



Sample Pages from Wheels

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SIXTEEN

IN 10 MINUTES OR LESS

Friend Request
Double Click
Brace Yourself
Lazy Eye
Fireworks
Pay Phone
Bench Warrant
Wheels
Tumblefur
Status Update: A Symphony

A Suite of Short Plays
BY
Bradley Hayward



Sixteen in 10 Minutes or Less

The plays herein may be licensed together or separately. The piece was conceived as a full length evening of entertainment, but each short stands perfectly well on its own without any prior knowledge of the characters. When produced in its entirety, the plays should be presented in the following order:

Act One

Friend Request (3M, 4W).....5

Thanks to a series of ill-fated friend requests, a doctored photo of a student spreads like wildfire among a group of teenagers.

Double Click (1M, 1W)..... 15

Young love blossoms when two teenagers flip open their laptops and start chatting.

Brace Yourself (1M, 1W)..... 23

A teenage brother and sister squabble as they try to extract a gummy bear that has lodged itself in a set of braces.

Lazy Eye (2 Either)31

Two eyeballs get bent out of shape while defending their half of a teenager's brain.

Fireworks (1M, 1W)..... 39

A couple of teenagers in love look up at the night sky and wait for colorful explosions to dance among the stars.

Act Two

Pay Phone (2M, 1W, 1 Either)..... 47

When a teenager loses his cell phone, he has no choice but to use a pay phone. Things quickly take a turn for the worse when a mysterious operator starts telling him what to do.

Bench Warrant (4W)..... 57

Three teenage girls have claimed a bench as their very own and routinely chase away all the "losers" who come near it.

Wheels (2M)..... 65

A teenage boy tries to repair a beat-up old truck so that he can get away from his parents and their broken down marriage.

Tumblefur (1W)..... 73

A sweet teenage girl takes her dog for a walk in the park and discovers that there is something exciting around every corner.

Status Update: A Symphony

(3M, 4W) 79

Seven teenagers express their hopes and fears online in a rousing symphony of status updates.

Settings

When the plays are presented together, the settings should be simple representations of each locale. The use of blocks is more than sufficient and will help facilitate quick scene changes between plays. When the plays are presented separately, the settings may be as simple or elaborate as you wish.

Characters

3M+4W, Expandable to 13M+17W+3 Either

James: Hyper & jumpy, male.

Piper: Outgoing & popular, female.

Cindy: Sarcastic & spontaneous,
female.

Samantha: Exuberant & talkative,
female.

Laura: Artistic & lonely, female.

Brody: Quiet & introspective, male.

Vance: Shy & thoughtful, male.

Right Eye: Eyeball, male or female.

Left Eye: Eyeball, male or female.

Operator: Voice only, male or
female.

Mom: Voice only, female.

Dad: Voice only, male.

When all of the plays are presented together, the characters may be played by the same actors throughout (for a minimum cast of 7) or the roles may be assigned separately (for a cast up to 33). All of the named characters are sixteen years old.

Right Eye, Left Eye, Operator, Mom, and Dad were written to be played by the same actors as the named characters, but could be cast separately.

If the plays are presented independently, many of the roles become gender flexible. Simply change the pronouns when appropriate.

Wheels

by Bradley Hayward

Characters

Brody, Vance

Setting

A bare stage; a driveway

The hood of a truck is open and propped up. This could simply be a block turned upside down. BRODY has his head buried in the engine. VANCE sits in a wheelchair with a toolbox on his lap.

BRODY: Wrench.

Without looking at VANCE, he holds out his hand behind his back.

VANCE: Is that the one with the claws?

BRODY: It's the one that's a wrench.

VANCE: *(hands him a set of pliers)* Here you go.

BRODY takes them and starts to work. Then he takes his head out of the engine.

BRODY: These are pliers.

VANCE: Sorry.

BRODY: How do you not know what a wrench is?

VANCE: I don't know. The only tool I ever use is my brain.

BRODY: Try a wrench. It works better. *(he drops the pliers into the toolbox and pulls out a wrench)* See. This is a wrench.

VANCE: Got it.

BRODY: *(sticks his head back in the engine)* Man, it's a mess in here. All rusty. Pieces breaking off. And the battery is crusted over.

VANCE: Sounds bad.

BRODY: Yeah. When an engine sits still for too long, battery fluid starts to ooze out the top. Then it gets hard and crusty. You practically need a chisel to get it off.

VANCE: Why are you even bothering to fix it if it's such a mess?

BRODY: Are you kidding me? Dad said the truck was mine if I could get it going again. I've been out here for three days and three nights now.

VANCE: Really?

BRODY: I don't mind. I like working with my hands. It clears my mind and I don't have to talk to anybody.

VANCE: Sorry. I can go if you want.

BRODY: No, you can stay. I like the help. Even if you don't know what a wrench is.

VANCE: With Dad in the military, I don't see him much. And Mom doesn't know anything about anything, except hair care products. So nobody ever taught me about tools. But if you ever need to know how to use a blow drier, I'm your guy.

BRODY: I'll remember that.

VANCE: Where do you want to go anyway?

BRODY: What do you mean?

VANCE: In the truck. If you get it running, where are you going to go?

BRODY: When I get it running.

VANCE: Sorry. When you get it running.

BRODY: Away.

VANCE: Away where?

BRODY: Wherever. Just away.

VANCE: Nowhere in particular?

BRODY: No. I just want to know what it's like to go where I want, when I want. Feel the wind in my hair. And not sit in one place all the time. Like this truck. It's been parked in the driveway for two years. It hasn't moved, not once.

VANCE: Why not?

BRODY: Do you want the long version or the short version?

VANCE: That doesn't sound good.

BRODY: I'll give you the short one. *(he drops the wrench into the toolbox)*
My parents suck.

VANCE: Why?

BRODY: The long version it is. You better crack open a couple cans of Coke.

VANCE: You don't have to tell me.

BRODY: Maybe if I say it out loud, it won't seem so crazy.

VANCE: You really don't –

BRODY: Samantha says it's good to talk about your feelings. She should know. She never stops yakking. Babble, babble, jabber, jabber.

VANCE: I thought you liked her.

BRODY: I love her. Don't tell her that, though. She'd run all over town and announce it to the world.

VANCE: *(laughs)* Yeah, she would.

BRODY: But I like listening to her feelings. It gives me a chance to forget about mine for a while.

VANCE: Like I said, you don't have to tell me.

BRODY: Grab me a Coke from the toolbox, would ya?

VANCE digs around in the toolbox.

It's the red can that says Coca-Cola.

VANCE: Hardy har har.

He hands BRODY a can of Coke. BRODY cracks it open and sits on the fender.

BRODY: Dad was driving me home from ball practice when he pulled up to the house.

VANCE: You don't play ball.

BRODY: This was two years ago.

VANCE: Oh.

BRODY: He was just about to pull into the driveway when he saw that Mom had parked her car on his side of the driveway.

VANCE: They each have their own side?

BRODY: Apparently.

VANCE: What happened?

BRODY: He flew into a rage. He told me to wait in the truck. So I did. He locked me in, so I couldn't have got out even if I wanted to. So I sat in the front seat for a long time. The clock has never worked, so I don't know how long exactly, but it was at least an hour. Or at least it felt like an hour. I kept one hand in my baseball glove and the other on my bat. When it started getting hot in there, I considered smashing the window. But then Dad would have got mad and me and, believe me, you don't want him mad at you.

VANCE: Does he...?

BRODY: Never. Not once. Not yet. His bark is worse than his bite, but sometimes his bark leaves tooth marks. Anyway, the front door of the house opened up. But it wasn't Dad that came out. It was Mom. She unlocked the truck and gave me a glass of water. Then she told me to go inside and take a shower.

VANCE: Did you ever find out what happened in there? (*BRODY shakes his head. Takes a sip.*) But they worked it out, right? I mean, they're still together. (*BRODY shakes his head*) They're not still together?

BRODY: A day went by. And then a week. Then a month. The truck never moved. It was like whoever moved it would be losing the argument. It became this sick game between them. Every day Mom would walk by it on the way to her car. She never looked at it. Dad rented a car for a while. Then he eventually bought a new one that he parks in the back. All this over a stupid parking spot.

VANCE cracks open a Coke for himself. He takes a long sip.

VANCE: So then what happened?

BRODY: The weeds started to come up through the driveway. The battery crusted over. The whole thing is so beyond stupid that I can't even believe it.

VANCE: I mean with your parents.

BRODY: Mom couldn't take it anymore so she filed for divorce.

VANCE: They got divorced? (*BRODY nods*) But they still live together. (*BRODY nods*) Can they do that?

BRODY: No, they can't. But they do.

VANCE: That's... strange.

BRODY: She gets the upstairs and he gets the basement. He even put in his own little kitchen down there. Well, if you can call a mini-fridge and a microwave a kitchen. He washes his dishes in the bathtub. It's been this way for a year now.

VANCE: Why don't they get separate places?

BRODY: They can't afford it.

VANCE: What does Samantha say about all this?

BRODY: I haven't told her.

VANCE: No?

BRODY: I haven't told anyone.

VANCE: You should tell her. She loves you too, you know.

BRODY: When she talks, she has this light in her eyes that I don't want to turn off. It's not that she wouldn't care. If anything, she'd care too much. She'd probably show up on my doorstep and wag her finger in my parent's faces. It would change things. And I don't want them to change. It's the only thing I have right now that I don't want to change.

VANCE: I see.

BRODY: The weirdest part is that both of them are trying so hard to be my favorite that it makes me sick. Every time I go up and down the stairs, my curfew gets later and later.

VANCE: At least there's one benefit.



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