

DEAR WHEATON,

Copyright 2020 ©

Cheyenne Bates '20
bates_cheyenne@wheatoncollege.edu

Prologue

WRITER

Seven Students, similar in dignity
(At Wheaton College- MA where we lay our scene)
From the acceptance letters that bring new hope
Where civil students learn, and sleep does not follow.
From forth the college halls, these seven students roam,
A writer and her six actors take the stage.

WINSLOW

Coming together with several strong ideas for this play

AKHSHAYE

Doth, with their monologues turned in on time, buried Cheyenne's strife.

AMELIA

The fearful, unveiling of their truthful, untold stories

SARAH

Which, are not always told by the persons they are truly from

STEVEN

It's now the hour and twenty minutes traffic of our stage.

LUKE

In which, if you with patient ears attend,

ALL

What you shall miss we will strive to mend.

SCENE 1: The beginning

AMELIA

Dear Amelia,

WINSLOW

Dear Winslow,

SARAH

Dear Sarah,

LUKE

Dear Luke,

AKHSHAYE

Dear Akhshaye,

STEVEN

Dear Steven,

ALL

Congratulations on your admission to Wheaton College! It is truly a pleasure to welcome you to the class of 2020 and the Wheaton College family.

AMELIA

You will spend four years, learning

SARAH

Laughing

LUKE

Making friends

STEVEN

Playing music

WINSLOW

Creating theatre.

AMELIA

Theatre

LUKE

Theatre

SARAH

What even is theatre?

AKHSHAYE

Who do you perform for?

AMELIA

Who do *I* perform for?

WINSLOW

Who do we *all* perform for?

AKHSHAYE

The magic of the theatre lies in the process. It is a representation of art in real time. There are no retakes, and no performance is truly the same. The most beautiful thing about acting is that one gets to live multiple, diverse lifestyles in one lifetime!

LUKE

I believe the most powerful thing in this world is emotion. It drives us to do everything exhilarating in life. Love, Hate, Sadness, Envy, Longing.

WINSLOW

Theatre is a rush, it's a feeling of pure exuberation, the thrill of having an audience watching you perform, the applause, laughter and tears. There is no greater feeling in the world.

SARAH

I used to always get cast as some sort of lead or supporting character: Belle from Beauty and the Beast, Kathy Seldon from Singin in the Rain, Mrs.Meers from Thoroughly Modern Millie, and the list goes on.

STEVEN

You see that kid. The kid right there! Sitting there full of wonder and joy! They are looking straight at me. There is a reason a kid like that is looking at a person like me. A person like me represents possibility.

AMELIA

I am an innate people pleaser. Genuinely, I need to be liked by everyone or it keeps me up at night. I would love to be someone who says that I only perform for myself, and sometimes that is true, but one of the reasons I love theatre and performing so much is that it makes the audience happy.

AKHSHAYE

It was on stage where I felt I truly had a voice for the first time. A voice that was true to myself. The stage liberated me of the menial burdens of life and reality.

STEVEN

The possibility to be whatever you want.

AKHSHAYE

to be the focus.

AMELIA

to be the star.

STEVEN

When you look at the eyes of a kid like this you see wonder and innocence.

LUKE

They all live together and mingle in the most precarious way to make different, new, unexpected emotions.

AMELIA

I tend to get frustrated and bored during the rehearsal process because the best part is the payoff. I constantly hear "oh it's not the journey, it's the destination" but I love the destination SO MUCH that I spend the entire journey anxious and jittery. Performing for an audience is invigorating.

WINSLOW

The intense highs and lows experienced in the theatre are among the greatest moments of my entire life. Telling a joke that makes the audience laugh, ALL EYES ON ME! That's what you would have heard me say in sophomore year of high school if you had asked me what theatre means to me. That answer has changed.

SARAH

But I'm not in high school anymore. I'm not doing community theatre. College is completely different. I play roles that I've never thought I would play. An eight year old British boy- a mom- a high police officer- a sad but musically talented girl- a wife. I've never really done straight plays until I came to college. I always hid my self consciousness behind my singing and dancing.

STEVEN

Hey kid, I pray you don't lose that. I pray you keep seeing what you see in me. When I perform I do it for you kid. I do it so you see someone like you on stage. I do it for that smile when something makes you happy.

LUKE

Acting allows me to dive into emotions, explore what they feel like, look like, are like. If I can understand these emotions, I better understand them when they enter into my actual life and then I'm able to appreciate them as these amazing gifts that humans get to feel.

AKHSHAYE

However, of late it's become a little bit of a burden too. When I ask myself the question "who am I performing for?" ...I truly don't know. I feel sad because no one from my family has ever seen me perform. Not my parents, grandparents or even my sisters.

SARAH

But Wheaton doesn't really do many musicals and soon I won't even be here anymore. Growing up my parents came to every show I performed in. From ballet, tap, singing recitals, musical theatre performances, I always knew at least one face in the audience. But now, each night when I look out, I see a sea of unfamiliar faces. I receive my applause and congratulations and then I leave. No after performance dinners or family pictures, it's just me.

STEVEN

I do it for those tears when something inside stirs. I do it for that kid who is sitting there, a younger version of me. I do it for all those who performed for me. I do it for those after me to know it's okay to feel different, to be different. When you see me performing, don't ask me why! When you see me being myself can you tell? Everyday I am performing for you and everyone else.

AMELIA

The reason I started performing in the first place is that I did a lot of work backstage, and I looked up to the actors so much, I couldn't help but want to be up on stage.

LUKE

Everyday. So, I guess I perform for myself, it helps my mental health but if I can make one person in the audience feel what I'm feeling on that stage, then I am honored to perform for them as well.

WINSLOW

Theatre isn't about me, it's about the community that helps to put on the play. Theatre is about the laughs, the community, the intense highs and lows shared by the cast and crew. Telling a joke that makes the audience laugh is as much about my delivery as it is about my castmates reacting to it.

AKHSHAYE

There is this brief moment, at the end of a performance, after the bow, the applause, where one stands and looks for the face of their loved ones. I have performed on different stages in different parts of the world, different accents, giving birth to different characters, and being complimented for a job well done... and while that feels beautiful, I look back and reflect I feel a little hole in me—a void I want to fill up—A sense of validation that I lack from my loved ones.

AMELIA

Granted, theatre has taught me a lot. I used to be paralyzingly shy, and I didn't have many friends. I was so shy that I had to go to leadership camp for three years. Theatre was my way of continuing to find my voice, and allowing myself to take up space in a room and speak.

WINSLOW

It's as much about onstage as it is offstage. Respect the offstage people, laugh with my friends. It's courage, bravery, and the intense need to be seen. Once theatre was all about me, now it's all about the people I'm doing it with. I'm not there for the audience, I'm there for my friends.

AMELIA

In that way, I perform for the past me who would never in a million years have gotten up in a room full of people to perform. I like to imagine her in the audience, hoping that she could find the confidence to get up on stage one day.

AKHSHAYE

Hopefully that will change someday soon. Until then, I will continue to live for the bow at the end of a show, and let the applause reverberate in my ears, driving me forward to the day when I see the face of my loved ones in the crowd.

SARAH

I perform for...I would say I am performing for me and my cast members. My cast members are my family. Not having my biological family at the show does not mean I'm alone. I still have the cast. I know it sounds sad, but you get used to it.

STEVEN

Who is performing for me? Authenticity is a concept I can only imagine. Everyday I must provide more for you all, but who provides for me? Only person I know is me, and my mom reading bedtime stories. So who performs for me? Just me!

WRITER

Freeze! This my friends is where the story begins for our fellow actors. As for me, you might ask, what *is* your part in the play? Well you could say that I'm in charge.

(beat)

But they don't know that... not yet anyway. I am the writer, I have the power to change the story at any given time. Like now, I'm doing my best to tell a story that reflects on their four years of college. I want to make sure everyone's voice is heard, however, I've got to do a little tweaking here and there. Now I'm not changing the actual stories they wrote, I don't have the power, or the right to do that. However it doesn't mean I can't have a little fun. For example, anything I write here, happens over there.

So if I were to type

(ALL unfreeze and WINSLOW does a one handed cartwheel)

See, Just like that.

(pause)

Now, let me clarify a few things, I am not, nor will I ever be a narrator. I won't tell you what is going to happen. I'll just show you. Secondly, I'm not Lex.

(beat)

This is not the play *Our Town*, we don't have a cute invisible town, in New Hampshire, where Akshaye is a drunk, Sarah is married to Winslow, and spoiler alert, everybody dies. However this *is* a story about life. The funny thing about life is you don't always have control. Sometimes they are moments that you love and appreciate, and sometimes you don't have a clue.

(pause)

In the words of Dr. Suess:

Congratulations! Today is your day.

Each ACTOR takes a line.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and Away!

You have brains in your head and feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself in any direction you choose, you are on your own.

And you know that you know.

And YOU are the being who'll decide where to go.

SCENE 2: Food: A reflection.

SARAH

You, know what's weird?

AMELIA

What?

SARAH

Okay, well... have you ever just like... forgotten to feed yourself?

WINSLOW

Oh, boy. have I?

SARAH

Like... You have these busy days where you are just going, and have class after class without a break--

LUKE

And your mind is just like--

STEVEN

There is something wrong.

SARAH

Yeah, and then you talk to a friend--

AMELIA

Or your parents call--

WINSLOW

And you are on the phone like "how are you... yeah, my day was good... nah, it was my long day"

LUKE

And then your mom is like.

STEVEN

Did you eat?

AKHSHAYE

What?

STEVEN

Did. you. Eat? It's not a difficult question.

WINSLOW

And shock comes over your face like--

AMELIA

Oh, that's what I forgot to do today

STEVEN

And then your mom is like: what do you mean you didn't eat! That is SO unhealthy!

AMELIA

You've got to do better than that...

LUKE

Don't you have snacks?

SARAH

Can't you get something from Chase?

AKHSHAYE

Don't you have options?

AMELIA

Oh, my God, yeah! You're like mom, no, I didn't go to Chase, I didn't have time to eat

LUKE

Who goes to Chase any more?

SARAH

We all know that Emerson and Balfour is better.

STEVEN

What about Davis Spencer Cafe?

WINSLOW

What about it?

STEVEN

Has anyone ever been?

AMELIA

What? No, Why would I walk all the way over there to get food? And aren't they closed at like 11 am anyway?

LUKE

Do you remember the freshman fifteen?

WINSLOW

Oh my god, YES!

LUKE

I never thought it was true,

AKHSHAYE

Yeah, me either, but then I found myself going to Chase just because the floor was going, or my friends were going.

AMELIA

I mean, same.

SARAH

But the staff...

AMELIA

OH MY GOD! Yeah, the food staff there is nice.

WINSLOW

You could literally ask them anything and they would do it

LUKE

Like Radha!

AKHSHAYE

Her omelets are to die for!

AMELIA

What about Jill, Mia, Deb and Katsumi?

STEVEN

In Balfour?

AMELIA

Yeah

WINSLOW

They are the best! So kind, and funny

SARAH

Once I was about to give my order, and I was like “ Can I have... and Jill was like “NO” I got really nervous but realized she was joking and I started laughing. The women in Balfour are the best.

STEVEN

What about Rico! God rest his soul. He was the kindest person

AKHSHAYE

I wish I got to know him better.

STEVEN

You didn't know him that well? How could you not know him that well?

AKHSHAYE

I didn't go to Emerson when he was there, and I never got the chance to have a real conversation with him.

AMELIA

That's a shame!

STEVEN

He died too soon.

(A natural moment of silence)

WINSLOW

Hey Luke!

LUKE

What's up Winston?

WINSLOW

You remember the dinners our FYS had?

LUKE

Yeah! Those were the best

WINSLOW

We grew so close, all of us.

AMELIA

Really? My FYS wasn't like that. we didn't care about each other at all.

WINSLOW

We were only close because Stephanie had us LITERALLY rip out our hearts on the first day with personal monologues.

SARAH

Really?

WINSLOW

Yeah, I remember we had one assignment, where we were doing body monologues/ and she had us talk about one part of our body that we loved or hated and turn it in anonymously.

SARAH

She really had you do that?

WINSLOW

Yeah, it was a lot

LUKE

That shit hurt

WINSLOW

But it was beautiful because it brought us all together.

(Pause)

Can we transition real quick?

SARAH

Sure

WINSLOW

So... I was wondering if I could share my scene for our assignment. It's based on Dr. Seuss' Green Eggs and Ham. I just want to know how it sounds, and since we have been talking about food I just figured, you would know if it fits.

AMELIA

Yeah! Okay, sure!

WINSLOW

Okay so Luke, you are SAM, and Amelia, you are HARRY

WRITER

Sam and Harry are sitting at a table, they are staring at what is in front of them. The eggs are blue, and the ham is also. Blue.

LUKE (SAM)

So...

AMELIA (HARRY)

So what?

LUKE (SAM)

You haven't touched your food. Are you going to eat it?

AMELIA (HARRY)

No.

LUKE (SAM)

Why?

AMELIA (HARRY)

Because I said so.

LUKE (SAM)

Why else though

AMELIA (HARRY)

Because this wasn't what I signed up for!

LUKE (SAM)

How is this not exactly what you signed up for?

AMELIA (HARRY)

I mean that I signed up for breakfast with you! Not this inedible blue shit.

LUKE (SAM)

You're being really insensitive to my cooking right now.

AMELIA (HARRY)

I'm sorry but who the fuck makes BLUE EGGS?

LUKE (SAM)

(muttering)

You ate them when they were green.

AMELIA (HARRY)

Because I knew what I signed up for! And you. Wouldn't stop begging me to eat them!

LUKE (SAM)

But now since they're blue, you won't eat them... No, I get it, my cooking isn't good enough for you.

AMELIA (HARRY)

That's not the case! I love your cooking 95% of the time, but then you decide to go off and make something weird. Like remember, when you made those red bananas?

LUKE (SAM)

Admittedly that did not go according to plan, but you can't name another/time.

AMELIA (HARRY)

Purple peas.

LUKE (SAM)

I see your point.

AMELIA (HARRY)

Ex-

LUKE (SAM)

But you should still try it!

AMELIA (HARRY)

Didn't I just prove my point and ensure that I didn't have to try this?

LUKE (SAM)

No, and quite frankly I'm very offended you won't try my cooking.

AMELIA (HARRY)

That's because it's blue.

LUKE (SAM)

Which means?

AMELIA (HARRY)

The only food I can think of that is blue is a blueberry and I really don't want to eat blueberry flavored eggs and ham. Maybe because the eggs, when they were green, had avocado in them and it made them better, but I fail to see how blueberry is going to enhance the flavor of this dish.

LUKE (SAM)

(Hopeful)

What if I told you it wasn't blueberry?

AMELIA (HARRY)

Is it blueberry?

LUKE (SAM)

Yeah, but that's not the point!

AMELIA (HARRY)

What is the point?

LUKE (SAM)

The point is to experiment and have fun! Enjoy your cooking, get out into the world and give it new meaning! Eggs and ham have been played out time and time again, but no one has ever dared to really experiment with the tastes and intricate nature of what could go into the possibilities of flavor combinations! No one, except me! Your life partner is asking you to try something that they made and you don't even have the common decency to try it, simply because it's blue?

AMELIA (HARRY)

You pureed blueberries to put into the eggs and ham.

LUKE (SAM)

And?

AMELIA (HARRY)

And it made the eggs and ham blue.

LUKE (SAM)

Yes it did, but do you know what it did to the flavor?

AMELIA (HARRY)

I'm going to take a shot in the dark and say that it tastes like blueberries, egg and ham. And I have only ever wanted two of the flavors to mix in my mouth.

LUKE (SAM)

Blueberry and ham, of course.

AMELIA (HARRY)

No. Ham, and eggs Sam, Ham. and. Eggs.

LUKE (SAM)

Of course that's your response.

AMELIA (HARRY)

What do you mean of course?

LUKE (SAM)

You never want to try new things. You are just perfectly content to sit around and have the same boring flavours in your mouth. You lack vision for food.

AMELIA (HARRY)

IT'S BLUEBERRY EGGS AND HAM SAM!

LUKE (SAM)

And you're being a really bad partner right now Harry.

AMELIA (HARRY)

Fine. fine. I'll take a bite.

WRITER

Harry takes a bite of his eggs, turns to SAM and smiles painfully while chewing.

LUKE (SAM)

Now was that so bad?

AMELIA (HARRY)

It actually wasn't the worst thing you've made me eat.

LUKE (SAM)

That's wonderful--

AMELIA (HARRY)

I'm not done, let me finish.

LUKE (SAM)

Of course.

AMELIA (HARRY)

It's not bad, but it's not good. I can't believe I'm saying this but it actually has potential to go somewhere.

LUKE (SAM)

Do you think it's better than the Green Eggs and Ham I make?

AMELIA (HARRY)

Dear God no! But I think that if you work on this and I mean REALLY work on this you've got a shot at something that no one has ever even conceptualized yet. You gotta add some other flavor, cause right now they clash too much. Maybe something like a cremé fresh to the eggs to take away a bit of the eggy flavor?

LUKE (SAM)

So it's not bad, but could turn the culinary world on its head if it's done right?

AMELIA (HARRY)

Yes! You could be not *just* the inventor of green eggs and ham, but also of blue eggs and ham!

LUKE (SAM)

Is this just your way of saying that you want green eggs and ham?

AMELIA (HARRY)

Yes and no?

LUKE (SAM)

(laughing)

Fine then, I'll make you some green eggs and ham.

(pause)

WINSLOW

So what did you all think?

SARAH

I loved it!

AKHSHAYE

Yeah, great job Winslow!

AMELIA

Okay, so has anyone here seen the Netflix version of Green Eggs and Ham?

(pause)

No, just me? Great, Well you should all watch it!

WRITER

(to audience)

Seriously Watch it.

(beat)

I may not be a narrator, but don't say I never gave you a sneaky suspicion about what's to come next. In which, if you with patient ears attend, What you shall miss we will strive to mend.

Each ACTOR takes a line.

“ In that case, of course, you’ll head straight out of town.

It’s opener there in the wide open air.

Out there things can happen and frequently do, to people as brainy and footsy as you

And when things start to happen,

don’t worry, don’t stew, just go right along.

You’ll start happening too.”

ALL

OH THE PLACES YOU’LL GO!

SCENE 3: Thoughts: A Stream of Consciousness

WINSLOW is aware of SARAH. SARAH is ADALINE and she weaves throughout. AKHSHAYE'S character in this is rude.

PERSON 1

Since day one of my life, I felt out of place.

(beat)

Isn't it worth it to take the leap? Things are good, but I still can't sleep.

PERSON 2

I'm in constant conflict with my vulnerability

PERSON 3

What do I do with my time again?

PERSON 2

Maybe I'm as futile as these waves

PERSON 1

But I still can't sleep.

PERSON 3

8 months without talking to many people who I knew and loved broke me

PERSON 1

But I still can't sleep.

PERSON 4

Life can't be a constant high. Who knew?

PERSON 5

What are your strengths?

PERSON 3

What's your longest crush?

PERSON 5

I DON'T HAVE ANY!

PERSON 3

So I, like a reasonable person does

PERSON 2

Gushing up against the beautiful walls in a seemingly endless battle

PERSON 3

Stop, being dumb and kiss...

PERSON 1

Isn't it worth it to take the leap?

PERSON 5

but I totally made something up.

(beat)

I get lost in my own thoughts.

PERSON 1

The world shakes. When I sleep, it feels like I'm giving up my autonomy.

PERSON 4

It's the opposite actually. A plummet to lowest low.

No more shit, no problems in your life, problems in the world, just no more shit.

PERSON 5

Why is it that when asked what you like about yourself, or what you are good at, you draw a blank? but when people ask you negative things about yourself... The list just never stops....

PERSON 3

So, like a reasonable person does, I bought a plane ticket

PERSON 5

I felt out of place.

PERSON 2

I do not know what's more beautiful, The ripples? the architecture?

(pause)

They remind me of myself—my facades and vanity—in constant conflict with my vulnerability

PERSON 4

Because if I'm the one to blame then floating is the thing to blame and if I can't float, what do I do with my time again?

PERSON 3

That's a real question. I want an answer.

PERSON 2

We have to stop living in the past and look to future possibilities

PERSON 1

Even if I could sleep, I wouldn't want to.

PERSON 4

I'm floating. The world looks a little happier, people look funny and weird.

PERSON 5

Like the black angel that fell from grace.

PERSON 1

Well, I should rephrase that.

PERSON 2

Hey dad, yes everything is in order; the presentation looks great... I think you're gonna be real proud...

PERSON 5

A lone wolf in a wild place it's a war every day. Thinking about how to consolidate my pain.

PERSON 2

Of me...

PERSON 3

Because I have had a crush on the same person since I was eight years old.

PERSON 5

Weaknesses... the list was never ending

PERSON 1

If I keep myself awake, I exist in a state of panic, but it's a panic I can control, and even ignore sometimes.

PERSON 2

Oh, I bet you are proud of yourself, huh?!

PERSON 4

I feel like they can understand me. Not just what I am saying, but what I'm feeling.

PERSON 5

A thicket of trauma, scars, and I get picked by the very memory

PERSON 3

It started when she talked to me on the chair lift.

PERSON 4

It's so peaceful. I can connect with everyone around me and...

PERSON 3

You know when a kid starts talking and you can't stop listening, cause they are so enthusiastic?

PERSON 4

It feels like moments of humanity that you rarely get to feel in regular day life.

PERSON 3

That was, and still is Adaline.

PERSON 4

My senses are enhanced, things look and sound better, are better? I think.

PERSON 1

But asleep, I'm paralyzed by nightmares.

PERSON 5

Thorns sticking out from the flowers of my corpse inside

PERSON 4

Forget obligations, do they honestly matter that much? Do they make me happy?

PERSON 1

Nightmares about Australia, nuclear holocaust, death destruction, the ever looming future, the possibility that there may not even be a future.

PERSON 5

I hear church bells and I plan my own funeral rights. So you tell me how to stop the unexpected!

PERSON 2

What do you want from me? Leave me alone.

PERSON 1

In my ideal future, I'm working on cartoons in L.A.,

PERSON 2

Gonna make daddy proud... that's cute. The company needs this merger.

PERSON 1

However California is on an enormous fault line and everyone could die in an earthquake.

PERSON 5

What are your strengths....

PERSON 3

I re-encountered Adaline at the ripe age of fourteen when she suddenly came to my high school, and was all of a sudden a huge part of my life again.

PERSON 4

Do they make me happy? I mean happier then this feeling right here.

PERSON 3

We did theatre together starting at fifteen and all of a sudden the crush was back. Her raw confidence, her beautiful eyes and the way she never gave up on anyone, inspired me to take those qualities into myself.

PERSON 2

You know what you are? A fucking loser!

PERSON 1

I can't go to L.A.

PERSON 5

There is a raging fire outside and it's hunting to take my life. Do I give in and surrender? Or do I fight to live another painful morning?

PERSON 1

But, alternatively, we could be hit by an asteroid that wipes out all life at any moment. Shouldn't I go to make the most of the time I have?

PERSON 2

You talkin' to me?

PERSON 4

No... I'm at peace so the world must be, so my life must be. That's why I float.

PERSON 5

Each day it's like I'm mourning myself from yesterday, still hoping to come through the heat unscorched. Still hoping to leave my pain yesterday.

PERSON 1

I find myself acutely aware that sleep and death are sisters.

PERSON 4

I'm drifting. I forgot to call my parents yesterday, the day before, the week before. I'll do it tomorrow. I can't remember the last time I called my grandparents.

PERSON 2

Yeah, I don't see no one here I'm talking to you

PERSON 3

She made me a better person. So I asked her to prom. Twice. And she said yes, twice but life has a funny way destroying your confidence.

PERSON 4

That's not okay, I know that. I don't have much to do today! Maybe I should go to a cafe and read a book, or go to a park and play frisbee, or catch a movie and hang out with my friends. Or I could just float.

PERSON 5

What is a mural to a legend if not his own legacy. The slingshot in David's arms as I take down a titan myself. As I forge on in this odyssey I am lost at sea looking for some resemblance of me.

PERSON 4

Yeah let's float again. Put more off until tomorrow, not just work but text a friend that may need me, signs I can't read because I'm not present, relationships dying in front of me, and I can't be the one to blame.

PERSON 5

Struggling to fight the raging fire that is my demon. I hear the devil's howl like a scottish play, but this ain't no play. Someone does die in the end, I believe it is me. So as you watch me clutch Hades, let Lucifer make his final plea.

PERSON 4

I'm falling. I'm watching friends become strangers, missing out on life. People don't call or text, because who knows if I'll ever answer, if I'll remember, if I'll even care.

PERSON 5

I close my eyes and I pray for forgiveness from the living, because I can't go on.

PERSON 4

Floating was a fun escape for moments but now I've gone and run away.

PERSON 5

The lone wolf howling through fire can't seem to find his pack.

PERSON 4

I'm afraid to be alone so I float. I'm afraid to be around people and show myself because I don't really know who I am anymore so I float. There are no obligations here.

PERSON 1

Right now, here, everything is fine. The earth is burning, people are starving, dying, and yet, here, I have food, a comfortable bed, and a home.

PERSON 4

I thought this is where I could find peace, where I could escape the shit, the problems of the world. But without those problems, I can't grow.

PERSON 5

I ask again, what's a mural to a legend if not his own legacy?

PERSON 2

HAHAHA... are you done?

PERSON 3

In freshman year we faceted one crisp October night and she said she missed me...And I flew out to visit her at college in North Carolina.

PERSON 2

You can't get rid of me mate.

PERSON 3

When I got there we chatted like old friends do and I had to confess to her that I liked her at the end of the trip. And she rejected me.

PERSON 2

We are such stuff as dreams are made of.

PERSON 3

That summer I went out into the woods on a National Outdoor Leadership School trip and used the time in the woods to meditate and get over her.

PERSON 4

I thought this is where I could find peace, where I could escape the shit, the problems of the world. But without those problems, I can't grow.

PERSON 3

When I returned to school I entered into a relationship that was really nice for the first 6 months. But then, I wasn't allowed to talk to Adaline anymore. There were other people too but Adaline was at the top of my list for people who I wanted to talk to. Because she was my best friend.

PERSON 2

I live in you... I am you!

PERSON 4

I'm falling. I'm watching friends become strangers, missing out on life. People don't call or text because who knows if I'll ever answer, if I'll remember, if I'll even care.

PERSON 2

Yea that's right, go ahead, take your pills, I'll see you tomorrow, you wuss!

PERSON 3

Eventually it broke my relationship. I reached out to Adaline and let her know how I felt about not being allowed to talk to her and was brutally honest about how much I missed her.

PERSON 2

We have to stop living in the past and look at the future possibilities...

PERSON 3

Here I am, New Years Eve, staring at the girl, my only thought is, wow she is stunning. And then, all of the sudden, we are in my bed, and I'm not taking the hints that I had laid out almost 3 years earlier.

PERSON 2

The company needs this merger

PERSON 3

Finally she looks at me and says,

SARAH

“stop being dumb and kiss me.”

PERSON 2

Thank you for your time.

PERSON 4

It's so peaceful.

PERSON 3

What do I do with my time again?

PERSON 1

Even if I could sleep, I wouldn't want to.

PERSON 5

What are your strengths?

PERSON 3

What's your longest crush?

PERSON 5

I DON'T HAVE ANY!

PERSON 2

I do not know what's more beautiful, The ripples? the architecture?

(pause)

They remind me of myself—my facades and vanity—at a constant conflict with my vulnerability

PERSON 4

Because if I'm the one to blame then floating is the thing to blame and if I can't float, what do I do with my time again?

PERSON 1

Since day one of my life, I felt out of place.

(beat)

Isn't it worth it to take the leap? Things are good. But I still can't sleep.

PERSON 2

I'm at a constant conflict with my vulnerability

PERSON 1

If I keep myself awake, I exist in a state of panic, but it's a panic I can control, and even ignore sometimes. But asleep, I'm paralyzed by nightmares.

PERSON 5

Thorns sticking out from the flowers of my corpse inside

ALL

I still can't sleep.

(Pause)

WRITER

Food for thought, no? The monologues were brilliantly written when they were individual pieces. But what kind of writer would I be if I just let you hear their stories in order? I have to keep you on your toes one way or another. If you think about it, good writers know all your secrets, the best writers are devious and can "get away with murder" *cough, cough* Steven King *Cough cough* and a great writer can get away with all three. So, much like life, I didn't want to give you all the answers.

Each ACTOR takes a line.

"You can get so confused that you'll start to race down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace

and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space, headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.

The Waiting place... for people just waiting.

Waiting for a train to go or a bus to come. Or a plane to go or the mail to come, or the rain to go or the phone to ring,

or the snow to snow or waiting around for a yes or No or waiting for their hair to grow.

Everyone is just waiting. Waiting for the fish to bite or waiting for wind to fly a kite or waiting around for a Friday night

or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake, or a pot to boil, or a better Break or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants,

or a wig with curls, or Another chance.

ALL

Everyone is just waiting

SCENE 4: RULES!

WRITER

There are general rules to being a theatre kid, but the most important one is : ONCE A THEATRE KID ALWAYS A THEATRE KID. I don't care if you did theatre in middle School, High School never thought you would do it again in college. Stop lying. You never forget the rules.

(beat)

RULE #1

- 1) If you are early

ALL

You are on time, if you are on time, you are late, and if you are late you're fired.

WRITER

See... I told you they know these rules by heart. I won't name names *cough, cough* Stephanie *cough, cough* once told us that if we were not early for rehearsal ON THE WEEKEND we would all fail.

ALL

ALWAYS be early.

WRITER

Rule #2

- 2) ALWAYS BRING

ALL

A pencil to rehearsal because the director ALWAYS changes their mind.

WRITER

Rule # 3

- 3) If you can see

ALL

The audience, the audience can see you.

WRITER

Rule # 4

4) PROPS:

ALL

If it's not yours, don't touch it.

WRITER

You would think this is just common sense by now, but you're wrong. DON'T make your SM angry. Have you ever seen Taylor or Sarah pissed off? They are the best! Rule #5

5) If something goes wrong:

ALL

Always stay in character.

WRITER

Rule # 6

6) Always know

ALL

Your cues.

WRITER

Again, it seems like a simple rule, but here is a secret, what the audience can't see is how goofy we are in the wings before and after our scenes. We dance, mouth things from across the stage, we make each other laugh, as quietly as possible. But most importantly, we mouth our favorite lines that other characters have. Sometimes remembering our cues is a little more challenging than one expects. Rule #7

7) FIND

ALL

Your light.

WRITER

Rule #8

8) Don't Talk

ALL

Back stage.

WRITER

Again, easier said than done. See rule 6. Rule # 9

ALL

9) LEARN YOUR LINES!

WRITER

Rule # 10

10) Always say:

ALL

THANK YOU

WRITER

Great! Now that you know the rules there is one more super confusing thing that you should know

ACTORS move to where the stage direction is being called.

stage left. stage right, up stage, down stage, and center. Got it? Good.

(pause)

Now I want to go over some of the perceptions that non theatre kids have of us. One of them is that we are always singing

AMELIA

We aren't always singing

SARAH

I mean... we kinda do though

AMELIA

Maybe you, but I most certainly don't sing everywhere I go.

SARAH

I don't sing everywhere... wait now that I think about it, yeah, you're right. But I love singing.

WINSLOW

Oh, we know. you wanted to do a musical for the final production.

SARAH

What's wrong with musicals?

AMELIA

Nothing is wrong with musicals it's just

AKHSHAYE

We just can't sing.

WRITER

Can't or won't sing?

AMELIA

Both.

WRITER

(To audience)

They may not sing, but they join in if one of them is singing a Disney song or something from a musical. We have been known to break out into spontaneous songs, but usually not in public, like High School Musical would have you to think. We will break out into tongue twisters. Watch...

(beat)

What a to do

EVERYONE on stage says the teaser

to die today at a minute or two to two. A thing distinctly hard to say but harder still to do. They'll beat a tattoo at twenty to two a ratatatata to. / And the dragon will come when he hears the drum at a minute or two to two today at a minute or two to two.

STEVEN

How do you all just know this?

SARAH

Time.

WINSLOW

Practice.

LUKE

Patience.

AMELIA

Listening.

AKHSHAYE

Learning.

WRITER

Then they are the ones that try and get you to swear. I slit the sheet.

ALL

The sheet I slit, upon the slitted sheet I sit.

WRITER

I am a mother pheasant plucker.

ALL

I pluck mother pheasants. I am the most pleasant mother pheasant plucker that ever did pluck a mother pheasant.

WRITER

There are some that are just really dark and creepy. But, hey, if it gets us to use alliteration, and helps us enunciate then why not? I sit in solemn silence,

ALL

On a dull dark dock. In a pestilential prison with a life long lock. Awaiting the sensation of a short sharp shock from a cheap and chippy chopper on a big black block.

WRITER

The fun thing is we all hear it differently and nobody teaches us the words, so if it's your first show ever, you are in for a shocker. Every show you bring to life, you meet new cast members, new faces are mixed with the old faces and you become family.

(beat)

As theatre kids we are not afraid to show our true colors to each other, and the theatre family at large. I happen to think that we are our authentic selves when we create theatre, and take on a different persona. As a theatre kid and writer. I stand for change. I write because that is the only way to make my voice heard in the community. That is how I hope to make my change in the world, and if what I have to say makes you uncomfortable. Good!

WRITER winks exits to get water

WINSLOW

You know what bothers me?

STEVEN

What?

WINSLOW

The fact that in four years we have only done one show with actual stage combat.

AMELIA

It doesn't seem that big a deal to me.

WINSLOW

You don't get it.

AMELIA

I'm completely okay with that.

STEVEN

(to audience)

People think when theatre kids fight it's just aggressive snapping.

AKHSHAYE

Winslow has a point, I mean, one of my favorite things I did while I was in Russia was Stage Combat, and we don't get to showcase it.

WINSLOW

Exactly my point

LUKE

Is that *exactly* your point *Winston*?

WINSLOW

My name is Winslow, Luke and you know it.

LUKE

Is it Winston?

STEVEN

Yeah, is it Winston?

LUKE

Only I can call him Winston!

AMELIA

I'm pretty sure no one can call him Winston

SARAH

I think this is just between the four boys....

WINSLOW

AGAIN. My name is WINSLOW. W-I-N-S-L-O-W not Winston, so I would greatly appreciate it if you didn't call me that.

LUKE

Whatever you say *Winston*

WINSLOW

That's it!

A fight breaks out, WINSLOW goes to punch LUKE in the face. LUKE ducks and the punch hits AKHSHAYE instead. AKHSHAYE bumps into STEVEN and then it's a four way brawl. Punches, kicks hair pulling, slapping ect. SARAH pulls out her phone to record the fight and AMELIA reads. The WRITER ENTERS.

WRITER

KNOCK IT OFF!

EVERYONE FREEZES

I left you all for five minutes and you burst into a fight!? What? Are we 12? Like What? I think you owe each other an apology. And them?

(gestures to audience)

Go on and apologize.

LUKE

(mumbles)

I'm sorry Winslow.

WRITER

You are a theatre major, I know you can project. Try again.

LUKE

I'm sorry Winslow!

WINSLOW

Same here I'm sorry!

WRITER

Now the four of you should apologize to the audience.

LUKE, WINSLOW, AKHSHAYE, AND STEVEN

We're sorry, our behavior was childish and petty.

SARAH

Can we do it?

AMELIA

Yeah? Is it time?

LUKE

Is what the time?

STEVEN

It's (insert actual time)

WINSLOW

No not that time

AKHSHAYE

You know... the thing?

STEVEN

(chanting)

Oh, GROUP THINK! GROUP THINK!

AMELIA

WILL YOU SHUT THE FUCK UP STEVEN! It's not called that and it will never be called that.

STEVEN

Okay, god.. Why you gotta do me dirty like that!?

WRITER

It's time... DRUM ROLL PLEASE!

(announcer voice)

WELCOME TO THE FIRST EVER SHAKESPEARE BATTLE!

SCENE 5: Shakespeare and the company he keeps

WRITER

I named this scene Shakespeare and the Company he keeps. For those of you that don't know, Professor Conway teaches an English class by the same title. Your task as the audience, if you choose to accept it, is to just listen to the rhythm of the Shakesperian language.

WINSLOW

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come/

SARAH

/My mistress with a monster is in love

AKHSHAYE

Why "bastard"? Wherefore "base,"
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous and my shape as true
An honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With "base," with "baseness," "bastardy," "base,"
"base,"
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition/

AMELIA

come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars, 1740
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night/

SARAH

/My mistress with a monster is in love/

LUKE

Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

SARAH

My mistress with a monster is in love.

WRITER and STEVEN are on different levels as STEVEN recites his monologue, WRITER interprets it though ASL. EVERYONE ELSE on stage is gone or is frozen.

AKHSHAYE

A Great American Playwright: August Willson

STEVEN

What I care about burning in hell? You talk like a fool... burning in hell. Why didn't God strike some of them crackers down. Tell me that! That's the question! Don't come telling me this burning-in-hell shit! He a man of God... Why didn't God strike some of them crackers down? I'll tell you why? I'll tell you the truth! It's sitting out there as plain as day! 'Cause he a white man's God. That's why! God ain't never listened to no niggers prayers. God take a niggers prayers and throw them in the garbage. God don't pay niggers no mind. In fact... God hate niggers! Hate them with all the fury in his heart. Jesus don't love you, nigger! Jesus hate your black ass! Come talking that shit to me. Talking about burning in hell! God can kiss my ass.

(beat)

Now, let him go! Let him go! That's your God huh? That's your God huh? Is that right? Your God, huh? All right. I'm gonna give your god a chance. I'm gonna give him a chance to save your black ass.

(beat)

I'm calling Cutlers's God! I'm talking to Cutler's God! You hear me? Cutlers God! I'm calling cutler's God! Come on and save this nigger! Strike me down before I cut his throat! I'm calling your God! I'm going to give him a chance to save you! I'm calling your God! We are going to find out whoes God he is! Cutler's God: Come on and save this nigger! Come on and save him like you did my mama! Save him like you did my mama, I heard her when she said, 'Lord have mercy! Jesus, help me! Please, God, have mercy on me, Lord Jesus, help me!

(beat)

And did you turn your back? Did you turn your back motherfucker? Did you turn your back? Come on! Come on and turn your back on me! Turn your back on me! Come on! Where is you? Come on and turn your back on me! Turn your back on me, motherfucker! I'll cut your heart out! Come on turn your back on me! Come on! What's the matter? Where is you? Come on and turn your back on me! Come on what you scared of? Turn your back on me! Come on! Coward! Motherfucker!

SCENE 6: The Slump

WRITER

We have come to the penultimate scene of our play. Dr. Seuss says it best.

“I’m sorry to say so but, sadly, it’s true that Bang-ups and Hang-ups *can* happen to you. You can get all hung up in a prickly perch. And your gang will fly on, you’ll be left in a Lurch. You’ll come down from the Lurch with an unpleasant bump. And the chances are, then that you’ll be in a slump. And when you’re in a Slump, you’re not in for much fun.

PERSON 1 (LUKE)

Hey,

I didn’t know if I should write this letter or not but I am entirely lost today and just need to understand how the hell I get to where you are. I used to feel so overwhelmingly happy all the time, At least I think I did. The world wasn’t out to get me, it felt smaller and more obtainable. It’s not even that I want to obtain the world though, I just want to find my spot in the world. Now, I feel so isolated.

It’s hard to put into words what I feel because I’m not sure what the hell the source of the pain is. Basically, this is how my day operates. I wake up, run, my morning is happy. Then I eat lunch with friends, I smile, laugh, and feel pretty okay. Around 2 or 3, something changes and I can’t prevent it. You know when you are sitting on a couch that is way too soft and just sink into it, and it takes more effort to push your way out of this position. I feel like I sink down low into that couch and don’t have the strength to get up. I just waste away there. It doesn’t mean I’m not participating in society that is taking place around me when I’m feeling this, it just doesn’t feel like it matters.

I’m afraid to see my parents as something more than just Mom and Dad. I don’t want to say goodbye to my childhood yet. I don’t want to be with anyone because how can I love them when I barley like the life I’m in. I have never had anyone close to me die, that a ticking time bomb I think about all the time. Will I even be able to handle that? Is this a phase? Because I am over it.

So, Luke, what the hell man. I just don’t get the point of any of this. Right back ASAP. This shit sucks and I am not holding on well.

Thanks,

Past Luke

PERSON 2 (WINSLOW)

Don't fucking speak. Don't talk to anyone. I am your world. I am everything to you and I am never going to let you forget that. Don't let anyone in. I am the only person you should spend time with.

I can't breathe. I can't move. I can't escape. I want to call my mom but they'll check my phone and yell at me. I want to talk to Caitlyn, Amelia, Kenzie, Brooks, Ben, Emma and Caleb. I WANT TO BE ALONE!

I'm not alone though. I'm in my room with the person who is calling themselves my world. I'm stuck in a prison of my own construction but my brain has discarded the blueprints. I haven't truly been alone outside of sleep, which seems to be my only time to myself. Sometimes I'll get an hour and I'll waste it playing video games. The time I have alone is from 11pm to 10:30am, which is mostly spent sleeping because of my depression.

My "world" hasn't expanded. At least that's what it feels like. It feels like my "world" has only shrunk since meeting this person, but I haven't noticed until I'm all alone. Any attempts to widen the world have been shut down and I'm quarantined.

Then the summer came. Nothing can prepare a prisoner for a surprise early release, but the amount of freedom I felt was... I suddenly felt emotions I had repressed. I cried out of the view of other humans. And I started making new friends again.

I did something that I'm calling my "night of extreme clarity" where I smoked half of an e-cigarette and a lot of weed I don't recommend this method, but, my brain suddenly clicked back to who I had been 3 years beforehand. But it wasn't good enough. I realized that I could be better, so I tried to become more compassionate, make more commitments to friends and to do more.

Life is hard. Life is scary. Life is what you make of it. Life is making a commitment to never going back to being a person who you hate. So I'm happier, funnier, and I'm making a commitment to be better.

PERSON 3 (STEVEN)

Today I am sitting amongst the people. They all walk by seeming so happy and frivolous. Here I am hearing the same old phrases, “What's wrong?” “How have you been?” “Is everything okay?” “Yeah, that sucks.” “Let me know if you need anything, okay?” Lots of sympathy but where's the sincerity. I feel alone. My loved ones are going through so much and here I am with them. They don't care. They don't care about me. They just ask to absolve themselves of any responsibility when shit hits the fan. Now here I am worried about whether she's still being harassed, if she needs me, if her leg will heal. All 3 of the most important women in my life are in dire need and here I am with them. Why don't you lean on them? They might surprise you? They could help? Believe in others, open up more and trust you won't fall. I get you don't believe it can get better but it can. Are you sure? I'm telling you to trust these people, they can be your friends. What if they let me down? Then you will hurt and feel. I don't think I can hurt anymore. Oh, but trust me you can. You can hurt a lot more. All I ever wanted for the happiness to continue. The happiness I feel right now, the love, the power, the feel, I want it to last forever. The lows make me realize how lonely I really am but I know I should try harder to connect. I just can't do it! I believe in you. I believe in myself. I just don't know if I can trust anymore.

PERSON 4 (SARAH)

Dear Sarah,

Remember when you used to be obsessed with perfection? You always needed an A, always needed your bed perfectly made, always needed to have presentable clothes, always needed your life to LOOK like it was in complete order. But you know that you're not. It was all a facade. You packed your schedule with rehearsals for the main stage productions, being in whims, working for media services, being a Lead Residential Advisor, being a writing tutor, on top of trying to graduate in three years. You worked yourself so hard that you didn't have time for your problems, they were pushed to the side to never acknowledge.

If I could go back to the time where all I cared about was grades and numbers, I would grab myself by the shoulders and shout at the top of my lungs: GO —TO— SLEEP! TAKE A NAP! YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A MACHINE. YOU ARE NOT A MACHINE, YOU ARE A PERSON. Whether or not my 18 year old self would listen to that voice, who knows. But I am listening now. I am not a machine. It does not matter if I graduate at the top percentage of my class, or lose weight for rosecliff, or go to bed by 10:00 pm every night, because it doesn't matter. All that matters is that I am happy.

I came to college thinking I was going to be a biology major, because I thought that is what I SHOULD do. Growing up I was always told, theatre is a hobby, not a career. But look who I am

proving wrong. I am getting auditions. Looking for work in the performing arts. I am living my authentic self. Whenever I visit home, I have people asking me what I will do when I graduate. Well... look where we are: Graduation is right around the corner. Something that I keep hearing is: “Your psychology major is much more valuable than your theatre major for finding jobs” And you know what I think of that. You can just SHUT THE FUCK UP. Imagine what would’ve happened if you told people like Meryl Streep, Denzel Washington, and all these amazing actors that, and what if they believed you. What if they decided to pursue biology or psychology because they thought that theatre wasn’t valuable or that they weren’t going to make it... that would be pretty sad. Imagine a world like that.

Sarah, I am proud of you. No, your life might not look perfect anymore. Your bed isn’t always made, you wear sweatpants to class, you might have corn flakes for dinner way too often, but you are doing okay.

Love,
Sarah

PERSON 5 (AKHSHAYE)

Dear Akhshaye,

I know the chips are stacked against you at the moment. I know how waking up each morning seems to be burdening. I know you feel a void, a disconnect between you and the others around you. You are questioning your craft, your talent which is something foreign to you, for I know that’s the only thing you’ve got, the only thing that’s brought you this far. I know the distance killed you and your high school sweetheart, and she has found comfort in other arms. You constantly question whether your parents and family truly take your career decision seriously. I know you want to drop out of school because you’re contemplating the gravitas your education will have, is it even worth the cost, the loan(s) considering you want to act? For you are a performer, an artist, someone who deals with feelings... To you, I say, hang on! Hold still! Power through! For this too, shall pass! Time heals all wounds, and provides you opportunities that you couldn’t possibly see. In the next year or two you will find you will grow in ways you couldn’t possibly imagine at this time: you will find Love—putting you through a priceless gamut of emotions, you will travel the streets of Paris and Amsterdam. You will go on to live in fucking Moscow for 3 months!! It is in Moscow where you’ll find a Guru: your craft as an actor will grow, you will be so aware of your physical capabilities as a performer; you will recognise nuances in a scene you couldn’t before, you will collaborate with your peers, fellow artists from around the world, and it will change your mindset about life and theatre! You will move from an “I” to a “WE” and that will in turn, change your perspective in life. Moreover, your family will support you through every hurdle and take your name with pride when you are bold enough to stand alone, chasing the impossible dream!

Love,
Akhshaye (from the future)

PERSON 6 (AMELIA)

Dear Freshman Year Amelia,

I know you're miserable right now. Leaving high school is hard and I know you think you will never achieve more than you did in high school or find better friends, and you resent Wheaton for that. Pretty soon though, you'll realize that many of those people from high school were never your friends anyways, and it'll hurt like hell, but you'll find a family at Wheaton. The most important thing you'll learn in your four years is that it's okay to be scared. It doesn't make you weak, admitting you're afraid makes you stronger and it lets people know you. At Wheaton you will go through the highest highs and the lowest lows. You'll hate school so much you want to drop out. You'll cry over classes, money, fake friends, real friends. You will see your best friends go on amazing life-changing adventures while you are so sick you can't eat or leave the couch. You'll have an identity crisis. And another. And another. You will face challenges you could never have imagined, but you'll persevere through it all. Through it all, you will have the most wonderful friends who will support you through anything. You will laugh until your stomach hurts and you can't physically laugh anymore. You'll learn all the lyrics to the Lorax soundtrack. You'll find a true passion in theatre. More than anything, you will have the most fun you've ever had. So stick it out kid, I promise it's worth it.

Much love,
Senior Year You

PERSON 1 (LUKE)

Sup Luke,

Boy, I do not envy you because you are in the thick of it my friend. But that means that there's a way out and I found it! To be honest, I didn't know that I was finding it at the time and did not even fully realize it was gone until months later but when I did, man was I happy.

I won't tell you too much what it is like because you're going to get there and I want you to have the same unreal feelings I had. I will say though that relying on the ones you love is everything. Reach out, tell them what you're feeling, even if you feel like it's a burden. Trust me, they just want to see you happy and healthy.

Focus on the change you are going through and embrace it. You have been so unbelievably lucky to have the childhood you had, and you are not saying goodbye to it just because you are not in it anymore. Remember the great times, share them with your family, laugh about them with friends and know that they had their place in your life. Look ahead at what is coming and you will realize in the moment how lucky you are to be where you are now.

Humanity is everything. Connections are everything. How do you think you are remembered after your time has come and gone? Through story, through love, through the people you have imprinted yourself on. If you can be kind, and good, then you are already doing better than so many people in this world. That's not to make you feel better about yourself because others are struggling, bring them with you. Spread kindness, that's really what this world needs today.

These elements are what made me see what place I have in this world. You are going to come around to them. However, the most important thing you can do right now is explore the sadness. Focusing and understanding emotion is what makes it less scary. You will know what I mean soon enough. This time you are going through right now might be the most important because without it, you wouldn't come out happier than you have ever been. Experience this low so you can make your highs much higher.

Finally, take yourself a little less seriously. This world is absolutely insane in the best way possible. Explore every aspect of it that you can.

Peace and Love,

Future Luke

WRITER

“You'll be on your way up! You'll be seeing great sights! You'll join the high flyers who soar to high heights. You won't lag behind, because you'll have the speed. You'll pass the whole gang and you'll soon take the lead. Wherever you fly, you'll be the best of the best. Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.”

WRITER

(to Audience)

Now my friends, it is time for us to say our final goodbyes.

(to the actors)

To the Actors, Thank You for being in my life! Some of you I have known from the very beginning of college, in our FYS. Some I have gotten to know through shows, while others I have truly gotten to know for the first time this semester. It has been an absolute honor to work with you all one last time. I couldn't have asked for a better Ensemble. I wish you all nothing but success and joy for years to come. To the ladies in Balfour Cafe, Thank You! You always knew how to brighten my day, by showing how much you cared about each and every student. To Wheaton, Thank You! You gave me a place to call home, and people to call family. Finally, to Charlotte, Stephanie, Professor Bryant, and Professor Kent Shaw. You were the stepping stones on my path to success, you all believed in me during the moments I didn't believe in myself. You opened doors for me and shoved me through, for that, I am eternally grateful.

AMELIA

Whenever people ask me what I want to do after college, I always try to come up with some impressive answer. I put on a customer service voice with my relatives and say "you know, I'm not totally sure! I have a couple different options so I'm still figuring things out, but I'm thinking about grad school!" People love it when you tell them you're trying to go to grad school. This isn't entirely false, I would love to go to grad school in like two or three years. For now I can't imagine doing more school. If I were to go to grad school right now I wouldn't get anything out of it. I'm happy not knowing what I'm going to do. I used to be someone who needed a plan and needed a structure, and to some extent that is still true. However, life is unpredictable. I used to have a lot of career goals, but now I don't think I need big dreams. I want to be happy, keep my friends around, and making a little money would be nice too. I have a job at home through the summer but beyond that, the world is my oyster. Not having a plan feels freeing, and I'm excited to see what post-college life brings.

WINSLOW

The future. It's an extremely scary concept for me, who likes to decide on everything in a matter of moments. I like knowing what I am going to be doing and having the freedom to make whatever choice I want to. But life after wheaton is actually going to be the death of me. Not in the sense that I'm going to die right after wheaton, but at some point after college, I am going to die. That's not very hopeful, but it's an inevitability, just like the fact that I truly believe that I could win a Tony for something that I am involved in.

We live life with certain inevitabilities, like that it is inevitable that you must wake up for your 9:30, or that you must talk with your friends to remain friends. My inevitably is that I'm going to do something incredible with my life. What it is and who I do it with are up in the air, but I'm going to do something incredible. Maybe its helping a small community learn to embrace the arts, maybe its something global like reducing the suicide rate, or maybe its something like helping a small town learn to dance again. Something incredible in the world is going to happen to me, and even though I don't know exactly what it is yet, I know it will happen. Because when you say that you're going to do something incredible with your life, you're only saying it. But when you call it inevitable, it's on you to make this thing happen, whatever it may be.

LUKE

They say hindsight is 20,20. We don't know how to better ourselves or our decisions until after they have been made, then we can see where we went wrong. The hope is that you can learn from it and move forward with this new-found knowledge. College is a war ground where this statement runs wild. You make mistakes, you learn, you probably make a similar mistake, you learn again, and so on until that part of your life feels stable. Then, some other aspect of life hits you hard and it's time to start the process again. I don't think there is any better way to grow has an individual.

Now, I have gone through this battle ground for almost four years and I cannot even recognize the individual I used to be. I came in with preconceived notions of what Wheaton would be, some aspects being true and most being off. The whirl wind that was these four years crushed me at moments, amazed me at others, and, in the end, built me up to who I am today.

I know what you're thinking, what a lammeeee speech. Another growth story... that most people have. But it feels special to me, you know? That's the part I want to articulate here. I have my little slice humanity and it may look like other pieces of the pie, but its mine. We all have these stories, happy, sad, angry, screwed up stories. All unique to ourselves but, in a way, somewhat similar. We have all had just terrible days, but we have also had great ones. Classes we loved and others we dreaded going to. Meals in chase we, well, that's actually a sore subject. The point is we are each having are unique college experiences, but we are having them together.

Remember back to one of the first evenings we were here, when we all lit those candles and stood around the dimple. That was the beginning of being a part of this community. Soon, there will be an evening where my class is doing the same exact thing. It's our full circle ending to our time here. We get to choose what we bring from this place and what we leave, for better or for worse. I'm going to tell you what I'm bringing with me.

At Wheaton, I learned the best gift you can give someone is being a friend. I wanted to impact the people around me somehow, leave my mark on them. Selfish, some people may say because it's truly just me wanting to be imprinted on most people I meet but, at the end of the day, at the end of our lives, stories and memories are all we have. So, I'll be leaving Wheaton with memories and people that changed my life, a hope for love and kindness to stay with me wherever I go, and a drive to reach as many people as I can around this world so that I can capture, and maybe share, my slice of humanity.

AKHSHAYE

As far back as I can remember, I have always wanted to be an actor. Growing up, a part of me always knew I wanted to act. However, I was very shy and as a result I constantly refrained myself! As many actors do, I too, had terrible stage fright. And, while I still feel like puking my guts out before I go up on stage; hoping that the "10 minute hold" lasts forever... once I'm up there, (at the risk that this may sound pretentious) there's a switch that goes off in me—it's something so transient, something I could never put into words—and suddenly, I'm transported, liberated... I come alive!

I will forever be indebted to Wheaton for my time here. Indebted to the love, kindness and opportunities it's professors and my peers have bestowed on me. It is at Wheaton that I found the courage to perform. I still remember voicing my stage fright to David Fox during my interview for beginning acting, to which David (though he had no reason to) said: "every great actor does". Today I stand here before you, feeling more confident in my abilities as an actor than ever before. While I am fully aware that the path is going to be a roller coaster and while I am nervous for the road that lies ahead, I'm ready to take it head on! I possess a certain hunger to work—be it in front of the camera or up on stage—an appetite that just wouldn't satiate. (I guess Chekhov would credit that to my youth :p)

While it has been incredibly challenging to reach this point: I have managed to surrender myself entirely to the process, and my life has never been more beautiful.

I don't know what the future has in store for me. I don't know where I'll end up; whether I'll attain the glories of fame and success or, whether I even want to. But the one thing I know for certain is that I will work oh so hard to make my dreams come true: constantly seeking excellence and growth in my craft. And, I will be an actor till my dying breath. And there ain't nothing that could take that away from me.

STEVEN

I hope my last day is as great as my first day. My first day I grinned till my teeth bleed white through my cheeks. My throat was filled with excitement as the sun roared across my skin. I was kissed by the rays of the sun and felt reassured this place was meant for me. I came with my name and left with an asterisk. Curiosity burst through my eyes and the mystery I saw was all I needed to feel full. Now I can look back and see all I've accomplished. I can look back and witness the ferocity of my advances. My dreams are within reach but my soul did not make it unscathed. I have been battered and bruised and know only but so much of what is left of me. Approaching my new beginning over the horizon, I feel compelled to reflect. Memories wash

over me constantly and I reminisce about the emotions of each feeling in each moment. Tears have fallen from my eyes and dripped into the pool of my soul. I dreamed that my time here would be transformative, I have gone through metamorphosis. Burgeoning from me is pride in my sorrows and ecstasy in my joys.

I dreamed a dream that I would cross the stage mature in my acts, knowledge, and pride. I dreamed a dream that the world wouldn't be ready for me. I dreamed a dream that my hopes would burn with passion. I dreamed a dream that the stage would be short but the journey was long. My time may be ending here but it's really just beginning. I really hope my last day is as great as my first day.

WRITER

“And will you succeed? Yes! You will indeed! (98 and $\frac{3}{4}$ percent guaranteed.) KID< YOU”LL MOVE MOUNTAINS! So... be your name Akhshaye, Steven, Winslow, Luke, or Amelia, Sarah, or Cheyenne, you're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting so... *get on your way!*

The SENIORS are now wearing their cap and gowns and have their own Ukuleles and start to strum the song SARAH wrote.

SARAH

Verse #1:

C G F
I stop, and listen to the trees, the dimple and it's breeze

C G
That surrounds us

C G F
I look, across the peacock pond, seeing cow duck and some swans

C G
And the biker gang

F G
And who could forgot those cotton candy skies

Chorus:

C G Am F
I know we'll go far away someday, across the world, or into space

C
No matter where we go
G F C
We'll always thank this place, cause Wheaton's here to stay

Verse #2:

C G F
We walk, through the wheaton woods, knowing we're up to no good
C G
But we're together
C G F
We laugh, and dance through Spring Weekend Songs, Waka Flaka was pretty bomb
C G
If you remember that
C G
We've taken classes and classes, and been in some clubs,

Chorus:

C G Am F
I know we'll go far away someday, across the world, or into space
C
No matter where we go
G F C
We'll always thank this place, cause Wheaton's here to stay

TRANSITIONAL BRIDGE:

C G
It's the end of senior year, and now we're here
F
It was an epic journey

C G F
And we have no more fear

Final Chorus (slow strums)

C G Am F
I know we'll go far away someday, across the world, or into space

C
No matter where we go

G F C
We'll always thank this place, cause Wheaton's here to stay

WRITER

Going dark

ALL

Thank you dark

BLACKOUT

End of Play