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a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences  
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## Abstract

### Edges

By Eleni Demestihias

The pressure of the Sochi Olympics is compounded for Olivia, whose relationship with her girlfriend and fellow Olympian Cara is tightly under wraps as they navigate competition and the politics of being "out" in the world of professional athletics.

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## CHARACTERS

*Total: 7; 4f, 3m*

### OLIVIA:

26, classically pretty, exactly what you might expect from a famous professional figure skater, but in looks only. She's come to the Sochi Olympics to compete in pairs figure skating, where she and her partner Tony are favorites to medal for the United States for the first time in recent history.

### CARA:

24, ripped, rowdy, and one of the top professional female hockey players in the country. Competing with the U.S. National Women's Hockey Team for a gold medal that has eluded the team since 1998, the last (and only) time the United States has beaten Canada for gold.

### TONY:

30, perpetually convinced he is younger and more handsome than he actually is. Olivia's skating partner and the bane of her existence.

### COACH:

Late 40's. Tony and Olivia's skating coach, a Black woman who has very purposefully driven her way into the world of figure skating with pragmatism and a thick skin.

### JACKIE:

25, the first Asian-American captain of the U.S. Women's Hockey team, and Cara's best friend. All focus all the time, as dedicated to being a good friend as she is to being a good leader.

### (2) ANNOUNCERS:

Men with tenuous grasps on reality. They may mispronounce names or misrepresent facts in the script (names/ages/positions/etc) and correct themselves or each other. Both or either should double as reporters later in the play.



Scene One

*OLIVIA enters in her Team USA Olympic jacket, standing on a platform upstage right, facing the audience and leaning against the railing as if watching a game.*

*At the edge of the stage is a sheet of plexiglass, meant to simulate the boards of an ice rink. Olivia should be in house lights, while the audience is lit in a way that suggests movement and cold. Sounds of a hockey game underway, skates on ice, sticks on pucks, the low murmur of a crowd just settling into their seats. After some time, we hear the announcers as if on a television broadcast. Throughout the narration of the game, Olivia is restless, unable to stand still while she watches, and the crowd grows louder.*

ANNOUNCER ONE:

In the first game of their group, the USA takes on Finland, a team that has traditionally struggled to keep up with the USA's fast-paced and physical game.

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Yes, the United States plays a hard and fast game, but Finland looks to me like they might well be able to give this young team some trouble.

ANNOUNCER ONE:

Jack, this USA team is the youngest in their Olympic history, if I'm remembering correctly. Their first-time captain Jacklyn Logan is, at only twenty-five, one of the veterans, and she starts on the ice today, joined by alternate captain Cara Weiser, only twenty-four.

*The crowd's dim roar grows.*

ANNOUNCER TWO:

It's important to remember that many of these girls have been in the national team program since their late teens, and Logan and Weiser are no exception. Here their line comes on an odd man rush now--

*And grows.*

ANNOUNCER ONE:

Nobody would want to be facing *them* down in a three-on-one situation--

*The crowd erupts into cheers and Olivia leans back, a proud smile breaking across her face.*

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER TWO:

And there it is! A beautiful feed from Logan right to Weiser's stick in front of the net and she wrists it in with no time for the Finnish goalie to react at all. Team USA's first goal of the Sochi Olympics, and so early on in the game. That's a pair who lead by example, Rod.

ANNOUNCER ONE:

Just too much mustard on the puck for that goaltender.

*The crowd quiets, and Olivia focuses on watching again. As she does, TONY, his hair slicked back but his outfit more or less the same as hers, joins her on the platform. She moves over to make room for him, but he stands too close to her anyway. Olivia is anxious now and trying to keep some space between them, much less able to keep her focus on the game.*

ANNOUNCER ONE: (cont'd)

Now, Cara Weiser is one of a handful of Olympians who decided to come out during the last few months. She is also the only American to speak out against what many consider to be a dangerous situation for gay and lesbian athletes here in Sochi.

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Yes, you're right. One has to wonder what her coaches and her federation think of that. There's been some discussion on both sides of the issue, some saying that such a "crusade" is a distraction when she should be here to focus on winning, others really praising her bravery for speaking out.

*Tony looks at Olivia instead of the game. He does not care that she notices. Olivia shifts uncomfortably, trying to stay, but eventually she's done. She has to brush by him to leave, and she exits with some urgency, leaving Tony alone on the balcony. This all happens beneath the following announcer's lines:*

ANNOUNCER ONE:

It's an interesting situation to be sure, but no matter what you think it's impossible to argue against having someone that solid and skilled on both sides of the puck on their roster.

Scene Two

*In the center of the stage is a bench meant to suggest a locker room setting, with both Cara and Jackie's bags. The "boards" are gone. Cara and Jackie enter the stage in their pads and jerseys, with helmets under their arms, amidst the excited chatter of the team as they undress, celebrating their win. Jackie and Cara sit and start to take off their skates, jerseys, pads, etc.*

JACKIE:

So. First game, first goal, first Olympics, what'd you think?

CARA:

I could get used to it.

JACKIE:

I could get used to you scoring goals like that. If you stay out of the box.

CARA:

Alright, alright. I know.

JACKIE:

Seriously, though. I know this was a prelim and everything seems low-stakes right now, but...you're too good to be sitting in the penalty box for tripping someone. Our penalty kill might be good, Dozer might be good, but it's not a chance we want to take.

CARA:

I know. I know how this works.

JACKIE:

I know you do. I just have to say it. It's my job.

CARA:

Something I might not get used to...you being my captain.

*Jackie tosses her sweaty jersey at Cara's head.*

JACKIE:

I'm still your best friend.

CARA:

Yeah, that's why it's weird.

JACKIE:

I can't decide whether I want to hustle and go hug my parents or take a shower so that my mom doesn't complain that I smell like hockey pads.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

You're going to smell like hockey pads anyway. You'd think by now she'd be used to it.

JACKIE:

Never. What about yours?

CARA:

I dunno. They never mention it.

*Pause.*

Olivia hates the smell, though.

JACKIE:

Speaking of which...you think she was here?

CARA:

At the game? I dunno.

*Pause. Cara stands up in her sports bra and pulls a pair of sweatpants on over her spandex. Jackie leans over so she can look up into Cara's face.*

JACKIE:

You're blushing like crazy. She's totally here.

CARA:

She said she might be.

JACKIE:

Did you look for her?

CARA:

No.

JACKIE:

Well go look for her!

CARA:

I can't--it's not like that.

JACKIE:

Cara, she's your girlfriend. How is it not like that?

CARA:

She doesn't really want anyone to see us together. People are always kind of recognizing her so she's really paranoid.

*Pause.*

I'll just be glad if she came.

JACKIE:

She won't even say hi to you? It's not like you're going to kiss her or anything, I don't understand why it would be so bad for some random reporter to notice that she's friends with a hockey player. A lot of us are friends with other athletes.

CARA:

I know. I told her.

*Cara sits again and starts to put her clothes and gear in her bag. Jackie, still only half undressed, watches her.*

JACKIE:

So...you're not going to see her at all while you guys are here.

CARA:

I don't know if that's true, I'm sure I can see her somewhere private at some point, but you know... we're both competing, so it's distracting if we're doing too much of that.

JACKIE:

You kind of sound like her.

CARA:

So?

JACKIE:

It just doesn't sound like something you'd say. I feel like you'd say that you would want to see her no matter what.

CARA:

I mean, I do, but that doesn't mean she's wrong, and I don't want to distract her. She has a really good chance of winning if she stays focused.

*Pause.*

JACKIE:

We do, too.

CARA:

(simultaneously)  
I know, I didn't mean--

JACKIE:

(simultaneously)  
I'm just--

CARA:

I didn't mean that we don't, just that she's more uptight about it than I am, and I don't want to stress her out, so I'm giving her the space she wants.

*Jackie finally finishes undressing and getting into her post-game clothes without saying another word. Cara sits with her bag, checking her phone.*

JACKIE:

I'm gonna say something and I just want you to think about it. Don't answer me, just think about it. Okay?

CARA:

Um. I guess.

JACKIE:

I feel like you should consider whether or not avoiding stressing Olivia out is stressing you out.

CARA:

That makes no sense.

JACKIE:

I feel like you walk on eggshells around her and it drives you crazy. That's going to distract you just as much as seeing her would. That's all I'm saying.

CARA:

I'm not walking on eggshells, I'm just giving her space.

JACKIE:

I told you not to answer me! I didn't hear it. You never said anything. I'm leaving, I'll see you later, dibs on the first real shower.

CARA:

If I get back to the room first then don't I get the first shower?

JACKIE:

Nope. You have to call it.

CARA:

That's not how it works!

JACKIE:

That's how it works at the Olympics.

CARA:

You just made that up.

JACKIE:  
Yup.

*Jackie smacks Cara's shoulder with her duffel, and Cara flinches away, laughing.*

JACKIE: (cont'd)  
Later, goon.

Scene Three

*The bench at a practice rink. The rink itself is offstage. The "boards," including the door, are up against the wing that leads offstage. The stage is set with benches meant to suggest the benches of the rink itself.*

*Tony stretches while taking up as much space as possible. He is clearly very into himself and expects everyone around him to be as well. Olivia enters with her headphones on and starts to stretch on her own, a bit away from him. When he notices her, he approaches her and takes one headphone out of her ear.*

TONY:  
You look great. Is that a new color scheme?

OLIVIA:  
Oh. Thank you. No, I don't know. I just wanted to wear something different.

TONY:  
It's very patriotic.

OLIVIA:  
I didn't notice.

*He is still holding her headphone and standing very close to her. Olivia, obviously uncomfortable, does not move away.*

TONY:  
I was hoping they hadn't changed it at the last minute.  
I like the way the maroon looks on me.

OLIVIA:  
It's nice.

TONY:  
We look very sleek.

(CONTINUED)

*He finally lets go of the headphone, but he's still standing too close. Olivia politely takes a little bit of space to stretch again, as if the conversation is over.*

TONY:

I was thinking about your Salchow earlier. I know you were having trouble with it yesterday, so I was thinking about why that might be, because you haven't had trouble with it before that I remember. It's back inside edge to back outside edge, and we usually do the opposite, or if you're switching from inside edge to outside edge it's usually switching feet. Am I right?

OLIVIA:

Um, I guess so. I didn't think that much about it. I was just a little stiff on my right, so I was landing funny, my balance was off.

TONY:

So I think maybe if you go back to the basics, not that a single Salchow isn't basic, but just switching edges on the one foot, maybe you'll feel better.

OLIVIA:

I feel fine today. I got some heat on my knee and it hasn't been sticking at all so far.

TONY:

I guess we'll see when we're out there, but I figured I'd tell you what I was thinking.

*He goes back to stretching luxuriously.*

TONY: (cont'd)

I'm so glad we have a partnership that feels mature.

OLIVIA:

What...do you mean?

TONY:

Just that we're not constantly fighting the way other teams are. The Russians--you know, Petrov and Nikolaev? Constantly at each other's throats.

OLIVIA:

Oh. Listen, Tony--

TONY:

I think she's just, you know, the typical ice princess. Which, to be fair, I definitely thought you were like that when I met you, but you're not like those kinds of girls at all.



OLIVIA:

Tony.

TONY:

Yeah.

OLIVIA:

Don't..I don't like it when you talk about our competitors like that.

TONY:

I'm sure she's nice. I'm just saying, there's a particular kind of girl who gets famous for figure skating, especially from the European countries. You know the type. Come on.

OLIVIA:

I'm serious. You don't know who's listening, who could hear you. That sort of thing might not directly factor into our scores, but it matters.

TONY:

Olivia. We're literally alone in this rink.

OLIVIA:

Right now, yes. But you do this a lot.

TONY:

Why are you so paranoid? Did someone say something to you?

OLIVIA:

Like what?

TONY:

I don't know.

*He sits on the bench and starts to put on his skates.*

OLIVIA:

Tony. Like. What.

TONY:

Like something about us being a couple.

OLIVIA:

Why would that make me paranoid?

TONY:

Because we're not a couple. And maybe you don't want people to know that.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

Maybe I **do** want people to know that.

*Tony sits up.*

TONY:

Why?

OLIVIA:

Because we're not a couple.

TONY:

So what? People thinking that we are makes them talk about us, and talk is good.

OLIVIA:

It doesn't change our results, I don't think it matters.

TONY:

It makes us favorites, and you know that matters. You were just talking about things that "don't directly affect" our scores and how important they are.

OLIVIA:

Bad things. Things that could tarnish our reputations. Not--frivolous gossip.

*Tony laughs.*

TONY:

You sound like a Jane Austen novel.

*He has clearly never read a Jane Austen novel in his life. He turns away from her and moves toward the rink, which is offstage.*

TONY: (cont'd)

Are you coming?

*Olivia hesitates, then turns her back on him so that she can sit on the bench and lace up her skates. Tony exits, stepping offstage and into the "rink." COACH, a severe-looking, composed and self-possessed older woman, enters with her things. She stands between the benches to watch Tony offstage.*

COACH:

Does he know how you feel about the ending?

OLIVIA:

Um, I didn't say anything. I don't think it's important, I'm not uncomfortable with it or anything.

COACH:

Well, that's interesting to hear.

*She turns to Olivia.*

So what happened between two days ago and now if you didn't talk to him about it?

OLIVIA:

I guess I changed my mind.

COACH:

You guess?

OLIVIA:

It just didn't seem important. I didn't want to...throw a wrench in things. If it looks good and it looks like it's working then that's what matters.

COACH:

You're a terrible liar, kid.

OLIVIA:

I'm...sorry.

COACH:

Don't be sorry. I'm not telling you so that you apologize to me for something. I'm telling you because the routine is not going to work if you're lying. If you're pretending to be comfortable, to be moved, to be inspired, it's not going to fly. Because you're not an actress.

*Olivia hesitates. They both watch Tony offstage for some time.*

OLIVIA:

I don't think he would take it well.

COACH:

It's not your job to worry about his feelings.

OLIVIA:

Then why should he worry about mine?

COACH:

He doesn't. That's why you have to tell him.

OLIVIA:

If I don't like it--I mean--couldn't you talk to Coleman, so he changes the choreography?

COACH:

I can. I will, if you don't say anything, because it's my job to make sure that my team is performing optimally, but I was giving you the chance to do it.

OLIVIA:

Well, I appreciate that, but--

*Coach turns to Olivia again, and then walks to the rink door, holding it open for her. Olivia gets up and carefully walks toward it in her skates.*

COACH:

You'll learn to stand up for yourself.

#### Scene Four

*Olivia sits cross-legged on the roof of one of the Olympic Village buildings. She's bundled up, but she doesn't look uncomfortable. On the contrary, she looks far more comfortable than at the rink earlier. The sounds of athletes and fans congregating and celebrating come from below. She leans over a little bit to watch a particularly loud group of them pass by. They chant something in Russian as they do. Cara enters excitedly, flopping down onto the roof next to Olivia, almost on top of her.*

CARA:

Hi.

OLIVIA:

Hi.

CARA:

Can I kiss you?

*Olivia nods sheepishly. Cara reaches over and gently pulls Olivia into a kiss that lingers for a few seconds.*

CARA: (cont'd)

I missed you.

OLIVIA:

I wish this wasn't the only place in this entire country where I felt like I could see you.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

I still don't really think anyone would blink twice about us hanging out in the Village, since most of us are friends with other athletes...but I don't want to talk about that right now.

*She fishes a chocolate bar out of her coat and presents it to Olivia, who takes it curiously.*

OLIVIA:

What is this?

CARA:

Alenka chocolate. It's milk chocolate. They started making it in the sixties.

OLIVIA:

This particular bar?

CARA:

No, you--

*Olivia laughs.*

CARA: (cont'd)

Come on, just try it.

OLIVIA:

You know how I feel about this.

CARA:

You can't even say it. I still can't believe this. Who doesn't like chocolate?

*Olivia unwraps the chocolate bar and then laughs again.*

OLIVIA:

It's empty. You really had me.

CARA:

I ate it. It was great.

OLIVIA:

Are you supposed to be eating chocolate?

CARA:

A Finnish girl twice my weight wiped half the rink with me today. I can eat whatever I want.

OLIVIA:

Well, worth it for the powerplay goal, right?

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

Worth it for the chocolate, even though I won't be able to turn my head tomorrow.

OLIVIA:

So, you--when you said earlier, how a lot of athletes are friends...

CARA:

Yeah. I mean, half the bobsledding team was in my room last night listening to Jackie tell that story she likes to tell about her middle school talent show. The one with the magic routine.

OLIVIA:

I believe you.

CARA:

So... we could hang out somewhere other than on a roof at two in the morning, you know.

OLIVIA:

No, I mean--I believe you that people do, and that hypothetically we could, but...I can't do it.

CARA:

Nobody's going to be able to just spontaneously know that you're gay because we're getting lunch, Olive.

OLIVIA:

It's not that easy. I don't trust myself to be able to pretend to just be your friend.

CARA:

You are my friend.

OLIVIA:

I know, I just mean that the way that I look at you--I know it's not platonic, I know I don't look like you're my friend, and I can't change that. I don't **want** to change that. I don't want to have to sit across from you at some cafe and pretend that I'm not thinking about kissing you.

CARA:

So... you'd rather meet me in the middle of the night, in secret, in subzero temperatures.

OLIVIA:

I know it sounds dramatic. I just don't trust myself. I don't trust anyone else, either.

*Cara reaches for Olivia's hand and links their fingers. After a few seconds, she lifts Olivia's hand to her mouth and kisses her knuckles.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

I know how lucky I am that you're even willing to do this.

CARA:

I'd do anything to get to see you.

OLIVIA:

But?

CARA:

Why does there have to be a but?

OLIVIA:

I could hear it.

CARA:

But...but would you be worried about this if I had waited to come out?

OLIVIA:

Cara, no. Yes. I would still be paranoid.

CARA:

Less paranoid.

OLIVIA:

I don't think so.

*Pause. Cara doesn't believe her.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

Maybe. But not much.

CARA:

I could have waited. I would--I would have waited, if you'd asked.

OLIVIA:

No, come on, you wanted to come out. It was important to you to do it before the Olympics and there was a good reason for that.

CARA:

It wasn't all just to make a statement.

OLIVIA:

I know. I know that.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

It was for you.

OLIVIA:

I...

CARA:

Olivia. I'm serious. I did this for you. I did this because I feel like you deserve to have someone who--who will shout it from the rooftops how they love you, who will tell anyone who asks how proud they are to be yours.

OLIVIA:

You don't belong to me.

CARA:

I belong to myself, but I also belong to you.

OLIVIA:

I don't think you should have come out for me. I think you should have done it for you.

*Cara lets go of her hand to twist and face her better.*

CARA:

I did it for more than one reason. Why does it bother you so much that you're one of them? You're a big part of my life. The decisions I make are partially--I want to build a life with you. And I know we've talked about that, and I know that you--that sometimes you do things for the same reasons. Just deciding to come out here, calling me and asking me to meet you, you're doing that because you love me and you want to be with me. Right? So...there are a lot of things in my life that I do because of you, or for you. That's not new.

OLIVIA:

That's--this is bigger.

CARA:

Bigger than choosing to stay in Minnesota with you instead of choosing to move closer to my teammates and play within a league?

OLIVIA:

No. Yes. It's more public.

*Pause. For a few seconds they might as well be sitting on two separate roofs.*



OLIVIA: (cont'd)

I wish you wouldn't say it like that. That's all.

CARA:

Like what?

OLIVIA:

Like--like I'm responsible for those things. For you staying in Minnesota. For you coming out.

CARA:

I mean, you're not. You know you're not.

OLIVIA:

You can't tell me that you did those things for me and then say I'm not responsible.

CARA:

I don't--I don't see how you can't tell that there's a difference.

*Olivia reaches up and pushes some hair behind  
Cara's ear.*

OLIVIA:

I don't want to talk about this anymore.

CARA:

I feel like we have to, though.

OLIVIA:

No, come on, not right now. Not here. I don't get to see you much here, let me just--I just want to enjoy you. I just want to be with you.

*Pause.*

Okay?

CARA:

Okay, John Green.

OLIVIA:

(laughing)

Shut up.

Scene Five

*A room in the Olympic Village. Two beds, with Jackie sitting on one of them, watching Cara while she finishes unpacking her clothes.*

JACKIE:

Why did you wait to unpack?

CARA:

It just still felt like a dream when we got here.

JACKIE:

So you didn't want to wake up and leave all your shit in the dream?

CARA:

Something like that.

*Jackie cackles.*

CARA: (cont'd)

Asshole.

JACKIE:

Nah, I remember that. Stupid little things like unpacking and brushing your teeth don't seem so important when you're still trying to wrap your brain around being an Olympian.

CARA:

I brush my teeth.

JACKIE:

I didn't for like, three days when I got to Vancouver.

CARA:

Jacks. That's disgusting.

JACKIE:

I know.

CARA:

I think I just still keep expecting it all to fall in on my head.

JACKIE:

Sure, chicken little.

CARA:

But seriously--I didn't think I'd even be here. I figured they'd crack my kneecaps themselves to keep me off the roster after the stunt I pulled.

JACKIE:

Coming out isn't a stunt.

CARA:

It was a little bit.

JACKIE:

No. That's not why you did it. Stunts are for attention. You didn't come out because you wanted your name in everyone's mouths.

CARA:

Yeah, but nobody else knows that.

JACKIE:

We would have rioted if they had dropped you and tried to cover it up.

CARA:

I know. I mean, I knew that. I just spent so long dreading coming out and feeling like it would be the end of my career that it's surreal that I'm out and here. That probably sounds dramatic, but--

JACKIE:

No.

CARA:

...no?

JACKIE:

It's not dramatic.

CARA:

Uh huh.

JACKIE:

I just meant, the situation is dramatic. So...

CARA:

Yeah.

JACKIE:

No, Cara, listen.

*Jackie gets up from the bed to join Cara by her suitcase.*

JACKIE: (cont'd)

I've known I was gay since I was thirteen. It took me five years to even come out to my parents. Five years of sneaking around behind the bleachers with girls who were curious but didn't know how to say it. I was a freak, but a useful one, they'd come kiss me and then later when they were pretending it didn't happen they'd call me some names in the hallway for good measure.

(CONTINUED)

In college, some girls were out and some weren't, and the ones who were did okay, but all the stars were girls who weren't, or girls who were straight, so I never opened my mouth. My coach never knew I was gay. I never saw a girlfriend right after a game where a coach or staff member might see me. When your athletic scholarship is hefty enough to be paying for most of school, you don't want to give them any reason to think less of you. You want them to be starting you. And even if there wasn't a direct link between the girls who were out and the ones a little farther down on the line chart...

So I never told a coach. I still haven't. I learned that there was basically a "don't ask, don't tell" policy most of the time. It's not so much that coaches don't know their players are gay, it's more that they don't want to hear about it, for whatever reason, especially the guys who used to play in the NHL or the AHL, because that's how things were for them. But you--you did it anyway, and you're still here. So maybe I can do it too.

CARA:

Jackie...I never even realized you wanted to come out.

JACKIE:

Well, I never told anyone, so how would you know?

*Cara hugs Jackie suddenly.*

JACKIE: (cont'd)

You didn't just do it for your sake. You've always talked about other people--

CARA:

Only you and Olivia know that.

JACKIE:

--but even if you had done it just for you, just because you wanted to say it and not saying it made you uncomfortable, there's nothing wrong with that.

CARA:

But that's a stunt. That's what half the internet thinks I did.

JACKIE:

Well first of all, stop searching your name on Twitter.

CARA:

It used to be fun.

*Cara goes back to sit on the bed, taking out her phone and scrolling. She holds the phone up for Jackie to see.*

CARA: (cont'd)

Like, look at this: "Cara Weiser can't be the only dyke on that team. The fact that she's the only out one is disgusting."

JACKIE:

Who said that?

CARA:

Just some fan. What I'm saying is...

JACKIE:

Who cares what some random fan says?

CARA:

I do.

JACKIE:

Well, there's your problem.

CARA:

I have a lot of problems.

JACKIE:

Cara. You're at the Olympics. You get to put on the crest and play with your best friends. You have a gorgeous, sweet, insanely talented girlfriend. I think you're doing okay.

CARA:

I guess.

*Jackie stares at her. Cara smiles eventually, flopping back on the bed, and Jackie joins her.*

CARA: (cont'd)

Alright. I know, I'm sorry, it's just a lot, still.

JACKIE:

I think you're making it more difficult than it has to be.

*Pause.*

I know, says me. Not like I would know. I'm just saying, let yourself be happy, alright? Let yourself enjoy this.

CARA:

I am. I know it doesn't sound like I am, but...yeah. You're right. I need to focus on that. On the good stuff.

JACKIE:

Focus on hockey.

CARA:

Deal, Cap.

*Jackie pretends to smother Cara with a pillow. Cara goes to put her phone away, but something catches her eye. She freezes, and Jackie rolls over so that she can see the phone too.*

JACKIE:

Um...

CARA:

I'm--

JACKIE:

Don't...I wouldn't take that too seriously. I mean, you know better. She's watching your game.

CARA:

He's practically standing on top of her.

JACKIE:

She's not even looking at him.

CARA:

I'm not worried about her. But the headline?

JACKIE:

It's just tabloid gossip, Car.

CARA:

Yeah, but people believe this shit.

JACKIE:

So what? You know better. It doesn't really matter. They're always spouting off about something. Remember that stupid article some guy wrote about how weird it is that our whole team is single? Where are our boyfriends? Right? It was funny then.

CARA:

This isn't the same. She never even tries to dispute this stuff.

JACKIE:

Do they ask her?

CARA:

Kind of. They'll ask around it sometimes. She never has a comment. She'd rather them believe this stuff than even just tell them that she's not dating him, it's not like she needs to tell them she's gay, but just--anything but--anything other than letting this be their thing. There's so many better things to say about her and she never tries to set them straight.

*Cara starts typing.*

JACKIE:

I don't know if that's her job.

*Cara's phone buzzes.*

CARA:

I'll be back. Sorry, I've just got to--you know.

JACKIE:

Yeah, do your thing.

#### Scene Six

*Cara and Olivia meet outside, bundled up a little bit, in a space between buildings. The walls of the buildings are incompletely lit by the windows and streetlights further offstage, casting them both partially in shadow. There are other people on the streets, calling to each other, laughing, and Olivia is hesitant, checking over her shoulder. Cara comes directly to her, holding out her phone.*

CARA:

What is this?

*Olivia leans over to look at Cara's phone, and then leans back, putting space between them again, still periodically looking around for others.*

OLIVIA:

Same thing it always is. Tabloid gossip. People tinhatting over nothing.

CARA:

It's not nothing.

OLIVIA:

It's not proof of anything.

CARA:

But it's not nothing. Can you look at me?

OLIVIA:

What do you want me to say? I can only tell reporters so many times that I'm not dating him, they don't ask me anymore. They ask him. So what do you want me to do?

CARA:

...I don't know.

OLIVIA:

Cara. *What* do you want?

CARA:

I don't know.

OLIVIA:

Well, next time you drag me out of bed to meet you in the freezing cold at 2 am, make sure you have a reason. Because one day I'll stop getting up.

CARA:

Oh, come on. We wouldn't have to meet like this in the first place if you weren't so goddamn paranoid all the time.

*Olivia stares at her. After a few icy seconds she turns to go.*

CARA: (cont'd)

Olive.

*Olivia stops, but doesn't turn around.*

CARA: (cont'd)

I'm sorry.

*Silence.*

CARA: (cont'd)

I lost it a little. I'm sorry.

*Olivia turns around, but doesn't come any closer.*

CARA: (cont'd)

It's just-- the way that he looks at you...



OLIVIA:

He's acting. We perform.

CARA:

I recognize it. The look on his face. It's the same way that I look at you, Olive. The way I look at you because I love you.

OLIVIA:

So he's a good actor.

CARA:

You don't really believe that.

OLIVIA:

So what? Even if he was, it wouldn't matter. I'm not interested.

*Olivia approaches Cara.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

You know what I think of when he dips me?

CARA:

Winning?

OLIVIA:

You. That's why I never notice him, how he's looking at me. Because I'm thinking about you. Because I'm acting.

CARA:

But he's not.

OLIVIA:

So what? If you have a problem with him you should have called him.

CARA:

He doesn't know I exist.

OLIVIA:

You're still talking about your problems with him. I can't help you with that.

CARA:

You could tell him.

OLIVIA:

Tell him what?

CARA:

Tell him that you have a girlfriend.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

Cara--you're so loud.

*Cara lowers her voice.*

CARA:

Why is that so absurd? He's a guy making eyes at you. At a bar you would tell him you were taken.

OLIVIA:

We're not at a bar. We're at the Olympics. Not only that, we're at the Olympics in a country where people like you and me get beaten to death. Incarcerated for life. Worse.

CARA:

That's an exaggeration and you know it.

OLIVIA:

No, it's--

CARA:

Nobody gets locked up for being gay here.

OLIVIA:

No. You know what, you're right, they don't, they don't get to, because other people kill them first.

CARA:

I'm not saying that doesn't happen, I'm just saying we're not them, and--I'm not asking you to come out.

OLIVIA:

Yes, you are!

CARA:

Not to the public. Of course I know where we are. I'm the one that *is* out. You think I don't have nightmares about the shit that people say? You think I don't get weird Twitter death threats?

OLIVIA:

Then you know why I can't risk it.

CARA:

Nobody's going to break into the Village and beat up a bunch of Olympic athletes.

OLIVIA:

The IOC told all gay athletes to lie low. Does that sound like something they would say if they were sure we were safe?

(CONTINUED)

CARA:  
Nothing is going to happen to you, Olivia. I promise.

OLIVIA:  
I'm not worried about me.

*Pause.*

CARA:  
I get it.

OLIVIA:  
You don't agree with me.

CARA:  
I think you should trust your partner.

OLIVIA:  
I do trust you.

CARA:  
Not me. Your partner. He's your teammate. You trust your teammates, that's what makes a team.

OLIVIA:  
It's not the same. Not like it is for you and your teammates.

CARA:  
I know it's not.

OLIVIA:  
You think I'm a coward.

CARA:  
Don't put words in my mouth, I never said that.

*Cara bundles her coat closer around her. She looks like she wants to go inside, but isn't sure that the conversation is over. Olivia speaks to keep her in the present.*

OLIVIA:  
I can't be brave like you, Cara.

*Cara softens.*  
I've never met anyone as brave as you.

CARA:  
You go out on the ice almost alone in front of thousands of people, hundreds of cameras, and try to convince a panel of judges that you're the most technical and beautiful person they'll see all day. I can't be brave like that.

OLIVIA:

Well, I could never survive being steamrolled by a six foot tall Finnish woman.

CARA:

None of the Finns are that tall.

*Olivia reaches for Cara, but stops herself. Cara deflates, turning to watch the lights dancing across the building. A group of drunk snowboarders passes them, singing in a Nordic language. Olivia doesn't speak again until they're past.*

OLIVIA:

We need to sleep.

CARA:

Yeah. Sorry.

OLIVIA:

I wish I could take you up with me.

*Pause.*

Are we okay?

*Cara turns back to Olivia, but she has taken a step back into the light.*

CARA:

Of course we are. It's three weeks. Just three weeks and we're home.

*They hold eye contact for a few more moments, and then Cara exits. Olivia stands alone onstage for a few seconds, and then exits in the opposite direction.*

### Scene Seven

*Post-practice. Olivia is taking off her skates, sitting on the bench of the rink. Tony enters from the rink, takes off his skates, puts them in his bag, and walks past her. He squeezes her shoulder as he does. Olivia is relieved that he doesn't speak. She has started packing up when Coach enters.*

COACH:

It's not working.

OLIVIA:

I'm sorry?

(CONTINUED)

COACH:

The ending. It's not working.

OLIVIA:

Okay, so I guess we should change it.

COACH:

Look, you need to talk to him. I can only sit down with him and bring it up so many times. He insists that it's all working great, because you've convinced him that it's fine.

OLIVIA:

So what? We change things that feel fine all the time.

COACH:

No matter what we replace it with, it's not going to work if you don't talk to him. You have to communicate.

OLIVIA:

I'm sorry, but honestly, I don't see what difference it makes.

COACH:

Because right now everyone has a hand in this but you.

OLIVIA:

I don't understand. I'm here. I'm working as hard as I can. How do I not have a hand in this?

COACH:

Because it's missing your voice.

OLIVIA:

I'm not a choreographer.

COACH:

No, but who you are as an athlete and a person influences this routine, and you're holding back. I need you to be present.

>OLIVIA:

Not to be disrespectful, but what would being present look like if this isn't it? Because I don't know any other way to be. I'm here, I'm skating, I'm listening to your coaching, I'm listening to Coleman's changes, I'm committed to competing...I don't know what else there is.

COACH:

Honestly, I know that's not true, because you weren't always like this. You used to push back a lot more. On everyone. Asking questions. It's why I liked you so much, because you reminded me of me.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

It just seems like a bad time to ask questions. We're already here, it's already happening, and conflict is just going to distract us. We're supposed to have that stuff all figured out by now.

COACH:

Sort of defeats the purpose of competing at the Olympics if you stop competing when you get here.

OLIVIA:

Look...I'm sorry. I don't know what you want me to say. I really want to do whatever it is you're asking me to do, as my coach, but I don't really know what this means. And, um--

*She checks her phone for the time.*

I actually have to go, but I guess I'll think about it, what you said.

*She moves to leave, and has to pass Coach to exit. Coach stops her with a hand on Olivia's forearm that is not meant to be threatening. Olivia is surprised, but not concerned.*

COACH:

I'm trying to help you.

OLIVIA:

I know.

COACH:

I know this is hard. This isn't like any other competition. But I don't want you to rule yourself out before you even get the chance to see what you're capable of.

OLIVIA:

...okay. Thank you. I'll...try not to.

*She exits.*

### Scene Eight

*Olivia sits alone at a table in the Olympic Village. People bustle around her, chanting and shouting, but she hunches over the table with her phone in her hand and her headphones in, watching something on the small screen. The following interview is recorded and plays as Olivia is hearing it.*

(CONTINUED)

REPORTER:

So, your first program is tomorrow. Do you feel ready?

TONY:

Yes, absolutely. We've been putting in a truly incredible amount of work over the past few months, I think we're ready to show off what we've accomplished.

REPORTER:

You and your partner, Olivia, you certainly have some chemistry.

TONY:

We've been skating together for three years now...that's not a long time when you compare it to how long some of these other pairs have been together, but it feels like I've known her forever.

*At her table, Olivia grimaces. A loud group of athletes passes especially close and she watches them warily. As the interview goes on, Olivia gets more and more tense.*

REPORTER:

You just kind of clicked?

TONY:

Exactly. There are some people you skate with, you know immediately you were meant to skate with them. You're just automatically in step with them and everything is complimentary. Olivia is that for me.

REPORTER:

It's a really beautiful thing to watch. I'm sure you know, people, fans especially, have a lot to say about that.

TONY:

Yeah, we see it, we hear it. It's nice to know that we can move people. Obviously we're here to get the scores we'd like to get, but it's more than that, too, and it's always really fulfilling to hear that we've, you know, that people feel things when they see us together. We're very close.

REPORTER:

Well, I'll tell you, it makes it difficult for anyone not to be really hoping for your success when you talk about her like that.

*Tony laughs. Olivia fumbles to pull her headphones out of the phone, at which point the recording cuts off abruptly mid-sentence. She shoves the phone in her jacket pocket.*

Scene Nine

*A room in the Village. There is only one bed, and a chair in another corner. Olivia sits on the end of the bed in comfortable clothes. Tony wears a polo and jeans. He should look overdressed and out of place.*

OLIVIA:

I really wasn't comfortable with the way that you answered that question earlier.

TONY:

Which question?

OLIVIA:

You know what I'm talking about.

TONY:

I don't think I do.

OLIVIA:

I know you want me to say it. I'm not stupid.

*Tony says nothing.*

The question about our relationship.

TONY:

It's just gossip. It doesn't mean anything.

OLIVIA:

It doesn't change our scores, you're right. But it means something or you wouldn't encourage it.

TONY:

It's funny. I like watching them try to figure things out. It makes me feel like...maybe I'm not the only one wondering.

OLIVIA:

Wondering what?

TONY:

About you.

*He leans forward in the chair. Olivia shifts, trying to get some space between them.*

You're such a mystery. That's why they always ask about us, you know, because nobody gets you, nobody can figure you out.

(CONTINUED)



OLIVIA:

I'm not here to be a celebrity, I'm just here to compete, I don't care if people don't know my favorite color or my life story.

TONY:

You are a celebrity, Olivia. We both are.

OLIVIA:

There's a difference between being a professional athlete and being a celebrity. You can be both, but I'm--I don't want that. I never wanted that.

TONY:

Wanted what? Attention? I find that hard to believe. Nobody who gets up in front of thousands of people the way that we do hates attention.

OLIVIA:

It's a certain kind of attention. Invasive attention.

TONY:

You are so dramatic sometimes. Even for a figure skater, and we're *all* dramatic.

OLIVIA:

I don't think it's dramatic to call speculations about my romantic and sex life invasive.

TONY:

I do. Nobody is trying to ruin your pure little reputation. They just can see something that you can't.

*He stands up, and Olivia shrinks.*  
Aren't you going to ask me what it is?

OLIVIA:

I don't--I don't care.

*He is speaking animatedly now, gesturing with his hands, telling a story like an actor trying too hard at an audition, continuing to move towards her across the room.*

TONY:

Everyone can see how much chemistry we have. They keep asking if we're together because it feels like we have to be, because all the passion, all the lust that's between us on the ice, has to be real.

OLIVIA:

It's not.

TONY:  
It is.

*He stops, standing in front of her with almost no space between them. He leans down and Olivia leans away from him, but he doesn't seem to notice. He holds onto her chin and moves to kiss her. He barely manages to before she shoves him away much more violently than he (and the audience) expects.*

OLIVIA:  
No.

TONY:  
Our routine suffers because you won't let yourself have this.

OLIVIA:  
I don't want this. I don't want you.

TONY:  
I don't believe you.

OLIVIA:  
I'm gay.

*Deadly silence. Tony takes several stunned steps backward and sinks into the chair again.*

TONY:  
You're--?

OLIVIA:  
I'm gay.

TONY:  
Oh, my god. That explains everything. Why didn't you tell me this forever ago?

OLIVIA:  
Because it didn't seem important. It doesn't change how I skate.

TONY:  
I think it changes everything.

*Pause, as he thinks.*  
God--you're incredible.

OLIVIA:  
I'm just a person.

TONY:

People always assume the men in this sport are gay--I should know--and you're out here breaking down boundaries and flipping stereotypes--

OLIVIA:

I'm not doing anything other than skating, Tony, I'm not a different person than I was five minutes ago.

TONY:

No. You're right. You were always incredible. When did you know?

OLIVIA:

When did I know I was gay?

TONY:

Were you, when we started skating together?

OLIVIA:

Um, yes. I'm...I was born like this, so...yes. I guess I kind of always knew a little bit, but I didn't date girls at all until college.

TONY:

Wow. Honestly, you must have girls just falling all over themselves to date you. I mean, I'd date you if I were a lesbian. Well, hell, I'd date you now, but really, you must be a total lady killer.

OLIVIA:

Well, no.

*She hesitates, folding and unfolding her hands in her lap.*

It's, uh, not like that. Listen, I--about us--

TONY:

Oh, don't--do not worry about it. I would not take it the least bit personally.

OLIVIA:

Well, okay.

TONY:

I'm not your type. Ha ha.

OLIVIA:

...anyway, now you know why I feel weird about the, you know. All the questions and rumors.

TONY:

Oh. Oh, absolutely, Olivia. Of course. I can't even imagine. I totally get it. I do.

OLIVIA:

And, I'm going to tell Coach tonight, too, I just thought you should know.

TONY:

I'm glad I know. it's honestly such a weight off of my shoulders.

OLIVIA:

Yeah, um. So...thank you.

TONY:

Thank you.

*He gets up from the chair again and goes to Olivia, who isn't happy about it but doesn't shrink away from him as obviously. He takes her hand, holds it for a few seconds, and then leaves the room. Once he's gone, Olivia flops onto her back on the bed and lets out an audible breath. She reaches for her phone on the nightstand and sends a text.*

*She puts the phone down. After a few seconds it buzzes again, and she reads the text. She pockets her phone and gets up from the bed, standing awkwardly until Coach enters.*

COACH:

It's a little late. You okay?

OLIVIA:

I'm gay.

*Coach stares at her for a few seconds. Then she takes a very deliberate seat on the edge of Olivia's bed.*

COACH:

You want to try that one again?

*Olivia paces.*

OLIVIA:

I know it's bad timing. I'm sorry. I should've said something before we even shipped out, especially out here, where--you know. I mean, you know, right? So I'm sorry. For saying it now.

COACH:

And why are you saying it now?

*Olivia stands still again, but she looks like she might burst into movement again at any second.*

OLIVIA:

What?

COACH:

You went this long without telling me, why is it so important to tell me right now?

OLIVIA:

It's...not.

COACH:

It clearly is, or you wouldn't be telling me.

OLIVIA:

I guess...I told Tony. And if he knows, then you should know.

COACH:

Ah.

OLIVIA:

He just kept answering all those stupid questions about us, and every single time he made it sound like we were in love with each other, and I was sick of it, because that's not me.

COACH:

Did you tell him that?

OLIVIA:

I told him I was uncomfortable with it and I explained why.

COACH:

Well, that's good.

*They stare at each other for a few moments. Coach looks much more comfortable in this room than Olivia does.*

OLIVIA:

So...is that like...it?

COACH:

Sorry?

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

That's all you have to say?

COACH:

What would I say? I'm glad you told him. I'm glad you told me. I'm glad you told him where to stick it. Or at least did your version of that.

OLIVIA:

I didn't do that. I can't do that.

COACH:

I don't know what else you'd want me to say. Do you want me to tell you that you're safe? Because that's not my job, and you know I can't guarantee that.

OLIVIA:

No. I know.

COACH:

If it helps, I don't think anything would happen to you, even if you were to tell everyone tomorrow.

OLIVIA:

I'm not planning on it. I don't really think it's something everyone needs to know.

COACH:

Alright. There haven't been any problems as far as I know, even with the out athletes.

OLIVIA:

No, there haven't. I don't think it's necessarily that anyone feels like we're in direct danger or anything. It's uncomfortable, not life-threatening. As far as we know.

COACH:

I do think it's bullshit that the Committee didn't really say anything.

OLIVIA:

I don't really know anything about that, the politics. I don't know if they could have really done anything without just telling us not to come or without us striking or something, and I wanted to skate more than anything. I just don't, um. I don't want people to be trying to figure out if I'm with someone.

*Coach considers Olivia very carefully. Olivia turns away again to walk toward the chair, but she doesn't sit down.*

COACH:

Uh huh.

OLIVIA:

Thank you for coming. I know it's late.

COACH:

It's not that late. I don't mind. I hope you feel better for having said it.

OLIVIA:

I'm sure I will.

*Pause. Olivia sits down again, wringing her hands.*  
Did you...ever do this? Come to the Olympics, I mean. I feel like I should know, I'm sorry, you just never mentioned it.

COACH:

Well...almost. There aren't really any black skaters. I don't know if you noticed. I don't mean to say that you're ignorant of it, or anything, just that I can imagine it might be an easy thing to not notice, for you. I grew up watching Debi Thomas skate, do you know who that is?

*Olivia shakes her head apologetically.*  
She won the Olympic bronze medal for women's singles in Calgary, 1988. I was eighteen. It was the coolest thing I had ever seen in my life. I had been figure skating for five years by then, but I'd never really seen anyone like me do it. Seeing her medal was like someone was telling me I could do it too. I was 23 when I tried qualifying for pairs skating for the Lillehammer games.

OLIVIA:

But you didn't go?

COACH:

No. It was 1994, so you would have thought that having a black woman on the pairs skating team was no big deal, right? But it wasn't as obvious as them not wanting to take me because I was black. It was a lot subtler than that. Years of being talked down to, bossed around, stepped on, and it's hard to stand up for yourself, because you worry about how you sound or how you look when you do. And I let it get in my head. I lost my edge, lost my way in, let them push me out.

OLIVIA:

I'm sorry.

COACH:

I learned from it. I never let anyone else get in my head like that again, and that's why I'm here, coaching you. Next time you're out there, take a look around at who's skating with you, who's coaching them, who's choreographing them, who's judging. If you see anyone who looks like me...well, you won't.

OLIVIA:

But you're here.

*Pause.*

I'm glad you're here.

COACH:

Me too.

Scene Ten

*Between buildings again, as before. Cara stands centerstage in a Team USA jacket, hugging her arms around herself. Olivia enters bundled in a bigger coat. They hug, but Cara is stiff. There are still far-off voices of the other athletes. This time Cara is the one to check and see how close they are. Olivia shrugs out of her coat and drapes it around Cara's shoulders. As before, the lights are shifting across both buildings, but Olivia notices nothing about her surroundings.*

OLIVIA:

I have something to tell you.

CARA:

I saw Tony's interview earlier.

OLIVIA:

What? Today?

CARA:

Yeah.

OLIVIA:

It's...that's why I wanted to talk to you.

CARA:

He's, like, two seconds from saying you guys are in love with each other. He's basically said it.

OLIVIA:

Cara--

(CONTINUED)



CARA:

And you just let him. You know? Nobody asks you about how you feel because you don't like the camera, and that's fine, but that means all they get is him telling everyone how *connected* you are, all this shit about your bodies and poetry in motion, about how amazing you are and things clicked as soon as you met--

OLIVIA:

(simultaneously)  
It's--

CARA:

(simultaneously)  
Things that I feel about you.

OLIVIA:

I came out to him.

*Cara is silent. She holds onto the jacket around her.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

Today. After I saw that stupid interview, I asked him to come talk to me, and I told him.

CARA:

What did you tell him?

OLIVIA:

I told him I was gay. And that I didn't like how he talked about us like we were something we're not. And honestly, he was really good about it. I feel really good about how it went.

CARA:

That's it?

OLIVIA:

What do you mean, that's it? That's what you asked, that's what you wanted. You wanted me to come out.

CARA:

I--I wanted you to *want* to come out.

OLIVIA:

What difference does it make? I told him.

CARA:

It makes all the difference in the world! It's not about him knowing, it's about you saying it. It's about you deciding to say it.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

Well, I did. Why isn't that good enough?

CARA:

It has nothing to do with being good enough.

OLIVIA:

Don't...that's what you're saying. At least admit that's what you mean.

CARA:

You told him you were gay. You told him to stop talking about you guys like you were together. But you didn't tell him about me.

OLIVIA:

Oh, my god.

CARA:

Don't do that, don't pretend like that's some insane, ridiculous thing to be upset about.

OLIVIA:

It's ridiculous that you think I didn't tell him because I don't love you enough.

CARA:

I never said that.

OLIVIA:

You never say half the shit you think, Cara, but I know you. You've got this crazy feeling that I'm going to walk away from you just because I can. Because nobody knows about us so nobody can hold me accountable for leaving you.

CARA:

You don't know anything.

OLIVIA:

I know you're scared.

*Cara takes off Olivia's coat and tries to hand it to her, but Olivia doesn't take it.*

I know you're scared of this. Because it's complicated and you can't control it.

CARA:

It doesn't have to be fucking complicated.

*She holds the coat out again. Olivia takes it.*

OLIVIA:

It is for me.

CARA:

Yeah, well that's the problem. Because for me? Loving you is easy. It's very simple. And it's not like that for you.

OLIVIA:

Loving you isn't what's complicated, Cara, it's not about you.

CARA:

Let's do a thought experiment here. Let's say, for the sake of argument, that I believe you, that it's not about me. Then what's the problem? What are you so afraid of?

OLIVIA:

Losing you.

CARA:

Oh, please. I'm mad at you. Yeah. I feel like shit. But if you think I wouldn't still walk through Hell with you, you've got no idea what you got yourself into. Love is loving someone even when they're being an asshole.

OLIVIA:

I'm not being an asshole.

CARA:

You're not hearing me.

OLIVIA:

I'm trying.

CARA:

I know. I didn't say you weren't trying.

OLIVIA:

You know I love you.

CARA:

Is that it?

OLIVIA:

What?

CARA:

Is that all you wanted to tell me?

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

Um, I...feel like that was pretty huge.

CARA:

I didn't say it wasn't, I just feel like there's something you're not saying and I don't want to go to bed like that, because I'll stay up all night trying to figure it out.

OLIVIA:

I don't know. He took it really well. He was really relieved. He'd, um--he tried to kiss me before so after I told him I think it helped him not feel as...emasculated.

CARA:

He--do you hear yourself? Do you see how you just like, don't tell me these huge important things and then you say it like it's nothing?

OLIVIA:

What, that he tried to kiss me?

CARA:

How can you say that like it's a minor inconvenience? You're saying it like you removed a blackhead, not like your gross, entitled douchebag of a skating partner came onto you.

OLIVIA:

I didn't tell you because I knew you'd get like this.

CARA:

I would not have gotten like this if you had just told me about it.

OLIVIA:

Why are you acting like I cheated on you?

CARA:

He tried to kiss you and you didn't tell him about me.

OLIVIA:

I don't trust him not to do something stupid and try to find you.

CARA:

So he finds me. So what? Why is that bad? Why is it bad that someone who's close to you might know who I am?

OLIVIA:

My parents know who you are. Our friends know.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

You know what I mean.

OLIVIA:

I don't think you realize that it's actually dangerous here.

CARA:

We're not Russian. They don't care.

OLIVIA:

You don't know that! You can't know that.

CARA:

How does telling Tony mean telling everyone else in a fifty mile radius?

OLIVIA:

You don't know him. I wish I could feel how you feel about it. I wish I could be that brave for you, Cara. I really do.

CARA:

Well, I can't make you feel anything. Clearly.

*She crosses her arms and turns away.*

I'm going to bed. You're skating tomorrow and I've got to train. Maybe you were right, maybe we shouldn't be seeing each other while we're here. Maybe it is too distracting.

*She waits for Olivia to speak, but nothing comes. When Olivia fails to stop her, she exits the stage and Olivia stands alone between the buildings. The sounds of the Village return, louder this time, and Olivia stands alone in the noise while the lights shift, and then, finally, go out.*

#### Scene Eleven

*Cara enters her dark bedroom in the Village. Jackie is asleep in one bed. Cara walks through the room without turning any lights on, across the stage and off the other side. A light comes on offstage. From the offstage bathroom, Cara can be heard crying. Sincere, gut-wrenching ugly crying. She is trying to be quiet, but it's not happening. Jackie stirs after a few seconds and rolls over. She sits up and flips on the lamp on the table between their beds.*

(CONTINUED)

JACKIE:  
Cara?

*Cara quiets and the sink turns on.*

JACKIE: (cont'd)  
Car?

*Cara doesn't answer. Jackie swings her legs over the edge of the bed with a touch of exasperation. The sink stops.*

JACKIE: (cont'd)  
Are you sick?

CARA:  
(muffled, offstage)  
No?

*Jackie gets out of bed and starts to walk toward the bathroom. Cara appears back onstage before she gets there, meeting her a little more than halfway. Cara is rumpled and her face is wet from crying.*

JACKIE:  
You look like shit.

CARA:  
Thanks.

JACKIE:  
Did you break up?

CARA:  
What? Jesus, no. Why would we have broken up?

JACKIE:  
You snuck out to see your girlfriend and came back at one in the morning to have a meltdown in our bathroom. If I did that, it would be because I got dumped.

CARA:  
She didn't dump me. She's not going to dump me, we're just...it's just hard. It's hard because we love each other so much.

JACKIE:  
Oh, my God. I...do not understand you.

CARA:  
Well, we're pretty different.

JACKIE:

No, I mean you, like both of you together.

*Cara walks towards her bed, still wiping at her eyes.*

CARA:

I feel like I'd know if it was bad enough to worry about it.

JACKIE:

I kind of feel like you're worrying about it, Car.

CARA:

It's fine.

*Cara sits on the edge of her bed and Jackie joins her as if on a bench at a game, silent and not looking at each other, for an uncomfortably long time.*

JACKIE:

I'm worried about you.

CARA:

Yeah. I know. I'm gonna go to sleep.

JACKIE:

You remember when we got here and you told me that Olivia didn't want to see you too much because it was going to be distracting?

CARA:

I'm taking care of it.

JACKIE:

Maybe you shouldn't see her until this is all over.

CARA:

I said I'm taking care of it. We all have people we care about here, right? Family that stresses us out sometimes. This is the same thing.

JACKIE:

I think you really need to ask yourself whether you're here as Olivia's girlfriend, or as my teammate.

CARA:

Seriously?

JACKIE:

Yes, seriously. I'm your captain.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

You're my best friend.

JACKIE:

Yeah, I am. But right now, here, I'm your captain. Right now, here, my priority is the team. Because that's how I have to be to get the job done right.

CARA:

If I had known making you captain meant losing my best friend I wouldn't have voted for you.

JACKIE:

Don't be like that, you don't mean that. I know you're upset and you don't mean that and I know that I'm not telling you what you want to hear, but you know that I love you, I want you to be happy.

CARA:

Just not right now. I got it.

JACKIE:

No. I want you to be happy always.

*She puts an arm around Cara's shoulders and pulls Cara into her side. Cara is trying not to cry and will not look at her.*

Always, seriously, you're my best friend, and I love Olivia too, you know that. But this is a job. This is our job. If you're right about Olivia not even being close to dumping you, and I'm sure you are--she'll be here when this is over.

CARA:

Yeah, she will, but you know what? If I don't do this? If I don't put the work in and see her when she needs me, or when she thinks she needs me, if I don't think about her, if I don't worry about her, then she won't be around for very long, because that's not how any of this works. I can't just turn off my relationship for two weeks.

One of the first things we learn when we get up to the senior team is that you can't just train while you're playing, right? You're an athlete all the time. You're an athlete during the summer when the leagues are on a break and there's no camp until August. You're an athlete when you're at your cousin's wedding wondering if you should have that second glass of wine. You're an athlete when you stay an extra ten minutes at the gym to run sprints you'd rather die than have to do again. Well, loving someone's the same way.

(CONTINUED)



*Cara has started crying again. She leans into Jackie, who squeezes her shoulders and lets her cry for a few seconds. It's obvious that they've been here before. These are two people very comfortable seeing the uglier sides of each other. Cara is not afraid to really cry on Jackie.*

I love her when it's easy and we're doing nothing but lying on the couch together all day, but I love her when she's difficult, too, I love her when it feels like she'll never love me as much as I do, I love her even when I have to come back here and cry my guts out for twenty minutes because she hides me and doesn't think anything of it, because that's what I signed up to do.

*Cara sits up straight again to look at Jackie. 'Cause it's work. Just like lifting is work. Just like hill sprints are work. That's why she keeps asking to see me even though she was the one to say we shouldn't. Because she knows that. Because some things are more important than gold medals.*

*Jackie wipes a couple of Cara's tears away and Cara takes over, a little bit embarrassed. She hugs Jackie, who doesn't hesitate to hug her back.*

JACKIE:

I trust you.

CARA:

Good. Because I need someone to.

*Blackout.*

### Scene Twelve

*The sounds and bustle of the Olympic pair figure skating rink during competition. The crowd, announcers, coaches, and competitors, as well as music, on and off. Cara enters onto the platform, dressed neutrally, with no indication of her country affiliation other than the pass around her neck. She looks out into the audience as if watching the event, as Olivia did before. The plexiglass 'boards' are once more between Cara and the audience. The crowd below her swells with noise, indicating that Olivia and Tony have taken the ice. Throughout the scene, the lights change with the music, to give the sense of movement.*

ANNOUNCER ONE:

And up next we have the upstart American pair that everyone has had their eyes on coming into this

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER ONE: (cont'd)

competition. They came in second in the World Championship this past year, seemingly out of nowhere, and I think it's safe to say the United States' hopes of medaling are squarely on their shoulders.

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Absolutely, Rod. The United States has traditionally done fairly well in ice dancing, but have failed to medal in pairs skating going back as far as 1994. This might be their chance to get back into the fray...

*The crowd quiets. Cara leans more against the railing. Music begins to play--an instrumental pop cover, or something similar.*

ANNOUNCER ONE:

One-forty-six point three is the points to beat at the moment.

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Certainly doable. If you're only now tuning in, this is Olivia Copse and Anthony Brewer.

*The faint sound of skates against ice can be heard with the music. Cara continues to watch nervously. There is a pause, and then the crowd cheers.*

ANNOUNCER TWO: (cont'd)

An impressive pair spin there.

ANNOUNCER ONE:

You can see, Jack, how much these two trust each other.

*The crowd cheers again.*

ANNOUNCER TWO:

And now a rotational lift.

ANNOUNCER ONE:

They'll work their way up to their biggest element in a moment. Only one other pair has attempted it so far this competition. It's worked well for these two in the past.

*Jackie enters in her Team USA gear, joining Cara at the balcony. Cara does not notice her until Jackie leans into her, and then they make brief eye contact before they both watch the ongoing performance. The crowd quiets, and Cara rests her face in her hands, elbows against the railing. With another build in the music, the crowd erupts again.*

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER ONE: (cont'd)

Oh, that really helped their chances, that was beautiful.

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Just perfectly landed by Copse there. Such a difficult landing to hit, but she made it look very easy. That's what the judges like to see. Difficulty and finesse.

ANNOUNCER ONE:

And here it comes.

*Again, only the sound of the music and skates against the ice. Cara is stiff and riveted, Jackie is more relaxed, but nervous in her own way. After a few seconds, the crowd roars its loudest so far, and Cara slumps against the railing, shaking her head, relieved. Jackie squeezes her shoulder.*

ANNOUNCER TWO:

Just incredible, Steve. Just incredible.

CARA:

Incredible.

### Scene Thirteen

*Tony stands in front of the boards, with the rink behind him, sweaty and running a hand through his hair to slick it back again. Closer to the boards, Olivia sits on a bench with Coach, speaking to her quietly in barely controlled excitement. A reporter (may or may not be the same as the first) bursts onstage to find them, out of breath and ruffled, as if he has fought through a crowd to get there, and approaches Tony.*

REPORTER:

Can I have a word?

TONY:

Of course, absolutely.

*Olivia and Coach notice him. Olivia's excitement wanes but she continues to listen to Coach, who is showing her things on a clipboard/dry-erase board/iPad. The reporter fumbles with his iPhone and holds it out to record.*

REPORTER:

You just scored an all-time high 80.64 points in the short program, only about 4 points short of the world record, set at last year's Skate America competition. How does it feel?

(CONTINUED)

TONY:

Honestly, it feels amazing. We know our work isn't done obviously, the free skating component is huge, but to have this under our belts and score the highest we've ever scored is amazing, it gives us the confidence to move forward tomorrow and know we can get the job done.

REPORTER:

There was some talk about American pairs tending to fall short of their predicted rank at the Olympics earlier this week, I'm sure you heard some of that too.

TONY:

Yeah. Well, it has been true in the past. Pairs have definitely come and underperformed at least as far as the experts had expected. But that was never gonna be us.

REPORTER:

You do seem to have a different outlook.

TONY:

I started out playing hockey when I was young so I think I come out expecting a battle more than some of the other pairs. It's a performance and a dance and all that, but it's also a competition and I never forget that.

REPORTER:

Is that something you and Olivia share?

TONY:

I don't think so. She's much softer than me, but she doesn't have to fight so hard to look beautiful on the ice, you know?

*They both laugh. Olivia glances over but clearly can't hear what he's saying. Coach retains her attention.*

I'm not a great actor or a great performer, so I have to come out fighting. Olivia is a fantastic performer just naturally. For example--everyone thinks we're in love with each other.

REPORTER:

Ha ha, I would say there's some speculation, for sure--

TONY:

We read about it all the time and we just laugh about it. It's really just such a testament to what a fantastic actress is, because you know, she's gay, so--she's not in love with me, nowhere except the ice, when she's performing. So I think she's really special,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONY: (cont'd)  
 she's got this edge on other competitors because she's just such a gifted performer.

*The reporter asks him something else, but now their conversation is silent. Olivia's watching them and Coach is trying to speak to her. She can't look away from Tony and the reporter despite the growing noise of a crowd, imagined or real. The lights narrow in on Olivia as the sound swells, and at its peak, she is illuminated in spotlight for a moment.*

*Blackout.*

Scene Fourteen

*Cara stands alone outside the locker room, far to one side of the stage, illuminated by a spotlight and dialing a number on her phone. She waits, but nobody answers. Her teammates are rowdy offstage, laughing about practice and the coming games. Cara plugs the ear that her phone is not held up to.*

OLIVIA:  
 (recorded)  
 Hi, you've reached Olivia. I--

*Cara sighs, hangs up and dials again. As before, nobody answers.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)  
 (recorded)  
 Hi, you've reached Olivia. I can't come to the phone right now, but leave your name and number and I'll get back to you as soon as possible.

*The voicemail beeps.*

CARA:  
 Olive, it's me. Please call me when you can, okay? Or just--just text me back, anything, I just want to know you're okay, I understand if you don't want to see me, I'm sure you're slammed, I just...I'm worried about you. I love you. I'm sorry. Baby, I'm so sorry. I know you didn't want it to happen like this.

*She hangs up and holds her phone in her hands as if she's waiting for Olivia to call her back.*

*Cara's spotlight goes out, and Olivia is illuminated on the other side of the stage, sitting with her back up against her door. Her*

(CONTINUED)

*phone rings, and she dismisses the call. Her phone rings again, and she dismisses the call again, putting her head in her hands. Her phone buzzes with a few texts, and she ignores those too.*

*Someone knocks on her door and she jumps to her feet, running a hand through her hair before she looks through the peephole.*

COACH:

It's me.

OLIVIA:

I'm okay.

COACH:

I'm sure you are. I still think we should talk about it.

*Olivia hesitates, considering it.*  
I have chocolate.

*Olivia lets her in, moving to sit on the edge of her bed as before. Coach sits next to her instead of on the chair, holding out a chocolate bar.*

OLIVIA:

I don't like chocolate, but thank you.

COACH:

More for me.

*She opens the chocolate bar and pops some in her mouth. Olivia looks at her hands like a kid in trouble.*

COACH: (cont'd)

You seem like you're doing okay.

OLIVIA:

I'm just trying to focus again. That's what I need to do right now. Skating is what's important right now.

COACH:

Skating doesn't exist in a vacuum. You didn't get here because of technical mastery. Not to say you don't have the technical mastery, because you do, but at this level, that's not enough. There's a mental toughness that you have to have to get here, and you wouldn't be here if you didn't have it. Winners are very specific kinds of people.

OLIVIA:

I'm not a winner.

COACH:

No, not yet. But you get to decide that.

OLIVIA:

I really don't know what that means. The judges decide who wins, all I can do is skate.

COACH:

I'm not talking about whether or not you get to decide if you take home gold. I'm talking about a mindset. Winning is a mindset. Today, Tony won. It's like playing chess. You ever play chess?

OLIVIA:

(sheepishly)

I was in chess club from first to seventh grade.

COACH:

Okay, well, today he backed you into a corner and said 'check'. You still have a move left to make.

OLIVIA:

He's my partner. I shouldn't be thinking about him as an opponent.

COACH:

Everyone is either on your team or not on your team. Today he made it pretty obvious he's not on your team, don't you think?

OLIVIA:

Why are you telling me this? If I think of him like that won't it completely fuck up our chances tomorrow?

COACH:

If you let him get away with this, yes. If you don't push back, you're right, tomorrow will be a disaster, because he'll have all the power. That's how men like him operate, you know. It's all about power. He had information that made him powerful, and he used it. You get to decide if that's a checkmate or not.

OLIVIA:

I don't know what you want me to do. You keep saying this stuff, about me losing my voice and now this, and I don't know what you want.

COACH:

It's not about what I want. It's not really even about what you want. It's about what you need to do for you.

(CONTINUED)

*Olivia thinks about it for a while, while Coach eats her chocolate.*

OLIVIA:

My girlfriend called me. Twice. I'm sure she wants to see me.

COACH:

Do you want to see her?

OLIVIA:

I should. I'm sure it surprised her just as much as it surprised me. I guess I'm glad I didn't tell him about her.

COACH:

But do you want to see her?

OLIVIA:

I don't know what to do, honestly.

COACH:

You ignored her calls.

OLIVIA:

I...yeah. I wouldn't know what to say.

COACH:

Hmm.

*Pause.*

You want to know what I would do? I'd go see her.

OLIVIA:

She has a game tomorrow.

COACH:

And you have free skate. So?

OLIVIA:

So we should both be focusing on winning.

COACH:

Listen, if she's an athlete, she gets it. She knows how to focus. It's like I was saying earlier, winning is a mindset, and to get here it's a mindset you have to have. Besides which, are you going to focus if you don't see her, or are you going to sit here and wish you'd seen her?

OLIVIA:

(firmly)

I don't want anyone to see us together.

(CONTINUED)



COACH:

You have bigger things to worry about than what everyone else thinks.

OLIVIA:

Why do you keep pushing me? Why does it matter so much whether or not I go see her or I tell Tony to fuck off or whether I get nervous and doubt myself? You can't just heap all this pressure on me because I'm here and you never got to be!

*She is surprised at her own outburst. Coach leans back, a little impressed.*

COACH:

Well, there you are. You've entered the ring.

OLIVIA:

I'm sorry. I didn't mean that.

COACH:

No, you did. That's okay. I am pressuring you. My job as your coach is to put you under pressure when you need it. Sometimes we're not going to agree on when you need it. And you're right that I'm probably more involved than I should be, because I see myself in you, and if you lost your chance the way I did, because you let someone walk all over you, I'd be devastated.

OLIVIA:

I don't know what I want to do yet. And I need you to stop telling me what I need to do so that I can decide.

COACH:

Okay.

OLIVIA:

...Okay?

COACH:

Yeah. Okay.

*She stands and hands Olivia the last bit of chocolate.*

Now go get your girl.

#### Scene Fifteen

*Up again on the roof like the first time. Cara waits with her arms around her knees, drawing them to her chest, cold and tense. After an uncomfortably long few seconds, Olivia enters, hands deep in her pockets. Cara lets go of her legs and scrambles to her feet.*

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:  
Hi.

*Cara approaches her and Olivia digs into her pocket to produce the chocolate that Coach gave her. She holds it out like a peace offering. After a pause, Cara takes it, considering it in her hand before she throws her arms around Olivia's neck to hug her. Olivia hugs back, melting in relief.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)  
I'm sorry I didn't pick up.

CARA:  
I'm just glad you're here.

*She pulls back, moving her hands to Olivia's face. Are you okay?*

OLIVIA:  
I guess so. I don't know. I feel fine, but I know that's not real.

CARA:  
It's okay.

OLIVIA:  
It's not though, is it? Everything's different now. I can't even count the number of things that change. My sponsorships, my routine, my parents--God, my parents--

CARA:  
--hey, stop. Take a breath.

*She drops her hands from Olivia's face and takes her hands.*

CARA: (cont'd)  
Maybe it's not okay. Maybe there are a whole lot of things that aren't okay right now. Maybe the best you can do is say, this is fucked up, and go to bed, and wake up and try anyway.

*Olivia, who has started crying, turns away to wipe her eyes.*

OLIVIA:  
I don't want to skate anymore.

CARA:  
Oh, Olive, you don't mean that.

OLIVIA:

I do. It's too much pressure. I can't--I can't look at him again. Not after what he did. Thinking about it makes me sick.

*Olivia is crying in earnest now.*

I can't face him, I can't let him touch me.

*She turns back to Cara.*

Doesn't he win if I do that? If I go out onto the ice with him and let it be--acceptable? What he did?

CARA:

Not everything is about winning or losing. I don't think this works like that.

OLIVIA:

I don't want him to think that what he did was okay.

CARA:

Well, it's not.

*Pause.*

I can punch him, if you want.

*Olivia laughs, wiping her eyes again. Cara sits down and reaches up for Olivia's hand to tug her down, too. Sitting side by side, Cara wraps an arm around Olivia's shoulders, and Olivia leans into her, resting her head on Cara's shoulder.*

CARA: (cont'd)

I think you can have both. I think, if you want to, you can skate, without him thinking that he's off the hook. I really do think there's a way to do it. You worked so hard, I don't want this to be taken away from you.

OLIVIA:

I want them all to see me.

CARA:

Who?

OLIVIA:

All of them. All the people who thought I was in love with him. All the people who will watch just because I'm not, because of what he said. All the little girls who don't know yet, who think they have to be a certain way, a certain person, I want them to see me. But I don't want them to see him.

(CONTINUED)

CARA:

Olivia, when you skate, when you're really, really in it, you outshine him a thousand times. Nobody can see anything else.

OLIVIA:

I think you're a little biased, but thank you.

CARA:

I am.

*Olivia turns her face in to Cara's neck, wrapping an arm around her waist.*

OLIVIA:

I just want to go somewhere with you. I don't want to think about anything else.

*Cara kisses the top of her head. They sit together in silence for a few seconds. Cara takes the chocolate out of her coat pocket and unwraps it. Olivia lifts her head.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

Can I try it?

CARA:

Seriously?

OLIVIA:

Yeah. I wanna try it.

*Cara breaks the chocolate in half and offers some to Olivia. She nibbles on it while Cara waits with bated breath.*

CARA:

Yeah?

OLIVIA:

...nope, still gross.

*They both laugh. She hands her bit of chocolate back to Cara, who eats both.*

CARA:

You should go to sleep.

OLIVIA:

You play tomorrow too.

CARA:

Yeah, but I play at night. You have to get up early.

OLIVIA:

I won't sleep anyway, I never do before stuff like this.

*Cara gets to her feet and Olivia uses her arm to get up.*

OLIVIA: (cont'd)

Will you walk me down?

CARA:

You sure?

OLIVIA:

I'm sure.

*Cara lights up.*

CARA:

Okay.

*They exit with their hands linked.*

Scene Sixteen

*Morning, in Tony's room, set up to mirror Olivia's. He stands in front of a mirror, checking his teeth. There is a knock at the door, and he goes to open it. Olivia stands in front of him and he steps back to let her inside.*

TONY:

I didn't expect to see you for a while still. Don't you usually jog before a skate?

OLIVIA:

I wanted to talk to you.

TONY:

Oh. Well, hi. I do have my own pre-skate rituals, so--

OLIVIA:

I know that, it's important.

TONY:

You must be swimming in attention now, huh? I'm sure everyone and their mother wants an interview with you. America's sweetheart. How many hearts do you think you broke yesterday?

(CONTINUED)

OLIVIA:

I didn't do anything yesterday. I didn't do anything but skate.

TONY:

It's like you have no idea how hot you are. It's very girl-next-door of you. I think it's part of the appeal.

OLIVIA:

You're disgusting.

TONY:

It was a *compliment*. Why are you so goddamn sensitive all of a sudden? Are you nervous? Seriously? Are you taking this out on me because your hands got sweaty? Go work it out. You're a professional.

OLIVIA:

I've never been less nervous to skate in my life. I came here because I need you to know something. I need you to know that you--that what you did was disgusting, and manipulative, and I don't forgive you.

TONY:

What I--

*She closes the space between them, and for the first time, it's Tony who shrinks away.*

OLIVIA:

You're going to let me finish.

*Pause.*

I'm not doing this today because I like you. I'm not doing it because I trust you, or because I particularly think you deserve to win anything. I'm doing it for me, and you need to know that when this is over, we won't be skating together again. It's not your right to out someone the way that you did. You took something from me.

You took something from me. That was for me to do. I was going to decide when I wanted to say something, *if* I wanted to say something, and who I wanted to say it to. You have no idea how this complicates things for me as an athlete, as a person, and that's exactly why it wasn't yours to say. I don't owe you anything. I never owed you anything. In fact, this may come as a surprise, but actually, *nobody* owes you anything.

TONY:

I think you're overreacting.

OLIVIA:

Oh, I know you do. I expected you would. There's really no way for you to understand. But that's okay. I'm not here to make you understand.

TONY:

Just to lecture me.

OLIVIA:

To say what I needed to say.

TONY:

Are you done?

OLIVIA:

Talking to you? Yes.

TONY:

And I'm supposed to want to skate with you in three hours?

OLIVIA:

Do you want to win?

TONY:

Of course I want to win.

OLIVIA:

Then we both know you'll skate.

*Pause. A long, long pause. Tony is deciding whether or not he wants to argue, but Olivia hasn't stepped down and faces him square on, calm and unblinking.*

TONY:

I wasn't attacking you.

OLIVIA:

I'm sure that you believe that.

*This time he says nothing.*  
I'll see you in a few hours.

*She exits, and as she closes the door behind her.*

#### Scene Seventeen

*Olivia is illuminated on one side of the stage, sitting on a bench, tying up her skates. The "boards" of the rink are between her and the audience. As Olivia finishes lacing her skates, Cara enters and laces her own on the other side of*

(CONTINUED)

*the stage. They are in two separate places, preparing to step onto two separate rinks. Cara finishes tying up her skates, and leans her elbows onto her knees.*

*They stand. The lights on them grow brighter while the rest of the stage goes dark. They go to their respective entrances to the rink and stand for a moment, looking out onto the "ice", on the edge of the stage. They each take a deep breath, and step off the edge of the stage together.*

*Blackout.*

*End of Play.*