

**OutSpoken**

**a play  
by  
Prince Gomolvilas**

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New Conservatory Theatre Center  
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ABOUT THE PLAY

OutSpoken was originally commissioned, developed, and produced by the YouthAware Educational Theatre program at the New Conservatory Theatre Center (Ed Decker, Artistic Director) in San Francisco, California. It opened October 5, 2005. It was directed by Sara Staley and stage managed by Jeffrey Cohlman, with the following cast:

TEEN 1	Wesley Cayabyab
TEEN 2	Jennifer Rich
TEEN 3	Andre Pina
TEEN 4	Lisa Jenai-Hernandez
TEEN 5	Joseph Holmes

OutSpoken continues to tour high schools in Northern California.

THE CHARACTERS

TEEN 1,  
male

TEEN 2,  
female

TEEN 3,  
male

TEEN 4,  
female

TEEN 5,  
male

PROLOGUE

FIVE TEENS. THEY ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 1

I am:

TEEN 5

Fill in the blank.

TEEN 2

I am:

TEEN 5

Fill in the blank.

TEEN 3

I am:

TEEN 5

Fill in the blank.

TEEN 4

I am:

TEEN 5

Fill in the blank.

TEEN 1

Label us.

TEEN 2

Identify us.

TEEN 3

Group us.

TEEN 4

Define us.

TEEN 1

Because we want to be labeled.

TEEN 5

However, no labels sound right.

TEEN 2

Because we would like an identity.

TEEN 5

However, we really can't be identified.

TEEN 3

Because we desire to be grouped.

TEEN 5

However, there is no group we fit in.

TEEN 4

Because we long for definition.

TEEN 5

However, we defy definition.

TEEN 1

Look at our race, our color.

TEEN 5

Is that who we are?

TEEN 2

Look at our gender, our sexual orientation.

TEEN 5

Is that who we are?

TEEN 3

Look at our religion, our politics.

TEEN 5

Is that who we are?

TEEN 4

Look at our bodies, our faces.

TEEN 5

Is that who we are?

TEEN 1

We need to know.

TEEN 2

So we want to talk.

TEEN 3

But when we start to talk.

TEEN 4

No one wants to hear it.

TEEN 1

Race and color.

TEEN 5

Boring.

TEEN 2

Gender and sexual orientation.

TEEN 5

So boring.

TEEN 3

Religion and politics.

TEEN 5

Bored out of my mind.

TEEN 4

Bodies and faces.

TEEN 5

Bored beyond belief.

TEEN 1 & TEEN 2 & TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

Why?

TEEN 5

People don't want to hear about that stuff.

TEEN 1

Issues.

TEEN 2

Social problems.

TEEN 3

Messages.

TEEN 4

Lessons.

TEEN 5

I mean, who wants to hear about that?

TEEN 1

People would rather hear about something else.

TEEN 2

They want to keep things real.

TEEN 3

They want to keep things light.

TEEN 4

They would rather hear a story about...

TEEN 5

...about romance.

TEEN 1 & TEEN 2 & TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

Say what?

TEEN 5

Yeah. They would rather hear a story about love.

TEEN 1 & TEEN 2 & TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

Bleeecchhh.

TEEN 5

No. Whether people admit it or not, a love story, a love story is what everybody's interested in. Right?

TEEN 1 & TEEN 2 & TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

...Right.

TEEN 1

A love story is what everybody wants.

TEEN 2

But what most people don't realize:

TEEN 3

Is that every story:

TEEN 4

Every story:

ALL TEENS

Every story is a love story.

ONE

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 5 ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE UNTIL  
OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

TEEN 1

My girlfriend is black.

TEEN 5

My girlfriend is white.

TEEN 1

But isn't it weird?

TEEN 5

Isn't it messed up?

TEEN 1

That nothing.

TEEN 5

Nothing in this world.

TEEN 1 & TEEN 5

Nothing in this world is black and white.

TEEN 5 DISAPPEARS. TEEN 1 IS APPROACHED BY  
TEEN 2.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 1:) Bus come yet?

TEEN 1

'S late.

TEEN 2

You in my history class, right?

TEEN 1

Sit in the back.

TEEN 2

Can I ask you somethin'?

TEEN 1

Can I say "no"?

TEEN 2

'M gonna ask you anyways.

TEEN 1

No.

TEEN 2

Your girlfriend is black, right?

TEEN 1

You can tell she's black? Wow, you're smart.

TEEN 2

Don't get all sassy like a girl.

TEEN 1

Don't get in my face like a boy.

TEEN 2

She don't act black.

TEEN 1

What?

TEEN 2

'M sayin', she's black, but she don't act it.

TEEN 1

How do you "act black"?

TEEN 2

You know.

TEEN 1

No, I don't.

TEEN 2

She's all like: (IN AN EXAGGERATED "VALLEY GIRL" VOICE:)  
"Oh my god, like, can you believe the look he was giving  
me? Ewww!" I mean, she's black. She should be talkin' like:  
(IN AN EXAGGERATED "URBAN" VOICE:) "Mm. This is all me up  
in here. Don't be getting' up in my grill, girl."

TEEN 1

What is your problem?

TEEN 2

I'm just curious.

TEEN 1

I can see why no guy wants to get with you.

TEEN 2

Shut up. I'm single by choice.

TEEN 1

You're single by law. Article 68, Section 49: "Never date a dumb ass."

TEEN 5 ENTERS.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 1, REFERRING TO TEEN 5:) Ppssh. There's another one that don't know what's what.

TEEN 1

What're you talkin' about?

TEEN 2

Your girlfriend should trade personalities with his girlfriend.

TEEN 5

Bus late?

TEEN 1

Yup.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 5, REFERRING TO TEEN 1:) Hey, he wants to know somethin'.

TEEN 5

What?

TEEN 1

I don't wanna know anything.

TEEN 2

Your girlfriend is white, right?

TEEN 5

And?

TEEN 2

How come she acts black?

TEEN 5

What?

TEEN 2

She acts like she's black.

TEEN 5

Are you for real?

TEEN 2

Does she have a complex or something? Does she think she's black...? (REFERRING TO TEEN 1:) I'm just askin' 'cuz he wants to know.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 1:) You got a problem?

TEEN 1

I don't know this girl.

TEEN 2

I'm walkin' home. Bye.

TEEN 2 EXITS.

TEEN 1

Don't look at me.

TEEN 5

Don't talk to me.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 5 LOOK AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

TEEN 4 APPEARS. THEY ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 1

My girlfriend is black.

TEEN 4

But people say to her:

TEEN 1

You don't act black.

TEEN 4

And she asks them:

TEEN 1

How do you "act black"?

TEEN 4

And they say:

TEEN 1

You know.

TEEN 4

And she says:

TEEN 1

No, I don't.

TEEN 4

You see:

TEEN 1

She was born on a farm.

TEEN 4

Far from the big city.

TEEN 1

She milked cows.

TEEN 4

Fed chickens.

TEEN 1

She doesn't listen to rap.

TEEN 4

Doesn't listen to R&B.

TEEN 1

She's a little bit country.

TEEN 4

A little bit rock 'n' roll.

TEEN 1

But people think that she's fake.

TEEN 4

That she's a poser.

TEEN 1

That she's trying to be something she's not.

TEEN 4

But that something they think she's not.

TEEN 1

Is the only something that she knows.

TEEN 5

My girlfriend is white.

TEEN 4

But people say to her:

TEEN 5

Why do you act black?

TEEN 4

And she asks them:

TEEN 5

How do you "act black"?

TEEN 4

And they say:

TEEN 5

You know.

TEEN 4

And she says:

TEEN 5

No, I don't.

TEEN 4

You see:

TEEN 5

She was born in a big city.

TEEN 4

Surrounded by diversity.

TEEN 5

This is the way her friends acted.

TEEN 4

This is the way her friends talked.

TEEN 5

How do people want her to act?

TEEN 4

How do people want her to talk?

TEEN 5

Like a "white" girl?

TEEN 4

What is that like exactly?

TEEN 5

So people think that she's fake.

TEEN 4

That she's a poser.

TEEN 5

That she's trying to be something she's not.

TEEN 4

But that something they think she's not.

TEEN 5

Is the only something that she knows.

THE FIVE TEENS ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 1

I am Hispanic.

TEEN 3

I am Middle Eastern.

TEEN 4

I am Native American.

TEEN 5

I am Asian.

TEEN 1

I am Hispanic, but I was raised in North Dakota.

TEEN 3

I am Middle Eastern, but I've never been to the Middle East.

TEEN 4

I am Native American, but I speak with a Southern accent.

TEEN 5

I am Asian, but I look Latino.

TEEN 1

My parents are not immigrants; I'm fourth generation.

TEEN 3

My parents are not terrorists; I was raised on American military bases.

TEEN 4

My parents don't run Indian gaming casinos; I come from a family of police officers.

TEEN 5

My parents are English teachers; I'm not a math genius.

TEEN 1

But:

TEEN 3

But:

TEEN 4

But:

TEEN 5

But:

TEEN 1

My girlfriend's brother is black too, and he does listen to rap.

TEEN 5

My girlfriend's sister is white too, and she does talk like a surfer girl.

TEEN 3

And my uncle is Muslim.

TEEN 4

And my aunt lives on a reservation

TEEN 2

Wait a minute!

TEEN 1 & TEEN 3 & TEEN 4 & TEEN 5

(Simultaneously:) Confused?

TEEN 2

Confused.

TEEN 1

What are we then?

TEEN 3

We don't know.

TEEN 4

So people think that we're fake.

TEEN 5

That we're posers.

TEEN 1

That we're trying to be something we're not.

TEEN 3

But that something they think we're not.

TEEN 4

Is the only something that we know.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 2:) You got a problem with that?

TEEN 2

...I'm walkin' home. Bye.

TEEN 2 EXITS.

TWO

TEEN 4 AND TEEN 3, ON OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE STAGE. TEEN 4 LOOKS AT TEEN 3; TEEN 3 DOES NOT NOTICE. TEEN 3 LOOKS AT TEEN 4; TEEN 4 DOES NOT NOTICE. TEEN 5 APPROACHES TEEN 4.

TEEN 5

Oh my god, you were so staring at Tony.

TEEN 4

What? Nuh-uh.

TEEN 5

Yuh-huh. There's like drool dripping off your lip.

TEEN 4

Whatever.

TEEN 5

Late.

TEEN 5 EXITS. TEEN 2 APPROACHES TEEN 3.

TEEN 2

Why are you staring at Tina?

TEEN 3

Huh? I wasn't.

TEEN 2

Your eyes were all bulging like: (Demonstrating:) A-woo-gah!

TEEN 3

Whatever.

TEEN 2

See ya.

TEEN 2 EXITS. TEEN 4 AND TEEN 3 ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 4

You see him?

He:

He's the most popular kid at school. Star quarterback, star pitcher, star everything.

He doesn't know that I watch him. Study him. I don't mean study him like he's a gorilla in the jungle. But I can't help looking at him because he has something I want:

I wish I could have his confidence.

Me:

I don't have any of his confidence. And probably never will.

TEEN 3

You see her?

She:

She's the most beautiful girl at school. Cute face, smooth hair, gorgeous body.

She doesn't know that I watch her. It's not that I'm obsessed like some crazy stalker. But I can't help looking at her because she has something I need:

I wish I could have her confidence.

Me:

I don't have any of her confidence. And probably never will.

TEEN 4

You see: I:

I am a girl who hears voices.

TEEN 3

You see: I:

I am a guy who hears voices.

TEEN 4

The skinny kids talk:

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 2.

TEEN 1

Do you think she knows how fat she is?

TEEN 2

Why don't you ask her?

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 4:) Hey, Tina.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 1:) What?

TEEN 2

You like to eat, huh?

TEEN 4

What're you talkin' about?

TEEN 1

Do you get any exercise?

TEEN 2

Exercise is important.

TEEN 1

Even dogs need to be walked.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 2 LAUGH AND EXIT.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) But the big kids talk too:

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 2, AS DIFFERENT CHARACTERS.

TEEN 2

Look how skinny she is.

TEEN 1

She looks like a cancer patient.

TEEN 2

Does she know she's way too thin? It's unhealthy.

TEEN 1

I think you need to tell her.

TEEN 2

Hey, Tina.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Words are like weapons, and everyone likes being armed for high school.

TEEN 3

The other guys talk:

TEEN 5 AND TEEN 1.

TEEN 5

Dude, that guy looks weird.

TEEN 1

What?

TEEN 5

Look at how flat his chest is.

TEEN 1

You're right. He looks like he's sick or something.

TEEN 5 AND TEEN 1 LAUGH AND EXIT.

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And those guys who don't say anything:  
I can still hear them anyway because sideways glances speak  
louder than words.

TEEN 4

But here's the thing:

TEEN 3

This is what sucks most:

TEEN 4

The girls make fun of me. But I know it's justified.

TEEN 3

The guys rag on me. But I understand why.

TEEN 4

You see, the only thing more confused than my mind is my  
body. Parts of me are:

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Very skinny.

TEEN 4

And parts of me are:

TEEN 2

Very big.

TEEN 4

It's like my body is in a constant battle with itself. Like it can't decide which shapes are uglier to the world.

TEEN 3

You see, my chest defies all explanation. The rest of my body looks great, and that's why I can boast all those touchdowns, all those baskets, all those goals. But my chest:

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 3:) Why is it so flat?

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 5:) I don't know.

TEEN 5

Do you have some kind of medical condition?

TEEN 3

Yeah: it's called high school.

TEEN 4

So, to make my big parts thinner, I've exercised and exercised, but the only parts of me that seem to get thinner are those parts that are already thin. And to make my skinny parts bigger, I've eaten the right foods and lifted the right weights, but the only parts of me that seem to get bigger are those parts of me that are already big.

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And even when the insults got old.

TEEN 4

And even when the voices stopped.

TEEN 3

The voices did not stop.

TEEN 4

I still hear them.

TEEN 3

And I still see the other guys, who must be jealous of how good I am at sports, I can see them trying to find things wrong with me to make them feel better about themselves. And they sometimes let out a little laugh when I'm changing in the locker room and they catch a glimpse of the freak show that is my undeveloped chest, a chest that does not respond to weight training, to targeted exercise, or to the voices that make it feel so insecure about itself.

TEEN 4

Yes, I keep hearing those voices.

TEEN 3

I hear them in my mind.

TEEN 4

While I'm walking though the halls.

TEEN 2

Fat!

TEEN 3

While I'm sitting on the bus.

TEEN 5

Flat!

TEEN 4

While I'm asleep.

TEEN 2

Skinny!

TEEN 3

While I'm dreaming.

TEEN 5

Diseased!

TEEN 2 AND TEEN 5 DISAPPEAR.

TEEN 4

I wish I could be around him.

TEEN 3

I wish I could spend some time with her.

TEEN 4

Because maybe I'd learn a thing or two about self-confidence.

TEEN 3

Because maybe I'd learn a few things about self-esteem.

TEEN 4

He could show me how to feel good about myself.

TEEN 3

She could show me how to feel good about who I am.

TEEN 4

But how do I talk to someone like him?

TEEN 3

How do I talk to a girl like that?

TEEN 4

I could go up to him and tell him how perfect I think he is.

TEEN 3

I could just tell her the truth and say how perfect I think he is.

TEEN 4

But he wouldn't care what I had to say.

TEEN 3

She'd just ignore me anyway.

TEEN 4

I mean, I see the way he stares at me.

TEEN 3

I see how she looks at me funny.

TEEN 4

But sometimes I get optimistic.

TEEN 3

Sometimes I look on the bright side.

TEEN 4

Sometimes I dream:

TEEN 3

Sometimes I dream that all it would take to change everything is actually very simple.

TEEN 4

Sometimes I think the answer is not so complicated.

TEEN 3

Sometimes I think that everything would change if just one person:

TEEN 4

Just one individual:

TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Would come up to me and say:

TEEN 3

You're okay.

TEEN 4

You're all right.

TEEN 3

Because I know by now that I can't change my body.

TEEN 4

But I can change my mind.

TEEN 3

But it's hard to do that on your own.

TEEN 4

So I wait for someone to come along to help me out.

TEEN 3

Someone to come along to save me from the voices.

TEEN 4

Someone to remind me that beneath my skin.

TEEN 3

Beneath my flesh.

TEEN 4

Beneath my blood.

TEEN 3 & TEEN 4

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Someone to remind me:

TEEN 3

That beneath it all:

TEEN 4

Beneath it all:

TEEN 3

I am as perfect as she is.

TEEN 4

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) I am as perfect as he is.

TEEN 4 LOOKS AT TEEN 3; TEEN 3 DOES NOT  
NOTICE. TEEN 3 LOOKS AT TEEN 4; TEEN 4 DOES  
NOT NOTICE. TEEN 3 AND TEEN 4 DISAPPEAR.  
TEEN 1 AND TEEN 2 ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 1

In the morning.

TEEN 2

Late at night.

TEEN 1

As soon as she gets up.

TEEN 2

Before he goes to bed.

TEEN 1

She looks in the mirror and does not like what she sees.

TEEN 2

He looks in the mirror and thinks about how unfair it is.

TEEN 1

How is it that she's stayed pretty much the same after all these years?

TEEN 2

How come he seems like the same guy he's always been?

TEEN 1

Her friends have changed.

TEEN 2

His friends are different.

TEEN 1

Some of her friends started calling themselves:

TEEN 5 AND TEEN 4 ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 5

Goth girls:

TEEN 4

Black is the new black.

TEEN 1

Some:

TEEN 5

Punk girls:

TEEN 4

Turn it up!

TEEN 1

Some:

TEEN 5

Emo girls:

TEEN 4

Depression is so depressing. But I like it.

TEEN 1

Identities defined by the music they listened to: music that she really could not stand.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) What is that crap?!

TEEN 4

Music is life!

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Some of his friends could now be called:

TEEN 4

Stoners:

TEEN 5

Dude, I am so hungry right now.

TEEN 2

Some:

TEEN 4

Tweakers:

TEEN 5

Oh my god my room is so dirty I have to clean it up right now can you believe the way it looks I don't even know what to do about it.

TEEN 2

Some:

TEEN 4

Smackheads:

TEEN 5

Whoa, where am I? How did I get here? What's my name?

TEEN 2

Identities defined by the drugs they were addicted to: drugs that he had no interest in trying.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 5:) Doesn't really look like fun to me.

TEEN 5

That's because you're not on 'em!

TEEN 1

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) She gave the music a chance, but it was all too loud for her, and she has never tried to hide her Top 40 sensibilities from anybody.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) Yeah, Justin Timberlake is on my iPod.

TEEN 4

That is so not okay.

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) He's thought about toking up, shooting up, snorting up with his buddies, but he worries about the consequences.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 5:) Yeah, I'm just gonna stick to Hawaiian Punch.

TEEN 5

Dude, you are so weird.

TEEN 1

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) So she took a step back from it all.

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And he kept his hands off.

TEEN 1

But because she is who she is.

TEEN 2

And because he is who he is.

TEEN 1

She's beginning to lose touch with her longtime friends.

TEEN 2

He's becoming distant from the people who have always seemed to be a part of his life.

TEEN 1

People who have cried with her.

TEEN 2

People who have laughed with him.

TEEN 1

People who are the only people she has ever really known.

TEEN 2

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) People who are the only people he has ever really known.

TEEN 1

There was a time when being different got you excluded.

TEEN 2

But times have changed.

TEEN 1

And being mainstream is the path to exclusion.

TEEN 2

So:

TEEN 1

So: she thinks: maybe she can save her dying friendships.

TEEN 2

Maybe he can still be friends with his friends. So:

TEEN 1

So: she figures that she doesn't actually need to listen to the music that they listen to, but maybe, just maybe, if she looked the look, that would be enough to preserve longtime bonds. So:

TEEN 2

So: he figures he doesn't have to become an addict or anything, but maybe, just maybe, if he tried it every once in a while, that would be enough for their friendships to last. So:

TEEN 1

So: she stands in front of her mirror this morning, a hot needle in her right hand. The place in the mall that does tongue piercings requires parental permission, which she will never get. So:

TEEN 2

So: he sits in a smoky basement with his friends, a long needle in his left hand. The drug of choice tonight is heroin, and, if you're gonna start something, you might as well start big. So:

TEEN 1

So: she stands in front of her mirror this morning, a hot needle in her right hand because, if she wants it done, she has to do it herself. And even with that pierced tongue, she might not be able to talk the talk, but it will certainly prove to her friends how much she loves them. So:

TEEN 2

So: he sits in a smoky basement with his friends, a long needle in his left hand because, if this is what it takes, then this is what it takes. And even after shooting up once, no one will think he's an expert, but it will surely convince his friends about how far he would go to show that he's still one of guys. So:

TEEN 1

So.

TEEN 2

So.

THREE

FIVE TEENS, BACKS TO THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 5

I am a boy in love with a girl.

TEEN 4

I am a girl in love with no one.

TEEN 3

I am a guy, and so are you.

TEEN 2

I am a person, and that's as far as I know.

TEEN 5 ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE UNTIL  
OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

TEEN 5

I am a boy in love with a girl.

I'm just slow when it comes to making things happen. Very  
slow.

TEEN 2 APPROACHES TEEN 5.

TEEN 5

I said one word to her in all of sixth grade. (TO TEEN 2:)  
Hi.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 5:) Hi.

TEEN 5

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And that was it. Until seventh grade.

(TO THE TEEN 2:) Hi, Tina.

TEEN 2

Hi, Frank.

TEEN 5

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And that was it. Until the school dance in eighth grade. (TO TEEN 5:) Wanna dance?

TEEN 2

Okay.

TEEN 5

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And that was it. Until freshman year of high school. (TO THE TEEN 2:) You wanna go to a movie or something?

TEEN 2

Sure.

TEEN 5

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) When we became sophomores, she started calling me her "boyfriend." And junior year, I started calling her my "girlfriend." We're seniors now, we're pretty committed, and I'm gonna ask her to marry me. When I'm 72.

But until then, we hang out all the time. Sometimes we go out with my friends. Sometimes with hers.

But the thing is, at the beginning of senior year, she started hanging out with a whole new group of friends.

A bunch of gay guys.

And she even joined the gay-straight alliance on campus. She's not gay or anything—believe me, I would know—but she has this let's-change-the-world attitude that can be really annoying coming from a high school girl.

Look, I don't have a problem with gay guys, but I don't want to hang out with them either.

You see, it's like this: I go out with her and her friends, and I get seen around town. People know she and I are boyfriend and girlfriend, but they start associating me with all these gay guys anyway. And when a weekend full of hanging out passes, Monday morning comes, and I get the crap beat out of me in the locker room after gym class.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 3 APPROACH TEEN 5.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 5:) Why do you hang out with all those fags?

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 1 & TEEN 3:) What?

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 5:) What are you? A homo or something?

TEEN 5

No.

TEEN 1

I thought you were straight.

TEEN 5

I am.

TEEN 3

But I guess you're a faggot.

TEEN 5

No, I'm not.

TEEN 3

For some reason, they don't beat up the guys at school who are actually gay. They take their hate out on me instead.

And they know I won't tell anyone about it. Not even my girlfriend knows. I ache all over, but you can't really see the bruises, so she has no clue what's going on.

I mean, I wish I could rub it in her face and tell her, "You see what hanging out with your friends does to me?" But I can't. Because if she ever found out about this, she would make a big deal about it, and she'd get the whole school involved, and more than ever I'd be forever associated with this whole gay thing.

And if I think I have it bad now, just imagine what would happen if I became some poster child for gay rights. It would mean a lot more turned heads, a lot more whispering behind my back, and a lot more beatings from guys who just don't care how much you hurt.

I am a boy in love with a girl.

And because of that:

I'll take the punches. I'll take the kicks. And I'll keep going out on weekends with a bunch of gay guys who will never know that, because I get beat up:

They don't have to.

TEEN 4 ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE UNTIL  
OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

TEEN 4

I am a girl in love with no one.

Let's not talk about sex. Please. Enough is too much already. On the bus: sex talk.

TEEN 2 AND TEEN 3 SPEAK TO EACH OTHER.

TEEN 2

Oh my god, Jenny had sex with Mark, and Mark had sex with Laura, and Laura had sex with Ralph, and Ralph had sex with Susan, and—

TEEN 4

During lunch hour: sex talk.

TEEN 3

Well, Andrew thinks John gay, but Sophia thinks John is straight, and Hank thinks John is bi, and my mom thinks John is-

TEEN 4

LiveJournal entires, MySpace bulletins, Yahoo! Chat:

TEEN 2

Sex talk.

TEEN 3

Sex talk.

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Sex talk.

TEEN 4

In my circle of friends, girls who have sex are no longer called "sluts" right to their face. That's because girls who have sex are my circle of friends.

And because I've never "done it," they make fun of me.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) I can't believe you're still a virgin.

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 4:) Yeah. I heard that if you don't do it by the time you're 18, your birth canal becomes infected and your children might come out retarded.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Since when did the word "virgin" become dirtier than the word "whore"? Since when did girls like me become social outcasts?

TEEN 5 APPROACHES TEEN 4.

TEEN 4

There have been boys. There always will be boys. Cute boys. Boys with nice smiles. Boys who like baseball. Boys who swing carefully because first base, second base, third base, and all the way home is the point of the game.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 4:) You have nice eyes.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 5:) Thanks.

TEEN 5

You have nice skin.

TEEN 4

Thanks.

TEEN 5

You have nice boobs. Can I stare at them? Can I touch them?  
Can I reach my hands underneath your shirt? Let's have sex!

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) I don't turn my nose up to other girls,  
I don't think that everyone should abstain from sex, I  
don't think everybody in the world should think what I  
think. I know what's right for me, and that's it. But these  
so-called friends of mine wanna know why.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) Why haven't you ever had sex?

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 4:) Have you thought about it at all?

TEEN 2

How far have you gotten?

TEEN 3

How far are you willing to go?

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) All their questions boil down to:

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) What's your problem?

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) Are you scared of sex?

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 4:) Is it against your religion?

TEEN 2

Are your parents overly protective?

TEEN 3

Do you even know how to do it?

TEEN 2

Are you saving yourself for marriage?

TEEN 3

Are you saving yourself from disease?

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) What is it?

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) I offer no answers. I give away no secrets. I solve no mysteries.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4:) Why?

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 4:) Why?

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Why?

TEEN 4

And I reply to their complicated question with an uncomplicated question:

Wouldn't you like to know?

TEEN 3 ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 3

I am a guy, and so are you.

My friends call me "The Magician." You hear that, and you would think that I could levitate and make the Statue of Liberty disappear and be chained, locked inside a trunk, thrown into the Pacific Ocean, and somehow make a death-defying escape.

But c'mon. I can't do any of that stuff.

The reason they call me The Magician is because my life seems to be perfect. People think that this is the result of magical powers because there is no logical explanation why this should be true.

I have understanding parents. Supportive teachers. Many friends. I've never been bullied at school, never been confronted on the street, and, as far as I know, never been discriminated against or been the victim of any kind of prejudice whatsoever, despite the fact that I am a boy. Who likes. Boys.

And this, my happy life, to my surprise, is causing lots of tension between me and my friends.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 5 APPROACH TEEN 3.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 3:) You don't know how easy you have it.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 3:) You take it all for granted.

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 1 & TEEN 5:) No, I don't.

TEEN 1

What're you always smiling about?

TEEN 5

Why do you deserve to be so happy?

TEEN 3

I didn't make it this way. It just is. (TO THE AUDIENCE:)  
You see, my friends don't have it as good as I do.

My friends have parents who mock them, parents who have disowned them, parents who have tried to beat the gay out of them.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 3:) Do you know how lucky you are?

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) My friends have other friends who have stopped talking to them, who have turned their backs on them, who have spread rumors like viruses.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 3:) Do you know how lucky you are?

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) My friends get taunted by bullies, get called "fag" in the middle of the street, are easy marks when they're out in public.

TEEN 1 & TEEN 5

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Do you know how lucky you are?

TEEN 5

Does this make me a magician? I don't think so at all.

If I were a magician, I'd be able to improve the lives of my friends.

If I were a magician, I'd be able to transform their parents, make their other friends look upon them with understanding eyes, make the bullies leave them alone.

If I were a magician, all my friends would be magicians too, so we would all know what it's like to live an easy and carefree life. So we all could live in a neighborhood, a town, a country, a world, where we feel safe and loved and protected and loved.

If I were a magician, I would make the hate, the ignorance,  
the wrong: I would make it all. Simply. Disappear.

TEEN 2 ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 2

I am a person, and that's as far as I know.

Teenagers may be opinionated, but parents are just as bad.

TEEN 3 AND TEEN 4 APPROACH TEEN 2.

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 2:) Teenagers think they know better than adults!

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 2:) Teenagers think they know everything!

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) But lemme tell you something. (TO TEEN  
3 & TEEN 4:) I admit to you right here and now that I  
don't know everything.

TEEN 3

Huh?

TEEN 4

What?

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And, usually, in my day-to-day life, it's okay for me to wander around aimlessly, lost in confusion, question marks crammed in my hip pocket.

However, there is one subject I can't escape from, one subject that people demand answers to.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 5 APPROACH TEEN 2.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 2:) Are you straight?

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 2:) Are you gay?

TEEN 1

Are you bisexual?

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 1 & TEEN 5:) Uh—

TEEN 5

Do you like boys?

TEEN 1

Do you like girls?

TEEN 5

Do you like both?

TEEN 2

Um-

TEEN 1 & TEEN 5

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) What are you?

TEEN 2

I don't know. (TO THE AUDIENCE:) I know too many people who do know exactly who they are. They're definitely straight.

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) That chick is hot.

TEEN 2

Or definitely gay.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) I have to agree with you.

TEEN 2

Or definitely bi.

TEEN 1

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Yes, she is.... But then again, so is he.

TEEN 5 APPROACHES TEEN 2

TEEN 2

Boys have asked me out. And I've been on dates. And hands touching accidentally in buckets of popcorn is incredibly sweet and romantic.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 2:) Is this what you've always dreamed of?

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) But sometimes I think it's sweet and romantic only because I see it happen in the movies.

TEEN 4 APPROACHES TEEN 2.

TEEN 2

And girls have given me suggestive looks at parties. And I have smiled back, not sure whether or not that's the appropriate response.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 2:) You have pretty teeth.

TEEN 2

Are those friendly glances? Or blatant come-ons? Do I know? Do I care? Do I ever wonder about...you know...girls?

I don't have a label. Which leaves me searching for answers and identities that will help guide me toward the right group to stand in, the right line to get behind, the right friends to hang out with, the right people to date, the right everything to everything.

TEEN 5

I am a boy in love with a girl.

TEEN 4

I am a girl in love with no one.

TEEN 3

I am a guy, and so are you.

TEEN 2

I am a person, and that's as far as I know.

FOUR

FIVE TEENS ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE UNTIL  
OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

TEEN 1

I am a Republican.

TEEN 4

I am a Democrat.

TEEN 2

I am an atheist.

TEEN 3

I am a Christian.

TEEN 1

I am a Republican. But I don't support most of the  
Republicans who are in office right now.

TEEN 4

I am a Democrat. But I hold many conservative beliefs.

TEEN 2

I am an atheist. But I go to church anyway.

TEEN 3

I am a Christian. But I sleep in on Sundays.

TEEN 1

The politics of religion are really complex.

TEEN 4

Almost as complex as the religion of politics.

TEEN 2

He:

TEEN 1

Republican.

TEEN 3

She:

TEEN 4

Democrat.

TEEN 1

Our first date was perfect. And even she would agree.

TEEN 4

I agree.

TEEN 1

We liked the same music.

TEEN 4

The same movies.

TEEN 1

The same TV shows.

TEEN 4

The same books.

TEEN 1

The same classes.

TEEN 4

The same sports.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 4:) Green Day.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 1:) Me too.... "Wedding Crashers."

TEEN 1

Me too.... "24."

TEEN 4

Me too.... "The Catcher in the Rye."

TEEN 1

Me too.... English Lit.

TEEN 4

Me too.... Hockey.

TEEN 1

Me too.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) So we talked all night.

TEEN 1

Conversation over burgers and fries.

TEEN 4

On a Friday night.

TEEN 1

Lost track of time.

TEEN 4

So much so that we missed the movie we were supposed to go to.

TEEN 1

And suddenly it was midnight.

TEEN 4

Had to make my curfew.

TEEN 1

And so did I.

TEEN 4

On my front porch:

TEEN 1

A kiss.

TEEN 4

A kiss on the cheek under the stars.

TEEN 1

And if I ever forgot who I was, she could be my mirror.

TEEN 4

And vice versa.

TEEN 1

The ideal partner.

TEEN 4

Shows you who you really are.

TEEN 1

And she was the ideal partner.

TEEN 4

And vice versa.

TEEN 1

Kiss.

TEEN 4

Kiss.

TEEN 1

Good night.

TEEN 4

Good night.

TEEN 1

It was so good that I didn't even suspect that that. Was the beginning. Of the end.

TEEN 4

How is it that after hours of talking that night that we never got to talking about politics? About our strong opinions about the world?

TEEN 1

Maybe if we got all that out of the way right upfront, we never would've continued the date.

TEEN 4

We never would've raised our hopes.

TEEN 1

We never would've been led to the false idea that this, that we, would last forever.

TEEN 4

We never would've believed in love.

TEEN 1

Over the next few days.

TEEN 4

Over the next few weeks.

TEEN 1

She began to show her true colors.

TEEN 4

And he began to show his.

TEEN 1

The more we talked.

TEEN 4

The more we drifted.

TEEN 1

The more we drifted.

TEEN 4

The more we saw how different we really were.

TEEN 1

We were once each other's mirrors.

TEEN 4

But those mirrors began to crack.

TEEN 1

To break.

TEEN 4

To shatter.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 4:) How could you support our foreign policy?

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 1:) How could you not see the threat that some countries pose to us?

TEEN 1

How could you not believe in a woman's right to choose?

TEEN 4

How could you not respect my respect for life?

TEEN 1

How could you turn your nose up at social programs?

TEEN 4

How could you not see that fighting the symptom is not the cure?

TEEN 1

How could you call yourself a Democrat?

TEEN 4

How could you call yourself a Republican?

TEEN 1

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) So we argued.

TEEN 4

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And we argued.

TEEN 1

And we tried to convince ourselves that what we believed didn't have to affect how we loved.

TEEN 4

But we were wrong.

TEEN 1

What you believe is who you are.

TEEN 4

And who you are is how you're loved.

TEEN 1

And it was on your front porch that we decided that we really weren't meant for each other after all.

TEEN 4

Arguing about novels or ice cream flavors or radio stations are fine.

TEEN 1

But arguing about the things that raise our blood pressures.

TEEN 4

That shape who we are.

TEEN 1

The hurt caused by those arguments could not be ignored.

TEEN 4

Even in the light of love.

TEEN 1

Even as we stood there sad and broken on your front porch.

TEEN 4

You were looking down on the ground.

TEEN 1

I was looking at the shattered pieces of our mirrors.

TEEN 4

And what did you see?

TEEN 1

I saw distorted glimpses of us in each shard.

TEEN 4

And what did that tell you?

TEEN 1

That told me that even in your broken pieces.

TEEN 4

Even against your shattered glass.

TEEN 1

I could still see myself.

TEEN 4

And I could still see myself.

TEEN 1

So what does that mean?

TEEN 4

It means something that neither of us recognized that night  
on the front porch.

TEEN 1

So that was the end.

TEEN 4

That was the end.

TEEN 1

Kiss.

TEEN 4

Kiss.

TEEN 1

Good night.

TEEN 4

Good night.

TEEN 1 AND TEEN 4 LOOK AT EACH OTHER,  
LONGINGLY, HOPELESSLY. TEEN 2 AND TEEN 3  
ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE UNTIL OTHERWISE  
INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

TEEN 1

She.

TEEN 2

Atheist.

TEEN 4

He.

TEEN 3

Christian.

TEEN 2

My circle of friends wear their disbelief in god like a badge of honor.

TEEN 3

My circle of friends parade their devotion to Christ like a New Year's Day float.

TEEN 2

My parents are deeply religious. So at my house, it was always like:

TEEN 4 AND TEEN 5 APPROACH TEEN 2.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 2:) God.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 2:) Jesus.

TEEN 4

Jesus.

TEEN 5

God.

TEEN 4 & TEEN 5

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Amen.

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And in that kind of house, you either end up becoming as religious as your parents. Or you choose to be a rebel without applause.

And, yup, my family didn't cheer when I turned my back on religion. But I wasn't doing it for them. I was doing it for myself.

And I guess I'd be a liar if I didn't admit that all my friends were doing it too.

TEEN 3

My parents aren't very religious at all. So at my house, it was always like:

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 3:) Religion is a sham.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 3:) Outdated ideas.

TEEN 1

Outdated ideas.

TEEN 4

Religion is a sham.

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And in that kind of house, you either end up patching together a bunch of different ideas about

life. Or you choose a religion that gives you some sort of logical structure.

And, yup, my family thought it was a little weird that I was studying the Bible since neither of them had ever picked one up. But I wasn't doing it for them. I was doing it for myself.

And I guess I'd be a liar if I didn't admit that all my friends were doing it too.

TEEN 2

But my friends are not me.

TEEN 3

And I am not my friends.

TEEN 2

Truth is, yes, I'm an atheist, but I missed going to church. I missed seeing familiar faces every week. Missed the comfort of being connected to a large group of people. Missed the shoulders of my parents, my parents who I had grown so far apart from, the shoulders of my parents pressing gently against mine.

TEEN 3

Truth is, yes, I'm a Christian, but I didn't like going to church. I didn't like the ritual, the worship. Didn't like the way everyone expected you to believe in things the same way. I wanted to keep my faith private. It's mine.

TEEN 2

So: I started to go to church again. Even though I remained an outspoken atheist.

TEEN 3

So: I stopped going to church completely. Even though I remained a devout Christian.

TEEN 2

But my friends thought I was weird.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 2:) Wait a minute.

TEEN 5

(TO TEEN 2:) You don't believe in God.

TEEN 2

(TO TEEN 4 & TEEN 5:) No.

TEEN 4

So why are you going to church?

TEEN 2

Because I feel like it.

TEEN 5

That doesn't make sense.

TEEN 2

It makes sense to me.

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) And my friends thought I was weird.

TEEN 1

(TO TEEN 3:) Wait a minute.

TEEN 4

(TO TEEN 3:) You're one of the most religious people I know.

TEEN 3

(TO TEEN 1 & TEEN 4:) So?

TEEN 1

So why'd you stop going to church?

TEEN 3

Why not?

TEEN 4

It doesn't make any sense.

TEEN 3

It makes sense to me.

TEEN 2

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) So: do you choose your friends?

TEEN 3

(TO THE AUDIENCE:) Or: do you choose yourself?

TEEN 2

And I'm sorry.

TEEN 3

But in the end.

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) I had to choose my friends.

TEEN 2

So: I had to act like an atheist. So: there I was on my last day of going church for one final time.

TEEN 3

So: I had to act like a Christian. So: there I was on my first day of going to church again.

TEEN 2

And that's when I met you.

TEEN 3

And that's when I met you.

TEEN 2

You seemed like a contradiction.

TEEN 3

And so did you.

TEEN 2

But it didn't matter to me.

TEEN 3

And it didn't matter to me.

TEEN 2

And I respected your beliefs.

TEEN 3

And I respected yours.

TEEN 2

You chose to be my mirror, but it was a mirror that you could put away when you wanted to be yourself.

TEEN 3

And vice versa.

TEEN 2

You reminded me to be myself.

TEEN 3

So I was comfortable in my own skin again.

TEEN 2

And so was I.

TEEN 3

And it's all because of you.

TEEN 2

So now: I go to church every Sunday morning.

TEEN 3

And now: I sleep in as late as I want to.

TEEN 2

And after it's over.

TEEN 3

And after I wake up.

TEEN 2

I go outside.

TEEN 3

And I meet you in front.

TEEN 2

And we spend the rest of the day together.

TEEN 3

And this is how we spend our lives.

TEEN 2

Hand in hand.

TEEN 3

Hand in hand.

TEEN 2

You are you.

TEEN 3

And I am me.

TEEN 2

And I am me.

TEEN 3

And you are you.

TEEN 2

And that's one belief.

TEEN 3

That we both have.

TEEN 2

And always will.

TEEN 2 & TEEN 3

(SIMULTANEOUSLY:) Amen.

EPILOGUE

FIVE TEENS ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE.

TEEN 1

I am:

TEEN 5

Don't fill in the blank.

TEEN 2

I am:

TEEN 5

Don't fill in the blank.

TEEN 3

I am:

TEEN 5

Don't fill in the blank.

TEEN 4

I am:

TEEN 5

Don't fill in the blank.

TEEN 1

'Cuz if you label us:

TEEN 2

If you identify us:

TEEN 3

If you group us:

TEEN 4

If you define us:

TEEN 5

If you fill in the blanks:

TEEN 1

You will be wrong.

TEEN 2

Because there are no blanks.

TEEN 3

There are no blanks to fill in.

TEEN 4

I am.

TEEN 5

End of sentence.

TEEN 1

I am.

TEEN 2

I am.

TEEN 3

I am.

TEEN 4

I am.

TEEN 5

I am.

END OF PLAY