

LABELS AND LARCENY

by Megan Orr

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LABELS AND LARCENY

A One-Act Comedic Mystery

by Megan Orr

SYNOPSIS: Welcome to the Wildwood School for the Gifted, a boarding school for the most exceptional young people across the country! Even though these students attend an elite school, they really are just like any other junior high students, facing everything from academic stress to clique conflicts. As the students prepare for their annual spring play, they learn a lesson about the dangers of labeling and even solve a mystery or two along the way!

DURATION: 35 minutes.

TIME: Present day; mid-March.

SETTING: Wildwood School for the Gifted.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 1 male, 4 either, 0-10 extras)

TY / TYRA (m/f) Sullen and standoffish; the new kid on campus who is hard to get to know (Scenes 1, 2, 4) *(36 lines)*

SAMANTHA (f) An “it” girl used to getting all the attention and who thinks she’s better than everyone else (Scenes 1, 2, 5). *(62 lines)*

ABILENE (f) A good-natured country girl who’s getting tired of being pushed around by the “cool” kids (Scenes 1, 4, 5). *(34 lines)*

JOCELYN / JASON (m/f) Athletic and matter-of-fact (Scenes 1, 2, 4, 5). *(41 lines)*

WINNIE / WINSTON (m/f) Nerdy, smart, and shy; nervous around the other students (Scenes 1, 2, 4, 5). *(39 lines)*

SPENCER (m) An intelligent, overly dramatic drama kid (Scenes 1, 3). *(28 lines)*

BRIA (f) A tough-talking flunky who never leaves SAMANTHA’s side (Scenes 2, 3, 5). *(34 lines)*

- KYRIE (f)A dim-witted flunky (Scenes 3, 4).
(29 lines)
- JULIET (f)An overly loud and dramatic drama kid
(Scenes 3, 4). (39 lines)
- MRS. / MR. RENNER (m/f)..... Music and theatre teacher at Wildwood
School for the Gifted; may be played by
an adult (Scenes 2, 5). (45 lines)
- STUDENT EXTRAS (m/f).....Optional. eating lunch (Scene 3)
(Non-Speaking)

SET

All scenes can occur with or without a backdrop. Instead, a few key props are used to suggest the set. Suggestions for each have been included below:

SCENE 1: EXTERIOR OF THE SCHOOL; ON THE QUAD

An archway at upstage left with plants, trees, ivy and a sign with the school's name: Wildwood School for the Gifted; some trees and bushes scattered around the stage for SPENCER to use to "hide"

SCENE 2: BACKSTAGE BEHIND THE SET

No set pieces needed but a prop table, random prop pieces, or paint cans can signify the backstage of a play; five chairs in a semicircle downstage

SCENE 3: SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Three cafeteria tables with chairs or benches: one at center stage, one at downstage left, and one at stage right; a stack of lunch trays

SCENE 4: BACKSTAGE BEHIND THE SET

No set pieces needed but a prop table, random prop pieces, or paint cans can signify the backstage of a play

SCENE 5: BACKSTAGE BEHIND THE SET

The same set as the previous scene but with five chairs in a semicircle downstage

LIGHTS

Standard indoor lighting can be used throughout, for both interior and exterior scenes. Lights fade and rise between skits. No spotlight is necessary.

COSTUMES

TY / TYRA – jeans and a black T-shirt; sneakers

SAMANTHA – a trendy dress or skirt and top; fashionable; girly

ABILENE – jeans and a flannel shirt; sneakers or cowgirl boots

JOCELYN / JASON – warm-up pants and a sports T-shirt; athletic shoes

WINNIE / WINSTON – jeans or khaki pants, a polo shirt, and cardigan

SPENCER – jeans and a black or gray turtleneck or sweater; dramatic

BRIA – jeans and a trendy top; fashionable; girly

KYRIE – jeans and a trendy top; fashionable; girly

JULIET – a flashy or colorful outfit that draws attention

MRS. / MR. RENNER – slacks or khakis, a button-down shirt, and a jacket;
dress shoes

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In staging scene one, we used an archway, several large potted artificial trees, and cardboard bushes to create not only a quad feel but to provide items for Spencer to hide behind.

We created our archway using some old high jump poles with cardboard boxes painted to look like bricks stacked in front of the poles. The banner spanned the two poles as the top of the arch.

You can reach out to a local sign provider to see if they would be willing to make a Wildwood School for the Gifted banner in exchange for advertising in the play program.

With so many different props, we found it helpful to assign the assistant stage manager to be in charge of props backstage. They can check in with each character before their scene begins to make sure they have the props that they will need in that scene and then collect and store the props after the scene is finished.

For the cafeteria scene, you may be able to acquire empty individual milk cartons from your school's cafeteria. Rinsed out, they make excellent "food props" that won't cause a mess if spilled.

PROPS

SCENE 1:

- backpack or duffel bag (TY)
- Two stuffed backpacks, one name brand, if possible (ABILENE)
- Basketball (JOCELYN)
- stack of papers (WINNIE)
- cell phone (SAMANTHA)

SCENE 2:

- basketball (JOCELYN)
- clipboard (MRS. RENNER)

SCENE 3:

- Four lunch trays with food items
- cell phone (SPENCER)

SCENE 4:

- basketball (JOCELYN)

SCENE 5:

- A sheet of math homework
- Bria's stolen props: a detective hat and magnifying glass, handcuffs, a stack of books, a bowl of plastic fruit; Winnie's glasses

SCENE 1**EXTERIOR OF THE SCHOOL; ON THE QUAD**

AT START: *Lights rise. TY enters center stage from the audience with a backpack over his shoulder and crosses to center stage, clearly sulking. He drops the backpack with a thud and turns back to yell at the audience.*

TY: I can't believe you're sending me off to boarding school! I haven't even done anything!

SAMANTHA enters from downstage right. ABILENE follows, carrying two backpacks that are clearly very heavy.

SAMANTHA: Excuse me?

TY turns to face SAMANTHA.

SAMANTHA: Hi. You must be new here.

TY: So? What's it to you?

SAMANTHA: *(Sarcastically.)* Well, nice to meet you too. Let's try this again, shall we? *(Slowly, with a big, fake smile.)* Hi! I'm Samantha. Who are you?

TY: *(Grouchily.)* Ty.

SAMANTHA: That's better! Now... why are you so upset?

TY: Why am I so upset? Why am I so upset?? My parents just dumped me off at a boarding school! And I haven't done anything wrong! *(Yelling back at the audience.)* I'm nominating you both for the worst parents of the year award! Just so you know!

SAMANTHA: Oh. I see the confusion. This isn't one of those kinds of boarding schools. This is Wildwood School for the Gifted, a boarding school for the most exceptional young people across the country!

TY: School for the Gifted? ... *(Hopefully.)* You mean, like in the X-Men??

SAMANTHA: No. Not like in the X-Men.

TY: *(Disappointed.)* Oh. Okay... so why are you at a school for the gifted?

SAMANTHA: Well... (*Gesturing to her face.*) ...obviously.

TY: What? I don't get it. You have... special skin??

SAMANTHA: No! Clearly my gift is my beauty!

ABILENE: (*Under her breath.*) Maybe on the outside.

TY: (*To ABILENE.*) Who are you?

SAMANTHA: Oh, you don't have to worry about her. That's just Karen.

ABILENE: My name is Abilene.

SAMANTHA: Okay. Whatever, Karen.

TY: (*To ABILENE.*) Why are you carrying around two bags? What's your gift? Super strength?

ABILENE: I guess I do feel a bit like a pack mule. But, no, I'm not unusually strong. My gift is singing.

SAMANTHA: (*Dismissively.*) Country.

ABILENE: I can also play the guitar.

SAMANTHA: I think she means the banjo.

ABILENE: I'm sure I can play that too if I had one.

SAMANTHA: (*To TY.*) Anyway, don't worry about Karen. (*In an exaggerated whisper.*) She's here on scholarship.

JOCELYN suddenly enters from upstage left, twirling a basketball. She stops when she sees TY.

JOCELYN: (*To TY.*) Hey. What's up? You new?

TY: Yeah?

JOCELYN: Cool. I'm Jocelyn.

TY: Ty.

JOCELYN: You play ball?

TY: I could shoot some hoops.

JOCELYN: (*Tossing the ball to TY.*) Cool. Let's get out of here.

TY: Fine by me!

TY follows JOCELYN off upstage left.

SAMANTHA: Now where is that nerd with my homework? She promised to be here by five. (*Shouting.*) Winnie!!!

WINNIE enters from stage left, spilling papers everywhere as she enters.

WINNIE: (*Fearfully.*) Yes, Samantha?? I'm... I'm here! I'm really sorry I'm late!

SAMANTHA: You better have that math homework I asked you about.

WINNIE: Yes! I do! One second. I know it's here somewhere!

WINNIE drops to her hands and knees, shuffling through the papers on the ground. SAMANTHA takes out her cell phone and examines her face. During their interaction, SPENCER begins sneaking onto the stage from upstage right, listening in.

SAMANTHA: When I pay you for a service, Winnie, I expect that service to be on time!

WINNIE: I know, I know. I'm sorry. I just had it right here...

SAMANTHA: Karen, help her.

ABILENE: (*Grumbling.*) My name is Abilene.

ABILENE sighs and crosses to the mess on the ground. She gets down on her hands and knees to help.

WINNIE: (*To ABILENE.*) What's she got against you?

ABILENE: Not as much as she thinks.

SAMANTHA: You have no idea the stress you cause for me, Winnie. Making me wait until the last minute. I have a grade point average to maintain, you know. Do you know how disappointed my parents would be if I lost my 4.0?

ABILENE: (*Under her breath.*) I wonder how disappointed they'd be if they knew you had to cheat to get it. (*To WINNIE, handing her a paper.*) Here you go, Winnie.

WINNIE: Thanks!

ABILENE and WINNIE stand. ABILENE discreetly folds another sheet of paper and puts it in her back pocket while SAMANTHA and WINNIE talk.

WINNIE: Here you go, Samantha! Tomorrow's math homework, as promised!

SAMANTHA grabs the sheet from WINNIE'S hand and glares at it.

SAMANTHA: Winnie? Did your brain somehow get sucked into a black hole like the rest of your social life?

WINNIE: I... no, I don't think so. Why?

SAMANTHA: (*Showing her the paper.*) Because this is science homework.

WINNIE: (*Grabbing the paper from her and squinting at it.*) Oh! I'm really sorry. I somehow misplaced my glasses earlier today so I can't really see anything—

SAMANTHA: Tell it to someone who cares. Now... where's my math homework???

SPENCER suddenly jumps out of hiding and speaks up so loudly and dramatically that they all jump in surprise.

SPENCER: Missing math homework? Sounds like a job for a great detective. Me!

ABILENE: (*To WINNIE.*) He's a detective?

SAMANTHA: Of course he's not a detective, Karen. He's a drama geek. They've all been acting this way.

WINNIE: (*Explaining to ABILENE.*) The school play this year is a murder mystery. The drama kids tend to get a little bit... obsessive.

ABILENE: Ohhhhhh.

SPENCER: You can call it obsessive. I call it getting into character! Now the question is... who would be most interested in stealing math homework?

SAMANTHA: I bet it was that new kid. What was his name? Ky? He looked a little shady.

SPENCER: A new kid? Arriving the exact day homework suddenly goes missing? Intriguing! Which way did he go?

ABILENE: (*Pointing upstage left.*) That way. With Jocelyn.

SPENCER: Excellent! Then we must track them down. Come! The game is afoot!

SPENCER runs off upstage left.

WINNIE: (*Turning to ABILENE.*) “The game is afoot?” What does he expect us to do? Follow him?

ABILENE: Better than staying here. Besides, maybe we can get him to find your missing glasses next.

WINNIE: Oh yeah! You think?

ABILENE: Let’s go find out!

ABILENE drops SAMANTHA’S backpack on the ground. ABILENE and WINNIE cross to upstage left.

SAMANTHA: Noooooo! Karen! Look what you’ve done! That bag is Louis Vuitton! Louis Vuitton is like... the American flag! It’s never supposed to touch the ground!

ABILENE: (*Shrugging.*) So... pick it up.

ABILENE and WINNIE exit upstage left. SAMANTHA stares after them, open-mouthed in shock.

SAMANTHA: Pick it up?? But... I.... Oh, this is so not over! ...Karen??
KAREN!!!

OPTIONAL SFX: A banjo solo. SAMANTHA picks up her backpack and storms after them, off upstage left. Lights fade.

SCENE 2

BACKSTAGE BEHIND THE SET

AT START: *Lights rise. TY and JOCELYN are passing a basketball back and forth between them upstage right. SAMANTHA and BRIA sit in chairs at downstage left, chatting. WINNIE runs in from stage left. She notices SAMANTHA and BRIA in the chairs and stops, nervously.*

SAMANTHA: (*Oozing warmth and welcome.*) Winnie!

WINNIE: (*Slowly.*) Yes?

BRIA: Over here!

WINNIE: Over here what?

SAMANTHA: Come sit with us!

WINNIE looks behind her.

WINNIE: Who, me??

SAMANTHA: Of course, you, silly! Who do you think?

BRIA pats the chair beside her. WINNIE crosses to the chair in relief.

WINNIE: Sorry, I... I didn't know. I thought you were still mad at me.
And it's really hard to see without my glass—

Just as WINNIE is about to sit down, BRIA moves the chair and WINNIE ends up falling onto the floor. SAMANTHA and BRIA laugh uproariously. After a moment of shock, WINNIE gets to her feet and runs off downstage left. MRS. RENNER enters with a clipboard, upstage right, steps between TY and JOCELYN, and catches the basketball midair.

JOCELYN: Hey!

MRS. RENNER: This is stage crew, Jocelyn. Not sports practice. And who's your friend?

JOCELYN: This is Ty. He's new.

MRS. RENNER: Well, welcome to Wildwood School for the Gifted, Ty.
You're in luck. You came just in time for opening night tonight!

SAMANTHA: Yeah. Whoopee.

MRS. RENNER: And just a reminder to you all—Miss Smith—that your grade in theater class is directly tied to your participation in tonight's show.

SAMANTHA: Participation? We're nothing but glorified hairdressers!
And we're not even getting paid! (*To BRIA.*) Bria, remind me not to take theater class again next year. It's, like, so lame.

BRIA: Yeah. So lame.

JOCELYN: You're just still mad you didn't get the lead role.

SAMANTHA: I am not! I could care less about this dorky play!

TY: I think you mean you couldn't care less?

BRIA: Hey! Shut it, new kid. Nobody asked you.

MRS. RENNER: That's quite enough of that. Everybody zip it. Now. Let's run through the list of backstage responsibilities one more time.

EVERYONE on stage groans.

MRS. RENNER: I know, I know. But the more we review, the less likely you'll forget. Samantha? Care to start?

SAMANTHA: Makeup.

MRS. RENNER: And?

SAMANTHA: (*Irritated.*) OMG, and curtains! Mrs. Renner, you are, like, so extra. I'm not going to forget!

MRS. RENNER: Relax, Samantha. Just making sure. Bria?

BRIA: Ya huh?

MRS. RENNER: You're supposed to tell me what you're responsible for tonight?

BRIA: Oh, right. Hair. And, like, prompting.

TY: She's in charge of prompting? You all are doomed.

JOCELYN: Right?!

MRS. RENNER: Thank you, Bria. Jocelyn?

JOCELYN: Running the ticket booth and then sets and prop changes. Ty's going to help me.

MRS. RENNER: Excellent! We could definitely use an extra hand. And finally, Winnie? (*After a pause, she looks up from her clipboard and looks around.*) Winnie? Where's Winnie?

SAMANTHA: (*Sweetly.*) Winnie who?

SAMANTHA and BRIA crack up laughing. MRS. RENNER looks around in confusion.

JOCELYN: Beauty and the Brainless were bullying her again, Mrs. Renner. She ran out crying.

MRS. RENNER: Ran out?? But she's in charge of lights and sound! We need her!

SAMANTHA: Oh, please. We don't need her. A trained monkey could do Winnie's job.

JOCELYN: Great! Since a trained monkey could do it, why don't you handle lights and sound and we'll let Bria take care of makeup and curtains?

SAMANTHA: Excuse me???

BRIA: Whoa, wait. Makeup and curtains? And hair? And... (*Turning to MRS. RENNER.*) What else am I supposed to do?

MRS. RENNER: Prompting??

BRIA: Right, that! Makeup and curtains and hair and prompting? What do you think I am? Like, an octopus??

MRS. RENNER: Enough! Boys and girls, this show opens tonight! Now is not the time to be stirring up problems with each other!

SAMANTHA: But, Mrs. Renner—!

MRS. RENNER: No excuses! We've got one final dress rehearsal starting right after lunch. Samantha, I want you to go find Winnie and apologize to her. Make sure she's back here after lunch for the final run through.

SAMANTHA: But, Mrs. Renner—!

MRS. RENNER: Now, Samantha! Or your parents will hear about this.

SAMANTHA: Fine! Come on, Bria. It's almost time for lunch anyways.

BRIA jumps up and joins SAMANTHA in crossing to stage left.

BRIA: Oooh, lunch! I think we're having tuna rolls today!

MRS. RENNER: Remember, girls. Find Winnie.

SAMANTHA: Oh, we'll find her all right.

SAMANTHA and BRIA exit, stage left.

MRS. RENNER: (*Sighing.*) I'm not sure I like the sound of that.

JOCELYN: Hey, Mrs. Renner? Not trying to cause you even more stress, but I noticed some of our props from backstage have gone missing.

MRS. RENNER: Missing? What's missing??

JOCELYN: Well... the detective hat, the magnifying glass, the handcuffs, a stack of books, a bowl of plastic fruit...

MRS. RENNER: So basically, everything??

JOCELYN: Well, yeah. Almost.

MRS. RENNER drops into a chair and puts her head in her hands.

MRS. RENNER: I knew it. I knew it!

JOCELYN: Hey... Mrs. Renner? Are you okay?

MRS. RENNER: I never should have taken this position. A drama teacher? In middle school?? What was I thinking?! I could have been a PE teacher!

TY: Then at least you could have taken out your frustrations by pelting us with dodgeballs.

JOCELYN and MRS. RENNER look at TY.

TY: What? My old PE teacher used to do it.

JOCELYN: Don't give her any ideas.

MRS. RENNER sighs and stands up with renewed purpose.

MRS. RENNER: No. It's going to be fine. We'll find the props. Or we'll do without. The show must go on.

JOCELYN: *(Skeptically.)* Must it, though?

MRS. RENNER: Yes. It must.

JOCELYN: *(With a sigh.)* If you say so.

MRS. RENNER: We'll meet back here after lunch. I've got to go find some caffeine. Lots and lots of caffeine.

MRS. RENNER exits stage left, holding her head with one hand, her clipboard under one arm and the basketball in her other hand.

TY: Dude. Is your teacher okay?

JOCELYN: Yeah. She's fine. But I'm not!

TY: Why? What's wrong?

JOCELYN: She just left with my basketball!

Lights fade.

SCENE 3
SCHOOL CAFETERIA

AT START: *Lights rise. SPENCER is sitting at a cafeteria table at upstage center with a lunch tray in front of him. JULIET enters from stage left with her own lunch tray and rushes over to SPENCER.*

JULIET: OMG, Spencer! Have you heard the news! The awful, awful news? It's terrible! Simply horrible!

SPENCER: You mean about the mysterious disappearance of the math homework? Yes, Juliet, I have. Simply tragic! What if math homework starts disappearing all over campus? No one will know what a fraction is! Everyone will forget how to add! Mr. Horace will need to resign from pre-algebra and take up a new career as a janitor!

JULIET: NO! I'm talking about the school play!

SPENCER: The school play? No! Not the play! What happened??

JULIET: I just ran into Jocelyn. She said that somebody stole all of our props from backstage!

SPENCER: What? NO! First missing math homework and now this? I am appalled!! There seems to be a thief among us! Something has to be done about it!

JULIET: Yes. But what??

SPENCER: We are going to get to the bottom of this! We are detectives after all!

JULIET: Spencer, that's just in the play! We're not really detectives.

SPENCER: Maybe you aren't. But that just means you haven't gotten into character yet. I'll help you. Watch and learn.

BRIA and KYRIE enter from downstage left, lunch trays in hand. SPENCER grabs JULIET'S lunch tray and slides it behind them off the table, food and all.

JULIET: Hey! I wasn't finished eating that!

SPENCER directs JULIET'S attention to downstage left.

SPENCER: Watch and learn!

BRIA: (To KYRIE.) Yeah, you know, she's kind of becoming, like, the biggest pain in the you-know-what, you-know-where. It's, like, totally annoying.

KYRIE: Bria, I adore your shoes! Where did you get them?

BRIA: Kyrie, that's not the point! OMG! Like, it's seriously so annoying you're not paying attention!

KYRIE: I am paying attention! So... are they from the mall or did you buy them online?

BRIA: Ugh. Sometimes I don't know why I hang out with you!

BRIA and KYRIE take a seat at a cafeteria table at downstage left.

SPENCER: (To JULIET.) So tell me. What did you see?

JULIET: See? What do you mean? It's just Bria and Kyrie.

SPENCER: Yes, exactly! And what did you see?

JULIET: (Slowly.) I saw... someone who has an unhealthy obsession with shoes?

SPENCER: No, no, no! You need to learn to think like a detective. Tell me. Did you notice anything... missing?

JULIET: Besides a few brain cells?

SPENCER: Besides that.

JULIET: Well... I know those two usually spend a lot of time with Samantha Smith...

SPENCER: Yes, exactly! And what were they talking about?

JULIET: Uh... paying attention??

SPENCER smacks himself on the forehead in frustration.

SPENCER: Now I know why I was cast as the lead detective and you're just the sidekick.

JULIET: Hey! My character may be a sidekick, but she still has an advanced degree!

SPENCER: All right then, Doctor Juliet. Allow me to present. Bria and Kyrie, two of the "popular girls," enter the cafeteria without their usual acquaintance, "it" girl Samantha Smith—

JULIET: I wouldn't exactly call her an acquaintance. More like a "frenemy."

SPENCER: And they were talking about a pain in the you-know-what, you-know-where.

JULIET: (*Confused.*) Where?

SPENCER: You know where.

JULIET: No, I mean what where?

SPENCER: You know what!

JULIET: (*Sighing.*) Why me?

SPENCER: That I cannot answer. But I do smell something fishy!

JULIET: It's probably my tuna rolls you spilled all over the floor.

BRIA: (*To KYRIE.*) Hey, like, don't look now, but I think the drama geeks have been staring at us.

KYRIE: (*Turning around.*) What? Where?

BRIA: I said, don't look now!!

KYRIE: You're right! They are totally staring at us! And why not? We look awesome!

BRIA: I don't know. That Spencer kid is kinda cute, but he's also a little... weird.

KYRIE: Oooh, look! They're coming over!

BRIA: Do not let them sit here! My reputation cannot survive being seen with drama geeks! Not outside the play, at least. Quick! Spread out!

KYRIE: Spread out?

BRIA: Hurry!

BRIA spreads out her lunch items across the table while KYRIE simply spreads out her arms and legs to cover the extra seat beside her. SPENCER and JULIET stop next to the table, staring at KYRIE curiously.

JULIET: (*To KYRIE.*) Ummmm... are you okay?

BRIA: Leg cramp. She gets them all the time. Right, Kyrie?

KYRIE: Right!

JULIET: Oh. O-kay...

SPENCER: Afternoon, ladies. My colleague and I are currently on a case to discover the whereabouts of a few... missing items. You two haven't noticed anything... strange today, have you?

KYRIE: You mean, besides you?

BRIA: (*Shushing KYRIE; to SPENCER.*) Ignore her. It's just a brain... cramp. She gets them all the time. Right, Kyrie?

KYRIE: Wow. I get cramps a lot.

JULIET: (*To SPENCER.*) I think they just answered your "Have you noticed anything strange?" question.

BRIA: Look, drama geeks. We haven't noticed anything strange and nothing has gone missing around here, okay?

KYRIE: I don't know, Bria. You know, just yesterday I couldn't find my favorite lip gloss. I looked all over the dorm room for it for, like, hours.

BRIA: That's why you tore up our entire room?? That place looked like a tornado had gone through it when I got back last night!!

KYRIE: Well, it's not my fault you were so late getting back! If you had come back sooner, you could have helped me and then maybe our room wouldn't be a wreck!

BRIA: You expect me to spend hours looking for your lip gloss??

KYRIE: Well, duh, Bria! That lip gloss was Dior. You can't just go down to the campus store and buy more!

SPENCER: What a chore!

KYRIE: (*To SPENCER.*) Right??

BRIA: Still... I can't believe you destroyed our room looking for some stupid lip gloss!

KYRIE: Well, I can't believe you still refuse to wear actual lip gloss! ChapStick is so not the same thing!

JULIET: And I can't believe I'm still standing here listening to this. I'm hungry. (*To SPENCER.*) And you owe me lunch.

SPENCER: You're right. That I do. (*To BRIA and KYRIE.*) Thank you, ladies. It's been a pleasure, but I believe we have all we need.

SPENCER turns and begins heading back to his table at center stage. JULIET follows.

JULIET: "All we need"? What are you talking about?

SPENCER: Oh, come now, Doctor Juliet. Tell me you didn't catch that blatant clue!

JULIET: Blatant clue? What clue?

SPENCER: The fact that Bria was late getting back from rehearsal last night. The same night that the play props mysteriously went missing. Any ideas why?

JULIET: OMG! You're right! Spencer, you did it! You actually solved a mystery!

SPENCER: Well, I wouldn't exactly say I solved the mystery. Not yet anyway. All we have right now is opportunity. Now it's time to look for motive! (*Pulls out his cell phone and checks the time.*) Scratch that. Now it's actually time to get back to the stage for the final run through!

SPENCER begins crossing toward downstage left.

JULIET: What?? Already?! But I haven't eaten yet!

SPENCER: No time! Our adoring public awaits!

SPENCER exits downstage left.

JULIET: Well, they better be waiting with some food! Otherwise, Spencer is about to find out why I'm called his sidekick!

JULIET kicks at the air before running off after SPENCER, downstage left. Lights fade.

SCENE 4

BACKSTAGE BEHIND THE SET

AT START: *Lights rise. JULIET, ABILENE, WINNIE, TY, and JOCELYN stand milling about center stage full of nervous energy. JOCELYN is playing with a basketball.*

JULIET: It's finally here! Our final run through! I cannot wait for the show tonight!!

ABILENE: Haven't you heard? Mrs. Renner still hasn't been able to find any of those missing props! What kind of detective play doesn't have any props?

TY: Don't worry, guys. It'll be fine. You don't need props to have a good show. Back at my old school, we almost never had any props. Or sets. Or costumes.

JOCELYN: Where did you go to school?? Prison??

TY: No! I went to _____. [Insert your school name here.]

ABILENE: I don't know what happened to all them missing props. But all I have to say is that nobody—and I mean nobody—had better done nothing to my sets! I spent nearly three weeks up on a ladder every day after classes paintin' 'em. I even ruined my best pair of overalls! If anything happens to them sets...

WINNIE: Don't worry, Abilene. I'm sure nobody would want to ruin the set. It's the school play! Everyone's looking forward to it! And really, if you think about it, we all helped make it happen. You painted sets and I did the lights and sound. Even Samantha, Bria, and Kyrie are helping with hair and makeup!

JULIET: Which reminds me, I need to get over to the dressing room for hair and makeup!

JOCELYN: You're willingly going to let those three stooges put makeup on you? Good luck!

JULIET: NO!!! Don't say that!!!!

JOCELYN: What? Say what??

JULIET: Don't you know it's bad luck to say "good luck" to actors?? You're supposed to say, "Break a leg"!

JOCELYN: Break a leg? But I don't want you to break a leg. That doesn't make any sense at all.

TY: (To JOCELYN.) It's true, dude. They said "break a leg" all the time at my old school.

JOCELYN: Yeah, well, that I believe.

JULIET: Oh no. Oh no, oh no, oh no! Something bad is going to happen now. I know it!

WINNIE: Relax, Juliet. You're not really that superstitious, are you?

JULIET: It's not superstition! It's an actual fact!

ABILENE: Maybe I had better go and check on those sets after all...

JULIET: I'll go with you!

JOCELYN: Guys, stop it. You're being ridiculous! Nothing bad is going to happen!

ABILENE and JULIET exit, upstage left.

TY: Famous last words.

KYRIE saunters in, downstage left.

KYRIE: Hey, everyone!

WINNIE: Kyrie! Aren't you supposed to be back helping in hair and makeup right now??

KYRIE: Yeah, I'm a little late! What I miss?

WINNIE: Not much. Mrs. Renner is going over hair, makeup, and costumes now. She's going to be furious you're not back there yet! Where have you been??

KYRIE: On the phone with my mom! She's bringing my Gucci bag that came yesterday to the show tonight! I can't wait!!

WINNIE: To see your mom, right? It's been, what, three months?

KYRIE: Oh no. I've been waiting forever. That bag has been on backorder since, like, before Thanksgiving!

TY: You know, that story just makes me feel bad for your mom.

JOCELYN: Whatever. Gucci is a dead meme. Why don't you get into something useful? Like basketball or soccer?

KYRIE: Get with the times! Sports are ancient news!

WINNIE: Well, you know, it's okay that everyone has their own interests. I mean, I like math.

JOCELYN: Yeah, yeah, save it for the Miss America pageant.

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