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Everybody Does It: A One Woman Show  
Advisor: Cara Gabriel, Theatre  
University Honors  
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## ABSTRACT:

“Everybody Does It: A One Woman Show” is intended as an exploration of the autobiographical story as theatre. This play utilized journals, photographs, and other mementos from the playwright’s life as source material. These materials were used to create an onstage, autobiographical journey that was unified and fluid. The playwright used the work of stand-up comedians such as Mike Birbiglia, monologists such as Mike Daisy, and the one-woman show of her advisor, Cara Gabriel, as inspiration for the piece. The show was rehearsed over a period of four weeks and had its world premier on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 in the Kreeger Auditorium. After the performance of the show the playwright received feedback from the audience. In the true spirit of theatrical collaboration the playwright incorporated this feedback into a new draft of the show. “Everybody Does It” is a work in progress that the author plans to continue to develop and workshop.

EVERYBODY DOES IT: A One Woman Show  
Written by Erin Hannigan

**SCENE ONE:**

*Then lights up. No sounds; no music. When lights come up I am waiting in the middle of the stage.*

I have always felt like I needed to tell the story of what happened to me in my senior year of high school. It's a story that comes out in bits and pieces at parties or with my friends.

It's a story that has defined absolutely everything in my life. Every decision I have made, every relationship I have entered, every MINUTE OF EVERYDAY is influenced by this seemingly small incidence in my life.

And I figure, if I'm still talking about and I'm still compelled to dwell on it, it must mean something.

And maybe if I tell the story from start to finish I can figure out what it means. Why it hurts me, weighs on me, and defines me.

*Lights out.*

## SCENE TWO:

*"Nine in the Afternoon" by Panic At the Disco plays.  
Lights up. I'm on stage.*

In my junior of high school I met two men who would change the course of my life forever. While playing Shelley in a community theatre production of *Batboy* I met Matt and Mikee.

I had known Matt for years, but something about the production of *Batboy* changed the way I saw him. Maybe it was the way his bowl cut glowed in the backstage lights or maybe it was the way he pulled down the house curtain after act one. When he changed my Shellely costume and helped me adjust my blonde mullet wig it felt different.... A little risky....I little sexy.

Mikee was new, gay, and fabulous. We became friends when he walked over to me in rehearsal leaned in and whispered "don't tell anyone, but I'm totally wearing a thong."

Mikee may have had me at "thong" but Matt was in for more of chase.

When I met him I was dating this phenomenal guy named Conor. Conor was every girls dream. He was super attentive, super supportive, and totally in love with me.

And that was why I hated him.

It might sound insensitive and selfish...but Conor didn't challenge me. He never said "no." He never fought back.

I could have set his house on fire, trashed his car, and snorted coke off his Nana and Conor would have been like, "Babe, if that's what you need to do. I support you."

So obviously when I met Matt I was drawn in. Matt was sweet and helpful, but he also had an edge. Matt smoked pot, didn't go to church regularly, and had even gotten drunk at a family Christmas party.

If we're talking Gilmore Girls Conor was Dean and Matt was Jess. And this girl was ready for a Jess.

So as Conor and I began to fall apart Matt and I started to hang out more. One Saturday, before I had officially ended things with Conor, I went to hang out with Matt.

We were taking a walk and all of a sudden Matt leaned in and kissed me. Just like that. Out of the blue. He pulled a fucking David Blaine and came out of nowhere.

I was shocked. Because HOLY SHIT I JUST CHEATED ON MY BOYFRIEND!

But I also kind of liked it....which was confusing because HOLY SHIT I JUST CHEATED ON MY BOYFRIEND!

So my mind is spinning and I'm FREAKING OUT and I just totally don't know what to do and I'm only 17 and I'm not equipped to deal with this and I think I might be having my first panic attack so....I....

Kissed him back. I KNOW IT WAS WRONG, but he was so cute, and I loved him, and his lips were already on my lips so....I mean.

Needless to say I knew I had to end things with Conor before that one kiss turned into lots of kisses. I went to prom with Conor and then we broke a few days later.

I sent Conor about 48 texts with every excuse I could think of and he responded with, "Babe, if that's what you need to do. I support you."

*BLACKOUT.*

### **SCENE THREE:**

*"Are You There?" from Bare: A Pop Opera plays.  
Lights up on me sitting in a chair center stage.*

So Matt and I decided to exclusively touch lips and everything was perfect.

One day we were listening to Bare in my car and I asked Matt,  
"What would you do if you were cast as a gay character in play? Like do you think it would be hard for you? Or weird to kiss a guy?"

To which Matt responded,  
"ummm, why do you think it would be weird? Do you think there's something wrong with gay characters? Like I could totally play a gay character and it would be fine...okay?! It would be awesome and not weird at all!"

*Look straight out at audience. Long, knowing sigh.*

*Black out.*

#### **SCENE FOUR:**

*"Snails" by the Format plays.*

*Lights up.*

On Veteran's day Matt and I had the day off from school so we hung out at my house. I realized Matt was acting weird, but I figured he was just tired or something so I ignored it...

When he was getting ready to leave Matt said that he had something to tell me. He sat me down on the first step of the main stairs in my house and started "I'm..." In the split second before he said the second word I already knew. I whispered it in my head before Matt said it himself. "Gay."

Thinking back now, maybe I subconsciously new all along. Maybe I had seen all the signs, but didn't put them together until that moment.

Matt was gay.

I would like to tell you I was supportive. I would like to tell you that I hugged Matt, told him I loved him and accepted him no matter who he loved. But I didn't do that. Because I was seventeen, and in love with this amazing boy.

I wanted to scream at him and say "You fucking homo! What the fuck is wrong with you? How could you do this to me? Don't you know how embarrassing this is? Don't you know how hard it's going to be to tell people this? Don't you love me?" But you don't do that. Because you can't do that.

Because here's the deal: When the guy you're dating tells you he's gay, you don't get to be angry. You don't get to be pissed. He didn't cheat on you. He didn't break up with you because he doesn't care. He broke up with you because there's something about him that he can't change, no matter how hard he tries.

So I didn't tell Matt that I hated him. I didn't scream at him. But I also didn't hug him and tell him I supported him. What happened was this...

*(a moment where I "hear" the words "I'm gay." Immediate crying and hyperventilating, I'm trying to regain my breath. When I finally get a hold of myself I manage to ask...)*

How long have you known?

When I asked I expected Matt to say for a couple months. A few weeks. But Matt looked into my eyes and told me he had known since 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He had known for four years.

He knew when he met me.

He knew when he asked me to be his girlfriend.

He knew every time he kissed me, every time he held me, every time he said he loved me.

In that moment the best thing I could do was wait for him to leave before I collapsed on the floor.

*Blackout*



## SCENE FIVE:

*"Tulip Baroo" by Of Montreal plays.  
Lights up.*

Despite my broken heart and the fact that I was a complete mess, I did the thing that everyone does. I put on a smile and told everyone I was fine, fine, FINE!

I continued to hang out with Matt because he was my best friend and he was friends with all my other friends. Plus, we were in a show together. Yeah, I wanted to die, but I didn't have time for that.

I was Toffee in *Zombie Prom*.

I didn't care about going to school, but I cared about going to rehearsal. Despite the fact that Matt was there, rehearsal was the only place where I could let myself go for a minute.

For two and a half hours twice a week I didn't have to be miserable. I didn't have to think about all the shit going on in my personal life. I could just sing and dance and BREATHE.

My point is: I was putting on a show and telling everyone I was okay. And it seemed like people were believing me.

Well actually, Matt believed me and everyone else realized I was falling a part.

So that Christmas, Matt decided that we would exchange gifts. You know, as "best friends."

I honestly could not tell you what I got Matt. Probably something really thoughtful that I had been planning since before our break up. I do remember driving to Matt's house on Christmas Eve for the big gift exchange.

When I got there Matt made us tea and then gave me my gift.

Now, I'm not quite sure what I was expecting. Of course, I didn't expect anything extravagant. But I definitely expected something thoughtful. Maybe one of the mix CD's Matt was famous for or a framed picture he had taken.

I gave Matt my thoughtful gift and Matt gave me.... A beta fish.

## A. FUCKING. BETA. FISH.

To be fair, he had put some thought and effort into it. The Beta Fish was named Tulip Baroo after my favorite Of Montreal song and also made a little personalized birth certificate for Tulip.

But there was something interesting about this birth certificate. On the birth certificate under gender, Matt had written "Androgynous."

PAUSE.

Now to a *normal* person, this might sound funny. It might make a *normal* person laugh a little bit. "Oh, how rich!" says the normal person "An androgynous fish..how clever!"

But let me remind you, that I WAS NOT a normal person at this point. Yes, I managed to put on clothes and walk out the door...but I was as close to insane as humanly possible.

I was sleep deprived, food deprived, love deprived and constantly had that crazy smile where you're eyes open too wide... (*do the smile to audience*).

To a normal person the androgynous fish would have been a cute joke. To me the androgynous fish was a brutal metaphor for my life.

Not only could I not get my boyfriend to stick to a sexuality, but now I had an ANDROGYNOUS fish. How could I love this fish if it could potentially flip flop on me every other day? What if I began to love it as a female, but then it decided it felt more male the next day. That kind of uncertainty wasn't fair. I didn't need a fish who couldn't pick a gender, I needed a fish who would commit to me, love me, need me, wait up for me at night, hold me and tell me everything would be alright. I JUST NEEDED AN UNEQUIVOCALLY STRAIGHT, MALE FISH!!!!

What I wanted to do was throw the fish bowl in Matt's face and shout "I don't want your gender confused fish!!!"

What I actually said was, "Oh my god! A fish! Woah!!! How'd you know?"

I did what I had done every day since Matt had broken up with me. I sucked it up, smiled and took the stupid fish.

That fish lived with me, MOCKING ME, for the remainder of my senior year. I did what everybody does with a beta: I never, EVER cleaned its bowl and I fed it...sometimes.

When I went off to college Tulip went to live with Matt in gay, androgynous....whatever it was, bliss. And when, during my Sophomore year, Matt called me to say Tulip had passed....like Moralis from *A Chorus Line* I felt "Nothing."

*Blackout*

## SCENE SIX:

*"Hey Ya" by Outkast plays.  
Lights up.*

So my birthday is New Years Eve  
a.k.a. the best day ever for a birthday.

News Years Eve is the perfect birthday because:

1. you ALWAYS have the day off from school
2. everybody in the world is celebrating AND
3. it's you're one last hurrah before entering a brand-spankin-new-year.

I was psyched for my birthday and no gay boyfriend or androgynous fish was going to ruin it for me.

I invited a bunch of friends over and we spent the night Youtubing Kristin Wiig videos, belting out showtunes, and waiting for the ball to drop.

A few minutes before midnight Matt and Mikee pulled me into the hallway. I assumed they had a birthday surprise for me. AND OH DID THEY EVER.

Exactly 51 days after Matt came out and broke up with me and exactly 5 minutes before the New Year, Matt and Mikee told me they were dating.

PAUSE

Now you may be as shocked as I was so let me repeat: on my GOD DAMN 18<sup>th</sup> birthday my ex-boyfriend and my best friend told me they were dating.

ON MY BIRTHDAY.

There are 365 days in a year. 365 opportunities to share bad news, 365 opportunities to ruin my life and these idiots had chosen, out of 365 options, to pick the ONE day out of the year that meant the most to me.

If they had told me the day before it wouldn't have been my birthday. If they had told me the day after it wouldn't have been my birthday.

IF THEY HAD TOLD ME FIVE MINUTES LATER it wouldn't have been my birthday.

Every hope I had for the new year. Every resolution I had planned to make, was suddenly meaningless. And to top it all off, when we went back into the room with all our friends I saw it: they all knew.

You know when you walk into a room and realize everyone was talking about you? It was like that. Only a hundred times worse.

*Blackout.*

## **SCENE SEVEN:**

*No music.*

*Lights up.*

How could do this to me? How could you LIE to me? We're supposed to be friends. We're supposed to share everything and you kept this from me.

You kept this from your best friend. From the person who sat up with you when you decided to tell your parents. From the person who loved you even when your parent's didn't.

When your parents told you to get out of the house whose house did you come to? Who let you sleep on her couch? Who held you when you cried?

Who dropped everything just to talk to you. Who put aside her homework, her friends, her LIFE because you needed someone.

Me, Matt.

I have given you everything and all you have done is lied to me. Every second of every day has been a lie. You don't get a free pass because things are hard right now. You don't get to skate by because your life sucks.

Because guess what?! My life sucks to.

Do you know what it's like to constantly, obsessively replay every moment of a relationship? To search for what you missed. To question every moment you spent with a person. To wonder when the exact moment was when they stopped meaning it when they said "I love you."

I feel sick everyday. I feel hurt everyday. And even though it kills me, I love you everyday.

So is it okay if you date my best friend? Is it okay for you to forget everything we had, to move on with someone else when I'm still alone?

Yes.

Because you can hurt me. You can lie to me. You can try over and over again to crush me. But I will never hate you. Never.

*Blackout.*

## **SCENE EIGHT:**

*"Teenagers" by My Chemical Romance plays.  
Lights up.*

Even though I was barely functioning the world kept turning.

So I kept going as best as I could. I was in two shows, continued to get straight A's, and I kept hanging out with Matt and Mikee.

In February all my friends (including Mikee and Matt) and I got into *Godspell*. After Friday night rehearsals we usually went to one of the Allie's houses to party.

I went because all my friends were there, but the parties made me miserable. Every time I went I had to watch Mikee and Matt all night. I felt like I couldn't escape them. I would turn a corner and catch them making out, role over to fall asleep and see them cuddling.

I couldn't stand seeing them together but, I couldn't not go to the parties, so I found another solution.

I started drinking. Heavily. I had never drank before then, but the first time I tried it at Allie's house I saw the appeal. Being drunk was fun. It let me be loose, it let me be a little crazy, and best of all it let me forget.

I figured that it wasn't a big deal. It wasn't like I was drinking on school days and it certainly wasn't stopping me from living the rest of my life. It was just one night of freedom every week.

But as all teenagers do...I eventually took it too far. I started to drink way, way too much. I would fly right past the fun, relaxed part of drunk right into the messy, snotty, crying, puking part of drunk.

One night as I sobbed with my head propped against the toilet Allie Abate and Ally Lynch confronted me.

"Hey, Erin....don't freak out, okay. It's just....just....well don't you think you're taking things too far? Your not even having fun at this point. I mean, we obviously know it's hard for you with everything...but this whole sloppy drunk thing is getting old...and obnoxious. Just like, maybe, take things easy for while?"

But at that point it was hard to listen. How was I the bad guy in all of this? Mikee and Matt were to blame. Matt had broken my heart and then stomped on it when he decided to date Mikee. They were the ones who should be getting lectures. None of this was my fault! Right?

I had turned from bubbly, fun Erin into some sloppy asshole. Everyone tolerated me through the end of Godspell, but on the last day of the show Mikee and Matt had had enough.

They told me to meet them in the Hanniford's parking lot to talk. I got into the back of Matt and Mikee's car and they immediately jumped down my throat. I got an earful about how they were disappointed in me and my behavior. They said they didn't even know me anymore. I used to fun. I used to be nice. Now I was just bitter. Now I was just some drunken bitch who couldn't let things go.

I sat there not believing what I was hearing. How had everything gotten so messed up? I was just trying to get by. Just trying to pick up the pieces. Why was it suddenly my fault?! How had I become the bad guy?

I tried to defend myself, but it was useless. Mikee and Mattt told me they were sick of me. That they couldn't be around me anymore.

LONG PAUSE.

Before that moment I thought I couldn't get any lower. I thought I couldn't feel any worse. But sitting there alone in a *supermarket* parking lot, I finally felt it.

Oh, so this is what rock bottom feels like.

*Lights Out.*



## **SCENE NINE:**

*"Table for One" by Liz Phair plays.*

*Lights up.*

Hey, Mom?

Can I talk to you? (voice cracks and I immediately start to cry)

No, I'm not okay. I don't know what's wrong with me. I'm always sad.

Noo, Mom not sometimes. All the time.

I don't wanna go to school, I don't wanna get out of bed.

I can't make myself happy.

I'm always upset.

I think I need help.

I think something's wrong with me.

*Lights out.*

## **SCENE TEN:**

*"Basket Case" by Greenday plays.  
Lights up.*

Most people think their parents are great, but my mom is actually super woman. It took her less than 24-hours to call the school psychologist and then find me a therapist and a week after I told my mom I needed help I was sitting across from Dr. Louise Penta at the Hanover Psychological Association.

Dr. Penta was a grey haired woman, probably mid to late 50s, with these huge glasses that made her eyes look magnified.

She would sit across from me in every session and just stare...that's it....just. stare.

Occasionally she would ask me a question that had nothing to do with anything....our sessions usually went like so.

*Stare into space for a full thirty seconds.*

As Dr. P: Are you sexually active?

Me: No.

As Dr. P: Do you drink or use drugs?

Me: ummmm....no (like I was going to admit that to this lady. I knew there was no 'recreational' drug use for this woman. You were either squeaky clean or headed to rehab).

As Dr. P: And how have you been feeling lately?

Me: Depressed....which is why I come here.....

*Thirty full seconds of silence.*

Occasionally, when she was feeling "chatty" she would ask me: "And what do you think the solution to that is?"

To which I would respond.....ummm I don't know.

Because if I knew the answer, why the hell would I be in therapy?!!

yeah...it didn't work out between Dr. Penta and I.

*Lights out.*

## **SCENE ELEVEN:**

*"Hollaback Girl" by Gwen Stefani plays.  
Lights up.*

After my EXCEEDINGLY HELPFUL sessions I decided that I needed to help myself. All my shows were over so I didn't have to see Matt and Mikee and I decided that the most logical thing for me--a deeply depressed, riding on the edge of crazy, individual --- was to date.

I set my sights on Rich Buckley, a guy I worked with. Rich was a complete douche-bag, but he was a man. A VERY STRAIGHT MAN. And that was enough for me.

I asked him out and he responded...."yeah, sure. Whatever."

So the night of our big date arrives and I'm waiting for Rich to call me. And I'm waiting....and waiting....and waiting...and Rich doesn't call.

I'm sure Rich had stood up many girls in his life, but I can assure you that Rich had NEVER stood up a girl quite like me.

This fucker picked the wroooooong chick to mess with.

I did what any normal girl would do in that situation.....I ambushed him...on A.I.M.

Suger8820 to RichBuckWild91: Ummm. Hey. So what happened to our date tonight?

RichBuckWild91 to Suger8820: Yeah.....idk....half forget, half didn't want to. You know, things r complicated.

Suger8820 to RichBuckWild91: Oh yeah. Totally. I get it. HAHAHAHAH LOL LOL LOL

RichBuckWild91 to Suger8820: mmhmmm, thanks. Well g2g. ttyl.

Suger8820 to RichBuckWild91: Umm...wait before you ttyl, can I just say something....

Um, what you did was really insensitive. And it really hurt my feelings. And like you don't know what other people are going through so you cant just act like that and expect people not to care, ya know? Just like, you're not some

fucking awesome catch who can just treat girls like that. Like, if you think I'm just gonna run to you when you feel like it , your wrong. Cuz like, you could have just told me and I wouldn't have mad. But you were cowardly. And idk, it just kinda pisses me off. Ya know? Like tell me like a man, ya know? Don't pussy foot around it like a dick. Sooo....

RickBuckWild91 to Suger8820: K?

Suger8820 to RichBuckWild91: Yeah, so like see you at work. And like don't be a fucker in the future.....hahahahahahahah...jk jk jk jk jk.

I went to work the next week and was a complete adult about the whole thing. I was nice to Rich, helped with all his work, even gave him I ride home...oh yeah, and then I dated his best friend.

Ttyl fucker.

*Lights out.*

## **SCENE TWELVE:**

*"Cecilia" by Simon and Garfunkel plays.  
Lights up.*

Over April vacation I went on what is a right of passage for any socially awkward high schooler: the chorus and band trip!

Five whole nights in Virginia sharing a room with people you don't really know and going to places you don't really care about to sing songs you don't really like.

For the trip I roomed with my friend Brooke and our two lesbian friends: Lindsey and Britney. (It's not really important that they were lesbians I think it just adds humanity to the piece)

Anyway, so it's me, Brooke, Lindsey, and Britney (the lesbians). Even though I wasn't psyched about the trip I actually ended up having a really good time. The day trips didn't suck and Brooke, Lindsey and Britney (the lesbians) and I got really close.

On our last night in Virginia I curiously asked Lindsey "so, how did you know you were a lesbian?"

I had asked this question to people before and had gotten answers like "I just kinda realized I was different than all the other kids on the playground" or "I've just always felt this way, it wasn't really a conscious thing." And I was expecting a similar answer from Lindsey give or take a dramatic coming-out story.

But what I got was TWO-HOUR epic about how she had originally dated this guy Jake (who later turned out to be gay) and how he had gotten her pregnant. And how...she had decided to have the baby, but ended losing it.

Now....Lindsey was a known pathological liar. I'm not saying I didn't fully trust her...but after I found her dad owned a car dealership and wasn't in the CIA...I became wary of her stories.

But even if it was a lie...something happened to me during Lindsey's story. It was this moment of clarity. Suddenly it all made sense. I had this huge light bulb moment where I realized....

My life is not so bad.

This chick, was either impregnated by her gay boyfriend OR is a horrible pathological liar. Either way.....her life is way more fucked up than mine.

I don't have a baby inside. I'm didn't lose said baby. And I am CERTAINLY not a pathological liar.

And just like that....I realized.....I'm fine. I'm really fine.

Huh.

*Lights out.*

### **SCENE THIRTEEN:**

*"Gonna Get Over You" by Sara Barielles plays.  
Lights up.*

So I moved on. I got into college, graduated high school, moved to a completely new place with completely new friends.

And as I began to go to new places and tell this story to more people...I realized something.

This story was not unique to me. I was a variation on a theme.

Over and over again I would hear, "Oh my god, I was that girl." Or "Wow...I think I might have been that guy."

And while no....not everybody has been broken up with by their gay boyfriend who eventually went on to date their thong-wearing best friend....but everybody has been hurt.

Everybody has been broken up with.  
Everybody has been lied to.

Everybody has wanted to just pack it in and call it quits.

But EVERYBODY finds a way.

Everybody grows. Everybody moves on.

Nobody ever really figures things out.

But everybody tries their best.

Everybody does it.

*Lights out.*

*"Ob-la-di, O-bla-da" by The Beatles plays.  
Lights up for bows.*

**-END OF PLAY-**