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## **“You Promised”**

(Standing)

You promised me last time. And I believed you. I believe you every time.

“I won’t hurt you,” you say.

And every time, you do. You cause me such grief.

I can’t keep going on like this.

I know, I know. It’s complicated, our relationship. You don’t mean to hurt me. You don’t want to hurt me—do you?

But. You do. You do hurt me.

You tell me I need you. That my life will fall apart if you’re not there to care for me. But if you’re so good—why do you cause so much pain?

Why? I’ll tell you why. Because you like it. I think you do, in fact. You like to cause me pain.

Me—and everyone else you know.

You tell us you know better. That you even have certificates on your wall to prove it: “UCLA School of Dentistry.” (Points at certificates)

And this—this gives you the right?

Oh? What? “This time,” you say. “This time will be different.” You say you’ve changed?

Novocain, you say. Laughing gas. Beethoven through a headset while a little fountain trickles, all drowning out the sound of the drill.... Different!

You promise, you swear—you guarantee? A money-back guarantee, you say?

Okay. I guess anyone can change, sure. So why not you?

And...you promise, right?

Yes, yes I do believe you. This time will be different. It will. It will.

(Sits in chair, leans way back, opens wide.)