

(this is a preview of a portion of the following:)

# Sheltered:

Confessions of a sheltered kid.

Written by Chelsea LeValley

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**SHELTERED**  
**A one-act play**

**First Production:**  
**Theater Puget Sound, Theater 4**  
**February 16-18, 2018**

**Original Cast:**  
**Alex- Rebecca Norris**  
**Heather and others- Be Russell**  
**Eliza and others- Hazel Gibson**  
**Nick and others- Jedediah Mathrie**

**Setting:** Ohio in the early 2000's. Or on a minimal stage.

**Characters:** 3 women, 1 man.

**NOTES:** The dialogue moves at lightning speed or a breakneck pace. If it doesn't, the audience will get ahead of us immediately and the play will fall flat because it's so stylized. "Asides" should be directed right to the audience and should feel hyper natural realism. Completely raw and brechtian. The rest of the piece should feel hyper stylized and heightened reality. Costumes and set pieces should be suggestive and neutral if at all existent.

(Makelmore's Make the Money plays from the top of the track as actors set their chairs/props; they sit in their chairs; they do a criss crossing high five series, then when Alex is standing center, Music fades out.)

### START OF PLAY

(Lights up, Alex stands alone. While she speaks other actors gradually join her on stage, near her, behind her, with her not stylized, just real people holding space.)

ALEX: (ASIDE) Last week I learned what that strange small green fruit at the grocery store is. West Coast people have been eating them all their lives but my breakfast toast just got a game changer. Avocados. I'd never heard of them before. This boy I liked found that out and left me one on my desk as a present.

MAN: I just popped your avocado cherry.

ALEX: No you didn't. (beat) I've had cherries. (wait, what?)

(MAN leaves laughing)

ALEX: (ASIDE) I'm from small town Ohio. We played cards instead of watch TV and I walked to and from school with the neighborhood kids. Santa shook literal sleigh bells from the roof so that I really believed until I was 14. My family thought life could be Disney world all year round in our house. I loved Jesus and had lots of play dates. AAAAND, yeah, I was sheltered...(an actor laughs at her) What? I was. I am? (beat) And it was all good. I was cool, through third grade.

(The other actors move to new places)

**ALL: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade.**

**ALEX: The day I learned it mattered what I wear.**

MAYA: Mr. Clark's class.

MAN: End of the day. Line up at the door. (under breath) Could the bell come any sooner please.

(We are in line at the door and we are 4th graders)

GIRL: Maya, I love your outfits. You always look so sexy.

(everyone looks at Maya)

MAYA: Thanks, I know.

GIRL: What is your inspiration?

MAYA: Britney Spears.

ALEX: Who is that?

MAYA: Wait, what?

GIRL: You don't know who Britney Spears is?

(Alex shakes her head no)

GIRL: Well. That explains that.

ALEX: Explains what?

MAYA: *(girls look at each other)* It explains why you are always wearing bib overalls and your hair in braids.

GIRL: With Winnie the Pooh... on the bib?

*(Alex looks down at her bib, shocked.)*

ACTOR (AS BELL): DING DING!

*(Class exits. Alex walks center)*

ALEX: That was the day I learned you can't wear Winnie the pooh overalls and be...sss....ya know, that word.

VOICE 2: Sexy?

ALEX: Yeah. *(unintentionally strange)* Sexy. *(beat)* And then my Dad left. Like many good dads. They sometimes leave. Well, actually he had an affair with a barmaid. For three years. We went bankrupt. The divorce was finalized and my mom and I moved from our sheltered life in little Oakwood Ohio to the big bad city of Cincinnati. Despite the growing pains of elementary school, I still thought I was cool until...

**ALL: Middle School.**

ALEX: Where I quickly learned otherwise.

JESSI: Wanna sit with us?

JESSI/LAUREN: NOT!

RANDALL: Cave dweller.

LAUREN: Pippi longstocking!

JESSI: Lame sauce.

LAUREN: Where did you get that bag? Its so....cute.

RANDALL: Wanna come hang out with us this weekend?

ALL: NOT!

LAUREN: Do you even have a dad?

JESSI: Why is your mother so old?

ALEX: This isn't real. *(starts to exit for the bathroom)*

LAUREN: Oh what you're gonna go cry over your lunch in the bathroom again?

JESSI: Oh that's her? How pathetic! HAHA!

RANDALL: LOSER.

*(they leave)*

ALEX: *(ASIDE) (breath, longer beat, looking at audience)* Didn't anyone else every cry in the bathroom... over their lunch? Oh come on. Somebody...anybody? *(hopefully some poor audience member raises their hand too..if they do: Thank you. If no, then move forward.)* I know people have it a lot worse than I did. I know I'm ridiculously privileged. Still, some things just hurt.

*(mom and Alex)*

MOM: You're cool, Alex. People just need time to get to know you.

ALEX: I'm afraid when they get to know me they'll just see how much I actually don't fit in.

MOM: You do you. That's enough.

ALEX: Psh. Not really anymore. *(Aside)*

**ALL: RECESS**

*(mom leaves)*

ALEX: *(ASIDE)* The one day rural living came in handy.

*(The Man plays basketball trying to impress Heather nearby. Heather and Eliza, slightly off but still cool kids are apparently trying to blow on blades of grass. Alex enters from the hallway doors upstage center. See's them. Goes to sit down up stage left. She begins to blow on a blade of grass. The girls have an awkward acknowledgement of the shared space before she sits. She sits anyways, uncomfortably.)*

HEATHER: I just don't know why Mr. Arcuri is being so difficult. *(blows)* I told him I was going to bring it in tomorrow. *(blows)*

ELIZA: Well, maybe he *(blows)*...

*(Alex's grass makes a loud whistle.)*

ELIZA: Hey how did you do that?!

*(Alex's grass makes another loud whistle)*

ELIZA: Woah!

HEATHER: Show me.

ELIZA: Yeah show me.

*(Alex gets up, walks over closer to the girls, sits down, blows the grass again.)*

ALEX: Hold it like this....*(shows her, they're better, maybe not as successful still, but they all share a laugh)*

ELIZA: Wait, you're the girl from like under a rock, right?

HEATHER: Yeah, duh. She like grew up with cows and sheep and shit. *(blows, its pretty good)*

ALEX: Not exactly. But we did drive four-wheelers to walmart and shot skeet.

HEATHER: What's skeet?

ALEX: Clay pigeons?

ELIZA: *(instructing Heather)* birds made of clay.

HEATHER: Oh. So, do you wanna like, sit with us at lunch?

ALEX: YES! I mean....*(playing it cool)* yeahhh. Sure. I think I'm free. *(Aside)*

**ALL: HIGH SCHOOL**

ALEX: Years later...

**MAN: THE CAFETERIA.**

**ALEX: *(aside)* The day I realized everybody was eating differently.**

*(Buzzing Lunch lines. Students with trays.)*

ELIZA: What are you getting?

ALEX: Mm. Nachos?

HEATHER: Burger on lettuce, no fries. *(Eliza looks disdainful)* I'm splurging.

ALEX: *(to Eliza)* What are you getting?

ELIZA: Froyo. Duh!

ALEX: What else are you gonna get.

ELIZA: Oh nothing. I'm getting froyo.

ALEX: For your meal? It's just ice cream.

ELIZA: Froyo is not ice cream. It's packed with *(She becomes zombie-like)* all natural organic ingredients, free-range, non animal tested,

ELIZA/HEATHER (*zombie-like*): no aspartame, no sodium, no partially hydrogenated corn syrup,

ELIZA/HEATHER/MAN (*zombie-like*): no wheat, no gluten, no intestinal organs,

ELIZA: (*hyper perky reality*) and its packed with antioxidants.

ALEX: (*steals a look to the audience, then:*) Eliza? We start lacrosse today. You need protein.

ELIZA: (*defensive*) I'm adding sprinkles.

*(New scene)*

**ALL: SLEEPOVER!**

*(The girls lay spread out on two couches. Alex is sitting with her knees up by her chin, shoveling in popcorn. Girls are miming talking while Alex ASIDES)*

ALEX: (*ASIDE/transfixed to the TV*) 3 hours and 43.2 minutes past my bedtime and we're watching a movie I'm definitely not...(*self-restraining*) supposedtobewatching...

*(girls conversation comes to life)*

HEATHER: Do you shop at Victoria's Secret?

HEATHER/ELIZA: Duh!

HEATHER: What, Target? (*to Alex*) Alex? (*the girls look at Alex but she's captivated by the TV*)

ALEX: Hmm?

HEATHER: Where do you Shop?

ALEX: Why is that clown coming out of that drain?

HEATHER: ALEX. Where do you get your lingerie?

ALEX: (*back to the TV*) Yeah. I dunno my grandma usually gets them for me for Christmas that clown just come out of the drain. (*Alex is nearly inhaling the popcorn, huddled on the couch*).

ELIZA: You haven't seen IT?

HEATHER: Wait that's like almost literal Granny's Panties.

ELIZA: Right?

ALEX: Didanyoneelsejustseethatclownclimboutofthatdrain?

HEATHER: Have you ever been to a mall?

ALEX: Yes, I've been to a mall.

ELIZA: Like in a car.

ALEX: Yes, in a car.

HEATHER: You're like some prehistoric species.

ELIZA: Fascinating.

ALEX: *(Aside)* What is this the nature channel special on sheltered kids?

ELIZA: What are you doing tomorrow after school?

ALEX: Lacrosse practice then play practice-

HEATHER/ELIZA: WE'RE GOING

**ALL: TO THE MALL**

*(The man recites it while the girls do an absurdist pantomime portrayal of people at a mall.*

*Underscored by orchestral music)*

ALEX: *(Aside)* Oh goody, my favorite place in the world. You know where is the best place to go if you want to feel needy, inadequate, unpopular?

MAN: The Mall. The endless mannequins with giant racks and tiny waists and beautiful, ridiculous clothes remind me how I am not fit enough to be a woman. The price tags remind me how I am not fit enough to be an adult with any financial stability or significant contributing member to our consumerist economy. The teenage girls sipping slurpees and smiling at pant sagging, shoe-scutting boys, remind me how insecure and uncivilized civilization as made us. And the sweater rack with 18 color options on the same design and the pants of the same style in 12 colors reminds me not only of how difficult decision-making can be but how vastly empty it can be to work at a job you don't love to buy things you don't need.

ALEX: Hold up. WHAT IS thaaaat-

*(The girls are standing staring at a beautiful exquisite portrait on the window outside the store -it is the man making a glamour pose, we believe that it is a poster.)*

ELIZA: This place is....alive.

HEATHER: This place is...everything.

ALEX: There's like porn on the walls.



HEATHER: These women are so... real.

ELIZA: Just, true to themselves and liberated.

*(MAN dangles thong at her)*

ALEX: I've never felt more encouraged to have sex than I do right now.

HEATHER: *(with absolute pride)* Yeahhh.

ALEX: And these women are REALLY beautiful. They're totally the most... sexy... thing I've ever seen. I'm like...feeling.. something.

HEATHER: Alex, you sound gay.

ALEX: I'm not gay! *(to Eliza)* Am I gay?

HEATHER: I don't know.

ALEX: Maybe I'm gay.

ELIZA: You're not gay.

ALEX: I'm not?

HEATHER: How do you know? *(Eliza shrugs)*

ELIZA: Probably because we live in rural, conservative, Ohio, and even if you were it'd be more trouble than it's worth. That's what my dad says.

*(Everyone takes at the audience. Shrugs. We return to action of the scene.)*

HEATHER: Anyway. They got a sale! So, you can get, 5 thongs for 500 dollars or 1 thong for 499 dollars.

ELIZA: Hm. I always hate how tricky the deals are here.

ALEX: Who can afford this?

HEATHER: I'm buying. Huge allowance. Thanks, Dad. Get the 5 for 500 deal. *(she flashes a credit card)*

ELIZA: Oo! Get her this one.

ALEX: *(holding up a full bodied panty)* I like these.

HEATHER: No. These. And. I expect you to model them back at my house.

HEATHER/ELIZA: Squee!!

HEATHER: Its so fun corrupting you! *(shift)* Now I need something new. *(They leave)*

ALEX: Okay. You guys take your time. *(she surreptitiously also grabs a pair of the "granny pannies")* I'm gonna take my five triangulated strings to the counter.

MAN/CASHIER: Ohhkay. That'll be 500 dollars.

ALEX: Oh and these *(slipping the hiphuggers onto the counter)*

MAN/CASHIER: Oh. *(to the hiphuggers)* Okay. Total will be 501 dollars.

ALEX: Wait you're telling me these underwear are one dollar and these are 500?

MAN/CASHIER: 500 for 5!

ALEX: These have a lot more fabric than the... 5 for 500 *deal* you have.

MAN/CASHIER: Yeah. *(pause)*

*(still a pause)*

You can probably just have them.

ALEX: Oh---kay, thank. you.

**ALL: Hiding things from mom!**

*(We're at Alex's house. She's upstairs gathering her laundry. Mom is downstairs)*

MOM: Alex, I said, Now! Bring that laundry basket down or you're gonna have dirty clothes this week.

ALEX: ...okay:)

*(Alex reluctantly puts the worn thongs in the basket and takes it downstairs. During the following dialogue Mom and Alex try to hand off the basket. Eventually she takes the basket after an awkward bit of Alex hanging on to it too long.)*

MOM: So, how was school today?

ALEX: Oh it was good.

MOM: What'd you have for lunch?

ALEX: Pork Nachos.

MOM: Oh Alex. You're too healthy.

ALEX: Sorry mom.

MOM: And how were the girls?

ALEX: Oh, fun. Good.

MOM: Eliza?

ALEX: She was good.

MOM: Heather?

ALEX: She was good.

MOM: Hm. Now get ready for bed and say your prayers. *(she gets the laundry basket, sotto voce)* Damn child.

*(Alex goes upstairs and kneels by her bed, prays)*

ALEX: Dear God, thank you for my friends and for my mom and for - *(We hear from downstairs)*

MOM: ALEX!!!!!!! WHAT IS THIS.... THISS!!!! BUTT FLOSS?! *(optional add: I WILL NOT STAND FOR THIS! THESE ARE TRASH.)*

ALEX: *(fast)* And thank you God for the seasons and please don't let my mom kill me before I get to get married and have sex. Amen. *(She lays down to go to sleep)*

**ALL: *(Aside)* BOYS.**

*(The man swoops in and picks her up. There might be a chase or a wrestle. It's playful and fun and accidentally....)*

ACTOR: *(makes queef sound effect)*

ALEX: ....Excuse me.

BOY: Why?

ALEX: Oh, nothing.

ACTOR: *(Makes queef twice. Pause. Everything pauses.)*

BOY: Wait, was that a...

ALEX: *(pause)* I tooted. Sorry.

BOY: Wait wait, what did you say?

ALEX: ...I...farted. Sorry!

BOY: HAHA! I don't think that was a fart. That was a-*(they both take to the audience)*

ALEX: *(to the boy)* A WHAT?

*(he laughs at her)*

**ALL: *(aside)* Alcohol.**

*(The family is having dinner. Mom gives Alex an eye. Grandpa is down stage left, nursing a glass of gin.)*

GRANDPA: Psst. Alex, come over here. Try this.

ALEX: What is it, Grandpa?

GRANDPA: Just try it, Alex, Be a Woman.

*(Alex sips the beer)*

ALEX: That's beer? I see why mom won't let me have it. (relishing!) It's too good.

GRANDPA: *(laughing/celebrating)* Ooowhoooweee! Jimminy crickets. That's my girl.

MOM: Ken! What are you giving her!

*(new scene)*

ALEX: *(Aside)* My dad was prone to alcoholism...and I found out that day I liked it. A lot. So, I dared myself not to drink until I was 21. Terrible idea socially. But High school was almost over and I'd made it past the parties and the pressure until....

**DRUNK MOMS: SENIOR SPRING BREAK!**

**Really dRUhnK Mom: in the BAHAMASSS...***(dancing...alone)*

ALEX *(aside)*: Thanks to our drunk favorite mid-life crisis mom chaperones, the trip includes nothing but drinking, sunbathing, drinking, oh and 25 dollar brazilians *(MAN: snaps exercise band and laughs maniacally)*.

ELIZA: and DANCING!

**(The lights are dim. Track #2 Hot in Here plays from the chorus. Its obnoxiously loud at first while they all dance to it and probably scream the first few lyrics, then the sound is low for the scene to go on. Heather and Nick are dancing together. Eliza and Alex bob mindlessly, watching)**

ELIZA: *(re: Nick)* Come on he's into you.

ALEX: *(he's dancing really closely with Heather)* Yeah. It looks like it.

ELIZA: He just doesn't understand girls who are...ya know, sheltered.

ALEX: *(shackled by the label)* Sheltered.

*(Heather rejoins them for a moment)*

HEATHER: So, Alex, are you gonna get with Nick or not? He wants to take you to the beach later tonight.

ELIZA: Ooooo!

HEATHER: *(locking eyes with boy across the room)* OhHellllloo, finelookingcollegeman. *(to girls)* Bye. *(she exits)*

ELIZA: Oh. Look! A boy! Ah! He's looking at me!

ALEX: No don't leave me!

ELIZA: I have to...byeeeeeeee!

*(Eliza gets pulled away, absurdly, by an imaginary hand to dance. Nick (MAN) is now seen bobbing across the room. The following conversation is yelled intimately over music, like you do. Alex and Nick see each other, and acting aloof, continue bobbing until they're "serendipitously" side by side, bobbing in silence. Then:)*

ALEX: Oh hey.

NICK: Oh! Hey.

ALEX: Hey.

*(beat)*

NICK: So.

ALEX: So.

NICK: So, is it true?

ALEX: Is what true?

NICK: That you like me. Heather told me.

ALEX: Oh! She did? Oh. Interesting.

NICK: So it's true.

ALEX: ...I mean, I did ask you to be my prom date didn't I.

NICK: You did.

ALEX: *(trying to lighten the mood)* Funny how we didn't really dance together though until...now.

NICK: What are you talking about. I did dance with you. You were all big time, Prom Queen. I was in your shadow.

ALEX: Then I was chasing my shadow all night.

NICK: Well, not tonight.

*(they dance together well. They almost kiss. It's interrupted. The song ends.)*

NICK: You're really cute, Alex.

ALEX: You're really cute.

NICK: Let me get you a beer.

ALEX: A what?

NICK: A beer. What do you want?

ALEX: Oh actually... water?

NICK: Pshh. Okay. I'm not getting you water. *(he pats her on the back, it's a little belittling, and flashes his arm band.)* I can get us beer. *(he flashes his 18 and older armband. she flashes her 17 and younger wristband back.)* They would've given you 18 and older. We're in the Bahamas no one cares.

ALEX: Yeah, I'm just...I'm not actually 18 so I feel dishonest about it.

NICK: You're so intense.

ALEX: Yeah I am *(moving toward him subtly romantic)*. I don't need a beer.

NICK: *(pulls back, looks at her)* Let me get you a beer. We'll dance. And we'll finish the night on the beach. *(beat)* What do you say?

ALEX: *(she says nothing, but he kisses her, or does something romantic, and she lets him. Beat while they look at each other. )* I want that.

NICK: Right. Be right back. *(he starts to exit)*

**(Track #2 Music stops. Time stops, voices intoning as her memories)**

VOICES: VIIIISHOOOM. *(or some sound effect that makes us feel like time stops)*

VOICE 1: Why won't you come to the party?

MAN: Why won't you spend the night?

VOICE 2: Aren't you the girl from under a rock.

MAN: You're such a goody-two-shoes. Just let me copy your homework. What's your problem?

VOICE 2: Wait, are you actually still a Christian?

VOICE 1: Some people just didn't grow up with the right nutrition education. Right, Alex?

VOICE 2: Uhm wide leg pants are out. So. I wouldn't wear THAT if you're coming with US.

MAN: Wait you're a virgin?! What the hell.

ALEX: *(Aside)* I WISH I WISH I COULD JUST FOR ONE MOMENT NOT BE THIS SHELTERED GIRL WITH RULES I MADE UP FOR MYSELF BASED ON AN IDEOLOGY I BELIEVED RIGHT. MY LIFE WOULD BE EASIER, WOULDN'T IT. BETTER, WOULDN'T IT? But you gotta dance with them that brung ya.

*(the scene unpauses)*

ALEX: I want...you. I just also only want water.

MAN: Yeah. *(beat)* See ya around.

*(MAN shakes his head disapprovingly at her, turns and slow motion walks away and finds Heather. Actors make the sound of a heartbeat thumping, as Alex's heart falls out of her chest slowly as held by the actor playing Eliza, before it hits the ground, Alex looks up to the heavens, and her heart starts to reverse gravity and rises back into its rightful place in her chest. Slow motion ends.)*

ALEX: *(Aside)* In that moment I felt some higher power than me cared even about me and this boy on a dance floor in the bahamas. Being sheltered sometimes makes me feel like an alien. Looking up makes me feel like I belong. *(Beat)* Maybe I am an alien?

**(Track #2 music back in, softly. Eliza stumbles in.)**

Play continues.....