SOLOMON. No, I don't know what that's a bit glossy, don't you think what you really mean.

HOWIE. Are you gay? (Diwata and Solomon watch. Howie directs his speech at Solomon.)

Throughout the following exchange, indicate anything is wrong.

SOLOMON. What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? What is this? 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SOLOMON. No, I don't know, not if they were good people, and what's with your euphemisms — "spend time with teenage girls," that's a bit glossy, don't you think? You're not even capable of saying what you really mean.

HOWIE. Are you gay? (Diwata looks away.) Are you? (Awful silence. Throughout the following exchange, Solomon does not lose his cool or indicate anything is wrong.)

SOLOMON. What is this? Who are you talking to?

DIWATA. Solomon, we don't really care, it's just — if you are —

SOLOMON. What? (Beat.) If I am it's none of your business. What is this? (Beat.) It's none of your business.

HOWIE. According to you it is. It conflicts with your public —

SOLOMON. That's politics, that's — I have no — I'm not in politics, what is this, if you don't talk to me I'm leaving, what is this?

HOWIE. It's hypocritical if you're —

SOLOMON. And hypocrisy, if I was hypocritical, it would be irrelevant —

HOWIE. So you are hypocritical, then? What does that mean?

SOLOMON. What do you want me to say?

HOWIE. I want to know if you're gay.

SOLOMON. Why? What, is this because today I changed the style of my shirt? Huh? (Trying to lighten the tension.) I told you this would happen — I took your advice, dressed a little different and look, you're already assuming I'm gay. C'mon, guys, what is this? (Beat.)

DIWATA. It was me in the third floor bathroom last year — I saw you and Mr. Healy, I was the one in the stall. (Solomon looks to both of them for an explanation.)

HOWIE. If you use anything you know about us without our permission, we will tell people what we know about you. I'd like all the copies of our conversation back too, the transcripts you have. (Beat.)

SOLOMON. What did she tell you? Because — I don't even know what — what is this all about?

HOWIE. Solomon ...

SOLOMON. No, I'm just saying I don't even know what you're talking about. (Diwata and Howie aren't sure how to proceed.)

DIWATA. Solomon, it's not a big deal ...

SOLOMON. What did you see?

DIWATA. We're not going to tell anyone. Howie, tell him. We won't tell anyone.
SOLOMON. Oh, okay. Whatever. Sure. I don't even know what this is about.
DIWATA. I saw you.
SOLOMON. Whatever. I've got to go. (Solomon starts to cough. He goes to the wastebasket. He throws up.)
DIWATA. Oh my God ... (Solomon keeps coughing, throws up again.)
HOWIE. (To Diwata, unsure of what else to say or do.) Are there any paper towels in here, or ... (Diwata gets some tissues. Howie is frozen. Solomon sits by the garbage can, not looking at them. Beat.)
DIWATA. (Still keeping her distance from Solomon.) No one knows, I just told Howie ... (Solomon can't look at either of them. He buries his head, faces away. Diwata and Howie are unsure of what to do.)
SOLOMON. (Angrily.) Do I have to say something to you? (Howie and Diwata attempt to say something once or twice but stop. The whole experience is tense, awful, and quiet. A very, very long beat. Diwata looks to Howie, then cautiously approaches Solomon, unsure.)
DIWATA. I lost my virginity with my sweatshirt on.
HOWIE. What?
DIWATA. (To Howie.) I feel bad, he looks like he's gonna kill himself, so I'm just saying ... (To Solomon.) No one knows that, I never told anyone that.
HOWIE. Jesus Christ ... leave him alone.
DIWATA. (To Solomon.) I was home, a little drunk on my mom's bed, and ... 
HOWIE. Oh my God ...
DIWATA. ... when it started, and I don't even remember how it all started, but it was happening and my pants were around my ankles ...
HOWIE. Oh my God ...
DIWATA. ... wearing this lame sweatshirt I didn't even like, it was a hand-me-down from my cousin, I had to throw it away. I couldn't look at it after it was over. My mom found it in the garbage, and she was like — "Diwata, we need to give this to Goodwill if you're not going to wear it. You know we don't throw clothes out." (Beat.) I could have at least had a nice one on. I have a Champion sweatshirt I like, something nicer. (Beat. To Solomon.) I won't tell anyone. I promise. (Beat. To Howie) Your turn.
HOWIE. Oh my God.
DIWATA. Do it. (Beat.)
HOWIE. I'm in love with Diwata.
HOWIE. (To Solomon — sincerer, more serious.) I feel sorry for himself.) That dance I made you watch — I said I left before I could embarrass them the dance. And all the kids — The leaders all laughed, and — they didn't laugh to hide the fact that they were their weight, looking away so I could tell, obviously. And then they made all of it, when — there was at least three bad. The kids called me "Miss Gay B.S.A. — bathing suit award," you know. Mary dancing naked in the forest with Timura.
HOWIE. You are so retarded, Diwata.
DIWATA. You are totally teaching me.
HOWIE. Jesus Christ ...
DIWATA. ... And oh my God. I've got a group interpretation performance. Diwata ...
SOLOMON. No, of course not ...
DIWATA. When?
HOWIE. (Gesturing towards Solomon, who has his hands on his hands by the garbage can.) Diwata ...
DIWATA. Howard, no — my team, take a consistent back seat to all of you. You be clear. You're both doing this. You're both on the team. Promise ...
HOWIE. Diwata ...
DIWATA. And I decide the material we interpret. No crapping all over my team. Otherwise we'll never agree. Promise. I'm not doing it — not unless you promise that none of this leaves this room.
DIWATA. I'm really moved by our team.
HOWIE. What is that smell?
SOLOMON. My vomit.
DIWATA. How much do I hate you. I hate you so much. (Diwata
smacks Howie. Beat.)

HOWIE. (To Solomon — sincere, but not sentimental. Howie doesn’t
feel sorry for himself.) That dance I made up, for the Boy Scouts talent
show — I said I left before I could embarrass myself. Well, I did teach
them the dance. And all the kids — guys younger than me laughed.
The leaders all laughed, and — they did this thing where they tried
to hide the fact that they were laughing — they were like shifting
their weight, looking away so I couldn’t see them smiling when — I
could tell, obviously. And then they said we didn’t have time to learn
all of it, when — there was at least fifteen minutes left. It was really
bad. The kids called me “Miss Gay B.S.A.” So … (Beat.)

DIWATA. B.S.A. — bathing suit area?

HOWIE. No, retard, Boy Scouts of America.

DIWATA. (Teasing.) You know, Mary Warren got in trouble for
dancing naked in the forest with Tituba. It’s nothing to be ashamed of.

HOWIE. You are so retarded, Diwata.

DIWATA. You are totally teaching me your moves.

HOWIE. Jesus Christ …

DIWATA. … And oh my God, I’m getting some killer ideas for our
Group Interpretation performance. Do you guys want to hear them?

SOLOMON. No, of course not … HOWIE. No, not now …

DIWATA. When?

HOWIE. (Gesturing towards Solomon, who still has his head buried
in his hands by the garbage can.) Diwata …

DIWATA. Howard, no — my team, my chance to perform has
taken a consistent back seat to all of your homo-drama, so let’s just
be clear. You’re both doing this. You’re not walking away from this
team. Promise …

HOWIE. Diwata …

DIWATA. And I decide the material we perform for Group Inter-
pretation. No crappling all over my ideas like you did last time,
otherwise we’ll never agree. Promise. Promise.

SOLOMON. No, I’m not doing it — not unless you promise that none of this then we’re done.

DIWATA. I’m really moved by our team spirit.

HOWIE. What is that smell?

SOLOMON. My vomit.
DIWATA. So nasty ...
HOWIE. (To Solomon.) Are you going to come out to your parents?
SOLOMON. Stop it, Howic. You think you know me. They already know, did you know that? No, so ...
HOWIE. Huh?
SOLOMON. I know you guys think you're some sort of private eyes, breaking the story ...
HOWIE. Well you never said you were gay.
SOLOMON. ... last summer my parents found me this camp ...
DIWATA. They know? Your parents know?
SOLOMON. ... which, for the first time addressed those gay issues ...
DIWATA. Like musical theater camp?
SOLOMON. No ...
SOLOMON. Exodus — it's this camp for kids who are, what some people call us is "ex-gays," but —
HOWIE. Jesus ...
DIWATA. Let him talk ...
SOLOMON. Kids who are gay, but want to live a life free of ... kids who don't want to live the gay lifestyle. Who don't want to be promiscuous and stuff ...
HOWIE. Gay people don't have to be promiscuous, I can't believe you'd say that!
SOLOMON. Stop yelling at me —
HOWIE. She's deranged, that doesn't mean all straight people are.
DIWATA. Excuse me, BlondBoy?
SOLOMON. She doesn't go around sleeping with people she meets online.
DIWATA. I'm right here ...
HOWIE. I don't do that, Solomon!
DIWATA. Then why are you surfing for sex all the time —
HOWIE. Why did you get drunk at a party, get knocked up and spend an afternoon at an abortion clinic —
DIWATA. Howie!
SOLOMON. I knew you were pregnant!
DIWATA. (To Howie.) How could you say that?
HOWIE. I'm sorry —
SOLOMON. You had an abortion?
DIWATA. (To Howie.) Shut your mouth about it, you shut your mouth.

SOLOMON. I can't beli —
DIWATA. Shut up! (Beat.) The three of us ...
HOWIE. So I guess ... what happened ...
DIWATA. I don't know. Let's ... I don't ...
SOLOMON. What you saw in the kitchen you think ...
DIWATA. Okay, but I saw ... then it happened?
SOLOMON. It wasn't — I wasn't there!
HOWIE. But, okay, so ...
SOLOMON. I don't know if ... maybe ...
HOWIE. I won't laugh ...
SOLOMON. ... but as a guy, I don't think you know, virginity ... I don't know.

DIWATA. Uh, okay, I would have sent you in, ... \(\text{laughs quietly}\)
HOWIE. (Trying not to laugh.) No, that doubt he went that far.
SOLOMON. Not in the bathroom. (Off-guard.) No, no, no — he didn't hurt me ...
HOWIE. Solomon, if he —
SOLOMON. Really. He didn't hurt me ...
VOICE. (Shouting, from outside.) Hello ...
SOLOMON. This doesn't leave this room ...
(To Reporter, while the rest of the cast in this room ... (The Reporter enters.)
REPORTER. Hello ... oh, hi, Jordan. Hi. I'm Jan Clark, from the Oregon Observer. Solomon. Can I just sit down and observe, Diwata, and Howie look at each other, and a collective mess.) A friend of yours, a week. She's been leaving me voice-mails at your rehearsals and ... your dad, Solomon, was here rehearsing, so ... (Beat.) He said he tell you I was coming.
SOLOMON. My cell was turned off ...
REPORTER. Well please, just pretend and observe if that's all right. (Beat.)
SOLOMON. The three of us were ...

DIWATA. (To Solomon.) Lincoln/Douglas debate.

DIWATA. (To Solomon.) Lincoln/Douglas debate.
SOLOMON. I can't beli —
DIWATA. Shurup! (Beat. The three of them aren't sure what to do.)
HOWIE. So I guess ... what happens now?
DIWATA. I don't know. Let's ... I don't know ...
SOLOMON. What you saw in the bathroom ... it wasn't what you think ...
DIWATA. Okay, but I saw ... then, okay, you tell me, what happened?
SOLOMON. It wasn't ... I wasn't hurt or anything ...
HOWIE. But ... okay, so ...
SOLOMON. I don't know if ... maybe, I think, you'll laugh ...
HOWIE. I won't laugh ...
SOLOMON. ... but as a guy, I don't know if ... maybe I lost my, you know, virginity ... I don't know ... (Diwata smiles. Howie laughs quietly.)
DIWATA. Uh, okay, I would have seen that. Trust me.
HOWIE. (Trying not to laugh.) No, it's not your virginity; bud, I doubt he went that far.
SOLOMON. Not in the bathroom. (Howie and Diwata are caught off-guard.) No, no, no — he didn't hurt me — (Knocking at the door.)
HOWIE. Solomon, if he ...
SOLOMON. Really. He didn't hurt me, never ... (More knocking.)
VOICE. (Shouting, from outside.) Hello...? Can I come in?
SOLOMON. This doesn't leave this room, okay? This doesn't leave this room ... (The Reporter enters.)
REPORTER. Hello ... oh, hi, guys. I'm sorry, sorry to interrupt. Hi. I'm Jan Clark, from the Oregonian. I'm sorry to interrupt. Hi, Solomon. Can I just sit down and observe? (Long beat. Solomon, Diwata, and Howie look at each other, unsure of what to say. They are a collective mess.) A friend of yours, a ... Diwanda, we spoke last week. She's been leaving me voicemails asking if I'd stop by one of your rehearsals and ... your dad, Solomon, he mentioned you were here rehearsing, so ... (Beat.) He said he'd call you on your cell to tell you I was coming.
SOLOMON. My cell was turned off.
REPORTER. Well please, just pretend I'm not here. I'll just sit and observe if that's all right. (Beat.)
SOLOMON. The three of us were just practicing Lincoln/Douglas debate.
DIWATA. (To Solomon.) Lincoln/Douglas is two people.
HOWIE. Would you be able to come back at another time? We're working on some rough spots, you know?
REPORTER. Oh, well...
SOLOMON. Yeah, I'm sorry, it's just, we're just a mess right now.
REPORTER. Is there a particular rehearsal I should attend, or...?
DIWATA. You should come back and see us do Group Interpretation.
REPORTER. What's Group Interpretation?
DIWATA. It's a category in which all three of us come together to tell a story. It's the only one we do together.
REPORTER. What story will you be telling?
HOWIE. Not now... SOLOMON. No, Diwata...
DIWATA. We can tell any story we like, a fairy tale, a fable, a legend... but we've decided to tell our story. The story of how we came together.
REPORTER. Well, that's the story I'm hoping to capture. I cover the regional beat on the local NPR station — this is exactly the kind of story they love to air.
DIWATA. You mean it would be read on the radio? Amazing...
REPORTER. Well, not so amazing — it would just be me reading a shortened version of the article I'd put together for the Oregonian.
DIWATA. Could I read it? I'm amazing at voiceovers.
REPORTER. Well, no — the journalists read their own reports —
DIWATA. I could play you. Could I play you?
SOLOMON. No, Diwata. HOWIE. Diwata, pull back.
REPORTER. I'm hoping to get this in the Sunday broadcast, so, the sooner you guys can tell me your story the better.
DIWATA. It's going to be pretty controversial, just to warn you.
SOLOMON. Diwata...
DIWATA. (To Solomon.) I didn't tell her anything...
REPORTER. What's controversial about it? (Howie jumps in before Diwata can speak.)
HOWIE. The rules of Group Interpretation say that you can't use costumes or props. (Beat.) And we use costumes and props. And that's going to be pretty controversial.
REPORTER. I see.
DIWATA. Dancing isn't allowed either, but I simply couldn't resist using the very special dance moves that Howard is going to teach us.
HOWIE. Jesus Christ...
REPORTER. What type of dance?
DIWATA. Striptease. Mainly. (Aside, to Solomon.) I still have my bodystocking. (Solomon buries his head.)
REPORTER. (Laughing.) That's the significance of all this drama.
DIWATA. Well Jan, besides final exams, years of jazz/modern dance — the significance show that, as we shed our clothing, we conceit... baring our... clothing... stranger-danger, the one they piece is inspired by each of our original image of each of our voices.
HOWIE. Mostly hers.
REPORTER. (Taking out her notebook.)
DIWATA. Here come our bathing suit business again.
SOLOMON. She means, it's like, we're not...
DIWATA. Here come our bathing suit business again.
SOLOMON. Please don't talk. (To the Reporter.)
REPORTER. I don't mean to disturb you. Forgive me. (Beat.)
SOLOMON. Please don't talk. (To the Reporter.)
REPORTER. I'm just wondering... I'm just thinking... you know... people that ready or not, we're going to be affected by this story. We're going to be affected by it. (Beat.)
SOLOMON. Maybe, even if it makes you uncomfortable.
HOWIE. And my moves aren't that special.
DIWATA. He's just nervous people will like their trauma.
SOLOMON. (To Reporter.) I'm really sorry. I'm really sorry. I'm really sorry. (Beat.)
REPORTER. Not at all, this is quite good. I'm writing a new foreword to my book — it's how kids like you often form your own ideas and the formation of your group — I think it's a new beginning, capturing the image of your group event — what is it called?
DIWATA. Group Interpretation.
REPORTER. Could I stop by sometime here? Even a rough rehearsal? You'd be doing me a favor. Can your parents of course to make sure this was that...
DIWATA. What do we get out of it?
SOLOMON. Diwata... (To the Reporter.)
REPORTER. It's fine, it's a fair question. (Beat.)
bodystocking. (Solomon buries his head in his hands.)

REPORTER. (Laughing.) That does sound controversial. And what is the significance of all this dancing?

DIWATA. Well Jan, besides finally having a platform for my ten years of jazz/modern dance — the significance of the striptease is to show that, as we shed our clothing, we are baring, via metaphorical conceit ... baring our ... bathing suit areas, which is the term from stranger-danger, the one they use in place of penis and vagina. The piece is inspired by each of our original flows — a mashing together of each of our voices.

HOWIE. Mostly hers.

REPORTER. (Taking out her notepad.) And so, explain to me the whole bathing suit business again?

SOLOMON. She means, it's like, we're showing people that ready or not —

DIWATA. Here come our bathing suit areas. (Solomon and Howie stare at Diwata.)

SOLOMON. Please don't talk. (To the Reporter.) We're showing people that ready or not, we're going to discuss things that are affecting us in real terms, adult terms, and we won't apologize even if it makes you uncomfortable.

HOWIE. And my moves aren't that special. Just a disclaimer.

DIWATA. He's just nervous people will laugh at him. Childhood trauma.

SOLOMON. (To Reporter.) I'm really sorry about this ...

REPORTER. Not at all, this is quite good timing, really — I'm writing a new foreword to my book — it deals with adolescence, how kids like you often form your own clusters apart from adults; and the formation of your group — I think it would be the perfect new beginning, capturing the image of you three performing this group event — what is it called?

DIWATA. Group Interpretation.

REPORTER. Could I stop by sometime before Friday? Just to see even a rough rehearsal? You'd be doing me a huge favor. I'd speak to your parents of course to make sure this was okay.

DIWATA. What do we get out of it?

SOLOMON. Diwata. (To the Reporter.) I'm sorry.

REPORTER. It's fine, it's a fair question. (Beat.) Other than an appearance in the Oregonian, I'm not sure what else I have to offer. (Beat,)
DIWATA. Is your sister-in-law still on the board of the Salem dinner theatre? I googled you, so ... sorry if that's weird.

SOLOMON. Yes, it is weird, Diwata.

HOWIE. (To the Reporter.) She's an actress.

REPORTER. (To Diwata.) I could certainly introduce you, if you like.

SOLOMON. That isn't necessary, we're not asking you for any favors.

HOWIE. (To the Reporter.) Do you know anyone in town who might be willing to serve as an advisor for the Gay/Straight Alliance at school? I've been looking for someone for over a month, but ... 

SOLOMON. Howie ... 

REPORTER. Well, certainly no promises, but I might be able to help.

SOLOMON. Again, there's no way we could be ready in time.

REPORTER. Solomon, your father told me about the article you wrote for the school paper. No promises, but there's a chance we could find a place for it in the Oregonian. (All three look at each other. Introduction to George Michael's "Freedom" sounds. * Blackout.)

Group Interpretation

Diwata enters, "dances" her blog using some very basic jazz/modern dance moves. She is totally serious about all of this.

HOWIE enters, somewhat reluctantly, and after receiving a signal from Diwata, does some of his very special moves. Diwata joins in.

Howie and Diwata look for Solomon to enter. He doesn't. Diwata exits, quickly returns pushing Solomon onstage.

Howie and Solomon flank Diwata and each pull one of her arms — they are fighting for control, way, then move the other way — all about of this.

Diwata does a grand move (i.e., flips head over into boys' arms). Bits flips; maintains full stage presence. She's tired and difficult, and it becomes clear that dance is not her main focus as tools for her more complex needs.

And then, in time with the music ... 

Diwata removes a piece of clothing.

And then another.

And another.

Diwata is wearing nothing but a long, sheer chiffon in heaven.

Howie and Solomon follow her around a bit less enthusiastically. Heaven's proceedings ... and even Solomon's music reaches its infective strains.

The boys have on poorly tailored suits and boxers.

With a flourish, they finish it off in time with a sharp business.

* See Special Note on Songs and Recordings on copyright page.