

*Acting Edition*

# the bandaged place

by Harrison David Rivers

This sample is an excerpt of a  
Concord Theatricals title.

Samples of Concord Theatricals titles  
are for perusal and cannot be used for  
performance or downloaded, printed,  
and distributed in any way.

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

Copyright © 2023 by Harrison David Rivers  
All Rights Reserved

*the bandaged place* is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all member countries of the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the Universal Copyright Convention, and/or the World Trade Organization conforming to the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television, online/digital production, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-71067-4

[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

[www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)

**FOR PRODUCTION INQUIRIES**

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

[info@concordtheatricals.com](mailto:info@concordtheatricals.com)

1-866-979-0447

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE

[licensing@concordtheatricals.co.uk](mailto:licensing@concordtheatricals.co.uk)

020-7054-7298

Each title is subject to availability from Concord Theatricals Corp., depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *the bandaged place* may not be licensed by Concord Theatricals Corp. in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Concord Theatricals Corp. office or licensing partner to verify availability.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *the bandaged place* is subject to a licensing fee. The purchase, renting, lending or use of this book does not constitute a license to perform this title(s), which license must be obtained from Concord Theatricals Corp. prior to any performance. Performance of this title(s) without a license is a violation of federal law and may subject the producer and/or presenter of such performances to civil penalties. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to the appropriate agent before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title(s) is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged. Professional/Stock licensing fees are quoted upon application to Concord Theatricals Corp.

This work is published by Samuel French, an imprint of Concord Theatricals Corp.

No one shall make any changes in this title(s) for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, scanned, uploaded, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, digital, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall share this title(s), or any part of this title(s), through any social media or file hosting websites.

For all inquiries regarding motion picture, television, online/digital and other media rights, please contact Concord Theatricals Corp.

### **MUSIC AND THIRD-PARTY MATERIALS USE NOTE**

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music and/or other copyrighted third-party materials (e.g. artworks, logos) in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music and materials that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for clearances of all third-party copyrighted materials, including without limitation music, and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Concord Theatricals Corp., against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of such copyrighted third-party materials by licensees. For music, please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

### **IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

*the bandaged place* was produced by Roundabout Theatre Company (Todd Haimes, Artistic Director; Julia C. Levy, Executive Director) at the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre on October 20, 2022. The performance was directed by David Mendizábal, with set design by Wilson Chin, costume design by Ásta Bennie Hostetter, lighting design by Nic Vincent, make-up design by Kirk Cambridge Del-Pesche, sound design and original music by Mauricio Escamilla, choreography by Tislarm Bouie, and fight direction and intimacy coordination by Rocío Mendez. The cast was as follows:

**JONAH IRBY** ..... Jhardon Dishon Milton  
**GERALDINE IRBY** ..... Stephanie Berry  
**ELLA IRBY** ..... Sasha Manuel, Phoenix Noelle  
**SAM YATES** ..... Jake Ryan Lozano  
**RUBEN TORRES** ..... Anthony Lee Medina  
**UNDERSTUDIES** . . . Thursday Farrar, Preston Perez, Deon Releford-Lee

*the bandaged place* was originally presented by New York Stage and Film and Vassar in the Powerhouse Season, Summer 2019.

## CHARACTERS

1 woman, 3 men, 1 child

**JONAH IRBY** – Black, Male-identifying, mid-20s/early 30s. Ella’s biological father, but not her legal guardian. Recently injured and still a bit shell-shocked. *Dancer or strong mover.*

**GERALDINE IRBY** – Black, Female-identifying, early 60s. Jonah’s grandmother and Ella’s great-grandmother and legal guardian. Accustomed to holding things together.

**ELLA IRBY** – Black or Multi-racial, Female-identifying, 8 years old. Jonah’s daughter. Wise beyond her years. *Dancer or strong mover.*

**SAM YATES** – Non-white, Male-identifying, mid-20s/early 30s. Ella’s ballet teacher. A bit goofy. Stronger than he looks. *Dancer or strong mover.*

**RUBEN TORRES** – Black or Latine man, early/mid-30s. Jonah’s ex-boyfriend. The kind of guy you don’t say “no” to. Sexy as fuck.

## SETTING

Jonah’s studio apartment in Harlem  
and various other locations around New York City

## TIME

November 2006  
Pre-iPhone

## STYLE

The scenes should tumble

## TIMELINE

Spring 1997

Jonah and Q have sex after Junior Prom.

Spring 1998

Ella is born.

She is adopted by Geraldine.

Jonah and Q graduate from high school.

Q moves to California.

Fall 1998

Jonah enters Juilliard.

Spring 2002

Jonah graduates from Juilliard.

He joins Ephemeral, a dance company based in Harlem.

He lives with Geraldine and Ella.

January 2006

Jonah meets Ruben on the street in the West Village.

February 2006

Jonah moves in with Ruben in East New York.

Early September 2006

Jonah is assaulted by Ruben.

Jonah spends two nights in Jamaica Hospital then moves back in with Geraldine and Ella.

October 2006

Jonah moves into his own apartment.

*(From the dark:)*

*(A ringing phone.)*

*(Lights up on **JONAH** asleep.)*

*(Eventually, he stirs.)*

*(He answers the phone without checking the number.)*

**JONAH.** hello?

*(Beat.)*

Hello -?

*(**RUBEN** appears.)*

**RUBEN.** Hey.

*(**RUBEN**'s voice has an immediate effect on **JONAH**.)*

*(He sits up, suddenly alert.)*

Jonah?

*(Beat.)*

Boy, I can hear you breathing -

**JONAH.** How'd you get this number?

**RUBEN.** Phone book.

**JONAH.** Fuck you, how?

*(Slight beat.)*

Ruben, I said how?

**RUBEN.** (*Matter of fact.*) Does it matter?

(*Beat.*)

**JONAH.** Yr not supposed to call.

**RUBEN.** Yeah, and yr not supposed to pick up, but here we are.

(*Beat.*)

**JONAH.** What do you want?

**RUBEN.** What do I want? Seriously / J -?

**JONAH.** Yeah, seriously, what do you want -?

**RUBEN.** Hey, come on / now -

**JONAH.** It's a simple question, Ruben. What the *fuck* do you / want -?

**RUBEN.** Damn boy, all right, calm down! I don't want nothing!

**JONAH.** Bullshit.

**RUBEN.** Listen to you / nasty mouth -

**JONAH.** I'm hanging up, you hear? / I'm hanging up -!

**RUBEN.** Fuck, Jonah, WAIT, OKAY? SHIT!

(**RUBEN** *collects himself.*)

I don't know why I called. My fingers just dialed yr number like they were on autopilot or something. I think they miss you.

(*Slight beat.*)

Jonah?

(*Slight beat.*)

Jonah, you hear me -?

**JONAH.** I can't do this.

**RUBEN.** What? Can't do what? Talk? You can't talk? You don't wanna talk -?

**JONAH.** No, that's not...

That's not what I mean and you know it.

*You know.*

*(They breathe into their respective phones.*

**RUBEN recalibrates.)**

**RUBEN.** I rewatched yr boy Woody's movie the other day. *Manhattan*? It was playing on TCM and I remembered how when we first started talking, you asked me if I'd seen it and I said no and you got all irate. / You remember that -?

**JONAH.** I wasn't irate -

**RUBEN.** You were like, "what do you mean you've never seen *Manhattan* -?"

**JONAH.** I don't sound like that -

**RUBEN.** And I was like, "I can't with Woody Allen." And you were like, "what are you talking about?" And I was like, "first of all would it kill him to put some color up on the screen -?"

**JONAH.** And I said, that's not his aesthetic -

**RUBEN.** And second, "does he have to be in all his own movies -?"

**JONAH.** He's not in all of them -

**RUBEN.** 'Cause I mean he kvetches like a pro, like a world-class champ for sure, but he can't act for shit -

**JONAH.** Okay, well, that's a matter of opinion -

**RUBEN.** And you were like, "you can't have lived in New York City yr whole damn life and not seen *Manhattan*, you know, 'cause it's like -"

**RUBEN & JONAH.** “A fucking love letter to New York.”

(**RUBEN** *smiles. He’s got him.*)

**RUBEN.** You *do* remember.

(*A moment.*)

I miss you, J.

I miss yr mouth.

Yr cute little ears.

Yr *ass* –

**JONAH.** Ruben –

**RUBEN.** And you miss me, too.

I know it.

I can hear it in yr voice.

The way you say my name.

Ruben –

**JONAH.** *Ruben* –

**RUBEN.** See there.

(*Beat.*)

Yr the only one for me, Jonah.

I’ve said it from jump. From jump.

The only one.

You know that, right?

(*Slight beat.*)

Come on, J –

(**JONAH** *snaps his phone shut.*)

**JONAH.** Fuck.

Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, stupid, stupid, stupid.

Okay.

Just breathe.

Yr okay.

Yr gonna be –

(**JONAH's phone rings again.**)

You've gotta be fucking kidding me!

(*He answers.*)

LEAVE ME THE FUCK ALONE!

(**GERALDINE appears.**)

**GERALDINE.** EXCUSE ME?

**JONAH.** Aw, fuck –

**GERALDINE.** Jonah?

(*Slight beat.*)

Boy, you better answer / me when I'm talking to you –

**JONAH.** Yes, Nana, I'm here / Shit –

**GERALDINE.** Is that how I taught you to answer the phone –?

**JONAH.** No, ma'am / no, ma'am –

**GERALDINE.** No, ma'am, is right. Answering the phone like you ain't got no sense. Like you ain't got no home / training –

**JONAH.** I'm sorry, okay? I didn't know it was you. I didn't *think* / it was you –

**GERALDINE.** Child, I know what you thought, *who* you thought I –

(**GERALDINE recalibrates.**)

**GERALDINE.** You *do* understand he's not supposed to be calling you, right?

**JONAH.** Yes –

**GERALDINE.** That it's a condition of the restraining / order –

**JONAH.** Yes, I know –

**GERALDINE.** “No contact. No communication –”

**JONAH.** Nana, I said, I know! You've made yr point.

*(Slight beat.)*

**GERALDINE.** How did he get yr number?

**JONAH.** What?

**GERALDINE.** You heard me / how did he get –?

**JONAH.** I don't know –

**GERALDINE.** What do you mean / you don't know –?

**JONAH.** I mean, I don't know. He's... well, you know how he is. He's diabolical.

*(Beat.)*

**GERALDINE.** Does he know where yr living?

*(Slight beat.)*

Jonah Sebastian Irby, does that man know / where you live –?

**JONAH.** *(A tantrum.)* No, Nana / GOD –!

**GERALDINE.** Oh, okay now, okay. Don't be getting all attitudinal with me. It's not a crazy question. If he has yr phone number then it follows that he could have yr address. I'm worried about you.

**JONAH.** I'm fine, Nana / really –

**GERALDINE.** I hate that word. “Fine.” It doesn’t mean anything –

**JONAH.** What it means is I’m handling it. It means I’m good and I’m handling it.

**GERALDINE.** Yeah, well, I guess I’ll just have to take yr word for it, won’t I?

*(Slight beat.)*

Change yr number.

*(Slight beat.)*

Jonah –

**JONAH.** Yeah, okay / I will –

**GERALDINE.** And not tomorrow or next week. / *Today* –

**JONAH.** I said, I will –

**GERALDINE.** And keep it to yerself –

**JONAH.** *Nana!*

**GERALDINE.** Okay, okay, I’m done. Don’t have to tell me twice.

*(Slight beat.)*

Lord, you got me all worked up and this isn’t even why I called.

**JONAH.** *(With bite.)* Why did you?

*(GERALDINE notes the attitude, but presses on without comment.)*

**GERALDINE.** I *called* to remind you that it’s yr day to pick Ella up / from her dance class –

**JONAH.** *(Under his breath.)* Aw, shit –

*(JONAH begins to dress. Pulling on pants, socks, shoes, etc. It takes a while.)*

**GERALDINE.** Which I thought might be appropriate given yr “variable” schedule –

**JONAH.** *(Under his breath.)* Shit, shit, shit –

**GERALDINE.** Jonah, are you hearing me?

**JONAH.** Yes, Nana, I hear you –

**GERALDINE.** Because I’m leaving for my meeting at the church in five minutes and I need to know if that plan needs to change.

*(Slight beat.)*

Jonah?

*(Slight beat.)*

Jonah, what the hell is going on over there?

**JONAH.** Nothing. Go to yr meeting.

**GERALDINE.** Boy, are you still in bed?

**JONAH.** What? Uh / no –

**GERALDINE.** Jonah, we have talked about this. You cannot stay in bed all day. / Life goes on, baby –

**JONAH.** I’m not still –

I know that life –

Fuck!

**GERALDINE.** Language!

**JONAH.** Sorry!

*(They breathe into their respective phones.)*

**GERALDINE.** Now I’m not trying to be all up in yr business / or anything –

**JONAH.** Oh no –?

**GERALDINE.** But it's been a month. A month of you holed up in that apartment telling me yr fine when I know yr not fine –

**JONAH.** Nana –

**GERALDINE.** And avoiding yr daughter

Which

Okay

Do me however you wanna do me

Screen my calls, whatever, I can take it, I'm an adult, but her?

Jonah, she's a child –

**JONAH.** I know what she is –

**GERALDINE.** And she needs her father –

**JONAH.** *You don't think I know that?*

*(They breathe into their respective phones.)*

**GERALDINE.** Look, all I need to know is if yr gonna pick Ella up from class or if I need to cancel my meeting.

*(Slight beat.)*

Boy –!

**JONAH.** No, don't cancel. I'm on it, okay? I'm on it.

*(JONAH closes his phone. He collects his wallet and his cane. He moves to the door and unlocks it – all three locks. One last breath and then –)*

I. Am. On it.

*(JONAH exits.)*

*(His apartment falls away. Outside of dance class. SAM waits with ELLA.)*

**ELLA.** My nana has a hat lady meeting so my daddy is picking me up.

**SAM.** Well, I'm sure he's on his way.

**ELLA.** Yeah, only sometimes he oversleeps. Like on Sundays when he's supposed to come to church. He always says, "sorry, I forgot to set my alarm," but I think he forgets on purpose. He believes in God though. Nana says that just because a person doesn't go to church doesn't mean they don't like God. She says that God loves everybody. Even people who don't go to church. Do you go to church, Mr. Sam?

**SAM.** Um... / What -?

**ELLA.** We're Baptists. That's the name of the de-nomination. Baptist. There are lots of different de-nominations. Methodists, Southern Baptists, Presbyterians, Evangelicals, Pentecostals... They like fire.

**SAM.** Do you think we should try calling yr father?

**ELLA.** We could. Only he's got Sprint so he doesn't get service underground. Do you have Sprint?

**SAM.** Uh, no. AT&T / but -

**ELLA.** Oh, that's way better. Less dropped calls.

*(ELLA dances around. SAM recalibrates.)*

**SAM.** Do you know his phone number?

**ELLA.** Yep.

*(ELLA continues to dance.)*

**SAM.** Um, well, would you mind telling it to me / so that I can call him -?

**ELLA.** Oh yeah!

*(ELLA moves to SAM.)*

It's three four seven four three two three five seven four.

*(SAM types in the number. He shows the screen to ELLA who confirms with a thumbs up. ELLA dances around and with SAM as he leaves his message.)*

**JONAH'S CELL PHONE.** *(Pre-recorded.)* "The person at the number you have dialed is not available.

Please leave a message after the tone."

*(A beep.)*

**SAM.** *(No cause for alarm.)* Um, hi, Mr. Irby?

This is Sam Yates from Alvin Ailey.

I'm here with Ella.

And, well, um... class ended almost twenty minutes ago and I'm just calling to make sure that someone, she says you, is on the way to pick her up –

*(JONAH appears.)*

**ELLA.** Daddy!

**JONAH.** Hey, Belly.

*(ELLA crashes into her father.)*

Ooo careful.

**ELLA.** Daddy, yr late.

**JONAH.** I know.

**ELLA.** I'm the last person left. I'm even later than Serafina and her mom is always late. Right, Mr. Sam?

**SAM.** Well...

**ELLA.** See, Daddy, "well" means yes.

**JONAH.** I'm sorry.

**ELLA.** Yr forgiven.

**JONAH.** Thank you.

*(ELLA drags SAM toward her father.)*

**ELLA.** Daddy, this is my teacher, Mr. Sam.

**SAM.** Hi.

*(SAM extends his hand. JONAH flinches slightly, then offers his own. They shake.)*

**JONAH.** Hey. Jonah.

**SAM.** Nice to meet you.

**ELLA.** *(To SAM.)* The last time my daddy picked me up from dance class I was only in Level Two. Now I'm in Level Three.

**JONAH.** They grow up so fast.

**SAM.** That they do.

**ELLA.** Daddy, see what I learned today?

*(ELLA demonstrates. JONAH and SAM watch her dance.)*

**JONAH.** I'm sorry I'm late. Ella's grandmother usually handles pick up.

**SAM.** Geraldine.

**JONAH.** Yeah, Geraldine.

**SAM.** She's a force.

**JONAH.** She's definitely something.

*(Slight beat.)*

Ella loves yr class, by the way. She talks about it constantly.

**SAM.** Well, I love having her. She's a very talented little girl.

**JONAH.** I bet you say that to all the parents.

**SAM.** I do. But in this case, it's true.

**ELLA.** Daddy, did you see me? Did you see?!

**JONAH.** I did, I did. You looked wonderful.

**ELLA.** Did he really watch, Mr. Sam?

**SAM.** Oh, totally. He didn't blink once.

**ELLA.** (*To JONAH.*) You didn't?

**JONAH.** I was like this the whole time.

(**JONAH** *makes a funny face.*)

**ELLA.** Whatever, Daddy.

(**ELLA** *moves to her dance bag. She puts on her coat, scarf, hat, etc.*)

**SAM.** Ella mentioned that you dance, too.

**JONAH.** She did?

**SAM.** She did. Are you with a company or...?

**JONAH.** Uh yeah, I'm with Eve Grant? Up in Harlem?

**SAM.** Wait. Ephemeral?

**JONAH.** You know it?

**SAM.** Are you kidding? I saw you guys perform at The Joyce last Spring. You were incredible. *The Times* loves you.

**JONAH.** They've been kind.

**SAM.** Effusive is more like it. And totally deserved. In my humble humble opinion.

(*A shared smile.*)

Is it a rehearsal injury?

**JONAH.** (*A lie.*) Oh. Uh... yeah.

# **WAIT, THERE'S MORE!**

Please visit our website to buy the full script, apply for a license to perform this show (if it's available), or to explore hundreds of similar titles.

**[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)**

**[www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)**

To be the first to know about new books, licensing releases, and anything theater-related, follow us on our social media channels.

**@ConcordShows** and **@ConcordUKShows** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**concord**  
**theatricals**