

Emily (ignoring him): Let's drop the "it can't happen here" and dig into policy, because it did happen here and it can happen anywhere else in this country.

Maya: Ok, but . . . we still don't have a story.

Emily: We could use me and Jimmy's experience, and use Tyler.

Lydia (quiet): What about my brother? (They turn and see her.)

Emily (surprised): You came. (Beat.)

Jimmy: Does that mean that you're less broken or more broken than we thought?

Maya: Jimmy.

Lydia (unphased): You said you're using my brother?

Maya: That came out wrong. She didn't mean use him, she meant use his story . . . for the piece.

Lydia (unreadable): Huh.

(She sits down, and fidgets with the zipper on her jacket. The others look at her, then at each other.)

Maya (hesitant): Do you have any ideas, Lydia?

(Lydia doesn't say anything).

Okay.

Emily (to Maya, breaking silence): I don't think an essay is enough to get people to listen. People write essays on gun violence every day, and look where we are.

Maya: But ours is gonna be different.

Emily: What about a song? That would be different.

Maya: The medium isn't what's gonna set us apart, it's the fact that our story will be real. We have the power to write something real, because we're the ones that actually went through it. (Slight beat.)

Are you sure you're okay, Lydia?

Lydia: You never asked if I was okay.

Maya: Are you?

(Lydia doesn't answer. She keeps playing with her zipper.)

Jimmy: Let's go back to the poem idea. Uhhh, let's see . . . Roses are red, I was almost dead, I may have been shot, but I'm still good in—

Maya (interrupting): Jimmy!

Jimmy: What?

Maya: Stop making a joke out of this.

Jimmy: What else do you want me to do?

Maya: Be real.

Jimmy: This is real. You want to join hands and sing kumbaya and cry? Fine, but count me out. Also, you've got a stupid cliché story.

Maya: That's not funny.

Jimmy: Did it sound like I was trying to be funny?

Maya: Well—

Jimmy (mocking): Everyone copes in different ways, Maya.

Emily: How about we just make sure this never happens again? So nobody else has to cope with this kind of thing ever again.

Maya: Exactly. Maybe . . . Ok, wait, remember that musical we saw that once? About the kids in the school shooting?

Emily: Yeah, it was horrible.

Maya: Well, maybe it was horrible because it wasn't written by people who knew what they were talking about. We know what we're talking about.

Emily: No, it was horrible because it focused on the shooter.

Maya: Well, that was a unique take. It was trying to get a different perspective, but—

Emily: No it wasn't, every article and new story and tweet and church has the thoughts and prayers and "forgive the shooter" bulls— It's ridiculous, in real life, nobody forgives the shooter, they—

Lydia (looking up): I forgive him.

Maya: What?

Jimmy (surprised): She speaks.

Emily: What do you mean you forgive the shooter?

Lydia: I mean I forgive him.

Jimmy: Because of your Christian guilt s—

Emily: No, because it's easier than actually making change.

Lydia: You think it's easy?

Emily: It means you get to just be okay with everything that happened. You don't have to do anything about it.

Maya: Write that—

Emily (talking over her): You can go ahead and be okay with it, but I'm not going to.

Lydia (soft): You think I'm okay with my brother being dead?

Emily: That's—that's not what I said.

Lydia: It's what you meant.

Emily: Lydia—

Lydia: I didn't forgive . . . Jack because it's easy, I did it because . . . it feels really good.

Jimmy: Huh?

Lydia: Like I couldn't stop him, but I can be better than him.

Emily: That won't stop it from happening again.

Lydia: Well, what will? Talking about how kids were shot and killed? Everybody talks about the school shootings every time. We did before we were the kids. Do you know how many people died in Parkland?

Emily: I don't know, like—

Lydia: 17. Nothing changed when 17 people died in Parkland, so why would it when only 3 kids die here? It doesn't really matter, does it?

Emily: We have to keep trying. We put enough pressure on Congress, and they have to make a change.

Lydia: Do you guys read the articles? The ones about us? (Beat.) You shouldn't. Maya: I read them.

Lydia: Did you see the one where they mentioned Tyler had just gotten back from a suspension?

(Slight beat.)

Maya (soft): What?

Lydia: It wasn't a big news outlet. You couldn't cite it in English class. But it was there. (Beat.) Maybe if they can see I'm good, if I'm so f---ing good I can forgive the man that killed my brother, I'll be worth listening to. Because they don't care about Tyler because he got suspended. If I'm just a good enough person, they'll want to save me, right? (Beat.) Right?

Jimmy (quiet): Were the first graders at Sandy Hook not good enough people?

Maya: That's not funny, Jimmy.

Jimmy (genuine): It wasn't a joke.

(Beat.)

Lydia: He's right. They aren't going to listen. So I forgive Jack—

Emily (interrupting): Don't say his name!

Jimmy: You sat next to him in freshman chemistry, you know his name.

Emily: Don't give him the notoriety!

Jimmy: Do you think not saying his name is going to make any of us forget what he did?

Emily: He doesn't deserve the recognition!

Jimmy (referencing his arm): Since when did all of this become about what anyone deserves?

Lydia: Exactly. I don't forgive Jack because he deserves it, I forgive him because it's really really hard, so it feels really good to do it. Being angry isn't going to do anything but hurt me.

Maya: Write that down.

Lydia: No.

Maya: What do you mean? We finally have something!

Jimmy: Maya, chill the f--- out.

Emily: Stop being a d--- Jimmy! She's actually trying to do something here!

Jimmy: Yeah, and it's annoying!

Emily: Because you haven't done anything?

Jimmy: I did something, I became your martyr, you're f---ing welcome.

Emily: You're not dead! What are you doing to help the people that are?

Lydia: Writing isn't going to bring them back.

Maya: It might not, but I—

Lydia: You can take two seconds to grieve.

Maya: But nothing happened to me! I'm totally fine! (to Jimmy) You got shot, and (to Emily) and you saw it all happen, (to Lydia) and you—Tyler. So you're all survivors, and I'm just someone who hid in that f---ing corner, so I have to do something! I have to write something!

Lydia: No you don't.

Maya: But—

Lydia: It's not going to undo anything.

Emily (to Lydia): No, Maya's right. If we tell our story to politicians, or voters, or foundations, they have to listen. They're going to listen.

Lydia: Do you actually think you can talk about what happened, Emily? Have you even let yourself remember it? (Beat.) She hasn't.

Maya: But everything happens for a reason. Maybe our reason is so we can get something done.

Lydia: Maya—

Maya (before she can object): Isn't that what the church says about it, Lydia?

Jimmy: That's stupid. I'm not good enough of a person to be God's vessel for getting s--- done. It didn't happen so we could do something. It happened because nobody did anything to stop it.

(Beat.)

Lydia: Yeah.

Maya: That doesn't matter anymore. What matters is what we do next.

Lydia: We don't owe the world that. They owed us safety. They owed Tyler safety.

Maya: We can't—I can't just do nothing.

Lydia: Nothing's okay.

Maya: But—

(She trails off. Beat.)

Lydia (gentle): You can put the pencil down, Maya. (Maya holds onto the pencil for dear life.)

(End of Play.)

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED MEMBERS OF THE WILLIAMSVILLE ROTARY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the Williamsville Rotary Club. Their outstanding community service has improved the lives of many Williamsville residents.

The Williamsville Rotary Club is a member of Rotary International, a worldwide service organization with 1.4 million members. The mission and values of Rotary International are widely recognized, and the Williamsville chapter has had particular success representing those values and supporting the community they serve.

The Williamsville Rotary Club received its charter in 1925, and for almost one hundred years has helped the local economy, youth community, arts, and education. During World War II, volunteers with the Williamsville Rotary Club conducted metal scrap drives, rallying together to support our troops and the war effort. Today, the Club's generosity sustains the Williamsville Library, Amherst Senior Center, Erie County SPCA, Mercy Flight, Western

New York Heroes, Millard-Fillmore Suburban Hospital, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

By upholding the work of other community organizations and lending volunteers to support initiatives for people living in poverty, people with disabilities and illnesses, and youth in the area, the Williamsville Rotary Club is actively working to better the lives of Western New Yorkers.

Specifically, their work with young people in the Williamsville area demonstrates an outstanding commitment to improving our community. The Williamsville Rotary Club has provided annual scholarships to graduating Williamsville High School seniors. In addition to scholarships, the Williamsville Rotary Club also facilitates a youth exchange program through Rotary International. They also donate to the Bornhava Early Childhood Center and little league baseball. Internationally, the Williamsville Rotary Club supports the Liberian Learning Center and the Matrichaya School for Women in India.

Extending their work to help those in other countries, the Williamsville Rotary Club has shown that their outstanding propensity to serve others is not predicated on shared culture or identity. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedicated members of the Williamsville Rotary Club and their commitment to our youth and to those most vulnerable in our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF VALERIA HASBERRY, KRISTA KINNARD, AND RODNEY WALLACE

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Valerie Hasberry, Ms. Krista Kinnard, and Mr. Rodney Wallace on the outstanding achievement of being named finalists for the Samuel J. Service to America Medal. Each of these individuals have demonstrated extreme dedication to public service and their country.

As the Chief Security Officer of the Architect of the Capitol, Valerie worked tirelessly to restore and maintain operations of the U.S. Capitol following the events of January 6th. Valerie worked to ensure Capitol operations continued and that the important work of the people would continue.

While serving as Chief of Emerging Technology at the Department of Labor, Krista was responsible for several innovations that have increased department-wide efficiency. She worked to streamline services, saving time and money. Krista's service has strengthened the abilities of the Department of Labor and helped serve American workers everywhere.

As the Director of Detection, Diagnostics, and Devices Infrastructure Division at Department of Health and Human Services, Rodney had an imperative role in the development of the COVID-19 vaccine. Rodney and his team worked tirelessly with several entities to safely and swiftly develop a vaccine. Without the efforts of Rodney and his team, the pandemic would have lasted much longer than it did.

Valerie, Krista, and Rodney have provided phenomenal service to our great nation, rep-

resenting Virginia's First District proudly. Their dedication to their work is nothing short of amazing and I am honored to recognize them for their achievement of being finalists for the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal.

DAN QUARATINO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dan Quaratino for receiving the 2021 Image Award from the Arvada Chamber of Commerce. The Image Award aims to recognize individuals who make a positive impact in our community and go above and beyond to make the lives of others a better place.

Dan is the Assistant Principal and Athletic Director at Arvada High School and is well-known for his passion and dedication to the education of students. He regularly provides opportunities for student athletes at the school, such as field trips and participation in out-of-state tournaments. He has also spearheaded the Arvada Sports Institute which gives students the opportunity to work in the sports industry and gain real-world experience. In addition to supporting student athletes, he encourages all students to get involved in their community and is genuinely invested in their future of these kids ensuring they have the education and experience to succeed in their path in life.

Congratulations again to Dan Quaratino on this recognition from the Arvada Chamber of Commerce. I extend my deepest appreciation for his contributions to our community.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER AND WORK OF CHERYL LITTLE

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize the tremendous career and meaningful work of Cheryl Little.

Cheryl Little has been a tireless advocate for immigrant rights for nearly three decades and has established herself as one of this country's leading experts in the immigration field.

Cheryl's extensive involvement in immigration dates back to 1985 when, upon her graduation from law school with honors, she began working at the Haitian Refugee Center. In January 1996, she co-founded the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Inc. (FIAC), now Americans for Immigrant Justice (AI Justice), and serves as its Executive Director.

She has received numerous honors and awards for her work, including the Morris Dees Justice Award as well as the Legal Legend award from History Miami and the 11th Judicial Circuit Historical Society. Poder Magazine named her one of Miami's 100 Most Influential People and she was named one of the "Top 20 Women Lawyers in South Florida" by the Daily Business Review. She has also been named "Person of the Week" by ABC News.

Ms. Little has authored numerous publications in the area of immigration, including law review articles and reports. She has testified before Congress and appears regularly on television. Her appearances include 60 Minutes, Nightline, PBS's News Hour, Frontline, The Oprah Winfrey Show, and CNN.

Cheryl Little is a selfless, compassionate, and devoted public servant and advocate for human rights. Her commitment to our community is exemplary, and I am proud to call her my dear friend. I wish her a hearty congratulations on her retirement and am grateful for her invaluable work to improve the lives of those in Florida's 23rd Congressional District, Florida, and our Nation.

IN HONOR OF THE 18TH INTERNATIONAL VEENA FESTIVAL

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize the Sri Annamacharya Project of North America (SAPNA), along with Veena Council Global, in commemoration of the 18th International Veena Festival. SAPNA was conceived as the Saint Annamacharya Project USA by Dr. Sriram and Mrs. Saradapurna Sonty in 1989.

The International Veena Festival presents over 50 Saraswathi Veenas—an ancient Indian string instrument originating in Vedic times and referenced in Vedic Scripture from thousands of years ago. Veena music is known to bring about spiritual healing, a feeling of communion, and a connection with a higher power.

Through the International Veena Festival, SAPNA seeks to sustain classical music; to promote innovative music traditions on a global stage; and to foster friendship, peace, harmony, and universal understanding through music in today's turbulent times.

Madam Speaker, I celebrate the work of SAPNA to honor the cultural heritage of more than four million Indian-Americans, uplift traditional Indian artists, and bridge cultural divides through music.

OPERATION SANDBLAST

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Senior Chief, Torpedoman's Mate David E. Boe, Senior Chief, Sonar Technician John F. Kuester, Master Chief Petty Officer Robert C. Perkins, and Commander Allen W. Steele, the original crew members aboard the USS Triton during the submarine's 1960, top-secret Operation Sandblast mission.

This mission was instrumental in the Cold War—not only did the crew gather valuable oceanographic data throughout its circumnavigation of the globe while remaining entirely submerged and undetected, but they demonstrated their endurance and the submarine's technical capabilities. At the time of Triton's