

mirror, mirror

By Mia Gomez-Reyes

Setting: Nowhere. Present day. It is always spring.

CHARACTERS

T - a songwriter. 23.

D - an actress. 27.

A - a teenager. 17.

B - a teenager. 18.

E - a dead wife. ghost. 34.

M - a dead grandmother. ghost. 63.

XV - a quinceañera. 15.

H - dama de honor. 15.

R - a wealthy woman. 48.

W - on death row. 46.

P - a mother. 30.

GIRLS - a chorus. they are newborns and as old as time and also teenage girls. so, eternal.

On the GIRLS

The chorus never speaks. Their voices should only be heard in screams, breaths, laughs or cries. No spoken words. Any amount of girls is fine. Must be as diverse as possible.

On the TITLES

All the titles of scenes should be projected in one way or another that should be easily viewed by the audience as well as understood. Artistic liberty for how these projections are displayed is heavily encouraged. While the house is open, the title of the play should be in view on the set in some form, projection or otherwise. Big and loud is my method, but once again, creativity is preferred.

On the DANCE

Anytime there is a dance (Rehearsal, Solo, Performance), there should be music, and the song should always be the same. It does not need to be a ballet dance, but the shoes must be pointe. Interpretation otherwise is up to you.

On the CHARACTERS

All these women are daughters before they are mothers. They are sisters before they are friends. They have all experienced some form of violence at the hands of men, whether during this play or before it. They will at some point after this play experience it again. They know they will.

On DOUBLING

Doubling is advised against in order to be able to keep all spoken characters' plotlines separate. If you must double, double spoken with unspoken (EX: Actress for XV is also a GIRL in other scenes). The exception for this is the trio of R/W/P, as they all only have one monologue, these may be played by the same actress, as long as you ensure they are easily identified as separate characters.

Content warning: Mentions of female violence, sexual and physical assault, death, and murder.

For daughters of mothers.

For mothers of daughters.

May you love your wretched mirror.

*“I feel more free than I have in years,
six feet in the ground.” - doomsday, Lizzy McAlpine*

*“I found my worth in this world,
by proving I’m a special girl,
time and time again.” - Special Girl, dodie*

SCENE 0.5

How do you crack pointe shoes?

There is a dark stage. No lights. No sound. No curtain. Then, there is the smacking on the ground over and over again. Sounds like a hard rock, or a weight being dropped to the ground. And a breath. Louder and louder and there's more of them, with lights up on a handful of GIRLS (? women?), sitting on the ground, smacking and cracking pointe shoes, each with at least three pairs to break in. The GIRLS wear white flowy dresses, bare feet, wild hair, and a single necklace with a pendant. Each pendant has the female gender symbol on it. When all of the pairs of the pointe shoes are broken in, each GIRL stands up, holding a single shoe, looks out into the audience, and screams.

SCENE 1

Dressing Room

T

I like to think that I know what I'm doing in the world.

T sits on the stage, in a fold out chair, dressed in whatever a girl in her mid twenties would be wearing at the time that is now. She is looking straight out, almost like she's talking to a mirror. The chorus of GIRLS sit around her, listening expectantly, waiting for her to go on.

T

No. That's stupid. Bad start. OK, try again.

Pause.

T

I like to think that. I think for me. I think. That's my problem. I think. I don't do. I need to start doing. Doing what? What am I doing?

Pause.

T

I'm making something. Art. I'm making art. I'm writing and I'm living and I'm fucking thriving while doing it. I don't need to explain anything about my life. Fuck interviews. They fucking suck.

The GIRLS nod silently in agreement. One GIRL gets up, begins doing T's hair into an elaborate updo braid. Another stretches T's legs out and begins to paint her toenails.

T

All they ask me about is who I'm writing about anyways. They don't care about the process or the work, or even the fucking words. They just want to know who to call up for the interview next week to ask the same stupid questions. "Did you know? How did you feel? What IS the truth?" The truth is subjective. The truth is not what I'm writing! It's perspectives. That's not-

She screams, with her mouth closed like she's trying to contain it.

The GIRLS continue working, unflinching, with two other GIRLS moving on to paint T's fingernails and starting her makeup.

T breathes in and then out.

T

Sorry. I'm not trying to be angry now. Anger gives me wrinkles and bad songs. Anger doesn't allow for peace. Not that I'll get any. Peace I mean. Wrinkles come with time. Aging gracefully as they say. Anyways. Let me try this again. Stop me if it gets weird.

The GIRLS look at each other. She's mostly ready. They stand her up, and begin dressing her in a new dress, shoes and earrings and various additions. This all goes while T says:

T

In my life there are two things I could do. I could swallow all my emotions whole, eat them up like a cold plum. Or. I could make them productive. I could process them and make them something other people can take and hear and go, this...this is how I feel. This is how I see the world, how the world sees me. And then maybe, something will come of that. But, I think for me, it's always a battle you know? You can't write everything for everyone. What will be yours, then?

So it's complicated.

It's a fight lots of artists have with their work. But it's important to me that my art, that it connects to something I need to work through somehow, because that's the stuff that people look at go "I needed this." And that just..makes a difference somewhere, you know? It makes a change to someone. They grow. Even if it's small. Even if only they know. Even if they don't. It is still better than nothing. Still better than holding it all in me, and never getting anywhere. Because there is only so much one person can bear in silence, only so much a person can withstand by herself. And I would rather share that with the world, share my understanding of the things that haunt me. I guess I'm always looking for someone to hold that with. All we want as artists is to be held by our audiences. That doesn't seem crazy to me. Don't you think?

The GIRLS have stepped away. She is dressed, prim and proper and beautiful. A sight to behold. They don't even bat an eye at T's crying, her dark black mascara running all over her face.

T

How was that?

SCENE 1.5

Midterms or Mental Break or Monday Night

This is staged like 0.5. Dim light, no set, no sound. Except when it starts this time, it's breathing first. Heavy breaths, scattered, with no real pattern to them. Like a panic attack. There's no

pointe shoes in the GIRLS hands now. It's scissors. They hold them open and stare while they breathe, not acknowledging the others or the audience in any way. There is a moment where they stop breathing, and in sync all move up the scissors to the front of their face, pull down pieces of their hair, and cut. Then, a guttural sob from one GIRL, a hysterical laugh from another, and finally one GIRL picks her scissors back up, mouths something in silence and keeps cutting.

SCENE 2

Money Dearest

R

You learn a thing or two when you hang around rich men. They like to assume things about the world. They assume that because you have money, you have knowledge. Which in some cases can be true. But many rich men are stupid, and stupid men are often incorrect.

The GIRLS are watching R from afar. They do not know how to interact with her yet. They listen.

R

I was a daughter of a father, and he was equally as wrong as often as he was right. He had a lot of opinions. But he was still a father, at the very least he tried to be. I was studious for as long as I could stand it, and I was in love many times.

R smiles to herself.

Married twice. I was a particularly good dancer. My husbands were intellectual men who loved to talk, or more truthfully loved the sound of their own voice, so I learned many things over my time with them.

The GIRLS begin to inch closer over time. They want to touch her pearls, her dress, her shoes. She is unattainable and never notices them.

R

The point of all this is, men always underestimate women. Rich men especially. They look down on everyone, even their own partners. Why? Ain't that the question. Simply because they can, because they can look at a woman and know that no matter how much power or influence or money she has, he will always get the benefit of the doubt. In everything. They don't even know how smart we are when they aren't looking. When they aren't listening.

I don't hate men. I don't have the energy to hate anything, personally. A waste of tears and of wrinkles. Ruining myself before my time, could you believe it?

People like to talk. A man's downfall is always a woman's fault. If she stayed, if she left, if she loved him, if she didn't. They ignore a man's own stupidity for the sake of the blame game. And that's fine by me. Lord knows I didn't do anything. Look, I loved him. I really did. But when you make mistakes in life, it's bound to catch up to you.

And I'm not saying I had anything to do with anything. No matter how many people will point their raggedy fingers at me. His heart stopped, that's science. He chose to live a life like he did, wild and seemingly invincible, and I participated like a loving and doting wife should. But if I had, you could hardly blame a girl now could you?

R winks. She grabs her pearl necklace, unclasps it and pulls it apart. The GIRLS scramble to grab the loose pearls, and R walks offstage without another word.

SCENE 2.5

Engaged

The GIRLS are laying down, backs flat on the stage. They don't make noise or have any objects in hand. They just lay down. A GIRL attempts to move her arm, and feels she cannot, like she is tied down by a rope you cannot see. She tries another limb. Nothing. She tries again. Nothing. The other GIRLS glance at her, some with defeated looks, like they've tried this before, some attempt to move their own bodies. It's a mix of some GIRLS struggles and other GIRLS passive acceptance. One GIRL comes from offstage, with a bag full of shiny beautiful rings. She goes to

each one, takes their left hand ring finger and slips a ring on. She goes about this process until she has one left. She picks up her own left hand, slips a ring on, finds a spot on the ground, and lays down.

SCENE 3

Bench

A

Will you please talk to me?

B

I have nothing to say to you. You can monologue if you want. I won't guarantee that I'm listening.

A

This isn't fair.

B

It's plenty fucking fair. You were rude, mean, downright bitchy. I'm not gonna take shit from you right now.

A

I really don't want to fight with you. Like at all. I haven't ever wanted to fight. I just want you to hear me out.

B

Like I said, talk all you want.

A

I'm serious, B. Can we please go sit somewhere?

B

Give me one good reason I should.

A

Because I know you. You hate being in the dark. And you know you won't ask him.

B thinks. She ponders. She relents.

B

Fine.

The GIRLS bring out a bench for B and A to sit on. They lay around them, playing with each other's hair and giggling about at the possibility of drama ensuing. The GIRLS are slowly creating braids on all their heads and tie them off each time they finish one.

A

Look. I'm not going to tell you that I didn't do the things I did. You know that I'm a terrible liar. Plus, it won't get us anywhere. But you can't expect people to not feel things. Feelings don't excuse the way I treated you. I was just defensive. I wanted to protect my emotions, my heart. When you guys broke up this time, for longer than normal, I assumed it was done. Over. You hadn't spoken to him in weeks. I thought I was in the clear. So...I called him.

B starts to get up, angry. A grabs her arm, B turns to look. A's eyes are pleading. A continues and B slowly sits back down.

It was innocent at first, I just wanted to have my suspicions confirmed, and figure out what to do from there but, he answered and he sugarcoated my phone in sweetness and then...I couldn't stop the spiral. It was over before it started and I didn't even notice.

B

You were always a poet.

A

I fell hard and fast. I didn't know what we were, but I would have let him go if I knew the truth.

B

You don't have to lie. You ARE a terrible liar.

A

Ok. I'm not sure what that outcome would have been. But I didn't want to hurt you. I know we weren't friends or anything but, you seemed nice enough. Like you would be hurt by this sort of thing. Like we could have been friends. I just. All I ever wanted was to love him, y'know? It was about love.

B

Ok.

A

And I'm sorry. I am.

B

I know you are.

B gets up to leave again. They stare at each other. B doesn't move to go.

A

For what it's worth. I think I knew in my heart he wasn't worth it. I knew he was still in love with you.

B

You did?

A

He watched you every time you left a room, and knew when you were going to come in the door before anyone else. He never did that with me. He was always surprised. I used to think it was because he was excited to see me, but I know better now.

A begins to tear up. This hurts her.

He had forgotten I was coming.

B

I'm sorry.

A

(stopping herself from crying)

Don't be. Somebody in this world loves you more than they can bear. We aren't all that lucky. That's not something to be sorry for.

B

Alright. Then...I'm not sorry?

A laughs. The GIRLS finish their braids and examine them. They all love it. One GIRL goes to try to braid A's hair but A stands before she can get to her.

A

Ok. I'm gonna go. Packing is a long process.

B

I can't believe you're doing that.

A

I mean, a fresh start's a fresh start. I'll take what I can these days. Plus, you can't deny the opportunity.

B

The opportunity for debt? That school's twice as expensive as the one here.

A

(earnestly)

The opportunity to be a better version of myself. She's out there somewhere. Just gotta catch her off guard. Trick her into becoming me. Or trick myself into becoming her? I don't know where this analogy is going.

The GIRLS look around confused. No fighting. Weird. They begin to look bored.

B

Such a poet.

B rolls her eyes.

B

Good luck. I hope you find her. Maybe she and I could be friends.

A

Maybe you could. Take care of yourself, Beth.

B smiles. A smiles back. The GIRLS look at each other, and practice smiling. Both A and B leave the stage in different directions. They do not look back. The GIRLS watch, and then follow, undoing their braids as they leave, smiling softly.

SCENE 3.5

4th Grade

There is a table. On it is a basket full of various feminine products. There is also a glass of water. A GIRL is holding a doll in her arms and sitting on the table, her legs dangling off the edge. She rocks it back and forth and back and forth. She hums a lullaby.

(NOTE: Preferably one not known to english speaking audiences, but any uncommon lullaby will do. If the actress doing this has a personal made up lullaby, use that instead.)

*When the GIRL is satisfied that the baby doll is asleep, she places the baby on the table, gets down, and begins to take items out of the basket. Tampons. Plan B. Birth control in a variety of forms such as the pill or an IUD. **absolutely no condoms.** She puts the tampon in. She reads the plan B packaging and decides to save it for a rainy day, placing it back in the basket. She gets the Pill packaging. She pops one of the pills out, grabs the glass of water, and drinks the pill.*

The GIRL retrieves her doll from the table. She leaves the tampon packaging on the floor. She skips off stage.

SCENE 4

Will you be my Maid of Honor?

T

I'd like to think that one day I will get married, you know? That I will have met the person I dreamed of my whole life, and walk to him, and Abby will be there too, ready to hold my hand or fix my veil...or get me a car if I change my mind.

T sits in the same chair as the last time we saw her. The GIRLS return and sit by her feet, watching her curiously.

T

I don't think that I would. But cold feet is a thing. A very real thing. A thing that saves you from pain and also maybe divorce. Or from your happily ever after. But is happily ever after a thing? I don't know.

The GIRLS hold out their left hands and observe the empty space on their ring fingers. They stand and go behind T's chair, in a line and practice being "surprised" by a proposal.

T

Abby says she's got it. Her happy, I mean. And I'm glad for her. I'm really, really glad. He's a good man. You don't get a lot of those these days. I'm just waiting for mine. But maybe not everyone gets one. Maybe soulmates are a thing, maybe sometimes your soulmate just...sucks?

T sighs. The GIRLS move on from being "surprised" to practicing their walk down the aisle.

T

She asked me to be her maid of honor. I said yes. I have to plan a party. I'm good at those. I started a google drive AND a pinterest board, and it's getting really full.

T smiles to herself.

I just want to make sure it's everything she wants. Her last big bang! That's what they call it right?

The GIRLS run off stage, waving goodbye to each other, as they practice "leaving for their honeymoon."

T

I don't think I'm jealous. No. I think I'm just.

T pauses. She wipes a tear, barely even crying.

T

I think I'm just lonely.

SCENE 4.5**Lunch**

The GIRLS sit at a lunch table, seemingly in a good mood. What follows is a choreographed sequence of them eating lunch. They look down at their plates. They can see: a piece of pizza, a cup of water, and some mandarin slices. In the middle of the table there are both chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin cookies. Each GIRL has a napkin. The GIRLS look up from the food, and grab their napkin. They unfold it. They pat down on the pizza with the napkin. They inspect the napkin and its grease. They hand their napkins out to each other and observe all the removed grease. They place the napkin on the table. They drink their water. All of it. They eat their mandarin slices. They nibble on their pizza. They do not finish it. They get exactly three bites in and then place the grease napkin on top of their pizza. They all reach for a cookie. They hesitate. They all grab an oatmeal raisin cookie. They pull the raisins out and eat the cookie by itself. They all get up to leave, turn and then pause. They turn around, one by one, and pocket a chocolate chip cookie. They turn back around and walk offstage.

SCENE 5**A Haunting****E**

Do you like being a ghost, Jo?

M

What do you mean?

E

I mean literally, do you like being a ghost?

M

Um, no it's not ideal. But, I like getting to observe things.

E

Like the people?

M

Mhm. Everything is different now. My family is bigger. I love that I get to see them all the time, even if they can't see me.

E

Well, that's a nice way to look at it. Have you learned anything interesting about them lately?

M

My granddaughter is engaged. I never thought the day would come. He's a lovely boy too. He loves her very much.

E

(curious)

How do you know?

M

Observation.

E

Oh my god, did you HAUNT him?

M

No! I simply happened to be being a ghost in places he frequented. Like his house.

E

Oh my god, you HAUNTED him.

M

Oh shush!

E

(laughing)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Congratulations. About your granddaughter.

M

Oh thank you. She's a very talented young woman you know. She writes books. Scary ones too!

E

What did she write? Any chance I might have read it?

M

I'm not sure. She never writes her name on the books. It's always a man's name. Which I still have yet to understand.

E

Does she go to book signings and stuff? Like meet people and talk about her books?

M

No, she never seems to be doing that. I don't think anyone outside of her parents and her fiance know she writes.

E

Holy shit. She's a ghost writer.

M

(dismissive)

No, she doesn't write those kinds of scary stories.

E laughs. A GIRL comes on stage, she chews on her lip, and sits on one side of the stage. She seems terrified.

E

No, no. She, she writes books for people. She's pretending to be them. They pay her to write books and sell them under another person's name. Another man's name. The men can't be good authors, so she writes for them.

M

I don't know if I understand.

E

I'm sorry. I'm not sure how else to explain.

Pause. Not awkward. Just a lull in conversation.

E

I've never asked but, how'd you kick the bucket?

M

Have we become that close?

E

I would hope. I don't talk with any other ghosts.

Pause.

M

Breast cancer.

E

Oh. I'm sorry.

M

Don't be. I was ready, I think. At least, I thought so. I'm here, so maybe I wasn't.

M is thinking.

What about you?

E

What about me?

M

How did you end up here?

E

Here as in dead, or here as in a ghost?

M

Both, I suppose.

E

My husband wanted to leave me, but didn't have the guts so he killed me instead.

M

Oh my god.

E

Yeah.

Pause.

E

As for the ghost thing, well, I guess I just need to see him die to finally be at peace. But that's just a hunch.

M

I'm sorry.

E

That's the way it goes sometimes. You just get unlucky.

M and E continue to be on stage. They walk around in circles, or squiggles, or what have you. They keep walking. They walk offstage.

The GIRL on stage has begun to tremble. She begins to cry softly. She hears a knock, and turns to look, frightened. Her body is pulled on, and she cries harder. She doesn't want to go. She is pulled up and begins to be dragged off stage.

(NOTE: This is not an extra body. We do not see anyone. The only person on stage should be the actress for this portion.)

She kicks and she kicks and is dragged off while we hear her scream.

SCENE 5.5

Rehearsal

The stage is lit in pink. The GIRLS come out one by one, holding their pointe shoes. They do not put them on. They begin to dance. One GIRL is performing beautifully and another GIRL begins to get jealous. She trips her. The GIRLS stop dancing. They begin to argue, pointing fingers and trying to teach each other how to do the steps better. The beautiful GIRL gets in the face of the GIRL who tripped her, demanding an explanation. The mean GIRL says something cruel, and outsider GIRLS look shocked. The mean GIRL begins to walk away, and the beautiful GIRL,

grabs her arm, turns her back to look at her, and smacks her with the pointe shoe. The GIRLS scream.

SCENE 6

Shrink

D

I did a movie once that royally fucked me up.

The GIRLS sit near D's feet. D sits in a chair similar to T's from earlier, or maybe the same one.

D

Like gacho fucking bad. Mentally shot for months. Just couldn't sleep or eat or breathe. I started going to therapy. Like actual therapy, with a real shrink.

The GIRLS all take out notepads and pens, and begin taking notes on the things D says.

D

It wasn't even the movie itself that did the damage. It was a standard scary movie. Maybe a little ahead of its time, but a simple plot scary movie nonetheless. It was everything after that.

Commentary on my body all the time, in a completely new way.

I was supposed to stay off the internet for a while, that's what my shrink said, when it all started. She said I was reading too much of the same, on those garbage forums, and that's what was "contributing to my deteriorating mental state". It's really funny when you think about it. I needed a shrink to tell me that reading about how men would like to bang me, or gut me, or both was contributing to my worsening panic attacks.

She asked me if I was still reading them, and I said no, and that she was right, I was getting better. When in reality I had just been sitting in the parking lot crying because a man walked by my parking spot to get to his car and it sent me down a black spiral. In my head, this man had a

fantasy where he catches me as im getting out of the car, and drags me to an unknown location, and I'm found dead, two weeks later, and its marked as a suicide. Or, it's a permanent open case. They make documentaries, and true crime episodes, and interview my loved ones about what it could have been. But really, this man, walking by me, had just left a session with his therapist, probably getting better on purpose. That man was probably happy.

The GIRLS look at each other, nod, and write something down. They look back up.

D

But you never know which man is batshit crazy and which man isn't. So my guard never goes down. Which is fucking exhausting.

The GIRLS agree.

D

I'm not even famous or anything. I mean I am, but micro famous. I'm not an A-lister. I only do magazine spread ads, you won't ever see my face in a high budget perfume commercial or anything. I used to think that this was everything I wanted. Acting and modeling, living the dream in LA or New York or wherever I am for work that week.

But I'm really scared. I'm still recognizable. Still a person. Still a woman.

The last forum post I read, it was a bunch of guys trying to figure out where I lived by collecting all my instagram posts and trying to see what was repeated. They were pointing out things like how the trees look, or the building names. Someone said that you could reverse image search things and find them on Google Earth. I don't even know if that's true.

Anyways, I'm here cause I need a new therapist. My old one, she was great, but I think I just need a different perspective. Maybe different advice. I'm trying to reconfigure my life, and it only feels natural to get a new therapist with that.

I deleted Instagram. I figured, if they can't see my pictures, they can't figure out where I live, right?

The GIRLS look around at each other, close their notebooks, and stand. They help D off her chair, they all link arms, and walk off stage in a group. As they are walking off, at different times, each GIRLS turns their head to look around the stage, searching for something. They never quite find it.

SCENE 6.5

First Date

There are three vanities, and three GIRLS sit in front of them. They are getting ready to go out. They put their hair up and out of their face. They grab silver kaboodles and open them up, each containing face care, makeup, brushes, etc. They grab a phone, place it on the vanity, and begin playing audio. It is a true crime podcast, hosted by two women and all three girls are listening intently while beginning their routine. (Bonus points if it's a popular podcast and hosted by white women). Each girl does their makeup differently, one goes dark and heavy, another goes full glam, and another goes for the "no makeup" makeup look. They occasionally stop, look down at their phone as if they can see the women who are talking. When they are done, they pause the audio, close their kits, stand up, and grab their keys along with their phone. They make wolverine claws out of the keys, and on the keys there is also a small pointy object and a pepper spray. They walk to the wings, and before fully exiting, stop, turn back to look at their chair. They turn back to the wings, one makes the sign of the cross on herself, another breathes out with her eyes closed and smiles, and another simply looks at her hand, nods and looks forward again. They exit.

SCENE 7

11:25pm

We are in a party hall, music blasting, lights going wild, a photobooth set-up of some kind. Very cute. A big sign that says "FELIZ 15". A girl, XV, is in the corner, sectioned off like a bathroom.

She is struggling to lift up her dress to go to the bathroom. It is red, sparkly, with lace and the most beautiful corset top. Her hair is up and pinned into a beautiful tiara. She wears red heels with light glitter. Four GIRLS enter and H, in a baby pink short dress with small pink heels, stand towards center stage dancing.

XV continues struggling trying to undo the corset ties. H wanders away, noticing that XV has been gone a while. She searches until she reaches the bathroom and slightly opens the door as she knocks.

H

Lalli? Lalli are you in here?

XV

yes.

H

Are you okay?

XV

my dress, um, I need to pee.

H

Oh. Do you need help?

XV

yes.

H

Okay. I'm gonna come in.

H opens the door and enters, struggling to walk around XV's dress without stepping on it.

XV

i can't lift my dress up, so I wanted to take it off, but I can't undo the corset ties.

H

Okay, do you want to try lifting the skirt again?

XV

sure. just be careful with it please.

H

Of course.

XV and H attempt grabbing the skirt hem and pushing it up, gripping the door handles or putting feet in weird footholes. They do not succeed. XV lets go of the dress skirt.

XV

Frick. This isn't going to work. Can you just untie me?

H

Are you sure? What if I can't tie you back up?

XV

Sure you can. You're super smart, you'll remember.

H

I'm not sure I-

XV

I really have to pee, Hanna. And you're my *dama de honor*. You have to help me.

H

Fine fine. Only because you really have to pee.

H moves behind her and begins the untying and loosening of the corset. She lightly brushes some hair out of the way, touching XV's neck lightly. XV shivers gently and giggles.

XV

Your hands are really cold Hanna. It tickles.

H

Sorry, sorry! You're almost done though.

H finishes untying and turns towards the audience, mostly blocking a view of XV. XV hops out her dress and goes into a stall. We hear pissing. H waits patiently and does not turn around. As this goes on, the GIRLS begin to slow dance with each other, heads on the others shoulders, with their arms around each other high up by their shoulders. As the scene progresses their arms will loosen and their hands will by the end of the scene end up on the waists of their dance partner.

XV comes back out, and hops back into her dress, picking her corset back to her chest. She turns to look at H.

XV

Can you tie it?

H

Yeah, yeah, just stand still.

The girls reposition again, and they stand quietly with the occasional groan as H pulls to tighten.

XV

You're doing great. I said you could do it.

H

Thanks.

H blushes.

H

And...you're done.

XV tests her dress out a bit and then beams.

XV

You're the BEST. I had to pee so bad, I've had so much soda today.

H

You're welcome.

XV

Did you see all the kids from school who came? I can't believe it. And the boys! They all wanted pictures with me!

H giggles.

H

I did see! Of course they did, you are the prettiest quinceanera our school has ever had. Hell, the whole district even!

XV grins.

XV

Thank you. You wanna go dance now?

H

Yes, I absolutely do.

The girls exit the bathroom and return to the dance floor. They smile, hug each other tightly, and hold the hug position while they sway to the music.

SCENE 7.5

5th Grade

The GIRLS play ring-around-the-rosie, giggling and tripping over themselves. They fall down and collapse onto each other, laughing and begin a kind of tickle war amongst each other. The GIRLS move around, always touching one of the other girls in some way. They end up finishing their tickle war, calling “uncle” in a silent laughing manner. They sit up in pairs facing each other, smiling. One GIRL reaches out to brush a strand of hair off another GIRL's cheek and tucks it behind her ear. The second girl blushes, goes to grab her hair and stops, catching on the first girl's hand on accident. They lock eyes. Blackout.

SCENE 8

8:45pm, on the dot.

The quince set again, seems earlier in the evening so there are more GIRLS on the dance floor. H is in the bathroom space alone, washing her hands and adjusting her dress. She looks like she has been crying. She looks over her shoulder, once, twice, three times. She decides to lock the main bathroom door. XV walks out onto the dance floor, in red flats, and gives hugs to all the GIRLS and gestures for one of them to bring out a chair. A GIRL rushes off stage to retrieve it.

H

I need this to get off me.

H begins to unzip her dress, checking the door is locked as she does so. She drapes the dress off, hangs it on a stall door and in her boy shorts and bra and heels, walks to the sink. She turns the water on and begins splashing it everywhere. Gets soap from the dispenser and squishes it on all her exposed skin. She starts to go for her face, notices her makeup, decides not to mess with that, and keeps going.

The GIRL returns with a chair and the red heels that XV wore in the earlier scene. All the GIRLS squeal and help XV sit down on the chair.

XV

Thank you! Thank you all! We will begin the shoe ceremony now. Where's Hanna?

The GIRLS look around, do not see her anywhere. H has begun to wash the soap off, scrubbing her skin roughly with paper towel napkins, crying harshly. She whispers to herself while the following occurs.

H

I need to get him off of me. Get off. Get off. Fuck.

XV

I don't see her. I don't want her to miss it.

H

I need mouthwash. There's no mouthwash in this bathroom. Where can I find mouthwash?

XV

Well. Fine. Someone record it for her. She might be outside. Maybe her mom called her. Yeah, her mom called her. To ask how much longer. That's right. Ok. Let's start.

XV sits in the chair, and a GIRL scrunches her skirt up delicately. XV smiles and presents her left foot. One GIRL slips off the flat, and replaces it with a heel. Another does the same for the right foot.

H

Shit. Shit. Shit. I'm gonna miss it. I'm gonna miss it. I'm gonna throw up.

H runs to the toilet and pukes. She's sobbing as she does so, so it's guttural and gross the whole time.

XV stands and presents her heels.

XV

Thank you! Thank you all. Thank you for attending tonight, and for being here to celebrate the beginning of my womanhood. I love you all. Thank you.

H

Fuck. That's gross. I'm so gross. I-

H returns from the toilet and stares at herself in the mirror.

H

Get it together. This happens to girls all the time. Tonight is not about you. It's for Xitlaly. Get it together.

H wipes the tear streaked mascara off her face. She opens her purse, finds lip gloss and applies it. She stares at herself in the mirror.

H

At least now, it's out of the way. I know what it's like now, I don't have to spend nights wondering what it's like, like we used to do at sleepovers. Now I know. Now, I've felt it.

Pause. She continues to stare.

I'm glad my worrying is over. I'm glad. Glad.

Pause. She stares. She attempts a smile. It falls almost immediately as she wants to cry again. She hardens her face.

I need to go outside now.

XV begins to dance again with the GIRLS, and practices walking in heels, while the GIRLS stand on their tiptoes imitating (?), teaching (?), XV how to walk in them.

H gets her dress off the stall door and slips it back on. She pats herself dry with one last paper towel. She looks in the mirror, and practices a smile, and this time it sticks.

H

Happy birthday, Xitlaly. I love you so much.

H walks out of the bathroom, and goes to the dance floor. XV throws her arms around her and laughs.

XV

You missed it!! Look!

XV shows off her feet.

H

I'm sorry! I think I ate too much cake, I was in the bathroom feeling all kinds of icky. But I'm better now I promise.

XV

Are you sure? My mom might have some medicine in her purse. She went across and got it, so it was cheaper and wayyy stronger than American stuff.

H shakes her head, laughing lightly. She almost feels better. Almost.

H

No no, I'm okay. I want to dance. Let's dance?

XV

Yes yes yes! Let's dance!

They begin to dance to whatever upbeat track is playing. H holds her arms to her chest, smiles, and dances, looking around the party hall, looking over her shoulder, once, two, three times. She finds nothing. She does not relax.

SCENE 8.5

Solo

Dark stage. There is a spotlight on one GIRL. She has a pointe shoe in each hand. She sits on the floor, places one on her foot, and ties the ribbons up her leg. She ties the bow, and admires her handy work. She does the other foot, smiling, humming to herself a slow song. She decides to undo the ribbons and rety them. She does this three times on each shoe before she is finally satisfied. She stands in them, walks around, feels them out. She ends up center stage, looks out into the audience and breathes out. She goes into first position. She closes her eyes, she tries to go into releve on pointe. She falls. She looks up from the ground, looks at her feet, her shoes, she looks back into the audience. She screams.

SCENE 9

Bathroom

A is standing in a high school bathroom, looking into the mirror. The mirror hangs in front of her face, which is facing downstage. You see A through it, and there are two additional mirrors hanging exactly the same on either side of A's mirror.

B

You bitch!

A

Get out of the bathroom Elizabeth.

B

No. Fuck you. Who the hell do you think you are? You don't own the bathroom.

A

I own it more than you do.

B

Fuck off.

A

I've been in it more than you. I've shat in it more than you. I've done a lot more things than you.

Pause.

A

I'm not about to get in a fight in the girls restroom like I'm on Jersey Shore, if that's what you are here for.

B

You don't know anything. You don't know what I've done or who-

A

I don't care for your resume.

B

Jesus Christ, you are infuriating.

A

Look. Beth. Think what you want about me. I don't care. But I won't entertain this main character syndrome moment because I have a little self respect. I have more than enough dignity. You march in here fighting for your honor as a scorned maiden, and don't even stop to think about the fact that you are fighting for nothing. He dumped you. You ignored him. People move on. I don't owe you shit.

B

You act like it's so simple.

A

Maybe it isn't. But I didn't do anything to you. We don't have a girl code, we aren't even friends.

B

So...so what? I'm just supposed to take it?

A

I don't know. But I just want you to know you are yelling at the wrong person. James isn't here. If you should be mad at anyone, it's him.

Pause. A moves to leave the restroom. She pauses by B and says earnestly:

A

But what do I know? I'm just the slut who stole your man. Right?

B hardens. A exits.

SCENE 9.5

Who is the man for you? Take this quiz and find out!

It is a sleepover. The floor is covered in blankets, pillows, a sleeping bag or two. Lots of chip bags and snacks, the occasional soda. There is a TV somewhere playing a Disney or Pixar animated film. A group of GIRLS lay around, snacking, reading, or on a device of some sort. They giggle often. Eventually, another GIRL enters, shushes them, and shows them a pile of teen magazines she has in her arms. They get very excited, abandoning all previous activities. The movie stays on, it has been forgotten and becomes background noise. The GIRLS all grab magazines, sharing or holding their own and flip through it. They show each other images of attractive male celebrities. They find quizzes, and rapidly do them, and are happy or upset at their results. They all huddle around one GIRL who begins to giggle uncontrollably at an image in the magazine, probably of a shirtless actor, someone of Tom Holland-like popularity, but doesn't need to be him. They gaze at him, and giggle, and turn to each other. They fan each other with magazines, like they've seen in movies. They all lie down, cuddling or overlapping. They all hold a magazine, shut their eyes, and fall asleep. The TV screen turns off. Blackout.

SCENE 10

32 out of 40

There is a woman sitting in a chair. She has her arms on the armrests and does not move them. She stares straight out. The GIRLS bring her different meals on trays throughout the scene. She never eats them.

W

I never even got a chance you know. To be somebody. I got abandoned from the day I was born. No empathy, no love, just passed around from body to body like I was an object. Worse than an object. Like I was something someone had forgotten and never came back to collect. No one knew whether to throw me out, hold onto me, give me away. So I lived in a box of people's minds. Out of sight, out of mind, you ever hear that?

She does a dry laugh. A GIRL brings out another chair and she sits in it, mirroring W.

I'm crazy, they say. Psychopathy. I passed a test. I was never good at tests. Of all the tests for me to pass, can't say I'm proud this was it.

Another GIRL, another chair.

I don't think I'm crazy. I think I'm angry. You would be too, if you had lived my life. You look at me with your judgemental hearts but you don't know the first thing about the life I've lived. Hate me, curse me, spit on my name, but I don't care. You would do it too. You would have killed them too.

Two more chairs, two more GIRLS.

I did what I had to do to stay alive. To survive. To come home to my woman. Do you know how hard it is to make a home in a body like mine? In a brain like mine? I didn't have a love to call my own until I was in my 30s. I knew a man's need for fifteen years before I knew I was capable of loving. You think I'd just let that get taken by a man who viewed me as an object? As less than that? You get to go home tonight, and call your mom, or curl up to your lover, and you get to sleep in peace. What would you do for that? What would you give up? What crimes would you commit?

Final chair, one last GIRL sits.

I knew in my heart what I needed to do to make it home. I will never be sorry for going home.

A GIRL comes from the wings with a needle. She goes to W, tilts her neck to the side, all sitting GIRLS mirror this. She injects W. W closes her eyes, the GIRLS do as well. W smiles. Blackout.

SCENE 10.5

Walk of Shame

The GIRL who performed during SOLO is back out on stage. She is upset, but not crying. She holds her pointe shoes in one hand, the way a girl holds her heels after a night out and her feet hurt. She composes herself, checks the time on a phone or a watch, looks around for something, is relieved she does not find it and walks. She walks on gravel, on the sidewalk in a neighborhood. Her makeup is smudged, her hair a mess, and she has a male T-shirt that is too big for her to wear over her dress. What indicates that it is male is up to you, my suggestion is greek Fraternity letters, or a dad joke that no one thinks is funny. She arrives home, whatever that looks like on stage, I don't know. She puts her shoes down, takes the shirt off and throws it on the ground. She searches for something, while putting her hair up in a ponytail. She finds it. It's a vibrator. She turns it on, and walks off stage without it. You watch it buzz for a while. Blackout.

SCENE 11

Girls Night In

There is a sage green couch in the middle of the stage, and a marble coffee table in front of it. On the coffee table are two stemless wine glasses, a red wine, already opened but not poured out yet. There is also a pink glass bong. T and D walk in together, dressed up like they had just been somewhere nice, like a club or a party. Their heels are still on. They get to the couch and remove their heels, and do the bra trick, but keep their dress on and do not make any attempt to remove their makeup or undo their hair. T pours each a glass, they clink and take a sip. D checks the bong, grabs a lighter, and takes a light hit. D offers T the bong.

T

Maybe later. I need this wine to settle first.

D

Fair fair.

T

So glad to be out of there. It was way too loud.

D

Ugh, yeah. What was the party for anyways?

T

Pre-screening of a sequel, rip off, something or other. I don't know. I just know that it was on my calendar.

D

The beauty of assistants.

T giggles, her glass already halfway empty. D takes very small sips so she is behind T.

T

When do you leave?

D

I think tomorrow afternoon. I told anyone who would listen that if they put me on a redeye after making me come to this event it would be like putting an intolerable infant on a plane without my bottle. And my bottle is wine.

T

Sucks. I thought I had you for longer this time!

D

Says the one who disappears anytime she's not on tour.

T

Gotta find my peace where I can. Hey, can you get my makeup wipes? And my tshirt and shorts?
This dress makes my eyes want to scream.

*D gets up, and goes behind the couch where these things presumably are, calling from over here
shoulder.*

D

How do eyes scream? Do they blink really loud or?

T

(giggling)

I hadn't thought it through, it was just an expression. A bad one evidently.

D

What would it be like if other body parts could make noise? Like what if my knees could sing?

*T sighs happily, like she missed this. Because she has. She grabs the bong. D returns with the
wipes and clothes, as well as an extra shirt and sweatpants.*

T

Let me get on your wavelength.

*D squeals excitedly. She starts to change while T attempts to take a small hit. Key word: attempt.
She doesn't succeed, and she blows out a huge hit and coughs up a lung and a half. D stops
changing to laugh and get T some water.*

D

Here, here! Stop coughing!

T

I can't! OhmygodithurtssomuchIthinkI'mgonnadie.

D

You are not going to die! Drink the water!

T grabs the glass and slows her breathing enough to drink water. She sighs, the relief welcome.

D

You fucked up.

T

I miscalculated.

D

You're going to be high as /shit dude

T

/As balls I know.

They giggle, and do the next conversation while changing, throwing clothes everywhere. Wine gets refilled and drunk. Time passes. Two GIRLS come out, mirroring everything D and T do from behind the couch until the end of the scene. D grabs a makeup wipe, and starts to remove her makeup. T grabs it and does it for her, holding her face delicately.

T

Close your eyes. Not too tight.

D does so. T wipes off the eye makeup. She grabs a wipe for herself, and does her own while D turns away from T and takes another hit. D is blushing intensely. She turns back and gets comfortable on the couch.

D

Your clothes are so soft. What detergent do you use?

T

Seventh gen. Isabelle told me about it. It's good for babies skin but not baby specific. You know?

D

What is baby specific?

T

Like those puffs you buy with the baby on -

D

The Gerber baby!

T

Yes!

D

I'll have to remember that.

T

The Gerber baby?

D

No! The brand!

T

Oh, right duh.

D

(imitating her)

Oh right duh.

T

Don't be rude! I reserve the right to kick you out AND keep your weed.

D

You wouldn't dare!

T

(grinning)

Don't test me.

They scooch closer to each other on the couch. The GIRLS move close to each other. D sips a bit of wine, tries to top off her glass and realizes the bottle is empty.

D

(pouty)

It's empty.

T

Maybe that's a sign to call it a night. I mean, you got a flight tomorrow.

D

Can I crash here?

T

I figured you were, considering you are wearing my clothing and currently crossed as hell.

They get closer, legs overlapping, the wine and weed forgotten. They look at each other.

D

I'm glad you're around you know. You make insufferable events better.

T

Thanks. I'm glad you're around too.

They smile at each other. D brushes a strand of hair out of T's face. D starts to move closer and then a phone rings. Simultaneously, the GIRLS kiss. Lovingly, softly. They tangle their hands in their hair, and begin backing up offstage, giggling into each other's mouths. D answers the phone.

D

Hello? Yes, I'm fine, I'm at T's. Yes. No, no I don't need an Uber. Or a Lyft. I'm safe, yes! You can come get me in the morning. I'm a grown woman. Yes. Okay. Okay. Bye, Sarah.

D hangs up. The GIRLS are gone.

T

Managers, am I right?

D

Yeah, can't live without 'em or whatever.

There is some silence. They aren't sure how to proceed.

T

Wanna go to bed? We can put something on Netflix, I need it like some people need white noise.

D

Sounds perfect. Should we clean up?

T

I'll do it tomorrow. Don't stress. Come on.

T stretches her hand out. D grabs it. They walk off stage. Blackout.

SCENE 11.5

Breathe Out

The set is bare, except for two tall chairs and a table with a bottle of rubbing alcohol, cotton balls, and two piercing guns. Two GIRLS come out, holding hands, clearly nervous. They are getting their doubles pierced together. They sit in the tall chairs and wait patiently. Another GIRL appears somewhere on stage writing a letter that is projected onto the set somehow. It reads something like: Mom and Dad, I'm 13. I am very responsible, I get good grades, I try my best in everything to be a good daughter. Please let me pierce my ears. I love you! Another GIRL appears holding a baby doll, who has shiny new earrings, matching the ears of the GIRL who's holding her. She rocks the doll back and forth, skipping around the stage happily. Finally, two final GIRLS come out, and prepare the GIRLS in chairs for their piercings, with the alcohol. The GIRLS who sit reach out for each other, hold their hands roughly, eyes shut tight, as the piercing gun sets on their ears. They breathe in, then out and wear hear the guns click. Blackout.

SCENE 12

A Meeting

E

Who are you?

M

Me? Who are you?

E

Well that's hardly fair, I asked you first.

M

My name is Jo. Well, Mary Jo. But I just go by Jo.

Bitterly:

Mary was my mother.

E

I take it we don't like Mary.

M

Let's just be glad she's not here.

E

Where is here, exactly?

M

Excuse me, Miss...?

E

Oh, uh, Evelyn.

M

Miss Evelyn, I am not a tour guide nor am I someone to haggle without some proper conversation first.

E

Sorry, I just, don't really know where I am.

M

Honey, neither do I. I just know this is where I'm at.

E

O...kay.

M

So you're Evelyn.

E

Yes.

M

How old are you?

E

Uh, 34. Last I checked anyway. Not really sure how long it's been since my last birthday.

M

Interesting.

E

What about you?

M

The youth these days, don't you know it's not proper to ask a lady her age?

E

You asked for mine!

M laughs.

M

I'm pulling your leg, girl. 63. Last I checked.

M winks. E eases a bit.

E

What do we do here?

M shrugs.

M

Anything, I suppose. I visit people sometimes. I've never really had company before. I usually just talk to myself.

E

Oh. Well. I can be company, if you'd like.

M

Really?

E

Got all the time in the world, might as well make a friend right?

M grins. E relaxes, fully. She's accepted this.

M

Right. Well, let me take you to my favorite spot. There's a girl in this neighborhood who has been practicing for her recital in her yard. She reminds me of my daughter when she was young. Do you dance?

E

I used to. Maybe now, I can pick it back up.

M

Maybe you can.

They exit.

SCENE 12.5

Suck It In

There are mirrors and scales scattered across the stage. Along the floor there are spanx underwear, waist trainers, and other girdle type clothing items. A GIRL comes onto stage holding another GIRLS hand, who has her hair up with a bow, and holds the baby doll in her other hand. The older GIRL stops by a scale, gets on, looks at the number, and smiles. A good number. She then looks at the younger GIRL and motions for her to do the same. She does. She does not understand the number, but the older GIRL smiles again, pleased. They walk to a mirror, and the older one stands in front of it examining herself. She turns to the side and looks at her profile. She sucks her stomach in, runs her hands against the flatness she's created on her stomach. She grins. She leaves the mirror, looking at the younger GIRL expectantly. She does not want to look in the mirror, but she doesn't want to disappoint her. She looks at herself. She turns, sucks in her stomach. It hurts, and she doesn't like it very much. She frowns, and leaves the mirror. The GIRLS walk around, picking up the various clothes items, and leaving them laying somewhere else. Eventually, the older GIRL pauses and gets on another scale. The number is the same. She sighs in relief. She grabs a waist trainer and wraps it around her, over her dress. She looks in the mirror. She is very happy. The younger one, attempting to smile, sucks in her stomach again. She's getting used to it. She puts the baby doll on a scale. The GIRLS grab hands again, and walk offstage.

SCENE 13

Proof of Mom

A woman comes and sits on the lip of the stage, her legs dangling. She looks exhausted. She's got a glass of white wine, it's not full, either she didn't pour it all the way or she's already had some. She picks a random person in the audience, ideally a woman who looks like she's been a mother.

If she hasn't, that's okay. But she picks someone, and she offers them a glass of wine. No matter whether the audience member says yes or no she will move past it immediately. She starts conversing.

P

I love my daughter, I swear I do. She knows all the best jokes to tell when I sit on the toilet and she sits on the tub edge swinging her legs and I tell her not to because she's going to lose her balance and fall backwards into the tub and bump her head and she won't like it very much, but she insists she will be okay and she tells her joke anyways and I laugh like a good mother should but also because it was a funny joke and I couldn't help myself to laugh.

She likes to run her fingers across my vanity and touch things even when I have told her not to, because there's lots of things that could drop and break, but I'm not really worried about the objects, they are just things, money exists to buy and replace those things. Anyways, I tell her not to drop the stuff and what stuff would she like to see and try because Mommy can help and we can be safe together. And she says I want to see your rings, so I grab the box where my rings live and open it up and let her try them all on, showing her fingers to the air, giggling all the while. She will tell another joke during this, which won't be as funny as the toilet joke but I will laugh anyway.

And then we will go to the store to buy some things and strangers will tell me she is adorable and wow she is just the sweetest thing and can I buy her a toy and someone at some point will say she is beautiful just like her momma and they will wink and I will blush and glance at my finger and think of my husband who is at work and how much he loves our lovely little girl but wondering if he still loves me or he loves what I gave him, does that make sense?

Anyways, I will go home from the store with her and my face will still be bright red and she will say I look like an apple and I will ask if she wants an apple and she will say no, later and I will nod. We understand each other like that. And I will walk to the restroom and she will follow begging to tell me a joke and I will let her because i love her i love her i love her but jesus christ how long will it be until i can take a piss in peace again?

Sorry a pee. We don't cuss at home. She's in a repetition stage. Does everything Mommy does. Y'know?

P downs her wine, leaves the glass on the lip of the stage. A GIRL comes out in hairbows playing, sees P, sees the glass, and goes to grab it. She picks it up, examines it, and practices drinking from it. She skips offstage with the glass.

SCENE 13.5

Nail Salon

The GIRLS are spaced out in the stage sitting in spa chairs, with their feet dipped into the water tub. They hold a phone in their left hand, texting. Their right hand is stretched out to the side, awaiting the beginning of their manicure. They have earbuds in to play some sort of audio we do not hear. They take a deep sigh and relax. While this occurs the following text messages are projected onto the screen and we hear a "Siri/Alexa"-esque voice reading each time they arrive.

- *So where are you guys meeting up?*
- *Can you pick up ramen for dinner? Instant ramen, not the fancy shit. I need some sodium or I'm going to pass out.*
- *He did it again.*
- *No no, we're going out tonight! We can't let him win. He wants to see you sad, fuck that! You're single now. Live your best life.*
- *She's really nice. I think we could be friends if we tried.*
- *Yes, I'll do it. Yes, I want the job! Say yes. I don't care about the pay rate.*
- *He's picking me up! No Uber for me this time. Ain't he a gentleman?*
- *I don't know how to tell my roommate to clean up, like confrontation is not my strong suit. But I'm getting wrinkles from being angry all the time.*
- *I don't have any ice packs.*
- *How many calories are in these leftovers? Do you know?*
- *Tell me which nails you like best.*
- *God, I love him.*

- *I can't stand this motherfucker.*
- *Phoebe dropped a new song. Sad party tonight? I can pick up some Two-Buck Chuck from the store.*
- *Happy birthday!*
- *Congratulations!*
- *Holy shit.*
- *It really stings.*
- *Fuck that guy.*
- *He ghosted me, I think.*
- *Share your location before you leave. Call me if you need anything.*
- *I can't leave.*
- *Don't watch the new episode without me! Putting in some overtime, be home soon!*
- *I have to do something.*
- *Call the cops.*
- *Are we going out tonight or what?*
- *Don't forget to call mom later. She misses you.*
- *I'm going to kill him one day.*
- *Not if he kills you first.*

The GIRLS switch their phones to the other hand and outstretch their left hand. They take their feet out of the tub and glance at their toes, manicured. They smile.

The GIRLS return to their relaxed state. The following message bombards their ears.

- *I love you.*
- *I love you.*
- *I love you.*
- *I love you.*
- *I love you.*
- *I love you.*

They get a call. They ignore it, send it straight to voicemail. They receive one more text. It is no longer a computer voice, but many women's voices, overlapping each others to say:

- *Call me back.*

Blackout.

SCENE 14

Performance

There are flowers everywhere. Different kinds, but ideally the majority have petals that can be ripped off as if one were playing “Loves Me, Loves Me Not”. They are hanging, on the ground just laying, in vases, etc.

GIRLS emerge, wearing their pointe shoes. Otherwise they have the exact same costuming from the whole show. No tutus or bunhead moments. They find a spot on the floor, claim it, and begin to stretch. They do not acknowledge the flowers.

T, D, A, B, XV, H, R and P enter from the wings. They do not acknowledge the GIRLS. They walk around and pick a flower for themselves.

T / D / A / B / XV / H / R / P

He loves me.

They pick off a petal.

He loves me not.

Another.

He loves me.

Another.

He loves me not.

They move around the space, lost in their own daydreams. They walk and they walk. They go to sit on the lip of the stage, legs dangling. They hold their picked flower and stare straight out into the audience. They stop picking the petals for now.

The GIRLS stand, and get into their dance formation. The dance begins. It consists of some ballet technique, weird contemporary movement, and callbacks to other movements in the play thus far, such as turning to look over their shoulder three times. The named characters do not turn to watch. The GIRLS continue to dance.

T / D / A / B / X V / H / R / P

He loves me.

They pick a petal. A GIRL begins to bleed, staining the bottom of her dress. She stops dancing. She goes to stand behind the line on the edge of the stage. The other GIRLS continue to dance. They do not notice this.

T / D / A / B / X V / H / R / P

He loves me not.

They pick a petal. Another GIRL begins to bleed. Same process as before.

T / D / A / B / X V / H / R / P

He loves me. He loves me not. He loves me. Not. Loves. Not. Loves. Not.

Petal, petal, petal, petal. All the GIRLS are bleeding. They are in pain. They are screaming. They want it to end. The flowers are bare.

P reaches into her pockets. She pulls out some tampons. Sticks her arm up, the GIRLS scramble for them, pushing and screaming. They all get one, and put it in. They sigh in relief. They go back to dancing.

T, D, A, B, XV, H and P turn around to watch the performance. They are silent. They forget their flowers.

The GIRLS dance until they think they might drop. They sweat, and grunt. They do not drop their smile while dancing. They dance and dance, and one by one the spoken characters get up, and walk away. The GIRLS pretend they do not notice, but they do. They are losing their audience. They are visibly stressed but do not stop dancing. When they are gone the GIRLS turn their focus to the real audience.

They smile big and wide. It's slightly scary. They try to form words. It sounds like gargles. Like a child learning to speak. It sounds like pain. They begin crying. They keep trying to speak while dancing while crying. They dance until one of them collapses, and they stop, surprised. They look at her. She stays on the ground. They turn back to the audience. They do a curtsy.

They try once again to form a sentence. They are a mess.

The spoken women return, bringing out some mirrors, they place them upstage of the GIRLS, silently, and walk off again. The GIRLS turn, see their disaster in the mirrors and run up to fix themselves, wiping at their face and an idea occurs to them.

They sit on the stage, in a circle around the collapsed GIRL. They unlace their pointe shoes, pick up only one, and walk to the mirrors left upstage. They pick up their arm, prepping for a swing.

They turn to look at the collapsed GIRL.

GIRLS

Mir-ror, mirro-r,

O-n the w-a-ll,

Wh-o's the fa-ire-st o-f the-m al-l?

They break the mirror with their shoes, the glass cracking. The collapsed GIRL shoots up, terrified. She screams.

Blackout.

End of Play.