

# CHIRAPTOPHOBIA

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A one-act drama by  
Hannah Estelle Sears

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

BEATRICE, mother

HENRY, father

MARY, aunt

JULIA, female, friend

RICKI, female, friend

EMMA, female, English teacher

ANDREW, male, friend

RACHEL, female, a ghost

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**SCENE 1**

*(Rows of chairs are set on half of the stage. They face stage left, where a coffin lies closed. BEATRICE, HENRY, MARY, JULIA, RICKI, EMMA, and ANDREW sit quietly. After a moment, Beatrice stands and walks to the coffin.)*

**BEATRICE:** *(Addressing the crowd:)* Thank you all for coming, it means a great deal to Henry and me.

*(Lights down on stage left, up on stage right where a couch, chair, mirror, toilet, and door are set. RACHEL sits on the couch, headphones plugged into her iPod, flipping through a magazine and singing along to her music.)*

**RACHEL:** YOU THINK NOW THAT YOU'VE LOST  
ALL THE FEELING IN YOUR TOES  
AS THE NUMBNESS TRAVELS ROUND, YOU HAVE NO  
PLACE TO GO.  
PERHAPS YOU WILL SUBDUE TO THE SHARP AND  
PIERCING AIR  
STRIP OFF ALL YOUR CLOTHES AND JUST LAY THERE.  
LAY THERE...

*(Removing her headphones:)* Mom! When's dinner?

*(Pause. No response. Rachel returns to reading her magazine. Her phone rings as if she's received a text message. She picks it up and looks. She then dials a number and puts the phone to her ear.)*

Ricki? Hey, it's Rache. *(Pause.)* No, no, just cause I'm reading People and I figured phone was easier. *(Pause.)* Me too! I'm starving! *(Pause.)* Yeah I took the math final today, it wasn't that bad. *(Pause.)* Yeah I'm fine, why? *(Pause.)* No, no, no everything's cool. I talked to him about it earlier. *(Pause.)* Haha I know, I know... *(Pause.)* I know! Okay enough. *(Laughing:)* It's not a big deal, I'll see you tomorrow. Okay, bye.

*(Rachel hangs up the phone and stands next to her couch facing stage right, watching herself in the mirror.)*

Hm.

*(She pulls up her shirt to her ribcage, examining her stomach. She grabs a handful of flesh and jiggles it.)*

Mirror mirror on the wall, why can't I be thin and tall?

*(She spins around to look at her rear, furrowing her brow almost comically. Lights down on stage right, up on stage left.)*

**BEATRICE:** *(Wringing her hands:)* It's been tough the last few weeks, for all of us. *(Uneasily:)* Since we're such an...intimate group, I thought it would be nice to invite you all up to say a few words and goodbyes.

*(Pause. Everyone looks around at each other. Finally, Ricki stands and walks to the coffin as Beatrice sits.)*

**RICKI:** I didn't really prepare anything, uhm... Well; Rachel was a good friend to me. She always asked about my problems with boys or my family or whatever. She was always so happy. There was this one time we were sitting in her room, and she just stood up and started dancing for no reason. That's the sort of thing I remember most, I guess, about Rachel. That look in her eyes when she'd get an idea like no matter how much you tried to convince her it wouldn't work there was no budging, that was it. She had to do it or the world would end. I admired that determination in her, and I always wished I could have had some of it myself. *(No longer addressing the crowd, but herself:)* I thought Rachel was perfect. That's not even an exaggeration; she was beautiful and so smart and funny and exciting. But she was also aloof. You could hear it in the way she'd say, "Yeah, I'm fine" and force a grin so wholeheartedly that you just let it go and moved on. She played it off well too, really making us all believe that the distance was her own choosing and

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maintaining an air of mystery that only made her more alluring. But she didn't want it.

*(Lights down stage left. Ricki and Julia cross to center stage during blackout and are met by Rachel.)*

**JULIA:** Hey!

*(The girls hug.)*

**RICKI:** Hey. So?! *(Leaning in. Whispering:)* Tell me what happened.

**JULIA:** Okay so Saturday night I went out with Caroline –

**RICKI:** Right.

**JULIA:** And she had heard that Drew was having a party –

**RICKI:** Mhm.

**JULIA:** *(Robust, excited gestures.)* Anyway we go and I'm, like, the only person from our school. It was pretty awkward at first but then I saw Jordan and was like thank god he's here, one person I know! So we're talking for a while and then this godly guy walks in, like 6 feet tall, built well I guess, not carved out of stone or anything, and he walks right over to Jordan and they start talking. So then I'm like "oh hi I'm Julia" and he says his name is Sean and we start talking cause neither of us knows that many people and Jordan's still there so it's not awkward. Then, 20 minutes later or something, the cops show up cause Drew forgot to warn the neighbors so we all run out the garage door to the park near his house. So we're all there and these two guys try to climb to the roof of the little building with the bathroom in it. I'm just sitting with Caroline and Jordan on this ledge. Then I see Sean like on a structure with this girl, I dunno who she is but I was like noooo! But so then I convince Caroline to walk over there with me and ask if they know how long we'll be in the park and so Sean comes back to the group –

**RACHEL:** Guys, we've gotta go to class.

**JULIA:** Hold on! I'm almost done!

**RICKI:** I hate you! Why can't I meet impossibly gorgeous men at parties on weekends and run through parks with them?

**RACHEL:** Okay well I'm going to class, see you guys later.

**RICKI:** Lunch?

**RACHEL:** I have student council.

**RICKI:** Oh, right, okay well I'll catch you later, love you.

**RACHEL:** Yeah.

**RICKI:** (*Turning back to Julia:*) Hurry! I wanna hear the end.

**JULIA:** Okay so he walks back over and basically what ends up happening is we walk to McDonald's in a big group and the two of us are flirting and then he and Jordan come back to Caroline's house to hang out and we all watch *Hostel*. By the way never watch that with guys, all they do is stare at all the naked women.

**RICKI:** What a surprise.

**JULIA:** But he was snuggling with me during the movie and it was so cute! Caroline's mom kicked everyone out at 12 but he texted me last night and said he wanted to hang out this weekend!

**RICKI:** Ah!!

**JULIA:** I know! I'm so excited.

**RICKI:** (*Over her shoulder as she exits:*) Okay I'm gonna run to class but that's great.

**JULIA:** Bye girl.



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*(She blows a kiss. Julia and Ricki return to the funeral as Rachel walks to stage right. She begins to do crunches, pushups and other exercises.)*

**RACHEL:** Come on, Rache, you got this. Ten more, that's all, keep going. I can feel the fat burning off, keep pushing, work through the pain. Seven, six, five, four, three, two, one, done! *(Panting:)* Phew that felt nice.

*(She stands and examines herself once more in the mirror. Lights down on stage left, up on stage right.)*

**RICKI:** Rachel was brilliant in her sickness. She'd tell me "Ricki, I know I have a problem, and I'll work on it, okay? Just give me time. I'll be fine. It's all gonna work out, it's not like I'm throwing up or starving myself or anything." She'd say "Ricki, I had the hardest workout at the gym yesterday" and, where I used to smile and feel jealous of her dedication, I'd cringe, shrinking behind her vapid promises and pretending it wasn't my responsibility to make sure she was okay. I don't know if it's all my fault, it feels like it but really she didn't want help.

*(Lights up on stage left, where Rachel is scribbling in a notebook, speaking what she is writing.)*

**RACHEL:** *(Speaking almost frantically:)* Three sets of 10 pushups, 25 crunches, 8 jumping jacks, one minute of plank, and four glasses of water before breakfast and dinner. *(Pause.)* Tell mom to only buy organic foods and stock up on celery, it has negative calories. Oh, and no more eggs, butter, wheat, sugar, or salad dressing.

*(She rips the page from her notebook and hangs it on the mirror.)*

There, perfect.

*(Looking at her reflection. Rachel freezes and Ricki walks to her couch and screams heartily. She calmly picks up the notebook. She reads from it.)*

**RICKI:** It was wrong of me to read her journal. But I did it and I'm glad because now, as I look at this wooden box about to sit solitary in the soil, I know what's really being buried. I won't tell, won't breathe a word of it. But I'll keep breathing. *(Addressing the crowd at the funeral:)* Rachel was confident, courageous, and beautiful. *(Turning to the coffin:)* Bye Rache.

**BEATRICE:** Thank you, Ricki. That was lovely.

**HENRY:** I hope—

**BEATRICE:** *(Privately, angry.)* Sh! Not now.

**HENRY:** But—

**BEATRICE:** I said not now.

*(Henry sits. Pause.)*

*(In a forced, polite but deeply irritated tone:)* Mary, would you speak?

*(She motions for her.)*

**MARY:** *(Walking to the front, tripping:)* Beats, I don't know if—

**BEATRICE:** *(Ushering her to the front:)* Everyone, this is my sister Mary.

**MARY:** *(Deep breath.)* Good afternoon.

*(She mimes her speech as the scene continues with a conversation between Andrew and Julia outside the funeral. Andrew rubs the top of Julia's head. She laughs.)*

**JULIA:** You've gotta stop doing that.

**ANDREW:** What?

*(Julia lets out a playfully disgruntled sigh.)*

Huh?

**JULIA:** You really need a haircut.

*(She touches his hair, fixing it.)*

**ANDREW:** You think so? *(Looking down her shirt as she works on his hair:)* I think I'm looking just fine these days.

**JULIA:** Oh? I don't know about that.

**ANDREW:** Well you should!

*(Taking her wrists and moving her hands away from his head. He keeps his grip, moving her from side to side playfully.)*

**JULIA:** *(Slaps his shoulder, giggling:)* Stop!

**ANDREW:** Nope. Not gonna happen.

*(He begins twirling her. When he finishes, she stumbles about and giggles.)*

**JULIA:** Hey so are you excited for the circus center?

**ANDREW:** No way, I'm terrified of heights.

**JULIA:** Oh don't worry, big bad me will be there to protect you.

**ANDREW:** Mhm we'll see!

**JULIA:** Oh yes we will. You'll be bawling like a baby –

**ANDREW:** Bawling like a grown-ass-man you mean!

**JULIA:** I dunno...

*(Andrew pretends to collapse in a fit of tears. Julia laughs.)*

See? This is why you need me! I can bring tissues and all the motivational banter you'll need.

**ANDREW:** *(Still pretending to cry:)* Oh Julia, how will I ever repay you?

*(Lights down.)*

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**SCENE 2**

*(Rachel rips the hair ties out of her hair and shakes it out. Andrew rises and goes to sit on the couch. Lights go down on stage right and fully up on Rachel's room scene.)*

**RACHEL:** *(Standing in front of the mirror, picking at zits and muttering:)* Stupid acne. Great, now I'm all red.

**ANDREW:** Rache, will you stop and get over here? *(Kissing her:)* Mmm, yeah I think that's just what you needed. How 'bout a little more of this *(He kisses her.)* and maybe this.

*(He whispers in her ear before kissing her neck.)*

**RACHEL:** *(Giggling:)* Stop it!

**ANDREW:** *(Playfully:)* Oh now do you really mean that? I don't think so.

**RACHEL:** You know me too well.

**ANDREW:** Oh?? We'll see about that.

*(They start making out on the couch.)*

**RACHEL:** *(After a while:)* Baby, my mom's home.

**ANDREW:** *(Kissing her ears:)* Shhhh.

**RACHEL:** I really have to write that English paper for Mr. Meyers, and you know how he—

**ANDREW:** I know, I know. But once I walk out that door, you'll sit in front of your computer staring at your paper and wish you hadn't sent me away.

**RACHEL:** I gotta admit, you're persuasive. But I have to pass on this one.

**ANDREW:** Really? Aw, that's no fun.

**RACHEL:** Well unfortunately for us both, I can't always be the fun one.

**ANDREW:** (*Lightheartedly:*) Well...you are always the fun one.

**RACHEL:** (*Playfully:*) I try.

**ANDREW:** Oh, I know.

**RACHEL:** You really, really —?

**ANDREW:** Yes.

**RACHEL:** (*Sarcastically:*) Well, no one can stop Mr. Andrew Baker when he's on a mission. If he wants something, he gets it.

**ANDREW:** Mmmm, that's right. Now you stop being such a party pooper and get back over here.

**RACHEL:** (*Shaking her head coyly:*) Make me.

**ANDREW:** (*Whining:*) Rache...

**RACHEL:** No, no, no, you get to have your fun so let me have mine! I need to keep you interested, don't I? That's what all the magazines say, keep the hunt alive. Play hard to get!

**ANDREW:** Baby it doesn't have to be this difficult all the time.

**RACHEL:** I'm not being difficult, I'm being fun. I'm the fun one, remember?

**ANDREW:** Yeah, I remember. Now live up to that title and get your butt over here!

**RACHEL:** (*Lying down with him:*) Talking about my butt, I see. What? You think it's nice?

**ANDREW:** You know I do baby...it's perfect.

**RACHEL:** Yeah? Good.

*(As they kiss, lights fade to black on stage left and come up on Beatrice standing at the back of the room arguing with her*

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*husband as the rest of the room walks slowly by the casket, some dropping flowers.)*

**BEATRICE:** Henry, this is my daughter's funeral—

**HENRY:** Our daughter.

**BEATRICE:** And I cannot have you talking about—

**HENRY:** About what? The truth? Beatrice, please

**BEATRICE:** Don't you speak to me in that tone—

**HENRY:** I don't have a tone

*(Beatrice lets out a huffy, hurried breath.)*

Don't get huffy.

**BEATRICE:** I'm not huffy!

**HENRY:** Oh come on, look at yourself. Pay our daughter a little more respect.

**BEATRICE:** I am paying her all the respect I possibly can be stopping you from bringing ridiculous allegations into—

**HENRY:** Ridiculous alleg...? Beatrice, you and I both know Rachel had problems. Don't pretend they didn't exist just because she is gone.

**BEATRICE:** Problems. What does that even mean? We all have problems!

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