

**Cast:**

**Laurel Bay-** Brynn

Mother Nature's morally good half. Methodically careful and slow.

**Chance Hemlock-** Marcus

Mother Nature's morally gray half. Abrasive quick wit.

**Intern-** Grace

A embodiment of being human, imperfection who wants to do everything perfectly.

**Willow Wisp -** Shay

The new generation's mother nature. Made for the new problem, not the old one.

**Credence-** Nia

The older sister, protective of her brother, and defensive outsiders.

**Jack-** Lukas

The younger brother, guarded from others, quietly optimistic

**Kelsey-** Jazz

A children's surf instructor, found their purpose educating kids and teaching balance

**Surfer Students-** Dario, Cam

Young and enthusiastic children trying to learn to balance their life with nature.

**Christopher Winnie-** Kiarra

The physical embodiment of curiosity. A kid too smart for their own. Good and just good enough to progress, not perfect.

*A giant doomsday clock snaps onto the center screen, and begins ticking down second by second. Lights come up on Disaster Prevention Inc. SL, **Chance Hemlocke** is sat, stacking blocks carefully, so they don't fall over. SR, **Laurel Bay** is shuffling through a folder labeled "Intern Applications". Both seem to be very tired and stressed. Suddenly there is a crash from backstage as **The Intern** enters carrying a tray with some scattered puzzle pieces. They set them down CS.*

**Intern**

I can't do this! What do you expect me to do?

**Hemlock**

Your job? Maybe?

**Intern**

Nothing's working. I NEED HELP!

**Hemlock**

How many times am I going to have to tell you it's your job, not ours.

**Laurel**

You're just gonna have to keep trying. We've already been training you, just... give it one more chance.

**Intern**

You're not even helping! You're just sitting here! Doing NOTHING!

**Hemlock**

We already tried it kid, our turn is over. So you better figure out something.

**Laurel**

Don't listen to him, all he ever thinks about is what he doesn't want to do. You can still do this, you just need to keep trying!

**Hemlock**

When are you going to give up on babying them? Hasn't worked so far!

**Laurel**

And YOU'VE been so helpful through this process??

**Hemlock**

I was, and it didn't work-

**Laurel**

-You never even put effort-

**Intern**

Can you both SHUT UP? If you helping is just screaming at each other the whole time then I don't want it.

**Laurel**

But you can't do this by yourself, what if-

**Intern**

-I think I'll be fine on my own. Leave. Now. I don't need either of you.

*Laurel and Hemlock exit, looking suddenly ashamed of their actions, more quiet than they ever have been. The Intern is left alone, the space feels much more empty now. They looks around as if they'll find the answer somewhere nearby.*

**Intern**

Shit. Hello?... Please, someone has to be out there somewhere. I can't be the only one left, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING. I NEED HELP.

*There is a shuffling from upstage, and **Willow Wisp** enters through the US double doors.*

**Willow**

Ok, let's do it then.

**Intern**

Jesus-where-wha- how did you get in?!

**Willow**

I'm here to help, stupid. You want action? Then let's get moving!

**Intern**

Hold on, I said I wanted help, not someone else trying to tell me what THEY think I should do.

**Willow**

You asked for help though, what else do you want me to do. Sit here and stare at you while you're whining?

**Intern**

You didn't even give me a chance to try! You just showed up!

**Willow**

Look, the old problem would've taken it's time and wasted time introducing who they are and every detail of their life. I'm here for the new problem, so lets MOVE!

**Intern**

If you're so confident then what the hell are we supposed to do next?

**Willow**

If you stop complaining I'll show you... Are you done?... Ok! Good!

Go grab the files on Laurel's desk. *(The Intern stands frozen, overwhelmed by the information just thrown at her)* Sometime soon??

**Intern**

And this is supposed to do something?

**Willow**

I need you to get this whole disaster prevention thing more. You are missing puzzle pieces, so... we're gonna go get them!

**Intern**

None of this is making any sense !

**Willow**

It's not supposed to! First on the list of possible pieces: Credence and Jack Cloud, siblings lost in a sinkhole, trying to make their own home on the road. We find them in their go to hideaway spot, the dock behind their house, participating in one of their nightly traditions. Now, go find the piece of the puzzle!

*(Credence and Jack appear downstage, smoking a blunt, a large plastic puzzle piece in between them, almost seems to be illuminating it's surroundings)*

**Intern**

What do you mean take their piece?

**Willow**

Just figure it out!

**Jack**

Mom tried to call again.

**Credence**

And you didn't answer her right?... RIGHT?

**Jack**

I only talked to her for a little.

**Credence**

Hey, we can't be doing this, we've talked about this dude, growth requires change.

**Intern**

Why are we here? They're just wasting time, this isn't important to anything.

**Credence**

JESUS! *(Credence jumps a little, not expecting someone to be behind her.)* You could announce yourselves before you rudely interrupted us.

**Willow**

You see it right? *(Points to the puzzle piece from over the Intern's shoulder)* Go.

**Intern**

Look I'm not too sure what's going on but I need that -

**Credence**

- Hey, back up first, we don't know you like that. *(Credence gets up from sitting, and puts a hand in the Intern's face, Jack tries to follow)* Jack, stay there I got it.

**Intern**

I'm not getting in your way I just need the piece-

**Credence**

-Nope!

**Intern**

-But I-

**Credence**

- Shhhhhhhh! *(The Intern makes several attempts to get Credence off, but Credence successfully shushes her every time.)* I will give you the piece. But you gotta be patient.

**Intern**

But you could just give it to me! You're not even-

**Credence**

-Stop looking at the fucking puzzle piece for TWO SECONDS. Sit down and look at something else. Then you'll get the goddamn puzzle piece.

**Jack**

*(Jack leans over to join the conversation)* She means well I promise, it couldn't hurt to try tho.

**Willow**

*(The Intern looks to Willow , confused)* Don't look at me, you have to figure this out dude.

**Credence**

*(The Intern and Willow sit down with Credence and Jack)* Do you hear that?... Nothing. One of the only places around any of us that isn't polluted by lights and noise.

**Intern**

But nothing's happening here, it's not important.

**Credence**

EXACTLY. Nothing's happening. It's away from all the somethings, and that isn't so bad is it?

**Intern**

*(The Intern takes a second to sit in this moment, for once looking at something other than the immediate goal)* I guess.

**Credence**

*(Credence gets up to leave, and hands the puzzle piece to the Intern without being asked)* Look, have places to be, but maybe don't be so uptight so often, stress makes you look terrible.

**Intern**

Hey!

**Jack**

*(Also getting up to leave)* I promise she means well. Sorry.

**Intern**

*(The Intern sits looking at the puzzle piece for a second.)* I got the thing... Now what. *(The doomsday clock on the center screen ticks back up by a few seconds, there's more time left than we thought.)* It can do that?

**Willow**

And it can keep doing that but we gotta move on!

**Intern**

-We just got here!-

**Willow**

You got to have your moment but you can't have it forever! Moving on, Kelsey Quercus, an East Coast surf instructor who educates kids on how to survive waves! She has a piece that her sister gave her before they were both lost in a summer storm, assumed lost in the ocean.

*(Kelsey walk on, followed by two surfing students, just out of a surf lesson)*

**Kelsey**

Good work today y'all! Balancing in the water is tough, but keep practicing! Remember, it takes time to build a strong base.

**Surf Student 1**

Thanks Ms. Quercus!

**Surf Student 2**

See you next week! *(The surf students run off, talking about the lesson to each other, Kelsey takes a moment to breathe, then suddenly remembers a not she had in her pocket. She pulls it out, unfolds it, and reads from it, she's clearly ready this not to the point that it barely still stays in one piece.)*

I was walking along the beach watching the ocean  
Waves crashing onto the shore  
Playing tag with the children as they ran away everytime the tide came close  
The sun shining on my skin  
I was at peace  
I blinked Then I was walking along the glaciers  
Plowing through the snow

Stunned by white mountain tops and still skylines  
I was at peace  
I blinked and I was back at the beach  
But as I walked the water was warmer than usual and still  
It was pulling out towards the horizon  
The next thing I know I was waist deep  
I blinked and I was back at the glaciers  
But there was no snow  
It wasn't cold  
Just grass and high mountain tops  
I blinked one last time  
Then I knew the earth is on its healing journey  
Looking out at the horizon  
I see beauty  
I see peace  
The earth is at peace

**Kelsey**

*(Notices the Intern)* You here for a lesson?

**Willow**

Oh for sure they really suck and don't think they can get better. *(Smiles deviously at the intern, knowing they're setting them up)*

**Intern**

I can just fine, thanks. But I would if you give me that *(points to puzzle piece Kelsey is wearing as a necklace)*

**Kelsey**

This means a lot to me, I'm not just gonna give it to you. *(Kelsey sets down their board down and walks away, the intern tries to follow, grabbing the piece from them, as they step over Kelsey's board, the Intern loses their balance, and falls over.)* Huh. I thought you really needed this piece, but you still don't have it. I wasn't even trying that hard.

**Intern**

*(Gets up frustrated)* I've already tried the waiting part, now I need that piece, and I'm not listening to some weird random ask you have. Just give me the piece and I don't need to annoy you anymore.



**Kelsey**

You know what, step on the board, then we'll see.

**Intern**

Can't you just make this easy? This feels like you're overcomplicating things.

**Willow**

You can't just go with it for once?

**Kelsey**

Balance is complicated, the ocean never stops moving, so you have to adjust. Too far one way or the other and you'll tip over. You have to figure that adjustment out for yourself. If the wave is pushing you one way, you can't go against it, you gotta go with it... Now if I give this to you are you going to stop tipping over?

**Intern**

I'll try?

**Kelsey**

Good enough. *(Kelsey tosses the necklace with the puzzle piece to the Intern, and begins walking out.)* Don't try too hard, you wouldn't want to overdo it, let whatever is pushing you forward do that. *(Kelsey exits, and the clock on the center screen ticks up even more, with the time left this is starting to feel more doable.)*

**Intern**

Ok! Something is working! We might actually be getting somewhere.

**Willow**

*(Sarcastically)* Wow, that was some really wise advice, maybe you should try following it and letting whatever is pushing you forward PUSH YOU FORWARD.

**Intern**

Maybe you're right. I can push forward and figure this out myself as we're going!

**Willow**

Hold on, that's not what i meant-

**Intern**

But I have to figure this out somehow, so I will! *(The Intern takes the folder of other interns from Willow, and flips to the next page)* Christopher Winnie, a child too smart for their own good, who

was taken too early after their house was destroyed in a hurricane. *(Looks back to Willow)* All I have to do is take the piece right?

**Willow**

I mean that's part of it-

**Intern**

So I'll just take the piece! Then it's quick for me, and easy for them. *(Looks back to Christopher's file)* Christopher loves to solve puzzles, so this should be even easier than the others!

*(Christopher appears on stage, emptying a puzzle onto the floor; within the pile of pieces is one larger, more colorful piece, the piece the Intern is looking for. They make an immediate beeline for the piece.)*

**Christopher**

Yo, what are you doing?!

**Intern**

I just need the piece, it'll be real quick-

**Christopher**

I don't have to give you shit, crazy-

**Intern**

I know what I'm doing! *(In the struggle the puzzle piece snaps in half. There is a moment of deafening silence, as the Intern looks down at the piece, suddenly realizing that they can mess things up for this kid.)* I- I- didn't mean-to-

**Willow**

-But you did. And now we have to figure out how to fix it.

**Intern**

You never told me that I could brake them!

**Willow**

I didn't think you'd take it that far.

**Intern**

I DIDN'T THINK I WOULD HAVE TO.

**Christopher**

*(Steps in between the Intern and Willow)* This guy sucks.

**Intern**

What?

**Christopher**

Ok, It's broken, big deal, it's not the end of the world.

**Intern**

You don't know that.

**Christopher**

But we're still here right? That clock hasn't counted down anymore has it?

**Intern**

...No.

**Christopher**

So you shouldn't just quit now, clearly you're missing something.

**Intern**

I don't know what I'm missing, ok? None of this is making any sense, and all I can figure out how to do is pick up the stupid puzzle pieces and hope something will make sense! No one has been any help to me, do you expect me to do this on my own?!

**Willow**

No! It was never going to be that way, you just don't know how to ask for help.

**Intern**

But I didn't need to-

**Willow**

But you never asked... So try.

**Intern**

I- How?

**Willow**

With words stupid.

**Intern**

Fine, I need help. This doesn't make sense, and I don't know what to do. Happy?

**Christopher**

Was that so hard? I ask people for help all the time, that doesn't mean it isn't embarrassing to ask, but what else can you do?

*(Laurel and Hemlock re-enter through the USC doors, having heard the ask for help.)*

**Laurel**

You could always sit down for once just let the person be helpful.

**Hemlock**

We might've messed up, but that doesn't mean we never learned to fix a few cracks.

*(Laurel and Hemlock take the broken pieces of the puzzle from Intern and Christopher and slide them back into place, making the two pieces whole again.)*

**Laurel**

You had a bump in the road, but that doesn't mean you can't keep moving forward. *(Laurel hands the piece to the Intern, and the clock starts counting up, faster and faster now, until the numbers disappear.)*

**Intern**

Wait. It's gone. The timer is gone, shouldn't we be worried?!

**Christopher**

We're always worried though, that's how humans are.

**Willow**

But we're gonna have to get over that somehow.

**Intern**

*(To Willow)* I've been trying though! I've done everything you told me to do! How am I supposed to know that if I mess up it won't ruin it for whoever comes after me?

**Laurel**

Look, we may not have been able to see the full picture, but that doesn't mean that we didn't mess up sometimes too.

**Willow**

They learned to fix stuff so you wouldn't have to, now you have to do what you can to set up what you can for whoever comes after you.

**Christopher**

Yeah, it's not just about you. And it won't end when you're gone. Someone's gonna have to pick up where you left off. And if the problems not solved, so what? We still made progress. Step by step. We keep stepping, and move on.

**Intern**

You're weirdly positive about all this.

**Willow**

Don't you have to be? It's not easy to solve problems if you're always so negative about it. That's what we have oter people for. *(The previous people that Willow and the Intern met return to their respective spots, illuminated in their own little spaces, all looking towards the audience, in support of the Intern)*

**Credence**

If we can ground ourselves in nature and just listen to it-

**Jack**

-then maybe it can start putting itself back together.

**Kelsey**

If we keep passing on what we know, and keep adjusting our life balance, then people might be excited to learn-

**Christopher**

-and maybe more people will want to add their piece of the puzzle.

**Surf Student 1**

And we can keep exploring-

**Surf Student 2**

-and try new things!

**Laurel**

There's never just one perspective to a problem-

**Hemlock**

-sometimes it has to be scary before you learn to see the step forward.

**Willow**

Look, I know you're nervous right now. We don't have one big solution, all we can do is take another step forward, and do our best to fix things, one problem at a time. If we hold each other accountable. And maybe we do succeed and complete part of it, but that's what we all are, that's what the earth IS. *An incomplete puzzle*. The truth is, our strength comes not from being whole... but from being broken differently. Because there's enough of us... that we are whole *together*.

So can we take a step forward?

**Intern**

Ok.

*(The doomsday clock suddenly flashes back onto the center screen, and begins counting down at high speed, Willow looks to the intern)*

**Willow**

Ready?

**Intern**

I don't know.

**Willow**

Good! *(Willow and then intern take a deep breath and everyone takes one step forward together, as the clock fades, the lights get momentarily brighter, as music similar to Time by Pink Floyd begins playing)*

