

Characters:

Sophia - Sophia is 11 years old. She is a quick thinker, strong, and tough, even when scared. She pretends to be okay when not and hates showing weakness.

Liv - Liv is also 11 years old. She is steady and calm in a way that makes people trust her. She notices things fast, especially with Sophia. She cares about everyone and would do anything to make sure the person she cares for is alright.

The Dealer - The Dealer is ageless and genderless. It speaks gently but has an unsettling presence.

Setting: This play takes place in an old, abandoned community center. This is a place that had memories but doesn't anymore. A place where people go to when they don't want to be found.

Scene 1 - The Summoning

(The lights turn on. Liv stands on the center stage, with her hands tucked in her pockets. Sophia comes from the side aisle, moving slowly and hesitantly.)

Liv: You came.

Sophia: Well, obviously, I did. You said it was urgent, and you never say anything is urgent.

Liv: Yeah, it's urgent. I did bring someone.

(A voice echoes. The Dealer appears, hands behind its back.)

Sophia: Who is this? And why are we in a place that looks like ghosts live in?

The Dealer: Good evening, Liv and Sophia.

Sophia: How does he know my name? This is not okay and is absolutely not safe.

Liv: Don't worry, this isn't dangerous.

The Dealer: Not unless you want it to be.

(Sophia holds her breath, paralyzed.)

Scene 2 - The Offer

The Dealer: I'm The Dealer. I collect memories.

Sophia: So, you sell memories?

The Dealer: No. I trade them. I remove them and rehouse them. Memories are currency for me.

Some people would do anything to get rid of a certain memory. Others may choose to remember.

Liv: Sophia, you said you wished you had forgotten that day. The day that changed your life.

Sophia: I didn't mean it literally!

The Dealer: People rarely do. Until they have the option.

Scene 3 - The Rules

(The Dealer holds a small case and opens it. Inside the case, swirling lights appear.)

The Dealer: To remove a memory, I have to replace it with another. Pain mustn't disappear simply, but it would have to be exchanged.

Sophia: What do you mean by "exchanged"?

The Dealer: It must be exchanged with a memory of equal weight from someone who is willing to give it.

(Sophia turns to Liv at an instant.)

Sophia: What did you do, Liv?

Liv: *(stuttered)* I... I offered one of mine.

Scene 4 - The Reveal

(Sophia gasps.)

Sophia: Liv, why would you do that!?

Liv: Because you have been carrying that every single day. The pain! You hide the pain and pretend you're fine, but I know you're not! I don't want to see you hurt and depressed, and not being able to do anything!

Sophia: *(sighs)* You don't need to fix me!

Liv: I'm not trying to fix you. I'm trying to stop you from breaking you apart!

(The Dealer stands still, and then steps closer.)

The Dealer: Sophia, what memory are you wanting to get rid of?

(Sophia's voice cracks and tries to sound strong.)

Sophia: The day that my father left.

The Dealer: Indeed, a strong memory. And would require something heavy in return.

Liv: The day Sophia and I met.

(Sophia catches her breath.)

Scene 5 - The Breaking Point

Sophia: Liv, anything but that!

Liv: That's the strongest memory I have. And maybe you'd be better without me.

Sophia: Why would you say that?

Liv: Because that day when your father left, you were crying behind the vending machine, and I didn't comfort you. I didn't go to you. And I've hated myself since that moment.

Sophia: Liv, you were ten!

Liv: It doesn't matter if I was ten or not! I should've gone to you.

Sophia: But you came to me every single time after that! You stayed near me every day! And that's what matters the most.

Scene 6 - The Deal or No Deal

The Dealer: The exchange must be made.

(Sophia steps between Liv and The Dealer.)

Sophia: No! I'm not giving you my memory. I'm not trading the day we met. I'm not trading any part of her!

The Dealer: Then you must bear the pain.

Sophia: I will. It's mine, and it shaped me. Because forgetting it won't make me whole; it would just make me hollow.

The Dealer: Most people beg me to take away their worst memory.

Sophia: Well, I'm not them, and I'm not going to beg!

(Sophia takes Liv's hand.)

Sophia: I'll face it. With her.

Scene 7 - The Aftermath

(The dealer closes the case.)

The Dealer: Well done. You have chosen memory over mercy. The choice you chose will cost you, but would also save you.

(The Dealer vanishes with a snap.)

Liv: Sophia, are you sure you're gonna be alright?

Sophia: I will still have the burden. But I won't be alone. And that's the most important part.

(The lights turn off.)

THE END