

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

you absolutely know that i did
i'm me.

PLATO
we also did go over a lot of them in class.
to be fair...

RUBEN
yeah but like, am i really gonna use long division? Ya know?
like why am i even learning this?

MANDY
oh my gosh ruben that's such a good point

RUBEN
oh hey thanks!

PLATO
well do you wanna go into programming?

GRACEON
why -- why the fuck would any of
us *want* to be a programmer

RUBEN
i don't -- (oh)

REELER
well actually programming *is* probably the smartest market to be training into right now

GRACEON
what, because the world is
computers?

SINDY
what? why do *you* know
about programming

REELER
it's just the world around us. you'd have to not be paying attention to see it. the future is gonna
be all computers. everything is already basically all computers

GRACEON
so you know how to program?

REELER
what, no? i just said it would be the smartest market to go into,
i never said i was smart

GRACEON
oh yeah hahahaha that's true

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?

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.

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

RUBEN

okay so that is like absolutely in now 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

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 Sindy 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

kid beauty pageants are weird man, i don't know.

GRACEON

how do you know that? i've never heard her 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 hahaha but she literally spoke almost entirely about sindy's hair. how....yeah just like how amazing it was, how glamorous it made her, how many judges complimented it....

GRACEON

woah. that's crazy she told you that

REELER

yeah. so

RUBEN

well i didn't know that!!

REELER

yeah, well.

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

Who, 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.

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

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 can read people pretty well.

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?

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'm really into 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 lot 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 just 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 them 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 it's complicated

SOCRATES

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

PLATO

well, like....does it matter? like we're hanging out, right? she's being 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, we're 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.

The other two both look to her.

Plato looks back.

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 AHEM

PLATO

oh 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, right

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

PLATO

Oh. What?

SINDY

Yeah, no bullshit, like *just* found out. But like promise me you don't tell anyone, okay??? I just like *had* to tell you.

PLATO

Okay, sure...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 like 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 kinda 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 like have something personally against her or something?

SOCRATES

No no. She's just dangerous wildfire energy. I just don't mess with dangerous wildfire energy. Some people can and thrive on messing with dangerous wildfire energy, more power to them. It just doesn't work for me.

PLATO

sigh

Well, she "knows" something about Ruben.

SOCRATES

Oh shit. Is she making up or is it true?

PLATO

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

SOCRATES

It's bad?

PLATO

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

SOCRATES

Oh no.

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 --
 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 Sindy is spreading
 rumors about you.

SOCRATES

Ruben, this is beyond our friend group. Sindy 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's 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 means 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

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 just....i don't know

i would 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 she hurt me right?

GRACEON

right

REELER

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

RUBEN

oh, so also make her think 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

RUBEN

okay,

thanks guys.

i 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 really 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 Sindy 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 Sindy 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! like 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
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 waasn't the one who started it? if that's what you're implying?

RUBEN
Sindy, I know it was you....I get it. The milk thing and....which I feel *really* bad about.
Like....but yeah then even after that you did this and....
Yeah, you know I just wanted to let you know 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 stuff about me. And you'll probably get in big trouble. 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 apologize and like tell all the people you told that it like, 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'm 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, aren't legally allowed to punch people! Like it's just an actual crime.

SINDY
He was literally 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 so 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 -- teacher's are gonna ask about that.

SINDY

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

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 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 was trying to literally attack me.

PLATO

If the cops come after you there's not 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 all up. You can tell people that his parents fucking hit him or something.

MANDY

you want us to lie.

MANDY

also a straight up crime.

SINDY

friends do that shit for each other

MANDY

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

SINDY

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

MANDY

....it's 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, I seriously read about this when I was finding dirt on him. They had to take the kid to the E.R. You can look him up, his name is Paulo Tribute. 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 like criminal lawyers, like people who get paid to make sure murderers and terrorists 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 fucking ruin my life, okay?

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

PLATO
and you did hit him, you know? like there should be some consequences to that

SINDY
Plato what??? What are you saying right now?? Like, I know you haven't been friends with Mandy and I for forever so like -- we fucking have each other, okay? We have nobody else. Our parents are fucking dumb and mean, teachers are stupid, every other kid is either super fucked up or gross or weird or 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 really awful friends.

PLATO
Sindy, i'm not just....we're friends with our other friends right?

SINDY
Not when they turn their fucking backs on us no!! We're not!

MANDY

Sindy, calm down --

SINDY

Mandy, oh my gosh are you literally trying to make me cry right now?? My parents told me that if I get a detention this year then they won't let me go to horse camp this summer and honestly you know that if I have to miss horse camp again I will fucking kill myself. And I mean that. I would like actually fucking kill myself and you guys would be left feeling so awful as to why you weren't like literally just a little bit of a better friend to me. You guys are my fucking ride or dies, okay? Like I love you. We've slept over at each others house. We've seen each others' toothbrushes, okay??

That is a bond that literally cannot be broken, okay? Like, Jesus, everybody just sees me as some fucking bad or mean girl and I like don't fucking care but I know the two of you don't see me like that. Right?

MANDY

Of course not

PLATO

Yeah, no....

SINDY

See? I know my fucking friends. I have good taste in fucking friends. I fucking love you. And I know you fucking love me too. And right now the girl you love is asking for help because honestly i'm getting really scared and i'm feeling really alone in this whole thing. And so I need you to help me out. Literally because I love you. Okay?

MANDY

Okay.

Sorry.

I love you.

SINDY

Plato?

PLATO

yeah?

SINDY

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

PLATO

Sindy, of course....

Look I 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 literally be over today.

PLATO

really?

SINDY

of course! i don't have the energy for this hahahaha

PLATO

hahahaha yeah me neither. yeah, you can trust me

SINDY

Cool :) 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 like do homework and watch a movie with my mom and go to // bed early tonight

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? Who is Christine?

SINDY

Mandy, don't worry. It's 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. Plato?

PLATO

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

SINDY

no don't worry about it i can 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

....right. sorry

SINDY

Can you guys braid my hair.

PLATO

now?

SINDY

it's just an ask. You can 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

GRACEON

i am going to fucking kill that bitch

RUBEN

graceon

GRACEON

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

RUBEN

graceon. 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, I need you to tell Ms. Suizzo I threw up at lunch and got picked up by my dad. And then when school gets out I need you to go to your house and bring me some sort of makeup to cover the black eye. Please.

MANDY

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

GRACEON

Ruben, why are you trying 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

what, 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. do 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...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 want to and....and then i got punched in the fricken eye!! so i feel dumb! okay! i feel stupid and i just....i just want to cover this thing up

GRACEON

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

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 and i'm sorry i know i'm really whiney right now

GRACEON

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

RUBEN

It really hurts....

And....

Graceon?

GRACEON

Yeah?

RUBEN

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

GRACEON

yeah, ruben, i know you don't.

RUBEN

Okay,

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

GRACEON

Ruben, I know you don't.

RUBEN

okay good

you know that my parents hid all of our peanut butter?

GRACEON

wait this got to your parents?

RUBEN nods.

RUBEN

i mean i don't even know how that's possible

GRACEON

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

RUBEN

TO EAT. GRACEON.

GRACEON

Oh okay, yeah

RUBEN

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 went over to his house or something?

REELER

no, not like -- i've just seen him 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

we're masses of rotting flesh slowly crawling towards our day of total decay. at our essence we're disgusting.

GRACEON

(flustered)

oh wow.

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

REELER

it's just whatever, it's just stuff I think.

GRACEON

well so like, are *you* 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, you're staring at me.

GRACEON

ohgodimsosorry

REELER

you're fine

did i like say something that was too crazy? my mom was telling me i should watch for doing that around people

GRACEON

No no no! It's like amazing actually. Just stuff you say actually like makes me think, so -- which is cool because -- like it's a really good thing because it's like actually intellectual. Like you

really like *think* about stuff you're not like -- which is actually really cool that I'm left here dumb
like duhhhh
Sorry

REELER
you're -- it's okay
that's....nice of you
....
sorry if i'm being weird

GRACEON
No! 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, ummmm, yeah it doesn't have like a name
that would feel kinda....weird i think

GRACEON
Right, totally, no, that'd be so weird.
So you just carry it around because -- ?

REELER
i don't know
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

Like just fell over

And then

Yeah he just 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 like 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

it's....

i just miss him....sometimes

GRACEON

yeah

....

i really like -- sometimes in the middle of the night i'll just like run around the basketball courts 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 is running 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....

that's just like....

something that i....

oh my god sorry

weird!

that was

that was

i just

you had shared something and it

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

so

REELER

....

GRACEON

sorry

REELER

for what?

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

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

just like

yeah.

or whatever

look, i'm gonna go

it's really hot

GRACEON

yeah my like, arm meat is sweating haha

REELER
oh

GRACEON
or
i mean, 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. I do.

hmm

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

PLATO

huh

woah

yeah i guess so

REELER

I like your bow

PLATO

Thanks

I like your bat.

REELER

Thanks

Lot of crazy stuff 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!!!

Is there anything I need to do?

PLATO

(sitting herself behind Mandy)

no, just close your eyes and breathe
let me know if anything's every too much

MANDY

totally

PLATO gets behind Mandy and starts rubbing her temples.

PLATO

MANDY

Oh wow.

Oh wow.

They both laugh.

MANDY
that feels crazy, what are you doing?

PLATO
oh 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
like bad a lot?

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

MANDY
that's it?

PLATO
yeah just -- 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.

*The following dialogue is exchanged by 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*

PLATO
mandy?

MANDY
hey girl!
WHOOSH hahahahaha

PLATO laughs

PLATO
you're breathing okay?

MANDY
yeah, yup
it feels really.....ugh like, blue? like bright green blue or something

PLATO
yeah 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 and....
I don't know
She said this thing once when I asked her that 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 really so evil for having high standards for myself? And for not putting up with motherfuckers who don't agree?"

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 think

PLATO

and you think they way she deals with things is okay?

MANDY

woah, I could feel 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 i love her 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 did tell me not to talk about it with anyone, she made that really clear

MANDY

oh....for sure

PLATO

Sorry...

MANDY

it's okay! for real

PLATO

Okay,

. 'm gonna pull you out I think. It's getting kinda 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. 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. It's really jarring to come back into your body, it just takes a few seconds for things to stop spinning, you're okay 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

ha, everyone does.

MANDY

ha

you're really nice, Plato

PLATO

oh, thank you

thanks

you're really nice 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...right? I mean, as long as Ruben can keep his head low for a while we should be fine

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

That shouldn't be that hard, 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 not the actors, they can still acknowledge each other here: hateful eyes, suspicious avoidance, real humans. But they have a task (which is transitioning the set hahahaha)

13. ALL THE KIDDOS. Classroom. The music stops with all the lights shutting off except for a spotlight on RUBEN. Everyone else is 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. They are the third biggest land mammals, after elephants and white rhinos. That fact is from Animal Planet.

Um, when hippos want to make more hippos, when they’re making their family bigger, the females will actually carry their babies for eight months inside them 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...reliable.

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 that counts as another source I’m pretty sure you said but don’t correct me if I’m wrong because I already counted it as one.

Um, yeah, 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. So that means technically we beat hippos, which I think is kind of cool, you know? And speaking of death, the hippopotamus is actually considered the world's deadliest large land mammal. That’s really surprising to me! You know, because bears. You know? But hippo will kill an estimated 500 people per year, and that’s only in Africa. That fact is from the BBC.

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

Quiet.

Everyone looks at Sindy simultaneously

A spotlight lights up on Sindy.

She acknowledges the light

And then looks to Ruben with a glare

RUBEN

Sorry! Uh, me saying that wasn't -- it's, uh, that's not. That's nothing. When I said ow, that was like an ow scratch, you know like when you like feel a good scratch, like a scratch feels good but it also kinda hurts so you say like...owwww....which is different than like a bruise 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.....This wasn't like, nobody hit me or....anything like that....

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 off and the....

Okay. I'll just take your silence as reprimanding.

So then I'll just -- keep going? If that's okay?

Sindy?

O_O

I mean -- ! Not *Sindy*! Sindy didn't -- ! Do -- ! This -- ! UH

SORRY

SHE DIDN'T....

wow I!

feel awkward!

uhhhhhhhhhh

hahaha

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. So, uh, okay, the hippopotamus um has an incredibly strong jaw, like really strong, and I learned is able to eat an entire cantaloupe melon with just like, only a few bites. This is actually a video I got to take when I went to the zoo last week with my mom and dad and....

I'll just stop talking and 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 read "YIKES" i would.

RUBEN
WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME

REELER
well Sindy is now definitely gonna think she's fucked

RUBEN
WHAT. WHY

REELER
Dude, Mr. Plum is an idiot, but not that big of an idiot. He's definitely gonna tell the other teachers that Sindy like hit you in the face 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 survival mode now, yeah

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

REELER
yeah i guess not survival? 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 WASN'T TRYING TO START ANYTHING. THAT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS DOING

REELER
well i'm pretty sure 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 be involved, so yeah....this is like....pretty crazily bad

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
cause you'll gonna like their advice more than mine

RUBEN
i didn't ask you for any advice

REELER
yeah but you're kind of always asking for advice in some way

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 them?

RUBEN
REELER, I DON'T. KNOW.

REELER
yeah, see, and I would just tell you to go and smash Sindy'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....helping....
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 that people tell you, 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 too

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

SOCRATES

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

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 substantial 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 kind of become their bible anyway, so

RUBEN

hahaha so then what, you're jesus?

SOCRATES

i don't know. 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 advice or not?

RUBEN

SOCRATES 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....like, really?

SOCRATES

yes ruben! move on, you only have 4 more minutes

RUBEN

YES! Sorry, okay. I just really want her to know that my presentation was just cause I was freaking out and that I really wasn't trying to get her in trouble. And that I just want both of us to drop this 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 JUST want this to go away

SOCRATES

it's not -- ugh, ruben you are now clearly 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 just end up making it worse

SOCRATES

yeah, then --

RUBEN

Socrates I am not telling an adult!

SOCREATES

sigh

Just 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 okay, just one last time, I really 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 back to you. 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 Jesus,
kay, thank you, 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 gotta 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 lie here for a while

SOCRATES

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

RUBEN

a little bit, but you're good

SOCRATES

okay....i just like....i just get freaked out when people....sorry

RUBEN

you're so good, go write your book

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 those presentations so he really may not have even seen it.

SINDY

But even still, like nobody's that clumsy, right? He 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* like really weird, you're not wrong

SINDY

i mean that's like me level thinking....
gosh okay so should i just 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 for murdering 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, leveling with you.
Ruben is a sweetheart.
He's weird and really very gross, but he's sweet.
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

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 at the end of the 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 with
Try....and find any more dirt that we could....use
And if he seems to be showing any sign of an attack we....strike

SINDY

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

MANDY

Wait, 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. so i just need to know if my back
was against the wall i'd be okay, okay? it's not personal

MANDY

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

SINDY

mandy i....yeah of course
but people....have been really mean in the past and i wasn't ready 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 conniving tadpole!

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

SINDY
ooh 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...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 sit!

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

MANDY

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

RUBEN
Oh -- !
a uh, just a note.

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

RUBEN
No! WAIT NO! Actually if you see her can you *please* tell her that I'm not trying to?!

MANDY
Okay....

RUBEN
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
i DO think that was wrong but then....
ruben your hippo presentation like really messed with her

RUBEN

WHAT NO 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?
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 DUDE 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 that was like a love note or something.

RUBEN

wait, to you?

MANDY

what?

RUBEN

This is a love note to you?

MANDY
wait, what?

RUBEN
what?

MANDY
ruben what oh my god what are you saying

RUBEN
this is not a love note.

MANDY
oh

RUBEN
sorry. SORRY. yeah this is not a love note!!!! No, it's just like a note to try and calm things down, sorry that took -- sorry, i've been like really bad at speaking recently. everything's been really getting to me

MANDY
oh.....you don't like....okay. Cool. Smart.

RUBEN
what?

MANDY
so you don't have a crush on anybody?

RUBEN
oh, yeah, no i don't know, that's like....
why are you asking me that?

MANDY
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! Bye, Mandy

MANDY
oh my gosh what, bye Ruben!

RUBEN
hahaha by 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
Haha!

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

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

MANDY
NO.

PLATO
no, i thin it's sweet

MANDY

is it obvious?

PLATO

i mean, to everyone but him apparently

MANDY

shoot, i really like him so much
and i feel like i can't tell sindy at all
but also like she so clearly knows and is so 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

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 like 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 it like -- i need to like, scratch or rip something

god i feel like i get reeler

PLATO

okay please steer clear of my telescope please

MANDY

i don't mean it literally

PLATO

you....seem pretty literal

MANDY

No, come on.

I don't know I just like him so much!

PLATO

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

MANDY

and i can't even talk about it with anyone!

ugh sindy really doesn't -- nevermind, sorry.

sorry

PLATO

Wait what? Are you okay? Sindy what?

MANDY

....Sindy just doesn't want me to like him because she's afraid if shit hits the fan i'll turn to him instead of her and that's like, fair! she's had a lot of people turn their backs on her, 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 just if you like him....like why would you liking him mean 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, you know?
 and i think it means a lot for her to have someone like me, you know?
 and i....
 i don't know
 everything's so 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 at that moment. It's heavenly.*

MANDY
 Oh my gosh?
 Oh my gosh, Plato

PLATO
 Yeah.
 :) Yeah
 I love her a lot.

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 it.

SOCRATES
 There doesn't seem to be anywhere to put the note in.

RUBEN

What? No, there like, legally has to be air slots in 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 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 left. 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 now being unreasonable. We are showing no sign of threat to you right now.

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? Think again.

SOCRATES
Okay, Sindy? You are you 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 laws of nature, 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

how the fuck

SINDY

watch it ;)

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

what the fuck shut up you scrawny little worm

SOCRATES

and you make everyone think 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
YOU GONNA FUCKING CRY AGAIN YOU LITTLE PIG

RUBEN
no

SINDY
OINK FOR ME

RUBEN
what

SINDY
OINK FOR ME YOU LITTLE FUCKING PIG

SOCRATES
Ruben don't you dare oink for this bitch

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?! 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 just a bratty little wildfire

RUBEN

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

SOCRATES

and how can she possibly know about that stuff!

RUBEN

she's sindy
she 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
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 get walked all 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 if you don't change how you act you will just let people walk over you the rest of your life and then you'll find yourself in your 60's feeling a hollow sense that you have spent your entire 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 possible.

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're 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 very 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 does

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, 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!!! You are at the top of the line of winners!! 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 we --

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 SOFT AND WEAK

RUBEN
I WILL NOT SUCCUMB TO SOFT AND WEAK

SOCRATES
I WILL FIGHT ANY WHO THREATENS MY SOIL

RUBEN
I WILL FIGHT ANYBODY WHO THREATENS MY SOIL

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...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, 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
Breathing okay?

MANDY
it's like yellow 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 grim
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

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, really love her

PLATO

i'm not saying that

MANDY

i know
ugh, i don't know
i just feel like we've all changed now
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 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 with more

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 like respect that trust?
you know?

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

PLATO
oh my god what? 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. Are you okay?

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.

She screams. 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 WOULD YOU DO THAT WITH HER

PLATO

WE DO IT ALL THE TIME IT'S JUST // SOMETHING WE DO WHEN WE HANG OUT

SINDY

WE DO IT FOR A REASON NOT FOR FUCKING FUN

PLATO

WAIT wait stop yelling, she needs quiet

beat

SINDY

you are not gonna kill my best friend.

PLATO

sindy what i was not trying // to kill your -- ?

SINDY

shut up. you will not 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 know you can't just break into people's houses

SINDY

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

PLATO

well you scared us, we were hanging out

SINDY

if she didn't like you so much i'd tell you to stay away from her birthday party

PLATO

well, you know what? she does and we have a really good time together

SINDY

are you trying to make me jealous right now?

PLATO

no! no. i like you two being friends, i like // you and

SINDY

shut up. you do not like me, you're just jealous of how close we are

PLATO

no i'm seriously, // i have no reason

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 be going 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 you wanna come with me?

MANDY
mhmm

SINDY
mhmm? Are you saying yes you want to come with me? Some people don't believe me. 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
mhmm.

They hug.

SINDY
Okay!
ready?

MANDY is helped up, takes Sindy's hand.

SINDY
i gotcha girl

PLATO
Did you....do something to your hair?

SINDY
what?
No.

PLATO
Okay. It looks....different

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

PLATO
Are you doing okay?

SINDY

why are you asking me that

PLATO

because...i thin we're friends?
are you okay?

SINDY

(genuinely considers saying no)
yeah, of course
we're gonna go

PLATO

okay, be gentle

SINDY

i will
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 then.

SINDY and MANDY go.

22. *SOCRATES and RUBEN. The sewer.*

RUBEN

Socrates?

SOCRATES

Sit

RUBEN sits.

RUBEN

I can't believe you actually invited me to your the sewer.

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 others because they see some part of themselves they cannot let live.

People fall in love because they see a part of themselves they want to worship.

We are ego-centric, self-driven animals. We have muddied the waters with thought and philosophy and examination, but really at our core you and I are animals.

RUBEN
gosh it really does smell like poop down here why is that

SOCRATES
You are simple.
That is your beautiful thing.
Sometimes I wish I could be as quiet as you, but....
I love your simplicity.
You are wild and you are free and you are boundless and dirty
And yet you are simple as a quark

RUBEN
um....

SOCRATES
I analyze. I decipher. I 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? like 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 so close

to completion

i was at 850 pages

850 pages

and then i heard a sound

a unique sound

not like the homeless

the sound was hostile

like a rat underneath a subway car

like a knife falling to the kitchen floor

and again i heard it

so i got up and took

four steps

four steps, that was all

then a cold wind blew passed me

and i realized what she was doing

so i turned

and dove for the book

not but 4 feet away

and it was already gone

she had taken 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 GAIN BY -- SHE KNOWS I WORKED SO HARD ON THAT BOOK RUBEN -- THAT BOOK HAS MY EVERYTHING IN IT, IT HAS MY HEART!

IT HAS MY HEART!!!

I JUST 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 do that....

RUBEN
 i...don't know i don't know

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
 That was pathetic. I apologize.
 Listen to me, Ruben. Sindy 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 the 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, she has my most prized possession. Do you understand?

RUBEN
 Socrates jesus i don't if i understand anything the smell of poop has really been dominating my attention

SOCRATES
 I know but it's okay!! Because I understand! You see? I know you don't know, but you don't have to because I do!!!! I do know!

RUBEN
 Okay

SOCRATES
 And it means we're going to have to go dark until the party. It means we're going to need to prepare. Expertly. And Sindy's eyes could have be 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 thin so. Yes?

SOCRATES

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

RUBEN

right

SOCRATES

But that I do, right?

RUBEN

r....yeah.

SOCRATES

So I'm going to ask you to do some things. Things that you may not *want* to do or might not think are right but you need to understand that I know they are what needs to be done. Because I know how we're going to get through this okay? And that's with each other. Okay?

RUBEN

Okay.

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
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 don't think that's such a good idea.

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

RUBEN
I am.
Why?

GRACEON

We...I haven't like, seen you since after your hippopotamus presentation and...it just seemed really intense, but I didn't wanna like...be over....like we just never -- just like I wanted to make sure you're okay but I didn't want to be like too....caring or ya know? But 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? We haven't done that in like, forever at this point.

RUBEN

N -- No. What sounds good is meeting behind the Whole Foods at 10 o' clock tonight.

GRACEON

Ruben why are you being so weird?

RUBEN

10 o'clock, okay? It's important!

GRACEON

O....okay

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. Um.

breathes

I have officially gone to war with Sindy 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 my life.

GRACEON

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

Ruben what?

RUBEN

(reciting)

You and I are very good friends and I acknowledge our friendship up to this point, 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 a very clumsy boy already I'm // going to have to

GRACEON

Ruben what are you saying you don't even know what rambunctious means!!!!

RUBEN

Graceon, please don't yell at me

GRACEON

NO. YOU -- you can't just like say you're cutting me out of -- Ruben literally, what???

RUBEN

I'm saying at least until this war is over // I'm going to have to cut

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

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

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 inside stuff 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 disgusting. You're both disgusting,
ruben what?

RUBEN

I don't know, it's -- i don't know, i'm really just so 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 what i'm sorry i didn't know // about your parents

SOCRATES

ruben stop she's manipulating you

GRACEON sprints at Socrates yelling as loudly as she can
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 rushing from his nose.

RUBEN

oh my gosh

SOCRATES

You see?

GRACEON

no. nonono ruben

RUBEN

ow

GRACEON

that's not what i --

SOCRATES

but it's what you did

GRACEON

SHUT. UP.

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 no fuck no no no
ruben i
i'm
fuck, i'm a monster

GRACEON runs off

RUBEN is still in shock

SOCRATES

Let's take care of your nose, okay?

RUBEN

oh my god that hurt
that hurt like a lot ,socrates

SOCRATES

i know

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

but it's so that you can come out of all this with your head held high, right?

RUBEN
right

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

RUBEN
warrior boy, hah

SOCRATES
come on

THEY go off together

24. GRACEON. *The basketball courts.*

*SHE runs on. Stops.
Is panting.
Pacing.
Stops.
Does 10 push ups.
Does 10 crunches
Punches the air a lot*

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 fuck fuck fuck i don't know what's -- fuck 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

don't do that

what you were....

the scratches

um

just hit the boxes

please.

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 before

GRACEON tires

Feels like 20% better

We just hear her panting

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

sorry if that was

fuck

jesus i am a fucking disaster

REELER

.....

GRACEON

god i hate -- ugh

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

shut up

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

REELER
i don't know what to say

GRACEON
then just stop talking

REELER

....

GRACEON
thank you for doing that

REELER
there's always boxes that wanna be smashed

GRACEON
can we keep going?

REELER
oh
uh, totally
yeah, sure
you....
are you okay?

GRACEON
no i'm not
but smashing feels good
so can we keep smashing?

REELER
yeah
yes

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. just like -- 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

dude, shut up

okay?

just

stop

we're both....

yeah, i'll -- yeah

GRACEON

....do you like me?

REELER

....

GRACEON

....listen, i asked it, so

REELER

....

GRACEON

and i'm getting fuckin' radio silence, that's rad
i still can't really breathe, man

REELER

i don't....

i don't....
uh
this is gonna sound like maybe

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

REELER
i don't know if i like anyone....

pause

REELER
not like....like i *like* you
you're like really....cool
yeah i don't know
i don't really know

GRACEON
okay
sure, okay

REELER
yeah
sorry
thanks

GRACEON
yeah
you're welcome....
....
smash stuff?

REELER
please
always smash stuff

GRACEON
i've got you

REELER
i've got you

*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 not ‘the actors’ in this transition. All the characters feel the way they 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 the same time. The moment their butts hit the seat, the music stops and the lights come up to normal.

25. ALL THE KIDDOS. Mandy’s House. Her 12th Birthday Party. Cindy 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 and welcome!! I am pleased to officially welcome you all 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

Yeah, thanks for coming

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. The floors are like, noticeably clean.

MANDY

Thanks, the housekeepers actually just came today.

PLATO

Oh, that makes sense for you.

SINDY

Perfect! Now I'll go! Reeler!

REELER

Hi, 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 polish it up.

GRACEON

it's actually pretty fun

RUBEN

what, you like did it him or something?

GRACEON

-- ?

hey, i didn't know we were talking again

a pause.

ow.

SINDY

Yyyikes!

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

Ah 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'm not wearing any makeup, Socrates!

SOCRATES

No, those little purple circles you drew in under your eyes, I think they're absolutely beautiful! They obviously aren'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 so Ruben?

RUBEN

Uh, yes, it looks nice.

SINDY stands up and slams both her fists 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

SOCRATES

Sindy? I truly love how shrill and discombobulated your voice is, but I have to ask, are you feeling alright?

SINDY

Of course I am.

MANDY

Appetizers, Sin.

SINDY

Appetizers! Let me get those appetizers.

SINDY gets up and 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

*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	REELER	SOCRATES	PLATO
holy shit!	what the fuck!	ruben, duck!	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 breathe off 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 do that to me

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

but like, 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

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 like 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 promptly in **40 minutes** to cut into the cake, yes?

On the dot?

GRACEON

What? What are we supposed to do until then?

MANDY

You c//an -- feel free to like 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 sounds so transparently like plotting

SOCRATES

Plato --

PLATO

Oh my god will you just shut the fuck up already?

....

MANDY

Plato?

PLATO

What?

MANDY

Are you okay?

Pause.

PLATO

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. YOU SAID you don't mess with that because nothing good comes from it, yet HERE WE ARE all tangled up in YOUR fucking mess because YOUR fucking ego couldn't be wounded

SOCRATES
You need to calm down

PLATO
Jesus! Fuck you!
You need to be a better friend
Everyone's like -- everyone's in survival and I don't -- we are literally friends!

SOCRATES
We're passed that

PLATO
And you're just gonna drag Ruben along in your kamikaze stunt?

RUBEN

Hey Plato! I like your shirt. It's really orange.

PLATO

You're gonna get him killed.

SOCRATES

You used to think higher of me.

PLATO

You used to not be so blind with power.

SOCRATES

And you could be so much more if you were willing to stand up for yourself

PLATO

Oh my god what the fuck?? Don't fucking lecture me like i'm your dumbass student, pretty sure you can't astrally project from your body and contact the fucking dead.

SOCRATES

w -- what?

PLATO

Nothing, I'm going to walk around.

Plato gets up and starts to leave.

RUBEN

I feel like I've never really heard you swear this much.

PLATO

Yeah Ruben, well a lot of fucked up shit's been going on and everybody who I thought were my friends are all like trying to destroy each other now? And it's literally Mandy's birthday and no one's even -- ugh!! So yeah, forgive me if I'm actually fucking angry for once. Have fun blowing up our friend group or whatever. Hope it's worth it.

She leaves.

RUBEN

I didn't say it was....is she okay?

SOCRATES

We're gonna be fine, yeah

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 it was in the present

SOCRATES

WHAT

RUBEN

You told me to put it there!

SOCRATES

No I said to stow 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 -- 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 ask to do 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, duh

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 -- ! Just, 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 i need you to tell me i'm not just gonna like....die?

SOCRATES

ruben --

RUBEN

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 like *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 for right....yes.please

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 stained 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 did that

RUBEN
but i like -- i just keep being stupid and clumsy and i feel like whenever i'm around her i like 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 around her?

RUBEN
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 like, yeah, you've 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 11 was gonna be this hard

27. *SINDY and MANDY. Mandy's room*

SINDY

Well I think this is going very well

MANDY

Okay Sindy, we have to talk

SINDY

I know I know, but it'll all be over soon and then we can *actually* celebrate your birthday, I swear

MANDY

Okay, actually? Because like i only turn 12 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

That sounds so fun! AH! Oh my gosh 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, 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? You said so yourself.

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

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

Let's fuck 'em up.

They do their handshake.

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 like, appear 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
why do you care? I don't have any stake in this fucking war

SINDY
Plato?? Because I'm like your friend maybe? And like why would I *want* to have my friend involved in something shitty she doesn't have to be involved in? Right?

PLATO
We haven't really -- whatever, yeah sure

SINDY
Excuse me? What?

PLATO
Sindy we literally --
Ugh, we have never hung out alone unless it's dealing with Christine!

SINDY
....
No

PLATO
N -- Yes! What do you mean no?!

SINDY
Are you for real using that against me right now?

PLATO

NO! OH MY GOD!

Look, all of the practice we were even doing was about releasing negative energy because negative energy clogs the channel and makes it harder to actually *do*

So at this point....

Yeah, I don't know

Probably couldn't even do it without it tearing you up from the inside

SINDY

....

SINDY just turns and goes.

PLATO

Wait, I'm not --

She's gone.

PLATO

UGH!

Plato 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 when a moment is 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 didn't like, *mean* for it to like, for always, you know?

like i'm just -- this sindy thing is like the scariest thing i've ever gone through and socrates wanted to help me and they're just really smart you know? i was just following their advice, 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

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 ridiculous doesn't absolve you of the responsibility of being ridiculous! And hurtful! You hurt me! Ruben I was like, we were best friends and you literally told me you were cutting me out of your life!

RUBEN

y -- yeah.

GRACEON

so....

i'm out

RUBEN

i feel really bad

GRACEON
me too

RUBEN
how do i...
i don't wanna be me anymore

GRACEON
yeah well
you are
and you're the only one who's gonna be able to figure out how to be the good you again

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.

RUBEN
wait that worked?

GRACEON
What the -- the door's locked

RUBEN
wait what?

RUBEN tries the other door. Locked.

RUBEN
So is this one.

MANDY's on but not in the same room.

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

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 please!!! Don't let Sindy -- come on, we're friends!! I just want to dance and eat cake at your party!! Mandy!

MANDY
Ruben, guys I...I can't, I -- sorry.

MANDY goes off, shaken.

RUBEN AND GRACEON
MANDY?!?!

a moment.

RUBEN
i feel like i 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
Uh, they're called her little monsters, actually

PLATO

Oh woowwww, bat boy's a true fan

REELER

Where is everybody?

PLATO

Probably planning their nuclear fallout strategy or something

REELER

Crazy bullshit going on with everyone

PLATO

Losing their fucking minds

REELER

You're 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 do not give a fuck anymore. I've got no stake in this game

REELER

Well, I mean it is *your* friends who are fighting each other

PLATO

Anyone who treats me like they've been treating me is not a friend

REELER

Like how?

PLATO

Like brushing me off, like forgetting about me

REELER

So what, you feel like an outsider or something?

PLATO

Yeah, so I'm embracing that shit! No one wants to be my friend, fuck 'em, I'll be my own friend

REELER

What about Sindy's Christine thing? Isn't that a friendship?

PLATO

That's a fucking business exchange. Sindy has never been my friend

REELER

Okay yeah, but like....i mean if things *did* actually go nuclear....would that be....i don't know, something that *could* actually stop her?

PLATO

what? no?

What?

REELER

hey, i'm respecting the secrecy, you know i'm all about that but....
even if you hate these guys right now....they are your friends
and if something's gonna, you know, *really* blow up....you might have to put that aside for the
friend group

PLATO

dang couldn't you just like beat her up with your bat?

REELER

N....no, I don't....

No, I'm not gonna do that

PLATO

ugh, that's not fair.

Why do I have to be nice to them if they've been vicious to me?

REELER

because they're your friends

PLATO

not really

REELER

well, that's something you get to decide i guess

PLATO
Fuck you

REELER
(almost as a cordial response, 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

REELER
what do you mean you can't find them? You looked everywhere?

SOCRATES
Yeah.

REELER
Bathrooms? Out back?

SOCRATES
Empty. I'm trying to find Mandy's room, but this house is huge. What do her parents even do?

PLATO
Her mom basically runs the puppy bowl every year.

REELER
Oh my god they're fucking loaded

SOCRATES
okay, help me check the rest of the house

PLATO

It's fine. They're probably just talking.

SOCRATES

You saw Sindy. There is blood in her eyes.

REELER gives a look to Plato.

PLATO

Well Jesus don't stare at me, if you'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, I'm waiting for them here.

MANDY

what? you really think they're gonna come to you?

SINDY

oh i know they are

MANDY

i mean, they might not be able to even find this room

SINDY

I forget that your house is so huge.

MANDY

Thanks

SINDY

But ou got Ruben, though?

MANDY

Yeah....

SINDY

what

MANDY

No no, I did 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

no

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 just let me // speak!!

SINDY

need i remind you of where you'd be if i left you right now?
you'd be alone.

in a big house all by yourself, on your birthday, in the middle of a war, with no allies
with 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* call herself my *ride or fucking die* continues to show
me that she doesn't have an unyielding loyalty

MANDY

BITCH THAT'S CAUSE YOU'RE NOT MY FUCKING QUEEN

ruh-roh

MANDY

YOU'RE 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
 HUH SINDY
 WHY AM I SINDY'S FRIEND BUT YOU'RE NOT MANDY'S FRIEND

SINDY
 I am your friend, Mandy

MANDY
 THEN WHERE'S MY PRESENT

SINDY
 what?

MANDY
 where's
 the present you brought me
 for my birthday

SINDY
 Your....
 your presents are all right here

MANDY
 yeah, from the people you say are my nothing friends.
 and what about my best friend?
 the girl who says i'm her fucking ride or die?
 where's my present from her?

SINDY
 mandy, i was busy, there's // been a lot going on i'm sorry!

MANDY

you know what i think?
 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
 well it's not
 i am a goddamn human being
 i am a motherfucking 12 year old adult!
 and you know what?
 you know what?!
 if you leave me, i'll be alone in a big empty house, but you know what?
 so will you

SINDY

mandy you're really 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

SOCRATES

you don't look too well. you're slipping

SINDY

maybe i'm just in it deeper than you are

SOCRATES

you're stubbornness will get you killed someday, you know that?

SINDY

shut up

SOCRATES

i've seen it. i've seen 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 can see something real in your eyes.

SINDY

are you trying to scare me?

SOCRATES

who needs to scare that which is already trembling?

SINDY

i hate your fucking lyrics

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 just *feeling* more powerful

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 BITCH YOU WEAK LITTLE CUNT, 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 at least 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? What?

RUBEN

I would eat LA

GRACEON

New York would taste like shit

RUBEN

Yeah and LA would be like ocean water

GRACEON

I'm 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. Do whatever you want. You can't just ask people to give you advice forever and then say it's not your fault because you were just following -- ugh, I don't know Ruben.

PLATO knocks on the door.

PLATO
Hello?

GRACEON
Hello? Plato?

PLATO
Graceon? Oh my gosh, is Ruben 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. That's what locked in means.

PLATO
Well, is there like an air vent in there?

GRACEON
A vent? What the fuck are you talking about?

RUBEN
Oh wait, yeah! I see one.

PLATO
Is it big enough for you to fit through?

GRACEON
there is no way he can fit through an air vent

RUBEN
Yeah it's pretty weirdly big, actually, huh
Graceon, I'm gonna climb through here and then I'll come and get you, okay??

GRACEON
Ruben --

RUBEN
No, I've got this! I'm gonna do this. I'm gonna do this!

*RUBEN climbs through.
He probably really just army crawls offstage.*

GRACEON
Ruben are you okay!!

RUBEN
Yeah!!! I can't hear you super well, so I'll just come find you when I get out!!

GRACEON
Okay!!!

a moment

PLATO
wait
isn't it only locked from the....

PLATO just opens 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 we should definitely make sure Ruben is safe

PLATO
i know i know let's just go

GRACEON
what's up with sindy?

PLATO
i don't know, girl, everyone's going crazy, let's just go

GRACEON
hey, wait
Christine....

PLATO
oh my **god** what is the *deal* with you people!?

GRACEON
is that a part of this?

PLATO
what -- ! no, that has nothing to do with any of this, that's some other --
it's not this

GRACEON
but *can* it be used for this?

PLATO
NO!

GRACEON
Plato

PLATO
NO THERE IS --
It's a dead person!! Christine is dead and Sindy has been trying to get in contact with her which is something i'm able to do but it's something that's super dangerous and can actually like, tear someone's essence apart and so we've been practicing how to -- and OKAY IT JUST HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS OKAY?!

GRACEON
woahhhh okay *that's* a bombshell

PLATO
it's not!! let's go find ruben!

GRACEON
Plato, if...if there's a way --

PLATO
THERE'S NOT

GRACEON
i'm just saying only you would be the one who'd be able to do it

PLATO
UGH I AM SO TIRED OF THIS FRIEND GROUP ASKING ME TO DO SHIT

GRACEON
I...okay not to be mean but I like? Don't think we ask you to....do things? Your just the only witch in group so --

PLATO
well maybe i don't like feeling like my....me-ness is the only thing that'll save our friends

GRACEON
well then....maybe that's a little selfish

PLATO
well then maybe i wanna be a little selfish

GRACEON
well maybe i don't think you're a selfish person

PLATO
well maybe you don't know me

GRACEON
i guess we'll see

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 fucking 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 psychotic bitch

REELER

mhmm for sure

you wanna smash something?

MANDY

you'd let me use your bat?

REELER

yeah, man, of course.

it's a bat, it's not like it's gonna break

MANDY

:) i'm good. this is all just stupid and dumb and everyone's acting stupidly.

REELER

can i take a drag?

MANDY

no.

REELER

damn, okay.

hey, do you like like ruben?

MANDY

shut the fuck up

REELER

oh it's that bad, huh?

MANDY

ugh, it's really bad

REELER

hmm, yeah i figured it might be

MANDY

do you think he knows?

REELER

maybe subconsciously, but he definitely doesn't like *know*.
the kid is like as dumb as a cashew

MANDY

i know he's so sweet

REELER

y -- okay

MANDY

do you think he likes me?

REELER

i don't know.
from what i know about him, he kind of likes everyone.
he's kind of a freak

MANDY

yeah, he's literally the worst

REELER

i like him

MANDY

yeah i do too....but he tried to fucking kill Sindy // or whatever so

REELER

yeah okay but maybe just because she doesn't like him doesn't mean you have to hate him also.
and you clearly like him a lot

MANDY

god i wanna like, rip out his insides 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 don'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 really big bathroom woah

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. did i say something

MANDY
no, you're -- ugh, seriously? you're just like really? like thick-headed as fuck

RUBEN
what does that mean

MANDY
ruben! do 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 mean? like --

MANDY

what? jesus, DO YOU LIKE ME

RUBEN

i don't know!!!

i feel like weird sometimes around....some people?? like....

like i feel *weird* around ummmm -- but like i don't know!

MANDY

what do you mean by weird

RUBEN

um

i don't know, like in my stomach.

like there's like this like swirling or something.

MANDY

wait okay i think -- yeah i have that too

RUBEN

wait what, you do?

MANDY

yeah. is it like hot? is it like burning a little in your stomach?

RUBEN

yeah, woah like even you just saying that like -- oh my god it's like *hot*

MANDY

like a fire? like you feel it right now?

RUBEN

wait yeah like a fire

MANDY

okay yeah me too

RUBEN

okay. okay!

well what does that mean

MANDY

i don't know. like. i don't know!

RUBEN

Mandy what?

MANDY

do you like want to do something because of -- like is there anything you want to do!

RUBEN

like right now?!

MANDY

like yeah!

RUBEN

dude like i don't know! Do you!

MANDY

what are you -- yes!

RUBEN

so should we do something!

MANDY

what do you mean by do something!

RUBEN

like i don't know like *do* something!

MANDY

ruben, i like REALLY wanna know what you're trying to say but you're not saying it

RUBEN

but do *you* know what i'm trying to say?!?!?

MANDY

i think so! but maybe not though!

RUBEN

then you say what you think i'm trying to say!

MANDY

what, no ruben, don't be dumb, just say it!

RUBEN

i mean i should probably go and stop sindy from like trying to kill me!

MANDY

RUBEN WHAT DON'T LEAVE WHAT ARE YOU DOING

RUBEN
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DOOOOOO

MANDY
YOU WANNA DEAL WITH THIS FEELING LATER OR SOMETHING?!

RUBEN
NO LIKE I WANNA DEAL WITH RIGHT NOW

MANDY
OKAY SO DO I

RUBEN
OKAY!!! SO HOW DO WE DEAL WITH IT

MANDY
I DON'T KNOW -- LIKE

RUBEN
MANDY WHAT

MANDY
STOP, NEVERMIND IT'S GROSS

RUBEN
NO PLEASE SAY IT I THINK WE'RE SAYING THE SAME THING

MANDY
OKAY WHAT ARE WE THINKING

RUBEN
NO LIKE SAY IT THOUGH

MANDY
NO LIKE YOU SAY IT

RUBEN
DON'T JUST REPEAT WHAT I SAY

MANDY
DON'T JUST REPEAT // WHAT *I* SAY

RUBEN

WE COULD LIKE KISS IF YOU // THINK THAT

MANDY
YEAH WE SHOULD DO THAT

RUBEN
OH IS THAT WHAT YOU WERE THINKING?

MANDY
YEAH IT WAS

RUBEN
OH, NEAT

MANDY
SO THEN I'M GONNA KISS YOU NOW

RUBEN
LITERALLY PLEASE KISS ME

THEY KISS!!!!!!!!!!!!
IT'S GLORIOUS
AND VICIOUS
AND DISGUSTING
AND AWKWARD
AND LASTS.
a breath.

MANDY
oh my god

RUBEN
wow. that was like, really good

MANDY
that was like the best thing i've ever felt

RUBEN
i think you're a really good kisser

MANDY
I think I am too.

RUBEN
i kind of really wanna keep doing it

MANDY
we should probably stop sindy

RUBEN
and then can we keep kissing?

MANDY
yes we can -- oh my gosh wow yeah yes please

RUBEN
okay.

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!

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! Ask me why I'm 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 is *really* impressive oh my gosh.

MANDY
Sindy, you're done, okay?

SINDY
According to my clock we're all right on time!!!! 40 minutes are up and it's finally time to cut into the lovely cake and celebrate new life!! 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, we can 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! 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 like -- you left me!!!! What kind of *friend* does that!!!! Does any of that!!! Like everyone is out // to fucking get me 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 going to **eat. cake.**

REELER

SINDY THAT IS A GUN

SINDY

GODDAMN RIGHT IT IS BITCH

REELER

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

ugh, 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

Shut up.

SINDY

AHEM! As punishment for threatening and betraying me, Ruben and Socrates will receive Sindy's ultimate punishment! I will right here in front of you all be exposing Ruben's darkest secret and burning Socrates's only copy of their precious little book.

SOCRATES

MPHHMPNRRRTRRR

RUBEN

Sindy!

PLATO

wait did you not back it up socrates?!

SOCRATES

MPHHNRRRTRRSK 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

I 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 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 begins lighting the candles on the book.
She sings s l o w l y and like she's committing slaughter with each word.*

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
YOU ARE LITERALLY RUINING MY 12TH BIRTHDAY

GRACEON
PLATO

SINDY
HAPPY --

THE BOOK CATCHES ON FIRE

SINDY
BIRTHDAY DEAR SINDY

PLATO
SHIT

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.

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 hey
what's up?

sindy embraces christine

SINDY
i missed your voice so much oh my god i miss you

CHRISTINE
hi baby
i missed you too

SINDY
i think about you literally everyday
literally i swear 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....
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 literally seeing my dead sister and my ugh FRIENDS are
no i'm not

CHRISTINE
is dad still being a fucking dick-head?

SINDY

yeah whatever

CHRISTINE

okay...have you had to call the police?

SINDY

like a couple...but like it's been okay, really it's been better

CHRISTINE

okay, are you taking care of yourself?

SINDY

ummm...yeah, not like.

i um --

no

CHRISTINE

no no, it's -- it's okay.

middle school's supposed to be a really tough time, so

SINDY

it is?

CHRISTINE

oh my gosh, yeah! are you kidding? it's like the worst period of time ever

nothing makes any sense

and neither does high school honestly

and really? i mean college doesn't really either...at least from what I got to experience

i don't know, i think maybe all of life isn't supposed to be easy.

SINDY

okay but that doesn't help me with what to like, DO

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 don't...love *someone*

you get to love *someone*, you get to love *some people*

you get to love to 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

you'll hurt people. and you might lose them for a while

you'll hurt yourself and you might feel like you lose you for a while but...

you will *always* have your heart

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

because you get to

SINDY

Chris i love you so much

CHRISTINE

i have to leave. you have to go back

SINDY
nononono please don't

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 the *heck* did you get so cool?

PLATO

i've always been that cool
just shut up for a sec

SINDY

i feel like i'm gonna throw up

breath.

SINDY

fuck
fuck fuck fuck
fuck, you guys
i'm so sorry
shit
why didn't anyone --
no, you did
fuck
i don't know what's wrong with me.
i don't know why i'm like this. i'm just like, fucked up and i don't know who i am or how to be
and i just feel like so fucked up like i just can't --

MANDY runs over and hugs her.

MANDY

shut up

they cry.

MANDY

you got really fucking scary

SINDY

i know i'm sorry
i know i know

GRACEON

mandy.

MANDY

what

GRACEON
what are you doing

MANDY
what??

GRACEON
sindy you pulled a gun on all of us

SINDY
Graceon no i know i didn't // realize, I'm sorry!

GRACEON
No, seriously, stop. Like you were *really* awful. Just because you realized you were awful doesn't mean you didn't act awful

MANDY
Okay but // like she's been going through a lot like you saw

SINDY
Graceon okay I'm sorry! I'm fucked up I literally don't know // what you want me to tell you!

REELER
Sindy we're all fucked up, it's fine // just accept it's gonna take some time

SINDY
I'm not saying *you're all* fucked up! // I'm saying -- I'm saying I'm sorry and I want to be friends because like -- what is going on!

SOCRATES
But you did go like completely // fucking ballistic and try killing us all

MANDY
She // knows, she literally -- guys she's saying she's sorry!

REELER
No, you're missing the point.

PLATO
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

RUBEN SOAKED ME IN CHOCOLATE MILK

SOCRATES

YOU LIT MY FUCKING BOOK ON **FIRE**

PLATO

(a fuck-you)

GUYS. RUBEN.

RUBEN

(rubbing his head)

ow

REELER

are you okay?

PLATO

(jesus christ)

RUBEN

yeah, 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

that's kinda harsh

GRACEON

the kind you asked when someone's
hit with a fucking sack of flower in
the head, dipshit

MANDY

oh my god, chill

SINDY

did you try to fucking kill me with a sack of flower?

SOCRATES

No

RUBEN

They were trying to 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
WAR AND LIKE THAT WAS THE ONLY THING THEY WOULD RESPOND TO, LIKE
NOTHING ELSE AFFECTS THEM IT'S NOT MY FAULT THEY DON'T FEEL SHIT

SOCRATES
NO NO NO I DID NOT FUCKING -- I TRIED // SAYING THAT WE WERE TRYING TO
MAKE PEACE WITH A NOTE BUT YOU WOULDN'T FUCKING LISTEN AND WENT
OFF AND MADE THIS WHOLE THING WAY BIGGER THAN IT NEEDED TO BE

RUBEN
// no sindy, we tried saying -- yeah

GRACEON
Okay // SOCRATES YOU DON'T GET TO -- YOU LITERALLY PULLED RUBEN AWAY
FROM ME LIKE A FUCKING LEECH

MANDY
ruben are you okay? Do you like, need anything?

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 really bad friends
you are all being terrible friends
all of you have been terrible friends
we're all being terrible fucking friends FUCK

a silence.

RUBEN
i wanna apologize cause i really feel like i started all of this

REELER
ruben maybe really don't talk right now

PLATO
stop blaming yourself for everything,
you didn't start anything

RUBEN
but like gross boy over here // who can't like

PLATO
stop CALLING YOURSELF GROSS
FUCK

RUBEN
you're scaring me

PLATO
 I'M GROSS TOO
 REELER'S GROSS
 FUCKING SINDY'S GROSS

SINDY
 okay, hey

PLATO
 WE'RE. ALL. GROSS.
 EVERYBODY
 OKAY?

breath.

GRACEON
 sindy i'm -- i want us to be friends, like i wanna -- but like i'm mad at you, okay? you got mean
 ruben i'm still mad at you too

RUBEN
 i know

GRACEON
 i think we'll all like, be friends before we graduate, yeah
 but just like right now i'm -- i don't *hate* you guys or anything
 i don't think i could
 but....
 i don't know....
 i don't think i like, love you guys or anything

SOCRATES
 i'm sorry, plato

PLATO
 cool

 thanks,
 still fucked up

SOCRATES
 yeah

GRACEON
 wasn't *i* the one who just -- why didn't you apologize to me?

SOCRATES
Graceon i'm sorry

GRACEON
jesus christ

SINDY
sorry, socrates

SOCRATES
...yeah
sorry

REELER
guys we are like craaaaazy
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? do we just go back to normal?

REELER
i think this *is* the normal for now, it's just kinda weird
for a while

RUBEN
oh
well that sucks

GRACEON
ruben it'll be fine eventually just like
whatever

MANDY
so
i mean
it is still technically my birthday

SINDY

oh fuck i'm so sorry mandy

MANDY

no nono stop

it's okay

um

i know everything's like

bad, or whatever right now

and i think cake is maybe ruined

but um

i was just wondering if we could

i was wondering if we could just like dance

to like one song, we only have to do one song and then you can like call your parents to come pick you up

REELER, SOCRATES, PLATO, GRACEON

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 like pretend?

for one dance

for me?

REELER

yeah, fuck it

PLATO

i would actually really like // to dance, actually

RUBEN

yeah, sure

GRACEON

sure, man

SINDY

yeah

SOCRATES

yeah, that might be nice

MANDY

:) okay
 thanks
 lemme just
 sorry, i know this is weird
 i just // sorry i thought

REELER
 stop apologizing!
 we said yes!
 and i think
 i think there's a chance we might all secretly actually really wanna dance and are just playing it cool right now so the longer you stall the more time you're giving us to secretly change our minds!

MANDY
 okay!
 okay
 thanks

MANDY goes to the phone and plays "Sex On Fire" by The Kings of Leon.

ALL BUT MANDY
 oh nice (*adlibs*)

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*