



# AS I AM

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE BAST

DIRECTED BY MEGAN BROTHERTON

# LOGLINE

A KOREAN ADOPTEE RAISED TO BE ITALIAN - IN A WORLD THAT INSISTS SHE BE ASIAN - WANTS A BIOLOGICAL CHILD TO FEEL SHE FINALLY BELONGS, BUT WHEN SHE CAN'T GET PREGNANT, SHE MUST LEARN TO LOVE THE ASIAN SHE NEVER WANTED TO BE.



# COMPS



A HILARIOUSLY MISGUIDED JOURNEY TO SELF-LOVE & IDENTITY



# SYNOPSIS

"I LOVE MYSELF AS I AM."

Lucia chants this mantra on her mirror everyday. But her eyes are covered with magazine, cut outs of deep set Caucasian eyes that she's clipped from magazines.

A Korean adoptee raised in a prolific Italian family, Lucia is desperate to have a biological baby - even more so than her overbearing mother. But after years of trying, her husband and mother team up against her, insisting she *just adopt*, triggering decades of pain from her own adoption experience, a secret she buried in order to survive.

Lucia flees to her fertility group meeting for support, but instead of solace, her best friend announces she's pregnant. Lucia explodes into a fury of jealousy and despair, burning her friendship and (literally) her privates after a failed "vaginal steam bath" - a last-ditch attempt at pregnancy.

In a heart-to-heart moment while on the toilet, Lucia cries to her mother. She explains the heartache of her eyes - how they keep her from belonging to her own family, but also the biological need to belong - *I need someone who's part of me. Who's of me.*

In the final moment, Lucia wipes her mirror clean, accidentally smearing the "m" in "am" into an "n" and reads:

"I LOVE MYSELF AS I AN."



# CHARACTERS



**LUCIA** (40s, Korean adoptee)

Lucia (Lew-CHEE-ah) acts like Joe Pesci, but looks like Greta Lee. Sick of saying the word "adopted," Lucia's waited her entire life to create a biological family she can belong to - without explanation.



**ELVEDA** (Lucia's adoptive Italian mother)

Looks like a dumpling, but would shiv you in a heartbeat if you cross her family. Obnoxiously loving, Elveda insists Lucia's 100% Italian like herself, blind to the damage this wreaks on Lucia's identity and pressure to have a child.

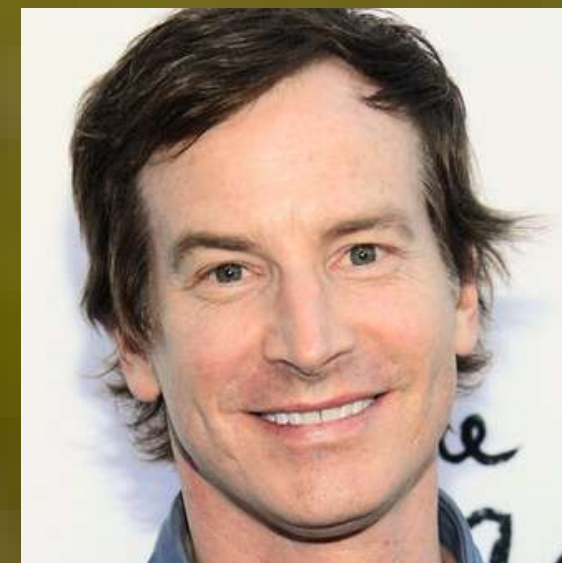
Mindy Sterling is attached



**DANI** (40s, Lucia's BFF)

Dani and Lucia have shared everything since 1st grade - and now infertility. Dani both loves and fears her fiery Italian bestie. She's the only one who understands Lucia's pain of being adopted.

Sutton Foster is attached



**MIKE** (40s, Lucia's teflon husband)

Made of homespun goodness, Mike is Lucia's lovable punching bag. But after 4 years of a thermometer forcing him to have erections, Mike starts the adoption process against Lucia's will.



# FERTILITY GROUP

MENOPAUSAL MISFITS



TONYA

(The group's questionable leader)



MICHELLE

(an over-sharer)



LOLI

(bad-ass and blunt)



JANICE

(devout and daft)



# STYLE/TONE

As I Am is tonally a cross between Tamara Jenkin's Private Life and the Australian comedy series The Let Down. It has big, quirky characters, and insane moments, but the performances are always grounded in truth. It should never feel broad or corny. It should look cinematic and real, but not too polished. Keeping the story really grounded is the secret to striking the right tone.

# THEMES

Can you love yourself AS IS?  
Racial Identity, Nature vs. Nurture, Infertility  
and the Biological Need to Belong



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a grey suit, white shirt, and dark tie, stands in the background. In the foreground, a woman with blonde hair is blurred, looking towards the camera. The background is dark.

# WHY THIS FILM?

Racial identity and the desperate need to belong is a national crisis in our country. As is the struggle with infertility. Ask any woman in their 30s and 40s, career woman or not.

It's a topic needed to be told from a uniquely female perspective. Lucia's story is that and more, unlike anything we've seen before and yet completely universal. It's a story perfect for our time.



# THE WORLD







Pregnant and directing  
on set for CDDP



# DIRECTOR MEGAN BROTHERTON

Megan is a writer-director known for telling funny stories with real heart, especially if they involve a toilet scene. She earned her MFA in Acting at Harvard University and studied comedy at the UCB Theater. Megan directed shorts and branded content for Funny Or Die (her videos amassed more than 20 million views and "Romper" is the most watched FoD video to date).

Her short films EVERYBODY DOES IT and BUTTERCUP screened internationally garnering rave reviews and awards, as well as distribution offers from Gravitas, and BUTTERCUP was selected to tour the US and Canada as part of LunaFest. The Roku Channel produced Megan's 2022 short film, PICKLED, as part of an anthology of shorts by "the next generation of comedy directors". Megan's most recent short film hangman, written by Sarah Rodenbaugh, is currently in festivals and has won two best director awards, three best narrative short awards, and three best actress awards.

Megan was a 2023 Commercial Directing Diversity Program (CDDP) Fellow and has directed for brands including Kohl's, Microsoft, Walmart, Nintendo and Nickelodeon. She won a 2018 Bronze Telly award and a Platinum Best of Show Aurora Award for her Access Books PSA produced by Women in Film, LA.

When Megan isn't directing movies she is directing (or begging) her toddler to brush his teeth and go to bed!



# WRITER

## STEPHANIE BAST

*I deserve a break today*

In 2020, I discovered something horrible. I was racist against Asians.

Before you judge, lemme explain. When I was 2 days old, I was left on a train in Seoul, Korea. 3,000 miles away in Bethlehem, PA, my Italian mother saw an adopted Korean baby on The Mike Douglas Show and knew she had to have one, too. She ordered me from the comfort of her own kitchen and 4 months later, I was shipped via airplane to meet my new family. All for the low price of \$3,000. TOTAL. That included airfare.

The town was so small and white, someone asked her, "How will you understand her when she starts speaking?" So my mom held me close and raised me like her. Anyone who didn't believe I was Italian was berated and banished from our lives.

Being Asian meant decades of convincing people I belong to the family I love. Being Asian labeled me with a stereotype I knew nothing about and utterly despised. So I rejected anything Asian - even rice, though I secretly loved it. That's some sad shit.

Being Asian created a monster whose skin and almond eyes betrayed a life-long, impossible quest to be Italian. So yes, I hated being Asian and hated myself. I bet you've hated yourself for something you can't change, too.

I started to write to heal a wound. Now I write to heal others.

KODAK PORTA 400



KODAK PORTA 400





# AMY KIM

Amy Kim began her production career at Warner Bros. Television (while at the same time producing independent shorts, pilots, and serving on the IATSE boards). Her indie producing effort WEST BANK STORY earned her an Academy Award. Amy then became Director of Production at Nickelodeon (which also supported TVLand, Nick at Nite, and Teen Nick), while also managing development, current and on-air. Kim later joined Michael Eisner's digital studio, Vuguru, as Head of Production where she met Burke.

# JAIIME BURKE

Prior to Lifeboat, Jaime was an independent producer for both digital series and independent film and served as an executive on the Twentieth Century Fox projects HIDE AND SEEK and THE OMEN 666. Jaime earned her MFA at the prestigious Peter Stark Producing Program at USC.



PARTY BOAT



BEFORE YOU KNOW IT



TEACHERS





# THANK YOU

for reviewing our deck!



Megan Brotherton  
brotherton@gmail.com



Stephanie Bast  
Steamylomein@gmail.com

