

# **IN-PROGRESS SAMPLES**

All of the following samples are written and owned by Elizabeth Finlayson.

*GOOD LUCK, BABE!*

*An ode to lesbians and lyricism*

A doctorate student's research for her thesis gets messy when the ghost of Sappho of Lesbos appears, deciding to help urge the woman out of the closet. A comedic exploration of compulsory heterosexuality, lesbian art, and lyricism, *Good Luck, Babe!* will make you rethink everything.

SCENE 4

The archives. SAPPHO is nowhere to be seen.  
MOLLY is reading through poetry, but it is disconnected. Like there is no emotion. JESSICA stands in the doorway.

**JESSICA**

It's not supposed to be spoken, you know. You're supposed to sing it.

Silence.

It sounds a little soulless right now. They call it *lyric* poetry for a reason /

**MOLLY**

I don't sing.

**JESSICA**

You used to.

She steps closer. Tension?

Do you remember?

**MOLLY**

Remember what?

**JESSICA**

You and me.

**MOLLY**

I...

**JESSICA**

When we were... friends.

She says the word with either care, or bitterness, or both.

You used to play your busted acoustic guitar in my dorm. You used to let me play it, sometimes.

**MOLLY**

Yeah, not like it could get much worse. (She chuckles awkwardly.)

**JESSICA**

I used to play *Fast Car*. (Beat.) I thought maybe that would help you understand...

**MOLLY**

...Yeah.

She pauses.

Yeah, I, uh, I remember that. You saying Sappho is like Tracy Chapman?

JESSICA shrugs.

**JESSICA**

I'm saying there's more in common than you think.

Sappho. Wu Zao. Emily Dickinson. Gertrude Stein. Ma Rainey. Bessie Smith. Ethel Waters. Josephine Baker. Chavela Vargas. Audre Lorde. Lesley Gore. Beth Brant. Joan Jett. Mary Oliver. Tracy Chapman. Janelle Monae. Hayley Kiyoko. Bikini Kill. King Princess. Julien Baker. Lucy Dacus. Chappell Roan. I mean— There are so many— so many writers, telling stories about their love through their poems, through their songs. Sappho is *not* an outlier. They are all tied together, by that fire burning inside them, to be heard. Some of them were heard! But most of them weren't. Most of them, we don't even know their names! How many women do you think there were, writing in their diaries, or praying to the gods that they could be themselves? Or that they would stop being different? Or that the rest of the world would fall away, so they could be with the person they loved?

Did you ever do that?

**MOLLY**

What?

**JESSICA**

Pray. Or wish. Or hope. Or dream.

A pause.

**MOLLY**

Of course I did.

**JESSICA**

Then *you* are like them, too. More than you think.

MOLLY takes a deep breath.

**MOLLY**

Did you ever do that?

**JESSICA**

Wish I was straight?

**MOLLY**

I guess.

**JESSICA**

Honestly? No.

**MOLLY**

Oh.

**JESSICA**

I like being who I am.

**MOLLY**

Yeah. No. I get that. (Beat.) If I were you, I'd like it, too.

JESSICA pauses to consider what that means.

**JESSICA**

You could, too /

**MOLLY**, quietly

Don't say that.

**JESSICA**

It's true.

Beat. JESSICA starts humming Fast Car, and leaves the room. MOLLY looks down at the book of poetry.

## SIGNALS FROM OUTER SPACE

When an isolated teenage girl with a tin-foil hat wearing, alien conspiracy theorist mother starts to hear extraterrestrial chatter on her radio, she thinks the martians have come to rescue her from her dull life. However, all is not as it seems. Digging into isolation, conspiracy theories, queerness, and the human desire for more, *Signals From Outer Space* is an out-of-this-world show.

### PROLOGUE

1981. The New Mexico desert, near Roswell, New Mexico. Night. SYLVIA sits behind a cactus, with her radio set by her side, and a cassette recorder in her lap. She wears a tin-foil hat on her head. She hits the record button on the tape player.

### SYLVIA

Hello, extraterrestrials. My name is Sylvia. I live in Roswell, New Mexico, with my mom, Susan, and our dog, Krypto. Something VERY special happened here, way back in 1947. But you all already know that. An alien spacecraft crashed into a farmer's field, and the government worked really hard to hide it from us. You can't hide the truth, though. My mom and I, we know you're real. You might as well give us a sign.

She looks to the radio. Silence.

I don't know why you wanted to land here. There isn't much to do. There's downtown, I guess. We've got an "alien diner," I guess, but if you stepped foot in there, you'd get caught right away. There's pictures of you all over the walls. The library's there, but it's not very exciting if you can't read. I would assume extraterrestrials can't read. Not English, at least. And out of town, it's just desert. Nothing but dirt and sand for miles. Cacti and tumbleweed and... I dunno. Plateaus. Rocks. Coyotes.

There's a coyote howl in the distance.

At night, that's all you can hear. Hear the coyotes howl.

The radio crackles, but there is no signal.

It gets a little lonely out here. I sometimes forget that there's other people on earth besides me and my mom. That's why you've gotta show yourselves! It'd be the most exciting thing to happen in Roswell, since, well... Roswell.

The porch light turns on from offstage. The door opens. SYLVIA stops the recording. She takes out the tape and puts it into a tin lunch box, which she buries in the dirt with a shovel. She leaves.

SCENE 7

**RENEE**

I know I'm not what you were expecting. And I'm sorry, okay? I just... I wanted to be something. For someone. I wanted to mean something, and I meant something to you, didn't I? (Silence.) I know I'm not an alien.

**SYLVIA**, correcting

Extraterrestrial.

**RENEE**

Extraterrestrial. And I know I'm not a... a boy. But I can't be. I am who I am, right? And you liked me, for who I was.

**SYLVIA**

I always thought that the world was infinite. That we could be anything and do anything we wanted, because in the grand scheme of things, we are so *tiny*. The universe is constantly growing, and growing, expanding infinitely and creating new stars, new solar systems, new societies every minute. But here, everything stays the same. I wake up every day, and I see the same sun and the same moon. I see my mom, and the coyotes, and these dumb hats that we have to wear, and that's it. What else is there? How am I supposed to believe that I can be whatever I want to be, when this is all there is? You say the world is so much bigger than this. But I don't see that.

*PYTHIA*

Centered around a teenage girl who is selected to be the newest Oracle of Delphi, *Pythia* explores the patriarchy in organized religions, girlhood, and our connection to the unknown.

PYTHIA, a teenage girl, is led to stand behind the altar, where a fire burns. She is the newest Oracle of Delphi, and it is her first time delivering prophecies. She was a sheltered girl in her youth. Naive. This is a lot (but she doesn't know it's a lot yet).

**PYTHIA**, with excitement

I can feel everyone's eyes on me. And lots of talking, but I can't really make any of it out. Wow, they don't tell you how heavy this veil is... I wonder who's here?

Pause. She leans forward to listen.

Elders? From Corinth? Wow... Oh! The Tyrant?? Of Syracuse?? Isn't it amazing? All these great people, coming to listen to me. What an honor. Oh! The King??? Of Sparta???

– or, does sparta have two kings...

Or, I guess not listening to me, per se, but listening to Apollo through my... vision... prophecy... thing! Wow... My words will shape history. They will end wars! They will inspire the greatest conquerors! They will–

One of the men's sacrificial goat kid baas.

Apparently, there's a goat here. That's... fine.

Where was I?

More baas. Like, a chorus of goats.

Okay, a lot of goats???

Beat.

Yeah! That's fine! This is fine. Oh! I understand! These goats are gifts! For me! In return for a prophecy, I get...

She hesitates.

a goat. Oh, that's so sweet. I guess I do... kind of, like goats, but not really any more than say a dog or a cat or a parrot.

Maybe somebody got the impression that I like goats?

...Do I give the impression that I like goats...???????

A priest yanks the veil off from her face. She can finally see the line of hundreds of men, each with a goat kid.

Aw! Babies! Oh, they're just little baby goats! Okay, *this* I could get used to—

The priest takes the goat and kills it. PYTHIA's face turns from elatedness to horror.

NO! BABIES!

Let me go let me go let me go let me go!

This can't be happening, this can't be happening—

She hyperventilates.

## *PITHOS*

Based on the myth of Pandora's Box, a mistranslation from the Greek word πίθος (pithos), meaning a large jar, *Pithos* puts the power into Pandora's hands, viewing her as a potter, molding her future and narrating her story to the audience. A contemporary lens on a classic story, *Pithos* cracks open the ancient myth's story for all to see.

### **PRE-SHOW.**

A pottery studio, if you want. A clay wheel in the center of the stage. It's off. There is a block of clay beside the table, and a stool. No one is there. Music plays.

### **BEGIN.**

PANDORA enters. She dresses like a hippie, dyke-y pottery instructor. Wearing overalls, covered in clay, a bandana, covered in clay, and a carabiner, covered in clay. She steps up to the clay, and kneels down.

Using a string, she cuts off a wide slab of it, hauling it onto the wheel, and dipping her hands in water.

Then, she slides her hands down the clay, and turns the wheel on. It begins to spin rapidly, and

PANDORA sighs. Looks at the audience.

### **PANDORA**

When I was a girl, I made figures out of mud. We didn't have Barbie dolls where I was from. If you wanted to play, you'd make the dolls yourself. I'd go down to the creek and dig into the earth, finding the clay within the shore. Sink my fingers into the soft mud. You could tell the clay from the dirt, could feel the slickness that wasn't like the rest of the bank. Dug that shit out. Once I had it, I'd let it dry, mash it up, add some water, and mix it together. Knead it a bit, and you didn't even have to pay at the store for it. Isn't that nice?

I liked it, making those dolls. They could be whatever I wanted them to. Kinda like those Barbies, 'cept it's more special, I think, since I made them. Sometimes I'd make them doctors in lab coats and stethoscopes, or race car drivers with helmets. Sometimes they were soldiers, and other times they worked at the grocery store. I never made angels, and I never made gods, and I

never made politicians. I started making these dolls based on their jobs, but eventually, I made everyone around me.

I made everyone except for myself. If I'm being honest, I don't think I knew that I was a person, too, until someone else told me. I think until then, I was existing in this kinda in between place, where I could see the world around me, see everything through this neutral place of... nothingness. Of a child, and not a person. It wasn't until my dad picked me up one day and faced me into the reflection in the water that I saw myself, and I was... different.