

A play by Assy

CHARACTERS

SOPHIA	Girl who just returned to school after the death of her brother. She is a very sensitive person when it comes to equality for LGBT people.
AISHA	Muslim girl who is very responsible and smart. She is Sofia's best friend and Kai's childhood friend.
KAI	Very playful guy who doesn't really care about things. He is Aisha's childhood friend.
EIDY	Spanish girl who never liked Aisha and Sophia for some reason and has very disrespectful behaviors from time to time.
TEACHER	She can be serious, but is a cool teacher.
MARIAM	Muslim girl who isn't very religious, but hates LGBT people because she believes it is against Islam's recommendations.

PLAYWRIGHT NOTES

I was inspired to write this play based on what I witnessed happening to some of the people I know. As a Muslim girl, there is this ideology of "girls only marrying boys," which the elders of my family believe. There is no place for those that have different sexual orientation and people make fun of gays. When I was in school, there was a Muslim girl who was a lesbian, and other Muslims said a lot bad things to her. So, by writing this play, I hope to open up some room for empathy when it comes to gays and lesbians.

SETTING

A classroom: Government class.

TIME

Nearing the end of the school day.

SCENE 5

(Sophia recently lost her brother. She goes to a diverse school and a group of students is struggling in the world of different sex orientations. They are having a debate about a very sensitive subject with some of the students of the class.)

TEACHER

Ok class, today we will be focused on empathy.

(Writes it down on the board.)

So can anyone tell me what the word empathy means? Do we need it or not? And why?

KAI

Well, in my own opinion, empathy is when you are able to put yourself in somebody else's place. Try to understand the person's feelings. And I think each one of us needs it at some point.

(Pitiful voice)

And I wish my dad would know that.

TEACHER

I want each students just to bring out their ideas. Come on, you are the future of tomorrow so I want to hear your thoughts. Nothing is wrong or right in regards to this subject.

(All students start to talk all at once)

TEACHER

Wait! Hold on a minute! I don't mean for you all to speak at the same time. You guys have a lot of thoughts, and that's great but one at a time, please.

(She turns to Aminata, who goes by Eidy)

Aminata, what you were saying sounds like you don't quite agree. Tell me more.

EIDY

That's no needy shit!

(The teacher tries to cut her off by calling her name but she keeps talking)

All this empathy stuff and all. People don't care what other's think so why the need to understand another's feelings. Just live life without care. I mean why bother, no one care about no one but themselves.

TEACHER

I like your participation but it would be better if you didn't use offensive language in the class.

EIDY

(Rolls her eyes)

Whatever.

TEACHER

humm...

(Clearing voice)

Okay... huh... Anybody else?

(Sophia raises her hand)

TEACHER

Yes Sophia!

SOPHIA

Well I wouldn't say that Eidy. You might not care about what other people think of you, but not everyone is like you. Without empathy, there won't be no tolerance and without tolerance, we won't learn to forgive and if there is no forgiveness, conflict between people will never end. When you heard about empathy, it doesn't always reflect on caring, what someone should do is to not judge another in any case, or why they chose that path, but respect whatever their decision might be.

(Class start murmuring in approval)

TEACHER

Wow, this is getting interesting! So what do you guys say?

KAI

She has a point!

TEACHER

Then why don't we move on to the reason why I had you talk about empathy first! Some of you might have seen it on TV, (sarcastically) if you watch TV of course. Nowadays your generation is more into Facebook and the other sites. Anyway (she gestures her hands). Going back to the subject, there have been recent events, protests in support of gay marriage, and the rights of the LGBTQ community to be treated equally. Would this be an example in which empathy is needed? Do you think they should be treated like normal couples, have rights to get married?

(Practically begging)

And please support your opinion.

MARIAM

I don't know about others religions but Islam does not accept the same gender getting married.

KAI

Neither does Christianity!

AISHA

That doesn't mean you can't. That is what your religion say not you. And I am not saying you shouldn't follow and respect your religion but you get to decide based on own your perspective and understanding.

KAI

I am not saying that I have to follow Christianity. I am also not saying I agree with being a lesbian or gay. But it's not my choice—it's theirs. So why not just let them live with their choices.

EIDY

(In a joking way)

Ohh please Kai, are you somehow hiding something you feel like you want to let us know?

(Laughs)

AISHA

Can you be respectful for once in your life! You are really annoying.

MARIAM

But if same gender marriage is allowed, and our society accepts it and more people decide to come out. Do we know if mankind is going to continue existing, because a man and another man, or woman and woman can't have babies? It requires two opposite sexes for reproduction. What becomes of mankind? Did we think about that?

AISHA

(To Mariam)

Dummy, do you think....

TEACHER

Aisha!

(Looks at her)

AISHA

I apologize! I was just trying to answer what Mariam was saying. I believe her ideology is ridiculous, allowing gay marriages and being more open doesn't mean the society is suddenly going to shift and everyone will be homosexual. Allowing gay marriage and treating people as equal has nothing to do with humankind's existence. And there are many ways to keep humanity from vanishing, we have science, eggs can be fertilized, there are implantations and many more things.

MARIAM

As a Muslim sister, I am really ashamed of you. And I am sure your parents would be too.

SOPHIA

(To Mariam)

And as a friend of a Muslim sister, it is really disappointing that you are judging another being.

(To class)

Just now we talked about empathy, most of you agreed that one needs understanding, and to respect another, but why are you not putting yourselves in their shoes right now (angrily.) LGBTQ are too humans and they have their rights.

(All student started talking at once.)

EIDY

Are you saying so because your brother was one of them and for that reason he couldn't handle it and just killed himself?

Or (pause) is it that you are actually a lesbian. That wouldn't surprise me you know!

(Some of the students shout: Ohhhhhhh)

(Aisha is about to speak, but Kai starts to talk)

KAI

Are you guys serious! That was not...

TEACHER

Ok that's enough.

SOPHIA

What if I am? So what?

(Looking directly at Eidy)

(After a moment of awkward silence at this surprise revelation, students start murmuring and looking at Sophia. She looks at the teacher and the teacher nods her head, Sophia walks out.)

TEACHER

Silence class! I said Silence

(Furiously)

(Classroom goes silent.)

I am really disappointed with you all. I started this conversation because I thought you were mature enough for it, but I guess I was wrong, you are not ready for this.

AISHA

Honestly, Miss, I don't think anyone is ready for this kind of conversation. We just have to start it off anonymously because it's something that would have been brought up anyway. It was just a matter of time...

EIDY

(To Aisha, rolling her eyes)

Bullshit!

(To teacher)

You said nothing was wrong or right, that you want to hear our ideas. Now you have our opinions, you telling us we are immature.

(pause, sighs)

That's fucked up. I am outta here!

(Gets up and walks away; the teacher doesn't even try and stop her)

TEACHER

Open your books to page 631, read, and answer the questions. And I don't want to hear any chit chatting. I mean (pause) none!

(She sits down on her desk and starts checking some paper work. Aisha gets up and walks off the stage.)