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TYPECAST

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Amanda Murray Cutalo



Typecast

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Cast of Characters

7W + 2 Either

JANE: Female. “The control freak.” The stage manager of the show who is cast as “Cinder White.” Organized, responsible, and comfortable in her role “behind the scenes.”

AUDREY: Female. “The ensemble girl.” A meek, soft-spoken girl, she is used to being cast as inanimate objects or squirrels. She is cast as “Prince Pleasant” in the show.

HEIDI: Female. “The mom/sidekick.” A pleasant girl with a bubbly personality. She is most comfortable in the “mother” or “cheerful sidekick” roles. She is cast as the “Evil Stepmother” in the show.

DEBRA: Female. “The diva.” Dramatic, haughty and egocentric, this girl is used to “stealing the show” and always being the center of attention. She is cast as the “Fairy Godmother,” a character who is onstage for a total of two minutes.

MYRA: Female. “The slacker.” Candid and snobby. She auditions for the show because she is “on academic probation and needs to earn extra credit.” She looks down on the “drama geeks.”

JULIET: Female. “The ingénue.” Sweet, cheerful, pretty, but limited in her ability to be anything other than a “pretty face.” Takes on the role of the stage manager in the show.

WILLOW: Female. “The politician.” Thinks she is practicing her student government election speech when she accidentally auditions for the show. She should always wear a blazer and look “put together.” She decides to do the show because she thinks it will help her win the election.

MS. DIANE THESPI: Male or female. “The drama teacher.” The stereotypical drama teacher – eccentric, artistic, and dramatic in everything she says and does. Mr. Daniel Thespis if played by a male.

MS. COLLEEN BALL: Male or female. “The gym teacher.” Gruff and a little rough around the edges, she runs the rehearsals as if they were sports practices. Mr. Cal Ball if played by a male.

Set

The original production used a very basic set since the majority of the scenes are set onstage during rehearsals. We had five stage blocks for the actors to sit on and move into different formations throughout the show. The blocks were all in disarray at the beginning and, as the show progressed, they began to move closer together into one, unified line.

We also had a small desk for Ms. Thespis and Jane during Scene One and another small desk in front of the stage for Juliet during the rehearsal scenes. We simply closed the curtains for Scenes 8 and 10 since they happen backstage before and after the performance.

Costume List

Note: There is a very quick scene change so keep the costumes simple.

In the original production, we kept the costumes simple so that many of the girls could throw their fairy tale costume over their “everyday” costume. Heidi, Debra, Audrey, Myra, and Juliet were able to quickly change into their costumes after their Scene 7 exit.

Jane’s change was trickier since she only has the blackout between Scene 7 and 8. Jane’s “everyday” costume was black pants and a black shirt. She overdressed by putting her ball gown over the “everyday” costume and then her “rags” (a bulky shirt and peasant skirt) went over the ball gown. During the Scene 9 montage, she was able to quickly remove the “rags” backstage and put on the golden slippers when she went to the ball. During this quick change, we had Prince Pleasant, the Stepmother, and the Stepsister “vamp.” They would take turns trying to get the Prince’s attention and dancing with him.

Jane/Cinder White

1. “Everyday” costume: All black clothes (pants, shirt, shoes)
2. Ball gown
3. “Rags” costume
4. Slippers for the ball (something that can easily fall off as she runs)

Audrey/Prince Pleasant

1. “Everyday” costume: jeans, flats, simple hoodie with faded color (e.g. gray)
2. Prince costume for the ball

Ms. Ball

1. Yellow warm-up suit with whistle

Ms. Thespis

1. “Everyday” costume: long flowy bandana skirt or dress, bright color blouse/sweater, possibly a head scarf

Debra/Fairy Godmother

1. “Everyday” costume: sparkly/bedazzled clothes, animal prints, jeans
2. Sparkly dress for Fairy Godmother

Heidi/Stepmother

1. “Everyday” costume: pink shirt or shirt with animal on the front, jeans
2. Red or black dress for Stepmother
3. Hooded cape

Myra/Stepsister

1. “Everyday” costume: ripped jeans, sneakers, open oversized flannel/plaid
2. Ball gown

Willow

1. “Everyday” costume: blazer, collared shirt underneath, flats, khakis or nice jeans

Juliet/Stage Manager

1. “Everyday” costume: feminine and frilly looking dress
2. All black clothes (shirt, pants, shoes) for the play

Production History

Typecast was premiered at Stuart Country Day School in Princeton, New Jersey on March 12, 2015. It was directed by Amanda Murray Cutalo and led by stage managers Kira Crutcher, Corinne Kadri, and Caroline Muscara.

The lights and sound were designed by Walt Cupit. The costumes were designed by the cast along with costume designers Tessa Matson, Gabriela Trinkl, and Madeleine Freundlich. The original cast included:

MS. DIANE THESPIS: Emma Claisse (T) and Olivia Sieler (S)

JANE: Vibha Mital (T) and Nina Ajemian (S)

AUDREY: Nina Kapstein (T) and Abby Sieler (S)

HEIDI: Zoha Khan (T) and Shelby Williams (S)

DEBRA: Caroline Bednar (T) and Olivia Atlee (S)

MYRA: Mia Szabo (T) and Skylar Seabert (S)

JULIET: Penelope Luchs (T) and Tess Chiarello (S)

WILLOW: Keya Patel (T) and Ava Medeiros (S)

MS. COLLEEN BALL: Rebekah Ten Hagen

T: Thursday night, March 12th

S: Saturday night, March 14th

Author's Note

A special thank you to Robert Missonis, Jan Baldwin, and Patty Fagin for supporting this production. Thank you also to my husband, Joe Cutalo, for listening to me think out loud on several car rides and reading through countless versions of this script.

SCENE ONE

The scene begins with two people standing on an empty stage – MS. THESPIS, who should look like the archetypal “artistic” and “free-spirited” theatre director and JANE, the stage manager who is dressed in black and holding a binder. JANE walks around the room double-checking (even triple-checking) that everything is in place for the auditions they are holding in five minutes. There should be a sign onstage that reads: “Auditions for Cinder White at 3pm today.”

MS. THESPIS: Jane, how many people do we have auditioning today?

JANE: (*excitedly*) More than double from what we had last year!

MS. THESPIS: So that would be...

JANE: Five.

MS. THESPIS: Lovely. That’s not even enough to fill all the parts. (*takes a minute to consider JANE*) We might have to throw you onstage this year!

JANE: Very funny. I don’t think you’ll ever get that desperate.

MS. THESPIS: I wouldn’t be too sure. (*changes the subject*) Any boys on the list?

JANE: No.

MS. THESPIS: So what else is new? It’s alright, I’ll get that Flanders girl to play the guy role. She looks like a linebacker and sounds like Morgan Freeman.

JANE: I think Laila transferred.

MS. THESPIS: Darn. Ok, well, we are on the look out for a mannish girl.

JANE: Got it.

MS. THESPIS: Who else is on the list? The usuals?

JANE: Yes and one name I don’t recognize.

MS. THESPIS: I’ll take it. Ok, why don’t you bring them in. And Jane?

JANE: Yes, Ms. Thespis?

MS. THESPIS: You know, you don’t have to wear all black for the auditions. That’s just for the performances, dear.

JANE: I'm proud to wear my stage manager uniform all the time.

MS. THESPIS: Well, it's not really a uniform... wait, is that your name embroidered on your shirt?

JANE: *(covers the place where the name is embroidered and says sheepishly)*
No.

MS. THESPIS: Just go bring them in.

JANE: Ok.

JANE exits momentarily into the wings and comes back with HEIDI, AUDREY, DEBRA, JULIET, and MYRA.

MS. THESPIS: Welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining us on this exciting theatrical adventure! Jane and I were just saying how thrilled we were to have such a big turnout this year. *(the auditioners awkwardly glance around at the relatively empty theatre)* Let us begin. You should each have an excerpt from the script. But before we start the auditions, I'd like us all to get to know each other, especially since I see some new faces. Tell us a little about your experience, maybe your favorite roles, and what role you're auditioning for. Alright. Everyone take a seat and we'll call you up individually.

The rest of the auditioners take their seats. JANE checks her list and calls the first name.

JANE: Juliet Sawyer.

JULIET: *(Rises from her chair. She is sweet, pleasant, and a bit flighty.)* Hi, I'm Juliet Sawyer. *(she pauses for a few seconds, staring blankly)* I'm sorry, I forget what else we need to say.

MS. THESPIS: Juliet, why don't you tell everyone what parts you've played? Your favorites, I mean.

JULIET: Oh, um probably Rapunzel, Ariel, and Sleeping Beauty.

MS. THESPIS: And what a wonderful job you did in all of them!

JULIET: Thank you! Oh, and I'll be auditioning for the part of Cinder White.

MS. THESPIS: *(smiles)* Of course. Thank you, Juliet.

JULIET: Thank you. *(she sits down)*

JANE: Next, we have Debra Wilkins.

The other auditioners react to DEBRA's name being called. It is obvious that none of them are eager to work with her. DEBRA haughtily rises from her chair.

DEBRA: Hi, my name is Debra Wilkins, as if you could forget. This is probably my last year at this dump of a school. My agent has a bunch of reality show auditions lined up for me. He says I'm the next Miley Cyrus. *(insert the name of the most recent celebrity trainwreck.)*

MYRA: I don't think that was a compliment.

DEBRA: *(shoots MYRA an icy stare)* My most memorable performance has been Mama Rose in *Gypsy*. Not the junior version. The professional touring company. I was only 12 at the time. But hey, when you're a triple threat like me, what does age matter?

MYRA: Is she done yet?

DEBRA: *(ignoring MYRA)* My other favorite role is Annie in the toddler production of *Annie* for which I won the award for most promising and talented toddler under three.

HEIDI: She was excellent!

DEBRA: *(to HEIDI)* I know. *(to everyone)* I will be auditioning for the role of the Evil Stepmother, a much better part than that boring Cinder White.

MS. THESPIS: Lovely. As always, I look forward to working with your enormous ego, I mean, talent.

JANE: Audrey Baker.

AUDREY: *(Rises timidly. She speaks in a voice that is barely audible.)* Hi, I'm Audrey Baker and this is my fourth show here.

MS. THESPIS: Louder!

AUDREY: *(only slightly louder)* Hi, I'm Audrey Baker and this is my fourth show here.

MS. THESPIS: *(aside to JANE only)* I've never seen that girl in my life.

JANE: *(aside back to MS. THESPIS)* She was in the ensemble.

AUDREY: I played tree #5 in *Into the Woods*, dead fish #3 in *The Little Mermaid*, the thicket bush in *Sleeping Beauty*, and Audrey II the plant in *Little Shop of Horrors*.

MS. THESPIS: I know for a fact that Laila played that role last year. Everyone thought the plant was Morgan Freeman.

AUDREY: I know, Ms. Thespis. But I thought Audrey II looked a little lifeless so I hid behind the plant and moved her leaves around when she spoke.

MS. THESPIS: That was you? I just thought Jane bumped into the plant while she was changing the set. Well, thank you... (*it is clear she has already forgotten AUDREY's name*).

AUDREY: Audrey.

MS. THESPIS: Yes, thank you.

JANE: Next up is Heidi Roberts.

HEIDI enthusiastically jumps from her chair with a big smile on her face. She is carrying a tray of brownies.

HEIDI: Hi, I'm Heidi Roberts. This is my fifth show here and I've done a lot of community theatre too.

MS. THESPIS: Heidi, what are you holding?

HEIDI: Oh, I baked brownies for everyone.

MYRA: Kiss up.

HEIDI: (*ignores MYRA's comment*) I just thought everyone would enjoy a little snack after auditions.

MS. THESPIS: How thoughtful of you, Heidi. What about your favorite roles?

HEIDI: Let's see. I've played Kim's mother in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Marian's mother in *Music Man*, and Mother Abbess in *Sound of Music*.

MYRA: Have you ever not played a mom?

HEIDI: (*defensively*) Yes. I also played Laurie's aunt in *Oklahoma*.

MYRA: Because the mom croaked.

MS. THESPIS: What part are you reading for, Heidi?

HEIDI: Cinder White's Fairy Godmother.

MYRA: Shocker.

MS. THESPIS: Thank you, Heidi. Jane, who's next?

JANE: (*checks her list*) Myra Snootwell.

MYRA begrudgingly rises from her chair. It is clear she does not want to be here.

MYRA: I'm Myra. Let's get one thing straight. I don't do theatre. I don't have "the bug" as you people call it. Honestly I'd rather dump a jar of spiders down my back and feel each of their thin, spindly legs crawl down my spine.

JULIET: Ew.

MYRA: But I'm failing art and my teacher said I could get the credits I need by being in the play. So, here I am.

MS. THESPIIS: Lucky us. Ok, let's start the readings. I'd like everyone to please stand up and spread out across the stage...

WILLOW walks in looking confused.

WILLOW: Sorry I'm late!

MS. THESPIIS: Oh great! Another one! That's a nice blazer.

WILLOW: *(still confused)* Thanks?

MS. THESPIIS: *(to JANE)* She could be a man.

JANE: Definitely.

WILLOW: *(confused)* Excuse me?

MS. THESPIIS: We're just about to start the readings, so why don't you just quickly tell everyone who you are and what you've played in the past.

WILLOW: Oh, ok. I'm Willow Scott. And...I'm sorry, what do you mean by what I've played in the past? Like musical instruments?

MS. THESPIIS: No, as in theatrical roles.

WILLOW: I haven't done any theatrical roles. Will that hurt me? Will I get fewer votes?

MS. THESPIIS: Well first of all, we don't vote here. I decide who plays what. And that's perfectly fine that this is your first show. Welcome!

WILLOW: What?

MS. THESPIIS: *(cuts her off)* Alright, it's time to begin the auditions! Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war! *(The auditioners all stare at her, confused. She recognizes their blank faces and dials her enthusiasm back.)* Let's begin.

We begin the audition montage. JULIET's, DEBRA's, and HEIDI's readings should be spot on, exactly how you would expect JANE, the EVIL STEPMOTHER, and the FAIRY GODMOTHER to sound. MYRA's, WILLOW's, and AUDREY's should clearly miss the mark.

JULIET: I know you think you know me, but you don't. I came here tonight because of magic. Tomorrow you'll wake up as a prince, and I'll just be me.

MYRA: *(reads with a sassy, stuck-up tone)* I know you think you know me, but you don't. I came here tonight because of magic. Tomorrow you'll wake up as a prince, and I'll just be me.

AUDREY: *(speaks so quietly that we are unable to hear what she is saying)* Cinder White, don't be sad. I'll help you find your way. You'll never be lost as long as I'm with you.

MS. THESPIIS: Louder!

AUDREY: *(speaks a bit louder but she is still unable to project)* Cinder White, don't be sad. I'll help you find...

MS. THESPIIS: Wait, which part are you reading for? I don't remember this from the script.

AUDREY: Oh, it's not. I'm auditioning for Mabel, the squirrel in the woods. Cinder White passes by her on the way to the Ball. I know she doesn't speak, but this is what she's probably thinking.

MS. THESPIIS: Next!!

HEIDI: Don't cry, child. I'm your Fairy Godmother and I'm here to help you. You're going to that Ball!

WILLOW: Welcome, Principal Stevens, Vice-Principal Snow, faculty, and students. My name is Willow Scott and I am running for Vice President of your student government. Let me begin by saying...

MS. THESPIIS: What are you doing?

WILLOW: Reading my speech.

MS. THESPIIS: For what?

WILLOW: Isn't this practice for the student government elections?

MS. THESPIIS: Across the hall.

WILLOW: Oh. *(turns and exits)*

MS. THESPIS: Next!!

DEBRA: Sweet Cinder White. You think you're better than me? More beautiful than me? What you don't realize is you've already lost. Sweet dreams! (*laughs evilly*)

MS. THESPIS: Thank you, Debra. And thank you, everyone. This is going to be a very difficult show to cast. You've made my decisions practically impossible. The cast list will be posted tomorrow afternoon at 3:00. In this room. That's all for today. Good night! Good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow! (*waves as the auditioners exit*)

JANE: So you really think this is going to be a tough show to cast?

MS. THESPIS: What? Oh no. I casted it in my head after they walked in the door. That's just what you say.

JANE: Oh.

MS. THESPIS: Thanks again for all your help today, Jane. I really couldn't do it without you.

JANE: You're welcome. Here are the names of all the auditioners. (*hands MS. THESPIS her binder*) I've alphabetized and color-coded them. Also, I've marked all the sound and light cues in the script and loaded them into the computer. Oh and I stayed up last night proofing the final draft of the prop list. It's in there too. Laminated.

MS. THESPIS: (*impressed*) Thank you. But Jane, don't *you* need your binder?

JANE: Oh, that one's for you. I made an identical one for myself at home.

MS. THESPIS: This must've taken you hours.

JANE: It's not a problem. Good night, Ms. Thespis.

MS. THESPIS: Good night, Jane.

JANE exits leaving MS. THESPIS alone onstage. Lights fade as MS. THESPIS starts looking through the binder.

SCENE TWO

All the auditioners and JANE have gathered around the empty bulletin board and are waiting for the cast list to be posted. It is clear they have been waiting for a while. WILLOW is the only one not there.

MYRA: Ok, this is lame.

JANE: I'm sure she'll be here any minute.

MYRA: Yeah, well the cast list was supposed to go up 45 minutes ago. I'm leaving. *(starts to leave and stops when she sees MS. BALL enter)*

MS. BALL: Hi everyone. Sorry about the delay. You might want to sit down. *(Everyone sits down, visibly confused. MS. BALL begins this next sentence with the utmost seriousness, as if she can barely get the ellipses, as if she needs to take a second before delivering horrible news. The students react with fear each time she pauses.)* Ms. Thespis will not be coming in today. She was crossing the street when a bread van...almost hit her and sent her running back to the curb where she tripped over a pigeon and fell straight into...a pile of muffins that someone had just thrown out. After enjoying a few bites, she managed to roll off the pile of muffins right into...a Barnes and Noble where she ordered a mocha grande. She was waiting for her coffee when one of the bookshelves...sparked her interest and she walked over to look for Vampire romance novels. Then she got appendicitis and had to go to the hospital.

JANE: Is she ok?

MS. BALL: Yeah, she's fine. She'll be back to normal in no time.

JANE: And you couldn't have led with that?

MS BALL: Anyway, I have the cast list. I'm filling in for Ms. Thespis just for today.

HEIDI: Don't you have basketball practice?

MS BALL: Yes I do. But Ms. Thespis kindly reminded me that I owe her big time after the ferret incident of 2009 and this would be an excellent way for me to repay her.

MYRA: The ferret incident?

MS. BALL: You know what? It's not important. Let's just read the cast list so I can go home.

JULIET: Yes please!

DEBRA: Finally!

WILLOW: (*enters*) Oh geez, I did it again. Sorry wrong room... (*turns to leave*)

MS. BALL: Nope, you're right in time. Have a seat.

WILLOW: No, but...

MS. BALL: Sit, Blazer Girl.

WILLOW sits. The auditioners prepare themselves as MS. BALL gets the cast list from her gym bag. It is wrinkled when she takes it out.

MS. BALL: The Evil Stepmother: Heidi Roberts.

DEBRA: What?! Her??

MS. BALL: Can we just hold the commentary until the end...or not share it at all because I don't care. The Fairy Godmother: Debra Wilkins.

DEBRA: You've got to be kidding me!

MS. BALL: Caring even less. Prince Pleasant: Audrey Baker.

AUDREY: I'm not the squirrel??

MS. BALL: Evil Stepsisters: Myra Snootwell and Willow Scott.

WILLOW: (*confused*) What?

MYRA: (*with feigned enthusiasm*) Awesome.

MS. BALL: And that's it.

JULIET: (*excitedly, as if she thinks MS. BALL deliberately forgot to read her name*) Um, excuse Ms. Ball. You didn't read my name yet.

MS. BALL: I didn't? Who are you?

JULIET: Juliet Sawyer.

MS. BALL: (*scans the list again, then turns the page and immediately locates JULIET's name*) Oh yes, Juliet Sawyer. Stage Manager.

JULIET: Is that a new character?

MS. BALL: No, it's the stage manager.

HEIDI: Wait, Ms. Ball, you never said who's playing Cinder White? If it's not Juliet (*JULIET begins to cry*), who is she?

MS. BALL: Oh right, I missed one. Cinder White: Jane Green.

JANE: What? No, I'm the stage manager.

JULIET: (*through sniffles*) She didn't even audition! I was that bad? (*cries*)

DEBRA: (*can't contain her anger anymore*) The Fairy Godmother? I'm the Fairy Godmother?! She's onstage for a total of two minutes! (*sees HEIDI and runs towards her*) You! To think I called you my friend!!

MS. BALL and JANE jump in and are able to hold DEBRA back just in time.

HEIDI: I'm just as confused as you are! I wanted your part!

Chaos breaks out. Everyone starts yelling at one another. AUDREY crawls into the fetal position.

MS. BALL: Alright. This was fun. I gotta go. (*leaves the chaos*)

SCENE THREE

The next day. The cast is waiting for rehearsal to begin. It should be clear, from their body language and facial expressions, that, while they have calmed down, they are still confused and upset. MS. BALL enters.

MS. BALL: (*unflustered*) Alright, I'm here. Sorry I'm late again. I... nope, I really can't think of a good excuse. I have some bad news. Unfortunately there were complications during Ms. Thespis' surgery and...she... (*pauses as if she is about to deliver difficult news*).

JANE: No! Oh no!

MS. BALL: Yes.

JANE: She died?

MS. BALL: What? No! She's fine. But she has to stay home and recover for the next six weeks, so that means I'm stuck with you. I'm your new director.

DEBRA: You?

MS. BALL: Yes, apparently Ms. Thespis felt that I had not sufficiently made up for a particular incident involving her ferret, a bottle of

hairspray, and a blowtorch, so here I am. Stage Manager, did you take attendance?

Silence as the cast looks at JULIET.

DEBRA: *(after a few seconds)* Hey ingénue, that's you.

JULIET: What?

MS. BALL: Attendance?

JULIET: What?

MS. BALL: A task in which you take note of which people are here and which people are not. I emailed you the cast list last night.

JANE: *(gently to JULIET)* It's one of the jobs of the stage manager.

JULIET: *(takes a minute, trying to figure out the best way to go about this)*
Oh! Ok, if you're here, raise your hands. *(the cast raises their hands)* Ok, if you're NOT here, raise...

MS. BALL: Stop. *(She grumpily pulls the crumpled cast list from her bag and reads. This part should happen very quickly).* Cinder White.

JANE: Here.

MS. BALL: Evil Stepmother.

HEIDI: Here.

MS. BALL: Fairy Godmother. *(DEBRA scoffs)*

MS. BALL: Evil stepsisters.

MYRA & WILLOW: Here.

MS. BALL: Prince Pleasant.

AUDREY: *(barely audible)* Here.

MS. BALL: Prince Pleasant.

AUDREY: *(still not audible)* Here.

JANE: Audrey's here, Ms. Ball.

MS. BALL: Then say "here," kid. Speak up! Alright, I'm sure at this point during the first rehearsal, Ms. Thespis breaks out into some inspirational speech with some barely relevant Shakespeare quote that she would try to pass off as her own and then tell you all to hold hands and pass a squeeze down the line as you "share the energy with each other."

Some nod. Others wait for what she has to say next.

MS. BALL: To be or not to be. Everybody squeeze each other. (*They awkwardly squeeze the person next to them, except MYRA who refuses to participate. DEBRA takes this opportunity to squeeze HEIDI a little harder than she should, and HEIDI lets out a yelp*). And break. Let's start with the first quarter, I mean, Scene 1.

MYRA: (*scoffs*) Ms. Ball, do we really have to do this? Can't you find some other theatre geeks to do these parts? The only reason I'm here is because I'm failing art.

WILLOW: Yeah and I didn't even audition. I thought I was at a student government meeting.

MS. BALL: Believe me, nothing would make me happier than to shut down this whole production right now. You think I don't have a DVR at home with 8 episodes of *Deadliest Catch* (or any other contemporary "guilty pleasure" show) waiting for me?? But unfortunately, we're all stuck with each other for the next 10 weeks and that includes you and Blazer Girl. Got it?

MYRA: Fine.

MS. BALL: Blazer Girl?

WILLOW: Fine. But if I stay, can I count on all of your votes?

MS. BALL: (*moving her into place*) Act now. Campaign later. And go!

MYRA: (*reads*) Cinder White! You lazy little thing. Make us breakfast!

WILLOW: And when you're done, we need our dresses for the ball.

MYRA: And then do our hair.

WILLOW: And paint our nails.

JANE: (*reading stiffly and awkwardly*) I'd be happy to help you get ready for the ball. Maybe I could even go with... (*she takes a long pause while she is turning the page*) you. I've never been to a ball before.

MYRA: Seriously? That's how you're gonna do it?

JANE: What?

MYRA: You stink.

HEIDI: Myra!

MYRA: Oh come on. You can't think that was good.

JANE: No, she's right. I stink. This is why I'm the stage manager. Ms. Ball, this is a mistake.

MYRA: I'll say.

MS. BALL: Alright, enough. *(to MYRA)* Slacker Girl, for someone that claims that theatre "isn't her thing," you sure have a lot of opinions. Take it down a notch. *(to JANE)* And Plain.

JANE: It's Jane.

MS. BALL: Whatever. I'm not gonna sugarcoat this. You do stink.

HEIDI: Ms. Ball!

MS. BALL: But this is the part you were given. And as long as you think you stink, you're gonna go on stinking. Forever. *(pauses to let it sink in)* Alright, pep talk over. Let's try a different scene. *(to AUDREY)* Quiet Girl. You're up. Do the scene when Cinder White meets Prince Pleasant at the Ball. Start with Plain's lines.

JANE: It's Jane.

MS. BALL: Whatever.

WILLOW: Um, Ms. Ball, I actually have to go.

MYRA: Yeah, me too.

MS. BALL: One at a time. *(to WILLOW)* Blazer Girl, where are you going?

WILLOW: I have a student government meeting. I'm already late.

MS. BALL: Fine, go. *(WILLOW exits)* Slacker Girl, what about you?

MYRA: Oh, I just don't want to be here.

MS. BALL: You know you remind me a lot of one of my players. Talented girl, horrible attitude.

MYRA: That's nice.

MS. BALL: Yeah, it is. But you know, we eventually got along. Because each time she said anything remotely unpleasant to me, I told her to take 10 laps. *(MYRA stares back, confused)* So take 10 laps.

MYRA: What??

MS. BALL: Let's go. Now. Around the theatre. *(MYRA still doesn't move)* You wanna make it 20!

MYRA: No!

MS. BALL: (*in her “coach voice”*) So move!!

MYRA hesitates for another second, deciding which way to go, then starts jogging. She jogs down the steps, and around the inside perimeter of the theatre.

MS. BALL: Alright Plain, GO!

JANE: Ms. Ball, it’s...

MS. BALL: (*in the same “coach voice”*) What?!

JANE: Never mind. (*she begins to read her lines from the script in the same awkward, mechanical way*) I know you think you know me, but you don’t. I came here tonight because of magic. Tomorrow you’ll wake up as a prince, and I’ll just be...me.

AUDREY: (*barely audibly*) But I do know you. I know you’re the most beautiful girl I’ve met and I want to marry you.

MS. BALL: What was that?

AUDREY: My lines.

MS. BALL: Oh, so you are capable of making sound?

AUDREY: What?

MS. BALL: I’m just trying to figure out why your mouth is moving onstage and nothing is coming out? I’m standing right next to you and I can’t hear you! (*During this last sentence, AUDREY walks to the downstage corner of the stage and curls up in a ball on the floor.*) What are you doing? (*to the others*) What—What is she doing?

JANE: Yeah, she does this sometimes.

MS. BALL: Does what??

JANE: She did it during math yesterday. She’s reverting to the rock.

MS. BALL: The rock?

JANE: Audrey usually plays animals or inanimate objects. She loves to be onstage but as long as she’s doing something that doesn’t require her to be a...person. She freezes up when she feels too much pressure.

MS. BALL is speechless and simply stares at AUDREY, not knowing where to proceed from here.

MS. BALL: How long does she stay like this?

JANE: Until she doesn't feel threatened anymore.

MS. BALL: Threatened? What does she think is gonna happen?

JANE: I would just let her be for now. She'll be ok.

MS. BALL: Alright, let's take it from the Fairy Godmother scene. (*JANE and DEBRA get into place*) And go!

SCENE FOUR

A week later. HEIDI and JANE are standing onstage as the STEPMOTHER and CINDER WHITE. HEIDI is holding up a poison apple, attempting to give it to CINDER WHITE. MYRA is still jogging around the inside perimeter of the theatre.

HEIDI: (*cheerfully and enthusiastically*) Sweet Cinder White. You think you're better than me? More beautiful than me? What you don't realize is you've already lost. Sweet dreams!

MS. BALL: Stop! What was that? (*directed at HEIDI*)

HEIDI: I'm sorry...

MS. BALL: Don't apologize. Just do it again!

HEIDI: (*just as cheerfully and sweetly*) Sweet Cinder White. You think you're better than me...

MS. BALL: Oh, just stop. Look, Nice Girl, you do understand that you're playing the villain here? The *evil* stepmother. That means that after you've tried to kill her by giving her a poison apple, you can't act like you're her bestie! (*HEIDI nods*) Again!

HEIDI: (*nods cheerfully and takes a pause, then does it the exact same way*) Sweet Cinder White. You think you're better than me? More beautiful than me? What you don't realize is you've already lost. Sweet dreams!

MS. BALL: Stop!

DEBRA: It's like watching Bambi become evil.

MS. BALL: What was that?

DEBRA: Ms. Ball, this is ridiculous. We've been running this same scene for two hours. Now, I'm just gonna say what everyone else is thinking. (*the others look at one another, confused*) Clearly, I should

be playing this part. Why not just let Heidi and me trade parts? I can be the Evil Stepmother and Heidi can be the two-minute mom. You're ok with that, right, Heidi?

HEIDI: (*she hesitates for a second*) Yeah, I'm fine with that.

MS. BALL: Oh you're fine with that? Great! You know what I think? I think Myra needs a little company.

DEBRA: Excuse me?

MS. BALL: 10 laps.

DEBRA: You can't be serious...

MS. BALL: Now! (*DEBRA begins to run. To HEIDI.*) You too, Nice Girl. (*HEIDI is startled into running behind DEBRA*) Anyone else wanna switch roles?

The others react quickly by shaking their heads, avoiding eye contact, and responding "No," "No, ma'am," etc.

MS. BALL: Alright, let's run the scene between Cinder White and Prince Pleasant at the ball. Plain! Quiet Girl! And go!

SCENE FIVE

Later that same rehearsal. MYRA, DEBRA, and HEIDI are still jogging. If possible, they should jog through the aisles and audience as well as across the stage during the scene.

MS. BALL: (*they have been at this for a while*) You are not the rock anymore! Speak up, Quiet Girl!

AUDREY: (*barely audible*) But I do know you. I know you're the most beautiful girl I've met and I want to marry you.

MS. BALL: Louder!

AUDREY: (*slightly louder*) But I do know you. I know you're the most beautiful girl I've met and I want to marry you.

MS. BALL: Louder!

AUDREY takes a deep breath. It's clear she's speaking as loudly as she can, which is still barely audible.

AUDREY: But I do know you. I know you're the most beautiful girl...

There is a sudden blackout.

MS. BALL: Stage manager.

JULIET: Yes, Ms. Ball?

MS. BALL: Why am I standing in the dark?

JULIET: Isn't there a blackout here?

MS. BALL: In the middle of the scene? No. No, there isn't. Can you be a dear and turn the lights back on?

JULIET: Sure!

A five second pause. There is still darkness.

JULIET: Um, Ms. Ball?

MS. BALL: Yes.

JULIET: I don't know how to turn the lights back on.

JANE: I got it. *(Runs offstage. The lights return.)*

MS. BALL: Thank you, Plain. Alright, That's enough for the day. I'm going home. *(to AUDREY)* And Quiet Girl. *(AUDREY turns around)* You're not off the hook. We're starting in this exact same spot tomorrow.

Everyone exits except MYRA, DEBRA, and HEIDI who have made their way back up to the stage. They all collapse, out of breath.

DEBRA: I think I'm dying.

MYRA: Relax, drama queen. We only ran three laps.

DEBRA: That doesn't matter. This is not a basketball practice! She can't make us do this!

MYRA: Yeah, well, she did.

DEBRA: Well, I refuse to stand for this abuse any longer. First, I have to stand by and watch *my* part get butchered by Elmo over there. My poise, my stage presence, my looks going to complete waste playing some pretty girl's godmother. And now, my body is forced to endure physical exhaustion and degradation?! I will not stand for it. Let both of you be my witnesses! There will be consequences for this! Someone will pay!

She dramatically throws her scarf over her shoulder and exits. MYRA and HEIDI are alone.

MYRA: She's a treat. (*HEIDI laughs a little*) I don't get you people.

HEIDI: You people?

MYRA: Theatre people. Thespians.

HEIDI: What do you have against theatre people?

MYRA: Well take drama queen. (*she gestures to where DEBRA has just exited*) She's nuts. Like certifiably nuts. It's like she's *always* onstage! Reciting those stupid monologues she makes up. Walking around here thinking that we all worship her. She thinks she can just say whatever she wants to people.

HEIDI: Not all theatre people are like that.

MYRA: Yeah, and then there are other people who think they can only play one part. So when they actually get cast in a decent role, they try to give it away to someone else.

HEIDI: It's not a big deal. I wanted her part too. And she would make a good Stepmother.

MYRA: Look, I know we don't know each other very well. But, why do you think *you* can't play this part?

HEIDI: I just haven't played a mean character before.

MYRA: So?

HEIDI: So I like playing "nice" characters. Everyone *always* likes the mothers and the best friends...

MYRA: You mean everyone always likes you. Is that why you do all this stuff?

HEIDI: What stuff?

MYRA: Like bake brownies for everybody and let that diva steal your part. You need to have everyone like you.

HEIDI: What's wrong with that?

MYRA: It's pathetic.

HEIDI: (*flares up*) At least I have friends and I belong to something. Are you saying I should be more like you?

MYRA: What is that supposed to mean?

HEIDI: You have no friends, no *real* friends anyway. And the only reason you're a part of this show is because you're failing art. So the way I see it, I'd much rather be a "too nice" theatre person than a slacker with no friends.

After this comes out, HEIDI realizes the weight of what she has just said. Hurt, MYRA gathers her bag and exits, leaving HEIDI alone.

SCENE SIX

Rehearsal the next day. Everyone, including AUDREY, is visibly tired. They've been at this for hours.

MS. BALL: Louder!

AUDREY: *(the same inaudible volume)* But I do know you. I know you're the most beautiful girl I've met and I want to marry you.

MS. BALL: Five more. You will do these push-ups until you are loud enough to be heard! Count 'em!

AUDREY drops to the ground and does five push-ups.

MS. BALL: Again!

AUDREY: *(still inaudible and now out of breath)* But I do know you. I know you're the most beautiful girl I've met and I want to marry you.

MS. BALL: Five more.

AUDREY drops to the ground and does five more push-ups. The scene continues as HEIDI and MYRA have their conversation off to the side.

HEIDI: Myra, I'm so sorry about yesterday.

MYRA: *(feigns surprise)* Really? You are?

HEIDI: Yes!

MYRA: 'Cause I wasn't sure after the 8 voicemails, 15 texts, 4 Facebook posts, and the "I'm sorry" video montage you made for me. By the way, where did you get all those pictures of the two of us together?

HEIDI: Easy. I followed you home, took the pictures of you, then Photoshopped myself into them.

MYRA: That is beyond creepy!

HEIDI: I know! But I just needed to make sure you know that I'm...

MYRA: Sorry! I know. Look, it's fine. It's not like we're friends anyway. Or according to you, I don't have any friends. So don't worry about it. We're fine.

HEIDI: It doesn't sound like we're fine.

MYRA: We're fine.

At this point, AUDREY has gone off to the side and become the "rock" again.

MS. BALL: And she's the rock again. Hey! You are not the rock anymore! Hey! (*AUDREY does not move. Seeing AUDREY has already reverted to her "rock" state, MS. BALL gives up and addresses the rest of the group*). Ok, let's take a break from that scene. Plain! Diva! Let's run the Fairy Godmother scene. Start from page 49. Stage manager, don't forget the sound effect for the godmother's wand.

JULIET: Ok!

JANE: What am I going to do now? I have no way to get to the ball...

MS. BALL: Plain, you should be crying here! Where are the tears?

JANE: I can't cry on cue.

MS. BALL: Then do what any decent actress does. Fake it! Diva, go!

DEBRA: (*enters*) What child? What do you wish?

JANE: Who are you?

DEBRA: I'm your Fairy Godmother.

DEBRA waves her wand. We hear a cow mooing.

DEBRA: (*annoyed*) What was that?

JULIET: Oops! Sorry!

MS. BALL: Let's try it again! From the same line.

DEBRA: I'm your Fairy Godmother.

DEBRA waves her wand again. This time, we hear a car crash.

DEBRA: (*getting more and more annoyed*) I'm your Fairy Godmother!

Again, she waves the wand. This time, we hear an air horn. She glares out at JULIET as she continues to

wave the wand three more times. For each wave, we hear the sound of a telephone ringing, a baby crying, and a gong.

DEBRA: Oh come on!

MS. BALL: Alright, enough with the sound cues! We'll fix that later. Let's just keep going with the lines. Plain, go!

JANE: (*continues to read awkwardly and mechanically from the script*) Godmother, I want to go to the Ball so badly, but then I think, why would someone like the Prince even look at me. I'm nobody.

DEBRA: Don't cry, child. I'm here to help you. You're going to that Ball!

JANE: But how?

DEBRA: (*as she reads these lines, the others should become more and more confused since these lines are not in the script*) Let me tell you a story. There was once a little girl named Isabel. She was one of five daughters, born to a very poor family. But she was her father's favorite daughter. He wanted, more than anything, to give his daughter a gift on her sixteenth birthday, so he traveled far and wide in search of the most powerful sorceress in the land. When he found her, he asked the sorceress to bless his beautiful, intelligent, witty, compassionate, athletic, musically gifted, humble daughter with special powers. So the sorceress...

MS. BALL: Stop. What are you reading?

DEBRA: My part.

MS. BALL: Your line is "With this magic wand." And I thought we said you were supposed to go from half-court to the foul line during this part.

DEBRA: Ms. Ball, first of all, I am a performer. I can't be restricted by stupid things like blocking, especially blocking that makes no sense. And secondly, there are no small parts, only small actors.

MS. BALL: What does that mean?

DEBRA: It means that when you are given a small part, you're supposed to make it bigger by giving yourself more lines.

HEIDI: That's not what it means.

DEBRA: (*ignoring HEIDI*) I just think this is the perfect way to make up for the fact that I'm not playing...another role (*she glances at HEIDI*) in this show.

HEIDI: (*more assertive this time*) Debra, that's not what it means.

DEBRA: (*stops this time to look at HEIDI*) Excuse me?

HEIDI: I said...Never mind.

DEBRA: As I was saying...

HEIDI: Wait! Actually, Debra, you're wrong. That expression, "There are no small parts, only small actors," it means that you can't always have the lead. Sometimes, you have to step aside and let other people, who *always* play the nice mom or non-threatening best friend, have a chance instead of hogging all the good parts for yourself. And sometimes, you have to cheer those other people on instead of making fun of them and making them feel like they're not good enough. And sometimes, you have to dial back your *enormous* ego and realize that instead of picking on other people, maybe you should concentrate on playing the part that you *do* have, because from what I've seen so far, you're... you're...not a very good Fairy Godmother!

Silence. Everyone stares at HEIDI and DEBRA.

JULIET: Wow, that was really specific.

MS. BALL: (*gives a slow and unenthusiastic clap*) That was a nice speech. You know what else it was? Disruptive. So just for that, Nice Girl and Diva get to do 20 push-ups.

DEBRA: What?! Why me??

MS. BALL: (*cutting her off*) The rest of you, head down to the costume room.

MYRA: Ms. Ball?

MS. BALL: What do you want, Slacker Girl?

MYRA: You...look really fat in that warm-up suit. I'm sorry. Someone had to tell you. Yellow really isn't your color.

MS. BALL: Thank you for your honesty. Now you can join Nice Girl and Diva over there.

MYRA: (*feigns surprise as she walks over to join HEIDI and DEBRA*) What? That's so not fair.

Everyone else exits as MYRA, DEBRA, and HEIDI start their push-ups. DEBRA should be in between MYRA and HEIDI. They are doing push-ups through the first part of this conversation.

MYRA: (to HEIDI) Ok, I forgive you.

HEIDI: You do?

MYRA: Yeah.

HEIDI: What changed your mind?

MYRA: That was awesome. Someone needed to tell her off.

DEBRA: I'm right here.

HEIDI: I know. It was pretty awesome. It's like, I just couldn't take it anymore. She's so full of herself.

DEBRA: Again, right here.

HEIDI: (*finally acknowledging DEBRA*) Well, you are.

MYRA: You are.

HEIDI: And you're so mean sometimes.

MYRA: You are.

HEIDI: (to MYRA) So are you.

MYRA: True. And so are you.

HEIDI: I know.

DEBRA: I didn't know you felt this way. I thought we were friends. Like Han Solo and Chewbacca. Thelma and...her hair dresser. Simba and...what's the name of that warthog?

HEIDI: Ok, stop. Debra, those aren't equal friendships. I'm not a warthog!

DEBRA: What?

HEIDI: Well, sometimes I'm a warthog. But other times, I need to be Simba!

DEBRA: Ok...

HEIDI: Good.

DEBRA: I'm confused.

MYRA: She's saying she's good enough to play...

HEIDI: I can speak for myself!

MYRA: Ok!

HEIDI: (to MYRA) Sorry. (to DEBRA) I'm just saying: I'm not a mother. I'm not a sidekick. And it's impossible for me to be cheerful and nice all the time. It's exhausting.

DEBRA: I just thought that was your personality.

HEIDI: No!

DEBRA: Does this mean you actually want to play the Evil Stepmother?

HEIDI: Yes.

DEBRA: Does this mean you really think I have an enormous ego and I hog all the good parts?

HEIDI: Yes.

DEBRA: Does this mean you're not going to bring brownies to rehearsal anymore?

HEIDI: Yes...well, we'll see. (with the same assertive tone as before) If I feel like it!

DEBRA: Oh...ok.

HEIDI: Ok.

There is an awkward silence.

MYRA: I'm not really failing art. I lied. I've never been in a show before. I just thought it would be fun.

DEBRA: Is it?

MYRA: Yeah. It really is.

HEIDI: Yeah.

DEBRA: I just had a great idea. What if we added the Fairy Godmother to another scene? Or three?

HEIDI and MYRA shoot DEBRA a look.

DEBRA: No. You know, I figured the answer was no. I just thought I'd throw it out there.

HEIDI and MYRA shake their heads.

SCENE SEVEN

Tech rehearsal, the night before the show. The cast is performing the last scene of the play. HEIDI (as the stepmother), MYRA and WILLOW (as the stepsisters), and AUDREY (as Prince Pleasant) are onstage. AUDREY is holding a shoe.

AUDREY: (*barely audible*) Are you sure that these two are the only young ladies who live here?

HEIDI: Oh yes, your Majesty! The only other person here is our maid. Unfortunately, she passed away this morning.

AUDREY: Please, bring her to me.

MS. BALL: Louder, Quiet Girl! You are not the rock anymore!

AUDREY: (*repeats with a bit more volume*) Please, bring her to me.

HEIDI: (*frustrated sigh*) As you wish.

The curtains close abruptly.

MS. BALL: Stage manager!

JULIET: (*cheerfully*) Yes, Ms. Ball?

MS. BALL: Why am I looking at a curtain instead of the long-awaited reunion between Cinder White and Prince Pleasant?

JULIET: Oh, the scene's not over?

MS. BALL: Did you see him put the shoe on her??

JULIET: No.

MS. BALL: Then it's not over!

JULIET: Sorry!

MS. BALL: Oh good lord. All of this, just because of a stupid ferret!

JANE: (*peeks out from behind the curtain*) Did you say something, Ms. Ball?

MS. BALL: No. Everybody! We're stopping here. Come out and sit. It's time for notes.

Everyone comes out from behind the curtain and sits on the front of the stage.

MS. BALL: Plain!

JANE: Yes?

MS. BALL: (*reads from the her notepad*) Disaster. Absolute disaster. (*she tears off the note and hands it to JANE*)

JANE: That's it. That's the note?

MS. BALL: Yeah.

JANE: Well, do you have any advice?

MS. BALL: Be better. (*to JULIET*) Stage Manager. Here's an idea. During the scene when Cinder White eats the poisonous apple, maybe it's a good idea to put the spotlight on her instead of on Blazer Girl who was offstage picking her nose. (*tears off the note and hands it to JULIET*) And Blazer Girl, don't pick your nose offstage. (*tears off the note and hands it to WILLOW*) If you can see me, I can see you. Next, Quiet Girl.

AUDREY: (*braces herself*) Yes?

MS. BALL: Five more. (*tears off the note and hands it to AUDREY*)

AUDREY: Ok. (*she drops and begins her push-ups*)

MS. BALL: Diva. You took out the monologue.

DEBRA: (*grudgingly*) Yes.

MS. BALL: That was good. The song you added in the middle of the Cinder White's death was not. (*tears off the note and hands it to DEBRA*)

DEBRA: I just thought the song would really enhance the dramatic...

MS. BALL: No.

DEBRA: Ok.

MS. BALL: Nice Girl. (*she pauses as HEIDI braces herself*) I didn't hate your performance today. (*tears off the note and hands it to HEIDI*)

HEIDI: Thank you.

MS. BALL: Slacker Girl. Ditto. (*tears off the note and hands it to MYRA*)

MYRA: Were those actual compliments?

HEIDI: I think so.

MS. BALL: Alright, that's it, people. I'm going home to soak in the tub while I eat a Stouffer's frozen meatloaf. Be here at 6:00 tomorrow.

Everyone exits but MS. BALL and JANE. MS. BALL is about to leave when she notices JANE.

MS. BALL: Let's go, Plain! Practice is over.

JANE: I will, Ms. Ball. I'm just going to label the sound cues so they're a little bigger for Juliet to see. And I'll preset the props for tomorrow night. Oh, and that spotlight really needs to be adjusted. And then, I should probably...

MS. BALL: You must make a good stage manager.

JANE: No, I make a *great* stage manager.

MS. BALL: (*corrects herself*) A *great* stage manager. But you're not the stage manager for this show. Juliet is.

JANE: So?

MS. BALL: So let her do that stuff.

JANE: But...

MS. BALL: But what?

JANE: But this is what I do. I make lists. I wear black. I keep the show running. I don't know what Ms. Thespis was thinking. I should never have gotten this part...

MS. BALL: Ok, stop right there. Look, you think you don't belong up there. But Ms. Thespis gave you this part for a reason.

JANE: Why?

MS. BALL: Because she thought you could do it.

JANE: So why do I freeze every time I'm up there? I'm awful.

MS. BALL: Yes, you are. (*shrugs*) Look, I'm not a drama coach. I'm in no way qualified to give you acting advice. But... I used to have this player. She used to practice in the gym after everyone else went home. When it was empty. She didn't know I was there so I just stayed behind the bleachers and watched her shoot. Foul shots, lay-ups, three-pointers. And she was really good! I don't think I remember her missing a shot.

JANE: (*not knowing where this story is going*) Ok...

MS. BALL: But guess how many shots this girl made during our season.

JANE: How many?

MS. BALL: None. Not a one. Not even during practice. Needless to say, she spent most of her time on the bench. For three years. Until one game. It was our last game of the season, and it was a *big* game. There were 3 seconds left on the clock. We were down two points. All we needed was a player that could make a shot from half court. She was the only one I had seen make that shot. She did it dozens of times when she was by herself in the gym.

JANE: (*engrossed in the story*) So what did you do? Did you put her in? Did she make the shot? Did you win the game?

MS. BALL: I put her in. She missed the shot. We lost the game.

JANE: (*disappointed*) Oh.

They stare at each other for a few seconds, JANE waiting for more and MS. BALL thinking that she has made her point. After a few seconds, MS. BALL gets up to go.

MS. BALL: Have a nice night, Plain.

JANE: Wait! Ms. Ball, I know you're looking forward to your bath and frozen meatloaf. But why did you tell me that story?

MS. BALL: You mean to tell me you've never stayed after rehearsal to stand on this stage and perform a monologue to the empty seats? When you thought no one else was around?

JANE: Of course I have.

MS. BALL: Really? Wow. That was just a lucky guess. So then...be Cinder White. Stop doubting yourself. This is something you can't organize or make lists for. And there's no guarantee that it'll go well. (*starts to leave, then turns back*) And I do too, by the way.

JANE: What?

MS. BALL: Think you can do it.

JANE smiles back at MS. BALL. MS. BALL exits leaving JANE alone onstage for a few seconds to think

MS. BALL: (*from backstage after a few seconds*) Go home, Plain!

JANE: (*jumps*) Ok.



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