

ROMEO & NAOMI RAMIREZ
by Kathryn Walat

About the play (from the playwright):

Anna (mid-twenties) is a rookie cop on her first undercover narcotics assignment at a school in South Florida. Under the name Naomi Ramirez she poses as a high school senior, attracting the attention of honors student Jesus Romeo.

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ANNA—female, 20s

About the scene:

Earlier in this scene Anna's boyfriend Josh revealed that he slept with a female acquaintance from high school; he is now apologizing for everything under the sun. That shitty news, together with the mounting pressure to deliver on an arrest, drives Anna to reveal details of the dangerous role she is playing, and eventually, to seek Josh's advice.

ANNA

Don't fucking apologize, Josh. I hate it when you apologize over stupid shit. I need you to *listen*, okay?

So there's this kid—this guy—he's eighteen. His name's Romeo—I'm not shitting you—*Jesus* Romeo in fact and he's . . . amazing. And quite possibly the biggest player in South Florida—or not, I don't know.

He wants to join the Coast Guard—to-to *help* people—and he's an honors student and like crazy into Shakespeare, and he wants to take me to the prom, okay? Today in school he sang me a song—right before class started—in front of *McShane's* class, Romeo is serenading me *a cappella* and everyone is watching—but unlike when all of them were watching me fuck up my sonnet, this time they're cheering him on!

And it's like kamikaze—*everyone* is going to see him crash and burn—because that's also when he decides to ask me to the prom, and I'm like: Seriously? In front of class you are doing this?

That's right, it takes balls. And you know what else? It's exactly—textbook—what they tell you *not* to do when you're undercover. Don't attract attention. Do *not* get involved with the civilians, never mind possible targets.

But in that moment—and this is the crazy thing—I *did* want to go to the prom with him. That's totally what I wanted to do. And I have goose bumps all over, and my heart is beating like *crazy*—it was like I was back in high school, except better, because for once *I'm* the girl being serenaded and—in that moment, my heart said yes.

I said I would *think about it*. What was I supposed to say?

And then—*then*—*McShane* made everyone sit down and open our books. And then. I lean in—because he's sitting at the desk right next to me, there in the back row—and I whisper, “Hey, so—about that weed? . . . ”

And he says, “Don't worry, I'll have it for you tomorrow.”