



**Sample Pages from
Patience Chose A Party**

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PATIENCE CHOSE A PARTY

A VIGNETTE PLAY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



Patience Chose a Party

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Characters

5M + 6 W + 11 Any Gender

Most of the characters only appear in one scene, which means there is a lot of opportunity to double or triple roles if you want to work with a smaller cast. The casting breakdown shows the maximum number of actors.

Note: Patience Payne does not appear in the play. She's just talked about. A lot.

Riley: (M) Teenager. Wants to go to the party. Thinks he's missing out if he doesn't.

Sandy: (W) Mom. Easy going but not easily fooled.

Ren: (AG) Teenager. Riley's younger sibling. Smart and knows it. Also, very happy with who they are.

Lincoln: (M) Teenager. Wants to go to the party. Wants his mom to make it happen.

Mellow: (AG) Teenager. Mellow. And a little sad but doesn't show it outside.

Avery: (W) Teenager. Actor (but not as good as Patience). A little high strung.

Jere: (AG) Teenager. Stage Manager. Easy going, but also, annoyed.

Lil: (W) Teenager. Actor. Wants to go to the party but wasn't invited.

Kinsey: (AG) Teenager. Extreme high achiever and overwhelmed by it.

One, Two, Three: (AG) Teenagers. All three are concerned about Sil.

Four, Five, Six: Teenagers. All three want a disease to solve their problems. Four is AG, Five is W, Six is AG.

Mr. Anderson: (M) Math Teacher. Will not back down.

Mrs. Bauth: (W) Mom. Will do anything to help her son get an A.

Boon: (M) Teenager. Slacker. Will do anything to get his friend back.

Bear: (M) Teenager. Former slacker. Trying to actually do well in school.

Woods: (AG) Teenager. Non-binary. Smart and knows it. Also, very happy with who they are.

Ms. Lyle: (W) Drama Teacher. Not sure what will happen if Patience isn't in her play.

Set

Use a unit set that stays the same for all the scenes. For example, two cubes stage right, a riser upstage with a table and two chairs. Avoid clunky transitions with unique set pieces for every scene. Keep the play moving fluidly!

Light and Sound

Explore using sound as part of your transitions. What sound or music represents the characters or theme of the scene? Consider the tone of each scene and identify the light that visualizes that tone. Is the scene warm or cool? Avoid blackouts! Again, keep the play moving fluidly – as one scene ends stage right, have another begin stage left.

Music plays. Lights up on SANDY entering with RILEY following and REN following RILEY. They cross the stage.

RILEY: Can I go?

SANDY: No.

REN: Mom said no.

RILEY: (to REN) Shut up. (to SANDY, sweetly) Can I please go?

SANDY: No.

REN: Mom said no.

RILEY: (to REN) Shut up! (to SANDY, sweetly) Can I please, please, pretty please go?

They exit as LINCOLN and MELLOW enter.

MELLOW: What do you mean you're not going?

LINCOLN: I'm grounded, sort of.

MELLOW: How can you be sort of grounded? That's like sort of shoplifting.

LINCOLN: I thought you stopped that.

MELLOW: Who said I was talking about me? How are you sort of grounded?

LINCOLN: My dad says I'm grounded. My mom says she's going to talk to Mr. Anderson.

MELLOW: What's she going to do? Get him to change your grade? (gasping) She's going to get him to change your grade? That's awesome. Do you think she could do the same thing for a speeding ticket?

LINCOLN: I thought you stopped that.

MELLOW: Who said I was talking about me?

They talk quietly as JERE enters with AVERY and LIL following. JERE is the Stage Manager for the school play. AVERY and LIL are actors in the play.

AVERY: She WHAT?

JERE: She's going to the party.

LIL: Which party? (*gasps*) The football party?

JERE: Yep.

LIL: She's going to the football party?

AVERY: It's dress rehearsal. It's dress rehearsal!

JERE: We know.

AVERY: She chose a stupid party over our dress rehearsal?

JERE: Sounds like it.

LIL: Everyone's going to that party.

AVERY: Does Ms. Lyle know?

They hurry off before we hear the answer. During the above, LINCOLN and MELLOW have said their goodbyes. LINCOLN exits, MELLOW sits on a cube. There is the sound of a bus roaring off. From the opposite side of the stage KINSEY runs onstage calling after the bus. MELLOW watches, interested but not moving at all.

KINSEY: Wait! Wait! Wait!

But the bus is gone. KINSEY turns to MELLOW.

KINSEY: Why didn't you stop it?

MELLOW: Oh, did you want that? Sorry...

KINSEY: You know I did. (*dropping their knapsack on the ground, searching for their phone*) We wait for the same bus every day.

MELLOW: We do? Doesn't ring a bell.

KINSEY: (*searching, throwing things out*) Where is it? (*suddenly sniffing*) Are you smoking?

MELLOW: Why? Want one?

KINSEY: (*searching*) Gross. (*pulling out phone*) Ah ha! (*hits a contact on phone*)

MELLOW: (*watching KINSEY with mild interest*) Intense...

KINSEY: (*on phone*) Mom! I need an Uber. If I caught the bus, why would I need an Uber? Just get it! (*back on the ground stuffing things back into the bag*)

MELLOW: (*musings to self*) I wonder if my mother would let me talk to her like that. (*KINSEY doesn't answer, focusing on their bag. MELLOW pretends to be KINSEY.*) "Oh Mel, I don't talk to my mom like that normally, I'm just stressed." I get you, stress is a bear. A big ole bear...

KINSEY: (*referring to the bus*) Unbelievable.

MELLOW: And you are in a big ole bear trap.

KINSEY: (*hearing MELLOW*) What?

MELLOW: (*as in a bear trap, but mildly*) Snap.

KINSEY: What are you doing?

MELLOW: (*smiling*) Nothing. You seem stressed.

KINSEY: I have a test first period.

MELLOW: Uh huh...

KINSEY: (*standing*) No. It is not uh huh. It's a domino effect. On fire. It's exploding dominos. I am on fire and dominos are exploding all around me.

MELLOW: Am I supposed to know what that means?

KINSEY: My day is scheduled to the second. The millisecond.

MELLOW: How do you do that?

KINSEY: Colour-coded spreadsheet.

MELLOW: Why do you do that?

KINSEY: Because. I have a test first period for which I set aside an exact amount of time to study, because tonight I have to start an analytical essay after my volunteer shift that's due on Wednesday. And I have two more tests today. Domino, domino, domino! (*during the above, KINSEY has pulled out their phone again and hit the contact*) Where is she? Mom! Where is the Uber! (*to phone*) Why aren't you answering!

MELLOW: Maybe 'cause you're yelling?

KINSEY: (*texting*) WHERE IS MY UBER! (*snapping at MELLOW*) How long is it to walk?

MELLOW: To school?

KINSEY: WHAT ELSE would I be talking about!

MELLOW: Can you be less intense? It's one test.

KINSEY: One test?? One? Test? It's not one test. It's all the tests! It's everything! This is my whole life! (*and this just overwhelms KINSEY, who sinks to the ground, hugging their backpack*) I need to be there first period. I need to be there.

MELLOW: (*softly*) Wow. I mean... wow. Is this what it's like in your head? Intense. I always thought you had everything together. Huh. (*KINSEY has not moved*) You ok?

KINSEY: I don't know.

MELLOW: (*sitting with KINSEY on the floor, cross-legged*) It's a 45 minute walk. I do it all the time. It's pretty, mostly. Peaceful. No one bothers you. (*KINSEY does not answer*) I have a question. If your day is super duper colour-coded, why did you miss the bus? I would think you'd know what time you have in the morning to the millisecond.

KINSEY: (*mumbling*) I overslept.

MELLOW: What?

KINSEY: I overslept! Ok?

MELLOW: The plot thickens.

KINSEY: I never do that.

MELLOW: And yet you did.

KINSEY: I was up till three studying and forgot to set my alarm.

MELLOW: Maybe you didn't want to take the test.

KINSEY: Of course I did. I thrive at taking tests. I'm just... a little tired.

MELLOW: I was supposed to have a test first period, too.

KINSEY: In what?

MELLOW: Doesn't matter. I wasn't planning on taking it.

KINSEY: You missed the bus on purpose?

MELLOW: Is it really missing if you never intended to take it?

KINSEY: Why would you do that? Unless you're choosing to fail... you're choosing to fail?

MELLOW: (*getting up*) Aren't you as smart as they say you are.

KINSEY: Who says?

MELLOW: (*stretching*) I don't know. "They."

KINSEY: I wish they wouldn't. Being smart has left me nothing but a mountain of expectations I can't seem to carry. Everybody thinks I can do this. They keep telling me, all the time, "you can do this."

MELLOW: (*sitting on cube*) Could be the other way. Could be that no one cares about you no matter how hard you try to get their attention. Could be there are zero expectations you get to carry, which sounds freeing but actually, it's kind of hollow. No one cares if you stay up late, skip school, sit here and watch the bus go by.

KINSEY: I don't know which is worse.

MELLOW: Yours. Yours is worse. Maybe. You could... sit here and find out for yourself.

KINSEY: I can't.

MELLOW: You could. It really is just one test.

KINSEY: One test. You don't get it. There are so many people I would disappoint.

MELLOW: Maybe. You also wouldn't be curled up on the ground hugging your backpack.

KINSEY: So, what would happen if you took your test?

MELLOW: Nothing. Trust me.

KINSEY: You don't know that.

MELLOW: Everybody already thinks I'm a waste of space. Why change their perception?

KINSEY: That sounds like letting other people decide who you are.

MELLOW: Hello, pot. Have you met kettle?

KINSEY: (*looking at phone, scrambling to feet*) What? What?

MELLOW: Back to yelling...

KINSEY: She sent it to the house. Why would she do that? I gotta go. (*grabs backpack, then stops*) Why did you talk to me?

MELLOW: Why not? It's what people do.

KINSEY: Not once in four years have you talked to me.

MELLOW: Oh. You never talked to me either.

KINSEY: I guess I didn't. *(starts to leave, turns back)* Do you want a ride?

MELLOW: Huh. *(almost does it)* You know... *(and then doesn't)* Nah. I'm good. Don't stress about your test, ok?

KINSEY: Ok. *(starts to exit)*

MELLOW: *(calling after)* And stop yelling at your mom. *(to self)* So intense.

Music plays. ONE, TWO and THREE run on to downstage centre. MELLOW slowly exits. Music stops.

ONE: I have to talk to Sil, but I don't want to talk to Sil because if I talk to Sil, it will be the end of the friendship.

ONE repeats their above line at the same time as TWO. Both ONE and TWO should say "end of the friendship" at the same time. TWO should be louder than ONE.

TWO: She has to talk to Sil but doesn't want to talk to Sil, but I want nothing to do with the end of the friendship.

ONE and TWO repeat their above lines at the same time as THREE. ONE and TWO say "end of the friendship" at the same time as THREE says "chain of friendship." THREE should be louder than ONE and TWO.

THREE: I never talk to Sil, but I would so talk to Sil, because Sil is the top of the food chain of friendship.

ONE: Which I want, but I don't, but I do. It'll be hard and it'll hurt and we've been friends for so long, how could I end it.

ONE repeats their above line at the same time as TWO. Both ONE and TWO should say "we've been friends for so long" at the same time.

TWO: Sil is a bully and I don't want to be on her bad side. It'll hurt and we've been friends for so long. High school is hard enough.

ONE and TWO repeat their above lines at the same time as THREE. ONE, TWO and THREE say "we've been friends for so long" at the same time.

THREE: Which I want. I want to be on top. I'd do anything to say we've been friends for so long. High school royalty.

ONE: But I'm anxious all the time.

TWO: But it's only one more year.

THREE: But if Sil knew what she was thinking...

ONE: It would be easier not to talk to –

TWO: It's always easier not to talk to –

THREE: I think that I'm going to talk to –

There is a brief pause and then –

ALL THREE: Hi Sil.

FOUR runs on.

FOUR: Lincoln's mom has entered the building!

Lights change. Chaos music plays (O Fortuna ~ Carmina Burana comes to mind) as everyone in the play bursts onstage – running back and forth. At the same time, three chairs are brought in. Two on either side of the table, and one off to the side.

MR. ANDERSON enters. At the same time, MRS. BAUTH enters carrying an oversized, but fashionable, tote bag. MR. ANDERSON and MRS. BAUTH stare at each other throughout this.

Everyone exits. Music fades.

BAUTH: (*pleasant, but steely*) Mr. Anderson.

ANDERSON: (*professional*) Mrs. Bauth.

BAUTH: Thank you for seeing me.

ANDERSON: Please, have a seat.

BAUTH: I'll stand.

ANDERSON: Why?

BAUTH: It feels like a standing situation.

ANDERSON: All right. So will I.

BAUTH: That seems childish.

ANDERSON: Does it? I wonder.

LINCOLN: Why are you talking like that?

BAUTH: (*not looking at LINCOLN*) Lincoln, sit down.

LINCOLN: You're standing.

BAUTH: This is between Mr. Anderson and myself.

LINCOLN: But it's my grade.

BAUTH: Sit.

LINCOLN sits off to the side. This is very much about ANDERSON and BAUTH. They stare at each other.

BAUTH: We have an unpleasant situation.

ANDERSON: Doesn't have to be.

BAUTH: True.

ANDERSON: You agree?

BAUTH: Of course.

ANDERSON: It's settled then. Lincoln accepts his grade.

LINCOLN leaps up.

LINCOLN: What?

BAUTH: (*not looking at LINCOLN*) Sit down.

LINCOLN: Mom!

BAUTH: (*looking at LINCOLN*) Sit!

LINCOLN sits in a huff. BAUTH opens her bag and takes out a small food storage container. She puts it on the desk and opens the container.

BAUTH: That is unacceptable. Macaron?

ANDERSON: They look delicious. I understand they're quite hard to make.

BAUTH: A little time consuming. These are pistachio.

ANDERSON: Alas. I'm allergic.

BAUTH: (*not surprised*) Indeed.

ANDERSON: My throat swells up.

BAUTH: Tragic.

LINCOLN: Can I have one?

BAUTH: No.

She puts the lid back on the container and puts it in her bag.

BAUTH: I'm going to sit. *(sits)*

ANDERSON: All right. *(also sits)* How can I help you, Mrs. Bauth?

BAUTH: *(pleasant, but steely)* Lincoln needs an A.

ANDERSON: I need a vacation. We don't always get what we want.

BAUTH: *(now more steely)* Lincoln needs an A.

ANDERSON: Lincoln did not do A work and therefore he did not receive an A grade.

BAUTH: Your instructions were not clear.

ANDERSON: That is not true.

BAUTH: Your deadlines were unreasonable.

ANDERSON: Also not true. Everyone else in the class was able to complete the assignments properly and meet the necessary deadlines.

LINCOLN: But it's so hard...

ANDERSON: Yes. It is.

LINCOLN: *(leaping up)* Ah ha! You admit it's too hard. You admit that no normal human being could ever take your class successfully. You are a failure as a teacher, admit it! Admit!

BAUTH: Lincoln.

LINCOLN: *(sighing)* I'm sitting. *(sits)*

MRS. BAUTH reaches into her bag, pulls out a bag of lemon drops, and puts them on the desk.

BAUTH: Patience drop?

ANDERSON: Are you going to follow him around for the rest of his life, fixing his mistakes? Make it so he never faces the consequences of his actions? Is that what you want for him?

LINCOLN: (*leaping up*) I didn't make mistakes! The instructions were unclear! The deadlines were unreasonable! Everything was unfair!

Both ANDERSON and BAUTH stare at LINCOLN for an uncomfortable amount of time.

LINCOLN: (*sighing*) I'm sitting. (*sits*)

BAUTH: Where were we? (*pleasant, but steely*) Oh yes, you were insinuating that I'm a failure of a parent. Have you ever been divorced, Mr. Anderson?

ANDERSON: I have.

BAUTH: Another unpleasant situation. Lincoln's father is obsessed with math. Lincoln's father has decided that Lincoln cannot attend an iconic social event unless he gets his math grade up. I have decided that Lincoln is going to do just that.

ANDERSON: Why?

BAUTH: (*pushing bag forward*) I had these lemon drops specially made. They have real lemon in them.

ANDERSON: Alas. I'm allergic.

BAUTH: (*not surprised*) Indeed.

ANDERSON: It's rare. My skin breaks out in a rash.

BAUTH: Tragic. (*puts away the lemon drops*) Mr. Anderson, I always get my way. (*pulls out a small moisturizer container*)

ANDERSON: But what good does it do?

BAUTH: (*holding out container*) Moisturizer? It has eucalyptus oil. I made it myself.

ANDERSON: Mrs. Bauth, are you trying to kill me?

LINCOLN: How dare you!

BAUTH: (*to ANDERSON*) That's dramatic.

ANDERSON: I'm just wondering what else you have in your bag that I'm allergic to. And that you know I'm allergic to. What event could be so important to go through all this?

LINCOLN: It's the party of the year!

ANDERSON: What?

LINCOLN: Everyone's going to be there. Dad is being so unfair!

ANDERSON: (*ramping up*) This is over a party?

BAUTH: (*ramping up*) Why should I deprive my son of the party of the year?

ANDERSON: Are you crazy?

BAUTH: Have you no sense of the importance of socialization? You are going to change his grade.

ANDERSON: I am not.

BAUTH: (*standing*) I can make things extremely difficult for you if you don't. More than a little eucalyptus rash.

LINCOLN: Go Mom!

ANDERSON: (*standing*) You don't scare me. I've talked to a lot of parents about their children's grades. And some of them will do anything, anything, to make sure their bundle of joy gets the grade they absolutely don't deserve.

LINCOLN: I totally deserve –

ANDERSON & BAUTH: Sit down! (*LINCOLN sits*)

ANDERSON: I've been reprimanded, scolded, slapped on the wrist, rapped on the knuckles, threatened, had a chair thrown at me, and not once have I ever changed a student's grade. Because no student ever benefited from it. Not in the long run. I won't be responsible for that. So, Lincoln's B minus is the grade he received and that is the grade he is going to get.

BAUTH: Wait. B minus? (*to LINCOLN*) B minus? You told me you got an F.

LINCOLN: Dad said anything under an A wasn't good enough.

BAUTH: He is such a ridiculous man. You got a B minus, all on your own? You didn't cheat?

LINCOLN: (*standing*) No! I would never!

BAUTH: Lincoln.

LINCOLN: Well, I would. But I didn't. Not this time. I swear. Are you mad?

BAUTH: Mad? (*said with joy*) B minus!

BAUTH and LINCOLN hug. ANDERSON throws up his hands and sits.

LINCOLN: Can I go to the party?

BAUTH: I'll drive you there myself. (*they start to exit*)

ANDERSON: Excuse me. We're not done here.

LINCOLN and BAUTH stop. BAUTH turns.

ANDERSON: Mrs. Bauth.

BAUTH: Mr. Anderson.

There is a pause.

BAUTH: Well. This is awkward. No hard feelings? One divorcee to another?

ANDERSON: You don't give those macarons to your ex, do you?

BAUTH: Of course not. He's allergic to shellfish. (*starts to go and turns back*) If you go to the staff room, and you see a container in the fridge with your name on it in red tape with red marker, I would probably refrain from opening it. Ta ta!

Lights change. Music plays. BAUTH and LINCOLN exit in one direction. SANDY enters from the other with RILEY and REN following. SANDY puts a laundry basket on the table. Music fades.

RILEY: (*to SANDY, sweetly*) Can I please, please, pretty please go?

SANDY: (*hands RILEY a shirt from the basket*) Fold.

REN: You're so pathetic when you beg.

RILEY: (*gesturing and pointing with the shirt*) Why are you here? (*to SANDY*) Why is she here? This has nothing to do with her and I resent having to hear her stupid voice coming out of her stupid face. (*throws shirt on the ground*)

SANDY: Riley.

RILEY: Sorry. (*picks up the shirt and tries to fold it*)

REN: Wanna see my report card? 100% across the board. I'm getting a key to the city.

SANDY: (*pointing REN*) Socks.

REN starts mismatching RILEY's socks.

RILEY: I really think, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that I have proven over the course of several months that I am responsible. The pinnacle of responsibility. Above and beyond.

SANDY: (*to REN*) I saw that.

REN: (*sweetly*) What?

SANDY: Don't mismatch his socks. Do it properly.

RILEY: Above AND beyond. That has to be worth something.

SANDY: It means you're a responsible human being and I'm proud of you.

RILEY: It's just a party!

SANDY: A party without supervision.

RILEY: You can't tell the football team they need to be supervised. Why is that my fault? (*throws the shirt on the ground*)

SANDY: Would you quit that?

RILEY picks up the shirt. SANDY takes it and folds it perfectly.

REN: Can you really blame Mom? You're the one who lied in the first place.

RILEY: I didn't lie! (*pause*) I just didn't expand on the situation.

REN: That's not what responsible people do.

RILEY: Your guts. I hate them.

REN: (*cheerfully*) Your problem. Not mine.

RILEY: Don't you trust me? What was the point of being good?

SANDY: You were faking it on the off chance you might go to a party? Is that what being responsible means to you?

RILEY: Noooooo. Not... exactly... It's going to be the party of the year. And I won't be there.

REN: There is no such thing. “Party of the year.”

RILEY: How would you know?

REN: It is a statistic that 91 percent of people get all worked up over New Year’s parties and, statistically speaking, they all fall flat. They’re never as good as promised. 99.6 percent of people never fall in love at midnight. 80 percent feel it’s a big waste of time. And don’t even mention quantifying the criteria for what makes the best party.

RILEY: You made all that up. There’s no way that – did you make it up?

REN: Totally. But you thought about it for a second.

RILEY screams in frustration and storms off. SANDY picks up the laundry basket.

SANDY: You’re going to drive him crazy one of these days.

REN: It’s the little things...

Music plays. Lights change. SANDY and REN exit as BEAR enters from the other side with a box of donuts.

BEAR: (to self) These are not bribery donuts. These are not bribery donuts. These are not bribery donuts. (puts donuts on the table)

BOON enters but stays on the edge of the space.

BOON: Hey.

BEAR: (turning to BOON) Hey! Hi! So... (pause) What’s up?

BOON: Nothing.

BEAR: Ok.

BOON: So. (sarcastic) How’s “school”?

BEAR: Ok...

BOON: Is it? “Ok?” A little birdie told me that you were “studying” last night. You told me you were grounded and that’s why you couldn’t go to the Bloody Grins concert.

BEAR: Yeah. I heard that you heard. (pushes donuts forward) I brought donuts. Your favourite?

BOON: Abandonment donuts.

BEAR: What? They are not.

BOON: Uh huh.

BEAR: They're apology donuts. (*picks up donuts and moves to BOON*) I wanted to say "I'm sorry I lied". If you want them, fine. If you don't, racoons can eat them.

BOON: Do racoons eat donuts?

BEAR: I don't know.

BOON: I bet they like powdered jelly.

BEAR: Maybe. (*pause*) Thanks for coming.

BOON: I'm not staying. (*beat*) I have an ultimatum.

BEAR: (*surprised*) Oh. Really?

BOON: (*taking the box of donuts*) And I'm taking the donuts. (*goes to sit with the donuts*) Because it's a crime to let good donuts go to racoons. And I'm not offering you any.

BEAR: I brought them for you.

BOON: I can't believe you thought you could buy me with... Those smell so good. (*opens the box and peers inside*) Is that an apple fritter?

BEAR: Fresh too.

BOON: (*turning away*) Abandonment bribery donuts. No thank you. (*beat*) Still. (*turns back*) Can't let a fresh donut go to waste. (*chooses a donut and takes a bite*) Bribery donuts taste good.

BEAR: So. What's your ultimatum?

BOON: Don't rush me! (*speaking about the donut*) So good. (*puts donuts away, talking to the box of donuts*) I'll be back for you. You and all your friends. (*now to BEAR*) So.

BEAR: So. (*pause*) I'm sorry we haven't hung out much these past few weeks.

BOON: Weeks? Try months.

BEAR: Sorry.

BOON: Are you? You keep saying that.

BEAR: I am.

BOON: Not sorry enough to skip class. Not enough to lie to your mom instead of your best friend. I'd say you're not sorry at all. You look the exact opposite, dude.

BEAR: I am!

BOON: (*takes in a big inhale and exhales*) Here it is. I've known you a long time. Sandbox days, Bear. This, whatever it is you think you're doing, this studying thing, this caring about school thing, it's not you. You come back to my side of the fence, or I'm giving you the "betty nope."

BEAR: (*this is serious, standing*) Dude. Dude!

BOON: None of that. You don't get to "Dude" me, Bear.

BEAR: (*sitting*) Dude!

BOON: And you don't get donuts. Ever. Donuts are off the table. No eating, no buying –

BEAR: How are you going to stop me from buying donuts?

BOON: I don't know! I've never done this before. You think I give ultimatums on the daily? Just tossing betty nopes around? I am totally hating this. Man!

BEAR: The betty nope is harsh.

BOON: I think ruining my chill is harsh.

BEAR: It means that much to you?

BOON: This is not about me. This is a you thing.

BEAR: It's been a hard year, dude.

BOON: I know.

BEAR: It's not my fault my dad took off.

BOON: I didn't say it was.

BEAR: Things change, people change, my whole life is different now. Can't you understand that?

BOON: No, I can't! I never change. I'm exactly the same as I've always been and I'm perfectly fine. I need a donut. (*takes a bite, sighs*) Donuts. Is there anything they can't do?

BEAR: How many do you think you've eaten over the years?

BOON: (*thinking*) Hundreds.

BEAR: Thousands.

BOON: Maybe. There is no end to the number of donuts I can consume.

BEAR & BOON: (*remembering*) Tower of Dough.

BEAR: Best birthday cake ever.

BOON: Why eat cake when you can eat donuts?

BEAR: I was totally sugar sick. Two day stomachache.

BOON: (*raising a donut, like a toast*) To donuts.

BEAR: Here, here!

BOON: (*realizing they are in a moment, turning away*) I'm not having a moment with you. I'm in my own moment. Totally separate.

BEAR: We haven't betty noped anyone since the sixth grade.

BOON: I thought it was appropriate. Then and now.

BEAR: Adam Lefforge? He had no idea we were ignoring him.

BOON: The point was still made.

BEAR: Do you remember... why we decided to ignore him?

BOON: Um... I'm sure it was massively important. We didn't betty nope lightly.

BEAR: No, we didn't. (*sighing*) I didn't think this through. (*slowly stands and moves away*)

BOON: Damn skippy you didn't.

BEAR: I don't want to lose you, Boon...

BOON: Should have looked before you leaped.

BEAR: I've had enough of that this year.

BOON: Oh. Well, it's not exactly the same thing, my thing and your thing with your dad, I mean...

BEAR: (*turns back to BOON*) If that's what you want. If that's what it takes not to lose you.

BOON: What?

BEAR: I'll do it. I'll stop studying.

BOON: What?

BEAR: I'll go back to the way I was. Try to, anyway.

BOON: You will? For real?

BEAR: The betty nope is a big deal. It's serious. (*pulls out phone and starts texting*)

BOON: Well, if I saw you in the halls, I wouldn't totally ignore you, I'd maybe wave, or nod, or what are you doing?

BEAR: I'm telling my study group I can't meet them.

BOON: Dude. There's a group?

BEAR: It helps me focus. I'm not great at reading.

BOON: Who is?

BEAR: (*to self*) I'll have to figure out what to tell my uncle.

BOON: I wasn't going to betty nope your family, dude. Just you.

BEAR: That's why I was studying. He told me if I get my grades up I can apprentice at his garage.

BOON: For real? You never told me. Do you want to work on cars?

BEAR: I like fixing things. (*sighing*) So, do you want to come over?

BOON: (*slowly standing, in a daze*) This is... I wasn't expecting this.

BEAR: It's what you wanted.

BOON: Yeah. I mean, yes. This is what I want. Exactly! You made the right choice.

BEAR: Sure.

BOON: (*moving away*) I mean... it's been weird without you. Maybe even a little empty. Maybe, I don't know, I don't think about it, I don't think about anything, and I sure wasn't thinking that my life is empty and I don't know what to do about it!

BEAR: Boon?

BOON: It's one thing to be two empty people because you're in a pair, so it's not like you're doing it alone and feeling alone and realizing that you just might spend the rest of your life empty and alone.

BEAR: (*going to BOON*) Dude? Are you all right?

BOON: No! You weren't supposed to say yes!

BEAR: What?

BOON: It wasn't supposed to go this way at all!

BEAR: I'm confused.

BOON: You were supposed to convince me to change my life. You were supposed to put your foot down and yell and I'd yell and tell you that you're wrong, but secretly I'd know you were right. I'd put up a big fuss but in the end –

BEAR: Ohhhh dude...

BOON: You got that right. Ohhhh dude.

BEAR: Then why did you throw down the betty nope? Why didn't you just say something?

BOON: I don't know. You think I do this all the time?

BEAR: You scared me! I wouldn't be able to sleep if you betty noped me for reals.

BOON: You weren't talking to me anyway. How did I know you cared?

BEAR: I do care!

BOON: I do too!

BEAR & BOON: Dude!

The two very sincerely bro hug each other and break apart.

BOON: Do I get to keep the donuts?

Music plays. Lights change. They exit one way as FOUR, FIVE and SIX run on.

ALL: I don't have much time.

SIX: What I need is a disease.

FIVE: Something that makes it impossible for me to be a doctor.

FOUR: That makes a friend totally forget I made out with her boyfriend.

SIX: That will make people stop getting mad at me.

ALL: It can't be too hard, can it?

FIVE: My parents decided I was going to be a doctor at birth. I was born and they bought me a set of scrubs. I always had to be a doctor for Halloween. This year, I was told doctors don't take art classes.

FOUR: I didn't mean to do it. It just... happened. And I definitely wasn't going to tell her. I can't believe he told, when did he get a guilty conscience all of a sudden? Everyone stopped talking to me.

SIX: I lie all the time. I lie to my parents, I lie to my friends, and teachers. I just do it, I can't help it. It's fun. It's not my fault people believe me, they should know better, right?

FIVE: I don't want to fail but it's the only way out of this, right?

FOUR: I just want things to go back the way they were.

SIX: I just want people to not get so bent out of shape. Why do they care so much?

FOUR: She's been my friend since the 4th grade. She won't even look at me.

FIVE: This would be so much easier if there was a disease.

FOUR: This would be so much easier if I never answered his text.

SIX: Why do they care so much?

Music plays. They exit. The lights dim to night. On the other side of the RILEY enters in full sneak mode, looking behind him. WOODS and REN enter. RILEY doesn't see them. When RILEY gets centre stage, WOODS speaks.

WOODS: What are you doing?

RILEY: (*hitting the floor*) Agh!

REN: Are you sneaking out to go to that party? (*to WOODS*) He's sneaking out to go to that party.

RILEY: My national nightmare continues.

WOODS: Him? Sneak out? No one would believe that.

RILEY: (*getting up*) One of you is bad enough. I have to listen to Sidekick Misery too?

REN: Hey! That's no way to talk to the Low Brass Section Leader of the Huron High Marching Band.

WOODS: That sounds so awesome. Yay me up top! (*REN and WOODS high five. To RILEY.*) Your sneak game is pretty poor. We heard you talking to yourself all the way down.

REN: You're lucky Mom and Dad are at the front of the house.

RILEY: (*looking back at the house*) They make it seem so easy in movies. You just open your window and climb down. It's terrifying. I have no idea how I'm going to get back in. Are you and Agent Doom going to tell on me?

WOODS: "Agent Doom." Are you ever going to let that go? I was nine and you tried to steal my night vision goggles.

REN: Why is this party so important?

WOODS: (*to REN*) Patience Payne is going to be there. She ditched the drama department dress to go.

REN: (*to WOODS*) She did? That's low.

WOODS: Do you really want to be associated with people like her?

REN: Who is Patience Payne anyway?

WOODS: How important could she be? Her name's on this play and she doesn't even make an appearance.

REN and WOODS look directly at the audience. RILEY is not in on breaking the fourth wall. After a moment, he continues on.

RILEY: She's the most popular girl in school.

WOODS: Popularity is a construct.

RILEY: What does that mean?

REN: It's not real. Riley, there will be other parties.

RILEY: Maybe there won't.

WOODS: On what planet? You think parties will instantly become extinct because you don't show up to one?

REN: There will always be parties. Cockroaches and parties.

RILEY: How do you know? You two have never been to one.

REN: Boo hoo. So sad. We've never been to a party. Parties are, what's the word, Woods?

WOODS: Mind numbing.

REN: That's two words. And totally true.

RILEY: But don't you feel you're missing out? Don't you... (*changing track*) Woods? Since when?

WOODS: Two weeks. What do you think?

RILEY: It's... woodsy?

REN: Don't make fun.

WOODS: No, he's right. It's not working out. My brother keeps calling me Branch.

REN: Give it time.

WOODS: Riley, parties are just an experience. Granted, an experience in which your brain cells slowly ooze out your ears.

REN: There are too many experiences out there to risk brain oozeage.

RILEY: (*sighing*) You two are so weird.

REN: Exactly.

WOODS: Atypic up top.

REN and WOODS high five.

RILEY: (*trying again*) Ok, Ok, don't you feel you're missing out, being weird? That you don't get to be normal?

WOODS: Normal is a construct.

REN: You put too much importance in the opinion of others. We like who we are.

WOODS: You should try it sometime.

RILEY: Was I really that loud when I climbed down?

REN: Nah. We were up anyway.

WOODS: I only sleep four hours a night. It's a curse.

RILEY: Are you going to tell?

REN: Despite what you may think of me, I'm no snitch.

RILEY: But you call me out every chance you get.

REN: Sure. When you're standing in front of me. I'm not going to do it behind your back.

RILEY: Oh. Thanks. (*exits*)

REN: (*calling after*) Have fun at your party. Say hi to Patience for me.

WOODS: (*calling after*) Try not to let your brain ooze out your ears. (*to REN*) He's going to have an awful time.

REN: Yeah. Almost makes me want to go. And record it. And show the video at Christmas.

WOODS: I bet he confesses.

REN: I bet he does too. Maybe I can record that.

Music plays. They exit. Lights change to full light. JERE, LIL and AVERY enter and move to the table. LIL and JERE sits, while AVERY paces. MS. LYLE enters.

MS. LYLE: (*entering with a flourish*) Hello, humans, are we ready to hit the light fantastic and put on the most amazing – (*really seeing them*) Oh. Why aren't we in costume?

JERE: (*standing*) Ms. Lyle.

MS. LYLE: (*singsong*) We're starting at seven on the dot.

JERE: Yeah, about that.

AVERY: (*bursting*) Patience isn't here.

MS. LYLE: She's not? Oh. That's cutting it close. (*to JERE*) Can you call her?

JERE: Yeah, I already did.

MS. LYLE: And?

JERE: She's not coming.

AVERY: She's going to a party. She chose a party over us.

LIL: It's a big party...

AVERY: Lil!

MS. LYLE has been facing downstage, staring out in a daze.

JERE: Ms. Lyle?

MS. LYLE: (*each one of these should be different*) Ok...Ok. Ok. Ok.

LIL: (*to AVERY*) Is she ok?

MS. LYLE: (*fast*) Ok. Ok. Ok. Ok.

AVERY: What do you think?

JERE: I think she's going to short circuit. (*claps hands*) Ms. Lyle! Snap out of it! What are we going to do?

MS. LYLE: (*dazed*) I... don't know.

AVERY: The show must go on. Right?

MS. LYLE: Right. Sure.

JERE: You don't sound sure.

MS. LYLE: The show must go on. The show must go on without...
Patience... Payne.

JERE: You still don't sound sure.

MS. LYLE: What party?

LIL: Football. It's going to be huge. Half the school is going.

MS. LYLE: (*to all three*) Were you invited?

JERE: Are you kidding?

AVERY: We could go if we wanted to.

JERE: (*to AVERY*) Are you kidding?

LIL: I wouldn't say no if I was invited.

AVERY: Lil!

LIL: It doesn't matter. I wasn't invited.

JERE: You're better off without them.

LIL: They're very popular.

JERE: Only to them.

AVERY: It's disgusting. Patience thinks she can ditch the dress rehearsal without any consequences. Just because? And she'll show up tomorrow and not think she did anything wrong. There are never



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