

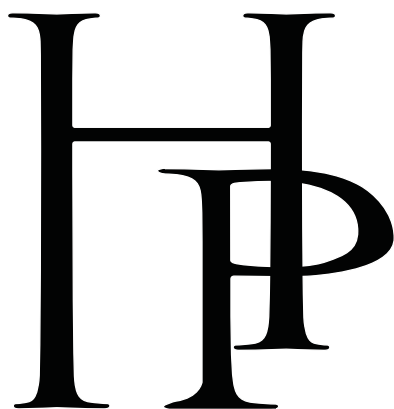
I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU

BY
BRENT HOLLAND



HP

HEUER
PUBLISHING
ESTABLISHED 1928



Toll Free: (800) 950-7529

Phone: (319) 368-8008

Fax: (319) 368-8011

Heuer Publishing

PO Box 248

Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

customerservice@heuerpub.com

FREE PERUSAL DOWNLOADS WEEKLY

www.heuerpub.com

I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU

By Brent Holland

Copyright © MMXXVI by Brent Holland, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-61588-621-0

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Heuer Publishing LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Heuer Publishing LLC.

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU

By Brent Holland

SYNOPSIS: In a locked mental health ward, Hannah is haunted by dream-visions of the people she cannot escape — her sister, her mother, a former enemy, and the boy she loved. An intense psychological drama about trauma, memory, guilt, and the terrifying question of whether the voices in Hannah's head are nightmares, memories, or something far worse.

DURATION: 35 minutes.

SETTING: A room in a mental health facility.

TIME: Present.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 females, 4-5 either)

HANNAH (f).....A teenage girl in mental institution. (270 lines)

ALEX (m/f).....Hannah's younger sibling, a dream vision. (18 lines)

DR. GRACE (m/f).....A therapist working with Hannah. (190 lines)

AUDREY (f).....Hannah's mom. A dream vision. (28 lines)

BELLA (f).....A teenage girl who was in a Juvenile center with Hannah. A dream vision. (37 lines)

DR. DANIELS (m/f).....A member of the staff. Not particularly hopeful of Hannah's position. (44 lines)

PARKER (m/f).....Hannah's best friend and romantic interest from the Juvenile center. A dream vision. (37 lines)

DOCTOR (m/f).....Can double with Alex, Audrey, Bella, or Parker. (Non-Speaking)

SET

The play is staged in Hannah's room at a mental health facility. The consists of a hospital bed with safe wrist restraints, a small bedside table or rolling tray, and one chair. A single entrance suggests the hallway and staff area beyond.

COSTUMES

HANNAH – institutional patient attire.

ALEX – casual clothing suitable for a younger child.

DR. GRACE – therapist or doctor attire.

AUDREY – worn, casual adult clothing.

BELLA – simple teen clothing.

DR. DANIELS – doctor attire.

PARKER – simple teen clothing.

DOCTOR – doctor attire.

PROPS

- ☐ breakfast tray
- ☐ dull metal knife
- ☐ bandage or gauze for Dr. Grace's injury (optional)

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU premiered at Laney High School in 2023 with the following cast:

HANNAH	Micah Gesualdi
ALEX.....	Sara Duffield
DR. GRACE	Solomon Hill
AUDREY	Grace Gillespie
BELLA	Gracen Moeller
DR. DANIELS	Ben Duffield
PARKER	Grantt Smith
DOCTOR	Doug Hernandez

AT START: *When the lights come up HANNAH is on her bed, resting. ALEX enters.*

ALEX: Hi Hannah!

HANNAH: *(With dread.)* Oh no.

ALEX: What?

HANNAH: I'm not in the mood for this. Go away!

ALEX: What did you do today?

HANNAH: Nothing.

ALEX: Oh, come on... you had to have done something!

HANNAH: I really didn't! I've been in bed all day.

ALEX: Are you sick?

HANNAH: I don't know. Am I?

ALEX: You must be!

HANNAH: Because I've been in bed all day?

ALEX: That's only part of it!

HANNAH: Whatever. Can you leave now?

ALEX: Want to play a game?

HANNAH: No.

ALEX: Oh, come on!

HANNAH: I don't want to play a game, Alex.

ALEX: Please?

HANNAH: If I play a game with you, will you go away?

ALEX: Maybe...

HANNAH: What game?

ALEX: *(Moving in close, almost eerily.)* How about hide and seek?

HANNAH: What?

ALEX: Hide and seek, Hannah. Like where you come find me when I'm hiding from you. Duh! We've played that game before!

HANNAH: Never mind. I don't want to play. Go away.

ALEX: But I do!

HANNAH: Why are you still here? Why won't you just leave me alone?

ALEX: I can't.

HANNAH: *(Exasperated.)* Why?

ALEX: I bet if you think real hard, you'll know why.

HANNAH: Why are you here?

ALEX: To play hide and seek again.

HANNAH: No!

*Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy
and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.*

ALEX: And to be with you. (*Getting very close.*) I will always be with you.

Blackout. When the lights come back on, DR. GRACE is touching HANNAH on her bed in the mental health ward, trying to awaken her. HANNAH screams and sits up.

DR. GRACE: It's alright Hannah.

HANNAH: (*Confused.*) Where am I?

DR. GRACE: You're in your room. You were having a nightmare again.

HANNAH: Wait... you're real?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: You're real, right? You're really here.

DR. GRACE: Of course I'm real.

HANNAH: And Alex... that wasn't real?

DR. GRACE: Alex? Your little sister? Were you dreaming about her?

HANNAH: I don't want to talk about it. (*A pause.*) But you're sure she isn't here, right?

DR. GRACE: Alex isn't here, Hannah.

HANNAH: (*Insistent.*) Are you absolutely sure?

DR. GRACE: There's no one in this room but you and I.

HANNAH: (*Realizing she is bound to her bed.*) I'm tied down.

DR. GRACE: You are.

HANNAH: Why?

DR. GRACE: It's just a precaution.

HANNAH: A precaution for what?

DR. GRACE: You thrash around in your sleep. It's for your safety. I take it you were having a nightmare again?

HANNAH: Yes. And it was so real. Every night. They always seem so real.

DR. GRACE: So, the meds aren't working? You don't feel any different?

HANNAH: Not a bit. I think they may actually be making it worse.

DR. GRACE: How so?

HANNAH: My dreams used to be cluttered, but now... they're so... vivid.

DR. GRACE: And that's a bad thing?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: Is there a way you can make me sleep without dreaming?

DR. GRACE: We can try... I mean, you'll dream, but maybe you won't remember it.

HANNAH: Why can't you make my dreams just stop?

DR. GRACE: We don't completely understand it, but dreaming is essential to survival. If you don't dream, eventually you'd die.

HANNAH: But what if dying is better than dreaming?

DR. GRACE: Don't talk like that, Hannah.

HANNAH: I can't live like this.

DR. GRACE: I know it seems bad right now. I understand...

HANNAH: (*Getting riled.*) You could never understand what it's like to be in my head! Every single day! Every single night! It gets worse, and worse and... (*She breaks down into tears.*)

DR. GRACE: (*Holding her as she cries.*) It will be alright, Hannah.

Blackout. When the lights come back on DR. GRACE has been replaced with AUDREY who is holding her in the same position.

AUDREY: It will be alright, Hannah. I've got you.

HANNAH: Mom?

AUDREY: I'm here, Hannah. Everything's going to be ok.

HANNAH: But how?

AUDREY: How, what?

HANNAH: How can you be here? You can't be here!

AUDREY: Why not?

HANNAH: Because...I'm in the hospital. I think.

AUDREY: I know you are.

HANNAH: Why am I here?

AUDREY: You're sick, darling.

HANNAH: I am?

AUDREY: And the doctors here are going to fix you.

HANNAH: (*Breaking from the embrace.*) Fix me?

AUDREY: They're going to make you well. And then, you'll be able to come home.

HANNAH: Home?

AUDREY: Just as soon as you're fixed.

HANNAH: But what if... (*She changes topic.*) Alex came to see me.

AUDREY: She did?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: Yeah.

AUDREY: I bet that must have been a nice surprise.

HANNAH: It wasn't. She won't leave me alone.

AUDREY: Your little sister idolized you.

HANNAH: Can you ask her to stop?

AUDREY: Stop?

HANNAH: Stop coming to see me.

AUDREY: Why would I do that?

HANNAH: Because... I... well, you know Mom.

AUDREY: She loved playing games with you.

HANNAH: Like hide and seek.

AUDREY: I don't think she liked that game very much.

HANNAH: I didn't either. But she asked me to play it with her again.

AUDREY: She was so young.

A beat.

HANNAH: I'm sorry, Mom.

AUDREY: What?

HANNAH: I said I'm sorry.

AUDREY: Sorry? For what?

HANNAH: For everything...

AUDREY: What do you mean?

HANNAH: Don't make me say it.

AUDREY: You don't have to say anything, Hannah.

HANNAH: (*A beat.*) Alright.

AUDREY: But you know what you did.

HANNAH: I know...

AUDREY: And you know that I was the one who found her.

HANNAH: I remember.

AUDREY: And you know that's why I'll always be here with you, right?

HANNAH: Is that why?

AUDREY: I'll always be with you. Until you're fixed.

HANNAH: (*After a beat.*) What's wrong with me, Mom?

AUDREY: Nothing a little sleep won't help, dear.

HANNAH: Sleep?

AUDREY: Yes. Sleep. Sleep fixes everything. Just like it did with me.

HANNAH: *(Starting to cry.)* I'm so sorry Mom.

AUDREY: Sleep fixes everything...

The lights fade to DR. GRACE and DR. DANIELS. They are watching as HANNAH is uncomfortably moving around in her sleep.

DR. GRACE: She's dreaming again.

DR. DANIELS: Let her.

DR. GRACE: It's a nightmare.

DR. DANIELS: And?

DR. GRACE: Try not to be too sympathetic, Dr. Daniels.

DR. DANIELS: For her? *(Indicating HANNAH.)* Yeah, I'll try not to.

DR. GRACE: You really don't like her, do you?

DR. DANIELS: No, I don't.

DR. GRACE: That shouldn't affect the way you treat her. It's unprofessional.

DR. DANIELS: I don't let my personal dislike for our patient affect me professionally.

DR. GRACE: Are you sure?

DR. DANIELS: Are you insinuating something, Dr. Grace?

DR. GRACE: I'm just saying, that this girl is sick, and we need to do our best to help.

DR. DANIELS: Do what you want, but I'm not going to let my guard down around her. And if you know what's best for you, you won't either.

DR. GRACE: Noted.

DR. DANIELS: Do you need me for anything else?

DR. GRACE: No. The sedative you gave her. It should be wearing off, right?

DR. DANIELS: It should have worn off an hour ago.

DR. GRACE: So, it's safe to try to wake her?

DR. DANIELS: Is it ever safe to try wake her?

DR. GRACE: You know what I mean.

DR. DANIELS: I do. Do you know what I mean?

DR. GRACE: I'll be careful.

DR. DANIELS: She's still very, very sick.

DR. GRACE: I know.

DR. DANIELS: Don't let your guard down.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: I'll be fine.

DR. DANIELS: Alright then. I'll be in the lab if you need me.

DR. GRACE: Ok. Thanks.

DR. DANIELS exits. DR. GRACE gently wakes HANNAH as she continues to struggle. Finally, HANNAH wakes with a start. She sees DR. GRACE.

HANNAH: Where's my mom?

DR. GRACE: Your mom?

HANNAH: She was just here.

DR. GRACE: You were dreaming.

HANNAH: No, I wasn't. She was here. She was right here!

DR. GRACE: You were asleep. You must have been dreaming of your mother.

HANNAH: *(Getting angry.)* Why are you lying to me?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: She's here!

DR. GRACE: *(Trying to calm her.)* You were dreaming.

HANNAH: Liar!

DR. GRACE: There's no reason to get upset.

HANNAH: I wouldn't get upset if you'd stop lying to me. *(She pulls against her restraints.)* Why do you have me tied down like an animal?

DR. GRACE: You're tied down so you don't hurt yourself.

HANNAH: *(Struggling to free herself.)* It's because you're scared of me. Isn't it?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: Just like everyone else! You're scared of me!

DR. GRACE: No, Hannah, I'm not.

HANNAH: *(After a beat.)* You should be.

DR. GRACE: Why should I be scared of you?

HANNAH: Because I could hurt you.

DR. GRACE: But why would you hurt me? I'm here to help you.

The struggling lessens.

HANNAH: Why would you want to help me?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: Because it's what I do, Hannah. I help people.

HANNAH: People like me?

DR. GRACE: Yes. People like you.

HANNAH: No one can help me.

DR. GRACE: Maybe you believe that, but I don't.

HANNAH: Then you're an idiot.

DR. GRACE: I have a couple of framed pieces of paper that say I'm not.

A beat passes.

DR. GRACE: You were dreaming of your mother?

HANNAH: It wasn't a dream.

A beat.

HANNAH: But yeah, it was my mom.

DR. GRACE: Do you remember what you talked about?

HANNAH: I remember everything.

DR. GRACE: Want to talk about it?

HANNAH: No.

DR. GRACE: Ok. What DO you want to talk about?

HANNAH: Does sleep really fix everything?

DR. GRACE: What do you mean by that?

HANNAH: It's just something I heard.

DR. GRACE: Well, it can fix some things. If you're angry or upset about something, sleeping on it can sometimes make it more manageable.

HANNAH: My mom used to sleep a lot.

DR. GRACE: Oh yeah?

HANNAH: All the time.

DR. GRACE: I see.

HANNAH: Do you? Do you know what it's like to see your mom drink herself into unconsciousness day after day after day? I don't mean occasionally. Every. Single. Day.

DR. GRACE: I'm sure that was tough.

HANNAH: Sometimes it made things better. But sometimes it made it worse. A lot worse.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: Is that something you would like to talk about.

HANNAH: No.

After a beat.

HANNAH: Can you take off my restraints?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: Would you mind taking off my restraints? They're uncomfortable.

DR. GRACE: I'm not supposed to.

HANNAH: Says who?

DR. GRACE: It's just...

HANNAH: That you're scared of me?

DR. GRACE: I'm not scared of you.

HANNAH: But you won't take off my restraints.

DR. GRACE: Fine. I'll take them off, but just while I'm here though.

DR. GRACE starts to take off HANNAH'S restraints as DR. DANIELS walks back in.

DR. DANIELS: Dr. Grace, can I speak to you a moment?

DR. GRACE: Excuse me?

DR. DANIELS: I need to speak with you. Now.

DR. GRACE: Hold on, let me get these off first. *(Removing the restraints.)*

DR. DANIELS: Don't do that!

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: I *know* that he's scared of me.

DR. DANIELS: Don't take off her restraints.

DR. GRACE: Why not?

DR. DANIELS: The outburst about her mother.

DR. GRACE: When she first woke up?

DR. DANIELS: It's a trigger.

HANNAH: What are you talking about?

DR. GRACE: What do you mean?

DR. DANIELS: We've seen it before. It's a warning sign.

HANNAH: A warning sign for what?

DR. DANIELS: Just leave the restraints in place.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: Why? They're uncomfortable. And the patient is calm.

DR. DANIELS: Is she?

DR. GRACE: Of course she is. You're calm, right Hannah?

HANNAH: I will be once I can move my arms again.

DR. DANIELS: You're going to do what you want, but I'd leave them on. I've known this patient much longer than you have, Dr. Grace.

DR. GRACE: Noted. And Dr. Daniels?

DR. DANIELS: Yes?

DR. GRACE: Don't monitor my sessions with Hannah.

DR. DANIELS: I don't take orders from you.

DR. GRACE: Do I need to complain to the board that you're unethically monitoring my sessions with this patient? You may have worked here longer, but I'm her assigned specialist.

DR. DANIELS: I wasn't monitoring you. I just happened to be walking by the monitor when I saw what you were doing.

DR. GRACE: Then let's pretend this is all a big misunderstanding. I'll stay here with my patient and you go to the lab. If I need your assistance I will let you know.

DR. DANIELS: I wasn't monitoring you.

DR. GRACE: Just go to the lab.

DR. DANIELS exits.

HANNAH: Was he listening in on our conversation?

DR. GRACE: Probably.

HANNAH: Why would he do that?

The restraints are off.

DR. GRACE: He's a worrier, but he's just trying to be helpful. (*After freeing HANNAH'S hands.*) Better?

HANNAH: (*Rubbing her wrists.*) Better.

DR. GRACE: So, your mom slept a lot?

HANNAH: Did she?

DR. GRACE: That's what you said.

HANNAH: Right. (*A beat.*) But only when she would drink. (*Beat.*) But that was pretty much all the time so, yeah. She slept a lot.

DR. GRACE: I see.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: I have a little sister.

DR. GRACE: I know. Her name is Alex, right?

HANNAH: I've told you about Alex?

DR. GRACE: A little.

HANNAH: Since Mom slept all of the time, I had to take care of Alex a lot.

DR. GRACE: How much younger was Alex?

HANNAH: Almost four years. She was always getting in trouble with the men Mom brought back to the trailer.

DR. GRACE: What kind of trouble?

HANNAH: It was just everything. They weren't nice men.

DR. GRACE: I'm sorry.

HANNAH: They're still out there you know?

DR. GRACE: Who is?

HANNAH: The men that my mom used to bring home.

DR. GRACE: Out where?

HANNAH: (*Gesturing.*) Just out there. Free. But they shouldn't be. They weren't nice men.

DR. GRACE: (*Digging.*) Do you want to hurt those men, Hannah?

HANNAH: I plan to kill them.

DR. GRACE: Kill them?

HANNAH: For what they did to us.

DR. GRACE: Ok. I guess I understand.

HANNAH: Do you?

DR. GRACE: I think I do.

HANNAH: That's weird, because I don't.

DR. GRACE: What do you mean by that?

HANNAH: I don't understand why I think about them so much. Why I think about hurting them.

DR. GRACE: Do you want to talk about it?

HANNAH: No.

DR. GRACE: Do you want to talk about what they did to you?

HANNAH: Why? It's in the past. Nothing can be done about it now.

DR. GRACE: Sometimes it helps.

HANNAH: You think it would help me to talk about someone hurting me? No thanks.

DR. GRACE: Is there anything you *would* like to talk about?

HANNAH: No. I want to sleep.

DR. GRACE: You've been asleep most of the day.

HANNAH: Just let me go back to sleep. Sleep fixes everything.

She rolls over. Black out. BELLA sneaks into the room. DR. GRACE is gone.

BELLA: *(Approaching the bed.)* Hey, wake up.

HANNAH starts to stir.

BELLA: Wake up, sleepy head. *(She slaps HANNAH awake. HANNAH is restrained once again.)* Good morning!

HANNAH: *(Unhappy to see BELLA.)* What are you doing here?

BELLA: Just came to see you, broken girl.

HANNAH: I'm not broken.

BELLA: Whatever.

HANNAH: I'm not!

BELLA: Then why are your hands tied to your bed?

No answer.

BELLA: Because you're broken.

HANNAH: You can leave now.

BELLA: Nah. I just got here. Plus, you're tied down so you can't do anything to me.

HANNAH: I can ignore you.

BELLA: Yeah, right.

BELLA closes her eyes.

BELLA: You've never been good at ignoring me. Remember that fight we got into the first day you showed up at the juvie lockup? You couldn't ignore me then, and you won't be able to now.

HANNAH: Do you want a replay of that first fight?

BELLA: Empty threats. You're tied down. *(She paces around.)* You can't do anything.

HANNAH: I won't be tied down forever.

BELLA: Are you sure about that?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: They'll let me go eventually and then I'll...

BELLA: Come after little... old... me? Why would you do that?

HANNAH: I'll get you.

BELLA: But why would you bother when you have such better targets to go after?

HANNAH: Don't go there, Bella.

BELLA: (*Mocking.*) "Don't go there, Bella" (*She laughs.*) What are their names again?

HANNAH: I'm ignoring you.

BELLA: The big one... the one that used to smack your mother around. What was his name?

HANNAH: I'm ignoring you!

BELLA: Oh, that's right... I read your file. His name was Billy, wasn't it?

HANNAH: You had no right to read my file!

BELLA: That's probably true. But it was fun, and after sucker punching me in the cafeteria, I figured I owed it to you.

HANNAH: I didn't sucker punch you. You had that girl from Richlands snitch me out to Ms. Coleman. You're lucky that they broke us up.

BELLA: I forgot about that. That was funny. You know I only had to give her a jello cup to get her to do that? (*She laughs.*)

HANNAH: When I get free...

BELLA: Free? You will NEVER be free. (*She laughs.*) You remember that time that you tried to get in Billy's way? Remember that?

HANNAH: You remember that time I caught up with you, alone in the rec room?

BELLA: Good times for sure, but not as good as the fourth of July. But that was a different guy wasn't it. What was his name again?

HANNAH: I don't remember.

BELLA: Liar! You remember every single one of them. Every one your mom ever brought home. Even the ones she couldn't remember because she was too drunk to care!

HANNAH: Shut up!

BELLA: Do you remember that one guy... your favorite.

HANNAH: Don't do it.

BELLA: Don't do what?

HANNAH: Don't say his name.

BELLA: Why? What are you going to do about it?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: Say his name and you'll find out.

BELLA: (*Mocking.*) That's just too juicy of a threat to let pass by, broken girl.

HANNAH: I swear Bella. I'm warning you. Don't say his name.

BELLA: Who's name? You mean your favorite? Dennis?

HANNAH pulls against her restraints.

BELLA: But Dennis was your favorite!

HANNAH has gone silent.

BELLA: What's the matter? Reminiscing on those good times?

HANNAH: (*Silently.*) I'm going to kill you.

BELLA: (*Playfully.*) What was that?

HANNAH: (*Louder.*) I said I'm going to kill you.

BELLA: I can't hear you, Hannah.

HANNAH: (*Shouting.*) I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!

In a flash, BELLA is right up in HANNAH'S face.

BELLA: Too late.

HANNAH: What?

BELLA: How are you going to kill me again, Hannah?

HANNAH: (*Taken aback.*) What?

BELLA: I can only die once. Right?

HANNAH: What do you mean?

BELLA: I mean, in real life. But seriously though, how many times have you killed me in your dreams, Hannah?

HANNAH: But...

BELLA: And has it ever done any good? Have you been able to get rid of me?

HANNAH: I...

BELLA: Of course you haven't.

HANNAH just stares at her.

BELLA: Because just like that memory of Dennis... I'm a part of you.
I'll always be with you.

HANNAH strains to get BELLA as the lights black out. The lights come back on as DR. DANIELS and DR. GRACE speak.

DR. GRACE: I think I made progress yesterday.

DR. DANIELS: Did you get her to talk about the abuse?

DR. GRACE: Not exactly, but we are close.

DR. DANIELS: You know, it's a dangerous road you're on.

DR. GRACE: Maybe, but I think it's the right road.

DR. DANIELS: But what if you're wrong?

DR. GRACE: If I'm wrong? Well, I can't do any more damage can I?

DR. DANIELS: Maybe. If it were up to me...

DR. GRACE: You would keep her sedated all of the time.

DR. DANIELS: Exactly.

DR. GRACE: Then it's a good thing it's not up to you. She been through trauma... lots of trauma.

DR. DANIELS: She claims not to remember any of it.

DR. GRACE: That's not entirely true. She remembers the things from her childhood... just not the stuff that caused her to be sent here.

DR. DANIELS: Do you think she's lying?

DR. GRACE: I don't think so.

DR. DANIELS: It would be mighty convenient you know? Keeping her out of prison and here in this nice cushy hospital.

DR. GRACE: I don't think she's lying. She's just been through so much. I think her brain just made a disconnect.

DR. DANIELS: It may be too much to sort through.

DR. GRACE: I don't think like that.

DR. DANIELS: (*Noticing that HANNAH is stirring.*) Well, she's waking up. I'm going to get out of here.

DR. GRACE: That's probably for the best. She doesn't like you.

DR. DANIELS: The feeling's mutual.

DR. DANIELS exits. DR. GRACE unties HANNAH'S restraints as she wakes up.

DR. GRACE: Good morning!

*Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy
and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.*

HANNAH: There's nothing good about it. No offense, Doc, but I'm not in the mood this morning.

DR. GRACE: Well, I can just sit here. We don't have to talk.

HANNAH: Don't you have something better you could be doing?

DR. GRACE: Not really.

HANNAH: Fine. Suit yourself.

A few moments pass.

HANNAH: You're really staying?

DR. GRACE: Of course.

HANNAH: But why?

DR. GRACE: Because you might change your mind.

HANNAH: About what?

DR. GRACE: About talking.

HANNAH: I won't change my mind.

DR. GRACE: But you already have. You've been talking non-stop since you woke up! Did you have dreams last night?

HANNAH: I said I don't want to talk about it.

DR. GRACE: Then feel free to enjoy some quiet time.

A moment passes.

HANNAH: Did I kill someone?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: I think I did.

DR. GRACE: You think you killed someone?

HANNAH: Yeah.

DR. GRACE: When?

HANNAH: Before I got here. At least I think that's what happened.

DR. GRACE: Who?

HANNAH: A girl named Bella. I spent time with her in a juvenile detention center.

DR. GRACE: Did you know her before?

HANNAH: Before I got in trouble? No.

DR. GRACE: Why did you kill her?

HANNAH: I don't know that I did. But I think I might have. *(Pause.)*
Did I?

DR. GRACE: You tell me.

HANNAH: I'm telling you that I don't know.

DR. GRACE: What makes you think I would know?

HANNAH: Because you're my doctor.

DR. GRACE: But I'm also the person who unlocks your wrist restraints every day.

HANNAH: What does that have to do with it?

DR. GRACE: It shows you that I'm not afraid of you.

HANNAH: Ok... But did I kill her?

DR. GRACE: What would make you want to kill someone like that?

HANNAH: Just answer the question!

DR. GRACE: Answer mine first.

HANNAH: Fine. Well, when I got to juvie she and I got into a couple of fights. When she figured out that I was too much for her to physically bully she broke into the records room and got a hold of my file.

DR. GRACE: She did? How was that even possible?

HANNAH: I don't know. I just know that she knew stuff about me.

DR. GRACE: What kind of stuff?

HANNAH: Personal stuff.

DR. GRACE: Such as?

HANNAH: Such as the kind of stuff I want to keep personal.

DR. GRACE: And what did she do with that information?

HANNAH: She told everyone that would listen. She told them that I was broken. That I had horrible things done to me and that I had done horrible things to other people.

DR. GRACE: I see.

HANNAH: And I think I might have killed her for it.

DR. GRACE: But you don't remember?

HANNAH: I don't. And that scares me.

DR. GRACE: It scares you that you may have killed someone?

HANNAH: No. I know who I am, Dr. Grace. It scares me that I can't remember if I did or not.

DR. GRACE: Oh.

HANNAH: *(Seeing his reaction.)* Was that the wrong answer?

DR. GRACE: Huh?

HANNAH: You gave a look when I said that. Did my answer surprise you?

DR. GRACE: No. Of course not.

HANNAH: You're lying.

DR. GRACE: (*Taken aback.*) I am not.

HANNAH: Yes you are. But, it's ok... I've had people lie to me my whole life. I'm used to it.

Blackout. When the lights come back up, PARKER is laying in bed next to HANNAH.

PARKER: (*Seeing that HANNAH is awake.*) Boo!

HANNAH: Parker!

PARKER: That's me!

HANNAH: But you're here! How? (*She hugs him tightly.*)

PARKER: Duh! I'm here because I love you and I told you a hundred times that I'll always find you.

HANNAH: (*Confused.*) But I'm in a hospital.

PARKER: I noticed.

HANNAH: Then how are you here? It doesn't make any sense.

PARKER: I'm here because I said I always would be!

HANNAH: (*Softly.*) I've missed you so much.

PARKER: I've missed you too.

HANNAH: Are you really here?

PARKER: Have I ever lied to you?

HANNAH: Of course not.

PARKER: How's it been going?

HANNAH: Terrible. This place is nuts. I have so much to catch you up on.

PARKER: Spill it!

HANNAH: But first, just hold me. Please.

They embrace.

HANNAH: I've missed this.

PARKER: Me too. Now what's been going on?

HANNAH: I don't know everything... but I got sent from Watson Juvie Center to here. Since then, I've been a wreck.

PARKER: Maybe that's why I'm here!

HANNAH: It has to be! How did you find me?

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

PARKER: I just asked around.

HANNAH: You asked around?

PARKER: And that's how I found you.

HANNAH: Do you know why I got sent here?

PARKER: I don't know.

HANNAH: That's strange. No one told you?

PARKER: No one. Let's talk about something else though. We're together now and that's all that matters!

HANNAH: Something's wrong here.

PARKER: (*Moving to HANNAH and grabbing her hand.*) No babe. Everything's right. Everything's going to be fine.

HANNAH: Something's not right.

PARKER: How so?

HANNAH: You shouldn't be here.

PARKER: Do you want me to leave?

HANNAH: Of course not! I never want you to leave!

PARKER: Good. Because I don't want to leave either.

HANNAH: (*Thinking.*) I can't remember the last time I saw you.

PARKER: What?

HANNAH: When was the last time I saw you. Before right now?

PARKER: (*Flippantly.*) I don't know.

HANNAH: You don't remember either?

PARKER: No. But it doesn't matter. Does it?

HANNAH: Of course it matters!

PARKER: Why?

HANNAH: Because neither of us can remember the last time we saw each other and now you're here!

PARKER: All that matters Hannah, is that I'm with you. I'll always be with you.

HANNAH: (*Pacing.*) But you can't remember the last time you saw me!

PARKER: It was probably in lock up. (*Laughing.*) We've both spent a lot of time in that place.

HANNAH: I know.

PARKER: And you're the person that made being in juvie totally bearable. It was almost fun sometimes.

HANNAH: It was. You were the first person I ever trusted.

PARKER: Then come back over here and lay down next to me and let's talk about the future.

HANNAH: I can't.

PARKER: You can't? Why?

HANNAH: Because there is no future.

PARKER: What?

HANNAH: Something's not right here. You shouldn't be in this hospital with me.

PARKER: (*Getting up.*) Everything's right, Hannah. I promise.

HANNAH: Then when's the last time you saw me, Parker?

No answer.

HANNAH: Something's not right. Something happened to you.

PARKER: Nothing happened to me. I'm right here.

HANNAH: And I want nothing more than for this to be real and you to be here, but you're not. You're not here and somehow I know you're never going to be here again.

PARKER: But Hannah!

HANNAH: (*Starting to panic.*) What did I do to you?

PARKER: Let's talk about something else. (*Getting up to collect her.*) Come lay back down with me.

HANNAH: I don't want to remember, but I have to. I have this horrible feeling that I did something to you and I have to know what it is. Did I hurt you?

PARKER: (*With a shift in tone and a pause.*) I never wanted to hurt you, Hannah.

HANNAH: But you did, didn't you?

PARKER: I never meant to.

HANNAH: (*Quietly.*) I trusted you.

PARKER: But after Bella showed me everything you had been through I thought you needed time to work some of that out on your own.

HANNAH: (*Meekly.*) And you left me... I remember.

PARKER: But I'm back now... and now I'll always be with you. I promise.

Quick black out. HANNAH bolts straight up in bed and startles DR. GRACE. She is crying and inconsolable.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: Hannah!

HANNAH is again restrained but DR. GRACE immediately works to free her.

HANNAH: I killed him!

DR. GRACE: Killed who?

HANNAH: I killed him!

DR. GRACE: It was a dream, Hannah. You're safe!

HANNAH is crying.

DR. GRACE: Listen to me! It was just a dream, Hannah!

HANNAH starts to calm down.

DR. GRACE: *(Holding her.)* There, there. It was all a dream.

HANNAH: *(After a moment.)* It seemed so real.

DR. GRACE: Sometimes dreams are just like that. Here *(Indicating food.)* I brought your breakfast.

HANNAH: I can't eat. I killed him. I know I did! I feel sick.

DR. GRACE: The medication is making you dream, Hannah. It was all a dream.

HANNAH: But he was there. Just like they are all there.

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: My mom, Alex, Bella... They're always with me. Every night.

DR. GRACE: They're just dreams Hannah. Dreams can be very convincing.

HANNAH: I didn't kill him? Is that what you're saying?

DR. GRACE: *(Reassuring.)* It was just a dream, Hannah.

HANNAH: Promise?

DR. GRACE: I promise. *(After a moment.)* Are you hungry?

HANNAH: I don't know. I still just have this feeling.

DR. GRACE: Well, try to eat. I got this especially for you.

HANNAH: *(Looking at the food.)* That was... very nice. *(Seeing the utensil.)* Wow, a real metal knife. You guys must really trust me.

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

DR. GRACE: (*Smiling.*) It's not sharp, but even so, don't tell Dr. Daniels.

HANNAH: (*Trying to be light.*) That guy.

DR. GRACE: If you stab me it will probably make his day... so try not to do that, ok?

HANNAH: No guarantees.

DR. GRACE laughs.

HANNAH: It was Parker.

DR. GRACE: Your boyfriend? What about him?

HANNAH: The dream. He was in the dream. He pretty much was the dream.

DR. GRACE: What happened?

HANNAH: He was there, and it was like it used to be.

DR. GRACE: Back at the Watson Center?

HANNAH: And even before that.

DR. GRACE: What did Parker say to you?

HANNAH: (*Thinking.*) Wait...

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: How do you know about Parker?

DR. GRACE: What do you mean?

HANNAH: You said he was my boyfriend. I never told you that.

DR. GRACE: (*Uncomfortable.*) You must have.

HANNAH: I didn't. I've never told anyone that. Ever.

DR. GRACE: Hannah... you obviously told me. Otherwise, how would I have known?

HANNAH: The only person that knew that was my case worker at Watson.

DR. GRACE: Hannah...

HANNAH: Did she tell you?

DR. GRACE: No.

HANNAH: Why would she tell you?

DR. GRACE: Maybe she did... maybe it was when you were transferred to us.

HANNAH: (*Thinking.*) Why was I transferred here?

DR. GRACE: Well, Hannah... you were transferred here for your own safety.

HANNAH: What does that mean?

DR. GRACE: Well, after the incident...

HANNAH: What Incident?!

DR. GRACE: Not an incident... I misspoke. It wasn't an incident... it was...

HANNAH: What happened to Parker?

DR. GRACE: What?

HANNAH: I did something to him, didn't I?

DR. GRACE: No. I'm sure Parker is fine.

HANNAH: Is he? Then call Watson! Get him on the phone for me!

DR. GRACE: I can't.

HANNAH: Why?

DR. GRACE: Because he's not there.

HANNAH: He was there when I left!

DR. GRACE: I know, Hannah.

HANNAH: Did I kill him? That's why he was in my head. I killed him didn't I?

DR. GRACE: Let's change the subject. It was only a dream.

HANNAH: Did I kill him? Answer me! I need a yes or no answer.

HANNAH is getting upset as DR. DANIELS enters.

DR. DANIELS: Excuse me, Dr. Grace. You are needed in room 213 for a few minutes.

DR. GRACE: This is not a good time, Dr. Daniels.

DR. DANIELS: *(Seeing the knife. Now his tone is very serious.)* Brett, I need you to come to me. Right now.

HANNAH: *(She has picked up the knife.)* Answer me!

DR. GRACE: Hannah, put down that knife. You're not going to hurt me. It's not even sharp.

HANNAH: Did I kill Parker? Like I did Mom? *(Crying.)* and Alex?

DR. DANIELS: Put down the knife, Hannah.

HANNAH: Stay back!

At this DR. GRACE makes a move for the knife and HANNAH stabs him in the hand.

DR. GRACE: Hannah! No!

Heuer grants Upstage Arts Board photocopy rights for 1 copy and production rights for 3 performances commencing on 01/29/27 and ending 90 days thereafter.

HANNAH: *(Trying to be calm.)* Just tell me. Did I kill Parker? Bella? Why won't they leave me alone?

DR. DANIELS makes a move but as he does HANNAH grabs DR. GRACE and puts the knife at his neck.

HANNAH: Do you want to see how far I can stick this into his neck? Take another step closer and we'll both find out!

DR. GRACE: Hannah...

HANNAH: Shut up! You've done nothing but lie to me! Everyone lies to me!

DR. DANIELS: *(To a monitor somewhere.)* We need help in here... now!

HANNAH: I killed them. All of them! And you lied to me!

Blackout. Lights come back up and HANNAH is back on her bed with DR. GRACE sitting on the edge of it.

HANNAH: I feel terrible.

DR. GRACE: It happens. It's not the first time something like this has happened to me here.

HANNAH: Even so, I'm really sorry about stabbing you in the arm.

DR. GRACE: Don't worry about it, Hannah. It'll heal.

HANNAH: I just lost my temper. You know, they used to say I was the broken girl because I did things like that, ya know?

DR. GRACE: You never told me that.

HANNAH: *(Amiably.)* Well, now you know.

DR. GRACE: Well, just for the record, I don't think you're broken.

HANNAH: I don't know. I probably am.

DR. GRACE: You can trust me. I'm an expert. I have a couple of fancy pieces of paper that prove it.

HANNAH: Thanks Dr. Grace. Are you sure you're not mad at me?

DR. GRACE: Of course not. Things like this happen all the time.

HANNAH: Good. Because I don't want you to be mad at me. I don't want you to leave me.

DR. GRACE: I won't.

HANNAH: I'll try to be better.

DR. GRACE: I know you will. Wow... I can't believe that you actually thought you had killed your mom, your sister and those other people. That's crazy. You'd never do that.

HANNAH: I try to be good. I really do.

DR. GRACE: I know you do Hannah.

HANNAH: So, when do you think my mom is going to be able to visit me again?

DR. GRACE: I'm sure she'll be by to visit you really soon. And I'm sure Alex will be with her.

HANNAH: And how about you, Dr. Grace?

DR. GRACE: Me?

HANNAH: Are you going to continue to work with me?

DR. GRACE: Of course! I'm staying right where I am. *(After a beat and with intention that will give the audience clarity about this scene.)* I will always be with you.

At this DR. DANIELS enters with another doctor.

DR. DANIELS: And this is Hannah. She'll be asleep for another hour at least. She can be very charming, but I have to insist that you leave her restraints on at all times. That's an order from administration. We don't want you making the same mistake Dr. Grace did.

THE END

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU

BY BRENT HOLLAND

Type: Short Play

Genre: Drama

Duration: 35 minutes

Cast: 3 females, 4-5 either (*7-8 total*)

In a locked mental health ward, Hannah is haunted by dream-visions of the people she cannot escape — her sister, her mother, a former enemy, and the boy she loved. An intense psychological drama about trauma, memory, guilt, and the terrifying question of whether the voices in Hannah's head are nightmares, memories, or something far worse.

HEUER
PUBLISHING
ESTABLISHED 1928

ISBN: 978-1-61588-621-0

HEUERPUB.COM