

Where Should We Eat? (And Other Life-Altering Decisions)

By Scott Haan

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Where Should We Eat?

- 2 -

DEDICATION

*To my wonderful and much-missed grandparents
Charles & Dorothy Haan and Peter & Elizabeth Fodrocy.
I'm glad they chose the restaurants they did.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

Every day, we make a thousand choices that might not seem important at the time, but who knows which one has the potential to change the course of our entire life? Three high school friends, Summer, Victoria and Ariel, are simply choosing a place to eat that night, but where they end up might set their futures on very different paths. Explore four possible scenarios springing from the same mundane decision in this comedy/drama about friendship, destiny, and the surprises life has to offer.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 m, 4 w, 2 flex, optional extras.)

SUMMER (f): Bright and optimistic, the most cheerful of this group of three high school friends.

ARIEL (f): Sarcastic and sullen; name pronounced "R.E.L." with emphasis on the "L."

VICTORIA (f): Nervous and introverted.

NARRATOR (flex): Our all-knowing guide to different possibilities.

MOTHER (f): An exhausted mother.

PATRICK (m): A friendly and cute waiter, the same age as the three girls.

CASHIER (flex): A bored fast-food employee.

SHADY GUY (m): Suspicious-looking man, who is big and/or tall in stature.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Some of the Narrator's future scenarios (at the end of Scenes 2, 4, 6 and 7) include optional parts for additional non-speaking extras. If desired, more extras can also be used as patrons in the restaurant scenes (2, 4 and 6).

SETTING

The story takes place at Victoria's house and at three different restaurants around town. Sets can be extremely minimal, with each site suggested only by a few props or objects. For smaller stages, one central table can be used for every location, with different signs or backdrops brought in to denote the different locations. The sets can be as bare or as elaborate as your resources allow.

SCENES

Scene 1: A table at Victoria's house
Scene 2: A burger joint, a few minutes later
Scene 3: REWIND: Back to the table again
Scene 4: A pizza place, a few minutes later
Scene 5: REWIND: Back to the table again
Scene 6: A Mexican fast food restaurant, a few minutes later
Scene 7: REWIND: Back to the table again

PRODUCTION NOTES

Since the show does not require any costume changes, scene changes should be as short as possible in order to maintain a brisk pace. If your stage is large enough, you should pre-set all four locations in different places on the stage so that no props have to be moved between scenes.

Scenes 2, 4, 6 and 7 end with the Narrator describing what will happen to the characters. During the Narrator's dialogue, the other actors will silently act out the scenarios described. Sometimes they will freeze in a certain pose, other times they will be moving. You may choose to act these out with or without actual props. A complete list of props is at the end of the play.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: On one side of the stage is the NARRATOR, who is about to address the audience. Elsewhere, preferably CS, is a table and three chairs. Friends SUMMER, VICTORIA and ARIEL are seated around the table. Summer is wearing a hat and has a purse with her. LIGHTS are up on the Narrator and down on the table...or, alternately, the girls at the table freeze or silently mimic conversation during the Narrator's introduction.)

NARRATOR: *(To the audience.)* Every day...every LIFE...is a series of small decisions. A thousand little choices like what to wear, what to eat, even what to say. And every one, no matter how small, has the potential to change the course of your life. Think about people you never would have met if you hadn't been at a certain place at a certain time. Even one mundane decision, like choosing a place to eat, can impact the rest of your life and the lives of the people around you.

(LIGHTS down on the NARRATOR and up on the table...or, alternately, the Narrator exits and the GIRLS unfreeze or talk at normal volume.)

SUMMER: I am starving. Can we go somewhere to eat? Diet or no diet, I am totally in the mood for a hamburger.

VICTORIA: Ooh, that sounds good. I could go for a ham-booger, too. *(ARIEL and SUMMER each do a double-take.)*

ARIEL: What did you say?

VICTORIA: What? I said I could go for a ham-booger.

(ARIEL and SUMMER look at each other and laugh.)

ARIEL: A ham-booger?

VICTORIA: *(Self-conscious.)* YES! What is so funny?

ARIEL: Do me a favor. Say, "I love to eat burgers."

Where Should We Eat?

- 6 -

VICTORIA: *(Confused.)* I love to eat boogers. *(SUMMER and ARIEL laugh again.)* WHAT?

SUMMER: Sweetie, you're saying "booger" instead of "burger."

VICTORIA: *(Trying again.)* Booger. *(ARIEL laughs.)* STOP laughing!

ARIEL: I'll stop laughing when YOU stop saying "booger"!

SUMMER: Victoria, it's "burger." See, look. *(Pulls out a pen and a post-it note pad from her purse and starts writing.)* There's an "R" in the middle. "Burger." *(Puts the note on the table in front of VICTORIA.)*

VICTORIA: Booger.

ARIEL: No, burger!

VICTORIA: Booger!

ARIEL: How can you not hear the difference?

VICTORIA: I'm saying EXACTLY what you guys are saying!

ARIEL: That's not true, because I'M not saying "booger"!

SUMMER: *(Genuinely trying to be helpful.)* The two syllables rhyme. Say, "Burr..."

VICTORIA: Burr.

SUMMER: Gurr.

VICTORIA: Gurr.

SUMMER: Burger.

VICTORIA: Booger.

ARIEL: Oh, this is the best thing ever!

VICTORIA: *(Embarrassed, SHE wads up the post-it note.)* Forget it. I don't want...THAT any more anyway. I'd rather have pizza.

ARIEL: Don't you mean "piz-uh"? *(Rhymes with "is a.")*

VICTORIA: I hate you.

ARIEL: And I don't blame you. But in any case, I don't want "boogers" for dinner, OR "piz-uh." I vote for tacos.

SUMMER: Of course you do, because you couldn't just agree with one of the options on the table. You have to insist on a third choice.

ARIEL: Well, I had McDonald's LAST night, and pizza gives me gas.

SUMMER: Wait, pizza gives you gas, but TACOS are okay?

End of Freeview

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