



Sample Pages from Pay Phone

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SIXTEEN

IN 10 MINUTES OR LESS

Friend Request
Double Click
Brace Yourself
Lazy Eye
Fireworks
Pay Phone
Bench Warrant
Wheels
Tumblefur
Status Update: A Symphony

A Suite of Short Plays
BY
Bradley Hayward



Sixteen in 10 Minutes or Less

The plays herein may be licensed together or separately. The piece was conceived as a full length evening of entertainment, but each short stands perfectly well on its own without any prior knowledge of the characters. When produced in its entirety, the plays should be presented in the following order:

Act One

Friend Request (3M, 4W).....5

Thanks to a series of ill-fated friend requests, a doctored photo of a student spreads like wildfire among a group of teenagers.

Double Click (1M, 1W)..... 15

Young love blossoms when two teenagers flip open their laptops and start chatting.

Brace Yourself (1M, 1W)..... 23

A teenage brother and sister squabble as they try to extract a gummy bear that has lodged itself in a set of braces.

Lazy Eye (2 Either)31

Two eyeballs get bent out of shape while defending their half of a teenager's brain.

Fireworks (1M, 1W)..... 39

A couple of teenagers in love look up at the night sky and wait for colorful explosions to dance among the stars.

Act Two

Pay Phone (2M, 1W, 1 Either)..... 47

When a teenager loses his cell phone, he has no choice but to use a pay phone. Things quickly take a turn for the worse when a mysterious operator starts telling him what to do.

Bench Warrant (4W)..... 57

Three teenage girls have claimed a bench as their very own and routinely chase away all the "losers" who come near it.

Wheels (2M)..... 65

A teenage boy tries to repair a beat-up old truck so that he can get away from his parents and their broken down marriage.

Tumblefur (1W)..... 73

A sweet teenage girl takes her dog for a walk in the park and discovers that there is something exciting around every corner.

Status Update: A Symphony

(3M, 4W) 79

Seven teenagers express their hopes and fears online in a rousing symphony of status updates.

Settings

When the plays are presented together, the settings should be simple representations of each locale. The use of blocks is more than sufficient and will help facilitate quick scene changes between plays. When the plays are presented separately, the settings may be as simple or elaborate as you wish.

Characters

3M+4W, Expandable to 13M+17W+3 Either

James: Hyper & jumpy, male.

Piper: Outgoing & popular, female.

Cindy: Sarcastic & spontaneous,
female.

Samantha: Exuberant & talkative,
female.

Laura: Artistic & lonely, female.

Brody: Quiet & introspective, male.

Vance: Shy & thoughtful, male.

Right Eye: Eyeball, male or female.

Left Eye: Eyeball, male or female.

Operator: Voice only, male or
female.

Mom: Voice only, female.

Dad: Voice only, male.

When all of the plays are presented together, the characters may be played by the same actors throughout (for a minimum cast of 7) or the roles may be assigned separately (for a cast up to 33). All of the named characters are sixteen years old.

Right Eye, Left Eye, Operator, Mom, and Dad were written to be played by the same actors as the named characters, but could be cast separately.

If the plays are presented independently, many of the roles become gender flexible. Simply change the pronouns when appropriate.

Pay Phone

by Bradley Hayward

Characters

James, Operator, Mom, Dad

Setting

Three pay phones; the mall

There are three pay phones lined up in a row. Phone Three rings three times, then stops. JAMES enters in a hurry. He rushes over to Phone One and picks up the receiver. He puts a quarter in and dials. Suddenly, a soothing OPERATOR comes over the loud speaker, sounding oddly like a recording. It could be male or female.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: I just did.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: I said I did.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: Stop arguing with me!

OPERATOR: Local calls, fifty cents. Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: Fifty cents? For a local call?

He digs into his pocket and pulls out another quarter.

OPERATOR: Local calls, fifty cents. Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: *(puts the quarter in)* I heard you.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: Not this again! I just did!

OPERATOR: Please insert two dimes and one nickel.

JAMES: I just put in a quarter.

OPERATOR: Please insert two dimes and one nickel.

JAMES: That's the same as a quarter.

OPERATOR: Please insert one dime and three nickels.

JAMES: What's going on here?

OPERATOR: Please insert one dime and three nickels.

JAMES: I don't have any nickels.

OPERATOR: Please insert three dimes.

JAMES: That's thirty cents.

OPERATOR: You will not receive change.

JAMES: You're really starting to tick me off!

OPERATOR: Please insert three dimes.

JAMES: No. I won't.

OPERATOR: You will not receive change.

JAMES: Neither will you!

OPERATOR: Now connecting. Thank you.

*All of a sudden, Phone Three starts to ring again.
JAMES ignores it. Phone Three stops ringing. The
OPERATOR comes back.*

No answer. Would you like to try again?

JAMES: Yes!

OPERATOR: Please press one to try again. Otherwise, press two to hang up.

JAMES pushes one.

JAMES: No wonder nobody uses these things anymore!

OPERATOR: Please press one to try again. Otherwise, press two to hang up.

JAMES: Oh, I give up!

He slams the phone back down on the receiver. Almost instantly, it rings. He picks it up.

Hello?

OPERATOR: I said, press two to hang up. Do not hang up to hang up.

JAMES: Is this a joke?

OPERATOR: I said, press two to hang up. Do not hang up to hang up.

JAMES pushes two.

JAMES: There! Happy now?

OPERATOR: I am very happy. Are you happy?

JAMES: What?

OPERATOR: I am very happy. Are you happy?

JAMES: That's none of your business.

OPERATOR: Now connecting. Thank you.

Phone Three rings again. JAMES ignores it. It stops ringing and the OPERATOR returns.

You should answer that.

JAMES: Answer what?

Phone Three rings once.

OPERATOR: That.

JAMES: Nobody's calling me. I'm calling someone else!

Phone Three rings once.

OPERATOR: Answer it. Or else.

JAMES: Or else what?

OPERATOR: You have been warned.

Phone Three rings. It keeps ringing.

Go on. You know want to.

JAMES has finally had enough. He leaves Phone One off the hook and answers Phone Three.

JAMES: Hello?

Another voice comes over the loud speaker. It belongs to MOM.

MOM: Hi, James. You called?

JAMES: Mom, is that you?

MOM: Yes. What do you want?

JAMES: I'm at the mall, but I lost my cell phone. You can pick me up now.

MOM: You sound upset. Is something wrong?

JAMES: Nothing's wrong. I just had a fight with the operator.

MOM: The operator?

JAMES: It was the weirdest thing. I could swear it was a recording, but it was like it was talking just to me.

MOM: Have you been drinking?

JAMES: Mom! I don't drink!

MOM: Not alcohol. Have you had an energy drink?

JAMES: No.

MOM: Don't lie.

JAMES: I didn't. I swear.

MOM: You know what they do to you.

JAMES: I know.

MOM: You sound jittery. I know you had one.

JAMES: I told you. The operator put me on edge.

MOM: The recording?

JAMES: I can't explain it. Come to think of it, how did you know it was me calling?

OPERATOR: Hello, James.

JAMES: There it goes again!

MOM: Hello?

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

MOM: Who is that?

JAMES: This is getting weird.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: All right already!

JAMES puts a quarter in Phone Three.

MOM: This is James' mom. Who is this and why are you bothering him?

OPERATOR: Hello, Mom. James is lying to you.

JAMES: About what?

OPERATOR: James had an energy drink.

MOM: I knew it. I knew it! What do you have to say for yourself?

OPERATOR: You are welcome.

MOM: Not you. James.

JAMES: Okay, fine! I had one energy drink. What's the problem?

MOM: The problem is that you promised you wouldn't. It makes you act strange and jittery and all together weird.

OPERATOR: You are weird, James.

JAMES: I'm not weird.

OPERATOR: Yes you are. Right, Mom?

JAMES: Don't answer that!

MOM: How can I trust you if you keep breaking your promises to me?

JAMES: How can I trust *you* if *you* keep breaking *your* promises to *me*?

MOM: What promises?

JAMES: You said everything was going to be okay. Well, everything is not okay.

Phone Two rings.

OPERATOR: Answer it, James.

JAMES: Answer it?

OPERATOR: You know you want to.

JAMES leaves Phone Three off the hook and picks up Phone Two. DAD's voice comes over the loudspeaker.

DAD: Don't listen to your mother, James.

JAMES: Dad?

DAD: She's filling your head with lies about me.

JAMES: So it's not true?

DAD: Not a word.

JAMES: That's a relief!

DAD: I did not have an affair.

JAMES: I didn't think you did.

DAD: That's right. We split up because of you.

JAMES: Huh?

DAD: That's right. You're weird, James. We couldn't take it anymore. So we got a divorce.

JAMES: It's my fault?

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: Go away! I'm talking to Dad.

OPERATOR: I cannot go away, James.

JAMES: Why not?

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES puts a quarter in the pay phone.

JAMES: There! Now why can't you go away?

OPERATOR: I am always here, James.

JAMES: Where?

OPERATOR: You know where.

JAMES: Dad, is it true? Did you really get divorced because of me?

DAD: If you don't believe me, ask your mother.

JAMES: Hold on. *(he drops the receiver and picks up Phone Three)* Mom, are you still there?

MOM: Yes, James.

JAMES: Did you and Dad get divorced because of me?

MOM: Is that what he told you?

JAMES: Yes.

MOM: He shouldn't have told you. But now that the cat's out of the bag, yes! Yes, James! YES! It's all your stupid, stinking, awful, rotten, heartless, idiotic, moronic, ugly, absolute, complete and total bloody fault!

JAMES: Really?

MOM: Boy, does it feel good to get that off my chest.

JAMES: What's wrong with me?

MOM: What isn't?

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

JAMES: I'm all out of money.

OPERATOR: Please insert twenty-five cents.

MOM: Good-bye, James.

OPERATOR: Good-bye.

Dial tone. JAMES slams the receiver down on Phone Three. He picks up Phone Two.

JAMES: Dad? You there?

DAD: I'm here.

JAMES: That's good.

DAD: But you're not.



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