(MATTHEW runs off to the corner of what looks like a small stage with steps. He sits against the steps rocking back and forth panicking. A woman who is not well lit comes up to him patting him).

MATTHEW

No! No...

(The woman steps away slowly, turning to the backstage door to smoke a cigarette).

Why...this...happening...why is this happening? Why is this—?

(MISS CLAIRE, an elderly woman in a neutral colored sweater, runs up to MATTHEW. The lights focus on her and MATTHEW).

MISS CLAIRE

Matthew! What’s wrong?

MATTHEW

DON’T TOUCH ME!

MISS CLAIRE

Oh my goodness! I’m so sorry. Do you need me to get Mr. Nichols?

MATTHEW

No please don’t. Please don’t.

MISS CLAIRE

Okay. Do you want to go to my office? We can call your mom.

MATTHEW

NO, NO, No, no, / no, no, no...

MISS CLAIRE

Oh, okay. Okay. What can I do?

MATTHEW

Just...

(Shaking, MATTHEW pats his hand down on the ground and MISS CLAIRE sits. MISS CLAIRE nods to someone in front of her mouthing “He’s okay”).

What’s happening? Everything’s really fast and I’m scared.
MISS CLAIRE

I know. These things happen. You haven’t done something like this before. All the lights, the music—I told Mr. Nichols that with your condition you may not be—

MATTHEW

No, it’s okay, Miss Claire. It’s okay.

MISS CLAIRE

(Turning to the woman behind her)

You know, I think that girl really wants to dance with you.

MATTHEW

She does?

MISS CLAIRE

Yeah. She’s been looking at you all period. It’s the end of the year dance party! Everybody wants to dance. All you have to do is go up and introduce yourself. That is if you don’t want to dance with me.

MATTHEW

I’m okay. I can… I can go talk to her.

MISS CLAIRE

Alright. We don’t need to do this right away. First let’s get up and just breathe.

(She helps him up and breathes with him. The breaths get progressively slower and the club grows quieter).

Remember, Matthew: it’s simple! All you have to do is focus, listen, and look in between the eyebrows.

(Music starts. (2. In Between))

I know you can do it. And, if you can’t dance with her, you can always dance with me.

(MISS CLAIRE exits)

MATTHEW

(With eyes looking downward and stiff arms)

THIS ISN’T HARD
IT’S IS SIMPLE
THEY’VE TOLD YOU THIS FOR YEARS
YOU’RE FOURTEEN
JUST LOOK IN BETWEEN
LOOK AT THE HAIRS ON HER FACE
STOP FIDGETING WITH YOUR EARS
DON’T MAKE A SCENE
JUST LOOK IN BETWEEN

FOCUSING AND LISTENING
IS ALL I HAVE TO DO
CLENCH MY FISTS
STIFFEN MY WRISTS
SO I CAN BE NORMAL LIKE YOU

DON’T BLINK MORE THAN ONCE IN A SECOND
SHE’LL NOTICE YOU TURNING THE GEARS
HOLD IN YOUR SPLEEN
AND LOOK IN BETWEEN

IT’S NATURAL DANCE TO A BEAT
IT’S NATURAL TO FEEL THE PAIN AND HEAT
JUST SMILE AWAY ALL THE SENSES
JUST LIKE EVERYONE DOES
I WISH I KNEW WHAT THAT WAS

IF FOCUSING AND LISTENING
IS ALL I HAVE TO DO
FIGHT BACK THE URGE TO YELP AND PURGE
SO I CAN CARE FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU

THIS ISN’T HARD IT’S SIMPLE
I TOLD MYSELF THAT FOR YEARS
YOU’RE NOT FOURTEEN
YOU LOOK IN BETWEEN

YOU CAN HOLD YOUR HEAD UP
TAKE A BREATH TO QUELL YOUR FEARS
THEN SHE WON’T BE MEAN
IF YOU LOOK IN BETWEEN

(MATTHEW takes a breath and taps the woman’s shoulder. He stares outward, as she doesn’t turn around immediately, and he sticks out a hand stiffly).

Hi, I’m Matthew.
(Music ends).