

MAYA KUPER & PAUL McCOMAS'

UNPLUGGED:

A SURVIVOR'S STORY IN SCENES & SONGS

Show Synopsis for *UNPLUGGED: A Survivor's Story in Scenes & Songs*

Tormented by an ever-deepening depression, 27-year-old rocker Dayna Clay sets fire to her recording contract ("Fireproof Storage") and pens a song-as-suicide-note ("Give Me Oblivion")—yet her sales-focused managers hear it only as her next big hit. After all, Dayna's fans buy dark themes: her breakout single describes her childhood rape and her determination to survive it ("Virtual Virtue").

At the moment, though, Dayna Clay isn't so keen on survival. Handing her guitar to a fan on the last night of her concert tour, she contemplates suicide—she has attempted it in the past, and remains unconvinced that her life is worth living. Instead, she hits the road for parts unknown, as rumors swirl regarding her whereabouts. Dayna's a woman on the run—and she's not the only one, according to a mysterious flyer she keeps seeing ("Wanted Poster").

Dayna winds up in the South Dakota Badlands, where she discovers an odd affinity for this odd land as she learns to climb its forbidding formations ("Hand Over Hand"). Resolving to give herself "a fighting chance," Dayna sees a physician who diagnoses her as clinically depressed, prescribes meds, and refers Dayna to an unlikely "specialist": a smart-aleck old rancher named Drake. A depression survivor himself, Drake lends a sympathetic ear—in stark contrast to the local hate-speech-sliling fundamentalist preacher ("Little Church").

Swearing off divisive religion, Dayna seeks spiritual guidance from Nature, which teaches Dayna to accept herself for whom she is: a bisexual woman ("Symmetry"). Thus encouraged, Dayna strikes up a new romance with a local girl, Kayla ("Jack-o'-Lantern"), but she's guarded in the relationship, haunted by her traumatic past.

Looking back on the day she first drove into South Dakota ("First Storm"), Dayna recognizes how far she's come on the road to recovery ("Second Storm"), yet she's torn between the prospect of building a new life with Kayla vs. returning to her rock-star career. When Dayna crosses paths with the woman from the "wanted poster"—who's fleeing an emotionally abusive relationship—each agrees to keep the other "in her prayers."

Little does Dayna know that she's about to be in dire need of all the aid—divine or otherwise—she can get, when she finds herself lost in the Badlands on a solo hike. Stranded with no phone, food, or medication ("Hand Over Hand [Reprise]"), she struggles through vicious PTS-driven flashbacks. In a moment of clarity, Dayna resolves to open her heart and mind to the love and trust she's long denied herself. With a weak body but a strong will, she makes it out of the darkness, to find her way back to Kayla and the future they hope to share ("Ready to Bloom").

And as for those who disrespect her choices? Dayna dismisses the haters with a punk anthem ("Karma Bomb") that calls out the abusers of power who stand in the way of freedom and equality for all.