



Dwayne Yancey

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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P.O. Box 1401

Rapid City, SD 57709

THE ARMADILLO QUEEN
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THE ARMADILLO QUEEN was first presented as a staged reading in June 2016 at the Renaissance Theatre, Lynchburg, VA: John Hold, director.

CEE CEE: Pamela Nowell

DEE DEE: Katerina Yancey

GYPSY JANE: Cheryl Carter

SARA: Kristen Williams Leclerc

CHARLIE: Dylan Grey

MISS BATTLEAXE: Melissa Kennedy

COACH FERGUSON: Jeff Krantz

THE ARMADILLO QUEEN

COMEDY. Sara, a new student, hopes to drift through her senior year at Hurleyburg High School with no one noticing her, but her dream is dashed when she is drafted to serve as the school's mascot, the Armadillo Queen. Sara is forced to wear an armadillo costume, appear at a Hurleyburg parade, endure a game of cow pie bingo, and drum up school spirit for the upcoming football game against the team's main rival. And the stakes are high. According to a 100-year curse, the whole town of Hurleyburg is destined to disappear if the football team doesn't win the upcoming game. Fearing annihilation, the Hurleyburg football coach seeks the help of the town's fortuneteller to find a magic charm that will ensure victory. Meanwhile, Hurleyburg locals Cee Cee and Dee Dee are hoping to extend their winning streak at cow pie bingo. There are nonstop laughs in this winning hometown comedy. Easy to stage with simple set pieces.

Performance Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

NOTE: For more Hurleyburg hilarity, checkout *Rhonda's High-Class Roadkill Chili* and *The Cactus Rustlers*.

CHARACTERS

(3 M, 5 F, 9 flexible, opt. extras)

SARA: A new senior at Hurleyburg High School who is drafted to serve as the school's mascot, the Armadillo Queen; wears a T-shirt and jeans; female.

CHARLIE HUNTER: A nerdy senior who has been drafted to serve as the Armadillo King because he's the only guy not on the football team; male.

GYPSY JANE: Local "fortuneteller"; female.

CEE CEE: Dee Dee's sister, a Hurleyburg football spectator who hopes to win at cow pie bingo; female.

DEE DEE: Cee Cee's sister, a Hurleyburg football spectator who hopes to win at cow pie bingo; female.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Stern teacher at Hurleyburg High; female.

COACH: Coach of the Hurleyburg High football team, which has never won a game; wears a hat; male.

HENDERSON: Football player who annoys the Coach; male.

FOOTBALL PLAYERS 1-6: Wear football uniforms; nonspeaking; flexible. (Note: May be played by females dressed as males.)

CHEERLEADERS 1-3: Husky/muscular cheerleaders; nonspeaking; flexible. (Note: May be played by males dressed as females.)

EXTRAS (opt.): As additional Football Players, Cheerleaders, and Students.

SETTING

Hurleyburg, Texas.

SETS

Simple set pieces that can be easily moved on and off are used to set the scenes. In many cases, a bare stage will suffice.

Storm cellar. A bare stage or a backdrop may be used.

Hurleyburg football field. There is a small set of bleachers that can be easily rolled on and off. The "field" is marked off into squares for Meadow Muffin Bingo in Act II, scene 1.

Gypsy Jane's house. There is a front door. Inside there is a sofa, TV, and a small table with two chairs. There is a sign on the wall listing her services and prices.

Classroom. There are student desks.

School office. There is a chair.

School hallway. There is an empty trophy case.

School cafeteria. There are some small tables with chairs.

School grounds. A backdrop may be used.

Barnyard. A backdrop may be used.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Bare stage and storm cellar.

Scene 2: Hurleyburg football field, afternoon.

Scene 3: Gypsy Jane's house.

Scene 4: Miss Battleaxe's classroom, first day of school

Scene 5: School cafeteria, lunchtime.

Scene 6: Football field.

Scene 7: Gypsy Jane's house.

Scene 8: School grounds.

Intermission, opt.

ACT II

Scene 1: Football field, Meadow Muffin Bingo.

Scene 2: School grounds, homecoming parade.

Scene 3: Gypsy Jane's house.

Scene 4: Bare stage.

Scene 5: Barnyard.

Scene 6: Football field, night of the big game.

Scene 7: Bare stage.

PROPS

Tray of snacks	tinfoil. Her tail is made of
Lighter	aluminum cans tied
Hair curlers	together on a string.)
Funky slippers, for Gypsy	Armadillo King costume
Jane	(Note: Charlie is
Wallet	wrapped in tinfoil. He
Money	has a fabric donkey tail.)
Bowling ball	2 Muffins
Backpack for Sara	Sign on the "field"
Ear buds	Small table
Book	Assorted dolls
Sharpie marker	Winning bingo ticket
Assorted pens	Hood of a car
Empty trophy case	Box
Wristwatch, for Charlie	Football jersey with no
2 Food trays	number on it, for
Piece of paper	Henderson
Fried chicken	Picture of Willie Nelson
Punk-looking clothing, for	Assorted junk food
Sara	Tissue
Bag	Books
Armadillo Queen crown	Buckets
Armadillo King crown	Bucket of water
Baton	Cowboy hat, for Charlie
Armadillo Queen costume	Black prom dress, for Sara
(Note: Sara is wrapped in	Suit or tuxedo, for Charlie

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Sound of wind

Wind

Sound of a tornado

Tornado howling

Sound of a raging storm

School bell

Heavy metal music

Cow mooing

Sound of a car passing

Sound of a truck approaching, slowing, and coming to a stop

Sound of a truck driving away

Sound of a truck slowing down and its passenger door
opening

"Fire" (effect created with lighting and smoke, opt.)

Sound of a grass fire (sizzle and then whoosh)

"Flames" spreading (effect created with lighting)

Fire truck siren

**“THE ARMADILLO ISN'T
JUST A WALKING TIN CAN
WITH A RAT TAIL.**

**THE ARMADILLO IS
A LEAN, MEAN,
FIGHTING MACHINE!”**

—COACH

ACT I
SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Sara, a new high school senior, enters.)

SARA: (To audience, peeved.) So...Alice fell down a hole and wound up in Wonderland. Dorothy got picked up by a tornado and carried away to Oz. But me...do I have anything interesting like that happen to me? No! My mom moves to East Bumrush Egypt—or at least somewhere out here in the middle of Nowheresville, Texas, which is just as bad—and right before my senior year! Which is even worse! My whole senior year is ruined! Ruined! Why can't I fall down a hole? Why can't I get carried away by a twister?

(Charlie enters.)

CHARLIE: Stay out here much longer and you will be.

SARA: What do you mean?

CHARLIE: (Pointing into the distance.) Twister's coming!

SARA: Oh, crap! Is that real?

CHARLIE: Real as rain! And goodness knows, we need the rain.

SARA: So what do we do?

CHARLIE: There's a storm cellar right over there at the old five-and-dime.

SARA: Great. Just great. Now I'm living in the middle of a disaster area!

CHARLIE: But, hey, look at it this way...now you can be both Dorothy and Alice at the same time.

SARA: What?

CHARLIE: You know, you can ride out a twister and go down a hole at the same time.

SARA: You're weird.

CHARLIE: Yeah, I know. Come on!

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(Sound of a tornado. Charlie and Sara rush off. Coach and Players enter. Note: If desired, Players may be offstage/unseen if using a smaller cast.)

COACH: *(To Players.)* All right, now listen up. I want to talk to you about what it means to be a Hurleyburg Fighting Armadillo. That's right, you heard me: a Fighting Armadillo. Now, I know some people don't think it's very dignified to have an armadillo as a school mascot. They call us names. You've heard 'em. I know you have. "Possum on the half shell." "Poor man's pig." "Hoover hogs." I've been told they were pretty tasty back in the day, though. Or how about this one: "Hillbilly speed bump"? Or worst of all, "roadkill." But who cares what our own cheerleaders call us? I'm here to tell you that the armadillo has gotten a bum rap. The armadillo isn't just a walking tin can with a rat tail. The armadillo is a lean, mean, fighting machine! Okay, maybe not so lean—kinda squat, actually—but you get the idea. Because when one of those 18-wheelers comes barreling down the highway in the middle of the night—its brights shining all the way from here out to the cap rock, and there's a little ol' armadillo waddling across the blacktop trying to keep its belly warm—you know what that armadillo does? Does that armadillo run and hide? Does it step aside and say, "Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Trucker, you've got the right of way here. Please, you go right on through while I wait over on the side of the road for you to pass on by?" No! That armadillo stands its ground! It doesn't just stand its ground. It looks that truck straight in the eye. Well, two eyes, really. It sizes up the approaching danger—about 40 tons of metal coming at you at 60-70-80 miles per hour—and you know what it does then? It takes a deep breath, it says a little prayer, and then it jumps straight up into the grillwork! Smack! Never mind that that armadillo gets smashed so flat that not even the buzzards bother to pick at the carcass. The point is...in the face of long odds, that armadillo fights back!

And that's just what I want you to do! (*Henderson speaks, but it's just incoherent mumbling. Note: A voiceover may be used if Players are unseen.*) No, Henderson, I'm not saying I want you to jump in front of a tractor-trailer. What I'm saying is you are going to be up against some long odds yourself this year. Now, we all know it's been a long time since this school has won a game. Ninety-nine years, in fact. All right, fine, we've never won a game. Now, some people say it's been bad coaching. Others say it's just been bad luck. Some even say there's some kind of "curse." Well, I don't believe that kind of mumbo jumbo. I believe in three yards and a cloud of dust, and believe me, out here in West Texas, there's plenty of dust. Now, I know a lot of you are wondering...why should we even bother? They're just going to beat us, stomp us, pulverize us into the dirt just like they always do. Well, you know what? There hasn't been an armadillo yet that's been able to beat a tractor-trailer, but they sure as heck try, now don't they? And that's just what I want you to do. I want you—each of you—to close your eyes and imagine that you're an armadillo. (*Incoherent mumbling from Henderson.*) No, Henderson, I'm not going to make you hold hands. This isn't one of those team-building exercises, but I want you to dig down deep inside your nine-banded shell, and in a few weeks when you get out there under those Friday night lights, I want you to think about what it's like to be an armadillo staring down those headlights coming straight at you. So on the count of three, I want you to open your eyes and jump, got it? So here goes: one, two, three, roadkill!

(*Coach and Players exit. Blackout. Lights up. Sara and Charlie are in a storm cellar. Sara is terrified and huddled in a corner. Charlie is relaxed.*)

SARA: I'm going to die! I'm going to die!

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CHARLIE: You know what's weird, other than me, that is? You ever read a story in the newspaper about a tornado somewhere? Ever notice how everybody always says, "it sounded like a freight train." So whaddya think? Does it sound like a freight train to you?

SARA: *(Looks up and can't believe Charlie is jabbering on calmly in the middle of disaster.)* What?

CHARLIE: The tornado...does it sound like a freight train to you?

SARA: Are you crazy?

CHARLIE: No. Just curious, you know. The strangest thing is...nobody looks at a freight train going by and says "you know, that sounds like a tornado." Don't you think that's odd?

SARA: *(Covering her head.)* Arrrrgggh!

CHARLIE: I think it's odd.

(Lights down on Charlie and Sara. Lights up on Coach and Players who are at practice.)

COACH: *(To Players, shouts.)* All right, well, enough of that motivational claptrap. Time to get down to business. And our business today is— *(Sees Henderson waving his hand wildly. Exasperated sigh.)* Henderson, do you have a question or are you just waving off flies? *(Incoherent mumbling from Henderson.)* What?! *(Turns around and spots the tornado.)* Oh, that. *(To Players, continuing.)* All right, so, here, at Hurleyburg, we run a wishbone offense. Now who can tell me where the backfield lines up in a wishbone formation? *(Players start to flee, shouts.)* Hey, come back here! What's the matter with you people? It's just a tornado, that's all! This is Texas! This is football! If you can't stand up to a little ol' funnel cloud, what are you going to do when it comes time to stand up against those players from Hustleburg? What would an armadillo do?! What would an armadillo do?!

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(Lights down on Coach. Lights up on Sara and Charlie, who are still in the storm cellar. Sound of a raging storm is heard. Sara's only slightly less tense than before. Charlie remains calm.)

CHARLIE: *(To Sara.)* Sounds like an F-3 to me.

SARA: F-what?

CHARLIE: Tornadoes. They go from F-1 all the way up to F-5. It's some kind of scale. I don't know what the "F" stands for.

SARA: *(Referring to the tornado, darkly.)* I can think of something.

CHARLIE: What do you mean?

SARA: Oh, never mind.

CHARLIE: You're not from around here, are you?

SARA: Whatever gave you that idea?

CHARLIE: I'm Charlie. Charlie Hunter.

SARA: Okay. I just want it to stop!

CHARLIE: So what's your name?

SARA: What?

CHARLIE: Your name.

SARA: Look, I'm only going to be here a year, and then I'm going to get as far away from this godforsaken place as I can.

CHARLIE: Oh, it's not godforsaken. We've got a church on every corner.

SARA: Yeah, I noticed.

CHARLIE: They say some people go to Sunday school at one, preaching at another, and prayer meeting at a third.

SARA: What about the fourth?

CHARLIE: What else? Potluck supper. Between you and me, the [Baptists] have the best fried chicken, but the [Methodists] have the best BBQ. *[Or insert another religion.]*

SARA: I'm a vegetarian.

CHARLIE: Oh. Since when?

SARA: Since now, okay?

CHARLIE: Oh. So what's your name?

SARA: Geez! What's with the name thing?

CHARLIE: Sorry, just being friendly.

SARA: Look, I don't want to be here, okay? So the name doesn't matter. It's not like we're going to be friends or anything. *(Long pause.)* I'm Sara. No "H."

CHARLIE: Hi, Sara.

(Lights down on Sara and Charlie. Lights up on Coach. Coach is ranting at his Players even though they have fled the field due to the oncoming tornado.)

COACH: *(Shouts.)* Oh, good grief! It's nothing but wind! Are you telling me you're afraid of the wind? Wind ain't nothing but air, so you're telling me you're afraid of the air! Pathetic! Just pathetic! What do you think an armadillo does when he sees a tornado coming? Do you think he just runs away?! No! He stands his ground and jumps! I want to see you jump! Jump! Jump! Do the "armadillo jump"! *(Disappointed.)* Fine, be that way. You know what you'll be? Losers! Just like your daddies were and your granddaddies before them! Losers! Losers! Losers! *(To himself, sighs.)* Maybe there is a curse, after all.

(Lights down on Coach. Lights up on Charlie and Sara in the storm cellar. Sound of tornado howling. Sara takes out a lighter.)

CHARLIE: *(To Sara, indicating lighter.)* What are you doing?

SARA: What's it look like I'm doing?

CHARLIE: That's a lighter!

SARAH: Duh! Yeah!

CHARLIE: You shouldn't play with fire.

SARA: I'm not playing with fire. I'm just...admiring it.

CHARLIE: But you might set something on fire.

SARA: I'm not setting anything on fire.

CHARLIE: You might set yourself on fire.

SARA: I'm not setting myself on fire.

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CHARLIE: You might set me on fire.

SARA: I'm not setting you on fire.

CHARLIE: You might set all this on fire.

SARA: Are you serious?

CHARLIE: Look at this! It's all flammable! It's all combustible! It all could go at any minute!

SARA: Fine, be that way. *(Angrily puts her lighter away.)*

What's it to you?

CHARLIE: Look, I've already saved your life once today.

Don't make me do it twice.

(Lights down on Charlie and Sara. Lights up on Coach. Sound of a tornado approaching. Coach is holding onto a goalpost for dear life and struggling against the wind.)

COACH: I wonder if Tom Landry ever had days like this?

(Hat blows off in the wind.) No, I'm sure he didn't.

(Lights down on Coach. Lights up on Sara and Charlie in the storm cellar. The tornado has stopped. Sara doesn't realize it and is still covering her head with her hands.)

SARA: *(To Charlie.)* So when is this going to be over?

CHARLIE: Oh, it's been over.

SARA: *(Looking up.)* What?

CHARLIE: Don't you hear? No freight train.

(Sara listens and hears nothing.)

SARA: So why didn't you tell me?! I'm tired of being cooped up in here!

CHARLIE: I just like talking to you.

(Sara stares at Charlie.)

SARA: To me? But I didn't say anything.

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CHARLIE: Everybody else thinks I'm kind of a dweeb or something, but you seemed to actually listen to me.

SARA: Oh, good grief. I'm out of here. *(Exits.)*

CHARLIE: *(Shouts.)* Look out for debris and downed power lines! *(To himself.)* "Sara," no "H." No "H." No "H." I have to remember that. No "H." No "H." No "H."

(Blackout.)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: Hurleyburg football field, afternoon. Cee Cee and Dee Dee are sitting in the stands watching football practice. Players are running about, looking ridiculous. Cheerleaders are performing silly cheers.)

CEE CEE: (To Dee Dee.) So, whaddya think? Is this the year?

DEE DEE: Nope.

CEE CEE: Why not? What's wrong this year?

DEE DEE: Just look at 'em. Does that look like a winning football team to you?

CEE CEE: I don't know. I don't know what a winning football team looks like.

DEE DEE: Well, for one thing, they're always the other team.

CEE CEE: Well, this group looks pretty promising, if you ask me. Look at 'em...broad shoulders, broad rumps, broad flanks—

DEE DEE: Sounds like the livestock report.

CEE CEE: And burly. They definitely look burly to me. Don't they look positively burly to you? Burly's worth a few yards at least.

DEE DEE: Those are the cheerleaders.

CEE CEE: Oh.

DEE DEE: The football team's over there. (Points.)

CEE CEE: (Realizes.) Oh, them.

DEE DEE: Scrawniest collection of runts I've seen in a long time.

CEE CEE: Well, guess that's it, then. Won't be settling any scores with Hustleburg this year.

DEE DEE: Won't be scoring at all, probably.

CEE CEE: I remember the last time they scored: They put out a whole special section of the "Hurleyburg Weekly Miracle," one page for each point.

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DEE DEE: It was a safety. The other team fumbled the ball and fell on it in their own end zone. The only thing our boys did was stand around and gawk.

CEE CEE: Hey, a score's a score. The [Nixon] administration...now those were the good years. *[Or insert another president.]*

DEE DEE: I don't know why we can't raise up a better crop of football players around here. You'd think if we could raise cattle with horns out to here... *(Holds out hands.)* ...we could raise us up a few football players. I blame inbreeding. That, and the curse.

CEE CEE: You don't really believe in curses, do you, Dee Dee?

DEE DEE: Heck, it's Texas. We all do a little cursin' now and then, especially when you get your butt whipped the way we usually do.

CEE CEE: Not that kind of curse. I'm talking "the curse," if you know what I mean. Two different things.

DEE DEE: Oh, I know what you mean. And, no, I don't believe in it. Of course, I don't believe in [Japanese] cars, either, but they still keep making those, so there. *[Or insert another foreign car manufacturer.]*

CEE CEE: True, true. So maybe it's bad luck, or maybe it really is a curse. You never know.

DEE DEE: All I know is we're running out of time. And you know what happens when time runs out.

CEE CEE: Yep. They say if we can't beat Hustleburg at something at least once in a hundred years, this town'll just dry up and blow away.

DEE DEE: Not that you could tell any difference, mind you.

(Blackout.)

SCENE 3

(AT RISE: *Gypsy Jane's house. Gypsy Jane is lounging on the sofa watching television and eating snacks. She is wearing funky slippers and has curlers in her hair. Coach enters and appears in the doorway. Coach gets ready to knock on the door.*)

GYPSY JANE: (*Without looking away from the TV.*) Don't bother knocking. It's unlocked.

COACH: Wow. You *are* good.

GYPSY JANE: I wouldn't be much of a fortuneteller if I didn't know you were coming, now would I?

COACH: Um, that's true.

GYPSY JANE: Besides, I heard you when you pulled up. You might want to have someone look at your undercarriage. I think you've got a hole in your muffler.

COACH: Oh, uh, thanks. Well, anyway...so...uh...well, see, I'm the football coach over at Hurleyburg High School, and, uh, I was wondering...well, your sign said you could read palms and stuff...

GYPSY JANE: Let me see your hand. (*Coach extends his hand. Gives his hand a cursory inspection.*) No good.

COACH: What? What's wrong? (*Gypsy Jane nods toward a sign that states her prices.*) Oh, sorry. Here... (*Puts a bill in her hand.*)

GYPSY JANE: That's better. Have a seat. (*Coach sits at a table.*) So what's it going to be? Life line, fortune line, or maybe your love line?

COACH: Uh, well, actually, I was wondering if you could tell me about my football team, you know, the upcoming season...how we're going to do.

GYPSY JANE: Ah, you want the ball!

COACH: I guess. I don't really believe in this kind of stuff. It's just that, well, I've tried everything else, and I'm kinda at my wits' end, so...

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(Gypsy Jane sets a bowling ball on the table.)

COACH: Uh, that's a bowling ball.

GYPSY JANE: Very perceptive. Fourteen pounds of pure polyester. Don't worry. It's my spare. I only use the one with the urethane core in league competition.

COACH: Uh, I thought you'd, you know, use a crystal ball.

GYPSY JANE: I've got a snow globe. Would that make you feel any better?

COACH: How can you tell the future looking in a snow globe?

GYPSY JANE: Oh, I don't have to.

COACH: What do you mean you don't have to?

GYPSY JANE: Your team stinks. Everybody knows that. You don't need a fortuneteller to tell you that.

COACH: Oh. That bad, huh?

GYPSY JANE: Worse, actually. I hear people carry cans of air freshener to the game just to rid themselves of the stench.

COACH: Oh. I always thought it was bug spray.

GYPSY JANE: Think what you want... *(Mysteriously, dramatically.)* ...but the hidden eye sees all! *(Normal tone.)* Besides, the nose knows, too. And if that fails, there're always the sports pages. How 'bout them [Cowboys], huh? *[Or insert the name of another suitable football team.]*

COACH: Oh. So you really think there's a curse?

GYPSY JANE: A curse, you say?

COACH: I don't believe it, mind you. I think it's just some old wives' tale. No offense, of course, to you or any other old wives.

GYPSY JANE: *(Sharply.)* I'm single.

COACH: Oh, I mean —

GYPSY JANE: You're not very good with women, are you?

COACH: Or football either, apparently. But what if...just for the sake of argument...what if there really was a curse? Is there anything that could be done about it?

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GYPSY JANE: Hmmmm. I don't know. Curses are very complex.
COACH: How complex?
GYPSY JANE: Now, if it were a spell, or a hex, or even a jinx...those are very different matters.
COACH: I see. *(Pause.)* Really?
GYPSY JANE: But a full-fledged curse? Now that's a different kettle of fish.
COACH: It is?
GYPSY JANE: Oh, yes. A curse requires someone with special skills.
COACH: What kind of special skills?
GYPSY JANE: Someone with special training.
COACH: What kind of special training?
GYPSY JANE: Someone who can give the matter special...consideration.
COACH: What kind of consideration?
GYPSY JANE: How much you got?
COACH: I don't know. *(Pulls out his wallet and counts the bills.)*
About seventeen dollars. Why?
GYPSY JANE: Special enough for me. *(Takes the money.)*
COACH: So you can break the curse, then?

(Gypsy Jane gestures for silence as she counts the bills.)

GYPSY JANE: What kind of offense you run, Coach?
COACH: Uh, the wishbone. Why?
GYPSY JANE: Then we need some chicken.
COACH: Oh. Why?
GYPSY JANE: *(Spooky voice.)* Because chickens have magic in 'em.
COACH: Really?
GYPSY JANE: Especially when they're deep-fried. Besides, I'm getting hungry.
COACH: Oh.

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GYPSY JANE: Well, don't just stand there! Step to it! Let's see some separation! This is no time for lollygagging! We've got a game to win here!

COACH: Oh, sorry. I'm going! I'm going!

(Coach exits. Gypsy Jane stuffs the money in her shirt pocket or purse.)

GYPSY JANE: *(To herself.)* Men! Sometimes they're so gullible!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 4

(AT RISE: Hurleyburg High School, first day of school. Miss Battleaxe's classroom. There are a few student desks. School bell rings. Sara enters, wearing a t-shirt and jeans and carrying a backpack. She slumps into her desk.)

SARA: All right, educate me. Let's get it over with. Day one of the Texas Hostage Drama: The siege begins. (Puts some ear buds in her ears, cranks up some loud, heavy metal music, and closes her eyes. Miss Battleaxe enters and approaches. Miss Battleaxe stands over her, glaring with disapproval. Miss Battleaxe drops a book near the desk. It makes a loud noise, but Sara doesn't respond. Miss Battleaxe picks up the book, holds it higher, and drops it. Louder noise but still no response from Sara. Frustrated, Miss Battleaxe rips the ear buds out of Sara's ears.) Hey! It was just getting to the good part!

MISS BATTLEAXE: This is school, young lady. There are no good parts.

SARA: Tell me about it.

(Miss Battleaxe towers over Sara in an intimidating fashion.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: I don't know you.

SARA: I'm new.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Like I said, I don't know you.

SARA: Uh, I'm Sara.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Sara, huh?

SARA: No "H" on the end.

MISS BATTLEAXE: I'm Miss Battleaxe.

SARA: Oh.

MISS BATTLEAXE: (Sternly.) With an "E" on the end.

SARA: (Weakly.) All right.

MISS BATTLEAXE: So you're new, huh?

SARA: Yeah.

MISS BATTLEAXE: (Studying Sara intently.)
Interesting...interesting...

SARA: Uh, yeah. Why are you looking at me like that?

MISS BATTLEAXE: We don't get many *new* people around here.

SARA: (Mutters.) I can't imagine why.

MISS BATTLEAXE: There's a lot you've got to learn about living 'round here, young lady. You know what I see when I look at you?

SARA: What?

MISS BATTLEAXE: I see somebody who's afraid of being in a new place.

SARA: I'm not afraid of anything!

MISS BATTLEAXE: I see somebody worried about whether she'll fit in.

SARA: But I don't want to fit in!

MISS BATTLEAXE: But, mostly, I see a violation of the dress code!

SARA: What? The t-shirt?

MISS BATTLEAXE: No, the footwear.

SARA: What about it?

MISS BATTLEAXE: You're not wearing cowboy boots.

SARA: I don't have any.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Oh, a charity case. Well, say no more.

SARA: I'm not a charity case! I just don't wear stupid cowboy boots.

MISS BATTLEAXE: This is Texas. Everybody wears cowboy boots.

SARA: But I'm not from Texas.

MISS BATTLEAXE: You're here now, though, aren't you?

SARA: Not my idea, I assure you.

MISS BATTLEAXE: And what's that thing in your nose?

SARA: It's a nose ring.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Around here, we put those on cattle. I'd advise you to take that out unless you want to find yourself led away to the rendering plant.

SARA: That's okay. I'll take my chances.

MISS BATTLEAXE: (*Glaring.*) No, you don't. Trust me.

SARA: Fine, I'll take it out.

MISS BATTLEAXE: I'm glad we understand each other.

Now, go to the office.

SARA: Am I being sent to detention?

MISS BATTLEAXE: Worse. Orientation.

(*Lights down on Sara and Miss Battleaxe. Lights up on Coach, who is talking on his phone.*)

COACH: (*Into phone.*) That's right, entrails. I need chicken entrails. And feathers. I probably need some chicken feathers, too. I don't know. I've never ordered chicken feathers before. How many do you think I need? (*Sarcastically.*) No, I'm not making pillows. I'm practicing some kind of pagan ritual. What do you think I need chicken feathers and chicken entrails for? I'm gonna set 'em on fire and say some magic words, and I don't know...bury 'em in the end zone along with Jimmy Hoffa...Well, I don't like the tone of your voice, either. Now just ship me a load of chicken entrails and you won't have to listen to it anymore...That's right. Care of Hurleyburg High School, Hurleyburg, Texas...No, no street address. We don't have streets out here...No. No zip code, either. We don't believe in all that government regulation. First, they give you a zip code, and next thing you know, you've got black helicopters flying overhead, you know what I'm saying? Now you just put Hurleyburg on it, and they'll know where to find us. The place isn't that big. And, hey, wait a minute. You're just on the other side of town. Why do you need all that address stuff, anyway? And hurry it up, too, because school's already started, and our first game is coming up in about a week, and we can't afford to lose another game and...And, oh, I was just kidding about that Jimmy Hoffa

thing. That was supposed to be at Giants Stadium. (*Hangs up. To himself.*) I sure hope this works.

(Lights down on Coach. Lights up on the Hurleyburg High School office. Sara is sitting in a chair, waiting for whoever she's supposed to see. Uncomfortable, she shifts about in her chair. She slumps, slides, and takes other positions. Finally, she discovers her most uncomfortable position.)

SARA: *(To herself, grumpily.)* Great. Just great. All my life, I've wanted to run away from home. Now, look what happens! Home runs away from me!

(Sara takes a marker and starts drawing on her arm. Miss Battleaxe enters.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: Ah, there you are.

SARA: Like there's anyplace else to go.

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(Indicating Sarah's arm.)* What's this...art class?

SARA: I'm just trying out designs for my tattoo.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Your tattoo, huh?

SARA: Yep. As soon as I'm 18, I'm going to get one. *(Extends her arm.)* What do you think?

MISS BATTLEAXE: I think I know where you could get a tattoo even before you're 18.

SARA: Really? You do?

MISS BATTLEAXE: Sure. Just about any ranch around here.

SARA: A ranch? You mean like a farm?

MISS BATTLEAXE: I mean like a red-hot branding iron. Ought to work just as well.

SARA: Ow!

MISS BATTLEAXE: Now get up.

SARA: What for?

MISS BATTLEAXE: I've had to look all over the school to find someone to show you around, and I've finally found someone.

SARA: Show me around where?

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(To Charlie, who is offstage.)* Come on, now, don't be shy.

(Charlie enters.)

SARA: *(To Charlie.)* You!

CHARLIE: Hi, Sara.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Ah, I see you've met. Excellent.

CHARLIE: I saved her life a few weeks ago.

SARA: You didn't save my life! You just, well— *(On second thought.)* Okay, maybe you did.

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(To Charlie.)* Well, nothing so dramatic today. Your job is to make her into a full-fledged member of Hurleyburg High.

SARA: But I don't want to be.

CHARLIE: I'd shake hands, but I had a little accident—

(Charlie extends his hand and shows his right hand is covered with ink.)

SARA: What's that?!

CHARLIE: Ink.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Ah, birds of a feather. Well, off you go, then.

CHARLIE: *(To Sara.)* They had your name down wrong in the roll book in homeroom. They had it with an "H," but I knew you didn't like that so I crossed it out for you. I guess I was a little too...enthusiastic.

SARA: *(Sarcastically.)* Gee, thanks.

CHARLIE: It kinda exploded on me. They said they hadn't seen a gusher like that around here since those wildcatters

from Tulsa hit a pocket of crude back in '58. Fortunately, I've got some backups with me.

(Charlie pulls out a fistful of pens from his pocket.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: If this were the Old West, Charlie, here, would have been considered armed and dangerous. Now, he's just dangerous...mostly to himself.

CHARLIE: Don't want to get caught short, you know. I like to be able to write down things if I get an idea. And I get lots of ideas.

SARA: What kind of ideas? Wait, I don't think I want to know.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Charlie's always scribbling something—scribbling, scribbling, scribbling—but at least he does his scribbling on paper and not his forearm. Both of you go find some soap.

CHARLIE: *(To Sara.)* Come on, I'll show you around.

SARA: *(Muttering.)* Fine.

(Charlie and Sara start to exit.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(To Charlie, calls.)* And make sure she signs up for activities!

SARA: But I don't want to do any activities.

(Charlie and Sara exit.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(Calls.)* At a school this size, everyone does activities!

(Coach enters.)

COACH: Ah, Miss Battleaxe...say, have you ever thought about becoming a witch doctor because— *(Miss Battleaxe glares at him.)* Oh, never mind.

(Coach exits. Lights down. Lights up on Charlie and Sara. Charlie is escorting Sara on a tour of the school. There is an empty trophy case.)

SARA: *(To Charlie.)* Are we done yet?

CHARLIE: Not quite. Just a few more things I need to show you.

SARA: I don't know why I need to know all this stuff. It's not like there's going to be a test on it or anything.

CHARLIE: And this... *(Indicating empty trophy case.)* ...this is our trophy case.

SARA: It's empty.

CHARLIE: Uh, yeah.

SARA: So why's it empty?

CHARLIE: Uh, we haven't won anything.

SARA: Ever?

CHARLIE: Never.

SARA: So this really is Loserville, huh? This place is even worse than I thought.

CHARLIE: Technically, we lost at the Alamo, too. But we still celebrate that.

SARA: And your point is...?

CHARLIE: I guess I don't really have one. It's just odd...sometimes something good comes out of losing. Of course, I guess not much good came out of it for Davy Crockett and all those fellows since they all got killed.

SARA: You are...strange.

CHARLIE: Sorry. Just a little Texas folklore.

SARA: So are we done yet?

CHARLIE: They say it all goes back to when the town was founded.

SARA: What does? The losing?

CHARLIE: Yeah, pretty much. They say there was this big rivalry between the founder of Hurleyburg and the founder of Hustleburg. It all had to do with where the railroad would go through. There are all kinds of stories about cash

payoffs in the legislature, threats of duels in the streets at high noon, voodoo priestesses being brought in from New Orleans...that kind of thing.

SARA: Voodoo? What are you talking about?

CHARLIE: The curse! Hurleyburg got the railroad and a hundred years of bad luck! They say ol' Jeremiah Hustle vowed that he'd made sure his town never lost anything to Hurleyburg ever again. He couldn't beat us in Austin, so he paid some voodoo queen from Louisiana to come in and put a curse on our town.

SARA: You don't really believe that, do you?

CHARLIE: (*Indicating the empty trophy case.*) I believe what I can see, and I don't see hardware in there, do you?

SARA: No, but that doesn't mean—

CHARLIE: You know what the funny part is? Nowadays, the trains don't even go through here anymore. So the one thing we won didn't last very long, but the losing...well, the losing goes on forever. Well, not really forever, I guess.

SARA: What do you mean?

CHARLIE: The old-timers say if Hurleyburg can't beat Hustleburg this year, it's all over.

SARA: What's all over?

CHARLIE: They say ol' Mr. Hustle set it up so that the curse expired after a century.

SARA: Well, that's good, I guess.

CHARLIE: But so will the town.

SARA: All right, now you've lost me again.

CHARLIE: A century straight of losing and then...poof! The town's gone!

SARA: What do you mean "gone"?

CHARLIE: The town's supposed to disappear.

SARA: Disappear? How?

CHARLIE: Oh, I don't know...tornado, sinkhole, some kind of cosmic vortex. They weren't very specific.

SARA: That's crazy.

CHARLIE: Or maybe it just won't be on the state highway map anymore. I'm not really sure. It's just one of those end-of-the-world prophecies, except it's not the whole world, just our little piece of it.

SARA: Like I said, you don't believe all that, do you?

CHARLIE: Naw. Well, not the cosmic vortex part. But there's no way we'll beat Hustleburg. Never have, never will. Anyway, down here is the library. *(Points.)* All the good books have gotten banned, but we've got some old copies of "Sports Illustrated." Guess you're probably not interested in the swimsuit edition.

SARA: Uh, no.

CHARLIE: Say, you wanna wash up? You know, separately?

SARA: That's okay. You go on.

CHARLIE: Except I might need a little help. There are some places I can't reach.

SARA: Geez.

CHARLIE: Wait. That gives me an idea. *(Takes out a pen and writes something.)* I'll see you at lunch, okay?

(Charlie exits. Sara lingers briefly, eyeing the empty trophy case, and exits. Coach enters opposite. He looks one way and then another and checks his watch.)

COACH: *(To himself.)* That's odd. I thought they'd have been here by now. Wonder where they could be? *(Sniffs the air.)* Ack! Weird smell. Must be doing experiments in chemistry class again. *(Realizes.)* Wait a minute. We don't have a chemistry class. *(Exits. Blackout.)*

SCENE 5

(AT RISE: Hurleyburg High School cafeteria, lunchtime. School bell rings. There are several small tables with chairs. Football Players and Cheerleaders are sitting at the tables eating lunch. There are two empty tables. Sara enters, carrying a food tray. She sits at the end of an empty table and studies her tray.)

SARA: (Looking at food.) Glop. Maybe I should just go on a hunger strike for the year.

(Charlie enters, carrying his food tray, and sits at the other end of the table.)

CHARLIE: Hi, Sara.

SARA: The tour's over. You don't have to show me around anymore.

CHARLIE: I know.

SARA: So you don't have to sit here with me.

CHARLIE: I know, but I wanted to.

SARA: Well, I like being alone. Go find someplace else.

CHARLIE: Oh. (Looking around.) Well, there's no place else to sit.

SARA: What about over there? (Points to a table of Football Players.)

CHARLIE: Those are all football players.

SARA: So?

CHARLIE: They won't let me sit with them.

SARA: Whatever. Over there? (Points to a table of Cheerleaders.)

CHARLIE: Those are cheerleaders.

SARA: Those are cheerleaders?

CHARLIE: Yeah.

SARA: Oh.

CHARLIE: Yeah.

SARA: What about that table over there? (*Points to empty table.*) It's empty.

CHARLIE: Teachers' table.

SARA: I don't see any teachers there.

CHARLIE: They all pack their lunch and eat in their rooms, but we still can't sit there.

SARA: Why not?

CHARLIE: Because it's the teachers' table!

SARA: Fine. Whatever. Just don't sit too close. And whatever you do, don't talk to me. (*Puts in ear buds, cranks up some death metal music, and closes her eyes. Charlie happily eats his lunch, occasionally scribbling something on a piece of paper. Sara opens one eye. Snaps.*) What are you doing?

CHARLIE: Nothing.

SARA: You're doing something! You're writing things down on those little pieces of paper.

CHARLIE: I know.

(Smiling, Charlie keeps scribbling. Sara tries to ignore him.)

SARA: And what are you so happy about? It's getting on my nerves.

CHARLIE: I've never had lunch with a girl before.

SARA: What?

CHARLIE: Usually, I have to eat by myself.

SARA: Technically, you still are.

CHARLIE: What do you mean?

SARA: I'm not eating.

CHARLIE: Oh. Can I have yours, then?

SARA: Sure, I don't care.

CHARLIE: We were supposed to have corndogs, but they said this came in this morning so they thought they'd have this instead. It's pretty good. Different, anyway.

SARA: I don't even know what it is.

CHARLIE: Some kind of chicken, I think.

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(Coach enters, sniffs the air, and shakes his head.)

COACH: Nah, that'd be crazy. *(Exits. Blackout.)*

SCENE 6

(AT RISE: Hurleyburg High School football field. Football practice. Cee Cee and Dee Dee are seated on the bleachers, watching football practice. Football Players are running around and Cheerleaders are practicing silly cheers.)

DEE DEE: (To Cee Cee.) Shouldn't they be in school right now?

CEE CEE: They are in school. Well, they're on school grounds, anyway.

DEE DEE: I meant in a class.

CEE CEE: Oh, that. They are in a class, of sorts.

DEE DEE: Looks like football practice to me.

CEE CEE: True. It *looks* like football practice. But it's not.

DEE DEE: What is it, then?

CEE CEE: History class.

DEE DEE: History? How you figure that?

CEE CEE: Coach Ferguson teaches history, okay. So he's having his students reenact some scenes from history. See right there...Pickett's Charge.

DEE CEE: Looks like the I-formation straight up the middle to me.

CEE CEE: And right there...there's Stuart's Ride around the Union army.

DEE DEE: Looks like the old end-around to me.

CEE CEE: Canceling class to hold football practice...why, that would be a violation of the Texas high school rules, now wouldn't it?

DEE DEE: Kind of thing that could get a school suspended.

CEE CEE: Wouldn't want that, now would we?

DEE DEE: Nope.

CEE CEE: Especially with all that's at stake, if you know what I mean.

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DEE DEE: I do. (*Indicating Football Players.*) So what about that one? What historical event is that supposed to represent?

CEE CEE: Oh, that. That must be the Sack of Rome.

DEE DEE: Looks like the sack of the quarterback to me, but maybe it's just my glasses.

CEE CEE: I tell ya, those cheerleaders...they're tough this year. Too bad we can't suit them up for the Hustleburg game.

(*Blackout.*)

SCENE 7

(AT RISE: *Gypsy Jane's house. Gypsy Jane is lounging on her sofa, watching TV and eating fried chicken. Coach appears in her doorway. He gets ready to knock, but before he can, she gestures for him enter without looking up from the TV.*)

GYPSY JANE: (*Without looking up from the TV, gestures for Coach to enter.*) You can come on in.

COACH: (*Surprised, steps across the threshold.*) Didn't work.

GYPSY JANE: Did you do exactly what I told you?

COACH: Well, um, not exactly.

GYPSY JANE: Well, there's your problem. You come to me for advice and then you don't follow it. That'd be like telling your quarterback to hand off up the middle, and, instead, he drops back to pass. What would you say to that?

COACH: It's not my fault. You see—

GYPSY JANE: Not mine, either. Don't come 'round asking for your money back.

COACH: They never showed up...the chickens, that is.

GYPSY JANE: Kinda like your offense most years, eh?

COACH: I mean, I think what happened is...well, never mind that. Do you have anything else...something simpler, maybe?

GYPSY JANE: Simpler than burning chicken guts, huh?

COACH: Well, when you put it like that—

GYPSY JANE: Fine. Black magic it is, then.

COACH: Black magic? You mean like witchcraft?

GYPSY JANE: More like voodoo.

COACH: I don't know. That sounds kind of dangerous.

GYPSY JANE: So is the forward pass. You know what they say: Three things can happen and two of 'em aren't good.

COACH: Uh, let's see... (*Thinks.*) One would be an interception. One would be an incomplete pass. So what's the third thing?

GYPSY JANE: Um, a completion?

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COACH: Oh, yeah. Sorry, never had one of those. Slipped my mind.

GYPSY JANE: You've never had a completed pass?

COACH: Well, not a real one. We had one in practice once, though. It was beautiful. A perfect spiral too, with just enough arc to go over the heads of the defenders...probably 20-30 yards downfield...the receiver was right there...came down right into her outstretched hands.

GYPSY JANE: *Her* hands?

COACH: Yeah, I had no idea cheerleaders could throw that well.

GYPSY JANE: Ever thought about switching teams, Coach? You know, let the girls play and have the boys cheer 'em on?

COACH: Tried once.

GYPSY JANE: And...?

COACH: You ever seen a linebacker in those little short skirts? Not a pretty sight, let me tell you.

GYPSY JANE: Neither is losing by 100 to nothing.

COACH: That's not fair! We might have been able to come back if they'd have let us play the second half!

GYPSY JANE: You know, I've never seen a quarterback take a knee...and still score a touchdown.

COACH: So there must be something you can do to break the curse, that is. Not that I believe in it, mind you.

GYPSY JANE: I suppose I could conjure up something.

COACH: Conjure! That sounds good! Conjuring sounds real good!

GYPSY JANE: Let me see your hat.

COACH: (*Indicating hat.*) What, this?

(*Coach hands his hat to Gypsy Jane.*)

GYPSY JANE: (*Looks in the hat.*) No, no rabbits in here.

COACH: Uh, what's that mean?

GYPSY JANE: It means no rabbit stew, for one thing.

COACH: Oh.

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GYPSY JANE: Figured it was worth a shot. Guess now I'll have to use my .45. Pulling 'em out of a hat would be a lot easier, you know.

COACH: I guess...but how does pulling a rabbit from a hat help break the curse?

GYPSY JANE: Oh, it doesn't. I'm just thinking about supper.

COACH: So, can you help me...with the curse, that is?

GYPSY JANE: Maybe.

COACH: I'd appreciate it.

GYPSY JANE: Or maybe not.

COACH: Uh, if I have a choice, I'll take the "maybe."

GYPSY JANE: So, Coach, ever play with dolls?

COACH: Oh, well, uh, when I was a kid, I had a G.I. Joe. But that was an action figure.

GYPSY JANE: Well, that's a start.

COACH: A start to what?

GYPSY JANE: Voodoo. Now, you need some dolls, and some pins—

COACH: I have a pencil. Will that do?

GYPSY JANE: Not quite. Voodoo is a very complicated.

COACH: Oh, so is football. You've got people going this way and that way. And sometimes they go this way before they go that way. And that's just during the pre-game introductions.

GYPSY JANE: Right. So, go get some dolls and some pins—

COACH: Dolls, pens, all right. Does it matter if they're ballpoint or felt tip?

GYPSY JANE: And you'll need to say some magic words.

COACH: Oh, you mean like "please" and "thank you"?

GYPSY JANE: Those, too.

COACH: "Dolls, pens, magic words." I can remember all that.

GYPSY JANE: Good. Well, off you go, then.

COACH: So if I do all that, that'll break the curse and we'll win the game?

GYPSY JANE: What do you think I am...a fortuneteller?

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COACH: (*Dumbfounded.*) Uh...

GYPSY JANE: That was a joke.

COACH: (*Still not getting it.*) Right! Ha! That was funny!

Well, I better get going, then. (*Starts to exit. To himself.*)

"Dolls, pens, magic words. Dolls, pens, magic words. Dolls,
pens, magic words..."

(*Coach exits. Blackout.*)

SCENE 8

(AT RISE: School grounds. Sara is outside the school, playing with her lighter. She's dressed in full punk regalia. Charlie enters unseen by Sara. He watches her play with the lighter.)

CHARLIE: (To Sara.) What are you doing?

SARA: What's it look like I'm doing?

CHARLIE: You shouldn't be doing that, you know.

SARA: So?

CHARLIE: It's against the rules.

SARA: All the better.

CHARLIE: And it's dangerous.

SARA: So is all that fried stuff they serve at lunch, but they still do it, don't they?

CHARLIE: You could set the whole school on fire.

SARA: You make it sound better all the time.

CHARLIE: I'm just trying to keep you from getting in trouble, that's all.

SARA: You sound like my father. (Realizes.) Well, if I had a father.

CHARLIE: I'm sorry.

SARA: (Sees Charlie's boots.) Uh, what is that all over your shoes?

CHARLIE: Oh, that's just manure.

SARA: Manure! Yuck! That's gross and disgusting!

CHARLIE: It's not so bad. We use it for fertilizer. It helps things grow.

SARA: What are you doing coming to school with that all over your shoes?!

CHARLIE: It's Drive Your Tractor to School Day.

SARA: Why don't you just go back in there with everybody else and leave me alone.

CHARLIE: I told you...they're football players. They won't let me sit with 'em.

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SARA: So you're the only guy in the school who's not on the football team?

CHARLIE: Uh, yeah.

SARA: That's weird.

CHARLIE: That's just West Texas.

SARA: (*Softens.*) So how come you're not on the team?

CHARLIE: Uh, I got cut.

SARA: Why'd you get cut?

CHARLIE: I guess they already had enough players. That's what the Coach said, anyway. Why?

SARA: How many players do they have?

CHARLIE: Uh, eleven.

SARA: I mean on the whole team.

CHARLIE: Like I said, eleven.

SARA: (*Empathetic.*) They've only got eleven players and you still got cut?

CHARLIE: The Coach said something about how it'd be a cold day in you-know-where before I ever help the team win.

SARA: And it's been how long since they've won a game?

CHARLIE: Um, never.

SARA: That's kinda harsh.

CHARLIE: I guess I'm not very coordinated.

SARA: You seem pretty coordinated to me.

CHARLIE: Uh, thanks.

SARA: (*Hardenings.*) Every time I try to be by myself, you show up.

CHARLIE: (*Grins.*) Uh, yeah.

SARA: It's almost as if you're stalking me.

CHARLIE: So can I ask you something?

SARA: (*Coldly.*) You just did.

CHARLIE: How come you're the only girl who's not a cheerleader?

SARA: (*Laughs.*) Me? A cheerleader? Get serious. Do I look like a cheerleader to you?

CHARLIE: And the ones we've got do?

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SARA: I don't want to get up there in front of everybody and do those ridiculous cheers. I don't like to call attention to myself.

CHARLIE: Uh, so how come you're wearing all that getup, then?

SARA: That's different.

CHARLIE: Around here, it sure is.

SARA: I just want to hang back in the shadows and drift through the year and hope nobody notices me.

(Miss Battleaxe enters.)

MISS BATTLEAXE: Ah, there they are! Just the two I was looking for!

SARA: *(Thinking Miss Battleaxe has spotted her lighter.)* What? I didn't do anything.

CHARLIE: *(To Miss Battleaxe, thinking the same.)* It was me. I did it. She had nothing to do with it.

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(Confused.)* What are you talking about?

CHARLIE: The, ah, you mean you're not here to...oh, uh, never mind.

MISS BATTLEAXE: I'm here because it seems you two have something in common.

SARA: Me? With *him*? Don't even joke about that.

CHARLIE: *(To Miss Battleaxe, hopefully.)* Oh, yeah?

MISS BATTLEAXE: It seems you two are the only two in school who haven't signed up for any activities.

CHARLIE: I tried.

SARA: *(To Miss Battleaxe.)* I'm not interested in any activities.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Well, I am. Here, this is yours.

(Miss Battleaxe hands Sara a bag.)

SARA: What's this?

MISS BATTLEAXE: Your costume.

SARA: My costume for what?

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MISS BATTLEAXE: We need mascots.

SARA: Mascots for what?

MISS BATTLEAXE: The football team. Congratulations!
You're the Armadillo Queen!

SARA: What?!

MISS BATTLEAXE: *(To Charlie.)* Oh, and here's your crown.
(Hands him a crown.) You're the king.

CHARLIE: *(Excited.)* I get to be the Armadillo King?!

MISS BATTLEAXE: It's really the queen's crown but you've
got to wear something.

SARA: Uh, but I don't want to be a mascot.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Too late. It's been decided. We need a
halftime show or a mascot. Now, something tells me you're
not a baton twirler, so unless you play the flugelhorn, you're
the mascot.

SARA: *(Weakly.)* I could play some death metal real loud...

MISS BATTLEAXE: Sorry, flugelhorn or nothing. Shame
nobody's touched that thing since that McClung boy
accidentally swallowed the spit valve. Took a few weeks,
but it passed right through without a scratch. Anyway, your
first assignment is the fundraiser for homecoming. I want to
see you there *smiling* and in full costume.

CHARLIE: Yes, ma'am!

MISS BATTLEAXE: If we're going to lose, at least we're going
to go out in style. *(To Charlie.)* Here, you take the baton.
(Hands Charlie the baton.) Maybe you can figure out what to
do with it.

CHARLIE: I thought you just said it was one or the other?

MISS BATTLEAXE: Think of it as extra credit. *(Sniffs the air.)*
What's that I'm smelling?

CHARLIE: Uh, I think it's my shoes.

MISS BATTLEAXE: Oh. *(Slight pause.)* All right, then. Go
Armadillos!

*(Miss Battleaxe exits. Charlie and Sara stare at each other. Note:
For the following, they shout/scream simultaneously.)*

THE ARMADILLO QUEEN
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CHARLIE: (*Shouts.*) Yessssss!

SARA: (*Screams.*) Noooo!

[END OF FREEVIEW]