

THEATRE KIDS

101
"Pilot"

Written by
Matt Butler

Based on
A True Story

Theothermattbutler@gmail.com
02102876393

COLD OPEN

INT. THEATRE

CLOSE UP: HANNAH'S FACE

HANNAH (16, outspoken & confident) is staring directly down the barrel of the camera. A hundred different emotions flash across her face.

HANNAH (V.O.)
How many times have we played this
game?

We pan out and see we're on a high school theatre stage. A hundred faces, barely visible past the glow of the spotlight, in the audience. In the wings, NAOMI (16, supportive), acts as stage manager. On stage OWEN (17, enthusiastic), gesticulates in an astronaut helmet. JOHN (15, sarcastic), mans the spotlight.

The world seems to be moving in slow motion.

HANNAH (V.O.)
Naomi in the wings. She'll send the
chorus back onto the stage in a
minute. Right on the dot. Owen in
the moment, forgetting what scene
we're doing next until it starts.
John on the spotlight. That must be
John. No one else moves it like
that.

We pan out further. More than anything, Hannah looks tired.

HANNAH (V.O.)
How many times have we done this?
Fifty? A hundred? I'm not even
acting. I'm just running through
the motions. Monotonous. Forever.
Is this what living is?

We pan out all the way. We can see the whole stage now. She's dressed like a rubber green alien on a distant sci-fi planet.

HANNAH (V.O.)
We're doing MIDSUMMERS NIGHTS DREAM
IN SPACE. This is hell.

END OF COLD OPEN

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

The OPENING TITLES begin to play as we cut between our leads-

INT. HANNAH'S ROOM. MORNING

Hannah lets out an exhasperated sigh as she forces herself out of bed, exerting the barest minimum of energy.

INT. OWEN'S HOUSE. BATHROOM. MORNING

Owen is the exact opposite, dancing as he brushes his teeth.

INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN. MORNING

John dresses quietly before sneaking out the door.

INT. NAOMI'S ROOM. MORNING

Naomi sits in bed, thinking hard. A yellow journal lies at her feet.

EXT. VARIOUS

We cut between each of our leads as they leave their homes and head off down the street. These aren't the sexy, well toned, actually 25-years-old Hollywood teens you're accustomed to. These are normal kids, awkward, nerdy and a bit in their own heads. They each eventually make it to-

EXT. CHERRY HILL HIGH

Your typical public school. Hannah's ignored by the general student body as she walks through the main gates. No one notices her as she makes her way to the small theatre towards the back of the school. She walks through the doors-

INT. THEATRE. MORNING

And smiles at all the other dorky kids just like her, all of them killing time before the first bell. John and Owen are already here- Owen soaking up adoration from the other kids, John kicking his feet up like he owns the place. They smile and wave at her as she enters.

She looks at the stage and lets out a conflicted sigh. For better or for worse she's home.

TITLE: THEATRE KIDS

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

Hannah looks up spitefully at a piece of paper on a pin-board- a sign up sheet with two columns, CAST & CREW, for an "Untitled School Show". John slides up behind her.

JOHN

What do you think the show's going to be this year?

HANNAH

Best guess? A huge flaming wreck that will leave no one unscathed.

JOHN

Hm. Yeah. Probably.

He very promptly signs his name in the CREW column.

HANNAH

Oh come on John, you're really gonna let Ms Darling-

JOHN

I'm not letting you drag me into all that Hannah. Last year was *Midsummers In Space*. We literally cannot do worse.

He wanders off, leaving Hannah steaming. She doesn't notice Naomi sneaking up behind her.

NAOMI

What does he know? He's just in it for the toys.

Hannah turns, smiling, and hugs her best friend.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hi Hannah.

HANNAH

Naomi! I thought you were gonna be back last week. I had to break tradition and get mixed chips all by myself. It was humiliating.

NAOMI

(Genuinely hurt)
You went to The Sinking Chip without me??

HANNAH

I'm kidding! I would never.
Unless... When did you get home?

NAOMI

(Rolling her eyes)
Just last night. My dad kind of
needed the extra week at the batch,
so we stayed. Nothing happens
during the first week of school
anyway. You and John decide what
the shows gonna be?

HANNAH

I don't need to know. If Ms
Darlings directing it it's gonna be
a bad time, that's a fact.

NAOMI

It seriously cannot be healthy to
be this mad at one teacher-

HANNAH

She's a bad teacher Naomi! She's
got no vision, no sense of control-
last year I played Puck as like a
sexy squid, it was ...what is this?

Hannah's noticed the yellow journal Naomi is handing to her.

NAOMI

I wrote this short story over the
summer. I'm pretty proud of it and
I was hoping you could give me some
notes?

HANNAH

(Jokingly)
Well give me the pitch, lets see if
it's worth my time...

NAOMI

Well it's basically about this girl
who dies and comes back as ghost-

HANNAH

Classic short story stuff-

NAOMI

And she's like, wants to stay on
earth with her friends, but she
also kind of wants to move on- it's
a whole thing. Obviously I wouldn't
trust anyone else with it-

HANNAH

Of course. I'll read it as soon as I can. Nothing is more important to me right now that this short story.

Beat.

NAOMI

You're still thinking about the show aren't you?

HANNAH

-there's just no way it's not a dumpster fire, it's impossible-

BRRRRRING. The bell goes off.

NAOMI

Come on, you can interrogate her in class.

INT. THEATRE

A dozen or so kids, including Owen, Hannah and Naomi, all walk aimlessly around on the theatre stage. Standing just off to the side is MS DARLING (50's, greying hippie) watching them. She snaps her fingers and everyone freezes. A beat passes-

DARLING

Giraffe!

She snaps again and everyone starts walking like giraffes.

DARLING (CONT'D)

Excellent.

INT. THEATRE

Owen is performing on stage with a GIRL, his scene partner, while everyone else watches. He's really good, everyone enthralled save for Hannah, who's trying to sneakily read Naomi's short story.

GIRL

This never would have happened if you just turned back!

OWEN

(Very loud, then quiet)
WOULD IT JANE!!!? ...would it?

Everyone applauds. They break character, Owen patting the girl on the back.

DARLING

Excellent improvising guys. You see that everyone? You discover the scene in the moment. You let your energy take you where you need to go. You hear that Miss Hudson?

Hannah suddenly looks up. Darling is glaring at her.

HANNAH

Crystal miss. Glad we spent the hour learning how to walk.

DARLING

Is there something you wanted to add? You want to lead the class?

Hannah sarcastically shakes her head and gives her a thumbs up. Darling sighs. There's a bit of mutual resentment there.

DARLING (CONT'D)

Ok, we'll pick this up tomorrow. Remember- "There are no bad actors, just bad people". Owen could I talk to you for a moment?

He nods and joins her in the corner of the room.

DARLING (CONT'D)

How are you Owen? Doing ok?

OWEN

Yeah good. Been a while since I did yoga that intense. Train pose really beat the snot out of me.

DARLING

...Owen there is no train pose.

OWEN

Really? Then what was I doing?

DARLING

...Owen I have a meeting with Vice Principal McKinley in about two minutes so I'm going to get right to the point. I'm curious, what are your plans for next year?

OWEN

...hmm?

DARLING

Once you're finished with school.
Have you thought much about your
future?

OWEN

Oh yeah, definitely. The future?
All the time.

It's clear Owen has given no thought to this at all.

DARLING

Owen, you have a gift. You're an
incredibly talented actor. I see
you going further than anyone at
this school has gone before.

OWEN

Further- you mean like- to Egypt?

Darling looks perturbed, but brushes it off as the bell goes.

DARLING

Owen I think that journey towards
your full potential starts now.
Guess what show we're doing this
year.

OWEN

Ooh! Um. Hamilton?

DARLING

No.

OWEN

Oh um ...um ...can't think, my
brain's full of Hamilton...

DARLING

We're doing Midsummers Nights
Dream.

OWEN

...again?

DARLING

Yes. And I want *you* to play Bottom.

Owen gasps.

OWEN

The ass man himself?

DARLING

I think it's the role you were born to play. Now obviously I don't want you spreading this around. I still have to finalize it with Vice Principal McKinley.

OWEN

Don't worry Ms Darling! You can count me. My lips are sealed.

HARD CUT TO

EXT. COURTYARD

OWEN

We're doing Midsummers again and I'm playing Bottom!

He's standing in the courtyard just outside of the theatre with John, Naomi and Hannah.

JOHN

The ass man himself? Well done Owen. That's a real get for you.

OWEN

Thank you!

Hannah looks mortified.

HANNAH

Wait, we're doing it again?? After last years disaster?

OWEN

She's talking to McKinley about it right now. It wasn't that bad Hannah. You just hate Ms Darling.

HANNAH

I don't hate her. She's the one with a problem with me!

NAOMI

You do talk shit whenever you can.

HANNAH

Because she doesn't know what she's doing!

NAOMI

Well when you're in charge of
entire department of horny,
closeted theatre kids, you can
decide what show to do.

OWEN

(Oblivious)

Yeah! That's the spirit Naomi.

A thought crosses Hannah. She looks up at the main building-

INT. MCKINLEYS OFFICE

VICE PRINCIPAL MCKINLEY (50's, wispy) sits in the dark at his
desk, fidgeting as Darling paces, finishing her pitch. He
looks like he wanted this to be over before it even started.

DARLING

Come on McKinley, just sign off.
It's only fifty grand. In return
you'll get a powerhouse of a
performance, that's a promise.

MCKINLEY

(Wincing)

That is still a large sum of money.
Ms Darling, didn't you do this show
last year?

DARLING

In space yes. This time we're
setting it in nazi Germany. It's
not just Shakespeare. It's also a
statement piece!

MCKINLEY

...and you're sure you can't do it
for cheaper?

DARLING

Patrick.

McKinley gulps. He's obviously intimidated by Darling.

MCKINLEY

No, you're right. It's a done deal.

He pulls a sheet of paperwork closer to him, ready to sign-
Suddenly Hannah bursts through the door.

HANNAH

Mr McKinley! You say yes to
Midsummers and you say yes to hack
productions until the end of time!

MCKINLEY

What?

DARLING

Ms Hudson, what are you doing out
of class? This is a private
discussion-

NAOMI (O.S.)

Hannah stop, you can't just barge
into the vice principals office
whenever you-

Naomi, Owen and John barrel in after her, all freezing when
they see the teachers staring at them.

OWEN

Oh... sup dudes.

NAOMI

We're so sorry to interrupt. Hannah
didn't mean to involve herself
where she isn't needed. We'll just-

HANNAH

Mr McKinley, we've basically done
the same show for four years. The
dramatic community at this school
has never had a chance to stretch
it's legs!

MCKINLEY

...the dramatic community...?

HANNAH

Of course all the parents and the
grandparents are going to fill the
seats you need to justify a show
like this, but if you really want
create art that's special, you need
to take a risk...

She has a thought as she's saying it.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I think the students should run the
school show this year.

DARLING/OWEN/NAOMI

...what?

RIIIING. There's the bell. Kids start moving to their next class.

DARLING

Um, ok, that's not happening. It's actually insulting that you would barge in here without even so much as a pitch-

HANNAH

Oh! We do- Naomi wrote it!

NAOMI

I did?

HANNAH

It's essentially about this ghost girl, right? And her complex, interesting emotions. It's really modern and cool-

OWEN

You wrote that?

NAOMI

Um, kind of, but-

DARLING

Mr McKinley, this is ridiculous, please ask them to leave, they don't even have the key personnel to run a show on this size-

HANNAH

This is it. This is the key personnel. Aren't you guys?

She glares at her friends. They all look very concerned.

JOHN

(Unconfidently)

Yes?

OWEN

(Confidently)

Sure!

Mr McKinley is looking more and more uncomfortable.

HANNAH

Sir, I've known these guys since I was about six. We know theatre back and forth. We're a big ol' box of fireworks and all you need to do it light the fuse.

DARLING

Mr McKinley I am a teacher. I obviously know what's best for-

McKinley has had enough.

MCKINLEY

(Obviously lying)

Oh no, would you look at the- day. Ms Darling you were actually supposed to come in and pitch tomorrow. I'm so sorry to have wasted your time-

DARLING

What? We scheduled this a month ago-

MCKINLEY

Yes, so sorry, my mistake, if everyone could just leave my office at once I would so appreciate it-

He gets up and very quickly ushers everyone to the door.

HANNAH

Ok but if you're hearing pitches tomorrow you'll hear ours too right?

MCKINLEY

Sure whatever.

INT. HALLWAY

He slams the door behind them. Everyone stands there in the hallway awkwardly. Hannah and Darling share a look.

DARLING

Ms Hudson, what exactly are you trying to do?

HANNAH

Something worthwhile.

She looks like she's about to say something she'll regret when she stops herself. Takes a quick tree pose. Calms down.

DARLING

See you all in class.

She wanders off. The others exchange odd looks. Hannah looks incredibly excited.

HANNAH

Ok. We have a deadline. Does anyone know how to write a pitch?

Beat.

JOHN

What exactly is going on?

END OF ACT ONE

EXT. COURTYARD

Our four leads make their way out to the main courtyard. Hannah has a fire in her eyes.

NAOMI

Wait, I'm sorry you're going to have slow way the hell down for me.

HANNAH

What's not to understand? We run the school show this year. We write it, produce it, put it on. Do something unique for once.

JOHN

Hannah, I'm really good at turning on lights and pointing them. I don't know how to do all of that stuff from scratch.

HANNAH

Neither do I, but we'll learn. Owen, what's your perfect role?

Owen thinks for a moment before lapsing into silence.

OWEN

Can I pick twelve?

HANNAH

Don't have to. Roll em into one, put em in our show. John, doesn't complete creative freedom sound good?

JOHN

Well, I don't know if that's what McKinley was pitching-

HANNAH

I don't get why you guys aren't as amped as I am. This is our chance to really make our marks on this school. To really shove our faces in the mud and wriggle around.

NAOMI

Hannah I don't care about any of that. You just bullshitted a play out of thin air, using my story, without even talking to me first. Have you even read it yet?

HANNAH

I've read *some* of it yeah. And what I've read is really good. I'm not just saying that. Come on guys, we're all artists with capitol Tee's. Don't you want to share your art with the world?

JOHN

The general Cherry Hill area.

HANNAH

That.

Beat. Naomi thinks to herself.

NAOMI

You think it's good?

HANNAH

(Not sure)
Yes! Obviously!

NAOMI

I mean we can talk about it-

HANNAH

Great! I'm gonna book the green room out after school. I'll see you all at four!

She dashes away, the others watching her go.

OWEN

...Seymour from Little Shop.
That's my dream role.

John gives him a look.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Sorry. Not the point.

Naomi starts moving backwards. Not walking, drifting, to her next class, the camera getting closer and closer to her as she gets further away. She looks so uncertain-

HARD CUT TO

RIIING! The final bell of the day rings.

INT. THE GREEN ROOM

Naomi walks into the theater green room. A simple, small space with a couple of couches, a small kitchenette and a pair of changing rooms towards the back. She looks nervous, especially seeing Hannah with a massive whiteboard in the center of the room and her journal in hand.

HANNAH

Welcome home Naomi.

John is already here, a laptop open on his knees. Owen enters a moment later.

OWEN

Sorry I'm late guys, I was buying snacks. Naomi, salt and vinegar right?

NAOMI

Ew, no?

OWEN

...John? Hannah? You ess and vee fiends?

They both shake their heads. Owen turns out his bag and dumps a massive pile of salt and vinegar chips onto the table. He sinks into his chair.

OWEN (CONT'D)

(To himself)

I'm a failure.

Hannah turns to them all-

HANNAH

Ok. Big question. How do we adapt Naomi's short story "*The Ghost Girl*" into like- two and a half hours?

NAOMI

Um, the title is actually *The Places You'll Go*. You know, like doctor Seuss.

HANNAH

Cool beans. *Places* is about a ghost girl-

NAOMI

Her name is Mara.

HANNAH

Yeah. Mara the ghost girl. I gotcha.

Naomi looks frustrated. It's becoming clear that Hannah hasn't read it.

OWEN

Oooh. DOCTOR Seuss. Very clever.

HANNAH

So, story starts with... Mara... hanging out... you know Naomi you wrote it, why don't you take us through it?

NAOMI

What? Right now? In front of the guys?

JOHN

It's all good. Just pretend we're not here.

He types up some very loud notes on his laptop while Owen starts to loudly eat his chips. Naomi grimaces before shaking off her jitters and swallowing her pride.

NAOMI

Well, as it is right now, it's a sort of character piece about this girl who dies and comes back as a ghost. Her friends and family can't see her but she spends all her time hanging around them anyway-

HANNAH

Friends are pretty upset? Doing a bunch of grieving?

NAOMI

...Sure. She wants to hang out with them but wherever she goes there's this door. And she knows it leads to whatever's next. So she ignores it and hangs around her friends-

HANNAH

Her grieving family, struggling to cope with their sudden loss, dope.

Naomi gives her a look. Hannah puts up her hands, as if to say "sorry, I'll back off".

NAOMI

But she quickly realizes that it's just not the same. And she's stuck. So there's this choice. Stay or go.
(Suddenly self-aware)
It's internal and weird and stuff you know, it's still a first draft. Whatever.

OWEN

I have a question. Are there any other ghosts?

NAOMI

...No?

OWEN

A second question. Can there be other ghosts? I've always thought I'd make a really choice ghost.

NAOMI

Ok, but-

HANNAH

That's good. And maybe something really bad happened to him-

JOHN

Apart from dying?

HANNAH

Yes, apart from dying thank you John, that he's dealing with. And that ties into a larger theme-

She writes the word *grief* on the whiteboard.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Now that's a theme that makes a show. We focus in on that raw visceral grief, we're gonna make the audience weep like a bunch of tiny babies.

JOHN

Have you ever lost someone significant? We're gonna wanna to pull from an authentic place.

HANNAH

No, but my cousins great aunt died a few years ago, I can ask her what the grieving process is like.

The kids are all talking over each other. Naomi is struggling. It's all starting to get away from her.

NAOMI

Hey, guys, stop. I know you're all trying to help but this is all-

HANNAH

Hey, it's all good Naomi. This is all part of the process.

NAOMI

I thought we were just talking about it? I mean if we do it at all we do it authentically and this doesn't feel like that-

OWEN

I hear that. How about this. The show's a musical and we have a whole chorus line of singing ghosts.

HANNAH

I was literally just thinking the same thing-

Naomi is drifting again. She's moving without having any control. She looks at the whiteboard, already covered in notes, and her journal in Hannahs hands, already forgotten, a prop.

The others don't notice she's gone until the door shuts.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Naomi? Chorus line too much?

JOHN

She's probably just needs some air.

Hannah shrugs and keeps scribbling on the whiteboard as John steps outside.

EXT. GREEN ROOM

The sun is starting to set, the bright blue being slowly replaced with a pale orange. The green room is directly adjacent to a small parking lot. Naomi is sitting on the hood of a shitty old car. John wanders towards her.

JOHN

That's my car.

NAOMI

Oh! Sorry. I didn't- I'll-

JOHN

No it's cool. It is, truly, a fundamental piece of shit.

He sits on the hood, placing his laptop next to him and reaching into his pocket-

JOHN (CONT'D)

You want a scratchy ticket?

NAOMI

...why do you have that?

JOHN

They calm me down. Take it. I have tonnes in the car.

She shrugs and takes the ticket. As she scratches she takes in the setting sun. She starts to breathe again.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You win anything?

NAOMI

Apple. Apple. Dog with a trumpet.
So no.

JOHN

You just wanna hang out here and talk lighting for a while?

NAOMI

Sure... How much money do you spend on scratchys a year?

JOHN

I don't have to answer that.

INT. GREEN ROOM

A bit of time has passed. The whiteboard is almost completely covered in notes. Hannah's still muttering to herself, determined to do this right, while Owen lounges on the couch.

OWEN

Hey Hannah? Do you know what you're going to do next year?

HANNAH

(Without missing a beat)
I'm gonna get into Juilliard, move to New York, write and compose a musical on the side and get it on Broadway by the time I'm 22. Why?

OWEN

...No reason. Isn't it wild though? Just one more year and then- done. Everyone you've known since primary. Abra-cadabra, poof! They disappear. Then what?

She looks at him perplexed.

HANNAH

What are you talking about?

OWEN

I guess it just hasn't really sunk in yet. I'm gonna miss it.

HANNAH

Why? You're seventeen. That's what happens. You grow up and you move on.

OWEN

Oh come on. You're gonna miss it.

HANNAH

Why are you so horny for high school? High school isn't real. It's a half-life. You meet people that in five years you'll never see again and you do all these things that don't mean anything. I'm over it. I want to start living.

Owen looks shook to his core.

OWEN

You can't mean that. This is the good life. Performing on that stage, everyone clapping for you, calling your name. What else could you want?

HANNAH

...I want more.

EXT. GREEN ROOM

Naomi and John are sitting in the car, John in the drivers seat, Naomi in the passengers. The laptop is on the dash. They've written nothing down.

NAOMI

You think of anything?

JOHN

My brains too smooth to think.

NAOMI

Ugh. I don't get it. I know this story inside and out, I should be able to do this.

JOHN

Ok, well lets go back to the very basics. What's this story about?

NAOMI

You know that. It's about a ghost-

JOHN

No I mean like what is it really about. Like at its core.

She thinks for a beat.

NAOMI

It's not really about any one thing. It's more like a feeling. You ever feel like you're on a piece of driftwood and you're moving out to sea and you don't know how to stop yourself? You have to choose. That's what it's about.

JOHN

...You know, sometimes not choosing is a choice. This is yours. Not hers. We can stop any time you want to.

NAOMI

...When'd you get so wise?

John shrugs. Naomi waits for a beat before heading back-

INT. GREEN ROOM

NAOMI

Hey Hannah, can we please talk-

She freezes. The whiteboard is almost black there are so many notes. Hannah turns to her, an enormous smile on her face.

HANNAH

Naomi! We've cracked it! We just have to move a few beats around-

Naomi looks at her journal in Hannahs hand. The pages are covered in scribbles and notes. Changes. Naomi sees red.

NAOMI

What the hell did you do?!

HANNAH

What? We ran out of space, we had to get creative-

NAOMI

That was my only copy!!

She slaps it out of Hannahs hands. A startled Owen spills his chips.

HANNAH

What the hell is wrong with you?! This is good! This is part of the process!

Beat.

NAOMI

I guess you don't even need me.

She grabs her bag and storms out of the room. Hannah turns to Owen.

HANNAH

What did I do?

Owen shrugs, he has no idea. Hannah waits a beat before heading out after Naomi-

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Naomi!

A beat. John slides back into the room.

JOHN

...you think we're gonna talk money tonight? Cause I suspect this thing's gonna cost a lot...

END OF ACT TWO

EXT. SCHOOL

Hannah wanders out of the school grounds, out into the larger neighborhood. It's almost full night by this point, the blue in the sky not having quite let go.

HANNAH

Naomi?

The outside world is extremely colorful. Neon stop signs and street lights all shine down on her, lighting the world in a hundred different hues.

EXT. BUS STOP

She turns the corner to the local bus stop, missing the bus by half a second. She stands there as it drives off into the night.

She stands there for a beat before looking down the street behind her, and the little shop at its end-

EXT. THE SINKING CHIP

Naomi sits outside a fish and chip shop, THE SINKING CHIP, quietly seething and eating "mixed chips", a bundle of hot chips smothered in tomato sauce and mayo.

She doesn't look Hannahs way as she approaches her.

HANNAH

Hi.

Naomi doesn't respond.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Can I sit?

After a beat with no reply Hannah sits.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Mixed chips without me?

Naomi glares at her. Hannah quickly shuts up.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Ok. I am sorry. Genuinely. You have
a right to be angry at me and I'm
sorry that I made you feel that way
because of what I did.

She's stumbling through the words. Naomi looks disgusted.

NAOMI
You don't even know what you're
apologizing for.

HANNAH
What?? Yes I do.

NAOMI
Put it in a sentence.

HANNAH
I'm sorry that I- wrote in your
book? Right?

NAOMI
...you're unbelievable. Do you even
realize what a violation of trust
that was?

HANNAH
Obviously I didn't! I wouldn't have
done it if I knew how protective
you were of it. I mean you gave it
to me but whatever...

Naomi sighs.

NAOMI
We got back from the batch last
week.

HANNAH
...what?

NAOMI

We got home the night before school started. I woke up the next morning, Mum and Dad were already at work. And I just didn't go. And it was great cause I knew I wasn't letting myself get caught up in whatever negativity you'd carved out for yourself today.

Hannah sits there in silence, soaking that in.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

It is the book, this story is important to me, but it's also not the book. It's you. You don't listen to me. You don't want to listen to me. You know, sometimes it's really hard to be your friend.

A long beat. This is hitting Hannah like a tonne of bricks.

HANNAH

...I'm really sorry.

Beat.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I'll pull the plug on this if you want.

Hannah gets up to leave.

NAOMI

Wait.

Hannah turns. Naomi is holding her chair tight, making sure that she's firmly in place.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You're still not listening to me.

She thinks long and hard.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

I still want to do the show. You're right. It's be a chance to do something different. But if we do it, we have to do it as partners. You can't steamroll all over me anymore. Ok?

HANNAH

Ok.

NAOMI

Ok. Do you want a chip?

HANNAH

Yes please.

She sit's down beside her and has a chip. It's at this moment that the boys find them.

OWEN

Oh man! There you guys are! Do either of you have a key? We kind of left the building unlocked.

HANNAH

How'd you guys know we were here?

JOHN

Oh, we didn't. Owen was just hungry for chips.

OWEN

Yeah.

JOHN

So... what's going on here? Are we still doing this? You both kind of stormed off in the middle of the meeting.

Hannah and Naomi both share a look.

NAOMI

Yeah. We are.

JOHN

...Shit. Gonna be honest, I was hoping you'd say the other thing cause it's like seven thirty and we've gotten so little done.

HANNAH

What? We filled up that whole whiteboard?

OWEN

I'm not gonna lie, most of it is completely unusable. If we hit the grindstone, pull an all nighter we might be able to salvage it...

JOHN

...Sure, We could. I also have an idea that'll probably blow up in our faces.

OWEN

Oh good let's do that instead.

INT. SCHOOL. THE NEXT MORNING

RIIIING. The bell for the first break of the day. Kids start to mill about, killing time until the day ends.

Owen, Hannah and Naomi are making their way to McKinleys office. Darling is coming from the opposite direction. They meet each other in the middle.

DARLING

Owen. Naomi. Ms Hudson. Good to see you.

HANNAH

Yes. It is.

DARLING

Ms Hudson I don't know what you're doing here, your pitch is obviously going to be shot down, that's a guarantee. In fact, I want to tell you this directly. Please take it to heart. Spite never got anyone anywhere.

John suddenly exits out of McKinleys office.

JOHN

I've got the show. We open in about six months.

Beat. Hannah and Darling both look at him dumbstruck.

DARLING

...Patrick??

She storms into McKinleys office. John quickly takes Hannah by the shoulder and leads the others away.

JOHN

Don't worry. I have the paperwork. She can chew him like a raw steak and can't do anything about it.

NAOMI
Wait, are you kidding? We're in?

JOHN
We're in.

HANNAH
What did you do?

HARD CUT TO

INT. MCKINLEYS OFFICE. MOMENTS EARLIER

John leans over McKinleys desk.

JOHN
How much is Ms Darling asking for?

MCKINLEY
Fifty grand.

JOHN
We can do our show for half.

MCKINLEY
Done.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

The others look dumbfounded. Hannah has to sit down.

HANNAH
That is ridiculous.

JOHN
Completely. Still got a show.

Naomi sits next to Hannah. Owen and John quickly join them.

NAOMI
We have a show! ...what do we do
now?

HANNAH
I think we have to make the show.

OWEN
...does anyone know how to do that?

There's the BRRRRRRING of the bell. A quick beat before Owen gets to his feet.

OWEN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna head to class. We can sort that part out later.

JOHN

Ok, but let's get onto it soon, ok? Last night's meeting was a disaster.

OWEN

Chill out John. How hard could it be?

The boys disappear around the corner. Naomi stands-

NAOMI

I'd better go. Psychics time baby.

She gets up to go- but Hannah takes her by the hand, handing her back her journal.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

You read it?

HANNAH

It's really good.

Naomi smiles and grips Hannah's hand tight. A beat passes before Naomi pulls away and disappears around a corner.

All the kids hanging about slowly trickle away, until Hannah's left alone in the hallway. She sits there, the world moving at a normal pace. She breathes it in. Indulges in it.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY

Naomi pins a recruitment sheet to a pin-board, exactly the same as the one at the beginning, labelled "*Untitled Student Led Show*". Hannah smiles.

HANNAH

That looks better.

TO BE CONTINUED...