
Inner Paradox

A full length play by Caetlyn McLean

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Contact:

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Cast

Females

Beth
Ellie
Samantha
Claudia
Charlotte

Males

Murray
Lawyer

Voice Over only

PA Announcer
Doctor
Gareth

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ACT 1

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ACT 1 – SCENE 1

OFFICE

A small radio is resting on a desk, softly playing music in the background. ELLIE and BETH are sitting on chairs, waiting. ELLIE has her eyes closed in meditation while BETH is staring up at the ceiling nervously.

BETH begins tapping on the chair's armrest. BETH's continuous rhythmic tapping irritates ELLIE and she opens her eyes to look at her hand.

ELLIE Will you stop that? It's driving me nuts!

BETH stops tapping and looks at her with a small grin.

BETH *(teases)* Cover your ears then.

ELLIE *(not amused)* Oh, very funny.

BETH just shakes her head, wondering what the fuss is all about. LAWYER enters. He picks up an envelope from the desk before turning his attention to ELLIE and BETH who stand in greeting. LAWYER shakes their hands. He is slightly hung over.

LAWYER Sorry, I'm a late. I was held up in court. *(takes a seat)* Now, it appears your father wrote a will before he passed on.

ELLIE and BETH sit down again.

LAWYER rummages through the overflowing in tray, desperately trying to find something. He glances briefly at ELLIE and BETH, and gives an embarrassed smile before going back to his search.

LAWYER Just bear with me. It's here somewhere.

Papers and folders fall off the table as ELLIE and BETH exchange bemused glances. After some time, LAWYER pulls out an envelope.

LAWYER Ah, here it is!

He opens an envelope and takes out a letter. He gives another smile before nervously clearing his throat.

LAWYER It says here ... "I, Matthew Joseph Hasting, hereby leave my collection of 13th Century coins to my eldest daughter, Bethany Joanne Hasting. To my youngest daughter, Eleanor Charlotte Hasting, I leave the house and the amount currently residing in my combined bank accounts to the sum of \$750,000."

BETH just stares at him in disbelief for a moment.

BETH Whoa! Wait a sec. I just get a bunch of useless coins and Ellie gets the house and all the money?

ELLIE Look, don't worry about it. We'll share it amongst ourselves.

Unsatisfied, BETH just gets up and stalks out, leaving LAWYER somewhat shell-shocked by her reaction. ELLIE is slightly embarrassed.

ELLIE (to LAWYER) Sorry about that.

Lights change as LAWYER exits.

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ACT 1 – SCENE 2

KITCHEN

BETH *enters to sit at the table. ELLIE enters and sits opposite BETH, having dinner. They each have a bowl of spaghetti and glass of red cordial in front of them.*

To the side of the stage is an old fashion bed.

ELLIE *'s phone suddenly beeps. She takes it out and reads the message. Her mouth drops open.*

ELLIE I can't believe he would even do that!

BETH Can't believe who did what?

ELLIE He's just called it off!

BETH Did he say why?

ELLIE Only that he was "thinking about it"! I bet there's someone else and he's too gutless to tell me.

She puts the phone on the table and starts toying with her food but not really eating it.

BETH *(sympathetically)* You okay?

ELLIE blinks and looks up at her.

ELLIE Yeah, sorry. That text just threw me. I just can't believe he actually called it off!

BETH I don't blame you. Most people do it face-to-face.

ELLIE Thanks for being so understanding.

BETH Not a problem. I probably would've reacted the same way. *(pause)* Look, I know you're probably not up to it anymore but try and finish the spaghetti. I'd hate for the smell to permeate the room.

ELLIE I'm okay. I'm just pissed off with him, that's all.

They continue their meal.

BETH nervously watches as ELLIE takes a mouthful and unconsciously taps on the table. ELLIE looks at her.

ELLIE 'You nervous about something?

BETH No. What makes you say that?

ELLIE You always do that when you're nervous.

BETH Sorry. 'Bad habit.

BETH licks her lips nervously as ELLIE takes a sip of the cordial and looks at her watch discreetly. ELLIE doesn't notice and continues eating.

ELLIE You should do some meditation or something.

Taking one last sip, ELLIE finishes her meal and gets up to clear the table.

She suddenly doubles over in pain as she holds onto the table for support, blinking violently.

BETH What's wrong?

ELLIE *(in agony)* My stomach! It hurts so much!

Dizzy, ELLIE starts losing her balance and has trouble breathing.

BETH Oh very funny. Butterflies in the stomach ... Ha ha ha ...

ELLIE *(panting)* Help ... me ... Please!!

BETH makes no attempt to move.

BETH *(snorts)* And you're talking about me being nervous.

ELLIE *(slurred)* Beth ... I'm not -!

ELLIE takes a few more unsteady steps before collapsing onto the floor and going into a quick seizure.

BETH calmly sits there for a moment as the seizure soon passes.

Spotlight on ELLIE.

Barely conscious, she can't move but can't do anything about it. She starts gasping for breath (agonal breathing).

Terror sets in as we hear her inner thoughts.

ELLIE (VO) What's happening to me? I can't move. Beth? You still there?
I ... can't ... breathe ... (*desperate*) Help!

ELLIE's heart is slowing down.

Her inner voice begins to fade. She is slowly dying, due to lack of oxygen.

ELLIE (VO) Can't ... think ... Cold ... very ... cold ...

Her heart stops and she loses consciousness.

She continues to weakly gasp for breath - with each breath growing further apart until she stops breathing completely.

Lights up as BETH wriggles uncomfortably in her seat and taps on the table once more.

BETH Ellie? You okay?

Suddenly guilty, she rushes over to ELLIE.

BETH Ellie? Can you hear me?

She tries to rouse her and starts panicking when ELLIE doesn't respond.

BETH (*in desperation*) No, no, no! Come on, Ellie. Wake up. You can do it. I know you can ...

BETH bends down to access ELLIE's breathing and starts to do chest compressions as the lights go down.



ACT 1 – SCENE 3

VOID

Spotlight on ELLIE who is now lying in bed, alone on stage and unable to move. Once again we hear her inner thoughts amidst the ambience of an intensive care unit.

ELLIE (VO, *waking up*) Ow ... My chest hurts. What happened? Where am I? (*panics*) Hello? Is anyone there? Help! I can't move! Please, Beth, where are you? I'm scared! (*to self*) Okay, just try and calm down. I'm sure there's a logical explanation for all of this. I'll find out in good time. (*Fatigue starts to set in. Weary*) But I right now feel so tired. I think I'll just take a ... little ... rest ...

There is silence for a while. The intensive care unit ambience becomes clearer as she slowly sits up, disoriented. BETH and CLAUDIA are talking.

CLAUDIA (VO) It's okay to be afraid.

BETH (VO) Fear is for the weak. I need to be strong for her.

ELLIE Beth? Is that you? Help!!

CLAUDIA (VO) How do you feel about seeing her like this?

There is a pause.

BETH (VO) More concerned than anything. Concerned for her well-being. This shouldn't be happening to her.

CLAUDIA (VO) Was there anyone you would like us to contact for you? Your parents perhaps?

ELLIE Who's she? Where am I?

BETH (VO) No, it's okay. Mum's due back from holidays in a week. I can't let her see Ellie like this. She'll be gutted!

CLAUDIA (VO) You look exhausted. Why don't you go home and get some rest? The hospital will contact you if there are any changes.

ELLIE No, no, no! Don't leave me here! Beth, please! (*pause*) Come back! (*pause*) Hello? Beth?

The faint rhythmic rumbling sound of thunder fills the air. The two-way radio has been left on the ground. She gets up look around curiously.

Silence.

She slowly climbs out of bed, listening intently. The rumbling becomes louder. There is another rumble which repeats itself every few seconds.

ELLIE That sounds familiar.

ELLIE wanders around, trying to find the source of the sound.

ELLIE Where's it coming from?

The rumbles stop as does ELLIE. She waits but there is nothing but silence.

ELLIE starts to become very depressed about her condition. She sits back down on the ground.

ELLIE I hate it here. I can't move, I can't talk to anyone and no one knows I can hear them! Why is this happening to me? I just want to get out!

There is the faint sound of an intensive care unit coming from somewhere, along with a ventilator and heart monitor. She starts to look around her.

DOCTOR (VO) Claudia, how is she?

CLAUDIA (VO) Still unresponsive. Vitals are normal. Pupils equal and reacting. Coma scale at 3. She's lucky the ambulance got to her when they did.

ELLIE Am I going to die? No, no. This can't be happening. I'm still here. Let me out. Beth!

DOCTOR (VO) Ellie, I'm just going to test your reflexes using the sole of your left foot.

ELLIE What for?

DOCTOR (VO) Ready?

ELLIE looks down at her feet briefly then back up again.

ELLIE Was that it? I didn't feel anything.

CLAUDIA (VO) Still no response.

DOCTOR (VO, to Claudia) Okay, give her vancomycin at 15mg IV. Lets see if we can get rid of the toxins.

ELLIE *rubs her arms as DOCTOR injects her with the antibiotic.*

ELLIE That was cold!

There is silence as DOCTOR and CLAUDIA leave her to rest.

ELLIE Hello? Is anyone still here? *(pause)* It's so lonely here.

She soon becomes aware of the sound of a TV program playing in the background

ELLIE What is that? Sounds like some strange TV show I've never heard of. I wish the nurses wouldn't do that. How do they know what we like listening to? *(sighs)* Still, I guess it's better than listening to silence.

She notices a jacket has been left on the ground. She bends down to pick it up and examines it.

MURRAY *enters from behind.*

MURRAY I wondered where I'd dropped it. Thanks.

She stands up and turns to him before giving the jacket to him.

ELLIE I know how much it means to you. I remember you wore it when I first met you.

MURRAY *(solemnly)* Yes and I remember how unimpressed you were at the time.

ELLIE Well, what do you expect? You were tearing across a protected area in that bloody Harley-Davidson of yours.

MURRAY *(grins)* At least you didn't throw it over the cliff. Speaking of which, there's something I want to show you.

He puts on the jacket then takes her hand and begins to lead her offstage towards the bed.

ELLIE Really? What?

MURRAY Words just can't describe it.

ELLIE Sounds ominous.

MURRAY Come on then ...

MURRAY *runs off stage*. ELLIE *tries to keep up with him but is running out of breath*.

ELLIE (pants) Murray! Slow down!

MURRAY (off) God, you're really out of shape! And you call yourself a park ranger!

ELLIE *takes a seat on the ground to catch her breath*.

BETH (VO) Can she actually hear us?

ELLIE *looks around, curiously*.

CLAUDIA (VO) No one knows for sure but we do know that the hearing is usually the last to go.

BETH (VO, soft) She just looks so vulnerable lying there ...

A smile gradually spreads across ELLIE's face as the conversation progresses.

ELLIE Beth? 'That you?

CLAUDIA (VO) There is some good news. Her pulse is still strong so there's a very high chance she can still hear you. The best thing you can do for her now is talk to her.

BETH (VO) Do we know what happened? I mean, how she ended up like this?

ELLIE *runs to the edge of the stage. Slowly stepping back, she is terrified with the realization that she is trapped.*

ELLIE Just get me out! Please!

CLAUDIA (VO) We found some toxins in her body. Do you know what she ate before she collapsed?

ELLIE Toxins? What toxins?

BETH (VO) I made her some spaghetti before going out to hang the washing. (hasty) But I made it the way I always have.

ELLIE What's that metallic smell?

CLAUDIA (VO) Hey, it's okay. I'm not trying to lay blame on anyone. I'm just trying to help you work out what happened. (Pause.) So, what does she do? For a living?

ELLIE's sense of taste suddenly goes awry and she steps away from the stage's edge.

ELLIE Urgh! Something tastes horrible!

BETH (VO) Um ... she's a model. For posters and catalogues and stuff ...

Coloured lights suddenly flash across the stage in quick succession.

Dizzy and disorientated, ELLIE puts her head in her hands.

ELLIE *(sleepy)* Oooh, my head's pounding like crazy? What's going on? Where am I?!

CLAUDIA (VO) I need to go and attend someone else. Talk to her. Let her know you're still here. *(to ELLIE)* Ellie, I'll be back to do your obs.

Footsteps can be heard followed by a rhythmic tapping sound.

BETH (VO) I don't really know what to say. It just feels so weird talking to you but not knowing if you can actually hear.

ELLIE *(quickly)* Something's not right. Why am I feeling like this? Help! Let me out!

She kneels on the ground.

BETH (VO, *guilty*) It was a really, really stupid thing to do. You know I don't usually do things on a whim. I don't know what came over me. It just ... happened. *(pleads)* Don't die on me. Please? I feel really awful about this. You have to believe me.

ELLIE *(groaning)* What's happening to me? My body feels so n ... No, I'm going to die. I know I am! Help!!

ELLIE lies down on the ground.

An alarm on the heart monitor goes off. A few beeps can be heard in the background.

BETH (VO) Ellie?

ELLIE *(slurs)* Burning ... rubber ... smells ... strange. What-

Her body starts twitching and she suddenly goes into a seizure.

BETH (VO) Oh god. Sister, help!

Footsteps can be heard as CLAUDIA can be heard.

CLAUDIA (VO) It's okay, Ellie, I'm just going to give you some valium to relax those muscles. *(pause)* That's it. Just try and sleep it off for now.

The seizure dies down.

ELLIE *(sleepy)* My head hurts. Where am I? Why can't I move? Where's ...

She passes out.

BETH (VO) What happened?

CLAUDIA (VO) She suffered a seizure. She's not out of the woods yet but we'll keep a close eye on her.

A phone beeps.

BETH (VO) Oh, crap ... I've got to go. There's something I need to do. *(Pause)* Hey, I gotta go to work but I'll be back later, okay?

CLAUDIA enters with a wheelchair and sees ELLIE on the ground.

CLAUDIA *(concerned)* Ellie? Are you okay?

She goes up to her and slowly tries to rouse her. ELLIE stir and looks up at her.

CLAUDIA Come on. Up you get, Ellie. We need to get you back into bed.

CLAUDIA slowly helps ELLIE into the wheelchair.

CLAUDIA You gave us quite a fright there.

ELLIE *(groggy)* Who are you?

CLAUDIA You don't recognise my voice?

ELLIE *(trying to think)* Ummm ... I think you're my nurse, Claudia.

CLAUDIA *(smiles)* Yes, that's right.

ELLIE What happened? Where am I?

CLAUDIA You had a bit of a tumble. (*pause*) We are getting quite worried about you. You don't seem to be responding very well to the treatment. We need you to wake up for us.

ELLIE Why am I here?

CLAUDIA *kneels in front of her.*

CLAUDIA (*gently*) That's what we're trying to figure out. What do you remember before you came to us?

ELLIE (*upset*) I ... I don't remember .. anything. I just want to get out of here. Please help me.

CLAUDIA It's okay. We're doing everything we can, I promise. We just need you to be strong and hang in there for us. Can you do that?

ELLIE (*nods*) I'll try.

CLAUDIA (*smiles*) Good girl.

She gets up and starts pushing the wheelchair towards the bed.

CLAUDIA In the meantime, lets get you back into bed.

She helps ELLIE climb back into bed as the lights go down.



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ACT 1 – SCENE 4

BUSHLAND

BETH *enters the main stage and starts attending to a campfire. ELLIE enters, carrying several large branches. BETH's outdoor clothing has designed that resemble the military.*

BETH Ah, you found some! Put them down for a sec and help me with the tent.

ELLIE *(heartily)* Don't you ever get tired for being so bossy?

BETH picks up a piece of tent equipment.

BETH *(teases)* Course not. Now shut up and show me how to put this bloody thing together.

ELLIE just shakes her head with a smile.

ELLIE Since when have you become interested in camping anyway?

BETH I've always been interested. I just... never got around to it until now. And don't look at me like that. I'm here, aren't I?

She exits.

ELLIE Yeah, okay. I've just never seen you as a camping sort of girl, that's all.

The ruffling of a tent can be heard.

ELLIE Wait a sec. You're my sister. I'm supposed to know what sort of person you are ...

BETH (VO) Will you relax? I don't know what you're like half the time.

The sound of the tent collapsing can be heard, causing ELLIE to giggle.

ELLIE Apparently that applies to tents as well. You okay there?

She moves to the exit. She hears a familiar tapping sound coming from within the tent.

ELLIE Beth?

She exits briefly and re-enters with an army rifle. She stares at it curiously.

Suddenly, there is a burst of activity nearby as inaudible two-way radios can be heard. ELLIE gets very anxious.

A single gunshot has her ducking for cover behind some thick scrub.

The rumbling of a helicopter causes her to look around but she can't see it. The faint yet inaudible chatter from a two-way radio slices through the air.

BETH (off) I'm sure I saw her head this way.

ELLIE is relieved to hear her voice and is about to get up to get her attention.

MURRAY (off) You know we can't afford to let her get away.

ELLIE ducks behind the scrub again and tries to remain inconspicuous but she accidentally rustles some leaves instead.

BETH and MURRAY enter.

BETH What was that?

MURRAY She's around here somewhere. I can almost smell her perfume.

There is a pause. ELLIE closes her eyes in terror, trying to steady her breathing.

MURRAY and BETH look around systematically, trying to find ELLIE. MURRAY's eyes rests on the shrub she's hiding behind. He signals BETH to the shrub and gestures her to say something. BETH gives a knowing smile.

BETH Give yourself up, Ellie! You knew blowing up a government building would result in this!

MURRAY and BETH exit once more. ELLIE frowns in surprise. Another burst of radio chatter floods the air.

ELLIE starts walking around, trying to find the radio. She moves to the side of the stage.

BETH (VO, taunting on radio) Ellie! We know you're hiding! Come out wherever you are!

MURRAY (VO, *on radio*) You can run but you can't hide, Ellie!

ELLIE *hesitates as the voice stops. She is shaking her head in disbelief.*

ELLIE No ... Something's not right. I'm imagining this.

Suddenly in awe of her surroundings, she just stands there got a moment, lost in a trance.

SAMANTHA *enters and is relieved to see ELLIE.*

SAMANTHA Oh, thank god! Do you realize how many of us are looking for you?

ELLIE *spins around in surprise and gapes at her. She looks around cautiously.*

ELLIE Sam? What are you doing here?

SAMANTHA (*surprised*) What do you mean what I am doing here? You've been reported missing since yesterday.

ELLIE *starts shaking her head in disbelief and backing away from her, closer to the edge of the stage but not realizing it.*

ELLIE Stay away from me, Sam! You're not real!

SAMANTHA Of course, I am.

ELLIE *She stares for a moment and realizes how close to the edge ELLIE is.*

SAMANTHA Ellie, Please! Just come away from the edge ...

ELLIE Why? So you and your mates can kill me? You're not even in the army anyway!

SAMANTHA What are you talking about? Look, just calm down. You're not well.

The faint sound of a ventilator and heart monitor fills the air. ELLIE looks around.

ELLIE You hear that?

SAMANTHA *just shakes her head, still confused.*

ELLIE This whole thing. Can't you hear it? It's the Intensive Care Unit! (*upset*) I'm on a bloody coma!

SAMANTHA Ellie, you're scaring me. Come on, I'll take you home.

The sound of the ventilator and heart monitor strengthens. ELLIE hesitates as SAMANTHA waits.

SAMANTHA Please?

ELLIE finally makes a decision and takes a few steps towards SAMANTHA who happily moves forward to take her hand. As SAMANTHA's hand touches ELLIE's, however, the sound of the heart monitor suddenly starts racing, causing ELLIE to jerk her hand back in shock.

Lights dim.

BETH (VO) Come on, Ellie. It's time to go.

ELLIE *(backing away)* Leave me alone!

BETH (VO) Don't you want to come home? Mum and Dad are waiting.

Lights up.

BETH has now replaced SAMANTHA and moves towards her but ELLIE isn't having a bar of it. She desperately starts taking a few steps back away from the stage's edge.

ELLIE Just back off! I mean it!

Spotlight on ELLIE. The ambience of the intensive care unit can be heard again.

BETH (VO) You can do it, Ellie. I know I didn't just imagine it.

ELLIE *(surprised)* What?

BETH (VO) Sister, she moved.

CLAUDIA (VO) Moved?

BETH: (VO) She just squeezed my hand.

ELLIE looks down at her hands, confused.

ELLIE No, I didn't.

She suddenly starts blinking, feeling dizzy.

BETH (VO) It was as if she was reacting to my voice.

CLAUDIA (VO) Try not to get too excited. It might just have been an involuntary muscle contraction.

ELLIE Nice one, Beth. How do you think Mum's going to feel when she finds out?

Alarms go off in the background. ELLIE sits down on the ground with her head in her hands.

ELLIE Why is everything moving?

BETH: (VO) What's going on?

CLAUDIA (VO) It's okay. Her blood pressure just dropped but it can easily be fixed.

ELLIE (*moans*) I don't feel so good ...

CLAUDIA (VO) Ellie, I'm just going to give you a bit more fluid through your IV line.

Lights down.

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ACT 1 – SCENE 5

BUSHLAND

ELLIE is making her trek through the shrubland. There is a bottle of water on a table in the middle of the stage.

She is still a little rattled by the realization that she has been imagining things. As she makes her way though the trek, the faint ambiance of the intensive care unit can be heard.

She stops and listens then becomes annoyed.

ELLIE *(to no one in particular)* Stop it! I can't even leave! Give me a way out and then I'll start listening!

Frustrated, she storms ahead.

She stops once more at the sound of the beach and gives a ridiculous laugh.

ELLIE Oh, nice one! I'm in the middle of the bloody country! Where the hell is the beach?

She looks around purposefully.

ELLIE Well?

She snorts and keeps going as both ambiances continue. She slowly stops and takes a sniff but soon shakes her head in disbelief.

ELLIE No, my mind's just playing tricks again. *(yells out)* I know what you're doing! It's not going to work!

BETH *(VO)* Ellie!

ELLIE looks around curiously but can't see anyone. As she continues moving, the beach ambiance is slowly replaced by that of splashing water which gets louder with every step.

She stops where she is and takes a deep breath, muttering to herself.

ELLIE I'm not going crazy. I can beat this. *(pause)* I just need to find a way out.

BETH *(VO)* Ellie!

ELLIE looks ahead and blinks in disbelief. We hear the sound of water splashing.

She moves to the edge of the stage in a trance.

BETH (VO) Come on in! The water's beautiful!

ELLIE just shakes her head. We hear CLAUDIA, distorted and faint.

CLAUDIA (VO) You haven't had a good wash in two days. This will freshen you up a bit.

ELLIE is starting to freak out and begins backing away from the watering hole towards the bed.

The lights suddenly change to blue as she climbs unto the bed.

In her mind, ELLIE is in the watering hole, drowning.

CLAUDIA (VO) She means well. Try not to be too upset by what's happening.

Spotlight on ELLIE. She is sitting up and starts gasping for breath.

The heart monitor start racing.

ELLIE No ... Let me out! (to BETH) Beth! Help!

CLAUDIA (VO) It's okay, Ellie. Just try and calm down. I'm not going to hurt you. I know this feels weird to you but I need give you a wash.

ELLIE takes a few deep breathes as the heart monitor slows down again.

We hear more water running. She shivers slightly and lies down.

CLAUDIA (VO) That's feel better, isn't it? We're nearly done.

We hear the soothing splashing of water as ELLIE slowly falls asleep.

CLAUDIA (VO) There you go. (curiously) Your skin feels hot. Let me just take your temperature.

There is a slight pause and a small beep.

CLAUDIA (VO) Mmmm ... 38 one. We'll have to keep an eye on that, won't we?

Lights up.

MURRAY is tending to the campfire next to ELLIE as she wakes up again. He looks up at her.

MURRAY Ah! I see that the sleeping beauty has finally woken.

ELLIE How long was I out for?

MURRAY just shrugs and turns his attention to the fire once more. ELLIE climbs out of the bed.

There is a pause. ELLIE notices a can of spaghetti on the ground and picks it up.

ELLIE What's this for?

MURRAY For a park ranger, you don't know much about camping, do you? *(chuckles)* What do you think it's for?

ELLIE is still staring at the can with a sense of déjà vu and MURRAY looks at her oddly.

MURRAY You okay? It's not going to bite you.

ELLIE Huh? Oh, nothing. *(pause)* I just had a really weird dream. I woke up in the middle of a outback in my car.

MURRAY *(teases)* Well, you're awake now. So, you don't have to worry. *(serious)* By the way, Beth popped around. She wanted to know how the water was.

ELLIE suddenly looks at him, feeling cautious.

ELLIE What water?

MURRAY The one in the watering hole. What's the matter with you today? Apparently, you had ripe old time, splashing about in there.

ELLIE slowly stands up again and start backing away. MURRAY just looks at her.

MURRAY Ellie? What's wrong?

ELLIE I ... I ...

She looks around desperately, trying to make sense of what she's going through.

ELLIE I'm not really awake, am I?

MURRAY *(confused)* What are you on about? You're standing right in front of me.

ELLIE What did you mean by Beth "just popping around"? No one just pops around when they are camping.

She looks around and listens but all she can hear is nature. She becomes annoyed and starts calling out to no one in particular.

ELLIE Oh, what? Now, you're scared?

MURRAY Ellie, just calm down.

ELLIE *(ignores him)* Come on! Where are those sounds I'm supposed to hear? I'm not really out camping, am I?

MURRAY Come on, you're scaring me ...

ELLIE *(sarcastically)* Well, boo hoo for you. That's exactly what Sam said before and I'm not falling for that again!

MURRAY moves to hold her but she violently retracts.

ELLIE Just back off! Doesn't anyone ever listen to me?

MURRAY just looks at her.

ELLIE Look, I'll prove it. I'm going to close my eyes and when I open them again, you're going to disappear.

MURRAY Oh, come on. Don't be ridiculous!

ELLIE just glares at him and takes a deep breath. She then closes her eyes for a few seconds before opening them again. She moans miserably.

ELLIE It's not fair! Nothing makes sense!

MURRAY *(to himself)* You can say that again.

ELLIE You're not helping, Murray!

MURRAY What the hell am I supposed to think? You're going off about who-knows-what and I'm just supposed to pretend it's not happening!

ELLIE That's because it isn't! You're not here. I'm not even supposed to be here! This whole thing is a facade! (*calls out*) This is all your fault!

MURRAY Ellie ...

ELLIE (*grumbles*) Look, just leave me alone.

She turns to leave and a distant, yet inaudible PA announcement is suddenly heard as MURRAY exits.

ELLIE stands there for a moment, listening intently as the PA announcement gradually gets louder.

ANNOUNCER (VO) Calling Doctor Quick. Code Blue. Ward 5C, Room 302.
Calling Doctor Quick. Code Blue. Ward 5C, Room

This is followed by general hospital ambiance as ELLIE slowly smiles. She spins around to face MURRAY but he is no longer there.

ELLIE (*calls out ecstatically*) Thank you! I knew I was just imagining it.

She stands there, grinning for a moment when it soon dawns on her that she still needs to find a way out. She groans.

She stumbles, slightly disoriented. She wipes her brow.

ELLIE (*pants*) Is it me or is it getting hot in here? Why am I sweating?
(*pause*) I'm so thirsty!

She starts to feel very dizzy and starts to panic.

ELLIE What's going on? Hello? Is anyone there? I need some help here!

She suddenly hears footsteps.

CLAUDIA (VO) It's okay, Ellie. I got it. Let me just take your temperature for a moment. I'm just going to stick the thermometer in your ear again.

There is a slight pause and another small beep as ELLIE rubs her ear clear.

CLAUDIA (VO, *concerned*) 41 five. That's not good. I'm going to add more fluid to your IV to try and bring it down. We might have to get the doctor in.

ELLIE staggers towards the bottle and opens it to take a drink. A soft yet deep growling sound can be heard.

CLAUDIA (VO) I'll be back in a minute.

Footsteps move away.

ELLIE stops drinking and looks around curiously. The growling continues but barely audible.

ELLIE shakes her head in wonder and looks at the label on the bottle. It too has numbers on it - 41.5. She frowns. The growling becomes louder accompanied by raspy breathing.

ELLIE Who's there?

ELLIE slowly puts the bottle down and turns around. She sees a Beast - unseen - and stares at it in horror. The growling grows louder and more menacing.

ELLIE takes a few terrified steps back then makes a run for it.

In a panic, she stumbles and trips, twisting her ankle. Growling grows louder.

Blackout.

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