The Audition

by Don Zolidis

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Characters

MR. TORRANCE
STAGE MANAGER
CARRIE
SOLEIL
ELIZABETH
ALISON
SARAH
TOMMY
YUMA
GINA
ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
ALISON'S FATHER
CARRIE'S MOTHER

There is also a chorus of ACTORS, who are auditioning for the play. They may be doublecast in many different parts as necessary.

The roles of Stage Manager may be cast as female if necessary.

The roles of Gina, Yuma, Elizabeth, Elizabeth's Mother, and Carrie's Mother may be cast as male if necessary.

Setting: A high school auditorium. The present.

(A high school auditorium. A bare stage.)

(The STAGE MANAGER runs on with a stack of sides.)

STAGE MANAGER

Where do you want these?

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

Put them downstage right.

(STAGE MANAGER heads stage left.)

STAGE MANAGER

Here?

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

Is that stage right?

(STAGE MANAGER thinks.)

STAGE MANAGER

Whoops. I'm nervous.

(STAGE MANAGER heads stage right.)

On the edge of the stage?

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

Yep. All right, bring `em in.

STAGE MANAGER *(shouting off)*

Okay people! Come on in!

(The ACTORS enter from all sides of the stage.)

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

All right stop right there! First off, thank you for coming out today. If you don't know me, my name is Mr. Torrance and—

(ACTOR #1 raises his hand.)

Yes?

ACTOR #1

Can I go to the bathroom?

MR. TORRANCE

Just hold on.

ACTOR #2

My Mom needs to pick me up in half an hour so I need to go first—

MR. TORRANCE

Okay, just—

STAGE MANAGER

Quiet please.

MR. TORRANCE

I know that I'm new here but I want to talk to you a little bit about this theatre program. You might go to some other high schools around here and see some pretty good shows. They do a fine job. We don't do a fine job here. We do an amazing job. And if you're going to be in this show, you are going to be amazing. So what I am looking for today are the best of the best. Do you understand?

ACTOR #1

So I can't go to the bathroom?

STAGE MANAGER

No.

MR. TORRANCE

This is Carmen. She's our stage manager. It goes from God to me to Carmen to you. You will listen to her as if she were me. If you are going to be late, you will call her, if you have a problem with scheduling you talk to her—

(ACTOR #2 approaches)

Later. This is the first audition. I'm going to call back a few of you. From those, the best will be in the show. You have three minutes to prepare yourselves.

(The actors relax and begin walking around, stretching.)

CARRIE *(a vocal warmup)*

Me me me me me me me me

ALISON *(a lip trill)*

Bbbbbbbbbbbb—

SOLEIL

To sit in solemn silence on a dull dark dock—

ELIZABETH

Guh guh guh kuk kuh kuh

ACTOR 3

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out.

ACTOR 4

I hope I get this part. I hope I get this part.

ACTOR 5

Just a little one, I don't really need anything big—

ACTOR 6

Is anyone else here auditioning for the first time? Anyone? Anyone at all?

ACTOR 3

Breathe in. Breathe out.

ACTOR 4

I hope I get it.

ACTOR 7

I'm going to get it. I know I'm going to get something, I don't know what.

ACTOR 5

I want a line.

ACTOR 4

I want a solo.

ACTOR 5

I don't want a solo. Just a line.

ACTOR 1

I want to go the bathroom—

ACTOR 2

Can I just go early?

ACTOR 3

Please God let me get this part.

ACTOR 4

Who's that girl?

ACTOR 5

I've never seen her before.

ACTOR 4

Is she better than me?

ACTOR 5

What is he looking for?

ACTOR 6

I've never been in a show before—

ACTOR 2

Please let me get this—

ACTOR 3

Please—

ALISON

I'm going to get the lead. No one can stop me.

SOLIEL

I need to get something, anything—

TOMMY

Is this the right place?

SARAH

Hi there I'm Sarah.

ACTOR 4

I want to get something—

SOLIEL

I need something—

ACTOR 5

I just want to be an extra. Maybe one line. I could say good morning or something, and that's it. And then I could wave at my parents in the back and then I could say that I was in the show.

ACTOR 6 *(overlapping)*

I'll do anything—

ACTOR 7 *(overlapping)*

I can do a Hungarian accent. Do you need anything with a Hungarian accent?

ACTOR 5 *(overlapping)*

I just need one line—

ACTOR 1 *(overlapping)*

Please!

ACTOR 7 *(overlapping)*

I can burp on command—

ACTORS 1 and 2 *(overlapping)*

Please!

ACTOR 5 *(overlapping)*

One line is all I ask!

ACTORS 1, 2 and 3 *(overlapping)*

Please!

ACTOR 7

I'm left-handed. Does that help?

ACTORS 1-6 *(overlapping)*

Please!

SOLEIL

I need this—you don't understand—I need this.

ALL ACTORS

I need it—I'll be great, I'll be wonderful, I'll be the best thing you've ever seen—please please please please PLEASE!

ACTOR 1

Can I go to the bathroom now?

(All of the actors exit.)

MR. TORRANCE

Who's first?

STAGE MANAGER

We have Cassie.

(ACTOR 2 enters.)

ACTOR 2

Hi. I'm Cassie. My Mom's waiting in the parking lot.

MR. TORRANCE

Great. What are you going to sing?

ACTOR 2

I have to sing?

MR. TORRANCE

This is a musical.

ACTOR 2

This is a musical?

STAGE MANAGER

It said so on the posters.

ACTOR 2

There were posters?

STAGE MANAGER

Didn't you listen to the announcements?

ACTOR 2

I can't ever hear the announcements. No one ever shuts up for them.

MR. TORRANCE

So you don't have a song prepared?

ACTOR 2

We're supposed to have—?

MR. TORRANCE and STAGE MANAGER

Yes!

ACTOR 2

Oh. Um. No. I don't have a song.

MR. TORRANCE

How about happy birthday?

ACTOR 2

Are you sure I have to sing?

MR. TORRANCE

Can you sing happy birthday?

ACTOR 2

Are there any non-singing parts?

MR. TORRANCE

I need to hear you sing first before I can put you in a non-singing part.

ACTOR 2

That doesn't make any sense.

STAGE MANAGER

He needs to make sure that you can't sing.

ACTOR 2

Okay, um… Happy Birthday, right?

MR. TORRANCE

Sure.

ACTOR 2

I forgot the words.

STAGE MANAGER

It starts with Happy Birthday.

ACTOR 2

Okay.

(ACTOR 2's cell phone rings. She answers it.)

Hi. Oh. Okay. I gotta go.

(She runs off. She runs back on in a minute.)

When are call-backs?

(She leaves.)

(YUMA enters immediately.)

YUMA

HI!!! I'm Yuma!

STAGE MANAGER

This is—

YUMA

And I just gotta *dance*! Kick it!

(Nothing happens. YUMA approaches the stage manager.)

When I say kick it, you hit the music okay?

(without waiting for a response, YUMA crosses to centerstage.)

And I just gotta *dance!* Kick it!

(YUMA does one half of one dance move before realizes that no music is happening.)

Hold on one second.

(She approaches the stage manager again.)

Did you understand me when I said kick it that was your cue to start the music? You got that?

STAGE MANAGER

You didn't bring any music.

YUMA

You think that's gonna stop me? I'm determined to get this role, I don't care if I didn't bring music, when I say kick it, you play it.

STAGE MANAGER

But there is no—

YUMA

Don't give me problems. Give me solutions.

STAGE MANAGER

I could hum something.

YUMA

Can you do more of a beat box thing?

(STAGE MANAGER tries a beat box.)

I'm not feeling you. I'm really not feeling you. But it's gonna have to work.

(YUMA approaches center again.)

AND I JUST GOTTA *DANCE*!!! Kick it!

(STAGE MANAGER starts a rather pathetic beat box. STAGE MANAGER begins to beat box more and more intensely, really getting into it. YUMA dances. She's wild, she's unpredictable and full of insane energy. She also provides her own sound effects.)

Uh huh. Yeah. Yeah. Y-iaao! Uh huh. Wa wa wa wa wa! Zoog! And I'm over here you can't stop me! Yeah! Uh huh. Yeah! Uh huh. Yeah! Uh huh. And stop.

(YUMA stares forward, breathing hard.)

What now?

MR. TORRANCE

I don't know that that's really the style of dance we're looking for.

YUMA

I can do anything. Watch this. Ballet? Check it.

(YUMA does a wild, insane ballet. Once again she provides her own sound effects to the ballet.)

Uh huh. Yeah. Leg up in the air. Graceful. Graceful. Wa! Yeah! Uh huh! Yeah! Uh huh. And… dropping the head like a swan. Stop.

(she stops.)

How about that? How about *that*, son? That's how I roll in the ballet.

MR. TORRANCE

Um…

(YUMA grabs the STAGE MANAGER.)

YUMA

You want tango?

(She begins a tango with the STAGE MANAGER.)

Skipping Forward

ELIZABETH
I didn't even speak French and I was in junior French honor society.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
We can fit in girl scouts tonight after karate—

ELIZABETH
I especially hated karate.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
Sensei Lee was disappointed with your effort today, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH
And what did I want to do?

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
If you didn't have me you'd sit on your butt all day long.

ELIZABETH
That's exactly what I'd do. Nothing.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
How would that look on your college applications?

ELIZABETH
I don't care, Mom.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
You'd never get into Yale without extra-curriculars.

ELIZABETH
I don't care, Mom.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
And then where would you be? Without college?

ELIZABETH
I don't care, Mom.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
Grades aren't enough. You need to be well-rounded.

ELIZABETH

My Mom has spent so much time rounding me I feel like a circle. What part of I don't care Mom don't you understand! I don't want to be in the show, I don't want to go to Yale, I don't want to be the manager for the water polo squad! I just want to do—

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Nothing.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. But I never said that to her. Instead I said—okay Mom—

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Good.

ELIZABETH

Whatever you say. I'll go to Yale. I'll marry a doctor.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Who cares about marrying a doctor? Be a doctor.

ELIZABETH

Okay I'll be a doctor.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Be a dermatologist. They never get sued and they don't have to do anything disgusting.

ELIZABETH

Fine I'll go to Yale. I'll be a doctor. For you. I'll live in a great big house—

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Four thousand square foot minimum.

ELIZABETH

And have a great big life.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Two kids or three?

ELIZABETH

For you. Because I'm—

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Perfect.

ELIZABETH

And when my kids are growing up you know what I'm going to make them do? Nothing.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
We don't have time for that. We need to go.

ELIZABETH
Yes, Mom.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
You're going to have a wonderful audition.

ELIZABETH
I know.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
You need a lead part if you're going to impress the admissions people.

ELIZABETH
I know.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER
You know you could stand to be a little more independent. That's what they're looking for.

(They leave.)

(ALISON enters.)

ALISON
Hi there. I'm Alison Bass. Of course you know that. Let's see… experience… last year I was Anna in Anna and the King. The year before that I was Belle in Beauty and the Beast. The year before that I was the Crucible in the Crucible. Well okay I wasn't the crucible, that's not really a role, but if there was a role for the crucible, that would be me. And when I was a little kid I played Annie. In Annie.

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
That's pretty impressive, Alison.

ALISON
I know, isn't it? That was a joke. Look um… do I really have to audition? I mean who are we trying to fool here, right? I know when everyone's here you can't make it look like you're going to give a part to a certain person, but… come on, we both know what's going to happen.

(short pause)

Does that make me sound conceited?

(she exits. SARAH enters.)

SARAH
Can I audition with somebody else? Is that possible?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
I'm going to need to hear you sing—

SARAH
Okay, but for the acting, can I bring in a partner?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
I guess.

SARAH
Can my partner be Tommy?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
Sure.

SARAH
You don't know how much that means to me.

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
Carmen, can you get Tommy?
(The STAGE MANAGER exits.)

SARAH
Can I tell you something? Tommy doesn't know he's going to do a duet with me.

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
Oh.

SARAH
And is it okay if we do this scene I wrote?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*
Well—
(the STAGE MANAGER brings in TOMMY.)

TOMMY
I thought my audition time wasn't for another fifteen minutes.

SARAH
Hi.

TOMMY
Hey Sarah.

SARAH

Hi. What's up?

TOMMY

I'm auditioning for the show.

SARAH

I know. Me too. Isn't that awesome?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*

I don't have all day people.

(SARAH pulls TOMMY aside.)

TOMMY

What's going on?

SARAH

Looks like they're pairing us up for a duet scene. Are you ready?

TOMMY

What duet scene?

SARAH

Oh here's the script.

(she hands him a copy of the script.)

TOMMY

Is this even in the play?

SARAH

They're thinking about adding it. And I overheard them talking earlier: they want passion.

TOMMY

Passion?

SARAH

Right. Passion.

TOMMY

Okay.

SARAH

You can do it. Are you ready?

TOMMY

I haven't even read the—

SARAH

Let's go.

(She pulls TOMMY back to centerstage.)

Hi my name is Sarah Arlen and this is Tommy Hartley and we're going to be auditioning for you now.

(she gets into character. TOMMY reads from the script. SARAH has it memorized.)

TOMMY

I don't know if I love Anne any more.

SARAH

How can you say that?

TOMMY

I think there's somebody else that I love more.

SARAH

Gregory, don't. Please. You can't mean me.

TOMMY

I do. You see, Anne is… fat and ugly and wears too much makeup around her eyes. It makes her look like a pig ran through a department store. Also I hate her high, whiny voice. It's like when she talks all the dogs in the neighborhood come running. And she smells like bacon all the time. I don't know why. Why did I ever start going out with her?

SARAH

You were crazy.

TOMMY

I was, but now I see you.

SARAH

You do?

TOMMY

Yes, compared to you, my current girlfriend is a bloated dead octopus washing up on the shore punctured with thirty hypodermic needles left over by the mafia. But you—

SARAH

Yes?

TOMMY

You are the most beautiful girl in the world. You are a star, a diamond, a diamond star, you are the cherry on top of my sundae, you are the whipped cream in my hot chocolate,

Skipping Forward

CARRIE'S MOTHER

No.

CARRIE

Can I make myself some dinner?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Do whatever you want just quit bothering me.

CARRIE

Okay.

(CARRIE approaches the audience again.)

My life: by Carrie. My life is the most wonderful thing.

(she stops.)

My life is the… when I was ten years old I got cast in the school play. We were doing this play our teacher wrote about Winnie the Pooh. I was Tigger. Probably because I was pretty hyper. I even got to sing a song about Tiggers. I was so excited I stayed after school every day, and I learned my lines in the first week, and every night at home I'd sing my song about Tiggers and how they were made out of rubber and everything. Our school didn't have a lot of money, but my friend's Mom made me a costume and we had a lot of fun. And I felt really good about it. I mean, I felt… amazing. It was like my whole life I was looking for something I was good at, and then all of a sudden here it was, I was good at being Tigger. I couldn't run fast, I wasn't good at math, I couldn't even spell, but when I sang that Tigger song, I was proud. So the day of the show came, and I was backstage in my Tigger costume, and I was really nervous, I had to pee like every five minutes, and then I went out there on the stage, and the lights were really bright, and I could see the outline of all these heads out there, and I could hear them, and I did my song—and I just put everything I had into it, and I wasn't nervous any more, I was happy, and when I finished… the whole audience applauded for me. For me. I had never been applauded for anything my whole life. And then after the show, all the parents were coming up and hugging their kids, even the kids who played trees, I remember this Dad came up and he was like, "you were the most realistic tree of all of them" and everyone was there. And everyone was getting hugged. And there were all these flowers. And I looked around for my Mom… and I kept looking around for her… and I kept looking. And then everyone started to go home. And I was still there. And I was still in that stupid Tigger costume. I asked her later why she didn't come to my show, and she said, "what show?"

(Pause)

I was really good, too.

(Lights change.)

(ACTOR 5 enters.)

ACTOR 5 *(extremely quiet)*

Hi my name is Marissa.

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

What?

ACTOR 5 *(just as quiet)*

Marissa Leon.

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

Can you be louder please?

ACTOR 5

What?

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*

Louder!

ACTOR 5

This is as loud as I get.

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*

I can't hear what you're saying!

(THE STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

You need to project.

ACTOR 5 *(barely audible)*

I am projecting.

STAGE MANAGER

No. Out there. To the director.

ACTOR 5

What?

STAGE MANAGER

Let me help you. HELLLLOOO. Did you hear that? Did you hear how it reverberated in the theatre? You try it.

ACTOR 5

What am I supposed to say?

STAGE MANAGER

HELLLLLOOOO.

ACTOR 5 *(barely audible)*

Hello.

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*

Okay, thank you.

STAGE MANAGER

All right, you're done.

(ACTOR 5 whispers in STAGE MANAGER's ear.)

She wants to know if there are any non-speaking roles.

(Lights change.)

(SOLEIL enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

Okay, this is so-leel.

SOLEIL

So-lay.

STAGE MANAGER

Why is it spelled so-leel then?

SOLEIL

It's French. It means the sun.

STAGE MANAGER

You were named after the French sun?

SOLEIL

Actually I was named after the girl who played Punky Brewster. Soleil Moon Frye.

STAGE MANAGER

What?

SOLEIL

Punky Brewster. You know that show?

STAGE MANAGER

No. You're weird.

SOLEIL

That's what people have been telling me.

(various actors begin to enter. These roles do not need to be played by the "auditioning" actors.)

ACTOR 1

Have you seen that girl?

ACTOR 2

What a freak.

ACTOR 3

Who wears that?

ACTOR 4

Does she do that to her clothes herself?

ACTOR 1

She's like just sitting there reading a book.

ACTOR 2

What is wrong with her?

ACTOR 3

Do you think she's on drugs?

ACTOR 4

She's totally on drugs.

ACTOR 1

You think you're special or something?

ACTOR 2

Why do you look like that?

ACTOR 3 *(overlapping)*

Why do you talk like that?

ACTOR 4 *(overlapping)*

Why do you think like that?

ACTOR 1

No one likes you.

(The ACTORS speak to the audience as SOLEIL sits in the middle of them.)

ACTOR 1

All the time we see these girls.

ACTOR 2 *(overlapping on "see")*

Walking in here like they own everything.

ACTOR 3 *(overlapping on "own")*

Like nothing applies to them.

ACTOR 4 *(overlapping on "nothing")*

So weird.

(They surround SOLIEL and speak at her.)

ACTOR 1

Head in your book.

ACTOR 2

Eyes down.

ACTOR 3

Don't you care what people think of you?

ACTOR 4

Did you take a shower this morning?

ACTOR 1

You're nothing.

ACTOR 2 *(overlapping)*

You're nothing.

ACTOR 3 *(overlapping)*

You're nothing.

ACTOR 4 *(overlapping)*

You're nothing.

SOLEIL

I can do this. I can be here.

ACTORS 1

The world takes people like you and chews them up—

ACTORS 2-4 *(overlapping with ACTOR 1)*

You can't. You can't. You can't.

ACTOR 1

You're probably going to bring a gun to school.

SOLEIL

I can be in the show.

ACTOR 1

You're a shadow—

ACTOR 2

You're a nightmare—

ACTOR 3

You're the thing we left behind—

ACTOR 4

I wish I could be like you.

ACTORS 1-3

Shhhh!

ACTOR 1

Don't you know the world belongs to us?

ACTOR 2

To the pretty.

ACTOR 3

The popular.

ACTOR 4

The rich.

ACTOR 1

Don't you know we're happier than you?

ACTOR 4

I'm not happy.

ACTORS 1-3

Shhhh!

SOLEIL

I'm plenty happy.

ACTOR 1

You're a freak.

ACTOR 2

Disease—

ACTOR 3

Emo—

ACTOR 4

You're a depressed little doll in the corner.

SOLEIL

I'm not like you!

ACTORS 1-4

Of course you're not!

SOLEIL

I'm not like you!

ACTORS 1-4

You wish you were. You wish you were.

SOLEIL

No I don't!

ACTORS 1-4

You wish you were.

SOLEIL

I wish I was. Like you.

ACTORS 1-4

That's all we wanted to hear.

(The actors retreat to the shadows but remain visible.)

SOLEIL

I grew up alone. My Dad left us. My Mom didn't make it. And I was alone.

ACTORS 1-4 *(whispering)*

Ugly

SOLEIL

And I'd look at the girls who were pretty and the girls who were thin and the girls who seemed to know everything. They knew everything about clothes and money and music and what to say and how to laugh and they were so beautiful and I looked at myself in the mirror and I wasn't like them. I wasn't like them.

ACTORS 1-4 *(whispering)*

No.

SOLEIL

I was something ugly, something diseased, something to be laughed at and destroyed and hated because I existed, just because I existed I was wrong and they were so easy, life

was so easy for all of them as they got in their cars with their mothers on the way home and I was on the bus, I was alone on the bus and I'd always put my bag next to me on the seat and I'd sit up front next to the bus driver, and there was this boy who would sit behind me and he said I was the garbage can

ACTORS 1-4 *(whispering)*

Hey there garbage can.

SOLEIL

And they'd throw garbage at me and he'd flick my ears and every day at recess I didn't want to go outside, I prayed for rain every day and I never wanted to go outside because I had no one. No one at all near me.

ACTORS 1-4 *(whispering)*

Garbage can.

SOLEIL

No one liked me. No one to talk to, and I just hoped the other kids would leave me alone and they wouldn't say anything to me and they'd just let me read a book, and most days they just ignored me, but sometimes they'd take the kickball and they'd throw it at me, and they'd back me up into the wall and I'd stand there with my head against the wall and they'd throw the ball at me again and again and every once in a while a girl would come up and shove my head against the wall or kick me in the back of the legs or put mud in my hair. The teachers watched. They thought we were playing. And I went home alone and I cried on the way home and then I cried at night for my Mom who died when I six and after that I just wanted her to come back and they stared at me all the time they stared—

ACTORS 1-4

You're different—
You're weird
You're ugly
You're poor
Sleep on dirt
Take a shower today?
Why don't you just die?

SOLEIL

But I didn't. Sorry to disappoint you. And I stopped caring what they said. And I stopped wishing I was like them.

ACTORS 1-4

You're weird you're ugly you're poor you're stupid—

SOLEIL

No I'm not. No I'm not. No I'm not. No I'm not. I'm going to be better than all of you. And when I got here—when I got to high school—I found this. And suddenly it wasn't all that bad to be different. And suddenly it wasn't all that awful to be weird. And I'm happy. And if someone asked me tomorrow if I'd trade it all to be average, to be just like them, to be pretty and simple and not think too much and have boys fall in love me and write me notes and go to the movies with my friends on weekends—if someone offered me that trade, you know what I'd say?

(short pause.)

Yes. In a heartbeat.

(ELIZABETH enters.)

ELIZABETH

Hi. My name is Elizabeth Walker and I'll be performing the role of Hamlet.

STAGE MANAGER

Isn't that for a guy?

ELIZABETH

I think it was meant for a woman.

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*

That's fine, Elizabeth.

(ELIZABETH performs the monologue. She's very good.)

ELIZABETH

I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame the earth seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why it appeareth to me nothing but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action, how like an angel, in apprehension, how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals. And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me.

MR. TORRANCE

Thank you Elizabeth.

(CARRIE enters as ELIZABETH exits.)

CARRIE

Hi. I'm Carrie. Do you mind if I sing a song?

MR. TORRANCE

Please do. This is a musical people! You're going to have to sing!

(ACTOR 3 enters.)

Skipping Forward

STAGE MANAGER

Come back tomorrow everyone.

(ALISON's FATHER enters as the STAGE MANAGER leaves.)

ALISON'S FATHER

Is Mr. Torrance here? IS MR. TORRANCE HERE?!

MR. TORRANCE *(off)*

I'll be right there.

ALISON'S FATHER

What is the meaning of this?!

(MR. TORRANCE enters.)

MR. TORRANCE

I'm not sure I know what you're talking about.

ALISON'S FATHER

I'm Alison's father.

MR. TORRANCE

Oh. Nice to meet you.

ALISON'S FATHER

I realize you're new this year and you're trying to change things—

MR. TORRANCE

Well Alison didn't even really give an audition—

ALISON'S FATHER

Can I finish? That girl sings like an angel. All right? All these other kids sound like monkeys being shot. My girl is beautiful, she's talented, and she's amazing.

MR. TORRANCE

I'm sure she is, but—

ALISON'S FATHER

Can I finish? That girl has more talent in her freaking foot than you've ever seen in your life. When she did Belle, the audience was weeping for joy. Weeping. An old woman had a heart attack she was so good. And she kept watching the show, okay? This woman is dying and she's happy because she's watching my girl on stage.

MR. TORRANCE

She's welcome to audition next year—

ALISON'S FATHER
Are you not listening to me? Do you have some kind of brain problem? Put Alison in the show.

MR. TORRANCE
No.

ALISON'S FATHER
Put Alison in the show.

MR. TORRANCE
I can't do that.

ALISON'S FATHER
YOU ARE A MORON AND I WILL DESTROY YOU!!!

MR. TORRANCE
You need to calm down sir!

ALISON'S FATHER
I WILL CALM DOWN WHEN YOU ARE DEAD OR ALISON IS IN THE SHOW!!

MR. TORRANCE
I'm not putting Alison in the show!

ALISON'S FATHER
Let's go! Let's go!
(ALISON'S FATHER raises his hands in fists.)

MR. TORRANCE
I think you're taking this a little overboard.

ALISON'S FATHER
Come on! Let's see what you got!

MR. TORRANCE
I'm not going to fight you.

ALISON'S FATHER
THEN YOU WILL BE DESTROYED!
(ALISON'S FATHER attacks. He does a few karate moves. MR. TORRANCE runs. Finally he turns around and pushes ALISON'S FATHER, who immediately collapses.)
Aaaarrghgghgh!

MR. TORRANCE

What? I didn't even—

ALISON'S FATHER

Ow my hip! My hip! You broke my hip!

MR. TORRANCE

I barely touched you.

ALISON'S FATHER

You assaulted me! I've been battered and assaulted! I'm barely alive! I need to go to the hospital. It's going dark. Why? Why?! What did I ever did to you?!

MR. TORRANCE

You said you were going to destroy me.

ALISON'S FATHER

I didn't mean it. Oh… this is the end… I'm dying… I'm not going to make it. Goodbye cruel world. I'm coming for ya Papa. I'm coming…

(ALISON'S FATHER passes out. MR. TORRANCE looks around.)

MR. TORRANCE

Um… help?

(ALISON'S FATHER wakes up slightly.)

ALISON'S FATHER

Please… I have to tell you… something…. Come closer…

MR. TORRANCE

Um…

ALISON'S FATHER

Please… closer…

(MR. TORRANCE leans in close.)

MR. TORRANCE

What?

ALISON'S FATHER

I'm suing you.

MR. TORRANCE

I'm still not putting her in the show.

ALISON'S FATHER

Fine.

(he gets up and leaves. THE STAGE MANAGER enters.)

STAGE MANAGER

Okay, everyone out here.

(The actors emerge, ready for call-backs.)

I need you in two lines. We need to test your dancing ability—

YUMA

Yes!

(YUMA takes a center position.)

STAGE MANAGER

Here's the move: kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Got it? Everyone. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Again. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Again. Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Rows switch!

(The first row and second row switch.)

Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick. Moving on. Twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. Again. Twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. So the whole thing: kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick twirl twirl stomp kick step kick. Rows switch.

(the first row and second row switch.)

Kick kick step kick shuffle spin kick twirl twirl stomp kick step kick.

(YUMA steps forward.)

YUMA

Then we add: sashay sashay work it work it work it! Everybody!

STAGE MANAGER

Wait no—

YUMA

Sashay sashay work it work it work it! Then Shake it shake it shake it work it shake it work it shake it! Yeah! Yeah! Everybody!

ACTORS

Sashay sashay work it work it work it! Shake it shake it shake it work it shake it work it shake it! Yeah! Yeah!

STAGE MANGER

Stop stop stop!

YUMA *(to SARAH)*

Um… are you aware that you suck?

STAGE MANAGER

Yuma! You are not the dance captain!

YUMA

Oh really? Maybe it's time for a dance-off.

STAGE MANAGER

It's not time for a dance-off.

YUMA

That's cause you can't bring it.

ACTOR 4

Aw no you di'in!

(They look at her.)

What? I'm street, I can't help it.

YUMA

Whatchu got? Come on. Bring it.

STAGE MANAGER

You want me to bring it?

YUMA

I want you to bring it like the pizza delivery man. Piping hot and fresh. In under thirty minutes. Or it's free.

STAGE MANAGER

All right. Let's go.

(The ACTORS forma circle.)

STAGE MANAGER

Kick kick step kick shuffle kick stomp twirl twirl hands us hands up kick step shuffle kick step!

YUMA

Oh yeah? Shake it shake it shake it thriller thriller thriller! Zombie thing zombie thing up down sprinkler sprinkler sprinkler

STAGE MANAGER *(interrupting)*

Kick shuffle kick step shuffle kick—

YUMA *(overlapping)*

Work it work it work it thriller thriller thriller sprinkler sprinkler sprinkler yeah yeah yeah YEAH!

(They stop. Pause. Then both begin simultaneously again.)

STAGE MANAGER *(simultaneous)*

Kick step kick step flare flare flare spin twirl kick!

YUMA *(simultaneous)*
Shake it shake it shake it in your face in your face in your face!
(They stop again.)
Aw, you been served.
(she walks away. The actors begin a slow clap.)

STAGE MANAGER
Oh stop it.

ACTOR 4
Aw now you di'in!
(The actors look at her.)
Is that not appropriate right now? I'm not sure. Should I have said, "aw snap?" I can never figure out the difference between the two.

MR. TORRANCE *(off-stage)*
The cast list is up.
(The actors surge to the side of the stage.)

SARAH
I'm girl number seven! I'm girl number seven! I've always wanted to be girl number seven! What part are you?

TOMMY
I'm boy number seven.

SARAH
It's fate.

TOMMY
I have to go.
(TOMMY escapes.)

ACTOR 3
I'm boy number two? But I'm a girl.

ACTOR 4
I didn't get it.

ACTOR 5
I have one line! One line!

ELIZABETH
I'm the show! Darn it.

ACTOR 7

Was there something wrong with my audition?

SOLEIL

I got a part!

(Lights change. CARRIE is left on-stage alone.)

CARRIE

Mom!

(CARRIE'S MOTHER is sitting in the chair.)

CARRIE'S MOTHER

What?

CARRIE

I got the lead!

CARRIE'S MOTHER

In what?

CARRIE

In the musical.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Oh. Good.

CARRIE

It's so cool, I have two songs, and then I get to…

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Wait a minute, when are you rehearsing this thing?

CARRIE

After school.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Which days after school?

CARRIE

Every day after school. It's only about two hours a day, though.

CARRIE'S MOTHER

You're going to be at the school an extra two hours a day?

CARRIE

Yeah, but it won't be a problem.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
When are you going to do your homework?

CARRIE
At night.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
I thought you were going to get a job.

CARRIE
I never said I was getting a job.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
You were going to apply at the grocery store.

CARRIE
When was that going to happen?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
You need to get a job.

CARRIE
Why?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
I don't know, Carrie. For fun. Why do you think people have jobs?

CARRIE
But when was—?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
You need to help out around here. I pay for your food, I pay for your insurance. It's not cheap. Where do you think the money's gonna come from for you to go to college?

CARRIE
I can work at night—

CARRIE'S MOTHER
That's not enough.

CARRIE
I'll get a job after the show's over—

CARRIE'S MOTHER
I don't think so—

CARRIE
And then I'll get a job over the summer, I can work plenty—

CARRIE'S MOTHER
And what are we going to do for money until then?

CARRIE
What have we been doing for money before now?

CARRIE'S MOTHER
You want to see my credit card bill? You want to? I need you to work. I don't need you to waste your time with this thing.

CARRIE
I'm the lead role.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
They'll find somebody else. You weren't the only one who auditioned, right?

CARRIE
No there were lots of people who auditioned and I got the part—

CARRIE'S MOTHER
Then they'll put one of them in. End of discussion. Go in tomorrow and tell your teacher.
(she goes back to watching television. CARRIE waits there.)

CARRIE *(under her breath)*
You probably wouldn't of come anyway.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
What?

CARRIE
I want to do this.

CARRIE'S MOTHER
I know you do and I'm sorry about that but there's nothing I can do.

CARRIE
What do you mean there's—

CARRIE'S MOTHER
I'm tired of talking about it.

CARRIE
I'm sorry am I taking up too much of your laying around time?

CARRIE'S MOTHER

I'm tired.

CARRIE

You're always tired!

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Cause I work twelve hours a day, that's why! And if you don't want to be like me, you better work now so you can go to college.

CARRIE

Mom. I'll make the money somehow but I'm going to do this show.

(her MOTHER is about to say something)

Just listen to me for a minute, okay? I'm going to go to college and I'm not going to be like you. You understand that? I'm not like you. And you know what that means? That means when I have a child I'm going to love them and support them and I'm going to take an interest in their life. And when my kid is in a show I'm going to be there every single night cheering for them. Do you understand that? I've stopped waiting for you to appreciate me. I appreciate myself. And maybe that's not everything, but it's enough.

(Pause.)

CARRIE'S MOTHER *(getting up)*

Maybe you should live on your own then.

CARRIE

That's not what I want—

CARRIE'S MOTHER

Where'd you get those clothes? Where'd you get those shoes? What did you have to eat today? Do I charge you rent? I don't really have anyone helping me out here, kid. Your father isn't around to do it. And you got all that stuff from me. From me. So don't sit there and say I didn't give you anything. I gave you everything you own.

(CARRIE'S MOTHER leaves.)

CARRIE

Being a mother is about more than that.

(CARRIE sits. She sings a part of her audition song softly to herself.)

(she stops and cannot continue.)

End of Excerpt.
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