



**Sample Pages from
Oddball**

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ODDBALL

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



Oddball

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Characters

5W+3M, expandable to 7M+20W+5 Either

One: Ballyhoo + all

Two: Guy with Ball, One (f), Two, Three(f), Four (f)

Three: Shannon

Four: Brandon, Linda, Larry, Sue, Bobo, Holly

Five: Lieutenant, Sergeant, Lemon

Six: Missy, Jackson, Deanne, Nicole (and Guy with Ball)

Seven: Blue(f), Red, Black(f), White(f), Orange(f), Yellow(f), Green

Eight: Monica, Brynn, Tisha, Zoe, Hailey

Nine: Guy with Ball, One (same as in Scene Two)

Ten: Ballyhoo + all (same as Scene One)

Set

A circus sideshow. It wouldn't be out of place to have a circus tent backdrop or cubes painted in bright primary colours. A table is needed for scene four, but all other scenes can be performed with cubes set stage right or left.

Costume

Black pants or jeans. Brightly circus-coloured t-shirts. There should be no major costume changes so that the play can move from scene to scene to scene without pause.

Blackouts

For the sake of pace, please do not use blackouts to transition from scene to scene. Use music and efficient blocking to move from one scene to the next.

Dedication

Oddball is dedicated to Debra Barnum and the inspiring thespians at Dixie M Hollins High School, St. Petersburg, FL.

Deb, this play wouldn't have existed without you.

One

Circus music plays. A spotlight comes up on BALLYHOO, standing on a cube. She calls out to the crowd, encouraging them forward as if standing outside a sideshow tent. As she speaks, the lights slowly fade up to reveal the rest of the cast standing in poses, or slowly entering to form a pose.

BALLYHOO: Step right up, step right up. Step inside for a show you've never seen before. Smell the cotton candy! Feel the excitement! Strain to hear the sounds of each and every act for this, this, is no show like any other.

She jumps off the cube and moves forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the other sideshow tents house freaks and abominations from all reaches of the world: The four-legged baby! The two-headed turtle! The Bearded Lady! We've none of that here. None. For your enjoyment, for you and you alone, inside this tent we offer the widest, the most sought-after, the most curious collection of... oddballs you'll ever find. Step inside to see LIVE acts of the slightly weird and the nearly harmless! Feast your eyes on the miracle of the MILDLY freakish! Prepare to oooh and aww at the curious, the quirky, the kooky and the LESS than strange. Step inside Ladies and Gentlemen, step in and SEE for yourself!

BALLYHOO sweeps her arm across the stage and the music changes to something upbeat. Everyone springs into action, dancing, moving into place, exiting. GUY WITH BALL and ONE are stage left, TWO, THREE and FOUR are frozen stage right.

TWO

GUY WITH BALL stands holding a small square. ONE walks up. She looks at the square.

ONE: What is that?

GUY WITH BALL: A ball.

ONE: It's square.

GUY WITH BALL: Yes.

ONE: So it's a box.

GUY WITH BALL: No.

ONE: Yes it is.

GUY WITH BALL: Nope.

ONE: So what is it?

GUY WITH BALL: It's a ball.

ONE: It looks like a box. (*poking it*) And it's not even rubber. You can't have a square non rubber ball.

GUY WITH BALL: Says who?

ONE: It won't bounce.

GUY WITH BALL: That's limited thinking.

ONE: Balls bounce.

GUY WITH BALL: Not necessarily.

ONE: Yes they do. That's exactly what they do.

GUY WITH BALL: Balls don't bounce. The floor pushes back. No bounce.

ONE: You're splitting hairs. Balls bounce and (*pointing*) that is not a ball.

GUY WITH BALL: It's a free spirit.

ONE: What?

GUY WITH BALL: This ball—

ONE: Box.

GUY WITH BALL: Is a free spirit.

ONE: In what way is that box—

GUY WITH BALL: Ball.

ONE: Anything close to a free spirit?

GUY WITH BALL: This ball thinks differently.

ONE: *(throwing her arms up)* Now it thinks.

GUY WITH BALL: *(holding up the square)* This ball is a nonconformist. This ball sees there is a world beyond bouncing; a world beyond the hectic chaos of up and down. There's more to see when you expand your vision in all directions. Up, down, left, right. The possibilities are endless.

ONE: You're... really... odd. And so's your ball. *(exits)*

GUY WITH BALL: *(calling out)* We take that as a compliment!

The focus shifts stage right. THREE places a crown of wires on FOUR. TWO fusses with a small box, to which the crown is attached by wires. GUY WITH BALL crosses to watch.

THREE: Steady now, steady. There!

TWO: *(fussing with the box)* Everything looks good to go. *(looking up)* It looks good.

THREE: It looks really good. Hi five!

TWO and THREE hi five.

GUY WITH BALL: What is that?

THREE: *(turning)* What?

GUY WITH BALL: *(pointing at the wires)* That.

THREE: That is something very special. That is the future.

GUY WITH BALL: No kidding?

THREE: That is... *(pausing for effect)* A normalcy meter.

TWO and THREE pose.

GUY WITH BALL: There's a machine for that?

TWO: It's a prototype.

THREE: This machine lets Ramona here,

FOUR: Hello!

THREE: (*poking FOUR*) Know when she's not acting normally.

TWO: (*poking FOUR*) When she strays from the centre.

THREE: When she gets a little odd.

GUY WITH BALL: No kidding.

THREE: It's magnificent.

TWO: Hi five!

TWO and THREE hi five.

GUY WITH BALL: Wow. So, why does Ramona,

FOUR: Hello!

GUY WITH BALL: Why does she want to be normal?

TWO and THREE laugh with each other.

TWO: Is he kidding?

THREE: He's got to be kidding.

TWO: (*to GUY*) Everyone wants to be normal.

THREE: Normal is where it's at.

TWO: Besides, if we can get this to work, we'll be rich.

THREE: Filthy stinking. Right, Mona?

FOUR: Hello!

GUY WITH BALL: It looks a little... involved.

THREE: (*a little irritated*) It has to be.

TWO: (*a little irritated*) It's a prototype.

THREE: How will we stamp out Ramona's,

FOUR: Hello!

THREE: Idiosyncrasies? Pluck them out of thin air?

TWO and THREE laugh.

GUY WITH BALL: But why do you – (*changing thought*) actually, wait, Ramona?

FOUR: Hello!

GUY WITH BALL: Hi.

FOUR: Hello!

GUY WITH BALL: Why do you keep doing that?

FOUR: What?

GUY WITH BALL: You keep saying, (*imitating her*) “Hello!” How come?

FOUR: I –

She nods her head to side. She does it again. It's rather hard to do because of the wires. FOUR wants to speak to GUY WITH BALL privately, which of course is impossible because she's attached to the wires. She manages, with great difficulty, to take a careful step to the side. GUY WITH BALL moves to stand beside her. Of course, TWO and THREE listen in.

FOUR: (*whispering*) It's the only thing I can think of to say. If I just say, “Hello,” then the meter won't have any reason to go off!

GUY WITH BALL: (*whispering*) Why are you whispering? (*pointing to TWO and THREE*) They're right there.

TWO: (*with horror*) She's pretending to be normal!

THREE: Why didn't the meter go off? (*poking TWO*) What's the matter with it?

TWO: (*really irritated*) It's a prototype!

THREE: (*really irritated*) It should have gone off! (*pulling FOUR back to the chair*) Pretending to be normal is not normal at all!

Suddenly a very loud alarm goes off, causing everyone to throw their hands over their ears.

FOUR: AGH! Shut it off! Shut it off!

TWO fusses with the box and the alarm shuts off. TWO and THREE give a cheer, congratulating themselves. FOUR looks completely dazed.

THREE: It works!

FOUR: My ears...

TWO: Hi five!

TWO and THREE hi five each other.

GUY WITH BALL: Congratulations.

TWO and THREE look GUY WITH BALL as if for the first time, and see the square.

THREE: What is that?

GUY WITH BALL: A ball.

TWO: It's square.

GUY WITH BALL: Yes.

THREE: So it's a box.

GUY WITH BALL: No.

TWO: Yes it is.

GUY WITH BALL: Nope.

THREE: So what is it?

GUY WITH BALL: It's a ball.

TWO and THREE look at each other.

THREE: We have to get Ramona out of here.

FOUR: (*wobbly*) Hello...

TWO: It's just a prototype. The meter gets too close to THAT thing—

THREE: It could explode!

Music plays. TWO and THREE hurry FOUR off in one direction. GUY WITH BALL looks at the audience, shrugs and heads off in the other direction. On his way out, GUY WITH BALL passes SHANNON on her way in. He watches her for a second and then exits.

THREE

SHANNON runs on, breathing heavily. She gets centre stage and bends over, her hands on her knees, taking in as much air as she can.

SHANNON: Can't talk, can't have to, busy, busy, busy, busy. Breathe Shannon! *(she takes in a huge gulp of air)* No time to – *(she takes in another gulp of air)* I give blood at two. *(she takes in another gulp of air)* I'm supposed to sit something at five. *(and another)* I don't know what it is. *(finally she exhales, it takes a long time)* I don't. It could be a dog, or it could be a baby. I can't keep track anymore. The – *(she mimes holding a small object)* thing I am sitting is named Precious Jewel. Which is not helpful. You might think dog right away. But have you heard the latest baby names? Fifi Crimefighter? Trixie Belle Angel? Blue Moxie? No help at all!

SHANNON collapses onto a cube. She closes her eyes and massages her temples, trying to will the right answer into being.

Precious Jewel. Precious... Jewel. I seeeeeeee ahhhhhhhhh Dog? Baby? Dog baby? *(She makes a sound of frustration and disgust. She looks up at the audience.)* I have Twenty-Seven Jobs. Not real jobs. Odd Jobs. Twenty-Seven Odd Jobs.

She takes in a huge gulp of air and gallops through the list.

(fast, fast, fast) Artist, Model, Babysitter, Blood giver, Data Entry, Delivery Driver, Dog Walker, Errand Runner, Focus Groups, Grocery Shopper, Henna Tattoos, House Cleaner, House Sitter, Laundry Doer, Lawn Cutter, Mover/Packer, Movie Extra, Mystery Shopper, Organizer, Personal Assistant, Pet

Sitter, Present Wrapper, Sleep Study, Singing Telegrams, Tarots, Typist, Tutor.

She takes a long exhale but then gives a gasp as she sidetracks herself.

Wait a minute, wait! Hold it! *(she freezes, her mind clearly racing)*
I'm missing one.

She runs through the list again, counting off the jobs on her fingers.

Artist, Model, Babysitter, Blood Giver, Data Entry, Delivery Driver, Dog Walker, Errand Runner, Focus Groups, Grocery Shopper, Henna Tattoos, House Cleaner, House Sitter, Laundry Doer, Lawn Cutter, Mover/Packer, Movie Extra, Mystery Shopper, Organizer, Personal Assistant, Pet Sitter, Present Wrapper, Sleep Study, Singing Telegrams, Tarots, Typist, Tutor and... *(she seems suspended as she tries to think of the last job)*
Tarots, Typist, Tutor and... come on number twenty-seven...
Tarots, Typist, Tutor, and...

She knocks on her head. Nothing comes. She sighs.

My mother enquires frequently, very frequently, on a daily basis frequently – she really wants to know when I'm going to get a “real” job. One single solitary just like everybody else normal every day real job. “Shannon! I don't know what to tell the bridge ladies anymore. Nina Halberstam's son is in the government. She gets a spiral ham every Christmas. You're just as smart as Nina Halberstam's son. Get me a ham!”

I'm supposed to be a brain surgeon. I've thought about it. Wouldn't that just show those bridge ladies. *(she poses)*
Shannon the Surgeon. Doesn't that sound good? A brain surgeon is tons better than a spiral ham. Look at that. *(she holds out a palm)* Look! Rock. Steady. I could totally be a brain surgeon. I love brains! *(energetic)* There was this documentary we watched in the tenth grade? This guy, this construction worker had a nail go thunk in his head and they had to cut a chunk out of his skull. I'm the only one in the whole class who watched the whole thing and didn't upchuck Tuesday spaghetti all over the classroom. Well, except for Morgan Dweck. But he ate worms.

(she sits, her energy gone) How did this happen? One second I'm looking after the neighbour's kid and the next... It's an odd job avalanche. Where's my St. Bernard to dig me out? Here, boy. Where are you, boy? Come save me! Come tell me if Precious Jewel is a dog or a baby. Come with a Blackberry in the barrel around your neck so I don't need to use bristol board to map out my day millisecond by millisecond.

Susan says, my friend Susan, my ex-friend Susan, she says, this is all smoke. An odd job smoke screen. Poof! *(she snorts)* What does she know? She's so stupid. She wants to be a dental hygienist. A dental hygienist. A dental hygienist! What sane person on this planet or any other actually wants to look in people's mouths for a living? Have you seen what goes on in there? *(she shudders)* Stupid Susan says I need to cut lawns and clean houses and need to keep adding another and another dog slash babysitting job. One Precious Jewel on top of another. If I'm too busy doing odd jobs I can't fail at something I really want to do. *(pause)* Huh. What does she know? *(pause)* She's so stupid. Stupid teeth loving Susan. *(she laughs crazily)* I could give every one of these jobs up in a second, any second, in a heartbeat. I could so give it all up and go be a brain surgeon in a – *(she gets a brain wave)* Balloon animals! *(she thrusts her fists in the air in celebration)* Balloon animals! Balloon! Animals! Ah ha! That's it! That's it! Eureka!

She realizes she is totally overreacting. She calms down, slowly lowers her arms, clears her throat and sits. She speaks quietly.

Twenty-Seven. Job number... I do kids' Birthday parties. My speciality is the balloon poodle, which is more difficult that the plain old balloon dog. Everybody does that.

SHANNON stands slowly. She starts to exit. She turns back to the audience.

If you see my mom, could you tell her how much I want to be a brain surgeon? It'll make her feel better.

Music plays. SHANNON exits. Everyone else enters moving about the space, setting up the next scene. Once the scene is set, everyone exits.

FOUR

BRANDON sits. He's at a table in a restaurant. His waitress LINDA approaches.

LINDA: Anything else sir?

BRANDON: That's it for us. *(he pats his stomach)* I couldn't eat another bite.

LINDA: Did you enjoy everything?

BRANDON: Enjoy? I'm beyond enjoyment! That was a great meal. Fantastic.

LINDA: Thank you sir.

BRANDON: I'm serious! The lasagna was some of the best I've ever had.

LINDA: We're glad you enjoyed it.

BRANDON: That lasagna makes me glad to be alive!

LINDA: *(cheerfully)* It's very good lasagna.

BRANDON: It's fantastic! I feel so good, you know what I want to do?

LINDA: *(with a big smile)* What?

BRANDON: I want to compliment the chef.

LINDA: *(the smile vanishes)* What?

BRANDON: I want to compliment the chef.

LINDA: You don't.

BRANDON: I do. And I want to tell the manager how good you are. I want to compliment you, too. You are a marvellous waitress.

LINDA: *(as if this is horrible)* No!

BRANDON: The food was amazing and I've never had friendlier service!

LINDA: (*truly angry*) How dare you! (*calling out*) Larry! Get over here! Don't you move, bucko. You hear me? Don't you move a muscle. (*calling out*) Larry!

LARRY enters.

LARRY: Linda, why are you yelling across the restaurant? (*to BRANDON*) Is there something the matter, sir?

BRANDON: Oh no, there's nothing the matter at all. I had a fantastic meal.

LARRY: (*with a big smile*) Glad to hear it. So, what seems to be the problem?

LINDA: He wants to compliment the chef.

LARRY: (*the smile vanishes*) He what?

BRANDON: The food was amazing and I've never had friendlier service!

LARRY: Watch your mouth!

LINDA: What did I tell you?

LARRY: There are women and children in this restaurant. Who do you think you are?

SUE: (*running in*) What's going on?

LARRY: This bozo wants to compliment the chef.

SUE: (*gasping*) The nerve!

BRANDON: (*slowly and confused*) The food was amazing and I've never had friendlier service...

SUE: You jerk! You absolute jerk! I knew he was going to be trouble. He told me to 'have a nice day' at the hostess stand.

LARRY: Unbelievable!

BOBO, the chef, comes storming in.

BOBO: Where is he? Where is he?

LARRY: Right here, Bobo.

SUE: Here's the lowlife.

LINDA: The scumsucker!

BOBO: (*crossing him arms*) Well, what do you have to say for yourself?

BRANDON looks at the angry crowd and then at BOBO.

BRANDON: Nothing.

LINDA: Oh now he says nothing. Now he's got nothing to say.

SUE: You might as well, we all heard.

LINDA: (*shoving BRANDON on the shoulder*) Don't hold back.

LARRY: (*shoving BRANDON on the other shoulder*) Come on, Mr. Big Shot.

SUE: Say it!

BRANDON: Uh... The food... was amazing... and I've... never... had friendlier service?

BOBO lunges forward and is held back by the others.

BOBO: I oughta bust you right in the nose!

LARRY: Easy Bobo, easy.

BOBO: Let me go, Larry!

LARRY: You gotta take the high road.

BOBO: (*shrugging LARRY free*) A guy just can't say that stuff in public.

SUE: Have you no sense of decency?

HOLLY rushes on, breaking through the crowd.

HOLLY: Brandon, Brandon? What happened? What's going on here? (*sitting at the table*) What did you do?

BRANDON: (*leaning toward HOLLY*) It's not me, it's them. They're all acting so –

HOLLY: Honestly, can I not leave you alone for five minutes?

BOBO: You know this guy?

HOLLY: What did he do?

LINDA: He wanted to compliment the chef.

LARRY: (*scathingly*) The food was amazing!

SUE: (*scathingly*) And he never had friendlier service!

HOLLY: Brandon! How could you?

BRANDON: But it's true!

HOLLY: (*to the crowd*) I'm so sorry, I can't believe he said that. (*to BRANDON*) What do you think you're doing?! Honestly.

LARRY: It's all right, miss. You can't be responsible for people's actions.

SUE: But do you really want to date a guy like this?

HOLLY: My mother says the same thing.

All the girls make 'mother disapproving of BRANDON' noises.

BRANDON: Obviously I'm not being clear. (*he clears his throat*) All I want to do is express how swell my evening's been. That's it. Nothing bad, crazy, nothing out of the ordinary. I just want to say... (*he takes a breath and plunges in*) that the food was amazing and so was the service.

Everyone screams and covers their ears. The following all overlap till BRANDON's outburst.

LINDA: My ears!

HOLLY: Brandon!

LARRY: The children!

SUE: I'm calling the cops!

BOBO: I'm gonna bust him into next week!

BRANDON: OK, OK!!! YOU WIN! (*silence as everyone stops and stares at BRANDON*) The food stinks! I mean it. It really, really stinks! And the service, a great big stinkeroo! You're the worst waitress I've ever come across! (*to LARRY*) And you, you're the worst manager! You stink like a thing that stinks a lot! I'm never going to step foot in this restaurant ever again and I'm going to tell everyone I know how much this place stinks and everyone working here stinks to high heaven. Stink-ity, stink, stink stink!

*The crowd breaks out into applause and cheers.
BRANDON looks more confused that ever.
HOLLY throws her arms around him. LARRY claps
BRANDON on the back.*

LARRY: It's all right man, it's all right.

LINDA: Everyone makes mistakes.

SUE: He's rather handsome, isn't he?

BOBO: I'm going to get you guys a big dessert! On the house. (*he runs off*)

HOLLY: Brandon, I love you! (*to the others*) This is the man I'm going to marry!

Everyone cheers and runs off. Music plays as the table and chairs are removed.

FIVE

The LIEUTENANT, SERGEANT, and LEMON stand in a line downstage. They are speaking to a group of cops before their shift.

LIEUTENANT: All right, all right, settle down people, settle down. Let's get this underway. Before everyone starts their shift for the evening there are a few announcements. As we all know, tonight is a full moon. We've been getting some flack from the other precincts for taking full moon shenanigans seriously, isn't that right Lemon?

LEMON: Laughing stock of the west side sir.

LIEUTENANT: As far as I'm concerned and as far as this precinct is concerned, better safe than sorry. Understood? I don't want anybody hurt on our watch. Sergeant, what should everyone be on the lookout for?

SERGEANT: (*stepping forward with a clipboard*) As always with a full moon there's going to be an increase in unexplainable behaviour. You got your out-of-the blue brawls, your super heightened arguments, your rowdy groups.

LIEUTENANT: Let's try and nip this activity in the bud. Stop it before it starts.

SERGEANT: Number two, we got your crazies and your wackos. Full moons bring 'em out of the woodwork, we all know that, there's no point ignoring otherwise. For the most part, these folks are harmless. A little bit of the odd. But, they're also the most unpredictable. Lemon had to deal with that woman last month who tried to jump off the Logan bridge because someone, what's the word Lemon?

LEMON: 'Dissed' sir.

SERGEANT: Someone 'dissed' her outfit. Be aware people.

LIEUTENANT: And of course we use the term crazies and wackos with the utmost respect.

SERGEANT: Right, absolutely. Respect. Number three. Werewolves. Everyone got your silver bullets? We've got a public to protect. Number four: underground poisonous aardvarks.

LIEUTENANT: Full moons bring out all kinds.

SERGEANT: These are nasty suckers, be sure you keep away from the tongue. Isn't that right Lemon?

LEMON: Never confront the tongue, always back away.

SERGEANT: Back away from the tongue, people.

LIEUTENANT: Anything else?

SERGEANT: Number five: we've recently had reports of an individual in the Booker Street area seen carrying what is clearly a box and claiming it is a ball. (*shaking head*) Only on a full moon, right Lieutenant?

LIEUTENANT: Only on a full moon.

Music plays. They exit off to the right.

SIX

MISSY and JACKSON chase DEANNE on stage from the left.

MISSY: You gotta stand strong.

DEANNE: (*weakly*) I am strong.

JACKSON: You're spaghetti.

DEANNE: Spaghetti can be strong.

MISSY: You got Jell-O knees.

DEANNE: Jell-O can be strong.

JACKSON: What Jell-O are you eating?

MISSY: Deanne! Stop!

DEANNE stops, causing JACKSON and MISSY to run into her.

DEANNE: Look. I'll just wear one. It's no big deal.

NICOLA enters.

MISSY: No big deal???

DEANNE: It'll be my thing.

JACKSON: No big deal, she says, no big deal.

DEANNE: My signature style?

MISSY: Have you lost your mind?

NICOLA: What's going on?

JACKSON: Tell her, Deanne.

MISSY: We are in a state of crisis.

JACKSON: Tell her what's going on.

NICOLA: (*curious*) What's the crisis?

MISSY: (*holding up a single sock*) This.

NICOLA: What's that?

JACKSON: It's not what it is, it's WHAT it is.

NICOLA: Ok. WHAT it is?

MISSY: Deanne?

DEANNE: It's no big deal.

MISSY: Deanne. Were you, or were you not wearing (*she holds it up*) THIS sock when you got your dream job at Kitty Kitty Kochi Kochi?

NICOLA: Since when do you work there?

DEANNE: Last month. I told you.

MISSY: And were you or were you not wearing THIS sock when you aced your Spanish final?

NICOLA: You aced your Spanish final?

DEANNE: Last week. I told you.

MISSY: And when Trent Henderson-Schopenhauer talked to you –

NICOLA: Trent Henderson-Schopenhauer talked to you?

DEANNE: You were there!

JACKSON: Do you pay attention to anything we do?

NICOLA: (*off handed*) Sure I do. (*cluing in*) Hey, this is one of your socks? The lucky socks? THE lucky socks?

JACKSON: Not socks. Sock.

MISSY: (*holding up the sock*) ONE sock. One odd sock.

NICOLA: Where's the other one?

JACKSON: Ah ha! Crisis!

MISSY: Tell her Deanne. Tell Nicola where the other one is.

DEANNE: My dryer ate it.

JACKSON and MISSY smack their heads with the heel of their hands.

DEANNE: It doesn't matter.

JACKSON: Luck doesn't work in the odd, Deanne.

MISSY: (*holding up the sock*) Lucky only works in pairs! A PAIR of socks!

NICOLA: Why do you care about her luck?

JACKSON: THIS is not just any luck.

MISSY: The whole world should care about THIS luck.

JACKSON: Universe aligning luck.

MISSY: Kitty Kitty Kochi Kochi luck.

JACKSON: Henderson-Schopenhauer luck.

MISSY: THIS is not something you let fade away because an appliance goes haywire.

NICOLA: What is she supposed to do?

DEANNE: They want me to confront my dryer.

NICOLA: What?

JACKSON: You can do it!

NICOLA: Why?

MISSY: (*as if explaining to an idiot*) To get the sock back.

NICOLA: You're encouraging her to confront an appliance? Give back the sock or else?

JACKSON: Exactly.

MISSY: She's got to stand up for herself!

DEANNE: (*stepping away*) I can't!

JACKSON: Why not?

NICOLA: "It's an inanimate object" works for me.

MISSY: (*pushing NICOLA out of the way*) You're not helping!

NICOLA: Can't you just open up the back and see if the sock is there?

DEANNE: This is not about socks. This is bigger than socks.

NICOLA: It's about pants?

MISSY: Nicola!

DEANNE: I'm telling you, I can't!

JACKSON: Why not?

DEANNE: My dryer is very... temperamental. Use the wrong fabric softener and she won't dry things for weeks. She's very... sensitive.

MISSY: What are you saying? (*to JACKSON*) What is she saying?

JACKSON: (*with wide eyes*) The dryer took your lucky sock on purpose?

MISSY: (*with wide eyes*) No!

DEANNE: (*whispering*) I think so.

JACKSON: Like a punishment or something?

MISSY: Like a message?

DEANNE: Yes!

NICOLA: (*can't believe what she's hearing*) What?

JACKSON: You've been leading us down the garden path. THIS is an entirely different scenario. THIS is not a confrontation scenario.

DEANNE: (*miserable*) I know! I'm terrified to even go in the basement.

MISSY: But you need that sock!

NICOLA: (*can't believe what she's hearing*) Uh, guys?

JACKSON: (*ignoring NICOLA*) Fess up! What did you?

MISSY: Mix darks and lights?

JACKSON: Dryers don't punish without a reason. You're not laying out the full enchilada.

DEANNE: (*pacing*) I didn't think it was a big deal.

NICOLA: (*looking around*) Are we on camera or something?

DEANNE: I thought it was a harmless offhanded casual remark.

JACKSON: What did you say?

DEANNE: I may have said... harmlessly... it ... really... (*fast*) I said I love my dry cleaner...

JACKSON and MISSY give a gasp of horror.

DEANNE: It was metaphorical!

MISSY: Your dryer doesn't know that!

JACKSON: You can't be careless with appliances or electronics. They have fragile feelings. My laptop is so mad at me.

DEANNE: Sheila?

JACKSON: Sheila.

NICOLA: Sheila?!

DEANNE: Why?

JACKSON: She thinks I'm two timing her. Spending too much time with my cell phone.

MISSY: You can't ignore her. She'll start losing your files and then you're screwed.

NICOLA: I don't believe this.

MISSY: (*starts to pace*) THIS is serious Deanne.

JACKSON: (*starts to pace*) THIS is an emergency.

DEANNE: What do I do?

JACKSON: Beg.

MISSY: (*she falls to her knees and links her fingers*) Please, Ms. Dryer. I didn't mean it.

JACKSON: (*falls to his knees and links his fingers*) Please give me my sock back.

MISSY: You're the best dryer in all the world.

JACKSON: I'll never disrespect you again!

MISSY: I'll dump my dry cleaner.

DEANNE: Why do I have to do that?

JACKSON: Desperate times, Deanne.

MISSY & JACKSON: Please, please, please!

NICOLA: You guys can't be serious.

MISSY: Not now Nicola. (*to DEANNE*) Let's go.

DEANNE: Now?

MISSY: Start practising!

JACKSON: And make it good. Or that sock's a lint burger!

DEANNE, MISSY and JACKSON run off. NICOLA looks around still not believing what has just happened. The GUY WITH BALL from SCENE TWO enters holding the square ball.

NICOLA: Am I not living on the right planet or something? Did I wake up on the wrong planet? I gotta get out of here. (she sees the GUY WITH BALL) What is that?

GUY WITH BALL: It's a ball.

NICOLA: It's square.

GUY WITH BALL: Yes.

NICOLA: So it's a box.

GUY WITH BALL: No.

NICOLA: I gotta get out of here.

NICOLA runs offstage in the other direction.

SEVEN

Music plays. Everyone enters, walking in purposeful straight lines around the stage. They make their way downstage to form a line. GUY WITH BALL stands off to the side, watching.

BLUE: Sometimes I –

RED: Sometimes I get the –

BLUE: I get the oddest pain.

RED: Totally freaks me out.

ALL: (they all grab a body part) Oh!

RED: It grabs me.

BLUE: I can't explain it.

ALL: (they grab a different body part) Ow!

BLACK: Ow! Ow! Ow!

WHITE: What's the matter?

BLACK: Heart attack.

WHITE: What? How?

BLACK: I got this weird pain in my chest. (*thumps the right side of the chest*) It's a heart attack.

WHITE: Says who?

BLACK: The Internet.

WHITE: See, that wouldn't be my first choice.

BLACK: Hey! The Internet is a perfectly respectable place to research unexplained chest pain. The Internet knows everything.

WHITE: You're seventeen. It's not a heart attack.

BLACK: Did you go to medical school over spring break?

WHITE: That's exactly what I did. MedicalDegreesForTeenagers.com.

BLACK: Oh! (*grabs stomach*)

WHITE: What?

BLACK: It moved. The pain moved. It's roaming!

WHITE: What does the Internet say about roaming pain?

BLACK: (*she pokes her stomach*) It's my appendix! Tuberculosis! (*she gasps and looks wide eyed*) I'm pregnant!

ALL: Ugh!

BLUE: Sometimes –

RED: Sometimes I'm just the –

BLUE: I'm the odd one out.

RED: No matter what I do.

ALL: Ugh!

ORANGE: Turkey?

YELLOW: (*overly cheerful*) No thank you.

ORANGE: Just a little? A little white meat?

YELLOW: (*overly cheerful*) No thank you.

ORANGE: White meat is good for you. Much better than dark meat.

GREEN: White meat is dry.

ORANGE: Hush. Jamie?

YELLOW: No thank you.

ORANGE: Are you sure? It's good...

YELLOW: Mom...

ORANGE: There's crispy skin...

GREEN: How come she gets crispy skin and I don't?

YELLOW: I don't want any skin.

ORANGE: You and I, Don, are watching our weight. Jamie is teetering on death.

YELLOW: Mom! I am not!

GREEN: It's not fair.

YELLOW: I know lots of fat vegetarians.

GREEN: She gets the skin, she doesn't even want the skin. I want the skin, Patty.

ORANGE: You can't have it.

GREEN: It doesn't make any sense. Her and her newfangled –

YELLOW: I'm right here, Dad.

GREEN: You and your newfangled –

YELLOW: Vegetarians aren't newfangled.

GREEN: You and your non skin eating ways.

YELLOW: They haven't changed since last year, or the year before that. Or the year before that...

ORANGE: Have a drumstick.

YELLOW: (*starting to get really irritated*) I don't eat meat.

ORANGE: You're wasting away! Come on, it won't hurt you. I won't tell.

YELLOW: Who would you tell? The veggie police?

ORANGE: There's police? Really?

GREEN: Your sister eats meat, your brother eats meat, everyone in the family eats meat. Everyone, except for YOU.

ALL: Sometimes, no matter what, Ugh!

Music plays and everyone moves.

EIGHT

THE GIRLS gather together, laughing. The music fades.

MONICA: That was fun.

BRYNN: So great.

TISHA: My stomach hurts.

ZOE: No wonder.

HAILEY: You're the one who ordered the large nachos.

ZOE: And ate them all.

TISHA: I couldn't help it! They were so good.

They all laugh.

MONICA: Anyone want to go to the mall? I don't have to be home till 10.

The other GIRLS stop and look at each other.

BRYNN: Sure!

ZOE: (*elbowing BRYNN*) Actually...

BRYNN: Oh. Right.

MONICA: Right what?

HAILEY: We're doing this now?

ZOE: Now.

MONICA: Now what?

ZOE: We have to talk to you, Monica.

BRYNN: In the parking lot?

ZOE: We can't stop now, we started. It's not fair to say, "We need to talk" and then stop. If it's in the parking lot then it's in the parking lot.

BRYNN: Why didn't we do this in the restaurant?

ZOE: That was fun time. This is serious time.

MONICA: Serious about what? What's going on?

TISHA: Since when are parking lots serious?

ZOE: Go, Hailey.

HAILEY: Monica (*she takes a deep and tragic breath*) we need to talk to you.

MONICA: (*wary*) Ok.

ZOE: About Dennis.

TISHA: We're not mad.

HAILEY: No, we're not mad at you.

MONICA: What does Dennis have to do with being mad at me? Did something happen?

GIRLS: No!

TISHA: No, no.

BRYNN: Nothing's happened.

ZOE: Well, yes.

HAILEY: Yes.

TISHA: Something very serious.

ZOE: Seriously, serious.

BRYNN: But we're not mad.

HAILEY: Not at all.

TISHA: We love you.

MONICA: Ok...

BRYNN: It feels so wrong to do this in a parking lot.

HAILEY: Shhh!

ZOE: How long have we been friends?

TISHA: Forever.

ZOE: *(linking her fingers together)* Together forever.

HAILEY: *(linking her fingers together)* Since the third grade.

ZOE: There are no closer friends than us.

MONICA: *(confused.)* Am I dying?

ZOE: No!

BRYNN: Nothing like that.

HAILEY: Not serious like that.

TISHA: That's way serious.

HAILEY: We'd never do something like that in a parking lot.

BRYNN: We shouldn't be doing this in a parking lot.

HAILEY: Shh!

ZOE: You have to dump your boyfriend.

MONICA: What?

BRYNN: It's ok, don't freak out! Zoe, that was harsh!



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