

ODD DUCK

By Christian Kiley

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CHARACTERS

(3 Males, 10 Females, 5 Either)

THE OUTCASTS

ANAPALA (“Ducky”) – A talented actress caught in the cruel hierarchy of social status.

LOBE – Her only clear and certain objective is that she collects bricks.

REMIE – An insomniac who often falls asleep in the strangest places.

COLONY – A student of ant behavior.

ROOK – The chess club assistant secretary.

RATTLE – Mumbles math equations continually.

HIKE – Wears a football helmet all the time though not a member of the team.

THE IN-CROWD

VALERIE - Living vicariously through Blake and his political aspirations.

YOJ – New member of the “In-Crowd.”

BLAKE – The only student running for student body President.

GLOW – Leader of G-Cubed, the most popular trio in the history of the school.

GLITTER – Member of G-Cubed.

GLIMMER – Member of G-Cubed.

TRI – The superstar quarterback.

ACROSS THE POND

THE VOICE – Enforces the rules and maintains order.

CASSIE – A custodian.

DR. BANCROFT – The revered and respected theatre teacher.

LITTLE GIRL – Notably younger than the other students.

SETTING

The play takes place on the Campus of the Mission High Mighty Mallards.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The play investigates the reality of social status and whether the concept of the “In-Crowd” truly has any merit. Anapala (“Ducky” as she is mockingly called by many of her classmates) is a student who has an undiscovered gift to act. The only place she or any of the “Outcasts” find relief is in a niche community by themselves. Can an established hierarchy be changed? And can people cultivate and develop their true talents and passions without being inhibited by social conformity?

The idea of the “claustrophobia of conformity” should be expressed by using wheeled chalkboard flats that can be pushed downstage little by little as the play progresses. By the end of the play, there are no gaps or exits between the flats. In a very real sense by conforming, the characters give themselves no choices or opportunities and therefore become trapped. THE VOICE can be placed in a D.J. style booth or platform or can be done via live or pre-recorded voiceovers. The “Opportunity X” is a large green X that is used throughout the play for “audition” moments and should be located downstage center.

COSTUME NOTES

All the costumes should be fashions from the present day. Styles and ideas can be taken from regional and other trends. Generally, “The Outcasts” can be dressed very naturally and functionally. The members of “The In-Crowd” are much more concerned with their appearance. The G-Girls were dressed in shades of pink (their names can guide their costume choices). Valerie and Blake were in clothing that would be worn to a debate tournament or political convention. Tri often wears football jerseys and other sports apparel. Yoj is the one character in “The In-Crowd” who should transform from her polished attempt at style to a more natural look as she defends “The Outcasts”. Anapala and “The Outcasts” can be somewhat normal in their dress and this will contrast the efforts of “The In-Crowd” to look “perfect”. Hike does wear a football helmet to impress Tri. Lobe becomes more and more disheveled as the play progresses (which fits her persona of being constantly lost). Rook and Rattle can be in what might be considered “endearingly nerdy”. Colony is a nature-lover and might be in hiking or similar gear. Though Remie could be the typical image of a “sleepy head”, there should be something beautiful and special about her. In our production, Anapala was cute and quirky, with a childlike sense of color. But whatever your costume and concept choices are have fun in expressing the vibrant colors of these characters.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Odd Duck was produced at Etiwanda High School November 6-8, 2008. The playwright would like to thank the cast and crew for their talent, passion, and creative input on this project. At its best, new work is always collaborative and this part of the process can not be replaced. Thank you for being part of this experience.

ODD DUCK - Cast

THE OUTCASTS

ANAPALA - Reanna Cadena
LOBE - Rahma Gharib
REMIE - Brenjoi Mudd
COLONY - Gabrielle Carrasco
ROOK - Kimberly Scott
RATTLE - Ayden Lopez
HIKE - Nik Granados

THE IN-CROWD

VALERIE - Victoria Dumapias
YOJ - Kristina Quick
BLAKE - Ryan McPheeters
GLOW - Jade Ealy
GLITTER - Lareesa Weissbeck
GLIMMER - Kalena Shook
TRI - John Farnham

ACROSS THE POND

THE VOICE - Tabitha Lehouillier
CASSIE - Kayleigh McDaniel
DR. BANCROFT - Shelby Anderson
LITTLE GIRL - Ella Kiley

PROPS LIST

UMBRELLAS/RAIN GEAR

(for the G-Girls and the Little Girl during dream sequences)

FOOTBALL

(Tri)

CHALK

(for boards, Rook and Rattle)

LOCATOR CARD/SCHEDULE

(Lobe)

CHESS BOARD

(Rook)

CELL PHONES

(G-Girls)

BOOK

(Yoj)

BACK PACKS/SCHOOL ITEMS

(books, notes . . . etc)

CASSIE'S WORK ITEMS

(mop, bucket, broom . . . etc)

BRICKS

(Lobe and for the set)

LIFESAVERS

(Cassie)

BOTTLE(S) OF WATER

(Dr. Bancroft and Anapala/Glow)

INHALER

(Hike)

HELMET

(Hike)

"VOTE FOR BLAKE" PENS

(Blake/Valerie)

TABLE

(for chess scene and party scene)

COPY OF HAMLET

(Anapala)

LUNCH ITEMS

(lunchbox, thermos . . . etc)

EARRINGS

(Glimmer)

GARBAGE CAN

(for set)

GREEN X

(center stage)

CAST LIST

(standard piece of paper)

PODIUM

(optional for election scene)

FOG MACHINE/FOG JUICE

(for "power of zero" scene)

CARDBOARD BOX OR SIMILAR WITH CASSIE'S PERSONAL ITEMS

FLOWERS AND VASE

(Cassie)

ANT FARM/CONTAINER WITH SAND

(Colony)

PARTY DECORATIONS

(hats, noisemakers . . . etc)

PARTY PUNCH SERVICE

(punch, container, cups)

FLOWERS

(Remie)

TIARA

(Remie)

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTED BY - Christian Kiley

STAGE MANAGER - Reanna Cadena

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR - Thomas Whitmer

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR - Shannon Kaliher

SET DESIGNER - Kyle Summers

MAKE-UP DESIGN - Tiara Brooks

LIGHT DESIGN - Sara Overhulse

SOUND DESIGN - Victoria Dumapias

PROP MANAGER - Enrique Leyva

COSTUME DESIGN - Danielle Kirtley, Kelsey Troncale, Kali Smith

COSTUME ADVISOR - Kali Smith

HAIR - Charisma Adams

SET CONSTRUCTION - The Etiwanda High School Technical Theatre
Class

LIGHT OPERATION - Sara Overhulse

SOUND OPERATION - Carly Hansen

SET PAINTING - Bethanne Mauch, Sara Overhulse, Michael Grubbs

CREW CHIEF - Kyle Summers

CREW - Jennifer Rose, Megan Reed, Corinne Howell, Chris Caceres,
Kelsey Troncale, Charisma Adams

HOUSE MANAGER - Bethanne Mauch

PROOF READERS - Bill and Ellen Kiley and Pamela Bowen

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ACT I

PROLOGUE – “THE STORM OF CONFORMITY”

As the lights come up a LITTLE GIRL is standing center stage looking out. The G-GIRLS enter and start to circle the LITTLE GIRL. The circles get tighter and tighter until the LITTLE GIRL can reach out and touch the G-GIRLS. The G-GIRLS exit abruptly followed by the LITTLE GIRL. A bell rings. THE VOICE makes announcements as STUDENTS are dashing around (BLAKE and TRI are throwing a football around as HIKE tries to get them to throw it to him, RATTLE is writing Math equations on the upstage boards, LOBE is looking around frantically with her locator card, REMIE sleepily looks for a place to nap, COLONY searches for ants for her ant farm, ROOK sets up a chess board downstage, the G-GIRLS are text messaging and talking, VALERIE is shaking hands and being diplomatic, and YOJ is reading a book). As these activities take place, ANAPALA continues to go through a repetitive ritual. This ritual can vary but something like taking off her backpack, pulling out all the items in it, taking inventory, and then placing all the items back in the backpack. THE VOICE makes announcements as the activity continues. This goes on until the second bell rings.

THE VOICE: Good morning Mission High Mighty Mallards. Are you ready to have another quacking good day? Please proceed to your first class without delay. Thought of the day: Life is not a sight-seeing tour. It is an opportunity to pick up a shovel or a pick and move some earth. You will have plenty of time to see things when you are old, well unless your vision is poor, then you can just hear things, unless- I think you get the idea. Or, if you don't, you are probably in mostly remedial classes in which case the words that I am using are like a sophisticated concoction of linguistic elixir that you will never sip from. Ooga Booga Booga. That means go to class in caveman. Just kidding. But really, go to class.

(ANAPALA remains standing center stage.)

SCENE 1 – “PRICKLY FRUIT”

CASSIE enters with mop and bucket and gets right to work. SHE stops for a moment, notices ANAPALA and coughs. ANAPALA continues to stare straight out. CASSIE coughs again.

ANAPALA: You have a cough. A dry cough. A very dry. You have a very dry cough.

CASSIE: I don't.

ANAPALA: You do.

CASSIE: I think I would have a pretty good idea if I truly and genuinely had a cough. It is psychosomatic.

ANAPALA: Why?

CASSIE: Shouldn't you be using this innate curiosity in the classroom?

ANAPALA: No, I am here. I am using it here. Where I am. Here.

CASSIE: Great, another smug suburban kid who is too good for the custodian.

ANAPALA: I like that.

CASSIE: Your pretentious attitude. Of course you would.

ANAPALA: No. Custodian. The word. I like the word.

(LOBE enters scouring over a schedule.)

LOBE: Pardon me, excuse me, I hate to trouble you but could you direct me to my class? I'm new, newer, newish. It kind of sounds like a religion for fledgling people.

(ANAPALA stands perfectly still.)

CASSIE: What are you looking for?

LOBE: My class.

CASSIE: You want to give me a hint?

LOBE: Practical Architecture and Conceptual Blueprint Development for the Young Liberal Artist in Search of Their Inner Child.

CASSIE: Are you going to MIT or Mission High? I'll assume you mean Drafting. P-120. *(CASSIE vaguely points and continues working.)*

LOBE: Thanks.

(LOBE crosses downstage where there are several bricks that seem to be the early stages of an inexplicable wall. LOBE takes one brick and places it in her backpack. ANAPALA continues to stare out into space and CASSIE continues working. It is unclear whether either one of them has seen or even cares that the brick has been taken. LOBE exits. CASSIE coughs.)

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ANAPALA: It's nasty. That cough.

CASSIE: Nuisances often are.

ANAPALA: True. By their very definition they would be.

CASSIE: Go to class.

ANAPALA: Oh.

CASSIE: Though I have to tell you that students don't normally ditch class and hang out with the janitor-

ANAPALA: Custodian.

CASSIE: Same thing. Go to class.

ANAPALA: No. Yes.

CASSIE: I'll call security.

ANAPALA: Why? Is someone in trouble?

CASSIE: What class do you have this period?

ANAPALA: One that I have not attended for eleven class periods. This would be twelve. If I can avoid going for the next forty-eight minutes and seventeen, sixteen, fifteen, fourteen seconds.

CASSIE: Where do you go? When you don't go to class.

ANAPALA: Bathroom stall. I usually make my lunch. Standing up.

CASSIE: Is it in that bag?

ANAPALA: Yes.

CASSIE: Isn't it already made?

ANAPALA: I do it again and again. Usually twenty-six times during first period. That's my average, twenty-six. Though I have gone as high as thirty, last Tuesday. And as low as twenty-two. My breakfast cereal seemed to be terribly short on marshmallows that day. The day before yesterday. My Mom will not let me pre-divide my breakfast cereal. If I had it my way I would. I would have the same number of marshmallows in each serving. To be reasonable, you know, because having the same number of regular cereal morsels would take some doing. You could weigh the portions on a little postal scale. But no one wants four less marshmallows on a Thursday than they had on a Monday. It could mess up the climax of your week. Maybe you could slowly give yourself more marshmallows as the week progresses as a way of building toward a contrived celebratory moment.

CASSIE: I eat bran flakes.

(ANAPALA does not move.)

Go to class.

(ANAPALA'S posture stiffens.)

Okay. I will walk you to. . .

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ANAPALA: . . .class. Walk me to class.

(ANAPALA's posture relaxes a bit.)

CASSIE: What class?

ANAPALA: Acting One.

CASSIE: The Guru, The Method Magistrate, The Theatrical Tyrant, The Brilliant Doctor Bancroft. Maybe you should transfer?

ANAPALA: Could I?

CASSIE: I mop and on a good day pick up empty potato chip bags.

You'll need to talk to your counselor about any complexities involving the master schedule. It's like a combination of plate tectonics and the electoral college. If you're not careful you'll end up walking to Australia over a land bridge with Grover Cleveland. Good luck. But my guess is that you need to do this. *(CASSIE takes a roll of Lifesavers out of her pocket and offers ANAPALA one. Then pulls it back.)* Ah, the etiquette of taking a Lifesaver. What is your favorite flavor?

ANAPALA: Cherry.

CASSIE: What if you knew with utmost certainty that behind this pineapple Lifesaver was a juicy, tangy, and delicious cherry one? Would you remove the pineapple to get to the cherry and put the pineapple back? You couldn't. Because there are rules, even in accepting candy. You can't just remove the flavor you don't like to get to the one you want. And who knows, maybe that pineapple is just what you need right now.

ANAPALA: I don't care for pineapple.

CASSIE: You don't. Well let me introduce you to another fruit with a prickly exterior.

(CASSIE starts to exit and ANAPALA reluctantly follows.)

ANAPALA: I don't like prickly exteriors. They tend to make me anxious.

CASSIE: You'll be fine.

ANAPALA: May I have a cherry Lifesaver?

CASSIE: When one comes up I'll let you know.

(CASSIE exits and ANAPALA takes three steps, returns to the spot where the three steps started, repeats the three steps, returns to the spot again, takes the three steps. ANAPALA continues this pattern as the lights fade to black.)

SCENE 2 – “THE BORDER BETWEEN METHOD AND MADNESS”

When the lights come up the class is already in full swing. DR. BANCROFT is leading the STUDENTS in an imagination exercise. As DR. BANCROFT moves around the comments can be delivered to the GROUP as a whole or as asides to one STUDENT. There is a volatility in BANCROFT’S movement. The GROUP is spread out but there are still clear divisions. EVERYONE is participating except for REMIE who is sleeping. The G-GIRLS are together and there is a clear division between the “IN-CROWD” and “THE OUTCASTS.”

DR. BANCROFT: So you have keyed in on an environment. Isolate one thing to experience. Use your senses. None of this fake gyration nonsense. Everyone’s eyes are closed, there is no one to impress. Be real.

(ANAPALA walks in and stands in the back, eyes open, not participating.)

Wake up in there. Feel something. “Come on Bancroft feel something!” Am I right? Of course! Keep breathing. And not just for the obvious functional purpose of staying alive. Fuel this thing. No shallow, puny breaths. Connect to your gut, your diaphragm. How do you breathe when you are madly and passionately in love with someone? I see it when I am walking around campus. It is like you are making out with your one true love forty-thousand feet under water and you barely make it to the surface for that breath that will allow you to plunge into the depths of your true love’s soul with all your life...at least until Tuesday when the love-lease expires and you look for the next body of water to immerse yourself in. Find the object or person or smell or texture or taste, find that thing that will get a foot in the door. Breathe. Pry the door open. Rip it off the hinges. I feel you faking. It’s like a bad game of hide and seek. Like subconscious Sahara desert Hide and Seek. There is nowhere to hide. I think we should just call the game simply, seek. Seek something. There it is. Behind the lies about summer camp and the way you really feel about your parents. Okay, open your eyes.

(DR. BANCROFT holds up a bottle of water.)

What is this?

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(The CLASS shifts uncomfortably.)

I see we've learned to avoid the obvious. Good. But that doesn't mean cringing in fear. Call them out. Your second, fifth, and tenth answers. Call them out.

COLONY: Conformity. It's a prison of conformity.

VALERIE: Optimism. It is nearly full.

DR. BANCROFT: I guess you're a psyche-half-full kind of girl.

ROOK: Something worth fighting for.

DR. BANCROFT: Good. High stakes. Though we'll see if those are more than trendy pseudo avante garde words.

RATTLE: Two hydrogen molecules, one oxygen, point seven percent of the body is made up of. . . two times one point zero, zero, seven, nine, seven plus fifteen point nine, nine, nine, four.

DR. BANCROFT: Predictable.

YOJ: Something to celebrate.

BLAKE: Another capitalist brainwashing tool.

DR. BANCROFT: Get out of your head.

BLAKE: A lie. A bloody lie. An oxymoronic lie. Nothing is clear. It should be cloudy.

DR. BANCROFT: What if I said it was the truth?

BLAKE: I don't know.

DR. BANCROFT: You may be running unopposed for Student Body President. But not in life.

BLAKE: I don't think that's necessary.

DR. BANCROFT: What is not necessary?

BLAKE: Calling me out for striving to do something for the betterment of the school.

DR. BANCROFT: And yourself. Don't forget that. You can gloss your way through your other classes with the slick jargon and colorful power point pie charts. But that's all sweet-toothed nonsense to me. This water is your life.

BLAKE: Like a metaphor?

DR. BANCROFT: No. Like real.

(DR. BANCROFT starts to drink it. Takes a healthy swallow. And another.)

(Holding the bottle out.) Your life. Cheers.

BLAKE: What? What do you want me to do?

DR. BANCROFT: With your life? How should I know?

(DR. BANCROFT takes another drink. And another.)

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BLAKE: *(Asking the class)* What should I do? What should I . . .

DR. BANCROFT: Ultimately it is you and some ambiguously confusing symbol or code you have to crack before. . .

(DR. BANCROFT takes another drink. There is only a small amount remaining.)

I am refreshed *(takes another drink)* and you are . . .

(As DR. BANCROFT is about to take a drink ANAPALA knocks the bottle out of DR. BANCROFT'S hand. It and most of the remaining contents come crashing to the floor. ANAPALA stands frozen for a moment and then violently and desperately tries to wipe it up. Some are shocked and others, the G-GIRLS in particular, start to snicker.)

GLOW: What a loser. It was a metaphor you spaz.

GLITTER: At the very least, it was nothing to go into a major fit over.

GLIMMER: That was like Inside the Actors Studio meets the Discovery Channel. Like honestly would a giant, hungry tree frog hop on stage and eat that James Lipton guy? I don't think so.

VALERIE: Are you okay Dr. Bancroft? That was entirely uncalled for.

(BLAKE starts to move to ANAPALA to help her up. VALERIE abruptly cuts him off.)

GLOW: Maybe if she came to class once in a while she would understand what we are doing. . .the methodology, the procedures.

GLITTER: What an odd duck!

GLIMMER: A strange bird.

GLOW: Ducky.

TRI: I like that. Ducky. Quack, quack.

VALERIE: Isn't there a special class for someone like her?

YOJ: Like making paper airplanes that can't fly.

TRI: I'm not smart. I know that. But I would never- What a 'tard.

COLONY: I don't think-

GLOW: That's right. You don't think.

DR. BANCROFT: Find a spot. Find a spot!

(The CLASS begins to spread out.)

Grab your journal and. . .

YOJ: Can we write about crazy people?

DR. BANCROFT: As long as you make it autobiographical.

GLOW: What a screwball. Ducky.

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DR. BANCROFT: Enough. Write. Just write.
(ANAPALA is on her knees center, trying to put the water back in the bottle. DR. BANCROFT is glassed over.)

VALERIE: It's only a metaphor you ridiculous quack.

GLIMMER: Did anyone film that? Anger management much?

GLITTER: That's better than that girl who ate her own hair. Remember her?

GLOW: Her bangs are lopsided now.

VALERIE: I think her head cocked unnaturally to one side after that.

GLOW: It still does. She looks like a confused Cocker Spaniel or a tourist trying to will the Leaning Tower of Pisa to straighten out
(demonstrates this by moving her head).

GLITTER: And she doesn't match. Ever.

(The lights slowly fade as ANAPALA stands up and puts the water bottle cap on and takes it off over and over. As the lights go down the others continue to murmur the slurs.)

VALERIE: Ducky.

GLOW: Plain brown duck.

GLITTER: Duck, duck, duck. . .

GLIMMER: Wow, what's it like to be at the absolute bottom of the social food chain?

YOJ: Ducky.

TRI: Ducky.

(The "IN-CROWD" repeats "Ducky", "Plain brown duck", and other derogatory names until the blackout is complete.)

SCENE 3 – "TINY"

In the darkness COLONY screams. When the lights come up SHE is alone. All her belongings have been taken, and SHE is curled up in a ball.

COLONY: (COLONY notices an ant on her face. SHE gently picks it off with her finger. The bulk of the lines should be directed toward the fourth wall.) Don't worry. I won't hurt you. You got away relatively unscathed. I guess any day you're not completely crushed is a good one. You are my hope. I guess it would be clichéd to call you Hope. Tiny Tank. Small but mighty. We're advanced compared to you. Mostly in our clumsiness and cruelty. (COLONY crosses to the fourth wall) But you can go discover. You'll be like Lewis and

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Clark, well, either one you want. The vast uncharted territory. What must that be like? Look at the mountains and valleys and expansive . . . (*COLONY holds her hand out so that the ant can climb onto the wall. The G-GIRLS walk in as COLONY is placing the ant on the wall*) Go on. I'm jealous. I really am. Why can't we all be just as anonymously productive as ants?

GLOW: Oh, you are. Trust me. You can go throw all your originality into the gaping mouth of a volcano for all I care. Or I'll get a pet anteater.

GLITTER: What's your name? Something with a C . . .

GLIMMER: It's a punctuation mark. Am I right? Comma . . .

GLITTER: Colon!

GLOW: Is your name Colon?

COLONY: Colony.

GLIMMER: Really. You were doomed from the birth canal.

COLONY: Names are important. What they mean is important.

GLOW: True. When I was born, my mother told me that a light, a piercing white light exuded from me. So intense was this light that everyone in the delivery room had to shield their eyes and move away from me. She said that no one could touch me for hours because of the heat and light pouring forth from me. Some travel in the cloaked conformity of an ant colony, others in the stunning glory of their heavenly bodies.

GLITTER: The story changes slightly every time. Maybe you should write it down so the telling is not prone to the common errors that are characteristic of oral tradition.

GLOW: Colony. Here's the deal. Don't speak in acting class again. Ever. Let the stars shine and everyone else can move the set pieces. Got it? This little message you got today is nothing compared to what it will be like. Isolation is like a vacation compared to the social leper colony, Colony. And you're one pimple away from that.

(The bell rings. EVERYONE is moving around actively, except for COLONY, who is still watching the ant crawl away. LOBE takes another brick and crosses off.)

THE VOICE: Remember, Mallards, that ducks fly south, not out of fear, but due to an innate and highly refined sense of purpose. The CEO, the neurologist, and the star athlete all have this in common. If you are not planning on becoming one of those professionals, I will take a cheeseburger with curly fries; those are the ones that aren't straight. Try-outs for the football team are after school on the field for those with refined athletic skill and in the parking lot for

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those without, which is where most of you should go for try-outs, because you don't, and never will, have what it takes to make the team. Also, play auditions for *Hamlet* are after school today in the really dark room where all the vampires, I mean tortured artists, hang out. Fly high ducks and watch for synthetic quack sounds followed by shotgun blasts.

SCENE 4 – “TEED OFF”

HIKE is center stage holding a football with his index finger. The way someone might for an extra point attempt. HE moves the ball and does it again and again with supreme concentration.

TRI: Hey, hey. Look at what we have here.

HIKE: Yes sir, Captain!

TRI: Well, I like that. You want me to sign that for you?

HIKE: You threw for three-thousand yards and twenty-seven touchdowns last year.

BLAKE: And thirty-three interceptions.

TRI: Hey.

HIKE: It's bound to happen. You take big risks to win games.

BLAKE: We have your new fan club President right here.

HIKE: *(pulls out his inhaler and breathes into it)* Well, I plan on playing this year.

TRI: Playing. Whew-wee! You look like you have enough trouble breathing. What position?

HIKE: Holder.

TRI: Like for extra points, field goals . . .

HIKE: Kickoffs exclusively.

TRI: Well, pop my cork and call me fermented, overpriced, bubbly water! There is no such position.

HIKE: *(inhales with deep anxiety)* But I've been practicing. *(nervously releases his breath)*

TRI: Listen, Forrest Gump, they got this little plastic thing, called a tee. The ball is placed on the tee and the kicker kicks it. There aren't any holders. Okay? So why don't you take off your helmet before I tackle you just out of principle.

HIKE: Sorry. I just wanted to be on the team.

TRI: Yeah. Maybe you can wash the jockstraps. Blake, you got one of those pens you're giving to everyone to encourage a landslide that will wipe out all of civilization and make you the ruler of nothing?

BLAKE: Of course. *(handing it to HIKE)* Remember Blake for President.

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TRI: Now let me sign that ball for you. (*Takes the ball, writes on it and then tosses it to HIKE; exits.*)

BLAKE: Remember Blake for President. I am a voice for the downtrodden, not that you are . . . well you get what I mean. (*Starts to leave, comes back*) I am for you. (*Starts to leave, comes back*) Vote for me. Blake Kennedy . . . for President. (*exits*)

HIKE: (*reading the inscription on the ball*) Bring a sweater, game nights get a little cold, especially in the bleachers. Tri. (*Takes a slow and deliberate breath and releases it with a trembling exhalation.*)

SCENE 5 – “THE DEEPER MEANING OF MOPPING”

CASSIE is mopping near or around center stage when ANAPALA enters and quickly exits, enters, watches for a moment, and then exits. SHE then enters and stands motionless.

CASSIE: You should get P.E. credit for as much as you move around.

ANAPALA: I move a lot.

CASSIE: Yes, you do.

ANAPALA: Movement isn't always progression.

CASSIE: True. Why aren't you in class?

ANAPALA: Math. I can't work in pencil. Smudges.

CASSIE: I understand. A lot of my life involves cleaning up smudges as well. How is Acting One?

ANAPALA: I knocked a water bottle out of Dr. Bancroft's hand.

CASSIE: Was it part of an exercise?

ANAPALA: Yes.

CASSIE: It was probably brilliant then.

ANAPALA: I was not participating in the exercise.

CASSIE: Well. The good doctor either loves you or . . .

ANAPALA: Or?

CASSIE: Or you'll never act again. At least on planet earth.

ANAPALA: Oh.

CASSIE: Do you like to act?

ANAPALA: I'm not sure. Not sure I even know what it is.

CASSIE: There are people who get paid a lot of money to do it, and they don't know what it is either. You should try out for the play.

ANAPALA: *Hamlet*. Is usually a boy.

CASSIE: True. Historically, *Hamlet* is often played by a boy. But Sarah Bernhardt played it. And Asta Nielsen. Angela Winkler. And . . . there have been others.

ANAPALA: So a girl can be *Hamlet*?

CASSIE: Though it is a rare occurrence, I believe so.

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ANAPALA: A girl can be Hamlet.

CASSIE: Maybe you?

ANAPALA: Maybe me, what?

CASSIE: Maybe you can be . . .

ANAPALA: Be . . .

CASSIE: Hamlet.

ANAPALA: Oh. *(Stunned and a little high, ANAPALA starts to exit.)*

CASSIE: Where are you going?

ANAPALA: To be Hamlet.

CASSIE: Oh.

(ANAPALA exits.)

LOBE: I hate to trouble you, but could you direct me to my class?

CASSIE: What class?

LOBE: Flourless Cuisine for the Purist Vegan with a Sweet Tooth.

CASSIE: You know this is not the Cordon Bleu?

LOBE: I'm just looking for my class.

CASSIE: Home Economics is in C-213 *(indicating)*, which is that way.

(CASSIE continues to mop as LOBE takes another brick from the downstage wall.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE 6 - "THE GARRY KASPAROV EXPERIMENT"

We hear thumping sounds in the darkness. ROOK and RATTLE are playing chess on a small table downstage when the lights come up.

ROOK: Watch your knight.

RATTLE: A3.

ROOK: Swing your rook.

RATTLE: D3.

ROOK: Very aggressive.

RATTLE: E3, F4, G3 . . .

ROOK: Watch your pawns.

RATTLE: Zero to two-hundred and eighteen possibilities.

ROOK: You can't just blindly . . .

RATTLE: Ten to the forty-third power.

ROOK: . . . forge ahead . . .

RATTLE: Persia circa six-hundred.

ROOK: . . . with your intended strategy . . .

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RATTLE: Ninth century Russia.

ROOK: . . . without considering . . .

RATTLE: Iberian Peninsula, tenth century.

ROOK: . . . your opponents . . .

RATTLE: Thirteenth century, *Book of Games*.

ROOK: . . . skill set . . .

RATTLE: 1475, pawn revolution.

ROOK: . . . tendencies . . .

RATTLE: 1851, first modern tournament.

ROOK: . . . strategy, feelings, momentary extemporaneous whims . . .

RATTLE: Steinitz defeats Zukertort, 1886.

ROOK: . . . you are not playing your opponent . . .

RATTLE: 1927, Vera Menchik.

ROOK: . . . you are playing a preconceived . . .

RATTLE: Dethroned champ's 365-day rematch right.

ROOK: . . . static game plan . . .

RATTLE: 1975, Fischer refuses to defend.

ROOK: . . . play me . . .

RATTLE: Karpov, Karpov, Karpov!

ROOK: . . . not the board . . .

RATTLE: 1985.

ROOK: . . . not the . . .

RATTLE: Kasparov's.

ROOK: . . . board . . .

RATTLE: Offensive.

ROOK: Check.

RATTLE: 2851.

ROOK: Check.

RATTLE: IBM's Deep Blue.

ROOK: Check.

RATTLE: Defeats Kasparov.

ROOK: Check . . . check . . . check.

RATTLE: Speed and brute force.

ROOK: Checkmate. But no imagination.

(RATTLE gets up and goes to the upstage chalkboard wall and begins to write feverishly.)

ROOK: Zugzwang.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 7 – “THE COOL SIDE OF THE WORLD”

The “IN-CROWD” is having their lunch in the cool section of campus.

GLITTER: Here is something to consider.

GLIMMER: Please don't try to wash philosophical.

VALERIE: Wax philosophical.

GLIMMER: Wash first. Then wax.

GLITTER: Was this area “the place to be” before we got here, or did we make it the place to be by being here?

GLOW: Social Manifest Destiny.

BLAKE: Are you kidding?

GLOW: Why don't you go hand out some of your promotional pens?

VALERIE: *(to GLOW)* Just because you don't know how to spell your name, don't discriminate against the pen.

GLOW: I will if they are cheap. I would rather be stylishly illiterate than dull and smart. That's the difference between an AGS zero, three carat diamond with pristine clarity and a common rock.

GLITTER: And how tacky is it to use a cheap disposable pen, anyway? What message are you sending when you write down your number with a pen that doesn't even match your outfit?

GLIMMER: Very true. In fact, today I coordinated my entire outfit around these earrings. *(Reaches up to indicate her earrings. One earring is missing.)* Oh! Oh, my. Glitter? Am I . . . am I missing one?

GLITTER: One what?

GLIMMER: Earring. Am I missing an earring?

GLITTER: *(in a horrified stage whisper)* Don't move. *(looking carefully)* Yes.

BLAKE: Don't panic. I mean, are they significant or valuable?

GLIMMER: Need you even ask?

VALERIE: We can look for it.

YOJ: You mean scrounge around on the ground. Aren't there people who do that?

TRI: Yeah, there's a club or something. Like the Lost and Find Club.

VALERIE: Found.

TRI: I like “find” better.

VALERIE: Why?

TRI: If it's found, why do they need a club to look for it?

GLIMMER: I hear sirens and my pulse is all jumpy. Do you hear it?

GLOW: No.

GLITTER: Of course not. This is her fashion crisis. She is the only one who is riddled by its dilapidating effects.

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GLIMMER: I have to go to the nurse.

GLITTER: She won't understand. I saw her wearing blue cowboy boots, white jeans, and a red parka last week.

VALERIE: At least she was patriotic.

GLITTER: You can only pull that off on the Fourth of July.

GLOW: And maybe President's Day.

GLITTER: I have to veto the outfit regardless. Simply based on her skin tone.

GLIMMER: I am going home to change my entire outfit! I look like a pirate. And as much as I love Johnny Depp, I don't want to be one. I get sea sick and I don't like bandanas or eye patches, or stumps, or other random things that replace the parts of pirates that are eaten by . . . well, whatever parts savage predators that like to eat parts of pirates eat! (*paralyzed in a panic-stricken state*)

GLITTER: Yeah, Johnny Depp is hot.

YOJ: I saw him in a movie when he was a kid. He was hot even then.

GLOW: I think they can tell as soon as we pop out as babies. Some need to be removed with oven mitts, and others are just room temperature leftovers.

YOJ: I don't think any newborn baby is average. Isn't there something extraordinary in each of us?

VALERIE: Good one. Blake, you can use something like that for your campaign speech. There is something extraordinary in each of us.

BLAKE: I like it.

TRI: You know, Val, you aren't going to be the First Lady if Blake gets elected.

BLAKE: What do you mean "if"?

VALERIE: (*to TRI*) Why don't you go throw something?

GLIMMER: I'm a little terrified over here.

BLAKE: Got it! Just take off the other earring.

VALERIE: Oh, how naive, Sweetie.

GLITTER: People who dress without accessories are a lower form of the species.

GLOW: I agree. There are places for them.

YOJ: Like law school and medical school.

GLITTER: And prison. You can't have accessories in prison. They can be used as weapons.

(ANAPALA enters and walks immediately up to GLIMMER. ANAPALA places something in GLIMMER's hand and closes it. SHE squeezes GLIMMER's hand. ANAPALA leans over and whispers something into GLIMMER's ear. At first, GLIMMER is frightened and tense, SHE then seems soothed and comforted. ANAPALA pulls away abruptly and exits. GLIMMER covers quickly to mask the impact of the interaction.)

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GLIMMER: Ducky. Go back to your own dirty side of the pond . . .
Ducky freak!

GLOW: What did she say to you?

GLIMMER: Some weird freak-talk.

YOJ: I want to know exactly what she said.

BLAKE: Me too.

VALERIE: Good. Get to know your constituents. Find out what they think and feel.

YOJ: Secrets are so . . .

GLOW: Dirty! Dirty, rotten, festering-

YOJ: Intriguing.

GLOW: That, too.

GLITTER: What did she give you?

GLIMMER: I don't know.

VALERIE: Well, look.

BLAKE: Open your hand.

YOJ: It could be something symbolic.

VALERIE: Or highly volatile.

GLOW: Dangerous. Like a poisonous spider.

GLITTER: Or the antidote for a poisonous spider bite.

VALERIE: Why would she need an antidote for a bite she hasn't received yet?

GLITTER: Preventative medicine.

YOJ: Open your hand.

TRI: I hope it's one of those flowering fireworks that dances like an angry, flaming Tasmanian Devil.

GLIMMER: Shh! (*peeks into her hand and then closes it*) This is like having my sweet sixteen party all over again, only this time I really don't know that I am getting a GT convertible.

GLITTER: Sweetie, there isn't a convertible in your hand.

GLIMMER: I know and I'm scared. The kind of scared that occurred during that dark tunnel of puberty.

GLOW: But then what happened?

GLIMMER: I came out of the tunnel . . .

GLOW: Of fear, disorientation, and degradation . . .

GLIMMER: And into the light of womanhood.

GLOW: Where you now bask and bathe.

GLITTER: Like a bubble bath of decadent delight.

YOJ: For the love of everything socially sacred, please open your hand!

GLIMMER: Oh. (*slowly opens her hand with her eyes squinted so SHE can not see clearly what the item is that has been placed in her hand.*) It's a fish hook . . . an exotic miniature reptile embryo . . . an imported French truffle, a small helpless tropical fish.

GLOW: Your earring!

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GLIMMER: It's a miracle!

GLOW: Or the work of a dark and evil force. Ducky took your earring and the forces of good, i.e. us, brought it back. Like some kind of benevolent earring fairy.

GLIMMER: Someone has to pay for this.

YOJ: For what? You got it back.

GLIMMER: Look at me. I'm a mess. I've aged three hours in nine minutes.

GLITTER: We're fortunate it didn't take longer to find it. You'd be dead.

GLOW: Get your stale bread crumbs out, girls. It's time to do a little social taxidermy without representation.

VALERIE: You're sick. And you might want to take better notes in your Government and Anatomy classes.

YOJ: I'm confused. Didn't she bring it back?

GLOW: Dead duck!

GLITTER: Yep.

GLIMMER: Oh. How dare she bring my earring back?

GLOW: After stealing it.

GLIMMER: Thief.

GLOW: And to think I used to feel sorry for her.

GLITTER: Yeah, me too.

GLOW: No more pity for the underprivileged.

GLITTER: No more.

GLIMMER: No . . . more.

GLOW: Pity.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 8 – “THE UNDERPRIVILEGED SIDE OF THE WORLD”

The OUTCASTS sit around eating their lunches and engaging in various activities. RATTLE is scribbling away on the chalkboard walls. ROOK is playing both sides of a chess match by physically moving from one side of the board to the other. LOBE is half heartedly searching for something. COLONY is scrutinizing the fourth wall. REMIE is asleep on her books and notes. HIKE is practicing holding a football for extra points. The activity continues until ANAPALA enters reading a copy of Hamlet.

ANAPALA: (*practicing*) “Words, words, words. Words, words, words.”

RATTLE: Historically, it has been rare for a woman to play Hamlet.

ANAPALA: Women have played it. Sarah Bernhardt.

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RATTLE: At this point, it is an uncalculated risk. One would have to gather endless data to determine the gender disparity between male and female Hamlets.

ANAPALA: I see.

COLONY: That's all the more reason to try.

ANAPALA: Really?

COLONY: In fact, I will audition as well!

LOBE: I would rather try to defeat Bobby Fischer without my queen.

COLONY: What does that even mean?

RATTLE: The sans queen scenario was played one thousand times by computer, and the side that started without a queen won two out of one thousand matches or point zero, zero, two percent of the time. And that was when the sides were at the same skill level. One could only guess how much more daunting the odds are for the novice against a master given the same handicap.

COLONY: I like those odds. Like them very much.

RATTLE: It is a losing proposition.

COLONY: So is life, then. What are you working so feverishly on?

RATTLE: A very difficult, some say, unsolvable problem.

COLONY: Then you understand. We are the point zero, zero, two.

(GLOW leads the "IN-CROWD" onto the stage. The OTHER MEMBERS of the "IN-CROWD" create a perimeter so that "The OUTCASTS" can not escape.)

GLOW: Ducky.

(GLOW pulls ANAPALA center stage.)

You are accused of theft in the highest court in the land! How do you plead?

ANAPALA: I don't know.

GLOW: Ignorance is akin to guilt.

ANAPALA: I didn't take anything.

GLOW: Exhibit A. See Glimmer's right earlobe.

(GLIMMER displays it for the group.)

GLOW: You can grovel and beg for mercy at this time for a lesser sentence.

GLITTER: A bird of your sort should be ostracized. Get it? An ostrich is a type of bird.

(ANAPALA stands motionless trying to disappear.)

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YOJ: Is this really necessary?

GLOW: Yes, really.

(GLOW signals to the “IN-CROWD” who gather around ANAPALA, each on their individual line placing their hands on her and pushing her down to the ground until SHE is virtually covered and can not be seen.)

GLITTER: Of course.

GLOW: Wobbly flight patterns are dangerous for everyone.

BLAKE: They upset the normal population.

GLOW: Causing hysteria.

VALERIE: And social blindness.

GLOW: Uncoordinated inconsistency.

TRI: Constant spasms of tripping and falling.

GLOW: They can not continue.

GLIMMER: Without justice.

GLOW: Justice.

YOJ: Maybe.

GLOW: There is a time for kindness.

YOJ: And this is . . . not . . . the . . . time.

(When the “IN-CROWD” is surrounding ANAPALA, THEY begin moving their bodies up and down around her, pushing her down as SHE slowly pushes upwards. As this section of the scene progresses ANAPALA provides more and more physical resistance, volume, and intensity. The lines in this section are from Hamlet.)

GLOW: “But that dread of something after death . . .”

ANAPALA: “The undiscover’d country, from whose bourn . . .”

GLOW: “No traveler returns . . .”

ANAPALA: “Puzzles the will . . .”

GLOW: “And makes us rather bear those ills we have . . .”

ANAPALA: “Than fly to others that we know not of . . .”

GLOW: “Thus conscience does make cowards of us all . . .”

ANAPALA: “And thus the native hue of resolution . . .”

GLOW: “Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought . . .”

ANAPALA: “And enterprises of great pitch and moment . . .”

GLOW: “With this regard their currents turn awry . . .”

ANAPALA: “And lose the name of action.”

BOTH: *(Building)* “Soft you now. Soft you now. Soft you now.”

ANAPALA: “Soft you now!”

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(This build continues until ANAPALA breaks out of the collective prison of arms on her line “Soft you now!” and moves powerfully and with full assertiveness downstage. The OTHERS fall weakly in behind her.)

GLOW: “Be all my sins rememb’red”

BLACKOUT

SCENE 9 – “SPOT LIGHT”

THE VOICE comes on in a much more panicked and less professional way than in previous announcements. The only person on stage is CASSIE who is sweeping until SHE is prompted to do otherwise.

THE VOICE: Excuse me everyone, I need you to stop what you are doing and look for my car keys. This wouldn't be a big deal except I just upgraded to a loaded Lexus coupe. So we are looking for a key with an L and my key chain has a neon pink rabbit's foot on it that says “Big Poppa”. Long story. So wherever you are, look, I mean really look. This is a code red! Code red! Code red! Cassie, please look through that garbage can. Yeah, that one right there. Just dump the garbage out and spread it around. It will make it easier.

(CASSIE stands in disbelief.)

This is a time sensitive matter. Go, go, go, go!

(CASSIE turns the garbage can over and starts looking through it reluctantly.)

There will be a prize for the person who finds my . . . Oh, here they are. Right here. Cargo pants are amazing. All these pockets. It is hard to believe that utility can actually become futility. Thank you, Mallards. We are back to business as usual. Oh, Cassie could you pick that up? You should be more discreet and cautious.

(CASSIE starts to pick up the debris. LOBE enters, takes a brick and tries to exit unnoticed. CASSIE looks up for a moment and LOBE freezes as if caught in the act of a heinous crime, gripping the brick tightly in her hands.)

LOBE: I . . . hate . . . to trouble . . . you, but . . . could you . . .

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CASSIE: Direct you to your class. Let me guess. Organically fueled alternative forms of transportation seen in the writings of Ray Bradbury.

LOBE: Excuse me, I better be on my way to Algebra.

CASSIE: Just put it in your bag.

LOBE: (*Turning to CASSIE but not revealing the brick*) Put what in my bag?

CASSIE: Never mind.

LOBE: It doesn't bother me that you know. I trust you.

CASSIE: Great, the trust of a thief. That and the loyalty of a turncoat and I'll be set.

LOBE: We all have secrets.

CASSIE: Yours just happen to be misdemeanors. And they tape everything here anyway. They know. They're probably just waiting for you to reach some quota before they bust you.

LOBE: Good.

CASSIE: What's good? The fact that it is only a misdemeanor, that everything is taped, that they are omniscient, that you will reach a quota before you are expelled? At least pick something that has value and is lighter.

LOBE: Sometimes you have to play the role you are given.

CASSIE: I'll give you that. You've embraced this clandestine kleptomaniac role pretty well.

LOBE: Thanks.

(LOBE exits. CASSIE works quietly for a moment. ANAPALA enters and watches her, unnoticed. DR. BANCROFT enters and observes discreetly.)

CASSIE: "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world."

ANAPALA: I agree, that is a lot of debris.

CASSIE: Call it what it is, other people's garbage.

ANAPALA: That was from *Hamlet*.

CASSIE: Other people's garbage, no, that's from me.

ANAPALA: No, no. The other thing. The "weary, stale, flat . . ."

CASSIE: Yes, yes. I read a play once.

ANAPALA: But you said it and it was real.

CASSIE: Based on the direct stimulus of this activity, I simply injected what I was feeling into the lines.

ANAPALA: Oh my.

(CASSIE looks caught.)

ANAPALA: Someone's hand is caught in the . . .

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CASSIE: Mousetrap!

ANAPALA: You're an actor!

CASSIE: In other lives, I have been many other things.

ANAPALA: There are still pieces of it in you. Big enough pieces to recognize what they are . . .

CASSIE: Pieces are lost in the trash.

ANAPALA: "Do you know me, my lord?"

CASSIE: "Excellent well. You are a fishmonger." (*Frustrated with the temporary possession*) No!

ANAPALA: "Not I, my lord."

CASSIE: "Then I would you were so honest a man." (*CASSIE releases a groan of dissatisfaction. The lines are coming despite her efforts to stop them.*)

ANAPALA: "Honest, my lord?"

CASSIE: "Ay, sir. To be honest, as the world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand." I might as well be stealing bricks!

ANAPALA: You know it. You know it!

CASSIE: I played it! Alright. I played it. In another life, on another planet.

ANAPALA: Amazing. Help me do it.

CASSIE: Do what? Chase some ridiculous pipe dream? Save all your tips to bet them on some rickety bus bound to Broadway or L.A? For what? It's a trash compactor! It's reality personified and it eats seventeen leading ladies a day from every geographic and socioeconomic demographic on the map. Don't sip from that wonderful poison.

ANAPALA: But you told me.

CASSIE: What?

ANAPALA: A girl can play Hamlet.

CASSIE: Yes. That's before I saw that look in your eyes.

ANAPALA: What look?

CASSIE: Trust me. Go play some miniature golf or something.

ANAPALA: But I thought you believed in me.

CASSIE: It's a possession, pure and simple.

(*DR. BANCROFT steps forward.*)

DR. BANCROFT: One out of ten-thousand is about right. Just because you were one of the nine thousand, nine hundred, and ninety-nine that didn't do it, don't begrudge those who can. (*To ANAPALA*)

Auditions are starting in a few minutes, Adrianna.

ANAPALA: Anapala.

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DR. BANCROFT: See you in a few minutes. *(moving toward CASSIE)*
Ah, Cassie, one of my classroom bulbs went out. Could you change it?

CASSIE: Yeah.

DR. BANCROFT: Before auditions would be super. I have to see the actors' faces.

(DR. BANCROFT exits in a flourish before CASSIE can speak. CASSIE then speaks out to the fourth wall.)

CASSIE: Yeah. Have to do that. I really do.

ANAPALA: You're not talking about a light bulb are you?

CASSIE: No, I guess I'm not.

(CASSIE finishes picking up the trash on the ground. ANAPALA helps CASSIE pick up.)

ANAPALA: Aren't you going to wish me luck?

CASSIE: Absolutely not.

ANAPALA: Oh.

(ANAPALA is motionless. CASSIE gathers her work items and starts to exit.)

CASSIE: Well, I'm not going to wish you luck.

(ANAPALA continues to wait. CASSIE stops. ANAPALA stares straight out. CASSIE looks at ANAPALA for a moment and then exits. CASSIE speaks from offstage. ANAPALA stands alone.)

CASSIE: Break a leg.

(ANAPALA smiles.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE 10 - "ODD-ITION"

ANAPALA stays perfectly still in the darkness. The OTHER STUDENTS move in around her. Each STUDENT auditioning will be part of the "Audition Machine". Each will be moving, warming up, preparing, and talking to themselves while ANAPALA remains perfectly still. During this sequence ALL the CHARACTERS will

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Speak exclusively in gibberish. This will build and build to a heightened level of intensity. When it is the CHARACTERS turn to speak THEY will deliver their lines at full volume while the rest of the CHARACTERS go through the motions and mumble their lines.

GLOW: (*Pacing wildly and talking to herself*) Imaiski talkski poetus prettious. Pow! Pow! Enormatiffic.

GLIMMER: (*Rocking back and forth*) Lobamatic, lobatron, lobaraycon, loblobloblob!

GLITTER: (*Touching her toes and then reaching for the sky*)

Shiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii! WaaaeEEEEEEEEEEEE! Talka, talka, talka!

VALERIE: (*Curling up into a ball and then opening up like a flower*)

Belliocerum, provokius, tink, tunk, thunk, ronk.

BLAKE: (*Shaking fists to create vocal vibrations*) Haaamma, meemma, ama, fama, pounch, pounch, pounch!

YOJ: (*Spinning in a circle, freezing, and then repeating the process*)

Ra, re, ri, ro, ru! Ru, ro, ri, re, ra! Ra, ra, re, re, ri, ri, ro, ru, ru!

TRI: (*Jumping up in the air with celebratory fist pumping*)

Vikkiwickiwagtagbedbug! Digdugdirthurtmachomanwearaskirt!

COLONY: (*Holding arms out as if in flight*) Cooooooticooooooo!

Freebed, freebeed, fret, fret, fret!

ROOK: (*Placing closed fist on chest and then opening both arms fully*)

Thumpecka thanka. Thumpecka trinka! Thumpa bumpa pumpa!

REMIE: (*Sleeping downstage, suddenly stands up and speaks.*)

Zorzeem! Zeezram! Zonkink! Zoopoll!

LOBE: (*Darting across the stage, searching*) Eorthnest! Seethest!

Notouth! Weept!

RATTLE: (*Punching the numbers of a huge imaginary calculator*) Nero!

Fwo! Tix! Ene! Shree!

HIKE: (*Pretending to spike a football*) Hitcha, richa, kicha! Ceetch!

Ceetch! Ceetch!

(The ENSEMBLE stands facing downstage. Their lips are still moving as THEY softly recite their gibberish lines. This continues until HIKE, with a sudden burst of confidence yells “Ceetch!” at which point the ENSEMBLE falls silent.)

ANAPALA: “They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that.”

(DR. BANCROFT enters.)

DR. BANCROFT: Anna, you’re up! Anna!

ANAPALA: Anapala.

DR. BANCROFT: Sure. Step forward to the green X.

(DR. BANCROFT crosses downstage to the green X. ANAPALA stays frozen.)

It's your time.

(ANAPALA reluctantly crosses to the green X. The LITTLE GIRL enters and crosses to the green X and stands in front of ANAPALA. THEY speak the following in unison. The gibberish lines can grow in volume and intensity after the line is completed.)

BOTH: "I will speak . . ."

(The gibberish continues and builds in feverish intensity as the lights fade to black.)

END ACT I

Do Not Copy

ACT II

PROLOGUE

THE LITTLE GIRL is standing alone center stage when the lights come up. SHE is confused and disoriented and is clearly looking for someone or something. The G-GIRLS enter and begin to move in a pattern very similar to the one at the top of the show. THE LITTLE GIRL tries to follow them but is left behind as the G-GIRLS move quickly off stage with complete confidence. The LITTLE GIRL pauses for a moment and then runs after the G-GIRLS.

SCENE 1 – “LISTS!”

GLOW enters screaming and clutching a piece of paper. GLITTER and GLIMMER follow close behind and then the rest of the “IN-CROWD” make their way in, as if THEY are audience members for a reality television show or a gladiator match.

GLOW: This must be some kind of mistake!

GLITTER: Yes.

GLIMMER: Of course.

VALERIE: Try to look at this rationally.

GLOW: How can you look at something irrational, rationally?

GLITTER: I close my left eye. We learned in psych class that if your right eye is open, it engages your left brain, which controls objective, rational thought.

VALERIE: That actually almost makes sense.

GLITTER: Do you think I should run some tests . . . see if it is a viable theory?

GLOW: Excuse me, but this is my meltdown!

GLIMMER: Try to calm down, Glow. Remember the pupil thing.

GLOW: Yes, yes. Breathe, breathe. Ever since that Betsy Bickerpelt wore a pants suit and flip flops, I have been leery of getting worked up. My pupils dilate like giant oil slicks. The pretty periwinkle blue (or the actor playing GLOW's real eye color) of my eyes becomes distorted with large pools of nondescript blackness. And there is nothing worse than that. Well, except maybe this. (SHE holds up the list) Gravedigger!

GLIMMER: Second Gravedigger.

GLOW: What?

GLIMMER: Yes, it states quite clearly that you are the Second Gravedigger.

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GLOW: Any kind of digging is completely out of the question. But grave digging. I would rather scrounge through last season's clearance rack than degrade myself with such filth. Do you know what that will do to my manicure? Dirt and debris are not good for the cuticles.

GLITTER: Well, you're not going to take it. Are you?

GLOW: Precisely brilliant! We will all turn down our parts. There can't be a show without us.

GLITTER: Actually . . . I got Horatio and I like the character journey . . . a little.

GLOW: You like the character journey?

BLAKE: I got Ophelia, and I think for me as a man, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

VALERIE: And it is good for votes, especially with the members of WHAM. Women Hating Arrogant Men. In some of the primaries, Blake was perceived as overtly masculine and even called a misogynist.

GLOW: Glimmer, what did you get?

GLIMMER: Gravedigger.

GLOW: The third one? Fourth? Fifth?

VALERIE: There are only two.

GLOW: Oh, wow. Wow.

YOJ: So, who got? You know? Who got the lead?

(EVERYONE falls silent and looks around awkwardly.)

GLOW: No, no, no, no! *(SHE looks and freezes in disbelief)* Not her. This is like the distant sounds of the headless horsemen of the apocalypse coming to hide my heart under the floorboards where it will beat as an ominous warning for future generations of popular princesses.

YOJ: Truthfully, she had the best audition. She deserved it.

GLOW: Oh, she fits the freaky psychological profile! I get it. One black-cloaked misfit deserves another.

YOJ: Or maybe the better actor got the part.

GLOW: Cute. I'll tell you what. As a sign of respect and a celebratory gesture, I think we should throw her a party. Replete with party punch. Girls, we still know how to make the witch's brew. Correct?

GLIMMER: Yeah, but . . .

GLITTER: Of course.

GLOW: Then we'll see if she can handle her newfound success.

Because I think we all know that the real cast lists never get put on neat little sheets of paper. The messy truth is an indelible reminder of the fact that the structures of power are forged over the course of

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generations. And they are not to be trifled with or amended. They stand as constant constellations, beacons of hope, that are never altered or changed.

YOJ: Except for a shooting star.

GLOW: What?

YOJ: That would change the constant constellation.

GLOW: Yes, it would. Feels good to be right, doesn't it? I used to be right all the time.

YOJ: Maybe you were wrong so often that it just seemed like you were right.

GLOW: What are you saying? That my life is a lie?

YOJ: I prefer to call it a piece of historical fiction.

GLOW: Why do we even let you hang out with us? You've always been moderate. With your little comments about saving the poor oil drenched water fowl. You like them. Don't you? You sympathize with them. Like some poor depraved transients that you pledge a buck to each month to make yourself feel better. Take the plunge. Go on! Join them. You've got one foot in the grave-

GLIMMER: Digger, that's me. And you. Me and you.

YOJ: The reason you pick on them is because they know who they are. They have an identity. And you don't. It infuriates you that you have no idea who you are. Well, I will not be your valet, courtier, henchperson, and evil cheerleader any longer. I will not play Horatio to your Hamlet unless the play is called Horatio! So whatever bizarre oaths and perverse promises we made are null and void.

GLOW: Whatever, Yoj. What kind of name is that anyway? Yoj.

Sounds like a Tai Chi instructor or some cartoon bear or something.

GLIMMER: Just for the record, I always thought your name was pretty.

GLOW: Yeah, if you've got it painted on your forehead and you are looking in a mirror.

(YOJ exits.)

Ah, banishment.

VALERIE: She left on her own.

GLOW: Exile.

VALERIE: Not really.

GLOW: Quarantine.

VALERIE: She doesn't have the bubonic plague.

GLOW: Deportation.

VALERIE: Same country.

GLOW: Extradition.

VALERIE: Not even close.

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GLOW: Hermitage.

VALERIE: I assume there will be other people around.

GLOW: Implosion.

VALERIE: Nice idea but physiologically improbable.

GLOW: Well, she just really, really sucks then.

VALERIE: Maybe. Blake, you should go after her. Make sure she is not part of the swing vote. Dominance is the only option.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 2 – “DEEP”

Acting class. The STUDENTS are standing around in a similar formation to the first acting scene. DR. BANCROFT is finishing an exercise with the class.

DR. BANCROFT: And exhale. And inhale. Hold it, two, three, and exhale. Imagine you are going under water. Take a nice full, deep inhalation and physicalize being underwater. Hold your breath.

(The CLASS MEMBERS do this in different ways; some are more committed than others, bending their knees, or curling up, etc.)

What does it feel like? What is the visibility like? Is there water life around you? Fish? Plant life? Microorganisms? Do you feel out of place? Do you feel tranquil? Or is panic starting to creep in? Trust your capacity. Your lung capacity. Feel the vitality and power. That's right, there is power, even in your limitations.

(A few students stand up gasping for breath.)

Hold it, hold it. Now imagine something is clinging to your leg, trying to pull you down, trying to pull you into the murky depths. Fight it.

(A few more retreat to the standing position, gasping for breath.)

There must be some fight in you. Move your arms. Try to struggle to the surface.

(ALL the OTHERS except for BLAKE and ANAPALA come to the surface.)

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You feel heaviness and fatigue. Reach, reach. You can see a faint sliver of light.

(ANAPALA looks sick but will not come up for air. BLAKE notices this and aborts the exercise.)

Reach for the-

BLAKE: Can we stop?

DR. BANCROFT: For the light.

BLAKE: She will not stop.

(ANAPALA continues to stay under water.)

Tell her she can stop.

DR. BANCROFT: Reach, reach!

(ANAPALA continues to reach.)

BLAKE: Anapala, stop! *(moves to pull her up)*

DR. BANCROFT: Do not touch her!

BLAKE: Stop. It is okay to stop.

DR. BANCROFT: You can not possibly understand . . .

(BLAKE grabs ANAPALA and starts to pull her up in a kind of makeshift lifesaving move. ANAPALA is weak and disoriented as if SHE has taken in water.)

DR. BANCROFT: Let her go! You clone! You fabricated puppet!

(DR. BANCROFT grabs BLAKE by the shirt and moves him swiftly down stage center. The lines overlap the action as DR. BANCROFT pushes BLAKE to the floor. The OTHER STUDENTS counter behind in shock and disbelief.)

DR. BANCROFT: What? No one can take risks? Only unopposed races for unimportant positions! Only neatly quaffed pompous platforms. No wind, only piped in air and sound and computer generated voices. Where is the pulse of the dreamer you spoiled, enhanced, glossy image from some overpriced prom catalog? *(now standing over BLAKE)* Is there something in there other than the soft pulpy mass of congealed mediocrity! This noise must stop. This useless carrying case must be destroyed. This can not continue. This can not! This can . . .

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(The line is stopped by ANAPALA's hand gently touching DR. BANCROFT's shoulder. DR. BANCROFT looks up.)

SCENE 3 – “PENNEED UP”

In the darkness THE VOICE speaks as setup and preparations are made for the scene. Most of the STUDENTS are sitting and lounging on the stage floor looking upstage at a podium when the lights come up. LOBE enters and while facing downstage puts another brick in her bag.

THE VOICE: It is that time of year for the candidates to face off in the same format as the Lincoln-Douglas debates of old. In this coliseum, the candidate's armor is made of policy and principle, and the weapons are the piercing words of the platinum-tipped arrow of truth or the blunt wrecking ball of a lie. In this political pugilism the blows that are exchanged will ring out through the centuries or at least on the pages of the yearbook. Perk up your ears and prepare to hear the words that could decide if two percent chocolate milk is part of our menu and whether words like Doritos and phrases like Rainbow Gummy Bears will become obsolete terms in a society of fiber-fit whole-grain vegan crackers and no-sugar-added-pure-cane-egg-white wafers. And now the candidates. Blake Kennedy and . . . *(in a poor stage whisper)* why do I only have one name here? Who is Blake debating? *(Returning to normal volume)* Blake Kennedy and himself. A probing look at the man inside the man and the boy he once was and how that boy climbed to this precipice . . . And here he is.

(VALERIE enters and stands at the podium.)

VALERIE: I am Valerie Larue, and I am Blake's campaign manager.

Blake regrets that he could not be here to-

BLAKE: *(Entering. Looking quite sick.)* Does anyone know how many votes I need to win?

(RATTLE's hand shoots up.)

RATTLE: One single solitary vote to win. Nineteen hundred and thirty-four votes to set a school record for highest number of votes for a student body President. Twenty-one hundred and seventeen votes to obtain the most votes for any candidate running for any office in the history of Mission High School. Sally Parker figuratively handed Bart Timkin his head in winning the office of Commissioner of

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Crosswalks in 1977. That position no longer exists, but the record is still very much intact. Of course all of these records need to be converted to percentages to account for the immense growth of the gross student population.

BLAKE: Thank you. One vote. My girlfriend slash campaign manager will take care of that.

RATTLE: Two votes.

BLAKE: Why?

RATTLE: You would naturally and unequivocally vote for yourself.

BLAKE: Why?

RATTLE: You are you and you are running.

BLAKE: Why?

YOJ: Blake, despite your social connections I would vote for you.

COLONY: I would also, Blake.

ROOK: Me, too.

TRI: Yeah, yeah. Me too.

HIKE: Me, too.

BLAKE: Listen, I want every single one of you to go cast a ballot with nothing on it.

RATTLE: A blank ballot. There is no data in that.

BLAKE: Yes, but there is a purpose.

(THE VOICE interjects.)

THE VOICE: Please disperse and return to your scheduled classes!

At this time we will immediately return to normal classroom activity.

Go finger paint or make a diorama or something! Disperse!

Disperse! This kind of assembly will not be tolerated.

BLAKE: Here! Take my pens. They're worth seven cents each. Isn't your freedom of choice worth more than seven cents?

RATTLE: There is some truth there. Even the gamut of items in the vending machine is a dollar. And there are twenty-five selections if none are sold out. And sometimes more if-

THE VOICE: Return to your classes or we will be forced to deploy security.

BLAKE: The power of zero! That's what it is.

THE VOICE: Disperse! Or we will let out the hounds!

RATTLE: Absolute zero! Yes! Yes!

BLAKE: Take the pens. Use them to write something original.

(The STUDENTS are calling out "vote for no one", "the power of zero", and "absolute zero". BLAKE starts throwing pens everywhere. STUDENTS are running and writing zeros on the chalkboard walls.)

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RATTLE: Zero times one is zero, zero times two is zero, zero times three is zero, zero times four is zero . . . *(continues in this progression until the end of the scene)*

THE VOICE: You leave us little choice if you do not cease and disperse immediately.

BLAKE: It is the ink that matters! Not the shell!

THE VOICE: This is your last warning! Prepare the laughing gas!

BLAKE: Not the shell! You are not the shell!

THE VOICE: Three . . . two . . . one . . . start laughing gas sequence.

(Smoke begins to fill the stage and EVERYONE is giddy with laughter and starts to exit except for BLAKE, VALERIE, and RATTLE, who is still furiously multiplying by zero. The remaining STUDENTS try to stifle their laughter. VALERIE tries to pull BLAKE away but gives up and exits. BLAKE moves downstage smiling as RATTLE continues to count.)

BLACKOUT

(RATTLE's counting and BLAKE's laughter continue into the darkness.)

SCENE 4 – “LUNCHEd”

ANAPALA is alone onstage with her children's lunch bag/box, something that is most certainly too young for her (Strawberry Shortcake, etc.). SHE is in the process of remaking her lunch in the fashion referred to earlier in the play. The G-GIRLS enter and watch ANAPALA for a repetition and then as ANAPALA continues THEY interject.

GLOW: So getting Hamlet hasn't changed you. Still the same old freak.

GLITTER: I would say most certainly.

GLIMMER: Yeah, I guess.

(ANAPALA ignores them and continues with the ritual.)

GLOW: My feelings are hurt Ducky. You're ignoring me! Say sorry.

GLITTER: Say sorry.

GLIMMER: *(Making a connection with ANAPALA that was established earlier)* Sorry.

GLOW: You took my part. Even pretty girls have a right to get a chance like that! Why is it only for you freaky ones? Just because

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you have real skulls in your room doesn't mean you know Yorick any better than I do. Stop doing that!

(GLOW knocks the item that ANAPALA is working with out of her hands. ANAPALA freezes for a moment.)

This was my ticket to the Ivy League. My swan wings versus your nasty duck feathered deformity. What've you got? What disease?

(ANAPALA tries to return to her ritual and GLOW knocks the item out of her hands. She freezes again.)

They got some neat little pink paper for you so that your teachers know not to crack the egg shell of the psycho-Humpty-Dumpty!

(ANAPALA tries to continue but is hit again. She tries again and is hit again. Again. Again. Again. She stops.)

Giving up is good! It extends the prey's life. Your life!

(In a burst of rage GLOW throws ANAPALA's lunch around the stage.)

Your lunch smells! Yuck! Barf! Puke! Putrid entrails! Who made it for you?

(GLOW opens the thermos and pours the contents on ANAPALA's head. As SHE is finishing CASSIE walks in, sees what is going on, and charges GLOW. SHE grabs her by the back of the hair and moves her downstage away from the other girls.)

CASSIE: *(In an intense, out-of-breath stage whisper)* Do you know who I am? Of course you don't. I have picked up your disposable caramel latte cups for four years. I have scraped your overpriced neon gum and recycled your illicit cocktail containers. And I have said nothing. And I was invisible until now.

THE VOICE: Cassie, you are in violation of the employee-student interaction policy. Please report to Reprimands and Promotions Department immediately.

(CASSIE slowly removes her hand from GLOW's head.)

CASSIE: I'm sorry. But I'm not sure what's real and what's weave. You might want it back, though. I'm pretty sure we can't clone a clone . . . yet.

GLOW: I hope that was worth it. Now your litter of little ones at home won't have any Pine Sol and toilet biscuits for dinner.

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(CASSIE walks toward the exit.)

GLOW: Janitor.

ANAPALA: Custodian. A person who safeguards things of value.

GLOW: *(to CASSIE)* Bye, bye.

(CASSIE exits and the lights fade as the walls move further downstage. The G-GIRLS move around ANAPALA.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE 5 – “WHO’S THE FAIREST”

During THE VOICE’s broadcast CASSIE stands center stage holding a cardboard box with very few personal items in it. DR. BANCROFT stands behind her. THEY are waiting. LOBE enters and quickly puts a brick in her backpack and exits. Near the end of the announcement ANAPALA walks upstage and begins to scribble on the board with a small piece of chalk.

THE VOICE: In order to maintain order and ensure the complete objectivity of the selection process for Ms. Mallard Queen of the Pond, we are hiring an independent consulting firm to come in and scour our student population for the individual who possesses the charm, vivacity, and beauty that will make us proud. Please behave as you normally would. There is no need to try outlandish stunts to obtain a tiny sliver of individual glory that will be a cruel reminder when you are unhappily entrenched in the mundane turnstile of adult life of how remarkable you were for one fleeting and magical moment. On second thought, you might as well take your shot. *(Aside)* Are we off the air? Next.

CASSIE: That’s me.

DR. BANCROFT: Actually could I just squeeze in? If it’s not too much trouble. I have a class and, well, it looks like you’re on your way out. It’s not like they’re going to name a building after me.

CASSIE: Go ahead.

DR. BANCROFT: *(Stepping to the green X)* Dr. Bancroft here.

THE VOICE: Great news Doctor B! The new theatre is going to be called the Doctor Bancroft Performing Arts Center.

DR. BANCROFT: Would it . . . never mind.

THE VOICE: What is it?

DR. BANCROFT: I’m so humbled, I can’t ask you . . .

THE VOICE: Ask, ask.

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DR. BANCROFT: My first name. I would really like my first name to be included.

THE VOICE: I didn't know you had a first name.

DR. BANCROFT: Bartholomew (*or Beatrice if Dr. Bancroft is female*).

THE VOICE: You're kidding.

(Awkward pause)

You're not. Of course, the Doctor Bartholomew Bancroft
Performing Arts Center!

(DR. BANCROFT crosses to one of the upstage exits. Stops.)

DR. BANCROFT: *(to CASSIE)* On your way out, could you change that light bulb? You must have . . . well things happen *(exits)*.

THE VOICE: Next.

CASSIE: Cassie here.

THE VOICE: What's in the box?

CASSIE: Some personal items.

THE VOICE: The flower in the vase is from the North Quad. Leave it.

CASSIE: Maybe you could name it after me.

THE VOICE: The North Quad?

CASSIE: The flower.

THE VOICE: It will die.

CASSIE: Exactly.

THE VOICE: Your anticipatory skills are quite acute.

CASSIE: Yes, I knew I would be fired.

THE VOICE: Return that flower to the North Quad, change the light bulb in Dr. Bancroft's room, and then vacate the premises. We will send you a form letter of recommendation with a range of slightly above average adjectives that you can select from. It will distinguish you from the other middle-of-the-pack employees.

CASSIE: That's awfully nice.

THE VOICE: Good day Miss- Well, good day.

(CASSIE approaches ANAPALA.)

CASSIE: Lifesaver?

ANAPALA: Sure *(taking one without looking and holding it in her closed fist)*.

CASSIE: Hey . . . that Hamlet thing, that was alright. Better than . . .

(CASSIE faces ANAPALA for a moment. Exits. ANAPALA opens her fist.)

ANAPALA: Cherry.

SCENE 6 – “HUT, HUT, HUT”

HIKE stands center stage with his helmet on. HE is intense and ready. LOBE enters and takes a brick. As SHE is exiting, TRI jogs by and slows down and stops. HE is in athletic clothes but not in helmet or pads.

TRI: What are you doing?

HIKE: Waiting. Staying focused. Waiting and staying focused. Those two things. Exclusively.

TRI: Try-outs are not here. This is not even a field. And they were yesterday.

HIKE: Oh. Okay.

TRI: Oh, okay. Go home.

HIKE: No.

TRI: Look son, I don't know who the bleep you think you're mouthing off to.

HIKE: Not your son, don't know the meaning of bleep, and it was not my intention to mouth off.

TRI: The team's been picked. That's it.

HIKE: Could I run a post pattern?

TRI: You could run it, but there is nothing to throw.

HIKE: Just concentrate. Make it happen.

TRI: Get out of here. Seriously, get out of here.

HIKE: Oh, okay (*does not move*).

TRI: One post. One mimed post. One mimed post we never tell anyone about. Huddle up.

(HIKE joins the two-man huddle.)

TRI: See that blue Honda Accord?

HIKE: Right there.

TRI: That's where you and the ball will meet in the sacred union between pigskin and human skin. Reptile and mammal coming together as one.

HIKE: Actually, two mammals.

TRI: Really?

HIKE: A pig is a mammal.

TRI: Did not know that.

HIKE: Yeah.

TRI: That's going to make bacon cheeseburgers a problem for me.

HIKE: Why?

TRI: It was a lot easier to eat them when I thought they were reptiles.

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HIKE: Cow is also a mammal.

TRI: I'm spiraling out of control!

HIKE: Run the play.

TRI: On three. One, two, three . . . break!

(HIKE and TRI clap in unison. TRI stays center as if about to receive the snap. HIKE moves stage right where a wide receiver would line up. The G-GIRLS enter and watch.)

GLOW: Hey, Tri.

TRI: Set. Twenty-four, twenty-four blue.

GLOW: What are you doing?

TRI: Twenty-four blue. Hut, hut . . . hike!

(TRI drops back to pass and GLOW walks right up to him. HIKE runs the pattern downstage right and then cuts a diagonal pattern moving downstage left.)

GLOW: You're not going to pass him a nonexistent ball . . .

TRI: *(to HIKE)* Blue Accord.

GLOW: Please don't do this.

TRI: Here it comes.

(TRI starts to go into the throwing motion as GLOW with relative ease pulls his arm down to his side. TRI looks deflated. HIKE completes the pattern and looks up, noticeably disappointed.)

GLOW: We both know that it is better this way. The only way down is crashing.

(HIKE turns and faces downstage.)

TRI: Sometimes two friends just want to play catch.

GLOW: Ah, the innocence of pre-puberty naïveté. Playing catch got a whole lot more complex.

TRI: I guess it did.

(GLOW leads TRI out as HIKE stands alone.)

BLACKOUT

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