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Cast of Characters

NARCISSUS, Beautiful. Both a boy and a man. A boy who one could have fallen in love with, even in his cradle. Everyone falls for him, but his young body houses a pride so unyielding that no boy or girl dare touch him. Lonely. Think Kurt Cobain. Think Hamlet. A boy with the depth of Hamlet trapped in the body of a Calvin Klein underwear model. Wants more than this world can provide.

ECHO, A teenage girl. A misfit. An outcast. In the beginning, a copycat. But she transforms. Desperately wants to speak but can't initiate a conversation or express desire unless someone else expresses it first. Cursed to repeat only what others say. Desperately in love with Narcissus. Frustrated.

CALLIOPE, An outsider for the way she dresses. Doesn't fit in. Sort of a hippie who shops at thrift stores. Doesn't buy into this high fashion world or want to be a part of it. A vegetarian. a P.E.T.A supporter. Like Echo, an outsider.

REFLECTION, The reflection of Narcissus. Doesn't have to look like him or move like him. Male or female.

FASHIONISTAS, High society inhabitants of the Fashion world. They include:

DONATELLA, Narcissus's Mother. The Empress of fashion. Elegant and over the top.

VALENTINO, Narcissus's Father. A Fashion Designer. The Emperor of Fashion.

RAFAEL, Donatella's personal assistant. Flamboyant. Often flustered. In love with Narcissus.

NATALIE, A supermodel. In love with Narcissus.

THE PRESS

THE BOUNCER

VOICES ON HEADSET, Frank, Rich, Morty, Jan the Lighting Designer, Gail the Producer, Freddy the Stage Manager.

Setting

The Ritz Hotel in Paris. In the banquet room. In the women's bathroom. By the pool. On the runway.

Production Notes

THE DESIGN/SET: A fashion show runway. (Shaped like a U would be effective—with the Audience facing each other on either side of the runway). The people in the audience are attendees of the fashion show.

THE STYLE: There are a lot of moments with physical action and music written in, and I imagine these to be fashion show moments. The whole play is a fashion event. There are moments when we get a real “fashion show” image of a person walking in or doing something physical to music that really encompasses a mood or a moment.

CLOTHES: Perhaps there are fabulous clothes. Or perhaps, everything is white and shiny and we let the audience imagine elaborate clothes.

As Narcissus is a reflection of the world he lives in, a small portion of his dialogue is made up of quotes from Hamlet, Chekhov's character Ivanov, Nietzsche, and Kurt Cobain.

Acknowledgments

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FASHIONISTAS

A NARCISSISTIC LOVE STORY

by Janet Allard

Scene 1

Disaster. Last season: The Fall of the House of Narcissus.

(The start of a fashion show. The house-lights dim as the audience is ushered to their seats. Above the runway hangs a sign that says “Narcissus”—the name of a clothing line. A plastic cover is removed from the runway, revealing a shiny (mirror-like) floor. In the dark, music. A clear beat. A spotlight hits the opening of the runway, a supermodel enters (NATALIE). She wears a long fur coat. The lights on the runway come up. We think this is going to be the show of the season. Then everything goes wrong. NATALIE takes three steps and trips on her shoes. The big sign that says “NARCISSUS” falls onto the runway. RAFAEL runs on, flustered, picks up the sign and tries to stick it to the back wall or hold it up like a billboard. NATALIE gets up and continues her awkward walk down the runway—CALLIOPE rushes in from the audience and throws herself onto the runway in front of NATALIE.)

CALLIOPE. Murderer!

(The music stops abruptly. CALLIOPE douses NATALIE and her fur coat with a bucket of blood.)

NATALIE. It’s Blood! Blood!

CALLIOPE. Baby killer!

NATALIE. Bad dresser!

DONATELLA. Security! *(She runs onstage.)*

CALLIOPE. Slaughterer!

NATALIE. Hippie Trash!

CALLIOPE. That coat used to live and breathe and love! That coat had a mother!

DONATELLA. Someone get her out of here!

(VALENTINO enters.)

VALENTINO. Ladies and Gentlemen, not to worry, not to worry.

CALLIOPE. *(Chants:)* Fur is murder!

Fashion slaughter!

Bambi killer!

Boycott fur!

DONATELLA. Remove her!

(CALLIOPE creates a huge commotion as THE BOUNCER enters and carries her out still yelling.)

CALLIOPE. Murderer!

Boycott Fur!

Murderer!

VALENTINO. Ladies and Gentlemen, our deepest apologies. Your patience please.

CALLIOPE. I'll be back!

(The lights plunge us into darkness. A spotlight comes up on DONATELLA and VALENTINO, NARCISSUS's mother and father. They speak to the audience.)

VALENTINO. It was unfortunate. Let's put it that way.

DONATELLA. That was last year. Last season.

VALENTINO. Everything that could go wrong, went wrong.

DONATELLA. It was a total disaster.

VALENTINO. It wasn't exactly what we expected.

DONATELLA. To put it mildly. We were ruined. As you all know.

VALENTINO. It wasn't just a bad show.

DONATELLA. When the first model tripped, I knew it was all downhill from there.

VALENTINO. It wasn't just the "P.E.T.A" Incident.

DONATELLA. You take your chances when you use fur. Everyone thinks Foxes are so cute and cuddly, They're rodents, they'd kill you if they had the chance. They'd gnaw your face off with their adorable little teeth and wear you as a coat. Believe you me.

VALENTINO. We were trying to capture. "Antarctica. The last frontier. Eskimo."

DONATELLA. It was the press really. They were the problem.

VALENTINO. The reviews.

DONATELLA. They killed us.

VALENTINO. But we're making a comeback. Rising from the ashes. Tonight. Spring.

DONATELLA. Spring. A whole new line. The season of re-newel. Our spring line will change the way you think about clothes.

VALENTINO. And of course we've named our new line after our son, Narcissus.

(The lights rise on NARCISSUS. He holds an electric guitar. He plays a short riff.)

DONATELLA. Narcissus! Darling. Just in time. Do you have anything you'd like to add?

NARCISSUS. Words, words, words.

VALENTINO. He's tired. I'm sure he doesn't.

NARCISSUS. Wait.

VALENTINO. We're out of time son. Next time.

NARCISSUS. I have something to say.

DONATELLA. Of course he does. Go ahead.

NARCISSUS. Wanting to be someone else is a waste of the person you are. We're so trendy. We can't even escape ourselves.

VALENTINO. Thank you Narcissus. No further comment at this time.

NARCISSUS. I hate celebrities. I really—

VALENTINO. Thanks enough! Cut. Do me a favor and leave the last part out.

(Lights out on VALENTINO and NARCISSUS. DONATELLA steps forward into a spotlight. She takes her place at the microphone and surveys the audience.)

Scene 2
Donatella Welcomes You.

(Donatella addresses the audience.)

DONATELLA. I am absolutely fabulously thrilled. Thrilled to see all of fabulous YOU here this fabulous evening. Oh my goodness is that Sir Elton John? Darling, you look fabulous, is that a Versace? What was I saying? Fabulous. We are fabulous. Thank you for coming, and dressing so fabulously, please take your fabulous seats, fabulous, you look fabulous, I know you're all looking fabulously forward to my husbands fabulous new line fashion line, named after our favorite and only fabulous son, Narcissus. Tonight, Narcissus himself will walk this very runway. The fabulous fashion show of the fabulous season to begin in just 30 short fabulous minutes!

Until then, please, enjoy the ambiance of the Lido ballroom.

THE PRESS. Donatella! Where is he?

Donatella! Is Narcissus here yet?

(VALENTINO steps in.)

VALENTINO. I'm sure he'll be along shortly, he's thrilled to be a part of this fabulous evening.

THE PRESS. Is it true the fashion house of Narcissus is on the verge of bankruptcy?

How do you expect to make a comeback after last years dreadful fashion flop?

DONATELLA. I don't think we need to—

VALENTINO. Fabulously.

THE PRESS. Did you slaughter a poor little helpless cute animal for that fur coat?

How can you be sure there won't be another animal rights incident?

VALENTINO. Please, have more champagne, mingle with the models, enjoy yourselves!

DONATELLA. Feel fabulous, look fabulous because...

DONATELLA and VALENTINO. You are fabulous.

(Lights down on them.)

Scene 3

Echo Hearts Narcissus.

(Music. Something with longing. ECHO enters. This is the women's bathroom of a fancy hotel. She takes out a can of spray-paint and spray paints "NARCISSUS" on the wall. She shakes the can again and sprays, framing his name with a heart. This should be like a moment in a fashion show—a grand moment, larger than life. Calliope runs into the bathroom and strait into a toilet stall. She locks the door.)

CALLIOPE. Hey.

ECHO. Hey?

CALLIOPE. *(From the toilet.)* If anyone asks, no one is in here! If anyone asks you, you're in here alone, you didn't see anyone. No one. Got it? No one.

ECHO. No one.

(THE BOUNCER busts in through the door.)

THE BOUNCER. You seen a crazy hippy chick?

ECHO. Crazy hippy chick?

THE BOUNCER. Did she come in here, yes or no?

ECHO. No.

(THE BOUNCER exits.)

CALLIOPE. Thanks, wouldn't be an elite party if they didn't try so hard to keep people like me out. (*CALLIOPE comes out of the bathroom stall where she's been hiding.*) Fucking elitists. I like your sweater.

ECHO. *Your sweater.*

CALLIOPE. Yeah, we're wearing the same sweater so what? Let me guess, you got it at Target, right?

ECHO. Target. Right.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, so I know who you are, I know your name, but you don't know mine, right?

ECHO. Right.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, I'm Calliope, you know like the Greek myth, yeah my parents were like hippies, and I know your name too, everyone does, you're Echo right so?

ECHO. Right. So?

CALLIOPE. So, I've seen you before, you're the freak.

ECHO. *You're the Freak.*

CALLIOPE. Yeah, I'll take that as a compliment, I'd hate to be normal if what's going on out there is considered "normal," and if I may ask, what're you doing in the bathroom? You like the ambiance or, let me guess, you're not on the "guest list" either are you?

ECHO. Are you?

CALLIOPE. How'd you sneak in?

ECHO. How'd *you* sneak in?

CALLIOPE. Let me guess, it's *your* bathroom, you're like "I live in here."

ECHO. I live in here.

CALLIOPE. No way, you live here?

ECHO. Here.

CALLIOPE. For real? Seriously?

ECHO. Seriously.

CALLIOPE. What's that? Graffiti? Wow, I didn't know you were so cool.

ECHO. Cool?

CALLIOPE. Narcissus?

ECHO. Narcissus.

CALLIOPE. So you're in love with him, and you're hiding in the bathroom. Excellent. Does he know?

ECHO. No.

CALLIOPE. That sucks. Silence. Worse than rejection.

ECHO. Rejection.

(Pause. CALLIOPE looks at ECHO.)

CALLIOPE. So, people say there's something wrong with you but I don't believe them.

ECHO. Believe them.

CALLIOPE. Can I ask you a question? Don't take this the wrong way, I just need to break through this communication barrier and go ahead and ask—

ECHO. Ask.

CALLIOPE. Are you retarded?

ECHO. Are *you* retarded?

CALLIOPE. Okay it was a stupid question.

ECHO. Stupid question.

CALLIOPE. People say you're like retarded but I think you're just not retarded, like you're like a misfit, like me like outside the lines you know but you're not, are you retarded? Look, I don't fit in either, don't wear the right clothes or whatever, people like us I mean we're either snobby or retarded or totally messed up or just—

ECHO. Just?

CALLIOPE. I mean what's your deal, what's with you?

ECHO. What's with *you*?

CALLIOPE. I mean, I'm not making fun of you here or like ridiculing you or anything, I'm really asking. Are you dumb? I mean like deaf and dumb?

ECHO. Dumb? (*Writes:*) I'm not dumb, lame-ass. I'm CURSED.

CALLIOPE. Cursed? Wow, that's deep, that sucks. Really sucks.

ECHO. Really sucks.

CALLIOPE. Cursed to what?

ECHO. To what?!

CALLIOPE. Yeah, to what?

ECHO. To what!

(She spray paints:)

CALLIOPE. To repeat.

ECHO. Repeat.

CALLIOPE. Repeat. Cursed to repeat. Yeah man, aren't we all. You're not alone.

ECHO. Alone.

(ECHO storms off. CALLIOPE yells after her:)

CALLIOPE. Wait— (*CALLIOPE looks after her. Then, looks at the spray painted name.*) Narcissus. What's the big deal about Narcissus?

(Lights go out on the Ladies Room and up on the Pre-party.)

Scene 4 **The Pre-party Party.**

(RAFAEL, NATALIE, DONATELLA and VALENTINO dance on pedestals at the pre-party party. Music plays—another fashion moment. NARCISSUS enters.)

NATALIE. Narcissus, Darling—

DONATELLA. Finally!

VALENTINO. Glad you could make it. You're late.

RAFAEL. Champagne? Perrier? Evian?

NATALIE. So, are we dancing?

DONATELLA. You look stunning.

NATALIE. Let me feel that coat.

RAFAEL. Cucumber sandwich? Caviar?

DONATELLA. Over here, my love, I'm just dying to introduce you to someone—

RAFAEL. Narcissus!

NATALIE. Narcissus!

NARCISSUS. No thanks.

RAFAEL. Looking for someone?

NATALIE. Someone in particular?

(NARCISSUS goes to a centerpiece and cuts a rose from the flower arrangement.)

RAFAEL. Who's that for?

(NARCISSUS looks around.)

NATALIE. Waiting for someone?

(NARCISSUS seems preoccupied. Or bored.)

NARCISSUS. I'm gonna go outside to have a cigarette.

(NARCISSUS turns his back to exit the runway. The Fashionistas turn to the audience. Maybe music underscores this as NARCISSUS walks out. A fashion moment.)

NATALIE. Narcissus. Just saying his name is like drinking from a clear clean spring.

RAFAEL. Narcissus. It's like having flower petals on the tip of your tongue.

DONATELLA. It's impossible to tell you how great he is.

RAFAEL. Narcissus is...Narcissus just IS. The way nature just is. Without trying.

VALENTINO. To understand him,

NATALIE. ...or why we're in love

VALENTINO. would be like trying to understand the weather. impossible.

DONATELLA. You have Michelangelo, Vermir, Matisse, Picasso, Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Sir Elton John—and then you have Narcissus.

NATALIE. He's the crowned prince of beauty.

RAFAEL. He IS the life I wish I was living.

VALENTINO. People want to wear the clothes he wears, drive the car he drives, love the way he loves, live the way he lives, they look at him and they want to be him.

DONATELLA. Through him, you can escape your ordinary boring world and enter a special world and feel like a god.

NATALIE. Even if you don't know who he is, you have to pretend you know who he is.

RAFAEL. He's the one person I'm not who I wish that I was.

VALENTINO. He's everything bright and shining and better than life.

DONATELLA. The perfect eyes.
The perfect nose

RAFAEL. The perfect hair.

NATALIE. The perfect pecks.
The perfect abs.

RAFAEL. The perfect back.

NATALIE. The perfect cheeks.

RAFAEL. The perfect lips.

DONATELLA. The perfect smile.

VALENTINO. He's our celebrity. Our royalty. Our Sun King.

(Lights fade on the FASHIONISTAS. Leaving NARCISSUS alone on the runway.)

**Scene 5
Freaked.**

(ECHO enters. ECHO and NARCISSUS pass each other on the runway. NARCISSUS having a cigarette. ECHO stands near him.)

NARCISSUS. Hey.

ECHO. Hey.

NARCISSUS. What's up?

ECHO. Up?

NARCISSUS. Yeah, you look kind of freaked.

ECHO. Freaked?

(Silence. She looks at him wanting to say more but can't. She exits fast. DONATELLA enters.)

**Scene 6
Go to Hair and Make-up.**

DONATELLA. 20 minutes till the big event people! You're looking fabulous!

(NARCISSUS tries to sneak away. She sees him.)

DONATELLA. Narcissus! Thank god you're here. I thought you'd run off again.

RAFAEL. Donatella!

(RAFAEL runs in a huff.)

RAFAEL. THE SHOES ARE MISSING! Hi Narcissus.

DONATELLA. How could the shoes be missing?

RAFAEL. We can't possibly start the show without shoes! Hi Narcissus.

DONATELLA. Exactly. So find them!

*(RAFAEL exits, flustered. DONATELLA confronts NARCIS-
SUS.)*

DONATELLA. Narcissus, darling, you keep disappearing. Where've you been?

NARCISSUS. Wherever you go, there you are.

DONATELLA. Could at least TRY to be sociable? For me and your father, if not for yourself?

NARCISSUS. No.

DONATELLA. Let me look at you. You look horrible.

NARCISSUS. I'm not your dog, I'm not some poodle you can dress up and prance around and show off.

DONATELLA. Too bad, I love poodles, they're adorable.

NARCISSUS. Why do you do this? All of this? What's the point. Where's the MEANING.

DONATELLA. In what?

NARCISSUS. In life. Do you ever even ask yourself?

DONATELLA. Frankly. No.

NARCISSUS. Why not?

DONATELLA. I don't have the time.

NARCISSUS. Mother. Feel my heart beating.

DONATELLA. Later.

NARCISSUS. No. Now. Feel it. Do I even have one? Is it there?

DONATELLA. Please darling, go to hair and make-up.

NARCISSUS. What a piece of work is man, how like an angel, how like a god, and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

DONATELLA. What?

NARCISSUS. There are no beautiful surfaces without a terrible depth.

DONATELLA. Oh, get over it.

NARCISSUS. If you gaze long enough into the abyss, the abyss also gazes into you.

DONATELLA. Please! Narcissus—

NARCISSUS. It's all an illusion. Clothing, image, make-up. Who cares. Money, fashion, luxury cars, ballrooms—

DONATELLA. What more do you want?

NARCISSUS. Love would be nice. *(She laughs.)* Is that funny? Is that ridiculous?

DONATELLA. He wants love. Adorable.
Darling, Let me tell you, friend to friend—

NARCISSUS. You're my mother.

DONATELLA. The whole world loves you. What more do you want?

NARCISSUS. A person. One person. Who knows me.

DONATELLA. Who *doesn't* know you?

NARCISSUS. Not my picture in a magazine. Not my reflection. Not my face. Not my clothes. Me.—

DONATELLA. It's called fame darling. People kill for it.

NARCISSUS. You don't understand me at all, do you.

DONATELLA. Narcissus. Look at things simply. Like everyone else does. In this world, things are simple. Runways shiny, money green, high-heels high, boots black, champagne dry, chocolate sweet. Simple.

NARCISSUS. I don't know who I am, why I'm alive, what I want. I'm bored, dissatisfied, revolted by life.

DONATELLA. Go to hair and Make-up! You are impossible!

NARCISSUS. Mother—

DONATELLA. Don't call me that, darling, it makes me sound old.

NARCISSUS. Donatella. I'm not going to be in your stupid show.

DONATELLA. Tell your father.

NARCISSUS. You tell him.

(RAFAEL enters.)

RAFAEL. SHOES! I found them!

DONATELLA. Rafael! Make my son look presentable. I will not have him going out on the runway looking so blah. So everyday. Make him look more like a heroine addict. People love that.

RAFAEL. Come Narcissus.

NARCISSUS. I'm going out for a cigarette.

DONATELLA. You don't smoke.

NARCISSUS. I do.

DONATELLA. Not anymore. It's out of vogue. Take up something fashionable. Like drugs.

NARCISSUS. I don't need drugs to make my life tragic.

(NARCISSUS starts to walk off the other way.)

RAFAEL. Narcissus—

DONATELLA. You have 15 minutes to pull yourself together! You're going to make or break this show! When you step on that runway people are going to melt.

(NATALIE enters with an enormous dress.)

NATALIE. Donatella, This dress is enormous! I can't wear it. Tell her Narcissus.

DONATELLA. Rafael, make him look like a God! How could that dress be enormous, Natalie?

(DONATELLA exits quickly to deal with the dress. NATALIE follows.)

NATALIE. Narcissus. *(He stops and looks at her.)* Do you love me or not?

(NARCISSUS looks at RAFAEL then exits quickly the other way.)

RAFAEL. Narcissus—

(RAFAEL runs after NARCISSUS.)

NATALIE. He's impossible. Impossible.

(NATALIE exits. Lights out on the runway and up on the ladies room.)

Scene 7 Tell Him.

(CALLIOPE and ECHO in the ladies room.

ECHO picks at her electric guitar.

CALLIOPE pours red paint (that looks like blood) into water balloons.)

CALLIOPE. Okay this time, it's gonna work. We're gonna take out the whole line of models in the finale. You're gonna help me right?

ECHO. *(Not listening.)* Right.

CALLIOPE. Water-balloons full of blood. I'm a genius.

ECHO. Genius.

CALLIOPE. You know, the thing is—Donatella wouldn't club a baby seal, she wouldn't have the stomach for it. I bet she doesn't even cook her own meat for dinner, I bet she thinks veal is a vegetable.

But, she can wear animal's skin to get a compliment. Hypocrite.

She doesn't see the blood she's shedding.

All the blood. Who gave us the right to kill for fashion? People are so disgusting. What if someone took your baby and skinned it and made it into a coat, how would you feel, we don't even think like that, we're so absorbed with ourselves and how we look, so in love with ourselves we'll kill a furry little cute animal just to get a compliment. It's social survival, survival of the fittest, and if you want

to take down a fashionista you've got to hit 'em where it hurts. Public humiliation. That's the name of the game.

There is only one way to stop them.

To stop the vanity! Put an end to Narcissus!—the clothing line I mean.

Are you even listening?

ECHO. Listening.

CALLIOPE. Bullshit, You're not, you're probably thinking why is she such a raving lunatic, let the animals die, I don't care.

ECHO. I don't care.

CALLIOPE. But you do. Deep down. If you paid attention, hello, echo, are you going to help me with this or not?

ECHO. Not.

CALLIOPE. Chicken. Where are you going?

ECHO. Going.

CALLIOPE. To chase Narcissus around, right?

ECHO. Right.

CALLIOPE. To stand around waiting for him to notice you, right?

ECHO. Right.

CALLIOPE. If you're like, so hung up on him, you should tell him.

ECHO. Tell him?

CALLIOPE. What? Is that so crazy, if he's in love with you too, don't you want to know?

ECHO. No.

(Pause.)

CALLIOPE. Do you ever start anything, Echo? You know, Initiate?

ECHO. Initiate?

CALLIOPE. Yeah, you know, DO something? Take action? You know?

ECHO. No.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, that's what I thought, that's your problem, all you do is respond. You react. You let everyone else DO. And you copy them. Nobody respects you and you never get what you want. Sorry if that's harsh but I'm right aren't I. I'm trying to help you out here, as a friend.

ECHO. A friend.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, I'm telling you the truth. You hide out, you lurk around in abandoned places, in empty hallways and bathrooms, you never say what's on your mind, really. You hide. Is that any way to live? You'll never get noticed, that way you know, you've got to take action.

ECHO. Action.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, you don't have a chance in hell with Narcissus. I'm telling you the truth. But don't you want to find that out? Instead of going around all silent and hung up on him, hoping for something that's never going to happen.

ECHO. Never going to happen?

CALLIOPE. Or maybe he's in love with you and you're sitting in this bathroom wasting your life. You should confront him.

ECHO. Confront him?

CALLIOPE. Open up to him. Meet him in some dark hallway. Grab him.

ECHO. Grab him?

CALLIOPE. Grab him and Kiss him.

ECHO. Kiss him.

CALLIOPE. Yeah, surprise him, why not? Tell him.

ECHO. Why not tell him.

CALLIOPE. Exactly. What's the worst that could happen? If he rejects you so what?

ECHO. So what.

CALLIOPE. Then you can move on. That's life that's how we live.

ECHO. We live.

CALLIOPE. That's right, Echo, we live, we love that's what we do. And if he doesn't love you, maybe there's someone else who will. Someone better. Echo?

(But she's gone.)

Scene 8
Echo. And the curse.

(Down by the Pool.

NARCISSUS *enters smoking.*

ECHO *follows him. She hides behind something—like a sculpture.*

NARCISSUS *paces in front of the pool.)*

NARCISSUS. Superfluous people. Superfluous words.

Having to listen to stupid questions.

Do you love me?

What kind of question is that?

It makes me feel sick.

It exhausts me.

I'm not much fun to be around.

I'm irritable, bad tempered, unpleasant and petty,

I don't even recognize myself.

I've had a headache for days, months, years.

I can't sleep.

And there's absolutely nowhere I can go.

Nowhere.

ECHO'S VOICE. Nowhere.

NARCISSUS. Hello?

(RAFAEL and DONATELLA enter. NARCISSUS hides behind a sculpture.)

RAFAEL. Donatella, They're putting carpet on the runway!

DONATELLA. How can they be putting carpet on the runway?
Who told them to put carpet on the runway?

I will not stand for a carpeted runway, Shiny, Rafael, think shiny, sparkling, shiny!

Where's my son, there's someone he needs to meet.

RAFAEL. I can't find him.

DONATELLA. What do you mean, you can't find him?

RAFAEL. I've looked everywhere.

DONATELLA. Then look more than everywhere.

(DONATELLA and RAFAEL exit.)

NARCISSUS comes out from hiding with a guitar. He's playing.)

NARCISSUS. I'm not like them but I can pretend.

Blah blah blah blah.

I think I'm just happy.

ECHO'S VOICE. *(Only her voice.)* I think I'm just happy.

(NARCISSUS stops. Looks around. Then plays.)

NARCISSUS. I'm not like them.

ECHO'S VOICE. I'm not like them.

NARCISSUS. But I can pretend.

ECHO'S VOICE. But I can pretend.

NARCISSUS. Blah blah blah blah, blah blah blah blah

ECHO'S VOICE. Blah blah blah blah, blah blah blah blah

NARCISSUS. I think I'm just.

ECHO'S VOICE and NARCISSUS. Happy.

(NARCISSUS gets an idea. He play a riff on his electric guitar.

ECHO answers with a riff.

He plays something.

She plays something.

He plays.

She plays.

Sort of a dueling banjoes type thing with electric guitars.

He plays and she echoes until they join and you can't tell where one begins and the other ends.)

NARCISSUS. I'm in love.

ECHO'S VOICE. In love.

NARCISSUS. Are you imaginary or real?

ECHO'S VOICE. Real.

NARCISSUS. Then, why can't I see you?

ECHO'S VOICE. I see you.

NARCISSUS. Can I see you in the flesh?

ECHO'S VOICE. In the flesh?

NARCISSUS. Up close?

ECHO'S VOICE. Close?

NARCISSUS. Close. What's wrong?

ECHO'S VOICE. Wrong?

NARCISSUS. Are you scared?

ECHO'S VOICE. Scared?

NARCISSUS. Scarred?

ECHO'S VOICE. Scarred.

NARCISSUS. Ugly?

ECHO'S VOICE. Ugly?

NARCISSUS. Shy?

ECHO. Shy.

(ECHO comes out from hiding. She grabs NARCISSUS and kisses him. He startles. RAFAEL and NATALIE enter. They catch them in the kiss and laugh. NARCISSUS pulls away from her.)

NARCISSUS. You're.

Sorry, you're—

ECHO. Sorry—

NARCISSUS. You're not who I thought.

ECHO. I thought—

NARCISSUS. I know what you thought, but I thought you were someone else.

ECHO. Someone else?

NARCISSUS. Yeah, someone different.

ECHO. Different.

NARCISSUS. Yeah, look, when I said “ I’m in love ”

ECHO. I’m in love.

NARCISSUS. Don’t—When I said that I thought you, listen—

ECHO. *You* listen.

NARCISSUS. I know you thought something was happening here between us.

ECHO. Something *was* happening here between us

NARCISSUS. But It’s not gonna happen, how could you possibly love me—

ECHO. Love me.

NARCISSUS. You don’t know me.

ECHO. Know me.

NARCISSUS. I can’t.

ECHO. Can’t?

NARCISSUS. Okay, I can, but I’d rather die.

ECHO. Die.

(RAFAEL and NATALIE join in.)

RAFAEL. You’re really wicked you know. Every time you smile at her, she cries.

NARCISSUS. Then I won’t smile anymore.

RAFAEL. And she’s not the only one.

RAFAEL and NATALIE. I am constantly upset by you.

NARCISSUS. What did I do?

NATALIE. Just by seeing you.

NARCISSUS. Then don't look at me.

RAFAEL. Everywhere I walk I see you.

NARCISSUS. Then walk the other way.

RAFAEL. What's wrong Narcissus? Why are you being this way?

NATALIE. What did we ever do to you?

RAFAEL. You're not being very nice.

NARCISSUS. When some people talk to me, I can hardly wait for them to shut up.

RAFAEL and NATALIE. Why don't you return my phone calls?

Why don't you text message me anymore?

Why do you avoid me in public places?

Why don't you come to my parties?

Why do I find the roses I give you in the trash?

Why don't you ever wear the Sean Jean jacket I gave you?

NARCISSUS. Because I can't.

RAFAEL and NATALIE. CAN'T why?

(Silence.)

RAFAEL and NATALIE. I waited for you at the bar that night

I invited you to my party

I sent you dozen's of roses. Perfect roses!

I gave you a Sean Jean Jacket!

I wore the latest Vera Wang dress for you and you didn't even notice!

I lied to my parents for you!

I broke up with my girlfriend for you!

I told you my secrets!

You led us on.

You made us think...

You're behavior is killing me!

NARCISSUS. I wish I felt something. Anything. For someone else. I wish I could suddenly become obsessed with someone and want to bring them roses and feed them chocolates and let them swim in my pool. I wish I did. But I don't feel. Anything.

NATALIE. Do you really think you're that much better than everyone else?

NARCISSUS. No. Worse. Much worse.

NATALIE. It must suck to be you.

RAFAEL. I can't even express how much I find you deeply unsympathetic.

NARCISSUS. I know, I'm a horrible person. I can't help it.

NATALIE. You're a Heartless egotist!

RAFAEL. I hope you get what you deserve. Narcissist!

NATALIE. I hope you fall in love with someone horrible.

RAFAEL. Someone terrible.

NATALIE. Someone unfathomable, impossible, fake!

RAFAEL. Someone who won't talk to you

NATALIE. Won't look at you.

RAFAEL. Won't listen to you.

NATALIE. Someone shallow, distant, cold!

RAFAEL. Someone you can never have!!!

NATALIE. Someone who will never love you back!!!

RAFAEL. Someone exactly.

NATALIE. Exactly.

ECHO. Exactly.

ALL. *(including ECHO—whose voice echoes on past the others.)* Like yourself.

(NARCISSUS grabs a chair and breaks it into pieces. LOUD THRASHING ANGRY MUSIC HERE.

The FASHIONISTAS watch. He stops. The music cuts out. The FASHIONISTAS watch him in silence for a second. Then, without saying a word, they exit, leaving NARCISSUS alone.

Alone. Except for a person who has appeared behind him. Watching him. This is his REFLECTION. NARCISSUS realizes someone is watching him.

**Note: Although the Reflections words are in parenthesis, they are most likely spoken.)*

Scene 9 Total Strangers.

NARCISSUS. What are you looking at?

REFLECTION. (you)

NARCISSUS. I don't understand anything.
Not even myself.
I don't understand other people or myself.

REFLECTION. (I know.)

NARCISSUS. What are you staring at?

REFLECTION. (the perfect eyes, the perfect lips, the perfect shoulders, the perfect smile)

NARCISSUS. I feel nothing.
Not love.
Not pity.
Just a kind of emptiness.
Exhaustion.

To an outside observer this is probably appealing. But I don't understand what's happening inside me.

(REFLECTION looks at him. He looks at his REFLECTION.)

NARCISSUS. I don't know who I am.
Why I'm alive.
What I want.
Love is nonsense.

Everywhere I look there's depression, boredom, dissatisfaction, revulsion from life.

REFLECTION. (I know.)

NARCISSUS. Are you with the hotel?

(REFLECTION *smiles.*)

NARCISSUS. Will you say something?

REFLECTION. (his eyes are twin stars.)

NARCISSUS. I don't know you, do I?

REFLECTION. (we're total strangers.)

NARCISSUS. If we're not going to talk—
Then, will you sit here with me a minute?

(NARCISSUS and his REFLECTION sit next to each other. Both looking strait out like they're looking at the ocean, side by side. Music here. Something really beautiful.)

Scene 10 Showtime.

(Transition back to the runway right before the show.

NARCISSUS and his REFLECTION stay where they are.

A spotlight on DONATELLA at a microphone.)

DONATELLA. Cut! Cut the music! That's the wrong music, who can walk to that? I can't walk to that, my girls can't walk to that, give me something we can step to please, with a beat please, and make it FABULOUS! FAST!

RAFAEL. We've got three minutes people!

DONATELLA. You've got three minutes to get this fabulously perfect or you're all, so help me god, fabulously FIRED!

(Lights up on a scrim. Behind the scrim there is chaos. Models getting dressed. Very chaotic.)

RAFAEL. I've got Charise, Donna, Natalie, Solange, Franchesca—wait, wait, I've got a girl with no shoes, WHERE ARE FRANCESCA'S SHOES!

(Two stagehands come out and roll up the cover on the runway – revealing a shiny runway floor. Over the loudspeakers we hear the headset conversation.)

FRANK. And he says “Penguin! I thought you were a nun!”
(He laughs. No one else laughs.) Hello? Is anybody on headset.

RICH. Yeah.

FRANK. Who's that, Morty?

RICH. Rich.

FRANK. Rich, this is Frank, did you hear the punch line? Penguin! I thought you were a nun!

RICH. Check out the total hotty, three rows up in the middle, man. In the sweater with the hair. She is HOT.

FRANK. That's Paris Hilton dude. This fashion thing is stupid, man, these people look like flamingos. Did you see Donatella, she looks like a baboon?

DONATELLA. Hello everyone, this is Donatella. Is anyone on this thing?

(Silence. DONATELLA puts the headset down.)

FRANK. That was close dude.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Hello everyone, this is Jan the lighting designer on headset. Donatella? Gail? Frank? Anyone else here?

FRANK. Here.

RICH. Yup.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Who was that?

FRANK. Frank. Spotlight 1.

RICH. And Rich. Spot 2. We're both here.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Okay and who are we missing?

FRANK. Spot 3.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Hello spot three?

(No answer.)

Who's on spot three?

MORTY. Morty. Yeah, Hi, I'm here. Sorry I was asleep.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Good morning Morty. Good and. We're just about ready to go here. If that lady in the front will sit down. Good. And. They're pulling up the runway. And where is our fabulous producer? Gail are you on headset? Gail are you there? Hello?

FREDDY THE STAGE MANAGER. Jan, Hi this is Freddy, we're clear to go.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Okay Freddy says we're ready and where's Gail Freddy?

FREDDY. Gail's here, Jan, she's giving me the signal, a big signal, a finger. To go. Gail the producer says go. Freddy off headset.

(Back to NARCISSUS and his REFLECTION at the pool.

NARCISSUS looks at his REFLECTION, smiles. His REFLECTION smiles back.)

NARCISSUS. What are you smiling at?

REFLECTION. You know
When I can't sleep
Which is most of the time.
I go outside and look at the moon.
I stare at it. Like you're staring at me
And I wish I could go there.
I look at it.
Like you're looking at me.
And I try to figure out what it's made of.
I watch it.
Like you're watching me.
I see it. Way out there.
And I wonder if it's as close as it looks.

And wonder if I reached out far enough—

NARCISSUS and REFLECTION. If I could—

NARCISSUS. Touch—

(He reaches out to touch his REFLECTION, disturbs the water, and his REFLECTION disappears.)

NARCISSUS. Wait!

Where are you going?

Come back.

CALLIOPE. Who are you yelling at, Freak?

Listen, asshole, you really messed Echo up.

You didn't have to do that.

You could have been a lot nicer to her. A LOT.

(NARCISSUS doesn't respond. He stares at the water in front of him, his REFLECTION appears again.)

REFLECTION. There you are.

NARCISSUS. Where did you go?

CALLIOPE. Where did who go?

(NARCISSUS stares at his reflection, spellbound.)

REFLECTION. You look at me the way I look at the moon.

You're like no one I know.

I like that about you.

CALLIOPE. Dude? You should go see here, she is totally in distress. I have no idea why, I don't know what she sees in you. If you ask me, you're a total asshole. I mean, I find you totally unappealing. I mean, sure you're good-looking and sexy and all, but really who would want to go out with someone like you. Someone totally fake and self-obsessed. I don't get what she sees in you. I mean, yeah sure, you're like okay, if you want a Calvin Klein add for a boyfriend. But who wants that?

NARCISSUS. What's your name?

Did you say something? Say it again.

REFLECTION. The perfect eyes

The perfect lips
The perfect shoulders
The perfect neck
The perfect—

CALLIOPE. Narcissus!

NARCISSUS. Your lips are moving, but I can't hear you.

CALLIOPE. Hear who?

(Back to the Runway. The show is starting.)

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Good. And here we go everyone, and house going to black. Good and house out.

(Camera flashbulbs snap.)

RAFAEL. Keep calm people! YOU'RE ELEGANT, YOU'RE ALURING, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! Remember you own a Mercedes and a house in the Hamptons, be aloof, untouchable, unavailable, sexy sexy, sexy!

(You see the models all behind the scrim getting dressed, total chaos.)

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Okay and the runway is clear. And lights fading to into darkness. Pitch darkness To black. Good. And spotlights 1, 2, and 3—

FRANK. Yeah.

RICH. Yep.

MORTY. Yo.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. You're going to pick Narcissus up in the doorway, perfect pick-up and—
Spotlights.
Go.

(A spotlight comes up on the runway. No NARCISSUS.)

And...
Where's Narcissus?

(Back to the pool.)

CALLIOPE. What are you looking at?

NARCISSUS. He's trapped. He's under there.

CALLIOPE. Under where dude? Who? Are you on drugs?

NARCISSUS. Under water. Trapped
Like the moon in the lake
under the surface—

CALLIOPE. You're kidding right?

NARCISSUS. I can't reach him—

REFLECTION. There's not an ocean between us or mountains or walls, just a little water.

NARCISSUS. Just a little water.

REFLECTION. That's all that keeps us apart.

(Back to the runway. The house in darkness. No lights on-stage.)

GAIL THE PRODUCER. Okay people, this is Gail The Producer we're holding.

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Holding? Gail, sorry, we've started.

GAIL THE PRODUCER. You started? You're kidding!

DONATELLA. *(Off microphone.)* WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON OUT THERE.

GAIL THE PRODUCER. I didn't tell you to start! *(To someone behind her.)* THEY STARTED!

DONATELLA. Who told them to start!

FREDDY THE STAGE MANAGER. There is absolutely no problem we're working it out, Donatella, we are working it out!

DONATELLA. Give me the headset—

JAN THE LIGHTING DESIGNER. Gail, this is Jan—

DONATELLA. I don't care who you are! This is Donatella! What the hell is going on out there!

GAIL THE PRODUCER. I told them to hold, We're holding, Donatella,

DONATELLA. Why are people sitting in darkness!
Why is there a spotlight on nothing!
Bring the lights back up!

GAIL THE PRODUCER. I think that would look bad, Donatella, I think that would look like a mistake.

DONATELLA. And what does this look like?
You're making mincemeat of this show.
Play the music

FREDDY THE STAGE MANAGER. Donatella wants music, music starting and GO.

DONATELLA. What exactly is the problem back there?

(Back to the pool.)

REFLECTION. The perfect eyes
The perfect lips
The perfect smile

CALLIOPE. Dude, walk away. He'll go if you go, trust me.

NARCISSUS. He looks at me.

CALLIOPE. Then look somewhere else.

NARCISSUS. And lose what I love?

CALLIOPE. You don't know what you're looking at, do you?

REFLECTION. I want to live where you live
Breathe where you breathe
Below the surface
Underneath it
I want to begin where you end
End where you begin

(NARCISSUS joins in.)

I want to go where you go
Know what you know

I want to be you.

CALLIOPE. You are him!

Narcissus!

He is you.

NARCISSUS. What are you talking about?

CALLIOPE. Your REFLECTION?!!

Dude, you really are on drugs.

(He looks back at the water.)

REFLECTION. Touch me.

Reach me.

CALLIOPE. You're spellbound by yourself.

You're drowning in your own image, dude.

You can't reach him

You can't touch him

He doesn't exist.

NARCISSUS. He doesn't exist?

REFLECTION. Just a little water keeps us apart.

CALLIOPE. What you desire is what you have.

NARCISSUS. Then what I have is what makes me empty.

(RAFAEL enters.)

RAFAEL. Narcissus! We've started. We need you on the runway now.

NARCISSUS. In a minute.

CALLIOPE. Come, Narcissus.

NARCISSUS. I wish you would go away.

CALLIOPE. They're waiting upstairs.

NARCISSUS. None of this makes any sense.

(Back to the runway.)

DONATELLA. Where's Narcissus! Send him out.

FREDDY THE STAGE MANAGER. He's not back here, I can't find him.

DONATELLA. What do you mean, you can't—did you check hair and make-up? Raul! Where's Raul! He was here getting dressed, he didn't just disappear!

GAIL THE PRODUCER. He walked out.

DONATELLA. Walked out? Walked out where? Why? Out which way? What For? How could this happen!

Narcissus is the show! The show is named after Narcissus! People are waiting to see him! The show is Narcissus! Narcissus is the show!

Where is he?

Find him.

(NARCISSUS looks at the pool. Music.)

NARCISSUS. I'll go where you go

Live where you live.

Know what you know.

I'm coming in

To find you to join you to meet you to be you

An image, a ghost, a reflection, the moon.

My self.

(He disappears underwater. A spotlight hits the door of the runway. No narcissus in the spotlight. It's empty.)

DONATELLA. Where is he?

Narcissus where are you?

Send a girl out, any girl, send someone out.

(ECHO enters. She's dripping with water, wearing a gown, something glamorous, she enters with both her hands cupped in front of her. She holds a flower. She walks the runway as the song plays, NARCISSUS emerges dripping from the pool and walks the runway offstage. ECHO puts the flower down in the end of the runway. The camera's flash.)

DONATELLA. Get her off the runway!

ECHO. Wait. I have something to say.

DONATELLA. Unless you know where my son is—

ECHO. He disappeared.

Transformed.

He was cut off in the flower of his youth.

(She shows the flower around to the crowd.)

I found this, where he had been.

Where I saw him

leaning into the pool

Like a statue carved out of Parisian marble

He hovered on the brink

Fascinated. Gazing.

Drowning in his own image

Spellbound by himself.

He got lost.

He tried and tried.

But he could not grab hold of himself. (Lay hold upon himself.)

He realized what he loved was in image a reflection.

Wasn't even real.

And when he couldn't bear it anymore.

As golden wax melts with gentle heat

As morning frost melts with the sun

He wasted away with love

He was consumed by its fire

He drowned in its depths

Until nothing remained of the body we loved

His eyes were twin stars.

Everything bright and shining and better than life.

(ECHO puts the flower down. The lights change. The characters address the audience.)

Scene 11

NARCISSUS: The True 'E' Hollywood Story.

(DONATELLA and VALENTINO address the cameras.)

DONATELLA. You know people say:

Do you feel responsible for your son's death?

Did you know he was going to do it? Did he tell you?
Why did he do it?

VALENTINO. Did he suffer from depression? Was he on drugs? Is there a history of depression in your family? Did he leave a note? What were the warning signs?

DONATELLA. Did you really go to an Eve Saint Loraine banquet the night after he died?

Do you think this is going to effect your spring clothing sales?

VALENTINO. Is it true *(Insert name of famous scandalous star here.)* came by to pay his respects and sent you a fruit basket?

DONATELLA. Is it true he was in love with *(Insert name of other famous scandalous star here.)* and left countless messages on her answering machine?

VALENTINO. What's the deal with his body turning into a flower, like do you really believe that?
The truth is.

DONATELLA. I don't know what we believe.

(RAFAEL speaks.)

RAFAEL. When Narcissus
When I heard
That he had
You know
How he
You know
Transformed.
My first thought was
You know
Like everyone else
This can't be true
And then I
You know I did something very strange
I went strait to my sewing machine
Strait to my Bernina.
And I just sat there.
I just sat there and stared at it

Until it
You know
Until it started to
speak to me.
And it said one word
It said "Weather."
So that's what I'm calling this line.
Weather.

Not with an "h" like whether or not but weather with no "h" like a
storm like partly cloudy with 20% chance of rain.
You know when I think of Narcissus
I think of something unobtainable
Something that catches your eye
And holds it there
Captive
You can't ever get enough of looking at
Because he was this
Not just for me
But for a lot of people. Most of us never spoke to him or just said
You know
Hi.
Or you know
Hello.
Hoping he would give us, you know, that smile that he would give.
Someone we were all drawn to
And you really didn't know why you had to look at him
It was just this
He had
Uh
Not just beauty, but uh
Nature.
You know I use that word instead of beauty.
Because we don't really know what beauty means
But we know what it's like to look at clouds
In the sky
And be just sort of mesmerized
Watching them move.
You're never satiated

You can look at it forever and never know it
It's unfathomable
Unobtainable.
Like the weather.
So I wanted to make a line of clothing
That could speak to that
A dress the color of weather
Or a coat
That reminded me of him
Of the time I spent with Narcissus
So this line is coming out in the spring.
And I think he would have liked it
I mean I hope
He
I don't think he would've hated it
I don't think he'd
You know people accuse me
Of trying to take advantage
Of his death
Of using him. Using his death
You know
Capitalizing, trying to make a buck, on his death.
But you know
I don't think he would see it that way
And I certainly don't see it that way
I mean I'm not capitalizing on his death
For gods sake I'm not publishing his secret diary
Or going through his private things
And selling them on e-bay
Or you know, digging up the grass from his front lawn and selling
it.
I'm not doing any of that.
I mean I'm not trying to make money off his death.
I just think, you know people will appreciate
A way to remember him.
That doesn't cost that much
I mean not designer prices
You'll be able to see this line of clothing at Target
So it will be accessible to everyone.

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