

# What Is Truth?

*The entire company walks to a line C.S. As their parts are spoken, a single spot focuses on them. These spots stay on each character as the next speaks their lines, until all are lit.*

**Man 1:** This is not truth. It takes place in a time where we all live, and yet detaches itself from our world. We are not here to create a world where you escape the reality of your life. We are not here to give you a warm fuzzy feeling inside. We are here to tell you the truth, the truth as we see it, as we find it to be. We come today bringing you this message. You know what it is. You see what we want you to see. You are here today to hear what we have to say and see what we have to show. This is not truth – it is false.

**Woman 1:** We have come to you as a service to all people. We are bringing this to you so that you too will understand the difficulties that lie beneath the surface. We want you to see what goes on, and we want you to be angered, we want you to rise up and protest. We want you to get off your couch and become active. The holidays are coming up – where will you be? Will you be with those who love you? Or will you be alone?

**Man 2:** When you walk out of your front door today, will you be going to work or in an aimless direction? We have come to you as a way to bring a message to you. We want you to understand the complexity of our world, and we want you to bring new understanding to your everyday lives. We want for you to understand. It is our deepest desire that you understand. Where are you going today? Could you change your plans at the drop of a dime? Or are you too set into your direction and ideas that you can't change?

**Woman 2:** When you go to your friends' house, do you hide in the corner? Or do you tell them your deepest secrets? Can you? Is your relationship in such a state that no matter how much you want, even your friends don't know the true you? Have you ever sat alone at night, wondering? Have you ever cried yourself to sleep because of something someone said to you?

**Man 3:** Was there ever a time when you questioned who you were in the world? Have you ever sat down and thought about your purpose? Why do we need to have this connection to thoughts and feelings at all times in our life? Have you never wondered what would happen if everything just was a little more abstract and not as clear? Do you ever wonder what people mean when they use idioms and figures of speech aimed at a certain group? Have you ever been the butt of the joke, but too ashamed to let people know that their comments hurt you deeply?

**Woman 3:** Why do we take certain people and turn them into our own personal joke? Have you never wondered? How is it that at one second we can be having a conversation about our lives and where they are going, and in the next breath change our tone and start making jokes about the guy down the street – the guy who can't afford to buy the nice clothes because his money goes towards food, the man on the corner who lost his job and is now forced to beg for money, the guy that sits next to us in class who is too afraid to come out and tell his parents' he is gay because of what he knows they will do – throw him out and never speak to him again?

**All:** (*in unison*) This is not truth. It is false. We come with a message for you to hear. This is not truth. (*company walks off stage l.*)

# What Is Truth?

*Man 2 enters, dressed as homeless man, and goes to bench stage l. Woman 2 enters from stage r. Goes to sit on bench, where homeless man is sleeping.*

**Woman 2:** The man on the bench. He is here, night after night, not able to find lodging in any of the shelters we provide. He has been rejected by the world, no longer a part of it. So he finds restless slumber on a park bench in the cold. He will soon freeze to death if we do nothing about what is happening here. The politicians claim to be making progress, but this man does not see any of it. Last night, he was turned away from a shelter yet again, because he had an open cut. This man was infected with HIV from his partner. Yes, this man is gay. And because of this, he can no longer find a place to sleep, to get out of the cold. Society will no longer accept him as a human and his family has turned their backs on him. All because he got up one day and told his family that he was gay.

*Homeless man starts to wake up and yells at Woman 2.*

**Homeless Man (Man 2):** Can't you leave a guy alone? I'm just trying to get a few fucking minutes of sleep, and you just stand there, talking this bullshit? Who the fuck do you think you are anyways – a guardian-fucking-angel?

*Homeless man seems to fall back asleep as two characters come and carry him off stage l. Woman 2 exits in same direction while Man 1 crosses to bed in hospital stage r. where Man 3 is lying on.*

**Man 1:** Hospitals. They scare many people. And with good reason too. So many sick people in one place, it has to be a breeding ground for some of the worst diseases. Doctors and nurses run around, trying to make sure that every patient is looked after. It's bound to happen that one of them forgot to wash their hands at some point. I come here every week to meet my brother – he is being treated for suicidal tendencies. On the good days, they let me actually go into the room and talk to him at his bedside. On the bad days, all I can do is look through the window, seeing him begging me to come in, and knowing that they won't let me. It breaks my heart every time I see it happen.

*Man 1 crosses to bed and sits down in chair. Woman 3 comes in as nurse and whispers to Man 1 that he can't be there. Man 1 gets up and walks off stage r. Woman 1 enters from upstage left and walks towards downstage center.*

**Woman 1:** I came out of the closet today... to my friends. The reactions were mixed. Some of them were fine with my being a lesbian, while others were freaked out or disgusted. From that moment in time, I knew who my true friends were. Telling my parents is going to be the hard part. They are so strict in the way they look at sexuality that I wonder if I should even bother telling them. I'm going to be going away to the city this fall and entering university. Maybe that would be a better time to tell them – when I am away from home. I want to let them know, but don't want to kill them. Telling them something like this would destroy my mother, and possibly my father. I can't figure out how to tell them that I don't want them to set me up with that guy. *(small beat)* I like girls, and there is nothing that can be done about it. Please don't let them try to send me to a rehabilitation camp if I tell them. I would die.

# What Is Truth?

*Woman 1 leaves stage l. Enter Man 2 from audience. Begins speaking as walking onto stage from right.*

**Man 2:** I was never the popular one in school. Oh, I had friends. Don't get me wrong there – I was never a loner. I just had trouble making friends that would last. Much of the time, they just wanted to get the answers to last night's homework. And for a while, I was willing to give it to them. My parents always told me that just because I didn't necessarily have the most friends didn't mean that I was not a good friend. And even though I knew it to be true, my first reaction to this whenever they would tell me would be *bullshit!* I know what you're thinking – really, I do. I should just accept myself as I am, and just know that no matter what people say about me, I truly know who I am. And I do – to a degree. But still, it hurts every time someone tells me I'm useless, I'm a slob, I'm better off dead. You know? God, it hurts.

*Man 2 walk off stage r. as Woman 3 enters stage r.*

**Woman 3:** My girlfriend and me, we've been together for a couple of years now. I truthfully can't see myself without her. And I know she feels the same way. We are like two peas in a pod. Whenever I see her name on my call display or she comes online, it just brings a sense of joy to my heart. Our parents don't accept us though. They think we are an abomination that should be squashed like a bug. I haven't seen my sister in over a year. I've missed important days in my families lives, all because they are closed-minded and won't let me be who I am. I'm in love and I know that it will last. We are meant for one another, and there is nothing that could separate us – not even our parents not being accepting of who we are.

*Woman 3 goes to sit on bench as Man 3 walks on stage l. and starts to dribble a basketball by himself.*

**Man 3:** I've always been here, all alone. I can't see to get any friends, and I don't know why. Maybe because some asshole started a rumor that I like to fuck other guys. This is not true. I am just an outsider to the world. I am shy, so I don't approach people very easily. The few people who I have spoken to told me “*Get lost fag. We don't need your type here.*” I went home that night and couldn't sleep – all I could here were those words and they stung. They bit deep into my very being and I began to question what I was doing here, why I was alive. I came to this park ready to kill myself. Then I began to think back on the stories I have read about people overcoming obstacles, and I knew that I could do that as well. (*Woman 3 gets off bench and exits stage l.*) Besides, this basketball was here and I couldn't pass up a little bit of practice with the hoops. My life, as I know it now, will change. I pray it changes. I have got tired of this old shit, where I am the butt of others jokes and they just sit there laughing at me, like the little pansy-ass mother-fuckers they are. Good riddance and fuck you to them all. My life has changed, and I'll be damned if I let them rule it anymore.

*Man 3 walks off stage r. and lights fade to black. Company walks back on stage and assumes their opening positions. As with the opening, spots will come up on each member as they speak, until all members are lit for final line. Order has changed and lighting designer should note change in order for proper lights.*

# What Is Truth?

**Woman 2:** Life is difficult at the best of times. People want to hurt you when you have already been to hell and are just now making your way back. When they come for you, remember the lives you have just seen. They have left you with many open-ended questions. Go and contemplate on them and make yourself a better person for having done so.

**Man 2:** When you think about what you just witnessed, look at what your thoughts are on the issues raised. Are you the instigator, making the cruel remarks, or are you the one who is the butt of the joke? Let yourself look through the eyes of the other party and then forgive them for what they have done to you or beg forgiveness of those you have hurt.

**Woman 3:** Learn from your mistakes. Don't relive the moments where you had a lapse in judgment. Bring to your life a sense of renewal and freshness. Let your feelings out. If you need to tell someone you are sorry, do it sooner rather than later. The weight that will be lifted from you is enormous.

**Man 1:** Never stop improving yourself. You are only as good as you let yourself be. If you decide that all you need to do is bring a chocolate bar to someone to solve all of your differences, that's all that you will do. And it is not enough. You can never be too kind to another human being.

**Woman 1:** Be sure to make peace with your neighbor. You are all brothers and sisters, and you should act as such. Sometime later on in life, you will be glad you did so. Maybe you don't like the way they live their lives. So be it. This doesn't mean you get to be mean to them. Love them no matter what, and your life will become that much easier.

**Man 3:** The truth of the matter is that any of these situations could happen to you, and you will *never* be prepared for them. You need to keep building yourself up and allowing yourself to be open to new possibilities.

**All:** (*in unison*) This has not been truth in the sense that you understand it. It has been fiction. These events could happen in your life. Be ready for them and meet them with open arms. You can help your friends and relatives if you just love them, no matter what they do or what choices they make. Love makes the world go round, and we must all contribute. This has not been truth in the sense that you understand it.

*Blackout. Once lights go fully to black, company will walk off stage. Woman 2, Man 2, Woman 3 will go off stage l. & Man 1, Woman 1, Man 3 will exit stage r. This is also how they will enter for curtain call. After curtain call, all cast will take places in chairs, which have been set up on stage for panel discussion.*