

THE MOST BORINGEST TEACHER IN THE WORLD

by Jerry Rabushka

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A One Act Comedy

by Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: People talk about dying of boredom, but no one really means it. Or... do they? When students in Mr. Borateen's history class start growing tired and listless, even the school nurse can't find a cure. Turns out he's practically boring them to death. Will the school fire Mr. Borateen, or will his students just wither away from his tedious lectures about the year 1627? It's a battle of wills and wits as students and parents fight their own school for the right to a stimulating education – and their lives!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 3 males, 5 either, 0-10 extras; gender flexible)

STUDENTS AT XYBORG HIGH:

- MELINDA WYDEN (f)..... An “average” student, who wants to learn... no really she does! *(60 lines)*
- MICHELLE DOUGHERTY (f)..... Very intelligent, and not afraid to remind us of it. *(61 lines)*
- ELLABETH MARTIN (f)..... A “popular” girl who never thought of school as a place for education. *(44 lines)*
- JAROD CURRANT (m) Student reporter and radio announcer, slightly arrogant. *(42 lines)*
- BOYCE ROBERSON (m) A friend of his, a bit of a “bad boy”. *(16 lines)*
- CANYON SCRUMBLE (m)..... A ball player, nice guy and popular. *(20 lines)*

OTHERS:

- MR./MS. BORATEEN (m/f).....A really, really, really boring teacher, fascinated with the year 1627. *(65 lines)*
- NURSE THERMOPOLIS (m/f)..... The school nurse. *(25 lines)*
- MOTHER (f).....Melinda’s Mother. *(36 lines)*
- GABE/GABRIELA (m/f).....Melinda’s older sibling, mid 20s. *(17 lines)*
- PRINCIPAL BRIDGES (m/f) A Principal, who fails to see why students matter. *(41 lines)*
- DOCTOR FORBES (m/f) Melinda’s family physician. *(12 lines)*

EXTRAS:

- STUDENTS (m/f) Optional. *(Non-speaking)*

CAST NOTE: Gabe and Mr. Borateen are referred to as male in the script but may be played as female characters by making appropriate changes to the dialogue.

DURATION: 45 minutes

TIME: Present day

SETTING: School

SETTING

The main settings are the class room and a “common area” in the school. Other settings can be implied with a few pieces of furniture or take place in front of a curtain; they are various offices, outside the school, and MELINDA’s house. Since the play has a lot of short scenes, try a simple approach to set or let the audience use its imagination in order to move quickly from scene to scene.

COSTUMES

Many of these characters play into well-known types, and in a one act play costumes can tell us a lot about the character. Since this play takes place over a number of weeks, easy changes in costume will be helpful to convey different days.

MELINDA – One step past what her mother would let her get away with.

MICHELLE – She wants to save the world, she’s intellectual, if anyone wears a skirt its Michelle. Big glasses, long cheap ear-rings, might work for her.

ELLABETH – Fashion-forward, bold-colored trendy, and would dress to call attention to herself.

JAROD – Dresses up more than the rest, knows what he wants in a career, he thinks he’s more mature than anyone else.

BOYCE – Sloppy, trying to look more “bad boy” than he is.

CANYON – Jeans and t-shirt or sweatshirt, shows his athleticism

MR. BORATEEN and PRINCIPAL – Out of touch with reality and can dress accordingly, for example plaids and stripes together, etc.

PROPS

- Nail polish or other beauty accessories for ELLABETH to use throughout the play.
- Cell phone.
- Signs for protest
- Usual school supplies for students and teachers, including some notebooks for MICHELLE’s novels.
- Student newspapers and a tabloid paper.
- Medical equipment such as stethoscope, monitor, etc.
- Microphone or hand-held recorder.
- Megaphone (*optional*)

SOUND EFFECTS

- Loud shoes walking
- Triumphant music

SCENE 1

AT START: *At school, right after history class. In a hallway, cafeteria, common area, or in front of the curtain. ELLABETH and MICHELLE are on stage, but not paying attention to each other. ELLABETH is doing her nails, MICHELLE is engrossed in a big textbook. ELLABETH examines her nails and is happy with her results. She makes a loud squealing noise, startling MICHELLE, who drops her books in surprise.*

ELLABETH: Perfect! Awesome! Magnificent!

MICHELLE: *(Picking up books.)* Ellabeth, would you not do that?

ELLABETH: Be perfect? I can't help it. Look at these nails!

MICHELLE: I'm trying to read. *(Opens the book again.)*

ELLABETH: *(Sticks a finger in the book.)* Well here, Michelle, let me hold your place and you can do both.

MICHELLE: *(Slams the books shut on ELLABETH.)* Thank you Ellabeth, but I already have a book mark.

ELLABETH: *(Stunned.)* Michelle! I spent all of history class perfecting these nails! You have no appreciation of the finer things. No wonder you're single.

MICHELLE: I'm single by choice rather than by consequence. *(Reopens her book.)* Don't touch it.

MELINDA enters, and she's flustered, and very high energy, throwing some books down.

MELINDA: I can't, I can't I can't!

ELLABETH: Melinda, what?

MELINDA: I cannot spend another day in his class.

MICHELLE: You're gonna have to. You can't drop history.

MELINDA: Let alone 46 minutes which feels like 46 weeks times two.

MICHELLE: You can't just give up because you don't like something.

MELINDA: I'm trying to pay attention but it's killing me.

ELLABETH: I do my nails in history. *(Flippant.)* I tried paying attention but I realized it just wasn't for me.

MELINDA: We have spent the entire semester on 1627. Last week I literally died of boredom.

MICHELLE: No, you didn't.

ELLABETH: Not literally.

MELINDA: I did, Michelle, Literally.

MICHELLE: If you literally died, you wouldn't be here talking to me. You figuratively died of boredom. Or we'd be at the cemetery mourning your untimely demise. (*Snarky.*) Maybe.

MELINDA: I literally lost my mind, then I figuratively died. Whatever.

MICHELLE: No, you figuratively did both. I literally can't keep track of your metaphor.

ELLABETH: Go figure.

MELINDA: I'm literally trying to have a conversation with you and literally wondering why. Can't I change teachers? I'm going nuts. Doesn't anyone else notice?

MICHELLE: Perhaps everyone else is too interested in the topic to notice your boredom. Or they're surreptitiously on their phones planning for senior prom.

ELLABETH: Guilty!

MELINDA: We're not seniors.

ELLABETH: One day we will be, and I plan to be ready. This year, nails. Next year, hair.

MELINDA: He's the most boringest teacher in the whole world. He's got to get some vim and vigor into this subject or I'm going to fade away like that girl in *Wuthering Heights*.

MICHELLE: It's *Wuthering Heights*.

MELINDA: Well I'm withering, so I say it's *Wuthering Heights*. Figuratively speaking, my heights are withering.

MICHELLE: You can't just say what you want and have it be the truth.

MELINDA: You haven't read my diary.

MICHELLE: You probably confused the literal with the figurative and it would be impossible to figure out what was real and what fantasy.

MELINDA: I hope my mother feels that way when she sneaks in and reads it. Could you please could stop being so perfect for five minutes and see things realistically?

MICHELLE: Realistically? Uh... no.

ELLABETH: Look, if you want to learn, then I suggest you try something other than going to school. Now if you'll excuse me, it's time for my welding class. (*Exits, waving her hands so everyone can see her nails.*)

MELINDA: He is so boring!

MICHELLE: I wouldn't know. Rather than pay attention, I'm writing my second novel, thanks to Mr. Borateen. Just make something up on the exams. I'm sure he doesn't read them anyway. Now if you'll excuse me, it's time for my electrical wiring class. *(Exits.)*

MELINDA: Well, all right. *(Looking through a book.)* I'll knock out another chapter of Withering Heights.

MICHELLE: *(From offstage.)* Wuthering!

MELINDA: *(Shouting back.)* Not my copy! *(Exits, opposite side from MICHELLE.)*

SCENE 2

AT START: *In MR. BORATEEN'S class. He's very self-absorbed and thinks he's a lot wittier than he is, and has been delivering the same jokes and lectures to the point where he barely even notices what he's doing. From a characterization standpoint, it's important to bore the students but entertain the audience at the same time.*

MR. BORATEEN: So, remember what this is about. It's about answering the question you're asked, not the question you think you're asked, and not the question you wish you were asked. If you're going to be a student of history, you need to...

ELLABETH raises her hands.

MR. BORATEEN: Yes, Ellabeth?

ELLABETH: *(Nonchalant, and still playing with her nails.)* You need to leave no obstacle unturned in the search for the truth. *(Looks at a nail.)* Perfect!

MR. BORATEEN: Yes, and how do you know that?

ELLABETH: You've told us. Every day.

ALL STUDENTS: *(Reciting.)* Leave no obstacle unturned in the search for the truth.

MR. BORATEEN: And why have I told you?

ELLABETH: Because most of the class is content to let obstacles stand in their way. Oh, and I just raised my hand so you all could see my nails.

MR. BORATEEN: Now, who remembers what happened on May 31, 1627? Boyce Roberson, how about you?

BOYCE: Nobody, because nobody's alive from then to remember.

MR. BORATEEN: That's correct, young man. So who knowwwwws what happened on May 31, 1627.

Some hands go up.

MR. BORATEEN: Jarod. Mr. Currant.

JAROD: You do.

MR. BORATEEN: That's also correct. Does anyone else in the class know what happened?

CANYON: Probably not.

MR. BORATEEN: Two words from a certain basketball jock Mr. Canyon Scrumble. It's a class record! But, correct again. You're all a lot smarter than you think, yet not nearly as smart as you'll be after a year in my class. Now, a tragedy of unspeakable proportion was visited on the people of 1627 Poland, an extinction that was hundreds of years in the making. In 1564, a Polish royal survey said there were 38 remaining large wild oxen known as the auroch. (*Loud and shattering.*) And it wasn't enough! (*The class jolts, some fall out of their chairs and slowly get back up.*) Michelle I see you're taking notes, congratulations. The last known auroch died in Poland in 1627. While she died of natural causes, the reasons for extinction were human induced: unrestricted hunting, farming that took away its habitat, and diseases transmitted by domesticated cattle. It's very sad. Melinda, don't you agree?

MELINDA: (*In a stupor.*) What?

MR. BORATEEN: Don't you agree? Or are you dying of natural causes as well? You look somewhat unwell.

JAROD: He said "don't you agree?"

MELINDA: Yes, I agree. Very sad. I remember when it happened. The auroch. Very sad.

MR. BORATEEN: Exactly how do you remember? Literally or figuratively?

MELINDA: Literally. Because your teaching methods take me back in time. (*Closes her eyes and starts to fall asleep.*)

MR. BORATEEN: That's why I want to dive into it. To examine in detail how 1627 laid the groundwork for 1628. In Europe, China, Africa, and beyond.

BOYCE: What's beyond China?

MR. BORATEEN: Not a whole lot, if you were Chinese in 1627. Looks like time is up.

BOYCE: Perhaps one day we'll move into 1628.

JAROD: (*Wistful.*) 1628. One day

MR. BORATEEN: Yes, 1628 may just leave 1627 in the dust. But we have much more of '27 to cover before we can even think of the turbulences of '28.

SFX: Class bell rings.

MR. BORATEEN: Oh, and class dismissed. Though it's so interesting I can't imagine why you'd want to go.

MELINDA is fast asleep.

MICHELLE: Melinda, wake up. Wake up

CANYON: Wake up!

BOYCE: If you can.

MICHELLE: Melinda!

MELINDA: (*Half asleep.*) Sixteen twenty seven... eight... nine....

JAROD: Melinda, hurry it's time for our "Brazilian horror movies of the 1970s and their social ramifications throughout the rest of South America" class.

MELINDA: I'm literally dead.

MICHELLE: No you're not. (*Looks again.*) But you're close.

They try to lift MELINDA up.

CANYON: Wow, she literally can't get up.

MELINDA: Oh... is it time to go? I don't feel so good.

ELLABETH: We better go see the nurse. I need to go anyway. I need a cure for a broken nail and split ends.

MELINDA: (*Still semi-conscious.*) I can't split. This class never ends...

MR. BORATEEN pages through a textbook as the STUDENTS help MELINDA out.

MR. BORATEEN: Tomorrow we study what happened on December 27, 1627, at 2 pm. We are certainly blazing through history, aren't we?

SCENE 3

AT START: *MELINDA is with her MOTHER and brother GABE at home. They can be sharing a meal, or in a living room. MELINDA is either playing with her food, for example absentmindedly eating from a big bag of chips, or trying to focus on a book, but not having an easy time of it. Finally she falls head first into whatever she's doing. If it's food, be careful.*

GABE: Melinda. Melinda.

GABE shakes MELINDA and she comes to.

GABE: Melinda are you OK?

MELINDA: *(Coming up.)* No, I'm not.

GABE: Boyfriend problems?

MOTHER: She's too young to have a boyfriend.

MELINDA: Ellabeth has three, and they're different each week.

MOTHER: I'm not her mother, so I don't care.

MELINDA: Her mother doesn't either, apparently. I'm bored. My teacher is like a ceiling fan. On slow. You can't even feel the breeze. *(She goes "round" as she speaks.)* It just goes round and round and round and round and round and-

MOTHER: Stop it!

MELINDA: Why are you making me go through this?

GABE: We all had Mr. Borateen. It prepared me for long college lectures on the development of the steam engine.

MELINDA: I can't.

GABE: (*Takes her pulse.*) Wow, you're slowing down. Do you need some soup? I know you're just my sister and we fight all the time, but I'd miss that if you...

MELINDA: Died of boredom?

MOTHER: Nobody ever died of boredom.

MELINDA: Nobody was ever this bored.

MOTHER: I had Mr. Borateen. My father had Mr. Borateen, and his grandmother had Mr. Borateen. He's up to date and very exciting.

MELINDA: He was up to date in 1629. Can you talk to someone and get me into someone else's class? It's literally a matter of life or death.

GABE: She needs soup. It's for the soul.

MOTHER: It's not that bad.

MELINDA: Yes it is. It's literally that bad.

MOTHER: It's not even figuratively that bad.

MELINDA: Literally. No one believes, me, factually or metaphorically. Either way I'm talking to myself...! I need to go to sleep.

GABE: Get the soup.

MELINDA: Gabriel! I don't need soup. I need a transfer. Carrots and chicken broth are not the cure for everything. Mom, please.

MOTHER: Okay. Maybe we should talk to the principal and see if he'll do something.

GABE: He'll just make her live with it.

MOTHER: Apparently, she can't. She's dying of boredom.

GABE and MELINDA: Literally.

MOTHER: I'll make an appointment.

SCENE 4

AT START: *Back in class, and MR. BORATEEN is teaching. The students aren't happy about it.*

MR. BORATEEN: Mrs. Carvalho has been called away to urgent family business in Brasilia. Her daughter is getting plastic surgery.

ELLABETH: I know this sounds odd coming from me, but that's just giving in to objectification.

MR. BORATEEN: No, she swallowed a plastic bag, and she needs surgery to get it out. So I'm teaching her cinema class for the foreseeable future.

ALL STUDENTS: *(Disappointed.)* Oh.

MELINDA: Oh save me!

MR. BORATEEN: Miss Wyden, are you bored?

MELINDA: Yes. Bored out of my gourd. If I only had a gourd, I would have something to occupy my time.

MR. BORATEEN: So who knows what happened in Brazil in 1972?

CANYON: No one?

MR. BORATEEN: No one, Canyon Scrumble? Not even me? That's patronizing and insulting, but continue.

CANYON: *(Relaxed and spread out, like that ball player who knows he can get away with anything.)* No one in North America. We're never taught about Brazil. We're taught about France, Italy, Germany, and England. And Prussia, but it got absorbed, Mr. Borateen. Absorbed like water into a paper towel! Occasionally Canada seeps in, and Mexico disappears after 1848. That's it. Brazil might as well be Mars, for all we've learned about it.

MR. BORATEEN: Mr. Scrumble, your humor is not appreciated. Nor does it motivate this class towards higher education.

CANYON: Are you going to tell us what happened, or just ask if we know. because...

BOYCE and JAROD: If we already knew it we wouldn't have to take the class. *(BOYCE and JAROD high five.)*

MR. BORATEEN: In 1972 some very interesting developments happened that affected Brazilian cinema for years to come. Years. To. Come. And does anyone want to hear what those developments are?

MICHELLE: *(Shrieking.)* Yes! That's why we're here! Are you that stupid that you can't figure out what your job is after doing it for 352 years?

ELLABETH: What she means is, yes, we'd love to hear it, and we'd love to hear it from you. *(Showing off her nails.)* By the way does this color work?

MICHELLE: Yes, it's great!

MELINDA: Beautiful, Ellabeth. I think I'm going to die now. *(Falls into a stupor again.)*

MR. BORATEEN: Excuse me, but perhaps some instruction would enlighten you.

MICHELLE: That's right. Please enlighten me. I love to be enlightened.

BOYCE: I do too. I need to pass the class. Take us out of the darkness into the flickering light of Brazilian cinema!

MR. BORATEEN: Miss Wyden, are you awake?

A few students check out MELINDA.

ELLABETH: No, she's not. Let's just have class without her. Meanwhile I'll take photos and put them on Instagram.

ELLABETH starts to pull out a phone, but MR. BORATEEN takes it away. ELLABETH starts to panic as if she's being drained of her life force.

MR. BORATEEN: You'll do no such thing. Or I'll have you write an essay.

MICHELLE: I'll write an essay. I love writing essays.

JAROD: Good you can write mine.

MICHELLE: No, everyone would know I did it, since it would have correct grammar and spelling and be scholarly yet entertaining.

ELLABETH: *(Almost like she's starving for oxygen.)* Give it back!

MR. BORATEEN: Not until class is over. Or not.

MICHELLE: You'd better give it back, or she'll wither away.

JAROD: She'll have to move to Withering Heights. The land without a phone.

ELLABETH: Need! Phone! *(Beat and she gets worse, fast, falling out of her chair, etc.)*

BOYCE: She's fading fast.

MR. BORATEEN: All right then. But no photos! *(Returns the phone to ELLABETH, and looks at MELINDA.)* Is she OK? She should have paid attention.

ELLABETH springs back to life and starts to dial.

MR. BORATEEN: Ellabeth what are you doing?

ELLABETH: I'm calling the school nurse! Melinda's got a minor part in the fall play and it's way too late to replace her. Even though it's definitely a minor role. *(Talks into the phone.)* Nurse Thermopolis, this is Ellabeth Rileway! Please come to room 301. We have an emergency! Please...We don't know. She's literally dying. No, not figuratively, literally. Yes I know the difference and this is no time for that discussion, just get in here! *(Hangs up.)* If I ruin my nails pressing call I'll never forgive you.

NURSE enters after a long sound effect of heels on a hard floor.

NURSE: So, what's the problem? I was just finishing a very fascinating article in *Kidney Stone Monthly*.

MICHELLE: Melinda. She's just slowing down.

CANYON: She's bored.

NURSE: It's school, what does she expect?

CANYON: Bored. Out of her gourd.

NURSE: *(Shakes her.)* Bored, huh. It's nothing a little discipline can't fix. She needs to buck up and pay attention. Like we all did. *(Loud, to MELINDA.)* Buck up and pay attention!

MELINDA: There's nothing to pay attention to. How can you pay attention to nothing? I wanted to learn, but I can't. There's nothing to learn. Just platitudes and attitudes and incertitudes and...I can't take anymore tudes. The world stopped in the year 1628, and it's very, very, very saditude. And you're not helping, Nurse Thermopolis.

MR. BORATEEN: Come on class, am I that boring?

MICHELLE: No, of course not. Plus I'm writing a novel in your class. I use my time wisely.

ELLABETH: I use it to fix my nails and makeup.

BOYCE: You're boring, *(Snarky.)* But they say I'm unteachable, so what do I know? I'd rather you not say anything substantial so as not to leave me feeling inadequate when I can't parrot it back.

MR. BORATEEN: I'm now going to read Chapter 5. Aloud. It's called "Moving into the 1970s in Rio and São Paulo." As an added treat, I'll read it in the original Portuguese.

MELINDA slides down and drops to the floor, and as he rambles on they take her out, and everyone else sneaks out as well as he is engrossed in the book.

MR. BORATEEN: Many of you might wonder how you can connect to a language you barely understand, but I believe that by osmosis, this knowledge will take hold in that 1500s era of the Portuguese colonization of Brazil and how 470 years later, it affected the movies they were watching and the language that was spoken... *(Flips a few pages [until all the students are gone], then looks up and notices no one is left in class.)* where did everybody go?

SCENE 5

AT START: *MOTHER, GABE, and the school PRINCIPAL are meeting in PRINCIPAL'S office. MOTHER is very concerned, while PRINCIPAL is concerned with getting her out of there.*

PRINCIPAL: Mrs. Wyden, Gabe, I remember you from days of yore... I'm glad you have come here with your concerns about Melinda. As the school principal, my door is always open. *(If there is a door, PRINCIPAL closes it.)*

MOTHER: She needs help, Mr. [Ms.] Bridges.

GABE: She needs to get out of that class.

PRINCIPAL: So you think we need to bend the rules for her.

MOTHER: *(Up and in PRINCIPAL'S face, hands on the desk and leaning over it.)* You need to save her life!

PRINCIPAL: *(Right back at her, standing up and leaning into her.)* Let me tell you something about today's students. Students are coddled, moddled, boddled, and foddled, that's the problem.

GABE: Those aren't even words!

PRINCIPAL: They are in this school. When I grew up we had one room in a little red school house 25 miles from the family farm. I walked to school, home for lunch and back. I carried 15 pounds of books and all I had to eat was a rotten apple which I gave to the teacher. So I don't want to hear about someone being slightly uncomfortable with a tried and true teacher like Mr. Borateen who has been with

us since before the founding of the United States of America. He doesn't just know history, he IS history.

MOM: *(After a short pause.)* Are you finished?

PRINCIPAL: No, but I'll stop and listen, because that's what we do here at Xyborg High. We provide a service to the parents and children, and that service is called education. *(Sits down and starts to page through a tabloid paper such as the Enquirer.)*

GABE: *(Looking over top of the paper.)* Are we really students here, or just a tax base?

MOTHER: *(Grabs the paper away.)* Look, I don't want to question Mr. Borateen's extensive and excessive credentials, but it's not resonating with Melinda. Can we just transfer her to another teacher? Someone she connects with. What about Miss Power or Mr. Weakly? I hear they have a great rapport and repertoire with their students. People come out knowing not only about 1627, but 28 and 29 as well.

GABE: At this rate, when she's 94, we'll get up to modern times, and they won't be modern anymore.

PRINCIPAL: It's against school policy to just transfer someone because they don't like the teacher. What happens next...Melinda doesn't want to sit next to someone?

MOTHER: Ellabeth.

PRINCIPAL: What?

MOTHER: She doesn't like sitting next to Ellabeth Rileway. Ellabeth is all about cosmetics. She does her nails and puts on makeup and the chemical odor is overwhelming. And Michelle Dougherty gives her an inferiority complex, because Michelle writes romance novels during class and Melinda isn't dating. Boyce is a bad influence, and Canyon Scrumble is too handsome and he distracts her. He needs home schooling because none of the girls can get any work done because they're daydreaming about Canyon just like I daydream about Canyon's father when my husband's at work. *(Gets louder and more demanding.)* Melinda needs individualized instruction because she's a bright child that you can't seem to keep entertained. But for now, she needs a transfer.

PRINCIPAL: And for now, that request is denied. *(Picks up paper and leans back in the chair.)* Ooo celebrity scandal!

NURSE enters, distraught.

NURSE: We don't know what's happening to her.

PRINCIPAL: Who?

NURSE: Melinda Wyden. At first we thought she was whiny, but now it's much more serious. She's slowing down. *(Grabs paper away from PRINCIPAL.)* Pulse, heart rate, breathing, brainwaves, we don't know what to do. *(Looks at paper.)* Ooo, celebrity scandal!

MOTHER: I know what to do! I'm her mother.

NURSE: Like that matters and like you'd know anything about it. *(Looks at paper again.)* Brad, Jen, Angelina...

MOTHER: *(Snatches the paper and tosses it away.)* You're going to need a nurse if you keep talking like that.

NURSE: I already know the cure for dealing with parents like you. It's telling them to shut up. So ma'ma, I don't care who you are or who you think you are, shut up. *(To audience.)* Works every time.

MR. BORATEEN enters, distraught as well.

MR. BORATEEN: It's Melinda. She's playing at being sick and she's ruining my lectures. The lectures I spent 325 years perfecting and she's nodding off as if I'm a bore. Now the other kids are doing the same. Even Canyon Scrumble is starting to slow down. He's mired in 1626 as I'm hightailing through 1627. I won't stand for it! You'll need to transfer them out! I refuse to let my teaching skills go to waste on a pack of unruly teenagers.

PRINCIPAL: With all due respect, Mr. Borateen, that's why we're here. You'll have to work with her just like she'll have to work with you.

MOTHER: *(Loud and over the top.)* Your killing my daughter!

MR. BORATEEN: *(Smug.)* If you're Mrs. Wyden, I'll have to disagree. Your daughter is killing education. I dare say that would be a much bigger loss!

MOTHER: So essentially, we're all going nowhere.

PRINCIPAL: That would be a yes... *(Goes to get his paper.)* Do you mind?

As scene ends PRINCIPAL unfolds paper and props feet up on desk, while the others look on in dismay.

SCENE 6

AT START: *ELLABETH, JAROD, MICHELLE, and BOYCE are talking together on the school grounds.*

ELLABETH: Do you think it's contagious?

JAROD: First Melinda, now Canyon. And he's in shape!

BOYCE: We've got to get some exciting instruction or we'll all turn into bad kids with no future.

MICHELLE: *(To JAROD.)* Debtors prison for you. *(To BOYCE.)* Jail for you. *(To ELLABETH.)* The workhouse for you, and the Nobel Prize for me.

JAROD: Why do you always act like you're better than everyone else?

MICHELLE: It's no act.

JAROD: You literally make me sick.

MICHELLE: You're just jealous that I get straight A's and I'm a self-published novelist sensation on Amazon at the same time. You're writing articles no one reads for a student newspaper that's best used as a paper airplane.

BOYCE: All of you stop being yourselves for a minute! We're got to do something.

ELLABETH: Picket. Protest.

JAROD: Let's suggest they hire a new teacher at a significantly lower salary. that'll work.

ELLABETH: I think Mr. Borateen has tenure. They can't get rid of him until he dies or retires.

BOYCE: He died 200 years ago. He just hasn't retired.

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