

Chasing Cinderella  
By Dana Hall

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Cast:  
5 Females

Characters

AVA NOW: Adult, Stage age 25+, female  
YOUNGER AVA: Child, stage age 6-9, female  
TEEN AVA: Teen, stage age 12-18, female  
TEEN SARAH: Teen, stage age 12-18, female  
SARAH NOW: Adult, Stage age 25+, female  
MOM: Stage age 30+, female

Diversity in casting is encouraged and production has creative liberty to present play based on medium chosen, budget, and vision. Duplication of roles is accepted.

**Synopsis:** Sometimes real-life is better than the fairy tales.

**AT RISE: AVA NOW is downstage center.  
She is in her home writing in a journal.**

**AVA NOW**

When I was little, I believed in fairy tales/

**Lights come up on YOUNGER SELF.  
She is between 6-10 years old and dressed like a  
princess. AVA NOW watches YOUNGER  
SELF play with toys as she acts out the scene.**

**YOUNGER AVA**

Someday my prince will come--

**AVA NOW**

I'd image I was in a fancy flowing gown as I twirled around--

**YOUNGER AVA**

He would come to take me to the ball. In a carriage pulled by white horses--

**AVA NOW**

I waited for--

**YOUNGER AVA**

My Prince Charming.

**AVA NOW**

I dreamt of a castle far away where--

**YOUNGER AVA**

I'd live happily ever after.

**AVA NOW**

Somewhere where my parents didn't fight. Where my brother wouldn't take my toys. A special land of talking animals and songs. A place the movies promised.

**YOUNGER AVA**

*(singing as she plays)*

If you keep on believing, the dream that you wish will come true.

**AVA NOW**

A land of dreams where my prince would kiss my hand--

**YOUNGER AVA**

And we would be married. I'd be happy forever.

**AVA NOW**

It seemed so easy back then. I had this little world I could escape to and all I had to do was believe. The beautiful princess would always be ok. I bought into this magical world so much so that every birthday was princess themed- with lavish pink decor. I felt so special and all I had to do was be beautiful too.

**MOM is off stage as she calls to  
YOUNGER AVA playing on the ground.**

**MOM**

*(OS)*

Time for bed my little Ava princess.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Ok mommy.

**MOM enters.**

**MOM**

Get into bed. There's plenty of time to play tomorrow.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Fine. But- can you tell me a story?

**MOM**

Sure honey. What should it be about?

**YOUNGER AVA**

Princess Ava.

**MOM**

Of course. *(settles in next to YOUNGER AVA)* Well-- Once, upon a time in a land far away there was a beautiful princess named Ava.

**YOUNGER AVA**

*(to her doll)*

That's me!

**MOM**

She was kind and always did her chores.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Did she have a unicorn?

**MOM**

Why- yes - yes she did have a shiny unicorn that she used to ride on the clouds.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Did she have long hair with bows? And eat cotton candy?

**AVA NOW**

The only thing greater than my love for tulle and tiaras was my love of candy.

**MOM**

Yes, to the hair and only after dinner for the cotton candy.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Mom-

**MOM**

Yes-

**YOUNGER AVA**

Will you come visit me in my castle?

**MOM**

Sure honey.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Will daddy?

**MOM**

I'm sure he will.

**YOUNGER AVA**

What about Henry?

**MOM**

Of course/

**YOUNGER AVA**

Hey mom.

**MOM**

*(slightly annoyed)*

Yes-

**YOUNGER AVA**

Can I ban boys from the castle?

**MOM**

You can't ban your brother if that's what you're asking.

**YOUNGER AVA**

It's my castle.

**MOM**

Listen, princesses are nice - they're fair and just to all- even little brothers.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Fine- but I'm painting it pink- even his room.

**MOM**

Fair enough. Now snuggle in my love.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Sing to me mommy.

**MOM**

Fine. But-close your eyes.

**MOM**

*(cont. Sings)*

A dream is a wish your heart makes  
When you're fast asleep  
In dreams you will lose your heartaches  
Whatever you wish for, you keep...

**MOM** *sings as lights go down.*

**AVA NOW**

I barely remember those days now. But I know that I was happy.  
I was loved and safe.  
There was something magical about that time in one's life.  
I was so pure and untouched by the reality that loomed around me.  
Some days I wish I could go back to that time and just live there for a moment.  
But unfortunately, it ended before it should have.  
A few summers later my parents got divorced. I remember thinking love is not supposed to stop.

I was confused - for the first time I felt lied to by the movies and stories. I started to question whether happily ever after really existed - and if so, why it was meant for others and not my family? I felt foolish-

*A few summers later. MOM is in AVA's bedroom observing. YOUNGER AVA turns towards MOM and takes off her tiara. She is packing up all her princess items in a box or garbage bag.*

**MOM**

What are you doing?

**YOUNGER AVA**

This stuff is for babies. I'm a big kid now-

*MOM takes one of the dolls out.*

**MOM**

But these are your favorite things in the world- honey. Honey? Talk to me.

**YOUNGER AVA**

It's stupid.

**MOM**

Hey- it's not stupid to like things.

**YOUNGER AVA**

It doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

**MOM**

Is this about me and your father?

**YOUNGER AVA**

No.

*YOUNGER AVA starts to get emotional.*

**MOM**

Ava- you can talk to me... look at me. Oh honey. You miss how things were?

**YOUNGER AVA**

Yah. It's all weird now.

**MOM**

I know it's a big change -for all of us.

***YOUNGER AVA keeps packing up her toys.  
She then sits back away from mom.***

**YOUNGER AVA**

Daddy doesn't even pick me up from school anymore.

**MOM**

I know sweetie. But he'll see you and Henry this weekend.

**MOM goes to soothe YOUNGER AVA.  
YOUNGER AVA pushes MOM away.  
After a long pause YOUNG AVA responds.**

**YOUNGER AVA**

Maybe if you were nicer to him he wouldn't have left us.

**MOM**

Ava that's not fair.

**YOUNGER AVA**

It's true. You guys were always arguing.

**MOM**

Sometimes people grow apart- it's no one's fault.

**YOUNGER AVA**

It's *your* fault.

**MOM**

Ava please- listen-

**YOUNGER AVA**

I don't wanna hear it.

**MOM**

I know this is hard Ava/

**YOUNGER AVA**

You could've made him stay.

**MOM**

I know that it doesn't make sense now why we all can't be together but trust me this is for the best- for all of us. Your daddy deserves to be happy and so do I.

**YOUNGER AVA**

I'm not happy. Henry's not happy.

**MOM**

I know - it's a lot of change. Happy takes time. It'll be ok- *in time*.

*MOM thinks YOUNGER AVA is coming to her to embrace her but she is wrong. YOUNGER AVA takes the princess doll mom was holding, looks at it as if she is saying goodbye, and tosses it in the trash.*

**YOUNGER AVA**

I hate you and it's not ok!

**MOM**

Honey- just calm down/ (comes sit with me and--)

**YOUNGER AVA**

NO! Leave me alone. I'll never be happy again.

**MOM**

I know it hurts now but you will find 'happy' again.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Can you just get out of my room?!

**MOM**

*(lost for words)*

Fine.

*Lights down on MOM and YOUNGER AVA.*

**AVA NOW**

I remember sobbing into my pillow that night.  
It didn't make sense. I blamed my mom for my dad moving out.  
Afterall, my mom didn't look like my princesses.  
My mom spoke her mind, she raised her voice. She did it wrong.  
I would do it right- from here on out.

*YOUNGER AVA goes to the trash and removes the*

*Princess. She fixes her hair and dress.*

**YOUNGER AVA**

*(Making a wish)*

I never want to feel alone again. I want my happily ever after.

**YOUNGER AVA** *kisses the princess and holds him tightly.*

**AVA NOW**

It's hard to believe how fast time passed.

When you grow up it feels like while you're in it - it takes forever- but looking back it goes fast.

Next thing I knew I was in high school!

That's when life really changed. This was the first time I was in a new school, with new kids- it felt like I had to start over.

But I had a plan.

I'd be perfect- simple right?

I'd get the right grades, know the right people, and make sure to do all the things that would make me fit in.

But I learned fairly quickly doing everything "right" didn't mean things would be easy.

*Enter TEEN SELF on phone.*

**TEEN AVA**

*(On phone)*

Megan you won't believe this- Tommy texted me after study hall and asked me to the movies! I know! He's so popular he could take anyone. He chose me!

*(realizing the time)* Omg-His mom will be here any minute-

**SPX: CAR HORN**

**AVA NOW**

So much for that horse-drawn carriage. His mom drove an Astro mini-van.

**SPX: DOOR BELL**

**TEEN AVA**

*(On phone)*

I'm literally freaking out- what should I wear?!

**TEEN AVA**

*(Calls OS)*

MOM! Mom, that's them! Tell 'em I'm coming. I'll be right there! *(on phone)* I think I'll wear the blue sweater- it's his favorite color! Thanks Meg- I'll text you later. Bye!

*TEEN AVA puts on the blue sweater, smiles, adds lipstick and exits.*

**AVA NOW**

Tommy held my hand that night. I felt so special. I tried hard not to shake. I felt valid, seen, but most of all worthy because this boy liked me. For a week I was on top of the world. He walked me to my locker after every class and even kissed my cheek. But then something changed.

**MOM enters and crosses downstage.**

**MOM**

*(calling up to TEEN AVA's bedroom)*

You can't stay up there forever honey.

**SPX: Music is heard.**

You can't drown out your feelings.

**SPX: Music gets louder.**

Ok. Well, when you're ready to talk about it I'm here.

*TEEN AVA is wearing a t-shirt of her favorite band. Enters upset. Eating snacks. She crosses the stage and exits on her last line.*

**TEEN AVA**

*(On phone)*

He's such a jerk! He asked Carla Johnson to Spring formal. No, I'm not kidding. *(upset)* She's skinny and tall, gorgeous - and look at me. I'm awkward and tell stupid jokes- I just don't fit. *(pause)* Meg- what's wrong with me? *(Pause)* Whatever- you're just trying to make me feel better. She's the freaking captain of the dance squad. What's the point-I can't compete with that!

**TEEN AVA exit.**

**AVA NOW**

That night I trashed Carla in my journal. For no reason, other than I wasn't her. *(Reading from Journal)* I also wrote- 'Carla is Cinderella and I'm an ugly stepsister.' I remember thinking if I could change myself then Tommy would like me. If he liked me then I could feel good about ME again. My freshman self, attached my value to how boys like Tommy saw me.

*Lights up on YOUNGER AVA playing on the floor with a princess and prince doll*

*(ken doll) then off after their last line.*

**YOUNGER AVA**

Good girls wear dresses, and have long hair, they're gentle and pretty and never raise their voice. A prince will never leave their princess.

**AVA NOW**

I thought I just had to be better. Then Tommy would notice me.

**YOUNGER AVA**

Out of all the princesses my prince would find me one day. Lucky me! I'll be the best wife and keep the castle so pretty! Oh, I'll sing to my pet mice and have tea parties all day.

**YOUNGER AVA skips off exit.**

**AVA NOW**

But living in a world where you get *chosen*- creates a lot of pressure.

**TEEN AVA**

*(reading label)*

Evidence-based #1 fat burner guaranteed to make you drop pounds fast.  
*(turns bottle)* Be the most beautiful version of you - unlock the you, you know, you can be.

***TEEN AVA pops a pill in her mouth as lights go down.***

**AVA NOW**

I wasn't going to lose out to another Carla. No matter what- I was going to be perfect.

***TEEN AVA lights up as she is looking into a mirror with makeup brushes in hand.***

**TEEN AVA**

*(in a mirror)*

Ok -so I just shade here and here on the sides of my nose then it'll look perfect. OMG it looks so slender! A little highlighter on the tip. Gorgeous. Now to fix these hideous eyebrows.

***Lights down on TEEN AVA.***

**AVA NOW**

I never did stick to that diet and my eyebrows looked ridiculous, like two caterpillars sitting on my face. But I kept at it, posting pictures on social media of my new “hot look.” I cared more about followers than I did what I liked or wanted.

*Lights up on TEEN AVA posing into her phone with a kissy face expression and giving the peace sign.*

**TEEN AVA**

*(posing talking into phone)*

Living my best life #aquarius #glamour #toogoodforyou

*Lights down on TEEN AVA.*

**AVA NOW**

I don't even know who that version of me was. I guess I was still chasing Cinderella. This idealized version of what I thought I was supposed to be.

**MOM**

Knock, knock.

**TEEN AVA**

What?

**MOM**

Can I come in Ava?

**TEEN AVA**

It's your house so whatever.

**AVA NOW**

Parents always do that- they pretend to knock and no matter what you say you know they're coming in.

**MOM**

It's Friday night.

**TEEN AVA**

So.

**MOM**

So, Henry and I are going to the movies you want to come too?

**TEEN AVA**

Eww movies with mom and brother- no thanks.

**MOM**

It a scary one- Zombie Crossroads - the one where they try to/

**TEEN AVA**

Eat people and take over the world?

**MOM**

More or less-- yeah I guess so. It may be predictable but the app says 88% of viewers give it 4 stars so...what do ya' say?

**TEEN AVA**

I'm good.

**MOM**

Come on you never pass up a horror flick!

*TEEN AVA doesn't answer and continues  
texting on her phone.*

**MOM**

You're just going to stay in all night?

**TEEN AVA**

Maybe. What does it matter?

**MOM**

It's not healthy. Call Megan and see if she can keep you company.

**TEEN AVA**

Fine.

**MOM**

Ava – I said call.

**TEEN AVA**

I'm texting her now. Uh-stop trying to control my life.

**MOM**

I just worry about you honey.

**TEEN AVA**

Whatever. *(pause)* I said I would.

**AVA NOW**

I did want to go with them but I couldn't be caught at the movies with my family. Afterall, I had an image to maintain. If my mom thought I was even the tiniest bit interested she would relentlessly try to get me to go. So I had to blow her off.

**MOM**

You sure?

**TEEN AVA**

*(despondent)*

Yup totally sure. Buh-bye.

**MOM**

Ok. Well, tell Megan I said hi. I'll bring you home some popcorn. Ok?

**TEEN AVA**

Great. Can you shut my door now?

**MOM**

Ok. Honey- see you later.

**AVA NOW**

Megan came over that night and we tried these face masks that made our eyes burn. She was on facetime with her boyfriend most of the night and went home early. I wish I would've gone with my mom and Henry.

I thought about texting my mom - but I didn't.

When I heard them come in I pretended I was asleep. *(smiling)*

She opened the door and put the popcorn on my dresser.

**YOUNGER AVA**

You have to be the most beautiful princess so the prince will like you. You have to make all the other princesses jealous. Then you'll dance and dance and hold hands and soon you'll live happily ever after.

*Lights down on YOUNGER AVA.*

**TEEN AVA**

*(on phone)*

No. No means absolutely *no one* Meg. No one wants to go to the stupid Spring Fling with me. *(pause)* Ask someone? Are you freaking kidding me right now?

And look totally desperate. No thanks. I'd rather stay home. *(pause)*

Thanks but no thanks I'm not going to be a third wheel. Have fun without me.

**MOM**  
*(Calling OS)*

Ava let's get moving. You're gonna be late!

**TEEN AVA**

Ugh my mom's yelling. I gotta go. See you in study hall.

*TEEN AVA hangs up. She goes into the kitchen where her mother is, putting together sack lunches.*

**MOM**

Hey- don't forget your lunch. You keep leaving them in the car.

**TEEN AVA**

Cuz I don't want it.

**MOM**

What? It's lunch.

*TEEN AVA looks at the lunch bag mom has put down. She is carrying a few text books with loose papers stuck into them.*

**TEEN AVA**

Super awkward.

**MOM**

How can lunch be awkward? It's food. Hurry up and put it in your bookbag, Henry is waiting in the car.

**TEEN AVA**

I don't have one.

**MOM**

One what?

**TEEN AVA**

A bag - I don't have a lame bookbag. I carry my books, and I don't need this stupid lunch.

**MOM**

*(sing-songy)*

Well- I put Oreos in there. *(Pause)* Double stuffed/

**TEEN AVA**  
*(under her breath)*

You can stuff it.

**AVA NOW**

When the words left my mouth I was met with a mixture of shock and morbid curiosity. I'd never said something like that - so direct.

**MOM**  
*(turning slowly)*

What did you just say to me?

**AVA NOW**

I rolled my eyes. I had nothing- we both know what I said.

**MOM**

Well-excuse me Miss Attitude, this is *my house* and you will not talk that way to me.

**AVA NOW**

I doubled down - it felt like there was no turning back.

**TEEN AVA**

Fine- I'll talk that way *outside*.

**MOM**

That's not what I meant and you know it. What's gotten into you Ava?

**TEEN AVA**

NOTHING. Leave me alone!

**MOM**

Fine, with that attitude I'm not driving you to school.

**TEEN AVA**

Great I'll walk.

**TEEN AVA storms out. Mom grabs the bag lunches. She takes a moment to center herself, stuffs down her tears and exits to the car.**

**AVA NOW**

As I was saying it I wanted to stop but I couldn't - it felt good. It felt powerful. I wasn't talking to my mom really- I was talking to the feeling of rejection.

I cringe now when I think about it but I remember standing outside until she came out and started the car. I got in. No words were spoken on the long ride to school.

**MOM comes back in after driving the kids to school. She has the car keys in hand. She picks a piece of paper off the floor and reads it.**

**MOM**

*(reading)*

Spring Fling - A night under the stars. Join us Saturday, April 24th. That's next weekend. Why hasn't she even brought it up? *(realizing)* Of course- Tommy never asked her- damn. My poor baby has a broken heart. What a relief I thought she was just turning into a jerk. We'll fix this.

**MOM exists with purpose.**

**AVA NOW**

Mom- tried her best to cheer me up. I can't blame her, she didn't mean to make it worse but she did. She really did.

**YOUNGER AVA enters wearing a tiara.**

**YOUNGER AVA**

This tiara means I'm the fairest of them all. Isn't it gorgeous? The diamonds sparkle. Now I'm ready for the ball.

**YOUNGER AVA exits. MOM enters with the same tiara. She puts it on the counter with a note. She is very proud of herself and smiles and hums as she exits. Once MOM has exited TEEN AVA enters from school.**

**TEEN AVA**

*(on phone)*

Ugh. I can't believe she made me use this ridiculous backpack. I took the late bus to avoid anyone seeing me. Did you get your dress yet? *(pause)* Awwww- Meg that sounds super cute. Send me pics.

**TEEN AVA puts backpack on a chair and sees the note.**

WAIT. What is this? *(pause)* No- not your dress. My mom. She wrote me a note. *(reading)* ‘Dear Princess Ava- get ready for the ball. Don’t forget your tiara when we go dress shopping tonight. Love, Your Fairy Godmother.’

DAMN! She knows about the dance! How did she find out? *(pause)*  
No, I blocked her on everything for this exact reason. Ugh I gotta go.

**TEEN AVA is staring at the tiara  
speechless as MOM enters.**

**MOM**

So? I see you found it.  
I put it away for you. Ya’ know- it used to be mine. I know it's only costume jewelry but your grandma paid a small fortune for it.  
I wore it with my veil attached.  
You used to steal it right off my dresser when you were little.  
It’s beautiful, isn’t it?

**TEEN AVA**

Then *you* wear it.

**MOM**

*(proud)*

Don’t be silly, I’m not the one going to the Spring Fling.

**TEEN AVA**

*(mocking)*

Neither am I.

**MOM**

Is this because of the Tommy thing? Honey come on there are plenty of other potential dates out there.

**TEEN AVA**

It's not about Tommy. I just don’t want to go.

**MOM**

But you love getting dressed up/

**TEEN AVA**

I *did* when I was a little kid- in case you haven’t noticed I’m not 7!

**MOM**

*(too excited to listen)*

I know – I know but we can get one of those big full dresses ohhh maybe in gold like Belle. *(gasp)* You could be the Belle of the ball-oh that’s good!

**TEEN AVA**

Wow. Ok- well, I appreciate the thought but/

**MOM**

*(excited/fast talking)*

I know what you're going to say- it's too close to the dance to get a good dress. Don't worry I hear Style & Couture still has a lot of options. They only let one dress per school get purchased so you don't have to worry about any repeats.

**TEEN AVA**

I'm not going.

**MOM**

Sure you are sweetie. Don't worry I called over and they're open late tonight.

**TEEN AVA**

Did you go through my room when I was at school?

**MOM**

No.

**TEEN AVA**

Then, how'd you find out about the dumb dance?

**MOM**

No, I swear scouts honor I didn't go near your room- though it is technically my house so it would be *my* room- but no.

**MOM takes a flyer from her back pocket.**

This must've fallen out of one of your books. You really should use your backpack honey.

**TEEN AVA**

Well, you can just throw it away because like I said I'm. not. going.

**MOM**

We can make you look like a complete princess. Put on the tiara. Come on- just try it out. You'll remember how it feels/

**MOM reaches out to put the tiara on TEEN AVA. This triggers something in TEEN AVA.**

**TEEN AVA**

I don't want this! I'm not a princess and I'm not a little kid anymore!

**TEEN AVA grabs the invite and tears it up. As the invite hits the floor the lights go out.**

**AVA NOW**

Those words were truer than that moment.  
 The truth was- I never felt like a princess.  
 I did love the attention dressing up brought with it.  
 How my parents would stop fighting and my dad would twirl me.  
 How my mom would tend to my dresses and tell me I was beautiful.  
 But it was just a vehicle, not my destination.  
 A part of me always knew that and maybe out of fear or the immaturity of youth I fought against who I really was.  
 Don't get me wrong- sure I wanted songs, adventures, the protection of knowing no matter what good would triumph over evil and magic- who doesn't want to believe in that?  
 A part of me will always be grateful to those fairy tales...  
 But I have to be honest because what's the point if we can't be honest with ourselves? In that moment looking at that tiara I was done. I was done waiting to be chosen- I wanted to choose.  
 I wanted to live- I was trying so hard to be what I thought I should that I tucked away who I really was.

*Lights up on TEEN AVA writing in a journal.*

**TEEN AVA**

*(Writing in Journal)*

Today the new girl asked me to borrow my notes for algebra. She's a math geek too...

**AVA NOW**

Thankfully things started to change for me my junior year of high school. That's when I met Sarah.

**TEEN AVA**

*(Writing in Journal cont.)*

She's from somewhere on the East Coast and says Mr. Koatz is a *chowderhead*. Who says that!? We laughed so hard. She's so funny. We're supposed to meet up later and finish studying for finals.

**AVA NOW**

I started to feel like myself. I didn't feel like I had to chase someone.

I felt this feeling within me growing.  
 The me I was inside was coming out. I had no reference for these feelings but I started questioning- What if there was no *Prince Charming* after all?

**MOM**

**(OS)**

Ava- I'm heading to the sandwich place you in?

**TEEN AVA**

Yeah- give me a sec.

**TEEN AVA hides journal away. MOM  
 knocks on the door.**

**MOM**

Did you say you were coming?

**TEEN AVA**

Yeah. So?

**MOM**

So? I had to come check- make sure my old ears didn't hear it wrong.

**TEEN AVA**

Ha. Ha. Can I drive?

**MOM**

I wanted a sandwich not a dance with death.

**TEEN AVA**

Oh come on. You barely let me drive anywhere!

**MOM**

Fine. But 10 and 2 Miss.

**TEEN AVA**

10 and 2 what?

**MOM**

Like on the clock.

**MOM demonstrates hand positions for driving.**

10 and 2.

**TEEN AVA**

Yeah you can keep saying it but it doesn't make any more sense.

**MOM:**

It's in the Rules of the Road.

**TEEN AVA**

Ok. What am I supposed to do memorize *every* little thing in there?

**MOM**

Yes! Actually, yes you are. Does anyone know how to read a clock anymore?

**TEEN AVA**

What can I say- my generation has evolved.

**MOM**

Yeah- well I'm definitely starting to feel extinct so that checks out.

**TEEN AVA grabs keys and throws them.**

**TEEN AVA**

Yeet!

**MOM**

What did I tell you about yeeting things?

**TEEN AVA**

It's funny, and also no one says it like that. (*notices*) Why are you grinning at me?

**MOM**

I'm not grinning. I'm just glad to have my Ava back.

**TEEN AVA**

Maybe if you let me drive more, I'd be even more nice. (*sarcastic*) My dearest Mommy have I told you how splendid you are looking today?

**MOM**

Yup there's my girl. Hey-if you get the keys you can drive *there* but I'm driving home.

**TEEN AVA**

Deal.

**TEEN AVA retrieves the keys and mom tries to steal them as they playfully exit.**

### AVA NOW

At lunch a part of me wanted to tell Mom about Sarah. I wasn't sure how she'd respond. I've had friends that came out and sometimes it didn't go well. We were just getting back to good I didn't want to potentially ruin it. Besides-there's something about saying things aloud that make them more real. I wanted to carry this feeling for Sarah with me as long as I could. Untarnished. Uninterrupted. Just mine.

**Lights up TEEN SARAH and TEEN AVA at school. They walk past each other slipping a note they have written to each other as they hurry to class. They eagerly read the note they were given.**

### TEEN AVA (Reading note)

Hey Ava-  
So did you actually study for the chemistry midterm or what?  
I saw how fast you turned in the packet and I was like Damn girl!  
I thought I'd write since I'm sitting here in Advanced Composition and Rhetoric my only Honors class and I'm completely bored!  
I'd text you but Mr. White watches over us like a hawk.  
Today he lectured about the historical use of propaganda in the media- and how it changed peoples' opinions about war and even influenced politics.  
And this was before social media!  
Hey that reminds me- when are we going to be Facebook official? Do people still do that?  
I think they do- right?  
Anyways- I gotta go. We have to turn in our thesis today for our papers and I am thinking of writing about how Tik Tok convinced everyone mom jeans were cool.  
Talk about power. So anyways, I hope I see you later. I miss your goofy face.  
W.B.S Write Back Soon. – Sarah (smiley face, heart)

### TEEN SARAH (Reading Note)

OMG Sarah- I thought you dropped that class?! That sounds tremendously boring. I did not study for chemistry- I guessed! I tried to look off of Todd's paper but he covered it with his hair! That's what I get for sitting next to a drummer. BTW I also totally love how you slipped the Facebook thing into your note in a very deliberant and blatant way- you know I want to but I haven't told my mom about us yet.  
I know, I know 6months is a long time- I just need a little more time.  
Anyways- come over after school we have several binge worthy shows to catch up on. Also, if you take the first letter of every word in this note it spells, I miss

you.

You totally just went back and looked. Jokes on you it doesn't but I still do. See ya' in study hall TTFN - Ava (hearts)

**Bell rings. They find each other and walk hand-in-hand to class.**

**AVA NOW**

They say you always remember your first love.

They're right. When I was with Sarah it was easy.

All of our friends knew we were together and even our teachers knew- mostly because they had to kick us out of the hallways in between classes.

Sarah had already come out to her family before us.

They welcomed me right away. It's nice and I want that too but coming out at home just felt so weird.

No one expected it of my brother- before he brought Cathy to meet my mom he didn't have to sit her down and say- "mom, I have something to tell you- I like girls."

I just don't get why that's a thing I have to do. She's my person.

That's simple and anyone that sees us knows this already. I did have a surprise planned for Sarah though...

**TEEN SARAH and TEEN AVA enter.**  
TEEN AVA is pulling TEEN SARAH by the hand in into an empty classroom. They giggle and TEEN SARAH is telling classmates to wait and they'll be right back .

**TEEN SARAH**

So are you going to tell me why you dragged me in here?

**TEEN AVA:**

I didn't *drag* you. I lovingly pulled you...

**TEEN SARAH**

Out with it- What's going on?

**TEEN AVA**

I thought we could talk for a minute.

**TEEN SARAH**

We can do that on the way to the dugout. Everyone's meeting up there after school. Come on, let's go Chowderhead. They'll leave without us/

**TEEN AVA**

Hey- before we go can I tell you something?

**TEEN SARAH**

Sure what?

**TEEN AVA**

Well, actually I wrote you something.

**TEEN AVA** *takes paper out of pocket.*

**TEEN SARAH**

A note? You could've just texted me.  
(*SARAH sees their seriousness.*) Hey, what's up? You ok?

**TEEN AVA**

Yeah- let me read it ok? (*pause*) (*begins reading*) Uh- Dear Sarah- (*stops reading*) Sorry I know it's lame.

**TEEN SARAH**

A little bit but go on... (*laughs*) Are you nervous? You're shaking/

**TEEN AVA**

Wow- you can tell? I just - well- let me read the letter ok.

**TEEN SARAH**

Sure. Go ahead...

**TEEN AVA**

Ok. (*deep breath then begins reading*) Dear Sarah, since the day I met you, I knew you were special. You're all the things that matter and you make me smile. But mostly I love who we are when we're together.  
I feel like I can just be ME with you and I – I brought you in here to ask you, away from our annoying friends, if you would go to senior prom with me.

**TEEN SARAH**

Are you being serious right now?

**TEEN AVA**

Yeah- I am.

**SARAH**

Yes! Of course, yes. I would love to go to prom with you.

**TEEN AVA**

(*smiling*) Great. Uh. Let's go tell the rest and grab some lunch.

**SARAH**

I can't believe you- always full of surprises. Thank you for being so sweet.

*They embrace and walk off hand in hand.*

**AVA NOW**

Prom was amazing and nothing like I had ever thought it would be.  
Sarah wore a ball gown and I wore a pantsuit.  
My mother took a million pictures of us.  
She thought we were best friends, and we were, but Sarah was so much more to me and I couldn't keep it in any longer.  
Maybe it was still the whirlwind of the night or sleep deprivation but the next morning I did something I didn't plan to do.

**Enter MOM and TEEN AVA. TEEN AVA is eating a bowl of cereal.**

**MOM**

So how was the big night!? I waited up but then crashed as soon as I heard you made it upstairs. Sarah looked amazing; the whole group of friends looked so grown up/

**TEEN AVA**

Mom/

**MOM**

I can't believe that was my little girl going to senior prom/

**TEEN AVA**

Mom/

**MOM**

Not my baby wabby anymore huh dumpling/ *(goes to pinch cheeks)*

**TEEN AVA**

Eww- Mom. Stop. I have to tell you something. Ok. How do I do this... uhh... you know how Henry and Cathy have been dating for awhile?

**MOM**

Ya- so?

**TEEN AVA**

Well, Sarah and I have been dating longer. She's my girlfriend.

**MOM**

*(takes a sip of coffee)*

Uh huh-

**TEEN AVA**

-- and I love her- oh wow that's weird to say to your mom- but I do.

**MOM**

We all do Ava- She brings out the best in you.

**TEEN AVA**

Wait. You're not shocked? You're not even surprised. Did you hear me I said I love love her not like 'omg I *love* those shoes where did you get them' but like the big L-word.

**MOM**

I hear you honey. *(leans in)* You look at her the way I used to look at your daddy. I know the look- that sparkle. Honey, I will never tell you who to love and I will never stop loving you.

**TEEN AVA**

Why didn't you say anything?

**MOM**

I didn't want to intrude – but I've known...*(corrects)* suspected for a while now. It's just not my story to tell so I went along with what I thought you wanted me to think...

**TEEN AVA**

I thought you'd be disappointed.

**MOM**

*(disbelief)*

Why? Why on earth would I be disappointed?

**TEEN AVA**

You always called me your little *princess*. This isn't what you probably thought things would be like?

**MOM**

Hey- I don't want you to play a part because you think that's what I want or someone else wants out there. You understand? Besides, sometimes real life is better than the fairy tales – *(beat)* Now tell me all the details from last night!

**Lights down on TEEN AVA and MOM**

**AVA NOW**

My family was supportive and I know I'm one of the lucky ones. Unfortunately, propaganda isn't just historical there will always be messages that divide us out there but *-love will always win-* I believe that so strongly. But relationships need more than love and neither one of us really knew how to be in a real relationship. We had our ups and downs. We didn't grow up with fairy tales about couples like us- maybe what's more harmful than the negative messages is the lack of representation. We figured it out on our own somehow and after college we got married and started a family of our own...

*AVA NOW is sitting down on a couch. She is writing in her notebook. SARAH NOW enters exhausted and sits next to her she turns on the TV.*

**SARAH NOW**

You know she's going to wake up as soon as we turn the movie on right?

**AVA NOW**

Of course-always does. It's Tuesday date night already? Wow. I almost forgot.

**SARAH NOW**

I put it on the calendar silly. What would you do without me?

**AVA NOW**

I honestly don't know.

*SARAH NOW watches AVA NOW writing for a moment.*

**SARAH NOW**

Hey- what've you been working on? I see you scribbling all the time in that notepad.

**AVA NOW**

Well- I've been trying to write things down more lately. *(looking at notebook)* Stories. Moments.

**SARAH NOW**

Oh- like a journal of sorts?

**AVA NOW**

Sorta- *(confesses)* It's a letter to our daughter.

**SARAH NOW**

Really?

**AVA NOW**

I want her to know us - know the love she came from.

**SARAH NOW**

It's such a sweet idea but it's ok not to write everything down.  
We're right here hon. I hope she feels it every day.

**AVA NOW**

I know. But I do it because- I don't ever want her to feel like she's alone.  
I want her to know that love exists in all forms and she never has to be something  
she's not to fit someone else's ideal.  
Lord knows that would've saved me a lot of time.

**SARAH NOW**

Met too- That's beautiful.

**AVA NOW**

I learned it from you Sarah.

**SARAH NOW**

*(smiling/playful)*

I sound so wise.

**AVA NOW**

You are- and to answer your question, Chowderhead- No.  
I can't imagine my life without you in it.  
Because it didn't begin until I met you.

**SARAH NOW**

How did I get so lucky?

**AVA NOW**

My mom always said- *Sometimes real life is better than a fairy tale.*

**SARAH NOW**

That's sweet- but don't get me started on fairy tales!  
You know what's always bothered me?

**AVA NOW**

*(smiling)*

Oh boy- You sound like me now. What?

**SARAH NOW**

How Cinderella could look into the Prince's eyes all night long and he not remember what she looked like the next day.  
He has to try that ridiculous glass slipper on every woman's foot in town.

**AVA NOW**

Maybe she wasn't what he *thought* he wanted.

**SARAH NOW**

*(takes that in)*

I guess not-

**AVA NOW**

Sometimes we think we know what we want,  
but we don't actually know what we need until we find it.

**SARAH NOW**

Ok- I hate it a little less now.  
*(smiles)* Put the notebook down the movie is starting-

**SARAH NOW** *lays her head on AVA NOW's shoulder, picks up the remote and turns on the movie. AVA NOW finishes her last line.*

**AVA NOW**

I just had one more thing to write...

*(reads as she writes)* Sometimes you have to make your own- happily ever after.

**-END PLAY-**