



# MONOLOGUES

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## CANDYLAND

Grandma, can I have a snack? Please?! I'm so hungry cause Mom took me to Toys 'R Us. She said I could pick out one game. Anything I wanted in the whole store! So I looked and looked, and then I found Candyland. I saw the gum drops and the ice cream floats—I was so excited to eat all the candy! But I tasted it, and it all just tastes like cardboard. *(Makes a yuckyface.)* I guess I must have picked a spoiled box.

## PICK ME!

Ooh! Ooh! Here! Pick me! I wanna go first! Pleeese! *(yelling)* Miss Janet, can you hear me? Meee, go, first! Hey, c'mon! What do I gotta do to get noticed around here?

*(jumping on each word)* Pick me, not Nick. He's gonna get sick! *(stops jumping)* Well, he always does. Barf, Barf, Barf.

*(pause)* Okay I'm being good, see? *(sits down, hands folded)* I'm quiet, Miss Janet, I'm being really quiet. Look how quiet I am! I'm as quiet as a mouse. Quieter, cause mice squeak. I'm quiet like a bug. They don't talk at all. Miss Janet, you look so pretty. I like your dress. And you have nice hair like my mom's—brown and gray. So can I go? Please? *(pause)* Wow, I can?! Yes! Cool! Woo! Hey...what were we gonna do again?

## THE AUDITION

My palms are sweating! How gross! I've always heard adults say that their palms got sweaty when they were nervous, but I couldn't relate. And now, it's happening to me! Yuck!

*(Talking to self)* It's only an audition. Stay calm! It is just the school play. It's not Broadway for crying out loud. It's not the movies. I am not going to make or break my acting career with a part in Ms. Calhoun's production of "The Hog and the Ham." But I want this sooo bad! I would make such a cute hen. I've been practicing walking up and down pecking for food. Talking in my best hen's voice.

*(Hears something)* Oh, my gosh, that's me. I'm on! Wish me luck! Oops, I mean tell me to break a leg! Or a drumstick.

*(Walks off cackling like a hen.)*

## THE WALL OF VAN GOGH

I am a very talented painter. An artiste. I am going to be as famous as Van Gogh one day. It was clear to me from a very early age. When I got my first paint set and that little brush in my hand, I knew I was inspired. My bedroom wall, like a giant white canvas, was calling to me. "Paint me! Paint me!" it pleaded. Before I knew what was happening, my hand was swirling and stroking and speckling all over! When I was finished, I stepped back to admire my masterpiece. It was divine! I called for my mom. I was sure she'd instantly enroll me in the finest art school in the country. She came running into the room, and when she saw my exquisite mural, she screamed at the top of her lungs and threatened to ground me for life! No wonder Van Gogh cut off his ear! Being a naturally gifted artist is not easy in a world full of moms.

## WHAT A WASTE

Mom, I don't see why I have to make my bed because when it's bedtime, I have to get in it and it just gets all wrinkled up again. And I don't think I should brush my teeth anymore because at lunchtime, I eat food and my teeth get all dirty again. Plus, why should I clean up my room when it's gonna be messy again as soon as I come home and play? It's just a waste of cleaning. *(pause)* Don't play?! But Mom, it's better to have my room always messy than always clean. That way I know where everything is.

## A LITTLE PRINCESS

I don't have a mother either...she's in heaven with my baby sister...But that doesn't mean I can't talk to her, I talk to her all the time...I tell her everything and I know she hears me because...because that's what angels do. My mom is an angel and yours is too. With beautiful satin wings, a silk dress, and a crown of baby rosebuds, and they all live together in a castle. And do you know what it's made out of? Sunflowers. Hundreds of them, so bright they shine like the sun. And when they want to go anywhere they just whistle, like this...*(whistles)* and a cloud swoops down to the front gate and picks them up and as they ride through the air, over the moon and through the stars...until they are hovering right above us, that's how they can look down and make sure we're all right. And sometimes they even send messages. Of course you can't hear them with all the noise you were making...but don't worry they'll always try again...just in case you missed them.

## DORIS

Last week, Alice and I made a tent in the backyard out of old blankets. We put them over the clothesline and fastened them to the ground with wooden sticks. It was a real big tent, and on the inside it was nice and cozy. We put a bunch more blankets inside for a floor and then put a bunch of our stuff in there: our dolls and books and games and stuff. We played in the tent all day and even ate our lunch and dinner in it and everything.

We asked our moms if we could sleep out in the tent all night, and they said yes and we got some more blankets and our pillows and made beds. We sat in the tent and talked and listened to the radio till real late, and Daddy brought us out some popcorn and Cokes. When it got late, Mom told us to turn out our flashlights and go to sleep.

We tried to go to sleep, but we couldn't. We kept hearing these funny noises. Alice said that maybe it was monsters and big animals and we got scared. Outside the tent, everything was real dark and strange and spooky looking, and Alice started to cry and wanted her mom and wanted to go home. We tried to stay in the tent, but it was too weird, so we went inside and slept in my room. With the lights on.

## GIVE OR TAKE A FEW

I have done about four million, three thousand dishes in my lifetime. Give or take few. You see, lucky me, when the chores were handed out in my family, I was given the kitchen cleanup. And boy does that kitchen get dirty. Especially the dishes. I have been trying to lobby my parents for paper plates, but they are really into the environment, so that won't fly. Hey, I'm into the environment too, but if you had to do the dishes every single night of your life, I think you'd see my point of view.

There are times when I think I can't face another dirty dish, another crusty fork, or a slimy spoon. But, I just talk to myself and somehow I pull through.

I am saving my allowance money for something special though. No, it isn't jewelry or clothes. I am going to buy a dishwasher!

## JUST YOU WAIT

*(Pirouette during scene.)*

Why do you always look at me like that? You can play with your dolls...or watch cartoons...or play house. I don't care...because I'd rather dance. If it bothers you, then don't watch. But when you get older, you're going to be sorry, because you won't be able to tell anyone that you saw me practice. I'm going to be one of America's greatest ballerinas...but then it'll be too late...and you'll have to pay to see me. Ha, ha, ha!

## MY OWN ROOM

Dad, just hear me out. I want my own room. You promised me a long time ago. Nobody ever uses the guest room downstairs. We never have any guests. I've been sharing a room with Jill for 3 years now. I need privacy. I need more space. I want to be able to talk to my friends without her listening in and do my homework without her bugging me to play with her. I'm responsible. I'm all grown up now. She still sleeps with her Snoopy night-light on. She's messy. She snores. She's making my life miserable! She's...what? I can? I can have the guest room?! Oh, thank you! I love you so much! Wow, I'll have the whole huge room all to myself. That gigantic room downstairs with no one but me. *(Realizing she'll be scared all alone)* Daddy? Can Jill sleep in my room tonight?

## I LOVE YOU AUNT HAZEL

Dear Aunt Hazel,

Thank you for the money you sent me for my birthday. It's so nice of you to give me cash every year. All of my other aunts give me sweaters and dolls that I end up taking back to the store. But not you. You are my favorite Aunt. Every year when the mailman comes and I see your letter, I'm always excited.

Except this year. Why did you only send me a dollar? What have I done to you except be the perfect niece? I know times are hard, but a DOLLAR?! What can you buy with that? Nothing except a candy bar. And you don't want me to eat candy cause then my teeth will rot out and I'll have to get false teeth like you. A little girl with dentures would look bad. So please Aunt Hazel, send me more money!

PS: I also take checks.

## ROLE CALL

*Star just found out she didn't get the role she wanted in the school play—her best friend did. Upset, she tries to scare her friend out of playing the role.*

You got the role? You got cast as Annie? That role was mine. I'm perfect for it. What did I get? *(pause)* Understudy?! For you?! You've got to be kidding me! You can't even sing. I'm just telling you so you won't embarrass yourself in front of everyone. And you know that song, *(sings)* "The sun will come out, tomorrow"? That means the sun's *not* out. It will be rainy and cloudy and gloomy the whole time you work on the show! Plus, that woman is gonna be so mean to you because you're an orphan. And you don't even get a cat. Just a big, old, ugly dog! Gosh, I feel so bad for you. *(pause)* What? Will I do it for you? I don't know, it's a pretty pathetic role. *(pause)* Okay, okay, I'll do it. But only because you're my best friend.

## THE PERFECT AGE

I'm sick of being my age. I want to be older right now so I can do all kinds of cool things. Like my brother Scott. He gets to drive and stay up late and eat whatever he wants. Only he has to kiss girls sometimes. Gross! And my dad's even more grown up and he gets to watch all the TV he wants! Plus he has lots of money. More than me. But he has to go to work every day to get it. And then he has to give most of it to Mom, and some to Scott, and some to me, and take out the trash and kill bugs. *(pause)* Well, there's grandpa. He's so grown up he can barely walk! *(pause)* Maybe I'll stay my age just a little longer.

## THE GROWN-UP

Dad, can I borrow your razor? *(pause)* Because I finally grew a mustache today. Look. *(pause)* Well look closer, it's there. I can see it. And I have to shave it off right away or I'll never get a girlfriend. It'll look stupid and get food stuck in it. Besides, girls don't like mustaches cause it feels gross when you kiss them. *(pause)* Lisa Rosen told me. Dad, you're going to have to face the fact that I'm all grown up. I'm a man now, and I have to start doing grown-up things like you do. Like shaving and wearing cologne and showering on a regular basis. *(pause)* Mow the lawn? Hey, look! My mustache was just a fuzz from the blanket. I guess I don't have to shave after all!

## THE BASEBALL GAME

Here he is, the greatest pitcher in the world! The crowd goes wild as he steps up to the mound. He leans back and lets that ball rip. Strike one! Boy he is pitching great today. Strike two! Wow, that ball was so fast I didn't even see it go across the plate. Strike three! That batter's out-of-there! The crowd goes wild. He's done it again. Pitched his one millionth no-hitter! Wait, look! The fans are coming on to the field. I can't believe this! They are picking him up and carrying him around on their shoulders. Boy do they love their pitcher!

*(Looks at the audience)* What? It could happen like that. Today is my first day to pitch a real game. My coach says I'm ready. My dad says I'm ready. How come I don't feel ready?

## CLASS PHOTO

Last week they took our class picture. I hated it. I had to wear my good clothes, and I couldn't play all day because if I got them dirty or tore them, my mom would really go crazy and yell—or worse, even. Oh yeah, I had to wear this dumb tie too *(pretends to gag.)* I hate ties. My dad wears one every day. No wonder why he's grouchy.

Mrs. Smith had us all line up, and we had to march down to the gym, where the guy who took the picture had his camera set up. He had us line up in rows—littlest kids in front, tallest kids in the back. Janet Clark had to stand in the back because she's bigger than anyone—Mrs. Smith, even.

Every single time the guy tried to take our picture, somebody would move or goof up or something, and we'd have to start all over. Corky Johnson kept making this real funny face like a beaver and kept cracking everyone up. Mrs. Smith made him leave. Boy, was he ever lucky. Only thing is—what's he gonna tell his mom and dad when they see the class picture and he's not in it? Oh boy.

We got our pictures back today. My mom hates it because part of my head is missing because of Janet Clark's arm. Big deal.

## GROUNDED AGAIN

*Character comes stomping into the room slamming the door on the way. Then he goes back to the door, opens it.*

*(Yelling)* GROUND ME, I DON'T CARE!

*(Slams the door again and looks at the audience.)*

I'm grounded again. It's the third time this week. And it's not even my fault.

*(He goes back and opens the door.)* IT'S NOT MY FAULT!

My Mom blames me for everything my sister does. Breanna is always getting me into trouble! A couple of days ago, she took my mom's best lamp and threw it down the stairs. What a mess. And then yesterday, she put a metal fork into the microwave and nearly caught the kitchen on fire. Then today, she put her finger-paints into the washing machine. Now all my dad's shirts are pink. And my Mom says I told Breanna to do all those things. And that is not true! What I DID tell Breanna is it would be cool if she did all those things. Which is NOT the same thing! It's not my fault she wants to be cool.

**CHICKEN SOUP WITH RICE****January**

In January it's so nice  
 While slipping on the sliding ice  
 To sip hot chicken soup with rice  
 Sipping once  
 Sipping twice  
 Sipping chicken soup with rice.

**February**

In February it will be  
 My snowman's anniversary  
 With cake for him and soup for me!  
 Happy once  
 Happy twice  
 Happy chicken soup with rice.

**March**

In March the wind blows down the door  
 And spills my soup upon the floor.  
 It laps it up and roars for more.  
 Blowing once  
 Blowing twice  
 Blowing chicken soup with rice.

**April**

In April i will go away  
 To far off Spain or old Bombay  
 And dream about hot soup all day  
 Oh my oh once  
 Oh my oh twice  
 Oh my oh chicken soup with rice.

**May**

In May I truly think it's best  
 To be a robin lightly dressed  
 Concocting soup inside my nest  
 Mix it once  
 Mix it twice  
 Mix that chicken soup with rice.

**June**

In June I saw a charming group  
 Of roses all begin to droop  
 I pepped them up with chicken soup!  
 Sprinkle once  
 Sprinkle twice  
 Sprinkle chicken soup with rice.

**July**

In July I'll take a peep  
 In to the cool and fishy deep  
 Where chicken soup is selling cheap  
 Selling once  
 Selling twice  
 Selling chicken soup with rice.

**August**

In August it will be so hot  
 I will becoming a cooking pot  
 Cooking soup of course, why not?  
 Cooking once  
 Cooking twice  
 Cooking chicken soup with rice.

**September**

In September for a while  
 I will ride a crocodile  
 Down the chicken soupy Nile  
 Paddle once  
 Paddle twice  
 Paddle chicken soup with rice.

**October**

In October I'll be host  
 to witches, goblins, and a ghost  
 I'll serve them chicken soup on toast  
 Whoopy once  
 Whoopy twice  
 Whoopy chicken soup with rice.

**November**

In November's gusty gale  
 I will flop my flippy tail  
 and spout hot soup  
 I'll be a whale!  
 Spouting once  
 Spouting twice  
 Spouting chicken soup with rice.

**December**

In December I will be  
 A baubled bangled Christmas tree  
 With soup bowls draped all over me  
 Merry once  
 Merry twice  
 Merry chicken soup with rice.

I told you once,  
 I told you twice,  
 All seasons of the year are nice,  
 For eating chicken soup with rice!

**THE ALIENS HAVE LANDED!**

The aliens have landed!  
It's distressing, but they're here.  
They piloted their flying saucer  
through our atmosphere.

They landed like a meteor  
engulfed in smoke and flame.  
Then out they climbed immersed in slime  
and burbled as they came.

Their hands are greasy tentacles.  
Their heads are weird machines.  
Their bodies look like cauliflower  
and smell like dead sardines.

Their blood is liquid helium.  
Their eyes are made of granite.  
Their breath exudes the stench of foods  
from some unearthly planet.

And if you want to see these  
sickly, unattractive creatures,  
you'll find them working in your school;  
they all got jobs as teachers!

**DEAR SANTA, HERE'S MY CHRISTMAS LIST**

Dear Santa, here's my Christmas list.  
I hope you'll bring it all.  
I've only asked for gifts my parents  
can't find at the mall.

I'd like to have a UFO  
with aliens inside  
and maybe a Tyrannosaurus Rex  
that I could ride.

A ninety-nine foot robot  
is a present I could use.  
I'll also need a time machine,  
and rocket-powered shoes.

Please bring a gentle genie  
who will grant my every wish,  
and don't forget a wizard's wand,  
and, yes, a talking fish.

Of course, I'll need a unicorn,  
and won't you please provide  
a dragon, and a castle  
in the English countryside.

Of course, the weight of all these things  
might cause your sleigh to crash.  
If that's the case, dear Santa,  
please feel free to just bring cash.

**DREAMING OF SUMMER**

I'm dreaming of warm sandy beaches.  
I'm dreaming of days by the pool.  
I'm dreaming of fun in the afternoon sun  
and week after week of no school.

I'm thinking of swim suits and sprinklers  
imagining lemonade stands.  
I'm lost in a daydream of squirt guns and ice cream  
and plenty of time on my hands.

I'm picturing baseball and hot dogs,  
Envisioning games at the park,  
and how it stays light until late every night  
and seems like it never gets dark.

I long to ride skateboards and scooters.  
I want to wear t-shirts and shorts.  
I'd go for a hike, or I'd ride on my bike  
or play lots of summertime sports.

My reverie turns to a yearning  
to draw on the driveway with chalk.  
It's really a bummer to daydream of summer  
while shoveling snow from the walk.

**THE TIGER AND THE ZEBRA**

The tiger phoned the zebra  
and invited him to dine.

He said "If you could join me  
that would simply be divine."

The zebra said "I thank you,  
but respectfully decline.

I heard you ate the antelope;  
he was a friend of mine."

On hearing this the tiger cried

"I must admit it's true!

I also ate the buffalo,  
the llama and the gnu.

And yes I ate the warthog,  
the gazelle and kangaroo,  
but I could never eat a creature  
beautiful as you.

You see I have a secret

I'm embarrassed to confide:

I look on you with envy  
and a modicum of pride.

Of all the creatures ever known,"  
the tiger gently sighed,  
"It seems we are the only two  
with such a stripy hide.

Now seeing how we share this  
strong resemblance of the skin,  
I only can conclude that we are  
just as close as kin.

This means you are my brother  
and, though fearsome I have been,  
I could not eat my brother,  
that would surely be a sin."

The zebra thought, and then replied

"I'm certain you are right.

The stripy coats we both possess  
are such a handsome sight!

My brother, will you let me  
reconsider if I might?

My calendar is empty so  
please let us dine tonight."

The tiger met the zebra in

his brand-new fancy car  
and drove him to a restaurant  
which wasn't very far.

And when they both were seated  
at a table near the bar,  
the zebra asked "What's on the grill?"  
The tiger said "You are."

"But please, you cannot dine on me!"

the outraged zebra cried.

"To cook me up and eat me  
is a thing I can't abide.

You asked me for your trust  
and I unwarily complied.

You said you could not eat me  
now you plan to have me fried?

And what about the envy  
and the modicum of pride?  
And what of us as brothers  
since we share a stripy hide?"

"I'm sorry," said the tiger  
and he smiled as he replied,  
"but I love the taste of zebra  
so, in other words, I lied."

**MY ROBOT'S MISBEHAVING**

My robot's misbehaving.

It won't do as I say.

It will not dust the furniture

or put my toys away.

My robot never helps me

with homework or my chores.

It doesn't do my laundry

and neglects to clean my floors.

It claims it can't cook dinner.

It never makes my bed.

No matter what I ask of it,

it simply shakes its head.

My robot must be broken.

I'll need to get another.

Until that day, I have to say,

I'm glad I have my mother.

**I CLONED MYSELF ON FRIDAY NIGHT**

I cloned myself on Friday night.

By Saturday at three

my clone had made another clone.

They both looked just like me.

They walked like me and talked like me.

They acted like me too.

They wore my clothes and used my stuff

and did the things I do.

But worst of all they made more clones

who then made even more,

and soon my house was overrun

and I was getting sore.

They wouldn't do my homework,

clean my room, or make my bed.

They wouldn't wash the dishes,

or do anything I said.

Instead they sat and watched TV

and played computer games.

They ate up all my favorite snacks

and called each other names.

And now they like to stay up late

and keep me wide awake.

My life is wrecked, but still I hope

you'll learn from my mistake.

Don't ever try to clone yourself.

But, if you ever do,

you'd better hope your clones are not

exactly just like you.



**TODAY I DECIDED TO MAKE UP A WORD**

Today I decided to make up a word,  
 like flonk, or scrandana, or hankly, or smurred.  
 My word will be useful and sound really cool;  
 a word like chindango, or fraskle, or spewl.

My friends and my teachers will all be impressed  
 to learn that I've made up a word like extrest,  
 or crondic, or crambly, or squanton, or squank.  
 Whenever they use it, it's me that they'll thank.

They'll call me a genius and give me a prize,  
 repeating my word, be it shimble, or glize,  
 or frustice, or frongry, or frastamazoo,  
 or pandaverandamalandamaloo.

You'll see it on TV shows one of these days.  
 They'll use it in movies. They'll put it in plays.  
 They'll shout it from rooftops! The headlines will read,  
 "This Kid Has Invented the Word that We Need!"

I'll make up my word, and I'll share it with you,  
 and you can tell people from here to Peru;  
 the old ones, the young ones, and those in between...  
 as soon as I figure out what it should mean.

**THE MARVELOUS HOMEWORK AND HOUSEWORK MACHINE**

Attention all students! Attention all kids!  
 Hold onto your horses! Hold onto your lids!  
 We have just exactly the thing that you need  
 whenever you've way too much homework to read.

The Marvelous Homework & Housework Machine  
 will always makes sure that your bedroom is clean.  
 It loves to write book reports ten pages long,  
 then put all your toys away where they belong.

This wonderful gadget will do all your math,  
 then mop up your messes and go take your bath.  
 The Marvelous Homework & Housework Machine  
 is truly like no other gizmo you've seen.

It hangs up your clothes on their hangers and hooks,  
 then reads all your boring geography books.  
 It brings you a pillow to give you a rest,  
 then brushes your teeth and prepares for your test.

This thing is amazing. I'm sure you'll agree.  
 It feeds you dessert while you're watching TV.  
 There's only one thing this device will not do.  
 It won't eat your Brussels sprouts; they're, like, P.U.

**THE FARMER AND THE QUEEN**

"She's coming," the farmer said to the owl.

"Oh, what shall I, what shall I do?

Shall I bow when she comes?

Shall I twiddle my thumbs?"

The owl asked, "Who?"

"The Queen, the Queen, the royal Queen

She'll pass the farm today.

Shall I salute?" he asked the horse.

The horse said, "Nay."

"Shall I give her a gift?" he asked the wren.

"A lovely memento for her to keep?

An egg or a peach or an ear of corn?"

The wren said, "Cheap."

"But should I curtsy or should I cheer?

Oh, here's her carriage now.

What should I do?" he asked the dog.

The dog said, "Bow."

And so he did, and so she passed,

Oh, tra lala lala,

"She smiled she did!" he told the sheep.

The sheep said, "Bah."

**MESSY**

Whosever room this is should be ashamed!

His underwear is hanging on the lamp.

His raincoat is there in the overstuffed chair,

And the chair is becoming quite mucky and damp.

His workbook is wedged in the window,

His sweater's been thrown on the floor.

His scarf and one ski are beneath the TV,

And his pants have been carelessly hung on the door.

His books are all jammed in the closet,

His vest has been left in the hall.

A lizard named Ed is asleep in his bed,

And his smelly old sock has been stuck to the wall.

Whosever room this is should be ashamed!

Donald or Robert or Willie or—

Huh? You say it's mine? Oh dear,

I knew it looked familiar!

**FOR SALE**

One sister for sale!

One sister for sale!

One crying and spying young sister for sale!

I'm really not kidding,

So who'll start the bidding?

Do I hear a dollar?

A nickel?

A penny?

Oh, isn't there, isn't there, isn't there any

One kid who will buy this old sister for sale,

This crying and spying young sister for sale?

**STRANGE RESTAURANT**

I said, "I'll take the T-bone steak."  
 A soft voice moored, "Oh wow."  
 And I looked up and realized  
 The waitress was a cow.  
 I cried, "Mistake—forget the the steak.  
 I'll take the chicken then."  
 I heard a cluck—'twas just my luck  
 The busboy was a hen.  
 I said, "Okay no, fowl today.  
 I'll have the seafood dish."  
 Then I saw through the kitchen door  
 The cook—he was a fish.  
 I screamed, "Is there anyone workin' here  
 Who's an onion or a beet?  
 No? Your're sure? Okay then friends,  
 A salad's what I'll eat."  
 They looked at me. "Oh, no," they said,  
 "The owner is a cabbage head."

**MY RULES**

If you want to marry me, here's what you'll have to do:  
 You must learn how to make a perfect chicken-dumpling stew.  
 And you must sew my holey socks,  
 And soothe my troubled mind,  
 And develop the knack for scratching my back,  
 And keep my shoes spotlessly shined.  
 And while I rest you must rake up the leaves,  
 And when it is hailing and snowing  
 You must shovel the walk...and be still when I talk,  
 And—HEY—where are you going?

**SNOWMAN**

'Twas the first day of the springtime,  
 And the snowman stood alone  
 As the winter snows were melting,  
 And the pine trees seemed to groan,  
 "Ah, you poor sad smiling snowman,  
 You'll be melting by and by."  
 Said the snowman, "What a pity,"  
 For I'd like to see July.  
 Yes, I'd like to see July, and please don't ask me why."

Chirped a robin, just arriving,  
 "Seasons come and seasons go,  
 And the greatest ice must crumble  
 When it's flowers' time to grow.  
 And as one thing is beginning  
 So another thing must die,  
 And there's never been a snowman  
 Who has ever seen July.  
 No, they never see July, no matter how they try.  
 No, they never ever, never ever, never see July."

But the snowman sniffed his carrot nose  
 And said, "At least I try,"  
 And he bravely smiled his frosty smile  
 And blinked his coal black eye.  
 And there he stood and faced the sun  
 A blazin' from the sky—  
 And I really cannot tell you  
 If he ever saw July.  
 Did he ever see July? You can guess as well as I  
 If he ever, if he never, if he ever saw July.

**PICTURE PUZZLE PIECE**

One picture puzzle piece  
 Lyin' on the sidewalk,  
 One picture puzzle piece  
 Soakin' in the rain.

It might be a button of blue  
 On the coat of the woman  
 Who lived in a shoe.

It might be a magical bean,  
 Or a fold in the red  
 Velvet robe of a queen.

It might be the one little bite  
 Of the apple her stepmother  
 Gave to Snow White.

It might be the veil of a bride  
 Or a bottle with some evil genie inside.

It might be a small tuft of hair  
 On the big bouncy belly  
 Of Bobo the Bear.

It might be a bit of the cloak  
 Of the Witch of the West  
 As she melted to smoke.

It might be a shadowy trace  
 Of a tear that runs down an angel's face.

Nothing has more possibilities  
 Than one old wet picture puzzle piece.

**SICK**

"I cannot go to school today,"  
 Said little Peggy Ann McKay,  
 "I have the measles and the mumps,  
 A gash, a rash, and purple bumps.  
 My mouth is wet, my throat is dry,  
 I'm going blind in my right eye.  
 My tonsils are as big as rocks,  
 I've counted sixteen chicken pox  
 And there's one more--that's seventeen,  
 And don't you think my face looks green?  
 My leg is cut, my eyes are blue  
 It might be instamatic flu.  
 I cough and sneeze and gasp and choke,  
 I'm sure that my left leg is broke  
 My hip hurts when I move my chin,  
 My belly button's caving in,  
 My back is wrenched, my ankle's sprained,  
 My 'pendix pains each time it rains.  
 My nose is cold, my toes are numb,  
 I have a sliver in my thumb.  
 My neck is stiff, my voice is weak,  
 I hardly whisper when I speak.  
 My tongue is filling up my mouth,  
 I think my hair is falling out.  
 My elbow's bent, my spine ain't straight,  
 My temperature is one-o-eight.  
 My brain is shrunk, I cannot hear,  
 There is a hole inside my ear.  
 I have a hangnail, and my heart is--what?  
 What's that? What's that you say?  
 You say today is--Saturday?  
 G'bye, I'm going out to play!"

## FAST FORWARD

Wouldn't it be great if life were like DVD and you controlled the remote? Imagine yourself sitting in math class taking a test. All of these problems don't look familiar! OH MY GOSH! You studied the wrong thing. Just get out the remote, and hit Rewind. Go all the way back to last night and VOILA, you can find the right chapter and when you're done, just fast forward yourself right back into class.

If would also come in handy for those times you'd just like to pass super quickly. Like that hour you spend in the dentist's chair every so often. Or, the lecture dad's always giving you for forgetting to take out the garbage.

And, there would always be those times that you just want to go back to and relive every now and then. I wouldn't mind rewinding all the way back to my fifth birthday when Aunt Sally gave me a puppy. Or the trip that we took when we went to see my sister graduate from college. Wouldn't that be fun?

I guess the only bad part would be if you lost your remote. I know a few people who think I talk too much. Some of my teachers for instance. If they got control of my remote, well, I think we all know what button they'd push. PAUSE! (*freezes*)

## COAT HANGER SCUPTURE

A "C"... a "C"... I got a "C" on my coat hanger sculpture. How could anyone get a "C" in coat hanger sculpture? May I ask a question? Was I being judged on the piece of sculpture itself? If so, is it not true that time alone can judge a work of art? Or was I being judged on my talent? If so, is it right that I be judged on a part of life over which I have no control? If I was judged on my effort then I was judged unfairly for I tried as hard as I could. Was I being judged on what I have learned about this project? If so, were then not you, my teacher, also being judged on your ability to transmit your knowledge to me? Are you willing to share my "C"?

(*high pitched*) Oh Well, perhaps I was being judged on the quality of the coat hanger itself, out of which my creation was made. Now is that not also unfair? Am I to be judged by the quality of the coat hangers that are used by our dry cleaning establishment to return our garments. Is this not the responsibility of my parents? Should they not share my "C"?

(*Teacher's Voice: wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa wa*)

Thank you Miss Othmar. The squeaky wheel gets the grease.

## THE SCIENCE PROJECT

*Leanna runs into her parents bedroom and turns on the light.*

Dad! Dad wake up! I need your help! (*Leanna's mom starts to wake up.*) Go back to sleep, Mom, I just need Dad. (*Dad is still not up.*) Dad please wake up and come downstairs and help me! My science project is due tomorrow and I haven't even started! I can't believe I forgot.

I was asleep and I was having this dream about flying to Los Angeles to swim in the ocean. It was a great plane and the stewardess was talking about how cold the ocean was in November. And then I remembered. Ocean?! I've got a science project due on the 15th. And today is the 14th. No, it's 3am! So today is the 15th. And my big science project, the one that is half of my science grade, is due in five hours!

(*Dad is still lying there*) Dad get up! You were always good in science. I know you can think of something! I told the teacher I was going to raise two goldfish. One goldfish I was going to feed fish food from the store. And the other one I was going to feed live worms. I told her I would do this for a couple of months. And the on November 15th, when the project was due, I would see which fish was bigger. Thus proving that...well I don't know what it will prove. It just better prove something! But Dad I forgot to get the goldfish from the store. So I need you to get up, get dressed, get your fishing gear and take me to the lake so we can catch two fish. I'll just tell my teacher they were once goldfish but the gold fell off. I can't believe I forgot my project was due November 15th. I felt I had more time. Get up!

(*Dad mumbles something.*)

What? It's October! Where did I get the idea this was November? (*laughing*) Oh yeah. The stewardess in my dream said it was November. Well, I better go back to sleep and tell her she has the wrong month. Sorry Dad. I hope I didn't wake you. (*Dad is still not moving.*) Dad? Oh well. Sweet dreams.

## CHORES

Look, Sue, I've only got two hands. Besides, how come I gotta do all the work around here while you sit around playing computer games?

(*pause*) No you didn't. I cleaned up last time, remember? (*pause*) The bathrooms? You call that cleaning? All you did was pick up two towels and then go sit in front of the TV and eat a tube of Pringles. (*pause*) Tired? How can you be tired from picking up two towels? You're supposed to help out around here too, you know. (*pause*) No way! Mom never said that. She said we had to share. If you don't, I'm gonna let things go, and then when Mom comes home, I'm gonna tell her what a goof-off you are. (*pause*) I will, too. I mean it.

(*pause*) Good. That's more like it. (*pause*) What are you doing? That's no way to rinse a plate. (*pause*) You're what? You're only rinsing your half!

**WORD OF THE DAY**

The word of the day is *negotiable*. I am going to try to use that word, *negotiable*, as many times as possible so that it will become an intrinsic part of my vocabulary. *Intrinsic*, that was word of the day yesterday.

The word of the day, by the way, is not negotiable. It is handed down from the powers that be, the Seventh grade English department, Ms. Hannibal, Mr. Jordan, and Mrs. Wax. If it were negotiable, I would argue for another word of the day, like *butterscotch*. *Butterscotch* is a perfectly wonderful word and I would be forced to use it all day long if it were word of the day.

Then when I ask my dad to take me for an ice cream sundae, it would be more negotiable because I could argue that I needed an opportunity to use the word *butterscotch*. And where else would a butterscotch sundae be more negotiable than Yummy Tummy's ice cream parlor?

**BE-BOP SHA-BANG**

My parents listen to jazz all the time. I don't know what they see in it. It all sounds like someone took a bunch of music and threw it in the blender, or something.

Last week they made me go with them to this jazz concert in the park where people are sitting around eating and talking about jazz. The main thing I remember is that they said "man" a lot. And "like." For instance: "Like, man this is really good food."

After about an hour, the band comes out. They're all wearing suits. Nobody on MTV wears *suits*. Then they all sit down behind these little stands and start making weird noises. My dad said that they were warming up. Then this main guy comes out and makes a speech. He said "man" and "like" a lot, too. Then he starts up the band. It sounded like our neighbor's weed whacker when it hits the drainpipe. After, when my parents asked me what I thought, I said, "Like, man, I thought it was awful."

**SAY CHEESE**

Aw, c'mon, Mom. We had our picture taken last year. *(pause)* But I don't think anybody really cares if there's a picture of the family in our Christmas card or not. *(pause)* How do I know? Because I was over at the Lawrence's one day when they got this picture from somebody. They trashed it right away. *(pause)* But Grandma must have a zillion pictures of us already. Besides, we see her every month. How much can we change?

*(pause)* Aw, nuts! You mean we gotta go and get all dressed up and stand around while this dorky guy says, "Cheese"? Besides, his stuff isn't any good. In the last one, I looked mental and Dad's head looked like it was on crooked. I'll bet we got laughed at good for that one. Before people dumped it, that is. Nobody keeps 'em, Mom. If they do, how come when we go to the Berkeys, we never see the ones we send them? I'll tell you why: 'Cause the Berkeys feed 'em to their dog.

**EXCUSES**

Oh man, I totally forgot that my book report is due today. Stupid book report! What I am gonna do? I can't tell the teacher that I didn't read the book and don't have a speech prepared. I've got to think of something. Maybe I can fake being sick. Yeah, good idea!!! Hmm...how about chicken pox? No, that won't work. I don't have any red spots on me. What about a stomach ache? Nah, too common, and everyone will know something's up. Wait! I know! What about laryngitis? It's perfect! If I have laryngitis I can't talk, and if I can't talk then I can't possibly give a speech about my book. Phew...what a relief. Sometimes, I really think I'm too smart for my own good. I better check my homework sheet so I know what's due tomorrow and I don't forget my homework again. Let's see...Wednesday I have a math test and *(cut yourself off)*...wait a minute! Today is Wednesday...aw geez, today is our math test, not our book report. And you don't need to speak to take a math test. Guess laryngitis can't get me out of this one.

## LATE PASS

Sorry I'm late Mrs. Applebee, but I have a really good reason. See, my alarm clock broke and didn't wake me up. It was bound to happen sooner or later. Anyway, by the time I got up, my mom had left for work thinking I was already on the bus. She's blind as a bat without her glasses in the morning. But when I got up and looked at my mom's clock—Ahhh! I already missed the bus! I had to rush and take a shower because my dog drooled all over me in my sleep. But the shower wasn't working! So I had to go outside in my pajamas and hose myself down. Then I couldn't find any clean clothes, so I had to wear my big brother's overalls. I grabbed my piggy bank—phew—lunch money! As I was running to school, I tripped five times on my pants. Then some bullies came running after me—I pulled up my pant legs and ran like the wind. And here I am. *(pause)* I hope I didn't miss the test.

## EILEEN

Tap, Tap, back and left and right, twist and...what the heck? *(to the person next to you)* Do you have any idea how to do this?...Ugg when is this gonna be over?

Thank goodness...finished! *(follow the person to the fourth wall)* I can't believe my mom made me take this class. It's ridiculous don't you think? I mean how does this teacher expect us to follow what she's doing when she goes so fast and moves her body so awkwardly? There has to be something seriously wrong with her. I don't think a person's legs are supposed to do that...but that's just me. Do you agree? *(pause for answer)* No...okay well I could tell that you got the hang of this whole thing a little more than me, but still, come on? Your mom must be forcing you to do this too right? *(pause)* Your mom isn't forcing you? Your mom's the teacher... huh...boy did I just put my big uncoordinated foot in my mouth. But...a...you know I was kidding about the teacher, I mean your mom having a serious problem right?! Clearly I meant I had serious problems because I can't do the steps and your mom explains them so well and...huh? What the...where did she go? Did I say something wrong?

It's time to talk to my mom about a new hobby. I don't think this one is working out.

## GHOST DOG

For several years, a ghost dog haunted my house. My older brothers had seen him, and they told me what he looked like. He was mostly white with a few brown spots, and he looked a lot like a wolf. He also had big, sharp fangs that stuck out on the sides of his mouth, which dripped saliva. Sometimes I thought I saw him, but I was never positive. I heard him though. He howled in the night—a low, mournful howl that put goose bumps on my arms.

Usually Ghost Dog howled when I was almost asleep. I'd have my eyes closed, and I'd be hugging my tattered blue blanket that I always slept with, and I'd just be drifting off when I would hear it: "Oooowwwuuuu..." My eyes always flew open, and my heart raced. My whole body stiffened, and I would lie there waiting to see if Ghost Dog howled again. He always did, and on the second howl I would leap out of bed and rush downstairs where my brothers were either doing homework or watching TV.

"Did you hear that?" I would ask. "Did you hear the Ghost Dog?"

They nodded solemnly and said, "Yep. That old Ghost Dog is unhappy tonight. He must be hungry." They never actually said the ghost dog ate children, but the way they emphasized the word "hungry," I was sure that he did.

One morning, I was sleepy and cranky after being terrorized by Ghost Dog two nights in a row. When my mother had a hard time getting me up for school, she said, "What's wrong with you? Didn't your brothers put you to bed on time?"

I told her they had put me to bed but I kept waking up because Ghost Dog had howled, and I was scared of him.

Mom sighed and rolled her eyes. "Have you noticed," she asked, "that this ghost dog only howls on nights when your father and I are not at home?" That's when I realized that I had been duped by my big brothers. All those nights when I trembled in my bed, they were downstairs, howling and laughing.

Mom said she would take care of the problem. Late that night, my dad came into my room. He whispered, "Shhhh. We're playing a trick on Tim and Mike." Then I heard the most awful howl. "Oooowwwuuuuuu. Oooowwwuuuu. This is Ghost Dog! Oooowwwuuuu."

I heard the door to Tim and Mike's room open and knew they were looking out. The howling continued: "Oooowwwuuuu. Those who have impersonated me are hereby sentenced to kitchen duty for the next month. Oooowwwuuuu."

The howling stopped. My brothers went back to bed. I quickly fell asleep.

And Ghost Dog never came to my house again.

## NO MORE BASEBALL, PLEASE!

Dad? I have something to tell you...No, I don't want to go outside and play catch. I want to stay inside and talk. Dad, I've been thinking maybe I shouldn't...Look, Dad can you put the baseball down? I'm trying to talk. Ok. Where was I? Look I've decided not to play little league this year. Dad? Would you stop laughing. I'm not kidding. No, really I'm not. Dad stop it! I'm quitting baseball. Oh Dad, don't cry. Face it, I'm a terrible baseball player. Last year I struck out thirteen times. And you know I can't catch or pitch. It's true and you know it. The only reason I played for the last couple of years is because I wanted you to be proud of me. But I'm no good in baseball. So I was thinking...can you sign me up for soccer?

## IS IT GOOD FOR ME OR NOT?

I wish the scientists would make up their minds about what's good for us to eat and what isn't. Just when I think I know, they change their minds.

Take coffee for instance. "Coffee will stunt your growth," my dad warned. "Coffee's bad for your health," my mom said, and they refused to let me have even one sip. They drank it every morning, but I couldn't have any. Then, out of the blue came a report from Harvard researchers that, guess what? Coffee is actually good for us! It lowers the risk of Parkinson's disease and diabetes. It's a mood booster and may even prevent cavities!

I'm hoping the doctors will soon decide that cheese cures cancer. Cheese currently gets a bad rap. When I was little, Mom thought that cheese was good for me, and I loved the taste. Then she learned that cheese is high in saturated fat, which is bad for your heart, so cheese got banished from the fridge. Life definitely went downhill.

Nobody ever picks on broccoli. The researchers, who seem determined to take the joy out of eating, insist that broccoli is safe and nutritious and will help prevent heart attacks and probably ingrown toenails, too.

Don't brownies prevent any disease? How about banana splits? They're good for my mental health, that's for sure, but nobody seems to care about that.

I'm waiting for the happy announcement that new research proves that chocolate-covered cherries are really a health food, and that we all need five or more servings of lemon cream pie everyday.

I hope it happens soon. I'm getting awfully tired of broccoli.

## THE WORLD'S HIGHEST COOKIE STACK

I've always thought it would be cool to have my name in the Guinness Book of World Records. I discovered that competition is fierce. Every single day, there are thirty attempts at a new world record just in the United States!

My mother suggested I might qualify for Person With The Messiest Room. My dad thought I could make the record book as The Kid Who Procrastinates The Longest When It's Time To Mow The Lawn. My sister wanted me to try for a record as The Person Who Went The Longest Without Talking, but I saw right through her plan.

I ignored all of my family's suggestions. Instead, I decided to try for The World's Tallest Stack of Oreos. All I had to do was get enough people to buy a bag of Oreos cookies and let me stack them up. Soliciting people to provide cookies was easier than I expected it to be. Most people thought it would be fun to be included, and many asked if they could come to watch.

I set a date for my effort. Then I got permission to build my cookie stack in the school gym. My plan was to make a pyramid shape, with a wide base of cookies that gradually tapered off as it got higher.

The Great Cookie Stack began at 10 o'clock. By ten thirty, the stack was higher than I could reach. so I put up the ladder that I had brought. I was on the sixth rung of the ladder, and the stack of Oreos was twenty feet high, when disaster struck.

I stepped up to the very top of the ladder, and that's when the power went out. There are no windows in the gym, it was complete total darkness. A couple of girls screamed. I tried to step down a rung, and my foot slipped. I grabbed for the top of the ladder, dropping the bag of Oreos. I lunged for it, lost my footing, and fell off the ladder, straight into the stacks of cookies. It crashed to the floor with me in the middle of it.

I didn't make it into the world records book. I did get my picture in the paper, thought, sitting in a pile of Oreos with the headline: "That's the way the cookie tumbles."



**CRAZY GLUE**

*Linda is on the phone pacing with her hand stuck to her cheek.*

Alison, oh God, it's me, it's Linda, I, I, I, I glued my...I glued my hand to my cheek! I'm walking around the house trying every kind of product and I can't get it off. Nothing will work! I crazy glued myself to myself!

I was fixing the chair that my Aunt Fran sat in, you know, the one she broke with her big butt. The wooden one! My Grandmother gave us that chair, so I decided to fix it. The wood glue didn't seem to be working, so I crazy glued it.

I was lying down underneath the chair, gluing the entire bottom half of the seat because I noticed cracks, these small cracks and I figured, why not just cover the whole bottom with glue so it will be stronger and last longer but, but, but then the chair came apart and the seat landed on my cheek and I put my hand in front of my face to protect myself and my hand got stuck to my cheek...it all happened so fast!

WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!

I'm walking around the house like a complete idiot and I have tried EVERYTHING. I've tried soap, detergent, nail polish remover, windex, fabreze, toilet bowl cleaner, pine-sol and pledge! Who knows what else and my face looks swollen. Everytime I try to pull my hand off my cheek it hurts way too much, like the skin wants to come off!!! MY EYE! My eye is burning and it keeps tearing and I may go blind now because I'm beginning to see blurry and so I am walking around my house with one eye and one arm!

WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!

Alison? Hello? Alison, are you there? Alison? ALISON?!

*(she shrieks)*

You're laughing? Are you laughing at me? YOU'RE LAUGHING?! My hand is stuck to my cheek and I'm going blind and you're laughing?!

*(she starts to laugh also)*

HAHAHAHA. I know, I know this is actually kind of funny but I want to laugh later, not now. Right now I need to get my hand off my cheek. I'm so afraid I'm going to have a permanent hand imprint on my face like I've been slapped for life!!! Please, I can't go out in public like this and I am too embarrassed to call up a hardware store and ask someone for help.

Can you call for me or come over? PLEASE. I am losing blood circulation in my arm.

Will you come? YEAH? Oh thank Heavens, Alison, please hurry, I'm feeling a bit faint.

**OLEANNA**

*Carol is speaking with her college professor. The setting is the professor's office. The two started the discussion about Carol's grades, but the discussion rapidly turned to a heated debate.*

Why do you hate me? Because you think me wrong? No. Because I have, you think, power over you. Listen to me. Listen to me, Professor. *(pause)* It is the power that you hate. So deeply that, that any atmosphere of free discussion is impossible. It is not unlikely. It's impossible. Isn't it? Now. The thing which you find so cruel is the selfsame process of selection I, and my group, go through every day of our lives. In admittance to school. In our tests, in our class rankings Is it unfair? I can't tell you. But, if it is fair. Or even if it is unfortunate but necessary for us, then, by God, so must it be for you. *(pause)*

You write of your responsibility to the young. Treat us with respect, and that will show you your responsibility. You write that education is just hazing. *(pause)* But we worked to get to this school. *(pause)* And some of us overcame prejudices. Economic, sexual, you cannot begin to imagine. And endured humiliations I pray that you and those you love never will encounter. *(pause)* To gain admittance here. To pursue that same dream of security you pursue. We, who, who are, at any moment, in danger of being deprived of it. By the administration. By the teachers. By you. By, say, one low grade, that keeps us out of graduate school; by one, say, one capricious or inventive answer on our parts, which, perhaps, you don't find amusing. Now you know, do you see? What it is to be subject to that power. Who do you think I am? To come here and be taken in by a smile. You little yapping fool. You think I want revenge. I don't want revenge. I WANT UNDERSTANDING.

## IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

I'm just a kid, and I don't know what I'm doing sometimes. But I think you should know better when you're all grown up. I think you should know how to act, and how to treat people. And I think if you once loved someone enough to marry them, you should at least be nice to them, even if you don't love 'em any more. And I think if you have a child, you should treat that child like a human being and not like a pet. Not like you treat your dog or somethin'. You know, when you have a dog sometimes you forget he's there, and then when you get lonely suddenly you remember him, and you remember how cute he is and stuff, and you kiss him a lot, but then the next day when you're busy again you don't notice him. That's how I've been treated for the past four years, and you don't treat your kid like your dog. It's not right.

## DANIELLE

*(reading)* "Stanislavsky method acting step five: the feeling of truth and belief. It doesn't matter WHAT you say but how you say it. Do the following exercise: using the phrase 'My dog is dead.' Interpret it with the adjectives below."

Okay, let's see...*(actually interprets them as instructed)*

1. Factual: my dog is dead.
2. Anger: my dog is dead. My dog is dead.
3. Flirtatious: flirtatious?! Okay...my dog is...dead. My dog...is dead.
4. Disbelief: my dog is dead. My dog is dead? My-dog-is-dead.
5. Despair: My dog is dead! My dog is dead! My dog is dead! OH! My dog is dead.
6. Joyful: Whatever...My dog is dead, my dog is dead...my dog is dead *(chuckles)*

The feeling of truth and belief...method acting...okay. What's step six?

## YEE AND LAN: A FAIRY TALE

Once upon a time, in a solar system that is so so far away from here that you wouldn't believe me if I told you, there were two planets. Their names were Yee and Lan, and they loved each other very much. Every time they saw each other they would whisper planet secrets, or share wisps of atmosphere, or tell silly jokes that caused them to shake with continent-sized giggles.

But they were a little sad, because it was so long between times that they got to be near each other, what with orbital mechanics being what they are and all. Most of the time they had to gaze from afar, and make up little songs about the stars and the cold and the one that they loved.

Centuries went by, and one time as they passed, reaching out through the cold and emptiness to be with one another, Yee slipped Lan a moon, because Yee had three and Lan had none. Lan looked so perfect with the new moon that all the other planets were a little jealous, and Yee didn't mind giving up that moon at all.

So the planets kept on dancing to the math-music of the universe, and Lan's moon was admired by all, until one day an evil-minded ice-hearted comet viciously slammed into it, shattering it into a thousand pieces. At that time, Yee was all the way on the other side of the sun and couldn't hear the wails and shouts that rocked Lan through and through. All the nearby planets, who were jealous anyway, made fun of Lan. Lan was so ashamed of what had happened to the moon, so generously given by Yee, that Lan began to dread their next meeting.

But the old equations had their say, and after so long they were together again. Lan was almost afraid to look at Yee, but Yee reached out a wisp of atmosphere in comfort. Yee hesitated a minute, because all planets know how beautiful moons are, but then went ahead and smashed the two remaining moons together so that Lan would have no reason to be feel bad.

So around and around they went, so very much in love that they thought they would burst, even though they looked a little bare, and felt a little cold without their lovely moons. But then, something beautiful happened their shimmering bits of moon dust started to flatten out, and make two large circles, one for each of them. And before too long, the circles became rings, great big wonderful rings, sparkling in the pure sunlight, the wonder of that solar system, and, some said, even the galaxy. The other planets were too awed by Yee and Lan's new beauty to feel even the slightest drop of jealousy.

And that is why, even on this planet, when two people have strong feelings for each other, so much love that they think they'll burst, sometimes they'll give each other rings, in memory of the planetary love of Yee and Lan.

## WRONG AND READY

Oh, my gosh. I think I've just come up with the best theory. Teenage life sucks. That's it. I mean, once you hit 13, your life just goes (*rocket motion*). All the adults are like "I loved being a teenager!" Ha, sure. Well, I'm sorry but this isn't "Sunshine 70's" anymore. They're just trying to make us feel better. And the little kids are like "I can't wait to be a teenager! It would be so fun much to be older!" Haha, no you don't. No, you really don't.

Okay, first of all, you're in Middle School when it all starts to happen. For some weird reason, it seems like when you're a teenager, all your friends start to turn on you. I mean, at first they're like "Hey, best friend!" and you know, you do the regular things like hang out and stuff. And then once you leave, they go around gossiping "Oh, my gosh, did you know that Gretchen made out with Justin at movies...oh yeah, it was definitely tongue," (*what expression*) I don't even know a Justin! Then, there's puberty. Actually, I'm not even gonna get into that.

And then there's high school, the black-hole of all teenage life. Once you get there, everything starts to fall apart. First, everyone expects you to be this pencil thin stick or you're considered "fat", but when you are that thin, they just go spreading around that your anorexic! And all through high school, it's nothing but college this or college that, and the college councilors are not much help about it. They're like "You fail! You lose! You fail at life! You better memorize the phrase 'You want fries with that?'" Grrr! (*Sigh*) Where was I? Oh yeah, life sucking. You know what, I'm tired of complaining. So, I just say two things to say: Adults, you're wrong, and kids, get ready.

## THE STEPSISTER SPEAKS OUT

*Cinderella's stepsister gives an different viewpoint on that famous story.*

It isn't easy being the ugly stepsister. Everybody always feels so sorry for poor little Cinderella, but what about me? I deserve a little sympathy, too. Does MY fairy godmother ever turn up with a magic wand? Does the prince ever dance with me at the ball? Not on your life. The best I can ever hope for with my pumpkins is a decent piece of pie. And as for the rats, well, rats are rats, with their sneaky eyes and skinny tails, nibbling and gnawing at the garbage. I never saw one yet who turned into a coachman.

If you ask me, that Cinderella is weird. Certainly, she isn't normal. Besides the fact that she has naturally curly hair and wears size 4 1/2 shoes, she is so good-natured that it's downright sickening. If you had to dust and sweep and clean all day long, would you go around singing to the birds? Of course you wouldn't. No sensible person would.

A lot of people think I'm jealous of her. Maybe I am. And with good reason. I subsisted on seven hundred calories a day for three whole weeks before the ball. I did my leg-lift exercises faithfully. I got a perm and a facial and a manicure. I even bought a new gown. Blue velvet. Designer label. I mean, I was READY. PRINCEY, I thought to myself, HERE I COME!

And what happens? Little Cindy, who has never seen the inside of a health club in her life and who doesn't know the caloric difference between a carrot stick and a chocolate éclair, whips together a dress out of some old curtains from K-Mart, waltzes off to the ball and snags the prince.

It isn't fair! It really isn't fair!

**JASMINE**

Jasmine's what I smell when I feel sad. It doesn't matter where—at the mall, in the locker room, or on the way home from school. What's around me might be gas fumes, sweat, and cigarettes, but suddenly through it all I'll smell this sweet delicate scent, the slight, but sure hint of a white flower. A flower I've hardly ever seen, or smelled for that matter. And never at those moments. Never when I'm down. But right along with the sting of whatever caused the pain—a teacher snapping at me, a friend not saying 'hi', my boyfriend looking at another girl—where ever it comes from, being put down, being ignored, or just being, sometimes, just thinking everything and everyone is just awful, and I want to be left alone— it can cut at me, it can suffocate me, it can make me feel like there's no light at all—and yet, while it's rushing through me, this hurt, this failure, this hopelessness that just takes me over at times—I'll smell it, I'll smell the jasmine, secret and shy, and in the middle of all these moments when I feel like I'm nothing at all, when I feel like I'm slipping and about to go under. There's a sweetness, a kindness, a soft white flower that whispers my name, that whispers to me and won't let me go.

**DOWN THE TUBES**

*Cynthia is confiding in her older sister, before she faces the grim job of telling her parents the bad news, that she won't be following the family footsteps by graduating Valedictorian.*

Well it's done, I've passed the point of no return...I can't believe this has happened! All my life, I've been great in school, I've always been a leader, almost always the first in my class...until now. I don't know what got into me. I'm so angry at myself; I knew I should have studied harder. Ever since I was a little girl, I've dreamt of delivering my Valedictorian speech at Graduation...just like Mom, just like you, just like most of my cousins...now, my shot at being Valedictorian is pretty much over. I feel awful; I feel like I've disappointed everyone, including myself...Why didn't I try harder, I should have paid more attention to my grades. My Dad would tell me, "I know your smart sweetheart, I know you feel like you've got it nailed, but it wouldn't hurt to do just a little extra credit to pad your average." But nooooo! I was too smart for that...You know most kids would have celebrated the grades I got, but not me, it's like I broke some sacred chain!...Well it's finally over, and there's nothing I can do about it, but cry a little tear and get on with life. But you know what's ironic?...As bad as I feel right now, it's like a giant load has been lifted off my shoulders...it's like I'm...FREE!

**CHELSEA**

*This character is very mad at the most popular girl at school for using her. They are sitting at a lunch table, and Chelsea is telling her everything.*

You know, I don't know why I even liked you. You're superficial, rude, and not even nice or anything. Look what you just did to Jess, she'll cry straight for a week. Why? Because she thinks your cool, and I did too. But not anymore. I've had it, I've put up with you long enough, and so has this school. And the worst part is, I thought you were my friend. I thought we would go to the mall, and laugh and talk, and it hurt me when I found out why I was here. It hurts right here. I was here just to do your dirty work for you?

What was your problem, not brave enough to do it yourself? You know, don't answer that, I know what you're going to say, but now, I don't know what to say. I just want to tell you that it hurts me, and I don't know how many other you hurt, but I really do hope you have a miserable life, and live in a miserable house, with a miserable family, and you know what else, I think you know you deserve it. You always wanted the truth, and you never had any trouble saying it, so just to let you know, you're not that pretty, and you're not that smart, so take your cookies and leave, cause neither of you are wanted here.

## PHANTOM REP

It was in the third grade, when they took us for a field trip to see Richard III in Boston. I'd never seen a live play before. I didn't understand what was going on up there, but I could tell that there was a whole bunch of people hating each other, going to way against each other, and just plain killing each other—kind of like all the wars and murders I heard about on the news. The last hour, I was really spacing out, desperately bored and upset with it all, wanting to go back to class and just take a spelling test or draw a picture. Then finally it ended and they closed the curtain.

But then—right then—they did something that I wasn't ready for. They opened the curtain again, and there was everybody who'd been running around hating each other and killing each other for the last three and a half hours—they were all up there, holding hands, smiling at each other, patting each other on the back, smiling at us, taking a nice bow, and that was when it really hit me. Hit me hard. They looked so beautiful, so peaceful and loving. Richard the Third was standing right next to the woman he'd murdered, and she was holding his hand and smiling at him as if they were about to go get something to eat together as soon as they washed off their make-up and changed their clothes. And I had that picture in my head all the way back in the bus, and I lay awake in my bed practically all that night, thinking, that's what the world needs. We need to get the U.N. to pass a resolution that on a certain Sunday, everybody in the world—the President of the United States, the head of Russia, the murderers, the bank robbers, the millionaires, the coal miners—will just line up and hold hands and take a bow. Dead people, too. I decided that dead people would suddenly be able to get up off the floor, walk over to the guy who killed them, and say, "Good show, good show. Ladies and gentlemen, we were only kidding. It was all a story. We really all love each other, and now we're going to change out of our costumes and have a party. You can all come too. Cake and cookies and wine, all on us!"

And that's why I wanted to act: so I could do that. Whether I was playing Snow White or the stepmother, Cordelia or Lady Macbeth, I wanted people to see me get up off the floor and take my place in line, smiling and holding hands with everybody, so I could give them a taste of what it would be like if the whole world could take a curtain call.

## PETER PAN

*Jane tells her psychiatrist a story from her childhood.*

When I was eight years old, someone brought me to this...theatre. Full of lots of other children. We were supposed to be watching a production of Peter Pan. And I remember that something seemed terribly wrong with the whole production. Odd things kept happening.

For instance, when the children would fly, the ropes they were on would just keep breaking...and the actors would come thumping to the ground and they had to be carried off by stagehands. And there seemed to be an unlimited supply of understudies, to take their places, and then they'd just fall to the ground. And then the crocodile that chases Captain Hook, seemed to be a real crocodile, it wasn't an actor. And at one point it fell off the stage and crushed a couple of kids in the front row. And then some of the understudies came and took their places in the audience. And from scene to scene, Wendy just seemed to get fatter and fatter until finally by the end of act one she was completely immobile and they had to move her off stage with a cart.

You remember how in the second act Tinkerbell drinks some poison that Peter is about to drink in order to save him? And then Peter turns to the audience and he says, "Tinkerbell is going to die because not enough people believe in fairies. But if all of you clap your hands real hard to show that you do believe in fairies, maybe she won't die."

So, we all started to clap. I clapped so long and so hard that my palms hurt and they even started to bleed I clapped so hard. Then suddenly the actress playing Peter Pan turned to the audience and she said, "That wasn't enough. You did not clap hard enough. Tinkerbell is dead." And then we all started to cry. The actress stomped off stage and refused to continue with the production. They finally had to lower the curtain. The ushers had to come help us out of the aisles and into the street.

I don't think that any of us were ever the same after that experience. It certainly turned me against theatre. And even more damagingly, I think it's warped my total sense of life. I mean nothing seems worth trying if Tinkerbell is just going to die.

## ST. JOAN

**Character:** Joan of Arc, an illiterate teenage girl who hears voices and leads soldiers into battle.

**Setting:** 15th-century France, at Rouen in the great stone hall of the castle. The hall has been arranged for trial-at-law, rather than a trial-by-jury. Joan, chained at the ankles, has just been told by her inquisitors that instead of being burned at the stake for heresy, she will be imprisoned for life.

JOAN: Yes, they told me you were fools, (*the word gives great offense*) and that I was not to listen to your fine words, nor trust your charity. You promised me my life; but you lied (*indignant exclamations.*) You think that life is nothing but not being stone dead. It is not the bread and water I fear. I can live on bread: when have I asked for more? It is no hardship to drink water if the water be clean. Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers; to chain my feet so I can never again ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep from me everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him: all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times.

I could do without my warhorse; I could drag about in a skirt; I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, and larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.

## THE CALL BACK

I can't believe it! He was actually nice to me. He was smiling during my whole song. He really seemed interested in me. I felt...important. Not "important" important, it just seemed to matter to him what I wanted, who I was, what I was there for. Mamma says he's like that with everyone. But he couldn't have been faking. I mean he said all this stuff—I was flying. I felt so good I was actually trying to remember if I'd had any caffeine that morning. This is it, Chris. I don't care what Mamma says. This man is gonna get me going. And you too, Chris. You could be my driver—no seriously—my manager. That's fifteen percent of everything I make.

Oh, God, it's happening again. Every time I get a call-back, I start thinking it's finally gonna come true. Someone acts a little friendly, and I start fantasizing. And then nothing happens, and I hate myself. God, I hope this guy is sincere. Chris, do you think I'm talented?

## ELECTION

**Tracy Flick:** Poet Henry David Thoreau once wrote, "I cannot make my days longer, so I strive to make them better." With this election, we here at Carver also have an opportunity to make our high school days better. During this campaign I have had the opportunity to speak to many of you about your concerns. I spoke with freshman Eliza Ramirez, who told me how alienated she feels from her own homeroom. I spoke with sophomore Reggie Banks who said his mother works in the cafeteria and can't afford to buy him enough spiral notebooks for his classes. I won't bore you with long winded promises about all the new and innovative things I will definitely achieve during the year in which it will be my honor and privilege to represent each and every one of you, but I can say that my years of experience on the student council have taught me the three most important attributes the president needs to possess; commitment, qualifications, and experience. I'll add one more, caring. I care about Carver and I care about each and every one of you and together we can all make a difference.

One of the things I would like to establish is a regular open forum where any student can come and voice their concern about issues we face here at Carver. I and the rest of the student council would then interface with the faculty and staff, so a continuous dialogue would exist. When you cast your vote for Tracy Flick next week, you won't just be voting for me. You'll be voting for yourself and for every other student. Our days won't be any longer, but they can sure be better.

## THE FEMALE FIX

*Ron has just been dumped by a girlfriend who insisted on trying to help him change everything she saw in him that wasn't quite right. Still angry and hurt, Ron goes to the GAP to buy a pair of jeans. When he is approached by a salesgirl who asks, "Can I help you?" Ron loses it.*

Help me? Can you help me? Did I ask for help? NOOOOOOO. Oh, Oh! There's that look! That, that condescending, falsely compassionate, you-need-my-help, let-me-fix-you-since-you're-a-pathetic-guy-and-I'm-the-all-knowing-female look! I am not so pathetic after all. You women are really something. First, you give us guys that look and sucker us in. Then once you got us hooked, you decide everything that's wrong with us. And then you get this crazy notion that you are the only ones who can help us. Well, Miss GAP, I hate to disappoint you, but I think I'm quite capable of finding a pair of jeans all by myself! I've done it before. I'm a shopper. A shoppee. I'm very, very shopful. So, if you'll kindly move out of my way, I'd like to buy a pair of jeans! Oh, and do you wanna go out sometime?

## SMEARED INK

*Jayson, a twelve year old, is excited about getting a girl's phone number that he likes in school. He is talking to his best friend about the whole ordeal as they walk home from school.*

I got her number! Yeah! Who is the man? Who is the man? I AM THE MAN! YEAH! Right here, check it out!

*(shows his palm)*

I wrote it down right here on my hand—on my hand...Oh no. It rubbed off. I only have half the number. Oh man! I wrote it on my hand and it smeared! Damn it! Now when I go back to school I'm going to look like an idiot! I can't ask her for her number again. I'm going to look like an idiot!

I told her I was going to call her today when I got home! What am I gonna do? I'm gonna look so uncool now. Look like a giant herb. This is the worst day of my life!

I should have written it on a piece of paper but we were in the schoolyard talking and all I had on me was a pen and I, I—ah man, I'm such an idiot. I can't believe it.

What am I gonna do? What am I gonna say to her now when I see her?

## THE HOT DOG VENDOR

Oh, no, you're wrong mister, I like my job. Yeah I know, a lot of people might be miserable doin' what I do. But not me, I like bein' a hotdog vendor.

What would the people in this city do without hotdog vendors? You gotta eat. Sometimes you don't have time to spend an hour for lunch you just want to get somethin' fast. There's the hotdog vendor with a quick solution. Yeah, my job's very necessary in the hustle and bustle of this city.

Hey, don't get me wrong, I know this ain't some movie star job. Sometimes you gotta deal with rude people, sometimes nobody's buyin', some days it rains. But, you know, as far as jobs go, it's alright. You wouldn't believe some of the people I meet. Nobody ever believes this, but one day Ivana Trump bought a hotdog from me. I'd swear it on a stack of Bibles. I get some of them soap stars from over there at CBS too. And, of course, I get all my regulars. They know me by name. I know what all of them are going to order before they even say it. They like that. Personal service.

You know, you gotta have brains to do this job. It takes somebody pretty slick to remember what over a hundred businessmen like on their hotdogs. Some like mustard, some like ketchup, some like mustard *and* ketchup, can you believe it?

And you can't be a lazy bones. There's a lot of work involved. First you gotta get up at the crack of dawn and go over to the warehouse for your supplies. You gotta do inventory. You gotta race to the good corners before the other guys get to 'em.

Not a lot of people could do this job. We get some people don't even last out the day. Just decide it ain't what they're looking for.

## OUTSIDE DAD'S FOOTSTEPS

*Adam tries to make his dad understand that he needs to live his own life.*

I got a “C” on my math test. That’s not so bad. It’s average, Dad. *(pause)* But it’s really hard for me right now. I have tons of homework, band practice, karate, and rehearsal for the play every night. That’s a lot of stuff. *(pause)* I know good grades are important, but so is everything else. I’m trying as hard as I can. What am I supposed to do? *(pause)* Quit the play?! No, that’s not fair! We’re already in the third week of rehearsal and I’ve got the lead role. I can’t quit now, Dad. I know you got bad grades when you were in school and you don’t want me to do the same thing. But don’t you see? You’re trying to make me be perfect because you weren’t. It’s like I’m supposed to make up for your life. Well this is *my* life. And I’m not perfect, Dad. I never will be. Acting is the one thing that really makes me happy. I’m going to pass all of my classes. Just not with straight A’s. That doesn’t make me a failure, Dad. And it doesn’t make *you* one either.

## JIM

Listen Mr. Gold, I’m really a very charming guy and this was all a terrible misunderstanding, and I really shouldn’t be here in the principal’s office. Ms. Victor left the room for a minute to take Amy to the nurse...really that girl is a klutz... and she asked us to please behave while she’s gone. Since no one was listening I simply tried to control the class, to help Ms. Victor of course, by doing a few Jim Carrey impressions *(does an impression.)* Do you see the stunning resemblance? We even have the same first name. *(pause)* Okay, guess not. Anyway, the point is I was merely trying to help not distract. It was an accident when I hit the globe, which knocked over the lizard tank, which set the lizards free. It’s not my fault all the girls started screaming. You don’t look too happy. You know, I think Ms. Victor has a thing for you. You can tell by the way she gives you “the eyes.” Can you blame her? You’re really a great guy. So what do you say? You gonna let this one slide? *(pause)* Yup...didn’t think so. See you in detention.

## YOU’RE A GOOD MAN CHARLIE BROWN

I think lunchtime is about the worst time of the day for me. Always having to sit here alone. Of course, sometimes mornings aren’t so pleasant, either—waking up and wondering if anyone would really miss me if I never got out of bed. Then there’s the night, too—lying there and thinking about all the stupid things I’ve done during the day. And all those hours in between—when I do all those stupid things. Well, lunchtime is among the worst times of the day for me.

Well, I guess I’d better see what I’ve got. *(Opens bag and looks inside)*

Peanut butter. Some psychiatrists say that people who eat peanut butter sandwiches are lonely. I guess they’re right. And if you’re really lonely, the peanut butter sticks to the roof of your mouth.

*(Munches quietly while looking around)*

Boy, the PTA sure did a good job of painting these benches. *(He looks off to one side)* There’s that cute little redhead girl eating her lunch over there. I wonder what she’d do if I went over and asked her if I could sit and have lunch with her. She’d probably laugh right in my face. It’s hard on a face when it gets laughed in. There’s an empty place next to her on the bench. There’s no reason why I couldn’t just go over and sit there. I could do that right now. All I have to do is stand up.

*(Stands up)* I’m standing up. *(Sits back down)* I’m sitting down. I’m so much of a coward she wouldn’t even think of looking at me. In fact, I can’t remember her ever looking at me. Is there a reason in the world why she shouldn’t look at me? Is she so great and am I so small that she couldn’t spare one little moment just to...*(Freezes)* She’s looking at me. *(Looks around, frantically trying to find something else to notice. Then with one motion, pops the paper bag over his head)*

If that little redheaded girl is looking at me with this stupid bag on my head she must think I’m the biggest fool alive. But if she isn’t looking at me, then maybe I could take it off quickly and she’d never notice it. On the other hand, I can’t tell if she’s looking until I take it off. Then again, if I never take it off, I’ll never have to know if she was looking or not. On the other hand, it’s very hard to breathe in here. *(There is a moment of tense silence, then his hand slowly rises, jerks the bag from his head and folds it quickly as he glances in the direction of the little girl.)*

*(Smiles)* She’s not looking at me.

*(Looks concerned)* I wonder why she never looks at me.



**PET PEEVES**

What annoys you more than anything? That's the question my language arts teacher assigned for a short essay. The assignment was a big problem for me, there are so many annoyances in my life every day that I can't possibly narrow it down to one.

For example: the people on cellphones who only call friends who are seriously hard of hearing. That is why the callers feel they must shout into their phones in order to be heard. Yesterday on the bus, I heard all the details of what some man I don't know had done last weekend, and believe me, he had a boring weekend.

Another pet peeve is those little postcard-size ads that fall out of magazines. It is nearly impossible to read a magazine without having half a dozen pieces of paper drop on your lap. If I want to subscribe to a magazine that I'm reading, it's easy to find information on how to do so without being buried in it.

Pet peeve number three is store clerks who ignore me while they chat with each other on the phone. I'm the customer, right? They're supposed to take my money and ring up my purchase, right? I once waited ten minutes to buy a box of computer paper because the only clerk in the store was getting a telephone quote on his car insurance.

When I complain about things like that, my dad always tells me to not sweat the small stuff. I know he's right—but still, I can't help fuming when I see someone toss litter out of a car window or walk a dog in the park without cleaning up after the pooch.

The only good thing about all these pet peeves is that I had so many of them. I got an A on my language arts essay.

**PUCK** *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Act 5, Scene 1, lines 430-445)*

If we shadows have offended,  
 Think but this, and all is mended;  
 That you have but slumbered here  
 Whilst these visions did appear.  
 And this weak and idle theme,  
 No more yielding but a dream,  
 Gentles, do not reprehend;  
 If you pardon, we will mend.  
 And, as I am an honest Puck,  
 If we have unearned luck  
 Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,  
 We will make amends, ere long,  
 Else, the Puck a liar call.  
 So, goodnight unto you all!  
 Give me your hands, if we be friends,  
 And Robin shall restore amends.

**HERMIA** *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Act 2, Scene 2, line 144)*

Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best  
 To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!  
 Ay me, for pity! what a dream was here!  
 Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:  
 Methought a serpent eat my heart away,  
 And you sat smiling at his cruel pray.  
 Lysander! what, removed? Lysander! lord!  
 What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?  
 Alack, where are you speak, an if you hear;  
 Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.  
 No? then I well perceive you all not nigh  
 Either death or you I'll find immediately.

**HELENA** *A Midsummer Night's Dream (Act 2, Scene 1)*

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!  
 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.  
 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;  
 For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.  
 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:  
 If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.  
 No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;  
 For beasts that meet me run away for fear:  
 Therefore no marvel though Demetrius  
 Do, as a monster fly my presence thus.  
 What wicked and dissembling glass of mine  
 Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?  
 But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!  
 Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.  
 Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

**ROSALIND** *Loves Labors Lost (Act 5, Scene 2, line 841)*

Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Biron,  
 Before I saw you; and the world's large tongue  
 Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,  
 Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,  
 Which you on all estates will execute  
 That lie within the mercy of your wit.  
 To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,  
 And therewithal to win me, if you please,  
 Without the which I am not to be won,  
 You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day  
 Visit the speechless sick and still converse  
 With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,  
 With all the fierce endeavor of your wit  
 To enforce the pained impotent to smile.

**PHEBE** *As You Like It (Act 3, Scene 5)*

Think not I love him, though I ask for him;  
 'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well.  
 But what care I for words? Yet words do well  
 When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.  
 It is a pretty youth; not very pretty;  
 But sure he's proud; and yet his pride becomes him.  
 He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him  
 Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue  
 Did make offense, his eye did heal it up.  
 He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall.  
 His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well.  
 There was a pretty redness in his lip,  
 A little riper and more lusty red  
 Than that mixed in his cheek; 'twas just the difference  
 Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask [1].  
 There be some women, Silvius, had they marked him  
 In parcels [2] as I did, would have gone near  
 To fall in love with him; but, for my part,  
 I love him not nor hate him not; and yet  
 I have more cause to hate him than to love him;  
 For what had he to do to chide at me?  
 He said mine eyes were black and my hair black;  
 And, now I am rememb'ed, scorned at me.  
 I marvel why I answered not again.  
 But that's all one: omittance is no quittance.  
 I'll write to him a very taunting letter,  
 And thou shalt bear it. Wilt thou, Silvius?

**ROMEO** *Romeo and Juliet (Act 2, Scene 2)*

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?  
 It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.  
 Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
 Who is already sick and pale with grief,  
 That thou her maid art far more fair than she:  
 Be not her maid, since she is envious;  
 Her vestal livery is but sick and green  
 And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.  
 It is my lady, O, it is my love!  
 O, that she knew she were!  
 She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?  
 Her eye discourses; I will answer it.  
 I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:  
 Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
 Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
 To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
 What if her eyes were there, they in her head?  
 The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,  
 As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven  
 Would through the airy region stream so bright  
 That birds would sing and think it were not night.  
 See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!  
 O, that I were a glove upon that hand,  
 That I might touch that cheek!