

# ALL OF THE ABOVE

A DrameDy in One Act

*by Bradley Hayward*

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### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

When a high school election shifts from policy to personality, Lauren finds herself fighting a charismatic opponent who uses digital rumors and tyrannical tactics to divide the student body. Through a metaphorical multiple-choice test, the play examines how easily truth is traded for a vibe and how silence can become a vote for the loud. In a world of rigid categories, these students must decide if they'll fill in the answers they're given or find the courage to write their own. With simple scenic requirements, contemporary characters, and a gender flexible cast of unlimited size, this potent play is perfect for high school drama programs and one-act competitions.

Performance Time: 30-35 minutes.

### **SETTING**

A high school. The scenes may be played on a unit set, simply suggested by rearranging blocks, or performed on a completely bare stage. What's most important is that the scene changes are performed quickly, to keep the play moving forward at a steady pace.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**  
*(Entirely gender flexible cast of 6-38+)*

THE CANDIDATES

**LAUREN:** 17, smart and responsible.

**CHASE:** 17, confident and charismatic.

THE MULTIPLE CHOICES

The ensemble of MULTIPLE CHOICES has been written in the script as 4 actors; however, this ensemble may be infinitely larger. Feel free to distribute the lines to as many actors as you would like to include.

**CHOICE 1**

**CHOICE 2**

**CHOICE 3**

**CHOICE 4**

THE STUDENT BODY

The following 32 roles may be assigned individually, played by as few as 3 actors, doubled by the ensemble of MULTIPLE CHOICES, or any combination in between. The starred characters (\*\*) have monologues and re-appear later in the play. The other characters only appear once, to suggest a large student body.

**BELLA\*\***

**NATE\*\***

**TYLER\*\***

**AMIRAH\*\***

**DANIEL\*\***

**COREY\*\***

**SAM**

**IVY**

**OMAR**

**FELICITY**

**MARK**

**JESS**

**FOLLOWER 1**

**FOLLOWER 2**

**XANDER**

**KELSEY**

**HOPE**

**BRYAN**

**GABBY**

**QUENTIN**

**WALKER**

**REBECCA**

**LUCAS**

**NAOMI**

**PENNY**

**VIOLET**

**PHOEBE**

**YASMINE**

**EVAN**

**KEILAN**

**ULANI**

**ZOE**

**CASTING NOTES:** The gender identity of all characters is non-specific. Please feel free to change the names and pronouns to whatever feels most comfortable for the cast.

The character of AMIRAH is written as Muslim. While anyone of any ethnicity, race, or cultural background can be a practising Muslim, feel free to change her religion to something that appropriately fits the actor. Please modify references to her hijab accordingly and respectfully.

### **LIGHTING AND SOUND**

The play can be easily produced with no special lighting or sound effects whatsoever. It may also be presented as elaborately as your budget and creativity allows.

### **COSTUMES**

The CANDIDATES and STUDENT BODY all appear in contemporary clothing. They each carry different colored backpacks at the start of the play, which are gradually replaced by bright red backpacks as the story progresses. The MULTIPLE CHOICES wear matching white lab coats, which switch to pink.

### **PRODUCTION NOTES**

The play's structure is built on short, staccato scenes designed to mimic the rapid-fire nature of a digital feed, intentionally stripping away most stage directions to prioritize pace. Directors are encouraged to come up with inventive locations and physical business that personalize the characters' lives, but please do not let these ideas impede the swift pace of the script.

### **PROPS**

Variety of colored backpacks	Flashlight
Red backpacks	Ballot
Tablets/iPads	Pen
Cell phones	Ballot box
Campaign poster	Floor length mirrors
Megaphones	Poster display with results
Snickers candy bar	Plastic crown
Granola bar	Booklet
Spatula	Plaster arm cast
Laundry basket	Lavender tote bag
Coffee pot	Notebook
Plunger	Laptop
Smoothie	Headphones

**Scene 1**  
**Test: Media**

*(AT RISE: The MULTIPLE CHOICES stand in a rigid line. They wear matching white lab coats, and each holds an iPad or tablet of some kind. They speak with the clipped precision of standardized test administrators.)*

**CHOICE 1:** Pop quiz.

**CHOICE 2:** Put away your phones.

**CHOICE 3:** Close your books.

**CHOICE 4:** Pick up your pencils.

**CHOICE 1:** Question one.

**CHOICE 2:** You see a post from a friend.

**CHOICE 3:** You disagree with the premise.

**CHOICE 4:** Do you—

**CHOICE 1:** A) Ignore it and move on with your life.

**CHOICE 2:** B) Type a thoughtful rebuttal that respects their humanity.

**CHOICE 3:** C) Screenshot it, post it to your story with a clown emoji, and let the algorithm do the rest.

**CHOICES:** All of the above.

**CHOICE 4:** Question two. Your self worth is currently measured in—

**CHOICE 1:** A) Likes.

**CHOICE 2:** B) Shares.

**CHOICE 3:** C) Views.

**CHOICE 4:** D) The terrifying silence of a post that gets zero engagement.

**CHOICES:** D. Definitely D.

**CHOICE 1:** Question three. The truth is—

**CHOICE 2:** A) Objective.

**CHOICE 3:** B) Subjective.

**CHOICE 4:** C) Whatever gets the most likes.

**CHOICES:** C. Always C.

**CHOICE 1:** There are no points for being right.

**CHOICE 2:** There are only points for being loud.

**CHOICE 3:** If you're not trending, you don't exist.

**CHOICE 4:** Please fill in your existence now.

*(The MULTIPLE CHOICES tap on their tablets and the LIGHTS shift to...)*

## **Scene 2**

### **Lauren: The Candidate**

*(LAUREN stands at a podium, rehearsing a speech.)*

**LAUREN:** "Northern District, we are at a crossroads." *(SHE stops. Shakes her head.)* No. Too dramatic. "Students of Northern District, look at the vending machines." *(SHE groans.)* That's too small.

*(CHASE enters. He doesn't walk, he struts. He's filming himself on a cell phone and carries a bright red backpack on his back.)*

**CHASE:** *(To his phone.)* And that's why the cafeteria food is actually a metaphor for the current administration. Soft, mysterious, and definitely past its expiration date. Stay tuned for the rally. Hashtag Chase the Change.

**LAUREN:** The election isn't until Thursday, Chase. You're going to run out of hashtags.

**CHASE:** *(Lowers the phone.)* Information warfare, Lauren. If I'm not in their pockets every five minutes, I'm yesterday. You should try it. Your last post was a list of policy proposals. Pfft!

**LAUREN:** It was a plan for the student budget. You know, the thing we actually have to manage?

**CHASE:** People don't want a budget. They want a vibe. They want to feel like they're winning again.

**LAUREN:** Winning what? We're in high school. The only thing to win is a better locker.

**CHASE:** It starts with the locker. Then it's a parking spot. Then it's making sure the right people are representing the school.

**LAUREN:** You sound like a recruitment video for a movement I don't want to be part of.

**CHASE:** (*Snickers.*) Check the comments on your budget post. Or don't. It's getting ugly out there. And I'm just the guy holding the camera.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

### **Scene 3 The Echo Chamber**

**SAM:** Did you see what they said about her?

**IVY:** Who?

**SAM:** Lauren. Someone posted a photo from middle school. She's wearing a shirt that says, "Save the Trees."

**IVY:** So?

**SAM:** The caption says she wants to ban paper in the classrooms. "Lauren wants to snatch your notebooks," it says.

**IVY:** That's a reach.

**SAM:** It has four hundred likes.

**IVY:** Whoa, really? Then I should probably delete my "Save the Whales" post. Just in case.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

### **Scene 4 The Notification**

**BELLA:** My phone buzzed at 2:00 a.m. Then 2:01. Then 2:02. It was a group chat I didn't ask to be in. They were talking about a girl in my chem class. Someone had edited her face onto a video. It looked so real. I knew it wasn't, but it looked real. And if it looks real, even if it isn't real, what's the difference? I stared at the report button. My thumb hovered. If I report it, I'm a narc.

**BELLA:** *(Cont'd.)* If I don't, I'm a witness. And if I leave the chat, I'm just a coward who didn't want to see it. So, I didn't do anything. I just turned the phone face down. But the light from the screen kept bleeding out from under the edges, hitting the ceiling. Even in the darkness of my own bedroom, I couldn't get it to stop glowing.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

**Scene 5**  
**The Comment Section**

**OMAR:** "You're a loser." Send.

**FELICITY:** "Kill yourself." Send.

**OMAR:** Whoa. That's a bit much, isn't it?

**FELICITY:** It's a meme, Omar. It's not literal.

**OMAR:** But you're saying it to a person.

**FELICITY:** I'm saying it to a profile picture. There's a difference.

**OMAR:** Is there?

**FELICITY:** *(Scrolls.)* Oh, look. Someone called me a "cry bully" for liking Lauren's post. See? It's just a game. We're all just characters in a game.

**OMAR:** I don't like the controls of this game.

**FELICITY:** Then stop playing. But you won't. You want to see what happens next just as much as I do.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

**Scene 6**  
**Test: Relationships**

*(The MULTIPLE CHOICES return to their line. Their movements are slightly less robotic but still synchronized.)*

**CHOICES:** Clear your desks. It's time for the practical exam.

**CHOICE 1:** Question four. Your partner hasn't texted you back in 45 minutes. Do you—

**CHOICE 2:** A) Assume they're busy living their life.

**CHOICE 3:** B) Check their location to see if they're at Chipotle without you.

**CHOICE 4:** C) Post a depressing song lyric to bait a reaction.

**CHOICES:** C. Always C.

**CHOICE 1:** Question five. You're texting every day. This means—

**CHOICE 2:** A) You're dating.

**CHOICE 3:** B) You're exclusive but allowed to look.

**CHOICE 4:** C) You're trapped in a psychological thriller with no ending.

**CHOICES:** All of the above.

**CHOICE 1:** Question six. "I love you" is best expressed via—

**CHOICE 2:** A) Saying it out loud.

**CHOICE 3:** B) A red heart emoji.

**CHOICE 4:** C) A blue heart emoji. It's more chill.

**CHOICE 1:** D) Removing your single status, but only after they do it first.

**CHOICES:** D. Don't show your cards.

**CHOICE 2:** Love is a transaction.

**CHOICE 3:** Loyalty is a subscription.

**CHOICE 4:** If the seen receipt is on, the clock is ticking.

**CHOICE 1:** Please fill in the partner that best fits your philosophy.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

**Scene 7**  
**Lauren: The Optics**

*(LAUREN paces back and forth. She's with MARK, a quiet boy who's holding one of her campaign posters. CHASE enters, flanked by FOLLOWER 1 who's filming his every move. Follower 1 wears the exact same bright red backpack that Chase wears.)*

**CHASE:** Look at this! The front runner and her... *(To MARK.)*  
What are we calling you, Mark? The chief of staff? Or just the guy who carries the heavy stuff?

**LAUREN:** He's my friend. Go away.

**CHASE:** *(Snickers.)* "Friend." Interesting choice of words. See, I did a poll on my page. People find Mark a bit, how shall I say it? Unvetted. He's very quiet. Very antisocial. People are asking if a leader should be dating someone so gloomy.

**MARK:** I'm right here, Chase. I'm not a poll.

**CHASE:** *(Ignores HIM.)* It's about the optics, folks. A president needs a first gentleman who reflects the strength of the school. Mark looks like he's one bad grade away from a breakdown. Is that the energy we want in the office?

**LAUREN:** You're attacking my personal life because you can't argue with my proposal for the library hours.

**CHASE:** I'm not attacking anything. I'm just asking questions. That's what a democracy is, right? If you can't handle a few questions about your choice of company, how can you handle the school board?

**LAUREN:** My relationship has nothing to do with my ability to lead.

**CHASE:** Everything is connected. If you can't manage your own boyfriend's image, how can you manage ours? See you at the debate. Or see half of you, anyway. Mark, maybe stay in the back? The lighting is better for people like you.

*(CHASE and FOLLOWER 1 exit, snickering.)*

**MARK:** Maybe I should stop helping with the posters.

**LAUREN:** No. That's exactly what he wants.

**MARK:** It's not about what he wants. It's about the fact that I'm now Option B on his latest story. I didn't sign up to be a multiple-choice question.

**LAUREN:** You don't have to help me if you don't want to.

**MARK:** I want to. But I also want to help myself.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

### **Scene 8** **The Ghost**

**JESS:** He didn't block me.

**XANDER:** That's good, right?

**JESS:** No, it's worse. He just stopped. But he still watches my stories. I can see his little bubble at the front of the list. He's there. He sees me go to the mall, sees me eat Twizzlers, sees me cry post at 1:00 a.m.

**XANDER:** Just text him.

**JESS:** I can't! If I text him, I lose the silence war.

**XANDER:** The what?

**JESS:** The person who breaks the silence first is the one who cares more. And the one who cares more is the loser.

**XANDER:** So, you're just going to sit here and watch him watch you not talk to him?

**JESS:** Exactly. It's the most romantic thing we've ever done.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

**Scene 9**  
**The Screenshot**

**NATE:** She sent me a picture. Just a normal picture. Her in her room, wearing a hoodie. But there was a look in her eyes, like she trusted me. Like I was the only person in the world who was supposed to see that specific version of her. And for five seconds, I was. Then I thought about the guys. I thought about how much clout I'd get if I showed them. Just a quick screenshot. A little trophy. My thumb vibrated over the buttons. I could hear their voices in my head, the laughing, the "Good job, man." I realized I wasn't looking at a girl anymore. I was looking at a currency. I could spend her to buy five minutes of being "the man." (*HE looks at his hands.*) I didn't do it. But I thought about it. And now, every time I look at her, I feel like I've already betrayed her. Because in my head, she's already been sent.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

**Scene 10**  
**The Standardized Match**

**KELSEY:** He's a 94% match.

**HOPE:** Based on what?

**KELSEY:** The app. We have the same values. We both like John Hughes movies, we both hate bubble gum, and we both think volleyball is overrated.

**HOPE:** Do you like the way he laughs?

**KELSEY:** The app doesn't have a data point for laughter.

**HOPE:** Do you like the way he smells?

**KELSEY:** That's weird.

**HOPE:** It's not weird! It's human.

**KELSEY:** Being human is messy. I want tidy. I want the 94%. I want to know the ending before I start the book. It's safer that way.

*(The LIGHTS shift to...)*

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