

THE CREEK

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A Musical in 2 Acts

by

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Summary

Sexual abuse mentor's attempts to heal cycles of abuse upended by manipulative abuse victim.

Synopsis

Nia is a sexual abuse survivor attending graduate school to become a therapist when her own therapist assigns her mentorship over 16-year-old Nikki and 17-year-old Remy. Mentorship goes well with Nikki, but Remy presents several challenges: he shrugs off, or walls off, his abuse as something he's in full control of; he questions Nia's motives for becoming a therapist; he attempts to get her to try drugs, including ecstasy, as he's read it's an effective treatment for P.T.S.D. related to abuse; he finds Nia's estranged abusive stepfather on social media; and in general acts like a manipulative and inconsiderate jackass.

When Remy gets Nia to go to the club with him we learn about his entanglement with the club owner, who is dealing him drugs for sexual favors. Soon after this, Nia's attempts to get through to him about his abuse and his behavior are interrupted when Remy tries to play her.

Then, for reasons stemming both from Remy's goading and her own search for healing, Nia decides to contact her stepfather, but her designs on confrontation and closure are waylaid by the fact that he is in a coma, under the care of his probably homicidal wife.

Nia is again interrupted when she gets word that there's been an altercation between Remy and the club owner, and that Remy has slapped Nikki after trying to get her to have sex with him. She then returns to explore whether healing the cycle of abuse is possible, for either of them.

Cast of Characters

Actress A:

NIA ROSSI A grad student, 26 years old.

Actor B:

YOUNG MAN A young man.

JOGGER A jogger.

REMIGO (REMY) NAVARRO An abuse victim, 17, Latino.

HARASSER 1 A male harasser.

Actress C:

YOUNG WOMAN A young woman.

NIKKI STONE An abuse victim, 16.

LEXI CALDWELL Michael's new wife, 22.

PHONE A smartphone voice.

Actor D:

MAN A man.

LOUIS HOLLANDER A therapist, 44.

IAN CRAWFORD A venue owner, 50.

MICHAEL SUBER Nia's estranged foster father, 57.

Actress E:

WOMAN A woman.

VIRA NAVARRO Remy's mom, 36, Latina immigrant.

DENISE ROSSI Nia's older half-sister, 30.

NURSE A nurse.

HARASSER 2 A male harasser (cross dressed).

\* 1-3 actors may be added to share/swing roles and act as chorus/extras. Actor F share D parts; Actress G share A & E parts; and Actress H share C and (cross-dressed) B parts.

\*\* If no Latinx actors can be found, playwright gives permission for parts to be modified.

Scene and Time

A wooded creek, a counseling center, a residence, an all-ages club, an apartment, a bus, a hospital, and a park in Nashville, all taking place in the spring of 2014 or so.

Track List

	<u>Act 1</u>	TIME	PAGE#
1.	Creek Theme (Instrumental Prologue Sequence)	2:05	1
2.	Did You Feel Like?	2:58	6
3.	You Don't Have to Tell Me	4:12	14
4.	And Then You Catch It	2:20	24
5.	I Want to Make Beautiful with You	2:31	30
6.	Creek Song	2:59	36
7.	You Should Try X	3:16	43
8.	Sunday Night Dance Party	2:30	54
9.	How Do You Know If You've Never?	2:42	61
10.	Super Soldier	3:55	67
11.	A Healthy Adult Relationship	2:39	72
12.	Naked Eye	2:32	76
	<u>Act 2</u>		
13.	Leaf on the Water	4:32	78
14.	You Ain't Getting His Money	3:34	87
15.	I Haven't Lost You Yet	3:26	93
16.	Name the Wind	2:04	95
17.	Creek Song (Reprise)	1:51	97
18.	When I Find Him	2:48	106
19.	There Is a Line	3:48	110
20.	Creek Theme (Instrumental Reprise)	0:31	114

TOTAL TIME: 57:14

Musical NumbersAct 1

- |     |  |                    |
|-----|--|--------------------|
| 1.  | Creek Theme (Instrumental Prologue Sequence) | COMPANY            |
| 2.  | Did You Feel Like?                           | NIA, NIKKI         |
| 3.  | You Don't Have to Tell Me                    | NIA, REMY          |
| 4.  | And Then You Catch It                        | LOUIS, VIRA        |
| 5.  | I Want to Make Beautiful with You            | REMY, NIKKI        |
| 6.  | Creek Song                                   | NIA, DENISE        |
| 7.  | You Should Try X                             | NIA, REMY          |
| 8.  | Sunday Night Dance Party                     | NIA, DENISE, NIKKI |
| 9.  | How Do You Know If You've Never?             | REMY, IAN          |
| 10. | Super Soldier                                | REMY, NIA          |
| 11. | A Healthy Adult Relationship                 | NIA                |
| 12. | Naked Eye                                    | COMPANY            |

Act 2

- |     |   |                         |
|-----|---|-------------------------|
| 13. | Leaf on the Water                       | COMPANY                 |
| 14. | You Ain't Getting His Money             | LEXI, NIA               |
| 15. | I Haven't Lost You Yet                  | NIA, MICHAEL            |
| 16. | Name the Wind                           | MICHAEL                 |
| 17. | Creek Song (Reprise)                    | NIA                     |
| 18. | When I Find Him                         | NIA, NIKKI, VIRA, LOUIS |
| 19. | There Is a Line                         | COMPANY                 |
| 20. | Creek Theme (Instrumental Reprise)      | COMPANY                 |
| 21. | And Then You Catch It (Curtain Reprise) | COMPANY                 |

ACT 1

Scene 1 - The Creek

SETTING: A wooded creek with a pedestrian path, late spring.

AT RISE: **(1. The Creek Theme (Instrumental Prologue Sequence)**. NIA enters and jogs across the stage listening to music through sport headphones connected to her smartphone strapped to her bicep. Just before SHE exits the stage, lights up on a MAN giving a college lecture. NIA exits. MAN continues lecture. NIA enters jogging, lights down on MAN -- This sequence is a representation of Nia's thoughts while she is jogging. This "thought-scene" sequence repeats several times for different thoughts, two of which are: MAN abuses WOMAN, and YOUNG MAN abuses YOUNG WOMAN. The director and company shall decide the severity of these scenes, how far to take them. These scenes are to be interspersed among other scenes from NIA's "normal" thoughts and life happenings. NIA is seen sometimes reacting to her thoughts. MAN and YOUNG MAN, when playing abusers, wear one-eyed masks. The "one-eye" represents the singular predatory vision of an abuser. Apart from the masks, these scenes may use realism or continue on with surrealism, dance, etc. Staging of all thought-scenes may come from content clues in the script itself, or whatever else the director thinks Nia's thoughts

might be. Also, the playwright may be contacted if further clarification is desired. After NIA's thought-scenes are over, MAN, WOMAN, YOUNG MAN, and YOUNG WOMAN exit. NIA jogs across the stage, then, far behind NIA, JOGGER jogs across the stage. This happens again three times. Each time, JOGGER gets nearer to NIA, who notices her pursuer, stops and pretends to tie her shoe, but readies an assault-deterrent. JOGGER jogs past, and exits. During this sequence the accompaniment is instructed to play certain dissonant or consonant passages/vamps that match the abuse or normalcy of what is happening on stage, as well as matching up proportionally to NIA's suspicions of JOGGER. The sequence ends when the music is interrupted by NIA's phone buzzing. SHE stops and answers it. Lights up on LOUIS.)

NIA

Hello.

LOUIS

Hi, Nia, it's Dr. Hollander. Say, I was wondering if you might have the time to take on another mentorship assignment?

NIA

Oh, um -- sure. I should have time.

LOUIS

You're sure.

NIA

Yeah, what's her situation?

LOUIS

His name is Remigo Navarro, he's a --

NIA

I'm sorry did you say he?

LOUIS

Yes. Is that all right?

NIA

Um ... yeah, that's fine.

LOUIS

Great, I will email you the same forms you signed for Nikki.

NIA

Oh, sure, um ... I'm on a run right now but I'll get them to you tonight or tomorrow.

LOUIS

Great, thank you Nia.

NIA

Of course, Dr. Hollander. Thanks for the opportunity.

LOUIS

Mm-hm, thanks Nia, have a nice run, good-bye.

NIA

Bye.

(NIA hangs up, lights down on LOUIS. NIA places her phone and jogs offstage.)

(FADE OUT)

(END OF SCENE)

Scene 2 - First Sessions

SETTING: A counseling center office and waiting room.

AT RISE: NIKKI and NIA are working on a puzzle in the waiting room. REMY and LOUIS are having a counseling session in the office.

NIA  
Yes, that's right, but only as long as I'm in school.

NIKKI  
To be a therapist, like Dr. Hollander.

NIA  
Oh, maybe someday. You need a doctorate to have his job.

NIKKI  
In psychology.

NIA  
In counseling actually.

NIKKI  
What's the difference?

NIA  
It depends on what you think you want to focus on, more on research or more on, um -- to do with the clinical aspect - - like are you more into the science of it, or more into working with people. You can do both -- it's just about focus.

(NIA finds a piece that fits near where NIKKI is working and she places it.)

... So what about you, is there anything you're interested in?

NIKKI  
Man ... I have no idea what I'd major in. I don't even know if I'd go. I mean, I know I'm not going to: grad school, I know that right now.

NIA

Well I wouldn't worry too much about that. I mean I was an art history major originally, and now I'm doing this.

NIKKI

Dang, so you can draw huh?

NIA

I, um: yeah --

(laughs)

You know what they don't teach you Nikki -- I mean it's not like you always just: get an art major and then you go into art. It doesn't happen like that most of the time.

NIKKI

Oh, but like ... huh.

NIA

I think that the most important thing is just getting a degree at all. Employers just want to know that you can go for something big and finish it, as much as what it is you did.

NIKKI

Oh, huh.

NIA

Like, I used to get so frustrated, you know like, "when am I ever going to need to know any of this?"

NIKKI

Oh hell yeah, I know that.

NIA

But, what I learned is that it's more like you're just ... building muscle, learning how to learn, that's what you want to focus on. Like doing pushups doesn't get you anywhere, but it makes you stronger. Does that make sense?

NIKKI

Yeah ...

NIA

You're a Junior right?

NIKKI

Yeah.

NIA

Well I'm saying, just apply to some places in the fall, you know? Just see what happens ... and I mean, you meet people too. You don't know how much you take the social aspect for granted until you're out of school -- you miss that after college. It's been a nice perk of going back.

NIKKI

(emphasize "the")

Yeah, but not like, the reason.

NIA

The what?

NIKKI

The reason you went back.

NIA

Oh ... yes -- you mean my personal experience with abuse, Dr. Hollander would have mentioned that yes?

(NIKKI nods.)

Yes, that was a part of it ... Would you like to talk about that?

NIKKI

Do you want to talk about it?

NIA

That is a part of what I'm here for. Yes ... did you have any questions?

**(2. Did You Feel Like?)**

NIKKI

Well just like ...

WHEN IT HAPPENED TO YOU, DID YOU ...

NIA

IT'S ALRIGHT, YOU CAN ASK ME.

NIKKI

WHEN IT HAPPENED, DID YOU FEEL ...  
LIKE YOU COULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO ...

NIA  
YES, I FELT LIKE THAT, AND LET ME TELL YOU THAT  
THERE'S NOTHING THAT YOU DID WRONG.

NIKKI  
NOTHING.

NIA  
NOTHING.

NIKKI  
DID YOU FEEL LIKE ...

NIKKI  
IT'S LIKE YOU DON'T WANT TO BE

NIA  
NO YOU DON'T WANT TO BE

NIKKI/NIA  
AN OBJECT,

NIKKI  
SO YOU PRETEND YOU'VE GOT A HANDLE ON IT.

NIA  
YOU HAD TO HAVE HAD SOME CONTROL,

NIKKI  
AND YOU DON'T WANT A SCANDAL,

NIA  
YOU CAN HANDLE THIS.

NIKKI  
DID YOU FEEL LIKE PROPERTY FOR STEALING?

NIA  
AND IT'S SUCH A DIRTY FEELING.

NIA/NIKKI  
WHEN WILL IT EVER FADE

NIA  
AWAY?

NIKKI  
DID YOU FEEL LIKE...  
YOU SEE IT COMING BUT YOU DON'T TRY TO STOP IT

NIA  
WHAT'S THE USE IN FIGHTING BACK,

NIKKI  
YOU KNOW IT ONLY MAKES IT WORSE,

NIA  
YEAH YOU TRIED IT BEFORE.

NIKKI  
AND SO YOU TRY TO TUNE IT OUT,

NIA  
YOU CAN'T BE WHO YOU WERE ANYMORE.

NIKKI  
AND IF ONLY I COULD LIKE IT THEN I WOULDN'T HAVE  
TO HATE IT.

NIA  
AND YOU HATE YOURSELF

NIA/NIKKI  
FOR THINKING THAT WAY.

NIKKI  
IT AIN'T LIKE HE WANTS TO KILL YOU,

NIA  
HE ONLY WANTS TO LOVE YOU,

NIKKI  
WHAT THE HELL AM I SAYING?

NIA/NIKKI  
WHAT THE HELL

NIA  
AM I SAYING?

NIKKI  
OH GOD YOU DON'T WANT TO BE

NIA  
NOBODY WANTS TO BE

NIKKI/NIA  
AN OBJECT,

NIKKI  
A TOOL, A TOY.

NIA  
SO YOU PRETEND YOU'VE GOT A HANDLE ON IT.

NIKKI  
WHAT IF I WAS PARTLY TO BLAME,  
WHAT COULD HAVE I DONE TO STOP IT?

NIA  
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.  
CAUSE IT'S YOUR PROPERTY HE'S STEALING,

NIKKI  
IT NEVER STOPS THE DIRTY FEELING.

NIA/NIKKI  
WHEN WILL IT EVER FADE AWAY?

NIKKI  
DID YOU FEEL LIKE ...  
AND IT FEELS LIKE A POISON POMPOM  
SOAKED IN ELECTRIC LAMINATION.  
DID YOU FEEL LIKE A POMPOM

NIA/NIKKI  
SOAKED IN ELECTRIC POISON LAMINATION?

NIKKI  
AND YOU'RE PETRIFIED,

NIA  
AND SO GOD DAMN BORED,

NIKKI  
JUST GET IT OVER WITH ...

NIA  
AT LEAST YOU KNOW THAT IT WON'T BE LONG,

NIKKI  
YEAH AT LEAST YOU KNOW THAT IT WON'T BE LONG,

NIA/NIKKI  
UNTIL THE LONGEST TIME BEFORE IT HAPPENS AGAIN.

NIKKI  
Dang, so like, but you get that though, like how you think you can handle it and that.

NIA  
Yeah, it's like -- it can become this: license -- like this weird sacred thing -- and you don't want people to protect you, or defend you, because that means like you're not ... well again like you can't handle it.

NIKKI  
Yeah, yeah, but then like, I mean, you don't want people to ignore you though either.

NIA  
(thinks, nods)  
Mm-hh, yeah, you want them to know about it, but you also want them to forget it, so it's not a thing.

NIKKI  
(wags head)  
Yeah, so you could just be like: on-off, like a switch.

NIA  
Yeah, like a light switch, that'd be --

(Nikki's phone sounds, SHE checks it.)

NIKKI  
Oh, that's my mom. I don't know if she knows I was staying this long ... I should go.

NIA  
Okay, yeah, sure. Thanks for --

(LOUIS opens his office door for REMY and THEY enter the waiting room.)

LOUIS

Nia, good. Remy, this is Nia Rossi, the volunteer mentor I mentioned. Perhaps you can meet another time though, if you're still talking with Nikki here.

NIKKI

Nah, I gotta go actually.

LOUIS

Oh, good timing, Remy, do you have time to meet with Nia for a short while?

REMY

(shrugs)

Sure ...

LOUIS

Alright then, well, I have some work to get to. Have a good day everyone, excuse me.

(LOUIS returns to his office.)

REMY

(to NIKKI)

Hey, you go to Central?

NIKKI

Yeah.

REMY

Yeah, I go there sometimes.

NIA

Oh -- Remy, this is Nikki Stone ...

REMY

Right on.

(A few beats pass.)

NIKKI

Alright, um, bye Nia, nice to meet you Remy.

REMY

Yup.

NIA

Bye Nikki.

(NIKKI exits.)

So, Remy, would you like to --

REMY

Oh hey, I gotta take off in like a bit, I got this new job.

NIA

That's okay. So, where's your new job?

REMY

... Hey so how come you're a mentor? You used to do this too?

NIA

Well, the main reason is that I'm in graduate school.

REMY

Huh, K ... well, mentor on baby.

NIA

(brusque laugh)

Remy, let's -- listen, I'm grateful for the opportunity to mentor you, and I want to, be of help, but --

REMY

Hey so this is like: double therapy huh?

NIA

Well, not really, what --

REMY

Like Dr. Hollander never got his ass crack swiped by a pervert: so he can't like, "get me" like you can -- something like that?

NIA

No, not at all, and we don't even have to talk about your experiences, or mine. I'm here, just as: support, whatever you need.

REMY

Support. "Shrink support", nice, shrink it up.

NIA

(laughs)

Uh, remember, Dr. Hollander is the only licensed therapist currently at the center, so I can't, shrink it up ...

REMY

Yeah, Dr. Hollander's pretty tight ...

NIA

You're having productive sessions with Dr. Hollander?

REMY

Sure, yup, and he's screwing my mom, so I sort of have to.

NIA

What?

REMY

Yeah, they've been going out for like a month, totally screwing by now. Big time.

NIA

Oh ... how, um --

REMY

They met online. After a while he found out I got all kinds of dick-tickled when I was a kid -- but, I mean: he emailed her first, so it's not like she was looking to date therapists, you know? It's just like, a thing.

NIA

Wait, what?

REMY

A therapist, it was in his profile, so like, maybe, but, you know?

NIA

Wait, so they met --

REMY

And my mom is like, I mean she's a betty, but she's prickly man, so -- yeah.

NIA

Your mom is prickly.

REMY

Like a cactus. It's like, I even made her profile for her you know -- cause like, I'm out of here soon, you know.

NIA

Out of here like you're moving?

REMY

Yeah, I'm out, I got plans.

NIA

Oh, that's exciting, where are you going?

REMY

What? ...

NIA

Where are you moving to?

(REMY looks at NIA a while.

**3. You Don't Have to Tell Me.**)

NIA

LISTEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE,  
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
IF YOU'D RATHER NOT.

REMY

NAH, IT'S ALRIGHT SO LIKE  
AS SOON AS I TURN EIGHTEEN,  
I'M GONNA WIPE MY SLATE CLEAN,  
YES I'M GONNA BE A CLEAN SLATER.

(lying)

AND I HADN'T REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT TO WHERE YET,  
GUESS I'M NOT THERE YET,  
GUESS I'LL DECIDE THAT LATER ...  
MAYBE DOWN THE STREET, MAYBE UP THE SHORE,  
I'M JUST LOOKING FOR A LITTLE MORE,  
SOMEWHERE WITH A BANGIN UNDERSCORE.  
AND NO WORRIES MAN, MAYBE I'LL BE BACK SOON,  
AND MAYBE NOT,  
JUST WANT TO TAKE MY OWN SHOT, YOU KNOW?

NIA

YEAH, PARDON ME FOR ASKING,  
BUT ARE YOU JUST LOOKING FOR SOMETHING NEW  
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU REALLY WANT TO DO, UM,  
OR IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'RE TRYING TO GET AWAY  
FROM?

REMY

What the heck you talking about "Is there anything I gotta  
get away from?"

NIA

I'M SORRY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME  
IF IT MAKES THINGS EASIER  
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
IF THERE'S NOTHING MUCH TO TELL.

REMY

NAH, IT'S ALRIGHT SO LIKE:  
LET'S GET IT OUT IN THE OPEN.  
JUST LET ME KNOW IF AND WHEN  
I SHOULD PULL THE ROPE IN,  
CAUSE IF YOU WERE HOPING  
IT WAS JUST SOME GROPING,  
I HOPE YOU HAVE GOOD COPING SKILLS,  
CAUSE THIS SHIT MADE MY MOMMA START POPPING  
PILLS, BUT I DIGRESS ...  
SO IT'S LIKE MY PRIEST  
USED TO TELL ME OF GOD'S GRACES,  
THEN HE'D RUB HIS PENIS  
ALL UP IN MY PRIVATE PLACES,  
TOLD ME IT WAS A RIGHT OF PASSAGE, AN INITIATION,  
ALL A PART OF GOD'S CREATION,  
AND DAMNATION AWAITED ME IF I BLABBED.

AND AM I "RUNNING AWAY" FROM THAT?  
NAH, NOT REALLY, THE GUY'S IN JAIL,  
NOW HE'S THE ONE WEARING SOMEONE'S DICK AS A TAIL  
HIS MINISTRY WAS AN EPIC FAIL.  
IF YOU LIKE I CAN GO INTO MORE DETAIL,  
LIKE THE TIME HE GRABBED MY NUTS  
AT THE ALTAR RAIL AND THEN HE --

NIA

JESUS REMY, STOP A MINUTE NOW, YOU DON'T HAVE TO  
TELL ME ALL THIS, IF IT MAKES THINGS EASIER,  
YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
OR JUST, MAYBE YOU CAN SLOW IT DOWN.

REMY

Slow it down? What?

NIA

I just feel like this might be a little much, maybe a  
little too much for right now, I mean --

REMY

TOO MUCH INFORMATION?

WEREN'T YOU IN A SIMILAR SITUATION?  
SEE, WHEN I SAW YOU I THOUGHT  
I KNOW WHY SHE'S A MENTOR,  
PROBABLY SOMEBODY BENT HER OVER SOMETHING  
THAT SHE DIDN'T WANT TO BE BENT,  
AND NOW SHE'S TRYING TO VENT,  
BY ACTING HEAVEN SENT  
TO A MESSED UP YOUNGER GENTLEMAN, LIKE ME.  
SO, WHAT HAPPENED?  
FROM THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE,  
SEEMS LIKE YOU HAD IT PRETTY ROUGH.  
YOU GET RAPED ON A DATE  
OR WAS IT LIKE DOMESTIC STUFF?  
SORRY IF I'M SPEAKING OFF THE CUFF,  
BUT BEING GENTEEL IS TOO TOUGH OF AN ENDEAVOR.  
TRUST ME IT FEELS BETTER  
TO JUST BE LIKE "WHATEVER."

AND I THINK IT'S GREAT  
THAT YOU WANT TO LIGHTEN THE LOAD I CARRY,  
MAKE THE WORLD LESS SCARY,  
YOU MAYBE WANT TO HELP ME BURY IT ALL.  
BUT I DON'T THINK YOU CAN BURY THIS SHIT  
IF YOU EVER WANT CLOSURE.  
SO LIKE, WERE YOU RAPED,  
OR WAS IT JUST LIKE, INDECENT EXPOSURE?

(pause)

OH SORRY YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
IF IT MAKES THIS EASIER,  
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME,  
IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL TOO "BLEH."

NIA

NO, IT'S ALRIGHT, I'M FINE,  
AND IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.  
MAYBE I JUST DON'T FEEL THE NEED TO SHOUT IT.  
SO MAYBE MIND YOUR MANNERS,  
MAYBE YOU DON'T NEED TO SPELL IT OUT  
ON GIANT COMIC SANS BANNERS,  
LIKE A BEACH OF NAKED SUN-TANNERS.  
ANYWAY OKAY: SO MY MOTHER TOOK OFF,  
AND WE WERE LOST AFTER WE LOST HER.  
SHE LEFT US WITH OUR STEP DAD,  
WHO THEN BECAME OUR FOSTER,  
SPENT YEARS WONDERING IF WE'D  
EVER EVEN CROSSED HER MIND.  
AND IF YOU'D EVER BEEN LEFT BEHIND,

YOU'D WELL, YOU'D GET IT.

ANYWAYS THEN ONE NIGHT HE CAME TO ME,  
HE SAID I OWED HIM FOR ALL THE YEARS HE GAVE,  
ALL THE YEARS HE GAVE TO US, AND HE ...

It happened, and it kept happening, and I was ... I was  
very confused.

AND WHEN MY SISTER FOUND OUT SHE CAME AFTER HIM,  
SWORE THAT SHE'D GET HIM PUT AWAY FOR 5 TO 10.  
BUT I SAID NO AND HE LEFT TOWN,  
AND WE NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN.

REMY

... Dang. So like, you had to live with him too? ... Hey  
but you said step dad, where's your real dad?

NIA

He passed away when I was 4.

REMY

Oh dang ... well, I gotta head, got work.

(REMY starts to exit.)

NIA

... have a good shift.

(REMY stops.)

REMY

Oh hey -- you want to go to this club sometime? It's all  
ages, so you could come, like you're not like, too old.

NIA

Um, thanks?

REMY

Hey actually, I got your number in this email. I'll text  
you about it maybe. See ya.

(REMY exits. NIA enters the  
office.)

LOUIS

Nia, so how do you --

NIA

I can't mentor that kid. Are you working with anyone else who'd be a better fit?

LOUIS

You mean a male mentor. I don't have any at the moment.

NIA

Yeah, well, I don't see what I can do for him. He thinks he knows everything already.

LOUIS

Nia, mentors help by simply being, by modeling boundaries.  
(in a reciting tone)  
By modeling healthy adult relationships, mentors provide healthy patterns for future interactions.

NIA

(mumbles)

Yeah...

LOUIS

Hearing a voice that simply says "I believe you" builds belief in the self and encourages healing. As Mentor, you should always be focusing on the 3 "P's" - purpose, pass --

NIA

Yeah, "purpose, passion, and power."

LOUIS

Working in this field means you have to take on all kinds, some surprising and unexpected. Mentoring is a good opportunity to get experience before you add on the --

(NIA's phone sounds, it's a text from Remy which SHE reads.)

responsibilities of licensure and professional practice -- to discover whether this field really is your calling.

(NIA gives LOUIS a dry expectant look and shows HIM the message.)

NIA

This is from him.

LOUIS

(laughs)

Oh, well um, that's ...yup.

NIA

(sighs, looks around)

I've got a paper I should be writing ...

LOUIS

Nia, there is one other thing: I'm seeing his mother.

NIA

(coy)

Seeing his mother? For therapy?

LOUIS

No, romantically.

NIA

Oh, "romantically."

LOUIS

Yes -- is that such a surprise?

NIA

No ... Good job.

LOUIS

Hey now, I've done, plenty of good, things, before, just, not in a while.

NIA

Well, that's good, that's really good.

LOUIS

But, you can see the complication here, how it might complicate my sessions with the boy.

NIA

Yes. I can see that.

(NIA puts her hand on LOUIS's shoulder and looks him in the eye.)

Louis, "I believe you."

(LOUIS laughs.)

(FADE OUT)

(END OF SCENE)

Scene 3 - Remy's House

SETTING: Remy and his mother Vira's home.  
There is a front door and a  
vanity.

AT RISE: REMY is about to leave when VIRA  
enters.

VIRA

Where are you going?

REMY

I'm just going out.

VIRA

No, you are not. That man, that pendejo -- you are going to  
get drugs, that is why you are going out.

REMY

I was just going to the store. I'll be back like soon.

VIRA

Remigo! Debes quedarte.

REMY

I'll be back in like an hour. Bye.

VIRA

Remigo!

(REMY leaves, crossing paths  
with LOUIS entering.)

LOUIS

Hello Remy, where are you off too?

REMY

Fecking, la-la land.

(REMY exits. LOUIS watches after  
him a few beats, then knocks.  
VIRA goes to open the door.)

VIRA

(relieved, thinking it is Remy)

Why did you lock it? Locks keep only the honest people out  
eh?

(VIRA opens the door for Louis,  
looks past him then back.)

Oh ... it's you. Well, come in.

LOUIS

Thank you, Vira.

VIRA

I'm not ready to go yet.

LOUIS

No problem. No hurries, no worries.

(LOUIS enters. VIRA putzes  
around the house.)

VIRA

Louis, you must give that boy respect. He will not take  
mine ...

LOUIS

Ah, well, that is common. You know --

VIRA

He will not listen. I say: he must not have marijuana: and  
he has it. I say he must not go --

(makes "poof" noise)

He goes!

LOUIS

I'm sorry, that is unacceptable behavior, we'll work on  
that.

VIRA

He is not ...

(from anger to sadness)

His time is up Louis. He is not the right boy ...

(LOUIS comforts VIRA.)

LOUIS

You have done an amazing job as his mother Vira. He is  
smart, confident, resourceful --

VIRA

He thinks he is going to be: a musician, a "DJ". It's not  
even an instrument.

LOUIS

He's in a time of transition ... he's: leaving behind parts of himself to make room for new --

VIRA

He is just a boy, Louis.

LOUIS

Yes, he is ...

(VIRA leaves LOUIS and goes to her vanity. LOUIS follows.)

You know, I'd love to keep him on, past his birthday.

VIRA

He will not want to.

LOUIS

We'll see.

VIRA

And how will he pay you. He will not want to get --

LOUIS

Don't worry about that right now, we'll figure something --

VIRA

(snaps)

Ah-aa -- no. This is not acceptable.

LOUIS

Well, we'll figure it out. Did I tell you, I've assigned him a mentor?

(VIRA applies a cosmetic.)

VIRA

A "mentor".

LOUIS

Yes, I've partnered him with one of our mentors. Her name is Nia Rossi, she's a --

VIRA

She is a woman, a woman mentor?

LOUIS

Yes.

VIRA

Good.

(shuts a cosmetic case)

He needs a woman who is not his mother. You want I will tell her -- hey, she has kids?

LOUIS

No, she's a graduate student at the U.

VIRA

She is a graduate student ... She will have your job soon?

LOUIS

(laughs)

Something like it I hope. I believe she will.

VIRA

She can teach him something we cannot, she is so smart?

LOUIS

(playful, jocular)

No, of course not ...

(ponderous)

Remy, at this time in his life -- having healthy adult relationships, relationships without stakes, where he's not being analyzed, or parented, or taught -- y'see: healthy adult interactions can help build a general sense of trust, trust in people, trust in environments --

VIRA

He cannot trust me?

LOUIS

Of course he can -- Vira, you're the only person he's ever trusted. But ... he could benefit from, more. Nia is also a client of mine, her experiences give her a unique --

VIRA

Her Priest?

LOUIS

No, not her priest ...

(clears throat, changes tone)

Well, all right, enough of that, um -- now I know we were thinking about just getting a bite, but I was just --

VIRA

(slams her fist)

There is someone -- at his music club. I know it.

LOUIS

Oh, what's that, that you know?

VIRA

I know my son. There is a man there and he is no good. He sells him drugs this man.

LOUIS

That's possible. It wouldn't be unlikely that Remy would --

VIRA

I knew it! Lo mataré!

(VIRA bangs a brush down on her vanity and it flies up in the air. This can be done via skill or a mechanism in the vanity. LOUIS stumbles about and tries to catch it.)

(If LOUIS catches it.)

(If LOUIS misses it.)

VIRA

Nice catch.

VIRA

Nice try.

(LOUIS twirls comb.)

(LOUIS picks up comb.)

LOUIS

I'll catch anything you got.

LOUIS

Don't worry, I'll get the next one.

(VIRA smirks, picks up a bottle and chucks it at LOUIS, who catches it, or picks it up. **4.** **And Then You Catch It.**)

LOUIS

YOU JUST GOTTA TOSS IT UP  
AND THEN YOU TRY TO CATCH IT.

Check it out:

(LOUIS does something goofy-  
fancy with the bottle and then  
drops it.)

VIRA

Nice catch.

LOUIS

AND IF YOU MISS IT  
TAKE A DIFFERENT TACK.  
(picks up bottle.)  
SET YOUR BIRDIE FREE,  
(twirls bottle.)  
AND WATCH YOUR BIRDIE FLY,  
(throws bottle up in the air.)  
THEN HAVE A LITTLE PARTY  
(spins and boogies)  
TIL IT COMES ON BACK.

(LOUIS catches bottle,  
hopefully. Throughout the rest  
of the song, HE does other  
fancy-goofy tricks, getting VIRA  
to dance with him eventually.)

LOUIS

COME ON NOW VIRA IT'S FRIDAY NIGHT,  
WON'T YOU LAY YOUR WORRIES DOWN.  
YOU CAN GET'M BACK WHEN THE SUN COMES UP,  
JUST LET ME TAKE YOU FOR A NIGHT ON THE TOWN.  
YOU'VE BEEN A MOTHER TO YOUR SON FOR SO LONG NOW,  
IT'S TIME YOU LIVE A LITTLE JUST FOR YOU.  
TOMORROW'S GONNA FALL BACK OUT OF THE SKY,  
SO DO THIS WITH ME DO, DO, DO:

YOU TOSS IT UP  
AND THEN YOU CATCH IT.  
AND IF YOU MISS IT  
GO ON TRY IT AGAIN.  
SET YOUR BIRDIE FREE,  
AND WATCH YOUR BIRDIE FLY.  
THEN HAVE A LITTLE FUN,  
TIL YOU'RE BACK WHERE YOU BEEN.

ONE THING YOU CAN DO TO GET THROUGH TO YOUR SON  
IS JUST TO SHOW HIM THAT YOU'LL BE ALRIGHT.  
A YOUNG MAN NEEDS LOVE AND LIBERTY,  
SO HOLD HIM YES, JUST NOT TOO TIGHT.

YES, REMY NEEDS TO SEE YOU SET YOURSELF FREE,  
THAT YOU GOT YOUR OWN PLACES TO GO-OH!  
AND HEY I'M VERY FOND'A YA,  
AND I GOT A NEW GONDOLA,  
WON'T YOU LET ME ROW YA ROW, ROW, ROW?

VIRA

YOU TOSS IT UP AND YOU CATCH IT,  
BUT IF IT DROPS:  
DALE UN INTENTO MÁ.S.  
LET A BIRDIE GO, BUT LET THE BIRDIE KNOW:  
WHO IS THE BOSS, BEFORE YOU GIVE IT A TOSS!

LOUIS

EE-YEAH!

(THEY dance. CHORUS made of  
ACTORS A, B, & C enters.)

CHORUS

OOO, LAI LAI LAI LA-DI DAI.  
OOO, HEY HEY, HEY HEY.

YOU TOSS IT UP  
AND THEN YOU CATCH IT,  
AND IF YOU MISS,  
PICK IT UP OFF THE FLOOR.  
EE-YEAH, YEAH,  
SET YOUR BIRDIE FREE,  
AND WATCH YOUR BIRDIE FLY.  
THEN HAVE A LITTLE FUN,  
THEN HAVE A LITTLE MORE, YEAH.

(LOUIS goofs and VIRA laughs.)

OOO, LAI LAI LAI LA-DI DAI,  
OOO, HEY HEY, HEY HEY.

(CHORUS exits. VIRA, in a  
dancer's "closed position" with  
LOUIS, puts her head on HIS  
shoulder.)

VIRA

And if the birdie does not come back, Louis?

LOUIS

Then ... you go and find him.

(VIRA breaks position, fetches a  
light jacket and heads for the  
door. LOUIS Follows.)

VIRA

Si -- I go and find him, and I lock him up -- safe in his  
place -- snug as a bug!

(FADE OUT)

(END OF SCENE)

Scene 4 - The Creek Again

SETTING: The Creek, somewhat off the path.

AT RISE: NIKKI and REMY are hanging out  
upstage getting high.

REMY

You feeling it?

NIKKI

Some I think ... what kind is this again?

REMY

Purple Android. Here, listen to this -- this is me.

(REMY hands NIKKI his  
headphones. SHE puts them on, HE  
starts his music, SHE listens,  
lightly bobbing her head to a  
fast beat.)

... So what do you think? ... I mean, it's just freeware  
and a cheap Roland, so ...

(NIKKI removes a headphone cup.)

NIKKI

Which one you using?

REMY

Which Roland?

NIKKI

Which daw?

REMY

Which what?

NIKKI

Which daw?

REMY

What's a daw?

NIKKI

Uh: Digital Audio Workstation, what freeware?

REMY

Like "D-A-W", "daw" -- nobody calls it that!  
(pinches his brow, he's high)  
That's not how you say that.

NIKKI

Well what do you call it?

REMY

Um ... I don't call it anything, just like: what program it  
is ... oh my god -- you could totally call it that though.  
Daaaw -- man. So -- but what do you think? You like it?

NIKKI

It's, um, it's a lot.

REMY

(giggles, nods)

Yeah.

NIKKI

Is there ever singing?

REMY

Nah, you don't need it. I mean, like -- sometimes you  
could, or sample some if you want.

NIKKI

Well, I like music better with singing.

REMY

(a revelation)

Wait, so like -- you make music too though, huh?

NIKKI

(thinking of a past abuser)

... The person I used to live with, he kinda did what you  
do, but more like, ambient, you know?

REMY

(grunts)

Huh ... bet it sucked ass.

NIKKI

(laughs)

Yeah, it did.

REMY

Hey, I can write music with singing though.

NIKKI

Yeah? Nuh-uh.

REMY

Hey: you should sing. You should sing on one of my tracks.

NIKKI

(laughs, shakes head)

Mm-mm, nope, you don't want that.

REMY

What, ah, you're no good? That's okay -- we'll just autotune.

NIKKI

I mean I can sing in tune, that's not it, it's just --

(REMY stops NIKKI with his  
finger. Cue note sounds. **5. I**  
**Want to Make "Beautiful".**)

REMY

I WANT TO MAKE "BEAUTIFUL" WITH YOU.  
COME ALONG AND MAKE A SONG,  
IT WOULDN'T BE WRONG  
IF YOU WANTED TO.  
LET'S CHASE AWAY THE CLOUDS OF GRAY.  
COME ALONG, SPEND A DAY WITH ME  
MAKING SOMETHING NEW.

NIKKI

BUDDY YOU'RE CRAZY.  
I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOUR TRICKS.  
YOU'RE THINKING I'M EASY AND  
YOU WANT TO GET A QUICK FIX.  
BUT JUST BECAUSE I'M NEW TO TOWN,  
JUST BECAUSE OF MY PAST,  
THAT DON'T MEAN I'M FAST.  
MAKE A SONG WITH YOU,  
I KNOW WHAT YOU REALLY MEAN.

REMY

I DON'T THINK YOU'RE EASY,  
I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A SLUT,  
I'M JUST LOOKING FOR  
I DON'T KNOW WHAT.  
ALLS I KNOW IS THAT  
I FEEL IT IN MY GUT.