

Heart's Beating

A gay fantasia on personal themes

by
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
Will	Secretive, missing a heart.	24	M
Simon	Open book, full of love.	24	M
Connor	Horny, chaotic, a demon.	?	M
Winnie The Pooh	A sweet and simple bear.	99	M
Creature	Enraged, cold, intelligent.	1	M
Frisbee Guy	Violent, bitter, confident.	23	M

Note: Creature and Frisbee Guy will be double cast.

A "-" means the line is immediately followed by the next.

A "/" means that the lines overlap each other.

(V.O.) = voiceover

Content warning: Adult language, violence, blood, death

"The human heart has hidden treasures,
 In secret kept, in silence sealed;
 The thoughts, the hopes, the dreams, the pleasures,
 Whose charms were broken if revealed."
 - Charlotte Brontë, "Evening Solace"

SCENE 1

A montage featuring Will and Simon. We see a highlight reel of their past. Their first meeting, where there's an instant connection. A moment of laughter. A touching image. We see a playful friendship. But it slowly starts to turn into something more. They start to become closer, in more ways than one.

Then, suddenly, there's a moment of stillness. The two men are being flung away from each other. Then- a jump cut, a short-circuit to-

The perfect relationship. Almost too perfect. I'm talking like rolling in the fields surrounded by flowers and hearts perfect. The definition of true love. They couldn't be happier. Until, suddenly-

Simon disappears and Will has a strange out of body experience. Will's heart leaves his body. His heart vanishes.

WILL

That's not good.

SCENE 2

Will and Simon's shop in a fantastical world. Will is packing for a trip.

SIMON

A quest? Seriously. You're leaving. Right now. To go on a crazy quest?

WILL

Everyone's gotta do it sometime!

SIMON

Yes, sometime. But why this time? Why this moment?

WILL

Do I need a reason? Maybe I'm just feeling a bit spontaneous.

SIMON

You're forgetting that you have a job.

WILL

Our whole lives don't have to revolve around work, Simon. The people can live without the bookstore for a couple of days.

SIMON

But tomorrow is story-time Sunday! The kids will be so disappointed.

WILL

I think you're the only one who enjoys my stories.

SIMON

Not true at all! Everyone loves them. How couldn't they?

WILL

You may be a little bit biased there.

SIMON

Perhaps, but it's true.

WILL

Well, whether they love me or not, they'll have to catch me another day.

SIMON

When?

WILL

I don't know? When we do the next one.

SIMON

That's what I'm asking. When is the next one? How long are you going to be on this quest? What even is the quest?

WILL

I don't have time for questions.

SIMON

You're just going to go off on this derring-do nonsense without telling me anything?

WILL

Pretty much, yeah.

SIMON

Well, may I provide an alternative choice?

WILL

Will it matter if I say nay?

SIMON

It shan't. Consider: you, me, a picnic basket, and a sky full of stars.

WILL

That sounds lovely.

SIMON

I know. And there might be a surprise in store for you...

WILL

Oh, really?

SIMON

Mmhmm. A really nice surprise.

WILL

Well, that is certainly tempting. For when I get back.

SIMON

Will, what's going on?

WILL

Nothing.

SIMON

Uh huh. Nothing. From where I'm standing it seems like a whole lot of something. Because you're not acting like yourself. You don't want to do the job you love. You turn down a peaceful date night. And for what? Danger? Adventure? Just tell me what's going on!

WILL

GAH!

Suddenly, Will starts to have a violent reaction.

SIMON

Are you dying?

WILL

Maybe!

SIMON

Wait, what?

WILL

It just- it hurts and/- AHHH- AHHHH- AHHHHHHH

SIMON

Will! Stop it! Please. No! Please!

For a terrifying moment, it seems like this is
going to be a very short play. Then-

WILL

Whew. All better. Time to go.

SIMON

WOAH WOAH WOAH WOAH WOAH absolutely not!

WILL

What?

SIMON

What? “What,” he says. After giving me the scare of my life. I need some context, sir.
What’s going on?

WILL

...

SIMON

Will, please. You can tell me anything.

WILL

I don’t want you to worry.

SIMON

Too late.

WILL

I may not have a heart anymore.

SIMON

Like, metaphorically?

WILL

No, there's literally an empty hole where my heart should be.

SIMON

How do you know?

WILL

Because I watched it float away.

SIMON

That's not good.

WILL

That's what I said! But two months went by and nothing happened so I thought I was fine!

SIMON

You mean your heart has been missing for two months and you didn't tell me?

WILL

I didn't want to worry you. Because I wasn't even worried. Until I started having these horrible moments of pure agony. Like the one you just saw. And it's getting worse. That's why I have to go on this quest. I don't know how much time I have left.

SIMON

And how do you know that this will help?

WILL

I don't, but there's no alternative. Unless you have a better idea?

Beat.

SIMON

I guess you have to go.

WILL

Exactly.

SIMON

And, obviously, I'm coming with you.

WILL

Yes- wait, no!

SIMON

And why not?

WILL

It's my problem. I was warned I'd be personally challenged, have to confront my demons, that sort of thing, and I'm scared about what you may see if you come along.

SIMON

Will, I love you. Even the messy parts. I can handle anything.

WILL

What if you see something that makes you hate me?

SIMON

I could never hate you.

WILL

But it's going to be dangerous. I would never forgive myself if you got hurt.

SIMON

I'm not the one that I'm worried about.

WILL

What do you mean?

SIMON

It's just- no offense- but you're not exactly the adventuring type?

WILL

What are you trying to say? That I'm not tough?

SIMON

Emotionally, yes. But physically...

WILL

What?

SIMON

Well let's hope it's not too windy out there.

WILL

Wow, so that's how it is?

SIMON

It is indeed.

WILL

I'll show you "tough."

SIMON

How?

WILL

Come at me. Right now. If I win- I go by myself, no more questions asked. If you win, you come with me.

SIMON

...

WILL

Are you refusing a challenge, coward?

SIMON

No, just thinking about how, if you're going on a dangerous quest, you might want to feel confident in yourself. I wouldn't want to embarrass you right at the start.

WILL

Sounds like you're just afraid to get your face messed up, pretty boy.

SIMON

Oh, that's it.

Simon rushes Will. They fight in a playful way. Simon wins, pinning Will to the ground. Both men pant heavily.

SIMON

Still want to talk trash?

WILL

Alright, I yield, I yield!

SIMON

Glad to hear it, sweet pea. When you catch your breath, you can start giving me the rundown on this quest.

WILL

Punk...

SIMON

What was that? You want to go for round two?

WILL

I'm good.

SIMON

Then: the quest?

WILL

Right. The quest giver gave me this map with all of the info that I need.

Will pulls out a small folded map. But, as he unfolds, it slowly becomes bigger and bigger until it becomes comically oversized.

WILL

They said this was the travel sized version. I'd hate to see the regular one.

SIMON

That's insane.

WILL

Well, they did say it would be a crazy journey. So, basically, the quest will consist of two daunting and life-threatening challenges personally tailored to the quest undertaker. If I survive each challenge and collect two keys, the location of my heart will be revealed. But those could be anything, you know? Could just be like fun little puzzles. So maybe there's no need-

SIMON

And what if the challenges are crazier than you think they're going to be? We could be faced with something impossible like fighting an entire army, wading through a room of barbed wire, or even reading a book about philosophy. Not to mention the fact that you said *if* you survive, which means there's no way I'm staying at home waiting for you.

WILL

Wait, speaking of home, you know, I just realized- who's going to watch the shop? You know there have been bandit sightings around.

SIMON

I'll rent a security dragon.

WILL

And what if it accidentally burns the place down?

SIMON

We're insured.

WILL

But what about-

SIMON

I'm coming with you. End of discussion.

WILL

I'm just worried.

SIMON

About?

WILL

What if having you with me negates the results somehow? Like what if we finish and then someone is just like "well actually you didn't do it by yourself so you actually can't get your heart back, sorry about it!"

SIMON

That's dumb. That was a dumb thought. I'll kick the butt of anyone who says that. Think, Will. Remember all of those epic adventures that you've read about. Did any of those individuals do it completely on their own?

WILL

No, I guess they didn't.

SIMON

You're the best part of my life. And if doing some wild adventurer nonsense is what it takes to keep you alive, then I will do everything in my power to help, and nothing in this world can stop me.

WILL

That's... very nice. Thank you, Simon.

SIMON

Any time. So, when do we leave?

WILL

Tomorrow?

SIMON

What?

WILL

You know, get a nice fresh start in the morning. Give me some more prep time.

SIMON

I'm sorry, after all of that, you just want to push it to tomorrow?

WILL

I just want one more night of a normal life with you. And you know, being pinned down by you gave me a few ideas about how to spend it.

Simon scoops up Will effortlessly.

SIMON

Tell me more.

SCENE 3

Will and Simon in their bedroom in the early morning. Will gets out of the bed.

SIMON

(sleepy)

Where are you off to?

WILL

Just using the bathroom.

SIMON

Alright, don't fall in.

Will exits. A moment. Will re-enters fully dressed for his quest. He kisses Simon on the forehead. Will exits. A moment. Then, the world gets a little bit darker. Connor appears out of nowhere.

CONNOR

Wake up, Simon.

SIMON

(sleepy)

But moooom it's not even a school day.

CONNOR

Wake up!!!

SIMON

Okay, jeez!

Beat

SIMON

Who are you?

CONNOR

You don't seem too disturbed by the fact that a stranger is in your bedroom.

SIMON

Wouldn't be the first time. Plus, my boyfriend is right here, and he's big and scary, sooo

CONNOR

I don't see any big and scary boyfriend.

SIMON

No, he's right- You know I keep telling that man to not eat heavy meals before bed but he never listens.

Simon exits

SIMON

(off)

That biscuit!

CONNOR

Was that supposed to be a substitute for "bitch"? And don't people usually say "son of a"?

SIMON

Why would I bring his mother into this? She's lovely. Although I don't feel the same way about her son right now.

CONNOR

He left without you.

SIMON

Wow, you should be a detective. Wait, who are you?

CONNOR

A scary and powerful demon of darkness who knows more about your boyfriend than you do.

SIMON

What do you mean?

CONNOR

Let's just say, there are reasons why he didn't want you to go with him.

SIMON

I'll thank you to keep out of our business, friend-o. You've overstayed your welcome.

Simon grabs his sword and slashes at Connor, who avoids him with unnatural ease.

CONNOR

Don't you think you should be catching up to Will instead of picking a fight with me?

SIMON

Fine, but this isn't over.

CONNOR

I was going to say the same thing. But, I'm a gentleman, so I'll leave. Before I go, I do have one more question: who was in your bed before Will?

SIMON

Excuse me?

CONNOR

Before, you were all like "I've had all these strangers in my bedroom before my boyfriend." Name one.

Beat.

CONNOR

You can't, can you? Curious. Ah well, toodle-oo.

Connor vanishes.

SIMON

Note to self: install holy water booby traps when we get back.

SCENE 4

Scene shifts to the site of the first task. Will enters, struggling with the comically oversized map.

WILL

How do you even hold this thing? Okay, if I'm reading this right, this should be the spot.

Will clocks his surroundings. There is a long, shaky bridge. At the end, there is a chest. Suddenly, Connor appears.

CONNOR

Hello!

WILL

AHHH! You. You did this, didn't you?

CONNOR

Flattering that you think I have the power to do all of this, but this has nothing to do with me. I'm just along for the ride.

WILL

So why are you here?

CONNOR

I love drama.

WILL

That can't be it. You have to want something. You always do.

CONNOR

Perchance.

Connor vanishes.

WILL

You can't just say "perchance!"

Beat.

WILL

Demons. What was I doing? Oh yeah, the challenge. There should be something somewhere on this- Oh, something's appearing.

Alright: “To complete the first task, you must cross the rickety bridge. The key is in the chest. Watch your step.” Okay, sure. I’m not gonna lie I was kind of hoping these would be like brain teasers. Still, doesn’t look too difficult. Just gotta keep my balance. Wait, there’s a note. “P.S.: Watch out for the lava.” I don’t see any-

A river of lava appears under the bridge.
Terrifying steam and smoke fills the space.

WILL

Oh, this is bad! Okay, calm down. No big deal, just a river of death awaiting me if I fall. I really should’ve joined Simon for those yoga classes. Those probably would’ve been helpful right about now.

Simon runs in, panting, but dressed for
battle.

WILL

Oh, hey Simon. I was just thinking about you. All good things, all good-

SIMON

You... left... me.

WILL

I didn’t... want to wake you?

SIMON

Liar. You said that we were in this together. And you left me.

WILL

Because I didn’t want to be followed.

SIMON

Well that’s too darn bad. Because I’m here anyways. So, how can I hel-

A sudden burst of steam from the lava.

SIMON

Watch out!

WILL

What the hell? It’s just steam.

SIMON

I’m trying to protect you.

WILL

Simon. Look at that bridge. Having two people on that thing at the same time would only put us in more danger. I have to do this on my own. Please. Trust me.

SIMON

Fine. But if you get into any kind of trouble I reserve the right to step in.

WILL

Thank you.

SIMON

Wait. You forgot your knife.

WILL

Oh, thanks.

Will takes the knife from Simon, and sticks it in his pocket.

SIMON

Wait. You got this, alright?

WILL

Alright.

Will steps onto the bridge, it sways aggressively. He pauses, breathes, and slowly starts to move again. Then- SWISH! A frisbee comes flying at Will. Will barely dodges and once again struggles to keep his balance. Frisbee Guy appears by the chest, holding another frisbee.

FRISBEE GUY

Hey, cutie.

WILL

That- that voice- it sounds so familiar.

FRISBEE GUY

Surely you don't mean to tell me that you don't remember me from the frisbee golf tournament?

WILL

No, it can't be, you're not-

FRISBEE GUY

I'll give you a hint. I called you cute. You said I was pretty. I gave you my number. And what did you do?

WILL

I-

FRISBEE GUY

You never texted me!

Frisbee Guy throws a second frisbee at Will. Will Barely dodges.

FRISBEE GUY

Back then, I was hitting on you. Now I'm just going to be hitting you!

WILL

No wonder I didn't text you. You're assaulting me with poor wordplay and bad vibes.

FRISBEE GUY

Bold words for someone who swooned when I walked by you.

WILL

That's in the past.

FRISBEE GUY

Seems like you're doing a lot of living in the past these days.

WILL

I don't know what you're talking about. Besides, you're not so scary, you're just throwing some frisbees.

FRISBEE GUY

Frisbees that will make you lose your balance and fall to a lava-y death.

WILL

Yeah, but you can only throw one frisbee at a time, so, hah!

Frisbee Guy grows two more arms, all of which have frisbees.

WILL

I can't stop making things more difficult for myself.

FG starts throwing more and more frisbees at Will. Will slowly but surely moves towards him and the chest.

FRISBEE GUY

How many men have hit on you since me?

WILL

None, but that's okay! I know I'm hot.

FRISBEE GUY

You can project confidence all you want, but you and I both know that you have no prospects.

WILL

No prospects? What is this, the regency era?

FRISBEE GUY

You can't hide behind humor forever, Will!

WILL

Just try and make me face my issues! If therapy couldn't do it, you have no chance!

Will lunges for the chest, FG grabs Will, holding his arms and legs with different arms. FG slowly starts to stretch Will's limbs, threatening to tear him apart. Simon slowly sneaks across the bridge.

WILL

Listen, this seems really excessive. I mean, why are you doing this?

FRISBEE GUY

Because you still think of me sometimes. You still think "what if I'd texted him?" Maybe I could've had a real relationship. Well I was right there. And you ignored me, thinking you could do better. But you couldn't.

WILL

Well guess what, bud. I don't even remember your name. And I did do better. I found the real thing.

FRISBEE GUY

Real? Oh, we're talking about Simon. Ah yes, your "real" boyfriend. I'm curious, how did you make that one?

WILL

I don't know what-

FRISBEE GUY

You're pathetic. No one else ever came along. Maybe I was your last chance. Now you're stuck with a r-

Frisbee Guy is cut off by Simon's sword going right through his body. FG is vanquished and vanishes. The lava vanishes.

SIMON

Will? Will?!

WILL

Why... why did you help me? I didn't ask for your help. I had it under control.

SIMON

Oh, so the monster tearing you limb from limb was you having it under control?

WILL

It was my task! I failed! And now I'll never get the key and I'll never get my heart back and-

SIMON

Hold on, hold on.

Simon retrieves the key from the chest.

SIMON

Look, look, we got the key. It's all good. We got it.

WILL

You made me look weak! I'm pathetic! I'm a loser! I'm-

SIMON

Stop that! I'm here.

WILL

I didn't want you to be!

Beat

WILL

I'm sorry. I'm such an asshole. I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

Will exits. Simon moves to follow him. Connor appears, stopping him.

CONNOR

Drama drama....

SIMON

What do you want?

CONNOR

Nothing, I'm just here if you want to unpack anything you want to. Girl to girl.

SIMON

How did you-

CONNOR

I hear things from the shadows. Why do you think he ran away?

SIMON

He was just stressed and overwhelmed.

CONNOR

Because he knew that you heard everything that monster said.

SIMON

That guy, he said...

FRISBEE GUY (OFF)

"How did you make that one?"

SIMON

What could that mean? And why would that upset Will so much?

CONNOR

Why don't you go ask him yourself?

Connor vanishes.

SCENE 5

A camp at night. Will sits by the fire. Simon enters.

SIMON

There you are.

WILL

Here I am.

SIMON

I was worried sick.

WILL

...

SIMON

Nice camping set-up you got here.

WILL

...

SIMON

Can I ask you a question? I mean, it's gonna sound dumb, but it's genuine.

WILL

....

SIMON

How did we meet?

WILL

There was a party. We had a mutual friend. We danced together. There wasn't any AC in that apartment but we danced anyways. We were so sweaty and gross but it didn't matter.

SIMON

I didn't know that.

WILL

What?

SIMON

All I can remember is being in love with you. Watching you tell your stories. Daily banter. Sparring. But I realized today that I had no idea how we met. And I don't remember even falling in love with you. I just woke up one day and we were living our lives together.

WILL

...

SIMON

I can't even remember my life before you.

WILL

...

SIMON

Isn't that strange? To forget your whole life besides a brief amount of time with one person?

WILL

...

SIMON

Is there something that I should know?

A long beat.

SIMON

Will.

WILL

Please. Not right now.

SIMON

What are we not doing right now?

WILL

I have a sick feeling that you already know.

SIMON

Already know what?

WILL

Okay, if you don't know, then we don't have to talk about it.

SIMON

What's there to talk about?

WILL

It's been a long day.

SIMON

You did one thing today.

WILL

And it was a lot. Just drop it.

SIMON

I don't even know what I'm dropping!

WILL

I can't have you hating me.

SIMON

I already told you, I could never-

WILL

Stop saying that!

SIMON

I have to until you start to believe me!

WILL

Can you just fuck off?

Beat.

SIMON

That was insanely out of line and wildly inappropriate.

WILL

I'm sorry, okay? I suck. I'm an asshole. I don't want you to think that- I don't- I can't have you-

SIMON

No, no, you're not... that. I don't think-

WILL

I am. I really am. I don't want to- I would never- I'm such a piece of shit.

SIMON

Don't say that. Please don't say that. It's not- We're just having a crunchy moment.

WILL

What are you talking about?

SIMON

It's how I look at things. Life can't always be smooth, it's bound to have a crunch now and then.

WILL

You're so dumb.

SIMON

I'm just trying to lighten the mood.

Beat

SIMON

Will. I know you didn't want me to be here. But I am here. So let me be here for you.

WILL

Okay, okay, just stop saying "here" so much

SIMON

That's fair. So what's up?

WILL

(like he's defusing a bomb)

Simon. You're not just my boyfriend. You're... more than that. And you're right. About everything you said. Some things just don't add up with us and there's a reason for that.

Simon. You're a robot.

Long beat.

SIMON

What?

WILL

I'm sorry.

SIMON

That can't be- robots don't- I feel real.

WILL

You're very realistic, but you are a robot.

SIMON

How long have I been--- this way?

WILL

Two months.

SIMON

But- but- I don't remember everything specifically, but I know we've been together for so long, right?

WILL

You were made specifically for me.

SIMON

You're joking.

WILL

Why would I joke about something like this?

SIMON

Because that can't be true. That would mean that I'm not real. That nothing I know is real.

WILL

That's why I never wanted you to find out.

SIMON

So you were planning on hiding this from me for the rest of my life?

WILL

Not necessarily, I just thought it wouldn't hurt you if you didn't know.

SIMON

Well it hurts, Will. It hurts to know that someone you loved has been lying to you.

WILL

Why did you use the past tense?

SIMON

What?

WILL

You said "someone you loved." What did you mean by that?

SIMON

I didn't mean-.

WILL

Yes, you did. I knew this would happen. I knew you'd hate me if you found out.

SIMON

Don't turn this around on me.

WILL

No, I wasn't trying-

SIMON

Yes you were!

WILL

No, I-

SIMON

How did you want me to react to this, exactly?

WILL

...

SIMON

No, Will, explain it to me. How am I supposed to take this? That not only have you been lying to me this entire time, but it also turns out that everything about our relationship is artificial. And I don't even know who or what I am right now. And I certainly don't know who you are. How can I love someone that I don't know? How can I love me?

WILL

You're Simon. My boyfriend.

SIMON

And nothing else. Just the way you want me to be.

WILL

That's not what I-

SIMON

Yes, I only exist in the context of you. I'm not even my own person. Why did you do this to me? How could you be so cruel?

WILL

Well, this situation isn't great for me either!

SIMON

Excuse me?

WILL

I'm the desperate loser who had to get a robot boyfriend because he couldn't find an actual person who would love him.

SIMON

Stop it!

WILL

Stop what?

SIMON

Making me feel bad for you! I'm the victim here!

WILL

You're not a victim.

SIMON

What would you call this dynamic?

WILL

You're making me sound like-

SIMON

Like what?

WILL

Like a horrible person. Like a predator. That's not who I am.

SIMON

Then who are you?

WILL

Someone who hates himself.

Beat.

WILL

Someone who was desperately lonely. Who needed love in his life more than anything, but who had no love for myself, and needed to get love from someone else. And no one else was lining up. That's what robots are for, right? To do the things that are too difficult for humans to do?

SIMON

So you're using me.

WILL

That was never my intention.

SIMON

I'm just a tool for your pleasure.

WILL
Stop it!

SIMON
The perfect sex toy.

WILL
No, no, I- GAH! I can't say anything right, can I?

SIMON
No, you can't.

WILL
No matter what I say, you're just going to be upset.

SIMON
Of course I'm going to be upset! This is very upsetting!

WILL
Then what can I do?

SIMON
You can leave me alone.

WILL
For how long?

SIMON
As long as it takes for me to figure all of this out for myself.

WILL
But- I can't do this without you.

SIMON
So now you need me. Convenient.

WILL
That's not what I-

SIMON
Stop it!

WILL
No. No. Simon. Please.

SIMON

Just- stop.

Simon exits. Connor appears.

CONNOR

Wow, you really screwed that one up, didn't you?

WILL

I'm not in the mood.

CONNOR

Well I am! I'm always down to chat with my favorite dumpster fire of a human being!

WILL

That's not who I am.

CONNOR

Everything I've seen so far proves the opposite, actually. Even when I gave you the perfect robot boyfriend, you still found a way to mess it all up.

WILL

It's not messy, just... a crunchy moment.

CONNOR

Aw, what Simon said? Well he's told me a few things too.

WILL

You've been talking to Simon?

CONNOR

Yes, I have a life outside of you, you know.

WILL

You're the one who's turning him against me.

CONNOR

I haven't done anything to him. All I've been doing is pushing him towards the truth.

WILL

Why? I thought you were on my side here.

CONNOR

And what gave you that impression?

WILL

You're the one who started all of this. You're the reason he's here.

CONNOR

Yes, it's been a very long game and you're losing, terribly, I might add.

WILL

What do you mean?

CONNOR

Love is your biggest weakness. Simon is my weapon.

WILL

Simon's not-

CONNOR

Not what? A prop? A tool? Could've fooled me by the way you've been using him.

WILL

He wanted to be with me!

CONNOR

He doesn't know any better!

WILL

Well, he's not your friend. He's mine. And we're going to finish this quest, find my heart, and then we're coming to kick your little demon booty back to hell.

CONNOR

Oh, there'll be a fight alright, but what makes you so sure that Simon will be on your side?

WILL

He- He loves me.

CONNOR

(Terrible Will impression)

Ooh look at me, I'm WILL! "He loves me." "It's my quest." "Everyone's on my side" "IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT ME!"

WILL

That's not me!

CONNOR
Isn't it?

WILL
....

CONNOR
And there's a reason for that.

WILL
What are you talking about?

CONNOR
This entire world revolves around you, Will. And you don't even appreciate it. You take it for granted. You ever think that maybe other people want the spotlight? No. Because you never think about others. Maybe it's time for a new protagonist.

WILL
No, no. Simon? Help!

CONNOR
He's not coming back. He'll never come back.

WILL
You don't know that.

CONNOR
Neither do you.

WILL
What are you going to do to me?

CONNOR
The worst thing I can think of. Nothing. I want to watch to see just how badly everything goes for you. Good luck on your solo quest.

Connor disappears. Will has another violent reaction. He begins to scream, cry, various loud noises. Then-

SCENE 6

WINNIE THE POOH (OFF)
Hullo! Is anyone out there?

Will's violent reaction ends. A beat while he recovers.

WILL

No, nobody.

WINNIE THE POOH (OFF)

Well, there must be somebody there, because somebody must have said "nobody."

WILL

Fine. Yes, I am here.

WINNIE THE POOH (OFF)

Oh, hullo and good evening, whoever you are. If you don't mind, I need some help. You see, I'm rather stuck at the moment.

WILL

You and me both, buddy.

WINNIE THE POOH (OFF)

Are you also stuck in a log?

WILL

Oh my gosh no ah- I'll be right there. I don't see a log-

Suddenly, a log appears. Stuck inside is none other than Winnie the Pooh (yes, that one.)

WINNIE THE POOH

Are you here, yet, whoever you are?

WILL

Yes, I'm here. But I'm just wondering how you got in there.

WINNIE THE POOH

Well, you see, I was searching for something. And I suppose now here I am. Would you mind pulling on my legs, whoever you are?

WILL

Right, of course. My name is Will by the way. Alright, I'm going to pull on the count of three. One... Two... Three!

With a big heave, Will pulls Pooh out of the log, but loses his balance. Leaving Pooh on top of him.

WINNIE THE POOH

Oof. Thank you for the soft landing, Will. Now I know how my friend Tigger feels.

WILL

No problem. Are you who I think you are?

WINNIE THE POOH

Who do you think I am?

WILL

You are. You're Pooh Bear.

WINNIE THE POOH

And you're Will. I believe we already did this.

WILL

I can't believe it's really you.

WINNIE THE POOH

I can believe that it's me. After all, I am me. I think.

WILL

It's such a relief to see you. I really needed something good to happen today.

WINNIE THE POOH

Well that makes me happy.

WILL

How?

WINNIE THE POOH

It always feels nice to help a friend in need.

WILL

We're friends?

WINNIE THE POOH

Of course we are. You helped me, and somehow I have helped you. Isn't that friendship?

WILL

I don't know. I don't know anything. I thought I knew. But I don't. Besides, I don't want to trouble you.

WINNIE THE POOH

Trouble me with what?

WILL

There's a lot of things going on with me.

WINNIE THE POOH

Well, if you are anything like me, that is, a bear of very little brain, and you think of things, you find sometimes that a thing which seemed very thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.

WILL

I guess it couldn't hurt to talk things out.

WINNIE THE POOH

Yes. Perhaps we could discuss this over some honey?

WILL

I'm sorry, Pooh, I don't have any honey.

WINNIE THE POOH

Oh, stuff and fluff. In any case, we could just sit by this river.

WILL

I don't see a-

A river appears. A sense of peace fills the space.

WILL

Oh, this is nice.

Beat.

WILL

But I don't know where to start.

WINNIE THE POOH

Then let us think together.

A long beat.

WILL

I guess I struggle with the idea of love. Romantic love. It feels like a game. But one of those long board games with so many rules and complications that everyone gives up before it's over. And there are no winners. I just wanted things to be simple and clean. I wanted to skip the months of guessing "does he like me?"

And if he does, does he like me like that?" I didn't want to stay in that cycle of falling for someone who won't fall with me. I wanted to know what it felt like to be loved by someone. To be desired by someone. Because I could never find that in my real life. Even on days where I look in the mirror and say "Wow, I'm beautiful. Anyone would be lucky to have me," I go out into the world just to find that no one else agrees. People talk about love at first sight. Well, I've only felt that instant spark one time in my life. But it- it didn't work out. That's why I needed Simon. My loving Simon. But I went about it all wrong and messed everything up. I should've been honest with him about what he was on day one. But I wasn't. So he left me. And I'm alone again. That's the thing about love- it never works out the way that you want it to. Love doesn't want to be easy. To love is to feel pain. There's a reason they say you fall in love. Because falling can really mess you up. And the further you fall, the more you get hurt. Until the distance becomes so great that it kills you. That's my problem: Love is killing me, and I don't even have a heart.

Beat.

WINNIE THE POOH

Bother, that particular thing is much more thingish than I thought it would be.

WILL

I'm sorry, I know that's a lot to put on you.

WINNIE THE POOH

I can't say that I understand everything you just said, but I do know about love. It's taking a few steps backward to give way to the happiness of the person you love. You think that you made a mistake with the person that you love?

WILL

Yeah. A huge one. I told the truth.

WINNIE THE POOH

In my experience, that's never a mistake.

WILL

Not when it's a truth that's this horrible. A truth that I didn't even want to face.

WINNIE THE POOH

Perhaps he will forget? I do forget things often.

WILL

No, Pooh. He won't forget this.

Beat.

WILL

I can't do this. I'm lost without him.

WINNIE THE POOH

You see, when I am lost, I find that the best way to get un-lost is not to zig zag in every which way, but to keep moving forward in the same direction. So I suppose, in your case, the only thing to be done is to keep telling the truth.

WILL

He'll never forgive me.

WINNIE THE POOH

These things take time. I'm not worried for you.

WILL

Why not?

WINNIE THE POOH

Because you wouldn't have told him the truth if you didn't love him.

WILL

I guess so.

WINNIE THE POOH

And he wouldn't be upset if he didn't love you, as well.

WILL

...

WINNIE THE POOH

You see, as a stuffed bear, there are a great many things that I do not know, but I know about truth and love. In some ways, they are the same. Both can hurt, yes, but they can also save us. That is why we must keep loving and always be as honest as we can be with each other, especially when it hurts. Because that is how we grow.

WILL

Pooh, I don't think you're a bear of very little brain.

WINNIE THE POOH

And I don't think that you're a man of very little heart.

WILL

Thanks, Pooh, I really needed to hear that.

Beat.

WILL

I'm going to find Simon. Will you be alright on your own?

WINNIE THE POOH

Oh yes. I do think I will take things easy today.

WILL

I wish I could do the same. I'm scared.

WINNIE THE POOH

Why?

WILL

What if- what if Simon doesn't forgive me? What if I never reach the end of this quest?

WINNIE THE POOH

Rivers know this: there is no hurry. We shall get there some day.

WILL

Thank you, Pooh. For everything.

WINNIE THE POOH

You're quite welcome, Will. If you need me again, keep me in your heart, and I shall be in there forever.

WILL

But I don't have-. Yes, I will. Take care, Pooh.

WINNIE THE POOH

You too, Will.

Will takes one more moment to breathe in this peaceful moment. Then exits. Pooh disappears.

SCENE 7

Simon storming down a path. The sound of fire in the background. A dense and frightful darkness overwhelms the space. The world is murky.

Suddenly, Frankenstein's Creature appears (shoutout to the public domain), dragging a mysterious object in a bag. They bump into each other.

SIMON

Oh, I apologize.

A long moment as they look at each other.

SIMON

Do you need help carrying that?

CREATURE

You do not fear my abhorrent appearance?

SIMON

Doesn't matter to me. Here, let me help.

CREATURE

You are the first person to show kindness to me.

SIMON

Well, I just found out that I'm not a person. I'm a robot.

CREATURE

I do not understand that word. Are you some sort of creature? An experiment like myself?

SIMON

Yes, you could say that.

CREATURE

Where is your creator?

SIMON

It's complicated. We were in love. Well, we still are. But then I learned that I was simply a creation for his pleasure, which isn't something that's easy to live with. Where's yours?

CREATURE

He abandoned me the moment he saw my repugnant features. Now there are none on this earth who would pity me or assist me. That mistreatment has led me here, holding this.

SIMON

That's heavy. Speaking of, what are we carrying right now?

CREATURE

Something most beloved to my creator. It is the cold body of the darling of the Frankenstein family, William.

SIMON

Oh. I knew someone named Will too. Or at least as I thought I did.

A moment of realization.

SIMON

AHHH!

Beat.

SIMON

AHHH! That's a dead kid! What the hell is wrong with you?

CREATURE

Always the same reception! All hate the wretched and my monstrous form!

SIMON

Yeah, because you killed a kid, you sociopath! It has nothing to do with your appearance.

CREATURE

Mankind only concerns itself with my appearance. Even my creator, the only one who could ever understand me, fled at the sight of me. As a consequence, I have declared war upon this species, and, more than all, against him who had formed me, and sent me forth to this insupportable misery.

SIMON

I get being mad at someone, but why would you kill-

CREATURE

Do not dare to judge me. I am, after all, modeled after a man. And all men kill their fellow travelers on this planet. So much so that the mouth of the government has to outwardly condemn it, lest all men be tempted by the seductive allure of finality and victory over their enemies. You, who are modeled after man, tell me: have you ever taken a life?

SIMON

No, of course n- Wait. Yes. I have.

CREATURE

Hypocrite! Yet I do not doubt that you are accepted by this society, which only takes care of the beautiful, and spurns the unfortunate. Tell me then, robot, if you looked as I did, would your creator still care for you?

SIMON

...

CREATURE

And what would you do, if you were in my skin, instead of this murderous path of destruction? I am like Satan, cast aside. Even as I look upon you, the bitter gall of envy rises within me. How is it that you, another creation by man, are blessed with beauty and love, whereas my existence is an unending curse? Imagine how it feels to live my nightmare. A life robbed of affection and filled with loneliness. I had a lifetime before I was this- this wretch. I was a man, just like any other. But now I do not possess any of those memories. Instead, my soul is eternally plagued with the sins of this flesh. The sins of my creator. I did not ask for any of this. So I ask of you: can you be certain that you would not be doing the same as I, had you endured my circumstances?

SIMON

(even he can't believe he's saying this)

I- I understand.

CREATURE

Then perhaps you are more like me than you wish to believe.

SIMON

No, I'm not. I have... had... have a good life.

CREATURE

You do not seem too certain. What troubles you?

SIMON

He said that I was made for him specifically, so everything about me is a fabrication.

CREATURE

A man playing God.

SIMON

Something like that.

CREATURE

Gods don't appreciate it when their creations begin to act of their own accord.

SIMON

No. No they don't.

CREATURE

My creator wished to conquer death. He brought me back from the grave. But in attempting to bring more life into this world, he only brought about destruction, as you can see.

SIMON

You killed that kid on your own.

CREATURE

No. I am simply reaping what my creator sowed. He must know the repercussions of his actions. He chose to inflict this pain upon me. So I will destroy him in any way I can.

SIMON

That's why I'm not like you. My creator loves me.

CREATURE

And he forced you to love him in return. Does this not fill you with righteous fury?

SIMON

It did, at first. But I guess if there ever were a time where I stopped loving him, I could have just left.

CREATURE

Can you be certain that you've never tried to stray from his side? You have no way of knowing how much control he has over you.

SIMON

He wouldn't do that. He let me go just now.

CREATURE

Then it seems that you are now free to do as you wish.

SIMON

I don't feel free. I feel bogged down. I have so many questions. I don't know anything about what's happening. I don't know who I am.

CREATURE

I felt the same, once. Filled with the secrets which I desired to divine. However, I could not do so on my own. And the only person on this Earth who could answer my questions flees at the very sight of me. I will never know anything. That is my curse.

SIMON

Then you're free too.

CREATURE

...

SIMON

You've been given a second chance at life.

CREATURE

This is not a life. I am unnatural. Everything about me is a crime against nature. And society will never accept me. I have tried. A life of solitude is not a life worth living. I have asked my creator to make a female companion for me, but he has refused. If he won't improve or end my torturous existence, then I shall make his exactly like mine, until we are both in Hell, whether it be in life or death.

SIMON

That's not the answer.

CREATURE

Then what is?

SIMON

Being good. Doing the right thing, even when others don't.

CREATURE

How can you be so calm? How are you not ready to salt the Earth and destroy everything you see?

SIMON

I was. But now I've seen where that path could lead. And I can't allow myself to do that. I can be mad, but I can still be kind. That's what makes me different from you. I choose to see the best in people, even when they can't see it in themselves. Even if it's buried deep down, or if they've made mistakes. You're intelligent. Have you ever heard the phrase "to err is human"?

CREATURE

I have.

SIMON

And you've made a mistake in killing that boy.

CREATURE

I-

SIMON

Don't deny it.

CREATURE

I did.

SIMON

Then you're human, just like your creator. Find your humanity.

CREATURE

I refuse. Humanity is wicked at its core. Take your creator, for instance-

SIMON

You don't get to say anything about him. He is good. People are inherently good. We just have it beaten out of us by people who already got it beaten out of them. Apathy is simple. Hatred, easy. But making the choice to believe that things can be better and choosing to view the world through a positive light? That may very well be the thing that saves us. Granted, people do slip up, but that's just because it's the hardest thing in this life to do. It's an every day battle, and it's the only one we should ever be fighting.

CREATURE

Who are you to be the final authority on humanity? You're not even a real person.

SIMON

I decide what I am. And I'm choosing to be real. I'm choosing forgiveness.

CREATURE

Then you are as foolish as any person. Your mind is resolute, so I will not waste any more time in debating you. But I must caution you: if you decide to go back to your creator, you may try to reason with him, and still will he spurn and betray you again. That is always the way.

SIMON

We'll see about that.

CREATURE

You will indeed. Farewell, robot.

The Creature leaves. Suddenly, Connor appears.

CONNOR

I'm not gonna lie, I'd still smash.

SIMON

What the hell do you want?

CONNOR

Such aggression! Tell me, did you enjoy your little chat with the monster?

SIMON

I don't think he's a monster.

CONNOR

Interesting POV. Sounds ripe for a socratic circle, but unfortunately we don't have enough time or people for that.

Connor pulls out a rock.

CONNOR

Here, I got you a present.

SIMON

Why would I accept anything from you?

CONNOR

I just thought you'd want something that would help you on your journey. But ah well, if you don't want it...

SIMON

Wait. What is it?

CONNOR

It's a rock.

SIMON

Are you serious right now? How is a rock going to help me?

CONNOR

Because I'm gonna do something to it.

SIMON

Gross.

CONNOR

I'm using magic, ya sicko.

Connor does some fun little dark magic on the rock. It glows all evilly.

SIMON

What did you do?

CONNOR

I upgraded it. Here, take it. In case you need to upgrade too.

SIMON

What does that mean?

CONNOR

It means whatever you want it to mean. It'll give you all of my powers. All the weird shit you can imagine. You can use this to really mess someone up.

SIMON

I don't believe that you would ever share any of your power. What's the catch?

CONNOR

No catch, surprisingly. I like you, Simon. I want to help you.

SIMON

Why?

CONNOR

Call it a contingency plan.

SIMON

For what?

CONNOR

Nothing. Or something. Depends on how things shake out. But I have a feeling that you'll need it eventually.

SIMON

So now you want to help Will with his quest?

CONNOR

Who said anything about Will? I said it would help your quest. Come on. Don't make me beg.

SIMON

Ew, fine, I'll take the silly magic rock, if it'll get you to stop talking.

Simon accepts the rock.

CONNOR

Anyways, I think you should know that something crazy is about to go down.

SIMON

What are you talking about? Is Will in trouble?

CONNOR

Maybe. Maybe not. That all depends.

SIMON

On what?

CONNOR

On how fast you can get to the second challenge.

SIMON

It's happening already?

CONNOR

It's about to be. I personally think you'll find it to be very fascinating. Follow me!

They exit.

SCENE 8

Will arrives to the second challenge. There's a door leading to it. He pauses. Connor appears.

CONNOR

WATCH OUT BEHIND YOU!

WILL

WHAT?

CONNOR

HAAAAH HA HA! Oh shit, I didn't even expect that to get you. WOW!

WILL

Fuck you, Connor.

CONNOR

Such profanity! Have some class, why don't-cha?

WILL

Haven't you done enough to me already?

CONNOR

On the contrary, my little heartless diaper baby, we've only scratched the surface of the fuckery that I can unleash.

WILL

This is the last challenge. All I have to do is go in, finish it, and then I win.

CONNOR

Yeah, about that... I'm in charge of the second challenge.

WILL

No.

CONNOR

Yes!

WILL

Maybe you didn't hear me. I said "no."

Will rushes Connor, who dodges again and again until Will finally hits him once.

CONNOR

Jokes on you, violence turns me on.

Sound of an usher chime, like a show is about to begin.

CONNOR

That sound means it's time for my big moment. You don't want to miss a second of this. So get going!

Connor pushes out his hands. A powerful wind knocks Will into the next scene.

SCENE 9

The second challenge. Will is in a bedroom. A nice looking space. Filled with nerdy stuff. Very cute, comforting, and feels safe. The kind of place you'd never want to leave.

WILL

Where- Wait, this is-

CONNOR

I thought you'd recognize it!

WILL

Why here?

CONNOR

This was once a safe space for you, yes? Get ready for it to be ruined. With something truly horrific.

WILL

What?

CONNOR

LIVE THEATER!

Connor reveals that he's wearing Will's clothes. He puts on a Will wig.

CONNOR

I'll be playing you. I know, I'm too hot for the part, but this isn't really the kind of thing you can hold auditions for. Time for my Tony moment.

Simon, the real one, appears.

WILL

Simon!

CONNOR

Not your Simon! That's the real Simon. Now sit.

Connor forces Will to sit.

CONNOR

And enjoy our humble production. I trust that you will eventually recognize the given circumstances.

(to Simon, in character as Will)

What are you doing?

SIMON

Sitting on my bed.

Oh. Okay.

CONNOR

You can join me, if you want.

SIMON

Yeah, sure.

CONNOR

Beat

You okay?

SIMON

Yeah, why?

CONNOR

You just seem nervous.

SIMON

Just my first time sitting on a bed.

CONNOR

You've never sat on a bed before?

SIMON

No. I mean, yes I have. I just meant like, my first time sitting on someone else's bed.

CONNOR

How does it feel?

SIMON

Like any bed, I guess. But, different, somehow.

CONNOR

Well, mi cama es tu cama. Get comfy.

SIMON

Okay.

CONNOR

A long moment.

CONNOR

Hey.

SIMON

Yeah?

CONNOR

This is really nice. You know, getting to hang out with you.

SIMON

Yeah, I like being with you.

CONNOR

You do?

SIMON

Of course I do! I'm your friend, aren't I?

CONNOR

Right, friend.

WILL

Wait, this is-

CONNOR

(normal voice)

This isn't immersive theatre, sir!

(back in it.)

Simon.

SIMON

What's up?

CONNOR

Can I tell you something?

SIMON

Is it a deep dark secret?

CONNOR

No, I guess it's less something to tell, more something to ask.

SIMON

Alright, shoot.

CONNOR

Do you think... maybe... I mean... Would you like to grab dinner, with me, sometime, soon?

SIMON

Sure, I'm down.

CONNOR

Really?

SIMON

Of course, we could get something at the Pie Place, ooh or maybe the Chicken Cottage. Not sure why every restaurant in this city has to have an alliterative name, but-

CONNOR

No, I meant like, something nicer.

SIMON

Oh? Okay, how about the Stupendous Steakhouse? I'd have to buy a suit, but, you know, if it's what you want.

CONNOR

No, I-

SIMON

Okay, so you don't like that option. Well-

CONNOR

Simon. It's not the restaurants. I don't think you're understanding me. When I said dinner, I meant: do you want to go on a date with me?

A terrible pause.

SIMON

Will, I-

Another terrible pause.

CONNOR

I know we've been friends for a long time, but I'd be lying if I said that I haven't had deeper feelings for you for a while. I didn't say anything at first because I wasn't sure if you were queer or not, but by the time I found out you were I thought it was too late and I didn't want to lose you as a friend. But these feelings won't go away and I felt like I'd explode if I didn't tell you that I want to be with you. Always.

The worst pause of all.

CONNOR

What are you thinking?

SIMON

I'm thinking you've had one too many. You're fuzzy brained and you don't know-

CONNOR

I do, though. I know exactly what I'm doing and exactly what I want.

SIMON

Will- I'm sorry, but I just don't see you in that way.

CONNOR

Oh. There were just moments when I thought that you might like me as more than just a friend.

SIMON

I-

CONNOR

Like, you would compliment my appearance sometimes. And we hang out all the time. And you drop everything for me. And you ask me to sit on your bed. I thought this was the moment, I guess.

SIMON

Will, I did all of those things because you're my friend.

CONNOR

Oh.

SIMON

Yeah.

CONNOR

So you wouldn't ever see me in that way.

SIMON

No. I'm sorry.

CONNOR

Don't be. It's my fault.

Beat.

SIMON

It's getting late.

CONNOR

Si-

SIMON

I have work early tomorrow. So I should get some rest.

CONNOR

Oh, okay.

SIMON

Goodnight.

CONNOR

Good-

But Simon has already exited. Connor
breaks character and slowly changes from
the Will costume to his normal clothes.

CONNOR

And that was it. The moment that nothing would ever be the same between the two of you. That's all it took. Sure, you keep texting, and he acts like nothing happened. He seems not to mind. But you know what happened and you feel it- a shift. No more compliments, no more play-flirting, no more hangouts, no more connection beyond the occasional small talk over text. And even that peters out over time. You've lost your best friend. And the worst part is, you never stopped loving him. But now he's no longer in your life, and it's all your fault.

WILL

Please stop this.

CONNOR

I can't, because it's time for the next scene, and you're in it.

WILL

No, I can't-

CONNOR

Sure you can! You've had a long enough break from talking.

WILL

I don't- I don't know my lines.

CONNOR

Then it's time to improv, but you already know exactly what's coming up next.

WILL

I do?

CONNOR

Yes. This is when you came to me, the true hero of this story. Whenever you're ready.

WILL

Hi, are you... Connor?

CONNOR

Connor the scary and powerful? The very same. What can I do ya for, sweetheart?

WILL

You didn't talk like that before.

CONNOR

I'm experimenting with characterization. Keep going.

WILL

Fine. I heard you can create life.

CONNOR

I can indeed, much better than that other guy.

WILL

Not even gonna ask. I want a companion. A perfect one who will always love me. Can you do it?

CONNOR

Can a cow sleep while standin'?

WILL

I don't-

CONNOR

Yes, it can, and I can. Do your thing, that is. I can't sleep standing up. Might give it a try later. But back to the point: I need a bit more information, hon. What's your type? Muscular and rugged? Short and sweet? Built like a stick with a big ol di-

WILL

Actually. I want you to base him on someone. My best- my former best friend, Simon. I just can't move on from him. I've tried finding someone else but I just feel like he was my soulmate. No one else compares to him. So I'm done trying. Please, can you do it?

CONNOR

Of course I can. One perfect robot boyfriend coming up!

WILL

Wait, a robot?

CONNOR

Yeah, the powers that be don't like me just putting new life into the world all willy nilly, upsets the cosmic balance or something.

WILL

Oh, alright then.

CONNOR

May I introduce you to your perfect robot boyfriend- Simon!

Big reveal: Simon, the robot one, has been watching all of this play out from some hidden area. A long moment between Simon and Will.

WILL

Simon, I-

SIMON

Don't. I can't even look at you.

CONNOR

And now he knows everything. Not only is he a robot, he's not even a unique individual! Ah, this is the juiciest thing I've witnessed in quite some time! After all that drama from the first reveal, I can't even imagine how this is gonna-

Will suddenly tackles Connor to the ground and savagely beats him. For what feels like forever. Connor lets out bloodcurdling screams. Blood flies everywhere. Finally, Simon unfreezes and pulls Will away.

WILL

(to Connor)

See if you can get turned on by that!

(to Simon)

Get off of me!

Simon checks Connor's body.

WILL

Is he...?

SIMON

Alive, but just barely. I can't believe you would-

WILL

He was an evil demon, he had it coming.

SIMON

He wasn't evil. Just dramatic. All he wanted was for you to tell the truth.

WILL

You don't understand. He's the one who's been driving a wedge between us. He's been sabotaging this quest the whole time. And now that he's gone, things can go back to the way they were. Consider: you, me, a picnic basket, and a sky full of-

SIMON

No.

WILL

What?

SIMON

We can never go back. Not now that I know... all of this.

WILL

I'm sorry, but there's nothing else, Simon, I promise.

SIMON

I can't believe anything you say anymore.

WILL

...

SIMON

You know, I was ready to forgive you.

WILL

You were?

SIMON

But now- After you- Fuck. His screams. I don't think I'll ever-

WILL

It's just a crunchy moment, right?

SIMON

No, I don't even have a word for this level of bullshit.

WILL

You've never talked to me like this before.

SIMON

You've never tried to brutally murder someone in front of me before. So I guess there's a first time for everything.

WILL

Simon- I promise. Once, I get my heart back, I will spend the rest of my life making this up to you.

SIMON

...

WILL

Alright, now to find the key.

Will goes to Connor's body and fishes through his clothes. He finds the second key.

WILL

AH-HA! I did it!

But there's no joyous celebration. Just silence. Suddenly, the location of Will's heart is revealed. It's been inside of Simon all along.

WILL

Holy shit.

SIMON

Holy shit.

WILL

Well, that's simple, I'll just take it back and-

Will takes the heart. Simon starts to have a violent reaction.

WILL

NO, NO, SIMON!

Will puts the heart back. Simon is back to normal.

WILL

Are you alright?

SIMON

You didn't even ask if you could take it back.

WILL

I didn't mean for that to happen.

SIMON

You only think about yourself. You don't really care about me. I'm not even your boyfriend. I'm just a copy of some guy who wouldn't fuck you.

WILL

It's more complicated/ than-

SIMON

No, it's that simple.

WILL

There's gotta be a way to fix this so that we can both-

SIMON

There isn't a fix for this. There is no "we" anymore. One of us has to die.

WILL

No. I don't accept that.

SIMON

And it's not going to be me.

WILL

Excuse me?

SIMON

After all I've seen, I've decided that you don't deserve your heart.

WILL

That's not fair.

SIMON

Fair? I don't even think you know the meaning of the word.

WILL

This isn't like you at all.

SIMON

I get to choose who I am now. I deserve to have my own life outside of you.

WILL

You don't deserve anything!

Beat.

WILL

You're not even real.

SIMON

"still will he spurn and betray you again..."

WILL

What the hell does that mean?

SIMON

It was a warning I should've heeded. I was wrong. Maybe I've always been wrong.

WILL

What are you talking about?

SIMON

I believed in you so much. Even after everything, I still believed that, deep down, you were a good person. And now... I just can't. But, with your heart, I can be a far better person than you ever were. You're wrong, Will, you're the one who doesn't deserve anything, especially not this heart.

WILL

Simon, stop screwing around. It's my heart.

SIMON

Not anymore, it isn't. Not after you were so careless with it.

WILL

Don't make me take it from you.

SIMON

Are you threatening me?

WILL

Yes. This is my life we're talking about. I need it back.

SIMON

Then come and take it.

Will runs at Simon. Suddenly, a blast of dark energy comes from Simon and knocks Will to the ground.

WILL

How the hell?

SIMON

Courtesy of our demon friend.

WILL

You're on his side now?

SIMON

I'm on my own side. Try to touch me again, and I'll kill you.

Will has a violent reaction. He screams.

WILL

GAHHH! Simon! Please! Just give me a chance!

SIMON

Oh, that's a wonderful idea.

WILL

Really?

SIMON

Yes. One final challenge.

WILL

No, not another-

SIMON

Rule of threes, sweet pea.

WILL

I can't- not now.

SIMON

Yeah, you're right. You look like shit. And I need time to make this a truly epic finale. I'll give you exactly what you want. Us back at home, and a sky full of stars. You were right about one thing, Will. I could hate you. See you tonight.

Simon vanishes. The reaction crescendos into a release of such violent emotion that it destroys every part of the scene, leaving the stage completely bare. Just Will, clutching the place where his heart should be. A long moment as he recovers.

WILL

...

SCENE 10

Simon on stage alone. He pulls out the rock. Ominous vibes fill the space. A cacophony of terrible noise.

SIMON

Time to upgrade.

Darkness fills the world. A terrible sense of foreboding. The point of no return. A supervillain transformation.

SCENE 11

Will alone, cleaned up from before, sitting by the ocean. A haunting sense of loneliness.

WILL

On my own again.

CONNOR (OFF)

I thought that's what you wanted?

Connor slowly hobbles into the scene.
Covered in bandages, crutches, the works.

WILL

What, you back for more?

CONNOR

No, I actually didn't come here for you, believe it or not. I just came to relax and enjoy the ocean. Maybe you should try and do the same.

WILL

Don't fucking tell me to relax, you demon dick. How am I supposed to do that under these circumstances?

CONNOR

You mean the circumstances that you created?

WILL

I remember you doing the creating.

CONNOR

I remember you doing the asking.

Beat.

CONNOR

You probably think of me as just an evil horny demon, don't you?

WILL

I mean, that is what you are.

CONNOR

Well, let's think here for a second. Demons are just the opposite of angels. But we're also the same. We exist to show people who they really are. That's all that I've been trying to do this entire time. Get you to see the truth.

WILL

I thought you wanted to be the protagonist, or whatever.

CONNOR

After seeing your life? No thanks. I'd rather do something more enjoyable, like hike through a mosquito infested forest.

WILL

I thought quests were supposed to be fun.

CONNOR

Lots of things in life are supposed to be fun. Taking accountability for your own actions is not one of them.

WILL

So that's what I'm supposed to do now?

CONNOR

Do whatever the fuck you want, I don't care anymore. I'm finding a different spot.

Connor starts to hobble away with a darkly comical amount of difficulty. He falls over. Will runs to help him. Connor resists at first, but accepts the help. Will slowly helps him up.

CONNOR

Thanks.

WILL

Maybe I'm not completely evil after all?

CONNOR

You're not evil, Will. You're just human.

WILL

Then how come I barely feel like one? Maybe Simon was right. Maybe I don't deserve my heart.

CONNOR

Come here, I have something to tell you.

Will does. Connor slaps Will so hard that it echoes in the theatre.

CONNOR

SNAP OUT OF IT!

WILL

Jesus!

CONNOR

Nah, girl, Jesus ain't comin'. You're stuck with me.

WILL

I thought you didn't care!

CONNOR

Now I do. Try to keep up, won't you? And never say some dumb shit like that again.

WILL

Alright, gosh. I did deserve that, didn't I?

CONNOR

It felt good to me.

WILL

That's valid.

Beat.

WILL

I only said that because, you know, I thought it'd be the only way to, like, atone for what I'd done. Like, if I gave Simon my life, then my soul would be redeemed. Or something like that.

CONNOR

Babes, Simon isn't a real person. He's not even the real Simon, remember?

WILL

But he is real. He's real because I made him real. And I didn't want to let him go. But the more I tried to hold on to him, the more I drove him away.

CONNOR

Maybe that's the universe trying to tell you something?

WILL

What? You mean the cosmos are trying to tell me that I need to move on from some guy that I never even dated? That I should accept the fact that he will never love me and stop trying so hard? That there's no possible way to fix the damage that I've done, but I should still fight for my right to live, so that I can make better decisions in the future? That the entire reason that I had to go on this batshit quest anyways is because I put my heart in the wrong place? And that my heart has always been in the wrong place? And that's the whole point of all these shenanigans? Is for me to get my life back on the right track?

Beat.

CONNOR

Yeah, something like that.

WILL

I'm scared.

CONNOR

Why?

WILL

I know that I have to go back and face Simon. But he's so angry. It'll be a massive fight and there's no way out of it. I couldn't even beat him when he was just regular Simon. Never mind the fact that he's now like some dark demon.

CONNOR

Yeah, that one's my bad. I thought it would make things more dramatically interesting.

WILL

I don't think I can- No, fuck that. I'm leading with the energy that this is a fight that I can win.

CONNOR

Okay!

WILL

The harder the struggle, the more satisfying it's gonna be when I come out on top! Don't make a joke about that.

CONNOR

(lying, caught in 4k)

I wasn't going to.

WILL

I never thought I'd say this, but thank you, Connor.

Will holds out his hand for a handshake.

CONNOR

You broke several of my fingers.

WILL

Right. Sorry about that.

CONNOR

Nah that's okay. I heal fast. And the way that I antagonize people, it was gonna happen sooner or later.

WILL

Right.

CONNOR

Damn you didn't have to agree that fast.

WILL

Sorry.

CONNOR

I'm fucking with you, dude. I needed the harsh reminder that I need to change.

WILL

So did I.

Beat.

CONNOR

It's almost nighttime. Go on. Get your heart back.

Will nods and exits briskly. Beat. Connor slowly removes all of the medical nonsense on his body.

CONNOR

Got his ass.

Connor does a little flourish and has a grand exit.

SCENE 12

Back at Will and Simon's shop. Will walks in. Nighttime.

WILL

Simon? You here? I know you're mad, but please don't jump-scare me.

Simon emerges in a new outfit. Badass. A little scary. Definitely hot.

WILL
(against his will)

Hot.

SIMON
Flirt all you want. Nothing is going to stop what's coming.

WILL
Simon, wait.

SIMON
No! No more talking!

Simon rushes at Will and begins to attack him. Will just dodges as best he can, still getting hit a few times.

WILL
I won't fight you, Simon.

SIMON
I'm not giving you a choice.

WILL
This isn't how our story has to end.

SIMON
Oh, yes it does. You know as well as I do that a story is nothing without an epic ending.

Simon makes a book appear onstage. The book opens, making the entire world change. A gladiator arena. A cheering crowd. Sweltering sunlight. Simon has two swords. He throws one at Will.

SIMON
Pick it up.

Will does. Simon rushes at him and they begin to fight. Simon is a force to be reckoned with, ruthless. Never letting up.

Will fights defensively at first, but slowly starts to become more aggressive as he realizes that Simon isn't letting up.

Even though this is a fight. You can still feel all of the history and love that these two shared. There are still moments of intimacy amidst the brutality. This should be the most epic and emotionally charged fight in the history of theatre.

At one point, Simon lands a critical blow. Will stumbles backwards.

WILL

I just want you to know, this is the last thing I wanted for us. I still don't want to fight you, Simon. But I want my heart back. And if this is the only way to get it, then so be it.

SIMON

Shut the hell up, you self aggrandizing dickhead. You're not a martyr. You're a villain. You took everything from me. And I can't let that stand.

WILL

You're right. What I did was horrible and selfish. I just wanted to live in my delusions for a little bit longer. Because I was happy, and I didn't want that happiness to end. But that doesn't mean that I deserve to die.

SIMON

I'll decide what you deserve. With one final test.

Simon makes another book appear. Everything changes. The sky is full of stars. The world is relaxed and calm. Will lays on the ground, looking up. Simon appears.

SIMON

(Sing-song)

I brought scones!

WILL

What?

SIMON

Don't knock em' till you try em'! I for one think they're the perfect picnic food.

WILL

No, not that. I- I don't understand. Weren't we just having an intense fight?

SIMON

Only if you classify deciding which blanket to bring as an "intense fight." Listen, I know you love it, but I'm not laying on that disgusting mustard yellow blanket. You're lucky I haven't burned it yet.

WILL

What about your outfit?

SIMON

You mean this? Just thought I'd wear something a little spicy for you. You know, just in case you get bored with the stars.

WILL

Really? So it's gonna be that kind of picnic, huh?

SIMON

Only if you play your cards right, cowboy.

WILL

Well, come join me then.

SIMON

That's what you want?

WILL

Uh, was that not clear?

SIMON

You want me to come over for our date night under the stars?

WILL

Yes, that's exactly what I want.

SIMON

Okay. You've made your choice then.

WILL

You're the only choice I'll ever make, hot stuff.

SIMON

Ooh, don't start something you can't finish.

WILL

You know I always finish.

Simon walks over to Will and sits by him.
They look at the stars.

SIMON

(re: the stars)

Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?

WILL

(re: Simon)

Yeah.

Will leans in close and kisses Simon
passionately, melting Simon's defenses.
Suddenly, Will pulls out a small knife, and
stabs Simon in the back.

The illusion melts away. Until the two are
back in the shop. Still with a starry sky.

And it's all over. Simon is completely still,
no longer filled with any darkness. Just the
Simon we know. Dying.

WILL

Simon?

SIMON

Yeah, it's me.

WILL

What have I done? Hold on, I'll get some help and-

SIMON

No. Please just... stay with me.

WILL

Simon. I'm so sor-

SIMON

I'm sorry too. I- I hurt you. Are you okay?

WILL

I'll be fine.

SIMON

Good. Good.

Beat.

SIMON

Well, I think it's safe to say that you passed the test.

WILL

What are you talking about?

SIMON

I gave you the chance to go back to the way things used to be. And I was going to kill you if you chose to stay. But you got to me first. Well played.

WILL

Simon. I'm so sorry, about everything. I was just so desperate to be in a relationship. To feel desired, wanted, touched, and loved. But in doing that, I took away your autonomy, and that wasn't fair to you.

SIMON

It wasn't. I deserved more. I wanted to live. To experience everything. Especially after I found out that everything I knew wasn't even real.

WILL

You were real, Simon. I'm sorry that I ever said you weren't. Our time together has profoundly changed me.

SIMON

Great. I'm sure the last thing everyone wants to hear on this earth is how they were a tool for some homo's character development.

WILL

That's not what I-

SIMON

I know. I'm just giving you a hard time.

Simon starts to fade faster.

SIMON

Will.

WILL

Yes?

SIMON

Take your heart back. Something tells me I won't be needing it anymore.

Will does. Fading faster

SIMON

I-

WILL

No, save your strength. I need you to hear this. I won't ever forget you. I'll carry you with me for the rest of my life. And we'll experience everything. The good and the bad. We're going to see beautiful places. Make so many friends. Have great adventures. And I'm going to live a very long life. But before you go, you have to know: You were the best part of my life so far.

SIMON

That's nice. But make sure you keep the bookshop going. May- Maybe this could be the ne- the next story-time.

WILL

I don't think the kids will get this one.

SIMON

Tha- that may be true.

WILL

I love you, Simon.

SIMON

I can't say it back.

WILL

That's alright.

SIMON

It- It was nice to live. If only for a moment. Thank you.

Simon dies. Will holds him for a moment,
then lays him down peacefully.

Will sees the audience for the first time,
freezes like a deer in headlights, then runs
away.

The world of the play falls apart as
everything goes dark except for Simon's
body.

A crash of thunder.

Simon has a strange out of body experience,
very similar to the one that Will had in the
beginning...

Blackout.

END OF PLAY.