

But what if...

written by

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*The lights rise on a mostly bare stage with two beds on opposite sides of the stage. They are nicely covered and have personal touches for each character. ASHLYN is getting her bed set up for sleep and MALINA is playing on her phone in her own bed. ASHLYN Climbs into bed and the lights go out. A Beat. After a moment, ASHLYN loudly clambers out of bed.*

ASHLYN

OW!

*The lights come up to reveal ASHLYN Clutching her foot as if she has just stubbed it. She groans and sits back down on her bed. Searching around she looks to find something within the bed sheets and pulls out a phone. She messes around on the phone and then we hear a phone dialing and then ringing. MALINA answers the phone.*

MALINA

It's like 2 a.m. I need my beauty sleep.

ASHLYN

I thought that the guy whose picture you liked was named Mike not "beauty sleep."

*MALINA laughs.*

MALINA

You caught me.

*A comfortable silence begins. ASHLYN lays down as MALINA observes her toes. After a minute:*

Do you think I should get a pedicure? Jake and I are going to this new place tomorrow and I wanted to wear open toed shoes.

ASHLYN

(Sitting Up)

Why?

MALINA

My toes just kind of look... gross? I don't know. I like the massage.

ASHLYN

Fair enough.

MALINA

Your turn.

ASHLYN

Not yet.

MALINA

Fine, but then we are talking about the Bachelor and I don't even care if you get any spoilers.

ASHLYN

I hate the bachelor.

MALINA

Sucks to be you, then.

ASHLYN

How do those women know that he's not a creep. That like, looks nice- but then again, Ted Bundy looked nice. I mean, I can just imagine some woman...

*As these lines are occurring, characters matching her descriptions are appearing onstage acting out the things that she's saying.*

She's like an exotic brunette type because people are so over blondes and she's fighting another girl for the love of some generic white man.

*BLONDE and BRUNETTE appear onstage smiling, dressed like a woman on The Bachelor. A GENERIC WHITE MAN who is semi-attractive appears onstage and by-passes the BLONDE in order to flirt with the BRUNETTE.*

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

All the women flirt with him but he only "has eyes for her" as he makes out with literally every blonde on the show. They fall in love and he proposes throwing out the other women. Soon after they are married the problems start. Soon no one sees her out and about much anymore until someone finds her months later decomposing in a ditch with her-

*GENERIC WHITE MAN continues to flirt with the BRUNETTE and pulls a rose out of his jacket to hand to her while he is holding hands with the BLONDE behind her back. Then, GENERIC WHITE MAN gets down on one knee and proposes to BRUNETTE as BLONDE stomps off. BRUNETTE and GENERIC WHITE GUY start fighting. BRUNETTE exits the stage. Sound of sirens. GENERIC WHITE MAN puts up his hands in surrender and walks off.*

MALINA

Woah! Ok! That's enough!

*As MALINA is saying this the lights come back on instantly as if flashing ASHLYN out of her daydream.*

That literally has never happened with The Bachelor, but you sure as hell have been watching Law and Order.

ASHLYN

(Correcting her)

It hasn't happened yet.

MALINA

(Getting Frustrated)

Did you really call me at fucking early o'clock in the morning to lecture me on the danger of being on The Bachelor.

ASHLYN

Yes?

*There is a moment of pause MALINA takes a deep breath.*

MALINA

I have to get up for work in 6 hours.

ASHLYN

I'm sorry.

MALINA

I don't need you to apologize. I just want you to talk to me.

ASHLYN

I know. I know. I'm sorry.

MALINA

Ash.

ASHLYN

Sorry. Damn it.

MALINA

It's OK.

ASHLYN

You wanna hear something weird?

MALINA

*Rolling onto her stomach*

What?

ASHLYN

*Starting to pace.*

I had the weirdest dream last night and you were in it.

MALINA

Oh yeah?

ASHLYN

Yup.

MALINA

Well, what was it about?

ASHLYN

OK. So you know how sometimes you dream and you're in your house but it's not your house? And you're like confused because it's so similar and yet so... wrong?

*Lights begin to fade ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 dressed in the same clothes as ASHLYN appears onstage.*

ASHLYN

So, I was walking through my house, well my "not" house, and I hear yelling coming from somewhere around me and so I hide. Two people come around the corner and it's you and Jake. I moved to get closer and I could hear what you guys were saying. First you said, "She is not the problem," and then Jake said, "She is holding you back. Why do you think you owe her anything?" and then you said "She's my best friend."

*ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 crosses by ASHLYN's bed to hide. We see ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 wearing the same clothes as MALINA enter with ENSEMBLE MAN. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 and ENSEMBLE MAN are silently arguing and mouth along to the words that are supposed to be theirs. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 is listening in on their conversation and after the last line of their dialogue she falls out into the open. When that happens the dream becomes super meta ASHLYN becomes motionless and stares at the scene in front of her. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 and ENSEMBLE MAN become creepy and their whole demeanor changes. ENSEMBLE MAN raises a knife as if he's going to stab ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1.*

MALINA

*Cutting ASHLYN's fantasy off.*  
He would never-

ASHLYN

Do what? Talk about me to you? Because I'm not deaf Mal. I was just a room away.

MALINA

Jake loves you. He knows how important you are to me.

ASHLYN

No. Jake loves you. He didn't know this was a two-for-one deal.

*MALINA rubs her hand across her face and takes a deep breath.*

MALINA

Is that what this phone call is about? Because you know that-

ASHLYN

Jake called me he wanted to know if I would give him my blessing.

MALINA

Your blessing? What is he getting Bar Mitzvahed?

ASHLYN

He said he already has the ring.

MALINA

What?

ASHLYN

*Starting to get more upset.*  
He has the ring.

MALINA

*(Upset)*  
Why the hell would you tell me that?

*Starting to pace as she talks.*  
This kind of thing is supposed to be a surprise. Did he tell you to prepare me?

ASHLYN

No.

MALINA

Then why would you ruin the surprise?

ASHLYN

I'm sorry.

MALINA

Would you stop fucking apologizing. You knew how special this is to me and you ruined the surprise. Because you wanted to punish him. Is that why you called me?!

ASHLYN

No, I...

MALINA

You have been a really shitty friend lately. I'm going to bed. I just- I can't talk to you right now. I thought you'd be happy for me.

ASHLYN

Don't go, please. I need-

*MALINA hangs up the phone. ASHLYN pulls a diary out from her bedsheets and begins to write. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1, ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2, and ENSEMBLE MAN emerge once again dressed as their counterparts. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 and ENSEMBLE MAN come out first ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 comes in chasing after them. This time the characters speak for themselves.*

ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1

Malina, please.

ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2

No.

*Flashing a ring at ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1.*

I made my choice.

ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1

Jake, you know I love the both of you but she's my best friend. I need her.

ENSEMBLE MAN

Well, she doesn't need you anymore. She has me now. And I'm much less high maintenance.

*ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 slaps ENSEMBLE MAN on the chest jokingly and laughs.*

ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2

You were never one to beg, Ash. I wouldn't start now. It's unattractive. Do you want to be alone forever?

*ENSEMBLE WOMAN 2 and ENSEMBLE MAN exit together all lovey dovey like. ASHLYN watches them leave. ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 moves to center stage and sinks down to the floor. ASHLYN turns her head to look at ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 and looks disgusted. ASHLYN gets up and throws the notebook at ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1, she then sinks to the floor next to ENSEMBLE WOMAN 1 in a similar fashion so they are sitting back to back.*

*We see the lights change as if the sun is rising and then we hear two gentle knocks.*

MALINA

Ash?

*ASHLYN looks up. The lights fade.*

END OF PLAY