

Hannah Eagleson

Age: 17, Grade: 12

School Name: Kingsley High School, Kingsley, MI

Educator: Teresa Scollon

Category: Dramatic Script

Joyriding

JOYRIDING

CAST OF CHARACTERS-

WILL A young man who talks a lot of nonsense. Even though his words have meaning, he's pretty hard to follow. It's unclear if this is due to being blasted 24/7 or if it's just his personality. He's a troublemaker who suddenly regrets ever being one. He left home and misses his mom.

LIZ WILL'S estranged mother. She's a workaholic and perfectionist. Even after what her son has put her through, she misses/cares for WILL and wants him to come home.

RAE WILL'S girlfriend. She's emotionally unstable and needy, but very passionate. WILL often refers to their relationship as a "joyride."

SCENE

Two "rooms" with a curtain separating them. One is a casual dining room with a warm aura and the other is a blank slate with nothing in it except for a few random items- a dead body is the most notable thing. The latter room is unknown.

TIME

Midnight, the present.

SCENE 1

AT RISE: The scene is introduced with a spotlight on one half of the stage. It's dim and sirens are heard in the background. This half serves as an unknown place outside. A dead body lies face down at the stage exit.

WILL is crouched on the ground and trying to work his phone. He's as far away from the body as possible.

RAE is aggressively pacing around WILL. She has a blanket wrapped around her body.

RAE

Okay, so um... I guess we're okay. They won't find us. We have some time, lots of time even! Yeah- (RAE snaps her head back and forth as she shivers.)

I hate lying to myself. Baby, those sirens won't shut up. We gotta go.

WILL

It's Manhattan; sirens sing instead of the birds. There's no way they could've found you yet-

(RAE shakes her head.)

RAE

It's not just me, WILL. Don't say it like that. They're after you too-

WILL

Yes, I'm aware. You killed me. I'm a walking dead man because of you.

(RAE shakes her head and starts gesturing dramatically with her hands.)

RAE

Shut up, WILL! Just... stop with your verbal nonsense. This whole situation is nonsense, and you're willingly part of it. What? Are you going to leave me alone with-

(RAE gestures to the body on the other side of the room without looking at it.)

HIM?

WILL

Don't bring HIM into this.

RAE

We're in this together...you and me. Remember? You can't forget that. I'm yours and your mine.

(WILL shakes his head as he smacks the presumably slow phone.)

WILL

Shut up, RAE. Just please... leave me alone. I need to make a call.

RAE

WILL! Forget her! We have to go. Okay? Forget-

(RAE gestures back to the body without looking at it.)

HIM. It's just you and me now, and we have to go.

(WILL spares her a tired glance.)

WILL

Look, I won't tell her anything, but you need to leave me alone for a few minutes. Please, just go get the car started. I'll be quick.

(RAE starts to walk away, but quickly turns around.)

RAE

WILL, you can hate me, but I need you to know that I need you. I'm sorry. I love you so much-

(RAE begins to cry as she buries her face in her blanket covered hands.)

WILL

Our life has gone to hell, RAE. And because I love you, I'm willing to drive the car there. I know you're sorry. So please, pull yourself together and make sure everything's ready. I'll meet you in a few minutes.

(RAE slowly nods and wipes her nose. She crouches down with WILL and drapes her blanket over his shoulders. She kisses his cheek and walks to the stage exit. The body visibly disturbs her, and she chooses to avoid it by desperately hopping off stage and exiting that way.)

WILL

Please, please pick up-

(WILL holds the phone to his ear and starts to shake. A few audible rings can be heard. After about four rings, the spotlight spreads to the other side of the stage. LIZ appears in a comfy dining room- there is a table with vased roses and a computer. She sits with a blanket wrapped around herself as she types vigorously. A curtain separates her and WILL.)

LIZ

(Still typing)

Hello? This is LIZ-

WILL

Okay, please, please don't hang up. It's Will-

LIZ

(Stops typing and pauses completely)

WILL?

(LIZ holds her blanket tighter as WILL nods wearily.)

WILL

(Softly and with a sad smile)

Hey Mom.

LIZ

(She tightens the blanket's hold as her voice cracks)

This is Will?

WILL

How are you Mom? I-I um-

LIZ

Why are you calling me, Will?

WILL

Um- I'm okay, don't worry. I just wanted to talk to you.

LIZ

I wanted to talk to you too... but, you haven't answered my calls.

WILL

I had to get a new phone...I'm sorry.

LIZ

Well, I never got a new phone, but I would've told you if I did. You and I are just different I guess. You call, I immediately pick up-I call everyday for three weeks and you don't even know-

WILL

I know! Please, I don't wanna do this-

LIZ

I don't want to talk at all.

(She begins to choke up)

I've been wanting to talk for-

WILL

I'm talking now, Mom. Please.

(LIZ wipes her face as a few seconds pass.)

LIZ

Okay um... I'm as good as I can be I guess.

(She forces a smile even though she's alone.)

It's been awhile...how are you Will? I hear sirens in the background, so I'm guessing not great. Mother's intuition, you know?.

(WILL slowly stands up and begins to pace with the blanket still wrapped around his body. He makes sure to stay far away from the body.)

WILL

Um. Sirens are just a constant here.

(LIZ nods.)

LIZ

Sounds miserable.

(They both nod in unison as WILL chuckles uncomfortably.)

WILL

New York's not great Mom. I won't lie.

LIZ

I could've told you that.

WILL

You did. Many, many times.

LIZ

Oh, you were actually sober enough to hear me?

WILL

(Laughing dryly and shaking his head.)

It always goes back to *that*. Doesn't it?

LIZ

I guess. How are you...in regards to all *that*?

WILL

I don't think you wanna know, Mom.

(LIZ shakes her head along with WILL.)

LIZ

It's not like I can't create a decent picture. I mean, the stuff your father and I used to find...wow.

WILL

Well, if you knew, why didn't you do anything about it?

(LIZ stops shaking her head as WILL crouches on the ground again.)

LIZ

Excuse me?

WILL

(Shrugging)

You never even asked. I-I wanted you to ask, but you never did.

LIZ

Ask what, WILL?

WILL

If I was okay.

LIZ

You were perfect. I didn't have to ask you anything because I already knew. Your father and I worked hard, no-I worked hard to give you the perfect life-

WILL

You worked hard, yes. But that's all you did. So Dad hit me because I was high and I got high because Dad hit me. A cycle you never noticed because you worked so damn hard not to.

LIZ

(Closes computer lid after a couple seconds pass.)

So this is why you're calling me? Because my only child leaving wasn't enough to make me feel like a failure of a mother? I'm in pain and I'm so sorry, WILL. That's what you wanted to hear, right?

WILL

No-no. I think I just needed to get that off my chest. I appreciate you and-

LIZ

Whatever, WILL. Are we done here? I want to be done. Ironically, I'm working late tonight.

WILL

(Looks between the phone and the corpse.)

No-no. I have more to say, and I have to say it before it's too late. Like I said, I don't want to do this. I don't want to fight, or cause more trouble than I already have-

LIZ

Then say it, WILL. Please, quit with the dramatics.

(WILL shakes his head and laughs dryly. He looks around in thought and sighs.)

WILL

Right, right. Um, I-I guess I learned that the theory of joyriding is bullshit.

LIZ

(Holds her forehead in exasperation)

I don't want to hear one of your colorful ramblings right now. Just talk if you want to talk, honey-

WILL

(Stands up and starts pacing)

This is what I want to talk about. That's why I left, you know? Not to chase this Broadway dream, not to get away from you or Dad... not because it's acceptable to fly so damn high here. No, I was promised warmth and happiness if I got in that car-

(LIZ sits up a little straighter.)

LIZ

What the hell are you on about? Who promised you this?

WILL

This theory-this theory that a good joyride would cure me. I was promised. I just wanted to be okay! You know? Because I sucked so bad-

LIZ

I don't know what you're talking about. What needed to be cured? You were perfect-

WILL

I took a joyride, and ran over a few people on the way. You, Dad, me. I'm dead! We're all dead. I was never perfect. You wanted me to be, but I was and never will be perfect-

LIZ

You were perfect to me, and you still are. Now please, stop talking, Will. Do you need me to come get you?

WILL

I'm in the perfect amount of trouble to where I can never leave.

(LIZ stands up with her blanket and starts pacing in unison with WILL)

LIZ

What happened? What's happening? Tell me where you are-

WILL

(Starts to cry)

Someone got hit by a car, Mom.

LIZ

What? We're still on the joyriding metaphor, right?

WILL

(Shaking his head)

We were driving so damn fast. An-and I was so high physically and emotionally...but I was lonely you know? I didn't see it. I didn't see her and what she actually was.

LIZ

(Her voice cracks)

You killed someone?

WILL

No-no... I met this girl, RAE. And she's just such a high within herself. She's this crazy ride that goes way too fast sometimes, and she killed someone. I don't know anything else. She won't say anything else-

LIZ

(Lightly slams her hands on the table.)

I don't understand, WILLIAM. Why are *you* running if *she's* the one who did it?! Just come home, please! You're not involved! Right? Call the police, and report it! Because, you're not involved...

(WILL crouches on the ground and starts to whisper as if he doesn't want the dead body to hear.)

WILL

(Looking at the body)

I helped her hide the body, Mom.

(LIZ chokes up again and holds her face in horror.)

LIZ

You mean-

WILL

My girlfriend killed someone, and I'm 100% complicit. I can't come home...ever. I'm dead.

LIZ

(Shakes her head in defeat)

How could you let yourself get involved in this?

(She wipes her face)

No, no...you're not dead. Don't say that. You're alive...and perfect. Please just come home. Honey, please-

WILL

I'm already gone, Mom. I drove too damn fast, and I can't leave her.

(WILL looks off stage as the sirens get louder.)

LIZ

This criminal? Murderer?! Honey she's not worth it- just leave! Run. She doesn't love you if she expects you to follow her. She's dangerous-

WILL

I went joyriding and I-I can't... I don't remember how to drive at a normal speed. I don't even know how this happened or what the hell I'm saying. I'm just so scared Mom, and I really needed to hear your voice.

LIZ

It's okay, it'll be okay-
(LIZ covers her mouth to silence a cry.)
Where-where are you?
(Cue a silence that lingers for about five seconds.)
William, tell me where-

WILL
We're running away, Mom.

LIZ
No, no... no you're not. How about this? I won't ever tell anyone. Just-just tell me where I can reach you. Honey please, I won't ever say anything.
(LIZ perks up as she continues)
Come hide here. Bring her...you two don't have to go anywhere. I'd love to meet her, she must be really special for you to throw your whole life away-
(LIZ deflates as reality hits her)

WILL
I just wanted to say how sorry I am for everything, Mom. I'm sorry for blaming you, because it's not your fault. It has never been your fault, or Dad's even-

LIZ
I forgive you. But I will never forgive you if you do this-

WILL
Remember when I stole the car and drove it into a McDonalds? Or, when I stole cigarettes from the gas station? I stole a lot of stuff. I also said a lot of stuff, and I'm so sorry. I need you to know that I'm sorry for being such an awful person. I'm sorry for leaving, and getting myself into this hell. Yes, I was sober enough to hear you, but I was too high to actually listen-
(His voice cracks)
You deserve a proper apology, and you also deserve a proper goodbye Mom.

LIZ
No, no.
(Shakes her head)
I don't need any of that. You'll call me when you get to wherever you are-

WILL
I can't drag you with me anymore than I have. Please-

(RAE runs back on stage and grabs WILL'S arm, obviously avoiding the body as she does.)

RAE
Baby, we gotta go now. I'm sorry.

(WILL looks between her and the phone.)

LIZ
Is that her-RAE?

WILL
I gotta go, Mom.

LIZ
No, no, no you don't. Please, just come home. You selfishly call me up to say goodbye forever and expect me to be okay with that? No! Please, you can't do this to me again. Honey-

WILL
You worked really hard to have the perfect life, but you got stuck with me. And I'm so sorry that you spent so much

time loving someone who wasn't worth it. I was never going to be the son you deserved, and you knew that- but you loved and called me perfect anyway. Because you're truly the best, Mom.
(WILL squeezes his eyes shut as LIZ shakes her head in disbelief)

LIZ

Sweetheart, this can't be the end- you don't get to decide how we end. I'm your mother, I'll never let you go. I can't just do that- how can you ask me to do that-

WILL

(Shakes head violently)

I love you so much, Mama. I'm sorry I never said it before.

LIZ

WILL-

WILL

Goodbye.

(WILL hangs up the phone and weakly throws it to the side.)

RAE

(Grabs WILL and hugs him as she speaks.)

Baby, it'll be okay. I promise, you've got me. I promise, just stay with me.

(WILL nods wearily into her shoulder. LIZ on the other side calls his name a few more times before throwing her computer against the wall. She collapses into her chair and holds the blanket tight to her body.)

RAE

I'm so sorry.

WILL

(Pained)

I love you.

RAE (At the same time)

LIZ

I love you too, WILL.

I love you too, WILLIAM.

(RAE slowly leads WILL off stage. Before she can, WILL takes off his blanket and approaches the body. He spreads the blanket over the corpse and whispers an apology as he and RAE jump off the stage. They run up the aisles and exit in a rush. LIZ stays to cry and mumble a prayer with her blanket wrapped tightly around herself.)

END PLAY