

# SENIOR-ITIS

## By Bradley Walton

Copyright © 2013 by Bradley Walton, All rights reserved.  
ISBN: 978-1-60003-733-7

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

*Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC*

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

## SENIOR-ITIS

*A Full Length Comedy in Two Acts*

**By Bradley Walton**

**SYNOPSIS:** Stevie hates school, has no plans for the future, and may not even graduate unless he repeats the English class he flunked the year before. When his guidance counselor hooks Stevie up with a brainy, college-bound tutor named Andrea, the two of them establish a friendship that threatens to develop into something more, even though they both think it would be a mistake. Lorne lives a very controlled and uptight existence, mostly due to the fact that he's allergic to almost every food imaginable, and he subconsciously longs to break out of the mold he's created for himself. Lorne's best friend, Norman, is excited to finally be a senior, but as the months drag on, Norman's enthusiasm fades, and his apathy threatens to destroy his friendship with Lorne. Alex is the class president, and his goal is to hatch a senior prank that will be remembered for years to come. The problem is, no one else seems to care. They all have one thing in common: They're seniors. And the only thing standing between them and the future...is one more year of high school.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1 M, 1 F, 5-9 Either, Extras, Doubling)*

- NORMAN/NORA REYNOLDS (m/f) ..... A high school senior wanting to live his final school year to the fullest, until senioritis kicks in. *(142 lines)*
- LORNE/LAUREN WANER (m/f) ..... Norman's uptight friend; has food allergies. *(161 lines)*
- STEVIE GUTHRIE (m)..... A senior who can't wait to graduate but failed 11<sup>th</sup> grade English. *(229 lines)*
- ALEX SHAW (m/f) ..... President of the senior class. *(80 lines)*
- MR./MS. WALLIS (m/f) ..... A guidance counselor. *(26 lines)*

ANDREA SMITH (f)..... A senior tutoring Stevie in English. (185 lines)  
CONVENIENCE STORE CLERK (m/f) ... (29 lines)  
MR./MS. WILSON (m/f)..... The principal of the high school. (50 lines)  
MR./MS. HARRIS (m/f)..... The school detention supervisor. (6 lines)  
PROM STUDENT 1 (m/f)..... A student at the prom. (2 lines)  
PROM STUDENT 2 (m/f)..... A student at the prom. (2 lines)

**EXTRAS:** There may be extras in the hallway, park, and graduation scenes.

**DOUBLING:** The following combinations of characters can easily be played by the same actor: ALEX / CLERK or WALLIS / CLERK / HARRIS. The PROM STUDENTS can be combined into one character, or their lines may be given to MS. HARRIS.

**DURATION:** 80 minutes.

**STAGING:** Staging is intended to be flexible. The play could be performed with multiple painted backdrops and sets of office furniture, a bare stage with a bunch of cubes, or anything in between.

As written, the script calls for a library table, two library/office-style chairs, three office/teacher desks (or one desk that plays three different desks), three office/teacher chairs (or one chair that plays three different chairs), a convenience store counter, a beanbag chair, a school bench, a park bench, three student desks with chairs, and two banners or signs that say “Welcome to the Prom” and “Congratulations Class of [year]”.

The stage directions from the original production are included. Feel free to use them, or create your own blocking instead.

It is very important that scene changes occur as quickly as possible.

In the original production, the school mascot (for purposes of set decoration) was a flying squirrel.

**PROPERTIES – PERSONAL**

- Book bags with textbooks, papers, and notebooks – STEVIE, ANDREA, LORNE, NORMAN, ALEX
- Granola bar – NORMAN
- MP3 player and earbuds – STEVIE
- Bag of chips – NORMAN
- Handheld game – STEVIE
- Note cards – STEVIE
- Cell phone – ALEX
- Cell phone – NORMAN

**PROPERTIES – ONSTAGE**

- Books and papers – scenes I.3, I.6, I.7, and I.9
- Basket of fruit with bananas – scenes I.4, II.2
- Cash register or computer – scenes I.4, II.2
- Cordless phone – scenes I.6, II.8

**SOUND EFFECTS**

Phone ringing – scene I.6

Window breaking – scene I.10

**COSTUMES**

ANDREA, STEVIE, LORNE, NORMAN, and ALEX are contemporary teenagers and are dressed accordingly. STEVIE comes from a lower socioeconomic background than the others and his clothing should reflect this. For Act One, Scene 4 and Act Two, Scene 2, LORNE wears a shirt that says “Hoover High School (or HHS) Class of (current academic year).” For Act Two, Scene 6, STEVIE and ANDREA wear prom attire. For Act Two, Scene 9, STEVIE wears a graduation cap and gown. Costume changes should reflect the changing of seasons over the course of the play.

WILSON, WALLIS, and HARRIS are all school staff and should be dressed professionally.

The CONVENIENCE STORE CLERK is dressed according to his job.

The PROM STUDENTS are dressed for prom.

SCENES

**ACT ONE**

SCENE 1: **First Day of School** – LORNE, NORMAN, ALEX, WALLIS

SCENE 2: **Guidance Office** – STEVIE, WALLIS

SCENE 3: **School Library Conference Room** – ANDREA, STEVIE

SCENE 4: **Convenience Store** – LORNE, NORMAN, CLERK

SCENE 5: **Principal Wilson's Office** – LORNE, NORMAN, WILSON

SCENE 6: **Detention** – HARRIS, LORNE, NORMAN, ALEX

SCENE 7: **School Library Conference Room** – STEVIE, ANDREA

SCENE 8: **The Hall** – LORNE, NORMAN, ALEX

SCENE 9: **School Library Conference Room** – STEVIE, ANDREA

SCENE 10: **Outside of the School** – STEVIE, ALEX

**ACT TWO**

SCENE 1: **Somewhere that's Not School** – NORMAN

SCENE 2: **Convenience Store** – LORNE, CLERK

SCENE 3: **Stevie's Basement** – STEVIE, ANDREA

SCENE 4: **The Park** – LORNE, ALEX

SCENE 5: **Somewhere that's Not School** – NORMAN

SCENE 6: **Prom Night** – STEVIE, ANDREA, PROM STUDENTS

SCENE 7: **Principal Wilson's Office** – WILSON, NORMAN

SCENE 8: **Guidance Office** – WALLIS

SCENE 9: **Graduation** – LORNE, NORMAN, ALEX, ANDREA, STEVIE

**AUTHOR NOTES**

One day, one of my students was talking to me about the uncertainty she was feeling surrounding graduation, college, and the big changes that went along with those things. I remembered feeling the same way when I was her age, and I told her what I found to be true when I got to college...that everything was fine and I'd wondered what I'd ever worried about in the first place. The conversation got me thinking about what it's like to be a senior, and to have those big life changes just around the corner. And that was the starting point for this play.

Regarding a completely different aspect of *Senior-itis*, one of the characters, Lorne, has food allergies. There's a part where Lorne is talking about anaphylaxis, which is an allergic reaction where somebody's throat swells shut and they can't breathe. This is what happens to my daughter if she swallows a tree nut—she's allergic to them. Our family regards a dessert buffet pretty much the same way we would a mine field, and we keep EpiPens close at hand. Everything having to do with Lorne's allergies was written into *Senior-itis* for my daughter, mostly at her very insistent request. *Especially* the food critic stuff. She thought that bit was hysterical.

**PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*Senior-itis* premiered April 26-27, 2013 at Harrisonburg High School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. It was directed by the author; produced by Stanley Swartz; stage managed by Anna Dick with Jesse Henninger, Emma Jackson, and Natalya Murray on crew; and featured the following cast:

NORA.....	Merrill Harmison
LAUREN.....	Daelynn McCleve
STEVIE.....	Christion Tyler Edwards
ALEX.....	Annaka Reich
MRS. WALLIS.....	Anna Dick
ANDREA.....	Mariah Flick
CONVIENCE STORE CLERK.....	Luke Gibson
PRINCIPAL WILSON.....	Hiesun Ho
MS. HARRIS.....	Rachel Walton

**ACT ONE, SCENE 1**

**SETTING:** *August, the hall, before class on the first day of school.*

**AT RISE:** *LORNE and NORMAN, book bags slung over their shoulders, are standing outside of the school library before classes on the first day of school. NORMAN looks meaningfully around for a few seconds before speaking...soaking in the ambience of the moment. LORNE looks at his watch and sighs, wishing the librarians would show up.*

**NORMAN:** This is it, Lorne.

**LORNE:** This is what?

**NORMAN:** The moment.

**LORNE:** What, are the librarians finally here?

**NORMAN:** No. Not that moment.

**LORNE:** I thought they'd open the library early on the first day of school.

**NORMAN:** I think you were wrong.

**LORNE:** So what moment is it?

**NORMAN:** The one we've been waiting for.

**LORNE:** Norman, I don't have the slightest idea what you're talking about.

**NORMAN:** The first day of our senior year.

**LORNE:** I wasn't exactly in any hurry to get through the summer. I wasn't under the impression you were, either.

**NORMAN:** I wasn't. But now that we're here, it's like...like...

**LORNE:** What?

**NORMAN:** We're seniors.

**LORNE:** That's your big revelation? That we're seniors?

**NORMAN:** Yeah.

**LORNE:** I feel like you tried to express something heartfelt and profound just now, and I want you to know...you failed completely.

**NORMAN:** We're almost done with the whole school thing. We're eleven-twelfths of the way there...twelve-thirteenths if you count kindergarten. And more than that if you count preschool and daycare and stuff.

**LORNE:** I don't.

**NORMAN:** I'm just saying.

**LORNE:** I don't think anybody does.

**NORMAN:** All right.

**LORNE:** And you shouldn't, either.

**NORMAN:** Okay.

**LORNE:** Because it comes across as desperate and pathetic.

**NORMAN:** Forget the daycare and preschool thing, okay? *(Pulls out a granola bar.)*

**LORNE:** I'll try, but it might be too late. I think it may have already tainted my perception of you forever. What have you got?

**NORMAN:** Peanut butter granola bar. It's my breakfast.

**LORNE:** Get it away from me! You know that I have food allergies out the wazoo. That thing in your hand has at least four different kinds of nuts in it and I'm allergic to all of them.

**NORMAN:** It's not like I'm going to shove it in your mouth.

**LORNE:** Please don't eat that around me. It makes me nervous.

**NORMAN:** All right. Anyway, what I was trying to get across is that everything that happened before has now led up to this.

**LORNE:** Speaking as a friend here...it probably wouldn't be in your best interests to take up prophecy as a career choice.

**NORMAN:** Next year we go off to college.

**LORNE:** I thought you were going to college here in town.

**NORMAN:** I am.

**LORNE:** That's, y'know...not exactly going off.

**NORMAN:** I know, but still...we are on the cusp of our future. This is a culminating moment. Or the beginning of a culminating moment. Granted, it's a moment that's going to last a whole school year, so it's a long moment. And since it's such a long moment, it's a moment that we need to embrace and savor and really milk for all it's worth.

**LORNE:** *(Looking offstage right.)* I think they're opening the library. *(Looks at NORMAN. Beat.)* So what you're basically saying is...we still have one whole year of school to go.

**NORMAN:** You know how to really suck the life out of a moment, you know that?

*NORMAN and LORNE exit right. STEVIE enters from left, carrying a book bag and listening to music through ear buds. HE stops and scrolls through the music list on his MP3 player. ALEX enters from left, carrying a book bag, and crosses to STEVIE.*

**ALEX:** Stevie...how you doing?

**STEVIE:** *(Taking out his ear buds.)* Um...what?

**ALEX:** How was your summer?

**STEVIE:** Okay, I guess.

**ALEX:** Ready for your senior year?

**STEVIE:** I suppose. Um...not wanting to be rude or anything, but why are you talking to me?

**ALEX:** Why would I not talk to you?

**STEVIE:** Well...for one thing, you never talked to me before. For another, the people you hang out with ain't the people I hang out with. You're all smart and popular and stuff.

**ALEX:** All right, look, Stevie...I'm not gonna waste your time here. You know how I'm president of the senior class?

**STEVIE:** Not really, no.

**ALEX:** Okay, well...I am.

**STEVIE:** All right.

**ALEX:** And as senior class president, there's this thing I need to do that I was hoping you could help me with.

**STEVIE:** What?

**ALEX:** The senior prank. The joke that the senior class plays on the school every year.

**STEVIE:** You mean like when the principal's office got filled up with foam packing peanuts last spring?

**ALEX:** Right. None of this year's senior class officers are good practical jokers, but you have a reputation.

**STEVIE:** What reputation?

**ALEX:** The thing with the laxative and the coffee in the faculty lounge.

**STEVIE:** How did you hear about that?

**ALEX:** Everybody heard about that.

**STEVIE:** I was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. That was three years ago. Who remembers stuff like that? Besides maybe Mrs. Mertz...who drank it.

**ALEX:** I do. Because it was memorable.

**STEVIE:** Sorry. Can't help you.

**ALEX:** Why not?

**STEVIE:** I know I'm not perfect like you, but I'd like to think that I've, y'know, grown up a little bit since 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I just want to lay low so I can get done and get out of here.

**ALEX:** You're kidding.

**STEVIE:** Nope.

**ALEX:** Please?

**STEVIE:** What part of "no" don't you get?

**ALEX:** Sorry...I thought this was something you'd enjoy and you'd be good at. Maybe get you some respect from your classmates.

**STEVIE:** Look...Alex...your name's Alex, right?

**ALEX:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** The answer is no. Go bug somebody else. I have a senior year that I need to try not to screw up.

*MS. WALLIS, a guidance counselor, enters from left and addresses ALEX and STEVIE.*

**WALLIS:** Good morning, folks.

**ALEX:** Hey, Ms. Wallis.

**WALLIS:** Alex, nice to see you back. Stevie...you're just one of the people I need to see today. Why don't you come up to the guidance office with me so we can chat for a few minutes?

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 2

**SETTING:** *A few minutes later, the guidance office.*

**AT RISE:** *WALLIS is seated behind a large desk. STEVIE is standing in front of a chair stage right of the desk, his book bag on the floor beside of HIM.*

**STEVIE:** What do you mean I'm not a senior?

**WALLIS:** You failed 11<sup>th</sup> grade English. We were expecting you to repeat the class during summer school, but you never showed up.

**STEVIE:** 'Cause it was summer!

**WALLIS:** Were you hoping that the failing grade was somehow going to magically go away by the time you got back?

**STEVIE:** I dunno. I guess maybe I was hoping you'd forget about it.

*(Sits.)*

**WALLIS:** No such luck. Technically, you're still a junior.

**STEVIE:** But I've been in school for twelve straight years!

**WALLIS:** You should've worked harder.

**STEVIE:** English is my worst subject!

**WALLIS:** All the more reason you should've worked harder.

**STEVIE:** So what do I do?

**WALLIS:** You take 11<sup>th</sup> grade English again.

**STEVIE:** Am I gonna have Mrs. Mertz as the teacher again?

**WALLIS:** Actually, you'll have Mrs. Sharp this time.

**STEVIE:** Good. Mrs. Mertz hates me.

**WALLIS:** She doesn't hate you.

**STEVIE:** She had that blowout after I spiked the coffee with the laxative three years ago.

**WALLIS:** Nonetheless, she is fair. Although admittedly, she may be less inclined to cut you slack than she is with other students, but whose fault is that?

**STEVIE:** Mine.

**WALLIS:** I'm glad you understand that.

**STEVIE:** If I'm taking 11<sup>th</sup> grade English again this year, then when do I take 12<sup>th</sup> grade English?

**WALLIS:** You'll take them both on alternating days.

**STEVIE:** I'm gonna be in two different English classes at the same time?

**WALLIS:** Correct.

**STEVIE:** Who teaches English 12?

**WALLIS:** Mrs. Mertz.

**STEVIE:** No!

**WALLIS:** Yes.

**STEVIE:** Are you trying to kill me?

**WALLIS:** I'm trying to get you out of here on time.

**STEVIE:** I think I'd like it better if you tried to kill me.

**WALLIS:** Sorry, I can't help you. At least, not with that.

**STEVIE:** What...if I slipped you some money under the table, there's something you could do to help me without killing me?

**WALLIS:** Possibly.

**STEVIE:** Like what?

**WALLIS:** How about an English tutor?

**STEVIE:** What's that gonna cost me?

**WALLIS:** Nothing. We have seniors actively looking for community service projects. We encourage it. We call it senior service. You can get a special seal on your diploma if you complete enough hours.

**STEVIE:** There are students who actually do that?

**WALLIS:** As a matter of fact, there are.

**STEVIE:** And tutoring counts as community service?

**WALLIS:** Sure does. And it just so happens that hooking you up with a tutor falls within the range of my normal, everyday services, so you don't even have to slip me a bribe under the table.

**STEVIE:** How's it gonna work?

**WALLIS:** We'll need to set up a schedule, but plan on meeting with your tutor after school in the library at least two days a week. Maybe you can use their conference room.

**STEVIE:** After school?

**WALLIS:** Is that a problem?

**STEVIE:** I wanna be done with high school...not have even more of it.

*Blackout.*

### ACT ONE, SCENE 3

**SETTING:** *October, the school library conference room.*

**AT RISE:** *ANDREA is tutoring STEVIE after school. There is a table with two chairs. STEVIE is seated in the stage right chair, and there are books and papers spread out on the table in front of HIM. ANDREA is standing behind STEVIE, pointing over his shoulder at something on the table.*

**ANDREA:** You need to put a semicolon there.

**STEVIE:** Are you sure?

**ANDREA:** Positive.

**STEVIE:** Semicolons are weird.

**ANDREA:** You still need one.

**STEVIE:** Andrea, I am never, ever going to use semicolons after I graduate from high school.

**ANDREA:** Graduation's not until June. It's only October. We haven't made it to homecoming yet. (*Sits in the empty chair.*) You're going to have to put up with semicolons for a little while longer.

**STEVIE:** You going to homecoming?

**ANDREA:** No.

**STEVIE:** How come?

**ANDREA:** Nobody asked.

**STEVIE:** You don't have a boyfriend?

**ANDREA:** Nope. And I don't want one. Not at this point.

**STEVIE:** Why's that?

**ANDREA:** Well, without wanting to sound all fatalistic...in less than a year I'm going to college. Which, if things work out the way I hope, is going to involve moving away. I don't want to get into a relationship with somebody if I know for sure that there's going to be an expiration date. Make sense?

**STEVIE:** Yeah. You do know, though...when people get married, there's usually that thing they say about "... 'til death do us part."

**ANDREA:** That's different.

**STEVIE:** Yeah. But I'm just saying. There's no such thing as a relationship without an expiration date. You take what you get and you try to be happy with it.

**ANDREA:** I get that. It's just not what I want right now. And...don't take this the wrong way, but you don't strike me as the kind of person who would say what you just said.

**STEVIE:** Actually, that's my mom talking. My dad had cancer. He died when I was seven.

**ANDREA:** Oh. I'm sorry.

**STEVIE:** S'okay. It was a long time ago.

*Awkward pause.*

**ANDREA:** What about you? You going to homecoming?

**STEVIE:** Nah. Even if I had somebody to ask, it's just not my kind of thing. Pretty much everything about high school isn't my kind of thing. I so want this to be over now.

**ANDREA:** Is it really that bad?

**STEVIE:** Yes.

**ANDREA:** Sorry.

**STEVIE:** No. Not you. *(Stands.)* It's nice of you to tutor me with English after school and stuff. I appreciate you doing it. *(Turns away from ANDREA and takes a few steps right.)* Although I guess you're getting senior service credit for it, so you've got an angle.

**ANDREA:** Yeah, I am getting credit for it, but there was a giant list of stuff I could've picked from. After-school tutoring was my choice. I'm here because I want to be.

**STEVIE:** Oh. Okay. Sorry if that came off as—

**ANDREA:** It's okay.

**STEVIE:** It was kind of rude.

**ANDREA:** Don't worry about it.

**STEVIE:** I really do appreciate it. It's the being here and being forced to do this that I don't like.

**ANDREA:** As I understand it, nobody's forcing you. They just strongly recommended it.

**STEVIE:** Same thing. It's a choice that wasn't really a choice.

**ANDREA:** The school is trying to help you get through the year.

**STEVIE:** They could always just say, "Hey, kid, you don't need English."

**ANDREA:** *(Stands.)* I don't think they're allowed to do that.

**STEVIE:** I just wanna graduate and get out of here.

**ANDREA:** Don't you think that seems like...a little bit scary?

**STEVIE:** What?

**ANDREA:** Graduation. Life after high school.

**STEVIE:** Why?

**ANDREA:** We've been in school our whole lives. And then all of a sudden...we won't be. Everything changes.

**STEVIE:** Andrea, you're going to college, right? I mean, you'd have to be. Your GPA is probably like, five times what mine is.

**ANDREA:** Yeah, I'm going to college but—

**STEVIE:** Then you're going to school for four more years. Nothing changes. What have you got to be scared of?

**ANDREA:** (*Pacing around a bit to the left of the table.*) It's not the same. If I get into the school I want, I'll be moving six hours away from here. I'm going to be with different people in a new place. I'm going to have more responsibility than I've ever had before. In some ways it'll be the same, yeah. But in most ways, it's going to be completely different.

**STEVIE:** Better you than me.

**ANDREA:** What are you going to do?

**STEVIE:** I have no idea.

**ANDREA:** (*Crosses right to STEVIE.*) And you don't think that's scary?

**STEVIE:** Scary is relative.

**ANDREA:** Relative to what?

**STEVIE:** Well, there's embarrassing scary, like the fear of walking into a glass door at a fancy restaurant and leaving such a perfect face smudge that complete strangers are able to recognize you from it months later. There's afraid for your life scary like when you're staring down an angry biker who's got you pinned to a tree after you spit over a bridge that he just happened to be riding under. And there's horror movie scary...you know...axe murderers and demon clowns and cannibal sasquatches and creepy possessed children and stuff. Which isn't scary at all, because it's not real. And there's—

**ANDREA:** Wait, what...did you say—cannibal sasquatches?

**STEVIE:** Yeah. You've never seen a cannibal sasquatch movie?

**ANDREA:** No.

**STEVIE:** For real?

**ANDREA:** No.

**STEVIE:** You've never seen a movie where a sasquatch kills people and eats them?

**ANDREA:** So the sasquatch is eating people and not other sasquatches?

**STEVIE:** Why would a sasquatch eat sasquatch?

**ANDREA:** Because it's a cannibal sasquatch.

**STEVIE:** Cannibal sasquatches eat people, not other sasquatches.

**ANDREA:** Then how is it a cannibal?

**STEVIE:** Because it eats people.

**ANDREA:** (*Moving left, back towards her chair.*) But being cannibal means something eats other members of its own species. Like a cow that eats hamburgers would be a cannibal cow. A gerbil that eats other gerbils would be a cannibal gerbil.

**STEVIE:** You're saying... a cannibal gerbil wouldn't eat people?

**ANDREA:** No.

**STEVIE:** Then what would a gerbil that eats people be?

**ANDREA:** Big.

**STEVIE:** Huh. (*Sits.*) Well, that's awkward.

**ANDREA:** (*Sits.*) Why?

**STEVIE:** Because I always thought that the word "cannibal" meant that something eats people.

**ANDREA:** It's not like it's the sort of thing that comes up in conversation that often.

**STEVIE:** I used to talk about cannibalism all the time. 'Cause I thought it made me sound edgy and stuff.

**ANDREA:** Except it didn't mean what you thought it meant?

**STEVIE:** No wonder people looked at me funny. Makes me wonder what else I don't know.

**ANDREA:** That's what college is for.

**STEVIE:** Who needs college when you have? (*Insert name of popular search engine.*)

*Beat.*

**ANDREA:** You know something? You're right.

**STEVIE:** You think so?

**ANDREA:** Yeah. Scary is relative. You absolutely proved it just now. The thought of life beyond high school is mildly unnerving, but the possibility that you actually believe what you just said is downright terrifying.

**STEVIE:** I can top it.

**ANDREA:** That's okay.

**STEVIE:** No. Seriously.

**ANDREA:** I've had my fill of scary for one day. Thanks.

- STEVIE:** Not only is scary relative, but relatives are scary. *(Stands.)*  
There's, like, this genetic disorder that runs in my family and it's creepy as heck.
- ANDREA:** You don't need to tell me. I'm sure your relatives value their privacy.
- STEVIE:** Toxic armpit syndrome.
- ANDREA:** Toxic...what?
- STEVIE:** Armpit syndrome.
- ANDREA:** *(Laughing.)* You're making that up.
- STEVIE:** The name, yeah. 'Cause I don't know what else to call it. It's bad, I'm telling you.
- ANDREA:** I don't think there's anything I can do to stop you from telling me.
- STEVIE:** My Uncle Phil, he's got armpit stains like you wouldn't believe.
- ANDREA:** Oh, I believe it.
- STEVIE:** They go clear down to the waist on all of his shirts.
- ANDREA:** What?
- STEVIE:** Even some of his pants have armpit stains.
- ANDREA:** Would you shut up if I told you I wasn't listening? 'Cause I swear I'm not.
- STEVIE:** Now my aunt Sally...she has armpit stains in her car. But that doesn't top my cousin Seth. He works construction.
- ANDREA:** Construction. Armpit stains. Makes perfect sense. I understand. Honest. And I'm still not listening.
- STEVIE:** Mom says he's got armpit stains on the crane that he operates. And on all of the furniture in his house, including the microwave, and even on his dog. It's the most horrifically disgusting thing you've ever seen in your life. I've never been able to bring myself to look at his shoes. It's that terrifying. Tops horror movies any day of the week.
- ANDREA:** We need to get back to work.
- STEVIE:** Bummer. *(Sits.)*
- ANDREA:** If you want to graduate... *(Pointing at the papers on the table.)* work.
- STEVIE:** I can't wait to be done with this place.
- ANDREA:** You know what your problem is?
- STEVIE:** What?

**ANDREA:** Senioritis. You're a senior—

**STEVIE:** Not technically.

**ANDREA:** Close enough. You're a senior and you're not done with school, but you're shutting down and not trying as hard as you should.

**STEVIE:** Is that, like, a disease? 'Cause if it is, I've had it since about first grade.

**ANDREA:** Some people start early. And it's more like a state of mind.

**STEVIE:** Can I blame stuff on it?

**ANDREA:** You could, but I doubt the teachers would be sympathetic.

**STEVIE:** Do lots of seniors have it?

**ANDREA:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** Really?

**ANDREA:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** There are seniors in this school...who're turning into people sort of like me?

**ANDREA:** It's a pretty common occurrence.

**STEVIE:** Wow. That's *really* scary.

*Blackout.*

#### ACT ONE, SCENE 4

**SETTING:** *November, the convenience store.*

**AT RISE:** *LORNE and NORMAN are browsing in a convenience store. To their left is a counter behind which stands a CLERK who doesn't appear to be doing much of anything. There is a basket of fruit and bananas, along with a cash register or computer, on the counter. NORMAN is holding a bag of chips. LORNE is wearing a shirt that reads "Hoover High School Class of [current academic year]."*

**LORNE:** We shouldn't be here. This is dangerous.

**NORMAN:** It's a convenience store. It's 10:00 in the morning. It's perfectly safe.

**LORNE:** We might see somebody we know. Thanksgiving is next week. People are going to be out buying groceries and stuff.

**NORMAN:** At a convenience store? I don't think we need to worry about that.

**LORNE:** But still...

**NORMAN:** Listen, our parents are at work. Our teachers are at school. Your brother and my sister...both at school. Heck, if we see *anybody* we know from school, then they're skipping class the same as we are. We'll be fine. Now, what are you gonna get?

**LORNE:** I don't know.

**NORMAN:** I mean, I know all those food allergies you've got limit your options, but there's gotta be something. How about the pretzels?

**LORNE:** I'm allergic to wheat.

**NORMAN:** Corn chips?

**LORNE:** I'm allergic to corn.

**NORMAN:** What about these potato chips?

**LORNE:** They're made in a facility that processes tree nuts.

**NORMAN:** How do you know? You didn't even look at the label.

**LORNE:** Because I've looked at the label before.

**NORMAN:** And you remembered? Who remembers what they read on food labels?

**LORNE:** People with food allergies.

**NORMAN:** So you remember what's on the label of everything you've ever eaten in your life?

**LORNE:** Pretty much, yeah.

**NORMAN:** Do you have a photographic memory?

**LORNE:** No. I have survival instinct.

**NORMAN:** Are there any candy bars here you can eat?

**LORNE:** I'm allergic to nuts and dairy, so no.

**NORMAN:** What *can* you eat?

**LORNE:** Anything that doesn't contain peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, shellfish, fish, soy, eggs, sesame seeds, beef, corn, rice, celery, wheat, carrots, or blue food coloring.

**NORMAN:** You're allergic to celery?

**LORNE:** Yeah.

**NORMAN:** I am so jealous.

**LORNE:** I'm delighted that my affliction causes you envy.

**NORMAN:** I hate celery.

**LORNE:** I'm sure there are lots of foods I'd hate if I could actually eat them.

**NORMAN:** What happens if you do? Eat something you're allergic to, I mean.

**LORNE:** Depends on what it is. Anything from a rash to anaphylaxis.

**NORMAN:** What's that?

**LORNE:** My throat swells shut and I can't breathe.

**NORMAN:** That would suck (Or "stink").

**LORNE:** Yup.

**NORMAN:** So what happens if that happens?

**LORNE:** I have this thing called an EpiPen that I carry around and if I eat something that causes me to have a reaction, I use it to inject medicine into my leg.

**NORMAN:** What happens if you don't have the EpiPen with you and you have a reaction?

**LORNE:** I die.

**NORMAN:** Oh.

**LORNE:** Yeah. That's why I always have it with me.

**NORMAN:** Um. What are you gonna get here?

**LORNE:** (*Crossing left to the basket on the counter.*) A banana.

**NORMAN:** That's no fun.

**LORNE:** "Fun" foods are ones that don't make my butt itch or put me on the brink of death. Bananas are loads of fun.

**NORMAN:** How do you even make it from one day to the next?

**LORNE:** I eat a lot of bananas.

**NORMAN:** No wonder you're so uptight all the time.

**CLERK:** Shouldn't the two of you be in school?

**NORMAN:** What? Do we look like we're twelve years old?

**CLERK:** (*Pointing at LORNE.*) He looks like he's wearing a shirt that says "Hoover High School Class of (*Current academic year.*)".

**LORNE:** (*Taking a step right, away from the counter.*) Oh. Um. It was a gift.

**CLERK:** Which someone gave to you because you're in the class of (*Current academic year.*) at Hoover High School.

**NORMAN:** (*Crossing left, in front of LORNE, to the right side of the counter.*) How do you know today's even a school day? How do you know it's not parent conference day or something?

**CLERK:** Because I got stuck behind a school bus picking up kids on my way here this morning.

**NORMAN:** All right. Fine. We took a break. (*Crosses left to the left side of the counter.*)

**CLERK:** From school?

**NORMAN:** Sure. Why not?

**CLERK:** It's school.

**NORMAN:** We have a study hall right now.

**CLERK:** And they let you leave school grounds to make a convenience store run during your study hall?

**NORMAN:** Nobody stopped us on our way out.

**CLERK:** Did you use the main door?

**NORMAN:** They wouldn't have side doors if they didn't want people to use them.

**CLERK:** And did you shut the side door behind you?

**NORMAN:** It looked shut.

**CLERK:** Was it completely shut, or was it maybe propped open just a tiny bit so you could get back in later? Maybe a paper clip to keep the bolt from catching all the way?

**NORMAN:** Um...

**CLERK:** Or was it a piece of mulch? Do they still have the plants with the mulch outside the door by the drama classroom?

**NORMAN:** How do you know about the mulch?

**CLERK:** Because it's what I used to use to prop open the door when I skipped school. My best friend used paper clips, but I could never get that to work. And he was kind of a nerd. I mean, who carries around paper clips?

**NORMAN:** Wait...what?

**CLERK:** I used to skip from there all the time.

**LORNE:** So you're not like...gonna call the school?

**CLERK:** Oh, heck no.

**LORNE:** But you sounded like...

**CLERK:** I was just messing with ya. But seriously, if you're gonna skip, wear a different shirt or zip up your jacket. And try to sweat a little less. Don't be so conspicuous.

**LORNE:** (*Crossing left to NORMAN.*) Oh, crud. I just thought of something.

**NORMAN:** What?

**LORNE:** Was there a security camera by the door we used at the school?

**NORMAN:** I don't know. Probably.

**LORNE:** They're gonna know we left. We'll be on the security video.

**NORMAN:** Relax, will you? Nobody ever looks at those.

**LORNE:** How do you know?

**NORMAN:** They have a couple dozen cameras all over the school, recording all the time. Do you know how much footage that is? There's no way they go through it all. They're not going to watch it unless they have a reason.

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 5

**SETTING:** *Later that day, Principal Wilson's office.*

**AT RISE:** *WILSON is seated behind a desk. To stage left of the desk are two chairs, in which sit NORMAN and LORNE.*

**WILSON:** The library secretary was delivering overdue notices today and noticed that the side door by the drama classroom was propped open. With a piece of mulch. *(Beat.)* Do you have anything you'd like to say about this?

**NORMAN:** I wish people would return their library books on time.

**WILSON:** It's not a perfect world.

**LORNE:** Guess not.

**WILSON:** In a perfect world, you wouldn't have been skipping class.

**NORMAN:** We didn't think it would be a big deal if it was study hall.

**WILSON:** The school is supposed to know where you are, and leaving school grounds without checking out at the attendance office is not an acceptable practice.

**LORNE:** So if we'd checked out at the attendance office, the school would've let us go to the convenience store?

**WILSON:** No.

**LORNE:** Oh.

**WILSON:** You went to the convenience store, then?

**LORNE:** Yeah.

**WILSON:** Why?

**NORMAN:** They had food.

**WILSON:** Were you hungry?

**NORMAN:** Not really.

**WILSON:** Then why?

**NORMAN:** It was someplace to go.

**WILSON:** Someplace that wasn't school?

**NORMAN:** Yeah.

**WILSON:** Lorne, Norman...in six months, you'll graduate. No more high school. You should enjoy it while you still can. And if you don't enjoy school, then just stick it out. You're almost there, and you only get to be a senior once.

**LORNE:** Okay.

**NORMAN:** All right.

**WILSON:** Good.

**LORNE:** (*Hopefully.*) Are we done?

**WILSON:** No, I still need to assign you to detention.

**LORNE:** Bummer.

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 6

**SETTING:** *The next day, detention.*

**AT RISE:** *At right is a teacher's desk and chair. There are a cordless phone and some papers on the desk. There are several student desks and chairs to the left of the teacher's desk. NORMAN and ALEX are seated and working at two of the student desks, and there is a small stack of papers at an empty student desk. LORNE enters from the right, carrying his book bag. MS. HARRIS greets HIM.*

**LORNE:** Um...hi. I'm here for detention.

**HARRIS:** Name?

**LORNE:** Lorne.

**HARRIS:** Last name?

**LORNE:** Wagner.

**HARRIS:** There's a work packet with your name on the desk over there. Have a seat. No talking. Do your work.

**LORNE:** Right.

*LORNE sits. NORMAN lifts a hand to acknowledge LORNE, but LORNE deliberately looks away. A few seconds pass. HARRIS watches the STUDENTS. The phone rings. HARRIS answers it.*

**HARRIS:** Detention. This is Ms. Harris. *(Beat.)* I didn't realize I'd left my cell phone at home, but thanks for letting me know. *(Beat.)* Why were you looking through my text messages? *(Beat.)* Calm down. Wait a minute. *(To STUDENTS.)* I need to step out into the hall. No talking.

*HARRIS exits right, taking the cordless phone with HER.*

**ALEX:** Lorne...Norman...what'd you two do to wind up here?

**NORMAN:** Left school during study hall and went to the convenience store.

**LORNE:** Shh...we're not supposed to be talking.

**ALEX:** Ah. The convenience store. Why did they put that thing down the road from the school if they didn't want students to go there? It's like this pulsing beacon of temptation. What do they expect?

**LORNE:** They expect us not to go to the convenience store and to not talk during detention.

**HARRIS:** *(Offstage.)* It's not what you think! I promise!

**ALEX:** I think we're okay for a few minutes. But we need to make this quick.

**LORNE:** What do you mean...make what quick?

**ALEX:** I have an opportunity for the two of you.

**LORNE:** No.

**ALEX:** You don't even know what it is.

**LORNE:** When somebody offers you an opportunity in detention, it's never a good thing.

**ALEX:** Have you ever been in detention before?

**LORNE:** No.

**ALEX:** Then how do you know?

**LORNE:** Common sense.

**NORMAN:** What's your offer?

**ALEX:** I want you to help me make history.

**LORNE:** No.

**ALEX:** Anonymously, of course.

**LORNE:** Definitely not.

*HARRIS enters from right, the phone still in her hand.*

**HARRIS:** You all better not be talking in here. *(Puts phone to her ear.)* I would never brag to my friends about switching us from butter to margarine without telling you. What kind of person do you think I am? *(Exits right.)*

**NORMAN:** What sort of history are we talking about?

**ALEX:** The long, rich kind of history. The senior prank.

**LORNE:** You have got to be kidding.

**ALEX:** Last year, the agents of the senior class filled Principal Wilson's office with foam packing peanuts. Two years ago, they put all of the cafeteria chairs on the football field in the shape of Bugs Bunny. The year before that, they took the toilet paper out of all the bathrooms and hid it behind the books in the library. Our class has a legacy to live up to, and I don't want to let them down.

**LORNE:** What do you care about the senior prank?

**ALEX:** I'm the class president. This is one of my jobs.

**LORNE:** No, it's not.

**ALEX:** Not officially, no. But come on...nobody's going to remember the speech I give at graduation or the senior class's entry in the spirit wall decorating contest, or anything "official" that I do. But a good senior prank is something they'll talk about at class reunions for years to come.

**LORNE:** Don't you have, like...class officers to help you with this?

**ALEX:** Yes, I do, but they don't care. They either think it's a waste of time or they're too busy doing nothing to come to any meetings. I tried recruiting some of the students who're used to getting in trouble, but they wouldn't have anything to do with me. Running into you guys here today...it's like fate.

**LORNE:** It's not fate. It's detention.

**ALEX:** You two are like actual, real students. Just like me. Yet here we all are in detention together. It's as if we're being sent a message from on high.

**LORNE:** And the message is, "You all did something stupid. Don't be stupid again."

**NORMAN:** What'd you do to wind up here, anyway?

**ALEX:** I got caught in a part of the school where I wasn't supposed to be.

**NORMAN:** Where?

**ALEX:** The roof.

**NORMAN:** What were you doing on the roof?

**ALEX:** Exploring my options.

**LORNE:** (*Sarcastic.*) What...were you going to put a cow up there?

**ALEX:** Maybe.

**NORMAN:** That'd be too heavy. Plus, you'd have to get a cow. Toilet papering the roof would be a lot easier.

**ALEX:** Toilet paper's already been a prank component, but I like your brainstorming. So...you in?

**LORNE:** No thanks.

**ALEX:** Why not?

**LORNE:** For one thing, I don't want to.

**ALEX:** All right. That's one thing. What's another?

**LORNE:** Okay. I have this uncle...he *lives* for April Fool's Day. His favorite thing in the world is to play pranks...usually on the rest of the family. Sometimes the pranks are really elaborate and usually they involve animal droppings. I have come to dread April Fool's Day, and I don't want to do unto others what I don't want done unto me.

**ALEX:** Are you afraid of karma or something?

**LORNE:** No.

**ALEX:** You sound like you are. Could you at least give me your uncle's number?

**LORNE:** No!

**ALEX:** All right. Sorry. Forget I asked. Norman, what about you? You interested?

**NORMAN:** Yeah, sure.

**LORNE:** Are you serious?

**NORMAN:** Come on, Lorne. It'll be fun.

**LORNE:** No. You can do whatever you like, but I don't want to have any part of it.

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 7

**SETTING:** *January, the school library conference room.*

**AT RISE:** *At their table in the library, ANDREA and STEVIE are unloading their book bags, about to start a tutoring session. STEVIE is sitting in the right chair and ANDREA in the left chair.*

**STEVIE:** How was Christmas?

**ANDREA:** Fine. Busy. Lots of family stuff.

**STEVIE:** Get anything good?

**ANDREA:** Mostly money to put towards college.

**STEVIE:** For real?

**ANDREA:** For real. It's gonna cost a bunch.

**STEVIE:** How much?

**ANDREA:** A lot. My parents are footing part of the bill.

**STEVIE:** But not all of it?

**ANDREA:** No. I've been saving up from summer jobs for a couple of years. I got some scholarships, and I'm taking out some loans.

**STEVIE:** It just seems weird. It's like, for thirteen years, you're forced to eat broccoli every day. And then when you finally get to the day that you don't have to eat broccoli anymore, you're not only choosing to eat broccoli for another four years, but you're going to pay thousands of dollars to keep doing it.

**ANDREA:** School and broccoli aren't exactly the same thing.

**STEVIE:** They're close enough. I mean, broccoli is expensive.

**ANDREA:** When was the last time you checked the price of broccoli?

**STEVIE:** Um...probably never.

**ANDREA:** That's what I thought.

**STEVIE:** I just...I dunno...I hate to see you waste your money.

**ANDREA:** You almost sound like you're trying to talk me out of going.

**STEVIE:** (*Scooting his chair a foot right, away from ANDREA, because HE realizes that's exactly what HE's doing.*) No! Do what you want, or what you think is good for you. I'm doing what's good for me and it's gonna cost me a heck of a lot less money.

**ANDREA:** Are you trying to make yourself feel better that you're not going?

**STEVIE:** What?

**ANDREA:** Do you feel bad that you're not going to college?

**STEVIE:** (*Standing.*) No.

**ANDREA:** Now, in the short term, yeah, (*Standing.*) you're right, college is going to cost a lot. But in the long term, I'll be able to get a better job and make more money than if I never went to college in the first place.

**STEVIE:** You don't know that for sure.

**ANDREA:** It's a gamble. But as gambles go, it's not a bad one.

**STEVIE:** Vocational school's a safer bet.

**ANDREA:** Yeah. It probably is. But you don't go to vocational school to be a writer.

**STEVIE:** That what you wanna do?

**ANDREA:** That's the goal.

**STEVIE:** Good luck.

**ANDREA:** If you know you don't want to go to college, why haven't you been doing some kind of vocational training through the school system?

**STEVIE:** Didn't feel like it.

**ANDREA:** You don't like school...you don't like sitting in class all day...and you could've gotten training in auto repair, or welding, or something...wouldn't that have been better?

**STEVIE:** Maybe.

**ANDREA:** So why not do it?

**STEVIE:** (*Meandering around a bit, right of the desk.*) Because I had my guidance counselor and a bunch of teachers pushing me. They're all like, "Stevie! You should totally do this!" And I'm like, "No." If a bunch of grown-ups are gonna push me to do something, I'm not gonna do it. I wanna make the choice for myself and not be pushed into something I'm not sure about. So I didn't. And what if I'd gotten there and didn't like the classes I was taking, but got stuck in that job for the rest of my life? All because of some stupid choice I made in high school.

**ANDREA:** You realize that you still made a choice, right? And you could still get stuck in a job you hate for the rest of your life because of that choice.

**STEVIE:** I know. At least it was my choice. And maybe it was a really dumb one. It'll be a while until I know for sure. But if I do wind up with a lousy job, (*Crossing to right of ANDREA.*) how do I know things would have turned out any different if I *had* taken those classes?

**ANDREA:** (*Putting a hand on STEVIE's shoulder.*) You won't know. You never will.

**STEVIE:** You could go crazy thinking about this stuff.

**ANDREA:** (*Taking her hand off of STEVIE's shoulder.*) Yeah.

**STEVIE:** You know when you said the whole graduation thing—life after high school—was scary?

**ANDREA:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** (*Sitting.*) I think I'm starting to agree with you.

*ANDREA sits. Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 8

**SETTING:** *February, the hall at school.*

**AT RISE:** *LORNE enters from right and NORMAN enters from left.*

**LORNE:** Norman...what are you doing out of class?

**NORMAN:** I could ask you the same thing.

**LORNE:** I just went to the bathroom.

**NORMAN:** That's where I'm going.

**LORNE:** Are you “going to the bathroom” going to the bathroom, or “cutting class” going to the bathroom?

**NORMAN:** Why would you think I was cutting class?

**LORNE:** Because the time you talked me into sneaking out of school left an impression.

**NORMAN:** You’ve barely spoken to me since then.

**LORNE:** I got nailed skipping school to buy a *banana*. My brother had a field day with that! He’s never going to let me live it down.

**NORMAN:** Your brother’s a junior. Give it a year.

**LORNE:** And my parents said they didn’t want me hanging out with you anymore.

**NORMAN:** You’re almost 18, Lorne. You can make your own decisions.

**LORNE:** Yeah, well, I guess I agreed with them.

**NORMAN:** Well, just for the record, I was planning to use the bathroom for its intended purpose. Believe it or not.

**LORNE:** I’m sure Alex would be crushed to hear that. Now that we’re into February and you’ve had a couple of months to think about it, I guess you two probably have something planned for the senior prank.

**NORMAN:** It’s...you know...

**LORNE:** Never mind. The less I know about that, the better. (*Starts to exit left, then stops.*) How come you weren’t in school yesterday?

**NORMAN:** Um...

**LORNE:** That’s what I thought.

**NORMAN:** All I said was “um.”

**LORNE:** That’s all you needed to say.

**NORMAN:** Look, I just...it’s hard, you know? Focusing on school.

**LORNE:** I know. Believe me. But I’m still managing to do it.

**NORMAN:** We’re so close to the end and I feel...so constrained here. I want it to be the future—right now.

**LORNE:** And you were all excited about being a senior at the start of the school year.

**NORMAN:** Yeah. Funny how that’s worked out. Now that I’m neck-deep in my senior year, I just feel ready for it to be done.

**LORNE:** I'm ready to be done and get on with the future too, but unlike some of us, I've learned my lesson and now I do my daydreaming in class instead of someplace else.

**NORMAN:** What do you daydream?

**LORNE:** Just...stuff. You know. Life.

**NORMAN:** What do you want to do with yours? Your life. If you could do anything...what would it be?

**LORNE:** If I could do anything?

**NORMAN:** Yeah.

**LORNE:** Be a food critic.

**NORMAN:** But...you're allergic to everything.

**LORNE:** You said if I could do anything.

**NORMAN:** I know, but...the average meal would be toxic to you. I'm trying to imagine you as a food critic for a newspaper, eating a big meal from a restaurant. You'd have to get carryout delivered to a hospital and eat in the emergency room with a big pile of Epipens beside you, and every bite of food, you'd like...take a bite, chew, swallow, gasp for air, give yourself an injection, breathe, take another bite of food, and repeat the process.

**LORNE:** Are you making fun of me?

**NORMAN:** No, I'm just saying...there's got to be a better way to make a living.

*NORMAN exits right. ALEX enters from left.*

**ALEX:** Lorne...how's it going?

**LORNE:** Oh, great...it's a detention reunion.

**ALEX:** I was sitting in Spanish and I saw you walk by and then Norman like a minute later, so I got a bathroom pass to see if I could catch up with you.

**LORNE:** Do you have any idea how creepy that sounds?

**ALEX:** You're both kind of hard to track down. We don't have any classes together this year. I don't have your number, and I think you might've accidentally blocked me on Facebook (*Update reference as necessary.*) or something.

**LORNE:** It wasn't an accident. I told you, I'm not interested in the prank thing.

**ALEX:** I was hoping you'd change your mind...especially since you and Norman are buddies.

**LORNE:** Not so much anymore. Hasn't Norman been keeping you up to date on current events?

**ALEX:** I keep texting, but all he ever says is, "I'll catch up with you, soon."

**LORNE:** Really?

**ALEX:** Yeah.

**LORNE:** Huh.

**ALEX:** What?

**LORNE:** *(Exiting left.)* Nothing.

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 9

**SETTING:** *April, the school library conference room.*

**AT RISE:** *STEVIE is standing to the right of the library table with some note cards in his hand. HE has just finished practicing a speech with ANDREA, who is seated in the table's left chair and facing HIM.*

**STEVIE:** How was that? I mean, I know giving speeches isn't my thing, but it wasn't completely awful for a practice run, was it?

**ANDREA:** *(Standing.)* You need to speak with more conviction.

**STEVIE:** You mean...like I actually care?

**ANDREA:** Yes.

**STEVIE:** It's a speech about Charles Dickens. I don't care about Charles Dickens. I can't relate to Charles Dickens.

**ANDREA:** *(Crossing upstage to the front of the table.)* What can you relate to?

**STEVIE:** *(Crossing to meet her in front of the table.)* Spring break.

**ANDREA:** No. I don't want you thinking about spring break. This is April. Spring break was last month. Thinking back to the week where you shifted your brain into neutral isn't going to help. What else can you relate to?

**STEVIE:** I don't know.

**ANDREA:** *(Sitting on table.)* Okay...what's something you like to eat? One of your favorite things.

**STEVIE:** *(Sitting right of ANDREA on the table, very close to HER.)*  
Um...instant pudding.

**ANDREA:** All right. What I want you to do is, the next time you run through the speech, pretend that Charles Dickens is instant pudding. Okay?

**STEVIE:** Um...okay.

**ANDREA:** And try to avoid saying "um."

**STEVIE:** Did I say "um?"

**ANDREA:** Yes.

**STEVIE:** Did I say it a lot?

**ANDREA:** Fifty-six times.

**STEVIE:** You counted?

**ANDREA:** Yes. And you slapped your leg a couple of times.

**STEVIE:** And by a couple, you mean I did it more or less times than I said "um?"

**ANDREA:** More.

**STEVIE:** Is that bad?

**ANDREA:** It's distracting and it makes you look nervous.

**STEVIE:** *(Standing and taking a step right, away from ANDREA.)* I am nervous. I don't like to give speeches.

**ANDREA:** You're giving it in front of me. *(Stands and takes a step right to STEVIE.)* You don't have to be nervous.

**STEVIE:** *(Turning away from ANDREA.)* Yes, I do.

**ANDREA:** You've written a good speech. You just need to worry about presenting it well.

**STEVIE:** That is what I'm worried about.

**ANDREA:** You mean giving the speech for real? In front of other students?

**STEVIE:** Sort of.

**ANDREA:** Just pretend you're practicing the speech in front of me again.

**STEVIE:** That doesn't help.

**ANDREA:** Why?

**STEVIE:** Because *(Turning to ANDREA.)* I don't want to look stupid in front of you. *(Looks away from ANDREA.)*

**ANDREA:** It's okay if you look stupid in front of me. That's why I'm here. But for the record, I don't think you look stupid.

**STEVIE:** *(Turning to ANDREA.)* You don't?

**ANDREA:** No.

**STEVIE:** But I'm doing all this stuff wrong. How can you not think I'm stupid?

**ANDREA:** Because you're trying. I respect that.

**STEVIE:** For real?

**ANDREA:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** Okay.

**ANDREA:** Does my opinion really matter that much?

*STEVIE looks away from ANDREA and doesn't answer. ANDREA puts a hand on STEVIE's shoulder.*

Stevie?

**STEVIE:** Yeah. It matters.

**ANDREA:** How come?

**STEVIE:** Because I like you.

**ANDREA:** I like you, too.

*Pause. THEY look at each other.*

You mean like...? *(ANDREA removes her hand from STEVIE's shoulder.)* Crap. *(Or "Oh.")* No. *(Crosses left, away from STEVIE.)* Crap crap crap crap crap. *(Or "No no no no no.")*

**STEVIE:** Sorry.

**ANDREA:** Stevie...look...I...it wouldn't work. I got accepted. The college I really, really wanted to get into?

**STEVIE:** The one that's six hours away?

**ANDREA:** *(Not looking at STEVIE.)* Yeah. They accepted me.

**STEVIE:** Congratulations. When'd you find out?

**ANDREA:** *(Looking at STEVIE, but ashamed.)* A while ago.

**STEVIE:** I'm surprised you didn't, y'know...that you didn't tell me before now.

**ANDREA:** Stevie, I'm sorry...you and me...no. We're not compatible. We're totally not right for each other. (*Sits on the table again.*) And I'm going to college. Six hours away. We can't maintain a relationship with that kind of distance between us and me gone for two-thirds of the year. We can't.

**STEVIE:** (*Sitting on the table to the right of ANDREA, but not as close to HER as before.*) You sound like you've thought about this already.

**ANDREA:** I have.

*Beat.*

**STEVIE:** Oh.

**ANDREA:** Yeah.

**STEVIE:** I, uh...I didn't see this coming.

**ANDREA:** Me neither.

*Beat.*

That's why I hadn't told you about college, yet. It felt...complicated.

**STEVIE:** So now what?

**ANDREA:** We can't pretend we never had this conversation, can we?

**STEVIE:** I don't think so. (*Beat.*) Will you still tutor me?

**ANDREA:** Do you think it's a good idea?

**STEVIE:** I think I'm going to be screwed (*Or "out of luck".*) if I don't have you to help me finish the semester. And you need me to get enough service hours for your diploma seal.

**ANDREA:** Forget that. Ignore that. We, as a couple, would be doomed. What do you think?

*Beat.*

**STEVIE:** I think a serious, long-term relationship between you and me...I guess I'd be surprised if it worked out.

**ANDREA:** So it's not an option. Knowing that...do you still want me to tutor you?

*Beat.*

**STEVIE:** *(Soberly.)* Yes.

**ANDREA:** Okay.

**STEVIE:** Do you still want to tutor me?

**ANDREA:** Yes.

**STEVIE:** Okay.

**ANDREA:** Okay.

**STEVIE:** So...that's it, then? You're the tutor and I'm the student.

That's it.

**ANDREA:** That's it.

**STEVIE:** Anything else...bad idea.

**ANDREA:** Bad idea.

*Pause.*

**STEVIE:** *(Looking at ANDREA.)* I shouldn't ask you to go to prom with me, should I?

**ANDREA:** *(Looking away from STEVIE.)* No. I don't think you should.

*STEVIE hangs his head. Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 10

**SETTING:** *Later that afternoon, outside of the school.*

**AT RISE:** *ALEX is talking on his cell phone and pacing. His book bag is sitting on the ground nearby.*

**ALEX:** Norman. This is Alex. I'm standing out front of the school. I don't know if you maybe forgot, but we were going to meet in the cafeteria this afternoon to talk about the prank. Sorry I missed you. Again. Call me tonight if you get a chance. Bye. *(Hangs up and looks at his phone.)* Geez. What a loser.

*STEVIE enters from right, carrying his book bag. ALEX perks up, seeing an opportunity.*

**ALEX:** Stevie. Hey. How's it going?

**STEVIE:** I don't feel like talking right now, Alex.

**ALEX:** Could you maybe spare just a minute for me?

**STEVIE:** Alex, get out of my way.

**ALEX:** I'm sensing some hostility about something here, and I think I know a great way for you to funnel—

**STEVIE:** *(Pushing past ALEX.)* Alex, get it through your head—I don't want to talk to you! *(STEVIE exits left.)*

**ALEX:** *(Yelling after STEVIE.)* All right, fine! I can take a hint! You don't have to be such a jerk! Get a grip on yourself!

*There is a sound of a window breaking. ALEX reacts in surprise.*

Or maybe throw a rock through a window, if it makes you feel better.

**BLACKOUT.**

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from SENIOR-ITIS by Bradley Walton. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC**

**P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406**

**Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011**

**www.brookpub.com**