

“A Rough Start to a New Beginning”
Presented by the Lake Melville Players

Cast of Characters:

Leah Zoe Michelin
Mom..... Mckenzie Hutchings
Jake..... Dawson Barrett
Counselor..... Katelyn Riche
Dad..... Dawson Barrett
Police Officer..... Ashley Allen
Young Leah..... Danielle Cole
Student 1..... Ashley Allen
Student 2..... Shania Riche
Student 3..... Willa Neilson

Lights..... Sydnie Tuttau
Sound..... Stephanie Blake
Stage Hand..... Katie Michelin

Props:

- kitchen table
- four chairs
- door
- bed
- ten seats/stools
- two wooden black boxes
- lamp
- couch
- coffee table
- screen for projection

A Rough Start to a New Beginning

Act 1

A family is eating at the supper table.

Dad: How was your day sweetheart?

Leah: It was great! Today in school we did really well in our math! We're doing way better than everyone else doing the same program.

Mother: Good job sweetie. I'm proud of you. You see? Hard work pays off.

Dad: And if you keep that attitude towards life you will succeed and thrive in everything you do.

Leah: Thanks mom and dad. I never really thought of it that way before.

Parents: You're welcome honey.

Mom: So, how's your food guys? Good?

Leah: Really good but the potato is still kinda hard.

Dad: It's perfect honey. Thanks.

Leah: Mom? Dad? Since I'm doing so well in school do you think maybe we could go get some ice cream?

Dad: That sounds fun!

Mom: I've actually got a lot of cleaning to do. You and your dad can go, sweetie.

Leah: Okay. Can we go now Dad?

Dad: Yup. You can go get in the car, I'll grab the keys.

Leah: Alright!

Dad hugs Mother goodbye and walks out the door.

Lights fade. Track 2 – (Sirens) Mom is sweeping. Doorbell rings, there's a knock at the door.

Mom: Can I help you?

Police Officer: Are you Mrs. Cabot?

Mom: Yes, why?

Police Officer: May I come in?

Mom: What... what is going on?

Police Officer: Do you mind if we have a seat?

Mom: Just here is fine. *[points to couch]*

Mom and Cop take a seat in the living room.

Police Officer: I'm sorry ma'am, your husband and daughter were in a car crash this evening. Your daughter is in the hospital with minor injuries.

Mom: What... About... Dave?

Police Officer: I'm sorry mam. He was on the side of the car that had most impact. It appears they swerved to avoid hitting a deer. He didn't survive. *[wait for a moment]* Would you like me to take you to the hospital?

Mom: This can't be real... they only went for ice cream...

Mom is in shock, the Police Officer escorts/helps her offstage.

Act 2

Leah wakes up screaming. Her intoxicated mom walks in.

Mom: Stop yelling you little brat, I'm sick of you waking me up in the middle of the night with your damn screaming.

Leah: It's not my fault that I have to relive this nightmare every night. It's hard you know! And it doesn't help that you freak out and hit me if I look at you the wrong way...

Mom: Keep it up, Leah, keep it up.

Leah: Just stop it already! It's 6AM and you're already drunk, or still drunk from last night. What's wrong with you?

Mom: I drink so much because I'm sick of you! I can't wait until I can get away from you. I hate you, Leah.

Leah: Get out! I hate you too!

Leah throws something at her mom.

Mom: You little brat! This is what I meant... said I couldn't wait to get away from you. I'll kick you out yet, just you wait, Leah. This is why I drink, to make you less irritating.

Leah: No, you drink because you're pissed off at the fact that my dad is dead and you blame me! Do you think I don't miss him too?! I do.

Mom: I suggest you shut your mouth before I shut it for you.

Leah: Do it! Then I have an excuse to get far, far, away from you!

Mom walks towards Leah. Leah screams, lights fade, scene ends.

Act 3

Counselor: I'd like to welcome everybody to the Al-Anon Support Group. Here you will learn to deal and cope with the situations you face at home. In this group, you are all young men and women, fifteen to twenty one year olds. Any stories you share with us are completely confidential.

Student 1: How do you know that none of us will tell anybody?

Counselor: How would you feel if somebody told your story? They are very personal. By joining this group you are expected to respect each other's privacy and support each other. Is there anyone who would like to share first?

Student 2: I will, I guess. How do I start? Uh, my parents never really did anything for me. I can't remember what they're like sober. They have no stable job and all the money we get is usually spent on drugs. We don't have much of anything...

Counselor: And how does that make you feel?

Student 2: Honestly? It makes me feel worthless. Bad.

Student 3: I don't have a home, or parents really anymore. I'm tired of life. I got pregnant at 14 and my dad kicked me out. I'm living out on the streets right now. My mom drinks. She comes looking for me, sometimes. I don't know what to do anymore.

Student 2: That sounds horrible. Did you keep your baby?

Student 3: I had to give her up. She went to a loving, stable home – something I couldn't give her.

Leah: I guess I understand a little about what you guys are saying. I used to have a great life but it's kind of hard to remember now. Wouldn't it be great, two parents, a brother or

sister, lots of food and clothes... my dad died when I was little. My mom drinks and tells me it's my fault he died. She hits me. I wish I could just get away from everything.

Counselor: Your mother is grieving. It is a bad way to cope, alcohol isn't the answer, but she's probably just as lost as you are.

Leah: Yeah... I guess you're right...

Counselor: Does anybody else have anything to share?

Jake: I'll go.... My dad has never really been there for me. My mother left when I was a baby. My dad started drinking. He blames himself. It's so bad. He doesn't have a job or much money. But we get along okay I guess.

Student 1: It seems like alcohol really takes a toll on everyone here.

Counselor: I think you might be on to something. Today has been a successful first day. We are getting to know each other. This is the first step to building a strong support network. We will continue on Monday. I'll be in my office if anybody needs anything.

Everyone gets up to leave. Leah accidentally stumbles into Jake.

Leah: Sorry.

Jake: Me too.

They leave, scene ends.

Act 4

Leah is getting ready for school.

Mother: Get yourself out here right now if you want any lunch money!

Leah: Wait a second, Mom! God!

Mother enters room.

Mom: Don't use your attitude with me, Leah. You can forget the money. Now get going.

Leah: Fine. I'll just go to the cafeteria anyway.

Mom: I better not get another call from the school. They ask why you're not eating and you tell them you're not hungry.

Leah: Yeah OK. It's only the first day anyway.

Mom: I don't want a repeat of last year.

Leah leaves, room lights fade and the other half of the stage lights up.

Leah walks down the road with books in her arms and headphones in, eyes down. She runs into Jake and drops her books.

Jake: Watch it, watch where you're going you. *[pauses]* Hey, you're in my Al-Anon group aren't you?

Leah: Yeah, um... I guess. Sorry again, by the way.

Jake smiles and helps Leah pick up her books.

Jake: It's no problem. What's your name?

Leah: Uh, I'm Leah. You?

Jake: Jake. Where were you heading?

Leah: School.

Jake: Me too. Mind if I walk with you?

Leah: Not at all.

Leah and Jake walk to school, talking and laughing about different things.

Act 5

Leah and Jake walking to counseling after school.

Leah: It's pretty cool how we have a lot of our classes together. It is nice to have somebody to talk to.

Jake: Yeah me too. Now I have somebody to cheat off of in math class!

Leah: *[laughs]* You wouldn't be getting any better grades anyway. Trust me.

Jake: Ha, you never saw my report card last year.

Leah: So if you don't mind me asking, how do you find counseling?

Jake: It helps to talk about it. I'm glad I'm not alone.

Leah: If only I could find some help for my mom. Get her back to the way she used to be, you know?

Jake: I know what you mean. Before mom left, my dad and I used to be really close. We went to baseball games and to the park every weekend.

Leah: I used to go to baseball games with dad too. What's your favorite team? Mine's Red Socks!

Jake: Traitor. What's wrong with our home team? Blue Jays all the way! They are bound to make a comeback. There's a game on Saturday, wanna go?

Leah: Definitely.

Jake: Cool, I'll come by your place at 7:00.

Scene Ends.

Act 6

At Leah's house, she is getting ready. It is the night of the baseball game.

Mom: Where are you going? Why are you all dressed up?

Leah: To a baseball game.

Mom: Who in the world would you be going to a baseball game with? You haven't been since your father died, going to get YOU ice cream.

Leah turns to walk away quickly, heading to the door.

Leah: *[mumbles]* I'm going with a friend.

Mom: *[meanly]* Not tonight you're not, I'm tired of cleaning up after you, you useless lump. 'm not your maid and plus, I'm going out tonight.

Nearly in tears Leah runs out of house bumping into Jake (for the third time). Meanwhile, Mom is leaning against the door, feeling torn. She overhears the beginning of their conversation.

Jake: Woah, wait, slow down... does your mom always talk to you like that?

Leah: *[sniffing]* A lot, yes. But *[sniff]* it's just because she's so sad. It is part of the reason I am going to counseling, to find a way to help her. We used to be happy. I feel there has to be a way to make it a little better.

Jake: I understand... but I lost a parent too, I know she didn't die but she left us and dad doesn't talk to me like that.

Leah and Jake start to walk away. On the other side of the stage mom is sitting in the living room looking at photo albums.

Leah: I guess... I wish mom could be the way she was before dad died. I think you would have liked her. We used to look at old pictures of her when she was little and she would tell me stories. We also used to have mother, daughter date nights too. We would do each others nails.

Jake: If you really want... I could do your nails! I'm pretty handy with a paintbrush.

Leah: *[chuckles]* You turd.

Jake: *[laughs]* Come on, game is starting soon. Let's go! That'll cheer you up... unless the Blue Jays win...

Scene Ends.

Act 7

Mom is sitting, waiting at the table.

Mom: *[talking to the audience]* Maybe Leah's right. Things have been pretty rough since Dave passed away. I don't want my daughter to grow up hating me. It's time for me to grow up and start acting like a parent again. Is it too late to fix this? Can I make it okay? I hope Leah's having a good time. I hope that young boy is treating her right. It is getting dark out, I hope she shows up soon.

Leah enters the house after dark.

Leah: Oh, Mom... what are you still doing up? It's late.

Mom: Just waiting for you to come home. How was the game?

Leah: *[somewhat surprised of her mom's change in behavior]* Dad would have been proud, Red Socks won by a landslide.

Mom: I'm sure he would have. So this guy, what's he like?

Leah: Not too thrilled that the Jays lost, but other than that he's a nice guy. Easy to talk to and kinda funny too.

Mom: So you met him at counseling?

Leah: Yeah, we started talking after a couple sessions.

Mom: Do you find counseling helpful?

Leah: I like that people there are willing to listen and understand what I am going through. A lot of the students there are struggling with similar issues.

Mom: Is it for students only or can adults come too?

Leah: Well, this one is for students but Jake told me of one that him and his dad go to close by if you would like to try sometime.

Mom: I would like to try. I think it is time that I face the fact that your father is not coming back and that if we don't change things I may lose you too. I was reminded a little tonight of how things used to be.

Leah: Well, someone told me there's a *Friends* marathon on tonight. Want to watch it with me?

Mom: Would love to! [*mom gets up and hugs Leah as they are walking into the living room*] I'm sorry, can we start over?

Lights Fade. Play Ends.