

columbinus

(Three-Act Version)

By
the United States Theatre Project

Written by
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Dramaturgy by
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Conceived by
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“*columbinus* had a co-world premiere on March 8, 2005,
at Round House Theatre, Silver Spring, Md. (Jerry Whiddon,
Producing Artistic Director, and Ira Hillman, Managing Director),
and then on May 6, 2005, at Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, Alaska,
(PJ Paparelli, Artistic Director, and Jeffrey Herrmann, Producing Director)
in conjunction with the United States Theatre Project.

Originally produced in New York by New York Theatre Workshop.”

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FOREWORD

My memory of the Columbine shootings is vague. I was immersed in a theatre production at the time that somehow disconnected me from the outside world. A pain in my tooth took me out of the insular theatre world I was in and forced me into the banality of a dentist's waiting room. I was sitting there, bored, wanting to go back to rehearsal, when I picked up a copy of *TIME* magazine. On the cover were the faces of teenagers: some were victims, some their killers. I couldn't move. I was overwhelmed with disbelief. How could two teenagers do something so horrific? And why did it take me a week to realize what had happened? Something clicked in me that day, and I decided that never again would my mode of artistic expression not be directly connected to the world around me.

columbinus is not a play; it is a theatrical discussion. Its creators, a group of multigenerational artists, wanted to create a fictional world of adolescence, born out of our collective experience. Just as this fictional high school could be anywhere in America, so could the potential for a school shooting. We quickly realized that we needed to talk with this generation of adolescents and hear what they had to say about their world. At the same time, we needed to dive deep into the heart of Columbine and hear from the people who experienced the shootings, as well as teenagers living in Littleton today. We collected as much oral and written fact about Columbine as we could gather. The merger of these two worlds would be the subject for discussion.

I always thought this piece would be an answer to the notorious question: "why?" After traveling to Littleton and meeting parents, children, survivors and community leaders, I realized there were many answers from every perspective, including from the shooters themselves. With all these answers, I

noticed things had not changed, even in Littleton. Life went on. And all the reasons “why” remain. I asked myself, “What could this piece suggest as a different means of prevention?” I was afraid that we wouldn’t find an answer.

I eventually answered that question with more questions: How do we treat each other? Why do we treat each other the way we do? Why do kids, who will soon ask these questions about their kids, continue to treat each other the same way? Why does this cycle never change, even after the kids themselves resort to bombs and guns and butchering their fellow students to prove a point? Why do we look for an easy answer—a pill to take, a program to turn off—when we know in our hearts that something deep inside us has to change? What are we afraid of?

The project is the definition of collaboration. Hundreds of people were involved in its creation: first and foremost, the 13 families of the victims of April 20, especially Dawn Anna, Misty and Brad Bernall, Don and Dee Fleming, Tom Mauser, Darrell Scott, Betty Shoels, Doreen and John Tomlin, and Sue and Rick Townsend; the people of Littleton who let us into their lives, specifically Randy, Judy and Brooks Brown, Ruth and Paul Feldman, Brian Stepp, Emily Stepp Smith, Lance Kirklin, Diwata Perez; Frank DeAngelis and the faculty and staff at Columbine High School; Kate Battan and the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office; Alan Prendergast at *Westword*; Lynn Bartels and Kevin Vaughn at the *Denver Post*; Steve LuKanic; Frank Earley and the students of Arapahoe High School; Gerald Freedman and the North Carolina School of the Arts for their support in the early workshops; Donald Hicken and the 2003 senior company of the Baltimore School for the Arts for “telling us like it is;” The Virginia Schools; Brenda Scott and the drama students at J.E.B; Stuart and Carol Cadby and

the drama students at Yorktown for allowing us to ask and being brave enough to answer; the Youth Ministry of All Saints Episcopal in Atlanta, Ga., for their openness; Jerry Whiddon at Round House Theatre in Washington; the staff at Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, Alaska; and Jim Nicola at New York Theatre Workshop, all of whom gave the play life and an audience. Our deepest respect and admiration go to the incredible talent and commitment of the original cast, who have forever shaped this piece: Anne, Jimmy, Ekaterina, Jeanne, Daniel and Gene. And, of course, Karl and Will—Will and Karl—who carried the burden of two lost souls for four years and sacrificed and shared so much in bringing them to life. Finally, to Stephen Karam, my partner in all things *Columbine*, who always made me laugh and inspired me to be a better person.

columbinus is dedicated to all the voices that were silenced by the shootings on April 20, 1999. No one should ever feel that alone again.

—PJ Paparelli
May 1, 2006

columbinus had its co-world premiere on March 8, 2005, at Round House Theatre in Silver Spring, Md., (Jerry Whiddon, Producing Artistic Director; Ira Hillman, Managing Director) and then on May 6, 2005, at Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, Alaska, (PJ Paparelli, Artistic Director; Jeffrey Herrmann, Producing Director) in conjunction with the United States Theatre Project. The following artistic team collaborated on the co-world premiere:

FAITH Anne Bowles
PERFECT.....Jeanne Dillon
AP..... James Flanagan
PREP..... Daniel Frith
JOCK Gene Gillette
FREAK/ERIC HARRISKarl Miller
REBEL Ekatrina Oleksa
LONER/DYLAN KLEBOLD Will Rogers

By the United States Theatre Project
Written by Stephen Karam and PJ Paparelli
Dramaturgy by Patricia Hersch
Conceived and directed by PJ Paparelli

Additional Contributors Josh Barrett,
Sean McNall, Karl Miller,
Michael Milligan, Will Rogers
Set Designer Tony Cisek
Lighting DesignerDan Covey
Sound DesignMartin Desjardins
Costume DesignerDenise Umland
Projection Designer.....JJ Kaczynski
Stage Manager Shawn Dean

columbinus had its New York premiere on May 22, 2006, at New York Theatre Workshop (Jim Nicola, Artistic Director; Lynn Moffat, Managing Director). The following artistic team collaborated on the New York premiere:

PERFECT..... Anna Camp
AP..... James Flannagan
REBEL Carmen Herlihy
FAITH Nicole Lowrance
FREAK/ERIC HARRISKarl Miller
JOCK.....Joaquin Perez-Campbell
LONER/DYLAN KLEBOLD Will Rogers
PREP.....Bobby Steggert

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Additional Contributors Josh Barrett,
Sean McNall, Karl Miller,
Michael Milligan, Will Rogers
Scenic Design Tony Cisek
Costume DesignMiranda Hoffman
Lighting DesignDan Covey
Sound Design.....Martin Desjardins
Projection Design.....JJ Kaczynski
Production Stage ManagementAmy McCraney
Associate Lighting Designer.....Klyph Stanford

The three-act version of *columbinus* had its premiere on Feb. 6, 2013, at American Theater Company in Chicago (PJ Paparelli, Artistic Director). The following artistic team collaborated on the revision:

PERFECT..... Kelly O’Sullivan
AP..... Tyler Ravelson
REBEL Sadieh Rifai
FAITH Leah Raidt
FREAK/ERIC HARRISMatthew Bausone
JOCK..... Jerod Hayes
LONER/DYLAN KLEBOLD Eric Folks
PREP..... Rob Fenton

Written by Stephen Karam and PJ Paparelli

Dramaturgy by Patricia Hersch

Conceived and directed by PJ Paparelli

Additional Contributors Michael Leibenluft
Scenic Design..... William Boles
Costume Design Sally Dolumbo
Lighting Design Jesse Klug
Sound DesignMartin Desjardins, Andre Pluess
Projection Design..... Anna Hensen,
Rasean Davonte Johnson
Production Dramaturg..... Derek Matson
Production Stage Management Katie Klemme

columbinus

(Three-Act Version)

CHARACTERS

Freak / Eric Harris

Loner / Dylan Klebold

The following characters play everyone else:

MEN:

AP (Advanced Placement)

Jock

Prep

WOMEN:

Faith

Perfect

Rebel

NOTE: The characters' names should not be listed in the program. From the audience perspective, they are simply a group of teenagers.

SETTING

ACT I: A fictional high school in suburban America.

ACT II: January 1998 through April 20, 1999. Littleton, Colo.

ACT III: April 20, 1999, until present day. Littleton, Colo.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Production notes can be found at the back of the book.

SCENES

ACT I:

Morning Ritual	Physical Education
Selection	History Lesson
Identity	Work
Guidance: Part I	I.M. (Instant Message)
Cafeteria	Mischief
Drama	Dinner
Creative Writing	Alone
Guidance: Part II	

ACT II:

Dylan & Eric	April 20, 1999
Juvenile Diversion	911
The Basement Tapes	The Library
What If	Goodbye
The Parents	

ACT III:

24 Hours	Five Years
The Next Day	Ten Years
One Week	Thirteen Years
One Year	Today

NOTE: Scene titles should be projected at the top of each scene.

ACT ONE

House lights and stage lights are up, as audience enters. The space is stark and exposed. The stage floor evokes a gymnasium. On the back wall is a giant chalk-slate, functional but can also have images or words projected onto it. There are eight school chairs and two tables.

The actors enter the space carrying their first act costumes and props. They prepare the space, then gather downstage and address the audience.

ACTORS

Good evening (afternoon).

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

The story we will share with you tonight (today) is based on true events.

ACTOR (*Prep*)

The first act was created from conversations with teenagers from across the country.

ACTOR (*AP*)

The second act is based on interviews, writings and records surrounding the Columbine High School Shootings.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

The third act is taken from verbatim interviews with community members in Littleton, Colorado.

ACTOR (*Freak*)

There will be a ten-minute intermission between each act.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

We ask you to use your time wisely as we will begin each act promptly.

ACTOR (*Loner*)

And if you have a cell phone...now would be a great time to turn it off.

ACTOR (*Jock*)

We appreciate you coming to the theatre tonight (today).

ACTORS

Thank you.

They nod to the stage manager. Blackout.

MORNING RITUAL

In the darkness. Alarm clocks ring. In unison, the actors swing their arms round to the floor with a thud, silencing the alarms. Projected, the clock reads "7:00".

MOTHER'S VOICE (*VO - Faith*)
Rise and shine, sleepy head.

FATHER'S VOICE (*VO - AP*)
Hey, get up, get out of bed.

MOTHER'S VOICE
Get up...

ALL
Get out.

FATHER AND MOTHER
Get up.

ALL
I'm dead.

FATHER AND MOTHER
Get up. Wake up. Wake up.

ALL
(*"I'm"* overlaps with *"Wake"*) I'm up!

(*Lights up. Everyone still is asleep.*)

MOTHER
You're late.

ALL
Huh?

FATHER
...gotta run.

ALL
Huh?

FATHER AND MOTHER
You're late, gotta' run, run n' go, see ya' soon, don't be late, hey be safe, love ya' bye.

ALL
I...

MOTHER
Bye.

ALL

I...

FATHER

Bye.

ALL

Good.

FATHER AND MOTHER

Good?

ALL

(sufficiently annoyed) Goodbye!

(Sound of door slam. Blackout. Actors sigh. An alarm clock rings, and then everyone in unison smacks the floor. Projected the clock reads "7:09". Lights up.)

FREAK

(standing) Roll outta...

FAITH

Jump outta...

REBEL

Crawl outta...

PERFECT

Whatta wear?

JOCK

(simultaneous with "wear") Where's a towel?

PREP

Now'll shower.

LONER

Sour breath...

REBEL

And knots of frizzy hair.

AP

First I pee...

JOCK

Then I piss.

PREP

Lookin' good.

JOCK
Morning wood.

REBEL
First I'm thirsty.

PERFECT
First we need a...

ALL
Shower.

FREAK
I need a very, very cold shower.

LONER
I took a shower last night.

ALL
Right.

(The rhythm stops. Actors sing in the shower, while washing themselves.)

(Each actor steps out of his or her shower.)

PREP
Dry it.

JOCK
Shave it.

AP
Comb it.

PERFECT
Pluck it.

FAITH
Brush it.

REBEL
Let it.

FREAK
Scrub it.

LONER

(putting on his hat) Fuck it.

BOYS

Slick it down.

GIRLS

Put it up.

LONER

My pants are where...?

(They "discover" their costumes.)

ALL

Oh!

REBEL

(looking at her pants) They're wide.

FAITH

They're snug.

REBEL

They hide.

PERFECT

They low-ride.

AP

No time.

ALL

Move fast.

PREP

Flat front.

REBEL

Fat ass.

JOCK

Same old.

FREAK

Cargo.

PREP

Polo.

FREAK
Cargo.

PREP
Polo.

ALL
Button, Button, Button-fly.

FAITH & PERFECT
Wanna cry.

LONER/PREP
I hate this shirt!

PERFECT
Skort

FAITH
Or skirt.

PERFECT
Or short-short shorts...

PERFECT/FAITH
Or...

JOCK, FREAK, LONER, REBEL
t-shirt.

AP, PREP
A n' F.

JOCK
F-n' A...

AP, PREP
Button down fits well.

JOCK
...it smells. I smell.

REBEL, FREAK, LONER
Just black.

FREAK AND AP

Back pack.

FAITH

(overlapping with “pack”) Pack lunch.

PREP

Hang on a sec.

AP

A quick e-mail check.

REBEL & PREP

I strap it on.

JOCK & FREAK

And slap it on.

(Everyone changes place on stage)

PERFECT

Wait!

(Everyone stops, annoyed. PERFECT finishes dressing, moves downstage, zips her fly, then...)

PERFECT

OK.

ALL

Gotta eat a...

JOCK

big breakfast...

PREP

quick breakfast...

PERFECT

skip breakfast...

AP

(overlapping with “breakfast”) breakfast on the go.

FAITH

(simultaneous with “go”) Going...

AP

Gone.

ALL
Homework?

FAITH, PREP, PERFECT
Some.

ALL
Homework?

AP & FREAK
Done.

ALL
Homework?

LONER
None.

ALL
Go, go, go, go.

FAITH
vitamin...

AP
Claritin...

PREP
Ritalin...

JOCK
Creatine...

REBEL
mescaline...

FREAK
pop a pill...

PERFECT
pop "the pill."

(A car honks outside)

FAITH

My cell?

PREP
My stash?

REBEL
My Crosby Stills and Nash.

(Actors ad lib, i.e. "What?", "Crosby who?")

(Horn honks. Projected the clock reads "7:48")

ALL
We're late.

FREAK, PREP, JOCK, PERFECT
...jump in the car...

LONER & AP
...wait for the bus...

FAITH
...off for a walk...

REBEL
(walk faster) ...for a run...

ALL
What's up?

LONER
Hey.

REBEL
Yo.

JOCK
'Sup?

PREP
Yeah?

PERFECT
No?

FAITH
So...

AP
Way.

FREAK
Yeah.

PREP
I heard...

PERFECT
He is?

FAITH
To who?

PERFECT
To you?

REBEL
And him.

PERFECT
I know.

LONER
Woa

FREAK
No

REBEL
So

AP
Hi

PERFECT
Whore

JOCK
Ho

ALL
Fuck.

AP
Time to go.

REBEL

One more smoke.

PERFECT

One more kiss.

JOCK

One more minute...

PREP

to take a piss.

FAITH

A pee.

AP

A poo. *(Beat.)* Oh, God I hate crapping in the school bathroom.

ALL

I'll meet you in the...

LONER

Hallway or...

FREAK

Homeroom or...

AP

Study or...

FAITH

Store or the...

(ALL speak those in parenthesis.)

PERFECT

(The Caf) or the lab or the gym (by the door)

REBEL

By the North side of commons (the corner)

PREP

The gate so let's (wait)

JOCK

(Wait in the spot) in the back parking lot where it's (paved) and I'm

ALL

saved by the...

(School bell rings. The actors dash upstage and enter into the school. Music: "Mad World" by Gary Jules begins to play.)

SELECTION

Six props descend from above: a white baseball cap, a make-up compact, a pair of eyeglasses, a pack of cigarettes, a beaded leather choker, and a cross necklace.

While examining his surroundings, LONER wanders a bit further downstage.

LONER crosses to the edge of the stage and sits, as FREAK enters. He watches FREAK wander among the various props dangling above his head. FREAK examines the baseball cap, as PERFECT, REBEL and FAITH enter, ignoring him. FREAK crosses to the edge of the stage and sits.

PERFECT, REBEL and FAITH discover the make-up compact. PERFECT chooses the prop before the others. REBEL wanders away. FAITH follows. REBEL picks up the cigarettes and offers one to FAITH. FAITH, a bit uneasy, moves away and grabs the cross necklace. REBEL, indifferent, grabs a cigarette.

AP enters and the girls ignore him until he discovers the baseball cap. JOCK enters and realizes that the key to the girls' attention is the hat. He crosses to AP and takes it off his head. PERFECT is impressed as AP, dejected, crosses to the leather choker.

PREP enters and moves to the only prop available: the eyeglasses. Unhappy with his option, PREP crosses to AP and grabs the choker; AP is taken aback. As an afterthought, PREP hands the glasses to AP.

In unison AP, PREP, PERFECT, REBEL, FAITH, and JOCK use their props to assume their identities. FREAK and LONER, not sure of where they should be, wander among the students. FREAK and LONER find each other. There are no props left.)

FREAK
(breaking the ice) Hey.

LONER
(timid response) Hey.

IDENTITY

(Bell rings. Light goes to PERFECT.)

FAITH
She's nice.

AP
Ton of friends...she knows everyone.

JOCK
She's cool.

REBEL
She hangs with jocks.

PREP
Drinks...like a horse.

FAITH
One can assume she drinks.

PREP
We all party together.

FREAK
She's a bitch.

LONER
We don't hang out but she's ok.

(Lights on JOCK.)

REBEL
A jock.

FAITH
Hard working. Very determined.

AP
Yeah, he's a jock but he's different from what you would think.

PERFECT
He's really cool, very friendly with everyone. Sweet.

PREP
One of my best friends.

FREAK
Shining star of our school. Shining.

LONER
We spoke once in the sixth grade.

(Lights on AP)

JOCK
Smart.

PERFECT
Very smart.

LONER
Helluva Doom player.

FAITH
Really nice kid.

REBEL
Loser.

FREAK
A little obsessed with school.

PREP
Does he go to this school?

(Lights to REBEL)

LONER
She's cool.

PERFECT
She's crazy.

JOCK
She's ok. She's just...

AP
Different. Weird, but cool weird.

FREAK
I think she has a nipple pierced.

PERFECT
Tries to make a statement. I'd bet she's a really nice person inside.

PREP
Her older sister's cool.

(Lights on FREAK)

FAITH
Smart.

JOCK
Computer...dude.

REBEL
Intense.

PERFECT
Insane.

PREP
We don't hang out. I don't know if he hangs out.

LONER
Crazy, anal, fucked up sense of humor...and a good friend

(Lights to PREP)

JOCK
Oh, him...a dork

PERFECT
So funny.

FAITH
Knows everyone.

AP
Party guy.

FREAK
Complete asshole.

PERFECT
People have the wrong idea about him. He's really sweet.

REBEL
I don't dare comment.

LONER
He has his head completely stuck up his ass.

(Lights to FAITH)

PERFECT
Nice.

AP
Nice.

REBEL
She's nice.

JOCK
Smart. You know...

FREAK
I sit next to her in Chemistry.

LONER
Dull. Boring and dull.

PREP
Needs to loosen up.

(Lights on LONER)

PERFECT
I don't know him.

AP
Sits with us at lunch.

REBEL
Goofy...

ALL
Huh?

REBEL
...like the dog.

ALL
Oh.

FAITH
Definitely keeps to himself.

JOCK
Yeah, who?

PREP
No. Really can't say.

FREAK
A bit of a pussy, but a great friend. Yeah...

(Lights on AP.)

AP

People say I do well in school. I get along with everyone. You know, pretty average.

(AP exits. Lights on PREP)

PREP

People say I'm cool. Likes to party. Friends with everyone. Average guy.

(PREP exits. Lights on PERFECT)

PERFECT

People say I'm nice. Friendly. Social. Make people feel welcome. I don't know...

(PERFECT exits. Lights on REBEL)

REBEL

People say I'm different. Goth even. Maybe even druggie. Yeah, I get a lot of that.

(REBEL exits. Lights on FREAK.)

FREAK

I don't know what people say. Smart, funny.

(FREAK exits. Lights on JOCK.)

JOCK

People say I'm a jock, I'm sure. But I really hate that. When people get to know me, they forget that.

(JOCK exits. Lights on FAITH.)

FAITH

People say I'm nice. Friendly...I don't know. Like everyone else.

(FAITH exits. Lights on LONER.)

LONER

umm...I don't know.

GUIDANCE: PART ONE

VOICE *(Prep)*

Ok, we'll start with the big question: what do you want to do with the rest of your life?

LONER

Hum?

VOICE
What are your interests?

LONER
I dunno.

VOICE
You don't know? You've run sound for the drama program. You clearly have a creative side.

LONER
Ah...I don't know.

VOICE
Nice work on the *Frankenstein* play. It was great and the sounds when the monster came to life were incredible. I imagine the equipment must be complicated.

LONER
It was a tape deck. I pushed play.

VOICE
Well, I know you're good with electronics, wise guy. I've seen you in the computer lab after school a bunch of times.

LONER
Yeah...*(he laughs)*

VOICE
What's so funny?

LONER
Nothing, nothing.

VOICE
Thought about getting a job in computers?

LONER
I don't know. It's kinda difficult to find a technician job when I'm only 16 years old. It's a tough market for inexperienced, untrained hackers.

VOICE
Right, well there's lots of money to be made there.

LONER
Yeah. *(He laughs)*

VOICE

Why are you laughing?

LONER
It's nothing.

VOICE
You're not keeping secrets, are you?

LONER
Well, actually...

VOICE
C'mon...

LONER
OK, you have something hanging out of your nose.

(Lights and sound change, showing we are in Loner's mind. He shifts his position to get a better look.)

VOICE
That's ok. You don't have to tell me.

LONER
Can't you feel that? It's a very large piece of snot.

VOICE
Well, you have a very creative mind.

LONER
It's like clinging to your nose hair.

VOICE
And I see you are taking Creative Writing?

LONER
Will you please wipe it off?

VOICE
Have you thought about majoring in Creative Writing?

LONER
I don't have a fucking clue what I'll major in, Asshole. I'm dealing with the immediate here, and that should be okay. Why do we always have to know where we are going? And who's supposed to be guiding us? You? That's fucking hysterical. How are you qualified to guide me when you don't know the first thing about me? Yes, with a subtle glance from my file you glean that D in Political Science, or if you really want to impress the name of the show I did sound on. But let's see you name a friend, or the music I like...or where will I eat lunch today...and why do I eat lunch there? *(notices something)* Oh, shit...there's the twitch. Uh-oh, Mr. Booger, he's on to you. Go on. *(beat, angrily)* Go on. Just wipe it away. You can't just

ignore it. *(beat)* Maybe you can. It avoids the embarrassment, the awkward situation. Lucky for you, Little Buddy, he's gonna pretend that you don't exist. Too bad we don't have that in common.

(Bell rings.)

CAFETERIA

(FAITH enters, leading a tour.)

FAITH

(to the audience) Ok is everybody here? Is everybody listening? Come on, I need to know if you are with me. *(makes the audience respond)* Super awesome! Now...we are about to enter the cafeteria. In eighth grade you probably have closed lunches, but here you can leave if you want. It's a bit crowded in here today 'cause of the rain. A lot of these people usually eat outside. *(LONER enters with a tray; looking for a place to sit)* So let's see...where that kid is coming out *(points to LONER carrying a tray)* that's where they serve the lunches. *(LONER moves to get out of the way.)* Oh, and over that archway is our school motto...

Projected: "Through these halls pass the finest kids in America"

Through these halls pass the finest kids in America.

AP

(seated at one of the tables) Which is not supposed to be ironic.

FAITH

Ok, vending machines are over here... *(LONER moves to get out of her way, look for a place to sit.)* Well, you pretty much can sit where you like. There are no assigned seats by grade or group. Mostly, freshman over there. Over there are the guys who were their ballcaps sideways known as the gangstas...not to be confused with the minorities. *(realizing what she has said)* I mean, some of them are, but...*(getting flush)* My point is people sit with other people like them. How do I describe it?

REBEL

Segregation?

FAITH

Yes. *(thinks about this, then)* No...*(LONER returns to the space)* Hey, *(to Loner, pointing out an empty seat)* there's a spot over here.

(She points to a table with PREP and PERFECT. Not wanting to make a scene, LONER sits.)

LONER

Thanks.

FAITH

Anyway...here are the new restrooms. They're pretty awesome. They actually have sinks that you don't have to turn on the water, you just *(indicates putting hands under the faucet.)* I'm gonna make a quick stop and I'll be right back.

(FAITH crosses DS, as lights change to the restroom. PERFECT applies make-up, studying herself in the mirror. REBEL smokes a cigarette off in the corner.)

FAITH
Hey.

(PERFECT looks at FAITH, then returns to applying her make-up.)

FAITH
You won't believe what happened. I just added a new part to the tour, completely off-the-cuff. It was crazy.

PERFECT
You know, you would be really pretty if you straightened your hair.

FAITH
Thanks. I like your shirt.

PERFECT
I like yours too. Did you make it?

FAITH
No, I just...oh, no.

(PERFECT laughs. REBEL approaches)

REBEL
(referring to PERFECT's shirt) Do you think cigarette burns would compliment that color?

PERFECT
Fucking dike.

(PERFECT exits.)

FAITH
Thanks--

(REBEL ignores her and walks away. FAITH takes a beat, then walks to the audience. Lights change, we're out of the bathroom.)

FAITH
(regaining her composure) Okay. Next stop, the heart and soul of school: our gym.

(FAITH exits)

PREP

I think that seat's kinda taken.

LONER

I couldn't find another one.

PREP

Ok, that's cool. *(beat)* I've never really seen you before.

LONER

Ha, ha.

PREP

How long have you gone here?

(LONER doesn't say anything; just eats)

PREP

No seriously.

LONER

Come on, lay off.

PREP

I'm being serious. Did you transfer in?

LONER

Just let me eat. Ok? It's fuckin' pouring out.

PREP

(Signals across the room) Ok, just trying to start a friendly conversation. Sorry man.
(JOCK tosses a ketchup packet that hits LONER) What the fuck you asshole? Chill out, man.
You hit me. *(JOCK laughs; LONER looks carefully at PREP)* He can be a real dickhead.

LONER

Yeah. Thanks. *(PREP signals again, as LONER takes a bite of food. Another packet hits LONER; LONER turns to JOCK.)*

LONER

There's much easier ways of impressing him, faggot.

(JOCK pulls out the seat as LONER gets up causing him to fall, dropping his tray and food. The cafeteria bursts out in laughter then freezes.)

PREP

You asked for that, faggot. You act like *I* disgust *you*? Fuck you. *You* disgust *me*. The greasy hair, this combat grunge, all of this. If this is truly who you are, then good for you.

Congratulations on being yourself. (*beat*) I'm sorry your life sucks, but you chose this, right? You wanted to be you (*Looks at JOCK, then back to LONER*) You know, someday you'll remember high school as the sick feeling you got every day around noon trying to find a place to eat lunch and I'll remember it as the best years of my life...even if it's not me, the real me. (*leans into LONER*). Which me am I talking about? Who is the real me?

(*PREP looks around the group. He kisses JOCK.*)

No one. He doesn't exist.

(*Unfreeze.*)

JOCK

I think you're in my seat.

(*Bell rings. All leave as LONER picks up his food. REBEL approaches.*)

REBEL

Sticks and stones...come on. (*REBEL moves closer to him.*) What's in a name?

(*LONER abruptly stands, and starts to go.*)

REBEL

Hey, you dropped this.

(*She throws a book at him. He picks it up.*)

I could use some help next period going over my lines...if you're free.

(*REBEL exits. LONER reads.*)

DRAMA

LONER

But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?

It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!

It is my lady; O, it is my love!

Juliet enters from above.

REBEL

Um...just the lines.

LONER

Oh, yeah. Right. (*REBEL puts on a rehearsal skirt.*) It is my lady; O, it is my love!

O that she knew she were!

She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.

I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks.

(LONER freezes.)

REBEL

Yeah, well, it's probably this play, and that thing that happens when you are on stage, not being yourself...but I look at you, and let's face it, you're not my first choice, maybe not anyone's, the long baby face, with the Jay Leno chin...But I look at me...and I see someone too familiar staring back at me. I see the overpriced life she lives in, I see all that spelled out in every fat bulge, or frizz, or nose that's uncoverable...I'm uncomfortable with me. So I look away...to something else, someone else and you're not so bad...you are possible, obtainable...If I don't look at you and see that, then there's not much left, but some weed, and another episode of *Friends*, and my pathetic antisocial fucked up life. So hey, it's your chance...climb the balcony...give me a plastic rose...and we'll pretend that we're actually beautiful people. Come on, it's easy to escape.

(REBEL kneels on two chairs which function as the balcony. LONER unfreezes, and looks to her.)

REBEL

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name!
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

LONER

Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

(Awkward pause. The bell rings. JOCK, AP, PREP, FAITH, and PERFECT enter, and voice the thoughts in LONER's head.)

LONER

(staring at REBEL) All I need is a...

ACTOR (Prep)

Word.

ACTOR (Perfect)

A simple word.

ACTOR (AP)

It would open up a tremendous

ALL

Conversation.

ACTOR (Jock)

Just turn to her

ACTOR (Perfect)

And look at her

ACTOR (*AP*)
Open your mouth

ACTOR (*Prep*)
And say...

ACTOR (*Faith*)
Sorry this sounds so awkward. I think you act really good.

ACTOR (*Jock*)
Act really good?

ACTOR (*AP*)
And sound really awkward so

ACTOR (*Prep*)
No. Never.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Can't take the rejection

ACTOR (*Faith*)
Can't take the humiliation if

ACTOR (*Jock*)
Someone else found out.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
She would talk.

ACTOR (*Prep*)
She would say my name. She would...

ACTOR (*Faith*)
Say my name?

ACTOR (*AP*)
...actually coming from her lips.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Oh God, tongue in mouth.

ACTOR (*AP*)
Touching her nipples with my tongue. Nipping small bites

ACTOR (*Jock*)

My fingers

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Rubbing across her breast. She would like it.

ACTOR (*Prep*)

She would want it.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

Here. On the desk.

ALL

Yeah.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Think of the sex. Feeling it after I was finished. A space in her juicy-

ALL

(*looking away*) Oh God.

(*LONER deals with his erection.*)

ACTOR (*Prep*)

Stop it. Get down.

(*REBEL tosses a pencil in LONER's direction.*)

ALL

(*freezing*) Shit.

ACTOR (*AP*)

She can see me sweat.

ACTOR (*All*)

Shhh!

ACTOR (*AP*)

She knows I am acting crazy.

ACTOR (*All*)

Shhh!

(*REBEL, annoyed, picks it up herself.*)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

Ok. That's it.

ACTOR (*Prep*)

I gotta go.

(LONER goes to leave.)

ACTOR *(All)*

Wait...

ACTOR *(Faith)*

Maybe if I

ACTOR *(AP)*

Say that I

ACTOR *(Perfect)*

Wonder if you

ACTOR *(Prep)*

Now while I'm walking by.

ALL

Casually

ACTOR *(Faith)*

Seize it. Talk to her. It's not even talk. It's a...

ALL

Hi.

ACTOR *(Jock)*

"Hi" is gay. That's all I need is to sound like a fag.

ACTOR *(Prep)*

But if I just say something.

ACTOR *(AP)*

Saying one thing could change everything.

ACTOR *(Jock)*

Go ahead.

ACTOR *(Prep)*

Come on!

ALL

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

(Bell rings. REBEL exits. LONER looks away. Lighting changes as students change the space into a classroom.)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

And what would we talk about? Nothing. Not a fucking thing. What would a snotty little cunt like her say to a piece of shit like me?

ACTOR (*AP*)

What was I thinking?

ACTOR (*Prep*)

She's a bitch.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Bitch.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

And I am not stupid enough to fall into her trap.

ACTOR (*Jock*)

Let her tell the whole school what the freak did.

ACTOR (*AP*)

One thing after another...

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Leading to more

ACTOR (*Prep*)

And more...

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

No way. No fucking way.

(REBEL returns and sits next to him. The space is now a classroom.)

REBEL

Do you have the time?

LONER

No.

(REBEL looks away.)

LONER

But thanks for the play...today.

REBEL

What?

LONER
I liked the play.

REBEL
Thanks, but I didn't write it.

LONER
Yeah, but it was a good play...*(They laugh.)* It's 1:15...6th period.

REBEL
Yeah, I know. *(awkward but they smile)* Hey, I'm...

(JOCK sits right in back of LONER.)

JOCK
I thought you were gay. *(REBEL exits. LONER turns to JOCK.)* What?

CREATIVE WRITING

TEACHER *(Rebel's voice amplified from offstage throughout this scene)*
Okay, let's critique the last of the narrative assignments. I'll follow along with your essay and share my comments. You're up.

(LONER stands in front of the class. His essay is projected. The teacher's corrections appear as she critiques his essay.)

LONER
(uncertain, in a low voice) The town, even at 1:00AM, was still...

PERFECT
I can't hear what he's saying.

FAITH
Shhhh.

(PERFECT shushes FAITH.)

TEACHER
You need to speak a little louder.

LONER
(a bit more confident) The town, even at 1:00AM, was still bustling with activity as the man dressed in black walked down the empty streets.

TEACHER
Great opening.

LONER

The moon was barely visible, hiding under a shield of clouds, adding a chill...

TEACHER

...which added a chill...

LONER

...which added a chill to the atmosphere. What was most recognized about the man was the jingling of his belt chains striking not only the two visible guns, but the large bowie knife, slung in anticipation of use.

TEACHER

Great details. Well done.

(A laugh from PREP and JOCK. LONER stares at them, as the lights shift. A light comes up that projected a large shadow on the chalk slate. LONER walks into the light, staring. We are in LONER's mind.)

LONER

In the midst of the nightlife in the center of the average-sized town, this man walked, fueled by some untold purpose, what Christians would call evil.

TEACHER

New paragraph.

(Turns and looks at the shadow.)

LONER

His face was entirely in shadow, yet I could feel his anger, cutting thru the air like a razor. He noticed my presence, but paid no attention as he kept walking toward a popular bar. The Watering Hole. He stopped and waited. "For whom?" I wondered, as I saw them step out. A group of college-preps...the second-largest spoke up

(The students in the class become the college-preps in the story.)

LONER & PREP

Nice trench coat dude. That's pretty cool.

LONER

The man in black said nothing but I could feel his anger growing.

LONER & PREP

You want a fight? C'mon, put the guns away, fuckin pussy!!!

TEACHER

Please...

LONER

Other preps could be heard muttering in the background...

LONER & AP

C'mon man you wouldn't shoot us. We're in the middle of a public place.

LONER

Yet the comment I remember the most was uttered from the biggest of the group, obviously a cocky, power hungry prick.

TEACHER

I thought I said...

LONER & JOCK

Go ahead man! Shoot me!!! I want you to shoot me!!! Ha, ha. You won't. Goddamn pussy...

TEACHER

And I've stopped commenting-

LONER

It was faint at first, but grew in intensity and power as I heard the man laugh.

(Kids start laughing; under their laugh...)

For almost half a minute this laugh, spawned from the most powerful place conceivable, filled the air, and thru the entire town, the entire world...

(As the laugh gets unbearably intense, LONER pulls out his an imaginary shotgun and fires on the students. All of the students fall to the ground. The Teacher's voice remains unaffected.)

TEACHER

New paragraph.

LONER

The town was utterly still. He stopped, and gave me a look I will never forget. If I could face an emotion of god, it would have looked like the man. I not only saw in his face, but also felt emanating from him power, complacency, closure, and godliness. The man smiled, and in that instant, I understood his actions.

TEACHER

Ok. *(Class unfreezes. LONER walks to his seat.)* Stay up there. Now, before I accept this draft, cut out all the inappropriate language. But, the profanity notwithstanding, let's open it up for discussion. Comments? *(To AP)* Yes.

AP

I thought it was unique.

TEACHER

What do you mean by that?

AP

He has a very distinct voice, and was careful about the details.

JOCK

Oh come on.

TEACHER

Yes? What do you think?

JOCK

I don't know...I didn't like it.

TEACHER

Why?

JOCK

Are you serious? What do you want me to say? It sucks.

(PREP laughs.)

TEACHER

All right. Some courtesy please.

JOCK

Look, call on someone else. I'll tell him what I think later on.

LONER

Tell me now. I'm right here.

TEACHER

That's enough!

JOCK

I mean, what if I wrote a little story about cleaning up the school, taking out people like him?

TEACHER

One more outburst like that, and you are out of here!

JOCK

(JOCK stands, the class freezes, and lights shift.) What? You're going to kick me out? Are you serious? This piece of shit writes about walking around the town shooting people for no reason, and you want me to what...to give constructive criticism? How about "throw this maniac out, and get him some fucking help?" Was I supposed to feel sorry for him or something? Look at him. What has he done to earn anyone's respect? What time did he wake up this morning? 7? 7:30? Try 5:00 AM. I ran 4 miles before he even got out of bed this morning. And while he's home after school circle jerking to Lara Croft with his faggot-ass friends, I'll still be here, serving the school you teach in. Whether I feel like it or not, I'll

show up and work. What does he do? Nothing. So, that's what he is: nobody. And, you know what, Teach? I'm valuable, and you should show me the respect I deserve. *(The bell rings. Lights shift back. JOCK hesitates, waiting for LONER as the rest of the class gets up to go.)*

TEACHER

We're going to talk about this at the beginning of class tomorrow. Do you understand?

JOCK

Yeah. I understand.

TEACHER

(to LONER) Stay here for a second.

(LONER crosses downstage, and JOCK glares at him as he slowly exits the stage.)

TEACHER

Can you come by my office after school? I'd like to talk to you about your story before I give you a grade.

LONER

Why?

TEACHER

You are an excellent writer, but I have some problems with this one.

(Students at lockers, in the hall. LONER leaves with new confidence as he passes FREAK.)

LONER

Hey.

FREAK

Hey.

(JOCK shoulders LONER to the ground. PERFECT and PREP notice. All freeze. FREAK helps LONER up. Projected on the slate is the translation.)

FREAK

(in German) Do you speak German? *(Srichst du deustch?)*

(to JOCK as he walks by)

LONER

(in German) He's a fucking asshole. *(Er ist ein Arschloch.)* *(in English)* How's that?

(to PERFECT)

FREAK

(in English) Not as good as... *(in German)* she's a sloppy whore. *(Sie ist eine Schlampe.)*

LONER
(in English) Well how about...

(to PREP)

LONER & FREAK
(in German) I want to kill you! *(Ich will dich toten!)*

(They laugh at the coincidence. Bell rings. All unfreeze, spoken in English)

LONER
Later.

FREAK
Later.

(All exit, FREAK sits.)

GUIDANCE: PART II

VOICE *(Jock)*
So what are your interests? *(Beat.)* You must have something. Looks here like you played soccer, is that right?

FREAK
Yeah.

VOICE
What did you enjoy about soccer?

FREAK
I don't know.

VOICE
Come on, tell me more then, "I don't know..." *(Beat.)* I know you're a bright kid. Your grades are excellent. What about the future? Any post-graduate plans?
(Beat.) Come on...

FREAK
Marines or computer science maybe.

VOICE
Marines, huh? That's great. You know, even the Marines would like to see an extra-curricular activity on your transcript.

FREAK
Well then you should write one in there and help me out.

(They laugh. FREAK is annoyed.)

VOICE

Your transcript shows you've been to a bunch of different schools in the past few years.

(Beat.)

FREAK

Uh-huh.

VOICE

Why is that?

FREAK

Because I've been to a bunch of different schools in the past few years.

VOICE

You've moved around a lot?

FREAK

Yup.

VOICE

That couldn't have been easy.

FREAK

Is that a question or a statement?

VOICE

What?

FREAK

My dad's in the military, so we went where the work was.

VOICE

That explains the interest in the marines, huh? Yeah, well, good. Good. But like I said, even the Marines would like to see an extra-curricular activity. Shows commitment, discipline. Picking up a sport could take care of all that.

(Sound and Lights shift. FREAK begins to speak his thoughts. The counselor takes no notice.)

FREAK

Would it take care of the fact that I get pissed off so easily? That I freak out at almost anything?

VOICE

Two years on a sport can fix up your Marine application.

FREAK

How do you fix up the fact that I'm pigeon-chested, or that my dosage has been increased?

VOICE

I don't know why someone as bright as you isn't involved in more activities?

FREAK

I don't know why you keep checking your watch.

VOICE

Do any of your friends play soccer?

FREAK

FRIEND, but thanks for asking, you little fucked up man, with your bachelor's degree in business on your wall next to the three-day certificate in counseling. You are not equipped to handle what's going on inside of me. You want me to open up to you in one conversation? I don't think I'll be telling you anything today, sir, because I've just been humiliated. But I'll let you in on a little secret...*(leans in)* I'm looking at a man, who is disgusted by me, sir, by the way I act, by my choice of silence. He's looking right at me and actually thinks that I can't see right through him. But see, sir, I actually can see the sports page opened under my file. But see, he thinks I can't see that. I wonder why he would think that? *(Beat)* No. No. I've decided that in our little ten-minute session I don't think we're going to be friends...because I'm smarter than you are, and I have something you don't have. Self-awareness. You want to help me figure out the next eighty years of my life, why don't we start with today, or what's going to happen when the bell rings ten minutes from now? Tell me why I have a short temper and get angry at almost anything I don't like, like people I have no respect for trying to tell me what to do. Or why I have too many inside jokes or thoughts to have very many friends? You tell me why. And then we can talk. Ok?

(FREAK reaches back and swings wildly at the invisible wall, and punches it. Lights and sound change.)

VOICE.

Well, I'll see you in a few months.

FREAK

Okay. Sorry I was so silent. Lots to think about.

VOICE

No problem. And hey, I hope you'll think about what I suggested. It really would be great for you.

FREAK

And what was that, again?

VOICE

Catch...

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

(A basketball is thrown at FREAK from above. Whistle blows. A scoreboard is projected on the screen, onto which the two teams, Shirts and Skins, are indicated. PREP, AP, and JOCK enter. AP and JOCK are shirtless and move to one side. PREP and FREAK are on the other. JOCK takes the ball from FREAK.)

JOCK

Okay, 8 all. Let's go.

PREP

No, we're out of time.

JOCK

Come on. *(To AP)* Let's go.

(Prep shoves the ball into AP's stomach. AP turns to Jock, anxious and confused.)

AP

Start from anywhere, or...?

FREAK

Throw it from out of bounds!

(FREAK and PREP laugh. JOCK sees AP is nervous)

JOCK

Time-out.

(He pulls AP aside, puts his arm around him.)

FREAK

Time out? We have like two seconds. *(Jock glares at him; FREAK gets pissed.)*

JOCK

(aside, to AP) All right dude, here's what we're gonna do, I'm gonna throw it in bounds to you, they're both gonna try and attack you...

AP

I've picked up on that pattern, yeah...*(JOCK laughs)*

JOCK

(drawing on his hand) All you have to do is pivot and bounce pass, okay? That's it. Pivot and pass.

AP

(JOCK takes the ball, goes out of bounds to throw the ball into the court) Is pivot, is it what it sounds like, I mean, you want me to--?

(FREAK and PREP laugh)

JOCK

Dude, yes. Just...*(he pivots, his back to FREAK and PREP, mimes passing)*...

PREP

C'mon...

(They set up for the play. Whistle blows, JOCK tosses the ball to AP and performs a quick move to get away from PREP. He motions to AP.)

JOCK

Now! Now!

(FREAK has already glued himself to AP; after a brief "jump ball", he shoves AP who falls to the ground.)

PREP

Jump ball.

JOCK

Fuck you, jump ball. Foul. He shoved him!

PREP

Whatever.

AP

I'm sorry...

JOCK

(To AP) Forget it. You get two free throws. A point a piece. We just need one to win.

(AP crosses to the opposite foul line. PREP and FREAK laugh.)

JOCK

Over here.

(AP crosses to the shirts' side of the stage, and take his place. FREAK, PREP, and JOCK flank him.)

JOCK

Focus on the shot, breathe, and toss it in. You gotta see it in your head.

(AP focuses on the shot, takes a big breath, and flings it off stage. Buzzer sounds.)

AP

Shit.

JOCK
You've got another shot.

AP
Oh, good.

JOCK
Focus. See the shot.

AP
Focus, breathe, see the shot, and shoot. *(AP focuses on the shot, takes a big breath, and preps the ball; he hesitates)* I can do this. Focus, breathe, see the shot, and shoot. *(AP focuses on the shot, takes a big breath, and preps the ball; he hesitates)* I see it. But I see much more than the shot: *(looks at JOCK)* I see this guy who I shared Oreos and Power Rangers and the occasional Sonic the Hedgehog level with...look at me like a stranger because I can't get a stupid ball into a stupid hoop. So, what do I do? What can I do? Nothing, so just toss the ball and hope that they'll grow up and realize that all this will mean nothing. Great, I sound like my dad. "It's just a phase and when school is over everything will change" Makes sense, but how the fuck is that helpful to me NOW... with these people- yes, stupid people- who won't go away. *(He lifts the ball to shoot, trembling)* Focus. Definite 4.2. Breathe. Information technology with a minor in artificial intelligence. See the shot. I see all that so far away from me. Shoot...

(He tosses it off stage.)

(Buzzer sounds. He got it in)

JOCK
Awesome shot, man.

PREP
9-8. Come on.

FREAK
Let's go.

(AP moves to the sidelines, while the others take their positions. Bell rings.)

JOCK
Oh well. Game.

FREAK
Fuck.

JOCK
Good game.

FREAK

FUCK!!!

JOCK

Chill out man. Good game.

(JOCK offers his hand. FREAK exits)

JOCK

What a freak, man. *(To Prep)* Let's go.

PREP

Holy shit, he pissed himself!

JOCK

What?

PREP

Oh God...

JOCK

Pathetic.

(Bell rings. The kids ignore AP, laughing/mumbling comments as they leave. An incredibly awkward moment as the lights shift to FREAK on a bench, changing out of his gym clothes. FREAK hesitates, waiting for the right moment to take off his shirt unseen. PREP and JOCK notice.)

PREP

Why does it take you so long to get undressed?

JOCK

He doesn't want us to see his tits.

PREP

Is that it? Is that why you never shower after class?

JOCK

No, he just doesn't shower.

FREAK

What's your problem, asshole?

JOCK

What'd you say?

FREAK

Nothing.

PREP

No, I think he called you an asshole.

FREAK
(with attitude) Okay...

(JOCK turns FREAK around. PREP and JOCK stare at his chest.)

FREAK
Get off me.

PREP
Oh, shit! Look at his chest.

JOCK
Man...that's fucked up.

PREP
Are you missing something in there?

FREAK
(rising to get his shirt) I don't think so, dude.

JOCK
(keeping the shirt from FREAK) What do you call this sick shit?

FREAK
A chest deformity. What's *your* problem?

JOCK
Oh, you're so cool. You're my idol.

FREAK
What did I do to you, asshole?

JOCK
(JOCK drops the shirt, grabs FREAK'S nipple and squeezes it slowly.) Watch your mouth, you little bitch.

FREAK
(helplessly) Get off.

PREP
(tossing FREAK's shirt) Let him get dressed. He's making me sick.

(A pill bottle falls out of FREAK's shirt pocket.)

PREP
(picking up bottle) Pharmaceuticals...

JOCK
What is it? Viagra?

PREP
L-U-V-O-X

JOCK
Let me see it.

(AP enters.)

AP
Guys, the coach is rounding up...*(sees the harassment)*...I—

PREP
Uh-oh, Freak, your girlfriend's here.

AP
The coach sent me in here to...

JOCK
Hey, what do you make of this shit? Huh?

AP
I don't know...um...

JOCK
(pronounced Love-voX) Luvox?

AP
Luvox *(pronounced Lou-voX)*...I think it's an anti-depressant.

JOCK
He's a mental case...

PREP
So, you're a faggot *and* you're depressed?

JOCK
Tell me seriously; do you like looking at my ass?

(JOCK wipes his ass with the pills, and drops bottle. The voice of COACH is heard from off-stage.)

COACH *(Loner)*
Hey, what the hell's going on?

JOCK

(looking up above them, quickly dressing) Hey, Coach.

COACH
What is this?

(Beat. PREP and JOCK look at each other.)

AP
We were just fooling around.

COACH
Well, get dressed and give me a hand outside. Boys...

JOCK
(to AP) Great shot man.

AP
Thanks.

(Bell rings.)

(A classroom scene now surrounds FREAK. The students face the direction of the TEACHER, whose voice resounds from the back of the theater.)

HISTORY LESSON

TEACHER *(Faith)*
Who wants to tell me about Natural Selection? *(All groan)* Survival of the fittest? Who did their reading last night?

(FREAK continues to pick up the pills. AP raises his hand.)

TEACHER
Yes?

AP
The theory of natural selection, or survival of the fittest, has replaced creation stories like Adam and Eve in the Garden with a different, though equally questionable creation story we refer to as evolution.

TEACHER
Very good. Who would care to elaborate? Anyone? *(AP raises hand.)* Anyone else?

FREAK
(an outburst) Survival of the fittest doesn't always mean survival of the biggest. *(All "hub" reaction)* Sometimes...*anything* can make you the fittest in the right situation. *(All "oh" reaction)*

(Lights and sound indicate we are in FREAK's fantasy.)

TEACHER

Your theory could best be expressed through the Biblical story of Cain and Abel.

FREAK

My thought exactly.

TEACHER

Which is exactly why I had it.

AP

Which was the author's point.

FREAK

Shut the fuck up.

(Beat. Did he say that?)

AP

Excuse me?

(FREAK points to TEACHER, "cuing" her.)

TEACHER

Sit down and shut the fuck up.

ALL

Yeah.

(AP sits down and shuts up.)

TEACHER

Shall I continue?

FREAK

Please do.

TEACHER

Abel, class, was the pretty boy *(all react)* you know—the popular prep who sucked anyone's dick to get them to like him...*(all react)* while Cain was a bit more...

FREAK

...misunderstood...

TEACHER

Exactly— and actually possessed some fucking brains *(all laugh)*...but in the end...Cain killed Abel. *(All "ooh")* None of Abel's 'fit' qualities helped him. In the end it was Cain who lived on...

FREAK

Presenting the man who Nature selected: Cain. The first murderer...

CAIN *(Rebel)*

You're impressed.

FREAK

What did you use? A knife, a club, what?

CAIN

You want details?

FREAK

That's why you're here.

CAIN

(calling offstage) Abel... *(back to FREAK)*

(Enter Abel, played by AP.)

ABEL

Yes?

FREAK

We're about to hear how you got your fuckin' head smashed in.

CAIN

I fuckin' smashed his head in. Shown here:

(Projected: A picture of Cain holding Abel's head up. All react. Projected: Abel's spine still attached to his now-severed head. The group reacts, gossed out.)

ABEL

That's not in the Bible.

CAIN

Survival of the Fittest.

FREAK

You got the ball rolling...

CAIN

I got the fame. The most famous killing of all time.

(Leopold and Loeb appear. PERFECT plays Leopold. JOCK is Loeb. Two distinguished gentlemen.)

LOEB

Pre-Noah's Ark, perhaps. But let's talk about the trial of the century...

CAIN

Who are these assholes?

(Projected are slides of the famous trial photos.)

TEACHER

On May 21, 1924, in Chicago, Nathan F. Leopold Jr., 19, and his friend Richard A. Loeb, 18, kidnapped fourteen year-old Bobby Franks from his schoolyard and bludgeoned him to death. *(All "oohs")* Their motive:

LEOPOLD & LOEB

Just for the hell of it.

TEACHER

Both of the young men were smart...

LEOPOLD

A genius. An IQ of 210.

LOEB

A graduate of the University of Michigan at 17.

FREAK

Of course...how else could they fuck with America...?

TEACHER

Of good family background...

FREAK

Like me.

CAIN

Hey, why am I suddenly getting the backseat, here?

LOEB

Because we are examples of Nietzsche's ubermenschen...*(introducing himself to FREAK)*...Loeb.

FREAK

Urbemen?

LEOPOLD

...better and smarter than normal humans...*(introducing himself)*...Leopold.

LOEB

(to Cain) Because history is full of lone wolf psychos...we were a team.

LEOPOLD

We were able to do together what we never would have done apart.

LOEB

Murder.

FREAK

Yeah?

LEOPOLD

The perfect murder.

CAIN

Except you were caught.

LOEB

As were you.

CAIN

I was caught by God. You idiots were nabbed by the police. This one dropped his glasses at the crime scene!

FREAK

What?

LEOPOLD

Details...

FREAK

(to Cain) So I should work alone?

CAIN

No, you should choose your partner-in-crime wisely.

AP

(trying to get in on the action) Yeah.

ALL

(except AP) Shut up!

FREAK

Why did you do it? Go all the way. End someone's life.

LOEB

The perfect crime demands murder. It is a necessary element.

FREAK

How did you actually...I mean, actually follow through and...

LEOPOLD

And kill someone and stuff their body in a concrete drainage culvert?

LOEB

You have to believe you are superior...that you are above the law and its consequences.

FREAK

Yeah, that's right.

TEACHER

Most interesting of all is the bizarre relationship of the two killers, who were widely regarded to have been...

LOEB

(attempting to interrupt) Brilliant...

LEOPOLD

Handsome.

TEACHER

(correcting them) Lovers.

(Long beat. FREAK stares at the two killers.)

CAIN

Oh, you are so busted.

ABEL

(again, trying to fit in) Yeah. *(Before the rest can respond)* Shut up, I know.

FREAK

Fuckin faggots. Kein Mitleid!

ABEL

What does that mean?

(Hitler Youth, played by PREP, appears.)

HITLER YOUTH

No mercy.

FREAK

Kill everything. Kill 'em all.

CAIN

Who the hell are you?

(The Hitler Youth salutes the “Heil Hitler.” Projected are photos of the prototypical Hitler Youth.)

TEACHER

The Hitler Youth movement was a major force in rallying support around Hitler’s vision of his own Aryan nation, his own attempt at Natural Selection....

FREAK

Heil Hit-

(Hitler Youth stops him.)

HITLER YOUTH

The young man who only studies philosophy and in a time like this buries himself behind his books or sits at home by the fire, he is no German youth!

(The Hitler quotes are projected on the screen as the YOUTH speaks them, ending with: “-Adolph Hitler, 1933.”)

FREAK

What do I have to do? What do I have to learn?

HITLER YOUTH

Knowledge would spoil my young people. I prefer that they learn only what they pick up by following their own play instinct. But they must learn self-control.

FREAK

I’m in control...What else do I need?

HITLER YOUTH

IF A PEOPLE IS TO BECOME FREE IT NEEDS PRIDE AND WILL-POWER, DEFIANCE, (+ *Leob*) HATE, (+ *Loepold*) HATE, AND ONCE AGAIN (+ *Cain*) HATE...

FREAK

You know what I...

ALL

Hate...

FREAK

I...

ALL

Hate...

FREAK

I...

HITLER YOUTH

And once again...

FREAK

...*hate* when there is a group of assholes standing in the middle of a hallway or walkway, and they just stand there talking and blocking my fucking way!

HITLER YOUTH

Get the fuck outta the way or I'll bring a friggin sawed-off shotgun to your house and blow your snotty ass head off!

CAIN

You know what I hate?

FREAK

When people mispronounce words! And they don't even know it too. Like often, or acrosT, or eXspreso, or pacific.

CAIN

I wanna get pacific witch-you.

FREAK

You know what I hate?

LEOPOLD

People who don't believe in personal hygiene.

ABEL

For the love of god, CLEAN UP!

FREAK

I hate everything unless I say otherwise, hey don't follow your dreams or your goals or any of that shit, follow your fuckin animal instincts. If it moves kill it, if it doesn't, burn it. Kein mitleid!!!

(Music now sounds from back of the theater surrounding audience.)

ALL

KEIN MITLEID!

(Everyone stomps wildly to the music in the unison. The lyrics scroll on the screen:)

*Du auf dem Schulhof
ich zum Töten bereit
und keiner hier weiss
von meiner Einsamkeit*

(The group, consumed by violence, freezes. Lights switch immediately to the glow of a computer screen on FREAK's face, as he sits in front of a computer.)

FREAK
What does this mean?

(The lyrics appear on the screen as the group speaks them in unison:)

ALL
CHILDREN IN HALLWAYS
HAVE BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS
FOR NO ONE WOULD LEAVE ME ALONE

(On the screen we see a search engine projected. FREAK types the words "Bomb Building" into the entry box. The mouse moves towards the search engine. Projected is a black page with red lettering: "The Anarchist's Cookbook.")

FREAK
Holy fuck!

WORK

(Multiple phones ring. FREAK starts answering the phones.)

FREAK
Blackjack Pizza, please hold? *(puts one on hold)* Blackjack Pizza, please hold? *(puts one on hold)*
Blackjack Pizza, please hold? *(puts one on hold)*

MANAGER
Hey, I need a cheese and a pepperoni.

FREAK
Okay.

(FREAK enters the pizza place and the rest of the company are playing antsy customers.)

JOCK
Gimme a sausage, double cheese and—

FREAK
(to JOCK) Hang on...*(on the phone)* Hello, Blackjack Pizza. Please hold? *(More people wander in...)*

PERFECT
(to JOCK) I was here first, sorry. Can I have half pepperoni and half mushroom?

FREAK
Yeah, hang on.

REBEL

Where's your bathroom?

FREAK

You can't use it. *(The phone rings.)* Hello?

MANAGER VOICE *(AP)*

Hey, when you get a chance, I need a cheese and a pepperoni...

FREAK

Okay. *(on the phone)* Hello, Blackjack Pizza. Please hold?

PREP

(PREP enters) I'm here for a pick-up. Three cheese pizzas--Helloooo?

(Everyone clamors for attention, and the following OVERLAPS. MANAGER's voice becomes prominent as FREAK stares straight ahead, ignoring all of the commotion. The MANAGER's speech becomes a "countdown" for FREAK's cue to be "on TV")

MANAGER VOICE

And...THREE extra cheese...TWO sausage...ONE pepperoni...You're on the air!

(All of the actors are silent and immediately plop down in front of FREAK, who is behind the counter of his "cooking show." Polite applause and cheesy intro music. On the screen is projected the live video feed.)

FREAK

Hello and welcome. So...let's get started. You do not want to have the length any longer than eight inches. Diameter should usually be between ¾" and 2". Pipes are about as easy to purchase as a CD. The way I bought most of mine is by going out and getting all of the caps one day, then getting the pipes a few days later, or at a different store.

PERFECT

What if I want to save time and get the caps and pipes all at once?

FREAK

You can, but I wouldn't recommend it. You don't want to look too suspicious.

PERFECT

Thanks.

FREAK

You really don't have to spend a day making the perfect powder. If you're eighteen you can buy this shit at almost any store. Start pouring your--

PREP

Can I do this at home?

FREAK

Yes, but when in your bedroom be sure you have plenty of newspaper down because accidents do happen and if you have a big stain on your carpet, mom and dad might ask some questions. (*general ad libs, "I hate when that happens..."*, "*that's my mom..."* etc.)
The ingredients used are very important if you want to kill and injure a lot of people. From broken paper clips to 2" nails to solder...

JOCK

Yes, what about buckshot? Will that work?

FREAK

Good question. Almost anything small and metal will work. Go ahead and start pouring your powder/shrapnel shit in. After it's about half full, tap it on a hard surface until it will not settle any more.

PREP

Do I have to tap?

FREAK

Absolutely. You want as much powder as physically possible in there. Once it is full, screw on the cap and you're basically ready to go.

(With the MANAGER's voice, the light changes. The actors return to the hustle of the pizza place as they exit.)

MANAGER VOICE

What the hell is that?

FREAK

Nothing.

MANAGER VOICE

Jesus Christ...

FREAK

It's not real.

MANAGER VOICE

Fireworks are one thing, but a goddamn pipe bomb?

FREAK

No problem. It's totally cool. Sorry.

(FAITH enters and stands back as if reading the menu above the counter. The phone rings.)

MANAGER VOICE

We'll deal with this later. Put it away and take her order.

(FREAK waits until he goes. He starts to pace and freak out.)

FREAK

(under his breath) FUCK. FUCK ME. FUCK.

(He turns around as FAITH comes up to the counter.)

FAITH

I'd like a veggie supreme. I think...

FREAK

(tense) One second, please.

FAITH

I'd like a *(looking down from menu)*...oh, hey. Hey. I didn't know you worked here. I'm--you know, from 5th period...

FREAK

Jesus Christ, fuck off.

(FREAK freezes.)

FAITH

Okay...okay...*(at a loss, starts to tear up. Directs the following to God)* I just don't understand. Jesus, tell me, is this normal? Is this healthy? Because this feeling of being saved...this knowing that at least I will be saved...it's making me sick. If this is what You went through, I understand suffering. But why torture me? Because they tortured You? Then take me now. Take me right now. It seems death on a cross, a few hours of suffocation is nothing next to four years of looks, and smirks, and "fuck off's" I don't know, Lord. You tell me. Maybe that's why Your teenage years are such a mystery. You didn't want anyone to know. *(Beat.)* Will You respond? I wonder...will I ever see Your face? What will it feel like looking in Your eyes...or any man's eyes? The reassurance of "It's all right" from a voice you can actually hear. Nothing imagined or blindly trusted. His kiss...what would he taste like...?

(FREAK unfreezes.)

FREAK

Hey...

FAITH

Oh God... gosh...

FREAK

Hey, I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

FAITH

No, it's...I'm not feeling well.

FREAK
Do you want some Coke?

FAITH
Uh...no...

(Beat.)

FREAK
Sorry. It was my manager--

FAITH
That's ok. I thought I said something.

FREAK
No. I was being a dickhead. You didn't do anything.

FAITH
...Other than ordering a pizza. I did do that. *(a forced laugh)*

FREAK
Yeah. *(laughs)* Veggie supreme. *(They laugh.)*

(Beat.)

FAITH
Yeah.

FREAK
Yeah...can I get you a Coke? My mom says Coke settles the stomach.

FAITH
So does mine...like who even knows if that like actually works...

FREAK
It also takes the paint off certain cars.

FAITH
What?

FREAK
Um...listen*(awkwardly)*...are you going to the prom?

FAITH
(Beat) No.

FREAK
Do you want to go?

FAITH

Why are you asking me? We don't know each other. You don't know me...

FREAK

Do you think that's weird?

FAITH

Yes....but...

FREAK

Well?

FAITH

I mean, yes. I'll go.

FREAK

That's great. That's fuckin' great. *(He moves toward her.)*

FAITH

Oh, I just have to ask. I've got to run it by my mom, ok? Sorry, is that—

FREAK

Yeah, that's fine.

FAITH

Can I e-mail you?

FREAK

Sure, no problem. E-mail me. Just let me know.

FAITH

Okay. I'll e-mail you. *(He kisses her.)* Bye.

(As FAITH leaves the store, she looks up to God and freezes.)

FREAK

All I want is to be surrounded by the flesh of a woman...someone who wanted to fuck like hell. Who can I trick into my room first? I can tell them what they want to hear, be all nice and sweet, and then tear their throat out with my teeth like a pop can, like a fucking wolf, show them who is God, oh, the lovely sounds of bones cracking and flesh ripping, Ahhh...

(FAITH unfreezes and exits.)

MANAGER VOICE

Ok, we need to talk.

FREAK

It's gone. I threw it out-

MANAGER VOICE
Do your parents know about this?

FREAK
No.

MANAGER VOICE
I think they should.

FREAK
Look, man it's cool-

MANAGER VOICE
You think this is a joke? Get your keys. *(FREAK is silent, tension is building)* We're going to your house and you can explain this to your parents...

FREAK
What?

MANAGER VOICE
Explain to them that I caught you at work...

FREAK
Jesus, no!

MANAGER VOICE
...shoving a pipe bomb up your ass. Now what would they say about that?

(FREAK stops, realizes the manager has been teasing him.)

FREAK
Oh...fuck you. Fuck you.

MANAGER
You chicken shit...*(laughs)* you shoulda seen your face...white as a fuckin' ghost.

FREAK
Oh, you are an asshole, man. Don't do that.

MANAGER
Listen keep that shit out of the kitchen.

FREAK
Okay, thanks.

MANAGER

But something like this shouldn't go unpunished, so you get to close up.

FREAK
Oh thanks.

MANAGER
And do receipts. Pipe bombs. That's crazy.

(MANAGER exits. "You got mail" is heard. FREAK takes his apron off and goes to his computer.)

FREAK
Sweet!

(Projected is the email. It slowly scrolls out.)

Hey Pizza Man...I'm really sorry about this. I can't go. My mom said no. She thinks we don't know each other, and she's probably right. Plus, I probably should be going with this guy from youth group. I kinda told him yes already...It would've been fun. But let's hang out, ok. Call me...

FREAK
Okay, I'll call you...you stuck up little bitch, you fucking little Christianity godly whore.

(Sound of an IM is heard. Lights up on LONER, sitting at a computer with a large metal mixing bowl of cereal. The following dialogue is projected.)

IM (Instant Messenger)

LONER (voDKa)
sup nugget

FREAK (REB)
sup

LONER (voDKa)
what are you wearing

FREAK (REB)
your mom

LONER (voDKa)
dirty bunny

FREAK (REB)
stuck at work

LONER (voDKa)
home bored

FREAK (REB)
got caught w/pipe bomb

FREAK (REB)
must close shop.

FREAK (REB)
pissed

FREAK (REB)
!

LONER (voDKa)
(spoken) Shit. *(typed)* ☹ *(spoken)* Awwww...

FREAK (REB)
im serious. im fucking pissed.

LONER (voDKa)
wanna see me draw an egg?

FREAK (REB)
fuck off, stop it. i'm fucking stuck here.

LONER (voDKa)
()

an egg.

FREAK (REB)
(typed) fuckfuckfuck I wantout!!!!

LONER (voDKa)
same. parents got a call...CW story was disturbing...

FREAK (REB)
story?

LONER (voDKa)
figure in black

LONER (voDKa)
shooting preps

LONER (voDKa)
carving flesh of jocks...

LONER (voDKa)
nothing much

FREAK (REB)
LOL u r a troubled little boy writing scary papers

LONER (voDKa)
i made one of the pricks a little nervous

FREAK (REB)
who?

LONER (voDKa)
jockmutherfucker

FREAK (REB)
prick fucked w/ me in gym

LONER (voDKa)
prick dissed me in caf

(Take a beat and the following two IM's appear simultaneously)

LONER (voDKa)
what he do?

FREAK (REB)
what did he do?

(beat)

LONER (voDKa)
talked shit.

FREAK (REB)
yeah same.

FREAK (REB)
what he say???

LONER (voDKa)
some shit

LONER (voDKa)
what HE say

(long beat)

(They look behind them. Projected is a title card: REBEL MISSION, on fire.)

LONER & FREAK

Check!

FREAK

Then let's rock and roll.

MISCHIEF

(While JOCK narrates, PERFECT and FAITH dress FREAK. All of the Actors narrate the scene as if they were sportcasters.)

ACTOR (*Jock*)

Name: Reb, short for Rebel. Why?

FREAK

It's the name of our high school mascot. He's a little Colonial Soldier with a gun. Ready for a mission...

(While REBEL narrates, AP and PREP dress LONER)

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

Name: Vodka. Why?

LONER

Drink of choice. Straight up...within an hour you're fucked. The shit you get into...

FREAK

Well, not by yourself. Adventure is never taken alone.

LONER

Never alone...

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

Every rebel needs a mission...and a partner.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Someone who is creative, who inspires your mischievous mind...

ACTOR (*AP*)

Who will execute your plans with the utmost conviction...

ACTOR (*Prep*)

Focused, determined, organized...

ALL

Wild, inventive, knows no bounds...

FREAK & LONER
The Adventures of...

FREAK
Reb & Vodka

LONER
Vodka & Reb

ACTOR (*AP*)
Mission #1

ACTOR (*Prep*)
Scene one...

ACTOR (*All*)
Operation:

FREAK & LONER
Vengeance.

(The actors, reporters in a sport's telecast, stand to the sides and watch as "Mission Impossible" theme is heard, as FREAK and LONER cross the stage. FREAK perches himself on a table)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Just look at Reb penetrate the outer perimeter and station himself on the shed of Target #1.

FREAK
A punk mother-fucker who thought he was a bad-ass today...

ACTOR (*Faith*)
One move and the Reb-man might ruin everything. But the patience. (*watching FREAK*)
You just don't see this kind of disturbed intensity in today's youth.

LONER
Holy shit!

FREAK
What?

LONER
The Asshole's on his patio.

FREAK
Correction: the Target's in sight.

LONER

Out comes...

FREAK
Amanda.

LONER
Look at her sleek, black. Oh, she is a goddess.

FREAK
(to LONER) Ah, she is a paint gun.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
Hold everything...Looks like an unattended white van has entered into the picture.

FREAK
That's what I'm seeing.

LONER
Unattended.

ACTOR (*Jock*)
Rebel isn't the kind of player to let it just sit there undisturbed.

ACTOR (*AP*)
Vodka will definitely want in on the action...

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
But not without a plan. Rebel's too smart to go in without a plan.

FREAK
I'll be on lookout.

LONER
I'll smash the window.

(They cross center-stage approaching the object.)

ACTOR (*Faith*)
Vodka seems to be hesitating. This kind of uncertainty may prove costly.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
The weapon:

LONER
A rock.

LONER
Is anyone coming...?

FREAK
Clear.

ALL
Smash!

LONER
Woa! Oh God!

ACTOR (*Jock*)
Reb is shaking!

FREAK
Like hell I am!

(LONER quickly runs to gather up what he can find in the car.)

ACTOR (*Faith*)
The stolen goods:

LONER
Electrical stuff. And...*(looks to FREAK, holds up some wires)*...other things.

ACTOR (*Prep*)
The alibi:

(FREAK and LONER look to each other)

FREAK & LONER
Uhhh...

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
The getaway vehicle:

FREAK
My Honda. Ready.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
These boys can fly.

FREAK
Like lightning.

(The two arriving at another part of the stage, breathing heavily.)

ACTOR (*Prep*)
Safe, parked few miles from the scene.

ACTOR (*Faith*)
What a night.

ACTOR (*Jock*)
What a high.

ACTORS (*All*)
What a team.

LONER
Reb and Vodka.

FREAK
Vodka and Reb.

LONER
No longer captives to their progressive pretentious Little Town.

FREAK
No longer bound by the rules.

LONER
Above the law.

FREAK & LONER
I am the law!

FREAK
Superhero.

LONER
Superhuman.

LONER & FREAK
Natural selection, baby.

(Police lights flash, sirens sound, a spot light shines on them. They turn towards the light. As the siren dies, they turn toward the audience. Lights move to a spot on the boys. The voice of a Judge is heard.)

JUDGE (*Prep*)
To the charge of first-degree criminal trespass, theft, and criminal mischief. What is your plea?

FREAK
Guilty.

LONER

Guilty.

JUDGE (*Prep*)

First time out of the box and you get caught. I don't believe it. It's a rare occurrence when someone gets caught their first time. It is the verdict of this court that the defendants serve one year in the juvenile diversion program. I hope your parents' eyes are finally open.

(Sound of a gavel smashing down.)

DINNER

(The actors cross to tables upstage. Lights on FREAK's dinner table. REBEL is his mother, JOCK is his father. FREAK's father is unemotional and particular. His mother is cautious and compliant.)

MOTHER

Well...

FATHER

What a day!

MOTHER

I don't know.

FATHER

What?

MOTHER

Why would he-

FATHER

Don't worry.

MOTHER

Okay.

(FREAK enters.)

FATHER

Hey.

MOTHER

Hi.

FREAK

Hey.

MOTHER

Want some?

FREAK
Thanks.

MOTHER
How are-

FREAK
Fine.

(MOTHER exits.)

FATHER
School?

FREAK
Fine. Work?

FATHER
Fine. Work?

FREAK
Same.

(MOTHER re-enters with plate.)

MOTHER
Here.

FREAK
Thanks.

(Beat.)

FATHER
Well?

(Long pause.)

MOTHER
Say something?

FREAK
I'm sorry.

FATHER
I'm sorry?

FREAK
Yeah.

FATHER
That's all-

FREAK
I'm going...

MOTHER
Where?

FREAK
Out.

FATHER
Not tonight.

FREAK
Why?

FATHER
No.

FREAK
Come on.

FATHER
Enough.

FREAK
How long?

FATHER
Two months.

FREAK
For what?

FATHER
For what?

FREAK
For nothing.

FATHER
NOTHING!

FREAK
I'm going...

FATHER
Where?

FREAK
My room.

MOTHER
Finish your-

FREAK
Why?

FATHER
Let him go.

FREAK
Thanks.

(FREAK exits. Lights up on LONER's family, SR of FREAK's: FAITH is his mother, AP is his father. LONER's father is introverted, hesitant and slightly distant. His mother is organized, efficient and driving her husband. LONER enters.)

FATHER
Hey.

MOTHER
Hi.

LONER
Hey.

MOTHER
Want some?

LONER
Thanks.

MOTHER
How are-

LONER
Fine.

(MOTHER exits.)

FATHER
School?

LONER
Fine. Work?

FATHER
Fine. Work?

LONER
Same.

(MOTHER re-enters with plate.)

MOTHER
Here.

LONER
Thanks.

(Beat.)

FATHER
Well?

(Long pause.)

MOTHER
Say something!

LONER
I'm sorry.

FATHER
I'm sorry?

LONER
Yeah.

FATHER
That's all-

LONER
I'm going...

MOTHER
Where?

LONER
Out.

FATHER
Not tonight.

LONER
Why?

FATHER
No.

LONER
Come on.

FATHER
Enough.

LONER
How long?

FATHER
Two months.

LONER
For what?

FATHER
For what?

LONER
For nothing.

FATHER
NOTHING!

LONER
I'm going...

FATHER
Where?

LONER
My room.

MOTHER
Finish your-

LONER
Why?

FATHER
Let him go.

LONER
Thanks.

(LONER exits. Lights come up on FREAK's family, as LONER's continues to eat.)

LONER'S MOTHER
I don't understand.

FREAK'S FATHER
I don't understand.

FREAK'S MOTHER
This anger...

LONER'S MOTHER
What's going on with him?

LONER'S FATHER
It's that school.

FREAK'S FATHER
It's that computer.

FREAK'S MOTHER
Why would he push us away?

LONER'S MOTHER
Why won't he let us in?

FREAK'S FATHER
(to the spouse) You try talking to him.

LONER'S MOTHER
You're his...

ALL
Mother/Father...

FREAK'S MOTHER
He hates me.

LONER'S FATHER

He loves you.

LONER'S MOTHER

I hated my father.

LONER'S FATHER

I talked to my mother.

FREAK'S FATHER

It's just a phase...

LONER'S MOTHER

He's a boy.

FREAK'S MOTHER

He's just a boy.

LONER'S FATHER

...who's into violence.

FREAK'S FATHER

I was into violence.

LONER'S MOTHER

Does he need help?

FREAK'S MOTHER

He has help.

LONER'S MOTHER

Some medication...

FREAK'S FATHER

He has medication...

LONER'S MOTHER

Someone to talk to?

LONER'S FATHER

He has someone to talk to...

ALL

Us. (*Beat*) Us?

FREAK'S MOTHER

What can we do?

LONER'S MOTHER

What can I do?

FATHERS
Try talking to him.

MOTHERS
I have.

LONER'S MOTHER
He doesn't want to talk.

LONER'S FATHER
I was like that too...

FREAK'S FATHER
Give him space.

LONER'S MOTHER
And time...

FREAK'S MOTHER
He's a good kid.

FREAK'S FATHER
He'll talk...

LONER'S FATHER
When he's ready...

LONER'S MOTHER
He'll have something to say...

(Beat.)

ALL
What will he have to say?

(Lights up on PERFECT, looking out to audience. She is talking to her mother.)

PERFECT
If I told you...what would you say? *(Beat.)* Maybe you know. Maybe you don't. Maybe you should...

MOTHERS
Something.

PERFECT

Remember Steve? You loved him. You loved how he smiled and sat across from you at this very table. Do you know that Steve laughs at you?— laughs that you drive a bus? I heard him laugh one night about the white trash school bus driver...and even I laughed. Do you know he spent the night? I was in bed and he knocked on my window...I knew you were upstairs. Yeah...I thought about waking you but, c'mon what would I have said? Could you imagine, me sitting on your comforter naked, his beer on my breath, asking you, "is this the right time to do it?" Yeah...what would you have told me?

MOTHERS
Something.

PERFECT

So mother, it just kind of happened. He was so into it and I don't think he heard me... I did said no, but he said it was all right, so I guess it was ok, but...it hurt and I asked him to...but he looked at me really like intensely—and he told me he loved me...and after a while he put his clothes on and left... and...*(Beat.)* I mean it can't be, mom, if he's my boyfriend, and we love each other, I mean it's not like he can... If he's my boyfriend... I mean it's not his fault if I let him in the window and...well, you could have heard him? Maybe you did, but you didn't want to bother me...wanted to give me my space. You are always good about that, mom...

MOTHERS
Something?

PERFECT

It was fine... next time it will be better. I know that. You've gotta experience these things to know. Yeah...

(Music: "Bittersweet Symphony" by The Verve begins to play.)

MOTHERS
Was there something you wanted to tell me?

PERFECT
No. It was nothing.

(Lights fade as the cast prepares for ALONE. The cast lines up upstage and in unison, slam the doors of their respective bedrooms and their places on stage. They are unaware of each other, alone.)

ALONE

(Lights to LONER who sits beside his bed. He writes in his journal.)

LONER
Cause it's a bittersweet symphony that's life...

(He pierces the journal with his pencil.)

(Lights switch to AP, sitting at a desk with a huge SAT practice book in front of his face. He sets the book down and stares at a clock timer. He picks up his pencil. Staring at the clock, hits the top to start it ticking, and then starts to write.)

AP

Try to make ends meet, you're a slave to the money then you die.

(REBEL is lit, pushing her sleeves up.)

REBEL

I'll take you down the only road I've ever been down...

(Lights out on AP. REBEL takes out an Exact-o knife.)

You know the one that takes you to the places where all the veins meet, yeah.

(Lights switch to JOCK, who tosses his shirt. He stares at his body. He goes into a sit up position. He starts a long series of sit-ups. Faster and faster.)

JOCK

No change, I can change, I can change, I can change,
but I'm here in my mold, I am here in my mold.
But I'm a million different people from one day to the next...
I can't change my mold, no,no,no,no,no,no,no

(Lights switch to PERFECT, looking in a mirror (the audience). She lifts her shirt enough to expose her stomach. Then pulls her stomach in and releases. She lifts a toilet seat.)

PERFECT

Well I've never prayed,
But tonight I'm on my knees, yeah.

(FAITH is lit, on her knees with a rosary blessing herself, as PERFECT drops to her knees.)

PERFECT/FAITH

I need to hear some sounds that recognize the pain in me, yeah.

(Lights out on PERFECT as she starts to vomit.)

FAITH

I let the melody shine, let it cleanse my mind, I feel free now.

(FAITH stands and picks up her prom dress, places it against her body.)

But the airwaves are clean and there's nobody singing to me now.

(As she lets the dress drop, lights switch to PREP, at a mirror. He is looking at himself, as he messes hair. He stops and stares, disgusted by what he sees.)

PREP

No change, I can change, I can change, I can change,
but I'm here in my mold, I am here in my mold.
And I'm a million different people from one day to the next
I can't change my mold, no,no,no,no,no,no,no.

(Lights switch to FREAK, sitting in front of his computer. He is wildly playing a video game.)

FREAK
Have you ever been down?

OTHER ACTORS
I can change, I can change, I can
change, I can change...

(As FREAK tosses the joystick, lights switch to REBEL who has just cut her arms several times in self-mutilation. She hangs off her bed.)

REBEL

Cause it's a bittersweet symphony this life.

(Lights switch to LONER, now dressed in black, he tears up his journal and takes out a pipe bomb.)

LONER

Trying to make ends meet, try to...

(Lights switch to FAITH, dancing with her prom dress as a partner.)

FAITH

...find somebody then you die.

(During the music without lyrics, lights switch to PERFECT looking at a pregnancy test. She waits.)

(Lights switch to AP who writes, checks the clock, writes, checks the clock, writes. This increases in speed.)

AP

You know I can change, I can change, I can change,

(Lights switch to JOCK, punching the air wildly.)

JOCK

but I'm here in my mold, I am here in my mold.

(Lights switch to FREAK, standing on a chair panning the room with a gun.)

FREAK

And I'm a million different people from one day to the next.

(Lights switch to PREP looking in the mirror, now wearing heavy black eyeliner.)

PREP

I can't change my mold, no,no,no,no,no,no,no!

(ALL are lit. FREAK and LONER jumps off their chairs, AP flings the book off his desk and throws the timer, PREP wipes his make-up off, JOCK collapses, PERFECT throws the pregnancy test, FAITH tosses the dress, REBEL throws the knife. All of them crawl into fetal positions facing DS. They all experience a moment of pain and loneliness.)

(FREAK and LONER slowly stand across the stage facing each other.)

LONER AND FREAK

We've got sex and violence, melody and silence

We've got sex and violence, melody and silence

(FREAK and LONER turn upstage and out of light)

OTHER SIX

I'll take you down the only road I've ever been down

I'll take you down the only road I've ever been down

(All actors except FREAK and LONER lay their signature props in their original positions and exit.)

(FREAK and LONER cross downstage into the light. They are now wearing black trenchcoats. As the music fades, they look to each other, then look to the audience and smile. Blackout.)

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Stage and house lights are up. Laid out on two chairs are the second act costumes for the roles of ERIC HARRIS and DYLAN KLEBOLD. Dylan's costume: a black t-shirt with the words "Wrath" written in red, a Boston Red Sox hat, with the "B" only on the backside, a small silver ring with a black oval, and a trenchcoat. Eric's costume: a white t-shirt with the words "Natural Selection" written in black, a digital watch, black webbing for ammunition, and a trenchcoat. These were the actual clothing of the two killers on the day of the shootings.

On a table are laid out two guns: a TEC-9 and a sawed-off shotgun, and a bottle of Jack Daniels. On the other table are the following: a keyboard, a can of Coke, a stack of pipe bombs, Molotov cocktails, crickets, a can of Slim Jims, a tool kit, and a camera with case.

The Actors playing FREAK and LONER enter and lay down on the deck. Music: "How to Disappear Completely" by Radiohead is heard. Lights fade to black.

DYLAN & ERIC

Projected in the darkness are the graduation photos of Dylan Klebold, and Eric Harris.

Lights come up on the actors playing FREAK and LONER as they stare at the photos. Then look to each other and cross to the clothing. They contemplate putting on the clothes, then turn to the props. They examine the guns and pipe bombs.

Projected: Photos of Dylan and Eric from the day of the shootings. The actors look to each other, put down their weapons and begin to dress.

Once completed, they look to each other, sit, and lights and sound cut out.

JUVENILE DIVERSION

("Session 1: April 14, 1998" projected)

VOICE (*Rebel and Prep*)
State your name.

DYLAN
Dylan Bennett Klebold

ERIC
Eric David Harris

VOICE (*Both*)
And you attend Columbine High School?

DYLAN & ERIC
Yes.

VOICE (*Both*)
And you live in Littleton?

DYLAN & ERIC (*not in unison*)
Yes.

VOICE (*Both*)
All your life?

DYLAN
Yes.

ERIC
No.

VOICE (*Prep*)
Explain.

ERIC
I moved from Plattsburgh, NY...actually I was born in Wichita, moved to Ohio, Michigan,
then to Plattsburgh. We moved to Littleton when I was in 7th Grade.

VOICE (*Prep*)
Lots of moving...Dad in the Military?

ERIC
Yeah, he was.

VOICE (*Rebel*)
Ok, Dylan, describe what happened.

DYLAN
I...I wrote all this down.

VOICE (*Rebel*)
I'd like to hear it from you.

DYLAN
I broke into a van. Took stuff from it. Drove away (friend's car). Cops discovered us.
Admitted to the crime.

ERIC
I broke into a car and stole \$1700 worth of equipment, was caught thirty minutes later.

VOICE (*Prep*)
And what do you make of your punishment?

ERIC

Do I like it?

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Instead of jail time you'll be meeting with me. I mean, you must have some reaction to that.

DYLAN

I'm hoping I can get the best I can out of it and am optimistic about it. So far it sucks.

ERIC

(*suppressing anger*) Looking forward to it. Hopefully it will set me straight.

VOICE (*Prep*)

Do you feel you've gotten on the wrong path?

ERIC

(*impatient*) Yes. Clearly, I mean—well, clearly it's what you all think.

(*Beat.*)

VOICE (*Both*)

And what does your family think?

DYLAN

Oh, they were thrilled. They were devastated.

ERIC

Shocked them. All trust is lost.

VOICE (*Both*)

Would you say this has been one of the most traumatic experiences in your life?

DYLAN

Yes.

ERIC

Yes. And moving from Plattsburgh.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Now, what's your relationship with the co-defendant?

DYLAN

Co-defendant?

ERIC

He's my best friend...past and current.

DYLAN

We've been friends for about 4 years. Very good friends.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

How do you spend your free time?

DYLAN

Spend most of my time at home. In my room. Alone. This is where you note that I'm anti-social...

VOICE (*Rebel*)

I want you to tell me what's going on. Look on that sheet and tell me which of the following you are having problems or difficulty with...

(The boys' checklists are projected. The lines are checked off as the boys fill out the forms.)

DYLAN

(looks at the sheet and checks as he reads off)

Finances and Jobs.

ERIC

Anger, anxiety, authority figures, depression, disorganized thoughts, homicidal thoughts, jealousy, loneliness, mood swings, obsessive thoughts, racing thoughts, stress, suspiciousness...oh, and...*(a final check)*...temper.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Do you want to explain?

DYLAN

It's kind of difficult to find a technician job when I am only sixteen years old.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Very funny, wise guy.

VOICE (*Prep*)

Eric? Please, could you try and explain?

ERIC

I...*(Beat. A sincere, but difficult attempt to open up)* Sometimes I get so angry. I punch walls.

VOICE (*Prep*)

Go on.

ERIC

I've got this short temper, often get angry at almost anything I don't like.

VOICE (*Both*)

Do you feel in control of your life?

DYLAN

Yes.

ERIC

Yes.

VOICE (*Both*)

Have you ever used drugs?

DYLAN

Drugs are a waste of everything. Definitely not worth it. My brother, case in point...

ERIC

I'm on medication, I told you. Anti-depressants. I've had drinks, smoked pot, but I don't need that anymore.

VOICE (*Both*)

And are you sexually active?

DYLAN

I'm...

ERIC

Oh...

DYLAN & ERIC

No.

VOICE (*Both*)

Have you ever been sexually active?

ERIC

No. I told you—Jesus. No. No. No.

DYLAN

Nope. Uh-uh. God...

VOICE (*Both*)

Are you versed in sexual education—

DYLAN & ERIC

(overlapping) Yes, yes— oh, God, of course, yes...

VOICE (*Rebel*)

(smiling) Okay, okay.

(Session 2: 7/10/1998 projected)

VOICE (*Rebel*)

So what do you think of your Diversion classes?

ERIC

The anger management class I took was helpful in many ways. If a person does not want to control his or her anger, then it can be a problem.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Dylan?

DYLAN

Truthfully?

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Yes.

DYLAN

It wasn't worth my time.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

What do you mean?

DYLAN

It was an eight-hour day of pointless review and cramped conditions. I feel that I shouldn't have had to take that class, but I'm just trying to get out of the diversion program.

VOICE (*Rebel*)

Well, if you've already embraced the class's message, your progress report isn't showing it. A "D" in Math and Composition--and your teacher reports that you are sleeping in math class...

DYLAN

I'm only sleeping in class because I was up the night before doing an Essay --

VOICE (*Both*)

If you want to get through this process, no more excuses.

(DYLAN and ERIC look at each other in agreement.)

ERIC

It won't happen again.

DYLAN

I promise.

(Session 3: 1/19/1999 projected)

VOICE (*Prep*)

And tell me again why I am seeing you together today?

DYLAN

I thought my dentist's appointment was in the morning,

ERIC

But it wasn't. Dylan messed up the time, so I told him to come to my 2:30 appointment.

VOICE (*Prep*)

Ah, ha. In the future, I'd prefer to see the two of you apart.

ERIC & DYLAN

Oh yes. Of course, right.

DYLAN

You'll note my grades are improving...

VOICE (*Prep*)

Except that D in Calculus and an F in gym...

ERIC

Yes, but look at my three A's...

VOICE (*Prep*)

I see...

DYLAN

I'm working for my next-door neighbor doing yard work and landscaping...

VOICE (*Prep*)

Good. Very good.

ERIC

And I've changed my meds...my mood is improving and I feel better.

DYLAN

Most importantly...

ERIC

I am truly sorry for what I have done.

DYLAN

I know what I did was wrong.

VOICE (*Prep and Rebel*)

I placed a call to your parents to discuss early termination, and they have no problems with my decision.

(DYLAN and ERIC smile.)

DYLAN

Thanks. Thank you very much.

ERIC

(overlapping) That's great--I really appreciate that. Thank you.

(Eric and Dylan look to each other and smile. Lights to black. Projected are the final reports of the Diversion Counselors, as they are read.)

VOICE *(Prep)*

Eric did a very nice job on Diversion. He is a very bright young man who is likely to succeed in life. Seems responsible and remorseful. He suffers from depression but has changed his meds and feels better. He says he has difficulties handling stress, but says he has a good handle on it now. He impressed me as being very articulate and intelligent.

(Lights on ERIC, sitting on a table holding a video camera. This is a video journal entry.)

ERIC

Well folks, today was a very important day in the history of Reb. Today, I got a double barrel 12ga. shotgun, a pump action 12 ga. shotgun, and a 9mm carbine. It's all over now, this is point of no return. Well, I've gotta get that that Marine application out before they start with me. *(beat)* It's weird, I don't feel like punching through a door anymore.

(Projected: "January 14, 1999: File Closed".)

VOICE *(Prep)*

January 14, 1999: File Closed.

VOICE *(Rebel)*

Dylan is a bright young man who has a great deal of potential. If he is able to tap his potential and become self motivated he should do well in life. I also confronted him on his minimizing and excuse giving. It all sounds like he feels like the victim although he denies this. All in all: Nice young man, kind of goofy, and a bizarre sense of humor, he makes me laugh.

(Lights on DYLAN, sitting on a table holding a video camera. This is a video journal entry.)

DYLAN

I just got back from Arizona. Can you believe it? Touring a college with my dad...it was cool. But they have no clue. Days from now the judgment will begin. It's interesting knowing I'm going to die...everything has a touch of triviality to it.

(Projected: "March 3, 1999: File Closed".)

VOICE *(Rebel)*

March 3, 1999: File Closed.

(On the slate is projected the display of a video camera. It is dated March 15, 1999. Standby symbol flashes.)

ERIC
Ready?

DYLAN
Ready.

(Standby goes to Record, as the lights snap up. DYLAN is recording ERIC. They are in his bedroom.)

THE BASEMENT TAPES

ERIC
Ok, it's about 1:30AM. Less than 48 hours to Judgment Day. We want to take you on a tour of what we've been up to over the last few months.

DYLAN
We've been busy little beavers.

ERIC
That's Vodka on camera. Say hello Vodka?

DYLAN
Hello vodka...

ERIC
Welcome to the arsenal of freedom. Better known as my bedroom. My parents are a bit too trusting.

DYLAN
Ah...they're clueless.

ERIC
Yeah, Green Mountain Guns called the other day and my dad answered the phone. They're like "Your clips are in." My dad says, "I didn't order any clips." Fucking hysterical...

DYLAN
We were this close from being fucked.

ERIC
Anyway, they don't come in here. I keep it clean. They stay out. Ok, here we have the Delta batch--

DYLAN
Created by yours truly.

ERIC

And we've got a pretty awesome supply of crickets and pipe bombs. These are for the first ten minutes. Smoke 'em out. Scare 'em out. Then Molotov's if we get bored. Mix and match...

DYLAN

But the real stars of the show... (*Hands off the camera*)

ERIC

Drum roll...

DYLAN

Arlene and Samantha- she's a feisty one! Brought to us by Mr. Mark Ma--

ERIC

Mr. John Doe.

DYLAN

Yeah...

ERIC

And a certain girlfriend of a certain mass murderer--

DYLAN

A prom date does not constitute a girlfriend.

ERIC

--who bought us these little babies. Dylan will see to a very personal thank you...

DYLAN

Fuck you.

ERIC

Anyway guys, we hope you don't get any shit for buying us these.

DYLAN

Yeah, we're sorry about that. But it was our choice, our doing.

ERIC

Ok, let's clear up a few things with you people so we're not (*does the quote fingers*) "misunderstood." (*ERIC puts down camera in front of him to free his hands.*) We are kind of a select case here. Don't think this will happen again.

DYLAN

We're not like those kids in Arkansas. Idiots got caught.

ERIC

I hope you realize what we are implying: the most deaths in U.S. history.

DYLAN

The police, the parents, the fucking world will be studying these videos.

ERIC

And don't blame the gun shows or fucking Kmart for selling us shit—

DYLAN

Yeah, I don't want no fucking laws on buying fucking PVC pipes.

ERIC

Go ahead and change the gun laws--

DYLAN

(interrupting) How do you think we got ours?

ERIC

And don't blame the school--

DYLAN

Yeah, the administration is doing a fine job as it is.

ERIC

(cuts him off) And don't blame my family; they're the best fucking parents I have ever known.

DYLAN

Yeah, they gave me my fucking life. It's up to me what I do with it.

ERIC

(cuts him off) GODDAMNIT, do you hear me?! Do NOT blame anyone but me and V!

DYLAN

This was our choice. Our decision.

ERIC

(pushing Dylan out of the camera; Dylan gets a coke from the table) It's hatred that fuels this fire. See, even you are hating us right now. But I'll tell you something. You made me. You made US.

(flipping an obscene gesture toward the camera.) Look at what you made. You're fucking shit, you humans, and you need to die. Even us. We need to die too of course. We'll fuckin die killing you fuckin shits. It's war. And in war there are victims. We...the victims. *(into the camera)*

But this...all of this is the end of that. *(Close to the camera.)* I have so much rage inside me. Worst than a loaded gun because you just don't expect anything vicious from silence. Silence is deadly. The longer the silence, the more deadly. Shhhhhhh! *(As he says this, he grows quieter and quieter)* BANG! *(DYLAN startled, knocks over a can of soda.)* You idiot!

DYLAN

Sorry, man...

ERIC

What the hell, Dylan! That's all I need is a disaster on the floor and my mom will start. I need things in order here.

DYLAN

Ok.

ERIC

In fucking order...

DYLAN

Sorry.

ERIC

Turn the fucking camera off.

(Awkward silence. DYLAN turns off the camera. The stage goes to black, as static is projected on the slate.)

WHAT IF

(Lights fade up on DYLAN, lying on the table next to the Jack, playing with the TEC-9. ERIC is sitting at his computer typing. His email is projected as he types:

By now it's over. If you are reading this, my mission is complete. Your children who have ridiculed me, who have chosen not to accept me are dead. Surely you will try to blame it on the clothes I wear, the music I listen to – but no: parents and teachers, YOU have taught these kids to be gears and sheep. I may have taken their lives and my own – but LET THIS MASSACRE BE ON YOUR SHOULDERS UNTIL THE DAY YOU DIE. I did not choose this life, but I have indeed chosen to exit it. You may think the horror ends with the bullet in my head – but all that I will leave you with is to decipher what more extensive death is to come. Reb.

DYLAN

So this is a bizarre question, but how do you really think it will end?

ERIC

Well, we're not getting out of there alive—not with all those cops out there. So, the best way to go is a shootout.

DYLAN

And then?

ERIC

Then what? We're dead. We're history...the greatest school shooting of all time.

DYLAN

And after that?

ERIC

What do you mean, “after that”?

DYLAN

Oh, come on...like you haven't thought about this.

ERIC

What is there to think about?

DYLAN

We're going to be dead in two days.

ERIC

Yeah, it's weird knowing you are going to die.

DYLAN

Weird? It's terrifying.

ERIC

Yeah, that's the best part.

DYLAN

Oh yeah...like you're not a bit scared.

ERIC

Look, why we are even talking about this?

DYLAN

Dude, why are you so sensitive?

ERIC

Ok Dylan, let's talk about death. The afterlife, if there is one, is like the final level of Doom, ok? Destroying, killing—

DYLAN

Fucking Doom?

ERIC

It's blackness. It's nothing. It's just over.

DYLAN

How do you know?

ERIC

I know.

DYLAN

No. You can't know. No one knows. You just too scared to think about it?

ERIC

Look, we have always been set on this. We put guns to our heads and count one, two three. That is the plan. It is what I will do. And I need you to do it. Like we planned. Over and over, now what the fuck?

DYLAN

You just think you're going to be able to kill yourself just like that? Bang and that's it?

ERIC

There's no thinking. You're gonna have blood on your hands from these guns. The kick back is going to destroy your hands. You won't be thinking about anything. Your heart will be pounding and the gun will be the only thing you can do.

DYLAN

Ok, I hear you. You're in my face, here.

ERIC

Good, because you don't have a choice. Gun in hand, I will end my life and you will end yours. End of discussion.

DYLAN

(Beat) What if I don't?

ERIC

What did you say?

DYLAN

What if you shoot first, but I decide not to? What are you gonna do then?

ERIC

What is this? You want to fuck this up? I'm not gonna let you fuck this up. You're out. Get the fuck out. Get out.

(DYLAN goes.)

Ok, Dylan you're going. Ok. Yeah. Hey, you forgot your camera.

(DYLAN goes to get the camera.)

What the hell? What's your problem? Christ...

(ERIC crosses to the window and grabs his arm.)

DYLAN

What's your problem? I asked you a simple question—

ERIC

Two days before? You wait until tonight to ask your simple question?

DYLAN

Fine, no more questions. I'll just do what I'm told and not say a thing.

ERIC

Sit the fuck down.

DYLAN

I'll pretend that I'm not scared and run around here giving orders like some fucking Marine.

ERIC

WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE MARINES? *(goes after him, knocking him to the ground; turns the safety off on the shotgun; points it at his face)* Jesus Christ, you asshole.

You have no idea what I'm capable of. *(drops the gun and moves away)*

DYLAN

You are fucked, man. Fucked. *(ERIC turns away)* Why would you do that? Why would you fucking do that to me?

ERIC

(starts to break down) Fuck you. You're such an asshole...*(under these speeches he is making a sound as he roams around the room)*

DYLAN

What, the Marines?

ERIC

Well, that's it, eh?

DYLAN

Oh.

ERIC

My parents are fucking idiots. *(tries to laugh)*

DYLAN

What'd they do—

ERIC

The Marines don't take drugs, mom, not even prescription...

DYLAN

She told the recruiter?

ERIC

It doesn't matter.

DYLAN

They didn't let you in because of a prescription drug?

ERIC

It doesn't matter.

DYLAN

I'm sorry--

ERIC

(erupts) Jesus Christ, you Asshole.

DYLAN

What--

ERIC

What do you want, Dylan? You want to live this fucking life? I'm done. Ok? I want one last memory. One I've been planning more than trying to finger your little girlfriend at the prom...

DYLAN

She's not my girlfriend, you fuck. She is a friend that went to the prom with your friend who happened to buy us these guns. What's your problem?

ERIC

I wouldn't know, Dylan. I sat here stuffing pipe bombs all night. Tell me what prom was like. I don't know. *(ERIC jumps right back to previous discussion without a beat.)* Go on. You can lick smelly ass until the day we throw our little caps in the air and sing "Columbine. Oh Columbine?" And Miss Valedictory gives her prize-winning speech about how wonderful it was at Columbine High School, all the friends she made...when you and I and maybe four others out of a class of what, 350, actually talked to her? I'm not going to sit there to listen to bullshit spew from what is supposed to be the smartest person in the class...fuck me. No way. They don't deserve that day. They don't deserve one more day past Tuesday. I want them to feel they almost got away with it. One last prom. One last yearbook picture...

DYLAN

You're not taking it, are you?

ERIC

What?

DYLAN

(picks up the bottle) Your medicine. You're pretty fucked up...

ERIC

What...you're worried cause I'm *angry*?

DYLAN

(toss the bottle at him) I mean, look at you...

ERIC
Don't fuck with me, Dylan.

DYLAN
You can't even stand still.

ERIC
Shut the fuck up.

DYLAN
Is all this in your plan?

ERIC
You are a sad, lanky, ugly loner—

DYLAN
...WHO WENT TO THE FUCKING PROM. *(ERIC doesn't know what to do; DYLAN waits)*
It's a real surprise the Marines didn't want to add a bi-polar freak to their ranks—

(ERIC punches him. DYLAN throws ERIC to the ground and eventually punches him in the face.)

ERIC
Stop. Stop. FUCK!

DYLAN *(full of rage mixed with pain)*
Jesus fucking Christ, Eric. Why do you have to push this? You keep pushing...

ERIC
I'm sorry.

DYLAN
Fuck!

ERIC
What?

DYLAN
I don't want this. I don't want any of this.

ERIC
You don't want this?

DYLAN
No, I want this—I just don't want to feel like this.

ERIC

Like what?

DYLAN
Like *this*. Goddamnit--

ERIC
That's why we're doing this.

DYLAN
I know.

ERIC
That's why the closets full of pipe bombs.

DYLAN
I know!

ERIC
It's real, man. The guns are real.

DYLAN
Then what the fuck is our problem. Let's just do it.

ERIC
Right here man. (*Handing him the gun*) Right here. We're gonna kick start a revolution. We'll be remembered forever. Like gods man, like fucking gods...

DYLAN
Directors will die to film this movie.

ERIC
They'll be fighting over us.

DYLAN
Spielberg or Tarantino?

ERIC & DYLAN
FUCKING TARANTINO.

DYLAN
And of course they'll blame the movies.

ERIC
But who actually blows up their school?

DYLAN
No one. Just us.

ERIC
Planned to the “T”.

DYLAN
Executed without error.

ERIC
All right here (*picks up his day planner*) 5AM?

DYLAN
We get up.

ERIC
No big deal because of...

DYLAN
Tuesday morning bowling.

ERIC
6AM?

DYLAN
We arrive at Littleton Lanes and bowl just like normal.

ERIC
STRIIIKE!!!

ERIC & DYLAN
Heil Hitler!

ERIC
7 AM?

DYLAN
Back to your house.

ERIC
Load up the car.

DYLAN
Your parents at work.

ERIC
8:30AM?

DYLAN
Back to my house. Set up the car.

ERIC

Your parents at work.

ERIC

10:30AM?

DYLAN

The decoy...

ERIC

Two backpacks with pipe bombs...

DYLAN

...and propane tanks...

ERIC

...placed in a field three miles southwest of the school.

DYLAN AND ERIC

Kaboom!

ERIC

11 AM?

DYLAN

We're at the school.

ERIC

I park in the Junior Lot-

DYLAN

I, the Senior Lot.

ERIC

Positioned perfectly at the South door.

DYLAN

I, the Southwest door.

ERIC

Just in case someone survives the explosion of...

DYLAN

Two twenty pound propane bombs.

ERIC

11:10 AM?

DYLAN
We enter the cafeteria...

ERIC
Never being noticed...

DYLAN
And place the two bombs among the hundreds of backpacks...

ERIC
Never being noticed.

DYLAN
Never being noticed.

ERIC
At 11:15, over 500 students have now entered the cafeteria.

DYLAN
Little to do they know in two minutes--

ERIC
the bombs are wired to explode.

DYLAN
Just in time to get one fork full in.

ERIC
Then back to our cars

DYLAN
Pick up our guns

ERIC
And wait.

DYLAN
And wait.

ERIC
11:17

DYLAN
11:17

(ERIC and DYLAN celebrate and run around, as the company takes positions for "April 20, 1999".)

DYLAN

Think of their faces...

ERIC

The ones on fire, screaming for help...

DYLAN

The world noticing our little high school, engulfed in flames.

ERIC

The power we'll have...

DYLAN

The fame we'll have.

ERIC

Like gods, man, like fucking gods.

DYLAN

God, I can't wait till I can fucking kill you people. *(They pick up their guns.)*

ERIC

You all better hide in your fucking houses because I'm coming for EVERYONE soon, and I WILL be armed to the fucking teeth and I WILL shoot to kill and I WILL fucking KILL EVERYTHING!

DYLAN

GO!

ERIC

GO!

DYLAN & ERIC

GO!

(BLACKOUT. Two horrific shotgun blasts are heard.)

911

(The following sequence is projected as the actual call is heard.)

DISPATCHER

Jefferson County 911...

TEACHER

Yes, I'm a teacher at Columbine High School and there is a student here with a gun. He just shot out a window. I believe, um, um

DISPATCHER
Columbine High School?

TEACHER
I don't know what's in my shoulder. If it was just some glass or what.

DISPATCHER
Has anyone been injured ma'am?

TEACHER
I am, yes...yes!

DISPATCHER
Ok.

TEACHER
Yes!...and the school is in a panic, and I'm in the library. I've got...students down. (*To Students*) Under the table kids, heads under the table! Kids are screaming, and the teachers are trying to take control of things. We need police here...

DISPATCHER
OK, we're getting them there.

TEACHER
Can you please hurry!

DISPATCHER
Who is the student, ma'am?

TEACHER
I do not know who the student is.

DISPATCHER
Ok.

TEACHER
I saw a student outside.... I was in the hall...Oh Dear God...Ok, I was on hall duty. I saw a gun and said, "What's going on out there?" And this kid said "Oh, it's probably a video production, probably a joke." (*Talking to student*) I said "Well, I don't think that's a good idea," and...I went walking outside...to see what was going on. He turned the gun straight at us and shot and...oh my God, the window went out. And the kid standing there with me, I think he got hit.

DISPATCHER
OK.

TEACHER

I have something in my shoulder.

DISPATCHER

Ok, we got help on the way, ma'am. (*large bang*)

TEACHER

Ok...Oh God!

DISPATCHER

Stay on the line with me (*large bang*)

TEACHER

Oh God! Kids, stay down.

DISPATCHER

Do we know where he's at?

TEACHER

I'm sorry

DISPATCHER

Do we know where he's at?

TEACHER

Ok...I'm in the library. He's upstairs. He's right outside here.

DISPATCHER

Outside of the hall or outside—

TEACHER

In the hall

DISPATCHER

Ok.

TEACHER

There are alarms and things going off. Smoke... (*Yelling*): My God, smoke is coming into this room.

DISPATCHER

Ok...

DISPATCHER

I just want you to stay on the line with me. We need to know what's going on.

TEACHER

Ok. I am on the floor.

DISPATCHER
Ok, you've the kids there?

TEACHER
In the library...and I've got every student IN THE LIBRARY ON THE FLOOR. (*To students*) AND YOU GOTTA STAY ON THE FLOOR!

DISPATCHER
Is there any way you can lock the doors?

TEACHER
Um...smoke is coming in from out there, and...(*gunfire*) the gun is right outside the library door...OK, I don't think I'm going to go out there.

DISPATCHER
Ok, you're at Columbine High School?

TEACHER
I've got three children.

DISPATCHER
Ok we've got it...

TEACHER
OK...I'm...

DISPATCHER
Yes...

TEACHER
I'm going to go to the door to shut the door, ok...
I've got the kids on the floor um...I got all the kids in the library on the...

DISPATCHER
We have paramedics, we have fire and police enroute...OK...sir?

TEACHER
Ok

DISPATCHER
Is there anyway you can block the door, so no one can get in?

TEACHER
I...yes...I guess I can try to go, but I mean like he's right outside that door I'm afraid to go to that door

DISPATCHER
That's ok

TEACHER

That's where he is. I don't know. I said, "What... what is that kid got" He was outside at the time. And...and...and...um. I was on hall duty (*explosion*) Oh God...And he was going, he was like woo, hoo, woo hoo...

DISPATCHER

Mmm-hmm, I know

TEACHER

...like getting shot off. I said, "What's going on out there?" ...said it's a cap gun, probably a video production. You know they do these videos

DISPATCHER

Right

TEACHER

That's not, you know, a play gun, a real gun, I was going out there to say, "No" and I went walk- (*huge gunfire*) Oh my God, oh my God, that was really close.

DISPATCHER

OK (*huge gunfire*)

(Lights up on DYLAN and ERIC, dressed in trenchcoats and gear)

ERIC

Get up!

TEACHER

(whispers) Oh God...I hear him. I hear him. I think he's in here ...*(two gunfires)*

DYLAN

Get up.

DISPATCHER

What's your name ma'am?

TEACHER

(whispers) My name is Patty

DISPATCHER

Patty?

TEACHER

(whispers) He just told everyone to get up now... He's in the library. He's shooting kids...

ERIC & DYLAN

All the jocks stand up!

THE LIBRARY

(During this scene, the actors sit among tables and chairs recounting the events of April 20, 1999. ERIC and DYLAN face the chalk slate, their backs to the audience. They never directly interact with the other actors. The gunshots and explosions are achieved by ERIC and DYLAN slamming their hands against the slate.)

ERIC

Everyone wearing a white hat, stand up!

ACTOR *(Jock)*

Nobody stood up.

ERIC

Fine, I start shooting.

ACTOR *(AP)*

They moved in front of the librarian's desk. I could have reached out and touched their legs.

DYLAN

Everyone's afraid, look at all the scared people under the tables.

ERIC

If you're wearing a hat or have a sports emblem on your shirt, you're dead.

ACTOR *(Jock)*

That Saturday I got my haircut, otherwise I would have been wearing my hat.

ACTOR *(Faith)*

They made their way down toward the windows. They picked out a boy who wore glasses.

ERIC

You think those glasses are cool. Geek.

DYLAN

You think you're cool? Pathetic, fat boy!

ACTOR *(Faith)*

Kyle Velasquez was sitting at a computer desk.

(DYLAN shoots.)

He slumped over his monitor and fell to the floor.

ERIC

This is for all the bullshit Columbine put us through.

DYLAN

Now I finally get my revenge.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

They put down their backpacks on a computer table...

DYLAN

The pigs are here.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

...and crossed to the windows. They both fired over and over.

(Dylan and Eric simultaneously fire twice)

ERIC

God, this is so much fun. I've waited my whole life for this.

DYLAN

Anyone with a white hat, stand up or I'll shoot everyone.

(All the male ACTORS slowly "remove their hats.")

ACTOR (*Prep*)

It was us and Patrick Ireland all hiding together under a table. We were all wearing hats.

ACTOR (*Jock*)

I hid my hat. *(referring to Prep)* And then he started to stand up.

ACTOR (*Prep*)

I wanted him not to shoot everyone under the table.

ACTOR (*Jock*)

I grabbed his shoulder and whispered not to move.

ACTOR (*Prep*)

I knew Dylan over the years. I looked him directly in the eye, hoping he might--

(DYLAN raises his gun.)

DYLAN

Today is your day to die.

(DYLAN shoots.)

ACTOR (*Prep*)

We got hit with buckshot. His leg was gushing blood. Patrick tried to stop the bleeding with his hands--

ACTOR (*Jock*)

--But I didn't want any help--

ACTOR (*Prep*)

Then Patrick raised his head high enough above the table...

(*DYLAN shoots*)

He dropped after being hit twice in the head.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

I was hiding under a computer table in a little cubicle.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

There was a boy named Steven Curnow next to me. (*Looks SR.*)

ACTOR (*Faith*)

He bent down right next to the chair I had been sitting in...

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

I turned around, plugged my ears and shrugged my shoulders.

(*ERIC fires.*)

Steven died.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

The sound was deafening.

(*ERIC turns and points a gun and fires.*)

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

With a 12-gauge shotgun at close range, he had shot a three-inch hole in my shoulder. I was moaning.

ERIC

Quit your bitching.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

I thought I was going to get shot again...so I leaned over the cubicle and pretended to be dead.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

He moved away.

ERIC

Don't worry you're all gonna be dead in a couple of minutes.

ACTORS

Why are you doing this?

ERIC
This is payback.

DYLAN
This is what you deserve.

ERIC
Who's going to be next in line to die?

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
I was out in the open. There was no room under any of the nearby tables.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
One of them walked past Cassie and I. We were shaking. Then Cassie started praying out loud.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
She kept saying, "Dear God, Dear God, why is this happening? I just want to go home."

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
I immediately buried my head in the floor as he passed. He banged on the table.

ERIC
(*knocks on the blackboard*) Peekaboo.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
He took a closer look at Cassie, as she put her hands over her head.

(*ERIC shoots.*)

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
He shot her point blank in the temple. Cassie looked at me, bewildered, then slumped to the floor and died.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
I never took my eyes off of him. He was so close to me. He looked disoriented. I saw blood streaming down his face.

ERIC
I hit myself in the face.

DYLAN
Cool.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

He was on the balls of his feet. He swung his gun back and forth in front of us. Then it pointed directly at me. He said.

(Lights isolate ERIC and Actor playing Perfect. This moment goes into real time.)

ERIC
Do you want to die?

ACTOR *(Perfect)*
“No”

ERIC
Do you want to die?

ACTOR *(Perfect)*
“No”

ERIC
Do you want to die?

ACTOR *(Perfect)*
(Barely audible) No.

ERIC
Everyone’s going to die.

DYLAN
Shoot her.

ERIC
No, we’re gonna blow up the whole school anyway.

(Lights restore.)

ACTOR *(Perfect)*
Then he got distracted. I heard Isaiah say “mom” and something about “home”

ERIC
Oh look, it’s a nigger.

ACTOR *(Jock)*
Matt Kechter and I were under the same table as Isaiah.

DYLAN
There’s a nigger over here!

ACTOR *(Jock)*
Isaiah tried to back up under the table. Dylan grabbed him, struggling to pull him out.

(ERIC shoots.)

DYLAN

(Looks to his hands and on his body.) Look at this black kid's brains! Awesome, man!

ERIC

Man, I never knew nigger brain could fly that far.

(DYLAN shoots.)

ACTOR *(Jock)*

In a fury of shooting, Matt fell dead. I was covered in his blood, so I rolled over immediately, and played dead.

ERIC

Is he dead? I wanna know if that nigger's dead.

DYLAN

Yeah, he's dead.

ACTOR *(Prep)*

They whooped in celebration.

ERIC

WHOO-HOO.

ACTOR *(Prep)*

They were having the time of their lives.

DYLAN

I can't believe I did that. *(pause)* Cool.

ERIC

Who's ready to die next?

(ERIC gestures as if throwing something.)

ACTOR *(Prep)*

It was a small CO₂ cartridge. It was sizzling under the table. I saw it. I grabbed it. I threw it.

(Explosion.)

ACTOR *(AP)*

Then he did the craziest thing. He started jumping on bookshelves, shaking them back and forth. Cursing wildly. Firing his gun, shooting books.

(ERIC walks away from the group. He kneels behind a table, unseen.)

ACTOR (*AP*)

Then he disappeared. I couldn't see him. He was behind the bookshelves- alone.

(DYLAN shoots.)

ACTOR (*Faith*)

He had blasted the display cabinet to pieces. It was full of sports trophies. Then he spotted Mark Kintgen. I knew it was Mark because his cerebral palsy made him move slow.

DYLAN
Pathetic.

(DYLAN fires twice.)

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Two 9mm bullets: one to his neck, one into his head.

(DYLAN begins a repeated firing of his gun, slowly increasing in speed.)

ACTOR (*Rebel*)

It was me, Lauren, Valeen, Lisa, and Jeanna, cramped under one table.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

He wouldn't stop shooting. Shooting.

(Company shudders with each shot.)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

In that moment all you could do is pray that they won't shoot you. Pray that you won't die.

DYLAN
(Rages.) AHHHHHHH!!!

(DYLAN stops.)

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Kelly was dead.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)

I turned to Lauren and her head just...dropped. I pushed her but she didn't respond.

ACTOR (*Faith*)

Dylan would pass papers to me in government class. We used to talk about homework.

DYLAN
Pathetic. *(DYLAN rests his head against the chalk slate.)*

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Val ran out from table.

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
You guys, I'm bleeding.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
He turned to her.

(Lights isolate DYLAN and the Actor playing Rebel.)

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
(whispers) Oh my God...Oh my God...

(DYLAN shoots a single shot.)

DYLAN
God! Do you believe in God?

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
Yes.

DYLAN
Why?

ACTOR (*Rebel*)
That was the way my mom and dad had raised me.

(DYLAN walks away and joins ERIC. Lights restore.)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
I was alone under a table. I asked John Tomlin if I could join him under his. He motioned me over. I started talking to him. He calmly put his hand over my mouth and said, "shhh, shhh". Then we saw the legs coming. He held my hand.

ERIC
Watch my back.

(ERIC fires.)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
We were hit. John crawled out from table to get away.

(DYLAN fires. ERIC turns around and fires immediately.)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
He shot him. I felt his legs shake against mine.

ERIC
Are you still breathing?

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
I didn't know who he was asking so I just closed my eyes. I just blacked out.

(*ERIC fires.*)

DYLAN
Let's go kill some cops.

ERIC
I need to reload. Where's the bag?

ACTOR (*Faith*)
They were moving around my table. I heard something about "using the shells." Then...

(*Lights isolate. DYLAN points his gun in her face. He holds it there for fifteen seconds.*)

ACTOR (*Faith*)
He walked away.

(*Lights restore.*)

ERIC
Who is under the table? Identify yourself!

(*Lights isolate DYLAN and Actor playing AP.*)

ACTOR (*AP*)
I said "It's me, John."

DYLAN
John Savage?

ACTOR (*AP*)
Yes.

DYLAN
Hi.

ACTOR (*AP*)
Hi, Dylan. What are you doing?

DYLAN
Oh, killing people.

ACTOR (*AP*)
Are you going to kill me?

DYLAN
(*Looks to ERIC. Pause.*) No, dude. Just run. Just get out of here.

(*Lights restore.*)

ACTOR (*AP*)
I remember if he said, “yes” I would have said. “Then make it quick. Just put a bullet in my head and get it over with.” But he let me go.

ACTOR (*Prep*)
I was about one desk over and one back from Daniel Mauser. All I could think of was in *Lethal Weapon*, or one of those action movies, they said it’s hard to kill somebody if they’re looking you in the eyes. I was gonna look him in the eye.

(*ERIC fires*)

But then he shot Daniel, who tried to push chairs at him and tried to grab his legs...anything to make him stop. But he only shot again, and again.

ERIC
Get up! (*ERIC fires.*)

ACTOR (*Prep*)
Then Daniel was still.

DYLAN
(*Laughing*) Did he try to grab you?

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Corey gripped my hand. “Stay tight the cops will come” he said. I looked up and right into his eyes.

(*ERIC and DYLAN fire.*)

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
Corey’s back was covered in blood. His head was...(*looks at her hands.*)

DYLAN
Hey, you know I always wanted to kill somebody with a knife. There’s more blood with a knife.

ACTOR (*Perfect*)
I closed my eyes. I played dead. I was playing dead when I felt him...his body stopped moving...breathing.

DYLAN

You all better get up and leave. We're gonna blow up this library.

(ERIC moves around US. DYLAN stops and notices the JOCK.)

DYLAN

Well, look what we have here.

(Lights isolate DYLAN and Actor playing Jock.)

ERIC

What?

DYLAN

Just some fat fuck.

(DYLAN slowly points the gun at JOCK.)

Are you a jock?

ACTOR *(Jock)*

No.

DYLAN

Well, that's good. We don't like jocks.

(DYLAN looks closer into his face.)

Let me see your face. *(Pause)* Give me one good reason why I shouldn't kill you?

ACTOR *(Jock)*

I don't wanna get into trouble. I don't want to get into trouble.

DYLAN

Trouble? You don't know what fucking trouble is.

ACTOR *(Jock)*

That's not what I meant. I mean I don't have a problem with you guys, I never will and I never did.

DYLAN

I'm going to let this fat fuck live, you can have him if you want to. *(lowering his gun)* Let's go to the Commons.

ERIC

We have one more thing to do.

(Blackout.)

GOODBYE

(The following is heard. It is the audio from the boys' goodbye video.)

ERIC

Say it now.

DYLAN

Hey mom. Gotta go. It's about half an hour before our little judgment day. I just wanted to apologize to you guys for any crap this might instigate as far as *(camera jiggles; this is inaudible)* or something. Just know I'm going to a better place than here. I didn't like life too much and I know I'll be happier wherever the fuck I go. So I'm gone. Good-bye. Reb...

(Lights slowly come up on DYLAN and ERIC, walking slowly to the center of the chalk slate. ERIC carries the shotgun, DYLAN, the TEC-9.)

ERIC

Yea...Everyone I love I'm really sorry about all this. I know my mom and dad will be just like just fucking shocked beyond belief. I'm sorry alright. I can't help it.

DYLAN

We did what we had to do.

ERIC

Morris, Nate if you guys live I want you guys to have whatever you want from my room and the computer room.

DYLAN

Yeah, take whatever you want of mine.

ERIC

Susan, sorry. Under different circumstances it would've been a lot different. I want you to have that fly CD. *(Beat.)* That's it. *(Long beat.)* Sorry. Goodbye.

(ERIC slowly puts the shotgun into his mouth. DYLAN slowly raise the TEC-9 to his left temple.)

DYLAN

Goodbye.

(Blackout, as two gunshots are heard.)

(Lights reveal the two guns and Dylan and Eric's trenchcoats, left on stage. Smoke from the guns is in the air.)

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

(A circle of chairs. In the center of the circle are all of the costumes and props for the third act. The Company enters and selects their characters' respective pieces and pre-sets them. When ready, the Company stands around the circle as the Actor playing AP crosses center.)

COMPANY
April 20, 1999

24 HOURS

(NOTE: The approximate time of the event periodically is projected throughout the scene as indicated.)

(Lights up on TOM MAUSER, an intellectual, reserved man who works in public transit for the state. He enters putting on a tie.)

[Projection: Noon]

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

It was a day like any other day: I jumped out of bed. Showered. Meditated. Ate breakfast. Headed off to work. I had this out of town conference later that day and I was rushing to get work done before I left. Around Noon a coworker came into my office—

(A COWORKER enters.)

COWORKER 1 (*Rebel*)

(“Does he know?”) Tom...don't you live in Littleton?

TOM MAUSER

(To her) Yes.

COWORKER 1

(“Why is he not phased?”) Do you have kids at Columbine High School?

TOM MAUSER

Yes, my son Daniel goes there. What's this all about?

COWORKER 1

I think you should come with me.

(Projection: Footage from April 20: the helicopter aerial shot of the school; students fleeing; police surrounding the building.)

(A muted version of the audio from that day is heard. COWORKERS gather around the table watching.)

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

We go into a conference room and there was about ten or twenty people watching a TV. On the news were helicopters, police surrounding the school, reporters saying things like “shots were fired.”

(They stand and stare at the screen.)

COWORKER 2 *(Jock)*

You okay, Tom?

TOM MAUSER

I appreciated people asking me, but Daniel was a good kid, how could he get mixed up in a shooting? *(To Coworkers)* Yeah, I’m gonna head out to this conference.

COWORKER 2 *(Jock)*

Tom, go to the conference later.

COWORKER 1

Maybe you should call home.

TOM MAUSER

I just wasn’t that concerned. Even if there *was* a shooting, there were 2000 kids in that school. What were the chances?

(DARRELL SCOTT is the son of a preacher, relaxed and easy-going. He’s never lost his Southern roots including his Louisiana accent.)

DARRELL SCOTT *(Prep)*

I’m at a shopping mall when my wife calls. I’m thinking it’s probably some kid, mad at another kid, took a gun and shot at him. *(DARRELL SCOTT sits in the “drivers’ seat of two chairs. We barely hear the radio audio.)* So I jumped in my pick-up, turn on the radio and the announcer’s just sobbing, saying that up to 30 kids have been shot, some killed and I immediately start doing the math: 1,800 kids: I have Rachel and Craig in there, what are the chances, right?

(KATE BATTAN is the homicide investigation officer for Jefferson County, Colorado. She’s straight-forward, tell-it-like-it-is. She’s speaks with confidence, but is careful with her words.)

KATE BATTAN *(Perfect)*

I learned from academy training play “what if?” ‘cause on the drive there Dispatch was sayin’ this incomprehensible stuff like bombs being exploded, grenades. My adrenaline’s going crazy and I’m thinkin’ “What if there’s dead people? What if there’s an active shooter—because until Columbine Colorado never had a major school shooting. When I got to the school, I see kids running towards me and it’s just—whatever they saw in there, we couldn’t stop *(exhale)* you couldn’t take it back: no rewind, no redo.

(FRANK DEANGELIS is a working class Italian-American coach. He likes to hear himself talk and he has a big heart.)

FRANK DEANGELIS (*AP*)

I was sittin' in my office with a new teacher and my secretary comes in--

PRINCIPAL'S SECRETARY (*Faith*)

Frank, there's been shooting.

FRANK DEANGELIS

So I ran out by the trophy cases and I see a double-barrel shotgun comin' down the main hallway. I freeze and see this group of twenty girls coming right into the hall. I get them into the gym and lock the doors.

[*RUTH FELDMAN is a working class, A.D.H.D mid-western mother with an enormous heart; She loves people, loves to talk but connects from an honest and caring place. She wears a Dairy Queen nametag. Her co-worker, MARTINE, (Rebel) wipes down the counter.*]

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

We had just opened the Dairy Queen when the phone rang and actually, I had no idea who it was at first. Here's this hysterical person telling me, 'they're shooting at us.' I'm like, 'who is this'? And then I realized it was Emily – (*on the phone*)

(*EMILY faces upstage.*)

EMILY STEPP (*Perfect*)

Mom, I'm at school and they're shooting people.

RUTH FELDMAN

I'm like, "Okay, can you block the door?"

EMILY STEPP

The teacher says there's nothing to block the door!

RUTH FELDMAN

And I'm like, "there's SOMETHING TO BLOCK THE DOOR" So they put file cabinets in front of it and I said, "Where's Brian? Where's your brother?"

EMILY STEPP

I don't know. At lunch?

RUTH FELDMAN

I said, "I'm on my way" and I looked at my co-worker who's also a mom--

MARTINE (*Rebel*)

Ruth, go. Just go.

[Projection: 12:35pm]

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

I work homicide but I didn't necessarily have a role at first, just "Where am I needed? What can I do?" When I found my Sergeant he said--

SERGEANT (*Jock*)
Kate, this is your case.

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)
And I'm like, "Okay...thanks for letting me know." So I gathered the team to write search warrants 'cause at the time we had a short list of names: Chris Morris, Harris & Klebold, Nate Dykeman and Brooks Brown.

(RANDY BROWN is an expert real estate broker with a kind heart and do-anything-for-anybody attitude. But never, never get him mad. He often tucks his shirt in and rests his thumbs in his belt. He's seated. BROOKS faces upstage.)

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)
So I'm with some clients in a closing on a condo when my son Brooks calls--

BROOKS BROWN (*AP*)
Uhm...dad, there's a shooting at the school.

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)
And I said, "Okay...it's Eric, huh?" 'Cause I knew, I just knew it was Eric--

BROOKS BROWN (*AP*)
Yeah, I think so.

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)
So I said, "Ok, I'll be right there." And it's so weird the way you react 'cause I just went back into that closing. Finally it hit me and I took off. I literally drove down Colorado-470 a hundred and thirty miles an hour and ran every red light to the school. A policeman stopped me and I said, "Look, I gotta get my son" but he wouldn't let me go so I'm sittin' there thinking, 'Can I take this guy?'

(JUDY BROWN is a strong-willed, passionate mother with a touch of hippie. She's holding a brush.)

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)
I'm in a watercolor class and my husband Randy never calls--

RANDY BROWN
Judy, there's been a shooting at Columbine. Brooks is with me. I'm headed home.

JUDY BROWN
And I said, "It's Eric Harris, isn't it?" and he said--

RANDY BROWN
I don't know.

JUDY BROWN

When I knew my kids were safe, I started worrying about Dylan. Brooks and Dylan were friends since grade school but Dylan was very close to Eric. I had always imagined Eric doing something like this and Dylan just sitting nearby in a car somewhere just going “What’s going on?” and ending up in trouble so I immediately called Tom—Dylan’s dad—and he was frantic, “Judy, I don’t know what’s going on” so I said “Well let me come up.”

[Projection: 1:00pm]

FRANK DEANGELIS (*AP*)

We started bussing the kids we had evacuated over to Leawood Elementary which is right across the street from Columbine. When I got there, parents were everywhere and I just remember one of my teachers who had helped Dave Sanders, my God, he was just covered in Dave’s blood.

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

When I got to Leawood, my brother was already there and he had heard from his kids and my son Craig but not from Rachel.

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

My son Brian made it home and the first thing he said—

(BRIAN STEPP faces upstage.)

BRIAN STEPP (*Jock*)

Where’s Emily?

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

Someone said she’s still in the school and he bolted. *(BRIAN runs full speed off-stage and the Company men tackle him to the ground.)* We literally had to tackle him to the ground because he was running back to get her.

[Projection: 2:00pm]

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

In less than two hours, we had search warrants on both the Harris and Klebold’s homes and when the detectives get there, they found explosive devices.

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

(Holding a cordless phone) When I got to the Klebolds, the police told us to get out of the house because of the bombs so we stood outside and Tom’s on his cell with the lawyer and I said, “Why do you need a lawyer? You don’t know if it’s Dylan.” And I’m tellin’ Sue, “I cannot believe Dylan would do anything like this.”

[Projection: 3:00pm]

(EMILY faces upstage.)

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

The last time I talked to my daughter was about 3 o'clock.

EMILY STEPP (*Perfect*)

Mom, just level with me: the police aren't coming, are they?

RUTH FELDMAN

No, Emily, I guarantee they are coming.

EMILY STEPP

I just want you to know that you're the best mom ever and I really, really love you.

RUTH FELDMAN

And I'm like, "Now I don't want to hear any more of this. Just knock it off. Stop it right now."

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

The police aren't telling us anything, so I decide to call home, "Brooks, have you heard anything?" he says—

(*BROOKS faces upstage.*)

BROOKS BROWN (*AP*)

It's Dylan, mom.

JUDY BROWN

Are you sure?

BROOKS BROWN

Yes.

JUDY BROWN

Did they put his name on the TV?

BROOKS BROWN

Yes mom, it's Dylan.

JUDY BROWN

So I turn to Tom and Sue and said, "It's Dylan."

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

I mean, are you a parent? (*he's not*) well, it's an indescribable feeling of helplessness. Indescribable.

[Projection: 3:21pm]

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

When the SWAT team entered the library, they found the bodies of what appeared to be two shooters: Harris had shot himself in the mouth and Klebold had shot himself in the left temple.

[Projection: 4:45pm]

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

A friend called and said that they had seen them loading Emily into a bus. We rushed over to Leawood and they made an announcement up on the school stage--

SCHOOL OFFICIAL (*AP*)

The last bus is being unloaded.

RUTH FELDMAN

We were watching the kids go past the doorway--

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

I was kind of balanced on a fence outside watching through the bus windows and I thought I saw Rachel. Then the girl got off --

RUTH FELDMAN

No Emily.

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

No Rachel.

SCHOOL OFFICIAL (*AP*)

If you haven't reunited with your child, we want you to go over here to this table.

RUTH FELDMAN

God, did that hit me, what they were saying. People started fainting and screaming and then I heard—

SCHOOL OFFICIAL (*AP*)

This is Emily Stepp and if her parents are here; please come forward.

RUTH FELDMAN

She was on the corner of the stage just standing there. My husband rushes up there and she literally just fell off the stage into his arms. And then I can't believe they made this announcement--

SCHOOL OFFICIAL (*AP*)

If your student is not here then you probably need to go home and get dental records.

RUTH FELDMAN

And-- to this day I still don't remember which parent this was—but one lady just vomited all over the place.

[Projection: 6:00pm]

[The Company crosses to a row of chairs: TOM MAUSER, DARRELL SCOTT, DOREEN TOMLIN (Rebel) and BRAD (Jock) & MISTY BERNALL (Faith) sitting in a row of chairs: DOREEN TOMLIN is from hard working, religious simple folk with a touch of a Wisconsin accent. DOREEN wears a cross; BRAD and MISTY are conservative religious, well-bred Mid-Westerners; SUE TOWNSEND (Perfect) is a Type-A mother; she doesn't miss a trick.]

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

They asked the parents whose kids hadn't been accounted for to go into a different room.

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

There was only a handful of us left.

BRAD BERNALL (*Jock*)

We kept looking for Cassie.

MISTY BERNALL (*Faith*)

We'd go to the sidewalk, we checked the streets to see if a bus was coming.

DOREEN TOMLIN (*Rebel*)

I was getting envious of parents who were finding their kids, or those that kept screaming out their kids' names. I had no enthusiasm to jump up and look for John. I think the Lord was already letting it settle in my heart that he wasn't coming back.

SUE TOWNSEND (*Perfect*)

One of the firemen was bending over doing something in his bag and I said, "are there any more busses?" And I remember he glanced up at me and then he looked back at his bag and he said, "I think there's one more." I think he did that because he didn't want to tell me "that's it, there's no more buses."

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

We were all sitting there waiting for a bus that would never come.

[Projection: 6:30pm]

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

When we got home, I called a bunch of people to say, "We got Emily. She's okay." I hang up and thought, "whew, what a day" and I look outside and see my neighbors Don and Dee Fleming, standing in their driveway. I walked across the street and they were like, "You got Emily...that's awesome" and I said, "have you heard anything about Kelly?" and they said "No."

[Projection: 11:00pm]

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

The doorbell rang it was the sheriff's deputy saying that there might still be students in the school, but the police wouldn't enter much of the building because of the bombs. I just kept thinking Daniel could be bleeding to death and the police weren't moving to get to him.

[Projection: 12:15am]

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

Columbine's a two hundred fifty thousand square foot school so we knew that it was gonna be an all-nighter.

[Projection: 1:40am]

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

I held on thinking he might be hiding in a closet or classroom just waiting it out. I went down to my basement so I wouldn't wake my wife and I just wept, "Lord, please, I don't want to lose my son."

[Projection: 2:05am]

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

By the time the SWAT team got into the cafeteria, there was literally water about this deep because of the sprinklers. (*She gestures to her knees*) Command gets this call, "Tell your SWAT guys do not touch any backpacks" well the team walks into 451 floating backpacks and every time one hits into their leg, they wonder if they're gonna blow up.

[Projection: 3:00am]

MISTY BERNALL (*Faith*)

I couldn't sleep. I was laying there thinking, "Cassie's over the fence a hundred yards away and they won't let us get to her".

BRAD BERNALL (*Jock*)

We decided to shower and walk to the school. We ran into a police officer and said we just wanted to know what the truth is, if there is anyone left alive in there. He paused and said, "No." I said "Thanks we appreciate your honesty."

[Projection: 6:00am]

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

The next morning, the Rocky Mountain News published a photo from the front of the building.

[Projection: Rocky Mountain News photo from April 21, 1999]

Well, the Rohrbough's wake up and open up paper and find a picture of Daniel. That's how they found out he was dead.

[Projection: Noon]

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

We didn't get official notice until noon that Rachel was the first person killed at Columbine. And I remember sitting with my son Craig on the curb out front of his mom's house, we're just sitting there and out of the blue he says, "Dad, I was in the library. I saw what happened. I saw it all." So I realized right then that we had two casualties not just one.

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

The sheriff's office finally confirmed that Daniel's body was in the library. He was found lying under a table with chairs turned over around him; he was using them to defend himself. Eric had shot him in the face.

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

All of us that were in the gym that night...we had no idea who we were, but within 24 hours we were going to be connected for the rest of our lives.

THE NEXT DAY

(*KATE BATTAN enters the school library.*)

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

It wasn't until the next morning that I actually got inside the school. You know, you never expect to go into a quiet school. They're not quiet; they're *never* quiet; they're full of kids. We walked down the main hallway and you're seeing shoes, the kids literally ran out of them; lockers that have bullet holes in them, burn marks on the carpet. The first place that we went was the library. I walked to the very first table: underneath there was a young lady with long brown hair and a blue long sleeve shirt, blue jeans and brown boots. I took a piece of paper and put number 1 and set it on the floor next to her and that became victim number 1 and that was Lauren Townsend. (#1) I took a picture of her with my Polaroid and we did that with every one of the bodies as we went through. (#2)

(*Projection: Photos of the victims. Note: the photos are not crime scene photos, but their high school pictures.*)

This should be the first time the audience sees the victims. The projections are in the following order and projected when indicated below: Lauren Townsend, Kelly Fleming, John Tomlin, Corey DePooter, Daniel Mauser, Matthew Kechter, Isaiah Shoels, Steve Curnow, Cassie Bernall, and Kyle Velasquez.

KATE BATTAN

You know, there are things that I'll never share because they're just mine but um, (#3) seeing college applications, what books they were reading and just seeing all this potential— (#4) all these things that could've been-- gone, in a second. (#5) You just see somebody that was working on homework-- you look at it and you're like... (*beat*; #6) I deal with death all the time, but something that is so senseless and so violent, you just can't prepare for that. (#7) I remember one of the kids holding his baseball cap in his hands as tight as he can; (#8)

another kid had a pen in his hand and I wanted to know what he wanted to write. (#9) Things like that, you know, haunt you. (#10. *Note: there are two spaces skipped before the photos 13-15 are projected.*) I gave Dave Sanders number 13, superstitious I didn't want that to go to a kid (#13) and then 14 and 15 were Danny and Rachel outside. (*Projection: #14 & 15.*) So that's how I met my victims. (*KATE walks over to the center of the room.*) When I saw Harris and Klebold, I didn't feel anything for them. I didn't look at these two boys and say, "Why did you do this?" Instead—and I apologize that I even called them boys 'cause I hate that--when I looked at these two, it's like ok, here's the gun, here's the splatter, here's what I can deduce from what I'm seeing. It was pretty clear it was one of those one, two, three, boom.

ONE WEEK

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

That night, one of the other pastors said, "We better go back to our churches. People will be coming soon." A background theme kept playing in my head "who were the dumb parents of this mess?" As I was handing out Eucharist, "Body of Christ" --

COMPANY

(*sotto voce*) Amen.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

"Body of Christ" someone says--

COMPANY

(*sotto voce*) Klebold.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

I say, "Body of Christ" I get--

COMPANY

(*sotto voce*) Klebold. Don't forget them in their hour of need.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

I said, "If they need me, have them call." Two days later, I get a call from Tom Klebold: "I need your help."

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

Dylan's service was in secret. Sue wanted us to go, but it was the same day as Rachel Scott's. Her funeral was held at this church that was an old Kmart building and it was absolutely packed: hundreds of people. When we got to Dylan's: it was a room as big as this kitchen and there were maybe 10 of us.

RANDY BROWN

None of his friends were there.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

I looked around the room--you cannot imagine-- this is a family in deep, unimaginable pain.

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

Sue said, “He’s in the next room.” And I remember, a friend of ours asked is she could sing ‘Amazing Grace.’ (*The Company begins to hum the song.*) We went in and there was Dylan. He was in this box, like a cardboard box in the shape of a coffin. See, he was going to be cremated.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

I stand there and stare at this boy...the body of this boy...he had grown since I last saw him--

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

He had on a short sleeve dress shirt. I just remember thinkin’ I never saw him dressed up; he always had on t-shirts.

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)

He had a little nick on his chin.

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

By his head was this pile of Beanie Babies, near the wound.

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)

I just wanted to talk to him. I put my hand on his shoulder...and said, “God rest your soul.”

DON MARXHAUSEN (*Jock*)

And I’m thinking, “How do I commend this boy – this mass murderer – to heaven? (*“Amazing Grace” ends.*) We see death many times and experience many different forms of grief, but a parent’s love is as faithful as God’s: it never dies.

ONE YEAR

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

We were...numb. The entire community was in shock, for months. But I’ll tell you one of the little side effects was that people were so nice.

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

Our hearts just went out to those families.

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

There was certainly a lot of love. There was this amazing make-shift memorial in Clement Park--

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

In the school parking lot, Rachel’s car was just covered with flowers and stuffed animals.

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

There was no road rage. “You go ahead of me.” “No, you.” It *felt* like a community.

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

But soon enough there were a lot of controversies—

COMPANY

15

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

Greg Zanis put up fifteen crosses on the hill behind Columbine. Well, Danny Rohrbough's dad got pretty upset—

BRIAN ROHRBOUGH (*Jock*)

I contacted the park service to take those two crosses down, and when they didn't, I took care of it myself.

COMPANY

13

BRIAN ROHRBOUGH (*Jock*)

You don't raise a monument to Adolf Hitler in the Holocaust Museum and it's not gonna happen here.

COMPANY

15

TOM MAUSER

A few months later Cassie Bernal's church put up fifteen trees but some of the victims' fathers sawed down the two trees at the center.

COMPANY

13

TOM MAUSER

One of Cassie's youth group members spoke up—

YOUTH GROUP MEMBER (*Faith*)

If there's *more* hate, then when does it stop?

DARRELL SCOTT

Tragedy can never sustain unity. Like after 9/11, there was certainly a feeling of closeness-- Democrats and Republicans singing 'God Bless America'—but within three months, we're all fightin' with each other like nothing ever happened.

TOM MAUSER (*AP*)

Ten days after Columbine, the NRA had its annual national convention in Denver of all places. Well, I got up and spoke at a rally... (*Giving the speech*) One night, my son Daniel said to me at dinner, "Dad, did you know there were loopholes in the Brady Bill?" and I just blew it off. Two weeks later he was killed with a gun that was purchased through one of those loopholes. Something is wrong in this country when a child can grab a gun so easily and shoot a bullet into the middle of a child's face, as my son experienced. (*applause*)

DARRELL SCOTT (*Prep*)

A month after, I spoke before Congress... (*DARRELL gives a speech to the Company*)
Politicians immediately look for a scapegoat such as the NRA. In the Bible when Cain slew Abel, the villain was not the club he used or the National Club Association - the true killer was Cain, and his reason found only in his heart. We've refused to honor God in our schools, and in doing so we opened the doors to violence and hatred. (*applause*)

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

When things like this happen, people are going to be angry. Even I thought if Harris and Klebold lived, the community would have had a place to put all that anger but there's always going to be people that want to find somebody or something to blame. Have you talked to The Browns? Well, they're not big fans of the sheriff's office and that's okay we have big shoulders.

RANDY BROWN

What burns me up is when people say "there's nothing we coulda done to stop it." Because that is simply not true.

JUDY BROWN

At the time, our son was scared of Eric.

RANDY BROWN

He bragged about making pipe bombs on his webpage— and this was a year *before* the shootings.

JUDY BROWN

He threatened Brooks' life and *that's* when we filed the police report.

(Projection: The Browns 1998 Police Report)

RANDY BROWN

We gave the police a copy of his webpages--

JUDY BROWN

We kept calling them to follow up and finally we just gave up.

RANDY BROWN

They dropped the case. They just dropped it and never called us.

JUDY BROWN

A year later, Columbine happens.

RANDY BROWN

Immediately Sheriff Stone starts telling the press that Brooks was a suspect.

JUDY BROWN

We were hated by everyone. The kids were calling Brooks a murderer—at Matt Kechter’s funeral, the football team was planning revenge on him.

RANDY BROWN

We kept saying, “You’ve got it all wrong, Brooks was the one who turned Eric into the police.”

JUDY BROWN

We kept calling the police to help them find the report--

RANDY BROWN

Yeah, we thought they lost it or something. We were so naïve.

JUDY BROWN

The police denied it. They said there is no Brown report. It doesn’t exist.

RANDY BROWN

The truth is they were holding secret meetings to cover-up that fact they had our report and did nothing.

JUDY BROWN

So, they accused Brooks and made us look like liars.

RANDY BROWN

Who you gonna believe? The police or The Browns whose son was friends with the shooters?

JUDY BROWN

Randy luckily found the report number in his old day timer so they had to release it, but it took six months before they cleared Brooks name. Even today, people still think he was involved with it.

RANDY BROWN

All this is while families are burying their children-- that’s how horrible these people were.

JUDY BROWN

And Kate Battan was a part of that.

KATE BATTAN (*Perfect*)

You can coulda, woulda, shoulda all you want— Yes, absolutely, The Browns made that report with the webpages. In hindsight, wouldn’t it have been great if we had done more? Sure. You can always look back and go, wow, I wish we had knocked on the Harris’ door and told the dad, have you seen your son’s webpage? But we didn’t. Would that have stopped Harris and Klebold? I don’t know. (*beat*) You know, in every other homicide that I’ve had in my career, I still have contact with almost all of my families; unfortunately with Columbine some of the relationships that we had with the family members started to fall apart and that breaks my heart about this case more than anything. I told you emotions are

pretty close to the surface here-- (*indicating herself*) and not just the girl who walked into the school that day, but everybody. You just try to move forward and find a new normal.

JUDY BROWN (*Rebel*)

Normal is a funny word. I don't think any of us went back to normal.

RANDY BROWN (*Prep*)

Our lives are before Columbine and after Columbine.

JUDY BROWN

(*Breaks down*) You know as parents, I've made some terrible mistakes-

RANDY BROWN

(*overlapping*) Me too.

JUDY BROWN

You *have* to go back and ask, why did I do that? But that *never* happened with Columbine. We had the opportunity to be the best high school in the nation, but no one wanted to say, "this is what we did wrong."

RANDY BROWN

They just wanted to move on.

JUDY BROWN

So that's what happened. Don't talk about it; just move on—

FIVE YEARS

(*FRANK is giving a tour of the school. Projection: "We are Columbine" as it appears in the school.*)

FRANK DEANGELIS (*AP*)

With most school shootings, the principal usually leaves but I always thought it would be kind of neat if I could be here when the last kid graduates that was born when Columbine happened. You know, it's like a family so I'm gonna have a hard time leavin'. Let's give ya' a little walk-through before the bell rings— so I'm comin' down this hall here, and they were firing there and I see these girls comin' out, so I get them into this gym area here and try to lock the doors. I reach into my pocket and pull out the *one* key that opens every door in this

building so I know there was someone lookin' after us that day. (*He blesses himself.*) You know, there's really two reasons why I'm here today: I got counseling early on and my faith.

And the third reason is that I love what I'm doing. It's all about relationships. I tell my teachers all the time: they don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. You know, at assemblies --- I've done crazy things. I've come in as Barry Manilow singin' Copacabana, this last time I was Neptune-- I came out of this seashell, with the thing- and the kids love it. I make fun of myself but they know I care about 'em. I just remember these kids tellin' me after the shootings, 'Mr. D-, if we don't go back in that building then the two murderers won.'" So for the new school year, I came up with this theme of take back the school. On our first day back, we did a rally down here in the student parking lot and we're all in We Are Columbine T-Shirts, and there was a real sense of pride. But after any tragedy,

everybody's gonna come out to tell you how to "make Columbine better." God, there was so much made of the bullying-- look, there's bullying in every school and most kids realize, if they're smart enough, they're not gonna do it in front of adults. Okay, I was a coach so immediately, you know, "you let it slide" but time and time again we have proved if a kid screwed up it didn't matter if he was a jock, non-jock, musician, white, black-- I turned my own son in for violating drinking and he was a good wrestler and it cost him a chance to go to State. Look, I have a lot of faults but I believe in honesty and integrity, and so being questioned on that really bothered me. Bottom line: I don't want Columbine to be associated as the place that had one of the worst high school shootings in history; I want it to be about what it is: family.

BETTY SHOELS (*Jock*)

My brother's family were the only black kids in Columbine but Isaiah had good friends 'cause he liked to joke-- he used to tease his Aunt Betty something terrible. He loved people but a lot of times he was deceived—those who really wanted to be his friends and those who-- (*long pause*) he was harassed. (*Tears roll down her face, but she never loses her stern demeanor.*) He was called...names, and a lot of times went along with them calling him names. He liked to joke to compensate...a lot of black people compensate, okay, in this environment. The principal been told what was going on, "It's not gonna happen at this school" is what we was told, but my niece she told me what was goin' on. She begged me, "Please, please Aunt Betty, talk Daddy into gettin' us out." But before I could really have a serious conversation with my brother, Isaiah was killed. The two boys called him a nigger. They saw him under the table and they said, "There's that nigger" and shot him. Now, when you think Columbine do you think of it as a hate crime? (*She exits.*)

FRANK DEANGELIS

On the night of the shootings I was gonna address people for the first time at Light of the World Church. They called me up and the people, all of a sudden started cheering and clapping. And I literally felt the guilt: I mean, it happened on *my* watch. Parents drop their kids off with the expectation they're gonna be home at 3 o'clock -- so I said I love you guys and people are gonna tell you time will heal. But I'm not gonna lie to you; these scars that we have today are gonna be with us for the rest of our lives.

TEN YEARS

(*Lights up on LANCE KIRKLIN. Sounds of kids playing in the park. He has a basic cellphone and keys to his truck.*)

LANCE KIRKLIN (*Prep*)

So yeah...I got shot five times. (*He shows us where he got shot.*) Here (*His right thigh*) my knees (*points each out*) one on my foot here, my chest and-- oh yeah, my face...it was a shotgun blast, so the hole was basically, from my ear to my eye to the inside of my chin. If you look at that photo from outside the school, there's this big bloodstain on the sidewalk next to Dan Rohrbough—and that was me. After I was hit, I woke up and saw this blue suit run past me and I'm thinking, "should I ask for help?" Because the last time I asked I heard, "Sure I'll help you" and I heard like a click and like a sonic boom, and I felt my face like twist, and just watch it spray, like all over. And that was Eric Harris...but I was like "Screw

it, what's the worst that could happen?" so I put my hand up and this EMS picks me up and throws me in the back of the ambulance and I'm pissed as hell 'cause he hits my knee on the bumper or whatever and I'm like "Now that son of a bitch is going to hear about that." And that's it. I was out for two weeks. My first real memory was waking up in the hospital and my dad's like, "Lance, we gotta getcha ready Aerosmith's coming to see you." And I'm like, "Okay, sounds like a great idea" and in comes Aerosmith. And Shania Twain came by...and I proposed to her. *(He smiles)* She didn't say no. *(A rock flies out on stage.)*

PATRICK KIRKLIN *(AP)- VO*
Dad.

LANCE KIRKLIN
What's up, dude?

PATRICK KIRKLIN *(AP)- VO*
He's throwin' rocks at me.

LANCE KIRKLIN
Tell him to stop.

PATRICK KIRKLIN *(AP)- VO*
I did and he won't stop.

LANCE KIRKLIN
Tell him I said he *has* to stop.

PATRICK KIRKLIN *(AP)- VO*
Okay.

LANCE KIRKLIN
He'll be ten in October. Yeah, they get along, like brothers do. You know, I thought I'd be a dad, but not when I was 19.

(Lights up on DIWATA PEREZ. She's in nurse's scrubs, holding a Starbucks cup.)

DIWATA PEREZ *(Rebel)*
Yeah, my mom being a Filipino woman, she was like, "oh my God, Diwata, you have to do nursing..." But that was on the back burner until, actually, when Columbine happened and my best friend Jeanna, she was shot in the library under the same table as me, and she's all, "Can you please tell my mom and dad that I love them?" And I was like, "Nope. I'm not gonna tell them. And you know why? You're going to be fine." So when we'd visit her in the hospital that's when I was like, "Yep. *That's* what I want to do. No question." So right now I work in the ICU, with babies and their families.

(Lights on RUTH FELDMAN who is bringing a coffee cup to EMILY STEPP who is holding her iPhone. BRLAN STEPP sits on his smartphone. He's wearing a DQ hat, shirt, and nametag.)

RUTH FELDMAN *(Faith)*

It does not surprise me that Emily's a counselor. (*She picks up a toy train*) She always wants to talk everything through—(*LOGAN makes baby sounds*) Is that your train, Logan? Choo-choo?
It's a very cool choo-choo train.

EMILY STEPP (*Perfect*)

You can tell she hates being a grandma. (*RUTH exits with the train doing baby-talk*) I always wanted to be a counselor. When I was looking for a position, there were three openings at Columbine but I ended up at Chatfield --

BRIAN STEPP (*Jock*)

(*Doesn't look up from his smartphone*) Chatrat.

EMILY STEPP

Thanks Bri.

BRIAN STEPP

(*Still doesn't look up*) Welcome.

RUTH FELDMAN

(*explaining*) Columbine kids call Chatfield kids "Chatrats."

EMILY STEPP

It's our rival school. Actually, after the shooting, Brian and I had to finish the last two weeks of the year over at Chatfield.

BRIAN STEPP

Yeah, they were just gonna give us the rest of the year off and I was down for that.

EMILY STEPP

I don't think they wanted *that* day to be the last day for the seniors.

BRIAN STEPP

Yeah, that would've sucked.

BROOKS BROWN (*AP*)

My last day at Columbine ended up being April 20. I was friends with Dylan and Eric so naturally I was a suspect. The school called my parents and said, "People are threatening Brooks' life and he shouldn't come back." That was awful but I wanted to see my friends you know, and defend myself, and that's when they said, "we noticed on his transcript that he's not set to graduate so if he doesn't come back, we'll graduate him." So I took my diploma and said fuck you to Columbine.

EMILY STEPP (*Perfect*)

I'm glad I'm still in Littleton—I'm close to my family...it would be sad if my mom and Brian didn't get to see Logan—

RUTH FELDMAN (*Faith*)

(*Can't even process that*) No, that would not be...I would have to move.

EMILY STEPP

And honestly, I'm glad that I ended up working at Chatfield. I think working at Columbine would be harder to do things like fire drills. *(She tucks her hair around her ear with her finger.)*

Yeah, it's still a trigger for me. I let them know, "if it's a drill, please let me know in advance."

(BRIAN pockets his smartphone and gets up.)

BRIAN STEPP *(Jock)*

Got to go.

RUTH FELDMAN

Off to work?

BRIAN STEPP

Yeah. *(to the audience)* Nice to meet you. *(to the baby as he exits.)* Later, Logan.

(Beat.)

RUTH FELDMAN

Yeah, Brian doesn't talk about the shootings. He's only talked to me one time and that was on that day and has refused to talk about it ever since.

EMILY STEPP

It was hard because I was off to college so I didn't see him very much.

RUTH FELDMAN

He couldn't go back to school; he just couldn't. He ended up dropping out after his junior year.

EMILY STEPP

I didn't have to go back, like Brian did. I didn't have to deal with all the memories that were there.

DIWATA PEREZ *(Rebel)*

I just remember people were laughing again. I was like how is everything going back to normal? Do you guys not realize what just happened here?

BROOKS BROWN

I was ostracized and if anyone would spend time with me I was like grateful that they were willing to.

LANCE KIRKLIN

The constant stares. All the friggin' time. People would stare at my face and not say anything.

EMILY STEPP

I don't ever remember being super angry, just this overwhelming feeling of sadness.

DIWATA PEREZ

Oh I was angry. When anyone would be like, "Oh, I understand..." I wanted to wallop them in the face.

LANCE KIRKLIN

I got my GED and moved out...and it was just a big nonstop party for nine, ten months.
(He gestures to his kids.)

BROOKS BROWN

I drank. A lot.

LANCE KIRKLIN

And their mom came to one of those parties, and just kind of...never left.

BROOKS BROWN

I just felt worthless. It's been like a decade of self-hate.

DIWATA PEREZ

You know, I was in the library that day. It was me, Lauren, Valeen, Lisa and my best friend Jeanna, all cramped under one table...and I was the only one that wasn't injured— *(Puts hand up in front of her)* obviously, I know it wasn't my fault, I couldn't do anything, lalalala but the problem is that in your head, you dream up this big picture of how you want to be-- Like Jeanna. I haven't even talked to her in like 10 years...because I left her in that library. I mean, I didn't even drag her, I didn't *try* to drag her, I didn't do any of that. I just left her.

LANCE KIRKLIN

You know, I got shot five times, but Dan, he got shot once and died-- I mean, he was religious, a good person, he would do better for society than I *ever* would, but why, you know, why did I survive?

(BROOKS addresses the audience. Note: Brooks reflects on this moment thirteen years after and like many survivors, wishes he could have done more. The moment is human, honest, and full of emotion.)

BROOKS BROWN

You know, I've been dealing with some Columbine shit that I've never talked about with anybody-- even my parents— but it's the kinda thing I need to start talking about so...*(clears his throat; takes a drag.)* I've gone over that day a million times with a million people: it was fourth period, I went out to have a cigarette and saw Eric pull up in the parking lot. And when I walked over to him, the story I've always told is that I didn't know what he was up to. But the truth is when I saw him there...he was so serene, like there was this peace to him and he was never like that. And that's when I knew. I just knew. And then he said, "Brooks, I like you now get out of here. Go home." And I did. I walked away. I walked away, knowing my little brother was in the cafeteria, knowing what was about to happen. And when I heard the gunshots, I knew who was shooting. And everyone that day was constantly saying, "Don't worry about it, Brooks, you did everything you could" but I didn't-

- and Jesus, I know I'm not the only person who is living with guilt—but I was the *only* one who could have done something to stop it.

DIWATA PEREZ

You know, if Lauren were still here she would probably be a veterinarian right now, doing like all these great things and for a long time I kept thinking “what am I doing? I have nothing to show for ten years of my life”— and then I became a mom and instead of all about me, now I'm all about her.

THIRTEEN YEARS

(Lights up on RUTH FELDMAN, wiping down the counter at the Dairy Queen.)

RUTH FELDMAN

When Columbine happened, I was a manager; now I own the place. Most of the kids that work here are Columbine kids-- they start when they're 15 or 16, and they stay all the way through college-- Emily calls it the Dairy Queen Mafia: once you get in, you never get out. But these kids today, they really don't know much about the shootings; they were babies when it happened and the school doesn't talk about it. And that's why the Memorial was so important. I'll never forget sitting in my yard and Dee Fleming comes over—she lost her daughter Kelly in the library—and I stupidly asked, “So how's the memorial going?” And she says, “well, to tell you the truth, Ruth, I just don't think there's much interest in building it.” And that just sunk in. So I started talking to Kirsten this lady who did some printing for the Dairy Queen, and we went to the Memorial Committee and asked, “Can we help?”

(KIRSTEN KREILING, a highly professional local business woman with extremely good taste, enters. She's no-nonsense. While RUTH and KIRSTEN are complete opposites; they have great affection for each other. RUTH hands her a drink.)

KIRSTEN KREILING *(Perfect)*

They thought we were a couple of whack jobs.

RUTH FELDMAN

Look at those two. Ok, you guys: go for it.

KIRSTEN KREILING

Sure, knock yourselves out.

RUTH FELDMAN

I left that meeting going, they don't know us, do they?

KIRSTEN KREILING

By then, we needed to raise about a million dollars. And we didn't have a clue.

RUTH FELDMAN

So we started with a car wash—

KIRSTEN KREILING

which was an abysmal failure—

RUTH FELDMAN

It rained.

KIRSTEN KREILING

But we just adopted that whole mantra—

RUTH FELDMAN AND KIRSTEN KREILING

Failure's not an option

KIRSTEN KREILING

And we just started showing up at festivals, you know, handin' out donation envelopes—

RUTH FELDMAN

At Western Welcome Week, our booth was near this gentleman who was giving pony rides and he decided to donate all of his proceeds to the memorial. So, we gave pony rides until a kid fell off and then that was done. No more pony rides.

KIRSTEN KREILING

I had a little girl come into my shop and gave me a shoebox.

RUTH FELDMAN

So cute.

KIRSTEN KREILING

She had gone door-to-door in her neighborhood and there was like 12 dollars and fifty cents in there.

RUTH FELDMAN

I mean it wasn't a lot of money every time, but it was adding up.

KIRSTEN KREILING

And we got better at it as we went along. Starbucks came up with special coffee to help us raise money. We even got Bill Clinton to come to the groundbreaking.

RUTH FELDMAN

Eventually people kind of got just tired of us and said just give 'em some money. You think I'm kidding?

KIRSTEN KREILING

This guy calls and says, "how much do you need to finish it?" And I told him, "about \$300,000" and he says, "well, I wanna take care of that, but I want you to stop fundraising immediately. I'm tired of hearing you broads asking for money."

RUTH FELDMAN

And that was pretty much it.

KIRSTEN KREILING

All total, from when Ruth and I got involved, we raised over a million dollars. Everyone just had a connection to Columbine. For me, I never, ever wanted those families to think that we forgot them.

(Crying. RUTH takes her arm. Music: 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole plays softly. Projection: Image of the Memorial at sunset with a view of the Rockies in the background.)

RUTH FELDMAN

The dedication was so beautiful...

KIRSTEN KRIELING

Dawn Anna spoke, she always spoke for the families...

DAWN ANNA (*Rebel*)

They're here. Can you feel them? Our angels? Kyle, Kelly, Dan, Matt, Corey, Steven, Rachel, Daniel, John, Cassie, Isaiah, Dave, and my Lauren.

KIRSTEN KREILING

Then we let the doves go. 200 of them.

RUTH FELDMAN

With the sun setting behind the mountains...so beautiful.

KIRSTEN KREILING

I just remember sitting in the memorial that night, thinking--

RUTH FELDMAN

Can you believe this is real?

KIRSTEN KREILING

I mean, it's over. It's finally over.

(RUTH takes KIRSTEN's hand. Lights fade to black.)

TODAY

(In the darkness, we hear two horrific gunshots. We hear the first responder 911 clips from Virginia Tech, Aurora, and Newtown Shootings. Sirens and fire alarms fade as lights come up on BROOKS BROWN, smoking a cigarette.)

BROOKS BROWN (*AP*)

Funny, the way I know that these shootings happen? my phone dies— yeah, it freezes and dies because of the number of calls: “Hi Brooks, this is Steven from Fox News” because everyone wants to know how to deal with it. (*beat*) But the sad thing is most of this country is stuck on one solution. God, we would love it to be one thing that we can outlaw or blame, but part of it is inside of us, like the little things we know we don't like about ourselves and do nothing about but is the first thing we point at in someone else- constantly

I hear “the parents, the parents—look, Eric, Dylan and I were all friends, right? and Eric and Dylan had *very* different upbringings but ended in the same place— now, how many steps away were my parents from theirs?

ACTOR PLAYING ERIC

To this day, the parents of Eric Harris have never spoken publically about their son or his role in the shootings. Ten years after Columbine, Oprah Magazine published an essay written by Susan Klebold.

(The ACTOR PLAYING ERIC hands the ACTOR WHO PLAYED DYLAN a piece of paper.)

ACTOR WHO PLAYED DYLAN

(reads) My son Dylan was a product of my life's work. I thought, "If I had been a better mother, I would have known this was coming." I can't help but remember in the days before he died, I held his scratchy face between my palms and told him that I loved him. Had he felt pressured by this? I longed to talk to him one last time and ask him what he had been thinking. I concluded that he must not have loved me, because love would have prevented him from doing what he did. And though at moments I was angry with him, mostly I thought that I was the one who needed his forgiveness because I'd failed to see that he needed help. *(beat)* I will never be able to explain or excuse what he did. For the rest of my life, I will be haunted by the horror and anguish he caused. I cannot look at a child without thinking about how my son's schoolmates spent the last moments of their lives. Dylan changed everything I believed about love. I think I believed that if I loved someone as deeply as I loved him, I would know if he were in trouble. My maternal instincts would keep him safe. But I didn't know, and my instincts weren't enough.

(THE ACTOR PLAYING DYLAN turns and watches DIWATA PEREZ kneel center, as if looking at her daughter.)

DIWATA PEREZ *(Rebel)*

You know, I look at my daughter and think, “There is a purpose for you in this world, whether or not you know what it is that you're going to do in this lifetime but I can only *hope* that you're gonna do great things.

(The actors write the victim's names on the slate. When finished, they turn to the audience.)

ACTORS

Thank you. Good night.

(The actors exit. The lights fade, save for the illuminated chalkboard memorial.)

END OF PLAY

PRODUCTION NOTES

Staging *columbinus* is a challenging task. We were heavily influenced by the theatrical styles of Bertolt Brecht and Peter Brook: minimalist theatre with a strong awareness of the actor, the space, and the reason why the artists are doing the play. The production should be simple and honest. There should be no attempt to create sets and costumes for each location or for transitions between scenes or to mask anything offstage. The scenes run like a surreal river, each flowing into the next. Therefore, sound and lighting are major elements, constantly redefining the space into new locations.

The projections and some of the technical elements are a challenging but critical undertaking. The technical sequences like **I.M.** or **911** should never be spoken by the actors. It robs the audience of the real experiences intended: the silent communication of teenagers and the harsh reality of the events of April 20, 1999. Although we explored the use of live video feed in several moments, **Work** was the only scene where it was successfully employed. The use of live video creates the problem of split focus (moments in which the audience isn't sure whether to watch the actors or the video), so we encourage you to explore its use long before you reach **Tech**. Remember, the story needs to be told clearly, simply, and as humanly as possible. After four years and three productions, we discovered: less is more.

The chalkboard memorial is one of the most powerful moments in the production. There is much controversy about whether or not to include the names of Dylan and Eric among the victims of the Columbine tragedy. We did not. We felt the play focuses so heavily on Dylan and Eric that it was a more fitting memorial to end by remembering the victims.

We'll mention the obvious: there should be absolutely no cutting, censoring or editing of *columbinus*. First of all, it's illegal. Secondly, by producing the play, you have a responsibility to the people who shared their stories with us. The world of adolescents and the Columbine tragedy are filled with the beautiful and the disturbing. They need to exist as they were discovered; otherwise it is not truthful.

Engaging the actors/designers in the reason why they are doing the show should be at the heart of every production of *columbinus*. We encourage everyone involved in the production to research the events of the Columbine shootings. We also encourage the actors—provided they aren't teenagers themselves—to take some time to observe adolescents. Engage them in conversation—but do more listening than talking. You'll be amazed at what you hear.

—P J Paparelli
Feb. 1, 2007