

Crystal

You look around at your friends here, following the successful completion of a pretty good run for a play you wrote, and you can't believe that you're considering leaving. This is perfect. If only this could be your entire life.

The offer came in yesterday. A friend of yours from college wants you to manage a small theater in New York City. You would manage the books, do a lot of fundraising, be involved with everything that happens there, and get to put on one or two of your original plays a year. It really could be your big break, and it would mean doing what you love for a living, while applying some of the organizational skills you've gained doing the boring jobs you've found here. The longer you work at these tedious office jobs, the more you hate them. At first, the idea of a pretty well-paying 9-5 job that didn't take much thought and left your evenings free for theater seemed perfect. Now that you're in your 30s and staring down another 30-40 years of boring office work, it scares you. None of it's that bad, it's just not how you see your life.

This offer could lead to all sorts of things, or it could lead to being a grown woman sharing a tiny apartment with a stranger in an extremely expensive city after leaving all your friends behind. You know the job will be a paycut, and you know how expensive New York is. With a job working that many evenings and late nights, you really don't want to commute from the suburbs. It's still a small theater, and they can barely afford to hire a full-time person at all. You'll be wearing lots of different hats, working long hours, and most of it will be paperwork, not art. Is that really worth leaving what you have here?

Here you have close friends. You direct two or three of your own shows a year and act in most of the rest that the company puts on. You do most of the paperwork to keep things running and book spaces. The community really values what you do here, and you have time to do it. You have never been one to seek out romantic relationships, so this company and your friendships here are the connections that really matter to you.

These people know you and understand you. Whenever you go somewhere new, you struggle to make connections and get people to accept you for who you are. You identify as asexual and aromantic and you're happy with that. It took you a while to come to terms with it, but since you have, you've found your friendships have grown stronger, and you're happier with yourself. The only problem is that you were a drama kid, and you love the physicality of actors. You like being physically affectionate with your friends, male and female, teasing them and doing all sorts of things that most people perceive as flirting. Your friends understand, but when you're around new people you get paranoid that anything you do will be taken as a sign of romantic interest. It's happened to you too many times. The idea of starting over is just terrifying to you.

You're also really worried about the company here if you leave. Everyone is passionate and creative and wonderful, but most of them couldn't keep the books if their lives depended on it. And worse yet, the NYC job wants you to start next month. With packing and moving, you wouldn't have nearly enough time to train anyone else. You might be able to help a little long distance, but you're afraid that the theater group would fall apart without you.

But this might be your one chance to really make it!

The Cast

Jason is a great actor, and you're lucky to have him. He's been really busy with relationships and grad school and you've had to work somewhat around his schedule, but it's been worth it. His relationship

with Maria and Skylar is complicated, but seems to be working for them.

Maria is a good tech, and good techs are hard to come by in community theater. Everyone wants to be on stage and in the spotlight. To some degree she seems to mostly be here because her partners and friends are, but she works hard and does her job well, so her reasons are her own.

Skylar is a good character actor with a wide range, but you've noticed that, recently, they seem to be more awkward when playing male characters. That's too bad. You always appreciated their flexibility, but if they need to be cast as female in the future, that's fine, you just need to know. Skylar is one of your closest friends in the cast. They're fun to flirt with and know that it's not going anywhere. They're also probably the easiest person to talk to about the stress and issues of running the play, partially because they tend to be pretty laid back about it. If you decide to talk to one person before sharing your circumstances with everyone else, Skylar is probably it.

Tyler does a lot of sets and props for your shows. He's a great artist and you're lucky to have him, but he's also really busy with work. He feels that he has to be the best at everything just to get by, and as a young, bisexual black man in tech, he's probably right. He's dating Dan, and they're having some drama, but mostly you've been staying out of it.

Dan mostly does small character parts. He's not the best actor in your group, but he's really good at working with other actors. He teaches high school English and runs the drama program. He feels self-conscious about not being good enough, but you're sure that he's great with those kids.

Angela was a friend of yours, years ago, when she was heavily involved in the theater. You're sorry that her recent relationship turned out to be such a mess, but you were really glad to have her back for this show. Even after all these years, she really brought something special to the lead character in this play. Now that the show is over, it would be nice to spend a little more time reconnecting, especially since you're thinking about leaving.

Olivia is your costume designer and plays the occasional bit part. Her costume work is great. She's not one of your better actors, but for things that are in her wheelhouse, she can be a lot of fun. She leads a pretty busy life outside the theater, so you really don't see her much when she isn't needed for rehearsals.