

DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC AND OTHER ANNOYING THINGS PARENTS SAY

by Rachel Bland

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DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC AND OTHER ANNOYING THINGS PARENTS SAY

A Comedic One Act

by Rachel Bland

SYNOPSIS: Ugh! Parents are sooo annoying! And these kids have had it with all the annoying phrases their parents are always using! How did the saying “hold your horses” ever come about anyway? Not to mention the most annoying saying of all: “because I said so.” Find out how these sayings and more are perceived in the eyes of kids as they put them into imaginative settings like the wild west, Shakespeare’s home, a high stakes kitchen, and an action-packed spy adventure. *Don’t Be So Dramatic and Other Annoying Things Parents Say* takes a creative look at some of the most annoying sayings parents use on their children through hilarious, flexible, ensemble driven scenes.

DURATION: 40 minutes.

TIME: Modern day/ The old west/ Shakespearean times.

SETTING: A blank stage / Shakespeare’s home / Old west mercantile shop / Restaurant kitchen / Front of a school / Spy lair.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2-4 females, 2-4 males, 11-61 either, 5-10 extras)

OPENING:

PARENT 1 (m/f)..... (9 lines)
 PARENT 2 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 3 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 4 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 5 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 6 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 7 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 8 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 9 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 PARENT 10 (m/f)..... (3 lines)
 KID 1 (m/f) (8 lines)

KID 2 (m/f)	(6 lines)
KID 3 (m/f)	(4 lines)
ANNOYING KID (m/f).....	(5 lines)
ANNOYED MOM (f).....	(3 lines)

DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC:

DRAMATIC KID 1 (m/f).....	(8 lines)
DRAMATIC KID 2 (m/f).....	(6 lines)
DRAMATIC KID 3 (m/f).....	(6 lines)
ROMEO (m)	(1 line)
JULIET (f)	(2 lines)
SHAKESPEARE (m).....	(18 lines)
SHAKESPEARE'S MOM (f).....	(16 lines)
SOOTHSAYER (m/f).....	(1 line)
CAESAR (m/f).....	(1 line)
HAMLET (m/f).....	(1 line)
GHOST (m/f).....	(1 line)

EXTRAS:

BRUTUS (m/f)	(Non-Speaking)
CASSIUS (m/f).....	(Non-Speaking)
SENATE MEMBERS (2-5) (m/f)	(Non-Speaking)

HOLD YOUR HORSES:

FAST KID 1 (m/f).....	(8 lines)
FAST KID 2 (m/f).....	(10 lines)
FAST KID 3 (m/f).....	(8 lines)
SLOW PARENT 1 (m/f).....	(15 lines)
SLOW PARENT 2 (m/f).....	(4 lines)
SLOW PARENT 3 (m/f).....	(4 lines)
SHOP OWNER (m/f).....	(6 lines)
SHOPPER 1 (m/f).....	(5 lines)
SHOPPER 2 (m/f).....	(4 lines)

EXTRAS

EXTRA SHOPPERS (0-6) (m/f)	(Non-Speaking)
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BECAUSE I SAID SO:

TAYLOR (m/f)	(10 lines)
DEVON (m/f)	(8 lines)
ALEX (m/f).....	(9 lines)
CAREY (m/f).....	(7 lines)
HEAD CHEF (m/f)	(20 lines)
CHEF 1 (m/f)	(18 lines)
CHEF 2 (m/f)	(23 lines)
CHEF 3 (m/f)	(17 lines)
CHEF 4 (m/f)	(18 lines)

EXTRAS

EXTRA CHEFS (0-6) (m/f)	(8 group lines)
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DO WHAT I SAY, NOT WHAT I DO:

SPY DAD (m).....	(30 lines)
EMERSON (m/f)	(21 lines)
CHARLIE (m/f).....	(8 lines)
JORDAN (m/f).....	(8 lines)
RILEY (m/f).....	(6 lines)
SIDEKICK (m/f).....	(7 lines)
TECHIE (m/f)	(3 lines)
DR. NO THANK YOU (m/f).....	(4 lines)
BAD GUY 1 (m/f)	(1 line)
BAD GUY 2 (m/f)	(1 line)

EXTRAS

BAD GUY 3 (m/f).....	(Non-Speaking)
BAD GUY 4 (m/f).....	(Non-Speaking)
HIDDEN SPIES (3-10) (m/f)	(Non-Speaking)

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHEN YOU'RE OLDER:

KID 1 (m/f)	(4 lines)
KID 2 (m/f)	(5 lines)
KID 3 (m/f)	(5 lines)
KID 4 (m/f)	(5 lines)
KID 5 (m/f)	(1 line)
KID 6 (m/f)	(1 line)
KID 7 (m/f)	(1 line)

KID 8 (m/f)	(1 line)
KID 9 (m/f)	(1 line)
CHRISTMAS MOM (f).....	(4 lines)
CHRISTMAS DAD (m)	(3 lines)
CHRISTMAS KID (m/f)	(3 lines)
PARENT 1 (m/f).....	(2 lines)
PARENT 2 (m/f).....	(2 lines)
PARENT 3 (m/f).....	(2 lines)

CASTING NOTES

Don't let the number of characters in the play scare you—the roles can be combined in whatever way works best for you! This play can be a wonderful opportunity for your actors to have fun playing multiple, hilarious parts.

With the exception of ANNOYED MOM, ROMEO, JULIET, SHAKESPEARE, SHAKESPEARE'S MOM, SPY DAD, CHRISTMAS DAD, and CHRISTMAS MOM, all roles are gender flexible. The character's names are considered gender neutral, but please feel free to change pronouns if needed.

COSTUMING

Since there are many characters and settings for this play, it is recommend to keep the set and costumes simple and largely representative. For instance, have all actors wear a black shirt/pants as a base and then added on items to help establish the differences in their characters.

SETS

This play can be presented with a simple, minimal set. Many of the scenes can be performed on a blank stage or with minimal added set pieces. Directors are encouraged to be creative when staging this play.

PROPS**OPENING**

- grocery cart (ANNOYED MOM)
- large dog toy or bone (ANNOYING KID)

DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC

- vial of poison (ROMEO)
- paper and quill (SHAKESPEARE)
- stage daggers (JULIET, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, SENATE MEMBERS)

HOLD YOUR HORSES

- beach props (SLOW PARENT 2)
- beeper (SLOW PARENT 1)
- optional emoji posters (SHOPPERS)

BECAUSE I SAID SO

- cookware/ utensils (CHEFS)
- doll (HEAD CHEF)
- doll cookware/ utensils (HEAD CHEF)
- cat ears headband (HEAD CHEF)
- pop star props (HEAD CHEF)

DO WHAT I SAY, NOT WHAT I DO

- briefcase with papers (SPY DAD)
- “Who Dat 3000” machine (TECHIE)
- disguise glasses (SIDEKICK)
- soccer ball (EMERSON)
- 3 cars or steering wheels (SPY DAD, BAD GUY 1, BAD GUY 2)
- red lasers (HIDDEN SPIES)
- golden statue (SPY DAD)
- flash drive (DR. NO THANKYOU)
- crutch (SPY DAD)

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHEN YOU'RE OLDER

- 2 wrapped presents with socks inside (CHRISTMAS DAD)

OPENING

AT START: PARENT 1-10 are positioned around a blank stage in various tableaux that depict stereotypical activities that parents do. (i.e, talking on the phone, working on a computer, having coffee with friends, changing a diaper, etc.) Although ten parents are listed, there can be as many actors in these tableaux as needed, and the following lines can be split amongst them as seen fit. KID 1, KID 2, and KID 3 are positioned upstage and are reacting to the various things the parents say.

PARENT 1: Stand up straight!

PARENT 2: Do what I say, not what I do.

PARENT 3: Hold your horses!

PARENT 4: Practice makes perfect.

PARENT 5: Because I said so.

PARENT 6: If all your friends jumped off a cliff, would you jump too?

PARENT 7: You'll understand when you're older!

PARENT 8: Don't make me turn this car around!

PARENT 9: The early bird gets the worm!

PARENT 10: When I was your age...

PARENTS 1-10: Don't be so dramatic!

KID 1, KID 2 and KID 3 cross downstage while PARENT 1-10 exit.

KID 1, KID 2, and KID 3: UGH!

KID 1: Parents are soooo annoying.

KID 2: They're always telling us what to do.

KID 3: And they're always telling us what to do with these super annoying, old timey sayings.

KID 2: Yeah! A lot of the time, I don't even know what they mean. Like yesterday, my dad told me to "rub some dirt on it." I was at my basketball game... inside. He is so weird.

PARENT 1 enters.

KID 1: They just don't understand us! Parents are so annoying.

KID 3: So annoying.

PARENT 1: Excuse me, did I hear you right? Did you say that *parents* can be annoying?!!

KID 1: Um, yeah.

PARENT 1: Oh, really? You have no room to talk, kiddo.

KID 2: What are you talking about?

PARENT 1: Let's just take a look at the evidence, shall we? (*Motions upstage.*)

ANNOYED MOM enters, pushing a grocery cart as they roam the aisle of a grocery store. ANNOYING KID follows behind, hiding something behind their back.

ANNOYING KID: Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom...
Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom...

ANNOYED MOM turns to look, acts as if she might scream, but then turns around again and continues to push the cart.

ANNOYING KID: Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom...
Mom... mom—

ANNOYED MOM: WHAT?!?

ANNOYING KID: (*Pulls out a large, crazy looking dog toy from behind their back.*) Can we get this?

ANNOYED MOM: We don't have a dog.

ANNOYING KID: Oh, yeah. (*Tosses the toy and continue to walk.*)
Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom... Mom...
Mom...

ANNOYED MOM turns around and glares at ANNOYING KID.

ANNOYED MOM: What.

ANNOYING KID: Can we get a dog?

ANNOYED MOM takes a deep breath and walks offstage. ANNOYING KID shrugs and follows them off stage.

KID 3: Yikes. She has a point.

KID 1: That was a long time ago! I was little.

PARENT 1: That was last week.

KID 1: ANYWAY... the things parents say to kids are way worse than that! Parents are some of the most annoying creatures on this earth!!!

PARENT 1: Oh my goodness, don't be so dramatic.

KID 1: Like that! That, right there! You are always saying annoying stuff like that: "don't be so dramatic." As if I have a choice in the matter—I'm eleven! (*Or whatever age the actor is.*)

KID 2: You're not wrong. Parents *can* be pretty annoying.

PARENT 1: Let's just see how the evidence stacks up. I'll give you and your friends a chance to present your case: things parents say that are annoying. In the end, we'll see where we land. What do you say? Are parents as annoying as kids?

KID 2: Yes! Finally, a chance to show all the parents just how annoying they can be too.

KID 1: Alright, first up...

ALL ACTORS exit as the next scene is set up.

DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC

AT START: *ROMEO and JULIET act out the following scene as DRAMATIC KID 1, DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3 watch from a different area of the stage as the "audience."*

ROMEO: Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavory guide! Here's to my love. (*Drinks the poison.*) O, true apothecary, thy drugs are quick.

ROMEO proceeds to die very, VERY dramatically. JULIET wakes up during the following lines.

DRAMATIC KID 1: What are you doing?!? You just met her!

DRAMATIC KID 2: Woah.

DRAMATIC KID 3: Shhh!

JULIET: What's here? A cup closed in my true love's hand? Poison,
I see, hath been his timeless end.—

DRAMATIC KID 1: I don't believe this!

DRAMATIC KID 2: This is getting good!

DRAMATIC KID 3: Shhhh!

JULIET: O, happy dagger, This is thy sheath. There rust, and let me
die. (*Takes a dagger and stabs herself. She also dies very, VERY
dramatically.*)

*DRAMATIC KIDS applaud. ROMEO and JULIET jump up, bow, and
exit.*

DRAMATIC KID 1: That was the craziest thing I have ever seen.

DRAMATIC KID 2: That was awesome!

DRAMATIC KID 3: William Shakespeare is more than just awesome.
He is widely regarded as the greatest and most prolific writer in the
world—

*DRAMATIC KID 3 is interrupted by DRAMATIC KID 2 pretending to
sword fight.*

DRAMATIC KID 2: Swish! Zing! Zing! Did you see the sword fighting?
That was awesome!

*DRAMATIC KID 1, DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3 pretend
to sword fight during the following lines.*

DRAMATIC KID 1: And my mom says *I'm* dramatic.

DRAMATIC KID 3: You *are* dramatic

DRAMATIC KID 1: Oh, no, no, no. I've got nothing on this
Shakespeare dude.

DRAMATIC KID 2: And those death scenes! (*Dramatically acts out
getting stabbed and dying.*)

DRAMATIC KID 1: My point. (*Motioning to DRAMATIC KID 2, who is still lying “dead” on the floor.*) My mom is always telling me to not be so dramatic, but this guy made a whole career out of it! What if William Shakespeare’s mother ever told *him* to stop being so dramatic? Just imagine...

DRAMATIC KID 1, DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3 exit. SHAKESPEARE, SHAKESPEARE’S MOM, SOOTHSAYER and CAESAR enter. SHAKESPEARE sits at his writing desk and explains his ideas for his play to SHAKESPEARE’S MOM as he writes them. At the same time, the characters act out what is in the scene.

SHAKESPEARE: And then the soothsayer will say...

SOOTHSAYER: Beware the Ides of March!

SHAKESPEARE: And of course, everyone will know that they mean March 15th and that Julius Caesar needs to be careful on that day. Like, just stay home, Caesar; nothing good is going to happen on March 15th. But does Caesar listen? NOOOOO.

CAESAR scoffs and waves the SOOTHSAYER away. SOOTHSAYER exits.

SHAKESPEARE’S MOM: Of course he doesn’t.

CASSIUS enters with BRUTUS and EXTRA SENATE MEMBERS. They act out the following as SHAKESPEARE says it.

SHAKESPEARE: In the meantime, this guy named Cassius has convinced a bunch of guys to kill Caesar because he thinks Caesar is getting a big head and is going to try to be king, and they *do not* want a king. He even finally convinces one of Caesar’s best friends, Brutus, to join them in killing Caesar.

Angry CASSIUS, BRUTUS and EXTRA SENATE MEMBERS all take turns stabbing CAESAR; BRUTUS stabs him last.

CAESAR: Et tu, Brute! (*Dies very, VERY dramatically.*)

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Wait, wait, wait. (*BRUTUS, CASSIUS and EXTRA SEATE MEMBERS stop and stare at her.*) Did Caesar say he wanted to be king?

SHAKESPEARE: Well, no. Actually, he refused the crown when the Romans offered it to him.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: So, all these men—including Caesar's best friend—just stab him to death?!?

SHAKESPEARE: Um... yes.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: William! Don't be so dramatic! Just have Brutus go and talk to Caesar! I'm sure a good heart to heart over a nice cup of tea will clear all that nonsense up. There is no need for all the stabbing!

BRUTUS, CASSIUS and EXTRA SENATE MEMBERS look around at each other, shrug, and then help CAESAR up. They brush him off and help him off stage and exit.

SHAKESPEARE: Okay, fine. I have another idea. So, there's this prince of Denmark... (*Enter HAMLET.*) His father has just been killed by his uncle and Hamlet is all moody, but then his father's ghost comes back and says... (*GHOST enters.*)

GHOST: I am thy father's spirit. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder. (*Exits.*)

SHAKESPEARE: So then, um, (*Looks nervously at SHAKESPEARE'S MOM.*) a bunch of, um, stuff happens, and Hamlet finds himself talking to his old friend, Yorrick.

HAMLET: To be, or not to be, that is the question,
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles...

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Wait a moment. *Who* is Hamlet talking to?

SHAKESPEARE: His friend, Yorick.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: And Yorick is...

SHAKESPEARE: Dead.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Shakespeare! Really—he's talking to a dead guy?!? SO DRAMATIC.

SHAKESPEARE: But mother, this part is really important! In this soliloquy, Hamlet not only contemplates the great enigma that is existence, but the way he explores the themes of death and the afterlife are sure to resonate with every beating heart that resides in the audience. Will Hamlet shuffle off this mortal coil or give pause long enough to realize the power that lies in the strife and calamity of life?

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Uh, huh. Shakespeare...

SHAKESPEARE: What.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: What happens in the end?

SHAKESPEARE: Well...

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Shakespeare—What. Happens. In. The. End.

SHAKESPEARE: *(Pause.)* They all die.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Not again!

SHAKESPEARE: But, Mom!

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Willie, we have discussed this. All this drama—it's just not necessary! Not every person in the story needs to die.

SHAKESPEARE: Horatio survives. *(SHAKESPEARE'S MOM glares at him.)* Fine. Well, I do have a few more ideas.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Alright, let's hear them.

SHAKESPEARE: There's this fairy king, and he tricks his wife into falling in love with a donkey—

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Ludicrous. There are no such thing as fairies.

SHAKESPEARE: Two star crossed lovers take their lives—

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: Don't be ridiculous; they just met.

SHAKESPEARE: What about a Scottish king who is told by three witches—

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM: OH, SHAKESPEARE—DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC!

SHAKESPEARE'S MOM and SHAKESPEARE both exit in frustration. DRAMATIC KID 1, DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3 enter.

DRAMATIC KID 1: And BOOM, just like that—we don't have Shakespeare anymore. That's right—no Romeo and Juliet, no Julius Caesar, and no Hamlet. All because his mom was ANNOYING and kept telling him to not be so dramatic.

DRAMATIC KID 3: He was dramatic.

DRAMATIC KID 1: It was his job to be dramatic! And who's to say that I'm not the next Shakespeare, huh? (*Stares from DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3.*) Hey! You never know.

DRAMATIC KID 2: Come hither, Shakespeare. I think I hear your mother calleth; it tis the hour of our luncheon.

DRAMATIC KID 3: Thou speaketh the truth, good sir. My stomach rumbles. Let us grabeth the pizza!

DRAMATIC KID 1, DRAMATIC KID 2 and DRAMATIC KID 3 laugh and exit.

HOLD YOUR HORSES

AT START: *A blank stage. FAST KID 1 runs down the aisle or across stage at full speed.*

FAST KID 1: Go, go, go! Move out of my way! Zoooooommm!!!

SLOW PARENT 1 walks across the stage and almost gets run over by FAST KID 1.

SLOW PARENT 1: Woooah. Where are you going so fast?

FAST KID 1: (*Runs in place.*) Anywhere! Everywhere! I gotta go!

SLOW PARENT 1: (*As they exit.*) Oh, kiddo... you gotta hold your horses!

FAST KID 1: (*Stops dead in their tracks.*) What?!? (*Exits.*)

FAST KID 2 runs across the stage with a beach ball. SLOW PARENT 2 slowly follows them with their arms full of beach props—bags, towels, beach towels, an umbrella, etc.

FAST KID 2: MOM, COME ON! Jake just posted that the waves are perfect today!

SLOW PARENT 2: Will you hold your horses? I'm going as fast as I can!

SLOW PARENT 2 makes her way offstage. If something drops, FAST KID 2 picks it up.

FAST KID 2: Hold my what? (*Exits.*)

SLOW PARENT 3 is in a line for tickets at an unseen movie theatre with FAST KID 3. FAST KID 3 desperately tries to see why the line is moving so slow.

FAST KID 3: What is taking so long? You pick your seat, you pay for your ticket, you leave! Pick, pay, leave! How hard is that?

SLOW PARENT 3: Now, hold your horses. There are always loads of previews before the movie starts anyway.

FAST KID 3: That's not the point! Wait... did you say hold your horses?

SLOW PARENT 3 exits. FAST KID 1 and FAST KID 2 enter and join FAST KID 3.

FAST KID 1: My Dad is always saying "hold your horses." I don't get it. Like... what even is that? Where are the horses, Dad? Where are the horses?!?

FAST KID 2: My mom says that, too! I know she means to slow down and that I should be patient... Blah, blah, blah. But why the horses? Honestly, just leave the horses out of it.

FAST KID 3: It must be a saying from when they were kids. You know, like in the OLD days.

FAST KID 1: Yeah. Back then, they didn't have a lot of things that we have now. So, you know... everything took longer.

FAST KID 2: My mom said she didn't get a cell phone until she was in college!

FAST KID 1 and FAST KID 3 gasp.

FAST KID 3: But, how did she tweet? What did she watch Netflix on?

FAST KID 2: She DIDN'T.

FAST KID 1 and FAST KID 3 gasp.

FAST KID 1: She must have been so bored!

FAST KID 2: And before that, all she had was a thing called a beeper.

FAST KID 3: A beeper?

FAST KID 2: Yeah. It was supposed to alert you if someone needed to call you or whatever. But it could only show so many words at a time. So, then you had to go find a phone and call that person to find out what they wanted!

FAST KID 3: And it just beeped?

FAST KID 2: It just... beeped.

FAST KID 1: Weird.

FAST KID 2: I know. Just imagine...

The scene transitions into a scene from an old western movie; SLOW PARENT 1, SLOW PARENT 2 and SLOW PARENT 3 enter with added western costume pieces. SHOP OWNER, SHOPPER 1 and SHOPPER 2 enter. EXTRA SHOPPERS may also enter if desired. All actors are milling about the store or are in line to purchase items, with the SHOP OWNER ringing up their purchases. This can be as realized as the director chooses; you can also heavily rely on pantomime.

SHOP OWNER: Alright, sir. That'll be two bits.

SLOW PARENT 1: What? But just last week, a loaf of bread was only one bit!

SHOP OWNER: *(Shrugs.)* Inflation.

SLOW PARENT 1: Hmph. I miss the good ol' days.

Beeper goes off. SLOW PARENT 2, SLOW PARENT 3, SHOP OWNER, SHOPPER 1, SHOPPER 2 and EXTRA SHOPPERS murmur and look around.

SHOPPER 1: What in tarnation is that noise?

SHOP OWNER: Why, it's coming from yer pocket, Jeremiah! (*Or other western name.*)

SLOW PARENT 1: Oh, this? (*Takes out the beeper. SLOW PARENT 2, SLOW PARENT 3, SHOP OWNER, SHOPPER 1, SHOPPER 2 and EXTRA SHOPPERS jump back.*)

SHOPPER 2: Jumpin' Jehoshaphat! What is that thing?

SLOW PARENT 1: This new-fangled contraption is the best invention to come out since the telegraph—they call it... THE BEEPER!

SLOW PARENT 1 holds it up for all to see. SLOW PARENT 2, SLOW PARENT 3, SHOP OWNER, SHOPPER 1, SHOPPER 2 and EXTRA SHOPPERS in the store give oohs and ahs.

SLOW PARENT 3: What's it do?

SLOW PARENT 1: It beeps!

More oohs and aahs.

SHOPPER 1: Holey Moley! What will they think of next?

SLOW PARENT 1: The beeper goes off when there's somebody try'n to get a hold of ya!

SHOPPER 2: What will they think of next?

SLOW PARENT 1: Only now, I gotta find out who's try'n to get a hold of me. Let's see... (*Looks at the beeper.*) Why, it's just a series of odd little pictures. That one looks like the face of a little boy.

SHOP OWNER: Oh, that must be lil' Timmy! Oh, how is sweet lil' Timmy? I haven't seen him in a month of Sundays!

SLOW PARENT 1: Oh, he's just dandy; always with that dog of his.

SLOW PARENT 2: (*The beeper beeps.*) There are more little pictures now. It looks like some water drops, a brick wall, and an upside-down smiling face?

Option: a poster of the emojis listed is brought on and shown to the audience by SHOPPER 1 and SHOPPER 2.

SHOPPER 1: Well, that is odd! I wonder what it could mean.

SLOW PARENT 3: The water and brick wall kinda look like the well on your property... (*The beeper beeps again.*) And now it just says "Woof."

SLOW PARENT 1: Leapin' Lizards! It's Timmy! He fell down that blasted well again.

SHOPPER 2: You better go get Doc! Hurry, now!

SLOW PARENT 1: Priscilla, go hitch up the horses, we gotta skedaddle! (*SLOW PARENT 3 rushes off stage.*) So long and happy trails, my friends! (*Exits.*)

SHOP OWNER: Wow, that dog really does have an uncanny way of letting him know when Timmy's in trouble.

SHOPPER 1: Wait, come back! You forgot your beeper!

SLOW PARENT 2: Jeremiah, your beeper!

SLOW PARENT 1: (*Entering.*) Oh, I almost forgot it! Hold your horses, Priscilla! I forgot the beeper! (*Looks off stage at SLOW PARENT 3.*) I said, hold your horses, Priscilla!

SLOW PARENT 1 & 2, SHOP OWNER, SHOPPER 1-2: Hold your horses, Priscilla!

ALL SHOPPERS and SHOP OWNER exit. SLOW PARENT 1-3 have taken off their western wear. The scene returns to present day.

FAST KID 3: There's no way that happened.

FAST KID 1: Well, no matter how it started, "hold your horses" needs to die; just like those beeper thingies—and that hat.

SLOW PARENT 1: Hey! This is back in style, I'll have you know.

FAST KID 2: When I grow up, there is no way I'm saying anything *that* outdated to my kids.

FAST KID 3: No cap, bruh. When I grow up, I'm going to be the cool parent.

SLOW PARENT 2: Woooahh. What's all this talk about growing up?

SLOW PARENT 3: Hold your horses, kids. You're already growing up too fast as it is.

FAST KID 1-3, SLOW PARENT 1, and SLOW PARENT 2 all exit.

BECAUSE I SAID SO

AT START: TAYLOR, DEVON, ALEX and CAREY enter a blank stage.

TAYLOR: Do you know the most annoying thing my mom says to me?

DEVON: Is it “money doesn’t grow on trees!” My Dad says that anytime I want something that costs more than the bean, cheese, and rice burrito from Taco Bell.

TAYLOR: All the time, but that’s not it.

ALEX: Is it “when I was your age…” and then going into a long spiel about what it was like to live before cell phones.

TAYLOR: *(Laughing.)* No, but sometimes that does happen.

CAREY: Is it: “The aliens won’t care how cool your clothes are, so stop complaining about your sister’s hand-me-downs.” Ha! Yeah, they’re always saying that.

DEVON: That’s oddly specific.

ALEX: Yeah, I think that one is just you.

TAYLOR: Ummm... it’s not that one either. It’s “Because I said so!”

CAREY: What? I didn’t do anything!

TAYLOR: No, I mean the most annoying thing my mom says is “because I said so.”

ALEX: Yes! SO ANNOYING. My parents are always saying it too.

CAREY: Mine too! And it makes NO SENSE.

DEVON: They literally just say it anytime they don’t have an answer to something.

ALEX: Mom, why do I have to go to bed now?

TAYLOR, DEVON, ALEX, and CAREY: Because I said so.

DEVON: Why can’t we get another dog?

TAYLOR, DEVON, ALEX, and CAREY: Because I said so.

CAREY: Why do we have to wear these tin foil hats every time it rains?

TAYLOR, DEVON and ALEX stare at her.

ALEX: Again, dude, I think that’s just you.

DEVON: What is your life like?

TAYLOR: Anyway... only parents can get away with stuff like that. I mean, really, in what other situation will someone ever tell you "because I said so" as an answer, and then not allow you to ask questions about it? Just imagine...

TAYLOR, DEVON, ALEX, and CAREY exit as the stage transforms into a kitchen at a prestigious restaurant. HEAD CHEF, CHEF 1, CHEF 2, CHEF 3 and CHEF 4 enter; there can be more CHEFS, if desired. CHEFS man stations around the space. HEAD CHEF roams around the space, checking on various dishes.

HEAD CHEF: Alright, chefs, listen up! Tonight is the big night! We have a big, important guest eating here tonight, and we need to be prepared; no mistakes!

ALL CHEFS: Yes, Chef!

As the HEAD CHEF walks around, he says the following lines to CHEF 1, CHEF 2, CHEF 3, and CHEF 4.

HEAD CHEF: The soups should come out quickly and be the exact temperature needed to stay hot, yet not burn the tongue.

CHEF 1: Yes, Chef!

HEAD CHEF: The sauces need to be saucy!

CHEF 2: Yes, Chef!

HEAD CHEF: The entrees should be moderately portioned and the meat cooked to perfection.

CHEF 3: Yes, Chef!

HEAD CHEF: The pastries need to be extra pasty! Uh, I mean... delicious!

CHEF 4: Yes, Chef!

HEAD CHEF: Tonight's menu begins with a fresh spring salad and a roasted butternut squash soup, followed by our world-famous Duck à l'Orange. Our widely celebrated pastry chef will cap the evening with our decadent tiramisu. Any questions?

ALL CHEFS: No, Chef!

HEAD CHEF: Then let's get to it! All chefs man their stations and begin. Salads go out in ten minutes. *(Exit.)*

ALL CHEFS: Yes, Chef!

CHEF 1: I'll start by chopping the arugula and spinach. *(To CHEF 2.)*
You can chop the radishes. *(Pointing at CHEF 3.)* Can you go get
the tomatoes and fresh goat cheese?

CHEF 2: Yes, Chef.

CHEF 3: Yes, Chef. *(To CHEF 4.)* Behind you, Chef.

CHEF 4: I'll start plating the soup.

CHEF 1: Good thinking, Chef.

CHEF 1, CHEF 2, CHEF 3, and CHEF 4 work for a minute before HEAD CHEF enters, holding a toy doll. He stops and holds the doll up to their ear, nodding and occasionally whispering back in its ear.

HEAD CHEF: Chefs, there's been a slight change in plans for tonight's prep. From now on, I'm going to be taking the cookware and utensils that you have been using and replacing them with my little doll's cookware and utensils. Don't worry, she says that she just cleaned them, so there's no need to wash anything. Well, that's all for now. Keep up the good work!

CHEF 2: Wait! Uh, chef... this seems a little unnecessary. We all need our regular cookware. Is there a reason that you're changing them out for... sorry, I didn't get your doll's name.

HEAD CHEF: It's Susy.

CHEF 2: Of course it is. Is there a reason that you're changing them out for Susy's cookware?

HEAD CHEF: Sure, there's a reason! BECAUSE I SAID SO. Is that clear?

ALL CHEFS: Yes, Chef!

HEAD CHEF proceeds to wheel around a cart and take all cookware/utensils while also handing out comically small replacements. CHEF 1, CHEF 2, CHEF 3 and CHEF 4 honestly try to use the doll cookware for awhile, failing miserably.

CHEF 3: Can you pass me the teeny, tiny spatula, please?

CHEF 2: *(Hands CHEF 3 the spatula.)* Anyone else think this is a little weird?

CHEF 4: Shhh! We don't speak that way of head chef.

CHEF 3: They are the head chef!

CHEF 1: It's a little odd, sure, but they're a genius! Sometimes geniuses are just like that.

CHEF 2: Okaaayyy... it's just that no one has told me "because I said so" as an answer since I was in, like, middle school. Seems a little weird to—

CHEF 4: Shhh!

HEAD CHEF enters, this time wearing a pair of cat ears.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from DON'T BE DRAMATIC AND OTHER ANNOYING THINGS PARENTS SAY by Rachel Bland. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

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