

# CORONATION

by Peter Fenton

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*This play contains teenage pettiness, references to teen-oriented media, light innuendo, and a few scenes in a boys' locker room.  
Recommended for ages 12+*

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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
DAN PARK/(PARKER)	The Chaos Goblin	17	M
MARIA ROJAS/(WOLCOTT)	The Perky Artist	17	F
MRS. LOWRY	The Guidance Counselor	40s	F
JANELLE BORDEAUX	The Bubbly Cheerleader	18	F
CANDICE DAVENPORT	The Ambitious President	17	F
BRYAN McGRATH	The Golden Boy	18	M
MISS/(MR.) ROGERS	English Teacher	20s	Any
MR./(MS.) HAWKINS	A/V Teacher	30s	Any
SEÑORA/(SR.) BLEVINS	Spanish Teacher	30s	Any
MS./(MR.) HENDERSON	Theatre Teacher	50s	Any
KATRINA & TYLER	Student Commentators	16-18	Any
EMILY & NICOLE	Senior Cheerleaders	17-18	F
YOUNG DAN, MARIA, BRYAN, JANELLE, & CANDICE			

**FOR THE RECOMMENDED PROFESSIONAL OR AMATEUR CAST SIZE, 9 (3M/6F):**

1. DAN (17-18/M/East Asian or Any Ethnicity)
2. MARIA (17-18/F/Latin American or Any Ethnicity)
3. MRS. LOWRY (40s/F/Any Ethnicity)
4. JANELLE (17-18/F/White or Any Ethnicity)
5. CANDICE (17-18/F/Any Ethnicity)
6. BRYAN (17-18/M/White or Any Ethnicity)
7. ROGERS/KATRINA/NICOLE (16-18 and Adult F, Any Ethnicity)
8. HAWKINS/TYLER (16-18 and Adult M, Any Ethnicity)
9. EMILY/BLEVINS/HENDERSON (17-18 and Adult F, Any Ethnicity)

**FOR THE RECOMMENDED PROFESSIONAL CAST SIZE, 6 (2M/4F):**

1. DAN
2. MARIA
3. LOWRY/BLEVINS/EMILY/HENDERSON
4. JANELLE/ROGERS
5. CANDICE/KATRINA/NICOLE
6. BRYAN/HAWKINS/TYLER

**In a cast of 6, some lines must be pre-recorded. Please refer to the appendix for a guide.**

For a cast larger than 9, remove doubling as seen fit. Additional background actors may populate most scenes.

MARIA, CANDICE, JANELLE, MRS. LOWRY, NICOLE, and EMILY must be played female. DAN and BRYAN must be played male. Other roles may be played as any gender and renamed accordingly.

**HOW TO READ THIS SCRIPT**

This play is comprised of **sequences** (clusters of scenes) and **moments** (individual scenes). The way in which scenes are numbered in this play is a boldface **X-Y.**; where X represents "sequence" number and Y represents "moment" (scene) number. Transitions between *moments* are meant to be fluid and playful, moving from one to the next as though the same scene. Sequences end with a *BLACKOUT* and a page break.

## PRODUCTION NOTES & PRE-APPROVED CHANGES

If DAN is not cast as East Asian, you may change his surname to Parker. If MARIA is not cast as Latina, you may change her surname to Wolcott. While this play is not explicitly about race, it is not incidental that DAN and MARIA are written with traditionally non-white last names. This is a story about power, privilege, and visibility. **When casting and designing DAN and MARIA, it is imperative to position them as outsiders to the conventional power-holders in an American high school.** Consider casting performers who may be neurodivergent or disabled, LGBTQ+, of ethnic or religious minority, or any intersections thereof; and/or styling them to appear lower class or with very niche interests. The overall point is muddled or lost altogether if MARIA and DAN are presented as no different from CANDICE, JANELLE, and BRYAN.

The scrim is optional if your production lacks resources for one.

The kindergarten flashbacks may be handled by (A) casting children to play the kindergarten versions of DAN, MARIA, JANELLE, CANDICE, and BRYAN or (B) having the actors playing their teenage selves double as their kindergarten counterparts. Mr. Fenton sees merit to both approaches.

You may translate the Spanish to any other foreign language and credit the teacher as its equivalent of "Mrs. Blevins". The Spanish Class scenes aren't about the Spanish.

**It is Mr. Fenton's intent that this story is set in 2024 in the USA, specifically in Bucks County, PA. If you so choose to update to the present year, your production MUST do the following:**

1. Adjust DAN's kindergarten year to 12 years ago
2. Adjust MRS. LOWMYER's graduation year to 28 years ago
3. Assess whether the references to Tom Holland, John Cena, Anderson Cooper, *Hunger Games*, *Squid Game*, *The Godfather*, social media/generative AI/other tech platforms remain relevant and update accordingly
4. DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE cut/update the references to:
  - Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
  - Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie
  - How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
  - How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss
  - Carrie* by Stephen King
  - The Crucible* by Arthur Miller
  - "Bohemian Rhapsody" by Queen
  - The Sound of Music*
  - Mean Girls*
  - Tednesday*
  - Greek mythology
  - The Bible

Intermission for this play is optional. Mr. Fenton would choose not to have one. If you so choose to take intermission, place it after 10-3.

1-1.

CHAMBER STONE HIGH SCHOOL, a public high school in a well-off Philadelphia suburb in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. October 4, 2024. The set is very simple to allow for various locations to be represented through minimal set pieces. A projector scrim features.

Chamber Stone High School is home to the Dragons, their colors contain a deep green. Many posters advertising the Homecoming Queen vote are hung around the set.

A young woman's voice on the morning announcements:

"Good morning, Chamber Stone High. Today is Friday, October 4th, 2024. In case you forgot, your homecoming queen will be crowned tomorrow."

AT RISE: A hand-painted poster reading "VOTE FOR MARIA" features next in a line of other sterile, professional posters for other nominees.

"And now, over to a video interviewing this year's homecoming court."

Charming, bright, and jaded high school senior DAN PARK (17) enters.

DAN

Some men just wanna watch the world burn. And I should know, because I'm one of those men.

He touches Maria's poster.

DAN

"All this for a queen."

MRS. LOWRY

1-2.

GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.

Dan looks up to see sporty, seasoned guidance counselor CHRISTINE LOWRY (40s).

DAN

I know. I know.

MRS. LOWRY

Unless you plan to hurt somebody, anything you share does not leave this office.

DAN

All right, all right. Fine. Here's what happened. Miss Rogers. You know Miss Rogers, right?

MRS. LOWRY

I do know Miss Rogers.

1-3.

*ENGLISH CLASSROOM. September 26.  
English teacher fresh out of undergrad,  
MORGAN ROGERS (22), enters. Dan rises.*

DAN

Yeah, girl's like four years older than me. Look at her.

MISS ROGERS

Good morning, class! I'm Miss Rogers. I graduated from West Chester five minutes ago and I'm ready to change the world, one child at a time.

*Dan glances aside.*

DAN

Sure.

So anyway, I'm a senior now. I'm not taking crap from anyone at this school anymore. That includes my teachers. I needed to size this girl up.

*He fake-hyperventilates.*

MISS ROGERS

Daniel. What's wrong?

DAN

Where's my paper? Everyone else got theirs back.

MISS ROGERS

O--oh my goodness. Didn't I? I--

DAN

Did you lose my paper, Miss Rogers?

*Miss Rogers actually hyperventilates.  
Dan flashes a smirk.*

MISS ROGERS

Hang on! I'm gonna find it, and then we're gonna make it right, OK?

DAN

(Laying the guilt trip on thick.)

OK.

*Miss Rogers exits.*

1-4.

*GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.*

MRS. LOWRY

And this paper?

DAN

Oh, yeah, straight up did not do it. Haven't even opened my copy of *Catcher in the Rye*.

MRS. LOWRY

Dan.

DAN

Christine.

MRS. LOWRY

Mrs. Lowry.

DAN

Mrs. Lowry.

MRS. LOWRY

While I'm--~~sorrified~~--that you gaslit a teacher. That's not why I called you in.

DAN

Yeah, I know.

MRS. LOWRY

I watched your video. You gonna tell me a story or what?

DAN

In the interest of--um. Is there any detention or suspension on the line here, or...?

MRS. LOWRY

I see what you did there.

DAN

Allegedly.

MRS. LOWRY  
What you *allegedly* did there. I'm impressed.

DAN  
Is this a trap?

MRS. LOWRY  
Should it be?

*Pause.*

MRS. LOWRY  
I want a story. And if you're not going to tell me the truth,  
at least entertain me.

DAN  
Challenge accepted.

MRS. LOWRY  
Why don't we start at the beginning?

DAN  
A very good place to start.

*Pause.*

DAN  
The year was 2012.

MRS. LOWRY  
Oh--no need to go back that far.

DAN  
The year was 2012.

MRS. LOWRY  
Dan, what does this have to do with--?

DAN  
The year was 2012, Christine. It was the first day of  
kindergarten. Um. All I wanted was a friend. And there she  
was--

1-5.

*ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND. 2012.  
YOUNG DAN (5, can be played by teenage  
Dan) sits lonely on the blacktop.*

*A perky nonconformist, YOUNG MARIA (5,  
can also be played by teenage Maria)  
enters and taps him on the shoulder.*

YOUNG MARIA  
You're Danny Park, right?

*Dan rises.*

YOUNG DAN  
Oh--yeah. Hi.

YOUNG MARIA  
I just moved here from Virginia. Your mom's name and picture was on a sign right in front of my house. "Kathy Park"--

YOUNG DAN  
How did you--? You can read?!

YOUNG MARIA  
You look just like her.

YOUNG DAN  
Do you wanna finger paint with me?

YOUNG MARIA  
As a matter of fact, I am the best at finger painting.

YOUNG DAN  
Not sure you know who you're messing with.

YOUNG MARIA  
I'm Maria.

YOUNG DAN  
Dan.

YOUNG MARIA  
I know.

1-6.

*GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.*

MRS. LOWRY  
Maria's a sweet girl, I do really like her.

*On scrim: A photo featuring field hockey goalie Maria and Coach Lowry.*

MRS. LOWRY  
Great goalie, too!

DAN  
Yeah.



*On scrim: Images flash by of Young Dan and Young Maria in their childhood friendship, growing into awkward, artistic tweens.*

DAN  
She--she's my best friend.

MRS. LOWRY  
So I've gathered.

DAN  
See--the thing about Maria. She is never not Maria. That's always been exactly who she is.

MRS. LOWRY  
One of her best qualities.

DAN  
Yeah. That's cute in elementary school. But then puberty hits you like a truck. By eighth grade you're always looking over your shoulder. Trying to see who's looking. Who's laughing. And before you know it, you start senior year and you've worked so hard to get from scrawny nerd to--well, I'm still a scrawny nerd. Never gonna be like Bryan McGrath or anything. But I'm a nerd with a little power now. And someone like Maria--

*A pause.*

MRS. LOWRY  
So, are you gonna tell me a story or what?

DAN  
Yeah.

*On scrim: An image of Young Maria reaching down to Young Dan.*

DAN  
This is the story of how I did a bad thing.  
For a very good person.

*BLACKOUT. A school bell rings.*

2-1.

*HALLWAY. September 5.*

*On scrim: One Month Earlier.*

*AT RISE: Spunky artist/athlete MARIA ROJAS (17) is at her locker with her large field hockey bag.*

*Dan enters. He keeps his distance.*

MARIA

Good morning, Danny!

DAN

What's up, Rojas?

MARIA

It was super dead on my shift last night, so I got a chance to bust out my pastels!

*She shows off her latest art piece. It's quite good.*

DAN

Oh--you're still doing that.

MARIA

I am! What do you think?

DAN

It's great.

MARIA

Thanks! You been making anything? I'd love to see it.

DAN

Yeah, I'm not... taking art this semester.

MARIA

Wanna borrow my pastels?

DAN

Maybe sometime.

MARIA

Just let me know when!

DAN

Hey, you do the calc homework yet? What was it?

MARIA

103, 1 through 41, every other odd!

Cool. Thanks.

DAN

My pleasure!!

MARIA

*She exits.*

*Establishment politician in the making-- think teenage Kamala Harris-- CANDICE DAVENPORT (17) enters, putting together a display for Homecoming Court in a hyper-fixated trance.*

Hello--

DAN

*Candice jumps back, startled.*

Oh--hey. I'm in a bit of a rush here.

CANDICE

Need any help?

DAN

I've got Bryan, so I'm all set. We've got a system going.

CANDICE

*Candice's impossibly perfect tennis/honors student boyfriend BRYAN MCGRATH (18) enters. Captain America in the flesh.*

What's up, Bryan?

DAN

Oh, ya know. Keeping busy. Got an away match at Eastern Bucks later. Maybe I'll take this one on a proper date.

BRYAN

*He touches Candice gently.*

How are you, dude?

BRYAN

Same as I've always been.

DAN

*He pulls a poster off the display.*

Do you mind?

CANDICE

DAN

"Cast your vote for homecoming queen". Already time, huh.

BRYAN

We're going on the announcements today to kick things off. Unsealing this envelope. Gonna make a few girls' days. Maybe their whole year.

*He hands Dan an envelope labeled "CONFIDENTIAL".*

BRYAN

It's top-secret stuff.

CANDICE

"Seven outstanding female role models were determined by an independent committee of faculty and staff for the privilege of being nominated--"

DAN

(To Candice.)

Think you're on the list?

BRYAN

I'd bet money on it.

CANDICE

Well, the Homecoming Queen should be a young woman of exceptional intellect and character. Not some basic bimbo.

*The sweet, conventionally attractive (think Legally Blonde) JANELLE BORDEAUX (18) enters. She sees a poster.*

JANELLE

Oh my god! It's nomination day!

CANDICE

Anyway. They gave student council the prime spot.

BRYAN

They put us right after they say what's for lunch and before the moment of silence.

CANDICE

I pulled some strings.

DAN

Your email was very clear that's where you wanted it.

CANDICE

Oh--yeah. Duh. Thanks?

DAN  
Don't mention it.

BRYAN  
See you in gym, man!

DAN  
Can't wait.

*Bryan gives Dan a playful punch on the shoulder and takes Candice's hand. They step away from Dan.*

CANDICE  
It's better if you're the one to read the names. You know. Just in case.

BRYAN  
In case of what? You can say your own name.

CANDICE  
But what if it's not there?

BRYAN  
Come on, babe. It's a dumb popularity contest, right?

CANDICE  
Yeah. But--

BRYAN  
My queen either way.

*He kisses her on the cheek and flashes a grin--his shiny white teeth may audibly glisten. Dan rolls his eyes.*

*Bryan and Candice exit. Dan realizes he is still holding the envelope.*

DAN  
You--your envelo--

*He inspects the "CONFIDENTIAL" label.*

DAN  
Homecoming nominees, huh...?

MRS. LOWRY (OFF STAGE)

Dan!

2-2.

*GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.*

MRS. LOWRY

You didn't.

DAN

Excuse me. Seven outstanding female role models were chosen independently by a committee of faculty and staff for the privilege of being nominated for homecoming queen. Plus, my handwriting's terrible.

MRS. LOWRY

Dan.

DAN

Christine.

As I was saying. I took the envelope--which was sealed--down to the TV Studio, because the morning announcements were about to start.

MRS. LOWRY

You're too much.

*TV STUDIO September 5. Dan crosses to the control booth and puts his headset on. Janelle sits at the anchor desk, holding her lapel mic and speaking into it.*

JANELLE

Did you see it's nomination day?! I totally forgot. I should've dressed up.

*Dan looks up at Janelle and pauses. She's dressed and styled especially nice.*

DAN

You--?

*He decides not to comment.*

JANELLE

Should I pretend to be surprised when they announce my name? That would be rude, right? I'm a terrible actress.

DAN

I'm sure you're fine.

JANELLE

No, I'm serious. You remember *Sound of Music* last year? I wanted to be the Baroness, but Henderson made me the nun who says "a clown".

DAN  
Yeah. I was running lights.

JANELLE  
Oh! Yeah. Duh.

*A school bell is heard ringing.*

MR. HAWKINS  
All righty, Dan: start 'er off.

*Candice enters, flustered.*

CANDICE  
Hey! Has anyone seen my--um--?

*Dan holds up the CONFIDENTIAL envelope.*

CANDICE  
Thank god.

DAN  
Don't mention it.

*Candice exits. Dan pushes a button to  
switch on the "On Air" signal.  
BLACKOUT.*

*News fanfare plays.*

*On scrim: A high school video  
production class-quality title sequence  
plays.*

DAN (IN THE DARK)  
Janie, you're on in three, two--

SAMPLE ONLY - DO NOT COPY

3-1.

ART CLASSROOM & TV STUDIO. September 5.

AT RISE: Janelle sits at the anchor desk with piercing shiny eyes and a radiant smile.

JANELLE

Good morning, Chamber Stone. I'm Janelle Bordeaux. Today is Thursday, September 5th, 2024.

Dan sits wearing his headset and digging out his calculus textbook.

DAN

Run the lower third.

He opens the textbook and flips to the answers at the back, not looking up.

JANELLE

Lunch today will be pizza sticks. There is no Hot Combo.

DAN

Play it out.

(Into his mic--still not looking up.)

Switching to Camera B.

Candice and Bryan enter. He carries the envelope.

JANELLE

And now for a special message from Student Council.

CANDICE

Good morning, Chamber Stone.

BRYAN

Beautiful day in Bucks County!

JANELLE

sure is!

CANDICE

This is your student body president, Candice Davenport.

BRYAN

And I'm your treasurer, Bryan McGrath.



DAN

(Eyeroll.)

Bryan.

*He turns down Bryan's microphone, silencing him in the middle of his sentence.*

BRYAN

The Homecoming Dance is an institution at Chamber Stone High and with it comes the coronation--(of the Homecoming Queen.)

MR. HAWKINS

Something going on with Bryan's mic?

DAN

Oh--uh. No idea, Hawk. Let me just...

*He turns Bryan's sound back up.*

DAN

Think I fixed it!

BRYAN (CONTINUED)

--one exceptional female role model to represent the Class of 2025.

*Lights up on the Art Classroom, where Maria doodles in a sketch book, not really paying attention.*

JANELLE

I've been waiting for this since freshman year.

CANDICE

I'm sure you have.

JANELLE

What are you waiting for?! Open it!

BRYAN

Pleasure's all mine. Ladies.

*He tears open the envelope, freezing halfway through. All freeze except Dan. The lights change as he narrates.*

DAN

Something you gotta understand: I don't give a crap about any of this. I was literally copying answers from the back of my calc book. But when I heard that envelope slice open, I felt a shift in the air. The whole world was about to change. And for a little chaos goblin like me, this is Christmas morning.

*Lights return as Bryan opens the envelope. All unfreeze.*

*On scrim: Typed first names of the first six nominees appear as spoken.*

BRYAN

Your class of 2025 Homecoming Court: Nicole Beckett. Janelle Bordeaux.

JANELLE

(Squealing.)

You shouldn't have!

CANDICE

I didn't.

BRYAN

Kendra Cline. Candice Davenport.

*Candice postures herself.*

BRYAN

That's my president!  
Emily Hodges. Allison Stauber.

*He pauses.*

CANDICE

You only said six names.

*Action freezes again. Lights change again to indicate a sidebar from Dan.*

DAN

Listen, Janelle, Nicole, Emily. It's the entire cheer squad. Their boyfriends would all shove me in a locker given the chance, but they're nice, pretty girls. Of course they were getting nominated. Class President Candice, you know, she's gorgeous, she's going to Princeton--no surprise. But truly not a single person was ready for the last name on the list.

*Action resumes, lights return.*

CANDICE

Who's that?

JANELLE

Well, don't tell me someone put my name twice!

BRYAN

Maria Rojas!



JANELLE

First the lights would go out--

*The lights drop out. Spotlight on Candice pulling out a big sword.*

CANDICE

Then Candice gets Janelle in the jugular.

*Spotlight on Janelle pulling out a comically large medieval battle axe.*

JANELLE

There would be blood! Blood everywhere!

*Spotlight on Bryan*

BRYAN

It'd make the Hunger Games look tame.

CANDICE

I'd sharpen my knives.

JANELLE

I'd throw my battle axe.

BRYAN

Hey, maybe it'd hit Bryan on the way! Wouldn't that be fun?

*Spotlight on Maria, with a crown on her head, bouquet and sash in her hands.*

MARIA

But in the middle of it all... sweet Maria Rojas. Holding a bouquet and a sash.

*Spotlight on Dan.*

DAN

Forget dumping a vat of pig's blood on the queen. They'd all do it for me. And the best part is, when no one pays you any real attention, you can bet away with anything.

*BLACKOUT.*

4-1.

*FIELD HOCKEY PITCH. September 5.  
Posters for Candice and Janelle are now  
hung around the set.*

CANDICE (IN THE DARK)  
May the best girl win.

JANELLE (IN THE DARK)  
Best girl win.

*A coach's whistle is heard.*

*AT RISE: Field hockey practice just  
finished. Coach Lowry sees Maria linger  
at goal.*

MRS. LOWRY  
You can head out, Rojas. You did good today.

MARIA  
Eh. I let 'em get to me more than usual today.

MRS. LOWRY  
I didn't notice.

MARIA  
I did.

MRS. LOWRY  
Something on your mind?

MARIA  
Did you hear I've been nominated for Homecoming Queen?

MRS. LOWRY  
I sure did! How are you feeling about it?

MARIA  
It--it has to be a mistake, right?

MRS. LOWRY  
Maybe. Maybe not.

MARIA  
It's super cool. But I think I'm gonna turn it down. Is there  
a way I could do that?

MRS. LOWRY  
Why?

MARIA  
I have no shot.

MRS. LOWRY

Oh?

MARIA

Oh, don't get me wrong! People like me. But they mostly just leave me alone.

MRS. LOWRY

I'm surprised you don't have more friends.

MARIA

I have everyone I need, really. Mom, Dad, people at work. My brothers and sister.

MRS. LOWRY

Fair enough. You might not need anyone else, but--

MARIA

Oh! And Danny Park's my best friend.

MRS. LOWRY

I know Dan. Keep that boy in line, will ya?

MARIA

Would if I could.

*A minivan car horn is heard.*

MARIA

That's my ride. Thanks for chatting, Coach!

MRS. LOWRY

You want my advice?

MARIA

Always!

MRS. LOWRY

Get out on the field. I'd hate for you to stay in the goalie box just 'cause it's comfortable there.

MARIA

Well, if you're taking me out of goalie, Coach, I'm not playing defense. I wanna be a striker.

MRS. LOWRY

Go get 'em.

*Mrs. Lowry exits. Maria crosses to the Astronomy Classroom.*

4-2.

*ASTRONOMY CLASSROOM. September 6. Maria takes a seat. Candice enters and sits in the desk next to Maria.*

MARIA

Good morning, Candice! Congrats!!

CANDICE

Thank you. Have you voted yet? You know, you can scan the little code right here--

*She pulls out a large campaign poster with an unmissable QR code.*

CANDICE

And vote up to ten times a day until October 4th!

MARIA

Yeah, I'm not doing that.

CANDICE

Well, you can.

MARIA

I probably won't.

CANDICE

But everyone votes for Homecoming Queen.

MARIA

I actually never have. Plus, I'm technically nominated this year, so--

CANDICE

Yes! Congratulations!! Oh, wow. Yeah.

MARIA (CONTINUED)

--wouldn't that be against the rules?

CANDICE

That's respectable of you, but no.

MARIA

Noted. I still probably won't, but it's sweet that someone nominated me.

CANDICE

It is. And only one of us can win, anyway.

*Candice rises, poster in hand.*

CANDICE

It's reassuring to know the committee valued intellect and character when they chose this year's court.

MARIA

I totally agree!

*Candice sticks her poster on a prominent wall at center stage and exits. The poster reads BRAINS. AMBITION. GRACE. CANDICE FOR HOMECOMING QUEEN". Candice exits.*

4-3.

CAFETERIA. September 4.

*Janelle enters and sits with two of her lackeys (and fellow Homecoming nominees) EMILY and NICOLE (both 17).*

*Maria crosses to the Cafeteria. She sets her lunch down and joins them.*

MARIA

Hey Janelle!

NICOLE

Um--who are you?

MARIA

Maria.

EMILY

Maria...?

MARIA

Rojas.

JANELLE

Oh! You're Maria Rojas!

MARIA

I am.

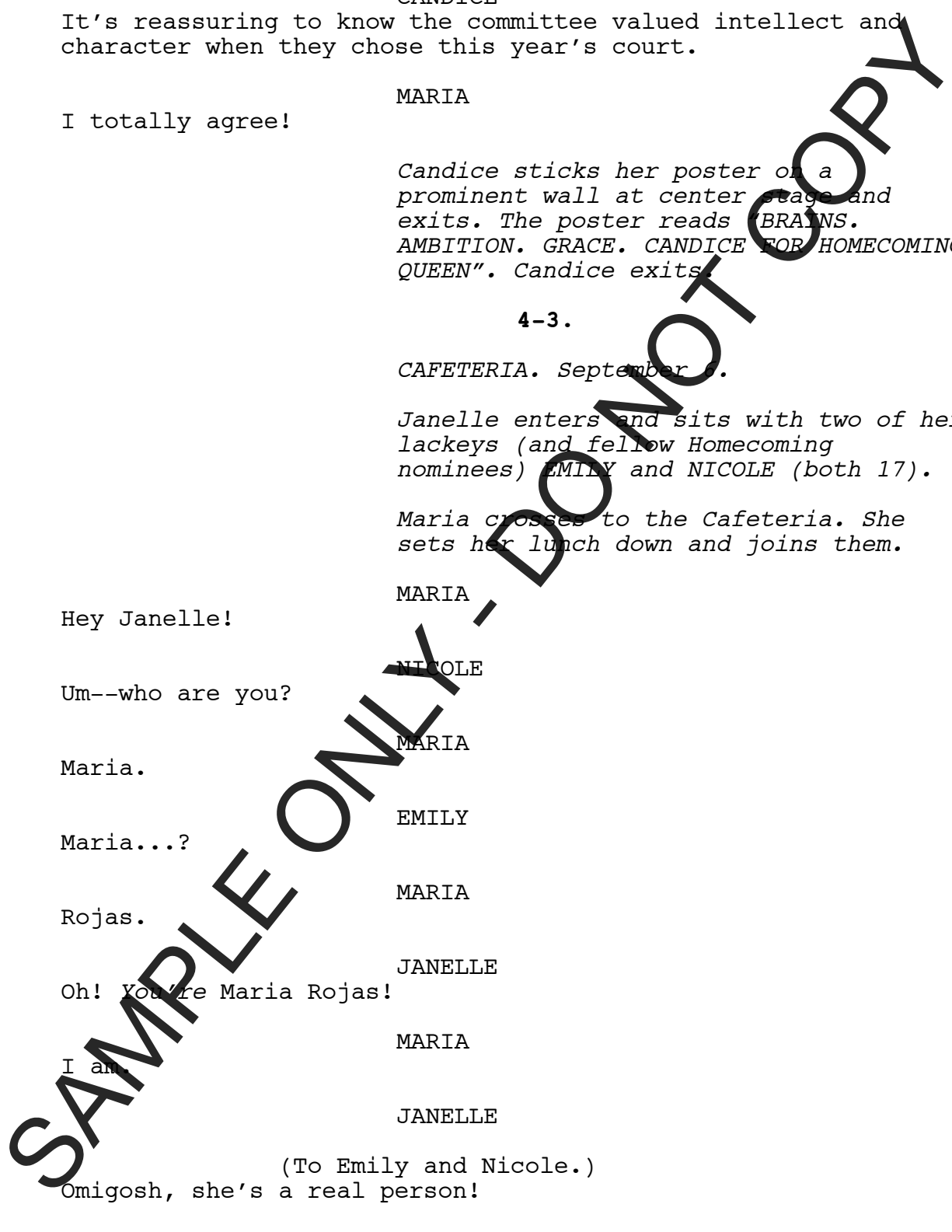
JANELLE

(To Emily and Nicole.)

Omigosh, she's a real person!

MARIA

I've lived on your street since we were five.





JANELLE

None of us knew who you were. Nicole was convinced your name got on the list as a joke.

MARIA

You and me both!

NICOLE

Cool.

JANELLE

But like, your name isn't a funny name. Which is why I thought you were probably real.

MARIA

Yep, well--here I am.

JANELLE

I was stalking all over the socials trying to find you yesterday.

MARIA

I only have Instagram for my art, actually.

JANELLE

Your boyfriend must be so proud.

MARIA

Oh, I'm not dating. Not even sure I like boys that much.

JANELLE

Good for you, girl.

MARIA

Did you see all the homecoming posters already? It's kinda wild.

JANELLE

I know. It's so annoying. I wanted to be the first.

*She gets up and covers Candice's poster at center stage with a poster of her own. It simply reads "JANELLE."*

JANELLE

Have a great day!

MARIA

You too!!

*Janelle exits. Maria crosses away from the Cafeteria. Nicole and Emily exit.*

4-4.

CALCULUS CLASSROOM. September 6.

Maria has a seat at the desk. Dan enters and has a seat next to her, grinning.

DAN

There she is! Woman of the hour!

MARIA

I think I'm gonna be sick. This homecoming thing's gotta be a joke, right?

DAN

No, no. You are an incredible female role model recognized by an independent committee of--

MARIA

Cut it out. I'm thinking about turning it down. There's no way anyone is going to vote for me.

(Pause)

Is there?

DAN

Who's to say?!

MARIA

Uh... you?

DAN

Look at these posters--

*He points to some nearby posters.*

DAN

"Brains. Ambition. Grace." "Janelle." They want this so bad. It's just a piece of plastic. We all saw *Mean Girls*.

MARIA

I didn't, actually.

DAN

You tell me for a second you can't stand toe-to-toe with these girls? You're exactly the kind of girl who should be Homecoming Queen. You're my best friend. You're like--you're a bonafide ray of sunshine. You work the cash register at Chick-fil-A, so if the shoe fits--

MARIA

Do you really mean all that?

DAN  
Of course. It's true.

4-5.

*GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.*

*Mrs. Lowry enters. Maria freezes on stage.*

MRS. LOWRY  
Was it a lie?

DAN  
She does work the cash register at Chick-fil-A.

MRS. LOWRY  
Dan.

DAN  
Christine.

MRS. LOWRY  
I already know you're a gifted liar, but then again, you say you've been friends since kindergarten, so--

DAN  
None of that was a lie.

MRS. LOWRY  
I believe you. But I sense you're not at peace with it. Do you wanna take a second and unpack that?

*Dan shoots her a dissonant grin and a thumbs up.*

DAN  
Nope!

*Mrs. Lowry exits. Dan returns to his seat in Calc.*

4-6.

*CALCULUS CLASSROOM. September 6.*

*Maria throws her arms around Dan.*

MARIA  
That's the sweetest thing anyone's ever said! I don't know what I did to deserve a friend like you. I feel like I just won the whole thing!

DAN

Oh, but you absolutely could win the whole thing. Let me be your champion.

MARIA

What did I do to deserve you?

DAN

Maria. You can win this. Do you trust me?

*He extends his hand.*

MARIA

Let's friggin do this!

*BLACKOUT.*

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