



CRACKED, BUT NOT BROKEN

(College Version)

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Character Breakdown:

Chelsea: Kind and smart, victim of Jess's manipulation

Andrea: Strong and supportive. Tries showing Chelsea why Jess is a problem

Jess: Manipulative and controlling. All about having power and control

Props Breakdown:

Chelsea:

- Phone
- Ring from Jess

Andrea:

- Phone

Jess:

- Phone

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK VB

(CHELSEA and ANDREA enter)

CHELSEA

Hey – I’m Chelsea, and this is my best friend Andrea. We’re Juniors now, but it doesn’t seem that long ago that we were Freshman and just couldn’t wait to get first semester out of the way. I had like a million plans for winter break – relax, work at the coffee shop. I just wanted some time for myself and maybe a chance to hang out with my best friend.

ANDREA

Try to get to more parties, maybe meet some guys... We’ve been best friends since grade school and I remember exactly when Chelsea and Jess met. We were hanging out, sitting on this bench chatting when my friend Rob and Jess drove by. They saw us and stopped. Rob had me come over to the car to listen to this new band and while Rob and I were doing that, Jess and Chelsea started talking.

(JESS enters and approaches CHELSEA. He sits next to her. CHELSEA knows who JESS is, but assumes he does not know her. While ANDREA speaks to the audience they sit there awkwardly.

CHELSEA pulls out her cell phone and begins playing Angry Birds)

(ANDREA exits, JESS and CHELSEA sit for a beat. CHELSEA is still on her cell phone)

JESS

Whatcha doing?

CHELSEA(*Surprised, shy*)

Uhhh, just playing some Angry Birds.

JESS

You still play that? That’s like ancient.

CHELSEA

Yeah, I know, lame, right?

JESS

No, that’s cool. I still play it , too. What level are you on?

ANDREA

Oh, it's this one. I think it's impossible.

JESS

Are the Angry Birds making you angry?

CHELSEA

Infuriated!

JESS

Let me see.

(CHELSEA hands her phone over to JESS)

JESS

Oh right, this one took me forever too. See here's what you do, you can actually get all the ugly green pigs with one bird. Just have to launch him at the right plank and... (He does so) Boom! Ugly pigs are dead.

CHELSEA

Oh! Wow, that was easy. I'm not very good at that game.

JESS

Oh no! It's a really hard level. Do you know how many times those pigs laughed at me before I completed it. Too many to count. Stupid pigs. (CHELSEA laughs) I'm Jess by the way.

CHELSEA

Uh, yeah, I know who you are. You're a senior, right? Just transferred here for baseball.

JESS

Yeah, this school has an awesome baseball team. Way more scouts come here and I really want to make it as a baseball player. And you are?

CHELSEA

Oh, right, um, I'm Chelsea Martens. Andrea and I are friends.

JESS

Yeah, Rob has a huge crush on her. It's kinda sad really. When he saw her over here he said, "Hurry, think of an excuse so I can go talk to her." He doesn't really have a new band for her to listen to, he just wanted an excuse to see her.

CHELSEA

I think the feelings are mutual. As soon as Andrea saw his car she started fixing her hair.

JESS

So they will probably be going out soon, huh?

CHELSEA

Maybe...

JESS

Hmmm... You dating anybody?

CHELSEA (Shyly)

Nope...

JESS

Oh...

CHELSEA

Yeah...

JESS

So...

CHELSEA

Yeah?

(A moment looking at each other. JESS bursts out laughing, stands up, and puts his hand out to her)

JESS

Come on.

CHELSEA

What?

JESS

Come on. We have to go and tell Andrea and Rob.

CHELSEA

Tell Andrea and Rob?

JESS

That we win, because we're going on a date before they do.

(Beat, they smile at each other)

That is unless you aren't interested.

CHELSEA

No! No... I think I'd be interested.

JESS

Well... great, come on!

(CHELSEA slowly takes JESS's hand and they exit together, ANDREA enters)

COLLEGE LIBRARY VB

ANDREA

Well, that's when they started seeing each other . . . a lot. Rob and I started seeing each other shortly after that too. I thought that since Rob and Jess were friends and Chelsea and I were friends that we would be hanging out a lot. But we didn't. I actually hardly ever got to see her.

CHELSEA

Winter break flew by. Everything was so much more exciting once Jess was in my life. I hurried through everything just to be with him.

When we started classes again, it was hard to balance everything. Homework, friends, campus events, and Jess. But, Jess wanted to be with me. It was amazing. And he was older than me, so I felt like he was trying to help me out. I just tried to follow his lead.

I asked him a few times if he thought it would be fun to go on some double dates with Andrea and Rob, but he didn't seem too interested. I think he wanted to keep me all to himself. Jess always made the plans and he always said he had something special up his sleeve for our dates, so I usually didn't even know what our plans were until he picked me up. It was pretty exciting, at first. But then things slowly began to... change.

(CHELSEA gets on her phone, JESS enters)

JESS

Hey Chels.

CHELSEA

Hey! How are you?

(Puts her phone away)

JESS

Not bad, what are you doing?

CHELSEA

Nothing.

JESS

It looked like you were texting.

CHELSEA

Oh, yeah, I guess I was.

JESS

Who?

CHELSEA

Nick Petersen.

JESS

Chelsea...

CHELSEA

Jess . . .

JESS

Don't.

CHELSEA

He's my partner for my science lab. I have to talk to him.

JESS

I think that he likes you.

CHELSEA

What?

JESS

I've seen how he talks to you Chelsea, I think he's hitting on you. I don't think you should let him do that.

CHELSEA

You really think he likes me, like that? (JESS nods) I've never gotten that idea from him. I always thought that we were just friends. Gross.

JESS

Trust me, I'm a guy and I know how these things work. He's trying to hook up with you.

CHELSEA

That would never happen.

JESS

Good. Probably best that you don't talk to him.

CHELSEA

But we're lab partners.

JESS

Switch with somebody.

CHELSEA

Oh... okay.

JESS

Look, it's for his own good. I wouldn't want him to have to continually chase something he can't have, it's not nice.

CHELSEA

But I've known him for so long- it just seems really rude.

JESS

Hey, it's rude to lead him on, isn't it? Drop him!

(Beat, back to sweet and nice)

Okay? It'll be best for everybody involved. And besides, you don't need him anyway. You got me.

(Puts his arms around her waist)

CHELSEA

Jess, not in school, okay?

(she turns her head away, he forces her to face him and kisses her)

JESS

Come on, Chelsea, you're just playing hard to get again. You always say no, but we both know you love it. Besides, I want everybody to see and know that you are all mine. What class you got next?

CHELSEA

American Lit. You?

JESS

I've got some free time. Hey, could I borrow your phone? I want to look up this week's baseball stats.

CHELSEA

Sure. Oh, wait, Jess, that's not where the baseball stats are, let me-

JESS

I know, I am going to go ahead and delete all your contact information in here about Nick, since that's what we decided. I'm also gonna see if there are any other guys in here that are bad news so I can make sure you're safe. Oh, and keep your schedule free tonight. I might be getting out of practice early and I want to know where you are. Have fun in class!

COLLEGE HALLWAY VB

(JESS exits)

CHELSEA

The weird thing with Jess was that even though a lot of the things he said seemed to make sense I always ended up feeling like I was stupid, always getting it wrong or taking something the wrong way. Being too sensitive or touchy. But we did have a lot of fun. He helped me with a bunch of my classes because he had already taken them. And everyone liked him! My brothers and sisters loved him and even my mom said she thought that I had done pretty well picking out Jess.

I felt like I was the only one feeling weird about it until this time I talked with Andrea. Jess and I were just about to leave when she joined us...

(JESS enters)

JESS

You ready to go?

(ANDREA enters)

ANDREA

Hey guys, what's going on? A bunch of us are going to go to the new Chinese place tonight. You should come along.

JESS

We've already got plans. And I heard that new Chinese place sucks. At least, that's what some people are saying. Thanks, but no thanks.

ANDREA

Are you sure—

JESS

Yeah, we're sure.

ANDREA

Okay...

CHELSEA

Jess, come on, we could go babe, don't ya think? I haven't talked to Andrea in awhile.

JESS

Well, maybe not talked, but you've been texting. She sent you 18 text messages yesterday.,

ANDREA

How did you know—

CHELSEA

How did you get to my phone? It's been in my purse.

JESS

When you went to the bathroom I had to use your phone. What's in your purse that I shouldn't see?

ANDREA

Chelsea's purse and her phone are her own business.

JESS

I didn't ask you. I think I need to go talk to Rob about keeping his girlfriend on a tighter leash.

ANDREA

What?

JESS

Yeah, and maybe a muzzle. Stay right here. I still need to talk to you... (Looks at ANDREA)...alone. (He leaves)

CHELSEA

Andrea – I'm sorry. I don't know why he acts like that. He's been under some stress with classes and baseball stuff – he has so much to do. And then I pick on some little thing like him checking my phone when he's just trying to protect me.

ANDREA

First of all you don't owe me an apology, he does. That was rude. I was just trying to invite you guys to join us. I never see you anymore. You're always with him. I don't see how he is protecting you, he's just cutting you off from your friends.

CHELSEA

No he's not, he just wants me to be safe. And Jess says people who are dating always spend less time with their friends.

ANDREA

Rob and I don't see our friends any less.

CHELSEA

Jess says that's because you guys just aren't in love--not like we are.

ANDREA

What?

CHELSEA

I'm sorry Andrea, I'm not trying to rub it in, I just know how lucky I am to have him. Here, look, I haven't shown anybody because I am a little embarrassed, but this is the ring Jess got me for being together for 3 months.

(CHELSEA pulls out a ring, it could be in a box, on a locket around her neck tucked into her shirt, or just in her pocket. Just as long as it is hidden until this point. It is stunning. ANDREA takes it from CHELSEA)

ANDREA

Whoa!

CHELSEA

Yeah... I know.

ANDREA

How much was it?

CHELSEA

Jess wouldn't tell me, but he did say I was worth every cent.

ANDREA

Wow.

CHELSEA

Yeah...

(CHELSEA slowly grabs it back from ANDREA. A beat while CHELSEA admires the ring and ANDREA watches CHELSEA)

ANDREA

Chelsea, just...be careful, okay?

CHELSEA

Andrea, we're fine, he's just moody today. I'm sorry he was rude. Everything's fine.

ANDREA

Fine.

CHELSEA

Okay. Well... I'm gonna go find him and make sure he's okay.

(CHELSEA exits)

ANDREA

Seeing that ring freaked me out. It looked really expensive, and it just made me nervous for Chelsea. He was doing all of these things that were so controlling and she was just . . . going along. It was like watching my best friend disappear before my eyes.

CHELSEA

When I talked to Andrea that day, I don't know who I was trying to convince that everything was going to be okay, her or me. I always made it seem like I was fine and Jess and I were totally happy because, well, I was embarrassed. Jess and I weren't having as much fun as we had in the beginning and it seemed like there were more and more rules all the time about how things should be between people who loved each other. But I thought things would get better. I thought if I learned and followed the rules, Jess and I would be happy again. I thought everything was going to be okay. But things didn't get better...

BRICK OUTSIDE SCHOOL VB

(Andrea enters)

CHELSEA

Hey Andrea, what's up? Make it quick ok? Jess is waiting for me out in the car.

ANDREA

Okay, well... it's about Jess.

CHELSEA

What about him?

ANDREA

Rob told me he said some stuff about you to the guys at the gym. And I thought you should know.

CHELSEA

Well, what? What did he say?

ANDREA

He talked about some personal things you two did together. Really personal things. And I guess he was bragging about it.

CHELSEA

Jess wouldn't do that. He's not like that.

ANDREA

There's more... he also said you said no at first, but that he "convinced" you. What does that mean? Chelsea, did he rape you?

CHELSEA

(Blowing up) What do you want Andrea? Huh? Is this what you brought me here for? To badmouth my boyfriend in front of me?

ANDREA

I just thought you should know Chelsea, I don't think it's right, and I'm worried about you--

CHELSEA

Well it's not true! None of it! People criticize Jess all the time because they don't understand him.

ANDREA

Oh, please!

CHELSEA

You're trying to break us up, aren't you?!

ANDREA

You know what, yeah, I am! He treats you like crap, I never see you anymore and you aren't the same person. You've changed Chelsea.

CHELSEA

Yeah, well so have you. You're just jealous, aren't you? Because Rob doesn't love you like Jess loves me.

ANDREA

Rob and I broke up! (Pause) Rob and I broke up, Chelsea. A month ago. We haven't been together for awhile.

CHELSEA

I didn't know that.

ANDREA

Of course you didn't, I never see you anymore.

CHELSEA

Jess never told me.

ANDREA

Because he knew you would want to see me.

CHELSEA

I'm so sorry Andrea.

ANDREA

It was... really hard... especially without you there. But it's fine, Rob and I are fine, we're still friends. Kind of.

CHELSEA

And Rob told you this?

ANDREA

He wanted you to know.

CHELSEA

Why?

ANDREA

Because we're both worried about you. (Beat)

CHELSEA

Don't be. I can handle myself.

ANDREA

Chelsea-

CHELSEA

Jess and I are fine. We're happy together! I'm happy, I am the happiest I have ever been in my life so quit trying to ruin it! Okay?

ANDREA

Whatever...

(ANDREA exits)

CHELSEA

I did think I was happy. At least, I thought I could be once everything with Jess calmed down. I felt really bad about Andrea and Rob but I just couldn't handle *another* problem. Not with everything else I was going through. Later that same week, Jess found me alone before baseball practice. He had borrowed my phone again. He came over to give it to me after class.

(JESS enters holding ANDREA's phone)

JESS

What's this? A text message from Nick Petersen at 12:15 on Saturday night. "I think we got an A on this project for sure, good job."

CHELSEA

We worked on the project late that night, it was due Monday and we hadn't done anything on it until then. It's worth 25% of the final grade. It was nothing.

JESS

I told you to switch partners.

CHELSEA

Professor Whitman wouldn't let me!

JESS

You expect me to believe that you two sat up until midnight just working on a group science project. I'm not stupid! What's up?

CHELSEA

Nothing happened! Nick and I are just lab partners –

(She tries to free her other wrist, he grabs it)

JESS

How about I take that ring back? I don't want somebody I can't trust having something that important to me.

CHELSEA

Jess, please let me go! You're the only guy I see.

JESS

(pulls her closer) Well if you love me you'll stop worrying about school and focus on what's really important. I helped you with your classes, and now I need you to help me with baseball by being here with me.

CHELSEA

You are really hurting my arm, please.

JESS

Oh, I am sorry. I didn't mean it. I just get so jealous when I see you with other guys. Don't you know that by now? That's how people are when they're in love. Great, now you've made me late to practice. (Exits)

CHELSEA

Jess went back to practice. I hung out and waited for him. I messed around on my phone and posted a selfie I took of us on my Instagram, saying how much I cared about Jess, hoping it would improve his mood. But when I showed it to him after practice he told me that I had to delete all my social media accounts. He thought it would make it too easy for guys to find me and hit on me. He also said it wasn't safe. Lots of things seemed like they weren't safe for me anymore. He always said he was protecting me. And I thought he was. I felt tired all the time. I stopped eating much of anything, and I would get stomach aches when Jess came to pick me up. Sometimes I wanted to burst into tears, but I just didn't have the energy. I have never felt so... alone.

PINK WALL VB

ANDREA

After I had that last talk with Chelsea, I was really upset. She never returned my calls or texts, she wasn't there for me when Rob and I broke up, and she wasn't even the same person anymore! I thought she was being really stupid, and I wanted to tell her that but... I knew it wouldn't change anything. It would only make things worse. I mean, I barely got to talk with her now, if I attacked her, she would probably cut me out of her life altogether.

COLLEGE CLASSROOM VB

CHELSEA

Before I knew it...it was time to get ready for spring break. Jess was really excited about his last visits with some baseball scouts. Baseball season was going really well for the team. I started to think that things were getting better now that Jess had less stress...but they weren't.

JESS

Hey, I've got everything planned for spring break. We can go up to my parents' cabin. We'll have the whole place to ourselves. We can play house all week. There won't be anyone around to bother us. I can't wait. Got to run.

CHELSEA

I was really stressed and feeling pressured. I went into the bathroom and threw up...

BATHROOM VB

ANDREA

Hey I heard you in there, are you okay?

CHELSEA

I'm fine...

So what's up?

ANDREA

Ya know, just getting ready for spring break...

CHELSEA

Right, well I better go...

(Chelsea starts to leave, Andrea stops her)

ANDREA

Chelsea wait, look I need to talk to you, for real. Don't get mad, okay? I--I did something...It's just that I was worried about you--

CHELSEA

What did you do?

ANDREA

I talked to someone in the counseling department about you and Jess and she wants you to stop by.

CHELSEA

Oh, so what now, I need to see a counselor?!?

ANDREA

He treats you like crap...

CHELSEA

He treats me fine!

ANDREA

He doesn't respect you, he's always insulting you or telling you what to do...and, and I've seen the bruises on your arms.

CHELSEA

I'm fine!

ANDREA

Okay... then let me see your arms.

CHELSEA

Why?

ANDREA

Prove it, let me see your arms.

CHELSEA

No.

(She starts to exit, Andrea grabs her arm)

ANDREA

Chelsea, wait!

CHELSEA

OW! (Beat) He only did it once, okay... It was just a mistake. He was really sorry, he apologized for it and said it would never happen again... Okay?

ANDREA

Chelsea--

CHELSEA

My problems are my problems Andrea, and I don't need you interfering with my life by talking to a counselor about me. You're not helping me! I don't need help!

ANDREA

Right. Well, if you ever do, you know where to find me.

(ANDREA exits)

COLLEGE HALLWAY VB

CHELSEA

When I think about that now, I realize I didn't handle it well. I mean, I know she was trying to help, but I just felt so stupid for being in this relationship that I got defensive. And things with Jess were way more complicated for me than they may have seemed to her.

But what she said kind of made sense..and with everything I was feeling—I decided it probably wasn't a good idea for me to go with Jess for the entire week. I knew my parents wanted to see me over break. And I just didn't want to be put in that situation anyways. I had to tell Jess, but I was scared about what he might do when I told him no.

(Jess enters)

JESS

Oh man, I am so excited for break, it's going to be great.

CHELSEA

Yeah.

JESS

What's wrong? Aren't you excited to spend the whole week with me... alone?

CHELSEA

Yeah, but...

JESS

But what?

CHELSEA

I don't know. I haven't seen my parents since Christmas, and I'd really like to go and visit them. You could come along.

JESS

Oh, c'mon, it'll be fine. You'll get to see them this summer.

CHELSEA

Jess... no...

JESS

What?

CHELSEA

No. I'm not going to spend the week with you.

(He stares at her for a while. She stares back)

CHELSEA

I'm sorry.

(He abruptly gets up and begins to storm off)

JESS

Whatever.

CHELSEA

Jess-

JESS

SHUT UP! (exits)

BRICK VB

CHELSEA

I went outside and saw him standing by his car, which was parked in the back corner of the parking lot. I wasn't sure that I really wanted to talk to him but I wanted to explain how I was feeling. Plus I hated that he was mad at me. So, I went over to him..

PARKING LOT VB

(CHELSEA exits and reenters. They sit in tense silence for awhile. JESS won't look at

CHELSEA)

CHELSEA

Jess, I'm sorry, I just-

JESS

SORRY?!? You've planned this from the beginning, haven't you? You lead me on all year long and take all of the stuff I gave you and at the last minute you're not interested. Well, you know what? You can get the hell out of here because I'm not interested either. You're pathetic. No

wonder everyone told me not to waste my time with you. I was just too nice a guy to listen. I really couldn't care less if I ever see you again.

CHELSEA

Look, Jess, please...can't we just talk about this...

JESS

No, get away from me..

CHELSEA

Jess, just listen-

JESS

No *you* listen, get out of here! (gets close to her)

CHELSEA

You don't understand-

JESS

I don't understand?!?

(The scene freezes as Jess reaches over to grab Chelsea by the neck. Chelsea exits the car. The action continues as she describes it)

CHELSEA

(Jess mimes the action while Chelsea narrates)

And he reached over and put his hands around my throat, and I thought he was trying to strangle me – he had his hands around my neck and was shaking me so hard. I thought he was never going to stop – Finally he shoved me, called me a nasty name, got in his car and sped off.. (JESS exits.)

I – I could hardly think – I felt like this was happening to someone else. Jess told me he loved me, and I believed him. I trusted him. How could I have been so stupid? I don't remember much after that. I was so...confused.

Silence.

(Andrea enters, sees Chelsea and kneels down next to her. Chelsea does not respond. Andrea holds her for a moment, then helps her sit down in the chair. She kneels and makes sure Chelsea is okay, then Andrea speaks to the audience)

ANDREA

Chelsea?

PINK WALL VB

ANDREA

Whenever I think of the way Chelsea looked that night it freaks me out. She had this dead expression on her face and I can't help but think of how much worse it could have been. It wasn't just luck that I showed up. I knew that Chelsea was in trouble. Rob had mentioned that Jess wanted to spend the week with Chelsea, alone. I told her that I didn't think that was a good idea and she agreed. Then when I talked to Rob about everything today, I was worried for Chelsea. And it's a good thing that Jess didn't hurt her any worse than he did. Otherwise, it could have meant really bad news. I drove Chelsea back to the dorm, we called her mom, and the next day we talked to a counselor at school.

CHELSEA

It turned out OK. The counselor asked me to meet with her. She said she had talked to Jess and that he said that we got in a fight and he dumped me. I also heard from other students that he was telling everybody that I cheated on him with Nick Epstein and that's why he dumped me. I wish I could tell you that hearing that surprised me, but it didn't.

Lots of people have helped me through this very confusing time. I realized that if you can't count on your boyfriend to be kind, that should be a big red flag. An advocate helped me plan how to stay safely away from Jess, and I'm seeing a counselor every week, too. The counselor said that I should never see him again, even if he claims he has changed--because it's not as simple as that. She talked to me about consent, and what that means. That just because Jess and I were dating didn't give him the right to force himself on me, ever. She also helped me see that none of this was my fault and that I didn't deserve to be treated like that. No one does. I do still want the best for him, but I want the best for me, too. The bottom line is, I am really glad I am out of that relationship and have committed to never going back.

I am telling you this story, because I don't want it to happen to you.

Thanks for listening.

END OF PLAY