

Daisy Chains

Scene One

[Lauren's house. Nolan let's himself in.]

Nolan: Lo? Are you ready babe?

[Lauren appears at top of stairs, smiling, runs down stairs into his arms]

Lauren: Hey! *[quick kiss]* Yeah, just gotta grab my bag.

Nolan: I brought you something *[gives her a daisy with a note]*

Lauren: *[reads the note]* Awwwwhee, sweetheart! I love you too!

[Nolan kisses the top of her head, smiling, Lauren beams and turns to add the daisy to a vase full of them, all with notes]

Lauren: Crap! I gotta feed the dog, be right back.

Nolan: Kay well hurry up, we're gonna be late.

[Lauren exits for a few seconds, comes back flushed like she'd been running]

Nolan: Your sure you have everything?

Lauren: Yepp, let's go.

[both head for the door Nolan leading, Lauren touching his waist]

END SCENE

Scene 2

[*Katie and Jessica sit on a bench to the right of the stage, In the background Nolan and Lauren can be seen with their heads together, standing close*]

KATIE: Look at them. They're adorable, aren't they?

JESSICA: Yeah, absolutely charming...

KATIE: How long has it been now?

JESSICA: [*Examining fingernails*] Just over a year, if I remember correctly.

KATIE: They're perfect for each other! I just hope to find a guy like him one day.

JESSICA: Yeah same... Too bad he's taken.

KATIE: What? No silly, I mean a guy *like* him. Someone who will love me and be there for me like Nolan is for Lauren. Remember when he filled her locker with balloons on Valentine's Day? Wasn't that so sweet?

JESSICA: Sickeningly so.

KATIE: I mean even the way he asked her out was perfect. I wish some guy would declare his feelings for me at the school dance. It was just *so* romantic.

JESSICA: I know, soo cute.

KATIE: I hope they stay together forever. Lauren is so lucky to have a guy like Nolan in her life. Don't you think she's lucky, Jessica?

JESSICA: Practically a leprechaun.

KATIE: Oh, Jessica. Look at the way they glow around each other. I hope to be that happy one-day.

JESSICA: Wouldn't that be special...

KATIE: Could you think of a better match?

[Bell rings]

JESSICA; Nope, c'mon lets go, cooking class is gonna suck now...

END SCENE

Scene Three

[Chris, Nolan and Luke in the gym, passing a basketball around]

Chris : Man, you guys would not believe the dime I scoped today driving to practice.

Nolan : Oh yeah?

Chris : Yeaah dude, such a MILF.

[Luke laughs and rolls his eye at Chris. Chris notices, furrows brows.]

Chris : What's that look for?!

Luke : I'm sorry man, but you could never wheel a milf, you just don't have what it takes.

[Nolan and Luke both laugh, as Chris brushes off the comment.]

Nolan : So true, we all know that I'm the only one here who could pull that shit off, I could bottle every broad in the book !

Chris : Don't get so cocky Nol, it might come back to bite you in the ass. Plus you've got Lauren.

Luke : Yeah, too bad you're on a tight leash

[Chris laughs, sits down on the bench, grabs a bottled water. Luke and Nolan continue passing the basketball.]

Nolan : Yeah right! I may have Lauren, but that doesn't stop my wheels from rollin'. What she don't know won't hurt her eh.

Luke : Atta boy, don't let her hold you down!

Nolan : Never man, you of all people know that I could never let one chick stop my flow.

Chris : Man, why would you even say that? Laurens amazing to you.

[Luke stares at Chris, ignoring the comment. Chris gets up, and heads off stage.]

Luke : Freak! Speaking of chicks Nolan, your girl offered me a personal study sesh for Spanish after school tommorrow eh?

Nolan: What?

Luke: *[teasing]* Oh yeah man, guess I'm finally gonna find out what's kept you tied down for the past year.

Nolan: Your joking right?

Luke: No way man, Imma be hitting that ass up.

[Nolan pauses, looking at Luke, anger filling his eyes. He drops the basketball. Tension builds between Nolan and Luke].

Luke : Obviously I'm kidding man, don't get your shit in a knot. She's your girl, I get that..

Nolan : No man, I know... Don't worry about it...

END SCENE

Scene Four

[Lauren's House. Nolan and Lauren enter Living Room, Nolan flops onto the couch while Lauren tidies around him.]

Lauren: Want anything to eat? I think my mom went grocery shopping today

Nolan: Nah, I'm good.

[Lauren walks off stage, into kitchen]

Lauren (OFFSTAGE): I got a B on my Chemistry test. You know the one that I was so stressed about? Oh, and how was practice? I'm sorry I didn't meet you before it started to give you the shoes you left yesterday...

Nolan: Lo, can you please come in here? Forget the snacks.

[Lauren pauses, then replies slowly, with a question in her voice]

Lauren: Uh yeah sure

[Lauren re-enters and sits next to Nolan, her hand on his knee. Nolan is agitated, takes a deep breath, runs his hands up and down his legs once or twice]

Lauren: What's up babe?

Nolan: I don't know Lo, why don't you tell me?

[Nolan stands, starts pacing]

Lauren: Nolan, really I have no idea what you're talking about.

[Nolan slams his hands through his hair, knocking his hat to the ground]

Nolan: You know what I'm talking about, don't play innocent Lauren. You know, hitting on one of my best friend's is really not a good idea. Besides, like Luke would be into you.

Lauren: Luke? What? I don't know why you're bringing up Luke. Did he say something to you at practice or something?

Nolan: Oh come on Lauren, you told Luke to come over for a [*air quotes*] 'study session'

Lauren: Yeah? He needs help in Spanish.

[Lauren is slightly leaning away by this point, wary of Nolan]

Nolan: He's not even taking Spanish. Tell me the truth Lauren. Are you guys seeing each other behind my back?

[Lauren stands, shaking her head]

Lauren: Nolan, you're crazy.

Nolan: I'm not crazy Lauren, something's going on. I know it.

Lauren: You really need to work on the trust issues Nolan.

[Nolan turns and backhands Lauren, Lauren falls onto couch, gaping and holding cheek]

Lauren (PANICKED): What the hell Nolan!

Nolan: Don't you dare flip this on me! I'm not the one creeping your best friend!

Lauren: I'm not doing anything to your best friend!

Nolan: Don't Lie!

[Nolan grabs Lauren by her hair and slams her into the floor. Lauren loses Consciousness, Nolan stands above her, yelling.]

Nolan: Are you ready to tell the truth now? You worthless cheating trash.
Huh? are you ready to be honest with me now? Lauren?

[Nolan blinks, then kneels beside Lauren, cradling her head]

Nolan: Lauren? Baby? Oh god, Jesus Lauren I'm sorry! Come on babe, just wake up.

[Nolan tries to lift Lauren off the floor but gets too upset, stands and paces]

Nolan: What have I done? Shit, I didn't mean to knock you out. Lo?

[Lauren stirs, slowly sits up rubbing her head]

Nolan: Lo! Thank god! Baby I'm sorry.

Lauren: What? *[Pauses, blinking]* What happened? *[Sighs loudly]* I didn't ask Luke to study Nolan, there's nothing going on. Just believe me.

Nolan: That not what he said, you okay?

[Lauren sits on the couch, holding her head and glaring at Nolan for refusing to believe that she's telling the truth, tears run down her face but she tries really hard not to make it obvious]

Lauren: Well obviously he lied to you

Nolan: I don't see how that's obvious.

Lauren: What have I done to make you so suspicious all the time?

Nolan: They all want you Lauren, I know they do. I can't have that.

Lauren: Why can't you hit them instead

Nolan: You act like I hit you all the time...

Lauren: You've hit me plenty of times...

Nolan: Didn't realize I was so terrible to you. And why are you still crying?

Lauren: You're not terrible to me, and my head hurts, what do you expect

Nolan: I'm supposed to expect you to be crying?

Lauren: Well yeah, you just fucking knocked me out. You need to control yourself.

Nolan: I need to control my self? What the hell Lauren? You know what, if I'm such a terrible boyfriend why don't you just dump me. Huh? Are you that needy?

Lauren: That's not funny Nolan. I'm just giving you an explanation.

Nolan: No Lo, you just called me a terrible boyfriend who doesn't love or understand you. That sum it up for you? Know what? I'm done.

Lauren: Nolan, please don't do this. I'm not mad that you hit me, please just stay.

Nolan: No I think you've made it clear enough that you don't want me here.

[Nolan gets up, starts to leave]

Lauren: Nolan wait! *[Grabs Nolan's arm]*

[Nolan backhands Lauren]

Nolan: Fuck off Lo. You need to figure out where you stand with this.

[Nolan exits, Lauren cries after him]

Lauren: I'm sorry! Nolan please stay!

[Lauren stares at the door for a second, then picks up his hat and puts it on the table]

Lauren: I love him. I really, really do. He doesn't mean to hit me, it's a

reflex thing.

And he's had such a hard life. No father, his moms an alcoholic. Like, I don't know how anyone could be calm and collected all the time. I was mean to him, I shouldn't have been so rude. He didn't deserve me treating him like that.

[Lauren glances down at her charm bracelet, fingering a daisy pendant]

Lauren: He gave me this charm for my birthday a couple of months ago. Daisies represent loyal love. I have a whole vase of fresh ones. Each one proving he loves me. Everyone has faults. He's loyal to me, and he loves me and that's all that matters.

A few bruises won't hurt as much as him leaving me. Or me leaving him. He needs me.

My friends will understand when they fall in love, you have to sacrifice and fight.

You just have to take the good with the bad sometimes.

END SCENE

Scene five

Enter Lauren, Nolan, Katie, and Jessica into cafeteria with lunch trays, sit at their table.

Nolan: So how come you were late this morning anyhow? I know your lazy, but c'mon, you should at least try to show up on time.

Lauren: I'm sorry, I guess I slept in. I had a really bad headache this morning.

Nolan: Well no wonder! I told you it was stupid to keep that can opener in the top cabinet. Are you sure you should be eating those?

Jessica: Ha! Is that what happened to your face? God Lauren, I'd sure slow up on those fries, soon you'll be stupid and fat.

[Lauren looks uncomfortable, puts the fries down.]

Nolan: How about you? You're chunking out a bit yourself.

[Chris enters, Takes the chair beside Katie.]

Chris: Hey guys,

Everyone: Hey

Jessica: Back to subject Nolan, unlike your girlfriend, I wear it well.

Nolan: *[Laughs]* Yeah, Okay

Chris: What are you guys talking about?

Nolan: How my girl's gotten a bit... rounder.

Chris: Lauren's not fat..

Nolan: *[Laughs]*, Yeah well you haven't seen her naked then have you?

Jessica: *[Laughs]* Oh god. Come on Nolan, I'll buy you dessert.

[Jessica and Nolan move to corner of scene, getting dessert.]

Chris: *[Rolls eyes]* Dick.

Katie: No kidding. What actually happened to you Laur?

Lauren: Exactly what Nolan said happened..

Katie: Yeah right, you keep your can opener in the drawer, not your upper cabinets.

Lauren: We moved it.

Chris: Oh right. (-sarcastic-)

Lauren: Whatever, you guys are being stupid.

Chris: Seriously Lauren, what the hell happened to you?

Lauren: Nothing!

Katie: Come on Lauren! You're practically limping, and your eyes are all spacey. Actually, you kind of look like you've been unconscious...

Chris: I don't think a can opener can do that...

Lauren: Please you guys, just drop it. You're overreacting.

[Chris stares at Lauren, squinting for next two lines.]

Katie: Fine, we just, we worry about you Laur.

Lauren: I know, but seriously, I'm fine.

Chris: He hit you.

Katie: What?

Lauren: Excuse me?

Chris: His knuckles are bruised, and all of you is bruised. He's making up shit excuses, that fucking piece of shit hit you!

Lauren: No! Of course not! God Chris lay off the drugs, they're making you crazy. I'm done with this.

Chris: *[Stands up slamming hands on the table]* ARE YOU SERIOUS, HE FUCKING HIT YOU!

[Jessica and Chris re-enter scene.]

Nolan: *[Looks quickly at Lauren]* Dude, what are you talking about?

Chris: Fuck off man, just get out of here!

Nolan: What did you just say to me?

Jessica: Uh, well, the testosterone is a little to apparent in here, so I'll just peace. See ya.

*[Everyone leaves but **Chris Nolan and Lauren**].*

Nolan: So what's going on here? Huh? Have you been spreading stories again? Been craving just a little more attention? Come on Lauren, what is it? Are you going to answer me, or did you just forget the English Language?

Chris: Don't talk to her like that you meat, you don't deserve her.

Nolan: And you think you do? Just fuck off man, this is not your business. Answer the question Lauren.

Lauren: I swear Nolan, I didn't say a word!

Nolan: *[Throws Lauren's tray]* DON'T FUCKING LIE LAUREN

Chris: She's serious man, I'm just not stupid.

Nolan: Yeah right. That fucking bitch is lying to you, and now she's lying to me. I'm going to deal with her.

Lauren: I'm not lying!

Nolan; SHUT UP!

Lauren: Please Nolan, don't be mad.

Nolan: I said SHUT UP!

Chris: Calm your fucking shit man. She's not lying.

*[Enter **principal**, **Nolan and Chris** sit quickly, **Nolan** throws his arm around **Lauren**, **Lauren** flinches.]*

Principal: [*Clears throat*] Is there a problem here? I thought I heard shouting.

Nolan: That wasn't us Mam,

Principal: Good lord Ms. Gary, are you alright! You look ready to drop!

Lauren: Fine Mam,

Principal: No, you're not well at all, Mr. Polan, assist Ms. Gary home.

Nolan: Don't you think that's something I should do Mam?

Principal: I'm doing a writing clinic in your next block that you'd hate to miss, Mr Polan can handle this. Move along.

[Nolan rams Chris's shoulder as they pass]

Nolan: Don't fucking touch her..

END SCENE

Scene Six

Jessica, Luke and Katie in the hallway, heading to class.

Jessica: Major drama at lunch today eh?

Luke: Yeah, what was that all about.

Katie (Uncomfortable): Uhh I'm not sure,

Jessica: Who cares, I've always said that Chris is a bit of a weirdo.

Luke: haha yeah for sure, he's probably just trying to stir shit between the

lovebirds. Everyone knows he's frickin in love with Lauren.

Jessica: Yeah right! Lauren's pretty dumb but even she's not that stupid!

Luke: Ah well he's gonna get his ass kicked if he's not careful.

Katie: Oh I hope not..

Jessica: You should go for him Kate, you guys would be super cute!

Luke: If you could get him to stop drooling over Lauren!

Katie: Uhh no, we're just friends.

Jessica: Awe Katie, you're so shy!

Katie: Well why don't you go for him?

Jessica: Uhh no, I like my men with a little more... Muscle.

Luke: (choke laughs) Do you now?

Jessica: Sure do, (dramatic wink) how you doin'?

Katie: You guys are gross!

[Everyone Laughs]

Luke: Seriously though Jess, we should do something sometime.

Jessica: I'll see if I can fit you into my schedule.

Luke: Pfft schedule of doing what exactly? Stalking Nolan?

Jessica: (Play shoves Luke) Shut up! Saturday night work for you?

Luke: Sure does baby

Katie: (under breath) You guys are pathetic

END SCENE

Scene Seven

Lauren and Nolan in their bedrooms, shown as a split wall, on their cell phones to each other.

Lauren: Hello?

Nolan: Hey babe. It's me.

Lauren: Oh..Hi

Nolan: Lo, about today...

Lauren: No Nolan, don't do this to me,

Nolan: Just listen a second

Lauren: No

Nolan: Baby I love you, I just, something snaps. I'm so sorry.

Lauren: That's not fair, you know I love you too.

Nolan: Please forgive me, you know it wont happen again, I promise.

Lauren: *[Tears up]* You promised last time too Nolan. I just, I don't know if I can handle it anymore

Nolan: Come on Lo, please don't do this, please, I love you so much. How can I make this better?

Lauren: You can't

Nolan: Don't be stupid, there has to be something...

Lauren: I hurt Nolan! Everywhere! My head is pounding and my back is stiff. Our friends noticed this time Nolan, they noticed. I can't handle that.

Nolan: Come on Lo, You care what they think? Do you really believe them when they say I don't love you? Who could you doubt it. I not only love you Lauren, I need you. You know that.

Lauren: [*sobs*]

Nolan: Baby please, you're the best part of me, I can't live this life without you.

Lauren: This isn't fair!

Nolan: I know baby, I know.

Lauren: I just, I cant leave you.

Nolan: Lo I will make this up to you, I promise, with all my heart. I am so sorry.

Lauren: I know. I've got to go.

Nolan: Okay, I love you, so much.

Lauren: I love you too.

[Hangs up, Nolan's side blacks out, Lauren still bawling. A daisy hits her floor tied to a rock with a message, Lauren bends picks it up and reads it.]

Lauren: [*reading out loud*] 'I'm sorry' [*sighs*] I know.

[drops the daisy into the jar.]

END SCENE

Scene Eight

*[Cafeteria, the day after the last cafeteria outburst. The mood is tense. **Lauren** is sitting beside **Nolan**, and his arm is around her. There is food in front of her but she doesn't eat. **Jessica** sits on other side of **Nolan**, **Katie** beside **Jessica**, and **Luke** beside her. The scene begins with **Chris** entering and slamming his tray down on the table without a word, then sitting beside **Luke**. No one acknowledges him.]*

Jessica: So Nolan, how do you think you did on that chemistry test? I'm pretty sure I bombed it, but you must have passed.

Nolan: I probably failed too, couldn't stop thinking about my girl all block. *[Nolan pulls Lauren closer and looks at her lovingly, kissing her on the head]* You'll be the end of me, beautiful. *[laughs]*

[Lauren laughs awkwardly and stares at her food]

Katie: It's nice to have everything back to normal, you guys are too cute.

Nolan: Back to normal?

Jessica: She means that the soup special is chicken noodle again! *[Pause as everyone stares at JESSICA, then she continues quietly]* I hate broccoli and cheese...

[Luke laughs, Luke and Jessica make flirty eye contact]

Nolan: Yeah, that's what I thought she meant. Do you want me to get you some soup baby?

Lauren: *(quietly)* I'm full, but thanks anyways.

Luke: Hey Chris, want to drive me home after school? My car's still in the shop

[Before Chris can answer Jessica interrupts]

Jessica: I'll drive you Luke, I go right by your house anyways.

Luke: Thanks, sounds great.

[Luke winks at Jessica, she smiles]

Nolan: (to **Lauren**) How 'bout you, sweetheart? Want me to drive you home? *[doesn't wait for her to answer]* I'll meet you after your last class, okay?

[Lauren nods]

Luke: Hey, Nolan. You going to hit up Ericka Smith's party with me on Friday?

Nolan: Nah man, rain check. I'm hanging with Lo. *[Kisses LAURENS head]*

Luke: What! Come on, I need my wing man! How am I supposed to wheel chicks without you?

Nolan: Since when have you ever needed my help?

[Luke and Nolan both laugh]

Luke: Yeah fair enough.

[The bell rings, they ALL stand]

Nolan: Don't worry man, broads love you, almost as much as they love me.

Luke: Pfft yeah sure man, you got great wheels with the old ball and chain on your ankle

[They laugh, and Nolan play-shoves Luke]

END SCENE

Scene Nine

*[During Class **Chris** passes **Lauren** notes which she ignores, bell rings **Lauren** is leaving her last class with arms full of books, scene begins as **Chris** walks up behind **Lauren**.]*

Chris: Hey, Lauren! Wait up! *[CHRIS grabs LAUREN's hand and she wheels around in surprise]*

Lauren: Chris... I can't talk right now. Nolan's waiting for me.

Chris: No Laur, this can't wait. Can you hold off? Just a second.

[Lauren shakes him off and keeps walking]

Lauren: I have to go, Chris. We shouldn't even be talking...

[Chris grabs her and holds her against the wall. Lauren looks shocked, dropping her books.]

Chris: NO! You need to listen to me right now! Why can't you just dump the asshole? He doesn't treat you right!

Lauren: Chris! Get off me. He treats me fine, great. He loves me.

Chris: I would treat you better, I would... I do, love you more. You don't know half the things he says when your not around.

Lauren: I'm sorry Chris but I love him, and he loves me too. *[shows charm bracelet]* See? We love each other.

[Chris touches her face, and she cringes as his fingers brush across her bruise]

Chris: Is this what you call love?

[Lauren looks down, not saying anything]

Chris: IS IT? Is that what love is? Come on Lauren, are you kidding me! He's my best friend, but It disgusts me how he treats you like garbage, you're worth so much more than that!

Lauren: Just leave me alone!

Chris: No Lauren I'm not going to leave you alone, you don't want to be left alone.

[Chris leans in to kiss Lauren, and she desperately struggles out of his grasp and moves away from him, rubbing her arms where he was touching them]

Lauren: What the Hell is wrong with you, Chris? You say you're better than him, but look at you! You're no better than anyone else, so stop thinking you are. Just please, never touch me again.

[Nolan storms in raging, rushes up to Chris]

Nolan: I told you not to fucking touch my girlfriend!

[Nolan punches Chris in the face, who is immediately knocked to the ground.]

Lauren: Nolan! Stop I had it under control! He was backing off!

[Nolan backhands Lauren. She falls to the ground. She gets on to her knees, cradling her cheek, but does not stand up]

Nolan: Were you cheating on me? With this piece of shit! Is that what your saying?

Lauren: *(Crying)* God! Nolan, no! He grabbed me, I promise! I could never cheat on you, I love you too much! He just...

Nolan: He just what Lo? What did he just do? Huh! Just get the fuck outta here Lauren, I'll deal with you later.

[Lauren jumps up and scurries off stage. Nolan watches her leave and then walks towards Chris, who has been sitting on the floor watching the whole time. Nolan grabs him by the shirt collar, pulling him up slightly. Chris does not look afraid]

Nolan: Don't ever fucking touch her again, get it? She wants me, she loves me. Your just a piece of shit on the bottom of her shoe. So keep. Your hands. Off.

Chris: You can't scare me like you scare her Nolan. Who are you? You used to be the last person to do something like this.

[Nolan drops Chris and kicks him in the face, glaring at him before storming off stage]

END SCENE

Scene Ten

[Lauren sits on her bed, holding a daisy and crying]

Lauren: Why does he have to do this? I don't understand why, why me, why me?

[Lauren curls into a fetal position and stays there for a moment, then a daisy falls through the window]

Lauren: What the?

[Lauren picks up daisy on floor]

Lauren (READING THE NOTE ON THE DAISY): Lo, I'll love you forever, Nolan. I can't do this anymore. I don't believe him.

[Lauren walks up to her vanity, wiping her tears and applying some make-up and perfume]

Lauren: This is it.

[Lauren slowly takes off her charm bracelet, keeps it in her hand. She stares at the audience for a moment, then sighs and exits]

END SCENE

Scene Eleven

*[School gym, funeral arrangements, **Principal** addressing cast and audience rest of cast sitting cross-legged with their backs to the audience. **Jess and Luke** have their arms around each other, **Katie** is sobbing into **Chris's** lap. Nolan is not there.]*

Principal: We are gathered here today to mourn a most gruesome and terrible loss. Lauren Gary, an honoured student here at Willow Brooke High, past away last night after a brutal beating from her boyfriend, Nolan York. The police do not wish me to tell you this. You're parents may also disagree with the information I am supplying. But in times like this protocol does not take priority. In times like this, we have to stand together and be a family. Lauren was one of the best of us, remember her that way, remember her charm and her bubbly attitude. Remember that she was always there to hold the hand of a friend in need, or even to hold the hand of a stranger. She was the girl who would always hold the door open, or drop something off at the office, or give hints on how to do a tricky essay. She was a straight A student with deep involvement in our leadership and global outreach programs. Lauren was loved dearly by some, and liked greatly by all. Celebrate her, for her spirit will never die so long as you remember.

*[Katie stands and walks shakily to the podium, the **principal** takes a seat in the chair beside it, pulls out a tissue.]*

Katie: Hi, um, I'm Katie. Lauren is, well, I guess was, my best friend.

[Katie Stops to pull out tissue, takes a deep breath]

Katie: We've been best friends since grade one, when I was getting my hair pulled and Lauren marched right up to those guys and told them off. She, uh, she always stood up for me like that. She always had my back. We were like two peas in a pod. She always encouraged me to be brave and fearless, to say what I thought and act on what I knew was right. She made me better. I never thought that Lauren, strong, fierce confident Lauren would end up being the one who needed to be stuck up for. Even to me, Nolan and Lauren were the perfect couple, she hid it so well. I didn't have a clue. Maybe if I did, Lauren would still be here. She was not weak, she was just in love. Now she's not here at all. I just, gone. That's the only way to describe my best friend now.

CURT AIN CLOSE

END SCENE