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*This play is for Adrienne Campbell-Holt*

## **Cast of Characters**

MARGOT, 14

WADE, 14

PHOEBE, 14

BALLARD, 14

DEREK, 14

HUNTER, 15

## **Setting**

Friday night.

Margot's basement.

1995.

Ninth grade.

After Kurt, before Monica.

## **Production Notes**

A forward slash (/) indicates a point of overlap.

For NINETEEN, the director and actors should feel free to create the music for Wade's song however they feel best serves the production. The stage directions describe the way it was performed in the original production, with Wade (Matt Stadelmann) playing the song on electric guitar, accompanied on drums by Phoebe (Kristen Connolly) backstage. The only essential, unchangeable elements are the lyrics and the final moment, when Wade and Margot see one another.

## Acknowledgments

Originally produced by Colt Coeur (Adrienne Campbell-Holt, Artistic Director) at HERE Arts Center. The cast and staff were as follows:

MARGOT . . . . .	Heidi Niedermeyer
WADE . . . . .	Matt Stadelmann
PHOEBE . . . . .	Kristen Connolly
BALLARD . . . . .	Erin Felgar
DEREK . . . . .	Teddy Bergman
HUNTER . . . . .	Joe Tippett
Director . . . . .	Adrienne Campbell-Holt
Scenic Design . . . . .	Daniel Zimmerman
Costume Design . . . . .	Erica Rice
Lighting Design . . . . .	Grant Yeager
Sound Design . . . . .	Amy Altadonna
Original Music . . . . .	Justin Levine and Matthew Stadelman
Production Stage Manager . . . . .	Ashley Rodbro
Technical Director . . . . .	Anthony Cerrato
Properties . . . . .	Josh Kohler
Associate Producer . . . . .	Amy Groeschel
Press Agent . . . . .	Richard Kornberg & Associates

## Special Thanks

Ars Nova, Colt Coeur, Jason Eagan, Ivana Eiger, Jocelyn Florence, Amy Groeschel, HERE Arts Center, The Huntington Theatre Company, Sue Jean Kim, David and Louisa Levenson, Justin Levine, Whitney May, Gio Perez, Kate Roberts, Ashley Rodbro, Emily Shooltz, Chris Till, Alex Timbers, and Lisa Timmel.

# SEVEN MINUTES IN HEAVEN

by Steven Levenson

## ONE.

(MARGOT.)

**MARGOT.** Then suddenly it's August.

It's the last day, it's Tuesday. And we're walking, the campers are sleeping, it's nine o'clock, it's Tuesday, and we go for a walk, there's free time for an hour, and we go for a walk for an hour.

There's a million, there are all of these, there are ten million fireflies everywhere.

The grass was wet. He said something about how, what shampoo did I wear or how it smelled like it was... I couldn't even, my heart started—was it apple or was it, and I was, green apple, yeah.

He took my hand. His hand was smaller than I thought it would be. His fingers were long but his hand was small. It was soft and wet, warm. He laughed, he was sorry his hands, he said, when he got, he was nervous.

We sat down. I held my knees against my chest like this, like I was holding them right there. I was trying to be normal, act normal, his hands were, act normal, we sat there, the grass was wet, act normal, it was through my shorts, up into my shorts, something was biting my leg, act normal, he didn't say anything but I wondered about his shorts, I wondered what he was, if I could just act normal, something kept biting, act normal, my shorts were, my knees were, his fingers, everything, then everything, everything started to, everything was, and then. Then we. And then it was. Then it. And then.

(Pause.)

This isn't what you think it is. He gave me his necklace. So.

(Beat.

Dark.)

## TWO.

*(Six kids in six bedrooms stand in front of six mirrors in the suburbs.*

*They primp.*

*Loud music.)*

## THREE.

*(Friday night in America.*

*The Basement.*

*Bowls of chips.*

*Liter bottles of soda.*

*A ping pong table that no one ever uses has been pushed up against a wall, next to the trampoline.*

*The smell of dusty board game boxes and the muffled spongy softness of nubby carpet between toes.*

*MARGOT stands in the center of the room. She wears a tank top and too much lip gloss and a leather necklace with a silver locket and she looks uncomfortable.*

*WADE sits on the couch.*

*Someone should have told him not to wear that sweater with those pants but they didn't.*

*He holds a wrapped present.*

*Silence.)*

**WADE.** Am I the first person here?

**MARGOT.** It looks like it.

**WADE.** Oh.

*(Beat.)*

I kept telling my mom we shouldn't leave until 7:45.

**MARGOT.** Do you want a Coke?

**WADE.** I'm not really allowed to drink soda.

**MARGOT.** We have juice.

**WADE.** Do you have seltzer water?

**MARGOT.** I don't think so.

**WADE.** You know, soda is terrible for your teeth.

**MARGOT.** We have diet.

**WADE.** If you give rats, they did this experiment, and if you give rats Diet Coke, if you keep giving it to them for a while, they basically go crazy.

**MARGOT.** Really?

**WADE.** Yes.

*(Beat.)*

Do you know what aspartame is?

**MARGOT.** Yeah.

**WADE.** Ok.

*(Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** Do you want a glass of water?

**WADE.** I don't really like the taste.

**MARGOT.** Of water?

**WADE.** Not really.

**MARGOT.** It's from a, we have a filter thing. It filters it.

**WADE.** Have you ever had, if you're really hot, if you've been outside for a while, and you're so hot, and then you go inside and you're so thirsty? Have you ever been like that?

**MARGOT.** Uh-huh.

**WADE.** Well, so, that's the worst time to drink seltzer water. Don't you think?

**MARGOT.** I don't know.

**WADE.** It's because you want to gulp it, because you're so thirsty, but when you gulp it, it scratches your throat up. Like all the way down, it's like pure scratches. Like teeth or something. It kills.

**MARGOT.** I think people are going to start showing up soon. It's not even eight yet.

**WADE.** Did you invite a lot of people?

**MARGOT.** Uh. Not that many. Like, ten.

**WADE.** That's a lot. That's a good amount.

**MARGOT.** They're not all coming.

**WADE.** My dad's away so my mom dropped me off early so she could go home and watch my little brother. He's two. He's a jerk.

**MARGOT.** I didn't even want to have a party, but my boyfriend, he's visiting, so, it's like the only way for people to meet him.

**WADE.** Who's your boyfriend?

**MARGOT.** Oh, you don't know him. His name is Mike. He's from Cleveland. He's older, so.

**WADE.** Did you meet him in Cleveland?

**MARGOT.** We worked at this camp together.

**WADE.** You know, Cleveland is where they have the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

**MARGOT.** Oh.

**WADE.** My dream is to be in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with my band.

**MARGOT.** You have a band?

**WADE.** Um. Well. Not yet. But. It's sort of complicated.

*(Beat.)*

My mom says hi to your mom.

**MARGOT.** Oh ok.

**WADE.** She wanted to come in and say hi, but I told her please to not do that.

**MARGOT.** Do you want chips or anything?

**WADE.** Here's your present. By the way.

*(WADE hands her the present.)*

You can open it now if you want.

**MARGOT.** You didn't have to get me anything.

**WADE.** Happy Birthday. I made you a card. It has a birthday cake, I drew a cake, and it has sixteen candles on it, because you're turning fifteen but there's one to grow on and so it's lucky.

**MARGOT.** It's not my birthday.

**WADE.** When was it?

**MARGOT.** It's not until March.

*(Beat.)*

**WADE.** Then why are you having a party?

**MARGOT.** Because of my boyfriend? From Cleveland?

**WADE.** Oh.

**MARGOT.** Thank you, though. This is...

**WADE.** My mom told me this was your birthday party.

**MARGOT.** It doesn't matter.

**WADE.** She said it was your birthday.

**MARGOT.** It really doesn't matter. Seriously.

**WADE.** Oh my God. She's so retarded.

**MARGOT.** You shouldn't say retarded.

**WADE.** She is, though. You don't understand.

**MARGOT.** Well. Thank you. For the present.

**WADE.** I shouldn't have brought you anything. That was stupid.

**MARGOT.** Do you want me to give it back to you?

**WADE.** No thanks. You should keep it. It's fine.

**MARGOT.** Should I open it now?

**WADE.** It's a bracelet.

**MARGOT.** Oh.

**WADE.** My mom picked it out. It wasn't that expensive or anything, but.

**MARGOT.** Well, thank you. This is...thank you Wade, this is so sweet.

**WADE.** I guess.

*(Beat.)*

You look nice. I meant to tell you that when I walked in. I forget why I didn't.

**MARGOT.** Oh.

**WADE.** That's a weird thing to say. I'm sorry.

**MARGOT.** No not at all.

**WADE.** You look really nice. Your eyes look great in regards to, with your shirt. I like that shirt.

**MARGOT.** *(Embarrassed:)* Ok.

**WADE.** I should have worn a polo. I'm so stupid.

**MARGOT.** You look fine.

**WADE.** I bet everyone will wear a polo. I bet your boyfriend will wear a polo.

**MARGOT.** Not necessarily.

**WADE.** I'm so stupid.

**MARGOT.** You're not stupid.

**WADE.** Can I have some chips now please?

**MARGOT.** Sure.

**WADE.** I'm pretty starving.

*(Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** Do you want me to get them for you?

**WADE.** Yes please.

*(MARGOT scoops some chips onto a napkin and gives them to WADE.)*

Are these Ruffles?

**MARGOT.** I don't know.

**WADE.** I like Ruffles.

**MARGOT.** I think they might be.

**WADE.** They look like Ruffles.

**MARGOT.** Then they probably are. My mom got them.

*(WADE tries one.  
He chews it.  
He tastes it.  
He considers it.  
He frowns.  
He spits it out into his napkin.)*

**WADE.** Oh my God.

**MARGOT.** Are they not...?

**WADE.** No.

**MARGOT.** I'm sorry.

**WADE.** I guess I'm not very hungry after all.

*(The doorbell rings.  
WADE stares at MARGOT.)*

**MARGOT.** I should get that.

*(Beat.)*

I'll be right back... *(She goes.)*

**WADE.** *(Deadpan:)* Woohoo. More people. Woohoo. Woohoo. Woohoo.

*(Dark.)*

#### FOUR.

*(Two clusters of kids, boys and girls, talking at the same time.  
In the background, the groove of some Salt 'N Pepa.  
Shoop. Shoop be doop. Etc.  
In one area, we've got MARGOT and PHOEBE and BALLARD.)*

PHOEBE *is hot.*

BALLARD *is pretty. She's the funny one. She looks around the room like something smells bad.*

DEREK *'s in the corner with HUNTER, hovering over the chips, which they devour in liberal handfuls, like starving peasants.*

HUNTER *is hot. He is so boring it almost hurts.*

DEREK *wears flannel and Airwalks and steals his mom's cigarettes sometimes.*

WADE *sits on the couch by himself, unsure what to do or where to look.)*

**PHOEBE.** My mom took me to this doctor last week. This Eastern type, like, Chinese kind of person doctor.

**BALLARD.** Oh my God. Wade is here? Puke.

**PHOEBE.** And he checks your senses with all of these Chinese things and my sense of smell is—ok, so there's this chart. Did I say that? There's this chart, ok?

**MARGOT.** Does anybody want chips or anything?

**BALLARD.** Is Derek looking at me?

**PHOEBE.** And so you can either be, like, bad, good, or, um...I forget the other ones, but so the top one is superior, ok?

**BALLARD.** Are you speaking human, Phoebe? What is coming out of your mouth?

**PHOEBE.** You're not listening.

**DEREK.** I saw a video yesterday with a guy doing a half pipe. But, and then he falls in the middle and there's blood, like, everywhere.

**HUNTER.** Oh. Shit.

**DEREK.** I know.

He probably broke his nose.  
Your nose has a ton of blood in it.

**HUNTER.** Shit.

**DEREK.** He just laughs, too.  
He doesn't even get pissed.  
He just laughs.  
With all this blood all over.

**MARGOT.***(To DEREK and HUNTER:)*

Does anybody want a Coke?

**DEREK.**

No thanks.

**HUNTER.**

No thank you.

**BALLARD.** Nobody has any idea what you're saying. You sound like a homeless person.**HUNTER.** I think Margot was staring at you.**PHOEBE.** It's not a regular doctor, Ballard. It's an Eastern type doctor.**DEREK.** Do I have something on my face?**HUNTER.** Let me see.**BALLARD.** I get it. You don't have to scream at me.

You have some crust on your mouth. Around your mouth.

**PHOEBE.** I wasn't screaming.*(DEREK wipes his mouth.)***BALLARD.** Where's your boyfriend Margot?**DEREK.** Is it gone now?**MARGOT.** He's on his way. There's traffic.**HUNTER.** Yeah. Mostly.**PHOEBE.** Chinese doctors are better than regular doctors because they're totally natural.**DEREK.** I kind of want to leave.**HUNTER.** I could call my sister. She can pick us up.**MARGOT.** He'll be here.**DEREK.** Not yet.**PHOEBE.** Like acupuncture?**HUNTER.** Yeah, not yet.**BALLARD.** Oh my God, Phoebe. Are you still talking?**DEREK.** But soon.**HUNTER.** Yeah, soon.*(The music and the lights cut out, sharp.)***FIVE.***(MARGOT and PHOEBE and HUNTER and WADE. HUNTER flips through a CD wallet. WADE looks on over his shoulder.)***PHOEBE.** You have such a nice house, Margot.

**MARGOT.** Oh thanks.

**PHOEBE.** Why have I never been here before? How sad is that?

**MARGOT.** I don't know.

**PHOEBE.** What does your dad do again? Is he a lawyer?

**MARGOT.** He's a doctor.

**PHOEBE.** (*Nodding.*) That makes sense.

**HUNTER.** Can you back up, Wade? You're, like, sitting on my head.

**WADE.** Sorry.

**PHOEBE.** This party is going to be so fun.

**MARGOT.** Yeah.

**PHOEBE.** Truthfully, I'm having so much fun already.

**MARGOT.** Me too.

**PHOEBE.** This is so fun. You have such a fun house. I love basements.

**HUNTER.** Can we watch a movie?

**PHOEBE.** No, Hunter, we are not watching a movie. It's a party.

**WADE.** I like movies.

**MARGOT.** We can watch a movie if people want to.

**PHOEBE.** No, no movie. We can't talk if we watch a movie. Watching a movie is so boring.

**WADE.** My brother always talks during movies. He yells at the screen, if there are bad guys or something. He just starts yelling. He's a jerk.

**PHOEBE.** What's your boyfriend's name, Margot?

**MARGOT.** Mike.

**PHOEBE.** Mike is such a nice name. That's, like, one of those really, really nice names.

**WADE.** Oh I love this CD. Put this on.

**HUNTER.** It's not the right mood.

**WADE.** I think it is.

**HUNTER.** Trust me.

**MARGOT.** Yeah, I think he should be here soon. I don't know why he's late. He's never late.

**WADE.** Is that Led Zeppelin?

**HUNTER.** No Led Zeppelin, Wade.

**PHOEBE.** How long have you been together?

**MARGOT.** Just since the summer. August. So, not that long.

**PHOEBE.** That's a long time. That's two months.

**MARGOT.** Almost.

**WADE.** I think Led Zeppelin would be good.

**HUNTER.** Yeah, for playing Magic cards in your attic.

**PHOEBE.** What's he like?

**MARGOT.** What do you mean?

**PHOEBE.** I don't know. Describe him. Paint us a picture or whatever.

**MARGOT.** Um. Well. He's really cool.

**HUNTER.** (*Pointing to a CD:*) Remember this? Third grade?

**WADE.** (*Laughing:*) Yeah.

**PHOEBE.** Is he tall?

**MARGOT.** Ish.

**WADE.** Chris Shay loved that song.

**HUNTER.** (*Laughing:*) Chris Shay.

**PHOEBE.** Does he play sports?

**MARGOT.** Not really. Well, tennis.

**PHOEBE.** Tennis counts.

**HUNTER.** Chris Shay used to do that dance.

**WADE.** The funky chicken.

**HUNTER.** He didn't even do it right.

**WADE.** He did it like he was a robot. Remember? He thought it was a robot but we were like, no Chris, / it's a chicken.

**HUNTER.** / We'd be like, it's called the funky chicken, not the funky robot.

**PHOEBE.** And he drives?

**MARGOT.** Yeah. He just got his license.

**PHOEBE.** Wow.

**HUNTER.** What kind of car?

**MARGOT.** Huh?

**HUNTER.** Your novio. What kind of coche?

**MARGOT.** Oh. Um. He has his dad's old Acura.

(HUNTER *laughs*.)

WADE *sort of laughs to go along.*)

**HUNTER.** Nice.

**MARGOT.** It's a two-seater.

**HUNTER.** Yeah, no, I'm sure.

**WADE.** What's the best car?

**HUNTER.** Um. Either Mercedes or BMW. Or Range Rover. It depends what you're looking for.

**WADE.** Yeah, that's what I thought. I like Toyotas too.

**PHOEBE.** What did you guys do at the camp you went to?

**MARGOT.** We were CITs.

**PHOEBE.** Fun.

**HUNTER.** Mostly Mercedes, though.

**WADE.** My dad has a Toyota. It's really nice. It's a good color.

**MARGOT.** He did a lot of the arts and crafts stuff with the kids. He's sort of an artist.

**HUNTER.** It just really depends what you're looking for. Safety. Comfort. Horsepower.

**WADE.** It's red. But like really red.

**PHOEBE.** He's an artist? I love artists.

**MARGOT.** He makes movies mostly. Like, he made this movie last year at his school that he showed me. It's animated, it's an animation movie, about a dinosaur and how he gets lost in this building. This really big, sort of factory sort of building. And he gets lost in it and he can't find his way out, because the hallways, they're, like, these really long, like, factory kind of hallways, and so he goes up the stairs but then he gets stuck, because he can't figure out how to go *down* the stairs, even though he keeps trying and trying. He just can't, he can't figure it out. And so he gets really upset and he starts crying, and his tears, they're so big that they fall down and they make a river, this river. And these construction workers try to find him, but they have to make a boat out of this—they find a table, this metal factory table, and they make a boat out of it, so they can go down the river. So they can find him. But they don't get there fast enough, because the river,

it just keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger. And the dinosaur, he basically, he just ruins the whole building. Forever.

(*Beat.*)

It's really funny.

**HUNTER.** (*Blown away:*) *What.*

**PHOEBE.** That is so adorable, Margot.

**WADE.** Um. Dinosaurs weren't around at the same time as buildings.

**MARGOT.** It's not supposed to be realistic, I don't think.

**WADE.** Still, though. It might be confusing for people. For kids.

**PHOEBE.** (*Confidentially, to MARGOT:*) Long distance relationships are so hard.

**WADE.** Maybe he should have a note at the beginning of the movie that tells people that it's not realistic. In terms of science. For kids. If kids are watching.

**HUNTER.** Hey Wade.

(*HUNTER punches WADE in the arm.*)

**WADE.** Ow.

**HUNTER.** Punch Buggy, no punch backs.

**PHOEBE.** Hunter.

**HUNTER.** What? It's a game.

**WADE.** You didn't see a Punch Buggy.

**HUNTER.** Yes I did.

**WADE.** Where?

**HUNTER.** In my mind's eye.

**PHOEBE.** It's not a game when you punch people, Hunter.

**HUNTER.** Oh really? What about boxing?

**PHOEBE.** That's a sport.

**HUNTER.** Sports are games.

**PHOEBE.** Not always.

**HUNTER.** (*Mimicking her:*) "Not always."

**WADE.** It didn't hurt that bad. I have pretty strong triceps.

**HUNTER.** See? Wade liked it. He has strong triceps.

**PHOEBE.** You need anger management, Hunter.

**HUNTER.** It's a game. Punch Buggy no punch backs.

**PHOEBE.** It's a game for when you see Punch Buggies.

**HUNTER.** I did.

**PHOEBE.** Mind's eye doesn't count.

**HUNTER.** Well then maybe we have different rules, because in my version, it does count.

(PHOEBE *laughs.*)

**PHOEBE.** Oh yeah?

(HUNTER *laughs.*)

**HUNTER.** Yeah.

**PHOEBE.** Yeah?

**HUNTER.** Yeah.

**WADE.** Are you guys boyfriend and girlfriend?

(*Beat.*)

**PHOEBE.** What?

**WADE.** I just didn't know if you were still boyfriend and girlfriend. Somebody said that you guys, that you stopped, because Phoebe was going out with Phil Marnell.

**HUNTER.** What?

**WADE.** I didn't know if it was true.

(*Beat.*)

**PHOEBE.** Who told you that?

**HUNTER.** Dude. Not cool.

**PHOEBE.** Who told you that, Wade?

**WADE.** Well, no, but then I saw you, two weeks ago, I saw you at the mall and you were kissing each other. Outside of Lids. So I didn't know.

**PHOEBE.** That wasn't us.

**WADE.** No. It was. Because I checked.

**HUNTER.** You *checked*?

**WADE.** Yeah. You had your hand on her butt through her pants. It was sort of sick. Your hand was, like, it was vibrating.

**HUNTER.** What does that even mean—you *checked*?

**WADE.** My grandma thought it was kind of inappropriate.

**PHOEBE.** Well. We are boyfriend and girlfriend, so.

**HUNTER.** You were at the mall with your grandma?

**WADE.** Yeah. She loves to shop.

**HUNTER.** Cool, Wade.

**PHOEBE.** We are boyfriend and girlfriend. So.

**WADE.** Ok.

*(Pause.)*

**PHOEBE.** Yeah. We are. We definitely are.

*(Silence.*

*Fifteen seconds.*

*HUNTER flips through the CD wallet.*

*PHOEBE stares at HUNTER, who doesn't look up.*

*MARGOT looks at the floor.*

*WADE looks at the wall.*

*Nothing happens.*

*Unbearable.*

*MARGOT looks up.)*

**MARGOT.** Do you guys want to order a pizza?

## SIX.

*(HUNTER.)*

**HUNTER.** This is what I do in the morning:

The alarm goes off.

I get up.

I do fifty push-ups, three hundred crunches, twenty pull-ups on this metal bar I hung on my door, fifty oblique crunches on my left, fifty oblique crunches on my right, two hundred scissor kicks. I do thirty squats. I do twenty lunges on my left leg, twenty lunges on my right leg. Then I take a shower.

My sister comes in the bathroom, so I'm like, get the fuck out, I'm in here. So she leaves.

I brush my teeth. With Colgate. I scrape my tongue with the toothbrush. You push it as far back as you can. Even if you gag a little, if your eyes tear up, you just keep going. Spit. Rinse. Spit. Rinse. Spit. I gurgles water for thirty-five seconds. Then mouth wash. Listerine. One minute. Water for twenty seconds. Then I floss. A hundred seconds on

the top teeth, a hundred seconds on the bottom teeth. Water for ten seconds. Spit. Rinse. Spit. Spit. Spit.

(Dark.)

**SEVEN.**

(DEREK and BALLARD play ping pong.)

**DEREK.** I decided I want to be a VJ.

**BALLARD.** You're not hot enough.

**DEREK.** You don't have to be hot. You have to be funny.

**BALLARD.** You do have to be hot. And you're not funny.

**DEREK.** I am funny.

**BALLARD.** How?

**DEREK.** Like, pranks. Like, prank calls. Have you ever heard my prank calls?

**BALLARD.** That's not funny.

**DEREK.** Like last week, Hunter and I called this hotel, and I was like, the guy answered, he said, hello, and I was, like, *(With offensive Indian accent:)* "Hello, kindly sir, can I have some curry bindala on my poontang please?"

(Beat.)

Come on. That's so funny.

**BALLARD.** Not to me.

**DEREK.** Well, to be a VJ, you have to know a lot of stuff about music, and you have to be good at talking on camera.

**BALLARD.** You also have to be good at being hot.

**DEREK.** What about Pauly Shore?

**BALLARD.** Pauly Shore is hot.

**DEREK.** Pauly Shore is not hot.

**BALLARD.** Tabitha Soren is hot.

**DEREK.** Kennedy is hot.

**BALLARD.** Serena Altschul.

**DEREK.** Daisy Fuentes.

**BALLARD.** See? They're all hot.

**DEREK.** Maybe I'm hot too.

**BALLARD.** No comment.

**DEREK.** Thanks Ballard.

**BALLARD.** What? All I said was no comment. I didn't say anything bad.

*(WADE enters.*

*DEREK and BALLARD stop playing.*

*They wait.*

*He leaves.*

*They play.)*

**DEREK.** I used to wear glasses. I looked worse with glasses, right?

**BALLARD.** What are we doing tomorrow night?

**DEREK.** What are *we* doing?

**BALLARD.** Yeah. I mean. Do you have plans or anything?

**DEREK.** No.

**BALLARD.** Do you want to do something or...?

**DEREK.** I was going to maybe go to Saskia's. She's having a party. You should come.

**BALLARD.** It's a drinking party.

**DEREK.** So? It'll be fun.

**BALLARD.** I don't drink.

**DEREK.** You don't have to. It's just a party.

**BALLARD.** I don't want to pull a Melissa Gould and get all drunk and hook up with some forty-year old guy at TCBY, ok?

**DEREK.** I thought it was Hamburger Hamlet.

**BALLARD.** Same difference. How do you even know that? It was a secret.

**DEREK.** Because you told me.

**BALLARD.** Oh.

*(Beat.)*

You don't drink either.

**DEREK.** I know.

**BALLARD.** That's why we're friends.

**DEREK.** I mean, I thought there were other reasons, too, but...

**BALLARD.** If you want to drink, you should drink.

**DEREK.** I don't.

(*Beat.*)

**BALLARD.** Maybe if you want to do something other than the party, though...

**DEREK.** How's stuff with your dad going?

**BALLARD.** What?

**DEREK.** Your dad. Did he find a new place and everything?

**BALLARD.** Why is everybody asking me about my parents?

**DEREK.** I don't know.

**BALLARD.** Well, I don't want to talk about it. If I wanted to talk about it, then I would talk about it. Obviously.

(*MARGOT enters.*)

**MARGOT.** Hey guys. We're probably ordering a pizza. Do you want any special toppings?

**BALLARD.** You're interrupting our game, Margot. You're being completely distracting.

**MARGOT.** I'm sorry.

**BALLARD.** I'm kidding. Chill.

**DEREK.** Pepperoni.

**BALLARD.** Sick.

**DEREK.** Do they have pineapple?

**MARGOT.** I can check.

**BALLARD.** Vomit.

**DEREK.** It's what people in Hawaii eat.

**BALLARD.** People in Hawaii also eat moose and shit.

**DEREK.** That's Alaska.

**BALLARD.** It's both, dumb ass.

**MARGOT.** Do you want anything Ballard?

**BALLARD.** I don't eat pizza. It's full of lipids.

**MARGOT.** The kind we get is really good.

**BALLARD.** Where's it from?

**MARGOT.** Baldari's.

**BALLARD.** Baldari's is nasty. No offense.

**MARGOT.** Do you want a salad or something?

**BALLARD.** I already ate.

**DEREK.** Do they have meat lovers? Because that's probably the best one to get if they do.

**MARGOT.** I'll ask my mom.

**BALLARD.** Do they have barf lovers?

**MARGOT.** Cool. Thanks guys.

(MARGOT *leaves.*)

**DEREK.** Margot is...she's sort of cute, don't you think?

**BALLARD.** For a slut.

**DEREK.** She is not a slut. She's the opposite of a slut. You're a slut.

**BALLARD.** Yeah right Derek. I haven't even done below the bra. You know that.

**DEREK.** You're still a slut.

**BALLARD.** Your mom's a slut.

**DEREK.** Margot's sister's hot.

**BALLARD.** Caitlin? She's a druggie. She used to smoke drugs at the bus stop every morning.

**DEREK.** She goes to Syracuse. That's a good school.

**BALLARD.** Yeah, maybe for druggies.

**DEREK.** Margot's never even hooked up with anybody.

**BALLARD.** At school maybe. But this boyfriend guy from camp, you don't know what they did. They could have done, like, the whole karma sutra.

**DEREK.** I guess.

**BALLARD.** I mean, if her boyfriend's even real.

**DEREK.** Why wouldn't he be real?

**BALLARD.** I've never seen him, you've never seen him, nobody's ever seen him.

**DEREK.** I haven't seen my cousins in Montana since I was six, but I still believe they're there.

**BALLARD.** She's gross, Derek. She's like a walking, talking slut machine. You put in a quarter and slut comes out. She's worse than Phoebe. Phoebe costs two quarters.

**DEREK.** I thought Phoebe was your best friend.

**BALLARD.** She is my best friend. Don't be rude. I'm just kidding.

(*Beat.*)

I heard her and Hunter did it.

**DEREK.** Well they didn't.

**BALLARD.** Yeah I know. I was just testing you to see if you knew.

**DEREK.** She does this thing with her tongue I heard.

**BALLARD.** What thing?

**DEREK.** (*Catching himself.*) Never mind.

**BALLARD.** What?

**DEREK.** I'm not supposed to say.

**BALLARD.** Now you have to say.

**DEREK.** I shouldn't have even—forget it.

**BALLARD.** I swear to God.

**DEREK.** I can't. Hunter will kill me.

**BALLARD.** I just said, I swear to God. Derek. Tell me. Now.

**DEREK.** No. I can't.

(*Beat.*)

**BALLARD.** If you tell me, then I'll tell you something.

**DEREK.** I don't want to know anything.

**BALLARD.** Yes you do, Derek. Trust me. You want to know this.

**DEREK.** What is it about?

**BALLARD.** I'm not telling you until you tell me about Phoebe.

**DEREK.** Just give me a hint.

**BALLARD.** Nope. No hint.

(*DEREK sighs.*)

**DEREK.** She apparently, she does this thing, I guess, where she like...she licks your teeth? When she's kissing you?

**BALLARD.** What?

**DEREK.** Yeah. Like, she licks each tooth. Like, individually. Like, each separate one.

**BALLARD.** Wait. But why?

**DEREK.** I have no idea.

**BALLARD.** Like, front and back?

**DEREK.** I think just front.

**BALLARD.** What a freak.

**DEREK.** You can't tell anybody.

**BALLARD.** I swore to God, Derek. That's not a joke for me.

*(PHOEBE enters somewhere else.*

*She lies on the ground, splayed out like a crumpled up rag doll.)*

**DEREK.** Now you tell me.

**BALLARD.** Ok. So. Last week, ok? Phoebe told Hunter that she wanted / to do it.

**PHOEBE.** / I told Hunter, I want to. I want to, I think. Even though we're not married.

**BALLARD.** Even though she always told him she didn't want to before she got married, because she's Catholic.

**BALLARD.** And then he said he didn't want to, and Phoebe was, like, why don't you want to, I thought you always wanted to all the time? And so Hunter asked her why she didn't just do it with Phil Marnell if she wanted to do it so bad, which was totally mean, and she's like, because I don't love him and he's not my boyfriend anymore, you are, asshole. And Hunter was like, well, you used to love him and he used to be your boyfriend. And then Phoebe told Hunter, I love you, and Hunter said thanks. So she said I love you, again, and he said thanks. Again. And then she said I love you, don't you love me? And he said thanks, I already said thanks. And then she started crying and he said, I have to go, and so he did. He just... he left.

**PHOEBE.** And then he said he didn't want to, and I was, like, why don't you want to, I thought you always wanted to all the time? And so Hunter asked me why I didn't just do it with Phil Marnell if I wanted to do it so bad, and I was like, because I don't love him and he's not my boyfriend anymore, you are. And Hunter was, like, well, you used to love him and he used to be your boyfriend. And I was like, so? And then I told him, I love you, and he said thanks. So I said I love you, again, and he said thanks. Again. And I said I love you, don't you love me? And he said thanks, I already said thanks. And then he said he had to go. And he did.

*(Short pause.)*

**DEREK.** I already knew that.

**EIGHT.**

*(The bathroom.)*

HUNTER and DEREK stand.

PHOEBE sits on the toilet.

HUNTER takes a long pull off of a bottle of gin.)

**PHOEBE.** Whoa.

**DEREK.** Don't kill it.

**HUNTER.** I'm not.

**DEREK.** That was, like, four shots you just took.

**HUNTER.** It was, like, one and a half, Derek. Calm down.

**PHOEBE.** You guys, this is seriously so boring.

**HUNTER.** Then leave.

*(DEREK takes the bottle and takes a pull.)*

**PHOEBE.** Don't tell me what to do, Hunter.

*(DEREK coughs.)*

**DEREK.** It went down the wrong...

**HUNTER.** Beefeaters is one of the best alcohols that there is.

**DEREK.** No I know. It's really, it's good. It was just the wrong...

**HUNTER.** It's because it's smooth. It's Beefeaters.

**DEREK.** Yeah. Exactly.

**HUNTER.** You don't even feel it.

**DEREK.** Yeah. I barely felt it. It was the wrong, it just went down the wrong...

**PHOEBE.** You guys are going to smell terrible.

**HUNTER.** Phoebe, shut it or leave.

**PHOEBE.** You shut it or leave.

**HUNTER.** Way to just repeat what I said back to me.

**DEREK.** Phoebe. Take a shot.

**PHOEBE.** No way Jose.

**DEREK.** Come on. One shot.

**HUNTER.** Yeah. Come on Phoebe. Take a shot.

**PHOEBE.** I said, no.

**DEREK.** Why not?

**PHOEBE.** Because I don't need to drink alcohol to be cool. I'm cool enough just being myself.

(HUNTER *and* DEREK *laugh.*)

I don't see how that's funny.

**HUNTER.** Ok, Jessie Spano.

**PHOEBE.** You guys can keep trying to peer pressure me if you want, but it's not going to work.

**DEREK.** Here. Pass it.

**HUNTER.** It's not going to kill you, Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** It might.

**DEREK.** Hunter, pass it.

**HUNTER.** Can you chill out, Derek? Jesus. I'm going to give it to you. You don't need to freak out.

**DEREK.** I'm not.

(HUNTER *passes the bottle.*)

**HUNTER.** Just take it. Finish it. Jesus.

**DEREK.** I don't even like it that much. I just...

**PHOEBE.** The last sip is, like, mostly backwash, just so you know.

**DEREK.** Backwash is the best part. It tastes like chocolate.

**HUNTER.** What?

**DEREK.** (*Southern accent:*) Tastes like chicken.

**PHOEBE.** Derek, you're mental.

(DEREK *finishes it.*)

HUNTER *looks in the mirror.*)

**HUNTER.** My face looks weird. Like, puffy. Right?

**DEREK.** Uh-oh.

**PHOEBE.** Drinking is so boring. It's just, like, a beverage.

**DEREK.** Uh-oh. Shit. Did you guys feel that?

**HUNTER.** What?

**DEREK.** The room is, like, shit. I just felt, like, the whole room, like, it just, like, it just...tipped.

**HUNTER.** It *tipped*?

**PHOEBE.** What?

**DEREK.** I think I feel, like, a little...drunk.

**PHOEBE.** Derek.

**HUNTER.** I don't feel anything.

**DEREK.** Oh wow. I feel, all of a sudden, I feel, like, oh wow.

**HUNTER.** Enjoy it.

**PHOEBE.** Derek.

**DEREK.** It's because gin makes you drunker than vodka, I think, because gin has more, um, it has more of the, like...oh my God, I can't even talk. What am I saying? I'm not even making sense.

(DEREK *cracks up*.)

**PHOEBE.** Derek. (*To HUNTER:*) He's so drunk.

**HUNTER.** Enjoy it. I'm telling you.

**DEREK.** I don't know what I'm saying.

(PHOEBE *holds up four fingers*.)

**PHOEBE.** Derek, how many fingers am I holding up?

**DEREK.** (*Laughing:*) Stop.

(HUNTER *speaks in slow motion*.)

**HUNTER.** Derek. Hello. Derek.

**DEREK.** Stop. Stop.

(*A knock on the door*.)

**HUNTER.** Shit.

**DEREK.** Oh shit. Shit.

(PHOEBE *stands*.)

DEREK *takes out gum, hands a piece to HUNTER*.)

**PHOEBE.** Hold on a second.

**DEREK.** Shit. Gum. Here. Shit.

**HUNTER.** Just be normal, man.

**DEREK.** I'm trying.

**HUNTER.** Put the bottle away.

**DEREK.** Where?

**HUNTER.** Just put it in, like, just put it in the toilet.

**PHOEBE.** Do not put it in the toilet.

**DEREK.** It's going to clog it.

**HUNTER.** Just do it.

*(Another knock.)*

**PHOEBE.** Hold on. *(To DEREK:)* Put it in the trashcan.

**HUNTER.** Someone will see it.

**PHOEBE.** They're going to see it if you put it in the toilet.

**HUNTER.** We'll make sure nobody uses the bathroom.

**PHOEBE.** Forever?

**DEREK.** Fine. I'm doing it. Whatever.

**PHOEBE.** Derek.

*(DEREK puts the bottle in the toilet, shuts the lid.*

*HUNTER opens the door.*

*BALLARD stands there.*

*Silence.)*

**PHOEBE.** *(Bright:)* Hi Ballard.

**BALLARD.** Is this an orgy or something? Am I interrupting?

**PHOEBE.** No way, Ballard.

**BALLARD.** You wish, Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** No I don't. What? No.

*(DEREK and HUNTER just chew gum.)*

**BALLARD.** What's wrong with you guys?

*(DEREK shakes his head.)*

**HUNTER.** Nothing.

**BALLARD.** What are you doing in here?

**HUNTER.** Nothing.

**DEREK.** Peeing.

**BALLARD.** What?

**DEREK.** I had to pee.

*(Beat.)*

**BALLARD.** We're playing Candy Land.

**HUNTER.** Cool.

**DEREK.** I love candy.

**HUNTER.** That's great.

*(Beat.)*

Thanks for getting us, Ballard.

**DEREK.** Yeah. Thanks for, uh, thanks for coming to get us, Ballard. That was, this is really nice.

**HUNTER.** Thanks, Ballard.

*(Beat.)*

**BALLARD.** Are you coming?

**HUNTER.** Yeah.

**DEREK.** Yep.

*(They chew gum.)*

**BALLARD.** Ok. Are you guys, is something going on that I should know about? You're acting totally sketch right now.

**DEREK.** No.

**HUNTER.** No.

**BALLARD.** Phoebe?

**PHOEBE.** We were just talking.

**BALLARD.** About what?

**DEREK.** Stuff.

**HUNTER.** Just different stuff.

**BALLARD.** Like what kind of stuff?

**DEREK.** Music.

**HUNTER.** Backpacks.

*(Beat.)*

**DEREK.** Backpacks and music.

*(Beat.)*

Thanks for getting us, though.

**HUNTER.** Yeah. Thank you. Ballard.

*(BALLARD gives them a withering look.)*

**PHOEBE.** Thanks!

**NINE.**

(BALLARD.  
*She smiles.*)

**BALLARD.** Phoebe's always like "oh my God Ballard, you should go out with Derek. You guys would be so cute together. Oh my God oh my God."

(*Beat.*  
*She stops smiling.*)

**TEN.**

(*Everyone sits in a semi-circle on the ground, playing Candy Land.*)

**DEREK.** (*To HUNTER:*) Did you know that Jason Chernick has lyme disease?

**HUNTER.** Yeah.

**PHOEBE.** Can you die from that?

**BALLARD.** No.

**DEREK.** Probably.

**BALLARD.** Jason Chernick has the stupidest haircut I've ever seen. I want to rip it off his head. Frosted tips?

**PHOEBE.** I think it's funny.

**WADE.** You can die if it's not treated.

**DEREK.** Jason Chernick has the nastiest breath all the time. He always gets all close to you and you're, like, stop breathing on me man. / I'm going to get asthma.

**HUNTER.** / It's because he gets that thing from the vending machine. The thing that's half beef and half cheese.

**PHOEBE.** Beef is the sickest meat.

**DEREK.** Beef is the best meat.

**PHOEBE.** Well, like, that's just your opinion, Derek.

**BALLARD.** Jason Chernick. God.

**WADE.** I like, the vending machine, they have that thing now with the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches? Where it's already made? Those are good.

**MARGOT.** I can tell my mom to get some more chips if anybody wants more chips.

**HUNTER.** Hey Wade.

*(HUNTER burps in WADE's face.  
Everyone laughs, grossed out.  
WADE sort of laughs.)*

**PHOEBE.** Did you just burp?

**DEREK.** Hunter. Jesus.

**PHOEBE.** I can smell it. It smells like pepperoni.

**HUNTER.** In Japan, everybody burps.

**PHOEBE.** That is not true.

**HUNTER.** Yes it is. I read it.

**PHOEBE.** Where?

**DEREK.** Shit. I think I ate too many chips.

**HUNTER.** A book.

**DEREK.** *(To MARGOT:)* My tongue feels like I scraped it off. Do you know that feeling?

**WADE.** I know that feeling.

**DEREK.** I didn't ask you.

**WADE.** I thought you did.

**PHOEBE.** People in Japan do not burp.

**MARGOT.** Remember, we used to play Candy Land during recess if it was raining?

**HUNTER.** I like Lord Licorice.

**BALLARD.** I played Connect Four.

**PHOEBE.** I love Connect Four.

**HUNTER.** Lord Licorice is, like, a candy pimp.

**WADE.** I like Pictionary.

**DEREK.** Dude. Princess Lolly. So hot.

**HUNTER.** Agreed.

**BALLARD.** Margot, do you have any vegetables?

**MARGOT.** What kind of vegetables?

**BALLARD.** Um...the vegetable kind?

**PHOEBE.** Oh do you have carrots? Like mini carrots with dip?

**BALLARD.** Dip is so fattening, Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** Not if you just put a little.

**BALLARD.** It's like eating a stick of lard.

**MARGOT.** I can go check if we have vegetables. I'm not sure.

**PHOEBE.** I love mini carrots. And hummus. Hummus is good for you. It's chickpeas.

**BALLARD.** Do you have anything healthy in your house, Margot, or is it just, like, fat person food? No offense.

**MARGOT.** I can go check.

**BALLARD.** Never mind. It's going to take too long.

**PHOEBE.** Check if you have hummus, too.

**MARGOT.** It'll take four seconds.

**BALLARD.** Four seconds is too long. We're not stopping.

**DEREK.** Does anybody have any cigs?

**HUNTER.** Did you say, cigs?

**BALLARD.** Ew. No, Derek. No smoking. Smoking is so bad for you.

**DEREK.** I know that, Ballard.

**BALLARD.** If you smoke, we're not friends.

**DEREK.** Don't be a loser, Ballard.

**BALLARD.** You're going to be a loser when you get cancer and you die and nobody comes to your funeral.

**MARGOT.** My parents would get sort of mad if people start smoking.

**DEREK.** Fine. I won't smoke. Nobody has any cigs anyway.

**HUNTER.** Why do you keep saying cigs?

**DEREK.** Because I want to.

*(DEREK punches HUNTER in the arm.)*

*HUNTER punches him back.)*

Ow. Man.

**PHOEBE.** Guys don't fight. I hate when people fight.

**HUNTER.** We're just playing.

**DEREK.** Yeah, we're just playing.

(DEREK goes for HUNTER again.  
HUNTER tackles DEREK to the ground.  
They wrestle a little, laughing and squirming, and then they gradually stop laughing.)

**BALLARD.** Guys. Watch the board.

**DEREK.** You're going to rip out my earring.

**HUNTER.** Where are your cigs? I want your cigs.

**DEREK.** I'm going to punch you in the sternum.

**BALLARD.** You're ruining the game.

**DEREK.** Ok ok. Get off me, man.

**HUNTER.** You get off me.

**PHOEBE.** Can we start again? Are you guys done kissing?

(HUNTER and DEREK pull apart, fast.)

**HUNTER.** What?

(BALLARD stands.)

**BALLARD.** Ok. I'm done. I want to go home.  
Unless this gets fun right now, I'm calling my mom and I'm going home.

## ELEVEN.

(*Spin the Bottle.*)

**DEREK.** Who goes first?

**HUNTER.** I don't want to.

**PHOEBE.** Are there rules?

**DEREK.** No rules.

**HUNTER.** Uh. I don't want to kiss a dude.

**BALLARD.** What?

**DEREK.** Yeah. No dude on dude kissing.

**BALLARD.** Um. Unfairness?

**HUNTER.** Girls like kissing girls.

**PHOEBE.** Says who?

**HUNTER.** It's just true.

**MARGOT.** I don't like kissing other girls.

**BALLARD.** Phoebe does.

**PHOEBE.** No I do not thank you very much.

**BALLARD.** Phoebe loves kissing girls.

**PHOEBE.** Ha ha ha ha.

**DEREK.** Ok. If girls don't want to kiss girls, then they don't have to.

**HUNTER.** This game just got, like, forty percent less fun.

**PHOEBE.** You're such a perv, Hunter.

**BALLARD.** All guys love lesbians.

**PHOEBE.** Sick.

**WADE.** I don't love lesbians.

**BALLARD.** Well, correction: all non-gay guys love lesbians.

**WADE.** I'm not gay.

**BALLARD.** I didn't say gay. I said gray.

**HUNTER.** Can we start?

**DEREK.** Who's starting?

**MARGOT.** I don't know if I should play.

**HUNTER.** Everybody has to play.

**MARGOT.** But Mike might get mad.

**BALLARD.** Mike sounds abusive. No offense.

**MARGOT.** You're not supposed to kiss other people if you have a boyfriend. That's not abusive.

**DEREK.** Are you sure that you guys are exclusive?

**PHOEBE.** Usually camp boyfriends are not exclusive. In my experience.

**HUNTER.** Oh. Like that skinny Arab guy with the mustache, you mean?

**PHOEBE.** Ok. First of all, he was not from Arabia, he was from Egypt, so thank you for being racist.

**BALLARD.** I think the thing is, maybe Margot's just a prude.

**MARGOT.** No.

**PHOEBE.** Ballard, don't say mean things.

**BALLARD.** Truth isn't mean, it's just true.

**MARGOT.** I'm not a prude.

**BALLARD.** Then prove it.

**MARGOT.** Fine. Whatever. I'll play.

**PHOEBE.** I'm excited to meet Margot's boyfriend.

**BALLARD.** Me too.

**MARGOT.** Well, you're going to. When he gets here.

**BALLARD.** Awesome. Well I have decided that I am not going to hold my breath on that one, because I don't want to pass out.

**HUNTER.** Let's play. Someone spin.

**MARGOT.** I don't know what you're talking about, Ballard.

**DEREK.** This is taking way too long. This shouldn't take this long, man.

**BALLARD.** Hey wait, I have a question though. So when people, when we kiss people, do we have to lick their teeth?

**MARGOT.** What?

**DEREK.** Ballard.

**BALLARD.** No. Do we or not?

**WADE.** (*Cracking up:*) Teeth? Like, *teeth*?

**HUNTER.** What are you talking about?

**BALLARD.** I thought we had to lick people's teeth. I thought that's how you kiss people. Am I wrong?

**DEREK.** Shut up Ballard.

**BALLARD.** You shut up.

**MARGOT.** Let's just play if we're going to play.

**WADE.** Is someone going to spin?

**PHOEBE.** (*Laughing nervously:*) Ok. I'm confused.

(WADE reaches forward and spins.  
If it lands on a guy, it goes like this:)

**DEREK.** Re-spin.

**HUNTER.** Re-spin.

**BALLARD.** Guys, you're destroying Wade's dream.

**WADE.** I'm re-spinning.

(WADE re-spins.)

*If it lands on a guy again, everyone just yells:)*

**ALL.** Re-spin. Re-spin.

*(If it lands on PHOEBE or BALLARD, it goes like this:)*

**HUNTER.** Oh yes.

**DEREK.** Do it.

**PHOEBE or BALLARD.** Ok come on. Let's go.

*(They kiss. It's very fast.)*

**DEREK.** No no. It has to be five seconds.

**PHOEBE or BALLARD.** What?

**HUNTER.** Five seconds at *least*.

**PHOEBE or BALLARD.** That is not a rule.

**BALLARD or PHOEBE.** Um, yes it is, Phoebe (or BALLARD).

**PHOEBE or BALLARD.** I hate you guys.

*(She turns to WADE:)*

If you put your tongue in my mouth I will bite it off and I will swallow it.

**WADE.** I won't.

**PHOEBE or BALLARD.** This is so sick.

*(They kiss for five seconds.*

*But no one catcalls or anything.*

*The kiss goes on past five seconds.*

*It really lasts.*

*The lights change and they are the only two people in the universe and the universe is spinning and the earth is spinning and they are standing still.*

*They pull away very slowly, a single gossamer thread of spit dangling translucent between them.*

*PHOEBE or BALLARD, unconvincingly:)*

Yuck.

*(If it lands on MARGOT, it goes like this:)*

**HUNTER.** Nice.

**DEREK.** Oh my God.

*(MARGOT and WADE peck and part.)*

**BALLARD.** No no. It has to be five seconds.

**HUNTER.** Five seconds at *least*.

**MARGOT.** That is not a rule.

**BALLARD.** Um, yes it is, Margot.

*(MARGOT sighs.  
She and WADE stand and meet in the center.  
WADE kisses her.  
Deep and passionate.  
He puts a hand on her face.  
She melts a little.  
The universe slows like a warped record.  
After ten seconds, she backs away.)*

**MARGOT.** Yuck.

*(She wipes her mouth on her shirt.)*

## TWELVE.

*(PHOEBE.)*

**PHOEBE.** Phil Marnell has a scar. It's tiny. You wouldn't even really see it unless you knew it was there and you were looking for it. It's from chicken pox and it's on his left temple and it's a little dot like somebody stamped him with a dot when he was born so that they would always be able to find him.

When I was ten, my dad quit his job so he could find out what he really wanted to do, and it started to look like what he really wanted to do was watch TV in his boxers and drink Diet Rite. My mom would come home at seven and I would be in my room and they would fight. My mom would yell and my dad would cry, and then my *dad* would yell and my mom would cry, and then my dad would curl up in a ball and rock himself back and forth and say the word, "please," over and over, until it didn't even sound like a word but more like a sound that an animal might make.

I used to sit in my closet on a pile of dirty clothes and push myself in against the door and wait for everything to stop. Sometimes my mom would leave and she wouldn't come back for a few hours. Or a few days. Sometimes my dad would say sorry and they would make up and we all had dinner together and Dad put pants on and everybody smiled, and those times were the worst. Sometimes I would sit there in the dark and I would imagine I wasn't really there or that somebody far away was dreaming me and what if they woke up. Sometimes I would take my fingernail and I would stretch it across

my chest very slowly, so that the skin would begin to split and a little inch of blood would open into my shirt and then everything would get very quiet and I didn't cry and I wasn't scared and I felt alone and emptied out and like maybe I would never die, but even if I did it would be ok.

*(Beat.)*

My dad would just keep saying, "please," until my mom left the room and then he would say, "love isn't free, Betsy. It costs you. It always costs you. It always costs you."

It always costs you.

### THIRTEEN.

*(Hide and seek.*

*The kids are spread out all over the house.*

*PHOEBE and HUNTER are in Margot's closet, a tight, claustrophobic place that smells like clean clothes and dirty shoes and moth balls.*

*MARGOT and DEREK hide in the garage behind a barricade of old bicycles and sports equipment.*

*BALLARD and WADE sit in the basement.)*

**HUNTER.** It's sort of weird to be in Margot's closet. Right?

*(PHOEBE nods.)*

So weird.

**DEREK.** So where's your boyfriend?

**MARGOT.** There's a lot of traffic, I guess.

**DEREK.** I hate traffic.

**MARGOT.** Me too.

**DEREK.** What's on your necklace?

**MARGOT.** Oh. It's, um, it's Thurston Moore?

**DEREK.** Who?

**MARGOT.** From Sonic Youth? My sister got it for me.

**DEREK.** Oh man. I love Sonic Youth. They're so good.

**BALLARD.** I can't believe we're actually playing this.

**WADE.** What?

**BALLARD.** Don't stop counting.

**HUNTER.** Don't you think it's a good hiding place?

**PHOEBE.** (*Sharp:*) Maybe you should stop talking or they're going to find us.

**HUNTER.** You don't have to be so rude about it.

**PHOEBE.** Oh I'm rude?

**HUNTER.** Yeah. You are.

**PHOEBE.** Ok. Hunter? Don't make me laugh.

**HUNTER.** Yeah, I won't.

**BALLARD.** Hide and Seek.

**DEREK.** So why is Wade here?

**MARGOT.** Oh. My mom ran into his mom at the grocery store and she invited him.

**DEREK.** Bummer.

**BALLARD.** More like Hide And This Sucks.

**HUNTER.** Are you just—we're not going to talk?

**PHOEBE.** I guess not.

**HUNTER.** We're just going to stand here?

**PHOEBE.** I guess so, Hunter. I guess we're just going to stand here.

**HUNTER.** Awesome.

**MARGOT.** My mom and his mom used to be in this kind of, like, group therapy meditation kind of thing a few years ago.

**DEREK.** Do you like skating at all?

**MARGOT.** Yeah. It's cool. It seems fun.

**DEREK.** I just got a new board for my birthday.

**MARGOT.** Oh.

**DEREK.** It's pretty, uh, it's pretty dope.

**WADE.** Ninety-one. Ninety-two.

**BALLARD.** That's close enough. Let's go.

**WADE.** Wait. My leg's asleep.

**DEREK.** Yeah. It's custom. Alien Workshop deck, Birdhouse wheels. I wasn't sure whether to get Alien Workshop or Neutron Death, but Alien Workshop has better pop. For tricks. I do a lot of tricks. I'm trying to get sponsored now. I sent in a video to Quicksilver. Of my tricks.

**PHOEBE.** Japanese people do not burp.

**HUNTER.** You don't know the first thing about Japanese people, Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** You don't know the first thing about anything, Hunter.

**BALLARD.** This is taking for-fucking-ever, Wade.

**WADE.** Give me one more second. I think I'm starting to feel something.

**HUNTER.** Why are you being such a bitch?

(*PHOEBE hits HUNTER.*)

**PHOEBE.** Don't say that.

**HUNTER.** Fuck. Stop. Jesus Christ, man.

**DEREK.** I love, like, uh, music. Do you like music?

**MARGOT.** Yeah. I'm pretty... I like it a lot.

**HUNTER.** You're such a bitch sometimes.

(*PHOEBE hits him.*)

If you hit me again, I'm going to hit you back.

**PHOEBE.** You can't hit a girl.

**DEREK.** I've been meaning, I keep meaning to ask you. What's your favorite band? Or, like, artist?

**MARGOT.** Oh. I don't know.

**DEREK.** I know. It's hard. To narrow it.

**MARGOT.** Probably, yeah, Sonic Youth. Or the Meat Puppets.

**DEREK.** (*No clue.*) Oh ok. Meat Puppets, yeah.

**HUNTER.** I can hit whoever I want. You're not my boss.

**PHOEBE.** If you hit me, Hunter, I will tell everybody, I swear to God, I will tell everybody in the entire school about what you and Chris Shay did in second grade.

(*Beat.*)

**HUNTER.** If you ever did that, just so you know, I would go to your house and I would kill your family.

**PHOEBE.** Yeah, really smart, Hunter. Then you would go to jail and you would get the death penalty.

**BALLARD.** Wade. Get it together.

**WADE.** I'm trying. It's pins and needles.

**BALLARD.** What is wrong with your circulation? Do you have a disease?

**WADE.** No.

**DEREK.** I also love punk. Punk music.

**HUNTER.** I would hide the bodies. No one would ever even find out.

**PHOEBE.** Yes they would.

**HUNTER.** How?

**PHOEBE.** Finger prints? Hello?

**WADE.** Are Margot and Derek boyfriend and girlfriend?

**BALLARD.** Um. What are you talking about?

**PHOEBE.** I don't know what you told Ballard / but I do not lick people's teeth.

**HUNTER.** / I didn't tell Ballard anything.

**DEREK.** So is your boyfriend, he's, it's sort of like, are you guys serious or whatever?

**MARGOT.** Um. Yeah. I think so. I guess.

**DEREK.** Oh. Ok.

**WADE.** Did you hear about Jeremy Lerner?

**BALLARD.** Are Margot and Derek going out. That is probably the stupidest thing I have ever heard in my entire life up to and including right this second.

**HUNTER.** I never said anything to Ballard.

**PHOEBE.** It was one time and you *asked me to*, asshole.

**HUNTER.** I know. I was there, dummy.

**PHOEBE.** You're the dummy, piece of shit.

**MARGOT.** Yeah, we're pretty serious.

**DEREK.** Cool.

**BALLARD.** Derek and Margot are not going out. They never went out.

**WADE.** Jeremy Lerner got suspended. Did you hear about that?

**DEREK.** I play the drums. I don't know if you knew that.

**MARGOT.** No.

**DEREK.** I'm pretty good. Not to brag. But. I've only been taking lessons for a year. I'm getting a double bass drum for Christmas, so I can start playing live shows.

**BALLARD.** Um. Who the fuck is Jeremy Lerner?

**WADE.** Jeremy Lerner. From the golf team. He had firecrackers in his locker.

**BALLARD.** Is this, are you trying to impress me with, like, is this Golf Team Gossip, Wade?

**WADE.** I guess. He's really good at putting. He's probably the best putter on the team.

*(DEREK leans over and kisses MARGOT.  
MARGOT pushes him off.)*

**MARGOT.** Oh wow.

*(PHOEBE grabs HUNTER and kisses him hard.  
They make out a little.)*

**WADE.** Yeah. Jeremy's pretty nice.

**BALLARD.** Why would Derek and Margot be going out? Why would you even say that?

**WADE.** I don't know. I just thought, because Derek kept saying stuff about her to Hunter before.

**DEREK.** I'm sorry. I just, I had to do that. I had to do it. I couldn't help it.

*(PHOEBE pushes HUNTER off.)*

**PHOEBE.** Your mouth tastes like shit.

**BALLARD.** Like what stuff?

**WADE.** Just stuff about her, like, how she's really small or something, and how he wanted to put her in his pocket and, like, do stuff to her. I didn't listen. It was sick. Derek says sick stuff a lot.

**HUNTER.** Your mouth tastes like shit, too. It's not just me.

**WADE.** Jeremy Lerner's parents are going to ground him for probably like the rest of high school.

**BALLARD.** Ok. *Wade?* Do you think I could possibly care less about Jeremy fucking Lerman?

**WADE.** Lerner.

*(PHOEBE begins to sob.)*

**HUNTER.** What? Oh my God. Phoebe. Stop.

**BALLARD.** Gossip sucks, Wade. It hurts people's feelings and it hurts their reputations. You should really think about not doing it.

**DEREK.** Did I make things, are things weird now?

**HUNTER.** Come on, man. Stop crying.

**MARGOT.** No. No. Just...

**WADE.** Well, just, Derek and Margot have a lot in common. When you think about it.

**PHOEBE.** You never say hi to me anymore.

**BALLARD.** Like what?

**HUNTER.** What?

**DEREK.** Just what?

**MARGOT.** Just...nothing.

**PHOEBE.** In the hall. In class. You ignore me. You never call me back. All I ever do is talk to your mom and she tells me you're going to call me back, but you never call me back.

**HUNTER.** I was busy. We had two games this week. And I was staying at my dad's house anyway.

**PHOEBE.** I had a biology test on Tuesday and I had to finish *The Blu-est Eye* but I still found time to call you.

**WADE.** Derek used to like me, but then in seventh grade, he stopped. I don't know why. It was pretty abrupt.

**MARGOT.** I have a boyfriend.

**DEREK.** Right. I forgot. Boyfriend. Right.

**BALLARD.** Maybe because he thinks you're annoying as shit.

**MARGOT.** What?

**DEREK.** Nothing.

**WADE.** We used to have sleepovers at Derek's house because Derek's mom would get us Cookie Crisp and we watched the movie *Major League* even though it was R.

**HUNTER.** You're the one who got all weird about it.

**PHOEBE.** About what? About the tooth / thing?

**HUNTER.** / No. Not the tooth thing.

**MARGOT.** Tell me.

**DEREK.** You really want to know?

**WADE.** I guess the thing is that Margot and Derek are both really outgoing. / Like, extroverts?

**BALLARD.** / Can you please just stop talking about Margot and Derek? I have the worst fucking migraine.

**MARGOT.** Derek, tell me.

**PHOEBE.** About what? Tell me what.

**HUNTER.** You kept, like...pressuring me.

**PHOEBE.** I thought you wanted to.

**HUNTER.** I do want to. Just not...I don't know. Not right now.

**DEREK.** Ballard said you don't have a boyfriend. She said you made him up.

**MARGOT.** Why would she say that?

**DEREK.** I don't know.

**WADE.** My leg's awake now.

**BALLARD.** Whoop dee doo, Wade.

**PHOEBE.** How did I get *weird*?

**MARGOT.** I do have a boyfriend.

**DEREK.** I believe you.

**HUNTER.** You got all, like, you got all, you got like this. Like crazy. Like this.

**WADE.** Do you think we should start looking?

**DEREK.** There are no pictures or anything, I guess, is the thing.

**HUNTER.** Just because I didn't want to / and you wanted to.

**PHOEBE.** / I didn't even care. I don't even care.

**MARGOT.** My camera broke. I told her that.

**DEREK.** Don't get mad at me about it. I'm the messenger, man.

**BALLARD.** Why don't you go look, Wade?

**HUNTER.** I told you I wasn't ready for a relationship, but it's like you didn't even listen.

**PHOEBE.** Yes I did listen.

**MARGOT.** God. I hate her.

**DEREK.** She's just kidding.

**PHOEBE.** I could hook up with any guy I want.

**HUNTER.** (*Pointed:*) Yeah. I know.

**MARGOT.** I just, I hate her.

**PHOEBE.** I could hook up with college guys. Rich's brother? His whole fraternity thinks I'm hot.

**WADE.** They're probably waiting for us.

**HUNTER.** Do it, Phoebe. Go for it.

**DEREK.** But so can I kiss you again?

**MARGOT.** I don't think so.

**DEREK.** Why not? I won't tell anyone.

**BALLARD.** It feels like there's a tornado inside my eardrum and it's blowing up people's houses and their dogs and their microwaves and it's going to rip my face off, ok?

**DEREK.** I've liked you since, like, seventh grade Margot. I'm not kidding.

**MARGOT.** We're not kissing again. So stop.

**PHOEBE.** You think I want to go out with *you*?

**WADE.** My mom gets migraines.

**MARGOT.** It's not happening. So you can just please, like, just please stop.

**PHOEBE.** I can't even tell you how funny that is.

**DEREK.** All you had to say was no.

**HUNTER.** I'm glad it's funny.

**WADE.** My dad used to get stress headaches, but then he moved jobs.

**BALLARD.** I don't care about your perfect family, Wade. And how you watch R-rated movies and shit and your dad's job and how perfect and amazing it is. Ok?

**PHOEBE.** I hate you.

**HUNTER.** I hate you, too.

**MARGOT.** I hate Ballard. She gets me so upset.

**DEREK.** Well she's my friend, so stop.

**BALLARD.** I'm so happy that you have this incredible, amazing, perfect family, Wade. That's so amazing for you.

**WADE.** I didn't say that.

*(PHOEBE buries herself into HUNTER.  
She holds him hard, as hard as she can.)*

**MARGOT.** I just I'm sorry but I hate her I'm just I'm sorry but I just I hate her I hate her I hate her.

**DEREK.** Oh my God.

**HUNTER.** Oh my God. Phoebe.

**WADE.** Ballard? I'm sorry if I made you sad / or something.

**BALLARD.** / Stop fucking saying that you're sorry, Wade. What are you sorry about? Just stop.

**MARGOT.** He'll be here. I know he'll be here.

**WADE.** Everything, I guess.

#### FOURTEEN.

(DEREK.  
*Elsewhere.*)

**DEREK.** Ten years later, I won't remember anything from tonight. By the time we're sophomores, we won't even nod when we pass each other in the hallway. And when we're seniors, we won't even have to pretend like we don't care.

When I'm twenty-five, I'll live five blocks away from Ballard, on the same street, and I'll never know. Then she'll move to Chicago to do PR and I'll go back to school and by the time I'm thirty, I don't even remember Phoebe's last name or Hunter's phone number or the taste of Katie Spellman's watermelon lip gloss on the bus ride back from Gettysburg.

But I'll remember the smell of Margot's basement, like rug burn and salt and vinegar and the feeling in the bottom of your stomach when you realize for the first time that nothing, none of this, nothing, nothing lasts.

#### FIFTEEN.

(*The basement.*  
PHOEBE sits by herself, staring blankly into space.  
MARGOT enters.)

**MARGOT.** Hey.

**PHOEBE.** Hi.

**MARGOT.** We're doing ice cream sundaes upstairs.

**PHOEBE.** Oh. Ok.

**MARGOT.** Do you want to come?

**PHOEBE.** I'm lactose intolerant.

**MARGOT.** Oh. Right.

*(Beat.)*

Do you want something else? My mom made cookies, and we have a lot of just other stuff. Random stuff.

**PHOEBE.** I'm not really hungry.

**MARGOT.** We were going to go outside and do marshmallows on the grill but it just started raining. But if you want to do marshmallows on the stove, you can do that. I think Derek's doing that.

**PHOEBE.** I don't eat gelatin. It's made from horse feet.

*(Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** Is everything all right?

**PHOEBE.** Mmhmm.

*(Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** It's almost eleven.

**PHOEBE.** I know.

*(Beat.)*

Did you get in touch with...?

*(MARGOT shakes her head.*

*Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** It sort of explains why he never called me back this week.

**PHOEBE.** Well, you never know, though.

**MARGOT.** I thought he just had a lot of homework.

**PHOEBE.** Maybe he did. Maybe he still has a lot of homework. Sometimes I have a lot of homework.

*(Long pause.*

*PHOEBE prepares to say something profound.)*

The thing is...in middle school you don't have that much homework. But in high school, you have a lot more. And so maybe he just had, like...a ton.

*(Beat.)*

**MARGOT.** *(Disbelieving:)* Yeah.

**PHOEBE.** Don't be sad, Margot.

**MARGOT.** I'm not.

**PHOEBE.** You should never, ever be sad. You're so pretty.

**MARGOT.** Thanks.

*(Beat.)*

It's just, like, he's the one who kept calling me when we got back from camp, and sending me postcards from his trip to New Hampshire. And making me mix tapes and telling me I reminded him of his ex-girlfriend who he was in love with, but then she cheated on him and he almost wanted to die for two years, but then he met me and it was like everything started to feel ok again.

*(Beat.)*

It's funny, because I barely like him. I barely do at all. He likes me.

*(Pause.)*

**PHOEBE.** That is funny.

## SIXTEEN.

*(MARGOT on the telephone.  
The sound of a loud beep.)*

**MARGOT.** Hi. Yeah. Mike. It's me.

Why aren't you answering your car phone?

I don't know where you are but it's really late and you're freaking me out and I'm going to have a heart attack.

If you weren't serious about this, then you shouldn't have told me you were coming. Because now everybody thinks you're coming and if you don't come, then I'm going to be, like, dead.

*(Beat.)*

You said you would be here, Mike. You promised you would be here.

*(Beat.)*

I've left you ten million messages and I've paged you four hundred thousand times. So.

Get here.

*(Beep.)*

SEVENTEEN.

(HUNTER and PHOEBE sit on the couch, with WADE between them.

DEREK sits on the floor with his head in his hands.

BALLARD stands.)

**BALLARD.** So then, ok, so then Margot comes back in—

**DEREK.** No more games.

**BALLARD.** —and the person looks around, and when the person winks at you, then you die. Ok?

**HUNTER.** Which person?

**BALLARD.** The person, Hunter. The Mafia person.

**DEREK.** Nobody wants to play this, Ballard. We're tired.

**BALLARD.** Speak for yourself, Derek.

**HUNTER.** I don't understand the rules.

**PHOEBE.** Hey Ballard, can you give the rules again and translate them into stupid?

**BALLARD.** If you get winked at, Hunter, then you die. That's the whole game. That's it.

**HUNTER.** Why do you die? That makes no sense.

**BALLARD.** Because those are the rules. That's the game. That's how you play.

**HUNTER.** Well, I don't get it.

**WADE.** Do you think Margot's boyfriend is going to be here soon? It's pretty late.

**DEREK.** I'm not playing. I don't want to play.

**BALLARD.** Can somebody please get Derek two Midol and a tampon please?

**DEREK.** Does anybody want to play this right now?

**BALLARD.** Everybody does.

**DEREK.** No. Does anybody, seriously, does anybody want to be doing this? Let's vote. Show of hands. Who wants to play this?

(PHOEBE and WADE raise their hands.

HUNTER follows, half-embarrassed.)

**PHOEBE.** I do.

**WADE.** I want to play.

**BALLARD.** Well, so someone get Margot. We're starting.

**DEREK.** I'm going outside.

**HUNTER.** It's raining.

**DEREK.** God I want a cigarette, man.

**BALLARD.** Stop it, Derek. It's pouring out.

**HUNTER.** Nobody has any cigs, bro. Already established.

**PHOEBE.** Derek, seriously, you're addicted.

**DEREK.** I am not addicted.

**BALLARD.** Cigarettes are the most disgusting—my grandfather died from cigarettes, Derek. Does that even, do you even care?

**HUNTER.** Derek needs his cigs. He's got to get the cigs.

**DEREK.** It's not funny, man.

**PHOEBE.** Cigarettes make your breath taste like ashtray.

**DEREK.** Well, I'm not expecting anyone to lick my teeth tonight, so.

**HUNTER.** Dude.

**PHOEBE.** F you Derek. It was, Hunter was the one who said to do it, and it was a joke anyway.

**WADE.** Can you die, in the game, when you get winked at, can you die however you want or is there a special rule or something?

**HUNTER.** Uh. Shut up Wade.

**PHOEBE.** Leave him alone, Hunter. You're not funny.

**HUNTER.** Back off, Phoebe. Jesus. Wade doesn't care. He likes it. It gives him a boner.

**BALLARD.** Someone go get Margot. Derek, get Margot.

**WADE.** It doesn't give me a boner.

**DEREK.** If people want to play, then they should play. I don't want to play. I shouldn't have to play.

**HUNTER.** I don't either.

**BALLARD.** Everybody has to play. Not an option.

(MARGOT enters.)

**PHOEBE.** Guys, we're all going to play. It's going to be fun. We have to play.

**DEREK.** Just shut up Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** Did you just tell me to shut up?

**DEREK.** I'm not playing. I don't want to play, so I'm not playing.

**MARGOT.** Did somebody put a bottle in the toilet?

*(Beat.)*

There's, um, there's a bottle in the toilet. An alcohol bottle.

*(Beat.)*

**WADE** *laughs.*

**WADE.** A bottle? In the toilet?

*(Beat.)*

I didn't do it.

**MARGOT.** Did somebody else do it?

*(Beat.)*

**PHOEBE.** Derek did.

**DEREK.** What? No I didn't.

**PHOEBE.** Derek and Hunter did it. / They were drinking and then they put it in the toilet.

**HUNTER.** *(To PHOEBE:)* / What? Are you serious?

**MARGOT.** Can somebody just get it out please?

**BALLARD.** You guys were drinking?

**DEREK.** Phoebe. Stop.

**PHOEBE.** What? I'm not going to lie for you. You told me to shut up.

**BALLARD.** People are drinking?

**PHOEBE.** Derek and Hunter are. Derek's drunk.

**DEREK.** No I'm not. I didn't drink.

**HUNTER.** Thanks Phoebe.

**PHOEBE.** Thanks for sticking up for me when Derek told me to shut up.

**MARGOT.** I just, I don't care, but I really don't want there to be a bottle in the toilet. My parents are going to get really mad.

**BALLARD.** You guys are drinking? Are you serious? You're drinking, Derek?

*(Beat.)*

**DEREK.** (To MARGOT:) Are they going to call our parents?

**BALLARD.** Oh my God. Derek.

**DEREK.** It was just, it was less than half a bottle. They can't tell my parents. My parents are going to kill me.

**MARGOT.** Can you just get it out?

**BALLARD.** Why is everybody, why does everybody keep doing the stupidest, why do you keep doing stupid things all night?

**DEREK.** Are they going to call my parents, because if my parents find out... I can't get in trouble again.

**HUNTER.** Stop crying, Derek.

**DEREK.** You don't understand Hunter. I can't get in trouble for something else right now.

**BALLARD.** Everybody is doing all of these things and we're just, it's *illegal*. It's completely illegal, Derek. You're not twenty-one. / You can get arrested.

**DEREK.** / I know that, Ballard.

**BALLARD.** You can get arrested and go to jail.

**MARGOT.** Can somebody please get it?

**BALLARD.** You think it makes you cool if you drink? It makes you uncool.

**HUNTER.** I don't want to get it. Wade pooped in that toilet.

**WADE.** No I didn't.

**BALLARD.** I can't believe that you're a druggie.

**DEREK.** I am not a druggie.

**BALLARD.** Drinking is drugs, Derek.

**DEREK.** I'm not a druggie. You can't be mad at me about this, Ballard.

**MARGOT.** Please can somebody just get it?

**DEREK.** You can't be mad at me all the time about everything, Ballard.

**BALLARD.** We're not even fifteen yet.

**HUNTER.** I am.

**DEREK.** Yeah. Because you had to repeat third grade.

**HUNTER.** Thanks a lot, asshole.

**BALLARD.** We're not ready to start drinking.

**PHOEBE.** It's not even worth talking to them, Ballard.

**HUNTER.** God. Phoebe.

**BALLARD.** We're not ready to start drinking and doing sex and cigarettes and drugs and all of this, like, all of these—we're not ready. Nobody is ready.

**MARGOT.** My parents are *right* upstairs.

**DEREK.** (*Icy:*) More like, you're not ready, Ballard.

(*Silence.*)

BALLARD *is a little bit crushed.*)

**DEREK.** (*To MARGOT:*) Please don't tell your parents. Please.

(*Beat.*)

**MARGOT.** Can somebody please just get it?

(*Beat.*)

**HUNTER.** Man. I'll get it. Whatever.

(HUNTER *goes.*)

*Long pause.*)

**WADE.** Are we going to play the game now?

**BALLARD.** Shut up, Wade.

## EIGHTEEN.

(*Everyone sits on the floor in a circle.*)

*No one so much as smiles.*)

**DEREK.** Truth or dare?

**PHOEBE.** Truth.

**BALLARD.** No more truths.

**PHOEBE.** Fine. Dare.

(*Beat.*)

**DEREK.** I dare you to go upstairs. Go to the kitchen. If someone's in there, you just, you don't say anything, you just ignore them. If you say something, you lose. Find a jar of peanut butter and a jar of mayonnaise. If someone asks you something, if they ask you a question, you don't answer. You don't nod, you don't shake your head. Take the peanut butter, take the mayonnaise, find a bathroom. Close the door to the bathroom. First you take the peanut butter and you put

it on your cheeks, in three vertical lines. One. Two. Three. Then take more peanut butter and rub it on your neck, so it covers your neck. Your whole neck, like a cast.

**PHOEBE.** (*Giggling:*) This is really weird.

**DEREK.** I'm not done. Put the peanut butter down. Get the mayonnaise. Take the mayonnaise and make a moustache and a goat-tee out of it. They have to connect. Then make mutton chops. Make them thick. Then put three scoops of it in your hair, whatever way you want, but it has to be three scoops. Big scoops. Then wash your hands so you don't get it all over the doorknobs and the cabinets and everything. Open the bathroom door. Go back to the kitchen. Put the peanut butter and the mayonnaise back where you got them. If someone's in there, nothing, no words, no signals, nothing. Go to the front door. Open the front door. Walk to the end of the driveway. When you get to the mailbox, stop. Put your hands behind your head, like someone's pointing a gun at you. Stay there. Like that. After five minutes someone will come and get you. They will lead you back to the house with your hands behind your back, like you're a prisoner. You won't say or do anything. You just walk. One step after the other. If you say anything, or if you laugh or if you cry or if you do anything at all, you lose. And if you lose, you have to put your face in the toilet that Wade pooped in underwater for thirty seconds with your eyes open. Those are the rules.

(*Silence.*)

**PHOEBE.** Um. I pass.

**DEREK.** No passing.

**HUNTER.** We said, no passing.

**PHOEBE.** It's raining outside. / It's not fair.

**DEREK.** / No. Passing.

(*Silence.*)

*PHOEBE looks around the circle.*

*They look back at her.*

*She waits for some kind of reprieve.*

*It doesn't come.*

*She takes a deep breath.*

*She climbs the stairs.*

*Beat.*

*HUNTER turns to WADE.)*

**HUNTER.** Hey Wade. Truth or dare?

(*Beat.*)

**WADE.** Dare.

*(And all the lights go out.)*

**NINETEEN.**

*(WADE steps into a sad little pinspot of light.  
DEREK sets up a microphone and mic stand in front of him.  
PHOEBE hands him an electric guitar.  
BALLARD smooths his hair.  
HUNTER tests the microphone.  
He gives WADE the all-clear sign.  
Everybody leaves and WADE is alone.  
He is somewhere else now.  
He sings.)*

**WADE.** *(Singing:)*

THERE'S A PICTURE I KEEP IN MY WALLET  
IT'S FROM OUR YEARBOOK, SEVENTH GRADE IN '92  
I CUT IT OUT WITH SCISSORS AND A RULER  
I PUT IT ON MY PILLOW AND PRETEND TO TALK TO YOU

IN THE PICTURE, YOU'RE WEARING A SWEATER  
RED AND BLUE STRIPES LIKE THE RIBBON IN YOUR HAIR  
AND EVEN THOUGH YOUR SMILE IS TIRED  
YOUR EYES LIGHT UP, IT REALLY ISN'T FAIR

SOMETIMES I WISH I WAS YOUR SHADOW  
SO I COULD STICK TO YOUR HEELS  
GO WHERE YOU GO  
SOMETIMES I WISH I WAS YOUR SHADOW  
I WANT TO LOOK THROUGH YOUR EYES  
KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW

SOME NIGHTS WHEN I FEEL LONELY, I TAKE OUT YOUR  
PICTURE  
ASK YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO BE  
AT FIRST YOU JUST LAUGH, YOU SAY YOU DON'T KNOW  
HOW TO ANSWER  
OR YOU SAY "WHO CARES?"  
AND I HAVE TO DISAGREE

I WOULD SHOW YOU ALL THE THINGS INSIDE ME  
THE THINGS NO ONE WANTS AND NO ONE WANTS TO  
KNOW

**THIS PLAY IS  
NOT OVER!**

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