

In Search of Lost Memory

An One Act Stage Play

By Zhi Wang

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HANNAH LEE: female, 20 years old, lost most of her memory, intelligent, and perceptive.

JONATHAN: late 40s, male, claims himself divorced and childless, a very skillful neurologist who came to the town only recently, taciturn, and nervous, used to have a drinking problem.

ALEX: male, just graduated from the only local high school, curious, adventurous, and compassionate.

SETTING

a small town.

Scene 1

(Lights on, focusing on a white hospital bed, HANNAH wakes up in white hospitalization suits, she gets up slowly and looks around in complete loss, then stands up in panic as if looking for something, lights should follow her)

(gradually light up the whole stage as Jonathan enters, he looks concerned, even a little afraid)

Hannah

(points at herself)

Hannah?

Jonathan

(avoids eye contact)

Uhh... I don't know because/ I

Hannah

What... I can't... I can't remember anything, (pause) Hannah

(pause) who are you?

Jonathan

I found you unconscious on my way to work here, Evergreen center, we did some scan and uhh... You are expected to have some sort of uhh, (pause) memory loss.

Hannah

Evergreen?

Jonathan

You're familiar with the name?

Hannah

No, no, I don't know (pause), I can't describe, it's all so disconnected. What happened to me? Where am I?

Jonathan

It's complicated, your condition is not stabilized and we better take it slow.

Hannah

Tell me!

Jonathan

(speaking fast)

all right (pause), I have no idea why you were here and can certainly not tell you what happened, because I don't know.

(relieved upon finishing)

Hannah

This can't be, you're lying!

(Jonathan tries to get close to Hannah as if he wants to hug her or comfort her, she clearly rejects it and seems to be startled and frightened)

Hannah

I need to get out of here.

Jonathan

You can't, you need to stay in hospitalization, you are not stabilized!

(Hannah disregards him and runs out)

(black out)

Scene 2

(Hannah runs to a stop in front of a grocery store, looks inside and around, ALEX comes out the grocery store with a drink and some candy)

Alex

(nods to Hannah as he walks past, he notices she's in all white suits)

Hi.

Hannah

You know me?

Alex

(halts, a little confused)

Ah no, I was just being, uhh, polite and delightful.

Hannah

So you don't know me.

Alex

I don't think I do, (beat) I'm Alex by the way, what's your name?

Hannah

Hannah. Last name could be Lee.

Alex

Wow, wow, what's going on here, what do you mean "could be"? Besides, Hannah Lee is a really familiar name, I knew one when I was little but then she moved out of the town.

Hannah

(more excited and composed)

You know a Hannah Lee? Is she like me?

Alex

I don't know, appearance wise, maybe quite alike, but uhh, she's probably 7 or 8 last time I saw her and you are like 20-ish, what kind of question is that, are you making some Youtube prank videos?

Hannah

What? (Pause) No, I woke up in that hospital (points to some direction) and lost my memory.

Alex

(chuckles and looks around)

Where's the camera, like and subscribe y'all.

Hannah

(angrily)

I'm not kidding! Tell me about this Hannah you know!

Alex

Alright, alright, (beat) my mom knows her mom and we used to visit each other quite frequently, but then as I said, they moved away, I haven't seen her for years and certainly can't tell you more cause I don't know more. Did that answer your question?

(long pause, Hannah seems to be thinking while Alex getting awkward, he walks away a few steps and then looks back at Hannah)

Alex

Well, (beat) have a good/ day.

Hannah

Can you show me around the town? I just had a special feeling that I, uhh, I need to see the town.

Alex

I thought that your lived here, (beat) it's getting kind of weird, (pause) but yeah, why not? It's a pretty small town.

(they walk away)

Hannah

What's a Youtube anyway?

(blackout)

(after a long pause, they walk back to
the front of the grocery store)

Alex

It's fun talking to you, cause it's basically me talking all the
time, you're unlike anyone here (chuckles), you're weird.

Anyway, I just graduated from that high school we just walked
past by, I didn't like it though, but come on, whoever has a
real brain can't genuinely like it, but, I do like to learn and
read, I was in a band and very into music, what kind of music do
you like?

Hannah

I have a better one, which one of us has a worse memory here?

Alex

How's that relevant?

Hannah

I can't remember my family, friends, or places that I've been
to, can you imagine being that? Everything is fragmented and
nebulous, all the things that are most close to you, but you

just can't remember, but I do remember other things, less important ones, and yeah I like music, rock music.

Alex

My band is a rock band, we're called Felony, (he does some weird gesture) I mean not that we actually do that, it's just a cool name. (Pause) So... Are you sure that you used to live here? cause I remember her as like, very smart, but you don't even recognize...

Hannah

I told you I lost my memory! You just wouldn't believe me!

Alex

And I've been telling everyone that I've seen aliens! I just, I've never seen anyone who's lost their memory, ok? I'm working to comprehend and believe you. You have déjà vu of this town?

Hannah

It's more than déjà vu, (sighs) Believe it or not, all these feel familiar to me, but I'm not sure. I'm going back to the hospital, I may find something about me there. (Pause) This is about finding out who I am or uhh I was, I don't know. It's important to find out who I was.

(long pause)

Hannah

Can you come with me?

Alex

Oh I'm now seriously in this? (beat) What do you want me to do, captain?

Hannah

I need to get into Jonathan's office, maybe there's some documents there, he's the doctor I was talking about, I need you to fake fainting right in front of him and they'll have to give you emergency care or something and that should buy me time to go into his office.

Alex

You mean sneaking into his office.

Hannah

Same thing. You are the only one I actually know now.

Alex

That's (beat) oddly heartwarming and kinda scary.

(Walk away again, blackout)

Scene 3

(Hannah and Alex enter the hospital, inaudible chatting and hand gesture between them, Hannah sees something and drag Alex to hide on one side of the corner)

(Jonathan walks on the other side.

Hannah said to Alex, "That's him!", we can't hear it. Alex takes

a deep breath and walks out, he suddenly falls to the ground and starts shaking violently)

(Jonathan crouches down quickly to check on Alex, he runs off and calls to get other staff, still no sound, meanwhile Hannah runs off to the other direction, blackout)

(Hannah runs into Jonathan's office, there is a wooden desk, two wooden chairs, one in front of the desk for patients. After some searching, she finds a picture and she freezes staring at it and holding it, we now can hear her breathing heavily)

(Jonathan walks in, we hear his heavy breath, he freezes upon seeing Hannah holding the picture, Hannah stands up slowly, Alex runs to the door, we see his silhouette still in the dark)

Hannah

What's this? Why do you have it? (holding up the picture)

(long pause)

(Jonathan walks over to sit at one of the patient chairs, they form a reversed doctor-patient position, his back to us)

Jonathan

I'm sorry, Hannah, I'm really sorry. (Pause) give me the opportunity to say all these in one go, OK? (now lights only on Jonathan, pause) It was two months ago, you and your mom went to the cinema, at night, I came to pick you up but I got drunk, I insisted that I can drive, it's only a few miles from home. Then it happened, I deviated and the car hit a nearby tree, your mom's side took that hit. (pause) We were all bleeding but she's in terrible condition, I was so afraid, I called an ambulance, but she died four hours later. (Long pause) I was in extreme guilt and depression, you called me a murderer, it's too much than I can take, than you can take, I can't beat it, I can't beat it, (pause) you hated me so much and I really don't how to deal with it. (pause) Then I had another stupid, terrible idea. I want you to have a normal life without dealing with a traumatic past.

(Lights back on both, long pause in silence)

Hannah

(sitting, in calm voice)

"A normal life", (pause) are you planning to let me go like how someone lets go wounded wildlife they find?

Jonathan

I thought it's redemption, I'm really sorry, I was too naive, I...
I...I can't just...

Hannah

I lived here, right?

Jonathan

It's your hometown, before I met your mother, so... I brought you
back here. (pause) Listen, now since it's all clear, can you, give
me another chance, we can move back, I haven't sold the/

Hannah

No, just (beat) go, leave.

Jonathan

It was a mistake, I tried to fix it.

Hannah

You can't fix it, I can't fix you, neither can you fix me.

Jonathan

Do you hate me?

Hannah

(Pause) I don't know you. just leave, leave!

(some action sequence before Jonathan
leaves)

(Hannah sits in stagnation, Alex
enters, she raises her head and looks at him)

Alex

Are you OK?

Hannah

I'm not.

Alex

For sure, for sure. (Grabs a patient chair and sits next to her, both facing us now)

Hannah

Is it weird that I'm not angry with him? I should be furious at what he did but I'm not even sure that he actually did those things, how am I supposed to feel strongly for someone I barely know? Am I cold?

Alex

It makes sense to not feel anything if you don't remember anything. But, (beat) maybe it doesn't really matter who you were, I'm honestly happy for you that you don't remember what happened, because it can be painful if you vividly remember it all. (beat) I suppose, they are not your reality if you don't remember them.

Hannah

I must have some really happy memory as well.

Alex

You almost remember this town, I bet you used to be happy here.

I'm not trying to lecture you like a teacher or something, but,
(pause) nothing from your past can catch up with you now, I
skipped a bunch of classes in high school and didn't get into
college, you don't have that problem because you don't have the
past, you have the present and the future, isn't that extremely
free? It's like, (pause) nirvana.

(Hannah nods, long pause)

Hannah

I'm scared but I'm not sad.

Alex

Do you want to listen to a song?

Hannah

Rock?

Alex

(pulls out his phone)

It's only up to your interpretation. I envy you for listening to
this for the first time cause this rocks.

(They smile to each other, starts play

Stop Crying Your Heart Out by Oasis, or some song by Nirvana)

(black out as the song reaches its
climax)

The End

