

Off the Record

Written by

Alec Wild

OnSite Theatre Company

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Cast of Characters

NINA CORDE, 20s, a pretty volunteer working on the Henry Neale Gubernatorial campaign.

STEVEN KENDELL, 30s-40s, campaign manager for Neale for Missouri

LORRAINE KAY, 50s, reporter for the American Observer

HENRY NEALE, 30s-40s, the candidate.

ELIZABETH NEALE, 30s-40s, his wife

The entire play takes place in and around a rented school bus. The audience all play reporters. During the show, they follow a Twitter hashtag which reveals information about the characters and the campaign. They also can be texted specific questions to ask the characters.

Sections marked with **** **** are places where the audience is asking questions of the actors, and, based on who's chosen, the order may vary. Actors should be ready to jump around a bit in those sections. Additionally, audience members should be encouraged to ask anything they like, so actors might be asked some crazy questions. Improvisation skills are useful.

There are sections of the play that are *private*, and require a convention. The actors all have body mics which only go on during these private interactions (usually when the lights on the bus go off). This way the actors can whisper, as if to stay quiet. The audience will hear them, but understand that the conversation is happening behind the scenes.

SCENE ONE

The inside of a school bus, being utilized as a press bus for the Henry Neale Gubernatorial campaign. The audience (or those in the audience who volunteer), before entering, have registered their cell phone numbers with the box office.

The audience (who play the press corps) sits in either the front or the back of the bus. Two rows of seats near the center of the bus are left open for the actors, as well as a seat in front near the driver.

Throughout the action, the audience will receive text and Twitter messages from various sources with information and questions for the campaign staff and candidate.

In the middle of the press group sits LORRAINE KAY, a reporter from the Missouri Flame.

NINA CORDE, mid-20's, has been greeting the audience as they come on board. When everyone has boarded...

NINA

Hello? Everyone? Sorry! Hello. Hi! Thank you so much for joining us tonight for our final press event for Neale for Missouri! We're delighted that you're here. As all of you surely know, the election is only a few days away. In a poll that was published just this morning, Bob Bishop and Henry Neale were each polling at 47%, and that means this election is close. Incredibly close. Neck and neck, as they say at the races.

Congressman Neale is very eager to drive home his message of what we call "progressive inclusion." That means that when the Congressman is elected governor of this great state, we'll all move forward together. Henry Neale believes in people. And we're optimistic - we're *confident* - that if we can just get the message out in this last week, we're confident that Henry Neale will be the next Governor of the Show Me state.

I understand that you're all reporters, so I know you'll need to keep your cell phones *on* during this event. No doubt you'll want to be in contact with your editors and news managers and so on. If any of you are on Twitter, you can follow the hashtag for this event - #NealeBus. We'll be live-tweeting about the Congressman's background and policy initiatives.

I know you must all be anxious to meet Congressman Neale. He's at this moment attending a fundraiser for the Saint Louis Science Center, and our first stop will be to pick him up. Steven Kendell, our intrepid campaign manager, will be joining us in just a moment, and we'll be on our way. I think you've all been given a

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NINA (cont'd)

schedule for the evening - they look like this – are there any questions before we get underway?

LORRAINE KAY raises her hand.

Yes, you have a question?

LORRAINE

Who are you, dear?

NINA

Yes - I apologize! My name is Nina Corde, and I'm a volunteer.

LORRAINE

You're very pretty.

NINA

Oh, thank you.

LORRAINE

And what sort of volunteer work do you do for the campaign?

NINA

Well, as I said, I'm a volunteer, so I do pretty much anything that's required...

LORRAINE

(Writing in her notebook)

"Anything that's required."

NINA

Yes, I mean, I do whatever I'm asked to do...

LORRAINE

(Writing)

"Whatever I'm asked to do." My my.

NINA

Yes. For the campaign.

LORRAINE

Well, Nina , I have a question for you about the Congressman's background.

NINA

Oh...he's very accomplished.

LORRAINE

Yes.

NINA

You can read his biography there in your tour schedule - bottom right hand corner.

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LORRAINE

Yes dear. But I'm wondering if you know why Mr. Neale was kicked out of high school at the beginning of his sophomore year.

NINA

Kicked out of....I don't....well I....I apologize, Ms. ...

LORRAINE

Lorraine Kay, Missouri Flame.

NINA

I apologize, Ms. Kay. As a volunteer, I'm not a spokesman for the campaign.

LORRAINE

(reading from her notes)

Mr. Neale was booted out of Vianney high school shortly after starting his sophomore year. I just was wondering why.

NINA

I'm sorry, I'm not supposed to answer any questions except about our schedule.

LORRAINE

(Writing)

"Not supposed to answer any questions."

NINA

That is to say, I'm a volunteer, it's not my place to comment on campaign-related... things.

LORRAINE

And why did you volunteer?

NINA

Again, Ms. Kay –

LORRAINE

You can call me Lorraine.

NINA

Again, Lorraine . . . Ms. Kay. I'm only here to address questions related to tonight's tour schedule. Mr. Kendell, the campaign manager, should be here in just a moment.

LORRAINE

But I'm sure all of us would like to hear about why a pretty young woman like you would be interested in Henry Neale.

NINA

It's...OH! I'm not... *interested*...

LORRAINE

Well then, why did you volunteer?

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