

(A) EMMA

BARRY

→ Emma! Wait til you hear the news. Dee Dee got you on Eddie Sharpe. Tomorrow at 8. That's an audience of 16 million!

EMMA

Wow. That's amazing. Thank you.

DEE DEE

I'm glad I could help. Everything I do from now on comes from a place of love.

EMMA

I'm going to take a stand and I want to thank you all, because without your love and support I never would have found the courage. But... um... the reason I came was to tell you that I'm going to do it *my way*. I'm not going on TV.

There is a pause while everyone processes this.

DEE DEE

You owe me a fucking house!

*DEE DEE lunges at EMMA, screaming.
HAWKINS, SHELDON & ANGIE leap to
restrain DEE DEE. BARRY shields EMMA.*

HAWKINS & BARRY & SHELDON

(Ad libs.)

Whoa! Whoa! Take it easy!

BARRY

Get her outta here!

*HAWKINS, SHELDON & ANGIE wrestle DEE
DEE out the door.
BARRY is alone with EMMA. He looks at
her.*

BARRY (CONT'D)

She's a very passionate woman.

EMMA

Yeah. TV's just not my thing.

BARRY

Okay.

EMMA

I have a plan, and it's a good plan. I just need time to work on it a bit. Don't worry. I'm not giving up.

BARRY

Sure.

EMMA

I'm sorry.

BARRY

Hey, honey, we screwed things up every step of the way. If you have a plan, I have faith. You're smarter than all of us put together. I just wish there was a prom waiting for you at the end of all this.

EMMA

I've been giving this a lot of thought. Obviously. Despite all the recent awfulness, I still believe everybody has good in them, it's just with some people you have to scrape away the crap to see it. So. This is what's going to happen: I'm going to do my thing and people are going to listen and some will even cry because they will realize what they did was wrong, and in the end, there will be a kick ass Prom in Edgewater Indiana for everybody, regardless of who they happen to love. I know it.

BARRY

That would be wonderful.

EMMA

And when that happens I want you to be my date.

BARRY

What? What about -

EMMA

We broke up. Just say yes. There's no one in the world I'd rather go with.

BARRY tries to hold back tears.

BARRY

Don't make me cry. I look so fat...when I cry.

EMMA

You're not fat, you're just big-boned.

They hug.

BARRY

Yes. I'll go with you. Can I wear my silver tux? The one I never wore? I still have it. Of course it needs major renovations. But I could have it FedExed.

EMMA

Well, you better because we are goin' to Prom!

She exits.

BARRY

I can't believe it.

END

#17 BARRY IS GOING TO PROM

I'M ODDLY EXCITED
PERHAPS THAT'S BECAUSE
ALTHOUGH IT SHOULDN'T MATTER
IT SOMEHOW DOES

IT'S STRANGE BUT
I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A TIME MACHINE
'CAUSE GUESS WHAT
IT'S LIKE I'M SUDDENLY SEVENTEEN
SO BOOK A WHITE LIMO, UNCORK THE DOM
AFTER TWENTY-NINE YEARS I'M FINALLY GOING TO PROM

I ONCE THOUGHT
A NIGHT LIKE THIS WASN'T IN THE CARDS
NOW I'VE GOT
A DATE, A TUX AND THE WHOLE NINE YARDS
A RATIONAL PERSON WOULD JUST STAY CALM
SINCE WHEN AM I RATIONAL? BARRY IS GOING TO PROM
THE PROM!

I WISH I COULD TELL THAT SAD KID I WAS
TO STOP CRYING INTO HIS CHEETOS
THEY SAY, "IT GETS BETTER!" GUESS WHAT? IT DOES!
WHO CARES IF YOU'RE A BIG OLD GIRL
JUST GO TO THAT GYM AND TWIRL!

③

EMMA / ALYSSA

SHELDON

~~This is a PR problem.~~

DEE DEE

No, Sheldon. We had a PR problem. This a full-blown scandal. This is the end of my career.

HAWKINS

Wait. Is that why you came here? For publicity?

DEE DEE

Don't start with me, Tom. You do not know how the world works.

HAWKINS

Yes. I do. Unfortunately.

EMMA

(numb, slowly)

ONE THING'S UNIVERSAL
LIFE'S NO DRESS REHEARSAL
WHEN PEOPLE FIND A SCAPEGOAT TO CONDEMN

WE WENT BIG AND YET WE'VE BLOWN IT
WELL I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT
ALL ALONG TONIGHT BELONGED TO THEM

~~EMMA's phone rings. Lights back up on
the real prom. ALYSSA is on her phone.~~

EMMA

→ Alyssa?

ALYSSA

I swear, I had no idea.

EMMA

How could you not know? You were on the prom committee.

ALYSSA

It was Kaylee and Shelby. They figured out we were together and they made sure I didn't find out. They didn't want me to tell you.

EMMA

I don't believe you.

ALYSSA

Do you think I would do something like this to you?

EMMA

Then come meet me.

ALYSSA

I can't.

EMMA

You can't or won't.

ALYSSA

(Crying.)
My mom is here.

EMMA

Well, leave her.

ALYSSA

She's watching me every second.

EMMA

Then tell her you're gay! Tell her we're in love! That was the plan, right?

ALYSSA

I can't. It's bad enough that Kaylee and Shelby know.

EMMA

Bad enough?

ALYSSA

I mean it's not like I thought it would be. I'm sorry.

EMMA

You're sorry. Great. That fixes everything. Have fun at the normal person's prom!

She hangs up.

ALYSSA

Emma? Emma?

END

© MR. HAWKINS

SCENE 3: SCHOOL GYM

*We are in a raucous PTA meeting.
MRS. GREENE addresses the crowd.*



MRS. GREENE

You are telling us that the State's Attorney is forcing us to hold a prom?

HAWKINS

The State's Attorney wants us to hold an inclusive prom, yes, because that's what they feel best reflects America's values.

MRS. GREENE

This is not America. This is Indiana.

HAWKINS

Just to be clear, this is America.

PARENT #1

My son will not be forced to go to a homosexual prom.

HAWKINS

Again, it's not a homosexual prom; it's an inclusive prom and you don't have to attend if you don't want to.

MALE COACH

Will there be homosexuals at this prom?

HAWKINS

Probably...

PARENTS

(Ad libs.)

So it is a gay prom! What's the difference? Call it what it is!

HAWKINS

Look I'm sorry you're upset, but the organization of the prom is within the purview of the Student Council. Let's hear what they have to say. Alyssa?

ALYSSA

Well, we want Prom to go on, obviously. It's supposed to be a celebration, for all students -

MRS. GREENE

This is not a student matter. This is about government tearing our community apart. This is big government taking away our freedom of choice.

HAWKINS

Okay. This not about government intervention. Emma? What is this about?

EMMA

I just want to go to Prom like any other kid.

HAWKINS

But you can't. Because some of the parents in this room are homophobic. That's what this is about. And that's why the courts are involved. Now I know the unfamiliar can be frightening, but the fact is a young girl at this school - an honor student - stood up and asked us all to take a closer look at our beliefs. So, let's do that. Ask yourself exactly what is it that you find so frightening about homosexuals?

END

At that very moment, the doors to the gym burst open and BARRY, TRENT, ANGIE & SHELDON rush in, picket signs in hand.

BARRY

~~Hold it! Hold it! Hold it! What you are doing is wrong!~~

Everyone is shocked.

MRS. GREENE

Excuse me... who are you?

BARRY

(To MRS. GREENE.)

Seriously? I'm Broadway's Barry Glickman!

(Calls out.)

Where's the lesbian kid?

(Emma raises her hand.)

Hi, I'm Barry. What's your name?

EMMA

Emma.

BARRY hugs her.

① DEE DEE / HAWKINS

SCENE 9: APPLEBEES

DEE DEE and HAWKINS are in a booth.



HAWKINS

I save up all my money and I go to New York every summer. I see as many Broadway shows as I can. When I run out of money, I second act 'em.

DEE DEE

Really?

HAWKINS

My point is I've seen you many, many times. I missed your Eleanor.

DEE DEE

(Assuming a voice.)

"You didn't miss a thing."

HAWKINS

Are you choking?

DEE DEE

No. I was doing Eleanor. That was the voice I used...

HAWKINS

Oh. It's uncanny.

DEE DEE

Thank you.

MRS. GREENE crosses with a friend.

MRS. GREENE

Mr. Hawkins?

HAWKINS

Mrs. Greene.

MRS. GREENE

(To DEE DEE.)

Ms. Glickman.

DEE DEE

Allen. Dee Dee Allen. Do you not have the internet in Indiana? Just type in Dee Dee. I'm the second one that comes up after Dee Dee Myers, whoever that is.

HAWKINS

She was Clinton's press secretary.

DEE DEE

Whatever. There's no excuse for ignorance is my point.

MRS. GREENE

You and your friends know nothing about us, about our town, about our people. And yet, you feel justified in telling us what to do. It seems to me that ignorance is your stock-in-trade.

HAWKINS

Miss Allen is a Tony Award winning Broadway star -

MRS. GREENE

Well, I suggest she stick to acting. Clearly she is a much more compelling personality when someone tells her where to stand and what to say.

MRS. GREENE and her friend leave.

HAWKINS

I'm sorry about that. You have to understand this town's been through a lot. We had an auto parts factory that closed down because of outsourcing. A lot of families left. The biggest industry now is the prison and it's even hard to get a job there. You picked a strange time to visit.

DEE DEE

We didn't mean to make things worse. We just thought by helping this one girl we might make the world a better place.

HAWKINS

And I appreciate that. It's just people are angry and scared and powerless. When that happens, you look for a scapegoat. Not that I'm making excuses for her...

DEE DEE

Let's drop it. You know, I've never said this before to someone, but: tell me about you.

HAWKINS

About me? Huh. I don't know. I'm just a small town principal. It can be frustrating but at least I have a job.
(Shyly.)

Single.

DEE DEE

Sorry?

HAWKINS

I'm single. Just putting that out there.

DEE DEE

I'm single too. Well, happily divorced.

HAWKINS

I think I read about that. Eddie Sharpe. The talk show host?

DEE DEE

That's right. It lasted 15 heart-pulverizing years. He's a parasite. He's got a hit TV show and he's still bleeding me dry. I hate his money-sucking guts.

HAWKINS

Well, I never liked his show.

DEE DEE

Oh. It seems we have a few things in common, you and I.

HAWKINS

I don't think so. I'm just an ordinary guy, you're a Broadway star.

END

~~#10 WE LOOK TO YOU~~

DEE DEE

~~Well, the truth is Broadway is changing. And I'm getting older. Not old, just older. Sometimes I think I should just quit.~~

HAWKINS

~~No. Please. You can't do that!~~

DEE DEE

~~Why?~~

(E)

MRS. GREENE (PICK PG. 12
OR PG. 73)

At the side of the stage, we see EMMA,
an anxious young high school student.

#3B WHAT GIRL?

ANGIE

It's all over Twitter. She lives in a small town called Edgewater, Indiana. She's a lesbian and she wanted to take her girlfriend to the high school prom and the PTA went apeshit.

MRS. GREENE, the head of the PTA,
addresses a group of reporters.

MRS. GREENE

Look, the PTA has an accepted set of rules concerning Prom: young ladies must wear non-revealing dresses, young men must wear suits or tuxes, and if a student chooses to bring a date, that person must be of the opposite sex.

REPORTER

Can't you just ban this student?

MRS. GREENE

We have been advised that there may be some legal repercussions if we prevented this girl from attending. So although it breaks my heart, we have no choice: there won't be a prom this year. Thank you.

END

MRS. GREENE exits and the reporters
follow her.

BARRY

They cancelled Prom? How could they do that?

MR. HAWKINS, the school's principal,
approaches EMMA.

EMMA

How could they do that?

TRENT

It's hard to believe this kind of thing still happens.

HAWKINS

It's amazing this kind of thing still happens.

ACT TWO
SCENE 11: PRESS CONFERENCE

#12 ENTR' ACTE

MRS. GREENE is making a statement to the press on behalf of the PTA.

MRS. GREENE

 I've been asked to read a statement.

(reading)

What happened here was not the result of some elaborate plan to humiliate this girl, as has been reported in the press. The James Madison High School parent-teachers association felt Emma would not be safe if we allowed her to attend Prom with the other students because the uncomfortable truth is there are people in our community who are offended by her life choices. We felt this arrangement, while not ideal, was the only course of action available to us. Thank you.

MRS. GREENE attempts to leave but is stopped by reporters' questions.

FIRST REPORTER

Mrs. Greene! Are you homophobic?

SECOND REPORTER

How does excluding a student protect her?

THIRD REPORTER

Are you saying homosexuality is a life choice?

MRS. GREENE

Look. This is uncomfortable for me... to be in front of a camera like this, to read terrible things about my town in the paper. I'm just a mother, not any kind of a spokesperson, and I love all the students of James Madison High as much as my own daughter. The truth is we are in this situation because a group of people, privileged people from New York, who know nothing about us, came down here just to get publicity. They are the villains. You should be writing about them, not us.

BLACKOUT.

END



BARRY

SCENE 10: EMMA'S ROOM

EMMA's room. BARRY is sitting on the bed, a gown draped over him. There are dresses everywhere. EMMA is in the bathroom.



BARRY

If you don't hurry up you'll be meeting my drag alter-ego, Carol Channing Tatum.

She emerges from the bathroom wearing a girly gown completely incompatible with her sense of style.

EMMA

What do you think?

BARRY

Well, it's better than the pink, but we're not seeing your shoulders. You've got great shoulders.

EMMA

This isn't working.

BARRY

Don't panic. It's just a first draft.
(He picks up another dress.)
How about this?

EMMA

I don't know. What did you wear to your prom?

BARRY

(Referring to the dress.)
Same! No, I... um... I was going to wear a silver tux, with matching turquoise cummerbund and tie, and those contacts that change your eye color to aqua blue... but I never... I didn't, uh...

(He gets choked up.)

This isn't about me, this is about you and I promise: you are going to have the night of your life. What's your date wearing?

EMMA

I don't know.

BARRY

She hasn't given you a fashion show?

EMMA

I've never been to her house. Her mother doesn't know about us.

BARRY

How long have you been together?

EMMA

A year and a half.

BARRY

Oh, honey.

EMMA

But she's coming out tonight big time. That's the plan. Oh, I'm really scared.

BARRY

Why?

EMMA

For a million reasons. Mainly because half the people there still hate me.

BARRY

Look. I never went to my prom because like your mystery girlfriend, I didn't have your courage. You made all this happen. When you walk into that gym tonight, you know what people are going to see? The bravest person on the planet.

EMMA

I don't know. This is hard. Does every girl go through this?

BARRY

Of course. All across town, girls are spraying on their tans and whitening their teeth and sticking their fingers down their throats one last time so they can fit into their dresses. They're trying to look their best for the prom, but they're wasting their time. They might as well be wearing a garbage bag with the word "whore" spray-painted on it, you know why? Because they're whores. Only kidding. It's because they don't have the glow you have right now.

END

G DEE DEE

HAWKINS

~~Well... this is not the way to do it. I almost had those parents convinced to reinstate Prom and you disrupted everything.~~

DEE DEE

~~Well, that's exactly what we came here to do.~~

~~DEE DEE starts to leave.~~

HAWKINS

→ I'm a fan.

DEE DEE stops.

DEE DEE

What? You're a fan?

HAWKINS

Yes. I am.

DEE DEE

What kind of fan? A big fan, or a small fan, or a scary, stabby fan...?

HAWKINS

You could say I'm a big fan, yes.

DEE DEE

Really? That's surprising.

HAWKINS

Is it?

DEE DEE

You're not my usual demographic.

HAWKINS

What do you mean?

DEE DEE

Straight. You are straight, right?

HAWKINS

I am. Straight people like Broadway too.

DEE DEE

You know I've heard that, but I always thought it was a fairy tale. So to speak.

HAWKINS

Well, it's true. I've been a fan since I saw you in your very first show.

DEE DEE

You saw "Swallow The Moon"?

HAWKINS

Sure. And I have the album. I've listened to it a hundred times.

DEE DEE

Really?

HAWKINS

That song you sing at the top of the second act: "The Lady's Improving"; I still get chills every time I hear it.

DEE DEE

That song made me a star.

HAWKINS

And it made me a fan.

TRENT & SHELDON reappear.

TRENT

Dee Dee, we must make haste.

SHELDON

Some of the larger hicks are trying to tip over the bus.

TRENT & SHELDON leave. DEE DEE starts to follow but HAWKINS stops her.

HAWKINS

Miss Allen. This is a delicate situation. I'm asking you and your friends to back off for a few days.

DEE DEE

Back off? Backing off is exactly what we're not going to do. I see what's happening here. You're trying to disarm me

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

with flattery. Well it won't work, Tom. Flattery only makes me stronger. It fuels my ego.

END

DEE DEE exits as EMMA enters, followed by ANGIE who is frantically taking pictures with her phone.

EMMA

Stop taking my picture!

ANGIE

We need a poster for the rally.

ANGIE takes the photo.

HAWKINS

(To ANGIE.)

Thank you. Thank you.

ANGIE leaves.

EMMA

Who are these people?

HAWKINS

Actors. Famous Broadway actors. They've come to help you.

EMMA

Well, they're not helping me! This is a nightmare!

HAWKINS

Oh, it's not a nightmare. You can wake up from a nightmare. I've got to go deal with the riot in the parking lot.

HAWKINS runs off. ALYSSA runs up to EMMA.

ALYSSA

Oh my God.

EMMA

I know.

ALYSSA

It's like everybody's gone insane. This is all way too much. I'm freaking out.

TRENT / STUDENTS

SCENE 14: IN FRONT OF THE 7-ELEVEN

Students
→

A group of students, including SHELBY and KAYLEE, are hanging out in front of a convenience store.

KAYLEE

I saw it on CNN.

SHELBY

Seriously?

KAYLEE

Yes. They said, "Edgewater Indiana overflows with bigotry." They talked about us like we're monsters.

SHELBY

I saw a Fox News van drive down my street yesterday.

KAYLEE

At least they're on our side.

TRENT approaches them.

FIRST STUDENT

Look! It's that guy from Talk to the Hand.

TRENT

Greetings, feckless youth of Indiana.

THIRD STUDENT

What are you doing here?

TRENT

Just out for a walk. Enjoying the sweet and fetid scent of Americana. I'm from a small town myself, you know.

FIRST STUDENT

We're not interested.

The kids start to leave.

TRENT

Look, there's an ideological divide between us, and I think if we got to know each other, we might be able to bridge it. I'll begin.

TRENT (CONT'D)

I'm an actor. My instrument was forged in the fiery furnace that is Juilliard. I'm sure your drama teacher has told you of that institution?

SECOND STUDENT

We don't have a drama program.

TRENT

Ah. That explains your general lack of empathy.

They start to leave again.

TRENT

Wait! We're building a bridge! Building a bridge! What about you?

KAYLEE

Me?

TRENT

Who are you?

KAYLEE

Kaylee.

TRENT

No, that's your name. Who are you? Let's say I am to play Kaylee in "The Story of Kaylee." Help me prepare.

KAYLEE

Uh... I'm a girl. A teenager. I'm a cheerleader.

TRENT

And why do you hate homosexuals?

KAYLEE

Hey! I'm a good person! Right, Shelby?

SHELBY

We all are.

FIRST STUDENT

We go to church.

FIFTH STUDENT

We're Christians.

TRENT

Ah! Okay. Now we're getting somewhere. This is something I know about. Christians follow the teachings of Christ, correct?

ALL

Yeah...

TRENT

I've played Jesus Christ on three separate occasions: my current messianic turn in Godspell, last year's Hallmark Easter special (that was animated), and Temptation!: a stage musical based on The Last Temptation of Christ. I've been crucified three times; twelve if you include the reviews. I got to know J.C. very well. I don't believe he hated anyone, let alone gays.

SECOND STUDENT

But the Bible says homosexuality is wrong. And we follow the Bible.

TRENT

Okay. Well, I'm pretty sure there are rules in the Bible that you guys are breaking every day.

KAYLEE

Well, that's different.

TRENT

Is it? You can't cherry-pick the Bible, choosing which parts you want to believe.

KAYLEE

We don't do that.

#15 LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

TRENT

You don't? What's this?

KAYLEE HAS A SMALL TATTOO
THAT TATTOO WOULD BE TABOO
KAYLEE GUESS WHAT WAITS FOR YOU:
AN ETERNITY IN THE FIERY PITS OF HELL!

KAYLEE

Hey!

(I) ANGIE



ANGIE

Look, kid. Not everybody gets a chance to step out of the chorus. You got to do it for all us people waiting for our moment.

EMMA

I'm too scared.

ANGIE

Let me tell you a story. It's 1975. The original company of "Chicago" is in previews and the worst flu in history hits the cast. They're down to the third cover for the role of Roxie Hart. And she's scared, just like you. So Fosse, who's a real ball-buster, is putting her through her paces. But she's petrified, and even worse, performing the routines like a robot. And the Foss says to her, "Hey, kid! Snap out of it! You're freaking out! You got the steps, you got the notes, but where's the zazz, baby?!" And though she'd never heard that word before she immediately knew what it meant. And that girl went out there and crushed that performance so hard the whole audience was standing on their feet screaming bloody murder.

EMMA

And that girl was you?

ANGIE

How fucking old do you think I am? This was 1975. The point is every Fosse girl knows that story. It's all about finding your own inner strength...

END

#13 ZAZZ

ANGIE (CONT'D)

WHEN A CHALLENGE LIES AHEAD
AND YOU ARE FILLED WITH DREAD AND WORRY
GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ!

IF YOUR COURAGE DISAPPEARS
WHAT'LL GET YOUR FEARS TO SCURRY?
GIVE IT SOME ZAZZ!

ZAZZ IS STYLE PLUS CONFIDENCE
IT MAY SEEM CORNY OR KITSCH
BUT WHEN SCARED OR ON THE FENCE
YOU'LL FIND THAT ZAZZ WILL SOON MAKE FEAR
BECOME YOUR BITCH

⑤ SHELDON

BARRY

It's just what we do!

End of song. They congratulate one another. Phones begin dinging. People start staring at their phones.

SHELDON

(Reading his phone.)

The rest of the reviews are coming in. The Post, Associated Press, the New York Times.

BARRY

The New York Times!

The whole room reads in silence.

SHELDON

Wow.

Party goers drift away, still reading the devastating review on their phones.

DEE DEE

What's happening?

SHELDON

Wow. This is not the review you want when you've got shitty advance sales. This is going to close us.

DEE DEE

What do you mean close us? We just opened?

SHELDON

Nobody's going to buy a ticket to this show after they read this.

BARRY

What didn't they like? Was it the hip hop?

SHELDON

Yes, but not only that.

BARRY

Sheldon, for God's sake, just read it.

SHELDON

(Reading part of the review.)

Okay. Just the highlights: "Barry Glickman's FDR might just be the most insultingly misguided, offensive, and laughable performance that this reviewer has ever had the squirming misfortune to endure."

DEE DEE

(Holding it together.)

That's not so bad.

BARRY

Do her! Do her!

SHELDON

"Watching Dee Dee Allen's Eleanor Roosevelt croaking out a heavy-handed message of activism is like paying an aging drag queen to shove a syrup-soaked American flag down my throat."

DEE DEE

(Struggling to remain strong.)

That is not criticism; it's a personal attack!

SHELDON

"If you are considering buying a ticket to this show, do yourself a favor; buy a few feet of good heavy rope instead and then go hang yourself."

BARRY

(To SHELDON.)

Jesus. Was the show really that bad?

SHELDON

It's not the show. It's you two. You're not likable.

BARRY & DEE DEE

What?

SHELDON

We've been over this a million times: nobody likes a narcissist. Leave it to me. I'll go try to change the narrative, once again.

END
BARRY

~~So talking about yourself non stop suddenly makes you a narcissist? I hate this world.~~