



On the historic Lawn of UVA, a cowboy-hearted Texan transfer student and a hijab-wearing Egyptian debater clash over Jefferson's ideals of liberty and tradition, only to discover that the fiercest arguments are the ones that bring them closer together.

Synopsis

The Good Guy Girl is a short romantic drama that blends intellectual rivalry with cultural chemistry.

David Austin, a brash Texan trying to make the debate team, faces off against Adara Kamal, an Egyptian student living in the famed "Good Guy Room" on The Lawn. Their debates cut deep: Jefferson's ideals of liberty and equality versus the cultural traditions that both gave birth to and constrained them.

As they duel on the debate stage and banter under Jefferson's statue, their competition shifts into connection. By the time the judges declare their debate a tie, they're already testing each other with late-night walks, witty challenges, and the kind of sparks no judge can score.

It's a story of identity, history, and the ways we wrestle with tradition to find meaning—and maybe love—in the present.

Genre & Tone

- **Genre:** Romantic Drama / Coming-of-Age Short
- **Tone:** Witty, intellectual, warm, and visually steeped in UVA's Jeffersonian architecture.
- Think: *Before Sunrise* meets *The Social Network* — fast dialogue, romantic tension, iconic setting.

Themes

- **Tradition vs. Progress** – Can ideals survive without the frameworks that birthed them?
- **Cultural Identity** – A Texan Christian and an Egyptian Muslim navigate common ground.
- **Debate as Romance** – Argument sharpens chemistry; rivalry opens the door to connection.
- **Jefferson's Legacy** – Liberty and equality examined through modern, diverse voices.

Characters

David Austin (19) – Texan freshman, brash but earnest, a “cowboy” with charm and rough edges. He hides insecurity behind humor and swagger, but is sincere in his search for truth—and connection.

Adara Kamal (19) – Egyptian Muslim, sharp, witty, and self-possessed. A debate champion with a gift for cutting through pretenses. Living in UVA’s “Good Guy Room,” she embodies tradition transformed, balancing pride with playfulness.



Visual Style / Moodboard

- **Setting:** The Lawn at UVA, Jefferson's Rotunda, historic Lawn rooms, candlelit interiors, and the statue of Jefferson at night.
- **Color Palette:** Warm amber candlelight and ivory walls contrasted with UVA's brick red and deep greens of the Lawn.
- **Mood:** Intellectual intimacy — flickering flames, whispered debate, the glow of Rotunda lights against the night.

Comparable Films

- *Before Sunrise* (1995) — intimate walking-and-talking romance.
- *The Great Debaters* (2007) — debate as drama and identity.
- *Normal People* (2020) — romantic chemistry through dialogue and tension.

Writer's Statement

The Good Guy Girl began as a meditation on what it means to debate Jefferson at his own university — through the voices of students he never imagined: a Muslim woman and a Texan

Christian freshman. Their arguments aren't just about history, but about how we wrestle with tradition, culture, and attraction in a modern world.

It's a story of debate as courtship, rivalry as romance, and how the pursuit of happiness can be as simple—and as complicated—as a late-night walk on The Lawn.

