

MEG (cont'd)
(beat)
As I...
(longer pause)

NICOLE
(to herself)
What are you doing Meg?

Meg puts the notecards back in her
jacket.

START

MEG
When people with hate in their hearts use weapons to express their rage and prejudice, politicians say a lot of the same things. We need to get guns off the streets. We need better mental health services. That's true. And that's what I was going to say tonight.

(beat)
Instead, I'm going to tell you a story.

The summer I turned 15 I fell in love with my best friend Joanna. And it scared me to death. I was sure I was the only lesbian in Pennsylvania. So when I saw a poster in the public library for a gay pride event in Pittsburgh, I was desperate to get there.

I rode a 67A Downtown. And when I stepped off that bus, there were rainbow flags everywhere. Men kissing each other. Women holding hands.

The PLGCC had a booth and I took one of every brochure. And I spent an hour talking to a nice man named Todd. And I felt...safe.

That safety. That sense of belonging. That's what people like Russell Lewis want to disrupt. That's what hate crimes do. They make an entire group of people feel afraid. Like targets. Like they could be next.

When shootings like this happen, the pundits speculate and pontificate. And some of them are saying Pittsburgh is full of small-minded people. Bigots. But that's not our city.

RONNIE
~~No it's not!~~

MEG
Pittsburgh is a hard-working, diverse, safe place. We've got big hearts and open arms and we welcome people.

As Meg proceeds, Emilia, Nicole,
and Ronnie applaud.

MEG

We've got compassion and empathy and we care about people-- that's our city. We've got different faiths and cultures, and we respect people--that's our city.

EMILIA

~~That's our city!~~

MEG

We're all Pittsburghers and we stand with each other--that's our city!

RONNIE

~~That's our city!~~

MEG

So let's keep loving each other and standing up for each other. Because that's who we are Pittsburgh. That's our city!

END

Meg waves to the crowd, Ronnie, Emilia, and Nicole respond with applause.

Ronnie joins Meg at the podium and envelopes her in a bear hug. Then Ronnie exits and Meg joins Emilia and Nicole.

NICOLE

Erica spent four hours on that speech in your pocket.

MEG

I went with my gut.

EMILIA

You were amazing.

Nicole's phone buzzes and she steps away to take the call.

MEG

You really think it was good?

EMILIA

Yeah. I do.

Emilia steps closer to Meg, removing an imaginary piece of lint from her jacket.

MEG

There are about a dozen cameras pointed at us right now.