

ADVENTURES AT THE HIGH SCHOOL DANCE

by Scott Mullen

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ADVENTURES AT THE HIGH SCHOOL DANCE

A Full Length Comedic/Dramatic Collection

by Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: The high school dance makes for a lot of comedy and drama, from nervous wallflowers and strangers feeling a spark, to a girl who can freeze time, an energy-sucking "dancepire" and a shy teen disguising himself as a chaperone. This amusing collection of plays offers a string of offbeat, funny stories and a number of intriguing characters for performers to play. The sets are very simple and require no connecting backstage space.

DURATION: 100 minutes

TIME: Modern day

SETTING: A park, various locations at a school dance

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3-16 females, 2-10 males, 5-26 total; 0-unlimited extras)

CAST NOTE: Characters can be doubled, but it should be clear when actors are playing different characters than before. *All of the characters are teens.*

I LOVE BORIS THE LEAST

MEG (f)

ALICE (f)

OUT IN THE CAR BEFORE THE DANCE

KYLE (m)

SARAH (f)

DAVE (m)

AUDREY (f)

THE SELFIE

WARREN (m)

MONICA (f)

OH BROTHER

ZOE (f)

MATT (m)

HILLARY (f)

I'M NOT GOING TO DANCE WITH YOU

EMILY (f)

HENRY (m)

THE CHAPERONE

NOAH (m)

OPAL (f)

DANCEPIRES

GABE (m)

HOLLIS (f)

JANE (f)

NICK (m)

UP ON THE ROOF

GRACE (f)

BRIAN (m)

IN THE THIRD FLOOR GIRLS' BATHROOM DURING THE SLOW DANCE

ALLIE (f)

RUBY (f)

TRISH (f)

AMANDA FREEZES TIME

AMANDA (f)

CADEN (m)

FULL CAST (m/f)

COSTUMES

Many of the costumes can come from actors' closets. This is not a prom, so the characters can wear what they think is appropriate. It's not really formal.

SET

There is a lot of flexibility here about how characters use the stage space. Have fun with it. The settings are minimal and geared toward quick transitions.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This collection has been purposely written to be easy to produce. All of the characters are in their teens, and you may perform as many or as few of the pieces as you want. Enthusiastic characters should have a lot of energy and talk fast.

Though this is a dance, music should never intrude on the dialogue, except where noted. You might not even want to use music at all until the final play.

PUBLISHER NOTE

I'M NOT GOING TO DANCE WITH YOU and AMANDA FREEZES TIME are available as separate Ten Minute Play packs.

I LOVE BORIS THE LEAST

By Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: Meg asks a stranger, Alice, to help her decide which of four boys she should go to the school dance with.

TIME: Present

SETTING: A park.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females)

MEG (f)..... A bit on the shy side. (73 lines)

ALICE (f)..... Very talkative. (79 lines)

COSTUMES: Regular clothes.

SET: A bench

PROPS

- a book
- envelope
- purse
- cell phone

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AT START: MEG is seated on a park bench, reading a book. ALICE enters, gives her a long look, then sits down next to her. Meg looks up.

ALICE: Do you go to Marbury High?

MEG: No.

ALICE: Do you know anyone there?

MEG: I don't think so.

ALICE: Perfect! Okay. My name is Alice, and I need your help. And I'm willing to pay for it. Not a lot. (*Pulls an envelope from her purse.*) I have eight dollars and forty-two cents, for ten minutes of your time. Maybe not even ten minutes.

MEG: Ten minutes of what?

ALICE: Just listen and give me completely unbiased advice.

MEG: I can do that.

MEG takes the envelope.

MEG: Though I would have done it for nothing.

ALICE: No! I want this to be a business transaction. I'm hiring you as a completely impartial observer, to give me your honest opinion. None of my friends are impartial at all – they all know too much. I need someone who knows nothing.

MEG: Great.

ALICE: What's your name?

MEG: Meg.

ALICE: This is my terrible problem, Meg. Four different guys have asked me to the school dance.

MEG: That doesn't seem like a terrible problem.

ALICE: It is!

MEG: Just pick the one you like the best.

ALICE: But I like them all. I love them all.

MEG: You can't possibly love four different guys.

ALICE: I do! I've been going about this scientifically. I think about each of the guys... and I get a warm feeling inside me.

MEG: Maybe you're just lonely.

ALICE: No! I don't feel like this about every boy. Here – look!

ALICE pulls out her cell phone. Scrolls. Shows MEG photos.

ALICE: This is Kurt – look at those dimples. This is Greg – he plays quarterback! And Trevor – you should see him skateboard. And Boris. He's weird. But smart. And nice.

MEG: Okay, but you can't possibly love them all the same. Right?

ALICE: I don't know.

MEG: Look at their photos again. Weigh your love.

ALICE: Weigh my love?

MEG: Yes.

ALICE scrolls through her phone. Makes a series of humorously thoughtful love-weighing faces.

ALICE: I'm pretty sure I love Boris the least.

MEG: Good. So we can eliminate Boris—

ALICE: But I'm not sure I want to eliminate Boris.

MEG: Then pick Boris.

ALICE: But I'm not sure I want to pick Boris.

MEG: Can you just go to the dance alone and dance with all four guys?

ALICE: A lot of people are going without dates. But I really want a date. And I don't want to go to the dance with four guys.

MEG: Three guys?

ALICE: That's not a thing.

MEG: Two guys?

ALICE: No! It needs to be one guy.

MEG: Then start eliminating!

ALICE: But it's hard!

MEG: Okay. Let's take a step back. Which of these guys have you actually dated?

ALICE: None of them.

MEG: None of them?!?

ALICE: I went out with Jimmy Hudson for two years, but we broke up last week. And he's going to the dance with Denise Berger.

MEG: And when all of these other guys heard that, they asked you to the dance.

ALICE: I guess. Yeah.

MEG: Okay, so... which of these guys have you had long, meaningful conversations with, that makes you want to spend time with them?

ALICE: I haven't really talked that much with any of them. I was going out with Jimmy!

MEG: Do you know these guys at all?

ALICE: A little bit.

MEG: Then how can you love them?

ALICE: I don't know. I just do.

MEG: Maybe it's gas. What did you eat today?

ALICE: It's not gas. It's just, they asked me, and it felt nice.

MEG: Hmmm.

ALICE: What?

MEG: I think you just needed some positive reinforcement. They make you feel wanted. They chose you.

ALICE: It's not just that! I have feelings for them!

MEG: You need to start eliminating. We're scratching off Boris.

ALICE: No...

MEG: But you love Boris the least. Say it.

ALICE: I love Boris the least.

MEG: So we're scratching off Boris. We're down to three. Isn't that progress?

ALICE: I guess.

MEG: I'd ask you who invited you first, but it shouldn't be about that. Let's attack this from another angle. Why do you want to go to the dance?

ALICE: Because it's a dance! It's fun! All my friends will be there!

MEG: Do they all have dates?

ALICE: They do.

MEG: So they can't pick up any of the guys you don't choose. Because that would be easier. Right now, you're going to have to say no to three guys.

ALICE: Wait – you could go with one.

MEG: I don't go to your school.

ALICE: That totally doesn't matter. Do you have a boyfriend?

MEG: ... No.

ALICE: Have you ever had a boyfriend?

MEG: This isn't about me!

ALICE: Perfect.

MEG: I'm not going to your school dance!

ALICE: Why not?

MEG: First off, none of these guys have even asked me yet. How would that even work? You're going to tell one of the guys that you don't pick that they can ask me? I'm not sure I want to be someone's second choice. Especially if they're going to be looking at you all night.

ALICE: Okay. Fine. It was just an idea.

MEG: Although... maybe we should pretend I am. Because that will make you think about how you'd feel if one of these guys was going with me. If you're jealous – then maybe that's the guy you should pick.

ALICE: Yes. I like that idea. Pretend you're dancing with a guy.

MEG: What?

ALICE: Just do it. Then I'll imagine who you're dancing with.

MEG: This is silly.

ALICE: Is anyone looking?

MEG looks around.

MEG: No.

ALICE: Dance.

MEG sighs. She starts pretend dancing, waving her arms.

ALICE: No. Slow dance. Like you're in their arms.

MEG pretends to slow dance, her arms out like they are around a guy.

ALICE holds up her phone to line the faces up with her.

ALICE: Kurt... Greg... Trevor... he's taller – even taller!

MEG adjusts. Pretend dances with someone taller.

ALICE: And Boris.

MEG: I thought we eliminated Boris.

ALICE: I just wanted to see how I felt. He's shorter.

MEG adjusts down.

MEG: Can any of these guys actually dance?

ALICE: No idea.

MEG: You should have some idea!

ALICE: Now pretend you're kissing Boris.

MEG: I'm not going to kiss Boris!

ALICE: I need to know how I'd feel about it! Pretend!

MEG pretends to be kissing the invisible boy she is dancing with.

ALICE: Okay, now pretend you're kissing Kurt... and then Greg... and now Trevor. He's taller!

MEG does all the kissing.

ALICE: Okay. That helped. I'm cutting Trevor. Too tall.

MEG: Good. So now it's down to Kurt and Greg—

ALICE: And Boris.

MEG: I thought we eliminated Boris.

ALICE: When you kissed him, I felt something.

MEG: So pick him.

ALICE: But he's weird.

MEG: In what way?

ALICE: I don't know.

MEG: An interesting way?

ALICE: Maybe.

MEG: And how did he ask you to the dance?

ALICE: He was really shy about it. Cute – but awkward.

MEG: Okay. This is what you need to ask yourself – what are you looking for in a dance date? What do you care about? Are you just looking for arm candy?

ALICE: That would be Kyle.

MEG: Are you looking for a future boyfriend?

ALICE: That would be Greg.

MEG: Or just someone who you can have a really nice time with without worrying about any of that?

ALICE: That's Boris.

MEG: So which one?

ALICE: I don't know!

MEG: Close your eyes. (*ALICE does.*) Imagine! You're at the dance. You're hanging with your friends and their dates. Laughing!

ALICE: Yes.

MEG: Now you're dancing. Something fast. You're throwing your arms in the air. You're having a ball.

ALICE: Yes!

MEG: Oh, it's a slow song! He's pulling you close. Your head is on his neck. He's a good dancer. You're perfect together. You look into his eyes...

ALICE: Yes...

MEG: Who is it?

ALICE: Who...

MEG: You look to your left. It's me! I'm dancing with Boris! And we're kissing!

ALICE: Nooooooooo...

ALICE opens her eyes.

MEG: No?

ALICE: I don't want him kissing you.

MEG: Because you want to kiss him.

ALICE: I guess I really do.

MEG: So you don't love Boris the least.

ALICE: I think I love Boris the most.

MEG: So it's settled. How does it feel?

ALICE: ... It feels good. I'll let the other guys down easy.

MEG: Then can you fix me up with Kurt?

ALICE: I thought you didn't want my seconds.

MEG: He's cute.

ALICE: He is...

MEG: If you want Kurt, I'll happily go with Boris.

ALICE: No!

MEG: Then you need to let the others go.

ALICE: You really want to go to my school dance?

MEG: If you'll have me.

ALICE: When I was picturing being with my friends... you were there.

MEG: So that's a yes.

ALICE: Yes.

Blackout.

END OF PLAY

OUT IN THE CAR BEFORE THE DANCE

By Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: As friends move in and out of a car, Dave is nervous about his impending date with Audrey, while Audrey has concerns of her own.

TIME: Present

SETTING: A car in the school parking lot.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 2 males)

- KYLE (m)..... Amiable, self-assured. *(16 lines)*
SARAH (f)..... His girlfriend, may be slightly
phone-addicted. *(24 lines)*
DAVE (m)..... Kyle's nervous best friend. *(22 lines)*
AUDREY (f)..... A friend of Sarah's who talks a
lot. *(19 lines)*

SET: Two chairs behind two chairs, to represent a car. Characters enter and exit the "car" by miming opening and closing doors.

COSTUMES: School dance attire.

PROPS

- Cell phone



AT START: KYLE sits in the driver's seat of the parked car, with SARAH next to him in the passenger seat. DAVE and AUDREY are in the back. SARAH looks at her phone; AUDREY is in mid ramble.

AUDREY: I can't wait to hear what music they're going to play. Do you think they're going to play mostly fast songs or slow songs? Or like fast, fast, fast, slow, fast, fast, fast? Or fast, slow, fast, slow, fast, slow, fast, slow?

AUDREY looks at DAVE expectantly.

DAVE: I don't know.

AUDREY: Do you think they'll play two slow songs in a row? Or just one, and then go right back to fast stuff? I think we need to make sure we dance to the slow songs when they come on. I wonder if we can request songs from the DJ? I know the perfect slow song. So romantic.

SARAH: Melissa Spanos is live-streaming the dance. It looks like people are there already. There's music playing. Some people are dancing.

AUDREY: Let's go in! Why aren't we going in? Oh! There's my friend Nikki. What is she wearing, that's crazy! I need to talk to her.

AUDREY opens the door, jumps out of the car, and closes the door again. She runs off stage right, yelling.

AUDREY: Nikki! Nikki, Nikki, Nikki!

And AUDREY's gone.

DAVE: She's exhausting.

SARAH: You need to give her a chance. She's nice.

DAVE: Does she ever stop talking?

SARAH and KYLE: No.

Look at each other. Laugh.

KYLE: But that's good, because you're shy, and you need a girl who does all the talking.

SARAH: But she's nice.

DAVE: You said that already.

SARAH: And she likes you. She'll be a good first girlfriend for you.

DAVE: I've had girlfriends.

SARAH and KYLE both turn around and look at DAVE.

DAVE: Fine. Why does she have to be my first?

KYLE: Do you have someone else you're interested in? Seriously interested?

DAVE: ... No.

KYLE: And you're just going to a dance together. No one said you had to be boyfriend/girlfriend.

DAVE: Sarah did!

SARAH: Audrey is a good friend of mine. I want her to have a good time at the dance. This can be good for you too.

DAVE: She's just so... enthusiastic.

SARAH: Kyle, talk to him. I need to go talk with Gabby.

SARAH opens her door, hops out, closes her door, and exits offstage right. DAVE moves up to the front next to KYLE, either by going outside or somehow climbing over the seat.

DAVE: I think I'm having second thoughts.

KYLE: I know Audrey can be a bit much, but—

DAVE: She's nice. I heard.

KYLE: So you dance with her, you have some fun. It's not a commitment. And I know you can dance – we've been practicing all week.

DAVE: I completely forgot everything you taught me.

KYLE: You did not.

DAVE: I really have. I'm going to look like an idiot.

KYLE: You're not going to look like an idiot.

DAVE: Says the guy who never looks like an idiot.

KYLE: Did I ever tell you the story of my first date with Sarah?

DAVE: I don't think so.

KYLE: Because she told me not to tell anyone. And I agreed, because it's embarrassing – mostly to me! But I'm going to tell you now – don't tell her I told you.

DAVE: I'm listening.

KYLE: Our first date was a fix-up, like this. I took her to the movies, which is a good first date, because you don't have to have a conversation that lasts the whole date – you have a two-hour break to watch the movie. But I was still really nervous. My hand was so sweaty that I didn't even try to hold her hand. So I drove her home, and I wasn't sure what to do, because I wanted to kiss her, but I wasn't sure she wanted to kiss me. So I walked her to her door, I looked at her, and she looked at me, and neither of us did anything, and it was getting awkward. And then her dad came home.

DAVE: Oh no.

KYLE: Yeah, he parked in the driveway, and he just sat in his car, I guess waiting for me to leave, but I didn't want to leave without kissing her, but he was there watching. So I was frozen, and finally he got out of the car and came up to the front door, and I guess he was going to just be nice and go inside, but before he could, I threw up on him.

DAVE: What!

KYLE: Yes! I was moving out of the way, but I was nervous, and there wasn't much room, and suddenly it all came up and I had nowhere to go and it all went on him. And I just ran to my car and drove off. It was awful. I thought Sarah would never speak to me again.

DAVE: But she did.

KYLE: She did. And the point is that even when the worst thing happens that you can imagine happening, life goes on. I even watch football with her dad sometimes! So just go and enjoy the dance. I mean, try not to throw up on her, but if you do – you'll survive. So – are we good?

DAVE: Am I supposed to kiss Audrey? No one ever said anything about kissing. How's my breath?

KYLE: Look, kiss her if you want to, and she wants to. Otherwise, don't. Okay?

DAVE: I really don't remember how to dance.

KYLE: That's fixable.

SARAH enters, sees DAVE in the front, and opens the back door. SARAH slides in.

SARAH: We all good?

DAVE: I need to take Dave behind the gym and show him some quick moves. See you inside in five?

SARAH: See you there.

KYLE and DAVE leave the car and exit stage left. SARAH pulls her phone out again. AUDREY enters from the other side, opens the door, and slides into the back seat next to SARAH.

AUDREY: Where did they go?

SARAH: They are going to meet us inside in five minutes.

AUDREY: Dave doesn't like me, does he?

SARAH: How can he not like you?

AUDREY: I talk too much. I get too excited. I need to stop talking.

SARAH: You need to be yourself. That's what I like about Kyle; we can be ourselves.

AUDREY: Not all the time.

SARAH: All the time.

AUDREY: I know you don't fart when you're around him.

SARAH: Sometimes I do.

AUDREY: Sarah!

SARAH: It's natural. And he doesn't care!

AUDREY: I'll never find a boy like that.

SARAH: On our first date, he took me to the movies, and I was so nervous. And I'm sure he wanted to hold my hand, but my hand was so sweaty I wouldn't let him. So he walked me home, and I really wanted to kiss him, but he was nervous, and I was nervous, and nothing happened – and then my dad came home.

AUDREY: No.

SARAH: He walked right up to the front door! I was mortified! And then – I threw up on my father!

AUDREY: You didn't!

SARAH: It was awful! And Kyle just left, I mean – what else could he do? I thought I'd never see him again. But he called me the next day to see if I was okay. And we've been together ever since.

AUDREY: That's amazing.

SARAH: He swears he'll never tell anyone else that story – and if he does, he'll say that he was the one who threw up.

AUDREY: Wow.

SARAH: Sometimes it's just... magic.

AUDREY: You think Dave will try to kiss me?

SARAH: Do you want him to?

AUDREY: I think so.

SARAH: Just have fun. It's a dance! It's all about possibilities! About taking chances! About being brave!

AUDREY: And I should keep talking.

SARAH: Well – maybe ten percent less.

AUDREY: I can do that.

SARAH: Kyle says Dave is an excellent dancer. Oh! There they are. Let's go to the dance!

Blackout.

END OF PLAY

THE SELFIE
By Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: Warren asks Monica if she'll take a selfie with him outside the dance, and she tries to solve the mystery of why.

TIME: Present

SETTING: A bench outside the school.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(1 female, 1 male)

WARREN (m) A shy teen overdressed for the school dance. *(63 lines)*
MONICA (f) An outgoing teen with a shy side of her own. *(64 lines)*

SET: All you really need is a bench. There could be a sign for the school.

COSTUMES: School dance attire. Warren is wearing a suit. Monica looks nice.

PROPS

- two cell phones
- a folded note

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AT START: WARREN sits on a bench outside the school, alone, nervous, tense, leg jiggling. MONICA enters; she stops on the other side of the stage, pulls out her cell phone and looks at it. WARREN eyes her, almost stands, can't bring himself to do it. Sits. Eyes her again. Pulls out his own phone. Looks at it. Deep breath.

WARREN: Can I ask you a favor?

MONICA looks over at him.

WARREN: This is really embarrassing, and I don't really want to explain why I have to do this, but – can I take a selfie with you?

MONICA: Why?

WARREN: It's nothing weird, I promise. As soon as we're done, you can go back in to the dance. I just need a quick picture – if I can figure out how to do that with this phone.

MONICA: You've never taken a selfie before?

WARREN: ... No.

MONICA: And you want to take your first selfie with me?

WARREN: Forget it. I'll get someone else.

MONICA moves over near him.

MONICA: No, I'm intrigued now.

WARREN: Just a selfie.

MONICA: For some mysterious reason.

WARREN: Yes.

MONICA: It's not some sort of creepy scavenger hunt thing, is it?

WARREN: ... What?

MONICA: You know, you have to go out and do a list of things and take pictures with your phone. Am I on a list? Or am I some type of girl you need to take a photo with? I'm not sure I want to know what type of girl you think I am.

WARREN: No. It's none of that.

MONICA: Or is this a trick? We press our faces together to take a selfie, as people do—

WARREN: Do they?

MONICA: And then you give me a quick kiss, and take the photo, and surprise! And then it's all over the Internet.

WARREN: Why would it be all over the Internet?

MONICA: You're not going to kiss me?

WARREN: Just a selfie!

MONICA: You sure?

WARREN: I'm not interested in you like that!

MONICA: Why not?

WARREN: Can't we just take the picture?

MONICA: Why aren't you interested in me like that? I mean, not that there's going to be a "like that", but I'm curious.

WARREN: Forget I said anything.

MONICA: Tell me.

WARREN: I think I really like girls who are... smart.

MONICA just stares at him.

MONICA: Wow.

WARREN: I'm sorry.

MONICA: I am seriously going to punch you in the face right now.

WARREN: I mean really smart. Like really, really, really smart.

MONICA: Warren—

WARREN: How do you know my name?

MONICA: Are you serious? We've been going to the same school since we were five.

WARREN: I didn't think you'd know who I was.

MONICA: I went to your seventh birthday party!

WARREN: You remember that?

MONICA: Well, yeah. Your house has a pool. It was really nice. I don't remember you in the pool, though.

WARREN: I hid in my bedroom for most of the party. My mother invited the whole class. It was a little... overwhelming.

MONICA: You've always been really shy.

WARREN: You noticed that?

MONICA: Pretty hard not to.

WARREN: It's embarrassing.

MONICA: But not that shy. Look. We're having a conversation.

WARREN: Only because I had to.

MONICA: Who said you have to?

WARREN: Nobody. Nothing. Can we just take this selfie now?

MONICA: No. Do you know my name?

WARREN: Monica Williams.

MONICA: I'm surprised you know who I am.

WARREN: Of course, I know who you are. You're popular.

MONICA: Am I?

WARREN: You have friends. Lots of friends.

MONICA: Too many friends.

WARREN: How is that even possible?

MONICA: I don't know. Like tonight. We came in a group. No one talking about anything really, except Betsy likes Cooper—

WARREN makes a face.

MONICA: I know! That's the face I made! So, they are all giggling and trying to make that mistake happen, and I'm just standing there watching the dance wondering why I'm there. And no one is asking me to dance, no one. So, I came outside. I was trying to decide if I should text my dad, have him pick me up – and there you were. Calling me dumb.

WARREN: I didn't call you dumb!

MONICA: I'm not dumb. I may not be super-intelligent math club straight A's smart, but I get good grades. I'm going to go to college. As soon as I figure out what I want to do.

WARREN: You will.

MONICA: You probably have it all figured out. You know exactly where you're going to college, what you're going to study, and exactly where you're going to live and work when you're done.

WARREN: You think I know that?

MONICA: I have no idea what I'm going to do with my life. It's terrifying. Maybe I am dumb.

WARREN: You're not dumb.

MONICA: Why does it all have to be so... complicated.

WARREN: I don't know. There's no logic to any of it. None at all.

A beat of silence.

MONICA: You don't seem that shy.

WARREN: I am shy.

MONICA: But here we are, chatting up a storm.

WARREN: You're making me.

MONICA: So, let's do this selfie thing. Give me your phone.

WARREN almost hands her his phone and pulls back.

WARREN: I can't.

MONICA: Why not.

WARREN: This is humiliating.

MONICA: Taking a selfie is never humiliating. Unless you have a snot bubble, or food on your face. You don't have either.

WARREN: I need you to hold up a note.

MONICA: What?

WARREN: Like I said, it's humiliating. Do me a favor, don't read it. Just hold it up.

WARREN fishes a piece of paper out of his pocket. Unfolds it and hands it to MONICA. But she doesn't hold it up, she reads it. In thick, bold magic marker, the paper reads—

MONICA: *(Reading.)* "I had a conversation with your son".

WARREN: Why did you have to read it?

MONICA: Is this selfie for your parents?

WARREN: It's humiliating.

MONICA: Wow.

WARREN: They literally made me come to this dance. They said I had to actually talk to people. Talk to a girl. Have an actual conversation. Take a selfie as evidence.

MONICA: Why would they do that?

WARREN: I guess because... people. I need to learn to interact with people. And I do, they're right, and it's easier just to say yes to my parents. But all of this is terrifying, you don't know how many times I wanted to run away from you.

MONICA: But you didn't.

WARREN: But I didn't. So, take a quick selfie, hold up the sign, then I can leave, and you can pretend this never happened. My parents won't put it on the Internet. I promise. Hold up the sign.

MONICA: No.

WARREN: Monica—

MONICA: No, because we're not done yet. I don't want this to be some hit and run conversation that we never have again. Do you know how many times I've talked to my friends about how scared I am for the future? Never. That's not something we do. I mean, I'm shy too. I would never have said a word to you out here if you hadn't talked to me first. Would never have shared anything with you. It's scary.

WARREN: So why are you?

MONICA: Because you talked to me. Because I went to your birthday party once. Because even if I hadn't, sometimes maybe you need to talk to people, not your friends, but actual people.

WARREN: Because people.

MONICA: Because people. And because you don't like me like that. Because I'm dumb.

WARREN: I never said you were dumb.

MONICA: Is there some smart girl you like in the dance right now?

WARREN looks away.

MONICA: There is. Who?

WARREN: You don't know her.

MONICA: She goes to our school?

WARREN: Yes.

MONICA: Then I know her.

WARREN: Allison Green.

MONICA: Ha! I do know her. Really? Allison Green? No, I can see it. She is smart. Really smart. She here with a date?

WARREN: Group of friends.

MONICA: You need to ask her to dance.

WARREN: Not in a million years.

MONICA: Warren—

WARREN: Do you like someone here?

MONICA looks away.

WARREN: You do.

MONICA: Fine. Andy Murphy.

WARREN: He's nice. Ask him to dance.

MONICA: I'm not going to walk up to a guy and ask him to dance!

WARREN: Exactly. Exactly.

MONICA looks at WARREN.

MONICA: Here's what we're going to do.

WARREN: No. What are you going to make me do?

MONICA: I'm not going to make you do anything. I'm not your parents. I want you to do this because you want to do this. We are going to go into this dance, together, and we are going to dance. Together. In front of everyone. And we are going to have so much fun that Allison and Andy will both be aching for us to ask them to dance – and we're going to do it. Say you want to do this.

WARREN: I think I'm going to throw up. But yes.

MONICA: Good! We're going to be awesome together. Because why?

WARREN: People?

MONICA: Because people. First, the selfie.

MONICA holds up the note in one hand, the phone in the other. MONICA and WARREN press their faces together.

MONICA: Smile.

WARREN manages a smile. MONICA turns her head and kisses him on the cheek. FLASH.

MONICA: Text that to your parents, and then we dance.

WARREN: They're going to freak out. In the best way.

WARREN hits a button on his phone, then tucks it away. MONICA hands him the folded-up note, and he pockets it. Then MONICA puts out her hand. WARREN takes it, and they head off into the dance.

END OF PLAY

OH BROTHER

By Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: Zoe isn't happy that her younger brother, Matt, is at the dance, spying on her for their mother, but Zoe is able to turn the tables on him.

TIME: Present

SETTING: The outskirts of the dance floor.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 1 male)

ZOE (f)..... Not as confident as she pretends to be. (68 lines)

MATT (m) Zoe's younger brother, by a year or two. (52 lines)

HILLARY (f)..... Matt's age. (15 lines)

SET: The outskirts of the dance. There may be some decoration. We're going to be in this basic set for four plays.

COSTUMES: School dance attire.

PROPS

- 1 cell phone

● ● ●

AT START: *The outskirts of the dance (which for this and the next three plays is largely unseen, existing where the audience is.) ZOE enters, heading across the stage. Entering behind her, moving stealthily, is MATT, a year or two younger. ZOE whirls and confronts him.*

ZOE: Why are you following me?

MATT: I'm not following you. It's a dance. We're moving in the same direction.

ZOE: Move in the other direction.

MATT heads in the other direction. ZOE heads off the way she was going. MATT reverses and goes back after her, but she spins and catches him again.

ZOE: What are you doing?

MATT: Pretend I'm not here.

ZOE: I'm not going to pretend you're not here. You're here. I mean it was cute when we were little kids – "there's your little brother, Matt, following you around, isn't that adorable". It's not adorable anymore. Where are your friends?

MATT: They're around.

ZOE: Hang out with your friends.

ZOE heads the way she was going. Then stops at the sight of someone on the unseen dance floor. MATT sidles up next to her.

MATT: Who are you looking at?

ZOE: None of your business.

MATT: Is it Chad Wheeler?

ZOE: How do you know Chad Wheeler?

MATT: I keep my finger on the pulse of the school. He's got sort of a bad reputation. Is that what you like? Bad boys?

ZOE: We are not having this conversation!

MATT: Is it his hair? I wonder how he gets it to swerve like that.

ZOE: If you don't leave me alone, I'm going to tell Mom.

MATT laughs.

ZOE: What?

MATT: Mom's the one who told me to follow you around!

ZOE: She did not.

MATT: "Let me know what your sister is up to at that dance."

ZOE: She did not.

MATT: And she wants photos of any boys you are with. So if you want the pictures to be nice, make sure you smile.

ZOE: You are not taking pictures of me with boys!

MATT: Are there any boys?

ZOE: We're not having this conversation!

MATT: I mean, I go to school with you, and I've never seen you with any boys.

ZOE: Stop—

MATT: So I don't know what Mom's worries are based on. I guess maybe puberty. Is it puberty?

ZOE: I went through puberty four years ago!

MATT: So not puberty.

ZOE: Don't follow me around, don't take pictures of me, don't tell Mom anything. There are no boys.

MATT: But she's paying me.

ZOE: What???

MATT: Pretty well, too.

ZOE: How much?

MATT: I'm not sure that's any of your business.

ZOE: It's all my business! Let me see the pictures you took already.

MATT: I haven't taken any pictures yet! You haven't done anything yet. Mom's not going to pay me unless I have a photo of you with a boy. So let's get moving!

ZOE: I'm working on it!

MATT: Are you? You seem to just be circling a lot.

ZOE: I'm coming up with a plan.

MATT: The clock is ticking. If you ask me—

ZOE: I'm not asking you!

MATT: I don't know what you're so worried about, if there are no boys.

ZOE: There may be boys! There's the possibility of boys. Or boy – let's make that clear. Just one boy.

MATT: Chad Wheeler.

ZOE: Stop saying his name!

MATT: I do know him, you know. I mean, I don't think he knows my name, but sometimes we nod to each other in the hallway. I gave him my pretzels once. Okay, he may have sort of taken them. But he was nice about it. So I could talk you up.

ZOE: You better not!

MATT: Fine. I'll just wait. See what happens.

ZOE: What do you want, Matt? Do you want me to outbid Mom?

MATT: You can't afford that. I know how much money you have.

ZOE: You need to stay out of my room!

MATT: Although—

ZOE: What.

MATT: I could use a favor.

And just like that, the power shifts. ZOE smiles.

ZOE: Really.

MATT: I don't like that smile.

ZOE: My mind is intrigued by the idea that you need me.

MATT: I didn't say I needed you—

ZOE: Spit it out.

MATT: Your friend, Lisa.

ZOE: She's way too old for you. And she's dating Brad Leeman.
You're no Brad Leeman.

MATT: Thanks. No. Her little sister.

ZOE: Hillary? You like Hillary? That's... That's really interesting. I
can see that. Maybe.

MATT: Do you think she likes me?

ZOE: I have never talked boys with Hillary, so I have no idea.

MATT: Okay. So this is the deal. You talk to Hillary and say nice
things about me, and I won't take any pictures of you.

ZOE: Say nice things about you? Like what?

MATT: Hey! I have my charms.

ZOE laughs.

MATT: You're supposed to be my supportive older sister!

ZOE: First of all, that's not in my job description. Secondly, I want
promises. Put up your hand. Say "I, Matt Burke, promise to never
go into my sister Zoe's room ever again."

MATT: This is ridiculous.

ZOE: Do it.

MATT: I, Matt Burke, promise to never go in my sister's room ever again.

ZOE: "I, Matt Burke, will get my sister snacks whenever she asks."

MATT: What?

ZOE: Do you want to know if Hillary likes you or not?

MATT: How can I bring you snacks if I can't go in your room?

ZOE: You can leave them outside the door. On a plate.

MATT: I, Matt Burke, will get my sister snacks whenever she asks.

ZOE: "I Matt Burke, promise to get out of the bathroom whenever my sister Zoe needs it."

MATT: What if I'm on the toilet?

ZOE: Fine. You can add "as fast as I can".

MATT: I, Matt Burke, promise to get out of the bathroom as fast as I can whenever my sister needs it.

ZOE: Okay. Now the other thing I need you to do is take a picture of me dancing with a boy.

MATT: I thought you didn't want that!

ZOE: It needs to be the right boy.

ZOE looks out at the dance floor.

ZOE: There. Wallace Grimes. I'll dance over near him, and then take our picture so it looks like we're together.

MATT: Wallace Grimes is very clean-cut. And very nice. Safe.

ZOE: Yes, he is.

MATT: Not your type at all.

ZOE: What do you know about my type?

MATT: You don't want to be photographed with Chad Wallace! You don't want Mom to know you like the bad boys!

ZOE: Shush about the bad boys.

MATT: What if Wallace Grimes sees you dancing next to him, and Wallace wants to dance with you for real? Isn't that better than dancing with nobody?

ZOE: Don't you worry about who I dance with. Now. Hillary is going to want to know if you can dance, and I have no idea. So let's see what you've got.

MATT: What, now?

ZOE: Just right there, on the edge of the dance floor. Dance.

MATT: And then you'll talk to Hillary?

ZOE: If you're any good.

MATT: I'm good.

ZOE: Then I'll talk to Hillary.

MATT: Don't tell her that I like her. Just find out if she likes me.

ZOE: I promise.

MATT: Okay...

MATT goes out to the edge of the stage. Deep breath. And then he dances. And he's surprisingly good. A little unpolished, slightly goofy, but he comes across as fun. ZOE sees someone and waves them over. Entering is HILLARY. MATT doesn't notice, as he's too into the dancing. HILLARY joins ZOE.

HILLARY: What's going on?

ZOE: My brother likes you.

HILLARY: What? Who's your brother?

ZOE points to MATT, who continues dancing throughout.

HILLARY: I didn't even realize Matt was your brother. He likes me?

ZOE: Apparently.

HILLARY: Why?

ZOE: You don't think you're likable?

HILLARY: I didn't think he knew me that well.

ZOE: Apparently, he does.

HILLARY: Wow.

ZOE: So... do you like him?

HILLARY: I don't know. I never really thought about it.

ZOE and HILLARY watch MATT dance.

HILLARY: He's really into dancing.

ZOE: Oh, I made him do that. I wanted to see if he could dance.

And I wanted you to see if he could dance. Plus, it's pretty funny.

HILLARY: He's not a bad dancer.

ZOE: No, he's really not. And he's a really good guy.

They watch MATT dance.

HILLARY: I really wasn't expecting to dance tonight.

ZOE: No one ever is.

HILLARY: You?

ZOE: Maybe. We'll see.

MATT somehow dances even wilder.

ZOE: Do you think you can dance with that?

HILLARY: I think I can.

ZOE: Good.

HILLARY: I think I will.

ZOE: Go for it.

HILLARY: I'm a little scared.

ZOE: Don't be scared. He's my brother. If he hurts you, I'll kill him in his sleep. But he won't.

HILLARY: Okay. Deep breath—

And HILLARY joins MATT. They both dance. It's wild. But there's chemistry. And they're having a great time. ZOE watches, then pulls out her phone.

ZOE: You aren't the only one Mom paid to take photos.

And ZOE snaps some pictures, moving around them as HILLARY and MATT dance. MATT and HILLARY finally notice her. ZOE flees, laughing, as MATT and HILLARY chase her offstage, all exiting.

END OF PLAY

I'M NOT GOING TO DANCE WITH YOU

By Scott Mullen

SYNOPSIS: New girl, Emily, approaches shy Henry by telling him that she isn't going to dance with him.

TIME: Present

SETTING: The outskirts of the dance floor.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male)

HENRY (m)..... A little shy, but friendly.
(63 lines)

EMILY (f)..... New in school. Not shy.
(66 lines)

SET: The outskirts of the dance floor.

COSTUMES: School dance attire.

PROPS: None

AT START: HENRY stands watching an unseen school dance.
EMILY sidles up next to him.

EMILY: I'm not going to dance with you.

HENRY: What?

EMILY: I mean, I love this song, it's such an amazing song. I know there are a lot of songs I couldn't dance to – but I think I'd be really good at this one. But I'm not going to dance with you.

HENRY: Do I know you?

EMILY: No. I'm new. My family just moved here last week. I'm Emily.

HENRY: Henry.

EMILY: Great. Now that we've introduced ourselves to each other, I'm just going to make it clear once again – don't ask me to dance. I'm not going to do it.

HENRY: I don't dance.

EMILY: Perfect. That makes it so much easier.

HENRY and EMILY watch the dance.

EMILY: Why don't you dance?

HENRY: I don't know.

EMILY: Do you not like it? Though I don't know how you can't like it – it looks like so much fun. Maybe you don't think you're good at it, but honestly, I look at these people out there dancing, it seems like most of them are just making it up as they go. Which is fine. So... why aren't you out there?

HENRY: Maybe I'm shy.

EMILY: I used to have that problem—

HENRY: That's hard to believe.

EMILY: It's true. Especially since we move so much. My dad works for a company that keeps sending him all over the country. So I have to meet new people. Which is really hard to do if you're shy. Finally, I just said, the heck with it, I'm going to be one of those people who isn't afraid to be themselves and talk way too much and hope they wind up talking to people who don't mind. Do you mind?

HENRY: Do I mind—?

EMILY: That I talk so much.

HENRY: Oh. No.

EMILY: Good. If you're shy, the solution is not to be shy. Now, who do you want to ask to dance?

HENRY: I don't.

EMILY: Come on. You're at a dance. You're standing here, watching dancers. Somewhere in your mind, you're out there with someone.

HENRY: I'm not.

EMILY: Humor me. If you had to dance with someone or the world would end, who would you ask to dance?

HENRY: Why would the world end?

EMILY: Just pretend.

HENRY: That doesn't make any sense.

EMILY: Just tell me.

HENRY: Fine. The girl over there in the blue. With her friends.

EMILY: Interesting choice. Reveals a lot about you.

HENRY: Like what?

EMILY: Go ask her to dance.

HENRY: No.

EMILY: Because—

HENRY: She'll probably say no.

EMILY: Then ask her not to dance.

HENRY: What?

EMILY: Yeah. Walk up to her, and tell her you aren't going to dance with her. She can't say no to that. Not really.

HENRY: Wait a minute – that's what you did to me!

EMILY: I did.

HENRY: Does that mean you want to dance with me?

EMILY: I told you – I'm not going to dance with you.

HENRY: But do you?

EMILY: I told you not to ask me.

HENRY: I'm not asking you!

EMILY: I like this song, too. I could really dance to this song.

HENRY: But not with me.

EMILY: Nope.

HENRY: Why don't you ask somebody?

EMILY: Just walk up to them?

HENRY: If you had to pick someone—

EMILY: I don't know any of these people.

HENRY: Just off appearance.

EMILY: That's not why I'd want to dance with someone. Because of how they look? Oh. No.

HENRY: I'm so confused.

EMILY: The girl you like – the one in the blue—

HENRY: I didn't say I liked her—

EMILY: Fine. The girl you want to dance with. You know her, right?

HENRY: Not really.

EMILY: But enough to know you want to dance with her. She's probably nice.

HENRY: She is.

EMILY: Well, there you go. That's a reason. I don't have a reason to dance with any of these people. They're strangers.

HENRY: I'm a stranger.

EMILY: Like I said, I'm not going to dance with you. Though we're not really strangers now, are we?

HENRY: I guess not.

EMILY: I think we've graduated to acquaintances.

HENRY: Would you dance with an acquaintance?

EMILY: Depends on if they were nice.

HENRY: Am I nice?

EMILY: Are you asking me to dance?

HENRY: No.

EMILY: Because—

HENRY: I know. You're not going to dance with me.

EMILY: Do you think you're nice?

HENRY: I try.

EMILY: That's a good answer.

EMILY and HENRY watch the dancing. EMILY taps her foot. HENRY notices.

HENRY: You really want to dance.

EMILY: I'm starting to feel like it might be fun to get out there.
(Points.) I think I could do what she's doing.

HENRY: It's a little fast.

EMILY: You waiting for a slow song?

HENRY: No.

EMILY: Because those are romantic. You have to get close for those. The girl in your arms. Are you ready for that?

HENRY: Maybe not.

EMILY: You've got to work your way up to a slow song. Like with the girl in blue over there – what's her name?

HENRY: Bryn.

EMILY: With Bryn, you need to start out with a fast song. Show you can let loose. That you aren't afraid of looking foolish – though don't look foolish. Keep the dancing under control. Then maybe a medium song. Something where you can show off moves. And eye contact. Eye contact is key. It's about dancing with her, not checking what everyone else is doing. If you see her looking at other people – you've lost her.

HENRY: Eye contact.

EMILY: And then if song number three is a slow song, and she still wants to dance with you, then it's time for the slow song. Just pull her close and hold her. Listen to her breathe, to the thump of her heart. Don't step on her feet.

HENRY: It's a lot to remember.

EMILY: Just follow your heart. Or no – scratch that. Don't worry about your heart. Just have fun. It's dancing. Just dance. Throw your arms into the air. Get the adrenalin flowing. Slap a big smile on your face. There's nothing better.

HENRY: But you're not dancing.

EMILY: No.

HENRY: Because...

EMILY: Just a lot of strangers.

HENRY: Right. So... will you dance with me?

EMILY: No.

HENRY: Why not?

EMILY: Because we're friends now.

HENRY: We are?

EMILY: Don't you think so?

HENRY: I do.

EMILY: And because I told you I wasn't going to dance with you. That's part of the deal.

HENRY: I didn't make a deal.

EMILY: We're just two friends, standing on the sidelines of a school dance, trying to help each other figure this whole thing out.

HENRY: That's what this is?

EMILY: Yup.

HENRY: And are we figuring things out?

EMILY: Do you feel more ready to dance than you did ten minutes ago?

HENRY: Maybe.

EMILY: Then go out and ask someone to dance.

HENRY: But not you.

EMILY: Not me. Because I'm safe. You need to take a risk. You need to put yourself out there. You need to smile at the girl you want to dance with, stick out your hand, and ask her to dance.

HENRY: You're right.

EMILY: I know.

HENRY: I'm ready.

EMILY: Breath check?

HENRY breathes on his hand. Tries to direct it up to his nose.

HENRY: I think it's okay.

EMILY: Go get her.

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