

Suicide Cop

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First Draft

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SCENE ONE- EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

RYANNE (15) and MOM 1 (45) enter stage right. RYANNE is dressed for cheerleading practice, holding her pompoms. MOM 1 is holding car keys, and seems anxious to leave. Stage left, CHEERLEADERS are practicing in front of the school. ERIN (16), JACK (17) and DOUG (17) are among them. COACH blows her whistle and gestures for the team to line up.

MOM 1

Remember what we talked about.

RYANNE

Yes Mom.

MOM 1

Your whole college career could be riding on this. You have to make it onto the squad if you have any chance of a college scholarship.

RYANNE

I know.

MOM 1

Don't argue with me.

RYANNE

I'm not arguing.

MOM 1

Do your best. You're good. The coach will see it.

RYANNE

Yes Mom.

Mom 1 exits stage right. Ryanne walks over to the team.

COACH

You here to try out?

RYANNE

Yes.

COACH

Get in line. Alright, everyone let's see what you can do. Jumping jacks. Go.

The team begins to do jumping jacks, but Ryanne doesn't participate. She makes a lame attempt to do one, then pulls out her phone and scrolls Instagram.

Coach walks the line, examining each of the players. She is not paying attention to Ryanne.

ERIN

Hey. You're new?

RYANNE

Yeah.

ERIN

Erin.

RYANNE

Ryanne.

ERIN

You trying to make the team Ryanne? 'Cause it looks like you don't give a damn.

RYANNE

I might be actual crap at this sport.

ERIN

Or you may be legit throwing this try out.

RYANNE

You may be right.

AVA (15) and BETHANY (15) enter stage right. They have come to watch tryouts and scope out the boys. They whisper together, pointing and laughing.

BETHANY

I'm telling you, the guy cheerleaders are so cute.

Jack splits from practice and jogs
over to meet them.

JACK

Hey.

AVA

Hey.

BETHANY

Hey.

JACK

(To Ava) You a freshman?

AVA

Yeah.

JACK

Cool. Stick around after practice.

AVA

Ok.

Jack jogs back into line, nodding
secretly to Ava.

Bethany grabs Ava's arm.

BETHANY

Oh my God, he was totally hitting on you.

AVA

Do you think?

BETHANY

Girl, I know. He asked you to 'stick around after practice.'

Coach blows her whistle.

COACH

Okay, good effort everyone. The roster will be posted by the
end of the week.

The team splits up into many side
conversations. Ryanne and Erin hang
out together.

Jack goes back to Ava and puts an arm around her shoulders. He whispers something in her ear and she giggles.

Mom 1 enters stage right.

RYANNE

Gotta go.

ERIN

See ya in school.

Ryanne jogs over to meet Mom 1.

MOM 1

How did it go?

RYANNE

Fine.

MOM 1

Did you make the team?

RYANNE

Coach said she'll post results next week.

MOM 1

Did you give it your best?

RYANNE

Yes Mom.

Ryanne and Mom 1 exit stage right.

JACK

You wanna get a coffee?

AVA

Sure.

JACK

What's your name?

AVA

Ava.

JACK

Jack. You're real pretty.

AVA

Thanks.

BETHANY

I would also like a coffee.

JACK

If it's okay with my girlfriend, it's okay with me.

Bethany and Ava grasp hands and
scream.

BETHANY

He called you his girlfriend!

JACK

I'm right here.

AVA

Sure, I guess.

JACK

Sure to the coffee, or sure to the girlfriend thing?

AVA

(laughing) Both. I guess.

Jack throws an arm around Ava's
shoulders and leads her off stage
left. Bethany hurries to keep up.

SCENE 2. EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Students walk by, wearing back packs,
talking in small groups.

Erin and Doug are hanging out center
stage, talking to each other.

Ryanne enters stage left, alone,
texting on her phone. She walks up to
Erin without realizing it.

ERIN

Well if it isn't belly flop.

Doug laughs.

RYANNE

Huh?

ERIN

Belly flop. That's what they're calling you cause you tanked
try outs.

RYANNE

Oh yeah. What's up?

DOUG

If you didn't want to be on the team, why show up in the first
place?

RYANNE

My mom.

ERIN

I understand. My mom wants me to be a doctor.

RYANNE

Mine too.

DOUG

Mine just wants me to stay out of jail.

ERIN

(Nodding towards Ryanne's phone) What are you on?

RYANNE

Oh. It's this kid I met online. I dunno. I was on a hashtag on Instagram, right? And I started talking with this kid from England. He's got this really weird handle like "Kill Me Now." So I ask him, and he's like, it's not about the app. It's real life, he's really depressed.

ERIN

That sucks.

RYANNE

Yeah. I dunno how to help him. I'm just talking to him you know. He sent me this video.

Ryanne shares her screen with Erin.

RYANNE

He's stuck in a locker. Some kids are bullying him.

ERIN

Wow. That's heavy.

DOUG

What are you, some kind of suicide cop?

RYANNE

No. I just give a damn.

ERIN

Hey, don't listen to him. I think its cool.

RYANNE

Yeah, it's whatever. How's practice?

Ryanne, Erin and Doug move stage right, but continue to hang out.

Students mingle around in small groups, talking.

Jack and Ava enter stage left, Jack's arm draped over Ava's shoulders.

JACK

Don't wear this shirt, it doesn't look good.

AVA

What's wrong with this shirt?

JACK

It's ugly.

Jack tries to kiss Ava, but she pushes him away.

JACK

What are you doing? You're my girlfriend.

AVA

I just don't want to...

JACK

(Loudly to all the students milling about) You didn't have a problem kissing me last night. You couldn't get enough.

Students gasp and laugh. A circle forms around Ava and Jack.

AVA

What are you doing?

JACK

I wouldn't be caught dead with such a slut.

Jack high-fives one of the onlookers and steps backwards into the crowd with a mic drop.

Ava looks around in horror. The students laugh. She rushes off stage, crying.

SCENE 3 - EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Students are sitting outside, eating lunch. Ava sits alone, eating a sandwich, scrolling on her phone. Ryanne, Erin and Doug enter stage left.

RYANNE

The kid I was talking to, the one from England, he killed himself.

ERIN

Holy crap.

RYANNE

We were playing word games, and you know, I was trying to cheer him up, and he just said, "Thanks for being such a good friend." That was it. I never heard from him again. I tried texting, but he didn't answer. This morning I woke up to a message from his dad, all caps. HE KILLED HIMSELF. WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING? His dad's blaming me.

ERIN

It is not your fault.

RYANNE

I know.

Erin spots Ava and waves at her. The three kids walk over to her.

ERIN

Hey Ava.

AVA

Hey Erin.

ERIN

Ryanne. Ava.

RYANNE

Hey.

AVA

Hey.

ERIN

Sorry about what happened.

AVA

Whatever.

DOUG

Ryanne's a suicide cop.

AVA

What's a suicide cop?

RYANNE

Shut up.

AVA

What's a suicide cop?

ERIN

She rescues people she finds online.

AVA

Really?

RYANNE

I try to rescue people. I'm not very good at it.

AVA

Would you try to rescue me?

RYANNE

Do you need rescuing?

AVA

No.

Erin spies another friend and waves.

ERIN

I'll catch you guys later.

Erin and Doug walk off to start a conversation with another student.

RYANNE

How long have you known Erin?

AVA

All my life I think. She knows everyone. How'd you get started with the suicide thing?

RYANNE

I was just trying to be a good friend.

AVA

You didn't hear what they're saying about me?

RYANNE

I didn't hear and I don't care.

AVA

I like you, Ryanne.

RYANNE

That was fast.

AVA

I don't mean "I like you" like you.

RYANNE

No, I didn't mean...I mean, thanks. I like you too.

SCENE 4 - EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

Parent-teacher night at school.
Students and their parents are dotted
around the stage. Ryanne and Mom 1
are standing to the right, not
speaking to each other.

Ava and MOM 2 (45) enter stage left.

MOM 2

I'm so excited to meet your teachers. I know they will all have
wonderful things to say about you.

AVA

Mom.

MOM 2

Don't worry, I won't embarrass you.

Mom 2 sees Mom 1 and waves.

MOM 2

Excuse me, can you tell me where room 225 is?

AVA

Mom, she doesn't know.

RYANNE

Hey Ava.

AVA

Hey Ryanne.

MOM 2

Sweetie, aren't you going to introduce me to your friend?

AVA

Ryanne, my mom. Mom, Ryanne.

RYANNE

Ma'am.

AVA

I think I forgot my phone in the car. Ryanne, do you want to
come help me find it?

RYANNE

Sure.

Ryanne and Ava exit stage left.

MOM 2

They grow up so quickly.

MOM 1

Hmm.

MOM 2

You know, I didn't want to say anything in front of Ava, but I'm worried about her.

MOM 1

Why is that?

MOM 2

She's been cutting herself, on her arms.

MOM 1

Why would she do that?

MOM 2

I don't know. I think she's under a lot of stress in school. I think something happened, some of her friends aren't talking to her anymore.

MOM 1

She'll grow out of it.

MOM 2

How is your daughter...?

MOM 1

Ryanne.

MOM 2

Yes, Ryanne. How is she adjusting to high school?

MOM 1

She's fine.

Ava and Ryanne reappear, hand in hand. They abruptly drop hands when they realize their parents have seen them.

AVA

It was in my pocket all along.

MOM 2

Ava, girls don't hold hands with other girls.

AVA

Mom!

Mom takes hold of Ava and steers her
away from Ryanne.

MOM 2

It was very nice to meet you.

MOM 1

Likewise.

Mom 1 and Ryanne watch Ava and Mom 2
exit stage left.

MOM 1

I don't want you to hang out with that girl.

RYANNE

Why not?

Coach enters stage left, making the
rounds. She stops to shake hands with
several student/parent pairs before
approaching Mom 1 and Ryanne.

COACH

Ryanne, isn't it?

RYANNE

Yes Ma'am.

COACH

And you must be Mom?

MOM 1

Pleased to meet you.

RYANNE

Mom, this is Coach.

MOM 1

You're the coach who passed up on a chance to sign my daughter?

COACH

I didn't pass up on the chance, Ryanne demonstrated to me that she didn't want a place on the squad.

MOM 1

What?!

COACH

She stood on the sidelines, she didn't participate, she was texting someone the whole time.

MOM 1

What?! Is this true?

RYANNE

Mom I...

MOM 1

What part of college scholarship did you not understand?!

RYANNE

Maybe I don't want to be a cheerleader. Maybe I don't like it.

MOM 1

I don't care if you like it or not. You have to think about your future. (To Coach) Is there any way you can take another look at her?

COACH

I really shouldn't...

MOM 1

She was varsity team in Junior High.

COACH

(To Ryanne) Come to practice tomorrow. I'll give you one more chance.

RYANNE

Yes Ma'am.

MOM 1

Thank you.

Mom 1 nudges Ryanne.

RYANNE

Thank you.

Coach moves on to another
student/parent pair.

Mom 1 turns on Ryanne.

MOM 1

You were texting? You're throwing your life away on that stupid
device. Give it to me.

RYANNE

But, I'm talking to some people...

MOM 1

That's the problem!

RYANNE

You don't understand...

MOM 1

Give me the phone.

Ryanne hands it over.

MOM 1

You'll get it back after you make the squad.

SCENE 5 - PARK - DAY

The stage is empty. Doug, Erin, Ava, Bethany and Ryanne converge on center stage from all angles. They are wearing COVID masks.

Erin and Doug do an elbow bump.

Ava and Bethany wave at each other.

Ryanne leans forward to kiss Ava, still wearing her mask. Ava returns the affection, laughing.

All the kids remove their masks.

ERIN

I didn't think I was ever going to get out of the house!

RYANNE

How long has it been since they closed the school? A year?

BETHANY

I'm gonna die if I have to listen to one more lecture about COVID safety.

AVA

How did you escape?

BETHANY

I told my mom I was going to get the mail.

ERIN

Isn't she going to figure out you're gone?

BETHANY

Yeah, but...what was I supposed to say?

RYANNE

I told my parents I was going for a run.

ERIN

I'm walking the dog.

DOUG

Where's the dog?

ERIN

Oh snap! I forgot my dog.

Ryanne takes Ava by the hand and draws
her aside.

RYANNE

Are you feeling any better?

AVA

Don't head shrink me.

RYANNE

I'm not.

AVA

I don't need help.

RYANNE

Okay.

DOUG

I'm serious, things are pretty bad at home.

ERIN

How bad?

DOUG

Bad.

Ryanne and Ava rejoin the group,
holding hands.

ERIN

Ryanne, I've got an assignment for you.

DOUG

Shut up.

ERIN

Doug's in a bad place.

RYANNE

I'm sorry to hear that.

DOUG

I'm fine.

RYANNE

It's not my business, but if you have deep emotions like anger or sadness, you have to express them. Both of you. Holding things inside just makes it toxic. Fine, you don't want to talk to me. But talk to someone. Cry if you have to. It doesn't make you less of a man.

AVA

I was so worried crying would make me less of a man.

RYANNE

I'm serious. Don't ignore your pain. Let it out. I talk to people, that's why I'm not depressed.

DOUG

I found a bottle my mom was hiding in the bathroom. She's not nice when she's drunk.

BETHANY

Oh my God.

ERIN

My mom's constantly calling me fat.

BETHANY

Why?

ERIN

She's fat herself, and she thinks it's funny.

RYANNE

I'm supposed to be perfect.

AVA

I'm supposed to be beautiful. And quiet.

RYANNE

My mom told me you cut yourself.

AVA

How does your mom know? Why is that any of her business?

BETHANY

Is it true?

AVA

No. Yes. I just get so confused, and angry, and I want to scream but I'm supposed to be quiet.

RYANNE

You can scream. I'll scream with you.

AVA

Now?

RYANNE

Yeah. Doug, what do you think?

Doug screams, loud and frustrated.
Ryanne joins in, making a sport of it.
Erin first, then Bethany both scream
until everyone is fighting to be the
loudest. They lose their breath and
fall silent, turning to Ava.

She draws a deep breath and lets out
a scream. The rest of the kids join
in.

They collapse into laughter.

AVA

I feel better.

RYANNE

Once isn't gonna be enough. You have to keep letting it out.

SCENE SIX - LIVINGROOMS - NIGHT

Ava, Ryanne, Erin and Doug are each sitting on different chairs, a comfortable chair, a wooden chair, a stool and a bed. They are spaced out across the stage, each holding a phone. As they text, they speak their text out loud.

ERIN
Sup?

RYANNE
Not much.

DOUG
I gotta get outta here.

RYANNE
What's going on?

DOUG
She's drinking again.

ERIN
Come to my house.

DOUG
On my way.

Doug stands up, puts his phone away and exits stage right.

Bethany enters stage right, texting. She sits down in Doug's old spot.

BETHANY
OMG Ava, check your Instagram.

AVA
What is it?

BETHANY
Jack. He posted your phone number on the gossip site. "For a good time, call Ava."

AVA

What?! Oh no.

BETHANY

Call him now. Tell him to take it down.

AVA

I can't call him.

RYANNE

Erin, what are you gonna do when Doug gets there?

ERIN

I dunno. I'll hide him in my closet.

AVA

I'm freaking out. What do I do?

BETHANY

You have to call him.

AVA

I can't call him. OMG. I'm getting texts. "Hey baby, come suck my..."

BETHANY

Ava has an emergency.

RYANNE

What is it?

BETHANY

Check the school Instagram gossip feed.

RYANNE

Oh crap.

BETHANY

You have to call Jack, tell him to take it down.

RYANNE

I'm on it.

Jack enters stage right, and stands,
holding his phone.

RYANNE

Hey douchebag. Take this post down.

JACK
Who the f- is this?

RYANNE
A friend of Ava's.

JACK
She's not worth it, man. She'll leave you hanging.

RYANNE
Take the post down.

JACK
Or what?

RYANNE
Come on dude, I'm appealing to you as a human being.

JACK
Middle finger emoji.

Jack exits stage right.

AVA
What am I gonna do?

BETHANY
Don't panic. Ryanne is calling Jack.

AVA
What?! You told Ryanne to call Jack? How could you?

BETHANY
Ava-

AVA
Block.

RYANNE
Ava, are you okay?

AVA
Thank you for being such a good friend.

Ryanne reads her text in shock. She jumps up and runs halfway across the stage.

ERIN

Ryanne, when Doug gets here do you wanna play word games?

RYANNE

I have to go. Ava's in trouble.

ERIN

What's wrong?

RYANNE

I'm afraid she's gonna kill herself.

Ryanne runs off stage.

SCENE SEVEN - AVA'S ROOM - DAY

A bed and a lamp sit on one side of the stage. Ava lies on the bed sobbing. She sits up and reveals that she has a knife. She puts the knife down on the pillow and picks up a brush, combing her hair as she cries. She puts down the brush and picks up her phone, scrolling for a moment.

AVA

"Hey baby, I wanna give you some tongue?" Oh my God. My life is over. I'll never be able to live this down. The entire school thinks I'm a joke. It's better to just get it over with, to end it all. I'm gonna text Ryanne again, one last time. I'm gonna tell her that I'm sorry. [pause] Why isn't she answering? Maybe she didn't get my text. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

She puts the phone down and picks up the knife.

Ryanne bursts on stage, breathing heavily as if she has run a long distance.

RYANNE

Don't do it.

AVA

Did you run all the way here?

RYANNE

Yes.

Ava puts the knife down.

AVA

I'm sorry.

RYANNE

It's okay.

AVA

I just don't know what to do.

RYANNE

Okay. But this isn't it. You can get a new number. You can hit back, and post something about Jack.

AVA

Like what?

RYANNE

Like, tell them Jack's package is so small, that's the real reason you broke it off.

AVA

I couldn't.

RYANNE

Trust me, he deserves it.

Ava picks up her phone and texts. She laughs, hitting send.

RYANNE

Ava. I get that you don't want to talk to me. But you have to talk to someone.

AVA

I'm fine.

RYANNE

You're not fine. And I'm not leaving until you agree to get help.

AVA

You really are a suicide cop.

RYANNE

Where am I gonna sleep? Because I'm camping out here.

AVA

Fine. I'll talk to someone.

RYANNE

Great. Who?

AVA

Um. My mom, I guess.

RYANNE

Okay, let's go.

AVA

You can't come with. My mom would die if she found you in the house.

RYANNE

Ava, this is serious. You need to take yourself seriously. We're going to ask for help, and I don't care if your mom is mad.

AVA

I'm scared.

RYANNE

I know. Me too. But we're in this together.

Ava reaches out to take Ryanne's hand.
They walk off stage together.

SCENE EIGHT - EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Students cross the stage in small groups, carrying backpacks. Some are wearing COVID masks.

Ava and Ryanne enter stage left, holding hands.

Erin, Doug and Bethany enter stage right, chatting quietly.

The five kids meet center stage.

Ryanne does an elbow bump with Erin, and gives Doug a hug.

Bethany waves awkwardly to Ava.

BETHANY

Hi.

AVA

Hi.

BETHANY

Listen, I'm sorry-

AVA

No, I'm sorry. You were only trying to help.

BETHANY

Loved how you put Jack in his place.

RYANNE

How are things at home?

DOUG

Same. But now that school's open again, at least I'm not there.

ERIN

My closet is always open.

DOUG

Thanks, but your closet smells like feet.

ERIN

Here's hoping this year is better than last year.

RYANNE

I have a feeling it will be.

The five friends move off together,
stage left, talking and laughing.

CURTAIN.