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Anxiety is Orange**

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ANXIETY IS ORANGE

A VIGNETTE PLAY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



Anxiety is Orange

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Characters

2M 7W 12E, Doubling Possible

Scene One: (1M, 1W) Tyler, Chloe

Scene Two: (1W, 1E) Black, Pink

Scene Three: (1M, 1W, 2E) Milan, Scout, Rory, Ethan

Scene Four: (1E) Jealousy

Scene Five: (3W) Belle, Nada, Wynn

Scene Six: (2E) Blue, Dee

Scene Seven: (1W) Brittany

Scene Eight: (4E) Presley, Harper, Tal, Jem

Scene Nine: (2E) Yellow, Grey

Style

A vignette play (short scenes based on a theme). Physicalizations and vocal choices should be bold and visual since we only meet each character once.

Set

Cubes for levels. The stage is then covered in costume pieces that actors will wear to highlight a specific colour in each scene. If possible, hang the costumes on clothing racks so they are up and visible. If not, create an interesting pattern on the floor.

Costumes

Each actor should wear a base neutral outfit. The stage should be littered with costume pieces that actors will wear for each scene. Costume pieces need to be easy to slip on and off (e.g. hats, scarves, shirts, jackets, cardigans). Pieces are bright solid colours, no stripes, no patterns, no logos.

Music

Use music to transition between scenes. Make the transitions as short as possible.

Lighting & Transitions

Do not use blackouts to transition between scenes. Keep the pace moving. Let us see the changes in characters and costume changes. Make the transitions part of the staging. Let the theatrical form be visible.

Music plays. ACTORS walk on stage, their arms filled with brightly-coloured costume pieces. They reach centre, look at one another, smile and throw all the clothes in the air. They laugh and scramble to adjust the pieces around the stage where they will be needed for upcoming scenes.

TYLER puts on a wenge (look it up) BROWN jacket. BLACK and PINK put on what they need for the next scene.

TYLER moves far stage left. CHLOE moves far stage right. The other actors either tableaux to watch or turn their backs to the audience on CHLOE's line.

TYLER starts to cross. CHLOE throws out her hands and cries out.

CHLOE: Stop, stop, stop right there, hold it!

TYLER freezes. The music shuts off.

CHLOE: Oh no. (*turning away*) No, no, no, no, no.

TYLER: What?

CHLOE: No.

TYLER: (*approaching*) What “no?” What are you saying “no” to? I’m Tyler, are you Chloe?

CHLOE: No. Yes. (*she turns and sees him moving*) Stop! (*TYLER stops*) I am Chloe. But you must understand that “no” is the only thing I can say here.

TYLER: No, I don’t understand.

CHLOE: (*turning away*) It’s obvious.

TYLER: Maybe you could help me out? I could come a little closer?

CHLOE: You can’t be Tyler.

TYLER: (*slowly approaching*) I can. I am.

CHLOE: Impossible.

TYLER: Do you want to see my driver’s license?

CHLOE: Sheila described you all wrong. (*turning back*) Stop moving!

TYLER: Why? What did she say?

CHLOE: Sheila said: “Tyler is a fun guy, a great guy to be around, no one makes me laugh more than Tyler, swoop this guy up quick before it’s too late.”

There is a pause.

TYLER: And that’s wrong because...?

CHLOE: It is a complete and utter fabrication.

TYLER: Chloe, I’m getting a headache. Do you want to play miniature golf or not?

CHLOE: I want to play miniature golf with Tyler.

TYLER: I’m Tyler.

CHLOE: No.

TYLER: I’m not doing this again.

CHLOE: You are not Tyler.

TYLER: Why?

CHLOE: It’s obvious. (*She sees he doesn’t get it. She throws her arms up.*)
You’re wearing wenge.

There is a pause. Let that sink in.

TYLER: Well, I didn’t see that coming.

CHLOE: (*now she approaches*) At no point did Sheila alert me to the fact that the person I’m supposed to connect with on an interpersonal level would show up in wenge.

TYLER: (*looking at his jacket*) Wait. This is brown. Wenge is brown?

CHLOE: Wenge hurts my soul. Wenge is the colour of a complete lack of sophistication.

TYLER: Wenge is the colour of the jacket I got from my brother.

CHLOE: See? You wear hand-me-downs. I rest my case!

TYLER: It’s a nice jacket.

CHLOE: It’s not what Tyler would wear.

TYLER: Tyler would so wear this jacket. He would rock this jacket. He does rock this jacket! And he’s fun, a million laughs in this jacket because he’s a nice guy who doesn’t care what colour people wear... why am I talking in the third person?

CHLOE: An excess of wenge in someone's life is inexcusable. Umber I can handle, but this, this abomination is beyond the scope of any woman's reasonable decency. *(she turns away and folds her arms)* This relationship is going nowhere.

TYLER: It would have to start somewhere to actually go nowhere. I don't think we're going to get that far. OK. I'm going to go now. Have a nice life in your wengeless world.

CHLOE: *(turning back)* Sheila and I are going to have a long chat about this debacle.

TYLER: Oh trust me, Sheila and I are going to have a longer chat.

CHLOE: You? Her? Why? *(tentative)* What are you going to tell her?

TYLER: That I can't date a girl who wears Arctic Snow after Labour Day. It's beyond the scope of any man's reasonable decency. *(he spins and moves upstage)*

CHLOE: What?

Music plays. Everyone is on the move. CHLOE stamps her foot and moves upstage.

BLACK and PINK move downstage to stand side-by-side. The music stops.

BLACK: I wear black. I like wearing black. It hides things. It feels like armour. It makes me feel good. I get funeral jokes all the time—why is joking about a funeral appropriate? Or “what are you so sad for? What are you depressed about? Smile!” Wearing black does not mean I'm sad. “Cheer up, don't be so moody.” I like how people can tell exactly who I am and how I feel simply because of a colour.

PINK: Oh yeah? How about pink? I wear pink. I like it. And this is what I get all day long: “Oh you're such a girly girl. Aren't you pretty? That's such a cute outfit. You always wear pink, isn't that precious. Do you need help with that math?” Why do people assume I'm stupid because I wear pink?

BLACK: Because a lot of stupid girls wear pink.

PINK: What's with the attitude? Pink is bright, it makes me happy, and it's not— *(she stops herself)*

BLACK: Say it.

PINK: I wasn't going to—

BLACK: Go ahead. Say it. Pink is not black.

PINK: (*wrinkling her nose*) Well it's not.

BLACK: Nice face bubble brain.

PINK: Hey!

BLACK: Keep to yourself Judgy McJudgerson.

PINK: I wasn't judging...

BLACK: You just did!

PINK: Ok, ok. (*beat*) Let's get this out in the open. I admit it. I judge you because of the colour of the majority of your wardrobe. Don't you do the same with me?

BLACK: Yep. Full on judge.

PINK: That is not something people should do. We shouldn't make assumptions based on shades of fabric.

BLACK: Agreed. I don't like it when it's done to me, so I shouldn't do it to you.

PINK: Ok! (*beat*) But it's not just the clothes, you know.

BLACK: What?

PINK: You scowl.

BLACK: I do not.

PINK: You wear a black cloud. Literally.

BLACK: I am a perfectly happy person. (*pointing*) You are *too* happy.

PINK: What's wrong with a sunny disposition?

BLACK: Your laugh is grating and your smile is robotic.

PINK: My laugh is effervescent and I'll do it all day long if I want to Judgy... Judgy Judge pants.

BLACK: (*correcting*) Judgy McJudgerson.

PINK: Whatever. (*crossing her arms*) "Robotic." That hurts.

BLACK: (*agreeing*) Sorry. (*beat*) Effervescent?

PINK: Want me to spell it? Use it in a sentence? Identify the country of origin?

BLACK: Ok, ok. Let's agree that judging someone by their outward appearance is unbecoming of well-rounded, smart, deeply philosophical individuals such as ourselves.

PINK: Agreed. No more judging. (seeing someone) Hey look!

BLACK and PINK both turn their heads left to right to watch someone walk by. They can be invisible or you can have a person walk by the two wearing beige.

BOTH: Ugh. Beige.

Realizing what they just said out loud they clap a hand over their mouths and run upstage in opposite directions.

Music plays. MILAN struts downstage. She is wearing PURPLE. She is a stereotypically rich debutante self-absorbed girl. She looks at the audience with total disdain. She then sits on a cube.

ETHAN, SCOUT, and RORY, all holding clipboards, have gathered during the above.

ETHAN: (with great glee) Stop, stop, stop right there, hold it!

The music shuts off. ETHAN looks like he can barely contain himself from laughing out loud.

SCOUT: (to MILAN) I'm sorry, what do you want us to do?

ETHAN can hold it in no longer. He bursts out laughing with his whole body. It's loud and over the top. SCOUT swats ETHAN, who stuffs a fist in his mouth.

MILAN: Is he, like, laughing at me?

SCOUT: I don't see what's funny about this.

RORY: Of course not. Of course we don't. (to ETHAN) Get yourself together, we're going to take this seriously.

SCOUT: We are?

RORY: Of course. (coming over, kneeling beside her) Milan, we are here to listen to whatever you have to say. Your words are important to us. We are thrilled to hear every word that comes out of your mouth.

ETHAN snorts. SCOUT swats him.

MILAN: I mean, like, I came all the way down here for this meeting. I didn't have to do that.

RORY: No, you did not, you did not.

MILAN: My driver had to take me all the way across town.

RORY: We should be thanking you for agreeing to see us. (*standing*) Isn't that right, Ethan?

ETHAN: (*with a fist stuffed in his mouth*) Sure.

SCOUT: (*to RORY*) What are you doing?

RORY: Being polite. (*moving to SCOUT*) We want to be polite to Milan, don't we Scout? (*as an aside to SCOUT*) We want to be polite to someone with access to Mr. Bennett's money, don't we Scout?

SCOUT: (*sighing*) All right. Maybe I didn't hear correctly the first time. (*moving forward*) What exactly do you want us to do?

MILAN: Change the colour of stop signs.

SCOUT: (*moving away*) That's what I heard the first time.

ETHAN can't help it, he doubles over laughing again, falling to the floor and pounding the floor with his fist.

RORY: You'll have to excuse our colleague. His great aunt twice removed just died. (*kicks ETHAN*)

ETHAN: (*this stops him from laughing*) Ow!

MILAN: But he's like, laughing?

RORY: Some people have the exact opposite reaction in certain situations, isn't that right, Ethan?

ETHAN: Uh, yeah.

RORY: He laughs when he's supposed to cry and he cries when he's supposed to laugh.

ETHAN: It's a disease.

RORY: Oppositicitis. Like appendicitis. Only different.

ETHAN: I'm a sick man.

SCOUT: (*coming in strong to get back on track*) May I ask why you want us to change the colour of stop signs?

MILAN: I don't like red. Red is too aggressive.

SCOUT: That's the point. We want people to stop. Aggressively.

RORY: Well, if they stop too aggressively they'll hurt their brakes.
Milan is right. Aggressive is bad.

ETHAN: But if people stop passively, that isn't a stop at all, right? Isn't that just a roll?

SCOUT: We don't want that.

ETHAN: It's kind of illegal.

SCOUT: So you see, Milan, red is a purposeful colour choice for stop signs. The stop sign has always been red and there's a good—

ETHAN: Not always. It was yellow first. It wasn't red till the 1950's.

RORY: Why do you know that?

ETHAN: I'm a font of useless information.

SCOUT: Well, it's red now and red it's going to stay. (*to MILAN, bringing her up to a stand*) Thank you for coming in...

RORY: (*pushing MILAN back down*) Now, now, let's not be too hasty here. Perhaps Milan has more to say about her proposal?

SCOUT: (*aside to RORY*) You want to risk the entire safety of a town to appease a spoiled, deluded rich kid?

RORY: (*aside*) Ix-nay on the eluded-day.

SCOUT: (*aside*) I'm not going to indulge this!

ETHAN: (*getting in the middle of their aside*) I'll do it, I'll do it. I'm good now.

All three turn to MILAN.

ETHAN: So. Milan. (*sitting beside her*) That's a great colour on you.

MILAN: Purple is my favourite.

ETHAN: Purple is the colour of royalty. The Bennetts are totally the royals of Morley. Am I right?

MILAN: Does that make my dad the king?

ETHAN: Not really. Purple is the colour of creativity, and this proposal is very creative.

SCOUT: Where does he come up with this stuff?

RORY: Font of useless.

ETHAN: Your proposal to change the colour of the stop signs—item number one, red is too aggressive.

MILAN: Red is, like, in your face. Stop. Do it. What if I don't want to?

RORY: And why should you?

SCOUT: Laws, rules of the road. You know...

RORY swats SCOUT.

ETHAN: Are there any more reasons you want the stop signs changed?

MILAN: Branding.

ETHAN: *(chokes a little on a laugh and regains control)* Of course.

MILAN: This town is so boring. It needs a stamp. It needs, like, a marketing strategy. And a hashtag.

ETHAN: Oh please tell me you have a hashtag.

MILAN: Duh.

SCOUT: What does this have to do with stop signs?

ETHAN: Hush. Milan is preparing to speak.

MILAN: Morley. Hashtag—mystery.

RORY: Hashtag—Mystery...? Ok.

SCOUT: What does this have to do with stop signs?

MILAN: *(as if it's obvious)* My favourite colour is purple.

ETHAN: Of course. I totally get it.

RORY: Do you?

ETHAN: No.

SCOUT: You want us to change all the stop signs to your favourite colour because...?

MILAN: Purple is the colour of mystery.

RORY: *(to ETHAN)* Did you know that?

ETHAN: I can't know everything.

SCOUT: We don't want it to be a mystery. We want people to stop.

MILAN: (*with a pouty stamp*) You're not getting it. Does she have to be here?

SCOUT: Yes, she does.

RORY: Ok, ok, ok. Ah, ok. Great proposal Milan. We're off to a great start. There's threads to tighten, points to massage, concepts to narrow down, but this is good. This is good...

ETHAN: Were you thinking eggplant?

MILAN: I've got this nail polish called Passion Plum.

ETHAN: Of course you do!

SCOUT: And who is going to pay for passion plum stop signs?

MILAN: Daddy. He'll buy me anything.

SCOUT: I give up. (*she leaves*)

RORY: Ok! We'll meet next week? How about that? Ethan?

ETHAN: Wouldn't miss it.

MILAN: (*standing*) Sure. I wanna talk about crossing guards. That neon has got to go. So last century.

Music plays. MILAN leaves as RORY and ETHAN stare at each other for a moment. They exit as JEALOUSY enters.

NOTE: Jealousy is a "vice." Kindness, Charity, Humility, Patience are all "virtues." In this context they are other people—so treat the words as names, not acts.

JEALOUSY enters and sits. She/He is talking to another person, Kindness, not the audience.

JEALOUSY: (*big smile*) Hello! How are you doing? Are you well? You look great. (*beat*) See, see? See what I'm doing? This is the new me, Kindness. Good, huh? I'm turning over a new leaf. I'm making a change. I get it. I've looked in the mirror and it isn't pretty. Now, normally I know we don't normally get along and normally, we don't attend the same parties... (*tentative*) Did you go to Charity's Beach Soiree? (*jealous, turning away*) I heard she put chicken in sand buckets. Chicken buckets. And you pulled out the wings with a tiny shovel. (*really jealous, standing*) It's not fair that I didn't get invited. Everyone knows I'm a sucker for cute theming! (*takes a breath, smiles, calmly sits*) I'm not a monster, Kindness. I'm a good person. My eyes aren't even green. My reputation is

undeserved. You don't know what it's like. Everybody loves you. "Oh Kindness, she's the best, she's so nice and loyal and has shiny hair"—how do you get that hair so shiny? *(takes a breath)* So I had a realization. I need to change. I need a new leaf. It was after I didn't get invited to Humility's Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, which is fine. It's fine. Even though Humility knows I'm a sucker for a piñata. *(bursting)* Why won't anyone invite me to their parties? Why? Why? Why? *(takes a breath)* I've got some things to work on. Do you think you could help? Give me a few pointers? Maybe I could tag along to Patience's Oscar Gala? Did you get invited to Patience's Oscar Gala? *(beat)* I hate you.

Music plays. Everyone moves. NADA sits. WYN and BELLE approach.

WYN & BELLE: Hey!

NADA: *(with a scrunched up face)* Hey...

WYN: What's the matter?

BELLE: Your face is all scrunchy nasty looking. Like you're smelling something.

NADA: Really? *(she tries to change her face)*

BELLE: That doesn't help.

WYN: What's the matter?

NADA: Brian bought me roses.

WYN & BELLE: *(sitting on either side of NADA)* He did?

WYN: That's so sweet.

BELLE: That's a big step.

NADA: I know...

WYN: What's wrong with them?

BELLE: Are they dead? Did Brian give you dead roses? Like the worst breakup message ever? *(standing)* Like he can't tell you, so he went to the florist and specifically said "dead roses" and she tried to change his mind but he was all, "Give me the dead ones. I have to send a message."

WYN: On what planet would a guy go to that much trouble to break up with someone? That requires effort. You know he'd just text.

BELLE: True. Unless he really wanted to send a message. (to NADA) Are they dead?

NADA: No, no. (beat) They're yellow.

WYN goes "Awwwwwww" at the same time as BELLE goes "Uh Oh..." BELLE sits.

WYN: What? I love yellow roses. It's sunshine on a stem.

BELLE: Not red, huh?

NADA: No. Very, very yellow.

WYN: But he bought you flowers. Let's not forget this. The boy went out and got you live flowers. Not dead ones. Alive and breathing flowers. Well, not breathing. Can you imagine? That would freak me out.

BELLE: Ok. We're not forgetting Brian bought flowers.

NADA: He did. I am a horrible human being. I'm an ungrateful person that I can't enjoy this.

WYN: So what's wrong?

BELLE: Rose-olism.

WYN: That's not a word.

BELLE: Rose symbolism. Different rose colours mean different things.

WYN: They do not.

NADA: They do.

WYN: So he is sending a message...

NADA: I don't know. It's just flowers right? He was being a great boyfriend.

WYN: Yes.

BELLE: Maybe.

WYN: Belle.

BELLE: Red rose, colour of love. L-O-V-E. Red rose, I love you, message sent and received. White rose—Good for brides.

WYN: How do you know this?

BELLE: Reader's Digest. My grandmother has a subscription. The pink rose is for appreciation. Message of the pink rose? Thank you! Yellow rose—friendship.

WYN: Ohhhhhh.

BELLE: Yeah ohhhhhh. You don't think I'm crazy now, huh?

NADA: I'm a horrible person.

WYN: Maybe he doesn't know that yellow roses mean friendship. Maybe he just saw them and thought you'd like them. Sunshine on a stem.

NADA: It has to be that. He's not that smart. I mean, he's great but he's not doing a lot of thinking in his spare time. He's not sending messages.

BELLE: Maybe.

WYN: Stop that! Nada, you take that sour look off your face this instant. Your boyfriend bought you flowers. It was a kind gesture and, may I say, a loving gesture. Some of us don't have the luxury of decoding stupid rose-whoisit messages because some of us are very much boyfriendless. Count your lucky stars and get over yourself.

NADA: You're right. You're right. And this isn't the first time he's got me flowers.

WYN: You see? He likes you.

NADA: He gave me some white carnations last week. They were beautiful.

BELLE: You do know white is the colour of death in Japan. *(they both turn and look at her)* What?

Music plays. Everyone moves. BLUE comes downstage and sits cross legged on the cubes. DEE approaches BLUE with purpose.

DEE: Stop, stop, stop right there, hold it!

Music stops. BLUE looks at DEE.

DEE: What's the matter with you?

BLUE: Nothing.

DEE: It's not natural to be such a calm person.

BLUE: Why?

DEE: Look around you, wake up! Smell the coffee, the world is going to hell.

BLUE: It is?

DEE: The world is full of dangers at every turn. There is something to get you around every corner. Death? Hello! Wham!

BLUE: Do you want some tea?

DEE: What?

BLUE: (*gesturing off, or holding up a cup*) I have camomile. It's soothing.

DEE: Why would I want to drink tea?

BLUE: To calm your nerves. You obviously have a lot on your mind.

DEE: I'm not the oddball. You're just sitting there. Like water, like a lake in the morning, and it's not natural.

BLUE: Who told you this?

DEE: The world! The world lets us know 24/7 that people are liars, that people are unreliable. When people say they're going to take your car and treat it with respect, they can promise six ways to Sunday but you're going to find out the car is totalled. Every single time.

BLUE: Oh...

DEE: Oh what?

BLUE: I don't believe people are bad. Not all together.

DEE: Believe me, the car is totalled.

BLUE: Look up.

DEE: Why?

BLUE: Just do it.

DEE: No.

BLUE: Look.

DEE: I won't.

BLUE: Look.

DEE: You can't make me.

BLUE tilts DEE's head up easily.

BLUE: There. What do you see?

DEE: Nothing.

BLUE: Exactly. Just the sky. It's very blue, don't you think?

DEE: Sure.

BLUE: And?

DEE: That's it.

BLUE: What a wonderful world we live in that the sky can be that blue and stretch for miles and miles, and someone somewhere is looking up and seeing the same sky and having the same thoughts of marvel and wonder. That's the world.

DEE: The sky isn't blue. We just perceive it as blue. Science.

BLUE: You have a lot on your mind.

DEE: You have to think of the dangers of life. It's irresponsible to say "the sky is blue" and be happy about it. It's irresponsible to look up instead of the world around you.

BLUE: What's happened to your car?

DEE: I don't know. He said he'd be careful this time. Why did he lie to me?

BLUE: That sucks. (*DEE looks at him.*) What? It does.

DEE: Damn. I was hoping you were going to change my mind. This so sucks.

BLUE: Look at the sky. It'll help... for now.

DEE: For now.

Music plays. Everyone moves. BRITTANY comes downstage. Music stops.

BRITTANY: I wear red. It's my favourite colour. Now. It makes me feel alive and I look good in red. I used to wear pink because... that's what girls wear. Right? That's what I've always been told. Pink is for girls, don't you look so cute! Pretty pink dresses with bows and lace and swish and twirl for grandma! Cute, cute, cute, everything so cuuuuute. (*beat*) I threw every pink thing I own



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