



Draft 8.3 -- 17 September 2025

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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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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Minimum Cast: 6 (4f/2m)

DAN PARK (17/M/Korean) - Lead Role. The witty, wounded director of the morning announcements. Resents being overlooked and wants to prove how shallow his school is. On the short and skinny side.

MARIA ROJAS (17/F/Latina) - Lead Role. The perky, all-loving field hockey goalie. She bounds through on the margins of school and wants to connect with new and old friends.

MRS. LOWRY (40s/F/Any Ethnicity) - Major Role. The dry-humored, sporty guidance counselor. She has called Dan into her office and won't let him go until he realizes what he's done.

JANELLE BORDEAUX (18/F/White or Any Ethnicity) - Major Role. The bubbly cheer captain and favorite to win Homecoming Queen. She wishes to be seen for more than her looks (but yes, please do see her looks).

CANDICE DAVENPORT (17/F/Any Ethnicity) - Major Role. The Princeton-bound student council president. Clever and ambitious, she knows she's respected--she just wishes people liked her.

BRYAN McGRATH (18/M/White or Any Ethnicity) - Major Role. The athletic, easygoing student council treasurer. He's dating Candice and just wants everyone to have fun. Seems unaware the girls are at war.

MISS ROGERS (Early 20s/F) - Minor Role. English Teacher.

MR. HAWKINS (Adult/M) - Minor Role. A/V Teacher.

SEÑORA BLEVINS (Adult/F) - Minor Role. Spanish Teacher.

MS. HENDERSON (Adult/F) - Minor Role. Theatre Teacher.

EMILY (Student/F) - Minor Role. Senior Cheerleader.

NICOLE (Student/F) - Minor Role. Senior Cheerleader.

KATRINA (Student/F) - Voiceover Role. Student Commentator.

TYLER (Student/M) - Voiceover Role. Student Commentator.

DOUBLING SCHEME

Cast of 6 (2M/4F):

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

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 represent various locations with minimal set pieces. A projector scrim features.

Chamber Stone's mascot is 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 to posters for fellow nominees.

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

Short, skinny high school senior DAN PARK (17, Korean) enters.

DAN

Some men just wanna watch the world burn. And I should know, because I'm one of those men.
"All this for a queen."

Sporty, seasoned guidance counselor CHRISTINE LOWRY (40s) enters.

MRS. LOWRY

Dan.

1-2.

GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4. Mrs. Lowry gestures to a seat. She and Dan sit opposite each other.

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 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

(Glancing aside.)

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

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

DAN

Did you lose my paper, Miss Rogers?

MISS ROGERS

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

DAN

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--horrificed--
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.

DAN

Allegedly.

MRS. LOWRY

What you *allegedly* did. 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 gonna 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. Dan
crosses to sit lonely on the blacktop.*

*A perky nonconformist, MARIA ROJAS (17,
Latina) enters and taps him on the
shoulder.*

MARIA
You're Danny Park, right?

Dan rises.

DAN
Oh--yeah. Hi.

MARIA

I just moved here from Laredo. Your mom showed me all around my house. Her name and picture's on a bunch of signs--"Kathy Park, call 215-584"--

DAN

How did you--? You can read?!

MARIA

You look just like her.

DAN

Do you wanna finger paint with me?

MARIA

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

DAN

You don't know who you're messing with.

MARIA

I'm Maria.

DAN

Dan.

MARIA

I know.

1-6.

GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4.

MRS. LOWRY

Maria's a sweet girl, I do really like her.
Great goalie, too!

DAN

Yeah.

On scrim: Images flash by of Dan and 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. I mean. Me and Maria--we're different. You can see it I can see it. Um.
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--I--I just--

A pause.

MRS. LOWRY

So, are you gonna tell me a story of what?

DAN

Yeah.

On scrim: An image of Maria comforting 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: Maria is loading a large field hockey bag into her locker. 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 lately?

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.

My pleasure!!

She exits.

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

Hello--

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

Need any help?

Oh--I'm all set with Bryan. We've got a system going.

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

What's up, Bryan?

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

He touches Candice.

How are you, dude?

Same as I've always been.

He pulls a poster off the display.

Do you mind?

"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 conventionally attractive (think Legally Blonde) JANELLE BORDEAUX (18) enters. She sees a poster.

JANELLE

Oh my god! It's nomination day!

She crosses to the TV Studio.

CANDICE

Anyway. We're going right away when the announcements begin.

BRYAN

Literally right after they say what's for lunch, like even before the moment of silence.

CANDICE

I pulled some strings.

DAN

Your email was very clear that's when 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
I think you should 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 grins-- 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--

(Inspecting the label.)
Homecoming nominees, huh...?

MRS. LOWRY (OFF STAGE)
Dan!

2-2.

GUIDANCE OFFICE. October 4. Mrs. Lowry enters.

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--

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.

She exits.

2-3.

TV STUDIO. September 5. Dan crosses to the control booth and puts his headset on. Janelle sits at the anchor desk.

JANELLE

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

Dan pauses. It's clear Janelle is 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 so badly to be the Baroness, but what'd I get? I'm the nun who says "a clown." Thanks, Henderson--

DAN

Yeah. I was running lights.

JANELLE

Oh! Yeah. Duh.

A school bell is heard ringing.

MR. HAWKINS (VOICE)

All righty, Dan: start 'er off.

Candice enters, flustered.

CANDICE

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

Dan holds up the envelope.

CANDICE

Thank god.

DAN

Don't mention it.

*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--

3-1.

ART CLASSROOM & TV STUDIO. September 5.

AT RISE: Janelle sits at the anchor desk with a radiant smile.

JANELLE

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

Dan sits wearing his headset and opening his calculus textbook.

DAN

Run the lower third.

He 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 (VOICE)

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 my skinny ass 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 beautiful, 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!

CANDICE
Maria Rojas.

JANELLE
Maria Rojas.

*On scrim: A handwritten name joins the
six typed ones -- MARIA.*

MARIA
(Pleasantly surprised.)
Maria Rojas.

*All freeze. Lights drop off the Art
Classroom and TV Studio. Spotlight on
Dan as he rises.*

3-2.

*DAN'S IMAGINATION. Continuous. The
stage is bathed in a manic red wash.*

DAN
That sweet, sweet name. Maria Rojas. So I was sitting there.
I was thinking about all these wonderful female role models.
And the golden boy. And me. When you look like me, and you
just--are--like me. You gotta fight so hard for your spot in
the pecking order. Never gonna get invited to the game, never
gonna be offered a spot I didn't carve out myself. But I did
it. By some miracle, I did it! You don't count Dan Park out.
Ever.
But every so often, something like this comes around. Some
shiny thing jumps in front of them like Bryan McGrath or a
tiara--and I'm reminded all over again how little I matter.
So what if I burned it all down?
What if I did everything in my power to put the crown of the
Homecoming queen on Maria Rojas's head? I could see it now:

*Janelle, Candice, Maria, and Bryan
unfreeze.*

CANDICE
Full-scale Battle Royale!

JANELLE
No, Squid Game!

MARIA
These girls would plunge the school into chaos!

BRYAN
Everyone would run for cover!

JANELLE

First the lights would go out--

The lights drop out. Spotlight on Candice with a big sword.

CANDICE

Then Candice gets Janelle in the jugular.

Spotlight on Janelle with 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

Maybe we'd hit Bryan on the way.

BRYAN

Wouldn't that be fun?

Spotlight on Maria placing the crown on her head.

MARIA

But in the middle of it all... Maria Rojas steals the crown while the whole world burns.

Spotlight on Dan.

DAN

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

BLACKOUT.

CANDICE (IN THE DARK)

May the best girl win.

JANELLE (IN THE DARK)

Best girl win.

4-1.

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

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 6.

Janelle enters and sits. A table full of other popular girls is implied to be there with her.

Maria sets her lunch down and sits with Janelle.

Hey Janelle!

MARIA

Um--hey girl--?

JANELLE

Maria.

MARIA

Oh! You're Maria Rojas!

JANELLE

I am.

MARIA

Omigosh, she's a real person!

JANELLE

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

MARIA

None of us knew who you were. Nicole swore it was a joke.

JANELLE

Makes two of us.

MARIA

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

JANELLE

Yep, well--here I am.

MARIA

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

JANELLE

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.

4-4.

CALCULUS CLASSROOM. September 6.

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

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 gonna turn 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.

5-1.

BOYS' LOCKER ROOM. September 6.

AT RISE: Dan is in gym clothes, alone on stage and removes his shirt. He's quite small, his white briefs are visible.

Bryan enters, wearing just a towel.

BRYAN

Nice gains, Danny P.

DAN

Oh--um.

BRYAN

Hell of a fight today. I went back and forth on pickin' you or Manda there at the end. Should've picked you, dang!

DAN

Yeah, I--

BRYAN

You're like the silent assassin out there, playing dodgeball. I was lookin' over at Flanagan and in comes Danny P with the money shot. Hit me square in the chest.

DAN

I know. I--I was there.

BRYAN

Never seen that kinda fight in you, my guy.

He sits, "manspreading".

BRYAN

You're not getting picked last next time, I know that!

DAN

Well, nobody--

(Trails off.)

--picked me.

BRYAN

Yo, are you already as sick of homecoming as I am?

DAN

N--no--?

Bryan laughs.

BRYAN

Yeah, Candice--it's all she talks about anymore. It's only been like what, two days? Day before the nominations, she's saying to me, you know, "homecoming is dumb, it's just a popularity contest" but then her name's on the list and suddenly--uh... it's gonna be a long month.

He gets up.

BRYAN

Should probably get some clothes on, yeah?

He gives Dan a playful punch on the shoulder as he exits. Dan finishes changing when Bryan is out of sight and crosses to the Field Hockey Pitch.

5-2.

FIELD HOCKEY PITCH. September 9.

Maria enters.

DAN

All right, let's have a look at your Instagram. Remind me what it is again?

MARIA

Oh--are you not following? Here, let me just--

She takes Dan's phone and pulls up her account. She taps the screen.

On scrim: Maria's barren Instagram account with a few art pieces and exactly 22 followers.

MARIA

"Follow back" and--boom!

DAN

Pleasure to be your twenty-third.

MARIA

Twenty-three more than zero!

She laughs.

MARIA

So, how are we gonna win this?

DAN

Oh no--no, no. Make no mistake, Rojas. "We" are not winning anything. This is all you; you're a self-made woman.

MARIA

Well, that's not fair! If you help me win, shouldn't you get to celebrate, too?

DAN

See, this is a dicey situation. Let's look at the facts here:

He hands Maria a paper. She studies it.

On scrim: Intricate--quite good--drawings of Maria, Janelle, Candice, Dan, and Bryan with a web of lines drawn between each figure, labeled with facts drawn on paper.

DAN

Janelle or Candice will win Homecoming Queen. It's probably going to be Janelle, but I could see a world where her votes get split between like Nicole, Emily, whatever.

MARIA

That doesn't really tell me anything.

DAN

Candice and I are in NHS and AP English and AP Gov, and I see Janelle every day in the studio and once I start on stage crew, and they both seem to like talking to me. So I'm technically friends with them both.

MARIA

What's this about Bryan?

DAN

Well he's--
he's. Dating Candice, so.
By proxy.

MARIA

I see you. Movin' up in the world.

DAN

Yeah. So by some legal definitions, helping anyone in this election constitutes a conflict of interest.

MARIA

(Playful.)

You're such a dork.

She laughs. Dan pulls out a phone and starts filming her.

MARIA

Are you filming me?

DAN

What you're giving right now--this is perfect.

MARIA

"Giving"?

DAN

The laugh. The eyes. You're on fire right now.

A coach's whistle is heard.

MRS. LOWRY (OFF STAGE)

Let's move, ladies!

MARIA

Ah--OK. We gotta keep working on this!

DAN

When's your study hall?

MARIA

Fifth period.

DAN

Cool. Sign out. Meet me at the Studio.

MARIA

That's your study hall--?

DAN

Don't worry about it.

BLACKOUT.

A school bell rings.