



**Sample Pages from
Roshambo**

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ROSHAMBO

ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS IN ONE ACT BY
Brian Borowka



Roshambo

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Cast of Characters

2M+11W+3 Either

TAYLOR	Female. A top-ranked Roshambo player.
BECCA	Female. Taylor's friend and Roshambo teammate.
DEB	Female. Their coach.
KAREN	Female. Taylor's mother.
LINDSAY	Female. Another top-ranked player and mean girl.
AMANDA	Female. Lindsay's teammate.
COACH K	Male or female. Their coach.
ASTRID	Female. A Roshambo player with an invisible friend.
ANDROMEDA	Female. Her teammate, who thinks she is an alien.
NICK	Male. A Roshambo playing dude.
JOSEPH	Male. Nick's teammate.
SUZANNA	Female. The Roshambo tournament announcer.
CHLOE	Female. Suzanna's sidekick.
TINA	Female. A huge Roshambo fan.
SECURITY OFFICER	Male or female. A security officer.
JUDGE	Male or female. The Roshambo tournament referee.

Roshambo

Roshambo is an alternative name for the game Rock-Paper-Scissors.

Set

For the first five scenes, a bare stage with perhaps the suggestion of a classroom or activity room in the school (such as a blackboard or bulletin board).

For scene six, something to suggest the big Roshambo tournament (such as a sign or banner). There should also be a playing area for the competitors and a place for the announcers to call the action (e.g. a platform and two stools).

Scene I

BECCA and TAYLOR are practicing rock, paper, scissors with their coach, DEB. TAYLOR's mom, KAREN, looks on intently.

As DEB calls out each word, the girls make their hands into scissors, paper, and rock in quick succession.

DEB: Scissors, paper, rock. Scissors, paper, rock. Very nice. Good form, Taylor. (*TAYLOR and BECCA limber up their hands*) OK, team. Show me toolbox.

BECCA looks confused.

TAYLOR: (*whispers to BECCA*) Three scissors in a row.

DEB: One, two, three, shoot. One, two, three, shoot. One, two, three, shoot. (*TAYLOR and BECCA throw scissors three times*) Good job. OK, take five.

DEB takes out her cell phone and meanders over to the side of the stage. KAREN crosses to TAYLOR.

KAREN: Looking great, honey. Keep those hands limber. Scissors up!

They do a scissors finger move to each other. KAREN goes over to see what DEB is doing on her phone.

BECCA: (*to TAYLOR*) Wow – how are you so good at Roshambo?

TAYLOR: I don't know. It just comes naturally I guess.

DEB walks back over to the girls with KAREN following eagerly behind her.

DEB: Taylor – big news. The national scholastic Roshambo rankings have just been released. (*KAREN gasps. DEB takes a dramatic pause.*) You are number one in the country!

TAYLOR: (*shocked*) What?

KAREN: (*ecstatic*) Yes! Number one! Number one!

DEB: You are officially the top youth Roshambo player in America.

KAREN: Do you know what this means? Taylor, do you know what this means?

TAYLOR: No.

KAREN: Tell her what it means!

DEB: It means you're the best of the best.

TAYLOR: I don't know about that.

DEB: It also means that everyone at the tournament is going to be looking to take you down. You cannot show weakness.

KAREN: (*chanting*) Number one! Number one!

DEB: Karen, please stop doing that.

KAREN: Sorry.

DEB: (*to TAYLOR*) Meet me in an hour for more training. We've got a lot of work to do. (*DEB starts to leave*) Oh, you too Becca.

KAREN: (*whispering to TAYLOR*) Number one!

DEB and KAREN exit.

BECCA: Taylor, that's so incredible. The top ranked player in the country.

TAYLOR: I guess so.

BECCA: What's wrong?

TAYLOR: Nothing.

BECCA: Come on, Taylor. What is it?

TAYLOR: It's just – Roshambo used to be fun, you know? Rock, paper, scissors. It was just like a silly game for deciding little things. But with this tournament coming up and all the training, and – well, it's just different now, more intense I guess. I don't know, forget it.

BECCA: Look, just play the game the best you can and you'll do great.

TAYLOR: Right.

BECCA: Come on, let's get some food. We've got a three hour training session ahead of us.

They exit limbering up their hands.

KAREN: (*from offstage*) Number one! Number one!

Scene 2

The voice of COACH K rings out from off stage.

COACH K: Team Strike Force. First positions. (*LINDSAY and AMANDA enter and hold a Roshambo position*) At ease. (*They break the pose. COACH starts pacing, holding a cell phone.*) All right ladies, listen up. The national youth Roshambo rankings came out today.

AMANDA: How exciting!

COACH K: Amanda. You're not on the list. Unranked. Just like last year.

LINDSAY: Whatever. Get to the point. Who is number one? As if I don't know.

COACH K: Who is number one? Well funny you should ask that, because the answer is not you.

LINDSAY: What? Give me that! (*LINDSAY takes the phone from COACH K*) This has got to be a mistake.

COACH K takes the phone back.

COACH K: It's no mistake. It's a disaster. You've dropped to number two. Second place. Shameful.

LINDSAY: There has to have been a mix up. Can't you talk to someone?

COACH K: I don't think so.

LINDSAY: (*fake sweet*) Come on, coach, please.

COACH K: Fine. I'll talk to the Roshambo rankings committee. You two practice the scipper. One hundred scippers apiece. Get to it.

COACH K starts to leave.

AMANDA: Wait – coach. What's a scipper again?

COACH K: You tell her, Lindsay. I'm out of here.

COACH K exits.

LINDSAY: A scipper, Amanda. Come on, it's a standard Roshambo play. You start to throw scissors but when you see the other player throwing rock you change it to paper at the last second. Like this.

LINDSAY demonstrates the move.

AMANDA: Isn't that cheating?

LINDSAY: Duh. Now let's practice. (*LINDSAY does the move repeatedly as AMANDA tries to do the same*) You're doing it wrong.

AMANDA: Sorry. Hey so if you're not number one – who is?

LINDSAY: Some girl named Taylor.

AMANDA: Taylor? I think I know that girl.

LINDSAY abruptly stops doing scippers.

LINDSAY: Oh really? That gives me an idea. Walk with me.

They exit.

Scene 3

ANDROMEDA enters and sits center stage. ASTRID comes in.

ASTRID: All right Andromeda, we've got a Roshambo tournament coming up, and I don't know about you but Foo Foo and I would like to win so let's start practicing. (*ANDROMEDA stands*) You ready? (*ANDROMEDA nods slowly*) OK, let's do this. One, two, three, shoot. (*ASTRID throws scissors. ANDROMEDA does not move.*) You're supposed to throw.

ANDROMEDA: I apologize. I was listening to a voicemail. From my home planet.

ASTRID: You are really weird, you know that? I mean, here I am, trying to practice, and you – (*hearing the voice of an invisible person*) Wait. What? (*to ANDROMEDA*) One second. (*to invisible person*) No. You are kidding? Seriously? (*starts laughing*) That is so funny. Oh that is hilarious. (*laughing uproariously*) Foo Foo just told me a joke. You wouldn't get it. Way over your head.

ANDROMEDA: On my planet, there are no rocks. There are no scissors. And there is no paper. My planet is a boiling inferno of fire. It can be very uncomfortable.

ASTRID: And that's why you moved here. Great story. (*ANDROMEDA sits back on the ground*) Forget this. I'm practicing without you. Come on, Foo Foo, let's go.

ANDROMEDA hears footsteps.

ANDROMEDA: Did you hear that?

ASTRID: What?

ANDROMEDA: Someone's coming. Strangers have discovered our secret training lair.

ASTRID: You mean the robotics classroom?

ANDROMEDA stands.

ANDROMEDA: Beam me up, Captain. (*nothing happens*) Tractor beam must be broken again. Happens a lot. Let's go.

They start to leave.

ASTRID: (*to her invisible friend*) Foo Foo, watch your mouth. (*to ANDROMEDA*) You do not want to know what she just called you.

They leave.

Scene 4

Two boys, NICK and JOSEPH, enter.

JOSEPH: So are we seriously going to do this stupid tournament?

NICK: Fo-shizzle.

JOSEPH: What about my idea for a team name: The Black Widows!

NICK: Uh – no.

JOSEPH: Dude, why not? The name Black Widows totally rules. And every time we say it we can do a snake move.

JOSEPH does a snake move.

NICK: Black widow's a spider.

JOSEPH: We can do a spider move.

JOSEPH does a spider move.

NICK: I like The Avalanche.

JOSEPH: The Avalanche?

NICK: Yeah, because we're like an avalanche of rocks coming out of the sky.

JOSEPH: I kinda think we throw rock too much. Maybe we should change it up.

NICK: No way, man. Rock is strength. Rock is power. Beware of The Avalanche.

JOSEPH: Fine, The Avalanche.

NICK: Swerve.

We hear a sound.

TAYLOR'S VOICE: Is anybody in there?

JOSEPH: Dude, did you remember to reserve this room?

NICK: Uh – what?

JOSEPH: Dude!

NICK: (*playfully beating on JOSEPH with his fists*) Avalanche!

NICK chases JOSEPH offstage.

Scene 5

BECCA and TAYLOR enter. LINDSAY and AMANDA sneak in after them and eavesdrop outside their view.

They play three quick rounds. TAYLOR wins each.

TAYLOR: OK, ready? One, two, three, shoot. One, two, three, shoot. One, two, three, shoot.

BECCA: How do you win every time?

TAYLOR: You have some pretty obvious tells, Becca.

BECCA: I do?

TAYLOR: When you look down, you throw paper. When your head goes to the side, you throw scissors. And when you are frustrated you throw rock.

BECCA: I never notice those things.

TAYLOR: You just have to know what to look for. Size up your opponent and you'll figure out their tells. Coach Deb had me studying video for hours, because I'm the "special player." (*She makes air quotes*) Ow.

BECCA: What's wrong?

TAYLOR: My hand – it feels kind of sore.

BECCA examines her hand.

BECCA: You need to be really careful, Taylor. Don't let anybody touch that hand. Now let's keep practicing, Coach Deb will be here soon.

TAYLOR: Fine.

They start to practice again. The focus shifts to AMANDA and LINDSAY.

LINDSAY: Did you hear that?

AMANDA: Yeah – all those tells. That's so interesting.

LINDSAY: No, Amanda. The hand.

AMANDA: Oh, right.

LINDSAY: I think it's time for Miss Number One to get a friendly handshake from one of her supporters.

She puts supporters in air quotes.

AMANDA: What does it mean when people do those two fingers in the air? I never understood that gesture.

LINDSAY: Quiet, someone's coming.

She pulls AMANDA to their hiding place as DEB enters past them into the room where TAYLOR and BECCA are practicing.

DEB: (*spotting TAYLOR*) There you are. I've been looking everywhere for you, Taylor.

BECCA: Well, here she is.

DEB: Oh, and you too Becca. (*to TAYLOR*) So, champ, how's the training going?

TAYLOR: OK, I guess.

DEB: Come on, Taylor. You're the best. You've got to act like the best.

LINDSAY and AMANDA enter.

LINDSAY: Knock knock.

TAYLOR: Oh, hey Amanda.

DEB: This room is reserved.

AMANDA: It is? Let's just go back.

LINDSAY holds up a hand.

LINDSAY: Oh, we know. We just came to wish Taylor here good luck.

DEB: (to TAYLOR) That's Lindsay. Last year's number one ranked player.

LINDSAY: (*forced smile*) That's me! And I just came by to show you what a good sport I am.

BECCA: Oh, really?

LINDSAY: Of course, right Amanda?

AMANDA: Uh – right.

LINDSAY: As your top competitor, I wanted to wish you the very best of luck and extend my hand in friendship. (*She extends her hand. BECCA and TAYLOR look at each other.*) So, Taylor, how about a handshake?

TAYLOR gets an idea. KAREN enters with a gym bag.

KAREN: Taylor, honey, you left your warm-up clothes in the car again –

TAYLOR takes LINDSAY's extended hand and shakes it.

LINDSAY holds the handshake a bit too long, hurting TAYLOR's hand. They release hands.

TAYLOR: (*holding her hand in pain*) Ow!

AMANDA: Wow, Lindsay, you've got some handshake.

LINDSAY: Guess I just don't know my own strength.

KAREN: Honey, honey, are you OK?

BECCA: You did that on purpose.

LINDSAY: I don't know what you are talking about. Feel better, Taylor. Amanda, let's go.

LINDSAY starts to leave. AMANDA lingers behind.

AMANDA: Wait, I think she's really hurt.

LINDSAY: Come on, Amanda. What is wrong with you?

LINDSAY pulls AMANDA away. KAREN sits with her daughter.

KAREN: Taylor, honey. Scissors up. Scissors up.

TAYLOR: I can't, Mom. I can't make scissors.

DEB examines the hand.

DEB: I don't know how to say this, but if Taylor can't make scissors, there is no way your daughter can compete in the tournament.

KAREN: No! Why, Lord, why?!

TAYLOR: It's OK, Mom.

KAREN: But we've worked so hard for this.

DEB: I guess this means that our team is down to just one player. Becca, time to start training hard core.

BECCA: What? But I'm terrible at Roshambo.

DEB: You won't be after I'm done with you. Feel better, Taylor. Maybe next year. All right, Becca, let's go.

BECCA goes off with DEB. KAREN sits with TAYLOR. KAREN tries to form TAYLOR's hands into scissors.

TAYLOR: Mom, stop, I can't do it.

KAREN: But, but – scissors up! We've worked so hard. What about the scholarships? The Division I schools? What about your future?

TAYLOR: It's just a game, Mom.

KAREN: Just a game? Do you know how much money and time and money I have spent on this game? Do you have any idea what kind of sacrifices I've made for this?

TAYLOR: I'm going for a walk.

She exits. KAREN is really upset.

Scene 6

The scene shifts as the stage is set for the big Roshambo tournament.

SUZANNA, the Roshambo announcer, enters confidently.

SUZANNA: Hello Roshambo fans. My name is Suzanna and I'm thrilled to be doing the play-by-play again at the Scholastic Roshambo Championship. I am joined this year by former athlete and current reality television star Chloe.

CHLOE enters.

CHLOE: Thank you thank you. Great to be here. Hello Cleveland!

SUZANNA: We're in Connecticut.

CHLOE: Right, little known fact. Connecticut was originally called Cleveland. It's true. Look it up.

SUZANNA: Anyway, the first match is just moments away and leading off we've got one of the favorites to win it all, ranked number two in the country: Lindsay.

LINDSAY enters.

LINDSAY: Hi, thank you. It's an honor to be here.

CHLOE: Question: Have you ever thought your name should be pronounced Lind-SAY since it's kinda spelled that way? Think about it.

SUZANNA: Lindsay, what can we expect to see from you in this year's tournament?

LINDSAY: Well Suzanna –

TINA, a crazed fan, enters.

TINA: OMG Lindsay. It's Lindsay. I don't believe it. I am two feet away from Lindsay. I – wait – I gotta take a picture. *(she takes a picture of LINDSAY with her phone)* Hashtag Greatestdayofmylife. *(she walks over to LINDSAY)* Lindsay, I am your biggest fan. Oh, can I just – I know I shouldn't ask you this but YOLO, right? So, please, would it be OK if I got a picture with you?

LINDSAY: Sure, anything for my fans.

TINA: Seriously? OMG Hashtag dying. (to SUZANNA) Will you take our picture? (back to LINDSAY) OK, now – can you just – this will be so amazing. Can you pose with me being a piece of paper and you cutting me like you are the scissors? That would just like make my entire life. Oh that is so amazing. You are the best. Hashtag mylifeisawesome. I love you Lindsay!!!

TINA is removed by a SECURITY OFFICER.

SUZANNA: Well Lindsay you've got some seriously devoted fans.

LINDSAY: What can I say?

The JUDGE leads LINDSAY into position.

SUZANNA: As Lindsay gets into place for the match we have just a few moments to chat with her opponent – Joseph.

JOSEPH: What's up, Suzanna, the Black Widows are primed for victory.

SUZANNA: I thought you were called Team Avalanche.

JOSEPH: Black Widows!

He does his spider move.

SUZANNA: OK, well, I noticed that you have no coach.

CHLOE: And I noticed that if you put these two fingers over your nose, you can't breathe. Watch.

She does so and starts coughing. The JUDGE brings JOSEPH to his position.

SUZANNA: That's terrific. Well, folks, it's time for the moment everyone has been waiting for. The opening match! Chloe, any thoughts?

CHLOE: None whatsoever.

JUDGE: Players take your positions. One, two, three, shoot.

JOSEPH throws rock, LINDSAY throws scissors.

SUZANNA: Wow. Joseph comes right out with rock and wins the first round.

JOSEPH: Team Avalanche rules. I mean, Black Widows!

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot.

JOSEPH throws rock. LINDSAY throws paper and covers JOSEPH's hand briefly.

SUZANNA: A win for Lindsay. And we are all tied up.

JOSEPH: Your hand is really soft.

LINDSAY: Gee thanks, creeper.

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot.

JOSEPH throws rock. LINDSAY throws paper.

SUZANNA: Paper for Lindsay and she takes the lead.

COACH K: Time out! Time out! *(Taking LINDSAY aside. NICK enters.)*
There is no way he will play rock again. He can't be that dumb. I want you to throw scissors.

LINDSAY: Seriously?

COACH K: Yes. But if he does throw rock. Throw a scipper. Got it?

LINDSAY: Got it, Coach.

NICK: *(standing with JOSEPH)* Just throw rock, dude. Rock rules.

JOSEPH and LINDSAY get back into position.

JUDGE: Ready? One, two, three, shoot.

JOSEPH throws rock. LINDSAY throws scissors but then changes it to paper at the last second.

JOSEPH: Hey!

SUZANNA: Paper for Lindsay. Lindsay advances!

JOSEPH: Wait a minute. She cheated. She slow played me.

LINDSAY: No I didn't.

JOSEPH: Yes, you did. Come on, check the replay.

CHLOE: We have instant replay?

SUZANNA: No, we don't, which means that Lindsay advances to the next round.

LINDSAY: Yes!

She high-fives COACH K.

COACH K: Nicely done.

COACH K goes off with LINDSAY.

NICK: You shoulda played rock, dude.

JOSEPH: I did play rock. She is such a cheater.

NICK: I know.

JOSEPH: Can you believe she did that?

NICK: She's horrible. Disgusting, man. (*JOSEPH starts to go*) Hey. You think she'd go out with me?

JOSEPH: What?

NICK: Go ask her.

The JUDGE moves NICK into position.

SUZANNA: Well wasn't that exciting? Now for our next match we have the second member of Team Avalanche, Nick, facing off against – oh no.

TINA stands frozen.

TINA: OMG – Nick. It's Nick. OK, Tina, keep it together. Deep breaths. Deep breaths. No, I can't let him see me like this. I look awful. I have to change. No, I can't change. I have to go up to him.

She takes a deep breath and walks up to NICK.

NICK: Sup.

She passes out. THE SECURITY GUARD enters and starts to take her offstage. TINA pops back up.

TINA: No, wait, I'm fine. You can't do this. It's not fair. Nick! Nick! I love you! Marry me, Nick!

THE SECURITY GUARD takes TINA offstage.

SUZANNA: Well, I guess Nick wins by forfeit.

NICK: Team Avalanche rules!

SUZANNA: Which brings us to a match between two contestants who need no introductions.

CHLOE: Because we have no idea who they are.

AMANDA enters nervously as ANDROMEDA enters majestically.

AMANDA: Hi there, my name is Amanda.

ANDROMEDA: Yes, I know.

AMANDA: How? We've never met before.

ANDROMEDA: I'm sorry. I wasn't talking to you.

AMANDA: Who were you talking to?

She holds up a finger.

ANDROMEDA: Yes, I think so. (*looks at AMANDA*) This is sort of private, do you mind?

AMANDA: What?

The JUDGE steps forward.

JUDGE: Players, take your positions. (*AMANDA gets into position. ANDROMEDA does not.*) I said, positions!

ANDROMEDA walks over to the JUDGE.

ANDROMEDA: I am sorry. You must excuse me. An emergency situation has come up at home. You understand.

AMANDA: Huh?

ANDROMEDA: My planet needs me! Good day.

She exits.

SUZANNA: Well, that was highly unusual, but it looks like we have two forfeits in a row.

CHLOE: And it also looks like we are out of donut holes. Did you eat the last one?

SUZANNA: Maybe. Anyway, Amanda will be moving on to the second round.

AMANDA: Yay!

AMANDA cheers for herself and exits.

CHLOE: And I will be moving on to Tasty Donuts. And no donut holes for you!

CHLOE exits.

SUZANNA: I don't care because now I am very excited to introduce the number one youth Roshambo player in the country – (*DEB enters with BECCA*) Wait. You're not Taylor.

DEB: This is Becca. Taylor had an injury and won't be participating this year.

SUZANNA: Well, fans, that is indeed a disappointment.

DEB: Becca will be representing our team this year.

SUZANNA: OK, Becca. Tell us a little about yourself.

BECCA: Well, as Coach Deb said my name is Becca. I, um, I like sailboats and – sorry I'm kinda nervous.

DEB: Becca's worked very hard. And she probably doesn't have a chance to win, but that doesn't mean she isn't a very nice person.

BECCA: Gee, thanks.

BECCA gets into position.

DEB: Wait, that was meant to be a compliment.

SUZANNA: And her opponent in this match will be (*checking her notes*) Astrid.

ASTRID enters.

ASTRID: Hello, yes, it's great to be here. Foo Foo and I could not be more excited.

TINA strolls onstage.

TINA: Astrid! What an honor. Truly, truly, an honor. Would it be possible for me to get a picture with you and Foo Foo? (*to SUZANNA*) Here, hold this. (*hands SUZANNA a phone and poses with one arm around ASTRID and one arm around the air*) Thanks.

SUZANNA: You seem a lot calmer than last time.

TINA: I've been heavily medicated. Well, Bye!

TINA leaves.

SUZANNA: So is Foo Foo like your imaginary friend?

ASTRID: She's not imaginary, she's invisible! Oh, look. Now you've hurt her feelings. I hope you're happy. (*talking to invisible Foo Foo*) It's OK, Foo Foo. It's OK.

ASTRID takes her position across from BECCA.

DEB: OK, remember Becca. Stay focused. Intimidate your opponent.
Don't break eye contact.

BECCA: Where's Taylor? I hope her hand is all right.

JUDGE: Positions! One, two, three, shoot.

ASTRID throws rock. BECCA throws scissors.

ASTRID: Yes.

ASTRID high-fives an invisible Foo Foo.

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot.

ASTRID throws paper. BECCA throws rock. ASTRID wins again.

SUZANNA: That's two in a row for Astrid. Looks like time is running out on sailboat girl.

TAYLOR calls from offstage.

TAYLOR: Time out! (*DEB signals for a time out. TAYLOR walks on, over to BECCA.*) Come on Becca, you can do this. Watch for the tells.

BECCA: I don't know if I can.

TAYLOR: You worked really hard. You just have to trust yourself.

JUDGE: Players take your positions.

BECCA looks at ASTRID intently.

ASTRID: If you are looking for tells, I don't have any.

ASTRID, without realizing, gives a scissors tell.

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot.

ASTRID throws scissors. BECCA throws rock.

SUZANNA: That's one point for Becca.

CHLOE enters with donut holes.

CHLOE: What'd I miss?

SUZANNA: Shh!

ASTRID: That was lucky. But it won't happen again.

BECCA: Are you sure?

ASTRID: Uh, what?

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot.

ASTRID throws paper. BECCA throws scissors.

SUZANNA: And we are all tied up at two!

CHLOE: *(with food in her mouth)* This is so exciting.

ASTRID: Time out! Time out!

JUDGE: Only your coach can call a time out.

ASTRID: Foo Foo is my coach and she has been trying to call a time out but you've been ignoring her.

JUDGE: One, two, three, shoot!

ASTRID throws paper. BECCA throws scissors.

SUZANNA: And it looks like sailboat girl wins!

ASTRID: That is ridiculous. Foo Foo, you do not know how to coach Roshambo. Wait, I'm sorry. Foo foo!

ASTRID leaves. DEB and TAYLOR run up to congratulate BECCA.

DEB: Great job, Becca.

TAYLOR: You were amazing.

BECCA: It was all you, Taylor. The tells – that totally worked.

DEB: We are moving on to the semi-finals.

TAYLOR: High five!

They high-five.

BECCA: Wait – Taylor. How are you able to high five with your bad hand?

TAYLOR: What? Oh, right. I mean, ow.

BECCA: Taylor, did you fake this injury?

TAYLOR: No, of course not. I just was so happy that you won that I forgot about the pain for a moment. But now it's back. I'm going to go put on some ice.



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