

HYPOTHETICALS

Rebecca Anne Nguyen

2608 N. 81st St

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

+1 (414) 204-6159

rebeccanwrites@gmail.com

HYPOTHETICALS Synopsis

On her way to mandatory psychotherapy after an altercation at work, BLAISE MCKAY meets a handsome STRANGER in the elevator. After revealing secrets they've never told anyone, they share a passionate kiss. But when the stranger asks for her phone number, Blaise declines – he's one of the few people she's met that she actually likes, and she doesn't want to ruin it by getting to know him.

Blaise goes to therapy. To her surprise, the psychologist who must approve her return to work is DR. JAMES BROOKS – the stranger she just kissed in the elevator. Jamie refuses to see Blaise as a client, but Blaise is desperate to return to work because she is paying for memory care for her mother, who has dementia. She begs Jamie to sign the release clearing her to work again.

Jamie agrees to therapy but won't sign the release until Blaise has made progress. He lays down strict ground rules for their therapy sessions: they can't talk about what happened in the elevator or their feelings for each other. Jamie orders Blaise to "dress like a nun" when she returns the following day.

Blaise shows up to her first therapy session dressed in a sexy nun Halloween costume and proceeds to misinterpret Jamie's subsequent requests to dress conservatively. In therapy, she and Jamie try their hardest not to fall for each other. Jamie takes notes in a small notebook he carries everywhere. He suspects Blaise's difficulties at work and in relationships are due to undiagnosed autism spectrum disorder, but he does not tell Blaise her diagnosis, choosing to speak in metaphors so he

doesn't scare her. He thinks Blaise's lack of empathy is really a lack of understanding of how neurotypical minds differ from hers. We find out Jamie is also on the spectrum when he meets with his therapist, DR. GWEN, who gives Jamie relationship advice without knowing Blaise is really Jamie's client. Jamie writes what Dr. Gwen says in his notebook, too.

Blaise and Jamie discuss their growing feelings for each other in hypotheticals. When they discover their mutual passion for Taiko drumming, a therapy session turns into a drumming lesson, and they nearly kiss again. Alarmed by his loss of control, Jamie reveals to Dr. Gwen that Blaise is his client. Dr. Gwen tells Jamie if he wants to be with Blaise, he has to terminate therapy and wait five years to start dating her. She encourages Jamie to forget about Blaise and get his "needs met" elsewhere.

Jamie decides to terminate therapy and tell Blaise he loves her. But when he arrives at his office, Blaise is already there, and she's discovered the notebook he's always scribbling in. Reading quotes from Dr. Gwen, Blaise thinks Jamie has diagnosed her with everything from narcissistic personality disorder to autism, which she wrongly assumes is an intellectual disability. Jamie tries to explain that he is Autistic too, but Blaise is too furious to listen. She storms out of the office without getting Jamie's approval for her return to work.

Blaise quits therapy, gets fired from her job, and has no way to pay for her mom's care. At her mom's memory care community, BETTY tells Blaise – whom she does not remember – that she had a daughter who was Autistic. Blaise discovers that her mom has always known she was Autistic but taught Blaise to mask her disability – and her true self – because Betty was afraid Blaise's father would abandon the family if he found out his daughter was "broken."

Jamie writes and calls, but Blaise won't answer. Distraught, he goes to Dr. Gwen for advice. Dr. Gwen suggests that she and Jamie become a couple instead – they would only have to wait two years before they could "come out in public." Jamie realizes Dr. Gwen lied to him about the five-year waiting period because she was trying to keep him and Blaise apart.

Blaise is helping her mom move out of private memory care. Betty has a moment of lucidity and Blaise confronts her about her autism diagnosis and ultimately forgives her mom. The phone rings, and Betty reveals that someone named Dr. Brooks has been calling every day because Betty "didn't answer his letter." Blaise finds a letter from Jamie in her mom's things. It says he loves her, and that he's willing to give up his career to be with her now. A nurse enters and asks Blaise why she is packing. Blaise says she can't afford to pay, but the nurse shows her Betty's billing statement - Jamie has paid for Betty's care for the next two years.

Blaise rushes to Jamie's office to thank him for helping her mom. Jamie offers to give up his career so they can be together, but Blaise wants to wait two years so she can understand her autism diagnosis and he can keep his career. She tells Jamie she'll meet him at the elevator where they first met two years to the day.

Two years later, Jamie is pacing outside the empty elevator. He starts to leave when Blaise finally shows up. She reintroduces herself, telling him she is Autistic. They go into the elevator and kiss. When someone asks them to hold the door, they push the Close button and continue to embrace.