

VERMONT
YOUNG
PLAYWRIGHTS

A SELECTION OF OUR TOP PLAYS FROM 2017



These 10-minute plays were first staged
on May 11 & 12, 2017 at FlynnSpace in Burlington

Vermont Young Playwrights is a partnership between Vermont
Stage, Flynn Center, and Young Writers Project

A SELECTION OF OUR HIGHLIGHTED PLAYS

JACKSON by Maisie Newbury

Drama 3M / 1F

Twin brothers wrestle with the death of a close friend. What does it take to put your world back together, and how do we say goodbye? A poignant, heart-felt and authentic look into the different ways we recover from loss.

THAT'S PRETTY GAY by Julia Scott

Comedy 2F

Admitting you love someone is hard. Maybe harder if she's your best friend. Maybe even scarier if you're a girl, too.

FAMILY BONDING by Carli Harris

Comedy 2M / 2F

When different families join together as a new unit, there's a lot of love and sometimes, confusion. A sophisticated and delightful comedy of errors about step-siblings and secrets.

AN ACCIDENTAL BURIAL by Rachel Fickes

Comedy 2M / 1F

A funeral begins with the appropriate amount of gravitas. And then, the truth comes barreling around the corner. Hilarity ensues. A great non-speaking role and strong relationship dynamics make this play by Rachel Fickes a real crowd-pleaser.

DANCING WITH THE DEVIL by Noah Bessette

Comedy 1M / 2F

Two sisters. One devil. A rubber chicken and some ketchup. Bessette's play keeps topping itself with ample room for physical comedy, gags, and puns. Dancing With the Devil will have audiences in stitches.

NO OFFENSE by Kai Reinborough

Comedy 2M / 2F

Using political viewpoints as a basis for character motivations, Reinborough's play is sure to drive debate and have audiences consider how, and if, we are hearing

one another. Fun, provocative, and a vehicle for some great ensemble work, No Offense will get you laughing at your own ideals and others.

PEANUT GALLERY by Ava Wilson

Comedy 1M / 1F

An older couple bickers in the grocery store over food choices. Beneath the hardline arguments is a foundation of love and care. What does it mean to be alive, and how much longer will we get the chance?

BAD GRANNY by Ella Moyer

Comedy 1M / 1F

Who is tougher, meaner, smarter? The little old lady, or the thief? Moyer's comedy will delight audiences with its role switching and clever dialogue.

SOUP OR SALAD by Gabriel Groveman

Drama/Comedy 4M

*A group of old friends reunite at their favorite diner. Nostalgia clashes with progress in Groveman's sophisticated comedy. Deftly maneuvering between moments of stinging comedy and authentic pain, *Soup or Salad* is a rollercoaster of emotions that is sure to walk the tightrope between belly laughs and tears.*

BEHIND THE DESK by Myleigh Kilbon

Comedy 4M

Michael can't wait to get to Hawaii. After work, he'll be on a plane! If only Calvin would stop talking. If only Pete didn't need the money. The clock is ticking, the plane is leaving and Michael can't get out from "behind the desk." Notions of freedom and privilege collide in Kilbon's swift comedy.

Jackson

By

Maisie Newbury
Weybridge, VT

Middlebury High School
Grade 9

vtgurl242@gmail.com

(802) 458-7244

Characters

OLIVER, sixteen-year-old boy living in Astoria, OR, working in his family diner

THEO, twin brother of OLIVER

MARIA, Mother of OLIVER and THEO

JACKSON, dead former boyfriend of OLIVER and best friend of THEO

Setting

The Astor's Diner, owned by MARIA and run by the whole family

Props/scenery needed:

1 broom, 1 jigsaw puzzle, 1 table and 1 "door"

Play opens, OLIVER enters, sweeping the floor of the DINER SET

OLIVER

(aside, looking out over audience with broom and apron) Hey Jack. It's been what? Eight months and 23 days, right? Not that anyone's counting. I turned sixteen last week. You would have been sixteen two days later, but you'll never be sixteen. You'll never get to go to college on the East coast and learn all about Boston and come home saying things like 'wicked' and calling everyone you disagree with a 'goddamn chucklehead'. I know that you're still alive in alternate universes, Jack, but I'm really missing you in this one. I'm also a little bit pissed, because you said you wouldn't die until you'd seen everything, and I don't think you ever went further than Portland. I know you always hated it when I used our history against you, I just can't help wondering if you were all talk. *(taking apron off and putting away broom)* I can't stop myself from thinking about what might have happened if you had just *(stepping outside)* stepped outside.

(THEO sits, cross-legged on the ground, hunched over a jig saw puzzle)

OLIVER

Hey Theo! What're you up to?

THEO

I'm re-building Thebes. Care to join me?

OLIVER

I'm afraid not. *(lying down on his back and looking up at the sky)* You know how I am with puzzles.

THEO

It's not your fault. You can't see the whole picture if you can't see the colors.

OLIVER

I guess not. Then again, maybe I just suck at puzzles.

THEO

I guess we'll never know.

OLIVER

Do you think there's an alternate universe where Thebes was never lost? Like it's still this big, bustling city like New York or London with people and metro stops and skyscrapers?

THEO

I don't know. It doesn't do any good to dwell on things like that.

OLIVER

Agree to disagree.

(Both are quiet for a beat)

OLIVER

Hey look! Danny DeVito!

THEO

What in God's name are you looking at?

OLIVER

(pointing) That cloud, right there looks exactly like Danny DeVito.

THEO

(following his finger) No way. That is one hundred percent not Danny DeVito.

OLIVER

How can you say that? It's uncanny.

THEO

No way. That cloud, Oliver, is unmistakably Elle MacPherson.

OLIVER

How is that Elle MacPherson?

THEO

It has boobs!

OLIVER

Well now you're just seeing what you want to see.

THEO

I could say the same for you.

OLIVER

Why would I want to see Danny DeVito?

THEO

I don't know what kind of guys you're into, man!

OLIVER

I'll give you a hint: Not Danny Freaking DeVito!

THEO

Whatever you say.

MARIA

(offstage) Back to work boys!

THEO

Sorry, Mom!

MARIA

It's alright! I just need to take a fiver. Gotta go to the bathroom. Then need to grab some burger meat from the basement.

THEO

(Rushing in to put apron on and start wiping down a table) Yeah no for sure! Do what you gotta do.

OLIVER

(still outside, casting his gaze, once again, over the audience) We all miss you, Jackson. It's not just me. I can tell my parents miss you too. My mom's been taking fivers more and more recently, and well... you know her. She's more resilient than anyone else. But make no mistake, it still kills her every time we come home from school, take a walk out by the ocean, or even go to Zingers without you.

THEO

Oliver! Get your ass in here!

OLIVER

Theo's just the same. He won't talk about what happened. In some ways he's worse than Mom. He acts like you never existed which sucks because I can't talk to him about you without him changing the subject. But I know he misses you more than he lets on, Jack. Don't worry. Sometimes I hear him crying after he thinks I'm asleep. *(walks inside and puts on apron, grabbing broom and starting to sweep again)*

THEO

Who the hell were you talking to out there?

OLIVER

No one.

THEO

Danny DeVito?

OLIVER

No.

THEO

Then who?

OLIVER

You know who.

THEO

No I don't, Oliver. You always do this. You act like I can read your mind and like I'll just know what you're thinking... But I don't! And I can't help you or talk to you if you don't tell me what's on your mind. Who were you talking to?

OLIVER

I told you, you already know! *(beat)* I mean maybe you act like you don't. I mean, God knows you've been putting on a pretty good performance pretending like he never even existed!

THEO

Oh don't tell me this is about *him*, Ollie

OLIVER

(shocked) Don't call me that, Theo.

THEO

Why not? Because that's what HE used to call you? *(getting closer and closer to OLIVER's face)* He's gone, Ollie. He's dead and he's not coming back. You can't keep talking to someone who's not there. It's pathetic not to mention borderline insane.

OLIVER

Well what if I called you Theodore?

THEO

You wouldn't.

OLIVER

You're right, I wouldn't but you can't say it wouldn't hurt you a little. (beat) You can't just act like he never existed! That's not fair to him and it's not fair to me. He was your best friend. That just doesn't go away.

THEO

Yes it does! That's the problem! Can't you see that? You always want there to be more than this, but what if this is all you get? What will you do then? You live in this magical, black and white world, where Thebes never fell, clouds look like Danny DeVito and *you-know-who* is still alive somewhere out there, but none of that is real! Your perception is flawed, Oliver. You're color-blind, clouds are just clouds, Thebes is just a tourist attraction, and the accident was over eight months ago!

OLIVER

Eight months and twenty-three days.

THEO

See, the fact that you know the exact number? That's not healthy.

OLIVER

Well it's not healthy that this is the most you've talked about him since he died! I mean I would pay you a million dollars right here, right now if you could just say his name.

THEO

I... (*pained*) You know I can't do that, Oliver

OLIVER

EXACTLY! You act like you've moved on! You act like your life is right on track and nothing has changed but then the lights go off in our room and you can't stop yourself from crying.

THEO

I thought you were asleep.

OLIVER

Yeah well I wasn't!

THEO

At least I'm not talking to him! (*yelling in OLIVER's face*) He can't hear you Ollie! He's not here!

(*Enter MARIA*)

MARIA

Quit arguing you two, you'll scare away the customers. (sees how hurt they look, pulls out a chair

and sits on it) What's going on?

OLIVER

(holding back tears) Nothing... Right Theo?

THEO

Right.

MARIA

I don't believe that.

THEO

Smart woman that you are.

OLIVER

No you're not.

MARIA

Is this about... Jackson?

THEO

Yes.

OLIVER

(at the same time) No.

MARIA

Come on, what's going on?

OLIVER

(reluctantly) I miss him so much.

THEO

You miss him too much. You're living in the past. You're counting days and thriving on these stories he told you about alternate universes—

MARIA

Theo, don't talk to your brother that way.

OLIVER

It's okay, Mom.

MARIA

No it's not! You boys should be talking about this and helping each other through this, not tearing

each other apart.

OLIVER

Well we *can't* talk about it! Theo can't even say his name!

MARIA

Stop! Stop fighting! You are sixteen-years-old! You are too mature for this!

THEO

Really? Too mature to struggle with the loss of a friend?

MARIA

That's not what I meant... I just think that you guys are going about this the wrong way. I want to help you.

OLIVER

Well what the fuck are we supposed to do?

MARIA

Oliver, language!

OLIVER

With all due respect, Mom, that doesn't really answer my question.

MARIA

Well tell me, why do you feel like you need to talk to Jackson?

OLIVER

Because he's the person who I talk to about everything. He was the one person I could tell anything to and he would help me through it, no questions asked. He's the one person who would be able to help me through this and he's not here...

MARIA

Okay. And why can't you talk to Theo?

OLIVER

Because every time I try to he changes the subject.

THEO

Only because I think it's better to move on than to live in the past.

MARIA

And why is that?

THEO

Because when a chapter ends in a book you start a new one. Same goes for life. Jackson's chapter is over. I've got to keep on going or else I'll get stuck living the same sentence over and over again.

MARIA

Closure

OLIVER

What?

MARIA

You two need closure. *(beat)* Pretend that I'm Jackson. *(Exit MARIA and enter JACKSON, who sits down in MARIA's place across from the boys)*

JACKSON

What would you say to me if you got to see me one last time?

(THEO looks to OLIVER, who shakes his head)

OLIVER

(weakly) You go first.

THEO

Okay... *(tentatively)* Hey, Jackson.

JACKSON

Hello Theodore.

THEO

Mom, this is dumb.

JACKSON

Just talk to me, Theodore.

THEO

Okay, but you can't talk. *(pause)* Don't say anything. I have to tell you something.

JACKSON

What is it?

THEO

I'm sorry.

JACKSON

What for?

THEO

You know what for. *(beat)* I never meant to make you feel guilty for falling in love with my brother, You were my best friend-- my favorite person -- and then, well, you know I kind of felt like a third wheel. And it fucking *kills me*, knowing how I left things with you. You were right: I do need to grow up. I hate that those were the last two words you ever said to me. I hate that they're part of the reason you can't even fucking hear me right now.

JACKSON

It's OK, Theo.

THEO

But I can't help feeling this way. And here I am sitting here talking to my Mom pretending like she's you because I haven't been able to say your name since your funeral. But I can. I can finally say your name. Jackson. There. I said it. And maybe that means that I can finally say goodbye.

JACKSON

Listen to me, none of it was your fault, Theo. None of it. And I understand.

THEO

Th-thanks. *(pauses)* I miss you.

JACKSON

I miss you, too.

(THEO smiles)

MARIA

(now standing directly behind JACKSON. All are staring directly at OLIVER) Okay, Ollie, your turn.

OLIVER

I've been talking to him for months, mom! What more could I have to say to him?

MARIA and JACKSON

How about goodbye?

OLIVER

I don't know. For eight months and twenty-three days I've been pretending you're still listening... *(voice breaking)* Maybe it is time. I mean maybe you can't hear me. I mean, I'm not delusional. I know that you're not here. But the very thought that I might never see you again, might never hear your voice again except for in videos and other recordings like the voicemail you

left me the night before you died when you... *(trails off)*

JACKSON

I what?

OLIVER

You told me you loved me. For the last time. ... Ever

JACKSON

Ever? You thought that was the last time ever?

OLIVER

Well, doesn't it have to be?

JACKSON

No, Ollie. Just because I'm gone doesn't mean that we were for naught. Or that we were pointless. Or that we were *never meant to be*, whatever that means. You were my endgame, Ollie.

OLIVER

Yeah?

JACKSON

Absolutely. But you've got to move on.

OLIVER

But what if I can't? What if, as I'm trying to piece together this new relationship puzzle, I find myself reaching for Jackson-shaped pieces?

JACKSON

Well you damned well might. You suck at puzzles. *(shoots THEO a look. He nods in agreement)*

OLIVER

It's hard for some people!

JACKSON

(grabbing OLIVER's hand) Look, maybe I'm alive in alternate universes. Maybe I'm finding out new things that I never knew before. Maybe I'm learning to fly or I'm riding a woolly mammoth. Anything is possible in alternate universes, right?

OLIVER

Right.

JACKSON

And maybe if there's some universe where you and I are still together, I'll meet you there. But in

this universe, I'm gone. And it's going to be hard. But you are the strongest person I know, and if you can't get past this, no one can. I mean, if you're really honest with yourself, I think you're moving on already.

OLIVER

You're right, Jackson. I'm just clinging to pieces that are still left. I'm just going to have to accept it. That you're not here. *(beat)* Goodbye, Jackson.

JACKSON

Goodbye.

(JACKSON drops OLIVER's hand and disappears out the diner door. MARIA takes her seat at the table and OLIVER's hand)

MARIA

Alternate universes, huh? Well isn't that something?

OLIVER

Yeah it is. *(to THEO)* I told you so.

THEO

Yeah... You sure did.

MARIA

Well boys, I'm going to close early today. You two go back outside.

(THEO and OLIVER look at each other and smile, taking off aprons and going outside. When they return to the puzzle they realize they had put it together wrong)

OLIVER

Well that just doesn't look right

THEO

Nope. Thebes is in total disarray.

OLIVER

Well I guess there's only one thing we can do.

THEO

Rebuild?

OLIVER

You know it.

(They start to re-build)

THEO

Ollie, that piece doesn't go there!

OLIVER

Yes it does! Purple matches with purple!

THEO

Ollie, that's orange and green.

OLIVER

No it's not!

THEO

Yes it is!

(Fade to black as boys continue working and arguing about the puzzle)

That's Pretty Gay

by

Julia Scott

9/12/2016

14 Orchard Street, St. Albans, VT, 05478

802-782-1118

jmscott@fcsuvt.org

CHARACTERS: PRIYA, teenage girl
ZOE, Priya's best friend

SETTING: Rooftop at night

AT RISE: PRIYA sits reading alone on a blanket, pillows and quilts surround her. She is talking to herself.

PRIYA

Okay. You've got this. Totally. Totally. Deep breaths. Calm down. The worst that can happen is... Well, the worst that can *plausibly* happen is nothing. Why isn't that more comforting? Okay. Okay, Priya, I have faith in you. Just, "Hey Zoe, I was thinking: we should go out sometime. On a date. Or something." Maybe not quite like that, but-

(She is cut off by ZOE, who enters from the aisle, stands beside the stage. She is holding two mugs.)

PRIYA (CONT'D)

Zoe!

ZOE

Priya, can I have some help? I need more hands. Like, seven, maybe. Can you grab one of these cups? Careful, it's hot!

PRIYA

Oh! Yeah!

(PRIYA jumps to her feet, takes a mug in one hand and ZOE's hand in the other. PRIYA helps ZOE onto the stage.)

ZOE

Thank you, m'lady.

(An exaggerated curtsy)

PRIYA

(gestures to mug)

And this?

ZOE

I brought you hot cocoa.

PRIYA

That's pretty gay.

ZOE

(sitting down)

That's the point.

PRIYA

Well, I appreciate it. The-the cocoa, I mean.

ZOE

Anytime. I'm always here for you.

PRIYA

Well, I really appreciate it.

ZOE

Just the cocoa?

PRIYA

Yeah... the cocoa. I...

ZOE

Appreciate it?

PRIYA

Well, yeah. So... thanks.

ZOE

This conversation has gotten somewhat cyclical.

PRIYA

Apparently. So... I was thinking...

ZOE

Okay, right, you do that from time to time.

PRIYA

Funny. But, really, I was thinking maybe...
(trails off)

ZOE

What is it? Everything alright?

PRIYA

Oh, yeah, everything is totally cool. It's chill. Cool beans. Smooth sailing. It's all pretty chill. Super chill. Like, subzero.

ZOE

Right. You totally sound chill.
(Catches herself)

ZOE (CONT'D)

Sorry. What were you saying? You were thinking. What about?

PRIYA

Well, just... Thanks. For coming out here tonight. I like spending time with you, you know?

ZOE

Oh, yeah. No problem. *Whatever.*

(comfortable silence)

PRIYA

We have to go back to school Monday and I do not support it.

ZOE

Gross. Gross! Why would you bring that up? I have to kill you now. I am legally obligated to push you off this roof. It's for the good of humanity. I'm so sorry.

PRIYA

I left all of my homework for this weekend, so I am honestly ready to die. You were a great friend and I'm sorry it has to end this way.

ZOE

Oh god, did we have English homework?

PRIYA

I'm going to say...yes? I don't actually remember. I'm willing to bet we do. I wrote it down somewhere.

ZOE

Can you send me the assignment when you find it?

PRIYA

No, I hate you, and I want you to suffer.

ZOE

Oh, cruel maiden! You hurt me so. Your dispassion is a blow I cannot bear. Surely, I will never recover.

PRIYA

As much as I hate you, I am willing to put aside my feelings for the greater good. If you don't know the assignment, how can I learn and grow as a person from my analysis of literature? You are denying the world the possibility to be better through my knowledge and the community I share with my classmates through discussion of our work.

ZOE

Very nice. Stellar delivery.

(She claps and continues)

Really. Did you have that prepared?

ZOE

Okay, but seriously, don't forget or I will throw myself dramatically into a river and drown. And it would be your fault.

PRIYA

You're so... melodramatic. Don't worry.

ZOE

Come on, you know you love it. I bring meaning and...

(Considers before finishing)

Colour to your life.

PRIYA

And I absolutely hate you for it.

ZOE

And I you as well.

(pauses, casually puts arm around PRIYA's shoulders)

ZOE (CONT'D)

The sky is amazing tonight. This was a great idea.

PRIYA

I just thought it would be a good way to end break. I always like it up here. It's different, you know? Like, everything is softer

and...better. Responsibilities and stress just don't exist. It's a separate world. It's... nice. No, it's kinda more than nice. It's... I'm not sure. I don't know if there's a good word for it. Maybe serene, but like, warmer. Can a word be warm or cool? I think so... I'm a little bit rambling aren't I?

ZOE

I like it when you ramble.

PRIYA

Oh, well, that's...sweet of you.

(ZOE leans in)

ZOE

You're pretty sweet too.

PRIYA

Thanks. I-

(Leans away)

ZOE

Yeah?

PRIYA

Well, I was just...wondering if...

ZOE

Yeah?

PRIYA

I was wondering if...you were cold. I'm kind of hoarding the blankets.

ZOE

(sighs, slightly irritated)

No. I am perfectly fine. I enjoy the cold. It's refreshing.

PRIYA

(Confused)

Really, it's no problem. If you're-

ZOE

I'm totally fine. Absolutely fine. Is that all you wanted to ask?

PRIYA

Yeah. That was it. That's all.

ZOE

Okay then. Glad that's settled. You have nothing else to say and I am not cold. While we're taking inventory, how's your cocoa?

PRIYA

It's super great. Thanks. I love the mini-marshmallows. They're largely superior to the normal sized ones. I don't know how they do it.

ZOE

It must be marshmallow magic. I'm certain of it.

PRIYA

Ah, yes, naturally! They concentrate the power of two full sized marshmallows into one tiny one. They have a device to do it, actually. It's a very precise science. Years of effort went into the creation of this machine. The work and resources funneled into the project rivaled that of the moon landing. And all years before, right? Because marshmallows must outdated the space race. At least four scientists must oversee the affair. It's all very top secret too. Once, the method was almost leaked and...

(Trails off, laughs)

PRIYA (CONT'D)

Wow. That was a lot of... marshmallow conspiracy theory. I literally will not stop talking. Wow. Okay. Sorry.

ZOE

You don't need to apologise. Are you... stressed about something? Anxious? Something to...tell me? I swear, I won't be mad. Fire away.

PRIYA

(flustered)

No, I'm fine. Totally, just, you know. School? Yeah, going back to school after a week is... not my ideal situation. I've been enjoying break and...

ZOE

Oh, yeah. I get it.
(beat)

ZOE (CONT'D)

(puts arm around PRIYA's shoulder)

Anyway, shotgun that for my band name: "Marshmallow Conspiracy". What's not to like? It's offbeat, it's mysterious, it only makes sense in context. Maybe you could be my hypothetical band with me?

PRIYA

Why would I be in a band? I have absolutely no musical talent.

ZOE

Yeah, but you technically came up with the name.

PRIYA

See, maybe I don't have to be in the band and instead you could just give me 20% of the profits.

ZOE

Excellent idea. Or you could be one of my many adoring groupies.

PRIYA

Indeed, it is my true calling. My greatest talents all put to use. So much upward mobility.

ZOE

Well, you have so very many talents... what wouldn't play to your strengths? Other than maybe bassist.

(PRIYA takes a deep breath, stands up)

PRIYA

Okay, I really need to ask you something. Tell you something. Or something.

ZOE

Yeah, Priya?

PRIYA

I... I really like you. Like, romantically. When I think about you, it's like my soul is exploding into fireworks, or-or confetti. When I talk to you, it's like... it's like I'm melting into oneness with the universe. When you say my name, I feel somehow blessed

and special. Being around you is like lying in the sun on a summer day, when you know this is the best it can be. And, I would totally get if you don't like me like that. I just needed

PRIYA (CONT'D)

to say something. I had to. I'm... sorry... if that was too much. No pressure.

ZOE

Don't apologise, Priya. I'm glad you did. I'm glad you told me your feelings. Because... I totally feel the same.

PRIYA

(Surprised)

You like me too?

ZOE

Yeah. Yeah, I do. I like you a lot. Like, "lie awake at night smiling about you" like you.

PRIYA

You... you do? You... actually like me? You aren't just saying that? Like, you-

ZOE

(Cutting her off)

Kiss me, you insufferable dork.

PRIYA

That's... pretty gay.

ZOE

You don't say.

(They lean in to kiss)

FADE OUT.

Family Bonding

An original play by Carli Harris

Draft #: 2

School: Spaulding High School

Email Address: 17carharri@u61.net

Mailing Address: 135 Currier st, Barre, VT, 05641

Phone: 802-595-2132

CHARACTERS: JOSH, ALLIE's step brother, age: 25
 ALLIE, JOSH's step sister, age: 23
 JOANNE, ALLIE's mother, age: 44
 FRANK, JOSH's father, age: 47

SCENE: The family's dining room, mid-evening.

AT RISE: A table sits center stage with four chairs. There are magazines on the table. Boxes can be seen around the room. JOSH runs on stage, putting on his belt. He goes to one side of the stage and looks into the wings. He goes back to the other side of the stage.

JOSH

(yelling to someone off stage)

I was right, that was her car. Just get dressed and come out!

(He finishes buckling his belt and sits at the table, switching positions to look more natural. He looks down at his lap and back up at the magazines. He grabs one and places it in his lap, pretending to read it. JOANNE enters, holding a grocery bag and talking to someone on a cellphone.)

JOANNE

Oh now, Donna, I don't think she meant it.

(pause)

Well, it's just a phase. All teenagers go through it, trust me. Even Allie was like that for awhile.

(pause)

Yes, I know. I promise it won't last.

(pause)

Right. Well, I have to finish dinner. I'll talk to you tomorrow.

(pause)

Okay, buh-bye, Donna.

(She hangs up the phone and does a noticeable eyeroll)

That woman could talk for hours.

JOSH

I sure am going to miss Donna.

JOANNE

(looking around the room)

Are these the last of your boxes?

JOSH

Yep, just this last load and then I'm out of your hair.

JOANNE

Well, at least stay for a goodbye dinner. Your father will be home soon. He'll want to see you before you leave.

JOSH

Of course.

JOANNE

Is Allie home yet?

JOSH

Yeah, she got home from UNH a couple of hours ago.

JOANNE

Allie, come out, dear! I've missed you so much!

(ALLIE enters)

ALLIE

Hi, Mom.

(they embrace)

JOANNE

Hi, honey. How were finals?

ALLIE

They weren't too bad.

JOANNE

That's good. Are you hungry? Dinner should be ready soon.

ALLIE

Absolutely.

JOANNE

Good, good. Well, I need to get back to it. Nice to see you, Josh.

JOSH

You too, Joanne.

(JOANNE exits. JOSH and ALLIE watch her leave.)

ALLIE

Do you think she knows?

JOSH

No way. She's completely clueless.

ALLIE

(Sitting back in the chair next to him)

Thank God. I was sure she'd caught us.

JOSH

Yeah, me too.

(JOSH places the magazine back on the pile. FRANK enters carrying a briefcase and talking on a cellphone.)

FRANK

No, Todd, that's just not going to cut it.

(pause)

The best you could do? Well, maybe you just aren't right for this job.

(pause)

Yeah, that's what I thought. You'd better have it on my desk tomorrow morning or you're fired.

(He hangs up the phone)

What a moron. Where the hell do I find these people?

JOSH

Rough day at work, dad?

FRANK

Just another day at the office. Are you staying for dinner?

JOSH

Yeah, Joanne asked me to.

FRANK

Good, good. Well, I'm going to help her out in the kitchen.

(as he walks off stage, taking the stack of magazines)

It's nice to see you, Allie.

ALLIE

(calling after him)

You too!

(pause)

Did he seem weird to you?

JOSH

No, not really.

(FRANK enters with plates and silverware. He sets five places.)

Dad, why'd you set five places?

FRANK

I thought maybe we'd have a guest tonight.

JOSH

Who?

FRANK

There wasn't someone you were maybe going to invite? A special someone?

JOSH

Um, no.

FRANK

Well, nevermind then. I guess it will just be the four of us after all.

(He takes the fifth plate and silverware set and exits)

JOSH

What the hell was that about?

(FRANK enters with four cups)

FRANK

What do you two want to drink? Water? Milk? Josh, we all know how *thirsty* you are.

JOSH

I'm sorry, what was that?

ALLIE

Water for the both of us. Thank you, Frank.

(FRANK exits)

Does he know about us?

JOSH

I don't know. He isn't treating you any differently.

ALLIE

Well, he isn't *my* dad. Is there anything you've done that would lead him to believe we were-

JOSH

Shh! They're coming back.

(JOANNE walks in with a dish of food and spoons it onto each plate. FRANK enters with a pitcher of water and fills each cup. JOANNE and FRANK sit down at the table and the family begins to eat dinner)

JOANNE

So, Josh, are you excited to be moving out and living on your own?

JOSH

Well, I won't be completely alone. I have a roommate.

FRANK

(scoffs)

Yeah, a "roommate."

JOSH

Yeah, a roommate. Sam, from my biology class. You've met him, Dad.

FRANK

Sure, Sam is great.

JOANNE

Frank, is something wrong?

FRANK

No, I'm fine, dear.

JOSH

Really, Dad? Because you seem to have a problem with me for some reason. Care to share?

FRANK

I just think you aren't as focused as you should be right now.

JOSH

What are you talking about? I finished college, I'm moving out, I have a job-

FRANK

Waiting tables. Is that something you're planning to do for the rest of your life?

JOSH

No, of course not. It's just-

FRANK

You should be filling out applications for internships or jobs in your field. You need to focus more on growing up and less on having fun.

JOSH

Dad, I-

FRANK

You are acting extremely childish.

JOANNE

Frank.

JOSH

How so, Dad?

FRANK

Oh, how so? Let's start with what I found in your room the other day.

(he throws a pair of pink lace panties on the table)

Care to explain?

JOANNE

Frank, this is completely inappropriate behavior for the dinner table.

JOSH

Dad, what the hell were you doing in my room?

FRANK

What the hell are you doing hooking up with some skank in my house?

(waves the panties in JOSH's face)

Don't try to tell me that these aren't sex panties!

JOANNE

(standing from her seat)

Frank. Kitchen. Now.

(FRANK and JOANNE exit)

JOSH

Shit.

ALLIE

He called me a skank.

JOSH

I know. I'm sorry. He wouldn't have said that if he knew it was you.

(pause)

He might've been a little more upset actually. At me though, not you.

(pause)

Why did you leave those in my room? Were you trying to get us caught?

ALLIE

Of course not! How could you even think that? It was just an accident. A really, really, really stupid accident.

JOSH

Yeah, it doesn't matter now anyway. Do you want me to keep you out of it? I can tell my dad it's just some girl from school.

ALLIE

No, we should just tell them. We would have had to eventually anyway.

(JOANNE enters, yelling to FRANK offstage)

JOANNE

Now, you stay in there until you've calmed down! I don't want anymore if this.

(She walks over to the table and puts her hands down on it. She leans in to JOSH and ALLIE)

You two. I have covered for you long enough. You are telling him about what's going on.

ALLIE

Mom, you knew?!

JOANNE

Of course I knew! I'm your friggin mother. I know everything.

(sitting down and calling to FRANK offstage)

Are you calm enough, dear? Your dinner's getting cold.

(FRANK slowly walks onstage and sits back in his chair)

JOSH

Dad-

(FRANK lifts a finger to cut JOSH off)

JOSH

Dad, I just-

(FRANK lifts his finger to JOSH again. JOSH slumps back in his chair)

FRANK

How serious are you about this girl?

JOSH

Very serious.

FRANK

How serious? Is she your girlfriend?

JOSH

Yes, she is my girlfriend. We're very serious. In fact-

(He reaches into his pocket, pulls out a small black box, and places it on the table)

I wanted us to be even more serious than we are now. She isn't a distraction, dad, she's what's keeping me motivated. She keeps me together.

(ALLIE's eyes widen. FRANK sits back in his chair and pokes at his dinner with a fork)

FRANK

Alright, son. I want to meet her. She has to make me believe this isn't a big mistake.

JOSH

Actually, you already have met her.

FRANK

Well, who is she?

ALLIE

(awkwardly waves)

Hey, Frank.

FRANK

What?

(There is a pause. FRANK shoots up from the chair)

What?!

(He paces and points a finger at JOANNE)

Did you know about this?!

JOANNE

Honestly, Frank, how did you not? It's not like they were very secretive about it. Stepsiblings don't get along *that* well.

FRANK

I just thought... because they were close in age... Are you two really getting married?

JOSH

Well, Allie? I know this probably wasn't the proposal that you had in mind... I'll admit that it wasn't exactly what I pictured, but I don't mean it any less than I would have if there had been flowers and candles... and if our parents weren't sitting here while it happened.

JOANNE

Frank, let's give them a chance to talk. I'm sure this hasn't been easy for them either.

FRANK

(while exiting with JOANNE)

How long have you known about this?

JOSH

(Holding the ring out to ALLIE)

Well...?

ALLIE

Are you sure about this?

JOSH

Of course I am. You heard what I told my dad. I've never been more serious about anything in my life than I am about you. I want to be with you, Allie.

ALLIE

Josh, I want to be with you too.

JOSH

So is that a yes?

ALLIE

(nodding)

Yes.

(they hug)

JOSH

I love you, Allie.

ALLIE

I love you too.

(They kiss. A loud groan is heard from offstage)

FRANK

(offstage)

It won't last, right?

JOANNE

(offstage)

Frank!

End of play

AN ACCIDENTAL BURIAL

A ten-minute play

by

Rachel Fickes

Draft #: 3

School: St. Johnsbury Academy

Mailing Address: PO Box 84, Peacham VT, 05862

Phone: (802) 592-3171

Email Address: refickes@gmail.com

CHARACTERS: DANIEL, mourner, 28
MOTHER, DANIEL's mother, 57
UNDERTAKER, employed by funeral home, 65. His/her every action is marked with the greatest reverence.

SCENE: Funeral home, afternoon

AT RISE: UNDERTAKER carries in urn, sets it on table. MOTHER walks forward to look, DANIEL hangs back.

MOTHER

Oh, thank you. Thank you very much. Wow, it's smaller than I thought it would be.

(UNDERTAKER exits. Pause.)

Look at that, Daniel. Just sitting there. Remember that time she took you flower-picking?

(Pause.)

You went out into the field at, what was it, 5am? Felt like it, anyway. She showed you all the different types of wildflowers, and you came back with daisy chains and flower crowns and a giant bouquet for my table.

(Pause.)

And you told me not to eat the foxglove, remember? ...Danny?

DANIEL

Yeah Mom, I remember.

MOTHER

I miss her already, y'know? Remember when--

DANIEL

Yeah, Mom, I remember. Okay? I remember.

(Pause.)

I'm sorry.

MOTHER

What's wrong.

DANIEL

I just--she may have taken me to pick flowers, but she never liked me.

MOTHER

Of course she liked you--

(UNDERTAKER enters with box of tissues, sets them on the table, backs out.)

You were her only grandchild!

DANIEL

Oh, c'mon. Don't tell me you didn't notice it. The comments at family gatherings?

MOTHER

Sass is required at family meals. Everyone knows that.

DANIEL

I used to think it was just a few random events. But it's always happened. She once told me that the fireflies outside were the eyes of ghosts.

MOTHER

I'm sure she thought it was a fun story.

DANIEL

She told me that mascots eat children! Why do you think I quit baseball?

MOTHER

Come over here with me, Daniel. You have to be respectful to the dead.

(Pause.)

Daniel?

DANIEL

If she was such a saint, why didn't she come to my wedding?

MOTHER

Daniel, please.

DANIEL

It was really important to me that she came.

MOTHER

She was born in a different time, honey. You know that.

DANIEL

That shouldn't excuse her actions now! She had a lifetime to learn.

MOTHER

Sometimes you get stuck in your ways. It's hard to change when you're as old as she was.

DANIEL

Anna sent back the bridal shower gift: that's why she didn't come. Do you know what it was?

MOTHER

Daniel.

DANIEL

A frilly apron. (Beat.) With matching oven mitts.

MOTHER

Maybe she didn't like the font on the invitations.

DANIEL

Anna works longer hours than I do--

MOTHER

The font was pretty ugly, Daniel.

DANIEL

I do almost all of the cooking!

MOTHER

Even I was a little turned off by it. I mean, the invitations are going to look so dated five years from now.

DANIEL

Forget about the font, Mom! She didn't even try to get to know Anna.

MOTHER

Come over and see her. Don't be disrespectful. You have to be respectful of the dead.

DANIEL

Why won't you listen to me!

MOTHER

Daniel.

DANIEL

Fine! I'll stare at the urn! It won't change anything!

(DANIEL moves to stand beside MOTHER. Long pause.)

MOTHER

Let me fix it, Daniel. What do you want me to do?

DANIEL

What I want?! I want you to--

(DANIEL knocks urn to floor, it shatters. Silence.)

MOTHER

Are you happy now?

DANIEL

I--Don't cry, Mom. I--I don't know why I did that.

MOTHER

Your grandmother is in the carpet.

DANIEL

Oh God, I know--I know. Let me sweep it up.

MOTHER

No, leave her.

DANIEL

(Looking around the room)

There has to be a broom around here somewhere.

MOTHER

Daniel.

DANIEL

We can get a new urn, I'll pay for it.

MOTHER

Daniel, leave her.

DANIEL

No! I can fix this. Let me fix this.

MOTHER

What did you tell Anna?

DANIEL

What?

MOTHER

What did you tell her when my mom didn't show up?

DANIEL

Oh. What could I say? I mean, I loved my grandmother. I love my wife.

MOTHER

You told her she was sick?

DANIEL

I told her she was sick.

MOTHER

Guess you weren't too far off.

DANIEL

That's horrible.

MOTHER

We're horrible.

DANIEL

You're the least horrible person I know.

MOTHER

I hated her too.

DANIEL

No, you didn't. You're not capable of hating anyone.

MOTHER

Yes, I am. And I did. For years. That's why we moved North. To get away from her.

DANIEL

I thought it was for the schools? You told me it was for the schools!

MOTHER

That's a load of crap. I couldn't stand living near her.

DANIEL

I really hope she can't hear you right now.

MOTHER

She knew it anyway. Why do you think she put the foxglove in my bouquet?

DANIEL

What? She was mean, but she can't have been that bad! Can't we relive the past without tainting it? I mean, remember when--

MOTHER

Yeah, Daniel, I remember. I remember it all. She ruined my childhood!

DANIEL

Oh God, you don't mean that. You can't mean that, you're just upset.

MOTHER

No! You don't understand! She wouldn't let me leave the house without her--no friends, no birthday parties, no dances! She was overbearing. Over-protective. Controlling. Authoritarian.

(MOTHER grinds ashes into the carpet with her foot with each word.)

DANIEL

Oh God, stop! You'll never get her out of there!

MOTHER

Good! I'm sick of pretending! (To ashes) You made my life hell!

(UNDERTAKER enters, MOTHER and DANIEL freeze. Pause. UNDERTAKER exits. Long pause, during which MOTHER and DANIEL exchange a glance. UNDERTAKER re-enters with vacuum, picks up shards of urn, vacuums ashes, exits. Beat. DANIEL starts laughing, joined by

MOTHER)

DANIEL

I can't believe that just happened. How can someone be gone, just like that? Like she was never even there. Just...erased.

MOTHER

At least the carpet's clean again.

DANIEL

Yeah, we need to remember the really important stuff, like carpets.

MOTHER

I was going to scatter those ashes in the flower fields.

DANIEL

With the foxglove?

MOTHER

And the other flowers, too! It's not *all* foxglove, Daniel. It only seems that way looking back.

DANIEL

It doesn't help that there was an awful lot of foxglove.

MOTHER

There always is.

DANIEL

My grandmother is in a vacuum cleaner.

MOTHER

Maybe a vacuum is the best place for her.

DANIEL

No one else there for her to torment, at least.

MOTHER

She can finally have a world that's all her own.

DANIEL

Dust to dust.

(He puts his arm around MOTHER, they exit.)

Dancing with the Devil
By Noah Bessette

Noah Bessette
Mount Abraham Union High
1496 Monkton Road
1(802)363-2658
North Ferrisburgh VT 05473

LUCY: 14 year old. Naive and innocent little sister of CRYSTAL . Insecure and shy annoying.
Easy to manipulate. Female

CRYSTAL : 17 year old. Angsty Goth teen. LUCY's older sibling. Male or Female name is changeable.

LUKE: 6,000 years old. Also known as Satan, Lucifer, Prince of Darkness, Lord of Evil etc.
Suave charming and hot. Very persuasive. Male

SETTING: Living Room Present day

AT RISE: CRYSTAL enters her living room.

CRYSTAL

(Draws a Satanic Star on the floor and kneels in front of bowing)

Hail Satan, Hail Satan. Lord of Darkness hear my call.

(LUCY enters)

LUCY

What are you doing?

CRYSTAL

Summing the devil.

LUCY

Why?

CRYSTAL

I'm bored, Nothing good on TV, I'm single and Trump is President. I'm already in hell.

LUCY

Oh... Can I join you?

CRYSTAL

Sure, whatever.

(LUCY kneels down next to her sister)

LUCY

What do I do now?

CRYSTAL

Just bow and say 'Hail Satan' a lot.

LUCY

That's it?

CRYSTAL

For you? Yes, just do that.

LUCY

Ok.

CRYSTAL

(Continuing the ritual) Hail Satan! Hail Satan. This follower asks for you to appear.

LUCY

Wait, you're a member of the Satanic Church?

CRYSTAL

Yeah. I joined last week.

LUCY

Why?

CRYSTAL

They say religion can help fill a void.

LUCY

So you chose Satanism?!

CRYSTAL

Oh, don't tell me that the rest of the religions aren't as evil.

LUCY

They're not.

CRYSTAL

Really? Islam's blowing up buildings, Jews control the media and the Christians are hypocritical child molesters.

LUCY

What about Buddhism? That one's not like the others. I like it.

CRYSTAL

Well, it's common for kids to have imaginary friends.

LUCY

Hey!!

CRYSTAL

Just shut up and help me summon the devil or leave.

LUCY

You're mean.

CRYSTAL

Well you're an annoying brat.

(The girls continue the ritual)

CRYSTAL

Hail Satan. Hail Satan. This follower requires your guidance and wisdom. We beg you to appear.

LUCY

Hail Satan.

CRYSTAL

Satan, Lord of Darkness We loyal servant *(LUCY looks startled at CRYSTAL . CRYSTAL glares at her)* ...seek your aid. Please bestow your wisdom.

(CRYSTAL pulls a rubber chicken out and knife)

LUCY

Where did you get the Chicken?

CRYSTAL

Petsmart.

LUCY

Doesn't it require a real chicken?

CRYSTAL

I can't afford a real chicken. So this will have to work.

LUCY

I don't think that's how it works.

CRYSTAL

Hey who's the Satanist here?

LUCY

Okay whatever... jerk.

CRYSTAL

Hail Satan! We offer you this sacrifice of blood to sate you.

(CRYSTAL slits the rubber chicken's throat and then pulls out ketchup and pours some on the chicken the floor and smears some on his/her hands. After a pause nothing happens.)

LUCY

Is that it?

CRYSTAL

Wait for it.

LUCY

Maybe you need a real chicken.

CRYSTAL

Shut up!

(waits for a bit, nothing happens)

God damn it. It's not working.

LUCY

Maybe you can't just summon the Devil.

CRYSTAL

Shut up! Let me just read through the ritual again.

LUCY

How do you find rituals in summoning the devil?

CRYSTAL

Google.

LUCY

Oh... that makes sense. You can find anything on the internet.

CRYSTAL

Damn. My phone's in the other room. Let me go get it.

LUCY

Ok.

CRYSTAL

Don't mess with anything.

(CRYSTAL leaves LUCY sits in a chair and waits. Suddenly the lights all go. There is a loud noise and a puff of smoke. LUCY screams lights come up revealing LUKE on standing on the Satanic Star.)

LUKE

Sorry I'm late. Just was eating a nice plate of French fries when you summoned me. I normally don't answer calls like this, especially with a rubber chicken, but I was really wishing I had some ketchup for my fries and then you gave to me, so I was like what the hell, HA! haven't been to Earth in awhile so why not?

LUCY

(Confused and frightened) You're.... You're the devil?

LUKE

I bet you were expecting the big red guy with the horns, goat legs and the tail? I'm afraid that form is a real pain it takes a lot of effort and makes a big mess. Oh, where are my manners?

(bows to LUCY and kisses her hand)

The devil is at your service. But you may call me Satan, Lord Satan, Shaitan, The Adversary, Old Nick, Red Right Hand, Mephistopheles, Diablo, The Dark Lord, Azazel, The Devil, Beelzebub, Lord of the Flies, Baal, Lucifer, LUKE, Lord of Hell, Lord of Darkness, *(In a fake terrified voice)* I'm so sorry Lord Satan I didn't know, or just, *(lets out a high pitch pained scream)*.

LUCY

(Stunned) Uhhh... I'll go with LUKE.

LUKE

Splendid now what's your name lovely lady?

LUCY

Uhhh... LUCY.

LUKE

Well, LUCY, it is a pleasure to make your acquaintance LUKE and LUCY sounds like the title of a lovely novel don't you think?

LUCY

(Embarrassed) Uhh... I guess so.

LUKE

I know so. So anyway down to business. What did you summon me for, my dear?

LUCY

Well... I... uhhh

LUKE

Oh, I'm sorry. First I have to ask. What have I missed since I've been gone? The cell service in Hell is terrible so I am never able to keep track of current events up here.

LUCY

How long have you've been gone?

LUKE

The last time I was here was when I was I made a deal with Dick Cheney. He gets power and wealth and I get chaos in the Middle East and I get his soul, it seemed fair. But then I learned he didn't have a soul, man that was embarrassing.

LUCY

So that was...

LUKE

About 16 years ago. So what's new?

LUCY

Well the election just happened.

LUKE

So what corrupt idiotic politician did you select to run your country even farther into the ground?

LUCY

Well... ah Donald Trump.

LUKE

(Starts laughing hysterically) Well that explains why suicides are up.

LUCY

It's not funny.

LUKE

(trying to stop laughing) Well, no, of course not. But I mean all my plans to destroy the world and all it's happiness and all you humans are doing it for me. It makes my life much easier. When Adolf won that card game and I had to resurrect him I was not expecting this as the result. It's great.

LUCY

Wait, what?

(LUKE Shrugs and pulls out a cigar/cigarette and a lighter)

Mom doesn't let people smoke in here.

LUKE

Well I'm the devil, so deal with it. *(Lights his cigar/cigarette)*

(CRYSTAL enters holding his/her phone)

CRYSTAL

Ok, I got the phone, so let's try this...

(notices LUKE)

(Excited) Wait, are you?

LUCY

This is LUKE

LUKE

(Singing a capella) Please allow me to introduce myself. I am a man of wealth and taste.

CRYSTAL

Yes of course. You're Satan, the Devil. (Kneels in front of LUKE)

LUKE

Why, yes I am.

CRYSTAL

I can't believe it you answered my summons.

LUKE

Yes Yes. Now what do you want?

CRYSTAL

(Awkwardly) Oh... well about that, I was mainly doing this to see if I could.

LUKE

So you just summoned the devil just to see if you could? I can see that brains and looks walk hand-in-hand in this family, and you apparently got the short end of the stick there.

CRYSTAL

Wait what?

LUKE

What I'm saying is the smart and pretty one happens not to be you. She's over there.

(Blows LUCY a kiss. LUCY blushes)

CRYSTAL

LUCY? She's just a kid!!

LUKE

And what are you?

CRYSTAL

I'm... I'm...

LUKE

You're just a little kid with an ego and social problem so you hid from the world and you have no concept of the real world or real problems but you can't pull your head out of your own ass to see the truth. You don't have your friends so you attack people who want to help you like your

poor sister and that Doctor, Oh what was his name? Oh yeah Dr. Anderson. Am I in the ballpark here?

(CRYSTAL is stunned. LUKE blows smoke in her face)

Now leave my sight for people deserving of it.

(CRYSTAL exits quickly)

LUCY

I'm sorry about CRYSTAL . She can be a real jerk sometimes.

LUKE

Oh it's not your fault my dear. I have had to deal with people like her before it's no big deal. So now we must talk business. I like you kid so let's hear what you want.

LUCY

I don't want anything summoning you was CRYSTAL's idea.

LUKE

Oh there has to be something. There is always something. I'll tell you what I'll get rid of you pesky sister for you.

LUCY

What!

LUKE

I can do it anyway you want. Quick, Slow painful or painless. But I promise you it will be the greatest murder since Snape killed Dumbledore!

LUCY

Spoiler Alert!!!

LUKE

The book's been out for 15 years.

LUCY

I just started reading them.

LUKE

Well that's not important anyway. So kid are you ready to dance with the devil by the pale moonlight?

LUCY

I don't know-

LUKE

I get the uncertainty. I have dealt with people like that before. But if you don't mind me saying none of them were as smart or as pretty as you.

LUCY

Really?

LUKE

Oh yes. The most beautiful I've ever seen.

(The two get closer about to kiss when LUKE's phone rings.) Goddamn it.

This will just be a second.

(on the phone)

Hello?

Oh hi, Marilyn.

Yes, we are still on for tonight. No, I was not talking to Jane Russell.

Yes, I am looking forward to it too.

Yes.

No!

How could you accuse me of such a thing.

Ok, that's a fair argument.

Look can I talk to you later I'm in the middle of something here.

Ok bye.

(Looks around nervously)

(Whispers) Love you too.

LUCY

Who was that? Who's Marilyn?

LUKE

Oh that was... Marilyn Manson. Yeah I am helping him.... Move tonight. Yeah that's it.

LUCY

(To herself) I don't think he's dead. You said cell service sucks in hell.

LUKE

Well apparently the one place that AT&T can actually provide good service is hell. But of course no where else. But I'm not changing for that coverage at those rates?...And they call me evil?

LUCY

Oh... ok.

LUKE

So anyway how about we finally come to terms and end this deal.

LUCY

I'm not sure I want a deal with the Devil.

LUKE

Oh come on what's with kids today? Don't know Harry Potter, don't make a deal with the devil. Are people crazy or am I just old. Don't answer that. Well if you don't want to make a deal. I'll be going.

LUCY

Wait. I'm sorry. You've been nice to me and I want to make it up to you.

LUKE

Do you now?

(Gets closer to her in a romantic way)

Then prove it.

LUCY

How?

LUKE

Swear it. Swear yourself to me.

(They get closer about to kiss when the the light goes black and a loud sound. Lights come back up and they both are gone. CRYSTAL enters finds a note on the floor.)

CRYSTAL

(Reading)

They're gone! Thank you, Satan! *(CRYSTAL smiles Blackout)*

NO OFFENSE

by

Kai Reinsborough

03/24/2017

Champlain Valley Union High School

45 Alder Lane, Burlington, VT, 05401

(802) 540 0885

kaireinsborough@cssu.org

CHARACTERS: CASEY, libertarian, 21
SOPHIE, far left, 19
PJ, new right (trump thumper), 19
MARIA, religious right, 20

SETTING: Apartment living room, in
snowstorm.

AT RISE: SOPHIE, PJ, MARIA sitting.
CASEY enters, and sits down.

CASEY

I managed to get the backup generator on, but that's just the lights and the fridge. That means no TV, no WiFi, no nothing.

PJ

Well, I'd better get going then.

CASEY

Hold up, there's no way anybody's driving home. There's like a foot and a half of snow out there.

SOPHIE

Already?

MARIA

I knew I shouldn't have come here. Parties always suck.

CASEY

I was having fun, up until a few minutes ago.

PJ

I just wish those girls singing Hamilton would've shut up.

SOPHIE

Well, you don't have to worry, everyone is too drunk to sing now.

CASEY

Worse than that, most everybody's asleep. Or boning. Really, mostly the second one. In fact, almost entirely-

PJ

Well, so long as we're not driving, can I have some booze?

CASEY

All out.

SOPHIE

Damn. So we're just stuck here until the storm's over?

CASEY

I guess so.

(Long pause.)

I don't think I got all of your names. I'm Casey.

MARIA

I'm Maria.

SOPHIE

Sophie.

PJ

You can call me PJ.

CASEY

Okay, cool.

(Pause. Opens his mouth to talk, then stops.

Looks around the room, then finally speaks.)

Alright, I'm bored. ... Anybody got any good jokes?

PJ

Ooh, I got one... but it's a bit offensive. Everybody's cool, right?

(All three talking over each other.)

CASEY SOPHIE MARIA
Of course. I'm good. Whatever.

PJ

Alright, so two guys walk into a bar, and there's this Jamaican bartender, smoking a big fat joint, and the first guy's like "Whoa, I thought that was illegal in Miami!" Did I mention they are in Miami? That's kind of important. So the bartender says

(Over-the-top Jamaican accent. (Just try.))

"Nah, mon, dey just passed di oardanance yeastaday daun oot da city cauncil-"

SOPHIE

Okay, stop. Do you have to do the voice?

PJ

Yeah, it's part of the joke.

SOPHIE

But it's promoting negative stereotypes about marginalized groups.

CASEY

It's just a silly voice.

SOPHIE

A silly voice that dismisses an entire culture and way of being.

MARIA

I was enjoying myself. You liberals ruin everything.

SOPHIE

Are you listening to yourselves? News flash! It's 2017!

CASEY

God, calm down!

SOPHIE

Listen, I'm really not that easily offended, I just didn't realize I was dealing with a group of racists. Not all Jamai-

PJ

It's just a joke!

SOPHIE

I like jokes!

MARIA

Alright, tell a good joke, then.

SOPHIE

Alright... uhh... How many policemen does it take to change a lightbulb?

MARIA

How many?

SOPHIE

I don't know, they're too busy beating the room because it's black.

(CASEY and MARIA burst out laughing.)

SOPHIE

At least you guys are aware of systematic police racism.

PJ

Oh, so it's ok to just bad-mouth police?

CASEY

Ugh... not you, too.

PJ

Listen, those people risk their lives every day so you can sleep safe at night.

CASEY

Jesus, it was a joke, sh-

PJ

What's funny about it? I don't think it's funny!

CASEY

That's why we don't let you decide what's funny.

PJ

(Stammering.)

Why don't we let ... the people who... decide ... Am-
America ... you- you hate America! ... Cuck!

SOPHIE

Cuck? You shouldn't go swinging words like that around! It's
shaming marginalized-

CASEY

Okay, I've had enough of you two. You both need to stop
being so offended all of the goddamned time.

SOPHIE AND PJ

(S)he's the one who's offended!

CASEY

Okay, I have a joke that maybe will appeal to both of your
delicate sensibilities.

MARIA

Thank you.

CASEY

Okay, so a doctor, a lawyer, and a priest are on a plane,
and it's going down. The doctor says "We must get the
children out first!" then the lawyer says, "Save yourself!
Fuck the children!" and the priest says, "Do we have time!?"

(Pause. PJ starts laughing.)

SOPHIE

Wait, but... Oh! Because...

(Joins PJ in laughter)

CASEY

Okay, so we're good here. Let's f-

MARIA

Wait... gasp!(actually gasp, don't say "gasp.") That joke isn't-

PJ

It's good, right!

MARIA

Oh sweet lord in heaven, you did not just mock the clergy!

CASEY

All three of you. Of course.

MARIA

That's not a subject to make light of!

SOPHIE

The kids or the priests?

MARIA

Just because a couple of devil-worshipers invaded our noble cause, doesn't give you the right to slander Jesus Christ's name! You know god is always listening to you, right?

CASEY

Like Santa Claus.

MARIA

Yes, exactly like S- hold on, are you mocking me?

PJ

Credit where credit's due, they're at least better than Islam.

SOPHIE

Oh, you do not want to go there!

MARIA

He's right, you know, 32% of-

CASEY

Okay, stop! Jesus Christ, you guys are sensitive! Why can't you just learn to not let these things affect you?

SOPHIE

Like you've never been offended by anything, Mr. "It's just a joke!"

CASEY

I mean, not really. Stuff doesn't get to me.

PJ

Oh, is that right?

MARIA

Sigh. (actually sigh, don't say "sigh.") This whole conversation has been more annoying and confusing than ... libertarian foreign policy.

(PJ and SOPHIE laugh.)

CASEY

(Forcing a smile.)

Oh, come on ... I mean ... it's not that bad.

PJ

What's not that bad?

CASEY

Uh, libertarianism?

SOPHIE

(Laughing.)

Oh yeah, let's do nothing, that'll solve all our problems.

CASEY

(Start off laughing, then get louder and angrier.)

I mean, we're bombing innocent civilians every day of the week, and the government thinks that it has the right to enforce our values on other people, all while taking away our rights at airports, and at borders, and wasting our tax dollars on the war on drugs, and, and YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST MOCK-

MARIA

Whoa, calm down!

CASEY

I AM CALM!

PJ

Jesus, it was just a joke, get over...

(Trailing off as he realizes.)

Hey, wait a minute!

SOPHIE

He got offended!

MARIA

Yeah!

CASEY

Uh.. no, no I didn't.

PJ

Sounded like it to me.

CASEY

No, I didn't. I just have...

ALL, JOINING IN

thoughts and beliefs that are more important than anybody else's social comfort.

(All talk over each other, then come into sync.)

CASEY	SOPHIE	PJ	MARIA
Disrespecting my values, which, by the way, are the only feasible way to a respectful and honest society, is more than just rude, it's dangerous for our future, for our economy, and for anybody who wants to just live their goddamn lives the way they want to!	So, I'm not allowed to fight for social justice, but you're allowed to fight for the right to not have social security? You libertarians fucks are all the same, you care about people, until they need your help. I hope private health insurance kills you.	See, this is why we need a sensible president who doesn't take shit from the media, or from anybody else, for that matter. People like you are what turned this country from an economic powerhouse into a shithole. That and NAFTA. God, this country needs work!	How dare you accuse me of being immoral or whatever. I mean, I'm no saint, but I'm a hell of a lot more caring and consistent than you, hypocrite! You should check your attitude before the man upstairs decides to chuck you in with Hitler and Alan Turing!

ALL, SYNCING (C/S/P/M) (CSP/M)

You know, we could actually have a productive and intellectual conversation if you (statists/bigots/cucks/satanists) dropped what you had been oh-so-precariously indoctrinated into by the (mainstream/corporate/Jewish/liberal) media, listened to what I had to say and just shut the (fuck/heck) up!

(All slump back into chairs, fuming. Pause.)

CASEY

(No longer angry. Talking to himself.)

Shut the fuck up... shut the...

(Having an epiphany, jumps to his feet.)

Oh my god, That's it!

MARIA

I've heard enough out of you.

CASEY

But don't you see? I don't give a shit what any of you have to say!

PJ

What the hell are you talking about?

CASEY

Maria, were you listening when Sophie was talking about social justice?

MARIA

Not a word.

CASEY

PJ, did you care about Maria's defense of catholicism?

PJ

No, of course not.

CASEY

And Sophie, did you fully understand the depth and complexity of my understanding of the geopolitical turmoil caused by high taxation and authoritarian statism?

SOPHIE

Go fuck yourself.

CASEY

The problem isn't that we're offended, it's that we think literally anyone cares! Maybe it's okay to feel like the world is out to get you, or... or that you're the only sane one in the room, but nobody's going to change their mind based on what you yell at them! That's it! That's the lesson! We just need to grit our teeth and shut the fuck-

PJ

I think I'll just go back to the way I was doing things before.

MARIA

I was already planning on it.

SOPHIE

Can we do that? I wanna do that.

CASEY

up.

(Blackout.)

CASEY

Wait, what? Wait! No. No! NO, STOP CLAPPING! We were making progress!

SOPHIE

Majority rules.

CASEY

Well, so long as we're gonna keep arguing, I have some things to say about the fourth amendment.

(Sophie, PJ, and Maria Groan.)

END.

PEANUT GALLERY

A six-minute play

by

Ava Wilson

Draft #: Final

School: Twinfield Union School

Mailing address: 150 Star Pudding Farm Rd, Plainfield 05667

Phone #: (802)-426-4068

E-mail: 2021avawilson@twinfield.net

CHARACTERS: EDWARD, old man, 84
RUTH, Edward's grumpy wife, 80

SCENE: Grocery store

AT RISE: EDWARD and RUTH are standing in an aisle at a grocery store, shopping. RUTH is pushing the cart.

EDWARD
(EDWARD tosses jar of peanuts into shopping cart)

RUTH
(uses angry tone)
Put those back.

EDWARD
What?

RUTH
Put those back and grab the unsalted ones.

EDWARD
I can pick out my own peanuts Ruth.

RUTH
(frustrated tone)
The doctor already told you you should cut down on sodium. Now put them back!

EDWARD
A couple peanuts aren't going to hurt me.

RUTH
(Using loud angry voice)
Edward, I don't want to make a scene, put them back!

EDWARD
(grumbles and slowly puts back the peanuts)

RUTH
Was that so hard Edward? Now will you please pick out a can of the unsalted ones?

EDWARD
(glares intensely at RUTH and grabs can)
Of course honey.

RUTH
(begins pushing cart)
Now, please hurry, we have lots more to get.

EDWARD
(Shuffles following RUTH)

RUTH
(grabs two cans of oatmeal of shelf, holding a can of oatmeal in each hand, looking down intensely at both cans)
Edward which one did you like better, Quaker Oats or the OatFit kind I got last time?

EDWARD
The Quaker Oats is much better darling, and we always get that.

RUTH
You're right OatFit is good.

EDWARD
Were you even listening to me Ruth?

RUTH
(RUTH still staring down at oatmeal)
Huh?
(looks up from cans slightly confused)

EDWARD
(sighs deeply)
Nevermind...

RUTH
(tosses OatFit into cart and puts other can back)

RUTH
Will you grab something for dinner?

EDWARD
Of course I will.

RUTH
(Uses strict tone)
Make sure it's healthy Edward.

EDWARD
(Grabs kielbasa and walks back over to RUTH)

RUTH
Really Edward, sausage? I said healthy, can you listen to me for once?

EDWARD
First of all, technically, it's not sausage, it's kielbasa and second of all, I always listen to you dear.

RUTH
(puts back kielbasa while Mumbling)
Always have to do everything myself...

(grabs tofu and puts in cart)

EDWARD

(Disgusted tone)

What the heck is that?

RUTH

It's tofu and it's healthy.

EDWARD

I am not eating that sponge for dinner.

RUTH

(using upset tone)

You're acting like a child Edward.

EDWARD

Well you're acting like you're my mother, so...

RUTH

(RUTH slowly turns head to glare at EDWARD using extremely angry

tone)

What did you just say to me Edward?

EDWARD

(sarcastic tone)

I guess tofu it is.

RUTH

Now hurry up, I have a few more things to get. Dr Feeble told me this is the best place to get fresh veggies! Then we can live forever!

(Begins pushing cart again)

EDWARD

(Using sarcastic tone)

I'm not sure I want to live forever.

RUTH

(dramatically rolls eyes)

EDWARD

(Grabs chocolate covered peanuts)

I haven't had these in what seems like forever.

RUTH

What do you think you're doing? Those are full of sugar.

EDWARD

(Sarcastic tone)

Just getting some chocolate covered peanuts, unless that's a problem?

RUTH

Yes, it is a problem Edward. These foods are going to end up killing you!

EDWARD

I just want some damn peanuts.

RUTH

They're not good for you.

EDWARD

I can't have salt, I can't have fat and, I can't have sugar. I'm not going to die from health issues, I am going to starve to death!

RUTH

(Puts hands on hips)

Must you always act like a small child? All you do is complain about everything.

EDWARD

All you do is control my every move, you shrill old woman.

RUTH

(using shrill angry voice and stuttering)

Edward you... you

(screams angrily then hits Edward with cart)

EDWARD

(falls backwards and remains on ground.)

What the heck is wrong with you Ruth? You know I have a bad hip. Are you trying to kill me? It's like you want me dead.

RUTH

(begins sobbing)

No I'm not trying to kill you, you idiot. I'm trying to keep you alive!

EDWARD

I'm going to die either way, I may as well live the way I want to. And trust me I don't want to live my last years eating tofu, disgusting oatmeal and I especially don't want unsalted peanuts.

RUTH

But I don't know what I'd do without you Edward. I just want you to be healthy. The doctor says healthy foods are the key to a long life.

EDWARD

(looks kindly at RUTH and sighs)

I suppose you're right dear, chocolate covered peanuts aren't that good anyways. Come on let's get the rest of our stuff.

RUTH

I'm sorry honey, I don't know what came over me. You know how I can be.

(RUTH holds out hand and pulls EDWARD up from the floor)

EDWARD

(Smiles widely at RUTH)

Thank you dear.

RUTH

(Smiles back at EDWARD then brushes dust off his shoulder)

Of course.

(EDWARD and RUTH begin walking away)

EDWARD

Can I ask one quick question though honey.

RUTH

Of course, what is it?

EDWARD

Are potato chips okay? I mean technically, they're a vegetable and...

RUTH

(interrupts EDWARD with a sigh and reaches down and holds Edward's hand)

RUTH & EDWARD

(Walk away holding hands)

BAD GRANNY

By Ella Moyer

Contact:

Ella.Moyer2004@gmail.com

CHARACTERS:

GRANNY: A rich old lady who is being stalked by a man named Brad who is trying to steal her purse

BRAD: Guy who's trying to steal an old woman's purse

SETTING: Street in New York

AT RISE: Granny is walking in on stage right and Brad is on stage left on the phone.

GRANNY

(Walks on stage)

BRAD

(Talks on the phone)

I'm telling you boss, she's rich... THE OLD WOMAN! She's the one, ok?...I told you to stop picking on me about yesterday! I didn't!... I know what I'm doing. I've got this.

(Hangs up phone and puts it in his pocket. Clears throat. While talkin, each time he says it differently)

Hi! Hi. Hello! Whats up? Howdy! Hey there. Welcome! Greetings old lady! Can I have your money? No, no, no.

(Granny walks past him)

BRAD

Umm, Hello.

GRANNY

(Turns around)

Good Morning!

BRAD

Good afternoon! Umm, night. Morning!

GRANNY

Can I help you?

BRAD

Uhh,,, I was actually wondering if I could help you?

GRANNY

...No.

(Begins to walk away)

BRAD

Uhh, but, just let me do you a favor. Anything you can think of?

GRANNY

Well, there's nothing I can think of right now.

BRAD

Well where are you going?

GRANNY

I'm headed to work.

BRAD

I could give you a ride.

GRANNY

No thank you. I just don't think I'm comfortable getting into a strangers car.

BRAD

Are you saying that you don't trust me?

GRANNY

Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying. Why don't you walk me there instead?

BRAD

Sure!

(They both begin to walk again Brad reaches into her purse but she looks at him so he backs away)

GRANNY

You never did tell me your name.

BRAD

No, I didn't.

GRANNY

(There's a pause and Granny looks at him confused)

...What's your name?

BRAD

Oh, my name, Noah.

GRANNY

And I'm Jalapeno Smith.

(Brad looks at her concerned)

I said what's your name?

BRAD

Brad.

GRANNY

Call me Granny.

(Shakes his hand and they begin to walk again. Brad reaches into the purse)

GRANNY

What are you doing?

BRAD

Oh, umm, well I was just looking at your purse. It looks very expensive. You must be very wealthy.

GRANNY

Sure, where are you going with this?

BRAD

Well you see, I am known to make a lot of money into a lot *more* money. Whatever you have, I can double it. If you give me 1,000 dollars, I can make it 2,000. 2,000 to 4,000. You name it.

GRANNY

But I'm already rich. Why would I want more money when I already have more money than I'll ever need?

BRAD

Uhhh, well what if you get robbed or scammed? What are you gonna do then?

GRANNY

You mean like right now?

BRAD

(Small pause while he thinks of something else to say)
N-No, but let's say that I am scamming you. And then, when I succeed-

GRANNY

What makes you think your gonna succeed?

BRAD

(Another small pause)
W-well... Y-you-

GRANNY

Not everyone is gullible.

BRAD

W-well you've never actually done what I'm doing before so-

GRANNY

(Starts to cry)

BRAD

Oh, ahh ok... you're crying w-what do I do? Ummm...
(Looks around not really knowing what to do)

GRANNY

I-I'm sorry you just look so much like my son. I-I just... UHH!
(Rests her head on his shoulder and continues to cry.)

BRAD

(Awkwardly pats her head)

Oh! Ummm, I'm sorry?

GRANNY

(Pulls out his wallet without him realising it.)

(Picks up her head and wipes her eyes)

Oh, sorry. He just, never comes to visit me anymore...

(Plays with the wallet)

That's funny, his wallet looks just like this.

BRAD

Hey!

(Grabs wallet and puts it back in his pocket)

...Your good.

GRANNY

Try again. Just relax

(Takes a deep breath)

Well what fall of a sudden you are forced to pay money for government... things...

GRANNY

(Pause)

Government things? Try something else.

BRAD

Well, what if, you had a family crises and you had to... pay for funerals?...

GRANNY

How long have you been doing this?

BRAD

Almost three weeks.

GRANNY

That explains it.

BRAD

So... you've done this before?

GRANNY

Let's sit down.

(They both sit down on a bench)

I was born in Vegas. I didn't see my parents much. My mother was always working but my father was a conman. That's how I got into it. It was fun, until it got serious. My father got mad at every little mistake. I didn't want to do it anymore, but when I moved out I realized I didn't know what I wanted to do for work. So I kept doing what I did best.

BRAD

What was that?

GRANNY

Think about it.

BRAD

(Pause)

Oh.

GRANNY

(Pats him on the head)

There you go. Then I just kept doing it. I made a lot of money. Then, I decided I wanted to get hard earned money.

BRAD

But, why would you work if you have more than enough money?

GRANNY

I was sick of stealing. I felt bad yet didn't make up or admit to what I did. And I still haven't.

BRAD

Why not?

(Short pause)

GRANNY

I guess I'm just afraid to face the consequences.

(Stands up and starts to walk away and then turns around)
Are you still going to walk with me?

BRAD

Oh, yeah. Sure.

(They both walk off stage left)

THE END!

SOUP OR SALAD?

A ten minute play
By Gabriel Groveman

Draft #: 3

School: Twinfield

Author's Phone: (802) 426 - 4200

Author's Mailing Address: 28 School St. Marshfield, VT 05658

Author's Email Address: 2022gabrielgroveman@twinfield.net

CHARACTERS: PHIL, 49
MIKE, 50
JIM, 50
JOSH, the waiter, 24

SCENE: The Sunrise Diner on Long Island

AT RISE: MIKE and JIM are sitting in a booth talking.

JIM

It's great to be back on Long Island, just like old times. So glad we made time to catch up.

MIKE

Yeah, me too. I'm looking forward to seeing PHIL... I just can't stop thinking about him after the... incident.

JIM

Yeah, I know what you mean. I think he'll be fine, we just need to be there to support him, he's been through a lot.

PHIL

(PHIL walks into the diner)

Hey! MIKEY! JIMMY!

MIKE

(MIKE turns his head to look at PHIL)

Hey JIM, It's PHIL!

(MIKE and JIM get up and greet PHIL at the door, they all go and sit down)

PHIL

(happily sighs)

Wow, this place hasn't changed one bit, has it?

MIKE

I know exactly what you mean! I mean, can you imagine how many hours we wasted sitting around this booth?

JIM

(Chuckles)

Well, we had some pretty good times here. What has it been? Like 30... 35 years?

MIKE

Oh, it's been too long, my friend, way too long.

JIM

(Sighs and starts mumbling excuses)

Yeah, well, you know, we've all been busy. I mean, we all went off to college and then I got married and had Chandler, and then you had Dylan... and PHIL of course had the business.

(JIM pauses and tries to think of more excuses, but sighs and decides not to.)

But enough excuses, we're finally together... and it's all thanks to PHIL.

MIKE

To PHIL!

(They all clink their glasses and drink some water.)

PHIL

(Slams his drink down, grunts, and wipes the water from his face)

So JIM, how's the family doing?

JIM

Well, you know, the family's good.

(JIM pauses and questions whether to tell them something but decides not to and smiles)

Sarah got a promotion in work, Chandler's learning how to drive and little Megan's starting kindergarten in the fall.

(Chuckles)

They grow up so fast, don't they?

(JIM takes a swig of water)

but enough about me, how's everything been since... you know...

PHIL

(PHIL looks down at the floor and gets quiet)

Ah, JIM, I knew you would ask me this... Well... you know... It's been...

JOSH THE WAITER

(JOSH cheerfully and clumsily walks up to the table, breaking the silence)

Hi, welcome to the Sunrise Diner, my name is JOSH, I'll be your waiter this afternoon. Is this your first time here?

MIKE

What? Oh, Oh, no, we actually used to go here back in highschool.

JOSH THE WAITER

Great, then you know our menu, can I get you any more drinks, or are you ready to order?

MIKE

(Turns to JIM and PHIL)

The usual?

JIM and PHIL

(They nod)

MIKE

We'll have the Family Sized Sunrise Sub with extra cheese.

JOSH THE WAITER

Excellent choice, the Family Sized Sunrise Sub comes with a side for the table. Would you like soup or salad?

MIKE

We'll have soup.

JIM

Actually, make that a salad.

PHIL

Well, I'll just have whatever they're having.

JIM

(Turns to MIKE and PHIL)
Let's just get salad. Okay?

PHIL

Sure, salads fine.
(PHIL turns to the waiter)
We'll have salad.

MIKE

Hey! What about soup?

JIM

I don't know, What about soup?

MIKE

We always get soup, why aren't we getting soup?

JIM

Because I feel like eating salad.

MIKE

We always get soup, and I say we should get soup. Why? You think you're too good for soup?!?

JIM

No, I'm just not in the mood for soup! So we're getting salad! I want salad! PHIL wants salad!
We all want salad!

(JIM starts to yell)

Why can't you just eat the damn salad!

JOSH THE WAITER

I... Uh... I can do half salad half soup if you like.

MIKE

That's okay we'll have soup.

JIM

No. I think we'll have salad.

MIKE

SOUP!

JIM

SALAD!

MIKE

SOUP!

JIM

SALAD!

PHIL

(Yells over JIM and MIKE)

Why can't we just compromise and get half and half!?!

JIM

Because! We've never had salad here before!

MIKE

Exactly! We've never had salad here! What if we get salad and... and it's awful! What happens then!?!

JIM

I don't know, we've never had salad here! I don't know if it's awful!

MIKE

Listen to me! I want soup! We are getting soup! End of discussion!

JOSH THE WAITER

(JOSH smiles trying not to seem to freaked out)

I'll uh... I'll let you decide, I'll come back in a little bit

(JOSH shakes his head and walks away)

(MIKE and JIM glare at each other)

JIM

Can we please just get salad?

MIKE

JIM, we are getting soup.

(MIKE starts to get emotional)

Please, JIM, please, I need this. I need this JIM... please.

PHIL

Come on JIM, for God sakes, just let him have soup.

JIM

(Sighs)

No.

(JIM pauses)

I'm sorry, but, we are going to get salad.

PHIL

Are you kidding me!?! Really? What possible reason could you have to want the salad so much anyways?

JIM

I don't want the salad! I need the salad!

PHIL

Okay, I'll ask you again. Why do you need the salad!

JIM

(Angrily stares at JIM)

Do you really want to know!?! Do you really want to know why I need this salad!?!

PHIL

Yes! That's what I've been trying to ask! Why do you need the salad!?!

JIM

Because PHIL! Because I've wasted too many Goddamn years eating soup, and I would like to try the salad... Just once before I die, I would like to try salad! Is that too much to ask?

PHIL

No. JIM.

(PHIL looks at his friend with sympathy)

JIM. listen to me. You are not going to die. Not any time soon.

JIM

(Looks at PHIL)

Yes PHIL... yes I will

PHIL

No... no you won't... you... you can't.

JIM

Yes PHIL... yes I will.

(Pauses thinking about what to say and how to say it)

Last week I went to the doctors for a checkup, I told him I was having piercing headaches. We ran the tests... I have with brain cancer.

PHIL

(PHIL pauses, taken back by the news)

Jesus... How long? How long until you... you...

JIM

(Jim looks at the floor, ashamed that he hadn't told his friend sooner.)

About two weeks... Maybe a month if I'm lucky.

PHIL

(Sighs, leans back, pauses, and looks at MIKE)

Come on MIKE... can we just get salad? If not for JIM, then for me?

MIKE

(Sighs, folds his arms, and shakes his head)

No. I'm sorry, but we can't... we... we just can't.

(Mike pauses)

I'm sorry JIM, but I need the soup.

JIM

Really!?! Why? After what we just heard! Why on earth would you even think about getting soup!?!

MIKE

(Takes a deep breath)

I'm getting a divorce... Diana's been cheating on me with some 20 something from her work. She's taking the kids... and the house.

JIM

MIKE, I'm so sorry... but what does this have to do with what we're talking about?

MIKE

(MIKE takes another deep breath in trying to keep in his emotions)

I thought if I had the soup...

(MIKE corrects himself.)

I thought if we had the soup, then maybe, just maybe, things could be... I don't know, normal? Like back in highschool.

PHIL

(PHIL struggles to find words)

MIKE... JIM... I... I didn't know.

(They all sit in silence.)

JOSH THE WAITER

So sorry to keep you waiting. Have you made your decision? Soup or Salad?

PHIL

(Looks at MIKE then looks at JIM for a long while)
I think just the check would be great.

JOSH THE WAITER

I'm sorry, but you didn't order anything.

PHIL

Right, then. Well, in that case, I guess we'll be leaving... we hope you have a nice day.

JOSH THE WAITER

(Smiles)
Uh, You too.
(JOSH walks away, the whole group sits in silence.)

MIKE

(MIKE slowly gets out of his seat and heads for the door)

PHIL

MIKE... Hang on.

MIKE

(Turns and looks and looks at PHIL)
What? What is it?

PHIL

We... we can't do this.

MIKE

We can't do what PHIL?

PHIL

We can't do this! We can't allow ourselves to fight over something as pointless and subjective as life! Things aren't going to be normal, but that's life. Life isn't normal, it's not supposed to be normal, it's just about as confusing and incoherent as a play written by a 13 year old... But that's why it's so great! Look... the way I think of it, life is life, it starts and then it ends.

(PHIL looks at JIM)

And... and... some will end sooner than others. That's it. That's why we continue to get up in the morning, because... because we know... or at least I know... that life isn't normal, because everyday is a new day, and maybe one day it'll just end., and that's that, that's life. And... and it's scary, to come to terms with... with our own moral failings, or when we can't seem to find anything to hold on to or find meaning in...

(PHIL drinks more water takes a deep breath in)

So then what happens next? What happens then? What happens when you don't have a purpose.

(PHIL pauses trying to hold back his emotions)

I tried to kill myself... because I didn't have a purpose. I had no family, or friends... no one to remind me of the good in humanity and only people who remind me off the bad. I found myself having nowhere to look, nothing to do, no one who cared. So yeah! I tried to kill myself, I tried to take my own life over nothing more than a lack of hope. Yes. I tried to kill myself, but I'm still here aren't I? And isn't that what matters? I couldn't do it. That's what matters... I guess.

(PHIL takes another deep breath in)

Maybe... Just maybe we try to find meaning in meaningless objects like photos or books... or soup or salad, to fulfill our futile desire for a purpose.

(PHIL pauses)

We are here, we are together, and... and that's what it's all about, that's where we can find meaning, that's what matters. And not to sound like a cat poster, but... the only meaning we need can be found within ourselves. And now that we've reconnected, I hope we can still get together, for at least as long as JIM's condition permits. Right?

MIKE

(Walks over to PHIL, lost for words)

PHIL... I'm sorry... But you I can't stay in Long Island. I have no house... no family... there's nothing for me here, only painful memories.

(Takes a deep breath in and drinks some more water)

I was offered a job in California, and I accepted. I'm leaving tomorrow. That's why I wanted to meet today, so we could meet one more time before I go.

PHIL

(PHIL looks at the ground trying not to cry.)

Oh... So this is goodbye.

MIKE

I guess so.

(MIKE and PHIL share a final look at each other)

Take care of yourself PHIL.

PHIL

You too MIKE

MIKE

(MIKE looks at JIM and frowns, knowing that this will be the last time he ever sees his friend alive.)

I'll see ya around JIM

(MIKE and JIM shake hands)

JIM

(Looks at MIKE for the last time)

See ya MIKE.

MIKE

(Pats JIM on the back and walks out of diner)

(The door closes and JIM and PHIL are left alone in silence)

FADE TO BLACK

END OF PLAY

Behind The Desk

by

Myleigh Kilbon

**Wednesday 3/8/17
Williston Central School
2323 mountain view road
598-6359
myleighkilbon@cssu.org**

CHARACTERS: **MICHAEL-** Clerk working the front desk of a ritzy hotel. He seems kind of snooty he is working at a very ritzy and high class hotel. He probably has a French or British accent. He wants to go to a spa in Hawaii and he has a plane ticket to leave for this spa at the end of the day and wants the day to be stress free. About 32. Wearing a classy suit.

CALVIN- A tourist that is visiting New York City in the summer with his wife. He is very chatty and likes to be thought of as cool so he tries to use a lot of slang in his conversations with people. About 60. Wearing cargo shorts, flowery shirt, sandals, a camera around his neck and a map in his hand.

BOB- Is the manager of this high class hotel in New York City and Michael's supervisor. He is very hard working but also humorous when it comes to his employees. He is about 45. Also wearing a classy suit.

PETE- Has had a very rough life because his parents walked out on him and his sister when they were little and they had been going through orphanages and foster homes their whole lives and have never had enough money to do anything. Now that he and his sister are no longer part of an orphanage, they have to pay for everything on their own and they don't have enough money so he is going to steal some. He is about 21. Wearing a black ski mask and all black clothing.

SETTING: The front desk at a high class hotel in NYC. It is June so it's nice and warm out. It is present day.

AT RISE: **MICHAEL** is standing behind a desk looking down at a piece of paper. There is a manila folder on the table. His boss, **BOB**, comes up to the desk and looks over to see **MICHAEL** studying his plane ticket.

BOB

Is that the ticket to happiness?
(asks in a joking way.)

MICHAEL

Yes, yes it is! At 3:30 I am free to go to the spa.

BOB

I would take offense to that but I've been in the same position and I totally understand.

MICHAEL

I was hoping that you would sir.

BOB

Anyway, I came here to get the Jeffersons file. Apparently the entire mini fridge in their room was empty when they got there.

MICHAEL

Sound suspicious to me sir. Better check it out myself as well.

BOB

No no **MICHAEL** I wouldn't dream of it. This is your last day here before you go on vacation and I want you to have good memories of this place when you are gone.

(**BOB** Walks off the stage holding the folder that **MICHAEL** gave him. A tourist comes in and comes over to the desk and leans on it. Tries to make conversation with the clerk but the clerk just wants to go on his vacation.)

CALVIN

Hey, I was just outside and I saw the biggest rat that I've ever seen! Only in New York am I right?

(**MICHAEL** looks at **CALVIN** like he has a screw loose and smells like a public bathroom.)

MICHAEL

Yes.

(He says weakly and disgusted)

CALVIN

Well, tonight I'm taking the Mrs. out and she is gonna wanna go somewhere super expensive you get me be bro?

MICHAEL

No I most definitely do not.

(**MICHAEL** walks out from behind the desk and clasps his hands together)

MICHAEL

Is there something that I can help you with sir?

CALVIN

No sir I'm just here to avoid my wife until I take her out later and you seemed totally dope.
(emphasizes the dope)

MICHAEL

Dope?

(sounded confused)

CALVIN

Yeah! It's what all the cool kids are saying these days.
(Sounding excited)

MICHAEL

Yes that explains it.

(sounding sarcastic while studying the older man.)

CALVIN

So what do recommend for restaurants around here.

MICHAEL

Well one of my favorite restaurant around here is The Golden Pineapple.

CALVIN

What do they serve?

MICHAEL

All kinds of good things like french fries, Hamburgers...
(**CALVIN** cuts him off.)

CALVIN

Sounds good. Where can I find it?

MICHAEL

Um, you can find downtown. The on Fifth and Elm.

CALVIN

How expensive is it? I got to keep the Mrs. happy but don't want to break the bank. You get me bro?

MICHAEL

First of all, it depends on what you buy like all the other restaurants in New York City and the whole world for that matter, second of all I don't get you because I am not married and third of all I am not your bro!

CALVIN

Sorry! I didn't know that siblings were a touchy subject for you dude.

MICHAEL

(to no one in particular)

I can't believe this guy!

CALVIN

So...

(trying to change the subject)

Do you like working in a hotel?

MICHAEL

Yes it is fine.

(says with hostility)

CALVIN

Cool cool. I work at a school. I get paid those big teacher bucks ya know?

(Starts to laugh uncontrollably.)

MICHAEL

hahahaha you are so clever.

says sarcastically)

CALVIN

Why thank you. I keep telling my wife that but she says that my jokes are worse than my idea to go hot tubbing with her parents and trust me that was a bad idea.

MICHAEL

It sounds like a horrible idea. Hot tubbing with your in laws!

CALVIN

It was a bad idea. She was so mad at me for at least the next two years and she still holds it over my head whenever I say I have a good idea. Women, am I right?

MICHAEL

I still don't know because I'm still not married.

CALVIN

You're still young I believe that it will happen.

MICHAEL

I don't know I'm kind of a loner.

CALVIN

Well maybe you don't need a woman in your life as long as you have good friends right?

MICHAEL

Right

(checks his watch)

I'm so sorry that I have to end this little chat fest

(under his breath)

NOT - but I have to go.

CALVIN

I totally get that bro I mean maybe some room has run out of towels or soap. Always on the run in a hotel right. We are superheros but nobody notices it.

MICHAEL

Actually I don't do things like that. I am in charge of check-ins not room service. If you didn't notice, that is the maid's jobs.

CALVIN

Well if you aren't doing that,
(sounding puzzled)
what are you doing?

MICHAEL

You see I am going on vacation and I need to get to the airport or I am going to miss my flight.

CALVIN

That would be terrible I mean I know how I would feel if I missed my flight due to some guy. I would probably strangle him.

MICHAEL

(checks his watch again more aggravated)
Yes, I probably would too. But right now I really have to go.

CALVIN

Right yeah you better get out.
(kind of standing in the way)

MICHAEL

If you could just move to the left a little that would be great.

CALVIN

Oh oh yes of course my bad. I'm always in the way at home.

(**MICHAEL** picks up a black suitcase from behind the desk and walks out in front of **CALVIN**.)

MICHAEL

Finally I can leave and go to paradise!

CALVIN

You know, one time at the airport, I was trying to go and get on my flight but this super annoying guy in front of me kept on flirting with the flight attendant and so I just started screaming and he finally moved so then I got on the plane and guess who sitting next to me. Yup it was the guy flirting with the flight attendant. He stared daggers at me the whole flight.

MICHAEL

Yes that is a very interesting story but like I said, I have to get going.

CALVIN

Oh right. I don't want to get in the way. I think that I'll go upstairs and check on my wife. Oh my gosh!

(sounding panicked)

I forgot which room I'm staying in!

MICHAEL

How about I get someone to look at that for you.

CALVIN

Can you do it? I mean, you're right there and all so.

MICHAEL

Fine, but then I really have to go!

CALVIN

Yes yes I understand.

(**MICHAEL** walks behind the desk and pretends to look at some papers. Looks up.)

MICHAEL

You are in room 15 on 3rd floor.

CALVIN

Thank you so so much. I could have lost my wife!

(under his breath)

Not that that would be the worst thing...

MICHAEL

Anyway, like I have said about a million times, I have to go!

CALVIN

Of course and I want you to know that I hope that you have a super stress free vacation.

MICHAEL

I am trying really hard!

CALVIN

You probably shouldn't try too hard, then it might become stressful.

MICHAEL

What I am trying really hard to do is actually leave on go on vacation.

CALVIN

Then why don't you just leave!

MICHAEL

You are actually going to let me leave! No more ridiculous tasks.

CALVIN

Nope.

MICHAEL

Really?

CALVIN

Of course, why would I make up a ridiculous task anyway?

MICHAEL

Well, I kind of assumed that you were trying to get away from your.. but...nevermind.

CALVIN

You should probably go now, or you're going to miss your flight.

MICHAEL

Oh yes.

(**MICHAEL** walks out from behind the desk but before he can leave, **PETE** walks in and holds up a gun. He takes the gun and points it at **CALVIN**. **CALVIN** puts his hands in the air. **PETE** advances to him.)

PETE

Now listen to me and no one here gets hurt do you understand.

(**MICHAEL** nods his head.)

PETE

I want \$100,000 in cash and in a canvas bag. I want this here in five minutes. If you don't meet these requests, he dies.

(pointing to **CALVIN**)

MICHAEL

Okay, we are going to get you your money, but I don't have the key to the safe. My boss does.

(Just then **BOB** enters.)

BOB

MICHAEL what the hell is going on out here?

MICHAEL

Sir we have a hostage situation. We need to get this man \$100,000.

BOB

I understand I will go and get the money.

PETE

If you are going then I want you (indicating **MICHAEL**) I want him on the ground.

BOB

Yes yes anything!

(**MICHAEL** lies down on the ground.)

MICHAEL

I feel like a fool.

CALVIN

You should. HAHAHAHA

MICHAEL

You shouldn't be talking, you have a gun pointed at your head.

CALVIN

That's not my fault now is it?

MICHAEL

Well me lying on the ground is not my fault, I'm doing it so he won't shoot you. But of course I could get up and.....

(**PETE** cuts him off)

PETE

STOP! You two are fighting like an old married couple!

MICHAEL/CALVIN

Thank you.

PETE

Another word out of either of you and he's dead.

(indicating **CALVIN**)

MICHAEL

Go ahead and shoot him. I am sick of him! All I wanted to do today was get on a plane and go on my vacation but this buffoon kept talking to me and now I am going to miss my plane.

CALVIN

Oh yeah! Well I wanted to make a friend at the hotel today because I am so bored with my wife and sometimes she gets on my nerves. Always talking away nonstop expecting me to listen.

MICHAEL

That is what you have been doing to me all day!

PETE

Why don't you two ever stop talking?

(**MICHAEL** and **CALVIN** are clearly ignoring him and keep on talking.)

CALVIN

I can't believe that I ever wanted to talk to you in the first place!

MICHAEL

Well all I wanted to do today was go on my vacation but now

(checks his watch)

I am going to miss my flight.

PETE

Can you two please stop whining.

(Still ignoring him, **MICHAEL** gets up and walks to the front desk.)

PETE

I told you that if you moved I would shoot him, but I'll give you two choices, stay there and he dies, or go back and lay on the ground. I'll give you three seconds. 3.....2.....

(**BOB** cuts him off)

BOB

I have returned and I have the money in a canvas bag. Now please release the hostage and go.

PETE

I think that I changed my mind. I still want all of the money, but I also want his
(looking at **MICHAEL**)
plane ticket.

MICHAEL

Oh I don't think so!

BOB

MICHAEL, you have to give him whatever he wants, do you understand.

MICHAEL

Yes sir I guess I understand.

BOB

Good, so just walk over and put the plane ticket on the floor by his feet. Does that work for you?

PETE

Sure whatever. I just want the ticket.

BOB

Okay Michael, go ahead.

(**MICHAEL** mutters under his breath as he brings the plane ticket over to **PETE**.)

MICHAEL

Okay, now you have the ticket, can you let him go now.

PETE

I want to make sure that I won't be followed or caught. I am going to leave a bomb and a mouthpiece behind the front desk, so I can hear what you are saying. When and only when I get to Hawaii, I will dismantle the bomb using an app on my phone, does everyone understand?

BOB/MICHAEL/CALVIN

Yes.

PETE

Good, now is there a back entrance to this place?

MICHAEL

Down that hall, there is door that says "Staff" on it, if you go through it there is a door leading to where delivery trucks come to drop off our orders.

PETE

I better not catch anyone trying to follow me.

CALVIN

No sir!

(**PETE** walks toward stage left but can't move because **MICHAEL** has grabbed his shoe and **PETE** has dropped his gun and the money along with the ticket.)

PETE

Hey, what the hell do you think you're doing?

MICHAEL

You have a great imagination if you think I'm going to let you take my plane ticket.

PETE

I am going to get away and I'm going to take your ticket with me.

MICHAEL

No!

PETE

Yes!

MICHAEL

No!

PETE

Yes!

CALVIN

They need to learn some new words.

BOB

No kidding.

(**MICHAEL** grabs the ticket off the floor and also grabs the gun but leaves the money. He stands up and runs over to **CALVIN** and **BOB**)

MICHAEL

Hazza!

BOB

You still have a little time to make if you hurry!

MICHAEL

Sir, I am already gone.

(**MICHAEL** runs out stage right and **BOB** walks over and holds **PETE'S** hands behind his back.)

BOB

Looks like you got busted in the end eh?

PETE

I'll be back for you and your little assistant too.

BOB

Let's go you.

(**BOB** walks **PETE** off stage right, then comes back in brushing his suit off.)

CALVIN

That was pretty exciting huh?

BOB

Yes, yes it was.

CALVIN

So.....

(kind of awkward silence)

I was outside a few minutes ago and I saw the biggest rat ever!

BOB

Yes...

(kind of grossed out)

THE END