

LATE NIGHT CONFESSIONS OF A BIPOLAR TEEN

By Sean Abley

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ISBN: 978-1-60003-939-3

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LATE NIGHT CONFESSIONS OF A BIPOLAR TEEN

A One Act Dark Comedy Drama

By Sean Abley

SYNOPSIS: This bipolar teen is dealing with their bipolar disorder as best as they can, with humor, supportive friends, and more than a little secrecy. But a lock-in event over Halloween weekend at the local high school, and a new kid determined to be a bully, threaten to expose their disorder to the school.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4-10 either, 3-10 extras; doubling possible, gender flexible)

JUSTIN/ JUSTINE (m/f)	Teenager dealing with bipolar disorder, generally friendly and outgoing, but cautious. Uses humor to deflect discomfort. <i>(97 lines)</i>
MACKENZIE (m/f).....	Teenager, popular, outspoken, fearless. <i>(81 lines)</i>
BOOKS (m/f).....	Teenager, bookworm, sensitive, quiet but not shy. <i>(86 lines)</i>
DYLAN (m/f)	Teenager, can be thoughtless and brash, bully by default but not outright mean. <i>(47 lines)</i>
MACKENZIE'S MOM or DAD (m/f).....	Written as an offstage voice, but may be played on-stage if casting permits. <i>(3 lines)</i>
MS./MR. PHILLIPS (m/f)	The guidance counselor. Super enthusiastic. Written as an offstage voice, but may be played on-stage if casting permits. <i>(4 lines)</i>
BIPOLARETTE ONE (m/f)	Physical manifestation of Justin's bipolar disorder. <i>(6 lines)</i>

- BIPOLARETTE TWO (m/f)..... Physical manifestation of Justin’s bipolar disorder.
(6 lines)
- BIPOLARETTE DRACULA (m/f) Vampire with bad Transylvanian accent. Written as an offstage voice, but may be played on-stage if casting permits. If played by a female, title of film should be changed to “Countess Dracula Vs. Godzilla.” (1 line)
- BEAR MASCOT School mascot, can be changed from a bear to your school’s mascot. (1 line)
- BIPOLARETTE GODZILLA..... Written as an offstage voice/character, but can be played on-stage if casting permits. (Non-Speaking)
- EXTRAS..... 3-10; CLASSMATES / BIPOLARETTES or more if needed, for lock-in group scenes. (Non-Speaking)

CAST NOTE: All roles are gender-neutral, change pronouns as necessary. *Late Night Confessions of a Bipolar Teen* was originally written for a four-person cast, which meant the actors playing MACKENZIE, BOOKS and DYLAN doubled as the BIPOLARETTES, and the actor playing DYLAN doubled the voices of MACKENZIE MOM/DAD, MS./MR. PHILLIPS, and (COUNTESS) DRACULA. As many BIPOLARETTES EXTRAS can double as CLASSMATES / EXTRAS in group scenes. However, casting all roles with individual actors is a perfectly acceptable choice for the play.

DURATION: 40 minutes.

SETTING

A unit set to represent various characters' bedrooms, and areas of their high school. All settings and set changes can be accomplished by rearranging 4-8 chairs or theatrical blocks. If using limited casting, the actors playing JUSTIN, BOOKS, MACKENZIE and DYLAN can change the set between scenes; if using a larger cast, BIPOLARETTES can change the set. There should be no blackouts, only light shifts from one setting to the next. Feel free to change the name of the high school and the town to suit your production's needs.

PROPS

- Laptops (3)
- Tablet device (or regular book)
- Drawing pad and pencil
- Steering wheel
- Baby prop
- Backpacks (4 or more for extras)
- Sleeping bags (4 or more for extras)
- Library books
- Empty Sports Drink Bottle
- Full Energy drink Bottle
- Puppy (stuffed)

COSTUMES

STUDENT CHARACTERS – Contemporary clothes.

MS./MR. PHILLIPS – Contemporary teacher attire.

BIPOLARETTES – Can be either contemporary students, or something more theatrical.

BEAR MASCOT – A bear mascot costume or your school's mascot.

BIPOLARETTE DRACULA – Dracula costume if played onstage.

BIPOLARETTE GODZILLA – Godzilla costume if played onstage.

MACKENZIE – Zombie face paint.

SOUND EFFECTS

All sound effects can either be sound files, or made live on stage by Bipolarettes.

- Race car
- Tires squealing
- Bad horror movie sound track
- Horror movie monster battle

SLANG

Feel free to change any slang words or phrases to something more current.

PRODUCTION NOTES

As written, the BIPOLARETTES are present in the fantasy sequences, and double as STUDENT EXTRAS in the group scenes. If your production needs dictate using just four actors total (JUSTIN, BOOKS, MACKENZIE, DYLAN), have JUSTIN's friends become the BIPOLARETTES when needed, and DYLAN do the offstage voices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Late Night Confessions of a Bipolar Teen was commissioned by the Oxbridge Academy of the Palm Beaches 2015-2016 Advanced Theater students, and first performed on May 24, 2016 under the title *Locked In*. The production was directed by Brittany Smoliak, and stage managed by Virginia Arguelles. Production manager was Kimberly Patterson, and the production crew was Caitlin Kirk. The cast was as follows:

DYLAN ----- Shayna Benardo
 BOOKS----- Miranda Boodheshwar
 MACKENZIE ----- Alexander Morrison
 JUSTINE ----- Emma Turkki

AT RISE: *LIGHTS UP on BEDROOMS - JUSTIN, MACKENZIE and BOOKS are all in their bedrooms, all with their laptops open and nearby. JUSTIN is drawing in a notebook, BOOKS is reading something on his/her tablet, and MACKENZIE is on his/her computer. MACKENZIE calls BOOKS via a video chat on their laptops. BOOKS sets the tablet aside and answers the call.*

BOOKS: Hey, Mac!

MACKENZIE: Hey! Are your parents on board with the lock-in this weekend?

BOOKS: More than okay. Anytime I'm not in my bedroom reading, my parents act like it's Christmas and their birthday all rolled into one.

MACKENZIE: Awesome. I'm gonna add Justin, hang on.

MACKENZIE calls JUSTIN via a video chat. JUSTIN sets his/her notebook aside and answers the call.

JUSTIN: Hey!

MACKENZIE: Hey, I have Books on here, too.

BOOKS: Hey.

JUSTIN: Hey.

MACKENZIE: So are you ready for the lock-in this weekend?

JUSTIN: I don't think I'm going to go.

MACKENZIE: What?

BOOKS: Why not?

JUSTIN: I don't know, it's just not my thing.

BOOKS: That's not the point. Everybody's going.

JUSTIN: So?

BOOKS: So you need to go if everyone's going.

JUSTIN: I'm not sure that makes sense.

MACKENZIE: Dude, you have to go. Why wouldn't you go?

MACKENZIE and BOOKS freeze while JUSTIN talks to the audience.

JUSTIN: *(To audience.)* How do I explain this to them? It's not that I don't want to go--I'd love to go. Seriously. But there's just one small problem. I have what most people call, wait for it... bi-polar disorder.

BIPOLARETTES enter.

BIPOLARETTE ONE and BIPOLARETTE TWO: *(Break fourth wall for surprise reveal sting.)* Dun dun duuuun!

JUSTIN: It's this disorder where I can't control how my brain decides to work sometimes. Like, I'll be full of energy one day, and my brain can't stop thinking about a million things. I want to go and think and do stuff faster and faster and faster. Those are the manic phases, and they feel like—

The BIPOLARETTES quickly create a car out of chairs and their bodies. MACKENZIE, BOOKS jump into the car with JUSTIN in the driver's seat pantomiming a steering wheel. One BIPOLARETTE makes a SFX: racecar going insanely fast. Everyone is hyper excited to be going so fast--improvised screams, shouts, etc. As JUSTIN pantomimes steering everyone reacts in sync as if they're taking hairpin turns, driving the car over ramps, etc. while the BIPOLARETTES supply the SFX: tires squealing, people running to get out of the way, etc.

JUSTIN: Faster! Faster!

BIPOLARETTE as PUPPY scampers in front of car.

MACKENZIE: Look out for that puppy!

JUSTIN yanks the steering wheel aside and laughs manically as a BIPOLARETTE PUPPY runs away. A BIPOLARETTE as MOM WITH BABY walks in front of the car.

BOOKS: Look out for that woman carrying a baby!

JUSTIN yanks the wheel to the side as the BIPOLARETTE MOM WITH BABY runs away.

MACKENZIE: Dude you're not going to make that turn!

JUSTIN: Yes, I am! Hold on!

ALL: (*Shouting in terror and excitement as they take a really sharp turn.*) GAAAAHHHH!!

The car straightens out.

BOOKS: Here comes the ramp!

MACKENZIE: You'll never make it over those school buses!

JUSTIN: Yes I will!

BIPOLARETTE ONE and BIPOLARETTE TWO: Punch it and go!

JUSTIN: Yeah!!!

JUSTIN pantomimes stomping on the gas. Everyone leans backwards as the car instantly picks up speed. They hit the ramp and sail through the sky.

ALL: (*Shouting in terror and excitement as the car flies over the buses.*) GAAAAHHHH!!!

The car lands with a thump.

JUSTIN: I'm putting the top down! Use your jetpacks to fly into space. Three, two, one, go!

EVERYONE pantomimes strapping on a jetpack, then flying out of the car. They all land back in their bedrooms. Scene goes back to normal.

JUSTIN: And then I get completely depressed without any warning, the lows are like—

JUSTIN falls to his/her bed. BIPOLARETTES position themselves on either side of the bed, as if they're hiding. JUSTIN sits up.

JUSTIN: I think I'll go out and test this geocaching app.

BIPOLARETTES jump up and grab JUSTIN's arms and pull him back down on the bed.

BIPOLARETTE ONE: Yeah, I don't think so.

JUSTIN: What? Why not?

BIPOLARETTE TWO: Because you're too depressed. Remember?

JUSTIN: But I was fine two seconds ago.

BIPOLARETTE ONE: Aw, that's too bad.

JUSTIN: No, I'm getting out of bed and going geocaching.

BIPOLARETTE TWO: Nope. No can do. You can try, but we're not letting you get out of bed because now is the time when we're sad.

JUSTIN struggles to get up but can't. He finally gives up.

BIPOLARETTE ONE: And don't forget--none of your friends really like you, and nobody cares if you're depressed. So don't tell them. Nobody wants a depressed friend.

JUSTIN: You know, you're right. I'm really depressed. I'm never going to be happy again. I can tell. I'm just going lie here and be angry at my friends for not knowing how sad I am-- (*Mood suddenly changes to super excited.*) --and then I'm going to ride this amazing rollercoaster!

JUSTIN, MACKENZIE, BOOKS and the BIPOLARETTES jump into position for a rollercoaster and immediately react as if they're having the time of their lives.

ALL: GAAAAHHH!!!!

JUSTIN: But now I'm sad.

BIPOLARETTE ONE and BIPOLARETTE TWO: (*Sad trombone sound.*) Wah-waaa....

Rollercoaster starts up again. Everyone is instantly energized.

JUSTIN: But now I'm up again!

ALL: Yeeeah!!

JUSTIN: And now I'm just chill.

MACKENZIE and BOOKS go back to their bedrooms. BIPOLARETTES exit.

JUSTIN: *(To audience.)* I never know when it's going to happen, and sometimes it won't happen for weeks. I mean, yes, I'm on a few drugs for it, but it can be hard to control. When it happens at school or hanging out or whatever I can make some excuse to leave or joke about it to hide what's going on. But if I'm at a lock-in for the weekend? There's no place to go if the rollercoaster starts up again. So... *(Back to the video chat.)* I really just don't want to go.

MACKENZIE: Why not?

JUSTIN: We're stuck in school 5 days a week, all day. Why would I want to spend my weekend there, too?

MACKENZIE: Because it's different. We'll be there all night. It'll be like classes got canceled, plus we'll get to see what the school is like when it's closed. I heard they had a blast last year.

BOOKS: I know it doesn't make sense, but there's something about being in a school when it's closed that is super appealing. Like you get all the benefits of breaking into the school after hours, but without getting arrested.

JUSTIN: That's...weird.

MACKENZIE: Look, you can either go to the lock-in and have a bad time for one night, or not go and then have to explain to everybody why you didn't go all day at school on Monday. So why not just go and have a bad time?

JUSTIN: Okay. Wait, what?

MACKENZIE: I'm just saying.

MACKENZIE'S MOM: *(Offstage.)* Mackenzie! Dinner!

MACKENZIE: *(Calls off.)* Can I eat in my room?

MACKENZIE'S MOM: *(Offstage.)* No, you cannot eat in your room. This isn't prison. Come down for dinner.

MACKENZIE: *(Calls off.)* You can't make me eat at the table. I have civil rights.

MACKENZIE'S MOM: *(Offstage.)* You do not have civil rights. This is a monarchy ruled by me and your father. Come down for dinner or you'll be cast out of the kingdom.

MACKENZIE: She thinks *Game of Thrones* references are hilarious. Anyway, I have to go eat dinner. You're going to the lock-in. Bye! *(Logs off the video chat and exits.)*

BOOKS: You really should go.

JUSTIN: I really don't want to.

BOOKS: I know. But you and me and Mac can hang out together and make our own fun. We don't have to hang out with everybody else.

JUSTIN: What makes you think I don't want to hang out with everybody else?

BOOKS: I don't know, you just seem sort of... antisocial sometimes. And as a person who would rather spend her time reading than going to the dances or football games, I get it. But sometimes you just need to recharge with some social interaction. It will be okay, I promise.

JUSTIN: You act like I'm afraid of going or something.

BOOKS: Aren't you?

JUSTIN: No.

BOOKS: Okay, my bad. But you should still go. We'll have fun. Promise.

JUSTIN: Maybe...

BOOKS: I have to go. Talk tomorrow. Bye.

JUSTIN: Bye.

BOOKS hangs up the video chat and exits.

JUSTIN: *(To audience.)* That sure sounded like she knows more about me than I've told her. But it doesn't matter. I'm not going to the lock-in. No matter how much they beg and tell me how much fun it will be, I'm not going to the lock-in. I promise you, I. Am not. Going to the lock-in.

MS. PHILLIPS: *(Loudspeaker.)* Welcome to the Capital High School Halloween Lock-in!

(LIGHTS instantly change to—

SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, The BIPOLARETTES change the set and JUSTIN has been transported to the gymnasium. MACKENZIE and BOOKS enter, excited for the event. The sounds of more students can be heard [or CLASSMATES / EXTRAS can enter], and music plays in the background. Everyone has backpacks and sleeping bags. This is the beginning of the lock-in. MS. PHILLIPS can either be heard over the loudspeakers or we can see her on-stage, making the announcement over the P.A. system. She is impossibly upbeat.

MS. PHILLIPS: (*Loudspeaker.*) Remember, no costumes allowed, but we have face painting set up on the east side of the gym. Food will be in the cafeteria--enjoy some delicious cheese boooooo-gers, zombieroni pizza and boooooo-ritos!

MACKENZIE: Did she just say "cheese boogers"?

MS. PHILLIPS: (*Loudspeaker.*) We'll be showing scary movies all night in the auditorium, including *Dracula Vs. Godzilla*, *Kittenasaurus Rex*, and *Soccer Mom Zombies 2 Colon Carpool of Death*.

BOOKS: *Soccer Mom Zombies One* was actually pretty good...

MS. PHILLIPS: (*Loudspeaker.*) The doors close in five minutes! They'll only reopen at midnight for those of you that want to escape from all the fun we'll be having and go home. Enjoy the night... (*Cheesy spooky voice.*)... if you survive! (*Evil horror laugh that turns into a cough.*) AH HA HA HA HA HA-- (*Coughing.*) No, I'm okay. I accidentally breathed in a breath mint... (*Exits.*)

MACKENZIE: I think I'm going to get my face painted!

BOOKS: I heard they were suspending the Dewey Decimal system in the library for the night--it's going to be anarchy!

MACKENZIE: This is going to be amazing!

JUSTIN: Is it?

BOOKS: Yes, it is. Just relax. If you start thinking you have to have fun, you won't. Too much pressure.

JUSTIN: Funny, that's what my dentist says.

MACKENZIE: I don't get it.

JUSTIN: I know.

BOOKS: Just hang out until midnight. Then you can totally go home if you want.

JUSTIN: (*To audience.*) Oh, no. I can feel it coming on. That "everything is on fast forward" feeling. Calm down, calm down.

MACKENZIE: What's wrong with you? Why are you moving around like that?

JUSTIN: I'm just nervous is all.

MACKENZIE: About what? We're locked in the school all night with no parents and no rules. What could go wrong?

DYLAN enters.

DYLAN: *(To audience.)* Did someone say "school bully"?

BIPOLARETTES pop out and perform a "surprise reveal" sting.

BIPOLARETTE ONE and BIPOLARETTE TWO: *(Unison, surprise reveal sting.)* Dun dun DUUUUNNN!

JUSTIN, MACKENZIE, BOOKS and CLASSMATES all freeze while DYLAN talks to the audience.

DYLAN: Hi, I'm Dylan, and I've only been at Capital High for two weeks. We just moved here from Great Falls. My last school was the worst. People were so mean to me all the time. But nobody knows me here, so I get to start over. Here's some advice I read on the Internet, which has to be true because it was on the Internet, right? If you want to keep people from messing with you, you have to get them first, and show them that if they *do* mess with you, there *will* be consequences. So that's what I'm going to do tonight. Fear the nerd who was bullied! I just need to find the right victim...

JUSTIN, MACKENZIE, BOOKS and CLASSMATES all unfreeze and resume their conversation as DYLAN eavesdrops.

JUSTIN: *(Anxious, fidgety, in a manic phase.)* You know what? You're right! This is going to be amazing! We're going to have mega fun. We're going to have so much fun, our heads are going to explode! I mean literally explode! Bang! Headless high school students everywhere. *(Mom voice.)* "What happened to Justin?" *(Police voice.)* "We're sorry ma'am, his head exploded because he had mega fun." *(Mom voice.)* "Oh, I told him not to have mega fun! I told him to have medium fun!" *(Fake cries like mom.)* Boo hoo hoo hoo.

MACKENZIE: Okay, what's wrong with you?

JUSTIN: What do you mean? I'm fine!

MACKENZIE: Two seconds ago you were hating life, and now you're doing really terrible stand up.

JUSTIN: What do you want me to do? Sing? Dance? Go fight that bear? (*Calling to someone off stage.*) Hey! Bear! I'm coming for you! Don't look at me like that! It's on, buddy! I'm gonna fight a bear! Yeah!!

JUSTIN races off stage. BOOKS runs off after him.

BOOKS: Justin! Stop! That's the mascot!

BOOKS exits. DYLAN moves over to MACKENZIE.

DYLAN: What's his problem?

MACKENZIE: Good question. He just sort goes crazy every once in awhile.

DYLAN: I'm Dylan. I just started at Capital.

MACKENZIE: Mackenzie. That's our friend Justin, and Books is the one chasing after him. Where are you from?

DYLAN: Great Falls. We just moved. I don't really know anybody yet.

MACKENZIE: You can hang with us if you want. I think it's going to be pretty chill tonight.

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