



Headlines of Hate: Identity Based Bullying

By Manny Oñate

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Character Breakdown

- Narrator:** Expositional character in the form of a news anchor or reporter.
- Actor 1:**
 - Marco: New kid in school. Just wants to be left alone.
 - Homophobic bully 1: Bully at Jesus' school.
 - Anti-Semitic Bully: Targets Ray and Stephanie.
- Actor 2:**
 - Jock Bully: Football player that targets Marco.
 - Ray: Friends with Stephanie and bullied.
 - Jesus: Valedictorian who is targeted for being gay.
- Actor 3:**
 - Stephanie: Friends with Ray, targeted for being Jewish.
 - Emily: Friends with Marco, from his hometown.
 - Homophobic Bully 2: Bully at Jesus' school

Props List

- Actor 1:**
 - Football, backpack, and phone
- Actor 2:**
 - Notepad, backpack, and phone
- Actor 3:**
 - Bullying notes, backpack, and phone

TRACK VB

NARRATOR

Bridgeton New Jersey, Marco and his family move into town from Arizona. The first week of school is fine and Marco keeps a low profile, not talking to people and focusing on homework. But the following Monday, another student approaches Marco with an idea.

ACTOR 2

Hey! You're the new kid right? I was wondering if you were thinking about trying out for the football team?

ACTOR 1

Oh, well, I've never really played so I don't know if I'd be any good.

ACTOR 2

But, you're like, fast right? I mean you look fast.

ACTOR 1

Well, I guess I could give it a try.

ACTOR 2

Yeah that's more like it! Tryouts are this Wednesday, I expect to see you there, new kid.

(ACTOR 2 exits)

ACTOR 1

Yeah, okay I'll be there.

BOOKSHELF VB

NARRATOR

Columbia Missouri, Jesus is nearly done with his senior year. An active member of the community, hard worker, and valedictorian, Jesus seems to be friends with just about everybody. Jesus was practicing his graduation speech in a study room in the library, alone...or so he thought.

ACTOR 2

And I know that I might not be exactly the same as the majority of my classmates or community but I still feel at home here. Coming from a different country, my parents were nervous about adjusting to a new culture and raising a kid here. They found a place where being helpful and kind is second nature. We got to know our neighbors and grow together. Differences and similarities. Agreements and disagreements. No matter what, we all come together in celebration. And in the spirit of celebration and the understanding of the community, I want to take this

opportunity to come out as gay. And some of you might look at me differently now, but I hope, no, I KNOW that we can keep that same love and togetherness that makes our school and- (ACTOR 3 exits unseen) ugh that's too personal, I'll change it when I get home.

PARK VB

NARRATOR

Medford Oregon, Stephanie and Ray have been best friends growing up and now go to high school together. Both of them keep to themselves for the most part. But one week, Ray is distant and doesn't talk or hangout with Stephanie very much. Stephanie asks about it over the weekend.

ACTOR 3

Hey, I noticed that you seemed kinda down and quiet this week I just wanted to check in and see if you're okay. We didn't even hangout or eat lunch together once.

ACTOR 2

Yeah, sorry about that I just... never mind it's stupid.

ACTOR 3

You can tell me anything, you know that.

ACTOR 2

Well, you know how you're Jewish? Well duh obviously you know that (they laugh) that new kid everyone's scared of came up to me and said that he'd "break my neck" if he saw me hanging out with... uhhh the "jewish kid" so yeah. Sorry I know it's dumb and I shouldn't have been so scared.

ACTOR 3

I am so sorry. And hey I get it that is scary. Did you report it to the office or anything?

ACTOR 2

No he only threatened me the one time. He probably doesn't even remember doing it. I'm sure I was just overreacting.

ACTOR 3

He really said he'd beat you up because I'm jewish? wow. I'm surprised he hasn't picked on me. Well lets just try to avoid him and hope they forget we exist.

ACTOR 2

Okay sounds like a plan.

NEUTRAL GREY VB

ACTOR 1

(Enters) The stories we will be sharing with you today are based on real events that have happened in schools across the country. Each story involves a different type or types of Identity Based Bullying.

ACTOR 2

These stories have a number of things in common. Bullying, online harassment, harsh verbal slurs and disrespectful actions all occur in these stories. We aren't showing this to you because we condone this behavior, but because we want to show you what it looks like and what you can do to stop it if you see or hear about it.

ACTOR 3

We want to let you know that what you hear could stir up some intense emotions and feelings. If you find that you need a moment to collect yourself and breathe, please feel free to take that moment.

SPLIT BLUE WALL/PLANT BEDROOM

NARRATOR

Marco's story continues. Marco sends a message to his friend Emily back home in Arizona.

ACTOR 1

Hey Emily! So the weirdest thing happened to me today. You know how I've just been trying to keep a low profile? Well today one of the football players came up to me out of nowhere and asked me to try out for the team!

ACTOR 3

No way dude that's awesome! Have you ever even played football before?

ACTOR 1

Only at thanksgiving with my family, but never on a real competitive team. I'm excited! I think I might have found my new "thing" yknow?

ACTOR 3

Hahaha if you say so. I'm really happy for ya!

ACTOR 1

Thanks! This school year might not be as bad as I thought.

NARRATOR

After the tryouts, Marco has another conversation with Emily.

ACTOR 3

Hey! You had the football tryouts today right? How'd they go?

ACTOR 1

Umm fine I guess. Like I've never played before so I wasn't the best but it went fine.

ACTOR 3

They knew you haven't played before right?

ACTOR 1

Yeah they knew' it's just... well...

ACTOR 3

What's up? What happened?

ACTOR 1

We were running sprints and when it was my turn to go someone yelled' "run like the cops are after you!"

ACTOR 3

That's awful I am so sorry that happened.

ACTOR 1

Yeah. I think the worst part was that nobody like, called it out or anything. A lot of people actually laughed.

ACTOR 3

Did the coaches do anything.

ACTOR 1

Not really. I know one of them got mad and told us to focus up but I could tell he was mad that people were distracted, not about what was said.

ACTOR 3

Are you going to report it or anything like that?

ACTOR 1

I don't know. It depends I guess. I'm sure they just thought it was a joke. I guess if I even make the team I might bring it up to the coach, but yeah, who knows if that's even going to happen.

ACTOR 3

I am so sorry. You shouldn't have to deal with this. I'm here for you if you need to talk.

CAFETERIA VB

NARRATOR

Back to Columbia, Missouri. Jesus goes to school the next day. He notices that people's behavior towards him changes as the day goes on.

ACTOR 2

It was so weird. In the morning it wasn't too different than any other day. I talked with my friends and started my day like normal. But then something happened at lunch. I heard someone call my name.

ACTOR 1

Hey-sus!

ACTOR 2

Hey uhh what's up?

ACTOR 1

Congrats being the vale-DICKED-torian!

ACTOR 2

It took me a second to process what was just said to me. I didn't recognize what it meant until I realized everyone around me had started laughing and staring at me. It was all downhill from there. For the rest of the day it was constant

ACTOR 1

Stupid homo! Go back to whatever smelly country you came from/

ACTOR 3

I always knew you were some kind of foreign fag!

ACTOR 1

I can't believe you're giving our graduation speech! Ugh, so gross.

ACTOR 3

You're disgusting!

ACTOR 2

I don't know how everyone found out. I was so embarrassed and hurt that I went home early that day. My parents weren't home so I went straight to my room and cried. I actually thought people

would accept me. I wrote my whole speech being so sure of that. I guess I was wrong.

BLUE LOCKERS VB

NARRATOR

Oregon. Stephanie and Ray's story continues. The next week at school they hangout again, and then one day the bully approaches both of them after school.

ACTOR 1

HEY! I thought I told you to stop hanging out with her? Do you wanna to get beat up?

ACTOR 3

You can't talk to people like that!

ACTOR 1

Watch it, Jew! I'm not talking to you, I'm talking to your friend. I warned you, and you didn't listen. So watch your back. (exits)

ACTOR 3

Okay that was not okay. We need to tell someone now. (ACTOR 2 is quiet) Right?? Hey!

ACTOR 2

Sorry I have to go (hurries off)

ACTOR 3

(to audience) So I decided to report what happened to the principal and they ended up getting suspended for a few days. Ray wasn't hanging out with me again and then one morning he didn't show up to school. I tried calling him but he didn't answer so I called his mom. She answered the phone crying because he got beat up on his way to school. I was going to report it but when I put my stuff in my locker, I found a note threatening to kill me if I ever reported anything. I was so scared that I just stayed quiet. (ACTOR 3 exits)

NARRATOR

Ray never told anyone who beat him up that morning, but it was the same bully from before. The bully said that he knew Ray reported him to the principal and that it was time for payback. They also said that if Ray told anyone who beat him up he would have to eat through a tube, if he were lucky enough to live. After school that same day, Stephanie stopped by to check in with Ray.

IS A HOUSE BACKGROUND POSSIBLE? DOOR CENTERED?

ACTOR 3

Hey! What happened earlier? Did that bully do this to you?

ACTOR 2

No. look just go home. I'm fine.

ACTOR 3

What? I know it's scary he even left me a note but-

ACTOR 2

IT WASN'T HIM!.... just go home and stop bothering me okay? Please.

ACTOR 3

but i'm worried about you-

ACTOR 2

Just leave! If you care about me, you'll stop being friends with me. (ACTOR 2 exits)

ACTOR 3

And that was the last time we talked for awhile. Ray avoided me and started missing school more and more. He still got bullied and beat up but never reported anything. I wanted to help, but he didn't want my help anymore. I kept getting notes too. Really terrible ones. "it's time for a second holocaust" "Hitler was right" "the only good jew is a dead one". I wanted to report everything but I was terrified of what might happen if I did. So I did what I thought would keep us safest, and did nothing.

TRACK VB

NARRATOR

New Jersey. The first football game of the season happens. Marco actually gets a chance to play, but doesn't do well. Normally, a new student who has never played football before wouldn't play as much as Marco did. They lost the game and all of the blame was placed on him. Next week at school, Marco walks down the hallway, and gets confronted by one of the guys on the team.

ACTOR 2

Hey! What was going on during that game?

ACTOR 1

I'm sorry it was my first game ever and I didn't expect to play that mu-

ACTOR 2

Whatever I don't wanna hear excuses. You should be way better than you are.

ACTOR 1

What? I've never played befo-

ACTOR 2

C'mon man look in a mirror. Are you actually black?

ACTOR 1

Excuse me? That has nothing to do-

ACTOR 2

Oh please you are supposed to be good at sports I mean look at all the pro teams. Just a bunch of wasted potential. (ACTOR 2 exits)

ACTOR 1

And that was the day I went from “invisible transfer kid trying to blend in” to “the fake black kid on the football team”. I tried to ignore it but people wouldn't leave me alone. They would even pick fights with me in between classes and during gym class. I always tried to run away to avoid getting physical but they never got in trouble. And whenever I would get cornered and defend myself, somehow I always ended up being the one in detention. The reports would say that I was “aggressive” or “disrespectful” even though I was just trying to get through the day without getting a bruise or cut that I'd have to explain to my parents. It was so frustrating and I just didn't know what to do.

STUDY HALL VB

NARRATOR

Jesus' story continues. With graduation approaching and the bullying getting worse, the principal makes the decision to remove Jesus as a speaker. Disheartened, but not defeated, Jesus convinces the school paper to allow him to put his new speech in the graduation edition.

ACTOR 2

I am gay. I am an immigrant. These are two things about me that I cannot change and would not want to change if I could. I am proud of who I am. My family is proud of who I am. I can't pretend that I'm not disappointed in how people have reacted, I expected better. I have struggled with what to write next. I want to leave this in the past and move on, but at the same time, I never should have been put in this position. I want to forgive, but I am not ready yet. I am not ready to forgive without knowing those that hurt me are seeking it, will do better, and understand why what they did was wrong. If you want my forgiveness, you will have to earn it. We are pressured to forgive right away, but I do not believe I am obligated to forgive those who would not hesitate to hurt me again. I will no longer give the speech at graduation. Good luck with whatever the future holds for you.

SPLIT RED BRICK VB/PINK VB

NARRATOR

Stephanie and Ray's story continues. The bullying and harassment is getting worse and the two

friends stop communicating entirely. Until early one morning, Stephanie gets a text from Ray.

ACTOR 2

Hey I know we haven't talked in awhile but I just wanted to let you know that you probably shouldn't go to school today.

ACTOR 3

What? Why? What's going to happen?

ACTOR 2

I'm just sick of getting beat up and picked on. No one cares, yesterday he came up to me again and said-

ACTOR 1

HEY! I'm sick of seeing your ugly face so tomorrow after school I think I'm gonna break it for good! Hope your mom gets you a nice casket!

ACTOR 2

And I am just done! I can't take it anymore and I am just going to end it all. I don't want anything to happen to you by accident, so please just stay home. (exits)

ACTOR 3

Are you talking about what I think you're talking about?!?! You can't do that! I know it's hard but please don't do anything you'll regret! (sends text) hello???? Ray????

NARRATOR

Ray never responds to the text. Or the twenty after that.

PINK VB

ACTOR 3

I knew Ray was talking about bringing a gun to school. I wasn't sure if he would actually do it but he sounded serious. I didn't want to get him in trouble and ruin our friendship. But if I didn't say anything and he actually did it, well... I don't know how I'd live with myself. I feel Ray's frustration. That bully needs to stop torturing both of us, but this isn't the way. I feel so hopeless.

GREY NEUTRAL VB

NARRATOR

Each of these stories is based on real events that have happened in this country. Not every case of identity-based bullying is this extreme, but they can be and they can happen anywhere. The best thing you can do in these situations is report any incident you see or hear about and be supportive and kind to everyone. We want to end this program by showing you that with the right help and action, bad situations can be turned around for good.

ACTOR 1

Bridgeton New Jersey, I eventually told my parents about all the race based bullying I was going through, and after some meetings with the school, we decided that it would best for me to transfer to a new school. It was hard joining in the middle of the year but eventually I found a group of friends and things are a lot better now.

ACTOR 2

Columbia Missouri, I still got a lot of harassment for being a gay immigrant up until graduation, but I did have a few people come up and apologize or say that they hated what people were saying they just didn't know what to do. I ended up getting a full ride scholarship to every school I applied to. It was hard, but in the end I am proud of who I am and no one can take that away from me.

ACTOR 3

Medford Oregon, I decided to call the police. Ray didn't end up coming to school that day and wasn't in school for awhile after that. I also reported all the notes I had been getting and they had video from the school cameras of what the bully was doing. He ended up getting expelled and might even be in legal trouble. Ray eventually told me that he started seeing a therapist and got the help he needed. I was so happy to hear that, and even happier to have my best friend back.

ACTOR 1

Each of you has the power to be an ally, and a support for someone else.

ACTOR 2

We should all strive to be accepting of people as they are.

ACTOR 3

Kindness isn't always the easiest choice, but it is almost always the best. Thank you for listening.

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