

A Thesis Presented to  
The Faculty at Alfred University

*Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers*

by

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It would have been enough to write a play, direct one that was not my own or to act as a designer and technical director on a different project. However, my ambitious nature drove me to do all three for *Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers*, not for the sake of bragging rights but because I believed in this show. I thought its message needed to be heard; the idea that those that are in a position of privilege in society need to be careful and sympathetic when communicating with those that are socially oppressed. With the growing number of young trans-people committing suicide, the story of this play was relevant to present day and needed to be produced. A college is the perfect place for putting on this show, with the support of professors, actors and crew members that would be open to its ideals and the kind of audience that could hear its message.

Throughout the process of mounting my production of *Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers*, I was asked by my cast, crew and audience members, "How much of this really happened?" The answer is that I did work at a summer camp that was named after a lake and complained about my campers with fellow counselors. I really did make "poor man s'mores" with lighters and gossip about a camper who wore cat ears everywhere and peed herself on purpose. Most important of all, I really did have a favorite camper who, after being bullied severely by their cabinmates, chose to stop speaking. The real Cameron was a young girl, a creative and bright high school student who sported purple stripes of skin as remnants of her cutting days. As the counselor who took her on the daily trek to the health lodge for her meds, we got very close very fast. When she chose to be mute rather than voice thoughts that supposedly no one cared about, she did take up sign language and carried around a notebook for communication. On the other hand, she was not transgender, she never ran away into the forest and, as far as I know, never fell in love with a sardonic deaf girl. While there are many

embellished plot points to create drama, the ideas expressed by the character of Cameron are very real. Being non-trans myself, I pulled from conversations I had with my transgender friends and called upon incidents of gender identity discrimination I had witnessed or read about. For example, I once saw a transwoman's friend refer to her as an "it" and have listened to a transman compare himself to Ariel, the little mermaid. There even was a transman put into an all girl's cabin at my camp but the reasoning behind that, I'll never know.

The idea to make something of this incredible summer camp experience came much later, when I was in Becca Hayes's senior project, *Letters to No One*. The possibility of a student mounting a full scale production as a senior project had never even crossed my mind, let alone writing the show myself. Not only that, but Becca's production itself was of high quality and the story was incredible. Directing was not really my forte but I had been honing my writing skills over the past three years through Alfredian Dramatists and Friday Night Live. So I thought to myself, "Why not write and direct my own show? How hard could it be?"

I truly did not consider how difficult it would be. My usual method of writing was spitting out short, clever sketches at 3am after five cups of coffee and two hours of unrelated YouTube videos. Creating a script with well-developed characters and fully formed plot arcs was a completely different task. My tendency to over think details kicked in and each page took about three hours to write. In order to allow myself enough time and space to get it done, I frequented my local coffee shop over the summer and spent entire days there, writing. Even with countless cups of overpriced coffee, the first scene took about two weeks to write. The first draft of the script was finished just in time for auditions in February, and the final draft was finished two weeks after the show had been cast. Editing was an arduous and painful process that made me vividly aware of all the flaws in my play without ideas of how to fix them. I vividly

experienced the phrase, "Kill Your Darlings", the idea that a writer may have to cut out or change their favorite parts, "darlings", if they do not work. However, it became more like a mass murder with half of Laura's lines ending up cut, large portions of Cameron's back story removed, and Gabby having even fewer one-liners, all for the sake of character and plot development. It wasn't all elimination; there were also elements added, like the resolution between Nikki and Danielle along with lines here and there to clarify plot holes pointed out by advisors and cast members alike. Although editing was painful, the process was worth it and the script came out better for it.

As for the process of directing and producing, that had its own pains. In order to do a show, a director requires a space, money and people. The natural choice for space was CD Smith Theatre, a blackbox theatre that would go almost unused for most of the semester with the main stage show, *Life is a Dream*, being in Miller 2. There were some conflicts with who got to use C.D. Smith, particularly during the rush to finish the set for *Life is a Dream*, but issues were solved amicably via e-mail and occasionally in person. However, money caused more issues than I had anticipated. Fortunately, I had procured funds for the production by being granted the Smith Crapsey award with four hundred dollars for the show and a two hundred and fifty stipend. I foolishly thought the four hundred would cover the props, the printing, the expensive screen printed shirts I wanted for costume and the complicated set I hoped to put together. Thankfully, most props were brought in by the cast and crew but costs such as food were taken out of my stipend. The extensive set took up the rest of the four hundred dollar budget and then some. Wood, paint and canvas, since there was no muslin, was so expensive we had to change the set design three different times. I ended up needing five boxes of screws after initially buying

two, more wood was required for more bracing and I had to last minute buy a piece of luan, a type of wood, off of Zac Hamm, technical director of the scene shop.

Obtaining enough people for the right jobs was a challenge I had been prepared for, though stage mangers, crew, and the design team were found very easily. Niki Kimball enthusiastically agreed to be my stage manager when I asked her and Maddie Petraske was hired by Niki as her assistant. Sean Heverin point blank offered to do my set design, along with Chloe Theodosiou for props, Rachel Romack for make-up and Nick Labate for playbill and poster. All of the running crew volunteered without me having to find them down and ask. The only real difficulty was getting Robert Lamb, but once his senior project was done, he was on board as well. The casting, however, was not so easily done. Alfred's small population was reflected in my audition turn out. There was a mere three people the first night and only two the second night, requiring that I schedule a third night of auditions to see actors that were already in *Life is a Dream*. I barely managed to fill all nine roles with the nine actors that came to auditions.

Another person that was important for me to acquire was an American Sign Language, or ASL, teacher for my actors in the scene with ASL. I took a big risk by keeping the third scene in sign language and an even bigger one by having Olivia be deaf. It would have been easier to either never show Cameron learning ASL or have him learn from someone who is not a native speaker. Yet, having another person dealing with oppression, like Cameron, especially a drastically different kind, created a much more dramatically interesting story. It added to the play's major ideas of listening and being sensitive to issues that minorities deal with while not taking away from the main plot arc. Still, it was yet another challenge I gave myself in writing and directing. I had limited experience with the Deaf community and sign language so the creation of Olivia's character and conveying the experience of a deaf person required a lot of

research. On top of that, finding someone who could bring her to life, learn sign language well enough to come off as fluid and develop her character into more than just “the deaf girl”. After watching Cassidy Teagle quickly grasp Olivia’s attitude and a few simple signs in auditions, the issue of casting was quickly resolved. Fortunately, the problem of finding a teacher was easily fixed as well when one of my friends recommended Emily Wright. Emily enthusiastically translated the script into proper ASL grammar and was willing to be flexible with meeting up multiple times to teach my actors. With my presence at each of the lessons, my learning the signs along with them allowed me to step into the role of interpreter for that scene.

If only the entire rehearsal process had been as surprisingly effortless as the rehearsing of scene three. Even without taking into consideration the fact that almost half my cast was in another production, I had to coordinate around nine different people’s schedules. This, along with the rigid *Life is a Dream* rehearsal schedule, meant that finding time to rehearse was hellish at best and the issues did not stop there. Actors far too frequently showed up late or forgot about rehearsals or were unable to focus or follow directions even when they were there. I had so many problems with one particular actor, I had to let her go four weeks before the show and scramble to replace her.

Luckily, despite all of these issues, it all came together. I found a fantastic replacement, Jen Cox, who learned her lines in a week. When focus and attentiveness was high, I got to witness beautiful moments develop and characters come alive. During run throughs of the full play, I began to see an amazing story forming and every week I saw improvement from each of my actors. Even though we were all stressed, especially those in two productions, tension and bickering was surprisingly minimal and there were more jokes than fights. While it was easy to get caught up in the stressful elements, most of the rehearsals themselves were quite enjoyable

and I found I enjoyed directing more than I expected to. It was nerve-wracking to reduce rehearsals to almost nothing during the week of *Life is a Dream*, but the extra time in the evening allowed the set building team to create the periaktoi, the four sided spinning boxes that represented the different settings, and problem solve when building did not go smoothly.

One of the most important aspects of my process was Steve Crosby. As my advisor from the beginning of freshman year, Steve had been the natural choice as the chair of my honors committee and the advisor on my senior project. Even before the rehearsals began, he was helping me with the complicated process of editing my play, pointing out elements missing from, or not necessary, for my plot and ways I could improve upon the characters. We continued to meet weekly, even after the script was done, to problem solve issues I was having, to remind me of the next steps I needed to take in the rehearsal process and for him to check in. The meetings themselves were an invaluable help to me and yet, Steve went beyond that and sat in on rehearsals to give me specific critiques about scenes that needed more help. There is no way this project would have gotten done without his aid.

Still, there were glitches. The first dress rehearsal was littered with lighting cue mistakes, actors' frustrations causing breaks in character, and missing crew members leading to delays in scene changes. Opening night also had its rough patches with forgotten lines and clunky acting. Nevertheless, each pitfall was followed by improvement and triumph and we pulled together to make something incredible. I have never felt so proud in my life as I did when I watched my actors nail every moment, serious or humorous, to the delight of the audience. After each show, I had people gather and congratulate me on a job well done, but I could not help but respond by giving credit to my cast and crew.



I learned much more from this process than simply how to direct and produce a show I wrote. As the type of person who does not like group projects because of having to rely on other people, many aspects of directing were hard on me. Unless it is a one-woman show, directing a play requires the ability to ask people to do something and trust that they will do it on their own. I was willing and able to ask, but the trust was faulty. Each time someone let me down, I got frustrated and stressed. I built trust as I learned to handle the let downs and focus on actors and crew members that followed through. One of the most amazing things I discovered was that the more patient and trusting I was with people, the more likely they were to go above and beyond what I had asked. When people were late to previous rehearsals and I did not jump down their throat about it, I found them arriving early to the next rehearsal. When actors fumbled lines or blocking, I focused on what they did well during that rehearsal and found them fixing the problems themselves in the next rehearsal. My directing style became one of encouragement with gentle criticism because I realized that being kind and trusting is the best way to persuade actors to do what the director wants and needs. I believe the other major thing I learned was the extent of human altruism and how to accept people's help. Throughout the process, people offered to help without me having to directly ask. People volunteered to design or be on running crew for a play they had not even read, simply because they were interested in helping with my project. I saw it the most during the process of building the set, an activity that required more people than me and the technical director, to get it done. Each time I mentioned set building around the cast or crew, someone would pop up and offer a particular skill. I was surprised each time, I remained grateful for the help every time.

Although I would count this project as a success, there are definitely some things I would have done differently if I had known what the process would be like. Even though I had an

amazing, helpful team of designers and crew, I still could have used more help. Steve suggested I get an assistant director early on but I chose to rely on Niki, my stage manager, for such duties. In reality, I needed someone separate whose attention was not split between multiple projects and could do the small tasks for me so I could focus on the big picture. Unlike most of the other roles I had to fill, no one really presented themselves for the job but I should have taken the time to find an assistant. Instead, I ended up taking on more duties than necessary and unnecessarily stressing myself out. The other major thing I would do differently would be to find more effective ways of communicating my ideas. A lot of my stress also came from people not understanding things I had believed I had made clear. In these miscommunications, I had a tendency to think it was the other person's fault for not understanding me when in reality, I probably failed to communicate what I really meant. Later on in the process, I adopted a running to-do-list and did not cross tasks off till they were absolutely done, allowing me to make sure I told the right people the right things, or reiterating if I had not. The one thing I would not change is doing the project itself. While the experience was a stressful one with many obstacles, the results, big and small, were absolutely worth the strife.

Final Draft of  
Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers  
By J.J. Davis

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### Scene One

*DANIELLE enters the cabin, wearing a uniform that identifies her as a camp counselor at Camp White Lake and LAURA, already in the room and changed into her pajamas, doesn't look up from her bed. DANIELLE is trying to keep it together but begins sobbing once she reaches her bed. LAURA, on her bed with her computer, looks up and doesn't know what to do. DANIELLE starts crying harder when she tries to stop and LAURA awkwardly slides over a box of tissues before going back to writing on her computer. ELLIE and RHIANNON's voices are heard off stage as they approach the cabin. They enter, both also in Camp White Lake counselor uniforms, with ELLIE holding a pizza box. Their conversation stops when they see DANIELLE crying.*

RHIANNON: Oh no.

ELLIE: Oh, sweetie, this puts the mandatory in mandatory fun night. Come, sit. *(She gestures to the yoga mat in the middle of the room.)*

DANIELLE: *(Through tears)* You sure? You haven't even done your yoga.

ELLIE: It's cheer Danielle up time, not yoga time.

RHIANNON: And, dude, Ellie stole pizza for tonight.

*ELLIE opens the pizza box to reveal half a cold pizza. DANIELLE slinks off the bed and takes a piece to nibble on. ELLIE and RHIANNON join her on the mat while LAURA watches awkwardly.*

ELLIE: Alright, what can we do to make you feel better? We could meditate or . . . drink some nice tea or . . . go star gazing or . . .

DANIELLE: Pizza's good.

RHIANNON: Dude, you're not gonna tell us- *(ELLIE gives her a look.)* What? I want to know.

DANIELLE: It's nothing, I'm just being silly.

RHIANNON: Now I *really* want to know.

ELLIE: Drop it, Rhiannon. *(To DANIELLE)* We all have bad days, sweetie.

DANIELLE: Not this bad.

RHIANNON: How bad is bad?

ELLIE: So, Rhiannon, you said you had a good camper story?

RHIANNON: I have a feeling that Danielle might have some better ones.

DANIELLE: You first.

RHIANNON: Okay, okay, so you know annoying, little brat? The one I complain about all the time?

DANIELLE: You're gonna have to be more specific, they're all brats.

ELLIE: My cabin is lovely, they had a hair braiding party last night and-

DANIELLE: Could you not?

ELLIE: Honey, they're not all awful.

DANIELLE: I know, I know. I just, you know.

RHIANNON: Hey, hello!

ELLIE: Tell your story, sweetie, I wanna hear it.

RHIANNON: Dude, you will not believe how gross this camper is. Oh man does she not only drive me fucking nuts every time she whines, I noticed today how stringy her hair looks. So stringy, that I think she hasn't showered since she's got here.

ELLIE: For six days?

RHIANNON: I'm pretty damn sure because her hair was as greasy as the pizza.

*DANIELLE drops her pizza with horror.*

RHIANNON: Man, I had to tell her to shower for fuck's sake but in a nice way. Because I'm pretty sure annoying, little brat has never been disciplined in her life since she fucking cried when I told her to put on her shoes faster. So I try the bullshit, empathetic counselor approach by saying I sometimes forget to shower and I wonder when the last time she showered was.

ELLIE: Oh no, did she start crying?

RHIANNON: Oh boy, does she. But it doesn't end there. After about a minute of her crying, she starts wiping her tears all over her face.

DANIELLE: Oh my God.

RHIANNON: And through her sobbing, she manages to tell me, "I r-read on t-tumblr that tears a-are good for y-your skiiiiiiin." I can't take it anymore so I snap at her, "It's your hair! It's your hair that gave it away! Go take a shower *right now!*" Without a break in her crying, she picks up her towel and starts walking out. "With soap and shampoo," I command before she can get out the door and she gets the stuff and leaves. Then, the one other camper in the cabin pipes up with, "Is it true? What she said about tears?" And I spin around, give her the evilest eye I have ever evil-ed and say, "Don't. You. Dare." So that was the highlight of my day.

ELLIE: Your campers must be terrified of you.

RHIANNON: Hell no, dude, they adore me. Even annoying, little brat laughs at my jokes when she isn't crying. So, Danielle, what are your campers-

LAURA: One of my campers ran away and pooped in the woods.

RHIANNON: Shit, you win.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, that was *your* camper?

ELLIE: Oh goodness, please don't tell me it was . . . um-

RHIANNON: Cat Ears?

LAURA: Her name is Christina, she just happens to wear cat ears.

RHIANNON: Everywhere. And pee herself on purpose. And now she's pooping in the woods.

Dude, do you think she pooped outside because she thinks the world is her litter box?

ELLIE: Maybe she actually identifies as a cat and-

RHIANNON: Ellie, have you ever owned a cat? Not even real cats run away and shit in the woods.

DANIELLE: Wait, what's the rest of the story? Oh my God, did you have to go clean up cat shit?

*(They all look at LAURA, expectantly.)*

LAURA: *(Sighs)* Yeah.

RHIANNON: Holy shit! No pun intended.

ELLIE: Before or after the search?

LAURA: After.

RHIANNON: *(Can't hold back her laughter any more)* Holy fuck! You had to go on a lost poop search after your lost cat search? *(She cackles.)* Holy motherfucking shit, that's fantastic! *(She pulls herself together when she notices LAURA glaring at her.)* I mean, that's a fantastic story. For you to tell later.

ELLIE: Rough day, hun, pizza?

LAURA: Any cheese left?

DANIELLE: *(Looks at the piece of cheese pizza she's eating)* Uh, I think I got the last one. I could pull off the pepperonis off one for you.

LAURA: No thanks. *(She crawls off her bed any way and joins them.)*

DANIELLE: *(After some hesitation.)* Okay, so is it true that Cat Ears-

LAURA: Christina-

DANIELLE: Um, Christina got frustrated during one of her choir classes and peed herself on purpose?

LAURA: That story is going around? Great.

ELLIE: Yeah, I've had to tell my cabin several times to stop talking about it.

DANIELLE: Is she getting bullied by the other campers?

LAURA: Not really. Mostly they're too afraid to talk to her. Except that one other goth girl.

ELLIE: At least she has friends.

RHIANNON: Oh yeah man, Goth Girl is in my cabin. The other day she, totally fucking serious, asked me, "Why is life death?"

ELLIE: What did you tell her?

RHIANNON: Dude, if being a camp counselor has taught me anything, it's if you don't have anything camp appropriate to say, say nothing at all.

LAURA: I'll trade you, Rhiannon.

DANIELLE: I'll trade you my entire cabin for Christina.

ELLIE: Are they really that bad, Danielle?

DANIELLE: They're . . . They're *(she's on the verge of crying but holds back her tears)* so awful. To each other, to me. They're horrible little . . . little-

RHIANNON: Shits?

DANIELLE: Yes! Absolute shits!

ELLIE: Oh, sweetie, even your favorite camper?

DANIELLE: *(She sighs.)* They've been bullying Cameron.

LAURA: Oh no.

DANIELLE: I shouldn't be surprised considering how badly it went when he came out to them as transgender but still!

ELLIE: That is really awful, I'm so sorry Danielle. *(She hugs her.)*

LAURA: Why don't they just put him in a boy's cabin?

RHIANNON: Yeah, dude, why don't they?

DANIELLE: They're worried about putting someone with boobs in a cabin full of teenage boys.

LAURA: Oh.

RHIANNON: Still, bullying is pretty bad, man.

DANIELLE: That's not all.

RHIANNON: Aw man, it gets worse?

DANIELLE: Yeah, they've bullied Cameron so badly that he's chosen to stop speaking.

RHIANNON: Dude, what, how?

DANIELLE: They've been making him feel uncomfortable by being so Not Camp Appropriate but he could only call them out for being NCA so many times. Apparently one of the times that he spoke up, they told him that no one cares what he has to say. So he's decided to no longer say anything at all. The only way I could get him to tell me was by getting him to write it down.

LAURA: Better to be mute than misunderstood. Wow.

DANIELLE: It's so fucking frustrating!

ELLIE: Danielle, we know. It's hard to stop bullying, you can't always be there and-

DANIELLE: No, Ellie, I mean Cameron. He's been learning sign language from some deaf girl and for the past two days he's being signing or mouthing words or whatever at me and then he gets mad at me when I don't understand. We used to talk about our favorite authors and bounce story ideas off each other and now he has to write down every stupid sentence after repeating it at me in sign language for five minutes.

ELLIE: Maybe you could learn some sign language, try to speak to him on his terms or-

DANIELLE: I've tried, I really have. I just, you know. I'm just tired.

ELLIE: Sweetie, don't give up yet.

RHIANNON: Dude, no. I swear to fuck you are not giving up on this camper.

DANIELLE: I'm at the end of my rope, Rhi.

RHIANNON: You'll destroy him.

DANIELLE: But I-

RHIANNON: Dude, tell me, do you know how long it took for the twin towers to come down?

DANIELLE: Are you comparing me to terrorists?

RHIANNON: No man, just tell me, do you know?

DANIELLE: No.

RHIANNON: Less than fifteen seconds. Do you know how long it takes to burn down a dorm room?

DANIELLE: Um, no.

RHIANNON: Less than five minutes. Do you know how long it takes to destroy someone's self-esteem?



DANIELLE: Some allotted amount of time?

RHIANNON: Two seconds being ignored at summer camp.

DANIELLE: Oh.

RHIANNON: Look, man. It is easier to destroy something than create something and it's a hell of a lot less time consuming. It would take less time to burn the Mona Lisa than it did to paint it and it will take moments of you letting that camper down for you to destroy his trust. When I was here, my cabin counselor gave up on me so don't you fucking dare be that counselor.

DANIELLE: Okay, I get it. I'll . . . do something. I don't know.

RHIANNON: It'll mean everything to him, I promise.

LAURA: You were saying that Cameron likes stories, right? Maybe do something involving stories and the cabin or something. Get them all involved.

DANIELLE: Yeah, maybe, I'll think about it.

ELLIE: *(Checking her phone)* Hey, looks like all of girl's side is having an official mandatory fun night.

*(Everyone else checks their phones.)*

RHIANNON: Fuck yeah! Maybe they have something better than cold pizza. No offense, Ellie but I'm totally in the mood for s'mores.

ELLIE: None taken, let's go!

DANIELLE: I didn't get an invite.

RHIANNON: No way! *(RHIANNON grabs DANIELLE's phone and looks through it.)* No way, how could they forget *you*?

ELLIE: Hey. *(She hugs DANIELLE as she starts to cry again.)* We were already having our own awesome night, we don't need them to keep having one.

DANIELLE: B-but Rhiannon wanted s'mores.

RHIANNON: It's cool, we'll make poor man s'mores, I did it while I was at camp. Got a lighter?

DANIELLE: No.

*(RHIANNON, ELLIE and LAURA all pull out their lighters at the same time.)*

DANIELLE: No, guys, we'll burn the cabin down.

ELLIE: I'll be right back. *(She leaves.)*

DANIELLE: What's she doing?

RHIANNON: I think she's ninja-ing us some supplies. *(To LAURA.)* So, tell us more about Cat Ears.

LAURA: *(Disgruntled)* Really?

RHIANNON: Did she really pee her bed the first night to mark her territory?

LAURA: Yes.

DANIELLE: And hiss at you when you tried to take her sheets to wash them?

LAURA: Yup.

RHIANNON: And-

*(ELLIE returns with graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows.)*

ELLIE: Ta-da! I had to be super sneaky but I got them for you. *(She pulls out a marshmallow and hands it to DANIELLE with her lighter.)* The trick is to not burn your fingers.

*(DANIELLE cautiously tries "roasting" the marshmallow over the small flame while LAURA and RHIANNON grab marshmallows and do the same. ELLIE makes chocolate and graham cracker sandwiches.)*

ELLIE: Rhiannon, don't set yours on fire.

RHIANNON: But I like mine burnt to a crisp.

DANIELLE: *(Makes her s'more and takes a bite.)* It tastes like butane. *(She laughs)* They're the best s'mores I've ever had.

*(LAURA burns her fingers and drops her marshmallow.)*

LAURA: Fuck shit tits!

RHIANNON: Damn, and I thought I had the potty mouth.

ELLIE: Told you not burn your fingers, Laura. *(She hands her another marshmallow)*

LAURA: I wasn't trying to.

RHIANNON: *(Pops the marshmallow in her mouth)* Mmm, butane and friendship.

DANIELLE: Are you sure it's okay?

RHIANNON: Are you kidding? This is awesome! We're breaking so many fire codes just to crappily burn some marshmallows to spend time with each other rather than those assholes out there. I'd rather nearly burn down our cabin with you guys any day.

LAURA: Me too.

ELLIE: You know I think the world of you, Danielle. Now give me back my lighter.

*(They continue to make them as the lights dim to near darkness, the flames shining brighter than the stage lights before each lighter is turned off one by one. End of scene.)*

## Scene Two

*Playwright's note: For most of the scene, CAMERON is signing rather than speaking. "In ASL" refers to in American Sign Language. It is imperative that there is nothing translating his signs for hearing audiences other than Danielle reading what he writes.*

*The next morning, DANIELLE sits surrounded by campers at a cafeteria table, all wearing Camp White Lake camp uniforms that vary from the counselors' uniforms by color. DANIELLE sits between CAMERON and NIKKI and NIKKI talks to her friends, SELENA and GABBY, who sit on her right. CAMERON is reading a sign language book and practicing various signs.*

NIKKI: So one time in my chemistry class we were learning about crystals and it was awesome because we got to make our own rock candy.

GABBY: Yummy!

NIKKI: It gets better. We get to make them all different colors and so I make mine red, of course but it turns out pink but whatever. But my chemistry teacher seriously brings in blue rock candy. And he's bald, with a goatee and glasses so he totally looks like that guy from "Breaking Bad." So I said to the teacher, "What is that, meth? Are you secretly a drug dealer?"

SELENA: Oh my God, that's hilarious.

DANIELLE: Nikki, maybe talk about something else.

NIKKI: It wasn't meth, though. That's the joke.

DANIELLE: Nikki, I'm sure you can find ways of being funny without being inappropriate.

NIKKI: But those are my best stories.

DANIELLE: Yes, but camp is a place where we want everyone to feel comfortable so we avoid things that might make people uncomfortable. Like jokes about teachers dealing drugs.

SELENA: The only one that's uncomfortable is the Shemale over there.

DANIELLE: Selenal His name is Cameron and you should respect him like any of your other cabin mates.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Please stop talking about me like I'm not here.

DANIELLE: Um, Cameron, I don't know what that means. I'm sorry.

*CAMERON looks for something to write with but finds only a pen, no paper, in his pocket. He writes on his hand "Stop" and shows it to DANIELLE.*

DANIELLE: Stop? Me?

GABBY: What a freak.

*CAMERON reaches across DANIELLE to show NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY what's on his hand.*

NIKKI: We're not going to stop talking because you stopped talking, weirdo.

DANIELLE: I think he means stop talking about him.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, thank you.

DANIELLE: Yes. Ladies, let's talk about something else. Like, um, who's excited for the camper dance?

NIKKI: Ew. We can't even kiss our dates.

SELENA: Why would you want to kiss your date? Boys are terrible kissers.

GABBY: How would you know?

SELENA: How do you think I know?

NIKKI: Ooooo! Tell us everything. Did he put his tongue in your mouth?

DANIELLE: Okay to NCA in two seconds flat. Come on, guys, no one at the table wants to hear about that, especially when we're about to eat.

NIKKI: I wanna know.

DANIELLE: *I don't want to think about tongues in anybody's mouths.*

GABBY: You have a tongue in your mouth. It just happens to be your tongue.

*(NIKKI gives her a look and then gets up to get a cup of water.)*

DANIELLE: *(turning to Cameron)* So, what's that book you've got there?

*CAMERON lifts the book so DANIELLE can read the cover. Meanwhile, SELENA pulls out a notebook and her and GABBY begin to play a game quietly.*

DANIELLE: Oh, a sign language book. That's cool. Learn any cool signs?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes.

DANIELLE: Can you show me some?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I wish people understood me.

DANIELLE: Cool, what does that mean?

*CAMERON repeats the signs while mouthing the words.*

DANIELLE: I can't read lips either, I'm sorry.

*CAMERON writes it on his hand for her.*

DANIELLE: "I wish people understood me." Oh. Um. Well. It would probably help if you started speaking again. I know I liked talking to you about the story you were writing.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. *(He shakes his head.)*

DANIELLE: No? Did you stop writing that story?

*CAMERON starts to sign but writes something on his hand instead.*

DANIELLE: "Talking doesn't help. Everything I say is wrong." Oh, Cameron, that's not true.

*CAMERON returns to reading his book and practicing finger spelling.*

DANIELLE: Okay, I understand that you don't want to speak but I'd still like to interact with you. Could you maybe teach me some signs?

*NIKKI reenters.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You want to learn to sign? *(He writes it down on his hand for her.)*

DANIELLE: "Learn to sign", yes! Can we start with my name?

NIKKI: *(Settling into her seat.)* What's the sign for control freak?

DANIELLE: Hey! That was just mean. Next time any of you ladies say something NCA, I'm going to Gina. Now find something else to talk about.

SELENA: *(Under her breath)* Running to head of girls' side, way to prove her point.

DANIELLE: Excuse me?

SELENA: Nothing, nothing at all.

*NIKKI joins SELENA and GABBY's game. Throughout the scene, anytime DANIELLE isn't talking to them, they play the game.*

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, how do I sign Danielle?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* D-A-N-I-E-L-L-E.

DANIELLE: *(In ASL)* D-A-M-I-E-L-L-E *(Out Loud)* Is that right?

*CAMERON looks in the book.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No-

*DANIELLE tries again but CAMERON corrects her when she mixes M and N again.*

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's confusing. What's Cameron look like?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* C-A-M-E-R-O-N.

DANIELLE: That's cool! You're getting really good at that. *(To the rest of the table)* Hey, ladies, do the rest of you want to learn how to sign your name?

GABBY: Like in cursive? I learned that in fourth grade.

NIKKI: No, stupid, like in sign language. Danielle is trying to get us to talk to it.

DANIELLE: By it I hope you're not referring to Cameron.

NIKKI: Sorry, honest mistake, "Cameron". Hey, I never asked, what's your real name? Could you show us that in sign language?

*CAMERON flips NIKKI off.*

DANIELLE: Cameron!

NIKKI: Aw, that's pretty. You should have stayed a girl with such a pretty name. Though, looking at you now, you probably made an ugly girl.

DANIELLE: Both of you! Enough!

NIKKI: Alright, what's my name in sign language?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-I-T-C-H.

SELENA: Oh. *(Signing and speaking each letter out loud)* B-I-T-C-H? I'm pretty sure that's not how you spell Nikki, shemale. That's right, I know how to finger spell so don't try that with me.

DANIELLE: Cameron-

NIKKI: Maybe we should take a page out its book and start talking about stuff in another language. Then we can talk about whatever we want!

DANIELLE: Nikki, please! Please keep it camp appropriate until we're dismissed for breakfast. Okay? Can you make it that long without making a sex joke?

GABBY: Ooooooh, counselor said a dirty word!

DANIELLE: Seriously, five minutes, that's all I ask of you three.

NIKKI: Fine, deal.

*SELENA and GABBY nod their heads in agreement.*

DANIELLE: Thank you. Cameron-

*Danielle gets up from her seat and pulls him aside while Nikki eavesdrops on their conversation*

DANIELLE: There are better ways of reacting to bullying than being nasty right back. Maybe we can figure out something together.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why? *(He writes something on his hand.)*

DANIELLE: I never said you have to be nice to them. I'm going to tell you a secret, Cameron, that most adults won't tell you. You don't have to be nice to those that aren't nice to you.

*CAMERON writes something else down.*

DANIELLE: Well, that's what we need to figure out, isn't it. You can't go around flipping people off when you're mad because it's easier than talking to them. Unless someone cuts you off on the road. You're always allowed to flip someone off if they cut you off.

CAMERON: (*Gesturing, not in ASL*) You've flipped people off?

DANIELLE: Oh believe me, plenty of people have seen me flip the bird. But not here, Camp White Lake is not a place for that sort of thing.

NIKKI: Woah, wait, what are you saying to it? Because it sounds like you're telling it to be mean to us after telling us not to be mean. Are you serious right now?

DANIELLE: Actually, we're talking about how annoying it is when someone cuts you off on the road. Do you drive yet, Nikki?

NIKKI: If I did, do you think I'd still be here in this shiiiiii- shindig? This shindig.

DANIELLE: Nice save.

GABBY: One time, my mom named her car Ophelia, because she loves Shakespeare, and then she accidentally drove it into a lake. She's okay but Ophelia drowned.

DANIELLE: Oh my God! Hopefully she learned her lesson with her new car.

GABBY: She named it Desdemona!

DANIELLE: Oh no.

GABBY: No, she named it Desdemona, not Yoko Ono.

SELENA: Now I know where you get your brilliance from, Gabby.

GABBY: Aw, thank you! But I think I gain more wisdom from my mom than her cars.

NIKKI: Oh, wow.

DANIELLE: (*DANIELLE sits down to talk to GABBY.*) So, Gabby, your art here at camp is painting, right? What do you like to paint?

GABBY: Oh my God, I love painting. According to my mom, I loved it so much I used to eat the paint

NIKKI: That explains so much.

DANIELLE: Oh, um, that's . . . weird. Uh-

CAMERON: (*Taps DANIELLE on the shoulder and signs*) I love to draw!

DANIELLE: You . . . what? (*She repeats the sign for drawing*) Is that-

NIKKI: (*Under her breath*) Retard.

DANIELLE: Woah, Nikki, we don't use the R-word. Ever. Even outside of camp.

NIKKI: Are you serious? You're trying to tell me what I can say even after I leave? What the . . . heck? What am I allowed to talk about?



DANIELLE: Talk about your art. Talk about your favorite TV show. Talk about your favorite kind of music. It's really not that hard.

NIKKI: Dance. "Game of Thrones." Anything on the radio. Done.

DANIELLE: Your favorite show is "Game of Thrones?"

SELENA: Oh my God, me too!

DANIELLE: Maybe don't talk about your favorite shows.

GABBY: Mine is "My Little Pony!"

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, what were you saying- signing?

*CAMERON writes the translation on his hand.*

DANIELLE: Oh! You like drawing too. That's cool. Hey, Gabby, do you like drawing?

GABBY: No.

DANIELLE: Okay then. So, Cameron, what do you like to draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love to draw people. And faces.

DANIELLE: Oh! *(She does the sign for face)* Face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! This the sign for face.

DANIELLE: Have you drawn anyone at camp?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. *(He pulls out a picture from the sign language book)* See?

DANIELLE: Who is she?

*CAMERON write her name at the top of the paper.*

DANIELLE: Olivia. Wow. She's very beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, she is beautiful.

DANIELLE: *(She does the sign for beautiful)* Beautiful?

*CAMERON nods.*

DANIELLE: *(She repeats the sign.)* Beautiful. Hey, could you draw me? I've never gotten to model for an artist before.

*CAMERON turns the paper over, squints at Danielle and poses her before drawing her.*

DANIELLE: This is so cool.

*CAMERON puts a finger to his lips.*

DANIELLE: Oh, okay, still and silent. Got it.

SELENA: Okay, so one time there was this word that my cousin kept using and he thought it meant something else but it totally meant *something else*.

GABBY: How could you use something else wrong? It just means something else.

SELENA: No, Gabby, he kept being like “Oh man, I totally bleeped and it’s so bad when I bleep.”

GABBY: He used the word bleep wrong?

SELENA: No the word was *(whispering)* queef.

*DANIELLE moves to do something but goes back to posing.*

NIKKI: Oh my God! What did he think it meant?

SELENA: He thought it meant to forget! At one point he said he queefed about his sister’s birthday and then we had to tell him what it was.

GABBY: What’s queefing?

SELENA: It’s, um-

NIKKI: Vagina farting.

*DANIELLE grips the table.*

GABBY: Oh! He vagina farted about his sister’s birthday. That’s hilarious.

NIKKI: You know what word I hate, more than queef?

GABBY: Stop?

SELENA: Moist?

NIKKI: Pussy. God, I hate the word pussy. It makes me think of cats! I don’t want to think about cats when I think of my . . . genitalia. Cats are hairy and . . . bleh!

*DANIELLE is getting visibly more and more tense.*

SELENA: *(Asking rhetorically)* Why do you think they call it a pussy?

GABBY: Because it meows? Because it licks up milk? Oh Oh Oh! Because it spits up hairballs!

SELENA: I hope neither of yours do that.

NIKKI: Neither of mine do.

GABBY: Both of mine do! *(She giggles and then snorts.)*

DANIELLE: *(Finally stop posing)* Enough! That is enough! Why?

*None of the three girls answer.*

DANIELLE: Oh, now you stop talking? I asked you a question. Why do you do that? Why do you feel the need to talk about these things at the cafeteria table? Or at all?

SELENA: I don’t know.

NIKKI: Because it’s funny.

DANIELLE: Really? You can't think of any jokes that don't involve inappropriate things?

NIKKI: It's the kind of jokes my friends at school like.

DANIELLE: Well you're not at school or with those friends. You're at camp with different people with different senses of humor. Not everyone finds those kinds of things funny and you never know who you're going to upset if you just speak without thinking because it might, *might* be funny.

*GABBY suddenly lets out a giggle.*

DANIELLE: What?

GABBY: Sorry, I just got that we were talking about vaginas, not cats! *(She giggles again.)*

DANIELLE: Okay, I hope you think of a better explanation than "It's funny" because I'm pretty sure the head of girl's side won't accept that answer any more than I did. *(She gets up.)*

SELENA: No, please don't get Gina.

DANIELLE: If you won't listen to me, then maybe you'll listen to her.

*DANIELLE exits.*

NIKKI: Oh thank fucking God, she's gone. Fuck shit dammit. Ugh.

SELENA: Yeah, she's gone to get the head of girl's side!

GABBY: Do you think she'll bring just her head or the rest of her too?

NIKKI: Jesus fucking Christ, Gabby, go eat a can of paint.

GABBY: I was kidding, jeez.

SELENA: Nikki, we're in deep shit this time. What if she says we can't go to the pool during free time or . . . or . . . or worse, the dance!

NIKKI: Calm the fuck down, she won't do that. *(She looks in the direction of where DANIELLE left.)* Oh shit, she looks pissed.

SELENA: See?

NIKKI: Well, before she comes back, I have to ask it something.

SELENA: No, Nikki, don't make it worse.

NIKKI: Hey! Shemale! *(CAMERON ignores her.)* Hey! We were talking about pussies earlier, do you have one? You keep saying you're a boy but people in girls' cabins tend to have vaginas. So what's down there, huh?

SELENA: Don't be weird, why do you want to know that? What else would be down there?

GABBY: A cactus?

SELENA: I worry what your vagina looks like.

NIKKI: You're really a girl, aren't you? You just think pretending to be a boy will make you cool.

SELENA: Nikki . . .

NIKKI: What? Afraid that the mute is gonna snitch on us? *(NIKKI moves closer to CAMERON and he struggles to keep ignoring her.)* I've seen your pads, you definitely don't have a dick.

SELENA: Danielle is-

NIKKI: Shush! Or are you really a boy and you just got put in a girl's cabin so you could perv on us, huh? Which is it?

GABBY: Nikki-

NIKKI: Shut up. We all know. Come on, just admit that you're just a-

*DANIELLE reenters.*

DANIELLE: Nikki, what are you doing?

NIKKI: Oh, I'm just trying to see it's drawing of you.

DANIELLE: Alright, ladies, come with me, the head of girl's side wants to speak with you. Come along.

*NIKKI, SELENA, and GABBY get out of their seats and exit with DANIELLE.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Bitches.

### Scene Three

*Playwright's note: A good portion of this scene takes place in American Sign Language with projected supertitles for audience members that do not speak ASL. Dialogue that is signed will be preceded by the stage direction "In ASL" but some of the dialogue is spoken aloud or written down and read out loud. It is important to keep what is spoken and what is sign as it is in the stage directions.*

*"One week later" is projected onto the supertitle screen.*

*The scene takes place in CAMERON'S cabin with CAMERON and OLIVIA sitting on a bed as OLIVIA teaches CAMERON American Sign Language. CAMERON signs very slowly throughout the scene and signs more words than necessary or ask OLIVIA what they are. OLIVIA frequently has to slow down or repeat for him and omits more words like many native speakers do.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* This is difficult. Signing is difficult.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So is being deaf. Quit complaining.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(OLIVIA writes it down and he reads it aloud)* "Quit your bitching." Oh! Is this *(does the sign for complain)* bitch? *(Does the sign again and laughs)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Complain? No.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No? *(Out loud)* Ugh, can't you just teach me the bad words so I can swear at people without them knowing?

*OLIVIA reaches over and playfully smacks him upside the head.*

CAMERON: What's that the sign for? *(OLIVIA writes it down)* "It's Olivia for stop being an ass." *(In ASL)* Sorry, Olivia.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do ABCs.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A - B - C - D - E - F . . . *(Struggles, OLIVIA shows him G)* G - H - I - J . . . um *(OLIVIA shows him K)* K - L - M - N - O . . . *(out loud)* oh! It's like K! *(In ASL)* P - Q - R - S - T - U - V - W - X - Y - Z!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your name?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You know my name!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Don't be stupid. Sign your name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Oh. C-A-M-E-R-O-N. *(Pause)* H-E/ H-I-M.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No. Sign language doesn't do *(mouths)* pronouns.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Really?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yeah.

CAMERON: *(Smiles and says out loud)* That's awesome! Less misgendering. *(In ASL)* I am a boy.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your art, boy?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My art is drawing and writing. *(Out loud)* Oh! I've never asked you before. *(In ASL)* Your art?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Dance. *(She writes it down for him)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Wow?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How do you dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* With my body.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(She writes it down and he begins to read it out loud)* With my- oh. *(In ASL)* J-E-R-K. *(He pauses, trying to figure out how to sign what he means.)* *(In ASL)* You are deaf.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. I'm aware.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Deaf people dance?  
*(OLIVIA smacks him upside the head again.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-W! What?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Deaf people love dancing!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Are you asking me how to love? Really?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No, no I know how to love. But how do *you* dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How do *you* dance?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear –

CAMERON mouths "music". OLIVIA shows him the sign for music.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear music and dance.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Oh! I feel music. Like . . . like –

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-A-S-S?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes! Like-

*OLIVIA grabs CAMERON'S hand and puts it over her heart. CAMERON freezes and stares at her with confusion. OLIVIA bobs her head and points to her heart area. After a few more moments of fluster, CAMERON gets it. The two of them sway to the beat of OLIVIA'S heart. She releases his hand but he leaves it there for a few more seconds before removing it.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand.

*He mouths "heart" OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Heart.

*He mouths "beat" and OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Beat. Heartbeat . . . I have a question.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Why didn't you go to a deaf camp with other deaf people? Even other deaf dancers?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why didn't you go to a boy's cabin with other boys?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Me too.

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in shock)* You're mom taught you sign language but wouldn't put you in a deaf camp? What the fuck!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Use sign language!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't know W-T-F.

*OLIVIA shows him the sign for what the fuck.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck, your mom?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* My mom doesn't know sign language.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck. Who what when where how and why?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* She isn't deaf or hard of hearing so why should she bother?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm not a good enough reason.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

*OLIVIA writes down the translation*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

*OLIVIA points to the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. Why not you?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Too much time and effort. She's a busy woman and she already finds me to be a burden. She just wants me to be normal and easy to deal with.

*OLIVIA writes down the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are good.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Not really, I actually go out of my way to make things more difficult for her since she's such a dick to me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are great!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do great people swear at their moms for fun?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are . . . *(He gets frustrated and mouths at her "you are worth it".)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I am worth it?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! You are worth it!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You learned sign for yourself, not me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I S-T-A-Y for you.

*OLIVIA stares at him with confusion. CAMERON mouths "stay for you" at her.*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I stay for you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool. Tell me about your mom.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't want to talk about my mom any more.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom . . . not good. Not great.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She doesn't call me Cameron.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What a bitch!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She calls me *(mouthing the word)* confused.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Confused.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She thinks I'm confused. That's why she P-U-T me in a girl's cabin.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* But you're not a girl.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She still calls me her daughter. *(Out loud.)* It's horrible, I think she's hoping it's a phase and putting me in a girl's cabin will get me through it faster.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Fuck her! Fuck your cabin! Fuck girl's side! Fuck anyone who doesn't call you C-A-M- you need a name sign.



CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign you can show your mom or anyone else who calls you the wrong name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A name sign?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign, a sign that is unique to you and represents you. How about I shorten your name to D-O-R-K?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* M-E-A-N-I-E. Is your name sign B-I-T-C-H?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, mine is *(She shows him her name-sign)*.

CAMERON repeats her name-sign.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W, it is you. *(He does her name-sign again.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes, it is I, Olivia. Good job.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What should I do for mine?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you like to do, besides annoy me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I what you?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Forget it. What do you do?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write and draw.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you write? What do you draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write . . . *(He writes down the words.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You write stories *(CAMERON repeats the sign)*, poetry *(CAMERON repeats the sign)* and . . . Facebook statuses?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love poetry.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* And Facebook?

CAMERON: *(Outloud)* Holy shit do I miss the internet. I miss checking- *(OLIVIA puts a hand over his mouth.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL, with her hand still over his mouth)* A-S-L.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love writing more than the *(mouthing the word)* internet.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Writing . . . *(She repeats the sign a couple times.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, writing.

OLIVIA does the sign for writing but with her right hand forming a C.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You *(Does the modified sign again.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Me? *(He repeats the sign and then says out loud.)* Oh! *(In ASL)* C for C-A-M-E-R-O-N and writing. W-O-W.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you like it? Or do I have to start calling you bitch face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love it. Please call me *(He does the name-sign)* not . . . that other sign.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't know, Cameron, you look like a bitch face to me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. I am Cameron. I am a boy and I am . . . *(He mouths the word "transgender")*.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Transgender.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I am transgender. I love that sign! It's like beautiful and self. Transgender is beautiful and I am beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. You are beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You think I'm beautiful? I think you're beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool . . . I think you're . . . cool. I'm not used to people saying nice things to me. I'm not used to hearing people talking to me at all.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you realize you're the only other hearing person to sign with me in years?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry, I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Of course you don't understand. Hearing people don't fucking understand, even if you do talk to them in their language. You know this, this is why you don't talk any more. This is why I only speak in my language. You want to know what I like about sign language? You have to think before you sign and you have to sign what you think. None of your hearing people's subtle bullshit. Sign language is about expressing, not hiding. I'm glad I'm deaf so I don't have to hear all the horrible things you've told me you hear. I don't have to hear my teachers talking slower to me because they think I'm an idiot as well as deaf. Best of all, I don't have to hear my mother yelling at me because she thinks I'm stupid. She's the stupid one, can't even fucking sign my language.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No you don't. But at least you try. Thank you for trying.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I watch you sign, I know what you mean.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You don't understand half my signs.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you as a person.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Because I hope you don't mind but I've fallen in love with you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You love to fall on me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love you.

*OLIVIA stares at him in confusion as an awkward silence ensues.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Do you mind?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry. I think I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry you love me. I am shit.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are beautiful and smart and funny and weird and I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You've known me for two weeks.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* The days are long and each day with you is amazing. I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stop saying that. Stop lying to me.

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* I'm going to keep saying it until you believe me. *(In ASL)* I love you, Olivia. I love you. I love you. I love you!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're being ridiculous. You can't love someone you barely know.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand but I know I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Now you *know* you love me. Okay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. I know I love you. I love you!

*CAMERON starts hopping around on the bed.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in ASL)* I love you! I love you! I love you!

*NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY enter the cabin as CAMERON is dancing around.*

SELENA: What the fuck, why is she in our cabin?

NIKKI: Oh wow, I think it's managed to get itself a girlfriend.

*CAMERON flips her off.*

NIKKI: Ah, now there's some sign language I know.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'll go get the counselor. *(She moves to leave.)*

NIKKI: Stay where you are, bitch. I'm talking to both of you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're the bitch. Can't even get some pronouns right.

NIKKI: *(Imitating her signs in a mocking manner)* What the fuck is this? You trying to flag down a plane or something?

SELENA: Hey, not cool, you know my cousin is deaf.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck? Leave us alone.

NIKKI: You know what? I'm actually okay with it. Means I don't have to hear you whining to me or the counselor about being "Not Camp Appropriate". I can say whatever the fuck I want, it's a free country. I came here to dance, not get told off by trannies.

*CAMERON gets up and slaps her.*

NIKKI: You hit like a girl.

*OLIVIA gets up and keeps him from hitting her again.*

GABBY: Um, you're a girl too.

SELENA: Gabby, that's not the point.

GABBY: Then what is the point? I didn't come to art camp to be mean to people. I just wanted to paint flowers and stuff while hearing band kids practice. Instead, you made us leave free period to see if he was here.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* H-E?

NIKKI: You didn't have to come. You could have gone to the pool and practiced doggy paddling.

GABBY: You threatened to push me into the lake if I didn't come.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* This has been fun and by fun I mean awkward so- *(She grabs CAMERON's hand and moves to leave)*

*NIKKI moves to block her path.*

GABBY: Oh, you gonna push her in the lake for not obeying?

SELENA: Nikki, let the boy go. Gabby's got a point. This is weird.

NIKKI: You too? It's not a boy. It's . . . what are you? Like what's in your pants?

GABBY: Underwear?

SELENA: None of your business?

NIKKI: I'm asking it.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why are you asking?

NIKKI: *(Moving towards him)* Is it a hand? Tentacles? A third eye? Or do you have a vagina because you're a fucking girl? *(She makes a grab at his waistband but he moves out of the way.)*  
Hmmm?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* A fist! *(He punches her in the stomach and runs out of the cabin)*

OLIVIA *runs after him but stops at the door of the cabin.*

NIKKI: Okay, I deserved that.

GABBY: You know, they changed the name of the Heimlich maneuver because people kept suing the family when it wouldn't work. I think you're currently experiencing why.

NIKKI: Not helpful, Gabby.

OLIVIA *looks out the window and begins gesturing at the others. SELENA comes to the window.*

SELENA: Oh my God, he's running into the woods. Olivia, you have to go after him.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, no. I can't. I'm afraid of the woods and the dark.

SELENA: I don't understand, finger spell?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A-F-R-A-I-D.

SELENA: Oh, of the woods? *(OLIVIA nods.)* Fuck, we have to tell the counselor.

GABBY: Fuck.

NIKKI: I'm so fucked.

*The lights fade to black but before the scene changes, counselors can be heard in the dark, calling Cameron's name and searching for him in the woods.*

## Scene Four

*During scene transition, other counselors enter and hide in various parts of the stage, shining their flashlights in their search for CAMERON. DANIELLE enters with the stage lights still off and a flashlight as the only source of light.*

DANIELLE: Cameron! Where are you? We're just trying to help.

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Dude, where you at? You need help?

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Sweetie, are you okay? Please come home.

LAURA: *(Offstage)* Hey. Cameron. Hey. You here?

*The lights come up slowly to reveal CAMERON on the opposite side of the stage from*

*DANIELLE. He is sitting and grimacing from pain.*

DANIELLE: I found him! Cameron . . . oh my God, you're hurt. Can you stand?

*CAMERON shakes his head. She offers him a hand to help him up with. CAMERON shakes his head again.*

DANIELLE: Cameron . . .

*She crouches down to his level.*

DANIELLE: You don't want to go back yet, do you?

*CAMERON doesn't answer.*

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Is he okay?

DANIELLE: He's injured but he can't get up yet. I'll stay with him while you guys get first aid, okay?

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Works for me! Peace out!

*All counselors exit, still in character.*

DANIELLE: *(Standing up)* Cameron, what happened in the cabin? With Nikki and them?

*He doesn't even look at her.*

DANIELLE: I know you hurt her, I just want to understand why.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She H-U-R-T me first.

DANIELLE: Cameron, there's no one else around, is the sign language really necessary?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes.

DANIELLE: Okay, how's this? We create a safe zone. Here. In the creepy, dark forest. Um, safe from judgment and safe from the head of girl's side. We can tell each other things and it be just between us. Okay?

*CAMERON doesn't respond.*

DANIELLE: I'm serious, nothing you say here will leave this forest and you can tell Gina as much or as little as you want when you get back.

*CAMERON still doesn't respond.*

DANIELLE: Cameron, I'm trying to understand you, as a person. Like, *(she takes a deep breath)* I actually kinda, you know, get the trans thing.

*CAMERON gives her a weird look.*

DANIELLE: I mean, it's only a little. But, when I'm not here, in uniform, I basically dress like a boy. T-shirts and flannels, you know? And I was such a tom boy growing up, no way you could get me into a dress. I'm all about those boy things, like climbing trees and stuff and I don't paint my nails.

*CAMERON stares at her, confused.*

DANIELLE: And you know what was my absolute favorite movie as a kid? Mulan! I loved that she was this super kick-butt, masculine woman that was like "I can do anything a man can do, screw sexism!" You must love Mulan because-

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* You think I'm Mulan?

DANIELLE: Finally, you're talking!

CAMERON: You think I'm a woman dressing up and pretending to be a man?

DANIELLE: No, but like, I thought you might look up to her because she . . . she . . . um-

CAMERON: You really don't get it, do you?

DANIELLE: I do understand! You're a boy but you feel trapped in the wrong body.

CAMERON: Was Mulan trapped in the wrong body?

DANIELLE: She was trapped by gender roles.

CAMERON: So no, Mulan is not my Disney role model . . . Ariel is.

DANIELLE: The Little Mermaid? Isn't she a bit . . . you know?

CAMERON: Boys can like feminine things, even transboys. I always connected to her story, knowing you're different, feeling like a change to your body will fix everything and wanting to do anything to get that change. I think I knew even when I first saw that movie that I wasn't a girl.

DANIELLE: That's really young, how old were you?

CAMERON: Probably about four? Maybe five?

DANIELLE: Wow, and it took you this long to come out?

CAMERON: It was a rather slow and painful process. Really an ongoing process. You never really stop coming out.

DANIELLE: (*Nearly under her breath.*) Oh I know.

CAMERON: What?

DANIELLE: Nothing! So, how did the process start?

CAMERON: Post- Little Mermaid?

DANIELLE: Yes, after your Disney awakening.

CAMERON: Well, you know how little girls try on their mother's heels or her jewelry?

DANIELLE: Uh-huh, of course, even I did that for a bit.

CAMERON: I was always stealing my dad's ties and trying to learn how to tie them. Or putting on his button up shirts or whatever. At first my mom thought it was cute, like "Aw 'she's' playing dress up with Daddy's clothes!" It got less cute after my dad left and even less when I refused to wear the "adorable" dresses she would buy me. Around then she stopped thinking it was a tom boy phase I'd grow out of and started getting worried.

DANIELLE: Was she worried that you were trans?

CAMERON: I doubt she knew what trans people were but I definitely heard the word "lesbian" said in concerned whispers enough times.

DANIELLE: I'm sorry, Cameron, that must have been hard to hear.

CAMERON: It's not as bad as this one time, when I was ten, one of the neighbor kids came over and called me a dyke. I was just hanging out on my lawn, minding my own business. I don't think she even knew what that word meant.

DANIELLE: Oh, that's really awful. I'm sorry you had to go through that.

CAMERON: Yeah, well, wanna know something funny?

DANIELLE: After all you've said so far, totally.

CAMERON: I probably didn't help things by wanting to be a boy for Halloween that year.

DANIELLE: Just . . . a boy? Not any particular boy?

CAMERON: Yup, just a boy. You can imagine my mother's reaction when I told her.

DANIELLE: Am I right to assume she wasn't too happy about it?

CAMERON: She bought me a Hannah Montana costume as a response.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's bad. That's a whole new level of awful.



CAMERON: Right? So, one time, while my mother was in the bathroom, I stole the kitchen scissors, hid under the coffee table and cut off all my hair. It was pretty bad, my hair looked like I'd cut it underneath a table. And, as my mom was getting out of the bathroom, I ran up to her, threw what hair I had cut off at her and yelled, "Now I'll be a boy for every holiday!" Not the best comeback I've ever had.

DANIELLE: Better than what I could have thought of. You really threw your hair at her?

CAMERON: Yeah, it's kinda gross in retrospect.

DANIELLE: Yeah, so is trying to make you be Hannah Montana for Halloween. Did she let you be a boy that year?

CAMERON: Kinda. I borrowed some of my older brother's clothes and she told people I was dressing up as him. It wasn't a very fun Halloween, we didn't trick or treat for very long.

DANIELLE: It sounds like it wasn't a very fun year in general for you.

CAMERON: It gets worse.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, really?

CAMERON: I won't bother you with the rest if you don't want to hear it. I've probably depressed you enough. *(He curls up and begins to turn away.)*

DANIELLE: Cameron, I wouldn't keep asking about it if I didn't want to know. When I said safe space, I meant it. Your coming out stories stay between you and me.

CAMERON: You sure?

DANIELLE: Very sure.

*CAMERON takes a deep breath before continuing.*

CAMERON: Well, I kept the short haircut and then came the classic "Are you a boy or a girl?" question that any prepubescent 'girl' with short hair gets. I don't know what was weirder, getting asked or hesitating to answer girl. Each time I got asked it, and I got asked it a lot, I felt weirder and weirder about answering girl. And it bothered me a lot too. That's such a basic question, boy or girl, the second question on any questionnaire after your name and the first question any stranger asks about a baby when the parent hasn't properly color coded it.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, we do color code our babies. So weird.

CAMERON: I hate it but any way. And then you start to notice everywhere, everything is asking you "Boy or girl?" It's fine when you're cisgendered and you've never had trouble coming up with the answer. But when you do start to wonder . . . Bathrooms? Clothes shopping?

Every questionnaire or answer sheet? "Boy or girl?" (*Gets up, revealing that he's not really injured*) And then, one time, someone asked if I wanted a burrito, that's all, just a burrito. And I turned around and screamed, "I'm a boy, goddammit!" I had been holding my pee for an hour trying to figure out which bathroom to use so I was a bit stressed out. But I had said it. I was a boy. Am a boy. I am a boy.

DANIELLE: Well, that's one way to come out. And when did the . . . boy burrito incident happen?

CAMERON: The last time I was here, near the end of camp. (*Starts pacing*) It went so much better last year, even though I winced every time someone called me a she. But at least they weren't calling me it or shemale. At least I could use the bathroom without girls refusing to shower when I'm in there. Last year, I could pretend to fit in with my cabin mates and sometimes say the right things. I can't be around anyone anymore because women think I'm a dyke and men think I'm a faggot. God, why the fuck did I come out?

DANIELLE: I know, coming out can be very difficult.

CAMERON: No, you don't know, you don't understand! Straight people don't understand what-

DANIELLE: Cameron, I'm bi.

CAMERON: You- what?

DANIELLE: Yeah, I'm queer, just like you.

CAMERON: No, wait, really?

DANIELLE: Yeah, I haven't known as long as you, took me till middle school to figure it out, but yeah. I'm part of the rainbow too.

CAMERON: There's been another queer person here this whole time?

DANIELLE: Oh, plenty of the counselors are queer, we're at an arts camp.

CAMERON: Did you have a hard time coming out?

DANIELLE: Not as hard as you, no one ever called me it or shemale. And bathrooms aren't really a problem. Though locker rooms can get awkward. But, you know, you're constantly coming out to people and it's never easy.

CAMERON: Did you have a boy burrito incident?

DANIELLE: (*She laughs.*) Yeah, a little bit. (*CAMERON looks at her eagerly, waiting for her to tell him.*) Alright, so as I got older, I started hanging out with girls more, stopped trying to be cool by being a tomboy, you know? But it got weird sometimes because all they wanted to do

was talk about boys. Well, one time at lunch, everyone's going around the table telling what they like about boys, like their shoulders or their arms or their eyes and I'm just zoned out, checking out the girl across from me. So when they come to me, I accidentally answered, "their boobs."

CAMERON: So, I'm not weird, right? All of us queer people have trouble with this?

DANIELLE: Yes. Some more than others but yeah.

*CAMERON suddenly hugs her.*

DANIELLE: Oh!

CAMERON: Does it get better?

DANIELLE: Yes, it really does.

RHIANNON: *(Off stage)* I got it! It took me forever but I found the first aid kit!

DANIELLE: Oh, um. *(They stop hugging and she looks at CAMERON standing up just fine)*

*CAMERON suddenly and overdramatically falls down, clutching his knee.*

DANIELLE: Um, give it to me. I think he'd prefer if I took care of him.

*CAMERON gives her a thumbs up.*

*RHIANNON comes on stage, holding the med kit, with a confused look on her face. She looks at CAMERON and looks at DANIELLE.*

RHIANNON: Oh, you're going tell me everything when you get back to the cabin.

*RHIANNON hands her the med kit and exits.*

DANIELLE: Thanks! *(To CAMERON)* Okay, I'm gonna, like, put a bandage around your knee and we should be good, okay? *(Begins haphazardly wrapping his knee.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-K with me.

DANIELLE: Oh, are we back to the sign language?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, I'm sorry.

DANIELLE: Well, thank you for telling me your story, Cameron. I appreciate you opening up to me. *(Finishes bandaging)* Now, let's get out of this damn forest.

*The light begin to dim but do not completely fade to black as DANIELLE helps CAMERON up and she supports him as he fake limps out of the forest.*

## Scene Five

*During the storytelling part, overlapping, interrupted or simultaneous lines help bring realism and a sense of spontaneity to the scene. A bit of improv is encouraged.*

*Lights up on DANIELLE's cabin with inside and just outside it viewable. Inside, NIKKI, SELENA, GABBY, CAMERON are getting settled for bed. The scene begins when DANIELLE is well into doing highs and hopes.*

DANIELLE: Alright, now I know you three had a rough day but you can't avoid sharing your highs and hopes for today forever. Selena, how about you go first?

SELENA: My high is that I'm not going home early and still getting to go to the dance.

DANIELLE: That is certainly a positive. Do you have a hope?

SELENA: I'm kinda excited about my twenty dates to the dance and seeing how many of them are going to buy me flowers.

DANIELLE: Twenty? Twenty dates?

SELENA: Don't worry, most of them are my friends who couldn't get dates but a few of them are boys that I'm hoping will follow me around like puppies all night.

DANIELLE: And that's your hope? Puppy boys?

SELENA: And flowers from the puppy boys.

DANIELLE: Oh okay then. Sure. And what about you Gabby? Do you have a high for today?

GABBY: I discovered I can put my legs behind my head and walk around on my hands. Wanna see?

DANIELLE: Maybe when I'm less likely to get nightmares. And do you-

GABBY: I hope Cameron has a good time for the last few days.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's very nice of you Gabby.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Thank you.

GABBY: I like food too! How did you know?

DANIELLE: That means thank you, Gabby.

GABBY: Food is a good way of showing thanks, you're right.

DANIELLE: Okay then. Nikki, you're up.

NIKKI: Can I share a low?

DANIELLE: No, it's gotta be a high, a highlight of your day.

NIKKI: My high is nothing. Nothing was good about my day.

DANIELLE: Nothing? Absolutely nothing?

NIKKI: Yup.

DANIELLE: Alright, how about a hope, something you hope will be better than nothing?

NIKKI: That camp will be over in three days.

DANIELLE: Okay, I think we need to have a talk.

NIKKI: We are talking. Right now.

DANIELLE: Let's go outside the cabin for a bit.

NIKKI: Alright but it's on you if these guys try and ritually sacrifice each other while we're gone.

*DANIELLE and NIKKI exit the cabin but are still on stage.*

DANIELLE: Is there something you want to tell me?

NIKKI: No.

DANIELLE: Anything you want to get off your chest?

NIKKI: Nope.

DANIELLE: Alright, what happened when you had your meeting with Gina?

NIKKI: Why do you care?

DANIELLE: I'm worried about the fact that absolutely nothing was good about your day. That's pretty concerning, Nikki.

NIKKI: You know what happened.

DANIELLE: Not everything, not your side of things.

NIKKI: I was an asshole and I deserved it.

DANIELLE: Is that what Gina said?

NIKKI: That's what everyone says.

DANIELLE: But I want to know why you were . . . not such a nice person.

NIKKI: I don't know, maybe I wanted to get sent home.

DANIELLE: Are you disappointed you didn't go home early?

NIKKI: Kinda, if I did I wouldn't have to live with that thing.

DANIELLE: Nikki, really, after all that has happened you're still going to dehumanize Cameron like that?

NIKKI: How am I supposed to react, huh?

DANIELLE: With the kindness and respect you'd show any human being.

NIKKI: But it's- she's-he's not just any human being! I thought he was just a weird girl when I met it-him and then it—he turns out not to be a girl and I just don't get it. It's weird, okay? It's really weird.

DANIELLE: You called him a he. Or tried to at least.

NIKKI: Because Gina told me to respect his pronouns or I won't get to go to the dance.

DANIELLE: Oh, you're trying because you have to, not because you want to.

NIKKI: Yes. I still don't like it-him.

DANIELLE: Is that all that happened in the meeting?

NIKKI: She made Cameron apologize for punching me but I know it's not really sorry. Why would it-he be?

DANIELLE: Maybe he's sorry for you hurting you like you're sorry for hurting him.

NIKKI: I'm not sorry.

DANIELLE: You're not? You said you deserved it.

NIKKI: Doesn't mean I'm sorry. He was mean to me first-

DANIELLE: Well-

NIKKI: It-he was! Every time I said something that made it even a little uncomfortable it'd jump down my throat. But it-he makes me uncomfortable all the time! But I'm not allowed to tell it that it-he's NCA and to go away. I didn't know what else to do.

DANIELLE: It was a very difficult situation to be in, I can see that. But you still could've respected him as a person. And you still can.

NIKKI: I don't know. This is not what I expected camp to be like.

DANIELLE: I doubt this is how Cameron expected camp to be like either.

NIKKI: He ruined my time here.

DANIELLE: And I'm sure he hasn't had the best time here either.

NIKKI: And it's my fault, isn't it?

DANIELLE: I didn't say that. You both could have been better to each other. You both made mistakes.

NIKKI: Yeah, I guess so.

DANIELLE: Okay, I want the rest of your time here-

NIKKI: All three days of it-

DANIELLE: Okay, the next three days to be better. So how about we make a deal?

NIKKI: Another deal? I already made one with Gina and it's hard enough.

DANIELLE: You'll like this one, I promise.

NIKKI: Okay, what?

DANIELLE: You'll do more than call Cameron by the correct pronouns, you'll try and understand him.

NIKKI: What? I don't want to be friends with it-him.

DANIELLE: Just understand him, that's all Nikki. And in exchange, I'll be easier on you and not jump down your throat every time you say something inappropriate. How's that?

NIKKI: That's . . . not bad actually. Alright, deal.

*They head back into the cabin.*

DANIELLE: So, do you have a new high?

NIKKI: I hope to have a good time at the dance and get more dates than Selena!

DANIELLE: What about- oh , nevermind. Sorry about that guys. Anyway, Cameron, you gonna share your highs and hopes?

*CAMERON hands her a piece of paper with his highs and hopes written on it.*

DANIELLE: Do you mind if I read these out?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, please read it.

DANIELLE: I think that's a yes. Okay, so Cameron's high is, oh, uh, getting to kiss Olivia.

NIKKI: Woah, it got a kiss? I mean, sorry, right, the agreement, he. He got a kiss.

SELENA: Hey, that's totally NCA. Not fair!

DANIELLE: Well, a high is a high, even if it's NCA.

NIKKI: In that case, I might have a different hope than the one I mentioned.

DANIELLE: Um, so, Cameron's hope is . . . love. Just love.

GABBY: Aww!

NIKKI: Ugh.

DANIELLE: That's really sweet Cameron. Thank you for sharing. Thank you all for sharing.

*The campers start settling into bed and curling up with their blankets.*

DANIELLE: I actually have just one more thing, ladies.

NIKKI: *(whining)* Aw, really?

DANIELLE: Well, I have something fun planned, to take your minds off the rough day we all had.

GABBY: Are you going to sing us a song?

DANIELLE: Um, no, I can't sing. But, I can tell you a bed time story.

NIKKI: A bedtime story?

GABBY: A bedtime story!

DANIELLE: And all of you are going to help me write it!

SELENA: Huh?

*CAMERON holds up a piece of paper with some words on it.*

DANIELLE: *(reading it)* Yes, Cameron, it's going to be like Mad Libs. I'm going to create a, you know, framework of a story but you guys are going to fill in the details.

GABBY: Can it be about penguins?

DANIELLE: Do they sing but the main one tap dances? Because I think I've heard this before.

GABBY: No. Penguins don't sing. They just eat fish and swim.

DANIELLE: I was thinking something a little more, you know, exciting.

GABBY: Sometime they get eaten by sea lions.

DANIELLE: So, once upon a time-

NIKKI: A sea lion ate Gabby-

DANIELLE: Nikki, remember that this is like Mad Libs. I will ask for all of you to give suggestions when the story calls for it. Okay? Until then, please listen and think of ideas for when I ask for them.

NIKKI: Okay, okay, sorry. That was . . . disrespectful.

DANIELLE: Thank you, Nikki. Where was I? Oh yes, once upon a time there lived a large, mysterious creature at the bottom of a lake at a summer camp.

SELENA: Oh my God, is that why we can't swim in the lake? I thought it was the leeches!

DANIELLE: Selena, what did I say about interrupting?

SELENA: Oops! Sorry.

DANIELLE: Any way, this creature lived in a lake that was . . . *(She gestures at the kids to give suggestions)*

SELENA: Gross and slimy!

NIKKI: Full of seaweed!

GABBY: Sparkled like a diamond!



DANIELLE: Sparkly but full of gross plants that the creature would hide in. Campers were drawn to the shine of the lake but learned to stay away when they were told what was in the lake. They were told there was . . . (*Gestures again for suggestions*) what in the lake?

SELENA: Lots of water?

CAMERON *holds up a sign with a suggestion.*

DANIELLE: Vicious fish! They were told to avoid the vicious fish in the lake. The children became afraid to even go near the water and the sea creature used to like hearing them play. Oh, shoot, I forgot, what is the sea creature's name?

NIKKI: It has a name?

DANIELLE: What's *his* name?

SELENA: Oh! Oh! How about Billy Bob?

GABBY: Jean-Baptiste de Franco . . . the third.

DANIELLE: Um, Bob, let's go with Bob the sea creature. So, uh, Bob got very lonely when he couldn't see or hear the children any more so at night he would . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

NIKKI: Do bad impressions of the counselors!

SELENA: Yodel!

CAMERON *holds up another suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: He'd yodel and recite bad poetry-

GABBY: That angsty campers left on the beach!

DANIELLE: I like that, that's what he would recite from the lake. Eventually, this became too much for the campers. The first brave camper went down to the beach and . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

GABBY: Did an interpretive dance to the poetry.

NIKKI: Threw rocks into the water and yelled insults.

DANIELLE: A camper named Nikki threw rocks into the water and told Bob to shut up.

NIKKI: Hey! I wouldn't do that!

DANIELLE: It's a story, Nikki.

NIKKI: Fine.

DANIELLE: The next brave camper tried to defeat the terrible poetry by . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

CAMERON *holds up a sign for a suggestion.*

SELENA: By correcting his grammar.

DANIELLE: A brave camper named Selena shouted corrections and constructive criticism at the lake but it did not stop Bob. At last, on the third to last night of camp, one brave camper named . . . *(gestures for suggestion)*

GABBY: Danielle!

SELENA: Yeah, Danielle as a camper.

DANIELLE: Oh, um, okay, brave camper Danielle ventured into the water because no other camper would. She hacked her way through the seaweed with a . . .

*CAMERON holds up a suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: A butter knife? Hmmm . . .

NIKKI: A machete?

GABBY: A spork!

DANIELLE: A spork it is! She hacked with her mighty spork through the concealing seaweed, breathing through her extremely long straw. After hacking and hacking, she found poor lonely Bob. She nearly turned back because . . . *(Gestures for suggestion)*

NIKKI: He was weird looking?

*CAMERON holds up a suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: Because she was so surprised that he looked like a normal boy, just a bit greener. But she persisted. She went right up to Bob and caressed his . . . *(gestures)*

SELENA: Right ear!

GABBY: Inside his nostrils!

DANIELLE: She went right up to him and stuck her finger in his nose and whispered gently in his ear the words he had always wanted to hear . . . *(gestures)*

GABBY: I love you!

NIKKI: You smell like feet!

DANIELLE: She lovingly whispered to him, "You smell like feet" which Bob had been waiting all his life to hear. With someone who finally understood him, Bob agreed to stop keeping them up at night if Danielle would come and talk to him at least once a day. And both sea creature and campers lived happily ever after.

GABBY: Aw, yay for Bob. I'm glad someone went and talked to him. It's probably hard being a sea creature.

DANIELLE: I'd think so, Gabby.

SELENA: Now time for bed?

DANIELLE: Yes, yes. Get all comfy and I'll turn off the lights.

CAMERON: *(In ASL while holding a sign translation)* Good night.

DANIELLE: Goodnight ladies . . . and gentleman.

*She turns off the lights.*

*End of play.*

Rough Draft of

Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers

By J.J. Davis

Completed: February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

This was first version of the completed script, given to cast and crew members during the initial stages of rehearsals. During the first two weeks of working with the cast, Steve and I met to work on ways to improve and change the script. The edits we made became what was seen on stage and what I put in here as "Final Draft". This rough draft is included to show what work was put into the editing process.

## Scene One

*DANIELLE enters the cabin, wearing a uniform that identifies her as a camp counselor at Camp White Lake and LAURA, already in the room and changed into her pajamas, doesn't look up from her bed. DANIELLE is trying to keep it together but begins sobbing once she reaches her bed. LAURA, on her bed with her computer, looks up and doesn't know what to do. DANIELLE starts crying harder when she tries to stop and LAURA goes back to writing on her computer. ELLIE and RHIANNON's voices are heard off stage as they approach the cabin. They enter, both also in Camp White Lake counselor uniforms, with ELLIE holding a pizza box. Their conversation stops when they see DANIELLE crying.*

RHIANNON: Oh no.

ELLIE: Oh, sweetie, this puts the mandatory in mandatory fun night. Come, sit on the communal yoga mat.

DANIELLE: *(Through tears)* You sure? You haven't even done your yoga.

ELLIE: It's not yoga time yet, it's cheer Danielle up time.

RHIANNON: And, dude, Ellie stole pizza for our mandatory counselor fun night.

ELLIE: Just say McFinn, hun. It's a lot easier.

*ELLIE opens the pizza to reveal half a cold pizza. DANIELLE slinks off the bed and takes a piece to nibble on. ELLIE and RHIANNON join her on the mat while LAURA watches awkwardly.*

ELLIE: Alright, what can we do to make you feel better? We could meditate or . . . drink some nice tea or . . . go star gazing or . . .

DANIELLE: *(Pauses to finish chewing)* Could you make all my bad campers disappear?

RHIANNON: *(Puts on a deep voice)* There are ways . . . ways of making them pay. *(She pretends to crack her knuckles)*

ELLIE: Rhiannon, don't go beating up her campers.

RHIANNON: Why not? *(Get up and moves towards the door)*

DANIELLE: You're joking, right?

RHIANNON: Mostly. One of them did look at me funny the other day.

DANIELLE: One of them has a twitch.

RHIANNON: Oh.

ELLIE: Honey, why are your campers making you cry?

DANIELLE: They're just such little *(Starts to cry again)* little - little-

RHIANNON: (*Coming over to get a piece of pizza*) Shits?

DANIELLE: Yes! And not just to me, to each other. And they don't seem to understand "That's not camp appropriate" means shut the fuck up! I swear, I lost count of how many times I had to say "Not Camp Appropriate, Not Camp Appropriate, NCA!" at breakfast. And then it just got worse from there. The shittiest of the shits are bullying my favorite camper because he has the nerve to tell them to stop being not camp appropriate. Bullying! In my cabin! At least it's not my night to sleep in the cabin. I needed to be with you guys.

RHIANNON: Oh is that the "boy" camper?

DANIELLE: The trans-camper, yes.

ELLIE: I thought you said Cameron was doing okay.

DANIELLE: He was, despite his laundry list of special needs. I just found out today what's been going on when my co-counselor is watching them.

RHIANNON: Ugh, she's so creepy.

DANIELLE: Creepy?

RHIANNON: Dude, so totally creepy, she's *always* smiling, like a broken beauty pageant queen or something. I bet she even smiles when she's angry.

ELLIE: Are you talking about Jackie? I love Jackie! How could Jackie be doing to make you upset, sweetie? She's such a lovely person.

DANIELLE: (*Starts to get upset*) They love her! More than they'll ever love me. And it's because she's a broken beauty pageant queen or whatever. She's like . . . like cotton that's just come out of the dyer. She's all warm and fluffy and her smile makes you smile. And I just can't compete with that.

RHIANNON: Nu-uh, her smiles don't make me smile; they make me want to run away.

DANIELLE: They love her so much that they actually behave for her and then tell NCA stories when neither of us are in the cabin. Or when they think I'm not listening. Maybe if I was more like Jackie, more like warm, fluffy cotton, maybe they'd-

ELLIE: Have you tried talking to her and seeing what she does differently? It might not be you, hun, it might be something you're doing.

DANIELLE: Are you saying I'm a bad counselor? What the hell, Ellie?

RHIANNON: Danielle, that's not what she's saying and you know it, man.

ELLIE: We're both just trying to help you, hun.

DANIELLE: Well, this is the part where you say, "We love you for who you are," and, "It's okay that you're not like Jackie."

RHIANNON: Hell no, please don't be like Jackie. I'd start having to sleep with one eye open.

ELLIE: Of course you're not Jackie. You're you and that's okay.

DANIELLE: Okay? Only okay?

ELLIE: *We love you. We appreciate you. (She hugs DANIELLE.)*

LAURA: You're a stream.

DANIELLE: What?

LAURA: You're not warm, fluffy cotton, you're a stream. No one fears or respects the stream because they think it is gentle and sweet until it rains and it swells and covers everything. But a stream doesn't have to flood to make a difference. Streams cut through forests and smooth rocks and it is a force. A simple force but a force nonetheless. You are — I tried. I just wanted- I didn't know what to say when you came in crying and-

DANIELLE: No, that's great. I am a stream.

RHIANNON: Hell yeah! The mighty river Danielle! Don't piss her off by telling NCA stories or she'll drown you in her fury!

LAURA: That's not what I-

ELLIE: We got it. It was a lovely metaphor, hun. John Green would be proud. Come join us on the yoga mat, Laura, and eat some pizza.

LAURA: Do you have plain cheese?

DANIELLE: Oh, um. *(She pauses in the middle of eating her piece of cheese pizza)* This was the only piece. I can pull the pepperonis off one for you.

LAURA: No thanks. *(Joins them on the mat any way)*

RHIANNON: Dudes, we've got pizza, we've got Danielle to stop crying. You know what we need?

ELLIE: Cuddles and sex?

DANIELLE: These campers to leave?

RHIANNON: Yes *(Points to ELLIE)* and no *(Points to DANIELLE)*. It's camper story time and I call firsts. Okay, so you know that annoying, little brat? The one I complain about all the time?

DANIELLE: You're gonna have to be more specific, they're all brats.

ELLIE: My cabin is lovely, they had a hair braiding party last night and-

DANIELLE: Could you not?

ELLIE: Honey, they're not all awful.

DANIELLE: I know, I know. I just, you know.

RHIANNON: Hey, hello!

ELLIE: Tell your story, sweetie, I wanna hear it.

RHIANNON: Dude, you will not believe how gross this camper is. Oh man does she not only drive me fucking nuts every time she whines, I noticed today how stringy her hair looks. So stringy, that I think she hasn't showered since she's been here.

LAURA: For six days?

RHIANNON: I'm pretty damn sure because her hair was as greasy as the pizza you're eating.

*DANIELLE drops her pizza with horror.*

RHIANNON: Man, I had to tell her to shower, for fuck's sake!-but in a nice way. Because I'm pretty sure that annoying, little brat has never been disciplined in her life, since she fucking cried when I told her to put on her shoes faster. So I try the bullshit, empathetic counselor approach by saying, "I sometimes forget to shower," and, "I wonder when the last time she showered was."

ELLIE: Oh no, did she start crying?

RHIANNON: Oh boy, does she. But it doesn't end there. After about a minute of her crying, she starts wiping her tears all over her face.

DANIELLE: Oh my God.

RHIANNON: And through her sobbing, she manages to tell me, "I r-read on t-tumblr that tears a-are good for y-your skiiiiiiin." I can't take it anymore so I snap at her, "It's your hair! It's your hair that gave it away! Go take a shower *right now!*" Without a break in her crying, she picks up her towel and starts walking out. "With soap and shampoo," I command before she can get out the door and she gets the stuff and leaves. Then, the one other camper in the cabin at the time pipes up with, "Is it true? What she said about tears?" And I spin around, give her the vilest eye I have ever evil-ed and say, "Don't. You. Dare." So that was the highlight of my day.

ELLIE: Your campers must be terrified of you.

RHIANNON: Hell no, dude, they adore me. They think I'm hilarious. Even the annoying, little brat laughs at my jokes when she isn't crying because I told her to do something.

LAURA: One of my campers ran away and pooped in the woods.

RHIANNON: Shit, you win.



DANIELLE: Oh my God, that was *your* camper?

ELLIE: Oh goodness, please don't tell me it was . . . um-

RHIANNON: Cat Ears?

LAURA: Her name is Christina, she just happens to wear cat ears.

RHIANNON: Everywhere. And pee herself on purpose. And now she's pooping in the woods.

DANIELLE: Do you think she pooped outside because she thinks the world is her litter box?

ELLIE: Maybe she actually identifies as a cat and-

RHIANNON: Dude, Ellie, have you ever owned a cat? Not even real, non-human cats run away and shit in the woods.

DANIELLE: Wait, what's the rest of the story? Oh my God, did you have to go clean up cat shit?

*(They all look at LAURA, expectantly.)*

LAURA: *(Sighs)* Yeah.

RHIANNON: Holy shit! No pun intended.

ELLIE: Was this before or after the lost camper search for cat- Christina.

LAURA: After.

RHIANNON: *(Can't hold back her laughter any more)* Holy fuck! You had to go on a lost poop search after your lost cat search? *(She cackles.)* Holy motherfucking shit, that's fantastic! *(She pulls herself together when she notices LAURA glaring at her.)* I mean, that's a fantastic story. For you to tell later.

DANIELLE: Okay, so is it true that Cat Ears-

LAURA: Christina-

DANIELLE: Um, Christina got frustrated during one of her choir classes and peed herself on purpose?

LAURA: That story is going around? Great.

ELLIE: Yeah, I've had to tell my cabin several times to stop talking about it.

DANIELLE: Is she getting bullied by the other campers?

LAURA: Not really. Mostly they're too afraid to talk to her. Except the one other goth girl.

ELLIE: At least she has friends.

RHIANNON: Oh yeah man, Goth Girl is in my cabin. The other day she, totally fucking serious, asked me, "Why is life death?"

ELLIE: What did you tell her?

RHIANNON: Dude, if being a camp counselor has taught me anything, it's if you don't have anything camp appropriate to say, say nothing at all.

LAURA: I'll trade you, Rhiannon.

DANIELLE: I'll trade you my entire cabin for Christina.

ELLIE: Are they really that bad, Danielle?

DANIELLE: Did I not tell you guys the worst part? They've bullied Cameron so badly that he's chosen to stop speaking.

RHIANNON: Dude, what, how?

DANIELLE: Apparently one of the times that he spoke up, they told him that no one cares what he has to say. So he's decided to no longer say anything at all. The only way I could get him to tell me was by getting him to write it down.

LAURA: Better to be mute than misunderstood. Wow.

DANIELLE: It's so fucking frustrating!

ELLIE: Danielle, we know. It's hard to stop bullying, you can't always be there and-

DANIELLE: No, Ellie, I mean Cameron. For three days he's been signing or mouthing words or whatever at me and then he gets mad at me when I don't understand. We used to talk about our favorite authors and bounce story ideas off each other and now he has to write down every stupid sentence after repeating it at me in sign language for five minutes.

ELLIE: Maybe you could learn some sign language, try to speak to him on his terms or-

DANIELLE: I've tried, I really have. I just, you know. I'm just tired.

ELLIE: Sweetie, don't give up yet.

RHIANNON: Dude, no. I swear to fuck you are not giving up on this camper.

DANIELLE: But, Rhiannon, I-

RHIANNON: Dude, tell me, do you know how long it took for the twin towers to come down?

DANIELLE: Are you comparing me to terrorists?

RHIANNON: No man, just tell me, do you know?

DANIELLE: No, I don't know.

RHIANNON: Less than fifteen seconds. Do you know how long it takes to burn down a dorm room?

DANIELLE: Um, no.

RHIANNON: Less than five minutes. Do you know how long it takes to destroy someone's self-esteem?

DANIELLE: Some allotted amount of time?

RHIANNON: Two and half weeks at summer camp.

LAURA: Oh, I see what you're doing.

RHIANNON: Look, man. It is easier to destroy something than create something and it's a hell of a lot less time consuming. It would take less time to burn the Mona Lisa than it did to paint it and it will take moments of you letting that camper down for you to destroy his trust. When I was here, my cabin counselor gave up on me so don't you fucking dare be that counselor.

DANIELLE: Okay, I get it. I'll . . . do something. I don't know.

RHIANNON: It'll mean everything to him, I promise.

ELLIE: I think you could-

LAURA: *(Checking her phone)* Hey, looks like all of girl's side is having an official MCFN.

*(Everyone else checks their phones.)*

RHIANNON: Fuck yeah! Maybe they have something better than cold pizza. No offense, Ellie but I totally in the mood for s'mores.

ELLIE: None taken, let's go!

DANIELLE: I didn't get an invite.

RHIANNON: No way! *(RHIANNON grabs DANIELLE's phone and looks through it.)* No way, how could they forget you?

DANIELLE: They probably remembered to invite Jackie.

RHIANNON: Those shitheads.

ELLIE: Hey. *(She hugs DANIELLE as she starts to cry again.)* We were already having our own awesome MCFN, we don't need them to keep having one.

DANIELLE: B-but Rhiannon wanted s'mores.

RHIANNON: It's cool, we'll make poor man s'mores, I did it while I was at camp. Got a lighter?

DANIELLE: No.

*(RHIANNON, ELLIE and LAURA all pull out their lighters at the same time.)*

DANIELLE: No, guys, we'll burn the cabin down.

ELLIE: I'll be right back. *(She leaves.)*

DANIELLE: Is she going to tell them that we're not coming?

RHIANNON: I think she's ninja-ing us some supplies.

*(A few seconds later, ELLIE returns with graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows.)*

ELLIE: Ta-da! I had to be super sneaky but I got them for you. *(She pulls out a marshmallow and hands it to DANIELLE with her lighter.)* The trick is to not burn your fingers.

*(DANIELLE cautiously tries "roasting" the marshmallow over the small flame while LAURA and RHIANNON grab marshmallows and do the same. ELLIE makes chocolate and graham cracker sandwiches.)*

ELLIE: Rhiannon, don't set yours on fire.

RHIANNON: How'd you know that I like mine burnt to a crisp?

DANIELLE: *(Makes her s'more and takes a bite.)* It tastes like butane. *(She laughs)* They're the best s'mores I've ever had.

*(LAURA burns her fingers and drops her marshmallow.)*

LAURA: Fuck shit tits!

RHIANNON: Damn, and I thought I had the potty mouth.

ELLIE: Told you not burn your fingers. *(She hands her another marshmallow)*

LAURA: I wasn't trying to.

RHIANNON: *(Pops the marshmallow in her mouth)* Mmm, butane and friendship.

DANIELLE: Are you sure it's okay?

RHIANNON: Are you kidding? This is awesome! We're breaking so many fire codes just to crappily burn some marshmallows to spend time with each other rather than those assholes out there. I'd rather nearly burn down our cabin with you guys any day.

LAURA: Me too.

ELLIE: You know I think the world of you, Danielle. Now give me back my lighter, I want one.

LAURA: *(Eats hers)* It tastes like . . . fire. Like how sometimes you have to destroy something to make something new. We burn these marshmallows- *(They all give her a look.)* Okay, it tastes like butane but I still want three more.

*(They continue to make them as the lights dim to near darkness, the flames shining brighter than the stage lights before each lighter is turned off one by one. End of scene.)*

## Scene Two

*The next morning, DANIELLE sits surrounded by campers, all wearing Camp White Lake camp uniforms that vary by color, at a cafeteria table. She sits between CAMERON and NIKKI and NIKKI talks to her friends, SELENA and GABBY, who sit on her right. CAMERON is reading a sign language book and practicing various signs.*

NIKKI: . . . And I said to the teacher, "What is that, meth? Are you secretly a drug dealer?"

SELENA: Oh my God, that's hilarious.

DANIELLE: Nikki, that's not camp appropriate.

NIKKI: It wasn't meth, though. That's the joke.

DANIELLE: Nikki, I'm sure you can find ways of being funny without being NCA.

NIKKI: But those are my best stories. Why can't I tell them?

DANIELLE: We've been over this. Camp is a place where we want everyone to feel comfortable so we avoid things that might make people uncomfortable. Like jokes about teachers dealing drugs.

SELENA: The only one that's uncomfortable is the Shemale over there.

DANIELLE: Selena! His name is Cameron and you should respect him like any of your other cabin mates.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Please stop talking about me like I'm not here.

DANIELLE: Um, Cameron, I don't know what that means. I'm so sorry.

*CAMERON looks for something to write with but finds only a pen, no paper, in his pocket. He writes on his hand "Stop" and shows it to DANIELLE.*

DANIELLE: Stop? Me?

GABBY: What a freak.

*CAMERON reaches across DANIELLE to show NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY what's on his hand.*

NIKKI: We're not going to stop talking because you stopped talking, weirdo.

DANIELLE: I think he means stop talking about him.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, thank you.

DANIELLE: Wait. *(She imitates the sign for yes)* That means yes, right?

*CAMERON nods his head in response.*

DANIELLE: Yes. Ladies, stop talking about Cameron, especially in such a horrible way. He might expressive himself differently than you but that is no reason to bully him. There are so many other things for you guys to talk about. Like, um, who's excited for the camper dance?

NIKKI: Ew. We can't even kiss our dates.

SELENA: Why would you want to kiss your date? Boys are terrible kissers.

GABBY: How would you know?

SELENA: How do you think I know?

NIKKI: Ooooo! Tell us everything. Did he put his tongue in your mouth?

DANIELLE: NCA! So NCA! No one at the table wants to hear about that, especially when we're about to eat.

NIKKI: I wanna know.

DANIELLE: *I don't want to think about tongues in anybody's mouths.*

GABBY: You have a tongue in your mouth. It just happens to be your tongue.

DANIELLE: *(turning to Cameron)* So, what's that book you've got there?

*CAMERON lifts the book so DANIELLE can read the cover.*

DANIELLE: Oh, a sign language book. That's cool. Learn any cool signs?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes.

DANIELLE: Can you show me some? If you want to.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I wish people understood me.

DANIELLE: That looked cool. What does that mean?

*CAMERON writes it on his hand for her.*

DANIELLE: "I wish people understood me." Oh. Um. Well. It would probably help if you started speaking again. I know I liked talking to you about the story you were writing.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. *(He shakes his head.)*

DANIELLE: No? No what? You don't like talking to me?

*CAMERON starts to sign but writes something on his hand instead.*

DANIELLE: "Talking doesn't help. Everything I say is wrong." Oh, Cameron, that's not true.

*CAMERON returns to reading his book and practicing finger spelling.*

DANIELLE: Okay, I understand that you don't want to speak but I'd still like to interact with you. Could you maybe teach me some signs?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You want to learn to sign? *(He writes it down on his hand for her.)*

DANIELLE: "Learn to sign", yes! Can you show me how to sign my name?

NIKKI: What's the sign for control freak?

DANIELLE: Hey! Not only was that inappropriate, that was just plain mean. Next time any of you ladies say something NCA, I'm going to the head of girl's side. Now find something else to talk about.

SELENA: *(Under her breath)* Way to prove her point.

DANIELLE: Excuse me?

SELENA: Nothing, nothing at all.

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, how do I sign Danielle?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* D-A-M-I-E-L-L-E.

DANIELLE: *(In ASL)* D-A-M-I-E-L-L-E *(Out Loud)* Is that right?

CAMERON looks in the book.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No! No. D-A-N-I-E-L-L-E.

DANIELLE tries again but CAMERON corrects her when she mixes M and N again.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that could get confusing. What does Cameron look like?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* C-A-M-E-R-O-N.

DANIELLE: That's cool! You're getting really good at that. *(To the rest of the table)* Hey, ladies, do the rest of you want to learn how to sign your name?

GABBY: Like in cursive? I learned that in fourth grade.

NIKKI: No, stupid, like in sign language. Danielle is trying to get us to talk to it.

DANIELLE: By it I hope you're not referring to Cameron over here.

NIKKI: Sorry, honest mistake, "Cameron". Hey, I never asked, what's your real name? Could you show us that in sign language?

CAMERON flips NIKKI off.

DANIELLE: Cameron!

NIKKI: Aw, that's pretty. You should have kept it and stayed a girl. Though, looking at you now, you probably made an ugly girl.

DANIELLE: Both of you! I'm already sitting between you two but if that is not enough to get you to behave, I'm sure the head can find a more drastic solution.

NIKKI: Alright, what's my name in sign language?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-I-T-C-H.

SELENA: Oh. (*Signing and speaking each letter out loud*) B-I-T-C-H? I'm pretty sure that's not how you spell Nikki, shemale. That's right, I know how to finger spell so don't try that stuff with me.

DANIELLE: Cameron, why would you do that? You know I'm going to have to report this to the head of girl's side now.

NIKKI: Maybe we should take a page out its book and start talking about stuff in another language. Then we can talk about whatever we want!

DANIELLE: Nikki, please! Just ignore each other and talk about camp appropriate stuff until we're dismissed for breakfast. Okay? Can you make it that long without making a sex joke?

GABBY: Ooooooh, counselor said the word sex!

DANIELLE: Seriously, five minutes, that's all I ask of you three.

NIKKI: Fine, deal.

DANIELLE: Thank you. Cameron, there are better ways of reacting to bullying than bullying right back. Maybe we can figure out some together.

CAMERON: (*In ASL*) Why? (*He writes something on his hand.*)

DANIELLE: I never said you have to be nice to them. I'm paid to be nice, even if they aren't.

I'm going to tell you a secret, Cameron, that most adults won't tell you. You have no reason to be nice to those that aren't nice to you.

CAMERON writes something else down.

DANIELLE: Well, that's what we need to figure out, isn't it. You can't go around flipping people off when you're mad because it's easier than talking to them. Unless someone cuts you off on the road. You're always allowed to flip someone off if they cut you off.

CAMERON: (*In ASL*) You've flipped people off?

DANIELLE: Oh believe me, plenty of people have seen my middle finger by itself. But not at camp. Camp White Lake is not a place for such signals.

NIKKI: Woah, wait, what are you saying to it? Because it sounds like you're telling it to be mean to us after telling us not to be mean. Are you serious right now?

DANIELLE: Actually, we're talking about how annoying it is when someone cuts you off on the road. Do you drive yet, Nikki?

NIKKI: If I did, do you think I'd still be here in this shiiiiii- shindig? This shindig.

DANIELLE: Nice save.



GABBY: One time, my mom named her car Ophelia, because she loves Shakespeare, and then she accidentally drove it into a lake. She's okay but Ophelia drowned.

DANIELLE: Oh my God! Hopefully she learned her lesson with her new car.

GABBY: She named it Desdemona!

DANIELLE: Jesus Christ.

GABBY: No, she named it Desdemona, not Jesus.

SELENA: Now I know where you get your brilliance from, Gabby.

GABBY: Aw, thank you! But I think I gain more wisdom from my mom than her cars.

NIKKI: Oh, wow.

DANIELLE: So, Gabby, your art here at camp is painting and what not, right? What do you like to paint?

GABBY: Oh my God, I *love* painting. According to my mom, I used to even eat the paint when I was younger, that's how much I loved it!

NIKKI: That explains so much.

DANIELLE: Oh, um, that's . . . weird. Uh-

CAMERON: (*Taps DANIELLE on the shoulder and signs*) I love to draw as well as write!

DANIELLE: You . . . what? (*She repeats the sign for drawing*) Is that-

NIKKI: (*Under her breath*) Retard.

DANIELLE: Woah, Nikki, we don't use the R-word and we especially don't call people it. Ever. Even outside of camp. Not life appropriate.

NIKKI: Are you serious? You're trying to tell me what I can say even outside of camp? What the . . . heck? What am I allowed to talk about?

DANIELLE: Literally anything else. Talk about your art. Talk about your favorite TV show. Talk about your favorite kind of music. It's really not that hard.

NIKKI: Dance. Game of Thrones. Anything on the radio. Done.

DANIELLE: Your favorite show is Game of Thrones?

SELENA: Oh my God, me too!

DANIELLE: Maybe don't talk about your favorite shows.

GABBY: Mine is My Little Pony!

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, what were you saying? Or, I guess signing.

CAMERON *writes the translation on his hand.*

DANIELLE: Oh! You like drawing too. Oh, that's cool. Hey, Gabby, do you like drawing?

GABBY: No.

DANIELLE: Oh, okay then. So, Cameron, what do you like to draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love to draw people. And faces.

DANIELLE: Oh! Is that *(She does the sign for face)* the sign for face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! This the sign for face.

DANIELLE: Oh, cool! So you like to draw *(does the sign again)* faces. Have you drawn anyone at camp?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, I drew O-L-I-V-I-A. *(He pulls out a picture from the sign language book)* See?

DANIELLE: Who is this?

CAMERON *write her name at the top of the paper.*

DANIELLE: Olivia. Wow. She's very beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, she is beautiful.

DANIELLE: Is this *(She does the sign for beautiful)* beautiful?

CAMERON *nods.*

DANIELLE: *(She repeats the sign.)* Beautiful. Hey, could you draw me? Only if you want to but I've never gotten to model for an artist before.

CAMERON *turns the paper over, squints at Danielle and poses her before drawing her.*

DANIELLE: Aw man, this is so cool.

CAMERON *puts a finger to his lips.*

DANIELLE: Oh, okay, still and silent. I can do that.

SELENA: Have you ever had to, like, explain a word to someone but you don't want to explain a word to someone but they need to know what the word means?

GABBY: What?

NIKKI: I'm with her, what do you mean?

SELENA: Okay, so there was this word one time that my cousin kept using this word and he thought it meant something else but it totally meant *something else*.

NIKKI: I think I know what you mean.

GABBY: How could you use something else wrong? It just means something else.

SELENA: No, Gabby, he kept being like "Oh man, I totally bleeped and it's so bad when I bleep."

GABBY: He used the word bleep wrong?

SELENA: No the word was *(whispering)* queef.

NIKKI: Oh my God! What did he think it meant?

SELENA: He thought it meant to forget! At one point he said he queefed about his sister's birthday and then we had to tell him what it meant.

GABBY: What's queefing?

SELENA: It's, um-

NIKKI: Vagina farting.

GABBY: Oh! He vagina farted about his sister's birthday. That's hilarious.

NIKKI: You know what word I hate, more than queef?

GABBY: Stop?

SELENA: Moist?

NIKKI: Pussy. God, I hate the word pussy.

DANIELLE: *(Still posing for the picture)* You better be talking about cats.

NIKKI: That's why I hate it! It makes me think of cats! I don't want to think about cats when I think of my . . . genitalia. Cats are hairy and . . . bleh!

SELENA: Why do you think they call it a pussy?

DANIELLE: *(Still posing for the picture but struggling to.)* Don't answer that!

GABBY: Because it meows? Because it licks up milk? Oh Oh Oh! Because it spits up hairballs!

SELENA: I hope neither of yours do that.

NIKKI: Neither of mine do.

GABBY: Both of mine do! *(She giggles and then snorts.)*

DANIELLE: *(Finally stop posing)* Enough! That is enough! Why?

*None of the three girls answer.*

DANIELLE: Oh, now you stop talking? I asked you a question. Why do you do that? Why do you feel the need to talk about your vaginas at the table or discuss queefing? Why?

SELENA: I don't know.

NIKKI: Because it's funny.

DANIELLE: Really? You can't think of any jokes that don't involve inappropriate things?

NIKKI: It's the kind of jokes my friends at school like.

DANIELLE: Well you're not at school or with those friends. You're at camp with different people with different senses of humor. Not everyone finds those kinds of things funny and you never know who you're going to upset if you just speak without thinking because it might, *might* be funny. I hope you think of a better explanation than "It's funny" because I'm pretty sure the head of girl's side won't accept that answer any more than I did. *(She gets up.)*

SELENA: No, please don't get her.

DANIELLE: If you won't listen to me, then maybe you'll listen to her.

*DANIELLE exits.*

NIKKI: Oh thank fucking God, she's gone. Fuck shit dammit. Ugh.

SELENA: Yeah, she's gone to get the head of girl's side!

GABBY: Do you think she'll bring just her head or the rest of her too?

NIKKI: Jesus fucking Christ, Gabby, just go eat a can of paint.

GABBY: I was kidding, jeez.

SELENA: Nikki, we're in deep shit this time. What if she says we can't go to the pool during free time or . . . or . . . or worse, the dance!

NIKKI: Calm the fuck down, she won't do that. *(She looks in the direction of where DANIELLE left.)* Oh shit, she looks pissed.

SELENA: See?

NIKKI: Well, before she comes back, I have to ask it something.

SELENA: No, Nikki, don't make it worse.

NIKKI: Hey! Shemale! *(CAMERON ignores her.)* Hey! We were talking about pussies earlier, do you have one? You keep saying you're a boy but people in girl's cabins tend to have vaginas. So what's down there, huh?

SELENA: Don't be weird, why do you want to know that? What else would be down there?

GABBY: A cactus?

SELENA: I worry what your vagina looks like.

NIKKI: You're really a girl, aren't you? You just think pretending to be a boy will make you cool.

SELENA: Nikki . . .

NIKKI: What? Afraid that the mute is gonna snitch on us? Come on, just admit that you're just a-

*DANIELLE reenters.*

DANIELLE: Nikki, what are you doing?

NIKKI: Oh, I'm just trying to see it's drawing of you.

DANIELLE: Alright, ladies, come with me, the head of girl's side wants to speak with you.  
Come along.

*NIKKI, SELENA, and GABBY get out of their seats and exit with DANIELLE.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Bitches.

### Scene Three

*Playwright's note: A good portion of this scene takes place in American Sign Language with projected supertitles for audience members that do not speak ASL. Dialogue that is signed will be preceded by the stage direction "In ASL" but some of the dialogue is spoken aloud or written down and read out loud. It is important to keep what is spoken and what is sign as it is in the stage directions.*

*The scene takes place in the cabin with CAMERON and OLIVIA sitting on a bed as OLIVIA teaches CAMERON American Sign Language. CAMERON signs very slowly throughout the scene and signs more words than necessary. OLIVIA frequently has to slow down or repeat for him and omits more words like many native speakers do.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* This is difficult. Signing is difficult.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So is being deaf. Quit complaining.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(OLIVIA writes it down and he reads it aloud)* "Quit your bitching." Oh! Is this *(does the sign for complain)* bitch? *(Does the sign again and laughs)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Complain? No.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No? *(Out loud)* Ugh, can't you just teach me the bad words so I can swear at people without them knowing?

*OLIVIA reaches over and playfully smacks him upside the head.*

CAMERON: What's that the sign for? *(OLIVIA writes it down)* "It's Olivia for stop being an ass." *(In ASL)* Sorry, Olivia.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do ABCs.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A - B - C - D - E - F ... *(Struggles, OLIVIA shows him G)* G - H - I - J . . . um *(OLIVIA shows him K)* K - L - M - N - O ... *(out loud)* oh! It's like K! *(In ASL)* P - Q - R - S - T - U - V - W - X - Y - Z!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your name?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You know my name!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Don't be stupid. Sign your name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Oh. C-A-M-E-R-O-N.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do pronouns.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I, me, you, we, H-E, S-H-E, them, mine, your, our, their.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What are your pronouns?

CAMERON: *(Smiles and signs)* He. I am a boy.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your art, boy?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* To change minds, people.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is *your* art, Cam?

CAMERON: Oh! I thought you said - *(In ASL)* My art is drawing and writing. *(Out loud)* Oh! I've never asked you before. *(In ASL)* Your art?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Dance. *(She writes it down for him)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Wow?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How do you dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* With my body.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(She writes it down and he begins to read it out loud)*

With my- oh. *(In ASL)* J-E-R-K. *(He pauses, trying to figure out how to sign what he means.) (In ASL)* You deaf.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. I'm aware.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Deaf dance?

*(OLIVIA smacks him upside the head again.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-W! What?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Deaf people love dancing!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Are you asking me how to love? Really?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No, no I know how to love. But how do *you* dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How do *you* dance?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear --

*CAMERON writes "music" on the notepad and OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear music and dance.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Oh! I feel music. Like . . . like --

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-A-S-S?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes! Like-

*OLIVIA grabs CAMERON'S hand and puts it over her heart. CAMERON freezes and stares at her with confusion. OLIVIA bobs her head and points to her heart area. After a few more moments of fluster, CAMERON gets it. The two of them sway to the beat of OLIVIA'S heart. She releases his hand but he leaves it there for a few more seconds before removing it.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand.

*He writes "heart" on the notepad and OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Heart.

*He writes "beat" on the notepad and OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Beat. Heartbeat . . . I have a question.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Why didn't you go to a deaf camp with other deaf people? Even other deaf dancers?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why didn't you go to a boy's cabin with other boys?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Me too.

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in shock)* You're mom taught you sign language but wouldn't put you in a deaf camp? What the fuck!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Use sign language!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't know W-T-F.

*OLIVIA shows him the sign for what the fuck.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck, your mom?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* My mom doesn't know sign language.

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* What?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Sign language!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck. Who what when where how and why?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* She isn't deaf or hard of hearing so why should she bother?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm not a good enough reason.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

*OLIVIA writes down the translation*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.



*OLIVIA points to the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. Why not you?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Too much time and effort.

*OLIVIA writes down the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are good.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Okay, thank you?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are great!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Sure?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are . . . *(He gets frustrated and writes down "you are worth it".)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I am worth it?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! You are worth it!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You learned sign for yourself, not me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I S-T-A-Y for you.

*OLIVIA stares at him with confusion. CAMERON writes it down for her.*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I stay for you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool. Tell me about your mom.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't want to talk about my mom any more.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom . . . not good. Not great.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She doesn't call me Cameron.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What a bitch!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She calls me C-O-N-F-U-S-E-D.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Confused.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She thinks I'm confused. That's why she P-U-T me in a girl's cabin.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* But you're not a girl.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She still calls me her daughter.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Fuck her! Fuck your cabin! Fuck girl's side! Fuck anyone who doesn't call you C-A-M- you need a name sign.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign you can show your mom or anyone else who calls you the wrong name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A name sign?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign, a sign that is unique to you and represents you. How about I shorten your name to D-O-R-K?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* M-E-A-N-I-E. Is your name sign B-I-T-C-H?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, mine is *(She shows him her name-sign)*.

CAMERON repeats her name-sign.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W, it is you. *(He does her name-sign again.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes, it is I, Olivia. Good job.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What should I do for mine?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you like to do, besides annoy me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I what you?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Forget it. What do you do?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write and draw.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you write? What do you draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write . . . *(He writes down the words.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You write stories *(CAMERON repeats the sign)*, poetry *(CAMERON repeats the sign)* and . . . Facebook statuses?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love poetry.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* And Facebook?

CAMERON: *(Outloud)* Holy shit do I miss the internet. I miss checking- *(OLIVIA puts a hand over his mouth.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL, with her hand still over his mouth)* A-S-L.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love writing more than I-N-T-E-R-N-E-T.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Writing . . . *(She repeats the sign a couple times.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, writing.

OLIVIA does the sign for writing but with her right hand forming a C.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You *(Does the modified sign again.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Me? *(He repeats the sign and then says out loud.)* Oh! *(In ASL)* C for C-A-M-E-R-O-N and writing. W-O-W.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you like it? Or do I have to start calling you bitch face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love it. Please call me *(He does the name-sign)* not . . . that other sign.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't know, Cameron, you look like a bitch face to me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. I am Cameron. I am a boy and I am . . . *(He writes down the word "transgender")*.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Transgender.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I am transgender. I love that sign! It's like beautiful and self. Transgender is beautiful and I am beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. You are beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You think I'm beautiful? I think you're beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool . . . I think you're . . . cool. I'm not used to people saying nice things to me. I'm not used to hearing people talking to me at all.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Of course you don't understand. Hearing people don't fucking understand, even if you do talk to them in their language. You know this, this is why you don't talk any more. This is why I only speak in my language. You want to know what I like about sign language? You have to think before you sign and you have to sign what you think. None of your hearing people's subtle bullshit. Sign language is about expressing, not hiding. I'm glad I'm deaf so I don't have to hear all the horrible things you've told me you hear. I don't have to hear my mother yelling at me because she thinks I'm stupid. She's the stupid one, can't even fucking sign my language.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No you don't. But at least you try. Thank you for trying.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Because I hope you don't mind but I've fallen in love with you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You love to fall on me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love you.

*OLIVIA stares at him in confusion as an awkward silence ensues.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Do you mind?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry. I think I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry you love me. I am shit.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are beautiful and smart and funny and weird and I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You've known me for two weeks.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Each day here feels like three and every day with you is amazing. I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stop saying that. Stop lying to me.

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* I'm going to keep saying it until you believe me. *(In ASL)* I love you, Olivia. I love you. I love you. I love you!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're being ridiculous. You can't love someone you barely know.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand but I know I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Now you *know* you love me. Okay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. I know I love you. I love you!

*CAMERON starts hopping around on the bed.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in ASL)* I love you! I love you! I love you!

NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY enter the cabin as CAMERON is dancing around.

SELENA: What the fuck?

NIKKI: Oh wow, I think it's managed to get itself a girlfriend!

*CAMERON flips her off.*

NIKKI: Ah, now there's some sign language I know.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'll go get the counselor. *(She moves to leave.)*

NIKKI: Stay where you are, bitch. I'm talking to both of you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're the bitch. Can't even get some pronouns right.

NIKKI: *(Imitating her signs in a mocking manner)* What the fuck is this? You trying to flag down a plane or something?

SELENA: Hey, not cool, you know my cousin is deaf.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck? Leave us alone.

NIKKI: You know what? I'm actually okay with it. Means I don't have to hear you whining to me or the counselor about being "Not Camp Appropriate". I can say whatever the fuck I want, it's a free country. I came here to dance, not get told off by trannies.

*CAMERON gets up and slaps her.*

NIKKI: You hit like a girl.

*OLIVIA gets up and keeps him from hitting her again.*

GABBY: Um, you're a girl too.

SELENA: Gabby, that's not the point.

GABBY: Then what is the point? I didn't come to art camp to be mean to people. I just wanted to paint flowers and stuff while hearing band kids practice. Instead, you made us leave free period to see if he was here.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* H-E?

NIKKI: You didn't have to come. You could have gone to the pool and practiced doggy paddling.

GABBY: You threatened to fart on my pillow if I didn't.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* This has been fun and by fun I mean as awkward as fuck so- *(She grabs CAMERON's hand and moves to leave)*

*NIKKI moves to block her path.*

GABBY: Oh, you gonna fart on her pillow for not obeying?

SELENA: Nikki, let the boy go. Gabby's got a point. This is weird.

NIKKI: You too? It's not a boy. It's . . . what are you? Like what's in your pants?

GABBY: Underwear?

SELENA: None of your business?

NIKKI: I'm asking it.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why are you asking?

NIKKI: *(Moving towards him)* Is it a hand? Tentacles? A third eye? Or do you have a vagina because you're a fucking girl? *(She makes a grab at his waistband but he moves out of the way.)*

Hmmm?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* A fist! *(He punches her in the stomach and runs out of the cabin)*

*OLIVIA runs after him but stops at the door of the cabin.*

NIKKI: Okay, I deserved that.

GABBY: You know, they changed the name of the Heimlich Maneuver because people kept suing the family when it wouldn't work. I think you're currently experiencing why.

NIKKI: Not helpful, Gabby.

*OLIVIA looks out the window and begins gesturing at the others. SELENA comes to the window.*

SELENA: Oh my God, he's running into the woods. Olivia, you have to go after him.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, no. I can't. I'm afraid of the woods and the dark.

SELENA: I don't understand, finger spell?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A-F-R-A-I-D.

SELENA: Oh, of the woods? *(OLIVIA nods.)* Fuck, we have to tell the counselor.

GABBY: Fuck.

NIKKI: I'm so fucked.

*The lights fade to black but before the scene changes, counselors can be heard in the dark, calling Cameron's name and searching for him in the woods.*

### Scene Four

*DANIELLE enters with the stage lights still off and a flashlight as the only source of light.*

DANIELLE: Cameron! Where are you? We're just trying to help?

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Dude, where you at? You need help?

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Sweetie, are you okay? Please come home.

LAURA: *(Offstage)* Hey. Cameron. Hey. You here?

*The lights come up slowly to reveal CAMERON on the opposite side of the stage from DANIELLE. He is sitting and grimacing from pain.*

DANIELLE: I found him! I found Cameron! Cameron . . . oh my God, you're hurt. Can you stand? We need to get you back and get you first aid.

CAMERON shakes his head.

DANIELLE: Oh, um, could you stand? With help?

CAMERON shakes his head again.

DANIELLE: You don't want to go back yet, do you?

CAMERON doesn't answer. DANIELLE sits down next to him.

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Is he okay?

DANIELLE: He's injured but he can't get up yet. I'll stay with him while you guys get first aid, okay?

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Works for me! Peace out!

DANIELLE: Is it okay if I sit next to you?

CAMERON nods.

DANIELLE: So, are you going to tell me what happened or are we going to have to play charades? Or Pictionary, we could draw stuff in the dirt?

CAMERON writes "NO" in the dirt.

DANIELLE: I'm guessing by the lack of picture that that's a no to both. *(She draws in the dirt, turning the O of NO into the head of a stick figure person.)* Look! It's you!

CAMERON gives her a "really?" look.

DANIELLE: Okay, I know I'm not as good at drawing people as you but I definitely see a likeness. Oh, wait! *(She draws more.)* Look! He's holding a pencil, for drawing *and* writing. Ha! I saw you smile, my picture must not totally suck.

CAMERON turns the N into a stick figure drawing of DANIELLE.

DANIELLE: Is that me? Hmmm, I never noticed that my hair was in a shape of an N before. But other than that, it's totally dead on.

*CAMERON starts drawing more stuff in the dirt next to their pictures.*

DANIELLE: So, what got you into drawing? *(Pause, no answer.)* You don't have to talk to me about what happened yet but talking until the others get here with the first aid kit might be nice. There's no one around but me so you don't have to sign.

*CAMERON points to the N and the O.*

DANIELLE: Are you still afraid you're going to say something wrong?

*CAMERON nods and keeps drawing.*

DANIELLE: Oh, Cameron, everyone is always living in a state of being afraid of saying the wrong thing, it's what keeps us from saying every stupid thing that comes to mind. Seriously, they spend a week training us to not say the wrong things and I can guarantee each of us messes up at least once a day.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* S-O?

DANIELLE: I guess I could see the appeal of signing. You're forced to think about what you have to say before you, well, sign it.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* That is why I decided to get into it.

DANIELLE: It's really cool, Cameron, but I still don't speak ASL. I'm sorry.

*CAMERON goes back to drawing.*

DANIELLE: Cameron, I've tried learning but I can't even remember how to sign my name and that was only a week or so ago.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* D-A-N-I-E-L-L-E.

DANIELLE: I'm not going to remember that, I'm sorry.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry too. *(He goes back to drawing.)*

DANIELLE: Okay, how's this, we create a safe zone? Here. In the creepy, dark forest. Um, safe from judgment and safe from the head of girl's side. We can tell each other things and it be just between us. Okay? You can even tell me them however you want.

*CAMERON nods but keeps drawing.*

DANIELLE: Alright, I guess I'll go first. Um, how do you say "I'm bi" in sign language?

CAMERON: *(Stares at her, shocked and signs)* I'm B-I?

DANIELLE: Okay *(In ASL)* I'm B-I.



CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Are you B-I?

DANIELLE: Are you a boy?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W.

DANIELLE: I've been wanting to tell you so bad, like maybe know there's another queer person around might help you feel less alone. But they tell us to basically pretend to be asexual, you know, tell the kids nothing about our personal lives. But all the girls are like "Oh my God, do you have a boyfriend?" or "Which boy counselor do you think is the hottest?" Yeah, because I only like boys and nothing else. So I get the annoying questions because you're queer thing.

*CAMERON goes back to drawing in the dirt.*

DANIELLE: And . . . and . . . um, I kinda get the trans thing. Like, a little. When I'm not here, in uniform, I basically dress like a boy. I was such a tom boy growing up, you know? Like, ugh, dresses, no way! Gonna go play in the dirt, kinda like you're doing now. Well, you're more artsy about it. But yeah, I'm all about those boy things, you know? Climbing trees and stuff and I don't paint my nails.

*CAMERON doesn't even look up from his drawing.*

DANIELLE: And you know what was my absolute favorite movie as a kid? Mulan! I loved that she was this super kick-butt woman that was like "I can do anything a man can do, screw sexism!" Yeah! You must love Mulan because-

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* You think I'm Mulan?

DANIELLE: Oh my God! You're talking! Yay!

CAMERON: You think I'm a woman dressing up and pretending to be a man?

DANIELLE: What, no! But like, I thought you might look up to her because she . . . she . . . um, this is what I meant by we mess up at least once a day. Even with the training.

CAMERON: You really don't get it, do you?

DANIELLE: I do! I do get it! You're a boy but you feel trapped in the wrong body.

CAMERON: Was Mulan trapped in the wrong body?

DANIELLE: She was trapped by gender roles.

CAMERON: So no, Mulan is not my Disney role model.

DANIELLE: Oh, okay. I'm sorry.

CAMERON: Ariel is.

DANIELLE: The Little Mermaid? What? Isn't she a bit feminine?

CAMERON: Boys can like feminine things, even transboys. I always connected to her story, knowing from a young age that you're different, feeling like a change to your body will fix everything that feels wrong about you and wanting to do anything to get that transformation.

DANIELLE: That seashell bikini. Your habit of brushing your hair with a fork.

CAMERON: I'm serious! I think I knew even when I first saw that movie that I wasn't a girl; that I wasn't meant for this body.

DANIELLE: Wait, really? How old were you?

CAMERON: Probably about four? Maybe five?

DANIELLE: Oh my God. I didn't know I was bi till at least middle school. And I didn't admit it to myself till high school. Really? Five years old?

CAMERON: Most little girls try on their mother's heels or her jewelry. I was always stealing my dad's ties and trying to learn how to tie them.

DANIELLE: Okay, I even did the heels thing until I fell on my face one time and that was enough.

CAMERON: At first my mom thought it was cute, like "Aw 'she's' playing dress up with Daddy's clothes!" But she noticed how I would stuff all the dresses she'd make me wear under my bed or how I'd hide all the pictures of me in them. She stopped thinking it was a tom boy phase I'd grow out of and started getting worried.

DANIELLE: Worried?

CAMERON: Well, I doubt she knew what trans people were but I definitely heard the word "lesbian" said in concerned whispers enough times.

DANIELLE: Oh, jeez.

CAMERON: Yeah, I even had one of the neighbor kids come over and call me a dyke when I was playing on my lawn with hot wheels. I doubt she even knew what that word meant because we were only ten years old.

DANIELLE: Yeah, I didn't know what that word was before I got called it in high school.

CAMERON: Well, it doesn't help that for Halloween that year, all I wanted to be was a boy.

DANIELLE: A boy? Just . . . a boy? Not any particular boy?

CAMERON: Yup, just a boy. You can imagine my mother's reaction when I told her.

DANIELLE: "No daughter of mine is going dressed as some boy! Not even on Halloween, young lady!"

CAMERON: She bought me a Hannah Montana costume as a response.

DANIELLE: Oh, that is so much worse than I could have imagined.

CAMERON: So I stole the kitchen scissors, hid under the coffee table and cut off all my hair.

DANIELLE: Under the coffee table?

CAMERON: My mom was in the bathroom at the time. So my hair looked like I cut it without a mirror underneath a table.

DANIELLE: Worse than a bowl cut? Worse than a mullet?

CAMERON: Like a hurricane hit a hairdresser's. Like an angry kid with his sister's Barbie doll and a pair of scissors. Like . . . like . . .

DANIELLE: Like if Jackson Pollack did haircuts!

CAMERON: Um, sure. Anyway, as my mom was getting out of the bathroom, I ran up to her, threw what hair I had cut off at her and yelled, "Now I'll be a boy for every holiday!" Not the best comeback I've ever had.

DANIELLE: Better than what I could have thought of at ten years old. Or now. You really threw your hair at her?

CAMERON: Yeah, it's kinda gross in retrospect.

DANIELLE: So is trying to make you be Hannah Montana for Halloween.

CAMERON: She tried to hide my horrible haircut with the wig so I cut that up too. I think she was afraid I would do the same to her hair because she took me to a hairdresser and got my hair fixed.

DANIELLE: Did she let you be a boy for Halloween?

CAMERON: Kinda. I borrowed some of my older brother's clothes and she told people I was dressing up as him. We went trick or treating to fewer houses than usual and there are no pictures of me from that Halloween.

DANIELLE: Oh. That's so sad.

CAMERON: Yeah, well, after that I kept the short haircut and then came the classic "Are you a boy or a girl?" question that any prepubescent 'girl' with short hair gets. It was weird to be asked but even weirder when I hesitated to answer girl. Each time I got asked it, and I got asked it a lot, I felt weirder and weirder about answering girl. And it bothered me a lot too. That's such a basic question, boy or girl, the second question on any questionnaire after your name and the first question any stranger asks about a baby when the parent hasn't properly color coded it.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, we do color code our babies. That's so weird.

CAMERON: (*Stands up, revealing that he's not really injured*) And then you start to notice everywhere, everything is asking you "Boy or girl?" It's fine when you're cisgendered and you've never had trouble coming up with the answer. But when you do start to wonder, everything is like . . . something poking your brain. Bathrooms? "Boy or girl?" Poke. Clothes shopping. "Boy or girl?" Poke. Every questionnaire ever. "Boy or girl?" Poke. Poke. POKE! "ARE YOU A BOY OR A GIRL?"

DANIELLE: I'M A GIRL!

CAMERON: (*Starting to yell*) And then, one time, someone asked if I wanted a burrito, that's all, just a burrito. And I turned around and screamed, "I'm a boy, goddammit!" I had been holding my pee for an hour trying to figure out which bathroom to use so I was a bit stressed out. But I had said it. I was a boy. Am a boy. I am a boy.

DANIELLE: And when did the . . . boy burrito incident happen?

CAMERON: Last year, the last time I was here. (*Starts pacing*) It went so much better the last time I was here, even though I winced every time someone called me a she. But at least they weren't calling me it or shemale, which I get called more than Cameron. At least I could use the bathroom without girls refusing to shower when I'm in there. I can't be around anyone anymore because women think I'm a dyke and men think I'm a faggot. At least last year, I could pretend to fit in with my cabinmates and sometimes say the right things to convince them that I was a normal girl. God, why the fuck did I come out?

DANIELLE: Well, I came out because-

CAMERON: But it's different with you! Your own name isn't a trigger and looking down and seeing boobs where you think there shouldn't be doesn't give you a panic attack! You just have to remind people that you like girls, I have to remind people who I am. People might call you a lesbian if you date a girl or assume you're straight if you have a boyfriend but people might assume I'm a girl using a guy's bathroom and I could get the shit beaten out of me. You have to change what genders you prefer on Facebook to feel comfortable, I have to change my body to feel safe in my own head. So yes, you're queer and we're both fighting the queer war against a heteronormative society. But your battles are different than mine and to pretend to understand is just insulting.

DANIELLE: Oh. You're right. You're so right. I'm so sorry.

CAMERON: *(Calming down)* You asked me how I got into drawing, right? I started drawing male characters I liked in books and TV shows because I admired them and looked up to them. And slowly, I realized I wanted to be them and I could draw myself as them. After the first few times I drew myself as a boy, I knew I wanted to transition and have everyone see me as one.

DANIELLE: So, did the name Cameron come from some character from a favorite book or something? Because all I can think of is Cameron Diaz and yeah.

CAMERON: It was my father's name. I always hoped he would be proud to have a son so I pretended he named me after him like father's do.

DANIELLE: Hoped? He wasn't around?

CAMERON: He left while my mom was pregnant with me. I never knew why and I'm not sure if she did either. When I was at that, "Why is the sky blue and the grass green?" ask questions about everything age, I would ask her about him all the time. I'd get a different answer every time I asked. "Daddy's off fighting dragons in China," or, "Daddy's sailing around the world chasing the loch ness monster," or whatever. The story changed but his name was always Cameron, where it be Captain Cameron or Sir Cameron or just Cameron. Huh. I think that's where the storytelling and writing came from because after a point I started telling my mom my own stories about what "Cameron" was doing instead of... instead of being my dad.

DANIELLE: Oh wow, see my dad, when I came out-

RHIANNON: *(Off stage)* I got it! It took me forever but I found the first aid kit!

DANIELLE: Oh, um. *(Looks at CAMERON standing up just fine)*

CAMERON suddenly and overdramatically falls down, clutching his knee.

DANIELLE: Um, give it to me and I'll take care of it. I'm not sure he'd be comfortable with a stranger taking care of him.

CAMERON gives her a thumbs up.

RHIANNON: *(Off stage)* No blood, no problem. *(She slides the med kit on to the stage to DANIELLE)*

DANIELLE: Thanks! *(To CAMERON)* Okay, I'm gonna, like, put a bandage around your knee and we should be good, okay? *(Begins haphazardly wrapping his knee.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-K with me.

DANIELLE: Oh, are we back to the silent treatment.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, I'm sorry.

DANIELLE: Well, thank you for telling me your story, Cameron. I appreciate you opening up to me. *(Finishes bandaging)* Now, let's get out of this damn forest.

*The light begin to dim but do not completely fade to black as DANIELLE helps CAMERON up and she supports him as he fake limps out of the forest. The lights come back up as they arrive back at camp and in the middle of one of DANIELLE's stories.*

DANIELLE: - And so everyone's going around the table telling what they like about boys, like their shoulders or their arms or their eyes and I'm just zoned out, checking out the chick across from me. So when they come to me, I accidentally answered, "their boobs." So I guess that was my boy burrito moment.

*OLIVIA comes running up to them and aggressively embraces CAMERON, nearly knocking him to the ground.*

DANIELLE: Someone missed you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I was so worried about you, I thought you might get eaten by a bear or a rabid camper in the woods or-

*CAMERON grabs both of her hands and holds them for a moment.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Can I kiss you?

*OLIVIA kisses him in response and presses the sign for "I love you" into his hand.*

DANIELLE: Oh, um, that's not camp allowed, I mean, appropriate. Uh, guys.

*DANIELLE moves to separate them but they part before she does. The two of them stand close and CAMERON presses an "I love you" into her hand.*

DANIELLE: I'm allergic to this level of cute.

*DANIELLE exits and the lights fade with OLIVIA and CAMERON still together.*

### Scene Five

*Lights up on NIKKI, SELENA, GABBY, CAMERON and the rest of DANIELLE's cabin getting settled for bed. The scene begins when DANIELLE is well into doing roses and buds.*

DANIELLE: Thanks for sharing, Anna. I'd love to see your picture of a crazed teddy bear riding a unicorn when you're done with it. Alright, now I know you three had a rough day but you can't avoid sharing your highs and hopes of the day forever. Nikki, how about you go first?

NIKKI: Can I share a low?

DANIELLE: No, it's gotta be a high, a highlight of your day.

NIKKI: My high is nothing. Nothing was good about my day.

DANIELLE: Nothing? Absolutely nothing?

NIKKI: Yup.

DANIELLE: Alright, how about a hope, something you hope will be better than nothing?

NIKKI: That camp will be over in three days.

DANIELLE: Nikki, that can't be the only thing. What about your final performance? Or the camper dance?

NIKKI: Oh, I hope more guys ask me to the dance so I can turn down more guys than Selena.

DANIELLE: Well, that is better than nothing. What about you, Selena?

SELENA: My high is that I'm not going home early and still getting to go to the dance.

DANIELLE: Uh, well, yes that is certainly a positive. Do you have a hope?

SELENA: I'm kinda excited about my twenty dates to the dance and seeing how many of them are going to buy me flowers.

DANIELLE: Twenty? Twenty dates?

SELENA: Don't worry, most of them are my friends who couldn't get dates but a few of them are boys that I'm hoping will follow me around like puppies all night.

DANIELLE: And that's your hope? Puppy boys?

SELENA: And flowers from the puppy boys.

DANIELLE: Oh, okay then. Sure. And what about you Gabby? Do you have a high for today?

GABBY: I discovered I can put my legs behind my head and walk around on my hands. Wanna see?

DANIELLE: Maybe when I'm less likely to sleep and get nightmares. And do you-

GABBY: I hope Cameron has a good time for the last few days.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's very nice of you Gabby.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Thank you.

GABBY: I like food too! How did you know?

DANIELLE: That means thank you, Gabby.

GABBY: Food is a good way of showing thanks, you're right.

DANIELLE: Um, anyway, Cameron, you gonna share your highs and hopes?

CAMERON *hands her a piece of paper with his roses and buds written on it.*

DANIELLE: Do you mind if I read these out?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, please read it.

DANIELLE: I think that's a yes. Okay, so Cameron's high is, oh, uh, getting to kiss his love, Olivia.

NIKKI: Woah, it got a kiss? I mean, sorry, right, the agreement, he. He got a kiss.

SELENA: Hey, that's totally NCA. Not fair!

DANIELLE: Well, a high is a high, even if it's NCA.

NIKKI: In that case, I might have a different hope than the one I mentioned.

DANIELLE: Um, so, Cameron's hope is love. Just love. Oh, all you can hope for is love.

GABBY: Aww!

NIKKI: Ugh.

DANIELLE: That's really sweet Cameron. Thank you for sharing. Thank you all for sharing.

SELENA: *(Yawns loudly and overdramatically)* Mmm, time for bed!

DANIELLE: I actually have just one more thing, ladies.

NIKKI: *(whining)* I just want to sleep, it's been a long day.

DANIELLE: Well, that's exactly why I have something fun planned, to take your minds off the rough day we all had.

GABBY: Are you going to sing us a song like Jackie does?

DANIELLE: Um, no, I can't sing like Jackie. But, I can tell you a bed time story.

NIKKI: A bedtime story?

GABBY: A bedtime story!

DANIELLE: And all of you are going to help me write it!

SELENA: Huh?

CAMERON *holds up a piece of paper with some words on it.*



DANIELLE: *(reading it)* Yes, Cameron, it's going to be like Mad Libs. I'm going to create a, you know, framework of a story but you guys are going to fill in the details.

GABBY: Can it be about penguins?

DANIELLE: Do they sing but the main one tap dances? Because I think I've heard this before.

GABBY: No. Penguins don't sing. They just eat fish and swim.

DANIELLE: I was thinking something a little more, you know, exciting.

GABBY: Sometime they get eaten by sea lions.

DANIELLE: So, once upon a time-

NIKKI: A sea lion ate Gabby-

DANIELLE: Nikki, remember that this is like Mad Libs. I will ask for all of you to give suggestions when the story calls for it. Okay? Until then, please listen and think of ideas for when I ask for them.

NIKKI: Okay, okay, sorry. That was . . . disrespectful.

DANIELLE: Thank you, Nikki. Where was I? Oh yes, once upon a time there lived a large, mysterious creature at the bottom of a lake at a summer camp.

SELENA: Oh my God, is that why we can't swim in the lake? I thought it was the leeches!

DANIELLE: Selena, what did I say about interrupting?

SELENA: Oops! Sorry.

DANIELLE: Any way, this creature lived in a lake that was . . . *(She gestures at the kids to give suggestions)*

SELENA: Gross and slimy!

NIKKI: Full of seaweed!

GABBY: Sparkled like a diamond!

DANIELLE: Sparkly but full of gross plants that the creature would hide in. Campers were drawn to the shine of the lake but learned to stay away when they were told what was in the lake. They were told there was . . . *(Gestures again for suggestions)* what in the lake?

SELENA: Lots of water?

CAMERON *holds up a sign with a suggestion.*

DANIELLE: Vicious fish! They were told to avoid the vicious fish in the lake. The children became afraid to even go near the water and the sea creature used to like hearing them play. Oh, shoot, I forgot, what is the sea creature's name?

NIKKI: It has a name?

DANIELLE: What's *his* name?

SELENA: Oh! Oh! How about Billy Bob?

GABBY: Jean-Baptiste de Franco . . . the third.

DANIELLE: Um, Bob, let's go with Bob the sea creature. So, uh, Bob got very lonely when he couldn't see or hear the children any more so at night he would . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

NIKKI: Do bad impressions of the counselors!

SELENA: Yodel!

CAMERON *holds up another suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: He'd yodel and recite bad poetry-

GABBY: That angsty campers left on the beach!

DANIELLE: I like that, that's what he would recite from the lake. Eventually, this became too much for the campers. The first brave camper went down to the beach and . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

GABBY: Did an interpretive dance to the poetry.

NIKKI: Threw rocks into the water and yelled insults.

DANIELLE: A camper named Nikki threw rocks into the water and told Bob to shut up.

NIKKI: Hey! I wouldn't do that!

DANIELLE: It's a story, Nikki.

NIKKI: Fine.

DANIELLE: The next brave camper tried to defeat the terrible poetry by . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

CAMERON *holds up a sign for a suggestion.*

SELENA: By correcting his grammar.

DANIELLE: A brave camper named Selena shouted corrections and constructive criticism at the lake but it did not stop Bob. At last, on the third to last night of camp, one brave camper named . . . (*gestures for suggestion*)

GABBY: Danielle!

SELENA: Yeah, Danielle as a camper.

DANIELLE: Oh, um, okay, brave camper Danielle ventured into the water because no other camper would. She hacked her way through the seaweed with a . . .

*CAMERON holds up a suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: A butter knife? Hmmm . . .

NIKKI: A machete?

GABBY: A spork!

DANIELLE: A spork it is! She hacked with her mighty spork through the concealing seaweed, breathing through her extremely long straw. After hacking and hacking, she found poor lonely Bob. She nearly turned back because . . . (*Gestures for suggestion*)

NIKKI: He was weird looking?

*CAMERON holds up a suggestion sign.*

DANIELLE: Because his stare looked like it could cause cancer! But she persisted. She went right up to Bob and caressed his . . . (*gestures*)

SELENA: Right ear!

GABBY: Inside his nostrils!

DANIELLE: She went right up to him and stuck her finger in his nose and whispered gently in his ear the words he had always wanted to hear . . . (*gestures*)

GABBY: I love you!

NIKKI: You smell like feet!

DANIELLE: She lovingly whispered to him, "You smell like feet," which Bob had been waiting all his life to hear. With someone who finally understood him, Bob agreed to stop keeping them up at night if Danielle would come and talk to him at least once a day. And both sea creature and campers lived happily ever after.

GABBY: Aw, yay for Bob.

NIKKI: So, moral of the story, don't leave your angsty poetry lying around?

DANIELLE: Um, sure, that's one way of putting it.

SELENA: Now time for bed?

DANIELLE: Yes, yes. Get all comfy and I'll turn off the lights.

CAMERON: (*In ASL while holding a sign translation*) Good night.

DANIELLE: Goodnight ladies . . . and gentleman.

*She turns off the lights.*

*End of play.*

**Original Rehearsal Schedule for *Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers***

- Sun, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:30pm-** Cast meeting and read through of *finalized script* (woo!)
- Mon, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5:45pm-** Cameron and Danielle, scene four (Without other counselors)
- Tues, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:45pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three (without other campers)
- Wed, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Danielle, Nikki, Cameron, Gabby, and Selena, scene two
- Thur, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 12:15pm-** Danielle, Nikki, Cameron, Gabby, and Selena, scene five
- 4pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three sign language lesson (subject to change based on teacher's availability)
- 6:15pm-** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, scene one
- Fri, March 6<sup>th</sup>- NO REHEARSAL, go enjoy your break!!!**
- Spring break-** *Please be memorizing and be as close to off book as possible by the time we get back. Also, please catch up on sleep. I know you all need it.*
- Mon, March 16<sup>th</sup>, NO REHEARSAL, I'll just be getting back to America**
- Tues, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Cameron and Olivia, Scene three
- 6:45pm-** Add Nikki, Selena and Gabby
- Wed, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:15pm-** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, Scene two
- Thurs, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three sign language lesson (subject to change based on teacher's availability)
- 6:15pm-** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie, and Laura, Scene one
- Fri, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Danielle and Cameron, Scene four (without other counselors)
- Sun, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 12:30pm-** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, Scene five
- 2pm-** Cameron and Nikki, work on stage combat for scene three
- 5:30pm-** Everyone, *off book* run through
- Mon, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6pm-** Danielle and Cameron, Scene four (without other counselors)
- Tues, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Cameron and Olivia, Scene three
- 6:45pm-** Add Nikki, Selena, and Gabby
- Wed, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:15pm-** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, Scene three
- Thur, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 4pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three sign language lesson (subject to change based on teacher's availability)
- 6:15pm-** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie, and Laura, Scene one
- Fri, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Danielle, Nikki, Cameron, Selena and Gabby, Scene five

**Sun, March 29<sup>th</sup> through April 11<sup>th</sup> – *rehearsals will be TBA based on what needs to be worked on and working around Life is a Dream tech week. There will be Friday, Saturday and Sunday rehearsals, be prepared.***

<b>Sun, April 12<sup>th</sup> 7pm-</b>	Everyone, run through then work through
<b>Mon, April 13<sup>th</sup> 7pm-</b>	Work through Scenes two and five
<b>Tues, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 8pm-</b>	Run through then work scenes needing extra work
<b>Wed, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 7pm-</b>	Run through then work scenes needing extra work
<b>Thur, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 7pm-</b>	Run through then work scenes needing extra work
<b>Fri, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-</b>	Tech rehearsal
<b>Sat, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 10am-</b>	Tech rehearsal
<b>Sun, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 7pm-</b>	Full dress rehearsal
<b>Mon, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 7pm-</b>	Full dress rehearsal
<b>Tues, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 7pm-</b>	Full dress rehearsal
<b>Wed, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 7pm-</b>	<b>OPENING NIGHT! (call time 7pm, show at 8pm)</b>
<b>Thur, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7pm-</b>	<b>Second performance (call time 7pm, show at 8pm)</b>
<b>Frid, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 8pm-</b>	<b>Final performance (call time 8pm, show at 9pm)</b>

**Final Rehearsal Schedule for *Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers***

- Sun, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:30pm-** Cast meeting and read through of *finalized script* (woo!)  
**Mon, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5:45pm-** Cameron and Danielle, scene four (Without other counselors)  
**Tues, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:45pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three (without other campers)  
**Wed, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6pm-** Danielle, Nikki, Cameron, Gabby, and Selena, scene two  
**Thur, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 12:15pm-** Danielle, Nikki, Cameron, Gabby, and Selena, scene five  
**4pm-** Cameron and Olivia, scene three sign language lesson (subject to change based on teacher's availability)  
**6:15pm-** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, scene one

**Fri, March 6<sup>th</sup>- NO REHEARSAL, go enjoy your break!!!**

**Spring break- *Please be memorizing and be as close to off book as possible by the time we get back. Also, please catch up on sleep. I know you all need it.***

**Mon, March 16<sup>th</sup>, NO REHEARSAL, I'll just be getting back to America**

- Tues, March 17th, 4:15pm-**sign language lesson for Cameron and Olivia, Rod Brown  
**7:00pm-** Cameron, Olivia, Nikki, Gabby, and Selena, Scene three  
**Wed, March 18th, 6:15pm-** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, Scene two  
**Thur, March 19th, 3:30pm-**Cameron and Olivia, Scene Three (other campers not needed), Rod Brown

**Fri, March 20th, 6:30pm-** Cameron and Danielle, Scene Four (Without other counsellors)

**7:30pm-** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, Scene four

**Sun, March 22nd, 12:30pm-** Danielle and Nikki, Scene Five

**1:00pm-** Add Cameron, Gabby and Selena

**2:00pm-** Cameron and Nikki, Stage combat for scene three

**5:30pm-** EVERYONE, off book run through, British chocolate during notes

**M, March 23- 6pm** Danielle and Cameron, Scene Four

**T, March 24- 4:15pm** sign language lesson Juliana and Teagle

**6:45pm,** Cameron, Nikki, Selena, Gabby (and Olivia when she gets out of class), end of scene three

**W, March 25- 6:15pm** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena, and Gabby, scene Two

**Th, March 26- 3:30pm** Olivia and Cameron (not other campers), scene three

**6:45pm,** Cameron, Nikki, Selena, Gabby (and Olivia when she gets out of class),

end of scene three

**F, March 27- 7:00pm,** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, Scene One

**Sat, March 28-** 1pm, Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena, and Gabby, Scene Five

Work through of first half of play!

3pm- Scene One

4pm- Scene Two (Counselors may leave)

5pm- Scene Three

**Sun, March 29-** Work Through of second half of play!

1pm- Scene Four (INCLUDING counselors)

2pm- Scene Five (counselors may go)

5:30pm- Run through

**M, March 30th, 6-6:30pm:** Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, Scene One

**T, March 31st, 4:15-5pm:** ASL lesson with Olivia and Cameron, Student Lounge

**W, April 1st:** *TBA*, will be scheduled when role of Selena is officially filled

**Th, April 2nd, 3:30-4:30pm:** Olivia and Cameron, Scene three (without other campers), *TBA* on location

**F, April 3rd, 6-6:30pm:** Cameron and Danielle, Scene Four (without other counselors)

**Sat, April 4th:** NO REHEARSAL

**T, April 7th, 4:15pm-** Sign language lessons for Cameron and Olivia

**Th, April 9th, 3:30pm-** Scene three, Cameron and Olivia (without other campers)

**F, April 10th, 3:30pm-** Run through of scenes 2-5, everyone in those scenes EXCEPT other counselors

4:30pm- Danielle, Rhiannon, Ellie and Laura, run through of scene one

**Sat, April 11th, 1pm-** Danielle, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, Scene two

2pm- Olivia, Cameron, Nikki, Selena and Gabby, end of Scene three

**Sun, April 12th, 7pm-** OVER THE TOP!!! (don't worry, I'll explain)

**Mon, April 13th, 5:30pm-7pm:** run through with everyone (those in allowed to leave early to be on time)

9:30pm-11pm: work on problem scenes (what those are will be announced earlier)

The odd break is due to Chamber Singers and Chorus rehearsals.

**Tues, April 14th, 7:15pm:** Run through with everyone, work problem scenes after

**Wed, April 15th, 7:15pm:** Run through with everyone, work problem scenes after

**Thurs, April 16th, 7:15pm:** Run through with everyone, work problem scenes after

**Fri, April 17th, 4:15pm:** Run through with everyone. It's reeeally important everyone is on time so those in the concert can eat before their call. PLEASE BE ON TIME.

**7pm:** NO ACTORS, dry tech

**Sat, April 18th, 10am-2pm:** Everyone, including actors and crew, wet tech with tech run through after

**Sun, April 19th, 7pm:** First dress rehearsal (show conditions)

**Mon, April 20th, 7pm:** Second dress rehearsal

**Tues, April 21st, 7pm:** Last dress rehearsal

**Wed, April 22nd, 7pm:** OPENING NIGHT!!! Showtime is **8pm**

**Thurs, April 23rd, 7pm:** Second show!!! Showtime is **8pm**

**Fri, April 24th, 8pm:** Last show, different call time, showtime at **9pm**





### Scene Three with ASL Translation

*Playwright's note: A good portion of this scene takes place in American Sign Language with projected supertitles for audience members that do not speak ASL. Dialogue that is signed will be preceded by the stage direction "In ASL" but some of the dialogue is spoken aloud or written down and read out loud. It is important to keep what is spoken and what is sign as it is in the stage directions.*

*"One week later" is projected onto the supertitle screen.*

*The scene takes place in CAMERON'S cabin with CAMERON and OLIVIA sitting on a bed as OLIVIA teaches CAMERON American Sign Language. CAMERON signs very slowly throughout the scene and signs more words than necessary or ask OLIVIA what they are. OLIVIA frequently has to slow down or repeat for him and omits more words like many native speakers do.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* This is difficult. Signing is difficult. **(this hard, signing hard)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So is being deaf. Quit complaining. **(deaf hard, stop)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dont/understand)** *(OLIVIA writes it down and he reads it aloud)"Quit your bitching."* Oh! Is this *(does the sign for complain)* bitch? *(Does the sign again and laughs)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Complain? No. **(complain? SHAKES HEAD)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No? **(SHAKES HEAD)** *(Out loud)* Ugh, can't you just teach me the bad words so I can swear at people without them knowing?

*OLIVIA reaches over and playfully smacks him upside the head.*

CAMERON: What's that the sign for? *(OLIVIA writes it down)* "It's Olivia for stop being an ass."  
*(In ASL)* Sorry, Olivia. **(SORRY)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do ABCs. **(POINTS A-B-C-D Motions for (etc))**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A - B - C - D - E - F ... *(Struggles, OLIVIA shows him G)* G - H - I - J ...  
um *(OLIVIA shows him K)* K - L - M - N - O ... *(out loud)* oh! It's like K! *(In ASL)* P - Q - R - S  
- T - U - V - W - X - Y - Z!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your name? **(POINTS name?)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You know my name! **(POINTS know POINTS name)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Don't be stupid. Sign your name. **(Stupid. Sign name)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Oh. C-A-M-E-R-O-N. H-E/ H-I-M

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* He/him? ASL doesn't do pronouns.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Really?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yeah.

CAMERON: *(Smiles and says outloud)* Cool! Less misgendering! *(He signs)* I am a boy. **(POINTS boy)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your art, boy? **(POINTS art boy)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My art is drawing and writing. *(Out loud)* Oh! I've never asked you before.

*(In ASL)* Your art? **(POINTS (at self) drawing writing.) (POINTS art?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Dance. **(DANCE)** *(She writes it down for him)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* **W-O-W**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Wow? **(wow)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How do you dance? **(HOW dance?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* With my body. **(my body dances)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dontunderstand)** *(She writes it down and he begins to read it out loud)* With my- oh. *(In ASL)* **J-E-R-K.** *(He pauses, trying to figure out how to sign what he means.) (In ASL)* You are deaf. **(POINTS deaf)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. I'm aware. **(NODS understand)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Deaf people dance? **(deaf people dance?)**

*(OLIVIA smacks him upside the head again.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* **O-W! What? (what?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Deaf people love dancing! **(we love dance)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How? **(how?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Are you asking me how to love? Really? **(You ask howt love? (looks flabbergasted)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No, no I know how to love. But how do *you* dance? **(SHAKES HEAD SHAKES HEAD, understand love. But deaf dance?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How do *you* dance? **(how you dance?)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear. **(POINTS hearing)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So? **(shrugs)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear – **(POINTS hearing)**

*CAMERON mouths "music". OLIVIA shows him the sign for music.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear music and dance. **(hear music (gestures "and sooo") POINTS dance)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Oh! I feel music. Like . . . like – **(POINTS feel music. (thinking fingers)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* **B-A-S-S?**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes! Like- **(NODS! thinking fingers)**

*OLIVIA grabs CAMERON'S hand and puts it over her heart. CAMERON freezes and stares at her with confusion. OLIVIA bobs her head and points to her heart area. After a few more moments of fluster, CAMERON gets it. The two of them sway to the beat of OLIVIA'S heart. She releases his hand but he leaves it there for a few more seconds before removing it.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand. **(understand)**

*He mouths "heart" OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Heart. **(heart)**

*He mouths "beat" and OLIVIA shows him the sign.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Beat. Heartbeat . . . I have a question. **(heartbeat. Question)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What? **(what)**

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Why didn't you go to a deaf camp with other deaf people? Even other deaf dancers? **(why POINT not deaf camp go? other deaf people)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why didn't you go to a boy's cabin with other boys? **(why POINT not boys camp go)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom. **(Mom)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Me too. **(same)**

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in shock)* You're mom taught you sign language but wouldn't put you in a deaf camp? What the fuck!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Use sign language! **(sign!!!!)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't know W-T-F. **(not know W-T-F)**

*OLIVIA shows him the sign for what the fuck.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck, your mom? **(W-T-F POINTS mom)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* My mom doesn't know sign language. **(Mom not know sign)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck. Who what when where how and why? **(W-T-F what why (confusion hands))**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* She isn't deaf or hard of hearing so why should she bother? **(not deaf, hard-of-hearing - soooo.. why?)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are. **(POINTS deaf)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm not a good enough reason. **(not important)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dontunderstnd)**

*OLIVIA writes down the translation*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dontunderstand)**

*OLIVIA points to the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. Why not you? (~~dont~~understand why not?)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Too much time and effort. She's a busy woman and she already finds me to be a burden. She just wants me to be normal and easy to deal with. (~~toomuch~~ time work, mom B-U-S-Y, POINTS (at self) relationship/cooperation mom hard. mom wants POINTS (at self) easy, normal)

*OLIVIA writes down the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are good. (~~but~~ POINTS good)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Not really, I actually go out of my way to make things more difficult for her since she's such a dick to me. (~~not~~. POINTS (at self) make everything hard mom, mom not good POINTS (at self))

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are great! (POINTS really good)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do great people swear at their moms for fun? (really good people not bad words mom)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are . . . (POINTS) *(He gets frustrated and mouths at her "you are worth it".)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I am worth it? (POINTS (at self) important?)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! You are worth it! (NODS POINTS important.)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You learned sign for yourself, not me. (POINTS not learn for POINTS (at self))

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I S-T-A-Y for you. (POINTS S-T-A-Y for POINTS)

*OLIVIA stares at him with confusion. CAMERON mouths "stay for you" at her.*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I stay for you. (POINTS stay for you)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool. Tell me about your mom. (Cool. What POINTS mom?)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom? (mom?)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't want to talk about my mom any more. (POINTS (at self) finished talk my mom)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom . . . not good. Not great. (Mom not good. not good.)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry. (Sorry)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She doesn't call me Cameron. (Not know POINTS (at self) C-A-M-E-R-O-N)

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What a bitch! (Bitch)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She calls me *(mouthing the word)* confused. (She says POINTS (at self))

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Confused. (Confused)

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She thinks I'm confused. That's why she P-U-T me in a girl's cabin. **(She think POINTS (at self) confused. Mom putme girls camp)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* But you're not a girl. **(but... POINTS not girl)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She still calls me her daughter. **(mom thinks/wants/ daughter)** *(Out loud.)* It's horrible, I think she's hoping it's a phase and putting me in a girl's cabin will get me through it faster.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Fuck her! Fuck your cabin! Fuck girl's side! Fuck anyone who doesn't call you C-A-M- you need a name sign. **(Fuck her, fuck your cabin, fuck girls camp, fuck everyone not saying C-A-M... POINTS need a sign name)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(what? notunderstand)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign you can show your mom or anyone else who calls you the wrong name. **(sign name POINTS show everyone who says wrong name POINTS)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A name sign? **(sign name?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign, a sign that is unique to you and represents you. How about I shorten your name to D-O-R-K? **(sign name. sign for only POINTS. maybe.... POINTS sign name D-O-R-K?)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* M-E-A-N-I-E. Is your name sign B-I-T-C-H? **(POINTS sign name B-I-T-C-H)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, mine is *(She shows him her name-sign)*. **(shakes head, POINTS (at self) (shows sign name))**

CAMERON repeats her name-sign.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W, it is you. *(He does her name-sign again.)* **(W-O-W (does sign name) POINTS)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes, it is I, Olivia. Good job. **(NODS, (does sign name) Good work)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What should I do for mine? **(What I make my sign name)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you like to do, besides annoy me? **(What POINTS work like, other annoy POINTS)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I what you? **(POINTS what POINTS)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Forget it. What do you do? **(nevermind, what POINTS work)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write and draw. **(POINTS write draw)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you write? What do you draw? **(What POINTS write, what POINTS draw)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write . . . *(He writes down the words.)* **(POINTS write)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You write stories *(CAMERON repeats the sign)*, poetry *(CAMERON repeats the sign)* and . . . Facebook statuses? **(POINTS write stories, poetry, ... facebook writing?)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love poetry. **(POINTS love poetry)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* And Facebook? **(and facebook)**

CAMERON: *(Outloud)* Holy shit do I miss the internet. I miss checking- *(OLIVIA puts a hand over his mouth.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL, with her hand still over his mouth)* A-S-L. **(Sign language!!)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love writing more than the *(mouthing the word)* internet. **(POINTS love writing more ....)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Writing . . . *(She repeats the sign a couple times.)* **(writing...writing.... writing thinking fingers)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, writing. **(NODS writing)**

*OLIVIA does the sign for writing but with her right hand forming a C.*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You *(Does the modified sign again.)* **(POINTS)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Me? *(He repeats the sign and then says out loud.)* Oh! *(In ASL)* C for C-A-M-E-R-O-N and writing. W-O-W. **(POINTS (at self) C POINTS CAMERON and writing)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)*. Do you like it? Or do I have to start calling you bitch face? **(POINTS like (does sign name) Start saying POINTS bitch face)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love it. Please call me *(He does the name-sign)* not . . . that other sign.

**(POINTS love (does sign name) please say (does sign name) not (gestures bitchface))**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't know, Cameron, you look like a bitch face to me. **(POINTS not know cameron, POINTS like bitch face POINTS (at self)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. I am Cameron. I am a boy and I am . . . *(He mouths the word "transgender")*. **(SHAKES HEAD POINTS (at self) boy and POINTS (at self))**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Transgender.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I am transgender. I love that sign! It's like beautiful and self. Transgender is beautiful and I am beautiful. **(POINTS (at self) transgender. POINTS (at self) love sign. beautiful, self, transgender beautiful and I beautiful)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. You are beautiful. **(NODS POINTS beautiful)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You think I'm beautiful? I think you're beautiful. **(POINTS think POINTS beautiful, POINTS think POINTS beautiful)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool . . . I think you're . . . cool. I'm not used to people saying nice things to me. I'm not used to hearing people talking to me at all. **(Cool, think POINTS cool. POINTS (at self) not normal to people say nice things POINTS. I not talk hearing people.)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dont/understand)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you realize you're the only other hearing person to sign with me in years? **(POINTS understand POINTS only hearing person sign with POINTS years)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry, I don't understand. **(sorry, I dontunderstand)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Of course you don't understand. Hearing people don't fucking understand, even if you do talk to them in their language. You know this, this is why you don't talk any more. This is why I only speak in my language. You want to know what I like about sign language? You have to think before you sign and you have to sign what you think. None of your hearing people's subtle bullshit. Sign language is about expressing, not hiding. I'm glad I'm deaf so I don't have to hear all the horrible things you've told me you hear. I don't have to hear my teachers talking slower to me because they think I'm an idiot as well as deaf. Best of all, I don't have to hear my mother yelling at me because she thinks I'm stupid. She's the stupid one, can't even fucking sign my language.

**You not understand. hearing people don'tunderstand. don'tunderstand even if I say english. You know that - you don't talk, you sign now. I only talk in ASL only. Sign language important because I sign my thoughts, thoughts (need) same sign sign same thoughts (need). Not hearing stupid shit. sign language showing not hiding. I like my deafness, no hearing stupid bad people words. I not hear teachers talk slowly because they think I stupid deaf. I not hear mother talking loud because mom thinking I stupid. Mom stupid, not even know sign language.**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand. **(understand)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No you don't. But at least you try. Thank you for trying. **(SHAKES HEAD, you only try. thank you trying)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you. **(POINTS (at self) understand POINTS)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* **How?**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I watch you sign, I know what you mean. **(POINTS (at self) watch POINTS sign, POINTS (at self) know)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You don't understand half my signs. **(POINTS (at self) dontunderstand most POINTS signs)**



CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you as a person. **(I understand YOU (emphasize))**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Because I hope you don't mind but I've fallen in love with you. **(Because I hope you like, I fall love you)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You love to fall on me? **(You fall on me??)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love you. **(I love)**

*OLIVIA stares at him in confusion as an awkward silence ensues.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Do you mind? **(You like? not like?)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. **(dontunderstand)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry. I think I love you. **(I think love you)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry you love me. I am shit. **(I sorry you love me, I not good)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are beautiful and smart and funny and weird and I love you. **(You beautiful, smart, funny, weird. Love you)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You've known me for two weeks. **(You know me two weeks)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* The days are long and each day with you is amazing. I love you. **(days long, all days you really good. love you)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stop saying that. Stop lying to me. **(stop saying you love me. Stop lying)**

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* I'm going to keep saying it until you believe me. *(In ASL)* **(I love you, Olivia. I love you. I love you. I love you!)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're being ridiculous. You can't love someone you barely know. **(You dumb, you not love someone you not know)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand but I know I love you. **(don'tunderstand but I know love you)**

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Now you *know* you love me. Okay. **(Now you KNOW you love me??)**

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. I know I love you. I love you! **(NODS I know I love you)**

*CAMERON starts hopping around on the bed.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in ASL)* **I love you! I love you! I love you!**

*NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY enter the cabin as CAMERON is dancing around.*

SELENA: What the fuck, why is she in our cabin?

NIKKI: Oh wow, I think it's managed to get itself a girlfriend.

*CAMERON flips her off.*

NIKKI: Ah, now there's some sign language I know.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'll go get the counselor. *(She moves to leave.)* **(I'll go get help)**

NIKKI: Stay where you are, bitch. I'm talking to both of you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're the bitch. Can't even get some pronouns right. **(you bitch, not even know name)**

NIKKI: *(Imitating her signs in a mocking manner)* What the fuck is this? You trying to flag down a plane or something?

SELENA: Hey, not cool, you know my cousin is deaf.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck? Leave us alone. **(Fuck you, go away)**

NIKKI: You know what? I'm actually okay with it. Means I don't have to hear you whining to me or the counselor about being "Not Camp Appropriate". I can say whatever the fuck I want, it's a free country. I came here to dance, not get told off by trannies.

*CAMERON gets up and slaps her.*

NIKKI: You hit like a girl.

*OLIVIA gets up and keeps him from hitting her again.*

GABBY: Um, you're a girl too.

SELENA: Gabby, that's not the point.

GABBY: Then what is the point? I didn't come to art camp to be mean to people. I just wanted to paint flowers and stuff while hearing band kids practice. Instead, you made us leave free period to see if he was here.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* **H-E?**

NIKKI: You didn't have to come. You could have gone to the pool and practiced doggy paddling.

GABBY: You threatened to push me into the lake if I didn't come.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* This has been fun and by fun I mean as awkward so- *(She grabs CAMERON's hand and moves to leave)* **(This fun... not fun, awkward. sooo....)**

*NIKKI moves to block her path.*

GABBY: Oh, you gonna push her in the lake for not obeying?

SELENA: Nikki, let the boy go. Gabby's got a point. This is weird.

NIKKI: You too? It's not a boy. It's . . . what are you? Like what's in your pants?

GABBY: Underwear?

SELENA: None of your business?

NIKKI: I'm asking it.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why are you asking? **(Why you say question)**

NIKKI: *(Moving towards him)* Is it a hand? Tentacles? A third eye? Or do you have a vagina because you're a fucking girl? *(She makes a grab at his waistband but he moves out of the way.)* Hmmm?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* A fist! *(He punches her in the stomach and runs out of the cabin)*

OLIVIA *runs after him but stops at the door of the cabin.*

NIKKI: Okay, I deserved that.

GABBY: You know, they changed the name of the Heimlich maneuver because people kept suing the family when it wouldn't work. I think you're currently experiencing why.

NIKKI: Not helpful, Gabby.

OLIVIA *looks out the window and begins gesturing at the others. SELENA comes to the window.*

SELENA: Oh my God, he's running into the woods. Olivia, you have to go after him.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, no. I can't. I'm afraid of the woods and the dark. **(Shakes head, shakes head, I scared woods, dark)**

SELENA: I don't understand, finger spell?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* **A-F-R-A-I-D.**

SELENA: Oh, of the woods? *(OLIVIA nods.)* Fuck, we have to tell the counselor.

GABBY: Fuck.

NIKKI: I'm so fucked.

*The lights fade to black but before the scene changes, counselors can be heard in the dark, calling Cameron's name and searching for him in the woods.*

Director's Script with Rehearsal Notes  
Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers

By J.J. Davis

Used: March 1st - April 21st, 2015

## Scene One

DANIELLE enters the cabin, wearing a uniform that identifies her as a camp counselor at Camp White Lake and LAURA, already in the room and changed into her pajamas, doesn't look up from her bed. DANIELLE is trying to keep it together but begins sobbing once she reaches her bed. LAURA, on her bed with her computer, looks up and doesn't know what to do. DANIELLE starts crying harder when she tries to stop and LAURA awkwardly slides over a box of tissues before going back to writing on her computer. ELLIE and RHIANNON's voices are heard off stage as they approach the cabin. They enter, both also in Camp White Lake counselor uniforms, with ELLIE holding a pizza box. Their conversation stops when they see DANIELLE crying.

RHIANNON: Oh no.

ELLIE: Oh, sweetie, <sup>keep it natural</sup> this puts the mandatory in mandatory fun night. Come, sit. <sup>will she</sup> (She gestures to the yoga mat in the middle of the room.) <sup>throw box</sup> <sup>floor</sup>

DANIELLE: (Through tears) You sure? You haven't even done your yoga.

ELLIE: It's cheer Danielle up time, not yoga time.

RHIANNON: And, dude, <sup>throw box</sup> Ellie stole pizza for tonight.

ELLIE opens the pizza <sup>box</sup> to reveal half a cold pizza. DANIELLE slinks off the bed and takes a piece to nibble on. ELLIE and RHIANNON join her on the mat while LAURA watches awkwardly.

ELLIE: Alright, what can we do to make you feel better? We could meditate or . . . drink some nice tea or . . . go star gazing or . . .

DANIELLE: Pizza's good.

RHIANNON: Dude, you're not gonna tell us- (ELLIE gives her a look.) What? I want to know.

DANIELLE: It's nothing, I'm just being silly.

RHIANNON: Now I really want to know.

ELLIE: Drop it, Rhiannon. <sup>keep it as harsh</sup> (To DANIELLE) We all have bad days, sweetie.

DANIELLE: Not this bad.

RHIANNON: How bad is bad?

ELLIE: So, Rhiannon, you said you had a good camper story?

RHIANNON: I have a feeling that Danielle might have some better ones.

DANIELLE: You first.

RHIANNON: Okay, okay, so you know annoying, little brat? The one I complain about all the time?

DANIELLE: You're gonna have to be more specific, they're all brats.

ELLIE: My cabin is lovely, they had a hair braiding party last night and-

DANIELLE: Could you not?

ELLIE: Honey, they're not all awful.

DANIELLE: I know, I know. I just, you know.

RHIANNON: Hey, hello!

ELLIE: Tell your story, sweetie, I wanna hear it.

RHIANNON: Dude, you will not believe how gross this camper is. Oh man does she not only drive me fucking nuts every time she whines, I noticed today how stringy her hair looks. So stringy, that I think she hasn't showered since she's got here.

ELLIE: For six days? *great reaction*

RHIANNON: I'm pretty damn sure because her hair was as greasy as the pizza.

*DANIELLE drops her pizza with horror.*

RHIANNON: Man, I had to tell her to shower for fuck's sake but in a nice way. Because I'm pretty sure annoying, little brat has never been disciplined in her life since she fucking cried when I told her to put on her shoes faster. So I try the bullshit, empathetic counselor approach by saying I sometimes forget to shower and I wonder when the last time she showered was.

ELLIE: Oh no, did she start crying?

RHIANNON: Oh boy, does she. But it doesn't end there. After about a minute of her crying, she starts wiping her tears all over her face.

DANIELLE: Oh my God.

RHIANNON: And through her sobbing, she manages to tell me, "I r-read on t-tumblr that tears a-are good for y-your skiiiiiiin." I can't take it anymore so I snap at her, "It's your hair! It's your hair that gave it away! Go take a shower *right now!*" Without a break in her crying, she picks up her towel and starts walking out. "With soap and shampoo," I command before she can get out the door and she gets the stuff and leaves. Then, the one other camper in the cabin pipes up with, "Is it true? What she said about tears?" And I spin around, give her the evilest eye I have ever evil-ed and say, "Don't. You. Dare." So that was the highlight of my day.

ELLIE: Your campers must be terrified of you.

RHIANNON: Hell no, dude, they adore me. Even annoying, little brat laughs at my jokes when she isn't crying. So, Danielle, what are your campers-

*no break*

*Better  
story  
telling  
our  
fees  
new*

*keep it  
short, show the bullshit*

*pivot  
the  
overday*

*don't speed*

LAURA: One of my campers ran away and pooped in the woods.

RHIANNON: Shit, you win.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, that was *your* camper?

ELLIE: Oh goodness, please don't tell me it was . . . um-

RHIANNON: Cat Ears?

LAURA: Her name is Christina, she just happens to wear cat ears.

RHIANNON: Everywhere. And pee herself on purpose. And now she's pooping in the woods. Dude, do you think she pooped outside because she thinks the world is her litter box?

ELLIE: Maybe she actually identifies as a cat and-

RHIANNON: Ellie, have you ever owned a cat? Not even real cats run away and shit in the woods.

DANIELLE: Wait, what's the rest of the story? Oh my God, did you have to go clean up cat shit?

*(They all look at LAURA, expectantly.)*

LAURA: *(Sighs)* Yeah.

RHIANNON: Holy shit! No pun intended.

ELLIE: Before or after the search?

LAURA: After.

RHIANNON: *(Can't hold back her laughter any more)* Holy fuck! You had to go on a lost poop search after your lost cat search? *(She cackles.)* Holy motherfucking shit, that's fantastic! *(She pulls herself together when she notices LAURA glaring at her.)* I mean, that's a fantastic story. For you to tell later.

ELLIE: Rough day, hun, pizza?

LAURA: Any cheese left?

DANIELLE: *(Looks at the piece of cheese pizza she's eating)* Uh, I think I got the last one. I could pull off the pepperonis off one for you.

LAURA: No thanks. *(She crawls off her bed any way and joins them.)* *pull out candy "I'm*

DANIELLE: *(After some hesitation.)* Okay, so is it true that Cat Ears-

LAURA: Christina-

DANIELLE: Um, Christina got frustrated during one of her choir classes and peed herself on purpose?

*good"*

*death  
sure per*

LAURA: That story is going around? Great.

ELLIE: Yeah, I've had to tell my cabin several times to stop talking about it.

DANIELLE: Is she getting bullied by the other campers?

LAURA: Not really. Mostly they're too afraid to talk to her. Except that one other goth girl. *keep from being stage-y*

ELLIE: At least she has friends.

RHIANNON: Oh yeah man, Goth Girl is in my cabin. The other day she, totally fucking serious, asked me, "Why is life death?" *love it*

ELLIE: What did you tell her?

RHIANNON: Dude, if being a camp counselor has taught me anything, it's if you don't have anything camp appropriate to say, say nothing at all.

LAURA: I'll trade you, Rhiannon.

DANIELLE: I'll trade you my entire cabin for Christina.

ELLIE: Are they really that bad, Danielle?

DANIELLE: They're . . . They're *good, a little tough love*  
*good confession*  
(*she's on the verge of crying but holds back her tears*) so awful. To each other, to me. They're horrible little . . . little-

RHIANNON: Shits?

DANIELLE: Yes! Absolute shits!

ELLIE: Oh, sweetie, even your favorite camper?

DANIELLE: (*She sighs.*) They've been bullying Cameron. *harder to say, doesn't come out easily*

LAURA: Oh no.

DANIELLE: *mean*  
I shouldn't be surprised considering how badly it went when he came out to them as transgender but still!

ELLIE: That is really awful, I'm so sorry Danielle. (*She hugs her.*) *good comforting*

LAURA: Why don't they just put him in a boy's cabin?

RHIANNON: Yeah, dude, why don't they?

DANIELLE: They're worried about putting someone with boobs in a cabin full of teenage boys.

LAURA: Oh.

RHIANNON: Still, bullying is pretty bad, man.

DANIELLE: That's not all.

RHIANNON: Aw man, it gets worse?

DANIELLE: Yeah, they've bullied Cameron so badly that he's chosen to stop speaking.



*take a moment to register*  
 RHIANNON: Dude, ~~what~~/how?

*find  
lees*

DANIELLE: They've been making him feel uncomfortable by being so Not Camp Appropriate but he could only call them out for being NCA so many times. Apparently one of the times that he spoke up, they told him that no one cares what he has to say. So he's decided to no longer say anything at all. The only way I could get him to tell me was by getting him to write it down.

*good  
build*

LAURA: Better to be mute than misunderstood. Wow.

*good stand up keep it smooth*  
 DANIELLE: It's so fucking frustrating!

*trying to calm her down*

ELLIE: Danielle, we know. It's hard to stop bullying, you can't always be there and-

*in a  
height  
of frustration*

DANIELLE: No, Ellie, I mean Cameron. He's been learning sign language from some deaf girl and for the past two days he's being signing or mouthing words or whatever at me and then he gets mad at me when I don't understand. We used to talk about our favorite authors and bounce story ideas off each other and now he has to write down every stupid sentence after repeating it at me in sign language for five minutes.

*problem solving*

ELLIE: Maybe you could learn some sign language, try to speak to him on his terms or-

DANIELLE: I've tried, I really have. I just, you know. I'm just tired.

ELLIE: Sweetie, don't give up yet.

RHIANNON: Dude, no. I swear to fuck you are not giving up on this camper.

DANIELLE: I'm at the end of my rope, Rhi.

RHIANNON: You'll destroy him.

*good cut off*

DANIELLE: But I-

*nervous  
fees  
plant it*

RHIANNON: Dude, tell me, do you know how long it took for the twin towers to come down?

DANIELLE: Are you comparing me to terrorists?

RHIANNON: No man, just tell me, do you know?

DANIELLE: No.

RHIANNON: Less than fifteen seconds. Do you know how long it takes to burn down a dorm room?

DANIELLE: Um, no.

RHIANNON: Less than five minutes. Do you know how long it takes to destroy someone's self-esteem?

DANIELLE: Some allotted amount of time?

RHIANNON: Two seconds being ignored at summer camp.

*good  
come  
down*

DANIELLE: Oh. *good reader*

RHIANNON: Look, man. It is easier to destroy something than create something and it's a hell of a lot less time consuming. It would take less time to burn the Mona Lisa than it did to paint it and it will take moments of you letting that camper down for you to destroy his trust. When I was here, my cabin counselor gave up on me so don't you fucking dare be that counselor. *Show regret man*

DANIELLE: Okay, I get it. I'll . . . do something. I don't know.

RHIANNON: It'll mean everything to him, I promise.

*side down with Ellie foot touch at comfort*  
LAURA: You were saying that Cameron likes stories, right? Maybe do something involving stories and the cabin or something. Get them all involved.

DANIELLE: Yeah, maybe, I'll think about it.

ELLIE: *(Checking her phone)* Hey, looks like all of girl's side is having an official mandatory fun night.

*(Everyone else checks their phones.)*

RHIANNON: Fuck yeah! Maybe they have something better than cold pizza. No offense, Ellie but <sup>I'm</sup> totally in the mood for s'mores.

ELLIE: None taken, let's go!

DANIELLE: I didn't get an invite.

RHIANNON: No way! *(RHIANNON grabs DANIELLE's phone and looks through it.)* No way, how could they forget you?

ELLIE: Hey. *(She hugs DANIELLE as she starts to cry again.)* We were already having our own awesome night, we don't need them to keep having one.

DANIELLE: B-but Rhiannon wanted s'mores.

RHIANNON: It's cool, we'll make poor man s'mores, I did it while I was at camp. Got a lighter?

DANIELLE: No.

*(RHIANNON, ELLIE and LAURA all pull out their lighters at the same time.)*

DANIELLE: No, guys, we'll burn the cabin down.

ELLIE: I'll be right back. *(She leaves.)*

DANIELLE: What's she doing?

RHIANNON: I think she's ninja-ing us some supplies. *(To LAURA.)* So, tell us more about Cat Ears.

LAURA: *(Disgruntled)* Really?

RHIANNON: Did she really pee her bed the first night to mark her territory?

LAURA: Yes.

DANIELLE: And hiss at you when you tried to take her sheets to wash them?

LAURA: Yup.

RHIANNON: And *keep going if love*

*(ELLIE returns with graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows.)*

ELLIE: Ta-da! I had to be super sneaky but I got them for you. *(She pulls out a marshmallow and hands it to DANIELLE with her lighter.)* The trick is to not burn your fingers.

*(DANIELLE cautiously tries "roasting" the marshmallow over the small flame while LAURA and RHIANNON grab marshmallows and do the same. ELLIE makes chocolate and graham cracker sandwiches.)*

ELLIE: Rhiannon, don't set yours on fire.

RHIANNON: But I like mine burnt to a crisp.

DANIELLE: *(Makes her s'more and takes a bite.)* It tastes like butane. *(She laughs)* They're the best s'mores I've ever had.

*(LAURA burns her fingers and drops her marshmallow.)*

LAURA: Fuck shit tits!

RHIANNON: Damn, and I thought I had the potty mouth.

ELLIE: Told you not burn your fingers, Laura. *(She hands her another marshmallow)*

LAURA: I wasn't trying to.

RHIANNON: *(Pops the <sup>done</sup> marshmallow in her mouth)* Mmm, butane and friendship.

DANIELLE: Are you sure it's okay?

RHIANNON: Are you kidding? This is awesome! We're breaking so many fire codes just to crappily burn some marshmallows to spend time with each other rather than those assholes out there. I'd rather nearly burn down our cabin with you guys any day.

LAURA: Me too.

ELLIE: You know I think the world of you, Danielle. *Keep the arm thing* Now give me back my lighter.

*(They continue to make them as the lights dim to near darkness, the flames shining brighter than the stage lights before each lighter is turned off one by one. End of scene.)*

## Scene Two

*Playwright's note: For most of the scene, CAMERON is signing rather than speaking. "In ASL" refers to in American Sign Language. It is imperative that there is nothing translating his signs for hearing audiences other than Danielle reading what he writes.*

*The next morning, DANIELLE sits surrounded by campers at a cafeteria table, all wearing Camp White Lake camp uniforms that vary from the counselors' uniforms by color. DANIELLE sits between CAMERON and NIKKI and NIKKI talks to her friends, SELENA and GABBY, who sit on her right. CAMERON is reading a sign language book and practicing various signs.*

NIKKI: So one time in my chemistry class we were learning about crystals and it was awesome because we got to make our own rock candy.

GABBY: Yummy!

NIKKI: *good story telling* It gets better. We get to make them all different colors and so I make mine red, of course but it turns out pink but whatever. But my chemistry teacher seriously brings in blue rock candy.

And he's bald, with a goatee and glasses so he totally looks like that guy from "Breaking Bad" *more longer* So I said to the teacher, "What is that, meth? Are you secretly a drug dealer?"

SELENA: Oh my God, that's hilarious. *not sarcastic*

DANIELLE: Nikki, maybe talk about something else. *good reactions*

NIKKI: It wasn't meth, though. That's the joke.

DANIELLE: Nikki, I'm sure you can find ways of being funny without being inappropriate.

NIKKI: But those are my best stories. *beware of writing*

DANIELLE: Yes, but camp is a place where we want everyone to feel comfortable so we avoid things that might make people uncomfortable. Like jokes about teachers dealing drugs.

SELENA: The only one that's uncomfortable is the Shemale over there. *good gesturing*

DANIELLE: Selena! *became what's: level* His name is Cameron and you should respect him like any of your other cabin mates.

CAMERON: *became what's: level* (In ASL) Please stop talking about me like I'm not here. *read*

DANIELLE: Um, Cameron, I don't know what that means. I'm sorry. *good subject*

CAMERON looks for something to write with but finds only a pen, no paper, in his pocket. He writes on his hand "Stop" and shows it to DANIELLE.

DANIELLE: Stop? *not*

GABBY: What a freak.

*all laugh*

CAMERON reaches across DANIELLE to show NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY what's on his hand.

NIKKI: We're not going to stop talking because you stopped talking, weirdo.

DANIELLE: I think he means stop talking about him.

CAMERON: (In ASL) Yes, thank you.

DANIELLE: Yes. Ladies, let's talk about something else. Like, um, who's excited for the camper dance?

NIKKI: Ew. We can't even kiss our dates.

SELENA: Why would you want to kiss your date? Boys are terrible kissers.

GABBY: How would you know?

SELENA: How do you think I know?

NIKKI: Ooooo! Tell us everything. Did he put his tongue in your mouth?

DANIELLE: Okay to NCA in two seconds flat. Come on, guys, no one at the table wants to hear about that, especially when we're about to eat.

NIKKI: I wanna know.

DANIELLE: I don't want to think about tongues in anybody's mouths.

GABBY: You have a tongue in your mouth. It just happens to be your tongue.

DANIELLE: (turning to Cameron) So, what's that book you've got there?

CAMERON lifts the book so DANIELLE can read the cover.

DANIELLE: Oh, a sign language book. That's cool. Learn any cool signs?

CAMERON: (In ASL) Yes.

DANIELLE: Can you show me some?

CAMERON: (In ASL) I wish people understood me.

DANIELLE: Cool, what does that mean?

CAMERON repeats the signs while mouthing the words.

DANIELLE: I can't read lips either, I'm sorry.

CAMERON writes it on his hand for her.

DANIELLE: "I wish people understood me." Oh. Um. Well. It would probably help if you started speaking again. I know I liked talking to you about the story you were writing.

CAMERON: (In ASL) No. (He shakes his head.)

DANIELLE: No? Did you stop writing that story?

good  
friend

NIKKI

NIKKI get up for  
good drive

patonime

she repeat get up for

wave or split

CAMERON starts to sign but writes something on his hand instead.

DANIELLE: "Talking doesn't help. Everything I say is wrong." Oh, Cameron, that's not true. *read*

*slow*  
CAMERON returns to reading his book and practicing finger spelling.

DANIELLE: Okay, I understand that you don't want to speak but I'd still like to interact with you. Could you maybe teach me some signs? *NIKKI sign*

CAMERON: (In ASL) You want to learn to sign? (He writes it down on his hand for her.)

DANIELLE: "Learn to sign", yes! Can we start with my name?

NIKKI: What's the sign for control freak?

DANIELLE: Hey! That was just mean. *don't compare* Next time any of you ladies say something NCA, I'm going to Gina. Now find something else to talk about.

SELENA: (Under her breath) Running to head of girls' side, way to prove her point.

DANIELLE: Excuse me?

SELENA: Nothing, nothing at all. *Q*

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, how do I sign Danielle?

CAMERON: (In ASL) D-A-M-I-E-L-L-E.

DANIELLE: (In ASL) D-A-M-I-E-L-L-E (Out Loud) Is that right? *really, quiet*

*get distractions away*  
CAMERON looks in the book.

CAMERON: (In ASL) No! No. D-A-N-I-E-L-L-E. *phones? just minor activity*

*-* DANIELLE tries again but CAMERON corrects her when she mixes M and N again.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's confusing. What's Cameron look like?

CAMERON: (In ASL) C-A-M-E-R-O-N.

DANIELLE: That's cool! *genuine* You're getting really good at that. (To the rest of the table) Hey, ladies, do the rest of you want to learn how to sign your name?

GABBY: Like in cursive? I learned that in fourth grade.

NIKKI: No, stupid, like in sign language. Danielle is trying to get us to talk to it.

DANIELLE: By it I hope you're not referring to Cameron.

NIKKI: Sorry, honest mistake, "Cameron" Hey, I never asked, what's your real name? Could you show us that in sign language?

CAMERON flips NIKKI off.

DANIELLE: Cameron!

more subtext

NIKKI: Aw, that's pretty. You should have stayed a girl with such a pretty name. Though, looking at you now, you probably made an ugly girl.

DANIELLE: Both of you! Enough!

NIKKI: Alright, what's my name in sign language? *still unnatural*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-I-T-C-H.

SELENA: Oh. *(Signing and speaking each letter out loud)* B-I-T-C-H? I'm pretty sure that's not how you spell Nikki, shemale. That's right, I know how to finger spell so don't try that with me.

DANIELLE: Cameron-

NIKKI: Maybe we should take a page out its book and start talking about stuff in another language. Then we can talk about whatever we want! *more subtle*

DANIELLE: Nikki, please! Please keep it camp appropriate until we're dismissed for breakfast. Okay? Can you make it that long without making a sex joke?

GABBY: Ooooooh, counselor said a dirty word! *more subtle better*

DANIELLE: Seriously, five minutes, that's all I ask of you three.

NIKKI: Fine, deal.

SELENA and GABBY nod their heads in agreement.

DANIELLE: Thank you. Cameron-

*Danielle gets up from her seat and pulls him aside while Nikki eavesdrops on their conversation*

DANIELLE: There are better ways of reacting to bullying than being nasty right back. Maybe we can figure out something together.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why? *(He writes something on his hand.)*

DANIELLE: I never said you have to be nice to them. I'm going to tell you a secret, Cameron, that most adults won't tell you. You don't have to be nice to those that aren't nice to you.

CAMERON writes something else down.

DANIELLE: Well, that's what we need to figure out, isn't it. You can't go around flipping people off when you're mad because it's easier than talking to them. Unless someone cuts you off on the road. You're always allowed to flip someone off if they cut you off.

CAMERON: *(Gesturing, not in ASL)* You've flipped people off?

DANIELLE: Oh believe me, plenty of people have seen me flip the bird. But not here, Camp White Lake is not a place for that sort of thing.

good  
subtext

work on set up

good "tell secret"

NIKKI: Woah, wait, what are you saying to it? Because it sounds like you're telling it to be mean to us after telling us not to be mean. Are you serious right now?

DANIELLE: <sup>good mainly my frustration</sup> Actually, we're talking about how annoying it is when someone cuts you off on the road. Do you drive yet, Nikki?

NIKKI: If I did, do you think I'd still be here in this shiiiiiii- shindig? This shindig. <sup>you</sup>

DANIELLE: Nice save.

GABBY: <sup>oh oh good cayerness & honesty</sup> One time, my mom named her car Ophelia, because she loves Shakespeare, and then she accidentally drove it into a lake. She's okay but Ophelia drowned.

DANIELLE: Oh my God! Hopefully she learned her lesson with her new car.

GABBY: She named it Desdemona!

DANIELLE: Oh no.

GABBY: No, she named it Desdemona, not Yoko Ono.

SELENA: Now I know where you get your brilliance from, Gabby.

GABBY: Aw, thank you! But I think I gain more wisdom from my mom than her cars.

NIKKI: Oh, wow. <sup>good</sup>

DANIELLE: <sup>wonder over keep underlying pain</sup> (DANIELLE sits down to talk to GABBY.) So, Gabby, your art here at camp is painting, right? What do you like to paint?

GABBY: Oh my God, I love painting. According to my mom, I loved it so much I used to eat the paint

NIKKI: That explains so much. <sup>say it to Selena</sup>

DANIELLE: Oh, um, that's . . . weird. Uh-

CAMERON: (Taps DANIELLE on the shoulder and signs) I love to draw!

DANIELLE: You . . . what? (She repeats the sign for drawing) Is that-

NIKKI: (Under her breath) Retard.

DANIELLE: Woah, Nikki, we don't use the R-word. Ever. Even outside of camp.

NIKKI: Are you serious? You're trying to tell me what I can say even after I leave? What the . . . heck? What am I allowed to talk about?

DANIELLE: Talk about your art. Talk about your favorite TV show. Talk about your favorite kind of music. It's ~~really not that hard~~. <sup>less begging, better</sup>

NIKKI: Dance. "Game of Thrones." Anything on the radio. Done.

DANIELLE: Your favorite show is "Game of Thrones?"



SELENA: Oh my God, me too!

DANIELLE: Maybe don't talk about your favorite shows.

GABBY: Mine is "My Little Pony!"

DANIELLE: So, Cameron, what were you saying- signing?

*CAMERON writes the translation on his hand.*

DANIELLE: Oh! You like drawing too. That's cool. Hey, Gabby, do you like drawing?

GABBY: No. *get up?*

DANIELLE: Okay then. So, Cameron, what do you like to draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love to draw people. And faces.

DANIELLE: Oh! *(She does the sign for face)* Face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! This the sign for face.

DANIELLE: Have you drawn anyone at camp?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. *(He pulls out a picture from the sign language book)* See?

DANIELLE: Who is she?

*CAMERON write her name at the top of the paper.*

DANIELLE: Olivia. Wow. She's very beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, she is beautiful.

DANIELLE: *(She does the sign for beautiful)* Beautiful?

*CAMERON nods.*

DANIELLE: *(She repeats the sign.)* Beautiful. Hey, could you draw me? I've never gotten to model for an artist before.

*CAMERON turns the paper over, squints at Danielle and poses her before drawing her.*

DANIELLE: This is so cool.

*CAMERON puts a finger to his lips.*

DANIELLE: Oh, okay, still and silent. Got it.

SELENA: Okay, so one time there was this word that my cousin kept using and he thought it meant something else but it totally meant *something else*.

GABBY: How could you use something else wrong? It just means something else.

SELENA: No, Gabby, he kept being like "Oh man, I totally bleeped and it's so bad when I bleep."

GABBY: He used the word bleep wrong?

*good money,  
see nursing & care*

*pad?  
s: r?*

SELENA: No the word was (*whispering*) queef.

DANIELLE *moves to do something but goes back to posing.*

NIKKI: Oh my God! What did he think it meant?

SELENA: He thought it meant to forget! At one point he said he queefed about his sister's birthday and then we had to tell him what it was.

GABBY: What's queefing?

SELENA: It's, um-

NIKKI: Vagina farting.

DANIELLE *grips the table.*

GABBY: Oh! He vagina farted about his sister's birthday. That's hilarious.

NIKKI: You know what word I hate, more than queef?

GABBY: Stop?

SELENA: Moist?

NIKKI: Pussy. God, I hate the word pussy. It makes me think of cats! I don't want to think about cats when I think of my . . . genitalia. Cats are hairy and . . . bleh!

*good physical* DANIELLE *is getting visibly more and more tense.*

SELENA: (*Asking rhetorically*) Why do you think they call it a pussy?

GABBY: Because it meows? Because it licks up milk? Oh Oh Oh! Because it spits up hairballs!

SELENA: I hope neither of yours do that.

NIKKI: Neither of mine do.

GABBY: Both of mine do! (*She giggles and then snorts.*)

DANIELLE: (*Finally stop posing*) Enough! That is enough! Why?

*None of the three girls answer.*

DANIELLE: Oh, now you stop talking? I asked you a question. Why do you do that? Why do you feel the need to talk about these things at the cafeteria table? Or at all?

SELENA: I don't know.

NIKKI: Because it's funny.

DANIELLE: Really? You can't think of any jokes that don't involve inappropriate things?

NIKKI: It's the kind of jokes my friends at school like.

DANIELLE: Well you're not at school or with those friends. You're at camp with different people with different senses of humor. Not everyone finds those kinds of things funny and you

never know who you're going to upset if you just speak without thinking because it might, *might* be funny.

GABBY suddenly lets out a giggle.

DANIELLE: What?

GABBY: Sorry, I just got that we were talking about vaginas, not cats! *(She giggles again.)*

DANIELLE: Okay, I hope you think of a better explanation than "It's funny" because I'm pretty sure the head of girl's side won't accept that answer any more than I did. *(She gets up.)*

SELENA: No, please don't get Gina. *get up good*

DANIELLE: If you won't listen to me, then maybe you'll listen to her.

DANIELLE exits.

NIKKI: Oh thank fucking God, she's gone. Fuck shit dammit. Ugh.

SELENA: Yeah, she's gone to get the head of girl's side!

GABBY: Do you think she'll bring just her head or the rest of her too?

NIKKI: Jesus fucking Christ, Gabby, go eat a can of paint.

GABBY: I was kidding, jeez. *be offended, good*

SELENA: Nikki, we're in deep shit this time. What if she says we can't go to the pool during free time or . . . or . . . or worse, the dance!

NIKKI: Calm the fuck down, she won't do that. *(She looks in the direction of where DANIELLE left.)* Oh shit, she looks pissed. *genuine*

SELENA: See?

NIKKI: Well, before she comes back, I have to ask it something.

SELENA: No, Nikki, don't make it worse.

NIKKI: Hey! Shemale! *(CAMERON ignores her.)* Hey! We were talking about pussies earlier, do you have one? You keep saying you're a boy but people in girls' cabins tend to have vaginas. So what's down there, huh?

SELENA: Don't be weird, why do you want to know that? What else would be down there?

GABBY: A cactus?

SELENA: I worry what your vagina looks like.

NIKKI: You're really a girl, aren't you? You just think pretending to be a boy will make you cool.

SELENA: Nikki . . .

NIKKI: What? Afraid that the mute is gonna snitch on us? *(NIKKI moves closer to CAMERON and he struggles to keep ignoring her.)* I've seen your pads, you definitely don't have a dick.

SELENA: Danielle is-

NIKKI: Shush! Or are you really a boy and you just got put in a girl's cabin so you could perv on us, huh? Which is it?

GABBY: Nikki-

NIKKI: Shut up. We all know. Come on, just admit that you're just a-  
*DANIELLE reenters.*

DANIELLE: Nikki, what are you doing?

NIKKI: Oh, I'm just trying to see it's drawing of you.

DANIELLE: Alright, ladies, come with me, the head of girl's side wants to speak with you.  
Come along.

*NIKKI, SELENA, and GABBY get out of their seats and exit with DANIELLE.*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Bitches.

### Scene Three

*Playwright's note: A good portion of this scene takes place in American Sign Language with projected supertitles for audience members that do not speak ASL. Dialogue that is signed will be preceded by the stage direction "In ASL" but some of the dialogue is spoken aloud or written down and read out loud. It is important to keep what is spoken and what is sign as it is in the stage directions.*

*"One week later" is projected onto the supertitle screen.*

*The scene takes place in CAMERON'S cabin with CAMERON and OLIVIA sitting on a bed as OLIVIA teaches CAMERON American Sign Language. CAMERON signs very slowly throughout the scene and signs more words than necessary or asks OLIVIA what they are. OLIVIA frequently has to slow down or repeat for him and omits more words like many native speakers do.*

*yes & no signs sarcastic, nod & shake head*  
CAMERON: *(In ASL)* This is difficult. Signing is difficult.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So is being deaf. Quit complaining.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(OLIVIA writes it down and he reads it aloud)* "Quit your bitching." Oh! Is this *(does the sign for complain)* bitch? *(Does the sign again and laughs)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Complain? No.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No? *(Out loud)* Ugh, can't you just teach me the bad words so I can swear at people without them knowing?

*OLIVIA reaches over and playfully smacks him upside the head.*

CAMERON: What's that the sign for? *(OLIVIA writes it down)* "It's Olivia for stop being an ass." *(In ASL)* Sorry, Olivia.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do ABCs.

*keep making* CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A - B - C - D - E - F . . . *(Struggles, OLIVIA shows him G)* *smile getting* G - H - I - J . . .  
J - K - L - M - N - O . . . *(out loud)* oh! It's like K! *(In ASL)* P - Q - R - S - T - U - V - W - X - Y - Z!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your name?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You know my name!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Don't be stupid. Sign your name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Oh. C-A-M-E-R-O-N. *go smooth*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do pronouns.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I, me, you, we, H-E, S-H-E, them, mine, your, our, their.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What are your pronouns?

CAMERON: *(Smiles and signs)* H-E. I am a boy.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What is your art, boy?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My art is drawing and writing. *(Out loud)* Oh! I've never asked you before. *(In ASL)* Your art?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Dance. *(She writes it down for him)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W *there is a sign*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Wow?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How do you dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* With my body.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand. *(She writes it down and he begins to read it out loud)*

With my- oh. *(In ASL)* J-E-R-K. *(He pauses, trying to figure out how to sign what he means.)* *(In ASL)* You are deaf. *more*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. I'm aware.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Deaf people dance?

*(OLIVIA smacks him upside the head again.)* *Olivia won*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-W! What?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Deaf people love dancing!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* How?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Are you asking me how to love? Really?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No, no I know how to love. But how do *you* dance?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How do *you* dance?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* So? /

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear -

CAMERON *mouths "music"*. OLIVIA shows him the sign for music.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I hear music and dance.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Oh! I feel music. Like . . . like - *finger wiggle for thinking/un*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* B-A-S-S?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes! Like-

*top foot* OLIVIA grabs CAMERON'S hand and puts it over her heart. CAMERON freezes and stares at her with confusion. OLIVIA bobs her head and points to her heart area. After a few more moments of fluster, CAMERON gets it. The two of them sway to the beat of OLIVIA'S heart. She releases his hand but he leaves it there for a few more seconds before removing it. *Close Eyes*

CAMERON: (In ASL) I understand.

He mouths "heart" OLIVIA shows him the sign.

CAMERON: (In ASL) Heart.

He mouths "beat" and OLIVIA shows him the sign.

CAMERON: (In ASL) Beat. Heartbeat . . . I have a question.

OLIVIA: (In ASL) What?

CAMERON: (Out loud) Why didn't you go to a deaf camp with other deaf people? Even other deaf dancers? *more indignant*

OLIVIA: (In ASL) Why didn't you go to a boy's cabin with other boys? *some sign*

CAMERON: (In ASL) My mom.

OLIVIA: (In ASL) Me too.

CAMERON: (Out loud and in shock) You're mom taught you sign language but wouldn't put you in a deaf camp? What the fuck!

OLIVIA: (In ASL) Use sign language! *How orf*

CAMERON: (In ASL) I don't know W-T-F.

OLIVIA shows him the sign for what the fuck.

CAMERON: (In ASL) What the fuck, your mom?

OLIVIA: (In ASL) My mom doesn't know sign language.

CAMERON: (In ASL) What the fuck. Who-what-when-where-how-and why? *confusion hands*

OLIVIA: (In ASL) She isn't deaf or hard of hearing so why should she bother?

CAMERON: (In ASL) But you are. *you deaf*

OLIVIA: (In ASL) I'm not a good enough reason.

CAMERON: (In ASL) I don't understand.

OLIVIA writes down the translation

CAMERON: (In ASL) I don't understand.

OLIVIA points to the translation.

CAMERON: (In ASL) I don't understand. Why not you?

*Keep it punchy  
frustration comes out in old leaning  
idea*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Too much time and effort. She's a busy woman and she already finds me to be a burden. She just wants me to be normal and easy to deal with.

OLIVIA *writes down the translation.*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* But you are good.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Not really, I actually go out of my way to make things more difficult for her since she's such a dick to me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are great!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do great people swear at their moms for fun?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are . . . *(He gets frustrated and mouths at her "you are worth it".)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I am worth it? *You are important*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes! You are worth it!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You learned sign for yourself, not me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I S-T-A-Y for you.

OLIVIA *stares at him with confusion. CAMERON mouths "stay for you" at her.*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I stay for you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool. Tell me about your mom.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't want to talk about my mom any more.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* My mom . . . not good. Not great.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She doesn't call me Cameron.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What a bitch!

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She calls me *(mouthing the word)* confused.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Confused.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She thinks I'm confused. That's why she P-U-T me in a girl's cabin.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* But you're <sup>say</sup> not a girl.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She still calls me her daughter. *(Out loud.)* It's horrible, I think she's <sup>be</sup> hoping it's a phase and putting me in a girl's cabin will get me through it faster. <sub>pig</sub>

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Fuck her! Fuck your cabin! Fuck girl's side! Fuck anyone who doesn't call you C-A-M- you need a name sign.

*great  
sympathy  
and  
honesty*

*Olivia  
realizes he  
loves her and  
defers*



CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign you can show your mom or anyone else who calls you the wrong name.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* A name sign?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A name sign, a sign that is unique to you and represents you. How about I shorten your name to D-O-R-K?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* M-E-A-N-I-E. Is your name sign B-I-T-C-H?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, mine is *(She shows him her name-sign)*.

CAMERON repeats her name-sign.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* W-O-W, it is you. *(He does her name-sign again.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes, it is I, Olivia. Good job.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What should I do for mine?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you like to do, besides annoy me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I what you?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Forget it. What do you do?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write and draw.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* What do you write? What do you draw?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I write . . . *(He writes down the words.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You write stories *(CAMERON repeats the sign)*, poetry *(CAMERON repeats the sign)* and . . . Facebook statuses?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love poetry.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* And Facebook?

CAMERON: *(Outloud)* Holy shit do I miss the internet. I miss checking- *(OLIVIA puts a hand over his mouth.)*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL, with her hand still over his mouth)* A-S-L.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love writing more than the *(mouthing the word)* internet.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Writing . . . *(She repeats the sign a couple times.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, writing.

OLIVIA does the sign for writing but with her right hand forming a C.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You *(Does the modified sign again.)*

keep it  
cool

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Me? *(He repeats the sign and then says out loud.)* Oh! *(In ASL)* C for C-A-M-E-R-O-N and writing. W-O-W.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you like it? Or do I have to start calling you bitch face?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love it. Please call me *(He does the name-sign)* not . . . that other sign.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't know, Cameron, you look like a bitch face to me.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* No. I am Cameron. I am a boy and I am . . . *(He mouths the word)* <sup>man</sup> ~~cocky~~ <sup>ness</sup> "transgender").

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Transgender.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I am transgender. I love that sign! It's like beautiful and self. Transgender is beautiful and I am beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Yes. You are beautiful.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You think I'm beautiful? I think you're beautiful.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Cool . . . I think you're . . . cool. I'm not used to people saying nice things to me. I'm not used to hearing people talking to me at all.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Do you realize you're the only other hearing person to sign with me in years?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry, I don't understand.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Of course you don't understand. Hearing people don't fucking understand, even if you do talk to them in their language. You know this, this is why you don't talk any more. This is why I only speak in my language. <sup>stand up</sup> You want to know what I like about sign language? You have to think before you sign and you have to sign what you think. None of your hearing people's subtle bullshit. Sign language is about expressing, not hiding. I'm glad I'm deaf so I don't have to hear all the horrible things you've told me you hear. I don't have to hear my teachers talking slower to me because they think I'm an idiot as well as deaf. Best of all, I don't have to hear my mother yelling at me because she thinks I'm stupid. She's the stupid one, can't even fucking sign my language.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand. <sup>little smile</sup>

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No you don't. But at least you try. Thank you for trying.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you. <sup>stand up</sup>

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* How?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I watch you sign, I know what you mean.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You don't understand half my signs.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I understand you as a person.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Why?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Because I hope you don't mind but I've fallen in love with you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You love to fall on me?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I love you.

OLIVIA stares at him in confusion as ~~an awkward silence ensues.~~

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* Do you mind?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I don't understand.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry. I think I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'm sorry you love me. I am shit *Sit down*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* You are beautiful and smart and funny and weird and I love you. *Sit dose*

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You've known me for two weeks.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* The days are long and each day with you is amazing. I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Stop saying that. Stop lying to me.

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* I'm going to keep saying it until you believe me. *(In ASL)* I love you, *each other*

Olivia. I love you. I love you. I love you!

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're being ridiculous. You can't love someone you barely know. *single to*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* I don't understand but I know I love you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* Now you know you love me. Okay.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes. I know I love you. I love you!

CAMERON starts hopping around on the bed.

CAMERON: *(Out loud and in ASL)* I love you! I love you! I love you!

NIKKI, SELENA and GABBY enter the cabin as CAMERON is dancing around.

SELENA: What the fuck, why is she in our cabin?

NIKKI: Oh wow, I think it's managed to get itself a girlfriend.

CAMERON flips her off.

NIKKI: Ah, now there's some sign language I know.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* I'll go get the counselor. *(She moves to leave.)*

NIKKI: Stay where you are, bitch. I'm talking to both of you.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* You're the bitch. Can't even get some pronouns right.

convince  
her

frustration  
and

love

good  
transition

feed off  
each other

NIKKI: *(Imitating her signs in a mocking manner)* What the fuck is this? You trying to flag down a plane or something?

SELENA: Hey, not cool, you know my cousin is deaf.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* What the fuck? Leave us alone.

NIKKI: You know what? I'm actually okay with it. Means I don't have to hear you whining to me or the counselor about being "Not Camp Appropriate". I can say whatever the fuck I want, *really stuff* it's a free country. I came here to dance, not get told off by trannies.

*CAMERON gets up and slaps her.*

NIKKI: You hit like a girl. *hit him with words*

*OLIVIA gets up and keeps him from hitting her again.*

GABBY: Um, you're a girl too.

SELENA: Gabby, that's not the point.

GABBY: Then what is the point? I didn't come to art camp to be mean to people. I just wanted to paint flowers and stuff while hearing band kids practice. Instead, you made us leave free period to see if he was here. *good*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* H-E?

NIKKI: You didn't have to come. You could have gone to the pool and practiced doggy paddling.

GABBY: You threatened to push me into the lake if I didn't come.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* This has been fun and by fun I mean awkward so- *(She grabs CAMERON's hand and moves to leave)*

*NIKKI moves to block her path.*

GABBY: Oh, you gonna push her in the lake for not obeying?

SELENA: Nikki, let the boy go. Gabby's got a point. This is weird.

NIKKI: You too? It's not a boy. It's . . . what are you? Like what's in your pants?

GABBY: Underwear?

SELENA: None of your business?

NIKKI: I'm asking it.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Why are you asking?

NIKKI: *(Moving towards him)* Is it a hand? Tentacles? A third eye? Or do you have a vagina because you're a fucking girl? *(She makes a grab at his waistband but he moves out of the way.)*  
Hmmm?

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* A fist! *(He punches her in the stomach and runs out of the cabin)*

OLIVIA *runs after him but stops at the door of the cabin.*

NIKKI: Okay, I deserved that.

GABBY: You know, they changed the name of the Heimlich maneuver because people kept suing the family when it wouldn't work. I think you're currently experiencing why.

NIKKI: Not helpful, Gabby.

OLIVIA *looks out the window and begins gesturing at the others. SELENA comes to the window.*

SELENA: Oh my God, he's running into the woods. Olivia, you have to go after him.

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* No, no. I can't. I'm afraid of the woods and the dark.

SELENA: I don't understand, finger spell?

OLIVIA: *(In ASL)* A-F-R-A-I-D.

SELENA: Oh, of the woods? *(OLIVIA nods.)* Fuck, we have to tell the counselor.

GABBY: Fuck.

NIKKI: I'm so fucked.

*The lights fade to black but before the scene changes, counselors can be heard in the dark, calling Cameron's name and searching for him in the woods.*

### Scene Four

*DANIELLE enters with the stage lights still off and a flashlight as the only source of light.*

DANIELLE: Cameron! Where are you? We're just trying to help.

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Dude, where you at? You need help?

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Sweetie, are you okay? Please come home.

LAURA: *(Offstage)* Hey. Cameron. Hey. You here?

*The lights come up slowly to reveal CAMERON on the opposite side of the stage from*

*DANIELLE. He is sitting and grimacing from pain.*

DANIELLE: I found him! Cameron . . . oh my God, you're hurt. Can you stand?

*CAMERON shakes his head. She offers him a hand to help him up with. CAMERON shakes his*

*remember  
stage  
directions*

*head again.*

DANIELLE: Cameron . . .

*She crouches down to his level.*

DANIELLE: You don't want to go back yet, do you?

*CAMERON doesn't answer.*

ELLIE: *(Offstage)* Is he okay?

DANIELLE: He's injured but he can't get up yet. I'll stay with him while you guys get first aid, okay?

RHIANNON: *(Offstage)* Works for me! Peace out!

DANIELLE: *(Standing up)* Cameron, what happened in the cabin? With Nikki and them?

*He doesn't even look at her. give her something to react to*

DANIELLE: I know you hurt her, I just want to understand why.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* She H-U-R-T me first.

DANIELLE: Cameron, there's no one else around, is the sign language really necessary?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes.

DANIELLE: Okay, how's this? We create a safe zone. Here. In the <sup>good</sup> creepy, dark forest. Um, safe from judgment and safe from the head of girl's side. We can tell each other things and it be just between us. Okay?

*date with movement*

*CAMERON doesn't respond.*

DANIELLE: I'm serious, nothing you say here will leave this forest and you can tell Gina as much or as little as you want when you get back.

CAMERON still doesn't respond.

DANIELLE: Cameron, I'm trying to understand you, as a person. Like, *(she takes a deep breath)* I actually kinda, you know, get the trans thing.

CAMERON gives her a weird look.

*good*  
*in his* DANIELLE: I mean, it's only a little. But, when I'm not here, in uniform, I basically dress like a boy. T-shirts and flannels, you know? ~~And~~ I was such a tom boy growing up, no way you could get me into a dress. I'm all about those boy things, like climbing trees and stuff and I don't paint my nails. *need to believe you, not interested enough*

CAMERON stares at her, confused.

DANIELLE: And you know what was my absolute favorite movie as a kid? Mulan! I loved that she was this super kick-butt, masculine woman that was like "I can do anything a man can do, screw sexism!" You must love Mulan because- *good remember my*

CAMERON: *(Out loud)* You think I'm Mulan?

DANIELLE: Finally, you're talking! *excitement, good*

*good*  
*conversation* CAMERON: You think I'm a woman dressing up and pretending to be a man?

DANIELLE: No, but like, I thought you might look up to her because she . . . she . . . um-

CAMERON: You really don't get it, do you?

DANIELLE: I do understand! You're a boy but you feel trapped in the wrong body.

CAMERON: Was Mulan trapped in the wrong body?

DANIELLE: She was trapped by gender roles.

CAMERON: So no, Mulan is not my Disney role model . . . Ariel is.

DANIELLE: The Little Mermaid? Isn't she a bit . . . you know?

*try not to sound better or trying* CAMERON: Boys can like feminine things, even transboys. I always connected to her story, *went on* knowing you're different, feeling like a change to your body will fix everything and wanting to do anything to get that change. I think I knew even when I first saw that movie that I wasn't a girl.

DANIELLE: That's really young, how old were you?

CAMERON: Probably about four? Maybe five?

DANIELLE: Wow, and it took you this long to come out?

*better*  
CAMERON: It was a rather slow and painful process. Really an ongoing process. You never really stop coming out. *good pain*

DANIELLE: (Nearly under her breath.) Oh I know. *don't know anyway*

CAMERON: What?

DANIELLE: Nothing! So, how did the process start?

CAMERON: Post- Little Mermaid?

DANIELLE: Yes, after your Disney awakening. *keep the physicality*

CAMERON: Well, you know how little girls try on their mother's heels or her jewelry?

DANIELLE: Uh-huh, of course, even I did that for a bit. *don't get defuse*

CAMERON: I was always stealing my dad's ties and trying to learn how to tie them. *good negotiating*  
on his button up shirts or whatever. At first my mom thought it was cute, like "Aw 'she's'  
playing dress up with Daddy's clothes!" *good change* It got less cute after my dad left and even less when I  
refused to wear the *good* "adorable" dresses she would buy me. Around then she stopped thinking it  
was a tom boy phase I'd grow out of and started getting worried.

DANIELLE: Was she worried that you were trans? *surprised*

CAMERON: I doubt she knew what trans people were but I definitely heard the word "lesbian" *good*  
said in concerned whispers enough times. *good more change* *reaction D*

DANIELLE: I'm sorry, Cameron, that must have been hard to hear. *good sympathy*

CAMERON: It's not as bad as this one time, when I was ten, one of the neighbor kids came over  
and called me a dyke. I was just hanging out on my lawn, minding my own business. I don't  
think she even knew what that word meant. *good levels*

DANIELLE: Oh, that's really awful. I'm sorry you had to go through that.

CAMERON: *Yeah*, well, wanna know something funny?

DANIELLE: After all you've said so far, totally.

CAMERON: I probably didn't help things by wanting to be a boy for Halloween that year.

DANIELLE: Just . . . a boy? Not any particular boy?

CAMERON: Yup, just a boy. You can imagine my mother's reaction when I told her. *finding humor*

DANIELLE: Am I right to assume she wasn't too happy about it?

CAMERON: She bought me a Hannah Montana costume as a response. *good*

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's bad. That's a whole new level of awful.

CAMERON: Right? So, one time, while my mother was in the bathroom, I stole the kitchen  
scissors, hid under the coffee table and cut off all my hair. It was pretty bad, ~~my hair looked like~~  
~~I'd cut it underneath a table~~ And, as my mom was getting out of the bathroom, I ran up to her,



good physicality

threw what hair I had cut off at her and yelled, "Now I'll be a boy for every holiday!" Not the best comeback I've ever had.

DANIELLE: Better than what I could have thought of. You really threw your hair at her?

CAMERON: Yeah, it's kinda gross in retrospect.

DANIELLE: Yeah, so is trying to make you be Hannah Montana for Halloween. Did she let you be a boy that year?

CAMERON: Kinda. I borrowed some of my older brother's clothes and she told people I was dressing up as him. It wasn't a very fun Halloween, we didn't trick or treat for very long.

DANIELLE: It sounds like it wasn't a very fun year in general for you.

CAMERON: It gets worse.

DANIELLE: Oh my God, really?

CAMERON: I won't bother you with the rest if you don't want to hear it. I've probably depressed you enough. *(He curls up and begins to turn away.)* good

DANIELLE: Cameron, I wouldn't keep asking about it if I didn't want to know. When I said safe space, I meant it. Your coming out stories stay between you and me. keep physicality

CAMERON: You sure? really

DANIELLE: Very sure. really

CAMERON takes a deep breath before continuing.

good build

CAMERON: Well, I kept the short haircut and then came the classic "Are you a boy or a girl?" childish voice good  
question that any prepubescent 'girl' with short hair gets. I don't know what was weirder, getting asked ~~or~~ hesitating to answer girl. Each time I got asked it, and I got asked it a lot, I felt weirder and weirder about answering girl. And it bothered me a lot too. That's such a basic question, boy or girl, the second question on any questionnaire after your name and the first question any stranger asks about a baby when the parent hasn't properly color coded it. slow down

DANIELLE: Oh my God, we do color code our babies. So weird.

CAMERON: *(Stands up, revealing that he's not really injured)* And then you start to notice everywhere, everything is asking you "Boy or girl?" It's fine when you're cisgendered and you've never had trouble coming up with the answer. But when you do start to wonder . . .

Bathrooms? Clothes shopping? Every questionnaire or answer sheet? "Boy or girl?" And then, one time, someone asked if I wanted a burrito, that's all, just a burrito. And I turned around and screamed, "I'm a boy, goddammit!" I had been holding my pee for an hour trying to figure out

like about boys, like their shoulders or their arms or their eyes and I'm just zoned out, checking out the girl across from me. So when they come to me, I accidentally answered, "their boobs."

CAMERON: So, I'm not weird, right? All of us queer people have trouble with this? *need to*

DANIELLE: Yes. Some more than others but yeah. *ben*

*CAMERON suddenly hugs her.*

DANIELLE: Oh!

CAMERON: Does it get better?

DANIELLE: Yes, it really does.

RHIANNON: *(Off stage)* I got it! It took me forever but I found the first aid kit!

DANIELLE: Oh, um. *(They stop hugging and she looks at CAMERON standing up just fine)*

*CAMERON suddenly and overdramatically falls down, clutching his knee.*

DANIELLE: Um, give it to me. I think he'd prefer if I took care of him.

*CAMERON gives her a thumbs up.*

*RHIANNON comes on stage, holding the med kit, with a confused look on her face. She looks at CAMERON and looks at DANIELLE.*

RHIANNON: Oh, you're going to tell me everything when you get back to the cabin.

*RHIANNON hands her the med kit and exits.*

DANIELLE: Thanks! *(To CAMERON)* Okay, I'm gonna, like, put a bandage around your knee and we should be good, okay? *(Begins haphazardly wrapping his knee.)*

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* O-K with me.

DANIELLE: Oh, are we back to the sign language?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, I'm sorry.

DANIELLE: Well, thank you for telling me your story, Cameron. I appreciate you opening up to me. *(Finishes bandaging)* Now, let's get out of this damn forest.

*The light begin to dim but do not completely fade to black as DANIELLE helps CAMERON up and she supports him as he fake limps out of the forest.*

### Scene Five

*Lights up on DANIELLE's cabin with inside and just outside it viewable. Inside, NIKKI, SELENA, GABBY, CAMERON are getting settled for bed. The scene begins when DANIELLE is well into doing highs and hopes.*

DANIELLE: Alright, now I know you <sup>all</sup> had a rough day but you can't avoid sharing your highs and hopes for today forever. Selena, how about you go first?

SELENA: My high is that I'm not going home early and still getting to go to the dance.

DANIELLE: That is certainly a positive. Do you have a hope?

SELENA: I'm kinda excited about my twenty dates to the dance and seeing how many of them are going to buy me flowers.

DANIELLE: Twenty? Twenty dates?

SELENA: Don't worry, most of them are my friends who couldn't get dates but a few of them are boys that I'm hoping will follow me around like puppies all night.

DANIELLE: And that's your hope? Puppy boys?

SELENA: And flowers from the puppy boys.

DANIELLE: Oh okay then. Sure. And what about you Gabby? Do you have a high for today?

GABBY: I discovered I can put my legs behind my head and walk around on my hands. Wanna see?

DANIELLE: Maybe when I'm less likely to get nightmares. And do you-

GABBY: I hope Cameron has a good time for the last few days.

DANIELLE: Oh, wow, that's very nice of you Gabby.

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Thank you.

GABBY: I like food too! How did you know?

DANIELLE: That means thank you, Gabby.

GABBY: Food is a good way of showing thanks, you're right.

DANIELLE: Okay then. Nikki, you're up.

NIKKI: Can I share a low?

DANIELLE: No, it's gotta be a high, a highlight of your day.

NIKKI: My high is nothing. Nothing was good about my day. *Keep it honest*

DANIELLE: Nothing? Absolutely nothing?

NIKKI: Yup.

*stop  
swinging  
feet*

*don't  
worry*

*good timing*

DANIELLE: Alright, how about a hope, something you hope will be better than nothing?

NIKKI: That camp will be over in three days. *honesty*

DANIELLE: Okay, I think we need to have a talk.

NIKKI: We are talking. Right now. *word choice*

DANIELLE: Let's go outside the cabin for a bit. *good answer*

NIKKI: Alright but it's on you if these guys try and ritually sacrifice each other while we're gone.

*DANIELLE and NIKKI exit the cabin but are still on stage.*

DANIELLE: Is there something you want to tell me?

NIKKI: No.

DANIELLE: Anything you want to get off your chest?

NIKKI: Nope.

DANIELLE: Alright, what happened when you had your meeting with Gina?

NIKKI: Why do you care?

DANIELLE: I'm worried about the fact that absolutely nothing was good about your day. That's pretty concerning, Nikki.

NIKKI: You know what happened.

DANIELLE: Not everything, not your side of things.

NIKKI: I was an asshole and I deserved it.

DANIELLE: Is that what Gina said?

NIKKI: That's what everyone says.

DANIELLE: But I want to know why you were . . . not such a nice person.

NIKKI: I don't know, maybe I wanted to get sent home. *motivation*

DANIELLE: Are you disappointed you didn't go home early?

NIKKI: Kinda, if I did I wouldn't have to live with that thing. *biterness*

DANIELLE: Nikki, really, after all that has happened you're still going to dehumanize Cameron like that?

NIKKI: How am I supposed to react, huh?

DANIELLE: With the kindness and respect you'd show any human being.

NIKKI: But it's- she's-he's not just any human being! I thought he was just a weird girl when I met it-him and then it—he turns out not to be a girl and I just don't get it. It's weird, okay? It's really weird. *good, leave the energy, keep our hands*

DANIELLE: You called him a he. Or tried to at least.

NIKKI: Because Gina told me to respect his pronouns or I won't get to go to the dance. *less middle school tantrum*

DANIELLE: Oh, you're trying because you have to, not because you want to.

NIKKI: Yes. I still don't like it-him.

DANIELLE: Is that all that happened in the meeting?

NIKKI: She made Cameron apologize for punching me but I know it's not really sorry. Why would ~~he~~ be?

DANIELLE: Maybe he's sorry for you hurting you like you're sorry for hurting him.

NIKKI: I'm not sorry. *strong hit*

*slow down, give a right response* DANIELLE: You're not? You said you deserved it.

NIKKI: Doesn't mean I'm sorry. He was mean to me first-*keep going, steam*

DANIELLE: Well-

NIKKI: It-he was! Every time I said something that made it even a little uncomfortable it'd jump down my throat. But it-he makes me uncomfortable ~~all the time~~! But I'm not allowed to tell ~~him~~ *righteous anger* that ~~he's~~ NCA and to go away (I didn't know what else to do.) ↓

DANIELLE: It was a very difficult situation to be in, I can see that. But you still could've respected him as a person. And you still can.

NIKKI: I don't know. This is ~~not~~ what I expected camp to be like. *good*

DANIELLE: I doubt this is how Cameron expected camp to be like either.

NIKKI: He ruined my time here. *subdued realization*

DANIELLE: And I'm sure he hasn't had the best time here either.

NIKKI: And it's my fault, isn't it?

*31 keep on off* DANIELLE: I didn't say that. You both could have been better to each other. You both made mistakes.

NIKKI: Yeah, I guess so.

DANIELLE: Okay, I want the rest of your time here-

NIKKI: All three days of it-

DANIELLE: Okay, the next three days to be better. So how about we make a deal?

NIKKI: Another deal? I already made one with Gina and it's hard enough.

DANIELLE: You'll like this one, I promise.

NIKKI: Okay, what?

DANIELLE: You'll do more than call Cameron by the correct pronouns, you'll try and understand him.

NIKKI: What? I don't want to be friends with it-him.

DANIELLE: Just understand him, that's all Nikki. And in exchange, I'll be easier on you and not jump down your throat every time you say something inappropriate. How's that?

NIKKI: That's . . . not bad actually. Alright, deal.

*They head back into the cabin.*

DANIELLE: So, do you have a new high?

NIKKI: I hope to have a good time at the dance and get more dates than Selena! *Selena is not*

DANIELLE: What about- oh, nevermind. Sorry about that guys. Anyway, Cameron, you gonna share your highs and hopes?

*CAMERON hands her a piece of paper with his highs and hopes written on it.*

DANIELLE: Do you mind if I read these out?

CAMERON: *(In ASL)* Yes, please read it.

DANIELLE: I think that's a yes. Okay, so Cameron's high is, oh, uh, getting to kiss Olivia. *Keeping it awkward*

NIKKI: Woah, *danielle look at her* it got a kiss? I mean, sorry, right, the agreement, he. He got a kiss.

SELENA: Hey, that's totally NCA. Not fair!

DANIELLE: Well, a high is a high, even if it's NCA.

NIKKI: In that case, I might have a different hope than the one I mentioned.

DANIELLE: Um, so, Cameron's hope is . . . love. Just love.

GABBY: Aww!

NIKKI: *Ugh aw*

DANIELLE: That's really sweet Cameron. Thank you for sharing. Thank you all for sharing.

*The campers start settling into bed and curling up with their blankets.*

DANIELLE: I actually have just one more thing, ladies.

NIKKI: *(whining)* Aw, really? *grumpy goat*

DANIELLE: Well, I have something fun planned, to take your minds off the rough day we all had.

GABBY: Are you going to sing us a song?

DANIELLE: Um, no, I can't sing. But, I can tell you a bed time story.

NIKKI: A bedtime story?

GABBY: A bedtime story! *same time*

DANIELLE: And all of you are going to help me write it!

SELENA: Huh?

*CAMERON holds up a piece of paper with some words on it.*

DANIELLE: *(reading it)* Yes, Cameron, it's going to be like Mad Libs. I'm going to create a, you know, framework of a story but you guys are going to fill in the details.

GABBY: Can it be about penguins? *yes raise hand*

DANIELLE: Do they sing but the main one tap dances? Because I think I've heard this before. *penguin sign*

GABBY: No. Penguins don't sing. They just eat fish and swim.

DANIELLE: I was thinking something a little more, you know, exciting.

GABBY: Sometime they get eaten by sea lions.

DANIELLE: So, once upon a time-

NIKKI: A sea lion ate Gabby- *gabby never good, laughing*

DANIELLE: Nikki, remember that this is like Mad Libs. I will ask for all of you to give suggestions when the story calls for it. Okay? Until then, please listen and think of ideas for when I ask for them.

NIKKI: Okay, okay, sorry. That was . . . disrespectful.

DANIELLE: Thank you, Nikki. Where was I? Oh yes, once upon a time there lived a large, mysterious creature at the bottom of a lake at a summer camp.

SELENA: Oh my God, is that why we can't swim in the lake? I thought it was the leeches!

DANIELLE: Selena, what did I say about interrupting? *good pained smile*

SELENA: Oops! Sorry.

DANIELLE: Any way, this creature lived in a lake that was . . . *(She gestures at the kids to give suggestions)*

SELENA: Gross and slimy!

NIKKI: Full of seaweed!

GABBY: Sparkled like a diamond!

*no cabin area as water*

go into it so they go into it

DANIELLE: Sparkly but full of gross plants that the creature would hide in. Campers were drawn to the shine of the lake but learned to stay away when they were told what was in the lake. They were told there was . . . (*Gestures again for suggestions*) what in the lake?

SELENA: Lots of water? *snort, mdr all faces*

CAMERON holds up a sign with a suggestion.

DANIELLE: Vicious fish! They were told to avoid the vicious fish in the lake. The children became afraid to even go near the water and the sea creature used to like hearing them play. Oh, shoot, I forgot, what is the sea creature's name?

NIKKI: It has a name?

DANIELLE: What's *his* name?

SELENA: Oh! Oh! How about Billy Bob?

GABBY: Jean-Baptiste de Franco . . . the third *good reactions*

DANIELLE: Um, Bob, let's go with Bob the sea creature. So, uh, Bob got very lonely when he couldn't see or hear the children any more so at night he would . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

NIKKI: Do bad impressions of the counselors!

SELENA: *(Yodel) yodel*

CAMERON holds up another suggestion sign.

DANIELLE: He'd yodel and recite bad poetry- *good waff*

GABBY: That angsty campers left on the beach! *the bob*

DANIELLE: I like that, that's what he would recite from the lake. Eventually, this became too much for the campers. The first brave camper went down to the beach and . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

GABBY: Did an interpretive dance to the poetry.

NIKKI: Threw rocks into the water and yelled insults.

DANIELLE: A camper named Nikki threw rocks into the water and told Bob to shut up. *good angry*

NIKKI: Hey! I wouldn't do that! *insulted throw them*

DANIELLE: It's a story, Nikki.

NIKKI: Fine.

DANIELLE: The next brave camper tried to defeat the terrible poetry by . . . (*gestures for suggestions*)

CAMERON holds up a sign for a suggestion.



## **Example**

### **Rehearsal Notes for April 17<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Scene One**

- Good remembering to cheat out more, Morgan
- I like the edition of Ellie's "are you serious" line as a verbal reaction to Rhiannon's persistence
- Danielle and Ellie, more verbal reactions to Rhiannon's story beyond your lines
- Rhiannon, the long pause after "the highlight of my day" into "So Danielle" is a little awkwardly long, be quicker about going back to nagging Danielle about her day
- Great with your reactions to the stuff about Cat ears, very in character all three of you
- The bit where Ellie starts pulling off the pepperonis is so great and so natural, keep it up, just be careful not to overpower Danielle's line
- Danielle, be careful not to let all of your confession be on the same emotional level
- Great with the ad libbing as you all leave to go to the mandatory fun night, keep it
- Rhiannon, much better with your 9/11 speech, each line meant something important and different and you really hit all the right notes
- very Ellie and mom like on the "told you not to burn your fingers"

#### **Scene Two**

Overall, so much better!

- Nikki, much better with the story telling, more high school than middle school, stay at that maturity level through out the play
- So much better with reacting to Nikki's story during and at the end, keep up that level of being in character and reacting to each other
- Good with reacting to Cameron signing, remember to react to him any time he tries to interact with you three
- Cameron, careful that your signing doesn't become aggressive and too in Danielle's face (got better as the scene went on)
- Selena and Gabby, react to "talk to it", egg Nikki on any chance you get, you're still her friends at this point, if begrudgingly

- Danielle, maybe try gesturing upstage when referring to Gina? Just an idea
- Nikki, careful when confronting Danielle to not come off as older than her, you're a high schooler confronting a figure of authority
- good timing on "retard" along with the reactions to it
- Gabby, really on point with your nativity about "something else" and "queefing"
- Jen, we need to work on your stage whisper because I still can't understand "queef"
- Nikki, careful not to sound so mature talking about pussies, discussions of genitalia are still scandalous in high school
- Gabby, almost didn't hear "vaginas not cats" line, being louder and looking up at Danielle will help
- definitely keep standing and stay standing at the end of the scene, it works much better

### **Scene Three**

- Olivia, while I'm all for you not actually hitting Cameron upside the head, definitely do something more visible than a light tap, it makes his reaction make more sense
- Cameron, loved how excited you were to find out Olivia's art and then your beat change into confusion on how was great
- Great action and reaction on "I hear music and dance" bit
- The physicality and the reactions for the heart beat bit are very in character, great job
- Cameron, much better with the "deaf camp" question seeming like an outburst rather than just a causal question, makes you speaking make much more sense
- Olivia, fantastic job tonight with the subtext talking about your mom, even with just signing I can see that it bothers you but you're hiding it under forced apathy
- Olivia, great with your frustration about having to write down the translation of "I'm not a good enough reason" and getting more frustrated when he still doesn't understand
- The whole "I stay for you" bit tonight was great, totally saw Cameron this close to confessing and Olivia figuring it out and avoiding
- Olivia, great reaction to "facebook status" and getting on him for liking facebook so much
- Great job with the balance of Olivia's rant being for Cameron and herself and Cameron reacting to it with puppy dog love

- Nikki, Selena and Gabby, come in sooner so Cameron's love confession isn't so long
- Gabby, cheat out and don't have your back to the cabin "wall"
- Turn more Nikki and fake punch harder Cameron

#### **Scene Four**

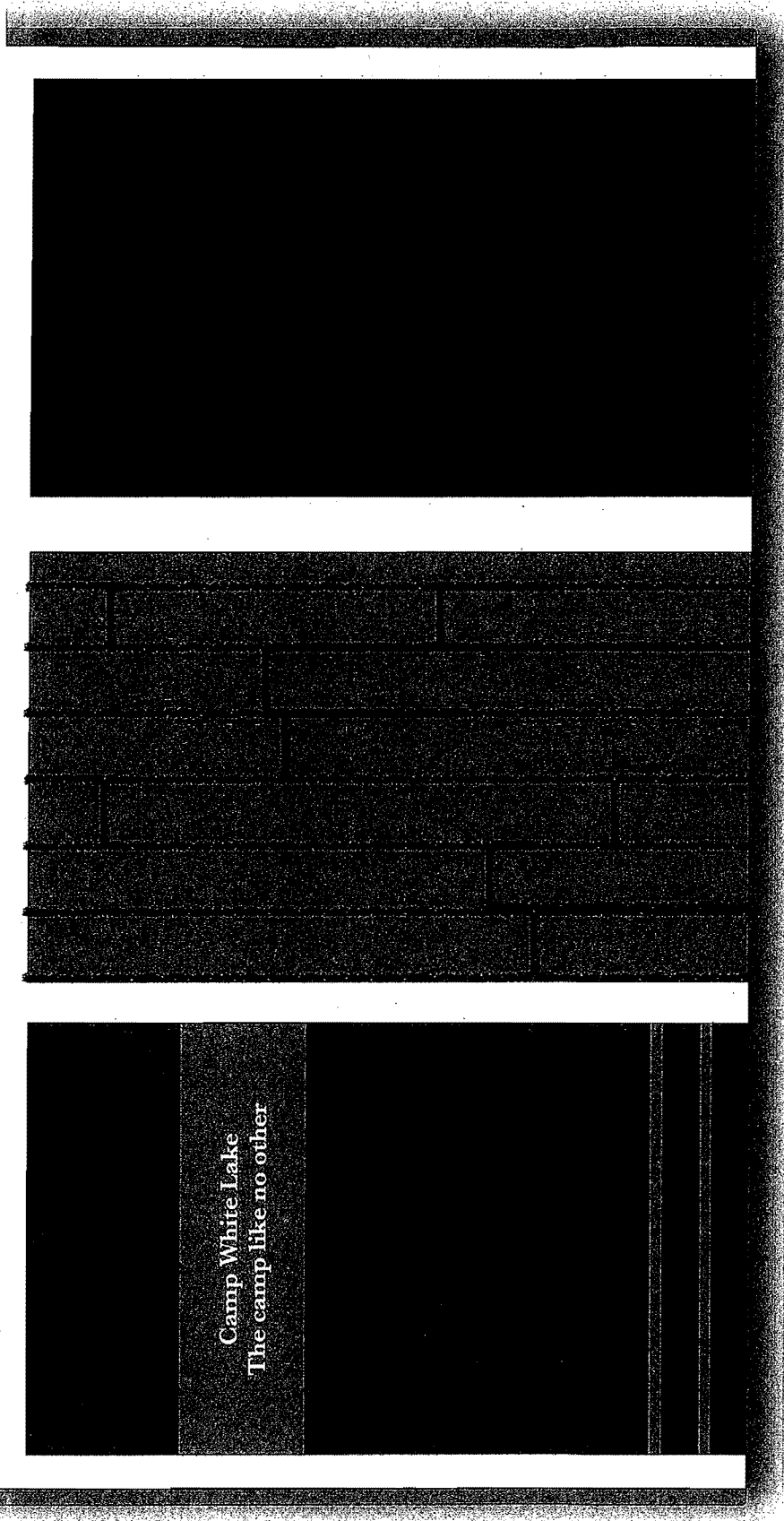
- Danielle, remember to be more downstage of Cameron so he can open out more
- Danielle, great enthusiasm talking about Mulan and good remembering to not pause and just go into it, careful that your enthusiasm doesn't lead to you rushing lines
- Both of you, much better projecting during this scene, keep remembering to talk like the other person you're talking to is at the other end of the stage, not right next you
- Cameron, look up instead of down!
- Danielle, the looking around at the "safe space" for "I meant it" really works, keep it
- Cameron, good on the "I hate it" and then going back into ranting
- We already discussed the stuff about your end rant, you can do it Julianna!
- Cameron, good with allowing "I know it's hard to come out" line to be heard rather than overpowering it
- Cameron, great with verbally reacting to Danielle's story
- Keep the looking at each other before Cameron falls bit

#### **Scene Five**

- Much better with maintaining the maturity level of a high schooler, Nikki, particularly when you went outside to talk to Danielle
- Selena, make me believe that you really have 20 dates and you want puppy boys
- Danielle, you've been doing well with being taken aback by Nikki's outburst but today you weren't as much
- Selena, don't forget the "hey!" after Cameron's high is read out
- Cameron, good with letting your enthusiasm for the activity lead to you getting up
- Selena, careful that your "yes you would" doesn't overpower Danielle's "It's a story, Nikki"
- For all four of you, so great with reacting to each other and keeping up the timing



## The Original Periaktoi Sides





## Lighting Notes

Scene one:

Single hot focused light in the center, some small spillage around the outside (evoke a campfire even though it is not that specific.

Scene two:

Stark white lighting (school cafeteria)

Scene Three:

Begin basic cabin "Look" unless the idea for scene one was not included add higher light to focus on the hand signs.

Scene 4

2 minute fade up of lights starting 10 seconds after the first line lights will still be dim and maybe gobo'd (?) focus on where Cameron is sitting large dark areas off stage.

Scene five:

Again basic cabin "Look"

? change lights on "Bed time story" bluish and broader focus?

notes

Basic cabin look is not quite enough light for go around, a little to warm, but looks fuzzy and cozy.





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			for s'mores		
7	Graham crackers, marshmallows, chocolate	ELLIE, LAURA, DANIELLE, RHIANNON	ELLIE steals these to make s'mores in the cabin to cheer up DANIELLE. They taste like butane.	Half box of graham crackers, half bag of marshmallows, and a bar of chocolate	
Scene 2 p.8	Sign language book	CAMERON	CAMERON is reading a sign language book and learning to sign	Relatively small paperback Webster's ASL Dictionary w/ blue cover	
	pen	CAMERON	CAMERON uses this to communicate w/ DANIELLE by writing on his hand	A black pen	
	Drawing of OLIVIA	CAMERON OLIVIA, DANIELLE	CAMERON shows a drawing he made of OLIVIA to DANIELLE	A portrait of OLIVIA from the side, done in pencil	
Scene 3 p.17	Notepad, pen	CAMERON, OLIVIA	CAMERON and OLIVIA take turns writing in the notepad, as she teaches him ASL	Yellow notepad and black pen	
Scene 4 p.26	flashlight	DANIELLE	DANIELLE enters with only source of light as flashlight, searching for CAMERON	Typical LED plastic black flashlight	
	Med kit and wrap	RHIANNON, DANIELLE	RHIANNON slides med kit onto stage for DANIELLE	Red box with white cross, medical kit with supplies:	

			to wrap CAMERON's "injury"	*leg wrap for CAMERON	
Scene 5 p.32	Notepad and pen	CAMERON	CAMERON writes suggestions and "highs and lows" on it	Same yellow pad as before w/ black pen	

### Camp Cabins:

2 bunk beds

- bed linens, pillows, blankets for each bunk
- stuffed animals, personal items for campers, suitcases, etc...
- Art supplies, paintings, artwork, etc...

### Cafeteria:

Table and chairs

- coffee and coffee cups



### —❧— **Special Thanks** —❧—

Steve Crosby, Zach Hamm, Amanda Mangerpan, Niki Kimball, Becca Hayes, Dani Gagne, Bestest Friend Sam, Roommate Sam, my campers and fellow counselors, my granma, my parents and sister and dogs.

### —❧— **A Few Words on C. Duryea Smith** —❧—

In many ways, performing arts at Alfred University started with C. Duryea Smith III, who joined the faculty in 1937, retiring in 1970. For all but one of his 33 years at AU, he served as chairman of the University's Department of Speech and Drama. He was the founder of the New York State Theatre Conference and was an advisor to the New York State Community Theater and to the Chelsea Theatre in Brooklyn, and was a member of the National Theatre Conference. He was the director or technical director of over 100 plays at AU, and gave special emphasis to arena staging. For 3 decades he also administered the program of cultural events that brought professional theatre, dance, and music productions to the Alfred Campus.

### **Fire Notice**

The exit indicated by a green light and the sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to safety in the event of a fire or other emergency. Please walk, not run, to the nearest exit.



## *Campfire Tales are Best Told in Whispers*

Written and Directed by J.J. Davis

April 22 through 24, 2015

C.D. Smith Theatre, Alfred University

## MEET THE CAMPERS

**Cameron**



Played by Julianna Root, a sophomore who has no idea what she is doing with her life. Possibly a bio major and a psychology major. This is her first production at AU and would like to thank her friends for not murdering her during tech week. <3 I like potatoes.

**Nikki**



Played by Abigail Hurley, a sophomore theatre major with hopes of starting her own theatrical company after graduating. Abby has appeared in many productions and has directed 5 small acts before. She would like to thank all her friends for putting up with her crazy self.

**Gabby**



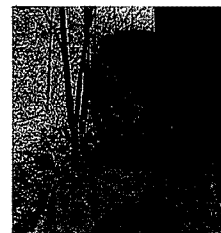
Played by Rebecca J. Montelli, a junior English major with a minor in Music. She is an active member of Alfredian Dramatists and Friday Night Live, but this is her first major stage production at AU. She would like to thank her family, her boyfriend Kyle Flannery, her director J.J. Davis, & her feline son Toby for all their love and support. Also potatoes. Stay fab, folks.

**Selena**



Played by Jennifer Cox, a junior Psychology major and Spanish/Creative Writing minor. She has performed in *Peter Pan*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Music Man*, *Seussical the Musical*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *Salvation Armani* as well as playing witnesses in the NY Bar's Mock Trial program. Thank you for coming.

**Olivia**



Played by Cassidy Teagle, "I am the plague. Fear me."

## MEET THE COUNSELORS

**Danielle**



Played by Delaney O'Hare, a first year student at Alfred. She is a theatre major with a planned minor in theatre design & technology and music. She recently played Dawn in the production of *Life is a Dream*.

**Ellie**



Played by Morgan Rairigh, a first semester junior at the New York School of Art and Design, concentrating in ceramics with a minor in family business and entrepreneurship. This is her third theater production here at Alfred University.

**Rhiannon**



Played by Briar Hayes, a third-year Psychology major with an obsession for astrobiology, military history, and ethics. This is her first stage production, and a welcome return to tech crew after high school. When not writing sci-fi or reassembling computers, she can be found enabling our guinea pig overlords. She would like to thank the friends and family who peeled her off the wallpaper and got her out there to be seen.

**Laura**



Played by Nickolette Jones, AKA Batgirl, a sophomore with a major in theatre and a minor in creative writing. She plans to act on a Broadway stage once she graduates college, and will attempt to fight crime as a part-time job. She's very excited to be a part of this production. She'd like to thank her mom and her dad, and her six cats.

**Gina (not really)**



Not actually played by anyone but we decided to put J.J. Davis's bio here since she's head of everything. Since Starfleet isn't accepting applications and the title of "Mother of Dragons" is taken, she's busy finishing her Bachelor's degree in Theatre and Psychology. Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

## —❧— **Director/Playwright's Notes** —❧—

This play clearly has an agenda. It doesn't pull punches and it is not subtle. I wasn't looking to represent both sides of this issue because whether or not trans people should be respected and accepted should not have to be debated. In an ideal situation with a larger casting pool, a transman would have played Cameron and a deaf woman would have played Olivia to allow their stories to be told by people who live these realities. Instead, I pulled these character's stories from what has been shared with me by trans people, that I know personally, combined with the experiences I had as a counselor at a summer arts camp. Now, the rest is up to you, dear audience. Don't allow the Nikkis you'll meet to silence the Camerons, Danielles and Olivias you'll find. Please, listen to them.

Not all of us are so lucky to have someone explain their experiences oppression in a dark forest. Sometimes their tales are best told in whispers.

## —❧— **DESIGN TEAM** —❧—

**Set Designer** ... Sean Heverin

**Lighting Designer** ... Robert Lamb

**Costume Designer** ... J.J. Davis

**Prop Designers** ... Niki Kimball, Delaney O'Hare,  
Chloe Theodosiou

**Makeup Design** ... Rachel Romack

**Poster Design** ... Nick Labate & Morgan Rairigh

**Logo Design** ... Nick Labate

**Playbill Design** ... Briar Hayes & Morgan Rairigh

## —❧— **Director/Playwright's Notes** —❧—

This play clearly has an agenda. It doesn't pull punches and it is not subtle. I wasn't looking to represent both sides of this issue because whether or not trans people should be respected and accepted should not have to be debated. In an ideal situation with a larger casting pool, a transman would have played Cameron and a deaf woman would have played Olivia to allow their stories to be told by people who live these realities. Instead, I pulled these character's stories from what has been shared with me by trans people, that I know personally, combined with the experiences I had as a counselor at a summer arts camp. Now, the rest is up to you, dear audience. Don't allow the Nikkis you'll meet to silence the Camerons, Danielles and Olivias you'll find. Please, listen to them.

Not all of us are so lucky to have someone yell about their experiences with oppression in a dark forest. Sometimes their tales are best told in whispers.

## —❧— **DESIGN TEAM** —❧—

**Set Designer** ... Sean Heverin

**Lighting Designer** ... Robert Lamb

**Costume Designer** ... J.J. Davis

**Prop Designers** ... Niki Kimball, Delaney O'Hare,  
Chloe Theodosiou

**Makeup Design** ... Rachel Romack

**Poster Design** ... Nick Labate & Morgan Rairigh

**Logo Design** ... Nick Labate

**Playbill Design** ... Briar Hayes & Morgan Rairigh

This performance was made possible by  
the Smith Crapsey Scholarship Award and  
the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

— PRODUCTION TEAM —

**Playwright, Director & Producer ...** J.J. Davis

**Stage Manager ...** Niki Kimball

**Assistant Stage Manager ...** Maddie Petraske

**Technical Directors ...** Robert Lamb & J.J. Davis

**Assistant Technical Director ...** Briar Hayes

**Master Electrician/Light Board Operator...**  
Denisse Duran-Montilla

**Sign Language Instructor ...** Emily Wright

**Sign Language Interpreter ...** J.J. Davis

**Set Construction ...** J.J. Davis, Robert Lamb,

Briar Hayes, Rebecca Montelli, Sean Heverin,  
Amanda Mangerpan, Katie Byrne, Jennifer Cox,  
Casey Busch, Rachel Romack

**Running Crew ...** Grace Beekman, Katie Byrne, Eli  
Garcia, Briar Hayes

**Periaktoi ...** Thing 1      &      Thing 2



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**Playwright, Director & Producer ...** J.J. Davis

**Stage Manager ...** Niki Kimball

**Assistant Stage Manager ...** Maddie Petraske

**Technical Directors ...** Robert Lamb & J.J. Davis

**Assistant Technical Director ...** Briar Hayes

**Master Electrician/Light Board Operator...**  
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**Running Crew ...** Grace Beekman, Katie Byrne, Eli  
Garcia, Briar Hayes

**Periaktoi ...** Thing 1      &      Thing 2

