

# CHIPPED

## By Forrest Musselman

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## CHARACTERS

PLAYER # 1	Host of variety show. Can be played by either male or female.
PLAYER # 2	SHE plays a modern Juliet.
PLAYER # 3	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 4	HE is too cool.
PLAYER # 5	HE plays a modern Romeo.
PLAYER # 6	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 7	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 8	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 9	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 10	SHE is very strange and paranoid.
PLAYER # 11	Can be played by male or female.
PLAYER # 12	Must make a cute mouse and can be played by either male or female.

## TIME & PLACE

The very near future. On the set of the Internet variety show, *Chipped*.

## PROPS LIST

1 computer monitor	3 fluorescent boxes
3 keyboards	1 scary mask
6 or more fluorescent ropes	1 watch
1 large hoop	3 or more cell phones
1 mouse arrow	

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

This play was designed for one-act play competition, so time should run around thirty-five minutes.

While the original play had sections where black lights were used to achieve a “futuristic” effect, it can certainly be staged differently to accommodate budgets.

Costumes consisted of the characters wearing black tank tops and shorts, which were splatter-painted with fluorescent colors, worn over white long underwear and white socks. Each character wore a different type of hat to make them unique.

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO**

The original, talented cast from Rushford-Peterson High School who'll remember a different version of this play of 1998 for the rest of their lives: Emily Colbenson, Jewels Humble, Kristin Ekern, Thomas Humble, Matt Galke, Kjersta Poppe, Katie Lynn Humble, Bre Bunke, Andrea Humble, Rachel Breitenback, Katie Heimgartner, Miranda Cady, Betsy Blixt, Liz Larson and Amanda Bovy. You were all the genesis of this play.

My wife, Melisa, who can maneuver a van full of set pieces in heavy city traffic like no one's business, and Jackson, who takes long naps in the afternoon so I can write.

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**SETTING:** On the set of the Internet Variety Show, where everything is painted in fluorescent colors. There are three platforms on the stage that look like broken pieces of a large keyboard. Located upstage center is a large monitor with a door in the middle of it.

**AT RISE:** *Opening music begins and curtain opens to reveal the players frozen in various positions. Black lights illuminate the various colors on stage and on the characters. On a music cue, players begin creating visual effects to the music through movement of fluorescent ropes, balls, and other props of choice. Eventually the ropes are combined through a hoop held by PLAYER #1 which forms a web-like pattern over and around her. SHE slowly lowers the hoop over her head while all ropes are left to dangle around her as SHE walks to the edge of the stage. All other players seat themselves about the stage and freeze as the music fades.*

PLAYER #1: Hello, and welcome to *Chipped*, the only variety show broadcast on the world wide web that is good for you. As you watch us on your PC at home, remember that we are the wave of the future. If you ride the wave, you'll find yourself traveling toward a shore of new possibilities. If you stay floundering in the water, you'll drown in a sea of ignorance, gasping for a past that is no longer feasible. Ride the wave. In this show we explore all aspects of the computer and the positive effects it has on us today, the future. So, let's start with the purest of all emotions. Love. Please feel free to click on any of the following character links to begin your on-line pleasure. Ride the wave.

**(Three groups sit at the three platforms. PLAYER #12 runs from stage right, carrying a large mouse arrow and squeaking excitedly. PLAYER #12 finally points the arrow at platform C where #5 and #2 are sitting back to back, typing on keyboards. PLAYER #12 makes an audible click and #5 and #2 begin to speak.)**

PLAYER #5: Whoa! What chat room through yonder Windows ME appears? It does not cease, and Juliet is on line! Hello, fair one. It is my lady, oh, it is my love! She types, yet she says nothing. What's up with that? Her IP address discourses. I will answer it. Oh, if I were the keys beneath her fingers.

PLAYER #2: Hey, Romeo. What's up?

PLAYER #5: She types. Oh, type again, bright angel!

PLAYER #2: O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy keyboard, and refuse thy computer, or, if you won't but swear my love, I'll no longer use the Macintosh.

PLAYER #5: Shall I read more, or shall I type at this?

PLAYER #2: What is an IBM? It is nor hand, nor foot, nor face. Oh, use some other name! What's in a name? That which we call an IBM by any other name would work just as well. So Romeo would, were he not using the IBM, retain that dear perfection which he owes without it.

PLAYER #5: What? Fine. I take thee at thy word. I'll be new baptized. Henceforth, I never will use the IBM.

***(PLAYERS #5 and #2 freeze and PLAYER #12 clicks arrow on Platform B where PLAYER #8 is sitting in front of a computer monitor.)***

PLAYER #8: Ok, computer, we have to talk. I have had something on my mind for so long, and I have to get it out. As you know, we've spent a lot of time together this past year and I don't know what it is, but even when we're apart, I think of you. I just love watching you, listening to your soft humming, holding your mouse in my hand. It's such a perfect fit as if we were meant to be together. Do you feel the same way? ***(pauses, listening)*** I got you a present today. ***(opens the door to the large monitor behind upstage, removes a shirt and places it over the computer)*** The color always looks good on you. It brings out your icons. Oh, how happy you've made me! Will you go steady with me! Ok, then we are officially going out. So, kiss me. ***(kisses the screen, embraces it and freezes)***

***(PLAYER #12 clicks arrow on Platform A. PLAYER #4 is the center of attention in one group while PLAYER #3 is the center of attention in another group. It is important that they do not notice each other until the end of the scene.)***

PLAYER #7: So anyway, I saw Packard in gym class today. He's soooo cute!

PLAYER #3: Well, you can look the other way because I saw him first.

PLAYER #10: I'm sure, Mona. Have you even asked him out yet?

PLAYER #3: I don't know. I'm not sure if I should.

PLAYER #4: Dudes! Have you seen Mona Tor lately? She is hot.

PLAYER #6: Is that the lunch lady?

PLAYER #4: No, idiot! In gym class?

PLAYER #6: Oh. Yeah, she's hot.

PLAYER #11: Dude, she's fine. I've seen her checking you out, dude.

PLAYER #6: Ask her out, dude.

PLAYER #4: No way. She's out of my league for sure. She'll probably laugh at me or something.

PLAYER #6: I know. Why don't you text message her?

PLAYER #4: Yeah, that would be a great idea if I knew her number.

PLAYER #11: Dude, I know this other chick that hangs out with her a lot. I'll text her and find out the number.

PLAYER #4: Awesome. Do it, dude!

***(PLAYER #11 pulls out cell phone and quickly sends a message. PLAYER #10's cell phone rings.)***

PLAYER #10: What's up? I'm getting a text from Hewlett.

PLAYER #3: What's it say?

PLAYER #10: It says he has a friend who wants your number.

PLAYER #7: Ohmigod! It might be Packard! It might be Packard!

PLAYER #3: Really?

PLAYER #7: It has to be.

PLAYER #3: Ask if it's Packard.

PLAYER #10: Okay, okay.

***(PLAYER #10 sends the message as they all giggle uncontrollably. PLAYER #11's cell phone rings.)***

PLAYER #11: Dude, she text back already.

PLAYER #4: What's the number?

PLAYER #11: She didn't give it. She wants to know if the friend is you.

PLAYER #6: Whoa! Smart chick, dude.

PLAYER #4: Yeah, tell her it's me, dude.

***(PLAYER #11 sends message. PLAYER #10's cell phone rings. All three girls scream.)***

PLAYER #10: It is Packard. He wants your number!

PLAYER #7: I knew it. I knew it!

PLAYER #3: Give it to him. And ask him if Packard is there right now.

***(Scene speeds up, building to where they see each other.)***

PLAYER #4: Tell her yes. And ask her if I could text message her sometime.

PLAYER #3: Tell him yes. Anytime.

PLAYER #4: Tell her that I'm going to text her right now.

PLAYER #3: Tell him that I'm looking forward to it.

PLAYER #4: Tell her to turn around.

PLAYER #3: Tell him that I'm turning.

***(They turn and see each other for the first time. They walk toward each other and stare at each other longingly for a moment. Then they quickly begin typing on their cell phones. PLAYER #1 takes center stage.)***

PLAYER #1: If only all relationships were that easy. Unfortunately, they're not. Some don't always work out the best. We'll get to those in just a minute, but first a pop up commercial.

***(PLAYER #9 comes running out immediately and grabs PLAYER #11 before HE/SHE has a chance to exit.)***

PLAYER #9: Hey, all you wide-eyed zombies out there. Are your eyes feeling a little dry? Having trouble blinking? Have you been staring at the computer screen for too long?

PLAYER #11: Then you need the new *Chipped* eye drops!

PLAYER #9: That's right! One drop in each eye and you'll be able to spend another twelve hours in front of your monitor.

PLAYER#11: Just run down to your local pharmacy or if you can't leave the house just order it through our new web site: [www.i've-been-staring-at-my-computer-too-long-and-now-i-can't-blink-dot-com](http://www.i've-been-staring-at-my-computer-too-long-and-now-i-can't-blink-dot-com).

PLAYER #9: And if you order now, we'll also throw in a free consultation at your nearest clinic for your carpal tunnel syndrome.

PLAYER #11 & #9: Surf us out!

***(They both exit in a dead run. PLAYER #1 resumes center stage and is about to speak when PLAYER #6 enters wearing a scary mask. PLAYER #6 runs about screaming.)***

PLAYER #6: Look out! I'm coming for you! Your hard drive is mine! I'm following your cookie crumbs! I know where you live!

***(PLAYER #6 exits laughing wickedly.)***

PLAYER #1: Please excuse that horrible interruption. It appears we have a virus in our system. Do not be alarmed, however, for our technicians have everything under control. Now, let's continue on with our show. We all know love is a fragile thing. It may work and it may not. Love can turn ugly, misleading, twisted and warped. Click on the following links to see the down side of love.

***(Scary music begins to play as all lights go off except the black lights. PLAYERS #9, 7, and 11 stalk in, each carrying a glowing, white box. Two boxes are painted with arrows while the third is blank. They sit and hold boxes in front of their faces, representing a video feed bar while PLAYER #10 enters through the monitor door and stands behind them. PLAYER #12 comes in extremely scared, clicks on the first box and leaves squeaking in fright. Music fades as the regular lights come back on and PLAYER #10 begins to speak.)***

PLAYER #10: I was never very popular when I was in school. No one ever sat by me at lunch or played with me at recess. I thought when I got my computer and started using the e-mail, it would all change. Boy, was I wrong. Whenever I checked it ***(suddenly screams and looks behind her; recomposes herself)*** nothing. So, one day when I was at school, I decided to send myself an e-mail. What a wonderful feeling it was to come home and find out that I had mail. The note was short but sweet, and I couldn't wait to find out what would be on my screen the next day. ***(suddenly screams and looks behind her; recomposes herself)*** Well, the day after when I came home from school, another one of my letters had arrived. It asked me how I was doing, commented on the weather, you know, normal chit chat. Very polite. It said that I would write again tomorrow. I was so excited. I wondered what I would say.

***(PLAYER #6 suddenly sprints across the stage wearing the scary mask and saying the following very fast.)***

PLAYER #6: Wormwormwormwormwormwormwormwormwormwormworm.

PLAYER #10: The next day, however, I received a very strange e-mail. It said things like, "I know who you are and where you live. I'm watching your every move." ***(SHE suddenly freezes and reverses her movements. Feed bar boxes should reflect this movement.)*** Evom yreve ruoy ginchta mi. ***(stops and restarts)*** I'm watching your every move. And then, after that, they kept getting worse. ***(suddenly screams and looks behind her; recomposes herself)*** Now, I was getting mail five or six times a day and each letter was

more horrid than the one before. Finally, I realized I shouldn't have to take this abuse anymore, so I went to the police. I told them the whole story, and they just laughed in my face. I don't think they realized what kind of predicament I was in. Then there was the day. . . Then there was the day. . . Then there was the day when I came home and found the front door slightly open.

***(PLAYER #10 freezes. There is a long, uncomfortable pause until PLAYER #12 enters curiously, surveys the situation and then clicks on the box.)***

PLAYER #10: Open.

***(This is all PLAYER #10 can do. PLAYER #12 clicks the box again.)***

PLAYER #10: Open.

***(Again, no progress. PLAYER #12 clicks the box three times.)***

PLAYER #10: Open, open, open.

***(PLAYER #12 whines dejectedly and walks over to PLAYER #1, who comforts the mouse arrow.)***

PLAYER #1: All technicians here at *Chipped* apologize for the inconvenience. We seem to have some sort of freeze-up.

***(PLAYER #11 hands box to #7 and drags frozen PLAYER #10 offstage. PLAYERS #9 and #7 follow looking embarrassed.)***

PLAYER #1: We regret that we will not be able to bring you the rest of the stalker video. Please continue with the other "love gone wrong" link. Thank you and you're watching *Chipped*, the show of shows.

***(PLAYER #12 happily clicks on PLAYER #5 on Platform C and exits. PLAYER #2 is lying motionless on top of the platform.)***

PLAYER #5: ***(typing on keyboard)*** Ah, dear Juliet, why art thou so cool? Methinks this newly bought Macintosh is uber-cool. Art thou on-line? ***(pauses)*** She is not. Here, here will I remain with half-eaten green apples as your chambermaids. L-O-L. ***(pauses)*** Still no reply. Has she forgotten our timely date? A dateless bargain to engrossing death! I bite my thumb at thee! ***(angrily punches the return button)***

**and then cringes at his actions)** My actions precede my brain. Thy modem is quick. . . Thus, with a click I sign off. Forever.

**(PLAYER #5 lies down beside PLAYER #2 and sighs dramatically before falling immediately asleep. PLAYER #2 awakens quickly after HE falls asleep, sits up, glances at her watch and frantically begins typing on her keyboard.)**

PLAYER #2: I do remember well where I should be, and there I am. Where is my Romeo? What's here? A message, written by my true love's hand? Oh, my love, a Macintosh he did buy. But, hark, what's this? Insults, I see, hath been his timeless end. O cursor! Typed all, and left no friendly goodbye? Then I'll be brief. This typing, my dagger. **(typing furiously)** This is thy words: there rust, and let me die.

**(SHE hits the return button and lies back down, sobbing uncontrollably. PLAYER #1 enters and looks on.)**

PLAYER #1: Never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and Romeo. But, hey, let's move on, shall we? Our technicians have informed me that the earlier freeze up was caused by that pesky little virus, but please do not worry. We have the situation under control. We will resume right after this pop up advertisement.

**(PLAYER #6 enters, not wearing the scary mask, but concealing it under his/her shirt.)**

PLAYER #6: SPAM. What does this word mean to you? If you're older than dirt, this word represents the pink mystery meat found in cans that you can eat anytime you want. If you're young and cool, SPAM is basically defined as junk email you receive from companies trying to sell you something. So, what's with the negativity surrounding this word? Why not help turn this whole icky meat, bad email reputation around into something good? That's why I've developed a feel good company, which centers around the anagram Something Positive And Moist. Positive because we're happy and Moist because. . . well, because moist is always associated with something good. Moist cake. Moist cookies. Moist towelette. But what is the Something, you ask? Well, just send me your email address and I'll send you all the details. Within months, weeks, even days, you'll be loving SPAM, too. Here's where you can send the pertinent information.

PLAYER #8: DON'T DO IT! STOP! DON'T SEND THIS PERSON ANYTHING!

***(PLAYER #8 enters running and grabs PLAYER #6 by the arm.)***

PLAYER #6: Hey, what's the big idea?

PLAYER #8: ***(pulling mask from under PLAYER #6's shirt.)*** Do not send anything to this person or you'll be getting SPAM for the rest of your life. This is the virus we've been looking for.

PLAYER #6: Damn you, Norton. How did you find me?

PLAYER #8: Folder by folder. Systematically. C'mon, let's go.

PLAYER #6: You may have won this time, but I'll mutate, I swear. You'll not see the last of me. I'll find all of you. All of you!

***(PLAYER #6 laughs wickedly as PLAYER #8 ushers him/her off stage. PLAYER #1 enters.)***

PLAYER #1: Welcome to *Chipped!* Ride the wave. It appears our virus scare is over. Now we can all continue viewing and enjoying our tribute to the family unit. Please click on the following links for streams of optimal pleasure.

***(Players enter and get into positions on various platforms. PLAYER #12 scurries in and clicks on platform A where #4 and #7 are standing. PLAYER #7 is hitting various keys on keyboard while staring into an imaginary monitor.)***

PLAYER #4: Okay, buddy boy. It's time to go to bed. You've got school tomorrow.

PLAYER #7: C'mon, Mom, just five more minutes.

PLAYER #4: No, you've played enough video games tonight.

PLAYER #7: But I'm almost done with this level.

PLAYER #4: To bed! Now!

PLAYER #7: Just let me finish this level and then I can save it. If I quit now, I'll have to start the whole level all over again.

PLAYER #4: I guess you'll have something to look forward to tomorrow then.

PLAYER #7: But Mom!

PLAYER #4: No more arguing. Good night.

PLAYER #7: Fine.

***(PLAYER #7 sulks off stage left. PLAYER #4 watches #7 leave, makes sure HE/SHE is gone and then begins to play the game herself. PLAYER #12 enters and clicks on platform B where PLAYER #5 and PLAYER #9 are standing.)***

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PLAYER #5: Well, honey, today is the big basketball game. Are you nervous?

PLAYER #9: Not really, Dad. You're the best coach around.

PLAYER #5: That may be true, but I can only do so much. I can push the training, instill my philosophies and predict what the opposing coaches might do, but when it comes right down to it, it's all up to the players.

PLAYER #9: I'll make you proud, Dad.

PLAYER #5: That's my girl. Now get online and sign in. You remember the account number?

PLAYER #9: **(types on keyboard and looks into monitor)** Of course, Dad. I've done this a million times.

PLAYER #5: I know you have. And that's what this training is all about. You gotta know the game better than you know yourself.

PLAYER #9: I'm ready, Dad. The game is starting.

PLAYER #5: **(begins to pace)** All right, let's go. Work that keyboard. Let's get hungry out there! Space bar, space bar! Delete, delete! No, no, no! Not the Caps Lock key. Keep your head in the game.

PLAYER #9: Relax, Dad, I've just started.

PLAYER #5: All right, all right. Shift key, shift key. Shift, not escape! Oh, man, what are you doing. Call a time out! Time out! Pause, pause, pause!!!

PLAYER #9: Okay, okay. Chill out, Dad.

PLAYER #5: Chill out! This is the championship game of the online basketball tournament and you're playing like it's just some game.

PLAYER #9: It is, Dad. It is a game. **(storms off through door in monitor)**

PLAYER #5: Wait a minute. Come back. You can't quit now.

**(PLAYER #5 follows her through door. Players #2, 3, 6 and 8 come running on stage as overly-peppy cheerleaders.)**

PLAYER #2: All right. It's a time out. Let's show 'em what we got.

PLAYER #3: Ready?

ALL: Compute! **(Begin some sort of clapping and stomping beat.)**  
Who's that surfin' on the net?

PLAYER #8: It's me. It's me.

ALL: Don't log off or you're gonna get wet.

PLAYER #8: Okay. Okay.

**(They repeat the cheer again, ending with lots of screaming and jumping.)**

PLAYER #2: All right, guys. We gotta give our Internet gamers something special.

PLAYER #3: How about the new one we've been working on?

PLAYER #6: Are you sure? Is it ready?

PLAYER #8: Sure, it's ready. Let's do it.

**(ALL agree.)**

PLAYER #3: Ready?

ALL: Compute! **(The following is a parody of Beck's "Two Turntables and a Microphone")**

There's an IP address a little up the road  
Further than all the web sites that we know  
A place we saw the screen aglow  
With the key pad jazz and the bug-eyed flow.  
Download sites, Internet printouts,  
Two zip drives and a modem phone.  
Picture scans, just clap your hands, just clap your hands.

**(Repeat following line three times.)**

Where it's at! I got two zip drives and a modem phone!

**(Just as the cheer ends, PLAYER #12 comes running out angrily, chases the four cheerleaders off with the arrow and returns to platform A where PLAYERS #10 and 11 are waiting. PLAYER #12 clicks on the platform and exits. PLAYER #10 is typing and looking at an imaginary monitor.)**

PLAYER #10: Mom? Can I have the credit card?

PLAYER #11: What in the world for?

PLAYER #10: I found something on Ebay.

PLAYER #11: Ebay? What's that?

PLAYER #10: Have you been living in a cave or something? It's only the biggest website ever. It's like an auction where you can buy and sell stuff?

PLAYER #11: What kind of stuff?

PLAYER #10: Anything you want. Clothes, toys, collectibles, books, cars, anything. I'm bidding on some used CD's. So, can I have the credit card?

PLAYER #11: Let me look at this site, first. I want to make sure it's legit.

PLAYER #10: Mom, it's been around forever. Everyone knows it's good.

PLAYER #11: Wow, there is a lot of stuff on here. Is this furniture?

PLAYER #10: Yes, I told you. Go back to my page please. There's only a few minutes left on my bid.

PLAYER #11: Let me look for a little longer.

PLAYER #10: Mom!

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