

# Abandoning Taylor

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Erica Jo Lloyd

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**ABANDONING TAYLOR**  
**By Erica Jo Lloyd**

**SYNOPSIS:** “We had one lifetime together! Yours! What about the rest of mine?” So Taylor tells his dead girlfriend, Mandy, after she announces that she doesn’t like Taylor’s new fiancée, Amelia, in this play about loss and not dealing with it. Eventually the echoes of Mandy win out, and Taylor settles for isolation to be “alone” with Mandy.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**  
**(2 MEN, 4 WOMEN)**

TAYLOR BRANDON..... A grieving young man.  
MANDY ALLEN ..... Taylor’s childhood sweetheart.  
AMELIA ..... Taylor’s current fiancée.  
MOTHER..... Taylor’s worried mother.  
MR. ALLEN ..... Mandy’s father.  
MS. NASH..... Taylor’s biology professor.

**SET/PROPERTIES**

The play can be produced with no set or props.

In the original production, two chairs were set center stage, to represent two swings in a park. The action in Taylor’s life revolved around them.

**ORIGINALLY PRODUCED**

May 2005 in a staged reading at Viterbo University. Directed by Abby K. DeSanto.

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

In the original production, the scenes which involve Taylor and Mandy as children were prerecorded and the audio played while Taylor and Mandy sat in the swings onstage.

Most scenes had a distinguishing prop, which was used for all scenes in that location, such as a book for Amelia in the library, and a wash rag for Mother in the kitchen.

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**AT RISE:**

*A park, TAYLOR and MANDY are alone, it's the present day.*

**MANDY:** We've spent every important moment of our lives in this park.

**TAYLOR:** And now?

**MANDY:** I don't –

**TAYLOR:** Mandy, please! I need to be with you! It doesn't matter. You're sick and you need me.

**MANDY:** You first proposed to me here.

**TAYLOR:** When we were ten.

**MANDY:** Taylor, don't make this hard. Let me go. I don't want you to watch me die.

**TAYLOR:** You need me.

**MANDY:** Remember Robby Ellis? You always got so mad about him. We were just kids.

**TAYLOR:** I need you.

**MANDY:** No.

*Later. The university library.*

**AMELIA:** Taylor. *(Pause.)* Taylor . . .

**TAYLOR:** *(Startled.)* Yeah?

**AMELIA:** You always look so depressed all the time.

**TAYLOR:** Yeah . . .

**AMELIA:** Did you get the science assignment?

**TAYLOR:** Uh . . . yeah . . .

**AMELIA:** You need to get out of this library sometime and come out with me.

*Later. MS. NASH's office.*

**TAYLOR:** I can't be failing.

**MS. NASH:** You are, you've failed every test, you don't do the assignments, and you don't talk in class . . . I have no choice.

**TAYLOR:** What can I do? This semester has been really hard. *(Pause.)* I can't fail.

*Later. MANDY's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** Taylor! I told you not to come see me!

**TAYLOR:** I had to. I can't sleep, I can't function. I'm failing science.

**MANDY:** I'm dying.

*Later. A street.*

**MR. ALLEN:** Taylor, this was how she wanted it. She died alone.

**TAYLOR:** I should have been with her!

**MR. ALLEN:** She didn't want you with her.

**TAYLOR:** You were with her.

**MR. ALLEN:** I'm her father.

**TAYLOR:** This isn't fair!

*As children. The park.*

**MANDY:** Taylor Brandon, you're a mean, mean person!

**TAYLOR:** You were giving your crackers to Robby!

**MANDY:** I don't want to marry you anymore! He just wanted some crackers! I was being nice!

*Present day, after MANDY's death. A bar.*

**TAYLOR:** I haven't been out in a really long time.

**AMELIA:** So it's about time we went on a date.

**TAYLOR:** I didn't realize . . .

**AMELIA:** I've been trying to get you to ask me out for like a year now. Don't tell me you didn't notice . . .

**TAYLOR:** It hasn't been an easy year for me.

**AMELIA:** Let's dance.

**TAYLOR:** Oh –

**AMELIA:** Come on!

*Later. TAYLOR's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** *(She is not a ghost or apparition of any sort. She is very real – but only to TAYLOR.)* Did you forget me so soon?

**TAYLOR:** *(He is not surprised by MANDY's presence.)* No, she's just this girl. Her name's Amelia.

**MANDY:** You don't seem surprised to see me.

**TAYLOR:** I knew you couldn't be gone forever.

*Later. TAYLOR's mother's kitchen.*

**TAYLOR:** Mom? Can . . . Amelia come for dinner tomorrow?

**MOTHER:** Of course, honey! I'm just so glad you're getting your mind off Amanda!

**TAYLOR:** Sort of . . .

**MOTHER:** I mean, I know you two had a history, but it's time you moved on. I know how I felt after your dad died, but . . . you just have to keep living . . .

*Four months later. TAYLOR's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** So. Amelia's met your mother?

**TAYLOR:** Yeah. It seemed to go well. We never had that problem though, did we?

**MANDY:** No, your mother practically was my mother.

**TAYLOR:** Amelia's nice. And mom seemed to like her.

**MANDY:** She's not the one, Taylor.

**TAYLOR:** Hold on! We're not there yet. I've only been with Amelia a few months.

**MANDY:** You know it, too. You know she's not the one.

**TAYLOR:** Well, you were and you're dead, what does that say?

**MANDY:** We had a lifetime together!

**TAYLOR:** We had one lifetime together! Yours! What about the rest of mine?

**MANDY:** I'm just saying, it's not Amelia, she's not the one. She doesn't understand about me?

**TAYLOR:** I talk to a dead girl. How many people would understand?

**MANDY:** Fair point, but still . . .

**TAYLOR:** It has to be someone, and it can't be you.

**MANDY:** You don't need anyone else. *(Pause.)* We'll find someone better. Just get rid of Amelia. Do it for me.

*The bar.*

**AMELIA:** So what do you do for all those hours you spend alone in your room?

**TAYLOR:** Nothing. Just think.

**AMELIA:** About what?

**TAYLOR:** Nothing. You wouldn't be interested.

**AMELIA:** Is it about Mandy?

**TAYLOR:** Let's dance.

**AMELIA:** You hate dancing.

**TAYLOR:** Well, now I want to.

**AMELIA:** No, now you're avoiding the issue.

**TAYLOR:** What issue? I just want to dance. We're at a bar, we're drinking and we should be dancing.

**AMELIA:** This conversation isn't over, Taylor. Mandy is all you think about.

**TAYLOR:** That's not true. All I'm thinking about right now is changing the subject. And before that, I was thinking about asking you to stay the night.

**AMELIA:** Really? You would invite me into that shrine to your childhood?

**TAYLOR:** Shrine?

**AMELIA:** Yes, shrine! Mandy is everywhere!

**TAYLOR:** That's not true.

**AMELIA:** Prove it.

*Later. TAYLOR's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** I don't like this.

**TAYLOR:** You don't like what?

**MANDY:** Amelia! I'm sick of it!

**TAYLOR:** We've been through all this.

**MANDY:** We're not finished! You can't leave me!

**TAYLOR:** You left me! Before you even died, you left me!

*Library.*

**AMELIA:** Are you sure you're okay?

**TAYLOR:** Yeah.

**AMELIA:** I mean, I just worry about you is all.

**TAYLOR:** *(Angrily.)* Well, don't. *(Pause.)* Sorry. I'm sorry.

**AMELIA:** *(Hurt.)* I should get going.

**TAYLOR:** No, don't. I don't want you to go.

*Later. TAYLOR's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** You're still seeing her?

**TAYLOR:** Yes. I asked her to marry me, in fact.

**MANDY:** Well, that was stupid!

**TAYLOR:** I love her! Why is that stupid?

**MANDY:** You don't love her, you hate being without me. That's why it's stupid.

**TAYLOR:** Mandy, I can't keep going through this with you. You've been dead months now, and I think Amelia is starting to suspect something.

**MANDY:** She's not the one! You know it, and you know what else? She knows it.

*TAYLOR's parents' kitchen.*

**TAYLOR:** Mom. Can I talk to you?

**MOTHER:** Of course.

**TAYLOR:** I think I'm cracking up.

**MOTHER:** What do you mean?

**TAYLOR:** Well, after this whole thing with Mandy last summer, and – well, I . . .

**MOTHER:** Honey, you've had a stressful year. But Mandy's gone, and you don't need to feel guilty about marrying Amelia.

**TAYLOR:** I wouldn't feel guilty, except I see Mandy.

**MOTHER:** That doesn't mean you're going crazy.

**TAYLOR:** Would I be crazy if I talked to her?

**MOTHER:** No, honey, you're just grieving. People deal with it in different ways. When your dad died -

**TAYLOR:** What if she talked back?

*Silence.*

**TAYLOR:** I thought you'd say that.

**MOTHER:** But I didn't say anything.

**TAYLOR:** Neither does Mandy, but that doesn't mean I don't hear her.

**MOTHER:** Have you talked to anyone about this?

**TAYLOR:** No. And please don't say anything to anyone. Everyone would think I'm crazy.

**MOTHER:** I –

**TAYLOR:** The real problem isn't that she talks to me. It's that she keeps telling me Amelia's not the one. What if she's right?

*As children. The park.*

**TAYLOR:** Tag! You're it!

**MANDY:** You always tag me! You're faster than me, it's not fair.

**TAYLOR:** Well if you weren't so slow, you wouldn't lose all the time!

**MANDY:** You're mean! You always pick on me! I'm going to tell my daddy.

**TAYLOR:** Oh, don't do that! I promise I won't tag you anymore.

**MANDY:** Fine.

**TAYLOR:** I'm not gonna play with you anymore, either!

*Present day, before the wedding. The park.*

**AMELIA:** This is a quaint little park.

**TAYLOR:** This is where I grew up.

**AMELIA:** With Mandy.



**TAYLOR:** Yes, Amelia, with Mandy. I needed to bring you here because, well, this park and those memories are who I am, and . . . I don't know how to make you understand what Mandy meant to me. She will always be with me.

**AMELIA:** I heard you talking to her yesterday.

**TAYLOR:** I wasn't – *(Pause.)* I was not – *(Pause.)* It wasn't her – *(Pause.)* You don't –

**AMELIA:** *(Firmly, slowly.)* You were trying to tell her why I was the one.

**TAYLOR:** Oh, I –

**AMELIA:** And you also told her that you hoped she understood that she would be getting married in a couple of months if she was alive. She would marry you and not me. And I accepted that a long time ago. I thought I did, anyway . . .

**TAYLOR:** Amelia –

**AMELIA:** No, listen to me for a change! I thought that I was okay with that, because I loved you and I wanted to be with you, but I can't marry a guy who is in love with his past. You brought me to this park to explain to me why you don't love me.

*As children. The park.*

**TAYLOR:** Will you marry me, Mandy? I love you like my mom loves my dad.

**MANDY:** We're not old enough to get married.

**TAYLOR:** But I can still ask you. Then Robby Ellis can't ask you. 'Cause you're mine.

**MANDY:** We can wait till at least junior high, right?

**TAYLOR:** I'll wait forever for you. But I'd rather not. I think when we're sixteen, that would be good, because then our moms won't have to drive us on our honeymoon.

**MANDY:** Sixteen sounds good.

**TAYLOR:** And maybe we can save up to go to Six Flags for our honeymoon. My mom says honeymoons should be romantic. You could hold my hand on the roller coasters.

*Present day, before the wedding. The bar.*

**AMELIA:** Taylor! You're miles away! Come back to me. Talk to me!

**TAYLOR:** Yeah, I know what you mean.

**AMELIA:** I knew you weren't listening. You said, "Yeah, I know what you mean," to the last six things that I've said. Prior to calling you back to this world, I asked you what you wanted to drink, if you wanted to dance, if you wanted to go to a spa for our honeymoon,

if you would wear the pink tux I ordered, and two things that I dare not repeat now that you're listening.

**TAYLOR:** I've listened to every word you've said.

**AMELIA:** Liar.

**TAYLOR:** Am not!

**AMELIA:** Then what did I promise you on the honeymoon?

*Later. TAYLOR's bedroom.*

**MANDY:** So. You invited her to spend the night last night, huh?

**TAYLOR:** You were here?!

**MANDY:** Oh, honey, I'm always here. You know, I honestly didn't think you'd ever have another girl in that bed of yours. I thought I'd be the only one.

**TAYLOR:** There was Maggie on homecoming junior year, when you decided that we needed a break and went to the dance with Robby Ellis. So I asked his younger sister. Mom was out of town. Didn't I ever mention that to you? I was pretty proud of it.

*The day of the wedding. TAYLOR's parents' kitchen.*

**MOTHER:** Are you sure you're okay?

**TAYLOR:** No. But I'll always have Mandy.

**MOTHER:** Taylor, you don't have Mandy, she died.

**TAYLOR:** Well, she's more real than Amelia, anyway.

**MOTHER:** I'm really worried about you. Ever since Amelia called off the wedding, you've been sulking and sitting in your room all day long, and I hear you talking to yourself.

**TAYLOR:** Oh, don't worry about me. I'm not talking to myself, Mom, crazy people do that. I'm talking to Mandy.

**MOTHER:** Is Mandy here right now?

**TAYLOR:** Do you see her? No, she stays in my room.

**MOTHER:** Taylor. I want –

**TAYLOR:** Well, Mom, it's been great chatting, but I've got things to do. Mandy and I are going to watch a movie.

*TAYLOR exits.*

**MOTHER:** Taylor! She died! She died over a year ago!

*BLACKOUT.*

**THE END**