



**Sample Pages from
Inanimate**

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INANIMATE

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT BY
Christian Kiley



Inanimate

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Cast of Characters

2W + 16 Either

ANI	WASHER
ALARM	CELL PHONE
COFFEE	WALL
TOASTER	DOOR
REFRIGERATOR	MONGOL #1/DINOSAUR #1
LAPTOP	MONGOL #2/DINOSAUR #2
INSPIRATIONAL POSTER	WINDOW
CLOSET	FAKE ROCK
DRYER	SARAH

Setting

Ani's house. The Present.

Production Notes

The world of the play is created almost entirely by the actors and their physicality. This allows the play to be produced almost anywhere.

You may elect to dress each character in a shirt that represents the inanimate object they are portraying. Starting with the same color and/or style of t-shirt for each character is an interesting thought since all of the inanimate objects are part of Ani's mind. Please feel free to use your own thoughts and ideas to create the design for each character. The costume design can be as simple as the name of each character printed on each shirt to three-dimensional designs. For example, Washer and Dryer can have plastic containers attached to their shirts with cloth in them to look like the windows that a washer and dryer often have. Closet can be holding hangers with items of clothing on them. The Mongols can be costumed in a variety of ways. This can include a cross between a nomad-warrior and a GQ model. When they return as dinosaurs you may elect to just use dinosaur head costume pieces (to help with the quick change.) Designing the costumes can be part of the character development process and can add a unique quality to your production that truly makes it your own.

Since it is Ani's mind that really brings these inanimate objects to life there is no need for real props.

Inanimate was produced by the Etiwanda High School (Etiwanda, CA) Theatre Department and premiered on April 10, 2014. The playwright would like to thank the cast for their dedication, talent, and contributions throughout the rehearsal process. A very special thank you to Bill and Ellen Kiley for their proofreading and editing assistance.

Ani: Kahlia Cadle
 Alarm: Winter Dias
 Coffee: Emily Aguilar
 Toaster: Naomi Contreras
 Refrigerator: Alexius Bruce
 Laptop: Isabelle Huynh
 Inspirational Poster: Savannah Knottingham
 Closet: Yvonne Mwazo
 Dryer: Ashley Garibay
 Washer: Ashlyn Barron
 Cell Phone: Aliyah Dumas
 Wall: Skylar Clowers
 Door: Christina Toumah
 Mongol #1/Dinosaur #1: Camrin Ware
 Mongol #2/Dinosaur #2: Ethan Abon
 Window: Bethanne Mauch
 Fake Rock: Milan Alsobrook
 Sarah: Alani Walker

Inanimate

“Not living or capable of life,
 not endowed with life or spirit,
 lacking consciousness or power of motion.
 An inanimate body.”
 (*Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary*)

The ensemble is standing in various positions around the stage. They represent the objects in the house. When the lights come up they are completely still. ANI is standing center stage with her eyes closed.

ALARM: Beep, beep, beep. Wake up, Sunshine. Beep, beep, beep.
Happy Monday morning, Ani.

ANI hits the snooze button.

ANI: Seven more minutes of sleep.

ALARM: You don't mean that. You will keep hitting me over and over and over. Alarm clock abuse! Alarm clock abuse!

ANI and ALARM tussle a bit before ANI accepts the fact that she must get up.

ANI: Okay, I'm getting up.

COFFEE: Brew, brew, brew. Your coffee is ready.

COFFEE hands a mug of coffee to ANI. This and all the other props can be mimed since they are all figments of ANI's imagination.

COFFEE: Sweet but not too sweet. Just the way you like it.

ANI: You always make me happy.

ALARM: You play favorites! I provide a valuable service for you.
Without me you would never wake up and drink coffee.

COFFEE: Are you saying she would sleep forever without your horrible beeping sound?

ALARM: You can just go buy a rooster and see how you like that.
Cockadoodledoo! Do you like that? Living in a barn? Because I'm done. I'm taking a vow of silence.

ALARM may elect to put tape over her/his mouth for the vow of silence.

TOASTER: (*tosses a Pop-Tart in the air*) Incoming! Blueberry Pop-Tart.

ANI catches it.

TOASTER and ANI: Perfect!

REFRIGERATOR: (*pretends to throw it like TOASTER did*) Chilled juice!

EVERYONE gasps. REFRIGERATOR hands the glass of juice to ANI.

REFRIGERATOR: I am a smart refrigerator, not some savage icebox.

LAPTOP: (*entering and rushing toward ANI*) You've got to watch this video. It's a talking kitten. A talking kitten! A kitten could rob a bank and it would be cute as long as it was wearing an itsy-bitsy little ski mask. Who's an itsy-bitsy bank robber with a teeny-weeny mask?

ANI watches and laughs.

ANI: A kitten could steal a purse from an old lady and it would be cute!

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: Dreaming is flying without wings. (*referring to her/his shirt which has an abstract design on it*) This is an abstract picture of flying that is supposed to inspire you to figuratively fly.

ANI: It looks like vomit.

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: Some of this is vomit. I get airsick sometimes.

CLOSET: (*handing ANI a scarf*) Ani, you may need this. It's going to be cold and windy today.

ANI: Weather report?

LAPTOP: Windy and cloudy with highs in the low fifties.

CLOSET: You never wear this anymore and it looks so cute on you.

LAPTOP: Jack-the-Ripper-kitten cute?

CLOSET: Kitten-awkwardly-on-ice-skates cute.

DRYER: Ding. Your clothes are ready.

ANI: Oh, good. Thank you, Dryer.

DRYER: You're very welcome, Ani.

WASHER: Hold up! You know that there are two of us here. Without me your clothes would be dry, but dirty and stinky. I wash the clothes and Dryer gets all the praise.

ANI: Sorry, Washer. I'll keep that in mind.

WASHER: I mean, without me you would have to find some stream or river to wash your clothes in.

DRYER: (*facing off with WASHER*) Take it easy, Washer!

WASHER: You take it easy, Dryer. You are just a glorified clothesline.
Which is basically a piece of string.

DRYER: What did you call me?

WASHER: String!

ANI: (*getting between WASHER and DRYER*) Stop arguing. You are a team. Both of you make my life better. Thank you *both*.

CELL PHONE: (*entering*) Reminder: You have a test today.

ANI: What's it on?

CELL PHONE: Texting Sarah to find out what the test is on.

COFFEE: More coffee?

ANI: Thank you.

TOASTER: Another Pop-Tart? Or perhaps you would like a toaster strudel instead?

REFRIGERATOR: More juice?

CELL PHONE: Sarah says the letter u, the letter r, an idiot. The Great Wall of China.

WALL: As a wall I feel I am an expert on this subject and am available to assist you.

LAPTOP: Obviously she will be using me. I have the entire cyber universe at my disposal. (*makes sound effects that indicate a search is taking place*) Starting search: The Great Wall of China.

CELL PHONE: Sarah says she got you a latte.

COFFEE: Are you cheating on me?

ANI: Occasionally I have a latte. Is that so wrong?

COFFEE: We have a regular morning thing. Maybe my carafe is not as clear and beautiful as it used to be but I still brew a mean cup of Joe.

ALARM CLOCK: (*ripping the tape off*) You are a coffee pot, not a carafe. A pot. It would be like me calling myself a time synchronization device.

COFFEE: What happened to your vow of silence?

ALARM: Some things have to be broken.

COFFEE: Don't you dare touch my carafe!

ALARM: I will shatter your pot into a million pieces!

ANI separates ALARM and COFFEE.

ANI: Stop it. Both of you are very important to me.

ALARM: Maybe if you listened to me once in a while.

COFFEE: And rinsed my pot...carafe out occasionally.

Two MONGOLS enter and stand outside DOOR.

DOOR: Knock, knock, knock.

ANI: Who is it?

DOOR: They say they are here to help you with your test on the Great Wall of China.

ANI: Who are they?

MONGOL #1: *(in an attempt to sound sweet)* We're here to help you with your test, Ani.

ANI: I don't think I should let you in.

MONGOL #2: *(also trying to sound sweet)* Of course you should let us in, sweetie. We want to tell you about the Great Wall of China.

ANI: No. Go away.

MONGOL #1: *(getting angry)* Open the door so we can help you get an A!

MONGOL #2: *(also getting angry)* And conquer your lands and use your resources to build our empire!

CLOSET: Do not let them in! They're not the sort of conquerors who know how to color coordinate or care for cashmere.

MONGOLS #1 and #2 act like they are selling a product in a commercial. The action here should be taken straight out toward the audience.

MONGOL #1: Hand wash.

MONGOL #2: Using baby shampoo.

MONGOL #1: Or a very mild detergent.

MONGOL #2: Gently press out excess water from the garment.

MONGOL #1: Do not squeeze or wring it out like a dishrag.

MONGOL #2: And above all else do not, and I repeat, do not dry it on a hanger.

MONGOL #1: You will get shoulder dimples.

MONGOL #2: And the garment will not retain its original shape.

CLOSET: (*impressed*) I stand corrected.

MONGOL #1: Also, my shoes match my belt.

MONGOL #2: That's a nice touch.

MONGOL #1: Thank you. You know GQ suggests that color coordination is a way of putting people at ease.

MONGOL #2: Well that's fabulous. I'm at ease with you.

MONGOL #1: And I'm at ease with you.

WINDOW: They do look civilized and color-coordinated.

ANI: Should we let them in?

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: Dreaming is flying without wings.

ANI: Out of context your random inspiration makes no sense.

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: You crushed my wings.

ANI: (*to the MONGOLS*) Sorry, I'm not going to let you in.

MONGOL #2: That is really unfair.

MONGOL #1: Simply because we have the reputation for being warlike conquerors who cause people to build walls to protect themselves from us is no reason to build walls to protect yourself from us.

WALL: That's right. You're not getting through me.

WALL blocks the MONGOLS from entering.

DOOR: Yes, that's what I'm for.

DOOR joins WALL to block the MONGOLS.

WINDOW: Or me.

WINDOW joins in the blockade as well.

DOOR: More me though.

WINDOW: In some cases a window entrance can be a wonderful change of pace. You ever heard of Romeo?

DOOR: Yeah, that was a balcony with double doors.

WINDOW: And I quote, “What light through yonder *window* break.”

DOOR: It’s not literal.

WINDOW: Oh, it’s literal.

WALL gets between them.

WALL: Hey, at least they don’t know about the key inside that fake plastic rock by the front door.

EVERYONE: (*turning and looking at WALL*) Wall!

DOOR: You’re as dumb as a fake plastic rock.

WALL: Thanks.

MONGOL #2: The key is in the fake plastic rock.

MONGOL #1: Which one is it?

FAKE ROCK: (*savoring the opportunity to finally speak*) Here I am!

MONGOL #2: It’s like you’re trying too hard to be a rock.

FAKE ROCK: I took acting classes at the Community Center.

MONGOL #1: Don’t give up. It takes time.

FAKE ROCK: Sometimes I practice by sitting around and doing nothing. My dream one day is to be the rock that King Arthur pulls Excalibur out of.

MONGOL #2: I don’t know how to tell you this. It’s a stone that King Arthur pulls Excalibur out of, not a rock.

FAKE ROCK: No! That’s an entirely different set of classes.

MONGOL #1: May we have the key please?

FAKE ROCK: Sure.

FAKE ROCK hands the key to MONGOL #1.

MONGOL #2: And for the record, I think you are a very good fake rock.

MONGOL #1: Yes, there is a certain authenticity to your fakeness.

FAKE ROCK: Well, back to work.

FAKE ROCK moves back into position.

MONGOL #2: Shall we invade?

MONGOL #1: I was hoping you would ask me that very question.
(to ANI) We are going to invade now in the most civilized way possible.

ANI: Is this going to help me study for my test?

MONGOL #2: Absolutely.

MONGOL #1 hands the key to DOOR.

DOOR: Ani, they're coming in.

WINDOW: I think coming in through the window would have made for a much more dramatic entrance.

MONGOL #1 and MONGOL #2 enter. As they enter WALL, DOOR, and WINDOW move back to their original positions and all of the INANIMATES cower in fear.

MONGOL #1: Do you have any coffee? Cream and sugar please.

MONGOL #2: And perhaps some breakfast pastry.

MONGOL #1: Cronuts are just divine.

MONGOL #2: The flakiness of a croissant mixed with the cake-like density of a donut. Scrumptious.

ANI: I am pretty sure this is not how the Mongols invaded anything!

MONGOL #1: Easy, Ani. Your cacophony is hurting my ears.

MONGOL #2: And your unhappiness is hurting my heart.

COFFEE: *(with warm hospitality)* Two coffees, cream and sugar.

ANI: Coffee, what are you doing?

COFFEE: Being hospitable to these very well-mannered marauders.

TOASTER: Toaster strudel. Not quite a cronut, but I have artificially sweetened icing.

MONGOL #1: Bravo, toaster!

MONGOL #2: Bravo indeed.

ANI: How did you toast those so quickly?

TOASTER: This same thing happened last week when the Vikings invaded.

ANI: Even my appliances are turning against me.

MONGOL #1 crosses to LAPTOP.

MONGOL #1: What is this wonderful futuristic contraption?

ANI: That is a laptop computer. You can find any information you want on there.

MONGOL #2: Oh Ani, he knows that's a computer. How do you think we got here? Google Maps.

ANI: This is not very helpful at all. And bordering on cruelty.

CELL PHONE: Sarah is on her way to pick you up for school.

ANI: I'm not even dressed yet.

MONGOL #1: Do you want us to hide in the bushes and prevent Sarah from seeing you? If you know what I mean.

ANI: No, I don't want you to kill my best friend.

MONGOL #2: Not kill her, you savage. Take her to Starbucks to give you extra time to get ready.

ANI: Oh.

MONGOL #1: I don't feel so good.

MONGOL #2: Nor do I.

COFFEE: I poisoned you.

ANI: Coffee!

MONGOL #1: (*dying*) Well played, Coffee. Well played.

MONGOL #2: (*dying*) For future poisonings you might want to make the coffee a little stronger. I tasted a slight hint of arsenic on that last sip.

ANI: You killed my tutors, Coffee.

COFFEE: You're welcome.

TOASTER: I did too! You beat me this time, Coffee. But there will be other warlike tutors to poison in the future.

ANI: No there won't.

MONGOL #1: Ani, remember that the Great Wall of China...

MONGOL #1 dies by falling on the ground in an overly dramatic display.

ANI: The Great Wall of China what?

MONGOL #2: It was built to...

MONGOL #2 dies in a similarly exaggerated fashion.

ANI: It was built to what? What?

ANI grabs COFFEE and shakes her.

ANI: Look what you've done! Look what you've done!

COFFEE: I thought this is what you wanted. I saved us. I saved you.

SARAH enters from the audience and approaches DOOR.

DOOR: Knock, knock, knock. Ani, Sarah is here.

SARAH enters the house. When she does all the INANIMATE OBJECTS become lifeless. The MONGOLS get up and hide behind CLOSET. When SARAH enters ANI is grabbing COFFEE and yelling at her/him. COFFEE is lifeless. ANI is too preoccupied to know that SARAH is there.

DOOR: Ani! Sarah is here. Knock, knock!

ANI: Look at what you've done! Look at what you've done!

SARAH: Ani, you're talking to your coffee.

ANI: *(letting go of COFFEE)* Oh. Hey, Sarah.

SARAH: Hey. Ready to go to school?

ANI: I don't feel good. I think I'll stay home today.

SARAH: You've missed a lot of school lately.

ANI: I know, okay?

SARAH: Easy. I'm just looking out for you.

ANI: By sending civilized well-dressed Mongols that were no help with studying for the test.

SARAH: What are you talking about? Are you all right?

ANI: Yes. Sorry. I'm just not sleeping very well.

SARAH: What can I do to help?

ANI: Just go to school. I'll work it out.

SARAH: Okay. But I'm worried about you.

ANI: Don't. It's just a phase. I'll grow out of it.

SARAH: I hope so, Ani.

ANI: Why? Because this is inconvenient for you? I'm not the best friend from the magazines with the perfect hair, and perfect skin, and perfect personality. Because I talk to my coffee pot?

SARAH: Because you seem unhappy. Miserable.

ANI: Well, maybe I like it that way. The blinds drawn and the lights turned down low.

SARAH: Maybe.

ANI: Just leave. I free you from your obligations to me.

COFFEE: Good, Ani. Good. You're better off on your own.

SARAH: These things you call obligations I call a friendship.

ANI: You're just like this stupid inspirational poster my parents hang up to try and remind me of what I'm capable of when I try.

SARAH and INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: Let me help you.

ANI: No! I don't like you at all.

ANI rips down the INSPIRATIONAL POSTER, which can be done by the actor playing INSPIRATIONAL POSTER falling to the ground when ANI moves toward her/him. SARAH exits.

ALARM: That was the right thing to do.

ANI: But she's my friend.

CLOSET: We're your real friends.

ALARM: We wake you up.

COFFEE: And keep you caffeinated.

TOASTER: We make your breakfast.

REFRIGERATOR: And keep your juice chilled.

LAPTOP: We show you cute kitten videos.

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: *(still on the ground)* And inspire you even when you try to destroy us.

CLOSET: We hide the bodies of dead Mongols...

COFFEE: We poison for you. I did that!

MONGOL #1 and #2 pop out from behind CLOSET and deliver their lines while exiting.

MONGOL #1: Very clever with the poisoned coffee.

MONGOL #2: Could hardly taste the poison at all.

DRYER: We make your clothes so Spring fresh and soft.

WASHER: And we clean those clothes otherwise they would smell like spring fresh body odor.

CELL PHONE: We're your lifeline to the outside world.

ANI: Sarah. I should text her and tell her I'm sorry.

CELL PHONE: No!

ANI moves toward CELL PHONE.

CELL PHONE: Don't touch me.

ANI: I just need to tell Sarah that I'm sorry.

CELL PHONE: No. You did the right thing.

ANI begins to chase CELL PHONE.

CELL PHONE: Keep your hands to yourself. Help!

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER gets up and stands in between ANI and CELL PHONE.

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: Dreaming is flying without wings.

ANI: Get out of my way, Poster.

INSPIRATIONAL POSTER: No.



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