



Sample Pages from
Wait Wait Bo Bait (Middle School Edition)

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WAIT WAIT BO BAIT

–Middle School Edition–

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



Wait Wait Bo Bait – Middle School Edition

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Characters

Woman One

Woman Two

Woman Three

Woman Four

Man One

Man Two

The play could be performed with a larger cast, by splitting up the scenes.

Setting

If possible a free-standing door should be centre stage. If not, arrange cubes to form a space that can act as a door.

Other cubes should be scattered around the stage so that smaller scenes can be performed with them. This way, a scene can begin as the previous scene ends. Think abstractly, rather than realistically.

There is the sound of a clock ticking. All the characters are onstage in various wait poses. They all look at their watches and give a collective sigh. They move into a second pose.

ALL: I. Hate. Waiting!!!!

MAN ONE: Wait for the bus.

WOMAN ONE: Wait to be served.

MAN TWO: Wait in line.

WOMAN FOUR: Wait to leave.

MAN ONE: Wait for the doctor.

MAN TWO: The dentist, the optometrist, the podiatrist, the vet, the –

WOMAN THREE: *(interrupting)* Hurry up and wait.

WOMAN TWO: You wait until your father gets home.

MAN ONE & TWO: Wait over there.

WOMAN ONE & THREE: Wait for me!

WOMAN TWO: No, you're supposed to wait over there.

WOMAN FOUR: Wait for a date.

WOMAN THREE: Wait on the phone.

MAN ONE: Wait forever.

ALL: Waiting and waiting and waiting.

They change their waiting pose.

ALL: Waiting and waiting and waiting.

They change their waiting pose.

ALL: Waiting and waiting and waiting.

MAN TWO: I can't wait any longer. Let's start the show!

They all scream, jump up and down and run off except for WOMAN TWO.

WOMAN TWO sits on a cube. She has a phone beside her.

WOMAN TWO: (*very calm and collected*) I'm not waiting. I just happen to be here in my room sitting by the phone. But I'm not waiting. This is the 21st century. Women do not wait by phones waiting for men to call. Nosiree. That would be pathetic. And sad. Very 20th century. 19th century even. If they had phones. So that's not what I'm doing here. There's a perfectly good explanation for why I happen to be sitting in this particular location. Right by the phone. There's nothing on TV. All my friends are busy and there's no good movies out right now anyway. I have a plethora of music to listen to at my fingertips. It's much more comfortable sitting on this chair than it would be sitting on the bed. My bed is very soft. Soft beds aren't good for your back. It's much better to sit here and it just so happens that the phone is beside me. That's all. That's all there is to it. (*Sudden emotional change, bursting out*) Ring! Ring! Would you just ring you stupid piece of machinery! Ring and stop ruining my life! (*Back to calm and collected*) Or don't ring. I don't care. I'm not waiting for anything. Nosiree. Nothing at all.

Lights change. Upbeat music plays.

NOTE: The humour is not the gross postures or gestures one can make while waiting to use the bathroom. The humour is in the attempt to be casual about something that is oh-so urgent.

MAN TWO runs into the space. It's clear he has to use the bathroom. He approaches the door and bangs on it. The answer is not good because MAN TWO gives a gesture that looks like a groan and starts to dance in place.

WOMAN THREE enters from the other side. It's clear she has to use the bathroom. She runs right up to the door and goes to bang on it, when MAN TWO steps in front of the door. He makes a gesture as if to say – "go to the back of the line sister." WOMAN THREE makes a face at MAN TWO and goes to the back of the line. She also starts to dance in place.

It would be appropriate if the two started to do the same dance moves.

WOMAN FOUR enters moving very, very slowly with her knees pinched together. It's clear she has to use the bathroom. She sees the line and gives a gesture of dismay. She goes up to MAN TWO and gives a pleading gesture as if to say "please let me bud in

line.” MAN TWO jerks his thumb towards the back of the line. He’s not letting her in.

WOMAN FOUR gives the same pleading gesture to WOMAN THREE. WOMAN THREE jerks her thumb towards the back of the line. WOMAN FOUR gives a sigh and moves very slowly towards the back of the line. Now all three dance in place.

WOMAN ONE enters. She only dances a little. She has to use the bathroom but not as badly as the other three. She gets into line but is very impatient. She taps WOMAN FOUR on the shoulder as if to say “Why is this line moving so slowly?” WOMAN FOUR waves WOMAN ONE away. She can’t talk; she’s in too sorry a state.

WOMAN ONE goes up to WOMAN THREE and taps her on the shoulder. WOMAN THREE waves her away as well.

WOMAN ONE goes up to MAN TWO and taps him on the shoulder. MAN TWO thinks that WOMAN ONE is trying to bud in. He gives her a harder tap back and jerks his thumb towards the back of the line. WOMAN ONE doesn’t like being pushed. She gives MAN TWO a push. MAN TWO reciprocates. WOMAN ONE flexes her fingers and gives MAN TWO a mighty big push. This sends MAN TWO back into WOMAN THREE and WOMAN FOUR. All three end up on the floor.

WOMAN TWO exits from the door indicating that the bathroom is free. Since WOMAN ONE is the only one left standing, she goes in.

MAN TWO, WOMAN THREE and WOMAN FOUR all pound on the floor in frustration.

The lights change and everyone exits. MAN ONE and MAN TWO enter to sit on cubes. They are sitting outside the principal’s office. They both give a big sigh.

MAN ONE: How long have they been in there?

MAN TWO: Almost half an hour.

MAN ONE: Half an hour. How long does it take to decide a punishment? Mrs. Dufour always struck me as a rather decisive woman. Two weeks detention – zap! You're suspended – pow!

MAN TWO: Your dad is ultra-decisive. He's the king of decisiveness.

MAN ONE: I know. Can I have the car, dad? No. Two seconds tops – whamo! What the hell are they talking about?

MAN TWO: Maybe they're not talking about you. Maybe they wrapped you up in the first five minutes and now they're talking about vacations. (*MAN ONE looks at MAN TWO*) It's possible. They could be comparing vacation spots. "I like Hawaii. Jamaica is nice this time of year."

MAN ONE: You're just in a good mood 'cause they haven't reached your parents and you're not going to get yelled at till later.

MAN TWO: What's the worst that could happen? You've never been in trouble before. Sure, your first time out has been a bit of a doozy but really, how hard on you can they be?

MAN ONE: My dad's going to kill me.

MAN TWO: Be serious.

MAN ONE: Seriously he could kill me.

MAN TWO: Not gonna happen. Think smaller scale.

MAN ONE: I don't know. Maybe he'll hide all my shoes.

MAN TWO: "Son. We've decided your punishment. We're going to hide all your shoes."

MAN ONE: Just because your dad is all "Boys will be boys. Hey man, I was young once too. Peace out."

MAN TWO: I don't know Brillo. I've never set fire to a bathroom before. My dad did a lot when he was young but I'm pretty sure he never set fire to a bathroom.

MAN ONE: But we didn't mean to set fire to a bathroom.

MAN TWO: If only that counted.

MAN ONE: Who knew toilets were so flammable.

MAN TWO: Hindsight is twenty-twenty.

MAN ONE: What are they doing in there? I wish they'd come out and get it over with. Just come out right now and get whatever it is,

whatever punishment, out in the open. I just want to know. The waiting is killing me!

MAN TWO: Ah ha! Chinese water torture. I think there is no punishment. They're just sitting in there, making you sweat it out.

MAN ONE: (*standing up*) Enough is enough. This is inhuman. If they're going to punish me, fine. Just get it over with. I deserve to know. It's my basic human right to know and I want to know right now!

WOMAN ONE enters.

WOMAN ONE: All right Mr. Brillman. They're ready for you.

MAN ONE: (*sitting down*) I changed my mind. I can wait.

They exit. Lights change. WOMAN FOUR is sitting on a cube. WOMAN THREE enters.

WOMAN FOUR: (*Using an Eastern European accent*) Come in. Come in. What do you want to know? Madame Zoobenka, sees all.

WOMAN THREE: Thank you. I just have one question.

WOMAN FOUR: Madame Zoobenka knows all.

WOMAN THREE: What I want to know is –

WOMAN FOUR: Cash up front honey, 24.50 including tax. (*WOMAN THREE pays*) What is it? What do you want to know? Your hands are very descriptive. Your face has interesting shadows. This is going to be a most fascinating session. Ask your question and Madame Zoobenka will answer. She will tell all.

WOMAN THREE: OK. (*She takes a deep breath*) OK. This is what I want to know. How long am I supposed to wait for the man of my dreams?

WOMAN FOUR: Come again?

WOMAN THREE: My Prince Charming. My knight in shining armour. The one who's going to sweep me off my feet and make me happy for the rest of my life. How long am I supposed to wait?

WOMAN FOUR: You watch too much TV.

WOMAN THREE: You're supposed to see into the future. So look into the future and tell me when he's going to come.

WOMAN FOUR: Oh honey. Here take your money back. Go put an ad in the paper. Better yet, stand on a street corner with a sign:

“Wanted: One man of dreams.” You’ll be farther ahead than anything I can tell you.

WOMAN THREE: Chad said you could tell me. Chad said you were the best.

WOMAN FOUR: (*Losing accent*) Chad gets paid to say that. Look. I can do wealth and prosperity. I can do great romance and when’s the best time of year to buy a house. I can usually make a stab at children. But how long you should wait for the man of your dreams? If I could do that do you think I’d be sitting here? Do you know how long I’ve been waiting for the man of my dreams? It ain’t been a minute and it ain’t been pretty.

WOMAN THREE: What happened to your accent?

WOMAN FOUR: Huh? Oh that’s just for show. The future is easier to believe when it comes from Eastern Europe. Don’t ask me why; I just follow the trends.

WOMAN THREE: Well this is no good. I mean if I had a timeline – you will wait x number of years and then open the door, I’d be willing to wait. For the man of my dreams I’m willing to wait. My mother always said, “Don’t settle. Don’t give away your dreams. I settled for a car salesman and I’ve been kicking myself ever since.”

WOMAN FOUR: Used or new?

WOMAN THREE: Used.

WOMAN FOUR: The poor dear.

WOMAN THREE: But now, I don’t know. It’s so unpredictable. And it’s so unfair to Sherm.

WOMAN FOUR: Who’s Sherm?

WOMAN THREE: My boyfriend.

WOMAN FOUR: Hold the phone. Hold the phone. Why are you looking for a white knight when you already have a Sherm? You’re here with your don’t-settle-for-a-car-salesman sob story and you have a Sherm? Do you know how many people out there are waiting for a knight and have no back-up Sherm to lean on?

WOMAN THREE: Sherm is great don’t get me wrong. He’s sweet and kind and he loves me and –

WOMAN FOUR: And?

WOMAN THREE: He's short. My friends make fun of me all the time. He can barely kiss me without standing on tiptoe. He's not man of my dreams material. He's not the one I've been waiting for.

WOMAN FOUR: How do you know?

WOMAN THREE: His name is Sherm! The man of your dreams doesn't get off a horse and say, "Hello. My name is Sherm." It doesn't work like that.

WOMAN FOUR: (*standing up*) You watch way too much TV.

WOMAN THREE: Hey. Where are you going? What about my future!

WOMAN FOUR: I've just seen the light. I'm going to get my Mel.

WOMAN THREE: Who's Mel?

WOMAN FOUR: Mel wants to marry me. I've been putting him off and putting him off 'cause I've been waiting too. Only I've been waiting for one of those tall, dark and handsome types. Someone who drives a motorcycle and has long curly hair.

WOMAN THREE: You see. You know what you want. My mother was right. Why settle?

WOMAN FOUR: 'Cause this whole wait for the man of your dreams thing is crackers in your head. Who says the man of your dreams is going to come? What if you wait forever and you lose your Sherm and I lose my Mel and we're both bitter old women, the kind with lots of cats and dust balls for company. Kids on the street will pass by our houses and snicker. I do not want that to happen to me. I'm going to marry a man who loves me and I love him and who cares if he has a lisp and a handlebar moustache and likes Country and Western. Do you love your Sherm?

WOMAN THREE: Yes but –

WOMAN FOUR: Neh, Neh, Neh. Do you love your Sherm?

WOMAN THREE: Of course I do.

WOMAN FOUR: Then stop whinging and stop waiting for a man who's living in your head. I will wait no longer. (*calling out as she leaves*) Mel! Mel! Fire up the station wagon and the Johnny Cash. We're going to Vegas.

WOMAN THREE: (*running after*) Wait! Wait!

They exit. Lights change. Music plays.

MAN ONE enters. He moves across the stage and stands far stage left. He looks like he's waiting for the bus. WOMAN ONE enters. She goes to stand by MAN ONE. They nod politely at each other. They both look off to the side as if they are expecting a bus to come by.

WOMAN TWO and WOMAN THREE run in together, as if they are afraid of missing something. They get into the line and breathe deeply. They congratulate each other on not being late. They join the others in looking off to the side.

WOMAN FOUR enters. She is looking into a compact, primping herself as if she has to look good for the bus that everyone is waiting for. Satisfied, she closes her compact and joins the others looking off to the side.

MAN TWO enters. He looks at the line. He joins in. He too looks off to the side but can't see anything. He looks at the line but everyone in line ignores him. He looks back to the side but can't see anything.

MAN TWO: Is this a new bus stop?

The others ignore him.

MAN TWO: Is a parade coming this way?

The others ignore him.

MAN TWO: Is someone handing out free cheese?

The others ignore him.

MAN TWO: What is it? What are you waiting for?

The others all turn towards MAN TWO in disgust.

OTHERS: We're waiting for Godot.

MAN TWO: Oh. OH. OK then. Carry on. Don't mind me. Wait for Godot.

The others turn away from MAN TWO and continue looking off to the side.

MAN TWO: Am I supposed to know who Godot is?

The others give a look of disgust at MAN TWO and file off.

MAN TWO: (*following off*) Oh wait, wait! He's the guy with the free cheese!

WOMAN TWO enters. The phone is sitting on the cube. She is singing into a hairbrush.

WOMAN TWO: (*singing – she's just making up the melody*) Oh Mr. Phone. Why don't you ring? Why don't I hear you sing in the night? Oh Mr. Phone. One ding-a-ling is all I need to make it right. (*speaking as if to a Vegas night club audience, still using the hairbrush as a microphone.*) Thank you. Thank you very much, I'm here all week. You know, just before I go, I'd like to send out a little word. Just a little word out there to all the guys in the world. (*singing*) To all the guys in the world. If you meet that special girl. Don't make her wait by the phone. All alone. 'Cause that's not nice. She might curse you and wish that you had lice. How'd you like that? Have to shave your head and buy a hat. (*speaking*) Thank you. Thank you very much. Try the buffet. All you guys out there in the world. Could you do us gals a favour? It's just a simple, teeny, tiny, little thing. If you don't want to call a girl then don't ask for her number. Sounds easy don't you think audience? Don't ask for her number. Don't look her in the eyes and say "I'm going to call you." Don't say it. Don't say those five little words. Would that be so hard? I don't think so. "I'm going to call you." Five little words that make girls all over the world cancel their plans and sit in their rooms going absolutely mental waiting for stupid boys to call. I know my life would be a lot better off if I had never heard them, isn't that right audience? Ah, you're a beautiful crowd. (*singing*) For centuries girls have waited for that invitation to the ball. 'Cause a stupid boy has told her – I'm going to call. For centuries girls have believed but over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over again we've been deceived. When will we learn? When will we ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, learn. (*speaking*) Thank you. Thank you very much. Tip your waitress! Our next act is Gammy Sam and his trained seal Jo Jo. Jo Jo can play "You Light Up My Life" on the castanets. Let's hear it for Jo Jo!

She exits. WOMAN ONE enters. She sits on a cube and stares out with a look of paralyzed fear on her face. There is a moment of silence as she sits and stares. WOMAN FOUR and MAN TWO enter. They see WOMAN ONE and approach her carefully.

WOMAN FOUR: Cassie.

WOMAN ONE: Uh huh?

WOMAN FOUR: Are you OK? You look a little... Ah you look a little...

MAN TWO: Funny. You look funny.

WOMAN FOUR: No she doesn't.

MAN TWO: Maybe not funny. Not ha-ha funny anyway. A little more scary than funny. A little more space alien weird than funny. A little more –

WOMAN FOUR: Howie. (*she clears her throat*) Cassie?

WOMAN ONE: Uh huh?

WOMAN FOUR: Whatcha doing?

WOMAN ONE: I am drenched in the stench of my own sweat with shaking limbs I cannot quiet. I am paralyzed with certain fear that everything, everything in my life is dreadfully horribly wrong.

MAN TWO: Well as long as it's nothing major.

WOMAN FOUR: Howie! (*to WOMAN ONE*) Cassie...

WOMAN ONE: Uh huh?

WOMAN FOUR: Can we ask why you're drenched in the stench of your own sweat, with quaking limbs –

MAN TWO: Shaking limbs –

WOMAN FOUR: Right, shaking limbs and certain fear and all that?

WOMAN ONE: I have to do my oral presentation in History this afternoon.

WOMAN FOUR: Your oral presentation?

WOMAN ONE: Uh huh.

WOMAN FOUR: You're paralyzed with certain fear because you have to speak in public?

WOMAN ONE: Uh huh.

WOMAN FOUR: This afternoon.

WOMAN ONE: In 2 hours 23 minutes and 17 seconds.

MAN TWO: Well as long as it's nothing major.

WOMAN ONE: I didn't think. I didn't think. I didn't think that it would be a problem. What's the problem? There's no problem. I've done the research. I've practiced in my bedroom in front of the mirror. There's no problem. But I didn't think. I didn't think that I would have to wait the whole day before I had to do the presentation. Do you know what happens when you have to wait a whole day before you do something? Do you know what happens when you don't do something right away but you have to wait the whole day?

MAN TWO: Please Cassie, tell us what happens.

WOMAN FOUR: Howie.

MAN TWO: She asked!

WOMAN ONE: What happens is you start to think. You start to get nervous. You start to think about what's going to happen during the presentation when you're standing in front of the class and everyone is looking at you. What if everyone is incredibly bored? What if the teacher is so bored he starts making paper airplanes and launching them at me? What if Joe Blockhead sitting in the back makes faces and lewd gestures? What if my mouth goes dry and I can't say anything but squeak squeak squeak and I fail the presentation and I don't get into a good school and I'm left to fend for myself for the rest of my life with a crappy entry level cubical job and a bachelor apartment on the wrong side of the tracks! *(she takes a deep ragged breath)* That is what happens when you have to wait.

MAN TWO: Wow.

WOMAN FOUR: That's a... that's a lot of pressure to put on yourself over an oral presentation.

MAN TWO: Wow.

WOMAN FOUR: Maybe you should talk to Mr. Besten about this. Just so he knows... your feelings on the situation.

MAN TWO: I mean really. Wow.

WOMAN FOUR: Howie.

MAN TWO: How much caffeine have you had today?

WOMAN ONE: Huh?

WOMAN FOUR: *(pulling up WOMAN ONE)* Nothing. Cassie, why don't we go to Mr. Besten's office. I'm sure he'll put your mind at ease.

MAN TWO: Maybe you don't have to do your presentation today.

WOMAN ONE: Not do it today? Not do it today? Then I'll have to wait until tomorrow!!

They exit.

WOMAN THREE enters to sit. MAN ONE is pacing.

WOMAN THREE: Stop it.

MAN ONE: *(still pacing)* What?

WOMAN THREE: Stop it.

MAN ONE: What?

WOMAN THREE: Pacing. You're wearing a hole in the carpet.

MAN ONE: I can't. I'm all wired up. When I'm wired up, I need to keep moving. It's genetic or generational or geometrical or something. Why are you so calm? Isn't this driving you nuts? Isn't this eating you up inside? Aren't you going crazy?

WOMAN THREE: They took him in five minutes ago. It's going to be awhile.

MAN ONE: Awhile. *(continues pacing)* I hate waiting. Hate it, hate it, hate it. I'm never good at Christmas. And birthdays... don't get me started on birthdays.

WOMAN THREE: Stop it!

MAN ONE: I can't.

WOMAN THREE: Come on, you're making me dizzy.

MAN ONE: *(stopping dead)* Dizzy. Are you getting sick? *(he looks around with panic)* You're getting sick, I've heard stories of people getting sick in emergency rooms, worse than when they came in and dying and—

WOMAN THREE: Would you shut up. Would you shut up about dying? People are staring.

MAN ONE: You don't need to get snippy.

WOMAN THREE: Sorry. I'm not thinking straight. I've never—*(she grabs her head)* I don't know what to think or how to think and I don't have any room in my brain for polite conversation. *(she looks up)* Snippy?

MAN ONE: Mom word. I like it.

WOMAN THREE: You would.

MAN ONE: (*sits with a sigh*) I hate waiting rooms more than I hate waiting. There are a ton of germs here. (*he sniffs the air*) I can smell them.

WOMAN THREE: You can't smell germs.

MAN ONE: I can.

WOMAN THREE: What do you care?

MAN ONE: I care. All it takes is for one germ to wipe out your whole immune system! We could be covered with germs right now. (*he shivers*)

WOMAN THREE: Is that stuff your mom says?

MAN ONE: 'Course. She talks A LOT about germs. (*looking around*) Where are your parents?

WOMAN THREE: Calling Jason's mom.

MAN ONE: Oh. (*pause*) Oh. (*pause*) Nicky?

WOMAN THREE: Would you stop talking for—

MAN ONE: I can't sit here and —

WOMAN THREE: We're not talking —

MAN ONE: Do you know anyone who's died?

WOMAN THREE: (*she looks at him before answering*) No.

MAN ONE: My grandfather died two years ago.

WOMAN THREE: I'm not talking about this.

MAN ONE: And someone put the ugliest sweater on him. I've never seen it before. It was a Christmas sweater, with snowmen.

WOMAN THREE: Pete.

MAN ONE: And snowflakes, and pom poms and there is no way Grandpa would have been caught dead in a —

WOMAN THREE: (*standing*) Pete!

MAN ONE: (*standing*) I threw the ball! I threw it, OK! I can't stop— This is my fault. It's my fault Jason's here and I can't —

WOMAN THREE: It's my fault. I told you to throw long. Because he was being so, *(she throws her arms up)* he just catches everything!

MAN ONE: I wanted to throw it long. He said I'd never make the team.

WOMAN THREE: I wanted him not to catch the ball. I wanted him to look bad. It's not your fault. It's not mine.

MAN ONE: How do you know? *(sits)* I never saw that car.

WOMAN THREE: Me neither. *(sits)* He'll be fine. He has to. Right?

MAN ONE: How long do we have to wait to find out?

WOMAN THREE: I don't know. So. How many germs are there here?

MAN ONE: You don't want to know. And don't even get me started on super germs. The super germs are the worst. Mom wouldn't lie.

WOMAN THREE: You can tell me if you want to. I won't mind. OK?

MAN ONE: OK.

WOMAN THREE and MAN ONE exit. WOMAN ONE enters and sits on a cube. She is at a restaurant. She has a huge menu in front of her. MAN TWO walks by very quickly without stopping. He is a waiter.

WOMAN ONE: Hello there I'm ready to – *(MAN TWO completely ignores her)* Okay dokey.

WOMAN TWO comes by from the other direction. She is also a waiter and ignores WOMAN ONE.

WOMAN ONE: I've been waiting for a while and I'm ready to... *(when WOMAN TWO has gone)* Okay dokey. I was warned about this. A woman eating alone always has trouble getting served. Not to worry. I want to eat at this snobby French restaurant and I'm going to do it.

WOMAN THREE races by ignoring WOMAN ONE.

WOMAN ONE: *(very fast)* I've been waiting fifteen minutes now I know what I want to order –

WOMAN FOUR and MAN TWO walk by ignoring WOMAN ONE.

WOMAN ONE: Can I get some soup? A salad? How about some bread and water? Can I get that?

MAN ONE walks by ignoring WOMAN ONE.



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