

WANNABES
By Ana Hiciano De Góngora

CHARACTERS:

BEN GALLAGHER..... a temperamental bookworm who just wants to make his brother and family happy. He constantly questions his morals and is eager to find solutions to the problems he faces. (Man, 18, Senior)

ALEX TERRENOS..... a witty romantic who embraces his femininity and queerness. He has to balance school and his closeted boyfriend all while being constantly bullied, a situation he doesn't take as seriously as he should. (Man, 17, queer, POC, Junior)

MACK STARR..... a spunky rule-breaker who doesn't know her place in the world. Behind her tough exterior, she struggles with beauty and identity, all while trying to be the strong one among her friends. (Womxn, 18, queer, POC, Senior)

ALLISON DE L'EAU..... a lonesome butterfly who struggles with constant neglect from her family and peers. Still, she keeps a smile on her face and strives to bring happiness to people, even if they end up leaving. (Woman, 17, Junior)

CHRISSEY WOODLAND..... an energetic overachiever with a politician personality who strives to be a shining example for her peers. Through her run-ins with bullies and students in need, she always finds a way to learn about how to serve her people. (Woman, 16, Junior)

SHAWNEE REEVES..... a hyperactive loudmouth who wants to leave her mark on the world through her art. Despite her small stature and any words of caution from her best friend, she has no shame in being unapologetically filterless. (Woman, 14, Freshman)

ALMA STARR..... a loyal skeptic whose priority is to keep herself and her best friend out of trouble. Cautious and caring, she has a deep interest in the world that surrounds her and how other people affect it. (Woman, 15, Hispanic, Freshman)

TRISTAN GALLAGHER..... an intimidating 'protector' who battles his insecurities by trying to fix the people around him to fit his beliefs. He approaches his relationship with his brother through tough love, and aims to change his course to one that lines up with the footsteps of his family. (Man, 18, Senior)

KENNETH RAYMOND..... a soft-spoken heartthrob who hides his love life in efforts to keep the peace at school. Balancing work, his mother, his grades, and his secret relationship, he tries his best to dig the pain of not being himself deep and have patience with his reckless boyfriend. (Man, 17, Junior)

PHILIP/PHILLIE WOODLAND..... a gentle giant who acts as the peacemaker between their sibling and anyone who might come in their way. Ironically, they look up to their younger sister as she excels in school, and lends a helping hand whenever they can. (18, Senior)

JAKE/JAYCE WOODLAND..... a carefree troublemaker who is on a mission to make the people around them laugh. Witty and well-intentioned, they let their charisma shine the way, especially when it involves innuendos and cheap humor. (18, Senior)

JESSIE CALMANDER/INTERCOM..... a self-centered opportunist who does good deeds for her personal gain. She is easily angered when things do not go her way, but she still tries very hard to maintain her personal image and her status in school. (Woman, 17, Junior).

AARON MEYERS/MR. TENILLE..... an attractive rascal who cares more about his appearance than all else. With a commanding voice and a mischievous smirk, he leads his life with intensity. (Man, 18, Senior)

MCKENZIE/MAXWELL KESSASS..... a flowery dreamer who is a sweetheart to their friends but a badass to their enemies. They yearn for a romantic high school experience and bring a level of innocence to the room. (16, Junior)

JOSIE/OZZY MOSS..... a stone-faced critic with unmatched beauty. They rarely smile outside of close company and silently judge the people that don't meet their bar. They take their anger and disgust out on heavy exercise. (17, Junior)

JOSEPH/JANET HENRY..... a prodigal poet who spends the majority of their time nose-deep in a journal. Imaginative and lyrical, their narration of life is far more illustrative than that of those around them. (15, Sophomore)

TINA/KYLE CHOE*..... a giddy follower who just wants to seem cool to their friends. While their airhead personality contrasts their raw intelligence, they somehow manage to miss most social cues. (15, Sophomore)

SABRINA/SEBASTIAN REDDY-BLANC*..... an irritable daredevil who won't take anyone's bull. Sporty and rough around the edges, they are not afraid of life's problems and will take things as they come, often acting on impulse. (16, Sophomore)

TOBY ALAMAN..... a jockish wallflower who is looking for a role model. They find themselves attached to the football team and use them to learn about how to survive within high school culture. (15, Freshman)

KODA DUBRAY*..... a nerdy academic with a heavy crush on the redhead running for senior class president. They are invested in learning about technology and its many wonders, though they get annoyed at having to help teachers understand their computers. (17, Junior).

VOs: Ms. Raymond, Mrs. Gallagher, Mr. Gallagher, Mrs. Reeves, Mr. Terrenos, Mrs. Starr

Cameo: Coach Miller

*Surname subject to change per production

ACT 1

(CURTAIN)

SCENE 1

*Greenhill High School. Auditorium. 2024.
BEN, MACK, ALLISON, and ALEX pack up from presenting an assembly.*

MACK:

Okay, but can we talk about how those were some of the tallest kids I've ever seen? What are they feeding them? Can I have some?

ALLISON:

Or we could talk about what actually matters: We only have twenty pamphlets left and almost every voter registration sheet is gone. This presentation was a total hit!

MACK and ALLISON high-five.

ALEX:

(Holding a microphone up) Sounds like an excuse to celebrate... I have boxed wine...

BEN:

Come on guys. There are still five days left to Gun Violence Awareness Week. We have another presentation tomorrow.

ALLISON:

You know, it doesn't hurt to be excited sometimes, Ben.

ALEX:

Yeah! We're kicking ass nationwide. *(With a sigh)* More importantly, we're making a difference.

MACK:

There are more people joining Wannabes chapters across the country this month than we've had in the entire last year. None of this would have happened if you hadn't had the guts to lead this project. If anyone should be happy, it's you.

BEN:

I guess I'm... happy.

ALLISON:

Then smile. Pretty please?

ALEX:

If you smile, I'll give you my coupon for Proseco... *(after nothing)* are you gonna say no to free alcohol?

BEN cracks an awkward smile and ALEX, MACK, and ALLISON cheer. ALEX waves the coupon at BEN, and BEN reluctantly snatches it.

ALLISON:

Mission complete guys! Hey, Mack, help me load the car.

MACK:

You mean, "Hey Mack! Can I watch you flex?" Yes you may, Princess.

ALLISON:

Uh huh? Flex what?

Exit MACK and ALLISON.

ALEX:

(To Ben) You coming?

BEN:

Yeah, just... give me a minute.

ALEX:

I wasn't gonna say this, but... we were hoping to get you out of here for this reason. Come on, the longer you stay the more it'll bring back.

BEN:

I'll be fine.

ALEX:

You don't have to be. But alright. We'll be in the car.

Exit ALEX. BEN looks around.

SCENE 2

Mural. 2018.

*A digital clock with red numbers lights up above the stage. It reads 00:00:00.
Lights flash blue and red on a dark stage.*

BEN (VO):

April 4th of 2018, at 2:37pm, a man entered the Greenhill High School courtyard with an AR-15 and shot into a crowd of unsuspecting students as they viewed the new school mural. 37 people ages fourteen to eighteen had to be hospitalized. Five people didn't survive to see an ambulance. If it bothers you that I said that so plainly, I'm not sorry. The truth about what happened is not poetic, and I have been censored enough.

Hallway.

The clock rewinds until it reads 02:07:17.

BEN (VO):

Let me set the scene for you. The fourth quarter of my senior year had just started, and it seemed like everyone had something on their plate.

A shrill bell rings.

(QUARTER FOUR)

*Enter JAKE and PHILIP through the audience carrying posters and boxes. Enter
CHRISSEY close behind.*

PHILIP:

(To Jake) How many times do you have try before you realize it's not gonna work? You're failing Astronomy. That's fail with an F! In Astronomy!

CHRISSEY grabs a poster and two large strips of tape from PHILIP. She prepares a poster for the wall.

JAKE:

You don't know! Maybe next time I bring Mrs. Arnold a gift card, she'll actually give me a B. I mean, everyone loves Target, right?

PHILIP:

Jake... you're so dense, light bends around you.

CHRISSEY slaps the poster on the wall. It reads "Vote Chrissy Woodland for Senior Class President," red and blues and all.

CHRISSEY:

SO MUCH TO DO, NO WE'RE NOT DONE YET
KEEP UP YOUR WORK, THERE'S EIGHT MORE WEEKS LEFT

JAKE:

IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS THAT I START TO WISH I WAS NEVER BORN

CHRISSEY:

Shut your trap.

JAKE:

Yup.

CHRISSEY:

THIS IS THE YEAR THAT SCHOOLS WILL LOOK AT
I HAVE STRAIGHT A'S, I MUST MAINTAIN THAT

PHILIP:

Jake, relax! WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS THREE TIMES BEFORE

CHRISSEY:

A HUNDRED PERCENT ON ALL MY GRADES... I'VE GOT A STREAK

PHILIP and JAKE:

Oy vey!

PHILIP and JAKE make their way towards the stage.

CHRISSEY:

GOTTA KEEP MOVING, GOTTA KEEP GRINDING THERE'S JUST A
FEW MORE WEEKS. NEVER BEEN SO WORKED LIKE THIS BEFORE...

CHRISSEY runs to catch up to PHILIP and JAKE.

CHRISSEY, PHILIP, and JAKE:
OH MY GOD, IT'S QUARTER FOUR

*They get onstage. Enter COMPANY, gradually.
ALEX filters through his backpack, then turns towards the audience, phone in one
hand, instant ice pack in another. Lights on KENNETH, who is putting a sweater
on and tying his shoes while on the phone.*

ALEX:
(To Kenneth) HOW ARE YOUR GRADES?

KENNETH:
I HAVEN'T CHECKED THEM

ALEX:
ARE YOU AFRAID?

KENNETH:
I'm terrified, yes.

ALEX and KENNETH:
I THINK MR. TENILLE MIGHT BE DELIRIOUS

ALEX:
Someone get this man a girlfriend!

KENNETH:
CAN'T WAIT TO GRADUATE NEXT SUMMER

ALEX:
We'll be Seniors! Jesus... WHAT A BUMMER.
(Dramatically) I MIGHT ACTUALLY MISS THIS PLACE.

KENNETH:
You serious?

ALEX:
Mmmmm no. *(Suddenly)* Hey! Um...
BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU ON A DATE

KENNETH stops what he's doing and looks around to make sure he's alone.

ALEX:

I KNOW A SPOT

KENNETH:

NO ONE WILL SEE US?

ALEX:

NO ONE WILL SEE US

KENNETH:

Well... LET'S GIVE IT A SHOT

ALEX and KENNETH both hang up.

ALEX and KENNETH:

Yes! I'M FALLING SO MUCH HARDER THAN BEFORE
OH MY GOD, IT'S QUARTER FOUR

*Lights on COMPANY in The Hallway.
ALEX and KENNETH slowly rise, and turn to join the crowd.*

COMPANY:

OH IT'S QUARTER FOUR WHEN STAKES GET HIGHER AND
LABS CATCH ON FIRE THE PRESSURE'S SO MUCH MORE
OH IT'S QUARTER FOUR WHEN HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA IS
ALL WE KNOW AND MORALE IS ON THE FLOOR
OH MY GOD, IT'S QUARTER FOUR

Lights when JESSIE bumps into CHRISSY.

CHRISSY:

(Excited) Hi there! Are you interested in contributing to the Theatre Arts fundraiser the Woodland campaign is hosting? *(Thrusts a Vote Chrissy pin at Jessie.)*

JESSIE:

Ooh, I totally would, but I'd honestly rather choke to death.

MACK:

Has anybody seen my sister? Jake? Phil? Jesus, Alma. You and Shawnee are always getting into trouble...

Exit MACK.

SHAWNEE and ALMA stumble on giggling. SABRINA screams angrily offstage.

SHAWNEE:

(To Alma) I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU REALLY TOLD HER

ALMA:

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT FEUD IS OVER
BUT NOW I HAVE TO GO BACK AND SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCE
She'll snap me in half.

SHAWNEE:

No! IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, COME AND SEE ME
MY DOOR IS OPEN—

ALMA:

YOU'RE TOO GOOD FOR ME

SHAWNEE:

AT LEAST IT'S OVER: EVERYONE HAS GOTTEN SO intense!

ALMA:

Finals.

SHAWNEE:

<insert gross 'finals' noise>

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

ALMOST DONE WITH FRESHMAN YEAR

SHAWNEE:

OH IT'S BEEN HELL

ALMA:

Don't say that word.

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

IT'S ALMOST OVER, IT'S ALMOST OVER
AS FAR AS I CAN TELL
NEVER BEEN THIS CLOSE TO IT

ALMA:

BEFORE

SHAWNEE:

CLOSE TO IT BEFORE

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

OH MY GOD, IT'S QUARTER FOUR

SHAWNEE and ALMA join the COMPANY. Enter BEN and TRISTAN. They pass a football to each other until they get onstage. TRISTAN holds the ball to an audience member, then takes it away from them when they reach for it.

COMPANY:

OH, IT'S QUARTER FOUR WHEN STAKES GET HIGHER AND
FRIENDSHIPS EXPIRE THE PRESSURE'S SO MUCH MORE
OH, IT'S QUARTER FOUR WHEN HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA IS
ALL WE KNOW AND MORALE IS ON THE FLOOR
OH MY GOD, IT'S QUARTER FOUR
IT'S QUARTER FOUR, IT'S QUARTER FOUR.
OH MY GOD

BEN runs up to the front of the COMPANY, a book open in hand.

BEN:

IT'S QUARTER FOUR

End Music. COMPANY disperses.

SCENE 3

AARON and TOBY hold ALEX back as TRISTAN taunts him. TRISTAN sees BEN and yanks the book out of his grasp.

BEN:

Hey!

TRISTAN:

Grow a pair, *<insert two-syllable insult>*.

TRISTAN slams the book against ALEX's chest.

ALEX:

Ow! Asshole...

TRISTAN:

(To Aaron and Toby) Wait to let him go till after the bell rings.

ALEX:

(Struggling) Come on! It's the third one in a row, I'm gonna get a pink slip!

TRISTAN:

We're just protecting the guys in the hallway. We want them to get to class safely. You know... without you staring them down.

ALEX:

(Matter-of-factly) You mean what you do to the girls?

TRISTAN pushes ALEX into the lockers. The bell rings, and AARON and TOBY exit. TRISTAN approaches BEN.

TRISTAN:

I never see you pushing him around like you used to, Ben. What are you, gay?

TRISTAN exits. ALEX picks up the book and holds it out to BEN. BEN takes a step away from ALEX in disgust.

ALEX:

(In mock) Ooooooh... scary gaaayyyyy... (drops the mockery. To Ben) Come on, I'm not contagious.

Enter KENNETH. He stops to watch BEN take the book after hesitating. ALEX gives him a hurt look.

BEN:

(Slight guilt, then it fades. To Alex.) Stop looking at me.

Exit BEN. KENNETH approaches ALEX.

KENNETH:

Oh no...

ALEX:

They found me in record time. You wouldn't happen to have air freshener on you? I smell a horrible mix of cheap cologne and soiled jockstrap.

KENNETH takes a perfume out of his bag. ALEX sprays some on himself.

KENNETH:

Be careful with those guys, Alex. You have a sharp tongue, and I don't think it helps. Let's get you to class.

ALEX:

Oh, come on. I'm getting better at comebacks! Hey, wait, give me a second...

ALEX pulls out his phone and reads a text from his father.

MR. TERRENOS SR. (VO):

You're too young to decide what you like. The guys will stop bullying you when you man up a bit.

KENNETH:

Everything okay?

ALEX nods. He and KENNETH exit.

SCENE 4

BEN (VO):

The problems we ran into before the shooting were exactly what you'd expect from a high school. We wanted to get into good schools, wanted to fit in, wanted to find purpose. Survival was a given, or so we thought.

The Classroom. Time reads 02:07:04.

Enter COMPANY.

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Alright class, hopefully you pull yourselves together this quarter! That's directed at a few of you in particular. Pass last night's homework forward for corrections and turn to page one-seventy-eight in your textbooks. We'll be going over some word problems after I take attendance.

COMPANY collectively groans.

MACK holds her groan out longer than the rest of the students.

MACK:

Boooo! I'm sure you can come up with something a little less generic, Kelson.

MACK leans back to where PHILIP sits.

MACK:

(To PHILIP) I'm telling ya, this man's an absolute lunatic—

MR. TENILLE (VO):

That's Mr. Tenille to you, Miss Starr. Another comment out of you, and you'll spend tomorrow morning scraping the gum from under my chairs.

MACK:

Right, right... sorry, old man.

MACK spits the gum from her mouth onto her hand and sticks it under her seat.

(PROCRASTINATION GAME)

MACK:

(To class) LOOK, I REALLY VALUE MY SLEEP
DON'T GET ME WRONG, I REALLY CARE ABOUT THIS CLASS
AND EVERYTHING
I'D DO THE WORK AND ALL, BUT HONESTLY
RUNNING ON TWO 'Z'S AND SEVEN COFFEES DOESN'T CUT IT

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Makenna?

MACK:

It's Mack! Anyways...

*COMPANY passes homework forward.
KENNETH enters the classroom late, and takes his seat in front of MACK.*

MACK:

I ALREADY DO THIS STUFF FOR SIX WHOLE HOURS
I'D DO THE WORK BUT I DON'T HAVE THE POWER
SORRY MISTER TALKS-A-LOT, BUT THIS IS SUPER LAME
I'D RATHER PLAY THE PROCRASTINATION GAME

PHILIP:

(Leaning forwards) Ditto.

MACK:

You?

JAKE:

(From behind Philip) Us!

Lights on CHRISSY, working diligently.

PHILIP:

So, WE'RE NOT LIKE MY SISTER, YOU CAN TELL

JAKE:

SHE HAS THE SMARTS, AND HAS THE

PHILIP and JAKE:

WILL TO DO ANYTHING

PHILIP:

And us? Well—

JAKE:

WE'RE NOT GOOD AT ANYTHING
I really wish I were kidding.

PHILIP:

WE'D ASK HER TO HELP US, BUT LIKE, FRANKLY—

BEN and TRISTAN arrive to class late, and each get a pink slip passed to them.

JAKE:

SHE'S INTIMIDATING

PHILIP, JAKE, and MACK all stand on their chairs.

MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

MY LAST TWO BRAIN CELLS ARE PREOCCUPIED
BESIDES, WHEN AM I GONNA NEED TO KNOW THIS STUFF AGAIN?
I'D BE DOING A PUBLIC SERVICE BY BOYCOTTING THIS JUNK

KENNETH:

(To Mack) BUT FACE IT: HAVING A 'D' IN THIS CLASS ISN'T FUN

COMPANY 'oo's.

KENNETH:

I'm suffering, guys.

KENNETH, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

I ALREADY DO THIS STUFF FOR SIX WHOLE HOURS
I'D DO THE WORK BUT I DON'T HAVE THE POWER
SORRY MR. TALKS-A-LOT BUT THIS IS SUPER LAME
I'D RATHER PLAY THE PROCRASTINATION GAME

COMPANY raises their papers.

COMPANY (HIGH VOICES):
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS MEANS

COMPANY (LOW VOICES):
WHAT THIS PROBLEM MEANS

COMPANY lowers their hands, and CHRISSY stands, CS.

CHRISSY:
I HAVE IT DONE

COMPANY:
What?!

CHRISSY:
IT ONLY TOOK TEN MINUTES

COMPANY:
Come again?!

CHRISSY:
I JUST HAVE MY PRIORITIES IN LINE

COMPANY:
WOW, WAY TO DRAG US

CHRISSY:
HOMEWORK TEACHES PERSEVERANCE, AND
FINISHING BRINGS A SENSE OF JOY
LEARN TO LOVE IT AND YOU WILL FIND—

COMPANY:
CHRISSY, WE DON'T SEE THE POINT
I ALREADY DO THIS STUFF FOR SIX WHOLE HOURS
I'D DO THE WORK BUT I DON'T HAVE THE POWER
SORRY MR. TALKS-A-LOT BUT THIS IS SUPER LAME
I'D RATHER PLAY THE PROCRASTINATION GAME
PROCRASTINATION GAME, PROCRASTINATION—
PROCRASTINATION GAME... OH YEAH!

MACK:

Now if you'll excuse me... I'll be in the bathroom for the next two periods.

End Music. The bell.

TRISTAN:

But Mr. Tenille, I have stuff to do.

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Well, then you should have studied for your test. I'll be seeing you after school, Mister Gallagher. Mister Raymond... a word?

KENNETH:

(To Mack) Here comes the usual.

MACK:

(In mock) Is everything alright at home, Mister Raymond?

KENNETH:

(In mock) Yes, sir! I love working hours on end to help my mom make ends meet! Why wouldn't things be alright?

COMPANY believes to leave. KENNETH gets a message from his mother.

MS. RAYMOND (VO):

Relationships are a distraction, baby. You'll find a girl after college. Just focus on school and work. You don't know what you want yet.

KENNETH stands up and exits to talk to Mr. Tenille. TRISTAN checks his phone.

MRS. GALLAGHER (VO):

Stop acting so stupid. Can anyone your age do anything on their own?

Exit COMPANY.

SCENE 5

The Hallway. Time reads 02:02:53.

BEN (VO):

Before April 4th, I took every day for granted. Like any other teenager, I was too focused on my image and my place in the world to notice that everyone else was trying to do the same.

*Enter CHRISSY, handing out pins to STUDENTS in the hallway.
She interrupts SABRINA's path with a pin in hand.*

CHRISSY:

Take it! Take it... *(harshly)* Take it.

SABRINA fearfully takes the pin and exits SR.

BEN (VO):

We were all looking for purpose. What we wanted to be. Amidst those challenges, we got distracted with petty conflict— you know, like teenagers do —and that's where drama took place. We didn't know how small these problems were yet.

Enter JESSIE with JOSIE and TINA. They put up a "Vote Jessie Calmender" poster, and JOSIE winks at KODA, who swoons.

(SCHOOL SPIRIT)

CHRISSY gets competitive, and raises her voice.

CHRISSY:

VOTE CHRISSY WOODLAND FOR CLASS PRESIDENT
PICK UP A PIN, NOW DON'T BE HESITANT
I AM YOUR CANDIDATE, THAT IS EVIDENT
VOTE FOR ME, VOTE FOR ME, VOTE FOR ME

*JESSIE notices CHRISSY's outcry, and laughs with JOSIE and TINA.
Enter ALEX to stand somewhat behind CHRISSY.*

CHRISSY:

THIS NEXT YEAR, THE SCHOOL WILL BE BRIGHT AGAIN
NO MORE BULLYING, NO FAILED PROMISES

ALEX lets out a 'ha' and walks away. Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA bickering.

CHRISSY:

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD, VOTE FOR ME

CHRISSY moves to hand pins to AUDIENCE.

SHAWNEE:

(To Alma) PLEASE?

ALMA:

NO, NO, NO, NO

SHAWNEE:

CAN WE JUST GO SIT INSIDE THIS TIME?

ALMA:

PLEASE LET ME GO, I DON'T WANNA SEE THOSE JERKS TODAY

SHAWNEE:

Aw... WOMAN UP, ALMA, LET'S GO PLEASE!

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

(Alternating) NO, PLEASE, NO, PLEASE, NO, PLEASE

ALMA:

No!

SHAWNEE:

WHY? WHY? WHY? WHY?

ALMA:

I SAID I DON'T WANNA DEAL WITH THEM TODAY

SHAWNEE:

BUT CAN WE TRY? IF WE MAKE IT THROUGH
MAYBE THIS TIME WE CAN STAY

ALMA:

MAYBE WE CAN STAY...

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

OKAY

Exit SHAWNEE and ALMA. COMPANY parts to reveal ALEX.

ALEX:

I'M SO SICK OF HIGH SCHOOL, THE BATHROOMS SMELL LIKE WEED
I HAVE LIKE FIFTY BRUISES CAUSE I GET
ROUGHED UP EVERY WEEK. *(Unenthusiastically)* Whoopee...
DOES ANYONE HAVE ADVIL, I RAN OUT YESTERDAY

Enter BEN. He grabs JESSIE's hand and starts pulling her.

ALEX:

CAUSE LOCKERS GIVE ME MIGRAINES AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE I'M—

BEN and JESSIE bump into ALEX as they cross.

ALEX:

Ouch! Hey...

BEN and JESSIE:

SCHOOL SPIRIT, SCHOOL SPIRIT
IT'S ALL IN THE NAME OF SCHOOL SPIRIT
THIS WHOLE SCHOOL WILL BLOW YOUR MIND
'G'-'R'-DOUBLE 'E'-'N' HILL HIGH

JOSIE, TINA, and TRISTAN join.

BEN, JESSIE, TRISTAN, JOSIE, and TINA:

SCHOOL SPIRIT, SCHOOL SPIRIT
GET IN THE MOOD FOR SCHOOL SPIRIT
HANDS DOWN LOW, NOW HANDS TO THE SKY
'G'-'R'-DOUBLE 'E'-'N' HILL HIGH

*BEN and ALEX sing their verses at once, circling each other .
CHRISSY joins in from the audience on the next round as JESSIE joins in.
Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA bickering over the next verse. ALEX accidentally
bumps into JESSIE. TRISTAN makes BEN notice, and BEN grabs ALEX by the
front of the shirt to impress TRISTAN. CHRISSY notices immediately.*

BEN:

Hey, don't touch her! What's wrong with you, huh?

CHRISSY:

(Over) Hey! Hey, hey, wait, get out of my— Ben Gallagher! You can't do that, don't be so— hey, hey, quiet!

*The number screeches to a halt. End music. JESSIE stands in CHRISSY's way
before she can approach.*

JESSIE:

Well, if it isn't our favorite redhead.

TINA:

(To Jessie) I thought that was <redhead of choice>!

JESSIE:

(To Tina) Shut up.

Enter ALLISON.

CHRISSY:

(Around Jessie) Let go of him, or I'm getting admin's attention.

ALLISON:

Whoah whoah whoah hey, can we please calm down? I'm sure whatever's happened can be handled rationally.

ALEX:

(To Allison) Yeah, but that's incredibly anticlimactic. Just let me deal with these imbeciles, I'm not a baby.

TRISTAN:

Yeah! He's not a baby. Right, Ben?

BEN:

He's a big boy now.

ALEX:

(Running his hands up Ben's arms) And I know how much you like that, Daddy.

*BEN drops ALEX in disgust and embarrassment.
ALEX dusts himself off.*

ALEX:

That's another point for the queers. Bye all. *(Disappointedly)* Bye, Ben.

Exit ALEX.

JESSIE:

(To Chrissy) You think yourself so high and mighty, don't you?

ALLISON:

Jessie, why don't we take a walk to calm you down?

JESSIE:

(To Allison) Are you telling me what to do?

ALLISON:

I'm trying to be a good friend.

JESSIE:

Didn't realize we were friends...

JESSIE is unfazed by her response. ALLISON is hurt.

TRISTAN:

(To Jessie) Come on, ditch Pinky and the Brain.

JESSIE:

The voters aren't perfect, Chrissy. They need someone who represents them.

CHRISSY:

I'm not perfect. Neither are you. But at least I have an ounce of kindness.

JESSIE is left without anything to say. CHRISSY exhales and pulls out her phone.

MRS. WOODLAND (VO):

I don't like how you talked back to your father and I yesterday. This debate team and school politics has made you incredibly rude. Keep this up and we might have to talk about forfeiting this election.

CHRISSY:

(Taking a deep breath). Just one more year of living under this bullsh... (seeing Allison and recollecting her image) ..poop. Bullpoop.

ALLISON:

Hey, Jessie was really rude to you. Are you alright?

CHRISSY:

Yeah, happens all the time. I'm sorry she said that stuff to you.

ALLISON:

Happens all the time. Wanna talk about it?

CHRISSY:

Thank you, Allison, but I'm busy at the moment. Maybe some other time?

Exit CHRISSY. ALLISON drops her smile and wipes some tears away before exiting.

SCENE 6

*The Commons. Time reads 2:02:44.
MACK, JAKE, and PHILIP enter.*

JAKE:

Come on... you can't tell me that Mr. Tenille doesn't get it on with Mrs. Arnold during the lunch break.

MACK:

Oh, ew! Why would you even say that?

JAKE:

Ever since she dumped Coach Miller, she's all over him!

JAKE gasps and claps a hand on MACK's shoulder.

JAKE:

I bet it's his receding hairline. God, that's so hot...

MACK gags.

PHILIP:

Guys, can we please turn this conversation around?

JAKE:

Sure.

JAKE pulls a breadstick out of thin air.

JAKE:

You can't deep-throat this breadstick.

MACK:

(Snatching the breadstick) Bet.

PHILIP:

No!

PHILIP takes the breadstick and throws it towards the audience.

PHILIP:

Prom. Let's talk about prom.

MACK:

What's there to talk about?

JAKE:

Now that Philip's with McKenzie, he wants to go.

MACK:

Whaaaat? What happened to "No-Prom Prom Night?"

PHILIP:

Trust me, I'd rather not go. But Kenzie has been dreaming of this since she was a child, and I don't want to take that away from her.

MACK:

Well, fine. Jake, Kenneth, and I will just have a blast without you.

JAKE:

Actually.... I was thinking you and I could go?

MACK:

(After a moment) What—

JAKE:

Don't get the wrong idea! I just think if one of us is going, we should all go. Kenneth will find a girl to go with cause he's hot. We can triple-date Phil and Kenzie.

PHILIP:

Well, since you invited yourself, sure. *(To MACK)* Hey, shoot a message to Kenneth about it. Where the hell is he anyway?

Exit PHILIP and JAKE.

(A DRESS)

MACK:

I... *(watching them go)* ..okay. Sure. Prom with Jake. *(Cringes)* I hope he doesn't make me wear a dress. I'd ruin all the photos. Though... that could make for good karma...

I HAVE NEVER BEEN A FAN OF DANCES
GOD KNOWS THAT WHITE PEOPLE CAN'T DANCE
Am I wrong?

I'LL ADMIT I'VE DREAMED OF BEING SPUN ACROSS A BALLROOM
BUT IT LOOKS WEIRD WHEN YOU'RE JUST WEARING PANTS
IMAGINE ME IN A DRESS. EVEN THE THOUGHT IS SO STRESSFUL
JESUS CHRIST, I'D LOOK LIKE A MESS
Oh, I JUST KNOW IT'D BE TOO TIGHT
AND THE ZIPPER WOULD GET STUCK
TO GET ME OUT WOULD TAKE THE NIGHT
MY DATE WOULD BE LIKE WHAT THE FU...

MACK notices someone walking by while holding the note.

MACK:

..CAN'T CATCH ME DEAD IN A DRESS. Besides,
WHAT'S THE POINT IN LOOKING FANCY? I CAN'T EVEN GET A DATE
BESIDES JAKE, but ew. I USED TO THINK SOMEONE WOULD COME
ROMANCE ME, WIN ME OVER!

(Looking down at herself) But I mean, I THINK IT'S MUCH TOO LATE
I AM PROBABLY OVERWEIGHT
AND MY THIGHS LOOK SUPER STUFFED
I EAT AT AN ALARMING RATE AND MY HIPS ARE WAY TOO MUCH
(Desperately) I WON'T BE WEARING A DRESS
(Recovering) AND IT'S NOT BECAUSE I HAVE A PROBLEM
I THINK I LOOK JUST FINE, BUT JUST 'ALRIGHT' IS NOT ATTRACTIVE
AND I KNOW WHERE MY POWERS LIE
I'LL JUST WEAR A SUIT AND TIE, I'LL EVEN THROW A TOP HAT IN
I AM SURE THAT JAKE WON'T MIND, hell
I'M NOT SURE THAT I LIKE MEN!
FORGET THE RUFFLES FOR AN EVENING
I'LL JUST DRINK TO LOSE THE STRESS
(Softly) I'M TOO BIG TO KEEP ON DREAMING THAT I...
COULD EVER PULL OFF A DRESS.

End Music.

SCENE 7

MACK:

(Filters through her backpack, struggling) Ugh, where are the—

Enter SHAWNEE dragging ALMA.

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

(Alternating) No, please, no, please, no, please—

MACK:

(Throwing tampons everywhere) Whoah! I swear there's no privacy in this public school... *(She starts to pick them up)*

SHAWNEE:

Alma's not letting me eat in the commons!

ALMA:

As my sister, you should tell her that it's a horrible idea. Otherwise it's treason.

MACK:

The lunchroom is pure Gallagher turf. You guys are gonna get stepped on.

MACK takes out her phone and starts texting.

SHAWNEE:

I'm short, getting stepped on is practically a habit.

Exit SHAWNEE.

MACK:

What can I say? *(Looks up)* The girl is shameless.

(COMMONS)

Time reads 02:02:33. Enter COMPANY on tables. Exit ALMA.

MACK:

(At phone) Jesus, Kenny. Where are you

Exit MACK SR.

COMPANY:

DID YOU HEAR WHAT SHE SAID?
SOMEONE'S CAUSING LOT'S OF TROUBLE
FINALS, FINALS, HAND THE CHEAT SHEET ON THE DOUBLE
THAT GUY HAS FOUR GIRLFRIENDS, I THOUGHT SHE WAS A VIRGIN
THIS FOOD SUCKS, FLIP 'EM OFF

Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA USR, cross from USC to DSC.

COMPANY:

SHE HAS A CRUSH ON SOMEONE ELSE'S—

SHAWNEE:

IT'S SO COMMON TO GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE—

ALMA:

IT'S SO COMMON TO GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE—

COMPANY:

IT'S SO COMMON TO GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE
NO ONE'S BUSINESS, IT'S NOT OUR BUSINESS BUT IT'S
COMMON TO SHARE THE STUFF WE DON'T CARE ABOUT TO
EVERYONE THERE, IT'S OUR JOB TO PASS ALONG THE
JUICY GOSSIP, GET THAT GOSSIP

Enter BEN and TRISTAN USR.

COMPANY:

COMMONS, COMMONS, COMMONS TALK LIKE—

TRISTAN approaches SABRINA.

TRISTAN:

HEY LITTLE LADY IN THE GLASSES,
HOW'D YOU LIKE TO LOOK AT YOUR LUNCH?

TRISTAN takes off SABRINA's glasses and drops them in her tray. TRISTAN then approaches KODA.

TRISTAN:

HEY FELLA, YOUR ENTIRE ASS IS SLIPPING OUT
Lemme help you with that.

BEN pulls TRISTAN back as he wedgies KODA.

BEN:

Dude, chill out.

*ALMA sees BEN and TRISTAN. JAKE and PHILIP notice SHAWNEE and ALMA,
and approach them.*

ALMA:

THOSE ARE THE GUYS, THOSE ARE THE GUYS
THE ONES THAT PESTER ALEJANDRO IN THE HALL.

SHAWNEE:

(Fists clenched) Well, I oughta—

JAKE and PHILIP hold SHAWNEE back by the arms.

PHILIP and JAKE:

OH DON'T DO IT, PLEASE DON'T DO IT
THOSE TWO GUYS WILL TEAR YOU APART

COMPANY:

IT'S SO COMMON TO GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE
NO ONE'S BUSINESS, IT'S NOT OUR BUSINESS BUT IT'S
COMMON TO SHARE THE STUFF WE DON'T CARE ABOUT TO
EVERYONE THERE, IT'S OUR JOB TO PASS ALONG THE
JUICY GOSSIP, GET THAT GOSSIP
COMMONS, COMMONS, COMMONS TALK LIKE—

ALMA, PHILIP, and JAKE:

LOOK AT THE TROUBLE, LOOK AT THE DRAMA
LET'S HOPE THOSE AWFUL TWO GET THEIR KARMA

SHAWNEE:

(Louder than she should be) Well, if everyone thinks they're so mean, why isn't anyone doing anything to stop them?

BEN and TRISTAN look SHAWNEE's way.

TRISTAN:

You talking about us, freshie?

BEN and TRISTAN slowly make their way over.

SHAWNEE, ALMA, PHILIP, and JAKE:

GOD, THEY'RE LOOKING OVER HERE *(Bleep!)*

I THINK THEY'RE COMING NEAR *(Bleep!)*

WE'RE GONNA DIE, WE'RE GONNA DIE

JAKE:

I love my mommy!

Enter TINA, USR cross USC.

TINA:

Guys! Someone put an orange dildo in the wrestling team's trophy case!

BEN, TRISTAN, and some COMPANY exit.

COMPANY:

IT'S SO COMMON TO GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE
NO ONE'S BUSINESS, IT'S NOT OUR BUSINESS BUT IT'S
COMMON TO SHARE THE STUFF WE DON'T CARE ABOUT TO
EVERYONE THERE, IT'S OUR JOB TO PASS ALONG THE
JUICY GOSSIP, GET THAT GOSSIP
COMMONS, COMMONS, COMMONS TALK LIKE—

SHAWNEE, ALMA, JAKE, and PHILIP lead COMPANY.

COMPANY:

DID YOU HEAR WHAT SHE SAID?
SOMEONE'S CAUSING LOT'S OF TROUBLE
FINALS, FINALS, HAND THE CHEAT SHEET ON THE DOUBLE
THAT GUY HAS FOUR GIRLFRIENDS, I THOUGHT SHE WAS A VIRGIN
THIS FOOD SUCKS, FLIP 'EM OFF

SHE HAS A CRUSH ON SOMEONE ELSE’S— DID YOU HEAR WHAT SHE SAID?
SOMEONE’S CAUSING LOT’S OF TROUBLE
FINALS, FINALS, HAND THE CHEAT SHEET ON THE DOUBLE
THAT GUY HAS FOUR GIRLFRIENDS, I THOUGHT SHE WAS A VIRGIN
THIS FOOD SUCKS, FLIP ‘EM OFF
SHE HAS A CRUSH ON SOMEONE ELSE’S—

SHAWNEE, ALMA, PHILIP, and JAKE:
IT’S SO COMMON TO—

COMPANY:
GOSSIP IN THE COMMONS LIKE

End Music.

SHAWNEE:
Let’s get out of here...

ALMA:
I told you!

*Exit SHAWNEE and ALMA USL. Enter BEN, book in hand.
Slowly exit COMPANY. Enter TRISTAN USR.*

TRISTAN:
(Taking the book) Catch up, moron.

BEN exits after TRISTAN.

BEN (VO):
So, when things like what happened at Greenhill happen, we start to ask ourselves:
Where does violence come from? From a lack of love? Or the presence of hate?

SCENE 8

*The Library. Time still reads 01:02:02.
ALEX and KENNETH across each other at the table, studying.*

ALEX:

So I said “I know how much you like that, Daddy.” You should have seen his face.

KENNETH:

(Detached) Wow. You really have no shame.

ALEX:

What is there to be ashamed of? It was just a joke to get him off my case.

KENNETH:

You’re right. I guess I’m just worried.

ALEX:

(Taking Kenneth’s hand) Well, it’s good to know you care. Thank you, but there’s no need to worry.

ALEX rearranges his papers to switch textbooks.

ALEX:

Ben, Tristan and I have been dancing on thin ice for three years now. At this point, it’s more like a game.

KENNETH:

And that’s supposed to make me feel better?

ALEX:

I’m not crying, am I?

KENNETH:

I’m scared, Alex. *(Beat)*

ALEX:

..we’re getting distracted. What’s your next problem?

KENNETH:

Wait, I still wanna talk about this.

ALEX:

We can chat about the Gallaghers all you want when you don't have a 'D' in Pre-Calculus.

KENNETH:

Fine.

ALEX and KENNETH put their heads down to work. ALEX starts tapping his foot at an obnoxious volume. KENNETH grows sick of it and steps on ALEX's foot. ALEX looks up while KENNETH works and pulls his foot out. Eventually, ALEX taps his foot again, and KENNETH has to stomp him. ALEX pulls his foot out and stomps KENNETH's foot. KENNETH retaliates, giggling. ALEX gasps and kicks KENNETH's shin. KENNETH lifts his foot and slides it up ALEX's leg.

(STUDY BUDDY)

ALEX grabs KENNETH's foot.

ALEX:

CAREFUL OVER THERE YOU'RE WASTING PRECIOUS STUDY TIME
AND I CANNOT AFFORD TO DROP MY—

KENNETH grabs ALEX's pencil and throws it stage right.

KENNETH:

YOUR PENCIL'S OVER THERE

ALEX stands up and goes to get the pencil. He takes his time bending down.

KENNETH:

YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO GET IT IF YOU'RE
PLANNING ON CONTINUING OUR—

ALEX:

YOU'RE STARING AT MY ASS

KENNETH:

What? No!

ALEX:

DON'T THINK YOU'RE SO CLEVER, AND I KNOW THIS IS your pencil!

ALEX sits back down.

KENNETH:

I CAN'T HELP IT BUT TO STARE
YOU HAPPEN TO BE PRETTY AND DISTRACTING
So maybe cut it, will ya?

ALEX:

Cute.
LOOK AT THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR SMILE
I HAVE TO ADMIT IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I
SAW YOU WITH IT, IT MAKES ME HAPPY TO SEE IT

KENNETH:

LOOK AT THE BEAUTY OF YOUR EYES
THEY LIGHT UP THE WHOLE ROOM, FILL IT WITH LIGHT,
OH, I THINK THEY'RE PERFECT, THEY MAKE ME HAPPY

ALEX and KENNETH:

I HAVE SUCH A PERFECT

They lean in for a kiss, but stop.

ALEX and KENNETH:

STUDY BUDDY

KENNETH:

MY NOSE IS IN A TEXTBOOK

ALEX:

NOT IN YOUR FACE

KENNETH:

WHERE I WANT IT

ALEX and KENNETH:
WE'D BETTER GET BACK TO STUDYING
HEY! STUDY BUDDY? CAN YOU HELP ME WITH THIS PROBLEM?
NOT MATH OR U.S. HISTORY, JUST THE
FACT THAT YOU HAVEN'T KISSED ME IN TWO HOURS

ALEX:
Which isn't that long.

KENNETH:
IT'S NOT THAT LONG

ALEX:
REALLY NOT LONG

ALEX and KENNETH:
AT ALL

KENNETH:
THREE-POINT-FOUR-SIX SQUARED?

ALEX:
Like, eleven-point-nine?

KENNETH:
Thanks. SUCKS TO KNOW THAT I GOT A
COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ANSWER

ALEX:
Lemme see... YOU FORGOT TO CARRY THERE

KENNETH:
Ah...

ALEX:
AND YOU DROPPED A SIGN? AND ALSO
YOU MADE UP THIS PROBLEM, DIDN'T YOU?

ALEX and KENNETH:
LOOK HOW YOU'RE BLUSHING, WHAT A SIGHT
YOUR FACE IS GLOWING UNDER THE LIGHT
LOOK HOW IT HITS YOU, IT'S JUST RIGHT
HOW DID I GET SO LUCKY TO HAVE A—

ALEX:
STUDY BUDDY

KENNETH:
Study buddy...

ALEX and KENNETH:
AND SURELY, WE'VE BEEN STUDYING
WE HAVE FOR A WHILE, KIND OF A WHILE, A WHILE
IT'S GETTING KIND-OF TIRING ACTUALLY
STUDY BUDDY, CAN YOU HELP ME WITH THIS PROBLEM?
NOT MUSIC OR BIOLOGY, JUST—

ALEX:
THIS HOT GUY'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, AND I LIKE HIM

KENNETH:
I REALLY LIKE HIM

ALEX:
LIKE, "LIKE-LIKE" HIM

KENNETH:
He's alright.

ALEX:
Hey...

ALEX and KENNETH:
AND HE MIGHT BE MY STUDY BUDDY
SO SHOULD WE STUDY?

They stand chest to chest, breathing heavily.

KENNETH:

I think that's enough for today.

ALEX and KENNETH share a kiss. End Music. They are interrupted by a phone call. KENNETH pulls his phone out of his pocket and answers.

KENNETH:

Mack? ... Whoah, yeah, sure, I'll be right over.

ALEX:

What did she say?

KENNETH:

Yeah, I know it's been a couple days. I'll join you guys tomorrow. *(To Alex)* She says Jake and Phil are <insert strange activity of choice>. *(Back to phone)* What? No, I'm not with anyone.

ALEX frowns at that, and watches KENNETH as he picks up their stuff.

KENNETH:

No, I swear— hey look, I'll be right over. I'll text you later.

KENNETH hangs up. ALEX holds his bag out for him.

ALEX:

Why did you lie?

KENNETH:

Come on, Alex—

ALEX:

I thought you said Mack was okay with me being around. Has that changed?

KENNETH:

What? No, she's just out with Jake and Phil. They can't keep their mouths shut. You know that better than anyone.

After a moment.

ALEX:

Are you ashamed of me?

KENNETH:

What?!

ALEX:

Wrong question.

KENNETH:

I work every day after school. My mom works two jobs. We live paycheck to paycheck to stay in this neighborhood so I can go to this school, which by the way, I'm currently not doing very well at. The only comfort I have right now is that I'm not getting beat up by Tristan and Ben Gallagher, so I'd appreciate it if you stopped pressuring me. I mean, can you imagine the look on my Mom's face if I came home all beat up because the whole school thought I was gay?

ALEX:

You *are* gay.

KENNETH:

I'm bi.

ALEX:

Whatever, Kenneth, you're attracted to men!

KENNETH gets tensely close to ALEX to carefully take his bag from him.

KENNETH:

Not until I stop seeing you get shoved against those lockers.

KENNETH exits.

SCENE 9

ALEX starts to pick up his things.

ALEX:

(To himself) I can't keep having the same conversation— why is everything always about sexuality? Can't we try talking about date plans, or my stand-up show this weekend, or... anything else, really?

He sits and rests his head in his hands in frustration.

(LOCKED)

ALEX:

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF IT'S MY FAULT
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF IT'S MY DOING
MAYBE I'M THE REASON HE WON'T SAY HE'S HERE WITH ME
I CAN'T HELP HOW THE SCHOOL WILL THINK
I CAN'T HELP HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT ME
MAYBE THEY'RE THE REASON HE WON'T SAY HE'S BEEN WITH ME
YOU KNOW, HE DESERVES TO BE UNASHAMED
WHY'S IT MATTER THAT HIS TONGUE HAS MY NAME?
BUT THERE'S THIS PREJUDICE I CAN'T EXPLAIN
WHAT DID I DO TO THEM TO MAKE THEM HURT ME THIS WAY?
AND WHAT CAN I DO TO FIX IT?

ALEX realizes what he's said.

ALEX:

WHAT CAN I DO TO FIX THIS? *(Standing)*
WHAT CAN I DO TO ERASE THE DENTS IN THOSE LOCKERS?
WHAT CAN I SAY TO THE ONES THAT HARM THE CASTAWAYS?
WHAT IS THE KEY TO OPEN UP EVERY CLOSET?
WHAT IS THE CODE SO THE LOCKED AWAY CAN ESCAPE?

ALEX frantically puts his stuff together, then sets it back on the table.

ALEX:

(To himself) Since when is my— *our* safety... an opinion?

Enter KENNETH to apologize.

ALEX:

OH WHERE DID IT ALL GO WRONG?
SINCE WHEN IS OUR LOVE A BAD THING.
WHY CAN'T I HOLD HIS HAND LIKE OTHER PEOPLE DO?

KENNETH stops to listen to ALEX, who doesn't notice.

ALEX:

HOW CAN I TRY TO MAKE A CHANGE?
WHAT DO I SAY TO MAKE THE PAIN GO AWAY?
WHAT IF I START A MOVEMENT? IT COULD ALL BEGIN TODAY
MAYBE FUTURE YEARS WILL BE FREE OF THESE CHAINS
I CAN BE THE ONE TO FIX THIS, I WILL HELP THE CAUSE TO FIX THIS

ALEX goes to stand on the table. KENNETH hides behind the bookshelf to watch.

ALEX:

I'LL DO ALL I CAN TO ERASE THE DENTS IN THOSE LOCKERS
I'LL SAY WHAT I CAN TO THE ONES THAT HARM THE CASTAWAYS
I'LL BE THE KEY TO OPEN UP EVERY CLOSET
I'LL CRACK THE CODE SO THE LOCKED AWAY CAN ESCAPE
AND NO ONE WILL BE LOCKED ANYMORE...
NO ONE WILL BE LOCKED ANYMORE
KENNETH WON'T BE LOCKED ANYMORE

Exit KENNETH.

ALEX:

AND OUR LOVE WON'T BE LOCKED ANYMORE

Exit ALEX. End Music.

SCENE 10

BEN (VO):

Where does violence come from? How about hate? Are we born with it inside of us? Is it a tradition that gets passed down?

*Grey Wall. Time reads 01:01:52.
Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA.*

SHAWNEE:

Phew! *(pants maniacally)* I've never been more relieved to see that ugly-ass wall!

ALMA:

Language! If it weren't for your loud mouth, we would have avoided that nightmare yesterday.

SHAWNEE:

Oh, I'm sorry, Alma.

ALMA:

I know you are. Now, come on, we only have a little time to eat our lunch.

ALMA takes a seat in front of the wall.

SHAWNEE:

Right.

SHAWNEE sits next to ALMA.

(WE)

SHAWNEE:

(Under her breath) I would have totally kicked their meaty butts...

SHAWNEE karate-chops the air. ALMA looks at her with skepticism.

SHAWNEE:

(Drops the act) Okay, I would have tried.

I WOULD SUFFER A WHIRLY FACEDOWN IN A TOILET FOR YOU.

ALMA:

(Gags) Where... what?

SHAWNEE:

BUT YOU WOULD FEEL BAD, SO YOU'D ASK TO GET DUNKED TOO.

ALMA:

I wouldn't, but I see where you're going with this.
IF WE DON'T HAVE THE SAME SCHEDULE NEXT YEAR, I'M SURE I
WILL SUE.

SHAWNEE:

Cause a lawsuit's more reasonable—

ALMA:

BECAUSE THINGS DON'T FEEL RIGHT WHEN I DON'T DO THEM WITH
YOU.

ALMA invites SHAWNEE to stand. She does.

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

WE HAVE SAILED THROUGH EVERY TORMENT AND
FLOWN PAST EVERY TEMPEST AND CONQUERED THE MONSTERS
THAT STOPPED IN OUR WAY

ALMA and SHAWNEE strike a combat stance with a 'ha!' They then take hands.

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

WE HAVE MANAGED THEM ALL JUST BY STICKING TOGETHER
IF WE STAY TOGETHER THEN WE'LL BE OKAY

SHAWNEE:

YOU COMPLETE ME

ALMA:

YOU COMPLETE ME

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

AND I AM COMPLETE WHEN WE'RE WE

SHAWNEE:

(Meekly) I HAVE TO PEE...

ALMA:

(Throwing her hands up) Very poetic. Just go!

SHAWNEE:

What did we just say about doing things together?

ALMA:

(With a sigh) Grab our lunches.

ALMA and SHAWNEE exit. Enter BEN with book in hand and TRISTAN.

BEN:

If it makes you feel any better, you get to see Jessie in detention.

TRISTAN:

Nah, not why I'm pissed.

BEN:

Then, what? Why are you pissed?

TRISTAN:

Mr. Tenille. The stick's gone so far up his ass...

BEN:

This about the test retake?

TRISTAN glares at BEN, then starts to exit. BEN grabs TRISTAN's arm.

BEN:

Whoah whoah whoah, sorry soldier! Talk to me.

TRISTAN:

(Guilt Trip) What's there to talk about? I've been bullshitting my math path, practically cheated into skipping a year. I don't find a way to pass this test—

BEN:

You're gonna get to do the college football of your dreams. I can help you.

TRISTAN:

(With real intention) What are you gonna do, flirt with Mr. Tenille?

BEN:

Gross, no! Help you study— why do you keep making those jokes?

TRISTAN:

You can help me by taking a picture of your test when he hands it back.

BEN:

Fine. Answer my damn question.

TRISTAN:

EVEN SINCE WE WERE LITTLE, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN MORE OF A MAN.

BEN:

What the hell?

TRISTAN:

YOU THINK WITH YOUR FEELINGS TILL I GET YOU BACK ON TRACK.
YOU DEAL WITH THE DANGER,
BUT COME BACK WITH GUILT ON YOUR FACE

BEN:

..Is this about Alex?

TRISTAN:

ARE YOU GONNA MAN UP? BE LESS SISSY? OR AM I TOO LATE?

BEN:

I'm not gay.

TRISTAN:

Then why do you flinch so much around him? Why have you been having trouble putting people in their place—

BEN:

I just don't know how I feel about hurting people, does that make me gay?!

TRISTAN:

This isn't about hurting people. Like Dad says: people like Alex are sick. If we keep letting him run around with lipstick on his face, the guys that don't know any better will think that's okay. How would you feel if Aaron or Toby turned gay, huh? What if one of them tried to—

TRISTAN gets scarily close to BEN.

BEN:

Ew, shut up! I get it, Tristan, no one wants any of that to happen.

TRISTAN puts a hand on BEN's shoulder.

TRISTAN:

WE HAVE SAILED THROUGH EVERY TORMENT, AND
FLOWN PAST EVERY TEMPEST AND
CONQUERED THE MONSTERS THAT STOPPED IN OUR WAY
WE HAVE MANAGED THEM ALL JUST BY STICKING TOGETHER
IF WE STICK TOGETHER, THEN WE'LL BE OKAY

TRISTAN becomes menacing.

TRISTAN:

(Agitated) If you really want to help, keep the fag in check so the men don't become a bunch of girls. Man up, and lose the damn book.

Exit TRISTAN with BEN's book. Resume Music.

BEN:

..STICKING TOGETHER, IF WE STICK TOGETHER THEN WE'LL BE OKAY
YOU COMPLETE ME, AND I AM COMPLETE WHEN WE'RE WE...

BEN receives a message from his father.

MR. GALLAGHER (VO):

Don't go around coming up with your own deluded ideas about morality. Why can't you take after your brother and listen to my advice?

BEN puts his phone away. End Music.

SCENE 11

Enter ALEX, who bumps right into BEN and drops a letter.

BEN:

What the—

BEN picks up the letter, sees ALEX, then shuts up.

ALEX:

(Breathless) That's mine.

ALEX holds his hand out. BEN doesn't move.

ALEX:

Ben, I'm tired. I'll get out of your hair if you'll just give that to—

ALEX reaches for the letter, but BEN holds it above his head. ALEX grabs BEN's arm, and BEN pushes ALEX down hard.

BEN:

Don't touch me!

BEN begins to read the letter.

ALEX:

(In pain) What did I ever do to you?!

ALEX slowly gets up.

ALEX:

Just cause this school doesn't do shit about you pushing me around—

BEN:

(Reading the letter) “Since the first time I laid eyes on you, I've seen the world through rose-colored glasses...” What's this?

ALEX:

Stop.

BEN:

“Every kiss feels just like the first,” oh, so this is serious!

ALEX surges forward and fights with BEN for the letter.

ALEX:

(On the verge of tears) Give me that!

BEN:

So there’s another one like you?

Cue Music. BEN grabs ALEX by the shirt. ALEX grabs BEN’s wrists.

BEN:

Well, who is it?

ALEX:

(Struggling) I don't need to tell you shit.

ALEX bites BEN. BEN hisses in pain and lets go of ALEX.

BEN:

This! This is exactly what my brother warned me would happen. You’re spreading this around like a disease.

ALEX:

Ha! You don’t actually believe that.

BEN:

Yes, I do.

ALEX:

You sound like you’re trying to convince yourself.

BEN rushes towards ALEX with a fist up. ALEX falls to the ground and scrambles back as BEN towers over him.

(LOST CAUSE)

BEN:

Shut up! *(voice breaking)* Just shut up!

BEN retreats, leaving ALEX breathing heavily. BEN turns around and looks at his hands while ALEX gets back up, angry.

ALEX:

That's it. I'm done.
YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE A HUNDRED TIMES
AND NOW MY PATIENCE IS ON THE FLOOR
I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS ANYMORE
I THOUGHT YOU'D COME AROUND BUT I

BEN looks back at ALEX, noticing his hurt.

ALEX:

HAVE LOST MY FAITH, MY HEART IS SORE
IF YOU WANT A FIGHT, THE FIGHT IS YOURS
I KNOW YOUR JUDGEMENT'S BLINDED FULLY
YOU HAVE MORALS YOU FORGOT
I KNOW THE BULLY'S ALWAYS BULLIED
AND I KNOW THAT HATE IS TAUGHT

BEN starts to speak but ALEX stops him.

ALEX:

BUT I DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR ENERGY TO
TEACH YOU WHAT IS WRONG
THAT'S NOT MY JOB. YOU'VE CLOSED YOUR EARS AND
NOW YOU'RE A LOST CAUSE

BEN:

You can think what you want about me. I know I have the support of my friends.

ALEX:

Right, cause they're so smart.

BEN:
THEY ALL SEE WHAT YOU DO IS WEAK
I MUST PROTECT THEM ALL FROM YOU. I DON'T WANT THEM TO DO IT
TOO

ALEX:
That wouldn't be my fault.

BEN:
Oh yeah? (*Gestures towards letter*)
SEE, THIS? IT'S SICK. YOU'RE SUCH A FREAK
YOU TURNED THIS BOY TO BE LIKE YOU
THIS IS WHAT YOUR PEOPLE DO

ALEX:
'My people,'— are you dumb?

BEN:
I TRUST MY JUDGEMENT, I'M NOT STUPID.
I'M NOT A BULLY, NO I'M NOT
I'M TRYING TO FIX THE THINGS YOU RUIN
PUT YOUR AGENDA TO A STOP. AND IT'S MY DUTY TO MY FAMILY
TO SHOW YOU THAT YOU'RE WRONG. THAT'S MY JOB
I SEE THAT NOW YOU'RE A LOST CAUSE

BEN and ALEX:
YOU ARE A MENACE TO ME AND THE PEOPLE I LOVE
I THOUGHT WE'D OUTGROW THIS BUT
NOW I AM SURE THAT WE'RE NOT
I'M BEING DEFENSIVE TO ALL YOUR OFFENSES
MY EYES FILL WITH TEARS BUT I STAND HERE RELENTLESS

BEN and ALEX come face to face.

BEN and ALEX:
I DON'T WANT TO HATE YOU, BUT I HAVE TO HATE YOU BECAUSE...

Cut Music.

BEN and ALEX:

Because... *(hesitant)* CAUSE NOW YOU'RE A LOST CAUSE

Cue Music. BEN and ALEX separate and grab their backpacks. They return face to face, and ALEX reaches for the note again. BEN pushes him away. Enter MACK. ALEX tearfully slaps BEN across the face and takes his note back. End Music. The Bell rings. Exit ALEX. BEN stands there, stunned.

MACK:

You deserved that.

Exit BEN. Enter KENNETH, walking past MACK. MACK sees KENNETH is upset, and runs in front of him.

MACK:

Hey! I can't decide what color pantsuit to wear to Prom, any suggestions? *(After no response)* Have you been crying?

KENNETH:

I'm fine. Have you seen Alex?

Cross COMPANY.

MACK:

No, but I saw Ben. So?

KENNETH:

It's nothing, we just had our first fight.

KENNETH realizes what that implies.

KENNETH:

Shit...

KENNETH begins to exit.

MACK:

(Wide-eyed) Wait!

Exit KENNETH and MACK. Transition to the Grey Wall.

INTERCOM (VO):

Pardon the interruption, Gladiators. This is your principal speaking: there are a lot of students in the hallways after class has already started. If you are one of those students, you are disrespecting your teachers, and more importantly, you are disrespecting yourself. This is your education, not your teachers' or your parents'. What do you wanna be in ten years? Who do you wanna be right now?

SCENE 12

Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA. Cross COMPANY occasionally. SHAWNEE is checking her phone as they walk on. Time reads 01:02:10.

MRS. REEVES (VO):

Being an artist doesn't pay, Shawnee. Besides, you don't actually know what you want to be yet. You're only fifteen.

ALMA:

And I don't say this all to be a radical environmentalist, but we have to do something about the major corporations that are spewing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The only reason no one's stopped them is government corruption, but if we the people do it together—

SHAWNEE:

(Putting her phone away) Did you remember to hug your tree this morning?

ALMA:

Oh shush.

SHAWNEE:

Hey, hey, I'm not complaining! It's good that you know what you wanna do with your life. You're gonna be the world's greatest... uh...

ALMA:

Hexicologist.

SHAWNEE:

All science looks the same to me. Skip fifth?

SHAWNEE sets her lunchbox down. Enter ALLISON.

ALLISON:

Hey, not to be lonely or anything, but can I skip with you guys?

SHAWNEE:

Of course! You're so pretty by the way, I love the pink. I'm Shawnee.

ALLISON:

Oh! Well, thank you. I'm Allison.

ALMA:

My name is Alma, and I think it's cool that an upperclassman wants to sit with us. Why's that?

ALLISON:

Oh, it's... a long story.

SHAWNEE:

We have time.

ALLISON:

Well... alright. I'm here cause I have no friends. *(A moment)* I guess it's not a long story.

SHAWNEE:

Whaaaat? Not even one?

ALLISON:

I mean, they come and go. Nobody seems to stick around for too long. Not even my family.

ALMA:

Someone needs a vent session. *(Hands Allison a cookie from her lunchbox.)*

(NO ONE)

ALLISON:

Thanks. Well...
FAMILY OF FOUR. THAT WAS BEFORE:
MY BROTHER ENLISTED, THEN WALKED OUT THE DOOR.
So... FAMILY OF THREE! Oh, AND THEN THE DIVORCE.
IT TAKES TWO TO FIGHT, AND ONE FIGHT WENT TO COURT.
BUT IT'S BEEN A YEAR. SO I'M OKAY.
I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO'S FAMILY'S BROKEN.
SO I STAY HERE FOR THOSE IN PAIN.
PEOPLE LOOKING FOR SOME GUIDANCE: I PROVIDE IT
I'M JUST ASKING FOR A FRIEND. BUT NO ONE HAS STAYED YET.

ALMA:

No offense, but... maybe you've been talking to the wrong people?

ALLISON:

I'm not good at picking out who's good and who isn't.
MADE FRIENDS WITH JESS— YOU KNOW HOW THAT ENDS.
I HELPED HER GROW BOLD; SHE IGNORES MY REQUESTS.
BUT I'VE MET SOME PEOPLE THAT I DON'T REGRET.
BUT AFTER THEY'RE GONE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT COMES NEXT.
IT'S KIND OF WEIRD TO NOT HAVE A PLACE.
JUST A SPOT THAT GETS ERASED AND I KEEP PAINTING.
STILL, I CAN'T TELL A MASK FROM A FACE.
BUT AS THEY KEEP ON LEAVING, MY TRUST'S RECEDING
AND MY HEART IS BREAKING. CAUSE NO ONE HAS STAYED YET.

SHAWNEE:

Well, no more. We'll stay.

End Music.

ALLISON:

You just met me.

SHAWNEE:

You just told us your deepest darkest issue. We're practically sisters already!

ALLISON:

Well, I don't know your deepest darkest issues.

ALMA:

Climate change.

SHAWNEE:

(At the same time) I don't think the world would be any different if I didn't exist.

ALMA and ALLISON both look at SHAWNEE worriedly.

SHAWNEE:

Well, not yet anyways! I've done nothing of value.

CROSS Company.

ALLISON:

You don't need to do something to make a difference in the world.

ALMA:

And even if you did, you've done plenty.

SHAWNEE:

(Standing) Yeah, but like, I haven't done anything for the community. I'm not a scientist or anything, all I do is draw. I didn't even get into Advanced 2D Art!

SCENE 13

SHAWNEE turns towards the ugly grey wall and looks at it for a moment. She lets out a dramatic gasp. COMPANY looks at her for a second, then moves along. SHAWNEE dances about elatedly.

(LEAVE A MARK)

ALMA:

What? What did you do now—

SHAWNEE:

Shhhhhh sh sh sh sh, hear me out! Hear me out!
HAVE YOU EVER TURNED THE TV ON TO SEE A PRO WRESTLER
MAIMING ANOTHER AND STARTED THINKING:
“Wow! THAT’S GONNA LEAVE A MARK”?

ALMA:

I mean... sometimes my grandma likes to watch Lucha Libre for the costume
design. Does that count?

SHAWNEE:

Not the point. I HAVE ANOTHER IDEA

ALMA:

Ay no...

ALMA reluctantly stands.

SHAWNEE:

(With painful American accent) Ay si!

ALLISON:

Well, this is awkward.

SHAWNEE:

Guysssss! I REALLY WANNA LEAVE A MARK
I REALLY WANNA LEAVE A MARK ON THE WORLD
AND THIS DUMB WALL SEEMS LIKE A GREAT PLACE TO START
JUST IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

ALMA:

YOU DON’T HAVE THAT KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY

SHAWNEE:

Right! THAT’S WHY I NEED YOU TO BE A PART OF THIS
I’VE MADE ALL THE CALCULATIONS

ALMA and ALLISON:

(In full befuddlement) When?!

SHAWNEE:

WE CAN HAVE THE WHOLE SCHOOL PLAY A PART

ALMA:

I take it I'm never getting out of this.

SHAWNEE shakes ALMA's hand.

SHAWNEE:

We stick together, Alma. *(Pointing to Allison)* You're coming too.

ALMA and ALLISON:

Great.

Exit SHAWNEE and ALMA. Time reads 00:07:25.

Enter COMPANY with booth, paint, and pens.

Enter SHAWNEE and ALMA SR. Cross COMPANY.

SHAWNEE:

Let's get this mural started!

PLEASE LEAVE A MARK, HELP US LEAVE A MARK

DIP YOUR HAND IN A BUCKET AND LEAVE US A HANDPRINT

SHAWNEE sees AARON draw an obscene image. She covers it with her hand.

SHAWNEE:

No! NO PHALLIC IMAGES, PLEASE!

START OVER HERE. WHY'S NOBODY LISTENING TO ME?

I'M BEGGING OVER HERE

SHAWNEE frantically washes off AARON's drawing.

COACH MILLER (VO):

(Angered) Miss Reeves!

SHAWNEE yelps and slaps a paper over the spot where AARON's drawing is.

SHAWNEE, ALMA, and ALLISON:

Shi...

ALMA:

..talking mushrooms...

ALLISON:

I'm... gonna go.

Exit ALLISON.

COACH MILLER (VO):

Are you the ones responsible for this... grotesque imagery?

ALMA turns around to see a phallus drawn, not painted, on the wall.

SHAWNEE:

(Feigning offense) Grotesque?! What's so grotesque about— Oh! Coach Miller, get your mind out of the gutter!

Enter CHRISSY as SHAWNEE and ALMA forcibly laugh. CHRISSY sees the commotion and moves towards the girls.

COACH MILLER (VO):

I'll have administration know about this vandalism immediately. And you, Miss Starr... you take after your sister—

CHRISSY:

Oh, Coach Miller! This is a misunderstanding. These lovely ladies just got board approval to start a *(looks at the girls expectantly)* muraaaallll?

ALMA:

(Through her teeth) Yes.

CHRISSY:

A mural! Here on this wall. I'm sorry you didn't get the memo, I'm sure someone will notify you about it soon.

COACH MILLER (VO):

Well... thank you, Miss Woodland. Sorry, girls.

They all watch Coach Miller leave.

CHRISSY:

(To ALMA) I'll get you that approval in no time.

ALMA:

Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you! You just saved our butts. Shawnee had the brilliant idea to turn this ugly grey wall into a school mural.

SHAWNEE:

No one's cooperating. They keep drawing ballsacks, meaning I have to repaint. I'm painting over ballsacks!

CHRISSY:

Would you mind if I joined in to help?

ALMA:

Be our guest.

CHRISSY dips her hand in green paint and splats her hand against the wall, leaving a green hand print. She signs her name underneath in permanent pen.

CHRISSY:

YOU NEED TO MAKE IT SIMPLE. DIRECTIONS SHOULD BE CLEAR
LET THEM PUT ONE HAND ON IT, THEN GET 'EM OUT OF HERE

ALMA:

IT'S SIMPLE, IT'S SYMBOLIC

CHRISSY:

Yes!

SHAWNEE:

THERE'S ROOM FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL TO PLAY A PART

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

THIS PROJECT HAS BEGUN

CHRISSY:

OH YEAH LET'S GET THIS STARTED

Enter COMPANY with pens. Exit CHRISSY. Time reads 00:02:57.

SHAWNEE and ALMA:

PLEASE LEAVE A MARK, HELP US LEAVE A MARK
DIP YOUR HAND IN A BUCKET AND LEAVE US A HANDPRINT
START OVER HERE, WRITE YOUR NAME RIGHT UNDER
LEAVE YOUR TRACE FOR FUTURE YEARS TO KNOW

Enter CHRISSY with papers and phone in hand.

CHRISSY:

We're approved, ladies!

SHAWNEE, ALMA, and CHRISSY:

LEAVE US A MARK, LEAVE US A MARK, LEAVE US A MARK,
LEAVE US A MARK, LEAVE US A MARK, LEAVE US A MARK,
LEAVE US A MARK, LEAVE US A MARK

COMPANY swarms the wall and covers it up.

ALLISON and COMPANY:

(At the same time) WE BELIEVE WE CAN LEAVE A MARK,
OH WE BELIEVE WE WILL
FIND A PURPOSE AND PLAY OUR PART, OH WE BELIEVE

*COMPANY backs away from the completed mural.
End Music.*

SCENE 14

(ANYTHING)

*COMPANY gathers to converse. BEN sits on the table, visibly upset. ALLISON,
MCKENZIE, and JOSEPH to DSC. Time reads 00:00:27.*

ALLSION:

DID YOU SEE WHAT SHAWNEE REEVES DID?

JOSEPH:
HAVE YOU HEARD OF ALMA STARR?

MCKENZIE:
THEY WERE HELPED BY CHRISSY WOODLAND

ALLISON, JOSEPH, and MCKENZIE:
THEY HELPED US LEAVE A MARK

ALLISON:
THEY BELIEVED IN ME

JOSEPH and MCKENZIE:
INSPIRED ME

ALLISON, JOSEPH, and MCKENZIE:
CONVINCED ME THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING

*ALLISON, MCKENZIE, and JOSEPH all move to admire the mural again. Cross
BEN DSR, Enter TRISTAN, cross to BEN.*

TRISTAN:
YOU KNOW WHAT MR. TENILLE SAID? I JUST TOOK MY PRE-CALC
TEST: SEVENTY OUT OF A HUNDRED, BEN, THIS IS MY BEST
NOT A BOOK ON ME, NOW LOOK AT ME
I KNOW THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING

BEN:
Yeah, but you cheated.

TRISTAN:
Man, shut up, I feel good.

Face COMPANY DS.

COMPANY:
MAYBE I AM ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
MAYBE I HAVE A PLACE IN THE WORLD
ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR A PURPOSE

ALLISON, JOSEPH, and MCKENZIE:
MAYBE I CAN DO ANYTHING

COMPANY:
I CAN BE ANYTHING, ANYTHING I WANT TO BE
OOO YEAH, SCREW THIS I'M STARTING NOW
THERE'S NO NEED TO GOOF AROUND
THIS IS MY LIFE, THIS IS MY PATH, AND I CAN DO—
WHOAH HEY, I'M PROUD OF WHO I AM
MAYBE I DON'T HAVE A PLAN, BUT
THIS IS MY LIFE, AND I CAN DO ANYTHING

*COMPANY rejoices with CHISSY, ALMA, and SHAWNEE.
Enter ALEX. Enter KENNETH to stop ALEX.*

KENNETH:
ALEX, BABY, WE NEED TO TALK

ALEX:
(In fear of the phrase) What?

KENNETH:
THAT THING ABOUT LOCKERS— I HEARD IT ALL

ALEX:
Oh...

KENNETH:
I WANNA HELP YOU GIVE IT A START, I'D GO THROUGH IT ALL

ALEX:
Wait! Kenneth—

KENNETH stands on the table, and COMPANY looks at him.

KENNETH:
HE'S PROTECTED ME, DEFENDED ME...
I AM SO PROUD I'LL SAY ANYTHING

ALEX stands, speechless. KENNETH hops off the table and pulls ALEX into a kiss. COMPANY murmurs and 'aww's. CHRISSY stands on the table next.

CHRISSY:

MAYBE I AM A LEGEND IN THE MAKING
MAYBE I AM HISTORY RIGHT NOW
ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN FAR TOO BUSY WAITING

CHRISSY, ALEX, and KENNETH:

I CAN DO ANYTHING

MACK unzips her jacket to reveal a <pride shirt of choice> to support KENNETH.

MACK:

(Riff) I CAN BE ANYTHING

COMPANY:

ANYTHING I WANT TO BE. OOH YAH, SCREW THIS, I'M STARTING NOW
THERE'S NO NEED TO GOOF AROUND, THIS IS MY LIFE
THIS IS MY PATH AND I CAN DO— WHOAH HEY
I'M PROUD OF WHO I AM; MAYBE I DON'T HAVE A PLAN BUT
THIS IS MY LIFE, AND I CAN DO ANYTHING

TRISTAN:

I HOPE MY PARENTS ARE PROUD

KENNETH:

I HOPE MY MOTHER IS PROUD

COMPANY:

WHAT DO I WANNA BE? DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GONNA BE
I JUST KNOW THAT I'M PROUD OF ME
PROUD OF WHO I AM, PROUD OF WHERE I'M GOING

BEN, ALEX, CHRISSY, SHAWNEE, ALMA:

I HOPE MY PARENTS ARE PROUD, I HOPE MY PARENTS ARE PROUD
I HOPE MY PARENTS ARE PROUD

COMPANY:

WHAT DO I WANNA BE? DO I KNOW WHAT I WANNA BE?

(Including leads) I HOPE MY PARENTS ARE PROUD OF WHO I WANNA BE

COMPANY texts their parents, and reacts negatively to the phone responses as they echo, overlapping each other. Time reads 00:00:06.

SCENE 15

(WANNABES)

SHAWNEE:

HOW MANY TIMES HAS SOMEONE TOLD YOU
YOU DON'T KNOW YET, YOU'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH?
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN SILENCED,
TOLD YOU'RE VOICELESS, YOU'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH?

ALEX:

“DUMBASS KIDS WITH DUMBASS FANTASIES,
GROW A WHITE HAIR AND THEN YOU MAY SPEAK.”

KENNETH:

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU FELT WORTHLESS?

ALEX:

CAN'T KEEP WAITING TILL WE'RE OLD ENOUGH

COMPANY:

WE HAVE DREAMS SO BRIGHT. HAD THEM ALL OUR LIVES
WE COULD USE THEM AND THE WORLD WOULD UNITE

KENNETH:

BUT NO, WE'RE STUPID, WE CAN'T GET INVOLVED
WE'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH, WE'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH

COMPANY:

WE'RE ONLY CRAZY TEENAGE WANNABES
YOUNG AND RECKLESS AND MUCH TOO BLIND TO SEE
WE THINK WE KNOW ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE WORLD, I MEAN
WE'RE JUST WANNABES, WE'RE JUST WANNABES

CHRISSY:

WHY SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL I'M OLDER?
I COULD BE A KILLER ACTIVIST.
WHO SAID THAT KIDS CAN'T HAVE OPINIONS? I THINK WE SHOULD—

COMPANY shushes CHRISSY.

ALMA:

ADULTS OUT HERE MESSING UP THE WORLD,
LEAVING A PLANET THAT WE'LL HAVE TO CLEAN

PHILIP:

I HAVE IDEAS

JAKE:

I'VE GOT ARGUMENTS

JESSIE:

BUT THEY'LL HAVE TO WAIT TILL I'M OLD ENOUGH

COMPANY:

WE HAVE DREAMS SO BRIGHT. HAD THEM ALL OUR LIVES
WE COULD USE THEM AND THE WORLD WOULD UNITE

MACK:

BUT NO, WE'RE STUPID, WE CAN'T GET INVOLVED
WE'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH, WE'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH

COMPANY:

WE'RE ONLY CRAZY TEENAGE WANNABES
YOUNG AND RECKLESS AND MUCH TOO BLIND TO SEE
WE THINK WE KNOW ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE WORLD, HEY
WE'RE JUST WANNABES, WE'RE JUST WANNABES

ALEX:

WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TO START A MOVEMENT

Lights on ALEX and BEN. BEN is separate from the conversation, dejected.

BEN:

I think I was wrong.

ALEX:

WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TO HAVE A VOICE.
JUST BECAUSE WE'RE NOT OUT OF SCHOOL YET
DOES NOT MEAN WE CANNOT HELP TO MAKE A BETTER CHOICE

BEN:

I HAVE TO MAKE A BETTER CHOICE...

COMPANY:

WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TO START A MOVEMENT
WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TO HAVE A VOICE
JUST BECAUSE WE'RE NOT OUT OF SCHOOL YET
DOES NOT MEAN WE CANNOT HELP TO MAKE A BETTER CHOICE

BEN:

I WANNA BE GOOD, I WANNA BE KIND, I WANNA SET OUR
DIFFERENCES ASIDE

COMPANY:

WE'RE ONLY CRAZY TEEN—

Gunshots are heard and lights go out. COMPANY screams and runs in all directions. They settle against the wall, now with bullet holes. CHRISSY, TRISTAN, KENNETH, ALMA, and SHAWNEE are highlighted. Lights rise on the five dead. The lights fall. The clock reads 00:00:00 and turns off. Exit COMPANY.

INTERMISSION

ACT 2

SCENE 1

(EMPTY)

The Hallway. Lights on present COMPANY. Time reads 15:16:37.

COMPANY:

IT FEELS LIKE THIS PLACE HAS NO WALLS
OFFERS NO ROOF TO KEEP US SHELTERED
OPENLY WALKING THROUGH THE HALLS
INNOCENTS LACKING A DEFENDER

Enter PHILIP and JAKE, JAKE completely silent, and PHILIP shaking and muttering to himself. Exit PHILIP and JAKE.

COMPANY:

CLUTTERED MIND, HOLLOW HEARTED, FROZEN TIME
UNFORGOTTEN NAMES RING, THE GROUNDS SING
BUT IT ALL STILL SOUNDS SO EMPTY
WHAT'S A DREAM? WE'RE LOSING OUR MEMORIES

Enter JESSIE. She shoves past COMPANY, crying. Exit JESSIE.

COMPANY:

WE DON'T WANT THIS INFAMY. WHY CAN IT BE THAT IT
ALL STILL SOUNDS SO EMPTY.

Enter MACK. She throws her backpack down and punches a locker.

COMPANY:

CLUTTERED MIND, HOLLOW HEARTED, FROZEN TIME
UNFORGOTTEN NAMES RING, THE GROUNDS SING
BUT IT ALL STILL SOUNDS SO EMPTY

Enter ALLISON. She tries to comfort the people around her, to no avail. She gets to MACK and helps her with her things. Exit MACK and ALLISON.

COMPANY:

WHAT'S A DREAM? WE'RE LOSING OUR MEMORIES
WE DON'T WANT THIS INFAMY. WHY CAN IT BE THAT IT
ALL STILL SOUNDS SO EMPTY?

SCENE 2

JOSIE's phone lights up with a video. COMPANY watches. Time reads 15:16:53.

MEDIA (VO):

Greenhill High School under pressure after a shooting occurs. Student absences increase significantly a little over two weeks after a man named—

JOSIE turns off her phone and looks around at COMPANY.

JOSIE:

I don't wanna hear his name.

(THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS)

MACK's phone lights up with a report.

MEDIA (VO):

After the tragic shooting of Greenhill High School, the attacker—

MACK:

Who gives a shit?!

MEDIA (VO):

The NRA has not publicly made commentary on the attack at Greenhill High School. The A-R 15 responsible for the attack—

COMPANY:

Correct!

MEDIA (VO):

The shooter is said to have been a man named—

COMPANY:

What about the six lives lost? This is not fair.

MEDIA (VO):

We send our thoughts and prayers to the students and families of Greenhill High School.

COMPANY:

A LITTLE THINKING AND PRAYING WON'T DO SHIT

COMPANY gathers in anger.

JOSIE:

ALL OF US ARE CRAWLING WITH THE BLOOD PRINTS IN OUR HEADS
SCATTER-BRAINED CAUSE SPLATTER BATHED US
ALL IN SHADES OF RED
WE SPLIT OUR WAYS, YET ON THAT GRAVE DAY
THERE WAS NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN
NOW WE RUN THEIR WAY FOR A PLACE TO STAY
BUT THEY'RE SIDING WITH THE GUN

JOSEPH:

WHO'S OUR ALLY, WHO'S A VILLAIN, WE CAN NEVER TELL
POLITICIANS RARELY LISTEN WHEN WE SCREAM FOR HELP
NOW THE MEDIA'S CHANGED ALL THE MEANING RAISED
FROM THE MASSACRE WE'VE SEEN. THEY WILL SAY HIS NAME
SAY THE BRAIN'S TO BLAME WHEN IT'S THE A-R 15

COMPANY:

MEDIA SAYS HIS NAME, LOOKING FOR WHO TO BLAME
BUT IT'S 'WHAT'S' TO BLAME.
WHAT'S TO BLAME? WHAT'S TO BLAME?
MEDIA SAYS A NAME, LOOKING FOR WHO TO BLAME
BUT THE GUN'S TO BLAME, THE GUN'S TO BLAME
A LITTLE THINKING AND PRAYING WON'T DO

MACK:

THE SECOND AMENDMENT IS BEING DEFENDED
BUT EVERYTHING HAS LAYERS
WHEN THE REDCOATS CAME, PLAYED THE RIFLE GAME
THEN THE PEOPLE WERE OUR SAVIORS
THERE'S NO POWDER NOW, GO THROUGH SEVERAL ROUNDS
IT'S MACHINE OVER BEHAVIOR

COMPANY:

WE WANT OUR FRIENDS, WE WANT OUR LIVES
SO SCREW YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

AARON:

WHY DO CAMERAS CLOSE WHEN WE SPEAK
OUT WITH OUR DEMANDS?

COMPANY turns attention to ALEX.

AARON:

I SAW ONE GUY HOLD ANOTHER'S GUTS IN WITH HIS HANDS

Exit ALEX, upset.

AARON:

THEY FORGET OUR PAIN JUST TO ENTERTAIN
TO THE ONES THAT HAVEN'T SEEN
WHAT WE'VE BEEN THROUGH HERE, WE'LL JUST DISAPPEAR,
TELL THEIR KIDS HOW MUCH THEY MEAN

ALLISON:

PARENTS SEND THEIR KIDS TO SCHOOL SO
THEY CAN GROW AND LEARN
WHO'S TO SAY THEY WON'T WALK RIGHT IN, NEVER TO RETURN?

MCKENZIE:

BULLETS UP AHEAD, TABLE ON HER LEG AND HAVING TO STAY CALM

ALLISON:

UNDERNEATH THE DESK, PHONE AGAINST HER CHEST, SAYING
'HEY, I LOVE YOU MOM'

COMPANY:

MEDIA SAYS HIS NAME, LOOKING FOR WHO TO BLAME
BUT IT'S 'WHAT'S' TO BLAME.
WHAT'S TO BLAME? WHAT'S TO BLAME?
MEDIA SAYS A NAME, LOOKING FOR WHO TO BLAME
BUT THE GUN'S TO BLAME, THE GUN'S TO BLAME
A LITTLE THINKING AND PRAYING WON'T DO
THE SECOND AMENDMENT IS BEING DEFENDED
BUT EVERYTHING HAS LAYERS
WHEN THE REDCOATS CAME, PLAYED THE RIFLE GAME
THEN THE PEOPLE WERE OUR SAVIORS
THERE'S NO POWDER NOW, GO THROUGH SEVERAL ROUNDS
IT'S MACHINE OVER BEHAVIOR
WE WANT OUR FRIENDS, WE WANT OUR LIVES
SO SCREW YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Lights down. Scene Change.

MEDIA (VO):

Students at Greenhill High School return to class just two weeks after a man named—

COMPANY:

Shut it! SHUT IT DOWN

MEDIA (VO):

We asked a student from a neighboring school about what he knows about the shooting. When asked about the attacker, he said—

COMPANY:

STOP SAYING HIS NAME

MEDIA (VO):

You know, this is really just an issue about mental health. Some crazy guy with bad intentions just came in and—

COMPANY:

That's not the point! HE DOESN'T DESERVE THE FAME!

MEDIA (V/O):

Well. This is truly a tragic story. All of our thoughts and prayers are for the students and families at Greenhill High School.

COMPANY:

(Bleep!) this!

Exit COMPANY.

SCENE 3

BEN (VO):

Where does violence come from? From a lack of love? Or the presence of hate? Are we born with it inside us? Is it a tradition that gets passed down? Or do we acquire it when we have nothing else to turn to? I wanted answers.

The Library. BEN sits at the table, angry. ALEX comes in crying, and BEN notices. BEN stands, his fists clenched. ALEX wipes his tears and slowly approaches him. The moment BEN tries to strike him, ALEX grabs him in a hug, and BEN freezes.

(CRUMBLE)

ALEX:

I KNOW— I KNOW YOU HAVE SUFFERED A LOSS
LIFE CAME— IT CAME, AND IT CAME AT A COST

BEN pushes ALEX away fearfully but doesn't leave, so ALEX doesn't stop talking to him.

ALEX:

I HARNESS YOUR ANGER, YOUR TEARS
THE LOSS OF THE EIGHTEEN YEARS
THE FEELING OF WALKING ALONE

ALEX gestures to BEN his open arms.

ALEX:

CALL MY ARMS HOME
CAUSE NO PUSH, NO SHOVE
NO INJURY COULD BE GREATER THAN THIS

BEN softens.

ALEX:

THROUGH THE HURT, THROUGH THE FEAR
THERE'S SOMEONE THAT'S GRAVELY MISSED
AND THERE'S AN EMPATHY THROUGH THE ANGUISH
EVEN AFTER ALL THAT YOU'VE DONE

ALEX takes a moment to wipe his tears.

ALEX:

I'LL PUT YOU BACK WHEN YOU BREAK APART
I'LL HELP YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL
WHEN YOU CRUMBLE IN FRONT OF ME

ALEX crosses his arms and BEN approaches him.

BEN:

I... am so sorry—

ALEX

Not right now.

BEN:

I FEEL— I FEEL THE HOLE IN MY HEART

ALEX:

I KNOW HOW IT FEELS

BEN:

IT ACHES... MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN TORN APART
IT'S AS IF I WAS THE ONE, THE ONE PUT IN FRONT OF THE GUN
THE BULLETS HAD RIPPED THROUGH ME INSTEAD
I CAN'T BE ALONE

ALEX:

CALL MY ARMS HOME

BEN and ALEX:

CAUSE NO PUSH, NO SHOVE
NO OTHER ACTION IS BIGGER THAN THIS—

BEN hugs ALEX, overwhelmed.

BEN:

THROUGH THE HURT, THROUGH THE FEAR
YOU HUG THE MONSTER—

ALEX pulls BEN to look at him.

ALEX:

YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT

BEN:

I FEEL LIKE A MONSTER,
BUT THERE'S THIS EMPATHY THROUGH THE ANGUISH
EVEN AFTER ALL THAT I'VE DONE
I'LL PUT YOU BACK TOGETH I BROKE YOU APART
I'LL HELP YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL,
WHEN YOU CRUMBLE BECAUSE OF ME

ALEX:

THANK YOU FOR TALKING

BEN:

Well, MY DEFENSES ARE DOWN

They begin to leave, but quickly turn back towards each other.

ALEX:

I'VE BEEN THINKING:

BEN:

WHILE NO ONE'S AROUND:

BEN and ALEX:
CAN SOMETHING GOOD COME OUT OF THIS?

BEN and ALEX recognize what the other means.

BEN and ALEX:
SOMETHING TO DO IN HIS NAME SO
NOBODY GOES THROUGH THE SAME
SO NOBODY GOES THROUGH THIS PAIN ALL ALONE
CAUSE NO PUSH, NO SHOVE,
NO AMOUNT OF WORDS COULD BE GREATER THAN THIS
THROUGH THE HURT, THROUGH THE FEAR
THERE'S SOMEONE THAT'S GRAVELY MISSED
AND THERE'S AN EMPATHY THROUGH THE ANGUISH
EVEN AFTER ALL THAT'S BEEN DONE...

BEN and ALEX both become very emotional. They face each other at a distance.

BEN and ALEX:
I'LL PUT YOU BACK WHEN YOU BREAK APART
I'LL HELP YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL,
WHEN YOU CRUMBLE IN FRONT OF ME

Neither BEN or ALEX move.

ALEX:
So, what do we do now?

End Music.

SCENE 4

Classroom. Time reads 16:17:06. The Intercom crackles.

INTERCOM (VO):

Attention students: Due to Greenhill's current sensitivity and the excessive media attention from outside, the entrances to the building are to be under lockdown until the end of the school day.

BEN breathes heavily, about to crack.

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Students, please take your seats. I don't intend to host class today... I understand that it is very difficult for any of us to be here and focus. However, the district made it mandatory to show you this presentation on how to protect yourself in case an armed intruder gets into the building—

BEN:

Oh, okay. Keep the guns, make the school take the precautions! That makes sense.

(LOCKDOWN)

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Mr. Gallagher—

BEN stands from his seat.

BEN:

You know, it's really insensitive that you would even consider showing us this bullshit—

MR. TENILLE (VO):

(Shocked) Mr. Gallagher!

BEN:

—literally two weeks after we got shot up! My brother is dead. Your star student? Also dead!

PHILIP whimpers and cries.

JAKE:

(Coldly) Ben, I suggest you shut up.

BEN:

And Mack over there? She just lost her sister and her best friend. Did you notice Kenneth is also missing from class today?

MACK whimpers, then covers her mouth. The class stares at BEN in shock. BEN starts to cry.

BEN:

What? What?!

OKAY, YOU'RE STARING AT ME, FINE

I'LL CRY IN FRONT OF EVERYONE. WHAT'S DONE IS DONE

ALLISON slowly shifts in her seat to talk to BEN, but BEN steps away.

BEN:

JUST STEP AWAY AND LET ME DIE

DON'T ASK ME WHY I TRIED TO COME. MY BROTHER'S GONE

WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING IF WE HAVE A CHANCE TO DIE?

WHAT'S THE POINT OF LEARNING IF WE'RE LOCKED INSIDE THIS PRISON, THIS DEATHBED, AND NOTHING CHANGES OUTSIDE?

BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT... I WON'T ACCEPT THIS LOCKDOWN

BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT... I WON'T ACCEPT THIS LOCKDOWN

I'M FREAKING OUT, FREAKING OUT

SO LET ME HAVE THIS MENTAL BREAKDOWN

BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT

MACK wipes her tears away and stands.

MACK:

HEY, EVERYONE IS ON YOUR SIDE

WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO COPE WITH THIS, THE JOKE THIS IS

THIS PROTOCOL IS LACED WITH LIES,

THEY'LL ONLY KEEP PROMOTING IT NO MATTER HOW WRONG IT IS

PHILIP:

THE PROCEDURE'S MADE TO BUY US TIME BEFORE WE DIE

ALLISON

OUR ONLY CHANCE OF LIVING IS THE VOTE OUTSIDE THIS PRISON,
THIS DEATHBED; BUT NOTHING'S CHANGING THEIR MINDS
Hey... WHY DOES THE VICTIM GET THE FINE?
THAT ONLY HELPS THE CRIMINAL. IT'S CRIMINAL

BEN:

Yeah...

COMPANY:

WHY DO THE VICTIMS GET THE FINE?
THAT'S HELPING OUT THE CRIMINAL
GIVES POWER TO THE CRIMINALS

JESSIE:

SO WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING IF WE HAVE A CHANCE TO—

COMPANY:

DIE?

BEN:

SO WHAT'S THE POINT OF LEARNING IF WE'RE—

COMPANY:

LOCKED INSIDE THIS PRISON, THIS DEATHBED
AND NOTHING CHANGES OUTSIDE?
BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT, WE WON'T ACCEPT THIS LOCKDOWN
BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT, WE DON'T ACCEPT THIS LOCKDOWN
WE'RE FREAKING OUT, FREAKING OUT
SO LET US HAVE THIS MENTAL BREAKDOWN
BREAK OUT, BREAK OUT

End Music. The bell rings.

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Class dismissed. Everyone... go to lunch.

*BEN looks around at everyone and sees their anger.
MACK puts a hand on BEN's shoulder. COMPANY begins to leave.*

MACK:

You're an asshole. But I know you don't want to be alone right now.

*JAKE and PHILIP stand behind MACK.
BEN silently acknowledges that they all lost a sibling.
Lights out. Exit COMPANY with chairs.*

BEN (VO):

I wasn't the only one that wanted answers. I wasn't the only one that lost flesh and blood in a shooting. In fact, we lose someone to a bullet every fifteen minutes. If knowing this doesn't make you lose your appetite... well...

SCENE 5

*BEN, MACK, JAKE, and PHILIP sit on/at the table. Lights up. The Commons.
JAKE stares at his sandwich. Time reads 15:21:03.*

MACK:

Jake, eat. You like to eat.

JAKE:

Funny, I haven't enjoyed it as much recently.

PHILIP:

Jake...

JAKE:

Eating away my feelings isn't gonna change the fact that Chrissy's dead, Phil!

PHILIP flinches and starts to cry to himself.

BEN:

(Menacingly) Hey! *(Stops, then kindly)* You need to take care of yourself, man.

JAKE:

Out of character for you to say something so caring.

MACK:

Jake!

BEN:

No, he's right. *(To Jake)* I owe you an apology. I owe your sister an apology. I owe a whole lot of people an apology. In fact—

BEN impulsively stands on the table. COMPANY looks at him.

BEN:

Everyone? Not to be dramatic, but... I've been a dick. *(Realizing he's overreacting but can't go back now)* I've known that for a while. I've been blindly following my brother around my whole life trying to impress him, doing what he thought was best, being the best brother I could be. And by doing that I was hurting a lot of people. These past two weeks I've been thinking for myself, and I feel guilty that I placed my family's beliefs before my own. So I apologize for my actions, and I will work to turn myself around. Unfortunately, I can't apologize for Tristan. He wouldn't have been sorry at all. Even though it hurts to think that my favorite person in the world held so much... prejudice... and defended it, I still love him. And every moment he's been gone, I regret not saying it to his face.

(TORN AWAY)

BEN:

EVERY SECOND SUFFOCATES ME MORE
IF I HAD HIM STANDING HERE IN FRONT OF ME
I'D SAY THE THINGS I COULDN'T SAY BEFORE
BUT HE'S BEEN TORN AWAY

MACK:

NOW AT HOME, THE LAUGHTER ISN'T THERE
MAKING SILENCE MORE THAN I CAN BEAR TO LIVE THROUGH
THIS HOLE I CANNOT FILL, I CAN'T REPAIR
CAUSE SHE'S BEEN TORN AWAY

BEN and MACK:

BLOOD OF MINE ON THE FLOOR
I SOMEHOW MADE IT OUT THE DOOR
BULLET SAID I WOULD STAY
JUST AS LONG AS (SHE/HE) IS TORN AWAY

PHILIP:

EACH CLASS, EMPTY SPACES, EMPTY STARES
THERE, A FLEETING SPIRIT IN HER CHAIR
BRIGHT RED FLAME NOW SMOKE INTO THE AIR
SHE'S BEEN TORN AWAY

BEN, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

BLOOD OF MINE ON THE FLOOR
I SOMEHOW MADE IT OUT THE DOOR
BULLET SAID I WOULD STAY
JUST AS LONG AS (SHE/HE) IS TORN AWAY

BEN, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE look up.

BEN, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SAID
WHEN THEY TOLD ME YOU WERE DEAD
I JUST PUSH THROUGH EVERY DAY
I MISS YOU— PLEASE DON'T GO AWAY...

COMPANY:

AWAY...

BEN, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

I WISH YOU COULD STAY...

COMPANY:

STAY...

BEN, MACK, PHILIP, and JAKE:

YOU'VE BEEN TORN AWAY...

COMPANY:

TORN AWAY...

*End Music. The bell rings.
ALLISON falls off her crutches and her books fall to the floor with a bang.
COMPANY flinches. BEN jumps out of his chair and runs off.
MACK stands and shields PHILIP. JAKE doesn't react. PHILIP cries and tries to
block himself. Time reads 16:21:38. Lights out.*

BEN (VO):

So much unnecessary death, and instead of immediate action, our government let the public forget about the problem. Eventually, the cameras and the vans left Greenhill alone. So did the rest of the country.

SCENE 6

*The Classroom. Time reads 16:17:28.
COMPANY is in their seats, quiet. BEN has his head down on the desk.*

MR. TENILLE (VO):

(Hesitant) You have until the end of the week to finish those packets. You should be able to finish if you use your class time wisely. No pressure, the unit test is canceled. I have to go print some papers for the next period. Miss De L'eau, would you open that door for me when I return?

ALLISON nods. A door closes. ALLISON slowly shifts in her seat to look at the rest of the class.

ALLISON:

Can... I say something that scares me?

JAKE:

I think we've had enough fear for a lifetime.

MACK:

(To Jake) Hey, the girl's been helpful. *(To Allison)* What is it?

ALLISON:

I've shot a gun before.

COMPANY looks at her.

ALLISON:

My dad has a license. Whether we were at a shooting range, or if he took my brother hunting, my dad would always bring up these gun safety rules. He said that everyone who owns a gun is supposed to know them.

(THE RULES)

ALLISON counts the rules on her hand.

ALLISON:

(1) FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER TILL YOU'RE READY TO FIRE
(2) LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING
WHAT THE THINGS RIGHT BEHIND ARE
(3) THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AN UNLOADED GUN
(4) NEVER AIM AT ANYTHING AND NEVER AIM AT ANYONE
YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY WILLING TO DESTROY
(Beat) Do you think the guy that came in here knew those rules?

JAKE stands. BEN looks up.

JAKE:

KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER TILL YOU'RE READY TO SHOOT
WHEN CARRYING A WEAPON, THAT IS NOTHING TO DISPUTE
IF THE FLEX OF A MUSCLE GETS TO SAY WHO LIVES OR DIES

JAKE puts a foot on Chrissy's empty seat.

JAKE:

YOU'D HOPE THAT SOMEBODY WOULD THINK TWICE
(Noticing what seat he's at) ..RIGHT?

TOBY:

EYES ON THE TARGET, WHAT'S BEHIND AT ANY TIME, CAUSE THE
GUN DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE, IT TAKES WHATEVER LIFE
IF THERE'S PEOPLE OUT THERE WILLING
TO SHOOT RIGHT AT A CROWD
WHY SELL SOMETHING THAT SHOOTS A COUPLE ROUNDS? HOW?

MCKENZIE:

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AN UNLOADED WEAPON
YOU CAN THINK IT'S EMPTY BUT THERE'S ACTUALLY A LEAD IN
A SEMI-AUTOMATIC AND HE BROUGHT HIS MAGAZINES—

KODA:

DO YOU THINK HE REALLY KNEW WHAT THESE RULES MEAN?

COMPANY:

(1) FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER TILL YOU'RE READY TO FIRE
(2) LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING
WHAT THE THINGS RIGHT BEHIND ARE
(3) THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS AN UNLOADED GUN
(4) NEVER AIM AT ANYTHING AND NEVER AIM AT ANYONE
YOU'RE NOT COMPLETELY WILLING TO...

MACK:

NEVER AIM AT SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO KILL...
TO LOOK RIGHT DOWN A BARREL AND TO— *(Sobs)*
TO OPEN UP A LOCKER AND TO FIND TWO SCREAMING GIRLS AND TO

MACK chokes and wipes her tears, furious.

MACK:

..TO SUMMON UP A WEAPON TO ERASE THEM FROM THE WORLD
There are evil people! That is never gonna change!
SOME ARE THERE TO HARM US, SOME ARE THERE TO CAUSE US PAIN
WHEN YOU CAN'T CONTROL THE PEOPLE
THERE IS ONE THING THAT REMAINS:
Restrict them from the weapon. ITS ONLY PURPOSE IS TO TAKE.

A knock at the door makes COMPANY stir. ALLISON moves to open the door. The bell rings.

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Class dismissed. Remember, lunch is after school today.

Exit COMPANY. Enter ALEX USR, teary-eyed. MACK remains in her seat, packing up. ALEX sits in Kenneth's old seat. End Music. MACK and ALEX look at each other.

ALEX:

Do you ever feel like we should be doing something?

MACK:

We shouldn't have to.

ALEX:

How many more people have to die before someone does?

MACK gets up and begins to exit USR.

ALEX:

Your sister loved you. And, Kenneth.

MACK:

(Pauses) He knew you loved him back.

ALEX looks down. BEN approaches.

BEN:

Both of you. I need your help with something. Allison!

ALLISON whirls around.

BEN:

Come with us to the library.

ALL exit.

BEN (VO):

Where does violence come from? From a lack of love? Or the presence of hate? Are we born with it inside us? Or do we acquire it when we have nothing else to turn to? Whatever the circumstance in which violence appears, there's one thing that holds true: if you can't stop it, take measures to prevent its effects. But how?

SCENE 7:

The Library.

Enter BEN, ALLISON, ALEX, and MACK. BEN paces.

BEN:

The more time passes, the angrier I get. I don't think rage is a stage of grief, but it's a sign of helplessness.

MACK:

You called us in here for a therapy session?

ALLISON:

He called us in here because he has an idea. *(To Ben)* What is it?

BEN:

I don't know yet.

The others are silent. They feel the same way.

(THE FACTS)

BEN:

I just know we must do something. THAT 'SOMETHING' STARTS TODAY
It seems lawmakers let us down, SO WE MUST DO THIS OUR WAY
We all know someone that is dead. Let's raise their voices from the grave.
Cause right now, we're the only ones with regulations.

ALEX:

(Lifting clear backpack) I'll say...

MACK:

HAVE YOU GONE OUT OF YOUR MIND?
I mean, QUITE FRANKLY, IT'S TOO LATE. Our friends were not the first to die.
PREVIOUS INACTION SEALED OUR FATE

ALEX:

THIS FIGHT HAS MUCH TOO HIGH A COST,
WE'RE RISKING LIVES ON THIS "DEBATE"

ALLISON:

Hey! Remember not all hope is lost,
THERE'S MUCH MORE LOVE THAN THERE IS HATE
THE PEOPLE WILL RESTRICT THE GUNS IF
CURBING GUNS MEANS SAVING CHILDREN
THE MANUFACTURERS ARE THE ONES THAT PAY THE ONES—

ALEX AND ALLISON:

PAY THE ONES WHO MAKE THE
DECISIONS, THE ACTS, THE LAWS, THE ACTION

ALEX, MACK, AND ALLISON:

REVISIONS, WHAT PASSES, WHAT'S TAKEN OUT TO THE PEOPLE

BEN, ALEX, MACK, AND ALLISON:

THE MEDIA FEEDS, THEY REACT
BUT THEY'RE SO FAR AWAY FROM THE FACTS

BEN:

SO LET'S GIVE THEM THE FACTS... *(In slam)*
It's not like gun users run lawless, they have many rules to follow:
It's just that most of them are useless— a tough pill for us to swallow.
You change the grip, barrel, size, the gun can get reclassified,
But there are loopholes in the way someone can carry, wield, or buy. Besides:
Every criminal has a first offense, even criminals pass their background checks,
Any criminal with a couple rounds can put a bullet through your chest.
Some people have a darker past, so they see how much damage they can cause.
If we want to protect ourselves and everyone, we have to change the laws.

ALLISON AND MACK:

THE LAWS ARE FOR THE PEOPLE
BUT THEY SHOULD BE FOR THE MAKERS
THE MANUFACTURERS ARE THE ONES— THE ONES THAT PAY

BEN, ALEX, MACK, AND ALLISON:
THE ONES THAT PAY TO MAKE THE
DECISIONS, THE ACTS, THE LAWS, THE ACTION,
REVISIONS, WHAT PASSES, WHAT'S TAKEN OUT TO THE PEOPLE
THE MEDIA FEEDS, THEY REACT
BUT THEY'RE SO FAR AWAY FROM THE FACTS

ALEX:
THEY'RE SO FAR AWAY FROM THE FACTS...
What happened didn't have to happen. How dare they rather defend their guns?

MACK:
Alex...

ALEX:
(Whirling around) I watched the love of my life bleed to death in my arms!
Shouldn't that be enough?
Exit ALEX, clearly upset. End Music.

BEN:
Alex! *(Sighs)* I don't blame him.

MACK:
I'll go get him.
Exit MACK after ALEX.

ALLISON:
It won't be easy. Whatever we come up with, it's gonna take a toll on all of us.
But rest assured, we'll do it.

BEN:
Thanks... for being so willing to help.

ALLISON:
Yeah... yeah, of course. Hey, if you ever need anything, like a hug, or someone to
talk to or whatever—

BEN:
(Distant) Sure.

ALLISON thoughtfully takes a book from her bag and sets it down on the table in front of BEN.

ALLISON:

Something to keep your mind off the matter.

ALLISON exits briskly after ALEX and MACK.

SCENE 8

BEN:

More books.

(HISTORY)

BEN speaks up, as if to heaven.

BEN:

Moment I “lose the book,” another one winds up in my hands.
WORDS— THAT’S ALL THESE ARE
THESE PAGES ARE ALL A MUMBO-JUMBO OF
LETTERS, COMMAS, AND STUFF

BEN pulls the book in front of him and looks at the cover.

BEN:

(Reading) “Revolution: Recurring Themes.”

He opens and closes the book a couple times, then picks it up again with much more interest.

BEN:

WORDS... WORDS! THEY’RE SAYING THINGS
THESE PAGES ARE FULL OF HORRIFIC STORIES OF
BATTLES AND TIMES THAT WERE ROUGH

BEN holds the book to his chest, thinking.

BEN:

WEALTHY MONARCHS WRESTED MONEY
BIGGER BEARS STEAL WORKERS' HONEY
FRIGHTENING THUNDER COVERS SUNNY
BUT THE SUN DOES SHINE AGAIN

(Looking at the book) BOOKS KNOW DESPOTS NEVER LISTEN
EVEN THEN, THE CROWDS HAD RISEN
ARMOR CLANGING, WEAPONS GLISTENING

BEN stands up, then sits on the table.

BEN:

BUT THE GUN'S MORE HARMFUL THAN THE SWORD
THAT'S ONE DEAD VERSUS SIX... SIXTEEN
COME ON PAGES, TELL ME MORE, BRANDISH ME WITH HISTORY
(Standing) HISTORY, HER STORY, OUR STORY IS IN THESE PASTS
IT REPEATS, PEOPLE BLEED... SO WHY THE HELL DO WE RELAPSE?
WHY THE HELL DO WE RELAPSE?

*BEN sets the book down and goes to the shelves to find another one that catches
his eye.*

BEN:

(Reading) "What Happened in Montgomery."
WORDS BEG ME TO READ. THEY'RE SCREAMING MY PURPOSE
KNIGHTING ME INTO A PLACE IN WHICH I MUST SERVE

BEN finds purpose.

BEN:

WORDS TELL ME TO LEAD. THE PAST HAS ITS FIGURES
THEY ALL CARRY FIGHTS, AND A FIGHT THESE CAUSES DESERVE
(Setting the book down) POLITICIANS SWAYED BY MONEY
UNBOTHERED BY ANYBODY
WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE DYING? WHAT ABOUT US, THEN?

BEN picks up both books again.

BEN:

BOOKS HAVE WARNED US OF THIS BULLSHIT
(Slamming both books down) WE ARE YOUNG BUT WE'RE NOT STUPID
STOP THE VIOLENCE OR... I'll lose it!
BUT THE GUN'S MORE DEADLY THAN MY RAGE
IT DOESN'T SPARE PEOPLE YOUNGER THAN ME
SO I PROTEST, DESPITE MY AGE. I AM ECHOED BY HISTORY

BEN picks up the books one by one.

BEN:

(With book one) HISTORY... *(With book two)* HER STORY...
(Clutching them against his chest) OUR STORY IS IN OUR HANDS
IF BY ME, IT WON'T REPEAT. I WILL NOT GIVE IT ITS CHANCE
WE WILL NOT GIVE IT ITS CHANCE

*BEN grabs his bag and stuffs one of the books in. He holds onto "Revolution:
Recurring Themes" and his phone. BEN dials a contact and looks up.*

BEN:

I might get a lot of pink slips for what I'm planning to do...

Exit BEN USL. End Music.

SCENE 9

Outside. Enter MACK.

MACK:

Alex? Alex, where are you?

*She feels herself well up. MACK bends over and lets out a sad, frustrated scream.
ALLISON rushes on and holds onto MACK.*

ALLISON:

Sh, sh, sh, breathe, breathe. *(She lets Mack cry)* You're not alone. You're not alone.

MACK takes a moment to calm down.

MACK:

I miss her... she... (sniffling) she...

ALLISON:

Just let it out.

(THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW)

MACK:

(Sad and reflective) SHE... WANTED TO STUDY THE EARTH.
LIFE... HOW NATURE AFFECTED ITS CREATURES
ALTHOUGH HER HEAD JUST REACHED MY SHOULDER
ALTHOUGH I WAS TALLER AND OLDER
I... WANTED TO BE JUST LIKE HER

ALLISON:

SHE... WANTED TO MAKE WORKS OF ART
GREEN... AND PLASTERED ACROSS ON THE MURAL
I MET HER THE PREVIOUS MORNING
AND THEN SHE WAS GONE WITHOUT WARNING
I... WISH I WAS BOLD JUST LIKE HER

MACK and ALLISON:

AND WHAT A BRIGHT WOMAN SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN
SO KIND AT HER CORE THAT SHE SHONE WITHIN
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW—
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT LOST
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT LOST

*MACK and ALLISON look at each other teary-eyed and give each other a sad
laugh at the memory of Alma and Shawnee.*

MACK:

SHE... PICKED UP THE TRASH IN THE HALLS

ALLISON:

SHE... LET HER WORDS RUN WITHOUT FILTER

MACK and ALLISON:
ALTHOUGH SHE WAS SO FAR FROM PERFECT
I KNOW EVERY NUISANCE WAS WORTH IT
I... KNOW THAT SHE SPOKE FROM THE HEART
AND WHAT A BRIGHT WOMAN WE WOULD HAVE SEEN
AN ANGEL SO PURE THAT HER STEPS WERE CLEAN
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW—
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT LOST

MACK and ALLISON look at each other.

MACK and ALLISON:
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT LOST
THE WORLD'S GOING TO NOTICE THE COST
THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT LOST

End Music. ALLISON takes MACK's hand.

ALLISON:
We have to remember their lives, Mack. Then we'll do what we can so no one else
dies senselessly. Okay?

MACK takes a moment before nodding.

ALLISON:
Come on. Let's go help Alex.

Exit MACK and ALLISON.

SCENE 10

The Mural. Enter ALEX to a yellow sky, crying.

ALEX:

Hah! It's so beautiful. So why am I crying?

(SHAPING THE CLOUDS)

ALEX:

(To the sky) I don't believe in heaven or an afterlife or anything, but... I need something to hold on to.

The sky brightens.

ALEX:

IS THERE A REASON WHY I ALWAYS SEEM TO WONDER
IF THEY'RE MORE THAN JUST A SHAPE IN THE SKY?
IS THERE A REASON WHY I ALWAYS SEEM TO THINK OF... THINK OF
THEM AS MORE THAN JUST SOME PICTURES PASSING BY?
EVERY TIME, I PICTURE YOU JUST HOLDING ME
YOU'RE HOLDING ME AND YOU'RE HOLDING ON SO TIGHT
JUST RIGHT. BUT I'M HERE, AND YOU'RE THERE
LOOKING BEAUTIFUL AS EVER, STILL IN YOUR COLORED SWEATER
LIKE HOW YOU LEFT. LIKE HOW YOU WERE BEFORE YOU LEFT
FUNNY HOW, EVEN NOW, I CAN HEAR THE WORDS YOU SING TO ME
I CAN SEE YOUR FINGERPRINT ON THE HORIZON
AND YOU'RE SHAPING THE CLOUDS

ALEX:

TELL ME, TELL ME WHAT THEY MEAN. WHY DO THEY FLOAT AWAY?

ALEX sets his backpack down against the mural.

ALEX:

IS THERE A REASON WHY I ALWAYS SEEM TO PONDER
WHY I SEE YOUR CONSTELLATION IN THE NIGHT?
IS THERE A REASON WHY I ALWAYS TRY TO ASK YOU IF YOU
CAN TAKE MY HAND AND LIFT ME? LIFT ME UP HIGH
EVERY TIME I PICTURE YOU JUST... TOUCHING ME
YOU COMFORT ME AND YOU'RE TELLING ME "IT'S FINE"

I'LL BE ALRIGHT, BUT I'M HERE AND YOU'RE THERE
LOOKING BEAUTIFUL AS EVER, STILL IN YOUR COLORED SWEATER
LIKE HOW YOU LEFT. LIKE HOW YOU WERE BEFORE YOU LEFT
FUNNY HOW, EVEN NOW, I CAN HEAR THE WORDS YOU SING TO ME
I CAN SEE YOUR FINGERPRINT ON THE HORIZON
AND YOU'RE SHAPING THE CLOUDS

ALEX grows angrier and begins to cry.

ALEX:

TELL ME, WHY AM I STILL HERE? HOW COULD YOU FLY AWAY?
I NEVER GOT TO SAY I WANT YOU. WE NEVER GOT TO SHARE
MORE THAN A KISS. LOOK AT WHAT YOU MISSED
I NEVER GOT TO SAY I LOVE YOU. WE NEVER GOT TO SHARE
THE WORDS HOW WE WOULD HAVE IF YOU HADN'T GONE
IF YOU WEREN'T GONE

ALEX stops talking and takes a moment to wipe his tears and compose himself.

ALEX:

I'M HERE AND YOU'RE THERE, LOOKING BEAUTIFUL AS EVER
STILL IN YOUR COLORED SWEATER LIKE HOW YOU LEFT
BUT WE MUST WORK WITH WHAT IS LEFT
(Acceptance) I WON'T LET YOU DOWN: THAT, I VOW
I'LL REPEAT THE WORDS YOU SING TO ME. YOUR MEMORY WILL
HAVE ITS PLACE ON THE HORIZON. JUST KEEP SHAPING THE CLOUDS

End Music. Enter MACK and ALLISON.

ALLISON:

There he is!

MACK:

Alex?

ALEX:

I'm okay. Or... I will be. It's incredibly difficult without him, and I wouldn't wish this pain on anyone.

Lights go out and their phones light up with a message from BEN. Suddenly, shuffling.

MACK:

We'll take my car, come on!

All exit.

SCENE 11

*The Classroom. Time reads 17:17:7.
COMPANY is working on some packets, but they're obviously stirred.*

MR. TENILLE (VO):

We have the same schedule as yesterday, class. I'll be at my desk.

MCKENZIE:

(To Jake and Philip) Did you see the email Ben sent out to everyone?

JAKE:

No one checks their email.

PHILIP:

I saw it this morning. Do you think he's serious?

Enter BEN USR with a megaphone and some markers in hand.

(OUR AGE)

BEN:

ATTENTION PLEASE! LISTEN, WE'RE THE GENERATION OF RIGHT NOW
PUT YOUR FISTS UP WE'RE GONNA FIGHT NOW
I GUARANTEE THAT IF WE DON'T STAND FOR ANYTHING RIGHT NOW
WE WON'T EVER GET WHAT WE WANT NOW

MR. TENILLE (VO):

Mister Gallagher—

BEN:

YEAH, WE'RE YOUNG, BUT WE'LL SPEAK THE FUTURE
WE ARE THE FUTURE
WE'LL MARCH AS ONE, FOR WE'LL SPEAK THE FUTURE
WE SPEAK THE FUTURE

BEN reaches his hand out to the people in front of him. No one takes it. He starts to get frustrated.

BEN:

Come on! JUST TAKE MY HAND, WE'RE GOING OUT THERE AND WE'RE
TAKING A STAND. CALL OUT THE SYSTEM AND MAKE A NEW PLAN
SO COME ALONG, MAYBE WE'RE LITTLE, BUT MAYBE WE'RE STRONG
IN WITH THE RIGHT AND OUT WITH THE WRONG

BEN pulls JESSIE out of her seat.

BEN:

YEAH, WE GOTTA FIGHT CAUSE WE'RE YOUNG
WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, come on!
SCREAM UNTIL OUR BATTLES OUR WON
CREATE OUR OWN ANTHEM WHOAH
THINGS ARE GONNA CHANGE
SO MOVE ALONG CAUSE WE'RE TAKING THE STAGE
THIS IS OUR MOMENT, YEAH THIS IS OUR AGE

JESSIE:

Ben, this isn't going to bring anyone back from the dead.

JOSEPH:

I don't think that's his goal.

BEN:

We can have the whole nation looking at us. Imagine the headlines: "Greenhill High School students mobilize to have their voices heard after mass shooting." If we can get some other schools to join—

MR. TENILLE (VO):

I agree with you... but I'm sorry. By my contract, I can't let you leave this classroom.

Enter MACK and ALLISON with cardboard, pins, and markers.

MACK:

Who says you have to let us?
FORGET YOUR CLASS! CAUSE IF
WE DON'T SPEAK OUR MINDS ABOUT VIOLENCE
OTHER STUDENTS WON'T GO TO CLASS AGAIN

ALLISON:

WE LOST OUR FRIENDS... NOW LET'S
CHANT FOR CHANGE WITH THEIR NAMES IN OUR MOUTHS
SAVE THE ONES THAT COULD BE NEXT SOMEHOW

MACK approaches BEN and shakes his hand.

BEN and MACK:

YEAH WE'RE YOUNG, BUT WE'LL BE THE FUTURE
WE ARE THE FUTURE.

BEN, MACK, and ALLISON:

WE'LL MARCH AS ONE, FOR
WE'LL SPEAK THE FUTURE. WE SPEAK THE FUTURE

ALEX enters with a megaphone.

BEN:

Alex!

ALEX:

Hey! LET'S JOIN OUR HANDS, WE'RE GOING OUT THERE AND WE'RE
TAKING A STAND, CALL OUT THE SYSTEM AND MAKE A NEW PLAN

ALEX helps PHIL stand up. He then helps JAKE.

ALEX:

SO COME ALONG, MAYBE WE'RE LITTLE, BUT BABY WE'RE STRONG
IN WITH THE RIGHT AND OUT WITH THE WRONG

BEN, ALEX, ALLISON, and MACK:

YEAH WE GOTTA FIGHT CAUSE WE'RE YOUNG
WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, COME ON
SCREAM UNTIL OUR BATTLES OUR WON

TINA stands.

TINA:

SINGING OUR ANTHEM, WHOAH!

COMPANY:

THINGS ARE GONNA CHANGE
SO MOVE ALONG CAUSE WE'RE TAKING THE STAGE
THIS IS OUR MOMENT, YEAH THIS IS OUR AGE

*COMPANY exits with chairs. The mural.
BEN and ALEX shake hands as ALLISON, MACK, and COMPANY returns with
signs and markers.*

ALEX:

I told Kenneth's mom about what we're doing. She has a friend who's a reporter,
she should be here any minute now.

COMPANY assembles behind BEN, MACK, ALLISON, and ALEX.

BEN:

I have friends at Rivera High School that are organizing a walkout on their end.

ALLISON:

The website is climbing in views. We're going viral!

*BEN, ALLISON and ALEX split and stand on either side of MACK, who holds a
poster with the faces of the five students that were killed.*

BEN:

(Into his megaphone) Five of our students died because of the growing threat of gun violence in this country. The government's inaction upon this subject will not go unchallenged!

ALEX:

The lack of restrictions on semi-automatic weapons lost us the lives of friends, family, and loved ones. Say *their* names!

COMPANY:

Tristan Gallagher! Shawnee Reeves! Alma Starr! Kenneth Raymond! Chrissy Woodland!

BEN and ALEX move to the outskirts of the crowd, towards the audience.

ALLISON:

Say them again...

COMPANY (with AUDIENCE):

Tristan Gallagher! Shawnee Reeves! Alma Starr! Kenneth Raymond! Chrissy Woodland!

MACK:

Louder! Till the whole country hears us!

COMPANY:

LET'S JOIN OUR HANDS, WE'RE GOING OUT THERE AND WE'RE
TAKING A STAND. CALL OUT THE SYSTEM, AND MAKE A NEW PLAN
SO COME ALONG! MAYBE WE'RE LITTLE, BUT BABY WE'RE STRONG
IN WITH THE RIGHT AND OUT WITH THE WRONG

COMPANY moves to AUDIENCE and hands out pamphlets.

COMPANY:

YEAH WE GOTTA FIGHT CAUSE WE'RE YOUNG
CAUSE WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE, COME ON
SCREAM UNTIL OUR BATTLES ARE WON
LET US SING THIS ANTHEM WHOAH WE'LL MAKE THINGS CHANGE
SO MOVE ALONG CAUSE WE'RE TAKING THE STAGE
THIS IS OUR MOMENT, YEAH THIS IS OUR AGE

MEDIA (V/O):

Breaking: The students of Greenhill High School walked out of school today in protest of lawmakers' silence after a tragic shooting...

TINA:

We're all over social media.

MEDIA (VO):

(Person one) These kids should be in class. *(Person two)* No, these kids have had enough. *(Person three)* Young people think protests are the solution to everything.

SABRINA:

We certainly got your attention. And everyone else's.

SCENE 12

Lights darken. COMPANY returns to the stage.

MEDIA (VO):

I mean, protests are dangerous! I want to know my kid is at school when he says he is.

JAKE:

Yeah? Well, your kid could get shot at school.

PHILIP:

Someone's kid *did* get shot at school.

MEDIA (VO):

They are urging you...

COMPANY:

Someone got shot at school!

MEDIA (VO):

..listen to their cries for help.

(CUT TOO SHORT)

BEN:

YOU MAY BE WONDERING WHY
WE BROUGHT YOU THIS STORYLINE
A SERIES OF WORDING, SO TRAGICALLY WOVEN, FITTED IN A BOOK.

ALEX:

YOU STARTED OFF INTRIGUED
TO KNOW ABOUT THE THINGS I'VE SEEN
AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO LISTEN TO STORIES:
JUST TAKE A LOOK... AT MINE

COMPANY:

MINE (*slightly off from each other*)

BEN and ALEX:

TAKE A LOOK AT MINE, AND THE STORIES OF
THE ONES THAT WERE CUT TOO SHORT
THE ONES THAT REALLY COULD HAVE BEEN
THE ONES THAT DESERVED MUCH MORE THAN THE PAGES
THAT WERE RIPPED
NO, CUT...

COMPANY:

THEY WERE CUT TOO SHORT...

MACK:

WE'LL LIVE OUR LIVES IN FEAR— FEAR OF A REPETITION
FEAR OF THE CHANCE A MONSTER WILL BURN THE BOOKSHELVES

ALLISON:

BUT WE WILL COME BACK HERE TO PICK UP THE MISSING PAGES
FINDING THE SCRIBBLES THE AUTHORS HAD LEFT AS A FINAL CLUE

COMPANY:

THE ENDINGS OF THEIR BOOKS...
THE ONES WITH THE UGLY SPINES
BUT READ SO MUCH PRETTIER UNDER
THE ONES THAT WERE DESTINED TO DELIVER A MESSAGE THAT
ENDED UP LOST

BEN, ALEX, MACK, and ALLISON:

NOT LOST... JUST CUT TOO SHORT

COMPANY slowly quiets.

SCENE 13

COMPANY gets back to work on the protest.

BEN:

Don't lose energy, you guys! Remember who we're doing this for. And tomorrow we'll do it again!

ALEX, ALLISON, and MACK approach BEN.

ALEX:

(Playing Devil's advocate) Do you realize the scale of this controversy you're amassing? If this backfires, you might not get hired. You might get harassed on the street.

BEN:

I know.

MACK:

We'll never live in peace! This could be history, good or bad.

BEN:

I know.

ALLISON:

Ben, thousands of students want to march with us tomorrow. Can we deal with that pressure?

End Music.

BEN:

There's someone I know that's proven to me that there are sacrifices to be made to stand up for yourself and what you believe in.

ALEX smiles and brings the megaphone up.

ALEX:

If we wanna make a difference, we're gonna wanna be loud. We wanna be relentless. We wanna be on the steps of city hall until something is done!

(WANNABES REPRISE)

BEN:

And something will be done! We aren't just wounded soldiers on a battleground anymore. We are strength in times of peril, we are flashlights in the dark. We are the beginning of times where people won't look down on us because we have less years on this Earth. They will look up at us, because we've marched with those years on our shoulders, with our feet on fire, and changed the world while doing it.

COMPANY assembles US and begins to march DS.

COMPANY:

WE HAVE OUR VOICES, WE WON'T BE UNHEARD
BRILLIANT FORCES WITH A BLAZE SO BRIGHT IT BURNS
WE WALK THE LINE OF FIRE, WE ARE FAR FROM WEAK, WE ARE...

COMPANY yells out what they want to be.

BEN (VO):

Within a year, we had started a movement out of not just Greenhill, but thousands of students across the country. Students who want justice. People who wanna be safe. People who wanna stop the violence. People.

BEN, ALEX, MACK, and ALLISON:
WE ARE WANNABES

COMPANY strikes a protest pose.

COMPANY:
WE ARE WANNABES!

*MACK, JAKE, PHILIP, JESSIE, and ALLISON hand off their signs and markers to
COMPANY, then move offstage and into the rows of H.*

COMPANY:
WE ARE YOUR CRAZY TEENAGE WANNABES
YOUNG AND INSPIRED AND WE WANT YOU ALL TO SEE
WE HAVE THE WILL AND MIGHT TO CHANGE THE WORLD, HEY
WE ARE WANNABES. We are Wannabes!

Bows.

COMPANY:
WE ARE WANNABES, WE ARE WANNABES!

*COMPANY takes a final bow. The lights fade, highlighting the mural. The clock
starts running forwards.
Curtain.*

END