

# SOMEONE ELSE'S

by Greg Vovos  
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# **SOMEONE ELSE'S**

*by Greg Vovos*

## CHARACTERS:

**SUE LONSEY:** A loner who's borderline depressive. Wants to fit in, but has no idea how. Her best friend is her journal—which she takes with her everywhere. Not a fashionista by any means, as she wears her mom's old boots and a sweater that makes her look young.

**EMILY WALKER:** Pretty, popular, jealous. The Queen Bee. She runs her crew and decides what's popular and what isn't.

**ANDREA WALLACE:** Smart, athletic, strong, respected. Rises above the usual junior high ridicule. Her body is scarred from being burned in a fire.

**MIKE ZWYKOWICZ (MIKE Z):** Good looking guy, very popular, someone all the girls like. Emily's boyfriend. Works for the school newspaper.

**BRANDI KELLER:** Emily's friend, cohort. There's a part of her that wants to do the right thing, but she's not quite strong enough.

**KELLI CONNORS:** The third member of Emily's gang. A gossip. Nonstop. Starts most of her sentences with, "Did you hear that..."

**RYAN WISNIEWSKI (WHEEZY):** Short kid, funny, nice. Gets picked on a lot. And he's okay with that because he believes that's just the way life goes.

**CHAZ POWELL:** A bully who wears saggy pants. Preys on the weak.

\*There are also a few other STUDENTS needed for hall and party scenes.

## SETTING:

Mostly at the junior high school: hall, locker room, class room, bus stop. Also scenes at Emily's house and Sue's house. It's all very fluid and dreamlike though.

This play can be staged much like OUR TOWN. There is no reason for an elaborate set—if any at all. Most can be inferred from Sue's description.

**Please note:** Underlined dialogue is delivered to the audience. To help set up this narration device, you could have Sue writing in her journal to convey the idea that what she's saying to the audience is really what she's writing in

her journal. It's up to you. But one thing's for sure, Sue should always have her journal on her, until she doesn't.

**SOMEONE ELSE'S***by Greg Vovos*

*Lights up as Sue stands center stage, possibly in a spot, addressing the audience. Surrounding her, in less light, are other students from her school. They are in tableaux and will come to life as Sue says so.*

**SUE**

Welcome to Jr. High, USA. Population: Nobody cares. Motto: Dress right, follow the leaders, or get out of the way. My name is Sue Lonsey and I'll be your guide for this adventure. So, what do you need to know? Just that I'll be taking you on a little trip through my junior high experience. See, nobody here really knows me, cares about me, or is even remotely interested in what I think. And I'm kinda glad about that because the truth is, I can't keep up with these girls—the way they dress, how they switch sides, stab each other in the back, I just...can't. It's like, this school is a giant highway jammed with speeding cars, and I'm stuck in the middle, trying to get to the other side without getting hit.

*Sue walks over and points to the GIRLS as she introduces them.*

Over there are the popular girls. Emily Watkins. The She-Leader. Pretty, popular, pregnant. Just kidding. But I wouldn't doubt it. The other two: Brandi and Kelli. They both spell their names with I's. I guess their parents met in a sorority house. They are the "It Girls." They talk the same, dress the same, walk the same. They recycle boyfriends in an attempt to help the environment. But it all begins and ends with Emily. She is the Queen Bee.

Again, my name is Sue. But as far as anyone's concerned, I am invisible.

**EMILY**

*(Referring to Sue)* That girl is so weird. She's always writing in that journal. What could she even be thinking that's so important to write down anyway?

**KELLI**

Did you hear that her dad's in prison and her mom has a drug problem?

**BRANDI**

I don't think that's true.

**EMILY**

I think I did hear that.

BRANDI

She's actually pretty smart. She had to read one of her poems in English the other day, and it's was really good.

EMILY

What is wrong with you? She's a freak. And probably a drug addict. I mean, look at her. And those boots she wears. Ugh, such a tragedy.

BRANDI

Yeah, you're probably right.

*Sue walks past the Girls.*

EMILY

(*To Sue*) Hey, the Wicked Witch texted, she wants her boots back.

KELLI

Good one.

*The Girls laugh.*

EMILY

And that sweater is the worst. Where'd you get it? At the little girl's department at Wal-Mart?

*Sue walks away. The other girls freeze, a tableaux.*

SUE

I guess I'm not as invisible as I hoped.

*Two Boys rumble down the hall. The Little Boy, RYAN WISNIEWSKI (WHEEZY), tries to get away from the Bigger Kid, CHAZ POWELL. Chaz plays and dresses the part of the bully.*

*As Chaz chases Wheezy, Wheezy breathes heavily, laboriously. Chaz catches up to him and dumps Wheezy's books on the ground. Chaz saunters away, laughing.*

*Wheezy picks up the books, having difficulty breathing as he does so.*

SUE

Ryan Wisniewski, also known as Wheezy. He's about the smallest kid in this school. I'm not sure which is worse, being totally ignored or being perpetually picked on. I wish I could do something for that kid.

*She watches as Wheezy takes some big hits from his inhaler.*

But I can't. The other guy was Chaz Powell. He's such a scumbag that he doesn't even merit description.

And then there's...

*MIKE Z walks down the hall. Good looking, athletic, nice guy. What you see is what you get with Mike.*

SUE

Mike Zwykowitz or Mike Z. Everybody likes Mike. What's not to like? He's cute, athletic, and he's really nice.

MIKE

Hey, I liked that poem you read in class yesterday.

SUE

You did?

MIKE

Yeah. It was cool. Smart.

SUE

Really?

*Emily immediately unfreezes, takes Mike by the arm, pulls him away. She looks over her shoulder, and gives Sue a dirty look.*

EMILY

Watch it, witch.

SUE

I cannot believe Mike Z actually talked to me. Wow. That is literally the most exciting thing to ever happen to me at this school. Ever. Anyway, moving on.

*The scene begins to change around her. We're in a locker room now.*

SUE

Here we are in the girl's locker room. Don't get any ideas, boys. The only thing worse than walking down the hall is being in this locker room.

Anything can happen here and no teacher would be the wiser. I have a really horrible feeling that this will be the place of my demise.

*ANDREA WALLACE enters. She's the one girl everyone respects.*

SUE

Andrea Wallace. Probably the most respected girl in this school. I'm kind of in awe of her because she doesn't let anyone bother her or get under her skin. Like no one messes with her. No one. If they try, they'll be sorry. She's smart, athletic, she's going places. But the thing about Andrea is...well...she was involved in some kind of a fire and her entire chest is burned and scarred over. She literally looks like a monster. I don't know how she does it. If I looked like that and had to look at myself in the mirror every day, I'd want to kill myself for sure. Actually, I want to anyway but... (Andrea gets lost in her thought for a moment, and then recovers.) Anyway, I don't know how she does it, but I really admire her.

*Andrea approaches Sue.*

ANDREA

Hey, what are you writing?

SUE

Huh?

ANDREA

You writing something good?

*Sue closes her journal.*

SUE

No.

*Andrea studies her a moment.*

ANDREA

Can I ask you a question?

SUE

If you want.

ANDREA

Why do you always look so sad?

SUE  
I don't know.

*Sue looks away, writes something in her journal.*

ANDREA  
You really like to write, huh?

SUE  
I guess.

ANDREA  
Cool. I'm Andrea.

SUE  
I know. Everybody knows who you are.

ANDREA  
You're Sue, right?

SUE  
How'd you know?

ANDREA  
We've gone to school together for years. It's not like you're invisible.

SUE  
I guess.

ANDREA  
Have a good day. Ciao.

*Andrea leaves.*

SUE  
Wow. That was the longest and best conversation I've ever had at this school.

*Bell rings.*

*Back in the Hall.*

*Sue walks. Bumps into Mike.*

MIKE  
Whoa, sorry.

SUE  
No, umm...

MIKE  
You know, I was thinking...you should write for the paper. We could really use another writer.

SUE  
I don't know.

MIKE  
Well, you should think about it.

SUE  
Okay.

MIKE  
Okay, then gotta jet.

*Mike takes off. Sue watches him go.*

SUE  
Okay, this is officially the greatest day of my life.

*Emily walks up from behind her and spins her around. Kelli and Brandi are with her.*

EMILY  
Let me make this clear, Witch. You stay away from my boyfriend. You understand? If I ever see you talking to him again, you will regret it. Majorly. And please learn how to dress. I mean, God, still with that sweater? Yuck. Even my little sister wouldn't be caught dead in that.

*She starts to leave and then turns back.*

EMILY  
And by the way, don't think Mike liked your poem. He was just making fun of you. You're just too stupid to understand. And besides, he likes women like me, not little girls like you.

KELLI  
Yeah!

BRANDI  
Yeah!

*All the Girls leave.*

SUE  
And order is restored to the universe. I hate this school. Actually, I hate my life. Today, in English Class, I'm supposed to read another one of my poems. No thanks. I'm cutting.

*She looks and sees Wheezy getting dragged down the hall by Chaz. Chaz has him in a head lock and is slapping him in the face, in general, acting like an idiot.*

CHAZ  
Wheezy, stop picking on me. Your face is hurting my hand.

*Chaz slaps him some more. Wheezy laughs.*

CHAZ  
You think this is funny? Should I do it harder?

WHEEZY  
No.

*Chaz pushes Wheezy into the lockers. Wheezy hits them with a thud and slumps to the ground. Chaz zeroes in on him.*

CHAZ  
Now give me the money.

WHEEZY  
But it's for my lunch.

CHAZ  
You're going to eat my fist if you don't give me your money.

*Wheezy gives him the money.*

*Sue looks on in disbelief. Chaz gets in her face.*

CHAZ  
Got a problem, girly? Huh?

*Sue shakes her head.*

CHAZ  
Good.

*He walks away, laughing.*

*Sue walks to Wheezy.*

SUE  
Are you okay?

WHEEZY  
Yeah, why?

SUE  
Didn't that hurt?

WHEEZY  
That was nothing.

SUE  
It's not right what he does to you.

WHEEZY  
It's just the way it is.

*Wheezy takes a hit of his inhaler and walks away.*

SUE  
And that's the sad truth about everything right there. "It's just the way it is." We all believe it. Wheezy believes it. Emily, Kelli, and Brandi believe it. I believe it. We are who we are in our respective places. There are winners. There are losers. And there's nothing we can do about it because this is junior high.

*Andrea approaches her.*

ANDREA  
Hey, I'll walk to class with you.

SUE  
Oh, I'm not going today.

ANDREA  
Why not?

SUE  
Because I have to go to the... (*she trails off*)

ANDREA  
To the what??

SUE  
Um...to the...

ANDREA  
What are you talking about?

SUE  
I have to read a poem again today. And I don't want to.

ANDREA  
Why not? You're a great writer.

SUE  
I'm not a great reader.

ANDREA  
Sure you are. Don't hide what you have to offer, Sue.

SUE  
People will make fun of me.

ANDREA  
No, they won't. I promise.

SUE  
I don't know.

ANDREA  
Come on. Let's get to class.

*The Two Girls walk away.*

*Scene changes to a class scene. It can just be Sue downstage in a spot, with her classmates standing around her, upstage of her.*

SUE

Okay, uh...this poem is called...Grant the Carpenter Ant...

I saw an old friend – his name was Grant –  
a great big black, carpenter ant.  
We first crossed paths `bout a decade ago,  
when I watched the world like you'd watch a show.

Grant and I didn't utter a word  
yet there's no doubt my emotions stirred,  
as he looked at me in that way that he does,  
understanding it all, knowing the buzz.

See, Grant was there on that fateful day  
when my blue mommy was taken away.  
He watched with kindness, then wiped my tears,  
but then he left, disappeared for years.

And now back like a ghost he peers at me,  
wanting to free me from my misery,  
And though his teeth could tear a redwood apart  
even he couldn't stomach the pain in my heart.

`Cause this girl's different from the one he knew  
and what pray tell can a carpenter ant do  
for a girl who's lost more than a sunny day –  
she lost her mom, her mind, her way...

*Sue looks up.*

*The students look at her in shock. Then they burst out laughing.*

EMILY

What the heck was that?

KELLI

I have no idea. Except to say it was the strangest thing I've ever heard.

*SUE RUNS OUT. Brandi follows.*

EMILY

(*To Mike*) Is she out of her mind or what?

MIKE

Actually, I kind of liked it.

EMILY

You have got to be kidding me?!?

*Mike shrugs. Scene changes. Brandi and Sue at the bus station.*

*They stand there for a long silent moment. It's really awkward.*

SUE

This is my favorite place at school. The Bus Stop. It means I'm on my way out of here.

*Brandi runs up to her. Sue is seated. Brandi stands.*

*They are silent for a long moment. It's awkward.*

BRANDI

I'm sorry about the way they reacted to your poem.

*Sue shrugs.*

BRANDI

I never heard a poem about an ant before.

*Sue stares out.*

BRANDI

What did it mean?

SUE

I just want to catch my bus.

BRANDI

I know but I thought we could talk—

SUE

(*Abruptly*) Why are you being so nice to me all of a sudden?

BRANDI

I don't know. I just—

SUE

This isn't your bus stop.

BRANDI

I know. I just wanted to say I'm sorry about what my friends said.

SUE

Please, just leave me alone, okay? I'm over it. It's just a stupid poem.

*Brandi musters up the courage to sit down next to her.*

BRANDI

Was it about your mom? Is she okay?

SUE

Screw it. I'll just walk.

*Sue gets up to leave. She grabs her backpack, but leaves her journal sitting there. Once Sue is gone, Brandi notices it.*

BRANDI

Sue! Sue! Wait!

*Sue does not come back. Brandi opens up her journal to a random page. Reads.*

BRANDI

Oh my God...

*Scene changes. The hall.*

*Emily and Debbi surround Brandi.*

*Emily rips the journal out Brandi's hand.*

EMILY

Let me see this.

*Emily flips through the pages.*

EMILY

Whoa...look at this drawing. This girl is like certifiably crazy.

BRANDI  
We have to give it back to her.

EMILY  
No, we don't.

BRANDI  
It's not right. It's her journal. Her private thoughts.

EMILY  
We are not giving this back to her until I'm done with it.

*They flip through the pages some more.*

EMILY  
Oh my God. This is awesome!

BRANDI  
What's it say?

*Mike arrives. Emily hides the notebook.*

EMILY  
Hey, Mike.

MIKE  
Hey, Girls. What's up?

EMILY  
Oh nothing.

KELLI  
Did you hear that Emily has—

*Emily elbows Kelli.*

KELLI  
Owww.

MIKE  
Emily has what?

EMILY

That Emily's having a party this weekend?

MIKE

Of course I heard that. She's my girl.

KELLI

Here she comes! Here she comes!

*They look and Sue arrives. She approaches the gang hesitantly. They all stare at her. Finally...*

SUE

(*To Brandi*) Did you pick up my journal the other day. I think I might have left it at the bus stop.

*Emily gives Brandi a warning look.*

BRANDI

No. No, I didn't.

SUE

Are you sure?

MIKE

(*To Sue*) Did you think any more about my offer?

EMILY

What offer?

MIKE

I asked her to be on the newspaper.

EMILY

Oh. Special.

SUE

I don't think it's a good idea.

MIKE

Well, I do.

SUE

My poem didn't scare you off?

MIKE

Nope. Think about it.

*Mike takes off.*

EMILY

Well, Ms. Thang, Mike is certainly taking a fancy to you, isn't he?

SUE

Look, I'm not trying to start any problems.

EMILY

Don't be ridiculous. Listen, I'm having a party this Friday. And I think you should come. You know, get to know everybody better. I definitely think they need to learn more about you.

SUE

Why would you want me there?

EMILY

I'm sorry about my reaction yesterday. I'm just not good with literature and fancy word stuff. I'm sure your poem was very smart. Come on. Come to the party. It'll be fun.

SUE

Okay...sure.

EMILY

Great. We'll see you Friday. Come on, Girls.

*All the Girls leave. Except for Sue who has a smile as big as the sun.*

SUE

I know what you're thinking. Why would I go to her party after she treated me the way she did. I don't know. It's just...no one ever pays me much attention, especially girls like her. It feels nice to be wanted.

*Scene changes to THE PARTY AT EMILY'S.*

*Group of students. Music. Lots of laughter.*

STUDENT

Great party, Em.

OTHER STUDENT

Yeah, thanks for throwing it.

EMILY

Don't thank me. Thank my parents for going out of town and being dumb enough to leave me with complete access to free alcohol.

*A LOUD CHEER from the Group of Students. They Chant.*

CHANTING STUDENTS

Alcohol! Alcohol! Alcohol!

*Emily, Brandi, and Kelli approach Sue. Emily hands her a drink.*

EMILY

Here, have another one, Sue.

SUE

I don't think I should.

KELLI

I hear her dad's an alcoholic so maybe she shouldn't—

SUE

No, he isn't. Give me it.

*Sue drinks the shot.*

EMILY

That a girl. Have another.

BRANDI

I think she's had enough.

EMILY

Maybe you're right. It's time to have some real fun anyway.

SUE

*(To Brandi)* Thanks for looking out for me.

*Sue almost falls.*

BRANDI  
Are you okay?

SUE  
Yeah, I just forgot how to stand for a second.

BRANDI  
How drunk are you?

SUE  
I donut know. I've never drunk before.

EMILY  
Okay, everyone, gather 'round. It's story time.

STUDENT  
What am I, two?

EMILY  
*(Ignoring the comment)* I'm now going to read aloud from a very special book.

*Comments from the Partygoers.*

BRANDI  
Maybe we should go outside and get you some air. You don't look so good.

SUE  
I want to hear the book. I love stories.

EMILY  
This book, well, its' a journal actually, was written by our very own, Sue Lonsey.

SUE  
Is that my journal? You found it? How'd you find it?

EMILY  
Brandi gave it to me, silly.

SUE  
What? But you said—

EMILY

And now I'm going to read from a page entitled. "Who are my Classmates?"

SUE

No! Don't read that.

EMILY

Why not? People will enjoy it.

SUE

NO!

STUDENT

Read it!

STUDENT

Yeah, read it.

*Everyone begins to chant...*

PARTYGOERS CHANTING

Read it. Read it. Read it.

*Emily takes a drink and clears her throat.*

EMILY

Okay..."Ryan Wheezy Wisniewski: Shortest guy in the school. And based on the way he lets people push him around, he must have the smallest balls too, that is if he has any at all."

BOY

Damn, that hurts. Poor little Mikey Small Nuts.

*The Kids laugh.*

SUE

I didn't mean it like...I'm sorry, Ryan.

WHEEZY

*(Shrugging)* It's okay. It's just the way it is.

GIRL

Read the next one.

SUE  
Please don't.

STUDENT  
Read!

EMILY  
"Mike Zwykowicz: A hunk of a cutey who's too good to be true – I'd like to taste his blood to make sure he's real though."

MIKE  
Ewwww, that's weird.

*Mike moves away from her.*

SUE  
No, it doesn't mean anything. It's just...when I write sometimes I'm in weird moods. That's all. It's nothing.

EMILY  
(To Mike) I told you the witch was crazy.

STUDENT  
Read some more.

SUE  
Give me my journal back.

*Sue tries to take the notebook from Emily.*

EMILY  
Get off me!

*Kelli holds Sue back and Emily grabs control of the book.*

EMILY  
"Andrea Wallace."

SUE  
No, don't read that.

EMILY  
Oooh, I wonder why not? Would you like to hear, Andrea?

ANDREA

No. That's Sue's private journal. What she writes is her own business.

*Emily looking it over.*

EMILY

I think you want to hear this.

ANDREA

Really?

EMILY

Oh, yeah.

*Andrea nods to Emily to read.*

SUE

*(Near tears)* Please, don't.

EMILY

"Andrea Wallace. She literally looks like a monster. I don't know how she does it. If I looked like that and had to look at myself in the mirror every day, I'd want to kill myself for sure."

MIKE

Damn, that's cold.

STUDENT

Yeah, it is.

SUE

It's not what I meant.

MIKE

Whatever.

*Mike walks away from her.*

ANDREA

*(To Sue)* Why would you write that about me? I was nice to you. I talked to you.

SUE

That's not the whole thing. Please believe me. You don't understand. None of you understand.

MIKE

We're not idiots, Sue. Man, was I wrong about you.

SUE

But...

EMILY

(*To Sue*) Maybe you should just leave now.

*Sue doesn't know what to do. She turns to Brandi.*

SUE

You did this to me! You did this!

BRANDI

No, I didn't know—

SUE

Oh my God. I think I'm gonna—

STUDENT

She's gonna puke! She's gonna puke!

EMILY

--No, not in—

*Sue throws up on the floor.*

STUDENT

She puked. And it's chunky. Funky and chunky.

EMILY

Get out of here!

*Sue struggles out the door.*

EMILY

Well, don't just stand there, Kelli. Get a mop!

KELLI  
Right.

*Everyone looks around, stunned.*

STUDENT  
Now what?

*Emily holds up the journal.*

EMILY  
I could read some more.

*Andrea rips the journal away from her.*

ANDREA  
No. That's enough.

*Bell rings, scene changes, and we're back in school.*

*Sue walks down the hall.*

SUE  
God, do I long for the days of being invisible.

STUDENT  
Blow chunks lately?

STUDENT  
Yeah, I think it was right after she drank Mike Z's blood.

*Kids laugh.*

GIRL STUDENT  
That was horrible what you said about Andrea. What kind of person makes fun of burn victims?

STUDENT  
You're pathetic. You should just die.

*Sue tries to ignore them.*

*Mike approaches, but just walks right by her.*

SUE  
Mike?

*Mike stops, turns.*

SUE  
It's not what you think. I didn't write—

MIKE  
I heard what you wrote. Man, I thought you were different, like I thought you had...I don't know...I just thought you cared about people.

*Mike leaves.*

*Emily, Kelli, and Brandi approach.*

EMILY  
I hope you're happy. Your vomit stank up my whole house.

SUE  
You ruined my life.

EMILY  
Your life was ruined long before you met me. Like probably right around the time you decided it was a good idea to wear those ugly boots.

*Emily laughs. The other girls laugh too, and then leave.*

*Andrea walks towards Sue. Sue turns and runs off the opposite way.*

*Scene changes...just Sue under the spotlight.*

SUE  
Emily's right. Kind of. I started to wear these boots this year because I thought it was time for me to be a woman. So I went into my mom's closet, and took them out. I always remember her wearing these boots. Anyway, some things happened to me this summer and I decided, okay, I'm a woman now, and so I'm going to dress like a woman, like my mom. This way, no matter what happens, I'll have her with me, watching after me...taking care of me.

*She takes out a jar of pills.*

SUE

And now I think I know what it was like for my mom. Walking in her boots. I just...I kind of get it. She always felt like an outsider, like she had no one. Even though she was married and she had me...I mean, I was only two so maybe I wasn't anything to her. Maybe she did have no one. Or maybe she just had so many thoughts in her mind that she didn't know what to do with them. How to control them. And finally, they just got the best of her.

*She opens the pill jar.*

SUE

I always hoped I could avoid it. Like, I read things, that kids whose parents...well, that they're more likely to do the same thing. Maybe that's why I write so much. I just always believed that if I wrote enough words, I could make it all go away. But I was wrong...

*Brandi shows up on the right side of Sue. She "knocks" on the door, as if Sue's really inside her house and Brandi's trying to get her to come outside. But this should just be played by the spotlight. The "spotlight" being Sue's house. Brandi is right next to her, facing her, trying to get her attention. But Sue looks only out at the audience, never at Brandi.*

BRANDI

Sue! Sue! Open up! I know you're in there.

SUE

She has no idea where I am.

BRANDI

Please come out. I just want to talk to you.

*No reaction.*

BRANDI

I just want to say I'm sorry. Please, Sue. I'm sorry.

SUE

Too little, too late, Brandi Girl.

*Andrea enters from the other side of the stage, approaching Sue's left side. She looks at Sue. So now the three girls are in a line, Sue, in the center looking downstage, and the other two girls, outside her spotlight, looking directly at her.*

BRANDI

Please, Sue! Answer the door.

*Brandi knocks some more. Sue does not change her focus. Andrea watches Sue. Sue looks at her pills then begins...*

SUE

These pills, they smile  
like they have the answer.  
They move and sway  
like an exotic dancer.  
"Here!" they say,  
is "just what you need,  
a chance to get rid  
of all your misdeeds.  
Take me now  
and watch it all disappear,  
your pain, the now,  
your mom, your fear.  
No more future,  
no more worries  
no more emotional,  
heart-storm flurries."

*Brandi turns and walks away.*

SUE

*(continuing her poem, looking at the pills)*

"Just take my hand  
and dance with me,  
and let this moment  
slip from thee.  
Just take a taste  
and dance, be free..."

"Dance be free...

Dance with me..."

*Sue is about to put a pill in her mouth, and Andrea steps into her spot, grabs her by the arm, and stops her from taking the pills.*

*Andrea shoves the journal in Sue's face.*

ANDREA  
Take it.

*Sue looks around, as if for an escape route.*

ANDREA  
Nowhere to run now, Sue.

*Sue's scared.*

ANDREA  
Take it and read it.

SUE  
What?

ANDREA  
Read the journal. Aloud. Read what you wrote about me. Out loud to my face.

SUE  
I don't want to.

ANDREA  
I don't care what you want. I want you to read what you wrote. I want you to take responsibility for your words. I want to see your face as you look at my face as you say these things about me – these thoughts you had about me – I want to see that.

SUE  
I didn't mean them.

ANDREA  
You wrote them!

SUE  
Not to hurt you.

ANDREA  
So you did mean them?

SUE  
Please. It's not my fault. I'm not like those other girls. I don't go around

trashing people. These words were just for me. But Emily, she's the one. She read it out loud.

ANDREA

Did you writes these words, Sue?

SUE

Yes.

ANDREA

Did you mean them?

SUE

I don't know. Who knows what I mean? It's a journal entry. It's just a way for me to feel better so I don't do something stupid.

ANDREA

What do you mean stupid?

SUE

I don't know. Stupid.

ANDREA

You mean stupid like swallowing a bunch of pills?

*Sue looks at the pills she's holding.*

ANDREA

Read it.

*Sue takes the journal.*

ANDREA

From right there.

*Andrea points to a spot on the page.*

SUE

*(Reading)* "Andrea Wallace. She's probably the most respected girl in this school. I'm kind of in awe of her because she doesn't let anyone bother her or get under her skin. *(Sue looks at her.)* Like no one messes with her. No one. If they do, they'll be sorry. *(Pause.)* She's smart, athletic, she's going places. But the thing about Andrea is...well...she was involved in some kind of a fire and her entire chest is burned and scarred over..."

*Sue looks at Andrea.*

ANDREA  
Keep going.

SUE  
"She..." "She literally looks like...a monster. I don't know how she does it. If I looked like that and had to look at myself in the mirror every day, I'd want to kill myself for sure."

*Sue puts down the book.*

SUE  
I'm sorry.

ANDREA  
You're not done.

SUE  
What?

ANDREA  
You're not done. Go back to, "If I had to look at myself in the mirror," and keep going until the end.

SUE  
I don't want to—

ANDREA  
Do it!

SUE  
"If I looked like that and had to look at myself in the mirror every day, I'd want to kill myself for sure. Actually, I want to anyway so..."

ANDREA  
You want to what?

SUE  
Huh?

ANDREA  
You want to what? You didn't finish your thought. What do you want to do?

SUE  
I don't know.

ANDREA  
*(Really pressing her now)* What do you want to do, Sue? Say it. What do you want to do?

SUE  
I don't know!

ANDREA  
Kill yourself? Is that it? Do you want to kill yourself, Sue?

SUE  
NO, I DON'T WANT TO KILL MYSELF!

*Andrea nods her head.*

ANDREA  
Finish reading.

SUE  
*(Reading)* "I don't know how she does it, but I really admire her."

ANDREA  
You know exactly how I do it. You can do it too. So do it.

*Andrea walks away.*

SUE  
Andrea, I'm sorry.

*Andrea turns back.*

ANDREA  
You don't have anything to be sorry for. Those were your private feelings. And you know what? Sometimes it is hard for me to look myself in the mirror. Sometimes I do feel like a monster.

SUE  
You do?

ANDREA

We all do, Sue. We all do. Ciao.

*Andrea leaves.*

*Scene changes back to school.*

*Sue walks down the hall. Everyone gives her strange looks but no one says a word. Not one word to her.*

*Chaz and Wheezy come toward her.*

*Chaz plays keep away with Wheezy's inhaler. Wheezy is having a difficult time breathing.*

WHEEZY

Come on, give me my inhaler.

CHAZ

Why should I?

WHEEZY

Cause I can't breathe.

*Chaz slaps him in the face.*

CHAZ

Awww, poor little Wheezy can't breathe.

*Students start to gather.*

CHAZ

Hey, Bobby, look at little Wheezer here. He's afraid he's going to die.

WHEEZY

Come on, Man—I can't—

CHAZ

--breathe. I know. It's hilarious. Right, ain't it hilarious?

*Wheezy can't even talk now, he's practically hyperventilating.*

*No one says a word.*

*Sue runs up, grabs the inhaler out of Chaz's hands. Pushes him.*

SUE  
Leave him alone.

*Chaz lets Wheezy go. Wheezy collapses to the ground.*

CHAZ  
Or what?

*Sue throws the inhaler to Wheezy. He drops it, but picks it up, and quickly takes a deep breath.*

*Chaz backs Sue up into the locker.*

SUE  
Get away from me.

CHAZ  
Sure, but first...

*He grabs her. She fights him off but he is overpowering her.*

*Then Wheezy HITS CHAZ HARD ACROSS THE BACK OF HIS HEAD WITH HIS BACKPACK. It staggers Chaz. Wheezy hits him again and again and again.*

*By this time, a bunch of kids have gathered and they all applaud Wheezy.*

STUDENT  
Yeah, Wheezy. (*Other audibles welcome here.*)

STUDENT  
What's a matter, Chaz, did Witty Bitty Wheezy No Nuts beat you up?

*Chaz looks at them, shocked, embarrassed.*

CHAZ  
Forget you guys.

*Chaz leaves.*

WHEEZY  
(*To Sue*) Thanks.

*She smiles.*

WHEEZY

Now you just have to slay your Goliath. And all will be right with the world.

*Sue looks confused.*

WHEEZY

Emily.

SUE

Don't hold your breath.

*He takes a hit of his inhaler. The scene changes.*

SUE

*(To the audience)* So after that, I headed to the bathroom, and who should I see but...

*Emily stands, her back to Sue. She turns her head, a horrified look on her face.*

EMILY

Get away.

SUE

Just leave me alone, all right?

EMILY

Don't come any closer.

SUE

I'm not a freak, Emily. I'm not going to suck your blood or anything like that. So you can just...

*Sue notices what the problem is.*

EMILY

Please.

SUE

Oh my God. Did you just get your period?

EMILY

Get away from me.

SUE

Don't you have any pads or something?

*Emily is about to cry.*

SUE

Is this the first time this has happened to you?

*Emily nods and then...*

EMILY

I have to give a speech today. My pants are all...

SUE

Oh my God. That is so...unbelievable.

EMILY

Yeah, I bet you're ecstatic, aren't you?

SUE

When everyone sees this, they'll forget all about me.

EMILY

I don't know what to do.

SUE

This is like the best thing ever.

EMILY

No, it's not!

SUE

Yes, it is. Now you can be the freak. People can laugh at you, not me.

EMILY

Please help me!

SUE

I'm just so shocked. I thought you of all people had already had...I mean, you always act like so...woman-y.

*The bell rings.*

EMILY

Oh my God. That's the bell. People will be here any minute. I'll be a laughing stock.

*Sue takes a moment and then...*

SUE

Here, take this.

EMILY

What?

*Sue takes off her sweater. Hands it to Emily.*

SUE

Just wrap it around your waist. No one will know.

EMILY

I can't. I'm too—

SUE

Here, let me do it.

*Sue takes off her sweater and wraps it around Emily's waist.*

SUE

See? No one will know. It actually looks kinda cool. It's a good color for you.

*Emily examines herself in the mirror.*

EMILY

I always liked this sweater.

SUE

I thought you said it was for little girls.

EMILY

No, I was just...I'm really sorry, Sue. Really sorry.

SUE

Good luck on your speech.

*They hug. Brandi and Kelli come in.*

BRANDI

Oh...uh...are we interrupting something?

EMILY

No, I'm just...Sue was helping me get ready for my speech.

BRANDI

Sue was??

EMILY

Yeah. She was a huge help actually.

KELLI

Hey, did you hear that Chaz Powell went home crying to his mommy because Wheezy beat him up? It's true.

SUE

Yeah, I think I heard something about that.

*Brandi approaches Sue.*

BRANDI

I'm sorry I didn't get your journal to you. I'm really sorry.

SUE

It's okay. Sometimes the truth hurts. Sometimes it doesn't. In the end, we're all good. This time.

*Sue smiles, leaves.*

SUE

So, as it turns out, I took that spot writing for the newspaper.

*Scene changes.*

*Mike enters, hands her a piece of paper.*

MIKE

This is amazing. We're going to print it.

SUE

Cool. I didn't think you would.

MIKE

I'm sorry about the way I reacted. I mean, who cares? It's not like you really want to drink my blood, right?

SUE

Not during the day.

*She laughs. He does too, nervously.*

SUE

Lighten up. I'm just joking.

*Lights shift. And it's just Sue in the spot. All by herself.*

SUE

This is my first attempt at writing for a newspaper so pardon me if I don't do this right. But I gotta say, it's pretty exciting to be writing something that's going to be shared with a group of people, and not just kept to myself.

This space will be reserved for my ramblings. My take on things. And this being my first one, I'll keep it short. But I just want to say this. We're not alone. Not a one of us. I know we all probably feel like that from time to time. Or we feel like we have to act a certain way. Like we have to become this really cool person who people look up to. So we try to be someone who isn't even us. Well, don't. I say, be yourself. I mean, it's important to walk in someone else's shoes from time to time—really important actually.

*She takes off her mom's boots.*

But then the time comes when you have to kick those shoes off and get back in your own, and become the person you are, the person you're meant to be, the person the world is waiting for. And once you slip back into your shoes, then you can take the first step on the journey to the rest of your life. So be yourself. Be your wonderful beautiful self. And be brave. Believe me. And why should I know? What experience do I have in all this...well...Welcome to Jr. High, USA...

*All the students appear behind her, perhaps mirroring the very beginning of the play. The lights fade...*

**END OF PLAY**