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SCENE

[ODYSSEY SECONDARY SCHOOL, THE END OF THE DAY. WE'RE OUTSIDE,  
NEAR THE BIKE RACKS. A FEW KIDS MILL AROUND, LEAVING TO GO  
HOME. ARTIE WALKS BY, HUMMING, WHEN SUDDENLY:]

JIMMY:

[A LOUD WHISPER] Psst -- Artie!

[ARTIE STOPS.]

ARTIE:

[CONFUSED] S-somebody call me?

JIMMY:

[A LITTLE LOUDER] Keep your voice down!

ARTIE:

[A SCARED WHISPER] Sorry! . . . Uh, who -- who  
are you?

JIMMY:

[WHISPER] It's me!

ARTIE:

"Me" who?

JIMMY:

Jimmy!

ARTIE:

"Jimmy" who?

JIMMY:

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Jimmy Barclay!

ARTIE:

Oh . . . Why are we whispering?

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JIMMY:

Cause I don't want anybody to know where I am!

ARTIE:

It's working -- I don't know where you are.

JIMMY:

Behind the bush, to your right.

ARTIE:

[STEPS OVER; SEES HIM; LOUDLY] Oh! Hi, Jimmy!

JIMMY:

[SHUSHING HIM] Ssshhh!!! Come here!

[PULLS HIM INTO THE BUSH.]

ARTIE:

[QUIET AGAIN] Sorry! What are you doing back here, anyway?

JIMMY:

What does it look like I'm doing? I'm hiding!

ARTIE:

Yeah? From who?

JIMMY:

Rodney Rathbone. Have you seen him?

ARTIE:

No, not this afternoon.

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JIMMY:

Good -- maybe he forgot . . .

ARTIE:

What's wrong? Is he mad at you?

JIMMY:

I'm not hiding here cause it's his birthday!

ARTIE:

What'd you do?

JIMMY:

Well, we're were in Health and Human Behavior this  
afternoon--

ARTIE:

Really? I have that in the morning. Hey, did you  
get the handout about that special  
class tomorrow?

JIMMY:

Yeah, I got it. Anyway--

ARTIE:

I wonder what it's about -- I mean, the handouts  
are all stapled shut. Did you look  
at yours?

JIMMY:

No, I put it in my pocket. So, Rodney is there--

ARTIE:

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Mr. Michaels said our parents are supposed to read  
it and send back a note if they  
don't want us to go to the class.  
Is that weird?

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JIMMY:

Yeah, weird. So, anyway--

ARTIE:

You think your parents'll let you go?

JIMMY:

Artie, I don't know! Right now, I've got more important things on my mind -- like how to keep Rodney from using my spleen as a football.

ARTIE:

What'd you say to get him so mad at you?

JIMMY:

I didn't say anything . . . I laughed at him . . .

ARTIE:

You what?!

JIMMY:

Well, Phyllis Ransohoff made a joke about him in class, and before I could stop myself, a laugh came out . . .

ARTIE:

Oh, man -- that's serious! Rodney hates it when people laugh at him.

JIMMY:

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I know! After I did it, he just looked at me and  
grunted, [GRUFF] "Yo, Barclay --  
you, me, after school."



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ARTIE:

Wow . . .

JIMMY:

Yeah, now you know why I'm here . . . I think  
I'll be okay if I can just get to my  
bike . . . you sure you haven't seen  
him all afternoon?

ARTIE:

Yeah -- well, pretty sure.

JIMMY:

"Pretty sure?" Artie, Rodney is 16. He's almost  
six feet tall -- he doesn't exactly  
blend in with the normal middle  
school crowd. Did you see him or  
didn't you?

ARTIE:

Well, I was in the library -- I know he wasn't in  
there.

JIMMY:

He's never in there!

ARTIE:

Then I guess I'm not so sure . . .

JIMMY:

Great -- I'm doomed . . .

ARTIE:

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Oh, well, then I better go.

JIMMY:

"Go?" Whaddya mean "go"?

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ARTIE:

I'm not allowed to watch violence . . .  
[LEAVING] I'll see you later, Jimmy  
. . . I hope . . .

[HE LEAVES.]

JIMMY:

Thanks a lot, Artie . . . [A DEEP BREATH] Well, I  
can't stay back here forever . . .  
Looks like a clear path to the bike  
racks . . . All right . . . ready --  
set -- GO!! [HE RUNS AS FAST AS  
HIS LEGS CAN CARRY HIM, AND MAKES IT  
TO THE BIKES, VERY OUT OF BREATH]  
Made it! So far, so good . . .  
[PANICKED] Wait -- what's the  
combination? Think, Jimmy -- Ah!  
[TURNS THE TUMBLER] 35 . . . 12 . .  
. 4! [IT OPENS!] Yes!! [HE WHIPS  
THE CHAIN OFF AND HOPS ONTO HIS  
BIKE.] I'm outta he-- yaahh!!!

[MUSIC: STOPS ABRUPTLY WITH A LOUD DISCORD.]

RODNEY:

[A DEFINITE THUG] Yo, Barclay. Goin' somewheres?

JIMMY:

[SCARED] Uh, h-hi, Rodney! Uh, yeah, I thought  
I'd just mosey on home . . . well,  
see ya later--

RODNEY:

[STOPS HIM] Not so fast. You an' me got some  
unfinished business. Get off the  
bike.

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JIMMY:

Rodney, it was just a little laugh -- a guffaw  
-- a hearty chortle! Besides, I  
wasn't laughing at you, I was  
laughing with you!

RODNEY:

Yeah, well, when I get through with ya, you're  
gonna be laughin' outta the other  
side of your head!

JIMMY:

Rodney, I'm sorry! I apologize! I offer my  
sincerest and most humblest apology  
for any insult I may have caused  
you!

RODNEY:

That's nice . . . Now, get off the bike -- I'm  
gonna pound you into the cement.

JIMMY:

I appeal to your sense of humanity! You know,  
violence never solves anything! I  
think if you search deep down in  
your heart, you'll see that what you  
really want is for us to shake hands  
and forget this little  
misunderstanding ever occurred,  
right?

RODNEY:

No -- what I really want is for you to get off the  
bike, cause I'm gonna pound you into  
the cement.

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JIMMY:

Rodney-- [SUDDENLY] --look out behind you!!

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RODNEY:

[TURNS] Huh?

[JIMMY STARTS TO TAKE OFF ON HIS BIKE--]

JIMMY:

[ZIPS OFF] Bye!!

[--BUT RODNEY SPINS BACK AROUND AND GRABS THE SEAT, STOPPING HIM.]

RODNEY:

[GRUNTS WITH EFFORT] Nice try, Barclay, but no  
dice. Now get off the bike!

[ON THE WORD "BIKE," HE DUMPS JIMMY AND HIS BIKE ONTO THE  
SIDEWALK WITH A CLATTER.]

JIMMY:

[LANDING HARD] Ooff!! Oww!! All right, all  
right, I'm off!

RODNEY:

Get up, squirt.

JIMMY:

[HURT] Rodney, c'mon--

RODNEY:

I said, get up!

JIMMY:

Oooww!

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[SUDDENLY, SAM, AN OLDER KID OF ABOUT 17, RUNS ONTO THE SCENE.]

SAM:

[COMING ON] Hey, hey -- Hey, you big bully,  
what's the idea of hitting that  
little bully?



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RODNEY:

Nona yer business!

SAM:

Not only a bully, but rude, too.

RODNEY:

Hey, why don't you just get outta here, all right?

SAM:

Oh, no -- not until you say "I'm sorry."

RODNEY:

[FLABBERGASTED] I'm sorry?!

SAM:

Apology accepted.

[JIMMY GIGGLES.]

RODNEY:

[MAD] More laughin', twerp!?

SAM:

Sure -- the kid knows a good joke when he sees  
one.

[JIMMY LAUGHS.]

RODNEY:

Oh, another funny man . . . Listen, you want I  
should pound you first, that's okay

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by me -- I got nothing better to do  
for the next few minutes.

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SAM:

[SHAKING HIS HEAD] You aren't gonna pound  
anybody.

RODNEY:

No? Just watch me-- [HE SWINGS AT SAM, WHO  
SIDESTEPS HIM AND GRABS HIS ARM.]  
Hey! Leggo my arm -- aaahh!

SAM:

You know, you really shouldn't attack someone who  
knows karate . . . [HE APPLIES  
PRESSURE TO RODNEY'S WRIST.]

RODNEY:

[IN PAIN] Aaahh!! My wrist!!

JIMMY:

[AWED BY THIS DISPLAY] Wow . . .

SAM:

Now, I want you to apologize again, and this time,  
I want you to mean it.

RODNEY:

[IN PAIN] Aahh -- okay! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!!  
Leggo! Leggo!!

SAM:

[RELEASES HIM] Good . . . [RODNEY GROANS WITH  
RELIEF] Now, just turn around and  
walk away from here . . . now.

RODNEY:

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All right, all right! . . . [SNEERS] Catch you  
later, Barclay . . . [HE'S GONE.]

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JIMMY:

[GETTING UP STIFFLY] I can't wait, Rodney . . .

SAM:

You okay?

JIMMY:

Aside from a few minor compound fractures,  
yeah . . . thanks for helping me --  
that was great!

SAM:

Ah -- it was nothing.

JIMMY:

Nothing?! You just chased off Rodney Rathbone!  
That karate stuff is great!

SAM:

It's a good way to defend yourself -- comes in  
handy in a scrape. Uh, speaking of  
scrapes, you got a pretty nasty one  
on your arm.

JIMMY:

Ah, it'll be okay . . . Can you teach me some  
karate?

SAM:

Whoa, whoa -- wait a minute. You don't even know  
my name!

JIMMY:

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Oh, yeah . . . . Well, what is it?

SAM:

[AMUSED] Sam -- Sam Cooper.

=====

JIMMY:

I'm Jimmy . . . Okay, now that that's out of the way, can you teach me some karate?

SAM:

Uh, I don't think it's a good idea, Jimmy.

JIMMY:

Aw, c'mon! What if Rodney comes back?

SAM:

He won't bother you again.

JIMMY:

Maybe not today -- but what about tomorrow? Or the next day? Or the next day? Or the next--

SAM:

[LIGHTLY] All right, all right . . . Look, if your parents say it's okay, I guess I could show you a few pointers.

JIMMY:

All right! When?

SAM:

We'll talk about that later. Right now, you need to get that arm taken care of. You live around here?

JIMMY:

Yeah -- over on Elm.

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SAM:

C'mon, I'll walk you home-- [SEES SOMETHING] Uh-oh  
-- I hope you can walk.

JIMMY:

Of course, I can! I'm not that hurt!

SAM:

Maybe you aren't -- but your bike is.

JIMMY:

[PICKS UP HIS BIKE] Oh, great! The handlebars are  
all wonky!

SAM:

Don't worry -- it's fixable. You have any tools?

JIMMY:

My Dad does.

SAM:

Lead on . . .

[THEY START WALKING.]

[MUSIC: A NICE THEME BRIDGES US TO:]

SCENE

[THAT EVENING, AT THE BARCLAY HOUSE. THEY'RE JUST FINISHING  
DINNER, AND JIMMY IS REGALING EVERYONE WITH TALES OF SAM.]

JIMMY:

[MID-STORY] . . . And then he jumped right in the  
middle of Rodney's case! He grabbed

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him by the wrist and put this karate  
hold on him!

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GEORGE:

That's quite a story.

JIMMY:

Yeah, but the best part is, Sam said he'd teach me karate, too -- if it's okay with you guys. Is it?

MARY:

Now, just wait a minute, Jimmy. There's something I'm not clear on. Why did Rodney want to fight you in the first place?

DONNA:

Mr. Smart-mouth probably said something to insult him.

JIMMY:

Wrong! I didn't insult him . . . [QUIETER] I just sorta laughed at him . . .

MARY:

Oh, Jimmy . . .

JIMMY:

Well, I couldn't help it! Phyllis Ransohoff sits right behind me, and when Mr. Michaels told Rodney to read this section in our books about mental illness, Phyllis whispered, "Rodney's reading about his family again."

[GEORGE CHUCKLES.]

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MARY:

[REPROVING] George!

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GEORGE:

[IMMEDIATELY STOPS] She shouldn't have said that .  
. .

MARY:

[CURIOUS] What class was this in, Jimmy?

JIMMY:

Health and Human Behavior . . . Anyhow, Rodney  
doesn't like people laughing at him,  
so he decided to introduce my face  
to the cement -- not that he really  
needs an excuse to beat someone up.  
And that's why I want Sam to show me  
some karate. Is it okay, Dad?

GEORGE:

Well, I think it is a good idea for you to learn  
how to defend yourself, but I don't  
know this Sam is the person to teach  
you.

JIMMY:

Why not?

GEORGE:

Cause I don't know who he is, or anything about  
him.

JIMMY:

I just told you all about him! His name is Sam  
Cooper, and he's great! He protected  
me from Rodney, he knows karate, he  
fixed my bike, he likes the Marx  
Brothers --

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DONNA:

How do you know that?

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JIMMY:

Cause when you ran up to Rodney this afternoon, he said: "Hey, you big bully, what's the idea of hitting that little bully?" Groucho said that in A Night at the Opera.

DONNA:

Just what we need -- another comedian . . . [SHE LEAVES]

JIMMY:

What more do you need to know, Dad?

GEORGE:

[AMUSED] Well, call me demanding, but I think I'd like to meet the guy face-to-face.

JIMMY:

Oh . . . well, he said he'd meet me tomorrow after school. Why don't you join us?

GEORGE:

[AMUSED] Thanks for the invitation, son, I think I will.

JIMMY:

Great!

GEORGE:

Right now, though, I think you'd better go help your sister clean up the dishes.

JIMMY:

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[NOT HAPPY] The dishes?! Aw, Dad!



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GEORGE:

Well, you could do them tomorrow instead of  
meeting Sam.

JIMMY:

[AN IMMEDIATE CHANGE OF ATTITUDE; AS HE LEAVES]  
The dishes! What a great idea! Oh,  
Donna . . .

[HE'S GONE.]

GEORGE:

[SHAKING HIS HEAD] That boy . . . what'll he come  
up with next, huh? [NO ANSWER]  
Mary?

MARY:

Hmm? -- Oh, I'm sorry George.

GEORGE:

What's the matter?

MARY:

Well . . . doesn't it seem a little strange to you  
that they're teaching sixth-graders  
about mental illness?

GEORGE:

I don't know if it's strange . . . a little  
advanced, maybe.

MARY:

That's what I meant.

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GEORGE:

Well, he did say it was part of his Health and  
Human Behavior class. Mental  
illness falls under both those  
headings.

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MARY:

I know -- but, for sixth-graders?

GEORGE:

Depends on how far they take it. I mean, there's  
certainly no harm in them knowing  
about it.

MARY:

Maybe . . .

GEORGE:

You wanna go have a talk with his teacher?

MARY:

No . . . you're probably right. They've done a  
good job so far. I'm sure there's  
nothing to worry about . . .

[MUSIC: A TROUBLED BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE.]

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SCENE

[THE NEXT MORNING, AT THE BARCLAY HOUSE. MARY IS TALKING ON THE PHONE.]

MARY:

[ON THE PHONE] . . . So Robyn doesn't take that class? . . . Oh . . . No, no, it's just that Jimmy talked a little bit about it at supper last night, and, some of the stuff they're studying sounded a little advanced to me . . . This is a new class -- Donna didn't take it. That's why I thought that if Robyn did, we could compare notes . . . Well, listen, I've gotta go. I've got a ton of laundry to do . . . Okay, I'll talk to you later . . . `bye . . . [HANGS UP.] Now, let's see . . . [SHAKES HER HEAD AND SIGHS] Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy . . . You sure got these pants dirty enough yesterday . . . Oh! What's this . . . [OPENS THE NOTE AND READS] "To the Parents of Jimmy Barclay" Hmm . . . [OPENS IT, MUMBLE/READS] "Dear Mr. & Mrs. Barclay, This is to inform you that tomorrow . . . Health and Human Behavior will be a special class on the topic of-- [SUDDENLY SHOCKED -- MUSIC: A DRAMATIC STINGER UNDER] What? Oh, no . . . I better call George . . .

[MUSIC: VERY QUICK STINGER BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE.]

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SCENE

[THE SAME TIME, IN JIMMY'S HEALTH AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR CLASS. THE KIDS MILL AROUND UNTIL MR. MICHAELS QUIETS THEM DOWN.]

MR. MICHAELS:

[ABOVE THE DIN] All right, everyone! Listen up!  
[THEY QUIET DOWN.] Today's class is gonna be held in the conference room across the hall. Right now, I'm gonna read the role. When I call your name, if you have a note from your parents excusing you from the class, then just stay where you are -- I'll come and get it when I'm finished. If you don't have a note, when I call your name, come up to the front of the room. Is that clear? [THE KIDS ALL RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY.] [All right, let me get the role out here . . . uh Allen? Absent . . . Alcorn? No note . . . Baker? You have a note? Okay stay there -- I'll get it in a minute . . . Barclay?]

[DURING BRACKETED DIALOGUE, JIMMY TALKS TO HIMSELF:]

JIMMY:

[TO HIMSELF] Oh, yeah -- the handout! I forgot to give it to Mom . . .

[SUDDENLY, THE TEACHER'S VOICE IS BACK UP.]

MR. MICHAELS:

[CALLING HIS NAME] Jimmy Barclay?

JIMMY:

[STARTLED] Huh?

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MR. MICHAELS:

Do you have a note or not?

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JIMMY:

Oh, uh, no sir . . . no note . . .

MR. MICHAELS:

Front of the room, please . . . [Connors? No note  
. . . Coswell? No note . . .  
Cummings? You have a note . . .  
okay . . . Davis? No note . . .]

[DURING THE BRACKETED PART, JIMMY IS HEARD IN THE FOREGROUND.]

JIMMY:

[TO HIMSELF, AS HE GETS UP.] Oh well -- looks  
like I'm going to the special  
class . . .

[MUSIC: A STINGER BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE]

SCENE

[SAME TIME, BACK AT THE BARCLAYS. MARY IS WAITING FOR GEORGE TO  
PICK UP THE PHONE.]

MARY:

[TO HERSELF] C'mon, George, be there . . .

[IT CLICKS AS THE CONNECTION IS MADE.]

GEORGE:

[FILTERED] George Barclay.

MARY:

George, it's Mary!

GEORGE:

[FILTERED] Hi, sweetheart. What's up?

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MARY:

Plenty! You remember last night I was concerned  
about that health class of Jimmy's?

GEORGE:

[FILTERED] Yes.

MARY:

[A DEEP BREATH] Well, today they're having a  
special class -- on homosexuality.

GEORGE:

[FILTERED] What?!

MARY:

Yeah, I just found a handout in Jimmy's pocket --  
he never gave it to us. George, the  
class is going on right now!

GEORGE:

[FILTERED] Now, just calm down, Mary. Does it  
give any details about what they'll  
be discussing?

MARY:

No -- just that it's gonna be a special class.

GEORGE:

[FILTERED; A SIGH] All right, call the  
Principal's office and have them  
pull him out. I'm leaving now.  
Meet me at the school.

MARY:

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All right -- `bye . . .

[MUSIC: STINGER BRIDGE THAT PLAYS UNDER THE NEXT SCENE.]

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SCENE

[THE ASSEMBLY. A NOISY KID CROWD -- BUT NOT TOO BIG. MR. MICHAELS QUIETS EVERYONE DOWN.]

MR. MICHAELS:

[ABOVE THEM] Okay, everyone -- settle down . . .  
[THEY QUIET] One of the things this course is designed to do is to show us how different and unique we are from each other. Well, that's what today's class is all about. We're gonna be talking about something called "homosexuality." How many of you know what that is? [A BEAT] Good -- quite a few of you. Well, instead of just reading this in a book, I thought it'd be better for you to hear about it from someone who knows what it's like first-hand. I appreciate his courage in talking to us like this. So let's bring him out . . .

[SCATTERED APPLAUSE -- AND WE'RE WITH JIMMY.]

JIMMY:

[SHOCKED TO HIMSELF] Wha--?! I can't believe it! It's --

SAM:

[TO THE ASSEMBLY] Hi, my name is Sam . . . Sam Cooper . . .

[MUSIC: RISES DRAMATICALLY AND TAKES US TO:]

[COMMERCIAL.]

SCENE

[LATER, IN PRINCIPAL ANDREW'S OFFICE. A BUZZ OF THER INTERCOM.]

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MR. ANDREWS:

Yes, Helen?

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HELEN:

[FILTERED] The Barclays are here to see you.

MR. ANDREWS:

Thank you, Helen, send them in.

[THE DOOR OPENS AND GEORGE AND MARY ENTER.]

MR. ANDREWS:

Come in, Mr. and Mrs. Barclay--

MARY:

[ENTERING; URGENTLY] Mr. Andrews, where is our  
son?

MR. ANDREWS:

He's in the School Library. As soon as I got your  
call, I went over and got him out of  
the class myself.

MARY:

[RELIEVED] Oh, thank goodness . . .

MR. ANDREWS:

Please, folks, sit down . . .

[A BEAT AS THEY SIT.]

GEORGE:

Mr. Andrews . . . I . . . [AT A LOSS FOR WORDS]

MR. ANDREWS:

You want to know how this happened, don't you?

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GEORGE:

That'd be a good place to start.

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MR. ANDREWS:

The Health and Human Behavior course is a new venture for us, Mr. Barclay. Both it, and the instructor, Mr. Michaels, came very highly recommended. Because of that, I give him a great deal of leeway in how he teaches his course.

GEORGE:

Then you didn't know he was going to do this?

MR. ANDREWS:

I knew he was going to discuss homosexuality -- that was in his course materials. I didn't know he was going to devote a special class to it. That, in my opinion, crosses the line.

MARY:

It crosses the line for a public school teacher to even discuss it with a group of sixth-graders.

MR. ANDREWS:

Well, we're gonna disagree on that one, Mrs. Barclay. It's vital for kids these days to learn about this. Keeping them in the dark not only does them a disservice, but it could be dangerous.

=====

GEORGE:

You misunderstand us, Mr. Andrews. My wife and I recognize the importance of discussing sexuality -- all kinds of sexuality -- with our children. It's a task we take very seriously. But for us, the what that's discussed isn't nearly as important as how it's discussed -- what's said about the subject, how it's presented, whether it's shown in a good light or a bad light. We can't monitor that in your Health and Human Behavior course -- in fact, that's something not even you could monitor.

MR. ANDREWS:

And that's the reason I put a safeguard system in place -- which, admittedly, isn't very safe in it's present form. You folks were supposed to see a handout that, for some reason, you didn't see.

MARY:

Believe me, Mr. Andrews, we're going to make sure we see them from now on.

MR. ANDREWS:

I do believe you, Mrs. Barclay. And I'm going to give my safeguard system a complete overhaul -- I don't want anything like this to happen again.

GEORGE:



=====

But, that's what bothers us about this whole  
incident, Mr. Andrews -- why does  
this school have a course that needs  
a safeguard system in the first  
place?

=====

MARY:

Yes -- why is there a class here that teaches  
sixth-graders about homosexuality?

MR. ANDREWS:

Well, first of all, Mrs. Barclay, the class is not  
about homosexuality, it's about  
Health and Human Behavior. And as  
I've already explained to you, we  
believe it's vital for our students  
to know about this--

GEORGE:

"We?" "We" who, Mr. Andrews?

MR. ANDREWS:

Well, myself and the School Board.

MARY:

[SURPRISED] The School Board?

MR. ANDREWS:

Yes. We discussed it at our last open forum . . .  
I take it you weren't there?

GEORGE:

[SUBDUED AND A BIT EMBARRASSED] Uh, no . . . we  
weren't . . .

MR. ANDREWS:

The Board voted unanimously to adopt the course.

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[ALSO SUBDUED AND A BIT EMBARRASSED] Didn't  
anybody oppose it?

=====

MR. ANDREWS:

Only one person -- John Whittaker.

GEORGE:

[QUIETLY] Whit . . .

MR. ANDREWS:

Yes. Other than that, the measure met with very little resistance -- just the opposite, in fact. A number of people from various organizations were there in support of it.

MARY:

[CONVICTED] Oh, boy . . .

[THERE'S AN UNCOMFORTABLE BEAT.]

MR. ANDREWS:

Look, folks, believe it or not, I do understand how you feel. The last thing I want to do is alienate you. I agree that what Mr. Michaels did today went too far -- in the future, I'm going to monitor him more carefully. And, as I said, I'm going to rework my safeguard system. But, if you don't mind my saying so, it might be a good idea for you to build your own safeguards by being involved in the open forums . . . [A BEAT TO LET THIS SINK IN] Either way, I can assure you that what happened today won't happen again.

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I appreciate that -- but, for my son's sake, I  
wish you'd given us that assurance  
yesterday.

=====

MR. ANDREWS:

For what it's worth, Mrs. Barclay, I don't think Jimmy heard very much. The speaker had just started talking when I pulled him out.

GEORGE:

"Speaker?"

MR. ANDREWS:

Yes -- a young man named Sam Cooper.

MARY:

[CONCERNED] Sam?

MR. ANDREWS:

Do you know him?

GEORGE:

[VERY CONCERNED] No, we don't -- but our son might  
. . .

MR. ANDREWS:

I'm afraid I don't understand.

GEORGE:

After school yesterday, Jimmy had a run-in with one of the kids here and he said a guy named Sam helped him out of it.

MARY:

You think it's the same one?

=====

GEORGE:

I don't know . . . [A BEAT] Uh, look, I'd better  
talk to Jimmy. Is it all right if I  
go to the Library?

=====

MR. ANDREWS:

Of course. Just go all the way down the main hall  
and out the double doors. The  
Library is the building to your  
left.

GEORGE:

Thank you . . . [TO MARY] Uh, you want to come  
with me?

MARY:

Uh, I think maybe you need to handle this  
one . . .

GEORGE:

[A SIGH] Yeah, I had a feeling you'd say that . .  
. Well, if you'll excuse me . . .

[HE GETS UP TO LEAVE, AND THE PRINCIPAL STOPS HIM.]

MR. ANDREWS:

Mr. Barclay?

GEORGE:

Yes?

MR. ANDREWS:

[SINCERELY] I am sorry about this.

GEORGE:

[SIGHS] I know . . . so am I . . .

[HE LEAVES.]

[MUSIC: BRIDGES US DRAMATICALLY TO THE NEXT SCENE.]



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SCENE

[THE SCHOOL LIBRARY, A FEW MINUTES LATER. GEORGE WALKS UP TO THE COUNTER.]

GEORGE:

Uh, excuse me -- I'm looking for Jimmy Barclay.  
Do you know him?

A KID:

Barclay? Sure -- he's right over there.

GEORGE:

Thanks . . . [STARTS OVER, TO HIMSELF] Lord,  
please help me to know what to say  
here . . . [A DEEP BREATH; LOUDER]  
Jimmy?

JIMMY:

[HIS SURPRISE IS MELLOWED BY HIS CONFUSION] Oh --  
hi, Dad.

[A PERSON SHUSHES THEM.]

GEORGE:

[WHISPERING] Sorry! . . . [TO JIMMY] Takes me  
back to when I was in school -- some  
things never change . . . Listen,  
you wanna take a walk?

JIMMY:

Sure . . .

[A PERSON SHUSHES THEM AGAIN.]

GEORGE:

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[WHISPERING] Okay, okay! We're going! We're  
going! C'mon, Jimmy

[THEY LEAVE.]

[MUSIC: A VERY BRIEF BRIDGE TO THE NEXT SCENE.]

=====

SCENE

[OUTSIDE. GEORGE AND JIMMY WALK.]

GEORGE:

Boy, it sure turned out to be a nice day, huh? [A  
BEAT] You okay?

JIMMY:

[SIGHS] Yeah . . . no . . . I'm kinda confused.

GEORGE:

About Sam?

JIMMY:

Yeah! How'd you know?

GEORGE:

It's not important . . . what are you confused  
about?

JIMMY:

Well . . . Sam doesn't act like . . . like . .  
.

GEORGE:

A homosexual?

JIMMY:

Yeah! He's tough, Dad! I mean, you shoulda seen  
the way he took out Rodney!

GEORGE:

How do you expect him to act?

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JIMMY:

I dunno . . . sissy -- like a girl!

=====

GEORGE:

Oh . . . well, some do act that way -- but a lot  
don't.

JIMMY:

[A BEAT] I guess this means Sam won't be giving  
me karate lessons, huh?

GEORGE:

No . . . [CURIOUS] Do you know why?

JIMMY:

[HESITANT] I think I do, but . . .

GEORGE:

. . . but you're not sure.

JIMMY:

Well . . . no.

[A BEAT]

GEORGE:

You probably learned in your class that  
homosexuality is a life style,  
right?

JIMMY:

Yeah.

GEORGE:

Well, as a Christian, I believe it's not just a  
life style, it's a behavior -- a

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bad behavior. But you probably know  
that, too, huh?

JIMMY:

Yeah.

=====

GEORGE:

Okay, here's where it gets a little complicated . . . You're at an age right now where a lot of things [SEARCHES FOR THE RIGHT WORD] . . . influence you -- that means they affect the way you think about things. Your Mom and I influence you . . . so does television . . . the music you listen to . . . the movies you watch -- they all influence you in some way. But one of the biggest influences on you right now are your friends. You with me so far?

JIMMY:

Yeah, we learned about that in Human Behavior, too.

GEORGE:

Good -- then this next part should be a breeze . . . when you're with your friends, you tend to overlook bad behavior . . . and with your really close friends, after a while you start thinking that maybe the bad things they do aren't really all that bad . . . and -- depending on what it is -- sometimes you might even think it's all right if you try those bad things.

JIMMY:

[SCORNFULLY] C'mon, Dad -- you don't think I'm gonna become a homosexual, do you?



=====

GEORGE:

No, Jimmy, I don't . . . but -- and this is the really difficult part -- I also don't want you to think it's okay for Sam to be one . . . see, God has made it very clear that living the homosexual life is a sin. It's never okay for anybody . . .

JIMMY:

But, Sam said that one out of every ten people is like him, and that they're born that way, so they can't help it!

GEORGE:

[A DEEP BREATH] Well, first of all, son, the one-in-ten number is not right. It's really more like two out of a hundred.

JIMMY:

Then why did Sam say one-in-ten?

GEORGE:

He was misinformed. He got that number from an old medical report . . . But even if it were one-in-ten -- even if it were five-in-ten -- it doesn't change anything. Just because a lot of people are doing something, that doesn't make it right. A lot of people steal and take drugs, but those things aren't right, are they?

JIMMY:

No.

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GEORGE:

Same with this . . . As for being born that way -- that's a tough one. It's true that some people, like Sam, have a in-born tendency toward homosexuality. That means they're strongly tempted by it -- just like we're all tempted by some sin. But, giving into that temptation is a choice. In other words, Sam can choose to live a homosexual lifestyle -- or, with God's help, he can choose not to . . .

[A BEAT]

JIMMY:

[SIGHS] So, what do I tell Sam? I'm supposed to meet him later today.

GEORGE:

Uh, I think I need to talk with him by myself this time.

JIMMY:

What are you gonna tell him?

GEORGE:

Well, to begin with, I'm gonna thank him for helping you yesterday. Maybe it'll open up some doors so we can help him.

JIMMY:

Yeah . . . [A BEAT] . . . you think maybe we should . . . pray for Sam?

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[MUSIC: A NICE THEME STARTS.]

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GEORGE:

[SMILES] Jimmy, I think that's the best idea I've  
heard all day . . . C'mon.

[AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY DO AS THE:]

[MUSIC: RISES UP TO . . .

. . . THE END.]