

Audition Packet /Sides & Characters

Side #1. REN/ETHEL/WES/LULU SIDE

WES

Do you know how hard it was for me to get you that job at Dillingham's Hardware Store? It's not even a month and you get fired!

LULU

Every day it's more bad news with you. Every day.

ETHEL

Lulu, don't exaggerate.

WES

Ethel, now hush! You're not helping things.

ETHEL

Ren? What did happen?

REN

Nothing I should be fired for! Willard came by the store, and he wanted change of a dollar, so I popped open the register. And when Mr. Dillingham came out and saw my hand in the drawer, he went crazy. He accused me of stealing.

LULU

That's because everything you do makes people suspicious.

WES

Are you on drugs?

REN

No! But why don't you frisk me? I'm sure you've already poked through everything in my room.

ETHEL

Ren, apologize to your uncle.

WES

Look, young man, I know that I'm not your father...

REN

You can say that again!

(WES slaps REN. LULU gasps.)

ETHEL

Wes!

WES

Don't say anything, Ethel.

ETHEL

I can't not say anything! I don't know how to do that, Wes.

LULU

Pumpkin, hush, please!

ETHEL

Wes, I realize that we are guests in your home...

WES

Ethel! (***That stops her.***) Right now, just don't say anything!

Side #2. SHAW/VI/ARIEL

SHAW

Where is she?

VI

She told me she was going to Wendy Jo's. (*As SHAW reaches for the phone.*) Don't bother calling. She's not there.

SHAW

Did you know this?

VI

No. I did not.

SHAW

So, how does it feel, Vi? Now that she's lying to you?

VI

I'm not saying anything until I hear an explanation from her.

SHAW

It was frightening enough when she was running around with Chuck Cranston. Now, she is out in the middle of the night, with that punk who's campaigning to challenge me and the entire Town Council. How long can you keep defending her?

VI

I'm not defending her. We're not on opposite sides here, are we? Or are we?

(ARIEL rushes in.)

SHAW

Where were you?

ARIEL

Oh, Rusty and Wendy Jo and me, we were...

SHAW

Don't even bother.

VI

We know you weren't at Wendy Jo's.

ARIEL

I can't believe you're checking up on me.

VI

Sweetie, how do we know you're not sick? Or hurt?

SHAW

I am concerned for your well-being.

ARIEL

Then how come when I'm at home, you're never interested in what I'm thinking or how I feel? But the minute I walk out that door – wham! Suddenly, you're the concerned parent!

VI

Shaw, she doesn't mean that.

SHAW

Stop taking her side! She has to start answering for herself.

ARIEL

I don't know what good that would do. You don't listen to me any more than you listen to her!

(SHAW lunges, raising his hand to slap ARIEL.)

VI

Shaw!

(SHAW catches himself and stops. It is an awful moment. There is stunned silence. Finally, ARIEL turns and runs out. SHAW is shaken.)

SHAW

I've never hit anyone.

VI

I know.

SHAW

We're losing her, Vi. She has become willful and obstinate.

VI

(Kindly.) Like her father.

SHAW

I am her spiritual guardian.

VI

You used to be her friend.

SHAW

I don't understand what's happening. I don't know what to do anymore.

VI

Yes, you do.

Side #3. REN/ARIEL/CHUCK

CHUCK

Ariel, what the hell's going on? We had a date a half an hour ago.

ARIEL

Chuck, I'm sorry.

CHUCK

I don't like you making a fool out of me.

(REN skates over to CHUCK.)

REN

Will you be joining these ladies for dinner?

(CHUCK turns to REN, looks him up and down, then contemptuously pushes him backward. REN rolls away slowly. CHUCK grabs ARIEL by the arm and pulls her to one side.)

CHUCK

When I say "meet me at eight," what am I – talking to myself?

ARIEL

No. You're right. Calm down, honey.

CHUCK

Don't tell me to calm down! Don't – ever – tell me what to do. ***(Glances at RUSTY, et. al.)*** I know what your friends think of me. And that's bullshit. I'm the best party in this town, baby, and those three dogs oughta be tied up under the porch. Let's go.

ARIEL

No.

CHUCK

Get in the truck.

ARIEL

No!

CHUCK

Excuse me?

ARIEL

I said, "No." What part of that don't you understand?

CHUCK

Oh, when the preacher's daughter says "no," it just makes me hot. Say it again, baby.

ARIEL

Leave me alone, Chuck. Don't!

(REN skates over.)

REN

I believe the lady said, "No."

CHUCK

And I believe this is none of your business.

ARIEL

Ren, don't...

CHUCK

Ariel, who invited this clown?

REN

Oh, I'm sorry! We've never been formally introduced. ***(Extends his hand at CHUCK'S eye-level.)*** Ren McCormack.

CHUCK

Get your hand outta my face. And get your face outta my sight.

Side #4. REN WILLARD

A High School Hallway

(A row of lockers runs the width of the stage. STUDENTS cross on their ways to class. After an embarrassing exchange with ARIEL and RUSTY, turns and bumps into WILLARD HEWITT, a hayseed in a hat.)

WILLARD

Hey, mister! You bumped me!

REN

Sorry.

WILLARD

Don't you ever look where you're goin'?

REN

I said I was sorry.

WILLARD

Hey! You're that new guy from Chicago, ain'tcha?

REN

Perhaps.

WILLARD

Smart-ass, huh? Listen, fella, around here you push somebody... they push back. Next thing you know, you got... *(Gets confused; forges ahead.)* ...two people pushing. Get it?

REN

Got it. Lemme ask you something. They sell men's clothes where you got that hat? (Pause.)

WILLARD

(Suspiciously.) What is that, some kind of stupid joke?

REN

No. That's a really good joke.

WILLARD

That's it, man. I'm gonna kill you!

(He raises his dukes to REN, who throws himself at WILLARD's fists.)

REN

Oh, please! Kill me!

WILLARD

(Pulls away, startled.)

Huh?

REN

Kill me! KILL ME! That's the most exciting thing I've heard since I hit town! (Sticks out his hand.) Ren McCormack. And you are...?

WILLARD

(Wary.) Willard. Willard Hewitt.

REN

Willard, what do you do around here for a good time? *(WILLARD hesitates, then makes a lewd gesture.)*
Yeah. Besides that. You have any clubs?

WILLARD

Nope.

REN

What about movies?

WILLARD

Nope.

REN

What about malls?

WILLARD

Nope.

REN

What about...

WILLARD

Nope. Nope. And nope. (*Pause.*) We do have the Bowl-A-Rama down by the interstate.

REN

Wow. I really admire you. I could never do what you guys do around here.

WILLARD

Yeah? What do we do?

REN

(*Explodes.*) Nothing?!

REN

Bobby? Who's Bobby?

ARIEL

My brother.

REN

You never told me you have a brother.

ARIEL

Had a brother. Bobby was one of the four kids who went off the Potawney Bridge.

REN

Oh, god. I'm sorry.

ARIEL

Yep. One of the... (*A la SHAW.*) "...four young people who held the promise of Bomont's brightest future."

REN

Why didn't I know this?

ARIEL

We never talk about it. And once Daddy decided the town needed saving, he never mentioned Bobby again.

REN

You must miss him real bad.

ARIEL

I try not to think about it.

REN

That never works. I'll bet you think about it all the time.

ARIEL

How did you know that?

REN

I study you.

ARIEL

Oh, yeah? What do you see?

REN

Somebody who's smart.

ARIEL

Thank you.

REN

Maybe a little bit angry.

ARIEL

Maybe a lot.

REN

And somebody who's sad. **(Beat.)** I always wondered where that came from.

ARIEL

(Touched.) Now you know.

(They're both silent. She starts to speak, but stops herself.)

REN

What?

ARIEL

I've never felt like anyone's ever stopped to really look at me.

REN

Oh, no... You're in my mind, twenty-four hours a day.