

Nurse
Dr X
Side 1

*The hospital. Sally stands guard outside Doctor X's room.
Nurse enters with medication on a tray.*

SALLY. What do you get there?

NURSE. It's for sleeping.

SALLY. Okay, go ahead.

NURSE. Thanks. ~~(Nurse enters the room. Doctor X is handcuffed to the bed. They look at each other for a long time. Neither of them speaks. Then, finally, nurse approaches.)~~ I have medication for you.

It'll allow you to sleep.

DOCTOR X. It's you.

NURSE. Yes.

DOCTOR X. It's really you.

NURSE. Yes.

DOCTOR X. I can't believe it.

NURSE. I didn't know if you'd know me.

DOCTOR X. I couldn't ever forget you.

NURSE. I thought you might.

DOCTOR X. I thought I'd never see you again.

NURSE. Me either.

DOCTOR X. You're all I think about. Day and night. Afternoon. Morning. When I'm dreaming. When I'm awake. When I'm washing the dishes or loading my syringe. When I'm thinking about getting a cat, really I'm thinking about you. I do it all for you.

NURSE. I wish you would stop.

DOCTOR X. If I can't have love, no one can.

NURSE. That seems unfair.

DOCTOR X. Tell me — What is your name?

NURSE. You don't know?

DOCTOR X. No.

NURSE. Well, let's keep it this way.

DOCTOR X. Why is it I can't remember your name, yet all I think of is you?

NURSE. Maybe it's because I hit you on the head.

DOCTOR X. You did?

NURSE. Before I left.

DOCTOR X. Oh.

NURSE. You were sleeping so peacefully. I wrote the note and I put it where I thought you would see it.

DOCTOR X. You didn't sign it.

NURSE. I thought it was a very polite note but I thought maybe you didn't necessarily understand polite based on my past experiences with you. So I hit you over the head with a frying pan just to be sure you got the message. You didn't wake up so I hit you again just to be sure. Then I checked your vitals and everything was okay so I went to work. And I never saw you again. Now it turns out you're Doctor X.

DOCTOR X. And you're, Molly?

NURSE. No.

DOCTOR X. Sylvia?

NURSE. No.

DOCTOR X. Gertrude.

NURSE. No.

DOCTOR X. Betsy?

NURSE. Listen, I'm not going to tell you. In fact I'm thinking of hitting you over the head again just to make sure you don't remember that I work here.

DOCTOR X. Why didn't it work out between us?

NURSE. It just didn't.

DOCTOR X. Your face.

NURSE. Please don't say it.

DOCTOR X. It's like a plate.

NURSE. Oh, God.

DOCTOR X. I may be handcuffed to the bed right now, but that won't always be the case. We can run off together. You could even help me escape.

NURSE. I'm going to transfer to a different hospital.

DOCTOR X. Don't do that.

NURSE. I might move to a different state.

DOCTOR X. We could move together.

NURSE. This is the last time you'll see me.

DOCTOR X. You don't know that. No one ever knows that.

NURSE. I'll make sure this time.

— STOP

LISA. Sure, but you don't have to be the first test subject. What if you never wake up?

PETER. Well, first let me get the heart to work and then we'll talk surgery. Right now I have to get back to work. If I can save one life it'll be worth all the late nights and sacrifice.

LISA. Do you have to go right now?

PETER. Well ...

LISA. (Flirty.) Couldn't you stay a bit longer?

PETER. I guess I could stay a bit longer. (Peter climbs back in bed with her. They get comfortable. They begin to kiss maybe. Just then, the Crimefighter alert strapped to Lisa's wrist starts to glow bright red and beep loudly.)

What's that

LISA. Oh, nothing. (Lisa jumps up to get dressed.)

PETER. What are you doing?

LISA. I have to go.

PETER. Where?

LISA. I can't tell you. I just have to go! (And she goes.)

Stop -

Lisa parrots the street with Nina. Peter goes to his work area and works on the heart.

~~NINA. They saw Doctor X and how they said. Can you feel how~~

~~the air is charged? It's like liquid electricity all over my face ... my body. (To unseen guy off.) What are you looking at buddy? Keep~~

~~walking. (She goes back to feeling the air on her skin.)~~

~~LISA. So I can't ever tell anyone I'm a Crimefighter?~~

~~NINA. Huh? I'm sorry, what?~~

~~LISA. I can't ever tell anyone I'm a Crimefighter?~~

~~NINA. No, you can't. It would compromise us all.~~

~~LISA. It's just —~~

~~NINA. You want to tell him.~~

~~LISA. Yeah.~~

~~NINA. The Commissioner, of course, already knows, but Sally swears the Commissioner only knows her as a Crimefighter. She~~

SALLY. I have something, but no. You know what I'm going to cancel. Yes, lunch Wednesday. Oh, I can't Wednesday. What am I thinking? I'm such an idiot. How about Friday?

SALLY. Not this week, but next

VOICE OF COMMISSIONER. Right.

SALLY. I can't. But yes I don't care. Next Friday. Any time.

VOICE OF COMMISSIONER. Excellent. Friday.

SALLY. Next Friday.

VOICE OF COMMISSIONER. Right. Good! I look forward to it.

SALLY. Me too!

VOICE OF COMMISSIONER. Okay. Bye, then.

SALLY. Bye! (Lazmin and Nina gather around Sally to celebrate what just happened.)

*Peter + Lisa
Sides 3
Start -*

In Peter's apartment. Lisa and Peter are in bed together.

LISA. Tell me about my heart.

PETER. Make a fist. (She does. He holds it in his hand. He kisses it.)

LISA. Oh.

PETER. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Your cure little fist.

LISA. This fist?

PETER. That fist. Or the other fist. Either of your cute little fists.

LISA. What else?

PETER. The heart is not nailed down. It's an organ that can move this way or that. No one knows which direction it will go. The heart is unpredictable.

LISA. That's my heart. That's why I've had so many lovers. Sometimes the heart goes here. Sometimes there. And I come tumbling after ... I've upset you. (During this, Peter has stood to go.)

PETER. (Upset.) No, I just ... have work to do.

LISA. Don't work now.

PETER. I have to. The world needs a dependable artificial heart.

because all I need to know is the work in front of me. Everyone will pay! And the things I can remember don't haunt me. Her face like a plate. Her disappearance. Or her laugh, always startling, but runs right through you. Or who I am. Who am I? I don't have to think about that now. I have lovers to kill. I can concentrate on the damage I will inflict. You will all pay! There is something satisfying about an accomplished task. How can you be ever truly depressed if you accomplish all you set out to do? Some days it's just enough to get out of bed. Or to kill a couple of people. No more. Yes the refrigerator is empty but as long as something was accomplished, well then, it's back to bed. A sleep and maybe in the morning, a remembering. A thought about my mother. A vision of a room. And her, always her, with a face you want to eat off. (He injects them both.) Well that's done.

11

Doctor X exits. The Crimefighters and Lisa arrive at the slain couple. It's a crime scene now. They all put on rubber gloves as they enter. The dummies of the previous scene are replaced by Carson and Ed.

SALLY. Welcome to your first crime scene.
LISA. It's — not like I thought.

SALLY. It never is.
JAZMIN. Doctor X entered through the window as is his custom. He stood here.

NINA. I'm standing where Doctor X stood. I'm breathing the same air. It feels — I don't know. I feel alive.
JAZMIN. The Doctor is efficient. I'll say that. Comes in. Kills him. Goes out.
NINA. It makes me shiver.

SALLY. Any clues?
JAZMIN. Nothing.

LISA. (Standing over the dead couple.) Look at his eyelashes. He reminds me of —

29

actually, the thing about me is, and please don't say anything to the others —
LISA. I won't.
NINA. The thing is, ever since my run in with Doctor X, well, he's all I can think about. I can't stop thinking about the Doctor. Day and night. When I'm brushing my teeth. Even when — you know.

LISA. Oh.
NINA. Doctor X is just so exciting. And wrong. So exciting and wrong. I think the other girls have an inkling. Because I — I let him get away. I paused. If you know me, you know I'm not someone who ever pauses. I run into any situation, burning building, shark-infested pool, without a thought. But I saw Doctor X and I paused, to the point of stopping even. And it was not revulsion I was feeling. Well, it was, but it was mixed with something else, something potent. I'm not sure what. They should bottle it if they could ever find a way to collect it. They'd make millions.

NINA. Exactly. Doctor X enters here as Nina's memory and they look at each other. He just stood there, looking at me, with his doctor's bag and stethoscope. He showed no remorse. Remorseless. Soulless maybe. And it took my breath away. I'm terrified of what might happen the next time I run into him. You have to be ready at all times to kill if necessary. But when I think — I'm not sure I could do it in this case. I dread our next meeting and at the same time I look forward to it more than anything in my entire life. You know what I mean?

LISA. Yes.

Lisa and Nina exit. Doctor X becomes real. Doctor X approaches a sleeping couple who have arrived surreptitiously. He prepares his needles.

10

DOCTOR X. I don't have to think when I'm working. I don't have to feel. I don't get angry about the things I can't remember

28

DPK
Secret

SALLY. You're the only civilian who has ever tussled with Doctor

X and lived to talk about it. Did you know that?

LISA. No. I didn't know.

SALLY. Well it's true.

NINA. You've shown a lot of bravery.

LISA. No.

JAZMIN. He left with a limp. You gave him that at least.

LISA. I guess. It's funny though.

SALLY. What?

NINA. What?

JAZMIN. What?

LISA. He didn't respond to me the way men usually respond. I'm not saying every man loses his balance when he looks at me, but most of them do.

NINA. Huh.

JAZMIN. That's interesting.

LISA. I mean, he's not gay, I don't think.

SALLY. This is a guess. But I know sometimes obsession prevents us from seeing what's really in front of us.

NINA. Why are you looking at me?

SALLY. I'm not.

JAZMIN. She's not.

LISA. Anyway, it was nice to meet you. I got checked out by a doctor, so I'm okay.

SALLY. On behalf of the city, on behalf of humanity. Thank you for fighting.

LISA. I just did what anyone else would have done.

SALLY. Not anyone. Most people don't rush in to danger. Most people slink away. Very few people scale fire escapes in order to engage mastermind criminals in hand to hand combat.

LISA. Okay, I mean I guess I see your point.

SALLY. You're a very impressive woman.

LISA. Thank you.

JAZMIN. Very courageous.

SALLY. Just like I said, isn't she?

NINA. Maybe more so.

JAZMIN. You think?

SALLY. Excuse us for a second. *(The Crimefighters huddle and whisper to one another. On the other side of the stage, Peter is wrestling internally.)*

~~... She will hurt you. She will break you over her back.~~

together. You can see that, can't you?

GIRL. I've hurt you.

PETER. I'll recover.

GIRL. You will!

PETER. Of course. My heart is resilient. *(Exit Girl.)*

LISA. But it's not.

PETER. No, it's not.

LISA. Now I've scared you.

PETER. I'm just not sure I can go through it again. *(Lisa kisses him.)*

Oh? But then there's that.

LISA. Yeah.

PETER. Which makes me forget. Like a ten-second amnesia. Like a goldfish.

LISA. I like you, Peter.

PETER. I like you, too.

LISA. I'm going to the ladies room. I hope you'll tell me about your artificial hearts when I return.

~~PETER. I'd be delighted.~~

Lisa exits to the bathroom. The Crimefighters descend upon her there. Peter remains well lit.

SALLY. Lisa.

LISA. Sally, Jazmin, Nina.

NINA. Yes.

JAZMIN. It is us.

LISA. The Crimefighters! But what are you doing here and how do you know my name?

SALLY. We have connections at hospitals.

JAZMIN. We looked for patients with recent puncture wounds who seemed especially interested in their hearts.

NINA. And we followed you.

LISA. I see.

Start

Crimefighters
Pg 2

Crime Sighers
Side 2
Pg 2

She will hurt you and she will tear you and she will rip you apart
Who are you that you can withstand her? You are just
a man. You are a thinking man with a head and a heart and
a brain. You are not a dog. You are not a pig. You don't need
line through you too far. You have your own. You don't need
complications. You are not one and the same in every thing
to be tested. You are no one. You are no one. You are no one.
and you can't sacrifice these things for a tingling in your toes. For
a pretty face. Such a pretty pretty face. Carries an electromagnetic
field whatever she goes. makes your heart beat faster than it has
in years. She will break you. She will hurt you and tear you and
break you and null you and she will be nothing if you let. She
will ~~(get started. He takes his coat and leaves the restaurant. The
Crime Sighers come on of their hands.)~~
SALLY. My father was a cop. My mother was a cop. I have five
cousins who were cops. They all died at the hands of consumed
criminals. So I started the Crime Sighers to take back the city. I
recruited Nina —
NINA. The Arch Public Enemy killed my brother.
SALLY. And Jazmin.
JAZMIN. I just like to beat up men.
JAZMIN. I just like to beat up men.
SALLY. And now I'm asking you to join us and be a Crime Sigher.
LISA. Oh!
JAZMIN. We would teach you everything you need to know.
NINA. I lead a seminar.
JAZMIN. You would have all the tools you need.
NINA. And a costume.
SALLY. Join us. With you on our side, we'll bring Doctor X to his
knees.
LISA. I don't know.
SALLY. What don't you know? It's your calling.
LISA. Yeah, it's just. I've just sort of started seeing someone.
SALLY. Oh.
NINA. JAZMIN. Oh.
LISA. And I don't know if it would be fair to put him in
danger. To put myself in danger.
SALLY. It's a difficult decision. I mean on one hand, you could help
to protect the world from criminals and those who think life is cheap.
JAZMIN. Or she could follow her heart. *(The Crime Sighers sigh in
unison as they think about what it is to follow one's heart.)*
LISA. I do have a lot of time on my hands.

SALLY. Right.
LISA. I am looking to do something useful with my days.
JAZMIN. Sure.
LISA. I do want the world to be safe for lovers.
SALLY. Of course you do. Spectacular women such as ourselves,
women in danger usually live solitary lives. It's just the way it goes.
There are exceptions of course. Nina used to date a man of the law.
NINA. It was a quiet romance. Until the Jolly Puzler drowned
him in acid.
JAZMIN. Sally used to date the commissioner.
SALLY. That was a long time ago.
NINA. Not that long.
JAZMIN. I have a lot of one-night stands.
SALLY. All of this is to say, you have to figure it out for yourself.
(Lisa considers.)
LISA. I can't. No, I can't. I'm sorry.
SALLY. Well we're sorry to hear that.
JAZMIN. Very sorry.
NINA. Here's our card if you change your mind. *(Lisa takes the
card. They all look at one another.)*
SALLY. Well, I guess we should go then.
JAZMIN. Hope we see you again.
NINA. Yeah, me too.
LISA. Thank you. *(Lisa exits to the restaurant. She goes to the table.
She sees Peter's coat is gone. She realizes he is not returning. She doesn't
understand, but it hurts.)*
— stop —
5
LISA. Don't damage ~~them~~ again!
SALLY. Let them ~~be~~ again!
19

In the hospital, the nurses stand around talking. Peter is vis-
ible in a space behind them, working on an artificial heart
with a screwdriver.

~~LISA. I remember the last one. (Girl goes over to Peter's side.)~~
~~LISA. I remember the last one.~~
~~LISA. I remember the last one.~~

A restaurant. Peter and Lisa having dinner.

LISA. And I saw someone climbing a fire escape. So what else could I do? I followed.

PETER. You were very brave.

LISA. Not at all. Anyone else would have done the same thing.

PETER. Oh, I don't know. (Beat.)

LISA. There is something I should tell you.

PETER. What is it?

LISA. I've broken a lot of hearts. Too many to count really. I don't mean to. It just sort of happens.

LISA. That's why I've been out of the game so long. Too many people got hurt.

PETER. I appreciate you telling me this. I think I knew already in a way. Something about how every man's eye was drawn to you when you walked in the door on my arm. A girl like that can do a lot of damage. And not even on purpose.

LISA. It's not on purpose.

PETER. When they saw you, I felt all their hearts stop for a second. They all skipped a beat. Something about your eyes or your lips or the way you walk. Something about your shoulder or your hair or the color of your skin. Something inside you, just below the surface: a musical, a roller coaster, a sledghehammer.

LISA. I used to work in construction, but too many men fell to their deaths.

PETER. What do you do now?

LISA. They pay me to stay away from all the construction sites in the city.

PETER. They pay you not to work?

LISA. It's not fulfilling.

*Stop
Peter
Lisa
Side 2
Start*

PETER. How many people were hurt?
LISA. I remember the last one.
LISA. I remember the last one.

~~LISA. I remember the last one.~~
~~LISA. I remember the last one.~~

LISA. I'm sorry.

GIRL. Was it something I did?

LISA. Not really.

GIRL. Who I am?

LISA. No. I mean you are who you are and someone will love that more than anything. Perhaps already there have been those people who want nothing but you, but that person isn't me and it's not fair to you, not to mention that I just don't think I'm really into girls. I mean, not enough anyway. Not as much as guys and I'm glad I know that now but maybe you're not as glad to hear it. But it's the truth and I guess sometimes the truth is unfortunate. So I'm sorry.

GIRL. You're burning a hole through the center of me. I'm not sure I'll ever recover.

LISA. That's just how it feels now. It'll heal.

GIRL. You don't know that.

LISA. Everything always heals.

GIRL. Not this. You don't know. No one has ever left you.

LISA. I guess that's true.

GIRL. You're always the one to leave. I should have taken that as a warning. I'm so stupid.

LISA. You're not.

GIRL. I'm a great girl.

LISA. I know. I know. I'm sorry.

PETER. (To Lisa.) Oh, I see.

LISA. I've said too much.

PETER. No, it's just — I mean that's my story but in reverse. It's kind of painful to hear. (Girl goes over to Peter's side.)

GIRL. We can still be friends.

PETER. Sure. Fine.

GIRL. Don't be like that.

PETER. How should I be?

GIRL. I don't know. Okay, be like that.

PETER. Was it something I did?

GIRL. No, nothing like that.

PETER. Just not sufficient for your needs I mean.

GIRL. That's one way to say it I guess. We just don't belong to-

Stop

even when they shut their windows and lock their doors. My artificial heart would of course protect them. We could all sleep with our lovers without fear. We wouldn't fear to love.

LISA. You have a lover you're afraid to love?

PETER. No, no. With this heart? No, not me.

LISA. There's not anyone?

PETER. No, not now. Not anymore. Not anyone.

LISA. But I'm sure, a man like you —

PETER. Please. I don't want to talk about it.

LISA. Sorry. I just thought —

PETER. You were asking about the artificial heart. I'm going to be the first test subject. I can't do the operation myself of course. But if the heart works on me and my body doesn't reject it ...

LISA. But what if something happened to you while you were under the knife?

PETER. It's a risk I'm willing to take. For science.

LISA. Oh.

PETER. What is it?

LISA. My father died under the knife.

PETER. I see.

LISA. During surgery. So it scares me. You're brave.

PETER. No. Not at all.

LISA. You are.

PETER. Well, Okay.

LISA. And a brave man like you shouldn't be afraid of love. I mean, don't you want to?

PETER. Me? Oh, no. Not me.

LISA. Why not?

PETER. My heart can't handle it. *(Lisa looks from a window of a hospital building first can be heard)*

LISA. It handled that Okay. *(Peter looks shocked)*

NURSE. I could fall in love with him, doctor.

JAZMIN. Me too.

NINA. In another life.

PETER. Well, I think we're done here. I have other patients. You, I'm sure have other —

LISA. Come out to dinner with me.

PETER. Well — I — I don't normally — with patients.

LISA. Have dinner with me.

PETER. It's not —

PETER. Well, let's take a listen.

NURSE. He listened to my heart once.

SALT. He did?

NINA. He didn't. *(Lisa opens her shirt. Peter takes the stethoscope and listens to her heart.)*

JAZMIN. Was the stethoscope cold?

NURSE. Only a little.

NINA. Were his hands warm?

NURSE. He brushed my arm with his fingertips. They were like butterflies.

SALT. Did you kiss him?

NURSE. I was too afraid. There was his breath in my ear.

LISA. Is it?

PETER. Your heart is beating fast.

LISA. Is it?

PETER. You need to relax.

NURSE. He listened for a long time but when he was done, he told me I could go.

JAZMIN. And you want —

NURSE. There was nothing else to do.

PETER. *(To Lisa.)* You have a strong heart. There are other tests I can run if you want but from what I've heard your heart is strong and capable of many things.

LISA. Thank you. That's nice to hear.

PETER. Not everyone has such a strong heart. My own heart. It was damaged once and has never quite been able to recover. It's a muscle you know.

LISA. I know.

PETER. And it atrophies if you don't use it. Sometimes I don't use mine as much as I should. Yours, though. You can be as active as you want. A heart like that.

LISA. Thank you, Doctor.

PETER. Call me Peter.

LISA. Thank you, Peter. *(Pause.)* There's something else I wanted to ask you about.

PETER. Oh.

LISA. Sorry.

PETER. No. No. You heard about my experiments. It's hard to keep anything a secret. I tried to keep it out of the papers, but I guess in the current climate — People are afraid to sleep together

Side 1
Peter Lisa

The three Crimfightsers on stage. They are dressed right out of a comic book with masks over their eyes. They are fierce. Flashbulbs may go off. Jazmin and Nina may pose for the cameras in various positions. Sally does not.

SALLY. Thank you all for coming. I'm sure you know who we are. NINA. You've seen us on the news. JAZMIN. Perhaps you have a poster on your wall. SALLY. Or a story you tell over and over about the time you brushed Nina's sleeve. NINA. Or when Sally saved your cousin from a burning building. SALLY. Or when your brother had a date with Jazmin. JAZMIN. He just wasn't my type. NINA. But that's not why you're here. Just to gape at us. JAZMIN. Maybe they're here a little because of that. SALLY. You want to hear if anything is being done. NINA. About the murders. JAZMIN. The senseless murders that happen almost every night. SALLY. Let me assure you we are working on it. JAZMIN. We are close to solving it. NINA. We know who is doing it. SALLY. We're just waiting to catch the Doctor. NINA. We're near to finding Doctor X's lair. JAZMIN. He's been a hard nut to crack. SALLY. We've almost rid the city of crime. NINA. Because of us, Clownface, the Electric Eel and the Red Witch are behind bars. SALLY. And don't forget Fire Storm, Don Oregon, the Gambler, the Head, the Economist, Johnny Steel and Little Orphan Drillnose — JAZMIN. All in jail. And Muddlehead, the Monkey Twins, the Leather Fist, Volcano Moe, the Annihilator, the Incubator, Taramula Sue, Lulu the Circus Freak and Millionaire Ted — NINA. All presumed dead. Because of our hard work and dedication.

Crimfightsers Side 1

START

SALLY. But Doctor X eludes us still. (A static sound like from a static-walkie-talkie.) COMMISSIONER. Crimfightsers! SALLY, JAZMIN, NINA. Commissioner. (Light up on the Commissioner but perhaps we see only part of the commissioner or his back is to us or he wears a hat low to hide his face. The Commissioner is a mystery.) COMMISSIONER. It happened again last night. SALLY, JAZMIN, NINA. No! COMMISSIONER. On Forty-Third Street. SALLY. Wait it the same as the others? COMMISSIONER. The same. SALLY. Shoddy! JAZMIN. Snap! NINA. Darn! Sally, Nina and Jazmin walk into the crime scene. There is yellow crime-scene tape surrounding a bed. A man and a woman, dead, lie entwined in each other's arms. Note: can be dummies in the bed.) JAZMIN. Just like the others. NINA. Two lovers, dead, their hearts stopped by a poison that attacks the heart. SALLY. They were asleep when they died. JAZMIN. Entwined in each other's arms. The sleep of lovers. NINA. Now the death of lovers. SALLY. It was Doctor X. JAZMIN. No doubt. (The lights change and the three step out of the bedroom area. The man and woman are alive now, asleep. Perhaps light snoring.) SALLY. Doctor X came in through the window, up from the fire escape. (Enter Doctor X, dressed the same as at the top of the play, carrying a doctor's bag.) DOCTOR X. Look at them, lying there. I can't look at them. Oh, look at them. I can't look at them. Lying there, in each other's arms. (Shouting) No one will ever hold me like that! (The man stirs but does not wake.) Shh! There there now. Sleep sleep. (The man begins to snore again. Taking two hypodermics from the doctor's bag.) You're going to sleep for a long long time. (Doctor X injects them both. Their hearts stop.) NINA. There was someone else there. JAZMIN. Last night? (Lisa enters the same way Doctor X did.) LISA. Stop that You! Stop! (Doctor X turns. Lisa attacks him.)

SALLY. But Doctor X eludes us still. (A static sound like from a static-walkie-talkie.)

Peter in his workshop in the hospital, takes an artificial heart out of a box. It beats.

PETER. Here you are, my spare heart. Mother said, always have a spare. You never know, she said. Do everything twice. Just in case. Always have an extra pencil. Always bring an extra sandwich. And give it away if you can. To the kid with the torn jacket who smells like pee. And if they say "thank you," say "you're welcome" or "think nothing of it" or "no thanks is necessary." Tell them, "I can see you're a human being who needs something. We all need something sometimes and if I can be the one to help, well that is good, but next time it could be you that helps and that will be good too." Always do what you can to help. And if you think someone is laughing at you, look away. Look away. You'll save them all some day, she said. And now I will. I look to you, artificial heart. I look to you and I hope you know how to beat endlessly like I taught you. Because I'm going to make a million of you, and then another million, and another. Anyone who wants you, can have you. Anyone who feels weak will be made strong by your comforting weight and your life-saving pumping. You will be the circulatory savior of this world. But right now, I'm the one in need of your help. I'm the weak one, the sick, the damaged, the other. I'm the kid with the torn jacket, except the jacket is a heart. Tomorrow, they will crack my chest open and put you inside, and then I will never need to be afraid again.

*Peter
Side 1*

Nina stands in the room of Doctor X. She stares at him. He does not seem to notice.

DOCTOR X. Right there. Could almost touch her. Face like a plate.
NINA. Um...
DOCTOR X. She'll regret it. I'll make her regret it!
NINA. Doctor X?
DOCTOR X. What? What do you want? It's not enough to handcuff me to the bed. You've come to jeer at me.
NINA. No, I'm not. I came — I don't know why I came.
DOCTOR X. Well, I don't know why you came.
NINA. I'm sorry. I'll go. *(Nina does not move.)*
DOCTOR X. Go, then.
NINA. I'm sorry. *(Nina starts to leave.)*
DOCTOR X. Wait!
NINA. What?
DOCTOR X. Why were you looking at me like that?
NINA. Like what?
DOCTOR X. There. You're doing it again.
NINA. No, I'm not.
DOCTOR X. I don't think anyone has ever looked at me like that before. It's so familiar yet — no, I can't place it ... no, wait. I know! I've had this expression myself. I've seen it on my face when I've accidentally caught my reflection in silverware or drugstore windows. I know this expression. Oh, I know it.
NINA. You do? Well, I guess I — It's embarrassing. Please, look away.
DOCTOR X. I can't.
NINA. Please. Try to understand. I don't mean to look like this but when I see you, I guess I lose control over any thought of control of my face or body or demeanor. Just being here with you ...
NINA. You do?

D.P.X.
Nora
Sidel

DOCTOR X. You'd be surprised how understanding I can be.
NINA. I wish that were true.
DOCTOR X. (Scary aggressive.) I am understanding!
NINA. Oh. You're so forceful.
DOCTOR X. Yeah?
NINA. Wow.
DOCTOR X. Huh. Okay. Well then. Okay.
NINA. Yes.
DOCTOR X. Okay.
NINA. It's too bad you're evil.
DOCTOR X. I'm not evil.
NINA. Well. Anyway.
DOCTOR X. Sometimes things don't turn out the way we think they will. You know?
NINA. Yeah.
DOCTOR X. Perhaps you grew up with an idea of what kind of a man you should date and this came from your mom and the TV and magazines and other little girls. But sometimes what you have told yourself you want and what you actually want are not the same things. Sometimes your body and your mind don't agree and you should look at that. And not bandy about words like good and evil which everyone knows don't mean anything anyway when it comes down to it.
NINA. I guess.
DOCTOR X. Think about it.
NINA. I'm thinking.
DOCTOR X. I'm thinking about your body pressed against mine.
NINA. You are?
DOCTOR X. I'm thinking about taking off all your clothes piece by piece.
NINA. Stop!
DOCTOR X. Maybe I'd cut them off you.
NINA. You would?
DOCTOR X. Then I would tear into you, with my hands and my teeth. I would leave marks.
NINA. You would?
DOCTOR X. But that's just what I'm thinking of.
NINA. Oh.
DOCTOR X. I'm harmless.
NINA. You are?

DOCTOR X. It's just that my heart is so big. I just try to help everyone.
NINA. You do?
DOCTOR X. It may not seem like help to you, but we just have different perspectives.
NINA. I know.
DOCTOR X. I'd like to help you right now.
NINA. You would?
DOCTOR X. You need attention.
NINA. I know.
DOCTOR X. I'd like to hold you.
NINA. You — what?
DOCTOR X. I want to hold you. Can I hold you?
NINA. Yes! (Nina goes to him. He tries to hold her.)
DOCTOR X. Darnit. These darn handcuffs. You don't have the key, do you?
NINA. Oh, no. I shouldn't.
DOCTOR X. I just want to hold you. That's all.
NINA. That's all!
DOCTOR X. Just for a second.
NINA. Well, I guess if it's only for a second. (She undoes one of his handcuffs.)
DOCTOR X. The other one too.
NINA. Okay, don't try anything.
DOCTOR X. I wouldn't dream of it. (The other is undone and he wraps his arms around her. He kisses her deeply. While doing this, he takes the keys from her hand and tosses them across the room. Then he handcuffs her arms to the bed, removes her wristband.)
NINA. What's that?
DOCTOR X. What? (Doctor X kisses her again, long and hard. Then he climbs out of bed.)
NINA. Hey, wait.
DOCTOR X. I won't forget you. Probably.
NINA. Where are you going?
DOCTOR X. I have unfinished business.
NINA. But what about us?
DOCTOR X. Sorry. (Doctor X leaves. Nina sobs.)

End of Play

DOCTOR X. I can feel my insides crawling around like a bowlful of worms. My foreign heart beating in perfectly timed beats. I might be in here, incarcerated, in misery, but you can't keep me long. I have a mission. I have a — I can't remember. All I can see is your face. It's nothing but suffering living like this. Everyone should suffer. No one should be happy. One of these days. I'll get you! I'll get you all! *(Peter and Lisa kiss.)*

Lights up on Doctor X in jail. Peter and Lisa remain on stage.

LISA. It doesn't mean it can't be broken.
PETER. You're not going to break it now, are you?
LISA. I'll try not to. Life is unpredictable. There are forces set against our happiness. Things could happen at any time. One of us could die. When I'm out fighting crime. When you cross the street. You could wake up one day and not love me.
PETER. No!
LISA. We'll have to be brave in the face of the unknown. *(Lisa tries to be brave.)* I love you.
PETER. You do?
LISA. That's what my heart is saying.
PETER. Mine, too. *(They kiss.)*

Dr. X
Sided