

## The Final Short Story

### *My Story Outline*

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#### *Plot: Beginning, Middle, and End*

My story in unit 4 was about starting to move on from a traumatic event. I want my story in unit 9 to be about *surviving* an ongoing trauma or abuse. I want a queer story. I want a girl to get hit with the realization that she has been in a cult/dystopia/etc. She cannot break out yet, though she will certainly prepare for it, but she looks for fleeting bursts of light in the dark to keep her going.

Esther is the main character (see below). In the opening of the story, her routine and her “normal” will be illustrated. The audience is intended to think that it’s horrible at first glance, but they are also intended to buy into her rationalizations, for the most part. She goes to school and church every day, and school is typically her only daily experience with non-believers.

The rising action begins when Esther meets Cara somehow. They also might’ve known of each other before, but hated the other for their archetype. Cara is the person Esther is supposed to hate. Esther knows she is supposed to hate Cara, to laugh at her and mock her, but she has some kind of momentary insight into Cara and realizes that she is human, like her, and is unable to bring herself to do it fully. Perhaps Cara will have a history of constantly putting up a mask that Esther feels is a little bit too relatable. Either way, they have this moment, and Cara secretly devises a way to break Esther’s illusion of being happy in her cult.

Esther is swiftly forbidden from speaking to Cara, but at school she is ~unmonitored. Yet, she is still incredibly anxious about disobeying, but pushes through and meets with Cara in secret. These meetings become a coping mechanism for the overwhelming expectations from the world for both of them. The story closes with the both of them simply being... happy to be with each other, because when they are they know they can do it.

Also it’s all gay. You’re welcome

#### *Characters*

Esther will be the main character. She will have been raised in a cult or cult-adjacent organization her entire life. She may have some level of contact with the outside world, I’m not sure, but she will be taught to scorn non-believers unless she thinks she can convert them to “the light.” She believes she HAS to do as she’s told and gets incredibly anxious at even the thought of rebellion. she’s probably gay but doesn’t know it lol

Cara will be the foil to Esther, in a way. She's chaotic neutral/chaotic good incarnate. And gay. She does whatever the hell she wants, and she will NOT listen to authority, unlike Esther. She will appear for a moment, but she might vanish for a while afterwards; she's the catalyst to the story, but I want Esther to not be *able* to interact with Cara much (despite her longing). But she has to have a character somehow, so they might have secret meetings or something.

Esther's parents and other cult members won't be characters in their own right; they will be representative of the collective. Esther's parents are the only characters allowed to be slightly more than that, but I think odds are that there will be a little glimpse, but with the knowledge that they're in too deep and would have to "rescue" themselves.

### *Point of View*

Third person multiple, likely. I prefer writing in first person, but I think it would be helpful to have glimpses into Cara's mind that aren't just inferences. Might end up being third person limited, though.

### *Theme*

When our world falls apart, we can find comfort and healing in others.

### *Setting*

Contemporary. Probably, like, Texas or something. I can't make the allegory *too* obvious.