

GROUP

Written by

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Pilot
(April 8, 2026)

INT. DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL - BATHROOM - DAY

GRACE HOLMES (16) leans her head against the speckled stall door.

She's in here for privacy, not the accessible toilet.

And if she did need it, she'd be out of luck because it's clogged with half-eaten *chicken wings*.

Ew. Why?

She shuts her eyes.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Two fingers pull Grace's eyelids open. Her pupils constrict.

FRANK (O.S.)
You should give a try.

Bright lights. Tin ceiling. Something's on her nose...she fades...

INT. METROBUS - DAY

Grace jolts awake on a city bus. She wears a randomly-generated Sims outfit: long sleeves, short-shorts, and off-brand Crocs.

SUPER:

WASHINGTON, D.C.

She reads a road sign through the bus window:

Maryland Welcomes You!

SUPER:

~~**WASHINGTON, D.C.**~~
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND.

Grace sighs and pulls the stop-request signal.

FRANK (O.S.)
Did you hear me?

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FRANK HOLMES (40s), a middle-school history teacher, wipes commute-sweat from his temples.

FRANK

Grace?

Grace swings a feather wand toy over a disinterested tuxedo CAT named Salvador Pawlí. An old modeling competition show plays on the TV.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Grace.

Grace looks at him.

Pawlí snatches the toy.

INT. METROBUS - DAY

Grace She yanks down the yellow stop signal.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

The bus drops deposits Grace at the intersection of a golf course and a gated community, which sits on a different golf course.

She looks back and forth. Or is it all one big golf course?

She pulls up directions on her phone.

FRANK (O.S)

We need to talk about this.

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Uh-oh, one of the modeling contestants cries during her photoshoot.

Frank clicks the remote and the TV screen goes black.

FRANK

I think it could really help you.

GRACE

It didn't help at the hospital.

Grace picks cat fur off her pants. She's not in pajamas but she's not quite in real clothes, either.

FRANK

Dr. Powell says this one's different. It's more about connecting with your peers.

GRACE

My *what*?

FRANK

Girls who have similar, you know, experiences.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Grace orients herself on Google Maps. She needs to cross away from *all golf courses*.

She steps into the street and--

HONK! A black S.U.V. whizzes past.

INT. MARGOT'S S.U.V. - DAY

MARGOT (15, mixed race) twists around in the backseat and spots Grace through the rear window.

Margot watches her jaywalk, unfazed, across four lanes of traffic.

GRACE (O.S.)

You said this lady's in *Bethesda*?

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Pawlí plays with the feather wand on his own.

FRANK

What's wrong with Bethesda?

Grace gives her father a look. He knows what's wrong with Bethesda.

EXT. PREPPY SUBURBAN DOWNTOWN - DAY

Grace wilts in the late-summer humidity. Her phone leads her down a block with upscale shops, salons, and pilates studios.

She checks her reflection in the window of an expensive local coffee chain.

Yep, sweat stains. *Great*.

INT. EXPENSIVE LOCAL COFFEE CHAIN - DAY

ANNABELLE (16, white) savors her iced latte. She really considers its flavor and mouthfeel.

The BARISTA (20) notes Annabelle's Longchamp tote and Episcopalian school uniform. He waits for her to complain.

But she doesn't. She smiles at him. Kind of too much.

She sees Grace outside, and lingers by the door. She watches Grace walk into an ivy-covered office building.

Annabelle smiles again.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

Grace basks in the sweet, sweet air conditioning.

She calls the elevator and glances out front as the black S.U.V. pulls up.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

A buff, bald BODYGUARD (40) steps out of the vehicle, smooths his suit, and opens the back door.

Margot emerges, wrapped in a sweatshirt so long and baggy it could be a Snuggie.

FRANK (O.S.)
Dr. Powell thinks you're too
isolated.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Grace holds the elevator while Margot shuffles into the lobby.

Margot locks eyes with Grace and turns into the stairwell.

GRACE (O.S.)
Cool.

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Grace sinks between the ancient Ikea couch cushions.

GRACE (CONT'D)
My psychiatrist thinks I'm a loser.

FRANK

You've been home for two weeks. You
have try to do *something*.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

Grace studies the floor directory and notices a strange
pattering sound.

She follows it into the stairwell and peers over the railing.

Margot's head bobs down, down, down a flight of stairs, then
turns and runs up, up, up again.

Margot looks up.

Grace backs out of the stairwell.

DING!

Annabelle steps out of the elevator, latte in hand.

ANNABELLE

Helen's office is this way.

INT. GRACE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Grace pulls Pawlí into a cuddle.

FRANK

If you really don't want to go,
fine.

GRACE

Thank you.

FRANK

You can go back to school instead.

GRACE

I'm not ready!

Pawlí squirms out of her embrace.

FRANK

Well, those are your options.

INT. HELEN'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Annabelle goes straight for a tray of curated fidget toys.

VALENTINA (16, Peruvian Mestiza) looks up from her math homework.

FRANK (O.S.)
You either go back to school...

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

Grace stops at a frosted glass door. The plaque beside reads:
HELEN SILVER, PSY.D

FRANK (O.S.)
Or you start group therapy.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY

Grace's cheek meets the bathroom floor. Red liquid oozes over the tile beneath the toilet.

She sniffs. Why does it smell...sweet? Sour? Almost like...mambo sauce?

Because *is* mambo sauce. Spilled from an empty container of wings.

MARGOT (O.S.)
Are you going in or not?

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

Grace's hand hovers over the door handle.

Margot pants, very quietly, and tries to hide it. She points to Grace's frozen hand. *Hello?*

Grace turns the handle.

TITLE CARD:
GROUP.

INT. DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL - ART CLASS - DAY

The Elmer's glue squirts out like a bottle of ketchup.

SUPER:
THREE WEEKS EARLIER.

Grace observes her BOY CLASSMATE (16) pour a doomed amount of liquid adhesive over a slab of cardboard.

Students laugh and yell and finger-drum at the other tables. Trap music plays out of someone's backpack.

The boy arranges Sports Illustrated cut-outs in the glue, but they simply disintegrate.

INT. HELEN'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Grace scans the magazine rack for a trashy tabloid, but all she finds are brochures for mental health retreats.

Annabelle plays with a set of stacking magnets. METALLIC CLACKING NOISES ring through the room.

Valentina digs her pencil into her math notebook. She tries to focus over the CLACK. CLACK.

Her pencil breaks. She glares at Annabelle.

ANNABELLE

We're probably waiting on one more.

CELIA (15, purple highlights) bursts in from the hallway.

CELIA

SORRY SORRY SORRY I'M HERE!

She checks at the wall clock.

CELIA (CONT'D)

Oh I'm not even that late.

She flops down and drapes her bare legs over the coffee table. Her outfit seems deliberately styled to violate a school dress code.

CELIA (CONT'D)

So what are we all in for?

HELEN (O.S.)

Let's save that for the session.

A pair of sky-high designer heels strut around the corner, into the waiting room.

HELEN (61, tasteful Botox) greets the five girls. She's petite. The heels level the playing field.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Follow me. Leave your bags. And your phones.

She struts back towards her office.

HELEN (CONT'D)
And the magnets.

INT. ART CLASS - DAY

Glue Boy tries to wipe off the excess liquid, which makes everything worse. His project is unsalvageable.

Grace slides him her untouched cardboard canvas. He wipes his hands on it.

INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Grace's jaw drops before she can stop it.

Helen's office is less psych ward, more Santorini beach resort.

HELEN
Find your seats. They're
alphabetical.

Five pre-printed NAME TAGS are set out around a curved sectional. Grace finds hers, dead center.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Before we begin, we need to
establish the rules. First: What we
say here, stays here.

Annabelle carefully places her name tag over her uniform's coat of arms. Celia sticks hers to her bare sternum.

HELEN (CONT'D)
You all know about confidentiality.
I won't disclose anything, *unless*
your life is in danger.

Valentina puts her name tag on her leg where no one can really read it.

HELEN (CONT'D)
Buts confidentiality is also on
you. What we discuss in here...

She prompts the group. Only Annabelle replies.

ANNABELLE
Stays in here.

HELEN

Second: No phones. I told you to leave them outside, so if you're hiding a second phone--

She holds her palm out to Celia.

Celia pulls an iPhone out of her boot and gives it over.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Leave it next time. What's the rule on phones?

CELIA

No phones.

HELEN

Finally, most importantly: No contact outside the group.

Annabelle nods solemnly.

HELEN (CONT'D)

No hanging out, no texting, no following each other on Instagram until after our *final* session.

Celia raises her hand.

CELIA

Can we stalk each other on Instagram?

HELEN

Do you feel the need to?

CELIA

...Yes?

MARGOT

I don't have Instagram.

Celia finds this incredibly suspicious.

HELEN

Are we clear on the rules? I need to hear from all of you.

CELIA

Yep.

ANNABELLE

Clear.

MARGOT

Sure.

GRACE

(mumbled)
Sure.

Helen waits for Valentina.

VALENTINA
They're not complicated.

Close enough.

INT. ART CLASS - DAY

Grace weaves through the chaotic art room. She finds a pile of spare cardboard and takes a piece.

Beside the pile, *she sees it*. She wasn't looking for it, but it's *right there*. A yellow box cutter.

ANNABELLE (O.S.)
My name is Annabelle.

INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Annabelle fiddles with her diamond cross necklace.

ANNABELLE
I go to St. Mary's.

Real diamonds. Must be. The cross is so small yet so sparkly.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)
I'm here cause I have an anxiety disorder, an eating disorder--
(to Helen:)
am I allowed to say what kind?

HELEN
Ask the group.

ANNABELLE
(to the group:)
Can I share what kind of eating disorder I have?

Margot raises one eyebrow.

END OF SAMPLE.