

The Grass is Never Greener

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CHARACTERS:

1. **KATHERINA MONET WILDER:** 21, dramatic literature major at NYU, paints on the side, insecure, pessimistic, restless, wears lots of bright patterns
2. **AUSTEN CHARLOTTE HAWTHORNE:** 21, Katherina's girlfriend, comparative literature major at NYU, humble, reassuring, uplifting, wears v-necks and skirts
3. **LYRIC TAYLOR ADAGIO:** 21, of color, Katherina's friend, voice major at Juilliard, curly hair, confident, bold, fearless, stylish
4. **JULIET ARIEL SWEET:** 21, blonde, Katherina's friend, theater major at Juilliard, incredibly sweet, innocent, soft-spoken, modest, always in white
5. **EMILIA BELLA MONROE:** 25, redhead, a model, NYU alumna, wants time for herself, wants to pursue acting, exhausted, stressed, gorgeous, ambitious, overworked
6. **TRISTAN TYLER THORNTON:** 28, Emilia's boyfriend, actor, attractive, loves to party, self-centered, electric, impatient, charming
7. **LOGAN GARRETT GREENE:** 25, Tristan's best friend, Emilia's best friend, in love with Emilia, encourages Emilia when Tristan doesn't, thinks Emilia deserves a break, a peacemaker, pleasant, calming, chill
8. **BRI CLEO STEELE:** 25, Emilia's best friend, in love with Tristan, wears revealing clothing, deceitful, bubbly, petty
9. **VANESSA NORA MANNING:** 40, Emilia's agent, no-nonsense, always dresses professionally, pushes Emilia, strict, intense, persuasive

Scene 1

{Struggling dramatic literature major **KATHERINA WILDER**, 21, is sitting on her dorm room bed with her head in her hands. Her computer is in her lap, with an open Google Docs file, which is a play called "A Star in the Making." On the wall above her bed is a photograph of model **EMILIA MONROE**, **KATHERINA'S** idol. The door opens and **KATHERINA'S** girlfriend and roommate **AUSTEN HAWTHORNE**, 21, enters. She is holding a letter and has a smile on her face}

AUSTEN: I have some news.

{**KATHERINA** unfurls herself and looks up}

KATHERINA: You sound excited.

{**AUSTEN** nods}

AUSTEN: I am.

{She takes a deep breath}

AUSTEN: HarperCollins is going to publish *Roses for Ruby*!

{**KATHERINA** stares at her blankly}

AUSTEN: Did you hear me? HarperCollins is going to publish my book! *My* book! I've been working on it since high school and now it's finally going to be *published*!

KATHERINA: That's great!

AUSTEN: Isn't it? It's my dream come true!

KATHERINA: I know. It's all you ever talk about.

{**AUSTEN** frowns}

AUSTEN: What is up with you, Katherina? Two weeks ago, you would've jumped up and down, hugged me, kissed me, and offered to throw me a party.

KATHERINA: I'm sorry. I'm just tired.

AUSTEN: Did something happen? I'm just trying to understand.

KATHERINA: Professor Cardenas said my play feels like it was written by someone on drugs. She said that I need to get to the underbelly of who Emilia is and not just have her on a super high pedestal.

AUSTEN: I can't believe you chose to center your play on your celebrity crush. I always thought *I* was your greatest inspiration.

{**KATHERINA** scoffs. **AUSTEN** has a hurt look on her face}

KATHERINA: You know I'm inspired by you, but Emilia truly beat the odds and her story deserves to be told. I mean, who *wouldn't* want to write about her?

AUSTEN: If I were in your shoes, I would be writing about you. You're *my* greatest inspiration.

{**KATHERINA** is surprised to hear this}

KATHERINA: But *why*?! It's not like I have so much to offer you.

{**AUSTEN's** jaw drops}

AUSTEN: My book is about you, Katherina. Us. Our relationship.

KATHERINA: You mean the one where you always have to cheer me up?

AUSTEN: Why can't you ever be happy for me?

KATHERINA: It's not about you. I have to find a way to make my play more grounded and I have a severe case of writer's block.

AUSTEN: For what it's worth, I really liked your play. I thought it was incredibly imaginative.

{**KATHERINA** laughs. **AUSTEN** looks confused}

KATHERINA: No offense, Austen, but you'd have to be *illiterate* to think that.

AUSTEN: You're way too hard on yourself, Katherina.

KATHERINA: Not according to my teacher.

AUSTEN: She's overly critical. You *know* this.

KATHERINA: Austen, you know how much I envy Emilia and what she has. To me, she is perfect. So hearing that my play was incomprehensible was absolutely *devastating*.

AUSTEN: Look, I get it, but all that means is that you need to rethink the plot of your play. Writing takes time, Katherina. I've gone through dozens of drafts of *Roses for Ruby*.

KATHERINA: Yes, but you received positive feedback every step of the way. You're more successful than I am, and it really stings.

AUSTEN: It's not a competition, Katherina.

KATHERINA: Of course it is! And I'm losing. You, Lyric, and Juliet are so successful, Austen.

AUSTEN: You can't compare yourself to us, Katherina.

KATHERINA: You're about to have a book published. Lyric and Juliet are going to *Juilliard*, for heaven's sake. That's the most competitive performing arts school in the *world*. Juliet was cast as Elle in her production of *Legally Blonde*. Lyric's going to be the next Taylor Swift. And who am I? I'm just a failing dramatic literature major who can't churn out a decent draft.

AUSTEN: Just because your play isn't perfect doesn't mean you're failing, Katherina. And don't I deserve to be happy? I worked really hard to get my book published.

KATHERINA: You don't think I've been working hard on my play?

AUSTEN: That's not what I'm saying.

KATHERINA: It's what it sounded like to me.

{**AUSTEN** scoffs and starts assembling clothes and toiletries.

KATHERINA frowns}

KATHERINA: What are you doing?

AUSTEN: I'm going to stay at Juliet and Lyric's tonight.

KATHERINA: It's 1:00 in the morning!

AUSTEN: So? Juliet's in the middle of tech week. She's probably not even there yet, and Lyric says she likes writing songs when it's really late because the quiet helps her think.

{**KATHERINA** crosses her arms}

KATHERINA: Fine. Go. See if I care.

AUSTEN: I bet they'll actually be *happy* about my good news. Unlike you.

KATHERINA: Yes, they're practically going to be cheerleaders when they hear.

AUSTEN: Good night, Katherina.

{**AUSTEN** leaves the room, slamming the door behind her}

Scene 2

{25-year-old **EMILIA MONROE**; her boyfriend **TRISTAN THORNTON**, 28; her best friend **BRI STEELE**, 25; and **TRISTAN**'s best friend **LOGAN GREENE**, 25, are in **EMILIA**'s luxurious living room. **BRI**, dressed in a revealing, short floral sundress, is as close to **TRISTAN** as she can get. **EMILIA** is curled up on an armchair with colorful pillows. **LOGAN** is next to **TRISTAN** and keeps sneaking glances at **EMILIA**}

TRISTAN: It is so good to be back.

BRI: So how was it working with Maude Apatow?

TRISTAN: Honestly, she was a little immature. I mean, she thinks being on *Euphoria* makes her *so special*. Well, it doesn't.

EMILIA: You think being on *Making It* makes you special!

TRISTAN: Why are you arguing with me about Maude Apatow? I've been on location in Australia for two months, and this is the welcome I get?

{**EMILIA** rolls her eyes. **BRI** begins to massage **TRISTAN**}

TRISTAN: Thanks, Bri.

BRI: I think we should throw a party to celebrate your return.

TRISTAN: That sounds great! How about tonight?

{**EMILIA** looks surprised}

EMILIA: I thought it would just be the four of us tonight.

TRISTAN: Emilia, I've been gone so long. I'm sure adoring fans would love to see me tonight.

BRI: Of course they would. You're so popular.

EMILIA: I don't want strangers here tonight.

TRISTAN: They're not strangers. They're my admirers. And I think the party should start at eight. Could you make the calls, Bri?

BRI: I would be honored to.

TRISTAN: We're going to need a dance floor.

EMILIA: A *dance floor*? Where are we supposed to get one?

BRI: Leave that to me, Emilia. Don't worry.

EMILIA: Fine. As long as it ends at midnight.

LOGAN: I think that sounds reasonable.

BRI: Oh, please. Four hours is not long enough for an epic party.

TRISTAN: Bri's right. In fact, there shouldn't be an end time at all.

EMILIA: You can't be serious.

BRI: C'mon, Emilia, it's time you let your hair down.

EMILIA: I really wish you and I didn't live together, Tristan. Then this wouldn't be an issue.

TRISTAN: Why would you want to be separated from me?

EMILIA: So I could get some peace and quiet.

TRISTAN: You're in the wrong profession for that.

EMILIA: Why can't models have a break occasionally?

LOGAN: No one's saying they can't.

TRISTAN: No, that's pretty much *exactly* what I'm saying.

LOGAN: Tristan, that's ridiculous. Everyone's entitled to a break if they want it.

TRISTAN: Not celebrities. There are always auditions and photo shoots and networking events to attend.

EMILIA: And it can get really exhausting.

TRISTAN: Don't worry, Emilia. You'll age out of modeling by the time you're 40. *Then* you can have a break.

EMILIA: First of all, rude. Second of all, That's *fifteen years* from now.

TRISTAN: You really should be grateful for that. You're so photogenic.

EMILIA: Tristan, it's been a long three years, and I'm tired. I just want a respite.

TRISTAN: You can't afford to take a break right now, Emilia. You need to land a major television role first. Like I did with *Making It!*

EMILIA: You know, Tristan, I really wish you were more understanding and supportive of my dreams.

TRISTAN: I *am* supportive of your dream, Emilia. You're living it. We're living our dreams together. The best day of my life was when the CW asked me to star as Marco Porter in *Making It!*. I knew that my life was finally about to begin, and that it was the first stepping stone to becoming rich and successful. And look at me now. It's four years later, and in addition to starring on that show, I've been the lead in 3 major motion pictures. I've never felt better about myself, and I know you've never felt better about yourself, either. You were just asked to audition for the lead role in Amy Sherman-Palladino's new television show, *Pretty Babes*. This can be your chance to gain even more widespread fame and attention. I have no idea why you would even *want* to take time off. And the day you decide that is when I return from Australia?

EMILIA: I actually started thinking about it the day you left for Australia. It was the first time I truly felt like myself in the past two and a half years. Somehow, during that time, I had completely lost track of who I really was. I felt like I was waking up from a dream, and that I was just playing a game of pretend. My whole modeling career felt like a façade. It really made me think about how I had gotten here. You know, when Logan said he would introduce me to you, I was so excited. I knew who you were, of course, and I was glad to finally have the chance to talk with someone who was experiencing fame at the same time I was. When *Elle Magazine* published an issue with me on the front cover, I was suddenly bombarded with Instagram followers. I needed to be able to talk to someone who understood what I was going through. Attending and throwing parties, wearing fabulous clothes, going on auditions, having photoshoots...all of that was great, but it's just not who I really am. All I want is a chance to feel like a real person and not this caricature.

TRISTAN: Emilia, you never know what sort of opportunities you might miss out on if you take time off.

EMILIA: I wouldn't mind missing a few opportunities. I just feel so pressured lately, that if I screw up, it'll be the end of the world. And I hate feeling that way. I just want a moment to be able to *breathe*. To not feel burdened by everyone's expectations of me. I thought tonight would be a day for me to relax, but now you're throwing a party, so relaxing will be impossible. Everything's always about you, Tristan, and I'm sick of it.

BRI: Leave Tristan alone, Emilia. He deserves to see his friends. He's been gone for two months.

TRISTAN: Why is it that Bri is on my side, Emilia, when my girlfriend isn't?

BRI: You'll always be able to count on me, Tristan.

TRISTAN: That's music to my ears.

BRI: Glad to hear it.

EMILIA: Tristan, how can I be on your side when I don't believe that you'll do the same for me?

TRISTAN: I *am* on your side. I'm helping you preserve your career when you're talking crazy. We've got everything and you want to walk away?

EMILIA: Not forever. Just for a few weeks or so.

{**TRISTAN** looks at her in shock}

TRISTAN: A few weeks? What has gotten into you, Emilia? You used to be so passionate about your career.

EMILIA: Well, things change. Also, you're not in charge of me Tristan. I need to figure out who I am outside of modeling.

TRISTAN: Outside of modeling, you're *no one*. Now is not the time for you to take a month-long vacation. You have a huge audition coming up. It should be your priority.

EMILIA: Screw you, Tristan. It's not your life. It's mine.

TRISTAN: I'm just looking out for your best interests. No one else is.

LOGAN: Emilia has a point, though. She should be able to put her feet up.

EMILIA: I appreciate that, Logan. Thank you.

TRISTAN: That's sweet, Logan, but unnecessary. Once the party gets going, Emilia will forget all about this.

LOGAN {under his breath}: We'll see about that.

Scene 3

{**KATHERINA**, **AUSTEN**, and their best friends **LYRIC ADAGIO** and **JULIET SWEET** are hanging out at a coffee shop. **JULIET** is dressed from head-to-toe in pink}

JULIET: Rehearsal last night was *insane*. Whitney's throwing a cast party and, in true Vivienne fashion, has decided not to invite me.

KATHERINA: But you're the lead.

JULIET: Well, Whitney's a method actor, so she's being really nasty to me. All the time. I was thinking of crashing it, like Elle did in the movie.

{**LYRIC** lets out a snort}

AUSTEN: You should totally wear a bunny costume just like Elle.

JULIET: That's not a bad idea.

LYRIC: You'd totally steal Whitney's thunder. To really give her a taste of her own medicine, you should reenact the scene from the movie.

JULIET: The party doesn't even matter. I'm so excited for opening night. I can't wait for my parents to see me.

AUSTEN: We'll be there, too. Every night.

KATHERINA: I don't think I'll be able to come *every* night. I have so much work to do, and I'm so behind.

AUSTEN: Maybe seeing the show will inspire you. Juliet is just so talented.

KATHERINA: I know. I've seen her. But she's not the focus of my play. Emilia is.

LYRIC: I think Austen should be the focus. She's going to be a published author, Katherina. You should be really proud of her instead of jealous.

KATHERINA: Well, I *am* jealous. I've been trying to get a play of mine produced since I was 13.

LYRIC: Try to push that aside, okay? Austen deserves this.

AUSTEN: I was thinking I might write a sequel to my book.

JULIET: Go for it. You're so talented. You're going to be super successful, Austen. I just know it.

AUSTEN: Thanks, Juliet. You've always believed in me. I really appreciate it.

JULIET: When you become as famous as Jane Austen, I'm going to brag about you being my friend.

LYRIC: I'm going to make sure everyone I know reads your books.

KATHERINA: Would you do the same for me?

LYRIC: How can you even ask me that?

KATHERINA: Sometimes I feel like you and Juliet like Austen more than me.

LYRIC: The world doesn't revolve around you, Katherina.

KATHERINA: I know that.

LYRIC: Do you? Because you keep finding a way to make everything about you. This is Austen's chance to shine and you're ruining it.

KATHERINA: Sorry, Austen.

AUSTEN: Don't worry about it.

LYRIC: Seriously? You're letting her get away with this?

AUSTEN: She's been super stressed out lately, trying to get her play good enough to win the Goldberg Playwriting Award.

LYRIC: That's not an excuse, Austen!

AUSTEN: You're right. It's not.

LYRIC: If she can't appreciate you, you don't deserve her.

KATHERINA: Oh, I see. You think Austen would be better off without me. Well, maybe you have a point.

{**AUSTEN** looks at her in surprise}

AUSTEN: You don't really mean that, do you?

KATHERINA: Austen, it's become pretty obvious that we're at two completely different levels. And that gap is only growing bigger.

AUSTEN: Katherina...

KATHERINA: When Cardenas told me my play about a lesbian couple celebrating Valentine's Day needed to be less romantic, I should've switched majors and found something I could really excel at.

AUSTEN: Like what?

KATHERINA: Something even idiots can do. Like psychology.

{**KATHERINA** gets up and exits. **AUSTEN** sighs}

AUSTEN: I hate this.

JULIET: She'll come around.

AUSTEN: I'm not so sure.

JULIET: We can't let her give up on herself. You know, she's so lucky she has you, Austen. If she didn't, I don't know what she'd do.

AUSTEN: I just don't know how to get through to her. She won't listen to me.

LYRIC: Then maybe you should stop trying. Maybe this relationship is unhealthy.

AUSTEN: She's never been an optimist, but I've never heard her be so despondent before. I almost feel guilty that I'm getting my book published. It seems to be fueling her negativity.

JULIET: It's okay for you to be happy. She's just frustrated at her lack of progress. Once she becomes more successful, she'll come around.

LYRIC: Or she never will.

Scene 4

{**EMILIA** and **BRI** are in **EMILIA's** room. **BRI** is in an extremely revealing dress, and her hair is in a complicated updo. **EMILIA** is in a t-shirt and comfortable pants. She sits on the edge of her bed. A full-length mirror is next to the walk-in closet}

BRI: I can't believe you're not dressed yet.

EMILIA: I haven't decided if I'm going to the party, Bri.

BRI: Oh please. You're going.

EMILIA: You should've helped me convince Tristan that throwing this party was a bad idea.

BRI: That sounds like something Emma would say.

EMILIA: I *am* Emma.

BRI: No, Emma's who you *used* to be. It's time for you to accept that and move on.

EMILIA: I just want a break from being Emilia Monroe.

BRI: Do you think Marilyn Monroe or Heidi Klum took breaks? No, they kept working at their careers, which is what you should be doing. You need to be preparing for Thursday's audition. Imagine how your career will sky-rocket if you land the role.

EMILIA: Have you read the script? It's all about prostitutes and strippers. I don't want to be seen as a sex symbol.

BRI: It's just a role, Emilia, and I thought you loved acting.

EMILIA: You're starting to sound like my agent. She keeps hounding me about auditioning for more and more television and movie roles.

BRI: It would serve you well to listen to her.

EMILIA: I do, and it's exhausting. It's hard for me to even get an *hour* of peace all to myself.

BRI: Tons of girls would kill to be in your shoes, Emilia, and you don't appreciate what you have.

EMILIA: Of course I appreciate it, but I want to have something that's separate from modeling.

BRI: But why? Modeling isn't a hobby, Emilia. It's who you are.

EMILIA: That's the problem, Bri. That's *all* I am. And it's suffocating.

BRI: Don't you remember when you got discovered, Emilia? One night you're playing Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, the next you're gracing the cover of a magazine because Logan convinced

Tristan's agent to see you in the show. You'd wanted to be discovered since you were four years old. You remember those days, right?

EMILIA: Of course.

BRI: We've been putting on fashion shows since we were kids. Now you get to do it professionally.

EMILIA: It was fun when we were kids.

BRI: But it isn't anymore?

EMILIA: I'm under so much pressure, Bri. I just don't want to let anyone down.

BRI: Then stop talking about bringing back Emma. For the past three years, you've been Emilia Monroe. If you don't want to let anyone down, you can't retreat back to who you used to be. You've come too far for that.

EMILIA: Back when I was Emma Montgomery, I never had to worry about my fans or photo shoots. I was free to just be myself. I miss that.

BRI: Do you remember what college was like for us, Emilia? We were theater nerds. No one paid us any attention. You were invisible, and now you're not. Now you're with *Tristan Thornton*, for crying out loud.

EMILIA: Go to the party, Bri. I won't be joining you.

BRI: You're being ridiculous. This is the life you've always dreamed of and you're taking it for granted.

EMILIA: Please go.

BRI: Before modeling, you were *nothing*. Logan and I were your only friends. You don't really want to give up this life, do you?

{**EMILIA** sighs}

EMILIA {almost to herself}: I don't know. Maybe I do.

{**BRI** heads into **EMILIA**'s walk-in closet and begins rifling through the clothes. She emerges with a beautiful green dress and places it on the bed}

BRI: I'll see you at the party.

{**BRI** exits. **EMILIA** glances over at the dress. She picks it up, holds it to her chest and looks at herself in her full-length mirror}

Scene 5

{**AUSTEN** and **JULIET** are in a cafe}

AUSTEN: I wish Katherina could see herself in the same way I see her. As someone who's super talented and creative.

JULIET: Listen, I love Katherina, but she only sees things in black and white. Either she's successful or she's not.

AUSTEN: Be honest, Juliet. Do you think my success is holding her back?

JULIET: Austen, no. That's crazy. If anything, she should feel even more motivated to achieve her dreams.

AUSTEN: Sometimes I think Katherina's life would be better if she wasn't surrounded by people who are more accomplished than she is.

JULIET: What are you talking about?

AUSTEN: I was thinking of moving out of the dorm and staying with you and Lyric.

JULIET: And you think that will help Katherina?

{**AUSTEN** sighs}

AUSTEN: Maybe.

JULIET: I honestly don't think it will. She needs you, Austen.

AUSTEN: Does she? Because it doesn't seem like it.

JULIET: I know it might seem like that now, but she does.

AUSTEN: I just wish I could make her believe me when I compliment her.

JULIET: This is just how she gets sometimes. She's not really good at balancing her emotions.

AUSTEN: That's an understatement.

JULIET: When was the last time she got like this?

AUSTEN: Three years ago when she got rejected from USC.

JULIET: And what revived her?

AUSTEN: Emilia's success. After Katherina discovered the article that highlighted Emilia's rise to fame, she became *obsessed* with her. She would print out every interview with Emilia she could find and taped them to her walls in addition to the magazine pages that featured Emilia. She accumulated so many that her room essentially turned into a shrine to Emilia. Katherina also painted picture after picture of Emilia and taped those up, too. She wanted to pinpoint *exactly* what made Emilia so special so she could apply it to herself and become as well-known as Emilia. She was thrilled that she would be going to the same college that Emilia went to. She wanted to live in the same dorm room Emilia did freshman year, and when that didn't happen, she

covered all four walls of our freshman dorm with paintings of Emilia so she could try to channel her. I think she was hoping it would help inspire her, but it only made her feel worse.

JULIET: From what you're telling me, Katherina needs a sign that she can make it in the playwriting world.

AUSTEN: I agree, but how can we make that happen?

JULIET: We could have her self-publish her plays.

AUSTEN: That sounds like a good idea, but I'm not sure Katherina would go for it. All she talks about is how much she's unsatisfied with her work.

JULIET: I believe you can get through to her, Austen. Remind her of when writing was fun.

AUSTEN: I can try, but...

JULIET: You're afraid it won't work, aren't you?

{**AUSTEN** sighs}

AUSTEN: I really hope it does. I'd love to see her return to her true self. But a big part of me knows that it's not a guarantee. That I might never get through to her. And if I can't, I might have to leave her. Because it's becoming abundantly clear that I'm not enough for her.

Scene 6

{**TRISTAN**, **LOGAN**, and **PARTY GUESTS** are on the bottom floor of **EMILIA'S** house. A makeshift dance floor is set up in the living room. **TRISTAN**, holding a red solo cup, and **LOGAN** are in the middle of it. **BRI** enters and approaches **TRISTAN**, who takes her in}

TRISTAN: Bri! Lovely to see you!

LOGAN: Where's Emilia?

BRI: She's refusing to come.

{**TRISTAN** has an angry look on his face}

TRISTAN: *What?!* I need my girlfriend here! She makes me look good.

LOGAN: It's not like she wanted this party to be thrown in the first place.

TRISTAN: So what? Her job is to support me. She needs to be by my side at these events. Everyone loves her.

LOGAN: She doesn't like the attention, Tristan.

TRISTAN: Why is everything suddenly about *her*? She tells me she wants me to be supportive of her dreams but she won't support mine! I've been gone for two months. She should've been ecstatic the moment I returned. In fact, it should've been her who thought to throw me a party. And it should have been for the day I returned! She's acting like a stranger, Logan. I can't even recognize her anymore. I guess she can't stand that I'm doing better than she is. She's always been jealous of my success. I can't help it that I'm so beloved. Bri's the only one here who seems to give a damn about me.

LOGAN: Tristan, you're drunk.

TRISTAN: It's a party, Logan!

{**BRI** has a smile on her face}

BRI: Tristan, want to dance?

TRISTAN: Of course!

{**BRI** and **TRISTAN** begin to sway}

LOGAN: I think Emilia feels the same way you do, Tristan.

TRISTAN: What are you talking about, Logan? I'm insanely supportive! This party was for her, too. So she could make new connections and become more successful. She doesn't appreciate anything I do for her anymore. And you should always be on my side when it comes to this. Emilia could be more famous than Gisele Bündchen, but she has to work for it.

LOGAN: I'm going to check on her.

BRI: When you do, tell her that she's missing out on the best party ever and that she should stop reminiscing about who she used to be. She's a model now, Logan, and she needs to remember that.

LOGAN: I'll pass it on.

TRISTAN: Also mention that she's totally letting me down. Her absence doesn't paint me in the best light, especially considering she's one of the hosts.

BRI: And please convince her that any exposure is good exposure. I mean, so what if she plays a prostitute?

LOGAN: Wait, what?

BRI: That television show Vanessa scheduled? It's about prostitutes and strippers. Emilia's not sure if she wants to audition for it.

TRISTAN: That's crazy. She should be taking advantage of every opportunity that comes her way.

BRI: I agree with you, Tristan, but she won't listen to me. Maybe Logan will have better luck.

LOGAN: If Emilia doesn't want to audition, she shouldn't have to.

BRI: Don't you dare tell her that, Logan. For some reason, she cares about what you think.

LOGAN: Well, I care about *her*. I want what's best for her, and I'm not sure this role is in her best interest.

{**LOGAN** starts to walk off. **TRISTAN** reaches out and grabs his arm}

TRISTAN {slurred}: It really bothers me how much you care about my girlfriend. She means everything to me. Her relationship with me adds to my success. I want there to be a reality show filmed about me, and it's very important that she be part of it. Everyone has to know that Emilia Monroe, the *hottest* 25-year-old in the world, is with me.

LOGAN: Newsflash: They already do.

TRISTAN: She's never gonna go for you. Not when she has me.

LOGAN: I'm not competing with you, Tristan.

TRISTAN: Oh, we both know that's not true. I know you're hoping that she'll finally see that you're the better choice.

LOGAN: I see.

TRISTAN: But you're firmly in the friend zone. And that's where you'll always be. Because she's with *me*, Logan. *Me*. And there's no better option for her.

{**LOGAN** scoffs and exits}

BRI: That was cruel.

TRISTAN: He's just upset because he knows I'm right. Be honest, though. Do you think he has a chance with her?

BRI: Why? Are you jealous?

TRISTAN: Me? Jealous? Of course not. I'm *Tristan Thornton*. I'm a *legend*. No girl would *dare* dump me. I'm too important.

BRI: Of course he doesn't have a shot with her, Tristan. No one stands a chance against you.

TRISTAN: So why is she pulling away from me? Why can't she see that I'm only trying to help her?

BRI: Honestly, I don't know. You're doing everything right. And it's totally true that her attention should be on her career. I think she's having an existential crisis or something. But if she doesn't see how much you care about her, maybe you should look elsewhere.

{**TRISTAN** scoffs}

BRI: What?

TRISTAN: She's *Emilia Monroe*. There's no one else.

{**BRI** leans in so that her lips rest just beside **TRISTAN's**}

BRI: Maybe there should be.

Scene 7

{**KATHERINA** is in her dorm room. There are streamers and balloons hanging. A huge **BANNER** reads "CONGRATULATIONS, **AUSTEN**". There is a cake in the shape of a book on a desk. **AUSTEN** enters. She looks around in surprise}

AUSTEN: What is all this?

KATHERINA: Do you like it?

AUSTEN: Like it? I love it.

{KATHERINA smiles and gets off the bed}

KATHERINA: I'm glad.

{KATHERINA and AUSTEN kiss}

AUSTEN: What inspired you?

KATHERINA: I realized I wasn't as supportive as I should've been. I love you, Austen. And I'm so happy that your book is being published.

AUSTEN: So am I.

KATHERINA: I know you are. You deserve this, Austen. You put so much time and effort into *Roses for Ruby*. I'm just glad that one of us is succeeding at what she loves. Even if it isn't me.

AUSTEN: One day, your plays will be performed all over the country, Katherina, and everyone will sing your praises.

{KATHERINA sighs. Her smile drops}

KATHERINA: I really wish I could believe that, but...

AUSTEN: This is about your teacher, isn't it?

{KATHERINA nods}

KATHERINA: I really wish she would give me more positive feedback.

AUSTEN: She will. You know why? Because you're a very dedicated writer and are able to accomplish whatever is asked of you.

KATHERINA: Thanks, Austen, but lately, I've been feeling like I'm drowning. With every rewrite, I receive more and more criticism. I can hardly sleep at night now.

AUSTEN: Juliet and I were talking about this, and I think I know something that might help.

{**KATHERINA** freezes. Her lip twitches involuntarily}

KATHERINA: You talked to Juliet about this?

AUSTEN: Well, yeah. We're both really worried about you.

KATHERINA: You should've talked to me, Austen. That's what a girlfriend's for.

AUSTEN: I've got to be honest, Katherina. You haven't been acting like a girlfriend lately.

KATHERINA: I've just been under so much pressure lately. You don't know what that's like.

AUSTEN: You're not the only one going through stuff, Katherina. I have problems, too.

KATHERINA: Sorry. I wasn't thinking.

AUSTEN: Anyway, Juliet and I think you should start self-publishing some of your plays.

KATHERINA: I guess I could do that.

AUSTEN: Really?

{**KATHERINA** nods}

KATHERINA: Of course. I think it would be good for me. And your opinion matters to me, Austen. I trust it completely. And you.

AUSTEN: You should tell me that more often.

KATHERINA: I'll try to work on it.

AUSTEN: Thank you. Now, would you like to go on a romantic stroll with me?

KATHERINA: I would love to.

{**AUSTEN** and **KATHERINA** exit, holding hands}

Scene 8

{**EMILIA** is lying on her bed. The door opens and **LOGAN** walks in}

LOGAN: Hey.

EMILIA: Hey.

LOGAN: You should come to the party, Emilia. Everyone's asking for you.

EMILIA: I hate these parties, Logan. I don't know half the people out there, but they all know me. I liked it better before. When it was just you, me, and Bri. When I didn't have the weight of the world on my shoulders. When I didn't feel like I was compromising who I am. All I want is time just for myself and it's impossible. Everyone keeps telling me what to do, what to wear, and what to eat. They don't ask me how I feel about any of it. And to be honest, I don't care as much about Thursday's audition as Bri, Tristan, and my agent do. I know that if I got a break, even a brief one, I would feel better.

LOGAN: I get that, Emilia. I really do. You deserve some time off.

EMILIA: I thought I could achieve that by not going to the party, but I can't. I can hear everything that's going on. And I know that Tristan is probably annoyed that I'm not there.

LOGAN: Then you might as well come down. We can stick together, if you'd like.

{EMILIA smiles}

EMILIA: I would, thank you.

LOGAN: I will always have your back, Emilia.

EMILIA: I know you will. After all, you were the one you made sure I got noticed.

LOGAN: Well, I could tell you were special. You were so electric and confident when you performed. I knew your talents should be shown to the world.

EMILIA: Don't take this the wrong way, but sometimes I wish you had never brought me to my agent's attention.

LOGAN: You probably would've been discovered even without me. You're so talented and beautiful.

{LOGAN looks a little embarrassed}

EMILIA {quietly}: You think I'm beautiful?

LOGAN: You're a total knockout.

EMILIA: That's really sweet, Logan. Thank you.

LOGAN: No problem.

EMILIA: Do you know why I'm a model instead of an actor? Because Vanessa saw me in *Beauty and the Beast*, not on the cover of a magazine.

LOGAN: You'll have to take that up with Vanessa. When I told her about you, I said you had the talent to make it on Broadway.

{EMILIA is surprised to hear this}

EMILIA {softly}: You really said that?

{LOGAN nods}

LOGAN: Of course I did. You were far more talented than any of the other kids. You still are.

{**EMILIA** takes a deep breath}

EMILIA: Can I tell you a secret, Logan?

LOGAN: Of course. You can tell me anything.

EMILIA: Sometimes I really miss who I used to be. It was so much easier and freeing when I was Emma.

LOGAN: You can be her again.

EMILIA: Bri doesn't think so. She thinks it would be backsliding.

{**LOGAN** frowns}

LOGAN: That's crazy.

EMILIA: In a way, I suppose she's right. When I was Emma, I didn't matter as much.

LOGAN: You mattered to me. And Bri.

EMILIA: But to everyone else, I was pretty much invisible.

LOGAN: And that was a bad thing?

EMILIA: No.

LOGAN: There's nothing wrong with missing what you had.

EMILIA: Don't get me wrong, I really love where I am now, but I just want a few weeks of peace.

LOGAN: Which is completely understandable.

EMILIA: Bri thinks all my energy should be spent on modeling and photo shoots and auditions. She actually cares more about the modeling thing than I do. She was the one who convinced me to change my name. She told me that Emma Montgomery wasn't a striking enough name for a model. And I agreed because I felt like an entirely new person, and I wanted to leave the past behind. I chose Monroe as an homage to Marilyn Monroe, who is one of my major influences. I considered keeping Emma, but I wanted a name that would stand out more, so I went with Emilia.

LOGAN: Well, no one is going to forget you now, that's for sure.

EMILIA: I just want to feel *normal* again. The last time I felt like that was during *Beauty and the Beast*.

LOGAN: Then you should tell Vanessa that you want to audition for Broadway musicals as well. Any theater would be thrilled to be working with Emilia Monroe.

EMILIA: It *would* be nice to sing again.

LOGAN: If that's what you want, you have to fight for it, and you can't let anything get in the way. The only person who gets to decide what's best for you is you. Don't forget that.

Scene 9

{**KATHERINA** is on a walk with **AUSTEN**}

KATHERINA: I think this was a really good idea.

AUSTEN: I'm so glad.

KATHERINA: I've been so in my head lately, I haven't been able to see things clearly. You deserve better than that, Austen.

AUSTEN: You're right. I do. I'm just glad you seem more like yourself.

KATHERINA: I just wish I knew how to make my play more down-to-earth.

AUSTEN: You're overthinking it, Katherina.

KATHERINA: This is my last chance to prove to Cardenas I can succeed as a playwright. I can't turn in anything less than perfect.

{**AUSTEN** sighs}

AUSTEN: I think you should stop worrying about what she thinks and just focus on what brings you the most joy.

KATHERINA: I have to live up to her expectations.

AUSTEN: Focusing on that is stressing you out a lot more than necessary. Have you ever considered taking up meditation?

{**KATHERINA** is surprised to hear this}

KATHERINA: You can't be serious.

AUSTEN: I really think it'll be good for you. It could help you focus on the present instead of a hypothetical future.

KATHERINA: If I want to become a published playwright, it's crucial for me to win the Goldberg Playwriting Award.

AUSTEN: I believe inspiration will strike you when you least expect it. It happens to me all the time. Like yesterday, I was in the shower, and came up with an idea for the sequel to *Roses for Ruby*. Ruby and Josie are going to travel the world together, and Ruby will write plays about what she sees while Josie records everything in her travel journal.

KATHERINA: We should totally do that one day.

AUSTEN: Katherina, I would love nothing more. You just have to earn it.

Scene 10

{**EMILIA** walks into the party with **LOGAN**. They make their way to the living room, where they notice **TRISTAN** and **BRI** making out. A bunch of **PARTY GUESTS** are filming it. **EMILIA** blanches}

EMILIA: *Bri?!*

{**TRISTAN** launches away from **BRI**, who crosses her arms}

BRI: So you decided to show up after all.

EMILIA: Logan convinced me to come.

BRI: Oh, he did, did he?

EMILIA: But you were the one who insisted I come.

BRI: And then you made it very clear that you weren't interested.

EMILIA: That doesn't excuse what you did, Bri.

BRI: Tristan's done with you, Emilia. He thinks you're boring.

{**EMILIA** turns to **TRISTAN**}

EMILIA: Is that true?

TRISTAN: Of course not.

BRI: He's lying. He wants to be with *me*. I'm always there for him and you always have to pick a fight with him.

TRISTAN: She started it, Emilia.

BRI: Oh give me a break. You wanted it to happen.

TRISTAN: Nope.

BRI: If that were true, you would've pulled away.

TRISTAN: I was drunk. I couldn't push you away.

{**BRI** slaps him}

BRI: I'm perfect for you, Tristan. Why can't you see that?

TRISTAN: It's always been Emilia, Bri. Always.

BRI: She doesn't care about you! Not like I do!

TRISTAN: Get over yourself, Bri. You and I are never going to happen.

{**BRI** runs out of the room}

EMILIA: What the hell is wrong with you, Tristan?

TRISTAN: She kissed me!

EMILIA: And you just couldn't pull away? I thought you loved me!

TRISTAN: I do love you! Trust me!

{**EMILIA** scoffs}

EMILIA: How am I supposed to trust you when you pull something like this?

{Tears form in **EMILIA's** eyes. She swipes at them angrily. **LOGAN** reaches out to console her}

EMILIA: I loved you, Tristan. I can't believe you would do this.

{**EMILIA** buries her face into **LOGAN's** shoulder. He strokes her hair}

TRISTAN: God, Emilia, don't make a scene. You're making me look bad.

{**EMILIA** glares at him through her tears}

EMILIA: Oh, and kissing Bri didn't? Look around you, Tristan. That ship has sailed.

{**TRISTAN** notices all the cameras}

TRISTAN: Oh my god, I'm going to be the center of a scandal.

EMILIA: *That's* what you're thinking about? Your *image*?! You just betrayed me! How conceited are you?

{**EMILIA** begins to storm off}

TRISTAN: Stop making this about you! This could ruin my career!

{**EMILIA** storms out of the room. **TRISTAN** rolls his eyes}

TRISTAN: God, she's such a drama queen.

{**LOGAN** glares at him}

LOGAN: I think her reaction was on point.

TRISTAN: You must be happy now, Logan. After all, you finally got your wish.

LOGAN: Excuse me?

TRISTAN: For us to break up.

{**LOGAN** scoffs}

LOGAN: I've only ever wanted what was best for Emilia. I thought the two of you would make a good match, but if I had known you would do this, I never would have introduced you to her. She deserves a hell of a lot better. And I'm going to make sure she gets it.

{**LOGAN** storms out}

Scene 11

{**KATHERINA**, **AUSTEN**, **LYRIC**, and **JULIET** are in **LYRIC** and **JULIET**'s living room, sitting on the couch. Snacks are laid out in front of them}

LYRIC: Katherina, you and Austen should come over more often.

KATHERINA: Austen was just here.

JULIET: But *you* weren't. I feel like we don't see enough of you.

KATHERINA: Sorry. I've just been feeling ridiculously overwhelmed lately, but I think I figured out how to add authenticity to my play. I'm going to interview Emilia Monroe.

AUSTEN: I think that sounds like a great idea.

KATHERINA: I just hope she'll say yes. An interview with her would really help my play stand out.

JULIET: I don't know why she wouldn't. I mean, she should feel flattered to be admired by an accomplished dramatic literature major.

{**KATHERINA** laughs}

KATHERINA: I'm not sure if *accomplished* is the right word. That honor belongs to you, Austen, and Lyric.

JULIET: Your book's great by the way, Austen.

AUSTEN: Do you really think so?

LYRIC: I believe it'll be made into a major motion picture.

JULIET: I can totally see it.

AUSTEN: Who would you cast as Ruby and Josie?

LYRIC: I can see Auli'i Cravalho as Ruby and Lili Reinhart as Josie.

JULIET: I was thinking that, too.

AUSTEN: Do you agree, Katherina?

KATHERINA: I'll have to reread the book before I tell you. I haven't looked at it since the last draft you gave me.

{**AUSTEN, JULIET,** and **LYRIC** are surprised}

AUSTEN: You haven't read the final version yet?

KATHERINA: I just haven't gotten around to it. But I will. I promise.

{**AUSTEN** looks relieved}

AUSTEN: Okay, good. I'd really like to know what you think of it.

KATHERINA: As soon as I get a few more things off my plate, I'll turn my attention to it.

LYRIC: So what do you think you'll talk to Emilia about?

KATHERINA: Her success. How she got to where she is. Maybe try to uncover some juicy secrets.

AUSTEN: Well, if anyone can do that, you can.

KATHERINA: I just wish I already had a play published. I don't want Emilia to think I'm struggling.

LYRIC: You're hardly struggling, Katherina.

KATHERINA: Cardenas hasn't liked any of the drafts I've given her. I wouldn't exactly call that thriving.

AUSTEN: Writing is rewriting, Katherina. It's part of the process.

KATHERINA: That doesn't change the fact that it's incredibly frustrating.

AUSTEN: It *is* frustrating and time-consuming, but if your play becomes better, isn't it worth it?

KATHERINA: That's the thing, Austen. After I make all the changes my teacher suggests, it no longer feels like my play. It feels like hers.

AUSTEN: Is she choosing what words you put on the page? Is she dictating exactly what you should write? If not, it's still your play. It's still your vision. Just a revised one.

KATHERINA: It's turning into a completely different play, though.

AUSTEN: That can happen.

KATHERINA: Is it so bad to hope someone says the first draft is in a good place?

AUSTEN: You know that's not realistic.

{**KATHERINA** sighs}

KATHERINA: I know, but impressing Cardenas seems almost impossible. It feels like I'm doing nothing right.

AUSTEN: Cardenas is just one person. Why does her opinion matter this much to you?

KATHERINA: Because she's a playwright, Austen! She's written plays that have been produced all over the world. That's my dream! If a renowned playwright doesn't like my material, what chance do I have?

AUSTEN: Just because Cardenas isn't satisfied with your work doesn't mean others won't be. You should focus on writing the story you want to tell. And in the end, the only opinion that should matter to you is your own. If you're happy with the play when you submit it for the Goldberg Playwriting Award, that's what's important, Katherina. Even if it doesn't get chosen.

KATHERINA: Since when did you get so wise?

AUSTEN: I've submitted countless creative writing samples to competitions and most of them didn't even place. At the beginning, I would be devastated, but as time went on, I learned to accept that it wasn't the end of the world. There would be more competitions. Some would be interested in my work and some wouldn't. It's just the way the world works.

KATHERINA: Maybe I could show Emilia my play. See what she thinks.

{**AUSTEN** hesitates}

AUSTEN: Are you sure about that?

{**KATHERINA** frowns}

KATHERINA: You don't she would like it?

AUSTEN: I think it would be safer for you to present her with one of the paintings you did of her playing Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*.

KATHERINA: They're far from perfect!

{**AUSTEN** scoffs and rises}

AUSTEN: I'm going to return to campus, Katherina. I can't stand to hear you criticize yourself.

{**AUSTEN** exits}

JULIET: Are you two doing okay, Katherina?

{**KATHERINA** sighs}

KATHERINA: Not really.

JULIET: Katherina, if you keep disparaging your writing, Austen's not going to want to be with you anymore. She loves you so much and it pains her to hear you constantly berate yourself.

KATHERINA: Her leaving is the last thing I want. She's always been there for me, you know? She knows how to lift my spirits, and without her, I'd be completely lost. I don't want that to happen. I already feel lost enough as it is.

LYRIC: Katherina, if that's really how you feel, you're going to have to learn to see the beauty in your work.

Scene 12

{**BRI** and **EMILIA** are in **EMILIA's** bedroom. **EMILIA** is pacing while **BRI** is curled up in a ball on the bed}

EMILIA: I can't believe you kissed Tristan.

{**BRI** sniffs}

BRI: I saw my chance, and I took it.

EMILIA: He was my boyfriend!

BRI: Who you didn't care about.

EMILIA: That's not fair.

BRI: Oh, please. You were never in love with him, Emilia. You don't even care about your career. It shouldn't bother you that I chose to step into it.

EMILIA: It's my life, Bri! *My* life, not your life.

{**BRI** sighs}

BRI: I love him, Emilia. I can't help it.

EMILIA: What about him do you love?

BRI: Well, he's attractive.

EMILIA: There must be more to it than that.

BRI: He's so confident and charming. He knows exactly what he wants and isn't afraid to go after it. And can you imagine what it would be like for me to be his girlfriend? I would get to dress up all the time. He would show me off to all his friends and spoil me rotten with gifts. I want what you have, Emilia. I want to be famous. I want people to stop me on the street and ask for my autograph. I want professional stylists to fuss over me and make me look as glamorous as possible. I want my face to grace the cover of a magazine. I would kill to land the lead role in a television show.

EMILIA: Being famous isn't as dazzling as you think it is.

BRI: Maybe, but it's still my dream. It's hard being on the sidelines when your best friend is uber famous.

EMILIA: I didn't choose this, Bri, but I did choose you to be my friend, and you betrayed me.

BRI: You don't know what it's like to feel cast to the side. Once you got famous, our friendship was never your first priority. All you cared about was your image. I could've been you, Emilia. I was in the shows too, but no one took a chance on me the way Logan did with you. He saw your potential and didn't want it to go to waste.

EMILIA: I didn't ask him to do that. And if you were the famous one, I would be so supportive. I never would have hurt you the way you hurt me.

BRI: I'm sorry I ruined your party.

EMILIA: You were really so sure that I wouldn't make an appearance?

BRI: Excuse me?

EMILIA: You *begged* me to come to the party, Bri. You even laid out a dress for me to wear.

BRI: It's not like I kissed Tristan *immediately*. After an hour, I assumed you weren't coming.

EMILIA: Clearly.

BRI: You're overreacting, Emilia. You weren't planning on showing up and you don't love Tristan. I do. And for the first time, he actually appreciated me. And it felt really good.

EMILIA: You're supposed to be my best friend!

BRI: I *am* your best friend.

EMILIA: You haven't seemed like one lately. You don't side with me the way you used to. Remember when Tristan thought we should start a bonfire in our hotel room because he wanted to make s'mores the proper way? You were the first one who told him he was out of his mind and that he could end up setting the whole place on fire. I just thought I would always be able to count on you, and I haven't been able to lately. And now that Tristan and

I are over, I feel like I've lost the two most important people in my life.

BRI: You and Tristan are officially broken up, then?

{**EMILIA** scoffs}

EMILIA: That's what you have to say to me, Bri?

BRI: Emilia, I'm allowed to put myself first sometimes. You and Tristan have been struggling to stay afloat for a while now. At some point, you just have to accept that it wasn't meant to be. And that just maybe, he's meant to be with me. And you're forgetting about Logan. Isn't he one of the most important people in your life?

{**EMILIA** sighs}

EMILIA: I love Logan. He's my best friend. But you've been my friend since before preschool, and Tristan was my boyfriend. I was closer to him than I was with Logan.

BRI: Okay, you know that's not true. You and Tristan were in a mutually beneficial professional relationship. What you and Logan have is real.

EMILIA: Tristan will never go for you, Bri.

BRI: I would be a better match for him than some young starlet. I would actually appreciate him and spend time with him instead of being entirely consumed with work. You just took him for granted. I would never do that.

{**EMILIA** scoffs}

EMILIA: He doesn't care about you, Bri. He never will. You should do yourself a favor and move on.

BRI: You say that like it's so easy.

EMILIA: It is easy. I'm doing that.

BRI: You never cared about him in the same way I did.

EMILIA: He's a jerk, Bri. You're better off without him.

BRI: That's not for you to decide. You're not my manager.

EMILIA: He's only going to let you down. The only person he cares about is himself.

Scene 13

{**AUSTEN** is in her dorm room, typing on her computer. **KATHERINA** enters with a bag of clothes}

KATHERINA: Hey.

AUSTEN: How was your night?

KATHERINA: Good. We watched *But I'm a Cheerleader* and made friendship bracelets.

AUSTEN: Sounds like fun.

KATHERINA: It was. I'm sorry you missed out on it.

AUSTEN: Yeah, well.

KATHERINA: I really missed you.

AUSTEN: You did?

KATHERINA: Of course I did. I love you, Austen Charlotte Hawthorne. You're my north star.

AUSTEN: And you're mine.

{AUSTEN walks over to KATHERINA and kisses her}

KATHERINA: Lyric and Juliet helped me realize I need to stop allowing outside influences to get in my way.

AUSTEN: I think reading the latest version of my book will make things clearer for you.

KATHERINA: I'm really looking forward to doing that. I enjoyed the last five drafts.

AUSTEN: You've always been my inspiration, Katherina. I've admired you ever since the day we met. I know Cardenas's feedback can be rough, but I truly believe you can have a career as a playwright.

KATHERINA: I love you, Austen Hawthorne. I always have. Your stories gave me hope when I needed it the most.

AUSTEN: I love you too, Katherina Wilder.

{KATHERINA and AUSTEN kiss}

KATHERINA: I'm going to email Emilia now. I would've done it last night, but I wanted you to bear witness to it. If she agrees to be interviewed, I'm going to show her the painting I did of her as Belle in the iconic ballroom scene.

AUSTEN: That sounds like a good idea.

{KATHERINA composes an email to EMILIA, which reads:

Hi Emilia Monroe,

My name is Katherina Wilder and I'm a senior dramatic literature major at NYU. I'm writing a play about you and it would really mean a lot to me if I could interview you. I find you incredibly inspiring. There have been times when I've been uncertain about my work and whether I'll be successful at what I love to do, but your success has always given me hope that I will be discovered. In your interviews, you are so confident and poised and you have moved me in so many ways. You are an inspiration to women and anyone who is determined to reach their goals and follow their

dreams. You are literally my idol and I would be honored if you would let me interview you.

Thanks,
Katherina Wilder}

KATHERINA: Okay. Sent.

AUSTEN: Great. I'm so proud of you.

KATHERINA: Oh god, she's never going to say yes. She probably won't even see the email.

AUSTEN: Katherina, you *just* sent the email. Try to relax.

KATHERINA: What if she says *yes*?

AUSTEN: Isn't that what you want?

KATHERINA: I'm probably going to end up disappointing her.

AUSTEN: Impossible.

KATHERINA: Easy for you to say. You're perfect.

AUSTEN: So are you.

{An email notification lights up. She clicks on it to see a reply from **EMILIA**}

KATHERINA: Emilia got back to me. That was so fast. It's probably just a no. Will you read her response with me?

AUSTEN: I would love to.

{**AUSTEN** joins **KATHERINA** on the bed. They read **EMILIA'S** response, which goes:

Hey Katherina,
Thanks for reaching out. I'm honored that I'm an inspiration to you. I would love for you to interview me. What times would work best for you?
Emilia Monroe}

KATHERINA: Oh my god, oh my god, oh my god.

{**KATHERINA** starts to hyperventilate}

AUSTEN: Katherina, breathe.

KATHERINA: I need to find the painting of her as Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*.

{**KATHERINA** jumps off the bed and starts rummaging through the closet. She emerges with the painting and shows it to **AUSTEN**. It shows **EMILIA, THE BEAST, MRS. POTTS, LUMIERE,** and **COGSWORTH** in the iconic ballroom scene. She studies it}

KATHERINA: You're sure this is the right one to show her?

AUSTEN: Yes.

KATHERINA: I don't think it fully captures Emilia's beauty. I should've had a glow surrounding her.

AUSTEN: You could add one.

KATHERINA: That's not a bad idea.

{**KATHERINA** retrieves her paints from the closet. She adds a glow around **EMILIA** and examines it}

KATHERINA: Better?

AUSTEN: She looks ethereal.

KATHERINA: Exactly what I was going for.

{**KATHERINA** sits back down on her bed and composes an email to **EMILIA**, which reads:

Hi Emilia,

Thanks for getting back to me. Tomorrow afternoon at 4 pm works for me. See you then.

Katherina}

Scene 14

{**EMILIA** is sitting in a cafe. There is a smoothie in front of her and her hands shake as she sips it. Her eyes are red-rimmed and watery. The door opens and **KATHERINA** walks in. She is professionally dressed. She is holding a covered picture frame. She spots **EMILIA** and takes a few deep breaths before walking over and taking a seat}

EMILIA: Hi, are you Katherina?

KATHERINA: I am.

EMILIA: It's nice to meet you. I'm Emilia. But you probably already know that.

KATHERINA: Yeah, you're literally my idol. In fact, I brought something to show you.

{**KATHERINA** uncovers the painting. **EMILIA** lets out a little gasp}

EMILIA: Oh, wow.

KATHERINA: Do you like it?

EMILIA: It's *beautiful*.

KATHERINA: You can keep it, if you want.

EMILIA: Are you serious?

KATHERINA: I have five others just like it. And another 30 paintings centered on different scenes from *Beauty and the Beast*.

{**EMILIA** looks shocked}

EMILIA: Wow, um, that's dedication.

KATHERINA: Well, I think you're really talented, Emilia.

{**EMILIA** laughs}

EMILIA: Yeah, posing is such a great talent.

KATHERINA: You're still very good.

EMILIA: So you're a dramatic literature major? That sounds so cool.

KATHERINA: Really? Because it's a lot harder than it seems.

EMILIA: I could say the same for modeling and the whole lifestyle that comes with it. So what questions do you have for me?

KATHERINA: I guess I was wondering about what drew you to modeling in the first place?

EMILIA: I should start by saying I never really considered modeling as a career for me. Before Vanessa Manning discovered me, I wanted to be a Broadway actress.

KATHERINA: What's stopping you from doing both? Broadway is so close.

EMILIA: My agent would never allow it. She'd tell me it would take away from photo shoots, and auditions for film and television.

KATHERINA: Broadway would be lucky to have you.

EMILIA: You really think so?

KATHERINA: You're *Emilia Monroe*. I know so.

EMILIA: You're very kind, but you don't really know me.

KATHERINA: I feel like I do. I've been following your journey since the beginning.

EMILIA: I'm flattered.

KATHERINA: Three and a half years ago, I was in a really dark place. I got rejected from everywhere except NYU, and I didn't really believe in myself. I would sit in my room in the dark and just stare at a blank computer screen for hours. I felt despondent and a little depressed. There were days I didn't even eat. My girlfriend, Austen, tried to help me through it, and even though she did everything she could to cheer me up, she didn't succeed. But then one day, I was looking up other majors to see if any of them spoke to me and I came across an article all about your rise to fame. Your success helped me to create again. I painted you over and over again. Hearing that you attended NYU made me really excited to go there. I'm actually living in the same dorm room you did when you were a senior. I also have a poster of you that hangs over my bed. I like to think of it as my good luck charm.

{**EMILIA** looks slightly uncomfortable}

EMILIA: Umm...okay.

KATHERINA: I kind of lost my focus two weeks ago when my teacher told me my play was a total mess, and I kind of pushed Austen away. I've been working on being more loving and supportive, but I still haven't become totally confident in my work and if I continue to doubt myself, I'm going to lose her forever, and I really don't want that to happen.

{**EMILIA** sniffs and her eyes fill with tears}

KATHERINA: Are you okay?

EMILIA: Um, not really. It's just...I've felt so much pressure lately and I've kind of fallen into a dark place. Tristan, um...he cheated on me.

KATHERINA: That's terrible.

EMILIA: It was with my best friend. He didn't even care.

KATHERINA: I'm so sorry.

EMILIA: He cared more about preserving his image than what he did. I don't know how I'll ever be able to trust anyone again.

KATHERINA: I don't understand why someone would cheat on you. You're Emilia Monroe.

EMILIA: Yeah, I'm *Emilia Monroe*, but it's not all it's cracked up to be.

KATHERINA: I always thought your life was so enchanting. You just seem like you're living your dream. You're so successful.

EMILIA: Honestly, Katherina? I don't feel like I'm living my dream. I'd have to be on Broadway for that. Theatre was always my passion, and when you love something or someone, you have to hold on as tight as you can because finding that is the hardest thing to do. I turned my back on my true dream, and I've been regretting it for the past two and a half years.

KATHERINA: I've always felt like I had to be a playwright. My parents saw a production of *The Taming of the Shrew* when my mom was pregnant with me, and thought Katherina was a strong female character, and decided that if I were a girl, they would name me after her. When they told me that story, I felt a desire to be a playwright so I could inspire people with my characters. I also considered being an artist. My parents saw Monet's water lilies at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and decided that my middle name had to be Monet. Because of that, I've always been searching for perfection and I feel like that may be holding me back from truly committing to Austen. I need to fight for her with everything I've got. I can't lose her. I just can't.

EMILIA: You know what, Katherina? Perfection is a myth. There's no such thing. There's only what's *best for you*. You have to

figure out what that is and fight for it. My best friend saw the potential in me and fought for it to be unleashed.

KATHERINA: Bri Steele?

{**EMILIA** shakes her head}

EMILIA: No. Logan Greene.

KATHERINA: It sounds like he really believes in you.

{**EMILIA** smiles}

EMILIA: Yeah. He does.

KATHERINA: Do you care about him the way he seems to care about you?

{**EMILIA** sighs}

EMILIA: I think I might, but I'm not ready for that. Not yet. Not until I'm sure I won't get hurt again. Because getting hurt by him would be the worst thing in the world.

KATHERINA: Can I ask you a question?

EMILIA: Go ahead. That's what I'm here for.

KATHERINA: Are you happy with the way your life has turned out so far?

EMILIA: It's certainly exciting, but...

{She pauses}

KATHERINA: What?

EMILIA: Sometimes I think it would be easier if no one knew my name.

Scene 15

{**EMILIA**, in sweatpants, is sitting on her bed. **KATHERINA'S** painting is on her wall. There is knock on the door}

EMILIA: Go away, Bri.

VANESSA {offstage}: It's me.

{**EMILIA** flops down on her bed}

EMILIA: Vanessa. I should've known.

{Emilia's agent **VANESSA MANNING** enters. She is professionally dressed and her hair is pulled back with a clip}

VANESSA: Get up.

EMILIA: No.

VANESSA: I'm here to give you some tough love. I'm your agent. It's my job.

EMILIA: Can't you tell I'm heartbroken?

VANESSA: It's been a week. Get over it.

EMILIA: I need more time.

VANESSA: Emilia Bella Monroe, snap out of it. You haven't created any social media content, done a photoshoot, or gone on an audition in a week, which is totally unfathomable and unacceptable. You didn't show up to Thursday's audition! It's the lead role for a tv show! I had to pull crazy strings to convince the casting team to let you have a second chance, which is tomorrow, by the way. I told them they would be lucky to have you as part of their team. They were talking about casting Maude Apatow before I intervened.

EMILIA: Let them. I'm not interested.

VANESSA: Tough. You're going. Your reputation is on the line and so is mine.

EMILIA: The script sucks. It's so risqué.

VANESSA: This could be your breakout role!

EMILIA: The character's a prostitute! That's where I draw the line.

VANESSA: You need the exposure.

EMILIA: I don't want to play Olivia, Vanessa. There have to be better roles for someone as well-known as me.

{**VANESSA** sighs}

VANESSA: There probably are, but I stuck my neck out for you. You're going.

EMILIA: If they choose me, I'm going to say no.

VANESSA: That would be a mistake.

EMILIA: I want to be on Broadway, Vanessa. That was always my dream. You discovered me on the stage, so why aren't I working there?

VANESSA: Your performance in *Beauty and the Beast* was truly enchanting, but not because of your singing and acting. You have a rare beauty that makes you irresistible and it needs to be shared with the world. You stood out like a shooting star on opening night. No one in the audience could keep their eyes off you. You weren't just the star of the show. You were the show.

EMILIA: Which proves I have the talent to have a career on Broadway. You can make that happen for me.

VANESSA: Film and television are the best ways for you to be noticed. No one cares about Broadway stars. Besides, you have plenty of time to get back on stage. It could also take years before you're established as a prominent actress. That's time you can't afford to waste. Not if you want to be as famous as Gisele Bündchen.

EMILIA: I don't want to be a model anymore, Vanessa. I want to be a stage actress.

VANESSA: Emilia, you haven't worked this hard just to throw all your progress away. Every day, you get more and more offers from clothing brands. I was hoping you could be voted Model of the Year soon. *Prada* and *Victoria's Secret* are counting on you for their runway shows. Besides, do you really want to start from scratch? People only see you as having a pretty face. They don't know if you can act. If you become a chorus girl, you'll have thrown your career away for nothing.

EMILIA: I will model for *Prada* and *Victoria's Secret*, but after that, I'm done. And people will flock to Broadway just to see me in a show.

VANESSA: You know that's not a guarantee. There are girls who have been working towards Broadway their entire lives. You're not one of them.

EMILIA: That's only because you changed my trajectory. If you had listened to Logan, I would've been there already.

VANESSA: Modeling is a much more lucrative career, Emilia.

EMILIA: My name is Emma. And you never even gave me a choice between acting and modeling. You decided for me.

VANESSA: I *am* letting you act. Just not on stage. I'm trying to help you, Emilia. That's my job.

{**EMILIA** crosses her arms}

EMILIA: Vanessa, I've made my decision. You can either help me reach my dreams or I can find a new agent. Anyone would be thrilled to work with me.

{**VANESSA** sighs}

VANESSA: Fine. I'll see if I can get you an audition.

EMILIA: Thank you.

VANESSA: In the meantime, keep updating your social media accounts, go to tomorrow's audition for Olivia, and keep making contacts. People are counting on you. You can't let them down.

Scene 16

{**AUSTEN**, **LYRIC**, and **JULIET** enter **AUSTEN** and **KATHERINA**'s dorm room to see that all four walls are covered with photos of **EMILIA**}

AUSTEN: Oh. My. God.

{**KATHERINA** grins at them and then hurries over}

KATHERINA: Hey, guys! I am *so glad* to see all of you!

AUSTEN: Katherina...what *is* all this?

KATHERINA: Isn't it great? I think it will help me fully capture Emilia's essence.

AUSTEN: It's a little much, don't you think?

KATHERINA: Emilia's my muse, Austen. I need her to be inspired.

AUSTEN: Isn't it enough that you're living in her senior dorm room and have a poster of her above your bed?

KATHERINA: If you guys are up for it, I would like you to read a scene from my play. Juliet, you can play Emilia, and Austen, you can play Vanessa. Lyric, you can read stage directions.

{**KATHERINA** passes out script pages. **LYRIC** clears her throat}

LYRIC: Scene 10. Emilia and Vanessa are standing in Emilia's bedchamber. Emilia has her arms crossed against her chest and has a defiant look on her face. Vanessa is unfazed.

AUSTEN (as VANESSA): You made a commitment to modeling, Emilia. You can't just give it up.

JULIET (as EMILIA): I need to stay true to myself, Vanessa. It's time for me to be a Broadway actress.

AUSTEN (as VANESSA): But you are a vision to behold.

{**AUSTEN** looks at **KATHERINA** with uncertainty}

AUSTEN: Vision to behold? Who talks like that?

{**KATHERINA** frowns}

KATHERINA: I didn't ask you to critique my work, Austen.

AUSTEN: I thought you wanted to improve your play.

KATHERINA: Can you just keep going?

AUSTEN: Um, okay.

JULIET (as EMILIA): I'm more than just a pretty face.

AUSTEN (as VANESSA): Not to the world, you're not.

{She puts the page down}

AUSTEN: Okay, Katherina, this could definitely use some work.

KATHERINA: Who are you, my teacher?

AUSTEN: I can help you, okay? I think it has potential, but you have to be open to my notes.

{**KATHERINA** sighs}

KATHERINA: I guess it does sound kind of stilted.

AUSTEN: It's nothing we can't fix.

KATHERINA: Thank you, Austen. I really needed to hear this.

AUSTEN: This is what I'm here for.

KATHERINA: By the way, I think your book will definitely be turned into a movie. It was so powerful. I actually cried at the end.

AUSTEN: I'm glad you liked it.

KATHERINA: Liked it? I *loved* it. It deserves to be celebrated.

JULIET: And it will be more iconic than *But I'm a Cheerleader*.

KATHERINA: So, Juliet, are you still planning on crashing Whitney's party?

JULIET: Actually, she finally gave me an invitation.

AUSTEN: You're kidding. How did that happen?

JULIET: Max told her she was being immature by not inviting me.

LYRIC: That is so sweet!

JULIET: Yeah, he's really great. He actually invited me to go with him.

LYRIC: Oh my god! Juliet, that's *amazing*!

JULIET: Yeah. It is. I just don't know what to wear.

LYRIC: Something sexy. You have to show some cleavage.

JULIET {surprised}: Lyric!

LYRIC: What? You want Max to say "Wow" when he sees you.

JULIET: I'm really glad the party's scheduled for after opening night. I wouldn't want things to be awkward between us.

AUSTEN: You and Max play love interests, Juliet. I don't see how a date would get in the way of that.

JULIET: So are all of you coming to opening night?

AUSTEN: I wouldn't miss it.

LYRIC: Neither would I.

JULIET: How about you, Katherina? Can you come or are you too busy?

KATHERINA: If Austen's going, so am I.

AUSTEN: Well, I'm planning to go every night. Can I count on you for those performances as well?

KATHERINA: Yeah, why not?

{**AUSTEN** looks at her in surprise}

AUSTEN: Why the change of heart, Katherina? You seemed so opposed to it a week ago.

KATHERINA: Emilia helped me realize what's really important to me. I can't let my work destroy my relationships.

{**KATHERINA** reaches into her pocket and pulls out a handmade rose-shaped locket, which she hands to **AUSTEN**, who lets out a gasp}

KATHERINA: Austen, this is for you.

AUSTEN: It's beautiful, Katherina.

KATHERINA: It took me two hours. I was thinking of you and wanted you to know how much I care about you.

AUSTEN: I'm really liking this side of you, Katherina.

KATHERINA: Yeah?

{**AUSTEN** nods}

AUSTEN: Yeah.

{**AUSTEN** and **KATHERINA** kiss. **JULIET** and **LYRIC** smile}

KATHERINA: I love you, Austen Hawthorne.

AUSTEN: I love you, too

Scene 17

{**EMILIA** is lying on her bed. There's a knock on the door}

LOGAN {from off}: Emilia, it's Logan!

EMILIA: Come in!

{The door opens and **LOGAN** walks in. He joins her on the bed, and lies down besides her}

LOGAN: How are you doing?

EMILIA: Better.

LOGAN: I'm glad. I hate seeing you upset.

{**EMILIA** takes a deep breath}

EMILIA: I told Vanessa I don't want to be a model anymore.

{**LOGAN** looks surprised}

LOGAN: Oh, wow.

EMILIA: I want to be an actor, Logan. If I'd known that you told Vanessa that I could make it on Broadway, I would've fought for that with everything I've got. You saw the real me before I even did.

LOGAN: You were always happiest on the stage, *Emma*. You lit up every time you performed.

EMILIA: You're a good friend, Logan. I'm really glad you're here.

LOGAN: Of course.

EMILIA: You're really the only person I can count on anymore.

LOGAN: Emma, I'm sorry about Tristan. He was my friend and I should've seen who he really was.

EMILIA: Yeah, well, he fooled me, too. It's not your fault, Logan.

LOGAN: You deserve to be with someone who fully appreciates you.

EMILIA: I was thinking I shouldn't date for a while. I just don't know how I'll be able to trust anyone again. Who's going to take the time to get to know the real me? All anyone cares about is what I look like. They don't care about the girl inside.

LOGAN: I do.

{EMILIA smiles}

LOGAN: And while we're on the subject, there's something you should know.

{LOGAN takes a deep breath}

LOGAN: I'm in love with you, Emilia. You *and* Emma. I think I always have been.

{EMILIA stares at him in shock}

EMILIA: I don't know what to say.

LOGAN: You don't need to say anything. I just had to tell you.

{EMILIA sighs}

EMILIA: Logan, look, I care about you, but I'm not ready for a relationship. Not yet.

LOGAN: I can wait.

EMILIA: I really wish you had told me this sooner.

LOGAN: Would it have made a difference?

EMILIA: If you'd told me *before* I met Tristan.

LOGAN: I didn't think you cared about me in that way.

EMILIA: I didn't. But maybe I *could* have. You're my best friend, Logan. That's what I need right now.

LOGAN: Okay.

EMILIA: I don't want you to be disappointed, Logan, and I fear that might happen if we were to start something now.

Scene 18

{KATHERINA, LYRIC, AUSTEN, and JULIET are at a coffee shop}

LYRIC: Juliet, you should feel really proud of yourself. Your performances were *incredible*.

AUSTEN: I agree. You were absolutely electric.

JULIET: Thanks. I feel so...bittersweet about it, I guess.

AUSTEN: That's understandable. When I finished writing *Roses for Ruby*, I felt so accomplished but empty at the same time. I had spent so long working on it and I just had to keep going. I've started working on the sequel to *Roses for Ruby* where Ruby and Josie travel the world together and become inspired to create.

JULIET: I can't wait to read it. I bet it'll be as good as the original. Maybe even better.

AUSTEN: I can send you each chapter if you'd like. You could give me notes.

JULIET: That would be great.

AUSTEN: Are you looking forward to your next show?

JULIET: I am. It's *Cinderella*.

AUSTEN: You're totally going to be cast as Cinderella.

JULIET: If I do, Whitney will be so jealous.

AUSTEN: The only part she should play is Charlotte, the wicked stepsister.

JULIET: Yeah, that'd be nice.

AUSTEN: No matter what happens, though, I'll be there for sure.

LYRIC: So will I.

KATHERINA: I'm not that big a fan of musicals.

{An awkward pause. Then **LYRIC** clears her throat}

LYRIC: So Juliet, how was the cast party?

{**JULIET** grins}

JULIET: Amazing.

{She turns to **LYRIC**}

JULIET: Tell them your news, Lyric.

LYRIC: Okay. My latest music video went viral!

AUSTEN: Oh my god! That's great!

{**AUSTEN** pulls **LYRIC** into a hug}

LYRIC: I've always hoped this day would come. I just never expected it to happen so soon.

KATHERINA: Well, why wouldn't it? You're talented.

LYRIC: Thanks, Katherina.

KATHERINA: I mean, you're all just so *talented*. Whatever you want, you get. The starring role, publication, *fame*. It's so great that I'm surrounded by such successful creators. Isn't that just *perfect*?

AUSTEN: Are you, okay, Katherina? Did something happen? I mean, you've been doing so well lately.

KATHERINA: Cardenas read my latest draft and said I should make Emilia feel more personable. It's a wonder you guys still want to hang out with me. It's obvious why you're pulling away,

Austen. You can see that I'd only hold you back. You realized how codependent I am and want separation from me.

AUSTEN: You know what, Katherina? You *are* codependent. You always have been. And I pretended not to notice because I thought you needed me. I thought that if you just heard words of encouragement from me, you would find the light and perk up and that it would stick! But it never did! Because you consistently refuse to see the good in yourself! And it's made you a really *jaded* person. I know the girl I fell in love with still exists, but if you can't find a way to be her again, then this relationship isn't going to work.

{**AUSTEN** gets up and begins to walk away. **KATHERINA** reaches out and grabs **AUSTEN's** arm and then kisses her deeply. **AUSTEN** frowns}

AUSTEN: What are you doing?

{**KATHERINA** scoffs}

KATHERINA: I didn't know it was a crime to kiss my girlfriend.

AUSTEN: As of right now, you don't have a girlfriend.

KATHERINA: *What?!*

AUSTEN: Until you become the girl you were, you and I are over.

KATHERINA: Like *that's* what this is really about.

AUSTEN: Excuse me?

KATHERINA: You think I haven't noticed how you look at Juliet? Like she's the most perfect girl in the world. You don't look at me that way anymore.

AUSTEN: You really should be *grateful* towards Juliet instead of jealous.

KATHERINA: *Grateful?!* She's the reason you're pulling away!

AUSTEN: She's the reason I'm still with you! Without her, I wouldn't have put up with you for this long. I'm working way harder on our relationship than I should be, Katherina, because you won't let me in. You seem to care more about Emilia than me! I needed Juliet. She gave me a shoulder to cry on. It's not my fault that Cardenas hates your play!

{**KATHERINA** slaps **AUSTEN**, who storms out of the bar. **JULIET** and **LYRIC** look uneasy}

JULIET: I've only been trying to help, Katherina...

{**JULIET** exits}

LYRIC: What is wrong with you, Katherina?

KATHERINA: I don't know.

LYRIC: You better hope she forgives you.

KATHERINA: Do you think she will?

{**LYRIC** sighs}

LYRIC: I'm not sure. Maybe.

KATHERINA: I don't know what I'll do with myself if she abandons me.

LYRIC: Katherina, if you want Austen back in your life, you're growing to have to make the biggest romantic gesture in the world.

{**LOGAN** pulls into the driveway of a luxurious hotel, which has a pond and pretty vegetation in front of it. He glances over at **EMILIA**, who is blindfolded}

LOGAN: Okay, we're here.

EMILIA: Can I take the blindfold off?

LOGAN: Yes.

{**EMILIA** removes the blindfold and looks around}

EMILIA: Oh, wow.

LOGAN: Surprised?

EMILIA: It's so beautiful.

LOGAN: You deserve it, Emma. You've been working so hard and I'm so proud of you.

EMILIA: I'm so sorry I've been taking you for granted. You're the only one who ever thought I was enough.

LOGAN: Emma, you are *more* than enough. You're the best woman I know.

{**EMILIA** grins}

EMILIA: You're so sappy.

LOGAN: You're only realizing that now?

{**EMILIA** looks sheepish}

EMILIA: Kind of.

LOGAN: Well, I love you. Spending time with you is pure bliss.

EMILIA: We never made anything official, did we?

LOGAN: No. But I'm hopeful.

EMILIA: You recently reminded me that once you know what you want, you have to fight for it. I haven't been doing that, Logan. I was afraid.

LOGAN: Of what?

EMILIA: Not being good enough. I had an image to maintain and I thought that just being myself was subpar and you wouldn't like who you saw.

{**LOGAN** looks confused}

LOGAN: I don't understand.

EMILIA: I love you, Logan Greene, and I thought that if I wasn't perfect, you would reject me.

LOGAN: Emma, that's silly. You know why? Because I love you. Every part of you. You mean everything to me.

EMILIA: Ditto.

{**LOGAN** and **EMILIA** kiss}

Scene 20

{**KATHERINA**, **AUSTEN**, **JULIET**, and **LYRIC** are in **KATHERINA**'s dorm room. There is a covered canvas in the middle of the room}

AUSTEN: Katherina, the suspense is killing me.

KATHERINA: You're going to love it.

{**KATHERINA** removes the cloth to reveal a mural of **HER**, **AUSTEN**, **LYRIC**, and **JULIET** laughing while having a picnic}

AUSTEN: That is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

JULIET: Yeah, no question.

KATHERINA: I've spent so long focusing on Emilia when I should've been focusing on you guys. You're my true inspiration. I'm really sorry for what I put you through. I didn't fully believe in myself, hearing about your successes made me feel worse, and I took it out on you. I wish I could change what happened, but I can't. I want you guys to know that I'm super proud of what you've accomplished. I should've been more supportive, and I will do whatever I can to make it up to you. Do you think you can forgive me?

JULIET: I can. You just got in your head. It happens.

KATHERINA: Not to you guys.

LYRIC: Sure it does. I can't tell you how many times I judged myself for not being able to come up with the perfect lyrics or the perfect melody. I just never let it stop me.

KATHERINA: I think things will be better now.

JULIET: Welcome back, Katherina. We missed you.

KATHERINA: I missed you, too.

{**KATHERINA, LYRIC, and JULIET** hug}

KATHERINA {CONT'D}: I promise I'll never get so lost again.

JULIET: You better not break that.

KATHERINA: It's a deal.

{She turns to **AUSTEN**}

KATHERINA {CONT'D}: Austen, I know I haven't been fair to you. You've spent so much time encouraging me and praising me and I

took it for granted. The truth is that I didn't know why someone like you would want to be with someone like me. You're so successful and talented and beautiful and perfect and I didn't see those qualities in myself. I was scared that I wasn't enough for you. But I'm not scared anymore. Emilia helped me see that perfect is just an illusion and that searching for it is fruitless. But to me, you are perfect. I love you so much, Austen, and I'm so proud of you. I came to the realization that if I want to become a successful playwright one day, I have to stop pushing you away and just appreciate all you have to offer me. I know things have been rocky between us for a while now, but I'm not ready to give up on us. I'm here, Austen, and I'm not going anywhere.

AUSTEN: Katherina, I always believed that you would find your true self again. I loved you so much and it killed me that you didn't see the beauty in yourself. You are so talented and creative and should celebrate it. I know it's been hard for you to accept this and that you haven't always received the most positive feedback, but it's true. You have a real gift, and I know that one day, you will be celebrated across the world as a successful playwright.

END OF PLAY

My Personal Statement:

I've always been fascinated by the idea that you never really know what's truly going on in someone's life. I often find myself wondering about the lives of my classmates that I don't get to see. As an artist, I am not always satisfied with pieces I create and getting bad feedback usually makes me doubt myself. I believe it's natural to wish for a life someone else has, especially if their life seems more put together than your own. I wanted to explore the idea of success in my work and what it means to different people because as a senior in college, I am constantly thinking about the future and where I see myself. I wanted to create a piece that could feel relatable to any audience because success is what a lot of people struggle with

for much of their lives. I would like to develop this further because I believe it's important for people to witness narratives that show that there isn't just one right way a life should be lived. I want to see it staged so I can see the dichotomy between the two worlds I created, and how the two narratives are more alike than it would seem.