

BULLY!

by Kristen Doherty.

BULLY! consists of vignettes of short scenes and monologues written within the genre of Epic Theatre. With 24 scenes and around 70 characters, BULLY! is designed for large casts with each actor playing multiple roles. Every scene is based on real life accounts and events; some funny, some challenging, some heartbreaking, but all real.

Epic Theatre: “A form of didactic drama presenting a series of loosely connected scenes that avoid illusion and often interrupt the story line to address the audience directly with analysis, argument, or documentation. Epic Theatre is now most often associated with the dramatic theory and practice evolved by the playwright-director Bertolt Brecht, Germany, from the 1920s onward. Brecht’s intention was to appeal to his audience’s intellect in presenting moral problems and reflecting contemporary social realities on the stage.” Encyclopedia Britannica.

SUGGESTIONS ON STAGING.

All actors remain onstage for the entire piece. They sit in a row of chairs downstage in a neutral position, when their scene begins, they stand, walk upstage (with or without their chair) and are immediately in character. When the scene is completed, they return to their seat and resume neutral position.

Alternately Physical Theatre/Frantic Assembly techniques can be integrated.

Or more simply actors can make exits and entrances.

Songs and dance numbers could be added.

Music that compliments each scene should intersperse the action and bookend each piece.

It is permissible that scenes can be swapped or deleted and new scenes written by the students about their own experiences can be slotted in. Likewise terminology and language can be adapted to suit the location and cohort.

Most/all roles could be played by any gender.

PREPARING YOUR CAST AND CREW

In the lead up to introducing the script teachers may want to have a conversation with their students about some of the sensitive themes and topics BULLY! covers. This is a good opportunity for students to share their stories. I suggest forming a circle and speaking first about confidentiality and respect and then each student (and teacher first) shares a story of when they have been bullied, but also when they have been a bully... because realistically, at some stage in our lives, we have all been on both sides. These stories can then form the basis of small group improvisations and script writing sessions which can be integrated into the script to form your own, unique play.

*Scene 22 – ‘Regret It Now’ covers a very sensitive topic and schools may want to exclude.

SCENES

** Number in bracket denotes how many characters in each scene.*

- 1) TRAIN (4)
- 2) JUDGEY MUCH?! (2)
- 3) SINGING LADY MARMALADE (1)
- 4) BYSTANDERS (5)
- 5) CAUGHT UP (1)
- 6) THEY/THEM (2)
- 7) NOTHING MISS (7+)
- 8) INSIDE OUT (1)
- 9) CYBER BULLIED (2)
- 10) KMART NIKES (1)
- 11) BULLY BOY (5)
- 12) SOME FRIEND (1)
- 13) RACIST (5)
- 14) WHEN I WAS LITTLE (1)
- 15) SHEEP (5)
- 16) BATFINK (1)
- 17) PAYOUTS (ALL ACTORS)
- 18) NOT LIKE THE REST (2)
- 19) WEIRD TREE KID (1)
- 20) I DIDN'T MEAN IT (12)
- 21) TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF ME! (1)
- 22) REGRET IT NOW (7)
- 23) BULLY! (ALL ACTORS)
- 24) REPRISE OF TRAIN (1)

SCENE 1 – TRAIN

ALEX
JESSE
MASON

MASON Why is it people don't help when they see someone being bullied? Is it because they think the bully might turn their attention on them and suddenly they might become the victim? Are they scared to stick up for someone who everyone thinks is a nerd, or not cool enough? Do they think that defending a so-called nerd will make them into a nerd themselves? Is nerdiness contagious?

ALEX Recently in town, a boy on his way home from school was sitting on a train surrounded by other passengers. Then a bully got onto the train and for some reason, which we will never know, he took a dislike to the boy. The bully went over and started laying into the poor boy. The boy was calling out for help and what do you think happened? Nobody helped him. Nobody said a word. The people sitting next to him changed seats, others turned and looked out the window pretending that nothing was happening. One girl even filmed it on her phone.

JESSE The next day footage of this bashing was on the news. There was an outcry. Why did nobody help?

MASON Would you have helped? Ask yourself. If I were on the train would I have helped? Would I at least say something? I'm sure your answer is yes.

JESSE If you had asked those people on the train, before it happened, would they help someone in trouble? I'm sure they would have said Yes. Until it actually happened to them; and they did nothing. Of course fifty people on a train could over-power one guy who is bashing a little kid. There is power in numbers. But nobody made the first move. Nobody even said Stop! Is one person all it would have taken to stop this brutal act?

ALEX What if you were this person? How does this make you feel? Ashamed? Worried? Guilty? Or sure that you would have done or said something.

MASON Ask yourself this then. How many times have you laughed when someone is called a name, or makes a fool of themselves? How many times have you just walked past when someone is being bullied?

JESSE And when it happens to you, how much do you wish that someone, anyone would say or do something.

SCENE 2 - JUDGEY MUCH?

IZZY
KITTY

Two girls sit side by side, scrolling through their phones. They react to their messages, typing replies, laughing at their social media; only engaging with each other to take the occasional posed selfie. They look at the pics and approve.

BOTH Cute!

They go back to their individual scrolling. Eventually Izzy sees something she finds amusing and flashes her phone at Kitty who smiles and laughs.

They both go back to scrolling. Eventually Kitty sees something she finds gross, shows Kitty.

BOTH Ewh!

They laugh and go back to scrolling. Eventually Izzy sees something that she finds objectionable.

IZZY (distain) Pft! Seriously!? What a skank!

She flashes her phone to Kitty.

KITTY Is that Claudia? Wow she's brave.

Kitty goes back to her phone, disinterested.

IZZY (exasperated) She's attention seeking!

KITTY Yeah well...

IZZY She should not be wearing those shorts.

KITTY She's at the beach.

IZZY You know what I mean...

Izzy types something on to her phone. Satisfied, she flashes her screen to Kitty.

IZZY ...And *she* knows what I mean too now.

Kitty grabs the phone off Izzy and looks at her comment on the pic.

KITTY You can't write that!

IZZY Why not? It's true.

KITTY It's cruel. Take it off.

IZZY No! I'm doing her a favour.

KITTY What? By body shaming her?

IZZY She's a bully.

KITTY Yeah, and so are you for posting that.

IZZY Harsh much?

KITTY Judgey much?! (*a beat*) Take it off Izzy... It makes you look bad, not her.

Kitty hands Izzy's phone back to her.

A beat.

IZZY Fine! Whatever. Delete. (*she does so*) I've even liked the pic. Happy?

KITTY Sisterhood, Izzy. It's important that we back each other, not tear each other down. I wish I was brave enough to wear shorts like that.

IZZY So do I. Ha.

Izzy types something else on her phone.

KITTY What are you writing now?

IZZY I just changed it to a love heart emoji instead.

Kitty smiles her approval and they both go back to scrolling on their phones.

SCENE 3 - SINGING LADY MARMALADE.

RILEY

RILEY Felicity and I had been best friends since forever. I can't remember a time without her. Our mums were really good friends too, so she was really more like a cousin or sister than a best friend. (*laughs fondly*) We'd make videos of us singing Lady Marmalade and I used to call her my soul sister. She did all the complicated and extra bits, the Christina and Pink, and I did the more subdued Little Kim and Mya parts. We were so different in so many ways, she was so loud and funny and I was the sensible, focussed one. But our differences were also what brought us together. We complimented each other. Ying, yang. We talked constantly, I mean really, really talked; shared our innermost secrets, laughed until we cried. She made up for the parts of me that were missing. I was so self-conscious, so worried about what other people thought, but she was brave for me when I was shy, she taught me

how to stand up for myself. We did everything together, spent every minute together. Soul sisters. (*a beat*) And then we went to high school.

We picked different subjects because of our different interests and made new friends... Well, I made new friends... Felicity didn't. She'd just try and hang around with me and my new friends, and pretty soon the things that I used to find so endearing, the differences between us, really started to annoy me. It was pretty obvious that my friends didn't like her either... Not that they ever said it straight out, but then they stopped inviting me to things if Felicity was with me and I knew that I had to make a choice. My new friends, or Felicity.

(*sadly*) Make new friends and keep the old, one is silver the other gold. I remember that poem from a fridge magnet in my grandma's kitchen. "Make new friends, but keep the old... The thing is, I didn't keep the old. I turned against her. I thought if I showed the other girls, my new friends... If I proved to them that I didn't like her, they would stay friends with me. So I was mean to her... Awful, in front of them to prove myself. And of course they took that as licence to be mean to her as well. But the crueller we were to her, the more she would keep coming back... Like a little puppy she kept coming back, no matter what we said to her, no matter what we did to her... She just kept coming back and back and back. (*a beat - this is hard*) Until one day, when she just wouldn't take a hint. Wouldn't leave us alone. We all told her to go away, but she acted like we were joking. It was so frustrating. We were all screaming at her, calling her these horrible names, saying she was worthless and to stay away from us. And then I went right up to her, and spat "I hate you!" Right in her face. That was it. Her eyes filled with big tears and she turned around and walked away...(*in tears*) I lost my best friend that day.

Her mum confronted my mum about it and they had this huge fight. My mum was so embarrassed, so angry at me, so disappointed... She lost her best friend that day as well. Felicity's mum changed her school and she deleted me on any kind of social media and I haven't heard from her since. It's been years... The thing is, I really, really miss her. She was my other half, she was my soul sister, and I threw that away. And those girls, those "new friends" are still around... kind of, but there's no depth to our friendship. It's vapid. We don't really, really talk, we don't share our secrets, we don't laugh til we cry and we certainly don't sing Lady Marmalade. My friendship with them is soulless. Keep the Gold... I'll never have another friend like her.

SCENE 4 – BYSTANDERS

MORGAN

DREW

TANIA

LISA

CONSCIENCE

Schoolyard - Throughout this piece Conscience addresses audience directly, action freezes when they speak.

MORGAN Hey guys, there's that freak from our science class.

DREW Oh yeah, she's so weird.

TANIA So weird!

They all laugh.

MORGAN Come on!

They walk over to her, full of attitude.

MORGAN Oi! What are you looking at?

LISA Sorry?

MORGAN I said what are you looking at?

Morgan pushes Lisa, she stumbles backward.

DREW (*laughs*) Oops... (*sarcastic*) Ohh no...She's clumsy too.

TANIA Quick somebody put a paper bag over her head.

MORGAN (*laughs*) Yeah before she gets done by the cops for indecent exposure.

They all laugh.

LISA Stop it! What have I ever done to you?

Actors freeze.

CONSCIOUS (*to audience*) Why don't you do something?

Unfreeze.

DREW Shut up, dog!

LISA I don't even know you.

MORGAN She told you to shut up, loser!

Actors freeze.

CONCIOUS (*to audience*) You can help her.

Unfreeze.

TANIA Shut up or we'll kick your head in.

They push Lisa, she stumbles.

LISA Stop!

DREW Who's going to make us?

MORGAN Yeah who's going to make us?

DREW Nobody cares what happens to you... Freak!

Freeze.

CONCIOUS Could you do anything to help?

Unfreeze.

LISA Don't! Why are you doing this?

TANIA Right that's it! How many times do you need to be told? Shut the hell up!

The bullies push Lisa to the floor and raise their fists and feet to kick.

Freeze in tableaux.

CONCIOUS Too late.

SCENE 5 - CAUGHT UP

MIKE

MIKE Oh man, I don't know why I did it, I just got caught up I guess... I never expected in a million years that it would turn out like this... We were just having a bit of fun. Fat Matt we used to call him... Such a try hard. He never fit in, but he tried to... and that was the worst part. If he had just kept his head down and out of our way it might have turned out differently... But he was always following us around. It was like he was asking for it.

Jack... Jack's always was a bit of a legend... Well, so we all thought. He made it his mission in life to find ways to torment Matt. And we all just went along with it... I don't know why. I guess we thought it was pretty funny... Or maybe we didn't want to be the one that Jack would start laying into instead. Who wants to defend a loser? He made up songs about Fatty Matty, which we all sung at assembly. The teachers just let us... I can't believe we got away with it.

We used to trip him over whenever he'd walk past, push him into lockers, we put dirt in his sandwiches when he turned his back. Took pictures of him while he was getting changed for PE and then posted them on Facebook...Prank call him all the time. Get one of our girlfriends to message him so he thought someone actually liked him... Then she'd just not show up at their meeting spot. Then she'd call and apologise, only to do it again... But he kept on showing up. Once we put rotten fish in his locker. It destroyed all his school books and laptop.

I don't know why I went along with it... I could blame Jack. He brought it to school and dared me... But what am I? Five years old. I knew exactly what I was doing. We made that poor kids life a living hell, and I'm not proud of myself.... That's an understatement. I hate myself for it and I would do anything to take it back. Take it all back... He just wanted some friends. I didn't know he was so lonely... Maybe I didn't care, then... but I care now... I'm so sorry but it doesn't matter anymore...now it's too late.

SCENE 6 - THEY/THEM

JORDAN

DANI

JORDAN What do you mean she changed her name?

DANI They change their name. You can't misgender them.

JORDAN What are you even talking about? They?

DANI Alex likes to go by they/them pronouns.

JORDAN Pronouns? What the actual? And Alex? Her name is Alicia. It's always been Alicia.

DANI Alicia is their dead name; they are Alex now.

JORDAN Dead name? That's depressing.

DANI So it's being called something that you don't identify with anymore.

JORDAN What is everyone going to say?

DANI Who cares what they say. Alex is our friend. (*a beat*) Look I know it's hard to get your head around, but you've got to respect Alex's wishes. They have been on a really hard, confusing journey to get to this place.

JORDAN I know. (*a beat*) So is she... I mean, are "they" going to be able to wear the boy's uniform instead?

DANI Maybe? I don't know... I hope so. Wouldn't be better if we had a gender-neutral uniform so these things weren't such a big deal to everyone.

JORDAN I'd love to wear PE every day.

DANI Ha! Same! Look it's really important that we make an effort with Alex. They have been a friend since forever, and this is the first time I have seen them truly comfortable and happy since... I can't even remember when.

JORDAN Same.... I just don't understand why she... I mean "they" would want this. People are mean. They are going to get bullied, even more than they already are.

DANI I know, but we are their friend and it's our job to support and protect them.

JORDAN Ok... I'll try. Ha! I hope Alex appreciates it.

DANI See there you go.

They hug.

SCENE 7 - NOTHING MISS

3+ LITTLE KIDS
3+ BIG KIDS
RINGLEADER
TEACHER

Schoolyard - Big Kids standing in a group talking. Little Kids playing with a ball.

Big kids walk over, steal ball and start playing a nasty game of piggy in the middle.

One little kid stands up for the group and the other little kids abandon him and run off.

Big kids start picking on him, pushing him around, laughing.

Teacher enters.

TEACHER What's going on here?

Ringleader puts arm around the little kid and smiles sweetly.

RINGLEADER Nothing Miss.

Teacher smiles and nods. As the teacher walks off the ringleader pushes the little kid to the ground.

RINGLEADER Thanks for the ball kid.

Big Kids laugh and walk off leaving the little kid on the ground.

SCENE 8 – INSIDE OUT

TJ

TJ When I was younger the other kids would always tease me about my...

The actor touches a part of their body that they identify the character to be speaking of.

... Well you can see. It's pretty obvious. I was the kid who had something "wrong" with them. They would comment, call me names behind my back, and to my face, ridicule me. Other kids would flat out avoid me. I just wanted to play with them, be included, feel normal... have friends. The teachers would try to buddy me up with kids who they thought wouldn't reject me... but it wouldn't be long before they would stop asking me to play. The teachers would remind them and they'd pretend to be my friend again. It was embarrassing. I didn't want their pity. I wanted them to want to be my friend because they wanted to be, not just because they're told they had to be. So, I would avoid them and hide away in the library.

Then this new girl started at my school. A really, really, pretty girl. Amelia. She didn't know anyone, but of course because she was so pretty everyone wanted to be her friend. But when the other kids asked her to play, she looked straight to me and asked me if I wanted to come with them too. I said no, and she told the others that she'd catch up with them later and stayed with me instead.

After the others left, Amelia asked me if it was ok if she hung out with me... No one asked her, she just wanted to. She confessed that she had really, really bad social anxiety and the thought of being in a crowd made her feel overwhelmed, but there was something about me that she felt was calming. That made me smile, and from that day Amelia became my best friend. The longer we spent together the more she told me about her social anxiety. She said that she felt broken inside... different. That there was something wrong with her. She told me that she was really badly bullied at her last school because she had a meltdown in front of everyone. A panic attack. After that everyone called her crazy and a looney. Everyone rejected her, even her closest friends. And that just made her anxiety worse, which made their bullying worse... The teachers would try to force her old friends to make up with her, but they didn't want to, and she didn't want them to either. She wanted friends who wanted to be her friend... Not just because they had to be.

Amelia was exactly the same as me, except what was on the outside of me, was on the inside of her. But none of that mattered anymore, because now we both had someone who understood. We had each other. And what we had wrong with us became something so right, because it was what brought us together.

SCENE 9 - CYBER BULLIED

MUM
TIFF

Lounge room – Tiff arrives home upset and tries to avoid her mum seeing her.

MUM Tiffany, is that you? You're home early.... Is everything ok?

TIFF Hi mum... um yeah, we just had a study lesson so I thought I would just come home early.

MUM But I thought you had netball after school today?

TIFF I do, I mean I did but I don't really feel well so I just came home.

MUM Oh, sweetheart, are you ok? You have missed a lot of netball lately, as well as school. You are going to fail if you keep missing days. Are you sure you don't want me to ring the doctors?

TIFF No! No, I'll be ok. I'm sure it's just been one of those flu things that are going around.

MUM What for three months? Tiff this has been going on since the start of the year.

TIFF Mum, I'm fine. Get off my back, will you?

Tiff's phone beep, she ignores it.

MUM Aren't you going to get that?

TIFF It's none of your business. Leave me alone! *(goes to leave)*

MUM Tiffany come back here!

TIFF I said, leave me alone! Why can't you just keep out of my life?

MUM What's wrong sweetheart? Why are you acting like this? I don't understand. You have not been yourself lately at all. You've been locking yourself in your room and missing so much school. You never go out with your friends anymore. You are always angry or upset...

TIFF I said leave me alone!

Mum grabs Tiff's arm to make her listen.

MUM Tiffany, listen to me! This is not like you at all, you used to be so happy, you used to love school. What is going on? Please tell me. I'm so worried.

Tiff's phone starts ringing, Tiff gets it out and listens, then starts to cry.

MUM Who was that? What did they say? Why are you crying?

TIFF It was nobody. I don't want to talk about it!

MUM Give me your phone.

TIFF What? No!

MUM I said give me your phone!

Mum wrestles the phone off Tiff and starts scrolling through messages.

TIFF No! Please don't look at it.

MUM Oh my God! Who has been writing these messages to you?

TIFF I don't know... Everyone...

MUM What?

TIFF *(breaking down)* Everyone hates me.

MUM Nobody hates you.

TIFF Oh yeah, well how come there's an Instagram page called 'Everybody hates Tiff Sanderson' with 243 followers? How come I have no friends and all the ones I used to have don't speak to me! Except to give me a hard time. How come I get at least twelve texts a day full of abuse.

MUM A Facebook page? What are you talking about? What about Monica? She's your best friend. She'd never be involved in all of this.

TIFF She started all of this.

MUM Why?

TIFF Why? Because, I kissed a boy at a party that she liked, and then he started spreading rumours that we did more than that. So now she hates me. She has posted all these disgusting doctored pictures of me on Snapchat, and made up all these lies that I have been messaging everyone's boyfriends. And it's all lies. All of it. But they don't care.

MUM I'm ringing her mum and I'm taking you out of that school.

TIFF Don't you get it mum? I can't get away from it now. It's bigger than that. I can't escape... I can't turn on my phone or my computer without seeing hate messages, or horrible pictures of me. Kids from other schools have joined the page too. So that's it. I'm screwed.

Mum hugs Tiff.

MUM I know it seems big right now, but it's going to be ok... You know that don't you?

TIFF No.... Yes... I don't know.

MUM Times like this really show us who your real friends are... Monica is not one... And that's ok. You'll move on. She'll move on. We'll get through this and soon it'll be a bad memory.

TIFF Not soon enough.

SCENE 10 - KMART NIKE'S

ANDY

ANDY My family was pretty broke when I was growing up; single mum with three kids and my dad was an arse, never paid his share and we'd hardly ever see him. He used to write these really nasty messages on his Facebook page about my mum; resentful about having to pay his child care money, telling anyone who would listen that my mum would spend it all on herself. I deleted him. It was all lies, of course, my mum went without all the time; she would try so hard to make sure that we had everything we wanted, but most of the time we'd just have to miss out too. She hated it and would try to make it up to us...but sometimes when you try too hard to fit in you just end up sticking out instead.

When I was in Year 9 all of the guys had Nikes and I really wanted some, but of course we couldn't afford two hundred bucks for shoes. But then mum found a cheap knock off pair in Kmart. She was so thrilled when she brought them home, saying they looked almost exactly like the ones my friends were wearing. But they were so lame! I was embarrassed, but I wore them to school anyway... For mum. Of course, everyone noticed. They called me a try-hard and laughed at me. I became a joke. Every day they'd make comments, ridicule me. Every day! I knew we couldn't get new shoes until the old ones wore out and of course those cheap Kmart shoes just lived on and on, long after the other guys Nike's wore out.

I hated those shoes so much that one day I walked through tar that workmen had just laid on the roadworks near our house. Those Kmart Nikes were ruined, black tar, seeping into the pleather. I apologised when I got home, said I slipped. Mum was really disappointed but tried to hide it. She said

Thomas approaches.

THOMAS Hey Lee, want to come down the oval with us?

LEE Get stuffed why would I want to go with you and your feral friends, you tosser.

THOMAS What'd you say?

LEE That's right, softy.

THOMAS Look I don't know what your problem is, but I don't want any hassles.

LEE Well you'd better start running, pansy boy because I'm sick of looking at your face.

Lee pushes Thomas.

JASON Lee! Give it a rest will ya?

THOMAS Sorry Mate I'm not going to fight you. You're not worth it. Let's go guys.

MATT Yeah, Get your act together will ya, Lee?!

All walk off leaving Lee.

LEE What are you. Chicken? Oi! Come back you little maggot! I'm going to kick your head in!

Lee runs after the others.

SCENE 12 - SOME FRIEND

ANNA

ANNA It was bad. Back when we used to be close, Mel was at my house. I let her play Animal Jam on my iPhone to get me up a level, and she went through my photos instead. The thing was there with these pics that I'd taken of myself that I'd forgotten to delete. I was all dressed up in my sisters' clothes and make up and posing; really, really embarrassing stuff. And she found them, and of course she shared them. Sent them to herself, and then got home and sent them to everyone else, with all these really mean attachment things.

So, I'm humiliated. Everyone has seen them. Everyone is laughing at me. They all think it's hilarious and I just want to crawl up in a hole and disappear. These photos were for myself and no one else, they were private,

they were embarrassing. I thought she was my friend. She apologised but she laughed the whole time. Said she couldn't resist... Some friend.

SCENE 13 – RACIST

AEISHA
MORGAN
RACHAEL
TANIA
TEACHER

Classroom - Actors bring chairs forward to form a classroom.

Aeisha enters late, she wears a headscarf. Bullies smirk and look at each other. Aeisha finds the only seat spare (at the front). Others whisper behind her.

MORGAN What's that? (*points to headscarf*) Is it to hide your ugly face?

Aeisha looks uncomfortable and fixes her headscarf. Ignores the bully.

RACHAEL Does the scarf make you deaf? He asked you a question.

AEISHA I used to wear it back in Afghanistan. I'm Muslim, I've always worn it!

TANIA Well, you're in Australia now. If you want to fit in – take it off!

AEISHA No!

MORGAN Take it off. Do you know how un-Australian you are? (*shouts*) Take it off!

RACHAEL Miss! (*puts hand up*) It's *so* unfair. How come *she* (*disgust*) gets to wear *that* and I can't wear earrings?

TEACHER It's part of her religion. Now, get back to work, Rachael.

RACHAEL Yeah, well maybe my earrings have a part in my religion.

TEACHER Get back to work, Rachel!

Rachael rolls her eyes and slumps in her chair. Morgan leans forward to whisper to Aeisha.

MORGAN Are you hiding a nuclear bomb under that?

The bullies smirk and laugh. The teacher is oblivious.

MORGAN You going to blow up the school? I bet your dad was a terrorist.

Aeisha tries to ignore them.

MORGAN What's your dad do, huh? Does he have a job on the side or does he do terrorism full-time?

AEISHA *(quietly)* The Taliban took him when I was four.

TANIA You are so lying. I bet your whole families are terrorists.

AEISHA Leave my family out of this!

TANIA *(mocks)* Leave my family out of this.

Bullies laugh at her.

AEISHA Leave me alone.

MORGAN No, leave us alone! Hah! I bet your own country doesn't even want you. What makes you think *we* would want you?

TEACHER Okay, class. Lesson's over. Make sure you finish page 76-83.

Everyone leaves, apart from Aeisha.

AEISHA Maybe nobody does want me.

SCENE 14 - WHEN I WAS LITTLE

ARI

ARI I really hated school as a kid. There were these guys in the year above me who gave me such a hard time. No matter how hard I tried to make them like me, they never did. They were always picking on me, calling me names, pushing me around, saying that I looked funny... That I was a reject.

I tried to look like them. I really did. I would get my mum to buy me all the same clothes as them so I would fit in. It just made things worse. They called me a sheep and a try hard. There was just no way to win with those guys. I went to the teachers and told them I was getting picked on but they just told me to ignore it and walk away. But how can you just ignore it and when they have pushed you on the ground and they're rubbing dirt and rocks in your face? Tell me that! They wouldn't let me go no matter what I said... no matter what I did.

And do you know what? Nobody ever said anything. Nobody ever helped me. If just one person had stood up for me it might have stopped. I couldn't ignore it; I couldn't walk away. I had nowhere to go.

In the end I really hated myself. I used to make myself sick so I wouldn't have to go to school... I'm different now, stronger, but I can't think of those days without felling sick. I was just a kid. Just a little kid!

SCENE 15 – SHEEP

CASSIE
SALLY
JESSICA
ALICE
HOPE

Schoolyard - Girls standing around chatting.

CASSIE Hi guys (*hugs everyone*)

SALLY How are you? Love that top Cassandra.

CASSIE Oh thanks! Yeah, I'm all right, and you?

SALLY I'm fantastic, I can't believe what happened on The Bachelor last night.

JESS Neither.

CASSIE I know! I can't believe he got rid of Briony... So sad.

ALICE So sad. I had actual tears.

JESS Same.

Hope enters. Cassie laughs and points her out to the other bullies.

CASSIE OMG, have you seen that new girl? Talk about disaster!

All laugh

SALLY Does she even wash her hair, or are they too poor to afford water?

CASSIE I don't think she is that poor. I mean look at her fat butt. I think all she does is eat.

JESS She isn't that bad, she looks about the same size as us.

ALICE What are you talking about? Haven't you seen her at lunch, she is such a pig.

CASSIE (*calls out to Hope*) Hey you, reject! Yeah you, Hey! We're talking to you

HOPE (*shyly*) What do you want?

JESS (eagerly) What's your name?

SALLY (to Jess) Jess, if you don't think we would say it, don't say it at all.

JESS Sorry guys...

SALLY So what is your name?

HOPE Hope, why?

CASSIE Cause we've never seen a loser as huge as you before.

Sally and Jess laugh.

CASSIE Just joking. Ha. Got cha.

JESS Ha! Funny Cas.

CASSIE Don't call me Cas.

JESS Soz

CASSIE Don't say soz! Seriously! Anyway. We were talking to... What was your name again?

HOPE Hope.

CASSIE (mocking) Ohh, Hope.

CASSIE Hope. Your skirt is hideous.

HOPE But you're wearing the same skirt as me, it's our uniform.

SALLY Can't you see the difference? It looks so much better on us.

The bully's all laugh.

JESS Yeah, it does.

SALLY Yours is like two inches too long.

CASSIE Where'd you get it? The Op shop? Is it like, forth hand?

HOPE Excuse me?

JESS (nicely) You know, like second hand, but forth.

SALLY Shut up would you Jess! She doesn't need to understand.

HOPE I didn't get them from the op-shop. My mum got them for me.

ALICE That's right little Miss Goody-Two-Shoes, is your mum as feral as you?

HOPE Leave my mum out of this.

CASSIE *(mocking)* "Leave my mum out of this". It's her fault you exist.

SALLY Yeah, where did she get you from, the pound?

Bullies laugh.

ALICE Dog!

HOPE My mum cares about me.

CASSIE *(nasty)* Are you trying to say something?

HOPE No of course not... Well if I change will you stop bullying me?

CASSIE Who said we were bullying you? That's not the way we would put it. Is that how you would put it girls?

JESS Who us?

SALLY Of course not.

ALICE As if.

CASSIE Were just trying to help you fit in aren't we Sal?

SALLY That's right... Now that you mention changing, you could certainly change a few things. You need to let your hair down, literally. Maybe take your glasses off as well...

Sally pulls Hope's elastic out of her hair.

JESS Yeah take them off!

HOPE But I can't see without them.

CASSIE If you want to fit in you have to take them off.

ALICE You should pull you skirt up a lot so it is shorter and push your socks down. No one has them that high.

Hope does as she's told, takes her glasses off and adjusts her skirt and socks.

HOPE Ok, is that better then?

They all scoff.

SALLY Ha, ha! What a sheep!

CASSIE Oh my God! I can't believe you actually listened to us. You are such a try hard.

SALLY Don't bother square; you'll always be worthless.

ALICE Leave us alone, Loser!

SALLY Freak!

JESS Blonde.

CASSIE Jess that's pathetic!

JESS (*stammering*) I mean, I mean, dumb blonde?

Sally, Alice and Cassie push Hope then walk off. Jess gives Hope a little shrug as she turns and follows her friends.

SCENE 16 – BATFINK

REX

REX Poofa... I've always hated that word. The kids at primary school called me it, poofa, fairy, pansy, faggot, gay-boy. And I called them poofa right back. We called everyone it. Saying someone was gay was the best insult we could imagine. Of course, we'd all deny it, smack each other around the head and call them the same names back. Deflection at its best.

There was this one kid, Brandon was his name. I think his mum must have had a Beverly Hills 90210 fetish when she named him, his middle name was actually Dylan. Yep. Anyway, poor bloody Brandon. When we called him a fag, he didn't deny it... He didn't say a word. He just completely blocked us, like we weren't even there. Like he was resilient. Strong. Invincible. He used to pretend to be Batfink. Do you remember that show? Batfink?

(*impersonates*) "Your bullets cannot harm me; my wings are like a shield of steel". (*remorseful*) Except Brandon didn't have wings, he couldn't fly away, he couldn't defend himself...

A beat. This is hard.

And we did harm him. Our words like bullets, our fists breaking through his shield. We were relentless... And I participated. A hundred percent, I was a part of it. It was like, if I could bring the attention to the queer Batfink kid then maybe no one would notice that I was gay too... Until they did, then it was my turn to cop it.

SCENE 17 - PAYOUTS

MILLY

ALL ACTORS

Milly stands at the front of stage while all actors onstage (except one, Rhianna for next scene) approach her and throw insults at her. The group gets closer and closer and the insults get louder and nastier. Milly looks increasingly uncomfortable and ends up sinking to floor in a futile attempt to escape the harassment as they degrade her.

**Feel free to replace the insults to ones more prevalent in your setting.*

- | | |
|----|-------------|
| 1 | Freak |
| 2 | Wide Load |
| 3 | Dumb blonde |
| 4 | Tart |
| 5 | Dog |
| 6 | Idiot |
| 7 | Bimbo |
| 8 | Cow |
| 9 | Dumb ass |
| 10 | Moron |
| 11 | Brace face |
| 12 | Fat ass |
| 13 | Povo |
| 14 | Loser |
| 15 | Retard |
| 16 | Frigid |
| 17 | Pizza face |
| 18 | Fake |
| 19 | Try Hard |

20	Feral
21	Faggot
22	Hoe
23	Poofter
24	Skank
25	Slag
26	Festy
27	Fugly
28	Homo
29	Bogan
30	Snob
31	Try hard
32	Ugly
33	Stupid
34	Prissy
35	Goody two shoes
36	Square
37	Nerd
38	Metal mouth
39	Mono brow
40	Short ass
41	Fatty
42	Mole
43	Scrag
ALL	Loser

The group laugh, leave, some running, others walking. They return to neutral while Milly remains broken on the floor for the next scene.

SCENE 18 - NOT LIKE THE REST

MILLY
RHIANNA

Scene continues from PAYOUTS. Milly has sunk to the floor centre stage, all alone, crying softly.

Rhianna rushes up to talk to her.

RHIANNA Are you alright?

Milly just mumbles and turns her back on Rhianna.

RHIANNA Pardon? Are you ok?

MILLY Leave me alone.

RHIANNA It's ok.... You can trust me.

MILLY I said leave me alone!

RHIANNA I'm not going anywhere. I saw how they just treated you.

MILLY Why are you talking to me? You're just like the others.

RHIANNA What are you saying? You don't know me. How can you say that I'm like them?

MILLY Well no one is ever nice to me.

RHIANNA Well get used to it cause I am going to be *(smiles)* Do you want to talk about it?

MILLY No you won't understand, No one does all they do is pick on me. Everybody hates me.

RHIANNA They hate everybody. They're just bullies.

MILLY Yeah they are just bullies. I shouldn't listen to them. I always let them get to me.

RHIANNA They only do it because you're different; I think different is cool. At least you're not boring.

MILLY *(Smiles)* Yeah who would want to be boring?

SCENE 19 – WEIRD TREE KID.

CAM There was a kid in my primary school that we used to call the Weird Tree Kid... Even to his face, “Hey, Weird Tree Kid!” He wouldn’t answer of course. He didn’t speak to us at all, just block us as though he couldn’t see us, which made him seem even weirder. We’d try and make him look at us, talk to us, but he’d just climb the old gum tree in front of the school. He would climb so high that no one could get to him. Dangle, right out on the end of those branches if anyone else tried to climb out to him. We were all too scared to go that far. He was brave. Or crazy. *(a beat)* We just called him crazy. Every day before school he was up there, recess, lunch and after school. He’d climb up that old gum before we got there and leave after we’d gone. A couple of times we waited... Hours... Just to see if he’d come down. But nope. He’d just stay up in the tree, safe in its branches. After a while we kinda got bored and stopped hanging around the bottom of the tree. But still he didn’t come down; every day he still climbed that tree. Then one night there was a big storm, and a huge branch cracked off that old gum. The next day they had to cut the tree down as it was a danger. He just stood in the yard and cried and cried. The teachers couldn’t move him and after a while they had to ring his dad to come and get him. That kid never came to school again and his family moved away soon after.

I think about the Weird Tree Kid all the time...It’s a pretty cool thing to be able to climb so high... I wonder if we had been friends, he would have taught me to climb like him. High amongst the branches. I kinda feel like I missed out because we were mean to him, instead of being his friend. He was only the Weird Tree Kid, because we made him the Weird Tree Kid, without us he wouldn’t have had any reason to hide in that old gum tree.

SCENE 20 - I DIDN’T MEAN IT.

Actors step forward one at a time to deliver their defence for bullying.

1. I didn’t mean it.
2. He can handle it.
3. We were only kidding around.
4. It’s never bothered him before.
5. He gives as good as he gets.
6. He knows we’re not serious.
7. He’s a lad! He can take it.
8. He loves it.
9. It’s funny.

10. Everyone says it.
11. We've always called him that.
12. I was just standing there.
13. It was just a joke.
- ALL I didn't mean it.

SCENE 21 - TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF ME

JOSIE

Josie walks downstage to address the audience.

JOSIE Tell me what you think of me! Come on tell me! Ugly, stupid, fat? Oh that's original! Are dumb payouts all you can throw at me? Loser, Homo, Dweeb, Retard. Wow, you guys are so original! Like I haven't heard stuff liker that a million times.

What I want to know is why you think you have the right to judge me? You people don't know me. Nobody does because you haven't made the effort to speak to me like a human being. All you see is that I'm not quite like you and see that as grounds to tease me.

Well today is the day that I stand up for myself. We are all different, I'm not sure why, but I'm sure as anything that it's not so you can make people feel like crap. What gives you the right to make me feel bad about myself? All you people care about is what's on the outside, not the inside, where the real difference is. Why do you feel you have the right hurt me am I a vulnerable target? Just someone to pick on, a big joke!? How would you like it if someone treated you the way you treat me day after day? I think it's because you are scared, of people who are different. So, how about the next time you go to call me or someone else fat, ugly, loser, fag, frigid, freak or any other cruel name remember that you do not have the right to judge people... And the rotten things that you are saying about them, only reflects what's on the inside of you.

SCENE 22 - REGRET IT NOW

LUKE
REBECCA
TEACHER
SHANE
SASHA
MARK
EULOGISER

School - Luke is looking in his locker. The 'cool' group walks past.

LUKE How's it going guys? What are you doing?

The bullies laugh and mock Luke.

MARK What? *(laughs)* Why is he speaking to us?

SASHA Ohh look it's little Lukey pookey. Got lost on your way to Loserville, did you mate?

Shane shoves Luke into the lockers, other boys laugh.

SHANE Get out of the way, freak... What we're doing is none of your business.

The bullies exit, laughing.

REBECCA *(approaches Luke)* Hey Luke, what's wrong? What did they do to you this time? Are you ok?

LUKE *(pretending)* Hey don't worry about me, I'm fine. They didn't do anything to me.

REBECCA Luke, you don't have to lie to me, I know what they do to you. You can trust me; I'm not like everyone else.

LUKE I know.

She touches his shoulder to comfort him, he shrugs her away.

REBECCA Well I'll see you in class after lunch ok.

LUKE Ok... See you later.

The Classroom - Actors bring chairs forward in rows.

Luke is sitting in the front row. Rebecca sits at the back, looking uncomfortable.

TEACHER Everyone take your books out and begin on page 167.

Class moans and takes out their books.

Shane throws a piece of paper at Luke. Luke throws it back; the Teacher sees him.

TEACHER Luke if I see you throwing paper in my class again, you're out. Understand?

LUKE But they threw it first.

TEACHER I don't have time for your stories, Luke.

Class laughs. Shane throws another piece of paper at Luke and again he throws it back.

Shane sidles up to Luke and whispers into his ear.

SHANE It's OK Lukey, we won't hurt you.

Shane proceeds to push Luke off his chair. Luke yells out.

TEACHER That's it, Luke, get out of my classroom.

LUKE But they did it to me.

TEACHER I don't care, Luke. Get out of my classroom.

SHANE Yeah get out Luke you big girl. *(all laugh)*

LUKE *(yells)* Leave me alone!

Luke kicks his chair runs out of the classroom, crying. Everyone laughs.

The teacher follows him.

TEACHER *(annoyed)* What's going on Luke? Why are you acting like this?

LUKE They always pick on me.

TEACHER Look I will talk to them but you'll have to learn to control yourself.

LUKE *(quietly)* Yeah. Whatever.

TEACHER *(annoyed)* Do you understand me, Luke? I will not have you calling out in my classroom.

LUKE Yes, Miss.

Lunch Time - Luke is sitting by himself on a single chair. Rebecca walks over to him.

REBECCA Hey Luke, how you going?

LUKE Listen Rebecca, I don't want you feeling sorry for me, so you can go and sit with your friends, ok?

REBECCA *(Looks uncertain)* You sure?

Luke nods his head.

REBECCA *(hesitantly)* Ok then...

She leaves.

The bullies enter. They push Luke in the back of the head.

SHANE Poofter!

Luke runs off stage. Boys laugh and turn backs to audience.

The funeral - Straight into next scene. The bullies turn, consoling each other.

SHANE It's just not going to be the same without him around. He was a really good bloke. Don't you think guys?

MARK I know... I can't believe it.

SASHA Yeah, he was a good bloke.

Rebecca walks over and hears their conversation.

REBECCA You guys make me sick; I can't believe you.

SASHA What do you mean? What have we done this time?

REBECCA Your pathetic, all of you, all through his life all you've done is gave him hell, and now he's gone you all act as if you just lost your best mate.

Rebecca walks off. The boys remain stunned, ashamed.

Eulogiser enters, turns Luke's empty chair around to resemble a pulpit.

EULOGISER They never really liked you
They never really cared
Until you killed yourself,
Then the grief in death they shared
They can't believe you've done this
They can't believe you dared
It wasn't until you were gone,
That people realised that they cared
(Pause)
We just wish Luke realised that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

SCENE 23 - BULLY!

MICHELLE
TOBY

A bus stop. Centre Stage.

Actors mill around like they are arriving at stop and waiting for a bus.

A bully (Toby) is reeling off insults (taken from PAYOUTS scene 10) to Michelle.

Some ignore what's going on, others look uncomfortable or move away.

The bullying continues.

A bystander (Jack) comes to the front, sees what is happening and speaks up.

JACK You're a bully, mate!

TOBY Get stuffed, what's it got to do with you.

JACK Well I wouldn't want it to happen to my sister or any of my mates so why should I stand by and let it happen to her?

TOBY Keep out of it, or maybe I might find a problem with you (*pushes Jack*)

JACK Yeah, maybe you will, but then someone else might realise that they don't want to see it either.

Brad approaches them.

BRAD Hey Jack, this guy giving you problems?

Monica approaches them.

MONICA Yeah and he's not the only one he was having a go at that girl before.

BRAD Really? Bit of a bully are ya?

Toby reacts with disdain.

JACK Nah, its ok guys... Our friend here was just leaving.

BRAD Bullies aren't welcome here.

Toby starts to look uncomfortable. By now he is surrounded by a number of people, some still stay away and don't get involved.

TOBY Ok, ok I get your point.

Toby leaves.

JACK You alright?

MICHELLE Yes... Thankyou!

They all go about their business then all freeze.

SCENE 24 - REPRISE OF TRAIN

Actor breaks from group, walks downstage. comes forward. Reprise of last paragraph of TRAIN

MASON Ask yourself this then how many times have you laughed when someone is called a name, or makes a fool out of himself or herself? How many times have you just walked past when someone is being bullied? And when it happens to you, how much do you wish that someone....

ALL Anyone.

MASON Would say or do something?

End.