

PILLOW FORTRESS

Written by
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SCENE

Jordan's living room in an unnamed college town.

TIME

Now.

CHARACTERS

- RY** 22, she/they. Seems effortlessly cool, but it's secretly very effortful. Gay in a visible way. Prison abolitionist. Should be played by a Black woman or non-binary person.
- CHELSEA** 22, she/her. Your typical preppy white girl. Loves her mom. Thinks everything is about her.
- JORDAN** 21, they/she. Hot, sweet, and a little neurotic. Wants to keep the peace. Should be played by an AAPI woman or non-binary person.
- OFFICER KIM** 40s-50s, she/her. Chelsea's mom, a white woman. Police officer. Helicopter in all senses of the word.

NOTES

If there are two punctuation marks at the end of a line, it's dealer's choice

/ indicates that the next line begins

() indicates that the words inside are thought, implied, or intended, but not said

“The eyes of others our prisons; their thoughts our cages.”

— Virginia Woolf

*“I’m a bitch, I’m a lover. I’m a child, I’m a mother. I’m a sinner,
I’m a saint. I do not feel ashamed.”*

— Meredith Brooks

SCENE ONE

RY, JORDAN, and CHELSEA sit in JORDAN's living room, all working on a group presentation.

RY

My section is about Virginia Woolf queering the idea of narration. Cause she's talking about needing the room to do the writing that she's doing. And as a real person she might be trapped there but as the narrator she's trying to get in. But also, she is the room. Like she's creating the room. Yeah.

CHELSEA

I made a slide about Shakespeare's sister.

JORDAN

Oh

RY

You know Shakespeare didn't really have a sister, right?

CHELSEA

Yes... but she talks about her. Judith.

RY

As a thought experiment

CHELSEA

Exactly, yeah that's what I meant.

JORDAN

Piggybacking off that, I'm gonna talk about her ideas of the new woman. Like, doing what women hadn't done before.

CHELSEA

That's perfect.

RY

Should we go in that order or maybe Jordan..?

JORDAN

Um, I don't know / (if I should go first)

CHELSEA

It's tomorrow, let's not overthink it

JORDAN

I mean I could if you think that makes the most sense

RY

But you don't want to

JORDAN

I could go first

RY

Don't worry about it, I can (go first)

JORDAN

Thanks

CHELSEA

I would volunteer, but I don't think it would work with me first

RY

No yeah I'm happy to get it over with

JORDAN

I'll share my slides, so you can drop yours in. What's your (email)?

CHELSEA

charris6@utl.edu

RY

rmitchell4 .. @utl .. you know

JORDAN

Cool

CHELSEA

Can I change the theme?

JORDAN

Yeah of course

CHELSEA

I was thinking a hot pink with big chunky letters

RY Oh, that's not / JORDAN Sure, whatever / (you want is great!)

CHELSEA
To be honest, I'm flunking right now. Like flunking with a capital F. Flunking.
I'm actually grounded until I get my grades up. But I think a cute theme would help

RY
What do you mean grounded?

CHELSEA
Curfew, no visiting friends, y'know?

RY
But how?

CHELSEA
Oh I live at home. with my mom

RY
I forgot that's an option

JORDAN
But she let you come over, that's good

CHELSEA
Oh, no, I told her we're Zooming

JORDAN
Okay, bad girl!

CHELSEA
I'm such a rebel

All of their phones go off with an alarm. RY and CHELSEA make no move to check their phones. They might silence them by pressing the power button without looking at the screen. JORDAN actually reads the alert.

RY
Do they really expect us to find these kids?

CHELSEA

No really, the ones for old people too. I look when I'm out but...

RY

Anyway, I was gonna say that we might want to pick a more serious design scheme

CHELSEA scoffs. JORDAN starts locking the doors.

JORDAN

They're looking for someone. Apparently they're really close. We're supposed to stay inside.

CHELSEA

No way.

JORDAN

(showing their phone)

Look. Manhunt.

RY

Shit.

JORDAN

We should get all the windows too

RY

Okay, yeah.

A siren passes in the distance. JORDAN locks the windows and draws the curtains in the living room while RY moves toward the hallway.

RY

Is it cool if I go in?

JORDAN

Yeah, yeah, no one's home.

RY disappears into the hallway. JORDAN finishes locking the living room, and disappears into the kitchen. CHELSEA rummages in her bag.

Self-assured, borderline aroused, she takes her self-defense tools out and places them on the table one by one: Birdy, kitty cat self defense knuckle keychain, pocket knife, pepper spray, bear spray, bug spray, taser.

CHELSEA

Okay.

JORDAN returns.

JORDAN

(about Chekov's femme arsenal)

Holy shit.

CHELSEA

I know right??

JORDAN

You always carry all of that?

CHELSEA

Yep!

JORDAN

You seem so... calm.

CHELSEA

I am.

JORDAN

This might be the worst thing to ever happen to me.

CHELSEA

I think it's kinda fun!

JORDAN

Fun?

CHELSEA

Like we're Drew Barrymore in *Scream*.

JORDAN

Doesn't she have a breakdown and then get killed?

CHELSEA

I don't think so, doesn't she / shoot (him)

JORDAN

No, she gets totally disemboweled. You're thinking of—

RY returns.

JORDAN

Whatever, it doesn't matter.

CHELSEA

Ry, aren't you having fun?

RY

I wouldn't say fun /

JORDAN

Thank you.

RY

But it's not, bad?

Another couple sirens start, much louder than the last. JORDAN moves to the front window. They flail or point a little obsessively. Two police cars pass the house, loud and bright.

JORDAN

That's bad.

RY

But they were going pretty fast. Away from us

JORDAN

They're on my street, Ry.

CHELSEA

Yeah, but they're on their way to somewhere else that's not here! That must be a good thing?

JORDAN

There's a dead end like ten houses away. It's just woods after that.

RY

There's no other way they could go?

JORDAN

No. And I haven't seen any of them drive back this way either.

CHELSEA

They must still be close.

SCENE TWO

DING! from JORDAN's phone. They check.

JORDAN

Someone posted on NextDoor
It's an escaped prisoner.

CHELSEA

What'd he do? Drug possession? Grand larceny? Aggravated assault? Money laundering?

JORDAN

He was in the Grantfield County Jail. For murder.

CHELSEA

I knew it.

RY

How'd he get out?

JORDAN

It doesn't say.

CHELSEA

We've got a runner.

JORDAN

All the doors are locked. You got the windows. /

RY

I just put down the blinds, I didn't check if they were locked.

JORDAN

God, okay. Chelsea, can you handle that? I'm gonna (grab the flashlights and candles).

JORDAN and CHELSEA disperse. RY was not given a job. They sit. JORDAN gets back with their hands full.

Need help? RY

No no I got it. JORDAN

You sure? RY

Yes let me just—let me do it. JORDAN

Beat.

My bad, I didn't lock the windows earlier. RY

Don't worry about it. JORDAN

I got the blinds, / (I didn't realize it was this serious) RY

I know. JORDAN

I didn't realize / (it was this serious.) RY

It's totally fine!!!! Really. Chelsea is taking care of it. JORDAN

Right.. What are the flashlights for? RY

In case he cuts the power, obviously. JORDAN

And the candles? RY

JORDAN

For when we run out of batteries. But I only have one lighter, so we have to be careful not to use up all the fluid.

JORDAN organizes the candles and checks all of the flashlights.

RY

(weakly, holding up their phone, maybe pointing to the flash)

But ..

JORDAN

And what when it dies? We just need to be ready for anything.

RY

Okay.

CHELSEA enters.

CHELSEA

Why do we need so many candles?

RY

Just in case he cuts the power and our phones die and we run out of flashlight batteries.

CHELSEA

Ah, Good thinking. Gotta stay one step ahead.

JORDAN

Y'know what? It's getting dark, we should turn out the lights anyway. I don't want anyone peeking in. We'll turn the lights out.

RY

But that would make it look like we're not home.

JORDAN

Yeah.?

RY

If this guy actually shows up, wouldn't he want to rob an empty house? Or hide in it?

JORDAN

Maybe, but / the (doors are locked)

CHELSEA

I think it's pretty obvious that this convict wants to kill. And he'll be looking for his next victims.

RY

I doubt he's gonna / kill (anyone)

JORDAN

We're wasting time, I'm just gonna turn out the lights, okay?

JORDAN unceremoniously flips off the lights. Maybe they're in several corners of the room. Complete darkness (almost). Beat. CHELSEA slurps from her soda.

CHELSEA

Should we light the candles?

JORDAN

Not yet. Can't waste 'em.

RY

I guess that means no flashlights either.

JORDAN

Right.

A longer awkward silence. Maybe more slurping or ice shaking around. Maybe RY is bouncing their leg or fidgeting with a pencil.

RY

Okay not to keep forcing this, and I know it's your house and you get the final say obviously,, but I don't want to sit in the dark until they find this guy.... Can't we leave one lamp on?

JORDAN

He'll be able to see it

You're joking. How much longer can they sit here making stupid noises.

RY

Jordan,?

What
JORDAN

Forget it
RY

What!
JORDAN

RY
I don't know how much longer I can just sit here. Is the dark not freaking you out?

JORDAN
Well it wasn't before

RY
I don't think one lamp would be the end of the world,, The curtains look thick enough to hide it.

JORDAN
But what if it shows around the edges. We wouldn't know

CHELSEA
We could duct tape them to the wall? And then that way we know no one can see in.

JORDAN
.... Fine, sure. But if I hear anything, it's out !

RY
No yeah yeah.

CHELSEA
We'll be ready.

*JORDAN tries to find the duct tape in the dark.
It's a mess. Maybe they open several junk
drawers and loudly feel through the contents.*

JORDAN
Okay. Got the tape.

*JORDAN makes their way toward the window.
Maybe they bump into RY or CHELSEA. Maybe
they step on or kick books and notebooks and
laptops and phones.*

They become increasingly frustrated. While this is happening, CHELSEA is seated, playing a game on her phone. It illuminates her face. The game is either a shooter and we can hear little gun noises, or it's Subway Surfers and we can hear the music and sound effects.

RY

You okay?

JORDAN

Uh huh.

JORDAN keeps trying for a couple seconds, but they stub their toe and let out a little Yelp! They stop where they are.

CHELSEA

What was that?

JORDAN

I stubbed my toe.

JORDAN starts to move toward a lamp.

CHELSEA

Just

CHELSEA turns on her phone's flashlight.

JORDAN

Thanks.

In the light of CHELSEA's phone, JORDAN easily walks to turn on One Tiny Dim Lamp. CHELSEA turns off her phone flashlight. JORDAN starts to tape the curtains to the wall. They're struggling. RY approaches.

RY

Here, I got it.

RY holds the curtain to the wall while JORDAN tapes. CHELSEA returns to her phone game.

RY

We should do something. To get your mind off all of this.

JORDAN

What.

RY

We never finished the presentation.?

JORDAN

I can't focus on that right now..

RY

Right yeah me neither.

JORDAN

I don't see why Professor Martin decided to grade in groups instead of individually

RY

Psychological torture

JORDAN

Well it's working

RY

Maybe we could watch a movie??

JORDAN

No, no way. Even with the curtains taped, the TV would be like a giant sign saying "Hey! We're Here! Come Kill Us Next Please!"

Beat. Bummer.

CHELSEA

Since we're stuck in the dark, What if we pretend like we're having a Sleepover. Do sleepover stuff

JORDAN and RY look at her like she has twelve heads.

CHELSEA

Like play games and tell stories and eat snacks..!
We could braid each other's hair !

RY

Okay maybe not that. Maybe .. A Pillow Fort??

CHELSEA

YES!

RY and CHELSEA look at JORDAN expectantly.

JORDAN

I don't know.

RY

What

JORDAN

There's still someone out there.

CHELSEA

And what if I told you a fort would be a great place to hide if someone breaks in

JORDAN

....Yeah, what the hell. The pillows and blankets are in there. I'll make us some popcorn ?

CHELSEA

You're the best!

JORDAN exits to the kitchen. We hear them grab the popcorn, take off the plastic wrap, and start the microwave. A gentle hummmm.

SCENE THREE

RY walks over to a lamp in the corner opposite the kitchen and turns it on. It's still dim-ish in the room. CHELSEA starts gathering pillows, blankets, and any other fort accessories.

RY

I can't believe that worked. Sleepover !

CHELSEA

They were freaking me out

RY

Feels like they've watched too many true crime docuseries-es.

RY and CHELSEA start building a pillow fort with couch cushions and fuzzy blankets. It's almost tender.

CHELSEA

I don't blame them.

(offering a fort element to RY)

You want ?

RY

(taking it)

Thanks

CHELSEA

That stuff is really interesting. Understanding how the criminal mind works.

RY

They're usually a little ...graphic... for me. Not to mention the victims—

(helping CHELSEA with something)

Here.

The victims are white and the creators are white even though in the real world it's Black people Always getting screwed over, so that's / complete bullshit.

CHELSEA

I feel like I've seen YouTube videos / that have Black people

RY

Not to mention, they always want to lock people up. Like they can't stop talking about how the cases haven't been solved yet, and how they're still looking for answers and justice for the victims. But the police are idiots. They wouldn't know justice if it slapped them in the face.

BIG beat. RY expected CHELSEA to easily agree. CHELSEA is offended.

CHELSEA

My mom's a cop, and she's not an idiot.

RY

I didn't mean—

CHELSEA

No, it's fine. People say stuff like that all the time.

The World's Largest Beat as they continue to awkwardly arrange the pillow fort. CHELSEA conspicuously fixes the part RY was working on.

CHELSEA

She taught me to always carry a weapon. So, that might save us if the killer actually breaks in.

("I'm better than you")

I arranged them in order of lethal-ness if you need them.

RY

Thanks.

CHELSEA

If you don't want a weapon, you can always use the Birdy, it makes a really loud noise when you pull it.

Microwave beep beep beep. RY flinches. They really don't want to be here anymore.

RY

Got it.

SCENE FOUR

JORDAN walks back in with a bowl of popcorn.

JORDAN

Did you hear that?

CHELSEA

The microwave? Yeah?

JORDAN

I meant to hit the stop button before (it went off), but I got distracted

RY

It's alright

JORDAN
I put a line of eggs next to the back door

RY
Uh

JORDAN
Like a Home Alone trap!

RY
You think eggy feet would stop him?

JORDAN
..no, But we would hear it, and it would warn us!

RY
Sure.?

CHELSEA
Well, we / (made the fort)!

JORDAN
Yes! Oh my god! Fort!

RY
Yup.

CHELSEA
Woo!

JORDAN
(plopping down between them)
This is really cute.

RY
Thanks.

JORDAN
Ugh, I love sleepovers.

CHELSEA
Me too. Especially sneak-out-of-the-house-hide-from-a-murderer sleepovers.

RY

Uh huh.

JORDAN

... are we ready for story time?

CHELSEA

I was born ready.

CHELSEA grabs a flashlight and points the beam up at her face. She drops in. She really was born for this.

CHELSEA

My best friend's parents got stuck inside during a manhunt too. Just a couple months after they moved to their new house in Florida, they got an alert on their phones. just. like. us. So they're texting their neighbors trying to figure out what was happening, and Apparently, this man chopped someone's hand off and ate it, and he was running around their neighborhood. One person said he stole a bike and was riding around just like, a normal person. And Cami's parents told me that the bike even had a little basket on it. And no one even thought to stop him because who would suspect that a cannibal would be pedaling around with a little basket? No one! Then, a different person told them that the convict was swimming through the canals behind the houses. It's a Florida thing, I don't know, some of the houses have canals connecting them like, streets but for boats. Like in Venice. Anyway, the killer was swimming and hiding underwater and then he'd climb out to look inside everyone's backyard windows—that they didn't even think to cover. So Cami's parents are picturing him sneaking around all soaking wet, leaving a trail of soggy footprints on people's patios. And they're not really believing any of this, right? Cause they've heard two completely different stories and they assume the guy is probably just like in a getaway car or something. well, I shit you not, All of it was true... Except he didn't eat anyone. But he did steal a bike and swim through the canals. He stole a bike from someone's porch And to avoid being caught, he took it with him into the canal and swam with it!

JORDAN

So what happened?

CHELSEA

Well that's the best part. He got caught, obviously. And guess who caught him?

JORDAN

Who?

CHELSEA

My mom. Cami's parents came out of the house like Hiiii Kiiiiim and my mom was like Hiiii Sooo good to see youuu!!! And they were like How are you Doing?? Do you want to come in for a glass of wine? And my mom was like ohh nooo you're So sweet. I have the perp in the back of my cruiser and he's making it smell like wet dog, so I really should be going. And they were like Ah Kim always working!!!!!! And she was like Ha you know mee!

JORDAN

That. Is crazy!

CHELSEA

I know, she's so cool.

RY

You seem just like her

CHELSEA

Ugh thanksss. I mean she's a little

CHELSEA does her best helicopter impression.

JORDAN

Mmm I get it

CHELSEA

Even with the helicoptering, I still like living at home. I just have to sneak out to have a life

JORDAN

Oh my god.

CHELSEA

Don't worry, she won't find out

JORDAN

No, not that, I'm a terrible roommate.

RY

Why?

JORDAN

I didn't text Sawyer. You said you like living with— and I just remembered, I don't—I'm gonna call her.

The following dialogue should overlap messily.

CHELSEA

She probably doesn't know any more than we do. Unless she listens to the / police scanner.

JORDAN

(on the phone, to SAWYER)

Hey.

(beat)

You heard.

CHELSEA

(to RY)

I had to delete the app cause I ran out of storage.

JORDAN

(to SAWYER)

Yeah. So just don't / (come home right now)

CHELSEA

(to RY)

You know how it is.

RY

(to JORDAN)

Is she on campus still?

JORDAN

(to RY)

Yeah.

(to SAWYER)

Okay. Bye.

JORDAN hangs up the phone.

RY

What happened?

JORDAN

She's going to her partner's house. The buses are stopped, but she has a car, so

RY

Shit.

Not good. CHELSEA

You bussed here too? RY

Yep CHELSEA

You live in Portlow, right? JORDAN

Yeah! RY

Oh my god, what street? CHELSEA

Vine. RY

My dog's groomer is like, right there. CHELSEA

Sudsy puppy? RY

Yes!! CHELSEA

You live with your mom around here? JORDAN

Pulaski, like an hour away CHELSEA

And you take the bus? We should've met closer to you JORDAN

Too late now! CHELSEA

Sorry anyway.! JORDAN

CHELSEA

I'm sure the busses will be running soon

JORDAN

Maybe Sawyer can drive you both home, when it's safe

RY

No/no

CHELSEA

I would love a ride, thanks

JORDAN

If / it's (safe)

CHELSEA

When it's safe, yeah

RY

I don't mind the bus

JORDAN

I can't take buses anymore. My dad was a bus driver, but he recently saw—Wait.

SCENE FIVE

JORDAN motions CHELSEA to give her the flashlight.

CHELSEA

Oooh! Story!

RY

Let's hear it

JORDAN

Okayy, ummmm, So my dad taught at the middle school I went to. He was actually a really good teacher, everyone loved him. And he also drove the bus, so in the morning, he would take his car from home to this big garage where they would keep all the buses. And then he would drive the whole route and pick up all the kids and take them to school and then after school he would do the whole route in reverse and drop them off and then drive back to the garage and then take his car back home, y'know?

JORDAN

So he would do this every day, and one time he parks in the garage to get the bus, and it's really dark because it's like 7 am in the winter, but he gets out of his car and starts walking toward the buses like normal but then a ton of police show up. Lights on, sirens, and everything. And my dad is like Woah what's happening Here, and the police are like Come With Us. And my dad tells them that there's a bunch of kids waiting for him to bring them to school and he can't just leave. But the police said they had to interrogate him first. Long story short, someone killed a person and dumped their body on the other side of the garage and my dad had no idea.

CHELSEA

The body was just like... there???

JORDAN

No they uh put 'em in a trash bag.. Do you really wanna know the details?

CHELSEA

We've come too far to stop now!

JORDAN

The body was in pieces, like chopped up. And then they put it in a garbage bag. And they lit the whole thing on fire. So by the time the cops brought my dad to go see it, it was like, all crisped up.

RY

Disgusting.

JORDAN

Yeah. But the police saw my dad didn't know anything, so they just like. Let him take the kids to school.

CHELSEA

That's Crazy.

JORDAN

Yeah it kinda fucked him up for a while.

RY

No shit.

JORDAN

Still has me kinda fucked up.. And it didn't help that it was a small town, so word got out pretty quickly. *Everyone* was talking about it. The middle schoolers especially. They kept asking dad to tell them what he saw

Wow.

CHELSEA

Yeah he quit the next summer.

JORDAN

When was this?

RY

Two years ago.

JORDAN

Oh woah

RY

JORDAN

Yeah, recent. He still gets upset whenever someone brings it up.. He told me he can still see it. The charred bits and everything

Beat.

CHELSEA

Okay not to be totally gross and insensitive, but you talking about things getting crispy is kinda making me crave pizza.

RY

Dude.

CHELSEA

I'm just saying, I could really go for some thin crust right now!

JORDAN

I'm more of a deep dish lover myself.

RY

(completely theoretical)

I think our only option is Dominos.

CHELSEA

(taking it seriously)

You don't think we could get it delivered, do you?

RY

Bad idea.

JORDAN

Yeah, what if the murderer kills the delivery driver and puts on their uniform and gives us the pizza and then..

RY

We think he's the real driver and give him a huge tip.

JORDAN

Or he murders us.

RY

Sure, that'd suck.

CHELSEA

Right. Yeah.

RY

It seems unethical to put the delivery guy in harm's way just for a box of pizza. No matter how much we tip him..

CHELSEA

Heard. No Delivery.

Maybe CHELSEA starts eating the popcorn more vigorously now that she knows she's not getting pizza.

RY

Plus, the roads are probably blocked off by now.

JORDAN

Mm I'll check.

RY

You're gonna go out?

JORDAN

Nonono I was just gonna Google it

CHELSEA

(starting toward the door)

I can look

JORDAN
NO!

CHELSEA
What!

JORDAN
It's just like, what's the point of us securing the house if you're gonna be going in and out all willy nilly, y'know?

CHELSEA
Sure, yeah.

JORDAN
I don't feel like getting killed today.

RY
Maybe tomorrow?

JORDAN
You think this'll last that long?

CHELSEA
It was just a joke.

RY
I'm sure it'll be over soon.

JORDAN
We might actually have to Postmates something eventually, I haven't gone grocery shopping in a while.

CHELSEA
Maybe we'll have to resort to cannibalism. Like the bike guy

RY
I thought you said he didn't / (eat anyone)

JORDAN
Lockdowns can't last for more than a day or two, can they?

CHELSEA
Well I heard about an escapee who was hiding for eleven days. They closed all the schools and parks for over a week

RY

There's no way they can actually force us to stay here for that long

CHELSEA

I get hungry fast

RY

There's plenty of popcorn, we're gonna be fine.

CHELSEA

(looking in the bowl)

I don't know. . .

SCENE SIX

JORDAN

(You) better tell your story before we run out

RY

I don't have one.

JORDAN

C'mon, I told mine!

CHELSEA

Yeah, seriously.

Beat.

RY

Fine. Umm . . . okay. So in seventh grade, my ex and I were going trick-or-treating.

CHELSEA

Weren't you like.. fourteen?

RY

No we were twelve. And we agreed it would be our last year...Whatever. So we're walking around, and we don't see many other people, but we're having a good time getting all the candy to ourselves. And then a car passes us, and we don't really clock it, but then a few minutes later, the same car passes us going the other way. And we thought that was weird, Just cause there wasn't a single other car on the road. But we don't think about it too hard. But then it comes around Again and it pulls up really slowly behind us, just matching our pace.

RY

And we were creeped out so we run to the next house and knock at their door. And the car is just stopped in the road. And the driver is staring at us and we're really knocking on this door. And finally a little old lady opens the door and we tell her what was happening and we point to the car, and then they just speed off. But we're still freaked out so we just stayed on her porch until my mom came to pick us up..

CHELSEA

(baiting)

You could've called the police to help you.

RY

Turns out the old lady did just fine.

CHELSEA

I guess.

RY

It's like basic mutual aid. You help me, I help you

CHELSEA

What'd you help her with?

RY

What?

CHELSEA

What did you help the old lady with?

RY

It's not really that transactional. It's more of a philosophy

JORDAN

Kinda like a network of people, right?

RY

Yeah, something like that

CHELSEA

Hm.

RY

Plus I was twelve, what could she have wanted from me?

CHELSEA

I dunno, help crossing the street? You're the mutual aid expert

RY

I'm not— It was late, I don't think she was planning on crossing the street.

JORDAN

Makes sense.

CHELSEA

I don't know about mutual aid, it kinda just sounds like being a normal person

RY

It's just a term that this anarchist philosopher coined / to (explain the phenomenon)

JORDAN

Not an expert?

RY

I've read about it

CHELSEA

And you probably actually read *A Room of Her Own*

RY

A Room of One's Own?

CHELSEA

Yes, duh

JORDAN

You didn't?

CHELSEA

No of course not

JORDAN

That's not good

CHELSEA

But my ideas were fine, right?

RY

Yeah, but—

CHELSEA

It's too late to read now. I looked at Sparknotes, Cliffsnotes, Shmoop..

RY

Is that real?

CHELSEA

Shmoop? That's the best one

RY

Weird

CHELSEA

Everyone does it.

RY

Not everyone

CHELSEA

Well most people

JORDAN

A lot of people, yeah

RY

Do you use ChatGPT?

CHELSEA

Ew, no. Even I have standards

RY

Right.

CHELSEA

Where's your bathroom, I have to powder my nose.

JORDAN

End of the hall on the left.

CHELSEA

Thank youuuuuuu

CHELSEA exits.

SCENE SEVEN

RY and JORDAN sit in silence a couple seconds. Maybe JORDAN is on their phone again.

How are you doing?	RY
Better, I think.	JORDAN
Yeah?	RY
Still scared, but better. Distracted.	JORDAN
That's good.?	RY
You?	JORDAN
'm alright.	RY
You haven't had any popcorn, you want something else?	JORDAN
Oh no no it's okay	RY
I might have pasta?	JORDAN
I'll eat when I get home	RY
It's getting late	JORDAN

RY
It's only ten.

JORDAN
You sure?

RY
I'm good.

JORDAN
You're not just saying that.

RY
Yes. Promise.

JORDAN
Okay.

RY
You're a really good host.

JORDAN
You think?

RY
Yeah, I mean this situation sucks, but I'd rather be here (than anywhere else)

JORDAN
Yeah. . I'm glad you're here.

SCENE EIGHT

CHELSEA enters like a tornado. This is the first time we see RY's fear creep in.

CHELSEA
I heard someone in the yard.

RY
What?

CHELSEA
I heard footsteps, and heavy breathing.

JORDAN
He's here.

CHELSEA
I'm gonna go out there.

JORDAN
Chelsea, Don't.

CHELSEA
I can handle this, I have pepper spray!

RY
You're gonna spray him?? Then what???

CHELSEA
I don't know! Use my taser!

RY
That's a terrible idea!

CHELSEA
We can't just let him get away!

JORDAN
Shh SHHHHHHHHH You're NOT going out there. We need to hide.

*JORDAN grabs CHELSEA away from the door.
A dog starts barking in the backyard.*

CHELSEA
(whisper screaming)
Don't you wanna know what's going on out there?

RY
Chelsea..!

JORDAN
Do not open that door.

CHELSEA
No what if we just .. peeked out

*CHELSEA starts slowly toward the window and
peels back some of the tape. RY and JORDAN's
curiosity gets the better of them.*

They all look out the window like if the three stooges were just curious little guys.

RY

(on edge)

It's a cop.

JORDAN

Thank god.

CHELSEA

I bet they're right on his trail. I bet they know exactly where he is, and they're just waiting for the perfect moment to snatch him up. . .The police are going to keep us safe and put him in prison. Right, Ry?

RY

(appeasing)

Sure.

CHELSEA

I bet you're soooooo relieved.

JORDAN

Why wouldn't she be?

CHELSEA

Oh, nothing... Ry just hates the police.

RY

I didn't say that, but / (you're not wrong)

CHELSEA

But you did call my mom an idiot. Because she's law enforcement.

JORDAN

What?

RY

I didn't say that either!

JORDAN

That's kinda fucked up, even if her mom is a cop

R
Y
Jordan, I swear I didn't call her mom an idiot

C
H
E
L
S
E
A
You basically did.

R
Y
I did not.

C
H
E
L
S
E
A
You for sure / (called her an idiot)

J
O
R
D
A
N
shutupshut up
(turning back to the window)
He's gone.
Fuck. ... Fuck.

C
H
E
L
S
E
A
We can go find him. Ask what's happening.

R
Y
We should just stay hidden like we were before.

J
O
R
D
A
N
Are you scared?

R
Y
No, it just doesn't make sense to go interfere with their ... whatever. investigation.

J
O
R
D
A
N
Uh huh.

R
Y
I mean, I don't want the guy serve a life sentence or get hurt or anything, but like. I also don't wanna end up in burnt little pieces either.

J
O
R
D
A
N
So you agree he's dangerous.

R
Y
Well, yeah. But he's too busy running from the cops to bother with us.

C
H
E
L
S
E
A
We could help them! With the hunt!

RY

No, we can't.

CHELSEA

Well maybe you can't, but I definitely can. I'm like the Nancy Drew of UTL.

RY

Oh sure, you're just like her, only one issue /

JORDAN

Ry.

RY

Nancy Drew didn't have a lust for blood.

CHELSEA

What's that supposed / to mean?

JORDAN

Ry, shut up.

RY

She started it

CHELSEA

It's our civic duty to protect our neighborhood

JORDAN

And that's great

RY

You don't even live here

JORDAN

Civic duty or not, we cannot open that door

CHELSEA

Who died and made you in charge?

RY

This is their house!

CHELSEA

So?

RY

Their house, their rules.

SCENE NINE

JORDAN

Right....my house, my rules.

Rule number one: We stay inside.

Rule number two: We don't kill each other before we get out

Rule number three: We're having a sleepover, and sleepovers are supposed to be fun, so we need to have fun. Okay?

Beat.

JORDAN

What are other sleepover things we can do?

A brief stalemate.

CHELSEA

Make friendship bracelets.

RY

Use a Ouija board.

CHELSEA

Talk about boys.

RY

Smoke a bowl.

CHELSEA

Play truth or dare.

JORDAN

YES! Yes. Okay.

JORDAN plops down in the pillow fort.

JORDAN

Sit,sit

CHELSEA and RY reluctantly sit.

JORDAN

Okay, Chelsea, truth or dare.

CHELSEA

Truth.

JORDAN

Uh. If you could get dinner with anyone, living or dead, who would it be?

RY yawns.

CHELSEA

Probablyyyyy Emma Watson. Ooh or Jackie Kennedy.

JORDAN

MMmmm.

RY

That's an interesting pair.

CHELSEA

They're my two favorite feminists!

RY

Uh huh.

Beat.

JORDAN

Is it (Chelsea's turn to ask).?

CHELSEA

Oh my turn to ask. Okay, truth or dare.

RY

Truth.

CHELSEA

(genuinely curious)

Why do you hate cops so much?

JORDAN

Uh!

RY

No, that's fine, I'll answer it if you actually want to know.

CHELSEA

I do.!

RY

You're probably not gonna like what you hear, but don't forget you're the one who asked.

CHELSEA

Okay okay, can you just answer the question??

RY

Part of it is that cops kill a fuck ton of black and brown people every year. Y'know whether that's like, pulling someone over and shooting them, or um, giving them the chair, or a lethal injection. People in prison, people out of prison, doesn't matter. We're all at risk somehow. And not to mention, incarcerating people doesn't actually change their behavior, it just hides them. Actually, people who go to prison become *more* likely to go back. And the fucked up thing is that when they're inside, they become free labor for the state. It's basically legalized slavery. So, yeah. That's why. The short version anyway.

CHELSEA

Well if there were no cops, where would all the criminals go? Who would protect us?

RY looks at JORDAN like they really don't want to do this right now.

JORDAN

I think you're only allowed to ask one question in truth or dare.

CHELSEA

Ugh shit, you're right. We'll talk about this later.

RY

Can't wait !!!!!

JORDAN

Alright, Ry, you're up.

RY

Truth or dare?

Dare. JORDAN

No shit. RY

Dare me! JORDAN

Okay... (spinthebottlespinthebottlespinthebottlespinthebottle) Go out and lick the street. RY

You're kidding. JORDAN

You asked for a dare! RY

You're not really gonna make me go out there. JORDAN

Uhm.. / RY

A dare's a dare! CHELSEA

This is fucked up. JORDAN

Sorry, dude, you asked for it. RY

I didn't think you would pick this. JORDAN

Do you want me to change it? RY

That is so unfair. CHELSEA

It's fine. JORDAN

JORDAN exits toward the bathroom, away from the front door.

CHELSEA

What're they doing?

RY

I have no idea.

JORDAN returns with a half empty bottle of mouthwash. They point to CHELSEA's pocket knife.

JORDAN

You mind?

CHELSEA

(holding it out)

Take it.

JORDAN starts toward the door, armed with the mouthwash and pocket knife. They pause before unlocking the front door and leaving. RY locks the door behind JORDAN. CHELSEA peels the tape off one of the windows to get a look at JORDAN licking the street. RY looks out with her.

RY

Damn.

CHELSEA

Oh, gross!

JORDAN tries to open the door, but finds it locked. They forcefully yank at the handle, genuinely fearing for their life.

JORDAN (O.S.)

GUYS? THE DOOR IS LOCKED.

THIS ISN'T FUNNY! PLEASE! DON'T LEAVE ME OUT HERE—

RY rushes over to open it. JORDAN storms in and slams down the mouthwash and pocket knife, still swishing the mouthwash around in their cheeks. They grab CHELSEA's half finished soda and spit the mouthwash in it.

CHELSEA

I wasn't / (done with that.)

JORDAN

Fuck you.

RY

It's just a game!

JORDAN

Yeah, and you decided to put me in serious danger. I know neither of you care, but that man killed people. Real people. Who are now dead because of him.

CHELSEA

We get it!

JORDAN

I don't think you do.

RY

You weren't gonna get killed.

JORDAN

You don't know that!

RY

I never would've told you to go out there if I actually thought you'd get hurt.

JORDAN

Then why was the door locked?

CHELSEA

What if the killer came in the house? It was good Ry locked the door.

RY

Chelsea, please shut up.

JORDAN

You say there's no danger but you locked the fucking door. You pretend you're so tough, but you were practically shitting bricks when we saw the cop outside.

RY

We didn't know what was gonna happen.

JORDAN

Just like I didn't know if someone was waiting to kill me while I was face down licking the street.

RY

And yet! there's no killer in sight.

JORDAN

A cop could've run me over.

CHELSEA

They wouldn't.

JORDAN

I could be coming down with a fatal street-borne illness.

RY

I never forced you to do it!

JORDAN

No, you just asked me to.

RY

It was a dare, you didn't / have to

JORDAN

Y'know what, Ry? Dare THIS!

JORDAN grabs a pillow from the fort and hits RY. RY grabs one and hits back. They go back and forth for a few seconds before CHELSEA joins in.

CHELSEA

PILLOW FIIIIIGHT!!!!

It's a mess of blankets and pillows and popcorn. Maybe feathers start to come out of the pillows.

What starts as somewhat harmless morphs into something more grotesque as they start to take out their pent up feelings. There's nothing cute about it anymore. All three are now smacking each other with exerted force, full of anger. CHELSEA shoves or tickles or does something particularly dastardly to RY. RY's pillow hits CHELSEA like an expert hook, straight to the jaw, sending her backwards. She hits her head, knocking her out cold. RY and JORDAN freeze.

SCENE TEN

Oh, fuck.

RY

Jesus christ, Ry!..?

JORDAN

I did not mean to do that

RY

I fucking hope not

JORDAN

I was pillow fighting!

RY

JORDAN kneels down next to CHELSEA.

JORDAN

Chelsea? Cheeellseeaaaa....? CHELSEA!

JORDAN feels around CHELSEA's head.

JORDAN

You're lucky she's not bleeding

JORDAN picks up CHELSEA's limp arm and checks for a pulse on her wrist.

RY

You don't think I (killed her)

A tense moment.

JORDAN
She's alive.

JORDAN drops CHELSEA's wrist.

JORDAN
You wanna stick her outside too?

RY
I fucked up, I pani/cked

JORDAN
You did fuck up. You really fucked up.

RY
I / (didn't mean to)

JORDAN
What were you thinking?

RY
I don't know

Beat.

RY
I really — I just don't think anyone is trying to / (kill us)

JORDAN
He's out there.

RY
Probably already miles away.

JORDAN
You don't know that

RY
Or worse! Stealing a bike and taking a swim

JORDAN
Would it kill you to take this seriously?

RY has no joke.

JORDAN

No, it's fine. It's ridiculous. My mouth still tastes like dirt, Chelsea's knocked out, and there are fucking feathers everywhere. Who could take this seriously?

JORDAN stalks off toward the hallway. She returns with a small pipe with charred up weed in it. She holds it like a newborn kitten.

JORDAN

Where's (the lighter)

JORDAN pushes around the candles until she finds the lighter. She sits in the fort.

RY

What are you doing

JORDAN

Smoking.?

RY

A bowl of ash

JORDAN

Sawyer always leaves some— There's still some / in here

RY

I don't (think so)

JORDAN

You can't see it from there, at the bottom, there's (some weed left)

RY

Yeah?

JORDAN

Yes

JORDAN holds the bowl up to their lips and tries to light the bowl multiple times, but keeps chickening out when their fingers get hot. As a last resort, they hold out the lighter to RY.

JORDAN

Can you?

JORDAN raises the pipe up to their lips again.

RY

Jordan.

JORDAN

Please

RY

I thought you didn't wanna waste the lighter fluid

JORDAN

This is not a waste

RY lights it as best she can. Super intimate. JORDAN takes a surprisingly good hit and exhales slowly.

JORDAN

(strained)

Thank you.

JORDAN takes another hit, and erupts in coughs. She holds the pipe out away from her.

RY

That's— yeah.

RY takes the pipe from JORDAN's hand and sets it down. When JORDAN recovers, she catches RY looking at her.

RY

What is this

JORDAN

(thinking it's about the two of them)

What's what

RY

You don't strike me as the smoking type

JORDAN

(oh. now defensive)

What does that mean

Not in a bad way I just RY

What JORDAN

Nothing RY

Dude JORDAN

Nothing! RY

You're a freak JORDAN

I'm ? RY

Yes JORDAN

Why RY

Starting shit you can't finish JORDAN

You just don't seem like the smoking type RY

Mm. JORDAN

There's nothing wrong with that! RY

JORDAN tries to hide a yawn.

You tired? RY

No. You? JORDAN

No. RY

You want? JORDAN

The scraps of your scraps? RY

I'm high.! JORDAN

I bet you are! RY

I am. JORDAN

RY grabs the pipe and inspects before deciding to take a hit. It goes well, RY is pleasantly surprised.

See? JORDAN

JORDAN holds her hand out for the pipe back. They take another mediocre hit.

You hit that like you've never inhaled before. RY

What are you, the bowl police? JORDAN

No, I think the real police are the bowl police. RY

Whatever~. JORDAN

RY steals the pipe back and takes another hit.

RY

(laughing to herself)

The bowl police

JORDAN

Shut up~!

RY

We've got a warrant out for a cereal killer. Put down the Captain Crunch and no one gets hurt

JORDAN

Yesss cereal bowl... yes. Keep your spoons where I can see 'em

RY makes a sound of mild affirmation.

JORDAN

Or, or. We got intel you use the bumpers, even though you're a grown adult. Put your hands up and back away from the balls

(beat)

Bowl police? Bowl-*ing* police? No?

RY

Bruh. Back away from the balls?

JORDAN

(laughing)

Stupid

RY

You have the right to remain silent, any bad joke you make can and will be used against you.

JORDAN

Please don't take me! I have so much to live for!

RY

You're going to be locked up for a long time. That last one was heinous

JORDAN

(laughing)

Heinous??

I said what I said

RY

You sound like Chelsea

JORDAN

God, don't say that, it's just SVU cliches

RY

JORDAN kneels in front of CHELSEA and snaps in front of her face. No reaction. JORDAN backs away.

Huh.

JORDAN

RY gently kicks CHELSEA. Nothing.

Tough.

RY

You really

JORDAN

Yeah, I got her ass.

RY

I don't wanna say she had it coming, but—

JORDAN

She had it coming?

RY

Totally.

JORDAN

Hey, if she didn't (do the dastardly thing),
I wouldn't've (hit her so hard)

RY

I know

JORDAN

Even though she was being

RY

JORDAN RY
 A cunt Really annoying
 Yeah Yeah

RY
 If we're lucky, she'll just sleep through the night

JORDAN
 Don't want her going all G.I. Jane on you

RY
 That is so much better than Nancy Drew

JORDAN
 Y'know what?

RY
 Huh

JORDAN
 We should prank her.

RY
 While she's knocked out

JORDAN
 Why not?

RY
 Okay..?

JORDAN
 What do you think? The ole hand in a cup of water?

RY
 So she'll piss herself? I'm not cleaning it

JORDAN
 Great point

RY
 We could put shaving cream in her hand? So she

RY acts out splatting herself on the face with a handful of shaving cream, making an evocative noise.

Don't have any
Whipped cream?
Nope.
Hm.
What if we drew on her face
We shouldn't
But we should
Yeah?
What's the worst that can happen? She goes home and cries to her mommy?
She already hates my guts, but she doesn't hate your guts
I don't really care about staying in her good graces
What about the presentation
That's not happening
Chelsea's flunking, remember?
She can still present.?

RY
 She's gonna fail without us

JORDAN
 It's not our fault she's lazy and lacks reading comp skills

RY
 No

JORDAN
 Professor Martin will probably give us a pity A anyway. If she even makes us present

RY
 I don't know! She's / (a hardass)

JORDAN
 Yeah, but manhunt? Concussion?

RY
 True

JORDAN
 Don't tell me you don't wanna / prank her

RY
 No, no, I do

JORDAN
 So?

RY
 Do you have something to write with?

JORDAN smiles and goes to the kitchen or their bedroom. Maybe RY sits CHELSEA up. JORDAN returns and holds a Sharpie out to RY. RY is surprised by the choice.

JORDAN
 Do the honors?

RY hesitates ever so slightly before taking it and writing "ACAB" on CHELSEA's forehead in huge letters. JORDAN laughs.

That's sick
JORDAN

It seemed appropriate
RY

I can't wait to see her face
JORDAN

Yeah.
RY

She's gonna kill us
JORDAN

Presentation be damned. Cadet Kelly can kiss my ass
RY

Cadet Kellyyyyy. She is so Cadet Kelly
JORDAN

She's a menace is what she is
RY

SCENE ELEVEN

RY and JORDAN share a hearty laugh. Maybe they take a picture of / with CHELSEA. An alert from their phones loudly cuts through the air. They freeze. JORDAN holds their phone up between them and RY. They both read the all clear message. Maybe they continue to laugh, maybe it's suddenly still.

Damn.
RY

Uh huh
JORDAN

Well.....!
RY

JORDAN
Yeah

RY
That's it, I guess. They got him

Beat. RY starts to grab their stuff.

JORDAN
Stay.

(beat)
It's
(checks phone)
1:43, you shouldn't— I can grab the air mattress.

RY
I can call an / Uber.

JORDAN
Please stay.

RY
Okay.

JORDAN
I know we got the all clear, but—

RY
Yeah.

JORDAN
It's stupid

RY
No

JORDAN
Just don't wanna be alone. Still

RY
(looking at CHELSEA)
Well

RY and JORDAN laugh.

She does not count JORDAN

No, she doesn't RY

I wish.. ehh, that's fucked up JORDAN

What RY

Nehhhh JORDAN

Whaat RY

I wish I'd let her leave JORDAN

With the murderer loose? RY

JORDAN shrugs.

That *is* fucked up RY

She can handle herself, you saw the arsenal JORDAN

Oh I saw it RY

I didn't mean I wanted her to leave, I just wish she wasn't here JORDAN

I thought you were cool with her RY

You did? JORDAN

RY
 For a minute there yeah

JORDAN
 Why??

RY
 You didn't exactly clue me in

JORDAN
 Just cause I'm not a hot head like you, doesn't mean I / (agree with Chelsea)

RY
 You think I'm hot?

JORDAN
 That's not what / I (said)

RY
 Uh huh!

JORDAN
 Shut up

RY mimics zipping her lips and throwing away the key. A few seconds of silence.

JORDAN
 Really?

RY shrugs.

JORDAN
 You're ridiculous

RY gives her a look. JORDAN mimes unlocking and unzipping RY's lips. They're suddenly very close.

JORDAN
 There. Say whatever you want

Beat.

RY

I was gonna dare you to play spin the bottle..... Actually I was gonna dare you to kiss me. But then I thought that would be tacky. So then I thought, spin the bottle, it's a time-honored sleepover classic. But the 50-50 odds, really not great. If it landed on me, you'd think that was the plan the whole time and I couldn't ask like a normal person—which true, but so embarrassing—or worse, if it landed on Chelsea, you might think I just wanted to see you kiss her like some dyke creep. Even best case scenario, if we kissed and it was amazing, I would never know if it was just some stupid dare or because you actually like me.. I knew it was a bad idea, not that truth or dare is designed to be healthy or consensual, but I was trying to come up with something cool, and all I could think about was kissing you, and I panicked, and I made you lick the street.

JORDAN kisses RY. RY regains her bearings and kisses JORDAN back.

RY

I didn't think you (liked me)

JORDAN

I know

RY

Feels good to be wrong

JORDAN

Yeah

RY

When I made you go out /

JORDAN

Forget it

RY

And then locking the door, I was (scared)

JORDAN

I know

RY

I'm sorry

SCENE TWELVE

JORDAN kisses RY again. It's a deeper kiss this time. Things start to get steamy, when there is a sharp knock at the door. JORDAN and RY quickly separate, look at the door, and then at each other.

RY
Were you expecting someone?

JORDAN
No

RY
Roommate?

JORDAN
They have keys.

JORDAN quietly walks to the door and looks out the peephole. They swiftly withdraw their head.

JORDAN
Cop.

JORDAN backs away from the door. RY rushes over and looks out the peephole. RY backs toward JORDAN.

RY
What do you think she wants?

Another knock, more impatient this time.

JORDAN
Oh god.

JORDAN grabs the bowl.

JORDAN
I gotta flush this

RY
(But) we're not gonna (open the door?)

JORDAN
No?

RY
She has a gun.
We are not going to open the door.

JORDAN
Still, we should (air this place out)

RY
Fine

JORDAN leaves to flush the weed. RY uses something to air out the weed, maybe waving a blanket around or something equally unhelpful. JORDAN comes out of the bathroom.

JORDAN
It's gone.

RY
Okay.

More knocking.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
Open up! I can hear you in there.

JORDAN and RY continue the conversation in loud whispers.

JORDAN
What do we do??

RY
Nothing! We wait until she leaves

JORDAN
But!

RY

There's no way she has a warrant.

JORDAN

So???

RY

She can't come in if she doesn't have a warrant

JORDAN

Isn't this ? obstructing justice or something???

RY

Unless she has a reason to think we committed a crime and she went to the police station to get a warrant, we do not have to let her in. No matter what she says

JORDAN

Do you think she can smell it from outside?

RY

No, no, she's probably just going door to door to give the all clear in case people missed it

More knocking.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

They got the perp, you can open up now.

RY

See?

JORDAN

But why would she need us to open the door if it's just to tell us they got the guy?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Listen, you don't want to open the door, that's your prerogative. But if you don't at least talk to me, I will be forced to come back with a warrant.

JORDAN

What do you want?

RY

(whisper shouted)

Jordan!

Shhh.

JORDAN

Hi, who am I speaking to?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

You don't have to say

RY

My name is Suzy.

JORDAN

Alright, hi Suzy. I'm Officer Johnson.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Hi.

JORDAN

What's your last name, Suzy?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Brown.

JORDAN

Are you in school, Suzy?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

JORDAN and RY share a look.

Yes. At UTL.

JORDAN

Do you know Chelsea Harris?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

RY shakes their head furiously.

Um.

JORDAN

It's a yes or no question, dear.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

JORDAN
Yes, a little bit.

RY
Stop.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
That's great. Could you tell me the last time you saw her?

JORDAN
Is something wrong?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
I'm not sure yet. I'm trying to find out. Now, do you remember when you saw her last?

JORDAN
I don't know.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
That's alright. Do your best.

JORDAN
I'm not sure. Probably just in class on Thursday?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
I see.

JORDAN
What's going on?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
Are you a friend of Chelsea's?

JORDAN
No, ma'am.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)
Alright, that's fine.

JORDAN
I don't dislike her, we just don't really hang out

Beat.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Look, I know some people get spooked by officers of the law. But to tell you the truth, I'm not on the clock. I just want to know where Chelsea is.

JORDAN

What do you mean?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I'm Chelsea's mom.

RY

Shit.

JORDAN

Do you think she's telling the truth? They have different last names.

RY

We can't risk it either way.

RY starts to drag CHELSEA into JORDAN's bedroom. JORDAN hesitates.

RY

What choice do we have?

JORDAN helps RY drag CHELSEA for a few seconds before:

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Suzy, you there?

JORDAN

I'm here.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

When I heard about the escapee, I drove down to check on Chelsea.

By now, RY and CHELSEA are fully exited.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

We were texting for a while, she said she was at home, Zooming with some friends doing a school project. Do you know anything about that?

JORDAN

Oh, yes! We did Zoom earlier today. We're in the same group.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

And you didn't think to tell me that?

JORDAN

It slipped my mind.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Suzy, I'm going to level with you.

RY returns.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I sewed an AirTag into Chelsea's backpack, when she stopped answering her phone, I tracked it here. Do you have any idea why it might do that?

RY roots around for CHELSEA's phone. When she finds it, she scrolls in horror. There are so many missed calls and texts from OFFICER KIM. RY starts to unravel, maybe turning off the phone or wrapping it in tin foil from the kitchen.

JORDAN

I'm not sure, ma'am.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Could she have been here with your roommates?

JORDAN

They haven't been home since the morning.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I see. Suzy, you seem like a nice girl.

JORDAN

Thank you, ma'am.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

But you're not telling me everything.

RY

Jordan, she's going to find out

JORDAN (O.S.)

What do you want me to do?

OFFICER KIM

Remember, I'm not a cop. I'm just a mom looking for her daughter.

RY

Please, just make her leave

JORDAN

How?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Do you know anything that could help me?

RY

I don't know I don't know

JORDAN

What do you want me to do? Fess up?

RY

No, god no

JORDAN

I can just say it was a misunderstanding

RY

She'll have more questions

JORDAN

I can say I was thinking of another Chelsea

RY

That won't work

JORDAN

Then we can go out there and explain

RY

Jordan, please, I can't face her

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Suzy, is there someone in the house with you?

RY

I can't do this. I can't. Please

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Are they stopping you from speaking freely?

JORDAN

No, I'm the only one home.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Suzy, my daughter's backpack is in your house, and I need to know why. I wanted you to trust me, but you've made this very difficult. I'll get a warrant if that's what you need.

Big beat.

JORDAN

Officer Johnson? Are you still there?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Yes?

RY

What are you doing?

JORDAN

You asked me to fix this. I'm fixing it.

RY

Jordan

JORDAN

Hide.

RY

Jordan!

JORDAN

Go.

Beat. RY retreats toward the fort. JORDAN grabs their keys and leaves through the front door. The sound of their key in the lock.

SCENE THIRTEEN

Conversation between JORDAN and OFFICER KIM is barely intelligible.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Thank you for coming out, Suzy.

JORDAN (O.S.)

I thought it might be easier this way.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I do prefer talking face to face.

JORDAN (O.S.)

I'm sorry I don't have any information about Chelsea.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

You don't know that. Anything small clue could be helpful.

JORDAN (O.S.)

I'll try to remember.

RY slowly comes out of hiding. She's crying quietly. She takes several shaky breaths. As OFFICER KIM and JORDAN continue to talk, RY grabs her bag and begins to pack it: laptop, notebook, hopefully a few other things she's left around.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

You said the last time you saw Chelsea was on Zoom?

JORDAN (O.S.)

Yes.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

What did her background look like?

JORDAN (O.S.)

A bedroom, I think. She uses the blur thing.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Do you remember the color of the walls.

No. Sorry

JORDAN (O.S.)

And how did she seem?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

What do you mean?

JORDAN (O.S.)

Was she acting differently?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I don't think so.

JORDAN (O.S.)

You don't think so?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

She wasn't. She was normal.

JORDAN (O.S.)

And how would you describe that normal?

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

RY sees Chelsea's stash of weapons and takes the pocket knife, taser, and pepper spray. She puts the pocket knife and taser in her bag and clips the pepper spray to a belt buckle or outside of her bag.

JORDAN (O.S.)

Focused on the presentation.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

What are you presenting on?

JORDAN (O.S.)

Feminist authors in history.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

What author?

JORDAN (O.S.)

Virginia Woolf. A Room of One's Own.

Fabulous. How is that going? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Good. Pretty much done. JORDAN (O.S.)

When do you present? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Tomorrow. JORDAN (O.S.)

Chelsea is supposed to present tomorrow? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

We all are, yes. JORDAN (O.S.)

RY takes out her phone and calls a friend.

Right, of course. You're in the same group. How many / people are in each group? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Hey RY

Three JORDAN (O.S.)

Who else is in your group? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Yeah, I'm fine. Listen, can you pick me up? RY

Ry Mitchell. JORDAN (O.S.)

Not here. / I can meet you RY

And do you know where she is? OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

By Twelfth and Lincoln RY

I'm not sure

JORDAN (O.S.)

Thanks

RY

RY hangs up and hears this loud and clear:

You're doing great, Suzy.
Y'know what? Let's warm up in the cruiser, I'm freezing my ass off out here.

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

RY peels a little bit of tape around a window and looks out.

Damn

RY

Without any of her stuff, RY goes to the door, unlocks it, and grabs the handle. She can't stomach it. She locks the door again. She grabs her notebook, rips a sheet out, and writes JORDAN a short note. She places it in a conspicuous place near the door, grabs her bag, and turns toward the kitchen / back of the house.

SCENE FOURTEEN

CHELSEA yawns loudly from inside Jordan's bedroom.

Ah fuck

RY

RY puts down her bag, wipes her tears, and hides the note. CHELSEA throws open the bedroom door and walks into the living room, very slowly as if the world was spinning.

What time is it?

CHELSEA

RY checks her phone.

2:31 RY

CHELSEA groans.

RY
You slept for like an hour.

CHELSEA
Not sleep.

RY
You.. remember.?

CHELSEA
You hitting me,?

RY
We were rough housing and it just got a little

CHELSEA
Rough.?

RY
Yes

CHELSEA
Not all concussions cause memory loss, Dr. Google

RY
Do you want an ice pack? It looks like you have a bump

RY gestures to her own forehead.

CHELSEA
Really?

CHELSEA feels at her forehead.

CHELSEA
I don't (feel anything)
(feeling around her head)

CHELSEA

Here though,

CHELSEA grimaces.

RY

I really see a bump on your forehead. I'll get an ice pack

RY starts toward the kitchen as CHELSEA starts toward the bathroom.

RY

Wait!!

CHELSEA

What?

RY

I must've been imagining it. Trick of the light

CHELSEA

Just say my forehead is huge

RY

No

CHELSEA

I have a five-head. It's fine.

RY

That's not (what I meant)

CHELSEA

I don't want an ice pack.

CHELSEA and RY settle down.

RY

Okay.

(beat)

How do you feel?

CHELSEA

Not my first concussion, won't be my last

Yeah?	RY
You're an only child.?	CHELSEA
Yes.?	RY
Siblings equal concussions	CHELSEA
Sounds unpleasant	RY
Not my choice	CHELSEA
Right.	RY
What'd I miss, while I was out	CHELSEA
Oh, good news	RY
Huh	CHELSEA
They caught the guy	RY
Yeah?	CHELSEA
Yeah	RY
Awesome	CHELSEA
Yeah	RY

Well, guess I'll head home

CHELSEA

You don't seem like you're in a state to (get yourself home)

RY

I'm a concussion pro

CHELSEA

No buses

RY

I'll Uber

CHELSEA

You can't

RY

Why not?

CHELSEA

What if you pass out again

RY

That's not how this works

CHELSEA

Well you shouldn't Uber

RY

Why

CHELSEA

It's dangerous

RY

You said they caught him

CHELSEA

Yeah but (it's late)

RY

I'm fine

CHELSEA

RY
 No you really shouldn't

CHELSEA
 I don't wanna do your lesbian slumber party

RY
 What /

CHELSEA
 I'm not gonna do that

RY
 You need to stay inside

CHELSEA
 Why

Micro beat.
 Where's Jordan

RY
(maybe accidentally looking toward the door)
 Uh!

Chelsea tries to move to the door, Ry steps in the way

CHELSEA
 Back off

RY
 Just /

RY loses this scuffle, not wanting to further injure CHELSEA. CHELSEA moves around RY toward one of the front windows, she forcefully rips the tape off one of the windows.

CHELSEA
 Mom?

Ry shoves Chelsea out of the way and reseals the window

It's not (what it looks like)	RY
What is going on Let me leave	CHELSEA
No	RY
What the fuck is going on	CHELSEA
Your mom showed up looking for you, and we told her you were already asleep	RY
Asleep	CHELSEA
She was just on her way out, Jordan just went to ask her about her fancy cop car	RY
Fucking liar	CHELSEA
You saw them	RY
Why won't you let me leave	CHELSEA
	<i>They scuffle again, much rougher this time.</i>
Chelsea.!	RY
Move, you bitch	CHELSEA
Chelsea.!	RY

CHELSEA

Get out of my way!

SCENE FIFTEEN

RY reaches for the pepper spray and has it ready in her upraised hand when JORDAN comes back in the door.

JORDAN

Ry!

RY and CHELSEA freeze.

JORDAN

What is wrong with you?

RY and CHELSEA back away from each other.

CHELSEA

Ry's holding me hostage

RY

Jordan, she can't go out.. like that

JORDAN

Her mom left

CHELSEA

What?

JORDAN

Wanted to look around the rest of the neighborhood

CHELSEA

Well if I just call her— where is my phone?

RY sees where she left it and grabs it before CHELSEA can.

JORDAN

She's hurt.

RY

I know. . We should do something to make her feel better. Something sleepover? Like facials? Do you have any masks? Or *scrubs*? We could make a face scrub, do you have sugar? Or salt even

CHELSEA

I just wanna go home

RY

Really? I thought a scrub would be fun

CHELSEA

Look, no hard feelings. You don't have to take care of me. It's concussion number five

RY

It's / (no biggie)

CHELSEA

And I won't tell my mom you called her stupid. I'm gonna be double grounded anyway.

RY

But (I didn't)

JORDAN

Let it go

A phone rings. It's RY's, not CHELSEA's. RY silences it.

RY

Spam.

CHELSEA

Gimme my phone, I won't be a bitch about this. Really.

RY and JORDAN share a look.

CHELSEA

Just rough housing like me and four brothers. Mom gets it

RY's phone rings again. She silences it quickly.

JORDAN

Who was that?

RY
(badly lying)

Don't have the number saved

CHELSEA
 And what about tomorrow? If we miss it, we all fail.

RY
 I think our case for a pity grade is looking really good

CHELSEA
 Can't risk it

JORDAN
 Professor Martin wouldn't fail us

CHELSEA gives JORDAN a look.

JORDAN
 You're right, she would.

RY's phone vibrates. She picks it up.

RY
 Hey
 ...
 Yeah, sorry
 ...
 No I'll be there
 .
 Give me ten minutes
 ..
 I know

 Yeah okay, bye

JORDAN
 You're leaving?

RY
 Before Chelsea woke up I called (my friend)

JORDAN
 You were going to leave while I was out there with Kim?

RY
 You're on a first name basis now?

JORDAN
 Don't change the subject

RY
 No, I wanna know how buddy buddy you were getting with Officer Kim

JORDAN
 What'd you want me to do? Tell her I hate her guts?

RY
 I don't know, have a backbone?

JORDAN
 At least I did something while you were having a breakdown

RY
 I'm going

JORDAN
(gesturing to CHELSEA)
 And what about her?

RY
 I don't care

JORDAN
 You're just gonna make me take the fall

RY
 I'm not making you do anything. You do what you want

RY hands CHELSEA her phone. CHELSEA immediately starts texting her mom.

CHELSEA
 Thank you. Jeez

JORDAN
 You're a coward

RY
 Says Miss ~Cover the windows, Turn out the lights, Save the Candles~

JORDAN
I went out there for you. Twice

RY
You didn't have to do that

JORDAN
I lied for you

RY
You could've just stayed quiet

JORDAN
And that would've been really helpful, huh

RY
Makes more sense than going out there and wreaking havoc

JORDAN
I did what I had to do, Ry

RY
I'm sure you did

JORDAN
She would've found another way to get to us, she would've gotten a warrant, you know that.

RY
I also know that getting a warrant takes hours. We had time, we could have figured it out together

CHELSEA
It's okay, guys. Really. I've been double grounded before. It's not your fault
And my doctors said that I'm very good at getting over concussions.
Our presentation will still be awesome.
Don't even worry guys
We got this

CHELSEA grabs her bag and leaves out the front door. We hear CHELSEA opening and closing the door of her mom's car as she gets in.

SCENE SIXTEEN

RY and JORDAN look out the front window.

We're fucked

JORDAN

RY and JORDAN are spotted! They quickly duck out of view.

What now

RY

You're asking me?

JORDAN

I did

RY

You go and fess up

JORDAN

I go?

RY

You wrote it

JORDAN

And you egged me on

RY

So?

JORDAN

And you / (lied to Chelsea's mom)

RY

Pounding at the door.

Open this door right now!

OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

You wanna answer it? Go answer it

RY

I know you're in there
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I'm not covering for you again
JORDAN

Jordan, I'm very disappointed in you
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

You did a lot more than cover for me
RY

You hurt and defiled my daughter!
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Yeah, what the fuck, guys?
CHELSEA (O.S.)

You wrote an obscene lie on her forehead!
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

Some cops are probably bastards
CHELSEA (O.S.)

Chelsea!
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

But definitely not all of them
CHELSEA (O.S.)

I just know you're itching to say it's about the system and not the individuals.. go ahead!
JORDAN

I don't want any part of this
RY

Well, it's way too late for that.
JORDAN

Chelsea, you take that back.
OFFICER KIM (O.S.)

I don't fuck with pigs
RY

CHELSEA (O.S.)
 Sorry, I'm concussed.

JORDAN
 Have a backbone, Ry.

RY
 Fine.

RY grabs the Sharpie, goes onto her phone, opens the camera, and holds it up to look at herself. OFFICER KIM continues to pound on the door.

RY
 Hold this.

JORDAN holds the phone up so RY can see herself. RY writes "GAY" across her own forehead in scrawled letters.

JORDAN
 What is that

RY
 You wanna be friends with Chelsea's mom? We'll be friends.

RY throws open the front door. OFFICER KIM and CHELSEA are in the doorway.

RY
 Oh my god, sorry we couldn't hear you over the music.

OFFICER KIM
 I didn't hear / (any music).

RY
 You must be Kim. Chelsea has told us so much about you.

OFFICER KIM
 Who are you?

RY
 Oh duh, I'm Ry. I'm in Chelsea's class

OFFICER KIM

Do you want to explain why you were hiding my daughter?

RY

Well she told us about the grounding and sneaking out and all

JORDAN

Right. We just wanted to be good friends

OFFICER KIM

That doesn't explain why daughter is now branded

RY

Sorry, I'm not following

OFFICER KIM

The vile acronym? A.C.A.B.?

CHELSEA

My five-head?

RY

Ohhh that was just some sleepover fun

OFFICER KIM

Excuse me?

RY

We were playing truth or dare, I'm sure Chelsea told you.

CHELSEA

No?

RY

Well we were playing truth or dare, and Jordan is such a trickster

JORDAN

I am.. ! ! ?

RY

Jordan dared us both to write a secret thought on our foreheads

OFFICER KIM

A secret thought

RY
Something that we haven't told anyone

JORDAN
Something crazy

CHELSEA
I don't remember that

RY
You did hit your head really hard.

CHELSEA
Yeah, but / (my memory is fine)

OFFICER KIM
She said she didn't lose her memory this time

RY
This time?

CHELSEA
Yeah. The last couple..

OFFICER KIM
Her most recent was very severe. I don't usually believe in accommodations, but Chelsea couldn't take a test for months

CHELSEA
But this one / (wasn't that bad)

RY
Was very scary!

JORDAN
You were passed out for a long time

OFFICER KIM
I see.

RY
I knew we were pillow fighting too rough. I wish you would've let me give you that ice pack

OFFICER KIM
My Chelsea, stubborn as a mule

RY
But we love her, right?

OFFICER KIM
Yes, but not right now.

CHELSEA
Mom, you know I think police are awesome

OFFICER KIM
Don't try to sweet talk your way out of this one

CHELSEA
Mooom

OFFICER KIM
We're going to have a talk when we get home.
Thank you for.. dealing with her.

RY
Get home safe, okay?

*RY shuts the door. CHELSEA and OFFICER
KIM walk back toward the car.*

SCENE SEVENTEEN

RY
I can't believe that worked

JORDAN
Cops are dumb.

RY
That enough backbone for you?

JORDAN
Don't start

RY
Do you have something to say?

JORDAN
No

RY
Not a “thank you”? Or a “I couldn’t have done that without you”?

JORDAN
Thank you for cleaning up your mess, Ry. There wouldn’t’ve been an issue without you.

RY
You can’t tell me you’re upset

JORDAN
I am upset

RY
Why?

JORDAN
You left me out to dry

RY
I saved you

JORDAN
When it was convenient!

RY
Sorry I couldn’t come up with an elaborate lie while I was in the middle of a panic attack

JORDAN
And before that? You let me panic all night

RY
I was trying to calm you down

JORDAN
You were trying to tell me that my fears weren’t real. But now that we’re facing your fear, we should take it seriously

RY

Most murder victims are killed by someone they know. But police kill 3 random strangers every day. If Kim opened fire, it'd just be another day. Those are just facts

JORDAN

Do you expect my feelings to follow statistics? That's not how that works

RY

For me, it's *logical* to fear the police. I *should* be scared of the police, that's how I stay alive

JORDAN

But that doesn't make your fear more real than mine

RY

But it is more justified. Cops aren't some witching hour boogey man lurking around the corner. They're out in uniform, they're at school and in neighborhoods, they show up in broad daylight, and no one can stop them.

JORDAN

I know that

RY

Then act like it

JORDAN

What happened to not compromising with cops? Not talking to them or giving them what they want?

RY

In an ideal scenario /

JORDAN

There is no ideal scenario. Maybe that was the ideal scenario!

RY

You already broke the seal by talking to Kim, so I did what I had to do

JORDAN

You dogged on me for being chummy with her, and then turned around and did the same thing

RY

Because I had to

JORDAN

Right. Don't flex your leftist mutual aid holier than thou bullshit when we're all just trying to survive

RY

It's not bullshit

JORDAN

But it is. Because living those values would actually require you to care about other people

RY

I care about you

JORDAN

It really doesn't seem like it

RY starts to get closer to JORDAN, trying to bridge the gap. Maybe some kind of physical contact.

JORDAN

Can you leave?

Ouch. RY grabs her stuff and is almost out the door.

RY

Are you gonna come tomorrow?

JORDAN

I don't know

RY leaves.

SCENE EIGHTEEN

Suddenly, Professor Martin's classroom. CHELSEA, RY, and JORDAN stand in front of their classmates.

JORDAN

Woolf places Mary, or Mary places herself, in conversation .. with other historical women, .. especially writers.

CHELSEA

I already said that

JORDAN

Oh

CHELSEA

Maybe if you were here on time

RY

Let Jordan talk

CHELSEA

Go ahead

JORDAN

Um, sorry. I forget— Right. She compares these women to herself and to each other to try to figure out um, why women are separated from, their own agency. Society takes away their freedom and yeah. It uh .. it

RY

strips them of their ability to speak their minds. Or they're never afforded it in the first place.

JORDAN

Right, it's not anything about the women themselves, it's just the system. They get trapped. Um. I thought there was another slide, sorry. Uh, Let me just (look at my notes for one sec)

Unnoticed by JORDAN and RY, OFFICER KIM enters in uniform with the gun and handcuffs and everything. Maybe a baton. She stands in an unobtrusive corner of the classroom.

RY

In conclusion, Virginia Woolf is an important feminist author because of her bold examination of women's subjugation and reflection on her own creative process. She argues that women must have

(notices OFFICER KIM)

a room of their own... literally and metaphorically. She didn't shy away from. .

RY
(trailing off)

telling her truth. . And

OFFICER KIM
(to unseen PROFESSOR MARTIN)

Excuse my interruption. I need to take Ry Mitchell.

CHELSEA

Mom, you said you'd wait until after

RY

What is this

JORDAN

I don't know

CHELSEA

Can you come back in two minutes? We're almost done.

OFFICER KIM

Chelsea Honey, I've already interrupted class

CHELSEA

Ry was on the conclusion !

OFFICER KIM

Chelsea, No.

Ms. Mitchell, grab your things and come with me please.

RY

You can't take me, you have no reason to take me

OFFICER KIM

Please don't make this difficult

RY

Jordan?

JORDAN looks anywhere but at RY. RY looks at CHELSEA. CHELSEA averts her gaze. RY grabs her belongings and follows OFFICER KIM out of the classroom. End of play.