

**In Ability - Revised Draft**

IN ABILITY

By: Bailey Williams

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### Cast

JEN: 25 years old, can be played by any gender. Has been disabled since birth and is a wheelchair user. Confident. Proud. Outspoken.

BLAKE: 25 years old, can be played by any gender. Able-bodied. Kind. Nerdy.

TIFF: 25 years old, can be played by any gender. Became disabled after an accident when they were young and is a wheelchair user. Quiet. Smart. Unsure. Haunts the narrative.

PRIEST: 50s-70s male. Able-bodied. A wolf in sheep's clothing.

DOCTOR: Played by the same actor as PRIEST. 50s-70s male. Able-bodied. Doesn't hold the Hippocratic Oath in high regard.

MOTHER: 40s-60s female. Wants what's best for her kid, even if it doesn't seem like it.

STRANGER: 30s-70s female, a member of the ensemble. Has a lot of audacity.

PROTESTOR: 30s-70s, can be played by any gender, a member of the ensemble. Well meaning, but also ignorant.

DANCERS: Any age or gender, members of the ensemble, needed for the last scene of Act I.

SOLDIERS: 30s-40s, members of the ensemble. Needed in Act II.

### Notes on Casting:

Characters can be played by actors of any ethnicity. Characters who are designated as disabled should be played by disabled actors. There are characters that can be played by any gender. Within the script, they/them pronouns are used for those characters. Whoever is cast as those characters should use the pronouns they desire in the role. Queerness is welcome and should be encouraged and has the possibility to add to the beauty and complexity of the play.

### Notes on Punctuation:

-: The character has been cut off by someone else or is stammering.

...: The character is unsure of what to say next.

/: Characters are speaking at the same time/over each other.

Anything in italics is for emphasis.

Setting:

California, USA

Time:

The near future, 2040.

Act IPrologue

Setting: JEN and MOTHER's home, California. Circa 2023.

At Rise: On the stage is a table with presents and a cake on it, with candles lit. There are birthday decorations all around the stage. A group of kids surrounds the table with JEN in the middle, in their wheelchair, they are young, probably just turning 8. They are wearing something that screams their mom picked it out for them from the kid's section in Target. Simply something gender-neutral that a child would wear. The group finishes out "Happy Birthday".

MOTHER:

Make a wish, sweetie!

(JEN nods before blowing out their candles.)

MOTHER:

What'd you wish for?

(Blackout.)

Scene 1

Setting: JEN's house. Specifically, the living room. California, 2040.

At Rise: The TV is playing and JEN is in their wheelchair, next to the couch, now an adult. They are wearing nice attire that is typically worn to a funeral. They are staring off into space.

TV ANCHOR:

With militant police presence on the rise, it leaves people to wonder what exactly is the threat? What is the government hoping to contain? I sat down with Doctor-

(BLAKE enters and turns off the TV.)

BLAKE:

Jen... You ready to go?

JEN:

(Zoning back in)

Hm? Oh. Yeah. I mean, as ready as I'll ever be.

(Blackout.)

## Scene 2

Setting: A church in California in 2040, immediately after Scene 1.

At Rise: JEN and BLAKE sit in the first row of chairs seen on stage. A few members of the ENSEMBLE sit behind them. Two members of the ENSEMBLE are standing by what is assumed to be the entrance to the chapel, they are SOLDIERS. A chair has been removed from the first row to make space for JEN's wheelchair. There is a casket off to the side of the stage with a picture of TIFF beside it. The PRIEST is standing next to both of these things.

PRIEST:

Tiff's life, though it was tragically short, shows us that we have no excuse. Even though the Lord gave Tiff extra challenges, they lived out their faith every single day.

(A dramatic pause.)

Tiff's hardships began young, after their accident, they had to learn how to live with constant pain. However, the Lord provided for them. He gave Tiff's parents special grace to be able to raise a disabled child. He led Tiff to him. And that's how we know that Tiff is with him now.

(There are a few hums of agreement from the crowd.)

We all know that the Devil brought sin and darkness into the world. Tiff had to deal with that brokenness on a level some of us couldn't fathom. And when the world presented a Cure, it failed them. It gave Tiff a brief, temporary answer. But now,

Tiff has the eternal answer. They are fulfilled in Heaven, completely healed and perfect now. They now get to be how the Lord intended.

(JEN looks like they are about to say something. BLAKE takes their hand and squeezes it. JEN holds their tongue.)

Let us pray.

(JEN and BLAKE bow their heads while the crowd exits the stage, leaving only the PRIEST.)

(JEN and BLAKE raise their heads after a moment, only then letting go of each other's hands.)

(PRIEST walks over to JEN and BLAKE, though mainly addresses BLAKE.)

PRIEST:

It's been a while since I've seen you! I am so sorry that it had to be under these circumstances. If you need anything, please don't hesitate to reach out. I'll be keeping you in my prayers.

(JEN touches BLAKE's arm.)

JEN:

(To BLAKE)

You go ahead, I'll be there in a few minutes.

(BLAKE nods and exits the stage.)

(The PRIEST's demeanor immediately shifts, he kneels

down to be on eye level with  
JEN.)

PRIEST:

(As if speaking to a child)

What can I do for you, sweetheart?

JEN:

(Not having it)

You were the one who convinced Tiff to take the Cure.

PRIEST:

(Taken aback)

I'm not sure what you mean.

JEN:

I thought liars went to Hell, Father.

(PRIEST stands, now looking  
down on JEN.)

PRIEST:

(sighs)

Jen, I offered Tiff the guidance they asked for. They came to  
their own conclusions.

JEN:

This church has been one of the most vocal supporters of the  
Cure in the state since it was first introduced to the public.  
Was I supposed to not notice the poster advertising it on the  
bulletin board outside?

PRIEST:

We believe that God has ordained modern medicine to do His work  
in the world.

JEN:

(Scoffs)

So, which is it? Is the Cure ordained by God or is it a  
temporary answer?

PRIEST:

Glad to see you were paying attention.

JEN:

I've been paying attention for a long time. Or was I not supposed to notice those two at the door?

(JEN gestures to the SOLDIERS by the door, the only other characters currently on stage.)

Now answer my question.

PRIEST:

(A beat.)

Those two are here to help guard the church from any possible... (The PRIEST looks JEN up and down) *agitators*. And, should someone be considering receiving the Cure, they should pray and ask God to provide them with discernment so that they may make the choice He intends for them.

JEN:

And if their choice gets them to Heaven early, that's just a silver lining, right?

PRIEST:

I'm not sure what you mean.

JEN:

I think you do.

PRIEST:

I think, Jen, that if you keep going down this path, it will lead to nothing but difficulties, spiritually and physically.

JEN:

(Looks back at the SOLDIERS with a sort of understanding) Right. (Beat.) May God have mercy on your soul, Father.

PRIEST:

And may God bless your heart, Jen.

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

Setting: A diner in 2040 California, directly after the Funeral.

At Rise: JEN and BLAKE sit at a diner eating their lunch which each consist of burgers, fries, and a drink. Members of the ENSEMBLE fill the few tables around them, including two in SOLDIERS uniforms who are sitting with the STRANGER.

BLAKE:

Did you get your piece in?

(BLAKE begins to eat their burger.)

JEN:

What do you think?

(They check their burger, notice pickles and begin to pick them off.)

He's as much of an ass as he was when we were kids. He completely contradicted himself when it came to his stance on the Cure and refused to acknowledge that he's one of the reasons Tiff decided to take it.

(BLAKE slides their plate over to JEN. JEN places their pickles on BLAKE's plate without missing a beat.)

I just don't know how all of this- How Tiff's life doesn't weigh on his conscience (A beat.) There's a reason I haven't gone to church in years.

BLAKE:  
(Hesitant)

Jen. Tiff was an adult. They made their choice. No one was gonna change their mind. Not him. And not you either.

JEN:

I know that.

BLAKE:

Do you? Don't get me wrong, I don't like that church either and I don't like this idea that the Cure is the absolute solution for everyone. But you and Tiff always disagreed on how to handle who you were. As long as you two have been- were friends, it was the thing you two always avoided talking about. Hell, remember senior year, when you didn't talk to them for three weeks because they were so excited about seeing the Cure on the news?

(JEN nods, now dejected.)

(Gently) Look, I know you think the Cure killed them, Jen. But it didn't. It was just a random blood clot. A coincidence. You saw how happy they were for those few weeks.

JEN:

There's been a lot of research done, Blake. The Cure kills.

BLAKE:

(Sighs.)

Jen, I love you,

(JEN pointedly focuses on their lunch at this.)

But you sound like a conspiracy theorist. No reliable sources have come forward saying anything bad about the Cure. If they had, Tiff never would've taken it.

JEN:

I know you think this is just me being in denial about Tiff being gone. It's not. Their death is being covered up.

BLAKE:

By who?

JEN:

(Completely serious)

The government.

(BLAKE laughs at this.)

(JEN is clearly upset.  
They're avoiding eye contact  
with BLAKE when they notice  
the STRANGER and the SOLDIERS  
sitting nearby and watching  
both of them, they straighten  
their posture.)

JEN:

(Both upset and slightly nervous)

Can we change the subject, please?

BLAKE

(Noticing the change in JEN's mood, glancing at the other table)  
Sure. (A beat.) Did you hear about Jack and Christine?

JEN:

(Immediately lightening up)

Oh, you mean how they deleted all of their posts together and  
then the next day, Christine posted about finally being able to  
get a divorce?

BLAKE:

(Dramatically)

Yes! Getting that notification actually made me gasp! I mean, so  
much for high school sweethearts, am I right?

(There's a beat shared  
between the two of them.  
They've known each other  
since high school.)

(The STRANGER gets up from  
her table and begins walking  
over to JEN and BLAKE's  
table.)

JEN:

Honestly, I've been waiting for their breakup since graduation.  
I'm surprised-

STRANGER:

(Puts her hand on JEN's shoulder, not acknowledging BLAKE and  
talking as if she was talking to a child.)

Hi, sweetheart. I just had to say, I've been watching you since I got here and I just have to say, you are so brave!

(JEN takes a sip of their drink, looking at BLAKE. They've been through this before.)

I just know that if I was in your shoes, I wouldn't be able to keep going. Your strength has inspired me. I hope you have a blessed day.

JEN:

(Barely keeping their composure)

You too, ma'am.

(The STRANGER exits the stage  
The SOLDIERS soon follow.)

BLAKE:

How many times is that this year?

JEN:

Seven. You owe me a drink.

BLAKE:

We make the same bet every year.

JEN:

And you always lose.

(Blackout.)

#### Scene 4

Setting: A gas station in the middle of nowhere, 2031.

At Rise: It's a grungy, rundown, gas station bathroom that only has one stall. There is toilet paper on the floor. It's the definition of gross and inideal. There's a poster next to the sink advertising the Cure. Both JEN and BLAKE are wearing maybe flannels and converse or some other piece of basically timeless teenage style. They are teenagers after all.

(JEN and BLAKE enter from Stage Right. BLAKE is pushing JEN in their wheelchair.)

JEN:

I've got it from here, thanks.

BLAKE:

Of course. I'll just wait here.

(JEN wheels up to the stall and opens the door, only to find that their wheelchair does not fit through it and there are no bars to assist them, once inside.)

JEN:

*Fuck.*

(BLAKE looks over at JEN and visibly pieces together their predicament)

BLAKE:

Oh. (A beat.) What if I help?

JEN:

(Rubbing their head, trying to figure out what to do.)  
Yeah. Um. Just give me a minute to see how I want to do this.

(JEN first and foremost wipes down the toilet seat, anticipating having to touch it with their hands. Then, JEN puts the brakes on and unbuckles their seatbelt and moves their feet off of their footplate and onto the ground. JEN takes their hands

and pushes them against the walls of the stall. BLAKE watches on, anxiously waiting to be of use.)

JEN:

(Ever so slightly out of breath)

Blake, can you come here, please?

(BLAKE comes to JEN's side quickly.)

BLAKE:

What do you need?

JEN:

I need you to help me stand up and then make sure I don't fall on my ass.

BLAKE:

Cool. Got it. Simple enough.

(BLAKE puts their hands under JEN's arms and, with a small grunt from each party, helps them into a standing position.)

Are you stable? Are you good?

JEN:

(Quickly)

Yep. Yep, thanks.

BLAKE:

Okay, cool. I'm gonna move my hands now.

JEN:

Alright.

(BLAKE moves their hands away, still watching carefully to make sure JEN remains steady.)

BLAKE:

What now?

JEN:

Um. (A beat.) I'm gonna work on turning around and you just keep making sure I don't fall.

BLAKE:

(Nods.)

I'm gonna move your chair so I can catch you if I need to, okay?

JEN:

Okay.

(BLAKE moves JEN's wheelchair away from the door of the bathroom stall and places it directly to the side. They stay quiet so they won't distract JEN and move a stray piece of toilet paper around with their shoes to pass the time.)

(JEN slowly moves one of their hands, grabbing onto the toilet seat, and gagging slightly. They work to turn about 45 degrees before moving the hand that is on the toilet to the wall where their other hand currently resides. Once they are

successful, they take a  
breath.)

JEN:

(Slightly more out of breath)

Blake, I need you to shut the door and lean against it so that I  
can use it to turn around without it swinging open.

BLAKE:

Got it.

(BLAKE shuts the door and  
leans against it like they  
are told.)

(The sound of hands landing  
on the door can be heard  
after a few seconds. Unseen  
by BLAKE and the audience,  
JEN completes the necessary  
turn.)

(A beat.)

JEN:

(Fully out of breath)

*Fuck.*

(BLAKE frantically swings the  
stall door open.)

TEENAGE BLAKE:

What is it?! Did you fall?!

(They are met with the sight  
of TEENAGE JEN who rolls  
their eyes, but is still  
upright and looks completely  
fine.)

JEN:

I can't stay standing and pull down my pants...

BLAKE:

Oh. Oh... (A beat.) I'll help.

JEN:

(On the brink of being absolutely mortified)

Uh, no, Blake you don't have to-

BLAKE:

(Completely nonchalant)

Quit it. It's not that big of a deal.

(JEN is looking up at the ceiling, almost as if they are praying for God to strike them down right there.)

(BLAKE squats down and begins to unbutton and unzip JEN's pants.)

(They make eye contact with each other. BLAKE laughs.)

JEN:

(Unamused, feeling incredibly awkward and exposed)

What's so funny?

BLAKE:

Oh. Uh. Well. (They chuckle a little more) It's just- We've known each other for a while and well, this is the first time, at least I think, that I'm looking up at you and you're looking down at me.

JEN:

Oh.

(They both laugh, breaking the tension. It's a spark.)

(BLAKE then pulls down JEN's underwear before shutting the door. There is the sound of a small thud, or JEN finally being able to actually sit on the toilet. This is followed by the sound of a heavy stream of liquid.)

(A beat as the sound continues.)

BLAKE:

Geez, Jen, when's the last time you went to the bathroom?

JEN:

Uh... Right before we left the hotel.

BLAKE:

Eight hours ago?! Why didn't you go when we stopped for lunch?

JEN:

Didn't have to go then. I thought I calculated everything correctly but then I got that refill.

BLAKE:

(Slightly confused)

Calculated? (They chuckle slightly.) What, like, you made an equation for going to the bathroom?

JEN:

(Completely serious)

Yeah, I call it pee math.

BLAKE:

Pee math? (A beat.) Wait, is that why you're so good at algebra?

JEN:

No, I'm good at algebra because I actually pay attention in algebra.

BLAKE:

Harsh.

(The streaming sound finally  
begins to slow down.)

BLAKE:

(Completely changing subjects and with genuine curiosity)  
Shouldn't ADA laws make this bathroom being inaccessible, like,  
illegal?

JEN:

Yes. But, it's not like the federal government is gonna track  
down a non-chain gas station in the middle of nowhere and  
reprimand them for not following ADA laws.

BLAKE:

Well, that sucks.

JEN:

Tell me about it.

(The stream finally stops.)

And now we have to do this all over again.

JEN and BLAKE:

(In unison)

*Fuck.*

(Blackout.)

### Scene 5

Setting: Jen's house. A few weeks after Tiff's funeral. Evening.  
California, 2040.

At Rise: JEN sits at their dining room table with MOTHER across  
from them. There are dishes and silverware, signaling that

they've probably just finished a meal. MOTHER's purse sits beside her, a pamphlet peeking out.

MOTHER:

Sweetheart, I just think it would be good for you to schedule a consultation. *Just* a consult, that's all I ask.

JEN:

(Restraining herself)

Except it's not just a consult, Mom. You're asking me to do something I don't want to do. We've talked about this before. I've always said no, and you've never let that be enough. I'm an adult-

MOTHER:

I know that! I just don't want you to miss a chance at an easier life!

JEN:

This is who I am. Who I've always been. All I have ever known. I am happy with my life as it is. Did you ever think that maybe, just maybe, the idea of me not being disabled is terrifying to me? Mom, I wouldn't know how to exist.

MOTHER:

You say that, but how could you know for sure without even considering getting the Cure? I mean Tiff was so-

JEN:

I'm not Tiff! (Their voice breaks) And Tiff is dead.

(A beat.)

(Another.)

MOTHER:

I'm sorry. I know how much you miss them. I just think... I worry about you. I worry that you won't be able to live the life you deserve. And maybe, maybe you'll change your mind. I just want what's best for you, sweetheart.

(MOTHER leans over and gets the pamphlet from her purse, sliding it over to JEN.)

That's all I've ever wanted.

JEN:

(Picks up the pamphlet and looks at it, noticing something is attached to it. An appointment slip.)  
(In disbelief) ...You've already scheduled an appointment.

MOTHER:

Honey, please don't be mad at me.

JEN:

How could you? How did you even-? I'm not a minor, how did you schedule an appointment?

MOTHER:

I just told them I was your mother and they let me schedule one for you. I really didn't mean to upset you. I just knew that you were never going to do it yourself.

JEN:

(Snapping)

Because I don't want to!

MOTHER:

Now, Jen, there's no need to yell...

JEN:

(Seething)

Get out.

MOTHER:

Honey, please. I just-

JEN:

(Finally looking at MOTHER)

Get out!

(MOTHER grabs her purse,  
pushes her chair back, and  
leaves the table.)

(JEN puts the pamphlet down  
on the table and puts their  
head in their hands.)

(MOTHER exits the stage.)

(JEN is left on stage alone  
for several beats.)

(BLAKE walks onto the stage  
carrying a six pack and a  
DVD. They walk in as if they  
are entering JEN's house  
without even knocking. It's  
as if they don't need to.)

BLAKE:

(Completely unaware of what has just transpired)  
Hey, I just passed your mom on the way in, she didn't even say  
hi to me.

(BLAKE now notices JEN's  
state.)

Whoa. What did I miss?

JEN:

(Finally removing their hands from their face. It's obvious  
they've shed some tears.)  
I don't want to talk about it.

BLAKE:

(Opens one of the beers and slides it over to JEN)  
Glad I decided to hold up my end of our bet.

(BLAKE sits down in the chair  
closest to JEN. They now

notice the pamphlet, picking  
it up.)

Why the hell did you schedule a consultation?

JEN:

(Taking a big swig of their beer)

I didn't.

BLAKE:

(Looking confused, but realization dawns after a beat)

Oh.

JEN:

Mhm.

BLAKE:

Your mom?

JEN:

Mhm.

(They take another swig.)

BLAKE:

And you're sure that you don't want to talk about it?

JEN:

Absolutely.

BLAKE:

You want a rain check on Jurassic Park?

JEN:

(Sighs, putting down the bottle)

Can you-? Can you just sit with me, please?

BLAKE:

(Who has never been so sure of anything in their life)

Absolutely.

(Blake gently reaches for JEN's hand and squeezes it.)

(JEN takes their free hand and covers their face again. This time, they begin audibly crying.)

(BLAKE shifts from their seat and fully wraps JEN in a tight hug.)

(Blackout.)

### Scene 5

Setting: The Cure Clinic, repurposed from the San Francisco federal building. San Francisco, California. A few days after the events of Scene 4.

At Rise: The stage is split in two. On one side, is the exterior of the Cure Clinic. A group of protestors stands up on a hill by the front entrance holding signs that protest the Cure. All of them are noticeably able-bodied. SOLDIERS are also by the door, guarding it. On the other side is an exam room that is currently empty.

(JEN wheels onto the stage as if coming from the parking lot. They notice the protestors.)

(One of the protestors comes down to JEN from the hill with a clipboard in hand.)

PROTESTOR:

Hi! Would you be willing to sign our petition to stop the use and distribution of the Cure?

JEN:

Sure!

(JEN looks over at the group  
of protestors.)

Y'know, I'd love to join you guys. I just don't think my  
wheelchair's going to be able to make it up that hill.

(JEN signs the petition.)

PROTESTOR:

(As if just noticing that JEN is in a wheelchair and their  
protest is ironically inaccessible)

Oh. I- I'm sorry. I didn't- We didn't think about that. Um.  
Sorry.

JEN:

(Pointedly)

Just something to think about, y'know making sure disabled  
people be a part of your movement.

PROTESTOR:

(Taken aback)

Oh. We prefer the term "Differently Abled."

JEN:

(Who slightly regrets signing the petition now)

Sorry, what?

PROTESTORS:

Well, I'm a parent of a kid who's *special* and I just hate the  
idea of using such a *terrible* word. Just because he's *different*  
doesn't mean he can't do anything he sets his mind to. And the  
same goes to you!

JEN:

(Smiling through gritted teeth)

All about having the right mindset, huh?

PROTESTOR:

(Laughs awkwardly, for a little too long)

Exactly! (Beat.) Well, thank you for signing our petition. Have a nice day!

JEN:

(Completely done at this point)

Uh huh. You too.

(JEN wheels past the PROTESTOR and to the other side of the stage. They park their chair beside the exam room bed, which is repurposed from TIFF's casket, and wait for the DOCTOR. There is a SOLDIER posted in the room.)

JEN:

(Trying to make conversation)

How are you today?

(JEN waits several beats, but the SOLDIER doesn't respond.)

JEN:

(With heavy sarcasm)

*Lovely.*

(The DOCTOR, played by the same actor who portrayed the PRIEST, enters the stage from the exam room side after a few beats, focused on his chart.)

DOCTOR:

Good afternoon, Jen. It says here that you're scheduled for a consultation about the Cure, is that correct?

JEN:

(Nodding, but obviously just wanting to get this done)  
Yep. But, I am only here because my mother made me come, and she promised she'd never bring it up again if I did. So, please, just do the absolute bare minimum that you have to so that I can leave and then we'll never see each other again.

DOCTOR:

(Still only focused on the chart)  
Just get on the bed for me and we can get started.

(JEN clears their throat to get the DOCTOR's attention.)

(The DOCTOR finally actually looks at JEN.)

Oh. My apologies. Are you able to get on the bed?

JEN:

(With emphasis)

Nope.

DOCTOR:

Right. Well, we really need to perform a physical exam...

JEN:

You really don't. I'm not getting the procedure.

DOCTOR:

(Unsure)

Okay... I'll just explain the procedure to you and then you can ask me any questions you may have.

JEN:

(Sarcastically)

Great.

DOCTOR:

You'll arrive at the time of your appointment, we'll put you under with some anesthesia, we'll inject what is colloquially

known as the Cure into your arm. You'll be kept under for a few hours to allow it to take its full effect, then you'll wake up and, barring any complications, have no problems with mobility. We'll keep you overnight for monitoring and then release you in the morning. Simple as that. Any questions?

JEN:

What are the side effects?

DOCTOR:

Nausea, soreness around the injection site-

JEN:

Death.

DOCTOR:

(Chuckles dryly)

I didn't take you for a conspiracy theorist.

(The DOCTOR makes a note on  
his chart.)

JEN:

And I didn't take you for the type of doctor that needed armed protection... (Gestures to the SOLDIER) But here we are.

DOCTOR:

(After a beat)

Wanna tell me what makes you so hesitant to receive the Cure?

JEN:

I'm perfectly happy how I am.

DOCTOR:

Are you? Your chart indicates that you suffer from anxiety and depression.

JEN:

You exist in a world that's not built for you and you tell me how mentally sound you are.

DOCTOR:

And yet you don't want the Cure?

JEN:

No. The world needs fixing, not me.

DOCTOR:

(Sits down on his stool and  
rolls over to JEN)

Tell me, Jen, have you thought of a future for yourself. A job?  
A partner? Living on your own?

JEN:

I have a job and I've lived on my own since I graduated college.  
My future's set.

DOCTOR:

Wow, honestly, that's inspiring. (A beat.) But no partner in the  
picture?

(JEN is silent for a moment.  
They think of BLAKE, because,  
of course they do.)

JEN:

No.

DOCTOR:

Is a partner something that you want in your future?

JEN:

(Defensive)

I thought you were a doctor, not a therapist. (A beat.) But yes,  
I'd like a partner in the future.

DOCTOR:

And what about them? They'd have to worry about you. Take care  
of you-

JEN:

I can take care of myself just fine.

DOCTOR:

I'm sure you can. But I'm sure that your... *differences* might put some strain on a romantic relationship. The Cure would eliminate that possibility.

JEN:

(Shaken)

Can I go now?

DOCTOR:

(Caught off guard)

We still need to schedule your procedure.

JEN:

(Takes a deep breath)

Like I said, I don't want to see you again.

DOCTOR:

(Sighs)

Yes, you can go. But, my office number is in the pamphlet, should you reconsider.

(JEN doesn't say anything. They wheel back across the stage to the exterior portion of the Cure Clinic. Though this isn't seen by the audience. There is a spotlight focused on the DOCTOR and the SOLDIER in the exam room.)

DOCTOR:

(To the SOLDIER)

Make sure to put them on your surveillance list.

(The focus goes back to JEN, now on the other side of the stage. The protestors have left, though the SOLDIERS are

still at the entrance. Other than that, they are alone. JEN pulls out their phone and calls someone.)

JEN:

(Over the phone, holding back tears)

Hi, Blake. (A beat while BLAKE talks on the other end.) Yeah, I'm okay. It's just been a long day.

(Blackout.)

### Scene 7

Setting: JEN's bedroom. Night. California, 2040. A few hours after the events of Scene 5.

At Rise: There's a bed in the middle of the stage. Maybe a nightstand or an armoire. There's some clutter. Maybe clothes and a few books.

(JEN wheels onto the stage and stops next to their bed. They are finishing buttoning up their pajama top. They pull down the covers. Then, they transfer from their wheelchair to the bed easily. It's second nature. They sit there in silence for a moment before folding their hands.)

JEN:

(Hesitant, addressing the sky)

Listen... I'm sure you can tell that if I'm talking to you again, I'm more than a *bit* desperate. I just- I don't know what to do. I thought I did. But now... Do you remember when I used to pray to you every night? (A beat. They laugh at themselves.) Of course you do. I used to pray for you to heal me *every single night*. And

every morning, I'd wake up and I'd be so... angry. And when I started accepting who I was... we stopped talking. (A beat.) Isn't that ironic? Are you finally giving kid me the answer they wanted? Fucking took you long enough. (A beat.) I was happy with who I am. This- This is cruel. *You're cruel.*

(JEN sighs, defeated.)

Forget it. This was a waste of time.

(JEN swings their legs onto the bed and pulls up the covers. The lights dim on stage as they fall asleep.)

(We enter a place that is everywhere and nowhere. A dreamscape. Members of the ENSEMBLE begin to fill the stage. They are dressed in sensual, burlesque-type outfits as burlesque music begins to play softly. The ENSEMBLE begins a choreographed burlesque dance number.)

(A spotlight shines down on JEN who stirs, wakes up with a start, and sits up in their bed. They look around at the unfolding scene, very, very confused. Their wheelchair is still visible on stage.)

JEN:

(Addressing the audience)

Who thought a *dance number* would be good for this?!

(JEN pulls the covers off of them and begins making their way to the foot of the bed. It isn't graceful like the dance around them. Even in their dreams, JEN is disabled and has mobility issues. The spotlight follows them the whole time. JEN huffs when they finally reach the foot of the bed.)

(Two DANCERS move to sit on either side of JEN.)

DANCER #1:

(In a sensual manner)

You got out of bed this morning. *That's so inspiring!*

DANCER #2:

(In a sensual manner)

You live on your own? *That's so inspiring!*

(DANCER #1 and DANCER #2 move away from the bed and back to their places in the dance number. DANCER #3 and DANCER #4 come over and take their place.)

DANCER #3:

(In a sensual manner)

You went to college?!

DANCER #4:

(In a sensual manner and gently caressing JEN's face)

You're just *so inspiring*, sweetheart!

JEN:

(Still confused and now slightly uncomfortable)

Um...

(DANCER #3 and DANCER #4 move away from the bed and back to their places in the dance number. DANCER #5 comes over and takes a seat in JEN's

wheelchair, beginning to  
wheel around in it.)

DANCER #5:

Wow, this is fun! Must be nice to get to sit all day!

JEN:

(Stressed)

Could you not do that?!

(DANCER #1 and DANCER #2 come  
back over to sit on either  
side of JEN, who now has no  
way out of this. DANCER #5  
continues to wheel around the  
stage without a care in the  
world.)

DANCER #1

(Taking a seat on JEN's lap and caressing their face)  
(In a sensual manner) If I was disabled, I'd kill myself!

JEN:

(Distracted and watching DANCER #5 but then realizes what DANCER  
#1 just said)  
Great. Thanks. That's a perfectly sane thing to say to a person.

DANCER #2:

(In a sensual manner)

Can you drive? (A beat.) Can you drink? (A beat.) *Can you have  
sex?*

JEN:

(Over it.)

Okay, *what the fuck?*

(JEN nudges DANCER #1)

Get off me.

(DANCER #1 pouts.)

Now!

(DANCER #1 gets off of JEN's lap and returns to their spot in the dance number.)

(JEN then looks at DANCER #2)

You too! Go!

(DANCER #2 gets up off the bed and returns to their spot in the dance number.)

(JEN then looks at DANCER #5 who is still wheeling around the stage in JEN's wheelchair. JEN completely loses what is left of their composure.)

You! (Pointing directly at DANCER #5.)

(There's a record scratch. The music and the DANCERS both stop.)

(DANCER #5 stops dead in their tracks.)

(A beat as JEN and DANCER #5 stare at each other.)

Put my wheelchair back where it was or *so help me God!*

(DANCER #5 quickly wheels back over to JEN's bed and places the wheelchair back exactly where it was prior to DANCER #5's joyride. DANCER #5 begins to get up.)

JEN:

(Still very angry)

*Ah!*

(DANCER #5 looks at them,  
still alarmed.)

Put the brakes back on.

(DANCER #5 nods. There's a  
beat. Then the only sound is  
the soft clicks of the brakes  
being set.)

*Thank you.*

(DANCER #5 nods again before  
quickly returning to their  
spot in the group.)

(The music restarts. The  
spotlight is taken off of  
JEN.)

(The DANCERS finish out their  
number. During this time,  
unseen by the crowd, JEN is  
returning to their original  
spot in their bed.)

(The DANCERS take their bows  
and exit the stage.)

(The lights return to their  
dimmed state from earlier in  
the scene. JEN is back under  
the covers, asleep.)

(JEN wakes, sits up, and  
groans.)

JEN:

I need a break.

(Blackout.)

End of Act I

Act II

Scene 1

Setting: An elementary school playground, California, 2023. A few weeks after the Prologue of the play.

At Rise: There's a playground. Children from the Prologue are playing on it. Climbing the stairs, hanging from the monkey bars. Going down the slide. They're making the noises of typical childhood joy. YOUNG TIFF sits off to the side, distraught. They are wearing stereotypical child-like clothes.

(JEN rolls up beside TIFF,  
wearing clothes that are  
similar to what they wore in  
the Prologue but different to  
exhibit that it is a  
different day.)

JEN:

So, do you want to play Rock, Paper, Scissors again? Or maybe I can talk Nurse Miller into getting us the Go Fish cards?

TIFF:

(not paying attention)

My mom said they could fix it. The doctors. They could fix it. Fix me. It just... might take some time.

JEN:

Is that what they said at your doctor's appointment?

(TIFF nods.)

(A little dejected) Oh. (A beat.) Did they still fit you for your own wheelchair?

(TIFF nods again.)

What color did you choose? I always go with green. At this point, it's like my signature color.

TIFF:

Blue.

JEN:

Sick! Are you getting the sparkly one or just the regular?

TIFF:

Just the regular.

JEN:

Cool. Cool. Once you get it, I can teach you how to do wheelies and go really fast!

TIFF:

(Looking unsure)

I dunno...

JEN:

I promise it'll be awesome! (Looks at TIFF, then the playground, then back at TIFF) Plus, it's way cooler than the monkey bars.

TIFF:

Really?

JEN:

I swear. No. I pinky swear.

(JEN holds out their pinky finger to YOUNG TIFF as a beat passes between them.)

(TIFF, finally letting their guard down a bit, takes JEN's pinky finger with their own.)

(JEN smiles brightly at TIFF. It's the start of a friendship.)

(Blackout.)

## Scene 2

Setting: TIFF's house. California, 2033. The night before the group's high school graduation.

At Rise: We're in a living room, specifically, TIFF's living room. We still haven't made it back to the present day of the first act. There's a big couch and a TV and maybe some lamps and a coffee table with snacks and drinks on it, a typical living room. JEN, BLAKE, and TIFF are all laying on the couch together as the end credits of "Jurassic Park" begin to play on the TV. They are all wearing flannels or styles similar to those seen in Scene 3 of Act I to signify their ages. JEN and TIFF's wheelchair's are both off to the side but still visible on stage.

TIFF:

Alright, Jen, you get to pick what we watch next.

JEN:

I hear the new Spider-Man movie's supposed to be good.

BLAKE:

(Annoyed)

Please don't make us watch one of the fifteen versions of the same story again.

JEN:

Says the person who picks the same dinosaur movie from the nineties to watch for every single sleepover we have!

BLAKE:

It's a great movie!

JEN:

(Heavily sarcastic and rolling their eyes)

Uh huh. Sure.

(TIFF begins to laugh as they watch JEN and BLAKE continue to bicker. TIFF is able to recognize they're acting like an old married couple, even if they can't. JEN and BLAKE's actors can adlib here for several beats before both of them realize that TIFF is laughing.)

BLAKE:

(Confused)

What's so funny?

JEN:

(Also confused)

Yeah, Tiff, what is it?

TIFF:

(Pulls themselves together and sighs)

I'm just- I'm gonna miss this... I mean, sure, we've got the summer, but after that? We're all going to different parts of the country for college. It'll be hard to see each other, except maybe for holidays. And here you two are arguing over a stupid dinosaur movie...

JEN:

(Feeling vindicated)

Ha! (Points at TEENAGE BLAKE) They agree with me!

(BLAKE looks a bit dejected)

TEENAGE TIFF:

*That* I still love to watch every time we have a sleepover.

BLAKE:

(Now the one feeling vindicated)

Ha! (Pointing at JEN) They agree with me!

JEN:

(Rolling their eyes)

Whatever...

TIFF:

But, guys, I'm serious. Everything's gonna be changing soon. Who knows who we'll even be when we're older. Sure, we'll still be friends, but...

(JEN grabs the remote and  
turns off the TV)

JEN:

Alright, Tiff, where are you going to be in, hm, ten years?

TIFF:

Oh... I don't-

JEN:

C'mon, just for fun.

TIFF:

(Sighs)

Fine. (They take a beat to think.) I want to... have a stable job. Uh... I'm gonna... (They lighten up a bit, not taking it so seriously) meet the love of my life in college. They'll probably be a philosophy major or something. We'll elope. Then, after a few years, we'll be back in California and have a Golden Retriever named Otto and we'll have like three kids.

(All three of them laugh a bit. Sure, it's a bit silly, but it also seems like a nice idea. JEN looks at BLAKE, silently suggesting that they go next.)

BLAKE:

Sure, I'll bite. Uh... (They also take a beat to think) A stable job sounds nice. But me? (Not taking it seriously) In ten years, I'm gonna be living in fucking, I dunno, Austrailia. I'm gonna marry some stupidly hot bathing suit model and I'm gonna be so stupidly rich that we're gonna have a summer house and spend weeks on my yacht and flying all over the world in my private jet.

TIFF:

(Playing along)

Is that it?

BLAKE:

Mmm, well, I'll also be driving a Lamborghini. Obviously.

JEN:

(Also playing along)

Oh, obviously.

(All three of them are laughing again. This is fun and they are feeling like little kids again. BLAKE and TIFF look at JEN expectantly after a beat.)

JEN:

Oh, fuck, it's my turn, isn't it?

BLAKE & TIFF:

(In unison)

Yeah!

JEN:

(Putting their hands up in surrender)  
 Alright! Calm down! (They think for a beat, content to join in on the fun) Um... I will also be stupidly rich. Always just a little bit richer than you. (They point at BLAKE, who acts offended.) I'm also going to marry a stupidly hot model. But, a dog sounds nice too. I think, instead of a Golden Retriever, I'll have a Goldendoodle named Cupcake. And, I'll shower all of Tiff's kids with gifts and our dogs will have playdates!

TIFF:

Aw! Thank you!

(They all laugh again, content with the ideas of their fantasy futures. There's a beat as they all calm down.)

JEN:

Crap, I gotta pee. Blake, do you mind?

(BLAKE gets up and walks over to JEN's wheelchair, before bringing it back over to the couch so JEN can transfer back into it. This is nearly second nature for both of them.)

BLAKE:

(Putting the brakes on)

Your chariot awaits.

JEN:

(Unamused)

Ha. Ha. Very funny.

BLAKE:

(Amused with themselves)

Thanks, I'll be here all week.

(JEN transfers back into  
their wheelchair, undoes the  
brakes and wheels off stage.)

(BLAKE plops back down on the  
couch, taking TEENAGE JEN's  
spot.)

TIFF:

You know they're gonna be pissed you took their spot.

BLAKE:

It's what they get for dissing "Jurassic Park."

(TIFF rolls their eyes.  
There's a few beats of  
silence between them.)

TIFF:

Are you ever going to tell them?

BLAKE:

(Deflecting)

Tell them they should appreciate the masterpiece that is  
"Jurassic Park"? I tell them that all the time.

TIFF:

(Slightly annoyed)

Blake.

BLAKE:

What?

TIFF:

You know what.

BLAKE:

(Lying through their teeth)  
I certainly don't.

TIFF:  
I know they aren't exactly a "stupidly hot model", but come on.  
I don't know how much longer I can take this.

BLAKE:  
We're about to leave for college.

TIFF:  
You have the *entire* summer.

BLAKE:  
And then we'll be lucky to see each other once before Christmas.

TIFF:  
You're making excuses.

BLAKE:  
I'm being reasonable.

TIFF:  
And what if Jen meets their "stupidly hot model" while they're  
away at college?

BLAKE:  
I'll simply curl up in a ball and die.

TIFF:  
  
And *now* you're being dramatic.

BLAKE:  
What if they don't feel the same way?

TIFF:  
(Fed up)  
If they don't, then I'll give you my firstborn.

(A beat.)

JEN:

(Offstage)

You guys want some more popcorn?!

BLAKE & TIFF

(In unison)

Sure!

BLAKE:

(Sighs)

I'll tell them eventually.

TIFF:

Yeah, maybe when I'm nothing but a skeleton, six feet under.

BLAKE:

Now who's being dramatic?

(JEN wheels back onto the stage, a bowl of popcorn in their lap.)

JEN:

What did I miss?

(BLAKE and TIFF look at each other. BLAKE is silently begging TIFF not to say anything about their conversation.)

BLAKE & TIFF:

(In unison)

Nothing.

(JEN looks between their two best friends. They know they

missed something. BLAKE and TIFF are acting odd, but JEN decides to let it go. They set the bowl of popcorn on the coffee table.)

JEN:

Okay... (JEN wheels over to the couch and looks at BLAKE.) You're in my spot. Move.

BLAKE:

Oh. I'm sorry. This spot is reserved for people who respect my favorite movie.

JEN:

(Too stubborn to give in)

Fine.

(JEN proceeds to transfer back onto the couch and sit right next to BLAKE, their bodies are touching. TIFF looks at both of them knowingly before picking up the remote and turning the TV back on.)

TIFF:

So, Spider-Man then?

JEN:

Yes, please!

BLAKE:

(Who just wants to be put out of their misery)

Mhm.

JEN:

See, I knew you'd see my way.

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

Setting: JEN's house. California, 2040. Late afternoon. A couple of weeks after the events at the end of Act I.

At Rise: We're back in JEN's dining room. This time it's empty. The places aren't set. In fact, the whole house is empty.

(There's the sound of a door unlocking, opening, and then closing and being relocked. After a beat, JEN comes rolling into the dining room. They take their work bag off the back of their wheelchair and place it on the table, along with their keys. Then, they close their eyes and take a few deep breaths, as if decompressing from a hard day at work.)

(After a few beats, the sound of the door unlocking, opening and closing, repeats itself.)

(After another beat, BLAKE enters the dining room. They are carrying their computer and some paper files before putting them next to JEN's bag on the table.)

(JEN opens their eyes and looks at them in utter disbelief.)

BLAKE:

(Looks at JEN and notices their expression)  
What? Did you forget you gave me a key?

JEN:  
(Still a bit shocked)  
No- I just- Blake, it's not a good time.

(BLAKE pulls one of the  
chairs away from the table so  
that it is across from JEN  
before taking a seat.)

BLAKE:  
What's going on?

JEN:  
(Not making eye contact)  
Nothing, I'm fine.

BLAKE:  
(Refusing to look away from JEN)  
*Bullshit.* Since when did we start lying to each other, Jen?

JEN:  
(Now not making eye contact and playing with their hands)  
I'm not lying to you.

BLAKE:  
Really? Then, why can't you look at me?

(Silence. After several  
beats, BLAKE seems to give up  
on receiving an answer.)

Okay, fine. Let me tell you what I know. As long as we've known each other, we haven't gone longer than 24 hours without texting each other. We have seen each other at least three times a week since we graduated college, except for that time I got the flu. Except, then you came over to make me soup and watched shitty reality TV with me until I got better.

JEN:

Blake...

BLAKE:

But these past couple of weeks, you've been ignoring my calls and my texts, and you stood me up for lunch. *And* we still haven't watched "Jurassic Park"! So, *please*, Jen, tell me what the *hell* is going on with you.

JEN:

I- I can't...

BLAKE:

(Sighs, frustrated)

(A beat, as BLAKE finally looks away from JEN and instead at their lap.)

Tiff died. We both lost them. I can't... I *can't* lose you too. So, just tell me whatever I did wrong and I'll fix it. I'll-

(JEN cuts them off, taking BLAKE's hand in their own.)

JEN:

You didn't do anything wrong, Blake. I swear. This is about me.

(BLAKE doesn't let go. Both JEN and BLAKE are looking into each other's eyes now.)

BLAKE:

(Adamant)

Then, let me help! I'm your best friend, Jen. I can help you.

JEN:

You can't help. (JEN lets go of BLAKE's hand.) Not with this.

BLAKE:

What could you possibly be going through that I can't help with? Is this about your mom or-?

JEN:

I want- (JEN hesitates.) I *think* I want to get the Cure.

(JEN looks at their lap,  
ashamed. BLAKE looks at JEN,  
completely shocked.)

JEN:

(Continuing)

I just- I had that stupid appointment and it just- it got me thinking. That maybe, maybe my mom would finally shut up about it and maybe I would be happier. So, maybe, it would be better if I got the Cure.

(Several beats pass, as if  
the two are frozen in time.)

BLAKE:

(Quietly)

No.

(JEN looks at BLAKE again.  
Now, they're the one who's  
shocked.)

JEN:

What?

BLAKE:

(More confident)

No.

JEN:

No?

BLAKE:

(A little annoyed)

No.

(JEN scoffs in disbelief)

JEN:

This isn't exactly your choice to make, Blake. (A beat.) And you said you'd support whatever decision I made.

BLAKE:

That was before I knew you were right.

JEN:

Huh?

BLAKE:

(Sighs and grabs their computer)

You were ignoring me, which I still want some context on. But anyway, I thought I'd give the tinfoil hat a try. (A beat.) And you were right.

(BLAKE hands their computer over to JEN, who examines the screen for a moment.)

JEN:

What am I looking at?

BLAKE:

The closest thing I've got to proof. Which can be backed up with these.

(BLAKE takes back their computer before handing JEN the files. JEN begins looking through them. There's another beat of silence while BLAKE waits not-so-patiently.)

JEN:

Okay... I haven't seen most of this stuff and when I brought it up, you called me a conspiracy theorist.

BLAKE:

I proved myself wrong... and may have stolen that pamphlet your mom gave you. I mean everything here shows that the administrators are essentially playing Russian Roulette with

whoever gets the Cure. And everything leads back to that doctor that you had an appointment with. At least, it looks that way.

JEN:  
(Quietly)

They killed Tiff.

BLAKE  
(Who didn't hear JEN)

I just don't understand how they haven't been caught yet...

JEN:  
(Stoic, detached)  
No one they'll listen to cares enough.

BLAKE:  
Jen...

JEN:  
(Overwhelmed)  
I just- I need- I need a minute.

(JEN exits the stage.)  
(Blackout.)

#### Scene 4

Setting: JEN's house. California, 2040. Nighttime.

At Rise: We're still in JEN's dining room. BLAKE is still sitting in the chair by the table, though now they're drinking a beer.

(JEN reenters the dining room  
from where they left in the  
previous scene)

JEN:  
(Surprised)  
Oh. You're still here.

BLAKE:

Where else would I be, Jen?

(JEN wheels up to the table  
to sit beside BLAKE again.)

JEN:

I just thought when "a minute" turned into multiple hours, you'd want to leave...

(There's a lot of tension in  
the air. Neither of them are  
looking at each other. There  
are several beats of silence.  
BLAKE takes a few drinks of  
their beer.)

JEN:

(Trying to break the tension)

Well, if you're planning on sticking around maybe we can watch  
"Jurassic Park" if you-

BLAKE:

Why do you want the Cure?

JEN:

(Caught off guard)

Blake, I-

BLAKE:

I've just been sitting here, thinking about what could have  
possibly changed your mind... You've always been so content with  
who you were, I just- It doesn't make any sense.

JEN:

No, I haven't.

BLAKE:

What?

(BLAKE is looking at JEN again but JEN is not looking at them.)

JEN:

(Sighs)

I haven't always been content. I mean, god, when I was a kid, I used every birthday wish to try and walk. I prayed for it too. I didn't want to be who I was. I was lonely and angry and all I wanted was to be like everyone else. And part of me is still that little kid, Blake. I just want to fit in. I'm tired of strangers patting me on the shoulder and people not seeing me as a person, but something to gawk at. I want a future, a family... a partner. And I don't want to have the voice in the back of my head that says everyone around me will get tired of having to deal with this with me. Of having to deal with *me*.

(A beat. Another. BLAKE is taking it all in and JEN feels like they're about to suffocate. Realization dawns over BLAKE's face.)

BLAKE:

Do you- Do you think I'm gonna leave you? Is that why you've been avoiding me?

(JEN scoffs, quickly wiping their face and still not looking at Blake.)

BLAKE:

Jen, I'm not going to leave you.

JEN:

I think, one day, someone else will come along and they'll be better for you than I am and you won't have to worry about taking care of them so much.

BLAKE:

I don't want someone else.

JEN:  
(Finally looking at BLAKE)

What?

BLAKE:  
(Nervous)  
C'mon, Jen... I mean, I didn't think we'd be having this conversation *now*, but... (BLAKE laughs a bit.)

JEN:  
(Confused)  
Blake, what are you-?

BLAKE:  
I- Um...

(BLAKE proceeds to set down their beer and get up from their seat. They began to pace, rubbing the back of their neck as they try to figure out how to phrase what they want to say. JEN is stuck just watching them, unsure of what turn their conversation is about to take.)

(After several beats, BLAKE returns to their seat, wanting to grab JEN's hands, but deciding against it. In fact, they can't even make eye contact with JEN.)

We've been friends for such a long time and you said that you're worried about me having to take care of you and that's- that's just *crazy*. I mean, hell, you've always been the one who has taken care of me, Jen. I can't imagine my life without you. You are the most amazing person I know. And I'm sorry if I ever made

you think that you have to change anything about yourself to make me recognize that. (BLAKE finally gathers the courage to look at JEN again.) So, no, I don't want someone else. I want *you*, exactly as you are.

(JEN is looking at BLAKE in awe, hoping this is real and not the start to another extravagant dream.)

JEN:

Blake-

BLAKE:

(With quiet, newfound confidence)

What I'm saying is that I love you. I'm *in love* with you. And I've been in love with you for a very long time.

JEN:

(Almost instinctively)

I'm in love with you, too.

BLAKE:

(Chuckling)

Well, that's a relief.

(That should've eased the tension, but within a beat, the two of them are just looking at each other, silent. Waiting. What now? They both contemplate making the first move. JEN can't wait any longer as they quickly lean forward and cup BLAKE's cheeks with their hands and kiss them passionately, deeply. A kiss years in the making. BLAKE's leaning forward too now, kissing back with equal force

as they began running their  
fingers haphazardly through  
JEN's hair.)

(Blackout.)

### Scene 5

Setting: JEN's bedroom. Night. California, 2040. Immediately following the events of the previous scene.

At Rise: We're back in JEN's bedroom that we last saw in Scene 6 of Act I. It's nearly the exact same as before, though the clutter is slightly varied from when we last saw it to signal the passage of time.

(Both JEN and BLAKE's clothes and hair are disheveled as BLAKE closes the door to the bedroom behind them. Then, BLAKE leans down to kiss JEN again, they're struggling to stay apart. They pull away from each other again, moving over to the bed.)

BLAKE:

(Looking between JEN and the bed)

Do you want me to or...?

JEN:

(Only realizing now that they need to transfer)

Oh. (They chuckle, a bit awkward, they did only confess their feelings for their best friend mere moments ago.) Y-You can do it...

BLAKE:

(Nervously excited)

Okay!

(JEN proceeds to wrap their arms around BLAKE's neck. BLAKE gently lifts them out of their wheelchair. As they are holding JEN, the two kiss again before BLAKE gently lays JEN down on the bed. Now hovering over JEN, they kiss again, now fully pulling their bodies together. Maybe JEN helps to take off BLAKE's shirt or vice versa. We're in this moment for several beats. Then, the lights go out. This is not a full blackout, but only to help shift the scene. When the lights come back up, one of them is rolling off the other, both of them are a bit out of breath. JEN's wheelchair stays visible on stage, next to the bed, the entire time.)

JEN:

(After taking a few beats to catch their breath, feeling slightly awkward again)  
So, that was... nice.

(BLAKE laughs at this, hard.)

JEN:

(Sitting up and looking at BLAKE, now also laughing a bit)  
Don't- Don't laugh at me!

BLAKE:

(Still recovering from laughing)  
I'm sorry. Yes, it was very nice. Thank you.

JEN:

(Still looking at BLAKE, but with a raised eyebrow)  
Thank you for *what*, exactly?

BLAKE:

(Sitting up and shrugging)  
For feeling the same way about me?

JEN:

(Playfully, shoving BLAKE slightly)  
*Oh, shut up!*

BLAKE:

(Flirtatiously)  
Yeah? Make me.

JEN:

(Playing along, smiling happily)  
Oh, okay...

(They begin to kiss again.  
Neither of them notice as  
four figures from the  
ENSEMBLE silently enter the  
room, two from each side, now  
wearing black militant  
uniforms and holstering guns,  
they're SOLDIERS.)

(SOLDIERS #1 & #2 pull JEN  
and BLAKE out of the bed and  
restrain both of them)

JEN:

(Panicking)  
Who *the hell* are you people?!/

BLAKE:

(Panicking)  
What *the fuck* are you doing?!

(BLAKE attempts to free  
 themself from SOLDIER #2's  
 grasp, trying to get to JEN.  
 SOLDIER #3 aims a gun at  
 BLAKE. SOLDIER #4 aims a gun  
 at JEN. BLAKE retreats  
 slightly, silently just  
 focusing on JEN.)

JEN:

(Distraught)

Blake! (They then focus on SOLDIER #3, begging) Stop! Stop!  
 Please stop!

SOLDIER #1

He just wants the *degenerate*, leave the other one.

BLAKE

(Fighting being restrained again)

Jen!

(SOLDIER #2 continues to hold  
 BLAKE back as SOLDIER #4  
 pistol whips JEN, causing  
 them to lose consciousness.  
 SOLDIER #3 proceeds to do the  
 same to BLAKE. The SOLDIERS  
 leave BLAKE unconscious on  
 the floor before they all  
 help SOLDIER #1 carry JEN  
 offstage.)

(Blackout.)

### Scene 6

Setting: The Dreamscape last seen at the end of Act I.

At Rise: The Dreamscape is no longer full and colorful, it's  
 empty and dull, teetering on becoming a nightmare. JEN is  
 onstage. Alone. A spotlight beams down on them. They are laying  
 on the floor, their wheelchair nowhere visible.

JEN:

(Waking up, sitting up, and rubbing their face before addressing the audience, with heavy sarcasm)  
*Oh. This is the perfect time for another dream sequence, isn't it?*

(A beat.)

Hello? Burlesque Dancers?

(TIFF appears onstage in another spotlight in the exact outfit they were wearing in the portrait seen in Act I, Scene 2.)

TIFF:

Jen...

JEN:

(Looking at them in shock)

Tiff? How are you-?

TIFF:

We don't have a lot of time. You can survive this, but you're gonna have to fight like hell.

JEN:

(Confused)

Survive what? Fight what? Tiff, I don't understand!

TIFF:

I'll be with you the whole time, I promise. But you are going to have to keep fighting. Not just for me. Or Blake. But for yourself and everyone else like us.

JEN:

(Still confused and becoming overwhelmed)

What? Tiff, I don't-

TIFF:

It's time to wake up now, Jen.

JEN:

Tiff!

TIFF:

*Wake up!*

Scene 7

Setting: The Cure Clinic. San Francisco, California. 2040. Very early morning.

At Rise: We've returned to the exam room in the Cure Clinic. JEN is still unconscious, this time laying on the exam table, which is still TIFF's repurposed casket. DOCTOR is readying his supplies on a small table beside the exam table.

(JEN stirs a bit before  
waking up, startled.)

DOCTOR:

(Unfazed, not looking at JEN)

Oh, good. You're awake. I'm sorry my... *associates* were so harsh.

JEN:

What *the hell* are you doing?

DOCTOR:

(Sighs and looks at JEN)

My job.

JEN:

Fuck you.

DOCTOR:

You may not be able to understand this, but the work I'm doing is for the greater good.

JEN:

You're *killing people* for the "greater good?"

DOCTOR:

My work is very strategic, Jen. It has to be. Otherwise, people would start making a fuss.

JEN:

(Sarcastically)

And we wouldn't want that, would we?

DOCTOR:

(Completely serious)

No. We wouldn't. (A beat.) I have taken on the burden of administering the Cure, I don't do so lightly. I simply do what I must for a better world.

JEN:

A better world?

DOCTOR:

(Obviously getting tired of JEN's interruptions)

Yes. A better world. One where certain people, who contribute nothing to society, don't burden the rest of us with their needs. (A beat.)

JEN:

(With false confidence)

I'm so sorry I burden you by existing.

DOCTOR:

I'm not a bad person, Jen.

JEN:

(Still with false confidence)

Mmm, agree to disagree.

DOCTOR:

The Cure does work. Not everyone who has received it has died. I do my research too. Everyone who comes in my office, I look at their medical history and their current diagnosis, including yours, and I make a necessary choice.

JEN:

(Their facade cracking)

So Tiff *had* to die?

DOCTOR:

(Having to think for a moment)

Tiff? (A beat.) Ah, yes, that was your friend's name wasn't it? What a shame. They were one of the few I hoped the Cure wouldn't affect.

JEN:

(Furious)

You son of a bitch.

DOCTOR:

(Sighs)

Like I said, Jen, I'm not a bad person. (DOCTOR begins readying a syringe.) You know, working through a government funded program makes it easy to keep things quiet. I really thought I'd be able to make you see my way of things or maybe, at the very least, you'd stop being so vocal about being against the Cure. Honestly, I'm sad to see I failed, much like with, uh, Tiff, was it?

JEN:

So what? You're gonna force me to take the Cure? Kill me? You could've at least bothered to restrain me.

DOCTOR:

Forgive me for not betting on you to make a run for it.

(JEN looks around and notices for the first time that their wheelchair is nowhere in sight. They begin to panic again. They need to figure out a way to get out of here and fast. They look to the table beside them and see a wide range of medical

instruments. DOCTOR  
approaches with the syringe  
in hand.)

JEN:

Fuck you.

DOCTOR:

You know, the effect isn't always immediate. You may get a  
chance to say goodbye to your loved ones. I'll make sure to give  
*Blake* my condolences.

(With this, JEN sees red and  
proceeds to quickly pick up  
one of the instruments and  
whack DOCTOR on the head with  
it. They hit him hard enough  
to knock him unconscious. He  
falls to the ground. JEN  
looks around in a panic, they  
didn't think that was  
actually going to work. As  
they look around, it's  
obvious they're working out  
what their next move will  
be.)

JEN:

(Quietly to themselves)

Okay. Okay.

(JEN looks over the edge of  
the table to the ground as  
they finalize their  
decision.)

Shit. Okay.

(JEN proceeds to roll themselves off of the table and hit the ground with a loud thud. They groan, having obviously not landed right. Not that there is a right way to land in this situation. JEN lets out a few sobs as they lay crumpled on the ground. In this moment, JEN and DOCTOR eerily mirror each other as they lay motionless on the ground with nearly matching head wounds. Several beats pass before JEN moves themselves into an army crawl position with a few more groans. Slowly, they begin moving in the direction of an apparent exit.)

(The lights go out. Much like in Scene 4, this is not a full blackout, but rather a way to shift the scene. We still hear JEN grunting as it is dark. The light returns in the form of a single spotlight that is following JEN as they begin crossing the otherwise completely dark stage from left to right. Maybe they let out a few more grunts, maybe sobs.)

(Then, the part of the stage JEN just crossed remains black and the rest of the stage turns red aside from the spotlight on JEN. Behind JEN, various images and

videos are projected onto the stage of ancient and/or first known to the 19th century depictions of disabilities and mobility devices. The good and the bad. The beautiful and the ugly.)

(Then, the part of the stage JEN just crossed joins the black and remains red aside from the spotlight on JEN. The rest of the stage turns yellow. Behind JEN, images and videos are projected onto the stage of 20th century depictions of disabilities and mobility devices. The good and the bad. The beautiful and the ugly.)

(Then, JEN reaches the middle of the stage and the entire stage is filled with white light and the projections stop. The entire stage is empty aside from JEN. JEN is sobbing loudly now.)

JEN:

I can't... I can't do it.

SOLDIER #1:

(Offstage)

Find them, now!

TIFF:

(Offstage)

Jen, you *have* to keep going.

JEN:  
(Looking around for TIFF)

Tiff?

TIFF:  
(Offstage)

Jen, you can't stop.

JEN:  
I-I'm so tired. I can't do it, Tiff.

TIFF:  
Remember what I told you. Remember who you are fighting for.

(The projections restart.  
This time they're JEN's  
history. Happy memories  
filled with TIFF and BLAKE  
and moments where they felt  
pride in themselves for who  
they are.)

(JEN then takes a few deep  
breaths, recentering  
themselves. If they're going to  
survive, they have to keep  
going. The lights go all  
black again, minus the  
spotlight on JEN. JEN begins  
to keep army crawling. After  
a beat. The lights return now  
looking like black, red,  
yellow, and white. TIFF is no  
longer on stage.)

(As JEN keeps moving, the  
other half of the stage turns  
blue. The projections behind  
JEN return. This time the  
images and videos are from

some key moments in the modern disability rights movement. Think the signing of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the 504 Sit-In, the Capitol Crawl, the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.)

TIFF:

(Offstage)

Jen, keep going! You have to keep going!

(Then, the blue joins the black, red, yellow, and white. As JEN keeps going with the spotlight on them, the remaining part of the stage turns green. The projections change to recent advancements for people with disabilities in our time, the 2020's. Think CODA winning best picture at the Oscars or Ali Stroker winning a TONY.)

SOLDIER #1:

This way!

TIFF:

(Offstage)

Jen, keep going! You have to keep going!

(JEN lets out a few more angry grunts as they finally reach the other side of the stage. The green joins the other colors. Black, red, yellow, white, and blue. The spotlight is on them as what

is left of the stage matches  
the other end and is black.)

TIFF:

(Offstage but incessant)

Jen, keep going! You have to keep going! Jen! Jen! Jen! /

TIFF & BLAKE:

(Both offstage)

Jen! Jen! Jen!

(Jen collapses, bloody and  
exhausted, and, after a beat,  
the spotlight turns off.)

BLAKE:

(Still offstage, relieved)

Jen! It's okay! I'm here! I've got you!

(The stage stays lit as is  
for a full minute. The colors  
are as follows: Black, red,  
yellow, white, blue, green,  
and black again. This way,  
the stage resembles the  
disability pride flag.)

(Blackout.)

### Epilogue

Setting: JEN's house. California. 2041ish. Day. A year and some  
change after the events of the play.

At Rise: We're in JEN's living room, that is similar to TIFF's  
living room from Scene 2 except the furniture is a bit  
different, which is currently empty. Though the TV is on and a  
newscast is playing.

ANCHOR:

(On the TV)

The Cure is officially no longer on the market. After accusations and evidence came out in 2040 suggesting that the Cure had a potential to be deadly to those who received it, the FDA revoked its approval. It's hard to estimate just how many victims there were but scientists estimate the number to be in the thousands.

(JEN wheels onto the stage in wedding attire, a fully healed scar on their forehead.)

It is also unknown how many more victims there would have been if the survivor, Jen-

(JEN turns off the TV.)

JEN:

(loudly, as they check their hair)

Babe?! You ready?!

(After a beat, BLAKE walks onto the stage, also in wedding attire.)

BLAKE:

Oh, babe. I've been ready for this since high school.

JEN:

(Teasing)

I think high school's a little too early to get married.

BLAKE:

Thank god we're not still in high school.

(JEN notices something off about how BLAKE looks. Maybe their tie is crooked or an arm strap needs straightening or their makeup is smudged,

or a hair's out of place.  
This can be up to the actor  
and costume designer.)

JEN:  
(motioning to BLAKE to lean down)

Come here.

BLAKE:  
(Leaning down, smiling)

Yes, dear?

(JEN fixes the minor  
malfunction)

JEN:  
There. You're sure you're ready?

BLAKE:  
(Playfully)  
Well, I think we've had the "in sickness and in health" thing  
down pat for quite a while so... yeah.

JEN:  
(Trying not to give BLAKE the satisfaction of laughing)  
Oh, *you little...*

BLAKE:  
You love me.

JEN:  
(Jokingly)  
You're lucky I do.

BLAKE:  
(Lightheartedly but serious)  
Oh, I know.

(JEN cups BLAKE's cheeks and  
kisses them gently before  
pulling away.)

JEN:

Let's go get married.

(The lights fade, this is not a full blackout, but to help shift the scene to the next glimpse in the epilogue. A traditional Wedding March plays.)

(After several beats, the lights come back up and the stage has returned to the playground setting of the scene at the top of Act II.)

(JEN is in the middle of the stage in their wheelchair, lost in thought. They're about a decade older than when we last saw them.)

(After a beat, BLAKE walks onto the stage. They are also about a decade older now. They stop beside JEN, placing their hand on JEN's shoulder.)

BLAKE:

You okay?

JEN:

Hm? (Looks up at BLAKE.) Oh. Yeah. Just... thinking.

BLAKE:

About what?

JEN:

Oh, the old days. (They chuckle slightly before pointing over to the playground.) Tiff and I met right over there. (A beat. JEN is reminiscing, BLAKE looks for a moment before continuing to look at JEN.) I just wish they were still here.

BLAKE:

I miss them too, but I also like to think they're still around, watching over us or something.

JEN:

(Comforted by the thought)

Yeah... maybe so. (They look up at BLAKE again.) I love you.

BLAKE:

I love you, too.

(BLAKE leans down and kisses JEN. It's a quick but gentle kiss. One that signifies having spent years together now but still cherishing each moment they get to spend together.)

(After another beat, TIFF wheels onto the stage wear something similar to what TIFF wore in Act II, Scene 1 but different enough to signify they are not the same TIFF, stopping right next to JEN and BLAKE.)

TIFF:

Hi!

BLAKE:

Hi, sweetheart!

JEN:

Hi, Tiff!

(Both JEN and BLAKE hug TIFF JR. tightly. The family stays like this for a beat.)

BLAKE:

How was your first day of school?

:

(With typical childlike speed and excitement)

It was so much fun! I made a lot of new friends and we got to do some arts and crafts! And the playground has a new swing that I can wheel my wheelchair right up onto!

JEN:

That's awesome, sweetheart!

TIFF:

I know!

BLAKE:

Now, I was wondering if anyone would like to be able to eat some ice cream while they tell their parents about the rest of their day...

TIFF:

(Gasps excitedly)

Can we go?! Can we?! Can we?! Can we?!

(JEN and BLAKE look at each other fondly, smiling, before looking back at their child.)

JEN:

Of course we can go!

BLAKE:

As long as you lead the way, Tiff.

TIFF:  
(Excited and determined)

On it!

(This TIFF quickly wheels offstage with BLAKE following behind them. JEN goes to follow them. In the spot where JEN and TIFF met as kids, TIFF, the original, appears, after a Quick Change, in the same outfit worn in their funeral photo, with white light around them. The two friends look at each other, bittersweet smiles on their faces.)

BLAKE:  
(Offstage)

Babe, are you coming?

JEN:  
(Looks in BLAKE's direction)  
Yeah, I'm coming.

(JEN wheels offstage.)

(Blackout.)

End of Play.