

B) SIMON

*(Ding!**Spot on: SWEETHEART.)*

SWEETHEART. Here's my deal, y'all.

Two months ago I was on my way to audition for *Hamlet* at the Dahlonega Community Players when I first saw Nan. She was at the Subway just tearing through this foot long with all that stringy lettuce and crying and mauling those poor SunChips.

And I thought—this is real drama. Investigate.

So I asked her if she needed anything. And she told me that she didn't believe in love or justice anymore.

And I was like: whoa. Deep drama, y'all.

So I told her I was going to this audition—cause *Hamlet's* got some major justice, kids. And she went with me, and then we got some food at the Chick-Fil-A, and it was over those super puffy waffle fries that we became friends. I told her about my dreams of acting (I did not get the role of Hamlet, however), and she told me about her dream of saving animals (she works at this small vet in Canton), and I gave her my copy of *The Collected Works of William Shakespeare*, and she gave me free cat check-ups.

I even told her I was stripping at the Highway Club until I got my big break. And she didn't hate me for it. Which some people do.

And after a month of sharing books and meals and funny LOL cat pictures—she told me about Kyle and love and justice and how there was a bigger truth at stake if only she had the courage. And I said...

Let's get classical.

(Blackout.)

C)

*(Ding!**Spot on: KYLE.**Still strapped to his recliner but more of his old self. Cocky, bossy, and manly.)*

KYLE. I think we got off on the wrong foot here. I'm not an asshole. For real. Listen to me, I don't know why she's pitchin' this fit in front of everybody but...

OK. I hunt. Ok. She's never had a problem with it before. And I know it's not technically legal but those deer are in my back yard dammit

so it's more like lawn mowing and people don't need permission for that. And people—like—do stuff other people don't like. Like couples. That's how relationships work, goddammit, and you don't have to duct tape 'em to a damn chair! And I swear I don't know who that other one is. Who is that?!

You don't believe me. I can tell you're sittin' there thinkin' she might be right about me. That I just might deserve...

Shit. Shitshitshit—

I'll be straight with y'all—I don't know how this is gonna end. I really don't. She doesn't ever get mad, and she sure don't "act it all out" (which I'm not sure I get what that's about). The point is I don't know what the hell is going on and what the hell I did to make whatever is going on, going on.

I'm trying to say that she's lost it—And we're not safe—And I don't deserve this! Who deserves this!? THERE ARE BEARS OUT THERE—Please lord Jesus help me—she might actually kill me and I'm really hungry and my head hurts like a bitch and—JESUSLORD come on help me—y'all *know* this is crazypleasegodpleasegodPLEASE.

(Blackout.)

D)

*(Ding!**A spot on.**SIMON posing in a red cheerleader's outfit.**Shakes the pompom.**This is sarcastic, judgey, mocking, whatevah.)*

SIMON. Yaaaay, he's innocent. He doesn't know what in the world he did wrong. Bless his heart!

Pregnant Pause.

Now that shitbird has f-ed with my girl. And that does not abide in the House of Simon.

Cause Nan and I have been righteous friends since we met at the Drama Club Interest Meeting on the first day of middle school. She is my soul mate, y'all. For god sakes, we went to prom together (in a slightly ironic way but we had fun)—And she was the first person I came out to and, y'all, she said Jesus loved me even more because I had the courage to be true to the way God made me and God made me *pretty* fabulous—And Junior year she played Juliet to my—well I played Balthasar so we didn't really—whatever, it was miscast—the point is we defy category and crapass husbands.

Now. Let's take a journey into the mind of one Kyle Carter.

Systematic abuse slash desperate need for women that his father and modern buddy comedies taught him ever since his very first beer at age 12, which was quickly followed by a joke about a woman with two black eyes that's supposed to be funny because the punch line is something like "you've already told her twice"—which solidified the neural pathway from whiskey, to funny, to girls-being-hit, to do-what-it-takes-to-feel-like-a-man, to being king, to realizing your kingdom is a cracked driveway in the woods and you're a dream-withered mammal dying of Cheeto-induced heart disease, to hurting my friend, to shame that would be the color of eggplants if things like that were color-coded, to drinking more, to losing his step, to losing it all, to this very moment right goddamn now.

(Silence. Pompom.)

(Blackout.)

THREE.

(Real time in the house. KYLE in the chair, passed out. SWEETHEART holds a bear-shaped jar of honey and Kyle's gun. And SIMON has just entered the building—)

SIMON. Y'all. The air in here is totally intense.

NAN. Rising action!

SIMON. And that woman is holding a gun.

SWEETHEART. Badass.

(SWEETHEART cocks the gun like a badass.)

SIMON. Ok, this is non-violent re-enactment? Which leads to a confession, which leads to everyone leaving unscathed. Right?

NAN. Right. I just added to the dramatic arc.

SIMON. Nan...

NAN. I mean the first thing you said was "I'll kill that sonofabitch," and I said "that's a great idea."

SIMON. No. No. We said make him see the error of his ways, and get him arrested—

SWEETHEART. But I think the bears make it organic.

NAN. I added bears.

SIMON. To what?

NAN. To the end. The bears take over.

SWEETHEART. Which is why there's like a billion empty squirry things of honey drizzled up the walkway. It's like neon bear catnip.

SIMON. So she's not shooting him, but she is luring every bear in the nearby bear community into this room.

NAN. Yeah. But. Realistically and unfortunately: Worst-case scenario, he just gets scratched up.

SIMON. By a *live bear*, Nan! This is not what you want to do—this is not a real plan—

NAN. This is vengeance.

SIMON. This is overkill!

SWEETHEART. I thought it was profound and foolproof.

SIMON. *(To SWEETHEART:)* Who *are* you?!

NAN. This is Sweetheart, whose stage name is Peaches, who's playing Kyle. And doing a little stage management.

SWEETHEART. It's such an honor—

SIMON. Why didn't you cast me as Kyle? You cast the *stage manager*—

SWEETHEART. And props.

SIMON. *Whatever, I'm the man.*

NAN. In a UGA cheer skirt.

SIMON. You said you needed support. This is a supportive outfit.

NAN. I said *back up* not—

SIMON. FINE. I'll put on track pants.

(He whips out and dons red track pants - a la male cheerleader.)

Sorry for my zeal. I was rushed, I'm doing my own costumes, left my latte on the counter—

NAN. God a'mighty.

SIMON. And you ask a girl for help, then you don't give her the male lead.

NAN. She's a professional!

SIMON. So am I!

NAN. *You* are your profession.

SIMON. Which will someday land me a daytime talk show, but for now? For now and always, I am the best friend you ever had, and