

SCHEME SPACE

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

JESSIE (f) 17; typically angst-driven teen; a bit more insecure than people realize

LISA (f) 13: Jessie's younger sister; more mature than she knows

ALLISON (f) 17: Jessie's "best friend;" seeks the high school life portrayed in movies

LAUREL (f) 17; life is dull, so why not generate some excitement

JOSH (m) 17; an amiable hanger-on who dabbles in all crowds

JOE (m) 18; seems amiable but a bit of a schemer

MARELLA (f) 16: usually a bit of a loner

SCENES: The play is episodic and should move quickly from scene to scene. The stage should be split between Jessie's room and a family room at Laurel's home.

SCENE 1

AT RISE, LAUREL and JOE are on the computer. JOSH and ALLISON are nearby. MARELLA is apart doing some homework. They can be eating, texting on their phones - multi-tasking. On the other side of the stage, JESSIE is by her computer. She is plugged into an iPod or MP3.

LAUREL

I hope you know what you're doing.

JOE

I'm a master at this. Let me finish setting up. You're going to love it.

JOSH

What?

JOE

It's something my cousin did at his school. It got him a lot of attention. I'm almost done.

LAUREL

Looks sexist.

JOE

Sexy, Laurel - it's sexy. Leave me alone and let me finish.

ALLISON

I'm not getting the math.

JOE

Talk to Marella. She's a whiz.

MARELLA

Wait a minute - I never intended to do everyone's homework. It was just that one time, remember? 'Cause you were fried from practice.

JOSH

We won't ask anymore. Not after football season is done.

ALLISON

I'm not asking for the answers. Just the explanation.

MARELLA

One last time, and that's it.

LAUREL

I don't believe you're actually doing this.

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JOE
Got a problem?

LAUREL
Well ... no. Loving it.

JOE
Okay - I'm just putting the finishing touches on it and then I send! What do you think?

All gather around the computer.

ALLISON
You're rating all the girls in the high school?

MARELLA
Whaaat????

JOE
Just the ones I remember. Josh and I were doing this after practice. Something to do.

MARELLA
As opposed to doing your homework?

JOSH
As opposed to working on yet another boring, meaningless worksheet that has nothing to do with life and will be thrown out by the teacher at the end of the week.

MARELLA
As I recall, I did the worksheet.

JOSH
And you did an awesome job - thanks.

JOE
Okay - sending.

ALLISON
With the photos.

JOE
Oh yeah - the one of Jessie - how'd you get her to pose like that? Pretty hot.

ALLISON
We were fooling around - you know. I don't think she ever thought it would go anywhere. But in this day and age - one can't be too careful.

JOSH
Nice undies.

ALLISON
Victoria's Secret. We splurged.

MARELLA
I'd die.

JOE
Get over yourself! This could be the best thing to ever happen to her! She's going to be the "sex kitten" of the school. She'll thank us one day. Finally get a date.

MARELLA
But - she didn't know that picture would go anywhere.

ALLISON
Well then she can get off of her high and mighty judgmental horse of hers.

MARELLA
Weren't you friends?

ALLISON
Once-upon-a-time. Before she decided that she didn't want any part of "fun" in her life.

JOSH
This won't get traced back to us?

JOE
Nobody can trace it anywhere. I'm that good!

ALLISON
Hope I got a good rating. And you picked a good photo.

JOE
If you're in this room - not to worry. You're like a cover girl. Anyone else - well, I enjoyed myself. I've been collecting photos for days. You'd be surprised what's out there.

The lights dim on the grouping and come up on Jessie who is working on her computer. We hear LISA calling JESSIE. JESSIE suddenly clicks and stares at the computer screen. LISA enters.

JESSIE
What the -

LISA
Younger child alert! Watch your words.

LISA appears but JESSIE does not realize. She is fixated on something on the computer.

LISA (CONT'D)

Hey - Jess - what's the matter -

JESSIE

What are you doing here? Can't a person have any privacy?

LISA

I've been calling you to dinner.

JESSIE

Yeah. Well, I didn't hear. Get lost, okay?

JESSIE blocks LISA from the computer.

LISA

Don't shoot the dinner messenger. What're you hiding?

JESSIE

Nothing!

JESSIE covers the computer and waits. LISA watches her.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Go! I'll be right down.

LISA

I want to see -

JESSIE

It's nothing - stupid. That's what it is.

LISA

What is?

JESSIE

NOTHING!

LISA approaches as JESSIE clicks her mouse.

LISA

Whoa, Jess! Was that you?

JESSIE

Maybe.

LISA

Deleting it won't help - it's out there.

JESSIE
Yeah ...

LISA
- For a billion people to see -

JESSIE
Shut-up!

LISA
How'd ... I mean - why would you ... you know.

JESSIE
Prom time. No dates - we took our prom dress money and splurged on - other things. Allison and I were making ourselves feel better. Stupid! STUPID! Why'd I do that?

LISA
Tell Mom.

JESSIE
NO! Breakdown. She'll be popping pills within five minutes.

LISA
Dad -

JESSIE
- he'll make sure we're never on the computer again.

LISA
You can't leave it.

JESSIE
I'm in denial. Making believe it isn't out there.

The lights dim on JESSIE and LISA and return to the larger grouping of kids. MARELLA does homework and JOE, JOSH and ALLISON are grouped around JOE'S laptop.

JOE
And the comments roll in! We are popular!

ALLISON
But nobody knows it's us, right?

JOE
Oh. Yeah - not to worry.

JOSH
Come on, Laurel. You're missing the fun.

LAUREL

Just finishing up math. Since Marella is no help! What do the comments say?

JOSH

All from the guys so far ... thanking us. They're clicking on Mira's picture like crazy.

MARELLA

But she was - like - drunk - right?

JOE

Yeah. She won't do that again!

JOSH

Whoa! Good reaction on Jessie's pic.

JOE

Uh oh. Trouble in paradise. Olivia's threatening to report this to the school.

JOSH

Wasn't she on the "grimey" list?

JOE

Yeah - if the cyber-space police get a hold of this - it'll come down. Gather ye comments while ye may.

LAUREL

How can they take it down?

JOE

They have this "report offensive" content nonsense. Don't worry it takes awhile. We'll get to have our fun.

ALLISON

Hear from Jess?

JOE

Nope. But she picked it up - I have stuff embedded - I know she saw it.

ALLISON

(Putting away her computer)

We'll hear from her.

LAUREL

She may not care to acknowledge -

ALLISON

She will. She won't let this stay on.

The lights switch to JESSIE and
LISA

JESSIE

(Looking closely at it)

I can't believe it's there - for anyone - anyone in India or China -

LISA

Forget India. Think about your classmates.

JESSIE

I am.

JESSIE deletes the message.

LISA

Report it.

JESSIE

Maybe ...

LISA

Who else is on there?

JESSIE

Mira. Olivia. Allison - here - look at Allison -

LISA

Whoa! Nice.

JESSIE

Yeah - why did she get the glamour shot - and I get -

They both stare at the screen.

LISA

You got a greeting.

JESSIE

Someone wants me to comment.

LISA

Allison?

JESSIE

I don't know. Someone.

LISA

Are you going to?

JESSIE

No! I'm ignoring - the whole thing. I just don't get it. It's like I'm being targeted.

LISA

Let me see -

JESSIE

NO! Let's just go downstairs. Have dinner like this never happened. Don't say anything to anyone.

LISA and JESSIE exit as we return to LAUREL'S home.

ALLISON, JOE and JOSH are leaving.

JOE

Tomorrow's going to be awesome.

ALLISON

Come on - you've got to hit the weight room and I'm already late.

LAUREL

Later guys. Can't wait.

And they are gone.

MARELLA

I guess ... I'll pack up also.

LAUREL

Wait! Did you ever finish the math?

MARELLA

Well, yeah - and you did, too. You said you were working on it.

LAUREL

I - well - was finishing up another project. Actually never got to it. You don't mind -

MARELLA

- doing a favor? Guess not. Just don't want this to turn into a regular thing.

LAUREL

These are special times. It's just for now.

MARELLA

What were you doing?

LAUREL

A social experiment. Believe me, what I was doing has more to do with real life than pre-calc.

MARELLA

I don't know - pre-calc trains you to think - sort of logically -

LAUREL

I'm a complete social animal. Those are the talents that I am fine-tuning. You don't have to give me the math answers, Marella. There are others who will.

MARELLA looks at LAUREL and hands Laurel her answers. The lights go down. And come up on JESSIE'S bedroom. JESSIE and LISA enter. LISA heads to the computer.

JESSIE

Don't turn it on!

LISA

Just want to say "hi" to some friends. Not getting on your stuff.

JESSIE

You'll see your friends tomorrow.

LISA

It's my computer, too.

JESSIE

DON'T!

LISA

Afraid of more photos?

JESSIE

Don't want to talk about it.

LISA

Did you tell Allison what's going on?

JESSIE

She's the only one who had that photo. They didn't get it from me.

LISA

Thought you two were joined at the hip.

JESSIE

She's in some sort of tiff because I'm not wild about her new best friend.

LISA

Who?

JESSIE

That new kid - Laurel. She just seems - terminally bored with life. Really don't need that negativity around me.

LISA

Too bad. You and Allison have a lot of years together.

JESSIE

Yeah. But things change. She's into "Life's a party" and I'm into - "get into college and have a life later" mode.

LISA

I'm just going to get on for five minutes -

JESSIE

- no!

LISA

You can't punish me because you're mad at the computer. It's half mine.

JESSIE

I'm stressed, okay? Someone sends around a - totally inappropriate picture of me and then has the gall to be mad because I haven't reacted? Just leave the computer off for one night. Text people from your phone if you're desperate.

LISA

All right. But you owe me ... want to play a game or ... something? Monopoly? Take your mind off of everything.

JESSIE

I'm going to bed.

LISA

It's seven o'clock!

JESSIE

I'm tired.

LISA

Well, I'm not going to bed. I'll read.

JESSIE

Read in another room. I can't sleep with the light on.

LISA

You're a royal pain tonight, you know that?

LISA grabs a book.

LISA (CONT'D)

All right, I'm gone. "Sleep tight, little Jessie. Don't let the bed bugs bite."

LISA exits as JESSIE sits alone in the dark staring at the computer.

She gets up and sits by it. She goes to turn it on and then changes her mind. And just sits there. In the dark.

SCENE 2

The lights come on in LAUREL'S home.

MARELLA, LAUREL and ALLISON burst through. They have cell phones on, backpacks. It is the end of the school day.

LAUREL
I knew he was going to ask you!

MARELLA
Are you serious?

LAUREL
He told me days ago.

MARELLA
Why didn't you tell me?

LAUREL
Wanted it to be a surprise.

MARELLA
My first date.

ALLISON
Sweet sixteen and never been kissed. That's about to change!

MARELLA
What?

ALLISON
That's what Jessie and I used to say about ourselves when we turned sixteen. As far as I know, Jessie's "sweet seventeen" and never been kissed - but I am happy to report that my status has changed!

LAUREL
Stick with me. Everything will change.

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