

Here We Are, Again Or This is Why It's Hard

An Exploration of Allowing Yourself to Fall Again
In Four Parts
By

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Here We Are, Again or This is Why It's Hard Jeffrey Lo 2

For Andrew and Em.
You'll know if it's you.

*Weep for yourself, my man,
You'll never be what is in your heart
Weep Little Lion Man,
You're not as brave as you were at the start
Rate yourself and rake yourself,
Take all the courage you have left
Wasted on fixing all the problems
That you made in your own head*

*But it was not your fault but mine
And it was your heart on the line
I really fucked it up this time
Didn't I, my dear?
Didn't I, my –*

*Tremble for yourself, my man,
You know that you have seen this all before
Tremble Little Lion Man,
You'll never settle any of your scores
Your graces is wasted in your face,
Your boldness stands alone among the wreck
Now learn from your mother or else spend your days biting your own neck*

*But it was not your fault but mine
And it was your heart on the line
I really fucked it up this time
Didn't I, my dear?*

Didn't I, my dear?

SETTING:

Here. Today. Everywhere. Forever.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

He – Take him as you will. He's a boy, by the way. Any race/ethnicity.

She – Take her as you will. She's a girl, by the way. Any race/ethnicity.

He's Thoughts – Take them as you will. He's probably a boy, by the way. Any race/ethnicity.

She's Thoughts – Take them as you will. She's probably a girl by the way. Any race/ethnicity.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE:

There are places in the script where few words occupy entire pages. That was on purpose.

If you need to re-type the script in any way for production purposes, please keep to the format in terms of punctuation, spacing between stage directions and lines, or placement of ellipses. I want the director, actors and designers to interpret the script as it is presented on the pages here.

Some sections requires characters to overlap their dialogue. I've designated when they start the next line with a “ / ”.

Don't go overboard with set pieces. You can probably do this with 4 chairs and a small table. Allow the audience to use their imagination. What's important is the relationship between He and She and the struggles they have with their feelings for one another. Scene shifts should be short, sweet and indicated with a brief, consistent sound. A ding perhaps? A bell maybe? Something like that.

Finally, this is a play. Play. Have fun.

RUNNING TIME:

Approx. 30 Minutes

Here We Are, Again
or
This is Why It's Hard

I.

HE stands.
SHE stands.
Lights reveal the two.

HE'S THOUGHTS stands next to HE.
SHE'S THOUGHTS stands next to SHE
Lights reveal the two.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
Because you've tried this before
And it didn't work
You allowed yourself to feel
But ended up hurt
Because words can say so much
But you always want more
Because you think he might feel the same
But you'll never be sure
This is why it's hard.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
Because you've become close friends
And that shit's scary
'Cause you ask "*Is this worth it?*"
The answer - very
Because your heart moves forward
But your mind moves back
But you see a kindred soul
You see what you lack
This is why it's hard.

As lights shift, HE'S THOUGHTS and
SHE'S THOUGHTS set up a table and
two chairs.

HE and SHE sit.

HE looks at SHE.
SHE looks at HE.

Silence.

SHE smiles at HE

HE smiles at SHE.

More silence.

Not awkward.

Just silent.

It's quite nice, really.

Well – HE

Yeah? SHE

I think we should call it a night. HE

Yeah. SHE

HE
At least *I* should probably call it a night. I'm exhausted. I bet you have more in you. I don't know how you do it.

SHE
No, I should get some rest. I'm getting tired too.

HE
So you do run out of energy.

SHE
Contrary to popular belief – yes.

HE
I had my doubts.

HE and SHE share a nice laugh.

As the laughter dies down –

SHE smiles at HE

HE smiles at SHE.

Silence.

Back to the silence and smiles.

It's still quite nice.

Beat.

SHE

We got good work done today.

HE

Yeah, we did.

HE starts to pack his things.

SHE

And a lot.

I think we're in good shape for next week's pitch.

HE

Me too.

Beat.

HE (*cont'd*)

Hey, thanks for staying late tonight.

SHE

Of course.

HE

On a Friday of all days.

SHE

It's fine. I mean, this is big for both of us.

HE

Yeah and I think that after our –

(Checking his watch:)

- oh, five or so hours of work, we're really going to nail this and make it happen.

SHE

I didn't really have anything else going on tonight.

HE

Me either. Clearly.

SHE

If I weren't here I'd just have to go to my sister's. We're planning this big party. For our parent's anniversary.

HE

Oh, I'm sorry to keep you from that.

SHE

Oh no, no. I'd rather be here. It's better if she plans this on her own.
She can be a pain.

HE

Hah.

SHE

You know how sisters can be.

HE

Right.

HE smiles at SHE.

SHE smiles at HE.

Again with the silence and smiles.

But it sure does feel good...

Beat.

HE (*cont'd*)

Alright.
Well.
Goodnight.

SHE

Goodnight.

HE almost exits.

But before he does –

Lights shift.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
Because you thought you found him
But he left that day
Because you keep your guard up
It's safer that way
But this feels like it's right
But what's right can get overblown
Because despite everything

You still don't want to be alone.
This is why it's hard.

Lights Shift.

Hey –

SHE

HE turns around.

What's up?

HE

Pause.

Pause.

Pause.

There's no turning back now.

SHE just has to –

Do you wanna grab a drink?
Or dinner?
Or both? Or just one?
I don't know...
Something?

SHE

Silence.

Silence.

No smiles here.

Just agonizing anticipation.

Pause.

I –
I should probably –

HE

Right.

SHE

It's getting late.

HE

Right. Right.

SHE

I should really –

HE

Of course.

SHE

Silence.

Well...
Um.
Goodnight.

HE

Goodnight.

SHE

*HE exits.
SHE sits.
Lights shift.*

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard
Because you were lucky once
And you won't be again
'Cause you've messed things up before
And you know how that's been
Because your future was handed to you
But you threw your future to hell
Because you know what you're capable of
And can no longer trust yourself
This is why it's hard

*Lights shift.
HE re-enters.
Beat.*

Actually.

HE

...

*And there's that silence of agonizing
anticipation again...*

HE

...
I'm hungry.

And, um, thirsty.

...

Yeah.

SHE

Yeah?

Pause.

HE

Yeah.

SHE

Ok.

HE

So we should get food.

And drinks.

Yeah?

SHE

Yeah. Ok.

HE

Ok.

HE and SHE exit to get food and drinks.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This.

II.

As lights shift, HE'S THOUGHTS and SHE'S THOUGHTS set the scene.

HE and SHE are sitting in HE'S car.

HE pulls up to SHE's apartment.

HE

Here we are.

SHE

Here we are.
I had a really great time tonight.

HE

Yeah? Good.

*HE looks away.
Lights shift.*

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
'Cause you've felt this for a while
And what you're feeling feels so real.
 You've felt this for a while
And your wounds are ready to heal
Because this is your third date
But you still don't know how he feels
 This is your third date
Without a kiss. So what's his deal?
This is why it's hard.

Lights shift.

*SHE smiles at HE.
SHE watches HE.*

A brief silence that feels like forever.

*HE finally looks at SHE.
HE finally smiles at SHE.*

Beat.

SHE

I've really enjoyed these couple of days we've been going out. You know, outside of work.
I really enjoy spending time with you.

HE

Me too.

SHE

You do?

HE

Of course.

Lights shift.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
Because you wanted to avoid this
But how can you fight what is right?
 You wanted to avoid this
But her smile's glow is quite a sight
Because it is right here before you
If you fall will you run?
 It is right here before you
Don't repeat what you've done.
This is why it's hard.

Lights shift.

HE

Really. It's been great.

SHE

I agree.

HE

I mean, I've always liked talking to you and everything at work and all / but

SHE

/ Righ / t

HE

/ outside of wo / rk

SHE

/ Yeah / ...

HE
/ It's been different.

SHE
Different?

HE
Yeah.

SHE
Oh.

HE
In a good way.

SHE
OH. Good.

HE
A great way.

Silence.
HE and SHE look at each other –
expressionless.

A quick beat.

HE and SHE remember to smile at each
other.

HE (*cont'd*)
So –

SHE
So –

HE
Here we are.

SHE
Again.

Silence.
Beat.

HE
Maybe I can walk you to –

SHE
Oh, no need –

HE
Ok –

SHE
I mean it's just over there.

HE
Right.

SHE
Unless you *want* to walk me to my / door.

HE
/I do.

SHE
You do?

HE
Yes. I would like to walk you to your door.

SHE
Ok.

They don't move.

HE
But I guess you're right.

SHE
What?

HE
It's just right there.

SHE
Oh. It is.

HE
It is.

Ok then.

SHE

Silence.
SHE opens the door.
Lights shift.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.
Because it's impossible to understand him
What the hell does he want?
 It's impossible to understand him
Will he walk me or not?
This is why –

Lights shift.
HE pulls SHE in for a kiss.

But...

HE misses her lips.
He is kissing her chin.

Lights shift.

HE'S THOUGHTS

- it's hard.
Because lips are rather small
And they are really easy to miss
 Lips are rather small
Making it tricky to land a kiss.

HE'S THOUGHTS AND SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.

Lights shift.

HE's lips are still on SHE's chin.
They stay that way for a moment.

They're both in a good place right now.
Strange position. Good place.

Finally, they break apart.

Oops. HE

HE and SHE laugh.

I should probably try that again. HE (*cont'd*)

Yeah. SHE

Can I try that again? HE

Please. SHE

*HE slowly moves in and kisses SHE.
Finally.*

*The kiss breaks.
Wow.*

*HE looks at SHE.
SHE looks at HE.*

*SHE smiles at HE.
HE smiles at SHE*

*Silence.
This silence is even better than before.*

Then –

Do you remember my parent's party? SHE

The one you were planning with your sister? HE

Yeah, for their anniversary. SHE

What about it? HE

SHE

Um.
Would you maybe be interested in coming?
You know, with me.

Silence.

SHE (*cont'd*)

Wow, I'm sorry. What was I think/ing?

HE

Sure.

SHE

What?

HE

I'd love to. Yeah. That sounds nice. Really nice.

HE kisses SHE.

Lights shift.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This.

HE'S THOUGHTS

Is.

III.

As lights shift, HE'S THOUGHTS and SHE'S THOUGHTS set the scene.

*HE is walking.
SHE is sitting at home.*

This is why it's hard.

HE'S THOUGHTS

The past.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

The past.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

HE runs into his ex.

Oh. Wow.
Hey.
...
Hi.

HE

The past.

HE'S THOUGHTS

*SHE gets a phone call.
It's SHE's ex.*

Hello?

SHE

The past.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

How've you been?

HE

Yeah, it's been so long.

SHE

Me? I'm – I'm doing great. Yeah.	HE
Things have been good.	SHE
Everything's been going well at work.	HE
Family's good.	SHE
And you?	HE
So what's up? Why'd you call?	SHE
This is why it's hard.	HE'S THOUGHTS
Oh.	HE
This is why it's hard.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
What?	SHE
Wow.	HE
What?	SHE
Congratulations.	HE
Do not say that.	SHE
I couldn't even – How far along are you?	HE

SHE

You've been thinking of me? What do you expect me to say to that?

HE

3 months. Wow. And the father's...?

SHE

You have got to be –
You are married. Remember?
That woman you – ? The one you left me for?
Yeah, she's your wife.

HE

Your husband. Wow.

SHE

Stop.
Do. Not. Say That.
NO.

HE

I'm sorry. I didn't realize you were married.

SHE

I will not see you.

HE

Right the ring... Of course. I should have –

SHE'S THOUGHTS

Move away.

SHE

Bye.

HE

Well congratulations again.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

Move on.

SHE

BYE.

HE

Lots of congratulations. I'm really happy your life has been going the way you, well...

Wanted it...

MOVE FORWARD.

GOODBYE!!

SHE'S THOUGHTS

SHE

SHE hangs up the phone.

It was good to see you too.

HE

Move –

HE'S THOUGHTS

See you around.

HE

HE stands.

SHE sits.

Silence.

Beat.

Silence.

Beat.

Move forward.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

SHE calls HE.

Hello?

HE

Hey. How are you?

SHE

I'm... I'm alright.
How are you?

HE

Do you want to do something?

SHE

HE

Now?

SHE

Or tonight.

HE

I don't know...

SHE

Dinner? A movie?

HE

I'm not really feeling / like –

SHE

Anything?

HE

It's been a tough day.

SHE

I would just really love to see you.
Sometime today.

Silence.

SHE (*cont'd*)

Please.

Silence.

HE

Sorry, maybe next time.

SHE

Oh...

HE

I'm just not really feeling up for anything tonight.

HE'S THOUGHTS

Move –

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This.

HE'S THOUGHTS

Is.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

Why?

IV.

As lights shift, HE'S THOUGHTS and SHE'S THOUGHTS set the scene.

HE and SHE are getting ready for SHE's parent's anniversary party at SHE's apartment.

Silence.

*This is not one of those nice silences.
Far from it.
It is very, very silent.*

Hey.	SHE
What?	HE
This is why it's hard.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
Are you excited?	SHE
For what?	HE
The party.	SHE
Oh. Yeah. Sure.	HE
Convincing.	SHE

HE
What? I am.

SHE
Ok.

(Beat)
Are you ok?

HE
I'm fine. Excited.

SHE
You don't seem fine.

HE
It doesn't matter how I seem. I said I am fine. So I am fine. Ok?

HE'S THOUGHTS
This is why it's hard.

SHE
Ok.

SHE'S THOUGHTS
This is how it's happened before.

SHE
Ok...

Beat.

HE
Jesus.

SHE
What?

HE
I told you I'm fine.

SHE
I didn't say anything.

HE
But you're sitting there like – Like –
You clearly don't believe me.

SHE

I can't help it if I don't believe that everything's / fine.

HE

/ Why wouldn't everything be / fine?

SHE

/ I don't know. You tell / me.

HE

Do you hear your / self?

SHE

Yes! That's all I hear lately.
Myself.

Because something is wrong and you won't tell me what it is.

A painful pause.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you run.

HE

I don't think I should go.

SHE

What are you talking about?

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you run.

HE

I don't think I should go to your parent's
party tonight.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is how it hurts.

SHE

The anniversary party?

HE

Yes the anniversary party.

SHE

Why? Oh my God.

HE
What do you mean / why?

SHE
You just don't want to go all of a sud / den?

HE
Not all of a sud / den.

SHE
You were excited about this!

HE
YOU were excited about this.

SHE'S THOUGHTS SHE
This is how it hurts. JUST me?

HE
No, that's not what I meant.

SHE
I think that is what you meant.

HE
Don't do that.

SHE
What – what is happening?
What is happening here?
What? Do you want to break up / with me?

HE
That is / not what I said.

SHE
Is that what's happ / ening?

HE
NO! JESUS! All I said is I don't think I should go to your parents' tonight. I did / not –

SHE
WHY!?

HE
- I DID NOT SAY I WANTED TO BREAK UP WITH YOU.

SHE
THEN WHAT ARE YOU/ SAYING?

HE
I just think we're rushing into something we have no reason to rush / into.

SHE
Oh really?

HE
YES!

SHE
Where is this coming/ from?

HE
How long have we been dating?

SHE
You could have said that back/ when -

HE
I know but –

SHE
My family is expecting to meet you.

HE
I know but this is too/ soon.

SHE
What am I sup/ posed to say to them?

HE
THIS IS TOO SOON!

SHE
I ASKED YOU IF IT WAS TOO SOON AND YOU SAID –

HE
GODDAMNIT!

SHE'S THOUGHTS
This is how it hurts.

HE
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO
SAY, OK!

*And with the explosion...
A dead silence.*

SHE (*cont'd*)

This isn't just about the party is it?
You've been different.
For some time now...
You've been different.

...
What happened?

...
What is it?

...
What's wrong?

HE

...
...
...
nothing...

SHE

Don't just say nothing.
Please.
Give me more than just nothing. I think I deserve that much.

More silence.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you hide.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you try.

Beat.

SHE

Do you remember that day I called you and asked if I could see you?
I didn't care what it was we did, I just needed to see you and I told you that. I told you I
needed to see you. And you said no.
Maybe next time.

That day, right before I called you, I got a call. From my ex-boyfriend. I hadn't heard from
him in, I don't know how long but he called and he said to me –

I've been thinking about you.
Just like that...
I've been thinking about you.
He said he wanted to see me.

...
...
...

When we were still together he went on a trip.
For –
Business.

A few weeks later, the day before he was supposed to come back, I got a phone call from him.
He told me not to pick him up at the airport. He met a woman on the trip. Also from around
here. He said he couldn't explain it but he was in love with her. In love with her in a way he
couldn't be in love with me. The person he had been with for –

He left me for her.
And now they are married.

He told me, back then – *come on, you had to know there was no real future for us.*

...

Now he's calling me telling me he's thinking about me. That he wants to see me.

...
...

This is why it's hard.

HE'S THOUGHTS

He was the only man I've ever loved.

SHE

Because when you give someone your heart, they can never give it all back.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

I gave him my love.

SHE

They'll always keep a piece of it.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

And he left me for someone else.

SHE

Always.

SHE'S THOUGHTS

This is why it's hard.

HE'S THOUGHTS

After I hung up on him.

I called you.

And –

...

No, maybe next time...

...

SHE

Pause.

Beat.

So there...

SHE (*cont'd*)

Pause.

SHE stands to leave the room but before she does –

HE

I didn't want to fall for you, you know. I did not want to at all. I fought it and fought it and fought it but I still did. That's how great you are.

I'm not good for you.

No.

I –

I had someone once. A long time ago. Probably not unlike what you had.

She was wonderful. Beautiful, smart, supportive...

She was... everything.

But I didn't want everything.

Not yet.

I couldn't have everything.

I was young. I was ambitious. I had an image of what my future was going to be and...

She was nowhere to be found in it.

HE'S THOUGHTS

Move –

HE

She was... everything.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you move –

HE

I moved to the city to get my life started. The life I envisioned for myself. She was supposed to join me a year later but before the year came – there was no place for her in the new life I was living – the fast, broken life that I had fallen in love with.

The life that would come to a screeching halt if it suddenly had everything.

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is how you move forward.

HE

I find it simpler to find people like me. People who can't have everything. Who don't want everything. Who are fine with right now.

It's easier that way.

Less messy.

I look at you and... you're scary.

You deserve someone who will give you –

And I just haven't been able to do that for anyone before...

I'm just going to hurt you because that's what I do.

Hurt the people who least deserve to be hurt.

Beat.
Silence.

This is why it's hard.	HE'S THOUGHTS
This is why it hurts.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
This is why we struggle.	HE'S THOUGHTS
This is why we fight.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
Because there's no such thing as magic in love.	HE'S THOUGHTS
Because <i>love</i> is not an exception	SHE'S THOUGHTS
Because <i>I</i> am not an exception.	HE'S THOUGHTS
Because <i>we</i> are not an exception.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
This is why it's hard.	HE'S THOUGHTS AND SHE'S THOUGHTS
Because something that can mean so much to you, will always be scary to lose.	SHE'S THOUGHTS
Because nothing this special –	HE'S THOUGHTS
Meaningful –	SHE'S THOUGHTS
Necessary – ever comes easy.	HE'S THOUGHTS
This is why we work.	SHE'S THOUGHTS

HE'S THOUGHTS

This is why we are.

Lights shift.
SHE sits.

So here we are...

SHE

Again.

HE

Where do we go from here?

SHE

...
...
...
...
...

Silence.

Beat.

*SHE stands up.
SHE takes a step towards HE.*

SHE stands still.

SHE watches HE.

Beat.

*HE stands up.
HE takes a step towards SHE.*

*HE looks at SHE.
SHE looks at HE.*

Beat.

HE and SHE hold each other.

*HE gives all of himself to SHE.
SHE gives all of herself to HE.*

Fin.