

DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL

By Samara Siskind

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CHARACTERS

SALLY

CHARLIE

MAX

MOM /DR.WEAVER

DAD/DR.GREEN/SIMON

BUTCH/PUCK/BIFF

ROD SERLING/MULDER/CAPTAIN

REGIS PHILBIN/ERIC/CHRIS/RANDY

BEVERLY/JULIE/PAULA

CONTESTANT #2/AMAYA/GWEN

CONTESTANT #3/RACHEL/BROOKE

CARLA KRONKITE/DR.LEWIS

TARA WALTERS/DR.CARTER

DOMINIQUE/TRISTA

KRYSTAL/HELENE

ALEXIS/RUTHIE/KELLY JO

SCULLY/JUDGE JUDY/SARGE

SETTING

Bare stage. Chairs are moved on and off when needed.

PROPS

5 remote controls
Headphones
3 chairs
Desk
Mug shot signs
Mini voice recorder
Discman
Book
Feather duster
Cd
Compact mirror
2 roses
Stopwatch

Fake money
Clipboard
Hot dog
Cue cards
2 flashlights
Megaphone
Jar of peanut butter
Basketball
Journal
Gavel
4 surgical masks
Walkie Talkie
Microphone

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The most important factors in producing this play are energy and commitment. It is a high-stake, fast-paced comedy that relies on a strong, high-spirited ensemble. Students need to literally pick up and run with these characters and have tons of fun in the process. Many of the roles call for doubling, and even tripling. The show could be done with as many as forty actors, and as few as ten. Many of the roles are gender flexible. The break down given yields a flexible cast of seventeen. Sound cues are integral in this production as they drive the plot forward, and it would be beneficial to find and use as many of the television theme songs as possible.

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AT RISE: SALLY sits center stage watching television. Her older brother CHARLIE enters and sits down next to her. They watch. CHARLIE makes faces at the screen, snatches the remote from SALLY and changes the channel.

SALLY: Hey! I was watching that!

CHARLIE: Not anymore small fry.

SALLY: Charlie!!

CHARLIE: Go find another TV-

SALLY: I'm gonna tell mom-

CHARLIE: Go ahead, tell her. ***(SALLY takes a deep breath preparing to scream out.)*** And I'll tell her how you gave the cat Ex-Lax.

SALLY: You wouldn't.

CHARLIE: I would.

SALLY: I thought it would make Mr. Mufflesworth feel better.

CHARLIE: It didn't.

SALLY: Monster.

CHARLIE: Maniac.

SALLY: Moron!

CHARLIE: Mentalcase!

SALLY: Mayonnaise!

CHARLIE: Good one.

SALLY: GIVE IT!!

(SALLY and CHARLIE scream and fight over remote until MOM and DAD enter.)

MOM: What is going on here?!

(SALLY and CHARLIE point to one another.)

SALLY: He-

CHARLIE: She-

MOM: Let me guess, it's about the TV.

DAD: Not again.

SALLY: My favorite show is on-

CHARLIE: I want to watch something educational.

SALLY: Fear Factor is so not educational.

CHARLIE: I should get dibs on the TV. I'm older.

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SALLY: I'm smarter.

CHARLIE: I got straight A's-

SALLY: I did the dishes-

CHARLIE: I took out the garbage-

SALLY: I made the beds-

CHARLIE: **(flashing an angelic smile to MOM and DAD)** I love you both.

DAD: Maybe we shouldn't leave.

MOM: Maybe we should call Mrs. Cratchett to babysit.

SALLY and CHARLIE: NOOO!!

SALLY: She makes us hold yarn while she crochets.

CHARLIE: And she smells like ham.

MOM: Well, I don't know if the two of you are responsible enough to be home on your own.

CHARLIE: It's okay Mom and Dad, we can take care of ourselves.

SALLY: We promise.

CHARLIE: We won't yell-

SALLY: Or fight-

CHARLIE: Or break anything-

SALLY: Or wake the neighbors-

CHARLIE: You don't have to worry about a thing. I'll be in charge.

SALLY: No, I'll be in charge!

CHARLIE: Yeah right, like Mom and Dad would leave *you* in charge-

(SALLY and CHARLIE fight over who should be in charge.)

MOM: Enough already! You may share the remote for one hour, and then it's bedtime.

DAD: And you'd both better be asleep by the time we get home.

SALLY and CHARLIE: Okay.

DAD: Have a good night kids.

CHARLIE: You too Dad.

SALLY: Night Mom and Dad.

MOM: **(exiting)** I hope we're not late for the movie.

DAD: Can I get some popcorn? I like popcorn.

MOM: Yes dear.

(MOM and DAD exit. There is a ten second silence. SALLY and CHARLIE stare at the remote that's still in their hands.)

CHARLIE: **(pointing)** Look, Leonardo Dicaprio!

SALLY: Where?!!

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(CHARLIE grabs the remote and SALLY fights him for it. They tug the remote back and forth until it drops and breaks on the ground.)

CHARLIE: Now look what you did! It's broken. Now what are we gonna do?

(The theme from The Pink Panther plays. BUTCH enters suspiciously, wearing a trenchcoat and hat.)

BUTCH: Pssstt.

CHARLIE: What was that?

SALLY: Did you hear something?

BUTCH: I said pssstt.

SALLY: Excuse me?

BUTCH: You kids need a remote?

CHARLIE: Who are you?

BUTCH: The name's Butch, but you didn't hear it from me.

SALLY: Hi Butch.

BUTCH: Who'd ya hear that from?

SALLY: Not you.

BUTCH: Good job kid. Nice to meet ya.

CHARLIE: Hi. I'm Charlie, and this is my sister Sally.

BUTCH: So, you kids need a remote?

CHARLIE: Yeah! Ours just broke.

(BUTCH opens his jacket revealing several different styles of remote controls.)

BUTCH: I got the best, top of the line, right here. Ten clams.

SALLY: Clams?

BUTCH: Smackers, bills, bucks, big ones. *(SALLY and CHARLIE look at each other, shrugging their shoulders.)* Dollars kids, dollars.

CHARLIE: Hmmm, that sounds kind of steep.

SALLY: Yeah, ten dollars is a lot of money.

BUTCH: I'd be glad to take my business elsewhere. Actually, I got an appointment downtown-

SALLY: Wait!

CHARLIE: I'll give you five dollars.

BUTCH: Ten.

SALLY: Six.

BUTCH: Ten.

SALLY: Seven?

BUTCH: Ten.

CHARLIE: Eight.

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BUTCH: Ten.

SALLY: Nine?

BUTCH: Ten.

CHARLIE: Ten.

BUTCH: Eleven.

SALLY: Hey!

BUTCH: You kids are killin' me, but ten it is. You got yourselves a deal.

(CHARLIE gives BUTCH the money and BUTCH hands him a new remote.) Worth every penny. For an extra two bucks I'll give ya a lifetime warranty.

CHARLIE: No thanks.

BUTCH: Extra batteries?

CHARLIE: We just need the remote.

BUTCH: Your call.

SALLY: Thanks for your help.

BUTCH: If anyone asks...you don't know me.

(BUTCH pulls his hat down over his eyes and exits sinisterly. CHARLIE and SALLY examine the remote.)

SALLY: Wow, it looks really cool.

CHARLIE: I've never seen a remote like this.

SALLY: What are all these funny buttons?

CHARLIE: Quit it! You're gonna break this one too!

SALLY: Charlie!!

CHARLIE: Get your hands off it!!

(SALLY and CHARLIE tug the remote back and forth until there is a big click sound. We hear static and weird television-like sound effects.)

SALLY: What happened?

CHARLIE: This is weird. I feel different.

SALLY: Me too. **(CHARLIE reaches out and touches SALLY.)** Ow!!
You shocked me.

CHARLIE: That's strange. Try touching me. **(SALLY touches him and shocks him as well. CHARLIE jumps.)** There's so much static.

(SALLY walks to the edge of the stage and puts her palms out in front of her. SHE runs her hands across an invisible wall.)

SALLY: Uh...Charlie?

CHARLIE: **(standing next to her)** What is it?

SALLY: It's like an invisible wall.

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CHARLIE: *(feeling in front of him)* I saw something like this on TV once. Oh my god Sally.

SALLY: What? What is it?

CHARLIE: I think we're trapped.

(The theme from The Twilight Zone plays. ROD SERLING enters wearing a suit and stands in a corner downstage.)

ROD: Submitted for your approval...A young brother and sister home alone on a cold, dark night find themselves trapped in another plane... another universe... another dimension. Will they be able to put their differences aside in order to find their way home? If only they had listened to their parents. For now they will have to survive in a world that delves into the odd, the bizarre, the unexpected. A world that probes into the dimension of imagination. Sally and Charlie are trapped in...the Twilight Zone. ***(exits)***

CHARLIE: Cool!

SALLY: What did he mean Charlie? I'm scared.

(MAX, a production assistant wearing headphones and carrying a clipboard approaches SALLY and CHARLIE.)

SALLY: Umm... excuse me. Can you please tell us what's going on?

MAX: No time to chat. We have a show to put on.

CHARLIE: What show?

MAX: You two look terrible. Completely one-dimensional. You should stop off at the make-up trailer.

SALLY: But we're not...actors.

MAX: You are now.

CHARLIE: ***(to SALLY)*** I'll be back. ***(begins to exit)***

SALLY: Charlie!! Where are you going?

CHARLIE: I'm going to try to find a way out of here.

SALLY: I'll come with you!

CHARLIE: No, I'll move faster on my own. You stay here so I know where to find you-

SALLY: But-

CHARLIE: No buts. I have to find a way home. Don't get into any trouble.

SALLY: But I don't want to be all by myself.

CHARLIE: ***(pointing to MAX)*** Just stay close to that lady. She seems to know what's going on.

(CHARLIE exits and SALLY walks over to MAX.)

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SALLY: Excuse me but-

MAX: Still haven't found the make-up trailer have you?

SALLY: Not yet. Hi, I'm Sally.

MAX: I'm Max. You're just in time Sally.

SALLY: For what?

MAX: We need another contestant.

SALLY: A contestant? For what?

(Theme from Who Wants to be a Millionaire plays. REGIS PHILBIN enters followed by BEVERLY, CONTESTANT #2, and CONTESTANT #3.)

REGIS: Hello and welcome to Who Wants to be a Millionaire. I'm your host Regis Philbin and I'm outta control! ***(slaps himself; notices SALLY and walks up to her)*** I see we have a new contestant here, please introduce yourself to our studio audience-

SALLY: Hi, I'm Sally.

REGIS: Hello Sally, I'm Regis and I'm out of control! ***(slaps himself again)*** Have a seat Sally and let's get started with our Fastest Fingers question. Are you ready contestants? ***(CONTESTANTS nod their heads yes.)*** Here we go. Put the following condiments in the same order I put them on my hot dog. A) Relish B) Mustard C) Onions D) Ketchup. ***(CONTESTANTS ponder and enter their answers on imaginary screens in front of them.)*** I tell ya, this question is making me crave an Oscar Mayer Weiner. ***(MAX enters bringing REGIS a hot dog.)*** Ahhh just like at the ballpark, thanks Max. Alright, and the correct answers are ***(examining hot dog)*** D) Ketchup, B) Mustard, A) Relish and C) Onions, just the way I like it. And it looks like- Beverly from Wisconsin got it right! Come on down Beverly!

BEVERLY: ***(runs down to the hot seat screaming)*** WOO HOO! WOO HOO! WOO HOO!

REGIS: Wow, we got a live one here. Hello Beverly.

BEVERLY: Hi Regis.

REGIS: Tell us what you do in Wisconsin Beverly.

BEVERLY: I make cheeseheads Regis.

REGIS: Ah, for the folks at home who don't know, cheeseheads are big blocks of cheese worn on the head in support of Wisconsin's football team the Green Bay Packers, am I right Beverly?

BEVERLY: Is that your final answer?

REGIS: Why yes it is.

BEVERLY: You are correct Reg.

REGIS: Now I've always been curious, do you use gouda or swiss?

BEVERLY: Umm...they're made of foam Regis.

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REGIS: Of course they are. What was I thinking? I'm out of control!
(stomps his own foot) It's time for the one hundred dollar question.
Ready Beverly?

BEVERLY: Ready Reg.

REGIS: In rock, paper, scissors, what beats scissors? A) Rock B) Paper
C) Cantaloupe D) A knife.

(BEVERLY and CONTESTANTS all start games of rock, paper, scissors.)

BEVERLY: Can I use a life line?

REGIS: Of course you may.

BEVERLY: I'd like to poll the audience.

REGIS: Alright audience members, Beverly needs some help. Please enter A,B,C or D on the keypads in front of you. **(CONTESTANTS ponder and enter their answers.)** Well Beverly... the majority of our audience believes that cantaloupe beats scissors. Are you going to listen to them or go out on your own?

BEVERLY: Hmmm... I'm allergic to cantaloupe, so I think I'm gonna go with A.

REGIS: Is that your final answer?

BEVERLY: Yes.

REGIS: Of course, for one hundred dollars. Moving on to our next question-

BEVERLY: Actually, I think I'm going to stop right there Regis.

REGIS: Are you sure Beverly?

BEVERLY: I could really use that hundred dollars, and I just can't risk it. I'm not very smart.

REGIS: Spoken like a true cheesehead. Thanks for playing Beverly.

BEVERLY: Thank you Regis. I love you Green Bay! **(runs back to her seat.)**

REGIS: That means we go into another round of Fastest Fingers. Contestants ready? **(CONTESTANTS nod.)** Put the following stuffed animals in the order I love them best. A) Snoopy B) Hokey Pokey Elmo C) Eyecore D) Snuffleupagus. **(CONTESTANTS ponder and enter their answers.)** Your time is up, and the answers are D, A, C, and B. I gotta tell you folks that all these stuffed animals are near and dear to my heart, but I only love Snuffleupagus as much as my blankie. And it looks like Sally Brown is our Fastest Fingers winner! Come on and join us in the hot seat Sally!

SALLY: I can't believe I won!! I've never won anything before!

REGIS: Well today must be your lucky day. Tell the folks at home a little bit about yourself Sally.

SALLY: Ummm...I'm lost.

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REGIS: Aren't we all? Ready for our one hundred dollar question?

SALLY: Uh, sure.

REGIS: Here goes. ***(Theme from Who wants to be a Millionaire plays.)*** I'm sorry Sally, looks like we're out of time.

SALLY: What?

REGIS: And thank goodness because I have to go to the bathroom. My bladder's out of control! Thanks for watching, and be sure to tune in tomorrow to see Sally play for one million dollars! Don't touch that dial! The evening news is next.

(REGIS and CONTESTANTS exit. SALLY joins MAX, while news anchors get set up behind a desk.)

SALLY: What do I do now?

MAX: The local news is coming up, want to be a weather girl?

SALLY: I don't think so.

MAX: Okay then, here, you can hold up these cue cards for the anchors.

(MAX hands SALLY a stack of cue cards as Evening News theme music plays. Two news anchors, CARLA and TARA, sit behind a desk and read as SALLY flashes the cards at them.)

CARLA: Good evening, I'm Carla Kronkite-

TARA: And I'm Tara Walters. And here are today's top stories...

CARLA: The long anticipated film 'The Cat in the Hat,' opens this weekend despite rumors of problems in post production. A spokesman for the film said, 'We worked out the kinks. We worked out the glitches. We worked out the schneezels and beezels and skwitches!'

TARA: Actor Jonathan Lipniki was arrested for not paying his bill at a fancy Los Angeles restaurant this week. When asked to comment the child actor stated that he was innocent and still believes he'd been Punk'd.

CARLA: Coming up on Health Watch- ***(raising shoulder)*** If it hurts when you do this... don't do it.

TARA: This just in: New York City police have reportedly apprehended the person who 'let the dogs out.'

CARLA: The famed amusement park Disney World announced this week the opening of a new attraction guaranteed to sicken, tire, and nauseate all those brave enough to endure it. It's called, the Five Hour Line.

TARA: In Tinsletown gossip, Minnie Mouse has indefinitely postponed her marriage to Mickie Mouse. When asked why, Minnie stated "He's a dirty rat."

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CARLA: Toy makers, Mattel this week announced they are releasing a new Justin Timberlake doll. The eight inch tall fully poseable doll shares many resemblances to the real Timberlake. It sings, dances, and wets the bed.

TARA: Research by the Royal School of Veterinary Studies show that doggie depression is at an all time high as a result of their owners hectic work schedules. But my research suggests that the main causes of doggie depression are doggie Christmas sweaters.

CARLA: The Guinness Book of World Records just inducted the World's smartest baby, a two year old infant from South Carolina. When asked to comment, the baby pooped.

TARA: This just in: A truck full of Oreo cookies has overturned on I-95. Rush hour traffic has been held up for hours, and a truck filled with ice cold milk has been called to the scene to aid the police officials in licking off the creamy centers.

CARLA: This week solo recording artist and star of the popular Mtv show Newlyweds, Jessica Simpson, had her stand-up comedy debut at the Comedy Store in Los Angeles. To audience surprise she opened with the age old joke - why did the tuna cross the road?

TARA: And last, but not least, there is still an on-going search for the missing siblings Charlie and Sally Brown-

SALLY: Did she say Sally Brown? Hey, that's me!

CARLA: Their parents were recently charged with neglect, unfit parenting, and running an underground gambling ring. They are being held for further questioning.

(MOM and DAD come on stage posing for mug shots. They carry signs that say MOM and DAD and their respective serial numbers. They cannot see or hear SALLY.)

SALLY: ***(waving to them)*** Mom! Dad! It's me Sally! I'm over here!

DAD: I didn't do it!

MOM: It was for the kids!

DAD: Call my lawyer!

(They begin to exit.)

MOM: ***(singing)*** Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. Nobody knows my sorrow.

TARA: That concludes this evening's news, but don't touch that dial. Must see TV is coming up next.

CARLA: For News Update, I'm Carla Kronkite.

TARA: I'm Tara Walters.

CARLA and TARA: Good day and have a pleasant tomorrow!

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(CARLA and TARA exit as SALLY approaches MAX.)

MAX: Great job with the cards, you ready to be a stand-in?

SALLY: Max, that was me they were talking about on the news!

MAX: What?

SALLY: I'm one of the missing siblings.

MAX: Are you sure?

SALLY: Yes, that was my Mom and Dad up there, but they couldn't see me.

MAX: Where's your brother?

SALLY: He said he was going to try to find a way out of here.

MAX: Okay, the first thing we need to do is find him. They can handle the next segment without me, let's go.

(MAX leads SALLY off as CHARLIE enters on other side of stage.)

CHARLIE: ***(fiddling with remote)*** If I could just figure out this remote...There has to be a way out of here... ***(pushes some buttons, there is static sound)*** Oh no, what did I do?

(The Young and the Restless theme music begins to play. DOMINIQUE enters.)

DOMINIQUE: Charles, you're back!

CHARLIE: Uhhhh...my name's Charlie.

DOMINIQUE: Sorry Charlie. I've missed you Charles! Since you've been gone I've come to a realization.

CHARLIE: Yeah?

DOMINIQUE: I'm madly in love with you!

CHARLIE: Oh no...

DOMINIQUE: Ever since you saved me from that nearly fatal horseback riding accident...I knew I had to be with you.

CHARLIE: I'm scared of horses.

DOMINIQUE: We can overcome our fears together- as the world turns. Will you marry me?

(KRYSTAL enters. The theme from Dynasty plays.)

KRYSTAL: He can't. He's already married to me.

CHARLIE: Say what?

DOMINIQUE: Krystal! But I thought you were dead!

KRYSTAL: I was in Aruba. Part of the witness protection program.

DOMINIQUE: But I went to your funeral!

KRYSTAL: Was it nice?

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DOMINIQUE: Beautiful. But that's besides the point. Charlie is mine now!

KRYSTAL: But he doesn't love you.

DOMINIQUE: Love is a many splendored thing.

KRYSTAL: Love lifts us up where we belong.

DOMINIQUE: All you need is love.

KRYSTAL: Love means never having to say you're sorry.

DOMINIQUE: **(to CHARLIE)** I can't help falling in love with you.

KRYSTAL: Love... love...

DOMINIQUE: Can't think of one can you?

KRYSTAL: Oh shut up! I'll never let you have him!

DOMINIQUE: Over my dead body!

KRYSTAL: You backstabbing-

(Catfight begins between girls with CHARLIE in the middle. In the midst of the chaos, CHARLIE drops the remote on the floor.)

CHARLIE: Girls, girls, you're both pretty!

(Suddenly fighting stops. DOMINIQUE grabs KRYSTAL's hand.)

DOMINIQUE: That nail polish is gorgeous.

KRYSTAL: Thanks, it's Sierra Sunset.

(They start to fight again. CHARLIE poses full front as if on camera, in true soap opera fashion.)

CHARLIE: Stop it! I don't want either one of you. I'm not ready to commit to anyone. It's not you... it's me. These are the days of my life. I enjoy being a single man... keeping my options open.

ALEXIS: ***(enters in nurse hat)*** Excuse me, are you Charles Worthington the third?

CHARLIE: Sure.

ALEXIS: I'm a nurse at General Hospital. You have twenty-four hours to live.

CHARLIE/DOMINIQUE/KRYSTAL: What????!!!!

ALEXIS: You need a brain transplant. We couldn't find a matching donor.

CHARLIE: Oh my god!

ALEXIS: In the meantime, since you only have one life to live, what do you say we tie the knot?

CHARLIE: Oh man, I gotta get outta here-

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(CHARLIE runs off, the girls following close behind. The X-Files theme music plays. SCULLY and MULDER enter with flashlights. They inspect the area. SCULLY begins talking into a mini-recorder.)

SCULLY: Investigation of disappearance of Charlie and Sally Brown. No sign of Intelligent life. Lighting dim. The temperature a cool seventy-one degrees. No sign of foul play...What are you thinking Mulder?

MULDER: You look great Agent Scully. That shirt really brings out the green specks in your eyes.

SCULLY: I mean about the investigation.

MULDER: Oh... uh... **(looks around)** No tracks. No prints. No clue to help us figure out what happened to them. It's as if they vanished into thin air. This definitely qualifies as an X-file.

SCULLY: **(finding remote control)** Mulder look at this!

MULDER: Don't touch it, it may be dangerous.

SCULLY: **(examining remote)** What is it?

MULDER: Some ancient relic of a remote control.

SCULLY: We should get it to the lab.

MULDER: It's still warm.

SCULLY: Do you think this has any correlation to the missing brother and sister?

MULDER: Highly probable. I believe this case involves a higher level of intelligence. The truth is out there.

SCULLY: Can the truth wait until after lunch? I'm dying for a cheeseburger.

MULDER: You got it Scully. The BK is out there too.

(SCULLY and MULDER exit as SALLY and MAX enter on the opposite side of the stage.)

MAX: I thought for sure he'd be on TRL set.

SALLY: Where is he? Why can't we find him?

MAX: There's a lot going on here, but don't worry, he'll turn up. **(into a megaphone)** Can I get the Real World cast on the set please! We're on in ten seconds!

SALLY: What's going on now?

MAX: Just smile for the camera and try to look natural.

SALLY: You want me to be in this? But I told you, I'm not an actress.

MAX: This is reality television sweetie, you don't have to act.

(MAX exits as AMAYA, JULIE, RACHEL, ERIC, PUCK, and RUTHIE enter. They all stand in a line at the edge of the stage.)

AMAYA: This is the true story-

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JULIE: Of seven strangers-

RACHEL: Picked to live in a TV show-

RUTHIE: And have their lives taped-

ERIC: To find out what happens-

SALLY: Uh...When people stop being polite?

PUCK: And start getting real.

ALL: The Real World.

(They disperse. RACHEL listens to a discman, PUCK eats peanut butter out of a jar, JULIE reads a book, ERIC dribbles a basketball, AMAYA cleans, SALLY writes in her journal. RUTHIE searches for something.)

RUTHIE: Has anyone seen my Britney Spears cd?

RACHEL: Oh yeah, I borrowed it. Sorry. You need it back?

RUTHIE: No, don't worry about it. ***(RUTHIE turns out to audience confessional style. The rest of the cast freezes.)*** I can't take Rachel anymore. She's always taking my things without asking. It's so hard living with a klepto. She has no respect for other people's property.

(They all unfreeze.)

RACHEL: ***(giving CD back to RUTHIE)*** Here you go Ruthie. Thanks for letting me borrow it.

RUTHIE: ***(smiling sweetly)*** No problem.

(RUTHIE exits and RACHEL confesses.)

RACHEL: Ruthie kills me. She is so possessive. So what if I listen to her CDs? I bet she'd really have a cow if she knew I had her new watch, palm pilot, digital camera, diamond bracelet, lip gloss, teddy bear, mp3 player...

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