

# PLAYING WITH THE PIECES

A Ten Minute Play

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## **PLAYING WITH THE PIECES**

**Action of the play:** A director and two actors collaborate to develop a new theatrical play that explores contemporary culture.

### **Characters:**

Derek: a theater director

Every Girl: an actor in Derek's theater company

Lonely Boy: an actor in Derek's theater company

### **Setting:**

A bare stage with perhaps, a ladder, a few work lights, and several pieces of rehearsal furniture.

### **Time:**

Contemporary.

## **PLAYING WITH THE PIECES**

(Setting: a stage rehearsal space.)

LIGHTS UP

(Every Girl and Lonely Boy are waiting for someone.)

Where is he?  
EVERY GIRL

Let's go.  
LONELY BOY

We can't.  
EVERY GIRL

Why not?  
LONELY BOY

We have to wait.  
EVERY GIRL

You're sure it was here?  
LONELY BOY

What?  
EVERY GIRL

That we were to wait.  
LONELY BOY

He should be here.  
EVERY GIRL

He didn't say for sure he'd come.  
LONELY BOY

(Derek comes down the aisle through the audience and goes onto the stage.)

EVERY GIRL  
Here he is. Thank God, we don't have to do a play about waiting.

DEREK

Hi, guys. Sorry I'm late. Every Girl, good to see you. (*Nodding to Lonely Boy.*) Lonely Boy. Okay, ready to start? You got the new scenes memorized, yes?

LONELY BOY

Didn't exactly make sense...

EVERY GIRL

Not sure what you're trying...

DEREK

It's just a basic love story—boy meets girl, boy loses girl, you know, but with the current search for identity... authenticity... celebrity...

EVERY GIRL

Is that even a word?

DEREK

... and loneliness. I'm commenting on the emptiness of contemporary culture. I'm showing a frame of mind. The way life happens now—blurred, instant, at once.

EVERY GIRL

The play is all random and arbitrary. There's no beginning, middle or end.

DEREK

You just have to go with it. We live in an increasingly collective electronic Gothic Baroque culture.

EVERY GIRL

I can relate to that... the story of my life.

DEREK

Okay, Opening monologues. Places, please.

(Every Girl and Lonely Boy take center stage.)

LONELY BOY

I'm just a lonely boy. Lonely and blue-- even though I have a significant media presence--chat rooms, Twitter, Tumblr, Snap Shot, LinkedIn, Facebook. If you're not on Facebook, basically you don't exist. I'm totally accessible, but I've never been more isolated. I'm not one of those guys who live in my mother's basement. Well, actually I do live in my mother's

basement, but I don't live live in my mother's basement. The more connected I become, the lonelier I am.

EVERY GIRL

I love fashion. I love style. All the girls at the salon where I work feel that way. Fashion is my life. Tina had her lips done. She looked really funny at first--like Donald Duck. Our goal is to look fantastic--presumably for guys. But we only see each other. We arrive each morning, like movie stars on the set, gorgeous, perfect, glamorous, but no one's watching.

DEREK

Very nice. Thank you. Okay, Scene Two. Begin when you're ready.

(Every Girl and Lonely Boy take their places with scripts in their hands.)

LONELY BOY

Oh, you're not going to start all that nonsense again are you?

EVERY GIRL

It's not nonsense. I am not nonsense. You doubt my very right to exist.

LONELY BOY

What do you want?

EVERY GIRL

I want to be a star.

LONELY BOY

You can be my star.

EVERY GIRL

I want to be the most famous girl in the room.

LONELY BOY

But you have to be able to do something. For example, you can't win a gold medal at the Olympics.

EVERY GIRL

But just think of all those product endorsements! And what about Kylie Jenner? She can't do a triple Lutz either. I could just be famous for being famous.

LONELY BOY

You could set up a personal website. There's a company that will enhance your own "brand." Increase your visibility through search engines; raise your profile; establish a more robust digital identity, let your personality shine through.

EVERY GIRL

My goal in life is to have a reality show.

LONELY BOY

What do you know about reality?

EVERY GIRL

We get to pick our own reality. I could have a show about my journey from small-town Texas to Hollywood stardom.

LONELY BOY

But you're from Milwaukee.

EVERY GIRL

I want to have my own clothing line. I'd start with sportswear and then add fragrances, eyewear, shoes, handbags, then bedding and kitchen ware.

LONELY BOY

But why do you think you...

EVERY GIRL

I have that girl-next-door-with-a-hint-of-glamour sense of style. I'm very relatable. I have relatability. I could do a video cookbook on YouTube.

LONELY BOY

The only thing in your frig is cat food and Red Bull.

EVERY GIRL

Everyone deserves to be amazingly amazing. Scene.

(The actors relax.)

DEREK

Okay, okay, good, but let's explore. Loosen up. Let's try an improv. You two, center stage. Okay, be real.

EVERY GIRL

What do we do? What is the action?

DEREK

No action. Just be real.

(Every Girl and Lonely Boy stand there awkwardly and try to do an improv.)

LONELY BOY

*(after a long pause)*

I think therefore I am?

EVERY GIRL

*(hesitatingly)*

I shop therefore I am?

LONELY BOY

You can't un-bake a baked potato?

EVERY GIRL

Reality is when things are for real, like really real, like they're really as real as reality can make them real... Like, shit, man, this is for real...

DEREK

Okay, forget improvisation. That is never going to work. Let's go to the talk show scene. You memorize the lines?

(They both nod yes.)

DEREK

Okay, Lonely Boy, play the host as a bit star stuck. Every Girl, try playing the guest as a sort of sugar cookie blond. Okay, places.

(They set up a table and two chairs. Lonely Boy takes the host's chair.)

HOST

And for my next guest I have the scrumptious Every Girl.

(Every Girl takes the guest chair.)

HOST

You look marvelous as usual. It's great to have you here. Let's start with what you've been up to? Tell us about your current project.

EVERY GIRL

I've just finishing shooting a new film. It's very exciting. It's sort of Cirque du Soleil meets The Avengers. I play a neurotic, crazy, morally compromised, dual CIA FBI agent who's in deep cover as a drag queen. The plot revolves around adultery, polygamy, vampirism, serial murders—the usual dilemmas.

HOST

Well, your star meter is certainly on the rise.

EVERY GIRL

In America celebrity is next to godliness. But you have to be careful. Gwyneth Paltrow's a big star and her favorability rating is lower than that of the US congress.

HOST

And I hear you've become a social activist.

EVERY GIRL

Well, we all have to give back.

HOST

Tell us about your work.

EVERY GIRL

I have several causes that are close to my heart: prayer in school, lost puppies...

HOST

What about children?

EVERY GIRL

I don't really like children. They have runny noses and they smell funny. I'm more interested in patriotism, world peace, women's rights...

HOST

Let me ask you this. To what do you contribute your success?

EVERY GIRL

I believe in "the myth of pluck." You just have to hang in there and keep trying. We are all entitled to be special. Just because you can't carry a tune doesn't mean you shouldn't be a rock star.

DEREK

*(cutting in)*

Okay, that works. Then we'll end with a final monologue.

EVERY GIRL

I've got one, Derek. I've got a great one. My Oscar acceptance speech.

DEREK

You've never even made a film.

EVERY GIRL

I know, but please, Derek. Pretty please. I just know I'll be nominated eventually. I've been working on my speech for years. Everyone, who's anyone in Hollywood, has their speech prepared. Hell, half the country has their speech prepared. Derek, please.

DEREK

Okay, let's hear it. And the Oscar goes to Every Girl for... for... whatever...

(Every Girl quickly kisses Lonely Boy and Derek and rushes to center stage.)

EVERY GIRL

Oh, my god. Oh, wow. Thank you. Oh, wow. Yeah, I'm kind of speechless. Thank you to the Academy. Thank you for opening your hearts to me. This has been an extraordinary journey. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for our inspiring director. I'd like to thank my agent. I'm so in love with my agent right now. Best advice ever: don't fuck up the acceptance speech. Opps! F-bomb. I'd like to thank my stylist, my manager, my new perfume line. And my psychiatrist, my physical therapist, my body double, my stunt double, my dialogue coach (you know who you are). My first dance teacher, my roommate my senior year in college, everybody I've ever met in my entire life. I'd like to thank my parents for not practicing birth control. And I'd like to thank Meryl Streep. Thank you. Thank you so much.

(She walks off in triumph.)

LONELY BOY

Why'd she thank Meryl Streep?

DEREK

Everyone thanks Meryl Streep. Okay, Lonely Boy, what would be your ultimate goal?

LONELY BOY

To have 100,000 followers on Twitter.

DEREK

And what would you tweet them?

I dunno... LONELY BOY

You could ask them the question. DEREK

What is the question? LONELY BOY

The question obviously is: what is the question? Scene. The End. DEREK

The End