

EZ-A: A Play in One Act

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CHARACTERS:

The genders of these characters are not vital to the story, and may be changed upon the director's discretion

MELANIE, 18-- a freshman musical theatre major; roommate of Shelbie and best friend of Bianca

BIANCA, 20-- a junior acting major; best friend of Melanie

SHELBY, 18-- a freshman musical theatre major; roommate of Melanie, best friends with no one

DR. FISHER, 38-- a tenured faculty member and director

DEREK-- 19-- a junior musical theatre major; university celebrity

KRIS—19—a sophomore musical theatre major

STAGE MANAGER

ENSEMBLE

SETTING:

University campus.

Ticonderoga State University

TIME:

Now

DISCLAIMER:

The following story is fictional and does not depict any actual person or event.

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

The music used in this show should be in the style of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. The director may choose to have actual singing in this show, there is no requirement for it to be “good”. The worse, the better.

Scene I.

Lights up.

The set is set up with a few commonplace chairs, and side tables. The back wall is covered in show posters for the upcoming season. Scattered scholarship announcements, high honor recipients, and cast listings decorate the space. There are a few students moving on and off stage from either side—some walk with a purpose (perhaps they are late to class), and others stop to look at the call board. Among the commotion, two girls, BIANCA and MELANIE, come on stage. BIANCA is holding a coping of the university's newspaper, reading it diligently. MELANIE runs to the call board to see if she has been cast.

MELANIE. (*Excitedly*) I got cast! Can you believe it? I mean-- it's just an ensemble role but still! Dr. Fisher almost *never* casts freshmen-- but me, I got cast!

BIANCA. (*Flipping a page*) Easy now-- did you see who is playing the lead? (*Melanie browses the cast list again. Bianca looks up from the newspaper, waiting for her response. When Melanie looks up, Bianca looks back to the newspaper.*)

MELANIE. (*Exasperated*) ...*No!*

BIANCA. (*While reading*) Mm-hmmm.

MELANIE. (*Annoyed*) Shelbie Kurtfunkel? (*She looks to Bianca*) How the hell did *she* get the lead?

BIANCA. You know—she's *your* roommate, I thought you could tell me.

MELANIE. (*Peeved*) And she's acting with Derek Snyder! He's basically a celebrity. That's fucking bullshit! I listened to her sing, "My New Philosophy" *fifteen times* the night before auditions --let me tell you, Bianca-- **it wasn't good.** (*Bianca does not reply, rather she is engulfed in the newspaper in her hands.*)

MELANIE (CONT.). (*Reaching for the newspaper*) What are you reading, huh?

BIANCA. (*Uninterested*) A student died on campus.

MELANIE. (*Shocked*) What? When?

BIANCA. Friday, apparently. Listen to this: (*clears throat dramatically; reads in a dramatic voice*) "It is with a heavy heart that we must address the passing of Ticonderoga State University student, Miles Tennyson....Mr. Tennyson was found unresponsive early Friday morning in his residence hall after what the emergency response team suspects to have been a fatal exposure to

lavender....Counseling services will be offering extended services this week for any students impacted by the death. An office notice from President Edith Windsor will be released later this week....”

MELANIE. Shit. Lavender? Can that even kill people? *(Beat)* Could you imagine what his roommate must be going through? I must be so hard to deal with something like that and--

BIANCA. *(Cutting her off)* Oh Puh-leaaase -- he’s doing *fiiiine*. He’s guaranteed straight A’s for the semester.

MELANIE. What do you mean?

BIANCA. My freshman year we had a student death on campus-- the girl’s roommate got straight A’s for pleading emotional trauma with the Dean of Students Office. Could you imagine how lucky that is? I’m not saying I’d kill someone for straight A’s....but--- *(Shelbie enters from SL-- and crosses to look at the cast list—she lets out an earsplitting squeal of delight. Bianca and Melanie watch as she passes, and squint in displeasure of the sudden noise.)*

BIANCA. *(Sarcastically)* I take it you got cast?

SHELBBIE. *(Turns around excitedly)* I. GOT. THE. LEAD!

MELANIE. Congratulations, Shelbie.

SHELBBIE. Oh! Melanie, dear! I’m sorry you didn’t get cast. *(Turns back to the call board to initial her name)* I know how hard you worked on your song—perhaps you just didn’t fit the vision they were looking for--

MELANIE. *(Loudly)*No-- I did...see? *(She points to her name on the cast list)*

SHELBBIE. *(Nonchalantly)* Oh no-- I meant like....in a *real* part-- ensemble *hardly* counts.

BIANCA. *(Looks back down at the paper in her hands)* Hey Shelbie-- are you allergic to anything? Maybe *lavender*, perchance?

SHELBBIE. No--

BIANCA. *(Cutting her off)* Perhaps cats? Dogs? A festive tree-nut?

SHELBBIE. No—why?

BIANCA. Asking for a friend.

SHELBBIE. OOH! Like a survey or something? Do I get a Starbucks gift card for answering more questions?

BIANCA. Oh no—a much better prize.

SHELBBIE. Like what!? I’m *dying* to know.

BIANCA. Oh I'm sure you are—

MELANIE. (*Cutting her off*) I hate to *kill* the conversation—but Bianca and I are going to the dance studio. We'll see you later—

SHELBBIE. Oh yeah! Of course—let's get dinner soon, Melanie! We haven't had a roommate bonding night in soooooo long. It'll be so much fun!

MELANIE. Uh... I'll get back to you on that. (*Shelbie and Melanie say their goodbyes—Shelbie exits. Melanie looks at Bianca and makes a gagging reaction.*)

BIANCA. Well isn't she just a ray of sunshine?

MELANIE. Ughhh! I can't believe this! Did you *see* how fake she is? Dolly Parton's boobs are more genuine than her! (*Bianca laughs and shakes her head; Melanie pulls out her phone and nearly drops it.*)

MELANIE (CONT.). Shit! I have to get to class- I'm already late! I'll see you later! (*Melanie exits. Bianca looks out at the audience, shakes her head and returns to her newspaper.*)

Lights down.

Scene II

Lights up.

Some days later--MELANIE and BIANCA sit in MELANIE's room. There is a clear divide between MELANIE and SHELBBIE's respective sides of the room. MELANIE's side is decorated with comic book posters, off-Broadway Playbills, and prints of some of her favorite quotes (a majority of them being from classic literature). SHELBBIE's side is covered in...pictures of her—posters of past shows, pictures of her with “well known” on-stage celebrities.

BIANCA sits with her laptop on her lap. MELANIE is preparing to start her voice homework.

MELANIE. I cannot stand Shelbie—she spent the entire week “rehearsing” for our first rehearsal tonight.

BIANCA. Of *course* she did.

MELANIE. No—really. And she's spent the past few days doing this...weird humidifier thing— if she wasn't bad enough before getting cast, she's horrid now.

BIANCA. (*Clicks tongue*) You just need a new roommate.

MELANIE. I can't just leave—then she wins. I just...I just have to be better—get back at her by being more successful.

BIANCA. (*Mockingly*) Good luck with that. (*A pause while Bianca and Melanie work on their respective homework. Melanie's homework consists of vocal warm ups.*)

MELANIE. (*Quickly and over enunciating*) MOO MOH MAW MAH MAY MEE (*Bianca stops writing...she looks up...she shakes her head and keeps typing. Repeat.*)

BIANCA (*Without looking up*) ...We could just kill her.

MELANIE. WHAT? Oh my god, Bianca-- you can't joke like that.

BIANCA. (*Shrugs*) Who said I was joking? (*No response. Melanie stares at Bianca.*)

BIANCA (Cont.). C'mon—you get straight A's...a shot at the lead? Weren't you both called back?

MELANIE. Yeah but—

BIANCA. (*Cutting her off*) Do you think the entire cast could get straight A's if she died during rehearsal?

MELANIE. (*Thinks; beat*) That's a pretty big emotional trauma—I'm sure it's possible.

BIANCA. It'd look like an accident! That theatre is dangerous enough on its own...no one would have to know—

MELANIE. Bianca—this is a *human life* we are talking about—I may not like her but I'm not going to kill her—let alone for straight A's and *definitely* not for a role.

BIANCA. Suit yourself. (*They go back to work... Melanie looks at Bianca...and then back to her homework. Repeat.*)

BIANCA (CONT.). But could you imagine getting to work with Derek Snyder? His voice is audible gold. Not to mention... you're way cuter than Shelbie. (*As Bianca is talking, Melanie is visibly trying to ignore her as she goes through her next set of warm ups. Melanie's face should show signs of consideration as Bianca continues.*). Shit if I could have gotten an A in THEA 135 my freshman year—I'd hop all over that shit. Just you wait, Mel—that class will kill you. This is a golden ticket!

MELANIE. (*Quickly...and then slower*) BOO BOH BAW BAH BAY (*as slow as possible*)
B...E...E (*Looks at Bianca*) ...An accident you say? (*Beat*) Tell me more.

BIANCA. I knew you'd come around (*Melanie says nothing but rather impatiently prompts Bianca to elaborate on her evil plan*)

BIANCA. Alright, alright! Hold it-- I'm thinking.

MELANIE. What-- *now* you're thinking? I thought you already had a plan!

BIANCA. I don't just walk around formulating the perfect plan for murder, Melanie--

MELANIE. (*Under breath*) That's surprising

BIANCA. These things take time! (*Melanie shakes her head and turns back to her homework about to start her next line of warm ups "TOO TOH TAW TAH TAY TEE"-- this continues for a few beats*) **Wait--** I *did* read this article on Men's Fitness last week... "Top 13 Foods That Can Kill You"!

MELANIE. Why were you reading "**Men's Fitness**"?

BIANCA. Never mind that-- the article was basically a list of all these common foods that have high levels of toxins...let me pull up the article. (*Points at screen*) did you know uncooked almonds have high levels of cyanide in them?

MELANIE. What-- you're suggesting we get her to eat ridiculous amounts of almonds?

BIANCA. Not exactly-- I mean...yes-- but only like 8 - 32 almonds-- we can mix them into her food or something-- (*The lock on the door clicks, Shelbie enters the room. Bianca immediately slams the computer shut and slides it off her lap. Shelbie is carrying a basket with an absurd amount of props in it. She drops the basket in front of the door and crosses to her bed, not acknowledging the other two girls.*)

MELANIE. Well "*hello*" to you too.

SHELBBIE. Oh! Melanie! What are you doing over there?

MELANIE. Uh... I *live* here?

SHELBBIE. (*Over exaggerated laugh*) You're so **nutty**, Melanie! (*Bianca and Melanie look at each other*)

SHELBY. (*Just now noticing Bianca*) Oh you're here too. (*Suspiciously*) What are you two up to?

BOTH. (*Almost too fast*) Homework

SHELBY. Is that *all*?

BIANCA. In a **nutshell**-- yeah!

SHELBY. Melanie, why aren't you rehearsing? Rehearsal starts in forty-five minutes! I spent all *day* rehearsing my lines! (*Points to basket of props*) I **even** started my blocking! You're already behind!

MELANIE. Uh well--

SHELBY. (*Cutting her off*) OH EM GEE-- MELANIE! I just had the **best** idea-- let's walk to rehearsal TOGETHER! Just like old times, huh!?

MELANIE. (*Under her breath*) We met last month...

SHELBY. (*Ignoring her*) C'mon! We have to go! I want to get a good seat next to Dr. Fisher! Bianca, you can see yourself out, right?

BIANCA. (*Clearly annoyed*) Gladly.

SHELBY. (*Grabbing Melanie's wrist*) C'mon! Get your stuff! Say bye to Bianca and **let's go!** (*Bianca hands Melanie her backpack as Shelby drags her out of the room, stepping over the previously dropped basket of props on the way out.*)

Lights down.

Scene III

Lights Up.

Later that night-- the first rehearsal. The set is bare aside from chairs positioned in a semicircle facing the audience. DR. FISHER is sitting center, the STAGE MANAGER is to their right. SHELBBIE is to the left of DR. FISHER, and the other lead DEREK is next to SHELBBIE. MELANIE is on the far right end, next to an ensemble member, KRIS. There should be a few additional ensemble members-- however many the director should choose, but at least 9 people should be on stage.

DR. FISHER. *(Dr. Fisher's lines should all be delivered in monotone. Think "Snape" from Harry Potter)* Welcome to the first rehearsal for *Partially Medieval Milstead*. I am very excited to get to work with each and every one of you. We're going to go around and introduce ourselves to start off tonight. I hope you've picked up your scripts from the office mail boxes, and if you forgot to do so-- **please leave now**. *(The director may choose to have an ensemble member leave the stage at this point.)*

DR. FISHER (CONT.). *(To Melanie)* Why don't we start down here at the end?

MELANIE. Hi-- I'm Melanie.

KRIS. You can call me KRIS.

(As the cast goes around introducing themselves, the ensemble actors may choose any name they like best, as no Particular name is vital to the story.)

STAGE MANAGER. Hey folks, I'm yer stage manger. I'll be here takin attendance at each rehearsal an' helpin' out DR. FISHER.

SHELBBIE. *(Loudly)* Hello!!! My name is SHELBBIE KURTFUNKEL, I am a **FRESHMAN** musical theatre major. I am so so SO excited to be working on this show-- I've spent the past week rehearsing-- I'm practically off book already! And –

DR. FISHER. *(Cutting her off)* Thank you, Shelbie—I are very excited to work with you.

SHELBBIE. Of course, Dr. Fisher! I'm just so excite--

DEREK. My name is Derek Snyder-- this is my *fourth* show here, and I'm super pumped to work with all of you! *(The rest of the ensemble will finish "introducing" themselves here)*

DR. FISHER. Alright. For this first week, we will be doing tabled readings. We will be in the space immediately starting next week, so please be prepared for that. Do not come back to this room, no one will be here. Any questions? *(Beat)* Let us begin with the script read through. I will not be asking any of you to sing tonight, but please be familiar with the music by Wednesday for our first sing through. Shelbie, will you start us off?

SHELBBIE. Absolutely! *(Clears throat, twice...three times-- once more [with feeling] before reciting from memory)* Act 1. Scene 1. The Curtain rises on 1468 Manchester, a bronze version of the Cottonopolis. Center stage, we see the silhouette of Milstead ---

DR. FISHER. *(Loudly)* Please just skip to your first *line* after the overture, Shelbie-- in scene three.

SHELBBIE. *(Slightly panicked-- she looks down to her script and flips to scene three)* Uh-- right. *(In character)* "Giveth back my bourse! Holla! Beadle! Constable? Anyone!" *(Beat)* "Ow!"

DEREK. *(In character)* Ouch! Watch where yer trottin--

SHELBBIE. *(Out of character)* Derek, perhaps you could try playing a different verb here-- I don't feel like your character was actually injured--

DR. FISHER

That's enough, that's enough. Shelbie, a word please? *(Shelbie and Dr. Fisher walk up stage and have a very stern "talk", meanwhile the rest of the cast has a second to get acquainted. A few beats of idle conversation-- the other ensemble members are all very well acquainted as Shelbie and Melanie are the only freshmen students in the show. After a few beats, Kris notices Melanie's lack of engagement...)*

KRIS. *(To Melanie)* Can you believe her?

MELANIE. I know she's--

KRIS. A natural! No wonder she was cast as a freshman. Her personality is an amazing fit for her role.

MELANIE. You're joking.

KRIS. And reading the stage directions? Incredible! It was *really* giving me a good idea of where the show takes place. She's got a knack, that's for sure.

MELANIE. (to herself) You're *not* joking...

DEREK. I'm so excited to get to work with such an enthusiastic lead. She e-mailed me the day the cast list went up and asked if we could have one-on-one rehearsals.

KRIS Wow! You really lucked out. (*While everyone is talking about how great Shelbie is, the lights go down, and a single spot lights comes up on Shelbie and Dr. Fisher on the other side of the stage.*)

DR. FISHER. Shelbie, can you please explain to me *why* you were reading the stage directions?

SHELBBIE. Because it's part of the script—why do you *not* read stage directions at a cold reading? How is anyone supposed to know what's happening? I can't just assume everyone in the cast knows exactly what *my* character is doing, Dr. Fisher! Context is everything. At my high school, we always read the stage directions at the first rehearsal so no one was confused. Do you know how easy it is to get confused? I do!

DR. FISHER. I'm sure you do, Miss. Kurtfunkel. *However*, at this University we ask everyone to read their scripts *before* the first rehearsal. So there is no need to read the stage directions as everyone should already be familiar with the show. Do you understand?

SHELBBIE. Oh—so you *don't* want me to read them? Why didn't you just say so! (*Dr. Fisher lets out an audible sigh, and walks back to the cast and sits down in their seat.*)

DR. FISHER. That's quite enough talking-- quiet down. We need to get back to work... (*Looking forward*) it's going to be a *long* night.

Lights out.

Scene IV

Lights up.

The next day—at the call boards. BIANCA and MELANIE are talking in front of the call boards. There are other students coming by to look at postings)

MELANIE. (*Mocking Shelbie*) “Wait-- I’m *not* supposed to read the stage directions?” How the hell did she even get cast? A fucking monkey could figure out you’re not supposed to read the goddamn stage directions.

BIANCA. Where did she even go to high school? (*Beat*) Oh god... was she home-schooled? That would explain so much-- the personality, the hair...the...*everything*.

MELANIE. (*Laughs*) I don’t think the world was that lucky. To my understanding she went to some charter school.

BIANCA. Huh! Honestly I’m impressed-- she is very dedicated to being *that* stupid.

MELANIE. She kept giving the rest of the cast notes! She told Derek Snyder that his objective was unclear—**Derek. Snyder**. Everything he *does* is motivated, Bianca! He doesn’t stop to sneeze without having an objective....

BIANCA. Speak of the devil...(*Derek enters, and walks over to Bianca and Melanie. He’s carrying the laundry basket of props that SHELBBIE had in Scene II.)*

DEREK. Hey Melanie! Bianca.

BOTH. Hi Derek.

MELANIE. What’s with the basket?

DEREK. OH! I’m glad you asked. Shelbie and I were out in the amphitheater rehearsing. We’re working on our chemistry. She brought all of these, look! (*Derek rummages through the box and pulls out a plastic farming scythe*) She made a little prop scythe for all of the farm scenes!

BIANCA. How....creative.

DEREK. Isn’t it!? Well, I can’t stay and chat too long, I don’t want to be late. I have to run this to the theatre and then we’re meeting to work on objectives!(*Derek exits before Bianca or Melanie can say thing. Melanie turns to Bianca.*)

MELANIE. I don’t get it—why does the entire cast *adore* her? Are we crazy?

BIANCA. Shit—if we are, we’re crazy together. I’ve officially seen it all.

MELANIE. She kills me, B. She kills me.

BIANCA. OH!! That reminds me! *(Bianca reaches into her bag and fishes around for something)*I got the stuff! *(Pulls out bag of almonds)*

MELANIE. You're joking

BIANCA. Nope—got them this morning. 8-32 of these bad boys and we're in business.

MELANIE. You crack me up. *(Bianca tosses the bag to Melanie.)* Alright, so what do I do with these?

BIANCA. Well...you *could* just give them to her. Isn't she on some weird health kick? Almonds are healthy. Tell her they'll boost her metabolism or something. Or put them in a blender and make her a smoothie—I'm pretty sure they work either way. I have to get to class though, let me know what you decide on!

Lights out.

Scene V.

(Darkness. The sounds of the lock clicking...)

MELANIE. Shelbie? Yoo-hoo.... *(Melanie flips the lights on and enters the room. No one is home)* Looks like I'm the only one here.

(Melanie throws her backpack on her bed and looks under the bed. She checks under Shelbie's bed. Melanie searches every crevice of the room and even looks out the peep hole before returning to her bed. She reaches for her backpack and pulls out the bag of almonds.)

(She looks around the room and begins to figure out where she can put them. She pulls out a small blender from one of the storage bins and sets it up on her desk. She opens the almonds and starts to pour them in the blender.)

MELANIE. What the hell am I doing? I can't fucking kill her. *(Melanie reseals the bag quickly, and throws them across the room)* She crosses to look into the body mirror on the wall) Jesus Christ, Mel—get your shit together. You've been here a month, and you're already setting yourself up for a life time sentence in prison. Now you're going to grab your back pack, put on your lipstick, and take your homicidal happy ass to class.

Lights down.

Scene VI

Lights up.

Spacing rehearsal, some hours later. The set for “Partially Medieval Milstead” is on the stage. It can look like whatever the directors chooses. There needs to be enough open space down stage for a large musical number. The pit (if available) should be lowered. SHELBY is warming up her voice when KRIS and MELANIE enter. DEREK is on stage, silently reviewing his blocking and occasionally swinging about his sword. MELANIE tries to avoid SHELBY’s gaze but to no avail, SHELBY trots over to MELANIE, a smile on her face.

SHELBY. Hey Melanie! I haven’t seen you ALL DAY—I was beginning to think you *died* or something.

MELANIE. Sorry to disappoint—I’m still here. (*Shelby pulls out a bag of snacks from her pocket and pops them into her mouth.*)

SHELBY. (*While Chewing*) You know, that really w— (*Melanie looks down at Shelby’s food and is horrified to discover she is eating almonds.*)

MELANIE. (*Panicked*) What the hell are you eating!?

SHELBY. (*Holding up the bag*) Almonds! Want some?

MELANIE. (*More Panicked*) Where did you get those?

SHELBY. They were on the floor by my bed—I was just switching into my heels for rehearsal and there they were! Right on the floor—it was like fate! I’ve been snacking on them all day, they’re a little bitter but I think that reall—

MELANIE. (*Smacks them out of SHELBY’S hands*) STOP EATING THOSE!

SHELBY. (*Offended*) OH em gee—what the hell is your deal? I would have shared if you wanted some!

MELANIE. They’re uh—they’re expired! (*Bends down to pick up the bag before Shelby can see them*) You can’t eat expired almonds! They’ll make you sick! Let’s just throw them away—to be safe. (*She throws the bag off stage*) There! All better. (*Nervous Laughter*) We wouldn’t want you getting sick right before rehearsal, now would we!?

SHELBY. (*Overly thankful*) Oh no! You’re right!?! What would they do without me? The show would be ruined! There’d be no hope of going on, I don’t even have an understudy! (*Beat*) But uh, now that you mention it—I do feel a little uncomfortably warm.

MELANIE. Heheh... I'm sure it's nothing! Drink water! The show must go on—right? (*Dr. Fisher enters*).

DR. FISHER. (*While clapping their hands to draw attention*) Alright everyone! We're getting started. Places for the top of Act 1! PLACES!

(All of the cast assumes their placement for the top of Act 1. Shelbie should be center stage, with her back to the audience. The choreography for this musical number can be done at the director's discretion. The cast starts their song-- as they perform, the set pieces hung from the fly system begin to sway back and forth. Shelbie, breaks out from the ensemble-- comes down center, and belts her last note. Several people in the ensemble wince in displeasure. As the note begins to come to an end, there is a loud snapping noise as a piece of the set falls from the fly system, nearly hitting Shelbie. Shelbie's balance is thrown off, and she stumbles forward before falling into the lowered pit--cutting off her last note.)

STAGE MANAGER. (*From the booth*) HOLD! (*Someone in the ensemble screams, realizing what has happened. MELANIE moves out of the ensemble mass and looks down at SHELBBIE. Her eyes go wide. DR. FISHER comes running on the stage, followed by the STAGE MANAGER.*)

DR. FISHER. What happened?

DEREK. One of the lines snapped—the set piece knocked Shelbie into the pit!

DR. FISHER. (*Sarcastically*) Oh no...

STAGE MANAGER. (*Frantically*) Should we call 911? SOMEONE RAISE THE PIT!

MELANIE. (*Panicking*) This isn't happening; this isn't happening—this totally isn't happening.

DR. FISHER. Alright everyone, rehearsal will have to be cut short. Please leave—NOW.

Lights out.

Scene VI

Lights up.

Melanie is pacing furiously in her bedroom, it's the same night. There is a knock at the door. She jumps in fear before another knock—banging this time.

MELANIE. C-Coming! *(Melanie runs over to the door, and opens it and gives audible sigh of relief. BIANCA comes into the room. The lines in this scene should be quick—nearly overlapping.)*

BIANCA. *(Pushing herself in)* She's DEAD!? Tell me everything. Don't skip a detail.

MELANIE. She fell into the pit—

BIANCA. Was there blood?

MELANIE. This is all our fault.

BIANCA. Did anyone cry?

MELANIE. It was horrible!

BIANCA. When are you petitioning with the Dean of Students--

MELANIE. She wasn't supposed to eat the almonds! I never gave them to her! She took them off the counter!

BIANCA. Wait—the almonds? You think they had something to do with her falling?

MELANIE. She fell into the pit—She wasn't feeling well before hand.

BIANCA. Mel—the almonds were a joke. There's no way those actually had anything to do with this

MELANIE. But—she ate more than 8-32 of them!

BIANCA. Unless they were covered in battery acid—that wasn't your fault. Apparently the article on *Men's Fitness* said that only raw almonds straight from the tree carry Cyanide—the shit I gave you was from Whole Foods.

MELANIE. *(Suddenly calmed)* Oh... well that changes everything! I thought I was going to jail! Thrown away to rot forever! I can't put "homicide" on my resume, Bianca.

BIANCA. Not with that attitude, you can't. When's the funeral?

MELANIE. Next week... Dr. Fisher is cancelling rehearsal until then...that's when we're recasting too.

BIANCA. You've got this! Here's your big chance, "Millie" (*Melanie smiles at Bianca, laughs hesitantly and looks out in the audience with a nervous expression*)

Lights down.

Scene VIII

Lights up.

A few days after "the accident", back at rehearsal. The "set" for Partially Medieval Milstead should still be up. The cast of the show should be in all black, and DR. FISHER is standing to address them all.

DR. FISHER. I know we have all **fallen** into a slump since Shelbie's accident. This was definitely an unexpected pitfall. However, the show must go on... and we will need to recast a few roles. (*Melanie is clearly excited for Dr. Fisher's announcement. She scoots forward and starts to primp her clothing to ensure she looks as presentable as possible...*) Due to the recent circumstances, the role of Milstead will be given to - (*Melanie walks forward, ready to take the role*) -- Kris! (*Kris looks up from the floor with a bewildered look. They are clearly confused.*)

KRIS. Me?

DR. FISHER. Indeed-- I expect you to be off book by the end of the week-- make me proud. (*Beat*) We're going to call it a day for now, please go home and rest your minds. I'll see you all tomorrow evening. (*The cast begins to file off stage. Melanie is furious. She walks over to Kris and smiles.*)

MELANIE. Hey Kris-- do you have a second?

KRIS. Anytime, girl! What's up?

MELANIE. Oh... I just had a question real fast.

KRIS. Well spit it out.

MELANIE. Are you allergic to lavender?

Blackout.

End of Play.