

PROVING I'M NOT A LOSER AND OTHER ASSORTED FAIRLY DIFFICULT CHALLENGES

By Bradley Walton

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CHARACTERS

(13 roles: 1 Male, 12 Either, Extras Possible)

MORGAN (M or F)	A high school loser
SAGE (M or F)	Morgan's slacker sort-of friend who is trying to get Morgan to face reality
MR./MS. KROHN (M or F)	A math teacher
4 STUDENTS (M or F)	Passers-by in the hall
SANDY/SAMMY (M or F)	A member of the opposite sex to whom Morgan tries to speak
DENNIS (M)	A philosophical, but dense jock
GREASEBALL (M or F)	A delinquent
ZITWAD (M or F)	Another delinquent
EDISON (M or F)	A nerd
FRANKIE (M or F)	Another nerd

The director may add extras as students passing through the halls.

DOUBLING/TRIPLING

The 4 STUDENTS can be combined into 2. These same actors can also play the roles of KROHN, SAM, DENNIS, GREASEBALL, ZITWAD, EDISON, and FRANKIE with quick costume changes. The play may be performed with as few as 4 actors: 1 male, 3 either.

STAGING

Staging is very simple. The play is set in a school hallway. This may be represented by a bare stage in front of the curtain, a simple set with lockers or flats, or however the director sees fit.

PROPERTIES

Toilet Paper – MORGAN (stuck to shoe)

Football – DENNIS

Hershey Candy Bar – MORGAN

Latex Gloves – MORGAN

Marker – MORGAN

Markers – GREASEBALL

Markers – ZITWAD

COSTUMES

Everyone dresses according to character type: loser, slacker, jock, teacher, nerd, etc.

AUTHOR NOTES

When I sat down to write this play, I was attempting to write a flexible, large-cast ensemble script called "How to Mess Up Pretty Much Anything." After a couple of pages, it became obvious that this was not that play. So I went off and wrote that play. Happily, this one was still waiting for me when I came back, and it had figured out what it wanted to call itself in the meantime. It's nice when things work out.

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AT RISE: MORGAN and SAGE are standing in a school hallway. This may be a bare stage in front of the curtain; a simple set with lockers or flats; or however the director sees fit. There is a piece of toilet paper stuck to the bottom of one of MORGAN'S shoes.

SAGE: So there's this dog, see? And it's really ugly. Like a floral print lampshade. And it hasn't had anything to eat in days. And then it sees your homework. And it thinks, "Homework! Yum!" So it eats your homework and bam, instant excuse!

MORGAN: "The lampshade ate my homework."

SAGE: No, Morgan...the dog was ugly like a lampshade.

MORGAN: Sage, what does the dog being ugly have to do with it eating my homework?

SAGE: Instant sympathy.

MORGAN: Sympathy?

SAGE: I mean, like, if you get held up at gunpoint and robbed by an ex-movie star, at least you can say you met somebody famous and it's not a total loss. If you get robbed by some average person, that's a bummer. But if you get robbed by somebody's who's really ugly and has bad breath and stinks and has funky little bouquets of hair sticking out of their ears, then people start to sympathize. And when people sympathize, that's when you can start hitting 'em up for money and stuff. Maybe score some loose change or leftover Skittles or something. Never underestimate the power of ugly, Morgan. Ugly is a gift. Don't be afraid to use the ugly.

MORGAN: So if a purebred golden retriever eats my homework, the teacher won't cut me any slack. But if the spawn of Freddy Krueger's Irish water spaniel and Jabba the Hutt's Icelandic sheepdog make my algebra their Alpo, then I get extra credit? (*Feel free to update ugly character references as needed.*)

SAGE: Exactly.

MORGAN: Assuming, of course, that the dogs look like their owners.

SAGE: Duh.

MORGAN: You're full of used sock cologne, you know that, Sage?

SAGE: Sock cologne that's been used, or cologne that smells like used socks?

MORGAN: Whichever is more disgusting.

SAGE: I'm trying to help you. Why are you insulting me?

MORGAN: Because you deserve it.

SAGE: You're the one who didn't do their math homework.

MORGAN: Yeah. And I'm gonna be in serious trouble. That's cold, hard reality. You're living in some kind of fantasy where teachers give extra credit based on dog uglies.

(MS. KROHN, the math teacher, enters.)

KROHN: Morgan, I was just looking through the homework pile for last night and didn't see your name.

MORGAN: Um, well, Ms. Krohn...

KROHN: Don't bother telling me to look again. I know it wasn't there.

MORGAN: No, it wasn't.

KROHN: Why?

MORGAN: A dog ate my homework.

KROHN: A dog. Not your dog?

(MORGAN looks at SAGE. SAGE shrugs.)

MORGAN: I have a pretty dog.

KROHN: What does that have to do with anything?

MORGAN: It was an ugly dog.

KROHN: Your pretty dog used to be ugly?

MORGAN: Um...

KROHN: Did your dog have plastic surgery?

MORGAN: We had it professionally groomed once.

KROHN: Again, I ask...why are you telling me this?

MORGAN: An ugly dog ate my homework.

KROHN: Your homework was eaten by a dog that is ugly?

MORGAN: Yeah.

KROHN: And therefore this dog is easily distinguished from your dog, which is a pretty dog, although it used to be ugly?

MORGAN: Right.

KROHN: Whose dog was it that ate your homework?

MORGAN: Freddy Kreuger's.

KROHN: Freddy Kreuger's dog?

MORGAN: Yeah.

KROHN: Must've been one ugly dog.

MORGAN: Yeah.

KROHN: You've obviously had a very rough week, what with an ugly dog having eaten your homework, to say nothing of the fact that you once owned an ugly dog yourself. You poor creature. If I gave you extra credit, would it make you feel better?

MORGAN: A whole lot better.

KROHN: Well, you just get used to feeling bad, because it's not happening. Actually, I think I'll give you some negative credit for lying like a political candidate. You should be ashamed of yourself. I teach math, not government.

(KROHN exits.)

SAGE: You idiot!

MORGAN: What?

SAGE: Weren't you listening to yourself?

MORGAN: But you—

SAGE: You're like, the biggest idiot in the world, Morgan.

MORGAN: But—but—it was your idea! You came up with it. How does that not make you a bigger idiot than me?

SAGE: A wise man once said, "Who is more foolish, the fool, or the fool who follows him?"

MORGAN: That was Obi-Wan Kenobi!

SAGE: A very wise man indeed.

MORGAN: Don't go quoting Obi-Wan on me.

SAGE: You got a problem with the wisdom of Obi-Wan?

MORGAN: I have a problem with you giving me bad advice. I mean—I knew it was bad advice the second it was out of your mouth.

SAGE: You followed it.

MORGAN: I was stuck between a rock and a math teacher and it was the only thing I could think of!

SAGE: Look, I thought it would work, okay? And you know, if you hadn't screwed it up, it might've.

MORGAN: If you screw up bad advice, then it should become good advice and it ought to work.

SAGE: So that proves it was good advice to begin with!

MORGAN: You already admitted you were a fool...or an idiot...or an Obi-Wan wannabe or something.

SAGE: I admitted no such thing. It was a hypothetical situation. And anyway, you're the one who didn't do his homework. If you had, this wouldn't have happened. Any way you look at it, you messed up.

MORGAN: It happens.

SAGE: It happens to you a lot. You messed up with your homework. You messed up my advice. You even messed up noticing the toilet paper stuck to your shoe.

MORGAN: What are talking about? When did I have toilet paper stuck to my shoe?

SAGE: Since about 9:30 this morning. Going on six hours now.

MORGAN: Six hours! *(Looks at shoe.)* Aw, man. Do you think anyone noticed?

(A group of STUDENTS walks by.)

STUDENT 1: Did you see Morgan today?

STUDENT 2: He had toilet paper stuck to his shoe in second period!

STUDENT 3: He had toilet paper stuck to his shoe in fourth period!

STUDENT 4: He had toilet paper stuck to his shoe in the cafeteria!

(STUDENTS exit.)

MORGAN: But...but...how does toilet paper stay stuck to your shoe for six hours?

SAGE: Must be some darn good toilet paper.

MORGAN: Toilet paper isn't naturally adhesive.

SAGE: This is a public school. Anything that touches the floor or any one of various assorted surfaces automatically assumes adhesive qualities.

MORGAN: If the magic is in the floor, how can you say the toilet paper is good?

SAGE: It didn't rip or tear.

MORGAN: Lucky me.

SAGE: Not really, no.

MORGAN: I am such a loser.

SAGE: You are.

MORGAN: You don't have to agree.

SAGE: There are certain universal truths. This is one of them.

MORGAN: That I'm a loser?

SAGE: If I disagreed with you, I might get struck by lightning or a meteor or a flying toaster oven.

MORGAN: Toaster ovens don't fly.

SAGE: And I want to keep it that way. I'm not going to tempt fate here.

MORGAN: You're wrong.

SAGE: *(looking skyward)* Better be careful.

MORGAN: I'm a loser, but I'm not that big of a loser.

SAGE: *(moving a few steps away from MORGAN)* Are you sure about that?

MORGAN: Yes, I'm sure.

SAGE: *(moving another step away)* You're sure you're sure?

MORGAN: Positive.

SAGE: *(moving another step away)* Are you still here?

MORGAN: No lightning. No meteors. No toaster ovens.

SAGE: The universe must be watching TV. Take it back before there's a commercial.

MORGAN: The universe does not see me as a loser!

(SAGE covers his head with his arms as if expecting a sudden crash. When nothing happens, HE looks at MORGAN.)

SAGE: Prove it.

MORGAN: How?

SAGE: Show me one thing you can do without totally botching it.

MORGAN: Like what?

SAGE: Anything.

MORGAN: What kind of anything?

SAGE: Anything anything.

MORGAN: Anything is a broad concept.

SAGE: Yes, it is.

MORGAN: How am I supposed to come up with something if you're being so broad?

SAGE: What's something you're good at?

MORGAN: I don't know.

SAGE: Think.

MORGAN: Breathing.

SAGE: That's not quite what I had in mind.

MORGAN: You said anything.

SAGE: I meant something other than a body function.

MORGAN: Oh, wait.

SAGE: What?

MORGAN: I have asthma.

SAGE: You just said you were good at breathing.

MORGAN: Most of the time.

SAGE: Most of the time doesn't count. You're either good at it or you're not.

MORGAN: Nuts.

SAGE: Want to try again? But no more body functions.

MORGAN: Aw, come on.

SAGE: You can think of something.

MORGAN: You don't mean that.

SAGE: No, I don't.

MORGAN: You want me to fail.

SAGE: I'm trying to get you to prove you're an irredeemable loser. So yeah. That's the idea.

MORGAN: All right, fine. What would you like to see me screw up?

SAGE: You want me to suggest ways for you to humiliate yourself?

MORGAN: I want you to suggest ways for me to prove you wrong.

SAGE: You say potato, I say pah-tot-o.

MORGAN: Just gimme a suggestion.

SAGE: Ask somebody out on a date.

MORGAN: What?

SAGE: Ask somebody out in a date.

MORGAN: What if I don't want to go on a date?

SAGE: Don't worry about it. You're just going to mess it up anyway, so it won't be a problem.

MORGAN: I don't have time for a girlfriend. *(Or boyfriend.)*

SAGE: I'm not suggesting you get a girlfriend. I'm suggesting you ask someone out. That's all.

MORGAN: Look, I'm not trying to back down on this, but that's a bigger commitment than I'm willing to make.

SAGE: All right, fine. You know what? I'll lower the bar.

MORGAN: I'm not asking you to lower the bar.

SAGE: I'll do it anyway. That's how much faith I have in you.

MORGAN: I thought you didn't have any faith in me.

SAGE: I have faith in your lack of ability.

MORGAN: There's more to me than my lack of ability.

SAGE: That's a matter of opinion.

MORGAN: Thanks a lot.

SAGE: You're welcome. Okay, here's what I want you to do. Are you ready?

MORGAN: Yes.

SAGE: I want you to talk to a girl. *(Or boy.)*

(If SAGE and MORGAN are opposite genders, the following four lines of dialogue should be used.)

MORGAN: You're a girl. *(Or boy.)*

SAGE: I'm your friend.

MORGAN: That's debatable.

SAGE: Talk to a girl who's not your friend.

MORGAN: Talk to a girl?

SAGE: Y'know. Just flirt a little bit.

MORGAN: Flirt?

SAGE: All you have to do is pull it off without embarrassing yourself.

MORGAN: That's it?

SAGE: That's it.

MORGAN: You're making this too easy.

SAGE: We'll see.

MORGAN: What girl?

SAGE: The next one who comes this way.

MORGAN: What if it's someone I don't know?

SAGE: You're the one who said I was making this too easy.

MORGAN: All right, all right.

SAGE: Here. This one.

(SANDY/SAMMY enters.)

MORGAN: Hi.

(SANDY exits, completely ignoring MORGAN.)

MORGAN: (*triumphantly*) I told you that you were making this too easy.

SAGE: She didn't say anything back to you.

MORGAN: You didn't say she had to say something back.

SAGE: I said you had to do it without embarrassing yourself.

MORGAN: I'm not embarrassed.

SAGE: You should be.

MORGAN: I'm not.

SAGE: You're lying.

MORGAN: No shame.

SAGE: Yes shame.

MORGAN: None.

SAGE: Shame!!!

MORGAN: Okay, maybe a little.

SAGE: Thought so.

MORGAN: Hey, I think she's coming back.

SAGE: You want to try again?

MORGAN: Not really.

SAGE: Do it anyway.

MORGAN: Oh, all right.

(SANDY enters.)

MORGAN: Hey, um...

SANDY: Are you hitting on me or something?

MORGAN: No, I was just trying to strike up a conversation.

SANDY: Why?

MORGAN: No reason.

SANDY: No one tries to strike up a conversation with somebody who's just walking by unless they're hitting on them. Either you have something specific to say to me, or you don't. And if you don't, then you're hitting on me. Or you're a crazy person.

MORGAN: I'm not crazy.

SANDY: So you're hitting on me.

MORGAN: No, not really.

SANDY: Then you're crazy.

MORGAN: I'm not crazy.

SANDY: You just denied hitting on me. That makes you crazy by default.

MORGAN: Um...you have the most amazing um...forehead.

SANDY: You are hitting on me.

MORGAN: Because I'm not crazy.

SANDY: And you're really bad at it.

MORGAN: It's not something I do a lot.

SANDY: You said you weren't hitting on me.

MORGAN: I suppose...

SANDY: So you're a liar.

MORGAN: Can we start over?

SANDY: You expect me to stand here and start a conversation over with a crazy liar who's hitting on me?

MORGAN: No, but it would be awfully nice if you did.

SANDY: You're crazy!

MORGAN: We already established that.

SANDY: And not only that, but you're like, a total loser.

MORGAN: No!

SANDY: Yes!

MORGAN: Where would you get an idea like that?

SANDY: Have you paid any attention to the conversation we've been having?

MORGAN: I'm a crazy liar who's hitting on you.

SANDY: Exactly!

MORGAN: But that doesn't make me a loser.

SANDY: Why am I even talking to you?

MORGAN: I've been wondering about that—I mean—no, wait—

SANDY: Goodbye.

MORGAN: Where are you going?

SANDY: Someplace where you aren't. (*Exits.*)

MORGAN: I'd say that was a substantial improvement over the first time she walked through.

SAGE: You're deluding yourself.

MORGAN: You have to look for the positive.

SAGE: How was that positive?

MORGAN: She talked to me for like a full minute.

SAGE: She berated you for like a full minute.

MORGAN: There was a connection.

SAGE: Like a boxer's fist with an opponent's face.

MORGAN: I'm not embarrassed.

SAGE: You should be.

MORGAN: I'm not.

SAGE: You're lying.

MORGAN: Why would I lie?

SAGE: Because you're embarrassed.

MORGAN: I'm having an off day.

SAGE: Every day is an off day for you.

MORGAN: I have good days.

SAGE: What happens to you on a good day?

MORGAN: I dunno. Stuff.

SAGE: What kind of stuff?

MORGAN: Good stuff.

SAGE: Stuff that's good because it's good, or good because it's not bad?

MORGAN: What's wrong with not bad?

SAGE: Nothing. It's just that it's not good.

MORGAN: Can I go now?

SAGE: You admit you're a loser?

MORGAN: Of course not.

SAGE: Then you still need to prove it.

MORGAN: I don't have to prove anything to you.

SAGE: Do you care what I think?

MORGAN: No.

SAGE: I think you're a loser.

MORGAN: No, I'm not!

SAGE: If you don't care what I think, why are you so worked up about it?
Just go.

MORGAN: Gimme another suggestion.

SAGE: You want to try again?

MORGAN: No. I want to leave. So let's just get this over with.

(DENNIS enters, wearing a letter jacket and carrying a football.)

SAGE: Have him throw the football to you. And then catch it.

MORGAN: That's two things.

SAGE: It's a challenge in two parts.

MORGAN: That's not fair.

SAGE: *(sing-songy)* Morgan is a loser!

MORGAN: Hey, Dennis?

DENNIS: Huh? Yeah, what?

MORGAN: Is that a football you got there?

(DENNIS stares the football for a second.)

DENNIS: You don't play sports much, do you?

MORGAN: Not really, no. Why do you ask?

DENNIS: Because you don't know that this is a football.

MORGAN: Uh, well actually, I do...you know what? Never mind. How about you throw it here for a second?

DENNIS: Why?

MORGAN: I just wanna see it.

DENNIS: Look up a picture on the Internet. Turn on ESPN. Go to Wal-Mart and buy one of your own. They got ones there made out of soft foam stuff so you won't hurt yourself.

MORGAN: I'm not too worried about getting hurt.

DENNIS: I think I'd just as soon hold onto it myself, okay?

MORGAN: What, are you scared I'll break it?

DENNIS: You might.

MORGAN: How do you break a football?

DENNIS: Look, you ain't never done nothing to tick me off, and I don't wanna say nothing to make you feel bad, but this ball here, this is special. This means something. This is important.

MORGAN: It's like a giant pile of mashed potatoes.

DENNIS: Exactly! It's like when you've been practicing for hours and you're real hungry and you're staring down a big ol' pile of mashed potatoes and it's like the most beautiful thing in the world. This ball here, this is life. The sun, the moon, the planets, the stars, the asteroids and the planetoids and the hemorrhoids and stuff—they revolve around this.

MORGAN: I never realized there was such a profound connection between astronomy and athletics.

DENNIS: Football's connected to just about everything. Everything. Except for one thing.

MORGAN: Me?

DENNIS: How'd you know?

MORGAN: The conversation just seemed like it was going in that direction.

DENNIS: It's like I look at you and I know...something just tells me...you're one of those people that the ball doesn't speak to.

MORGAN: The ball speaks to you?

DENNIS: Oh, yeah.

MORGAN: What does it say?

DENNIS: Sweet things.

MORGAN: How sweet?

DENNIS: Like a Hershey Bar dipped in honey and covered with a melted Hershey Bar mixed with more honey. (*Update candy reference as needed.*)

MORGAN: You like honey and Hershey Bars.

DENNIS: They're like football for your mouth.

MORGAN: What if I offered you a Hershey Bar in exchange for you tossing—

SAGE: Throwing.

MORGAN: —throwing me the ball for a second?

DENNIS: Throw the ball to you?

MORGAN: Right.

DENNIS: And you'd like, catch it?

MORGAN: That's the plan.

DENNIS: In your hands?

MORGAN: I'm hoping so.

DENNIS: So you'd like, be touching it?

MORGAN: Would you like me to wear gloves?

DENNIS: You got gloves?

MORGAN: I got gloves.

DENNIS: What kind of gloves?

MORGAN: Latex gloves.

DENNIS: Whatta you doing with latex gloves?

SAGE: What *are* you doing with latex gloves?

MORGAN: Remember when we were dissecting frogs in biology class?

SAGE: Yeah.

MORGAN: There were exactly enough pairs of gloves for everyone in the class.

SAGE: Except you.

MORGAN: Except me. Never, ever again.

DENNIS: You touched frog parts?

MORGAN: I touched frog parts.

DENNIS: Gross.

MORGAN: That's an incredibly wise observation, Dennis.

DENNIS: (*nodding wisely and pointing at the source of his wisdom*) It's the football.

MORGAN: I thought so.

DENNIS: But wait a minute—you touched frog parts and now you wanna touch my football?

MORGAN: It was a year ago.

DENNIS: But still—you touched frog parts.

MORGAN: I've washed my hands since then.

DENNIS: But still—you *touched frog parts*.

MORGAN: I've got latex gloves, remember?

DENNIS: And that'll keep you from rubbing off on the football?

MORGAN: It should keep the year-old frog residue off the ball.

DENNIS: What about you?

MORGAN: What about me?

DENNIS: Look, it's like I was saying...I don't wanna hurt your feelings or nothing, but you're like, kind of a loser.

MORGAN: No, that doesn't hurt my feelings at all. To say I'm kind of a loser means that you don't think I'm a total loser, which is actually very nice of you.

DENNIS: Oh. Well, um...what I was trying to say...what I meant was that you're a total loser. Sorry. My bad.

MORGAN: No problem. Really.

DENNIS: And I just don't want your loserness to rub off on the ball.

MORGAN: You're afraid I'm going to infect your ball? With my loserness?

DENNIS: Yeah.

(MORGAN and DENNIS stare awkwardly at each other.)

MORGAN: Your football is a very special object.

DENNIS: I know.

MORGAN: Really special.

DENNIS: Uh-huh.

MORGAN: Do you really believe that there's any human thing in this world that could be stronger than the mystic astronomical energy of your football?

DENNIS: Um...

MORGAN: Wouldn't that be athletic blasphemy?

DENNIS: You think my football could blow up?

(Beat.)

MORGAN: Not if I have latex gloves on.

DENNIS: You sure?

MORGAN: Positive.

DENNIS: And they'll keep off the frog stuff, too?

MORGAN: *(pulls on gloves)* It'll be just like 10 little rubber quarantines on my fingers. If you looked at my hands under a microscope right now, you'd see year-old frog molecules hammering their tiny webbed protons against the inside of these gloves, screaming in frustration because the promised land of your magnificent football is within sight, but they know they can't go there.

DENNIS: So the football is safe?

MORGAN: These gloves are like a fallout shelter, and your football is right outside.

DENNIS: And I get a Hershey Bar?

MORGAN: *(pulls out a Hershey Bar)* You throw me the football, I throw you the Hershey Bar.

DENNIS: You'll give it right back?

MORGAN: You tell me, what am I going to do with a football?

DENNIS: Okay...here.

(DENNIS throws the football at MORGAN as MORGAN tosses the Hershey Bar to DENNIS. DENNIS catches the Hershey Bar. MORGAN is knocked off his feet without actually catching the football.)

SAGE: You okay?

MORGAN: I hate you.

DENNIS: Did you get to see the football?

MORGAN: Well enough.

DENNIS: What'd you think?

MORGAN: It's kind of pointy.

DENNIS: You done with it?

MORGAN: Oh, yeah.

DENNIS: Cool. Thanks for the Hershey Bar.

MORGAN: Don't mention it.

(DENNIS takes his football and exits. SAGE helps MORGAN up.)

MORGAN: I got him to throw the ball to me.

SAGE: Doesn't matter. You didn't catch it.

MORGAN: What do you want from me?

SAGE: An admission that you're a loser.

MORGAN: No. What's my next labor, you sadistic baboon?

SAGE: I'm gonna set the bar even lower.

MORGAN: Because you have complete faith that I will fail.

SAGE: Because I have complete faith that you will fail spectacularly.

MORGAN: At what?

SAGE: Juvenile delinquency.

MORGAN: Oh, come on!

SAGE: Seriously.

MORGAN: How can you fail at that?

SAGE: You'll find a way.

MORGAN: Where'd you come up with this idea?

SAGE: Look who's coming down the hall.

(GREASEBALL and ZITWAD enter. THEY are kind of skuzzy.)

GREASEBALL: Hey, uh, you ain't seen any teachers or principals come this way lately, have ya?

SAGE: Ms. Krohn was here a while ago, but she's probably on the other end of the building by now.

GREASEBALL: Excellent.

ZITWAD: Cool.

GREASEBALL: *(to ZITWAD)* You ready to do this?

ZITWAD: Totally.

SAGE: What are you going to do?

GREASEBALL: Stick it to the man.

ZITWAD: Yup.

SAGE: Sounds cool.

GREASEBALL: Nothing cooler.

ZITWAD: Like a toilet in a walk-in freezer.

MORGAN: That sounds...impractical.

GREASEBALL: It will be our ultimate achievement before we graduate.

MORGAN: But...the water would freeze. It wouldn't flush.

ZITWAD: No, not to use. We, like, we're just gonna stick a commode in the walk-in freezer in the cafeteria. (*with wistful longing*) Someday.

GREASEBALL: All we need is the key and a toilet.

ZITWAD: I told you, my cousin's got an old commode sitting outside in his back yard! We just have to go get it!

GREASEBALL: Your cousin lives 200 miles away and neither of us can drive.

ZITWAD: Yeah, but someday...

GREASEBALL: Someday the lunch ladies will walk into their freezer and there's gonna be a toilet there.

ZITWAD: Man, I wish I could see the looks on their faces!

GREASEBALL: Total commentary on the cafeteria food! Totally.

SAGE: So what are you up to now?

GREASEBALL: We're gonna write on the walls in the bathroom.

Um...you're not gonna tell anybody are you?

SAGE: Oh, no. Nah. You can trust us. Matter of fact, Morgan here's got an axe to grind with the school and I think he might wanna join you.

GREASEBALL: Really?

ZITWAD: What's your beef?

MORGAN: Um...I tried to use a no. 3 mechanical pencil to fill in the ovals on a test, and they said I had to use a no. 2.

ZITWAD: And you got a zero on the test?

MORGAN: Um. No. The teacher gave me a no. 2 pencil. But still. It was kind of embarrassing, plus I had to go to the trouble of changing pencils and stuff.

GREASEBALL: Whoa.

ZITWAD: That is just not right.

GREASEBALL: We would be honored if you would join us.

ZITWAD: Your cause is like, righteous and stuff.

MORGAN: Um. Thanks. So, uh, what kinds of things were you going to write on the bathroom walls?

GREASEBALL: True stuff.

MORGAN: Can't beat that.

ZITWAD: Stuff like "math stinks" and "English stinks" and "history stinks" and "school stinks."

MORGAN: Working on a theme there, aren't you?

GREASEBALL: We swiped some markers from the library. You want one?

MORGAN: Actually, I've got one from Ms. Krohn's room that I stuck in my pocket by accident. I mean—on purpose.

GREASEBALL: That's the spirit!

ZITWAD: C'mon, let's go stick it to 'em!

SAGE: I'll stand watch.

GREASEBALL: Good idea.

(MORGAN, GREASEBALL, and ZITWAD exit. SAGE stands onstage for a few seconds, watching for teachers. MORGAN enters, holding a marker.)

MORGAN: How do you spell "totalitarianism"?

SAGE: What?

MORGAN: "Totalitarianism." How do you spell it?

SAGE: I have no idea. Why do you want to know?

MORGAN: So I can write it on the mirror in the bathroom.

"School=totalitarianism."

SAGE: Nobody uses words like "totalitarianism" when they're vandalizing bathrooms. They write things like "school stinks" and cuss words.

MORGAN: I know. Greasball and Zitwad in there are going to town with that stuff. I wanted to be different, you know?

SAGE: If you want to be different, then misspell the cuss words.

MORGAN: I don't want people think I'm stupid!

SAGE: In the first place, nobody will know it was you. In the second place, even if they did, nobody would think you did it on purpose because everybody knows how to spell cuss words.

(The following exchange is optional and may be omitted. The dialogue may be resumed with MORGAN's "If I'm gonna write graffiti...")

(ZITWAD enters, holding a marker.)

ZITWAD: Hey, how do you spell—

(GREASBALL sticks his head onstage.)

GREASEBALL: *(exasperated)* With a "u."

ZITWAD: You sure it's not two o's?

GREASEBALL: Positive.

ZITWAD: Okay. *(To SAGE and MORGAN.)* Never mind.

(ZITWAD and GREASEBALL exit.)

SAGE: Okay. Maybe not.

MORGAN: If I'm gonna write graffiti, I wanna be a little classier than that, you know?

SAGE: You're vandalizing a school bathroom. If ever there was a time when you're not supposed to be classy, it would be now.

MORGAN: You're saying I'm messing this up?

SAGE: What do you think?

(GREASEBALL and ZITWAD enter, holding markers.)

GREASEBALL: Hey, Morgan. That thing you wrote on the mirror, what's up with that?

ZITWAD: Yeah. "School=tot." School's a lot of things, but... a tater tot? That doesn't make any sense.

GREASEBALL: Seriously. Don't you even know how to vandalize a bathroom?

MORGAN: Apparently not.

GREASEBALL: Wow.

ZITWAD: You are such a loser.

(GREASEBALL and ZITWAD exit.)

SAGE: Give up?

MORGAN: No!

SAGE: Oh, come on.

MORGAN: I defaced a mirror! Give me some credit.

SAGE: Let me see your marker.

MORGAN: Why?

SAGE: Just let me see it.

MORGAN: Fine. Here. *(Hands SAGE the marker.)*

SAGE: Morgan. This is a dry erase marker.

MORGAN: It is? Oh yeah, that's right...I was doing a math problem on the whiteboard and then stuck it in my pocket without thinking.

SAGE: It'll wipe right off the mirror.

MORGAN: So I don't get credit for defacing the mirror?

SAGE: No. You ready to give up now?

MORGAN: No. Look—trying to write "totalitarianism"—that was a pretty nerdy thing to do, right?

SAGE: Definitely.

MORGAN: So I succeeded at being a nerd!

SAGE: You didn't know how to spell the word!

MORGAN: Neither did you!

SAGE: I wasn't the one trying to write it on a bathroom mirror!

MORGAN: But it proves I have nerd blood in me and not loser blood!

SAGE: There's not a heck of a lot of difference between a nerd and a loser. But okay. You want to prove you're a nerd, then prove you're a nerd.

MORGAN: Great. *(Beat.)* How do I do that?

SAGE: Well, let's see...school's been out for close to half an hour now. And it's Wednesday. The math team meets for half an hour after school on Wednesdays. So math team should be letting out any time now, and there should be some nerds headed this way.

(EDISON and FRANKIE enter. THEY are very nerdy.)

MORGAN: Edison! Frankie! Hey, nerd brethren!

SAGE: Nerd brethren?

EDISON: Were you addressing us?

MORGAN: Sure. I mean, you're nerds. I'm a nerd. We're brethren. Gotta stick together, us nerds.

FRANKIE: I believe you are mistaken.

EDISON: Or possibly confused.

FRANKIE: Or delusional.

EDISON: Or stupid.

FRANKIE: We are unquestionably nerds, yes.

EDISON: But you unquestionably are not.

MORGAN: Sure, I am.

EDISON: Do you have a poster of nerd patron saint Albert Einstein hanging on the wall of your bedroom?

MORGAN: Uh...no, but I've been meaning to get one for a while now.

FRANKIE: What is the square root of 25,898?

MORGAN: Um...

EDISON: What was the capital of the Byzantine Empire?

MORGAN: Um...

SAGE: Oh, come on! It was Constantinople. We just went over that in history today!

MORGAN: Will you shut up?

FRANKIE: This seems to be going poorly for you.

EDISON: Would you like us to stop now?

MORGAN: No. No. Give me one more.

FRANKIE: Very well. Spell "totalitarianism."

MORGAN: Okay. You can stop now.

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