

PROM NIGHT

By Kelly Meadows

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Prom Night - Page 2

CHARACTER LIST

The Prom Queen Candidates:

Roxanne – representing the common student

Yvonne – if she's so popular, how come nobody likes her?

Camilla – very smart... smart enough to find fault with everyone!

Champagne – just an average girl, to her dismay

Micheline – she knows everything about everyone... and is happy to share!

The Band:

Seth – he's 19, confident, and the leader of the band

Herk – he's 18, old enough for issues, too young to be in charge.

Germaine – gotta love his hair!

The Students:

Garvey – captain of the football team

Stag

Gretchen – how many times can she get dumped in one night?

Dewayne – wasn't planning to go, after all, he likes chemistry

Alceste – can't do anything without adult supervision

Katrina – her somewhat sarcastic best friend

Stella

Odessa

PROP LIST

A cell phone for YVONNE

A drum for HERK

Pencils and paper for the students to cast votes

A crown for the prom queen

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Prom Night can be done with a set of glitz and glitter as suggested in the script, or on the other hand, will succeed on a smaller budget set as well. The reality of where they are – a parking lot – versus the fantasy of where they want to be – inside the prom with all the fancy decorations – can make for a nice contrast.

Since this is the biggest night of some of our character's lives, costumes and hair, not to mention their attitudes should reflect the amount of time they took to prepare. That doesn't necessarily mean their outfits have to match, or be tasteful. Since many of these characters are obsessed with hair and fashion, hairstyling can be a major part of their look, both for male and female characters. Many of the characters are based on a certain "type" such as the popular people, the nerd, the science student, etc. Encourage the players to start with those concepts, and then build their characters beyond any stereotypes.

As more of the characters take the stage, the challenge will be for them all to have their own space on stage. It might be a good idea to keep them in groups, for instance, under most circumstances, keep the band together, keep the sets of friends or dates together, so the staging can accurately reflect the relationships that start and then change throughout the play. Even players with smaller roles can take some time, and develop a strong personality based on where their character is in the "hierarchy" that many of these students want to rigidly maintain. They would be reacting to difference characters' dilemmas, based on where they perceive themselves to be in this hierarchy.

The play itself is more an ensemble piece than a solo vehicle, but there are a few focus points:

- Yvonne's determination to win Prom Queen at all costs, and the other candidates' determination to keep her from it. Playing up the differences and disagreements among the candidates is an important part of the play's success.
- The usual battle between the popular students and the "out" crowd.
- A growing frustration as the students are barred from taking part in "the biggest night of their lives."
- The relationship of the members of the band, who are slightly outside of the "goings on."

While the ends of each act are "fantasy" in the way the set is decked out, on the other hand, they're also taking place in "reality." Act two can mix them together by leaving the props from the act one fantasy together with the reality of act two, almost like ruins after a tornado. Encourage the cast to have fun with what they find.

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ACT 1

SCENE 1

(In a high school auditorium, the prom queen candidates are addressing the class. The stage can be decorated with all kinds of frills and balloons and signs such as Senior Prom 2003 (or whatever year) or even your own school's name if this is a school production.)

(On stage are ROXANNE, YVONNE, CAMILLA, and CHAMPAGNE. They're lined up near the front of the stage, ready to give a short speech as to why they should be voted in as prom queen.)

ROXANNE: My name is Roxanne, and here's why you should vote for me for prom queen.

CAMILLA: This should be good.

ROXANNE: It will. It will be great! *(to her imagined audience)* It's because I represent you! The commoner! The dweeb! The loser! The nerd! The fat guy who likes algebra. The girl with the zits everyone makes fun of in gym. *(points to someone imaginary)* Yes, Karen, I did mean you... get a doctor! But! I am *your* candidate – *(gets flustered when people aren't interested)* Hey, where's everybody going?

YVONNE: *(taking over at center stage)* I'm Yvonne. But *(giggles)* who doesn't know that? After all – I'm the most popular girl in the school. You might think I rule with an iron fist, but... not true. I rule because my mother is the teen fashion editor for the *Sun Times*.

CAMILLA: *(trying to start trouble)* You wear what your mother tells you to?

YVONNE: *(confident and in control, moving to and pointing out CAMILLA's outfit)* You *all* wear what my mother tells us to. *(struts back into place)* Because if you don't, I'll ostracize you and you'll have to spend your entire high school career... well... *(laughs again and points to CAMILLA)* studying!

CHAMPAGNE: *(bitter, because this won't help her win)* Everyone knows prom queen is a popularity contest.

Prom Night - Page 5

YVONNE: Oh, like we're going to vote for (*indicating CHAMPAGNE*) someone we don't like. And (*plays with her hair*) since I'm the most popular, everyone needs to vote for...

CAMILLA: Vote for me!

YVONNE: You? (*looks over CAMILLA confused and annoyed*) Who are you? Do you even go here?

CAMILLA: (*a bit snooty herself*) I'm Camilla. Yes, you wouldn't know me. I'm in the accelerated group, while you're content with being "pretty... but remedial."

YVONNE: Camilla? Why would anyone with a grain of sense vote for (*grandiose*) Camilla? The unknown quantity! It'd be like making a Saudi Arabian princess the president of the United States!

CAMILLA: (*pacing back and forth as if SHE's at a business meeting*) Very simple. A vote for Camilla is a vote that *you* don't get. (*to the audience*) It's a tough nut trying to knock off the most popular girl in the school. But the truth is, (*right to YVONNE*) everyone hates you. Even your friends hate you. Your popularity is an illusion imposed from on high. Truth be known, though what *would* you know about the truth, your candidacy is about as viable as the Chicago Cubs in September.

CHAMPAGNE: (*to CAMILLA, snotty*) You're about as viable as blonde hair on a hippopotamus. (*to the audience, warmly*) My name is Champagne, and if I'm elected prom queen, I'll work for the betterment of mankind everywhere. World peace, cheap chocolate, and of course, (*shouting as if there's a teacher in the back of the audience*) dropping that extra math requirement.

CAMILLA: You don't need to be prom queen do to all that.

CHAMPAGNE: I need motivation. And reward. Besides, (*shakes sense into CAMILLA, aggressively*) I really want that crown. (*to the audience*) So, vote for me or it's the world at war and a whole lot more math.

ROXANNE: We're graduating. What do you care about the math requirement?

CHAMPAGNE: I'm *not* graduating because of that math requirement.

ROXANNE: (*can't believe it*) You didn't know?

CHAMPAGNE: Knew, didn't care. (*begging CAMILLA*) Will you tutor me? (*running from girl to girl, or talking to the audience*) Will somebody tutor me? (*near tears*) I don't want to go to summer school!

ROXANNE: (*approached CHAMPAGNE*) Vote for me, and I'll help you out.

CHAMPAGNE: (*turns away, abruptly*) Never!

Prom Night - Page 6

ROXANNE: (*giving up, happily*) Well then, (*goes to YVONNE as if SHE's "X"*) if x equals 6, and (*goes to CAMILLA*) y equals 3.52, then z (*points out CHAMPAGNE*) will have to remain a mystery!

CHAMPAGNE: (*thinks it over*) Well, if I have to repeat my senior year, I'll be prom queen twice in a row.

YVONNE: Champagne, did you have a lobotomy when no one was looking?

MICHELINA: (*enters, taking control, barging in front of everyone*) Hold it! You forgot me! (*introducing herself*) Michelina! The dark horse candidate. The forgotten contestant.

YVONNE: Well, yes. Your candidacy is forgettable. Why would anyone vote for you?

MICHELINA: Because, if *you* haven't forgotten, I have a really really big mouth. (*to YVONNE*) I know whose boyfriend you've been dating behind her back. (*to CAMILLA*) I know what you did to the biology teacher's toad collection... gross, by the way. (*to ROXANNE*) And I know that you took a bribe to blow our chess championship at the state finals. And Champagne? (*confidently*) Where do I begin?

CHAMPAGNE: Michelina, don't you dare!

MICHELINA: Exactly. A vote for me is a vote for me to keep quiet.

ROXANNE: That's blackmail!

MICHELINA: Politics are dirty. (*to CHAMPAGNE*) So is your underwear.

CHAMPAGNE: You said you wouldn't-

MICHELINA: Yep. I say a lot of things that I don't necessarily do. Make ten promises, keep one or two. (*to the crowd as well as to CHAMPAGNE*) It's too bad when the truth has so much influence over the outcome of the vote. Just remember... (*to the crowd*) there are consequences to voting for Yvonne.

YVONNE: (*proud of it*) I won homecoming queen, I had the lead in the fall play, I'm the first flute in the band, and I'm head cheerleader. People vote for me out of habit.

ROXANNE: A bad habit. Do you ever go to class?

YVONNE: I don't have to. I'm popular. And if you try anything, Michelina, I'll-

MICHELINA: You already tried! So you can stand here and pontificate about your popularity, Yvonne, but (*to audience, gossipy*) remember when she flunked her European History test because she didn't know the difference between Frederick the Great and Frederick's of Hollywood? And Roxanne, I've seen you eat an entire chocolate cream pie as solace for... oh, was it second flute? Of course, sitting next to Yvonne, that would drive anyone to chocolate cream. Speaking of driving, who here got a speeding ticket, Camilla?

Prom Night - Page 7

That's only the beginning. (with a knowing smile) Prom, anyone? (SHE runs off, and all the others chase after her.)

SCENE 2

(Much of the play is more or less set in a parking lot outside the school. A few benches can be places around for people to sit on, as well as some light posts, curb markers, etc. People entering or leaving the parking lot come on from director's left. People going to the school exit to and enter from the director's right.)

(Enter SETH, HERK, and GERMAINE. Members of a band, dressed very informally; for instance, t-shirts and jeans, sandals, what have you. They're a bit disorganized. Seth, at 19, is the oldest, and the band leader.)

SETH: *(to HERK)* Herk, did you "remember" your bass this time?

HERK: I stink at bass!

SETH: You stink at it more when it's not here.

HERK: When it's not here no one knows I stink.

SETH: They do, because I tell them.

HERK: I want to play the xylophone! You never let me play the xylophone!

SETH: We don't *have* a xylophone.

HERK: The bass is in the trunk. Overheating, like a kidnap victim in a Van Damme film.

GERMAINE: *(unhappy)* I can't *believe* we're playing another prom!

SETH: I know. It's our third one this week. I can't wait till the school year's out.

GERMAINE: I want to play at an arena! At a baseball stadium! At the Super Bowl!

HERK: Well, we *did* practice during halftime.

SETH: At least we can get *into* this prom. I got laughed out of my own.

HERK: Seth, that's because you went with-

SETH: The humanities teacher. Would you stop with that story?

GERMAINE: You didn't get home until 5 a.m.

SETH: After we left we went to the coffee house and started reading some of the books banned by the Board of Education.

HERK: That's just about everything. Our library was down to one shelf.

SETH: I know. But I rebelled. Now I'm educated, and you're not. *(presents HERK to the audience)* See the difference?

Prom Night - Page 8

HERK: Where do we get in?

SETH: Get your bass, and I'll find... how come I can't find the door?
(exits for a minute)

HERK: I hate my bass.

GERMAINE: You need to help unload my drum set.

HERK: I hate your drum set, too. Anyway, I squished your snare under my bass.

GERMAINE: Why did you join the band?

HERK: I wanted to meet girls!

GERMAINE: You won't if you stink at bass!

SETH: **(comes back in)** It's locked.

GERMAINE: It's early.

SETH: It's never early, Germaine. We waited in the car sweating like hogs while you spent two hours spiking your hair.

GERMAINE: One.

SETH: Two.

GERMAINE: One.

SETH: **(giving up)** Okay, one and a half. Whatever.

GERMAINE: You like it? I spent two hours on it.

SETH: You just said one.

GERMAINE: If you like it, I spent two. Is it good for our image?

HERK: What image? You look like a possum.

GERMAINE: You smell like one. You could have waited inside.

HERK: **(imitating GERMAINE)** "Don't bother, I'll be right out!" Two hours.

YVONNE: **(enters, taken aback by their appearance)** Uh... does anyone know how to get in?

HERK: Oh, a beautiful maiden in distress. I must have her. **(goes to her)**

YVONNE: **(pushes him away)** Not even in your dreams. Who are you?

SETH: **(grabs HERK back, then joining them together, announcing themselves)** Seth.

HERK: Herk.

GERMAINE: Germaine. We're...

ALL THREE GUYS: ..."the band."

YVONNE: **(looks them over, takes her time)** Well, you can't have me.

GERMAINE: Who wants you?

HERK: **(pushes GERMAINE out of the way)** I do! **(asks YVONNE)** Why not?

YVONNE: I'm too popular!

HERK: I doubt that. You don't look popular. **(YVONNE is stunned)** You're all alone on prom night.

YVONNE: **(regains her composure, walks from one to the next, to SETH)** Too popular, **(to HERK)** too pretty, **(to GERMAINE)** too

Prom Night - Page 9

much in demand. Too bad for you! But, if you can get the door open, I'll let you hold it for me.

GERMAINE: We only hold the door for ladies.

YVONNE: Well! Then I'm the only one who will be able to walk through. After all, my mother is the teen fashion editor for the *Sun Times*!

HERK: Really? **(runs up to her again)** Did I do good? Do you like my outfit? It's new, it just *looks* old.

YVONNE: **(looks him over again)** You're making a mockery of my mother's good work. Now – when we get in, you all stay on the other side of the room from me. I did not get all dressed up –

SETH: I'll say.

YVONNE: Let me finish.

SETH: Why? You're going to insult all of us in one fell swoop. I need to protect them.

YVONNE: They need to get used to it. Now let me finish. **(takes a breath)** I did not spend all day getting dressed up to be locked out of the prom and have to spend it with guys in jeans.

GERMAINE: **(indicates her outfit)** That took you all day?

SETH: Don't you have a date?

YVONNE: I told you. I'm too popular. I couldn't narrow it down. Everyone wanted to go just to be seen with me. No one appreciates me for who I am.

GERMAINE: I understand that.

YVONNE: No one wants the real Yvonne.

GERMAINE: Understand that, too.

YVONNE: So I'm going alone! **(starts to cry)**

GERMAINE: **(comforting her)** Oh, it must be awful. Let me help.

YVONNE: **(back to normal)** No, let *me* help. Get some new hair.

GERMAINE: But I spent three hours on it.

YVONNE: Looks like two.

GERMAINE: Three!

SETH: **(figures HE might as well take GERMAINE's side)** It was three!

YVONNE: Two. That's definitely a two. I spent four on mine, and it's twice as good as yours. Plus, I had to deal with dress shoes, corsage, ribbons, hose, lipstick, rouge, base, eye liner, and mascara. I got up at 5 AM and I just got out of the bathroom 15 minutes ago. You just look like a drummer. You band boys are all alike. You spend all day on hair and forget the rest of the ensemble.

SETH: I sing.

YVONNE: Spare us. **(shouting)** Will someone please open the door? Where's the adult supervision? I can't believe the one time in my life I need adult supervision I can't find any!

Prom Night - Page 10

(Enter ALCESTE and KATRINA, two girls from the middle to bottom of the social stratum as dictated by YVONNE.)

KATRINA: **(excited)** No adult supervision? Did I hear no adult supervision?

YVONNE: Yes you did! Now go find a grownup with a key.

(steers KATRINA off stage, but they run into CAMILLA)

CAMILLA: **(enters, surveys the situation)** Katrina and Alceste. Coming alone. Couldn't get a date, could you?

KATRINA: Who wants one, when you go to "Nerd High?"

ALCESTE: **(speaking of nerd)** My mother won't let me go to any parties without adult supervision.

CAMILLA: Well, tell her to come supervise and bring a key.

KATRINA: **(doesn't understand it)** It's prom night. How could the doors be locked?

YVONNE: This is an outrage! How could they?

SETH: Yeah! You're so popular, you figure it out!

ALCESTE: **(mousy, walking away)** I can't go in anyway without adult supervision. My mom would kill me.

YVONNE: **(grabs ALCESTE to keep her from walking away)** It's okay, Alceste. You can spend all night looking for a boy to talk to you!

ALCESTE: **(steels herself to make a move)** I have one. **(up to GERMAINE)** Right here!

GERMAINE: I'm not your date. I'm the drummer. And I don't even know you.

ALCESTE: **(slinks away from him)** Oh. Never mind. My mom won't let me date a boy I don't know.

HERK: What does your mom let you do?

ALCESTE: Well, **(thinks it over, this is hard)** she lets me wear white after labor day! **(to YVONNE)** And, she wants me to beat the stuffing out of you and rig the voting so you won't win.

YVONNE: Oh? How do you plan to do this?

CAMILLA: **(excited)** Really! How?

ALCESTE: I'm counting the votes. Me and Katrina. We arranged it with the principal. **(starts coming out of her shell)** So, it goes something like this. **(gets out a piece of paper)** Oh, here's one for Yvonne. Whoops! **(tears it up and tosses it to the ground)** Next! **(starts to laugh uncontrollably)**

KATRINA: Alceste, that's enough. **(ALCESTE won't stop)** Really, that's enough. **(still SHE won't stop)**

YVONNE: **(shouting)** Stop it!!!

Prom Night - Page 11

CAMILLA: Really. I almost felt sorry for her.

YVONNE: Thank you, Camilla. That's sweet of you.

CAMILLA: I said almost.

HERK: How come if you're the most popular girl in the school you don't have any friends?

YVONNE: It's a risk you take. When you're popular, nobody likes you.

ROXANNE: **(Enters, having overheard, walks YVONNE to the far corner of the stage and and presents her to the audience like a case study)** Her popularity is based on Herbert Hoover's trickle down theory. It's imposed from above. It only helps the people who don't need it. It won't take root among the common man.

SETH: Um... so what are we going to do about getting in?

HERK: What about the principal?

GERMAINE: How about the maintenance man?

YVONNE: **(to ALCESTE)** Does *your* mother have a key? **(catches herself and whirls around)** Oh, I can't believe I'm talking to you.

ALCESTE: She wouldn't use it. She doesn't want me to attend an event where you're going to be present, particularly without adult supervision. She thinks you're a bad influence.

YVONNE: Me?

ALCESTE: Yes, you. She's afraid if people start to like me I'll turn out like you.

YVONNE: I doubt that. You can't be popular and worry about people liking you. It's a much more dictatorial process than you think. I'm not a bad influence, just a control freak.

MICHELINA: **(enters)** Bad influence? Hmm... **(brings ALCESTE and YVONNE together)** I think it all started in that cooking class, Yvonne, where you switched the cinnamon with the cayenne. But the real tragedy was that Alceste didn't know the difference. She just... ate the pancakes. Now, let's try around the back. I need to get out of this heat or my hair's going to wilt. I spent five hours on it.

GERMAINE: Looks like three.

MICHELINA: Five.

GERMAINE: I spent three on mine.

SETH: You said it was one!

YVONNE: You told *me* it was two.

SETH: It still looks like one to me.

MICHELINA: **(none of this matters)** Well, I spent five.

GERMAINE: Well, you wasted two of them. It looks like three.

YVONNE: **(as if SHE's a journalist)** With hair, you want to spend less time looking like you spent more time. Not more like less. Ask my mother.

MICHELINA: I would, if she was here with a key.

Prom Night - Page 12

SETH: Somebody needs to! I need to get my violin into some air conditioning before it warps from the heat.

KATRINA: **(enraged)** You brought a violin to play at the prom?

SETH: It's what I play. We're a violin, bass, and drums band.

MICHELINA: I did not come to my senior prom-

CHAMPAGNE: Yes you did, and I wish you wouldn't have.

MICHELINA: Let me finish! I was in the middle of a sentence.

CHAMPAGNE: Good. The longer the better. Five to ten years, if we're lucky.

MICHELINA: I did not come to my senior prom-

HERK: To polka? Ha! Surprise!

SETH: **(explaining to MICHELINA, and to the audience)** We perform a wide variety of music. From Zeppelin to Britney to Dylan to Haydn to Matchbox 20, but mainly, folk songs from pre-Stalinist Ukraine. The more you resist, the more Ukrainian we become.

GERMAINE: **(to YVONNE, threatening)** So, sweetie, find us a way in.

YVONNE: Okay, here's the deal. You have to vote for whichever one of us finds her way in first! **(that sends them all running off)**

ALCESTE: **(at the back of the crowd)** Stop her!

KATRINA: We'd rather have no prom at all than Yvonne as queen.
(exit)

(Enter GRETCHEN and DEWAYNE on an empty stage. GRETCHEN is dressed to the nines, and DEWAYNE is in cutoffs, sandals, and a muscle shirt, perhaps with a tasteless necklace.)

DEWAYNE: **(HE's not sure of what to say)** I'm so happy that you decided to go to the prom with me tonight. I know you won't regret it. I'm sorry you got stood up like that, and I'm sorry he left you sitting in a limo with no air conditioning for two and a half hours, and I'm sorry you owe the limo company \$180, but I'll make up for what he did to you. Next time you might try getting out, say, after... 90 minutes!

GRETCHEN: That's so sweet. You've been so nice to me. What was your name again?

DEWAYNE: Dewayne.

GRETCHEN: That's right. It was sweet of you... uh...

DEWAYNE: Dewayne.

GRETCHEN: Yeah, that's it.

DEWAYNE: Well, when I saw you shuffling down a major boulevard in a prom dress, I knew you were in trouble.

GRETCHEN: I'll never forgive him! Never! **(louder)** Never, do you hear me?

DEWAYNE: Gretchen!

GRETCHEN: **(annoyed and sharp)** What!?!

Prom Night - Page 13

DEWAYNE: I think everybody can hear you. Now settle down. I don't want to spend all night hearing about-

GRETCHEN: (**whining**) Garvey.

DEWAYNE: Garvey.

GRETCHEN: Be careful! If he sees you with me, he'll beat the pork out of you.

DEWAYNE: But he stood you up!

GRETCHEN: You know how he is. Oh well, it's my fault for trusting him. He thinks since he's the football team captain, he can do whatever he wants.

DEWAYNE: If he can do whatever he wants, then... why did he want to come to the prom with you?

GRETCHEN: Obviously he didn't! Oh, so you think I can't get a date with the popular people? I'll have you know I rank 16th in the class!

DEWAYNE: So you're smart, so what?

GRETCHEN: 16th in popularity. You should be glad I condescended to come up here with you – especially since you're wearing shorts!

DEWAYNE: Sorry. I wasn't planning to go. I wasn't going to rent a tux for \$89.95 just to have it hang off a gas pipe in the basement.

GRETCHEN: (**in disbelief**) Not go to prom?! Prom is everything!

DEWAYNE: No it's not. I can't dance, and... uh... this is the first date I ever had. (**GRETCHEN starts to cry**) And hopefully, the last.

GRETCHEN: (**resigned**) Well, let's go. I'll make do.

ROXANNE: (**enters**) You can't go in.

GRETCHEN: Why not?

ROXANNE: It's locked.

GRETCHEN: But it's prom night!

ROXANNE: You're a genius.

CHAMPAGNE: (**enters, taken aback**) You came with Dewayne?

GRETCHEN: It was all I could find. Garvey stood me up.

MICHELINA: (**enters**) Yep. He's coming alone and taking his chances. That's the new thing. Stag.

CHAMPAGNE: Coming to the prom alone.

ROXANNE: Dating is passé. It's out. It's "un." We girls are independent and we don't need a boy hanging on our arms for self-esteem.

GRETCHEN: Speak for yourself. I'll take what I can get.

ROXANNE: (**to DEWAYNE and GRETCHEN**) Vote for me for prom queen. They're taking ballots at the door.

KATRINA: But we can't get to the door, so nobody wins.

ALCESTE: Especially Yvonne. (**happy, running around the stage**) Five way tie for looooooooooooooser!

CAMILLA: (**grabbing ALCESTE and stopping her**) I don't even see your name on the ballot, Alceste.

Prom Night - Page 14

ALCESTE: Well at least I won't loooooooooooooose. My mother doesn't want me to-

ROXANNE: To live. Tell her to let up on you.

YVONNE: **(enters)** I want to get IN and I demand somebody do something.

ROXANNE: Oh, just stay in a corner and look popular.

SETH: **(enters with HERK and GERMAINE)** What the heck kind of prom is this? No one has a date, and the date has no one.

CAMILLA: Well, if we go in we have to hear you play polkas on the violin. **(sarcastic)** Party down, girlfriends.

SETH: I am really good on the violin. I can do a Dvorak romance like nobody's business!

HERK: Yep. Let's give them a crash course in folk dance a la Ukraine. Whoever does best is prom queen.

YVONNE: Lets just do a crash course in opening the door. Come on, all at once!

(Everyone but the band members run off stage and a loud crash is heard, SETH, HERK, and GERMAINE all wince.)

DEWAYNE: **(enters, slowly)** Ow.

YVONNE: **(enters)** Well that was pretty. Now my hair looks like I spent four hours on it, instead of five.

DEWAYNE: No, it looks like three.

YVONNE: Did you even comb yours?

DEWAYNE: No, I wasn't planning on coming. I was going to stay home and do chemistry problems.

YVONNE: Ewww!

DEWAYNE: I enjoy it. It beats coming here to have you put me down for looking like a normal 17-year-old dude.

YVONNE: I don't know. I rather enjoy your company. It makes me feel good about myself. Because every time I look at you, I realize how much better I am.

DEWAYNE: Your mother says the shorts and uncombed hair look is in.

YVONNE: Not for the prom!

DEWAYNE: For the prom. Didn't you read last Sunday's column?

YVONNE: Well, no.

DEWAYNE: Yep. You're out, I'm in. No one wears formals any more.

YVONNE: Oh, like my mother knows. She never listens to me.

GRETCHEN: **(enters, shrieks at DEWAYNE)** Why are you doing talking to her!

DEWAYNE: *You* don't want to talk to me.

Prom Night - Page 15

GRETCHEN: That doesn't give you the right to talk to Yvonne! You're on a date with *me*. And with me you will stay. No matter how impossible I become.

DEWAYNE: It would be impossible for you to become more impossible.

(enter GARVEY and STAG)

GRETCHEN: **(aghast)** Garvey! With Stag!

GARVEY: **(cocky)** Hi, Gretchen.

STAG: Hi, Gretchen.

GRETCHEN: What are you doing with... dateless?

GARVEY: Stag. He's a cool dude! And so am I! **(cocky)** Too cool to be tied down to one gal.

YVONNE: That's exactly how I feel. Why go out with one, when you can have them all?

DEWAYNE: Meanwhile, you have no one, and I'm the only one here on a date. Strange justice.

ROXANNE: **(indicating GRETCHEN)** Oh, and what a prize you have. **(crosses to STAG and GARVEY)** Well, which one of you wants to hook up with the future prom queen?

MICHELINA: **(pushing her way to GARVEY)** That would be me!

CAMILLA: **(getting in front as well)** Uh, me!

CHAMPAGNE: **(taking over until all the others fall over on themselves)** I don't think so. I'll take them both. Well, Garvey first.

STAG: **(stepping over all the girls on the floor)** Really, if I have to have a date, I'd rather go with Yvonne. She's popular, you know.

CHAMPAGNE: **(getting up)** She's too popular to make up her mind.

MICHELINA: **(gets up as well)** Besides, she's the one who put that frog in your notebook.

YVONNE: You said you wouldn't tell. **(starts to chase MICHELINA)**

MICHELINA: Oh yes, I did. I forgot. **(points to YVONNE, and says gleefully)** Frog. **(they try to fight, but STAG breaks them up)**

STAG: I don't care. She's still more popular than you are. Even though, I sort of like you better.

GARVEY: I think I'll just stand here and let all the girls fight over me.

ROXANNE: Okay. Champagne. You take him!

CHAMPAGNE: No, *you* take him.

CAMILLA: **(walks off in a huff)** I sure don't want him. Football for brains.

ROXANNE: Yeah. Changed my mind. Too handsome, too muscular, too macho. Too stuck on yourself. **(gets a small mirror out and tosses it to him.)** Here, go out with this! **(GARVEY looks in the mirror and is pleased with what HE sees; ROXANNE, after watching him awhile, takes it back)** All right! That date is over!

Prom Night - Page 16

STAG: I'll go with you, Roxanne.

ROXANNE: No, you won't.

STAG: But-

ROXANNE: The prom was supposed to have started fifteen minutes ago. Much as I'd like to, I can't go out with a boy who asks me at the last minute.

ALCESTE: My mother says a boy needs to call you at least 74 hours in advance for it to be acceptable. Of course, my phone's unlisted.

ROXANNE: Oh, who knows what they'll be doing three days ahead of time?

SETH: We do. We have three more proms to play.

(Enter STELLA and ODESSA)

STELLA: ***(surveying the situation)*** Oh, look, all the prom queen candidates are sitting out on the front steps. They must have been expelled.

CAMILLA: We can't get in.

STELLA: Can't get in? But I thought you were popular!

YVONNE: I'm popular, and I can't even get in.

SETH: No dates either?

ODESSA: Oh, there's one. ***(goes to GARVEY)***

STELLA: I'll take this one. ***(goes to STAG)*** See, that was easy. You people spend six months worrying about who's going to take you to the prom. I solved it in six seconds, and maintained an A plus average.

GRETCHEN: ***(outraged)*** You will not walk in that door with Garvey. He was supposed to go with me.

ODESSA: I see. So, since he's not going with you...

GRETCHEN: He can't go with anyone!

ODESSA: Anyone?

GRETCHEN: Anyone. Ever again. I'm not going to sit through this prom with Dewayne and watch someone else have a good time with the boy who left me overheating in a limo for two and a half hours.

ALCESTE: Gretchen!

GRETCHEN: What, Alceste?

ALCESTE: Even I'd have gotten out of that one.

ODESSA: Well okay, Gretchen. We'll never talk to Garvey again. We won't let him graduate, and we won't let him into the college of his choice. We won't let him ever go out with anyone again, we won't let him get married, and we won't let him have children. We won't hire him at a job, just out of respect to the fact that he thought better of taking you to the senior prom. Excuse me, Miss Gretchen, but there is a world out there that exists outside of your inability to hold a man.

Prom Night - Page 17

GRETCHEN: Excuse me, Miss Odessa, but, nuh uhhhh. Nobody is allowed to talk to Garvey all night long.

ODESSA: Oh. **(hanging on GARVEY)** We won't have to talk. **(sexy)** We're just going to-

GRETCHEN: **(takes after ODESSA, who runs to a corner)** Don't you dare!

ODESSA: Kiss, kiss, kiss, smooch. You name it! **(runs to GARVEY)** Hold me baby.

GARVEY: Uh... no.

ODESSA: I said, hold me baby!

GARVEY: I heard you the first time. You insinuated yourself on me without asking permission. I'm the captain of the football team. I'm the male counterpart to Yvonne. Since no one is as popular as I am, I can't go out with anyone at all.

ODESSA: **(screams)** Hold me, baby! I demand it! **(HE's scared, and HE shrinks back)**

YVONNE: Now you know what I have to deal with every day of my life.

ROXANNE: Well, why don't you two just get married and leave us poor losers alone?

GARVEY: Her?

YVONNE: Him?

CHAMPAGNE: Ok, is anybody really really hot?

STELLA: **(walks to center stage, confident)** I am! I spent 6 hours on my hair. It's da bomb!

SETH: Looks like four.

GERMAINE: Three, at most.

STELLA: What would you know about it?

SETH: Believe me. I'm an expert. **(goes from person to person)** Two, one, three point five, six, none, fifteen minutes, two weeks. Thank you Germaine, for making my life nothing but the pursuit of the trivial.

GERMAINE: Thank you Seth, for making me spend my late teen years practicing the Polka!

CAMILLA: Actually, **(goes to DEWAYNE)** Dewayne has the neatest hair of the bunch.

GRETCHEN: **(pushes her away)** Don't touch him!

CAMILLA: Excuse me. Is the entire male sex reserved for *Grrretchen*?

GRETCHEN: Yes, and it keeps them away from Yvonne.

CAMILLA: Good point. **(to DEWAYNE)** But I do love your hair.

DEWAYNE: You do?

CAMILLA: Yes. It looks like you put a lot of time into it.

DEWAYNE: I haven't combed it since I was 14.

CAMILLA: See? He's worked on it for three years!

DEWAYNE: Well. Thanks. I'd be your date, but I can't dump Gretchen for the second time in a night.

Prom Night - Page 18

MICHELINA: Oh, why not? She's been dumped as much as three or four times in a night. That one time at the movies, they passed her from aisle to aisle. She had a date with every boy on the math team. And she was too square for them.

KATRINA: **(shouting)** I want to go to the proooooooooooooo oooooooooooooom.

ALCESTE: This is what happens when there's no adult supervision.

STAG: Sixteen teenagers out on the front of the school.

ALCESTE: My mother doesn't like me in large groups of teenagers. Shesays it's bad for my self esteem.

CHAMPAGNE: Your mother! I'm surprised you don't live in a castle turret with Rapunzel and without a front door!

ALCESTE: We don't have a door. I snuck out the window. She forgot to lock it.

KATRINA: Who's going to let us in?!

CHAMPAGNE: Tonight is going to be known as the evening of the dead corsage.

ODESSA: The night of the runny mascara.

CAMILLA: A night that will live in infamy! All for the want of-

YVONNE: **(disappointed, sits)** An adult.

SETH: **(weaving his way in between a very disappointed group of people)** Okay, if you insist, I'll take control.

YVONNE: In those clothes? They don't have royalty at Wal-Mart.

SETH: I'm 19. I'm the oldest one here. And I'm a professional musician.

I happen to run a monopoly on Ukrainian folk tunes in this town.

ROXANNE: Well then set up outside and we'll just dance here.

DEWAYNE: I can't dance.

STAG: I don't dance.

YVONNE: I'm too popular to dance. Besides, my hair. It'll only look like 4 hours.

GERMAINE: It looks like three, now.

SETH: I can't play in this heat. I can't keep it in tune.

ODESSA: It's Ukrainian folk music. Who's going to know if it's in tune!

MICHELINA: Um... no. I think there are more important things to do than dance.

STELLA: At the prom? What else is there to do?

DEWAYNE: Make out?

GRETCHEN: Ew!

STAG: Drink?

ALCESTE: Not without adult supervision.

STAG: It's lemonade! And it's like... overheating in my trunk.

ALCESTE: I hope it's not pulpy. I hate it when it's pulpy.

Prom Night - Page 19

MICHELINA: (*also winding her way through the crowd*) The most important thing to do at the prom is to vote for the queen. I need to put it on my resume!

CHAMPAGNE: (*follows her*) Why would you want to put me winning prom queen on your resume? Don't you have your own accomplishments?

MICHELINA: Sadly, no. I've spent my entire high school career as a gossip. The only thing I'm good for is hanging at the water cooler and spreading rumors like an obscure but contagious Asian flu.

YVONNE: Well, okay. Skip the dancing, the lemonade, the making out, the talk, the costumes. Skip the weeks of planning. Just skip it. Skip the lesser Academy Awards and get right to the best picture. (*SHE goes to one side of the stage*) All of the prom queen candidates over here! And all of the normal people over there. And the rest of you too!

SETH: I'll run this. After all, I'm older.

YVONNE: You're not popular enough to run this.

GERMAINE: (*to YVONNE*) You're too overdressed to be taken seriously. What looks dumber than a teenager in a bridesmaid's dress in a parking lot when it's 97 degrees outside?

YVONNE: It is *not* a bridesmaid's dress!

ROXANNE: That's all it's ever gonna be. Always a bridesmaid, and never the prom queen!

DEWAYNE: Well... ok, lets hear it. Speak from the heart.

KATRINA: A prom queen candidate, speaking from the heart. (*SHE laughs, as does ALCESTE and all the other girls*)

DEWAYNE: Well. That too. Tell us why-

GRETCHEN: Dewayne! You are *not* to talk to any of the other girls here. Or Garvey.

DEWAYNE: That doesn't leave much. You, Stag, and the band.

GRETCHEN: You can't talk to Stag either. He's here with Garvey. It's me or be quiet.

DEWAYNE: You know what, Gretchen? I'm done with you.

GRETCHEN: But Dewayne? (*totally can't comprehend*) What did I do? Why don't you like me? Why doesn't anybody like me?

DEWAYNE: What? I'd have more fun doing chemistry at home. At least I can understand the reactions.

GRETCHEN: But! Nooobody ever wants to go out with me.

STELLA: That's right Gretchen. Nobody.

SETH: Ok, I'm the professional here, So I'm taking over. All of you stand here.

(HE moves the girls into place, on a side of the stage but near the front. Of course, they all don't like standing so close together)

Prom Night - Page 20

CAMILLA: Voting for prom queen in a parking lot? This is so wrong. It's like voting for President in the state of Florida.

(As SHE speaks, other students start to transform the stage into an interior set, which can basically be much the same as the auditorium in the beginning. While we're still in the parking lot, the stage should be redecorated to indulge CAMILLA. SETH and HERK bring out a table and three chairs, where they will sit and count votes, others bring in balloons, crepe paper designs, and any banners that were used in Scene 1.)

CAMILLA: **(continued)** My fantasy... was... well... the gymnasium, redecorated, because as you know, I hate sports in any way, shape, or form. There are flowers, balloons, music, a good band **(the band is insulted)**, the principal smiling, all the girls envious, and the handsomest boy in the class as my partner! **(to GARVEY)** Forget it, Garvey. The air conditioning is set to a comfortable 71 degrees, streamers and confetti fall around me, and suddenly one of the Backstreet Boys grabs me for a dance. Actually my fantasy is to get out of this heat, but that's not going to happen. So a girl has to dream.

ROXANNE: You can *dream* of winning!

CAMILLA: My dreams come true. Yours obviously haven't, or you wouldn't have turned out like you did.

SETH: **(after everything is in place)** Ok, wake up! All of you stand here. Now, me, Herk, and Germaine will be the judges-

YVONNE: What do you know about girls?

SETH: Right about now? A lot more than I wish I did. I know you harbor an unreasonable prejudice against my violin, and you're more obsessed with hair than we are. If you're more obsessed with hair than a rock band is, you're in big trouble.

(SETH, HERK, and GERMAINE take seats behind the table to serve as a judging panel.)

YVONNE: You're hardly a rock band.

SETH: I told you, we play Zeppelin. I plug that baby in, and we can rip the heart out of Matchbox 20, Backstreet Boys, and Kylie Minogue.

CHAMPAGNE: Who's Kylie Minogue?

SETH: Aussie disco queen. You should know! **(pushing her into place)** Because no matter what, she just won't go away. That's one point against you in the contest. Now. We're going to vote on inner personal qualities rather than number one – popularity, in which case Yvonne wins in a sham election, or number two – intelligence, in

Prom Night - Page 21

which case Camilla wins by default. No points off for being fat, ugly, or having bad hair, no points on for being pretty, having nice legs, or having a rich mommy.

YVONNE: Don't I get any points for my rich mommy being the teen fashion editor for the *Sun Times*?

SETH: No. It gives you an unfair advantage.

YVONNE: What about first flute?

SETH: One point *off* for talking out of turn!

ODESSA: She doesn't even read the column. Or she wouldn't look like that on the biggest night of her life.

GRETCHEN: Biggest night of our lives? (**horrificed**) And I'm spending it all alone?

ODESSA: You are surrounded by people!

GRETCHEN: I don't have a date! I might as well be all alone!

CAMILLA: I like this. We skip all the goopy stuff and cut right to the chase. Elect the prom queen. Then I can enjoy myself.

GERMAINE: Hang on. Let me get my drum.

YVONNE: Oh, get some mousse!

GERMAINE: I'm getting the *drum*, you moose.

HERK: Okay, does anybody have a question for our lovely contestants? They're going to speak from the heart, so you won't want to miss this!

GRETCHEN: I have a question.

MICHELINA: No one wants to hear your question.

HERK: You're right. Next?

GRETCHEN: But!

HERK: I said, next. I'm sure you've heard that before.

KATRINA: (**raises her hand**) Oh! Oh! Oh!

HERK: Katrina? (**GERMAINE bangs the drum before SHE starts**)

KATRINA: Here's a question... nobody likes you, but you want to be prom queen anyway. Why?

CHAMPAGNE: (**thinks hard**) Revenge...

ROXANNE: Yeah. Revenge. Definitely.

CAMILLA: What she said. And because I've been lying to my parents. They think people like me because I'm smart. I'd love to know what high school *they* went to.

MICHELINA: Because one day, I plan to be a senator in the Arizona state legislature, and-

CAMILLA: We don't live in Arizona, you idiot.

MICHELINA: I said... one day! And so I need to practice convincing people who don't like me to vote for me. (**to the audience**) After spreading malicious gossip – otherwise known as THE TRUTH – since the age of twelve, there are a lot of people here who... don't rate me very highly.

Prom Night - Page 22

YVONNE: Oh, everybody likes me. I've intimidated them into it. Not a problem.

HERK: But if they didn't...

YVONNE: If they didn't, I'd have my mom write up that they're out of style, that's what. Remember the column about half length skirts?

STELLA: It ruined my sophomore year.

YVONNE: Exactly! Next time I want to borrow that sweater, you'll lend it to me happily.

STELLA: I don't have it any more. You probably stole it.

SETH: Next!

GARVEY: Me! (**GERMAINE bangs again, GARVEY walks among the candidates**) You have a chance to go out with me, but you know I'd have a better time with someone else. What do you do? Are you selfishly hanging on to me for the prestige, or putting me first and going out with Dewayne?

STAG: Ha! That's funny.

MICHELINA: Garvey, there is no right or wrong answer. You're assuming that anyone could have a good time with you.

ROXANNE: When any date with you consists of one thing.

CAMILLA: (**really condescending**) Talking about you.

GARVEY: Maybe, but I *am* interesting.

CAMILLA: No, you're not. March 19th, last year. Remember. You, me, the doughnut shop.

GARVEY: You said you had a great time.

CAMILLA: That's just because I was in earshot of Odessa. I knew she wanted to go out with you, so I just wanted to rub it in. You're about as interesting as a Pauly Shore movie.

ROXANNE: I'd go out with you, Garvey. I just want to stare in to your eyes, dream a little, and have you tell me how pretty I am. That you want to get to know me better. Every girl wants that. Every girl wants Garvey to say she's pretty. To say he cares. To say that for once in his life, he's found someone or something that's more important than his own petty narcissism. I want to change you. Because you need it. Dewayne's pretty much okay the way he is. But you, Garvey, you're going to need a woman all your life to nag you and belittle you until you turn into something at least marginally agreeable.

GARVEY: Wow. No one's ever said that to me before. I didn't know you cared.

ROXANNE: I do!

CHAMPAGNE: You so do not!

ROXANNE: (**whispers to CHAMPAGNE**) I'm campaigning. Be quiet!

HERK: Next! Oh, I have one. (**GERMAINE takes up his stick, but HERK grabs it away**) You don't like the song, but someone who likes you wants to dance with you. Do you dance anyway, or sit the

Prom Night - Page 23

song out and then accept a dance from someone else for the next number, **(getting angrier by the moment)** humiliating the guy who asked you first? And yes, it happened!

YVONNE: I'll wait. Someone will always dance with me. **(snooty)** If I feel like it.

CHAMPAGNE: I'll go up and quietly ask the band to STOP PLAYING POLKAS!

GERMAINE: Sorry, that's not an option. When Seth says it's a polka, it's a polka.

YVONNE: Oh, so you boys do everything Seth tells you to.

GERMAINE: Pretty much. He's the leader.

HERK: Yeah. We have to. He's 19, you know. I don't always like it.

YVONNE: Well, tell him to go get a DJ.

SETH: **(pulls HERK back)** Next!

MICHELINA: I'll dance. Then I'll find out who he really likes, and it will be all over the school by lunch hour the next morning.

ROXANNE: Heck, I'll sit it out. Life's too short to dance to bad music.

CAMILLA: Which, apparently, is how this band expects us to spend our prom night. My senior prom – to a polka!

SETH: Actually the "Senior Prom Polka" is one of our greatest hits! **(ready to roll)** Let's get the fiddle and strike it up!

ALCESTE: I can't dance without adult supervision.

SETH: Well. I'm 19. I'm an adult!

ALCESTE: No, Seth, an adult has to be old. Like 22 or so.

STAG: Uh... do any of you smoke?

HERK: That's your question?

ALCESTE: I can't without-

KATRINA: Alceste! Your mother lets you smoke?

ALCESTE: When we have adult supervision, I can do just about anything. Y'all should come over sometime. **(still mousy)** It gets really wild.

STAG: We can't have a prom queen who smokes, drinks, or is into drugs.

GERMAINE: Cool. Blood test on the chicks!

STAG: Nope. *Honesty* test on the chicks!

DEWAYNE: **(annoying each contestant in turn)** Honesty! Well, let's see. Yvonne, if you were honest, you wouldn't be so popular. Michelina, if you were honest... oh you are, just never about yourself. That leaves Roxanne, Champagne, and Camilla. Camilla is in the accelerated program with me, but struggling. She's got her parents thinking she's smarter than she really is. Worse than that, she thinks she's smarter than me. That leaves Roxanne and Champagne. Roxanne, well known, but not well liked, and Champagne, well liked but not well known. But... honest? Still,

Prom Night - Page 24

there's a title on the line... prestige, smiles, parties, flowers, and... boys. **(STAG runs up to the girls, DEWAYNE pushes him away)** Other boys. **(back to announcer mode)** So is honesty really relevant? Do we just throw out four years of social discontent and start with honesty?

YVONNE: We'd better not!

DEWAYNE: And for what? It's one night of royalty, then off to college. Off to the land where you're nobody. The land where no one cares who's the prom queen. **(like a real ditz)** "Hi Mrs. Smith. I was the prom queen of a small American high school on an uncharted isle in the south Pacific. I don't have to do my homework."

YVONNE: That's what I'm counting on.

SETH: That's not how it works. I'm a polka history major. I study my butt off.

CAMILLA: This isn't fair. It was a question about smoking, not about our integrity.

STAG: Actually, it was both. Me and Dewayne, we're a team.

CAMILLA: Team of what? The tortoise and the bad hair!

DEWAYNE: A team of people who just happen to be different and have had a miserable time in high school because we like to do things that are different from everyone else.

YVONNE: You like to do things that are dumb. You have races to see who can finish a chemistry problem first.

STAG: We did, but Dewayne cheats. He asks Roxanne for help.

ROXANNE: Stop that. You'll ruin my reputation!

GARVEY: You mean?

STAG: Yep. I just like to hang around you for the acceptance. Deep down, I'm a science geek. Sorry, Garv. I thought you knew.

GARVEY: Well... **(flustered, short of breath)** I just came with you so I'd look like the better choice! **(crying out)** I know I'm good looking and athletic and a jock and all around a cool guy! But doesn't anybody like me for me?

STELLA: **(as everyone bursts out laughing)** No!

SETH: Stop it! **(they all stop laughing)** You're giving him a complex.

ROXANNE: Good, he needs one.

SETH: Next question, or do we have enough to vote on?

YVONNE: I think it's time to vote!

CHAMPAGNE: Vote!

CAMILLA: Vote!

ROXANNE: Vote!

MICHELINA: Vote!

SETH: Then we need another question. A good one. One to make these girls think.

YVONNE: Oh, you are so low.

Prom Night - Page 25

CHAMPAGNE: I don't like this. I'm starting to feel like a piece of meat.

YVONNE: Well, if it's just a popularity contest, I win. Besides, we've already laid out the next fashion section and my picture is on the top. So it's already in the news.

ALCESTE: (*mousy*) I have a question. (*HERK tosses the drumsticks to GERMAINE, who beats it again*)

CAMILLA: (*crabby*) Can you ask it without adult supervision?

ALCESTE: (*thinks*) Uh... no. (*silence, then drum beats*) Really, I can't. (*everyone waits, more drum beats*) No, really.

STELLA: (*taking control, walking up to each of them, and dragging STAG with her by the hand*) I have a question. Why do you care? What could possibly be so important about being prom queen that you want to humiliate yourself like this in front of the entire student body?

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