

# kiddos

written by

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It is very easy, I think, to love our infant-selves. I think they were obviously beautiful and expressed themselves honestly and were unapologetic and had really soft skin and eyes that glistened in the moonlight.

Then, upon entering adulthood, we were informed by a completely disorganized variety of sources that we needed to numb all those wild animal impulses to bite and suck and eat and scream. So we politely put on slacks and a ponytail and big sweaters and deodorant and became very very inoffensive.

There was a time, however, in the middle. When our feelings were in the midst of growing and stretching into something bigger and more monstrous. Sometimes it even felt bigger than our own capabilities to hold onto or understand where, or what, we were growing into.. Which, I think, gave avenue for us to do things the rest of the 'civilized world' would view as rather heinous. We looked into neighbors' windows for hours and ate snails and left scratch marks all over our bodies and humped our living room couch and lit lines of ants on fire.

And at the same time, our bodies were betraying us by *also* literally stretching and morphing into some scarily unrecognizable grease pot of spilling fluids.

In short, it was a complicated time. It was a crossroads.

So, I think if we're able to look *those* selves -- these 11 year-old, ugly, sweaty, leaky selves that were in the middle of an inheritance greater than they knew what to do with -- and give them a genuine hug,

I think if we relaxed enough to hear what these piss-ants have to teach us

I think we might scrape ourselves a little softer.

the kiddos: 11 years old

*ruben*, drooling and smiling little warthog that knocks over all the furniture

*mandy*, little bumblebee overheating on a sunny rooftop

*socrates*, (*they/them*). put the thinking of a philosopher in an 11-year old's immaturity

*plato*, talks to the forest spirits by her house far more than her parents

*graceon*, lone wolf in the snowy mountains, trying to run away from the moon

*sindy*, sugar pop queen. Is panicking far more than you would believe. Not the villain.

*reeler*, carries around a metal bat everywhere. Just coasting through

Do not play these characters as "11 year-olds," do not do your own adolescent self that disservice. They're brilliant people who have been on this earth for 11 years. The language will give them their age.

scene transitions:

Should be instant and actors should move on and off very quickly unless it is one of the two "Transitions" in the play, in which case follow the stage directions.

If there are set pieces for a specific scene they can be brought on while the actors are speaking the text of the next scene. It's all very quick. As quick as growing up.

Ride the music and rhythm of the whole play, it doesn't necessarily stop cold at the end of each scene.

the set:

these characters go to many different places. Suggest however much or however little you desire. Signs, props, projection, soundscape or nothing. This could be done on a completely blank stage

notes:

lines next to each other are spoken simultaneously

lines with parentheses around them are hushed

// indicates the next line to begin

the grammar and punctuation of each line is intentional

**ABOVE ALL:**

have fun. Jesus, you're playing 11 year-olds

1. ALL THE KIDDOS: RUBEN, MANDY, SOCRATES, PLATO, GRACEON, SINDY, and REELER. The playground.

PLATO

i just don't get why we're not like, taken seriously

SOCRATES

well adults don't think we really 'get it,' because we're only 11

MANDY

yeah, they're right

PLATO

yeah, but -- yeah, no yeah, but just like, i'm like *eleven*, i've been around enough to like learn, do you know what i mean?

SINDY

yeah i hear that

GRACEON

my moms, the other day, tried explaining what seeing eye dogs are to me

REELER

yeah, i do hear that

PLATO

yeah, see! like you // *obviously* know what seeing eye dogs are

SINDY

my daddy will always try telling me how a credit card works like i wasn't the one who's basically grown up seeing more technology than him

SOCRATES

and it's also like these are the people who will feel the need to explain to us that birds fly south for the winter but when it comes to recognizing that they have grown up in and helped establish a systemically racist and patriarchal society it's like they're suddenly oblivious

ALL

mhmm, yeah. preach, bitch. yeah, exactly (adlibs)

RUBEN

wait, look at that dog over there

ALL

oh god! wow, that is such a good boy. i want that. i want that dog, (adlibs)

*a breath.*

MANDY

who did the homework for math?

SINDY

Plato or Socrates, probably

PLATO AND SOCRATES

okay, chill

SINDY

well did you?

PLATO

yeah, but that doesn't -- did no one else do it?

REELER

why would we?

GRACEON

i did

RUBEN

no

PLATO

because it was assigned?

RUBEN

wait, you did? i  
thought you said  
you weren't gonna

GRACEON

i found time

REELER

assignments are bullshit anyway

RUBEN

right, right, chill

SOCRATES

okay chill out, donny darco

REELER

what, sorry that i don't want to do everything a problematic education system tells me to do?

SINDY

it's also just like, hard, i don't know // how you guys do it all

REELER

okay, no it isn't *hard*, Sindy, it's just oppressive. i could have done them it in like three minutes

SOCRATES

it was only 20 long division questions, i did it in like twenty seconds

MANDY

there is literally no way you did it in twenty seconds

SOCRATES



SINDY  
weird

GRACEON  
what?

REELER  
cause no matter what you go into it's still gonna be just another oppressive system

RUBEN  
wait,  
i don't understand how the future is computers

GRACEON  
well cause like, everything we do is // like with technology...like, yeah...right

SOCRATES  
like the new market // of the world's economy is slowly becoming more and more technically based, so it's only natural we shift solely to computers of some form

PLATO  
yeah just like with the amount of jobs that are being // transferred to computerized tasks increasing every year and the fact that our parents weren't trained in it at all means all older people are most likely going to be out of a job within the next 20 or 30 years

MANDY  
cause like, computers are....yeah, no yeah cause computers are like....the future.....great question, ruben :)

RUBEN  
....um. i don't....sorry, you like all spoke at once

SINDY  
ruben, you dumbass it's cause no one wants to read books anymore so everyone's just gonna use computers

PLATO  
okay like, I read books.

SOCRATES  
god damn, chill girl

GRACEON  
Jesus Christ, you don't always have to be such a bitch

PLATO  
woah, okay but you don't have to call her that

MANDY  
Graceon, hey, no girl

RUBEN

oh, yeah, sure, that makes sense

SINDY

excuse me, did you just fucking call me a bitch?

*a silence*

SINDY

Graceon, i FUCKING heard you, did you just fucking call me a bitch for literally answering Ruben's fucking question? He asked a question so I fucking answered it, I didn't realize you could call me a bitch for that?

MANDY

Sin, you're // calm, okay?

SINDY

Graceon!

GRACEON

Yes princess?

SINDY

excuse me?

GRACEON

i'm like, you called me.

SINDY

did you just call me a fucking bitch?

GRACEON

you called ruben a dumbass

RUBEN

it's alright, i didn't mean --

GRACEON

and he's not. a dumbass

MANDY

she wasn't trying to // call him a

SINDY

so name-calling is the way to solve it? you really think that's the most mature way to handle this?

GRACEON

bitch

SOCRATES

hey

GRACEON

hey

SINDY

cunt

RUBEN

hahahahaha  
hahahaha

REELER

holy shit

MANDY

sindy! girl!

SOCRATES

oh no

GRACEON

ruben, don't laugh at that, it's gross

RUBEN

oh, hey i'm sorry

SINDY

you're a little fucking twirp who can't get any boy to like her so you hang around this pile of hog  
slime over here

GRACEON

maybe it's because i'm not trying to put everyone's fucking penis in my mouth

SINDY

OH MY GOSH WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU JUST SAY

RUBEN

wait, what

GRACEON

a blowjob

RUBEN

wait...what

SINDY

THAT SHIT IS NOT FUCKING TRUE AND YOU -- I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU JUST SAID  
THAT

PLATO

seriously can everybody just take some deep breaths

MANDY

Plato, this is really not the time

RUBEN

i'm sorry i laughed if you're mad about that

GRACEON

ruben, it's okay

SINDY

GRACEON WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU JUST SAY TO ME

MANDY

that was like, too far

SOCRATES

graceon, seriously, let it go

GRACEON

i'm sorry, me let it go?

am i the one that's blowing a fuse right now?

SINDY

WHAT

SOCRATES

yeah, but like, you're still antagonizing

GRACEON

what the fuck does that mean?

SINDY

they mean you're being a fucking witch right now and literally everyone sees it

SOCRATES

sindy, calm down, that isn't what i said

GRACEON

did you hear what she called me!

REELER

it's just a word, dude

GRACEON

okay it is NOT *just* a word! you're just saying that cause you're a boy

SINDY

cunt.

GRACEON

OH MY GOD

REELER

Okay, sindy, step down

SINDY

or what mr. bat, you gonna beat my fucking teeth in or something?

RUBEN

guys?

PLATO

ruben, // really don't.

REELER

no. i didn't say that. i'm just saying step down

RUBEN

what?

PLATO

(you just gotta let it play out)

SINDY

do you think i'm scared of you or something?

PLATO

Sin?

REELER

no? what are you talking about?

SINDY

you think that just cause you carry a bat around suddenly you're somebody important?

PLATO

Sindy.

SINDY  
what?

PLATO  
....shouldn't you....keep it together....

SINDY  
girl what the fuck are you saying

PLATO  
cause....*\*sighs\**, Christine? Right? And getting tense like this isn't....helpful?

SINDY  
(shit). whatever

GRACEON  
wait,  
i'm sorry,  
who's christine?

SINDY  
nobody.

RUBEN  
was that like a blowjob person?

SINDY  
YOU LITTLE FUCKING WEASEL!

RUBEN  
WHAT I DONT EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS

PLATO  
SINDY

SINDY  
WHAT

PLATO  
CHRISTINE!

SINDY  
UGH

MANDY

RUBEN PLEASE STAY OUT OF THIS

RUBEN  
oh okay sorry

SOCRATES  
WHO IS CHRISTINE????

SINDY  
NONE OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS

RUBEN  
guys, i like get why computers are the // future now, sorry i didn't mean to

GRACEON  
OKAY LITERALLY STOP SHOUTING

SINDY  
WELL YOU ACTUALLY STARTED THIS SO

REELER  
jesus, i need to go smash something

GRACEON                      RUBEN  
wait what                      reeler, wait wait

SINDY  
great, now bat boy's gonna go break the fucking school now

REELER  
be quiet

SINDY  
woah don't like, tell me // to be quiet

MANDY  
literally that's not cool to talk to her like that

REELER  
i just need to cool off

MANDY  
just cause you carry a bat doesn't mean you can be a bully

REELER

i wasn't trying // to -- i just really need to breathe

RUBEN

guys i really didn't mean // to -- i was just asking -- like, computers

SOCRATES

Ruben

GRACEON

reeler, are you okay?

REELER

yeah, i'm fine.

GRACEON

you're like, shaking

SINDY

jesus, somebody's pissed

PLATO

guys what time is it? Shouldn't we  
like, get to class?

GRACEON

can you please, like chill

RUBEN

wait, uh how soon -- sorry, shoot

SINDY

Shut up Graceon, you smell  
like tuna salad

GRACEON

oh my god and you smell  
exactly like your dad after a  
bad shit

MANDY

hahahaha she kinda does

SINDY

WHAT

GRACEON

LITERALLY WHY DO YOU GET SO MAD WHEN SOMEONE LITERALLY JUST FIGHTS  
BACK

SINDY

BACK AGAINST WHAT BITCH I LITERALLY HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING

RUBEN

hey!

sorry!  
do any of you guys want any chocolate milk?

*he holds it up center.  
extremely dramatic spot on it  
the kiddos are washed in blue*

*a beat.*

SINDY  
what

REELER  
ruben what are you doing right now

RUBEN  
*(getting a chocolate milk from his bag)*  
i just....i have my milk....in my bag and uh....i don't know. just feel like maybe we could like, share it! if any of you guys like....it might make us all feel better! ya know?

PLATO  
uhhh i'm fine? thanks though

SINDY  
yeah i don't drink dairy

MANDY  
wait since when?

SINDY  
oh it's just a touch and go thing

MANDY  
oh okay for sure

GRACEON  
ruben?

RUBEN  
i'll just open it and we can pass it around like campfire style and anyone who wants some can have some

*He starts trying to open the milk carton.  
It's weird and sudden  
No one knows why he's doing it  
It's one of those paper cartons you have to unfold and pull to open*

GRACEON  
are you okay?

PLATO

what's uhh 'campfire style'?

REELER

hey buddy if you're tweakin' out or something, can you just let me know so i can just steer clear

RUBEN

no, guys, really just like trust me, sorry

MANDY

ruben?

GRACEON

ummm ruben?

SINDY

ruben, stop okay? you're like embarrassing yourself

RUBEN

*[really struggling to open the milk]*

no no no it'll all make it okay, it's okay

SINDY

ruben no one even wants any of your nasty milk

MANDY

okay well // hang on, i would

RUBEN

well that's -- wait, what?

SINDY

Ruben!

*The chocolate milk BURSTS with great violence, illogically so.*

*It erupts directly on Sindy, soaking her.*

*There is a great, collective gasp*

*And then an icy pause.*

*They all stand in silence, unable to grasp what just happened.*

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2. GRACEON, RUBEN, REELER. In a basketball court at a park.

RUBEN

okay so that is like absolutely in no way what i meant to have happen

REELER

well yeah, that's....i mean duh

RUBEN

cause i feel like she was left with the impression i did that on purpose and i *really* didn't!

GRACEON

serves her right -- such a fucking asshole

RUBEN

do you think she's gonna do something to me now?

GRACEON

well, look....

REELER

uh duh, of course she is

*Reeler settles into an old, beat up living room chair. Maybe it's higher up somewhere it gives him status*

RUBEN

WHAT WHAT DO YOU MEAN OF COURSE SHE IS

GRACEON

Reeler

REELER

what, literally every time someone has ever done something bad to Sindy she goes after them, hard.

and any time someone has fucked up her hair?? those motherfuckers aren't seen again

GRACEON

okay, not *every* time

RUBEN

Yeah! Like there was the time in 3rd grade where Turbo got gum stuck in Sindy's hair and she was like fine about it.

REELER

If by fine you mean she literally crushed his hamster to death in her hand and then made his parents believe that he was the one to do it thereby sending him to a reformatory school for the next 6 years....then yeah she was *totally* fine about it

RUBEN  
What!

GRACEON  
REELER

RUBEN  
I THOUGHT TURBO KILLED HIS HAMSTER

REELER  
we all did

GRACEON  
REEL. ER.

REELER  
Dude, I'm just being real, what do you want?

RUBEN  
okay i didn't see Cindy in Math after lunch, do you think she went home?

REELER  
well honestly --

GRACEON  
DUDE.

REELER  
*he* is asking. kid has the right to know

GRACEON  
ruben....

RUBEN  
....what happened to her

REELER  
well....apparently she tried washing the milk out in the girl's bathroom sink but it didn't work so then her and mandy just went to the nurses and were up there for like, i don't know an hour? crying until her dad came and picked her up

RUBEN  
WHAT. BUT I DIDN'T --! I DIDN'T --! NO!

REELER

Bro, you *soaked* her hair in chocolate milk. That's like punching her in the heart.

RUBEN

I didn't mean to!!!

REELER

Accidental or not, the milk exploded from your hand. Your responsibility

RUBEN

Do you think she's gonna spread a rumor about me?

REELER

Probably. I mean isn't that always the way she takes people down? Spreads something about them that turns the whole school into thinking they're some time of violent or weird freak?

GRACEON

Dude!

RUBEN

oh my god

REELER

I'm really just being honest. If you're afraid of the truth I can't help you. Sindy's hair is her crown, she won like beauty pageants with that thing as a kid, right? It's like, *the* thing her mom is proud of her for....

RUBEN

her hair?

REELER

beauty pageants with kids are weird man, i don't know.  
i mean beauty pageants are weird, but –

GRACEON

how do you know that? i've never heard sindy talk about her mom

REELER

at the winter concert last year, her mom came up to me and just like....started talking. yeah, i don't know, it was very weird.....but she spoke almost entirely about sindy's hair. just how....yeah just like how amazing it was, how glamorous it made her, how many judges complimented it....

GRACEON

woah. that's crazy that she told you that

REELER

yeah. so

RUBEN

well i didn't know that!!

REELER

you do now

RUBEN

Frick!!! Well I don't want the whole school thinking I'm some weirdo!!!!

REELER

okay crazy that you don't care about her possibly actually hurting you at all

GRACEON

You don't know though! Rube!

RUBEN

WHAT

GRACEON

No, do not yell me.

RUBEN

AGH

GRACEON

Ruben.

RUBEN

I'm like frickin' nervous, okay!

GRACEON

Wait, okay my mom was talking about this thing that might help you.

RUBEN

Which mom, Eleanor?

GRACEON

Genie.

RUBEN

Is she the smart one?

GRACEON

Yes, Ruben, she's the smart one.

RUBEN

okay, good.

GRACEON

She said

if a thing is making you scared, and you can't like, change the situation, but you can change your like, *thought* about the situation. Right?

So instead of thinking of it like she's gonna be mean to you, or spread a rumor, or like, hurt you, maybe....like think that she's....umm....i don't know. Like that it's....

Hmm. Yeah. wow. sorry, yeah I don't know.

REELER

hahaha dude, what kind of advice was that

RUBEN

WELL THAT DIDN'T HELP

GRACEON

wow i really thought i would come up with something by the end of that, that was so unhelpful i am so sorry.

RUBEN

REELER

REELER

nah nah nah you're not yelling at me, either

RUBEN

SORRY

REELER

what do you want?

RUBEN

HELP

REELER

okay, go talk to her

RUBEN

i'm sorry, what.

REELER

just go talk to Sindy. apologize. You know you hurt her, right?

RUBEN

but i didn't mean -- !

REELER

Cinnamon face! Look at me

RUBEN

Cinnamon -- ?

REELER

You did.

Whether you meant to or not.

All you can do is apologize and go from there

RUBEN

but what if she's still angry

REELER

then she's still angry, but there's no point in worrying about it if you don't even know maybe she just wants you to acknowledge it, you know? like own that it was a mistake

RUBEN

hmm. okay

GRACEON

wow that's....

yeah, that's really smart, yeah

i back that plan

you think you can do that, Rube?

RUBEN

yeah....

yeah.

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### 3. RUBEN and SINDY. The playground.

RUBEN

hey Sindy....

SINDY

Oh, hey Ruben!

RUBEN  
oh, uh....hey

SINDY  
Hey guy, what's up?

RUBEN  
oh, no, are you okay?

SINDY  
What?

RUBEN  
you seem....are you like super mad at me?

SINDY  
Ruben. Ruben! Come on.

RUBEN  
i just wanted to like -- I'm really sorry -- about the milk, if that's what you're mad about.  
Because I know you're hair is like, super....nice

SINDY  
Right right.

RUBEN  
i like didn't mean to, obviously! And it was dumb, i just thought people would laugh and calm down if I like exploded the milk onto *myself* but like....well like, i messed it up -- obviously -- and it....went on you, and i *didn't* want that to happen! like really i didn't....and i just feel really bad about it and feel like you might think it was on purpose? or....either way i'm just really, like *really* sorry....  
your hair looks nice.

SINDY  
Yeah, my mom took me to get it done yesterday.

RUBEN  
well, it's nice!

SINDY  
Omg  
thanks :)!

RUBEN

Okay.

Do you wanna like....respond or anything at all? To what i said? Like very much feel free to do that

SINDY

Ruben, no, omg i'm good! hahahaha.

RUBEN

Y -- yeah, sure! So, we're okay? The two of us are like -- like are you still mad?

SINDY

No no, for sure, we're -- yeah. Mhmm.

:)

RUBEN

Are you saying yes?

SINDY

Same page.

RUBEN

Same...page...

SINDY

For sure! Same page.

:)

RUEBN

o....kay

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4. *SINDY, PLATO, MANDY. Cindy's house.*

SINDY

i'm gonna fucking ruin him.

PLATO

Oh wow, alright.

SINDY

I just don't know how badly yet.

MANDY

Well, what do you mean how badly?

SINDY

Like do I just make him feel guilty by making him feel ashamed and embarrassed or do I want him to like get so outcast that he never feels like he can talk to anyone again? And how long do I make him wait before doing it? Do I do it quick? Do I draw it out?

PLATO

jesus, sindy, what?

MANDY

Well, but like what if you let this one....slide? just because -- !

SINDY

(accusatory)

Mandy, what.

MANDY

w - what

SINDY

what are you trying to say

MANDY

No! like, I'm just saying like, do you *have* to like make him feel like....awful? you know? or can you just like just make him feel....like, bad....I guess I'm asking if you can just make him feel guilty like you said. so yeah -- instead of like....hurting him or whatever.

SINDY

Mandy, literally what are you saying.

MANDY

Nothing nevermind.

SINDY

Okay, good.

PLATO

So what exactly are you planning on doing?

SINDY

Finding some sort of dirt on him is the easiest.

PLATO

no yeah i know that's like your thing or whatever, but like how? like who are you gonna talk to?

SINDY

I just have ways of finding things out about people.

PLATO

That's cryptic.

SINDY

Well yeah it's meant to be :).

PLATO

okay

SINDY

What?

PLATO

What do you mean what? I didn't say anything.

SINDY

You looked like something.

PLATO

We always look like something, that doesn't make sense.

SINDY

well you looked like you had something to say

PLATO

Someone once told me you lie about the stuff you say about people.

SINDY

who

MANDY

wait, really?

PLATO

You haven't heard this? You've been friends // with her longer than I have

SINDY

It's! Okay, yeah, hi. Yeah, like yeah, sure, sometimes I can make stuff up? So?

MANDY

Wait, like what have you made up about?

PLATO

You've never asked her about this?

MANDY

I'd never heard // about it

SINDY

Girls, I'm right here! You don't have to talk about me like I left.

PLATO

I wasn't

MANDY

We weren't. What stuff  
have you made up?

SINDY

Okay like, Jesus, like spotlight on me or whatever!

Yeah, I'll *try* and find dirt on someone, yeah. And usually I do! But, yeah, like, if I can't find anything then yeah, I'll just like, make it up. Or like if I do I'll usually find something and then I'll just like expand on it, you know? But, okay, it's like, always in line with their personalities, and you'd be surprised how many of them react like it's true. I read people pretty well, honestly.

PLATO

Isn't that like, wrong?

SINDY

what, being good at reading people?

PLATO

lying, Sindy.

SINDY

not if they deserve it, no  
and i don't go after anyone unless they deserve it  
if someone fucks with me, am i not inclined to fuck with them back?

MANDY

Will you then at least tell me if the thing you use for Ruben is made up or not?

SINDY

Why? Part of the power is no one knowing for sure if it's true.

PLATO

Well then people can just think you make them *all* up. I mean you might have.

SINDY

Excuse me, Billie *was* actually french kissing her dog.

PLATO

Yeah, okay sure.

SINDY

And Chrystal's mom was actually in midget porn.

PLATO

you're not....i think that term's outdated

SINDY

i'm just saying not everything I say is lies. you're making me out to be some like cold-hearted psychopath

PLATO

what? i'm literally not doing that

MANDY

But like if I asked you to tell me which it was for Ruben, would you?

SINDY

Mandy, why do you wanna know so badly? Don't you trust me?

MANDY

Just whatever, would you?

SINDY

Are you like, actually asking?

MANDY

Just -- yeah, answer the question!

Would you?

SINDY

Mandy, is this about stinky Ruben or is this about us now?

MANDY

What are you doing? You're getting weird.

SINDY

*You're* getting weird.

PLATO

Would you tell *me* even if you wouldn't tell her?

MANDY

Wait, you seriously *wouldn't* tell me?

SINDY

Holy shit calm down I didn't even say that!.....

Like....yeah, sure, if you *really* wanted to know like, yeah I could tell you, but then you like really couldn't tell anyone else, for REAL.

MANDY

Well yeah, obviously of course, of course.

PLATO

....

SINDY

Plato?

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5. *PLATO AND SOCRATES. The riverbank*

PLATO

hey, sorry that took me so long

SOCRATES

you're fine. i actually like when people are late to stuff cause it lets me be quiet in the space for a sec

PLATO

i feel like you know all the cool little hidden spots

SOCRATES

i really like wandering

PLATO

hey, i brought you an orange.

it's like -- sindy's mom got it from the farmer's market so it's like really really good

SOCRATES

oh, woah, you know i fuck up an orange. thank you

PLATO

a secret spot in exchange for a secret orange

SOCRATES

:)

so there's gonna be this big bonfire in the dumpster on Park Street friday night, behind the Applebee's if you wanna sit up on a hill and watch? should be really fun, and the fire with the stars will probably look amazing

PLATO

you know this from....// homeless network?

SOCRATES

homeless network

PLATO

right.....so.....you just like, get told when they're gonna like, burn the city?

SOCRATES

well

*(starts eating the orange)*

i mean we talk about everything. mostly they just talk about their lives and experiences and like, hopes and regrets. like, a loot of regrets. a lot of pain. neglect. i mean lot of love too. like, a lot of really....but yeah, the homeless are like, an extremely organized community and so, yeah, they let me know when there's gonna be any sort of noise they think i might like to know about.

PLATO

wow that's....you're like....very cool

SOCRATES

*[looking out]*

you are too.

PLATO

okay well clearly not like homeless network cool

SOCRATES

well you're not me, are you

PLATO

no, i'm me

SOCRATES

and i'm nowhere *near* being cool like you

PLATO

like -- ! dude, that's....

haha i am *not* --

oh wait!! shoot! wait, ugh, mandy and sindy and i are supposed to watch....oh i don't remember the name, but we're all gonna watch a movie friday night

SOCRATES

oh....okay, cool.

PLATO

dang it that sounded so nice!! i just shouldn't bail on them cause I'm still new to the friend group, you know?

but there'll be more fires right? there's always more to burn

SOCRATES

yeah :)

so you're like....yeah, huh, you're really becoming friends with them

PLATO

oh, uh....yeah! yeah, i don't know,

i just uhhh, yeah i've been helping....

sindy needed my help with something and so i've been helping her

that just lead to us hanging out more and....she just started opening up more....

yeah, i don't know! it's nice....being her friend

SOCRATES

she doesn't really seem like the type to open up

PLATO

yeah, i mean, that's what i thought too

SOCRATES

no like, i *know* she's not the type of person who opens up. like psychologically i know there's no way she just started opening up to you

PLATO

oh cause....

SOCRATES

cause i read people. like, very well

like how i know you're lying

PLATO

that's....i started uh....look, i just found out some stuff that can be done when astrally projecting and she really wanted my help to do that so i've just been like, training her i guess

SOCRATES

and you're trynna tell me Plato isn't cool

PLATO

that's not cool! that's just like....i don't know. that's just me

SOCRATES

you've never invited *me* to astrally project

PLATO

i would! i just....yeah i don't know, it's weird!  
it's complicated

SOCRATES

either way, being used for something is very different than being someone's friend

PLATO

well, like....does it matter? either way, we're hanging out, right? and she's nice to me

SOCRATES

uh, yeah? it very much matters. a friend actually cares about you. you're just service to her

PLATO

oh....woah....that was....

SOCRATES

what?

PLATO

mean?

SOCRATES

oh

PLATO

yeah....  
like, sindy and i are friends.

SOCRATES

no....you're not?

PLATO

okay....

SOCRATES

i'm not saying like --

*Plato's cellphone rings.*

*SINDY comes on with her own phone to her ear, she stands and looks out to audience.*

*The other two both look towards her.*

PLATO

Oh, sorry.

SOCRATES

No, that's okay, take it.

PLATO

I just wanna make sure it's not like // an emergency or anything

SINDY

YEAH AHM

PLATO

okay, sorry, just --

*PLATO answers her phone*

PLATO

Hey

SINDY

Hey, girl! Do you have a sec real quick? I gotta tell you something *crazy*.

PLATO

Oh, uh....yeah, sure.

SINDY

no, like, come over here

PLATO

oh, alright

*PLATO walks over to SINDY. She whispers something in her ear.*

PLATO

Oh. uh, What?

SINDY

Yeah, no, for real, i like *just* found out. Isn't that crazy??? But like promise me you don't tell anyone, okay???

PLATO

Okay, uh yeah, sure  
...Is that....is that all?

SINDY

What's up?

PLATO

Was that the only reason you called me or do you wanna like -- ?

SINDY

Omg so sorry I have to run I'm getting like....chased by a dog!

PLATO

wait Sindy what are // you even saying

SINDY

Bye!!!

*SINDY goes off.*

*PLATO walks back over to Socrates.*

SOCRATES

What?

PLATO

nothing,  
she's just....definitely weird sometimes

SOCRATES

i'm sorry about what i said. i didn't mean to make it sound like she's using you. even if she....is....using you....

PLATO

....like, do you have something personally against her or something?

SOCRATES

No. She's just...dangerous wildfire energy. I don't mess with dangerous wildfire energy. Some people can and thrive on messing with those kinds of people....more power to them. It just doesn't work for me, and i know that, so....

PLATO

*\*sigh\**

Well, she "knows" something about Ruben.

SOCRATES

Oh. Is she making up or is it true?

PLATO

i don't know. i hope she's making it up

SOCRATES

Is it bad?

PLATO

It's worse than bad. It's weird.

SOCRATES

Oh fuck.

Like how weird?

-----

6. RUBEN, GRACEON, REELER, PLATO, SOCRATES. Minutes later. The basketball court. Graceon has the ball.

PLATO

Hey.

GRACEON

Oh, hey guys.

RUBEN

What's wrong?

SOCRATES

Ruben....

RUBEN

What?

*(sees it in their eyes)*

Wait. no. No no no no no no. What. WHAT IS IT

SOCRATES

First, take a deep breath, Ruben.

RUBEN

What did she say about me!

*SOCRATES and PLATO look to each other.*

REELER  
just say it.

PLATO  
Ruben you need to understand we know that this may not be true but --

RUBEN  
WHAT IS IT

PLATO  
She's like.... *\*sigh\**  
she's saying you stick your toes in peanut butter

*beat.*

RUBEN  
WHAT

REELER  
what.

GRACEON  
wait

SOCRATES  
She's saying you like to stick your toes in peanut butter  
Chunky peanut butter, specifically

RUBEN  
BUT THAT'S -- BUT --  
WAIT GUYS I DON'T DO THAT

GRACEON  
yeah duh of course you don't

REELER  
is she saying he gets some sexual thing out of it?

RUBEN  
NO BUT FOR REAL I HAVE NEVER EVER DONE THAT IN MY WHOLE LIFE

GRACEON  
ruben, we know

PLATO

she didn't say. just that you like... *\*sigh\** like, *really* like doing it

RUBEN

BUT I DON'T

REELER

that's what a rumor is, buddy

RUBEN

OH MY GOSH GUYS I HAVE NEVER –

*(begins slowly pacing)*

THAT IS SUCH A WEIRD THING TO SAY WHY WOULD SHE EVEN SAY THAT

SOCRATES

she's a dangerous genius

RUBEN

NO GUYS BUT LIKE -- MAN, PEOPLE ALREADY THINK I'M WEIRD LIKE YOU NEED TO -- UGHHHHH NOOO NOW THEY'RE GONNA THINK THAT I'M SOME LIKE FREAK!!! WHOO STICKS HIS -- OH MY GOSH GUYS I'M FREAKING OUT I'M KINDA FREAKING OUT A LITTLE BIT

SOCRATES

Ruben, take a breath.

RUBEN

I CAN'T I'M LIKE ACTUALLY FREAKING OUT A LITTLE BIT

GRACEON

you really think telling him to breathe is gonna work?

SOCRATES

ruben, breathe

RUBEN

I FEEL A LITTLE LIKE MY CHEST IS ON FIRE I FEEL LIKE MY FEET AND MY CHEST ARE LIKE -- OH MY GOD GUYS I THINK THIS IS IT I THINK I'M DYING YOU GUYS

PLATO

We think you should go to the principal.

*Everyone, including Ruben, stops cold.*

RUBEN

plato, what.

REELER  
wait, *that* worked?

RUBEN  
plato be real

PLATO  
I'm being very real. We think you should go to the principal and tell her that Cindy is spreading rumors about you.

SOCRATES  
Ruben, this is beyond our friend group. Cindy took this to a new landscape and now it's war. If you meet her on that field you will not make it out. An adult is the only way you're making it out of this.

RUBEN  
wait, you both think this?

SOCRATES  
We do.

PLATO  
I mean plus, the school like *just* had that anti-bullying jump rope campaign, right? It would be borderline delusional of them not to take this seriously. It's actually like, perfect circumstances for you to be able to end this.

RUBEN  
NONONONO I DON'T WANNA END THIS

REELER  
what, yes you do

RUBEN  
NO BUT I DON'T WANNA END HER LIKE, JESUS THIS ISN'T A WAR

SOCRATES  
Ruben, yes.

RUBEN  
SOCRATES NO

SOCRATES  
Ruben! Yes.

RUBEN  
SOCRATEEEES NOOOO

GRACEON  
RUBEN!

*Ruben looks over to Graceon like a sad little puppy dog*

GRACEON  
You're getting whiney.  
Socrates is the smartest person we know. Just listen to them.

*Ruben slumps his head to look at Socrates.*

RUBEN  
okay talk

SOCRATES  
Whether you like it or not, this is now a war. You can either deny that those are the circumstances and wait until you're six feet underground or you can end this thing before it's even begun. Sindy is smart. Like, *really* smart. And I just....we just don't think you'll be able to outsmart her if you start exchanging blows. We think this, before anything has really happened, is the one opportunity you have to totally extinguish this thing. And it'll mean going to the principal and telling them everything.

RUBEN  
everything?

SOCRATES  
yes ruben, everything

RUBEN  
....  
okay but what if....i mean, won't that just make her more mad for telling on her?

SOCRATES  
ruben your only other option is trying to deal with this head-on by yourself

RUBEN  
oh....hmm

SOCRATES  
which i am -- ! Ruben, NO, I am NOT SUGGESTING --

RUBEN  
i think i'm gonna talk to her first.

SOCRATES  
RUBEN NO

GRACEON  
yeah uh....

PLATO  
Wait, like ask her for permission to tell the principal?

REELER  
That's a fucking dumb idea, Ruben.

PLATO  
Yyyyeah, sorry but definitely don't do that.

RUBEN  
No -- ! Well I'm not just gonna tell the principal if she like -- I wanna give her a chance to like, apologize and take it back, you know?  
And -- ! Okay, well like in wars don't -- isn't there sometimes, like usually a soldier or someone who like, goes to the other side and is like "You wanna call it off?"

PLATO  
yeah but that soldier usually dies i'm pretty sure

RUBEN  
okay but not always!

PLATO  
like....kind of always

GRACEON  
ruben she's telling people you stick your toes in peanut butter, she is not going to apologize

RUBEN  
*(begins pacing)*  
AGGGHH CRUD I FORGOT ABOUT THE PEANUT BUTTER

GRACEON  
Ruben don't get whiney again.

RUBEN  
EVERYONE'S GONNA CALL ME BUTTER BOY OR SOMETHING SHOOT

GRACEON  
Ruben.

RUBEN  
AND WHY WOULD ANYONE EVEN SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT LIKE --

*GRACEON gets in Rubens way and outstretches her hand to stop him, cold.  
Like a truck thumping into a brick wall.  
She catches him with both hands on his arms and looks at him*

GRACEON  
look at me

RUBEN  
okay ow

GRACEON  
it's okay  
look at me  
breathe

RUBEN  
breathing

GRACEON  
you understand why going to the principal would be the best option?

RUBEN  
*(grumpy child)*  
like....no

GRACEON  
okay, do you understand why going to the principal would be the *safest* option?

RUBEN  
ugh....yeah i guess

GRACEON  
and even knowing that you still want to talk to her?

RUBEN  
yes!

GRACEON

even though she outsmarts you in like....and don't take this personally --

RUBEN  
okay i won't

GRACEON  
outsmarts you in like, every way?

RUBEN  
okay....i think i took that a little personally

GRACEON  
ruben

RUBEN  
yeah!!! like....yeah!  
i don't know  
i would just rather try talking to her and seeing if she wants to apologize  
if i tell her that it really hurt me, you know?  
i mean *i* apologized to *her* when i found out i hurt her, right?

GRACEON  
right

REELER  
i mean, i'm pretty sure you apologized when you found out she might hurt you

RUBEN  
oh, so i should also make her think that i'm gonna hurt her?

REELER  
N -- are you serious?

RUBEN  
Yes? What?

PLATO  
No, Ruben, if you're gonna do this, *just* say that it hurt you a lot and you want her to apologize

SOCRATES  
yeah only threaten her if she doesn't back down

PLATO  
or just don't....you know what nevermind

REELER

yeah absolutely do not threaten her, ruben

RUBEN

okay,

thanks guys.

i really think this is the best move

SOCRATES

strategically it's really not

RUBEN

well i haven't made it this far off of strategy

SOCRATES

yeah, that's....true

REELER

i hope you live through it

RUBEN

i appreciate that

REELER

pretty sure she'll kill you, though

RUBEN

Really good support, thank you for that as well.

SOCRATES

we'll be here if anything goes wrong

RUBEN

thanks,

but i got this.

-----

7. *RUBEN. Outside the school bathrooms*

*MANDY comes out. Sees Ruben. Basically has a heart attack.*

MANDY

**ohmygodruben**

RUBEN

Hey Mandy! Was uh, is Cindy in there too?

MANDY  
ohmygod**RUBEN**

RUBEN  
Hi!

MANDY  
rubenohmygoshwhyareyouhereyoulikeliterallyscaredme!  
my fricken HEART is going,  
ha!  
what's....up?

RUBEN  
I just wanted to uh, well okay -- I just wanted to talk to Cindy about all the stuff she's been....the stuff she's uhhh said? the rumors? and I just know you guys usually end lunch in the bathrooms so i was waiting here for you guys to uh come out and uhhh, yeah....

MANDY  
you look like....good.

RUBEN  
i look good? what?

MANDY  
yeah like -- ! like nice! just like good nice, like a normal amount of good, like -- you know?

RUBEN  
Oh! hahaha, thanks. this shirt is actually my favorite shirt. It's like, kinda gross

MANDY  
Hahahahaha!

RUBEN  
haha I like your laugh. *\*imitates it\**

MANDY  
ohmygodisthatwhatisoundlikeimsosorry

RUBEN  
what no! It's nice! Sorry.

MANDY  
no you literally don't have to apologize i'm being a dumb, sorry

RUBEN  
no what? you're not

*SINDY comes out of the bathroom.*

SINDY  
sorry mand -- oh

....  
Hello, Ruben, What can I do for you?

RUBEN  
Hi, Sindy.

SINDY  
Weird shirt.

RUBEN  
Mandy likes it.

SINDY  
Well Mindy was lying.

RUBEN  
i don't think she was?

MANDY  
did you just call me mindy?

SINDY  
Ruben, what do you want?

MANDY  
(you literally just called me mindy)

RUBEN  
I, um,  
I wanted to know why you told people that....stuff.

SINDY  
Omg what? What stuff?

RUBEN  
The....the peanut butter thing, Sindy.

SINDY

Oh! Yeah, I *did* hear about that. That's pretty weird, honestly.

RUBEN

It was a mean thing to tell people and it actually like, kinda hurt my feelings pretty bad

SINDY

Excuse me, I wasn't the one who started it? if that's what you're implying?

RUBEN

Sindy, I know it was you....and I get it. With the milk thing and....which I feel *really* bad about. Like....but yeah then even after i apologized you still did this and....

Yeah, you know, I just wanted to let you know so that if you don't take it back and tell everybody that it isn't....true....if you don't also tell people it's not true then...you know what I'm going to go to the principal and tell her you've been telling people mean and fake stuff about me. And you'll probably get in really big trouble, honestly. So.

*Silence.*

SINDY

im sorry what.

RUBEN

But like --

No I don't have to! I don't even really want to honestly! Like if you just apologized and like told people that it was like -- that it wasn't true, then we can be cool! Like....we're not enemies, you know? I *totally* messed up and like....like I *totally* acknowledge that....but yeah. I don't think that like....fighting? or....yeah, i just....think we can....sorry, you look um, are you okay sindy?

MANDY

oh my god ruben literally what are you doing right now

RUBEN

what

SINDY

Did you just **threaten** me?

RUBEN

NO WHAT?! I was seriously just asking you to --

*WHAM! SINDY punches Ruben in the frickin' face!*

-----

8. *SINDY, MANDY, and PLATO. Playground.*

SINDY

Damn, okay, if literally either of you tries telling me that I shouldn't have punched him I won't let you come to Raging Waters with me anymore.

PLATO

Sindy, you just like, legally aren't allowed to punch people. Like it's just an actual crime.

SINDY

He was **threatening** me. It was self-defense. My mom taught me that.

MANDY

We literally *just* had the anti-bullying thing Sin, the school is like on *guard* for this stuff!

SINDY

You're both being pussies.

MANDY

Stop! You know i don't like that word....

SINDY

Pussy doesn't like pussy? Pussy afraid of her own pussy or something?

MANDY

SINDY, STOP

PLATO

Sindy, Jesus, just apologize to him.

MANDY

Literally you are being mean right now.

PLATO

If you don't, the principal is gonna find out and then like, the cops might actually get called, okay? This is real now.

SINDY

it's real NOW?! the weasel literally EXPLODED chocolate milk all OVER me, are we forgetting that?!?!?

PLATO

You gave him a *black eye*. That's like -- teachers are gonna ask about that.

SINDY

Then he'll just have to cover it up with makeup.

PLATO

Sindy, why would *he* try and cover it up?

SINDY

Because he's a dumb baby like the two of you will be if you literally tell anyone about this. He literally fucking threatened me to my fucking face!! Mandy was literally right there and heard him say it!

MANDY

I didn't want you to hit him, though.

SINDY

Sorry??? Like what?! Like I'm pretty sure you're both my friends!! Mandy, you're like my best fucking friend, sorry I literally want my friends to back me up when someone is trying to **attack** me.

PLATO

If the cops get involved you there just literally won't be anything we can do.

SINDY

Um, yes there is? You can tell people that you've been with me all day and haven't seen him at all and that he's making it up! You can tell people that his parents like, fucking hit him or something.

MANDY

you want us to lie to the police?

PLATO

also a straight up crime.

SINDY

real friends do that kinda shit for each other

MANDY

Sindy, if you *just* apologized to him he would probably be cool about everything

SINDY

mandy, you literally have no idea who we're dealing with

MANDY

....um....Ruben?

SINDY

Did you know that Ruben would start fights in preschool?

PLATO

what? sindy, no he wouldn't

MANDY

Ruben purposely gets sunburns so he can eat the dead skin, he did *not* start fights in preschool.

PLATO

how do you know that?

SINDY

In preschool he would get into fights every single day. He once a bit a kid's whole earlobe off and then he swallowed it.

PLATO

Stop, no he didn't.

MANDY

Ew! Literally shut up

SINDY

No, seriously, they had to take the kid to the E.R. You can look him up, his name is Paulo Tribunal. He moved to Arizona afterwards.

PLATO

Okay, yeah, I'll look it up.

SINDY

Do it. And also, Ruben's parents are fucking lawyers. Like both his parents are criminal lawyers, like people who get paid to make sure murderers and rapists and shit don't go to jail.

PLATO

Really?

MANDY

wait yeah they are lawyers i'm pretty sure, that is true

SINDY

Yeah exactly, so I don't want some fucking violent kid and some fucking lawyers trying to ruin my actual life, okay?

MANDY

Sindy, you're exaggerating, he's not gonna ruin your life

PLATO

and you....hit him, you know? like there should be some consequences to that i think

SINDY

Plato what??? What are you even saying right now?? Like, I know you haven't been in this friend group for forever so like -- we fucking *have* each other, okay? We've got nobody else. Our parents are fucking dumb and mean, teachers are fucking stupid, every other kid is either super fucked up or gross or weird or like, all three. And so all we have is each other, okay! And so for you to like -- for both of you to like fucking abandon me right now?! When I actually need you?! Is fucked up. and you're being awful friends. for real.

PLATO

Sindy, i'm not....we're friends with our other friends right? Aren't they our friends too?

SINDY

Not when they turn their fucking backs on us, no!! They're not!

MANDY

Sindy, calm down --

SINDY

Mandy, oh my gosh are you literally trying to make me cry right now?? Haha! My parents told me that if I get in trouble this year they aren't going to let me go to horse camp

MANDY

(ohmygosh)

SINDY

yeah.

and honestly you know, if I have to miss horse camp again I will actually fucking kill myself. And I mean that. I would like, actually fucking kill myself and you guys would be left feeling so fucking awful as to why you weren't just like, literally just a little bit of a better friend to me. You guys are my ride or fucking dies, okay? Like I **love** you. We've slept over at each other's houses. In each other's fucking **beds**! We've seen each others' toothbrushes, okay?? That is a bond. That is a bond that literally cannot be broken. Like, *jesus*, everybody just sees me as some fucking...bad or mean girl and I like don't even fucking care because I know that the two of you don't see me like that! You know? Right?

MANDY

Of course not

PLATO

Yeah....

SINDY

See? I know my fucking friends. I have good taste in friends. I fucking love you. And I know you fucking love me too. You *have* to love me a lot if you're gonna love me hahaha

PLATO

That's the aries in you

SINDY

Exactly, right! And right now the aries you love is asking for help, because honestly i'm getting...really scared and i'm feeling really....alone in this whole thing, honestly. Like everything got *very* real *very* fast. And so I need you to help me out. Literally because I love you. Because I **love** you. Okay?

MANDY

Okay.

I'm Sorry.

I really do love you, Sin.

SINDY

Plato?

PLATO

yeah?

SINDY

sorry, but like, are we still -- like, can i trust you with this?

PLATO

Sindy, of course....

Look, I really just don't want this to escalate more than it needs to

SINDY

what! literally me neither! If it was up to me this would be over literally today.

PLATO

really?

SINDY

yeah duh! i don't have like, the energy for this hahahaha

PLATO

hahahaha oh my gosh yeah me neither! ah, yeah, yeah. you can trust me

SINDY

Sweet :) and we're still meeting tonight right? To train?

PLATO

oh, for Christine?....um

SINDY  
what

MANDY  
wait, sorry what's up?

PLATO  
yeah, i was just gonna do homework and watch a movie with my mom and go to // bed early tonight just cause

SINDY  
you said that we were getting to where we --

PLATO  
well, "getting to" is not actually what i said, like you // just really wanted to

SINDY  
you *said* that i've been getting better and closer to actually doing it, right? those are your words

MANDY  
sorry, i don't -- what are we talking about? Christine?

SINDY  
Mandy, don't worry. Just some me stuff!

MANDY  
You s...? i thought we told each other everything

SINDY  
no? we absolutely do *not* tell each other everything. some things are scary for even *me* to know about myself so please don't take it personally if i don't wanna tell you, right? Plato?

PLATO  
i definitely don't think we can go full out yet but, uh... sure. i can ask my mom

SINDY  
no don't worry about it i'll ask her.

PLATO  
oh. okay?

SINDY  
and i'll bring glitter and we can draw on each other!

PLATO

oh, wait. cool, okay :)

SINDY  
yeah? :)

PLATO  
yeah whatever :)

SINDY  
don't try and hide your smile! You're excited!

MANDY  
Can // I come?

SINDY  
i love you, bitch! Oh, sorry. Um, just cause it is like a sensitive thing, can I ask that like we hang out later? Like I can sleep over tomorrow, okay? I just need to do this with Plato tonight.

MANDY  
oh, totally, yeah sure, I'll figure something out

SINDY  
Ugh, I love you girls.

MANDY  
I love you too.

SINDY  
Don't pull that shit again though, okay?

MANDY  
....yeah.

PLATO  
....yeah. sorry

SINDY  
Can you guys braid my hair.

PLATO  
....right now?

SINDY  
it's just an ask. You can always say no hahaha.

*PLATO and MANDY look at each other  
And then walk over to Sindy, start braiding her hair  
Split screen.*

-----

9. *GRACEON AND RUBEN. Playground*  
*Ruben is holding his black eye.*

GRACEON  
i am going to fucking **kill** that bitch

RUBEN  
graceon

GRACEON  
I will get a knife and stab her in her fucking neck and rub the blood all over her hair and then i will rip that hair out of her FUCKING head

RUBEN  
graceon. sorry, stop. i just....*\*sigh\** i need you to do me a favor?

GRACEON  
ruben if anyone is capable of killing her it's me. or reeler. i mean if both of us went at her --

RUBEN  
i need you to bring some makeup over to my house tonight.

GRACEON  
ruben,  
what

RUBEN  
I'm gonna walk home right now, I need you to tell Ms. Suizzo the chicken nuggets I had for lunch were undercooked, so I threw up and had to get picked up by my dad. And then when school gets out I need you to go to your house and grab some sort of makeup to cover this up. And then bring it over to my house. Please.

MANDY  
But don't you think that he'll tell people about you punching him?

GRACEON  
Ruben, why would *you* try to cover it up, you have to tell someone

SINDY

to be honest, no. I think as a person, he's just too afraid

RUBEN

because i don't want people to see it. because we're not going to tell anyone about this.

GRACEON

ruben yes we are

PLATO

do you want me to do a reading about it all?

SINDY

like a tarot reading?

PLATO

yeah, just to see

SINDY

i think i know how this plays out.

PLATO

okay. i might still do one. would you want me to tell you what i find out?

RUBEN

graceon, seriously? don't tell anybody. i feel like a wet fish or something. i feel so stupid and like....graceon my head hurts and i really just wanna go home

GRACEON

ruben.

SINDY

No. Don't bother. The kid isn't a fighter, we'll be fine.

PLATO

wait, what do you....

RUBEN

everyone said i should have just gone to the principal and i didn't! and....and then i got punched in the fricken eye!! and it hurts! it HURTS!!!! so i feel dumb! okay! i feel stupid and weird and like, i just....i just want to cover it up. i just want it.....i don't know

GRACEON

ruben, everyone.....like our friends are all....they probably already....know you got punched...

*it's quiet*

RUBEN

graceon can you bring it or not  
just tell me if you can't and i'll go steal it from a cvs or something

GRACEON

ru....yeah. okay

RUBEN

thank you. i feel like pretty lame right now and i'm sorry i know that i'm being like, super whiney

GRACEON

you're not lame  
and you just got punched, you're allowed to be whiney

RUBEN

i got punched...  
ah, t really hurts....  
And....  
Graceon?

GRACEON

Yeah?

RUBEN

I just....I don't stick my toes in peanut butter.

GRACEON

yeah, ruben, i know that you don't.

RUBEN

Okay,  
because like people are *saying* that they know I don't but I like, don't fully believe them?  
like i think people may think i do but are just saying they don't because they're talking to me

GRACEON

Ruben, I know that you don't stick your toes in peanut butter.

RUBEN

okay good  
my parents hid all of the peanut butter in the house

GRACEON

wait this got to your parents?

*RUBEN nods.*

RUBEN  
i asked where it was and they said we had peanut rats  
PEANUT RATS

GRACEON  
oh my gosh that's...wait  
why were you looking for the peanut butter?

RUBEN  
TO EAT. GRACEON.

GRACEON  
Oh okay, yeah

RUBEN  
PEANUT BUTTER IS A GOOD SNACK.  
I DO NOT STICK MY TOES IN PEANUT BUTTER

GRACEON  
Ruben, I know you don't.

RUBEN  
OKAY.

-----

#### 10. GRACEON AND REELER

REELER  
nah, I'm pretty sure the kid sticks his toes in peanut butter

GRACEON  
Oh  
okay.  
Have you like, seen him do it when you've gone over to his house or something?

REELER  
no, not like -- i've just seen him do like -- the kid does some weird shit, so i wouldn't be that surprised if he *does* actually stick his toes in peanut butter. and if he does, ya know? more power to him.

GRACEON

But it's like, *kind* of weird? right?

REELER

you and i are masses of rotting flesh slowly crawling towards our day of total decay.  
at our essence we are disgusting.

GRACEON

(*flustered*)

oh wow.

do you like read this stuff or is it -- do you just like, come up with it

REELER

it's just...

i don't know, it's just stuff I think.

GRACEON

well so like...*you're* gross?

REELER

we're all -- look, everyone's gross, and if we can't even let ourselves be gross then we're just pretending to be clean and why anyone would *pretend* to be clean in this world is fucking beyond me

hey, why are you staring at me?

GRACEON

ohgodimsosorry

REELER

no, you're fine

did i...like say something that was too crazy? my mom has told me i should watch doing that around people

GRACEON

No no no! what? It's amazing, actually. Just the stuff you say actually like makes me **think**, so -- which is *cool* because -- like it's a really good thing because it's actually like *intellectual*. Like you really like *think* about stuff you're not like -- which is really cool that I'm left here like dumb like

duhhhh

Sorry

REELER

you're -- it's okay

that's nice of you

to say

....

sorry if i'm being weird

GRACEON

You're....

Do you have a name for the bat?

REELER

my bat?

GRACEON

Yeah -- oh, I don't know if it's like, not okay to // ask about -- !

REELER

No no, it's....yeah, uh, yeah it doesn't have a name  
that would feel kinda....weird i think

GRACEON

Right, totally, that'd be so weird.

So you just carry it around because -- ?

REELER

i don't know

it makes me feel safe

GRACEON

From what?

REELER

I don't know

Why are you asking?

GRACEON

I've just

always been curious

REELER

About me?

GRACEON

Yeah -- well about your bat! Not like, *you*, like....just like, you just always have your bat....so....

REELER

It was my grandpa's. He was a baseball player,  
he's dead.

He would take me out to -- he owned a junkyard -- and he would take me out there

And we would just kinda like, beat the shit out of things  
It was really fun  
Really fun  
And then  
Uh  
Yeah, one day we were doing it and he like -- he just like died  
Just fell over  
And then  
Yeah he left me his bat  
So  
Yeah

GRACEON  
woah

REELER  
what  
what do you mean woah

GRACEON  
That's -- i'm sorry

REELER  
for what?

GRACEON  
that's -- i don't know, that's sad?

REELER  
it's not sad why would it be sad?

GRACEON  
oh yeah i don't know just that he died

REELER  
if you didn't want me to tell you why did you ask

GRACEON  
what? i didn't say i didn't want you // to tell me

REELER  
now i feel fucking dumb that i told you that story, like why did i even tell you that, that was a  
fucking bummer

GRACEON

well cause i asked you to

REELER

yeah

....yeah

sorry

i just miss him....sometimes

GRACEON

yeah

....

*(gets taken by this confession, almost possessed)*

i really like -- sometimes in the middle of the night i'll just like run around the basketball courts by my house for like 20 minutes until i feel *totally* exhausted like i'm gonna *die* so then i can lie on the ground and the earth is like -- like sweat will stream down my face and i'm like -- oh my god this is so weird -- like that the earth is like pulling me down and it's like aghhh take me, like just melting into....

yeah the earth....

that's just like....

something i....

oh god sorry

weird!

that was

that was

you just shared something and it

i just

like that's just something i've also never told anyone before

so

REELER

....

GRACEON

sorry

REELER

....

GRACEON

being weird

REELER

well --

GRACEON

i know, i'm fine

REELER

no i was gonna....

i mean everyone's weird

right?

it's why we're cool i think....

GRACEON

oh

right, yeah

REELER

yeah

I'm gonna go wait in the classroom, I think. It's really hot today.

GRACEON

okay

REELER

ummm,

yeah

like

i don't know if you'd be into it but

like,

we could smash stuff sometime if you ever wanted to

GRACEON

oh

like *us*?

REELER

yeah, like

yeah.

or whatever

look, i'm gonna go

it's really hot

GRACEON

yeah my like, arm meat is literally sweating haha

REELER

oh

GRACEON

or  
*(holds out her arm to demonstrate)*  
 like, just my arm

REELER  
 no no, that's cool

*a just TERRIBLY awkward pause*

GRACEON  
 b//ye

REELER  
 bye

GRACEON  
 yeah bye

REELER  
 okay bye

GRACEON  
 ...bye.

*REELER goes.*

GRACEON  
 UGH

-----

*11. PLATO. Classroom. REELER comes in and sits down.*

PLATO  
 Hey.

REELER  
 oh, woah, hey. I didn't know you got to class early.

PLATO  
 Really? It's me.

REELER  
 Fair enough

PLATO

Why are *you* here early?

Aren't you usually playing handball or beating stuff up behind the school with someone?

REELER

wh....no?

why would you think i do that?

PLATO

You....literally profess that you like beating stuff up with your bat.

REELER

No, why would think i was doing it *with* someone?

PLATO

Oh....uh, i don't know

Like Ruben? You....hang out together right?

REELER

yeah but he's not exactly chill right now

PLATO

Or like you might do it with....other people, i don't know

REELER

No

Shouldn't *you* be with other people?

PLATO

Um

Well everyone's usually doing something

Plus....i don't know

I kinda like being by myself sometimes

Especially after being around people a lot

It's nice

I don't have to pretend to like anyone when I'm alone

REELER

woah

PLATO

You know?

REELER

Yeah. Yeah.

hmm  
I feel like I've never actually been alone with you

PLATO  
huh  
woah  
i guess so

REELER  
I like your bow

PLATO  
Thanks  
I like your bat.

REELER  
Thanks  
Lots of crazy shit is happening with our friends.

REELER  
Yeah. I'm glad you're not involved.

PLATO  
Same to you.

REELER  
Hmm. cool

PLATO  
cool

-----

*12. PLATO and MANDY. PLATO's house.*

PLATO  
What do you think of Reeler?

MANDY  
I don't know, kinda scary, kinda cool, kind of weird  
Reminds me of my cousin a little which is also kinda cool kinda scary kinda weird, ya know?

PLATO  
Did you know tarot readings don't work on him?

MANDY

What? how can they not work on someone?

PLATO

I don't know. I usually feel this like, tingling in my hands when I'm shuffling the cards, but when I do it for him there's like literally no sensation and the cards never make any sense

MANDY

Weird

PLATO

Yeah,  
Anyway

MANDY

Anyway!

PLATO

You still want me to do it?

MANDY

YES!!!! oh my gosh are you kidding i've been thinking about this all day

PLATO

haha really?

MANDY

yes!!! omg  
Is there anything I need to like, do?

PLATO

*(sitting herself behind Mandy)*  
no, just close your eyes and breathe  
let me know if anything's ever too much  
if it feels too intensely

MANDY

okay, totally

*PLATO gets behind Mandy and starts rubbing her temples.*

PLATO

Oh wow.

MANDY

Oh wow.

*They both laugh.*

MANDY  
that feels crazy, what are you doing?

PLATO  
uh it's kind of hard to explain, especially while i'm... gimme a sec

MANDY  
oh my god

PLATO  
that's like -- wow there's a lot in there

MANDY  
oh my gosh  
like a bad a lot?

PLATO  
no just like -- there's a lot happening  
Okay, we'll go really easy to start? I'll pull you back after like 2 minutes

MANDY  
that's it?

PLATO  
yeah  
for now

MANDY  
okay okay sweet

PLATO  
ready?

MANDY  
ready

*PLATO presses into Mandy's temples. MANDY goes limp. PLATO lays her on the ground, then lays down on the ground herself. She takes a deep breath in and out.*

*The following dialogue is exchanged between their astral projections -- however that is; could just be voice-overs.  
would be dope if it was actually their astral projections but i get that that's "hard," or whatever*

*They start off echo-y and slowly come into focus after the first few lines.*

PLATO  
mandy?

MANDY  
hey girl!  
WHOOSH hahahahaha

*PLATO laughs*

PLATO  
are you breathing okay?

MANDY  
yeah! yup  
it feels really.....woah like, blue? like bright green blue or something  
emerald

PLATO  
it feels like seafoam today

MANDY  
woahhh yeah yeah  
really soft seafoam

PLATO  
yeah....  
hey,  
so do you think Sindy's going  
too far at all?

MANDY  
ummmmm  
i don't know  
I mean Sindy....ruben really hurt her, you know? and....  
I don't know  
She said this thing once and it kind of changed my mind about it all  
She said  
"I mean is it really so bad to think I deserve the best? Am I so evil for having high standards for  
myself? And for not putting up with people who don't agree?"  
You know?

PLATO  
yeah....  
she did punch ruben though

MANDY  
yeah....  
i don't know  
we've all got our own ways of dealing with things i guess

PLATO  
and you think the way she deals with things is okay?

MANDY  
woah  
I felt that question like, literally shake the space between us

PLATO  
hahahaha yeah i did too, sorry

MANDY  
yeah i don't know! i know that she's my best friend...and she's *always* had my back when the rest of the world didn't. and i've had hers when no one else had hers. and like, like i'm definitely friends with like you and reeler and graceon and you guys but, i don't know. i just love sindy, and i don't think loving her means i agree with everything she ever does? it just means that i love her, and like. always will. you know?  
wow i feel like, really clear-headed right now

PLATO  
that happens when you push out

MANDY  
is that why Sin has you push her out? is that what Christine // is all about?

PLATO  
i can't, umm, sorry  
i don't really  
she asked me not to talk about it with anyone? she made that really clear

MANDY  
oh....okay, for sure

PLATO  
Sorry...

MANDY  
it's okay! for real

PLATO

Okay,  
I'm gonna pull you out I think. It's getting a little tight in here

MANDY  
Already??? ugh whatever

*PLATO sits up, goes to MANDY, places her fingers on her temples and pulls her back into her body*  
*MANDY jolts up, gasping, brief flailing. PLATO preemptively holds her and pets her hair while MANDY sort of gasps. She's not in pain or afraid, just shaken.*

PLATO  
You're okay, you're okay. You're here, you're here. You're here  
It's really jarring to come back into your body, it just takes a few seconds for things to stop spinning, you're here now. just breathe

MANDY  
*(panting and then softly)*  
thanks

*a couple seconds of re-composure.*

MANDY  
how did you know i like having my hair stroked?

PLATO  
haha, everyone does.

MANDY  
ha  
you're...really nice, Plato

PLATO  
oh :) thank you  
you're really nice too  
i like being your friend a lot

MANDY  
me too!

PLATO  
wait me too!

MANDY  
:)

ugh, i like, hate it when our friends fight

PLATO

yeah me too

MANDY

you think it'll be over soon, though? Like do you think we'll all be friends by the time my birthday happens?

PLATO

Oh my god, by the time your birthday -- ?? Yeah I mean...that's a whole month away. I mean, as long as Ruben can just...

He's just gotta stay out of the spotlight for a little, which....

That shouldn't be that hard, right?

Right?

-----

*TRANSITION:*

*"Jerome" by Lizzo plays.*

*Lights pop to a deep purple or pink*

*The kiddos come on in slow-motion and set up the classroom*

*They move fluidly and precisely*

*They are still their characters here, still acknowledging each other: hateful eyes, suspicious avoidance, real humans. Just also moving a set*

-----

*13. ALL THE KIDDOS. Classroom. The music stops with all the lights shutting off except for a spotlight on RUBEN. Everyone else is now sitting at desks listening.*

*He's giving a powerpoint presentation with the slides projected behind him.*

*He has makeup covering his black eye.*

RUBEN

The wild hippopotamus, a presentation by Ruben Bertrum, which is me. Hello. Hippos are very large and fat animals. Males weighing between 1500 and 1800 kilograms. Not sure what that is in pounds but...females typically weigh between 1300 and 1500 kilograms so...that's smaller. Uh, they are the third biggest land mammal, after elephants and white rhinos. That fact is from Animal Planet.

Um, when hippos want to reproduce, they'll get pregnant and then the females will actually carry their babies for *eight* months and can only have one baby at a time, unlike humans who carry for 9 months and can have up to 8 children at a time. And that's from the San Diego Zoo, and also

the 8 babies at a time fact is from Jon and Kate Plus Eight -- which is a television show about a mom and a dad who had eight babies at once, so, that's...that source.  
 Uh, the period of childhood for hippos is also much shorter than it is for humans and at around 5 to 7 years old the hippo is considered a full adult. That's also from Animal Planet but it was on a different page of the website so I'm pretty sure that uh, counts as another...source  
 Um, okay, the median life expectancy of a hippo is 36 years. Human's have a life expectancy of 76-81 years. Both those are from [whatsmylifeexpectancy.org](http://whatsmylifeexpectancy.org). So that means technically we beat hippos, which I think is kind of –

*RUBEN accidentally scratches his eye and winces at having touched the bruise.*

RUBEN  
 OW.

*RUBEN freezes, he looks up, bug-eyed  
 The room goes cold  
 The lights snap up  
 Quiet.  
 Everyone looks at Cindy simultaneously  
 A very slow spotlight develops on Cindy.  
 She acknowledges the light  
 And then glares at Ruben*

RUBEN  
 Sorry! Uh, me saying that wasn't -- it's not, uh, that's not. That's not really anything. When I said ow, that was like an ow *scratch*, you know like when you like feel a good scratch, like a scratch that feels good but also kinda hurts so you say like...awwowwww....which is different than like an *injury* kind of ow. Like a bruise ouch would be like "ow!" but this was like --

*He goes to scratch his face while doing his fake ow, but it actually does hurt and he lets out an identical 'ow!' to the previous one.*

RUBEN  
 -- !  
 No! Like -- It's not like, a bad thing! or anything.....It's not like! Nobody hit me or!....anything like....  
 O\_O  
 It's just like....  
 Mr. Plum, I'm sorry can I -- sorry.  
 Should I still...finish the presentation?.....Mr. Plum?  
 I can't uh....I can't see you....Cause the lights are...Mr. Plum?  
 uh Okay. I'll just take your silence as reprimanding.  
 I'll just -- keep going? If that's okay?  
 Cindy?

O\_O

I mean -- ! Not *Sindy*! Not like this *Sindy here*!

*Sindy* didn't -- ! Do -- ! This .... -- ! UM

SORRY

SHE DIDN'T

DO

THIS

SHE DIDN'T DO THIS

SHE

—

wow

I ....!

feel....

uhhhhhhhhhh sorry

hahaha this is kinda crazy

*RUBEN starts to cry. He can't keep it together.*

RUBEN

Sorry everyone. Okay. wow i'm so sorry, I'm just totally floundering I feel like. Like a...Lemme just...

*He skips through the presentation, slide after slide about hippos. He's not good at holding his breakdown in. He lands on a slide with a video.*

RUBEN

I'll just skip to this part cause it's the most interesting. Uh, okay, so the hippopotamus has a really really really strong uh, jaw? like *really* strong, and I learned that it's able to eat an entire cantaloupe with just like, one or two bites. So this is actually a video I took when I went to the zoo...last month with my mom and dad and....

I'll just play it

Lights?

*Nothing at first. RUBEN really can't hold it together.*

RUBEN

sorry, but could someone please just get the lights it's just a little switch

*Lights dim.*

RUBEN

thank you so much

*Video plays of a hippopotamus being fed a cantaloupe at the zoo.*

*Ruben begins weeping in the dark, he's trying to muffle it but it just isn't working.*

*The video lasts about 20 seconds*

*It has sweet and funny commentary by Ruben and is kind of really nice on its own*

*It ends.*

*The lights come back up.*

RUBEN

Okay. Thank you very much. I hope you walked away with some new knowledge and a new appreciation, understanding, and respect for this giant and majestic animal.

*School Bell rings.*

-----

*14. RUBEN and REELER in the alleyway. REELER is smoking a cigarette.*

REELER

Yyyikes.

RUBEN

WHAT WAS THAT

REELER

That was the biggest yikes I've ever seen.

RUBEN

WHY DID I DO LITERALLY ANY OF THAT

REELER

Like if I could print out 10 foot tall letters that just read "YIKES" i would.

RUBEN

WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME

REELER

well, Sindy's definitely gonna think she's fucked now

RUBEN

WHAT. WHY

REELER

Dude, Plum is an idiot, but not that big of an idiot. He'll tell the other teachers that sindy like, beat the shit out of you or something and then word'll get around and in a few days you'll probably be pulled into the principal's office and asked a bunch of questions

so,

she's probably in like, nuclear mode now, yeah

RUBEN  
NOW????? WHAT DO YOU -- WHAT WAS BEFORE

REELER  
yeah i guess not nuclear? i don't know man this situation is extremely unfortunate for you

RUBEN  
SHOOT OKAY OKAY HOW DO I MAKE IT SUPER CLEAR TO HER THAT I'M NOT TRYING TO START ANYTHING.

REELER  
well i think that was your plan before and now we're here so....yeah i'd say that's not gonna work

RUBEN  
AHHHHH

REELER  
and you not wanting to get any adults involved definitely just backfired because now every teacher's gonna probably know and now *be* involved, so yeah....this is like....damn, pretty *crazily* bad wow

RUBEN  
AHHHHHHHHHH

*RUBEN abruptly takes the cigarette out of Reeler's mouth and takes a big drag. It goes horribly. He coughs everywhere, violently. While coughing, hands it back to Reeler.*

RUBEN  
Thanks.

REELER  
Anytime.

RUBEN  
im STRESSED and i feel really STUPID

REELER  
okay,  
you should go talk to socrates

RUBEN  
why?

REELER

because you'll like their advice more than mine

RUBEN

i didn't ask you for advice

REELER

yeah but you're kind of always asking for advice

RUBEN

i am not. am I?

REELER

i mean all the times we've hung out recently it's been about you and what you should do

RUBEN

wait really?

REELER

yeah, like, that's not bad or anything, you're life has been crazy, but.....

yeah i mean i just like haven't been to your house in like a couple weeks, which is a while for us

RUBEN

i know, my parents just don't really want anyone -- they said i can't have people over

REELER

what like, *because* of the peanut butter thing?

RUBEN

i mean yeah, right?! why else would they say that?

REELER

but how did this even get to your parents?

RUBEN

REELER, I DON'T. KNOW.

REELER

yeah, see, and I would just tell you to go and smash Cindy's room or something

RUBEN

yeah i don't....my hands are too soft to smash things i think

REELER

i figured

go talk to socrates

RUBEN

yeah okay. thanks for like....  
thanks for being my friend, Reeler

REELER

oh, uh, yeah man.  
thank you for being....mine.

RUBEN

you're welcome.  
sorry if that was weird, i felt like it was kinda weird

REELER

well if you knew it was gonna be weird then why did you say it

RUBEN

my dad told me to open up more

REELER

that's lame  
don't just do things because people tell you to, ruben

RUBEN

oh....right, yeah, duh.  
yes

REELER

are you going or what?

RUBEN

uh  
could i uh....

REELER

yeah whatever

*RUBEN takes the cigarette and takes one more puff.*

-----

*15. SOCRATES AND RUBEN. Riverbank.*

RUBEN

Hey Socrates! Thanks for waiting for me

SOCRATES

Were you just smoking with Reeler?

RUBEN

Why?

SOCRATES

You just really smell like it.

RUBEN

Oh, okay, well yeah we were

Just a little

Flex

SOCRATES

You know those things decay you from the inside out

RUBEN

Okay well according to you the fact that I like, take baths decays me from the inside out

SOCRATES

Well, they kind of do

RUBEN

Whatever! I need your help with Sindy, I feel like I messed things up really bad

SOCRATES

Yeah that presentation was absolutely abominable, was that on purpose?

RUBEN

NO OF COURSE NOT I'M JUST....

UGH I GOT CONFUSED AND MY MOUTH JUST KEPT MOVING AND I COULDN'T STOP

SOCRATES

Hey, I'm here for 5 more minutes and then I'm leaving for the sewers, so if you wanna ask something, ask it

RUBEN

You're going to sewers *now*??? School like just got out and I really need your help

SOCRATES

It's the only place i can write my book, and i've been making real progress. I think I'm getting close

RUBEN

You only -- you mean you *keep* your book down in the sewers?

SOCRATES

Of course

RUBEN

Isn't that likem dangerous to keep the thing you love the most in the sewers?

SOCRATES

It's not in danger, the homeless down there make sure no one steals it....

It's become...something like a bible? anyway, so

RUBEN

hahaha so then what, you're jesus?

SOCRATES

maybe....

RUBEN

that's....you know

you're kinda weird sometimes

SOCRATES

ruben you stick your toes in peanut butter

RUBEN

NO I -- SOCRATES HOW COULD YOU EVEN

I DO NOT

SOCRATES

Whatever, do you need advice or not?

RUBEN

SOCRATES THAT WAS NOT FUNNY I DO NOT STICK MY TOES IN PEANUT BUTTER

PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT

SOCRATES

ruben, jesus. yeah i know. you called me weird and so i poked at the thing you're most insecure about right now. i don't actually think you do that

RUBEN

oh okay....really?

SOCRATES

yes! ruben! move on, you have 3 minutes

RUBEN

YES! Sorry, okay. I just really want her to know that my presentation was just mefreaking out and that I really wasn't trying to get her in trouble. And that...I just want both of us to drop this, right? and move on.

SOCRATES

you....wasn't that your plan last time?

RUBEN

y -- yeah but....

SOCRATES

Ruben, you need to take care of her

RUBEN

take -- ! socrates i want this to go AWAY

SOCRATES

it's not -- ugh, ruben, you are in the midst of something that is not going to "go away"

RUBEN

socrates i'm super duper sorry but i am simply not going to accept your advice unless you tell me to do exactly what i already wanna do

SOCRATES

that's....insightful of you?

RUBEN

yeah thanks

SOCRATES

*(reluctantly)*

*\*sigh\**

Okay, well why don't you just try telling her that you don't want this go any further????

RUBEN

right?! But even when I plan out what I'm gonna say super clearly beforehand, the second i start talking to her i just get all weird and she gets mad and I get more scared and confused and then end up just making it worse

SOCRATES

yeah, then --

RUBEN

Socrates I am not telling an adult!

SOCREATES

*\*sigh\**

text her then, at least you can plan it out that way.

RUBEN

Jesus I don't have a *phone*, Socrates!!

Plus, I don't want evidence that I ever reached out to her in case it goes badly, you know?

And the internet lasts forever is something

that I learned

SOCRATES

that's actually -- i mean the internet *will* only last as long as humans last

RUBEN

well what does that....

SOCRATES

I'm just -- *\*sigh\**

Ruben, one last time, I really do think you need // to take --

RUBEN

NOT UNLESS IT'S ALREADY WHAT I WANNA HEAR

SOCRATES

*\*SIGH\**

WRITE HER A NOTE.

RUBEN

A note?

SOCRATES

Yeah, you can think it through so it isn't flustered, it's not on the internet so it can't be traced back to you, and especially if we both mix our handwriting, it'll be untraceable.

Plus you can still be fully transparent and say you really don't want to cause any more problems

RUBEN

Wait

that's really smart

SOCRATES

Ruben that is not what i think you should do, I think that will go really badly, I am literally *only* saying what I know you --

RUBEN

Up up up! Just take the compliment!

SOCRATES

*\*sigh\**

kay, thanks, Ruben

*HE hugs THEM.*

SOCRATES

AH

*Socrates instinctively punches him in the throat*

SOCRATES

o, o

gosh,

dang, sorry about that

RUBEN

*[gasping]*

why would you

why would --

*\*breahtes\**

OW

SOCRATES

you really need to ask before physical touch

RUBEN

my bad

SOCRATES

i gotta go. look, write a draft note tonight, let's meet tomorrow morning and write the final together and then slip it into her locker

RUBEN

roger

SOCRATES

great.

are you... gonna -- ?

RUBEN

*[still just in so much pain]*

yeah i'm just gonna hang here for a while

SOCRATES

okay for sure....is it cause i punched you in the throat?

RUBEN

definitely a little bit, but you're good

SOCRATES

okay....

uh hey....

you know you're allowed to....be....mad....right?

*a pause.*

-----

16. *SINDY and MANDY. Stairwell.*

SINDY

okay so i'm fucked, right?

MANDY

i mean, hard to say. like, Mr. Plum was definitely asleep during *at least* half of the presentations so he truly may not have seen it.

SINDY

But even still, like nobody's *that* clumsy, right? Ruben was very obviously trying to *call me out* in hopes Mr. Plum noticed, right?

MANDY

well ruben is the kid who danced so hard in the school musical that he peed himself onstage.

SINDY

Oh yeah. Wasn't he playing like a fruit?

MANDY

a strawberry, yeah, he was really good

SINDY

But like that seemed *so* calculated, right? Almost maniacal. Like to do it during a presentation? He had everyone's full attention, including the teacher, he knew I couldn't interrupt him and defend myself, he fuCKING APOLOGIZED TO *ME??* IN FRONT OF *EVERYONE????* LIKE WHAT

MANDY

yeah, that *was* really weird, you're not wrong

SINDY

i mean that's like me level thinking....  
gosh okay so should i just like,  
i don't know be honest with me should i just like,  
kill him or something?

MANDY

no! what?!  
sindy, no, do not kill ruben.

SINDY

I bet he's just like, in love with me or something

MANDY

Oh...okay....that doesn't mean you won't get in trouble if you killed him

SINDY

Jesus, what, are *you* in love with him or something?

MANDY

WHAT ARE YOU -- NO

*pause*

MANDY

Literally what, you're not saying anything

SINDY

oh my god  
mandy.

MANDY

WHAT

SINDY

lower your voice, it's not polite :)

MANDY  
sorry

SINDY  
\*sigh\* Mandy, I'll level with you.  
Ruben is a sweetheart.  
He's weird and really very gross, but he is a sweetheart.  
I get why you would have a crush // on him,

MANDY  
SINDY I DON'T

SINDY  
mandy.  
and I want you to be happy. your happiness *is* my happiness and that's for real. I have no  
problem with you being happy.  
What I do have a problem with is that if shit hits the fan and the building above our heads comes  
collapsing down it sounds like you might dive to save Ruben before you would dive to save me.

MANDY  
I mean I'd probably just run out of the building to save myself.

SINDY  
Mandy. If **shit** goes **down** I need to know that you will be behind me no matter **what**.  
Mandy, jesus, at least look at me.

MANDY  
sorry

SINDY  
damn.  
Can I trust you or not?

MANDY  
yes

SINDY  
okay. I can see in your eyes that you're lying.  
So because you just lied to me you don't get to come to raging waters with me next month

MANDY  
WHAT, SINDY--

SINDY  
I'm not done.

Don't lie to me.

That being said, I just want you to think long and hard, I mean *really think* about whether you want some smelly and gross 11 year old boy over the girl that has known you for like, most of your life and would literally kill a bitch for you. Like literally.

MANDY

Okay.

SINDY

Cause if you lose me you are not getting me back. I mean that.

MANDY

Yeah.

SINDY

And, not to be grim or anything, but where would you really be without me?

*This makes Mandy look to Sindy*

*What?*

SINDY

You know?

*Mandy looks back down, contemplating*

*She decides.*

MANDY

Okay so for now, how about we keep a close eye on Ruben,  
Start talking to all the teachers about all the community service we're involved in  
Try....and find any more dirt that we could....use  
And if he seems to be showing any sign of an attack we....attack...

SINDY

:) That sounds really great  
And plus, I've already got worse dirt if I need to use it

MANDY

what. worse than peanut butter?

SINDY

oh way worse than peanut butter. i found so much shit on him when i went looking,  
but you can't use all your ammo at once <3

MANDY

do you....know stuff about me?

SINDY

mandy, i know stuff about everybody  
that's the point

MANDY

that's....kind of scary, right?

SINDY

what? why? i'm not going to use it! it's literally just like a security blanket i can have around me because i have so many fucking trust issues with backstabbers. you know. so i just need to know if my back was against the wall...if i'd be okay, you know? it's not personal

MANDY

but....don't you trust me?

SINDY

mandy i....of course  
but people....have been really mean in the past and....

MANDY

but i've never....done anything mean to you

SINDY

yeah no i know....  
just makes me a good friend to keep close you know?

MANDY

i wanna keep you close just cause i love you, though....

SINDY

i love you --  
it was a joke, girl!  
jesus, we got all tense! i love you! you're my ride or die, queen!

MANDY

:) no, you are

SINDY

you're god damn right i am!  
now let's go spy on this little fuckin' tadpole!

MANDY

totally!  
and i'll be like total ninja! super secret! ya know?

SINDY  
 ooooo yeah  
*super secret*

MANDY  
*(hits a pose)*  
 super secret.

-----

*17. RUBEN. On his front lawn writing the note.  
 MANDY is across the block.*

RUBEN  
 Mandy? Mandy! Is that you?!

MANDY  
 ....NO

RUBEN  
 that's -- ! Yes it is, you just said no!  
 Hi!

MANDY  
 ohmygodshootme

RUBEN  
 I didn't know you lived so close to me.

MANDY  
 yeah i was just....yeah i was just going to the store

RUBEN  
 Wait, no i'm pretty sure you live like 40 minutes away, why are you --

MANDY  
 just! out on a walk and got lost :)

RUBEN  
 Oh, ok! can you come closer so I'm not like, yelling across the street at you!

MANDY  
 ok! i'll just....

*MANDY crosses the street.*

MANDY  
and now i'm over here!

RUBEN  
yay!

MANDY  
yay!

.....

RUBEN  
Hey!

MANDY  
Hi Ruben

RUBEN  
How are you?

MANDY  
Great, Ruben. You look -- how -- you're great.

RUBEN  
What?

MANDY  
I...I don't know

RUBEN  
hahaha yeah....  
Do you wanna sit on my lawn?

*On the word 'sit' Mandy sits down next to Ruben.*

MANDY  
Thanks

RUBEN  
Are you alright? you look scared i think?

MANDY  
I'm not

RUBEN  
You're shaking i think?

MANDY  
No.

RUBEN  
I feel weird, like kinda nervous?  
I think?

MANDY  
what why

RUBEN  
I don't know, i just feel kinda....weird right now....you're really close to me

MANDY  
*(getting up quick and taking steps away)*  
oh my god sorry! // you had just said to sit!

RUBEN  
it's -- ! it's okay!

MANDY  
*(trying to change the subject)*  
What are you writing?

RUBEN  
Oh -- !  
a uh, a note.

MANDY  
Oh jesus, are you gonna tell on Sindy with that?

RUBEN  
No! NO! **Actually** when you see her can you *please* tell her that I'm sorry and I'm really not trying to escalate this???

MANDY  
Okay....

RUBEN  
Reaaly!  
Shoot, do you think I'm trying to do something too?!?!

MANDY  
You want my advice?

RUBEN  
NO! I ask for advice too much, so no, I can do this on my own.

MANDY  
Okay

RUBEN  
AGH Yes what do I do!!

MANDY  
just  
really stop fucking with her

RUBEN  
MANDY NO I AM NOT AT ALL TRYING TO --

MANDY  
i know i know i know ruben.  
but....sindy's not one to forgive easily. that's just....who she is  
so the milk was....and then....yeah, if you want my opinion i don't think she should have hit you  
that is what i think but then....  
ruben your hippo presentation really messed with her

RUBEN  
WHAT I -- AH I JUST WANTED TO TALK ABOUT HIPPOS

MANDY  
either way, i just  
ruben  
*are* you planning on attacking?

RUBEN  
MANDY I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO --  
NO

MANDY  
okay  
cause she's really like, i think a really genuinely good person, you know?

RUBEN

NO totally! that's the thing like, sindy's really cool, i've always -- we were friends, you know?  
we ARE friends like, yeah, i mean i've always liked her

MANDY  
wait, like *like* her?

RUBEN  
what,  
like  
*like* her?

MANDY  
yeah....?

RUBEN  
NO OH MY GOSH NO NO NO.  
no no no I'm just saying I really don't think she's a bad person...or anything

MANDY  
ohhhh okay cool. for a second I thought that you were writing like a love note or something.

RUBEN  
wait, to you?

MANDY  
what?

RUBEN  
That this is a love note to you?

MANDY  
wait,  
what?

RUBEN  
what?

MANDY  
ruben oh my god what are you saying

RUBEN  
this is not a love note.

MANDY  
oh

RUBEN  
sorry. SORRY.

MANDY  
what? it's fine!  
i'm just....  
goodbye for now.

RUBEN  
oh, okay. bye, Mandy

MANDY  
wow  
i like how you say my name when you say goodbye

RUBEN  
I like your name! Mandy. Bye, Mandy!

MANDY  
oh my gosh what, bye Ruben!

RUBEN  
hahaha bye mandy!

MANDY  
Ruben!!!!

RUBEN  
Mandy!!!!

MANDY  
oh my gosh stop!!!!

RUBEN  
Mandy Mandy Mandy!!!!

MANDY  
Literally I'm going!!!!

RUBEN  
Okay Mandy!! Bye Mandy!!!!

MANDY  
BYE

RUBEN  
Okay!

-----

18. *PLATO and MANDY. Top of a hill at night, Plato's looking through a telescope at stars.*

PLATO  
wow so you're like  
in love with him.

MANDY  
NO.

PLATO  
no, i think it's sweet

MANDY  
is it  
obvious?

PLATO  
i mean, to everyone but him apparently

MANDY  
shoot, i like him so much  
and i feel like i can't tell sindy at all...  
but also like she so clearly knows and is upset AGH  
WHY DO I HAVE FEELINGS

PLATO  
Come look at Mars, she's super clear right now

MANDY  
i mean it like burns inside me  
when i think about him  
and his nose  
and his  
UGH  
the sweat that he gets on his forehead in PE  
i like....  
feel it....  
it burns like hot fire in my bones

*beat.*

PLATO  
wwwwait, what

MANDY  
have you ever liked someone that much?  
so much that it burns?  
it burns to not have them?

PLATO  
uh,  
no not really.  
Do you wanna see Mars or...?

MANDY  
but have you ever like,  
really loved someone before?  
just so much that it hurt?

PLATO  
i mean i think i've had like....a crush, yeah

MANDY  
but did it **ache**, plato?  
did it  
i mean did it feel like  
AGH feel like -- i need to like, scratch or **rip** something  
god i feel like i need reeler

PLATO  
okay steer clear of my telescope please and thank you

MANDY  
i don't mean it literally

PLATO  
you....seem pretty literal

MANDY  
Noooo, come on.  
I don't know I just like him!

PLATO  
Look, I really just think you should come look at Mars.

MANDY

and i can't even talk about it with – !  
sindy really doesn't -- nevermind, sorry.  
nevermind

PLATO

Wait what? Are you okay? Sindy what?

MANDY

....Sindy just...doesn't want me to like him because she's afraid that if shit hits the fan that i'll like turn to him instead of her and that's like, fair! she's had a lot of people turn their backs on her before, you know?

PLATO

um....yeah, that just,  
well it does just sound like you really like him, you know?

MANDY

yeah but i also really like Sindy, like I fucking **love** that girl

PLATO

yeah, no totally, I....  
but if you like him....like why would you liking him mean that you wouldn't like her? or couldn't like her? like if liking him makes you happy shouldn't she want you to be happy?  
isn't that what friends....? I don't know, right?

MANDY

y....like i said  
she's....she's been through a lot  
and i think it means a lot for her to have someone like me  
and i....  
i don't know  
everything's really complicated  
being 11 is hard

PLATO

yeah seriously

MANDY

Can I see Mars?

PLATO

:) yeah please do

*MANDY goes up to the telescope and looks through. It's absolutely glorious.  
The light of the stars shines on both of them. It's heavenly. A moment from a dream.*

MANDY  
Oh my gosh?  
Oh my gosh, Plato

PLATO  
Yeah.  
) Yeah

-----

*19. SOCRATES and RUBEN. Sindy's locker. There's no slot to put the note through.*

RUBEN  
Hurry up, okay? She gets to school early and I really don't want her to see us doing this.

SOCRATES  
Yeah okay but there doesn't seem to be anywhere to put the note in.

RUBEN  
What? No, there like, legally *have* to be air slots on it somewhere.

SOCRATES  
That's definitely not a law.

RUBEN  
But people keep like rabbits and bugs and like, you've seen movies where people get stuffed into lockers. How could // that be a thing if they weren't able to breathe inside?

SOCRATES  
Well yeah, there are these *little* slits but it doesn't fit // through these.

*SINDY walks up, stops cold.*

SINDY  
oh my god.

RUBEN  
oh no no no

SOCRATES  
Sindy

SINDY  
oh my absolute god

RUBEN  
sindy, we're just --

SINDY

you're bReaKiNG InTO MY LOcKEr!!!!?

RUBEN  
SINDY NO

SINDY  
OH MY GOSH YOU'RE LITERALLY TRYING TO BREAK INTO MY LOCKER TO BE  
ABLE TO BLACKMAIL ME?!?!?!?!?!?

SOCRATES  
Sindy there is no evidence that we are trying to do that

SINDY  
BITCH I'M SEEING YOU WITH MY OWN TWO EYES RIGHT NOW

SOCRATES  
No Sindy, we were just trying to leave you a treaty note that Ruben wrote. Look,

RUBEN  
i really tried to --

SINDY  
I WILL NOT TAKE YOUR  
LITTLE RANSOM  
NOTE YOU WEASEL.

RUBEN  
No!! It's not a ransom note!! And I'm not a weasel!!!! It's saying // how I *don't* want to make  
this like, a big thing!

SINDY  
LITERALLY STOP. You know I was actually gonna like try and make up? Do you know that? I  
was ready to forgive you. But you just made it personal, you little fucking insects

SOCRATES  
Sindy, you are acting irrationally now. We are showing no sign of threat to you.

SINDY

Shut up, you wanna lose your book?

SOCRATES

W...Excuse me?

SINDY

You think I wouldn't know about the thing you love the most? You think just cause you're some freak who reads 300 words a minute you're the most powerful person in our friend group?

SOCRATES

Okay, Sindy? You are aware that you have now blackmailed, threatened, and assaulted Ruben? You do know that if we took this to court you would actually be behind bars faster than you could feel regret?

SINDY

Yeah see it *definitely* sounds like you think you have more power than me

SOCRATES

I don't deny the truth, Sindy

RUBEN

hey Socrates whatcha doin'

SINDY

Is that a threat?

SOCRATES

Only if you hear it as one.

SINDY

You think i can't tear you down too? The sewers?

RUBEN

Socrates?

SOCRATES

all you do is terrify people. i have never seen you have a single friend who actually likes you for who you are

SINDY

shut UP you little fucking WORM

SOCRATES

and you make everyone think that they need you so badly but in reality *you're* the one who needs *them*

SINDY  
SHUT UP

*SINDY pushes SOCRATES. A moment.*

SOCRATES  
Assault

SINDY  
I WILL END YOU

RUBEN  
guys, please

SINDY  
*(to Ruben)*  
WHAT, YOU GONNA FUCKING CRY, LITTLE PIGGY?

RUBEN  
no

SINDY  
OINK FOR ME

RUBEN  
what

SINDY  
OINK FOR ME YOU LITTLE FUCKING PIG

SOCRATES  
Ruben don't you dare oink for her

RUBEN  
okay

SINDY  
DON'T LISTEN TO THEM. I CAN **RUIN YOU.** OINK FOR ME

RUBEN  
no

SINDY  
**THE HOLE IN YOUR CLOSET, RUBEN**

RUBEN  
.....sindy

SINDY  
The hole. In the bottom. Of your closet.  
oink for me.

RUBEN  
oink.

SOCRATES  
*(betrayed)*  
ruben

SINDY  
We used to be friends. Remember that?? When I could TRUST you both?! Copying each other's homework? Now you're all making me fight for my god damn life!!!! You wanna see me fight, bitch?!!! I will destroy you!!! I will burn you and your existences so badly that even your ashes will erupt into weak little nothing puffs of penis smoke!!! FUCK!!! YOU!!!

-----

20. RUBEN AND SOCRATES. Outside the principal's office. Ruben's been crying.

SOCRATES  
What. the fuck

RUBEN  
I just don't understand how it keeps getting worse

SOCRATES  
How is it that *she's* the one who threatened *us* -- like she's the one who literally broke multiple laws -- and *we* get suspended for 5 days!!!

RUBEN  
I am so sorry, socrates  
this is all my fault

SOCRATES  
she's a full wildfire

RUBEN  
i don't know how it's possible i keep messing up so badly

SOCRATES

and how can she possibly know all that stuff!

RUBEN

she's sindy  
she just knows

SOCRATES

i think i gotta head out.

RUBEN

your parents aren't coming?

SOCRATES

my parents don't pick up the phone  
i'm going to the sewers

RUBEN

wait what, why

SOCRATES

i am gonna tear that bitch down  
and i need to plan

RUBEN

no! literally Socrates please don't, i just want this to be over!

SOCRATES

ohhhh, ruben. I am going to tell you something. Look at me.

*He does. He wants to cry.*

SOCRATES

You cannot let yourself get walked over for the rest of your life.

RUBEN

no, please don't pep talk me right now.

SOCRATES

Ruben!

I know you, and I know what kind of a person you are, and the truth is that if you don't change how you act people just walk over you for the rest of your life and then you'll find yourself in your 60's feeling some hollow sense that you spent your life living for other people instead of for yourself. And you'll slip into an existential depression and live your remaining years in the worst kind of psychological whirlpool imaginable.

RUBEN

You...I'm getting freaked out

SOCRATES

Now we have been playing cold war for the past couple of weeks but she? She just launched a nuclear missile at us. And it fucking hit. And millions of people are **dead** and **misplaced** and **traumatized** and **poisoned**. And *you* are the president of this country!!! So what are you going to do?! Are you going to let your people wail and bleed in a ruined country?? Throw your hands up and say "oh well, hopefully next time they'll be nicer?!?! Or are you going to launch a full fucking ballistic airstrike on that maniac!!!

RUBEN

*(weeping)*

Socrates. I can't keep hurting people. I'm just such a screw-up.

SOCRATES

*(grabbing Ruben's face and getting right up in him)*

No. Ruben look at me!!!!

RUBEN

oh my goodness you're so close to me i'm highly over-stimulated

SOCRATES

She has taken an enormous, steamy shit on everything you're worth -- on your **dignity**  
Doesn't it feel like someone took a big shit on you

RUBEN

it doooees

SOCRATES

And you wanna stand up for yourself, don't you?

RUBEN

not really

SOCRATES

Ruben!! Yes you do! You wanna stand up for yourself, don't you!!!

RUBEN

socrates, no, i really don't

SOCRATES

Ruben you are the product of billions of years of evolution!! You are the culmination of literally trillions of life-and-death situations in which your ancestors gritted their teeth and swallowed

their own blood and fought back!!!! They persevered and won!!! Behind you stands an entire lineage of battles won! Of fighters! Their fight, their wisdom runs through your very DNA, so don't you SIT there and tell me you don't wanna stand up!!!!

RUBEN

i like

could stand up i guess

SOCRATES

So then stand up, Ruben

RUBEN

socrates come on, we're in the main office of the school

SOCRATES

Stand up!

*RUBEN stands.*

SOCRATES

And put your hands in the air!

*RUBEN half-assedly puts his hands in the air.*

SOCRATES

All the way!

*All the way up.*

RUBEN

this just doesn't feel like the place where --

SOCRATES

Now say "I am worth fighting for"!

RUBEN

Socrates //....

SOCRATES

Say it!

RUBEN

i am worth fighting for

SOCRATES

**mean it**

RUBEN

I am worth *fighting* for

SOCRATES

MEAN IT

RUBEN

i am worth figHTING FOR

SOCRATES

THERE YOU GO

RUBEN

I AM WORTH FIGHTING FOR

SOCRATES

SAY I AM THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

RUBEN

I AM THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

SOCRATES

I WILL NOT SUCCUMB TO WEAKNESS

RUBEN

I WILL NOT SUCCUMB TO WEAKNESS

SOCRATES

WITH THE STRENGTH OF ALL THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE ME

RUBEN

WITH THE STRENGTH OF ALL THOSE WHO....

SOCRATES

CAME BEFORE // ME

RUBEN

CAME BEFORE ME

SOCRATES

BECAUSE YOU'RE WHAT?

RUBEN

BECAUSE I'M WORTH FIGHTING FOR

SOCRATES  
AND WHO ARE WE GONNA TAKE DOWN

RUBEN  
WE'RE GONNA TAKE DOWN SINDY

SOCRATES  
BECAUSE SHE'S A WHAT?

RUBEN  
CAUSE SHE'S A....REALLY BAD AND MEAN PERSON

SOCRATES  
RUBEN I'M GONNA NEED YOU TO SWEAR

RUBEN  
I'M NOT GONNA DO THAT FOR YOU

SOCRATES  
OKAY THEN JUST SAY I AM WORTH // FIGHTING FOR AGAIN

RUBEN  
I AM WORTH FIGHTING FOR!!!!

SOCRATES  
GREAT!  
NOW WAIT FOR MY CALL  
And stay alert,  
From now on, we are 24/7  
Sindy is in full fight mode  
And we are the trenches, Ruben.

*SOCRATES goes off. RUBEN is left standing there, arms up. Awkward. HE sits down.*

-----

*21. PLATO and MANDY. Plato's house. They are astrally projecting.*

PLATO  
You breathing okay?

MANDY  
it's like yellow-ish smoke? does that make sense?

PLATO

yeah it absolutely feels like yellow honey smoke, like sunrise haze

MANDY

ugh can't we just stay in here forever?

PLATO

sometimes i wish i could, yeah

MANDY

but like, can we? like what if we just never went back

PLATO

oh yeah we -- it's hard to explain but essentially your...essence would like dissolve away from your body and you'd never be able to find your way back

sorry, that was weird

are you okay?

MANDY

ummm yeah

i just wish i didn't have to....go back hahaha

PLATO

yeah....

MANDY

okay, my birthday party is on Saturday, right?

PLATO

right

MANDY

And like everyone's gonna be there which is really cool cause like you only turn 12 once and it's a big year and you know, we haven't all hung out as like, a group, in so long

PLATO

but we're kind of in the middle of a war

MANDY

yeah....and i really thought this would be over by now and...you know what! i feel like nobody is on my side. like everybody wants me to just dump sindy and leave her behind and like no one is *hearing* that i like, i love her!

PLATO

i'm...i definitely have been hearing you say that

MANDY

yeah, i know

ugh, i don't know

i just feel like we've all changed

i just want it to go back to normal

PLATO

yeah i don't know, i still think this'll all pass eventually

MANDY

okay but like **what** is Christine!!

like can you just tell me that!

PLATO

N...Mandy, no? No, that hasn't....

No

MANDY

Plato jesus come ON

PLATO

she's really trusting me with // a lot and i don't wanna

MANDY

please, she trusts me more anyway

PLATO

i'm not....? competing? i'm just // saying that she's trusting me with a lot

MANDY

i'm not *competing* i'm just // saying that she

PLATO

and plus you were the one -- you know, if you love her so much shouldn't you like respect that boundary she set? you know?

MANDY

b -- ah, i can't -- i can't really breathe

PLATO

oh my god what? oh shoot shoot shoot

*PLATO sits up and runs over to Mandy, presses her temples*

*MANDY wakes up, gasps, pretty violently.*  
*PLATO holds her*

PLATO  
 Are you okay?

*MANDY is panting*

PLATO  
 Sorry sorry, breathe. Shoot, I'm so sorry, I got distracted and I just -- god I'm so sorry. You're here, you're here, you're here now. You're here now, in this body, in this place. You're here, you're here

*MANDY can't speak yet, just gasping*

PLATO  
 yeah, just breathe, just breathe

*PLATO strokes her hair*

*SINDY walks in the room*  
*She looks a little bit disheveled.*

SINDY  
 hi your mom let me in

PLATO  
 SINDY OH MY GOD

*The scream shocks Mandy to an absurd degree.*  
*Agony. Lemon juice and sand on an open wound.*

SINDY  
 MANDY OH MY GOD

PLATO  
*(to Mandy)*  
 OH NO SORRY SORRY SORRY

SINDY  
 WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER

PLATO  
 NOTHING NOTHING // WE WERE

SINDY  
 SHE'S SHAKING WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU DO

PLATO  
NOTHING WE WERE JUST PROJECTING // AND SHE STAYED IN FOR

SINDY  
WHAT? THAT SHIT IS DANGEROUS WHY ARE YOU DOING THAT WITH HER

PLATO  
YOU AND I DO IT ALL THE TIME IT'S JUST // SOMETHING WE STARTED DOING

SINDY  
WE DO IT FOR A *REASON*, NOT FOR FUCKING FUN

PLATO  
WAIT wait stop **yelling**, she needs quiet

SINDY  
fucking freak

*beat*

SINDY  
you are not about to kill my best friend.

PLATO  
sindy what, i'm not trying // to – we were having a

SINDY  
shut up. you are not going to hurt her, okay?  
you help me, and i appreciate it, but this is dangerous and  
and i don't know  
what you are

PLATO  
sindy, jesus  
you can't just break into people's houses  
by the way

SINDY  
i didn't, your *mom let me in*. i did not break into your goddamn house

*MANDY moans and groans.*

SINDY  
mandy's literally trying to speak, shut up

MANDY

hi

SINDY

hey mandy, are you doing okay?

MANDY

yeah

it's just bright

SINDY

you wanna go back to your house? and make hot chocolate and plan your birthday party?

PLATO

she really shouldn't go anywhere // right now

SINDY

let her answer

MANDY

mmp

SINDY

yeah? i can walk us there?

PLATO

those weren't words

SINDY

yes they were, oh my god will you stop questioning our friendship?

mandy do you wanna come with me?

MANDY

mhmm

SINDY

mhmm? Are you saying yes you want to come with me? Some people aren't believing you.

Make noise for yes if you want to come with me

MANDY

mm

PLATO

okay.

do you need anything?

*MANDY reaches her arms up to Plato.*

PLATO  
you --  
you wanna hug?

MANDY  
*(nods)*  
mhmm.

*They hug.*

SINDY  
Okay!  
ready?

*MANDY is helped up, takes Sindy's hand.*

SINDY  
i gotcha girl

PLATO  
Did you....Sindy,  
did you do something to your hair?

SINDY  
No.

PLATO  
It looks....different

SINDY  
It's humid  
Plus you're one to talk

PLATO  
*(noticing her)*  
Are...you doing okay?

SINDY  
why are you asking me that

PLATO  
because....we're friends? friends ask friends if they're okay

are you okay?

SINDY

*(genuinely considers saying no)*

yeah,

duh

:)

we're gonna go

PLATO

okay, be gentle

SINDY

of course

thanks

*MANDY stops and turns*

MANDY

sss --

See you saturday?

PLATO

For your party? Yeah, of course

Rest, okay?

MANDY

thanks.

love you

PLATO

you too

bye sindy

SINDY

bye

*PLATO goes to say "Love you" to Sindy but doesn't.*

*They both wait for the other to say it.*

*Neither of them do*

SINDY

See you Saturday

PLATO

Yeah, see you Saturday.

*SINDY and MANDY go.*

-----

22. *SOCRATES and RUBEN. The sewer.*

*Socrates is meditating.*

RUBEN  
Socrates?

SOCRATES  
Sit

*RUBEN sits.*

RUBEN  
I can't believe you actually invited me to your sewers.

SOCRATES  
Quiet

RUBEN  
Oh, sorry

*It's quiet*

SOCRATES  
Listen,  
There is nothing outside of ourselves.  
Everything that exists we experience is a mirror.

RUBEN  
o....uh-huh

SOCRATES  
Our experience of the world is a reflection of ourselves.  
We see ourselves in all things. People kill people because they share something one of them can't stand having in common.  
People fall in love because they see a part of themselves that they think deserves to be worshiped.  
We are ego-centric, self-driven **animals**. We muddied the waters with modern thought and philosophy and examination, but at our cores, you and I are animals.

RUBEN

gosh it really smells like poop down here

SOCRATES

You are simple.

That is *your* beautiful thing.

Sometimes I wish I could be as quiet as you,

As unaware as...

You are wild and you are free and you are boundless and you are dirty

Yet you always stay as simple as a quark

RUBEN

um....

SOCRATES

I analyze. I decipher. Calculate and contextualize. I am burdened with understanding.

RUBEN

i don't know what any of those words mean, Socrates

SOCRATES

IT MEANS I AM STUCK AND YOU ARE THE **FLOW**, RUBEN.

IT MEANS WHAT MUD I HAVE IN ME IS SPRING WATER IN YOU

AND WHAT BLIND BRUISES YOU HAVE I CLEAR OVER WITH FRESH BERRIES

RUBEN

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING

SOCRATES

*(grabbing Ruben by the collar)*

she took.

my book.

RUBEN

your....

SOCRATES

she took my book from me,

from right underneath me

RUBEN

wait like, *the* book? the one you've been writing since 2nd grade?

SOCRATES

it's gone, ruben

RUBEN

how did she...how?

SOCRATES

i don't. know

i was here last night

i was writing

i was -- Ruben it was close

i was close

to finishing

i was at 850 pages

850 pages

and then

it was so fast.

i heard a sound

i knew it was pointed towards me

so i got up

and took

four steps

four steps towards the sound

and

then a cold wind just blew passed me

and i

i turned

and dove for the book

but it wasn't there anymore

she took it

stolen it from me.

Ruben I have had dreams about that book.

I have seen prophecies.

That book holds within it revolution, it holds progress. It holds new ways of thinking and being and -- and -- aND IT WAS **MY** FUCKING BOOK!!!! THAT I'VE BEEN WRITING FOR SO

LONG!!!

WHAT THE FUCK KIND OF WITCH -- I MEAN WE ALL **KNOW** I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THAT BOOK FOR FOREVER AND SHE JUST -- I MEAN WHAT DOES SHE EVEN WANT IT -- SHE KNOWS I WORKED SO HAAAARRD ON THAT BOOK RUBEN -- THAT BOOK HAS MY EVERYTHING IN IT, IT HAS MY HEART!

RUBEN IT HAS MY HEART!!!

I WANT my book back Ruben!!

I want my book back.

I just want my book back.

*SOCRATES sobs into Ruben's arms.*

*RUBEN doesn't know what to do*

RUBEN  
socrates, jeez, i'm so sorry

SOCRATES  
why would she....what's going on ruben?

RUBEN  
i...don't know i  
i don't know, sorry

SOCRATES  
I'm sorry. I'm sorry

*SOCRATES composes themselves.  
Ruben wants to tell them to be messy and cry but doesn't have the words for that at this point in his life yet*

SOCRATES  
Gosh. That was pathetic. Sorry.  
Okay, listen to me, Ruben. Cindy is showing signs of preparing for an all-out warfare attack at Mandy's party. Everyone will be gathered under one roof and she knows that terrain better than any of us. If we refuse to attend we'll look like the villains; she has lethal information on all of us, and now she has my most prized possession. Do you understand?

RUBEN  
Socrates i've gotta be honest, the smell of poop has really been dominating my attention this conversation

SOCRATES  
but it's okay!! Because I understand! You see? I know what we need to do.

RUBEN  
Okay...

SOCRATES  
It means we're going to have to go dark until the party. Expertly. And Cindy could have eyes anywhere. She could have made even our most trustworthy parties resign their loyalty with talk of blackmail. Do you understand?

RUBEN  
I -- not really?

SOCRATES

Do you trust that I will get you through this, Ruben?

RUBEN

ummmm, I think so. Yes?

SOCRATES

And you know that **you** don't know what to do, right?

RUBEN

right

SOCRATES

But I do, right?

RUBEN

r....yeah

SOCRATES

Okay,

*SOCRATES hands Ruben an iPhone*

SOCRATES

I need you to make a call.

RUBEN

A call?

*GRACEON enters, she's in her home. RUBEN watches her come on.*

*Her phone is ringing, SHE answers it even though Ruben hasn't even put the phone to his ear yet.*

GRACEON

Hello?

*All lights out except for a spotlight on Graceon and another on Ruben with Socrates standing behind him.*

*Ruben puts the phone to his ear.*

RUBEN

Hi

*A pause.*

GRACEON

Hey Rube,  
What's up?

RUBEN  
*(looking back to Socrates first)*  
I...need to see you tonight.

GRACEON  
Um...okay? Like, you wanna come over?

RUBEN  
N...No.  
Meet me in the alleyway behind the Whole Foods at  
10 o'clock tonight.

GRACEON  
Ruben, what? My -- Why?

RUBEN  
I just need to talk to you.

GRACEON  
You can just come over to my house, Ruben.

RUBEN  
*(looking back to Socrates, who shakes their head)*  
I  
I don't think that's such a good idea.

GRACEON  
Okay....Are you, um, okay, Ruben?

RUBEN  
I am.  
Why?

GRACEON  
We....well I haven't like, seen you since after your hippopotamus presentation and....it just  
seemed really intense, so I wanted to give you space but....now I'm worried I like, should've  
been....because maybe you really weren't doing well and I've just been feeling like maybe  
I...haven't been the best...friend through all this so I just.....like are you....okay, I guess?

RUBEN  
Uh.  
Yeah. I'm okay, I think.

GRACEON

Okay, I mean is there anything you wanna do?

We could just watch a movie tonight and eat popcorn? Does that sound fun? Or

Is it just

You just wanna meet behind whole foods?

RUBEN

Y -- Yeah. At 10 would be great. Thanks.

GRACEON

Ruben why are you being so weird?

RUBEN

I'm not! It's important to me, okay?

GRACEON

O...okay

*Ruben hangs up.*

*Graceon does so after.*

*The lights of the stage wash up.*

-----

23. GRACEON, RUBEN, and SOCRATES. *The Alleyway Behind The Whole Foods*

GRACEON

Hey! Ruben. Oh, sorry, is that -- Socrates?

SOCRATES

Hello, Graceon.

GRACEON

Hey. What's um -- how are you?

SOCRATES

I'm awake, yeah.

GRACEON

Cool, um,

Ruben, what's going on?

RUBEN

Everything is fine, Graceon. But um.

*(breathes)*

*[the rest of his speech sounds very rehearsed]*

I am officially going to war with Cindy and // in order to accomplish this I'm afraid

GRACEON

oh, jesus, ruben

RUBEN

that i'm going to have to cut you out  
of like, my life.

GRACEON

....You're....What?

Ruben what?

RUBEN

*(reciting)*

You and I are

very good friends and I...acknowledge that, but unfortunately you bring out  
a sort of *rambunctious* side of me, and seeing as one wrong move will get me killed and I'm very  
clumsy already I'm // going to have to

GRACEON

Ruben what are you saying

you don't even know what rambunctious means

RUBEN

Graceon, please

GRACEON

No, Ruben, you can't just say you're like, *cutting* me out of -- Ruben literally, what???

RUBEN

I'm just saying at least until this war is over // we can't speak to each other as

GRACEON

Is this -- Is this some bullshit Socrates is feeding you? Are you fucking brainwashing him?

SOCRATES

I'm not forcing him to do anything

GRACEON

Jesus Soc, you don't know us! Ruben, I care about you! They do not *care* about you!!!

SOCRATES

You don't know what I am.

GRACEON

Ruben, I asked you how you were and you --!!!

RUBEN WHAT. WHAT ARE YOU SAYING RIGHT NOW

SOCRATES

You have a lot of shit pent up inside you that you need to deal with.

and to be honest, you're not dealing with it effectively, and we both think that at some point all of that stuff inside will burst outside and destroy everybody close to you

and we can't have Ruben in that right now, it's too dangerous.

Because we know he'd drop everything to save you.

So you're a liability.

GRACEON

what? That's -- you're fucking gross. This is gross,

ruben

what?

RUBEN

I don't know, it's -- i don't know, i'm really scared Graceon,

this has been like the worst month of my whole life

GRACEON

Ruben my -- fuck you, my fucking parents got divorced this week and you didn't even ask

RUBEN

what?

GRACEON

I have literally -- i have always been your fucking friend ruben what the fuck is wrong with you

what are you doing

RUBEN

wait i'm sorry i didn't know // about your parents

SOCRATES

ruben stop she's manipulating you

GRACEON

i'm

what?

SOCRATES

*(right in her eyes)*

manipulating. him.

*GRACEON sprints at Socrates, yelling*  
*RUBEN jumps in front and gets punched in the fucking nose*  
*He drops to the ground*  
*Everyone's quiet*  
*He looks up and blood is gushing from his nose.*  
*Graceon drops to the ground, hand hurt.*

RUBEN  
 ohhhhh my gosh

SOCRATES  
 You see?

GRACEON  
 owwwwww

RUBEN  
 ow

GRACEON  
 that's not what i --

SOCRATES  
 but it's what you did

GRACEON  
 SHUT. UP. oh my god what is happening

SOCRATES  
 we think it would better if for now you and ruben didn't talk  
 just until this blows over

GRACEON  
 oh my god no no no no no no no no fuck no no no  
 ruben i  
 i'm  
 fuck you!  
 fuck YOU!

*GRACEON runs off, holding her hand*  
*RUBEN is still in shock*

SOCRATES

Let's take care of your nose, okay?

RUBEN

oh my god that hurt  
that hurt a lot

SOCRATES

i know  
but you're breaking a habitual way of being to try and change a result  
that can hurt

RUBEN

right

SOCRATES

so come on, little warrior boy, let's go get ready

RUBEN

warrior boy, haha

SOCRATES

let's go warrior boy

*THEY go off together*

-----

24. GRACEON. *The basketball courts.*

*SHE runs on. Stops.*

*Is panting.*

*Pacing.*

*Stops.*

*Does 10 push ups.*

*Does 10 crunches*

*Does 10 burpees*

*Sprints back and forth across the court*

GRACEON

fuck

*Runs in place really fast*

*Nothing's working*

GRACEON

FUCK

*SHE starts grabbing at her body, almost unconsciously  
Grabs at her arms  
Slaps her arm  
It feels like something  
Slaps her stomach, chest  
Face  
Ribs  
Starts scratching*

*REELER comes on, sees her. She doesn't see him.  
Panic  
HE runs off  
She's still going, beating and drumming on herself*

GRACEON  
fuckfuckfuckfuck. Fuck i don't know what's -- fuck!

*REELER comes back on with a big empty cardboard box and throws it down  
SHE hears and looks at him, still scratching herself a little bit  
HE runs over to her and hands her his bat*

REELER  
*(panting)*  
don't do that  
what you were....  
um  
just please  
go hit those boxes

*A single moment of processing  
And then Graceon UNLEASHES A TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR OF SWINGS AND WAILS onto  
the box  
Cronos would beg for its mercy  
Reeler has never seen anyone smash something like this before*

*GRACEON tires  
Feels like 20% better*

*We just hear her panting, she walks around*

REELER  
Sorry

GRACEON  
for what

REELER  
i didn't know what else to do

GRACEON  
yeah  
fuck

REELER  
i don't know um  
sorry

GRACEON  
shut up  
that was really  
helpful  
thank you that  
thanks

REELER  
i don't --

GRACEON  
....  
i'm gonna go

REELER  
um  
wait  
we can like just hang?

GRACEON  
you wanna....hang?  
you wanna *hang* right now?

REELER  
sorry

GRACEON  
dude, stop

REELER  
i wanna say stuff but i really don't know what to say

GRACEON  
i feel  
gross

REELER  
we're all gross

GRACEON  
yeah i know

REELER  
i don't know what to say

GRACEON  
then just  
stop talking

REELER  
....

*A pause.*

GRACEON  
can i ask you something  
stupid?

REELER  
yeah

GRACEON  
Mandy's birthday party is on Saturday, yeah?

REELER  
uh, yeah

GRACEON  
can you like -- sorry.  
ugh

REELER  
you don't have to talk about it if you don't --

GRACEON  
everyone's being fucking stupid and mean and it'd be cool to know i had a friend there

that's all

REELER

oh

GRACEON

yeah see

that was fucking dumb

REELER

yeah, i'll -- yeah

GRACEON

look, do you like me? i mean do you **like** me?

REELER

....

GRACEON

...listen, i asked it, so

REELER

....

GRACEON

gettin' fuckin' radio silence though, that's rad  
i still can't really breathe, man

REELER

i don't....

i don't....

uh

this is gonna sound...weird

GRACEON

it's fine, i figured you -- it's cool i just needed --

REELER

no i don't know if i like

anyone....

*pause*

REELER

not like....like i *like* you

you're....cool  
you're super cool  
but  
yeah i don't know  
i don't really know  
i don't know if i...  
like people  
that way

GRACEON  
okay  
sure, okay

REELER  
yeah  
sorry  
thanks

GRACEON  
yeah  
you're welcome....

....  
you wanna keep smashing stuff?

REELER  
please, wow  
always let's smash stuff

GRACEON  
i've got you

REELER  
i've got you

GRACEON  
...fuck yeah

*Smiling,  
They go in to clasp hands  
And when their hands meet:*

-----

*TRANSITION:*

*“Tempo (feat. Missy Elliot)” by Lizzo comes on. Lights go red. At 0:09, the entire rest of the company comes on from the wings, slow-motion, and sets up the birthday party.*

*They are again, in character and are feeling the way they actually do about each other while setting up the party. Glances, scoffs, avoidances, being afraid of, all of it is happening.*

*The Birthday Party. Balloons, confetti, signs, a rug, anything you like. there just has to be a long dining table that all the kiddos sit down at at the same time. The moment their butts hit the seat, the music stops and the lights switch to the birthday party.*

-----

*25. ALL THE KIDDOS. Mandy’s House. Her 12th Birthday Party. Sindy is dressed up, but she doesn’t look very good. Her hair is all over the place. Her screws are coming loose. All the Kiddos have presents for Mandy in front of them. They differ in size, wrapped-ness, sleekness, etc.*

SINDY

 Bum ba dum BUUUUM 

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome!! I am pleased to officially welcome you to our evening of festivities and fantasias celebrating the humble Mandy’s exiting from the little age of 11 into the strongly built age of 12!! Though 11 has held so much joy and so much love, we are excited to see what is on the horizon.

MANDY

*(genuine)*

Yeah, thanks for coming, you guys :)

*Silence.*

SINDY

clap.

*They all clap.*

SINDY

Very good.

REELER

Jesus, this is tense.

SINDY

AHEM! The first order of business is this: As it is Mandy’s birthday party we request that in order to keep the mood uplifted and light, at least until the festivities begin, that guests only speak in compliments.

RUBEN

....what?

GRACEON

look, guys, i know there's a lot going on between us but i // think

SINDY

COMPLIMENTS. ONLY. GRACEON. your enthusiasm, however is *greatly* appreciated  
(^\_^)v

GRACEON

o.... *\*sigh\** okay

PLATO

Um, Mandy, I really like your house. It's uh...really big  
And the floors are like, noticeably clean.

MANDY

Thanks, it's cause the housekeepers came today.

PLATO

Oh, that makes so much sense for you.

SINDY

Perfect! Now I'll go! Reeler!

REELER

Hey, Sindy

SINDY

I am *so* glad you brought your bat.

REELER

weird thing to say, i feel like

SINDY

I mean it! It looks like it's shining more than normal! Did you clean it?

REELER

uh, yeah actually, for special occasions I will uh...polish it.

GRACEON

it's actually pretty fun

RUBEN

what, you like did it with him or something?

GRACEON

-- ?

oh hey, i didn't know that we were talking again

*a pause.*

*ow.*

SINDY

Yyyikes!

GRACEON

*(nothing?)*

ookay?

SOCRATES

*(rising)*

Mandy!

MANDY

Oh okay, hi Socrates!

SOCRATES

I wanted to thank you for opening your home to us all. It is quite beautiful indeed. Artworks from throughout time. Mirror-clean floors. I especially like the stone fountain of cupid out back.

MANDY

Aw thanks!

REELER

wait you have a *fountain*? What?

SOCRATES

It is a depiction of Cupid, no? The fountain?

MANDY

To be honest I have literally no idea

SOCRATES

Yes, Cupid! The mischievous little child who gives the humble human life a good tossing around just to feel in control. Speaking of -- Sindy!!

SINDY

Compliments, Socrates!!

SOCRATES

But of course, of course! I'm comparing you to cupid!  
 And I must say I love the **look** you've prepared for the evening?  
 Your makeup? What you have under your eyes?

SINDY

I don't – Socrates!

SOCRATES

No, those little purple circles you drew in under your eyes, I think they're absolutely beautiful!  
 Obviously isn't your body reacting to high amounts of stress, panic, and lack of sleep! And your  
 hair looks wonderful! Really has that can't-keep-my-shit-together look, don't you think, Ruben?

RUBEN

Uh, yeah, it looks really nice.

*SINDY stands up and slams both her hands onto the table.*

SINDY

YOU BETTER WATCH YOUR FUCKING MOUTH

SOCRATES

YOU STOLE MY **BOOK** FROM ME

SINDY

OH DID I???

SOCRATES

YOU'RE A LEECH

MANDY

*(rises)*

Okay! Thank you Socrates! So, uh, we were thinking we could start by getting everyone some  
 appetizers? Right, Sindy? Appetizers?

SINDY

Yes. Let's all have some appetizers.

MANDY

:)

SOCRATES

>:< .... XD

SINDY

>:< .... :)

RUBEN



PLATO

Hey, Graceon, are those new sneakers?

GRACEON

Yeah, Reeler and I went to the mall today. Payless

PLATO

Oh, what, that's so funny, me and my mom were there literally this afternoon.

GRACEON

wait like // the mall on Park -- ?

SINDY

OH WOW GREAT LOOK AT THAT. ARE YOU AND GRACEON DATING NOW OR SOMETHING

GRACEON

girl...

chill

MANDY

Appetizers, Sin.

SINDY

Appetizers! Let me get those appetizers.

*SINDY goes.*

PLATO

We aren't -- that wasn't cool. She's being really mean right now, Mandy.

MANDY

Sorry, there's just love in the air! Everyone's just falling in love!

REELER

literally nobody is in a couple right now

SOCRATES

I don't know, you and Graceon did go to the mall together, so

GRACEON

Well you and Ruben have been sucking each other off for the past week, so

RUBEN

Graceon, hey!

GRACEON

Ruben!!! Oh my gosh, you're so small over there I didn't even see you! You should really use that spine you supposedly have and SIT UP STRAIGHT.

RUBEN  
graceon what

MANDY  
THE APPETIZERS ARE HERE

*Lights change.*

*SINDY comes on with a tall glass of chocolate milk. Like 2 feet tall.*

*She places it in front of Ruben and sits down.*

*A moment.*

RUBEN  
sindy....

*The glass SHATTERS out of nowhere and Ruben is soaked in chocolate milk.*

GRACEON  
holy shit!

REELER  
what the fuck!

SOCRATES  
ruben, duck!

PLATO  
SINDY!

*a pause.*

*everyone's like*

*:O!?*

SINDY  
*(standing)*  
Well, that was delicious!

MANDY  
*(standing)*  
Really! Really good appetizer!

SINDY  
Shall we all take a breather to digest those appetizers?

MANDY  
I know I certainly need one!

SOCRATES  
I didn't get an appetizer.

PLATO  
Neither did I.

REELER

jesus what the fuck Sindy

RUBEN

sindy oh my god im so wet

SINDY

do you have a problem with the food we served you as our guests at the illustrious Mandy's 12th birthday party?

RUBEN

i...

*(looks to Socrates)*

no

i love it

so good!

mm!

REELER

oh my god you guys are getting psychotic

SINDY

SIT DOWN BAT BOY

GRACEON

jesus, don't yell at him

SINDY

OR WHAT YOU WANT AN APPETIZER

REELER

i would *love* to see you try and give me an appetizer

RUBEN

wait what does that mean?

SINDY

It means Reeler knows what it means to hurt people

REELER

chill // out

RUBEN

i...i could hurt people if i wanted

*pause.*

PLATO  
are we gonna eat the cake or?

SINDY  
WE'RE TAKING A BREATHER FIRST

GRACEON  
why, so you two can come up with some master plan to kill us all?

MANDY  
Graceon // hey

SINDY  
NO WE'RE NOT GONNA DO THAT

PLATO  
sounds like you are

SOCRATES  
Plato, not now

PLATO  
W -- Excuse me?

REELER  
Jesus, okay, yeah, breather. I need to go smoke outside.

RUBEN  
wait i could totally hurt someone if i really wanted to

GRACEON  
yeah, dipshit, i know you can

*pause.*

REELER  
JESUS. SMOKE?!

SINDY  
See?! We *all* need a breather!!  
We'll meet back here in **40 minutes** to cut into the cake, yes?  
On the dot?

GRACEON

Weirdly specific. What are we supposed to do until then?

MANDY

You c//an just feel free to go

SINDY

Mingle! Dance! Have some appetizers! Explore the garden out back! Walk around the house!  
But Mandy and I will be in Mandy's room so absolutely super don't come in there, kay great!

PLATO

Why?

SINDY

We need to start going through all of the presents you brought!! We need complete solidarity to do so.

PLATO

Sounds...like so transparently like you're plotting

SOCRATES

Plato this really isn't the time

PLATO

Oh my god  
will you just shut the fuck up already?

....

MANDY

Plato?

PLATO

What?

MANDY

Are you okay?

*Pause.*

PLATO

No.

I thought we were taking a breather!

SINDY

*(Beginning to gather all the presents with Mandy)*

Breather!

GRACEON  
Can I use your bathroom?

RUBEN  
(socrates?)

SINDY  
I'll show you where it is

MANDY  
Yeah, I can show you

SOCRATES  
(hold your ground)

*REELER leaves for the backyard, taking out a cigarette. SINDY and MANDY leave carrying presents -- though Mandy carries most. GRACEON follows behind.*

*RUBEN, SOCRATES, and PLATO are left at the table.  
SOCRATES and PLATO are both waiting for the other to say something.*

PLATO  
oh my god dude, WHAT

SOCRATES  
You know it isn't smart to fight her

PLATO  
biggest fucking hypocrite in the world over here

SOCRATES  
Excuse me, Plato --

PLATO  
YOU said she was dangerous wildfire energy. Right? YOU SAID don't mess with that because nothing good comes from it, yet HERE WE ARE!! messing with it!! on fire!!

SOCRATES  
You need to calm down

PLATO  
Oh my gosh! Fuck you!  
You need to be a better friend  
And this like, yeah, you're like talking to me like an inferior. Sorry, but literally you've been talking to me like a student or something. I'm literally your friend. Ruben's your friend. Everyone's like -- everyone's in survival and I don't -- we are literally friends!

SOCRATES  
Some kind of friendship, huh

PLATO  
oh my gosh

ruben?  
i hope it's worth it  
(looks to socrates)  
ugh, bye

*She leaves.*

RUBEN  
Okay....Socrates, I'm like *really* wet with chocolate milk

SOCRATES  
We need to use this opportunity to plant the package. Do you have it?

RUBEN  
I'll be honest and say that I don't like that we're calling it the package.

SOCRATES  
Where is it?

RUBEN  
Oh, well  
I put it in the present?

SOCRATES  
WHAT

RUBEN  
You told me to put it there!

SOCRATES  
No I said to hide it in *the main* area!!

RUBEN  
YEAH, the main area of a birthday party IS the presents

SOCRATES  
RUBEN WHAT ARE YOU -- okay. It's okay. I'll just go and get the package and plant it properly.

RUBEN  
In -- but don't Mandy and Sindy have all the presents in her room? How are you --

SOCRATES  
I'll figure it out, Ruben, don't make me waste time explaining it to you.

RUBEN

O -- okay, so then what should i do?

SOCRATES

jesus, you really need to be told everything?

RUBEN

uh well, no, but everytime i suggest doing something you tell me it's like....

not....smart? huh

why do you keep doing that?

SOCRATES

no no, I make a good point

okay,

you should go talk to reeler, see if you can borrow his sweatshirt or something. Milk-soaked clothes will only slow you down

RUBEN

uhhh, i shouldn't come with you?

SOCRATES

no, obviously

you'll just slow *me* down

RUBEN

um okay.

can i -- i'm like....

really kinda scared, uh socrates.

SOCRATES

jesus, ruben, come on

RUBEN

NONONO! Not like -- ! I'm still in this, but people keep saying like 'you're gonna get him killed' 'ruben's too stupid' blah blah blah, but like -- like, i don't know, i mean if they're *all* saying it -- like okay, i need you to **tell** me i'm not just gonna like....die

SOCRATES

ruben --

RUBEN

*(talking very quickly)*

i just kinda feel like you and Sindy are the two who are fighting now but i'm still the one getting hit? and sindy's yelling a lot and my stomach feels like absolutely insane like crazy like i really

wanna like puke and i know, i really know you said you'd keep me safe but like, you know, you're 11 just like i am! so --

SOCRATES

Ruben! If life was easy it wouldn't be worth winning

RUBEN

okay see! but i'm not trying to win! i'm just trying to have fun with my friends!

SOCRATES

right now winning means staying alive so i'm pretty sure you *are* trying to win

RUBEN

like...see, like *actually* staying alive?

SOCRATES

ruben we are wasting time! just go talk to reeler!

RUBEN

i just wanna know if i'm *literally* gonna die!

SOCRATES

the answer is someday yes! probably very unexpectedly! and you'll have the rest of your life to avoid processing that! so for now just go!

RUBEN

okayokayokay i'm sorry!

-----

26. RUBEN and REELER. Backyard. REELER's smoking.

RUBEN

Reeler!!!

REELER

woah, bring it down

RUBEN

sorry,

reeler!

REELER

better

...you wanna drag?

RUBEN  
ummm....no i think I'm....good....yesplease

*RUBEN takes the cigarette and takes a hit. Hands it back. Coughs.*

RUBEN  
those are so frickin *gross* man what the heck

REELER  
love 'em

RUBEN  
yeah totally me too

REELER  
you are absolutely covered in chocolate milk

RUBEN  
i know. could i wear your sweatshirt or something?

REELER  
you want me to give you my sweatshirt so you can put it on your disgusting, milk-soaked body?

RUBEN  
y - yes that is correct

REELER  
....yeah sure why not

*REELER takes off his sweatshirt and gives it to Ruben. RUBEN takes off his shirt, slaps it on the ground, and puts Reeler's sweatshirt on. While he's shirtless:*

RUBEN  
hey uh, why won't graceon talk to me?

REELER  
oh, uh, i don't know, probably because you said some fucked up shit to her

RUBEN  
she told you?

REELER  
no, not....we didn't like talk talk but she seems -- yeah, really hurt and whatever you said to her really hurt her

RUBEN

but i like -- i just keep being **stupid** and **clumsy** and i feel like whenever i'm around her i say dumb things and am like, all over the place, you know?

REELER

ruben we were really good friends, i've seen you do some really gross and weird and all over the place shit. isn't that when we had like, the most fun?

RUBEN

yeah, but that was *us*

REELER

why is it different for her?

RUBEN

well cause socrates said....so....

REELER

yeahhh they might not be as smart as you think they are

RUBEN

but like, their book....

REELER

just because someone can write a book doesn't mean they know how to be a good friend

RUBEN

....Can I ask you something?

REELER

yeah

RUBEN

Just cause Sindy's, I know looking for more like, dirt on me or whatever? And so, yeah, you've just seen me like....you just know about some of my biggest secrets so like....can you honestly tell me if you've told her anything?

REELER

no, Ruben, what of course not.

RUBEN

Okay....just like....she knows about the uhh hole in my closet

REELER

What?

Ruben, dude shut up, i would never have told her that

RUBEN

okay. no, i do believe you, but it's just like, scary like, how could she know that!

REELER

i don't know man, that's....yeah that's scary

RUBEN

it's okay. just trying to like survive at this point. no one told me i was gonna be this hard

-----

27. *SINDY and MANDY. Mandy's room*

SINDY

Well I'd this is going pretty well so far

MANDY

Sindy, we have to talk

SINDY

I know I know I know, but it'll all be over soon and then we are going to *actually* celebrate your birthday, I swear

MANDY

Okay...actually? Because i only turn 12...you know, once, and it feels like most of this has been about...the you // and Ruben thing

SINDY

I brought us a bottle of my mom's wine!

MANDY

Sindy!

SINDY

You're 12 now! Big leagues :)

MANDY

Wait, that sounds so fun! Oh my gosh girl i love you, are we gonna get like, *fucked* up?!

SINDY

Girl yesssss

MANDY  
AHHH OH MY // GOSH!!!

SINDY  
But first  
we finish this, yeah?

MANDY  
Y -- yeah....

SINDY  
Great! So, you go take care of Ruben, and I'll handle Socrates.

MANDY  
Oh,  
can't I just deal with Socrates?

SINDY  
No. You handle Ruben, because you're strong enough to overcome a crush for // me, right?

MANDY  
I know I know  
I just  
Wouldn't it be safer, like just for the....plan, right? If we dealt with the // people who we could probably

SINDY  
Mandy, stop right there. What I'm hearing sounds a lot like wavering trust and I // need you to know

MANDY  
No no no it's --!

SINDY  
Yes?

MANDY  
It's not....

SINDY  
you're my girl, right?

MANDY  
...yeah and you're mine

SINDY

We've got a bottle of wine waiting for us at the end of this

MANDY

Ah! I'm 12!

SINDY

Big kids, yeah?

MANDY

okay okay let's do this

SINDY

Let's fuck 'em up.

*They do a handshake and vanish.*

-----

28. *PLATO is walking down the Hallway. SINDY just kind of appears.*

SINDY

omg, hey girl!

PLATO

OH MY GOD WHAT THE --

GOD! you really just pop out of nowhere sometimes

SINDY

hahaha, yeah I know what you mean! Hey, really quickly, have you seen Socrates?

PLATO

i don't know. I think I saw them go out back maybe?

SINDY

Are you lying to me, Plato?

PLATO

uggghhh too weird you're acting weird!

Everyone's acting really snake-y and manipulative

SINDY

Excuse me? What?

PLATO

Sindy we literally --

Ugh, we have never hung out alone unless it's dealing with Christine!

SINDY

what are you saying right now

PLATO

we're not friends, are we

you're just using me cause i'm a freak?

SINDY

....

No

PLATO

N -- Yes! What do you mean no?!

SINDY

are you gonna tell me where socrates is or not

PLATO

i don't know and i don't care

*they stand for a second  
just facing each other*

SINDY

*(genuine)*

i did actually like hanging out with you

i think you're fun

*SINDY just turns and goes.*

*PLATO sighs.*

*She goes.*

-----

29. GRACEON and RUBEN both walk into the family room at the same time from opposite ends.

RUBEN

oh.

GRACEON

*\*sigh\**

Hey, ruben

RUBEN

this...this is weird

GRACEON

Ruben you don't just say a moment is weird when it's weird. That's weird

RUBEN

well this *is* weird

GRACEON

Is this too much contact for you?

RUBEN

what? no, Graceon stop like, twisting what I said.

GRACEON

– ?

*you* said you couldn't have me in your life because I was bad for you? that's literally what you said

and here i am, *in* your life. so i'm just trying to find where the line in the sand is, buddy.

RUBEN

okay yeah I'm sorry! I didn't realize how mean what i said was, but i like, i didn't *mean* for it to...hurt...or even for it to mean forever! i just

socrates just wanted to help me and they're really smart you know? so i just figured following their advice would be, but like, like i didn't *want* to say that stuff to you

GRACEON

ruben that is so fucking dumb

we told you to go the principal. remember that? when we all said to go to the principal

RUBEN

yeah and then i didn't and i got punched in the eye yes i remember being a dumb idiot, graceon

GRACEON

ruben stop like -- ! ugh! just cause you hate yourself doesn't mean your above making mistakes

*pause*

*woah what the fuck*

GRACEON

Just...just because you feel...ugh, like clumsy or ridiculous or whatever doesn't absolve you of the responsibility of being ridiculous! And hurtful! You hurt me. Ruben I was like, we were literally best friends and you literally told me, like fully out of nowhere that you were cutting me out of your life!

RUBEN

y -- yeah.

GRACEON

so....

yeah

i'm out

RUBEN

i feel really bad

GRACEON

me too

RUBEN

how do i....

i don't really wanna be me anymore

GRACEON

yeah well

you are

RUBEN

i just wanna have fun with my friends

GRACEON

then

you should probably go find some.

*GRACEON goes for the door.*

RUBEN

wait wait Graceon.

*It's locked.*

*Graceon stops.*

RUBEN

wait that worked?

GRACEON  
The door's locked

RUBEN  
wait what?

*RUBEN tries the other door. Locked.*

RUBEN  
So is this one.

*MANDY's onstage but not in the same room as them.*

MANDY  
Hey, you guys!

RUBEN  
Mandy?

MANDY  
Yeah, so sorry about this

GRACEON  
Mandy, open the door!

MANDY  
No, sorry, I'm gonna have to keep this locked. Graceon you just happened to be in the same room as Ruben so that's just bad luck on your end

GRACEON  
No Mandy this is such an inconvenient time to do this, just let me out I will not fuck with you

RUBEN  
Mandy!! Open the door !!! Don't let Sindy -- I just want to dance and eat cake at your party!! Mandy!

MANDY  
Ruben, guys I...I really can't, I just -- ugh, sorry.

*MANDY goes off, shaken.*

RUBEN AND GRACEON  
MANDY?!?!

*a moment.*

RUBEN  
i feel like  
i might've messed up again

GRACEON  
shut up ruben

-----

*30. PLATO is in the main room. She puts on "Bad Romance" by Lady Gaga. REELER comes on. Dancing. They both see each other and dance for a second.*

PLATO  
Woah what!  
I would not have taken you for a lady gaga fan.

REELER  
Pardon you, they're called her little monsters, actually

PLATO  
Oh woowwww, bat boy's a true fan

REELER  
Where is everyone?

PLATO  
Probably planning their fucking nuclear fallout strategy or something

REELER  
Yeah...  
You've been swearing a lot more

PLATO  
Time's are a-changing my friend. Watch out, I might try and steal your bat

REELER  
Oh *that* I'd like to see you try

PLATO  
Careful what you wish for

REELER  
You seem...abnormally calm

PLATO

I don't know....I really just could not give a fuck anymore. I've got no stake in this game

REELER

Well, I don't know

it is *your* friends who are fighting with each other

PLATO

I don't know...haven't exactly felt like I've been treated like a friend recently

REELER

Like how?

PLATO

Like brushing me off, like forgetting about me, like,

only....wanting to be around the parts of me that are convenient or beneficial for themselves...

REELER

Are you talking about Sindy and this whole Christine thing?

PLATO

I'm talking about everything. That's just...i don't know, the most obvious example

REELER

yeah...

PLATO

what

REELER

what

PLATO

you're thinking something, what

REELER

uh

okay

i guess, just like,

i'm not trying to pry because i wanna respect your guys' privacy but...i don't know

if things do like *actually* go nuclear? like...is it something you can use against her? Christine?

PLATO

what? no?

No

REELER

....okay. i guess it just seems like it's the only thing that's like,  
**ever** gotten her to stop freaking out  
on the playground you just mentioned her name and she chilled out, so  
i was just...

PLATO

UGH

ugh

but i don't wanna be involved anymore!!!!

REELER

yeah, well...

PLATO

ugh

can i tell you to go fuck yourself?

REELER

uhhhh

sure?

PLATO

fuck you

REELER

*(almost as a cordial response, a "welcome")*

Fuck you

PLATO

Ha

Fuck this

*SOCRATES comes on.*

SOCRATES

Hey, has anyone seen Ruben or Graceon?

REELER

Uh, not for like a second, why?

SOCRATES

I can't find them anywhere

PLATO

well, it's a big house, so

REELER

what do you mean you can't find them? You looked everywhere?

SOCRATES

Yes.

REELER

Bathrooms? Out back and everything?

SOCRATES

Empty. I'm trying to find Mandy's room, but this place is so fucking big. What do her parents even do?

PLATO

Her mom like, organizes and runs the puppy bowl every year.

REELER

Oh god, they're fucking loaded

SOCRATES

okay okay, help me check the rest of the house

*REELER gives a look to Plato.*

PLATO

Well don't stare at me, if we're gonna go, let's fucking go

*THEY head off.*

-----

31. *SINDY. Mandy's Bedroom. MANDY comes back.*

MANDY

Did you get Socrates?

SINDY

No no no, not yet. I'm waiting for them here.

MANDY

what? you really think they're gonna come to you?

SINDY

i do.

MANDY

i mean, they might not be able to even find this room

SINDY

your house is  
like, big

MANDY

Thanks

SINDY

But you got Ruben, yeah?

MANDY

Yeah....

SINDY

what's that?

MANDY

No no, I did! I locked him in the family room. Graceon just...also happened to be with him.

SINDY

oh whatever that's fine

MANDY

.....okay so hey

SINDY

noooo, mandy

MANDY

i didn't even say anything!!!

SINDY

Mandy we are *way* too late in the game for you to back out now

MANDY

i didn't say i was backing out if you would just let me // speak!!

SINDY

need i remind you of where you'd be if you didn't have me?

you'd be alone.

in a big house all by yourself, on your birthday, in the middle of a war, with no allies  
and no one who would keep you safe

MANDY

Sindy, oh gosh it is my birthday can you please calm down

SINDY

No! Not when the one person who *claims* to call herself my *ride or fucking die* continues to show  
me that she is not going to ride with me if it means giving up a little fucking **crush**.

MANDY

BITCH MAYBE THAT'S CAUSE YOU'RE NOT MY FUCKING QUEEN

*ruh-roh*

MANDY

YOU ARE MY FRIEND

YOU'RE MY LITERAL FRIEND

AND YOU KNOW WHAT?

YOU KNOW **WHAT? SANDY!!!!**

WHERE THE FUCK WOULD **YOU** BE IF I LEFT?!

CAUSE I'M PRETTY SURE **I'M** THE **ONLY** MOTHERFUCKER WHO PUTS UP WITH  
YOUR **BULLSHIT**

SINDY

Mandy, put a cap on it

MANDY

AND WHY IS THIS YOUR FRIEND GROUP?!

YOU KNOW?

WHY IS THIS SINDY'S FRIEND GROUP?! THERE'S ONLY TWO OF US!!! WHY ISN'T IT  
JUST MANDY AND SINDY! AND DOESN'T ANYONE EVER REFER TO **YOU** AS

"Mandy's friend," HUH

WHY AM I SINDY'S FRIEND BUT YOU'RE NOT MANDY'S FRIEND

WHY AM I SINDY'S FRIEND BUT YOU'RE NOT MANDY'S FRIEND

SINDY

I am your friend, Mandy

MANDY

THEN WHERE'S MY FUCKING PRESENT

SINDY

what?

MANDY  
 where is  
 the present you brought me  
 for my birthday

SINDY  
 Your....  
 your presents are right here

MANDY  
 yeah, from the people you say are not my friends.  
 but my best friend?  
 the girl who says she's my ride or fucking die?  
 where's my present from her?

SINDY  
 mandy, i'm sorry that i was busy, but there's // been a lot going on!

MANDY  
 you know what i think?  
 honestly?  
 i think you need me more than i need you  
 i think you don't even **know** how much i love you, because you think it's just a given  
 it's not  
 i am a human fucking being  
 i am a motherfucking 12 year old  
 adult!!!!  
 and you know what?  
 you know **what**?!  
 if you leave me, yeah, i'll be alone in a big empty house, but you know what?  
 so will you  
 and something tells me you'd have a much tougher time with that than i would.

SINDY  
 mandy you're being a bitch right now

MANDY  
 fuck you sindy

*MANDY runs out. They're both crying at this point, but no pressure for the actors to cry, seriously.*

*The characters are just 11 and 12 and it is that intense for them.*

*SINDY is alone.*

*She takes 3 big, deep breaths. She's really fighting off a panic attack. It almost overtakes her. Her breath gets wild.*

*SOCRATES enters surprisingly.*

SOCRATES  
Am I interrupting?

*And she composes, messily, clumsily.*

SINDY  
You're predictably on time, in fact

SOCRATES  
I would've come sooner but your goon seems to have an absurdly large house

SINDY  
gotta leech onto the fattest whale, they take you the farthest

SOCRATES  
you don't look too well. you're slipping

SINDY  
maybe i'm just in it deeper than you are

SOCRATES  
your stubbornness is going get you killed, you know that?

SINDY  
shut up

SOCRATES  
i've seen it. i've seen how the Stubborn fight their fight. i've seen what their eyes look like when they realize their determination doesn't mean shit in the face of reality. you know what's in their eyes? a profound awareness of their normalcy. i see it in your eyes.

SINDY  
are you trying to scare me?

SOCRATES  
who needs to scare that which is already trembling?

SINDY  
i hate how you fucking talk, sometimes

SOCRATES

but you can't argue with it, can you?

SINDY

hmm....no :)

no

i think i've won

SOCRATES

are you sure? because it sounds like you're hyperventilating

SINDY

yeah, i think i get you.

you just wanna see me scared

you thrive on *feeling* more powerful than others

i think you like the taunt more than the actual fight

SOCRATES

you're telling me you're not afraid?

SINDY

No, I am.

But for me,

this is also the fight :)

*SINDY pulls out a cloth covered in chloroform from behind her back and places it over Socrates's mouth. THEY pass out.*

*SHE lets out a scream. Beats on her bed. Blood.*

SINDY

YES!!!!

DON'T **FUCK** WITH ME BITCH!!

I AM SINDY LOO-HOO UP IN THIS MOTHERFUCKER YOU WEAK LITTLE ANT, AND

DON'T YOU EVER FUCKING FORGET IT

**FUCK**

*SHE drags their body offstage.*

-----

### 32. RUBEN and GRACEON. Still Locked in the Room

RUBEN

Strawberry or blueberry?

GRACEON  
What?

RUBEN  
Which would you rather?

GRACEON  
Eat?

RUBEN  
Which would you rather live in?

GRACEON  
Ruben literally shut up I'm mad at you

RUBEN  
There's nothing else to do!! You can still be mad at me but just play

GRACEON  
...Strawberry. It's got a nice shape.

RUBEN  
I say blueberry, there's like that little roof it has, and it's wide. I like wide houses.

*Pause.*

RUBEN  
New York or LA?

GRACEON  
To live in?

RUBEN  
To eat

GRACEON  
Which city would I eat? Ruben?

RUBEN  
I would eat LA

GRACEON  
New York would taste like shit

RUBEN

Yeah and LA would be like ocean water

GRACEON

That wouldn't even taste good

I'm still mad at you

RUBEN

I know

GRACEON

God this is so unfair I do not want to be in this room with you

RUBEN

I know I know I'm just

I like don't wanna go back out there...like I don't know what to do

....

What should I do?

GRACEON

No, Ruben. We literally -- I am *not* going to tell you what to do this time. Do whatever you want.

You can't just ask people how to live your life and then say it's not your fault because you were just following -- !! ugh, I don't KNOW Ruben

*PLATO knocks on the door.*

GRACEON

WHAT

PLATO

Graceon? It's me!

GRACEON

P – Plato?

PLATO

Graceon? Oh my gosh, is Ruben in there with you?

GRACEON

Yeah! Mandy locked us in here!

PLATO

What? Oh my god, well can you guys get out?

GRACEON

What -- no. We're *locked* in, Plato. That's what locked in means.

PLATO

Well, is there like...an air vent in there?

GRACEON

An air vent? What do you think this is, a factory?

RUBEN

Oh wait, yeah! I see one.

*Light shines on the airduct.*

GRACEON

(ohhh my gosh)

PLATO

Is it big enough for you to fit through?

GRACEON

there is no way he can fit through an air vent

RUBEN

I don't know, it's pretty weirdly big, actually, huh

Graceon, I'm gonna...try and climb through here and then I'll come back and get you, okay??

GRACEON

Ruben --

RUBEN

No, hey,

I've got this! I'm gonna do this.

I'm gonna do this!

*RUBEN climbs through the duct.*

GRACEON

Ruben!!

can you hear me!!

RUBEN

Yeah!!! I can't hear you super well, so I'll just...bye!!

GRACEON

Okay!!!

*a moment*

PLATO  
wait  
isn't the only locked from....

*PLATO just unlocks the door*

GRACEON  
WHAT

PLATO  
HOW DID WE // NOT THINK OF THAT

GRACEON  
WAIT RUBEN // COME BACK

PLATO  
RUBEN

GRACEON  
RUBEN HEY -- He can't hear us.

PLATO  
Glad we got you at least.

GRACEON  
yeah but Ruben's the one who's in danger

PLATO  
i know i know, let's just go

GRACEON  
where's sindy?

PLATO  
girl , i don't know, let's **go**

*THEY run off.*

-----

33. *MANDY in the bathroom, smoking a cigarette. REELER comes in.*

REELER

hello?

oh hey, right on, good for you

MANDY

oh, jesus, fuck off

REELER

people are looking for ruben and graceon, have you seen them?

MANDY

yeah i locked them in the family room.

REELER

oh. okay? thanks for....telling me.

why are you smoking a cigarette on the toilet?

MANDY

because i'm best friends with a manipulative asshole

REELER

mhmm for sure

do you wanna smash something?

MANDY

*\*sigh\**

that's sweet, no

i've tried that, doesn't help

REELER

can i take a drag?

MANDY

no

REELER

damn, okay.

hey, uh

do you *like* ruben?

MANDY

shut the fuck up

REELER

oh damn

that bad, huh?

MANDY

ugh,  
do you think he knows?

REELER

maybe subconsciously? but he definitely doesn't like, *know*.  
the kid's like a cashew

MANDY

i know he's so sweet

REELER

y -- okay

MANDY

does he like me?

REELER

i don't know.  
from what i know about him, he kind of likes everyone.  
he's kind of a freak

MANDY

literally the worst

REELER

i like him

MANDY

yeah i do too....but he tried to fucking kill Sindy or whatever

REELER

i don't know. you clearly like him a lot

MANDY

god i wanna like, rip his insides out with my teeth

REELER

o shit  
nice

*SHE offers him the cigarette. HE takes it.*

MANDY

i don't wanna lose her as my friend. we're like really really fucking tight, you couldn't get it

REELER

if she's your friend she'll want you to be happy.

if she can't live with you being happy, i don't know, maybe that's just her problem

MANDY

yeah

REELER

if you like him, you should just tell him

you're not getting any younger

MANDY

yeah, i know.

*RUBEN falls from a vent into the bathroom.*

*He maybe really just army crawls back onstage*

RUBEN

I made it out!

REELER

hmm, yeah that sounds about right for him.

I'm gonna go then

MANDY

wait what no don't

REELER

kay bye have fun

*REELER leaves.*

*RUBEN gets up.*

RUBEN

oh! hey, sorry

oh wow really big bathroom

MANDY

hi, ruben

RUBEN

uhhh

why'd you...  
lock me in a room?

MANDY  
ruben, because you're a big dumb IDIOT

RUBEN  
well  
yeah, but like *why* did you lock me in that room?  
i've just been thinking a lot about like following people blindly, you know? like, you and i have never had any problems....we get along really well i think, so like, why should *we* fight, you know?

MANDY  
ruben, ugh

RUBEN  
what.  
i said something weird?

MANDY  
no, you're -- ugh, seriously? shut up! you're like thick-headed as fuck

RUBEN  
what does that mean

MANDY  
ruben! can you not -- do you really like...not know?

RUBEN  
i feel like...i no longer know what we're talking about

MANDY  
ruben!  
do you like me!

*beat.*

RUBEN  
i'm sorry what

MANDY  
like....do you....like, *like* me.

RUBEN

ummmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm. i don't know????? like what does that even – ? like –

MANDY

what? jesus ruben, DO YOU LIKE ME

RUBEN

i don't know!!!

i feel like...weird sometimes around...people?? and yeah you're definitely one of those...people like...like i feel *weird* around ummmm -- but like

i don't know!

like what do you mean *like*

MANDY

what do you mean by weird  
that you feel around me

RUBEN

um

oh my gosh mandy

haha

HAHA!

oh my gosh!

i'm nervous!

i don't know! like in my stomach?

like there's like...thing swirling or something.

MANDY

wait yeah i...i feel that...too around you  
ruben i like you

RUBEN

wait what, you do?

MANDY

yeah. is it like...hot? the feeling? is it like...is it like hot does it make you like...start panting?

RUBEN

oh my gosh mandy yeah even like you just saying that like -- oh my god it's like *hot*

MANDY

like a fire? like you feel it right now?

RUBEN

yeah **really hot**

MANDY

okay yeah ruben me too i feel that too

RUBEN

okay! okay!

well what does that mean!

MANDY

i don't know! like. i don't knoww!

do you like want to

do something because of -- RUBEN IM HUNGRY

RUBEN

what!

MANDY

is there anything you wanna like – **DO** right now or something!

RUBEN

like right now?!

MANDY

yeah with this feeling!

RUBEN

dude i don't know! Of course!

MANDY

okay so let's do something!

RUBEN

what do you mean by do something!

MANDY

like i don't know like *do* something!

RUBEN

i mean i should also probably go and stop sindy from trying to kill me!

MANDY

RUBEN DON'T LEAVE WHAT ARE YOU DOING

RUBEN

WELL I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DOOOOOO

MANDY  
YOU WANNA DEAL WITH THIS FEELING LATER OR SOMETHING?!

RUBEN  
NO LIKE I WANT TO DEAL WITH IT RIGHT NOW

MANDY  
OKAY SO DO I

RUBEN  
OKAY!!! SO HOW DO WE DEAL WITH IT

MANDY  
I DON'T KNOW

RUBEN  
MANDY WHAT

MANDY  
STOP, NEVERMIND IT'S GROSS

RUBEN  
NO WAIT MANDY PLEASE SAY IT I THINK WE'RE THINKING THE SAME THING

MANDY  
OKAY WELL WHAT ARE WE THINKING

RUBEN  
NO LIKE YOU SAY IT THOUGH PLEASE I CANT SAY IT

MANDY  
NO YOU SAY IT

RUBEN  
DON'T JUST REPEAT WHAT I SAY

MANDY  
DON'T JUST REPEAT // WHAT *I* SAY

RUBEN  
WE COULD KISS IF YOU // THINK THAT

MANDY  
YEAH WE SHOULD DO THAT

RUBEN  
OH THAT IS WHAT YOU WERE THINKING?

MANDY  
YEAH IT WAS

RUBEN  
OH, NEAT

MANDY  
SO THEN WE SHOULD KISS NOW

RUBEN  
OKAY YEAH LET'S DO IT

*THEY KISS!!!!!!!!!!  
IT'S GLORIOUS  
AND VICIOUS  
AND DISGUSTING  
AND AWKWARD  
THEY ARE VOCAL  
AND IT LASTS.  
a breath.*

MANDY  
oh my god

RUBEN  
wow. that was like, really good

MANDY  
that was...the best thing i've ever felt

RUBEN  
i think  
i feel like you're a really good kisser

MANDY  
oh my gosh really?  
I think I am too.

RUBEN  
i kind of...really wanna keep doing it

MANDY

ruben we should probably stop sindy

RUBEN  
and then we can...?

MANDY  
yeah we can -- oh wow ruben

RUBEN  
yeah?

*A scream from offstage!*

RUBEN  
oh no

MANDY  
can i call you my boyfriend?

RUBEN  
oh my gosh that feels so  
serious i love that

MANDY  
okay let's go stop her,  
boyfriend

RUBEN  
oh my gosh i'm a boyfriend!

MANDY  
weird! go!

*THEY GO.*

-----

34. *EVERYONE. The Main Room.*

*SOCRATES is tied up in a chair at the head of the table, cloth over their mouth and eyes. SINDY is standing on top of the table. There's an **enormous** book next to her, like from out of Harry Potter. It has 12 candles stuck in it.*

*PLATO, REELER, and GRACEON stand watching her. RUBEN and MANDY run into the room together.*

SINDY

Oh jesus Mandy! why am i not fucking surprised.

RUBEN

Is that -- did you tie Socrates up in a chair? Is -- is *that* your book Socrates???

SINDY

Shut up, pig

SOCRATES

MPHHSTRTRKLP

RUBEN

Socrates that book is *really* impressive oh my gosh.

MANDY

Sindy, it's over, okay?

SINDY

According to my clock we're actually right on time!

Yup, 40 minutes are up and it's finally time to cut into the *lovely* cake and celebrate new life!! new death!! Yes?!

RUBEN

wait, are you -- is the *book* supposed to be the cake???

SINDY

Well we had to use SOMETHING that would catch fire!!!

REELER

Sindy you're being a bad friend

SINDY

shut up, freakshow! you think you know friendship? Name one fucking friend you've got

ALL BUT SINDY

Me.

SINDY

Well isn't that fitting! The freak is friends with the other freaks!

RUBEN

Sindy like two weeks ago we were literally all friends, this can all be fine

SINDY

ARE YOU KIDDING! You think I don't know you little worms talk about me behind my back?! You think I'm fucking stupid!? I'm not! You little shit stains get quiet when I walk in the room!!!! You think I don't notice that??? Who does that unless you were talking about me?? Yeah???? Tell me I'm wrong. Tell me you don't all talk about me like I'm some little Ms. Drama queen!!

PLATO

Sindy, we don't // talk about you like that

SINDY

Shut UP you fucking loser!! You called me a bitch! To my face! Do we not remember that?! And now you wanna tell me you *LIKE ME!* FUCK YOU! Ruben soaked my fucking hair in chocolate milk and tried getting me expelled, *you* fucking betrayed me! Mandy you just fucking like left me in the middle of the -- you left me!!!! What kind of *friend* does that!!!! Does any of that!!! Like everyone is out // to fucking get me or something, and –

REELER

(taking a step forward)

Sindy, get off the table

*SINDY pulls out a pistol!*

*People freak, Reeler freezes.*

ALL

WOAH, SINDY, WHAT THE FUCK

SINDY

Everyone SIT DOWN  
we're gonna eat **CAKE**.

REELER

SINDY THAT IS A GUN

SINDY

GODDAMN RIGHT IT IS

GRACEON

SINDY WE ARE LITERALLY ELEVEN

SINDY

MANDY'S TWELVE

REELER

AND THAT IS A LOADED GUN

SINDY  
RIGHT SO LET'S ALL SHUT THE FUCK UP AND LISTEN

*silence.*

SINDY  
right, that's just so much better :)  
my god i have a headache

GRACEON  
*(to Plato)*  
hey it's looking like Christine might need to --

PLATO  
Be quiet.

SINDY  
AHEM! So, uhh as punishment for threatening and betraying me, Ruben and Socrates will receive Sindy's ultimate punishment! I will, in front of all of you, expose Ruben's darkest and most embarrassing secret and burning Socrates's only copy of their precious little book.

SOCRATES  
MPHHMPNRRTRRR

RUBEN  
Sindy uhhhh which um

PLATO  
wait socrates do you not back up your book?!

SOCRATES  
MPHHNRRTRRSK HHHHUMMMMPH

SINDY  
And if anybody takes one step forward, Socrates themselves gets fucked 🤔👉

RUBEN  
*(takes one step forward)*  
Sindy okay for real hold on!

SINDY  
hmp  
gave fair warning.

*SINDY presses a button and Socrates DROPS down a trapdoor  
Everyone screams!!*

RUBEN

WAIT WHAT

MANDY  
HOW DID YOU DO THAT THIS IS MY HOUSE

GRACEON  
Get off of the fucking table!!

*SINDY points the gun.*

SINDY  
I WILL END YOU

PLATO  
SINDY STOP

REELER  
PLATO NOW IS WHEN YOU WOULD USE CHRISTINE

PLATO  
SHUT UP!

RUBEN  
Sindy we all like you!

*SINDY pulls out a handheld blowtorch and begins lighting the candles on the book.*

SINDY  
HAPPY // BIRTHDAY TO YOU

MANDY  
Sindy, i fucking love you what are you doing right now!

GRACEON  
Plato put your bullshit aside and be a friend!!

PLATO  
SHUT UP

SINDY  
// HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

RUBEN  
please stop yelling!!

MANDY  
THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MY 12TH BIRTHDAY

GRACEON  
PLATO

SINDY  
HAPPY --

*THE BOOK CATCHES ON FIRE*

SINDY  
**BIRTHDAY DEAR SINDY**

PLATO  
OH MY GOD

REELER  
PLATO COME ON

PLATO  
FUCK YOU, FINE

*PLATO SITS DOWN AND MEDITATES*

...

REELER  
....WHAT!!!!

MANDY  
I'M SORRY DID YOU JUST SAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY SINDY?!

RUBEN  
SINDY YOU'RE MY FRIEND // AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS

SINDY  
**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!!!!!!**

*PLATO opens her eyes.  
She's holding a lot of energy in her body so she's tense*

PLATO  
okay  
I got her.

RUBEN  
WAIT SINDY ACTUALLY PLEASE DON'T TELL PEOPLE

SINDY  
RUBEN HAS A HOLE IN HIS CLOSET // WHERE HE  
WATCHES HIS PARENTS FUCK -- WHHATT

*SOCRATES runs on with A BAG OF FLOUR and a FLAMETHROWER*

SOCRATES  
I ESCAPED FROM THE CHAIR AND HAVE RETRIEVED THE PACKAGE

REELER  
what in the --

RUBEN  
NO WAIT SOCRATES DON'T

*SOCRATES HEAVES the bag of flour at Sindy, but RUBEN JUMPS in front of her and is HIT head-on. He is knocked the FUCK out  
The bag of flour EXPLODES and white dust floats in the air along the entire stage*

*the slightest moment.*

PLATO  
Go.

*A massive pulsing of energy throughout the theater.  
The lights shake and flicker, the ground heaves  
A spirit rushes out of Plato and goes inside Sindy.  
It's a real gust of wind.  
It causes the fire to be put out.*

*Everything about the atmosphere changes.*

*Sindy's frozen. Pulled out from herself.*

*Sindy's sister, CHRISTINE, comes on. She's 20.  
This could be done a variety of ways.  
Any of them work.  
But the trippier the better.*

*At first it's just the sound of the ether. Space.*

CHRISTINE

s kro lllpnm neuuurrrk

SINDY

hello? what?

CHRISTINE

ssssnpy  
ssssindy?

SINDY

what the -- what is happening?

CHRISTINE

sindy  
sindy

SINDY

c -- hello?  
hello?

CHRISTINE

it's me

SINDY

no  
what?  
christine?

CHRISTINE

hi

SINDY

it's -- how are you  
what's happening?

CHRISTINE

i guess you have a friend who's...? pretty cool

SINDY

you're -- ?  
are you alive?

CHRISTINE

no

no

i'm not even really --

i'm not uh

*me*

anymore, actually

i'm kind of...

everything...

it's hard to explain

you'll figure it out

but uh

hi

what's up?

*sindy embraces christine*

SINDY

i missed your voice so much oh my god i miss you so much chrisy

CHRISTINE

baby

i missed you too

SINDY

i think about you literally everyday

i swear literally everyday i think about you and how much i miss you

CHRISTINE

i know

i know

SINDY

why did you....

what

happened?

CHRISTINE

it's....

i don't know if it would....

are you doing okay?

SINDY

yeah of course

CHRISTINE  
i can tell when you lie

SINDY  
ugh jesus  
no! i'm not okay okay!? i'm actually terrible right now like everyone i thought i loved is being the fucking

CHRISTINE  
how's dad?

SINDY  
i don't know  
bad

CHRISTINE  
okay....have you had to call the police?

SINDY  
no, he doesn't  
i haven't seen him in a while

CHRISTINE  
oh gosh  
are you  
taking care?  
of yourself?

SINDY  
ummm....yeah, not like.  
not really

CHRISTINE  
hey it's -- it's okay.  
middle school's a really tough time, so

SINDY  
it is?

CHRISTINE  
oh gosh, yeah! are you kidding? it's iconically known as the worst period of time ever  
nothing makes any sense  
and...it doesn't in high school either, honestly  
and honestly? college doesn't really....make much sense hahaha either....at least from what I got to experience

i don't know, i think maybe none of life is supposed to be easy.

SINDY

okay but that doesn't help me with what to like, DO

HERE

i'm still the one HERE

...

just saying it's hard doesn't make it not hard

CHRISTINE

No....no it doesn't

can i try something?

SINDY

yeah, sure

*CHRISTINE touches Sindy's heart.*

*It glows.*

CHRISTINE

you feel this?

SINDY

oh my gosh i love you so much please come back

CHRISTINE

i can't, just....do you feel this?

SINDY

yes it feels really really good please don't leave

CHRISTINE

sindy.

do you know how many people want to do that to you?

SINDY

stop please

*Sindy collapses into Christine and cries (again no pressure to cry, for real)*

CHRISTINE

you don't have me anymore. i'm not here.

but they are. they *are*, okay? they're here right now.

and it's messy. and it's painful. and they'll do things that hurt you and you'll do things that hurt them but....

i'm not alive anymore. my heart feels different. i feel love, but it's slower, wider somehow.  
 it's not bad, but it is different. it's not focused. i can't...love one *single* thing, i just *love*  
 you get to love *someone*, you get to love *people*  
 you get to love the sky and squirrels and an individual song and yourself.  
 you get to love yourself  
 you don't have people forever. you don't even have you forever  
 and...you'll hurt people. and you might lose them for a while  
 and you'll hurt yourself and you might feel like you lose you for a while but...  
 you will *always* have your heart  
 same one, whole life  
 but...you'll only *have* it as long as you *have* it  
 so *while* you have it, Sindy...  
 it'll be pretty fucking messy and impossible  
 but you have to love  
 you have to love what you love  
 because you get to

SINDY

Chris i love you so much

CHRISTINE

i have to leave. you have to go back

SINDY

nononono please

CHRISTINE

i love you

i love you

i love you

SINDY

i love you!

*SINDY is pulled back into her body.*

*She gasps violently and flails for a second.*

*Everything about the world around her just got flushed up and down the toilet.*

*Plato has her. Petting her hair.*

PLATO

hey hey hey breathe breathe breathe

breathe

breathe

can you feel my hand on your head?

*Sindy still gasping.*

PLATO  
do you feel my hand on your head?

*Still gasping, Sindy nods.*

PLATO  
you hear my voice?

*Sindy nods.*

PLATO  
you feel this?

*Plato lightly squeezes Sindy's arms.  
Sindy nods.*

PLATO  
just breathe

RUBEN  
jesus  
when did you get so fricken cool, Plato?

PLATO  
i've always been cool  
shut up for a sec

SINDY  
i feel like i'm falling down a hill

PLATO  
just give it a sec

*breath.*

SINDY  
fuck  
fuck fuck  
fuck, you guys...  
i'm so sorry  
why didn't anyone --  
no, fuck. you did!

fuck  
 guys i don't know what's wrong with me  
 i just got mad and kept getting...i was just...the milk pissed me off **so**...i don't even...it wasn't  
 worth all of this...mandy...ugh, ruben. socrates, graceon, reeler, plato, you guys, you guys are  
 literally my friends –

*MANDY runs over and hugs her.*

MANDY  
 shut up

*they cry.*

SINDY  
 mandy oh my gosh mandy

MANDY  
 you got really fucking scary that time

SINDY  
 i know i know i don't what's....i'm sorry, i don't know

GRACEON  
 mandy.

MANDY  
 what

GRACEON  
 what are you doing

MANDY  
 what

GRACEON  
 sindy  
 you pulled a gun on us

SINDY  
 Graceon  
 ii didn't // realize, I'm sorry!

GRACEON  
 No, seriously, stop. You were *bad*. Like, *mean*.  
 Just because you realized you were being horrible doesn't mean you weren't just like...horrible!

MANDY

Okay yeah but what more // do you want, like – !!

SINDY

Graceon I'm sorry! Like, I'm fucked up and I don't even know // what you could want me to tell you!

REELER

Sindy we're all fucked up, it's fine // just – it's gonna take some time

SINDY

I'm not saying *you're* fucked up! // I'm saying -- I'm just saying I've been really mad and now I want to be

SOCRATES

Sindy, you went like, completely // absolutely ballistic and tried to kill us

MANDY

She // knows, she is literally -- guys she's saying she's sorry!

REELER

you're missing the point.

PLATO

guys! Ruben is still unconscious, guys!

ALL

OH MY GOD

*Mandy, Reeler and Graceon run over to Ruben, still unconscious.*

*They sit him up and he starts to come to*

SINDY

Did you try and throw a fucking bag of flour at my head?

SOCRATES

YOU CHLOROFORMED ME

SINDY

YOU BLACKMAILED ME

SOCRATES

YOU LIT MY BOOK ON **FIRE**

PLATO

*(a fuck-you)*

**GUYS. RUBEN.**

RUBEN

*(rubbing his head)*

ow

REELER

are you okay?

PLATO

(jesus christ)

RUBEN

yeah,, i'm good,

sorry

REELER

shut up, look at me

MANDY

can you see me?

RUBEN

yeah, i can

see you

SOCRATES

what kind of stupid question is that?

REELER

kinda harsh

GRACEON

the kind you asked when someone's  
been hit with a fucking sack of flower,  
dipshit

MANDY

oh my god, chill

SINDY

did you lob a bag of flour at my head?

SOCRATES

No

RUBEN

*(still dazed)*

They were gonna hit you with the flour and then light you on fire

....

SINDY

WHAT

MANDY

WHAT

GRACEON

WHAT THE FUCK

REELER

holy shit

SINDY  
YOU FUCKING PSYCHOPATH

GRACEON  
OKAY YOU DON'T GET TO TALK

SINDY  
THEY WERE TRYING TO LIGHT ME ON FIRE???

REELER  
you pulled. a gun on us

SINDY  
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO USE A GUN

RUBEN  
you tied socrates to a chair and sent them down a trapdoor

SINDY  
OKAY THAT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THEY TRIED TO // FUCKING THREATEN ME WITH

PLATO  
SHUT THE FUCK UP!!!!

*Silence.*

MANDY  
i just wanted to let everyone know ruben and i are dating now

RUBEN  
oh yeah that is true

REELER  
oh hey  
right on

PLATO  
you're all horrible friends!!  
you are all  
terrible friends  
it's in *all* of us...  
sindy i don't know if it *started* in you but it's in *all* of us now...  
we're at each other's throoaaats  
we're monsters!!

all of us!

jesus.

you all effect me so fucking much!

so on behalf of us ALL can i ask us to please be a little fucking NICER to each other??!

*a silence.*

RUBEN

i just wanna apologize cause i really feel like i started all of this

REELER

ruben don't talk right now

PLATO

stop blaming yourself for everything,

it's not about you

*breath.*

GRACEON

sindy i'm -- i want us to be friends, like i wanna -- but like i'm...mad at you, okay? i don't know, maybe honestly just like, kinda scared

the gun was a lot...

ruben i'm still mad at you too

RUBEN

yeah okay

GRACEON

i think we'll all like, be friends before we graduate, yeah

but right now i'm -- i don't *hate* you guys or anything but

i don't think i could

i don't know....

i don't think i like, love you guys or anything right now

SOCRATES

i'm sorry, plato

PLATO

cool

....

still fucked up

SOCRATES

yeah

GRACEON

socrates, wasn't *i* the one who just -- why didn't you apologize to me?

SOCRATES

Graceon i'm sorry

GRACEON

jesus christ

SINDY

ugh sorry, socrates

SOCRATES

...yeah

sorry

REELER

guys we are like craaaaaazy

we are like, a very intense friend group

SINDY

i like it

GRACEON

yeah

i do too honestly

*a moment where the two look at each other*

*little smile*

RUBEN

so we're like -- now what? we just...go back...to normal?

REELER

i think this *is* normal for now, it's just...kinda weird

for a while

RUBEN

oh

that sucks

GRACEON

ruben it'll be fine eventually just like

whatever

MANDY

so

i mean

it is still technically my birthday

um

i know everything's like

bad, or whatever right now

and i think cake is maybe...not happening but um

i was wondering if we could

i was just wondering if we could just dance

to like, one song, we only have to do one song and then we can all call our parents to come pick us up

REELER, SOCRATES, PLATO, GRACEON

Oh, I'll be walking home. Oh, woah

RUBEN

personally, i would love if you could call my mom

MANDY

do you think you guys...could do that?

even if you like, *hated* it, could you just pretend?

for one dance

for me?

REELER

yeah sure, fuck it

PLATO

i would actually really down // to dance, actually

RUBEN

yeah, sure

GRACEON

sure, man

SINDY

yeah

SOCRATES

yeah, that might be nice

MANDY

:) okay

thanks

lemme just

*MANDY goes to the phone and plays "Sex On Fire" by The Kings of Leon.*

ALL BUT MANDY  
oh nice (*adlibs*)

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35. *ALL THE KIDDOS. The Midnight Meteor Shower, or: Finally. It's the Fucking Dance*

*The intro up until 0:25, is awkward  
Everyone starts standing up, feeling like they're supposed to be happy when really they feel  
crushingly awkward. It's the beginning stage of a middle school dance.*

*First verse*

*Plato and Mandy sing out the first words, "Lay where you're laying" at a decent volume. The  
room looks at them, they both regret doing it, and get quiet.*

*This causes everybody to do the dance that's just kind of swaying with their heads down  
They move around the room, almost never raising their heads to make eye contact  
It's so tight in the room and in their bodies  
At most people are mouthing the words, but no noise is being made  
Where the most 'dancing' is them playing drums on their legs*

*First Chorus*

*Nothing happens immediately  
Ruben feels it build, so before the words "Sex is on fire" he's erupting. He's jumping and  
punching the air, just a little violently. Very Ruben-y. But he does rein himself in and feels a little  
embarrassed  
People pretend not to notice, but the energy in the room is certainly lifted  
Graceon starts moving around the room a little bit faster  
Socrates starts stomping on the floor a little  
Mandy stands on her couch. Still muted dancing, but now she's higher up  
Plato joins her up there  
Sindy still feels pretty shaken/pretty guilty and un-loved  
Reeler is on the outside still, but his heart is racing*

*Second verse*

*Some smiles are forming  
We're getting a little fuck-it-ier  
Plato and Mandy have more fireworks coming out of them -- little more like a karaoke show  
Graceon is starting to move a little faster, she's still not really looking at anyone though  
Socrates has started using their hands, like they're pulling energy from the Earth along with  
stomping. Lookin' a lot more like some weird ritual is all I'm saying*

*Ruben has his eyes closed and is really feeling the music, like he's a 32 year old on LSD at a Grateful Dead concert. Pulsing? Convulsing? Vibrating? You know.*

*Sindy is starting to shimmy her way in but it's tentative*

*1:16, when the guitar doubles, Ruben bumps into Reeler and opens his eyes in apology. Reeler just starts doing what Ruben was doing. Ruben smiles and joins back in.*

*Second chorus*

*Oh baby*

*The dynamite erupts with a help from cabin fever*

*Ruben and Reeler start jumping with their move*

*Plato and Mandy soar off the couch and start bursting around the room*

*Graceon is close to a full sprint, she looks like she's running down a football field trying to bob and weave around all the Kiddos and furniture*

*Sindy enters in the storm and is jumping a little*

*Socrates is really throwing their shit into the fucking Earth, it's quite scary. Their face is certainly contorted*

*Third verse*

*Quite a bit of steam has just left them*

*And there's still more song*

*So, slowly, not immediately,*

*A fog of awkwardness and the reality of the situation starts creeping back in*

*They ironically laugh about how hard they each were just going*

*the first time they've made contact with each other in the dance*

*brings a bit of shame back in the room*

*Reeler notices it, doesn't fuck with it*

*The dance energy/freedom is somewhere between First and Second chorus*

*Reeler, however, has far more in him he wants to get out. He is not finished, and he knows they aren't either. His energy is far greater. He attempts to even go up and dance around other Kiddos to try and get them to dance harder*

*His heart is beating so hard it is tearing out of his chest*

*Third Chorus*

REELER

Ahhhh FUCK! Solos!!! We're doing solos!!!!

ALL

what?

REELER

There's this part where there's no -- Just, we'll call each other's names and everyone does a fucking SOLO!!!

ALL

what

REELER

YOU UGLY LITTLE FUCKERS I WANNA SEE YOU DANCE!!!!

*The song gets to the part where it's the chorus but very minimal instruments, at 2:29*

*When a name is called, that Kiddo gets an 8-count for a solo*

*Ruben has the first one and that bitch does not wait for anyone's permission, he GOES for it*

*They each dance as freely as they feel comfortable with in this group of friends*

*In a fantasy world, they would each feel comfortable enough to dance how they want to, freely and proudly*

*But this ending may not be perfectly happy*

*Regardless, these Kiddos dance.*

REELER

Ruben!

*Ruben's 8-count solo.*

REELER AND RUBEN

Plato!

*Plato's 8-count solo.*

REELER AND RUBEN AND PLATO

Mandy!

*Mandy's 8-count solo.*

REELER AND RUBEN AND PLATO AND MANDY

Sindy!

*Sindy's 8-count solo.*

REELER AND RUBEN AND PLATO AND MANDY AND SINDY

Socrates!

*Socrates's 8-count solo.*

REELER AND RUBEN AND PLATO AND MANDY AND SINDY AND SOCRATES

Mandy!

*Mandy's 8-count solo.*

ALL BUT REELER

Reeler!

*Reeler's 8-count solo.*

MANDY  
NOW EVERYBODY FUCKING DANCE!!!

*This launches them into the final chorus.  
And these little lightshows soar through the sky*

*For these 32 counts they are free. The drama and tension that is to come with friendship and forgiveness and love and hatred, that's fucking meaningless right now  
Right now, they have some insatiable hunger to attend to and the only way it's getting filled is by dancing as passionately as they possibly can.*

*It's beautiful and exhausting and ugly and graceful and an adult would definitely tell them to calm down.*

*They dance by themselves and they dance with each other, but they never stop*

*This is not about social structure. This is not about crushes. This is not about motives.  
This is about fucking dancing  
Don't overcomplicate it you artistic adults.*

*And finally,*

*On the last two "bum-bum's" they might go WOO, pump their fists, they might do nothing or they might keep dancing without the music.*

*But certainly,*

*The song ends  
and so does the play,  
with a sharp  
blackout.*

---

*curtain call is to sex on fire  
the audience is invited onstage and we have a big dance party  
of Kiddos*

