

"The Six Words of Life Assignment"

By

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To all the students who go through their own challenges every day

“The Six Words of life assignment” is a One Act comedy-drama mix that involves and emphasizes the different lives of students. this is to be placed in the present, and takes place in a school setting. The actors need to be mature enough to not play the stereotypical child, as the characters are sophomores in high-school. a wide variety of emotion and feeling must be portrayed in a mature manner, as though the story may seem over-comedic at first, it’s important to find and interpret these serious ideas and themes.

[Setting]

Willridge High, a private high school. current day.

[Characters] (7m, 5f, 1e)

Mr. Bock(m)- a sarcastic laid back AP English teacher

STUDENTS-----

Zack Mitchells(m) – The Student Council president

Adrian Lockhart(f) – the quiet girl

Anthony Polls(m) – the class clown (Has Huge Monologue)

Kathy Linger(f) – The straight a student

Brandon Wertz(m) – the bully

Patty Thorns(f) – the pep girl

Relatives/Acquaintances-----

Connor Mitchells(m) – a working dad

Ruth Mitchells(f) – an abusive wife

Langston(m) – Patty’s sick uncle and caregiver

Mrs. Wertz(f) – Brandon’s mom

M.Tarp(m/f) – Adrian’s music teacher

Jackson Moore (m) - A playful and athletic friend of Kathy’s

Scene I

(The stage lies in the formation of a typical classroom. students' desks are aligned diagonally starting from uR heading towards dc. a total of 9 chairs are necessary for the characters, but more may be added for extra filler roles if the director chooses so. the objective is to establish the idea of a private school setting. This idea can also be shown through logos, posters, and a dress code implemented upon the students. text books lie on the student desks. a chalkboard lies ur and a desk lies l. the stage is in blackout with all students starting in seats. Mr. bock also lies hidden among the students in a seat as well. a school bell rings. lights come up on stage) (the group of juniors and Mr. Bock create an ensemble of mixed reactions to the start of class)

All: *(A mix of)* "I hate this class" "This teacher is-" "English is my least favorite subject" *(And sentences of this sort)*

Mr. Bock: *(still among the students)* Ughhh i don't want to do this.

Patty: come on, you know the drill, it's the second semester already and you still do this every monday.

Mr. Bock: mondays, am I right?

Brandon: just stick in there

Mr. Bock: Fiiiine. *(standing up, x to the desk L)* alright class, welcome back to ap english! *(Fake celebration, with obvious sarcasm)* yaaaayy! *(suddenly)* Open your textbooks to page 28.

Kathy: Mr. Bock?

Mr. Bock: save the questions for the end of class.

Kathy: M-Mr. Bock?

Mr. Bock: My gosh, yes Kathy? what absolutely, POSITIVELY excruciatingly, intensive question is it that you desire so much to ask me?

Kathy: You said last week that we were going to start a new project today?

Anthony: Yeah, you said something about seven words or something?

(students give obvious sense of agreement, until...)

Brandon: I thought it was six words?

(Eruption of conflict occurs between the students arguing over whether it was six or seven words, Mr. Bock is still sitting at his desk, and finds this verbal fight amusing).

Zack: Mr. Bock, won't you stop this?

Mr. Bock: Give it a minute.

(the students continue fighting- after some time...)

Alright kids! settle down! this is a private school, I thought that you were all *(obvious over playing the role- acting like an over-privileged student- almost marry poppins like)* Perfect?

Brandon: Well that just isn't true.

Anthony: Now please, mr. bock, can you settle this?

Patty: Yeah, what's the new project?

Mr. Bock: Alright, now, today, class, we will be starting a new assignment called "the six-*(half of the students cheer, the other half grunts)* words of life.

Patty: what's it about?

Mr. Bock: *(Finding legitimate excitement in this project)* This project will involve you kids diving into the depths of your mind and soul. I want your creative senses to over-exasperate with flavor and fire. This assignment will let the skeletons in your closets take a peek through the gap of society's door. You will need to look into your inner self and write down the story of *(pointing at students)* you! and you will do ALL this... in six words.

Adrian: six words?

Anthony: six?

Zack: only six?

Mr. Bock: Yes! I need you all, as your assignment, to take a note card and write six words that describe either a moment or story of your life. for example. mine was... *(Black out on the rest of the stage, a single spotlight falls in front of Mr. Bock. he takes a step into it. with passion)* "teach for outcome, not for income"

Students: *(reacting differently, some with disgust, some with awe).* "that's so sweet!" "Cheesy!" "I'm gonna puke" *(etc.)*

Patty: *(standing Up)* I already finished mine *(blackout on stage, single spotlight in front of Patty. she steps into it. takes a deep breath as if about to say something philosophical)* GI-

Mr. Bock: *(Lights suddenly go into full)* Patty! if you dare say anything along the lines of "Glitter is the most amazing thing" I am going to puke.

Patty: I wasn't going to say anything about glitter Mr. B... *(turns around, rips up note card she wrote on and gives annoyed grunt)*

Mr. Bock: alright, anyone else wanna give it an improvised try? *(looking at the students)* anyone? Alright, now I gotta be the boring teacher who calls you out by random... *(a pause)*

Adrian, wanna give it a go?

Adrian: *(stands up slowly- she is shy, and is obviously thinking of what she could possibly say. black out minus a single spotlight in front of Adrian. she steps into it)* okay... um... “even humans can be a turtle” *(lights up on rest of stage- returns to normal)*

Anthony: *(calling out)* eeeemmmooooooo *(reaction of laughter arises from the students. Mr. Bock shushes them down)*

Kathy: So, Mr. Bock, when is this assignment due?

Harry: Yeah? How much time do we need to put into this?

Mr. Bock: I’ll give you ‘til this Friday. five days. beginning of class I will pick them up and read them anonymously.

Zack: A whole five days for just six words?

Adrian: Yeah, that sounds like a long time to work on just a few words.

Mr. Bock: Alright. at the end of the week we’ll see just how “easy” this assignment was. you’ll be amazed at *(getting excited again)* how much emotion, story, juicy plot, inner conflict, drama, and self reflection that can come from just six words.

(school bell rings, mix of students’ words are spoken about the assignment, this may be improvised or set as the director seems fit. all students exit except Adrian, who crosses to Mr. Bock)

Adrian: Mr. B?

Mr. Bock: Yes, Adrian, what’s up?

Adrian: I was really embarrassed being called on like that... why’d you pick me? you know i’m shy.

Mr. Bock: *(calming her down)* Adrian, *(with a small friendly chuckle)* it’s okay. you impressed me. and I’ll bet you the other kids were impressed as well. they just didn’t know how to express it. *(a pause)* Do you need a pass to your next class?

Adrian: *(quietly)* Yes please.

(Mr. Bock writes out a quick pass, during this, blackout. curtain closes)

Scene II

(in front of the grand drape. a hallway with lockers. students enter from both sides of the stage with backpacks on. students talk freely as dictated by the director)

Zack: Hey Kathy!

Kathy: Yes, Zack, what's up?

Zack: I was just wondering what you were doing for that six words of life assignment in english.

Kathy: Oh, probably something about academics.

Zack: I can see that, you with all your straight a's an' all.

Kathy: Well, grades are important to me.

Zack: Fair enough.

Kathy: What about you? are you going to do something about politics? or leadership?

Zack: Why would I do that?

Kathy: Because you're the president of student council, that's why.

Zack: Oh yeah, I guess so. something like *(Dr. Martin Luther King impression)* "I have always had a dream"

(They both laugh. a pause)

Kathy: Yeah, well I should probably head to math class now.

Zack: I guess, so. see you around! it was nice talking to you! *(exits)*

Kathy: You too! *(about to exit opposite direction, but bumps into Brandon)*

Brandon: And just where do you think you're going?

Kathy: I'm going to class

Brandon: Ooooh, just one problem there.

Kathy: And what's that?

Brandon: I'm going to class too.

Kathy: And how's that a problem?

Brandon: You're in my way! *(Shoves her down and stands over her)* Next time, watch where the hell you're going, okay?

Kathy: *(Trying to stand up)* I-I'm sorr-

Brandon: *(Pushing her back down)* Stay down, punk. *(Exits)*

Kathy: *(Stands up, dusting herself off. Begins to run & exit the other way in tears. Blackout)*

Scene III

(the stage is set with two separate sections for “mini scenes”. These mini sets will change while the other scene is going on. All in all, a total of six mini-scenes will take place. First, a table and two chairs make one DR. Brandon is sitting at the table and is about to begin this first mini-scene. A music stand lies DL. Adrian stands behind the stand and Tarp next to the white board that is D of the music stand. They are frozen for this scene)

Brandon: Algebra I... more like... Algebra Dumb. This doesn't even make sense! Numbers and letters should never be next to each other. Nonetheless on a piece of paper that is due tomorrow and taken for a grade! Literally the question says “Find the Value of X”... the “value”. Now, how the hell do you measure the “value” an inanimate thing? It's literally a LETTER!
(Stands up in rage, swiping the paper off the table)Agggghhhh!

Wertz: *(Enters DR)* Now now Brandon, what is it? What's with all the screaming?

Brandon: It's this f-

Wertz: The end of that word better be either “reak” or “udge”, or I am gonna have to disown you. No child of mine will use profanity in this apartment while I still live.

Brandon: I-I'm sorry Mom. It's just that this stupid homework makes no sense.

Wertz: What subject is it? I might be able to help.

Brandon: Algebra I

Wertz: Oohh, your father was always better at that math stuff than I was...

Brandon: Please Mom?

Wertz: Well, I suppose I could give it a looksies. Now where is it?

Brandon: Where's what?

Wertz: Your homework dear. Your Algebra worksheet.

Brandon: Oh... It's on the floor...

Wertz: Now how did it get there?

Brandon: The uh.... The wind got pretty heavy.

Wertz: Now Brandon, I may be old but I know just as well that there are no windows within 20 feet of this table. What really happened?

Brandon: I... I got a little angry at the homework...

Wertz: And?

Brandon: And I threw it on the floor.

Wertz: Alright, well I know pretty darn well that math homework is harder to do on the floor when you're sitting in a chair. *(Picks up the paper)* Let's see what we've got. *(Reading the paper aloud)* "Find the Value of X in the following equation: $5X-2=23$ ".

Brandon: I just don't know where to start

Wertz: My first idea would be to set the equation equal to zero.

Brandon: Why would I do that?

Wertz: Never estimate the value of anything without taking out the additives, for then you're not judging anything truly. You wouldn't judge a man's typical house condition while he has a guest over- it just 'ain't right.

Brandon: That makes sense. So we set the equation equal to zero to begin with.

Wertz: That's right dear.

Brandon: Quick question.

Wertz: And what's that?

Brandon: How do you set the equation equal to zero?

Wertz: You take the value on the right, which in this case would be 23, and move it over to the left side with the $5X-2$.

Brandon: Just... move it? How?

Wertz: Just imagine we take away 23 from both sides. Negative 2 minus 23 would be...?

Brandon: Negative 25!

Wertz: Yes! And now it gets easier. $5X-25=0$

Brandon: Now what?

Wertz: Now we can divide both sides by 5.

Brandon: We would do this because...?

Wertz: We would do this because it's never easy when all the extra details and complexities get in the way when you're striving for a goal. "The simpler the better" I always say.

Brandon: And that leaves us with... $X-5=0$, right?

Wertz: Correct! Now I'm sure you can see what happens ne-

Brandon: It's 5!

Wertz: Oh yes my dear, I'm so proud of you! I knew you'd get it!

Brandon: I just... you shouldn't be proud of me Mom...

Wertz: Why shouldn't I? You're young, handsome, smart, an-

Brandon: Mom... I did something bad today.

Wertz: What did you do? Did you get into another fight again?

Brandon: No... I... I pushed someone down this time.

Wertz: Why in the H-E-Double Hockey Sticks would you do that Brandon Ford Wertz?

Brandon: I- I don't know. I was agitated because of this project we were assigned in English- I have no idea what I'm going to do for it. And the other student just got in my way at the wrong time.

Wertz: I take it you will apologize to this young man/woman tomorrow the second you see them, correct?

Brandon: Yes Mom, the second I see them I will apologize. I promise.

Wertz: That's my boy. Always trying to be better. *(They hug)* Now go ahead and finish the rest of the worksheet- I know you can do it! And I guess get a head start on the infamous English project while you're at it. I'll be in the kitchen finishing up dinner. *(Exits)*

Brandon: I just want... to be better. *(Begins to write something down. Blackout)*

Scene IV

(Lights Shift to DL, where the next mini scene takes place. Whilst this is happening, DR is changed to a lounge chair where Langston is sitting frozen. Langston's scene takes place following Adrian's, whose is on now DL)

Adrian: Ms. Tarp, I see the music and I can read the music. I don't see what these lessons are for anymore exactly.

Tarp: Well, Adrian, it's not so much about reading the music anymore. You know the notes very well.

Adrian: Then what am I here for?

Tarp: You are here for the next step in your lessons. Feeling the music.

Adrian: Feeling the music?

Tarp: Quite right.

Adrian: *(Places hand on music on stand- almost like high-fiving the music)* There, I felt it.

Tarp: No, no Adrian. I'm certain you know exactly what I mean by feeling the music.

Adrian: You mean... internally?

Tarp: I guess you could say it like that, yes.

Adrian: And how do I do that?

Tarp: Well, let's see. As you know, our music goes as such "F,C,G,D,A, E, B- remember? Fat Cats Go Down Alleys Eating Birds"

Adrian: Yes... we learned this on day one.

Tarp: These letters obviously don't make just that one phrase

Adrian: Of course. Acronyms of the same letters can mean many different things, I just don't see how this relates to me feeling the mus-

Tarp: Hold on darling. Imagine we take these 7 letters, and change its corresponding word. For example... Say "F" no longer meant "Fat" in the phrase, and we were to change the phrase completely by doing such with other letters.

Adrian: So far it makes sense. Change the acronyms corresponding word to create a new meaning in all. *(A pause)* But how should we know which words to correspond to the letter? There a hundreds of thousands of words that start with "F".

Tarp: Let's change the letters to a topic with actual meaning. F, shall now mean Fear. *(She writes this on the board. She continues to do this with each letter/acronym)*

Adrian: Fear!? How did we go from jolly cats jovially walking through an all-you-can-eat buffet of birds to fear!?

Tarp: These new words, will describe how you will learn to feel the music.

Adrian: (*Still a bit lost*) Uh, okay. What about C?

Tarp: C will mean Courage. As it is well known that the only way to get past fear, is through Courage.

Adrian: That makes sense... and what about G?

Tarp: G describes Greed. Imagine an overload of Courage, to the point where your ego takes a higher position than your morals. Greed will overtake Courage.

Adrian: So Fear, to Courage, to Greed?

Tarp: Yes, that is correct. And following Greed, is the letter D, which in this case will mean...

Adrian: Determination?

Tarp: Close, Dreams. Greed leads to Dreams. Most of the time impossible ones, but dreams nonetheless.

Adrian: Okay. So next up is A. A, I'm going to guess is... aspiration?

Tarp: Correct! Now can you tell me why?

Adrian: Dreams and aspirations are basically synonyms.

Tarp: Now what about E?

Adrian: E would have to be... Excellence?

Tarp: No, for unfortunately most of the time Aspirations and Dreams don't always meet excellence. In this case, E means Expectations.

Adrian: And why is E Expectations?

Tarp: For Aspirations always have expectations, whether they are personal or of others.

Adrian: I see... It looks like we're at the last letter. B. What starts with B comes after expectations?

Tarp: Lastly, Expectations leads to Bargaining. You will do everything in your power, sell everything you own, change anything about you to meet these expectations.

Adrian: So... the whole cycle goes: Fear, to Courage, to Greed, to Dreams, to Aspirations, to Expectations, and finally, to Bargaining.

Tarp: That is correct. It is the cycle of desire, and it must be shown through your singing. A song with no emotion, no ups and downs, is no song at all, but more of a chant. A song with emotion, on the other hand, is a song worth singing and listening to. So I ask you, Adrian, what have you learned at today's lesson?

Adrian: I've learned, that singing pulls into life through the cycle of desire.

Tarp: Exactly, and there is always a reason to sing my dear. (*Exits DL*)

Adrian: There's always a reason to sing... (*Writes this down. Blackout*).

Scene V

(Lights shift back to DR where this scene takes place. Whilst this is going on, DL is changed to just a chair and a shattered mirror facing the chair. Anthony takes a seat there and is frozen, as his scene takes place following this one)

Langston: *(Coughing)* It's been 2 years since Patty's mother passed- Mrs. Thorns. She was a good lady, and an ever better mother, but a silly one as well. She's actually the one that got Patty into this cheerleading thing. Her father, well, he was different. He was strict and stern, but supplied the family nonetheless... including myself. You see, *(Coughing fit again)* he is-was my brother. Mr. Thorns... Now there's a name you can respect without even knowing the man who has it. *(Reminiscing over it)* "Mr. Thorns". Sounds kind of badass if you ask me. *(Coughs yet again, this time, pulls out a handkerchief to cover his mouth. Patty Enters DL)* Oh there you are my little cheerleader! How was the game tonight?

Patty: It went great Uncle Langston! Our team barely pulled through in the end, but we did it- Number One in the district!

Langston: Oh that's great sweetheart! And I'm sure you helped them win?

Patty: Of course. A team is only as good as its support group! *(Does little cheer)*

Langston: Amazing as always.

Patty: Always as amazing! *(They laugh)*

Langston: Now sit down dear, we've got some serious *(Coughing)* talking to do.

Patty: Oh Uncle Langston, is that cough getting any better? It's been 4 months now...

Langston: No need to worry about me.

Patty: But Uncle Langston, you know I always worry about you.

Langston: I appreciate it deary. And I am always here to watch out for you. *(They hug)* Now there really is something we must talk about.

Patty: Yes, what is it?

Langston: At the game...

Patty: Yes?

Langston: Was...

Patty: Was what?

Langston: Was that cute boy you're always talking to me about there?

Patty: Oh Uncle Langston

Langston: *(Laughing)* Yes, now what was his name again? Anton? Athigy?

Patty: Anthony. And no, sadly. I was really hoping he'd be there. I even texted him asking if he was going to the game, but apparently his phone didn't even get it.

Langston: How *(Coughs. Patty reaches to help him, but he sticks out his hand telling her not to)* How do you know his phone didn't get the message?

Patty: With our phones, it'll say "Delivered" once a message has been sent... this time, it didn't even say that much.

Langston: I can always give his parents a call? Talk to them and see if we can arrange anything.

Patty: No Uncle Langston, then he'll know I really like him. And, I just don't know if we're ready to take that next step...

Langston: So... Anthony is in a relationship with you and doesn't know about it.

Patty: Yes.

Langston: Ohhh boy...

Patty: It'll all work out in the end.

Langston: How do you know he'll *(Coughs)* treat you right?

Patty: Don't worry, he's a nice kid. And funny too. It seems like he's always happy at school. Don't get me wrong, I try to be as positive as ever, because *(Holds up pom-pom or does a quick cheer)* ya know, but even I still have my down days... he doesn't.

Langston: Bottling up your emotions like that isn't healthy.

Patty: I know, and I'm sure he knows that as well. He probably just has nothing to be sad about.

Langston: Everyone has something to be sa-

Patty: It's okay. He'll treat me right Uncle Langston. And even on the off chance he did, I know you'll be right there ready to help me.

Langston: That's right. I've always got your ba-*(coughs some more. This should be a big coughing fit)*... back.

Patty: Let me go get you some water.

Langston: No no, I can get it myself. I may be in my 50s, but I'm no senior citizen yet.

Patty: *(Defeated)* Alright. *(He exits. Patty is alone on stage, until another huge coughing fit is heard offstage where Langston exited. Glass shattering/pans falling sounds as well. Patty runs off to help him. Blackout)*

Scene VI

(Lights shift back to DL. Whilst this scene goes on, DR is transformed to having a desk and chair, in which Kathy sits frozen. Kathy's scene will take place DR following Anthony's, whose takes place now)

Anthony: *(All to the audience)* I broke my phone today. There sure as hell was a reason for doing so, but that comes later in the story. After English class, I couldn't help but wonder how I was going to approach this assignment. Of course at first it seemed obvious to me that I should do something funny. That's my day job isn't it? To be the funny kid? To, make others laugh, whether it be at or with me? So my primary thought for something along the comedic theme was *(Taking out notecard he has previously written on. Reading aloud)* "Laughter is always the best medicine". I actually thought of just turning this in. Why spend a whole five days of my school week worrying about a silly project with just six words? It would be... suffice. Just enough to get by without getting a horrible grade and it didn't take a lot of thinking or time. *(A pause)* Then Mr. Bock's words hit me. "I want the skeletons in your closets to peek through the gap of society's door". And it suddenly came clear to me. The divide between whether to take a minimalist and weak approach or a thoughtful serious approach became wider, and all feelings leaned towards serious. So that's what I did. I "Dove into the depths of my mind and soul" and did some deep thinking. None of the other students think that I could be sad. Not ever. The truth is, it's all a mask. One thing a mask does best is cover scars. And well, I've accumulated many scars across the years. My father abandoned me when I was 3, only to be followed with my mom becoming an alcoholic. Since then, I've always kinda been on my own. So I spend most of my time either at school, or here, in my room. The only company I have is this mirror. There is not a single thing in this world worse than silence and a mirror. Silence is dangerous. A mirror, is vicious. The two together? Well...*(Turns shattered mirror to face the audience)* That's what lead to my phone breaking. I... I threw it at the mirror, which is now shattered. Just perfect, right? A shattered, beat up, scarred mirror only to reflect a shattered, beat up, scarred image of yourself back at you. Needless to say... *(Pulls out another note card and reads it aloud)* "There are scars on my mirror" *(Blackout)*

Scene VII

(Lights shift back to DR. Whilst this scene goes on, DL mini set is to be transformed into a table and a chair, where Zack sits frozen. Zack's scene takes place following Kathy's, whose is taking place now)

Kathy: *(With book open on desk, reading aloud)* "An Ionic compound exists when the electrons of a nonmetal and a metal are transferred." Interesting. *(She writes this down in her notes)*

Jackson: *(Enters with shirt off)* Hey Kathy, I was wondering if *(Kathy turns to see him, gives a shriek and shields her eyes)*

Kathy: My goodness gracious Jackson, put a shirt on!

Jackson: Oh, sorr-

Kathy: What were you thinking!?

Jackson: I was just-

Kathy: Shirt. On. Now!

Jackson: A-Alright. *(Exits and comes back with a shirt on)* Sorry about that.

Kathy: *(Demanding an explanation)* Why weren't you wearing a shirt?

Jackson: I just got back from my track meet at Gildrige. I honestly thought the apartment was empty, but when I saw you in here, I thought I may as well ask if it's okay if I use the shower. I didn't want you to suddenly be all like *(Mimicking her)* "My goodness gracious? Why is the shower running!?"

Kathy: Well, perhaps you could've -*(At the same time with Jackson)* Put a shirt on

Jackson: *(At the same time with Kathy)* Put a shirt on *(Speaking alone)* I know I'm sorry.

Kathy: Apology accepted.

Jackson: Acceptance of apology recognized.

Kathy: Recognition of acceptance of apology received.

Jackson: Receival of- *(Cut off by Kathy)*

Kathy: That is quite enough. I need to study. I've got a chemistry test tomorrow that I'm not completely certain I'll ace.

Jackson: Let me see, *(Looking over her shoulder and mouthing the words as though he was reading the material)* Ahhhh, Ionic compounds. I remember this from two years ago. It's actually not that hard. It's more math than anything else really. Just make sure that the net charges *(Saying at the same time as Kathy)* Equals zero.

Kathy: *(Saying at the same time as Jackson)* Equals zero.

Jackson: See you've got this.

Kathy: I guess so... I'm just not certain I'll get a 100.

Jackson: Ahh, I see what you're missing.

Kathy: *(Flipping through book)* Which page!?

Jackson: *(Lightly laughing)* No, no. *(Closes her book)* You're missing a little thing called self-confidence.

Kathy: *(sarcastically)* Please.

Jackson: I'm not kidding. Believing you can achieve your goals is half the battle.

Kathy: "Believing" won't get me the 4.5 GPA I need.

Jackson: No, but it'll give you the potential to do so. If you don't have the potential, it'll never happen. It's a fact.

Kathy: Fine then, Mr. SmartSenior, tell me: How do I gain self-confidence?

Jackson: Think about it like this, when you're at a track meet, you want to look all the other competitors in the ey-*(Looks at Kathy, who is drifting back into her book)* Look, I see that athletics won't really grab your attention, so how about something that's a little more your style... What kind of music do you like?

Kathy: *(Thinking it over)* I'd have to say orchestral music. The strings and tones move me in a way that no other kind of music does. And it helps me study every now and then.

Jackson: Orchestra *(Claps hands)* Alright. Orchestra... *(Repeating the word to try and find a way to convey his message)* Or...che...stra... *(In weird pitches/tones-The actor can have a lot of fun with this part)* Orchestra! Orchestraaaa.... Orchestra? Orche-*(Cut off)*

Kathy: Orchestra! The word is orchestra!

Jackson: Orchestra?

Kathy: *(Loud and strict, foiling Jackson)* Orchestra!

Jackson: Think about it this way. Who would you say is the most important part of an orchestra?

Kathy: Duh, that's easy. The conductor.

Jackson: Of course! The conductor! Now, *(Picks up Kathy's pencil and conducts with it towards her)* What exactly does the conductor do? *(Continues to conduct through Kathy's lines as well)*

Kathy: The conductor takes control of the rest of the orchestra. They lead through the power of their hands. They are the heart and soul of the symphony.

Jackson: *(Still conducting)* Yes! Now here comes the part where I ask you the simpler questions.

Kathy: Alright...

Jackson: Fill in the blanks: The conductor Blanks the orchestra.

Kathy: Leads. The conductor leads the orchestra.

Jackson: Good, now *(Gesturing for Kathy to get off the chair. She does and he stands upon it still conducting, facing full front)* Which way does the conductor face?

Kathy: Duh, the conductor faces the orchestra. That way the musicians can see what the conductor is signalling.

Jackson: Perfect, now the final step *(Conducting gets big, wild, but still in control)* Kathy, you *(Pointing pencil at her)* are a conductor, but you are facing the crowd. You have all the pieces together! The violins, the violas, the cellos and basses, but you are just *(Emphasizing each of these words with a huge conducting-gesture)* ONE. STEP. AWAY!*(Finalizes conducting with a big finish on the last word)* You need to face your orchestra. Take control and pride in all the parts. Remember, to lead an orchestra, you must first turn away from the crowd! *(With this, he turns around on the chair, facing full back, and jumps off)*

Kathy: Jackson?

Jackson: *(Breathing heavily)* Yes Kathy?

Kathy: Thank you.

Jackson: *(With a smug smile or wink)* Any time. *(Exits)*

Kathy: *(Proceeds to write down notes on Jackson's speech. Whilst this happens, Blackout).*

Scene VIII

(Lights shift to DL. Whilst this happens, DR is struck of all set pieces. No more mini scenes will take place following this one. Zack is in a chair at a table working on homework)

Zack: *(Talking to himself)* This English project is killing me. I don't want to be the typical cliché kid, I need something with meaning...

Ruth: *(Voice from off stage)* Zack!

Zack: *(To himself)* Not again, *(Shouting)* Yes mom?

Ruth: *(Voice from off stage)* Zack!

Zack: *(Louder)* Yes mom, what is it?

Ruth: *(Comes stumbling in, obviously inebriated)* Zack, if I have to call your name one more time, I'm gonna *(Mumbles)*.

Zack: *(Gets up)* Mom, let me help you take a seat, you're drunk again.

Ruth: *(Flings Zack away harshly. Pushing him away)* I don't need your help! *(looks at Zacks homework)* What the hell is this crap doing on the table!?! *(Throws the papers off the table)* Look, Zap, I'm going to give you a bit of advice. Screw this whole school crap thing you've got going on. It ain't worth nothin'.

Zack: Alright mom.

Connor: *(Enters)* Honey, Zack, I'm home!

Zack: *(Runs and hugs Connor)* Hi Dad.

Connor: Hey champ. *(Looks up at Ruth, who is in the seat still tipsy)* Ruth, are you okay?

Ruth: Shut it Connor. You owe me.

Connor: What do I owe you for?

Ruth: For coming home so late again.

Connor: Ruth, I was at work. I just had to say and finish up some extra paperwork.

Ruth: Whatever.

Connor: Look, Ruth, I don't want to fight tonight, okay? I'm tired. I'll tell you what, I'll go ahead and set up the couch and sleep there. You can have the comfy bed.

Ruth: *(Somewhat coming out of her inebriation)* Connor, we need to talk,

Connor: Alright. Let's talk. *(Turns to Zack)* Hey, why don't you leave the room for a bit?

Zack: Dad, I can handle this. I know wha-

Connor: I know you can handle this Zack, but I wouldn't forgive myself if I let you watch this go down again. Please Champ?

Zack: *(Hesitantly)* Alright dad, I'll go. *(He begins to exit, but still stands on stage to witness the scene to come)*

Connor: Alright Ruth, let's talk.

Ruth: Connor. I am tired of you coming home so late.

Connor: Honey, I just needed to finish some extra work, no big deal.

Ruth: No big deal? I hate being home alone, and you know that.

Connor: I'm aware that you don't like being home alone, bu-

Ruth: I can't do this anymore, Connor.

Connor: Look, all I'm asking is that we stick through with this for Zack, he needs us to b-

Ruth: I am tired of this, Connor.

Connor: Would you please let me fini-

Ruth: I-

Connor: *(Yelling over her)* I, I, I! It's always I with you! *(Calming back down, now that he has her full attention)* The words Unite and Untie depend on where the "I" stands. It's either "U-'n'-I", or not. So I am asking you for the last time. Where does your "I" stand?

Ruth: *(Tongue tied, with lack of words)* I-I

Connor: Are you standing with me anymore, Ruth?

Ruth: Connor, It's time you grow up.

Connor: Me grow up? I have dealt with your constant drinking and fighting for so long, and you have yet to get a job. You and I both know why we are still in this. *(They both look at Zack)*

Ruth: That kid means nothing to me. *(A silence)*

Zack: *(Taken back)* Uh-I-uh-

Connor: Ruth, that is your child, our child, and it is our responsibility to raise him.

Ruth: I've done that for 15 years. For 15 years I have fed, raised, and nurtured that parasitic beast that you call our child. And what have I got in return? A hug every now and then?

Meaningless words of love? (*Standing up and charging at Zack*) Well those won't get me my life back!

Connor: Ruth, let's sit back dow- (*She slaps him. A pause. Connor crosses to Zack, takes his hand, and begins to walk out*)

Ruth: Where the hell are you going?

Connor: I am taking (*Emphasizing these next few words*) my child and leaving. (*To Zack*) Hey, Champ, grab your backpack and let's go.

Zack: Alright Dad. (*Zack picks up his papers and leaves with Connor. Blackout*)

Scene IX

(This takes place in front of the grand drape. The hallway. Whilst this goes on, the main stage is transformed back into the classroom)

Students: *(A mix of conversations as seems fit by the director)*

Patty: Hey Anthony

Anthony: Hey Patty, what's up?

Patty: *(Blushing)* Oh you know, the regular... Did you happen to go to the game last night?

Anthony: No, I wasn't able to go.

Patty: I thought so, *(Speeding up)* I was pretty sure you weren't at the game, but just wanted to make sure you absolutely weren't, because if you were there, and I missed seeing you, I would be pretty embarrassed because you obviously don't just fade into the room, you stand out and -

Anthony: *(Cutting her off)* Patty! If you keep talking at that pace you're gonna melt... You'll be a Patty-Melt

Patty: *(Laughing way too much- possibly a few snorts)* You are so funny Anthony.

Anthony: That's my job.

(School Bell rings)

Anthony: That's the five-minute bell, I gotta head to class.

Patty: Can I walk with you? I mean, we're going to the same class, might as well, right?

Anthony: Sure, go for it. *(They both exit DR)*

Brandon: *(Enters from DL and sees Kathy across the hall. He begins towards her)* Hey Kathy! Look, I really need to apologize for what I did yesterday. I was out of line and I'm just really sorry.

Kathy: *(Pretending not to hear him)* Hmm, that's weird. All I'm hearing is a soft voice.

Brandon: Wait, what? I just need you to know that I'm rea-

Kathy: *(Cutting him off)* Ooohh, it's still there. That is so odd...

Brandon: *(Annoyed)* And where do you hear this *(Mimicking her)* "soft voice"?

Kathy: *(Suddenly turning to him)* From You! Atop the thirty-thousand foot high mountain that is your ego!

Brandon: *(Tongue-Tied and not knowing how to respond)* I-Uh-um

Kathy: In fact, if I ever wanted to drop a quarter far enough that it would break the concrete it hits, all I'd have to do is drop the coin from your ego all the way down to your I.Q!

Brandon: K-Kath-

Kathy: *(Cutting him off)* It is time I stood up for myself, and you, you imbecile, chose the wrong time to come back and bully me! *(She Exits DR with confidence)*

Brandon: *(Aside)* What the hell just happened? *(He Exits DR confused, and still trying to process what just happened)*

(Black out)

Scene X

(The Grand-Drape opens to reveal the classroom set up as it was in the beginning. Mr. Bock stands in front of his desk. The students all sit at their respective desks with their note cards in hand. Lights up on the stage)

Mr. Bock: Alright class, it's the end of the week. You know what that means... *(Some students get up to try and hand Mr. Bock their note card assignment as to turn it in)* No no, sit down. We'll do that in a bit. It means it's Friday! *(To the students)* Mini dance party?

Adrian: I don't think we should do a min-

Anthony: *(Standing up. Shouting)* Mini Dance Party!

Students: *(Some get up and dance for about seven seconds, the others sit down and look the other way)*

Mr. Bock: *(Finishing his little dance)* Alright class, *(Claps hands)* good work. Now I know a lot of you wonder why we do this every Friday in my class. Well, personally, I think you all deserve to have a little fun. Even though it may be for only seven seconds, it's seven seconds you all deserve to have. Believe me, I know high school is hard, so I figured that when I was a student, I would've loved to have had those seven seconds to just not worry about anything.

Brandon: I appreciate that Mr. B, but what about our projects, what do you want us to do with them?

Mr. Bock: This is my favorite part of the year. Go ahead and turn them into me. *(The Students get up, cross to Mr. Bock, and hand him their note cards)* Awesome! Go ahead and sit back down. *(The Students sit back in their seats)* Now I'm going to read these out loud. *(Students react with either fear, happiness, shock, or disapproval. Settling them down)* Don't worry. They'll

be anonymous. *(Students give a sigh of relief)* But I'd like us to do an experiment as well with these *(Holds up note cards)* When I read one aloud, I want you all to guess who wrote it. I obviously won't tell you if you're right or not, but it'll be interesting to see.

Kathy: I don't think this is something I want to be here for.

Zack: Me neither.

Mr. Bock: Starting off we've got... *(Black out on stage, except a single light focused on Brandon. He stands up)*

Brandon: "I only want to be better"

(He sits back down. Lights up on stage)

Mr. Bock: Who do we think wrote that one?

Adrian: *(After a pause)* I'd guess Kathy.

Patty: Yeah, Kathy's all about those good grades.

Students: *(Majority agrees that it is Kathy)*

Mr. Bock: Alright class, settle down. *(He sets that note card aside)* Next one says... *(Blackout on stage, except a single light focused on Kathy. She stands up)*

Kathy: "To conduct orchestras, turn from audiences" *(She sits back down. Lights up on stage)*

Mr. Bock: That is an interesting one. Who do we think wrote that one? Possibly someone musical?

Brandon: Definitely Zack.

Mr. Bock: Why do you say that?

Brandon: Because he's Student Council President

Anthony: Yeah, leading is Zack's thing.

Students: *(Agree that the card was written by Zack)*

Mr. Bock: So we think that was written by Zack... alright. *(Takes the next note card)* This next one reads... *(Blackout on stage, except a single light focused on Adrian. She stands up)*

Adrian: "There's always a reason to sing" *(She sits back down. Lights up)*

Mr. Bock: Another music one I see. Any thoughts?

Zack: I'd guess that Patty wrote that one.

Kathy: One-hundred percent Patty. She's always so peppy and optimistic.

Students: *(Agree that the card was written by Patty)*

Mr. Bock: So the singing one we think was written by Patty. *(Takes the next note card)* Let's see... this next one says... *(Blackout on stage, except a single light focused on Patty. She stands up)*

Patty: “Mother, Father...Uncle. Death is greedy” *(She sits down. Lights up)*
(There is a silence in the room)

Mr. Bock: *(Loss of words)* S-So this one... *(Recouping)* Who do we suspect wrote this?
(A longer silence)

Adrian: Perhaps... *(A small pause)* I just don't know.

Mr. Bock: No predictions? Alright then... let's... let's move on. *(Picks up next card)* This next one is a long similar lines. It reads... *(Blackout on stage, except a single light focused on Anthony. He stands up)*

Anthony: “There are scratches on my mirror” *(He sits back down. Lights up)*

Mr. Bock: And this one? This one is pretty deep as well. Any idea as to who we think wrote this one?

Brandon: That'd be Adrian's.

Adrian: Why me?

Brandon: You're the quiet emo girl, that's why.

Patty: I don't mean to be rude, but I kinda agree that it's Adrian's as well.

Students: *(Majority agrees that Adrian wrote the note card)*

Mr. Bock: So we think that Adrian wrote this one... Now the next one *(He picks up the next card)* This one says... *(Blackout on stage, except a single light focused on Zack. He stands up)*

Zack: “Unite, Untie... Depends where 'I' stands” *(He sits down. Lights up)*

Mr. Bock: This one seems to do with relationships... any thoughts?

Kathy: My guess is that it's Brandon's. We all know how he doesn't like making friends.

Brandon: Now that seems a bit out of line.

Kathy: Well it's true!

Brandon: *(Scoffs)* Whatever.

Students: *(Agree that Brandon is the one that wrote that note card)*

Mr. Bock: That looks like the end of it.

Zack: Out of curiosity Mr. Bock, how many did we guess right?

Mr. Bock: That's not really my information to tell.

Patty: Come on Mr. B, tell us. I give you my permission to at least tell us how many we guessed right, just don't tell us which ones we specifically got wrong or right.

Students: *(Show approval of the idea with mixes of:)* “Yeah, just tell us how many we guessed right!”, “We don't need to know any specific ones”, and “Please Mr. Bock?”

Mr. Bock: (*Settling them down*) Alright, alright. You all want to know how many you guessed right?

Students: Yes!

Mr. Bock: And I have all of your permissions to say this number?

Students: Yes!

Mr. Bock: Drum roll please! (Students drum with their hands on their desks, excited to see how well they guessed) You got...(Drum roll stops. Serious moment) None right. (Students react)

That's right. (Dead silence) You all think you know each other so well, but there is so much more to each and every one of you than the rest of us think. (Silence) Six words kids... Six words...

(Blackout)

Fin.

