

CONFLICT BETWEEN PEERS: A CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Created by Leah Cooper, Ashley Hanson, and Pogi Sumangil for [PAHRTS](#)

Alex looked up from her script and directly at Joey, remembering how her jaw dropped when she heard she was doing a show with one of her favorite actors, directed by one of the biggest directors in town, Kim Banner. And now she was sharing a stage with THE Joey Howlett, being directed by THE Kim Banner. Alex knew that Kim and Joey had worked together a lot over the last year or two, and the theater community was already buzzing about this show.

She spent most of the first rehearsal trying not to appear starstruck in Kim & Joey's presence, but now, a week into rehearsals, that star was fading fast.

"Take Ten, everybody!"

"Thank you, ten," Alex muttered, feeling the tension creep into her jaw. She knew that any second, Joey would pounce, and she'd spend the next 10 minutes nodding and forcing a smile while Joey spends most of their break "talking about character," but definitely NOT "giving notes," because actors don't give fellow actors notes.

"Have you thought about playing it, like, really comedically?" A chill shot up Alex's spine. "Here we go," she thought to herself turning to face Joey. Behind Joey, Chris, another castmember who knows all too well about Joey's tendency to give other actors notes, locked eyes with Alex, giving her a knowing look and mouthing the word, "sorry."

As Alex made sure to nod and smile periodically while Joey talked at her, she thought back to how excited she was when she heard that THIS theater was doing *Become the Teapot*. She was even more excited when she received the call to play Shannon, a role she's been dreaming about since she first read the play in college. She thought back on the years of auditioning for THIS theater, and how she had begun to accept the fact that she'd never be cast in a show there. She had convinced herself that it was a waste of time to keep auditioning for THIS theater, but she just couldn't stay away from any theater doing *Become the Teapot*. And now, she was playing Shannon in *Teapot*, with Joey and directed by Kim! This was supposed to be a dream come true, it was *supposed* to be...

"...that way you're playing AGAINST the drama, you know?" Joey continued.

"Mm-hm," nodded Alex, wondering how Joey has gotten so far as an actor being so unprofessional.

ALEX'S CHOICE:

CONFRONT JOEY DIRECTLY ([p 2](#))

or

TALK TO THE STAGE MANAGER ([p 3](#))

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P2: CONFRONT JOEY DIRECTLY

Alex suffered through their break hoping that the muscles in her face didn't betray her true feelings about Joey's constant and unrelenting note-giving. "Aaaand we're back!" Alex finally felt like she could exhale. She resolved that when Joey comes up to her at the next break, she's going to say something.

"Take ten, please!" Alex, determined, felt Joey's crosshairs upon her. Before Joey could even get going, Alex put a hand on Joey's shoulder, saying, "Hey, I really appreciate you wanting to talk to me about this stuff, but it's starting to feel like you're giving me notes, and I just kinda want to discover things in rehearsal, you know? I wanna have ownership over the choices that my character makes."

Joey, dumbstruck, fumbled for a bit, finally managing to say, "I wasn't giving you notes, I just thought..."

"We could talk to Kim if you want to kick a few ideas around." Alex said, hoping to soften the blow.

"No, it's cool." Joey replied. "I'm gonna hit the bathroom before we get going again."

The next day, Chris overheard Joey talking to a few others:

"I was trying to help, and she started lecturing me about her 'process' and accusing me of giving her notes. Then she threatened to tell Kim on me. Whatever. There's a Diva in every show and if you don't know who it is, it's probably you, right?"

CHRIS'S CHOICE:

CONFRONT JOEY & THE OTHERS ([p. 5](#))

or

TELL ALEX ([p. 6](#))

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P3: TALK TO THE STAGE MANAGER

Alex suffered through another break hoping that the muscles in her face didn't betray her true feelings about Joey's constant and unrelenting note-giving. After rehearsal, she approached the stage manager, Courtney, and let him know what Joey had been doing. Courtney let out a deep sigh, shook his head, and rolled his eyes, telling Alex that this isn't the first time Joey's "crossed that line." Courtney assured Alex that the situation would be handled.

At the next rehearsal, Courtney stood before the cast.

"Hey guys, before we get started, I just want to remind you that you were all cast in the roles you're playing based on what you each bring to the table. We're all really passionate and imaginative and have great ideas, but I want to be clear: Please don't give each other notes. Kim is the director, so just let Kim do her job, and you guys concentrate on your own parts. Ok? If you have thoughts or questions about your own characters, let's talk about them here; that's what rehearsal is for. But please don't give notes to each other."

Feeling heard, validated, and supported, Alex breathed a sigh of relief. She even started to look forward to their first break being called, and not having to deal with Joey's notes. When it finally came, she locked eyes with Joey across the room and smiled. As she turned and reached for her water bottle, she heard, "I feel like your character is struggling more than she has to." Alex froze. She stood back up, turning toward Joey. "You just don't have to give it all away in that scene, you know? Give yourself somewhere to go." Joey said in that familiar, somewhat condescending tone.

ALEX'S CHOICE:

CONFRONT JOEY DIRECTLY ([p. 2](#))

or

VENT TO CHRIS ([p. 4](#))

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P4: VENT TO CHRIS

“Aaaaand, we’re back!” As people returned to the scene they were working on before the break, Alex walked up to Chris saying, “We’re getting drinks after this.” Chris nodded knowingly. After rehearsal, Alex & Chris made sure to choose a bar away from all the usual spots that the cast frequents, and Alex got all her frustrations out over some whiskey. Chris offered some advice, “having been there before.” She thanked Chris for listening, and decided to power through the rehearsal process, hoping that things would get better after opening. Things did get a little bit better, with Joey offering a few compliments here and there while continuing to give notes even through performances. Alex learned to feign illness, headaches, lack of sleep, and hunger to stop Joey from monopolizing all of her break time. Alex stopped going out with the cast after rehearsals & performances, and never really bonded with others in the cast. She had never hoped for a closing night before, but this time she really did.

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P5: CONFRONT JOEY & THE OTHERS

“Oh, come on, Joey!” Chris said with a laugh, “We all know I’m the only Diva in this show!” Joey and the others laughed. Chris continued, “Alex seems pretty cool. She’s definitely not as much of a diva as Justin was. Remember that guy?” Joey and Chris laughed knowingly.

Chris continued, “And let’s face it, sometimes you do give people notes.”

“I do not!” Joey replied.

“When we did Nature’s Pocket, you pulled me aside at least once every rehearsal…” Said Chris.

“I was just--”

“Talking ‘Character Stuff?’” Chris said, overlapping Joey.

Chris continued, “I get that you’re really passionate, and you love performing--we all do. And in your mind, it’s just “character stuff,” but to the people you’re talking to, it sounds like you’re giving them notes, especially if they don’t know you very well.”

“Whatever. It’s not like I’m going around telling people what to do.” Joey said, walking away.

Chris spent the rest of the rehearsal hoping that a bridge hadn’t been burned with Joey, but Chris watched in disbelief as the next break came and went, and Joey was nowhere near Alex.

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P6: TELL ALEX

Alex let out a big sigh. This was not the kind of experience she thought she would have at THIS theater. “Will you talk to Courtney and Kim with me?” Alex asked Chris.

“Suuure.” Chris said hesitantly. “But Kim and Joey are really close... I don’t know.”

ALEX’S CHOICE:

TALK TO KIM & COURTNEY ([p. 7](#))

or

SAY NOTHING AND HOPE FOR THE BEST ([p. 8](#))

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P7: TALK TO KIM & COURTNEY

Alex assured Chris that she would do all the talking; she just needed some moral support. Especially since Chris had worked at THIS theater before.

Alex and Chris feigned getting their things together while everyone else filtered out of the rehearsal room. When everyone was gone, Alex approached Courtney & Kim and recounted the issue with Joey.

“That’s surprising.” Kim said with a furrowed brow.

“Actually, it’s been an issue with Joey before.” Courtney added. Chris nodded.

“Really? Everybody we’ve worked with has only positive things to say about Joey. I just can’t imagine that Joey would do something like that. Maybe you’re misunderstanding something.” Kim replied.

Alex dug in. “I’m sure Joey means well, and probably doesn’t even realize how it sounds to me, but it’s really difficult to work when you feel like you’re being scrutinized by your fellow actors rather than feeling supported by them.”

“Ok, ok. I can see that.” Kim said after a beat. “I’m sorry, but I really have to get going, but I’ll check in with Joey and we can just go from there.”

Courtney nodded with empathy, and in a moment, Kim was gone.

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P8: SAY NOTHING AND HOPE FOR THE BEST

Alex decided to power through the rehearsal process, hoping that things would get better after opening. Things did get a little bit better, with Joey offering a few compliments here and there while continuing to give notes and appear frustrated when Alex didn't seem to take them. Alex learned to feign illness, headaches, lack of sleep, and hunger to stop Joey from monopolizing all of her break time. Alex stopped going out with the cast after rehearsals & performances, and never really bonded with others in the cast. She had never hoped for a closing night before, but this time she did.

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