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How to get into College

A comedy in one-act

By Don Zolidis

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How to Get Into College by Don Zolidis
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One-Act Comedy
27 any gender plus ensemble

Getting into college is harder than ever! It's not enough to have perfect grades, high test scores, and a slew of AP credits anymore. But fear not! Two Fairy College Admissions Counselors are here to teach you all the secret ways to make your application seem just a little bit more special—like saving an endangered species no one likes, or franchising your lemonade stand, or bribery! A hilarious comedy about the most stressful and confusing modern rite of passage: applying for college.

Cast of Characters

LOLA, an aspiring college student

WEEMS, a college counselor
BENTLEY, a college counselor

Athletics
TODD
COACH O'GRADY
COACH O'BRIEN
LUCAS (should be cast as another part as well)

Entrepreneurship
BREENA
CATHY
TOM (should be cast as another part)
COOPER

Save the World
MINA
CHARLES

Bribes
ESTHER
MOM
DAD
COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Be Unique
ROHAN
ANNIE

Hire Someone to Impersonate You

SOLONGE
COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Scientific Discovery
BEATRICE
CHARLES
MONSTER

Leadership
BRYN
SAMSON
MODERATOR
WARRIORS

Gender of Characters: Any of the characters may be played by anyone of any gender. Feel free to change names and pronouns as necessary to suit.

Double-Casting: All of the roles, except the main three, could be double or triple cast as necessary. With some quick costume changes, a cast of 10 could easily do this show.

A bedroom.
LOLA, a typical high school student, is writing her college admissions essay.

LOLA

Dear Selective College: Why would I like to attend your school? Um… I think I would like to go there because your website is pretty cool and the pamphlet you sent me is colorful and printed on glossy paper.

She shakes her head.

That won't work. Um… I would like to go there because your campus has trees and lots of old buildings and there are a lot of attractive people smiling in the pictures.

She shakes her head again.

Um… You have sent me many emails, and I totally read them all. No. Uh…

WEEMS bursts in, dressed in a suit with little fairy wings.

WEEMS

Fear not, prospective college student! It is I, your Fairy College Admissions Counselor!

LOLA

How'd you get into my room?!

Weems waves his wand.

WEEMS

Magic.

There's a knock on the door.

Don't answer that.

LOLA

Come in.

BENTLEY, another college admissions counselor, enters. She wears a suit as well, but no wings.

BENTLEY

Fear not, it is I, Bentley, your Emergency College Admissions Counselor!

She notices Weems

Are you wearing wings?

WEEMS

I wanted to spice it up a bit.

BENTLEY

Were you hiding in her room?

WEEMS

It's less weird when you wear wings.

BENTLEY

No it's not.

LOLA

Um… hey. This is super creepy and everything – if you don't mind, I'm gonna get back to stressing over my college application and maybe you people could leave.

WEEMS

You *people*?

BENTLEY *(to Weems)*

Shut it. That's why we're here! My name is Bentley and this is Weems –

WEEMS

Hey.

BENTLEY

Who is not a magic fairy.

WEEMS

I'm just a guy. Standing in front of a girl. Wearing wings. Asking her to -

BENTLEY

Stop it. And we're here to help you get into college!

LOLA

Yeah I gathered that, but I don't actually need help.

WEEMS

Oh touch *you*.

LOLA

I'm in the top ten percent of my class. I have good test scores, I'm in a bunch of extra-curriculars, and I took like nine AP classes.

WEEMS *(dripping with sarcasm)*

Nine? Oh wow, nine. So amazing. Incredible.
My *gerbils* took nine AP classes! And they're gerbils. And not particularly smart ones.

BENTLEY

Getting into college is more competitive than ever –

WEEMS

You are doomed! You're getting in *nowhere*!

LOLA

Um… my parents both got into good schools with those qualifications.

Weems and Bentley laugh.

WEEMS

Oh gee if it worked for your parents.

BENTLEY

What Weems is trying to say is things are more difficult now.

WEEMS

If your parents had a heartbeat and could spell their names they could get into college.

BENTLEY

Think about your parents. Do they know anything?

LOLA

No.

BENTLEY

There you go. So why are you listening to them?

LOLA

Good point.

BENTLEY

Let me lay it out for you: You want to go to a highly selective college or university, right?

LOLA

Sure.

BENTLEY

You know how they do those college rankings? By *selectivity.* Which means, the more people the college rejects, the higher its ranking. So their goal is to reject as many losers as possible.

WEEMS

Eventually, the best college will reject *everyone* who applies.

BENTLEY

And you know what your competition is?

WEEMS

Genetically engineered super mutants who have been preparing for this moment since they were in the womb.

BENTLEY

Well –

WEEMS

I'm talking 5.7 GPA, perfect SAT scores, captain of eight hundred clubs, star athlete robots with one mission in life! To look better on a college application than *you.* And they will crush you. They will grind you up in their perfectly photogenic teeth and they will mash you into a vegan slurpee!

LOLA

How could I be in a vegan slurpee? That doesn't make any sense.

WEEMS

They will manage because they are just that amazing!

BENTLEY

What Weems is trying to say is that you need help.

WEEMS

A LOT of help.

LOLA

Well, do you want to read my essay?

Weems slaps it out of her hand.

WEEMS

NO. We're here to guide you.

BENTLEY

In order to get into college, you need to be unique and different and amazing.

WEEMS

Or, you need to be able to fake that.

LOLA

How can I do that?

BENTLEY

Watch!

Lights change.

1. Sports

WEEMS

Now, everyone knows that the best way to get into a college is to be an amazing athlete.

Skipping Forward

TODD

Um I don't even know how to play hurling.

COACH O'GRADY

Oh sweet laddie, you don't "play" hurling, hurling plays you. Just think of it like rugby but with weapons.

Todd begins affixing pads to himself as Coach O'Grady gives a speech. Todd adds knee-pads, heavy gloves, shin guards, shoulder pads, a helmet, then wraps himself in pillows and then an extra level of pillows after that.

Take a moment to think about this day. Smell the sun. Drink the wind on your cheeks. Pray for yer health and safety. Because when that rock-hard ball is comin' at ye at 140 miles an hour and ye see yer life passin' before yer eyes, you'll think, by gosh this is great, risking your life and limb and sanity and future brain power for glory on the hurling field. This is the best day of your life, lad. Oh how I wish I could still be out there, getting hit in the face with the sliotar, or getting stabbed with the hurley stick in the ribs, or getting knocked to the fresh earth and being trampled by seven or eight large men. Don't forget your face padding.

Coach O'Grady stuffs a pillow into the faceguard of the helmet.

Can't do without that. You'd lose both your eyes in a matter of seconds.

Todd tries to say something, but we can't hear him through the face padding.

Don't try to talk. Words just ruin it. All right let's start the game!

Coach O'Grady hands Todd a large stick.

LUCAS, another person dressed identically, enters with his coach, COACH O'BRIEN.

COACH O'BRIEN

That's right, lad! Bare your fangs! You are a rabid beast! You eat lightning and poop thunder! No mercy! I want you to rip that poor lad's toes off and feed `em to him! Tear off his extremities like a true sportsman!

LUCAS

Mmmggh mgmmghg mgmgmg!

COACH O'BRIEN

Yes, yer a killer! Yer a killer of killers! Yer a kraken with wolves for tentacles! Aye!

COACH O'GRADY

Ah Coach O'Brien dinna be bringing yer whelps to a man's game! My lad has been eating rivets for breakfast! His skin's made of leather and he has no thoughts in his sweet little head except eviscerating your lad at hurling!

Todd tries to say something again. Coach O'Grady pats him and hands him a large stick.

Shh boy don't say a word.

Lucas tries to say something.

Coach O'Brien shhs him.

COACH O'BRIEN

No one needs to hear yer words, lad. Let your actions speak for themselves. Violence. Only violence.

Lucas is afraid.
Todd is afraid.
Coach O'Grady blows his whistle.

COACH O'GRADY

GO!

COACH O'BRIEN

GO LAD!

Todd and Lucas tentatively move towards each other, like sumo wrestlers in inflatable suits.

COACH O'GRADY

That's right! SCORE!

Todd and Lucas grab each other. Then dance like kids at a middle school dance.

COACH O'BRIEN

WHAT ARE YE DOIN! THIS ISN'T A MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE!

Lucas twirls Todd.

COACH O'GRADY

NO! THIS IS AGAINST EVERYTHING HURLING STANDS FOR!

They both sort of try to whack each other with their sticks.
Both of them fall over.

COACH O'BRIEN

Well that's better.

LOLA

Um… I don't think I want to try hurling.

WEEMS

It's a great sport. Some of the people who play it have most of their teeth.

LOLA

This is a real thing?

BENTLEY

Of course. In Ireland they play it without pads.

WEEMS

It's a sport from prehistoric times before sense or rational thought.

BENTLEY

Perfect for college.

Todd and Lucas roll and try to get up, but really can't.
They try to hit each other with their sticks while still on the ground.

COACH O'BRIEN

That's right! No mercy! Hit him in the potatoes!

Both of them are probably crying now.
But it's hard to hear because of their face padding.

Lights change.

2. Entrepreneurship

BENTLEY

Don't worry, though, because there are plenty of other ways you can show you're special and different even if you're hopelessly uncoordinated.

WEEMS

Like entrepreneurship.

LOLA

Oh.

BENTLEY

How about starting your own business?

WEEMS

You see, colleges are looking for that special someone who is well-rounded who will also make a boatload of money.

BENTLEY

Starting a business tells the college that you are exactly what they want: a greedy capitalist without a soul.

WEEMS

The kind of person who will exploit the system for a fortune and then, maybe, feel bad about it later, and donate a building.

BENTLEY

Remember: every building on every campus is named after someone who got super rich from exploiting the masses! Fun.

WEEMS

Let's watch!

Lights up on BREENA and a lemonade stand.

BREENA

Lemonade! Fresh lemonade here! Fresh lemonade!

CATHY, a mom, enters.

CATHY

Oh look a lemonade stand! This is so adorable!

BREENA

Would you like to buy some lemonade?

CATHY

Of course I would sweetie. Aren't you darling? I don't see any prices here, is it fifty cents?

Breena chuckles.

BREENA

We're actually a subscription service.

CATHY

Oh. Um –

BREENA

Just fill out this application and you can join.

Breena hands over an application.

There are actually three tiers of membership -

CATHY

I just want some lemonade.

BREENA

Of course. You don't want the basic service, it's terrible – but I also sell premium and VIP memberships, where the real value is.

CATHY

You're asking for my social security number?

BREENA

Strictly for identification purposes.

CATHY

This is for lemonade?

BREENA

Let me tell you about this lemonade. This is not store-bought mass-produced swill, okay? This is bespoke small-batch lemonade with hand-chosen lemons and pure, Columbian cane sugar. This is not a thirst-quencher, it is a lifestyle brand. Drinking this lemonade tells the world: I am special, I am different, I care about quality, the environment, alpacas, and the bee population. We reject most people.

CATHY

You reject people?

TOM, a dorky dad enters.

TOM

Hey check it out lemonade! When life hands you lemons, you make lemonade, am I right? Little Dad joke. You want to hear another Dad joke?

BREENA

No.

TOM

Oh. Well I sure am thirsty.

BREENA

No.

TOM

What?

BREENA

Move along, sir.

She points for him to leave.

TOM

I just wanted some lemonade.

BREENA

You're done here.

TOM

Oh. Okay.

Tom slumps and walks off sadly.

CATHY

Wow.

BREENA

We are looking for brand ambassadors. Are you prepared?

CATHY

Um… okay I'll do the premium membership.

Cathy signs the document.

BREENA

Fantastic. You're going to be very satisfied.

CATHY

Can I have the lemonade now?

BREENA

Actually, premium membership only qualifies you for lemonade during non-surge times.

CATHY

What are the surge times?

BREENA

When the temperature gets above eighty degrees, research shows that demand increases.

CATHY

So I can't get lemonade when it's hot?

BREENA

Oh absolutely you can! You just need to upgrade to the VIP tier. There's a small change-over fee, and then there's a convenience charge.

CATHY

What is a convenience charge?

BREENA

The change of membership adds a lot of time and effort for me, so I need to be compensated for my time.

CATHY

But you're the one who made the tiers!

BREENA

And that also takes a lot of time. Which is compensated in the origination fee.

CATHY

This is ridiculous! You know what? Cancel my membership.

BREENA

Of course. To cancel your membership you'll need to speak to Cooper.

Skipping Forward

BENTLEY
You can learn a lot about business if your parents work for Verizon.

Lights change.

3. Save the World

WEEMS
Well, if that doesn't work, you can try saving the world.

LOLA
Saving the world?

BENTLEY
Yeah if you save the world you will definitely have a leg up on the competition.

WEEMS
A little bit.

LOLA
How am I supposed to do that?

BENTLEY
Start with something small. Like an endangered species.

LOLA
Oh! Okay! I love pandas!

WEEMS
Nah nah nah –

LOLA
Or the spotted owl –

BENTLEY
No no no – those are popular endangered species.

WEEMS
Totally played. You're gonna have like nine hundred people from California who are trying to save owls or whatever.

BENTLEY
You need a species that will help you stand out.

WEEMS
A species no one cares about or even likes. Like this.

Lights up on MINA, in a wetsuit, on a boat.
Seagull sounds.
Mina talks as if she's being recorded.

MINA

Hi there! My name's Mina and I'm trying to save one of the world's least-loved endangered species, The Scorpion Devil Slug!

Mina produces a Scorpion Devil Slug, a slimy spotted thing about a foot long.

Look at this little guy.
Beautiful.
I'm being careful because the Scorpion Devil Slug is one of the most toxic and venomous creatures on the planet. One little sting from one of his two dozen or so probing tentacles and I will soon be frothing at the mouth and going into anaphylactic shock! Then my catatonic body will fall from this little dinghy into the ocean, where I will be consumed in an orgy of death and feeding.
Speaking of which, it's a really nice day to be out here on the water, in the Scorpion Devil Slug's natural environment.

Her brother, CHARLES, enters, a little less certain about how great this is.

CHARLES

That's right, Mina! Beautiful nature. The open ocean. Only one hundred and seven degrees of punishing sunlight and salt spray! My skin might never recover! Woo!

MINA

But it's worth it!

CHARLES

It sure is! To save these beautiful slimy poisonous creatures!

MINA

Venomous, not poisonous!

CHARLES

Fun fact: The Scorpion Devil Slug is the only creature which is both poisonous and venomous!

MINA

Wow! Nature is so amazing!

CHARLES

Yes it is! And look what I found!

Charles takes out an even bigger, slimier, more evil looking thing.

It's the Scorpion Devil Slug's larger, more dangerous, more ornery cousin! The Giant Vampiric Scorpion Devil Slug!

MINA

Wow! Where did you get that?

CHARLES

I found him affixed to my leg, dissolving my skin! I only have a few moments before excruciating, agonizing pain overwhelms my senses! But it's worth it! We're making a difference!

MINA

Yes we are! Because without us, these creatures might very well disappear from the planet.

CHARLES

Literally! Because the Scorpion Devil Slug requires a host body to breed!

Charles tries to keep a smile as agonizing pain hits him.

Oh boy I'm feeling that!
Sort of an otherworldly nightmare feeling!
Why don't you tell our audience about the slug's breeding requirements while I try to push down the horrific pain using only the power of my mind!

MINA

Thanks! You okay over there?

Charles keeps a smile and whimpers.

Well, um, when this little cutie is ready to breed, she latches on to a human – sort of like this – and dissolves a layer of skin with her acidic saliva, and then uses her tentacles to inject several thousand eggs subcutaneously. Just like a tick. Except thirty or forty times the size. Later – the baby slugs chew their way out of the eggs and up through the soft tissues of your body and…
Isn't nature neat? Right, Charles?

Charles can no longer speak.

He starts making a horrific high-pitched squeal.

Ha ha ha. It's a good thing we're out here! Making the world safe for these beautiful terrifying horrible monsters. Why don't you tell our audience about the role they play in the ecosystem, Charles!

Charles cannot.

Well, in their native environment, Scorpion Devil Slugs are typically used as ammunition by Orcas in their undersea wars. Orcas just launch these little suckers at each other like hockey pucks. If they go extinct, the Orcas will have to go back to slapping each other with their fins. Which would be terrible.
Oh boy. Oh. I believe I have annoyed the Scorpion Devil Slug. Whoops.
Her natural response is to – dig in – and inject 550 ccs of potent venom into my bloodstream and –

CHARLES

AAAAAAAAAAH I CAN'T TAKE IT IT BURNS IT BURNS I WANT TO DIE KILL IT KILL IT!

MINA

No Charles we're *saving* them!

CHARLES

AAAAAAAH!

Charles falls off the boat.

MINA

Whoops there goes my fine motor skills!
It was… worth it.

Mina freezes and collapses.

LOLA

Um… maybe let's not do that?

WEEMS

It doesn't have to be that particular endangered creature.

BENTLEY

There are some really awful ones if you want to look.

WEEMS

Nature. It wants to kill us.

4. Bribes

BENTLEY

Okay, fine, if that doesn't work, there's a tried and true method that's been getting mediocre kids into college for years:

WEEMS

Bribery.

BENTLEY

Do your parents have some retirement accounts they won't be needing?

WEEMS

Or a few life insurance policies that could be cashed out?

LOLA

But how could I even ask my parents for money?

Bentley chuckles.

BENTLEY

With a little determination and ingenuity, most parents can be milked for cash like dairy cows.
Watch.

ESTHER and MOM enter.

ESTHER

Hey Mommmm, how much do you love me?

MOM

I love you to the moon and back.

ESTHER

And what kind of dollar amount would you put on that?

MOM

I'm not bribing a college admissions officer to get you into college, sweetie.

ESTHER

Right. Of course. That would be terrible and unethical.
You know what's also terrible? Being the only one in your peer group to have a kid who can't get into college. I mean, that's a pretty poor reflection on your parenting, right? Gosh, your kid didn't even get into a prestigious school. I guess you were too *lazy* and *selfish* to spend the time necessary to get your kid tutors and after-school help and cool opportunities. Maybe you just didn't put in the work to make sure I did good in school. Huh. Maybe you needed to put a little more effort in.
I'm sure that doesn't say anything bad about you.
I'm sure no one is *judging* you because of that.
Talking behind your back.
Laughing at you.

MOM

All right fine let me get my checkbook.

WEEMS

And once you've guilted your parent into draining their life savings, the rest is child's play!

Lights up on a desk with a COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER.
MOM and DAD sit opposite him.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Okayyy, well I'm reviewing Esther's application here…

He shakes his head.

C in Algebra 2?

DAD

Right. Um.

MOM

Right.

DAD

So – I think that her grades can be explained by…

Dad takes out a five-dollar bill and slides it across the table.

Mr. Lincoln?

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Are you trying to bribe me, sir?

DAD

Oh no. I'm sure that never happens in this building that is named after a person who gave a lot of money to this college.

MOM

Yes. It would be ridiculous to assume that this institution which gets half of its operating budget from donations by wealthy people would need "donations" from other wealthy people.

DAD

Or. Also ridiculous would be a personal bribe for a valued employee who I'm sure is paid so much money by this college and doesn't need money for a speedboat.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Yes. This employee of the college is paid quite well. Maybe not well enough to afford a second home on the coast of Spain, though.

DAD

Huh. That is a shame.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

It is. It's also a shame your daughter got a C- in History.

MOM

Would it also be a shame if a valued employee of this college received information about that grade while relaxing in a brand-new luxury vehicle valued at eighty-one thousand dollars?

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

No I think it would only not be a shame if that employee was reading about this information in his second home *on the coast of Spain*.

DAD

Would this employee happen to have a brochure about this second home so that other people might look at it and go over their finances?

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Oh look I just found something. How strange that this would be sitting here.

Skipping Forward

ROHAN
I don't care about you, your college, or your pets.

ANNIE
I have spent a lot of time in high school exploring my many interests.

ROHAN
I have ONE interest.

ANNIE
Whether it was my four years on the cheer squad or becoming a varsity debater.

ROHAN
Snakes.

ANNIE
I also worked a part-time job to learn that some things in life require hard work!

ROHAN
Snakes are my life.

ANNIE
While still maintaining a perfect A average and passing 12 AP tests.

ROHAN
Some people only have one or two snakes, and those people are posers. I have many, many snakes. All kinds. I am wearing snakes on me right now. You can't see them because they are underneath my clothes. They appreciate my body heat.

ANNIE
I would like to answer the essay question: "Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure."

ROHAN
I do not fail. I cannot.

ANNIE
One time, in Physics class, I was having difficulty understanding a concept. As much as I tried, I couldn't get it. I started doubting myself.

ROHAN
I am unstoppable force. Fear is the mind-killer.

ANNIE

I started wondering if maybe I wasn't smart enough. Maybe this challenge was too much.

ROHAN

There is one challenge I face: And that is the wild boar which haunts my dreams. When the wind blows, I will catch the scent of him in my nostrils, and the hunt begins. He is mighty – old as the mountain and resents my intrusion into his world. He will kill me if he can. I will slay him and say a prayer over his glorious corpse.

ANNIE

So I made note cards –

ROHAN

I fashioned a spear from sharpened wood using a mixture of my own blood and mucus as glue. I wrapped the haft in the discarded skin of my beloved python, Beulah, to imbue me with her power.

ANNIE

And I studied all night.

ROHAN

I found his dung near an overturned oak- fresh and still warm. I was closing in.

ANNIE

And then the day of the test came –

ROHAN

I came upon him near a stream – his eyes blazed with fire, he had been hunted for years – none had claimed him. I pierced my own side with the spear to enrage him with the scent of my blood. I wanted him angry.

ANNIE

The test was so challenging!

ROHAN

He charged upon me like the devil himself! My spear shattered when it struck his leathery hide!

ANNIE

And there was an essay question Oh no!

ROHAN *(overlapping)*

I felt the hot tang of his blood fill my mouth as I wrestled the great beast to the earth! I sank my fingers into his flanks like talons –

ANNIE

I got an A!

ROHAN *(overlapping)*
His body shuddered beneath my assault! I became an animal then! I bit the creature and he bit me! I am chaos and fire and death! I am Nimrod unbound! I am one with the great boar!

ANNIE
And that's how I learned that hard work pays off!

ROHAN
I am the master of life and death! AAAAAAAAGGGHHH!

ANNIE
And if you accept me into your college, I will bring my can-do attitude!

ROHAN
I will bring snakes. Many, many snakes.

LOLA
Wow.

WEEMS
Let's be honest: if you're reading a bunch of essays, are you going to remember perfect Annie with her nice grades, or are you going to remember the snake loving boar hunting madman?

6. Hire Someone to impersonate you

LOLA
But what if I'm just not that interesting?

WEEMS
No problem. There's always the interview.

BENTLEY
This is called, "inventing a compelling backstory."

LOLA
So you lie?

WEEMS
You embellish. Let's say you grew up near a fire station.

BENTLEY
You embellish by saying your house caught fire and you barely escaped with your life.

WEEMS

Or you had a cold once.

BENTLEY

You died and came back to life and now you cherish every day like it could your last blah blah blah.

LOLA

So – make up a story for the interview.

WEEMS

Oh no no – hire someone to do it for you.

LOLA

Hire someone to prepare me for the interview?

BENTLEY

No no no – hire someone to *be* you during the interview.

WEEMS

Find a professional actor – someone who's a lot more charismatic and emotional than you.

BENTLEY

Someone who can milk that invented personal narrative for as much drama as possible.

*SOLONGE enters. Solonge is dressed somewhat like Lola, but a more interesting version. *Solonge may be a different gender than Lola.*

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Okay, so why do you think you'd like to go to this college, Lola?

Solonge looks off into space with a thousand-yard stare.

Lola?

SOLONGE

I seen my full of death. Times were hard on the farm. You never knew when the next rain was comin', or when up from the south would come a great cloud of locusts – I thought they were grasshoppers at first. I used to catch `em in my hands when I was a child.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Right, but um –

SOLONGE

My grandpappy was the first one to go. His skin got paper-thin by the end. That's just how it is on the farm. Life and death in equal measure. I had a pet goat.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

I'm sorry to hear about -

SOLONGE

His name was Barry. Had one eye. Used to sit on my bed and night and eat my pajamas. That's just how it was. You wore pajamas, and sometimes a goat ate them. You didn't complain, because you knew your Momma was also dealing with a pet goat. She couldn't ever have no new dress. Cause of the goat.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Why did you have the pet goats if they were eating your clothes?

SOLONGE

That's what you did! We didn't know no better. I used to ride out with my Daddy into the fields – we grew sorghum. It was beautiful. Sorghum as far as the eye could see. My Daddy said – this will be yours one day – if the bank don't take it from us.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Did the bank take it?

SOLONGE

They tried. Then they decided they didn't want it. Too many memories. Also goats.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

But -

SOLONGE

My Momma was beautiful. In the beginning. Before the locusts and the drought and the pet goats got to her. Life takes from you, just as much as it gives. Pretty soon you're digging a grave for the mailman in the dirt floor of your basement.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Why were you digging a grave for the mailman?

SOLONGE

Cause he died. That's what you did. You chip in. You help.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

I'm just trying to wrap my mind about *why* –

SOLONGE

You didn't ask why on the farm. We didn't have time for why. Why is a luxury. We were hard folk. Simple folk. In the summers we'd catch fireflies in our bare hands and play leapfrog with the donkeys. The donkeys always won. That's how it was. No crying that the donkeys were cheating – nobody had time to listen to your whining. You skinned your knee, you kept going. You lost two fingers to a feral barncat, you didn't say nothing. You got hit in the face with a rusty nail thrown by a trained goat? You smiled and thought, `that goat has got aim.'

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Okay, I'm trying to understand why the goats were there in the first place. They seem unpleasant.

SOLONGE

You have no idea. You with your little easy life. Free from goats. My Momma passed not long after my Grandpappy – carried away by the locusts. Her last words to me were: `aaaah locusts. Also, go to college. Be better than this. You can do it. Even if your grades ain't that great and your SAT scores ain't nothing special. Go. Live your life. Far from here. Aaaaah locusts got me.'

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Wow.

SOLONGE

Wow. So I guess I'm here to honor her memory. Momma. Poor Momma.

Solonge has an emotional moment.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER JAMELLA

Okay, so second question: What do you think you're going to major in?

SOLONGE

Pain.

Lights change.

7. Scientific Discovery

BENTLEY

Of course, if fiction makes you itchy, you could stand out for something you actually did.

LOLA

Like what?

WEEMS

Well, what are you doing with all that free time outside of your 10 AP classes and fourteen extra-curricular activities?

BENTLEY

Sleeping?! Please.

WEEMS

Sleep is for the weak. Think about how great your resume for college would look if you cut out useless sleep.

BENTLEY

For instance, you could make scientific discoveries!

BEATRICE enters, in a lab coat.
Into her phone.

BEATRICE

Day 113. My experiments are growing closer to fruition. Progress has been slow and hampered by my parents, who keep asking me to clean my room. But I will not be deterred. I will not clean my room, for I am close. I am about to pierce the veil that separates life from death. They call me mad. No. The world is mad. I am sane.

JAMES enters, dragging a body under a sheet.

JAMES

Um – are we sure this is legal?

BEATRICE

It's better to ask for forgiveness than permission.

JAMES

Does that work for crimes?

BEATRICE

Only one way to find out. Attach the device.

James begins attaching electrical wires to the body underneath the sheet.

JAMES

Hey I just wanted to let you know that this time we've spent together trying to break the laws of nature has been really special for me.

BEATRICE

James, please don't ruin this.

JAMES

I know you probably think I'm just the guy who goes to the morgue and steals a body, or digs up other body parts from the cemetery, but – there's a lot more to me than that.

BEATRICE

James – we have a mad scientist-deranged servant relationship, okay? I don't want to ruin that.

JAMES

Okay. It's just I see you up there mad scientisting and I'm real proud.

BEATRICE

Thanks. All right let's fire this sucker up.

JAMES

If this goes sideways and our creation gets loose and kills us, I just want to let you know how I feel. Also, can you write a recommendation letter for me for college?

BEATRICE

No, that's annoying.

JAMES

Okay.

BEATRICE

And three two one…
Beatrice throws a switch.
The lights go in and out.
The MONSTER under the sheet starts moving.
It's ALIVE!
The Monster dies immediately.
Dang it.

JAMES

Aw I thought we got it that time.

BEATRICE

Increase the voltage!

JAMES

Sure!
Beatrice throws another switch.
The lights go in and out.
The MONSTER under the sheet starts moving.

BEATRICE

It's ALIVE AGAIN!
It dies again.
Oh come on!
She kicks something.

The MONSTER comes alive.

BEATRICE

Yes! Sweet!
The Monster looks around. Blinks.

JAMES

Hi. I'm James. That's Beatrice over there. We're kind of a mad scientist and servant duo. Super fun.

MONSTER

Did I… die?

BEATRICE

She speaks! Yes! You have crossed over.

MONSTER

I was seriously dead?

BEATRICE

Very seriously!

MONSTER

And this is the afterlife?

BEATRICE

Well um…

MONSTER

Aren't there supposed to be like clouds or harps or something? I don't even feel like a sense of profound peace. This is like… I just have this nasty taste in my mouth.

JAMES

You probably haven't brushed your teeth in like a month since you were dead.

MONSTER

Oh man this is terrible. Where's my dog? I was supposed to get my dog back! My dog died and then went to heaven and then when I get here I'm supposed to meet him again so he can lick my face and wag his tail! I'm just looking around in this shabby basement with ugly décor and there's no clouds and there's no singing and no angels and no dog and this is the worst afterlife ever! What the heck. I'm leaving a 1-star Yelp review.

BEATRICE

You're not actually in heaven.

MONSTER

I'm in the other place? This weak sauce slightly damp basement?! Where are the flames? Where are the torture devices? I don't even see any like demons ready to roast me with specific torments from my life! Pathetic. Do not recommend.

BEATRICE

No, I, Beatrice, have brought you back to life. You shall be known as Beatrice's Monster.

MONSTER

My name is Terri. Okay? Get it right. And you didn't even bother to bring me snacks? There's no water bottles? There's no VIP treatment? I'm, like, back to life, but looking around, I'd rather be dead then hang here. Whatever. Brains, I guess. Fire bad. When do I go crazy and start murdering people?

BEATRICE
Hopefully you won't go crazy and start killing people –

MONSTER
No I'm definitely going crazy and killing people and you know why? Because of the terrible service here. All right?
She grabs James by the throat.
Hey look I have monstrous strength. Cool. Brains. Arrgh.

JAMES
Aaaa – maybe we leave this off our college application.

WEEMS
Fun fact: even if your scientific creation is going to kill us all, it will still look good on a college application!

BENTLEY
In fact, it's probably better that way.

8. Leadership

LOLA
But what if I can't do any of these things?

WEEMS
Well, if you're not good at anything at all –

BENTLEY
You have no skills, no talent, no ideas – there's one other area you can excel in:

WEEMS
Politics.

BENTLEY
Remember, those who can't, lead.

LOLA
I don't think that's the saying.

BENTLEY

Of course it is. If you lead, you don't have to do any of the work.

WEEMS

You're *leading* other people to do the work.

BENTLEY

If you tell other people what to do, you don't have to do it yourself.

WEEMS

Brilliant.

BENTLEY

But in order to rise above the fray, you're going to need to show *exceptional* leadership.

WEEMS

Historic leadership. The way leadership has always been done in humanity.

LULU

How's that?

BENTLEY

Watch.

Lights up on an election for student body president. SAMSON, a nerdy looking guy, is standing behind a podium while a MODERATOR asks questions.

SAMSON

And that's why, if you vote for me for Student Body President, I will make sure that there are gluten-free options in the cafeteria. If we have healthier food, we'll have a healthier student body and that will make us all feel better.

MODERATOR

Thanks Samson, and now we'll hear from Bryn Matthews: what would you change as Student Body President?

BRYN enters, dressed like a Celtic warrior with blue face paint and armor from Braveheart.

BRYN

Oh sure you can listen to Samson here and have gluten-free options – you can go back to your safe little lives in English class and Tech Applications. Aye, you could do that. And you'd live. You might graduate. You might go on to live sad little gluten-free lives –

SAMSON

Also there should be a vegan option.

BRYN

Aye, of course. A vegan option as well. And someone can hold your hand while you graduate, and your mommy and daddy will clap for you. And all the while, our rival school Bristol High School will continue to dominate us in soccer and girls' volleyball. You can treasure your precious dietary-conscious meal options while never tasting one breath of sweet freedom. Well I say NO.

MODERATOR

Again, the question is –

BRYN

Again, I say most of us live without ever being truly *alive*. I say JOIN ME. *RIDE* WITH ME. We shall suck glory from the marrow of life! We shall conquer our rivals once and for all!

MODERATOR

Um – I don't think we actually are supposed to conquer rival high schools.

BRYN

The administration wants you weak so they can control you! I want you *strong!* I say we *harness* our *power!* TO GLORY! TO VICTORY! JOIN ME! AAAAAAAAHH!

Sound of cheering hordes of warriors.
Bryn races off-stage.

MODERATOR

Okay – um – again this is about the cafeteria.

WEEMS

And, like most leaders in human history, once you have led a successful military campaign, you can seize power from any troublesome bureaucrats.

MODERATOR

All right, this convenes this session of the School Board and –

BRYN enters, with warriors behind her.

BRYN

Bristol High School has been VANQUISHED! Glory is mine!

End of Excerpt.
To purchase this play, visit www.concordtheatricals.com