

Rosalee Was Here

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Characters

Molly Chase, late thirties, a paraprofessional who works one-on-one with Rosalee

Rosalee Darien, eighth grade girl of mixed Latina heritage

Maxwell Holiday, late fifties to early sixties, a middle school principal

Setting

A middle school

Time

September to November 1995

NOTE FROM PLAYWRIGHT

In 1995, schools were dealing with greatly increased special education demands, and students with a myriad of behavioral and psychological diagnoses were taxing the teachers and administrators like never before. Accommodations were being made to satisfy the requirements of students' IEPs (individual educational plans) that were costly and time consuming. A principal in his early sixties would have witnessed and coped with extraordinary changes and, like most change, would not have welcomed it.

I hope that the artists who are considering the world of this play will keep in mind that Mr. Holiday is himself a stranger in a strange land. In fact, it is probably Rosalee who is the most comfortable navigating this landscape.

I also hope that the relationship between Molly and Mr. Holiday will be explored for its possibilities: perhaps there is tenderness, perhaps comradeship. Their conflict is easy to see. Less easy but even more important are the places where there is union.

Finally, a note about Rosalee. She is angry and she is hurt, but she is much more than that. Molly loves her because she is lovable. We must see that; we must fall in love with her, as well. The danger is in making her pitiable. When we pity Rosalee, we want to hide from her. The point of this play is to bring her into focus and that requires that the characters be brave, Rosalee most of all.

Act 1

SCENE 1

MR. HOLIDAY

Thanks for coming. Have a seat. I see you have some teaching experience.

MOLLY

Yes, subbing mostly. And I ran an after school program. I keep thinking of getting my certification-

MR. HOLIDAY

That's not necessary here. I mean, in this position. Graduate school?

MOLLY

It's a weekend program. Won't interfere with my job.

MR. HOLIDAY

What is your subject?

MOLLY

Liberal studies. I'm a writer.

MR. HOLIDAY

How fascinating. What do you write?

MOLLY

I don't know yet. Just always wanted to and I thought, why not? I'll probably start with family stories-

MR. HOLIDAY

We have two openings. One is with an eighth grade girl, Rosalee Darien. She's in foster care and has behavioral problems that require constant supervision. The other is with - two boys, Jared Davis and Gareth Hoffman. Both also have behavioral issues that are pretty well controlled with medication. Jared has a language based learning disability and Gareth's has mild autism. Very high functioning, actually. You'd be expected to work with them both in the classroom and keep track of them in the hallways. Fortunately, these boys are great friends. They shared the same para last year and it worked out quite well.

MOLLY

What happened to her?

MR. HOLIDAY

She died. It had nothing to do with the position.

MOLLY

What about Rosalee?

MR. HOLIDAY

It's a one-on-one position. The terms of her probation require that she is never unaccompanied, even to the bathroom. For her own safety, as well as others.

MOLLY

She's on probation?

MR. HOLIDAY

Since the sixth grade. I'll give you the file to read if you decide to take the position.

MOLLY

What's she like?

MR. HOLIDAY

Charming. Manipulative. Smart. Too smart for her own good. But socially she has problems. She wants to make friends but her aggression puts the other kids off.

MOLLY

I see.

MR. HOLIDAY

You'd be expected to stay with her in class, between classes, sit with her at lunch. And attend all meetings with her team. Did the business office explain the compensation?

MOLLY

Um, eight thirty an hour-

MR. HOLIDAY

Not exactly a king's ransom, I know but there are benefits like personal days.

MOLLY

I wondered about health insurance.

MR. HOLIDAY

These are not year round positions. Let's see, thirty-two and a half hours a week. You are not paid for lunch or holidays.

MOLLY

But wouldn't I be working during lunch?

MR. HOLIDAY

These are the terms of the contract. It's the same for all the paraprofessional staff. Everyone, myself included, is expected to be vigilant when on school grounds. Your vigilance is simply more specific.

MOLLY

What about Rosalee's para from last year?

MR. HOLIDAY
She started a house cleaning business.

MOLLY
Oh.

MR. HOLIDAY
So are you interested?

MOLLY
Yes. I- think I'd like to work with Rosalee.

MR. HOLIDAY
Excellent. You'll do well. She responds well to authority. And it looks like you'll be getting another course in world history and Edgar Allen Poe!

MOLLY
That never hurts.

MR. HOLIDAY
We have two in-service days before school starts - here's some paperwork. The bell is at 8:03; Rosalee will arrive at 7:50 so it's best if you're here by then.

MOLLY
Do I get paid for the thirteen minutes? Just kidding.

MR. HOLIDAY
And you have a seventh grader enrolling this year?

MOLLY
Sarah, yes-

MR. HOLIDAY
Sarah? Nice name.

MOLLY
She's a little nervous about it. She's shy. New school and all. I think working here will help her feel - we'd be on the same schedule- We've just moved here. I have a sister nearby. It's good to be near family.

MR. HOLIDAY
It's best if you don't discuss your family with Rosalee.

MOLLY
Oh, I wouldn't.

MR. HOLIDAY
Kids can be very inquisitive.

MOLLY
Wouldn't happen.

MR. HOLIDAY

Of course, Rosalee and... Sarah?... wouldn't have any of the same classes.

(beat)

Okay! So, Rosalee! You'll be part of a team that includes her probation officer, therapists - there's three - her foster parents and me. In some ways Rosalee is very lucky. She has the attention of several caring and concerned adults.

MOLLY

Where are her real parents?

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee and her sister were adopted by the Darien's when they were toddlers. Her past, well, that's most unfortunate. But it's our job - yours more than anyone's - to see her through this very trying time.

MOLLY

I'll do my best.

MR. HOLIDAY

That's very good. Thank you. We're lucky to have you. Welcome! So, we'll see you on the 29th. For the in-service. It's always very informational and a good opportunity for bonding with the other paras. Oh, and lunch will be provided, usually grinders, that sort of thing. Come early. You'll want a good seat. The opening speaker is the assistant to the secretary of education! We had to really fight to get him, I can tell you. And there's grinders. Molly-

MOLLY

Yes, Mr. Holiday?

MR. HOLIDAY

We're going to have a great year!

SCENE 2

MR. HOLIDAY

Good morning and welcome everyone! A special welcome to our sixth grade class and all the new students. You should have name tags in your orientation packets. Make sure you put them on so our returning students can say, *Welcome to Branson Middle School!* Remember returning students that the newbies will need extra help the first day or so finding their way to class. Let's everyone make it the best year of school ever and remember our motto - *Make it a great day or not, the choice is yours!* Rosalee, I'd like you to meet Ms. Chase -

ROSALEE

Hey, Courtney!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rose, I need you to acknowledge Ms. Chase.

MOLLY

You can call me Molly.

ROSALEE

Yeah, hi. Shanti!

MR. HOLIDAY

Ms. Chase is going to be with you this year. Just like Donna was last year.

ROSALEE

I want Donna back.

MR. HOLIDAY

Donna has gone on to other endeavors.

ROSALEE

You made her life a living hell!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rose, that is not appropriate. And I think you're the one who made her job difficult. Do you agree with that?

ROSALEE

No. God!

MOLLY

Shall we go to math? We're going to be late.

ROSALEE

Who cares?... Stop following me!

A CLASSROOM

ROSALEE (cont'd)

Hey, want part of a cookie?

MOLLY

Rose, no eating in class.

ROSALEE

I'm hungry! Stop bothering me!

MOLLY

Have you got a pen? Rose? Here's a pen. And paper.

ROSALEE

I've got my own pen and paper!

MOLLY

Then get them out.

ROSALÉE
No!

MOLLY
Wow. All right. I'll take notes.

ROSALÉE
I have to go to the nurse.

MOLLY
Rose, wait, where are you-

ROSALÉE
I'm having my period! God!

A HALLWAY

MR. HOLIDAY
Where's Rosalee?

MOLLY
Period.

MR. HOLIDAY
What?

MOLLY
She's menstruating.

MR. HOLIDAY
Oh. Very well. How's it going?

MOLLY
Great. What do I do if she won't do her work?

MR. HOLIDAY
We don't have high expectations for Rosalee. Academically. Just keep her safe. And do your best.

ROSALÉE
All clear?

A CLASSROOM

ROSALÉE (cont'd)
I can do it! God, I'm not a baby! Is this the only job you can get? It must suck.

MOLLY
I'm in graduate school. I'm actually planning on being a famous writer.

ROSALEE

You don't look the type. I forgot my notebook. I have to go to my locker.

MOLLY

Listen to me, young lady. I said listen! I am not going to chase you all over the school. I'll decide if we are leaving a classroom and I will set the pace, do you understand?

ROSALEE

Okay... My feet are paralyzed. They are. It's from the pills I take. Sometimes they just freeze.

MOLLY

Do you want me to carry you?

ROSALEE

Yes, please!

MOLLY

Come on, Rosalee. This isn't funny. I was hoping we could get to know each other today-

ROSALEE

This is what I'm like.

MOLLY

And develop a relationship that was enjoyable.

ROSALEE

Okay, I'm not gay.

MOLLY

That is inappropriate.

ROSALEE

I'm going to math. Chill out.

MOLLY

Now what are you doing?

ROSALEE

Looking for Ethan. My boyfriend. What? Donna always let me. It's just health. They're watching a stupid video.

MOLLY

BACK TO MATH!

ROSALEE

Okay, okay. God... Gym!

LOCKER ROOM

ROSALEE (cont'd)

You have to change, you know. It's a school rule.

MOLLY

I'm a teacher.

ROSALEE

Right! You're an aide. Would you turn around? God! I don't like anybody staring at me.

MOLLY

I wasn't-

ROSALEE

There's such a thing as privacy! Come on, you're not going to just stand there!

MOLLY

What - oh, I don't run.

ROSALEE

You're supposed to stay with me. At all times! What if I do something!

MOLLY

I'll watch from here!

ROSALEE

Constant vigilance! That's what Donna always was told! You got any kids?

MOLLY

Two.

ROSALEE

How old?

MOLLY

Twelve and fifteen.

ROSALEE

What are their names?

MOLLY

Sarah and Sean-

ROSALEE

I have a sister ten months younger than me. We were both adopted together. That's why our name is Darien and not something Spanish. I'm going to change it when I grow up. Have you ever been to Spain? I have this foster brother, Troy, he's like a gargoyle, you know what gargoyle's are?

MOLLY

No. Yes. Could we not talk while we run?

ROSALEE

Gargoyles are like guards who keep evil out. He keeps it in.

MOLLY

In where.

ROSALEE

In himself. He's his own gargoyle.

MOLLY

You just, uh, keep going... I'll kind of... catch my breath and then... hey... where are you going? Rosalee... Rosalee, get back here! God damn it!... *She's okay... I'll get her...* Rosalee!

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

MR. HOLIDAY

How's your morning going, Rosalee?

ROSALEE

Crappy.

MR. HOLIDAY

Why is that?

ROSALEE

I don't know why I have to have Harriet the Spy around every minute.

MR. HOLIDAY

You know why. We discussed this at length last year and before school started this year.

ROSALEE

I can find my way to class. I can run around a fucking field-

MR. HOLIDAY

That's one hour of detention.

ROSALEE

Just for saying fucking?

MR. HOLIDAY

That's two hours of detention.

MOLLY

Excuse me, one of the fuckings was a question.

MR. HOLIDAY

Why don't you explain why you left school property, Rosalee?

ROSALEE

I was running. Why should I run around in a circle? I mean, what am I, a crazy person? And Justin Garner grabbed my tits! How come he doesn't get detention!

MR. HOLIDAY

I'm not playing a game with you this year. We're lucky to find Ms. Chase. She was the only applicant for the position. If we can't accommodate you in this school, you'll find yourself back at the retreat.

ROSALEE

They'll just move me to another school district.

MR. HOLIDAY

Lunch in the detention room today. I'll have two trays sent up.

ROSALEE

I'm not eating that crap. Just kidding. Can we go? I have to get changed before social studies. Come on.

MR. HOLIDAY

Let's have a better afternoon!

LOCKER ROOM

ROSALEE

I told you not to look at me! And you don't have to tell Mr. Holiday everything I do. He's a very busy person. He's running the school. Now I'm going to be late! You're looking again!

MOLLY

I'm not looking!

ROSALEE

Walk over there!

A CLASSROOM

ROSALEE (cont'd)

Hey, stay out of there! That's my water bottle! And you have no right to go through my stuff!

MOLLY

Let me see that bottle... Rosalee... Rosalee, let me see that bottle.

ROSALEE

Leave me alone.

MOLLY

I'm not going to leave you alone. I don't think you have water in there. Let me see it.

ROSALEE

I'm trying to pay attention! Mr. French? Would you tell Miss Chase to stop talking to me? I'm trying to write down that essay question!

MOLLY

Mr. French, I need to take Rosalee to the office... Come on, let's go. I said, let's go... Mr. French, would you mind asking Rosalee to come with me?

ROSALEE

Fine!

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

ROSALEE (cont'd)

She won't let me do my work!

MR. HOLIDAY

Now what's wrong?

MOLLY

I think Rosalee brought alcohol to school.

MR. HOLIDAY

What?

MOLLY

She just threw a bottle of something in the trash.

ROSALEE

It's just water with a little vodka for my throat. God! My mother used to give it to me when I was sick. So is that against the law?

MR. HOLIDAY

Why don't you get that bottle, Ms. Chase.

ROSALEE

I just told you it's water with a little vodka! What are you doing?

MR. HOLIDAY

Writing.

ROSALEE

About me?

MR. HOLIDAY

Yes.

ROSALEE

I'm very important. People are always writing down things I say, things I do-

MR. HOLIDAY

You seem to think this is funny. All these people you're referring to. We're trying to help you get your life back. Do you want that?... Why don't you tell me what you want?

ROSALEE

I just want to be left alone.

MR. HOLIDAY

And how is that going to happen? How are you going to get what you want?

ROSALEE

I'm supposed to cooperate.

MR. HOLIDAY

Very good. Very, very good. Because cooperation is what makes the world go around. It's what makes society - civilized society - safe. Cooperation. Let me see that bottle... Do you know Room 313?

MOLLY

No.

MR. HOLIDAY

It's on the third floor. At the top of the stairs go right. It's at the end of the hall. Here are the keys. That's where you'll be for the next three days.

MOLLY/ROSALEE

What?

MR. HOLIDAY

In school suspension.

ROSALEE

Not Room 313! You can't even breathe in there!

MR. HOLIDAY

You should have thought of that before you brought in this.

ROSALEE

Why can't we go to the detention room with Mr. Clark?

MR. HOLIDAY

Room 313. Take your books. I'll have work sent up. Go.

MOLLY

Where did you get the vodka?

It's gin.
 ROSALEE

Where did you get the gin?
 MOLLY

From stupid Troy. I know where he hides it. I hate vodka.
 ROSALEE

How old is this foster brother?
 MOLLY

Seventeen.
 ROSALEE

Is he supposed to be drinking?
 MOLLY

You are so deluded.
 ROSALEE

So now I'm locked up for three days. Thanks a lot.
 MOLLY

You've been a bad, bad girl!
 ROSALEE

ROOM 313

What time is it?
 ROSALEE (cont'd)

Ten oh five.
 (beat)
 MOLLY

TIME PASSES

MR. HOLIDAY (V.O.)
 Pardon the interruption, students should report back to homeroom at this time so that teachers can dismiss them for the pep rally. Return to your homerooms at this time. The pep rally begins in fifteen minutes, cheerleaders and sports team members should *first* go to homeroom, as well. Thank you.

Do you believe in God?
 ROSALEE

No.
 MOLLY

You don't believe in God?
 ROSALEE

MOLLY

No.

ROSALEE

That's bad. Because there is one. He talks to me.

MOLLY

What does he say?

ROSALEE

He says, "Rosie?" He calls me Rosie. "Rosie, you're going to be famous one day." That's what he says. I think it's going to be my singing. Do you want to hear me sing?

MOLLY

Sure.

ROSALEE

*Cause I'm dreaming of you tonight
Till tomorrow I'll be holding you tight
And there's nowhere in the world I'd rather be
Than here in my room dreaming about you and me.*

MOLLY

That's beautiful!

ROSALEE

It's one of Selena's songs. She was murdered by her manager. She was going to be bigger than Madonna.

MOLLY

I've never heard of her.

ROSALEE

That's because you're old. And she was a *Latina*. I'm a *Latina*. My birth father was Mexican.

MOLLY

Do you speak Spanish?

ROSALEE

Only in songs. Selena didn't speak Spanish either - she was from Texas. Want to see something?... See that?

MOLLY

It looks like a scar.

ROSALEE

My birth mother burned my leg with a cigarette. I don't remember it. I was only one.

MOLLY

Rose-

ROSALEE

She was a drug addict. Blonde. Can you believe it? I used to have a picture of her. Heather looks more like her because her father wasn't Spanish. Want to see?... She's ten in that picture, but she's eleven now. Almost twelve.

MOLLY

And where is she?

ROSALEE

With Mom and Dad. Where else would she be?

MOLLY

I guess I'm a little confused.

ROSALEE

We're adopted. All right? We have a birth mother somewhere - I think California - then we got adopted. That's where Heather is.

MOLLY

In California?

ROSALEE

God, you're so dense! Darien's my last name - my adopted last name. It used to be Torrens. She's not really prettier than I am, but she's tall.

MOLLY

Do you see her often?... Hey, don't do that.

ROSALEE

She doesn't feel it.

MOLLY

Yeah, but it's not nice.

ROSALEE

Can you speak Spanish?

MOLLY

Tu eres muy bonita.

ROSALEE

What's that?

MOLLY

I said you were pretty.

ROSALEE

Say it again!

MOLLY

Tu eres muy bonita.

ROSALEE

Can you say anything else?

MOLLY

Not really. I took Spanish in high school. You could, too.

ROSALEE

I hate learning languages. I'll just sing instead. *I'll be dreaming...*

MOLLY

We've got some math to do.

ROSALEE

I hate math!

MOLLY

Tell you what. I'll write some problems on the board. Every time you get one right we'll... We'll do something fun.

ROSALEE

Fun? What could be fun in here?

MOLLY

Trust me.

ROSALEE

That's simple. Four times three carry the one...I don't know why they give me such easy work. It's not like I'm in kindergarten or anything. Okay, what's the deal?

MOLLY

Shakespeare.

ROSALEE

Not Shakespeare!

MOLLY

Shakespeare is a cool dude.

ROSALEE

He's dead. Even if he was cool, he can't be cool.

MOLLY

When someone writes something that people remember, it's like they're still alive.

(reads)

*And since you know you cannot see yourself,
so well as by reflection, I, your glass,
will modestly discover to yourself,
that of yourself which you yet know not of.*

ROSALEE

What language is that?

MOLLY

It's called Shakespearean. A teacher, a good teacher, is like a glass - a mirror - who can help you recognize yourself.

ROSALEE

I was in *Midsummer Night's Dream* when I was in the third grade. They made me a fairy.

MOLLY

So you do know Shakespeare.

ROSALEE

Except it didn't sound like that. It sounded like English.

MOLLY

When you get used to him, he sounds a lot like English. Look, all his poems are in the back. How about another math problem?

ROSALEE

Okay, but only one... It's not right. I just wrote those numbers. I told you, I hate math. You got anything to eat?

MOLLY

Tums.

ROSALEE

Fruit flavored?

MOLLY

Forget it.

ROSALEE

Donna used to bribe me with candy. I love candy. Anything with caramel.

MOLLY

Bad for your teeth.

ROSALEE

Doesn't matter. I won't live long enough for my teeth to fall out. God told me that, too.

MOLLY

All right, how about this?

ROSALEE

What?

MOLLY

My essay. I got a B.

ROSALEE

Nice!

MOLLY

Are you kidding? I gave it my life and I got a B. What's wrong with it?

ROSALEE

I don't know... Oh, no wonder.

MOLLY

What?

ROSALEE

You started with a quote. That's lazy.

MOLLY

I was making a point.

ROSALEE

Then make one in your own words. Didn't you go to middle school?

MOLLY

It's a quote from *King Lear*.

ROSALEE

Who's that?

MOLLY

A character in one of Shakespeare's plays.

ROSALEE

Not Shakespeare again!

MOLLY

It's a story based on my grandfather. He lost all of his money in the depression and practically destroyed his family because of his pride. He reminds me of King Lear. It's called a literary allusion.

ROSALEE

Yeah, yeah, whatever. What's a lace doily?

MOLLY

It's a crocheted - thing - that you put tea cups on so they won't damage the table. It's a detail to make the room feel real.

ROSALEE

I'd cut the first page. Nothing happens.

MOLLY

That's what my professor said.

ROSALEE
What time is it?

MOLLY
One sixteen.

ROSALEE
I've got to go to the bathroom.

A HALLWAY

MOLLY
Rosalee, cut that out-

ROSALEE
I'm looking for someone!

MR. HOLIDAY
What's going on?

MOLLY
Um, uh, Rosalee's going to the bathroom.

MR. HOLIDAY
I mean, what's going on in the hall?

MOLLY
Well, she, uh... she was looking for someone.

MR. HOLIDAY
She's supposed to be on in-school suspension!

MOLLY
I know, I know. We were on our way to the bathroom-

MR. HOLIDAY
Rosalee! Rosalee, answer me!

ROSALEE
I'm peeing!

MR. HOLIDAY
I am not going to put up with this, young lady! You finish here and get back upstairs and I don't want to see either one of you again today! Is that clear?

ROSALEE
What if Ms. Chase has to go to the bathroom?

MOLLY
(to Mr. Holiday)
I'll just hold it.

ROSALEE

That was special.

MOLLY

You are a troublemaker! What's the word in Spanish for fox?

ROSALEE

Catch me if you can!

MR. HOLIDAY (V.O.)

Excuse the interruption. Teachers may begin bringing students to the auditorium for the assembly.

MOLLY

How did I miss this?

ROSALEE

It doesn't matter. We can't go. It's like I'm dead for three days. Who cares. Soccer teams get up and everybody cheers. New kids are introduced. New teachers. New *paras*.

MOLLY

Is that what they did last year?

ROSALEE

I don't know. I missed that one, too.

SCENE 3

MR. HOLIDAY

Give that to me.

ROSALEE

Is that your mother?

MR. HOLIDAY

No, it's my wife.

ROSALEE

Is she an actress?

MR. HOLIDAY

No.

ROSALEE

I just wondered because she looks like she's wearing some kind of costume. She looks really nice. What's this?

MR. HOLIDAY

Don't touch that.

ROSALEE

What is it?

It's a unicorn.

MR. HOLIDAY

Really?

ROSALEE

My daughter made it in kindergarten, now don't touch it.

MR. HOLIDAY

Looks more like a frog.

ROSALEE

Yes, well, she was only five.

MR. HOLIDAY

How old is she now?

ROSALEE

She was born in 1961.

MR. HOLIDAY

Thirty one, you have a daughter thirty one? What's her name?

ROSALEE

Sarah.

MR. HOLIDAY

Same as Molly.

ROSALEE

Are you done scrutinizing my life?

MR. HOLIDAY

I have to go to the nurse. I'm having my period! Fine. I'll just bleed all over your chair.

ROSALEE

I was looking all over for you.

MOLLY

We're having a little problem.

MR. HOLIDAY

No, we're not. *You're* having a problem. You're always having a problem.

ROSALEE

What's the problem?

MOLLY

Brandi is the problem. She hit me and I hit her back.

MR. HOLIDAY

Now, Rosalee, you know that isn't true. Brandi did not hit you. You were trying to look at her magazine and when she didn't let you, you grabbed it and scratched her arm-

MOLLY

Who's Brandi?

MR. HOLIDAY

A classmate. A shy, sweet girl who would never hit anyone.

MOLLY

I don't understand.

MR. HOLIDAY

Rose was in the office waiting for you and Brandi came in to use the phone to call her mother-

MOLLY

I was here on time-

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee is now getting dropped off at seven forty-five.

MOLLY

I didn't know.

MR. HOLIDAY

You see, Rose, why you have to have someone with you? Five minutes is all it took for you to get into trouble.

ROSALEE

She did hit me. You don't have to hit with your hands. You can hit with your eyes. She hit me right in the stomach with her eyes.

MR. HOLIDAY

Protocol dictates that we call the police. You are on probation, Rosalee.

ROSALEE

Then call them! What do I care! They don't have a hemorrhage every time you look cross eyed!

MOLLY

Can we start over? Can we just start the day over? What if Rose and I go to the library and find a book.

ROSALEE

I don't want to read a book!

MOLLY

Then we'll listen to some music. Do you think they have any Spanish music in there?

ROSALEE
I hate Spanish music!

MOLLY
What about Selena?

ROSALEE
Oh right, like that's going to be in the school library.

MR. HOLIDAY
I don't believe that we're going to reward Rosalee's behavior with trips to the library.

ROSALEE
I just grabbed the magazine! I didn't hit her! There was an article in it I needed to see! For school! Doesn't that count for anything?

MOLLY
We're going to go somewhere. Anywhere. And sit. And talk... and then go to class.

ROSALEE
I've got to go to the nurse first. Period?

MR. HOLIDAY
(to Rosalee)
Come with me.

MOLLY
What do I-

MR. HOLIDAY
Just wait here.
(to Rosalee)
Stay there until Ms. Chase comes for you.

MOLLY
How are Jared and Gavin doing?

MR. HOLIDAY
Gareth. Fine. Off to a great start.

MOLLY
Oh.

MR. HOLIDAY
Second thoughts?

MOLLY
I was just curious. If anything should change. I mean, if the para leaves for some reason. I'd like to be considered for the position. I'm not sure Rosalee and I are a great mix.

MR. HOLIDAY

Would you like me to advertise for a replacement?

MOLLY

No. I'm just saying that I wonder if there was another position. I really enjoy being here. It's good for my family. For Sarah. To be on the same schedule. We had a tough year.

MR. HOLIDAY

I'm sorry to hear that.

MOLLY

What is the deal with Rosalee's sister?

MR. HOLIDAY

What do you mean?

MOLLY

Heather. I think there's some kind of tension between them.

MR. HOLIDAY

Did Rosalee talk to you about her sister?

MOLLY

Just briefly. She showed me a picture of her and when I asked about her-

MR. HOLIDAY

How long ago was this?

MOLLY

I don't know, a few weeks. What?

MR. HOLIDAY

She'll use it for sexual fantasy.

MOLLY

She'll - what?

MR. HOLIDAY

Didn't you read the file I gave you?

MOLLY

What file?

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee's file. She is not supposed to have a picture of Heather. She is not to discuss Heather with anyone besides her therapist. I gave you the file in September.

MOLLY

I never read it.

MR. HOLIDAY

I gave it to you-

MOLLY

No you didn't.

MR. HOLIDAY

I wouldn't have let you start this job without reading the file.

MOLLY

What's in the file?

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee molested her sister repeatedly over a long period of time. She made threats, very sophisticated threats, to keep her quiet. Finally, Heather told her parents. They called the police.

MOLLY

But she's thirteen-

MR. HOLIDAY

And she was eleven when she was arrested.

MOLLY

She has a boyfriend. Ethan.

MR. HOLIDAY

Ethan Cross? Ethan is the most popular boy in the eighth grade, do you really think he's interested in Rosalee?

MOLLY

He likes her. I know he likes her. She makes him laugh.

MR. HOLIDAY

Does she have pictures of any other girls?

MOLLY

What are you saying?

MR. HOLIDAY

I'm saying Rosalee is a sexual predator. I'm saying that - the *file* says that - she is not to have images of girls younger than she is. She won't even take the first step in her therapy.

MOLLY

Which is?

MR. HOLIDAY

Confess. Disclose her crime. That's one of the criteria for recovery. The most important one. She refuses to take responsibility.

MOLLY

And if she did. If she simply said she did-

MR. HOLIDAY

There's more involved, but essentially, she would have more freedom. She's been in this group for two years and has made no progress.

MOLLY

What happens if she never... discloses?

MR. HOLIDAY

She'll stay in state custody until she's eighteen. Then she'll be free.

MOLLY

Free to do what?

MR. HOLIDAY

Be a member of society. Get a job. Go to college. What everybody else does at eighteen. Free to be someone else's problem.

NURSE'S OFFICE

ROSALEE

What's wrong?

MOLLY

Nothing.

ROSALEE

Then why are you acting weird? Where are you going?

MOLLY

To the bathroom.

BATHROOM

ROSALEE

God, you're touchy. *Hi. I love your shirt... Did you get it at the mall?... Hey, want to see something?*

MOLLY

Rose, what are you doing?

ROSALEE

Look, two holes, I did it myself, you take a piece of ice- Hey!

MOLLY

We're going to class.

ROSALEE
You didn't even wash your hands!

A CLASSROOM

MOLLY
You're not supposed to pass notes.

ROSALEE
Mind your own business.

MOLLY
You are my business.

ROSALEE
That's pathetic.

MOLLY
You can't talk to me that way.

ROSALEE
Keep your voice down.

MOLLY
I'm your friend.

ROSALEE
No, you're not! God! You're an aide! You're just a person working in a crummy job!... Where are you going?... You're supposed to be with me!

MOLLY
I can't do it.

ROSALEE
Just sit around and read a book, that's what Donna did. Where are you going?

MOLLY
To see Mr. Holiday.

ROSALEE
You're supposed to be rewarding me in the library!... Okay, you're my friend, are you happy?

MOLLY
Ecstatic!

ROSALEE
They're just going to get me someone else! I don't do well with change! I'm adjusting! Do you hear me? I'm adjusting! Can we just go back to class? I'm ready to work. Really.

MOLLY

Really?

ROSALEE

Really. One of the characteristics of a borderline personality is that we like to stir things up. I take medication for it, but it doesn't seem to help. I also have Reactive Attachment Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder and I'm pathologically aggressive.

MOLLY

Anything else?

ROSALEE

I was bulimic once for about fifteen minutes. It was so gross. Do we really have to go in there? All this talk about food. I'm hungry!

MOLLY

Lunch is in... two hours and seven minutes.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Hi, Carol, it's Matt at the school, it appears that Rosalee has a picture of Heather..."

ROSALEE

Noooo!

MOLLY

Okay, look. I'll make a deal with you. We go to class - we skip phys. ed - and - I'll get you some chips from the vending machine.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Her aide reported it..."

ROSALEE

Those are bad for me. What kind?

MOLLY

Any kind.

MR. HOLIDAY

"I have no idea..."

ROSALEE

Fritos?

MOLLY

Fritos.

ROSALEE

And a drink?

MR. HOLIDAY

"I can try, what if she..."

MOLLY

Okay. Now let's go.

ROSALEE

I need to eat first!

MR. HOLIDAY

"I did tell her in September..."

MOLLY

Rosalee... Rosalee... Rosalee!

ROSALEE

What!

MR. HOLIDAY

"What time can you come down here?"

MOLLY

You cannot have your way every minute! The world doesn't work that way! I'm trying to compromise. If we can't compromise, we can't work together.

ROSALEE

You're threatening me again.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Yeah, all right. I'll have her in my office."

MOLLY

I'm not, okay. A deal. Another deal. I won't threaten you and you - what do you do.

ROSALEE

Hm. Does it have to start today?

MOLLY

Boy, am I outclassed.

MR. HOLIDAY

What is it, nap time?

MOLLY

Oh. Oh no. We were just talking. On the way to class.

MR. HOLIDAY

I need to see Rosalee in my office. Alone.

ROSALEE

Now what?

MR. HOLIDAY
A little conference. Came up at the last minute.

MOLLY
What do you want me to do?

MR. HOLIDAY
Room 238. Mrs. Crowley could use another monitor. Supervised study hall.

MOLLY
I'll see you later?

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

MR. HOLIDAY
Have a seat.

ROSALEE
Well?

MR. HOLIDAY
Ms. Chase and I had a talk today.

ROSALEE
She's quitting, isn't she.

MR. HOLIDAY
No, she's not quitting. She told me something that I'm afraid is quite serious.

ROSALEE
What?

MR. HOLIDAY
She said you have a picture of Heather. Is that true? I asked you a simple question, Rosalee. Shall I take your silence to mean yes?

ROSALEE
I don't have any picture.

MR. HOLIDAY
She said you showed her a picture. About two weeks ago. I've called your case worker and she, where is your backpack?

ROSALEE
I don't have a goddamned picture!

MR. HOLIDAY
Watch your language, young lady.

ROSALEE

So what about the picture, I don't have it anymore, it was in a book, it fell out, I didn't even know it was in there for all I know someone planted it there just to get me in trouble.

MR. HOLIDAY

Where is your backpack?

ROSALEE

If it's in there I don't know about it. I want to go home.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Yes?... Oh... I don't... we'll, yes... thank you." That was your case worker. She can't come until two thirty. I was hoping we could get this squared away. "Ms. Crowley? Is Ms. Chase there? Could you ask her to come to my office? Thank you."

ROSALEE

I'm not going anywhere with her.

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee, you're going to have to compromise. It's the most important skill you'll ever learn and I'll be very proud of you if you can demonstrate that skill right now.

MOLLY

Hi.

ROSALEE

Get out of here!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee-

MOLLY

It's all right.

MR. HOLIDAY

It's not all right-

MOLLY

It is. Can we have a little time alone? I mean here. Now.

MR. HOLIDAY

I need her backpack.

MOLLY

I'll get it, we'll get it later. Please.

MR. HOLIDAY

Why don't I come back.

MOLLY
Rosalee-

ROSALEE
Shut up.

MOLLY
I just want to say-

ROSALEE
Shut up.

MOLLY
All right, I'll shut up. I'm really sorry this happened. I think it's terrible. Sometimes I tell Mr. Holiday things that you say or do because I think it will help you. And I didn't think anything about that picture because I didn't think there was any reason to. And I still feel the same way. Heather is your sister and-

ROSALEE
Don't you know anything? Heather hates me.

MOLLY
Why would Heather hate you?

ROSALEE
I don't know. She's a liar. She always lies. And you know when people lie like all the time they can't stop because then people will know everything they said was a lie. Everything. In their whole life.

MOLLY
Sometimes people lie for good reasons. Or bend the truth.

ROSALEE
Lying never helps. Joan of Arc lied. She said she did something she didn't do and they still burned her.

MOLLY
That's true. That's true. But that was a very long time ago. Nobody burns anybody anymore.

ROOM 313

ROSALEE
Now what are you doing?

MOLLY
Praying.

ROSALEE
For what?

MOLLY
A miracle.

MR. HOLIDAY
I'm going to need your backpack.

MOLLY
It's in Room 313-

ROSALEE
(overlapping)
I don't know where it is-

ROOM 313

Mr. Holiday opens it and finds the picture.

MR. HOLIDAY
Thank you. Bring Rosalee to my office after school.

MOLLY
Okay.

ROSALEE
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THAT WAS IN THERE.

MOLLY
There's the bell, shall we go to science? Rosalee... wait a minute, Rosalee!

MR. HOLIDAYS OFFICE

MOLLY (cont'd)
Sorry to bother you.

MR. HOLIDAY
Yes?

MOLLY
I've lost her. She was headed out the door.

MR. HOLIDAY
How did you lose her?

MOLLY
She runs faster than I do.

MR. HOLIDAY
Attention! Would Rosalee Darien please report to Mr. Holiday's office immediately? *Rosalee Darien, report to Mr. Holiday's office immediately!...* "Hi, Carol, this is Max at the school, Rosalee took off..... yeah, I know...

MR. HOLIDAY (cont'd)

not yet, but we'll need an officer here anyway to pick her up, if you could call them... thanks..." "Harold, did you get that? Have the boys check the grounds after they check the building... I'll be here." The janitorial staff knows that if her name comes over the loudspeaker they are to search for her. You know, I'm really disappointed in you. Donna didn't have nearly as much trouble with her. It's the fifth week of school. This is actually the third occasion that has required police involvement. I didn't call them the first two times. But three strikes and you're out!

MOLLY

I'm sorry, the bell rang and she ran out-

MR. HOLIDAY

Do you need this job?

MOLLY

I - yes! And I- for the most part she's- I think if she just had a little more- have you heard her sing?

Mr. HOLIDAY

She has the support of countless adults. Professionals. Who do this every day. The best services. Look, I'm sorry. Rosalee is the hardest case I have in this school. But she's not the only one. Twenty-three percent of our population gets special ed services. I spend most of my day putting out fires. Dealing with parent, social services, the superintendent's office, the state board of education. I'm trying to maintain the standards necessary to keep the doors of the school open. Last year our test scores barely passed. Every child we have here like Rosalee - academic nightmares - brings us closer and closer to the abyss.

MOLLY

She has a burn mark on her thigh. Her birth mother burned her with a cigarette.

MR. HOLIDAY

She showed you her thigh?

MOLLY

She was wearing a skirt, for God's sake!

MR. HOLIDAY

When I started in public education thirty years ago, there were no guidelines to deal with children like Rosalee. Children with histories of sexual and physical abuse. We're making up the rules as we go along. We're trying things. They don't always work. Yes?... *I'll be right there.* She's in Room 313.

MOLLY

Really?

MR. HOLIDAY
Really. I'll go get her.

MOLLY
What do I do?

MR. HOLIDAY
Wait here for the police.

ROOM 313

MR. HOLIDAY (cont'd)
Hi, Rosalee.

ROSALEE
Where's Molly?

MR. HOLIDAY
In my office.

ROSALEE
I have to go to class.

MR. HOLIDAY
I think it's a little late for that. I've called the police
and I'm recommending a stay at the retreat.

ROSALEE
No!

MR. HOLIDAY
I don't think you're in a position to argue. Now come on,
young lady.
(beat)
Remember last year when the police had to come upstairs?

ROSALEE
Fine!
(to Molly)
I told you I just had to go to the bathroom!

MOLLY
I couldn't find you!

ROSALEE
I was in the bathroom! Tell him! Tell him! Tell him!

MOLLY
I wasn't- she may have - I don't know- she said something and
then ran and when I couldn't-

MR. HOLIDAY

It doesn't matter what you said to her, Rose. The fact is she couldn't find you. And you have been warned repeatedly about that kind of behavior.

ROSALEE

I just don't like anyone following me around! Why can't I just go to class and she can sit there if she likes and help me but I want to talk to my friends and she just stands there and listens!

MR. HOLIDAY

She's getting paid to listen.

ROSALEE

How would you like it?

MR. HOLIDAY

I am not the one on probation!

ROSALEE

All right, so send me there. Let them kill me!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rose-

ROSALEE

Bobby Perez almost died last summer! They tied him up and he couldn't breathe!

MR. HOLIDAY

I happen to know Bobby Perez is attending the vocational school.

ROSALEE

And they beat me. Look! I still have the scar on my arm where they hit me with a belt buckle!

MR. HOLIDAY

Okay, Rose. Yes?... Okay.

(beat)

They're here.

ROSALEE

Molly?

MOLLY

Where are they taking her?

ROSALEE

I need to get my stuff! I left my stuff upstairs!

MR. HOLIDAY

We'll send it along. Come on. Let's not have a scene.

ROSALEE

Can I at least wait until no one's in the hall?

MR. HOLIDAY

Come on, Rose.

ROSALEE

Molly, can you come?

MR. HOLIDAY

There is no more negotiating!

MOLLY

I'll take her.

MR. HOLIDAY

Hi, June. Who's working with Andrew and Elizabeth today?... Why don't you send her to 3B, Julie's out today... No, I've got someone... I think I have it, Julie dropped off their folders before she left yesterday... Thanks.

MOLLY

Now what do I do?

MR. HOLIDAY

While Rosalee is out, we thought you could work with Andrew and Elizabeth. They're both on IEPS-

MOLLY

Why did you let me take this position knowing it was impossible?

MR. HOLIDAY

(beat)

Because I always have hope! Hope that Rosalee will grow up - that someone will come along that she relates to - that she looks up to.

MOLLY

That person isn't me. I can't reach her. She doesn't want to do what I tell her, she wants to do the opposite.

MR. HOLIDAY

Things usually get easier after Thanksgiving. I'll tell you what. Why don't you - why don't you take the rest of the day off.

MOLLY

I can't afford it.

MR. HOLIDAY

I meant with pay.

MOLLY

The time sheets are very strict.

MR. HOLIDAY

Maybe, how about the detention room. Mr. Clark would be thrilled to have another warm body in there.

MOLLY

Sounds like a perfect day.

MR. HOLIDAY

Shit!

ACT 2

SCENE 1

MR. HOLIDAY

MR. HOLIDAY (cont'd)

Happy Monday! I hope you all signed up for hot lunch on Thursday because it's going to be a doozy! Mrs. Sparrow and Doctor Joe will be working all week on a Thanksgiving feast! And this just in- students are challenged to write a Thanksgiving memory or poem to share with their Language Arts class after vacation next week. We are setting aside the first two periods on the Monday you return so that everyone may participate. One student's work will be chosen from each class to be read at an assembly when we get back from vacation! So have a great day or not, the choice is yours!

MOLLY

Hi!

ROSALEE

Hi.

MOLLY

Good to have you back.

ROSALEE

Yep.

MOLLY

I thought you weren't coming. Home room is over.

ROSALEE

I couldn't wake up.

MOLLY

You okay?

ROSALEE

Can we go to the nurse?

MOLLY

Why?

ROSALEE

I'm tired.

MOLLY

How will that help?

ROSALEE

I don't know, maybe she can give me a pill!

MOLLY
Okay, okay. Let's go to the nurse.

MR. HOLIDAY
How's our girl?

MOLLY
She's tired.

MR. HOLIDAY
I told you, they changed her medication.

MOLLY
Right.

MR. HOLIDAY
You'll have to get used to each other again-
(to Rosalee)
I thought you were going to come and say hello to me when you got here today? How are you doing? Do you have your schedule? Mr. Ernst is going to be glad to have you back, I can tell you that! His class has been bored out of their minds since you left! Do you know what I just found out? Huh? Rosalee? I need you to look at me. You're going to see your parents. For a whole day. You're going shopping and out to lunch. The week after Thanksgiving vacation. A Thursday. They're taking the day off from work just to be with you. I can't tell you more, but be sure to check the weather that day you'll need to wear a warm coat in case it's cold. That's all I can tell you. The rest is a surprise.

ROSALEE
I'm really going to see my parents?

MR. HOLIDAY
You really are. So how about getting to class right now? And having a good day and a good week.

ROSALEE
I will.

MR. HOLIDAY
Promise?

ROSALEE
Promise!

MR. HOLIDAY
Now, run along.

ROSALEE
I have to see Ethan.

MOLLY
Who?

ROSALEE
My boyfriend. Don't you remember anything?

MOLLY
Rose, don't open any more doors. Let's just get to math.

ROSALEE
Okay, okay, keep your pants on.

A CLASSROOM

MOLLY
Come on, Rosalee.

ROSALEE
I'm tired!

MOLLY
She's tired... Okay... Rose... Rosalee... we need to go to another room... come on...

ROSALEE
I don't want to go to another room.

MOLLY
Your teacher says you need to stay awake then.

ROSALEE
Okay!

MOLLY
Come on, Rose. Honey.

ROSALEE
Don't call me honey!

MOLLY
Sorry. Let's go.

ROSALEE
I'm not doing anything. Fine!

MR. HOLIDAY
Where's Rosalee?

MOLLY
(beat)
With the nurse.

MR. HOLIDAY
What's the problem?

MOLLY
Um. Period.

MR. HOLIDAY
Again?

MOLLY
She says she has her period.

MR. HOLIDAY
And what are you doing?

MOLLY
I was... um, getting a drink of water.

MR. HOLIDAY
There's a water fountain right outside of Mrs. Wood's door.

MOLLY
Oh. This water is colder.

MR. HOLIDAY
You'd better get back there.

MOLLY
I'm on my way.

MR. HOLIDAY
What are you doing in the hall?

ROSALEE
(beat)
I'm looking for Molly.

MR. HOLIDAY
Weren't you just with the nurse?

ROSALEE
I was getting an Advil... For my period.

MR. HOLIDAY
You know you are not supposed to be unescorted.

ROSALEE
I was looking for Molly. Sorry.

MR. HOLIDAY
You don't want to jeopardize your special day with your parents, do you, Rosalee?

ROSALEE
No!!

MR. HOLIDAY

All right then. Back to class.

ROSALEE

Sorry. I didn't mean to get you in trouble. Did you tell him I was having my period?

MOLLY

I didn't want to get you in trouble, either.

ROSALEE

You mean you lied?

MOLLY

Yep.

ROSALEE

Can we go to Room 313?

MOLLY

I guess.

ROOM 313

ROSALEE

Home, sweet home! Did you bring me any candy?

MOLLY

I did.

ROSALEE

What have you got?

MOLLY

Here you go.

ROSALEE

Is that a chocolate turtle?

MOLLY

With a little bit of caramel.

ROSALEE

Where did you get this?

MOLLY

I made it.

ROSALEE

You made it?

MOLLY

A family recipe. Secret.

ROSALEE

Oh, my God. This is the best thing I have ever put in my mouth.

MOLLY

I know.

ROSALEE

You should sell these and make a fortune!

MOLLY

That's what my daughter says.

ROSALEE

Sarah?

MOLLY

(beat)

You know Sarah?

ROSALEE

Yeah, she's in the seventh grade. She has a crush on Paul. But bad news - he likes Jessica. Now I'm eating his little feet. And his tail. And now - I think - I'm biting into his heart. And it tastes like caramel. Mm mm. I just have to keep telling myself he doesn't feel a thing. Can I have another one?

MOLLY

Just one. One a day for five days. Then I'll bring you something else. I don't want you to get sick of them.

ROSALEE

Never! Cause I'm dreaming of you tonight, Till tomorrow I'll be holding you tight, And there's nowhere in the world I'd rather be, Than here in my room dreaming about you and me. I don't have the right hair cut to be a singer. And you have to wear a bustier.

MOLLY

(beat)

How was your time away?

ROSALEE

I don't want to talk about it.

MOLLY

Okay. Do you want to go to class?

ROSALEE

Nooo... I just want to sleep. It's this medication. I'm like a zombie.

MOLLY

What are you taking?

ROSALEE

Who knows - like four different pills - they think I might be pre-schizophrenic.

MOLLY

What makes them think that?

ROSALEE

Because I told them that God talks to me. He won't do it anymore.

MOLLY

Who won't?

ROSALEE

God. It's the pills. They're anti-God pills. Here.

MOLLY

Wow, Rose, this is really... real.

ROSALEE

I made most of it up.

MOLLY

I think if you get rid of the first paragraph, just go right into the description of the place... why is it so cold?

ROSALEE

They do that to keep you alert. Fifty-eight degrees. I just made up the part about the vomit. There wasn't really a pile of it in the cell with me. But there could have been. The other girl they brought in was drunk. Are you still reading that Shakespeare book?

MOLLY

It's for a class. I have to read two of his plays and all of his sonnets.

ROSALEE

What's a sonnet?

MOLLY

A poem with three quatrains and a rhyming couplet written in iambic pentameter.

ROSALEE

Okay, more than I wanted to know.

MOLLY

In my presentation I have to memorize one.

ROSALEE

Good luck!

MOLLY

It's not until the middle of December. I'll start, oh, the middle of December. Stay up all one night, drink a lot of coffee.

ROSALEE

Like I said, it would help if he wrote in English.

MOLLY

I'm thinking of memorizing this one. Number seventeen.

ROSALEE

(reads)

*Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
High deserts?*

MOLLY

It's means gifts. Like beauty. Kindness. Intelligence.

ROSALEE

Oh.

*Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet heaven knows it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life, and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say 'This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces.'
So should my papers, yellow'd with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage.
And stretched metre of an antique song:
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it, and in my rhyme.
That's beautiful.*

MOLLY

Do you know what it means?

ROSALEE

No. But some things are just beautiful without thinking about them. Can we find Ethan now? I have to give him a letter. He asked me to go to the dance and if I don't tell him yes he'll ask someone else. Please?

MOLLY

Rose, we don't even know where-

ROSALEE

I know where he is, he's in science. We'll just go to the door and ask for him and give him the note. I don't have phone privileges at home so I can't call him. Please!

MOLLY

How about you give me the note-

ROSALEE

No! You won't do it!

MOLLY

I will. I promise-

ROSALEE

You're a liar! You always lie!

MOLLY

I'm not lying, if you'll just give me a chance-

ROSALEE

No! You're a big fat liar!

MOLLY

Okay! Okay! It's okay! We'll give him the note! Please - come out of there - come here. I'm sorry. I know it's really important to you. Let's go do it. Okay? Come on.

ROSALEE

We really will?

MOLLY

We really will.

ROSALEE

This better not be a trick.

MOLLY

No tricks.

ROSALEE

He's the most popular boy in the whole school.

MOLLY

I know who he is. He's really... cute.

ROSALEE

God, it's gross when you say it.

MOLLY

Have you got the letter?

ROSALEE

Just sit over there!... Okay. All done. But when he comes to the door, you have to stand away and act like you're doing something else.

MOLLY

Rosalee-

ROSALEE

Just a little ways! God, you can still hear me, I just don't want you in my face! This is my boyfriend!

MOLLY

I'll stand away.

ROSALEE

Why are you all dressed up?

MOLLY

I have an interview. For a doctor. A doctor's appointment.

ROSALEE

What for?

MOLLY

Just female stuff.

ROSALEE

Are you pregnant?

MOLLY

No!

THE HALLWAY

MOLLY (cont'd)

This is the science room.

ROSALEE

I thought he was in science, I think he's in health. You know what? I don't think he's even in school today. I think he's out sick. Duh! Now I remember he told me... he told me last week... he was going to call in sick today... because there was a test- I need to go to the nurse. I need Advil.

MOLLY

I have some Advil.

ROSALEE

I have to get it from the nurse! It's against the law for you to give it to me! We could both get arrested! This is a school! There are rules!

MOLLY

I'm sorry.

ROSALEE

Don't you know anything? Now I won't go to the dance. This was my last chance! Fuck it, I don't want to go to the dance anyway. Stupid kids getting dressed up.

MOLLY

What would you like to do right now that would make you feel better? Can you tell me?

ROSALEE

Drop dead maybe!

MOLLY

Suppose we breathe.

ROSALEE

I don't want to breathe.

MOLLY

Want to help me with my story?

ROSALEE

No. What story?

MOLLY

I'm writing a story about a girl named Mandy. She's thirteen and she really wants to get a part in the school play.

ROSALEE

What is it with you and plays?

MOLLY

The problem is that she stutters. I mean, her dream is to be an actress but she can't speak without effort.

ROSALEE

How does it start?

MOLLY

It starts with her in front of the class giving an oral presentation.

ROSALEE

Oh, God, that's the worst!

MOLLY

Of course there's this boy...

ROSALEE

Naturally...

MOLLY
Who she knows will get the part opposite her...

ROSALEE
Is he cute?

MOLLY
What do you think?

ROSALEE
Can't she just take a pill so she won't stutter?

MOLLY
Then there would be no story. She's got to overcome this obstacle.

ROSALEE
She's got to have a breakthrough.

MOLLY
Right!

ROSALEE
Something more important - like somebody has a heart attack and she has to call the ambulance - or -

MOLLY
That's kind of melodramatic.

ROSALEE
How about she sees something, like a crime and she has to testify in court and if she doesn't the boy she loves will go to prison!

MOLLY
They're in middle school!

ROSALEE
How about if she really relates to the girl in the play so much - maybe the girl in the play could really be her - and the girl in the play says the words that could really change Molly's life.

MOLLY
Mandy.

ROSALEE
Right.

MOLLY
That would be a challenge to write.

ROSALEE
I could write that story.

MOLLY

How about you write a paragraph and I write a paragraph? You go first.

ROSALEE

Do you think Sarah could come over sometime?

MOLLY

Come over where?

ROSALEE

To my house. Duh!

MOLLY

How do you know Sarah?

ROSALEE

Wow. Okay, let me explain. She's in the school. I know the kids in the school. They like, go to school here. So, can she come?

MOLLY

It would be difficult. She's busy after school. And she has a lot of homework even for the seventh grade-

ROSALEE

I'm *talking* about the weekend. For a sleep over. Or maybe I could come to your house?

MOLLY

She sees her dad on the weekends.

ROSALEE

You're divorced?

MOLLY

Separated.

ROSALEE

And I couldn't even come over after school or something? We're friends. Look.

MOLLY

That's Sarah!

ROSALEE

Read the back.

MOLLY

"To Rosalie. From Sarah." She spelled your name wrong.

ROSALEE

So! Everyone does that! She plays soccer, doesn't she.

MOLLY

She does. She plays defense.

ROSALEE

I was goalie when I played. I was great. Even for a midget. Could you think about it?

MOLLY

Who do I ask?

ROSALEE

You just call my foster mother! That's all! I went to Megan's house last year! I'll put it on my life wall. I have this wall at home? It has all my important stuff on it from my life. My Rosalee wall. That's what my dad - my real dad - used to call it.

MOLLY

It will be nice to see him.

ROSALEE

Yeah.

MOLLY

Will Heather be coming?

ROSALEE

Who's Heather?

MOLLY

Your sister.

ROSALEE

My sister's name is Sarah.

MOLLY

But-

ROSALEE

I renamed her. Gotta go!

MOLLY

Wait! You have to write the paragraph.

ROSALEE

I'll do it in study hall!

MR. HOLIDAY

Whoa, whoa, whoa, slow down, young lady. Where's Molly?

MOLLY

Here-

MR. HOLIDAY

What is all this?

ROSALEE

I've got health class.

MR. HOLIDAY

Yes, you do, but this isn't the hundred yard dash.
(to Molly)
You're dressed up.

MOLLY

I have that doctor's appointment today.

MR. HOLIDAY

Right. Who's covering?

MOLLY

I don't know. I put in a request last Friday.

ROSALEE

I've got to get to health!

MR. HOLIDAY

Wait a minute, young lady! I'll check back with you after class.

MOLLY

Don't forget about Mandy?

MR. HOLIDAY

Who's Mandy?

MOLLY

Oh, we're writing a story together about a girl named Mandy who wants to be in a play but she has this stuttering problem.

MR. HOLIDAY

Is that for an assignment?

MOLLY

No, just trying to find a way to get her writing.

MR. HOLIDAY

Because I happen to know she hasn't turned in any of her essays.

MOLLY

Right. Well.

MR. HOLIDAY

Let's try and get her homework done before we get too creative.

MOLLY

We were having fun.

MR. HOLIDAY

Yeah, it sounds like it.

MOLLY

I have to go to the doctor.

MR. HOLIDAY

Molly-

MOLLY

I heard you.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Hi, June, listen, do you have a sub lined up for Molly today?... I know she's here now... She said she put in a request... No, Brian can't do it... No! What about you?... It's probably only an hour... you know, a test or something... Rose has been much better lately... Can't Nancy handle the phones... Because I have meetings all afternoon... and I thought I'd run out meet my wife for lunch... just one hour... a half hour... okay! Fine!..." Hi!

ROSALEE

Hi.

MR. HOLIDAY

I thought I'd take this opportunity to spend a little time with you. Go with you to class.

ROSALEE

I thought I had a sub.

MR. HOLIDAY

I'm the sub!

ROSALEE

You couldn't get anyone else?

MR. HOLIDAY

I chose to spend time with you. See what you're up to in class.

ROSALEE

Okay. But it's pretty boring. Hold that.

MR. HOLIDAY

Why am I holding your backpack?

ROSALEE

Molly always does. She's trying to save my back.

MR. HOLIDAY
I think if you carried around less- hey, where are you going?

A CLASSROOM

MR. HOLIDAY (cont'd)
Just observing today.
(to Rosalee)
Get out your book.

ROSALEE
I just take notes in here.

MR. HOLIDAY
Everyone else has a book.

ROSALEE
They didn't have enough.

MR. HOLIDAY
Mr. Carter, Rosalee doesn't seem to have a book... I see...
This was not funny!

ROSALEE
I get it confused. Last year I always came here after lunch.

MR. HOLIDAY
Thank you, Mr. Carter. Carry on! Where are you supposed to be?

ROSALEE
Molly and I always go to Room 313 for study hall.

MR. HOLIDAY
Room 313.

ROSALEE
I'm usually hyper after lunch and this way I don't get into trouble. But first I have to go to the nurse. I'm having my period. Did you get my backpack?

MR. HOLIDAY
Your-

ROSALEE
I just remembered, I have gym!

MR. HOLIDAY
Gym?

ROSALEE
Come on!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee Darien, I am not chasing you all over this school!

ROSALEE

Sorry! I forgot about gym! And we're already late!

MR. HOLIDAY

I thought you had gym in the morning.

ROSALEE

They switched my schedule!

MR. HOLIDAY

What are you doing for Thanksgiving?

ROSALEE

I hate turkey.

MR. HOLIDAY

That's not what I asked.

ROSALEE

I'm having dinner with Brad Pitt.

MR. HOLIDAY

Okay.

ROSALEE

Do you even know who he is?

MR. HOLIDAY

Of course I know who he is. He's the new heartthrob. In my day it was Robert Redford.

ROSALEE

Who's Robert Redford? Basketball!

GYM

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

ROSALEE (cont'd)

Would Mr. Holiday please report to the office, Mr. Holiday to the office? Have a nice day or not, the choice is yours!

MR. HOLIDAY

What is the meaning of this?

ROSALEE

I was looking for you!

MR. HOLIDAY

This is not a grocery store! And you are not allowed to roam the school and you certainly are not allowed to use the loud speaker!

ROSALEE

You left me! You left me and something happened! What am I supposed to do? Molly never leaves me!

MR. HOLIDAY

I had an upset parent in the front office, Mrs. Jenkins needed me for a minute, I ran out just for a minute.

MR. HOLIDAY (cont'd)

What happened?

ROSALEE

They say things. They say things about me. Things that aren't true! I'm a person. They act like I'm... I'm a movie or something... like I can't see them... or hear them... like I'm not even real.

MR. HOLIDAY

Okay, okay. It's my fault. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have left you. I'm sorry.

ROSALEE

I want to go home.

MR. HOLIDAY

School will be over in two hours.

ROSALEE

I mean my real home.

MR. HOLIDAY

I want that, too.

ROSALEE

When is Molly coming back?

MR. HOLIDAY

Soon.

ROSALEE

I miss her.

MR. HOLIDAY

How would you like some ice cream?

ROSALEE

Where are we going to get that?

MR. HOLIDAY

At an ice cream parlor.

ROSALEE
We're leaving school?

MR. HOLIDAY
We're leaving school. Come on.

ROSALEE
But I thought we had to get approval from the team.

MR. HOLIDAY
I'm making an executive decision.

ROSALEE
You're the boss!

TIME PASSES

MOLLY
Knock, knock.

MR. HOLIDAY
You're back.

MOLLY
How did it go?

MR. HOLIDAY
Oh, great. We had an uneventful- couple of hours.

MOLLY
Sorry. I had to wait.

MR. HOLIDAY
Did you have some tests?

MOLLY
Mr. Holiday Tests?

MR. HOLIDAY
At the doctor's.

MOLLY
Oh, yes. Blood tests, that sort of thing.

MR. HOLIDAY
Routine?

MOLLY
Annual physical. Cholesterol.

MR. HOLIDAY
You're a bit young for cholesterol.

MOLLY

Family history. They like to keep tabs on it. Where's Rosalee?

MR. HOLIDAY

With Mrs. Jenkins. She was tired after gym. I thought it best if she rested.

MOLLY

Uh huh.

MR. HOLIDAY

They didn't give you a shot did they?

MOLLY

No.

MR. HOLIDAY

Oh. You're glowing.

MOLLY

Health!

MR. HOLIDAY

Quite. What your doctor's name?

MOLLY

My doctor? Oh, something, um, hard to pronounce.

MR. HOLIDAY

Indian?

MOLLY

Indian?

MR. HOLIDAY

I hear there's a great Indian doctor in town. Just wondered if it was him.

MOLLY

No. It's a woman. Chinese American. Could be Korean.

MR. HOLIDAY

It's just you look so happy.

MOLLY

You've got a little something on your chin.

MR. HOLIDAY

Oh. Rosalee and I had some ice cream. Chocolate. Sauce.

MOLLY
Yummy. I'll just go, see you later.

FRONT OFFICE

Molly looks at the sleeping Rosalee.
She considers.

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

MOLLY (cont'd)
Um. I wondered if we could, do you have a moment?

MR. HOLIDAY
Of course. Where's Rosalee?

MOLLY
Still she's still asleep I just need to give you this.

MR. HOLIDAY
Everything okay?

MOLLY
It's fine. I just need to give you this. I told them I needed to give a two week notice. Of course, if you replace me before then-

MR. HOLIDAY
I don't believe this.

MOLLY
It's a lot more... money. And probably less stress.

MR. HOLIDAY
Giving notice the day before vacation and expecting me to replace you the following week is unacceptable.

MOLLY
I told my new employers that it might take a little longer.

MR. HOLIDAY
Do you know what this is going to do to Rosalee? We thought long and hard before we chose you for this position.

MOLLY
I thought I was the only applicant.

MR. HOLIDAY
It makes no difference.

MOLLY
I'm sorry. I hate doing this.

MR. HOLIDAY

Then reconsider. It's not accidental that Thanksgiving vacation comes when it does. We all need a break.

MOLLY

It's a break for me without pay.

MR. HOLIDAY

Yes. I know. If it were up to me you would be paid. All of you. And more per hour, too.

MOLLY

Rosalee's file. I read Heather's accusations. And Rosalee's denials. And the therapists reports and the parents. It's very confusing. Nobody seems to agree on anything. Except that both of these girls have a lot of problems.

(beat)

Suppose it isn't true. One of the therapists suggests that it was consensual-

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee is older than Heather. In the field of sexual abuse there is no such thing.

MOLLY

In the field of sexual abuse? We're talking about a child-

MR. HOLIDAY

She has to be somewhere, right? And I find, I try to find the very best people. And you are one of them. I truly believe that. You're not perfect. But you can take it. And this is an opportunity for you to do some real service. How often do we get that chance? Most of the time we're so wrapped up in our own personal problems we don't even see the suffering in the world. But Rosalee is a child who needs guidance. Who needs role models. You probably have no idea the effect you are having on her.

MOLLY

I have children, too, that I have to support.

MR. HOLIDAY

Think about it over vacation. Will you do that for me? Give it a week. Give it more time.

MOLLY

I can't make any promises.

MR. HOLIDAY

Enjoy the holiday.

MOLLY
Thank you. Same to you.

THE FRONT OFFICE

MOLLY (cont'd)
Rose?

ROSALEE
Oh. I was dreaming.

MOLLY
Nice dream?

ROSALEE
I was holding a baby. A girl baby.

MOLLY
We've got forty-five minutes left of science.

ROSALEE
I think I'm going to throw up. I ate an entire banana split.

MOLLY
Did Mr. Holiday have one, too?

ROSALEE
He ate a chocolate volcano. He's got it all over his chin. I didn't tell him.

MOLLY
That wasn't very nice.

ROSALEE
I know. Sometimes I just can't help myself.

MOLLY
Remind me never to eat ice cream with you.

ROSALEE
I had a good time.

MOLLY
Did you?

ROSALEE
Yeah. I feel, I don't know. Different. I should have told him about the fudge sauce.

MOLLY
It wasn't that bad.

ROSALEE

Now I feel terrible!

(beat)

I'm going to ask God to forgive me... All I can see when I close my eyes is that baby. Do you think she might be mine? I mean someday?

MOLLY

What do you think?

ROSALEE

Maybe I am going to live.

MOLLY

That must have been some banana split.

ROSALEE

How was the doctor?

MOLLY

The doctor was good.

ROSALEE

So we both had a good day.

MOLLY

I guess.

ROSALEE

Look at this! I wrote the story!

MOLLY

Really?

ROSALEE

Yeah. I figured out that Mandy didn't stutter when she played someone else. It was only when she had to be herself that she had trouble. Did you stutter when you were a kid?

MOLLY

No. I had hives. Rashes. When I got nervous. I itched like crazy. It still happens once in a while.

ROSALEE

Just be yourself and everything will be okay. You ready?

MOLLY

Go on.

MR. HOLIDAY

"Diane? Can you bring me the file of para applicants?"

ROSALEE

What?

MOLLY

Go on to class.

MR. HOLIDAY

And we'll need to place an ad... Don't ask... How'd you guess...

ROSALEE

I can't.

MOLLY

Oh, right.

MR. HOLIDAY

There's got to be someone out there... We can always pray, right?"

SCENE 2

MR. HOLIDAY

Good morning! And welcome back! I hope you all had a good Thanksgiving and are ready to buckle down and write your holiday stories! A reminder that homeroom will be extended until 10:04 and once again, one story or poem from each group will be read in the assembly on Thursday. Lunch today is chicken nuggets and french fries and the always famous sandwich and salad bar. Make it a great day or not, the choice is your!

(to Molly)

Where's Rosalee?

MOLLY

With the nurse. She's, you know...

MR. HOLIDAY

Yes.

MOLLY

May I come in for a moment?

MR. HOLIDAY

Course. Did you have a good holiday?

MOLLY

I did. You?

MR. HOLIDAY

The usual. Too much food. Too much *Mother*. Actually, my stepmother. My mother passed away when I was in college.

MOLLY

Sorry.

MR. HOLIDAY

Oh, well. Then my father died, oh let's see, three years ago?
Is that possible?

MOLLY

Time flies.

MR. HOLIDAY

Except around here! *Tick tock...* How's Sarah?

MOLLY

Sarah's fine.

MR. HOLIDAY

Adjusting to the seventh grade all right?

MOLLY

Mr. Holiday, I-

MR. HOLIDAY

I know. I can see it in your face.

MOLLY

I really had made up my mind.

MR. HOLIDAY

When do you-

MOLLY

Next week. If possible.

MR. HOLIDAY

Next week.

MOLLY

Any prospects?

MR. HOLIDAY

I might be able to get Donna back for a few weeks. I called
her over the weekend.

MOLLY

Then what?

MR. HOLIDAY

Then. Then Rosalee may be heading to a residential school.
We almost sent her there this year. Before you came along. I
wonder if you could do me a favor. Not mention to Rosalee
that you are leaving until Friday.

MOLLY

Don't you think that's rather late?

MR. HOLIDAY

She'll brood over it if you tell her now. Believe me, it's better this way.

MOLLY

Better for who?

MR. HOLIDAY

I'm making a request. Besides, her parents are coming for her on Thursday. I don't want her behavior to interfere with that.

MOLLY

Okay. I won't mention it.

MR. HOLIDAY

Thank you.

ROSALEE

Knock, knock!

MR. HOLIDAY

Rosalee, what are you doing?

ROSALEE

Looking for Molly.

MR. HOLIDAY

You are supposed to wait for her and not be roaming the halls.

ROSALEE

I'm not roaming. See? I walked over here like a little soldier. Anyway, Sarah's in there.

MOLLY

My Sarah?

ROSALEE

Mrs. Wood had to go to Room 14 because one of the kids fainted. Sarah came to get her.

MOLLY

Where's Sarah now?

ROSALEE

In Mrs. Wood's office. We were cleaning up for her and then I came here. What's the big whoop? It's just Allie Grant, she's always fainting.

MR. HOLIDAY

Mrs. Wood left you alone with Sarah?

Yeah. ROSALEE

Oh. (beat)

Oh, what? MR. HOLIDAY

Oh, I was unsupervised for thirty seconds with another human being. ROSALEE

We'll just wait until Ms. Chase comes back. Why don't you get out your notebook and work on your Thanksgiving story. MR. HOLIDAY
Rosalee?... Rosalee!
(to Molly)
She's taken off.

I'll find her. MOLLY

ROOM 313

Rose- MOLLY (cont'd)

Don't talk to me. ROSALEE

I just- MOLLY

Don't talk to me. ROSALEE

TIME PASSES

Good afternoon! I've got a huge stack of stories and poems in my hand! A panel of high school students have volunteered to select their favorites. And the top three stories as judged by the teachers will be published in next week's Herald Star! Isn't that exciting? Thank you everyone for participating. MR. HOLIDAY

Hey... I said, hey. MOLLY

Hay is for horses. ROSALEE

You going to sleep all day? MOLLY

ROSALEE
Maybe.

MOLLY
You missed lunch.

ROSALEE
Chicken nuggets. Blah.

MOLLY
I've got some candy.

ROSALEE
(long beat)
Okay, I don't care.

MOLLY
Here you go... I'm sorry if I-

ROSALEE
Shut up.

MOLLY
Excuse me?

ROSALEE
I said shut up.

MOLLY
Okay, I'll shut up. I made a mistake. I'm sorry. I overreacted about you and Sarah. Sarah likes you.

ROSALEE
Yeah, well, that's more than I can say for you.

MOLLY
Pardon?

ROSALEE
You're not divorced. Sarah doesn't see her Dad on weekends. You lied.

MOLLY
I didn't exactly lie.

ROSALEE
Sarah told me her father is some loser who lives in Florida.

MOLLY
He is. That's true. But I did break up with someone recently-

ROSALEE
Another loser.

MOLLY

I seem to attract them.

ROSALEE

If you don't want me to come to your house, then just say so.

MOLLY

It's just that I'm in school and working and the weekends and my son is having problems. Drugs, I think.

ROSALEE

What kind of drugs?

MOLLY

I don't know. Pot. Lots of pot.

ROSALEE

Pot can stunt your growth. Here.

MOLLY

It's beautiful.

ROSALEE

It's not Shakespeare. It's in English.

MOLLY

It is in English. I think you should give this to your teacher.

ROSALEE

It's for you. I wrote it over vacation. I didn't know I could write a poem.

MOLLY

You can do anything you want.

ROSALEE

Except math and science and social studies-

MOLLY

I read your file.

ROSALEE

What file?

MOLLY

The file Mr. Holiday keeps in his office. It said something about you that you should know.

ROSALEE

Okay.

MOLLY

It said you're a genius.

ROSALEE

It did not.

MOLLY

It did. I'm not supposed to tell you. But you scored in the top 5% of the country.

ROSALEE

Get out!

MOLLY

Swear to God.

ROSALEE

Holy crap. I'm a genius? Then how come I can't do math?

MOLLY

Even geniuses have to try.

ROSALEE

I'm pretty sure my teachers don't know anything about this. What do I do now that I'm a genius?

MOLLY

Just think of it as money in the bank. One day you'll take it out and use it.

ROSALEE

The square root of the perimeter is equal to the hypotenuse of the triangle's... coordinates x and y-

MR. HOLIDAY

There you are! Your teachers have marked you absent.

MOLLY

We came up here. To do some work.

MR. HOLIDAY

I see. Is that a chocolate turtle? Can I have one?

ROSALEE

You have to put the whole thing in your mouth.

MR. HOLIDAY

Mm.

ROSALEE

Did you know you both have a daughter named Sarah?

MOLLY

Really? Sarah with an "h"?

MR. HOLIDAY

It's my wife's middle name.

MOLLY
I just always loved it. Does she live around here?

ROSALEE
This is all very fascinating but here- I wrote my Thanksgiving story.

MR. HOLIDAY
Wonderful!

ROSALEE
It's kind of messy.

MR. HOLIDAY
As long as I can read it.

ROSALEE
Oh, you can read it.

MR. HOLIDAY
Now, how about getting to class.

ROSALEE
You've got a bit of chocolate on your chin.

MOLLY
On the way.
(to Rosalee)
I didn't know you wrote a story.

ROSALEE
That's what I was doing when you came in here.

MOLLY
I would have loved to read it.

ROSALEE
You'll get a chance.

A CLASSROOM

MR. HOLIDAY
Can I see you?

MOLLY
Me?

MR. HOLIDAY
Did you read this?

MOLLY
No.

MR. HOLIDAY
Did she tell you about it?

MOLLY
No. I didn't know until you came in. What?

MR. HOLIDAY
This is it. She's finally done it. Bring her to my office in five minutes.

ROSALEE
What was that?

MOLLY
Nothing. A message.

ROSALEE
Liar. Tell me.

MOLLY
Nothing.

ROSALEE
Come on!

MR. HOLIDAY
"Hi, Carol, thanks for taking my call. Rosalee wrote a, I don't know what to call it, she called it a Thanksgiving story..

MOLLY
What do you think it was?

ROSALEE
My story? I was just kidding.

MR. HOLIDAY
"That's why I called you...

MOLLY
Kidding? Why would you write that?

ROSALEE
I thought it would be funny.

MR. HOLIDAY
"All right... I'll start there."

MOLLY
It's not funny! It was stupid!

ROSALEE

It's called fiction. Didn't Shakespeare make up stories?

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

MR. HOLIDAY

Hi Rosalee, I thought we might want to have a little talk.

ROSALEE

I love talks!

MR. HOLIDAY

What you wrote in that story, Rosalee, is very serious.

ROSALEE

Yes, but is it genius?

MR. HOLIDAY

This is not funny. You could get Troy in a lot of trouble.

ROSALEE

For what? It's a story.

MR. HOLIDAY

You are implying in this story that he and you are having relations.

ROSALEE

I would never have sex with him. He has sex with Michelle. Like twice a week in his room. I know because I can hear them. He locks my door from the outside so I can't leave and goes in his room with Michelle. Anyway, I've been reading Shakespeare. There's all kinds of sex in Shakespeare. And Mrs. Bridges told us we should write about what we know and I just kind of combined them. Anyway, what's wrong with sex? It's how babies are made.

MR. HOLIDAY

You wrote a story about a foster brother named Roy and a girl named Rosanna having sex while the family was downstairs eating turkey.

ROSALEE

Well, it's a detail. The turkey is a detail in the story to make it real.

MR. HOLIDAY

We're going to have to report this to the team.

ROSALEE

Good. Tell them. Maybe then Troy will stop humping Michelle.

MR. HOLIDAY

(to Molly)

Were you sitting there while she wrote that?

MOLLY

I was trying to give her some privacy. She also wrote this poem.

ROSALEE

That was for you!

MR. HOLIDAY

Your parents are coming on Thursday.

ROSALEE

I know!

MR. HOLIDAY

This incident today could jeopardize that.

ROSALEE

It was just a stupid story!

MR. HOLIDAY

I can't make any promises, Rose.

ROSALEE

Heather got to go to Grandma's house in Boston for Thanksgiving. I got to sit in my room. Is that fair?

MR. HOLIDAY

How do you know what Heather did?

ROSALEE

Keisha Stuart went to camp with her this summer and they write to each other. Do you know Heather already got busted for pot? That's criminal behavior.

MR. HOLIDAY

Why were you sitting in your room during Thanksgiving?

ROSALEE

Same old. Same old. Troy's little cousins are annoying and when I said so they sent me up there. I hate turkey, anyway.

MOLLY

It's actually quite well written.

ROSALEE

Really?

MOLLY

The characters are vivid. Great descriptions of food. *This* Rosanna seems to love turkey.

ROSALEE
Part of being a writer is pretending.

MR. HOLIDAY
Can we focus?

MOLLY
I'm just saying.

ROSALEE
Okay, I'm sorry I called the guy Roy. How about Bill?

MR. HOLIDAY
It's the subject that is disturbing.

ROSALEE
Fine!

A PHYSICAL STRUGGLE

MR. HOLIDAY
I'm sorry.

ROSALEE
Can I go to class now?
(to Molly)
Maybe now the gargoyle leave me alone.

MR. HOLIDAY
"Carol?... No... no... it was a false alarm."

SCENE 3

ROSALEE
*Last dance, the last dance for love
Yes it's my last chance for romance tonight
Wo-o
I need you by me
Beside me to guide me
To hold me
To scold me
But when I'm bad I'm so, so bad
So let's dance-*

MOLLY
Okay, Donna Summer,

ROSALEE
-the last dance- Selena did it better.

MOLLY
That's impossible.

ROSALEE
You've never even heard Selena sing.

MOLLY
I don't have to. Donna Summer is the disco queen.

ROSALEE
Disco? You danced disco?

MOLLY
What's wrong with disco?

ROSALEE
Nothing.

MOLLY
I spent a summer in New York. I went to Studio 54. And I even danced with Keith Richards.

ROSALEE
What Keith Richards?

MOLLY
Drummer for the Rolling Stones.

ROSALEE
That's Charlie Watts. Keith Richards plays guitar.

MOLLY
He plays drums.

ROSALEE
He plays guitar.

MOLLY
I was the one at Studio 54.

ROSALEE
Was he ugly?

MOLLY
I wouldn't call him ugly.

ROSALEE
Then you must have been on crack.

MOLLY
We didn't even have crack in the 70s!

ROSALEE
I can totally see you dancing with Keith Richards. Doing the disco thing.

MOLLY
You don't believe me.

ROSALEE
Oh, sure I do.

MOLLY
I was there.

ROSALEE
Prove it.

MOLLY
I can't prove it.

ROSALEE
Dance, then. Show me the disco fever.

MOLLY
That was a long time ago.

ROSALEE
Come on, show me.
(sings)
*So let's dance- come on-
Let's dance the last dance.*

MOLLY AND ROSALEE
*So let's dance the last dance
So let's dance the last dance tonight-*

ROSALEE
You really are bad!

MOLLY
I'm not bad. Just out of practice. Besides, there's no music.

ROSALEE
Do you have a tape?

MOLLY
I might.

ROSALEE
Can you bring it in tomorrow - oh wait. I won't be here tomorrow.

MOLLY
Why not?

ROSALEE
They rescheduled my therapist for the morning, then dentist after lunch. I'm practically done for the week!

ROSALEE (cont'd)

My parents are coming in... Two hours and fourteen minutes-
what about Monday? Can you bring the tape on Monday?
Please? Please please please?

MOLLY

As soon as I find it, I'll bring it in. How's that?

ROSALEE

Okay.

MOLLY

So where are you going for lunch?

ROSALEE

I don't know. Someplace exotic. My dad always likes to
surprise me. It's not his fault all this happened.

MOLLY

When did you last see them?

ROSALEE

May. I was supposed to spend a week with them this summer
but it never happened. Poor you! A whole day without me!

(beat)

Phys ed is over! Yay!

MOLLY

Rosalee, wait-

ROSALEE

I don't want to be late for language arts! We're reading
Romeo and Juliet! I might get the lead!

MR. HOLIDAY

Ms. Chase, can I see you in my office? After you get Rosalee
to class?

MOLLY

I'll be back in a minute.

ROSALEE

Take your time!

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

MR. HOLIDAY

How's it going?

MOLLY

I didn't realize Rosalee wasn't going to be here tomorrow.

MR. HOLIDAY

Me neither. It came up yesterday morning and I've been flat
out.

MOLLY

When am I going to say goodbye to her? I don't want to upset her before her parents come.

MR. HOLIDAY

Well. *There's the rub.* They're not coming. Heather didn't go to school today. That is, she didn't get on the bus. They're searching for her. It's likely nothing. Heather does what she can to sabotage any time Rosalee has with their parents.

MOLLY

I don't believe this.

MR. HOLIDAY

I thought we might explain this together. Might as well get it over with.

MOLLY

What if I took her out to lunch?

MR. HOLIDAY

I can't allow any out of school activity without approval from the team. I'm sorry.

MOLLY

You took her out for ice cream.

MR. HOLIDAY

That was an emergency. The rules require-

MOLLY

Fuck the rules! The rules don't work! None of this works! She's a bright, curious, yes, rebellious adolescent girl who has had her childhood ripped out of her life! I've spent three months with her and I can tell you she's not a threat, there's not the slightest hint that she is plotting or planning anything other than getting a little time away. From me. Her prison guard.

MR. HOLIDAY

Look, I don't like this any better than you do.

MOLLY

What would you do if she was your daughter?

MR. HOLIDAY

My daughter? My daughter. She died, um, about...

MOLLY

(Oh. God.)

MR. HOLIDAY

Okay. Lunch.

I'll go get her.

MOLLY

CLASSROOM

MOLLY (cont'd)
Rosalee? Can you come out in the hall for a minute?

ROSALEE
No! We're casting!

MOLLY
Just a minute. Bring your things.

ROSALEE
I want to be Juliet!

MOLLY
Mrs. Murphy? Rosalee needs to come to the office for a minute... Two minutes...

ROSALEE
What's this about?

MOLLY
Mr. Holiday wants to talk to us about something.

ROSALEE
What happened?

MOLLY
Nothing happened. You know how he is. He thinks we should both always hear what he has to say.

ROSALEE
You know! You know something! Tell me!

MOLLY
I can't. I don't know. Just come!

MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

ROSALEE
(long beat)
What!!

MR. HOLIDAY
Rosalee, I got a phone call this morning... It's about your parents... Something came up and they, they can't pick you up today.

ROSALEE
That's it?

MR. HOLIDAY

That's... it.

ROSALEE

Can I go back to class then?

MR. HOLIDAY

They're terribly sorry, they said to tell you they would arrange things next week-

ROSALEE

Yeah, fine. Come on, Molly.

MR. HOLIDAY

Ms. Chase wondered if you'd like to go out to lunch.

ROSALEE

Are you crazy? Now I can sit with Ethan.

(to Molly)

And you sit at another table! Come on. Come on! We said two minutes! Come on!

MOLLY

Go on. I'll be there in a minute.

ROSALEE

You'll what?

MOLLY

Go on. Go on to class.

ROSALEE

I can't.

MOLLY

Yes, you can. Just walk, don't run.

(to Mr. Holiday)

I was thinking maybe I would stay. I was thinking maybe I would finish the year.

MR. HOLIDAY

We're trying to place her in a residential school.

MOLLY

I think it's a bad idea.

MR. HOLIDAY

It's in motion.

MOLLY

When will you know?

MR. HOLIDAY

A month. Maybe more. Why don't you take the weekend-

MOLLY

I don't need the weekend. I didn't need the week and I don't need the weekend.

MR. HOLIDAY

I can't guarantee anything.

MOLLY

You know, every time I read *Romeo and Juliet* I think, maybe Juliet will wake up before Romeo kills himself. Isn't that silly? I think, maybe this time it will have a happy ending.

MR. HOLIDAY

Yes, that would be nice.

A CLASSROOM/MR. HOLIDAY'S OFFICE

ROSALEE

I'm Juliet! Can you believe it? I'm the lead! And Ethan gave Jeremy a pack of gum to let him play Romeo! At least for today. Tomorrow we have to be someone else.

MOLLY

You'll make a great Juliet.

ROSALEE

Sh. I'm getting into character.

MR. HOLIDAY

Good afternoon! We have a late entry in the Thanksgiving story and poem competition and although students have made their selections, I want to read one that deserves an honorable mention. It's by Rosalee Darien and entitled, "Shakespeare Was Here."

Who will believe my verse in time to come
If it were filled with your most high deserts,
deserts means gifts like intelligence, patience,
beauty and kindness, you are beautiful and kind
and taught me a little about how to write-

ROSALEE

-like Shakespeare and even though I can't understand him word for word what I can understand is that his words are love. So should my papers yellowed with their age be scorned, that's okay, because if they are yellow people can still read them and know that you lived, you were here, like Shakespeare was here, and I was here and together we held up a mirror to each other and saw the truth.

(The end.)