

MIDDLE SCHOOLIN' IT

FIFTEEN SHORT PLAYS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTORS

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SNAKES IN A LUNCHBOX

A short dramedy by
Arthur M. Jolly

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CARLY, a mousy girl, ready to finally strike back.

GEORGIA, her quirky best friend.

PEYTON, a bully dealing with personal issues. Physically imposing over the other two. Female, but could also be male.

PLACE

The playing field behind a Florida middle school.

TIME

The present.

(GEORGIA carefully puts an old fashioned lunchbox on the ground. CARLY enters.)

CARLY: Did you get it?

GEORGIA: It's in there.

CARLY: Sweet! Can I see?

GEORGIA: No.

CARLY: Why not?

GEORGIA: It bites, and if it bit you, you would die, and then I'd have to tell your mom you're all dead, and your mom scares the cheese whiz out of me.

CARLY: How did you catch it?

GEORGIA: It was basking on a rock. I put the box down, and chased it in with a broom.

CARLY: That was incredibly brave.

GEORGIA: I am an incredibly brave girl.

CARLY: I owe you.

GEORGIA: You do. You owe me huge. Like, if I'm dying and I need a kidney, you gotta give me one of yours.

CARLY: I will give you both of them. And my liver.

GEORGIA: Why would I need a liver?

CARLY: Why would you need a kidney?

GEORGIA: Maybe I got bitten by a coral snake and my kidney exploded.

CARLY: That's what it does?

GEORGIA: I don't know. Google said they were the most poisonous snake in all of North America.

CARLY: Do you think it will hurt?

GEORGIA: Donating a kidney?

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CARLY: Peyton Jean Charles. Getting bit. Will it hurt her?

GEORGIA: You mean, if the plan works.

CARLY: The plan will work.

GEORGIA: Google didn't say. *(Beat.)* But I don't think that dying from a bite of the most poisonous snake in North America could possibly – even a little bit – *not* hurt more than anything. In fact if you ask me, I think it'd be like getting hit by a car on the inside.

(Beat.)

CARLY: Good.

(PEYTON enters.)

GEORGIA: Peyton!

(Carly spins.)

CARLY: Peyton.

PEYTON: Hey.

(A beat.)

CARLY: I...I brought it, so you don't have to hit me or anything. Just take it.

PEYTON: I'm not... *(Beat.)* I need to talk to you.

CARLY: You can just take it and go. It's in the box. Which you can keep.

PEYTON: I don't want your lunch.

CARLY: Yesterday, you said –

PEYTON: Yesterday...I'm sorry, okay?

CARLY: What?

PEYTON: I apologize. I'm sorry I hit you. I'm sorry I pulled your hair. And I'm sorry I called you a...I'm sorry for what I said.

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(A pause.)

GEORGIA: Oh my gosh, her mom called you!

PEYTON: Her mom never –

GEORGIA: Hey, it's cool, I'm with you. Scary woman.

CARLY: *(To Georgia:)* Really?

GEORGIA: *(To Carly:)* I know you probably like her, but – oh yeah. I think it's her eyebrows.

PEYTON: Her mom didn't call me.

GEORGIA: *(Still to Carly:)* Most people have two of them. The Frida Kahlo thing – yeesh.

PEYTON: Who's Frida Kahlo?

CARLY: So why would you –

PEYTON: *(To Carly:)* Is she always like this?

CARLY: You get used to it.

PEYTON: Okay. Anyway, I'm sorry. So. That's it.

(Peyton turns to leave.)

CARLY: That's it?

PEYTON: It's over.

CARLY: You have been tormenting me –

PEYTON: Tormenting?

CARLY: – Since the fourth grade. You are the most...you are my nemesis.

PEYTON: I don't know what that is.

CARLY: You're a bully, Peyton. You have... *(Beat.)* Didn't you know? *(Beat.)* There are kids in this school who go to bed crying because they have to deal with you, because you're...because they know that the next morning, their mom's gonna drop them off in front of the school, and the moment

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they are out of sight of the car, there's nothing safe for them, there's nowhere they can go in the whole school that you and your evil, stupid, hateful gang of friends might not just be...just turn up, and hurt them or make them feel small and...and trapped. Nowhere safe. Do you have any idea what that's like? (*Beat.*) You're sorry? Now, you're sorry?

PEYTON: I'm...things are different. They just...I can't help it if my friends...I'm not gonna be like that. Not anymore. So, keep your lunch. And I'm sorry.

(Peyton starts to leave.)

GEORGIA: What happened?

PEYTON: I don't have to tell you —

GEORGIA: Well, no. But you might want to.

PEYTON: What?

GEORGIA: It sounds like you're about to lose the undying admiration of the gang of hate...which means, unless my math is off, you're gonna be out of friends in this place — not that I'm offering...but who else are you gonna tell? (*Beat.*) What happened?

(A pause.)

PEYTON: Last night, my dad left the halfway house, came over and punched my mom in the face a bunch until she picked up a knife out of the sink and stuck it in his arm. Which is...he's okay. I mean, he's not dead or anything, but the way she looked when...he's gonna be in the hospital for a bit 'cause she hit an artery, and then he's going back inside. It's a violation of his condition of release or something, so there isn't even going to be a trial or nothing. The thing is...when she did it, I wasn't...I saw them fight, you know, before he — I mean, the first time. They fought a bunch, but she never...it was always them fighting. The two of them, it's how they were. Last night, I looked at her face — and I thought she was going

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to kill him. Stab him in the neck, or the heart. And I didn't feel bad about it. Not one bit. I just thought: took you long enough, Momma. *(Beat.)* Don't tell anyone. *(Beat.)* Never mind, say whatever. I figure everyone will know in a day or two anyway. They always do.

GEORGIA: Maybe. But they won't hear it from us.

PEYTON: Thanks. *(Beat.)* Cool lunchbox. Very retro.

(Peyton exits.)

GEORGIA: That was not what I was expecting.

CARLY: I don't...it's not fair.

GEORGIA: What part?

CARLY: Any part. Three years, and I—what? Have to just forgive her because her dad's a psycho criminal who stabbed her mom?

GEORGIA: Other way round.

CARLY: No! I have a snake in a lunchbox! I have the most poisonous snake in all of North America waiting—in a lunchbox! The ultimate revenge, the best turn-around revenge ever in the history of ever...

GEORGIA: Her mom stabbed her dad with a knife, you gotta—

CARLY: Why? Why do I have to, what—forgive her for everything?

(A beat.)

GEORGIA: Do you think they're gonna keep the knife? I mean, could you ever use it again?

CARLY: She just...ruined it. She ruined my whole plan.

GEORGIA: It'd be so weird—you'd be like, cutting a steak, and thinking—that's the one that was in Dad's arm. That's just

gross. Then again, my mom used a knife to dig a bunch of hair and stuff out of the drain the other week, and we still use that one...

CARLY: I hate her. I think I hate her more now.

GEORGIA: She did wash it.

CARLY: This sucks.

(A pause.)

GEORGIA: The thing is...you didn't get your revenge on Peyton. But if the plan was to stop her bullying you... *(She shrugs:)* Right?

CARLY: I guess so.

GEORGIA: We do still have a problem.

(They look at the lunch box.)

CARLY: D'you think it'll be angry?

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PIGLET

A short comedy by
Brian Armstrong

CAST OF CHARACTERS

PIGLET, a pig, prince of the Barnyard.

FELINIA, a cat, daughter of Ponius.

COWDIUS, a cow, Piglet's uncle, engaged to Goatrude.

GOATRUDE, a goat, Piglet's mother, queen of the Barnyard.

PONIUS, parent of Felinia, member of the royal court.

GHOST, the ghost of Piglet's father, the old King Ham.

SETTING

The barnyard of a small farm.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The character of Ponius is written as female, but can easily be made into a male character as needed simply by changing pronouns and the word "mother" into "father." The character has been done both ways in the past. If a larger cast is needed to give more students participation, any other farm animals can be added in non-speaking roles.

The animal nature of the costumes can be quite literal or simply hinted at. In previous productions this has been done with half-masks and with stage make-up or face paint.

SCENE 1

(PIGLET is sleeping peacefully in his pigsty. The GHOST of his Father, the old King Ham, drifts in behind him.)

GHOST: Piiiigleeet...Piiiigleeet...

(No response. Ghost swiftly kicks Piglet then resumes a ghostly pose.)

Hey, wake up you lazy sow.

PIGLET: Huh? What? Whozzere?

(Piglet turns to see the Ghost and screams.)

GHOST: Piglet...I am your father...

PIGLET: But, but, you're dead. The farmer took you and made you into breakfast.

GHOST: No! I was murdered by your Uncle Cowdius. He poisoned me in my slop, then when I pigged out (as usual), I died. *Then* the farmer made me into breakfast.

PIGLET: But then, wouldn't the poison have killed the farmer and his wife when they ate you?

GHOST: No, but I did give them teerrrible gaaas. Teeeriblllee...

PIGLET: Ugghh...I shouldn't have eaten that rotten fruit...it always gives me crazy dreams.

GHOST: This is no dream. Cowdius killed me so that he could marry your mother and become King of the Barnyard. You must avenge me and take your rightful place as king. Avenge me, Piglet. Aveeenge meee.

PIGLET: What? No, that can't be true. Mom wouldn't marry Uncle Cowdius. That's just gross.

GHOST: You'll see. You'll see...

(Ghost fades away [exits].)

PIGLET: That was weird. Now, for some reason, I'm *(Yawns:)* very sleepy.

(Piglet lays down to sleep. Enter GOATRUDE.)

GOATRUDE: PIIIGLEEEET!!! Get up and get dressed! You are not going to be late to my wedding!

PIGLET: Wedding?

GOATRUDE: Yes, wedding! Don't tell me you forgot that today's the day I'm marrying Cowdius.

PIGLET: You're what?

(The Ghost pops up briefly behind Piglet.)

GHOST: I tooold you so...

(Ghost exits.)

GOATRUDE: What was that?

PIGLET: Dad...

GOATRUDE: Your father is gone, and nothing is going to bring him back. You don't expect your dear old mom to be alone and miserable forever, do you?

PIGLET: It's only been a week!

GOATRUDE: Oh, don't exaggerate. Now I'm sure I told Cowdius to break the news to you. I remember because it was just after he bought me this gorgeous ring. Isn't it fabulous?

PIGLET: Mom, wait—I had this crazy dream last night and—

GOATRUDE: —Uh-huh, that's nice dear. Now clean yourself up, I want you looking handsome this evening. And clean your room while you're at it. It's a pigsty.

(Exit Goatrude. Piglet starts cleaning.)

SCENE 2

(Enter FELINIA.)

FELINIA: Piglet! Hi...are you excited or what? Isn't this soo cool, a royal wedding. Giving you any ideas?

PIGLET: Not now, Felinia. Geez, my dad hasn't been buried a fortnight and already a wedding? This is crazy.

FELINIA: I know, right, like your mother gets another wedding already? Isn't it someone else's turn?

PIGLET: *(Not really listening:)* I've got to find out the truth...

FELINIA: Maybe I'll catch the bouquet tonight... Oh! Tonight! Piglet, I need your help, that's why I came here.

PIGLET: What does Cowdius want?

FELINIA: Exactly! He asked me to take care of the entertainment for tonight, but I don't know what to do. He doesn't seem to like anything. Maybe some jugglers, or a play or—

PIGLET: That's it! A play!

FELINIA: Really; you like my idea? Okay, we'll do a play, and my mom can be in it; she's a really good actress and...

PIGLET: Yes, the play's the thing, by which I'll catch the conscience of the king. Go bring your mother. We've got to rehearse.

(Felinia exits.)

PIGLET: When the actors take the stage, they'll enact a horrendous murder, a king poisoned by his brother. If Cowdius did indeed kill my father, it will show on his lying face when he sees his treachery on stage.

(Felinia returns with PONIUS.)

PONIUS: Piglet, there you are. I'm so excited. Felinia tells me you're going to help us with our play. I used to be quite the actor in my day you know. Why your father never missed a performance, rest his soul.

PIGLET: Uh, right. So here's the plan.

(They get into a huddle and whisper. They exit.)

SCENE 3

(Enter COWDIUS and Goatrude.)

COWDIUS: Alright, alright, let's get on with this so I can hurry up and become king, uh, I mean, marry the most wonderful goat I've ever laid eyes on.

GOATRUDE: Oh, Cowdius, you're such a charmer. This is going to be wonderful. I hear my son helped out with the entertainment.

COWDIUS: Really? I didn't expect him to be so supportive.

GOATRUDE: Whyever not?

COWDIUS: You know, the whole taking his father's place thing, the fact that he'd be king if not for me marrying you, that old chestnut.

GOATRUDE: Never mind. I'm sure all Piglet wants is to see me happy. Oh, here they come.

PIGLET: Hear ye, hear ye. For the entertainment of his majesty, and her majesty, and uh, my majesty, the royal court has planned some fine entertainment. We thought you might appreciate a little, dinner theatre. Tonight we present: Regicide—a Murder Mystery.

(Cowdius looks nervous.)

GOATRUDE: Oh, how exciting. Don't you think so, dear?

COWDIUS: Yes, exciting.

PIGLET: In this scene, the king is getting ready for his daily slop. Meanwhile, a foul plot is afoot...

(Piglet sets up the slop in the pig pen.)

I am the king's servant, preparing his meal.

(Enter Felinia.)

FELINIA: Take a hike. I'll make it worth your while.

COWDIUS: Bribing the servants, how foul.

GOATRUE: Hush.

(Piglet takes the bribe and exits the "stage" but stays on the side to watch Cowdius.)

FELINIA: Now, where did I put that poison? Ah here it is!

(Felinia poisons the slop with a large bottle of poison.)

COWDIUS: Come on; who uses that much poison—or any at all?

(Goatrude shushes him.)

PIGLET: Hmm, I think he protests too much!

(Ponius enters, overacting.)

PONIUS: Oh, I have such a mighty royal hunger. I can't wait to pig out!

(Ponius puts her face down into the feeding trough and then hams up a death scene.)

COWDIUS: What? I won't stand for these lies. It didn't happen like that! I mean, nothing happened. The entertainment is over. Where's the clergyman? Let's get this wedding finished.

GOATRUE: He won't be here for another hour, dear.

COWDIUS: Who needs him? By the power invested in me as rightful heir to the throne, I hereby pronounce us married. Long live the king! Let's go, Goatrude.

GOATRUDE: Oh, how spontaneous!

(As they exit, Piglet calls after Cowdus.)

PIGLET: You fiend! You killed my father! You shall pay for this!

PONIUS: I don't understand? Didn't they like our play? But I was so great in it! Your majesties, wait!

(She exits.)

FELINIA: Well, it seems a shame to waste all this wedding preparation. What do you think, Piglet—shall we take the next step in our relationship?

PIGLET: What relationship? What are you talking about, you crazy cat? Let me be! Get thee to a hennery!

FELINIA: Crazy!?! I'll show you crazy! Nobody dumps Felinia!

(Felinia goes crazy, throwing things around, and ultimately drowns in the slop.)

PIGLET: Oh great, now Felinia's dead. Is dying the latest fashion trend now? Why, just before Dad was killed, my best friend was eaten by the farmer and his wife. All they left were scraps. Why, there's a piece over there.

(He picks up a pork chop or other pork product.)

Oh, Porkatio, I knew you well. Perhaps I should join you. Life is just too much to bear. I should just march up to that farmer and say "Hey, breakfast!" To be bacon, or not to be bacon, that is the question.

(He tosses aside the pork chop.)

No! I will avenge my father's death! I will kill Cowdus!

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(Piglet exits.)

SCENE 4

(Goatruide enters followed by Ponius.)

PONIUS: Are you sure you're not upset about the play?

GOATRUDE: Oh, it's fine dear, don't worry yourself about it. Actually I rather enjoyed it.

PONIUS: Yes, I was rather good wasn't I?

GOATRUDE: Yes, I don't know why Cowdius hated it so.

PONIUS: Hated?

GOATRUDE: Yes, he said he would behead the person responsible, but I'm sure he was exaggerating. He'll be here any minute. Why don't you ask him?

PONIUS: Here? Oh no, I've got to hide!

(Ponius hides, Piglet comes along, sneaking, trying to spy on his mother.)

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MY BIG ADELE MOMENT

A short dramedy by
Kenyon Brown

CAST OF CHARACTERS

LIV, female, age 13, any race. Competitive. A lot of attitude.

SARA, female, age 13, any race. Smart, less sophisticated.

SETTING

Backstage at a middle school auditorium. Evening dress rehearsal for a talent show.

TIME

The present.

SUGGESTED PROPS

A microphone ("mic").

PRODUCTION NOTES

This play is intended for middle school and high school students. It might not be appropriate for younger audiences. The following songs are referred to in the play: "Rolling in the Deep," "Chasing Pavements" and "Set Fire to the Rain" (Adele); "Stronger" (Kelly Clarkson), and "I Knew You Were Trouble" (Taylor Swift). With the exception of the Adele songs, the songs can be changed to suit the production. The names of the

television reality shows mentioned in the play can be updated if necessary.

(Backstage at a middle school auditorium. Evening. LIV is holding a mic, mouthing the words to a song, swaying in place. SARA is sitting in a chair, watching, listening.)

SARA: Wait! That is wrong!

LIV: What?

SARA: Olivia, why is Chantal singing now? Jordan's supposed to be singing.

(She looks at the rehearsal schedule. Liv suddenly stops, listens.)

LIV: Mrs. Merritt changed the order.

SARA: Why'd she do that?

LIV: It's good she's switched the lineup. OMG, as if Chantal can even sing.

SARA: Since when is Chantal singing "Stronger"?

LIV: Sara, who cares? If you're not singing Adele, why bother singing?

SARA: But I thought Chantal was singing "Chasing Pavements."

LIV: Pul-ease! No way can she sing Adele. Somebody had to tell her. It would be sooo embarrassing.

SARA: You told her she should sing a different song?

LIV: Well, yea-ahh. Something better suited to her voice. It definitely would never be my song choice. But Chantal doesn't have much range. So the song is fine for her.

SARA: Just because it's not an Adele song doesn't mean it's not good.

LIV: Chantal's definitely not an Adele girl. The sooner she gets it, the better.

SARA: There are a lot of other good singers is all I'm saying.

LIV: Stop the show! They don't bring it like Adele.

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SARA: Chantal sounds pretty good.

LIV: You think so?

SARA: Really good.

LIV: She does sound good, doesn't she? I hate her!

(She continues mouthing words to a song.)

SARA: Olivia, what's with the mic?

LIV: My new vocal coach says it should be an extension of my hand.

SARA: Seriously?

LIV: She says I should carry it with me at all times. To help me prepare. "Set Fire to the Rain" is a hard song.

SARA: Wait, you're singing "Rolling in the Deep."

LIV: Stop the show! My mom spoke to Mrs. Merritt. She said it was okay for me to switch my song.

SARA: You changed your song just like that?

LIV: Sara, I'm not going to sing the same song you're singing.

SARA: We can both sing "Rolling in the Deep." It's the school talent show, not a competition.

LIV: "Set Fire to the Rain" is going to be totally epic.

SARA: Olivia, you think everything you sing is epic.

LIV: Because it is. And BTW, it's Liv now. Please stop calling me "Olivia."

SARA: Sor-ry. I've only called you Olivia since like forever. What's wrong with "Rolling in the Deep"?

LIV: Sara, people will think you're copying me.

SARA: Excuse me?

LIV: I'm just trying to help you.

SARA: I was the one who chose the song first, then you decided to sing it.

LIV: I don't think so.

SARA: You always copy me. Don't deny it. Ever since we were little. Like when I started collecting American Girl dolls. When I got Julie for my seventh birthday, you had to get Julie.

LIV: I got Julie first.

SARA: No, I did. Then when I got her best friend, Ivy, you couldn't wait until you got Ivy.

LIV: Since I had Julie, for sure I wanted to get Ivy.

SARA: Only because I got her first. You've been copying me ever since I can remember.

LIV: Sara, I don't play with dolls anymore.

SARA: But you're still copying me.

LIV: So why am I singing "Set Fire to the Rain" and you're not? Huh? My coach says it's better suited to my voice. And I need to show I have range. Like everyone sings "Rolling in the Deep."

SARA: It's a great song.

LIV: I want to be original.

SARA: Hel-lo-oo, you can't be original when you're singing an Adele song, Olivia. I mean, Liv.

LIV: I'm making it part of my repertoire.

SARA: Like since when do you have repertoire?

LIV: I need a repertoire for when I'm going to audition for *The X Factor*. If I make it, this agent my coach has been talking to will represent me.

SARA: *American Idol* is better.

LIV: It's sooo over. *The X Factor* is it.

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SARA: What about *The Voice*?

LIV: Pul-lease. It's sooo cheesy. The judges make it all about themselves when it should be about the performers.

(Sara stops, listens. She looks at sheet of paper.)

SARA: Wait, Abby's singing now?

(Both girls listen.)

LIV: It's better all the weaker singers go first. Can you believe Abby's singing "I Knew You Were Trouble"? Ouch! The girl can't sing. She's really pitchy.

SARA: Abby sings good.

LIV: Not. Good is the enemy of great.

SARA: Huh?

LIV: If you're not great, you shouldn't be singing. That's what my coach says.

SARA: You don't think anyone can sing as good as you. You think everyone and every song are over. Except you and what you're singing. You probably think I'm over, too.

LIV: Sara, we're BFFs.

SARA: Yeah, right. Only when you feel like it. If I were Ivy, would you be Julie?

LIV: As if! Of course I would be Ivy. For a performer, Ivy is a totally cool name. It's Adele.

SARA: No, it's Ivy.

LIV: Exactly. I'd call myself just Ivy. Like Adele.

SARA: You always want what I have and make it yours.

LIV: You should be warming up, Sara. You don't want to sound pitchy.

SARA: Oh, now I'm pitchy?

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LIV: I didn't say that. Never mind. Don't rehearse.

SARA: That's what this dress rehearsal is for.

LIV: Sara, you can never rehearse enough. Preparation is everything. It could be the moment.

SARA: What moment?

LIV: *The moment.*

SARA: You don't know what you're talking about.

LIV: You always have to be ready, Sara.

SARA: Well, I am ready.

LIV: You don't sound sure.

SARA: I'm sure, okay?

LIV: Every time you sing, you have to make it like it's real.

(She stops, listens:)

Oh, don't you just luuuuvvv hearing Carter sing?

SARA: What's going on? Carter's not supposed to be singing now.

LIV: He's sooo cute. He could sing anything and I'd buy a ticket.

SARA: Mrs. Merritt has changed the order of everyone?

LIV: Finally we're hearing the stronger singers. Wouldn't it be totally epic if Carter and me sang a duet together? Or Randy. What about me and Randy singing a duet? He has a killer voice. I can't wait to hear Randy sing next.

SARA: Randy's singing next?

LIV: Our voices would sound sooo good together, don't you think? Randy sings as good as Carter. They're evenly matched.

SARA: How come you think the guys sing good, but not the girls?

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LIV: Because they don't. FYI, there's nothing wrong with *The X Factor*.

SARA: I didn't say there was anything wrong with it.

LIV: You don't think I should audition?

SARA: I don't know.

LIV: Well, I am. It'll showcase my talent.

SARA: I wonder if "the X factor" is like a real thing.

LIV: *The X Factor* is a show, duh.

SARA: No, I mean like the Rh factor.

LIV: The what?

SARA: Rh factor. Rhesus factor. Blood.

LIV: Gross!

SARA: It's in your blood. You're going to need to know it for the science test tomorrow. Have you even studied for it?

LIV: Hel-loo. I've been rehearsing.

SARA: What's your blood type?

LIV: I don't know.

SARA: You're supposed to know it for the test. I'm O positive. Rh positive. Pretty common.

LIV: So you're the same as everybody else?

SARA: It's a common blood type.

LIV: I'm sure I'm not common.

SARA: That's not what I mean.

LIV: It's like that special something in your blood, the X factor. Either you have it or you don't.

SARA: Have what exactly?

LIV: It. Talent. The whole package.

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SARA: Thank you for finally noticing.

LIV: I mean me.

SARA: You're the whole package? Yeah, right.

LIV: Sara, you don't even know how to sell it.

SARA: Sell what? What are you talking about?

LIV: You, your song. You gotta sell it, my coach says. With everything you're feeling. It's a performance. So perform.

SARA: I know that.

LIV: Why else do it unless you've giving like a 1000 percent, with everything you've got?

SARA: Since when are you like so professional?

LIV: You have to be it to do it. My coach says I could become a triple threat.

SARA: A what?

LIV: Triple threat. Don't you know anything? With training, I could sing, dance, and act.

SARA: Right...

LIV: She's helping me recreate myself. I can help you with your hair if you want.

SARA: I like my hair.

LIV: You do?

SARA: What's wrong with my hair?

LIV: Nothing.

SARA: My mom says you're wearing extensions.

LIV: Excuse me?

SARA: I guess on you, they work.

LIV: FYI, this is all my own hair.

SARA: Sure it is.

LIV: It is. My hair grows fast.

SARA: And it's more blonde.

LIV: I had it highlighted. Okay? To make it look natural. My mom does it for me. You should do it.

SARA: No way my mother will let me.

LIV: You're going to be in high school next year, Sara. You need your own look.

SARA: I do.

LIV: I don't think so. You look the same as everybody else. Your dress is nice. But it doesn't show you off.

SARA: What's wrong with my dress?

LIV: You can wear anything and you wear that dress? What's your style?

SARA: I don't know.

LIV: That's your problem. You need to know. You need a look that says, "This is me."

SARA: This is me.

LIV: Really? Stop the show!

(The girls listen.)

SARA: Wait, Jordan's singing...

SARA & LIV: *(Together:)* "Rolling in the Deep."

LIV: Jinx!

SARA: When did Jordan change her song?

LIV: Singing "Someone Like You" was definitely not the right Adele song for her.

SARA: You told her to sing "Rolling in the Deep"?

LIV: It was just a suggestion.

SARA: But I'm singing "Rolling in the Deep."

LIV: Yeah, so?

SARA: You were all set to sing "Rolling in the Deep" and then you changed to "Set Fire to the Rain" because I was singing "Rolling in the Deep." And then you told Jordan to sing it?

LIV: Jordan's version sounds decent, don't you think?

SARA: So it's not cool for you to sing "Rolling in the Deep," but it's cool for Jordan to sing it?

LIV: It is better suited to her voice. It has a stronger beat than "Someone Like You." A ballad is not right for her.

SARA: Who are you to say what the right song is for anyone?

LIV: I can have an opinion, can't I? At least Jordan works it. You can tell she's been rehearsing.

SARA: Olivia, you're unbelievable.

LIV: It's Liv. What? Sara, you can both sing the same song. It's not like you're competing. You even said so. You're a much better singer than Jordan. You don't have anything to worry about.

SARA: Why didn't you suggest another Adele song?

LIV: I thought it was a good choice for her. This rehearsal is taking like forever.

SARA: Out of all the Adele songs...

LIV: It was her decision.

SARA: Based on what you said.

LIV: What did I say?

SARA: She's singing my song, thank you very much.

LIV: Your song?

SARA: (*Shouting:*) YES, MY SONG!

LIV: Sara, chill.

SARA: Did you ever think about how I would feel?

LIV: Jordan's no competition if that's what you're concerned about. Believe me. You can outsing her any day of the week. All we do is keep stopping and starting the music. You'd think people would know their cues by now.

SARA: I just want this to be over.

LIV: Being a little nervous is good for your performance, Sara.

SARA: I'm not nervous.

LIV: It helps you focus on the show. Remember: all the training, all the rehearsing has prepared you for the big night. That's all you need to think about. Breathe. Deep steady breaths. You walk out on stage. The spotlight is on you. It's just you, the music, the song. Nothing else matters. I wonder if I have time to go to the restroom. Does my hair look good?

SARA: Oh, now my opinion matters.

LIV: Okay, I admit it. I got a spray tan, too. It helps my hair look more blonde.

SARA: Good for you.

LIV: You do what you have to do, Sara.

SARA: What is that supposed to mean?

LIV: You need an edge. You need to stand apart from the competition.

SARA: Why is everything a competition with you?

LIV: Because everything is. You don't earn a mansion with mediocrity.

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MY LITTLE BROTHER

A short dramedy monologue by
Dan Berkowitz

CAST OF CHARACTERS

TEEN-AGED KID, male or female, any age between 13 and 18.

(A TEEN-AGED KID, male or female, any age between 13 and 18, walks onstage and addresses the audience.)

TEEN-AGED KID: My little brother is the ugliest kid in the whole entire world. I mean it. Go to Wikipedia, enter the word "ugly," and there's a picture of my brother. He's, like, a foot shorter than me, but he weighs about a thousand pounds more. He wears big dorky glasses. His hair...looks like a dog was digging for a bone in it. He has lips that look like big globs of meat. A friend of mine once said they looked like liver lips. I started to call him "Liverlips" but my mom told me to cut it out. He just smiled. He always smiles. Always. No matter what happens. I mean, how not-cool is that? And he drools. Makes me want to throw up.

He got this sweatshirt for Christmas two years ago? He took a marker and printed "King of the Dorks" on the front of it in big block letters. Seriously. See, when he first heard the word Dorks, he thought they were, like, some alien life form out of *Star Trek* and that they were, like, really smart? And he wouldn't change his mind, no matter how many times I tried to tell him that was lame. So then he decided he wanted to be King of the Dorks. I mean, how dorky is that? It's, like, dork squared. Cubed. No, it's dorkdom to the tenth power. Whatever that means. Of course, he misspelled "King" so the sweatshirt actually says "Kink of the Dorks," which is even more ridiculous. And he wears it everywhere, and it's falling apart, but he won't throw it away, and he's convinced that when people stare at him they're thinking he's the coolest kid around. I mean, really...?

He calls me "Turtle" because I like to wear a hoodie and he says it makes me look like a turtle. How dumb is that? And I can't call him "Liverlips" but Mom never says anything about him calling me "Turtle." You cannot believe how embarrassing it is when I'm, like, standing on the sidewalk with a group of

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my friends at school or stuff, waiting for my mom to pick me up, and she drives up and my brother yells out the window of the car, "Hey, Turtle!" and then gives that moron laugh of his. I just want to die. Or kill him. Or both.

He always comes with Mom when she picks me up, or drives me anywhere. I've asked her a million zillion times not to bring him—especially when we're giving a ride to some of my friends—but she always says she has to bring him because she can't leave him alone and I should just deal with it.

But I've been dealing with it all my life. Well, since I was five, which is when he was born. It seems that no matter what I do, or how much I accomplish, he always has to come first, and the spotlight always has to be put on him.

For example: last spring, I got the second lead in the school play? Which was, like, a really big deal. I mean, everyone wanted to be in that play so it was really competitive, more people auditioned for it than ever before in the whole entire history of the school. And I got the part. The second lead! But, of course, when I come home all excited and everything, and call the whole family into the living room to announce that I'm going to be a star, what happens? My little brother looks at me through those big dorky glasses and goes, "Second lead? Why aren't you the first lead?" And then he gives that moron laugh. And Mom and Dad smile and laugh and turn to him with this adoring look as if he's just been sooooo clever. And suddenly my news—my big news, a real accomplishment—is, like, nothing. Sometimes it's like I'm not even there!

I mean, why don't I ever get any credit for what I do? I've been in lots of plays and stuff at school, and I've been pretty good, if I say so myself. And it's not easy. I mean, do you know how hard it is to learn lines? How hard it is to learn a monologue? And to walk out in front of a bunch of strangers—or even

worse, a bunch of your friends—and, like, pretend you're someone else who's totally different from you while you're trying to remember all the stuff you memorized and where you're supposed to stand and what you're supposed to do with your hands? It's really hard, but it's something I love, and I spend a lot of time practicing, and my friends and my teachers and the drama coach all think I'm good at it, but my mom and dad hardly ever say a word. But whenever my little brother does anything—anything!—they're all over him with "Oh, wasn't that terrific!" "Oh, isn't he wonderful!" "Oh, isn't that great?" And it's gotten worse. Last month, he was picked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at a parent-teacher meeting—the Pledge of Allegiance, for heaven's sake! —and the way my parents were gushing over him, and congratulating him on remembering all the words, and telling him how well he'd done it and how proud they were of him, you'd think he...he'd just played Hamlet...for the President...and won an Oscar for it!

It's not fair!

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THREE FIRST KISSES

A short dramedy by
Tim Bohn

CAST OF CHARACTERS

KATIE, an eighth grade girl.

JEN, an eighth grade girl.

SHELLY, an eighth grade girl.

SETTING

Katie's bedroom, right after school. There is a bed, a desk with make-up, nail polish, hairspray and books scattered on top of it, and a chair for the desk.

(KATIE, JEN, and SHELLY enter Katie's room, laughing and talking about their day at school. There is a bed, a desk, and various stuffed animals, etc.)

KATIE: No way!

SHELLY: Way.

KATIE: Libby and Tyler?

JEN: Hotness!

KATIE: Sucking face?

JEN: I would totally make out with Tyler Phillips.

SHELLY: No, it was Tyler Larson.

KATIE: Eew!

JEN: Nasty.

(Jen and Katie drop their backpacks and sit on the bed. Shelly puts her things on the desk and sits at the chair.)

SHELLY: No, it's sweet!

JEN: Katie?

KATIE: Tyler is just gross, Shelly.

SHELLY: Katie, I can't believe you! You and Jen are just...

KATIE: What?

JEN: Yeah, what are we?

SHELLY: Jealous.

JEN: Of Tyler? Nooooo!

KATIE: Seriously, Shell, I'd never kiss Tyler.

SHELLY: Maybe not, but you would kiss somebody.

JEN: Ooooh, this is getting juicy! Who is it?

KATIE: Just forget about it, okay? You guys want something

to eat? I'm starving.

JEN: Go ahead, run down to your mommy and get some cookies. We'll stay up here and talk about you.

KATIE: Hey!

(She hits Jen with a pillow.)

Fine, I'll just stay right here. You two have to go home sometime!

JEN: Right, good point. Shelly can tell me about this mystery man on the way home.

KATIE: Shelly, why did you—

SHELLY: I didn't say anything!

KATIE: You promised!

SHELLY: I didn't say anything. Jen, I didn't say anything to you, did I?

JEN: No. Nobody told me anything! I'm waiting. Who is it? Come on, Shelly, spill the beans!

SHELLY: Don't look at me!

JEN: Come on. Katie won't tell me anything—

KATIE: It's nobody, okay?!

JEN: Just tell me—you know you will sooner or later.

KATIE: It's nobody, I told you.

SHELLY: Jen, leave her alone.

JEN: I just want a name. Then I'll shut up, promise!

SHELLY: Drop it, okay? I'm sorry I never should've—

KATIE: It's nobody! Nobody, ever. Nobody wants to date me or kiss me or talk to me. Okay? I've never been kissed by anybody. I'm the only girl in the 8th grade that can say that,

right? Happy? Is that what you wanted to hear?

JEN: I'm sorry –

KATIE: So maybe Shelly is right. Maybe I am jealous of Libby. At least Tyler likes her.

SHELLY: Come on, that's not what –

KATIE: How embarrassing! I can't believe this.

SHELLY: It's no big deal.

JEN: Yeah, jeez, lots of people haven't –

KATIE: I'm gonna get some chips or something. You want anything? No? Fine.

(Katie quickly exits before she starts crying. Jen and Shelly sit quietly for a moment.)

JEN: Wow. That sucked.

SHELLY: Why do you have to be so mean?

JEN: What? What did I do?

SHELLY: You just kept pushing her. She obviously didn't –

JEN: Don't start in on me. You two are keeping secrets!

SHELLY: Not secrets –

JEN: Secrets! You two are talking about boys and kissing and not kissing and not telling me about it. Secrets.

SHELLY: It just came up today, that's all. I'm sure she would have told you.

JEN: Told me what?

SHELLY: You know.

JEN: Not really. She's never been kissed?

SHELLY: Nope.

JEN: Never?

SHELLY: No, never had a boyfriend, nothing.

JEN: So she's embarrassed.

SHELLY: Well, yeah.

JEN: It's no big deal, really. Is it?

SHELLY: Well, she thinks so.

JEN: But do you?

SHELLY: Well, kinda.

JEN: What do you mean, "Kinda"?

SHELLY: It's kind of a big deal. I mean if you've never been kissed and all your friends are talking about it and even Libby and Tyler...

JEN: Yeah, I guess so.

SHELLY: It's hard. You feel like there's something wrong, you know?

JEN: She does? That's not right, she —

SHELLY: I do, too.

JEN: You?

SHELLY: Yeah. It's hard being around everybody. Like there's this secret club that everybody is in but me and —

JEN: You?! You and Kevin went out for like 3 months.

SHELLY: Well, kinda. We held hands.

JEN: He never kissed you?

SHELLY: Nope.

JEN: Why not?

SHELLY: I dunno.

JEN: But—

SHELLY: A couple times I thought he was going to. But he got really pale and sweaty and left both times. I think he was scared.

JEN: Really? That's hilarious!

SHELLY: See? There you go again! You're so mean.

JEN: Come on—it's funny! You wanted to kiss him and he was too scared?

SHELLY: It's scary! I was scared too. I could've kissed him and I didn't. It's terrifying!

JEN: You're terrified of Kevin?

SHELLY: No, not him. Haven't you ever worried that a boy wouldn't kiss you back? Or that he'd tell his friends about it? Or that he wouldn't like it? Or that you wouldn't like it? It's like the whole world is watching and if you do anything stupid or wrong or silly your whole life is ruined.

JEN: That's a little extreme.

SHELLY: Well, maybe. But that's how I felt. So, Katie isn't alone. I've never had my first kiss either.

JEN: It's no big deal.

SHELLY: What was yours like?

JEN: Don't—

SHELLY: Come on. I told you my terrible secret. Who was it? Caleb? Or was it Dan?

JEN: I don't want to talk about it.

SHELLY: Why not? Chicken?

JEN: Let's go see what Katie is up to, I'm worried about her.

(Jen makes a move for the door, but Shelly cuts her off.)

SHELLY: Oh no you don't! You were the one complaining about us having secrets. Now you have to spill.

JEN: Fine. Neither.

SHELLY: Who then?

(Jen shrugs.)

Nobody? You haven't kissed anybody?

JEN: Guess not.

SHELLY: Holy crap.

JEN: Hey!

SHELLY: No, this is huge!

JEN: What? You gonna tell everybody?

SHELLY: Not everybody. Just Katie. Katie! KATIE!

JEN: SHHHHH!

SHELLY: You gotta tell her! You saw how freaked out she was.

KATIE: *(Off:)* I'm coming!

JEN: Not cool.

SHELLY: Here she comes. Shh!

(Katie enters carrying a bag of chips. Jen sits with her head down on the bed while Shelly bounces with excitement at the desk. Katie stares at them for a moment.)

KATIE: What?

JEN: Nothing.

SHELLY: Jen has a secret!

JEN: No, I don't.

KATIE: Guys, I don't feel like talking about it so...maybe you

should—

SHELLY: Jen never kissed anybody!

JEN: Shut up!

KATIE: What?!

SHELLY: Never! Not once.

JEN: Neither has Shelly!

SHELLY: That's true! Me neither!

KATIE: What about Kevin?

SHELLY: He panicked. Every time. No kisses!

KATIE: Caleb? Dan?

JEN: Nope.

SHELLY: Neither one!

KATIE: What? Why not?

JEN: They both tried. But...

KATIE: Shelly? What happened?

SHELLY: I dunno—she never told me this part. What happened?

JEN: It, well, they tried to kiss me but I kinda...hit them.

SHELLY: Cool!

KATIE: Hit them?

JEN: Caleb got real pushy so I smacked him. Dan wasn't so bad, so I just sorta pushed his face like, you know, into the ground.

SHELLY: That is awesome.

JEN: No, it isn't awesome. Who is ever gonna want to date the girl that beats up everyone that tries to kiss her?

KATIE: And you?

SHELLY: Me?

KATIE: Yeah, you never kissed anybody?

SHELLY: Oh, no.

KATIE: We're pathetic.

SHELLY: No! Don't you see?

JEN: See what?

SHELLY: This is all perfectly normal.

KATIE: NOT kissing is normal? Everybody but us is probably making out right now.

SHELLY: No way. For all we know, Libby and Tyler are the ONLY people in the 8th grade that have ever kissed anybody!

JEN: She's got a point.

SHELLY: I know, right?

KATIE: Wow. This is a lot to take in.

(Katie sits on the bed and begins to eat chips as she contemplates what she has just learned.)

JEN: It feels good to talk about it, right?

(Jen takes a chip and munches on it while she thinks.)

SHELLY: It's nice to be, you know, not alone.

(Shelly takes a handful of chips and eats them while staring off into space. After a few moments, the chips are gone.)

KATIE: No more chips.

JEN: I'm gonna go. I'm gonna go to Dan's house and kiss him.

SHELLY: Why?

JEN: Just to get it over with.

KATIE: I'll call Kevin.

SHELLY: No!

KATIE: What? Why not?

SHELLY: No, no, no, no! It's wrong!

JEN: It's not wrong, we're just scared. Once we kiss one boy the rest will be easy.

KATIE: Right. I'm tired of worrying about it!

JEN: Text me later, let me know how it goes.

(Katie gets out her phone and starts dialing. Jen grabs her backpack and heads for the door. Shelly grabs hair spray off the desk and blocks Jen from leaving, threatening her with the hairspray.)

SHELLY: No! I mean it. Sit down or Jen gets it.

JEN: Are you nuts?

SHELLY: SIT! Katie, hang up the phone.

JEN: She's psycho.

SHELLY: Hang. Up. The. Phone.

(Katie hangs up.)

You, sit.

(Jen sits.)

KATIE: Okay, crazy, what's up?

SHELLY: Stop and think. Don't go rushing off to kiss some boy to make it EASY. It's not supposed to be EASY!

JEN: What do you know? You've never —

SHELLY: Neither have you! Or you! Why not?

JEN: We went over this —

SHELLY: No, we didn't. We talked about being scared, but WHY?

KATIE: Shelly, it's just dumb. There's nothing to be scared of.

SHELLY: There is! Kissing someone is a big deal. Who have you kissed?

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ERASING THE BRAIN

A short dramedy by
Nina Mansfield

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ELLEN, a thirteen-year-old girl.

MATTIE, Ellen's ten-year-old brother.

VOICE OF MOTHER, an offstage voice.

TIME

The present.

PLACE

A living room or family room. The room has a television console with a video game system, which can be suggested by having Mattie face the audience while playing the video game.

The video game controller can be replaced with a handheld gaming device or remote control device, in which case, the play could be staged on a very, very simple set.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The play premiered in April 2010 as part of Turtle Shell Productions' 8-Minute Madness YouthFest (New York, NY), directed by Joel Haberli.

(Lights up on MATTIE, who is sitting, engrossed in a video game. The SOUNDS of a video game can be heard, and the light from the television flickers on Mattie's face. ELLEN storms into the living room. She is holding her diary, which she slams down on a nearby table.)

ELLEN: Just who do you think you are?

MATTIE: If you hold on two seconds, I will be...master of the universe.

(Ellen grabs the controller away from him; he tries to snatch it back.)

Hey Ellen, give that back.

ELLEN: Why should I?

MATTIE: I was about to reach a new high... *(An electronic rendition of MOZART'S "REQUIEM" signals the end of the game:)* ...score.

ELLEN: Put out your hands.

MATTIE: What? Why?

ELLEN: I want to see your hands, Mattie.

MATTIE: No. You're crazy.

(They struggle. Ellen grabs his hands, and flips them up to look at the palms. He closes his hands into fists.)

ELLEN: Open them.

MATTIE: You can't make me.

ELLEN: I said, open them.

(She begins to squeeze his wrists tighter, until he is forced to open his hands up.)

MATTIE: OK, OK. Just stop. That hurts.

(Ellen examines his palms for a moment, and then throws down his hands.)

ELLEN: I knew it. I knew it. I'm telling. Mom!

MATTIE: She's not home yet.

ELLEN: She should be home —

MATTIE: She's on a date.

ELLEN: Oh.

MATTIE: With...what's his name...Hank.

ELLEN: Oh.

MATTIE: Again.

(The two are silent for a moment.)

I don't think Hank really exists, do you? I hope he doesn't. I hope he's just...I hope he's just like her...imaginary friend or something. Like I used to have.

ELLEN: Whatever. I'm still telling.

MATTIE: Telling what? What did I do?

ELLEN: You know perfectly well what you did.

MATTIE: What? I didn't do anything.

ELLEN: Then what's that white stuff on your hands?

MATTIE: *(Looking at his hands:)* What stuff?

ELLEN: That fine dusting of white powder.

MATTIE: I dunno.

ELLEN: I do. You see, I was on to you. I could sniff you out a mile away. You thought you could be sneaky. You thought you could cover your tracks. Putting my diary back under my pillow. Placing the key back into my desk. So first I hid the key. That probably screwed up your little plan, didn't it? But

then, I knew something was wrong. The way it was laying there, upside down, under my pillow. I would've never left it that way. What did you use...a bobby pin or something? Some tool from your Swiss Army knife? Whatever it was, it scratched up the lock. You probably didn't notice that, did you? So I decided to catch you in the act. Baby power. A light dusting inside the pages. Now, it's on your hands. There's my proof.

(Ellen pulls the controlling device out of the video game machine, dangles it in front of Mattie for a second, and then begins to walk away.)

MATTIE: He doesn't like you.

ELLEN: *(She stops in her tracks:)* What?

MATTIE: Evan Marshall. The man of your dreams. The only boy you'll ever love. He doesn't like you.

ELLEN: Why you little...

(Ellen lunges at him; Mattie jumps out of her way.)

MATTIE: Don't hit, please don't hit me. I heard them talking, that's all.

ELLEN: What? When? Who?

MATTIE: Sheila Cassidy and her group. The ones that sit at the back of the bus. The ones that wear all that makeup.

ELLEN: When was this? What did they say? When were you ever sitting at the back of the bus?

MATTIE: Last week. You were staying late for band practice. Robbie dared me. But they kicked me out, so I just sat a few rows up, and heard their whole conversation. Sheila said that Evan likes Amy Steinem. That she saw them kissing on the playground last week. And I wouldn't have paid any attention at all except, well...

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(He holds up his hands sheepishly.)

ELLEN: You're just making this up to hurt me.

MATTIE: Do you think it's true?

ELLEN: What?

MATTIE: That there's only one guy for you? That Evan Marshall will be the only boy you ever love?

ELLEN: You are the worst little brother that anyone could ever have.

(She leaves, taking the controller and her diary with her.)

MATTIE: *(Calling after her:)* Oh, come on. Give it back.

ELLEN: *(Off:)* Not on your life.

MATTIE: Please!

ELLEN: *(Off:)* No!

MATTIE: It's not like I read the whole thing. Just a few of the entries from last week. You can't really blame me. It's what little brothers are supposed to do. We're supposed to read our big sisters' diaries. It's like a rule.

ELLEN: *(Off:)* I'm not listening to you.

MATTIE: If you give it back, I promise never to read it again. Cross my heart and hope to die. Never, ever, ever.

ELLEN: *(Re-entering:)* It's a little too late for that.

MATTIE: I'll go to confession and say a dozen Hail Marys.

ELLEN: We're not Catholic.

MATTIE: I can still confess. I don't think you have to be Catholic to get your soul wiped clean. And when my soul's wiped clean, you have to forgive me. Because God has.

ELLEN: Nice try. You're not getting it back.

(She starts to leave.)

MATTIE: *(Desperate:)* So...so, I'll erase my brain. Forget what I read.

ELLEN: You can't erase your brain.

MATTIE: Sure you can.

ELLEN: You can't force yourself to forget.

MATTIE: I forget stuff all the time.

ELLEN: It's not the same thing.

MATTIE: Last week, I forgot all about the Battle of Bunker Hill during my history test.

ELLEN: That just makes you stupid.

MATTIE: And I always forget my lunch money at home.

ELLEN: What's your point?

MATTIE: If you don't think about something—like ever—it just vanishes from your brain. Poof. Like it was never there. I bet if you wanted to, you could forget all about Evan Marshall.

ELLEN: *(Starting to walk away again:)* You just don't understand anything.

MATTIE: Like Mom. Forgetting Dad.

ELLEN: *(She stops in her tracks, and turns to Mattie:)* Mom hasn't forgotten Dad. Why would you say something like that?

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LE GOALIE

A short dramedy by
Nelson Yu

CAST OF CHARACTERS

FABRICE, male, 12-year-old hockey goalie.

SHELLY, female, 12-year-old hockey forward.

COACH, pre-recorded man's voice.

JORDAN, pre-recorded teenage hockey player's voice.

ACT I: INTRODUCING FABRICE**SCENE 1: THE GOALIE**

(FABRICE, a hyperactive 12-year-old goalie, marches in and squats in front of an imaginary hockey net. He speaks quickly with a Quebecois accent—where "th" is hard to pronounce so "the" becomes "da" and "think" becomes "tink." Also, the grammar is wrong like he still struggles with English sometimes. Hockey players and teams' names can be updated as necessary.)

FABRICE: I can stop anything! *(Faking a save:)* Sidney Crosby. No problem! *(Faking a save:)* Ilya Kovachuk. See ya! Steven Stamkos!? Hey, how's that Rocket Richard trophy looking? Oh, you need just one more goal. Well too bad, eh! *(Faking a bigger save:)* I'm the best since Patrick Roy. Better than Marc Andre Fleury. Better than that J.S. Giguere guy. And I'm only in peewee. Wait until I get to da pros, huh! I be unstoppable! *(He makes one last big save:)* But I can't stop Shelly Matador. She's too nice. I wish she wasn't cuz I would never let her score on me. They let a girl play hockey because she's that good. She used to be—like my neighbour—until she moved away. Then she played for the other team, the Falcons. But it no matter. She's still my friend. The coach yells at me when Shelly scores on me.

COACH: *(Jokingly:)* HEY, FABRICE. DON'T LET THE GIRL GET TA YA!

FABRICE: But I no care. I know I'm the best. I let one or two in so they think they can beat me. Yeah, let them tink dey can beat Fabrice Allaire! Goalie extraordinaire! *(Smiling:)* See it rhymes, eh?

COACH: ENUFF YAPPING. I WANNA SEE MORE PLAYING!

SCENE 2: THE GAME

(Fabrice flashes back to a previous game. He drops into a goalie pose and stares intensely out into the crowd.)

FABRICE: So it was the last game, eh. We were going to the finals. And it was tied four four. But we were playing against Shelly's team, The Falcons. She hadn't scored so I kinda felt bad for her, eh. She usually scores two. She's that good.

(In hockey gear, a confident 12-year-old SHELLY appears. She speaks to the audience in a normal Canadian accent and never directly to Fabrice unless noted.)

So I'm thinking...I need to win the game for da team, but dere's Shelly looking at me. She's all sad and stuff. I can see it in her eyes. They are telling me.

SHELLY: *(Faux sweetness:)* Let a softie in, Fabrice. You know you want to...

FABRICE: A softie is a goal that you should save. I never let a softie in...well except for that one time, but that wasn't my fault, eh. I lost my stick! *(Back to being hyper:)* So anyways, Shelly's eyes were talking to me and stuff and telling me what to do...

(Shelly tries to distract Fabrice with her pouting.)

But my coach was yelling at me to stay focused. Cause sometimes I start thinking about the next game that I forget I'm playing this game. I'm sure when I'm pro this won't happen—because I be like—tinking about the money I'll be making and that will keep me happy, y'know...

(WHISTLE blows. Fabrice relaxes.)

Coach calls a time out, eh.

FABRICE: He tells everybody where to go, but I'm sure nobody understands because once you get the puck you just want to skate as fast as you can and shoot. Hockey is like that. You don't think—you just do.

COACH: TIME OUT!!!
(Pause.) You here. You—protect the point. You—clear the crease.

FABRICE: So I sees their coach puts Shelly out onto the ice and everything. And I tell my coach to make sure she doesn't get the puck, but he can't hear so good. He's got one ear that's bad so he just stares at me and nods.

(WHISTLE blows. He squats into goalie position.)

When the ref drops the puck, I get nervous, eh. Cause this is a big game and Shelly is on the ice. It's not good cuz I'm sure Shelly will get pissed off if I don't let her score and she's my oldest friend since I moved here from Gaspé. *(Breaking out of goalie pose:)* That's in Quebec! Y'know...da French part of Canada...the best part! See, I had no friends, eh. Nobody would talk to me cause I don't speak English no good. She was the only one that said hi. *(Approaching Shelly:)* Salut!

SHELLY: You're weird.

FABRICE: I know. I'm French.

SHELLY: No, you're just weird... But I like that. *(Pointing at his hockey logo:)* You play hockey?

FABRICE: *(Slightly defensive:)* Ya, I play goal. I'm the best!

SHELLY: I was just asking—no need to get mad... Hey, you wanna go to my birthday party? I'll introduce you to my hockey team.

FABRICE: *(To audience:)* And that's how we became friends. *(Inches closer:)* The reason I'm talking to you is because of what happened at the game... I need your opinion.

SCENE 3: TWO MINUTES FOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

(Shelly mimes the following as Fabrice drops into goalie position and speaks.)

FABRICE: Shelly was racing down the sideboards. Nobody skates as fast as her in peewee. She took figure skating since she was like six so she was good and stuff. With the puck, she blows by McGruff and Jay Jay. They are our best D men.

(SLAPSHOT sound.)

But the puck wasn't completely flat when she shot it so it was wobbling and stuff. I can see it. I can save it. Cuz I'm like the best, eh? But in my brain, someting was saying "let it go...let it go" *(Standing up:)* Well, it says it in French, but I translated it for you. Would you let it by for your friend? My brain was arguing in my head! It was saying. *(Dropping into position:)* Save—you want to be a pro player. Pro players do not let softies in. No way! *(Fakes a save:)* Goal—their goalie was no good and let in four goals that period so I was sure we'd score another. The four goals on me were all accidents! *(Beat.)* I saw all of dis in my head and thought I had to save it. The game was tied. We lose! No go to finals! I had to do it for my team. There were eighteen of them and only one of her. I no want eighteen guys angry at me. Besides, Shelly would say it's just a game. She'd forgive me.

(Shelly shakes her head and gives him "thumbs down." Fabrice makes a save. Crowd ROARS!)

COACH: GREAT SAVE, FABRICE!

FABRICE: *(Bowing:)* Thank you. Thank you.

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(Fabrice gently taps his stick on Shelly's leg.)

Nice shot, Shelly.

(Shelly responds by angrily "two-handed slashing" him. A WHISTLE blows. They exit.)

ACT II: INTRODUCING SHELLY

SCENE 1: THE SHOOTER

(Shelly alone, in her hockey gear.)

SHELLY: So I have this French friend, Fabrice. He's not really French, he's from Quebec... He's a real piece of work. *(As if talking to somebody who doesn't understand:)* Meaning, he's kinda hard to convince to do the right thing. He's stubborn. I mean, I'm a girl, but I'm like the best forward in the whole league. And Fabrice is the best goalie. We made each other. *(Pause.)* Now you're probably asking...what is a girl doing in a boys' hockey league? Pfffft. I'm so much better than most of them—they had to let me play. Everybody loves a winner, right?

(Fabrice re-enters and squats in front of an imaginary net.)

FABRICE: I dare you to score on me!

(Shelly fires pucks at him.)

I'm unstoppable!

SHELLY: So he likes to think. He's not all that.

FABRICE: I got the technique! I got the style! Giv-er your best shot!

(Shelly fires until she scores.)

Lucky one, eh? That was an accident.

(Fabrice leaves.)

SHELLY: See, he thinks he's better than Patrick Roy or some other French goalie. Whatever. I let him think that because

goalies are hard to find—nobody wants pucks slapped into their face. (*Shrugging:*) And I needed somebody to practice with.

SCENE 2: THE GAME

(Shelly flashes back to the previous game against Fabrice.)

SHELLY: So last game. Our team needed to beat Fabrice's stupid team to head to the finals. The score was tied four-four. I hadn't scored since Fabrice's team was double and triple teaming me. But I knew it would eventually happen. I always score.

(Fabrice re-enters and squats into goalie position.)

Scouts were at the game, you know. I was going to get drafted high to a good Bantam team, I was certain...if Fabrice hadn't ruined it for me.

(Shelly slaps a puck. A repeat of Fabrice's save. Crowd ROARS!)

COACH: GREAT SAVE, FABRICE!

SHELLY: He knew I liked going five hole when the puck was wobbling. He was lucky I couldn't get a clean shot! Cuz I always score on him. His weakness is high blocker side. I always go there when I can. (*Approaching Fabrice:*) Then to make it worse, he slashes me afterwards.

(Fabrice taps his stick on Shelly and says slightly mockingly.)

FABRICE: Nice shot, Shelly...

SHELLY: So I had to slash him back.

(Shelly responds by "two-handed slashing" him. Fabrice "fakes" being injured by it. A WHISTLE blows.)

REFEREE: Two minutes for unsportsmanlike conduct.

SHELLY: What? He slashed me first!

REFEREE: Two minutes in the sin bin, young lady.

SHELLY: I swear I heard his teammates tell Fabrice to slash me earlier. His team is so annoying—they say stuff like "How's your boyfriend?" or "Are you gonna go home and cry if I trip you?" His coach is constantly complaining about me and the refs never call penalty when I'm hooked. Everybody hates me!... And because of my penalty, they score!

(Goal HORN roars. Crowd ROARS.)

We lose!

(Shelly exits in a huff.)

SCENE 3: POST-GAME ACCORDING TO FABRICE

(Fabrice alone.)

FABRICE: So after the game, we all like shake hands and stuff. It's to show you are a good sport.

(Shelly enters. Both mime shaking hands.)

Good game, good game, good game.

SHELLY: Good game, good game, good game.

FABRICE: *(Meets Shelly:)* I was going to apologize to Shelly for causing her to take a penalty, but she won't shake my hand.

(He offers his hand to shake and so does Shelly, but she pulls it away at the last second.)

I knew she was angry with me. I didn't need to hear it but she said it anyways.

SHELLY: *(With disdain:)* I thought you were my friend.

FABRICE: Then she left... *(To audience:)* How did I feel? *(In a goalie pose:)* I am unstoppable. I don't cry! That's for the little

boys! I'm a man! Je suis Le Goalie! Shelly is the one that is wrong for not shaking my hand. That's bad sportspersonship.

COACH: HEY, FABRICE. GOOD GAME!

FABRICE: *(To offstage:)* Thanks a lot, coach! *(To audience:)* Shelly and I didn't talk after. She would sometimes call me when she heard good news, even though she knows I don't like using the phone. I hate talking on it. It's like wearing a mask underwater. And I tink I sound a bit funny, y'know. Not like Shelly. She sounds nice.

(Shelly re-enters. Fabrice and Shelly mime being on the phone.)

SHELLY: Fabrice, I heard you got a shutout.

FABRICE: Yeah, my third one this year!

SHELLY: Congratulations!

FABRICE: Thanks a lot. *(To audience:)* But today?? Nothing. It's only a game, right?

SCENE 4: POST-GAME ACCORDING TO SHELLY

(Focus on Shelly – who speaks to the audience.)

SHELLY: Do you know what really bothers me? It's how Fabrice acted after the game. We were shaking hands like you're supposed to do.

(In a post-game lineup, Fabrice shakes hands with invisible players.)

FABRICE: Good game. Good game. Good game.

SHELLY: And he wouldn't shake mine!

(Shelly offers her hand, but Fabrice pulls his away at the last second.)

So I say to him – *(With disdain:)* I thought you were my friend.

(Fabrice leaves.)

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And he just walks away. What the french? Some friend he turned out to be! (*Starts off but stops:*) I didn't call him afterwards. He didn't deserve it. I hope he gets scored on lots in the finals and loses.

(*She exits.*)

ACT III: THE BIRTHDAY PARTIES

SCENE 1: ANNOUNCING PARTIES

(*Fabrice and Shelly on opposite sides of the stage – speaking to the audience, but never to another.*)

FABRICE: So Shelly was having a birthday party.

SHELLY: I was having a birthday party for my twelfth. I knew tons of boys! And of course the girls wanted to show up too.

FABRICE: She knows lots of people. I bet dere was going to be fifty kids dere. I couldn't even get five to show up to my birthday.

SHELLY: But I didn't want to invite Fabrice after what happened last game. His team beat the other team 10-0. They were total pushovers! We could have been city champs!

FABRICE: But I didn't want to go. No way!

FABRICE: (*Pointing:*) She has to apologize first!

SHELLY: (*Pointing:*) He has to apologize first!

SCENE 2: SHELLY'S PARTY

(*Fabrice and Shelly swap sides.*)

FABRICE: At the party. The boys stood in one area and all the girls in another – except Shelly. She was talking to the boys. I stood by myself because the boys were her teammates, y'know. They weren't going to be friendly to me. No way!

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SHELLY: I was talking to the boys...and made sure Fabrice saw. I wasn't going to talk to him so I made sure he knew. I told Brandon, a winger on my team, that I was angry at Fabrice. And he went to talk to him! It wasn't my fault!

FABRICE: So one of the Shelly's teammates bumps me. Not a little bump—like oops. But a big one. Like he meant it. I says to him, "What's that for??" and he says, "You were in my way Frenchie!" (*Agitated:*) I hate being called names. It's like being spit on, eh. So I shove him back, eh. He makes a face—(*Scrunching up his own face:*)—like this and tells me to "Buzz off!"—then shoves me. (*Even more agitated:*) I hate being hit so I push him back. One ting leads to another and I accidentally *fell* onto one of Shelly's teammates. Soon we were all pushing and shoving when I hear—

SHELLY: STOP IT!

FABRICE: (*Philosophically:*) You know when the rain stops and the sun comes out. It was like that. There's supposed to be a rainbow, but there wasn't a rainbow that day.

SHELLY: Fabrice, get out of my party! I didn't want to invite you anyways! My mom made me!

FABRICE: (*Dejected:*) Oh... And I thought she was there to help me, but no. She was just like everyone else. Mean... So I left.

(He begins shuffling off, but stops.)

I don't need her! I don't need anybody! I'm unstoppable! I am Fabrice Allaire! The greatest goalie in the world!

(Finally storms off.)

SHELLY: At first, I was so glad Fabrice left. What a total downer. He was ruining my party! Then my mom yelled at me. Told me I had to apologize. "For what?" I said. She said I showed bad judgment. Tell that to Fabrice! He started it! I thought he was my friend!

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SCENE 3: FABRICE'S PARTY

(Again, Fabrice and Shelly at opposite ends of the stage.)

FABRICE: So a week later, I had my birthday party. I made sure I wasn't gonna invite nobody I didn't like.

SHELLY: So a week later, Fabrice had his birthday party.

FABRICE: My mom made me invite her.

SHELLY: My mom made me go.

FABRICE: I didn't want to!

SHELLY: I didn't want to! Mom said it was "a good opportunity to make amends." *(Rolling her eyes:)* Whatever that means.

FABRICE: The whole team was at my house. It was great. First time I felt so popular... I guess my mom talked to all the other parents cause I know some of my teammates don't like me and they were there. And it was the first time we saw each other since the finals. *(Bragging:)* I got a shutout by the way. I'm going pro.

SHELLY: So Fabrice invited his entire team to his party. It was lame. No one there was his real friend...they just played hockey with him. Okay, maybe Maurice and that's because Maurice had a French name and his grandparents were from Quebec.

FABRICE: So Shelly was the only girl at the party. She probably felt pretty weird. That was good because I wanted her to.

SHELLY: Did I tell you I was the only girl. Hello? I stick out. I was wearing a dress too cuz my mom made me. But I'm sure I could beat up most of Fabrice's teammates though. That's how tough I am. And I'm still a girl.

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FABRICE: I was having a good time. Everyone was wishing "Happy Birthday" to me...except for one person.

(He glances over to Shelly. She gives him a disgusted look.)

SHELLY: He had all his friends around him. I wanted to at least say hi and maybe listen to his apology. But he's stubborn and I'm sure if he did it would be because of his mom. He's a mama's boy.

FABRICE: Mom nudges me, eh. She says I should talk to Shelly, but I say later. She knows we had a fight after the game... Moms know everything—even if you don't tell them. They got Mom-radar. When you sleep your dreams your secrets leak out and travel over to your Mom and tell them things. It's true.

SHELLY: I heard from Stan who heard from Kevin...that Fabrice was looking to apologize. Finally!

FABRICE: I heard from Kevin who heard from Trey that Shelly wanted to say sorry... Good!

(Fabrice struts over to Shelly.)

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MATH-O-FREAK

A short comedy by
Nancy Brewka-Clark

CAST OF CHARACTERS

LIBBY, a girl dance student.

KIRK, a boy math whiz.

ROBIN, a girl dance student.

SETTING

The school bus stop.

TIME

The present.

(LIBBY and KIRK are waiting for the bus.)

LIBBY: Why doesn't the stupid bus come?

KIRK: It's merely a matter of fixed spatial objects versus moving objects and the velocity at which—

LIBBY: Don't let Robin Miller hear you talking like that. It's just, just—geeky.

KIRK: *(Laughs.)* You're not jealous, are you?

(Libby stares at him icily.)

LIBBY: And why would I be jealous?

KIRK: *(Shrugs:)* I don't know.

LIBBY: *(Offhand, craning stage left for bus again:)* You must know. You said it.

KIRK: I mean, it's just logical. You like me and I like you, but I like Robin, too. *(He strokes chin, narrowing eyes:)* Uh-oh. Now there's a formula for trouble.

LIBBY: No it isn't. You and I have been friends from birth. Robin just moved here, so she can't ever be your friend from birth.

KIRK: When you put it that way—

LIBBY: Yeah, I know. It's logical. *(Waves stage right:)* Look! Here she comes now.

KIRK: No way. Her dad drives her to school.

LIBBY: Her dad's away on business. He's in Japan. When he comes back he's bringing her a string of pearls, real ones. Hi, Robin!

(ROBIN enters stage right.)

ROBIN: Hi, Libby.

KIRK: Hi, Libby.

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(Libby and Robin both stare at him.)

What?

LIBBY: You said, "Hi, Libby."

KIRK: No, I didn't.

LIBBY: Yes, you did.

KIRK: Well, what I meant was, "Hi, Lobbin." *(He smacks himself on forehead.)* I mean Robin.

ROBIN: Hi. *(She rolls eyes, turns immediately to Libby.)* Are you trying out for *The Nutcracker*?

KIRK: Nutcracker? How can you try out to be a nutcracker?

(Once more Libby and Robin stare at him.)

It's a kitchen utensil. How can you try out to be a kitchen utensil?

LIBBY: It's a ballet.

ROBIN: It's famous. People have been performing it for more than one hundred years.

KIRK: Oh, that *Nutcracker*. *(He waves his arms.)* It's all about how they save this walnut from the clutches of an evil metal tool, right? *(He speaks in high pitch:)* "Leave me alone, you nasty nutcracker, or I'll roll away under the table where you'll never find me." *(He deepens voice:)* "Walnut, you crack me up."

LIBBY: Not exactly. It's about this girl, Clara, and how on Christmas Eve all her toys come to life and dance.

ROBIN: And there's a beautiful fairy, the Sugarplum, and dancing snowflakes, and flowers.

KIRK: Girl stuff. No wonder I've never heard of it—oops, I mean—

ROBIN: Don't worry, Kirk, we knew that already. And it isn't

just girl stuff. The nutcracker is really a handsome prince and he has this huge battle with the wicked mouse king.

LIBBY: And Clara kills the mouse king by hitting him in the head with her shoe.

KIRK: Sounds like the nutcracker's a wimp.

LIBBY: He's— oh, never mind, you wouldn't get it anyway.

KIRK: True. Because it's girl stuff.

ROBIN: Madame Dumont— she's our ballet teacher— says that in a typical workout the biggest, toughest, strongest football player couldn't keep up with a ballerina.

KIRK: Then why aren't there ballerinas in Super Bowls?

(Libby and Robin exchange a knowing look and laugh.)

LIBBY: Kirk, have you ever heard of Lynn Swann?

KIRK: Ah hah! You're trying to trick me, aren't you? But, I'm too smart for that, oh, yeah. You see, girls, I happen to know that there's a ballet by that name.

LIBBY: *(Gaping at him:)* There's a ballet called "Lynn Swann"?

KIRK: Oh, so you don't know about it, huh?

ROBIN: Uh, Kirk, it's *Swan Lake*.

KIRK: What is?

ROBIN: *(With big sigh:)* The ballet you're thinking of—it's by Mr. Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. And it's famous, too.

LIBBY: Oh, Kirk, don't feel bad. After all, math-o-freaks aren't supposed to know anything about anything except numbers, numbers, and more numbers.

ROBIN: *(Another big sigh:)* So, do you know who Lynn Swann is or not?

KIRK: *(Mocking her big sigh:)* I can see you're just dying to tell

me. So tell me.

LIBBY: He played for the Pittsburgh Steelers back in the 1970s.

ROBIN: He played in four Super Bowls. And he was a dancer. A ballet dancer.

KIRK: Are you sure about this?

LIBBY: Of course we're sure. He studied dance all the way through school, even in college. That's why he played so well. He wasn't just strong, he was graceful.

KIRK: A ballet dancer can't be stronger than a football player. It's not—

LIBBY: (*Puts hands over ears:*) Don't say it.

KIRK: (*Loudly:*) Logical.

ROBIN: Well, you're right. It's not.

KIRK: At least somebody around here can put one and one together and come up with two.

ROBIN: What I mean is pound for pound logically there's no way a ballet dancer could tackle a football player and knock him down.

KIRK: At least somebody around here can see what's logical.

ROBIN: But Madame Dumont says ballet dancers use muscles that football players don't even know they have.

LIBBY: Even the foot movements you learn when you first start are harder than you'd ever believe.

KIRK: (*He puts out a straight leg and waggles his foot.*) Boy, you're right, that was hard. I wonder if I have the strength to do that again? (*Repeats move:*) Man, I'm so tired now I might have to lie down and take a nap. (*He flops onto ground.*) Wake me up when the bus comes, okay?

(He shuts his eyes and snores.)

LIBBY: *(She prods Kirk with her toe:)* Get up or we'll dance right over you when the bus comes.

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BRACE YOURSELF

A short comedy by
Keegon Schuett

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MIRANDA, a young girl with braces.

TOMMY, a normal guy.

LUCY, a good friend.

CRAIG, a dependable bro.

(Two girls, LUCY and MIRANDA, sit together outside during lunch. Across the stage sitting together are two boys, CRAIG and TOMMY.)

MIRANDA: This is the worst day of my entire life.

LUCY: No! No, today's a big day. It's what – two months now? He's going to ask you –

MIRANDA: He can't see me like this. You have to tell him he can't see me like this.

LUCY: They're just braces, Miranda. You're still very pretty.

MIRANDA: That's exactly what you'd say if I wasn't pretty anymore because of my braces.

LUCY: That's not true.

MIRANDA: Yes, it is and he's going to think so, too.

LUCY: You are pretty. Now you've just got a shinier smile. And besides –

MIRANDA: Don't. Don't tell me that Tommy loves me for my inner beauty. Don't say that. That's cheesy.

LUCY: That's not what I was going to say...but he probably does.

MIRANDA: Probably...it has been two months.

LUCY: Big anniversary. He's definitely going to ask you to the dance, Miranda.

MIRANDA: Not now. Now I'm half metal. I've got robot teeth. He's going to dump me as soon as he finds out.

LUCY: Well, what do you want to do? He's waiting for you.

MIRANDA: I want to die. I want to be invisible. Hand me the mirror.

LUCY: No. You're obsessing.

MIRANDA: Mirror. Now.

LUCY: Fine.

(She passes her a small mirror. Miranda observes her braces up close, very upset. Craig approaches Lucy.)

CRAIG: Hey, Lucy. Over here.

(Lucy walks to him.)

LUCY: What's up?

CRAIG: Tommy's been looking for Miranda. He wants to talk to her.

LUCY: The dance, right?

CRAIG: Probably. It's been a while.

LUCY: Two month anniversary. Huge.

CRAIG: I think he's got something special planned. Could you send her over?

LUCY: No. I can't.

CRAIG: Why not?

LUCY: It's complicated, Craig.

CRAIG: Well, what should I tell him? He's waiting.

LUCY: I don't know. Tell him she doesn't want to see him.

CRAIG: Anymore?

LUCY: No. She doesn't want to see him.

CRAIG: Wow. OK. Thanks, I guess.

LUCY: No problem.

(Craig goes to Tommy.)

TOMMY: She coming?

CRAIG: Uhh, I don't think so, bro.

TOMMY: Why not?

CRAIG: Lucy said that she said she doesn't want to see you anymore.

TOMMY: At all?

CRAIG: Yeah, that's the way it sounded, man. I'm sorry.

TOMMY: I thought she liked me.

CRAIG: Girls are like that. One minute they love you. Next minute they dump you through a friend, I guess.

TOMMY: I planned this whole thing.

CRAIG: I know. Tough break.

LUCY: *(To Miranda:)* Stop looking in the mirror.

MIRANDA: No. Not until I get used to the glare.

LUCY: Nobody's glaring.

MIRANDA: I meant the way my mouth reflects sun now. Are people staring?

LUCY: No one's looking over here. Tommy was looking for you, though.

MIRANDA: What? What'd you say?

LUCY: The truth.

MIRANDA: No! You didn't tell him about the—

LUCY: I just said that you didn't want to see him.

TOMMY: *(To Craig:)* I made her this necklace with lettered beads. It says, "Will you go to the dance with me, Miranda?"

CRAIG: That's a lot of beads.

MIRANDA: *(To Lucy:)* But I do want to see him. I just don't want him to see me like this.

LUCY: Do you want me to go get him? He'll understand, Miranda. He likes you.

MIRANDA: Oh, God. Uhh, yes. Go tell him I want to see him. Go before I change my mind.

(Lucy walks to Tommy and Craig.)

TOMMY: It's a pretty big necklace. And I was planning on kissing her.

CRAIG: You guys hadn't kissed?

TOMMY: No. And now we can't. We'll never kiss. Never.

(Lucy only catches the end of his sentence. She gasps and quickly returns to Miranda.)

MIRANDA: So?

LUCY: Nothing!

MIRANDA: Nothing?

LUCY: I can't say. Don't worry. It's nothing.

MIRANDA: You're freaking me out, Lucy. What did he say?

LUCY: Don't be mad if I tell you.

MIRANDA: I'm going to be mad if you don't tell me.

LUCY: OK, don't freak out, but I just heard Tommy tell Craig that he's never going to kiss you.

MIRANDA: Never?

LUCY: That's what he said.

MIRANDA: Oh, God. Oh, no! He must have heard about the braces!

LUCY: No! Maybe, but—

MIRANDA: You don't think he wants to see me so he can dump me, do you? Oh my God, he wants to break up.

LUCY: I wish I hadn't heard anything.

MIRANDA: Two months of true love down the drain because my teeth are too crooked.

LUCY: Look on the bright side.

MIRANDA: What's that?

LUCY: Your teeth won't be crooked after the braces come off.

MIRANDA: That's the best you can do? I'm a metal-mouthed monster and now I'm single! I'm gonna die alone! All alone!

(She begins to sob.)

CRAIG: It's not too late, bro. Go talk to her. Convince her that you're still the right dude for her.

TOMMY: You think there's some other dude?

CRAIG: No, bro. No. I'm just saying you need to assert yourself. You want her for another two months, you gotta tell her.

LUCY: *(To Miranda:)* Stop crying! It's not the end of the world. You can win him back.

MIRANDA: How?

LUCY: Own those teeth. He didn't fall in love with you for your mouth. He loves you because of who you are, Miranda. Go tell him what's up.

CRAIG: *(To Tommy:)* You go give her that necklace and she'll give you her heart.

TOMMY: That's poetic.

CRAIG: I know. Now go get her, tiger.

MIRANDA: *(To Lucy:)* You're right. I'm beautiful.

LUCY: You're a catch.

MIRANDA: (*Hyperventilating:*) I'm a catch! I'm not a monster...I'm worthwhile. I'm great. I'm a catch.

LUCY: Hey, hey. Catch your breath.

MIRANDA: I'm freaking out.

LUCY: Go tell him. You'll feel better after you do. Just go.

MIRANDA: Here goes nothing.

TOMMY: Here goes nothing.

(Miranda and Tommy meet at center.)

We need to talk.

MIRANDA: Stop. Don't break up with me.

TOMMY: Break up with you? I thought you —

MIRANDA: Look, I know you heard about my braces. I know you don't ever want to kiss me. And I just want to change your mind.

TOMMY: You got braces?

MIRANDA: I get it, OK? I get it! I've got more metal in my mouth than a bird cage. I've got more metal in my mouth than a skyscraper. All of that may be true, but all I know is these past two months have really meant a lot to me and I thought I was more to you than a pretty smile.

TOMMY: Miranda, I don't want to break up with you.

MIRANDA: I'm a lot more than a mouth full of braces, OK? I'm a smart girl. I'm a pretty girl. I've got a good sense of humor. I'm most of the whole package. And if you can't accept that then I'm better off without you.

TOMMY: Miranda! I don't want to break up!

MIRANDA: You don't?

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RANGER

A short drama by
Nina Ki

CAST OF CHARACTERS

LUIS, a young man in his early teens. The inhabitant of a small town that he desperately wishes to escape from. A strange mixture of a person who has experienced enough of life to have lost some of his innocence, yet still has much to know and live.

TOMMY, Luis's younger brother by a few years, and inhabitant of the same small town, though he does not have the same strong desire to leave. He looks up to and adores his older brother.

(A garden. LUIS, a young boy, carves viciously into the trunk of a tree with a pen knife. His younger brother, TOMMY, enters.)

TOMMY: Luis!

(Startled, Luis turns.)

LUIS: Oh. Tommy. It's you.

TOMMY: *(Breathlessly:)* You ran out so fast. I had to run to keep up, and even then I still—

(Beat. Tommy squints, looking hard at what is in Luis's hand.)

What's that you got?

(Luis shrugs, hiding it behind him.)

LUIS: Don't worry about it.

TOMMY: *(Persistently:)* What is it?

(He goes over to Luis, and tries to look behind him.)

LUIS: I said, don't worry about it.

TOMMY: I want to see—

(Tommy tries to look as Luis holds him at bay, and in the ensuing scuffle, Tommy wrenches it from Luis, falling to the ground.)

LUIS: Tommy, for Chrissake—

(Tommy gasps as he sees what it is.)

TOMMY: Luis, this is Dad's favorite pen knife—the one with the silver handle. *(Pause.)* He's been looking for this for weeks—

LUIS: Shut up, all right? Jesus!

(He grabs the knife from him, and shoves it in his pocket.)

A man can't do nothing 'round here without having some busybody all up in his business—

(Tommy looks hurt, but persists.)

TOMMY: How did you get that? Does he know you have it?

LUIS: None of your business.

TOMMY: I bet he doesn't. If he finds out you have it, he's going to be real mad. Even madder than he was with you before.

LUIS: I said, it's none of your business. And don't you dare tell.

(Beat. Then Tommy shrugs, and stands next to Luis, leaning against the wall like him. A long beat.)

TOMMY: I was worried 'bout you. You ran out so fast—

LUIS: You shouldn't have been.

TOMMY: I know. I mean, I know you can take care of yourself, but— *(Pause.)* I dunno. You looked upset.

(Luis does not answer. Tommy looks again at the knife.)

Can I hold it?

LUIS: Heck no.

TOMMY: Come on, just a little bit?

LUIS: I said, no. You're too young. You could hurt yourself.

TOMMY: You're only fourteen!

LUIS: *(Shrugging:)* I'm older than you.

TOMMY: Only by two years!

LUIS: Well, that still makes me your older brother. And I say no, so—so just shut up for once and listen to me.

(Tommy sulks. Beat.)

TOMMY: Dad was real pissed off at you, huh?

LUIS: Yeah, well, when isn't he?

TOMMY: He didn't hit you too hard, did he?

LUIS: (*Shortly:*) No.

(*Long beat.*)

TOMMY: I'm sorry, Luis.

LUIS: For what?

TOMMY: I—didn't want him to sell Ranger, either.

LUIS: Well you sure as hell didn't say nothing. (*Pause, bitterly:*) You just stood to the side and watched—

TOMMY: (*Quickly:*) I know. I know. I'm sorry, I just— (*Pause.*) Dad gets so mad, you know how he gets, and he was in such a bad mood—

LUIS: So you were too much of a coward to speak up, then.

TOMMY: No, it's not that, I just—I—

(*Luis gives him a piercing look.*)

I love Ranger! He's special, and—I know how much you like him— (*Pause.*) I wasn't being a coward.

LUIS: At least I spoke up. Even if Dad hit me—

TOMMY: He hit you because you used curse words. And whined.

LUIS: I did not whine.

TOMMY: Well, it just sounded like—

LUIS: I wasn't whining!!

TOMMY: Okay.

(*Luis turns away, shrugging.*)

LUIS: Just know that Ranger's gone because of you.

TOMMY: No!! (*Pause, struggling:*) I mean, I was — I just wanted to make sure — (*Pause, then urgently:*) I was going to buy him back!

LUIS: Yeah, right.

TOMMY: No, I was! I have two hundred dollars saved —

(Beat. Luis eyes his brother. Then, snorting and shaking his head:)

LUIS: No, you don't.

TOMMY: I do!

LUIS: Yeah? (*Sarcastically:*) I didn't know you could make money like that doing a paper route —

TOMMY: Don't make fun of me!! (*Pause, then desperately:*) I've been saving it for four years!!

(Luis hesitates, giving Tommy an odd look.)

LUIS: You do not have two hundred dollars.

TOMMY: I saved everything Grandma and Grandpa gave me for every Christmas and birthday. And I put in at least three dollars from what Jem gives me, every week.

(Luis gives his brother another look, deliberating on whether to believe him or not.)

LUIS: Then show me.

TOMMY: It's hidden, at home —

LUIS: Liar. Someone would have found it —

TOMMY: Underneath the couch, under the rug. There's a loose board on the floor, I've been hiding it there. (*Pause.*) I was saving it for a bike. Almost had enough, too, but — when Dad started talking about selling Ranger, I knew I had to buy him. Two hundred is way more than the price of a beagle —

LUIS: (*Shaking his head:*) No, it's not.

TOMMY: What?

LUIS: A beagle is worth three hundred, four hundred easy. Maybe even more.

(He pulls out the knife, and looks at it.)

This knife is worth more than what you got, right now –

TOMMY: Oh. (*Pause.*) Well, maybe if we just talk to whoever bought him –

LUIS: Dad gave him to Joe. The bartender. Dad owes Joe a favor, and Joe was lookin' for a dog to breed his Betsy with, so –

TOMMY: Joe? But isn't he – I mean, didn't he and his family just move to –

LUIS: Up north. Yeah. (*Pause, bitterly:*) It's no use. Ranger's gone.

TOMMY: Oh.

(Long pause. Tommy looks forlorn, almost about to cry. Luis glares at him.)

LUIS: (*Snapping:*) Well don't cry about it!!

TOMMY: (*Turning away:*) I'm not –

(Luis snorts derisively, and turns away. Long beat. Tommy dabs at his eyes with his shirt, and Luis pretends not to notice.)

LUIS: (*Suddenly:*) Let's go get him.

TOMMY: What?

LUIS: Ranger. Let's go get him back.

TOMMY: But isn't he up in –

LUIS: We can get a train ticket.

(They look at each other.)

TOMMY: But—how—

LUIS: We can use your money. And sell the knife. That'll be 'bout five hundred all together, at least, and we can use it to get out there. *(Pause.)* Heck, with that much we can probably even get one of those nice cars you hear about, with a free dinner and velvet seats—won't take much more than a day at most. *(With growing enthusiasm:)* We can get outside this backwards little podunk town, for once.

TOMMY: But— *(Pause.)* But if we use the money on the train, how will we buy Ranger back?

LUIS: We'll—take him. *(Pause.)* We'll find out where they're keeping him, and take him. He's ours, anyway. It wasn't right of Dad to sell him when he's not his—

TOMMY: Well, what about Dad?

LUIS: What about him?

TOMMY: Won't he notice we're gone—

(Luis snorts, and spits.)

LUIS: He could use a little bit of the fear of God in him, anyway. *(Bitterly:)* I hope he sees us gone and chokes on it—

(Tommy swallows, hard. He averts his eyes, saying nothing. Luis claps Tommy on the shoulder.)

Come on, what do you say? I can go over to the pawn shop right now. We can sell the knife, then go down to the train station—Sunday's a good time to leave. Dad'll be out, meeting with that rancher—

TOMMY: *(Slowly:)* I don't know, Luis.

LUIS: *(Snapping:)* Don't be a sissy. It's your being a sissy that got us here, in the first place.

(Tommy looks very hurt. He turns away, and hides his face behind his sleeve.)

What? What now?

(Beat.)

Are you crying again—

TOMMY: *(Yes he is:)* No!!

LUIS: Aww, come on, Tommy.

(Luis goes to touch him on the shoulder, but Tommy jerks away.)

Don't cry— *(Pause.)* I was just— messin' around—

TOMMY: I really did want to stop Dad from selling Ranger.

LUIS: I know that—

TOMMY: And I was saving all that money, for him. Because I love him. And I wanted to make sure we could still have him—

LUIS: All right.

TOMMY: I wasn't trying, to—to be a sissy, I just—if I could take it back now, I would have said something. I wouldn't have let you be the one to get hit and yelled at by Dad, I would have stuck by you and said something too—

(Luis looks at Tommy, looking as if he feels bad. Then he pats Tommy on the back, a little awkwardly.)

LUIS: I— know. *(Pause.)* I know you're not a sissy, Tommy, I'm sorry I called you that. Ranger getting sold was just—I know. I'm sorry.

(Tommy sniffles, and Luis sighs.)

I'm just mad at Dad because he sold Ranger. I'm just sad about it, not mad at you. It wasn't your fault.

(Tommy nods his acceptance of this apology, and the two stand there for a moment. Luis patting Tommy on the back, and Tommy's sniffles subsiding. Long beat.)

TOMMY: We're going to come back though, right, Luis?

LUIS: What?

TOMMY: I know how much you hate this town and sometimes how you hate Dad, but you wouldn't leave, right? 'Cause—you and Dad, and Ranger I guess too, you guys are the only ones I got. *(Pause.)* You're my family, Luis.

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CONFESSIONS OF A PEANUT BUTTER ADDICT

A short comic monologue by
Allan Bates

CAST OF CHARACTERS

SARA, female, a teenager.

SARA: It all started when I was in the second grade. My mother says it was when I was in the first grade. But I know it wasn't. We've had that argument hundreds of times. Or probably really dozens. Dozens at least. Not really arguments. Discussions. She thinks...my mother, that is. She thinks it was when I was in first grade because that's when I met Annabel. I did meet Annabel when she moved next door to us and that was in first grade. But the problem was when I met Emily when she transferred into our school, my school, Maple Avenue Elementary School, when I was in second grade.

Emily had gone to Ben Franklin Elementary and she wasn't very happy there because people teased her. I never knew why because Emily was—still is—a very nice girl. And smart. And she always brought the best sandwiches to school for lunch every day. She... But first, let me tell you about Annabel's sandwiches. Really interesting! They'd have things like olive spread or arugula—I still don't know what arugula is. And Annabel would sit right there next to me and open her sandwich and say, "This is arugula" or whatever. And she'd stick her finger between the leaves of arugula and find maybe some weird cheese that she'd tell me the name of but I couldn't ever remember and then put the sandwich back together and ask me if I'd like a bite... Annabel always started her sandwich with a huge bite. When she took that huge bite and I said, "Yuk," she always had this funny little look on her face like she was almost ready to cry. So after a while, about October I think it was, I started saying, "No thank you, Annabel." Then she'd take that huge bite with a smile on her face. I think that's when I learned to be really polite. Like I am now. I hope you've noticed that.

So you see, Annabel wasn't the problem and it wasn't in first grade. No matter what my mother says.

The problem was when Emily transferred into Maple Avenue Elementary School in second grade. Right from the start Emily

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became friends with Annabel and me. And we'd all sit together at the same table in the lunch room. And Emily would bring these delicious sandwiches. Peanut butter and jelly! Peanut butter in every sandwich! Sometimes with grape jelly, which was all right, but sometimes with strawberry jam or apricot jam or peach jam. All of them delicious! Believe me, I know they were delicious because Emily used to give me a bite every single day!

Well, she didn't give me a bite at first but after a few days she could see I really wanted to taste her sandwich and that's when she started to say, "Go ahead and try a bite." She saw I wanted to try her sandwich because I'd be sitting there with carrot strips wrapped in wax paper and held together with a rubber band and raisins in the same kind of package. And an apple or a banana and usually some cheese, yellow cheese, and crackers. But always carrot strips and raisins. And sometimes I didn't even open them.

At first I'd take a little nibble of Emily's sandwich and want more. Pretty soon she'd say, "Go ahead, take a big bite." And before long I was taking a huge bite every day and Emily would just smile at me and I'd say, "Thank you." Which is not easy to say when you have peanut butter sticking to your teeth. I could always tell if it was Emily's mother who made the sandwich that day or if Emily made it herself. Because when Emily made the sandwich she always put the jam in there extra thick. And usually it was strawberry when she made it. And those days we'd always have some strawberry jam on our chins and peanut butter on our teeth when we were done. Emily always offered Annabel a bite too, but Annabel always said, "No thank you" and went on with her sandwich. Though sometimes when she put her finger in her sandwich she'd push something really strange looking out of it.

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I suppose you think all this isn't why I became a peanut butter addict. But it is.

One day when I came home from school Mother wasn't there. She was just next door, but I didn't know that. And I was hungry. It had to be a day when Emily's mother had made her sandwich and put in something like grapefruit marmalade which would mean I didn't even taste a little bite. I still can't stand grapefruit marmalade. Anyway, I looked in the kitchen cabinets for something to eat. There were cans of soup and boxes of tea and stuff and of course a roll of waxed paper, but I didn't find anything to eat. So I climbed up on the sink and looked into the cabinet up there. And I found peanut butter. Not just one jar of peanut butter, but six jars of peanut butter! Creamy. Crunchy. And extra crunchy. All of them open except one jar of extra crunchy. I climbed down off the sink and got a spoon and ate a whole spoonful out of each jar! Well, each open jar. They were all delicious! Even without strawberry jam.

After a few days of that—me climbing up and eating spoonfuls of peanut butter when, well like when my mother was doing the laundry— she wondered where all her peanut butter had gone. Actually, she knew.

But I should tell you first—one day I was sure Mother was going to catch me. I heard her footsteps coming near. I climbed down from the sink as fast as I could and got away. I was pretty sure she didn't hear me. Didn't hear me or see me after all.

I'll bet you know sort of what happened. The peanut butter jars got emptier and emptier. And, well, as the peanut butter jars got emptier and emptier, I tried to take less and less each day. But it didn't seem to work. It seemed like the harder I tried to take less the more was gone out of each jar. After maybe a week or two, I tried the unopened jar, the extra

crunchy jar, and this time I found it was open. I ate a tiny spoonful. I put a bigger spoonful of it in the crunchy jar and smoothed it to look like it belonged in that jar. I turned the lids on the crunchy jar and the extra crunch jar extra tight and hurried to my room.

The next day I didn't even touch that extra crunchy jar. I really didn't.

But the day after that...soon after I came home from school...while I was in my room with the door shut, I heard a sound, like feet shuffling, outside my door. Then nothing. All quiet. Then I heard a gentle knock on my door. Then quiet again. Then I heard Mother say, "Sara." Just, "Sara." Her voice sounded... Well, I knew it was Mother's voice, but I'd never heard her voice like that before. Very quiet. Almost like she'd never called me Sara before.

My own voice seemed to stick in my throat. Then, I said, "Yes." Kind of lower than usual, trying to sound calm.

"Sara, may I come in?" She had never asked me before if she could come in. She had just knocked on the door once, waited a second, and then come in.

She didn't come in.

Want to read the entire script? Order a perusal copy today!

HI, WE THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD

A short dramedy by
Kenyon Brown

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CONNOR, male, any race, age 13. Eighth grader. Smart, wise.

LUKE, male, any race, age 14. Eighth grader. Flakey.

WILLIAM, male, any race, age 14. Eighth grader. Easy going.

ANDREW, male, any race, age 13. Eighth grader. Serious, emotional.

SETTING

Boys' locker room in a middle school gym.

TIME

The present. Morning, during a school day.

SUGGESTED PROPS

Basketball, uniforms, backpacks, cell phones.

PRODUCTION NOTES

This play is intended for middle school and high school students. It might not be appropriate for younger audiences.

(Locker room. Morning, during a school day. CONNOR and LUKE are changing into warm-up basketball uniforms. Luke is bouncing a basketball. WILLIAM enters. Connor and Luke freeze, stare at William.)

WILLIAM: What?

CONNOR: Hi...William...

LUKE: You're not dead?

CONNOR: Dude, I never believed it.

LUKE: Me neither.

CONNOR: Yes, you did.

LUKE: Well, I mean I did like for a moment. But then you didn't think he was dead. Then I thought for sure you must be right. No way William is dead. Not with the game tonight. He can't play if he's dead. We can't win if he's dead. So he must be alive.

WILLIAM: I am alive.

LUKE: Obviously.

WILLIAM: What are you talking about?

CONNOR: Dude, we thought you were dead.

LUKE: Yeah.

CONNOR: The text message from your dad.

WILLIAM: My dad? Connor, why would my dad text you?

LUKE: I got a text, too. He texted everyone.

CONNOR: He said he was texting everyone in your contact list about your accident.

WILLIAM: Accident?

CONNOR: You were walking across the street when a car hit you...

LUKE: And didn't stop. A hit and ruin.

CONNOR: Hit and run.

LUKE: Yeah, a hit and run. Totally cold.

WILLIAM: My dad just dropped me off. I was at the dentist.

LUKE: Oh, I hate the dentist.

CONNOR: Your dad said you died in the ambulance.

LUKE: I'm supposed to get a wisdom tooth removed.

CONNOR: Luke, focus. It's on Facebook, too.

LUKE: And everyone's tweeting about it.

CONNOR: Haven't you read your wall? Or seen the "Likes" on Instagram?

(Luke takes phone out of pocket. Boys gather around cell phone.)

WILLIAM: "...totally heinous act...beyond comprehension..." My dad doesn't say stuff like that. And now people think I'm dead?

LUKE: This is the most badass thing that's ever happened to us.

WILLIAM: To us?

LUKE: Well, I mean we're like bros, right?

CONNOR: William, you have to text people you're not dead.

LUKE: Yeah, William, you shouldn't pretend you're dead. It's not like pretending you're sick and you stay home playing Halo 3.

WILLIAM: Luke, I'm not pretending I'm dead.

LUKE: Well, everybody thinks you're dead.

CONNOR: People are like hysterical. They've been crying. Even teachers. Even Coach.

LUKE: Yeah, Coach led us in saying a prayer for you and your family.

WILLIAM: This is so whack.

LUKE: I wish people would say a prayer for me.

CONNOR: Dude, you need all the prayers you can get. Will you focus on William, please? How could your dad text us from your phone?

WILLIAM: My phone?

LUKE: It was definitely from your phone.

CONNOR: Did your dad take your phone away from you?

LUKE: I hate it when my parents take my phone privileges away.

CONNOR: Luke...

LUKE: I know. Focus.

WILLIAM: I misplaced it... I've been searching everywhere...

LUKE: You lost your phone?

WILLIAM: Maybe. I don't know.

CONNOR: When?

WILLIAM: Friday, I think. I thought it was in my back pocket.

LUKE: Did it fall into the toilet?

CONNOR: How could it fall into the toilet when his dad texted us with William's phone?

LUKE: Oh, right.

WILLIAM: My dad didn't text anyone.

LUKE: Never take a dump and text at the same time. What?

CONNOR: Did you check your backpack?

WILLIAM: Yes, I checked it.

CONNOR: It's a 9-1-1, dude.

LUKE: Definitely a 9-1-1.

CONNOR: Someone knows your phone password.

WILLIAM: I don't password my phone.

CONNOR: Whoa. Not good.

LUKE: Definitely not good.

CONNOR: You have to tell your parents.

WILLIAM: I am sooo dead...

LUKE: That's funny. I mean since you're supposed to be dead but you're really not.

CONNOR: You have to cancel your phone.

WILLIAM: I know...

LUKE: I hate telling my parents every time I lose my phone.

CONNOR: How many times have you lost your phone?

LUKE: A few...

WILLIAM: I can't believe this is happening.

LUKE: How else could somebody be texting everyone from your phone?

WILLIAM: And change my Facebook password. My password doesn't work anymore.

CONNOR: You can't get into Facebook?

LUKE: This is so not good.

CONNOR: Ya think?

(ANDREW enters. He sees William, freezes.)

WILLIAM: What'll people say when they find out?

LUKE: People really love you now that you're dead.

WILLIAM: But I'm not dead.

LUKE: Then people will love you even more when they find out you're alive.

(Andrew rushes over to William, hugs him.)

WILLIAM: I'm not dead, Andrew.

LUKE: See? He's loved.

CONNOR: Dude, get emotional, why don't you?

WILLIAM: You can let go of me now, Andrew.

(Andrew lets go of William.)

ANDREW: I don't understand...

CONNOR: Like none of us do.

LUKE: William, you can go to the office. Tell them to make an announcement you're not dead.

CONNOR: Just like that?

LUKE: It's faster than texting.

ANDREW: How could...?

WILLIAM: Someone's ripped off my phone and texting with it.

ANDREW: There are all these flowers and pictures of you by your locker.

WILLIAM: Really?

LUKE: I lit a candle for you.

CONNOR: Dude, you lit a candle?

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LUKE: I like candles.

ANDREW: People are like shocked.

WILLIAM: I have to go to my locker and get my books.

ANDREW: If you go to your locker, you'll shock people even more...

LUKE: You mean we're the only ones who know you're not dead?

WILLIAM: I guess. When my dad dropped me off, I walked straight to the gym.

CONNOR: You should find Coach and tell him before practice starts.

LUKE: But just don't walk out of the locker room and say, "Surprise! I'm not dead!" Say it but like positively. "I'm alive! I'm alive!"

CONNOR: Are you for real?

WILLIAM: But it's not my fault.

LUKE: *(To Andrew:)* Wait. What are you doing here?

CONNOR: Yeah, this is just for the starters. We have permission from our teachers to be here.

LUKE: Yeah, you don't have permission.

ANDREW: Coach said I should come.

LUKE: But you're second string. You don't practice with us.

ANDREW: I'm starting in the game tonight.

WILLIAM: You're replacing me?

LUKE: That's cold when you're not really dead.

ANDREW: Coach is giving me a chance.

CONNOR: You can't center.

LUKE: Yeah, you're too short.

ANDREW: No, I'm not. Anyway, it's not all about height.

CONNOR: Dude, it's about having the hands.

LUKE: And you definitely don't got the hands.

ANDREW: I do too.

CONNOR: You're more a small forward.

LUKE: Definitely a small forward.

ANDREW: I'm a good center.

LUKE: For second string maybe.

CONNOR: You're not as good as William.

WILLIAM: Talk about me like I'm not here, why don't you?

CONNOR: It is so wrong you're starting, Andrew.

LUKE: So wrong.

WILLIAM: I can't believe the game's still on.

LUKE: It's not like we want to play without you. Coach said you'd want us to continue.

CONNOR: Dude, the game has to go on.

LUKE: Yeah, the game has to go on.

CONNOR: It's the best way to honor your memory.

LUKE: You don't want us to be sad, do you?

CONNOR: We're dedicating the rest of the season to you.

WILLIAM: Hel-lo-oo, I'm not dead!

LUKE: William's right. He's not dead.

(Connor starts texting on phone.)

ANDREW: I think I should still suit up. Coach told me to.

CONNOR: I'll text Coach to come to the locker room.

ANDREW: But he'll see William isn't dead.

CONNOR: Du-uh.

ANDREW: But I won't start.

WILLIAM: Connor, don't send the text. I'll go talk to Coach.

LUKE: When William walks into his office, Coach'll think it's like a miracle.

CONNOR: Only if William was really dead, dufus.

LUKE: Then actually William would be like a zombie.

ANDREW: Dead, then not dead.

LUKE: The undead, exactly.

ANDREW: I don't know how William's going to explain this.

WILLIAM: I am standing here, you know.

ANDREW: People will be really upset. Maybe you shouldn't play.

WILLIAM: It's not my fault people think I died.

LUKE: Then people will cheer when you run out on court.

ANDREW: Or they'll boo.

WILLIAM: Why would they boo me?

ANDREW: You know, like they'll think it's a hoax.

CONNOR: He's right, William. Dude, think about it. People will say you punk'd them.

WILLIAM: I'm the one who's been punk'd.

CONNOR: They don't know that.

LUKE: You'll lose all your cool points.

WILLIAM: Someone's playing a joke on me.

CONNOR: This could be a major backfire. Coach could bench you for the rest of the season.

LUKE: Or kick you off the team.

CONNOR: At least until he finds out the truth.

(William slams locker door.)

WILLIAM: What can I do?

ANDREW: Stay dead until after the game tonight.

LUKE: Whoa, that's harsh.

ANDREW: It'll give you time to think of what you're going to say.

WILLIAM: What about me playing in the game?

ANDREW: I'll take your place like Coach wants me to.

WILLIAM: That means you'll start as center.

ANDREW: I can do it. I'll play the best I've ever played. William, you won't be sorry.

WILLIAM: How can this be happening when I didn't do anything wrong?

ANDREW: I have to play. It's the only way Coach will see I can do it.

CONNOR: With William, we have a shot at being in the finals.

ANDREW: Are you saying we don't with me playing?

LUKE: You haven't played much all season.

ANDREW: Only because Coach hasn't put me in.

LUKE: For a reason.

WILLIAM: Okay, okay – this is not helping.

ANDREW: I'm just as good as William.

LUKE: I don't think so.

ANDREW: I deserve to play. Why are you all against me?

CONNOR: Andrew, chill.

WILLIAM: Everyone chill.

LUKE: This is the most jank of anything bad that's ever happened.

CONNOR: The person who did this is really cold.

LUKE: Bogus.

ANDREW: Beyond comprehension.

CONNOR: Messed up.

WILLIAM: Definitely twisted.

LUKE: Not funny.

ANDREW: A totally heinous act.

WILLIAM: So gnarly.

LUKE: You sound like the text.

WILLIAM: What?

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THE UNDERGROUNDHOG RAILROAD

A short dramedy by
Jeri Weiss

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JAYDEN, male; environmentally conscious middle school student.

BREE, female; materialistic middle school student.

SETTING

A neighborhood outdoors.

NOTES

The "iPhone" can be changed to the newest, most popular cell phone at the time of production. A stuffed animal may be used as the groundhog, or the actors can pantomime holding one.

(JAYDEN sits on a bench. He has something hidden in his jacket.)

JAYDEN: I'm sorry, Harry. I wish I could keep you.

(BREE enters and sees Jayden talking into his jacket.)

BREE: What are you doing?

(Startled, Jayden closes his jacket.)

Who are you talking to?

JAYDEN: Nobody.

BREE: (Looking at his jacket:) What do you have in there?

JAYDEN: Nothing.

BREE: Then why is your jacket moving?

(Jayden pulls a baby groundhog from his jacket.)

Oh my gosh. What is that?

JAYDEN: It's a *Marmota monax*. A member of the *Sciuridae* family.

BREE: In English.

JAYDEN: It's a baby groundhog.

(Bree sits next to Jayden.)

BREE: It's so cute. Where did you get it?

JAYDEN: I found him. I named him Harry.

BREE: Hi, Harry. Aww. I want one.

JAYDEN: You can't have one.

BREE: Why not?

JAYDEN: They're illegal in our state.

BREE: How can an animal be illegal?

JAYDEN: It's an invasive species.

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BREE: What does that mean?

JAYDEN: They're not native to the area.

BREE: So what? This is America, right? It's a free country.

JAYDEN: You're missing the point. Non-native animals are a threat to our ecosystem.

BREE: How could this sweet little thing be a threat to anyone?

JAYDEN: By eating plants that our own native species need to survive.

BREE: Well, it sounds like a stupid law to me.

JAYDEN: Well, it's not.

BREE: Are your parents letting you keep him?

JAYDEN: Yeah, right. They won't even let me have a goldfish. They're calling Animal Control.

BREE: Animal Control. They can't do that. They'll kill him, won't they? Let's just take him back where you found him and let him go.

JAYDEN: Weren't you listening to what I just said? They endanger the ecosystem.

BREE: You and your ecosystem.

JAYDEN: *Our* ecosystem.

BREE: Well, you can't just let them take him.

JAYDEN: What else am I supposed to do with him? Would your parents let you keep him?

BREE: My mom might, but my dad threatened to leave if we brought home one more pet.

JAYDEN: Is your dad as cute as this little guy?

BREE: No, but this little guy is not gonna buy me a new iPhone.

JAYDEN: Materialist.

(Bree tries to think of a comparable insult, but the best she can come up with is:)

BREE: Environmentalist.

(Jayden laughs.)

Can I hold him?

(Jayden pulls Harry away from her.)

JAYDEN: I think he's hungry. I need to feed him.

BREE: I'm not going to let him go. You can feed him in a minute.

JAYDEN: Alright.

(Bree takes Harry.)

BREE: Hi little guy – *(Holding him in front of her:)* Uh, I hate to break it to you, but I think Harry is a Harriet.

JAYDEN: Oh. I didn't notice.

BREE: You wouldn't.

JAYDEN: What's that supposed to mean?

BREE: Nothing. *(To the groundhog:)* You're a pretty little girl, aren't you, Harriet? Look at your big belly. You're a tubby little thing. You're a little Harriet Tubman.

JAYDEN: Harriet Tubman. That's funny. *(Beat.)* No, that's not funny; that's brilliant.

BREE: Huh?

JAYDEN: Harriet Tubman. You know who she is, don't you?

BREE: Didn't she have something to do with slavery?

JAYDEN: Uh, yeah? Ever heard of the Underground Railroad?

BREE: That's how she got the slaves free, right? She built a railroad.

JAYDEN: It wasn't an actual railroad. It was a network of people who helped move the slaves from town to town until they reached a free state.

BREE: Okay, well, thanks for the history lesson.

JAYDEN: Don't you see? That's how we're going to set Harriet free. We're going to set up an underground railroad to a free state.

BREE: But...she's not African American.

(Jayden just looks at her.)

JAYDEN: Really? *(Beat.)* I'm talking about taking her someplace where groundhogs aren't illegal. Like...Punxsutawney.

BREE: Punx-a-what-ey?

JAYDEN: It's a town in Pennsylvania.

BREE: That would take a really long tunnel.

JAYDEN: The underground railroad wasn't actually underground, you know.

BREE: Well, that's dumb. Why did they call it that?

JAYDEN: Because it was done in secret.

BREE: Oh, like undercover.

JAYDEN: Right.

BREE: So how do we do it?

JAYDEN: I have a friend who lives in Winchester. I can make it there on my bike in about three hours. I take Harriet with me and drop her off with Jess. Then Jess rides his bike to

someone who lives a few hours north from him, and it continues like that.

BREE: So it would be like an Under-ground-hog Railroad?

(Jayden smiles at her.)

JAYDEN: Yeah. We just need someone at the other end who can release her in a safe place.

BREE: My cousin lives in Maryland. She could probably get Harriet over the border.

JAYDEN: So if we can find enough people from here to your cousin's house, we can transport her to freedom.

BREE: How do we do that?

JAYDEN: We need to call everyone we know between here and Maryland.

(They get out their phones. Bree's is woefully outdated.)

What kind of phone is that?

BREE: I know, right? That's why I need the new iPhone.

JAYDEN: Does it even text?

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FAMILY MEETING

A short comedy by
Don Zolidis

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MOM

DAD

KAITLYN, a teenager.

SVEN, a foreign exchange student, does not actually have to be a teenager.

(In a living room, DAD and MOM are preparing.)

DAD: You ready for this?

MOM: I don't know if I can do this, Bob.

DAD: You can. You can. Remember – we love her.

MOM: We do.

(They grip hands.)

DAD: Sweetheart, could you come in here for a bit? Your mother and I would like to talk to you!

(No response.)

It's important!

KAITLYN: *(Off:)* I'm kinda busy!

MOM: We need to talk to you! It's very important!

(KAITLYN enters, confused.)

KAITLYN: Can we do this quick because—?

(Mom leaps to her feet and gets between Kaitlyn and her room.)

MOM: Aha!

KAITLYN: What?

DAD: We've got you!

KAITLYN: What? What are you talking about?

DAD: Family Meeting!

KAITLYN: *(Baffled:)* You could've just said that—

DAD: No, no, no. You're not escaping this time. This time we're having a meeting.

MOM: We're having a big meeting. Sit.

(Kaitlyn sits reluctantly.)

KAITLYN: I still don't know what's going on.

DAD: Honey, would you like to tell her?

MOM: I thought you were going to tell her.

DAD: We talked about this. It sounds better coming from you.

MOM: You need to be the voice of authority, Bob.

KAITLYN: What is it?!

DAD: Okay, fine. (*Slight pause.*) Your mother is going to begin.

MOM: There seems to be some tension in the house. We've all been feeling it.

KAITLYN: That's your fault, not mine.

MOM: Can I finish please? I have a list here of things that have bothered me lately about you and your behavior.

(She looks at a long list.)

But you know what? I'm going to skip the minor things and get right to the major problem.

KAITLYN: Major problem?

MOM: It's...

(She can't bring herself to say it. She looks to Dad.)

DAD: You can say it honey. Be strong.

(He holds Mom's hand in solidarity.)

MOM: You're my rock.

DAD: And you're my rock.

KAITLYN: Can we get to it?!

MOM: It's...it's your basketball skills.

KAITLYN: What?

DAD: Let your mother speak. Tell her what we've been thinking about.

MOM: Well...I think we all would prefer someone in this family who can dunk.

KAITLYN: I'm five three.*

*(*Or whatever height she happens to be.)*

DAD: Spud Webb could dunk. Spud Webb was like four feet tall.

KAITLYN: He was a guy.

MOM: I don't like the way you use your gender as an excuse. A girl can do anything a boy can do.

DAD: When you were young you could dunk. We had that little basketball hoop and you were dunking all the time—

KAITLYN: That was like two feet tall!

DAD: All these excuses from you! Listen to yourself. Don't you even respect who you are? We have high standards for you! And one of them is that we want to see some high-flying jams. Would it kill you to do some windmill 360 thunder dunks on a regulation hoop?!

KAITLYN: I'm a girl!

MOM: Listen young lady, I never want to hear you hiding behind your gender again, you hear me?! Your father's heart is breaking because of your lack of a gravity-defying aerial assault. Look at him. Look at him! He is a sick man because of this! You're killing him!

KAITLYN: I'm not killing him, I just can't dunk!

MOM: I don't think I ever taught you the word "can't." I don't understand how this word got into your vocabulary.

DAD: Ninety percent inspiration. Ten percent perspiration. You think LeBron could dunk if he didn't believe he could dunk?

KAITLYN: Yes. Have you seen him?

DAD: Honey—if you believe in yourself...you can do anything.

MOM: We have tried and tried and tried with you. We've tried reasoning with you, we've tried punishing you, we've tried inspiring you—nothing seems to work.

DAD: So...since this is obviously not working out. We're replacing you.

KAITLYN: What?

MOM: I'm sorry, sweetheart. I wish that I could say love was enough, but after a certain amount of time we need to see results.

KAITLYN: You can't replace me!

DAD: Honey...there's someone we'd like you to meet.

(SVEN enters. Sven doesn't have to be extremely tall, but it would help.)

This is Sven. He's our foreign exchange student.

KAITLYN: What?

SVEN: Ya. Hello.

MOM: He's amazing.

SVEN: Thank you.

KAITLYN: He's a foreign exchange student?

DAD: We just felt like our family worked better with Sven in it. He's...I mean look at him.

MOM: He's really the kind of physical specimen we're looking for in this family.

DAD: It's not all about physical attributes, though—I think your mother and I both felt like his intangibles were off the

charts.

MOM: Oh yeah.

SVEN: Ya. I have great intangibles.

KAITLYN: His intangibles?

MOM: Honey—I love you, I really do, and I've made a big commitment to you, but you just don't believe in yourself.

KAITLYN: This is ridiculous! You can't trade me for a foreign exchange student!

DAD: We just felt that he gives our family a lot more presence in the low post.

MOM: Plus, no one has screwed him up mentally like you've obviously been.

KAITLYN: You can't dunk.

DAD: Don't you say that!

MOM: I can't dunk? I can't dunk? I dunked when I was seven months pregnant with you!

DAD: She did! I didn't see it but she told me about it afterwards and this is a marriage built on trust.

MOM: Thank you, Bob.

DAD: No thank you. For being inspirational.

MOM: I'm not inspirational. I'm just one woman.

KAITLYN: I can't do it. I'm never going to be able to do it.

MOM: If only your grandmother could hear you now.

KAITLYN: Grandma couldn't dunk either!

MOM: Grandma couldn't dunk because she wasn't allowed to dunk! Do you know how many women have sacrificed to give you the opportunities you have today? What we went

through? The harassment we suffered? And to have you, little miss everything, come along and throw away the opportunity to shatter an opponent's will to fight with a backboard-shattering jam is disgusting!

DAD: I'm disgusted!

SVEN: Ya. Me too.

KAITLYN: What's – what's going to happen to me?

DAD: We're sending you to the farm.

KAITLYN: The same farm where you sent Rufus and he never came back?!

MOM: Honey, you'll like the farm. They have low standards there.

KAITLYN: I'm not going.

DAD: It'll be better for you. You can be amongst your own kind. The earthbound.

KAITLYN: I don't care. I'm not going near any farm. You know why? Because I traded you for new parents!

DAD: What?

MOM: You can't do that!

KAITLYN: Yes I can! I talked to my own therapist and she told me that the reason I couldn't dunk was because I wasn't receiving the right kind of motivation. And where did that come from? From you! If you were any kind of inspirational parents, I would've been dunking years ago. This is all your fault.

MOM: Our therapist said the opposite!

KAITLYN: Too bad! My new parents are going to be arriving any minute now!

DAD: I'd like to see these people.

KAITLYN: And these are parents who are going to get results! They're Canadian!

DAD: That's preposterous!

MOM: Canadian?!

DAD: It's too cold in Canada for anyone to have kids!

KAITLYN: Not true!

SVEN: Sven likes Canadians.

KAITLYN: That's okay, Sven. You can stay.

SVEN: Yay for Sven.

MOM: You can't keep Sven and trade us!

KAITLYN: Watch me! My new Canadian parents are going to be so much more awesome than you ever were. They're going provide consistent boundaries!

DAD: What!

SVEN: Sven likes consistent boundaries.

KAITLYN: And they're going to give me room to self-actualize and allow me to discover my own true self! While simultaneously inspiring me to elevate over any defender and send them home crying with a series of acrobatic slams so devastating they'll never want to play again.

MOM: I...I don't know what to say.

DAD: You'd trade us? After everything we've done for you? Your mother dunked while she was seven months pregnant with you.

KAITLYN: Hey. Guys. Guys. I feel for you. And that's why I've written you a really nice letter of recommendation.

(She takes out a recommendation letter.)

"Children with minor talents may find Bob and Carol acceptable. For those children with the talent to reach the truly dizzying levels of ability, however, their inability to make effective speeches and sacrifice their personal lives will be a drawback." I did have to be honest. Don't worry. You'll catch on somewhere else. Maybe there are some ducks who've lost a mother, or a kindergarten who needs a room parent.

MOM: But these new parents...they won't love you I like do.

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CLOSETED

A short dramedy by
Jonathan Dorf

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ANDREW, early to mid-teens and not the coolest boy in school.

CHLOE, female, same age and way closer to the top of the pecking order.

PRODUCTION NOTE

In two instances, dialogue is followed by [bracketed] text. The bracketed text may substitute for the dialogue it follows if it is more appropriate for your community or production.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Pam Covington, Billy Houck, Parker Kaeding, Daniel Rashid and Cassidy Shapiro for their assistance in the development of the play.

(A walk-in closet in a home. ANDREW, early to mid-teens, and CHLOE [pronounced Klo-ee], same age, are inside. MUSIC and PARTY SOUNDS come from the other side of the door. The play should begin in almost total darkness, but as the characters' eyes adjust, the light should gradually increase.)

ANDREW: OK, so...

CHLOE: So...

ANDREW: Well, I guess I should come over there. Or...

CHLOE: Or...?

ANDREW: I don't know.

CHLOE: OK...

ANDREW: *(Beat.)* Yeah. I'll come over there. *(Beat as he doesn't move:)* It's weird that in ten minutes, somebody's just gonna open the door. What if they lose count, and ten minutes goes by and you're just waiting? I mean, can you come out on your own, or do you just have to wait? Or what if they open it, but it's only been six minutes? *(Beat.)* Do you think anybody's ever locked the door from the inside?

CHLOE: What are you talking about?

ANDREW: Nothing. I'm just— Nothing.

CHLOE: *(Beat.)* So are you gonna come over?

ANDREW: Do you want me to?

CHLOE: You just said you were. *(Half to herself:)* It's kind of the point.

ANDREW: Where's the light?

CHLOE: You don't turn on the light.

ANDREW: I can't see. I can feel something next to my foot, but I can't see what it is.

CHLOE: Derek's mom has like 75 pairs of shoes.

ANDREW: It doesn't feel like a shoe.

CHLOE: So step over it.

ANDREW: I don't want to break anything.

CHLOE: Haven't you done this before?

ANDREW: Yeah. Of course. But not in this closet.

CHLOE: A closet's a closet.

ANDREW: I mean they usually have like windows and stuff.

CHLOE: Closets don't have windows.

ANDREW: Sometimes they do.

CHLOE: Where?

ANDREW: I don't know.

(Beat. Andrew is breathing very deliberately. It's loud.)

CHLOE: Are you...what do they call it when you breathe really fast?

ANDREW: Hyperventilating. No. *(Beat.)* It's just I used to get panic attacks, and so I have these breathing techniques that keep me from going all...

CHLOE: All...?

ANDREW: My eyes are starting to adjust. I think I can step over it.

(He moves toward her, his hand reaching out and feeling the air until he touches her arm.)

CHLOE: What is that?

ANDREW: That's my hand.

CHLOE: It's all sweaty.

ANDREW: Sorry. It's like really stuffy in here.

CHLOE: So your hand's all sweaty?

ANDREW: *(Beat.)* We don't have to touch hands. *(Beat.)* I just thought— Never mind.

CHLOE: What?

ANDREW: I just thought it would be nice.

CHLOE: That's sweet. *(Beat.)* But sweaty hands just feel kinda gross.

(Andrew pulls away and blows on his hands.)

What's that?

ANDREW: Nothing.

CHLOE: I just felt something on my ear.

ANDREW: No.

CHLOE: Are you like blowing on my ear?

ANDREW: I'm trying to dry my hands.

CHLOE: *(As he keeps blowing:)* Stop. You're weirding me out.

ANDREW: Sorry.

CHLOE: There's no point drying them.

ANDREW: I guess.

CHLOE: You're just gonna keep sweating.

ANDREW: Sorry.

CHLOE: It's all right. Let's just not touch hands.

(Andrew moves away. The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE BEEP.)

ANDREW: What's that?

CHLOE: None of your business. *(Beat as Chloe checks her phone:)* Janette wants to know if we're making out yet.

ANDREW: Oh. (*Beat.*) What are you gonna tell her? (*Beat.*) Why do they call it Seven Minutes in Heaven if we have ten minutes? (*Beat.*) Sorry. I know you wanted Derek.

CHLOE: Derek's a tool [an idiot].

ANDREW: Isn't he your boyf—

CHLOE: *Ex-boyfriend.*

ANDREW: But you've been holding hands all night.

CHLOE: Cause he doesn't want it to be a whole big thing that we broke up, cause it's his party and he doesn't want the karma or fang shu or whatever to be all messed up, so I said I'd do this one last thing cause of all the good times we had together, which is a total lie, cause we went out for like three months which is totally forever and he bought me one tulip, which I'm like ninety-nine percent sure he stole from the Partridges' garden on his way over, and a stuffed zebra. It's soft, but he knew I wanted a koala and he got me a zebra.

ANDREW: (*Pronounced fung-shway.*) Feng shui.

CHLOE: What?

ANDREW: You said he doesn't want the karma or fang shu to be all messed up. It's feng shui. It's an ancient Chinese science. Well, sort of science with a little magic or mystic thrown in. It means "wind water." It's all about balancing energy in your space so good things happen. So if you want a room to have the right energy, you have to feng shui it by doing stuff like putting plants in the corners to protect against the hard edges, picking the right colors...

CHLOE: Wow. They were right.

ANDREW: Who? Right about what?

CHLOE: Everybody. Everybody says you're like the brain of brains.

ANDREW: I'm not that smart.

CHLOE: You think Mr. Donnelly knows what f...

ANDREW: Feng shui.

CHLOE: (*Carefully parroting him:*) Feng shui is?

ANDREW: Mr. Donnelly is building a school in Kenya next year when he retires.

CHLOE: Doesn't mean he's smart. Just means he's nice.

ANDREW: He designed the building. Even the electrical and sewage systems. I've seen the blueprints.

CHLOE: Total shocker you're never at any of the parties. (*Beat.*) Sorry. That was mean.

ANDREW: It kinda was.

CHLOE: My dad says I better enjoy it now, 'cause when I get older I'm gonna be ugly and stupid and probably poor unless I marry somebody rich. (*Beat.*) I'm really sorry.

ANDREW: (*Beat.*) You'll never be ugly. (*Beat.*) I told Evan I'd do his math for a week if he asked Derek to let me come.

CHLOE: Why would you even want to come here?

ANDREW: Why do you? (*Beat.*) It was either sit at home with my mom practicing for Science Olympiad or...I don't know...

(The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE BEEP. Chloe checks her phone:)

CHLOE: Geez, Janette. She's mad I didn't text her back.

ANDREW: Hey Janette—having an awesome time in the closet with Andrew.

CHLOE: I like it.

ANDREW: What?

CHLOE: I'm texting that.

ANDREW: It was a joke.

CHLOE: It's perfect.

ANDREW: But then she'll know we're not doing anything.

CHLOE: We're not doing anything.

ANDREW: But — Yeah.

CHLOE: And no she won't. Everybody knows I'm the fastest texter in our grade.

(The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE BEEP. Chloe checks her phone. Reading:)

OMG.

ANDREW: What?

CHLOE: That's what she texted.

ANDREW: She thinks we're —

CHLOE: She totally thinks we're —

ANDREW: But we're not — And Derek —

CHLOE: Derek can suck it [get over it]. And everybody knows in Seven —

ANDREW: *(Unable to help himself:)* Or Ten —

CHLOE: Minutes in Heaven, boyfriend-girlfriend is automatically suspended.

ANDREW: I did not know that.

CHLOE: We're only fake together anyway.

(The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE BEEP. Chloe checks her phone:)

She wants to know if we're regular kissing or French kissing.

ANDREW: What are you telling her?

CHLOE: Regular. 'Cause you're too much of a gentleman on our first time.

(The sound of a TEXT MESSAGE BEEP. Chloe checks her phone.)

OMG, OMG, OMG!

ANDREW: She said OMG three times?

CHLOE: Two. I was the first OMG, but she was the last two and she had one with an exclamation point.

(Chloe texts back.)

ANDREW: Wait.

CHLOE: Too late—I told her you kiss really good.

ANDREW: But—

CHLOE: I told you I'm the fastest texter.

ANDREW: Wait.

Want to read the entire script? Order a perusal copy today!