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*Dramatic Publishing*

# THE BULLY PLAYS

## 24 Short Plays by

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(THE BULLY PLAYS)

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# Bystander Blues

By Trish Lindberg

## CHARACTERS

- KATIE .....sensitive, intelligent girl, slightly overweight  
JOHNNY ..... most popular boy in school,  
a mean-spirited bully  
SAMANTHA ..... most popular girl in school,  
the queen of mean  
ERIC .....bystander, has known Katie since kindergarten  
JESSICA ..... bystander, afraid to be labeled  
“unpopular” by Samantha  
BOBBY .....bystander, used to be friends with Johnny,  
now tries to steer clear  
RACHEL .....bystander, feels sorry for Katie,  
not confident enough to stand up for her  
MATTIE ..... bystander, feels guilty  
but not enough to do anything  
BRANDY .....bystander, has some status in the school,  
but still unwilling to support Katie  
KARLA ..... bystander, shy, unwilling to  
draw attention to herself

This play may also be performed by a smaller five-person cast by keeping the characters of Katie, Johnny and Samantha the same and alternating the rest of the lines between two actors (bystanders) on either side of the action. The only exception is in the section where Samantha tries to belittle Katie in front of Jessica. The lines said by Jessica in the original version should all be said by the same actor.

Gender doesn't matter in the two bystanders in this smaller cast version. I'm sure the play could also be expanded, if more cast members were needed, by dividing up the lines of all but Katie, Johnny and Samantha and being sure that the same actor plays the Jessica part in the section mentioned earlier. I look forward to all sorts of creative variations.

**SETTING AND TIME:** Bare stage with props. The present.

**WORDS TO PONDER:** *Bystanders have tremendous power to stop bullying if they would intervene, get help, and support the target of the bullying. There are so many more young people who “see” bullying and do nothing than those who actually bully. Hopefully, this play will encourage those who see bullying behavior in action to stop tolerating it by doing and saying something. There is power in numbers. Bystanders need to step up and do their part to stop the needless scars that bullying leaves on young people every day in school.*

*(The BYSTANDERS [BRANDY, JESSICA, RACHEL and KARLA R and ERIC, BOBBY and MATTIE L] are standing upstage of KATIE and SAMANTHA, with their backs to the audience on either side of KATIE and SAMANTHA, who are in the center. KATIE and SAMANTHA are in a tableau, facing front about to begin their lines. JOHNNY is slightly upstage of them L with his back to the audience. As each of the BYSTANDERS speaks, they turn around front to the audience. When JOHNNY enters the scene, he, too, turns to interact with SAMANTHA and KATIE.)*

**BRANDY** (*turns front*). What happened yesterday

ERIC (*turns front*). Never should have happened.

JESSICA (*turns front*). I should have

BOBBY (*turns front*). Said something,

RACHEL (*turns front*). Done something,

MATTIE (*turns front*). Anything,

KARLA (*turns front*). But I didn't.

*(The BYSTANDERS observe as SAMANTHA and KATIE come to life and begin interacting. KATIE is obviously nervous around SAMANTHA, uneasy and untrusting. SAMANTHA sees KATIE as an easy target and immediately pounces.)*

SAMANTHA. Hey, what's up Katie?

KATIE. Nothing much.

SAMANTHA. I heard that you and Johnny...

KATIE. No way, Samantha... Who told you that?

*(She turns away as JOHNNY turns and joins in the conversation. KATIE is even more uncomfortable now. JOHNNY is the most popular boy in school, and KATIE is most definitely not in his crowd. He intimidates her and is known to be cruel. KATIE would rather be anywhere than in the hallway stuck between SAMANTHA and JOHNNY.)*

JOHNNY. Hi, ladies. How we doing?

SAMANTHA (*flirting*). Hi, Johnny.

*(KATIE turns away, trying to leave. JOHNNY blocks her way.)*

JOHNNY. What's up with you?

KATIE. What do you mean?