

COMING OUT OF THE BATHROOM CLOSET

By

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Characters

Emily, 25

Emily's Mom, 50's

Emily's Dad, 50's

Setting

A woman's bathroom in her family home.

A NOTE TO THE DIRECTOR/ACTORS

Because of the fact that the parents are fragments of EMILY's mind, there should be points where the actors playing the parents will mimic her facial expressions and/or body positions. This can happen as much or as little as you like, even when it may contrast with what the parent(s) is/are saying.

(Lights up on a young woman. This is EMILY. She is sitting on the toilet, hunched over and tapping her foot nervously. She gets up and goes to the sink, facing the audience, and looks in the mirror, which can be a clear piece of glass, plastic, or a metal frame. (A faint but audible sound of static, like white noise, can be heard throughout, except when indicated otherwise.)

EMILY

You can do this. You survived grad school; you can say three little words. Don't be a wuss.

Mom, Dad, I am...bi...cycling? Bi...sectional? Bi...lateral? Ugh, why can't I say it?

(Putting her head on the "mirror")

That one doesn't even have the "ssss" in it for God's sake...

(She breathes deeply, taking a moment to gather her courage. She jumps around, almost like a boxer. Then, she comes up to the sink and grabs the sides, looking into the mirror. (Quickly, the static becomes louder throughout the next monologue, especially toward the end of it.)

Okay, you got this. Mom, Dad, I. Am. Bi...SEXUAL! I like men *and* women! I don't give a flying fuck about what's in their pants! You wanna know how I know? I've known ever since I had my first crushes on my best guy friend *and* my best *girl friend*! I just didn't know what to call it or if it was normal or if it was just me or—

(Shower curtain peels back

(The static suddenly goes back to its original volume)

EMILY'S MOM

Now, was that so hard—

EMILY

(Screams)

(Scared and annoyed) Mom! What the hell are you doing in here?! Were you hiding in there the whole time?! I saw you leave!

(EMILY'S DAD appears, his head above EMILY'S MOM'S head, almost like a cartoon)

EMILY'S DAD

Oh, honey, you know we're not really here, right? You're crazy, but not *that* crazy.

(Laughs while EMILY gives him a death glare)

EMILY

Whatever. Having you two here is really not helping me gear up for this moment. Please go away. Shoo.

EMILY'S DAD

Hey. (Jokingly) Don't talk back to me, I'm your father.

EMILY

Well, *technically* you're a shadow of my father that I made up in order to...to...Actually, I'm not sure why you're here.

(EMILY'S MOM steps out of the shower, along with EMILY'S DAD)

EMILY'S MOM

Why do you think we're here?

EMILY

I don't—Can't you just *tell* me?

EMILY'S DAD

(Happily) Sure. Let me explain. I think...um...We're here because...um...(Seems to have a realization, almost embarrassed) Oh yeah, we're *you*, so we know about as much as you do. Sorry. Maybe we can still help you though. Start from the beginning.

EMILY

Well, I'm trying to figure out how to tell you two that I'm...you know...bi. (Horrorified) How do I even bring up something like that? (Sarcastically) Do I just go, "Hey mom, hey dad, nice weather we're having! Oh, and by the way, when it comes to genitalia, anything goes!" What if you think—

ALL

(Angrily, with an undertone of disgust) It's just a "phase—"
(EMILY'S MOM and DAD don't seem to notice what they've just said. After all, they are *technically* EMILY)

EMILY

Or—

ALL

(More sarcastic) Are you sure?

(Again, MOM and DAD don't notice what they're doing. Lights dim to three spotlights on EMILY, MOM AND DAD.

(ALL are looking out toward the audience.)

EMILY'S MOM

(Sad but hopeful) How do you know? Maybe you just haven't met the right guy yet. Give it time...

EMILY'S DAD

(Trying to be "helpful") Can't you just choose a side? I mean, you have a chance at choosing to be normal...

(Lights return to normal)

EMILY

Or some bullshit like that? What if you don't want to accept me as I am?

(Beat)

EMILY'S DAD

(Completely deadpan) Well then, I guess you gotta pack up and go.

(Another glare, this time from both women.)

What? I was just kidding!

(Laughs awkwardly)

EMILY

I don't know. Maybe I feel like I need to be prepared for anything. If I can barely say the words out loud to myself, how am I going to say them confidently to you guys? I don't want to sound like this is something I "think" I am, I *know* I am.

(EMILY'S MOM walks over to her. She turns EMILY to face her)

EMILY'S MOM

Listen to me, sweetie. I know that you know that we would never turn you away.

EMILY'S DAD

We love you kiddo, despite this thick skull of yours.

(Taps EMILY'S forehead.

(At this time, the sound of static gradually begins to get louder, but not loud enough for the actors' voices to be drowned out.)

EMILY

I want to believe that. Really, I do. But, what if you aren't as accepting as I want you to be? I couldn't care less what anyone else has to say, but you're my parents, and as much as anyone can say that even *your* opinion or acceptance shouldn't matter, it matters to *me*.

(A beat. EMILY sits on the toilet again, tapping her foot and holding back tears. EMILY'S DAD walks over to her and kneels down to her level.)

EMILY'S DAD

Are you really this worried about our approval?

(Throughout this monologue, the static sound gets louder at an accelerated rate, forcing EMILY to have to shout. EMILY'S MOM and DAD are also beginning to slow down or glitch.)

EMILY

Yes, but I'm also scared of the aftermath. What if you think that because I'm bi, I still have a chance of only being in relationships with guys? What if I bring a girl home and it gets weird? What if I want to marry her and *that* gets weird? I...I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO!

(The static is at its loudest now.

EMILY is having an anxiety attack. Both EMILY'S MOM and DAD are frozen where they stand. EMILY'S MOM slowly tries to break free, and finally shouts.)

EMILY'S MOM

Sweetheart!

(The static begins to get quieter. It's harder for EMILY to focus this time.)

You need to calm down! You're thinking too far ahead!

(She runs over to EMILY, hugging her tightly.

(A beat. EMILY'S MOM lets go of EMILY, and EMILY looks up at her. Then, she gets up, standing in front of her parents, looking them both in the eye. She goes to the mirror, looking into it and out into the audience.)

EMILY

Why is this so complicated for me? I know that you both love me. I had a great childhood growing up; you have both been the most supportive parents anyone could ever have.

EMILY'S DAD

Honey, you need to stop overthinking every little thing. It's going to drive you crazy. And you are not losing your mind before me. (Smiling)

EMILY'S MOM

(Taking EMILY'S DAD's hand) It's going to be okay, no matter what you decide or what happens after the fact. We've always been honest with you, and you've always returned the favor. I mean, except when you and your father broke the window and decided to blame it on hail. On the sunniest day of the year.

(She winks. EMILY'S DAD feigns offense, and then gives a small smile. EMILY laughs, looking at both of her parents as if through the bathroom mirror.

(Beat)

EMILY

I think I know what I need to do, so...

EMILY'S MOM

We love you sweetie.

(The sound of a car pulling up to the driveway is heard in the distance. ALL turn their heads toward the sound.)

EMILY'S DAD

(Turning back to EMILY) Well, kiddo, good luck.

EMILY

(Smiling) Bye guys. See you soon.

(EMILY'S MOM and DAD go back to the shower and step behind the curtain. DAD looks back and gives a little wave, EMILY waves back. She turns back to the audience and takes a deep breath. The static fades out. Silence. Finally. She smiles, small at first, then more broadly, as the lights slowly fade out.)

THE END