THE FINAL GIRL SUPPORT GROUP

by Shawn Deal

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SYNOPSIS: For the first time ever, the final girls—you know, those girls that survive to the end of a horror movie—are getting together for their very own support group. It's a side-splitting gathering of the final girls as we hilariously dissect and roast the tropes that happen in horror films, promising a night of non-stop laughter.

DURATION: 45 minutes.
TIME: Present.
SETTING: A room/classroom.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 females, 1 male)

COUNSELOR (f)..... Adult, older than the final girls. *(104 lines)*

ASHLEY (f)..... Teens to twenties, survived the lunchroom maniac. *(52 lines)*

JENN (f)..... Teens to twenties, survived the maniac doll. *(73 lines)*

TATUM (f)..... Teens to twenties, survived the clown maniac. *(46 lines)*

OLIVIA (f)..... Teens to twenties, survived the summer camp maniac. *(59 lines)*

SIENNA (f)..... Teens to twenties, survived the dream maniac. *(30 lines)*

MASKED MAN (m)..... Any age, themed as a chef. *(4 lines)*

SET

A classroom or office space in a community center/building or school. A door is needed for the final girls to enter through. Six chairs are set up in a line or semi-circle for the girls to all sit down and talk with the counselor as a group. There should be a table with drinks and snacks of various kinds. A sign should be set up in the room that reads:

Final Girl Support Group
Meeting time: Friday, Month (enter month play is performed) 13 (the day),
Year (enter year play is performed)
From 1pm to 3pm.

The sign can be plain or decorated in any way you choose.

AT START: *The COUNSELOR is seated on one of the chairs, facing audience. All other chairs are empty; in fact, the COUNSELOR is all by herself. The COUNSELOR looks anxious and, for a long moment, constantly looks at her watch, phone, or some sort of clock in the room. Beat. The COUNSELOR stands up and checks the drinks and snacks at the table, rearranging them. She also rearranges the sign, maybe moving it or straightening it—just anything to get some of her anxious energy out of her.*

COUNSELOR: Where are they? *(Looks again at whatever timepiece.)* Oh… I guess… I'm early yet. I'm just so nervous. No, nervous is not quite the word. Anxious might be a better fit, but that still doesn't capture exactly what I'm feeling. I want this to go well… I want to help these girls who are coming. This is our first meeting ever. And the girls who are coming are all special, extraordinarily special. They are all final girls.

This is my personal idea: to get these amazing girls together and see if I can help them and see if they can help each other. That's probably why I have this extra measure of anxiety and nervousness and just worry that this won't work. They are wonderful, strong girls who need help. They have all been damaged by the unfortunate circumstances they found themselves in.

It's not easy being a final girl. They are the girls that survive all those horror movies or novels or comic books or whatever horror story is being told. They are the ones at the end who vanquished the murderer, who saw all their friends and family die around them and came out of it alive.

So, I have spent the last several months trying to find those few final girls and get them all to agree to come here. It took a lot of coaxing, and I will find out in just a few minutes if I was successful. I can't wait to see if they will come.

ASHLEY pokes her head into the door. The COUNSELOR sees her and gets excited.

COUNSELOR: Come in! Come in! Please come in!

ASHLEY: *(Tentatively.)* Is this the right place? *(ASHLEY is dressed as a high school girl. She could be dressed as a cheerleader or have a letterman's jacket on or something to signify that she is indeed a high school student.)*

COUNSELOR: Yes, if this is your group. There are several meetings in this building today. *(Points to her sign announcing the meeting.)*

ASHLEY: *(Takes steps to actually enter the room. And looks closely at the sign.)* Yeah, I'm in the right place. I'm Ashley.

COUNSELOR: It is such a pleasure to meet you in person. Obviously, I'm Dr. Anna Kirby.

ASHLEY: *(Looks around the room.)* Am I the first to show?

COUNSELOR: Yes, you are. However, everyone should be arriving anytime now.

ASHLEY: Are there a lot of us?

COUNSELOR: A few… well, five, to be specific.

ASHLEY: There are five of us… how sad.

COUNSELOR: Yes, well… that's kind of why I'm getting you all together. It's important that you all know that you are not alone.

ASHLEY: That's cool, I guess. *(Beat of uncomfortable silence.)* Should I sit or just wait?

COUNSELOR: Oh… I'm sorry… follow me.

The COUNSELOR leads ASHLEY over to the snacks/drink table.

COUNSELOR: Please help yourself to any snack or beverage you may want… *(Pointing to the cookies on the table.)* I baked those cookies myself.

Beat. ASHLEY looks over the table and at the cookies. She lets out a blood-curdling scream and begins to run frantically around the stage space. In her blind panic, she knocks down a couple of chairs and runs back through the door she came in screaming. Just as ASHLEY exits, another girl walks in, JENN, she is carrying a gas can and lighter.

JENN: *(Flicking the lighter.)* Clearly, I must be in the right room.

COUNSELOR: *(Confused by ASHLEY'S response and sudden exit.)* I must have done something wrong already. I need to consult my notes.

The COUNSELOR rushes over to where her chair is in the circle. She will set it back up if this was a chair that was knocked down. She grabs her notes and starts searching through them.

COUNSELOR: What did I miss? What did I miss?

JENN goes to the snack table and picks up one of the homemade cookies.

JENN: What set her off? *(Goes to take a bite out of the cookie.)*
COUNSELOR: The cookies.

JENN suddenly stops, looks at the cookie, examines it, smells it, and very gently, as if it were a bomb, puts it back on to the table and cautiously backs away from the table.

JENN: Yeah… okay… then.

The COUNSELOR is flipping through her notes, trying to figure out something. JENN heads to the circle of chairs and straightens any that were knocked over. Instead of immediately placing the chairs back on the ground, she looks underneath every chair, ensuring there is nothing attached to them.

COUNSELOR: Oh… I found it. It was my mistake. Ashley survived the lunchroom killer who poisoned everyone with homemade fudge, cake, and cookies. I wonder if I should chase after her.
JENN: *(Thinking the last remark was directed at her.)* She'll come back, or she won't. I wouldn't worry about it.

After JENN is done looking at the bottoms of all the chairs, she will travel around the room, looking behind things and underneath things, including the sign and the table where the snacks are, to ensure that nothing is hidden anywhere in the room.

COUNSELOR: *(For the first time taking note of JENN'S strange behavior.)* What are you doing?

JENN: Looking for potential threats.

COUNSELOR: Ah… What kind of potential threats?

JENN: Children's toys.

COUNSELOR: *(Sudden drawing comes to light.)* Of course, you must be Jennifer, survivor of the crazy killer doll.

JENN: Jenn, you can just call me Jenn.

COUNSELOR: I have down here your name is Jennifer Larry?

JENN: No. Larry was the name of the doll. Lucky Larry, one of those kids' ventriloquist dolls. The ones dressed in the bright yellow shirt.

COUNSELOR: Oh, yes, right. My nephew got one of those dolls as a Christmas gift a year or two ago.

JENN: *(Sudden intensity. JENN rushes to the COUNSELOR to invade her personal space.)* You have to get it away from him immediately, as soon as you're done here. You have to destroy it and I mean completely. Be careful; those dolls are fast and can hide anywhere. And for some reason they are always carrying a knife or small hatchet. I don't know how their little stuffed arms are able to pick up a weapon like that. I mean, their arms are primarily made of cotton. How can an arm made of cotton, which weighs mere ounces, lift a hatchet of seven pounds? They defy physics. But it does make them easier to burn. I always carry around a can of gas. You can borrow it if you need to.

COUNSELOR: *(Takes a step back from JENN, who is uncomfortably close.)* That's very considerate of you.

JENN: I can come over and take care of the whole situation myself if need be. *(Pantomimes striking a match and lighting something on fire.)*

COUNSELOR: Thanks for such a generous offer; I'll keep that in mind.

While this conversation is taking place, TATUM comes in silently, looks around, and may go over to read the sign to make sure she is in the right place.

TATUM: You can't trust children's entertainment either.

Both JENN and the COUNSELOR are startled by TATUM speaking. JENN immediately grabs her can of gas and a lighter.

TATUM: I'm here for the counseling session. *(Points to the sign.)*
COUNSELOR: Of course, welcome.

The COUNSELOR goes up to TATUM and shakes her hand.

JENN: Sorry. *(Puts her gas can down and turns off her lighter.)* You can never be too careful.
TATUM: Those were good quick reflexes. Nice instincts.
JENN: They kept me alive.
TATUM: I hear that.
JENN: Now, what were you saying about children's entertainment?
TATUM: Totally untrustworthy. A danger to the children and society as a whole. Complete and utter chaos.
COUNSELOR: To what are we speaking of?
TATUM: Clowns.
JENN: Oh… nasty.
TATUM: I know, right?
JENN: Taking something that is supposed to be all fun and sweet and changing it into something diabolical.
TATUM: Yes, exactly…. Wow, you totally get it.
JENN: Yeah, it's kind of the same principle with children's dolls.
COUNSELOR: This is great. I'm glad the two of you have found a bond. This is what this whole group is supposed to be about—bringing a unique set of strong women together.
TATUM: I'm glad to be here. It looks perfectly safe. *(She looks around the room slowly.)* No clowns anywhere.
COUNSELOR: Do you have a trigger I should be aware of? Unfortunately, we have struggled with that today already.
JENN: Really, did I miss something? The girl that was running out as I came in. Right, gotcha.
TATUM: Well, I mean clowns, obviously, but anyone with heavy makeup. You know I can't go to children's parties or fairs or anything where there might be a face painting or something like that. I don't go to retirement villages because sometimes those older ladies have too much makeup on.

JENN: How about costume parties, fan conventions, anything like that?

TATUM: An absolute, strict NO.

COUNSELOR: *(Somewhat relieved.)* Well, I am relieved to say that there should be no problem with any of that here. This is a safe environment for you.

Enter OLIVIA. OLIVIA comes crawling in, doing something close to an army crawl. Her face is covered by camouflage paint, and she is dressed in camouflage or as a bush or tree or something that would blend into an outdoor woodsy environment. Beat. TATUM screams and runs hysterically around the room, eventually taking shelter under the snack/drink table. The COUNSELOR runs after TATUM, trying to catch and calm her down, eventually joining her under the snack/drink table. JENN just looks on.

JENN: *(To OLIVIA.)* Sup.

OLIVIA: *(To JENN.)* Sup.

Beat.

OLIVIA: Is this…?

JENN: Oh yeah… most definitely, without a doubt, you're in the right place.

OLIVIA: Noisier than I thought it would be.

JENN: It's had its moments for certain.

OLIVIA: I don't like that. I like peace and quiet. I just want to hear birds and bustling of the wind through the tree and nothing else. I'm intently listening for the sound of heavy footfalls, leaves crackling, twigs and branches breaking. All signs of someone coming after me, someone following me…

OLIVIA begins to look around behind her furtively. JENN does, too.

JENN: Don't worry. I have done a full reconnoiter. There is no one hidden in this room.

OLIVIA looks over at TATUM and the COUNSELOR and looks back at JENN.

JENN: Okay, let me rephrase that. There is no one hidden here that is of inherent danger to you.

OLIVIA: And they are?

JENN: That's the counselor, and the other is Tatum; she survived the clown killer.

OLIVIA: I'm not a clown.

JENN: Very clearly not, but you are like all war painted up.

OLIVIA: This is to give me a tactical advantage. I need to survive out in the wilderness. You never know when some deranged lunatic in a Lacrosse mask will come swinging a sharpened wicket at you.

JENN: Like the bat from the British game cricket?

OLIVIA: Exactly, only with a blade embedded in it.

JENN: Oh… dicey. I'm Jenn.

OLIVIA: I'm Olivia. *(Walks over to the snack table, peering down underneath it.)* Sorry, sorry for the whole face camouflage thing. Better to be safe than sorry. Just trying to survive.

OLIVIA reaches out her hand and helps both the COUNSELOR and then TATUM out from under the table. TATUM is reluctant and crawls out from under the table and steps away from OLIVIA.

OLIVIA: *(Towards TATUM.)* I'm not going to hurt you.

TATUM: *(Taking another step back.)* I get that. I truly do. It's just… you look scary.

JENN: I think you look like you're ready to kick some butt.

OLIVIA: I'm not trying to scare you. You know I'm trying to scare them… the boogie men.

JENN: They should be scared; we're a whole group of final girls. They stand no chance.

COUNSELOR: Yes. Yes, we are.

ALL FINAL GIRLS look at the COUNSELOR.

COUNSELOR: Okay, yes, you all are not me. You can all kick butt. And I mean that.

OLIVIA: Are those snacks? Are they available for everybody?
COUNSELOR: Yes. *(Smiles a bit.)* They are. Please help yourself.

ALL FINAL GIRLS collectively take a step or two towards the snack table when ASHLEY runs into the room and gets between them and the snacks.

ASHLEY: No one touch anything. The food is not safe!
COUNSELOR: Ashley, I'm so glad you're back.
ASHLEY: I'm not letting anybody touch that food.
COUNSELOR: The food is perfectly safe.
OLIVIA: Okay, what are we missing? What's her deal?
COUNSELOR: *(To ASHLEY.)* The food is perfectly safe. *(To OLIVIA.)* Ashley is a survivor of the lunchroom killer.
TATUM: The one that poisoned all that food at that high school; I can't remember the name.

ASHLEY is guarding the table, fending off anyone who comes close.

COUNSELOR: *(Trying to talk ASHLEY down from her heightened state.)* You can trust me. The food is perfectly safe. I can vouch for every piece of it.
ASHLEY: We don't know where it came from!
COUNSELOR: Yes, you do. I made the cookies in my kitchen using ingredients at my home.
ASHLEY: It could have come from anywhere.
COUNSELOR: But it didn't. It all came from me, and I bought everything at stores. All the packages were still sealed when I opened them.
ASHLEY: Someone could have snuck in after you opened them and tampered.
COUNSELOR: I only opened the packages just as you were arriving. That's what I was doing when you first walked in.
ASHLEY: When you were gone, someone could have…
COUNSELOR: I never left the room.

ASHLEY goes to say something else but cannot find another objection.

OLIVIA: I'm starving.

OLIVIA reaches for a cookie on the snack table. ASHLEY slaps her arm/hand away, the cookie lands on the floor.

OLIVIA: I want to eat. I've had nothing but camp food.
ASHLEY: Don't eat that.
OLIVIA: I'm not going to eat it now. It's on the floor.
TATUM: Five-second rule. *(Picks up the cookie.)*
OLIVIA: I don't believe in the five-second rule. Anything that lands on the ground in the forest could land in poop.
TATUM: We're inside. This is not the outdoors.
OLIVIA: But all camp kids have trudged into the forest, so all their shoes are covered in dirt, slime, bacteria, and poop. They walk everywhere indoors. I wouldn't trust anything on the floor.
TATUM: Oh… *(Pulls back.)* And ewww.
OLIVIA: *(To ASHLEY.)* I'm hungry, and those cookies look really good. I'm willing to accept the risk.

ASHLEY picks up one of the cookies, gives it a visual examination, and breaks it in half and then again and again. She brushes all the crumbs onto a paper plate. She licks her finger, testing to see if she can detect a slight amount of poison. Once satisfied, she gives the plate over to OLIVIA.

ASHLEY: I'm happy to announce it's not poisoned or concealing some sort of weapon.
OLIVIA: *(Looks down at the plate of crumbled cookie and responds hesitantly.)* Thank you. Yeah, a very good and thorough job.
TATUM: Would have had to have been a pretty small weapon.
JENN: Small weapons can be deadly. Take my word for it.
TATUM: The doll?
JENN: Came after me with a small pair of scissors and one of those plastic knives you use at picnics. *(Picks one up from the table.)* These suckers are surprisingly sharp.
TATUM: Still doesn't sound too bad.
JENN: He was able to stab me multiple times with both.
TATUM: Oooooooo.

The COUNSELOR has been looking at the time.

COUNSELOR: I was waiting for one more person, but I guess they're running late or not coming. So, let's get started and all go sit down.

ALL go over to the circle of chairs.

COUNSELOR: First, thank you all for being brave enough to attend today's support group.

JENN: Are you kidding me? Brave is our defining feature. It's the one thing we have in common.

OLIVIA: I wouldn't go straight to brave, more like the ability to survive. Strong survival instincts—that's what we have in spades.

COUNSELOR: Yes… that's good. I think you are all brave, in your own way, and strong and have all found it within you to survive your horrific situations. I'm here to help you readjust to society and provide a group of friends you can rely on—friends who understand what you've gone through and can be there for you.

TATUM: Hey, I take exception to that. I think we are just fine. I don't need help.

OLIVIA: This coming from the woman who hid under the table.

TATUM gives a little shriek when OLIVIA talks directly to her.

TATUM: It just frightens me when you speak to me with all that makeup on.

OLIVIA: How else am I supposed to talk to you?

TATUM shrieks.

JENN: *(To COUNSELOR.)* Oh yeah, we're all fine.

Beat. A loud banging is heard against the door. ALL FINAL GIRLS and COUNSELOR look to the door. ALL FINAL GIRLS jump up and take combative or defensive positions. Beat. Another bang on the door.

OLIVIA: He's coming. He's coming.

COUNSELOR: He's not coming. He's not coming. Everyone is perfectly safe. Remember, you took care of him.

OLIVIA: You know they come back. Mine came back from the dead seven times.

JENN: Seven times!

OLIVIA: He even got struck by lightning once and came back to life.

JENN: You're kidding. That can really happen?

OLIVIA: I had just killed him with a javelin, and about three minutes later, lightning struck the javelin, which was still stuck in him, and brought him back to life.

ASHLEY: The odds of being struck by lightning are one in 15,300.

TATUM: Only that small—I thought it would have been much bigger.

ASHLEY: 270 people get struck by lightning in the U.S. every year. It happens more than you think, and about 10% of the people who get struck die.

OLIVIA: But what are the odds of a dead person being struck by lightning and brought back to life within five minutes of me killing them?!

JENN: Astronomical, at the very least.

A loud bang against the door.

ASHLEY: That just can't be good.

TATUM: We're going to have to do something.

OLIVIA: Alright, I'll go for the door. Everyone prepare for the worst.

JENN: Defensive positions!

COUNSELOR: There's no need for any of this. Let's just all calm down and sit back in the chairs.

OLIVIA: *(Ignoring the COUNSELOR.)* You two take positions there and there.

ALL FINAL GIRLS get into positions.

OLIVIA: Ready.

ALL FINAL GIRLS nod.

OLIVIA: *(To TATUM.)* Cover the counselor.

TATUM shrieks, ALL FINAL GIRLS glare at her.

TATUM: Sorry, natural reaction. I've got her covered. *(Goes over to the COUNSELOR to guard her from potential attack.)*
OLIVIA: Okay, I'm heading for the door.

Everyone readies in their positions. OLIVIA takes a cautious step to the door. Before OLIVIA can get to the door, the door opens, and a girl's head sticks out and looks around. Beat. The girl's head disappears, and the door closes again.

COUNSELOR: *(With some measure of relief.)* Oh good, our last final girl has arrived.
ASHLEY: I wouldn't have called that an arrival—more like a fly-by.
COUNSELOR: Give her a moment. We all need a moment to accept that this is a safe environment, free of danger.
TATUM: Is she dressed as a clown? I didn't see.
OLIVIA: I only saw her head.

TATUM shrieks.

OLIVIA: Would you knock that off? I couldn't see if she was dressed as a clown. No makeup, though.
TATUM: Did she have a squishy red ball on her nose? Or was she wearing a long goofy hat with a fluff ball on it?
ASHLEY: No, none of that. She looked normal.
JENN: Well, obviously she can't be normal. Besides, looks can be deceiving, as we all know.

ALL FINAL GIRLS emphatically agree.

COUNSELOR: Let's at least invite the girl in.

The COUNSELOR moves toward the door. JENN tries to guard her the whole time.

JENN: Counselor on the move.

COUNSELOR: This is not necessary.

ASHLEY: *(To COUNSELOR.)* What are you doing?

COUNSELOR: I'm going to open the door and invite her to come in.

OLIVIA: Don't open that. You can't possibly know the danger that could be lingering behind that door. Every homicidal maniac hides behind a door.

TATUM: You know those adults that do something stupid in every horror film and then die. You don't want to be one of those.

COUNSELOR: I need to help guide this person in here.

OLIVIA: Resume positions!

ALL FINAL GIRLS take new positions. The COUNSELOR goes to the door.

COUNSELOR: *(To ALL FINAL GIRLS.)* Please stay calm and don't hurt anyone. I'm going to open the door now. *(COUNSELOR slowly opens the door. To the person on the other side of the door.)* Hello there. You're in the right spot. Would you like to come in? It's perfectly safe.