

PAINT

A Full Length Play
In One Act

*** Version 11-05-2017 ***

By TOM CAVANAUGH

PAINT is the story of Crystal Hayes, an African-American woman that cross dresses as a man (known as HAZE) to go out into the dangerous, yet mysterious world of graffiti artists. A college student by day, she takes care of her grandmother that she lives with while sneaking out at night to see her girlfriend, Deidre and also to create art on the billboards and rooftops of the city. Haze's life becomes more difficult when she uses her college loan money to pay the rent and is recruited by an older, street hustling, graffiti artist, Pablo.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

PAINT was developed in 15 page increments at The Fierce Backbone Theatre Company in Hollywood, CA. Fierce Backbone also gave PAINT, a special workshop for development and a developmental weekend that included a full reading of the play, improvisation experiments with the actors in character and audience Q&A sessions

BIOGRAPHY

Tom Cavanaugh received his M.F.A. in playwriting from the Actors Studio Drama School in 2000. Tom's full length play, BEHOLD was a 2010 finalist New American Playwrights Program at Utah Shakespearean Festival and won a 2011 Pickering Award for Excellence in Playwriting. His full length, ADAM & YOSHI was a finalist in McKinney Repertory Play Competition, Texas, finalist

2013 New American Playwrights Program Utah Shakespearean Festival and won 2012 Make the House Roar Prize at Lionheart Theater, Georgia. 2014, INLAND EMPRESS, Tom's full length play, World Premiered, The Lounge Theatre, Los Angeles. 2017 MISTER PICMAN, premiered at the Short & Sweet Play Festival, Hollywood, CA, & Theatre of Note's Alternative Acts. THE FIELD by Cavanaugh premiered at The CTI Theatre Festival in Independence, MO.

TIME: 1984

PLACE: NEW YORK CITY

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CRYSTAL/HAZE - 23 YEAR OLD, AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN WHO IS AN ART STUDENT THAT WANTS TO MAKE HER NAME BY CREATING STREET ART AT NIGHT ON THE ROOFS OF NEW YORK. SHE DRESSES LIKE A MALE TO FIT IN AND STAY SAFE IN THE DANGEROUS WORLD OF STREET ARTIST.

GRANDMA - 60 & OLDER, AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN, CRYSTAL'S GRANDMOTHER WHO KNOWS ART AND LOVES CRYSTAL. CRYSTAL LIVES WITH HER, THEY ARE VERY CLOSE.

PABLO - 35 AND OLDER, HISPANIC MALE, AN ESTABLISHED STREET ARTIST WITH A CREW THAT WANTS TO BECOME WORLD FAMOUS. PABLO HAS SOME DARK SECRETS HE HIDES TO MAINTAIN HIS STREET START STATUS.

DEIDRE - 23 YEAR OLD, ANY RACE, FEMALE, CRYSTAL'S LOVER AND NURSING STUDENT.

FLARE - 25 AND UP, ANY RACE, MALE, AN ARTIST ON PABLO'S CREW.

SEEN - 25 AND UP, ANY RACE, MALE, AN ARTIST ON PABLO'S CREW.

LILY - 25 AND UP, WHITE WOMAN WITH RED-HAIR. A DANCER IN THE CLUB THAT THE PAINT CREW HANGS OUT IN AND THAT CRYSTAL/HAZE SEDUCES WHEN CRYSTAL IS DRESSED AS HER MALE COUNTERPART, HAZE. FLIRTY, SEXY, LOST... BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE HER. SHE WANTS LOVE, BUT REALLY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND IT.

RICHARD - 55 AND OLDER, WHITE, MALE, CRYSTAL'S ESTRANGED FATHER. AN ART DEALER WITH MONEY WHO IS CONTROLLING AND VERY ABUSIVE.

AUCTIONEER - WHITE, MALE, STUFFY, RIGHT OUT OF CHRISTIES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: A BARE STAGE

SCENE 2: A BARE STAGE, A ROOFTOP

SCENE 3: A BARE STAGE, DEIDRE'S BEDROOM - LATER

SCENE 4: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

SCENE 5: A BARE STAGE, A ROOFTOP - NIGHT

SCENE 6: A BARE STAGE - THE NEXT NIGHT

SCENE 7: A BARE STAGE, THE CANAL ZONE - LATER

SCENE 8: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

SCENE 9: A ROOF TOP - THAT NIGHT

SCENE 10: A BOOTH IN THE CHELSEA DINER - NIGHT

SCENE 11: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

SCENE 12: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - LATER

SCENE 13: A BARE STAGE - LATER

SCENE 14: A BARE STAGE, THE CANAL ZONE - LATER

SCENE 15: A ROOF TOP - LATER

SCENE 16: A BARE STAGE

SCENE 1: A BARE STAGE

There are five white, paper panels on stage. Two down stage in the corners, two split at mid stage and 1 large panel at center is not blank. There is a finished painting at center. The edges of the painting are frayed and jagged as if they were cut from a billboard. A twenty-three year old girl stands at center in a sleeveless, white tee-shirt and sweat pants. She faces downstage.

*
*

An auctioneer at podium stands down stage left.

AUCTIONEER

Alright, and now we come up to the section that everyone has been waiting for this is the Haze portion of the auction. I know we have a lot of excited bidders out there... let's all put our hands together... rumor is "HE" might actually be in the room, in this crowd tonight so keep your eyes open alright! Are all of our phone bidders lined up? First we have Lot Eighty-Seven, this is entitled, FIFTIETH & EIGHTH, this is the actual billboard cut down from it's perch on the infamous, intersection that it is named after... We already have thirteen thousand to get us going. Do we have any interest at fourteen thousand? Fourteen I have. Now, asking fifteen thousand. Fifteen is bid, now asking for sixteen thousand. Sixteen we have now asking... sixteen-thousand five hundred is bid now asking for eighteen thousand. Eighteen... NINETEEN! Nineteen is bid. Now asking for twenty-thousand dollars. Any interest in the room or online for twenty thousand dollars? I have the bid at Nineteen thousand dollars in the room live, looking for twenty thousand dollars. Any interest out there at twenty thousand dollars. Any advances out there over nineteen thousand dollars. Fair warning and we're closing at....

LIGHTS CHANGE:

FLASHBACK SCENE: CRYSTAL'S BODY IS THE PRESENT, BUT HER MIND, CONVERSATION AND VERNACULAR ARE FROM HER PAST.

*
*

Crystal is the only one lit along with the painting.

CRYSTAL

The dream remains the same... I have it almost every night. I'm standing here... just like I'm doing now... and I can feel him... I can sense him... he's in the room... he's watching over every move I make... and I hear...

A man steps out behind her
says...

*

RICHARD

The colors you choose are not as exciting as they might be. Too much intense color in the background is competing with the rest of the picture.

CRYSTAL

Colors don't compete.

RICHARD

They compete for the viewers eye.

CRYSTAL

I like the colors.

RICHARD

What is it a picture of?

CRYSTAL

A dog.

RICHARD

The dog's face is asymmetrical.

CRYSTAL

So?

RICHARD

The right side of the jaw is larger than the left side.

CRYSTAL

So?

RICHARD

Stop saying so! This is important.

CRYSTAL

It's just a dog.

RICHARD

Start again from the beginning.

CRYSTAL

I like it this way.

I said... RICHARD

But, Daddy? CRYSTAL

Start it from the beginning! RICHARD

I don't want to. CRYSTAL

Start again from the beginning. RICHARD

I like it like this... CRYSTAL

Richard crosses to Crystal and slaps her face.

Now... start... again... RICHARD

Richard freezes.

That's when the picture freezes. That's when I wake up. The dream remains the same. CRYSTAL

The lights change. Richard exit and Crystal starts painting. *

The scene is no longer the Flashback and is back in the present. *
*
*

I can't find my blue blouse. GRANDMA
(Offstage yell)

Crystal continues furiously painting.

My blue blouse with the white flowers, where is it? GRANDMA
(Offstage yell)

Crystal continues to paint.

GRANDMA
(Offstage yell... but louder.)

I can't find a thing in this house. Where the hell is my blue blouse?

Crystal stops painting and stares at the canvas.

CRYSTAL
Top drawer and to the left.

GRANDMA
(Offstage)
I looked there and it's not there.

CRYSTAL
(Still staring at the canvas.)
Look again.

GRANDMA
(Offstage)
I am looking again and... oh wait..

CRYSTAL
"Here it is!"

GRANDMA
(Offstage)
Here it is!

CRYSTAL
"If it had been a snake it would've bit me."

GRANDMA
(Offstage)
If it had been a snake...

Grandma enters wearing the blue blouse.

GRANDMA
It would've bit me.

CRYSTAL
(Giggles as she talks)
I know. Why you lookin' for a blouse? It's nine o'clock. You should be lookin' pajamas.

GRANDMA
I'm trying to be more... spontaneous. I'll put em on later. I just didn't... feel... like... *

Grandma comes up behind Crystal and stares at the painting.

GRANDMA
 (Thinking as she speaks)
 What... the hell is that?

CRYSTAL
 Can't you tell?

GRANDMA
 I never liked things in the abstract.

CRYSTAL
 Everything is abstract.

GRANDMA
 You're not breaking the image down into multiple views.

CRYSTAL
 I know.

GRANDMA
 Why are you only showing one side?

CRYSTAL
 Life is kinda one sided... don't you think?

GRANDMA
 But what are you doing?

CRYSTAL
 I'm just painting, Grandma.

GRANDMA
 Is this from you imagination?

*

Crystal continues to paint.

GRANDMA
 Or your reality.

Grandma takes a closer look.

GRANDMA
 You can't abstract from nothing. You have to look at life
 and abstract from it.

CRYSTAL
 I am life.

Grandma smiles and walks away
 from the painting and goes into
 the kitchen.

GRANDMA
When I was in art school, I was more about the
impressionists.

*

CRYSTAL
They're okay.

GRANDMA
"Okay", she says! Whatever happened to Monet, Cezanne, Van
Gogh?

CRYSTAL
They died.

GRANDMA
You know what I mean!

CRYSTAL
I do, but... this... this is how I feel.

GRANDMA
You feel like baked macaroni?

CRYSTAL
Grandma!

GRANDMA
Well, it looks like baked macaroni to me!

CRYSTAL
That's cause you're hungry.

GRANDMA
I'm not hungry.

CRYSTAL
You didn't eat your dinner.

GRANDMA
I didn't?

CRYSTAL
No! I ate mine and you kind of played with yours.

GRANDMA
I bought it, I cooked it and I can do what I want with it.

There's a loud pounding on the
door.

CRYSTAL
Oh shit.

Sssssshhhhhh!

GRANDMA

The pounding stops. Grandma starts to walk towards the door. *

CRYSTAL

Don't!

GRANDMA

We gotta answer some time.

CRYSTAL

We'll answer when we can pay him.

GRANDMA

Short on rent doesn't mean we have to hide!

The pounding starts again.

GRANDMA

This is ridiculous.

Grandma takes a step for towards the door. Crystal puts her arm to block her.

CRYSTAL

No, Grandma!

GRANDMA

I'm just gonna take a peek. *

CRYSTAL

I got it.

Crystal crosses to the door and looks through the peep hole.

CRYSTAL

All clear.

GRANDMA

Good!

CRYSTAL

I don't care how loud he bangs! Do not open that door.

GRANDMA

I know.

CRYSTAL

He'll get his money.

GRANDMA
How?

CRYSTAL
I'm working on it.

GRANDMA
We lose this apartment and we're in a shelter or worse.

CRYSTAL
I'll get the money. No one is taking this apartment from us.

GRANDMA
Yeah, but...

CRYSTAL
No one, Grandma! I will get the money.

There's an uncomfortable
silence. Crystal goes back to
painting.

GRANDMA
Do you want some tea?

CRYSTAL
No, thanks.

Crystal continues painting

GRANDMA
A cup of tea and a cookie, then I'm going to bed.

Grandma brings her tea and sits
down in chair watching Crystal
paint.

CRYSTAL
I can feel you staring.

GRANDMA
I like watching you work.

CRYSTAL
It makes me self conscious.

GRANDMA
You're in my living room. I can watch if I like.

CRYSTAL
Your living room, is my bedroom.

GRANDMA

Oh yeah... well... when I'm in your bedroom, I'm in my living room.

CRYSTAL

You can watch, but stop critiquing.

GRANDMA

Easier said.

Crystal continues painting.

GRANDMA

Did you go to see your mother today?

CRYSTAL

It's Wednesday, Grandma.

GRANDMA

It is?

CRYSTAL

I get out too late from class to run all the way up there and visit.

GRANDMA

I forgot.

CRYSTAL

I'll go on the weekend.

GRANDMA

I know, but Sunday to Sunday. That's a lot of time in between to be alone in a place like that and I can't get up there alone during the week and you're in school and...

CRYSTAL

Sunday, Grandma. We'll go on Sunday.

GRANDMA

I know.

Grandma gets quiet and watches as Crystal paints.

GRANDMA

CRYSTAL

Grandma?

GRANDMA

Yes, darlin'?

CRYSTAL

You keep staring and I'm a kick you out of my room.

GRANDMA

Sorry... you know, if you would talk to your father...

Crystal starts to growl.

GRANDMA

You don't have to like the guy. Just talk to him.

(Pause)

Maybe, if you talked to him, you could move out of my living room?

CRYSTAL

And then what? Let him buy me?

GRANDMA

I didn't mean it like that.

CRYSTAL

He'll throw his money at me and just rub it in my face when he gets mad at me and he's always getting mad at me. He doesn't care about me!

GRANDMA

If he saw the way you paint, he'd have to care.

Silence.

CRYSTAL

Am I that good a painter? *

GRANDMA

It's not a question of being you're talent being good. *
It's a question of your art being sold, your art being good *
enough to be auctioned off. It's about selling the *
paintings and your father excels at selling. *

CRYSTAL

Is my are really good enough to sell? *

GRANDMA

Child, you've always been good. You just have to come to some kind of agreement with your father and get over "the incident"

Crystal makes a subtle angry sound. *

GRANDMA

I know! "We don't talk about that."

CRYSTAL

Well... I don't.

GRANDMA

Let the man sell your work. *

CRYSTAL

(Teasing)

You don't care about my paint getting sold. You just want me out of your apartment! *

GRANDMA

No, child. I just want what's best for you.

CRYSTAL *

I was teasing, I know you care. *

GRANDMA *

Well, I do. *

CRYSTAL *

But, you also want me to dance with the devil. *

GRANDMA *

Your father's a good dancer. *

CRYSTAL *

And a devil. *

GRANDMA *

A devil that knows good art and makes a lot of money selling it. *

CRYSTAL *

You know what you are asking me to do, right? *

GRANDMA *

I know. I know.... but... I should shut my mouth. *

CRYSTAL *

No, say what you're thinking. *

GRANDMA *

He's gotta sell somebodies artwork, might as well be yours! Might as well be the best and get the best price. *

CRYSTAL *

He never thought I was the best. *

GRANDMA *

Sure he did. That's why he's the way he is and did what he did. He knows the talent. *

Crystal looks at her Grandma and
smiles. *
*
*

Thanks, Grandma. CRYSTAL

I'm going to bed. GRANDMA

Crystal crosses and kisses
Grandma on the cheek and they
hug.

What time is your class tomorrow? GRANDMA

Late day tomorrow. One O'clock class. CRYSTAL

So I have to be quiet in the morning. GRANDMA

If you know what's good for you. CRYSTAL

Fresh. GRANDMA

Crystal grabs Grandma and gives
her an even bigger hug and kiss.

I love you too, child. GRANDMA

Grandma and Crystal stop hugging
and Grandma picks up her tea cup
and heads for the bedroom.

G'nite, baby. GRANDMA

Nite, Grandma. CRYSTAL

Crystal watches her Grandma go
off to bed. Soon as the door
closes, Crystal puts down her
paint brush, grabs a backpack
from the closet and a hooded
sweatshirt from a pile of her
clothes.

She changes in front of the audience and hides her gender as she turns from Crystal into Haze. Behind her the sets change. *

The lights go down and the sound of the city creep on to the stage. Haze places the mask back on, grabs a can of spray paint, looks around and crosses to the down stage left, white panel. Haze starts to create. She paints. *

LIGHTS UP ON: *

SCENE 2: A BARE STAGE, A ROOFTOP *

Another painter makes his way on stage. Haze never stops working.

PABLO
Oh man... no, way yo! I've been planning this bomb for weeks!

Haze pays no attention to Pablo.

PABLO
Hey!

No response.

PABLO
Hey, kid!

Haze never answers.

PABLO
I will kick your ass, toss you over the side and paint over this piece...

Haze is still painting and not looking at Pablo.

PABLO
Why ain't you running?

Haze paints more and Pablo check out Haze's work as he talks.

PABLO
Anybody else would've ran off soon as I yelled. Why didn't you run.

HAZE
Why should I run?

PABLO
Cause I'm El Pablo.

Haze stops painting.

HAZE
No, shit?

PABLO
The master of disaster. The bomber of all bombers. President of Risk! You know what that means?

HAZE
Yeah, I know you and your crew. I've seen your pieces.

PABLO
Then why ain't you running? Everybody else runs.

HAZE
I don't have to.

PABLO
Why's that?

HAZE
Cause you're too old to catch me, even if you could chase me.

PABLO
You lame ass, little... what crew you with?

HAZE
Nobody. I'm independent.

PABLO
Ain't safe flying solo no more.

HAZE
You're solo!

PABLO
That's different. I can handle mine.

HAZE
So, can I!

PABLO
Ya' think?

HAZE
Look, I got here first and I'm the one puttin it up.

PABLO
Yeah, but I'm bigger than you... bitch.

Haze says nothing.

PABLO
I said I'm bigger than you and I'm gonna bomb this sucker!

Haze just laughs.

PABLO
You want to battle with me?

HAZE
I'm not here for you. This is about me, so go battle yourself.

PABLO
You don't want to battle?

HAZE
I got my own fights to fight. Battling other bombers... That's a waste a time. I'm here for me.

PABLO
Weird, kid.

HAZE
Heard that before.

PABLO
What's your logo, kid?

HAZE
Stop calling me "kid", I'm twenty-three.

PABLO
(Laughs)
Okay... so... what's your logo?

HAZE
Purple Haze.

PABLO
Bitch, you're Haze?

Haze says nothing and continues to paint.

PABLO

You did the bubble on Hudson Street?

Still nothing.

PABLO

You put up on the Avenue and Bank Street?

No response.

PABLO

Haze tags on Broadway & Canal, Forty Duce and I seen what you did in The Yards up in da' Bronx, yo! You're the mofo I've been looking for!!!

Pablo looks closely at the paint and Haze.

PABLO

You hearing me?

HAZE

Yeah... you make my ears hurt.

PABLO

How come is it we never met?

HAZE

You know all the writers?

PABLO

When I like their work, I do.

Haze answers without looking at Pablo.

HAZE

You want an autograph?

PABLO

That mouth, bro, I oughta just beat your ass!

HAZE

You can try.

PABLO

Kid, don't push it.

HAZE

Is that what I'm doing?

PABLO

You don't stay on these walls, just by painting.

Pablo steps up to Haze and
stares him in the eyes. Haze
doesn't budge.

HAZE

How do I do it?

PABLO looks scary, but turns his
face into a smirk.

PABLO

Do what?

HAZE

I want to stay on these walls. I want to get known.

Pablo looks Haze in the eye.

PABLO

You want to do business?

HAZE

Business?

PABLO

Roll with me and the Risk crew.

HAZE

Painting?

PABLO

No, selling life insurance, cause you're gonna need it.

HAZE

Make me famous. Make me rich.

PABLO

How much did your last mural sell?

Silence.

PABLO

Silence

PABLO

Ever had your shit in a gallery?

HAZE

Gallery shows are boujois.

PABLO

If "boujouis" means, makes a lot of money... then you're right... they are!

HAZE

White walls, white wine, white people.

PABLO

Green money.

HAZE

I don't like em.

PABLO

You don't have to like 'em. Look, Fab Five Freddy and his crew took the game inside to the galleries back in Seventy-Nine.

HAZE

Street art gets famous on the streets.

PABLO

Bitch, it's nineteen-eighty-four, white people buy art in galleries and they like it.

HAZE

Everybody starts on the street.

PABLO

Okay, I'll give you that. True, true.

HAZE

Teach me how?

PABLO

Is that all you want?

HAZE

I have my reasons. Good reasons. *

PABLO

Can you go without the paint?

HAZE

What?

PABLO

Bombing, writing, painting? Can you live without it?

Haze turns his back to Pablo and continues painting.

PABLO

I'm here for the paint and the pain. The rest... the rest... yeah, it makes life easier, the money and all, but you gotta be in it for the paint and you gotta be in it for the pain, cause you don't get one without the other and if you can't tolerate the pain, than your paint ain't worth shit! So, I'm asking you... Can you live without painting?

*
*
*
*

There's a long pause. Haze can't answer and Pablo looks to see why, but Haze doesn't flinch.

*
*
*
*

Pablo walks up to the wall, takes two steps backwards and then stares intensely at the paint.

PABLO

Needs more red.

HAZE

How do you know what my shit needs?

PABLO

I don't know what your shit needs, but that piece needs more red.

Haze takes two steps back and looks at the painting.

HAZE

Okay... I am in it for the paint. I have to paint. I always have, since I was a kid, but I got other important reasons too and that means money. I want in. I want what you call, "the rest".

Pablo thinks about it as he stares at his painting.

PABLO

Me and my crew, we're gonna go All City and then we're gonna pull off something that's gonna get us a lot of attention.

HAZE

I can go All City.

PABLO

That means being on these roofs every night and painting masterpieces in each of the five boroughs until we make our mark.

*

HAZE

I can do that.

PABLO

Good! Cause, I'm short one artist and...

HAZE

Short?

PABLO

Yeah, we lost one.

HAZE

One of your crew?

PABLO

Yeah. This ain't gonna be easy. Ya never know who you're gonna run into and the shit's dangerous.

HAZE

I can handle it.

PABLO

You might, but I don't know cause you're still a toy. *

HAZE

I ain't no toy? *

PABLO

Yeah! You are! You're a "newbie", real new, but... your art... your work... it looks like an old timer, like a pro. *
I like that. *

Haze throws his hands up as he speaks.

HAZE

You're down one and after all your talking, I'm still here.

PABLO

You are.

HAZE

Take me on and make me famous. I'll make you rich.

PABLO

I like the way you talk, but you're young and...

Haze picks up a can and starts painting. Haze takes out a can of yellow and starts to spray.

PABLO

Why yellow?

HAZE

Would you ask Myles Davis, why he played a note?

Pablo thinks about it.

PABLO

Yeah, I would.

Haze continues to paint and talk
at the same time.

HAZE

That's rude, impertinent, you have no idea why or how or...

Pablo hears something.

PABLO

Sssshhhh...

HAZE

What the...

PABLO

Be quiet.

A siren starts offstage, softly.

PABLO

Let's go...

Haze continues to paint. The
siren gets louder.

HAZE

Almost there.

PABLO

We gotta go!

HAZE

Almost done...

The siren gets louder.

PABLO

Drop it.

HAZE

I gotta finish...

PABLO

It's hogs, yo!

Almost... HAZE

A white spotlight shines on stage left. Voices are heard from offstage.

Come on!!! PABLO

Pablo grabs Haze, Haze grabs his backpack. They start to run up stage center. Haze drops one can of spray paint. The siren is still heard and the sound of a police radio is heard as the white light scans the stage and then stops on the can of spray paint, holds for a few seconds and...

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 3: A BARE STAGE, DEIDRE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lights change and a bed, a window frame and a door come in down stage right. A studio apartment is set up with the blank drop as one of the walls.

The scenery changes as Haze speaks. Haze stands at center and changes her clothes to become Crystal. *

Crystal is standing in the middle of the studio apartment. Deidre, a beautiful, young, black woman, steps down behind Crystal and brings her arms around Crystal. *

You're late. DEIDRE

I know. CRYSTAL *

You smell of paint. DEIDRE

I'm supposed to?	CRYSTAL	*
I like that. It's sexy.	DEIDRE	
Been painting all night.	CRYSTAL	*
Is it done? Can I see it?	DEIDRE	
If you know where to look.	CRYSTAL	*
Why do I always have to find it? me where to look?	DEIDRE	
	Silence	
Everything with you is a secret.	DEIDRE	
Life's a secret...	CRYSTAL	*
	Crystal takes off her hoodie and unwraps the bandanas tied around her chest.	* * *
You're a secret.	DEIDRE	*
Not when I'm with you.	CRYSTAL	*
What are you when you're with me?	DEIDRE	
Myself.	CRYSTAL	*
What's that?	DEIDRE	
	Crystal tries to kiss Deidre.	*
I don't know.	CRYSTAL	*
	Deidre pulls away.	

DEIDRE
 Been six months and you still can't get here on time!

CRYSTAL *
 I have to paint.

DEIDRE
 And later you'll tell... you can't spend the whole night.

Crystal walks away blowing hot
 air and says... *

CRYSTAL *
 I don't paint... I get restless.

DEIDRE
 I know and you're always...

CRYSTAL *
 I'm always restless...

DEIDRE
 But, not when you paint?

Deidre just looks at her.

CRYSTAL *
 That's when I'm my most restless, in my greatest state of
 conflict. That restlessness comes out through my hands.

DEIDRE *
 Just spills out on to the canvas, the wall, the sidewalk,
 the whatever... *

(Pause) *

CRYSTAL *
 Don't think any of my paint is by mistake. I know exactly
 what I'm doing and exactly what I want people to see. I
 control the paint, I control the art... it might come from
 inside me, but I control it... there's nothing by mistake
 or chance here.

Crystal starts to untie her
 sneakers. Deidre watches. They
 both stare at each other and
 there's a long silence before... *

DEIDRE
 You should move in with me.

CRYSTAL *
 I told you... I can't.

DEIDRE
Cause of your family.

Crystal stops talking and looks at Deidre. *

DEIDRE
Your dysfunctional family.

CRYSTAL *

Stop.

DEIDRE
It's nineteen-eighty-four... a girl can live with another girl!

CRYSTAL *

Someone gotta take of my Grandma!

DEIDRE
I could help. We could all live together in a bigger place or something.

CRYSTAL *

That ain't gonna happen.

DEIDRE
Why?

Silence.

DEIDRE
Full a secrets.

Silence. *

DEIDRE
You quit school a month after we meet and to live at home, but you still have to sneak out every night. *

CRYSTAL *

Grandma doesn't want me painting up on roofs

DEIDRE
Doesn't explain that when I wake up in the morning, you're gone. You sneak away from your Grandma, you sneak away from me! That's sneakin!

CRYSTAL *

I can't explain it.

DEIDRE

You weren't like this when we met. You weren't like this before you quit school...

CRYSTAL

It's something I have to do!

DEIDRE

Why up on roofs? Why city walls when you can get arrested, go to jail or worse?

CRYSTAL

I don't know... I'll be out during the day and I'll see something, a wall, a billboard, could be anything... that's how it starts... and then I have to go handle it.

DEIDRE

Alone?

CRYSTAL

Alone is better.

DEIDRE

Better than being here with me.

CRYSTAL

It's not better... it's different. That's all.

DEIDRE

So it's different up there... climbing up to where ever...

CRYSTAL

Heaven. Writers call high up signs and places you have to climb to... heaven.

DEIDRE

So when you're up there... up in heaven... doing your thing, painting, you're happier then when you're down here at home? With me?

Crystal goes back to painting.

CRYSTAL

You don't get it.

DEIDRE

Why can't you just paint at home on canvas like everybody else?

CRYSTAL

You paint at home, you stay at home. No one sees it!

DEIDRE

So, you want to be seen?

CRYSTAL *

Yeah.

DEIDRE

If we lived together you could paint all the time and I could see you and your painting all the time. I'll take care of everything!

CRYSTAL *

That's not the kind of painting I want.

DEIDRE

That hurts.

CRYSTAL *

I'm not trying to hurt anybody... I'm just trying to get out what's inside me.

DEIDRE

I just don't understand why you have to climb up buildings and paint on billboards. *

CRYSTAL *

If I wait for them to find me, they won't. They have to see me now and not in some gallery by a handful of rich people.

DEIDRE

The roof's are too dangerous.

CRYSTAL *

So is walking down the street.

DEIDRE

But, when you walk down the street, you don't have to dress like a boy just to survive.

CRYSTAL *

True, but it's still a hell of a lot easier than walking down the street dressed as a girl. *

Silence

DEIDRE

It was better before. *

CRYSTAL *

What? *

DEIDRE

We went to school and you painted on canvas. *

CRYSTAL *

Canvas or billboard... it's still paint. *

DEIDRE

I miss the artist that used to share my bed all night and
all day on the weekends. The artist that painted my
picture on the refrigerator and named paintings after me.
The woman that used to protect me from anything and anybody
who would want to hurt me... I miss her. *

Crystal gets annoyed and sits
down on the bed. She starts to
put her sneakers back on.
Crystal focusses on her actions. *

CRYSTAL *

I feel like I'm running out of time.

Deidre shakes her head and heads
towards the bathroom.

DEIDRE

I wish you never became a tagger.

CRYSTAL *

I'm not a "tagger"!

DEIDRE

Don't play games. You're a tagger!

CRYSTAL *

That's an insult. It's either painter, writer or bomber...
the crews around here prefer writers and if you're not one
of those three... you're nothing. *

DEIDRE

You are something! You have the paintings on canvas to
prove it! You've been painting since you were a little
kid.

CRYSTAL *

I can't do that anymore! I think I have it all figured out
and...

DEIDRE

Are you still gonna have to dress like a boy?

CRYSTAL *

It's safer.

DEIDRE

What have you figured out then? *

CRYSTAL *

This guy's gonna teach me. Show me things. *

DEIDRE
(Shocked)
Some guy's gonna teach you?

CRYSTAL *

Yeah!

DEIDRE *

Really, now there's a guy. *

CRYSTAL *

He's painter that knows things. *

DEIDRE *

Who's he teaching Haze or Crystal? *

CRYSTAL *

What?

DEIDRE *

I bet he's got no problems teaching Crystal about life on the roofs. *

CRYSTAL *

It's not like that.

DEIDRE *

Bullshit! Everybody wants something. Nobody on the streets teaches for free. What's he want? *

CRYSTAL *

He's gonna teach me to get seen. *

DEIDRE

Your father gets seen and he gets people seen and none of them have to climb up on a roof or a billboard to get seen!

CRYSTAL *

My father's a pimp... do you understand? He sells people and pieces of art like a pimp! He ruined my mother. He ruined his exes... I don't need him!

DEIDRE

There's other galleries, other people...

CRYSTAL *

It's all connected. You don't understand.

DEIDRE

I don't. I never pretend to, but you never talk about...

CRYSTAL *
 (Crying and yells) *
 I hate talking about it. Okay? And...I hate everything *
 about it. I HATE MY FATHER!

Deidre walks towards her to *
 console Crystal, but pulls back. *

DEIDRE
 So risking your life on top of buildings, getting arrested
 for vandalism or worse... that's your way out?

Crystal seems broken, but not. *

CRYSTAL *
 You don't paint. You're a civilian, an outsider...

DEIDRE
 (Defeated)
 Now, I'm an outsider?

CRYSTAL *
 I don't mean it like that.

DEIDRE
 Then say what you mean. Cause I don't know how much more I
 can put up with... I love watching you paint. I love
 spending time with you, but if I'm not what you're about...

CRYSTAL *
 It's all one thing. It's all about one thing. You, the
 art, the life, climbing roofs... bombing... painting.
 It's... creating... it's art... it's all art.

DEIDRE
 But, you have to do it alone?

CRYSTAL *
 Well... yeah... I guess so.

DEIDRE
 Just go... get out.

Crystal slowly leaves as the *
 lights start to dim and set
 changes.

SCENE 4: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Crystal stands at center stage *
 and talks to the audience.

CRYSTAL

My entire kid life I would be approached by people at his openings and they would ask, "What's it like to be his daughter?" then after the "scandal", it all stopped. No one cared about us or about my father. They hated us and nothing was the same. Nothing was normal.

Lights change and Richard is on stage.

FLASHBACK SCENE: CRYSTAL'S BODY IS THE PRESENT, BUT HER MIND, CONVERSATION AND VERNACULAR ARE FROM HER PAST.

RICHARD

Most people want something normal. I am at war with the normal.

CRYSTAL

(Her voice goes younger.)

Yeah, but Daddy, I want to go outside and play.

RICHARD

Paint.

CRYSTAL

I want to hang out with my friends.

RICHARD

Stop talking and paint.

CRYSTAL

But, dad...

RICHARD

I don't want you outside alone. I don't want you talking to anyone unless I'm near. Do you understand?

CRYSTAL

No.

RICHARD

You said too much already. I told you not to say anything. I told you it was our secret.

CRYSTAL

But, I told the truth.

RICHARD

People hate the truth.

CRYSTAL

You don't like when I paint. You paint over all my paint.

RICHARD
I just make it better.

CRYSTAL
That's what they got mad at!

RICHARD
It sold the paintings.

CRYSTAL
They don't like my paint. They don't like me anymore.

RICHARD
They will like you again. Just paint... Right now, that's all you have to do in life!

CRYSTAL
But, I want friends and I want...

RICHARD
GOD DAMN IT! PAINT!!!

The lights change. Richard exits and Crystal talks to herself as she paints.

BACK TO THE PRESENT AND OUT OF THE FLASHBACK. *
*

CRYSTAL
Don't think... just paint. Don't care... just paint.
Don't think... just paint. Don't care... just...

The lights come to full.

Grandma enters, she quietly makes her way into the kitchen and starts to make breakfast. There is a pounding on the door.

GRANDMA
Oh no!!!

Crystal motions to Grandma to stay quiet. The pounding gets louder. Crystal looks through the peephole.

MAN'S VOICE
I know you're in there! Two months behind! I let it go two months! I WANT THE MONEY!

He pounds on the door and leaves.

GRANDMA
That's it? That's all he's got?

CRYSTAL
Don't joke. Another day and he'll padlock the door.

GRANDMA
He can't do that shit. I'm an old lady and you're a little girl.

CRYSTAL
I'm not that little and you're not that old.

GRANDMA
He's not locking us out. He not gonna leave us homeless.

CRYSTAL
No, but... next time, he'll use his key, open that door and then he'll kick us out.

GRANDMA
Let him try.

CRYSTAL
Won't matter. I'm gonna fix this.

Grandma sits down next to
Crystal and hugs her.

GRANDMA
Good, cause I'm tired of dodgin' that silly, so and so!

CRYSTAL
Me too!

GRANDMA
I don't know what I'd do without you, baby girl.

CRYSTAL
I'm not going anywhere, Grandma.

GRANDMA
I know, but... well...

She brushes the hair off
Crystal's face.

CRYSTAL
I love you too.

GRANDMA
Good.

CRYSTAL

Grandma... don't get mad when I ask you this, but... what if I quit...

GRANDMA

You're not quitting school. We talked about this.

CRYSTAL

I'm not learning anything. I already know the things they're teaching.

GRANDMA

It's not what you do while you're there. It's about what you have when you leave! *

CRYSTAL

Yeah, but...

GRANDMA

Get it done now and get it over with... besides... it's the one thing that your Father does pay for.

CRYSTAL

Rotten bastard.

GRANDMA

Watch your mouth.

CRYSTAL

Well, he is.

GRANDMA

I know, but we don't have to sink down to the same level as that rotten bastard.

Crystal laughs.

GRANDMA

I understand what you're feelin'.

CRYSTAL

About school?

GRANDMA

You don't have to go to art school to be an artist.

CRYSTAL

Exactly.

GRANDMA

But, it sure is nice, if you allow yourself to explore.

CRYSTAL

I explore all the time.

GRANDMA
Art school's there to take you a-part. It's your
responsibility to put yourself back together.

*

CRYSTAL
I do that daily.

GRANDMA
You do?

CRYSTAL
Doesn't everybody?

Pause.

GRANDMA
You want eggs?

CRYSTAL
You know I don't eat eggs.

GRANDMA
I gotta try.

CRYSTAL
You just want to make me fat.

GRANDMA
You're too skinny.

Grandma gets up and heads for
the kitchen. Crystal puts down
her brushes, grabs her blanket
and flops down on the couch.

GRANDMA
Finish painting?

CRYSTAL
It's not talking to me, right now.

Grandma laughs.

CRYSTAL
What?

GRANDMA
Your mother used to say that.

CRYSTAL
And she hated art school too!

GRANDMA
Yeah, but for different reasons.

CRYSTAL
Cause she was crazy.

GRANDMA
Blunt!

CRYSTAL
It's true.

GRANDMA
We're all a bit crazy...

CRYSTAL
Why is that?

GRANDMA
Different reasons... but... mostly cause, you don't pick up a paint brush cause you're in love with it... you pick up a paint brush...

CRYSTAL
Because you have to?

GRANDMA
(slowly)
In the end... no matter what... it's just you alone with the paint...

CRYSTAL
(Smiles)
And what painters paint? *

GRANDMA
(Smiles back) *
What painters paint... usually.... lives forever.

The lights dim and the set moves around. Grandma leaves the stage as Crystal turns to Haze as the set pieces change.

SCENE 5: A BARE STAGE, A ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The sound of the city comes across the stage that is now a rooftop. There is a blank canvas mid stage on the S.R. side. Haze looks around and takes out spray paint cans and a mask from his backpack.

Haze starts to paint.

Sounds of the city start to creep in as Haze starts a new "piece". 2 backpacks are tossed over the rood and two writers make their way on to the rooftop.

SEEN

Hey!

Haze never looks.

FLARE

Oh, hell no! You did not just blow us off!!!

SEEN

Hey Toy! What you doin' on our real estate?

FLARE

Yo Toy! You dumb or something?

SEEN

If he ain't dumb, he's deaf cause he don't seem to hear us!

FLARE

Or... you got us on the "Pay No Mind List"?

SEEN

You better be paying attention.

FLARE

Yeah, cause we ain't goin away.

Flare pushes Haze towards Seen and Seen pushes Haze back so hard that he falls down to the ground.

SEEN

This is our real estate.

Haze jumps to his feet and body slams Seen. Pablo makes his way on to the roof, unnoticed by the others.

HAZE

I'm supposed to meet a guy here!

SEEN

Wait a minute.

FLARE

You're the toy!

*

I'm no TOY!!!

HAZE

*

Haze raises his fists to fight.
Seen jumps up and takes his
fight stand.

SEEN

Think you're a tough guy? Let's go, toy.

A scuffle starts. Pablo breaks
it up.

PABLO

Knock it off!

Pablo steps in between Haze and
the others.

PABLO

This is Haze.

SEEN
(Calm & looking him over.)

The kid you been braggin' about?

FLARE

I thought he'd be bigger.

Pablo looks at Haze.

PABLO

Go back to what you were doing.

Haze looks around, picks up his
paint can and starts painting.

SEEN

What?

PABLO

I like his paint.

Haze doesn't look at the others
as he speaks and paints.

HAZE
(Very cool)

You really want me to crew up with these pikers?

Seen motions towards Haze, but
Pablo just raises his hand to
stop Seen.

Hey, mother fu... SEEN

Hold up. PABLO

He's cocky. I like that. FLARE

More important... he's good. PABLO

He ain't Future. SEEN

Somebody gotta take his place! PABLO

The others get silent.

Why? What happened to Future? HAZE

He slipped. PABLO

Took the fall? HAZE
(Serious)

Or pushed... maybe? FLARE

Pushed? HAZE

Or jumped... FLARE

Shut up. SEEN

Seen nudges Flare.

Don't matter how... he's dead. SEEN

Silence.

The kid wants to learn and we need a fourth. We do it together and we all get something out of it. PABLO

FLARE

And... we all stay safe.

PABLO

Yeah... that, but this is bigger.

HAZE

Bigger?

Haze looks around. Haze steps down, next to Pablo.

PABLO

(Looks at Haze)

What do you see?

HAZE

Depends, what am I looking for?

SEEN

Dumb ass, don't know and he's looking right at it!

PABLO

If you're a real writer, you know what to look for...

FLARE

The best real estate in the city.

Haze steps closer.

SEEN

Pablo! Let's go! If he can't see it, then he ain't worth it.

Pablo motions without looking at Seen as to give Haze more time.

HAZE

(Shocked)

The Block?

PABLO

He got it.

HAZE

Nobody paints The Block.

SEEN

How do you think nobodies become somebodies?

*

HAZE

It's guarded.

Pablo just smiles.

HAZE

Armed guards. I checked it out.

Flare steps down next to Haze.

FLARE

Only one guard after midnight.

HAZE

Then you gotta climb that ladder in the tube and that's about two stories...

SEEN

One and a half.

HAZE

Okay, one and a half, but it's the only way up and the only way down and... and it's single file. You gotta do it one at a time! How you gonna get a crew of four up the tube ladder, paint all that space and then back down the tube ladder?

PABLO

We send you up there, all alone, solo.

HAZE

Me?

PABLO

I told you... I like your art.

HAZE

(Shaking his head)

I don't know.

PABLO

You climb to heaven...

HAZE

That's like heaven to the max!

*

PABLO

You put up the Risk crew logo and you climb back down. Piece a cake.

HAZE

That would be amazing.

FLARE

Be a first.

SEEN

Nobody ever painted the Department of Water & Power.

PABLO
You paint the Block. You make history.

SEEN
If you don't get caught.

HAZE
How do you not get caught?

PABLO
We got a plan?

HAZE
You'll need a bad ass plan.

PABLO
We would... wouldn't we?

Pablo gets quiet.

HAZE
You gonna tell me or I gotta guess?

PABLO
First, we make a...

SEEN
Hold up! Hold up!

PABLO
(Annoyed at Seen)
Yeah?

SEEN
We don't even know this guy! How do you know we can trust him? Block is supposed to be a secret...

FLARE
Top Secret!

SEEN
How do we know this kid, can keep a secret?

Pablo looks around. He stares at the painting that Haze started.

PABLO
Okay... you really want to paint the Block?

HAZE
Hell, yeah!

Pablo reaches into his backpack
and pulls out his black book
with his drawings in it.

PABLO

Good... First we go All City. That means you ride with us.
You meet us every night and I don't mean you take a day off
here and there. You meet us every night. We start up in
the Bronx and we don't stop till we hit Staten Island.
We're gonna try you out.

HAZE

A try out?

PABLO

If you make the cut, then you make the crew.

HAZE

All of you tried out?

PABLO

No, but if you can't stand the heat, then get of the hood. *

Haze stares Pablo down.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 6: A BARE STAGE - THE NEXT NIGHT *

The Painters line up across the
stage. They paint as they talk.

PABLO

Flare, you got the logo.

FLARE

Oh man... Why I gotta do the logo? I did it last time.

SEEN

Let the kid do the logo. He's the one that gotta step up.

FLARE

Yeah, man... Let the kid do it.

PABLO

Not yet...

SEEN

Why the hell not?

PABLO

Cause I said "so"!

SEEN

That's some bullshit.

PABLO

I want to make sure the kid don't fold under pressure.

HAZE

Guys... I can hear you... I'm right here.

SEEN

We know that, dumb ass!

Pablo reaches into his pocket
and unfolds a sheet of paper.

PABLO

Put it up.

HAZE

I thought you did all the...

PABLO

Show us what you got. Tonight, my drawing, your painting.
We'll do all the rest, but you get this done by morning and
should the cops show up...

SEEN

Cause they always do.

PABLO

Not always.

FLARE

Lately, more than usual.

PABLO

True... if the cops show and you can't run fast enough and
get caught... that's the real test.

HAZE

What do you mean?

FLARE

You get caught and we'll see if you go to the river!

HAZE

What river?

PABLO

The one in Egypt?

HAZE

A river in Egypt?

PABLO, FLARE & SEEN
 (Together)
 De-nial, de-nial and de-nial!

The lights change and as everyone continues painting, a special light comes up on Pablo and Haze at center stage. They paint and talk.

PABLO
 Damn, kid... you're fast!

HAZE
 I hate when you call me "kid".

PABLO
 Don't be so sensitive.

HAZE
 I'm not sensitive.

PABLO
 When I call you kid... it's not a bad thing.

HAZE
 What is it then?

PABLO
 It means I like you, but... I can't get to close. *

HAZE
 So, when you have to cut me from the crew... you don't want any feelings to get in the way. *

PABLO
 Exactly.

HAZE
 I bet you're single.

PABLO
 (Uncomfortable)
 What do you know?

HAZE
 You're not single?

PABLO
 Just because I don't make a commitment... doesn't mean I'm single... know what I mean?

HAZE
 Oh yeah, I totally know what you mean.

Lights come down. In the dark
Haze crosses to S.L. And the
light comes up on Flare and Haze
working on another painting.

FLARE

No... way! Noooo friggin way.

HAZE

Yes way!

FLARE

Nah, I'm calling bullshit!

HAZE

Serious shit.

FLARE

No, way... it's bullshit.

HAZE

Why? Why is it bullshit?

FLARE

Because... there is no way that The Flash is faster than
Superman!

HAZE

Why? Why not?

FLARE

Because... Superman is the head of the Justice League and
that means he has to be the best of the best...

HAZE

Yeah, but that doesn't mean he has to be the fastest.

FLARE

Au contraire... I beg to differ! If you're the head of the *
Justice League... you have to be able to kick ass on all
levels. The element of speed in a foot race is one of
those levels.

HAZE

How do you know?

FLARE

Because I read comic books! That's why!

HAZE

If you read comic books then you will know there are
several versions of The Flash and they all at one time or
another had a race with Superman and although the races
vary, most of the time... FLASH BEATS SUPERMAN!

FLARE

Bullshit! BUUUUUUUULLL SHIT!

The lights change and Haze is
back at center with Pablo.

HAZE

How can you say that?

PABLO

Cause it's a privilege.

HAZE

Painting is a privilege?

PABLO

It's a privilege because you get to engage in something
that is the antithesis of reason.

HAZE

You're saying art is the "flip side" of reason? Painting
contradicts reason?

PABLO

Reason by definition is a cause, an explanation, a
justification for an action or event.

HAZE

So... art doesn't explain anything?

PABLO

No... it doesn't and... it shouldn't. My art is not an
answer to your questions or anybody's questions besides my
own and it shouldn't even do that... Does my art answer
your questions? *

Haze says nothing, stops
painting and takes a step back
to look at the art on the wall.

HAZE

(Smirks)

You call what you do art?

PABLO

(A little annoyed)

Smart ass...

The lights change and Haze is
now S.R. painting with Seen.
Haze paints a section and Seen
paints over it.

HAZE

You keep painting over everything I paint!

SEEN

You got the colors wrong.

HAZE

How can I get the colors wrong? There's no rules!

SEEN

There's plenty of rules!

HAZE

Yeah, you want to show 'em to me? Where they written down?

Seen points to his head.

SEEN

In here, man!

(He points to his heart)

In here... there's rules to colors!

HAZE

The feelings about colors are personal! Each color means something different to each other and they're usually connected to you past!

SEEN

No! You're wrong. Color reps everything. Color defines everything! Why do you think white usually means purity and innocence? Because it is void of color and has no pigment. That makes it pure.

HAZE

That's a definition defined by a bunch of white people with too much time on their hands! They link these loose definitions of morality and immorality to color... so that white is always right and black is always wrong... When in fact... the truth about the color white is that it's made up of all the colors of the spectrum and has no meaning and it has no meaning because it is really... all of the colors of the spectrum rolled into one... so many colors in the color white that white has no color and is transparent!

SEEN

You got a lot of words.

HAZE

Picked em up at school.

SEEN

So, you think that makes you smarter than me?

HAZE

No... just makes me talk too much... well, more than I should... I guess...

SEEN

Let's get something straight... about you and your school. Paying to go to school and learning all that shit out of a book, doesn't make you smarter... it makes you a chump!

HAZE

A chump?

SEEN

Yeah... cause all you need to know you could've learned on the street for free, but instead you paid a shit load of money to learn it the easy way... that makes you a chump.

The lights change and come back
up on Pablo. Haze is just
painting and Pablo continues to
steal looks at Haze.

*

PABLO

Come on, kid. Don't get quiet on me now.

HAZE

Just thinkin.

PABLO

About?

HAZE

What you said?

PABLO

And?

HAZE

I never thought I was privileged until now.

PABLO

What do you mean?

HAZE

I grew up doing this. Since, I was little.

PABLO

Painting?

HAZE

Kind of the "family business".

PABLO

You think everyone can grow up like that?

HAZE

I used to.

PABLO

Takes a lot of money and a lot of... are you rich?

HAZE

Me and my Grandma haven't paid the rent in two months.
That ain't rich.

PABLO

Someone must've been rich if you were raised painting.

HAZE

Weren't you?

PABLO

The way I was raised my Moms was too busy working two jobs *
to paint.

HAZE

I just have a different outlook on it.

PABLO

What do you mean?

HAZE

I always thought that when God created the world that he
purposely left out things... he only put into world so much
in seven days and what he left out... he left for humans to
do... on purpose, he left for humans to fill in the rest
and make sense of it all... he left space for humans to
fill in the poetry. To me it's all God's plan for us to
figure out the rest.Pablo finds himself just staring
at Haze.

PABLO

How you talk...

Silence

HAZE

What?

PABLO

Looks finished to me.

HAZE

Ya think?

Haze looks at Pablo. They stare
at each other.

Aaaa... yeah... I think.

PABLO

Pause

Now what?

HAZE

Longer silence

Dude, this is a rap!

SEEN

Pablo and Haze still stare at each other.

Pablo, man... let's go?

SEEN

Yeah, bro! We're good! activity!

FLARE

Let's get some extra curric-u-lar

All four look up and stare at the mural.

Yeah... I need a beer.

PABLO

Beer?

HAZE

Man does not live on paint alone.

PABLO

HAZE

(Still staring at the mural)

Then... let's get a beer.

Lights change and music starts to play.

SCENE 7: A BARE STAGE, THE CANAL ZONE - LATER

*

The same white canvas are hanging. There is a black platform at center in front of the center canvas. The lights change. There is flashing colored lights and the thump club music is heard.

Pablo, Haze, Seen & Flare enter.

PABLO
Seen, buy the man a beer.

SEEN
Why do I gotta...

PABLO
Just buy the beer, cuz.

Seen looks annoyed as he turns
and walks up to the bar.

PABLO
Welcome to Risk.

HAZE
Thanks. Can I go back to painting my own stuff?

PABLO
Yeah.

HAZE
Cool.

PABLO
And get pictures.

HAZE
Pictures?

PABLO
Everybody gets pics! Start a book.

HAZE
No!

PABLO
I thought you wanted to be famous?

HAZE
Get caught with a book on you, that's like confessing to
your crimes.

PABLO
You better start thinking about that cause everybody that's
anybody keeps a book of their work. Makes you stand out
from everybody.

HAZE
I'm not an "everybody".

The music changes and Lily
dances more intense.

Who.. is... that? HAZE

That's Lily. SEEN

Lily? HAZE

Everybody digs Lily. FLARE

Damn!!! HAZE

Lily dances as the guys watch. She changes with the music and the boys throw dollars as she dances.

Haze can't take eyes off of Lily, until Haze notices something cross stage. In front of the white canvas at S.R. mid stage, there are three buckets hanging with spray paint canisters.

What's with the white wall? HAZE

Free space. PABLO

Can I go up on it? HAZE

That's why it's there? PABLO

Haze starts to paint. The others watch. Lily comes off the stage... *

Okay... who's buying? LILY

I called you. SEEN

When? LILY

All week. SEEN

I was busy. LILY

Bullshit! SEEN

Who's that? LILY

New kid. FLARE

Whose crew? LILY *

He's one of mine. PABLO

New blood? LILY

Better to be with him than to battle him. PABLO

Mmmmmmm LILY
(Smirks)

Lily moves closer, but slowly.

Haze paints with a fury, but with a poetry also. The more Haze paints, the closer Lily gets and she realizes...

Hey... that boy's painting me... that's me. LILY

Haze hears Lily.

Almost... not even close to finished. HAZE

Damn... LILY

The rest of the party continues what they're doing, but silently as the lights dim on them, but special lights stay up on Haze.

You like it? HAZE

Yeah... LILY

Good. HAZE

Why haven't I seen you before? LILY

First time. HAZE

Here? LILY

Anywhere. HAZE

You go by Haze? That's what they call you? LILY

On my better days. HAZE

Your girlfriend into painting? LILY

I can't answer that. HAZE

Why not? LILY

No girlfriend. HAZE

No kidding? LILY

I don't lie. HAZE

That's what they all say. LILY

Lily giggles.

Your boyfriend, he's a writer? HAZE

*

Was. LILY

Was? HAZE

I'm in between boyfriends. LILY

You want to go out with me sometime? HAZE

I promised myself, no more guys that climb roofs with paint. LILY

You're prejudiced against writers? HAZE

*

No, just tired of waiting all night for them to show up and never knowing if they was arrested or fell off a building or worse. LILY

What's worse than falling off a building? HAZE

Being thrown off one. LILY

Haze stops painting.

Your ex? HAZE

Lily looks down at the ground.

Sorry. HAZE

You don't talk like the rest. LILY

I'm different than most dudes. HAZE

Gimme a marker? LILY

Haze hands a magic marker to Lily. She starts to write on his hand.

*

LILY
Do not call before three.

HAZE
Okay...

LILY
And don't call too much.

Lily takes a good long look at
the painting.

LILY
I like my painting.

HAZE
I like the model.

Lily smiles.

HAZE
Wait... one more thing...

Haze paints the HAZE logo in the
bottom right hand corner.

HAZE
Now... you're mine.

LILY
Only in paint.

HAZE
For now...

LILY
I like how you talk.

HAZE
Good.

Lily leans in and kisses Haze on
the mouth.

LILY
Thanks for the painting.

Lily runs off stage right.
Pablo comes up behind Haze.

PABLO
Damn, son! You move fast.

HAZE
 You only live it once.

PABLO
 Everybody been trying! Everybody and BOOM! You just walk
 in here and you own it!!!

HAZE
 I know what she needs.

PABLO
 Looks that way.

Pablo looks at the painting.
 Seen comes up behind Haze and
 pushes him.

SEEN
 Back up, bitch!

Haze regroups and starts to come
 back at Seen with a fist. The
 other taggers break them up.

HAZE
 What the fuck, man!

SEEN
 You don't push up on her! I'm working that.

HAZE
 She's not with anybody!

SEEN
 Not yet! She's gonna be with me!

They start to go at each other
 again.

PABLO
 Knock that shit off!!!

They pull them apart again.
 Seen calms down and breaks free.

SEEN
 I got it! I got this...

Seen calmly walks up to Haze.

SEEN
 Stay away from her. I'm warning you.

Seen points his finger in Haze's face.

HAZE

You ever put that finger in my face again. I'll break it off and shove it up your ass.

SEEN

Then, we both been warned.

Seen & Flare exit.

PABLO

You can fight.

HAZE

If I have to.

PABLO

Seen's a little tense.... Especially when it comes to the girl.

HAZE

What's that about?

PABLO

She used to be with Future.

HAZE

The guy who fell?

PABLO

Yeah.

HAZE

Slipped or pushed?

PABLO

Nobody knows.

HAZE

Damn.

PABLO

That's why things been so tense. Painter crews think some other crew did it. Cops don't know anything cause nobody will talk to them, so they've been cracking down on everyone ever since.

HAZE

And Lily?

PABLO

She talks flirty, but she hasn't had any serious talk with any of us since it happened. For awhile, she wouldn't talk to anyone.

HAZE

Really?

PABLO

Till tonight.

Haze stares at his painting.

HAZE

She's feels all alone. I know about that.

PABLO

What?

HAZE

Nothing.

PABLO

Tomorrow night we paint again.

HAZE

What about The Block.

PABLO

Calm down cowboy. You'll get your claim to fame.

Pablo looks around.

PABLO

Let's get out of here.

Pablo and Haze start to leave when Haze stops walking.

PABLO

What?

HAZE

One more thing...

Haze goes back to the painting and in the upper left corner paints the words "Lily sweet..."

PABLO

Couldn't just let it be.

HAZE

Now it's done.

Lights change and the set pieces move.

SCENE 8: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY *

Crystal stands in front of her easel. She looks straight ahead at the audience when her Dad steps out behind her and stand in a special circle of light.

FLASHBACK SCENE: CRYSTAL'S BODY IS THE PRESENT, BUT HER MIND, CONVERSATION AND VERNACULAR ARE FROM HER PAST. *

RICHARD

Making art is a denial of death. It's not life, it's a representation of life. Art is a denial of death. Now... what do you want to paint?

CRYSTAL

I don't know.

RICHARD

The cavalry doesn't always show up. The image moving from your head to the surface doesn't always happen. You can see anything... but do you want to paint it? *

CRYSTAL

Sometimes.

RICHARD

But do you want to paint it?

CRYSTAL

I have ideas... I just don't know how to get them out. *

RICHARD

Painting is total freedom. You don't have to know when it is done. You don't have to know whether it is good or bad when you stop. Free your heart and then you will free your mind. Do you know what your heart wants?

CRYSTAL

Yes.

RICHARD

Pick up the brush... and make it real.

CRYSTAL

Make it real...

RICHARD
A painting of a face is not a face.

CRYSTAL
What is it then?

RICHARD
Only you will know... when it's done.

Crystal picks up the paint brush
and the lights change.

CRYSTAL
Like this Dad?

Richard slowly starts to walk
away. Crystal never turns
around and continues to paint.

CRYSTAL
Daddy? Like this?

Richard walks off stage.

CRYSTAL
Like this, Daddy? Like this?

The light where Richard was
standing goes back.

The light changes from night to
morning.

FLASHBACK OVER AND BACK TO THE *
PRESENT. *

Crystal painting. Grandma
enters behind her and slowly and
quietly moves closer towards
Crystal, but without making a
noise.

GRANDMA
Who is she?

CRYSTAL
Grandmaaaaa....

GRANDMA
I know. I know. I shouldn't ask, but...

CRYSTAL
That's between me and her.

Red hair? GRANDMA

Yes. CRYSTAL

That's a handful. GRANDMA

How would you know? CRYSTAL
(Laughing)

I been a round... I know people... GRANDMA

Yeah, well... I'll let you know, if she's a handful. CRYSTAL

There's knock on the door.

Oh shit. GRANDMA

It's not him. CRYSTAL

How do you know? GRANDMA

That's not his knock. CRYSTAL

They knock on the door again.
Crystal puts down her paint
brush.

I got this. CRYSTAL

Crystal looks in the peep hole.

Shit... CRYSTAL
(Low)

What? GRANDMA

I'll handle it. CRYSTAL

Crystal open the door and Deidre
is standing there.

CRYSTAL
What are you doing here?

DEIDRE
I left messages.

CRYSTAL
Yeah, so?

DEIDRE
You never called me back.

CRYSTAL
Who said you can could come here?

DEIDRE
I want to talk to you.

CRYSTAL
Here in front of my Grandmother. Low blow! You know it's off limits.

DEIDRE
I know, but...

CRYSTAL
Grandma... this is my friend Deidre.

GRANDMA
Hello, Deidre.

DEIDRE
Nice to meet you. I've heard a lot about you.

GRANDMA
Oh? Nice to meet you. I don't hear too much about Crystal's friends and all, but...

CRYSTAL
Grandma, could you watch TV in your room for a while? *

GRANDMA
I'm what the French call 'de trop'.

Grandma gets up and starts to walk towards her bedroom.

GRANDMA
Nice meeting you.

DEIDRE
You too.

Grandma exits.

CRYSTAL
You threw me out of your apartment.

DEIDRE
I know. It was wrong. I was wrong to do that.

CRYSTAL
But, you did it.

DEIDRE
I was mad.

CRYSTAL
You did what you did.

DEIDRE
I'm sorry.

Silence.

DEIDRE
I said, "I'm sorry."

CRYSTAL
I heard you.

DEIDRE
Meet me half-way on this? *

CRYSTAL
There's no half-way. I'm not moving in with you and I'm not gonna stop painting on roofs. *

DEIDRE
I thought you hate easel painting?

Deidre points to the easel.

CRYSTAL
That's my Grandma's.

DEIDRE
Your Grandma's?

CRYSTAL
I told you... "Everyone in my family paints."

Deidre steps so she can see the painting.

DEIDRE
Grandma likes dancing redheads?

CRYSTAL
Apparently.

DEIDRE
A red headed muse?

CRYSTAL
Anyone can be a muse.

DEIDRE
I know... I was yours once.

Beat. *

CRYSTAL
Why are you here?

Deidre pulls an envelope from her purse.

DEIDRE
This came for you. It's from the school.

Crystal takes the envelope.

CRYSTAL
Thanks.

DEIDRE
Can I ask what it is?

CRYSTAL
A refund on the year.

DEIDRE
I thought your Dad paid for the year?

CRYSTAL
He did. When I quit, I gave them an address I could trust for refund.

DEIDRE
At least you trust me for something. Now what? *

CRYSTAL
I got plans.

DEIDRE
Not gonna tell me them?

Silence.

DEIDRE
Guess you can share all your plans with the redhead now?

CRYSTAL

I told you... that's not my painting.

DEIDRE

I know... not your painting.

Deidre walks to the door.

DEIDRE

Oh and... you have red paint on the inside of your left hand... same color as the girl's hair in the painting.

Deidre opens the door.

DEIDRE

Tell your grandma, I said "goodbye".

Deidre exits and closes the door behind her.

Crystal looks down at the envelope and opens it. She takes out the check, stares at it for a second and then realizes she just let Deidre go. Crystal goes to the door and looks through the peep hole. Crystal knows Deidre is gone for good. She looks really upset, gets herself together and starts to paint again. Grandma comes out and watches her from behind.

CRYSTAL

(Hiding back tears.)

I can feel you staring.

GRANDMA

Everything alright?

CRYSTAL

(While painting)

Perfect... just perfect.

Lights change and the sets move.

SCENE 9: A ROOF TOP - THAT NIGHT

*

Pablo, Haze, Flare and Seen all look out over the D.W.P and the billboard they want to paint.

We painting? HAZE
 Observing. PABLO
 Observing what? HAZE
 The plan. PABLO
 Oh... HAZE
 SEEN
 He don't need a plan. He'll just use his super powers and
 shit...
 FLARE
 (To seen)
 Stop, man...
 PABLO
 Shut up. Haze what time you got?
 Haze looks at his watch.
 PABLO
 This whole thing runs by the numbers.
 Pablo and Haze split down center
 stage and look out over the
 city.
 PABLO
 Flare, hit it.
 FLARE
 It's eleven forty foe... in one minute the lights gonna go
 on in the... hah! There he is! Right on time.
 The others watch.
 FLARE
 Fat Boy rolls up to work, enters the guard shack and turns
 on the light... toss it to Seen.
 SEEN
 Turns on the light in the guard shack, sits at his desk and
 at... Haze, time...
 HAZE
 Eleven-fifty.

SEEN

At eleven-fifty, the guards that have been working the main gate, they lock up the main entrance guard shack and head out to their cars. They start their cars and exit...

HAZE

Through the main gate.

SEEN

As you can see... "They're off and running..."

HAZE

There they go...

PABLO

Right on schedule and...boom...

Flare without looking at the
Guard Shack.

FLARE

Fat Boy gets up. Takes the keys from down off the wall and grabs a flashlight from the desk. He checks the flashlight.

HAZE

Yeah, he's...

FLARE

Shining it on the wall.

HAZE

He is!

FLARE

Every night...

PABLO

Like clockwork. Seen... take it.

SEEN

Fat Boy wobbles his ass out to the main gate and pulls the gates shut... time is eleven-fifty-nine and proceeds to lock up the gate... that's when I walk up the street and create...

SEEN, PABLO & FLARE
(All together)

*

The Diversion.

HAZE

What's the diversion?

PABLO

Something to keep the Security Guard busy and at the same time pulls him away from the gate cause...

SEEN

Cause as he's looking out the Gate away from what he's supposed to be guarding...

PABLO

That's when you and I climb over the south wall and enter the yard...

HAZE

Right behind the guard?

PABLO

(Motions with his hand on "is".)

Right behind the guard, who is...

SEEN, PABLO & HAZE

Looking the other way!

PABLO

That's when we cut the lock on the ladder and we climb our way to heaven.

HAZE

Nice... then what?

PABLO

We create a black out.

HAZE

A black out?

PABLO

Just on the billboard on top of The Block.

HAZE

That's what we're painting?

PABLO

Exactly.

HAZE

How?

PABLO

We cut the cords!

*

HAZE

Cords.

*

PABLO

There's power cables that run from the billboard to an electrical box at the base.

HAZE

You've been up there? You've seen them?

Seen reaches into his backpack and tosses Haze a pair of binoculars.

SEEN

Seen sees... everything.

Haze looks through the binoculars.

HAZE

Damn...

PABLO

Between the diversion and Fat Boy not paying attention...
(Smiles)
We can be up there all night before he notices...

HAZE

If he ever notices.

PABLO

Exactly.

HAZE

I thought you were sending me up there alone?

PABLO

Thought about it... it's a lot of wall. Gonna take a lot of paint.

HAZE

True.

PABLO

Two is better than one.

HAZE

(To Flare)

Where are you during all this?

FLARE

Right up here. I'm the look-out.

*

PABLO

You hear someone yell "SLIDE".

Slide? HAZE

That means get out as fast as you can. PABLO

Wow. HAZE

What? PABLO

This plan's so simple... it could actually work. HAZE

Only one reason it might not work. SEEN

What's that? HAZE

You. SEEN

I can hold mine. HAZE

In the dark, no lights and fast? SEEN

Shut up, man. I'll be up there too. PABLO

Like you were up there with Future? SEEN

This ain't the time and place. PABLO

Sure, it is. SEEN

Shut up. PABLO

Tell him. SEEN

Tell me what? HAZE

Dude, that's messed up. Not now. FLARE

HAZE

What?

SEEN

Who was supposed to be Future's back up man that night?

Silence.

SEEN

Why was he up there alone?

Silence.

SEEN

Tell him, Pablo. Tell him where you were.

PABLO

(Yells)

He don't need to hear this!

Silence

SEEN

Why not? He's new. Tell him the story cause you ain't
talked about it once with nobody. We roll with you at
night and trust you're gonna take us All City. You demand
our loyalty, but you ain't ever told the truth to none of
us. Why's that? *

PABLO

Shut up, man. *

SEEN

Come on, El Presidente. Tell the truth finally. *

Long pause. *

PABLO

My own shit got in the way... my own personal shit. I
couldn't make it. *

SEEN

Personal shit, like tappin ass? Ditched Future for a piece
is the word on the street. *

PABLO

The street don't always know the truth. *

SEEN

Truth is Future is dead... died all alone... died on the
cement laying at the bottom of some building's air shaft. *

PABLO

Enough, man.

SEEN

"Enough?" How can it be enough? You don't talk about it.
You never talk about it.

PABLO

Shut up!

SEEN

Why do you think he's recruiting you so hard?

Silence

SEEN

You think we need you to paint this thing? He could use
me! He could use Flare! He don't want to! He wants
someone up there with no connection... no history... so if
you get caught or if you take the fall... and you end up
dead... he don't want to feel the guilt, the pain again...
like the pain he got over killing Future.

*
*
*
*

PABLO

I didn't kill anybody.

*
*

SEEN

How would we know? You don't talk about it, right?

*
*

Silence

HAZE

Is it true?

*

Pause

PABLO

I want the best up there with me.

(Looks at Seen and Flare.)

You two pikers can't handle that?

(He looks at Haze, but talks
for them.)

Then, get the fuck outta here!

Silence

PABLO

You want to stir the shit... let's stir the shit. You two
out.

*

FLARE

What?

*

PABLO

You're on my last nerve, bitch. You two take the night
off! Go home before I toss both your asses over the side!

*

Pablo stares down Seen. *

PABLO
You eyeballin' me, boy? I'll jank the shit out of you!

SEEN
Ain't nothing.

PABLO
That's right! It ain't! I run this crew. My position here is solidified. You want to continue testing me...

SEEN
Let's go, Flare

FLARE
Why I gotta go? I didn't do nothing.

PABLO
Tell your story walkin', jerk-off! *

Seen and Flare reluctantly climb off the roof.

HAZE
That was har...

PABLO
Harsh?

HAZE
Hardcore.

PABLO
Ya think?

HAZE
When you're a boss, sometimes you gotta pull your people's cards.

PABLO
Yeah, but, there's one thing they're not wrong about.

HAZE
What's that?

PABLO
He shouldn't have gone solo like that. He should've just went home. I thought he would go home, if I didn't get there. I shoulda been there with Future. I was supposed to be his back up man, but... I just couldn't get there. *

HAZE
A girl? *

Kinda. PABLO

HAZE
Tappin ass is tappin ass... don't mean you...

PABLO
Wasn't about ass.

HAZE
Really?

PABLO
My mom's was sick. Almost went to hospital.

HAZE
Why didn't you tell them that?

PABLO
Cause I'm the president and they don't need to know.

HAZE *
Soooooo... real truth is... you didn't push Future off the *
roof? *

PABLO *
Real truth... no one knows how Future fell. Look, mother- *
fuckers in this game are always falling, always dying and *
we all know it could happen, but we do it anyway... cause *
that's the game of it, the fun of it, but... this shit's *
changing and it could be a legit business and all, but... *
people still gonna take the fall... it's just the way it *
is... the way it's always gonna be. *

HAZE *
Guess so. *

PABLO *
I gotta live with Future's death in my way... how I do *
that... ain't none of their business. I handles mine. *

HAZE
I'm with you.

PABLO
Good... so... we gonna paint something tonight or what?

HAZE
Block?

PABLO
Oh hell no... that's too much work.

Pablo takes two steps forward and a flat rolls in from S.L. that has a scrim stretched out over it.

The way the scrim is between the boys on stage and the audience. The audience can see Pablo and Haze's face as they look straight ahead.

HAZE
Right here, right now. Cool?

Haze starts to break out his paint and gear. Pablo the same.

PABLO
What do you see?

HAZE
It's a lot of wall.

PABLO
Always is.
(Puts his mask on)
But, what do you see?

Haze takes a long stare at the wall.

HAZE
What should I see?

PABLO
Michelangelo stared at a block of stone, he saw David trying to get out.

HAZE
How'd you know?

PABLO
What?

HAZE
That I see things in the bricks?

PABLO
Me too.

Haze smiles and takes a few steps back while staring at the scrim. Haze picks up a can and starts to paint.

Nice choice.

PABLO

Haze continues painting.

Yeah... good... yeah...

PABLO

Haze starts to move faster and use grabs another can, another color and paints some more.

I see where you're going...

PABLO

Haze drops a can and grabs another can and starts painting. Pablo starts to paint along side Haze.

This is good, yo.

PABLO

Pablo looks over at Haze.

You know in this game... only a real artist will get his light and will get to shine. A real writer just goes out to the street and writes to write... illegally.

PABLO

Pablo moves to a new angle.

Cause you don't paint for freedom...

PABLO

Hell, no... you take it.

HAZE

Haze takes off on the painting and Pablo moves closer and watches.

There's something inside me. I can't beat this out of me. It's in me. It's like a virus without a cure. Orgasmic, like... like...

PABLO

Like busting a nut.

HAZE

Haze stops and looks Pablo in the eye.

PABLO
Like you said... orgasmic.

Pablo grabs Haze and kisses him.

HAZE
What the fuck...

PABLO
Oh shit...

Pablo pushes Haze away. He wipes his mouth.

PABLO
Damn.

Pablo looks confused. He looks away.

PABLO
I'm sorry... I'm... I don't know what happened. I don't know what... what the hell, am I doing.

HAZE
It's okay.

PABLO
No! No, it is not okay.

HAZE
No, it's not okay, like okay, okay, but...

PABLO
What happened?

HAZE
You kiss...

PABLO
No, no... no... I ain't ever kissed no guy before and...

HAZE
I huh... I huh... I'm not...

PABLO
(Very intense and serious.)
You tell anybody what just happened... I'll fuckin kill you.

HAZE
There's nothing to tell... nothing happened.

PABLO
That's right.... Nothing happened.

HAZE
No... nothing happened.

PABLO
We should get out of here.

HAZE
Yeah, let's go.

Pablo gets his "manly man" act together.

PABLO
You want to get out of here? Go to the a... go to the Zone. Get a couple of beers. Look at some girls...

HAZE
Yeah, girls... girls would be good.

PABLO
Come on let's go.

HAZE
The painting's not finished.

PABLO
Let's just get out of here.

They grab their things and start to head out.

HAZE
I'm supposed to meet up with my girl.

PABLO
Yeah, yeah... no problem. Go meet your woman.

HAZE
Alright... catch ya later.

PABLO
Later, man.

They start to go separate ways.

PABLO
We cool?

HAZE
Yeah... we cool.

Good... cool.

PABLO

Pablo leaves first. Haze is all alone, looks around and wipes his mouth clean.

That's some weird shit.

HAZE

He wipes his mouth again and climbs off the roof.

The set starts to change.

SCENE 10: A BOOTH IN THE CHELSEA DINER - NIGHT

*

Lily is sitting all alone in a booth. She's got a cup of coffee in front of her and a plate of half-eaten food. She's been waiting there. Haze enters and plops down opposite Lily.

*

Where you been?

LILY

Where you think?

HAZE

God damn, painters! Always up on a roof.

LILY

What if I said I wasn't up on a roof.

HAZE

Then you'd be a damn liar.

LILY

HAZE
(Smirks)
So, if you know where I was, why you gotta ask? You knew the answer before I sat down.

You were supposed to meet me at the club.

LILY

I know. I know.

HAZE

Least you could do is say "sorry".

LILY

HAZE

You know I'm sorry, why I gotta say it?

LILY

Cause I've been calling you all week and you don't answer. I've been leaving messages and you don't call back! You just being a typical boy, running out at night bombing signs and sneaking into the club, hiding out behind the DJ Booth playing kissy face when I'm not on stage.

HAZE

Now, you don't like the way I kiss?

LILY

Did I say that? I didn't say that.

Haze gets up and changes seats
so he's sitting next to Lily.

LILY

You can sit this close, but you can't touch.

HAZE

You don't want me to touch you?

LILY

No, I don't.

Haze gets up and goes back to
his original seat.

LILY

I didn't say to move your seat.

HAZE

So, I can... sit, but I better not touch?

LILY

Yeah... exactly.

Haze leans back in his seat.

HAZE

Can I ask you something?

LILY

Shoot.

HAZE

Your ex... Future?

Lily gets quiet.

LILY
It's not right to talk about the dead.

HAZE
Why? We're not saying anything bad.

LILY
Yeah, but, it's hinkie.

HAZE
Hinkie?

LILY
Bad luck.

HAZE
Never heard that before. "Hinkie".

LILY
The Risk Crew. They're all bad luck.

HAZE
I'm on their crew.

LILY
Quit.

HAZE
Why? They're the best.

LILY
Yeah, they are, but... You know...

HAZE
No, I don't. Why?

LILY
Future didn't just fall off that building. Future was
thrown off.

HAZE
Really?

LILY
And some people think that it was Pablo that threw him off.

Silence.

HAZE
(Quietly)
Bullshit.

LILY
No, serious shit.

Really? HAZE

LILY
I know them guys a long time. Since we was kids. Pablo was always a little older and a lot smarter, but... there's something about him.

What? HAZE

He never hit on me. LILY

So? HAZE

They all tried, but he didn't. Something wrong there. LILY

So, if I didn't hit on you, you'd think there was something wrong with me? HAZE

I don't know. You're hard to read. LILY

Why? HAZE

Cause you do everything right! LILY

And that's bad? HAZE

It's messing me up!!! LILY

Doing everything right is wrong? HAZE

You're the first guy in my life to know what I want and then you actually do it! LILY

Like what? HAZE

You don't try to push me into a bed. You don't do anything, but kiss and you show up when you say you're gonna show up. LILY

HAZE
 Maybe, I'm just taking my time? Maybe, I'm planning my big
 move?

LILY
 Maybe?

They smile at each other.

HAZE
 I got the apartment to myself tomorrow.

LILY
 I can come over?

HAZE
 There's something I want to show you.

LILY
 I've seen bedrooms.

HAZE
 Something else.

LILY
 What?

HAZE
 Find out tomorrow.

LILY
 I gotta wait.

HAZE
 Hell yeah.

LILY
 Mystery man.

Haze leans over the table and
 kisses her.

LILY
 My mystery man.

Lights change and the set starts
 to move.

SCENE 11: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT DAY *

Richard is sitting on the couch
 where Crystal should be
 sleeping.

Grandma enters from the kitchen
with tea on a tray.

THIS IS NOT A FLASHBACK *

*
*

RICHARD

Where is she?

GRANDMA

Fifteen minutes ago when you asked I said, "I don't know".
I haven't left your sight so, what would you like for me to
say in the next fifteen minutes when you ask me again?

RICHARD

It's a school night and she's out all night?

GRANDMA

Last I heard staying out all night and being a young person
is legal after the age of eighteen.

RICHARD

I know. I was eighteen, once.

GRANDMA

Richie?

RICHARD

Richard.

GRANDMA

What ever! You were never eighteen. Tea?

RICHARD

Thanks.

The door flies open and Crystal
enters. Crystal starts to get
out of her hoodie as she speaks.

CRYSTAL

I know I didn't call and I know I shoulda called, but I was
hanging with my friend Lily and we went for coffee... and
we were talking and we lost track of...

Crystal lifts her hoodie over
head and sees...

*

RICHARD

(Cold)

Good morning.

CRYSTAL

Shit!

(Slightly panicked, looks to
Grandma)

What's he doing here?

Richard gets up and starts to
look over Crystal's painting on
the easel.

RICHARD

You're starting to retreat into realism again.

CRYSTAL

It's not a retreat. I've never left realism.

RICHARD

Realism doesn't sell.

CRYSTAL

Not everything has to sell.

RICHARD

She's beautiful. Is she that beautiful in the real?

CRYSTAL

More.

RICHARD

Interesting.

CRYSTAL

What do you want?

RICHARD

The Bursars Office at your school called me. They said I
was late on the payment.

Silence.

RICHARD

I told them I paid the full year back in August. They went
back and re-examined the account... seems your creative
accounting exposed a little glitch in the system... when
you withdraw from school and collect the refund... if you
do it a week before the end of the first semester... and
they have to refund the next semester, the system generates
a late fee notice...

Richard hands Crystal the
letter.

RICHARD

They wanted me to thank you and they wanted me to know that their I.T. Department would be "right on it" and the glitch would be fixed immediately. Thanks, to you.

GRANDMA

"Withdraw"? What's "withdraw"?

RICHARD

She quit school.

GRANDMA

But, she goes every day. Monday through Friday and...

RICHARD

She's been telling you she goes every day. She withdrew and had the refund money sent to an address in Queens.

GRANDMA

Queens?

CRYSTAL

I'm sorry, Grandma.

RICHARD

One whole semester, thirty-thousand dollars. I don't mind spending the money on you, but...

CRYSTAL

You hate spending the money on me!

Richard smirks.

RICHARD

I don't know why you think that. *

CRYSTAL

Cause you're cheap. *

RICHARD

I don't care that you quit school...

CRYSTAL

Oh! I know you don't care.

RICHARD

That's not what I meant.

CRYSTAL

I needed the money.

RICHARD

I don't care about the money itself, but...

CRYSTAL

Bullshit, money is the one thing I can count on you caring about.

RICHARD

I just want to know what the money paid for. *

CRYSTAL

I'm sure you do.

RICHARD

A vacation?

No response.

Drugs?

Still no response.

They mailed the check just over a week ago, you couldn't have torn through all of it that fast... could you?

CRYSTAL

Yeah, actually, I can and I did!

GRANDMA

Oh god, Crystal!

Crystal turns to Grandma.

CRYSTAL

It's not what you think.

RICHARD

If you need help, I'll send you to rehab.

CRYSTAL

Stop!!!

RICHARD

It's nothing to be embarrassed about.

CRYSTAL

Yeah and how long before you send me to the nut house like you sent Mom?

GRANDMA

CRYSTAL!

CRYSTAL

(Starts to cry and gets more
and more upset.)

He did it! He made her crazy! He cheated and lied and then he sent her there and she... and she... she never came back!

RICHARD

I did not send her there.

CRYSTAL

You broke her down. You broke her.

RICHARD

You don't know what you're talking about.

CRYSTAL

I do so!

RICHARD

You were too young to understand what...

CRYSTAL

I understand all of it!

RICHARD

You know... nothing!

CRYSTAL

You broke her down and then you broke me down!

Crystal stares out at the audience and sounds like she is talking to herself, but she's bouncing it off them for Richard's benefit because she's never talked about this before.

*
*
*
*
*
*

CRYSTAL

From the time I was eight till the time I was thirteen, you had another family. You had a mistress and you had a kid with her. I was walking to your house. I was cutting through the park and there you were... by the boat pond. You, that woman and that little girl... she had a boat on a string and she was pulling it around the pond. She was singing Row Row Row Your Boat and I stopped... I froze and watched... she had the boar in one hand and you were holding her other hand and you looked at me! YOU LOOKED AT ME! RIGHT IN THE EYE... and then you turned around and walked away... like you didn't know I was there. Like I was nothing to you.

RICHARD

I never did that.

Grandma stands behind the two and wants to get involved, but holds back and even tears up when she starts to feel Crystal's pain.

*
*
*
*
*

CRYSTAL

You did... you turned away from me and couldn't look back. I watched you walk away. You turned her around, picked up the boat and then the three of you walked into the crowds in the park.

RICHARD

I'm sorry.

CRYSTAL

Too late.

Crystal turns back to him and Grandma.

CRYSTAL

That's when I knew what my mom went through. That's when I knew what my mom was feeling her whole life. Like she was part of your life, but the part you look away from... like she never counted... all the shit you put her through...

Crystal turns away.

CRYSTAL

I need a shower.

Crystal starts to walk towards the bathroom.

CRYSTAL

Oh... I used the tuition money to pay the rent on this place.

GRANDMA

What?

CRYSTAL

I only have one parent that I can count on... and she needed her apartment paid for... I love you Grandma.

Crystal exits into the bathroom.

RICHARD

I never did that to her or her...

GRANDMA

Shut up, Richard.

Pause

GRANDMA

(Very calm)

And I don't care if your money paid for it... get out of my house, you piece of shit.

Grandma doesn't look at Richard.
He looks confused and doesn't
know what to do. He gets up and
exits.

Grandma sits down and starts to
cry when... Crystal steps out.

CRYSTAL

Is he gone?

Grandma gets herself together.
She doesn't want Crystal to see
the tears.

GRANDMA

Yes, he's gone.

CRYSTAL

I'm sorry, Grandma.

GRANDMA

For what?

CRYSTAL

Lying to you.

GRANDMA

I knew something was up, but... I let you be you.. You
know?

CRYSTAL

I know you do.

GRANDMA

I didn't want you to quit school.

CRYSTAL

I didn't quit, quit. I'm just taking a year off.

GRANDMA

Okay, but, you will go back?

CRYSTAL

I think so?

GRANDMA

For me?

CRYSTAL

I'll try.

*

They hug.

CRYSTAL

You still going to Senior Citizens?

GRANDMA

Shoot, I forgot about that. Yeah, I have to go! My turn to bring the cake. I don't show up with the cake, I'll never hear the end of it.

CRYSTAL

They love you too.

GRANDMA

No, they love my coffee cake.

Grandma picks up her things and heads for the door.

GRANDMA

Will you be here when I get back?

CRYSTAL

I guess?

GRANDMA

No, more faking you're going to school. I'll see more of you?

CRYSTAL

Maybe?

GRANDMA

Maybe?

They hug again.

GRANDMA

See you later.

CRYSTAL

See you later.

Grandma exits. Crystal looks around the apartment. She smiles. She sees the painting of Lily and she covers the painting. Crystal walks off stage and the sound of a shower running is heard.

Lights change.

SCENE 12: A BARE STAGE, GRANDMA'S APARTMENT - LATER

*

There's soft music playing and the sound of the door buzzer ringing.

Crystal runs out from the bedroom. Her hair is down, and wet from the shower. She looks different, very different than the way she's been seen in the play up to this point... Crystal looks more feminine than ever. She runs to the intercom and presses the button.

*

CRYSTAL

(Into the I.C.)

Come on up.

Crystal looks scared. She opens the apartment door and waits. Lily enters. She looks a little confused.

LILY

Hello?

CRYSTAL

Hi.

They just stare at each other. Crystal is hoping Lily recognizes her. It's very uncomfortable, but Lily does not know why.

*
*
*
*
*

LILY

I'm supposed to meet Haze here... he lives here... right?

CRYSTAL

Haze?

*
*

LILY

Yeah.

*
*

CRYSTAL

(Uncomfortable)

Oh yeah... he lives here... he a... he's a...

*

LILY

Are you related?

Crystal moves closer to Lily.

Kinda?	CRYSTAL	*
		*
Sister?	LILY	*
		*
Look closer.	CRYSTAL	
	LILY	
	(Oblivious)	
Yeah?		
	CRYSTAL	
No, I mean... look really close.		
	LILY	
What am I looking for?		
	CRYSTAL	
Lily. It's me.		*
	LILY	
What?		
	CRYSTAL	
Haze. Him... I'm him.		*
	LILY	*
What?		*
	CRYSTAL	*
I'm Haze.		*
	LILY	*
But, you're a.... You're a dude?		*
	CRYSTAL	*
	(Uncomfortable)	*
I just dress like a guy... I'm me. This is me.		*
		*
	LILY	
For real?		
	CRYSTAL	
You wanted to know all my secrets.		
	LILY	
No. No way. You're playing me, right?		*
	CRYSTAL	
No... really... it's me....		

LILY
Are you fuckin kidding me?

CRYSTAL
This is.. un.... this isn't how I planned it...

*

LILY
Stop fucking with me.

*

CRYSTAL
I'm not... seriously! I just wanted to... I wanted you to come here and see... just to see...

*

LILY
See what?

Crystal goes to take Lily's hand.

CRYSTAL
Wait here and...

*

LILY
Don't touch me.

CRYSTAL
Sorry... um... just stand right here.... Stand right here and... it'll all make sense.

Crystal runs and grabs the easel. She brings it closer to Lily.

CRYSTAL
I've been working on this since the first night I met you. I've been painting this... a little bit... everyday... every day I try to remember something... anything... any detail about you and when I come home... I try to put it... here...

*

Crystal unveils the painting. It's not like Haze's street art. The painting is exact, detailed and almost like a photograph in paint of Lily.

LILY
Wow!

Lily looks at Crystal. Lily looks closer at the painting.

LILY
Oh my god...

Lily steps closer and stares at it like she's looking at a mirror.

LILY

How did you...

Lily is nose to nose with the painting and runs the palms of her hand over the paint.

CRYSTAL

I've been watching you and listening to you every night...

LILY

To me?

CRYSTAL

I paid attention to everything... every thing that amazed me about you...

LILY

What about me would amaze anybody? I'm not... I'm just not...

CRYSTAL

Not what?

LILY

Not anything. I'm nothing.

CRYSTAL

I brought it home with me every night... Like if you would make that smile, the one you do when you're on stage and you're really happy I put it in there or the way you move your eyebrow when I make you laugh... I put it in there.. All of it...

Lily looks away from the painting.

CRYSTAL

I just remembered it and I made sure I put it in there... it's all the things I love about you.

LILY

You love me?

CRYSTAL

Well... yeah. I just needed to tell you and I didn't know how...

LILY

So you did it like this?

CRYSTAL

I'm sorry. I couldn't think of a better way.

LILY

(Stares closer at the
painting)

This isn't Haze's paint... not at all...

Lily steps up and takes a closer *
look at the painting. She then *
runs her hand over the ink. *

LILY

This doesn't feel like Haze at all now, why? *

CRYSTAL

I'm still Haze... that's still Haze's work, but when I'm *
home... I look like this... when I'm on the roofs... I
dress... I dress that way... it's just part of me and for
my own safety... It's me too... I just wanted you to see me
this way when I'm home... Haze is just a part of me that *
play, like a role. *

LILY

But, I like Haze's paint.

CRYSTAL

He's still here.

Lily bites her lip.

CRYSTAL

I know this is a lot, but just think about it. I didn't
want to keep my secret from you anymore and just don't...

Lily slaps Crystal

LILY

You back doored me! You back doored me, like some sleazy,
creepy guy! Instead of playing the just friends card you *
fuckin' played this... you played me... I hate that... I so
fucking hate that and you knew it... you knew what I was
going through... all that shit about Future!!! All that
shit about my ex.... You took it all... took it home with
you and you used it... you used it to get what you want
from me... and now you think I'm gonna love you just cause
you love me! Just cause you told me... FUCK YOU!

Lily pounds on Crystal,
collapses in tears. Crystal
tries to console her.

LILY

NOO! NOOOO! NOOO!

Lily get up and heads for the door.

LILY

Get off of me!

Lily runs out the door.

CRYSTAL

(Yells)

Lily!!!!

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 13: A BARE STAGE - LATER

*

In the dark, the sound of phones dialing and ringing are heard till finally one answers.

*

A light comes up on S.L. and Seen stands in the light. S.R. another light comes up and Lily stands in the light. Lily is crying and on a payphone.

SEEN

Yo, what's up?

LILY

I need you. I need you, please come get me.

SEEN

You need me? What the...

LILY

I gotta talk to you. There's something I gotta tell you!

SEEN

What? Tell me now!

LILY

No! Come get me!

SEEN

Are you crying?

LILY

What?

SEEN

I said are you crying?

LILY
 Would I fucking call you if it wasn't important. I need
 you!

SEEN
 Where are you?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 14: A BARE STAGE, THE CANAL ZONE - LATER

*

Loud music starts, but this time
 it's violent, thrasher, punk.
 Lily takes the stage, she swings
 from the pole violently and in a
 frightening way.

Flare and Seen watch from the
 opposite side of the stage.

FLARE
 Why we here, man?

SEEN
 Why you think?

FLARE
 He ain't gonna show. He's too smart for that.

SEEN
 She's the reason he's gonna show.

FLARE
 Yeah, but he ain't no he.. He's a she.

SEEN
 Yeah, either way the thing will show.

FLARE
 Two weeks of looking for her and she ain't...

SEEN
 Did you check out that address that Lily gave us?

FLARE
 Yeah... I've been to that apartment like three times a day.
 I stood there watching the front door and she doesn't go in
 or out!

SEEN
 It'll show.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

FLARE *
Why would she show here? *

SEEN *
Lily works here... that's the bait. *

FLARE *
We been here every night... she ain't coming back. *

SEEN *
That bitch will come back here and when it does... *

Pablo enters. He crosses to
Flare and Seen.

SEEN
What'd you want?

PABLO
You still waiting on her?

SEEN
And you're not?

PABLO
Let it go, man. Just let it go.

SEEN
No way.

FLARE
He's right and besides... we haven't painted for weeks.

PABLO
All that shit we were supposed to do... we haven't done...
the gallery and all that... we were supposed to go All City
and be a world class crew... we ain't shit.

SEEN
And whose fault is that? You dropped the bitch in.

PABLO
Big deal...

SEEN
What!

PABLO
I said "Big deal".

SEEN
She trashed Lily. She played us all. She even...

PABLO
Lily can handle her own shit. She always does. *

SEEN
When she's crying over Future and now Haze you gonna tell her that? *

Pause. *

PABLO
Everybody has to handle their own shit in this world, yo. *

SEEN
That don't make it right. *

PABLO
We're going backwards here. This was supposed to be about creating. Making art. Make shit that counts. You don't want to paint anymore? *

SEEN
No, I want to kick her ass!

FLARE
Yeah, man... we should be painting, but that's some whacked shit... playin' it like she's a dude and then all of a sudden she's a...

PABLO
Who cares? Does it really matter? *

SEEN
Who the fuck are you?

PABLO
What?

SEEN
You used to be El Pablo, the man... mother fucker to the max and now, all of the sudden, "Who cares?", "Does it really matter?"

PABLO
Cause it don't.

SEEN
Bro, you're sweet on her.

PABLO
No way.

SEEN
I know you man... you can't lie to me.

PABLO

You're trippin.

SEEN

Wow... I never thought I'd see the day.

PABLO

What?

SEEN

Bad ass Pablo turns to mush all over some dyke who paints better than him.

PABLO

Hold up.

SEEN

No, you hold up. Our Reps are on the line... RISK ain't nothing and you... You're a paper President... made a paper like a Pinata!

PABLO

You think that's what this is about? You think that's what this all boils down to?

SEEN

Only reason makes sense to me! Why else would you put all of us through this?

PABLO

Cause I can check my ego at the door. I could see things you couldn't.

SEEN

If you're gonna lecture me on art and paint, I'm out of here.

PABLO

If you could see the truth inside of you, then you could see the truth in her paint. Haze's paint is not... NOT... like any of ours or anyone else on the street... I don't know how to explain it, but there's more to HER art than you can see and it's bigger than all of us.

SEEN

(Pushing Pablo with each word.)

Chicken shit... some pussy whipped chicken shit... that's all this is about and that's all you are... dirty, old, chicken shit.

PABLO

(Can't take it anymore.)

Okay! FINE!!! You really want her? YOU REALLY WANT HER?

SEEN

Yeah, man... I really want her.

Pablo looks like he's emotional,
but hides it.

PABLO

Okay...

Pablo crosses to the payphone
and dials.

PABLO

(Into the phone)

Yo, it's Pablo... I want to paint the Block, tonight. I
need you...

*
*

BLACKOUT.

SCENE 15: A ROOF TOP - LATER

*

The sound of the city is heard.
The lights come up on the roof.
Haze climbs his way up the roof.
Tosses his backpack on the
ground and takes out some spray
paint. He starts to pain the
wall. Haze stops and takes a
look around. .

HAZE

Coward! Don't even show up!

Haze looks around and starts to
paint. Haze talks out loud as
he paints.

HAZE

You make me come down here, and now... where are you? I'm
here! Where are you? Bunch of punks! Want to call me
out!

*

A strange noise sounds, like a
stray cat in heat, a stray cat
in pain.

Haze stops painting and looks
scared, but collects himself and
goes back to painting.

HAZE

I am Crystal Purple Hayes... I got a mother in a mental
hospital who cracked up over a man...

*

I got a father that buys and sells people for their talent,
 who doesn't care who he hurts... who he hates... who he
 doesn't love... and I... and I... I create art... I make
 art... I can see David in the Rock...

*

The sound of a helicopter flying
 over head is heard.

*

*

HAZE

*

I can see the spirit of the beauty that is trapped
 inside... I am the beauty... trapped inside and I am...

The sound of metal crashing is
 heard along with the wind and
 the sound of a passing subway.

HAZE

Hello? Who's there? Pablo? Hello? Pablo? I'm here...

The lights go black and Haze
 screams.

SCENE 16: A BARE STAGE

*

Grandma stands at center, alone.

GRANDMA

I was asleep... it was three in the morning when my cell
 phone went off. It rang and her name popped up...
 "CRYSTAL"... it kept flashing her name with each ring. You
 know the way it does, so I picked it up thinking it was
 her. This wasn't normal, Crystal... three A.M. call... it
 was the cops. They asked me to come down and identify the
 body... they found her cell phone on her and of all the
 numbers... she had me listed as "LOVE".. not even Grandma
 just the word "LOVE", so they knew that I meant something
 different to her... I went down there... three A.M in the
 morning... and... they wouldn't tell me how she died. I
 kept waiting for them to say it, but they wouldn't tell me,
 until finally I asked... they said "They found her hanging
 from a billboard... an old electrical power line... a
 strong piece of cable... around her neck. They said
 "Either she killed herself or had tied the cable around her
 waist and when she fell the cable pulled up her body and
 caught under her neck when she was trying to paint... and
 the cable tightened like a noo... like a noo... like a
 noose.

*

*

*

*

*

The lights change slightly and
 the painting at center is lit.
 The auctioneer steps out down
 stage left.

AUCTIONEER

Nineteen is bid. Now asking for twenty-thousand dollars.

GRANDMA

She either killed herself on purpose or it was an accident... that's what the cops said. "Most likely...an accident."

*
*
*

Haze comes out and stands behind Grandma. Haze is on the directly platform behind her.

AUCTIONEER

AUCTIONEER

Any interest in the room or online for twenty thousand dollars?

GRANDMA

I don't think it was that at all... I think, somebody killed her.

Pablo comes out and stands down stage left.

AUCTIONEER

I have the bid at Nineteen thousand dollars in the room live, looking for twenty thousand dollars.

GRANDMA

I think someone put that rope around her neck...

Seen comes out and stands stage right.

GRANDMA

... and they pushed her over the side...

Flare comes out and stands up stage left.

GRANDMA

It wasn't suicide... I think she was murdered...

Lily comes out and stands up stage right.

AUCTIONEER

Any interest out there at twenty thousand dollars.

GRANDMA

I think someone wanted her dead...

There's a long pause and then
Richard steps out on stage.

GRANDMA

Her father wanted her cremated. He said he wanted to scatter her ashes... I fought him on that. He resisted a little, but gave in... quicker than usual. I found out later, he had an insurance policy out on her talent. He ended up collecting a lot of money on his dead daughter.

The lights change so that Haze
has the brightest light over
her.

GRANDMA

I see her paint... I go to see it sometimes up on Hudson Street or down on Bank Street, Broadway & Canal, sometimes, I even go all the way up to the Bronx... that's where her art is... that's where she is... her art hangs there and in my head, that's where she is... I used to tell her, "You can't abstract from nothing. You have to look at life and abstract from it..."

AUCTIONEER

Any advances out there over nineteen thousand dollars. Fair warning and we're closing the bid at nineteen thousand dollars.

GRANDMA

And she used to say "I AM LIFE!" That was her answer.

AUCTIONEER

Nineteen thousand once,

GRANDMA

"I... AM... LIFE!"

AUCTIONEER

Nineteen thousand twice.

GRANDMA

I like that.

AUCTIONEER

Nineteen thousand dollars three times... and sold!

Gavel strikes.

BLACKOUT.

THE END