

"Time For Change"

When a female high school student in 1958 decides to run
For class president, she must overcome more than just the
Election.

EXT. BELLFLOWER HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS, 1958 - DAY

It's a beautiful spring day at Bellflower High. The grass is perfectly manicured, the school looks newly painted and a huge banner drapes over the front entryway, "School Elections, show your support!".

Around the campus are hand drawn posters, posted on trees and walls all over, "Vote the Wright way. Robert Wright for class president", "Vote for Mr. Wright, for class president", "Bob Wright = Class President" all over. Except for one lone poster, currently being taped to wall. JOAN STEINBERG, 17, smart and studious carefully, and full of pride, finishes posting a rather large poster "Vote Joan Steinberg for Class President". She steps back and smiles at her handy work. Just then a familiar face rounds the corner, seemingly there the whole time. STEWART JONES, 16, the up and coming editor of the school paper, now a reporter, wanting to get the latest scoop.

STEWART

No girl has ever been elected class president in the history of Bellflower high. Care to comment?

Joan keeps her eye on her poster.

JOAN

Times are changing, Stewie, and Bellflower high needs to change with it.

Joan gathers her books and starts down the hall, Stewie follows at a rapid pace.

STEWART

But, you're running against Bob Wright! Bob is popular and charming and can talk to a crowd. The last time you spoke in front of English class you threw up.

This stops Joan in her tracks.

JOAN

I'm aware of that, Stewart, we all have our demons.

Stewart steps in front of Joan, for a serious question.

STEWART

Why. Why do you want to become class president?

CUT TO:

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER

Class hasn't started yet and students are scattered around the classroom. Several boys are sitting around a few desks, very intently listening to something. ROBERT WRIGHT, 17, very good looking and quite charming is obviously the leader of this small pack. He is listening to one of his cronies JOHN, 16, read the school paper.

JOHN

"The world is on the cusp of civil unrest and students of Bellflower can no longer go on with our heads in the sand. We all need to understand that the change happening in the world today is for the greater good..." No we don't! We wanna know when the next party is. That's what I wanna know!

ROBERT

She has a point.

JOHN

Bob!! She's a chick and an egg head! No one is going to listen to her. Her opinion doesn't matter.

ROBERT

I know, but what if they do? I don't want to take anything away from the girls here, but the class president has always been a man! That's tradition! We start losing tradition, we're going to lose our foothold on (quietly and only to his friends) doing what we want around here.

They all nod in agreement.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I don't want that to happen, do you?

The history teacher walks in, loudly, everyone takes their own seats.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS - DAY

The end of the school day and student are leaving. Some talk in groups, some just run off campus. Joan is smiling and talking to people here and there as she walks off campus. People call to her and she waves. She is suddenly a campus celebrity and it feels kind of good. She's not used to it. Stewart runs up beside her.

STEWART

Joan! Hey, hey! I was wondering, who's helping you with the campaign? Because, you know, if you need any help, I can. I can help. Posters, strategy, you name it.

Joan stops and cocks her head a bit.

JOAN

Stewart, didn't you tell me I didn't have a chance?

STEWART

No, I didn't say you didn't have a chance, I said a woman had never been class president before. There's a difference.

JOAN

Okay, true. But what about media bias? Don't you want to cover the election?

STEWART

Okay, true.

Joan walks away from Stewart.

STEWART (CONT'D)

But wait! Joan!

As she's walking away.

JOAN

Keep reporting, Stewie, you're good at that. I gotta get to work.

Joan hurries off. Stewart talks to himself

STEWART

School, election, and she works?

Stewart just shakes his head and walks away.

EXT. THE BACK OF A DINER - DUSK

Joan hurries to the back of a diner, briefly popping into the adjacent alley.

JOAN

(calling out)

Maggie? Magpie?

A homeless woman, MAGGIE, late 50's, comes out from the alley.

MAGGIE

Joanie baloney, how was school today honey?

JOAN

Great! The article in the paper came out today. Why don't you sit here and I'll be out in a little bit with something for you, okay? We'll catch up then!

Joan runs into the diner.

INT. GREASY SPOON DINER

Joan runs in from the back door and quickly drops her books and purse into a back room while grabbing her apron and name tag. She's been late before, so she knows how to move quickly. She ties on her apron and puts on her name tag almost at the same time. A burly voice calls out.

LOU

Joanie!!

As shes hurrying

JOAN

Lou!!

LOU, 40's, this is the kind of man who would own a greasy spoon, big, bald, burly - and kind.

LOU

Joan, you can't be late again!

JOAN

Oh Lou, I've been here the whole time! I was just looking for my hat.

Lou produces a hat that he had been holding.

LOU

The one you left out front?

JOAN

That very one!

She grabs the hat from Lou.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Thank you sir!

LOU

Joan, just let me know when you're going to be late - I got no problem, just let me know.

JOAN

I'll let you know, Lou.

Joan looks out at the front of the house and sees just one person drinking coffee at the counter.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Were you able to handle it without me?

Lou rolls his eyes and goes back into the kitchen.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE DINER - LATER

Joan is sitting on the back stairs of the diner and Maggie is sitting on an apple box, they both have half a burger.

MAGGIE

Little girl, you doing all this stuff by yourself? You ain't going to last if you keep that up. Workin' and school, who's helping you?

JOAN

I can do this myself.

MAGGIE

If anyone in this world can do anything it's you.

JOAN

Thanks Maggie. I just want to make a difference in the world, and it feels sometimes that nobody else does. It's aggravating.

MAGGIE

If it helps, you make a difference to me.

JOAN

MagPie, you're a softy.

MAGGIE

Shut up, you.

Joan reaches into a pocket in her dress.

JOAN

I nearly forgot! Here's a good one for you!

Joan hands Maggie a book. Just then that familiar burly voice calls out.

LOU (V.O.)

Joanie!! Breaks over!! Stop talking to that crazy lady!

Joan shakes her head, a little embarrassed.

MAGGIE

(yelling back) I ain't crazy!! I'm unconventional!!

INT. DINER FROM OF HOUSE - NIGHT

Joan waves at some people leaving the diner from the front door.

JOAN

Good night!

She closes the door, locks it and flips the sign from open to close. She turns off the house lights, and looks at the change in her pockets that she earned from tips. There's not much, but she takes nearly half and puts the rest in her dress pocket.

Lou emerges from the kitchen.

LOU

Griddle's done, kitchen's done, can I drive you home?

JOAN

Hold on (puts the change in Lou's hand) this is yours.

LOU

Every time, Joanie....

JOAN

It's for driving me home.

Lou rolls his eyes, but something stops him, he sees something in the front of the house.

LOU

(yells) we're closed!

Joan turns and sees that it's John, Robert Wright's friend, he's standing at the closed door. John sees Joan and points at her.

JOAN
It's a boy from school.

LOU
Ooooooh

JOAN
Not like that. Can you wait a few minutes, Lou?

LOU
Sure honey.

Joan walks up to the door, unlocks it, but stays in the door way.

JOAN
Hello?

JOHN
Hey Joan - can I talk to you for a sec?

JOAN
I only just have a moment, but okay.

They stand there for a moment

JOHN
Aren't you going to invite me in for some pie or something?

JOAN
John, right? No, we're closed. You said it would just be a sec.

JOHN
Well, that's rude, don't you think?

JOAN
If you have nothing to say to me...

Joan goes to close the door and John blocks it open.

JOHN
Oh I got plenty to say.

Lou comes into view and looks pretty big in silhouette.

LOU
Need some help there, Joan?

JOAN
It's okay, Lou, he was just leaving.

JOHN
We're okay, Pops. Look, it's stupid you
running for class president, you're going
to lose - just drop out.

Joan edges John's foot from blocking the door.

JOAN
Then why do you care if I run, if I'm
just going to lose.

JOHN
My boy, Bob, don't like competition.

Joan closes and locks the door, then loudly says to John.

JOAN
Tell him it's healthy!

Joan quickly walks passed Lou.

JOAN (CONT'D)
We can go now.

Lou flexes his muscles menacingly at John, who is still
at the door. John jumps and walks away. Lou is very
pleased with himself.

INT. BELLFLOWER HIGH, HALL - MORNING

Joan walks into the hall where she taped up her first
poster and it's gone. Just the tape that held it is
there. Now there's a poster for Robert Wright. She's
rather disheartened by it. A very excited Stewart bounds
around the corner.

JOAN
Oh, Stew, my poster's gone.

STEWART
Oh, yeah.. That's nothing. Come with me!

Stewart grabs Joan by the hand and pulls her down the
hall.

JOAN
It's not nothing, it's something. It says
something, something loud.

Stewart brings Joan to a closed door and stops there.

STEWART

Joan, yes, having your poster ripped down by some person is disappointing, but...

He opens the door to the newspaper room and there are tons of "Joan for Class President" posters all over, decorated in ribbons and colored markers, it's glorious.

JOAN

Holy cow! Stewart, I told you...

STEWART

It wasn't me. They were left here, with this.

Stewart picks up a note that says, 'A donation from the girls on Daisy Chain'.

JOAN

Oh, wow. I don't know what to say.

STEWART

Don't say anything now, save it up for the class address tomorrow.

Joan looks at Stewart and swallows, hard.

STEWART (CONT'D)

You'll be.... Fine.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE DINER - DUSK

Joan and Maggie are sitting in the usual places eating a half a burger, each.

JOAN

I can barely finish this, just thinking about talking in front of the whole school, make me want to....

She sets the burger down.

MAGGIE

What if you had a fairy god mother, or a genie, or something that grants wishes, what would you want?

Joan sighs and actually thinks about it.

JOAN

I don't want anything like from a fairy tale.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

I don't need a pretty dress, or a fancy carriage and don't need a handsome prince. I need people to listen and hear what I have to say, and I need to be able to say it without vomiting.

Joan shrugs her shoulders.

MAGGIE

What if I said, I was your fairy god mother. Because all the sacrifices you endure, and all the good you bring to people, you deserve to have that wish granted?

JOAN

I would say thank you and maybe you should stop reading the Brothers Grimm.

LOU (V.O.)

Joan!! Breaks over!!

Joan takes another bite and heads inside.

JOAN

Thanks MagPie

Joan turns to Maggie, Maggie is standing there with a glowing, glittery magic wand. Maggie swirls it in the air and points it to Joan.

MAGGIE

May you have what you wish for!

A Magical dust surrounds Joan. She gasps and shuts her eyes.

INT. BELLFLOWER HIGH, THEATER - DAY

Joan opens her eyes and she is sitting on a folding chair, on the stage, facing the entire student body. Everyone else running for student council is sitting on stage as well. The school PRINCIPLE is standing behind a podium, center stage.

PRINCIPLE

Our last speaker is Joan Steinberg.

There is applause. Joan smooths out her dress and walks to the podium.

JOAN.

Thank you.

Joan inhales deeply and looks to the crowd. Everyone is paying attention, intently. People who were whispering, the boys who don't support her, teachers who had been reading, all eyes are on Joan. You can hear a pin drop.

JOAN

Fellow students of Bellflower high. I know this is a rare sight. A female student running for class president, what has the world come to?

As if on cue, laughter. Confidence flows in Joan, she got her wish!

JOAN (CONT'D)

The world has come to a place that we must rise up to. It isn't the same place that it was when we were children, and it shouldn't be. We need to strive to become the people that it deserves. To embrace the change and diversity. I believe we can do it....

Joan continues her speak as the time ticks on. The audience nods in agreement and laughs, she has them just where she wants them.

FADE TO:

EXT. BELLFLOWER HIGH, FRONT - LATER

The school day is over the kids are running out again. A student OFFICIAL is speaking over the loud speaker.

OFFICIAL

Remember, class elections are tomorrow before class. Be sure to get to school in time to vote!

Kids are going about leaving, talking here and there, some just leaving. Joan has a crowd around her, congratulating her and waving. She's a natural. Joan spots someone off campus, Maggie.

Joan says goodbye to her friends and walks to Maggie.

JOAN

Fairy god mother?

MAGGIE

Yes child?

JOAN

How did you do that? Get everyone to listen.

MAGGIE

Oh Joanie Baloney, I didn't. You did. I only gave you confidence, everything else was all you.

JOAN

Me?

MAGGIE

(laughing)

Yes you. You had it all along. You just needed to be reminded.

Stewart is across the grass hollering.

STEWART

Joan!! A quote for the paper!!

Joan grabs Maggie's hand and squeezes, then turns to go to Stewart. Maggie pulls back

MAGGIE

Remember Joan, if it matters to you, you never have to do anything alone.

Joan smiles and runs to Stewart. Maggie disappears in a glowy glittery cloud.

FADE TO BLACK.