

# *Since Childhood*

*by*

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Cast of Characters

ZOE: 19

RICKY: 19

Place

Park

Time

Early Afternoon

**RICKY:** And she's great, you know, I think I want to marry her.

**ZOE:** Marry her?

**RICKY:** Yeah...she's really special Zoe.

**ZOE:** You barely know her.

**RICKY:** Well, in terms of time, yeah, I barely know her but the way I feel inside, it's like I've known her all my life.

**ZOE:** It's been two dates, Rick.

**RICKY:** I know, she's amazing.

**ZOE:** You're not thinking.

**RICKY:** I don't want to think, I want to be happy. She feels the same as me. It's like we've found eachother.

**ZOE:** What about your studies and career and---

**RICKY:** What about it? I'm still doing everything I've set out to do. Tanya supports me that way.

**ZOE:** And what does she do?

**RICKY:** I told you, she's studying to be an engineer.

**ZOE:** (sarcastic) An engineer?

**RICKY:** Yeah, what's your problem?

**ZOE:** I think you're rushing everything.

**RICKY:** I want you to meet her.

**ZOE:** I can't meet her.

**RICKY:** What do you mean, you can't meet her?

**ZOE:** I don't want to meet her.

**RICKY:** Why? I told her so much about you. I think you both are very similar.

**ZOE:** Similar? How are we similar?

**RICKY:** Your sensibilities. You both have similar views on things.

**ZOE:** What things?

**RICKY:** Things, things. Like, ah, she hates sports like you, she is funny like you so you both have similar humor, ummm, she can talk about really interesting topics like you---

**ZOE:** What topics?

**RICKY:** Science. Ancient history. Movies. But she's so down to Earth about everything.

**ZOE:** There's no way.

**RICKY:** No way, what?

**ZOE:** I'm not meeting her.

**RICKY:** You're not making any sense. I'm excited for the two of you to meet.

**ZOE:** Look, Ricky, this is hard for me because I don't want to hurt you. I really don't but I have to be straight up with you because it's driving me crazy and I need to have this ironed out between us.

We've been friends for a longtime. Since childhood. We grew up together and everything and hold a ton of memories between us...

Things have changed.

It's not like it used to be. We aren't like we used to be. I've gone my way in life and you have gone your way in life.

There is nothing in common anymore. All we have is the past and the past can't hold up our present forever.

What I'm trying to say is that instead of me not calling you back and not making plans to get together and basically...lying to you in order to not hang out with you when you're back in town from school... I'm sorry...I know that's...shit...I-I know I'm mean but it's been so long, keeping this all inside for—look, I'm—I just want you to get the hint already Ricky. Please.

Maybe hurting you now by saying this is the only way for you to understand. Sometimes you need to get hit on the side of the head with a brick to hear what I'm saying. You've always been like—

So, I don't want to be friends with you anymore. I don't want to hang out anymore. I don't want to

**ZOE:** (cont'd) talk on the phone anymore. Don't hit me up on social anymore. Just let me live my life...without you in it.

**RICKY:** Have you lost your mind?

**ZOE:** No, no I haven't.

*Zoe motions to leave.*

**RICKY:** Wait! Where are you going? You can't just abandon me after fifteen years of friendship.

**ZOE:** Things have changed.

**RICKY:** Why do you keep saying that?

**ZOE:** Because they have! You're off to school meeting new people and falling in love and you're going to get married with your great big job and have loads of kids and have the perfect house with a fireplace and dog and white picket fence and fancy car and the family boat and you will go on vacations two times a year and have the most magical holidays and I'm in the same old town, looking at the same old people with the same old job, living out the same old life that's been lived multiple times before me and I'm depressed and miserable and I have no way out and now your getting married and—and--and---

**RICKY:** Hey, hey, hey, slow down, sit down, take it easy.

*Ricky sits Zoe down.*

Where the hell is all of this coming from? I thought you've been happy. You always said you wanted to be a hometown girl.

**ZOE:** No! I hate it! I lied! I want a different life.

**RICKY:** Different life?

**ZOE:** Yes! Can't stand another day here.

**RICKY:** This isn't you, this isn't---when did you start feeling this way? I've been off to school for a year. What did I miss?

**ZOE:** I feel like I've been left behind happiness. I'm okay.

*Zoe gets up.*

**RICKY:** Happiness?

**ZOE:** I said, I'm okay.

**RICKY:** I'm traveling back to school tomorrow.

**ZOE:** Yeah, well, you're getting married so----

**RICKY:** Is that what this is all about?

**ZOE:** What?

**RICKY:** I said I want to get married, not that I'm getting married.

**ZOE:** Marriage is a serious thing!

**RICKY:** I know.

**ZOE:** You know, there's commitment and love, real love involved for many years, many, many years and there's gonna be days when you don't feel like you love that person and you will be tested and on those non-loving days you need to push through because it's on those days that you will know what love is really all about, not just when you feel it or when you think you feel it but when it's empty inside of you, empty and cold and lonely and the only way you can ever crawl out from yourself is when you find that spark of love that never truly goes out, no matter how dark the days get...*that's* love, that's when you know for sure.

(beat)

**RICKY:** I never looked at it like that.

**ZOE:** Something to think about.

**RICKY:** It's scary.

**ZOE:** What is?

**RICKY:** Not knowing if you could love someone when you don't love them.

**ZOE:** Yeah.

**RICKY:** Shit.

**ZOE:** (beat) Don't get down or anything.

**RICKY:** Maybe I have been rushing things.

*Zoe shrugs.*

**RICKY:** (cont'd) Did you really mean what you said about not wanting to be my friend anymore?

**ZOE:** I love you.

**RICKY:** What?

**ZOE:** ...I'm in love with you. I didn't know I was until you left for college. There was this pain in my stomach for a month straight. I went to the doctor and everything, thinking I was dying but the test results came back fine. The pain continued and then one day I received an email from you and it was like all my torment washed away and I was safe. That's when I knew it was you.

**RICKY:** Why didn't you talk to me sooner?

**ZOE:** And say what? I don't need to be looked at as a lost cause.

**RICKY:** Lost cause? You're my best friend. You're the greatest person I've ever known.

**ZOE:** This is why I can't see you anymore.

*Zoe gets up.*

I wasn't going to say anything because I don't want to look stupid and now I do cause I am and I have to get back to my stupid, pathetic life and I didn't mean to take anything away from your happiness. I'm sure Tanya is a great girl and pretty smart and I'm sure you are well into the next chapter of your life...I just don't see myself being part of it and I've, it's—

*Ricky kisses Zoe.*

(pause.)

**ZOE:** Have you lost your mind?

**RICKY:** No, yes, I don't know...shit, I don't know.

**ZOE:** Great. Now we're really screwed.

**RICKY:** ...I love you, too but I don't understand it, I don't know what kind of love this is.

**ZOE:** Kiss me again.

*Ricky looks at Zoe and the two come together. They kiss again gently.*

What about now, Ricky?

7.

*Ricky and Zoe stare into one another's eyes.*

*Lights fade.*

**END OF PLAY**