

INT. HIGH SCHOOL ART CLASSROOM - DAY

Our scene takes place midday in the heart of winter. Our characters find themselves staged in their high school ceramics studio, seated on adjacent stools about six feet apart. Snow falls heavily outside the window.

SOPHIA is dressed in sweatpants and a sweatshirt, as she has just arrived at the studio to meet ALICE after completing an environmental science midterm.

ALICE is dressed in similar attire, finishing a ceramics project as the two of them begin to discuss a conflict involving ALICE spending ample time with a new friend, Caroline.

ALICE

So how was the environmental exam?

SOPHIA

It wasn't bad at all, and there was an extra credit question at the end that I'm pretty sure I got right. It wasn't even related to the material.

ALICE

What was the question?

SOPHIA

Something like "what town in South Carolina is formed from the name of a popular hotel corporation, followed by what you would call the leader of a tribe?"

ALICE

Uh, Hilton Head?

SOPHIA

Yeah, that was my answer. Hopefully I got some points for it. So I saw you and Caroline walking towards the barn the other night when Lauren and I were walking to the semi-formal. I thought you said you couldn't come to the dance because you were caught up with homework. What were you guys doing?

ALICE suspends her work on the ceramics project and twists her upper body slightly to face Sophia.

ALICE

We were just taking a walk Sophia, relax.

SOPHIA

Did you have sex with Caroline last night?

ALICE

No I didn't Sophia.

SOPHIA

How do I know you're telling me the truth?

ALICE

Well it's up to you whether you trust me. But I feel like you're being unfair to me right now. I'm allowed to have other friends.

SOPHIA

No, I'm not saying you can't have other friends.

ALICE

Well that's what your actions are telling me. You can tell me that but it doesn't mean anything if you're getting jealous every time I spend time with anyone else other than you.

SOPHIA

I just don't understand how you are able to make so much time for Caroline when it feels like you never have time for me.

ALICE

That's not how it is.

SOPHIA

That's how it feels. I feel like you two are always together. Do you have feelings for them?

ALICE

No I don't. How many times do I have to tell you this?

SOPHIA

I feel like you're lying to me.

ALICE

Are you in love with me Sophia?

SOPHIA

Oh my God Alice, how can you be so egotistical? No, I'm not in love with you. I'm straight.

ALICE

I'm just saying, I don't understand why you're acting so jealous.

Artist's Statement

This interaction was a crucial turning point for me because it prompted me to seriously consider the possibility that I myself may be queer. I had previously been conceptualizing my jealousy towards Caroline as a fear of being “replaced” as Alice’s best friend, and was challenged with the task of unpacking why I felt so possessive over Alice and so insecure about the time she was spending with Caroline. While my emotions at the time strongly resembled those I’d experienced in the past when observing boys I was crushing on flirting with other girls, my internalized biases were preventing me from similarly categorizing my jealousy towards Caroline. I was understanding my jealousy as a result of feeling as though Caroline could offer Alice more than I could if they were engaging in a sexual relationship. I would consistently fail to consider the possibility that I may be bisexual because I would tell myself that any attraction I was experiencing that wasn’t towards a man was within the realm of what other straight women were experiencing; I wasn’t “bi enough” to identify as bisexual without my decision to label myself that way potentially invalidating others who I felt were more qualified to identify with that label.

Additionally, I struggled with coming to terms with being at the intersection of queerness and disability. Growing up neurodivergent, I desperately sought out the sensation of feeling “normal,” and as a young adult I was able to begin dissecting the belief I held that clinging to heterosexuality would allow me to remain in closer proximity to the neurotypical’s idea of “normalcy.”

During my freshman year at Skidmore College, I came out to myself and others and began identifying myself with the label “bisexual.” Having a circle of queer friends both from high school and college allowed me to engage in conversations around LGBTQ+ identity and my own relationship to my sexuality, and I feel very privileged to have that kind of community available to me. As a sophomore who has recently transferred to Clark University, I am optimistic about continuing to expand my support system during the coming years.

Personally, coming to terms with my bisexuality was a process of unlearning misogynistic and homophobic biases I was not necessarily always conscious I possessed. Before coming out to myself at nineteen, I found myself constantly comparing myself to a vision I held of a bisexual person, someone who had consciously experienced an equal attraction to men and women since early childhood. I also realized that my vision of a “successful” future was contingent upon me marrying a man and fostering a traditional nuclear family. After identifying that my fear of “failing” in life by not achieving this goal stemmed from the notion that a woman’s success is dependent upon a man, as well as the notion that a homosexual relationship is not as valid as a heterosexual one, I was able to begin envisioning myself in relationships absent of men, which was an incredibly freeing personal revelation.