

THE TWIN SISTERS  
Scenes of Youth in Two Acts  
(excerpt)

Written by Kyoung H. Park

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*A workshop production of “The Twin Sisters” was produced by Rash! Theatre’s Breakout Festival at the Barrow Group, NYC.*

## THE PLAYERS:

Annabel (Anna) Goodman:	20. Delicate, slim. A college student, brown hair, fair skin.
Elizabeth (Lisa) Goodman:	20. Anna's fraternal twin. A better-looking version of Anna. A self-glorifying actress.
Roberto Guerra:	24. Chilean. Muscular and angular, yet not aggressive. Intellectual. Lisa's boyfriend.
Benjamin (Ben) Harris:	20. American. Extremely attractive, rugged. Anna and Lisa's High-School friend.
Juan (John) Paz:	21. Latino. Roberto's cousin. Dark features, proper. Anna's boyfriend.

## THE SCENE

Anna, Juan, Lisa and Roberto's apartment in the Lower East side of Manhattan. A small living room.

The day is Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001 during the First Act.  
The action resumes Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2001 during the Second Act.

ACT II  
AFTER

SCENE 4

*At rise:* Three days have passed. It is mid-day.  
Sunlight pierces through the windows.

The room is a mess. There's a sleeping bag on  
the floor.

*Lisa and Anna are sitting at the dinner table.  
Anna wears a red tank top. Lisa wears the  
same in yellow.*

*They are eating salads.*

ANNA  
It's hot in here.

LISA  
Just eat your salad.

ANNA  
Do you mind if I open a window?

LISA  
Isn't it tasty?

ANNA  
It's too hot in here Lisa.

LISA  
(*Stern.*) I told you: we are not opening the windows.

ANNA  
Why?

LISA  
The air smells like dead bodies outside—that's *why*.

ANNA  
It's been three days.

LISA  
(*Sarcastic.*) Do you really think the stench is gone?

ANNA

I'm not hungry.

*She picks up a piece of lettuce and eats it.*

Bitch.

LISA

Just eat your goddamn salad! I told you I'd help out in the house.

*They eat in silence for a moment.*

ANNA

How long do you think Ben will be evacuated? I mean, I don't care that he's staying here... He can stay as long as he wants, right?

LISA

What about us? What are we supposed to do? Since they blocked Houston, no one can come into the area unless they live here. The stores are closed, the restaurants are shut, no one's working, they've postponed school and—

ANNA

Did you put balsamic vinegar in this?

LISA

It was on sale. I remembered how much you like it. They baby corns were on sale too.

ANNA

They're good.

*They eat some more in silence.*

LISA

We have to think of something to do.

ANNA

I'm too hot to think.

LISA

This has totally fucked up our plans.

ANNA

Don't worry. Everything's under control.

*Ben enters wearing shorts and a shirt.*

Hell, sweet hell.

BEN

Can it.

LISA

Wanna' get high?

BEN

The apartment stinks Ben.

ANNA

(*Playful.*) If you want me to crash somewhere else, just say so.

BEN

*He produces a joint from his pocket.*

So can I?

LISA

She doesn't really mean that... She's upset, with the, uh... *You know.*

ANNA

I meant that.

LISA

She's being emotional. Go ahead. *Mi casa es tu casa...*

BEN

You sure? Anna?

ANNA

Do whatever you want.

*Anna takes her salad and leaves. Ben's gaze follows her.*

LISA

Where were you?

BEN

Huh?

LISA

(*Sitting on the couch.*) Where were you?

BEN

I checked if they'd let me back home.

LISA

Any luck?

BEN

*Nope.*

*Ben sits next to Lisa, lights the joint and gives it to her.*

I should have thought about this when it happened... I was walking around Chinatown that day and I decided to go home to call my parents. But by the time I got to Canal Street, the police were already blocking the area.

LISA

*(Smoking.)* Did they tell you when you could go back?

BEN

They're still cleaning up. I'm sure they'll announce it in the news.

LISA

Don't.

BEN

What?

LISA

Watch the news. If I watch those clips again I'm going to puke.

BEN

Didn't they look like they were in a movie?

LISA

Open that window and tell me it smells like a movie. *A fucking stinking* movie. You wanna' know something funny? We were so tired since we had gone out dancing that the four of us slept through all of it like a log! Isn't that funny? Everything was so perfect before we went to bed, when I saw the TV the next morning, I thought it was nightmare. I even pinched myself, hoping I'd wake up.

BEN

Wasn't a nightmare, huh? I always said we couldn't trust the aviation system of this country...

LISA

*(Stern.)* What, are you kidding me? That's not funny. I feel my life is being threatened and the fact that you just put it off like it was nothing, like nothing really happened, like it wouldn't have made a difference whether it happened or not... I mean, isn't this important to you?

*Awkward pause.*

I'm sorry...

*She gives the joint to Ben.*

Are you OK here?

BEN

It's all cool.

LISA

Tell me if Anna's being a total bitch. I'll show her.

*Anna enters and grabs Lisa's salad.*

ANNA

Can you please take this to the kitchen?

LISA

You have to try my salad. I swear to God, I'm so bored I'm even *cooking!* Look at me, domesticated...

*Lisa exits laughing.*

ANNA

*(Sitting.)* Hey.

BEN

Thought she'd never leave.

*Ben kisses Anna. Suddenly she stops him.*

ANNA

*(Quietly.)* No.

BEN

Why not?

ANNA

Do you think John suspects anything?

BEN

I don't think so.

ANNA

What about Lisa?

BEN

She doesn't care. She's upset Roberto's getting political these days.

ANNA

He says we're being "imperialist hypocrites" and that we deserved this. *Don't smile like that.* He could get shot out there if he starts protesting too loud.

BEN

He's mad his seminar got cancelled... That's all.

ANNA

What does he think he's doing? He isn't even scared with everything's that's going on. This whole city's crumbling down and he's out there trying to stop this war... He's supposed to be here with Lisa. *Would you get off me?*

BEN

We'll be quiet.

ANNA

No!

BEN

It's not like we have anything else to do. Besides, you have no idea how much money I'm making these days. I'm selling my shit like it's gold!

*Ben pulls out some cash from his pocket.*

Eight hundred bucks I made this morning! I could take you out to the fucking Plaza if I wanted to!

ANNA

Really?

*Lisa quietly stands at the hallway, listening unnoticed.*

BEN

Once everyone else starts running dry, I'm gonna' pack my weed in those little plastic boxes; then, I'll double my price. People will want it so bad they won't be able to do anything about it.



ANNA

Can you really get me out of here? This is a shitty time to start making plans but I always loved you, Ben. I want us to be together. When this is over, will you take me away?

BEN

Sure. Why not?

*Anna kisses Ben.*

LISA

*(Interrupting.)* We're out of salad.

ANNA

*(Quickly pulling away from Ben.)* No, we're not.

LISA

I can't find it.

ANNA

I put the rest on the fridge.

LISA

I looked.

ANNA

Do you want me to go get it?

*Pause.*

Alright.

*Anna exits.*

LISA

I wish Juan was here. Rent's due and he's the only one with any money.

BEN

I can help out if you need some cash.

LISA

No, he'll be back.

BEN

You "always depended on the kindness of strangers."

LISA

*(Laughs amused.)* Well, “you’re a natural gentleman, one of the very few that are left in the world.”

BEN

You’re a good actress.

LISA

You’re better. .

*Anna enters with a small bowl with salad and a fork.*

ANNA

Isn’t nice to have a man in the house?

LISA

Good news, sis. Ben just promised me he’ll help us fix Juan.

BEN

*(Eating.)* I did?

LISA

If we put our minds together, I’m sure we can make him stay here.

ANNA

Leave him be. If he wants to go to work, let the man work.

LISA

No, it’s dangerous out there. We should stay together and never part. That way, we won’t have to worry about each other. Right Ben?

BEN

The salad’s good.

ANNA

What is there to worry about? What else could possibly happen to make this worse?

BEN

The way I see it, if World War Three is beginning, we should just enjoy the ride.

LISA

*Annabel,* I don’t like the way Juan’s going down there to help at the site. When he comes home he’s so pale and dirty, reeking of... Burned steel and dead meat. That place is dangerous, you know? We can’t jeopardize him like this.

ANNA

He'll be fine.

LISA

It's driving him mad. Last night, I saw him pacing around the apartment, alone, in the dark. He kept on talking to himself about being strong and dealing with the pain.

ANNA

Don't you like the baby corns? They're my favorite.

BEN

*(Smiling.)* They're so small.

ANNA

*(Giggles.)* Dork.

LISA

You thirsty Ben? Go get him some water.

BEN

You don't have to.

ANNA

Why don't *you* go get it?

LISA

*(To Ben.)* Remember that time we slept together?

*Ben chokes on his salad.*

ANNA

Elizabeth!

LISA

*What?* There's nothing wrong with remembering the good old times. Art, beauty, love—aren't those the things that matter?

ANNA

Stop talking about sex.

LISA

It wasn't just that. Tell her Ben. You always loved me, the way Anna loves Juan. But because Anna used to love you, we had to ditch our business and leave it all to you. Neither of us could get anywhere stepping on each others' toes and you were the only one that made a profit in the long run, weren't you? —

BEN

What?

LISA

—But that's OK. I forgive you. Besides, Anna and I now have other plans, don't we Anna?

BEN

Lisa, you and I slept together because we both got cheated on—

LISA

Liar!

BEN

Did you really think that I was trying to screw you over?

ANNA

Well, Lisa said that—

LISA

Forget what I said. What is past is past, now isn't it? We've all learned our lessons—

BEN

Is that why you left me? Jesus, *Lisa! Anna.*

LISA

She loved you, you asshole!

ANNA

And you loved her.

BEN

You know what? I'll go get the damn water.

*A fire truck siren rings. The three stay still until the siren is gone.*

Don't worry you guys. It's all cool.

*Ben exits.*

ANNA

What the hell are you doing?

LISA

Be careful. He's a liar.

*Awkward pause.*

I'm opening the windows. ANNA

(Grabbing Anna's arm.) No. LISA

You're asphyxiating me Lisa. ANNA

Here, let me show you something. LISA

*She takes out a small conga drum from under the couch.*

I bought this for the musical. Katherine dies beating the drums.

*She beats the drum.*

Can you smell that?

Smell what? ANNA

It's the scent of death Stella, creeping in through the window cracks. LISA

*Beat.*

Will ya' get a fucking grip? You're getting on my nerves. ANNA

*Beat.*

Don't fuck this up, Anna. LISA

Lisa, I know what I'm doing. ANNA

You're getting married. LISA

I'm not getting married for Christ's sake! ANNA

LISA

And I'm going to be on Broadway.

*Beat. Beat. Beat.*

ANNA

Oh, forget you...

*Anna quickly exits.*

LISA

Anna! *Anna!* I guess we'll just stay in today. We'll wait for Roberto and Juan to come back and then... Then we'll burn in this heat!

*Beat.*

## SCENE 5

The set is dirtier. There's take-out food and garbage on the floor and on the dinner table. It is later in the afternoon.

*Juan enters noticeably covered in dirt and dust, speaking on his cell phone.*

JUAN

*(To the cellphone.)* I don't want to go home. There's no reason for me to go to Staten Island... I'd rather be here and help at the site... It's not like I had a choice. They shut down the subways! Don't worry mom.

*He sits on couch. Opens the pot. Nothing.*

Alright! Alright! I'll try to get there tomorrow, OK? Chao.

*He hangs up. Anna enters slightly disheveled.*

ANNA

You're here.

*She fixes her hair in front of the mirror.*

JUAN

I got promoted today. Now, I get to sort through the metal, just in case there are people in between the junk. The guy who was doing that quit yesterday... He said he couldn't handle the pressure. Sometimes he found pieces of bodies, a leg, a foot, a hand... I found an ear today. I went up to my boss and asked: "What do I do with this?" He didn't know what to say. What do you do with an ear? He told me to take it to the doctors and they put it in a jar. Can you imagine what it might be like to try to piece those things together?

*Ben enters zipping up his pants.*

Maybe someone can actually build those parts into a whole. Say to someone: "Here's the person you've been missing." My stomach hurts.

*Ben sits down to roll a joint.*

ANNA

*(Collecting the garbage.)* John, baby, promise me you'll stop going there.

JUAN

I can't stop now. Not until the job is done.

BEN

I'm proud of you. I'd rather be dead than be there.

JUAN

You'd have to *be dead* to be there.

ANNA

*(Crying.)* Please, for me? It's not your responsibility. You've got to take care of yourself...

JUAN

This *is* my responsibility. This is *my* duty and I've got to stand strong. Stop crying for Chrissake's. There's nothing you can do about it. You didn't do anything wrong.

*She drops the trash and sits next to Juan uncomfortably.*

BEN

Here you go.

JUAN

*(Smoking.)* Rent's due today, isn't it? I'll get you some money after this.

ANNA

I'm sorry John.

JUAN

Roberto was asking me to help him get a job, but my dad said that everyone's out there helping at the site. Constructions have stopped around the whole city and well... He's got nothing to do. But you know what? I don't care anymore. From now on, he can deal with his own shit. I'm tired. So tired I might go home tomorrow... My mom wants to see me.

ANNA

Do you want me to go with you?

JUAN

You don't have to.

*Juan gives the joint to Anna. She passes it to Ben.*

JUAN

Some people say this was all meant to be. But then someone tell me why. Everything went to ashes so quickly—in a heartbeat. We can't live like this anymore, can we?

ANNA

Juan, listen to you! Stop working there, OK?



JUAN

So what should I do? Stay home with you instead? You've made it obviously clear you have no respect for my work. I've dedicated my trust and love to this city, cementing and erecting buildings all around it and all of a sudden—boom! Boom, boom, fucking boom! I'm not going to say what you want me to say. Just like the madmen that have done this, you get no forgiveness! No apologies necessary either. The world is stronger than any persons' insanity, so don't flatter yourself. You've made your choice. I'll move on.

*Roberto enters carrying protest fliers.*

ROBERTO

What's that smell? Juan, is that you?

ANNA

Lisa doesn't want the windows open.

*She starts collecting the trash again.*

ROBERTO

*(Opens a window.)* We need some fresh air.

JUAN

The air ain't so fresh.

ROBERTO

*(Out to window.)* Isn't this much better? Hypocrites!

*Pause.*

No one listens in this country.

ANNA

Then maybe you shouldn't spend your time protesting.

ROBERTO

What else am I supposed to do?

JUAN

*(To himself.)* Maybe we should *all* go away. Far, far away.

ROBERTO

You can't escape what's going on out there. We should embrace the reality of things and try to deal with this properly. Do you guys want to help me protest?

ANNA

Roberto?

ROBERTO

Stop asking! I don't have any money.

ANNA

Well, get some 'cause the landlord's gonna' throw a fit unless we pay in time.

*Roberto receives the joint from Ben and smokes.*

ROBERTO

I'll talk to him about it. Juan, can I borrow some cash?

JUAN

I don't have any.

ROBERTO

Thanks, I'll talk to Lisa.

ANNA

I don't think mom will send us more money besides our share.

ROBERTO

Well, help me, you guys. I spent everything I had on fliers.

ANNA

You should have thought about the rent before—

ROBERTO

Look around! Who cares about rent?

ANNA

*Excuse me! I am sorry!* Where are we supposed to live if they kick us out?

*Anna starts crying.*

BEN

You guys, I don't want y'all sitting on the curb. If you need the money, I swear it's not a problem.

JUAN

Would you stop crying already?

ROBERTO

This isn't about *you*.

ANNA

Leave me alone. *I'm not doing anything wrong!*

BEN

Hey relax, it's all cool.

ROBERTO

You keep quiet! So will you lend us the money?

JUAN

We can talk to my dad. He'll lend you the dough. But you've got to promise me you'll work it back.

ANNA

Why don't we *all* go to Staten Island tomorrow?

ROBERTO

No! Don't you see what's happening here? Just look at yourselves. This is an opportunity to change our *lives*. How can you be so ignorant?

JUAN

So it's settled. We're going to my place tomorrow.

*Roberto puts out the joint.*

ANNA

*(In tears.)* I'll go call dad.

BEN

I should probably call my parents too.

*Ben and Anna exit together.*

ROBERTO

So what do you say? Wanna' help me protest?

JUAN

I can't believe she's fucking Ben! What's the point in fighting for her anyway? It's too late. I mean, everything seems so irrelevant to what's happening out there. This apartment, Anna, Lisa, even you... I thought I could teach you all what it meant to live the American way. But look! How can you live *any* way when people are capable of doing this?

ROBERTO

This is your wake up call, Juan. Don't get me started. This isn't our country, but even *we* were riding high on a dream—the *American* dream. How long will this quest for the perpetual land of the free last? It sickens me to see you suffer the consequences of acts you don't even know you've taken.

JUAN

So is this my fault? Is that what you want to hear? Fuck you.

*Juan cringes.*

JUAN

You're such an ingrate, you know that?

ROBERTO

What is it?

JUAN

It's my stomach. I can't deal with this shit anymore. *Ow, fuck!*

ROBERTO

You OK?

JUAN

Let me tell you something. When Orlando Letelier was killed in the '70's—

ROBERTO

Don't come up with that bullshit.

JUAN

It's not! When he was murdered in DC by that Chilean secret service—

ROBERTO

Dina.

JUAN

—When the CIA helped you guys kill him, you didn't say anything at all. Don't forget that if it hadn't been for our help—

ROBERTO

Intervention.

JUAN

—If it hadn't been for America, your family wouldn't have the lands it has. My parents left the country while yours *stayed* and let him torture—

ROBERTO

They didn't let him do anything.

JUAN

—Well you were either in favor or against him. Pinochet didn't do shit all by himself.

ROBERTO

Of course not! The US gave him money—

JUAN

And got rid of his enemies. But that wasn't a problem when granddaddy was making a fortune—

ROBERTO

You shut your mouth.

JUAN

—And because he gambled it all away, suddenly you've become a neo-socialist pro-Allende, anti-Pinochet—

ROBERTO

*Stop it!*

JUAN

—You think you can argue any excuse for living by reading all your fucking books while my parents and I work—we *worked*—to provide us the life we have. And now that someone decides to fight against America, foreigners like you become more willing to screw us over than help us in return. Now that *we* got attacked, you blame us and *only* us. *Fuck!*

ROBERTO

Juan, *sit down*. Sit! Now listen to me. I love you man. You're like a brother to me. But what kind of life are you living? Can you physically imagine a million dollars?

JUAN

What?

ROBERTO

Can you? How much does that weigh? If you piled it up, how high would that be? Now picture two towers made out of a *billion* dollars! Working at the site is not the way to go man... Not when the CEO's that died in there were stealing more money than you could make in a lifetime.

JUAN

This isn't about money. This is about *us—people*. Don't you see we are a horrible race? We're disgusting; killing, maiming, and burning our own every day of our lives. When you finally see that, anything you do becomes nothing. I'm nothing.

ROBERTO

Primo... We'll get over this—time makes us forget. Are you OK?

JUAN

We'll always forget. That day has gone and past. Soon enough, no one will remember this.

*Lisa enters carrying shopping bags—many shopping bags.*

LISA

Who opened the window?

*She drops the bags by the door and shuts the window.*

Who opened this?

ROBERTO

It's getting too hot in here.

LISA

Deal with it.

JUAN

We're going to Staten Island tomorrow.

LISA

That's perfect. This city is dead anyway.

*She sits next to Roberto and kisses him.*

Roberto, we have to talk.

JUAN

*To hell with all of you!*

*Juan storms out.*

LISA

Mi amor, I'm upset. Walter, the producer, called. I've been trying to tell you that—

ROBERTO

*(Interrupting.)* Anna's cheating on Juan. He found a condom in their bedroom last night.

LISA

*(On a sudden impulse.)* Mi amor, I don't want you protesting anymore. I think it's stupid, rude, and inconsiderate and you're going to get killed if you do it.

ROBERTO

What?

LISA

*(Continuing.)* I'd kill you. The whole fucking country's mourning and I can't believe you're being so disrespectful. Why don't you stay home with me? We're being stupid and the world shouldn't be this way, but we can't stop it from being what it is.

ROBERTO

Yes, we can!

LISA

I'm your girlfriend Roberto, and you should take care of my needs. We're the only ones we can help.

ROBERTO

Look at you... Two hundred years after democracy, you don't even want a part of it.

LISA

I told you: I'm an actress, not a politician. Acting is a cathartic process; it *shows* other people the way life is, without having to lecture them how it should be...

ROBERTO

Lisa, you're an entertainer. Entertainment doesn't help.

*Lisa takes a revealing orange shirt from a shopping bag, puts it on, looks at herself in the mirror.*

LISA

I'm talking. Acting is about choices and we *entertain* through a play the process of making them. Fine—I'll give you that. But this isn't a play or a political rally. This is real! Two planes crashed into the Twin Towers, they burst into flames, fell to the ground and all of us are running to save our lives! Our lives, not theirs, not anyone's.

ROBERTO

You're ridiculous.

LISA

What's the worth behind your protest? Does anyone even listen to you? That's because you're wrong. *And hostile*. Life is hell and the best way to succeed is to look after yourself. Follow your dreams and live life to the fullest. But you—you keep on trying to tell me otherwise. You need to get real; you've been reading one too many books.

ROBERTO

Shut up.

LISA

What should I do with my life? Try to stop what is already happening?

ROBERTO

What life are you talking about when you don't even vote? You'd rather *not* support anything by not getting involved in anything. *You* can't face the real world out there!

LISA

Mi amor, don't you understand that I'm trying to help you?

ROBERTO

You aren't.

LISA

Just let me finish. I need you.

ROBERTO

You *are* finished. *This conversation is over.* I'm sick of you all telling me what to do in this house. I'm sick of playing nice to all of your fucking rules. I love you Lisa, but you live under certain ideals that I don't share with you. You can't force me to accept them as if you were *right*. Don't you think that the "terrorists" knew how horrible it was to hijack a plane and crash it into a building? But why did they do that? These people aren't crazy. They couldn't have done something like that if they were.

LISA

Why are you doing this?

ROBERTO

*¡Quiero una revolución!* I want the truth.

LISA

What truth? Whose truth?

ANNA

*(Off-stage)* Lisa, did you tell mom we need the money?

LISA

What? Yes!

ANNA

*(Anna enters.)* Don't lie to me. Is that new?

LISA

Go away!

ANNA

How are we going to pay the fucking rent when you're shopping all the fucking time?

LISA

Didn't you tell her to send it?

ANNA

That's not my problem! Go call her right now.



LISA

Annabel. We're talking.

ROBERTO

You look like an orange.

LISA

Now everyone listen to me! If we're to stay together in this house, like the way we used to be, *fuck* the world out there. It's either that or us. And it has to be us.

ROBERTO

Why?

LISA

*Because I said so.* Anna, you know better. We made a deal. We have gone too far to fail at this point. You're not leaving me. No one's leaving unless we do it together.

*She exits.*

ROBERTO

She doesn't stop, does she? Everything always has to fit into her own little world.

ANNA

Things are changing, Roberto.

ROBERTO

Oh, really? Because when I see the pictures of the missing people posted on the streets, the only thing I can think about are the protests back home. Everyone who lost a family member comes out September 11<sup>th</sup> and they ask the world to help them find their loved ones.

ANNA

But they're all dead, aren't they?

ROBERTO

Exactly. They're all dead. So take a walk out there and tell me: *what's different?* It's all the same. It's all the same, over and over again! Nothing's changed!

*He grabs his protest fliers.*

Nothing's changed!

**THIS PLAY HAS BEEN ABANDONED.  
BUT, IF YOU'D LIKE TO READ THE REST, PLEASE EMAIL ME AT  
kyounghpark@gmail.com.**

**THANKS!**