

The Apology Club

By Lee Cataluna

Emily – new to the club, willing to take responsibility for the world

Kristen – so competitive! Always tries to be sorrier. Fixated on one thing she did

Kava - brags, apology is a weapon, doesn't actually apologize for anything

SETTING: A meeting room, perhaps a church basement or empty office. Nondescript

EMILY

Hi! Sorry I'm late! I was rushing.

KAVA

Gee, sorry you don't have the same hustle that I have. I was late too, but I got here early.

KRISTEN

I'm sorry you had to come in the first place. You're probably the least likely person to be here. I have to attend these meetings. I'm so terrible. I have a lot of work to do on myself.

EMILY

Oh, hey, I brought chocolate pecan cookies. Sorry they're not home-made.

KAVA

You brought cookies? Sorry you didn't know I'm diabetic. And that I'm deathly allergic to nuts.

EMILY

Oh, I'm so sorry! I didn't know.

KRISTEN

Me too, I'm allergic, but I deserve to suffer.

KAVA

Yeah, sorry for your total ignorance and uncaring for your fellow club members.

EMILY

Please accept my sincere apology. I meant no harm.

KRISTEN

Oh, don't feel bad. I've done so much worse. One time, there was a lady at work that I hated. I knew she was allergic to shellfish so I put a shrimp in her coffee cup. Just rubbed it all around the rim, you know? She was in the hospital for three days. Lots of apologizing for that one.

EMILY

Should we get the meeting started? Sorry. I don't want to waste anybody's time.

KAVA

Sorry Kris. It's your turn to recite the Club Oath.

KRISTEN

Sorry, I should have just jumped in. OK.

We, the charter members of the Apology Club, vow to speak our truth, empty our guilt, and set forth our complete admission and confession. We offer the gift of absolution to our fellow members for all the bad shit they have done. We are united in our regret, and we vow to support one another in our quest to live without remorse.

KAVA, then KRISTEN, then EMILY

I suck.

KAVA

All right. I usually go first, and I guess I should let someone else take a turn but I'm sorry, nobody's apologies are as grandiloquent as mine.

EMILY

We're with you.

KRISTEN

No matter how shitty you've been, we are here to bear witness to your apology.

KAVA

This week, it really struck me how much sorrow and pain I've caused in my family, particularly among my siblings. All their lives, they've had to compete with me and I have bested them in every way. What a burden it must be to have me as brother. I am smarter, stronger, waaaaaay better looking, just altogether superior on every measure. And for that, I am truly sorry.

KRISTEN

What a beautiful apology. Yes! You don't have to feel sorry for your excellence anymore.

KAVA

I wasn't finished.

KRISTEN

Oh, sorry.

KAVA

I have other stellar qualities that have made people outside my family feel inferior as well, and I sense I must apologize for being just so across-the-board amazing. And so I say to all... I am sorry for being so great that it makes you feel so bad.

EMILY

I hear you. I hear you. But I'm wondering if you should take the first part of your apology to your family instead of laying it out here in group. I mean, some apologies are for things where there isn't one person we've wronged, like for instance, I feel so sorry for jamming up the town sewer system that one time, but it's not like I can go door to door and explain about my mom's bean casserole, right?

But it seems like you could have a conversation with your siblings and maybe make them feel better...?

KRISTEN

Aw, you're so new to this. Sorry. Let me explain. The point of Apology Club isn't to make anyone feel better except ourselves.

EMILY

Sorry. That makes no sense.

KAVA

It makes perfect sense. Catholics have confession. Republicans have talking points. This is what regular people do.

KRISTEN

If not for Apology Club, I would feel terrible about myself. This way, I can live my life guilt-free.

EMILY

But what about the people you've hurt?

KRISTEN

Oh, well, lots of times, they pretty much deserved it. That lady at work, Bernice, when I cut the brake lines on her delivery truck, I wasn't the only one who laughed when she took out the pole in the parking lot. Not really sorry. Sorry.

KAVA

Sorry, but you rudely interrupted my apology.

KRISTEN

Oh sorry. I thought you had exhausted your litany of excellence. I mean, sorry, but you say the same thing every week. Maybe you can change it up and say sorry for boring the poop out of us. Just saying. Sorry for the truth. I'm sure I'm worse, though. I'm always worse. Sorry I beat you in the "worse" department. I know you always gotta win.

KAVA

I don't always have to win. I just always do. Sorry.

EMILY

Um, I actually have some things I'd like to apologize for, if that's OK?

KRISTEN

Oh, sorry! We should have let you go first since you're new and you don't know what you're doing. I mean, sorry, but I would hate to have to go after me and all my shocking, awesome things I have to apologize for. Sorry, but you'd feel so inferior.

KAVA

Sorry for your inferiorities.

EMILY

OK, I'm going to start with something that I need to apologize for, but in this case, there's no real victim.

I'm sorry I parked in the handicapped parking stall with my mom's car. She wasn't with me but it had the placard, so I did it. I'm sorry I'm able-bodied

KRISTEN

Oh, that's not so bad.

EMILY

I faked a limp.

KAVA

How dare!

EMILY

Yeah. And I went shopping and then dinner and movie. My car was there for six hours. I'm sure I hurt a lot of people. Well, maybe not hurt, but inconvenienced. But maybe hurt. In any case, I did it and I feel really bad about it and I want to apologize so that I don't have to feel bad anymore.

KRISTEN

That's right. That's how you do it. When I first apologized for sending out those emails in Bernice's name that made the FBI raid her work locker, I can't tell you the freedom I felt in my heart. Made me want to do even worse shit to Bernice. It was awesome. That's what Apology Club is all about.

KAVA

Here is where we cleanse our souls, Emily. Let it all go. What else do you have to share?

EMILY

Um, I don't know. I'm sorry I don't recycle...?

KRISTEN

How dare! That's fucked up. OK. My turn. I'm sorry that I contribute to global warming because I can't get used to that almond milk crap. Cow's milk or nothing.

KAVA

I'm sorry I voted for a Republican once.

EMILY

How dare! I'm sorry I don't give money to the sad dogs in the TV commercial.

KRISTEN

I dressed as Pocahontas in a 4th grade play, and I am so sorry.

KAVA

I'm sorry I'm male.

EMILY

I'm sorry I'm white.

KRISTEN

I'm sorry I'm straight.

EMILY

I'm sorry my parents could afford orthodontia.

KAVA

I'm truly sorry I'm so good looking. That is such an unfair advantage!

KRISTEN

I'm sorry I stole my grandma's medical marijuana and put it in Bernice's Lean Cuisine lasagna. That was a funny-ass afternoon, though.

EMILY

I'm sorry for creep-shaming creepy guys.

KAVA

I'm sorry for never being creepy to a woman... all those girls who didn't know I was gay must have just thought that they were ugly. What a horrible swath of damage for me to leave in this world!

EMILY

I'm sorry I'm orgasmic.

KRISTEN

Bitch!

EMILY

I know! Multiply orgasmic! One after another. I'm really sorry about that.

KRISTEN

You took some of mine!

EMILY

I'm sorry! Can't help it! I'm sorry I keep the neighbors up all night.

KRISTEN

I'm sorry you're a slut.

KAVA

I'm sorry I'm not a slut. More people should get to enjoy me.

EMILY

I'm so so sorry for all the things I did that I didn't even know were wrong!

KRISTEN

I'm sorry for all the stupid, hurtful stuff I'm ever gonna do! I'm proactively sorry!

KAVA

I'm sorry I'm just too good for most fools!

KRISTIN

WE SUCK!

EMILY

WE SUCK!

KAVA

YOU SUUUUUUCK!

(they pause, catch their breaths, attempt to recover)

KRISTEN

Oh my God. I feel so much better!

KAVA

This really helps me live my full greatness with zero regret.

EMILY

...I don't feel better.

KRISTEN

You don't?

EMILY

Sorry. No. I feel just the same. Like it doesn't count unless I say sorry to someone that I actually hurt.

KAVA

No!

EMILY

Yeah. I think so. I have to apologize for things I've actually done, and I have to apologize to the person I actually did it to, and then, I have to promise never to do it again... AND figure out how to make it up to them.

KAVA

That's crazy talk.

EMILY

I think I do have to actually go door-to-door and apologize for that thing with the sewer system. I haven't had a guilt-free poop since it happened. I see that now.

KRISTEN

That's not how it works. You can't apologize directly to people. What if they don't accept? Where does that leave you?

EMILY

That leaves you trying to be better.

KAVA

What if you're the best you can be?

EMILY

I'm sorry. I think people can always try to do better.
(*beat*) Look, I'm gonna go... keep the cookies. Or throw it out if it's going to kill you.

KRISTEN

I'll eat it. I don't care if I die.

EMILY

I'm sorry for everything.

KAVA

Yeah, well, we've heard that before. Nobody really means it.

EMILY

Well, this helped. Thank you. And I really mean that.

Emily leaves. Kava and Kristen consider the cookies.

KRISTEN

Sorry, you want a death cookie?

KAVA

Hell yeah. I ain't allergic.

KRISTEN

You mean you lied to make her feel bad?

KAVA

Sorry.

End scene.