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Dramatic Publishing

THE BULLY PLAYS

24 Short Plays by

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(THE BULLY PLAYS)

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Bully-Bully

By Cherie Bennett

CHARACTERS

- J'NEECE age 14, a cheerleader, newest and youngest on the squad. *Not* a mean girl but does enjoy her status, cares a lot about what other people think of her—and by “other people” I mean anyone under the age of consent
- JANIS age 14, J'NEECE's alter ego. A “good” girl; earnest, sometimes annoyingly so
- MOM smart, loving, trying to connect with her daughter who has changed since she became a cheerleader
- TED a scruffy dog who acts like a human, could have been a master thespian if only the gig were open to canines

NOTE: TED can be played by a male or female, but the sense of the character should definitely be male. Utterly un-doglike except when giving a master thespian performance of: A Dog. The lone exception is when he slurps J'NEECE's cheek, sharing with her the genuine affection they used to share before her life became all about cheerleading. J'NEECE and JANIS should be made to look like a mirror image of each other. The actors cast should be approximately the same size so that, appropriately wigged and costumed, they appear to be the same person.

SETTING AND TIME: All action takes place in a 14-year-old girly-girl's bedroom. The set can be as elaborate or as simple as suits the needs of the production. There must be a full-length mirror with no glass. A bed. Chairs or a couch. This can be done simply with draped rehearsal boxes, perhaps a pink beanbag chair.

(During this, TED THE DOG enters on the fly. He walks upright but wears some sort of dog costume. [It should not block his facial expressions or hinder his speech or movement.] A leash trails from his collar. He seems human in every way except...he's a dog. He climbs onto J'NEECE's bed, looming, and manages to overact while panting.)

J'NEECE *(cont'd)*. Down, Teddie! Bad dog!

TED *(thrusts the dangling leash at her. J'accuse!)*. Bad human!

JANIS. Sadly, I would have to agree.

J'NEECE. You two are ganging up on me?

TED. Yo, I'm a dog. I've got a pack mentality. Comes with the gig.

JANIS. Anthropologically speaking, that's true. You see—

TED. Save it, savant.

JANIS. Savant. Noun. A person of learning, especially—

TED. Dying to hear the rest. Really. So entertaining. But I'm a caged beast, desperate for a walk. A walk. Get it? It's a euphemism.

J'NEECE. Hey, that was on my vocab quiz!

JANIS *(coaxing)*. And it means...?

TED *(when J'NEECE can't remember...)*. Didn't study? *Quel* shocker.

JANIS. You know what it means. *(Coaxing.)* A mild expression to replace one thought to be offensive...

J'NEECE. If I didn't study, you didn't study!

JANIS. You started to. But then Mack Bart texted you in study hall...

J'NEECE. He is so hot.

JANIS (*even she feels the lure*). Those dimples when he smiles...

J'NEECE. He's a junior and I'm only a freshman and—

JANIS. Oh-mi-gosh-oh-mi-gosh-oh-mi-gosh! What if he asks you to homecoming?

(The GIRLS share a thrilled gasp at the possibility.)

TED. Female bonding. A beautiful thing. I laughed. I cried.

(Pointedly.) I wet myself. *(As he lifts a leg—)*

J'NEECE (*grossed out*). On my bed?

JANIS. He didn't really do it.

TED. Psych! A little *bon mot*.

JANIS. He was joking.

TED. Bilingual canine humor. Picked it up from this smokin' toy poodle.

JANIS. He meets her at the park. After he...you know.

TED. Hey, it's a dirty business but someone's gotta do it.

Get it? Dirty "business"? *(He cracks himself up.)*

J'NEECE (*not amused*). Play dead, Ted!

(TED falls from the bed in a community-theatre-worthy death mime. J'NEECE continues to JANIS, eagerly.)

J'NEECE (*cont'd*). So we were conversating about Mack...

JANIS. Um, "conversating" isn't a word.

J'NEECE. Yes it is. Ashley says it. And she's head cheerleader!

TED (*rises on an elbow, weighing the difference*). Head cheerleader, rocket scientist. Head cheerleader, rocket scientist...

J'NEECE. She's nice to everyone and you're supposed to be playing dead!

(*TED dramatically "hangs" himself with his leash, tongue hanging out.*)

JANIS (*still thinking about what J'NEECE said*). Not "everyone"...

J'NEECE. Ashley never said one mean thing.

JANIS. But...when her boyfriend was ragging on Arnold, she laughed.

J'NEECE. So? She didn't do anything.

TED. Exactly the point, Your Slowness.

J'NEECE. What was she supposed to do, go: "Oh, making fun of Arnold is so mean!" Publicly humiliate her boyfriend?

TED (*scrambles up and holds out his leash*). Works for me. Glad we had this little chat.

J'NEECE (*ignores the leash*). But no girl would do that! It's social suicide.

JANIS (*sits, pats a spot next to her for J'NEECE, who reluctantly joins her*). J'neece. Sweetie. You're fourteen now. And I think it's time we had "The Talk." See, some things are sins. There are sins of commission and sins of omission...

J'NEECE (*rises hastily*). I don't believe in doing any of that stuff until I'm married!

TED. Canines don't marry. We mate. Often in the park. With a poodle. On a walk.