

# RISING SOPHOMORE

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A short drama for virtual performance by  
John Minigan

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

GARY, 15, a high school freshman. Athletic. A former bully on the cusp of change.

JACOB, 15, a high school freshman. Quiet. A good student who has been victimized.

## SCENE

FaceTime. A time of school closures and quarantine.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*Rising Sophomore* was first performed and live-streamed as part of QuarantStream Theatre Festival on April 14, 2020. It was produced by Nyssa Lowenstein and directed by C McCabe. The cast was as follows:

GARY.....Val Gerard Garcia, Jr.  
JACOB.....Jonah Cochin

## PRODUCTION NOTE

A slash (/) in dialogue indicates that the next speech overlaps, beginning at that moment.

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*(GARY and JACOB appear on screen, separately but beginning a FaceTime conversation.)*

**GARY:** Hey, Jacob.

**JACOB:** Hey.

**GARY:** Thanks for answering.

**JACOB:** I took a screenshot of your Snapchat.

**GARY:** I know. I got the notification.

**JACOB:** So I have a record of this. Just so you know.

**GARY:** Okay.

**JACOB:** And I'm recording us now.

**GARY:** I thought you can't record FaceTime.

**JACOB:** Not in the app. I'm using QuickTime.

**GARY:** Oh.

**JACOB:** Ms. Hughes said you could get suspended if you kept doing this or, like, retaliated. So / I'm —

**GARY:** I know. I know. It's / not.

**JACOB:** I'm keeping a record, that's / all.

**GARY:** That's not what this is about.

**JACOB:** What is it about, then?

**GARY:** This is....

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** This is hard.

**JACOB:** So?

**GARY:** ...

**JACOB:** I'm gonna go, okay? I'm out.

**GARY:** No, no—Jacob, hold on.

**JACOB:** Why should I?

**GARY:** I want to apologize.

**JACOB:** You apologized already. Ms. Hughes made you.

**GARY:** That was for school. I want to really say this.

**JACOB:** Why?

**GARY:** 'Cause I was a jerk.

**JACOB:** So?

**GARY:** And I been—I been stuck at home like everybody else 'cause of this stupid quarantine and I've been thinking about everything and... I'm sorry. About all that stuff.

**JACOB:** They were going to put it on my record.

**GARY:** Yeah, but they didn't, right? 'Cause we made you do it. Me and Topher, we got five days suspension for making you do it. And now this. It's like we're all suspended now, right? For months.

**JACOB:** My dad's mad at me.

**GARY:** Why's he mad at you?

**JACOB:** 'Cause I let you and Topher copy my work.

**GARY:** You didn't let us. We made you.

**JACOB:** He says it was my fault, too. He says a man has to stand up to bullies.

**GARY:** Really?

**JACOB:** I'm out, Gary.

**GARY:** No, Jacob, don't—

*(Jacob's screen goes dark.)*

*(Gary calls. Jacob's screen stays dark.)*

*(Gary takes out his phone and sends a text.)*

*(He gets a notification. He texts. He calls again.)*

*(Jacob reappears on screen.)*

**JACOB:** What do you mean, Topher's not coming back?

**GARY:** His parents figured out the only way he was passing Geometry was 'cause he was copying you. They said he's gotta go to vocational school now.

**JACOB:** Schools are closed.

**GARY:** When they open.

**JACOB:** They won't.

**GARY:** Then he's starting at Voke next year. They're gonna make him do ninth grade over.

**JACOB:** I guess that makes sense.

**GARY:** Yeah.

**JACOB:** Is that it? You wanted to apologize and tell me Topher's not coming back?

**GARY:** I dunno. I guess.

**JACOB:** Okay. See you.

**GARY:** Wait.

**JACOB:** What?

**GARY:** You're really smart.

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** I don't think I'd be passing Geometry, either. You're really smart.

**JACOB:** You've said stuff like that before. It was all part of you and Topher —

**GARY:** I mean it this time. You understand all that stuff. I don't.

**JACOB:** You know I don't trust you, right?

**GARY:** I know. I've been a jerk.

**JACOB:** For two years.

**GARY:** I know.

So I was wondering.

**JACOB:** What?

**GARY:** We're gonna have Algebra next year.

**JACOB:** Yeah.

**GARY:** So I wondered if, like, maybe we have a study hall together or something and, like, you have time, maybe you could help me in Algebra.

**JACOB:** I'm gonna be in Honors.

**GARY:** You should be.

**JACOB:** So we're not gonna have the same work.

**GARY:** I'm not talking about copying. I'm just saying, if you ever have a chance or have time to...

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** If I fail, my parents are gonna send me to Voke, too.

**JACOB:** So?

**GARY:** I know. You probably want that. It would be better for you. But I've been stuck here in the house and I've been thinking this is like— For you, this quarantine is probably good, right? You don't have to deal with us every day. I thought about that and it made me...

I'm sorry about all that.

**JACOB:** Okay.

**GARY:** But if I flunk out, I'm gonna have to go to Voke and Topher's gonna be there. I don't have any right to ask you to do anything for me, but I don't want to get stuck with Topher again.

**JACOB:** Why should I believe any of this?

**GARY:** It's true.

**JACOB:** You and Topher always do this. You make me think that –

**GARY:** You've been recording this, right?

**JACOB:** Yeah.

**GARY:** Send it to Topher.

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** Seriously. Send it to him. I'm done with him, okay? I don't want to end up having to spend the rest of high school with him. He's –

**JACOB:** Is this a prank call?

**GARY:** No.

**JACOB:** Was this his idea?

**GARY:** He's not smart enough to –

**JACOB:** Is he there?

**GARY:** No. We're, like, quarantined.

**JACOB:** Are you texting with him about this?

**GARY:** I haven't sent a single text. Just that one to you. You don't have to help me with Algebra, okay? I'll flunk it and I'll go to Voke and it's whatever. You do what you want. I've just been sitting around thinking, and...

Send this to Topher.

You understand stuff, okay? You understand stuff and he's...

I don't know.

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** I'm sorry your dad got mad at you. You didn't do anything wrong.

**JACOB:** Yeah.

**GARY:** ...

**JACOB:** ...

**GARY:** Hey, Jacob.

**JACOB:** Yeah.

**GARY:** You're recording this, right?

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