**OCTOBER 1, 2011**

**Samantha**

**Rachel**

**Todd**

*It’s the year 1980. We’re in a mostly empty gym in a middle school in central Texas.*

*Rachel, aged 12, is here with a metal brace that helps her walk. She’s awkward, nerdy, determined. She’s been hurt before.*

*She’s completing a project in the middle of the stage made of various pieces of machinery and assorted objects, like maybe a picnic basket, a large red and blue canister, an old phone, a tambourine and anything else that looks appropriate to add.*

*She looks devious.*

RACHEL : *(to herself as the project is almost complete)* Oh, it is ON!

*Samantha, also 12, enters from the side, sneaking up on Rachel. Samantha is pretty and popular and knows it. She’s a little mean too.*

SAMANTHA : What’s on?

RACHEL : *(surprised and embarrassed)* Oh my God, what are you doing here?

SAMANTHA : The door was open. It’s a free country.

RACHEL : You should be in class.

SAMANTHA : *You* should be in class, dork. What *is* that?

RACHEL : Nothing.

SAMANTHA : Doesn’t look like nothing.

RACHEL : If you must know, it’s a project.

SAMANTHA : What kind of project?

RACHEL : A science project.

SAMANTHA : For Mister Keaton?

RACHEL : What? Who told you that!

SAMANTHA : Who told me what?

RACHEL : Nothing. I don’t understand what you’re saying. I don’t understand what you’re doing here. Go away.

SAMANTHA : How long have you been down here?

RACHEL : Not long.

SAMANTHA : I thought you were home. Everyone said you’ve been sick.

RACHEL : I haven’t been sick.

SAMANTHA : *(gets closer)* What is this thing?

RACHEL : Just stuff. Nothing. It’s an art project, okay?

SAMANTHA : Oh, now it’s an art project?

RACHEL : Yeah. Or maybe history.

SAMANTHA : Let me see.

RACHEL : Not so close!

SAMANTHA : Oh my God, what’s inside of it?

RACHEL : Why do you have to be in here? Can’t you go back to the library and twist your hair around in really annoying circles like you always do until the boys start drooling all over the carpet?

SAMANTHA : I’m so bored of all the boys around here. So immature. *(notices something)* Is that a photo? *(reaches inside and pulls one out of the machine)* Is that Mister Keaton?

RACHEL : Give me that!

SAMANTHA : What’s going on? Tell me!

RACHEL : Nothing!

SAMANTHA : *(holding the picture)* Where did you get this?

RACHEL : None of your business.

SAMANTHA : He looks younger here, is this really Mister Keaton?

RACHEL : Yes, now hand it over!

SAMANTHA : *(threatening to rip the photo)* Tell me what you’re up to, or it’s goodbye photo.

RACHEL : Don’t. Come on. Look, I’ll tell you. I’m… I’m making a machine.

SAMANTHA : A machine?

RACHEL : A time machine. I’ve been working on it for months, between classes and after school. I took some spare parts from an old gas-powered saw in woodshop, a few vials of assorted chemicals from science lab, a couple of dirty towels from the boys’ locker room and emptied out the spit valves from all the trombones and tubas in band room. Then mixed everything together.

SAMANTHA : What about the photo?

RACHEL : I want to go back in time.

SAMANTHA : Why?

RACHEL : So I can meet Mister Keaton. When he’s my age. When he’s 12. He’s the only person I’ve ever met who really gets me, you know? I feel like we really connect on such a deep, personal level. It’s like he’s my soulmate or something. Plus he never makes fun of the way I walk.

SAMANTHA : He’s 20 years older than you.

RACHEL : I know that, frog-face. That’s why I’m making the time machine. To go back to 1960. When he was my age. Then we can be together. Finally. Grow up together. Bloom together. Become one. Don’t you understand? This is the real deal, him and me. Love.

SAMANTHA : You’re insane.

RACHEL : *You’re* insane.

SAMANTHA : The guy’s engaged to be married.

RACHEL : He is *now*. But he wasn’t back in 1960. If we’d known each other back then, he’d be engaged to *me* know. I just know it. I see the way he looks at me.

SAMANTHA : How does he look at you.

RACHEL : Like this. *(she demonstrates intensity and longing)* With his eyes.

SAMANTHA : That’s creepy.

RACHEL : You don’t know anything about it.

SAMANTHA : *(about the machine)* So how does it work?

RACHEL : Everything’s set. This piece pushes into that piece, this section jogs that section. You just tell it where and when you want to go. And then anyone around the machine will be transported to that time and place.

SAMANTHA : Have you used it yet?

RACHEL : Of course not.

SAMANTHA : So how do you know if it’s actually going to work?

RACHEL : Come on. Just look at it! How can it possibly fail!

SAMANTHA : *(looking more closely at the center of the contraption)* What’s this hole in the middle for?

RACHEL : That’s the part that activates it. All we have to do is find something long, hard and lean to stick deep inside. Then the machine will start right up and away we’ll go!

SAMANTHA : Are you serious?

RACHEL : Of course, why?

*Todd, also aged 12, enters. He’s Rachel’s brother. He’s coming from baseball practice. He’s got a baseball hat, glove and baseball bat.*

TODD : Hey Samantha!

SAMANTHA : *(to Rachel)* Oh God, it’s your spaz of a brother.

TODD : I thought I saw you coming down here. What’s going on? *(pretending his sister doesn’t exist)* Why are you all alone?

RACHEL : She’s not alone, pig-nose.

TODD : *(still pretending)* Did you hear something?

SAMANTHA : I came down here because I’m tired of you stalking me everywhere I go.

TODD : You know you love the attention.

SAMANTHA : You’re so juvenile.

TODD : So are you coming to the ballgame on Sunday?

SAMANTHA : Not even if my life depends on it.

TODD : I’ll take that as a yes. I assume you heard about last week’s game?

SAMANTHA : Oh yeah, Tom Brokaw was going on and on about it the other night.

TODD : Tom who?

SAMANTHA : The newscaster? Duh, hello! Don’t you pay attention to any current events at all? Plus I’m being sarcastic!

TODD : Anyway, I got three hits in that game.

SAMANTHA : Mm hmm.

TODD: Would have had four except the coach felt bad for the other team. Told me to bunt. He wanted to take it easy on them. You know what a bunt is, don’t you?

SAMANTHA : No, and I don’t care.

*During all this, Rachel is finessing and finalizing the machine.*

TODD : It’s where you grab the bat and open up your hands a little, real soft like. The bat likes to be held soft. And then you keep your eyes on what’s coming from the pitcher and just give a little nudge. A little poke. The bat likes to poke. And the ball likes to be poked too, you can tell. Everybody likes a little poke now and then, right? A bunt is special, Samantha. You wanna try? Come on. Reach your arms out. Put your hands around my bat.

SAMANTHA : Uh, Rachel?

TODD : Put your hands around my bat!

RACHEL : What?

SAMANTHA : Your brother is such a perv.

RACHEL : What else is new?

TODD : You know you want to try it.

RACHEL : Samantha’s not interested in boys your age, Todd.

SAMANTHA : That’s right. I like my men older.

RACHEL : How much older?

SAMANTHA : *Much* older. High school age. Not as old as your sister likes ‘em.

TODD : What’s that?

RACHEL : Shut up, Samantha.

TODD : Who does my sister like?

SAMANTHA : You don’t know?

TODD : No.

SAMANTHA : She’s got a picture.

*Samantha reaches for it. Todd reaches for it too. It falls to the floor.*

*Todd picks it up.*

TODD : Mister Keaton? Is that Mister Keaton the science teacher? Oh boy, wait till Mom and Dad hear about this!

*Rachel reaches for the photo, Todd pulls it back, Samantha gets into the mix.*

*There’s a struggle, things fall apart a bit, Rachel stumbles and her brace ends up deep inside the hole suddenly.*

*The lights flicker on and off frantically as Rachel and Samantha are transported to another time and Todd is bounced backward, unaffected by the machine. He slips and slides offstage and we lose track of him. Ideally he ends up in or behind the audience where he can change costume quickly.*

*Lights slowly brighten and Rachel and Samantha are staring straight out at the audience. They actually acknowledge that there’s an audience there watching them.*

SAMANTHA : Holy… What’s going on? Where are we?

RACHEL : Is this 1960?

SAMANTHA : Doesn’t look like 1960.

RACHEL : How do we know what 1960 looks like?

SAMANTHA : I don’t know. Mister Keaton?

RACHEL : If this is 1960 he’s only 12 years old. He wouldn’t go by Mister Keaton yet.

SAMANTHA : What’s his first name?

RACHEL : Larry.

SAMANTHA : Really? Doesn’t seem like a Larry.

RACHEL : I know, it’s weird.

SAMANTHA : *(to the audience)* Is there a Larry in here tonight? We’ve got someone very anxious to see you.

*A man walks out of the crowd. He’s in his 50s, gray, hunched over a bit. Maybe wearing a hat or with a gray beard or with a cane to help him appear older. He holds something at his side that we don’t see right away.*

TODD : Hello.

RACHEL : Wait, I don’t understand. Are you Mister Keaton?

TODD : No, dog-breath, it’s your brother.

RACHEL : Todd?

TODD : How many brothers do you have?

RACHEL : But that’s impossible.

TODD : I’ve been coming to this damned theater event for 8 long years now hoping you’d one day show up. This is where our old school used to be. What do you think, Sam? Am I mature enough for you now? I’m old enough to be your grandfather!

SAMANTHA : Um.

RACHEL : Oh God, Todd.

SAMANTHA : Still a perv.

TODD : I’ve still got that bat. Remember? From the old days? What do you say? A little bunting practice? Grab my bat, Samantha. Reach your hands out. Hold onto my bat.

SAMANTHA : Rachel, help!

*Rachel pushes her brother away with her brace. He falls back. She picks up the bat.*

TODD: Sis, it’s me. Your own flesh and blood.

RACHEL : You’re dead to me, old man.

TODD : Give me another chance.

SAMANTHA : We gotta get out of here.

RACHEL : Here’s a baseball bat, you know what to do.

*Samantha sticks it in the hole and the whole room shakes. Lights flash frantically on and off and the girls are off on another wild ride. Todd can only watch helplessly from the floor.*

*END.*