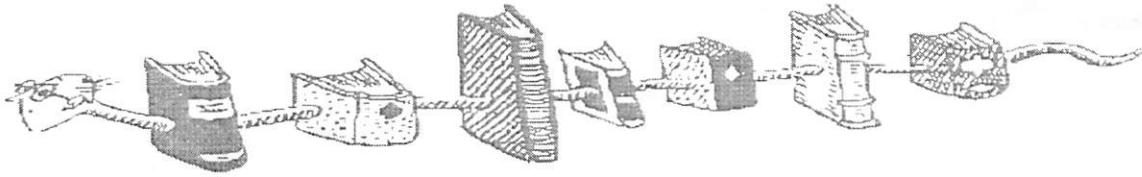


# *Youthwrite 2003*

*The definitive anthology of student written plays*

*Published by ABCDE  
(Association of B.C. Drama Educators)*

# Youthwrite 2002



*Dear Readers,*

*It is with great pleasure that I present the 2003 Youthwrite Anthology.*

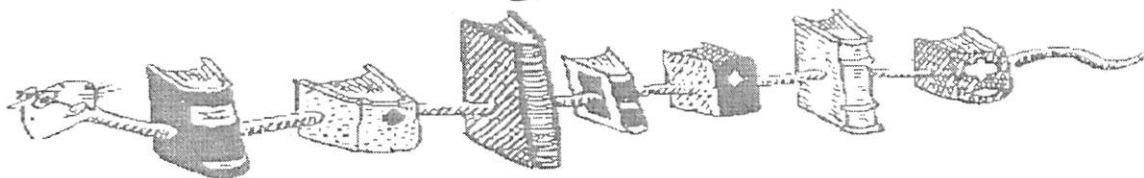
*The following plays are the winners of the 2003 B.C. Youthwrite Competition, held under the sponsorship of the Association of the British Columbia Drama Educators. Fifteen plays were submitted from schools around B.C. and then given to three adjudicators to read (Geoff Burns, Tom Cowles, and Linda Beaven). Each reader gave feedback to the playwright. Six plays were then chosen and now given the opportunity to see the work in print as a part of the Youthwrite Anthology.*

*The Association of B.C. Drama Educators feels that these plays are of an interest to teachers and students around the province, and these works could provide challenging and interesting scripts for further productions. We would like to remind you that these scripts are covered by copyright and the payment of royalties to the playwright may encourage them to write more plays. Royalty information will appear with each script.*

*I know you will be impressed with the variety of talent these young writers possess. Enjoy!*

*Gordon Hamilton  
Youthwrite Coordinator*

# Table Of Contents



## *Backstage*

by Lauchlin Johnston

---

## *A Mile Away*

by Holly Dravis

---

## *I Need to Dye My Hair*

by Brenda Fisher

---

## *Always*

by Will Johnson

---

## *Airspace*

by Anna Mehler Paperny

---

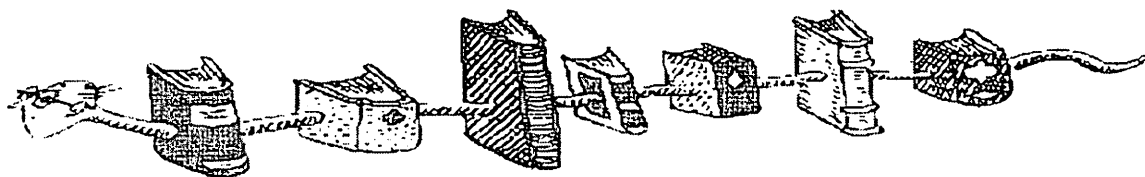
## *Top Five*

by Stephanie Wishart

# Backstage

by

Lauchlin Johnston



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Backstage" by Lauchlin Johnston is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Lauchlin Johnston at 8881 118th Street, Delta B.C. V4C 6H6. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$25.00.*



# Backstage

by Lauchlin Johnston

## Cast

Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager

House Manager (Nikki)

Sound Technician (Doug)

Lighting Technician (Mark)

Properties Manager (Lucy)

Actors/Actresses

- Clive – An understudy, it is his first time on stage
- Andrew – just broke up with his girlfriend
- Caitlin – overly sympathetic
- Cheryl – control freak

## Scene

Backstage at a generic theatre that is putting on the last show of a long run of a play. The stage is set so that when the curtain opens, the backstage area looks like the audience. There is a sufficient amount of “set” to mask any downstage (actual) actors from the upstage “audience”. This “set” has to disappear before the end of the play. The stage manager’s table and swivel chair are stage right. It is a mess.

*The Stage Manager enters stage right, with a briefcase, winter coat and hat on, and a file folder of papers. He dumps them on his table, then faces the (actual) audience while taking off his coat and hat, and hanging them on the back of his chair.*

**Stage Manager:** (sighs) Last show of the run tonight. It wasn’t really a bad show. Not much has gone awry. It’s been kinda fun. Oh well. There’ll be other shows.

*The Assistant Stage Manager enters in from stage left. She has a headset on, and is carrying a clipboard. She is also munching on a vanilla cruller. At some point in the following dialogue, she puts it down on the Stage Manager’s desk.*

**Assistant Stage Manager:** (through the cruller) Where the hell have you been? The house is opening in ten minutes!

**Stage Manager:** I was having dinner with a girl I met – you know – trying to live a normal life, outside this building.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Well, life or no life, you should have been here about an hour ago! I had to get that group of troglodytic, set-pushing Neanderthals that we call a stage crew to set the stage...and you know what they’re like.

**Stage Manager:** A couple of bricks short of a full load?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Yeah, that's it. Anyway, I called your house about fifteen times. I had to stop when your answering machine was full.

**Stage Manager:** Great...I'll have something to do tonight, when I go home.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Doug and Mark are in their sound and light booths.

**Stage Manager:** Good.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The actors are having their usual stress attack.

**Stage Manager:** Fine.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The flies are all set.

**Stage Manager:** Sure.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The lighting cues have all been tested.

**Stage Manager:** Great.

*The House Manager enters from stage left and crosses, unnoticed, to the Stage Manager's table.*

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The ushers are on strike.

**Stage Manager:** Uh-huh.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The smoke machine's...

**Stage Manager:** Wait a minute! The ushers are what?

**House Manager:** They're on strike. They all walked out just now.

**Stage Manager:** Oh great.

**House Manager:** They have been demanding to be paid a higher salary. Half Minimum wage seems rather cheap.

**Stage Manager:** Oh well. I'm sure people can hang up their own coats and find their own seats. How hard can it be?

**House Manager:** All right... *(he exits)*

**Stage Manager:** *(noticing the phone on his desk)* Wait a minute!

**House Manager:** *(entering)* What?

**Stage Manager:** What's that?

**House Manager:** It appears to be a phone.

**Stage Manager:** What is it doing here?

**House Manager:** It's the old phone from the green room. It's here because the phone guys were going to just throw it out, so I thought to myself: 'We could use it backstage for the stage crew to use after the show.'

**Stage Manager:** But a phone makes noise.

**House Manager:** Well, it isn't a number anyone will call anyway.

**Stage Manager:** I want it gone.

**House Manager:** But...

**Stage Manager:** Now! *(to A.S.M.)* ...how long do we have before the doors open?

**House Manager:** But...

**Stage Manager:** Get it out of here! I haven't got time to discuss it!

**House Manager:** I have to talk with the ushers. I'll get it later. *(he exits)*

**Stage Manager:** Sure, fine. How long do we have before the doors open?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Um...five minutes.

**Stage Manager:** Okay. *(noticing the headset on his table)* Are the headsets working?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Yep.

**Stage Manager:** Good. *(he puts them on)*

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Oh, there is just one more thing...

**Stage Manager:** What's that?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Guess who's coming to review the show tonight.

**Stage Manager:** Oh no...it isn't...

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Yes, it is...Eskobar Vincinelli, from the Star Newspaper.

**Stage Manager:** This night just keeps getting better and better.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** I'm gonna go open the curtains.

**Stage Manager:** Sure, fine, whatever.

*The Assistant Stage Manager crosses to the curtain control box and opens the curtains.*

**Assistant Stage Manager:** I'm headed up to the sound booth to make sure Doug is ready to go.

**Stage Manager:** You do that, and I'll check on the actors.

*The A.S.M. exits stage right. The phone rings on the stage manager's desk. He answers it.*

**Stage Manager:** Yes, what is it? I'm sorry, who is this? No, this is not a crisis hot line. (beat) Well, I'm sorry about your goldfish, but these things happen. (beat) Can't you find him in the vacuum cleaner? Just take off the bag...what? No...take it off. Take it off! No, not you. (beat – he looks frustrated) Look lady, why don't you just hang up and try your call again, I have a show to do.

*Andrew, followed by Caitlin, bursts into the backstage area.*

**Andrew:** IT'S ALL OVER! I have nothing in my life anymore!

**Stage Manager:** Excuse me, I have a real crisis here. *(he hangs up)*

**Andrew:** *(sobbing)* My girlfriend...she...she...she's already married! She just never told me! (beat) Eight months, you hear! EIGHT MONTHS! Oh why? WHY?

**Stage Manager:** I'm sorry to hear that.

**Andrew:** She always said that the diamond ring on her finger was a prize she found at the bottom of her Cheerios! But you know what? IT WASN'T! Oh Stacey... how could you?

**Caitlin:** Now come on! Straighten up! You've got a show to do tonight. And let me tell you something...we could NOT do this play without your stunning portrayal of policeman #2!

**Andrew:** ...but...

**Caitlin:** How about a cruller? That'll make you feel better.

*She takes the cruller off the Stage Manager's table and gives it to Andrew, who tries to eat it while still sobbing.*

**Caitlin:** Let's do some vocal warm-ups!

**Stage Manager:** Uh guys? The audience is coming in. they'll hear you.

**Caitlin:** *(ignoring him)* Now: Whether the weather is cold...

*(Andrew moans)*

**Caitlin:** ...whether the weather is hot...

*(Andrew moans again)*

**Caitlin:** ...we'll be together, whatever the weather...

*(Andrew moans loudly, through the cruller)*

**Andrew:** Stacey! *(sobbing)*

**Stage Manager:** Can you guys take it to the green room? The people out front can hear you!

**Caitlin:** *(as she exits with Andrew)* A! E! I! O! U! A! E! I! O! U! A! E! I! O! U!

*As she exits, she bumps into the curtain control box, which closes the curtains. The Stage Manager holds his head, as if he has a headache. Clive enters stage right.*

**Stage Manager:** One more show...one more show...

*The phone rings, and the Stage manager answers it.*

**Stage Manager:** WHAT?!? Listen, I told you before...this is not a crisis line! Huh? Can't you just buy another fish? It was your favorite. Well, if it's any consolation, I'm sure that Mr. Bubbles is in fish heaven. Happy now? Did you get it out of the vacuum? Well go do that, then.

*He slams the phone down.*

**Clive:** *(looking at the closed curtain)* Uh...how many people are out there?

**Stage Manager:** *(not looking at him)* The house isn't in yet. Could you open the curtains again?

**Clive:** Sure. *(he looks confused, then goes over to the curtains and starts pushing them around a little.)* Um, this isn't working.

**Stage Manager:** No, no, no! there's a control box...*(he looks up for the first time)* Oh! I'm sorry! I thought you were part of the stage crew. *(as he speaks, he crosses to the curtain controls and opens the curtains)* I don't think I've seen you before...Are you supposed to be backstage?

**Clive:** Um, uh, ...yes.

**Stage Manager:** Well, what do you do?

**Clive:** I'm Reginald's understudy.

**Stage Manager:** Reginald, as in the lead role?

**Clive:** Yes.

**Stage Manager:** Ah. *(he looks worried)*

**Clive:** I'm here because Reginald, well... had a fall.

**Stage Manager:** Oh no!

**Clive:** Yes, but I'd like you to know that he is very comfortable where he is now.

**Stage Manager:** He's in the hospital?

**Clive:** No, he's dead.

**Stage Manager:** What?!?

**Clive:** A couple of flights of stairs will do that to you.

**Stage Manager:** But he was in good shape.

**Clive:** Actually, he was headed down.

**Stage Manager:** Oh.

**Clive:** So, I'm taking his place for tonight.

**Stage Manager:** Do you know the character very well? The lead role is a very important part.

**Clive:** I'm playing the lead?!?

**Stage Manager:** *(staring straight ahead, with a smile and a glazed look on his face)* ...shoot me...just shoot me now and get it over with....

**Clive:** No, I'll be okay. I'll just give your script a quick read-through...*(he exits)*

**Stage Manager:** But we're starting in two minutes!

**Doug:** *(over head-set)* Have you got your head-set on yet?

**Stage Manager:** *(swinging headset's microphone up to his mouth)* Yeah, I'm here.

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Do the actors have their lapel microphones yet?

**Stage Manager:** *(looking at pile of lapels on his table)* No, they're sitting here.

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Well they need to have them on, RIGHT NOW!

**Stage Manager:** All right, will do.

*Cheryl bursts into the backstage area. She immediately seems to be in control, by her actions. She is very loud.*

**Cheryl:** Why are these microphones still here?

**Stage Manager:** I was just about to...

**Cheryl:** ACTORS! ROLL CALL!

*All the actors enter quickly and line up.*

**Stage Manager:** Shhhh! The audience can hear you!

**Cheryl:** NOW, one for you, and one for you, and one for you, and... where are all the rest?!? I refuse to deliver my three lines tonight unless everyone is out here in ten seconds  
FLAT!

**Stage Manager:** Shut up!

**Cheryl:** Make me! You know what your problem is?

**Stage Manager:** You?

**Cheryl:** SHUT YOUR TRAP! *(completely loses it)* OKAY! I'M COMING BACK THERE NOW!!!

*The phone rings.*

**Cheryl:** *(picking up phone and shouting into the receiver)* SHUT UP! THE AUDIENCE CAN HEAR YOU!!!

*She slams the phone down, making everyone jump.*

**Cheryl:** Now where the hell are my shoes?!?

*She flounces out, trailing the actors behind her.*

**Stage Manager:** Hey! We're starting in one minute! *(The Properties Manager enters, with a winter coat on, and an umbrella.)*

**Properties Manager:** Oh good gracious me! What a night!

**Stage Manager:** Great. The show starts in fifty seven seconds, and my property manager just arrives now!

**Properties Manager:** Oh you are just such a worrywart! You should just learn to take it eaaaaaasyyyy...

**Stage Manager:** OH, SHUT UP AND GO... ARRANGE YOUR PROPS!

**Properties Manager:** You don't have to shout. *(she goes to her prop cabinet which is behind the S.M.'s table)*

*Cheryl comes bustling in with the actors in tow. She fiddles and adjusts their costumes. They are all talking at once. The Stage Manager is trying to gain control.*

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Okay! Sound is ready! I'm fading out the pre-show music.

**Mark:** *(over headset)* All lighting systems are go!

**Stage Manager:** WAIT! WAIT! We aren't ready yet.

**Mark:** *(over headset)* It's too late now! I've started dimming the houselights.

**Stage Manager:** WAIT!

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Going to cue one.

**Mark:** *(over headset)* House to half!

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Cueing Mini-disc.

**Mark:** *(over headset)* House to black!

**Doug:** *(over headset)* Executing sound cue A.

*The sound of a honky-tonk piano is heard.*

**Stage Manager:** *(to actors)* Get out there!

*The actors move onto the "apron", and the Assistant Stage Manager runs over and closes the curtains from stage left. She stays there. The phone rings.*

**Stage Manager:** Look, you nauseating wench, Can't you get it through your thick little skull? This is not a crisis line, although I do have a few suggestions about where you can put that stupid goldfish!

*He hangs up.*

**Stage Manager:** Has anyone seen Andrew? He comes on in the next scene.

**Properties Manager:** *(entering)* Oh shoot! Andrew broke his liquor bottle last performance, and I was supposed to get him one last night. Darn! He needs it for his entrance.

**Andrew:** *(entering from stage right, sobbing)* Oh Stacey! Stacey! *(he takes out a liquor bottle and takes a big swig)* I hat two get brack to 'er! *(slurs)* Back to herd ! Yak heer?

**Properties Manager:** Oh goody! He found one!

**Stage Manager:** You idiot! He's drunk! Completely, totally, and utterly DRUNK!

**Andrew:** I resempr dat rumark! *(hic)* YER ALL STOOPID LAKES WITH PUNCH UP YER FOOT! AAAAAAUGGGHHHH!!!! *(he collapses in the center of the stage)*

**Stage Manager:** *(now frantic)* What are we going to do?!? He can't act like this!

**Properties Manager:** Why not? He's got his bottle.

**Stage Manager:** How can you act when you're unconscious?!?

**Properties Manager:** Oh yeah.

*The Assistant Stage Manager goes over to where Andrew collapsed.*

**Stage Manager:** Maybe we could prop him up in a chair, and some one could speak his lines from backstage...

**Assistant Stage Manager:** He's not breathing!

**Stage Manager:** What?!?

*They all move over to where he is. Caitlin enters from stage left.*

**Caitlin:** Uh, guys? Andrew's got a line coming up...oh God! What happened?!?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** I'll go phone 911!

**Caitlin:** (*rushing over to him*) Is he dead?!?

**Properties Manager:** Well I don't think so...

**Caitlin:** I'm not on for about fifteen minutes. Let's move him out to the lobby... the curtains have to open soon!

**Properties Manager:** I'll help!

**Stage Manager:** Why tonight? Why tonight?

*Caitlin and the Properties Manager drag Andrew off stage right. The House Manager enters stage left.*

**House Manager:** The audience wasn't too thrilled about having to hang up their own coats!

**Stage Manager:** Forget the audience! Andrew just passed out! Caitlin and Lucy are taking him to the lobby now.

**House Manager:** That's what I was coming to tell you about. You see...the ushers are *picketing* in the lobby.

**Stage Manager:** Well they can help load Andrew into the ambulance.

**House Manager:** Okay, but I warn you...they won't be happy about it.

**Stage Manager:** Guess what? At this point, I really don't care!

*The phone rings. The S.M. answers it.*

**Stage Manager:** Madam, your fish is dead. He is deceased, he has passed away, he has gone to meet his maker! And calling me incessantly isn't going to solve anything! So kindly stick your head in a gas oven, and don't infuriate me any farther!!!!

*He hangs up. Cheryl enters from stage right.*

**Cheryl:** Andrew's on right now!

**Stage Manager:** (*referring to House Manager*) Why, Steve here will be happy to take his place!

**House Manager:** But I don't know what to say!

**Stage Manager:** Ad-lib!

**House Manager:** What?!? Are you insane?

**Cheryl:** Come on! *(she pulls him off stage left)*

**Mark:** *(on headset)* Um, guys?

**Assistant Stage Manager:** What now?!?

**Mark:** *(on headset)* I don't quite know how to say this, but...

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Spit it out!

**Mark:** *(on headset)* There's someone in my booth.

**Stage Manager:** Uh, could that possibly be...oh, I don't know...*Doug?*

**Mark:** *(on headset)* No... I can't tell who he is... he's apparently drunk, or stoned, or something, and he has a gun.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** *WHAT?!?*

**Mark:** *(on headset)* And it's pointed at me.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Hold on, I'll call 911!

**Stage Manager:** You need it on your speed-dial.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Stay right where you are!

**Mark:** *(on headset)* Actually, I'm pretty sure he's not letting me move.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** I'm coming up!

*She exits stage left with her cell phone. Caitlin and the Properties Manager enter stage right.*

**Caitlin:** Andrew's in an ambulance, on his way to the hospital.

**Properties Manager:** They figure it was food poisoning.

**Stage Manager:** From what?

**Caitlin:** They don't know yet.

**Stage Manager:** What did he last eat? The cast was going to go out for a late dinner afterwards... the only thing he ate recently would be that...vanilla...crueller.

*The Stage Manager looks as if he is thinking of something. Meanwhile, Doug and the Assistant Stage Manager enter from stage left.*

**Assistant Stage Manager:** No good. That guy's got the door locked. Doug made it out.

**Doug:** That guy looked like he was straight out of the alley behind the theatre.

**Caitlin:** Andrew opened the back door in the Green Room to get some air circulating.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Don't tell me he left it open!?!

*Clive and Cheryl enter.*

**Properties Manager:** Does anyone know where a vanilla crueller could have come from?

**Stage Manager:** Yeah, I brought in a box of them for opening night, three weeks ago.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** There was a box of them sitting in the Green Room. I took one.

**Properties Manager:** That's probably what caused Andrew's sickness.

**Caitlin:** Wait a minute... I had one too!

**Clive:** So did I!

**Cheryl:** And me!

**Doug:** Crap... I had one too!



**Caitlin:** Oooh... I don't feel so hot.

**Cheryl:** Me neither.

**Clive:** Out of my way!

*Clive, Doug, Cheryl, the Assistant Stage Manager, and Caitlin all rush off stage left, in a panic, and are violently ill offstage. The House Manager enters in from stage right.*

**House Manager:** I just went down to the lobby... the ushers refuse to come back to work since they had to clean up after Andrew, when something disagreed with him. They just finished scrubbing out the lobby. Another thing... I refuse to play Andrew's part anymore. Half the audience has left already.

**Stage Manager:** Please! Who else can I ask?

**House Manager:** I don't know, but you're going to have to find another house manager. I QUIT!

**Stage Manager:** HOW CAN YOU QUIT NOW?!?

**House Manager:** Easy. *(option – at this point, he makes a rude gesture)*

*Mark comes running on from stage left.*

**Mark:** I made it out!

**Stage Manager:** How did you manage that?

**Mark:** I just pushed him over, he hit his head, and I ran away. Apparently he wasn't conscious. Any idea how this guy got in in the first place?

**Stage Manager:** One of the actors left the back door open.

**Mark:** Oh, that figures. This guy kept on repeating something...some name, actually.

**Stage Manager:** What name?

**Mark:** Stacey.

**Stage Manager:** Stacey?

**Mark:** Yeah, why?

**Stage Manager:** That's the girl Andrew just broke up with.

**Mark:** Well that would make sense, because he kept talking about 'an actor', and calling him a home-wrecker.

**Stage Manager:** He must have been the guy Stacey is married to.

**Mark:** Or *was* married to.

*Caitlin comes reeling on from stage right.*

**Caitlin:** Ooohh... there's an awful mess in the greenroom...

*The stage manager holds his head.*

**Stage Manager:** Okay, the next scene is coming up! EVERYONE BACK IN PLACE!

*Doug, the Assistant Stage Manager, Cheryl, Clive, and maybe some extra people come on stage, and surround the Stage Manager. Everyone starts speaking at once.*

**Said all at once, ad-lib more.**

**Doug:** I'm not going back up to my booth! There's a drunken, homicidal maniac running loose!

**Mark:** The same goes for me!

**Caitlin:** I can't go out there after I just coughed up a lung on the green room carpet!

**Cheryl:** My bunions are acting up again! Besides, I ate those crullers too! And may I remind you that YOU are the one who brought them in!

**Clive:** I haven't got any of the lines memorized! I made a fool of my self in the first act, and I'm not doing it again!

**Assistant Stage Manager:** The stage crew just left! I can't shift those set pieces by myself!

**Props Manager:** This is the worst production I've ever been in! Nothing is making sense anymore!

*They all continue yelling over top of each other. The phone rings. The S.M. breaks off a large piece of wood off the set. As he screams, he violently smashes the phone to dust.*

**Stage Manager:** SHUT THE HELL UP, YOU STUPID... RINGING... BOX OF EVIL!!!

*The Stage Manager runs about the stage screaming, trying to get away from the mob, and still smashing the small pieces of phone. By this time, he is totally insane. The entire stage is filled with chaos. As they run about, they knock apart the set. Someone rams into the curtain control box, and the curtains begin to open, revealing the hysterical, shouting mob to the astonished audience. Flats and platforms come crashing down with tremendous impact. Everyone continues for a moment, then suddenly realizes that they are being watched. Everyone turns and freezes, then waves, and nervously makes their way into the wings, leaving the Stage manager all by himself, center stage. He stands there for a moment, then clears his throat.*

**Stage Manager:** Uh, um... ladies and gentlemen...due to circumstances beyond my control, we will be having an early intermission.

*Blackout.*

# A Mile Away

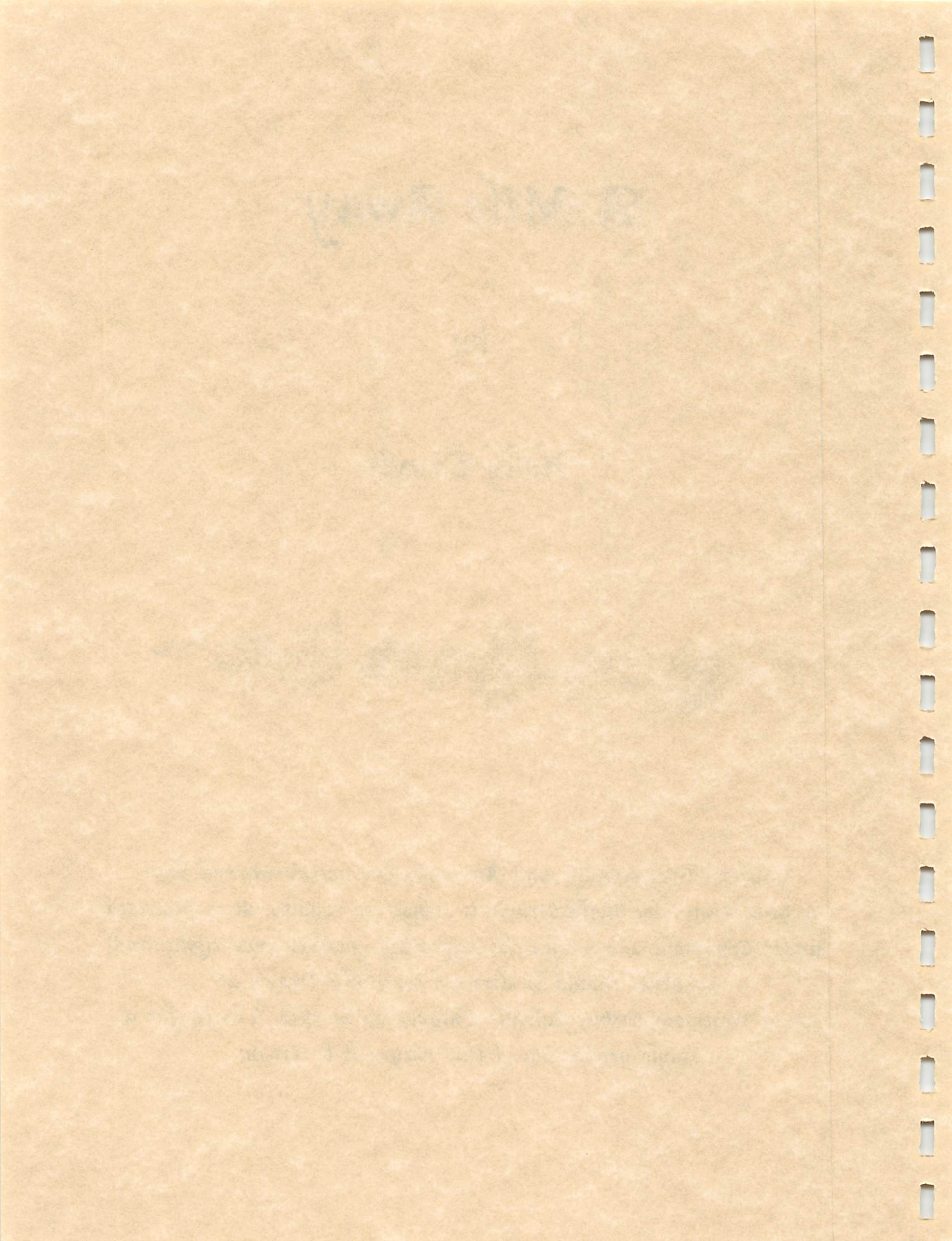
by

Holly Dravis



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "A Mile Away" by Holly Dravis is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Holly Dravis at 2143 Westmont Drive, Oakville Ontario, L6M 3N8. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$10.00.*





## Character Descriptions

**Thomas:** Thomas is a typical high school senior. He's a basketball player and just "one of the guys", although he is a homosexual and has been secretly seeing Joseph for eight months.

**Joseph:** Joseph is a very outgoing college freshman. He doesn't follow the crowd by any means, but he's not an outcast either. He has been aware of his homosexuality for several years. He's a mentally strong person who firmly stands up for what he believes in. Joseph is very caring when it comes to Thomas.

**Kurt:** Kurt is the popular jock. He is always concerned about the little things in life, such as looks. Kurt is an egotistical jerk when it comes to sensitive issues, such as Thomas' coming out. As well, he is very masculine and homophobic.

"A Mile Away"

AT RISE, JOSEPH is sitting at a desk DL in THOMAS' bedroom. A bed is C with a nightstand beside it. A picture frame is on the nightstand. A bookbag is leaning against the side of the desk, one binder is on the bed and two are on the floor. As well, a mirror stands DR. THOMAS enters from R carrying two cans of Pepsi.

THOMAS: Sorry, all we have is regular Pepsi. (Hands a can to JOSEPH.)

JOSEPH: Oh. I guess that's all right. (HE opens the can and takes a sip.)

THOMAS: Diet Pepsi's bad for you, anyway.

JOSEPH: (As if HE hears the same thing everyday.) Yeah, yeah, yeah. (THEY sit drinking THEIR Pepais.) What time did Kurt say he was going to come over?

THOMAS: He said about 6:30 or so. (THOMAS looks at HIS watch.) He should be here soon. He was going shopping with Aggie after basketball practice.

JOSEPH: Oh. (Pause.) What are they shopping for?

THOMAS: She found a dress she likes and she wanted to know what Kurt thought of it.

JOSEPH: Haha! Poor Kurt! (Laughs.) I have never understood why girls drag their boyfriends to the mall to find out how they look in something. I mean, if you like something, you like it. What does it matter what anyone else thinks of it?

THOMAS: I absolutely agree with you. But most girls are concerned about what others think about their looks. They think they always have to make an impression, like they're being judged in a beauty pageant.

JOSEPH: I've never cared about what other people think of me. I wear what I like. It might not be "in", but it's comfortable.

THOMAS: Well, Aggie is Aggie. (Pause.) Maybe it's a girl thing.

JOSEPH: Good point. There are so many things that people can't understand about girls. (Laughs.)

THOMAS: (Laughing.) Yeah.

JOSEPH: It's insane. Like, they take forever to get ready to go anywhere, even if they're just going to the Seven-Eleven down the street. I mean, does it really take hours of pain and torture just to go get a slurpy?

THOMAS: I wouldn't think so.

JOSEPH: I'm so glad I'm out of high school.

THOMAS: Why?

JOSEPH: Because. In university, no one really cares about what anyone else looks like. People stop trying to be accepted and just end up being themselves. Of course, the thousands of dollars they spend on tuition and books does tend to pull the purse strings a little tighter. But high school kids are the worst. They're the ones who are so self-conscious about

themselves and worried if what they're wearing is in or not.

THOMAS: Oh, I know. Trends are the worst things I have ever seen in my life! I've never understood them, and I don't think I ever will! A girl won't pay for dinner, but if her shoes are out of style, she'll run out to buy a brand new wardrobe.

JOSEPH: How people can stand to get married, I don't know.

THOMAS: (Quietly.) Yeah.

JOSEPH: (Long pause.) Thomas?

THOMAS: (Reading through HIS French binder.) Yeah?

JOSEPH: Are you okay?

THOMAS: Um... (Pause.) I'm fine.

JOSEPH: You're lying. (THOMAS shakes HIS head. Pause. THOMAS continues to work.)

THOMAS: What does 'la plage' mean, again?

JOSEPH: The beach. (THOMAS picks up a pen and writes it into HIS book.) Now, stop trying to change the subject. (JOSEPH sits next to THOMAS on the bed and places HIS hand on HIS shoulder.) What's wrong?

THOMAS: (THOMAS stands, picks up HIS schoolbooks on the floor and puts them into HIS bookbag. HE looks at HIS watch.) Kurt should be here soon.

JOSEPH: Thomas, tell me what's going on. You've been acting strange all week.

THOMAS: (Obviously lying.) Nothing's going on. Everything's great! (Faking a smile.)

JOSEPH: (Sincerely concerned.) You're worrying me.

THOMAS: (Awkward pause.) It's just that... (Pause.) I don't want to do this anymore. I'm tired of living a lie.

JOSEPH: What are you talking about? What lie?

THOMAS: I'm tired of sneaking around behind peoples' backs and having to lie when people ask where I'm going all the time. I mean, it's nerve-wracking to come up with a new story to tell everyone everyday. I don't like telling people I'm one place when I'm really somewhere else with you. It's too much!

JOSEPH: (Fearing the worst.) What are you saying?

THOMAS: I'm not sure what I'm saying, but I know something has to change.

JOSEPH: Like what? (THOMAS shrugs.) Stop tiptoeing around this! If you have something to say, just say it, okay?

THOMAS: I don't know, Joseph. Everything is just too complicated right now.

JOSEPH: Are you saying that you want to end it?

THOMAS: No! That's not what I mean.

JOSEPH: (JOSEPH lets out a sigh of relief.) Then what?

THOMAS: (THOMAS begins to pace.) I've really been thinking about it, and... (Pause.) Well... (Pause.)

JOSEPH: Well, what?

THOMAS: (Stops pacing. HE turns to face JOSEPH.) I can't handle the secrecy any longer. I have to tell people about us.

JOSEPH: Are you sure you're ready to come out of the closet?

THOMAS: (Hesitant.) Yes. (Pause.) I think so, anyway.

JOSEPH: That's great!

THOMAS: I'm just... well...

JOSEPH: What?

THOMAS: I don't know if I'm ready for the outcome of it yet. I'm not ready to face a bad reaction.

JOSEPH: From who?

THOMAS: The kids at school.

JOSEPH: Don't worry about them.

THOMAS: I can't help it.

JOSEPH: Look, not everyone is going to react the same way. Yes, some will over react, but some will just take it as if nothing has changed.

THOMAS: How can you be so sure?

JOSEPH: Look at your mom, for example. She took it perfectly fine, right?

THOMAS: (Shyly.) Well...

JOSEPH: (Stands.) Whoa, whoa, whoa! Hold on a second here! You did tell your mom, didn't you? (THOMAS shakes his head.) You said you told her a few months ago!

THOMAS: Yeah, I know. I just told you that to make you stop harping on me to tell her.

JOSEPH: You lied to me?

THOMAS: I'm sorry, Joseph. Don't be mad. I didn't know what to do. I was really confused! Hell, I still am!

JOSEPH: Why won't you tell her already?

THOMAS: I'm afraid of what will happen.

JOSEPH: She's your mom. How bad could it be?

THOMAS: Well, what happened with your parents when you told them?

JOSEPH: At first, they thought it was their fault and that they were bad parents. But once I explained to them that it was just who I am, they accepted it.

THOMAS: Yeah, see, my mom isn't like that. She's probably going to blame herself or think that my dad's death drove me to it. She'll probably think that if I'm gay, I'm doing a lot of other things like smoking, drinking, drugs; all of that kind of stuff.

JOSEPH: Doesn't she know you better than that?

THOMAS: I don't think she even knows me at all. I was always closer to my dad. And, when he died, she and I moved farther apart from each other.

JOSEPH: That's awful.

THOMAS: Well, it's been this way since I was little. Dad was always the referee between us. If she and I were fighting over something, he would come in a break it up. (Pause.) I really miss him.

JOSEPH: I'm sorry, Thomas. (JOSEPH hugs THOMAS.)



THOMAS: I really thought I was over his death by now.  
JOSEPH: I don't think you can ever completely overcome a death in the family.  
THOMAS: Yeah. It's hard to do.  
JOSEPH: But you should really learn to get along with your mom.  
THOMAS: I've tried, but it seems like a lost cause.  
JOSEPH: Well, you both have to give a little to make it work. Life's too short to be unhappy.  
THOMAS: I know. (Pause.)  
JOSEPH: So are you going to try to work things out between the two of you?  
THOMAS: I already told you...  
JOSEPH: For me? (Pause.) Please.  
THOMAS: All right. I'll try.  
JOSEPH: Will you tell her?  
THOMAS: Tell her what?  
JOSEPH: That you're gay.  
THOMAS: I can't! I already told you...  
JOSEPH: I know. Start on a clean slate. If you're honest with her right off the bat, you won't have to worry about keeping secrets from her.  
THOMAS: I'll try.  
JOSEPH: You'll try?  
THOMAS: Fine, I'll do it! Why do you have to be so damn convincing all the time?  
JOSEPH: Because you love me.  
THOMAS: (Sarcastically.) You wish!  
JOSEPH: (Gasps.) Loser! (THEY laugh.)  
THOMAS: What do I do about Kurt, though?  
JOSEPH: Why are you so afraid to tell him?  
THOMAS: You don't know Kurt like I do. He isn't the most gay friendly person.  
JOSEPH: Oh, you mean he's homophobic.  
THOMAS: Yeah. Extremely!  
JOSEPH: I figured that.  
THOMAS: What do you mean?  
JOSEPH: He's just one of those types of guys. I could tell when I saw him last week. It's really obvious.  
THOMAS: Yeah. He's always been like that. He's never liked homosexuals. He thinks anyone who's gay is sinful and just, quote-unquote, "nasty."  
JOSEPH: And you're best friends with him why?  
THOMAS: Well, he hasn't always been like this. I've known him since kindergarten. We grew up together. He really changed when we got to high school. But he and I still share a lot of the same interests and stuff. And, being on the same basketball team, it's not like we can't not be friends...that's really hard to do. Of course, I was best friends with him a decade before I realized I was gay.  
JOSEPH: Yeah.

THOMAS: (Breaking the seriousness.) But do you know what's funny?  
(JOSEPH looks at THOMAS eagerly.) He claims he can spot a  
homosexual a mile away.

JOSEPH: (Laughing.) Yeah. Straight people seem to think we all walk around  
like women with our hands hanging at our wrists, talking with lisps...  
(Laughing too hard to continue talking. HE gets up and demonstrates to  
THOMAS. JOSEPH walks around the room exaggerating the movement  
of HIS hips with every step. HE holds HIS arms in very close and hangs  
HIS hands from HIS wrists. HE turns to THOMAS and waves HIS hands  
in the air. Speaking with a lisp.) Oh, my God! That looks so good on you!  
(THEY laugh.)

THOMAS: Joseph, you always know how to make me laugh.

JOSEPH: (Returning to HIS usual self.) Well, you're too uptight. (Wiggling  
around and exaggerating how "loose" THOMAS should be.) You have to  
loosen up.

THOMAS: (Pretending to be offended.) Gee, thanks!

JOSEPH: Don't take it personally. I was just saying...

THOMAS: I know. How do you suggest I loosen up? (Mocks JOSEPH'S  
wiggling.)

JOSEPH: Well, if you just came out of the closet, you wouldn't have to worry  
about lying to people anymore. You can be totally open with them.

THOMAS: But something like this isn't widely accepted in my school.

JOSEPH: You see, that's your problem. You care too much about what others  
think. Don't! If you tell them and they don't accept you for you, then it's  
their loss. They'll be missing out on a once in a lifetime chance to be  
friends with a great guy.

THOMAS: Look, things are a lot different here than they are where you came  
from.

JOSEPH: What do you mean?

THOMAS: You told me that when you came out, no one seemed to really care  
either way. You were still seen as Joseph Matthews, right?

JOSEPH: Yeah, but...

THOMAS: Here, it isn't like that.

JOSEPH: What's different?

THOMAS: Well, for instance, there's not one day I go to gym class that I don't  
see someone making fun of someone else because they did something  
lame or stupid. Of course, they call anyone they don't like "a fag". They  
think that if someone messes up on something they're gay. And if a guy  
has even the tiniest speech impediment, he's named a "flaming homo".  
The list goes on and on forever!

JOSEPH: It all comes down to one simple theory: If you're a mile away, you must  
be gay.

THOMAS: What?

JOSEPH: You know, the outsiders of the school; people who aren't a part of the

inner circle, so to speak. People look at the outsiders differently than they look at the popular guys. If you do anything uncool; in other words, outside of their standards, you automatically get labeled. Most often for guys, it's being gay. For girls, it's being a slut.

THOMAS: That's exactly my point!

JOSEPH: It's all the same no matter where you go or how you look at it. But you have to realize that it's just because they haven't had to be around it and they haven't had to accept it, really. They don't exactly know what gay is.

THOMAS: (Thinking.) I guess that makes sense.

JOSEPH: (Jokingly egotistical.) Of course it does. (Pause. Seriously.) But you seem to think that when I came out, it was all great! It wasn't. I lost a lot of friends. But it really proves to you who your true friends are. (Pause.) I never said it would be easy and I never said nothing would change. Everything changes when you come out. But would you rather be in hiding for the rest of your life?

THOMAS: No. (Pause.) But I don't want to be made fun of for the rest of my life, either!

JOSEPH: Just ignore those guys. Does what they have to say really matter to you that much?

THOMAS: No. But what Kurt has to say does. He's the worst about it. I told you about the way he thinks he can spot us like we all wear huge targets above our heads and t-shirts that say "I'm gay".

JOSEPH: Yeah, well, if... (Pause.) When he accepts who you are, he may just change all that he believes in, all thanks to you. (HE smiles at THOMAS.)

THOMAS: How do you think that?

JOSEPH: Well, look at racism and prejudice. People don't like anything different because they've never had to deal with it. If you come out, maybe, just maybe, the people who you think will make fun of you will end up learning that it doesn't matter what you wear, what you do or don't do, what or who you like or don't like, etceteras, etceteras, etceteras.

THOMAS: (Pause.) So you really think I should tell him?

JOSEPH: Yes!

THOMAS: What will happen if I don't tell him?

JOSEPH: It's up to you in the end. But I promise you, it'll be best for everyone if you just do it now. People will take it harder the longer you wait to tell them.

THOMAS: But it's only been eight months.

JOSEPH: Yes, that it has. But if you keep putting it off, you're going to find yourself saying, "It's only been three years."

THOMAS: Good point.

JOSEPH: Procrastination is not doing you a favor here. (Pause.) Well?

THOMAS: (Pause.) You're right! (Pause. Suddenly full of confidence.) You know what?

JOSEPH: What?

THOMAS: I'm going to tell him.

JOSEPH: When?

THOMAS: Tonight.

JOSEPH: That's my boy! (THEY laugh.) Tell you what. I'll even leave you two alone to talk it out privately, all right? (Suddenly, there's a knock at the door. Startled, THEY jump.)

KURT: (From offstage R.) Hey, Thomas. Can I come in?

THOMAS: (Losing HIS nerve. Quietly.) Or maybe I won't.

JOSEPH: (Quietly to ensure KURT doesn't hear.) Yes, you will! You have to or you will just drag this pain and stress out even longer than it needs to be. You can do it. (JOSEPH lovingly squeezes THOMAS' hand, as to give support.) I know you can. (JOSEPH sits in the desk chair again.)

THOMAS: Okay. (Loudly.) Come in, Kurt. The door's open! (KURT opens the door and enters from R.) Hey, Kurt. (THOMAS stands and THEY walk to EACH OTHER. THEY grab one another's right hands and give EACH OTHER a half hug.) How's it going?

KURT: (Irritatedly.) Oh, man! Never go shopping with a woman! Every other sentence out of Aggie's mouth was "Does this make me look fat?" or "Does my butt look big in this?" (KURT sits on the end of the bed.) It's insane! (HE notices JOSEPH.) Hey... (Pauses to recall HIS name but cannot.) you!

JOSEPH: Hi!

THOMAS: Kurt, you remember Joseph, right?

KURT: Joseph? Joseph? Sorry, it doesn't ring a bell.

JOSEPH: We met at the basketball game last week.

KURT: Sorry, still. Were you on the other team?

THOMAS: No, he was helping out as score keeper.

KURT: Oh, yeah! I knew you looked familiar!

JOSEPH: Yeah. (Pause.)

KURT: You're here to study, too?

THOMAS: No, he graduated last year, actually.

KURT: Oh. (Looks at JOSEPH curiously.)

THOMAS: (Frantically trying to come up with an excuse.) He was...

JOSEPH: (Calmly.) Thomas asked me to proofread an essay he wrote for French. I'm majoring in French at university.

KURT: That's cool. (Awkward pause. KURT suddenly remembers.) Oh, Thomas! Your mom told me to remind you she's going to a meeting or something, so you'll have to make your own dinner.

THOMAS: That's right. It totally slipped my mind.

KURT: She figured that.

THOMAS: (Depressingly.) I hate cooking!

KURT: Well, you could starve, but I don't think that's the way you want to go. (Pause.) Wait...I've had your cooking before – you'd be best off starving. (Laughing.)

JOSEPH: Ouch, burn! (Laughing.)

THOMAS: (Jokingly to BOTH.) Who asked you?

KURT: (To JOSEPH.) You should have been here when he attempted to make a meal for his mom.

JOSEPH: Oh, yeah? (Eagerly.) What happened?

THOMAS: (To JOSEPH.) It doesn't matter anymore. It was a long time ago.

KURT: Well, the menu for the evening was spaghetti. (Laughing.) Somehow, he cooked half the noodles too long, and the other half were still hard. Haha. And the sauce was thick and chunky because he forgot to add water to the tomato paste. (BOTH laugh. THOMAS looks disapprovingly at BOTH.)

THOMAS: (To KURT.) Are you finished?

KURT: Oh! And the dessert! He tried to make a pie from scratch and...

THOMAS: (Cutting off KURT before HE can embarrass HIM any further.) I've never seen you try to cook anything other than microwaveable pizza pockets.

KURT: That's because I don't bother trying to cook. That's what girls are supposed to do, anyway. (HE laughs.)

JOSEPH: You've never watched the Food Channel, have you?

KURT: Why would I? Food is meant to be eaten, not watched.

JOSEPH: Well, at least eighty percent of the chefs on it are male.

KURT: You're kidding!

JOSEPH: It's a rough estimate, but it's true.

KURT: No self-respecting guy would dare to become a chef. Why don't they just call it the Gay Channel? (Laughing.)

THOMAS: What about all the guys in the home economics classes?

KURT: They're just there to meet girls. They don't actually cook.

JOSEPH: What makes them straight and chefs gay?

KURT: What's with the interrogation, Sherlock and Watson?

JOSEPH: I'd just really like to know.

KURT: (Stares at JOSEPH curiously. Finally, HE decides to tell HIM.) If it's in high school, it's fine because you need the credits. But once a guy gets into culinary arts and actually paying for his classes, he's lost to the dark side forever.

JOSEPH: The dark side?

KURT: Yeah, you know...

THOMAS: (Cutting KURT off.) Yeah, well, I'm just going to nuke something for us. (Walking R towards the door.) I hope you guys like leftover meatloaf. (KURT turns to JOSEPH and pretends to gag HIMSELF.)

JOSEPH: (Stands.) I'll tell you what. I'll go get us some food. How does pizza sound?

KURT: Great idea! (KURT puts HIS bookbag down on the floor and puts HIS baseball cap inside. JOSEPH walks to THOMAS, as though to kiss HIM goodbye, but catches HIMSELF before THEY kiss. KURT looks up just as

JOSEPH steps away from THOMAS, towards the door. THOMAS steps back from JOSEPH and sits at the desk, worried KURT saw THEM. HE tries to act as if nothing has happened. JOSEPH walks to the door and opens it.)

KURT: Make sure you don't get any of that pineapple crap on it. That stuff's so gay.

JOSEPH: Okay. Ham and pineapple it is! (HE runs offstage, slamming the door behind HIM. HE laughs until HE'S out of earshot.)

KURT: What did he mean by that?

THOMAS: (Being sure not to give HIMSELF away.) Nothing. He's just messing with your head.

KURT: You've got a pretty weird friend there, Thomas.

THOMAS: Yeah, well, what can ya do? (THOMAS laughs.) So what do you want to study first? Geography or algebra?

KURT: Um... (Pulls HIS books out of HIS bookbag and sits at the desk.) Well, I left my geography book in my locker, so let's study algebra.

THOMAS: Didn't you plan to study for geography this weekend?

KURT: Nah. Geography's easy and the algebra exam is first, anyway.

THOMAS: Okay. Algebra it is! (THEY open THEIR books and begin to work.) What did you get for X on number seventeen?

KURT: I got 1.75.

THOMAS: Okay, good. (THEY continue to work.)

KURT: You know what? (HE puts HIS pen down and looks up from HIS work.)

THOMAS: What?

KURT: I really hate algebra!

THOMAS: (HE stops working and looks up at KURT.) Haha. So do I.

KURT: I don't want to study tonight. We've studied long enough. Let's take a break.

THOMAS: (Sarcastically.) Oh, yeah. Thirty seconds of study can really wear a guy out.

KURT: (Jokingly.) Oh, shut up, you. (Laughing.) Oh, hey! Speaking of math class...

THOMAS: We weren't talking about math class. We were studying algebra.

KURT: Yeah, I know. It's called a transition.

THOMAS: No, it's only called a transition if it makes sense.

KURT: Okay, whatever. (Laughing.) Anyway, do you know Kayla Coleman?

THOMAS: Kayla Coleman? What does she look like?

KURT: She's really cute. She has great legs! (THOMAS looks at HIM cluelessly.) She has short brown hair, she's tall, she wears glasses... (THOMAS sits quietly trying to recall whom Kayla is.) Um... She sits in the row next to the window, third or fourth seat from the front.

THOMAS: In which class?

KURT: I already told you, math.

THOMAS: (Thinks for a short while.) Oh! Kayla! Yeah, I know her.

KURT: What do you think of her?  
THOMAS: I don't really know her, we've never spoken. I hear she's nice, though.  
KURT: But you've seen her, right? What do you think?  
THOMAS: She's cute, I guess. Why?  
KURT: Are you interested in her?  
THOMAS: I don't...(Pause. Suspicious of KURT.) What did you do?  
KURT: Relax, Tom. I did you a favor.  
THOMAS: (Frustrated.) What did you do?!

KURT: Well, she's a friend of Aggie's. And, Aggie tells me that she's always talking about you. You know, "Thomas this" and "Thomas that."  
THOMAS: So what?  
KURT: Well, I was talking with her after practice with Aggie and we set you two up for Saturday. Pick her up at seven. (Grins proudly.)  
THOMAS: (Very angrily.) You what?!  
KURT: Chill out. We were just helping you get the ball rolling again. You haven't been out with anyone for a while.  
THOMAS: What made you think I needed help?!

KURT: Thomas, stop yelling. Man! What's your problem?  
THOMAS: I don't want to be set up with anyone. I can arrange my own dates with whomever I please.  
KURT: Kayla's a great girl. You'll love her. She's perfect for you.  
THOMAS: (Pause. THOMAS calms HIMSELF.) No, she's not.  
KURT: What are you talking about? How would you know? You just said you've never met her. I've spoken to her a lot. She's your type.  
THOMAS: No, Kurt. She's...  
KURT: She's what?  
THOMAS: She's...she's not my type.  
KURT: What do you mean she's not your type? She's a lot like Brandy. Brandy was perfect for you.  
THOMAS: (To HIMSELF.) Oh, God!  
KURT: Yes, I know you hate Brandy. I do, too. She had no right to dump you for that other guy. But, you have to admit, when you two were going out, you guys were perfect together.  
THOMAS: At first, yes. But after a couple months, were weren't...  
KURT: You lie. You were better than Aggie and me. We're always fighting. I never saw you argue with Brandy, not once! (Pause.) That is, until she broke up with you. I still can't believe she had the nerve to blame you for everything that led up to it. I mean, she went around town and started the ugliest rumors about you. I mean, she caused the whole breakup in the first place. Where did she get off doing all that and trying to get sympathy from everyone at the same time?  
THOMAS: (Pause. Quietly.) Kurt, she didn't cheat on me.  
KURT: What are you talking about? You told me...  
THOMAS: I know what I told you. (Pause.) I lied.

KURT: Then what happened, Thomas?  
THOMAS: Brandy and I were doing fine until...  
KURT: (Impatiently.) Until what?  
THOMAS: Until I met Joseph.  
KURT: Oh. (Thinking.) She was hitting on Joseph behind your back?  
THOMAS: No.  
KURT: Did he catch her with someone else?  
THOMAS: No.  
KURT: Then what? (THOMAS sits silently.) Tell me, Thomas.  
THOMAS: She caught me.  
KURT: (Surprised.) You cheated on her?!

THOMAS: Um...  
KURT: With who? Did you... (HE grins and winks at THOMAS.) You know?  
(THOMAS doesn't respond.) You dog you! Is it someone I know?  
THOMAS: (Quietly.) Yes.  
KURT: Who?! You're driving me nuts, man!  
THOMAS: (Slowly.) Jo...  
KURT: (Cutting THOMAS off mid-word.) Jo? Jo Walker? You cheated on  
Brandy with Jo Walker?! How did you manage that? She's the most  
popular girl in town, not to mention the hottest.  
THOMAS: (Shaking HIS head.) No, not Jo Walker.  
KURT: Then who?  
THOMAS: Joseph.  
KURT: (Pause. HE begins to laugh.) Haha! Oh, that's so funny! I thought you  
just said Joseph. Haha! Got any Q-Tips? I think I it's time I cleaned out  
my ears. (Still laughing.) You and Joseph... oh, that is so wrong!  
THOMAS: (Very seriously.) I did say Joseph.  
KURT: (Speechless.) What?!

THOMAS: (Long awkward pause.) Kurt... (Pause.) I'm gay.  
KURT: No!  
THOMAS: I've been going out with Joseph for eight months now. (KURT  
doesn't move. HIS face shows no expression.) Kurt, say something.  
You're scaring me.  
KURT: (In disbelief.) Brandy caught you... You and Joseph...  
THOMAS: No! Nothing like that! God no! Brandy just showed up unexpectedly.  
KURT: I'll say! (Long pause.) How could you be gay? We used to go out with  
different girls every weekend.  
THOMAS: Yes, but I'd never had so much fun on a date until the day I met  
Joseph. Something just clicked when I saw him for the first time.  
KURT: Well, maybe you can go to a psychiatrist or a psychologist or something.  
I'm sure they can "click" you back to normal.  
THOMAS: I am normal! Don't refer to me as if I wasn't. Besides, nothing is  
wrong with me. I'm great! I've never felt so good in my life. (Pause.  
THOMAS tries to place HIS hand on KURT'S shoulder, but KURT moves



away. Slowly.) Kurt, this is right.

KURT: Right? Right?! How the hell can you say this is right?! It's not right. It's wrong! It's so wrong I don't know what to call it! Maybe they should call you people wrong squared.

THOMAS: Kurt, stop it!

KURT: Why should I? I can't tell you to stop being gay, can I? So how can you tell me to stop?

THOMAS: (Yelling.) Stop it! (Long pause.) Listen, Kurt. (Pause.) I know this is a lot to take in all at once.

KURT: (Sarcastically.) Nah, ya think?

THOMAS: Just listen! You have to understand that this is who I am and I'm not going to change. (KURT scowls and turns away.) You have no idea how hard it was for me to tell you. I've wanted to tell you for months, but I never had the nerve to.

KURT: Well, now I know. (Sarcastically.) Whoop-de-do! (THOMAS sits on HIS bed, almost in tears. KURT stands far from HIM, thinking.) Who else knows?

THOMAS: Other than Brandy and Joseph, you're the first.

KURT: So, what Brandy said... You mean all of those rumors were true?

THOMAS: Yes, Kurt.

KURT: Damn! I can't believe this!

THOMAS: (Angrily.) Why not? It's not that hard to comprehend.

KURT: You haven't been lied to for the past eight months. Who knows? Maybe even longer than that! What else have you been hiding from me, Tommy Boy?

THOMAS: (Angrily.) Stop thinking about yourself for once! This doesn't even affect you in any way!

KURT: Like Hell it doesn't! Now that you've come out, everyone's going to think I'm gay too because we're best friends.

THOMAS: No, they won't. You've been with Aggie for over a year! And, even if they did think you were gay, there's nothing to be ashamed about. I'm no different as a homosexual than I was when I was straight. (KURT lets out an angry sigh.) Huff and puff all you want. I'm who I want to be. If you have a problem with it, you can leave.

KURT: I don't want to deal with this tonight, anyway. In fact, I don't want to deal with this ever!

THOMAS: I'm sorry, Kurt. You have to deal with this!

KURT: Like Hell I do!

THOMAS: Fine. Just walk out and give up, just like you do with everything that doesn't come easy to you.

KURT: Listen to me, Thomas...

THOMAS: No, you listen to me, Kurt! I'm gay. Deal with it! I've always been gay, I just haven't always known. What makes me so different now than who I was a year ago?

KURT: You're gay!

THOMAS: My sexuality had nothing to do with our friendship then, and it has nothing to do with it now. I want to know how this affects our friendship to the point that we can't be friends. (KURT turns to leave. THOMAS stands in front of the door and stops KURT.) You're not leaving this room until I know.

KURT: Out of my way.

THOMAS: No. I want to know why we can't be friends. I want to know what you have against homosexuals.

KURT: Move!

THOMAS: Tell me.

KURT: Get out of my way!

THOMAS: Not until you tell me. Why is this so hard for you? (Pause.) Kurt? (Pause. Calmly.) What's causing this?

KURT: How could you keep this from me?

THOMAS: It wasn't just from you, Kurt. No one knew.

KURT: But you lied to me! Me, you're best friend! How can I trust you?

THOMAS: Kurt, we've been through too much together to end our friendship because of this.

KURT: I'm not too sure. How can I trust nothing will happen between us? You know, how do I know you won't hit on me?

THOMAS: Come on, Kurt. Get over yourself. I'm the same person I always was.

KURT: Think that all you want, but you'll never be the same person. Ever!

THOMAS: What is so wrong with my being gay?

KURT: Everything!

THOMAS: Get over it, Kurt. (Pause. THOMAS walks to KURT.) This is who I am. I am who I want to be. (HE places HIS hand on HIS shoulder.)

KURT: Get away from me, you fag! (Immediately regretful. Long pause.) Thomas...

THOMAS: Leave!

KURT: (Apologetically.) Thomas, I'm...

THOMAS: Just...go!

KURT: Fine. I'll leave. But, don't expect us to be friends anymore. I have a reputation to keep!

THOMAS: (Yelling.) To hell with your reputation! Get out! (KURT picks up HIS bookbag and leaves. To HIMSELF.) Him and his stupid reputation! Ha! What reputation? (Long pause.) Why did it have to end up this way? We've been best friends for eleven years and it ended in one night. (Looking in HIS bedroom mirror.) You're so stupid, Thomas. Why couldn't you just keep your feelings to yourself? All you had to do was walk away from Joseph, but you didn't even have to nerve to do that. Dammit! If I had only stayed home that night, I never would have met Joseph and this never would have happened! (Pause.) Which is worse: losing Kurt or losing Joseph? I should have kept my mouth shut! Why

didn't I?! I don't mind girls. They're a lot of fun to spend time with...  
(Looks at a photograph of THOMAS and JOSEPH on HIS nightstand.)  
But, Joseph is the best thing to have ever happened to my life. I knew I  
was gay long before I met him. (Looking up, as if looking to God.) Why  
can't he accept me? Why can't I just be one of the guys? What does it  
matter if I'm gay? This isn't fair! Life just isn't fair! (Almost in tears, HE  
falls to the bed. Long pause. JOSEPH knocks on THOMAS' bedroom  
door.)

JOSEPH: (From offstage R.) Pizza delivery! (THOMAS doesn't answer. HE  
stays on the bed, undisturbed. JOSEPH knocks again.) Thomas?  
(JOSEPH opens the door and enters.) Thomas? (THOMAS looks up at  
JOSEPH. JOSEPH looks around the room.) Where's Kurt?

THOMAS: We're not friends anymore. (JOSEPH puts the pizza down on the  
desk. HE hugs THOMAS.)

JOSEPH: Don't worry. Everything will be all right. (Slowly.) Just tell me what  
happened.

THOMAS: I told him, as I promised you I would. Then, we had a huge fight and  
I kicked him out.

JOSEPH: I'm sorry you had to go through that, Thomas.

THOMAS: What am I going to do?

JOSEPH: Well, you've gotten over the big hurdle of telling Kurt.

THOMAS: But what if he tells everyone at school on Monday?

JOSEPH: That's out of your hands now. There's no way for you to stop him from  
telling anyone else. The best thing to do is be prepared for it. It's going to  
be blabbed by someone at one point or another, so you have to be ready  
for it, whether it's in two days or two years.

THOMAS: I knew I wasn't ready for this.

JOSEPH: What did he say when he was here?

THOMAS: All he did was worry about himself. He even said that people are  
going to think he's gay because we're friends. Well, we were friends,  
anyway.

JOSEPH: Well, if he's worried about what the guys will think of him, then he  
probably won't be too eager to blab it around school.

THOMAS: (THOMAS frowns.) Let's hope so.

JOSEPH: He's just confused right now. Give him a little space and he should  
come around sooner or later.

THOMAS: I hope you're right.

JOSEPH: (Doubting HIMSELF.) So do I.

THOMAS: And I hope it's a lot sooner than later.

JOSEPH: Just be patient. He'll come around.

THOMAS: But it hurts so much! You should have heard all the things he said.

JOSEPH: I probably heard the same things from my friends when I came out.  
It's a rough thing to go through, but I'm proud of you for doing it. (THEY  
hug.) I think it has put our relationship on a whole new level. (JOSEPH

takes THOMAS' hand. THOMAS smiles. Pause. JOSEPH looks at the pizza box. To cheer up THOMAS, JOSEPH changes the subject.) It looks like we have all this here pizza to ourselves. (Grinning.) It's ham and pineapple. (THOMAS smiles and JOSEPH stands.) Come on, let's go get some drinks. What do you have, other than Pepsi? (THOMAS chuckles. HE stands and JOSEPH puts HIS arm around THOMAS. THEY exit R. Fade to dark.)



# *I Need to Dye My Hair*

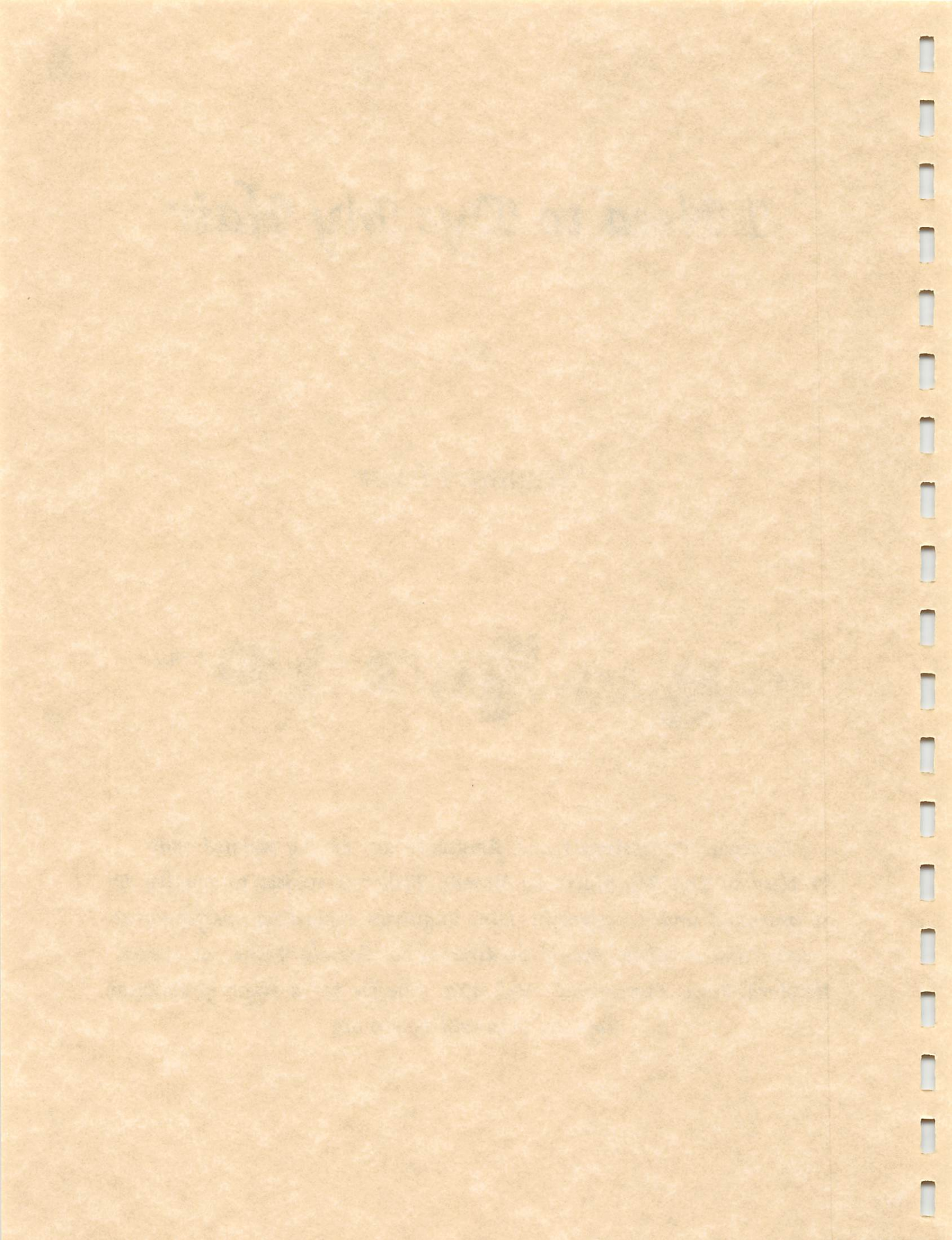
*by*

*Brenda Fisher*



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "I Need to Dye My Hair" by Brenda Fisher is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Brenda Fisher at 17066 Hereford Place, Surrey B.C. V3S 4X1. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$10.00.*





# I Need to Dye My Hair

Brenda Fisher

The setting is in MACKENZIE'S living room. There is a couch with a pillow on it, an end table L of the couch with a lamp and a phone on it, a coffee table DC of the couch with a T.V. remote control and some magazines on it. At rise, MACKENZIE and JEFFREY are cuddling on the couch.

MACKENZIE: Okay, I'm done with this boring show. Wanna watch a movie?

JEFFREY: Uh, yeah, okay. What do you want to watch?

MACKENZIE: I don't know. You pick.

JEFFREY: (Pause.) Nah, how about you pick?

MACKENZIE: Fine. How about 'Gone with the Wind'?

JEFFREY: Uh, yeah, sure.

MACKENZIE: You want to watch 'Gone with the Wind'?

JEFFREY: (Pause.) Sure.

MACKENZIE: (Sits up.) Okay, what's wrong?

JEFFREY: What? Nothing. I'm fine. You?

MACKENZIE: No no, don't change the subject. You've never showed interest in a movie with a plot before. Your favourite movie is 'Star Wars'!! Why do you want to watch 'Gone with the Wind'?

JEFFREY: (Pause.) I don't know.

MACKENZIE: What aren't you telling me?

JEFFREY: Nothing. I'm not telling you anything. (Pauses after he realizes what he said.) I mean, I'm not keeping anything from you.

MACKENZIE: You know you can't lie so don't even try to.

JEFFREY: I'm not lying!! (Pause.) Really, I'm not... I just want to watch the movie with you because you like that movie and I want to like what you like... not that I don't already like what you like because whatever you like I like and... so...

MACKENZIE: What? That didn't make any sense. What is up with you tonight?

JEFFREY: Nothing. It's nothing. I'm fine. Just... it's nothing.

MACKENZIE: Okay. I'll go get 'Gone with the Wind' then.

JEFFREY: Why?

MACKENZIE: Why!? Because you said you... okay, that's it! Tell me what's wrong or I'm leaving.

JEFFREY: But... uh... but... this is *your* house.

MACKENZIE: (Angrily.) Just tell me what's wrong!!

JEFFREY: Okay... (Pause.) Uhhhh... (Sighs.) You have to not talk for a few minutes, okay? I need to get this all out at once.

MACKENZIE: Okay, yeah, fine. Just start talking.

JEFFREY: (Stands up and starts pacing.) Okay... alright... here goes... (Takes a deep breath.) We have been dating for eight months now. You're amazing, in every way. I haven't been this happy in a relationship since... well, since ever. I feel like I don't deserve you but I know you'd only laugh at me for saying that. So... what I'm trying to say is... I... need to get a drink. (Jumps up.) Do you want anything to drink while I'm up? (Starts walking towards kitchen, which is located offstage R.)



MACKENZIE: What? Oh, no you don't. (Gets up off couch and stops JEFFREY.)  
Jeffrey, speak to me. What is going on?

JEFFREY: I told you already. It's nothing. Just thirsty... you sure you don't want anything?

MACKENZIE: (Pulls JEFFREY back to the couch and sits down.) Sweetie, tell me what's wrong. You're worrying me.

JEFFREY: I... okay... this is really hard... Mac... I... I love you. (MACKENZIE gasps.) That's it, that's what I needed to say. I love you, Mackenzie. (Long pause.) Mackenzie?

MACKENZIE: Yeah?

JEFFREY: Did you hear me? (MACKENZIE nods her head.) And?

MACKENZIE: And... I... just remembered that I had planned to... uh... to dye my hair tonight. So, I'm sorry, but you'll have to go now. Buh-bye.

JEFFREY: What?

MACKENZIE: Hair... I need to dye my hair.

JEFFREY: Dye... your... hair?

MACKENZIE: Yes. Tonight. Now.

JEFFREY: Mac, is everything okay?

MACKENZIE: Uh... yes... everything is fine. I'm fine. Really. I just want to dye my hair.

JEFFREY: Do you need any help?

MACKENZIE: No. I'm good. I just need you to leave.

JEFFREY: Leave? What? No! We were going to watch 'Going with the Windmill'.

MACKENZIE: 'Gone with the Wind'.

JEFFREY: Whatever. What's wrong? Did I say something wrong?

MACKENZIE: No. You're great. Wahoo for Jeffrey. I just really need to dye my hair.

JEFFREY: What colour?

MACKENZIE: What?

JEFFREY: What colour are you dying your hair?

MACKENZIE: Uh... brown.

JEFFREY: That'll look good on you. Of course it'll look good. You always look good.

MACKENZIE: Awww, Jeffrey, you're so sweet. Now leave.

JEFFREY: (Pause as he thinks.) Fine, but I want to come back. How long do you need to dye your hair?

MACKENZIE: Oh geez, um... Five hours.

JEFFREY: What!! Five hours!? That'll take until... one o'clock in the morning!! No, dying your hair doesn't take that long.

MACKENZIE: Yes, it does!! It's a big, long procedure! First, you have to go and buy the hair dye, which I still have to do!! Then, you have to dye the hair one colour and wash that. After that, you have to wait for it to dry until you can put streaks in... and I *am* putting streaks in. Then, you wash that and dry it too. *Then*, the touch-ups... it's a long and tedious process.

JEFFREY: You have got to be kidding me. Look, I'll be back soon. I'll go grab some food and I'll be back.

MACKENZIE: No, don't come back tonight. The process is... (Pauses as JEFFREY just stares at her.) I have to dye my... I said no. (Pauses then sighs.) I'll call you later, okay?

JEFFREY: Fine. I'll be at home.

MACKENZIE: Alright. (JEFFREY goes to kiss her but MACKENZIE sits on the couch instead. Trying not to see the hurt in his eyes, MACKENZIE starts playing with her hair. After a moment, JEFFREY leaves without another word. MACKENZIE waits a few seconds and then stands up and starts pacing.) Oh God, now what? What do I do? What do I do? I have to call Nadia. (She starts to dial, then hangs up.) Wait, involving his sister would be bad. (Trying to convince herself.) Very bad. Bad... but she is MY best friend so, really, I have to call her! Yes! I have to call Nadia! (Picks up the phone and dials.) Pick up your phone, Nadia... pick up your phone... you better pick up the phone or- Nadia! Are you busy? Yes? You're studying for Biology?... Oh well, come over. (Pause.) Right now. (Pause.) Because. I... need... you to... help me... uh... help me dye my hair! Yeah! (Pause.) Just come over, damn it. (Pause.) Okay, see you soon. (Hangs up.) Okay. Nadia's coming over. She'll help me. She always helps. Helpful Nadia is really what I should call her. (Pause.) What am I going to do? (MACKENZIE puts her head in her hands and mumbles to herself. She sits up and grabs a magazine from the table. She flips through it quickly, not really reading the articles. After a few beats, there is a knock from offstage.) Ah!! (MACKENZIE walks offstage momentarily then walks back on with NADIA.) Wow, that was quick.

NADIA: I live three houses from you, remember?

MACKENZIE: Right. That's right.

NADIA: Yeah... so why do you want to dye your hair?

MACKENZIE: What? Oh, right. See, Jeffrey was over earlier and I needed an excuse to get him out of my house and then I needed an excuse to get you over here.

NADIA: Why? What happened?

MACKENZIE: (Speaking fast.) Okay. So I'm sitting here with Jeffrey and we're watching some dumb T.V. show and then I suggest a movie. Well, Jeffrey starts talking about us and at first I thought he was dumping me but it turns out he isn't so then he says stuff and then I say stuff and then I called you and I thought of a nickname for you!! It's Helpful Nadia because you always help me with stuff. Do you like it? I think it works. Anyways, back to Jeffrey... it was bad. He was talking and I... he just... we... I don't know what to do... it was bad... he... (Starts whimpering.)

NADIA: Calm down, Mackenzie! Slow it down so you sound like you're speaking English! (Pauses as MACKENZIE takes a few deep breaths.) Good, now start again...

MACKENZIE: Jeffrey... he said... he... (Pause.) Okay, Jeffrey said he loves me.

NADIA: Oh no.

MACKENZIE: I know. Oh, I know. This is bad. No no, this is beyond bad. This is... oh, what's another word for bad?

NADIA: Ummm... horrible?

MACKENZIE: Yes!! That's it!! It's horrible. Why do they say that? Why? Do they honestly think we want to hear that?

NADIA: Well, you know if you look on the bright side...

MACKENZIE: (Interrupts.) Bright side? Bright side? Where is this bright side you speak of? I don't see any bright side.

NADIA: There's always a bright side. Now you and my brother can live happily ever after. This is great!!

MACKENZIE: Oh my God, do you know me at all? I can't stay in relationship after the evil words are spoken. I run. I get out fast. I don't commit to the "I love you" thing. I told *you* that and I know you told Jeffrey so what happened?

NADIA: I guess he just wanted to express his feelings for you. Look, you are all the guy talks about at home. He loves you. You have to deal with that.

MACKENZIE: I figured he wouldn't make the mistake of saying those words. We were fine before he said those words.

NADIA: Why can't you be fine after?

MACKENZIE: Because I never have before!! I don't know what to do with the whole commitment thing. He expects me to care... I don't "care" well. (Sighs.) Oh, and we were so happy.

NADIA: Here's what you need to do. You need to evaluate the pros and cons of this relationship. You need to realize that this is a GOOD thing and work through it. Most importantly, you need to realize that you would crush him if you dumped him.

MACKENZIE: I know. But you knew that I couldn't hear those words. I *can't* hear those words.

NADIA: Mac, you and me have been best friends for three years now. I have watched you dump guy after guy because they said they loved you. I've watched my brother go from girl to girl because he's never been happy with them. Now, with you guys together, I've never seen him happier... and I've never seen you happier.

MACKENZIE: Nadia, I understand where you're coming from. I know that you want nothing but the best for your brother and for me. But I don't think I'm ready for the whole commitment thing. Jeffrey is great but I don't know how to handle this.

NADIA: Let me help you, then!! We can do this together. Helpful Nadia, remember? If you need any guidance, I'll help you out!! Now, you haven't done anything drastic, right?

MACKENZIE: No, after he said that he loved me, I told him I had to dye my hair.

NADIA: Why would you say that?

MACKENZIE: I was in a panic!! I had to get out him of here!

NADIA: Okay, but I'm still confused on why you made him leave.

MACKENZIE: (Sighs.) Sweetie, he said he loved me. That's reason enough.

NADIA: Do you love him?

MACKENZIE: What?

NADIA: Do you love Jeffrey?

MACKENZIE: You know, that's not even important. What really is important here is what am I going to do about my hair tomorrow? I told Jeffrey I was dying it brown so all I need is for you to drive me to the store. If you'll just go get your car and bring it here, I'll meet you-

NADIA: (Interrupts MACKENZIE.) Are you avoiding the topic?

MACKENZIE: What was the topic again?

NADIA: Yes or no, do you love Jeffrey?

MACKENZIE: (Pause.) Yes.

NADIA: That's great!! Oh, this is so good! Now you can work on your commitment issues and then in a few years you'll get married and live happily ever after! Hell, I better be a bridesmaid... maybe even maid-of-honour! Oh, and we can go shopping for all the dresses and stuff! And the cake will be three layers and have that cute little

couple at the top!! You know, the wax bride and groom? Now, do you want a fall wedding or a spring wedding? Or maybe summer? How many kids? I think you should have two kids, one boy and-

MACKENZIE: Whoa! Take it easy there, Sparky!! Slow down the timer on my life, please! Thanks so much. Now, first of all, I hate you. Second of all, I don't do commitment well, third of all, I am not having kids, and finally, you're not helping!!

NADIA: Okay, sorry. I'll help. Here's my solution. How about you don't dump him and then you guys can be happy? Hey, there's a stretch!! You could be happy!!

MACKENZIE: Have you been listening to a word I've been saying?

NADIA: Look Mac, Jeff is a great guy. You wouldn't stay with a guy for eight months if you didn't like him. You have to enjoy his company some. He worships the ground you walk on, he cooks and he is romantic. So he said that he loves you... please, give it a chance.

MACKENZIE: I don't know.

NADIA: Don't dump him. Give it a chance. Think about it. Don't throw this away.

MACKENZIE: This is a hard decision to make. This is huge! I don't know. I have to think about it.

(Pause.)

NADIA: Mac?

MACKENZIE: Yeah?

NADIA: Even though I push you to commit, I just want you to know that I'm only doing it for your happiness, and my brother's. Whatever you decide, I'll support you. I'm here for you. (Sits on couch as MACKENZIE proceeds to talk to herself.)



MACKENZIE: I know. (Takes a deep breath.) Okay. Need to decide. Need to think. Okay, and I'm thinking... thinking... this is easy, okay, pros and cons. Pro – he's is amazing, really sweet, romantic, rich, pretty, great friend... Okay, cons – he... Ummm... Cons... Oh, I know!! He... (Pause.) He said he loves me. (Pauses.) This is so tough. I've never felt like this about anyone before. Okay... I can do this... I... I can't do this.

NADIA: (Sighs.) Mac, it's not a tough decision.

MACKENZIE: Yes, oh yes, it is. Nadia, you don't understand what it's like to be in this situation.

NADIA: What do you mean I don't understand?

MACKENZIE: Have you ever been in this situation?

NADIA: No.

MACKENZIE: Then how could you possibly understand?

NADIA: I'm just trying to help. I may not know these things from my past relationships but I've seen it with all my other "commitment issues" friends. I don't want you to be miserable.

MACKENZIE: Did you ever think that maybe I won't be miserable? Did you ever stop to think that maybe I want to be alone?

NADIA: Mackenzie, nobody wants to be alone.

MACKENZIE: Maybe I do. (Pause. Wanders DL.) Okay. What am I going to do? I can't. I can't do this. (Sighs.) Oh, Jeffrey is so good though. I don't know... Nadia makes a good point... I should give him a chance... oh, but I can't. (Pauses and sighs.) I hate people. (Phone rings, MACKENZIE picks it up and snaps.) What do you want? (Pause.) Look I'm not having a good day so if you want to prank call someone, I am not the person to do it to... Oh, I'm sorry, I thought... Why am I upset? Oh, well, I just... uhhhh... I just broke

a nail! (Pause.) Have I dyed my hair? (Nervous laugh.) Not yet... No... You want to come back over? Now?... Uh, now's not really a good... You bought me brown hair dye? Oh, wow. Okay. Yeah, bye. (Hangs up.) Oh for the love of... Now what do I do? (Sits on couch and puts her head in her hands.)

(Pause.)

NADIA: Who was that?

MACKENZIE: Who do you think it was? Jeffrey!!

NADIA: What did he say?

MACKENZIE: He's coming over.

NADIA: Now?

MACKENZIE: (Sarcastically.) No, next Tuesday. Yes! NOW!!

NADIA: Okay, sorry. Calm down. (Pause.) Should I stay?

MACKENZIE: No... Yes... No... I don't know!! Maybe... No, don't stay. I need to handle this on my own.

NADIA: Okay, I'll stay then.

MACKENZIE: NO!! Please, don't stay. I really should do this on my own.

NADIA: Mackenzie, as your best friend, I am overruling you on this decision. (MACKENZIE tries to argue.) Shhp. No. Quiet. I know that when you say that you need to handle this on your own, you mean, "Nadia, fix it."

MACKENZIE: But I-

NADIA: (Interrupts MACKENZIE.) I'm staying and that's that.

MACKENZIE: (Sighs.) Alright.

NADIA: You'll be fine. It's all good.

MACKENZIE: Have I mentioned lately that I hate you? (Knock from offstage.)  
Oh no... (Pause.) Uh, Nadia, go away for a second.

NADIA: What? Why?

MACKENZIE: Just do it. Please. I want to talk to Jeffrey alone for a second before  
you jump in.

NADIA: (Sighs.) Okay, I'll give you two minutes.

MACKENZIE: Five.

NADIA: Fine. I'll wait in the kitchen. (Exits stage R.)

MACKENZIE: Okay. Here goes nothing. (Another knock from offstage.) I'm  
coming!! Oh no... (MACKENZIE goes offstage momentarily for a  
few seconds and then reappears with JEFFREY.) Oh, you got me  
*three* different kinds of brown hair dye...

JEFFREY: Yeah. I figured since you hadn't bought any yet then I could help  
you out by buying some for you.

MACKENZIE: Oh, that's so... amazingly nice. I still need for you to be gone  
though.

JEFFREY: What? No! No, I'm not leaving.

MACKENZIE: Please?

JEFFREY: No.

MACKENZIE: Pretty please?

JEFFREY: No!! Besides I think we need to talk.

MACKENZIE: Talk? We don't need to talk. We always talk. You know, I think we talk too much. So, how about we just stop talking? I need to dye my hair now.

JEFFREY: But I really think-

MACKENZIE: And that's another thing. You think too much. Think and talk, that's all you do. How about we just sit and watch T.V. (Sits, grabs the remote control and mimes turning a T.V. on.) Oh, look! 'Friends' is on! You like- (JEFFREY grabs remote and mimes shutting off T.V.) 'Friends.'

JEFFREY: We are going to talk. (A noise is heard from offstage R.) What was that?

MACKENZIE: (Innocently.) What was what?

JEFFREY: That noise. (JEFFREY gets up and goes towards offstage R.  
MACKENZIE jumps up and grabs his arm.)

MACKENZIE: No! Don't go in there.

JEFFREY: Why not?

MACKENZIE: Ummm... (NADIA enters upstage R.)

NADIA: Hey, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: Nadia? What are you doing here?

NADIA: I really think Mackenzie needs me here. I mean, to help sort things out. I thought maybe you guys could use me.

JEFFREY: As what? A referee? You're my sister; We don't need *your* help with our love lives.

MACKENZIE: Oh, there's that word again.

JEFFREY: (Ignoring MACKENZIE.) Mackenzie's a big girl; she can deal with this on her own. She doesn't need your help.

NADIA: She doesn't know how to deal with you.

MACKENZIE: Uh, hello? I'm standing right here.

JEFFREY: (Ignoring MACKENZIE.) Okay, that's fine. But I still don't see why you're here. She can make her own decision about life; she's mature and intelligent.

MACKENZIE: Did you two not hear me? I can speak for myself!

NADIA: (Ignoring MACKENZIE.) She's not ready to make that decision, you didn't give her enough time to think about it.

JEFFREY: I didn't know there was anything to think about!

MACKENZIE: (Angrily yelling.) HEY!! Let me talk!!

JEFFREY: Okay. Fine. What's it gonna be?

NADIA: Jeffrey leave her alone. She isn't ready to-

MACKENZIE: (Interrupts NADIA.) Nadia, I'm ready. Let me speak.

NADIA: Okay. Sorry. (Sits on couch.)

MACKENZIE: Jeffrey, we have been together for eight months now. In those eight months, I have never been happier. Everyday I wake up and am so happy to be with you. You are amazing. Not only are you the best boyfriend, your sister is my best friend. You don't know what these past eight months have meant to me, (Pause.) but-

JEFFREY: (Interrupts MACKENZIE.) No. Don't say but. Please. That's not a word I want to hear.

MACKENZIE: But-

NADIA: (Interrupts MACKENZIE.) Mackenzie, c'mon. Don't do this. You need time to think.

MACKENZIE: No, I *don't* need time to think. Jeffrey, (Pause.) I... love you, I really do BUT I'm just not ready to commit. I'm not ready for that kind of a relationship yet. I can't. (Pause.) I'm sorry.

JEFFREY: Me, too. I shouldn't have said anything. I... I should go.

MACKENZIE: I'm really sorry, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: Can... we... still be friends?

MACKENZIE: No... Yes... Maybe... I'll give you a call later... sometime. Okay?

JEFFREY: Sure, yeah, fine. (Turns to NADIA.) Are you going home?

NADIA: No, I'm gonna stay here a while longer. (JEFFREY exits. (Long pause.) Mac? You okay?

MACKENZIE: Huh? Yeah, I'm good. I'm fine. I should be used to this. I'll get through it. (Sighs.) I always do.

NADIA: Do you want me to stay?

MACKENZIE: Yeah, I need you to help me dye my hair.

NADIA: Oh, you were serious then?

MACKENZIE: Not then, but I am now.

NADIA: (Laughs.) Okay, I'll help. What colour are you dying it?

MACKENZIE: (Holds up the three boxes of brown hair dye.) Brown.

NADIA: That'll look good on you.

(Fade to black as MACKENZIE smiles.)



# Always

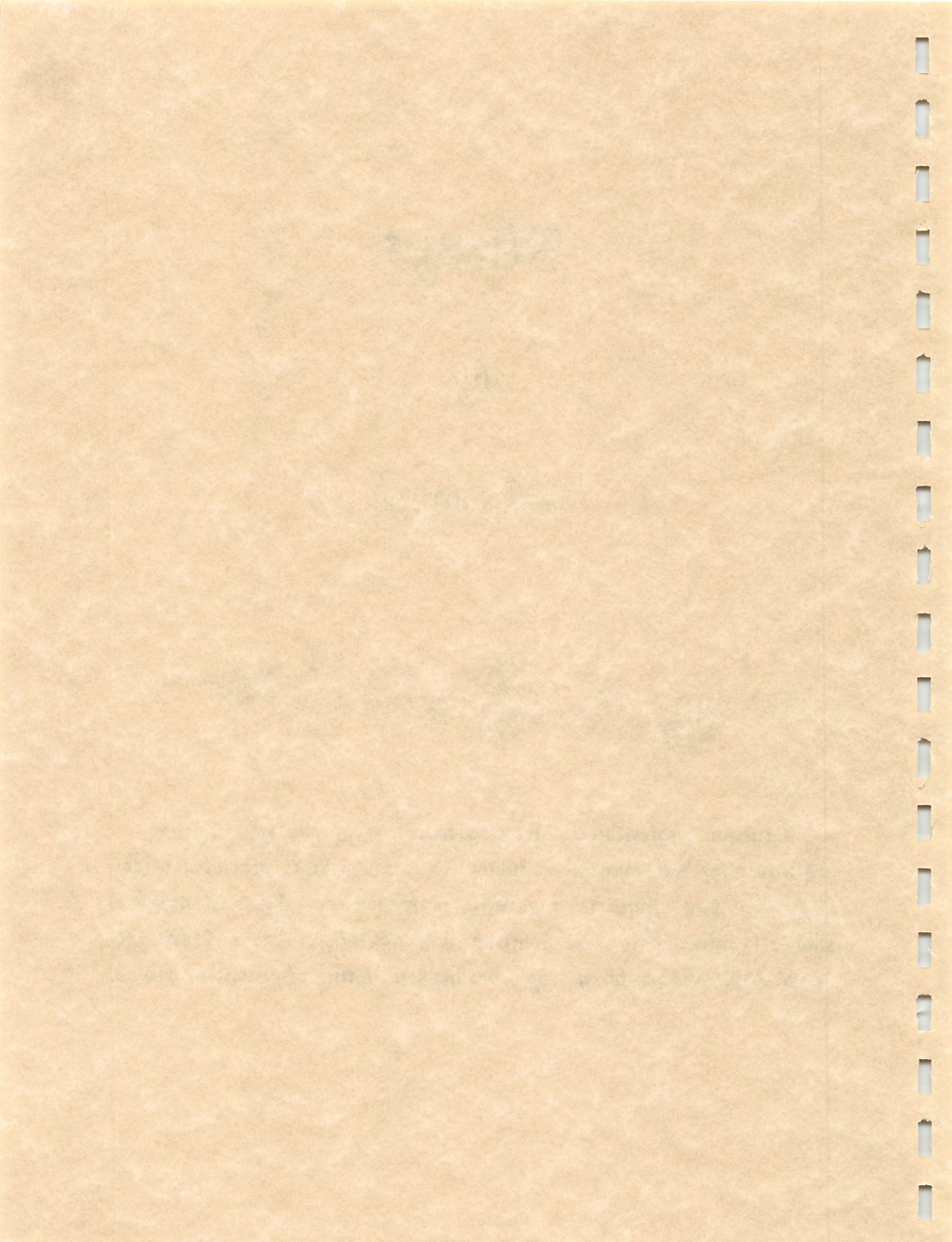
by

Will Johnson



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Always" by Wil Johnson is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Will Johnson at 5099 Wilson Drive, Delta B.C. V4M 1P3. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$10.00.*





# ALWAYS

**CHARACTERS:** *(All characters are described by their relationship with Kyle, the central figure of the story who never appears.)*

Eleanor – Middle-aged single mother. Very religious background.

Leanne – Girlfriend, 17 years old.

Daphne – 15 year old youth group member. Elitist, arrogant and judgemental.

Christine- 42 year old English teacher. Taught Kyle in Grade 9 and 11.

Matt – 17 year old, non-Christian friend.

Charlene – 16 year old youth group member. Soft-spoken, shy and optimistic.

Mike – 34 year old youth pastor. Approachable, warm and friendly.

Sandra – 45 year old witness to Kyle's car accident. Well-meaning but harsh.

Dolores – 76 year old church member. Traditional, naïve and idealistic.

Jeff – 11 year old younger brother. Popular, well-raised and polite.

Rachel – 13 year old attendee of Kyle's school. His admirer.

Mitchell – 25 year old former camp counsellor.

Rich – 50 year old father. Strong-minded, vocal atheist.

Courtney: 15 year old party girl. Obnoxious, unintelligent and promiscuous.

*All of these characters will be played inter-changeably by three actors. The break-up of parts is as follows:*

**Female #1:** Leanne, Dolores, Rachel, Daphne

**Female #2:** Sandra, Charlene, Eleanor, Courtney, Christine

**Male:** Rich, Mitchell, Jeff, Matt, Mike

# **ORDER OF APPEARANCES**

#1. Sandra

#2. Leanne

#3. Mitchell

#4. Eleanor

#5. Daphne

#6. Matt

#7. Christine

#8. Leanne

#9. Mike

#10. Daphne

#11. Rich

#12. Dolores

#13. Charlene

#14. Courtney

#15. Rachel

#16. Matt

#17. Eleanor

#18. Mike

#19. Leanne

#20. Jeff

# ALWAYS

*(Lights come up on three chairs, one at stage left, one at stage right and one at center stage. The three actors sit looking at the floor. When speaking, the actor looks up and begins to move and speak.)*

**SANDRA:**

Do I feel guilty? Well, no. I mean, I have to keep telling myself that it wasn't my fault. None of it was my fault. I mean, it's these crazy teen drivers these days. There was nothing I could do. He was weaving in and out of traffic, flashing his high beams in my rear view mirror and just basically making me nervous. But I mean, I have places to go too. The road doesn't belong to him. So I wasn't about to just let him pass me. And here I am, in a little Civic and he's driving some fancy Mustang. So he whizzes by me, and then cuts back into the lane. Driving like an idiot, that's what he was doing. What was I supposed to do? He clipped my hood, went flying into the median and then into the ditch. I got out of my car, in a panic, and cars were honking and squealing to a halt. It was utter chaos. Then, I see the young girl, and the young boy. They were climbing out of the car. The driver was just kind of hunched over the wheel, like he was sleeping. And the girl couldn't stop crying...

**LEANNE:**

I was always so close to Kyle. Even since we were really little, we were always great friends. Basically next door neighbours. We even went to the same church, you know, the one on 16<sup>th</sup>? St. Martin's. So we grew up together, and he was always so special to me. We did things together. We went to each other when we were upset. It was...beautiful. I've watched him change over the years. I've watched him grow. And you know, it was the same way back. We knew everything about each other. But you know, I think one of the biggest things in his life is when he went to Camp GreenTree a couple years back. Have you ever heard of it?

**MITCHELL:**

So, yeah, I had this job coupla years back. At this camp. Cool job, you know? It was fun. I was life-guarding and counselling and stuff like that. Fun times. Great place, that camp, I've got some good memories there. Anyways, you know, it's a Bible Camp. Parents send off their kids to learn about God and stuff like that, sorta like Vacation Bible School. Anyways, we got an awful lot of snobby little sheltered suburban kids there. You know, right? Not a big fan, but whatever. Kyle though, he was always different. Cool, cool kid. You could tell he was just a little bit different. It was something in his eyes. Like a passion or something. And he was sharp. He was a smart kid. But yeah, he didn't know a whole lot about God. I mean, his mother was a Christian and stuff but he wasn't big into it quite yet. But the whole week, he was just asking questions about God, trying to learn more about God...it was cool. The kid was hungry. Then, about three quarters of the way through the week he devoted his life to Christ. I was excited for him. You know,

he came back for years. I eventually stopped working there, but I heard he even became staff. And that makes sense, I always saw leadership qualities in him. I'm sure he did an awesome job. Lost contact with him over the years, but I'm sure he's doing well.

### **ELEANOR**

My boy, Kyle. I was always so blessed with him. He was a little hell-raiser when he was young. One time he flushed my watch, a brand new rolex, down the toilet! But I loved him. Loved him more than words can express. And he grew up to be such a man. He was strong. He knew what he wanted. He was so good at school. I was always so proud of him. I always tried to raise my children with the knowledge of God, and I was so pleased to find he devoted his life to Christ. Then, he started getting involved at our church. St. Martin's. A youth leader, that's what he was. Now, his father though, I always had such a tough time with him. I love him dearly, but he was never quite as involved in church as I was. Or Kyle was, for that matter. Sometimes he would tell me that he was an atheist, though I never believed that. He was too smart for that. But Kyle, he made some really good friends in that youth group. Good kids. They were a good influence on him. Especially this one girl, Daphne. I always really liked her. I think I always harboured the fantasy that they might, one day, date.

### **DAPHNE**

Kyle was always such a strong leader. I always looked up to him. I mean, he was involved in all areas of our ministry. When we were twelve we went on a missions trip to Mexico together. That was an incredible experience. It's so strange to see those poor children, dirty and living on the street. Such a shame. You know, it has been said that the Devil attacks those who are closest to God. And I think that's just what happened to Kyle. He was a target, doing such valuable work for the Kingdom of God. The Devil sent him all kinds of temptations, but none greater than those of his friends. I think he wanted to minister to them, but they began to warp his mind and lead him astray. They were such a bad influence. Kyle eventually left the youth group, and though it was a major setback for our ministry, I always trusted that God was doing it for a reason. That one guy, though, Matt. I would see him around school, hanging out with Kyle. If you ask me, in all honesty I think that boy must have the Devil in him.

### **MATT**

Kyle was such a rad guy. Always was. Me n' him, we've known each other since like Grade 2. And we've been through a lot together, me n' him. We're different, yeah. But we like chilling with each other. For a while he did the religion thing. He got all into church and stuff, which I dunno, was kinda lame. But whatever, not a big deal. He tried to push it on me a coupla times but I was like I dunno, dude, God...I'm just not into that, you know? And I think he respected that. I mean, he was reasonable. Even though he was all into that, he was still pretty laid back. And eventually he snapped out of it. I mean, I knew he had to sooner or later. It was just a phase, in my opinion. After he dropped church though, I mean, he was weird for a while. Upset, angry, whatever. But it was probably partly cuz of his Dad. His Dad left a little while before he stopped going to church. His girlfriend, her name's Leanne. She left the church with him, even though she was big into

all that shit too. I was always kinda jealous of their relationship. They really seemed meant for each other and stuff.

### **CHRISTINE**

I taught Kyle Grade 9 English, and I was his literature teacher in Grade 11. He was always one of the brightest students. Very sociable, well-adjusted and just whip smart. At the end of Grade 9 he bought me flowers, which isn't that common in a public school. I've been teaching for several years now, and students are so ungrateful these days. He was most definitely an exception, and such an encouragement to me. A little charmer with a winning smile. It's students like him, they're the reason I went into teaching in the first place. That being said, I saw quite a change in him over the years. Just with attitude, rudeness and whatnot. He cursed a lot more, and skipped a lot more classes. He was still very intelligent, just a little bit rebellious. That's really all I know of him, to tell you the truth.

### **LEANNE**

Kyle changed a lot while I was dating him. He went through a lot. Even I can't understand, though I was there with him through it all. With his dad leaving, and some of the problems he had with the church, I think anyone would've reacted like he did. Everyone told me he was a negative influence on me. Especially when he left the church. He had some very serious, very legitimate qualms with how they ran things. And I was the one he went to usually, when he had a problem with things. So, naturally, I left. I'm still a Christian, I would say that. But this isn't important. The fact of the matter is, Kyle was always my best friend in the world, and my boyfriend. I'm so thankful to have been blessed by knowing him. That's all that's important. All that other shit is just talk and gossip.

### **MIKE**

I can remember so clearly the first time I met Kyle. He just ran up to me, shook my hand and introduced himself. A lot of kids, they come in for the first time all timid, nervous and unsure. But not Kyle. He fit right in. And right away I could see something special about this kid. I really connected with him, the second I met him. He had this twinkle in his eyes, like this burning passion. He was so quick too. Very mature for his age. I think he reminded me a lot of myself, in many ways. Over the years he eventually became a leader. Probably my most valued leader, to tell you the truth. That's why it was so shocking to see him leave. I loved this kid, like a son almost. And when he left, it hurt. It really did. I'm sure it had something to do with his father leaving. I mean, the church stopped giving him what he needed. We expected so much from him. He gave so much, but no one was there for him when he need support the most. There was too much pressure, and he buckled. So, I was sad to see him go. But I respected his decision. I've kept in touch with him over the years. We go out to lunch. We discuss things. He's so lucky to have a girlfriend like Leanne. I don't doubt Kyle's faith at all. He lost faith in religion, not in God. I knew someday he would find his place. I knew he would succeed...it's really a tragedy what happened to him.



## **DAPHNE**

I always had this hunch that something would end up happening to Kyle. I mean, our God is a just God. And he punishes justly. And I don't know how Kyle could think he could get away with just turning his back on God. It was ridiculous. So, I mean, it came as a shock when he died. I mean, I was upset. But I knew it was for the best. I think, if I can be completely honest, that he deserved it.

## **RICH**

I never wanted to be an absentee father. I love my children, Kyle and Jeff, very very much. I didn't want to leave my family. Myself, I always resented my father. He left my family when I was really young. Since I was little I promised myself that I wouldn't repeat the same mistake. I told myself I wouldn't give in. I would see things through, and always be faithful. Eleanor, she is a beautiful woman. She's charming, sociable and loving. I loved her, very very much. But I think, in the end, it was religion that came between us. That's all I saw when I looked into her eyes. A religion. I stayed much longer than the average man would. I'm talking for years. I never wanted to leave my kids. Kyle. Jeff. But everybody has a breaking point. And I think I just hit rock bottom. I had nothing left to give. Kyle was always so smart. But he bought into religion early on in life, which was a shame. I really respected his decision to leave the church when he did. I think it was a good move. Religion is so primitive. But it made him, well, he was unhappy. When I would see him, we wouldn't get along. Like myself, I think he resented me very deeply. He sided with his mother...His funeral was strange. Surreal. Seeing people from my former life. Seeing his former friends. Hearing what they had to say about him. When Kyle passed away, I felt like a piece of me had been torn out. It pained me deep down. But I suppose that's the way life goes, isn't it?

## **DOLORES**

I attend every funeral at St. Martin's. I have not missed one in the last thirty-five years. Really, I never liked the boy. But I did go to show my respects. But let me tell you, it was a travesty. Complete insanity, nothing less. I saw one boy, now I don't know how he did this, but his hair...it was blue. Blue! In a church, nonetheless! There were people with earrings all over their faces. It was utterly and completely shameful. They were wreaking havoc. I remember, I always had a bad feeling about that boy. He always struck me as a bad apple. One time, when I was driving home, I saw him on the side of the road. And in his mouth...a cigarette. Such potential is wasted on youth. Let me tell you!

## **CHARLENE**

Kyle's funeral was nice. It was a nice day out, sunny and warm. There were cars lined up all the way down the street. So many people showed up, people I thought would've never stepped into our church. It was nice to see so many people from the school come to pay their respect. I guess God finds many different ways to bring people together, doesn't He? Anyway, it was a wonderful service. Truly. I remember I saw Kyle's mother in the front row, with Jeff sitting beside her. It was heart-breaking. He was trying really hard not to cry, holding his Mom's hand...You know, it disappoints me to

hear how people talk about Kyle now that he's gone. There's no respect. They're saying that it's such a shame he never came back to God, because now he's paying the consequences. Burning in Hell. He turned his back on God, he turned his back on heaven. That's what they're saying. And quite frankly, that makes me angry. Very angry. Because I know, even when Kyle was doing the things that he was, even when he was doing drugs and getting drunk and whatever, not that you know, I support any of those things...I know that he was still the Kyle I knew from Sunday School. I know Jesus still loved him. Our youth group has been very successful over the years. I've always contributed to our different programs. And I always knew that if he wanted to, Kyle could've led our entire ministry. He had an amazing heart, and an amazing brain. I always hoped to see him again. Now he's dead. And I guess we've all learned something from it, I suppose.

### **COURTNEY**

I fooled around with Kyle once, I mean, like at a party. Nothing ever really happened, like we didn't, you know, fuck or anything. And we didn't go out. I mean, I guess he wasn't really for me. He seemed really smart n' stuff. You know? And I'm not really into that. I mean, not that I'm dumb or anything. That's not what I'm saying. I just, oh, I dunno...Anyways, yeah, I knew him okay. Like pretty well, I guess. We partied together lots, and he was fun. You know, he was a really loud guy. Always yelling, acting, doing whatever. Like impressions from movies n' stuff. So I guess I had a crush on him for a while. That's why we made out that one time. But you know, you meet a lot of people. Like people from school and stuff. And you can tell that a lot of them, they're like going nowhere. But everyone liked Kyle. And, like I said, he was smart. So I always thought he'd be the one to become like Bill Gates or something...you know? So, that's why it sucks he died. Cuz you know, well, I dunno. Like I mean, I went to his funeral, and it was really sad. With all the flowers and shit. And people crying. Whatever. It just sucked.

### **RACHEL**

I think that Kyle was like the hottest guy in our whole school. I didn't know him, because he was in Grade 12, and I was in Grade 8. But he was so dreamy! I remember, one time, I bumped into him in the hall. And he, you know, looked right at me. He said "Sorry, hun." I never forgot that. It was like I was in heaven. He was just so nice. When he died, I went to his funeral. Everyone was going, and it was really really sad. Everyone was crying, so I cried too. It's always so sad when cool people die.

### **MATT**

Lately, I've been thinking about Kyle a lot. Can you blame me? And you know, every time I think about him it makes me really fucking angry. Like I wanna kill someone. You know, Kyle was different. He always was. I mean, everybody saw it. He wasn't like everyone else. He could've done anything!! I could see him becoming like Steven Spielberg, or like Tom Cruise, or even a writer or something. He could've done so

much stuff. He got into some harsh crap the last little while before he died. He was taking a few too many drugs and stuff like that. But I was never worried about him, cuz I always knew he would pull through. I knew it. And then, a fucking car accident!! Bang! He's dead. Like it could've happened to anyone, right? I don't think I'm ever going to be the same. It makes me wonder what kind of God could let something like that happen, you know? But mostly, it just makes me mad.

## **ELEANOR**

It was really nice to have so many people coming out to support Kyle. I never spoke to his father, even though he came. That was a nice gesture. I was just surrounded by the love and support of the church, and of the community. Tragedies like this always bring people together, and I had people offering to make me dinner, drive me places...the works. But it didn't change anything. When I came home at night Kyle's room was empty. When I sat down for dinner it was just me and Jeffy. They emptied out his locker at school and brought it home to me. Said I might want it. Sometimes it hurts so bad I just want to forget he ever existed. I tried to be a good mother, I really did. And Kyle got into some trouble over the years, but I feel like I did a good job. To lose him to such a senseless tragedy...oh, excuse me. (Cries) I look at my son, Jeff. I look at him and I see Kyle. He has his eyes. His voice. His humor. And I prayed to God, the night of the funeral. I prayed so hard. I said that I might be able to live through the death of one son. I may be able to take that grief. But I begged God, I said please, please, let me keep Jeff. I promise to be a good mother. I promise to do the right things. Just let me keep my son. And now, as I watch him grow, I know I love him and appreciate him that much more. And I have Kyle to thank for that. So, Kyle, I know you're sitting up in heaven looking down on me. Kyle, my baby. I love you. I love you so much. Thank you for coming into my life for these eighteen years. Thank you for being my son. Thank you...

## **MIKE**

It's amazing what a death can do to a community. It jolts us. Shows us reality. I see God working through Kyle's death in incredible ways. We're seeing new church members everyday. His friends are starting to come out to the youth group, with so many questions sometimes I get scared. Scared that I won't have the answers. I just pray that God will use me in their lives. Help me to fulfill His plan for Kyle's death. Help me to support this hurting community in its time of need. You know, a lot of people look down at Kyle. The things that he did. The problems he had. You know, Kyle did drink alcohol from time to time. He did start experimenting with drugs. He did stop coming to church. But these people couldn't see what was going on in his head. The pain from his father leaving. His doubts. His fears. And there's one other thing they don't understand. They don't understand that despite everything that happened over the course of Kyle's life, God loved him just as much when he died as the moment he was born. He loved him more than we could ever understand. And God had a purpose for Kyle, a reason for his life. And his death. God has a reason for everything.

## LEANNE

You know when you lose something? Something special? You know when you think that if you look hard enough, then maybe, maybe you'll find it? I go to sleep at night hoping that when I wake up in the morning, when I open my eyes, Kyle will be there. Laying beside me. And he'll say 'Hey princess, didya miss me?' But he's not. And it hurts every time. It hurts like someone has taken a piece of my stomach out, and left a giant gaping space. I know that God has someone picked out for everyone. And there is no doubt in my mind that Kyle was the person God chose for me. He was the one God wanted me to be with. Even if it was just for this short time. I loved Kyle, I really really did. And I always will.

## JEFF

Kyle was taking me to soccer when we got into the accident. It was me, him and Leanne. They were going to go on a date after they dropped me off. I had a tournament that night. My team was on a winning streak, and if we won that day we would've won the whole tournament. Kyle was always a good brother, taking me to soccer practice and my soccer games. I looked up to him as a role model and everything. He was my brother. We had lots of fun. He would play video games with me and sometimes he would take me to movies. So I'm glad that he was my brother...Everyone's been telling me that he's in heaven right now. And I think he is. I believe that. I think he's up there, and he's happy. I miss him though. Right now I really wish that he was down here on earth with us.



# Airspace

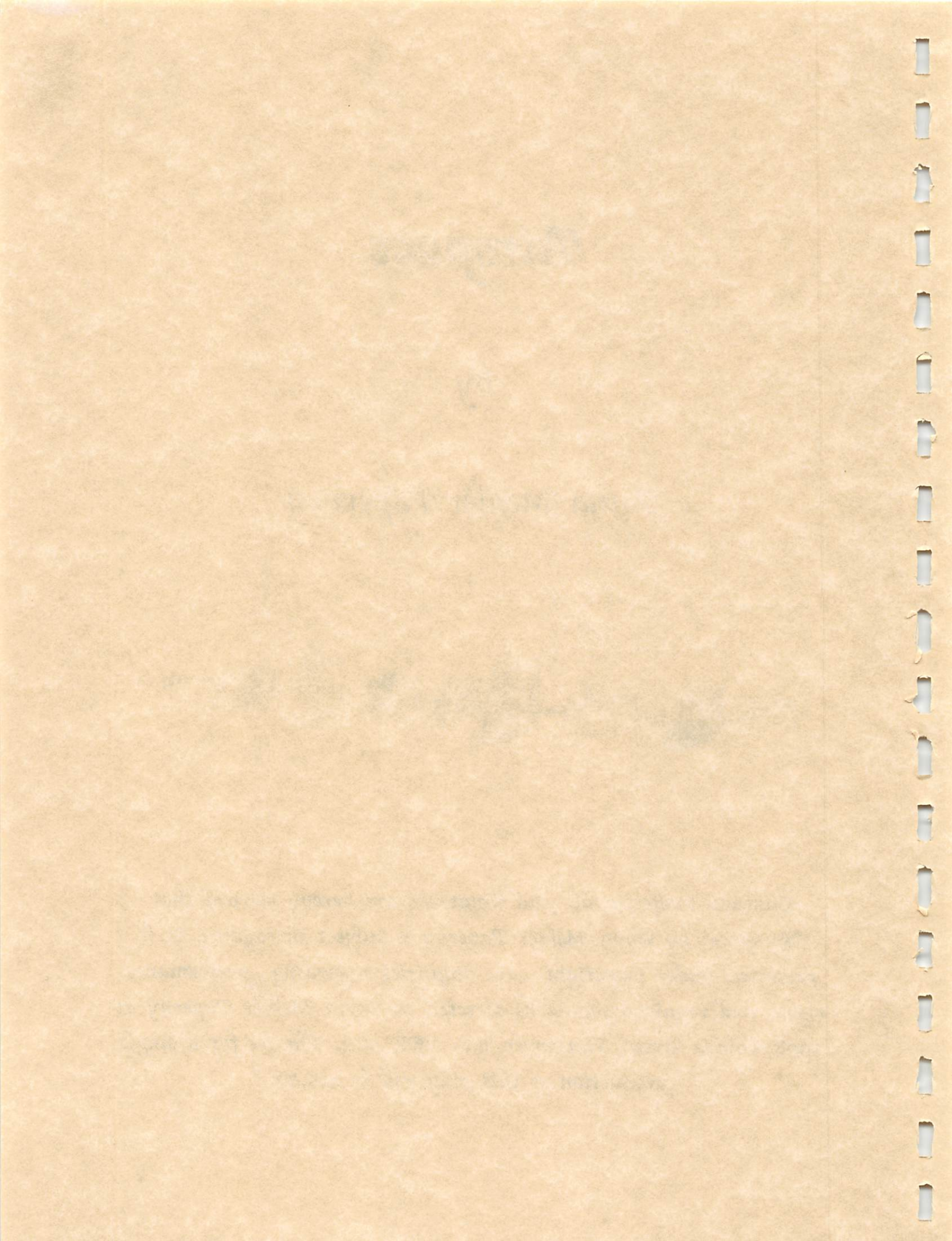
by

Anna Mehler Paperney



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Airspace" by Anna Mehler Paperney is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Anna Mehler Paperney at 1908 Tolmie Street, Vancouver B.C. V6R 4C2. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$15.00.*





A play in one act dealing with the real hazards of flying faced when two individuals are thrust together in the sealed, confined space of an airplane

## CAST

Lucrece

Claude

Flight Attendant

Christopher

Copyright annabanana2003



*lights up on a plane. CLAUDE is sitting in the aisle seat reading a thick book titled "A Brief History of the English Language". CHRISTOPHER, in a hat with a newspaper, is in the seat directly in front of CLAUDE. His face is hidden. LUCRECE enters, walks down aisle, scanning seat/row numbers nervously. she stops at CLAUDE'S row and hesitates.*

LUCRECE: *obviously ill at ease* Uh, sorry, could you...

CLAUDE: *slowly looking up from book* Oh, were you trying to sit down?

LUCRECE: Um, yeah...is this 24D?

CLAUDE: *slowly craning head around to read label overhead* That's what it says.

LUCRECE: Oh. Um.....

CLAUDE: Is this your seat?

LUCRECE: Yes. At least....*producing boarding pass from bag* that's what it says. *shows him*

CLAUDE: *looking over at boarding pass* Well, then, I guess it must be....*going back to book*

LUCRECE: *getting fed up* So, uh, would you mind....

CLAUDE: *looking us again from book* Yes?

LUCRECE: I'm just trying to get through.

**CLAUDE:** Oh. Right. Of course.

*Claude starts to get up, there is some confusion as they both try to navigate the narrow space. Eventually, LUCRECE reaches her seat and they both sit down. Once seated, LUCRECE immediately starts to futz with her stuff: adjusting and readjusting the seat, the window shade, etc. CLAUDE stares at her as she completes what is apparently some complicated ritual. When she is finished, she notices him staring at her and looks at him quizzically, then deliberately puts piece of gum in mouth, takes headphones out of bag, puts them on. CLAUDE returns to book, but is obviously very perturbed by the drastic rearrangement of his seat area. after trying to ignore it for a moment and failing, he attempts to discreetly shift stuff back around. immediately, LUCRECE snaps up and changes it back, then settles back down into her seat with her music. CLAUDE tries again, with the same result. this goes on for a couple minutes, with each party getting progressively more peeved, LUCRECE especially, who acts as if CLAUDE is violating something. The Intercom comes on.*

**INTERCOM:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Air Canada flight 221 to Ottawa. Because our number one priority is providing you with cheap, affordable, cheap air transport, we have discontinued our in-flight complementary food and beverage service. However, for the low, low price of fifteen dollars, you can be among the first to sample our new Airlifted Edibles menu, featuring a lettuce salad of mixed wilted greens served with your choice of 500-Island dressing or malt vinegar, and a bun with jam, peanut butter, and honey packets. Cutlery is fifty cents extra, drinks are eight dollars, and

peanuts are five. Availability of condiments is not guaranteed. Enjoy your flight. Bonjour mesdames and messieurs, et bienvenu au Air Canada vol 221 a Ottawa.....*as INTERCOM begins to speak in French, CLAUDE freaks out. LUCRECE, having taken no notice of the announcements, is violently startled by his behavior. Takes off headphones, turns to CLAUDE, shakes him*

LUCRECE: Hey! Hey! Are you OK? *announcements end. CLAUDE calms down* What was *that*? Are you having a seizure or something? Should I be giving you medication? I really don't know anything about First Aid...I failed that babysitting course three times *tries to put him in semblance of recovery position. CLAUDE shakes her off irritably.*

CLAUDE: Stop that! *she desists he shakes himself, as if trying to be rid of something* Uch! I can't stand it!

LUCRECE: What, the announcements? Yeah, I know. They're so banal. *mimicking intercom.* Thank you for choosing Air Canada, even though you don't really have much of a choice since the only other airline in this country is WestJet and they're even more in the toilet than we are, if such a thing is possible. I hope you enjoy your flight. *rolls eyes.* I mean does anyone really care where the emergency exits are?

CLAUDE: *impatiently* No, no, it's not *that*.....

**LUCRECE:** Then what?

**CLAUDE:** *grimacing* It's the French.

**LUCRECE:** The French?

**CLAUDE:** The French.

**LUCRECE:** The French...people? language? toast?

**CLAUDE:** The language, the language.

**LUCRECE:** *waiting for explanation; none is forthcoming* What's wrong with the French language?

**CLAUDE:** Well, you see, it's not that I have anything against French itself. As a language spoken in France, it's fine. It's just that I really, really, like English. So much so that I find every other language repugnant in the extreme. *smarmily* Parlez-vous francais? No, you impolite, chain smoking, poutine-eating bastard! *pounds fist on armrest.* Ow! What do they make these things out of?

**LUCRECE:** *smart alecky* I guess that poses a bit of a problem, living in a bilingual country and all.

**CLAUDE:** You're damn straight it does. Do you have any idea how miserable it is to wake up in the morning to be told how many ma-ti-airs grasses are in your honey nut cheerios?

**LUCRECE:** Well, *firstly* not that thus ought to make any difference, but my mother happens to be quebecois. And, *secondly*, I would NEVER allow a substance as chock full of artificial ingredients as Cheerios into my system. I make my own granola.

*SFX of plane taking off. Passengers tilt back slightly in seats, then level off after about a minute. conversation continues*

**CLAUDE:** You make you own granola? What are you? Some kind of hippie?

**LUCRECE:** What? Are you against hippies, too?

**CLAUDE:** Well, now that you bring it up...

**LUCRECE:** *You were the one who...*

**CLAUDE:** *ignoring her, continuing* they always have pissed me off. Kinda airy-fairy and self-righteous.

**LUCRECE:** *in disgust* You have got to be the most narrow-minded...

**CLAUDE:** So, answer the question. Are you a hippie?

**LUCRECE:** *primly* I do not believe in ascribing myself to stereotyped titles or definitions.

**CLAUDE:** So even you won't admit to being a hippie.

**LUCRECE:** Oh, give me a break. *rearranges more stuff, CLAUDE attempts once more to reclaim territory. same scene as above ensues. LUCRECE puts on headphones, turns away to look out window. CLAUDE shakes head, reopens book. FLIGHT ATTENDANT passes through aisle, handing out headsets. Stops at CLAUDE and LUCRECE's row.*

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** Would you like a headset?

**CLAUDE:** *taking one* Thank you.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** And you, ma'am?

**LUCRECE:** *gesturing to headphones on head* Oh, I've already got,

thanks. *FLIGHT ATTENDANT starts to leave* Oh, but there is one thing...

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Yes?

LUCRECE: Well, there is a distinct lack of space in this seat, I find. *shifts uncomfortably amongst chachkes*

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Yes, well...

LUCRECE: And I couldn't help but notice on my way in that the executive cabin is half empty...

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: I'm sorry, ma'am, but it's against our policy to....

LUCRECE: You see, I have this upgrade pass *fishes piece of paper out of bag, waves it in front of FLIGHT ATTENDANT* from a while back that I thought I could use to, you know. Get upgraded.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: I really am sorry, ma'am, but it's against our policy to upgrade passengers mid-flight.

LUCRECE: I don't see what the problem is. I have the pass. I'd like the



upgrade, please.

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** I apologize, but it really is beyond my jurisdiction...*moving on to next row*

**LUCRECE:** *high-pitched, mosquito voice* "It's beyond my jurisdiction".  
What a fucking bureaucracy!

**CLAUDE:** Why did you make such a big fuss? She was just doing her job.

**LUCRECE:** That's the thing! People are so damn focused on sticking to their job description...

**CLAUDE:** Well, what did you expect her to do? Change the whole...

**LUCRECE:** She didn't even *try* to get me an upgrade.

**CLAUDE:** What's so special about getting into first class anyway?

**LUCRECE:** They get treated SO much better. Plus I need the extra space.

**CLAUDE:** Why? So you can do some more interior decorating of your

seat? I mean, why don't you call in a renovation service while you're at it? *Get a swimming pool installed?*

**LUCRECE:** It is *not* interior decorating. It is feng shui. And it's the principle of the thing. I deserve better than this. *gestures to cramped area in distaste.*

**CLAUDE:** What you are is spoiled. You don't deserve any better than the rest of us.

*LUCRECE's face turns to one of pure venom. We can see that she is making a decision. Saying nothing, she turns back to her music. CHRISTOPHER rises, puts down newspaper, and walks down aisle towards back of plane, passing CLAUDE and LUCRECE's row. LUCRECE happens to look up just as he is passing by. Gasps, starts to panic, periodically peeks nervously over back of seat.*

**LUCRECE:** Holy shit!

**CLAUDE:** What?

**LUCRECE:** Did you see that guy?

**CLAUDE:** Who?

**LUCRECE:** The one that just passed. In the hat.

**CLAUDE:** No. Why? You know him?

**LUCRECE:** *head in hands* I cannot believe this is happening.....

**CLAUDE:** What? What's happening? Did I miss something here? Who was that guy?

**LUCRECE:** Cornelius Marsden!

**CLAUDE:** Should I know him?

**LUCRECE:** He's the warden from Scarborough Pen.

**CLAUDE:** The maximum-security juvie hall?

**LUCRECE:** The only one in the country.

**CLAUDE:** So you're a juvenile delinquent?

**LUCRECE:** What did I say about the labels? Duck! *ducks under seat, pulls CLAUDE down with her. CHRISTOPHER walks past, sits in seat, takes out newspaper.* Oh, God, how could I be so stupid?

CLAUDE: *getting up back into seat* You don't look like a delinquent.

LUCRECE: I'm not a delinquent! I just don't believe in keeping innocent helpless animals in cages!

CLAUDE: So what did you do? Ransack a zoo?

LUCRECE: Not successfully. I was busted trying to pick the lock on the reptile cage.

CLAUDE: You were *what*?

LUCRECE: That was after two successful pet store raids. But those were just small potatoes.

CLAUDE: *sarcastically* Oh, of course.

LUCRECE: They were going to let me off with three months in a correction centre, but then when they saw the bite marks on the guard's hands....

CLAUDE: You *bit* the prison guard?

LUCRECE: I react violently to being manhandled. It was self defense. And it got me five years in Scarborough.

**CLAUDE:** I cannot believe I'm sitting next to a teenage convict.....

**LUCRECE:** Shhhhhh! Shut up! He'll hear you! *looks around frantically*  
I need to get off this plane!

**CLAUDE:** How did you get on in the first place? I thought that facility had the tightest security imaginable.

**LUCRECE:** Oh, believe me, it does. It took me months of saving up the stale bread they fed us to fashion a cudgel which I used to beat the guard senseless. After that it was just a matter of stealing the key to my cell, bribing the custodian with rancid pot, and then sneaking out with the laundry.

**CLAUDE:** Sounds like a cinch.

**LUCRECE:** The hardest part was going through the washing machine.

**CLAUDE:** Was it really all that terrible there? I hear those places are pretty humane, as correctional institutions go.

**LUCRECE:** Humane? Yeah, maybe, if you enjoy waking up at ungodly hours to run around a gravel track, hard labour, crappy, nutritionally unbalanced food that is probably genetically modified out of its mind....

**CLAUDE:** Since when does food have a mind?

**LUCRECE:** I was speaking metaphorically

**CLAUDE:** Well, you should have made that clearer.

**LUCRECE:** What do you want me to do? Warn you every time I use a figure of speech?

**CLAUDE:** That would be helpful.

**LUCRECE:** You are pathetic. *she turns away, starts to futz with stuff, taking all carefully arranged items, replacing them in bag.*

**CLAUDE:** So what are you going to do now?

**LUCRECE:** I have to get off this plane. I've been missing for three days now. There's probably an all-points bulletin out by now.

**CLAUDE:** I hate to burst your anti-establishment bubble, but breaking and entering a few pet stores doesn't make you the unabomber. You probably wouldn't even make it onto the Axis of Evil.

**LUCRECE:** Whatever. There's no way I'm going back to that hellhole.

**CLAUDE:** *Whatever you say. returns to book.*

**LUCRECE:** *incredulous* Well, aren't you going to help me?

**CLAUDE:** *spluttering* Help you? HELP YOU? You're an underaged menace to society! A granola-eating, selfish, spoiled, snake-loving hoodlum! I ought to turn you in right now and send you back to juvie where you belong! *starts to get up*

**LUCRECE:** *panicking* No! *pulls him down, holds him in seat w/ both hands* You can't!

**CLAUDE:** *taken aback, obviously unused to human contact. resolve shaken slightly* What do you mean I can't? I am perfectly capable...

**LUCRECE:** You wouldn't!

**CLAUDE:** Oh, wouldn't I?

**LUCRECE:** *arms around him, breaking down melodramatically* Don't send me back there, please, please, please....you don't know what it means to me.....I can't do it.....it's been so awful and lonely.....if I go back I'll just waste away and shrivel up and die....."my prime of youth is but a frost of cares, my feast of joy is but a dish of pain..."



**CLAUDE:** *amazedly whispering, continuing quote* ".....My crop of corn is but a field of tares, And all my good is but vain hope of gain."

**LUCRECE:** *looking deep into his eyes* "...The day is gone and I yet I saw no sun, And now I live, and now my life is done."

**CLAUDE:** *incredulous, still half whispering in awe* You know Chidiok Tichborne?*they start to lean in towards each other*

**LUCRECE:** Of course. He's only the most gifted writer in the history of the English language.

**CLAUDE:** And all this time, I thought I was the only person who knew that poem...

**LUCRECE:** I have it memorized. I keep a book of his poetry by my.... bed....*they start to go at it, oblivious of the outside world. at one point, one of them kicks the back of CHRISTOPHER's seat.*

**CHRISTOPHER:** *irritated* Hey, watch it, will you? Some of us are trying to enjoy our flight in peace! ***LUCRECE pulls back, sobering immediately***

**LUCRECE:** Oh, man. Ok. Think, think, think.

**CLAUDE:** *still kind of starry eyed* I won't let them get you.

**LUCRECE:** *turning desperately to CLAUDE* You have to help me get out of here!

**CLAUDE:** *at a loss* What do you want me to do? Fake a heart attack so they have to make an emergency landing and then you'll escape during the confusion?

**LUCRECE:** *surprised* That's actually not a bad idea.

**CLAUDE:** *also surprised, pleased* Thanks! *skeptical* But do you really think it would work?

**LUCRECE:** Don't see why not. You can fake a good heart attack, right?

**CLAUDE:** Ummm...I dunno. I never tried.

**LUCRECE:** Well, now's as good a time as any to hone your con-man skills.

**CLAUDE:** But what happens when they find out I don't really have a heart attack? Isn't this sort of thing punishable by law?

**LUCRECE**: Only if you get caught. Which you won't if you play the part well enough. Just hack and cough, and then go all stiff and glassy-eyed and stay like that for a while. Drooling helps. I've seen it done all the time on TV.

**CLAUDE**: I can't believe I'm actually doing this.....

**LUCRECE**: *clapping hands gleefully* It's foolproof! *Genius! glances at back of CHRISTOPHER'S seat, subdues eagerness. excited whisper* Hurry, though! Before that sadistic glorified truant officer decides to go to the can again!

**CLAUDE**: *Ok...here goes...starts to hack and cough, breaths laboriously. LUCRECE pushes button in ceiling/armrest. FLIGHT ATTENDANT enters irritatedly.*

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT**: When will you kids learn? Those buttons are not for playing with! You can have some wing pins after the beverage ser....*notices CLAUDE* Holy guacamole! What's that matter with him?

**LUCRECE**: I don't know! I think he's having a heart attack or something!

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT**: Aw, man! I know I should have read the

"dealing with emergencies" section of the manual! Is there a doctor on the plane?

**CHRISTOPHER:** *rising* Yes, I'm a doctor. What seems to be the problem?

**LUCRECE:** *writhing around in seat* Oh my God, DO something! He's gonna die!

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** *gesturing to now prostrate body of CLAUDE*  
It's this gentleman here.....

**LUCRECE:** I think he's having a heart attack! You have to help him!

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** *arms flailing, frantically trying to sit CLAUDE up, then set him down again in a flustered panic* I can't have someone die on my shift! It would ruin my perfect record! They'd drum me out of the sorority!

**CHRISTOPHER:** I don't have proper medical supplies on me. You'll have to tell the pilot to make an emergency landing in....where are we, exactly?

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** We're flying directly over Wakaw,

Saskatchewan. *LUCRECE* pauses in her panic to stifle a laugh And what, may I ask, is so damn hilarious about Wakaw, Saskatchewan? I'll have you know I was born there! Best ten years of my life. Riding tractors, hunting prairie dogs and drowning them in the lake....of course we had to stay indoors for six months a year.....

CHRISTOPHER: Look, fascinating as your hick-town childhood may be, can we just land this plane? This man needs serious medical attention!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: *huffily* Well, if you're going to be so pushy about it...

CHRISTOPHER: I'll need a stretcher, too.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: All right, all right. I'm going! *she exits.*

*CHRISTOPHER follows. CLAUDE unfreezes.*

CLAUDE: Ow! I'm cramping up in muscles I didn't even know I had!

LUCRECE: Relax! You're doing a great job!

INTERCOM: Attention, ladies and gentlemen. We will be experiencing a short delay as we will be forced to make an emergency landing in Wakaw, Saskatchewan due to a minor medical emergency. Remain in

your seats with your seatbelts fastened at all times. Please do not panic until told to do so by your crew.

**LUCRECE:** Quick! They're coming!

**CLAUDE:** I'm having second thoughts about this whole thing, Lucrece.

**LUCRECE:** *appealing* Please. Do it for me? *seeing him hesitant, she kisses him. he is stunned for a moment, then half regains his senses*

**CLAUDE:** I really don't think I can....

**LUCRECE:** It's too late to back out now! You could go to jail for a stunt like this! *pushes him down as others approach. CLAUDE freezes. FLIGHT ATTENDANT and CHRISTOPHER enter bearing stretcher. Oh, please hurry. I think he's weakening. Oh, the poor guy. They proceed to put CLAUDE on it.*

**CHRISTOPHER:** Hey, wasn't he in a different position before?

**FLIGHT ATTENDANT:** Meh.

**INTERCOM:** Mesdames et messieurs, nous allons avoir un

*petit.....CLAUDE'S eyes bug out, he stiffens furiously against bands binding him to stretcher but is powerless to do anything. SFX of plane landing. CHRISTOPHER and FLIGHT ATTENDANT pick up stretcher.*

CHRISTOPHER: Ups a daisy!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Ugh! Like a carload of bricks! *they start to carry him off. addressing other passengers* Ok, people, clear out. Nothing to see here. *CLAUDE'S face is visible to audience, watching LUCRECE, who is not moving. His expression turns from expectancy to disbelief to anger as he is taken away, bound to the stretcher.*

LUCRECE: I hope you can do something for that poor guy. Looks like he's in awful shape.

CHRISTOPHER: Don't worry, ma'am. He'll be just fine once we're finished with him. *they exit. LUCRECE raises armrest between seats. makes self comfortable, lifts up legs onto seat, spreads out w/ CLAUDE'S book and pillow. Puts on headphones.*

LUCRECE: Heheh. Sucker. *starts to read. Lights down.*



# Top Five

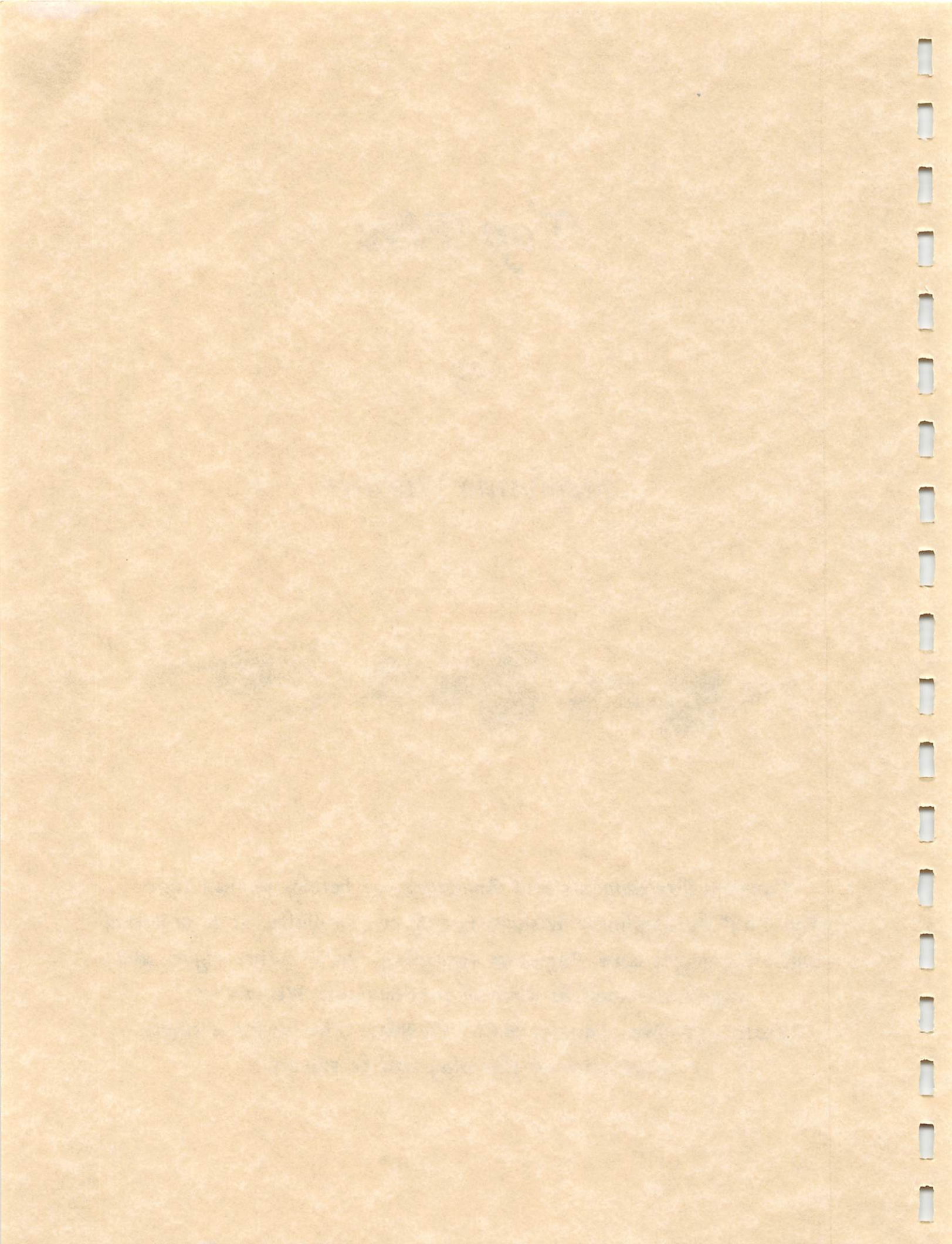
by

Stephanie Wishart



*Caution: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that "Top Five" by Stephanie Wishart is subject to royalty. It is protected under Copyright Law. Inquiries regarding performance rights and royalties should be directed to: Stephanie Wishart at 21010 45A Ave., Langley B.C. V3A 8M2. The fee for a single production of this play will be \$20.00.*





## TOP FIVE

**Setting** Present time in a local low-budget video store.

**Characters** 7 males, 2 females.

**Chet** Disgruntled, non-romantic, pathetic 21 year old video store clerk in search for a compatible other.

**Benny** A stubborn, pig-headed low-life; who takes pride in his annoying habits. And who has nothing better to do.

**Carl** A confused, bothersome customer.

**Sexy Girl** There to distract Benny.

**Rebecca** An up-front woman who is Chet's present love interest; not easily persuaded.

**Robber** A sad, confused delinquent desperate for money.

**Stoners** A bunch (3) of hooligans.

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

*(Lights come up. Chet walks in video store with backpack. Places bag on counter puts on c.d. Dances around)*

Chet *(Dirty Dancing theme song - time of my life)* Ahhh yes ...brings back memories. It was in high school grade ten, me and this girl I believe her name was ...Cherry or so she told me I think her real name was Charlene, we always had to hide our relationship. She was daddy's girl and I guess you could say I was a rebel. I enjoyed the relationship the whole two weeks we went out. It takes third place in my top five relationships for these three reasons she was hot, it was risky and oh I got play. *(Goes back to player turns it up louder and starts mimicking dance. Benny walks in on him)*

Benny *(Notices dancing and slides in on his knees. Chet turns off music)* Chet what are you doing we were just getting to the finale where's my big jump Johnny? *(laughs at own joke)*

Chet Shut up man. Don't you have anything better to do than come here everyday?

Benny I'm hoping one day you'll pay me.

Chet Dream on.

Benny Whatever, you can't get enough of me.. Ooo yeah you like it. *(touching himself)*

Chet That's it, you are so sick.

Benny OOOO THERE SHE IS! *(Looking outside window)*

Chet What, who, where?

Benny It's your lover girl. She's pulling up right now.

Chet Oh man. *(starts fixing hair smelling arm pits)*

- Benny I'LL GO BLOCK THE SLOT.
- Chet No you idiot that's a little obvious.
- Benny TOO LATE (*he stands in front of slot so she comes in, Chet seems as though he's in a trance*)
- Rebecca Uh what seems to be the matter with your slot? (*looking at Chet he doesn't even answer.*)
- Benny OH yeah umm people have been jamming it lately with ...books and such..yes books cuz we rent books sometimes yes ...those punks. (*shaking his fist*)
- Rebecca All right well good luck with that. (*she glances at CHET still in trance*) Is he ok?
- Benny Oh, he just hasn't had his coffee yet. You know how those caffeine freaks are.
- Rebecca Yeah. See you guys later (*gives a little wave and exits*).
- Benny (*Goes over and slaps Chet across the face.*) DUDE what did you just do?
- Chet (*rubbing face gives a delayed OW!*) I don't know, bugger off.
- Benny So explain to me why exactly you don't talk to her.
- Chet I can't, I feel like if I talk nothing will come out except mow whom bop like the Charlie Brown teacher you know.
- Benny You have to do something about it. You have liked her since grade one and you can't get the nerve to say anything. Quit playing Ducky from Pretty in Pink and ask her out. What are you, Silverman? At least she doesn't have a dog-faced brother that was down right freaky.

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

- Chet HELLO you have quite the obsession yourself with that other girl.
- Benny HEY don't bring her up that's totally different. I'm going to eat, you're making me upset and if you know who (*winks*) walks in stall her 'til I get back.
- Chet Yeah like I'll do anything for you.
- Benny WHAT'S THAT?
- Chet Sure thing Benny have no worries now go stuff your face with greasy fat burgers.
- Benny Now that's what I'm talking about. (*and leaves*)
- Chet So now you know. Yup grade one. We had this dress up thing for lunch where we would all wear our parent's fancy clothes and get partnered up with someone in our class to take out to "dinner" and she was my lucky date. (*picks up a video*) She's got eyes like Betty Davis and lips like Anjelina Jolie. But of course in grade one I didn't really notice those things but we grew up together. I had to watch her go out with every popular good for nothing guy. It killed me, still does. I've seen her laugh, I've seen her cry when a boy would break her heart. I want her so badly but she dangles me like Segourney Weaver does to Bill Murray in Ghostbusters or she's like that Mary all those guys could never get. She used to tell on me for cutting her ponytail off when I was seated behind her, or tripping her and breaking her leg in two spots and uh oh yeah telling everybody she had the worst case of contagious lice so no one would be her friend. All of this is true but make a list of all the things you've ever done to your loved ones.. Who's mean now? (*Customer enters*)
- Chet Hello Carl.
- Carl Yes, yes hello. (*walks around a bit*)

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

Chet           *(looks at audience)* He's a regular.

Carl           *(walks up to Chet)* Do you have One Flew Over Cuckoos Nest the sequel?

Chat           No.

Carl           How about Jaws 9? I've heard great things.

Chet           Uh no.

Carl           What about that one where they're on the bus.

Chet           Speed.

Carl           And they have to keep under a certain speed limit .

Chet           Speed.

Carl           Oh jeez it's on the tip of my tongue...Sandra something's in it .

Chet           Speed.

Carl           Racer, yeah that's it you got that?

Chet           No but we've got Speed.

Carl           Alright, I guess I'll take that one. *(gives money and walks away)*  
What time does it have to be back?

Chet           Tomorrow at six o' clock like everyday Carl.

Carl           Right. *(Exits)*

Chet           You'd think he'd know by now. *(Benny re-enters)*

Benny          Did she come? Did she come?

Chet           Yah she did.



## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

Benny        No No . Oh God NO! Today was the day I was finally going to speak my first sweet words to her ...*(whispers softly and gazing into oblivion)* I love you.

Chet         You would have really said that to her?

Benny        Yes I told you today was the day.

Chet         Well good if she comes in you can tell her that.

Benny        Maybe I will...wait I thought... HEY! Don't play tricks with me today's not the day!

Chet         I thought you said it was. Now you gotta do it. *(Just by coincidence Benny's goddess walks in- cue music and hair blowing effect. She lip syncs the first minute or two of the song seductively to Benny likes he's in a dream. Music is cut off by the five dollars hitting the table)*

Benny        *(pulls five dollars out of his pockets, slams it on the table)* Five bucks says she's mine...tonight, making sweet love down by the fire.

Chet         *(pulls out ten)* Ten, you're on. *(Shoves Benny a tad)*

Benny        Don't touch me *(brushes "cooties" off his shoulder)*

*(Benny walks in direction of sexy girl and pretends to be arranging movies, she glances at him and walks away, as Benny attempts to catch up, he falls to the ground and quickly jumps up. )*

Benny        Working, working. Yeah I'm working...arranging movies. That's my job.

Sexy Girl    Oh you work here?

Benny        I sure do baby, what can I do you for?

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

Sexy Girl Uuuuhhhh... yeah? What's that new Freddy Prinze Jr. movie called?

Benny *(disgusted face)* WHY?

Sexy Girl Well, let's just say I'm in love.

Benny I don't know where the hell that is... I don't work here. *(He walks back to the counter with a disappointed look)*

Sexy Girl Bye guys! *(Walks out of the store without a movie)*

Benny *(under his breath)* Eh, nice to meet you \*cough.

Chet *(grinningly states and waves with fifteen dollars in his hand)*  
Hey thanks, see ya later.

Benny Well that was depressing, I'm going to go eat. I've got a hidden stash in the bathroom.

Chet Alright.

*(Benny exits you hear a movie being dropped off in the slot.  
Chet walks over to pick it up)*

Chet Well I guess now's a good time to tell you who took number five in my top five relationships. Now this might sound odd but this particular relationship follows the same guidelines as Hannibal Lecter and Clarice Starling's relationship. It was summer going into grade 9. I don't know where they came from but girls started popping up everywhere. Don't get me wrong I liked it. They were growing ( *puts motions up to his chest* ) Well you know.. and I wanted some of that. Alison Stokes was her name. She was nice, very pretty, smoothest skin .. wait let me explain. We went out, give or take a month. One problem... the absolutely no touching allowed. This is where I feel like Hannibal Lecter. It was almost like she was scared of me. Whatever, it was only grade nine. But she it made into the top five for these three reasons: she was a damn good tease I'll give her that, other than the no touching I enjoyed her company, and like I said she had very smooth skin. (*Carl re-enters.*) Hello again.

Carl Yes, yes. Hello. ( *Walks up to counter with his video.*) So I took this (*looks at label*) Speed movie home popped it in the VCR and it seems I have already seen it . So I'm just going to look around and pick out another. (*Walks towards movie racks.*)

Chet Sure thing Carl.

Carl (*Brings up a movie.*) Hey um (*pointing to the box*) so is this guy the dad?

Chet I don't know I haven't seen it.

Carl Ah I see. So does he get killed?

Chet Don't know man haven't seen it.

Carl Ok I'll go pick a different one.( *Walks away comes back with a DVD.*) What's this?

Chet A DVD.

- Carl Is it good?
- Chet Um yeah I guess.
- Carl Ok I'll get it. I've never heard of DVD before (*hands him money*).
- Benny (*Benny re- enters holding a well prepared heaping sandwich*)  
Hey Carl my good man.
- Carl Oh hey.. Kenny.
- Benny That's Benny, you better start learning I might be working here soon eh Chet.
- Chet No, no you won't. Don't worry Carl it won't happen. Fifty cents your change and due back tomorrow at six.
- Chet Yes. Bye. (*and exits*)
- Benny (*Taking bites with it falling out everywhere. With his mouth full.*) Why are you giving me that look? I told you I had a stash.
- Chet None of that better be rotting in there.
- Benny Oh don't worry whatever I don't eat the mice get.
- Chet There's mice in there!
- Benny Did I say mice I meant you look nice?! Chet don't be mad. I'll get them out of there by tomorrow.
- Chet You better!
- Benny Dude what is your problem? I smell a dead bug and its coming from your aaa...
- Chet Hey will you shutup man!

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

- Benny        Come on let it out Chet. It's that girl isn't it? Jeez I got over my girl fast enough maybe you should try.
- Chet         I CAN'T! She's all I think about night and day other than my obsession with Buffy the Vampire Slayer.
- Benny        She's a hotty.
- Chet         Yes she is. But let me finish. There's so much I wish I could reveal to her. I even have a song! A freaken song Benny how sad is that?
- Benny        Are you serious? You have a song. Let me hear it.
- Chet         Why so you can laugh at me?
- Benny        No..(*lookin suspicious*) maybe I can help you. You can do it!
- Chet         Alright I trust you, as crazy as that sounds. (*Pulls guitar out from behind desk*)  
                We've known each other for quite sometime now and loved each other in many different ways. But still there's still one thing left undone.  
                Let me walk you to school today.  
                Let me walk with you everyday.  
                I'll hide behind your locker door,  
                and do what seems to come natural.  
                La la la. I never thought it could be like this.  
                Baby , in love let's kiss. (*Smooch noise*).  
                Let me come over to your house today.  
                Let me come over everyday.  
                Grab your favorite book and read your favorite part,  
                and I'll lay my head upon your lap.  
                Just because we're in love doesn't mean that it can't be fun. I never thought it could be like this. ...(*cut off*)

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

Benny STOP! That....it had.....ok ....it sucked. I'm sorry. You've got to come up with better than that. You gotta think romance.

Chet Don't you think I was trying.

Benny Come on think like the movies. Give me one of your top fives. Ok here we go top five best serenades.

Chet Alright I can do this. Number Five 10 Things I Hate About You, its too cheezy that's why it takes Number Five. Number Four..ok...Scream 2 you know it takes place in a cafeteria I could do better than that. Number Three as ridiculous as this sounds Nicolas Cage did an astounding number by The Delfonics in Family man. Number Two, the good ol' get drunk and sing outside your ex's window; Ben Foster in "Get Over It". And I'd say that Number One serenade in a movie would be Adam Sandler's in Wedding Singer no one beats the originality of his song. He's a good man.

Benny Ok there you go take some notes off those guys and you'll come out with the next Moulin Rouge.

Chet Alright maybe I'll do that thanks Benny.

*(Three male customers enter "Stoner Boys" wearing sunglasses, with a trace of smoke following in with them. Cue music for thirty seconds as the stoners glance around to their mysterious surroundings.)*

Stoner # 1 *(Directing other boys where to go)* Ok we've gone over this several times. You go to comedy, you go to the slasher / horror section make sure to get the really cheezy ones like "Slumber Party Massacre" and I'm going in for "Operation Nudy."

Stoner #2 Wait what was the plan?

Stoner #3 Yea I didn't quite get that.

Stoner #1 JUST GO!!

*(They all go their separate ways, while Stoner Boy #1 makes a lead to the back of the store headed for the "adult room")*

- Benny *(stops Stoner #1)* And where do you think your headed...?  
Hmmm?
- Stoner # 1 Nowhere I was just gonna ask you .. uh.. is .. that movie in yet.
- Chet Which movie is that?
- Stoner #1 Uh ..I don't know. *( Quickly other two boys pile movie into his arms.)* We will take these.
- Stoner #2 Dude you promised munchies!
- Stoner #1 *(Grabs the whole box of chocolate bars.)* And we'll take this.
- Chet Ok so that's: "Half Baked", "Dazed and Confused", "Cheech and Chong Up in Smoke", "Sorority House Massacre."
- Benny Very Nice.
- Chet "Return To Horror High", "High Fidelity" hmm never heard if that one. And "The Horse Whisperer."
- Stoner #1 Wait that's totally not ours.
- Stoner #3 Oh oops yeah it is. *(looking embarrassed)*
- Stoner #1 Ok what will this all cost us?
- Chet That comes to a whopping thirty - five dollars and sixty cents.
- Stoner #1 *(Puts his hand out for him friends to give him the money)* Ok guys you heard the man.
- Stoner #2 What I don't have it.



## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

Stoner #3 Me either dude.

Stoner #1 Well where did all....ohhhh right.

Stoner #2 Yea man we already spent it.

Stoner #1 Right. Well we can't pay for this so ....we will just go.

Stoner #2 Check ya later.

Stoner #3 (*knocks over cardboard statue on his way out.*)

Benny Well I just got another craving. Give me back that five bucks I gave you, it's Taco Tuesday across the street.

Chet No, I won that fair and square.

Benny Well then, what if I attempt to win it back.

Chet Sure why not?

Benny Ok ..rock, paper, scissors.

Chet You're on. (*Puts the money down on the counter then proceeds to a game. Chet puts out paper and Benny gives an explosive.*)

Benny I win.

Chet What no you don't. I hate people who do that its not rock, paper, scissors, and explosive. You do not win.

Benny Oh yeah! Well! (*Snatches the money off the counter and runs away yelling...*) SUCKER!

Chet Meh. All right lets get this over with. Grade eleven. I call this a relationship because she was there for me. At least I hope it was a she. Like "You've Got Mail" I fell in love over the Internet except I imagined her way hotter than Meg Ryan. She was there for me when I'd come home with stupid problems. We were so right for each other, same interests in everything. We stopped talking to each other in the risk of it getting too personal. She takes fourth place in my top five relationships for these three reasons: I could talk to her while watching TV, eating a sandwich, and listening to music; we never argued over who's gonna pay, and the fact her favourite movie was the same as mine. Ferris Beuller's Day Off. As for Number Two in my top five relationships this one was interesting. Sarah Vorhees. We had our huge differences. We were like opposites..like Batman and Catwoman .. at school. But behind closed doors we were as passionate as Bruce Wayne and Celina Kyle. She takes second place because hmm .. she was erotic, she was my first , and she had quick reflexes. *(He arranges some movies, then once again she arrives.)* Oh my it's her! Her! *( He catches contact with her)* Hello.

Rebecca Hello.

Chet *(To himself.)* I said hello. I can do this no worries. Do you think I should do it? Good answer. *(takes a big deep breath, walks over and taps her on the shoulder.)* Do you need help with anything?

Rebecca Um.. no but thanks.

Chet *(looks at audience and mouths CRAP!)* Oh ok. *(walks away but then turns back)* You know you look very familiar. Are you Rebecca? Rebecca Myers.

Rebecca Yes. Yes I'm sorry have we met?

Chet Yeah we went to school together.

**TOP FIVE**

**Stephanie Wishart**

- Rebecca Oh jeez! I'm so sorry I don't remember you at all. Your name..
- Chet It's Chet .. Chet Bennington
- Rebecca Oh my God! *(As she's talking she takes off scarf and puts, it on the counter.)* Chet Bennington. Oh I remember you, how could I forget. I hated you.
- Chet Uh..pardon.
- Rebecca Yah you're Chet. The Chet that tormented me and made me cry all the time at school, you are an awful person.
- Chet Let me explain, see I had this huge crush on you.
- Rebecca I don't care. I don't think you realized the damage you were doing. I shouldn't even be giving you the time of day. I'm out of here.
- Chet Wait ...*(but she's already left)* I wrote a song for you. *(Picks up the scarf she left, smells it, walks over to counter and pulls out a brown paper bag containing a bottle and some booze , as well as a cigarette. Takes a puff and a swig.)* Rebecca Myers  
Number One on my top five relationships for one reason and one good reason only, I can't have her. In the words of Forrest Gump, " life is like a box of chocolates you never know what your gonna get." *( Chet put his head down on the counter in his arms. A man walks in and pulls on a mask and pretends to use his hand as a gun in his pocket, walks up to counter.)*
- Robber Hey you! Give me your money.
- Chet *(Raises head.)* You've got to be kidding me.
- Robber No, why would I be kidding? Do I look like I'm kidding?  
*(Rebecca re - enters.)*
- Rebecca Don't think I came back to let..*( Robber turns around)* .. oh boy.

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

- Robber Oh no. Ok you (*pointing "gun" at Rebecca*) over there, and you (*pointing it at Chet*) go lock that door. (*Chet goes and does it.*) Ok this was supposed to be fast and easy now give me the money.
- Rebecca What, have you not done this before?
- Chet Rebecca what are you doing?
- Rebecca (*While Robber's not looking she gives Chet the cue to shh.*)
- Robber What are you talking about? Of course I have.
- Rebecca Well, I don't know. You seem new at this. Your hand's kinda shaking in your pocket there.
- Robber What are you talking about this is a gun. A real gun so watch what you say. Now shutup sit down and you give me the money.
- Chet Yeah will do.
- Rebecca Now wait. How can we be sure that's a real gun?
- Robber I beg your pardon.
- Rebecca Well I have to assume it's not real. I haven't even seen it yet.
- Chet Look Rebecca maybe he's right, maybe you should shutup before we get killed.
- Rebecca Are you saying I'm an idiot. I know what I'm doing instead of giving in like a whimp.
- Chet I'm not a whimp, remember the time I kicked Joe Mendiceni's ass because he broke your heart.
- Rebecca I didn't know you did that.

TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

- Chet            Yeah well I did.
- Robber        Ok both of you shutup.
- Chet            Are you telling her to shutup? You better check yourself before you wreck yourself. (*Puts up fists*) I know moves like Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan. I've seen Rush Hour four times.
- Robber        What are you going to do, I've got a gun?
- Chet            I doubt that. (*Pushes Robber, his hand gets knocked out of his pocket. Rebecca and Chet gasp.*)
- Robber        YOU RUINED IT! Why? Why couldn't you just give me the money? (*Drops to the floor and takes off mask and starts crying.*)
- Rebecca      Now look what you've done.
- Chet            Excuse me?!
- Rebecca      He obviously has some problems. Help him out.
- Chet            He just tried to rob me, are you crazy? (*Rebecca gives him a pouty face.*) Dammit! (*he walks up to the guy and taps him on the shoulder*) Are you ok? (*The Robber cries louder.*)
- Rebecca      Move. (*walks up to the Robber. Pulls out Kleenex and starts wiping face*) Ok now you good?
- Robber        A little.
- Rebecca      First off, why did you do it?
- Robber        (*Sniffles*) Well I have this girlfriend see.
- Chet            Great there's your problem.
- Rebecca      Go on.

**Robber** Well her birthday is coming up and I love her so much I just wanted to get her something nice.

**Chet** Let me give you some advice. A gift is only a good thing when the giver has given thought to that gift. But when the gift the giver gives, gives grief then that gift should give the givee regrets. So you think about that and I'll let you go with no hassle. I'll pretend like this never happened.

**Robber** Thanks man!!

*(Chet unlocks door. Robber exits)*

**Rebecca** Well you handled that quite well.

**Chet** Oh thanks, but whatever it's easy I just repeated the dialogue from *Very Brady Sequel* because I've seen it so many times.

**Rebecca** Well still impressive. Say I haven't seen that movie maybe I should rent it.

**Chet** *(Walks to where movie is and hands it to her)* Here you go, take it for free.

**Rebecca** Thanks. Well why don't you watch it with me? Oh duh I guess you're working. *(Benny enters)*

**Benny** Oh sorry is I interrupting something?

**Chet** No. Actually. Hold on a sec Rebecca. *(Chet goes and pulls Benny to the side.)* Listen I need you to do me a favor.

**Benny** A favor eh? It's gonna cost you.

**Chet** Whatever. Ok, you know how to run everything here right?

**Benny** Of course. Are you saying what I think you're saying?

## TOP FIVE

Stephanie Wishart

- Chet            Unfortunately I am.
- Benny          Oh Billy!
- Chet            Shh! I just need you to watch it for a bit. This is the one time  
Benny don't screw it up. I trust you.
- Benny          (*In Godfather voice.*) You, my son. You can trust me.
- Chet            Alright. (*Hands him the keys.*) Don't forget to lock up.
- Benny          No worries.
- Chet            (*Walks back over to Rebecca*) I'll um take you up on that offer if  
you'd like.
- Rebecca        Yeah I'd like it. You know we could catch up on old times. Wait  
.. I didn't like old times.
- Chet            Well we can make new times.
- Rebecca        Ok let's go.
- Chet            One more sec. (*Goes over to counter and grabs the bottle of  
booze.*) Ok now we can go. (*They head towards door.*)
- Benny          Go get em tiger. (*They exit*) This is so sweet. (*Carl enters once  
more.*) Well hello there!
- Carl            What are you doing here?
- Benny          Your dreams have come true I work here now.
- Carl            We'll see about that. Well here answer me this wise guy. I  
rented this KGD.
- Benny          That's DVD sir.

**TOP FIVE**

**Stephanie Wishart**

Carl            Yes yes whatever and I don't think my VCR takes these round things. What are they called?

Benny          DVD's.

Carl            Yea those I mean.. blah blah

*(Fades out with them bickering.)*