

PLAYBILL



STAY

Development Playbill | Foundation Edition

Created by Amy Matthew

Story, characters and preliminary 20-song map

DEVELOPMENT MATERIAL

Concepts and song titles may evolve during writing.

The Truth Inside the House

Two parents have both been unfaithful. Their three children sensed the fractures long before learning the truth and now express their fear through perfection, anger and desperate innocence. When every secret surfaces, the family must decide whether love still exists beneath the damage - and whether remaining married would be genuine healing or merely another performance.

THE HEART OF THE MUSICAL

Staying only matters if everyone is finally willing to remain present for the truth. Healing may lead to reconciliation - or to a loving separation.

THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE

Contemporary emotional pop, soulful R&B, piano-led ballads, chamber strings and restrained rock. The family frequently sings different thoughts simultaneously, creating beautiful but fractured five-part harmony.

CORE THEMES

- Truth versus appearance
- Children carrying adult choices
- Marriage versus family
- Betrayal on both sides
- Responsibility before forgiveness
- Hope without false certainty

Principal Characters

EVELYN HARPER | 43 - THE MOTHER

Capable, loving and emotionally exhausted. Feeling invisible, she reconnected with an old college friend. She can no longer pretend love alone makes her happy.

MICHAEL HARPER | 45 - THE FATHER

Dependable in public but absent at home. His affair began as escape from feeling like a failure. He wants forgiveness before understanding the damage.

GRACE HARPER | 17 - THE PERFECT DAUGHTER

High-achieving and preparing for college. She believes flawless grades and behavior can keep the family respectable - and perhaps together.

NOAH HARPER | 14 - THE ANGRY SON

Fighting, breaking rules and daring his parents to notice him. His anger conceals the terror that everyone he loves will leave.

LILY HARPER | 9 - THE KEEPER OF RITUALS

Sensitive and observant. She clings to dinners, movies and bedtime traditions because repetition feels like protection against change.

Supporting Characters

ADRIAN COLE

Evelyn's former college friend and affair partner. He represents the person she remembers being before marriage and motherhood consumed her identity.

TESSA LANE

Michael's colleague and affair partner. She refuses to accept all the blame for choices Michael made himself.

DR. LENA BROOKS

The family therapist who promises neither reconciliation nor divorce. She prevents them from using the children, blame or nostalgia to avoid the truth.

THE MEMORY ENSEMBLE

Performers embodying earlier versions of the family, private thoughts and once-beautiful moments that are now being reconsidered.

THE HOUSE

The home functions like another character: keeper of routines, witness to silence and a physical map of the family's separation.

Act One

1. THIS HOUSE KNOWS

Memory Ensemble - The home has witnessed every silence and lie.

2. BREAKFAST LIKE NORMAL

The Family - Five inner melodies fracture a cheerful routine.

3. PERFECT DAUGHTER

Grace - Perfection becomes her plan to prevent abandonment.

4. BREAK SOMETHING

Noah - Anger erupts through rock and physical choreography.

5. SOMEWHERE I STILL EXIST

Evelyn - Someone made her feel like an individual again.

6. AFTER EVERYONE SLEEPS

Michael - Shame and selfishness beneath his dependable image.

7. THE PASSWORD

Grace and Ensemble - One unlocked phone unravels everything.

8. KEEP THE HALL LIGHT ON

Lily - Darkness makes people disappear.

9. BOTH OF YOU LIED

The Children and Parents - Both affairs are exposed.

10. DON'T LEAVE TONIGHT

The Family - Suitcases appear; each sings the plea differently.

Act Two

1. MORNING AFTER THE TRUTH

The Family - They awaken inside the wreckage.

2. TELL ME EVERYTHING

Evelyn and Michael - Hearing the truth becomes unbearable.

3. WHAT DID WE DO WRONG?

Grace, Noah and Lily - The children blame themselves.

4. NOT YOURS TO CARRY

Dr. Brooks and Children - Adult choices are not their burden.

5. NO INNOCENT SIDE

Evelyn, Michael, Adrian and Tessa - Simple blame collapses.

6. SEPARATE ROOMS

Evelyn and Michael - Grief from opposite sides of the house.

7. I HATE YOU, I NEED YOU

Noah and Michael - Anger finally becomes fear.

8. START WITH SORRY

The Family - Apology means accepting responsibility.

9. ONE HONEST DAY

Evelyn and Michael - One truthful day instead of forever.

10. STAY

Full Family - They remain present without promising the ending.

The World Onstage

MUSIC

Piano, strings, emotional pop, R&B; and restrained rock. Contradictory solo lines collide in fractured five-part family harmony, then briefly align when someone tells the truth.

THE HOUSE

Walls rotate, furniture separates and family photographs become incomplete. The house visibly fractures without turning the drama into literal destruction.

THE GOLDEN CRACK

A thin line of gold appears whenever someone tells a difficult truth. It does not repair the house instantly; it merely shows where healing might begin.

MEMORY

The Memory Ensemble recreates loving moments and then reveals overlooked details. Their choreography lets past and present occupy the same room.

ENDING

The family does not pose for a restored portrait. The five stand together and look at one another honestly. The final harmony is hopeful, but deliberately unresolved.

DEVELOPMENT NOTE

This Playbill preserves the first foundation. Character histories, relationships, scene order and song titles remain flexible until the book and score are drafted.