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Cast of Characters

CALEB, High school senior

WALDEN, High school senior

DANIELLE, High school senior

KIP, High school senior

REINA, High school senior

ZOE, High school senior

QUINN, High school senior

SCHUYLER, High school sophomore

Time

It happens retrogressively. Since there are no official scene breaks a change in lighting will usually suffice to denote when a passage in time has occurred.

Place

A mid-western highway not far from the county line.

Setting

A lake. A Dairy Queen. A dark highway.

Acknowledgments

County Line was commissioned for the “Partnership for One-Act Plays for Teenage Actors” by the Guthrie Theater, Joe Dowling, Artistic Director, in association with The Playwrights’ Center.

COUNTY LINE

by Christina M. Ham

(AT RISE: CALEB and WALDEN sit beneath the shadows of a partially moonlit night. WALDEN wears a crown and a marching band cape. A strange, iridescent light appears in the distance.)

Lake

WALDEN. Friends?

CALEB. Not quite. Don't forget—you lied to me. *Acquaintances.*

WALDEN. Acquaintances? I don't think so. Not after tonight.

CALEB. *(Refers to light:)* Are they your friends or acquaintances?

WALDEN. Neither. Family.

CALEB. How many of 'em are out there?

WALDEN. About ten thousand—give or take. But, you can't see them with your naked eye.

CALEB. They must really care about you. I don't think I have more than two people that care about me. I take that back—maybe one.

WALDEN. It's not really me they care about, but how human friendships develop. How do you say? "I'm a means to an end."

CALEB. Friend? I'm not a good example of that.

WALDEN. "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

CALEB. What's that mean?

WALDEN. It's from the essay I was named after—"Walden" by Thoreau.

CALEB. Trust me. Tonight I made a choice that I'll have to live with for the rest of my life. And, right now my so-called friends aren't talking to me because of it.

WALDEN. I've heard that you only need one good friend.

CALEB. It's pretty much a no-brainer that people who say that don't have any friends.

WALDEN. Watch this.

(WALDEN removes his scalp and takes his brain out.)

No brain. Hee hee.

CALEB. Dude, that belongs inside your skull.

WALDEN. I'm among friends.

CALEB. You can't just whip your brain out in public, man. Something like that could get you killed in these parts. Believe me, they've killed over a lot less.

WALDEN. My people don't die—we regenerate.

CALEB. How about it could get me killed? Being associated with something—someone—different can be dangerous. Friends don't get their friends killed.

WALDEN. But, if we're acquaintees? Then, it's okay?

CALEB. Don't be a smart ass.

(WALDEN puts his brain back into his head.)

There have been a lot of abductions reported up here—near the county line. Why?

WALDEN. Because it's the perfect place for the least expected to happen.

CALEB. *(Acknowledges the lights:)* You think they'll take me with them?

WALDEN. You...want to go with them?

CALEB. Why not? There's nothing here for me.

WALDEN. And me? We've just started to become friends.

CALEB. Oh, yeah.

WALDEN. So, what happens on Monday? When we walk past each other in the hallway? Will you still speak to me?

CALEB. *(Looks at the light:)* Are they still listening?

WALDEN. I don't think so.

CALEB. Good. Then, they won't be pissed at what I'm about to say.

(The lights shift. CALEB and WALDEN continue to sit by the lake. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene.)

Lake

CALEB. I'm sorry. I tried to warn you.

WALDEN. It's okay. They're obviously no reflection of who you are.

CALEB. They used to be.

(CALEB throws his homecoming crown into the bushes.)

WALDEN. Don't.

(WALDEN goes to retrieve it.)

CALEB. You keep it. I don't want any reminders of them laughing behind my back.

WALDEN. What do you have to do to get one of these?

CALEB. Be popular.

WALDEN. That's all?

CALEB. You make it sound easy.

WALDEN. Isn't it?

CALEB. Not when you have about fifteen hundred students who hate your guts.

WALDEN. Well, you look like you don't let the pressure get to you.

CALEB. Maybe because I "dance" on the inside.

WALDEN. How do you do that?

CALEB. That's called a joke. Sorta.

WALDEN. I wanna learn.

CALEB. What? How to dance?

WALDEN. How to be like you—popular.

CALEB. It's not something you learn—you gotta earn it.

WALDEN. How?

CALEB. By inflicting cruel and unusual punishment on others.

WALDEN. They took most of my powers before I came here, but I could come up with something.

CALEB. You have to have a strong constitution. You can't buckle under peer pressure or suddenly get a conscience.

WALDEN. Aliens—we don't have a conscience.

CALEB. How can I be more like you?

WALDEN. You can let me separate your soul from the rest of your body.

CALEB. Really?

WALDEN. Uh, no. You've seen too many episodes of "The X-Files."

CALEB. Oh.

WALDEN. I ran into Zoe at Xerious Records. Did she tell you guys?

CALEB. No.

WALDEN. She spoke to me—first.

CALEB. Really?

WALDEN. She was with some guy. He was wearing a Southfolk High varsity jacket.

CALEB. Southfolk? That's the other side of town. When the hell did she start hanging out with kids from another high school?

WALDEN. I don't know. But, they seemed—close.

CALEB. I've known Zoe a long time, but sometimes she can be distant.

WALDEN. It seems to me that's the only thing human beings do really well—long distance.

CALEB. Reina—what was that all about?

WALDEN. She's not ready. That's all.

CALEB. God, this is hard. They're the only friends I've had. We've never really been apart.

WALDEN. You've never had any other friends?

CALEB. We did, but Bobby moved to Arizona when his dad's company transferred him—sophomore year. Looking back on it—it was the best thing for him.

WALDEN. And, he was human?

CALEB. Well...yeah. Sorta.

WALDEN. But, here you are hanging out with me because you want to. That means a lot.

CALEB. Same here.

WALDEN. Free will's something that can never be taken away from you. Believe me—we've tried.

CALEB. My dad's always trying to break me down. Make a man outta me—so he says.

WALDEN. Parents...they wanna help. Most times they mean well.

CALEB. Last time my dad meant well he got tickets for us to go to a Twins-White Sox game. I was six.

WALDEN. I must tell you something.

CALEB. What?

WALDEN. Back on the highway—my parents—they brain sanded you.

CALEB. So, you lied to me?

WALDEN. To protect you.

CALEB. You really do know what it's like to be human, don't you?

(CALEB and WALDEN look at each other as the lights shift. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene. WALDEN stands next to CALEB in front of DANIELLE, KIP, REINA, QUINN, and SCHUYLER.)

Dairy Queen

DANIELLE. How could you bring him here? After all he's done?

CALEB. Him? What about us?

REINA. You told him it was us didn't you?

SCHUYLER. God, and all this time I thought I had the big mouth.

CALEB. I had every right to tell him. When the hell are we gonna grow up?

(DANIELLE moves towards him.)

DANIELLE. Just come out and say it, Caleb. You're done with us.

QUINN. He doesn't have to.

KIP. *(To WALDEN:)* So, it's true.

WALDEN. What?

KIP. Aliens can reproduce sweat.

WALDEN. We can reproduce any human trait—physical or emotional—including jealousy.

KIP. I'm amazed at your race's ability to reproduce the human skin. Was it difficult? Painful? How long did it take?

CALEB. That's enough, Kip.

KIP. Can I be the first to “out” you and do an exclusive interview with you for my newsletter, “The Kip Files”?

DANIELLE. *(To KIP:)* What's wrong with you? What about what he did to Zoe? To all of us?

WALDEN. I never meant to hurt any of you—especially Zoe. Just get your attention. I'd say we're even.

(WALDEN walks over to the booth that ZOE is hiding underneath. He holds out his hand. She slowly comes from underneath it. KIP photographs this moment with his cell phone. WALDEN puts his hand on her throat and she draws a deep breath.)

DANIELLE. Zoe!

QUINN. Leave her alone!

(CALEB holds DANIELLE back. KIP holds QUINN back.)

ZOE. I'm—alright.

SCHUYLER. The geek speaks.

CALEB. What happened to her?

WALDEN. Ask her.

ZOE. I can't explain it—I just reached a point when words seemed pointless.

QUINN. You all right?

ZOE. Yeah.

QUINN. *(Pushes him:)* You better be lucky she's okay.

WALDEN. Look, this is all a misunderstanding.

REINA. Yeah. On your part.

WALDEN. *(To REINA:)* I thought we were friends. I let you borrow my C.D.

KIP. What C.D.?

WALDEN. N.I.N.

KIP. Nine Inch Nails? None of us listen to them.

REINA. You guys, he's a liar.

WALDEN. In homeroom you told me you loved it.

REINA. Shut up you dork!

WALDEN. Why are you being like this?

DANIELLE. You see the kind of trouble someone like him causes, Caleb? You're gonna have to choose—him or us.

(The lights shift on the stage to CALEB and WALDEN sitting side by side. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene. WALDEN's band cape is wrapped around him.)

Lake

WALDEN. You realize this will be the first time we've socialized outside of school?

CALEB. Yes. I'm glad it worked out.

WALDEN. Me too.

CALEB. If you wanna meet them you can't go looking like that.

WALDEN. This is the only face they gave me.

CALEB. No. I mean your clothes. Do you have something else to wear?

WALDEN. Yes.

CALEB. We'll go in a minute. Just let me sit here and think.

WALDEN. How long have you been friends?

CALEB. Most of our lives. We grew up in the same neighborhood—there in Oak Grove. But, this year's been tough—Quinn and Sky's brother killing himself, Reina's parents getting a divorce, and Danielle totally tripping on me. What happened out there—it really messed with my head.

WALDEN. I'd watch you guys at lunch, after school, in our neighborhood, hanging out. I wanted to be a part of that. I asked my parents if there was anything they could do to help me out. When they stopped you guys on the highway they realized you would have to decide whether you wanted to be my friend or not. You had “free will.”

CALEB. “It's up to us.”

WALDEN. You remember.

CALEB. Some of it. That part sticks out the most. *(Beat.)* What else did your parents do to me?

WALDEN. Nothing. They just talked to you.

CALEB. *(Pause.)* Maybe being our friend isn't all it's cracked up to be.

WALDEN. How could you say that? I finally have someone to talk to.

CALEB. Maybe 'cause human relationships are more complicated than you think.

WALDEN. Once I talk to them I'll be able to smooth things over.

CALEB. I doubt it. We should just stay here—watch the space ships.

WALDEN. We don't have space ships. You should face your friends. You at least owe them that.

CALEB. *They* owe me. I've paid enough.

WALDEN. Do people ever make fun of you?

CALEB. I don't know—maybe they do—behind my back. Like they did tonight at homecoming— laughing at my dad being drunk.

WALDEN. Why do they do it behind your back?

CALEB. 'cause I'm rich. When you're rich no one'll say anything to your face.

WALDEN. Since we came here I've had no friends.

CALEB. Can't you go to another planet?

WALDEN. No. My dads don't want to leave. Our race's survival depends on our ability to set up our community for others to come. You guys have a tough climate here. It's been hard to adapt. The toughest part won't be physically, but emotionally. Mom and dads say I'll get used to it, but when stuff like this happens I'm not too sure.

CALEB. You have two dads—that must be pretty cool. They can spend twice the time with you.

WALDEN. Right. More than your dad. I never see him. Does he ever come to your home?

CALEB. Yeah. He just works too hard. “Money never sleeps.” That’s his motto.

WALDEN. *(Takes his crown:)* I never saw you at the pep rally.

CALEB. That’s because I wasn’t there.

WALDEN. Why not?

CALEB. I had a doctor’s appointment.

WALDEN. Doctor’s appointment?

CALEB. Yeah—an ulcer.

WALDEN. Is that why you didn’t play in the game?

CALEB. Yeah.

WALDEN. I got your text message before the marching band went on the field. Did you get mine?

CALEB. Yeah. I needed to tell you what they had planned—even if I couldn’t stop it.

WALDEN. If they hadn’t made fun of your dad would you have told me?

(CALEB is silent.)

I understand.

CALEB. Look, you have to have a plan when you go in and talk to them.

WALDEN. Why?

CALEB. Because we’re teenagers—we smell weakness.

(CALEB stands and walks towards DANIELLE who confronts him. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene.)

Dairy Queen

DANIELLE. I turned down two colleges for you to go to the same school.

CALEB. I didn't tell you to do that.

DANIELLE. You didn't tell me not to either. If this has something to do with Reina...

CALEB. This has nothing to do with her.

DANIELLE. If you wanna break up with me just say it.

CALEB. Why don't you listen? I don't wanna break up with you. Okay? Something happened out there tonight and I just need time—room...

DANIELLE. Whatever.

(DANIELLE reaches into his jacket pocket.)

What's this?

CALEB. It's called a graphic novel—*Alien Nine*.

DANIELLE. I don't know what's gotten into you. You never cared about reading before.

(DANIELLE throws the novel to him.)

CALEB. It's a good series. Earth's being invaded by aliens and our future is in the hands of these little girls.

DANIELLE. That Walden guy was reading the same book in the cafeteria last week.

CALEB. Was he? I didn't notice.

DANIELLE. Must be popular.

CALEB. Guess so.

DANIELLE. Maybe I can borrow it from you.

CALEB. If you want.

DANIELLE. Then I'll have something to talk to both of you about.

CALEB. And what would you say?

DANIELLE. The stuff that's on every teenager's mind.

CALEB. Which is?

DANIELLE. Alienation.

CALEB. Just yours.

DANIELLE. Yesterday, when I went to cheerleading practice, Coach Perkins had a note for you. I thought it was from Kip or Regina...

CALEB. I got it.

DANIELLE. I thought you did. It looked important.

CALEB. What made you think that?

DANIELLE. It was sealed.

CALEB. It was from Walden.

DANIELLE. How long have you guys been pen pals?

CALEB. We're not "pals."

DANIELLE. I'm trying to remember how many times we've seen Dave Matthews in concert. The first time we went you hated'em. That must've been seventh grade when your mom went with us, right? We'd known each other about five years then. Now, you're a huge fan. Are you gonna give Walden my ticket?

CALEB. No.

DANIELLE. We've always been friends first—best friends. Before Walden came around. But, I can't figure out when you started talking to each other. It must've been one of those things you did behind my back.

CALEB. Only recently.

DANIELLE. This is the same guy you, Kip and Quinn put Nair in his shampoo bottle during P.E. and watched him wash his hair.

CALEB. You know it is.

DANIELLE. Did he say anything about me in your note?

CALEB. You wanna go there?

DANIELLE. Yes.

CALEB. We're acquaintances—that's all.

DANIELLE. What does that mean?

CALEB. You're in A.P. English—figure it out.

DANIELLE. He's lucky. He gets the better part of you. The part that's still trying to impress him because he doesn't know the worst parts of you yet. I wish I could be like him—stupid when it comes to you.

(Beat.)

We've got front row seats at the Dave Matthews concert. What time are you gonna pick me up?

(DANIELLE walks inside the restaurant. CALEB follows her. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene. CALEB and DANIELLE sit in the booth with the friends. ZOE uses her cell phone's voice to speak for her.)

Dairy Queen

QUINN. Why can't we just go to the cops?

REINA. And say what? They won't believe us. They'll think we've been huffing or something.

QUINN. Kip's the only person here that thinks it was aliens.

KIP. It's obvious—we're a threat to their integration into society.

REINA. Get real. It's that freak—Walden. He ran us off the road.

CALEB. Walden? This is Bobby all over again.

DANIELLE. What's that supposed to mean?

CALEB. You know exactly what it means. Remember? Him eating alone in the cafeteria—away from us.

SCHUYLER. He couldn't take a joke.

CALEB. Is that why he brought the gun to school?

REINA. He was a nut job—just like his dad.

CALEB. He was our best friend. We shut him out.

DANIELLE. He may have been our best friend, but he was also a traitor.

KIP. Hey, check it out! Look at the back of my neck. You see anything?

SCHUYLER. Yeah. Dandruff.

KIP. I mean any unusual markings that weren't there before you got in the car.

ZOE. Besides...my gray hair?

QUINN. I think it makes you look mature—not that you weren't before.

SCHUYLER. God, are you hitting on Zoe?

QUINN. No! Shut up.

REINA. There's gotta be a way to figure out what happened to us.

QUINN. Why don't you read your tarot cards?

REINA. I didn't bring 'em tonight. But...I could try hypnosis.

KIP. Get outta here. That stuff doesn't work.

REINA. Okay, you believe in aliens, but you don't believe in hypnotism?

KIP. My uncle says it's pure hocus pocus. It has no basis in reality.

ZOE. You...think you can do it?

REINA. I've seen my dad do it with his patients. He's helped them quit smoking, lose weight, have great sex...

DANIELLE. I'll do it.

REINA. Okay. First of all—relax.

KIP. You're getting sleepy...

DANIELLE. Shut up.

REINA. Close your eyes and let your breathing calm your body and mind. Focus only on the sound of my voice. Empty your mind of any thoughts that may connect you to the material world. As you do so your breathing becomes more and more shallow and your connection to past events becomes more and more present until you've gone back...and back...and back in time to three hours ago. What do you see?

DANIELLE. Nothing.

REINA. Find a focal point.

DANIELLE. (*Opens her eyes.*) I'm serious. Nothing happened. I'm still—*here*.

KIP. Told you it doesn't work.

REINA. It does. Some people are just more receptive than others. I did it the way my dad does it. I don't know what went wrong.

CALEB. I'll try it. I wanna know—see—what happened.

(CALEB closes his eyes.)

REINA. Close your eyes and let your breathing calm your body and mind. Focus only on the sound of my voice. Empty your mind of any thoughts that may connect you to the material world. As you do so your breathing becomes more and more shallow and your connection to past events becomes more and more present until you've gone back...and back...and back in time to three hours ago. What do you see?

(CALEB doesn't respond.)

You must answer my question. What do you see, Caleb?

CALEB. Darkness.

REINA. It's okay. Open your eyes.

(CALEB opens his eyes, but he's not looking at anyone at the table. He stands. KIP tries to keep from laughing. SCHUYLER hits him. CALEB paces around the restaurant during his recollection.)

CALEB. They've stopped us on the side of the road.

REINA. Who?

CALEB. Can't tell. They—don't have faces.

REINA. Try to get a closer look.

CALEB. It...I can't. They're lights are blinding my eyes. But, they're not from here.

KIP. What did I tell you? It's E.T. and his posse.

SCHUYLER. It could mean they're from another town, freak.

CALEB. We all get out of the car—except Zoe. She's hidden somewhere. And they look—not at our faces—but at the core of what makes us tick. They wanna break our will. And, he just stands there—watching.

REINA. Who?

CALEB. Walden. I try to ask him what I should do. But, all he says is, "It's up to us."

(REINA snaps her fingers. CALEB is crumpled on the floor on the other side of the restaurant. DANIELLE runs to him.)

KIP. That was intense.

(The lights shift as the group of friends exit the restaurant and walk the open road. ZOE will continue to use her cell phone voice until stated otherwise. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene.)

Highway

DANIELLE. I think somebody's watching us.

CALEB. God, you're paranoid.

DANIELLE. The bushes. I saw them move.

CALEB. Forget the gas. When we get to the DQ we'll call a cab and go home.

SCHUYLER. When we get there the first thing I'm gonna order is a chocolate shake.

QUINN. I don't have enough money for that.

CALEB. I'll spot you. I made you drive. It's the least I can do.

REINA. I'm gonna get some chili cheese fries.

KIP. All you girls think about is food.

REINA. More than what you guys think about.

ZOE. Dark highway—middle of nowhere—what do you expect?

DANIELLE. Anybody have a weapon?

REINA. My hair gel.

KIP. You girls stay behind us.

ZOE. Whatever.

(The GIRLS walk in front of the GUYS down the dark highway.)

SCHUYLER. Quinn?

QUINN. What?

SCHUYLER. We shoulda told mom we were leaving tonight.

QUINN. Yeah.

REINA. I'm telling you it was that freak Walden.

KIP. I saw him too. I think.

SCHUYLER. The lights were in my eyes. I couldn't tell.

DANIELLE. His family is so weird. I saw his mother one morning hanging from a tree—literally. Like a friggin' bat.

KIP. It was Caleb's idea to seal dry ice in a test tube and put it in his pocket and watch it explode.

CALEB. *(Laughs.)* Yeah, I know.

REINA. That was pretty funny.

KIP. Stroke of genius my boy was.

SCHUYLER. I have his dad for earth sciences. He goes around sniffing everything.

REINA. Ever since his family moved into our neighborhood weird stuff's happened.

CALEB. Weird stuff's happened in our neighborhood before they got there. Like Sky burning down her parents' house. Or, Kip putting Preparation H on everyone's doorknobs.

ZOE. Gross...that's what that was?

KIP. Why you gotta bring that up, man?

(KIP starts wrestling CALEB.)

DANIELLE. Hey. Break it up you two.

(DANIELLE gets between them and hugs CALEB.)

REINA. Gross. Get a room you guys!

CALEB. Watch my knee.

DANIELLE. *(Pulls away.)* Sorry.

QUINN. Hey, you guys remember what happened the last time that we came up here?

(Silence.)

ZOE. Fourth of July...weekend.

REINA. Kip was going to get the fireworks.

KIP. The highway flooded out on my way up here.

DANIELLE. And, Caleb and I weren't talking.

CALEB. I don't remember why.

SCHUYLER. Quinn and I were staying with a friend of our brother's. We didn't want to go home after Jess had killed himself.

REINA. And when the storm lifted—hundreds of bass had washed up dead on the shore.

QUINN. We didn't talk to each other for a month or two after that.

ZOE. We...were supposed to come back.

KIP. Then, school started. I had jazz club, track, debate team, and the newspaper...

DANIELLE. A.S.B., varsity cheerleading, yearbook...

CALEB. Football, work, my dad riding my ass...

QUINN. Two jobs, academic probation....

SCHUYLER. I thought I was gonna have to repeat freshman year.

REINA. We were busy.

CALEB. Zoe's point is that never stopped us before.

KIP. Face it—we were pissed at each other.

CALEB. But, somehow we always forgave the unforgivable.

(The lights shift as the FRIENDS walk towards QUINN's stalled car. They all get inside except for ZOE. It is a few moments prior to the previous scene.)

Buick

REINA. Let's just get outta here and get to your parents' lake house.

QUINN. How? I'm outta gas, here.

CALEB. I thought you said you had enough to get us there.

QUINN. I do—did. Maybe the gauge is broken—again.

REINA. “Again”? That means there was another time that this has happened?

(QUINN tries to turn the engine over. Nothing happens.)

DANIELLE. *(Looks at cell phone.)* There's no signal.

KIP. We're stuck here—for the night. Awesome!

SCHUYLER. I'm not sleeping under Quinn's smelly blankets.

CALEB. (*Taps Quinn's shoulder.*) Open your door, Q. There's a Dairy Queen about a mile up the road. We can walk there, call for gas, and get something to eat.

KIP. Good. I'm starving. Best way to deal with abduction is with food.

CALEB. Bullshit.

KIP. How do you know? Have you been abducted before?

CALEB. Look, last semester, when you fainted in gym class, you thought you were abducted.

KIP. This is different. I know it. I was...probed. It's hard to explain unless it's happened to you. It's like—time's moving backwards.

SCHUYLER. Probed? that was Reina putting her finger you know where.

REINA. Shut up, Sky.

QUINN. Pop the hood, Q.

(CALEB get out of the car and goes to the hood. QUINN tries to turn the engine over.)

SCHUYLER. (*Looks at watch.*) Hey, Quinn. Dad's Rolex stopped. I told you it was knock-off.

QUINN. What time?

SCHUYLER. 8:03.

REINA. (*Looks at her watch.*) Me too.

KIP. (*Looks at his watch.*) Yeah.

SCHUYLER. The last thing I saw was a bright light. Maybe we're all dead.

(ZOE comes from underneath the car. DANIELLE sees her first.)

DANIELLE. Oh, my God. Zoe!

(DANIELLE, REINA, and SCHUYLER get out of the car and hug her.)

REINA. You okay?

(ZOE tries to open her mouth, but can't speak.)

CALEB. What's wrong?

DANIELLE. We need to get her to the hospital.

(ZOE shakes her head.)

SCHUYLER. How? The nearest hospital is like, what? Thirty miles from here?

(ZOE thinks and takes her cell phone out of her pocket. She types a message. It is the "voice" she has used in the previous scenes.)

ZOE. (Typing:) I'm...okay.

KIP. (Laughing.) This is freakin' wild.

REINA. (Hits him.) It's not funny re-re.

ZOE. I tried to hide. I wanted to help, but I hid instead.

QUINN. Hid from who?

ZOE. You...don't remember?

QUINN. Zoe, who did this?

REINA. Did you see their license plate?

CALEB. Leave her alone. She didn't see anything. Just like the rest of us.

(ZOE and CALEB look at each other as the lights shift to a few moments prior to the previous scene. The friends climb inside the Buick again as QUINN drives. ZOE speaks normally and wears a baseball cap that covers her hair.)

Highway

DANIELLE. Did you see how fat Libby Reynolds has gotten since she was crowned homecoming queen last year? I'd vomit everyday before I let that happen to me.

REINA. I'm sure Caleb would be right there holding your hair back, Danielle.

(To ZOE:)

Zoe, who are you texting?

SCHUYLER. Her geek squad.

KIP. Quinn, why do you always have to bring Squealer, your little sister, with us?

SCHUYLER. So you don't have to pick up sophomores in chat rooms anymore.

QUINN. To keep an eye on her.

CALEB. Make sure she doesn't play with guns?

(DANIELLE hits CALEB.)

QUINN. See your jacked knee kept you out of the game tonight, Caleb.

KIP. No worries. That's what daddy's alma mater's for.

REINA. Screw Caleb's knee. The highlight of the game was that Photoshopped picture of Walden on the toilet that said, "Where's Waldo?" on the video screen.

(DANIELLE high-fives REINA.)

DANIELLE. We've got to thank Doug for doing that.

REINA. What was up with that dumb smile on Walden's face? Like he saw it coming.

CALEB. *(To DANIELLE:)* You mind backing up off of me? Your breath smells like onions.

SCHUYLER. Altoid!

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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