

THE CONCEPT:

Because What is Gender, Really?

This play is dedicated to queer youth worldwide. You are seen, you are loved, and there will always be
room for you.

YOUNG SOUL and THE CONCEPT stand in
The Place. The Place is an ethereal plane
separate from reality. The first time one enters
The Place is before they are born. This is
YOUNG SOUL's first time at The Place.

THE CONCEPT:

You have two choices.

YOUNG SOUL:

What?

THE CONCEPT:

Boy, or girl. You have to choose.

YOUNG SOUL:

Why?

THE CONCEPT:

That is the choice. Boy or girl?

YOUNG SOUL:

I- I don't know! The second one?

THE CONCEPT:

Girl?

YOUNG SOUL:

Sure! Whatever. Girl.

THE CONCEPT:

(gender reveal party vibes) Congratulations! It's a girl! Your name will be Lydia and you will be a girl forever! And then you die! Isn't that just great?

LYDIA:

Yeah. That's great.

Scene shifts to reality. LYDIA's 14, and at the store with MOM.

LYDIA:

Can we please leave?

MOM:

Lydia, school starts in a week! Don't you want new clothes?

(Lydia shrugs)

MOM:

Just try to have fun, okay?

LYDIA:

Okay.

(MOM spots dress on a rack at the store)

MOM:

Oh! This dress is supercute. Want to try it on?

(LYDIA hesitates, then nods.)

LYDIA leaves momentarily with The Dress. She
returns with it on.

MOM:

Lydia...

LYDIA:

What is it?

MOM:

You look...

LYDIA:

What!?

MOM:

Beautiful.

LYDIA stares at The Dress uncomfortably.

Scene shifts back to The Place.

THE CONCEPT:

You know, normal girls consider “beautiful,” a compliment.

LYDIA:

...I didn't feel beautiful.

THE CONCEPT:

Ungrateful much? You have an unfairly pretty face. And I would kill for your waistline.

LYDIA:

I... um...

THE CONCEPT:

(Bitter)

Girl, what is your problem?

LYDIA:

(uncomfortable)

I just... *(sighs)* I don't like to wear dresses. That's all.

THE CONCEPT:

Yes you do!

LYDIA:

No... I don't.

THE CONCEPT:

Hmmm. Interesting... Diagnosis: Tomboy.

LYDIA:

Is there something wrong with me?

THE CONCEPT:

Possibly.

LYDIA:

Okay.

Scene shifts to reality. LYDIA and MOM are driving.

MOM:

Wanna get ice cream?

LYDIA:

Is it okay if we just go home? I'm kinda tired.

MOM:

If that's what you want.

(MOM turns reminiscent)

When I was your age, I loved back to school shopping. Your grandmother and I would go to all my favorite stores. We'd always get ice cream after. I guess I just figured; I don't know. You haven't seemed like yourself lately. I know this isn't an easy age.

(More silence.)

LYDIA:

We can get ice cream.

MOM:

Are you sure?

LYDIA:

Seriously, it's fine.

MOM:

I'm okay with going home!

LYDIA:

No Mom, I want ice cream!

MOM:

If that's what you want.

(beat)

MOM:

Lydia?

LYDIA:

Yeah?

MOM:

I love you, okay?

LYDIA:

I love you too, Mom.

Scene shifts back to The Place

THE CONCEPT:

You could have made your mom really happy, Lydia.

LYDIA:

I know.

THE CONCEPT:

She really liked that dress, Lydia.

LYDIA:

I know!

THE CONCEPT:

Why'd you have to ruin the mood, Lydia?

LYDIA:

I don't know! I'm sorry!

THE CONCEPT:

(examines Lydia) Diagnosis: a disappointment.

LYDIA:

What!? How could I be a... I get good grades, I do my chores, I haven't done anything stupid, or illegal.

Is there... really something wrong with me?

THE CONCEPT:

Probably.

LYDIA:

Oh. Okay.

Scene shifts to reality. LYDIA is staring in the bathroom mirror wearing her dad's tie. The Dress from the store is crumpled on the floor. THE CONCEPT's words are starting to stick.

LYDIA:

(To mirror) Hello. Nice to meet you. I'm Lydia.

(to herself) That's not right.

(to mirror) Hello! I'm Lydia.

(to herself). Eww. That's not... ugh.

(to mirror) Howdy! My name is- nevermind.

My name is Lydia.

My name is Lydia.

I am Lydia. *(trying to convince herself)*

...

(to mirror.) Hello, my name is... Luka

...

Nice to meet you, Luka

Scene shifts to The Place

THE CONCEPT:

Who's Luka?

LYDIA:

I dunno.

THE CONCEPT:

(excited)

Is he a boy that goes to your school?

LYDIA:

What? No!! Why do you have to say stuff like that!?

THE CONCEPT:

(grossed out)

You're so weird.

LYDIA:

What? No I'm not! Right?

THE CONCEPT:

(Laughs to herself)

You are SO bizarre! Diagnosis: Outsider.

LYDIA:

(Quiet) Outsider? I have friends. People like me! Is there legitimately something wrong with me?

THE CONCEPT:

Most likely.

LYDIA:

Okay.

Scene shifts to reality. LYDIA is laying down on the couch, staring at the ceiling. MOM enters.

MOM:

Lydia? Your dad's missing his tie. You know, the ugly purple one— *?(sees her daughter on the couch)* Oh my gosh! Are you sick?

LYDIA:

Mom, is there something wrong with me?

MOM:

(places her hand on Lydia's forehead) Your forehead isn't warm. What are your symptoms?

LYDIA:

No Mom, I'm not sick.

MOM:

Do you have covid?

LYDIA:

I don't know!

MOM:

I have covid tests on the counter-

LYDIA:

No, Mom! You're not listening to me!

MOM:

You might be asymptomatic.

LYDIA:

I DON'T HAVE COVID, MOM!

(beat)

MOM:

Lydia.

LYDIA:

(Tearfully) What's wrong with me?

(MOM hugs LYDIA)

MOM:

Everything is going to be okay.

(THE CONCEPT enters.)

THE CONCEPT:

Diagnosis: Adolescence.

THE CONCEPT leaves. Scene shifts to
LYDIA'S room. She is staring at The Dress she
bought with her MOM. THE CONCEPT enters.

Even though they're not at The Place, Lydia can
see and hear them.

THE CONCEPT:

You looked so pretty in that dress.

LYDIA:

(breaking point)

It didn't feel right. Nothing feels right! Things have been so messed up lately. And I... I just want to feel
okay again. I just want to feel happy again.

(Long dramatic silence)

THE CONCEPT:

Are you on your period?

LYDIA:

What!?

THE CONCEPT:

Diagnosis: Hysteria.

LYDIA:

Why are you-

THE CONCEPT:

Don't you want to know what's wrong with you?

LYDIA:

No! Yes... Just tell me how to fix myself!

(pause)

THE CONCEPT:

You were beautiful in that dress.

LYDIA:

I felt beautiful in the tie. That stupid ugly purple tie. I felt beautiful when I was Luka.

(pause)

THE CONCEPT:

You are a girl.

LYDIA:

What?

THE CONCEPT:

You will be a girl forever and ever and ever. And then you die. Do you understand?

LYDIA:

I understand.

Scene shifts to reality. LYDIA is now at school,
walking down the hallway. MORGAN enters.
They walk up to LYDIA.

MORGAN:

Excuse me?

LYDIA:

Hm?

MORGAN:

Do you know where room 213 is?

LYDIA:

Yeah, I'm actually headed in that direction.

MORGAN:

Oh! Cool. Do you mind showing me?

LYDIA:

Sure.

(The two start walking)

MORGAN:

My name's Morgan, by the way.

LYDIA:

I'm Lydia.

MORGAN:

Lydia. Cool. Pronouns?

LYDIA:

Excuse me?

MORGAN:

Yeah. I like to make a habit of asking when I meet new people. I use they/them pronouns.

LYDIA:

Oh! They/Them. Ok. Cool. I guess I haven't really thought about it much... I-

MORGAN:

It's okay to not know.

LYDIA:

Yeah. *(beat)* But... I'm She/Her, right? I'm a girl, and I'm a girl forever, and then I die?

MORGAN:

(Looks to Lydia)

Not if you don't want to be.

LYDIA:

But... how do you know what you want?

MORGAN:

Time. And listening to yourself. And loving yourself.

LYDIA:

Oh. Right.

(The two keep walking)

MORGAN:

Well, this is room 213 right here-

LYDIA:

Can I hug you?

MORGAN:

Yes. Of course.

(The two hug, Morgan departs)

Scene shifts. LYDIA in the bathroom having a conversation in the mirror.

LYDIA:

Hello. My name is Lydia. Nice to meet you.

...

What, um... pronouns do you use?

...

What are MY pronouns?

She/Her.

(beat)

(To self) ...Right?

(To Mirror) Hello! My name is Lydia. I use She/Her... I...I use She/Her... I use They/Them pronouns.

(Something clicks.) Hello! My name is... Luka. I use They/Them pronouns.

...

Nice to meet you.

(Luka smiles to herself, a moment of reflection before....)

(THE CONCEPT enters)

THE CONCEPT:

(Panicked)

Lydia!

LYDIA:

What are you!?

(The Concept freezes. Their usual energy is gone.)

LUKA:

You're not real, are you?

THE CONCEPT:

I am real so long as people believe in me.

LUKA:

You've been in my head this entire time. You prevented me from finding my identity. You told me there was something wrong with me. You put me in a box. You... you hurt me.

THE CONCEPT:

(Defensive)

I didn't do anything to you. You are letting a random idea, some... fad-

LUKA:

My pronouns aren't a fad! My pronouns aren't an idea. Gender needs to be free so people can be free. YOU on the other hand- I know what you are. You are a **concept**, you are an **idea**, you are a **fad**, and you are a **weapon**. You are an old and withered box of pink and blue, when there is a whole kaleidoscope of other colors! Open your eyes!

(The Concept backs away, covering their eyes.)

THE CONCEPT:

Stop.

LUKA:

(gently approaching)

You know the world has no need for you anymore. Right?

(The Concept nods)

LUKA:

Then open your eyes. Look at the colors.

THE CONCEPT:

I can't-

LUKA:

Yes. You can. Open your eyes. Please.

(The Concept opens their eyes, afraid, then looks around the room, amazed. They fixate on Luka)

THE CONCEPT:

You're beautiful.

LUKA:

I know.

(The Concept fades away)

THE END