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God Saves Y'all

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An abstract of  
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Abstract  
God Saves Y'all  
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According to a 2021 survey conducted by the Trevor Project, an LGBTQ+ youth suicide prevention organization, 42% of youths surveyed seriously considered suicide. An increasing amount of anti-trans and gay bills have been introduced—the Human Rights Campaign has already tracked 340 in 2023—with the intention to antagonize such populations. These efforts take a toll on young people everyday and my hope is for this play to highlight those experiences. God Saves (Y')All is an ode to queer people of the past, present, and future as oppression spurs on against them in recycled laws rooted in hate.

As the Florida government casts more oppressive laws on the LGBTQ+ youth, Revere High School's GSA scrambles to find the perfect coverup—which (un)fortunately falls right into their lap. Claire, a naive young Christian, joins them after school thinking that they are a faith practicing group. Using Claire's mistake to their advantage, Julia, Hunter, and Daniel must keep up a charade so they may keep their funds and safe haven. However, when they fail their sponsor, Teacher Roberts, gets stuck in the crossfire and the teens begin to question everything.

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# God Saves Y'all

By Valeria Pacheco



## CHARACTERS:

Claire (she/her): devout all-American, Christian girl who plans all her activities to a T in her planner that looks like garbage (a fact she's very self-conscious about).

Julia (she/they): completely out!...to everyone but her Salvadoran parents; says she has a girlfriend "at another school". She loves a good pun and generally dresses like a Frog and Toad character.

Daniel (he/him): kind of always in the middle of an identity crisis. Class clown material with future aspirations to be a used car salesman like his dad.

Hunter (she/her): star athlete that cannot compete anymore. Very soft-spoken until you've put on a soccer match on the TV.

Tr./Mx Avery Roberts (they/them): continuously fighting the administration...in their head. History teacher but has experience in teaching sex ed—before programs were cut.

Principal Day (he/him): active member of his church and loves a good occasional power trip. New Balance wearer despite the lack of children.

## CASTING NOTES:

Claire and Principal Day are explicitly white.

Julia is explicitly Salvadoran and should be casted as such when possible; if not Central-American, and at the very least Latine. She is also canonically a lesbian.

Hunter is a transgender woman, Daniel is bisexual and Tr. Roberts is non-binary, so casting should try to pay respect to those identities as well as possible. **THAT DOES NOT MEAN DEFAULT TO WHITE CASTING FOR THESE CHARACTERS!**

## ACT 1

## SCENE 1

*The scene opens in the library. TR. ROBERTS, JULIA, HUNTER, and DANIEL are set up in a circle and face each other.*

TR.ROBERTS

Okay...I don't really know how to start this.

Uh, I guess we can say our names, pronouns, and any other identifier you feel is important to share?

Y'all may have known me as Ms. Roberts before. I teach sophomore history—and sex ed before it was canceled. So it's okay if you mess up, but I just wanted to reintroduce myself.

My name is Avery Roberts and you can all call me...Teacher Roberts or Mx. Roberts—during our meetings. I use they/them pronouns. Um, I am non-binary. Yeah. Thanks.

*A pause.*

DANIEL

Well, my name is Daniel, my pronouns are he/him, and I think I'm straight. Yeah. W-wait no I mean I'm definitely straight. *(laughs)* I'm like an ally.

Also what does non-binary mean?

JULIA

*(eye roll)* I thought we went over that already. Google's free!

Anyways, I'm Julia. Pronounced hoo-lyah. Practice it because I'm a bitch about my name. I use she/they pronouns. And I'm a definite lesbian.

HUNTER

I guess it's my turn...hi, I'm Hunter. And I use she/her pronouns. I'm a uh-I started trying to transition since this past year. My parents are really cool about it I think. But it's been hard.

TR. ROBERTS

Why has it been hard?

DANIEL

'Cause everyone is such a dick to her.

JULIA

True, those bitches.

TR. ROBERTS

Can we at least attempt to control our language around me? Jesus.

HUNTER

They won't let me play soccer on the girls team.

TR. ROBERTS

What?!

JULIA

Apparently, it's an unfair advantage. As if. I could try out and it would be an unfair *disadvantage* because I literally suck balls at soccer.

Ha. Get it? Suck balls.

DANIEL

Yeah, it's funny because you'll never do it.

*JULIA smacks DANIEL.*

DANIEL

Ah, whaaattt? It's true.

TR. ROBERTS

I'm going to choose to ignore those comments.

Can I do anything about the soccer situation, Hunter?

HUNTER

I don't think so. The coach said that I have to fill out some sort of medical records, but it was really invasive. Asking for like...period information and stuff.

*A pause.*

And I don't want my parents to fight and make a big deal about it.

Although, I don't think Principal Day can tell. He's really not observant. I think he thinks I'm a new student or something.

TR. ROBERTS

Why does that not surprise me?

JULIA

Everyone knows I'm a lesbian.

DANIEL

Except your mom.

JULIA

Yeah, she thinks you're my boyfriend. Blahhhh.

DANIEL

You'd be so lucky.

TR. ROBERTS

*(clears throat)* Is that difficult? Keeping something like that from your mother?

JULIA

Not really. I lie to her all the time.

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, that is not disturbing to hear as an educator at all...but I think we've exhausted the library facilities for today.

Thank you all for sharing today. We can meet at the same time, same place next week?

*Blackout. Open on the same circle setup except now they're all outside and wearing sweaters.*

TR. ROBERTS

Alright, why don't we start with a rose, bud, and thorn of the week? Just to catch up.

JULIA

Rose, I've been making a really good friend on Roblox. Bud, when I go home I can log back onto Roblox. Thorn, we are sitting outside on the ONLY cold day Florida has a year apparently.

TR. ROBERTS

Again, I'm sorry. I didn't know I actually had to reserve the library! We've been meeting there for months without one.

DANIEL

It's okay, teach. Let me think...Rose, my dad let me look at the new cars the lot got. And by new I mean they're used but new to us. Um, thorn is that he wouldn't let me help him move them because "I don't know how to drive". Bud...bud is that Eddy invited me camping this weekend!

JULIA

You've been spending a lot of time with that guy lately.

*HUNTER smirks and nods along.*

DANIEL

Well, yeah I need some more manly energy in my life. All I do is hang out with a bunch of girls.

HUNTER

Why don't you invite him to GSA?

DANIEL

*(blushes)* Wouldn't that be a little weird? It's like I'm insinuating that I think he's gay.

JULIA

You come and you're "straight".

DANIEL

Can you stop making air quotes every time you call me straight?

JULIA

I reserve the right to my suspicions.

TR. ROBERTS

Can we move on to Hunter's rose, bud and thorn?

DANIEL

I just want to make it clear that I find women very hot. Like extremely.

JULIA

You know about bisexual people, don't you?

DANIEL

What?

JULIA

We literally had a whole meeting about it in September. Bi visibility day!!

DANIEL

I don't know if I remember that.

HUNTER

Anywayssss, my rose is the weather today. Thorn is that my headphones are broken. And my bud is that I'm supposed to go shopping with my aunt this weekend. No offense to my mom, but she definitely has a superior fashion sense.

TR. ROBERTS

Well, I'm glad someone is enjoying our excursion today. Okay, it all sounds like your lives are somewhat under control.

DANIEL

I guess so...hey! What about your rose, bud, and thorn?

JULIA

Yeah, you never tell us anything juicy. It's always school, school, school. Boring!

TR. ROBERTS

I'm just trying to maintain SOME professionalism. It's very hard with this group.

HUNTER

You know we're all good listeners too.

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, okay. Let's start with the thorn. I've been having major stomach pains. My bud is that my new painkillers should work. Even though I have to spend like half my paycheck on them. Something good that's happened...I got a tattoo recently?

JULIA

A TATTOO?? WHY WOULDN'T YOU LEAD WITH THAT?!?!  
SHOW IT TO US!!

DANIEL

YEAH, SHOW US!!

HUNTER

I wanna see.

TR. ROBERTS

Disclosing this was clearly a mistake.

JULIA  
TELL US WHERE IT IS!!!

TR. ROBERTS  
(sighs) I will show you, but you all have to stay calm. Can you all do that?

*They all nod but are clearly shitting their pants from excitement. TR. ROBERTS rolls up their sleeve to their shoulder blade. The students crowd around them, pushing each other out of the way for a better look.*

HUNTER  
Whooaaaaa

DANIEL  
It looks...

JULIA  
Fucking sick!

DANIEL  
Kinda freaky. The two cow heads, I mean.

TR. ROBERTS  
It's from a poem. Two-Headed Calf by Laura Gilpin.  
And, Julia, I really thought you were going to be able to go through this whole meeting without swearing.

*TR. ROBERTS reaches down and pulls out a large, clear mason jar adorned with a sticky note declaring "Swear Jar! :D XD". They shake it in front of JULIA who reaches into her pocket for a single quarter.*

JULIA  
I was actually saving it because I only have a quarter today. You should feel lucky I spent it on your tattoo.

TR. ROBERTS  
Just pay up. Before we leave, how are we all feeling about Thanksgiving break? One word, please.

JULIA  
Indifferent.

HUNTER  
Nervous.

DANIEL  
Ready-to-eat.

JULIA  
That's three words.

DANIEL  
Fine. Hungry.

TR. ROBERTS  
Anxious. Alright, why don't we take a big breath in and out then? In....

*They all inhale and the lights blackout. When the lights come back on they no longer have their sweaters on and are back in the library.*

TR. ROBERTS  
And out! Alright, let's get to the session today. Good news is that Principal Day said that we should be able to get approval for a field trip next semester given we can fund it ourselves.

HUNTER  
Where are we going to get the money from?

DANIEL  
I think the swear jar.

JULIA  
I don't swear that much. Asshole.

TR. ROBERTS  
Julia's surprisingly right. Also, I'm adding asshole to the swear list, so watch it. We'll need a lot more than that for our trip to the museum. It's a bit of a drive, so there's renting a van, gas, tickets, meals...



DANIEL

We could throw a fundraiser. Like a bake sale. I'm an excellent businessman.

JULIA

The problem is that no one wants to join our club. Or be associated with it. How are we gonna get people to care enough about us to buy a stupid cupcake?

HUNTER

We could try recruiting new members.

DANIEL

I already tried that...it didn't go so well.

JULIA

What are you talking about?

DANIEL

Okay, so maybe just maybe you all were right.

I, uh, I started having these feelings for my friend. And well I didn't know if he would feel the same way. Except I'm no good at keeping secrets so I kind of just blurted it out. And he seemed happy! We spent the whole rest of the day together. I thought that meant he wanted to be *together*.

But then later, I told him he should join our GSA, which made him really like...upset. He started yelling at me and uh long story short, we're not friends anymore.

*A beat.*

So yeah I don't know if I'm ready for any new members yet. (*awkward laughter*) Buutttttt I am ready for cupcakes!!

HUNTER

Oh, Daniel, I'm so sorry.

JULIA

Congrats tho. On being bisexual and all. I'll refrain from saying I told you so.

TR. ROBERTS

Thank you for sharing, Daniel. I'm sure that was really hard for you. Is there anything I can do? Is he harassing you at all or ?

DANIEL

NO!

I mean no. He's mostly just been avoiding me since then, yaknow. No big deal.

JULIA

You are a sorry excuse of a liar.

HUNTER

It's okay to be hurt.

DANIEL

Well, I'm not.

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, okay let's go back to thinking about fundraisers. The cupcakes were just an idea, there's also car washes and read-a-thons...

JULIA

No one here would go to a read-a-thon. I wouldn't even go to a read-a-thon.

HUNTER

We could host a carwash at Daniel's dad's place. Or maybe he has connections?

DANIEL

HUNTER! You're a literal genius. I bet my dad could talk to Bobby Shine. He's the best in the city.

TR.ROBERTS

Alright, now we're getting somewhere! Carwash at Bobby Shine's it is then.

JULIA

*(sarcastically)* Oh, yipee! I'm sure that'll work.

*Blackout and reset scene, but now TR.ROBERTS is holding a moneybox over their head.*

TR. ROBERTS

Yipee! It looks like our plan *did* work to all the non-believers out there.

JULIA

Yes, but at what cost? I have tan lines in places I don't understand.

HUNTER

It wasn't really that bad.

DANIEL

I think my butt grew at least two inches from all that squatting.

TR. ROBERTS

Well, we're still a little short but that can be a next semester problem.

Why don't we make this meeting short? I'm sure you're all dying to go home. Let's just say...what are we most excited about for summer break?

DANIEL

Ooooo my family is going to Disney. My mom got a deal on it. Usually her extreme couponing is on lame, useless stuff like soap but this time it was cool.

HUNTER

My family's also going on vacation. I think camping or something? But, I think I'm most excited to see my favorite cousins. It'll be our first time seeing each other again since...well you know.

JULIA

I think I'll spend the summer trying to learn how to use my mom's sewing machine. Hopefully, it won't just end in her yelling and me crying. Or the other way around. Also, I'll be playing a lot of Roblox.

TR. ROBERTS

Alright, this all sounds lovely. Except the yelling and crying.

Personally, I will be spending my summer away from here reading many, many books. And no I will not disclose the location because I'm sure you will all just attempt to online stalk me anyways.

JULIA

Maybe, if you didn't make it so hard.

DANIEL

We just wanna be your friend.

TR. ROBERTS

That's very sweet, but I'm not your friend, y'all. I'm your teacher.

JULIA

Yeah, yeah we know that you only hang out with us for the extra club leader money stipend thing.

TR. ROBERTS

That's not true. How do you even know about that?

JULIA

I have my ways.

TR. ROBERTS

Perhaps consider that y'all are not the only ones that get fulfillment out of our club. And on that note, consider yourselves dismissed. We'll see each other in three months.

ALL

Okayyyyyy.

*HUNTER and DANIEL start to talk and leave together as TR. ROBERTS starts to put the chairs back where they belong and tidy up. JULIA hangs back and taps TR. ROBERTS on the shoulder. They turn around.*

JULIA

Can I, um, help you clean up?

TR.ROBERTS

*(surprised)* Yeah, sure. Why don't you wipe off the chairs and tables? We don't want to leave all the work to the janitors.

JULIA

Okay.

*JULIA and TR. ROBERTS work together silently for a minute.*

TR. ROBERTS

*(clears throat)* Everything okay, Julia?

JULIA

What? Oh yeah, yeah. Why wouldn't I be okay?

TR. ROBERTS

I just find it a little odd you didn't run out of here on the last day of class.

JULIA

Maybe, I'm working on being a better citizen.

TR. ROBERTS

Sure. This wouldn't have to do with your comment from earlier? About your mom?

JULIA

Everyone has mother issues.

TR. ROBERTS

...yeah I think you got me there. Doesn't mean I can't listen.

JULIA

It's just that I came to GSA hoping that it would give me the confidence to come out to my parents.

And then last week, I finally did. But now they just kind of avoid the topic or look disapproving and shit. At least if they got mad, then I would know they were acknowledging it. I get that their country wasn't like super cool about the whole girls kissing each other thing, but they've been in the U.S for more than fucking twenty years now!

So, all that to say I guess summer isn't really that happy of a time for me. I don't even get a fucking vacation to soften the blow.

TR. ROBERTS

That's two dollars.

JULIA

What?

TR. ROBERTS

You swore four times. Two dollars.

JULIA

I don't have any money.

*TR. ROBERTS reaches into their pocket hands JULIA a ten dollar bill.*

TR. ROBERTS

Go buy yourself a treat from the corner store. Come back with some change in August.

*A beat.*

JULIA

Thank you.

*JULIA gets up to leave intently staring at the bill in her hand.*

TR. ROBERTS

And Julia?

JULIA

Yeah?

TR.ROBERTS

I'm going to the Grand Canyon this summer. With my wife. In case you were curious.

JULIA

*(smiling)* That sounds really nice, teach.

*Blackout.*

SCENE 2

*In the school library, JULIA, DANIEL, and HUNTER crowd behind TR. ROBERTS who calls after the PRINCIPAL DAY. He ignores them, leaving without a second glance.*

TR.ROBERTS

B-but Glenn!

JULIA

Forget it, teach. He doesn't give a shit about us.

TR.ROBERTS

*(sighs)* Julia. Do I have to bring out the jar again?

DANIEL

I already fronted her five bucks for the day. As an investment.

*They all swivel to look at the “Swear Jar! :D XD”. It’s about three-quarters full of varying bills and quarters. There might even be a twenty in there.*

TR.ROBERTS

Well, Julia’s potty-mouth was gonna help fund our next field trip lunches, but seeing as we may not even have a club anymore...

JULIA

DOn’t say that! I don’t care what Glenn said. We need this club. Fort Lauderdaleeee is calling us.

TR.ROBERTS

He’s Principal Day to you, Julia.

DANIEL

Principal Day is too...sunny. I think Glenn suits him better.

TR. ROBERTS

Either way it seems our club has officially lost its support from him. I’m sorry, y’all.

HUNTER

*(quietly)* I don’t want it to end.

*As if in direct response to HUNTER’s plea, CLAIRE bursts through the library doors. Her clothes are aggressively fall-appropriate and she has the most painful looking smile on her face as she walks up to TR.ROBERTS.*

CLAIRE

Hello! I’m looking for the GSA?

TR.ROBERTS

Yes that’s us, but you see—

CLAIRE

Wonderful! Hello, my name is Claire and I’m a new student at Revere this year. I didn’t get to fully hear the announcements this morning, but I caught a snippet of a “GSA” meeting here today. I thought it would be the perfect club for me to join and meet some blessed best friends!

*A beat.*

JULIA

I'm sorry, but you don't really *look* like the kind of person who would join GSA. I mean maybe for the "S" part...

CLAIRE

Do I have to take some sort of entrance exam? (*smiles and straightens headband*) You'll be glad to know that I am excellent at reciting Bible verses.

JULIA

Why would I be glad to know that?

DANIEL

Try to be a little kinder to our new—what was that delightful phrase you used?—*blessed friend* here.

*CLAIRE beams and DANIEL returns her smile.*

JULIA

Ugh! Could you not hit on everything that moves please, we have serious busine—

DANIEL

I do not and that is just a harmful stereotype that you are perpetuating!

JULIA

IF IT'S TRUE DOES THAT STILL MAKE IT A STEREOTYPE THO? HMM?

DANIEL

YES, ACTUALLY IT DOES JULIA AND YOU WOULD KNOW THAT IF YOU LISTENED TO THAT TED TALK I SENT YOU, BUT NOOOO YOU NEVER EVER LIST—

TR.ROBERTS

Okay, okay break it up y'all!

HUNTER

Um, Claire, if you don't mind me asking, what do you think our club is *for* exactly?

CLAIRE

Oh! I assumed it stood for God Saves All. My old school used to have a similar one. Althoughhh, the acronym was a little different...but we did bible study and worship and even lock-ins at church! It was sooooo fun.



*An awkward silence.*

JULIA

What the fu–

DANIEL

–dge...haha Julia loves her chocolate, don't you? Claire, could you excuse us while we discuss this, uh, very INTERESTING opportunity for a new member.

CLAIRE

Of course, yes, I completely understand! I'll just be here reorganizing some of these library books.

HUNTER

They're already organized by the Dewey Decimal system, you know. Plus, there's not that many books left. They did another sweep for "inappropriate" materials last week.

CLAIRE

I don't believe in the Dewey Decimal system. My new method will work wonders for the books that are left. I think I'll start with the back row.

*CLAIRE begins to walk away as DANIEL motions the rest of the group to huddle up.*

TR. ROBERTS

Maybe I should stop her before she gets too far...

DANIEL

Nevermind that teach! Don't you all see what's happening here?

JULIA

Some weird Christian girl got lost on her way to prayer circle?

DANIEL

No! Well, yes sort of. We can use Claire's "mistake" as a cover.

TR. ROBERTS

I don't think I understand what you mean.

HUNTER

He's saying that we should exploit Claire's misunderstanding to keep the GSA running.

DANIEL

Yes, thank you! Except, *exploit* that sounds a bit harsh...it's more like Claire is helping SAVE us. Without her knowing. But isn't that better for her as a Christian—a good deed with no recognition?

TR.ROBERTS

No-no we're not going to do that to this poor girl. I'm going to explain the truth to her right now.

DANIEL

BUT Teacher Roberts! You heard what the principal said. We can't keep meeting on account of our "inappropriate" agenda. Maybe Claire's will float his boat more.

JULIA

I don't know. Isn't she supposed to think I'm going to hell for giving into unnatural lust or something? Degrading our club isn't worth it.

DANIEL

There won't be a club to degrade if we don't find something new to present our club as! Come on, we've been saving up all year to visit Fort Lauderdale!

TR. ROBERTS

This is true—but I don't want to lie to Claire or put you all in an uncomfortable position of hiding.

JULIA

Exactly. I won't allow it. Christian ideals have no place here!

HUNTER

You know there are gay Christians, right?

JULIA

Does she look gay to you, Hunter?

We can find another way to save GSA, I know it.

DANIEL

We're running out of time! This is our best option.

HUNTER

I hate to say it but I agree with Daniel. This club is never gonna survive under administration unless it gets a serious rebranding.

TR. ROBERTS

Say I was considering this, how would we go about it?

JULIA

Teach!

TR. ROBERTS

*(holds up hands)* Just a hypothetical. And I kind of, uh, need the extra money from running this club. Groceries. Health insurance. General adult life.

DANIEL

I was thinking that we could let Claire do her thing for like an hour and then act as if the meeting is over. Of course, all of us will stick around for longer and get on with our regular meeting. No one will suspect a thing!

TR. ROBERTS

And how exactly would we explain this to Principal Day?

DANIEL

We've simply had a change of heart. I'm sure he'll eat it all up if we sell it right.

TR. ROBERTS

I guess it's not hurting anyone...

JULIA

Are you saying what I think you're saying?

DANIEL

YEES!!!@! THEY'RE SAYING YES!!

*TR. ROBERTS shrugs and smiles. DANIEL immediately hugs them, followed by HUNTER gently joining and JULIA reluctantly finishing it off as she rolls her eyes.*

TR.ROBERTS

Shhhhhh.

We all have to be very careful about keeping it a secret. I don't want any of you in trouble.

JULIA

We are going to regret this.

DANIEL  
CLAIRE! CLAIREE YOU'RE IN THE CLUB!!!

*CLAIRE pokes her head out of a row of books and begins to jump up and down.*

CLAIRE  
REALLY? OHMY I-I THANK YOU WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SOO MUCH FUN!! Wait, I have so many ideas! Like maybe we could start our way from the Bible back to front because who's ever done that before?

HUNTER  
Sounds perfect.

DANIEL  
Yeah, bring all those bright ideas next week again when we meet, okay? You can lead us off.

CLAIRE  
Oh goodie! You got it, don't worry it will be so much fun!.

*CLAIRE runs out of the library waving back at her fellow GSA members.*

JULIA  
Okay, so I guess we're just picking up the stack of books she left behind.

TR. ROBERTS  
You'd be right.

JULIA  
I hate everything right now.

DANIEL  
Except us.

JULIA  
Especially you.

HUNTER  
Let's just try to enjoy this moment. And maybe figure out why the Nancy Drew series is next to all the Jane Austen novels?

JULIA

Figures they left all the boring straight stuff here.

*They all sit down and start to re-shelf the books, occasionally laughing at Claire's choices. Fade to black.*

SCENE 3

*The GSA has gathered again in the library. CLAIRE is standing with an obviously personalized Bible in her hands and business-casual outfit on.*

CLAIRE

Okay, let's get started...where are your Bibles?

JULIA

We don't have any.

CLAIRE

*(laughs)* Very funny. Hazing the new girl! Okayyyy...we can all share my bible for today. Ms.—um—Mr.—I mean, Ms. Roberts, do we have a document camera?

JULIA

It's actually Teach—

TR. ROBERTS

*(clearing throat)* It's fine, Claire. Kids get confused all the time. It's um, Ms. Roberts, I guess?

*JULIA, HUNTER and DANIEL give each other a "look".*

CLAIRE

Great, thank you!

TR. ROBERTS

Alrighty, well I have an announcement...Principal Day is coming to evaluate our club today.

HUNTER

*(sarcastically)* Oh, yipee.

DANIEL

I love when our Hunter gets sassy.

*DANIEL pulls HUNTER into a very enthusiastic side-hug while she looks bashful.*

TR. ROBERTS

It's nothing to get worked up about. He just wants to come see the new uh direction we're going in and sign off on our club for the year.

JULIA

Is he evaluating the other clubs?

TR. ROBERTS

I'm not sureeee...

HUNTER

*(quietly)* That means no.

CLAIRE

Well, I guess it's a chance to show off the fun activity planned for today's study!!

DANIEL

I wish Mr. Fernandez would come visit us instead. He has so many cool car magazines. And he always gives me a lollipop when I pass by the office to leave paperwork.

JULIA

You just wanna ogle at him.

DANIEL

*(gasps)* I would never do such activities on school grounds.

CLAIRE

*(laughs)* Oooo does he have a funny-shaped birthmark or something? I have one shaped like a duck!

JULIA

No, you see Daniel gets more of a funny feeling in his pa-

TR. ROBERTS

-PRInCipAl daY iS ACtUaLLy On HiS wAy SO WhY DoN't YoU geT StaRTeD cLAiRE?

*Everyone stares at TR. ROBERTS in slight disbelief. They force a distressed smile.*

TR. ROBERTS

Please?

CLAIRE

Yes, yes of course. I thought that we could start with playing a quick game of Bible Bee!

HUNTER

How do you play?

CLAIRE

None of you have played Bible Bee????!??

*Collective headshake.*

CLAIRE

Not to worry! It's super simple—we all take turns quoting Bible verses. You're "out" if you can't quote a new verse. It's really just a fun review :)

DANIEL

I can start...pass.

CLAIRE

*(frowns)* You can't really pass on your first turn, that just means you lose automatically.

DANIEL

But I don't know any Bible verses.

CLAIRE

How could you not—?

*PRINCIPAL DAY walks in next to TR. ROBERTS, who scoots slightly away from him.*

PRINCIPAL DAY

What do we have here?

CLAIRE

We're playing Bible Bee.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Oh, I love that game. But you all should just continue. It would be unfair of the *Bible Bee champ of Holy Name Church* to play now with you kids. I'll just observe. Pretend I'm not even here.

JULIA

That should be easy.

CLAIRE

Ms. Roberts, would you like to play?

TR. ROBERTS

*(slight cringe)* No, no thank you Claire. Principal Day has a point, it would be unfair of me, an adult, to compete against you all. Because I know so many verses. SOOOooOO many ha ha haaa.

HUNTER

Well I don't. I'll pass as well.

CLAIRE

This is going by quicker than I thought...Julia?

JULIA

*(eye roll)* "Genesis 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light".

*Surprised looks from everyone except CLAIRE who looks impressed.*

CLAIRE

Woahh solid first choice. Let me think..."Matthew 28:19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

JULIA

"Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of God's glory..."

*CLAIRE and JULIA go back and forth with some Bible verses for a while as PRINCIPAL DAY signals for TR. ROBERTS to step aside and speak to him for a minute.*

PRINCIPAL DAY

This is good. Better for the children, you know, more appropriate developmentally. I'm gonna re-approve this club and its funds.

TR. ROBERTS

Woah, yes that would mean a lot to the kids. *(nervous laughter)* But what do you mean by better? "More appropriate"?



PRINCIPAL DAY

Religion is an amazing outlet. I myself was once in a young boy band dedicated to worship through song: the “Chord- Rinthians”.

I’m just saying, this new club is much better than promoting sex and mature activities to a bunch of high schoolers.

TR. ROBERTS

I never talked about that with the students! We learned about history and art and their feelings. And even if they did want to discuss sex it’s better to be informed than to not.

If you thought that’s all we are, then why’d you approve our club in the first place?

PRINCIPAL DAY

I’m not saying that it was all sex, it’s just that these kids are too young to know what they want. Love is love and all that yadda yadda. I respect that, Avery, really. But this law means it falls under me to not have upset parents banging on our doors or expose students to advanced content. I’ve already had complaints, so this new, more wholesome initiative really needs to succeed. You understand that, right?

TR. ROBERTS

*(hesitates for a moment)* Yes, I understand.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Perfect! Then keep up what you’re doing and you’ll have nothing to worry about.

Oh, and be sure to update your proposal for your funds and field trip soon, okay? I need it to align with the new district paperwork in order to approve it.

*PRINCIPAL DAY walks out without waiting for TR. ROBERTS response. They shut their open mouth and walk back to where JULIA and CLAIRE are still going.*

JULIA

Um, the one with the mustard seed...I don’t know it in English. It’s in Matthew, I think.

CLAIRE

Ooo that’s a great passage! We should look it up.

JULIA

Does this mean I lose Bible Bee?

CLAIRE

Technically, yes. But you did really well!

*JULIA crosses her arm and rolls her eyes. She's obviously a bad sport.*

HUNTER

How'd you know so many verses?

DANIEL

Yeah, your memory skills aren't always very up to speed, Ms. I-force-Daniel-to-let-me-copy-his-history-sheets-or-I-beat-him-up.

JULIA

*(mumbling)* My mom put me in those religion class things when I was a kid. She's like a raging Catholic and she thought me memorizing the verses was cute for some reason.

TR. ROBERTS

That does sound kind of cute. But also very creepy.

CLAIRE

Ms. Roberts! Can you turn on the document camera for us, please?

TR. ROBERTS

Sure. Let me just hook it up for you. And why don't you all start moving the chairs around in a circle?

*HUNTER, DANIEL and JULIA start rearranging the seats. JULIA drags one, while HUNTER and DANIEL pick up two easily and move them.*

CLAIRE

Perfect! Hunter, you're really strong! You can pick up just as many chairs as Daniel and he's a guy.

*HUNTER frowns and furrows her eyebrow. DANIEL quickly comes to her side and gives her a playful shove.*

DANIEL

She could beat up half the guys at this school. You should see her on the soccer field sometime.

HUNTER

*(softly laughs)* Yeah, if they ever let me play again. Why don't we just look at that quote?

*CLAIRE pushes her Bible underneath the camera which is heavily highlighted, annotated and doodled. She points out the passage. Everyone else sits in the circle.*

CLAIRE

Here it is: In Matthew 17:20, Jesus said, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Such a lovely passage...

JULIA

*(scoffing)* I know why I remembered it now. It's such a ridiculous idea. A mustard seed against a mountain?

HUNTER

I'm pretty sure it's metaphorical.

JULIA

I know that! It's just how could you have so much trust in one thing or person or spirit?

DANIEL

*(shrugs)* We trust things all the time without thinking about it. Like my dad just assumes that the cars in his lot will drive. He doesn't check every single engine every single day. I guess that's how faith works.

TR. ROBERTS

That was surprisingly insightful. Maybe you could think of someone or something you find reliable, Julia.

JULIA

Uh, well my parents are out because of obvious reasons. I can't even be honest with them.

CLAIRE

Well, you can always be honest with Jesus.

HUNTER

*(quietly)* What if Jesus doesn't like our honesty?

TR. ROBERTS

Being honest has got to be one of the pillars of religion... I think. I'm sure he wouldn't punish you for it.

CLAIRE

Correct! That's why we have confession. You can purge yourself of your sins regularly and be forgiven.

Actually, we have them every Saturday at my church. We could all hang out afterwards!

DANIEL

Like a date? I mean hangout.

CLAIRE

I guess, I've never had a hangout before!

JULIA

Can we backtrack, what qualifies as a "sin"?

*CLAIRE rummages through her bag and takes out a standard "oops I did something bad, let's pray it away" pamphlet which she hands to JULIA.*

CLAIRE

It has all ten commandments. Basically, violating any of those counts as a sin.

JULIA

I can't understand like half of these.

HUNTER

*(takes pamphlet)* One through three basically say there is only one God and you have to respect them. Keeping Sabbath is Sunday mass, I presume. Five through eight are self-explanatory. Nine means don't lie and ten means don't be jealous.

DANIEL

I think Julia's got a lot of confessing to do.

JULIA

What? No, I don't.

DANIEL

That's a lie. Add that to your list. Along with your fake lover.

JULIA

THEY'RE NOOOT FAKEEEE, THEY JUST DON'T GO HERE!!

CLAIRE

Ooooooo does Julia have a booooyyffrriieend?

HUNTER

Something like that...but perhaps they're imaginary. We haven't even seen a picture of them.

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, that's enough of that. Julia can date or fake date whoever she wants.

JULIA

NOT FAKE.

TR. ROBERTS

Anyways, I think we should wrap up today's meeting. *(claps)* Dismissed.

CLAIRE

Aren't we supposed to do a closing prayer?

TR. ROBERTS

Oh yes, thank you for the reminder. Let's, uh, hold hands and close our eyes.

*CLAIRE immediately clasps the hands next to her and bows her head. Everyone else awkwardly figures out how to appropriately hold hands.*

TR. ROBERTS

I am thankful to be learning and growing alongside my students today. I hope that they continue to be inquisitive, kind to others, and healthy. Thank you and amen?

CLAIRE

Amen! That was a beautiful prayer. My old group would just recite the Our Father but I always liked a personalized touch.

HUNTER

I really liked it too. It was sweet.

DANIEL

Not as sweet as our hangout this Saturday! What time is confession, Claire?

CLAIRE

It's at ten! Wait, let me write down the address for you.

DANIEL

*(hands her his phone)* Put your number in and you can text it to me. *(turns to JULIA and HUNTER)* Y'all in?

JULIA

I'm in.

HUNTER

*(hesitantly)* I guess so.

CLAIRE

Great! Ahhh, I'm so excited!! Byeeeeee!!!!

*ALL call out bye in varying levels of excitement. TR. ROBERTS looks out before turning back to the group.*

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, why are you all joining Claire for confession?

DANIEL

I think it sounds fun.

JULIA

I want to destroy her.

HUNTER

Um, peer pressure?

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, let's maybe dig into all those answers.

DANIEL

I want to see the inside of a church and like I don't know, play tag in it?

JULIA

I want to find out some dirt on Claire. I'm sure she has secrets too. Protection if she goes rogue.

TR. ROBERTS

I don't think she suspects anything so far.

HUNTER

Are you feeling okay with that?

TR. ROBERTS

*(surprised)* What do you mean?

HUNTER

You know. The hiding. Being called Ms in the library. It's usually like...a bubble from everyone at the school.

TR. ROBERTS

It's fine. Don't worry about me. Keeping my job is more important.

HUNTER

Why do we always have to choose between safety and ourselves?

*A beat.*

TR. ROBERTS

I guess that's a good question to explore. I gotta go now too. Take it easy on Claire, y'all.

JULIA

No promises.

*Blackout.*

SCENE 4

*CLAIRE kneels at a pew while JULIA, DANIEL and HUNTER stumble in. They are loudly whispering to each other causing CLAIRE to turn around.*

CLAIRE

*(whispering)* Hi! Oh my gosh, I'm so excited y'all made it.

DANIEL

Wouldn't miss it!

JULIA

My mom lit up like a Christmas tree when I told her what I was doing today. Maybe, I'll ask her to take me to the thrift store later...

HUNTER

Y'all are supposed to keep your voices down!

CLAIRE

Right but it's okay! Sometimes I forget too.

JULIA

Yeah, sorry. The usual church we go to is SOOOO different from yours.

CLAIRE

Of course! No two are the same. Let me give you a quick tour and show you the confessional space. I just finished mine up.

JULIA

Wait. Isn't this the church Principal Day goes to? Holy Name Church?

CLAIRE

Huh, I guess it is. I mean, it is a mega-big-church. Lots of people go here.

JULIA

Weird.

CLAIRE

Uh, not really. It's fine. Let's get back to the tour! So here we have some stained glass art. My favorite is this one of David and Goliath! The candles by the back wall are lit in respect to the dead, sick, and other hurting souls. And over here we have the altar where Father Sam preaches.

DANIEL

WHOOA IT LOOKS JUST LIKE WHAT THEY USE AT THE AUCTION SALES!!1!!!

*DANIEL runs up to the podium at the altar while HUNTER attempts to quietly chase after him. JULIA shakes with silent laughter and CLAIRE looks absolutely petrified next to her.*

DANIEL

*(taps on the microphone)* Testing, one, two, one, tw—

HUNTER

*(wraps her hand around his mouth)* SHhhhh!



DANIEL

*(muffled)* Is it just me or are you enjoying this?

JULIA

God, they are an absolute mess.

CLAIRE

Language! You'll have to confess to taking the Lord's name in vain.

JULIA

*(shrugs)* Let me add it to my list.

HUNTER

Where do the confessions take place anyway?

CLAIRE

Yes, the last part of the tour! The confessional stalls are by the crying room on the left side.

DANIEL

A crying room honestly sounds like a fantastic idea.

JULIA

That's where they put all the brat-children. Speaking from experience.

CLAIRE

You guys should head in. They'll be wrapping up soon. Lucky for y'all there are exactly three stalls available! I'll wait out here.

*JULIA, DANIEL, and HUNTER all look at each other. DANIEL shrugs heading into the first room. A sighing JULIA enters the next room and HUNTER goes into the last one wringing her hands.*

DANIEL, JULIA and HUNTER

Forgive me Father for I have sinned.

*Lights on DANIEL. Preferably bisexual lighting (blue, pink, purple).*

DANIEL

I'm not really sure how to start this off.

I mean, I don't think I'm a bad person. The problem is I don't know how to stop. Like right now I just couldn't hold in my excitement for the mic even though it totally stressed out Claire and Hunter. Or when I begged Laura—that's my older sister—to let me try out her new skateboard and when she said no. I just snuck it out anyways. Not to mention accidentally broke it...MY wants are always more important. I don't know why when I tell my brain to stop it just won't.

Why do I have to take and take and take? Why couldn't I just like women? My life would be so much easier. And why do I mess with people's feelings? I know that I flirt a lot. Especially with Hunter. I mean, I think I like her. But I could be wrong. I was with Eddy and it just ruined everything.

So it's better to just keep my options open, swimming along, waiting for someone to approach me with the same energy. I need to always take more. Tell me, does that make me a bad person?

*Lights shut off on DANIEL and shift to JULIA. Preferably sunset lesbian lighting (dark/light orange, dark/light pink, and white).*

JULIA

I think the last—and only—time I came to confession I was eight. Apparently it was a requirement for my mom to dress me up like a child-bride and eat the Jesus cracker. They're pretty yummy actually.

I knew then I was a lesbian. I just didn't know the word for it yet. I would rewatch this old novela that had the shocking twist that *oh no two women are kissing!* My mom caught me one day and banned the whole series. After that I started recording them to watch late at night, enjoying the tingles of rebellion. I even confessed about it. The lying part and even the jealousy.

I didn't mention the tingles. Those were just for me.

Everyone expects me to hide. At home, at school and even at GSA now. But I want to make it clear. I am a lesbian and I don't care if you have a problem with it.

I do feel guilty about some things. Like being a bitch when I'm in a mood. For closing myself off to new people and even old friends. Lying excessively for fun. I'm working through those. But you can't make me feel bad about who I love. Not anymore.

*Lights shut off on JULIA and shift to HUNTER. Preferably transgender lighting (light blue, light pink, and white).*

HUNTER

Hi...I read in the pamphlet that I'm supposed to be baptized and stuff before confessing, sorry. I'm kind

of nervous, if I'm being honest with you. My parents aren't religious. But maybe I should consider the possibility of a God? I hope they're kind.

To my understanding I haven't really broken commandments one through three. I've never attended Sunday mass so there's that. I think I do a good job of honoring my parents because they also respect me. I DEFINITELY have not done six through eight, although once I took a pencil from Teacher Roberts' classroom. But I returned it right away!

I try not to lie. I mostly do it to protect my friends feelings, but that's not an excuse... Sometimes people think I'm lying when I'm not. They think I'm lying about being a girl. But I know that I'm not. If God exists, then why would they make me any differently? I was meant to be who I am.

But that doesn't mean I don't get jealous. This sin is the hardest. I'm constantly jealous of girls like Julia and Claire. They don't get stares in the bathroom. No one would stop them from becoming a midfielder after seeing their birth certificate or measuring their testosterone levels. I just want to exist in peace.

*Suddenly DANIEL, JULIA, and HUNTER are all spotlighted with the intensity of the lights in a police station interview. They all wince at the light and the booming voice that emerges.*

CLAIRE/GOD?

I see you have all defied the kingdom of God! Your actions are despicable, but you have a chance at redemption.

Three full rosaries. That's three Apostle Creeds, eighteen Our Fathers, eighteen Glory Bes, one-hundred and fifty-nine Hail Marys, and three Hail Holy Queens in total. Each. AND then, uh, well you can promise not to go back to your vile ways. That would be a start.

JULIA

I don't see how love can be vile.

CLAIRE/GOD?

Leviticus 18:22 "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable".

DANIEL

Am I detestable?

CLAIRE/GOD?

No!! No, you're not. You can be saved! A-and there's different interpretations of that passage.

I, um, I don't know which one is right.

JULIA

Claire, do you eat shellfish or pork?

CLAIRE/GOD?

I'm actually a vegetarian.

JULIA

Fuck.

CLAIRE/GOD?

Language! Geez, you literally *just* confessed

JULIA

Well, do you think that people who eat pork and shellfish belong in hell?

CLAIRE/GOD?

No.

JULIA

Exactly! Those are both banned in Leviticus too.

CLAIRE/GOD?

Well, yeah but those are just silly old bans. They don't mean anything. And even if they were sins they would be small ones. Certainly, not enough to go to hell.

HUNTER

How do you determine which sins are worse than others?

CLAIRE/GOD?

It's just not natural.

DANIEL

But, why not?

CLAIRE/GOD?

L-like the Vatican said it can't bless sin. Gays can't procreate! That's the whole point of marriage.

HUNTER

Sure, not having mutual respect and affection.

DANIEL

Or a longstanding commitment.

JULIA

Or an understanding of each other that only gets better.

CLAIRE/GOD?

I mean, I can respect it. But it's just not correct in the eyes of God. My Father says we should love the sinner not the sin.

JULIA

Well, what are your sins?

CLAIRE/GOD?

That's between me and God.

DANIEL

You apparently heard all of ours.

CLAIRE/GOD?

I didn't mean to, I just, the words just started flowing into my ears.

JULIA

Confess.

DANIEL

Confess.

HUNTER

Confess.

JULIA, DANIEL and HUNTER

CONFESS, CONFESS, CONFESS, CONFESS, CONFESS, CONFESS

*Bright interrogation style lighting now turns onto CLAIRE. The trios chanting continues as they fade into the shadows .*

CLAIRE

FINE!

Fine.

I haven't been completely honest. I used to go to St. Pious. The all-girls Catholic school an hour away? That's where my parents lived. Wait, that makes it sound like they're dead! Sorry, they're not dead. But they *are* getting a divorce. Can you believe that? They—they made a promise to God twenty years ago. I thought they were soul mates. Until last year, when late night whispers escalated to full-on public yelling matches. Before bed, I tried asking God why this, why us, why now? No response.

The stress started showing up in my grades. So while they work it out, I have to live with my uncle. That's how I ended up at Revere. And God finally sent me a sign with the GSA announcement! Literally God Saves All.

Yet, I'm more confused than ever. When y'all ask questions about God, I don't always know what to say. What I'm supposed to say suddenly feels wrong.

But if I don't believe in God, what am I supposed to believe in? Belief in something greater is what's supposed to keep us going. He's the only one who has ever listened to me, truly. If I stop, what will push me? How will I move the mountains?

*Lights come back shining on all of them. Slowly they begin to hold hands and CLAIRE pulls out a rosary. She begins by crossing herself and reciting the Apostles' Creed. DANIEL whispers the names of car models as their hands move to the next bead. HUNTER follows with famous soccer player names. JULIA begins to yell from a guttural place, but doesn't let go of her friends' hands and actually tightens her grip. Fade to black.*

SCENE 5

*Inside TR. ROBERTS classroom, DANIEL, HUNTER, and JULIA talk while eating their lunches before class begins. TR. ROBERTS routinely peers over their computer screen to monitor them.*

DANIEL

I'm just saying that if a bear and a shark fought that the shark would totally win no contest.

JULIA

And I'm saying that overgrown fish is as good as dead if it's dragged onto land.

HUNTER

Why are we even discussing this again? Bears and sharks are not natural enemies.

DANIEL

If it came down to fish as a food source then yes.

HUNTER

But there's a large difference between saltwater and freshwater environments which I have explained at least twice this week. And it's only Tuesday.

*Suddenly, CLAIRE appears at the doorway and waves shyly. TR. ROBERTS waves her in.*

TR. ROBERTS

Hi Claire! Are you feeling okay? I noticed you were absent yesterday.

CLAIRE

I'm fine, thank you. I was wondering if I could hang out here until class starts.

TR. ROBERTS

Of course.

DANIEL

Now that you're here maybe you can settle an argument for us! So say there's a bear and a shark somehow in close proximity to each other...

HUNTER

*(groaning)* Pleasee, can we move on from this.

JULIA

Hunter's right. Let's play a game instead.

CLAIRE

Yes! That sounds soo fun.

JULIA

It's not like Bible Bee though. We're going to play Truth or Dare.

DANIEL

Yeesssss ugh we haven't played in fooreverrr!

HUNTER

Because you always chicken out of dares.

DANIEL

That's not even true, it's just that Julia always hands out the most dangerous ones. ANd she always targets *me*.

HUNTER

Chicken talk.

TR. ROBERTS

CHildren, behave. And do not assign life-endangering dares, please.

CLAIRE

Seconding that please. Also, yay fun! I've never played truth or dare before.

DANIEL

*(gasps)* Why do you have no childhood?

CLAIRE

I mean it's just that it wasn't a very popular game with my old friends or at my old school. It's no Bible Bee or even Trivial Pursuit. Not very...educational.

JULIA

Well, we are going to fix that today. It's a simple concept: if you chose truth then you must answer honestly, if you pick dare you must do the challenge presented to you. Got it?

CLAIRE

Got it.

DANIEL

Let me go first! Hunter, truth or dare?



HUNTER

Truth.

DANIEL

What would you rate me out of ten?

HUNTER

Hmmm, let me think. A two.

DANIEL

You're such a LIAR!

Okay, Julia, truth or dare?

JULIA

Dare, obviously.

HUNTER

Okayyyy I dare you to do an impression of one of us.

JULIA

Too easy.

*JULIA does some of those small, weird theater kid exercises before entering the \*scene\*.*

Alrighty, I'm Avery Roberts. Uh, I work with high schoolers so I'm either really brave or really delusional or both. I love cats, tea, and cardigans. I hate confrontation, so if you took my cat, tea or favorite cardigan I would probably just smile and suffer from eye twitches. Thank you.

*JULIA bows as the others laugh and clap.*

TR. ROBERTS

I did not come to work this morning to be harassed by a fifteen-year-old.

JULIA

Almost sixteen. And this is your line of profession, teach. Be more prepared. Anyways, the next truth or dare victim is...Claire!

CLAIRE

Oh! I pick the truth option.

JULIA

Hmmmm...is it true that you're *related* to Principal Day?

*A pause from everyone.*

CLAIRE

*(nervous laughter)* Haaa whhhhaaat? Noooo, I barely know the guy.

JULIA

I found him listed as your uncle on Facebook. Which FYI Facebook is already lame, admitting you're related to people like Principal Day is even lamer.

DANIEL

Oh snap.

HUNTER

Now that you mention it, they do have the same sort of vibe.

TR. ROBERTS

Why didn't you mention that Principal Day is your uncle, Claire?

CLAIRE

Well, I um, I didn't want to make it weird. Like you all have to treat me special because of my family.

JULIA

I have another theory.

You didn't want to tell us that Principal Day is your uncle because he's having you spy on us.

DANIEL

If that's true, then that is totally messed up.

TR. ROBERTS

That's ridiculous, I mean we're not hiding anything. *(slight desperation)* Right y'all?

HUNTER

The jig is up. Claire knows. About all of us. Confession is so weird.

JULIA

I wouldn't be surprised if we were shut down by this afternoon.

CLAIRE

Wait! I didn't tell him anything. I swear.

DANIEL

How can we trust anything you say, Benedict Cumberbatch?

HUNTER

It's Benedict Arnold.

DANIEL

What?

JULIA

Ohmygod how many times did your mother drop you on your head?

DANIEL

Only twice. By accident.

CLAIRE

I'm being serious. I didn't say anything to him. Except that confession went well and you're all becoming stellar Christ followers.

JULIA

And why exactly would you lie for us?

CLAIRE

Because I like GSA. I like having friends. And you *are* all becoming better Christ followers! It makes my heart warm.

TR. ROBERTS

Aw well that's nice, Claire. I think.

JULIA

I don't believe you. You're just trying to fucking pray the gay away from us.

CLAIRE

Difference of opinions. Jesus taught to love and respect all.

HUNTER

I don't think denial and acceptance are the same thing.

JULIA

Admit that you're just trying to conduct your little mission trip with us misfits.

CLAIRE

And what would be so wrong with that? You all teach me new things and I can better understand how to help you all.

JULIA

THat's not the point of GSA!

CLAIRE

You're just all a bit confused. I mean you have a fake girlfriend that no one, not even a teacher, believes in for Christ's sake!

DANIEL

Woaahhhhh, saaaaavage alert.

TR. ROBERTS

For the record, I never said I didn't believe that and I think we should take a moment to—

JULIA

EXCUSE ME SHE'S NOT FAKE!

AND I DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO YOU!

HUNTER

I think we all just need to calm down.

*HUNTER tries to step in between them. Her hand brushes by CLAIRE's who immediately pulls it away.*

HUNTER

What the fuck, Claire? I'm trying to help you.

CLAIRE

I-I'm sorry, I know, it was just, it was like a natural reaction.

HUNTER

To what?

CLAIRE

You know.

HUNTER

I know.

DANIEL

What do we know?

JULIA

That Claire's not just a homophobe she's ALSO a transphobe.

TR. ROBERTS

Let's not throw out accusations. Although, the history of mission work is *deeply* problematic and it would be wise to unpack that in a way that's respectful to all of us...

*The most annoying bell in all of existence rings.*

TR. ROBERTS

Ughhh. We will continue this conversation *after* class. All of you. Take your seats everyone, please.

And don't think I didn't notice the swearing! You'll be paying every penny of it.

*HUNTER, JULIA, and DANIEL walk towards their table together. CLAIRE noticeably glances at them but chooses to sit elsewhere. Other students start to file in through the door not taking notice. It's a relatively small class, maybe fifteen students total.*

JULIA

*(mumbling)* The cursing was appropriate to the situation.

DANIEL

I hate to admit it but maybe I was wrong when I made the executive decision to let her join.

HUNTER

She's just never met people like us before. Maybe we can learn from each other.

*Across the room, CLAIRE lays her head down on her desk. Praying? Sleeping? Hard to tell.*

TR. ROBERTS

Give me a moment.

*Takes a deep breath in and out, then grins.*

Okay, so last week we left off at the end of World War II. So I wanted to move into discussing moves towards social reform after the war. Does anyone know or want to take a guess at some of these movements?

*Deafening silence.*

TR. ROBERTS

No takers? Alright, well there's a lot to talk about.

*Turns to the whiteboard with a marker in hand.*

There's the Civil Rights Movement, Second Wave Feminism, and uhm (*hesitates*) well there's also

JULIA

*(half-raising hand)* The Stonewall Riots?

TR. ROBERTS

Yes! Yes, those occurred in 1969. So let's actually begin talking about the Civil Rights movement.

After President Roosevelt issued an executive order in June 1941, Black Americans fought during WWII. While they fought heroically, the discrimination they faced before the war carried on afterwards. This sparked the civil rights agenda—

*Suddenly, PRINCIPAL DAY barges through the door which startles TR. ROBERTS.*

PRINCIPAL DAY

Helloo! Sorry for the interruption, Avery, I'm just dropping in for a surprise class visit.

TR. ROBERTS

Isn't that usually carried out by district people?

PRINCIPAL DAY

New bureaucracy and all. Shortages. You know how it goes!

TR. ROBERTS

*(murmurs)* It feels like spying.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Anyways, please continue with your lesson. Just act like I'm not even here.

*Proceeds to loudly take out his laptop and begin typing.*

TR. ROBERTS

Okaayyy, as I was saying, the Civil Rights movement was sparked by continued discrimination against Black Americans—

PRINCIPAL DAY

Oh! So sorry, but could we maybe stay away from such strong language?

TR. ROBERTS

I don't think I understand.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Well words like “discrimination” just feel like we're throwing blame around. I just don't see how dwelling on the past can be productive for education. And the correct term is *African-Americans*.

TR. ROBERTS

It's literally a history course.

JULIA

And people were racist as shit. They still are.

*TR. ROBERTS sighs and points at the swear jar which is on their desk now. JULIA stomps and drops in something (perhaps she's run out of change and can only offer what she has in her pocket).*

PRINCIPAL DAY

You see that's the problem with teaching history this way. Students come out thinking that America is just a racist country.

HUNTER

Well it's also sexist and homophobic.

DANIEL

We were just about to learn how people responded with like feminism and riots and stuff.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Is that so?

TR. ROBERTS

Well, yes, I mean no I hadn't actually gotten there yet.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Because you know many of those topics and how you're framing them are not allowed by the school district.

TR. ROBERTS

The district is making it really hard for me to do my job.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Look at poor Claire! She's clearly uncomfortable with you making her the villain in your lessons.

*CLAIRE picks up her head with a confused look on her face.*

CLAIRE

Principal Day, I wasn't offended by what Mx. Roberts was talking about. I was just upset about...something else.

PRINCIPAL DAY

What did you just call her?

TR. ROBERTS

Oh um nothing. Just a little nickname the students call me sometimes.

PRINCIPAL DAY

In any case, Avery, we need to have a serious conversation about your teaching. Your behavior at this school has become a concern of mine. It seems you are unable to remain unbiased as an educator.

TR. ROBERTS

WHat? This is totally unfair.

JULIA

Teacher Roberts is the only goddamn good educator at this school. They're the least biased person I know! They help me when things are hard. Like when they let me borrow some cash for some Hot Cheetos from Rite Aid. If anyone is biased here, it's you!



PRINCIPAL DAY

Wait, back up a second. Did you just say that *a teacher* gave you, *a student*, money? What other “special treatment” has been going on here?

And it's *she*, Julia. At least be grammatically correct during your tantrum.

TR. ROBERTS

I don't appreciate what you're insinuating, Principal Day.

JULIA

Yeah, it was only ten dollars, jeez. Lighten up.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Ten dollars?? That's far more than appropriate.

HUNTER

I feel like that's a stretch...

PRINCIPAL DAY

And what about that pride rally I saw you all attend last March? Was that really a secret meet up? It did seem rather convenient...

DANIEL

No! I was the one who spotted Teacher Roberts. They didn't want anything to do with us! They made us go home.

PRINCIPAL DAY

So you admit, you were all there for the rally despite saying you got “lost” on the bus. Who could have encouraged such risk-taking, dangerous behavior?

JULIA

Don't think we forgot seeing you there too! Helping with that fucking hateful agenda and lame Adam and Steve posters.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Watch that mouth, Julia. Or I'll have you suspended. What I do outside of school is no one's business, especially since I try to keep my personal and professional life separate.

HOWEVER, apparently some people cannot do that. Ms. Roberts, I'm afraid that we'll have to go through an internal review process to assess your standing at this school.

TR. ROBERTS  
But, Principal Da–

PRINCIPAL DAY  
No buts, Avery. It's out of my hands now.

TR. ROBERTS  
It is literally right in your hands.

CLAIRE  
What about GSA?

PRINCIPAL DAY  
That means as of now the GSA has no sponsor and cannot continue to meet.

JULIA  
FUck this shit!

TR. ROBERTS  
Juliaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

PRINCIPAL DAY  
Young lady you need to stop with that potty mouth before I scrub it clean.

JULIA  
I fu–

*HUNTER covers her mouth although JULIA resists.*

DANIEL  
Well, what if we got a temporary sponsor? Or just you know be realllly respectful of the library space until Teacher Roberts comes back?

PRINCIPAL DAY  
Many of our teachers are already sponsors. And this club doesn't have the same promise or long-standing commitment of the Christian Student Union. I would suggest you all take that up instead if you're really interested.

TR. ROBERTS  
Please, Principal Day, don't punish them for my mistakes.

PRINCIPAL DAY

It's not a punishment. I'm simply proposing an acceptable alternative.

CLAIRE

NOOOOOOOO!

*They all stare.*

I mean, there's something SPECIAL about GSA. It's like they really make me learn like no other group has before. I used to think that it was wrong to question God, but they taught me that it was okay. It's natural to have doubts and not just blindly follow everything.

*Looks around at all of them and then hangs her head.*

I'm really sorry about how I acted earlier.

*A beat.*

JULIA

God, that is such fucking bullshit.

You don't know the first thing about the real GSA. You think you know us. You think we're just here to make YOU a better person.

But that's not the point of this club, it was never the fucking point of this club. The point of this club was to make a safe space for QUEER people. Girls who like girls, guys who swing both ways, people who are becoming more themselves!

Not you. This GSA was never for *you*.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Wait, wait, wait. Y'all didn't change your club's mission? I was under the impression that this was now a Christian club.

I must say Claire, I'm disappointed in you. I thought you had really turned the club around.

CLAIRE

*(mumbling)* Sorry.

TR. ROBERTS

Well you see Principal Day the thing is that—

PRINCIPAL DAY

I think you've all said quite enough.

I'm gonna have to call parents, officials, everything. Jesus H. Christ.

DANIEL

Wait, wait. Can't we talk this out? Man to man.

PRINCIPAL DAY

No, everyone needs to come to my office. NOW!

*They all begin to hesitantly line up behind PRINCIPAL DAY. As they walk off stage, blackout.*

## ACT 2

### Scene 1

*DANIEL and HUNTER both sit in bathroom stalls next to each other texting on their phones which casts blue light on their faces. HUNTER is folding into herself uncomfortably and dressed in baggy, unisex athletic wear. DANIEL has hoisted his knees to his chest on the toilet—he has a prominent black eye. All their texts are projected.*

DANIEL

So hows the new school?

Find my replacement yet?? > :(

HUNTER

Lol

You know i could never

DANIEL

Ur right

Who could match up to these looks? ;)

*DANIEL takes a quick selfie—duck face and peace sign, of course. HUNTER giggles but covers her mouth quickly.*

HUNTER

No one haha.

*HUNTER looks at the selfie more closely.*

....

Whats that? On your face?

DANIEL

Nothing...

HUNTER

...

Daaaaanieeeelllll

DANIEL

Okay okay

Sooooo a few people found out about me and eddy because like principal days assembly lowkey outed all of us

HUNTER

That ducking asshole

Im so sorry

DANIEL

I dont care, those guys are all just suffering from sde anyways

Im more mad for you

I miss you, hunter

HUNTER

Firstly, what the hell is sde?

And imy too danny

DANIEL

Small dick energy, duh

HUNTER

Blah i think that the sde here is high too

I hate having to be a dude. Yall are all stinky

hahaha

DANIEL

:(

Any updates on ur parents?

HUNTER

Not really

My aunt says that the case manager is totally biased

...

I wish i could see them

DANIEL

Well, its only been a few weeks right?

You'll see them soon. Its gonna be ok

HUNTER

Ok

DANIEL

How'd your soccer game go??

HUNTER

It was just a scrimmage lol

they wanted to put me on the skins team at first. I just told them that i had a nasty rash

DANIEL

That actually worked?

HUNTER

I distracted them with my juggling!

DANIEL

Makes sense. I did the same at debate tryouts

*They are both smiling at their phones like idiots.*

HUNTER

Oh yeah, I forgot about that. How did it go?

DANIEL

Absolutely rude.

But it went okay. Lots of nerds. Just kind of need something to keep me busy you know

*Loud banging from both sides of the stalls. HUNTER and DANIEL look absolutely terrified. The lights go out as we hear banging, shouting, etc.*

## Scene 2

*Lights come back on to CLAIRE and JULIA dropping youth Bibles onto a table and organizing them.*

JULIA

Ugh, I can't wait to finish.

CLAIRE

It's not so bad. Volunteering is good for the soul.

JULIA

Shut it. You and your freak church uncle are the whole reason I'm here.

CLAIRE

That was really rude.

JULIA

Yeah, well it's just facts. If I had a time machine, I would go back and keep my mom from going into Principal Day's office.

CLAIRE

Don't you think it's nice that our family is becoming friends now?

JULIA

NO! AND THEY'RE NOT BECOMING FRIENDS, THEY JUST MUTUALLY HATE ME!

CLAIRE

*(whisper yelling)* can you not yell

JULIA

*(yelling towards the ceiling)* WHY AM I HERE? GOD, IF YOU WANTED TO PUNISH ME FOR BEING GAY, WOULD YOU JUST STRIKE ME DOWN NO—

*CLAIRE clamps her hand over JULIA's mouth but then jerks her hand back.*

CLAIRE

Did you just lick me???

*JULIA just grins menacingly.*

CLAIRE

*(sighs)* I can't keep apologizing for what happened.

*Beat.*

And to be fair it wasn't really my fault. Like Principal Day was always gonna cancel your club.

JULIA

Yeah, well you were supposed to *save* us. But everything just got worse. Hunter had to leave, Daniel looks like a fucking piñata, and I'm doing grunt work in this sick institution. Next to a Bible thumper no less.

CLAIRE

Could you stop being a bitch for ONE second? *(immediate gasp)* Wait, omg, Julia—I'm so sorry. I don't even know where that came from...

JULIA

Don't be. It's the first true thing you've said all day.  
Let's just finish up. I wanna go home.

CLAIRE

Yeah, okay. I should be hurrying up too.  
I, uh, I'm going to family therapy.

JULIA

Why are you telling me this?

CLAIRE

That's why I was absent. The day before everything went down with the GSA. I had to sit on a white couch squished between my parents. And like the therapist was just there nodding along as they confessed. He said they should use "I feel" statements. When you confess to a priest at least you have the decency to be honest and ashamed. It's not "I *feel* like cheating on my wife with Mrs. Rodgers from the PTA" it's just "God, I fucked up by cheating on my wife, what do I do?".

*A pause.*

And then somehow the conversation turned to me and my feelings and I clammed up because they were like *interrogating* me. So I mentioned making new friends at GSA, but then, then, my mom had to ruin it by freaking talking over me and jumping to conclusions!



*JULIA decides to stop being such a bitch.*

JULIA

That's a lottttt to unpack. First of all you just cursed. Inside a church. Secondly, your dad totally broke the (*counts on her fingers*) seventh commandment.

*A pause.*

What sorts of "conclusions"?

*CLAIRE looks away.*

CLAIRE

Well, um, last year there was this like small incident at church camp. My parents totally blew it out of proportion.

JULIA

Don't be lame. Tell me what happened!

CLAIRE

*(puffing out cheeks)* I went to camp last summer—Lady of Perpetual Sorrow's Sleepaway Camp—LOPS for short, as a counselor. One of my best friends, Emily, was also coming back as a counselor and we got a whole room together just us!

We would talk and paint each other's nails and all that stuff.

But Emily also wanted to do more than that. I was just sitting on her bed ranting about the way they ruined Rory's character in Gilmore Girls.

*Blank stare from JULIA who has never so much as seen a clip of GG.*

And out of nowhere she just...kissed me. My first one ever too!

*(clears throat)* Obviously, I panicked. I ran and told the nearest nun I could find. We got sent away from camp early. I had to spend the rest of my summer at a, um, less fun camp.

JULIA

Ohmygod.

Are you telling me that *you* kissed a girl before *me*?

*Drops down to her knees and clasps her hands above her head.*

WHy God? WHy?

CLAIRE

Aren't you even listening? I didn't WANT to be kissed. It just happened. Didn't you say you had a girlfriend anyways? You'll get your kiss in no time. And you'll actually want it.

JULIA

First of all, I know they feed you all sorts of crazy at that second camp you went to but there's nothing wrong with two girls kissing. I mean that consent thing is a whole other discussion...but you're not a bad person because of that.

And I'm sorry people made you feel that way.

*A small pause.*

Secondly, she broke up with me so that's not really a possibility anymore.

CLAIRE

What? Oh, I'm sorry Julia.

JULIA

It's whatever. She was complaining about how we haven't been spending enough time together. And then I pointed out that we technically haven't even met in person and that just pissed her off even worse.

CLAIRE

So you had (*laughs*) an *online* girlfriend?

JULIA

Hey! Roblox is a perfectly fine place to romance someone.

*CLAIRE doubles over laughing as JULIA crosses her arms across her chest, turning red.*

JULIA

OKAY IT'S NOT THAT FUNNY!

CLAIRE

I just, I don't know. Expected you to be some big player?

JULIA

Why would you think that?

CLAIRE

Just your whole look. And confidence.

JULIA

What about my look?

CLAIRE

I just thought—well that girls would be all over that.

JULIA

Well you thought wrong.

CLAIRE

Clearly.

*CLAIRE bursts into laughter again. She really just can't help it. She's going all in now.*

JULIA

I TOLD YOU IT'S NOT THAT FUNNY!!

CAN YOU SHUT IT??

CLAIREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

OKAY, IM GONNA *MAKE* YOU BE QUIET

CLAIRE

*(in between laughter)* Oh yeah, how? Are *you* gonna kiss me?

*A beat.*

JULIA

Do you want me to?

*CLAIRE nods nervously and JULIA approaches her slowly. As soon as they kiss, they're interrupted by JULIA's phone pinging with messages.*

JULIA

Fuck. Daniel just texted.

CLAIRE

Language.

JULIA

I don't give a fuck about language. We need to go.

CLAIRE

What? No, I have to go see my parents.

JULIA

It's bad, Claire. Like really bad.

CLAIRE

You can't keep not explaining thi-

JULIA

It's about Hunter. She's hurt. Really hurt.

CLAIRE

Where is she?

JULIA

Daniel's got her, but we gotta go help him. Quick.

*JULIA extends her hand for CLAIRE. She hesitates for a second, but lets herself be led away with JULIA. Blackout.*

### Scene 3

*JULIA, DANIEL, CLAIRE, and HUNTER sit on the floor. HUNTER has a black eye, open wounds and bruising. JULIA is cleaning some of her wounds.*

DANIEL

I'LL KILL THEM ALL!!

HUNTER

I don't think that's necessary. They're all just idiots.

JULIA

I'm so sorry, Hunter. I also volunteer to murder people for you.

HUNTER

It's seriously okay.

CLAIRE

I don't think so. It's *never* okay to turn to violence.

HUNTER

Why is she here again?

JULIA

Oh she was uh with me at my weird church punishment thing.

HUNTER

Yeah, I know that part, but wh-?

CLAIRE

UGH THIS IS UNBEARABLE! I HAVE TO CONFESS WHAT HAPPENED...JULIA AND I KISSED.

*Everyone stops and stares at CLAIRE. Then they all start talking at once.*

JULIA

I thought that we were going to keep that *private*.

DANIEL

Aw man you broke up with your Roblox girlfriend?

HUNTER

Can't say I didn't see that coming

JULIA

WHAat? I absolutely do not give off goes after straight girl vibes.

CLAIRE

I feel sooo weirdd about it

DANIEL

Like a good weird?

CLAIRE

I'm not 100% sure.

DANIEL

Yeah, I've been there.

JULIA  
OKayyy that's enough about our weird—whatever.

CLAIRE  
But I still don't understand what it means.  
Am I gay now?

DANIEL  
Maybe you're suffering from repulsive heteronormativity.

HUNTER  
*Compulsive heteronormativity.*

DANIEL  
Same difference. Did you like it? The kiss I mean.

JULIA  
DON't answer that.

CLAIRE  
It was...nice. A little sweaty.

JULIA  
I was nervous!!

CLAIRE  
Don't yell at me!

HUNTER  
Can you both stop yelling? It's hurting my head.

*A pause.*

JULIA  
I'm sorry. We're sorry.  
What happened to you Hunter? Really. We want to help you.

*DANIEL and CLAIRE nod their heads vigorously. HUNTER takes a deep breath before she begins.*

HUNTER  
Today was going good. Like actually.  
You know I've been trying to keep my head down. Just go to class and leave. And it was working. I didn't have to hear so many people deadname me if I just didn't participate. But I was getting lonely. Until I saw a bunch of dudes from my class playing soccer.

Turns out I was good enough to play with. And all I had to do was zone out their sexist, homophobic crap and focus on the field. I knew I couldn't keep it up forever, but it just felt so good to let go a little.

And then some "genius" suggested we play skins and shirts. I thought that I had gotten away with not taking off my shirt until I heard them all rush into the bathroom. Stupid. I should have waited. But my aunt was late and I really needed to go and then I started texting with Daniel... When they came in they were all laughing and they tried to push me up against the wall to strip me. The second one of them saw my bra, they called me...all sorts of names. But of course that wasn't enough. They just had to beat the living shit out of me too.

*A beat.*

And when they were doing that, I thought "maybe I deserve this". Maybe this is all I'll ever be to people.

*Complete silence.*

DANIEL

I'm so sorry. If I hadn't been texting you maybe you could ha—

HUNTER

What? No, no, nooo. It's their fault for being assholes.

JULIA

This is really serious, Hunt. Do you think they'll tell everyone else at school?

HUNTER

I wouldn't rule it out. Pretty sure I'll have to move again.

I'm just so tired of everything. Existing is exhausting. I wish I could just...not.

*JULIA and DANIEL throw each other worried looks. Before they can say anything, CLAIRE's phone starts ringing (she is definitely one of those people with an obnoxious ringtone at full volume). Everyone turns to look at her and she quickly turns it off.*

CLAIRE

Sorry, sorry. It was just my...uncle. I forgot he's been Life360ing me ever since I got in trouble.

DANIEL and HUNTER

Life360ing?

JULIA

The same creepy app my mom uses. It's for location tracking.

I can show you how to disable it.

CLAIRE

Please. I don't need a lecture right now.

DANIEL

Let's get back to Hunter. What do you need? Comfort food? What can I—I mean we—do?

JULIA

Already on it. I ordered Happy All. It should be here soon. And no I don't care that it's gonna give you stomach bubbles. It's Hunt's favorite.

HUNTER

That's very motherly of you.

JULIA

Fuck yeah, I'm like the best mom ever.

CLAIRE

I don't think those words should be in the same sentence.

JULIA

Best and mom?

*CLAIRE rolls her eyes.*

CLAIRE

Can I pray for you, Hunter? Like a prayer circle. We can all just throw some positive energy your way.

DANIEL

I don't know.

JULIA

Yeah, not to be rude since we just kissed and everything, but that idea sounds stupid.

HUNTER

Actually, I would be okay with that Claire.

CLAIRE, JULIA, and DANIEL *(in very different tones)*

Really?

HUNTER

I mean why not. Maybe God's real and they could throw me a bone. I'm honestly so tired of trying to figure everything out myself.

Some blind faith might be a little comforting.

CLAIRE

You won't regret this! I'm excellent at running prayer circles. *(claps)* Okay so everyone join hands and close your eyes.



*Everyone joins hands and closes their eyes.*

Dear God, it's me Claire again. I'm joining you today with my friends. We would like to ask you to watch over Hunter as she goes through a difficult per—

*The doorbell rings. They all swivel their heads to look.*

JULIA

I think that's our UberEats.

CLAIRE

Dang we were just getting to the good part.

HUNTER

Should I get the door?

JULIA

Yes, I'm starving.

CLAIRE

I suppose we can pray before eating.

*CLAIRE gets up and walks towards the door and opens it. Standing there is...*

CLAIRE

Teacher Roberts???

TR. ROBERTS

Oh, um, hi Claire.

*Everyone else's eyes widen and they all run to the door.*

ALL

TeaCHeR rObErtS!!!!

HUNTER

How are you?

DANIEL

I've been dying to tell you a joke, but I don't know your email.

JULIA

What are you doing?

TR. ROBERTS

One at a time!

I'm fine, thank you, Hunter. Secondly, what does it look like I'm doing?

*They extend their arm out to offer the greasy food bag. JULIA takes it with a neutral face.*

And yes you may tell your joke now.

DANIEL

How does a non-binary samurai defeat their enemy?

ALL

How?

DANIEL

THEY-SLASH-THEM!

...

GET IT??

*TR. ROBERTS can't help but break out into a grin. Then they start laughing, progressively getting louder, but it eventually turns into a slight cry/whimper/etc. They attempt to get themselves together.*

TR. ROBERTS

*(clearing throat)* SOrry! Sorry. I just—whew. It's been a while since I laughed like that.

CLAIRE

Is this a bad time to mention that I didn't get the joke?

JULIA

*(sighs)* I'll explain it later. Seriously, teach, why are you delivering food?

TR. ROBERTS

It's an easy side hustle while I'm...between jobs.

DANIEL

Wait, you're not coming back to Revere?

TR.ROBERTS

I'm afraid not. Or at least I don't think so.

CLAIRE

What?? WHY not? Did my un-Principal Day fire you?

JULIA

I will commit a felony against him for you.

HUNTER

She's absolutely not kidding.

TR. ROBERTS

Please do not do that. You would not survive in prison./

JULIA

/I resent that.

TR. ROBERTS

Besides that, no, Principal Day has not fired me *yet*. And honestly if this experience has taught me anything it's that being an educator is soul-sucking. Not because of y'all—you're the best damn part of this job.

...

But having to fight to be myself and a good role model and an effective instructor...it's just *so much*. If it's not Principal Day at Revere, well then it'll just be someone else at another school.

*A beat.*

CLAIRE

Do you wanna come in? We were just about to do a prayer circle before the food arrived. It might make you feel better.

TR. ROBERTS

*(hesitant)* I don't know. I have another order to deliver.

DANIEL

Oooh, please stay, teach! It'll just be a quick like two minute prayer, right Claire?

JULIA

They already fucked you over. Just take a minute to relax. Even if it is, you know, praying.

TR. ROBERTS

Can I get a sense of what it is you all are praying for?

HUNTER

Um, me. I've been having a lot of trouble at my new school.

*You can see TR. ROBERTS soften and after a small pause they step through the door.*

TR. ROBERTS

Okay, let's make this quick though.

CLAIRE

Great! Let's get back to position.

*HUNTER, DANIEL, JULIA and CLAIRE all begin to form a circle and TR.ROBERTS follows them. They all clasp hands.*

CLAIRE

Dear God, sorry for the interruption. We would like to ask you to watch over Hunter. She is a resilient young lady who has endured so much. I can tell that she's made an impact on those around her by keeping a level head.

*CLAIRE looks around the circle as if saying "okay your turn".*

DANIEL

Oh yea, um, Hunter is a beautiful person who deserves to be treated with respect.

JULIA

She's one of my best friends and your followers have been harassing her for just doing her. Please, tell them to—excuse my language—fuck off/

CLAIRE

/Julia!

*TR. ROBERTS clears their throat to speak.*

TR.ROBERTS

To revise what Julia said a bit, God, if you're there, I think we all want to see Hunter safe and happy. She's just a child trying to live as her true self.

I don't think that would be too much to ask.

Amen.

*They all echo the Amen and open their eyes; however, they continue to hold hands. Suddenly, HUNTER steps forward to gently hug TR. ROBERTS. They hesitate but allow her to continue. Soon everyone is wrapped into a group bear hug. Then TR. ROBERTS clears their throat.*

TR. ROBERTS

I-I have to go. The other order is probably in my car getting cold.

Take care of yourselves okay?

*The door shuts before any of the teens have the opportunity to stop it. A small beat.*

JULIA

This is totally unfair. I just, I can't believe it.

HUNTER

Everything is.

DANIEL

Ugh I've never felt so angry.

JULIA

It's just, how does our education system even have hope if we lose people like Teacher Roberts?

*JULIA grunts and dramatically throws herself to the floor. CLAIRE approaches and looks down at her and then at the rest of the group.*

CLAIRE

Well...why don't we do something about it?

JULIA

Be serious. Who's going to listen to a bunch of kids? We clearly don't matter.

DANIEL

Maybe we should make ourselves matter. I mean how do kids get attention?

JULIA

Ugh. By crying and yelling and other gross stuff.

HUNTER

Kind of like you just did?

JULIA

...I'm not gross.

DANIEL

Exactly. Full-on tantrum. Maybe that's how to get what we want.

HUNTER

I don't want any more attention on myself.

JULIA

How do you feel about breaking things? Likeeeee say Principal Day's windows?

*HUNTER slyly smiles and nods.*

CLAIRE

Uh-well maybe we shouldn't target Principal Day specifically.

DANIEL

Why not? He's been a real asshole. No offense, Claire.

CLAIRE

I mean I can't deny that...but we risk getting caught more easily.

JULIA

So we should target the school? I'm down for destroying anything.

DANIEL

A little payback to Revere does sound appealing.

HUNTER

Can I kick some soccer balls through the window?

CLAIRE

*(shyly)* Only if I can join you.

DANIEL

Helll yeahhhhh! Let's do this thing.

JULIA

Okay geniuses let's think about this: how are we gonna get there? We obviously need a car for a speedy getaway. Walking won't cut it this time.

DANIEL

Let's take my dad's truck. No one's home to see us and we'll just put it back where it was after we're done.

HUNTER

Doesn't your dad drive a manual?

DANIEL

I can figure it out. Easy.

JULIA

We can't vandalize the school if we die on our way there, idiot.

CLAIRE

I, um, I know how to drive a stick. My dad made me learn before getting my license.

JULIA

Let's ride then, bitches.

#### Scene 4

*All the speaking described is silent. They are all in the car. CLAIRE is driving. She has her hands at ten and two. Next to her is JULIA who is fidgeting with the radio, stopping at "Over the Mountain" by Ozzy Osbourne. We can hear the music. She smiles and begins nodding along, perhaps singing as well. HUNTER and DANIEL sit in the backseat talking with one another.*

*Then DANIEL tries to backseat drive CLAIRE. CLAIRE shrugs and continues what she's doing. JULIA turns around to yell at DANIEL. HUNTER starts to giggle. CLAIRE is driving up a hill. There may be some bumps and stalls as they go up. They begin to sing*

*“Over the Mountain” with JULIA, CLAIRE joining last; we can hear them now. JULIA sneaks a surprised glance at CLAIRE as she pulls into the parking lot.*

*They exit the car. HUNTER opens the truck’s bed and gathers soccer balls in her arms. DANIEL helps her. JULIA pulls CLAIRE along. After setting up the balls in a row, HUNTER goes up behind one hesitating. DANIEL touches her shoulder and nods. She smiles and kicks as hard as she can. We hear windows shatter. They all look at each other: nervous, excited, afraid, adrenaline-filled. Then they all start going at it, kicks, yells and smashing sounds ensue. They’re laughing at some point. They’re strangely happy? Glass begins falling. Suddenly, there’s blood coming out of HUNTER’s arm. They begin to crowd around her trying to apply pressure and HUNTER is crying and apologizing.*

*Suddenly, there’s blinding lights on all of them and they shrink back.*

*A booming voice, “WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU’RE ALL DOING?”*

*Blackout.*

## Scene 5

*We are in a sterile hospital room. HUNTER lies in bed as TR. ROBERTS enters.*

HUNTER  
Teacher Roberts?

TR. ROBERTS  
Hunter! I came as soon as I could.  
How are you?

HUNTER  
Hanging in there.

TR. ROBERTS  
Do you need a lecture on how vandalism that damages property could be considered a felony?

HUNTER  
Heard it already.

TR. ROBERTS  
Good. Good.  
I hear you’re the only one who hurt themselves.

HUNTER

Yeah. I'm a total klutz.

TR. ROBERTS

You know, you can tell me the truth, Hunter.

*A knowing beat.*

HUNTER

It's just so hard.

I just thought.

I just thought it would be easier.

TR. ROBERTS

I wish I could tell you it is. But I'm still struggling myself.

HUNTER

You don't mean...?

TR. ROBERTS

No. God, no. It's just hard. Being an adult and constantly having people think they know you better than you know yourself.

But you are so perfect, Hunter. You already know yourself.

HUNTER

You look tired.

TR. ROBERTS

I've been Uber eating all night. People get hungry around 3 am.

HUNTER

Did you know that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that almost 50 percent of fatal car accidents happen at night?

TR. ROBERTS

Let me guess, a random car fact from Daniel?

HUNTER

I'm just saying that you should be taking care of yourself.



TR. ROBERTS

I know.

...

It's been a little more than a year since I was here. Lying where you are.

HUNTER

Why? What happened to you?

TR. ROBERTS

It was before I came out as non-binary to my wife.

We were trying to have a baby. She really wanted to be the one to carry it. But she had a complicated time. So she asked me if I would do it.

I couldn't explain to her why it felt wrong. I didn't want to hurt her feelings.

The treatment was just...awful. The thought of a baby inside me stressed me out so much.

When I eventually miscarried, I felt so guilty. Like I killed it with my repulsion to being a mother.

But when I told my wife, she was just so accepting. And I felt, well I felt a little less alone.

*A beat.*

HUNTER

I'm moving away. Minnesota. My parents said it's the safest place they could find.

I haven't told them yet. The rest of the GSA, I mean.

TR. ROBERTS

They'll understand.

HUNTER

I'm going to miss them.

TR. ROBERTS

I guess I could say something cheesy like time heals all wounds. Or the Internet is a thing. But yeah. This really fucking sucks.

HUNTER

*(smiling)* That'll be twenty-five cents.

TR. ROBERTS

Do you accept I.O.U's?

HUNTER

Sure. Except I charge interest.

TR.ROBERTS

Of course you do.

HUNTER

Daniel doesn't just learn stuff from us you know.

TR. ROBERTS

I know. And I learn everything from y'all.

I should go now.

HUNTER

Teacher Roberts?

Could I, um, could I call you sometime? If I felt like...alone.

*A beat.*

TR. ROBERTS

Okay. Yeah. Yeah that would be nice.

*TR. ROBERTS goes over to hug HUNTER before leaving. Blackout.*

## Scene 6

*JULIA stands center stage in all black, rubbing her already irritated eyes. DANIEL is beside her with his hand on her shoulder also dressed in all black; he's clearly trying to keep it together. They stand together for a minute until HUNTER, also in black enters.*

HUNTER

Hi. Long time no see.

DANIEL

HUNTER! OHMYGOD WHEN DID YOU GET HERE?

*DANIEL does not wait for her response and immediately envelops her in a hug.*

HUNTER

*(struggling)* Just now. Let me go, before you kill me!

*DANIEL immediately releases and an awkward silence settles.*

JULIA

Sooo, how long you in town for?

HUNTER

Oh, probably just a couple of days. Gonna visit my aunt but then we're heading back home.

JULIA

Cool. Cool. How's, um, your new school?

HUNTER

Great! It's just like sooo nice to have a fresh start. There's so many gender neutral bathrooms!

JULIA

Our school had a gender neutral bathroom.

HUNTER

Yeah, one. Everyone just used it to have sex.

DANIEL

Well, I for one am glad you're adjusting so well, Hunt. Even if it has to be far, far away from us. In the freezing cold.

JULIA

If anyone cares to know, I hate my new school.

DANIEL

I think the nuns hate you too if that makes you feel better.

JULIA

It actually kind of does, thank you.

HUNTER

Speaking of nuns, do we know if Sister Claire will be joining us?

JULIA

Ughhhh i hate that you two call her thatttt

DANIEL

You're just mad that you didn't think of it first.

JULIA

She said she's pulling into the parking lot.  
*(frowns)* With Glenn.

DANIEL

Who's Glenn?

HUNTER

Principal Day. I guess that makes sense. Former employer and all.

*A pause.*

DANIEL

So anyways you and Claireeee what's going o—?

JULIA

Shutupshutupshutupshesliterallywalkingrighttowardsus

*CLAIRE walks towards them, waving. Her energy and outfit are all reduced by at least 30% of her usual self. PRINCIPAL DAY walks behind her with a neutral expression.*

CLAIRE

Hey, y'all. What'cha talking about?

JULIA

Nothing!

PRINCIPAL DAY

Hopefully, no shenanigans today. It's a funeral for Christ's sake.

JULIA

Yes, an event for paying respect for the dead. Which you couldn't even do when they were alive.

DANIEL

Hey, hey, hey—let's all just calm down.

JULIA

I will as soon as he admits he's a prick.

PRINCIPAL DAY

Would a prick have covered for your whole group's little vandalism stunt last semester?

HUNTER

No, but they might fire someone unreasonably. Or out an entire group of students.

PRINCIPAL DAY

*(presses lips together)* I'm gonna go mingle over there, now... stay out of trouble, Claire. I promised your mother.

*PRINCIPAL DAY walks off.*

CLAIRE

*(sighs)* That hour-long car ride was filled with the Chord-Rinthians on repeat.

JULIA

Why's he here?

CLAIRE

Said he wanted to offer his condolences. I think it's just to keep up appearances. Plus, my mom thought I needed some adult supervision.

HUNTER

Yes, or you'll fall back into the dangerous alphabet mafia.

DANIEL

Who taught you the phrase alphabet mafia?

JULIA

Me, duh.

HUNTER

Wait, I just realized you dodged Daniel's question. What's going on between the two of you?

*JULIA and CLAIRE look at each other nervously.*

JULIA

I mean we just/decided to stick to being friends.

CLAIRE

/Live so far away now and my mom barely trusts me as it is.

DANIEL

You had a freaking virtual girlfriend. How can you not make a little long distance work? Plus, you go to the same school now!

JULIA

Totally different classes, dude.

WHatt about you, huh? WHY didn't you make it work with Hunter long distance? God, knows she's better than all those other freaking people you've been dry humping.

*Awkward silence.*

DANIEL

Okay, first of all, ouch. Secondly, you know it's not the same. Hunter lives hundreds of miles away now. You knowwww my love language is physical touch.

HUNTER

Yeah, I mean, it just wasn't written in the stars or anything.

DANIEL

I mean it could be. Someday.

HUNTER

Statistically unlikely.

JULIA

Maybe the statistics would be better if you visited more frequently. I mean it's been months.

*A beat.*

The whole summer passed without so much as a couple of FaceTime calls.

HUNTER

Well, maybe I don't want to frequently come back to a place that reminds me of being rejected and depressed.

CLAIRE

But it's not just a place filled with sad memories. You have people here who love you for who you are.

HUNTER

Look around. It seems like there's already one person less who falls into that category.

*A longer beat. PRINCIPAL DAY re-enters.*

PRINCIPAL DAY

Hey, sooo uh yes Avery's lady friend said that it's time for you all to start giving your speeches.

JULIA

You mean their wife?

PRINCIPAL DAY

Sure. She said whoever would like to go first, the order doesn't matter.

*They all nod and the stage blacks out then spotlights them as a group.*

JULIA, DANIEL, HUNTER and CLAIRE

Teacher Roberts was...

CLAIRE

Caring

DANIEL

Clever

JULIA

Inspirational

HUNTER

Warm

CLAIRE

I hope that Teacher Roberts is in a better place now. They were always open to learning new things and were patient with me while I tried to learn as well. I may not have known them for as long as their other students, but I think that they helped me explore a more thoughtful prayer model.

I'm confident they are resting in the utmost peace. Amen.

*CLAIRE steps out of the spotlight.*

DANIEL

In life there are bears and there are sharks. Both equally dangerous and misunderstood animals. Often, I asked Teacher Roberts which would win in a fight. And instead of dismissing my question like other teachers, one day they answered me seriously. The animals, they said, will

both end up losing from not appreciating each other's different strengths and creating unnatural and unnecessary enemies with one another.

I thought that answer was kind of dumb. Personally, I always thought the shark would win. But I've been thinking about their response and how it could apply to my own life. I think Teacher Roberts could see me struggling with different parts of myself. And they wanted to let me know they were both important.

They had a real knack for helping people put themselves together.

*DANIEL steps out of the spotlight.*

JULIA

I remember the day that Avery Roberts revealed their tattoo to us. It was glorious: a two-headed calf, like the poem. It represents, you know, what most would consider a "freak of nature". To be perfectly honest I hadn't read the poem at all. I just thought the image was sick.

But when I looked it up later I couldn't stop reading it. Retracing the words in my head. Thinking about that moment of peace the cow had with its mother before it was discovered. I think that's how Teacher Roberts made me feel in the library. Surrounded in safety even if it was just for an hour.

I like to think that they felt the same way around us. Just a bunch of two headed calves grazing alongside each other under the stars.

*JULIA steps out of the spotlight.*

HUNTER

I'm not very good at talking about hard things. Or really speaking in public. Except I think Teacher Roberts may have saved my life, so the least I could do is respect theirs. So I decided maybe the best way to express what I'm feeling is through an exercise that they taught us. Rose, thorn, bud—each part of the flower reflecting a certain emotional state.

Rose, I feel like I'm becoming myself more every day with the tools you taught me.  
Thorn, I miss you and the rest of our little wacky group. I wish I didn't have to go away to be happier.  
Bud...I'm not 100% sure yet, but I think we are all on our way to making you proud.

*HUNTER steps out of the spotlight. Stage blackouts. It comes back on after a moment while the stage fills with smoke. They're hotboxing in JULIA's truck.*

CLAIRE



*(laughing)* My uncle is gonna totally kill me!

DANIEL

Aw, baby's first high! We should take a picture.

HUNTER

*(coughing)* What part of illegal activity do you not understand...?

JULIA

Y'all I am totally gone right now. Because what the hell? How did we even get here?

DANIEL

I believe your exact words were, "I can only grieve properly if I'm high as hell."

CLAIRE

That totally sounds like her.

JULIA

I can't believe they're gone.

HUNTER

I know.

DANIEL

That car just came out of nowhere I heard.

CLAIRE

Did you ever notice how many buttons are on this radio?

JULIA

Their wife looked like soooooooooo saaad...

*They all nod sadly in agreement. A small pause. Then...*

DANIEL

WAIT!

I HAVE AN IDEA Y'ALL

CLAIRE

Me toooooo

We should totally like invent um like a car BUT with wings. So it can fly!

HUNTER  
So like an airplane?

CLAIRE  
*(Frowns then smiles)* Yeeesss, exactly.

JULIA  
Okay, I think we've established not to listen to a high Claire.

DANIEL  
Well, my idea is way better than that.  
I was thinking about what Hunter was saying in her eulogy about making Teacher Roberts proud.  
We need to take our field trip! Fort Lauderdale, babyyyyyyyyy!

HUNTER  
That's actually a decent idea.

JULIA  
Are you kidding me? It's freaking awesome. We could, you know, plant a tree or spread some ashes or something at the stonewall museum.

HUNTER  
There are no ashes.

CLAIRE  
We could use glitter instead!

*JULIA points and nods at the idea.*

HUNTER  
Okay, but how are we gonna get there?

DANIEL  
We can just take the truck *(pats the seat)*

JULIA  
True...but this girl's a gas guzzler.

HUNTER

More money. What about our parents? You really think they'll let us go?

CLAIRE

My mom's kind of an overbearing bitch, so that's a negative.

DANIEL

Wow, I think that's the first time I've heard you curse.

JULIA

That's nothing. She chewed me out the other day for accidentally deleting the events off her GCal. I swear she could have filled the swear jar.

HUNTER

Quite a claim coming from the Swear Jar Queen herself.

JULIA

Shut up.

HUNTER

Seriously, though, I mean a trip sounds amazing. But my parents, they get worried about me. Especially...here.

DANIEL

Don't worry we'll be protecting you the whole time. Not that you need protecting. And we can just sneak Claire out. Easy peasy.

JULIA

I already don't care what my parents think. They know better by now to ask about things they don't wanna know.

HUNTER

*(hesitating)* I guess we can make it work.

CLAIRE

*(nods vigorously but she has a total "no thoughts, head empty" look on her face)*

JULIA

Okay, it's decided. Road trip to Fort Lauderdale, soon. Promise?

*JULIA holds out her pinky. CLAIRE quickly wraps her own around it with DANIEL following soon after. HUNTER gently wraps her on top.*

ALL  
Promise.

JULIA  
Alright now let's go hose down Claire with some perfume before returning her.

CLAIRE  
I'm totally fine.

HUNTER  
Your pupils are horrifically dilated.

DANIEL  
I think I've got some eyedrops.  
But let's take one last puff. For Teacher Roberts.

*DANIEL takes the joint and passes it to HUNTER after inhaling. She does the same passing it to JULIA and as JULIA passes it to CLAIRE the stage blacks out with the light of the joint flickering until going out completely.*

END OF PLAY