

FALLOUT
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11/13/19

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CAST:

KATE- A white millennial. She's dealing with some shit. Also getting an MFA. Also she's about to break her ankle in probably the worst possible way.

MIMI- A PhD student in Kate's program. They are newly very very close friends by virtue of their program and having to review each other's work. Mimi is ten-ish years older than Kate.

GABI- Kate's roommate. Smart, funny, deeply emotionally intelligent and also a cool girl. Puerto Rican, must be played by a Latinx actor.

JULIA- Kate's younger sister, in college. Used to Kate's bullshit.

DEBORAH- Kate's therapist, the best therapist she's ever had, but also that's a low bar.

ANNIE- Kate's other roommate. Sweet, caring, very good at being a good friend. Less cool but also less aggressive than Gabi.

SARAH- Kate's best friend from college, who now lives in Chicago. Has had sex with Kate, but they're not dating and have never dated, Sarah mostly dates men.

CARI- Kate's straight friend from childhood. Kate's straight white friend who is now married.

LILY- Kate's first girlfriend. They used to be best friends in high school, started dating and it fell apart. They have not spoken in years, and may not be speaking now.

DANA- Kate's physical therapist. No-nonsense, but also no comfort.

US SENATOR KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND- Just US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. Ideally playing herself, but if that's not possible, liberties can be taken.

SETTING:

Fall 2018. Couches, apartments, offices, ubers, millennial-land, now. Everything lives in a more suspended animation, but the scene that is the most unreal is the Lily/Kate scene.

Note about tone: Yes, I wrote an all-lady play about sexual assault that starts with a poem. However, the characters (especially Kate) spend a lot of time joking and being intentionally silly and irreverent about how they talk about sexual assault, because in my experience, this is how women actually talk to each other about sexual assault. All to say: don't be afraid of the jokes, there are hopefully a lot of them.

Note about doubling: Any characters except Kate, Gabi, and Annie may be doubled.

Note about OS Voice (OSV): This is a man's voice, ideally pre-recorded.

Note about pacing: The characters interrupt themselves and each other a lot. Don't slow down.

PROLOGUE: THESIS

Kate walks up to the podium in front of her class, holding a piece of paper.

KATE:

Fallout

When bits of bone and cloth come
Raining back down
When shards of glass and splintered teeth
Patter paved streets
When hair and leaves
Feather low through smoke
When you sit hum drum
Moonstruck
Does your city
Does your body become
Contaminant
Just because it's coming back
Slightly out of place?

Thank you.

A smattering of clapping maybe some snaps. She looks out, someone's hand is up.

KATE (*Calling on them*):

Yeah-

OS VOICE:

First, I really appreciated the reference to Slaughterhouse Five's Hamburg scene.

KATE:

Oh. Ok, thanks, uh-

OSV:

But I was just wondering, I guess it really made me think about, just in this era or um climate that we're in right now, it really brought to mind, sorry, the like culture of sexual assault, and I was wondering if that's part of your own personal experience?

Kate's stuck. Mimi comes up to the podium to tag her out and rescue her. It's incredibly awkward, a lot of weird shuffling.

KATE:

Oh- uh- sorry. No uh- sorry, are you asking if I-

MIMI (*simultaneous with Kate's waffling*):

Cool. Kate, that was- . Um- uh- this is something we can talk about next time but we should all review for these TA sessions how to critically deal with what you're about to hear or whatever, see, and uh, thanks, we're good.

Kate moves across Mimi, trips and falls.

KATE:
FUCK.

MIMI:
Oh shit, Jesus, are you?

SCENE 1

Kate and Gabi on the couch. Kate has her foot propped up in a cast.

GABI:

You should get like. Damages.

KATE:

I think I've had enough –

GABI:

No, like full on damages, like Glenn Close lawsuit DAMAGES!

KATE:

I'm fine with Glenn Close but no one's getting paid for this. I mean maybe I could sue Mimi if I wanted to? Like technically I think I tripped over her, but obviously it was his-

GABI:

Oh my god obviously, yeah- you don't ask someone that question-

KATE:

I mean you shouldn't.

GABI:

No!

KATE:

It's grad school.

GABI:

Yeah, it's. Jesus fucking Christ.

KATE:

Yeah.

GABI:

So.

KATE:

So.

GABI:

So are you like, I don't know, it's. It's throwing you. It feels like you've been thrown.

KATE:

I mean yeah, I literally threw myself to the ground in response.

GABI:

Like you were hit by a truck.

KATE:

Hit by the rape truck.

GABI:

Beep beep mother fucker, rape truck is coming to town.

KATE:

Hop on board. Or don't, you're taking a ride whether you want to or not.

GABI:

Good to know you didn't knock your sense of humor loose.

KATE:

Just my ankle and my brain.

GABI:

So what's going on in your brain?

KATE:

Well the sleep thing, but that's- whatever we'll say that's the ankle. I feel like, ok maybe not my brain but it's that thing where my mouth, or like my chest? Or like, my lungs are-

GABI:

Land that plane, Kate.

KATE:

Sorry. It's very quietly screaming.

GABI:

Mmm. Okbutlike. What about like talking?

KATE:

But like, the feeling, that feeling is the sense that talking through any of it- any of it- will be way too much.

GABI:

I mean, yes.

KATE:

Right. So.

GABI:

So. But like. This also feels like too much.

KATE:

Yeah. Yeaah. But.

GABI:

Like, you're shitting your pants about the thought of talking about how hard it is to talk about things that are hard to talk about.

KATE:

Maybe this emotional diarrhea will give me that special sweat-glow-

GABI:

Very pretty for a giant mess.

KATE:

I love that, I'm like a My Chemical Romance song.

GABI:

You're so beautiful but so broken inside.

KATE:

But like, I don't need to be broken? Like I could just-

GABI:

Dude, it's- like you were fully- .

KATE:

-Assaulted.

GABI:

Yes! Like, yes you also broke your ankle but you at least have a cast for that and this, there's nothing that actually. It's like, not-

KATE:

I mean. The ankle is new.

GABI:

The assault is not not new.

KATE:

It's a full year.

GABI:

Right! It's been a year of not dealing with it and pretending it's fine and then a fuckwad brings it up and you're like, demolished.

KATE:

Yes... and?

GABI:

Yes and nothing- it's not a yes-and situation-

KATE:

It's yes or-

GABI:

It's both and?

KATE:

As well as-

GABI:

In addition to-

KATE:

I always thought it was in *edition to*- like, edition of a book, and-

GABI:

Like "In this edition of this scenario"?

KATE:

Yeah, and no one corrected me until college?

GABI:

Public education mannnn.

KATE:

Mannn.

GABI:

Mannnnnnn.

KATE:

I do want to talk about it.

GABI:

Ok.

KATE:

Ok, but like here's my ideal scenario-

GABI:

Ok.

KATE:

I like, walk into the Senate. Or like. Crutch, but ideally walk.

GABI:

Ok, already sounds like a really good plan.

KATE:

And I filibuster.

GABI:

Uh huh. I'm less clear.

KATE:

Like, magically, there's a rule that appears that anyone can walk into the Senate and filibuster and I'm the only one lame enough to know about it so there's no line or general public and I find a bill that is totally sucky but that no one is paying attention to, but the whole US Senate is there. And CSPAN is down for the day so my grandparents aren't watching.

GABI:

Yes.

KATE:

No one's grandparents are watching, it's just me and the Senate, and like. A couple of the good Representatives? I don't want a bunch of them but the cool ones.

GABI:

Rosa DeLauro.

KATE:

Yeah, cool old lady reps can come.

GABI:

And Ocasio-Cortez, obviously-

KATE:

Yes.

GABI:

And me and Annie in the front row. Sorry, this is your thing-

KATE:

No this is helpful, obviously you and Annie are invited, what's a filibuster without roommates-

GABI:

Good. Sorry, continue, sorry-

KATE:

Sorry- so like- I just get up and I filibuster, and I just yell "I WAS ASSAULTED." And then no one has any follow up questions, ever, and then I keep the filibuster going by like reading Harry Potter in a performative way-

GABI:

With like terrible British accents-

KATE:

"Ello, Arry, it's you, Arry Po'ah"

GABI:

I love that scene.

KATE:

Can you imagine if like, the people who get Harry Potter tattoos, got that- like that was the line-

GABI:

It's deeply meaningful!

KATE:

So like, I just do that for the rest of the filibuster, and then later if it's still going and I feel like I wanna say anything else I can but for the most part I just win the filibuster by making so many people so uncomfortable so early on that they feel like they can't get up and leave but they also totally tune me out for the whole rest of it, so even if I decide to say something legit nobody even notices.

GABI:

Maybe most people should start all their meetings with that.

KATE:

Yeah, like if you haven't prepped for a presentation-

GABI:

You just yell "I WAS ASSAULTED" at the beginning-

KATE:

And then you can bullshit your way through the rest of it and no one will care.

GABI:

And no one will ever interrupt you again.

KATE:

This is what we, as women, have been doing wrong-

GABI:

Getting assaulted?

KATE:

Yes, it is very wrong of us to do that, and also- we complain all the time about men interrupting us in like Important Business Matters, but we have yet to try yelling "I WAS ASSAULTED" continuously until they stop.

GABI:

That was the point of metoo, though, right? It's all about the workplace.

KATE:

Business decorum.

GABI:

Seizing the means of production.

KATE:

Maybe. That's what- Karl Marx was actually, like Donald Trump- ughhhhh-

GABI:

Dude what even is that?

KATE:

My brain went- seizing the means of production, sexual assault is seizing the means of reproduction, grab em by the pussy, Donald Trump is a secret communist?

GABI:

Oooohh so deep undercover.

KATE:

Ugh what I wouldn't give for a good Joe McCarthy hearing.

GABI:

Your chances of being raped by Joe McCarthy were basically zero, back in the good old days.

KATE:

I mean. He probably hate fucked a sheep or something.

GABI:
Yeah. I can see it.

KATE:
I can't unsee it now that I've said it.

Beat.

GABI:
So. Given that there's no secret Senate filibuster rule.

KATE:
I mean, are we 100% sure?

GABI:
I did get a five on my APUSH. Thanks colonizers.

She salutes.

KATE:
God bless.

GABI:
I'm like ninety percent sure there's no secret citizen filibuster option-

KATE:
Good band name though! Secret Citizen Filibuster!

GABI:
Citizen Filibuster, the long-awaited sequel to Citizen Kane.

KATE:
Citizen Kate!

Beat. Kate rubs her leg down to her cast.

KATE:
Sorry. I'm stalling.

GABI:
Yeah, I'm letting you.

KATE:
Thanks. Thanks Gabs.

Beat. Kate takes a deep breath.

KATE:
Given that that doesn't exist. I don't know what I want.

GABI:
Yeah. That's ok.

KATE:
Is it?

GABI:
Yeah.

KATE:
I mean, I know I can't stay here, in this spot.

GABI:
But you can like, try something and see if it works, you don't have to know that it's gonna help you ahead of time in order to do it.

KATE:
Ummm...

GABI:
Like none of it is gonna be comfortable anyway? Even if it does eventually become helpful, at first it's not gonna feel great because it's gonna be a change.

KATE:
Right.

GABI:
But you're also not comfortable now.

KATE:
Yes.

GABI:
So you might as well be uncomfortable but moving towards comfort instead of doing this.

KATE:
You're telling me I should get up and put on a sweater if I'm cold even though the floor is gonna be cold on my feet on my way to get a sweater.

GABI:
I mean that is a very you analogy that makes no sense. But yes.

KATE:
I understood me.

GABI:
That's all that matters.

Kate sits up on the couch, pushes off the blanket, shivers. She leans over to reach the window, and opens it.

KATE:
I WAS ASSAULTED.

GABI:
Oh my god NO!

KATE:
What?

GABI:
You can't literally yell that- someone's gonna call the-

KATE:
Oh my god someone's gonna think you like-

They both start laughing.

OSV:
NO ONE CARES!

This sets them off into fits of laughter.

SCENE 2

Kate and Julia on the couch of Kate's apartment. The TV is on.

JULIA:

I think the BBC should start infiltrating American television.

KATE:

I agree but tell me more.

JULIA:

Like, they start sending covert reporters to get hired at American News Organizations, and they very slowly start upping the standards for journalistic integrity.

KATE:

Ok, but can we be recolonized with our fictional programs too?

JULIA:

Yes. Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Sally Wainwright and Shonda Rimes team up-

KATE:

Jenji Kohan, Shonda Rhimes-

JULIA:

Jenji Kohan, Diablo Cody, Shonda Rhimes-

KATE:

Ava DuVernay, Jenji Kohan-

JULIA:

Jill Soloway-

KATE:

Jill Soloway walks into a bar, sees Amy Sherman-Palladino, and immediately walks out.

JULIA:

Amy Sherman-Palladino walks into a gay bar, orders a drink and doesn't pay for it, and then walks out.

KATE:

And wins a GLAAD award.

JULIA:

Rose McGowan presents it to her-

KATE:

Rose McGowan gives a speech calling herself the bravest woman she's ever known-

JULIA:

Rose McGowan walks into a bar-

KATE:

Jesus I don't even know where to go with that one.

JULIA:

Too far?

KATE:

No, I just literally don't know where to take it. Dr. Christine Blasey-Ford walks into a bar, that's too far.

JULIA:

I bet you could find a way-

KATE:

Dr. Christine Blasey-Ford walks into a bar, a room full of bartenders says "No she didn't" and then charge her for someone else's drink.

JULIA:

Eh. Could be worse.

KATE:

Oh it can always be worse.

JULIA:

Your life could be worse, you could have no one to visit you and deal with your stinky head.

KATE:

It's your sisterly duty to visit my stinky head.

JULIA:

Is anyone else visiting?

KATIE:

Sarah's making her annual trip but. I don't know. I think I'm gonna try to not be such an invalid of putridity by then.

JULIA:

Infirm of purpose.

KATE:
Unfirm porpoise.

JULIA:
I think you mean unformed pupae.

KATE:
Will you scratch my stinky head?

JULIA:
Yes.

Kate puts her head in Julia's lap.

JULIA:
Wait can I pop this first?

KATE:
Sure whatever you can find is yours. I might fall asleep.

Julia inspects Kate's forehead.

JULIA:
Probably Dr. Ford's life can't get worse. Like she's on a guaranteed upswing.

KATE:
Eh I don't know. She still has to do Thanksgiving this year.

JULIA:
Thanksgiving is great!

KATE:
Ok but like, for her, the whole world knows all of her shit now but so does like, her second cousins. And she's gonna have to pass brussels sprouts to those people in like two months. That's worse.

JULIA:
Oh yeah woah I didn't even think about that.

KATE:
Like some cousin in bumfuck Arkansas is sitting on his couch right now going "Yeah she always was a tease".

JULIA:
I'm glad we don't have weirdo cousins in bumfuck Arkansas.

KATE:
No I'm pretty sure we're the weirdo cousins.

JULIA:
Yeah poor Lesley and Britt.

KATE:
And Diane. Marrying into the weirdos.

JULIA:
She is a high-class lady.

KATE:
Oh my god though did I ever tell you about when Diane told me, like super caszj, that she was raped?

JULIA:
What? No.

KATE:
Yeah it was in Washington, like the last time I was there, Diane was there and Grandpa was being a dick and I was trying to explain something in the news-

JULIA:
Oh god-

KATE:
I literally don't even remember, it was like, not even Trump stuff, it was like, oh my god it was like four years ago? Longer?

JULIA:
Before Britt's wedding?

KATE:
Yeah so not last trip but the trip before- doesn't matter. Grandpa was being a dick and Diane was there and I was trying to explain some New York Times thing to Grandpa and it was about sexual assault or something or the slut walk or slut shaming maybe? The whole point of the argument was that you can't put a steak in front of a hungry dog-

JULIA:
Except you can and they won't eat it until you say ok-

KATE:
I mean yes, right-

JULIA:
And also we castrate dogs-

KATE:
I didn't mention that but that's really good-

JULIA:
And also-

KATE:
Anyway anyway anyway- it came down to a classic Grandpa yelling match and he's making just like terrible arguments, and like, for all he knows any one of us could have had something happen-

JULIA:
Yeah, it's just stupid-

KATE:
And I said that to Diane, and she just goes, "I was raped at fifteen, he doesn't know what the fuck he's talking about."

JULIA:
Whoa.

KATE:
Yeah.

JULIA:
Fuck.

KATE:
And like, I just had that moment where I was like, oh my god I had no idea, but also I would have no idea, because like-

JULIA:
Yeah, you don't ask your aunts-

KATE:
No, I mean I wouldn't really have that conversation with Diane or Lisa unless they started it-

JULIA:
Right, like you'd never assume-

KATE:
I kinda did assume though, that it hadn't happened to them?

JULIA:
Yeah.

KATE:
Like obviously that's just my brain but like since they're older it just felt like not a part of something that ever would have been a part of their life?

JULIA:
Yeah, and like, they're family so we don't-

KATE:
Right, you hear when bad stuff happens in general, but until someone is testifying in front of Congress-

JULIA:
Right, like we'd know if Diane got kidney stones or something-

KATE:
Yeah, didn't she have polio or something crazy?

JULIA:
I think someone else had polio-

KATE:
That's so weird-

JULIA:
Yeah that that was like a THING-

KATE:
Right but you can't really fathom like polio and date rape existing at the same time-

JULIA:
I mean date rape probably wasn't super popular in the polio ward.

KATE:
Yeah, iron lungs also conveniently function as chastity belts.

JULIA:
Yiiiiikes.

KATE:
Not my best.

JULIA:
No.

Beat. Kate sits up.

KATE:

But like, you think you know shit about your family and then you're just hit with that.

JULIA:

Did she tell you about it at all? Like what happened?

KATE:

No. I knew before though that she got kicked out of Catholic boarding school so it kinda makes me think about like.

JULIA:

Oh whoa. Yeah.

KATE:

You know? I mean. I didn't ask her.

JULIA:

Yeah you can't really ask.

KATE:

And maybe she only told me because it's like, a different world for her now? Or because I'm so much younger? Like it's not like talking to Britt-

JULIA:

Right, you're not as close so you can talk about things more directly.

KATE:

And like it doesn't fundamentally change how I think about her.

JULIA:

Right it's not like it's you. Or mom.

KATE:

Yeah. No. Mom. Ack.

JULIA:

Like I can't even *imagine* how weird-

KATE:

Oh mom never very clearly told you she's never been raped? She's never had that gem of a conversation with you?

JULIA:
What?? No. I mean she told me about the abortion, but-

KATE:
Wait WHAT?

JULIA:
Mom had an abortion?

KATE:
Ummmmmmmmmm ok cool what the fuck.

JULIA:
Yeah she got preggo right before med school and went for a light spring cleaning.

KATE:
Wow ok how come I get the boring “I’ve never been raped but it probably sucks” story and you get the fun juicy abortion deets?

JULIA:
Oh my god never say juicy abortion ever-

KATE:
Juicy Juice! 100% Abortion of 100% Kids

JULIA:
Nonono-

KATE (*pointing to Julia*):
Juicy Jules! Julia’s Juciest Abortion Smoothies, now with more fingernails!

JULIA:
You are a nightmare.

KATE:
That was great.

JULIA:
That was the worst.

Beat.

JULIA:
It just feels weird thinking about it though.

KATE:
Yeah.

JULIA:
Like you can know someone really well and love them and not know half of their shit.

KATE:
Yeah.

JULIA:
And you can't really ask.

KATE:
No. And even if you did they might not tell you.

SCENE 3

Kate in Deborah's office. Her leg is in a boot.

KATE:

It was very, uh, very performative.

DEBORAH:

The way you were walking, or... ?

KATE:

Well, clomping, and like. All of it. I made a point of like standing up and huffing away. And I had to walk directly past them, I mean they like moved their legs. Although that may have just been deferential to like, the boot.

DEBORAH:

And they didn't say anything?

KATE:

No. I just stretched out on the benches in the lobby for like fifteen minutes. I didn't even go in the bathrooms, I feel like if I actually wanted like. If I needed space I would have gone in the bathrooms.

DEBORAH:

You feel like you wanted someone to find you in the lobby.

KATE:

Yeah. And I actually wanted to move my leg I think but. Yeah I wanted them to find me.

DEBORAH:

Why is that?

KATE:

I don't know. Because then they'd have to ask if I was ok. And I could say no, because I wasn't ok, but also I was making myself not ok because the subject matter was very *upsetting* but also I knew it was very upsetting so by going I was basically intentionally upsetting myself with my friends and just, waiting for them to care.

DEBORAH:

You gave them a test.

KATE:

Yeah. I guess.

DEBORAH:

Did they pass?

KATE:

I mean they didn't do anything wrong, it's not like- I didn't ask them for anything, I just sort of waited for them to come find me so I could have my very dramatic very performative reveal.

DEBORAH:

Is that how you want to tell them? In a dramatic way?

KATE:

I mean. No! No of course not, no one wants that monologue, that- although we were at the Vagina Monologues so obviously someone wants that monologue, someone auditioned for that monologue, but like no one wants to be stupid about it, you know? It's just- if it's that thing, if it's a monologue-

DEBORAH:

It's not real.

KATE:

Right. Exactly. And it's like. I do love kitsch. Maybe I do like the drama of it. It's kind of funny if you put yourself in a Lifetime movie. Like. If you start a Lifetime movie, there's no point in cutting out before the big dramatic monologue.

DEBORAH:

Do you feel like you started this movie?

KATE:

I'm just being like- it's just a stupid narrative arc thing-

DEBORAH:

Sure. But in a narrative arc, a protagonist has to do something to start the story. Do you feel like you started this story?

KATE:

I mean. Yeah. I did. I did, it's not- my actions caused this story to happen.

DEBORAH:

But you didn't make this happen to you.

KATE:

No I didn't force someone to force me to have sex, but- if we're talking narrative arc here, I did set it in motion-

DEBORAH:

But that assumes a preset outcome.

KATE:

Yeah. Because I've seen enough Lifetime movies to know what happens when you put yourself there, when you get stuck and then. And the only payoff you get is a really long winding terrible monologue. About how you're an apple core that's rotted in the middle or how you are empty inside a shell or how your body is dissolving inside your skin or whatever weird gross analogy. Or soul-murder. That's from SVU. Or maybe Numb3rs? I don't know, early 2000's super specified cop show, there was an episode where they call it soul-murder.

DEBORAH:

What does that mean to you?

KATE:

I don't know, it feels a little presumptuous to assume someone else can murder my soul, that feels like it's my job.

DEBORAH:

But you remember the phrase.

KATE:

Yeah. Yeah. I think they put it in a cop's monologue, about how they knew it was called soul-murder, so this perp should be tried as a killer, not a rapist, and this whole thing about how he ruined her whole life, she was dead inside, she'd never be the same.

DEBORAH:

Do you know what your monologue would have been if your friends had come to find you?

KATE:

No. I don't know. I was planning on some kind of- I don't know. An announcement. But.

DEBORAH:

In the Lifetime movie version, what happens?

KATE:

In the lifetime movie version, I mean I don't have a boot, boots aren't damaged and cute, they're just like damaged so. I just, I run out, I'm not huffy but it's very discreet. It's like, clandestine. Dainty? I don't know. Nick and James look at each other and then they both decide to follow. They find me in the lobby. I'm slumped next to a bench. My head is in my knees. It's not sprawling, I look scared and they look at each other and then one of them moves closer. James would move closer, he's more, like. No I think it would be Nick, it would be more poignant if it's Nick, James would approach and try to make me laugh, but this time it's Nick because he's so stoic and he comes over and just puts a hand on my shoulder and I look up because I haven't even noticed them and I've been crying but not like, gross, and they just look at me and they *know*. They get it. And Nick sits down next to me and I put my head on his shoulder and James sits in front of me and they both just look at me and they don't ask any questions because they just totally get it. And after a minute I can just say, "I was assaulted." Just like quietly and it's not even a big reveal because we already knew and it's just confirmation that I needed, like that-

KATE (*cont.*):

-moment isn't about them knowing, it's about me knowing I can say it to them. These boys can hear it and. And that's it. And then we cut to- something else. I don't know. Walking back to the student center later that night and we're sort of hug walking? Maybe I don't watch enough Lifetime to know what happens after the big monologue.

DEBORAH:

So essentially, you wanted a monologue with no lines.

KATE:

Yeah. I guess.

DEBORAH:

I mean what I hear in there is that you want understanding and unconditional love from your friends, specifically your male friends, and that you're subconsciously trying to force your way into a confession of this secret to confirm to yourself that you're worth loving anyway. That you're not ruined, there's nothing wrong with you, your soul isn't murdered. That you're still a whole person.

KATE:

I mean. Fuck. Yeah. Are you- is that like allowed, in therapy, to just give someone the answer?

DEBORAH:

Not usually, but it seemed like you could handle it.

KATE:

Yeah.

DEBORAH:

And we're seven minutes over from the monologue, but we needed to get somewhere. And next week, it's Tuesday because I have my conference Thursday.

SCENE 4

Kate and Annie are sitting quietly on the couch together. Kate's in her boot. Nothing's happening. They are maybe half-heartedly on their phones.

ANNIE:

Hey are you posting something for National Coming Out Day? I wasn't gonna post anything but then I felt like maybe I should?

KATE:

You should! If you want to, I mean obviously you don't have to, but if you want to you totally should.

ANNIE:

Are you?

KATE:

Oh no. Noooo.

ANNIE:

Why?

KATE:

I mean I thought about it. I drafted something but it's like not even about- it took a weird turn.

ANNIE:

Oh really?

KATE:

Yeah? I was like thinking about it and I was like, I definitely should post something because of everything, like just how everything feels right now and how bad everything feels-

ANNIE:

Yeah, totally.

KATE:

But then I was like, what does it say that my impetus to post something is just because of like a negative, like my main impetus is because of something fundamentally negative-

ANNIE:

Sure-

KATE:

And then I was like, wow who the fuck am I to even feel like the world is waiting with bated breath for my hot take on National Coming Out Day, like why do I even feel like people care if I post or not?

ANNIE:
Yeahhhh, yeah-

KATE:
Like that's so just like "mehhhh I'm important" or like "mehhhh I'm important with a capital I with capital I- important capital T-thoughts-"

ANNIE:
Ok that's- maybe you are? Or like, everyone has important thoughts sometimes?

KATE:
Maybe. But like then I was reading everyone else's posts and it made me feel really communal and I don't know I wanted to be a part of that feeling-

ANNIE:
Oh absolutely.

KATE:
But then it was like, given all the negative shit, I shouldn't be, you know centering myself, as a privileged, as someone who really hasn't ever been given shit, like I don't need to post about me, myself, or whatever-

ANNIE:
Ok...

KATE:
So I was like, I'm gonna write something about transphobia!

ANNIE:
Like in a- like how so?

KATE: I tried to make it about like, an apology or like accountability or whatever about how I was kind of a transphobic dick for most of like. My life.

ANNIE:
I mean, as were we all-

KATE:
Yeah, but like I just imagine that like there's probably people out there who I've hurt and I don't even know it, so it was meant to be like an apology to anyone who I made feel like they couldn't come out.

ANNIE:
That's like. I kinda like that.

KATE:
Yeah?

ANNIE:
Yeah. It's thoughtful.

KATE:
But then I was like, I've never made my own coming out post for myself so is it like, a cop out?

ANNIE:
Cop out seems strong, it's-. You're not in the closet.

KATE:
I feel like I am sometimes.

ANNIE:
But like-

KATE:
Like, yeah my friends obviously get it but I don't like, like I never had the moment-

ANNIE:
But like, you've been dating women-

KATE:
I mean Lily and I weren't really out, that was half the fun, and then Jenna and I were, I guess, but we didn't have a moment-

ANNIE:
Anyway, I don't think you have to be out even to post that. Like straight people should post that.

KATE:
It just feels like. I don't know- an apology without acknowledgement. Is that an apology?

ANNIE:
Acknowledgement's important, but if you feel like you need to apologize-

KATE:
I feel like I might have done something and I don't even know what it is and it hurt someone.

ANNIE:
Yeah. Yes. But we all might have hurt someone at some point.

KATE:

I might have like, seriously fucked something up for someone and they think about it all the time and I don't even think about it at all because I don't even realize I did it.

ANNIE:

I think you'd know if you seriously fucked something up.

KATE:

Would I though? Like what if it just felt normal to me? What if I didn't know I was doing something wrong?

ANNIE:

Yeah, but looking back now, you'd know.

KATE:

Maybe. Maybe. I just don't trust whatever my memory is of something, like it wasn't even worth filing away because it felt mundane.

ANNIE:

But you weren't a mundanely terrible person ever. The banality of evil is for like, Nazis.

KATE:

Maybe I would have been a Nazi!

ANNIE:

Woooooahhh ok.

KATE:

Maybe I was a nightmare.

ANNIE:

It's just hard for me to picture, but sure. I guess we all could have been nightmares, and we don't remember because it felt normal.

KATE:

Like do you honestly think white South Africans remember what it felt like to be racist?

ANNIE:

I mean I'm sure white South Africans don't really care-

KATE:

I mean, I'm sure they remember the capital R-Racism and the capital A-Apartheid, but do they actually remember feeling racist?

ANNIE:

I don't know.

KATE:

If you're always just yourself, like if being racist feels settled, or natural, or- like the stasis makes you, yourself, feel the same-

ANNIE:

You're asking how do you know if you've changed if you feel like the same person but you also know that you're different?

KATE:

Yeah, yes. Yes. I know I am changed. I know I am the same. So I don't know who I was.

ANNIE:

That feels like it's more about coming out then maybe you realize.

KATE:

Maybe.

ANNIE:

Like the reason you can't or couldn't write this post is because it's not about how transphobic you used to be, it's about how straight you used to be-

KATE:

And- yeah. Yeah.

ANNIE:

And I think we all. Like all queer people no matter where you are on the spectrum or how long you've been there, we're all constantly grappling with past versions of ourselves, with the person we used to expect to be now and so we're also grappling with like. The past-future versions of ourselves.

KATE:

Wow. Shit Annie.

ANNIE:

I don't know it's maybe a little much but. I think about how baby-me thought now me was going to be a different person than I am now and I think the trick is to not get caught up in asking baby-me for, or not apologizing to baby me for being different.

KATE:

And not hating baby-you for wanting to be different.

ANNIE:

Exactly.

KATE:

What were you thinking about posting?

ANNIE:

Well nothing now that the bar is so high.

KATE:

No no no! There's no bar I didn't even post anything!

ANNIE:

I'm teasing. Here you write mine and it can secretly be yours too. I won't tell.

She hands Kate her phone

KATE:

Two birds one bush.

SCENE 5

Cari and Kate are at brunch. Kate is in her boot ruefully sipping her mimosa.

CARI:

So like, it's just nuts because we didn't even know dogs could GET lice, let alone the type of lice that would pass along to people-

KATE:

Yeah I wouldn't have guessed-

CARI:

And of course, you can't do the normal human treatments so we were like, oh let's do the vinegar one, there's like an apple cider vinegar lice cure that actually is supposed to make your hair super shiny, but it like, SMELLS LIKE VINEGAR you know?

KATE:

Oof yeah.

CARI:

And apparently apple cider vinegar has a smell that other dogs like freak out about and try to pee on you so we go to the dog park and all of these dogs are freaking out around Soph and like, trying to pee on her-

KATE:

Kinky.

CARI:

Ugh so gross, like so gross! But then we realized like the next day that she didn't have lice and we were like oh my god, maybe it worked? And meanwhile I still smell like apple cider vinegar.

KATE:

Your hair looks great though.

CARI:

Thank you! I feel like it's super shiny but weirdly really like, dry?

KATE:

You can't tell.

CARI:

Joe hates it he says it's crunchy.

KATE:
That seems-

CARI:
It's fine, I feel like he's entitled to complain it always ends up all over his pillow anyway.

KATE:
Sure.

CARI:
Plus he smells like vinegar too so I have a lot to put up with also.

KATE:
Oh man yeah that's the worst.

CARI:
I don't know things could be worse.

KATE:
Yeah things can always get worse.

CARI:
Right? Like just when you're in the middle of sorting through something you get thrown a weird like, I don't know you just get thrown by something and then you have a whole other thing to deal with and you're still getting over the thing that threw you in the first place, like if you get in a car accident and get whiplash, you have whiplash but you also don't have a car.

KATE:
Yeah, yes-

CARI:
That's like. This whole lice thing, like yeah, Soph has lice but we also have to deal with this weird dog park thing.

KATE:
Right.

CARI:
So. Anyway. How are you?

KATE:
Fine. I'm having trouble sleeping. But fine.

CARI:

Are you coming- We're doing that end of summer soiree thing-

KATE:

Yeah. I'll be there.

CARI:

Great! I wasn't sure, with the ankle, how, like, how much you wanted to go out but I think it could be really good for you.

KATE:

I mean it hurts but. Yeah.

CARI:

Ugh that sucks. Joe broke his wrist once, like years ago, like years before we met-

KATE:

So like, when he was an adult or-

CARI:

Like end of college I think?

KATE:

Frat boy antics?

CARI:

I think it actually was a keg stand but his parents think it was biking to class.

KATE:

Oh I was totally kidding I didn't know he was in a frat Jesus.

CARI:

Yeah, oh god, I am SO glad we didn't know each other in college.

KATE:

Wait why?

CARI:

I mean I am not into frat guys-

KATE:

But like, Joe's a frat guy, apparently-

CARI:

Yeah, but like, I'm sure they got up to stuff that would have been totally dumb and would have bugged the shit out of me-

KATE:

Like what.

CARI:

Oh, ya know, just like- antics.

KATE:

Like what.

CARI:

Just stuff.

KATE:

What kind of stuff.

CARI:

Frat boy stuff.

KATE:

What's frat boy stuff?

CARI:

I don't know, I never dated a frat boy for that reason.

KATE:

What reason.

Beat.

KATE:

Sorry, I didn't mean. Sorry. Cari.

Beat.

KATE:

I think I've just, uh. Been going through a lot, and I. It's coming out for me in weird, spiraly ways and I- I- I was thinking maybe I should write about it.

CARI:

Yeah, well, yeah, that's what you do-

KATE:

But the thing is writing, or like, poems, they don't really any go anywhere, your shit just sits there and maybe people read it and that's great, but it doesn't smack someone in the face. And I kinda want to smack people. Like, all the time I just want to smack? People?

CARI:

Ok....

KATE:

I don't know.

CARI:

No, I- I get that.

KATE:

Yeah?

CARI:

Yeah. Have you thought about kickboxing?

Kate looks at her: "are you fucking kidding me".

CARI:

Oh my god, not right now, obviously, obviously, but. If you don't want to write about it, maybe there's like a physical outlet for that sort of- thing.

KATE:

Yeah. Maybe.

CARI:

Or you can just like, write about it and then post it. So it does smack people like, right in the newsfeed.

Cari giggles at her own joke, takes a drink.

CARI:

Or, you know. Talk to someone about stuff.

KATE:

I am.

CARI:

Good, that's good. You know, just, like, say it out loud. What you're going through.

KATE:

Yep.

CARI:

It can really help.

KATE:

Yeah.

CARI:

If you just like, talk.

SCENE 6

Kate back in class. She's having a one-on-one with Mimi.

MIMI:

I have to say I really hate this imagery-

KATE:

Oh god is it-

MIMI:

No it absolutely makes me cringe but I think it's powerful-

KATE:

Thanks Mimi, I-

MIMI:

It's the best stuff you've written in a while and I'm interested in you expanding it a little further.

KATE:

Ok. Ok, how-

MIMI:

Well I want to know where it comes from, to start.

KATE:

Like, actually? Or.

MIMI:

I mean it doesn't actually have to come from anywhere but knowing you I'm guessing there's a backstory.

KATE:

Yeah, there. It happened, it literally happened. I was on the train and everyone refused to stand up for me and it's honestly more comfortable to stand with it sometimes because the thing like digs in when I sit because of the height of the seats, but, so I was like, penned in behind this man. He was talking to his friends, I mean, this man wasn't- like he was maybe six feet and paunchy, and had a very bureaucratic haircut and like- he was saying to his friends. I guess he was trying to joke, like office water cooler joke, "...you put on a helmet to jump out of a plane, like what's that for? The helmet is gonna help if you're jumping out of a plane?" And his friends laughed like he was Jerry Seinfeld and it was 1991 Late Night and it's weird because before he started talking even I had had this urge to bite all of the hairs on the back of his neck. Like he had gotten a haircut earlier this week and his hairs were pointed and straight at the back of his neck and I wanted to take them in my teeth and rip them out by the root and he wouldn't even know what hit him before- because no one expects to have their neck hairs bitten off by a stranger on a subway and I kind of just want to be responsible for someone else's trauma for once.

KATE (*cont.*):

Responsible and then never think about it again and if some day someone's like, "Hey didn't you bite off my friend's neck hairs on the F train to Brooklyn?" I'd say- I don't think I took the F train, I was on the J at the time, what was he doing on the F train to Brooklyn? He doesn't seem like the type that would be on there. Look, clearly someone bit off his neck hairs at some point, and that's terrible, but honestly it's the subway to Brooklyn, he was in a navy suit, weird stuff just happens sometimes and that's life. And really, it seems strange that these neck hairs are being brought up now. Plenty of people have bitten neck hairs in their time. He had just gotten a haircut, he must like the feeling of having his neck hairs removed at some level, this just got a little out of hand.

And now he dreams about me. He dreams about his hairs caught in my teeth, the way I smiled at him. I didn't smile and he never really saw my mouth, full, but that's what he sees in his dreams. He can't bring himself to floss, it gets so bad that he needs a gum graft and his wife buys him a water pick but he can't do it. He feels queasy if celery string gets stuck, so he says he's allergic. He doesn't even know why it started, he doesn't know it's part of the need to keep his head totally shaved. I haunt him, I keep him company on the bus, at the airport. He hates standing in lines. He feels more comfortable wearing a scarf and his brother in law gives him shit for it, calls him metrosexual and asks him when he's gonna transplant his pubes onto his head because damn he got bald fast.

I also wanted to tell them that the reason you wear a helmet when you skydive isn't in case you need it when you hit the ground- it's so that if you hit your head as you're jumping out of the plane on the plane itself, you don't knock yourself out and fall unconscious to the ground. But then I liked the idea of each of them, jumping out of the plane, having the backs of their necks bitten on the way down and falling.

Beat. Kate looks at Mimi, unsure.

MIMI:

Ok. Weird.

SCENE 7

Kate is pretty drunk in an uber with Sarah. She's still in the boot and it's her first time drinking in weeks. She's not totally out of it, but like drunk enough to forget that it's not just the two of them and she's fully subjecting a stranger to this story. Sarah is tipsy but not as drunk.

KATE:

No no no Sarah it was like a thing like a full thing, Tori was like euuuh, whatever, like there for it, but I kept feeling like she didn't want to fuck me?

SARAH:

Wait why?

KATE:

Well, you know, we did-

SARAH:

Oh ok.

KATE:

But like we were at that spot, the like point where you're both like, topless and, but you have your jeans on? You know, classic dyke shit-

She laughs at her own joke, Sarah doesn't really.

SARAH:

Ok.

KATE:

But then she's like, Stop stop stop stop stop, we should talk about it first!

SARAH:

Oh weird.

KATE:

YEAH! YES! Right? Weird, that's weird.

SARAH:

Yeah that feels like a definite mood-killer-

KATE:

And I get it, it's the "right thing to do"-

SARAH:

Eh, I mean maybe?

KATE:

Like it's "responsible" and shit-

SARAH:

That would feel weird to me. It would feel weird.

KATE:

Right and it felt weird to *me*, but then I was like, am I so fucked up and weird that I don't expect, um, like expect someone to be respectful about my body? Like is that just a long weird hold over from the straight world, where, also by the way, like we are gay women, we aren't going to give each other diseases! Like that's not how that works!

SARAH:

I mean you could get herpes, and that would suck-

KATE:

Ok yes herpes but at this point everyone's been exposed to herpes-

SARAH:

That doesn't feel accurate-

KATE:

No, there's like so much of a chance that you have herpes or like have been exposed to herpes that it's not even worth worry, like you definitely have herpes or you don't and that's it-

SARAH:

Yeah, everyone either has herpes or they don't that's all people-

KATE:

No no no no, that's like-

SARAH:

Whatever so your talk was about herpes?

KATE:

Kind of? She asked me the last time I had been tested, which is like lol, like no? So I was like "Yeah I have, all good", and she was like "I haven't, but the last time I was, it was ok"-

SARAH:

Wait so you lied-

KATE:

I mean yesss? But also I hadn't been tested since Jenna, and I haven't done anything that would give me an STD since Jenna, so it wasn't a lie, it just wasn't- not not true?

SARAH:
Ok, but she hadn't been tested either?

KATE:
Right! Which is just like, why are you asking? Just tell me that and then I don't lie and we're good?

SARAH:
That's weird to me. I mean the whole thing is weird to me-

KATE:
Well and then she was like super into consent, which is like, fine-

SARAH:
But that gets so boringggggg!

Annie enters on the other side of the uber. Split scene, Kate/Annie and Kate/Sarah. When Kate is with Annie, she's sober. She stays drunk with Sarah.

KATE *(To Annie)*:
That's when it felt a little weird.

ANNIE:
How so?

SARAH:
Like, yes, I get it, but it's just not like- like, you're not in it-

KATE *(To Sarah)*:
I mean it's the right thing to do, though, like-

ANNIE:
So she was arguing against consent?

SARAH:
I'm not arguing against it, I just feel like when you get too wrapped up in it, it gets weird-

KATE *(To Annie)*:
It felt weird because it felt like this veiled thing where she was like, justifying- *(To Sarah)* it honestly didn't ruin the moment, just like made me think about how I'm so not used to that-

ANNIE:
Did she like, get it?

KATE *(To Annie, but looking at Sarah)*:
I don't know.

SARAH:

I just feel like it's easy to get bogged down and like not focus on the guy, or girl, whatever- the person you're with.

KATE (*To Sarah*):

Sure.

SARAH:

Sometimes I feel like if everyone just like fucked each other shit wouldn't be such a big deal.

ANNIE:

That feels like deflection.

KATE (*To Annie*):

Is it?

ANNIE:

Yeah, I mean you still feel weird about the way you had sex, and from this, obviously Sarah does too.

SARAH:

I don't think you need to feel weird about it, though, that's definitely on her and not on you.

KATE (*To Annie or Sarah?*):

Yeah. Whatever. Whatever whatever.

SARAH:

Super not your fault.

ANNIE:

Have you ever told Sarah?

KATE (*To Annie*):

What? Oh. No.

Sarah gets up and exits the car.

ANNIE:

Why not?

KATE:

She's only here once a year and I don't- I don't want to ruin this trip for her.

ANNIE:

That feels- That's maybe a little overly generous.

KATE:

Yeah. But also. I have no idea what I'd even say to her.

ANNIE:

I don't know, just some. I think she could take some kind of responsibility for, for how that all happened, I mean like, she-

KATE:

No. No, that's the whole thing though is that nothing that happened was her responsibility. We fucked, I felt weird-

ANNIE:

You didn't just fuck though, like it wasn't an accident-

KATE:

No, I. I think she really just wanted to be with a woman and I was a safe option. She knew I wasn't going to turn her down.

ANNIE:

Right, so it was calculated, she intentionally, like, chose-

KATE:

That's. That's giving her too much credit, and anyway it's not like I didn't want to... to be there for her, I mean-

ANNIE:

Obviously everyone wants to be there for their best friend but that's more than-

KATE:

It was my choice. I made the choice. It wasn't a good or bad choice I just-

ANNIE:

Regardless, she didn't even bother, to like, acknowledge, or even, she like, tried to downplay-

KATE:

She left, and she was still straight. The next night I made a *bad* choice, and that's what. That's what got me in trouble, it was me making a bad choice and then having a bad consequence but she left before I started making bad choices so. So that's it.

ANNIE (*really pushing*):

But like, ok, bad consequence isn't- first of all, getting assaulted isn't just a bad consequence- but do you honestly think that if you hadn't felt weird or hurt or crazy or gaslit by Sarah in the first place, you wouldn't have-

KATE (*over the above*):

I don't know! Who the fuck knows, Annie, it could be any- I could have been anywhere feeling weird about anything, it's not. It was just straight up random it wasn't her or. I made my choice, and then he- .Yeah, actually, it would be great if I could be mad at her for it because then, then I could tell her and she could apologize and then we'd be all set and I'd be cured. But that's not. She was responsible for her shit, I'm responsible for mine. I'm sorry, that was. Rude.

ANNIE:

No, it-. I'm sorry. I think it's fair. I think your feelings are fair. But maybe it would also be fair to tell your college best friend you're a little fucked up right now.

KATE:

She left. I can't. That's not something you can text.

ANNIE:

No. But you could talk to her if you wanted to.

KATE:

I kind of don't. I kind of don't need to give her another reason not to come back.

ANNIE:

Maybe she shouldn't.

SCENE 8

A Sunday morning, Kate and Annie are sitting on the couch, Annie is eating granola. Gabi comes in from the kitchen with a yogurt.

ANNIE:
Good morning sunshine.

GABI:
Mmmmmm.

Gabi motions for Kate to move her foot, Kate doesn't.

KATE:
I need foot space.

GABI:
I need yogurt space.

ANNIE:
Here-

Annie grabs a pillow and puts it in her lap, Kate scooches over to lean on Annie, giving Gabi room to sit. As soon as Gabi sits, Kate puts her foot on Gabi's lap.

GABI:
NO NO NO NO NO NO FEET.

Gabi holds her yogurt in the air, too grossed out by Kate's foot to move.

KATE:
Listen, cripples get priority-

Kate lifts her foot so Gabi can transition from the couch to the armchair, which she does, looking disgustedly back at Kate.

GABI:
“Cripple” is an ableist slur.

KATE:
I'm reclaiming it on behalf of the disabled.

GABI:
Your ankle does not count-

ANNIE:
I wonder how long you have to be incapacitated to actually be considered disabled-

KATE:
I'm ready to sue the MTA-

ANNIE:
I mean the stairs are so bad-

GABI:
You can't sue the MTA, you aren't disabled-

KATE:
Actually, technically I fall under ADA law-

ANNIE:
Really?

KATE:
Anxiety, Depression, PTSD, and Sleep Disorders are all recognized as-

GABI:
Wait, seriously?

KATE:
Yeah isn't that nuts?

ANNIE:
I mean it makes sense, those allowances should be made-

GABI:
Yeah, of course, but that just means that like everyone I personally know-

KATE:
I mean yeah, we're all just broken souls trying to find our way back to the light and the lordt.

GABI:
Wow.

KATE:
I should apply for a therapy dog.

GABI:
Or a therapy SoTrulyReal Doll.

ANNIE:
Wait, what-

KATE:
No! Gabi, no- later I can't deal with the Truly Reals before 3pm on a Sunday-

ANNIE:
Oh no, is this one of your-

GABI:
I just wanna show her Baby Monkey Millie and then I'm done-

KATE:
Please, please? I have not eaten.

GABI:
I'll text it to you.

KATE:
You are sick.

GABI:
Just your neighborhood garden pervert.

KATE:
Yeah you wish.

GABI:
What? What does that mean-

KATE:
You're not like, actually a pervert-pervert.

GABI:
Yes I am!

KATE:

Nahhh you're a straight up weirdo but you're not a pervert-

GABI:

What are you even talking about I am a freaky lil hobgoblin-

ANNIE:

Actually I don't think you're pervvy either-

GABI:

What have I ever done to you that makes you think I'm not pervvy-

KATE:

I don't know you're not like, hhhhehrrrr, like, pervvy perv- you're like-

ANNIE:

You don't seem predatory.

GABI:

Ok but like-

KATE:

Plus to the extent that you are pervvy, I'd say that you perform perversion as a defense mechanism to mask the fact that you're still processing sexual trauma and it's a way for you to still have access to your sexuality without shutting it down completely or losing control.

GABI:

Um ok please never drag me like that in front of my cinnamon roll yogurt-

KATE:

It's not a drag!

GABI:

Don't get me wrong, I'm always hwet for a good drag but -

KATE:

No no no, Gab, it wasn't a drag I promise it was a. It was an overreach at analysis. It was me being an asshole.

GABI:

Shut up you're fine.

KATE:

You can be a pervert if you want to be a pervert.

ANNIE:

I'll tell everyone you're a pervert if that would make you feel better.

GABI:

Yes, thank you.

ANNIE:

Ok it's going on my insta-story- hold up your 'gurt.

Gabi makes a face holding her yogurt. Beat while Annie captions the picture.

KATE:

The thing is, about perverts-

GABI:

Please tell me the thing about perverts-

KATE:

No, like actually-

GABI:

Ok, fine, what-

KATE:

Like, perverts want to do bad things.

GABI:

I want to do bad things, and I want bad things done to me-

KATE:

No, like, they want to hurt people.

GABI:

Yes zaddy.

KATE:

No, Gab, seriously, like, I think the reason the word "pervert" has like, penal code level significance is because it specifically denotes someone who causes harm to other people with sexual predation-

GABI:

I mean I think it has “penal code significance” because our society criminalizes sex and is so sexphobic-

KATE:

Yeah, but like, perversion specifically-

GABI:

-Specifically has been used against queer people and alternate sexual and gender preferences-

KATE:

I mean I know that, obviously I know that, I’m talking about my own specific connotations for the word-

GABI:

But like, referencing the penal code or the justice system as a measure for how moral something is, is always going to be inherently problematizing, or like, just, problematic-

KATE:

Yeah, but there’s a reason sex predation is given it’s own category, and like, overapplied, like of course the fear of queer people is that they turn other people gay, because, like-

GABI:

Ok you’ve lost me-

KATE:

Like, trauma creates trauma.

ANNIE:

Ehhhhhhhhhhh-

KATE:

Obviously I’m not saying being queer is a trauma-

ANNIE:

Okaaaay? I mean it can cause trauma, but only because of a lack of-

KATE:

Yes, that’s, I mean-

ANNIE:

Sorry-

KATE:

No, it's that- people do find out they're queer through queer experiences. And yes, there would always be some level of queerness in a totally straight society, but it only exists if you're around other queer people-

GABI:

I don't totally buy that but-

KATE:

My point is that like, you can be queer by yourself in a totally straight society, but it only really comes into existence, functionally, when you find another person to share queerness with, or like, to experience queerness with-

ANNIE:

I don't know that queerness has to be a sexual experience though-

KATE:

No, but, ok, then just for argument's sake, purely sexual queerness, right? Not including all of the other facets, not even including gender shit for a minute-

GABI:

This is getting incredibly specific-

KATE:

Yes, I feel like I'm refining as I'm going so just, like, bear with me here-

ANNIE:

Ok go-

KATE:

Ok, so, in a totally like, totally straight society, if you are queer, the only time you're ever going to experience sexual queerness is if you find another queer person who happens to be queer with you. And maybe you don't even think to notice that person exists until someone like, taps you on the shoulder because they see, like they're clocking you, like-

ANNIE:

Queer spots queer, dog park, yes-

GABI:

Wait, dog park? Yiff.

ANNIE:

It's not a furry thing, it's a tumblr thing-

GABI:
Furries love tumblr-

ANNIE:
Ok but different. Sorry, yes-

KATE:
Like, Ring of Keys-

ANNIE:
Yes, better example-

GABI:
What's-

ANNIE:
You'd call it white lesbianity-

GABI:
Uh-huh.

KATE:
Like, you kind of have to be inducted into queerness by another person. And hopefully that happens totally organically and like, spontaneously, and like, without pressure, but sometimes, and I feel like, definitely in the past, queers kind of had to be a little predatory in some way.

ANNIE:
Like-

KATE:
Like in a Carol, like, not in a rapey way, although-

ANNIE:
Maybe sometimes in a rapey way?

GABI:
Yeah but like who's not gonna sign up for that road trip ya know?

KATE:
But that's kind of the point, you sign up for the road trip because you know something's gonna happen but you don't know what, but the person driving DOES know what's going to happen, and that kind of, that's like a real power imbalance. Like, a hot power imbalance-

GABI:
Yeah, I was gonna say you're always looking for Carols-

KATE:
Yeah, yes, I mean. Yes.

GABI:
But like, so explain to me-

ANNIE:
Yeah finish the thesis here.

KATE:
Ugh I should have just done my thesis on Carol I'd be finished-

GABI:
Probably finish a handful of times-

KATE:
Not a full hand-

GABI:
Three fingers-

KATE:
More like-

ANNIE:
Ok, yes, you'd fuck Carol, we'd all fuck Carol, we are all just on tinder for the glove lunches, we get it-

GABI:
Oh my god that's a great line-

KATE:
Wait yeah, oh my god I'm gonna add that to my bio, "just here for a glove lunch"-

ANNIE:
Wait nonono you do not want to be the weird Carol stan on tinder, that's weird and bleagh-

KATE:
Like-

GABI:

Yeah I mean I'm also into Carol, but actually a tinder bio referencing Carol IS white lesbianity-

ANNIE:

Yeah, that plus like a photo showcasing a cat and a Harry Potter tattoo-

GABI:

Oh my GOD white lesbianity-

ANNIE:

Sorry, wait, please finish the story.

KATE:

Ok ok fine yes. There isn't really a story, just that like. I think perversion is the combination of sexual aggression and an intent to corrupt others. Because people are lonely.

GABI:

And even perverts don't want to feel like perverts.

KATE:

Exactly! And trauma causes trauma.

ANNIE:

And queers turn queers?

KATE:

Or like, queers need other queers in order to be queers.

GABI:

So when you can't find any, safely, because your society is fucked-

KATE:

You end up desperately seeking them out in covert ways-

ANNIE:

Which then, fulfills the stereotype that queers are dangerous and predatory and will turn you.

Beat.

KATE:

I think we solved it.

Beat. Annie's phone dings.

ANNIE:

Oh my god Gabi what the fUCK?

GABI:

It's Baby Monkey Millie.

ANNIE:

Why???

GABI:

I'm gonna turn you.

SCENE 9

Kate is on the couch, not sleeping. There's a knock at the window. She turns over, puts her arm over her forehead.

KATE:
Shit.

There's another knock at the window. Kate shifts.

KATE:
Ok! Yep! I should have showered.

Kate sits up. Lily is sitting on her fire escape outside her window. Kate pushes the window open. Lily climbs through. She's holding a lit cigarette.

KATE:
Hey-

LILY:
Hey-

KATE:
Thanks for- actually sorry, can you- we don't smoke in the house.

LILY:
It's not real.

Lily takes a puff and exhales a small stream of smoke.

KATE:
Oh. Ok.

LILY:
So.

KATE:
Yeah. Lil-

LILY:
What the fuck am I doing here?

KATE:
I don't know, I- why'd you come?

LILY:

I mean, it's good to see you, I feel like I'm supposed to say it's good to see you-

KATE:

You don't have to if it's not-

LILY:

Maybe it is good to see you.

KATE:

I feel like it's weird-

LILY:

It is weird.

KATE:

Yeah. I. Your hair's new-

LILY:

Nope.

KATE:

Ok. Well. New since me.

LILY:

Mmm.

KATE:

It looks nice, that's my point.

LILY:

Your place is small-

KATE:

It's New York.

LILY:

I've been to New York before.

KATE:

Yeah I know.

LILY:

Like, by myself too-

KATE:

Sure. No, I know, it's just weird because that feels like a different city.

LILY:

Like.

KATE:

Like the city I live in now can't possibly be the same city we were in for that concert, it's just like. I think the time corrupts the space.

LILY:

Does it.

Beat. Lily is owning Kate's silence, she takes another drag.

LILY:

That was a weird concert-

KATE:

Yeah! Yeah, they were great but like-

LILY:

It was weird.

KATE:

It was weird!

LILY:

I don't really listen to them anymore.

KATE:

Oh. Yeah. Me neither.

LILY:

The kids do though, my brother like, calls it "classic pop".

KATE:

What??

LILY:

Yeah, like, MCR, classic pop.

KATE:

They're not even pop, they're like-

LILY:
They're fully emo.

KATE:
Maybe they like, grew into normies.

LILY:
Are you a normie now?

KATE:
No.

LILY:
Are you a lesbian now?

Beat.

KATE:
I think. That's kinda why you're here?

LILY:
What, you wanna fuck, what-

KATE:
No I wanted to- I have questions for you, I guess?

LILY:
About lesbians.

KATE:
About me.

LILY:
You brought me here to talk about you. That is, at once, shocking and so not shocking.

KATE:
I know I try to stay on brand.

LILY:
Self-centered and self-deprecating, that's a hot combo.

KATE:
It's very trendy right now.

LILY:
Oooh, you're trendy now. Not normie but trendy.

KATE:
Not like, totally trendy but like an attempt at trend.

LILY:
That sounds about right.

KATE:
But I'm too like, anxious to fully commit.

Kate displays her nails.

LILY:
Do you still do that? I thought the salmonella would have cured that habit.

KATE:
I got salmonella junior year, I was still biting when we broke up.

LILY:
Right. I guess time's corrupting the space. Or the memory or whatever.

KATE:
Yeah.

LILY:
I don't remember high school.

Beat.

LILY:
What are you gonna ask me?

KATE:
I was gonna ask you if I was a good girlfriend.

LILY:
Why do you care what I think?

KATE:
Just, just some kind of perspective, you don't, you're not pulling your punches and I think I might have been a very insufferable nineteen-year-old.

LILY:
Which is so different from now-

KATE:

Right exactly so. I'm insufferable now, maybe, but then... I think I might have been dangerous. Or... or bad? Bad to you.

LILY:

Why?

KATE:

I don't know, it wasn't intentional, or, or it didn't feel like I was intentionally treating you badly, I just think now, now, I know how people can use each other and-

LILY:

You feel like you used me?

KATE:

I mean. A part of me feels like we, like used each other to figure stuff- like, you definitely knew I was a safe place to start and I wouldn't turn you down so. But then I also, like, could be a new person with you and that felt really weird because it meant something changed, I mean something fundamentally changed with us and with me at the same time.

LILY:

But you didn't, you were still-

KATE:

Well, no, I was trying not to change like, externally, I mean it was scary, I was scared and it's- it's a lot to expect someone to just completely, like their whole identity to shift and like be...- You know you didn't have to feel that, you were already like, fully formed by the time you got to me, like already in love with me, and-. Or sorry, maybe you weren't.

LILY:

No, I was. I was in love with you the whole time.

KATE:

Ok, so, yes, I'm insufferable, but I'm not usually wrong.

LILY:

We'll get there.

KATE:

So, like, you didn't change but I did, I got obsessed with you really quickly, getting to be with you turned into the most important thing in the universe, more important than you, and me getting you was better than you were, and I guess that's kind of fucked up.

LILY:

That I became a symbol instead of a person?

KATE:

You took up a lot of space. You took up like, every space. So when you disappeared, it was like-

LILY:

I disappeared to me, too, Katie.

KATE:

And like, I'm sure that was terrifying for you, but it was scary for me because I didn't know how to- I mean, you were making terrible choices-

LILY:

No, I was making the choices I needed to make-

KATE:

Yeah, but dropping out of college was a little nuts-

LILY:

I was a little nuts, that's why I needed to drop out of college, and I knew I *knew* you would never not judge me for that. I mean that time when you came and you saw me- I just. You were so. Judgemental.

KATE:

I. I was terrified of you. You were, I had never seen anyone at that point, you were just. Non-human. You looked dead. You didn't care that I was there, and that scared me because it meant you could stop caring about me, which did not match up at all with what I was feeling...

LILY:

We are still focusing on what you were feeling. I was so depressed I couldn't move, Kate. But yeah, let's talk about what you were feeling-

KATE:

Yeah. Yes. Sorry, but that's why you're here because I need to know-

LILY:

Ask.

KATE:

Did I hurt you, that day?

Beat.

KATE:

Because I want to be able to tell you that I thought I was doing the right thing, - I wanted to have sex with you to make you feel better because I was nineteen and thought that's what would help because I didn't know what else to do, we couldn't talk through it anymore, I couldn't help you and I thought that's what you wanted, I genuinely thought- but when I think about it I just think-

KATE (*cont*):

-about feeling you freeze up suddenly and looking down and you had tears in your eyes and you apologized and me saying it was ok but I don't know if I actually stopped soon enough.

LILY:

You stopped.

KATE:

That doesn't mean I didn't...

LILY:

No. It doesn't.

KATE:

So.

LILY:

Katie, it doesn't matter if you did or not. It's not my job to reassure you, or, or whatever this is, I don't know. I'm not your fucking conscience. I'm not going to follow you around, telling you that you did the wrong thing and deserve to be punished, or whatever. I can't do that, it's not my job.

KATE:

I don't know how to- . I don't know what to say.

LILY:

That's fucking new.

KATE:

Yeah, it is I don't. It's not easy for me.

LILY:

So it's hard. So?

KATE:

So. I'm sorry. That's why you're here. I'm sorry. I don't know whether or not I hurt you, or-

LILY:

Raped me. You don't know if you raped me.

KATE:

No, I don't I-

LILY:

It will be less scary if you say it out loud.

KATE:

Is that what you want, for me to, to, it's... -will that make it? That's what you need.

LILY:

This conversation's about you. What you need.

KATE:

Yeah, yes. I don't know if I raped you, and I'm sorry that I don't know, and I'm sorry that I did if I did, and if I didn't I'm sorry I came close.

LILY:

Feel better?

KATE:

No. Way, way worse.

LILY:

Good.

Lily kisses Kate on the cheek.

LILY:

Good night, Katie.

SCENE 10

Kate is back in class with Mimi.

KATE:

My brother and I both write about rib cages. I mean, he writes like, songs with his band and I do, this, but we both end up with the same images. I don't know why. We've never talked about our rib cages. He had a dislocated spinal thing but I never did so it's not about that.

MIMI:

Do you think it's cosmic?

KATE:

No. I think it's familial. Genetic.

MIMI:

Schizophrenia is genetic, *and* it's induced by circumstance, something can be both...

KATE:

Sometimes I worry that he's pre-disposed for schizophrenia. There was like, a minute where I thought I was fully going off the deep end.

MIMI:

Why?

KATE:

I told myself I saw the ceiling move in the shower.

MIMI:

I mean if you're gonna go nuts you might as well reference the canon-

KATE:

Oh like-

MIMI:

Crazy ladies love their water.

KATE:

Oh duh very Ophelia, very Virginia Woolf-

MIMI:

Very Blanche DuBois. Bath-time?

KATE:

Right! Yeah. Do you think Blanche got herself raped?

MIMI:
Yes.

KATE:
Ok... ?

MIMI:
I think Tennessee couldn't figure out another way to rape a woman other than for it to be self-induced because I don't think he could imagine wanting to have sex with a woman so badly that it doesn't matter how she feels about it.

KATE:
Ok. Ok. But aside from Tennessee, do you think Blanche, herself-

MIMI:
There is no Blanche, herself, Blanche is Tennessee. I, Mimi, am myself, you, Kate, are yourself, Blanche is never Blanche, herself-

KATE:
No. No, I don't believe that, I think Blanche is Blanche, and yeah, she wouldn't exist if he hadn't written her but that doesn't mean she's him, or she's not- she is herself, regardless of him, that's just more, that's fictional attributional misogyny-

MIMI:
That is theory based jargon nonsense.

KATE:
Fine. Yes. But Blanche exists. She's real. Say it's a documentary and not a play-

MIMI:
It's too cheesy to be a documentary, are you kidding me? Colored lights-

KATE:
Life is cheesy and documentaries are cheesy as fuck have you ever seen a documentary? They are intentionally cheesy. If documentaries were fiction they'd be melodrama.

MIMI:
If life were fiction it'd be melodrama.

KATE:
Yes! My point, that's exactly my point-

MIMI (*in hyperbolic quotation marks*):
Life is too much drinking on a school night and tinder hookups who come to your house and don't fuck you and wanting chocolate but being too lazy to go to the 24/7 Rite Aid across the street and, and-

KATE:
You're just talking about last night-

MIMI:
I'm literally referencing the terrible poem you submitted last week that was just a stream of consciousness-

KATE:
Ok well now I'm talking about women who love water and rib cages.

MIMI:
Why do you think Blanche is real?

KATE:
I think I'm real.

MIMI:
You take long showers and you live in a fantasy world and you're terrified of death and age and-

KATE:
And if I were straight and I had a serious long-term boyfriend he would totally be gay and I would be insulted and-

MIMI:
Didn't you have a long-term boyfriend in college?

KATE:
I mean- yeah, I dated Matt and-

MIMI:
Matthew. You've always written about him as -

KATE:
Yes. Yeah I don't know why I called him Matt just then.

MIMI:
Matthew is lamer than Matt.

KATE:
Sure. I want my past tense college boyfriend to be cooler and hotter than he was because-

MIMI:
Because-

KATE:

Because it means I could get any hot guy I want and I'm not just dating women because they are the only people who think I'm hot-

MIMI:

But they are- women have better taste-

KATE:

Maybe. Yeah. Maybe I'm hotter to women than men.

MIMI:

So-

KATE:

So, like, with Blanche-

MIMI:

Blanche, who was terrified of being unsuitable to men-

KATE:

Blanche needed confirmation so desperately that she manifested her own assault.

MIMI:

Not just the assault-

KATE:

No! Yes, in manifesting the assault, she manifested her insanity, getting carted off to the nuthouse and and-

MIMI:

Kindness of strangers-

KATE:

Kindness of strangers gets you raped.

MIMI:

Specifically the reliance on the kindness of strangers-

KATE:

It's a stupid thing to do.

MIMI:

But it's an intentional thing to do.

KATE:

Yeah. Yes. It's always intentional. Even if it's subconscious, it's intentional, it's choosing to let people hurt you, it's- manufacturing your own melodrama, pitching a documentary-

MIMI:

An intentional rape victim.

KATE:

What?

MIMI:

If you're an unintentional rape victim, at least in fiction, you get the chance to be melodramatic about the trauma and you, I mean, general you, you as in the average nonfiction human- you don't get to be melodramatic but you really really want to be, or at least want the chance-

KATE:

Everyone wants the right, if not the execution-

MIMI:

Right. But if the trauma is self-induced-

KATE:

You don't really earn it.

MIMI:

And the dramatic arc doesn't hold up.

KATE:

Unless you're Blanche DuBois. Because she's punished.

MIMI:

What does this have to do with rib cages?

KATE:

I don't know. Rib cages feel feminine? To me. And morbid. Maybe it's about manifested morbidity, transrelational trauma, and and the caged vestiges of inherited-

MIMI:

Don't academicize, stay simple-

KATE:

Rib cages are dangerous. They're not masculine, skulls are masculine. They're not sexual, pelvises are sexual but rib cages, they're not *not* sexual? They're maybe a little melodramatic and like, femmey and maybe a little self-destructive and southern gothic and maybe a little Blanche DuBois-

MIMI:
Blanche DuBois would have written about rib cages-

KATE:
Ok. Actually- wow.

MIMI:
Ok what.

KATE:
It never occurred to me.

MIMI:
Ok?

KATE:
Blanche was an English teacher.

MIMI:
Poetry. Shakespeare. Rosenkavaliers.

KATE:
Yeah. And what-

MIMI:
She should have been a writer.

KATE:
Yeah.

MIMI:
Blanche DuBois was a writer who didn't write.

KATE:
Or. She wrote it was just- she wrote her life into a melodrama. She got too invested in narratives, and words, and-

MIMI:
Good thing you write about rib cages or you'd really be in trouble.

SCENE 11

Kate lying on a physical therapy table. Dana walks in. She's very pregnant.

DANA:
Hey Kate.

KATE:
Hey Dana.

DANA:
How we feeling this week?

KATE:
Eh. You know. Crunchy.

DANA:
Crunchy huh? We'll take a look.

Dana rolls down Kate's ankle sleeve.

DANA:
Not that swollen.

KATE:
No, not too bad. It's been going up and down.

DANA:
What's going on in here.

Dana bends Kate's ankle slightly, pushes on the center of her joint. Kate buckles slightly.

DANA:
Ok yep.

KATE:
Sorry. Sorry.

DANA:
It's ok. Lemme get in it.

Dana pulls out a bottle of massage lotion, two quick pumps on her hand. She sits on the table with Kate's leg hoisted up on her lap, but angled out so that her belly isn't in the way while she massages. It's all painful but Kate's not surprised by any of it.

KATE:

I just feel like I'm at that point where I shouldn't be this- ahhh...

DANA:

Yeah, I'd love it if you were further along here.

KATE:

I feel like I bore all my friends. No one wants to hear about it anymore, you know?

DANA:

Joint damage isn't cute.

KATE:

Yeah, and like, there's no fun way to talk about it at parties!

Cari appears, drunk with a margarita in hand. Split scene: Cari/Kate and Dana/Kate. Cari sits in the chair facing Kate on the table.

CARI:

Oh my god with your post, I was just like, that's why she went a little nuts! And then I was like, oh my god I told her to write about it and she did, so like. But like, how are you, how are you feeling?

KATE *(To Cari)*:

Oh you know, it's uh- fine. Feeling better I guess. *(To Dana)* No one cares that it's ahh ahhh-hurting.

DANA:

Still having trouble sleeping?

KATE *(nods to Dana, and then to Cari)*:

Still having trouble sleeping, but what else is new?

CARI:

Is that normal though, like, are you- when is that getting better?

KATE *(To Dana)*:

It would be great if we could just give everyone a date by which I'll be Better. I can have a whole party and everything.

DANA:

That would be great. That's not how it works.

KATE *(To Cari)*:

It's just uh- it's just one of those things where I'm doing all the right things and it's just gonna. It's gonna get better or it's not and I kind of just have to do the right things anyway because-

KATE (*cont.*):

-there's nothing else really to do except therapy and uh. It's really dumb.

CARI:

But you're getting help, and that's like the most important thing.

KATE (*To Cari*):

I mean yeah. The most important thing would be to just not have it be an issue, you know? Like it'd be great to just erase or like go back and just yell at myself and be like, "Don't go!" You know?

CARI:

Yeah but like everyone wants a time machine ya know?

KATE (*To Dana*):

It'd be awesome if we could just fast forward this all the way to the end.

CARI:

I just though, I loved your post about it, when you wrote that whole thing? Like, you always write good things but I feel like that just hit me and I was like, yeah, like why can't we be honest about this trauma? Why can't we just say, "yeah this happened to me, and like, it sucked"? Why can't we do that? I mean, you did, and that's what I'm saying, it's like, so great that you did that. Like, just so brave and great you know?

KATE (*To Cari*):

Oh, thanks, uh-

CARI:

Like, yeah, like, so many women are talking about it, but I feel like I don't ever see or like read or, uh, whatever, no one talks about how like your body feels like it doesn't belong to you any more, or what even it means to get over it, and you just, like reading what you said about being estranged, or alien, or yeah, estranged from a piece of your body just made me think about stuff-

Dana gets behind Kate, she flips over onto her stomach. Dana pushes Kate's ankle into a bend.

This is the most painful part of the session.

DANA:

Let go.

CARI:

It made me think about so much stuff because like, I had a miscarriage-

KATE (*To Dana? To Cari?*):

Shit.

CARI:

I had a miscarriage, and like I know it's not the same as what you're going through but it kind of is, because like, I wasn't in control and that's so scary-

DANA:

Let go.

CARI:

And like I haven't really talked about it but I kind of wanted to post about it too, because it's so common, it's like, one in five?

KATE (*To Cari, gritting her teeth*):

One in three?

DANA:

One-two-three...

CARI:

Right, like I don't even know the statistic, but I think it's more than like sexual assault-

KATE (*To Dana? To Cari?*):

But who's counting-

CARI:

No no no, not to denigrate at all that experience-

DANA:

Let go.

KATE (*To Cari? To Dana? Quietly*):

No-

CARI:

Just like, it's so common, and no one talks about it, and it's like so lonely? And like, how long am I supposed to hold on to it?

DANA:

You've gotta let go of this-

CARI:

Like, you know, you're still obviously going through it and like, still having trouble sleeping, but at least you know that like you're getting help and like there's a community now and you can talk about it and that's so great and I just, I'm like in this place where I can't talk about this miscarriage because there's no like, forum.

DANA:

Come on, breathe and then let go.

KATE (*breaking, pulling away from Dana, to both Dana and Cari*):

I can't! I ca- I'm sorry this is, this is. I'm not going any further, this isn't. It's just not something I can process here- I can't. I can't. I'm sorry.

Kate grabs her stuff and limps away. Cari is left holding her margarita. She looks over and sees Dana. Cari takes a drink and points at Dana's belly.

CARI:

Congratulations.

SCENE 12

Kate and Gabi are sitting on the couch again. Kate's ankle sleeve is gone, but it's still on a pillow.

KATE:

Do you think anyone else is having these conversations?

GABI:

Maybe. Probably. Honestly I don't know I'm so fucking open about my shit that I just assume everyone else is.

KATE:

It makes it easier to talk to you.

GABI:

I do it because I kind of love to scare people.

KATE:

Yeah. Yeah, I can see that.

GABI:

Like, my boss- I feel like I've told you this but my boss is just so very hwHite lady about this stuff-

KATE:

Like she-

GABI:

Like the vibe is that she just acts like so, uhg, I don't know, upset and like distraught by the indecency of it all? And she literally, the other day was like "can you imagine how horrible it would be to be *raped*"? In a very performative feminist way so you can't even be like-

KATE:

You can't be mad at her-

GABI:

But like, fuck that dude, I am. I'm mad, I'm annoyed. It's frustrating to sit there and watch her be so OUTraged by the horror of sexual assault and to just be like, yeah, it's sucky and horrible, but it's also mundane.

KATE:

Right. It's normal.

GABI:

It's totally normal. And that's like, crazy? Like fully cucu-lulu, yes absoyluuutely, and yet-

KATE:

And yet here we are.

GABI:

Here we fucking are dude.

KATE:

Here we are and we're not better, we're not put together, we're still-

GABI:

We're still messes. Or you are. A little bit.

KATE:

I'm still a little bit of a mess.

GABI:

And you're still questioning yourself.

KATE:

Yeah. Yes. And I like- I don't know if anyone else is actually having these conversations or if it's just me, or me and you, or like, me you and a few other- if it's like the minority of people like us who are actually having these conversations and questioning and like-

GABI:

Dissecting any of it.

KATE:

Yes. Dissecting. Good word.

GABI:

I took AP Bio.

KATE:

You know I gave myself salmonella because I bit my nails after bio class one time? Like after a dissection?

GABI:

Oh my god that is revolting.

KATE:

Yeah! Yeah it's so gross I didn't even think about it, it's just such a fucking compulsion-

GABI:
Euhhhh what did you even dissect?

KATE:
It was a frog. A full frog-

GABI:
Nononononooooo-

KATE:
Yes! And there's like formaldehyde and shit-

GABI:
Yeah, like POISON.

KATE:
Yes! I had poison fingers and I ate them anyway.

GABI:
Wow. You're Snow White and the Witch and the apple all in one.

KATE:
Yeah and then a prince fucked me while I was fully in a coma.

GABI:
Let's not hyperbolize-

KATE:
You're right, it totally wasn't a coma, my bad.

GABI:
This is why it's so hard to believe you? Because your story keeps changing-

KATE:
I know! And the non-coma wasn't even related to the poison-fingers-

GABI:
So you admit to conflating these disparate experiences for the purpose of a more sympathetic narrative impact!!

KATE:
IT'S TRUE. I DID IT. I LIED FOR THE SAKE OF COHERENT DRAMATIZATION!!!

GABI:
GUILTY! YOUR HONOR, TAKE, TAKE HER TO THE... THE JAILHOUSE!

KATE:

Wait, in what world does the prosecuting attorney order a judge-

GABI:

Listen, this is the court of public opinion, anything goes.

KATE:

I thought only men could be tried in the court of public opinion?

GABI:

No no no, anyone can be tried in the court of public opinion, it's just that men are ONLY tried in the court of public opinion-

KATE:

Unless they're black-

GABI:

Unless they're black. Or Latino. Or Native. Or undocumented or trans or disabled-

KATE:

Right.

Beat.

KATE:

So.

GABI:

So. So now that you've been found guilty of dramatization, boring your friends, ignoring your friends, queer predation, trauma creation, being un-healed, revealed, depressed, regressed, and all together fucked, Kate, what are you going to do?

KATE:

I'm going to Disney World.

EPILOGUE: DISNEY WORLD

US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is sitting at the presiding officer's desk in the US Senate.

GILLIBRAND:

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you to acknowledge the honorable citizen from, um- I apologize it says here, "kind of from Massachusetts, kind of from Washington, but at this point, basically just New York"- I thank you to acknowledge the citizen who has come before us to exercise her right to the secret citizen filibuster.

KATE:

Thank you, US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, who I deeply respect and admire, maybe not enough to vote for, but also who I'd definitely sleep with. Top, bottom, just light mutual petting, whatever you'd be down for, ugh oh my god no, sorry that's gross never mind, god I'm such a- it- actually brings me to my purpose here today, which is to speak on the issue of things I wasn't down for, which is to say plainly and openly, for the thousandth and first time:

I was sexually assaulted. Actually, fuck that. I was raped. By a man. He- it doesn't matter. And then almost exactly a year later, a boy in my class asked me about it and it threw me for such a loop that I literally fell down and broke my ankle so I would have something else to focus on.

And also, I've been not-raped-but-not-into-it.

And also, I've had amazing sex with someone I really loved. Also amazing sex with randos...

And also, I may have raped someone I really loved. Or it might have been not-rape. I don't know. Maybe she doesn't know. But she probably does, she was kind of always the person to make up her mind very definitively about things, although we don't really speak so maybe that's changed, I like to think that I've changed so in giving myself the benefit of the doubt, I can't really say that I know how she'd react to anything at this point.

The point is, I'm having uh. I'm having a really really hard time. I'm not ok, and I want people to know that. I want my friends to know that. I don't want them to do anything differently, I just want them to know. And I don't know how to talk about it without putting it into a monologue, so I figured why- why not filibuster to stop the "Guns for Troubled White Boys Bill" fuck, seriously? No one else was gonna stop this? Ok anyway.

I was raped. And it's ok for you to be uncomfortable with that because I'm uncomfortable with it and really, no one should be comfortable with it, and, I guess statistically, I'm the most likely to eventually be comforted and feel comfortable, but I just think maybe we shouldn't keep trying to get comfortable, because pretending like there's a comfortable ending for anyone means that the people who can't get comfortable or who never even dreamed about being comfortable- that they're somehow failures for not being healed.

And I think that's kind of all I wanted to say, except that when I go to bed at night I can see the reflection of someone else's windows in the glass of my door sometimes still get recurring –

KATE (*cont.*):

-nightmares because someone else is leaving their window open and it's reflecting into my bedroom, and suddenly I feel like I'm trapped in a room full of mirrors. But. Maybe this isn't the place for that kind of poetic- uh- .

So. I think I'm done with the things I needed to say. But uh-

She pulls out a copy of Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban opens it to the first page:

"Harry Potter was a highly unusual boy in many ways."

END OF PLAY