

# How to Kill a Mockingbird

A Comedy in One Act

*By Bradley Walton*

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### **STORY OF PLAY**

Five less-than-stellar students meet to work on their group English project. Their assigned reading: Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Unfortunately, not one of the five has actually read the book. In fact, nobody even brought a copy of the book along. Worst of all, they're not exactly sure what the title of the book even is! Thus begins a hilarious series of guesses and assumptions which culminate in a massive conspiracy theory about the book and the true threat of mockingbirds.

*How to Kill a Mockingbird* premiered January 13, 2011 at Harrisonburg High School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. It was directed by the author and Stanley Swartz, with the following cast:

*Kerry – Heidi Warner  
Jamie – Taylor Ritchie  
Blair – Jasmin Purnell  
Aubrey – Gracie Burzumato  
Dusty – Travis Schreiber-May  
Senior Citizen – Fernando Pena Gamboa  
Waitress – Cassidy Holsinger  
Mrs. Conrad – Lillian Poirot*

## **CHARACTERS**

*8 roles, all gender neutral, optional extras  
(Change pronouns as needed.)*

**KERRY** – a high school student who prioritizes his job over school.

**BLAIR** – a high school student, not terribly bright or motivated.

**DUSTY** – a high school student, also neither bright nor motivated, but with a very assertive personality.

**JAMIE** – a high school student who prioritizes video games over school.

**AUBREY** – a high school student, the dimmest of the bunch; looks up to Dusty, Blair, and Jamie.

**SENIOR CITIZEN**

**WAITRESS/WAITER** – early twenties.

**MR./MRS. CONRAD** – a middle-aged English teacher.

**EXTRAS** – There may be customers seated at other tables in the coffee shop.

## **COSTUMES**

Everyone is dressed according to his or her character type. It's raining outside, so some characters may have raincoats or umbrellas.

## **PROPS**

Several paper coffee cups

Newspaper

Coffee stirrs, napkins, sugar, etc. (optional)

## **STAGING**

The play is set in a coffee shop below street level. This can be very simply represented with tables and chairs. If the tables are square, angle them so that all of the actors can face out to the audience. There should be no tables DR or DL, as the actors will be moving around in these spaces.

There may be an optional counter and optional stairs leading upwards offstage. There may also be a sign with the shop's name: The Coffee Cellar. All entrances into and exits out of the coffee shop should be made at stage left. There should be no windows. Entrances and exits to the restrooms and kitchen should be made at stage right. Most of the blocking notes in the script are based on the original production and are provided as suggestions. Please feel free to block the play differently, if you like.

## Scene 1

*(AT RISE: DUSTY is drinking a cup of coffee, seated on the stage right side of a center table. Up right, there is a SENIOR CITIZEN seated at another table, drinking a cup of coffee and reading a newspaper. There may also be other coffee shop CUSTOMERS seated at other upstage tables. JAMIE, AUBREY, BLAIR and KERRY, all high school students, will enter and join DUSTY. So, from stage right to stage left, the seating order will eventually be: DUSTY, JAMIE, KERRY, BLAIR, AUBREY. JAMIE enters from L and crosses to Dusty's table.)*

**JAMIE:** Hey, Dusty.

**DUSTY:** Hey, Jamie.

**JAMIE:** Are we the only ones here so far?

**DUSTY:** Yup.

**JAMIE:** *(Sits L of DUSTY at Dusty's table.)* Huh. Weird.  
I'm usually late for everything.

**DUSTY:** You are late. It's just that everybody else is later.

**JAMIE:** That sucks. *(Or "stinks.")* Now I have to wait for them instead of them waiting for me.

*(AUBREY enters from L.)*

**DUSTY:** Here's Aubrey.

**AUBREY:** Hey. Are Kerry and Blair here yet?

**JAMIE:** Nope.

**AUBREY:** Wow. Weren't we supposed to meet like, fifteen minutes ago?

**DUSTY:** Yup.

**JAMIE:** I just got here.

**AUBREY:** You been waiting long, Dusty?

**DUSTY:** Long enough to order a coffee and drink most of it.

**JAMIE:** I never figured you for a coffee drinker.

**DUSTY:** Neither did my mom. I have a four-cup-a-day habit now and it totally freaks her out.

**JAMIE:** Sweet.

**AUBREY:** So how's the coffee here?

**DUSTY:** Tastes kind of like caffeinated mud.

**AUBREY:** Then why are you drinking it?

**DUSTY:** Didn't you just hear me say it was caffeinated?

*(BLAIR enters from L.)*

**BLAIR:** Hey, guys. Sorry I'm late.

*(BLAIR grabs a nearby table and scoots it a few feet to the left of DUSTY and JAMIE's table. BLAIR and AUBREY sit at the second table, BLAIR on the right, AUBREY on the left.)*

**DUSTY:** Don't worry about it.

**BLAIR:** Where's Kerry?

**DUSTY:** Obviously someplace that's not here.

**BLAIR:** Is he still coming?

**DUSTY:** He'd better be. This place was his idea.

**BLAIR:** He's usually pretty reliable.

**DUSTY:** He used to be. Then he went and got a job. Now he sleeps through most of his classes and I think he turns in about as much homework as the rest of us.

**BLAIR:** Bummer. I was kind of hoping that he'd, y'know, be on top of this assignment we're doing.

**AUBREY:** Have you tried texting him?

**DUSTY:** I don't have his number, and even if I did, the wireless reception down here sucks.

*(KERRY enters from L.)*

**KERRY:** Sorry!

**DUSTY:** Where've you been, Kerry?

**KERRY:** I took a ten-minute nap that lasted thirty minutes.

*(Looks at DUSTY.)* Dusty, are you drinking coffee?

**DUSTY:** Yeah.

**KERRY:** I would never have figured you for a coffee drinker.

**DUSTY:** Just because I'm a juvenile delinquent in the making doesn't mean I can't be addicted to caffeine.

**KERRY:** But the coffee here sucks.

## **End of Freeview**

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