



Ellen Abrams

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

Copyright © 2022, Ellen Abrams

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Take a Seat is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and all of the countries covered by the Universal Copyright Convention and countries with which the United States has bilateral copyright relations including Canada, Mexico, Australia, and all nations of the United Kingdom.

Copying or reproducing all or any part of this book in any manner is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this book may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or videotaping without written permission from the publisher.

A royalty is due for every performance of this play whether admission is charged or not. A "performance" is any presentation in which an audience of any size is admitted.

The name of the author must appear on all programs, printing, and advertising for the play and must also contain the following notice: "Produced by special arrangement with Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, Rapid City, SD."

All rights including professional, amateur, radio broadcasting, television, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved by Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, www.BigDogPlays.com, to whom all inquiries should be addressed.

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

P.O. Box 1401

Rapid City, SD 57709

TAKE A SEAT

COMEDY. Ms. Baker, a high school guidance counselor, does her best to help students every day with their hodgepodge of problems, but it isn't easy! There's a student who hates his name, a freshman who can't find the gym, a teen obsessed with videogames, and a student who repeats whatever his teachers say and insists it's an "affliction." But Ms. Baker's day is far from over. The student council president has eaten all the chocolate bars for the school fundraiser, a cat is on the loose, and two love-struck teens want to arrange their schedules so that they can be in every class together. And to top it off, a student—who can only be described as being from "another planet"—arrives looking for a friendly ear. Easy to stage with a flexible cast.

Performance Time: Approximately 45-60 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(4 M, 4 F, 12 flexible)

(Flexible cast. Doubling, tripling possible.)

- MS. BAKER:** High school guidance counselor; wears a wristwatch; female.
- MANDY:** Student madly in love with Andy; female.
- ANDY:** Student madly in love with Mandy; male.
- SCHUYLER/STEPHEN:** Arrogant senior who didn't get accepted to Harvard; flexible.
- CLARE/CLIFF:** Student who loves rocks but is unsure about whether to go to college and what to major in; flexible.
- RALPH/RAE:** Student who repeats/mimics whatever his teachers say but insists it's an "affliction"; flexible.
- KATH/KEITH:** Freshman who can't find the gym; flexible.
- BICKERSTAFF:** Student who hates his name; male.
- LARRY/LULU:** Student who gives Bickerstaff advice; flexible.
- PAM/PETE:** Student who has created an extensive Excel spreadsheet with ideas for new elective classes; flexible.
- KEVIN/KRISTIN:** Map-loving student looking for the library; flexible.
- ANÍK ("Uh-neek"):** Painfully shy student who is experiencing major changes at home; flexible.
- JACKSON/JACQUELINE:** Student obsessed with playing videogames; flexible.
- SARAH/SETH:** Student council president who has eaten all the chocolate bars for the school fundraiser; flexible.
- VIOLET:** Goth student who wants to volunteer at an elementary school; wears full Goth makeup and clothing; female.
- BRIAN:** Student who has been caught cheating on an exam; has writing all over his hands, wrists, and arms; male.
- MARGOT:** Student who has a crush on Mr. Segal, her Algebra teacher; female.

Take a Seat

5

SAM: Disabled student who wants to transfer to another high school because he is being bullied; uses canes/braces/crutches to walk; male.

ESTHER/ELVIS: Student who brings a pet cat to school; flexible.

ALIEN: Student from another planet; has green skin and wears gloves and futuristic clothing; flexible.

NOTE: For flexible roles, change the script accordingly.

TAKE A SEAT

6

SETTING

High school guidance counselor's office.

SET

Ms. Baker's office. There is a desk and chair for Ms. Baker. There are two chairs opposite her desk. There is a candy dish, a computer, and a pencil/pen holder on her desk. There is a filing cabinet with student files/folders.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1: Mandy and Andy.

Scene 2: Schuyler.

Scene 3: Clare.

Scene 4: Ralph.

Scene 5: Kath.

Scene 6: Larry and Bickerstaff.

Scene 7: Pam.

Scene 8: Kevin.

Scene 9: Anik.

Scene 10: Jackson.

Scene 11: Sarah.

Scene 12: Violet.

Scene 13: Brian.

Scene 14: Margot.

Scene 15: Sam.

Scene 16: Esther.

Scene 17: Alien.

Take a Seat

7

PROPS

2 Class schedules
Paper cup of water
Form
Giant spreadsheet
Piece of paper with a map drawn on it
Files
Hand-held videogame
Briefcase, for Ms. Baker
Pen
Paperwork

TAKE A SEAT

8

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Sound of "beeping" and "pinging" for videogame device
Small light that streaks across the stage

TAKE A SEAT

9

"LISTEN IN SUCH A WAY
THAT OTHERS
LOVE TO SPEAK TO YOU."

—Anonymous

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: High school counselor's office. Ms. Baker, a school counselor, is sitting at her desk. Smiling and holding hands, two love-struck teens, Mandy and Andy enter. Staring into each other's eyes and without looking where they are going, they manage to sit simultaneously on the two chairs opposite Ms. Baker's desk and then continue to stare into each other's eyes.)

MS. BAKER: (Clears throat.) Ahem. (No response from Mandy and Andy, who continue to stare into each other's eyes.) I said... (Clears throat louder.) ...ahem! (Mandy taps Andy on the shoulder and then points to Ms. Baker.) You wanted to see me? (Mandy and Andy have already gone back to staring into each other's eyes and smiling at each other. Shouts.) Yo! (Waves her hand in their faces.) If you could give me one-tenth of the attention you're giving each another, I would be grateful.

ANDY: Sorry, Ms. B. I just— (Overwhelmed with emotion.) Can you believe it? Would you just look at her? Isn't she the most beautiful girl in this school? In the world, even?

MS. BAKER: You make a very cute couple.

MANDY: It's *him*, Ms. B. He's the cutest boy anywhere, don't you think so?

ANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) It started on the first day of school—

MANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) When Ms. Adler called out his name—

ANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) And then Ms. Adler called out *her* name—

MANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) And he called, "Present."

ANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) And she sang out, "Here I am."

MANDY/ANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) That's when we knew.

MANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) That it was—

ANDY: (To Ms. Baker.) True love.

MS. BAKER: Charming story.

Take a Seat

II

MANDY: Did you notice that our names rhyme? (*Points to herself.*) Mandy...

ANDY: (*To Ms. Baker, pointing to himself.*) Andy.

MANDY: (*To Ms. Baker.*) It means we were meant to be together, don't you think?

MS. BAKER: I couldn't say. I'm glad you like each other. Now –

ANDY: "Like"?! There's nothing "like" about it, Ms. B. I know guys don't usually admit this kind of thing, but I am so...so...smitten with this one, that I don't care who knows it...even you.

MS. BAKER: Well, thanks for that.

MANDY: And I feel exactly the same. Exactly! I have found my soul mate.

MS. BAKER: I'm very happy for you both. If that's all you wanted to tell me, why don't you get to your next class?

(In unison, Mandy and Andy rise while still staring and smiling at each other. Without looking where they're going, they somehow find their way to the door and exit. A squeal is heard offstage. Mandy and Andy rush back into Ms. Baker's office.)

MANDY: We almost forgot!

MS. BAKER: What's that, dear?

(Staring into each other's eyes and without looking where they are going, Andy and Mandy manage to sit simultaneously on the chairs opposite Ms. Baker.)

ANDY: We need your help.

MANDY: (*To Ms. Baker.*) Desperately.

ANDY: (*To Ms. Baker.*) Yes, desperately.

MS. BAKER: What kind of help do you need?

ANDY: Our class schedules. Look!

Take a Seat

12

(In unison, Andy and Mandy put their class schedules on Ms. Baker's desk.)

MS. BAKER: *(Looking over Mandy's schedule.)* Mandy, you're taking calculus and History of the Mesopotamian Peoples. Impressive. *(Looking over Andy's schedule.)* And I see you are too, Andy.

MANDY: That's the problem, Ms. B.

MS. BAKER: Too difficult for you?

MANDY: Not at all!

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* The problem is we arranged our schedules so that we could be in every class together, but—

MANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* But they've separated us for History of the Mesopotamian Peoples.

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* It's unfair!

MANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* It's awful!

MS. BAKER: Look, kids, anyone can see you two are gaga over each other. And that's terrific. But...do you *have* to spend every hour, minute, and second together?

ANDY/MANDY: Yes!

MS. BAKER: Don't you want to expand your friendship horizons...get to know other kids in school?

ANDY/MANDY: No!

MS. BAKER: Do your parents know how, uh, *close* you are?

MANDY: My folks love him almost as much as I do!

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* And mine are crazy about her!

MANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* So could you...?

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* Would you...?

MS. BAKER: Could I...would I...what?

ANDY: Talk to someone and get us both back into *that* class?

MANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* Then we'll be together in 100 percent of our classes!

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* We would be so grateful.

MANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* Eternally.

MS. BAKER: So grateful that you would wash my car this weekend? *(Mandy and Andy look confused. Chuckles.)* Just

kidding. I can't make any promises, but I'll see what I can do. You do know that schools usually keep even identical twins apart from each other in their classes, right? Sometimes too much togetherness can be, well, *too* much.

(Mandy and Andy stare into each other's eyes, smiling.)

MANDY: Not for us!

ANDY: *(To Ms. Baker.)* Not if we live for a thousand years!

(In unison, Mandy and Andy rise while still staring and smiling at each another. Without looking where they're going, they find their way to the door and exit.)

MS. BAKER: *(To herself.)* I give it six months...

(Blackout.)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Ms. Baker is seated at her desk. Schuyler is seated opposite, arguing with Ms. Baker.)

SCHUYLER: (To Ms. Baker.) You don't seem to understand!
Everyone in my family goes to Harvard...even the *stupid* cousins.

MS. BAKER: The university has made its decision, and you didn't get in. You have my sympathies.

SCHUYLER: I can't get into Harvard on your sympathies!

MS. BAKER: Schuyler, I know you're disappointed, but when you use that tone, you are going to find very little compassion from anyone.

SCHUYLER: I'm the first person in my family in, like, a million years not to get into Harvard! My stupid brother even went there.

MS. BAKER: I know your brother. He's not stupid. In fact, he's brilliant.

SCHUYLER: That's beside the point! I took all the SAT prep classes possible. I did volunteer work at the smelly homeless shelter and the messy soup kitchen. I wrote at least a million thank-you notes.

MS. BAKER: (Flatly.) Good for you.

SCHUYLER: Know what else? I also sold some of my old clothes on [Poshmark] and gave *five* percent of what I earned to some stupid kids' charity. [Or insert the name of another suitable business.]

MS. BAKER: (Sarcastic.) You're a credit to teenagers everywhere.

SCHUYLER: I did all of that to show them I was Harvard material, but it didn't work.

MS. BAKER: It didn't work because it looked like you were volunteering just to make yourself look good on your

application and not because you genuinely cared about those charities.

SCHUYLER: Of course, I don't care about those charities! Of course, I did it to make my application look better! It's what everyone does! Hello?!

MS. BAKER: But there's something else about you, in particular, Schuyler, that is not necessarily true about other applicants.

SCHUYLER: (*Threateningly.*) If you say it's my attitude, I'll scream.

MS. BAKER: That's just what I was going to say.

(*Schuyler screams. Ms. Baker looks shocked.*)

SCHUYLER: I warned you.

MS. BAKER: (*Irritated.*) And I warned *you* when we first discussed your college applications. Did you use that essay you showed me?

SCHUYLER: I most certainly did.

MS. BAKER: Even after I suggested you write another?

SCHUYLER: You don't know what you're talking about.

MS. BAKER: There's that attitude problem again.

SCHUYLER: Everybody's always telling me that! But I don't *have* an attitude problem! I really, really don't!

MS. BAKER: Do you know that line from the Robert Burns poem "To a Louse"? (*Recites.*)

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us!"

SCHUYLER: What language is that...[Icelandic]? [*Or insert another language.*]

MS. BAKER: Scottish. Do you understand what it means?

SCHUYLER: (*Recites.*)

"O wad some Power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us!"

(*Thinks.*) Oh, I get it! He's saying, "Wouldn't it be great to see ourselves the way other people do?" That's it, right?

But I already know how everyone sees me. They're jealous!
And they hate me.

MS. BAKER: Who's jealous?

SCHUYLER: Everyone! They know I'm the smartest kid in
my class and they don't like it. Has anyone else in this
school applied to Harvard? I don't think—

MS. BAKER: As a matter of fact, quite a few students. And
Yale. And Columbia. And plenty of other prestigious
universities.

SCHUYLER: Have any of them been accepted to these... (*Air
quotes.*) ..."prestigious universities"?!

MS. BAKER: Yes, they have.

SCHUYLER: (*Shocked.*) Who?!

MS. BAKER: That's private information...not mine to share.

SCHUYLER: So, you're saying that there are people I know,
people I see every day, people I am in the same classes with
who got into these... (*Air quotes.*) ..."prestigious
universities," but I didn't?!

MS. BAKER: I did suggest you apply to a couple of "safety"
schools, remember?

SCHUYLER: Tell me what I did wrong!

MS. BAKER: "Please"?

SCHUYLER: Oh, right, yeah. Puh-lease.

MS. BAKER: Let's start with your interview. What was that
like?

SCHUYLER: I told the interviewer—who wasn't all that
bright, if you must know—how lucky Harvard would be to
have me enroll there. I reminded her that my whole family
attended, and I told her that if it were possible to get higher
than a 4.0 average, I knew that I would. Plus, I said that I
would become head of student government by the time I
was a sophomore.

MS. BAKER: What was her reaction to that?

SCHUYLER: It went over very well. (*Pause.*) But now that I
think about it, I wonder if I...well, if I came on a little too
strong.

MS. BAKER: Meaning...?

SCHUYLER: Overconfident. Brash, maybe. Maybe even—

MS. BAKER: Arrogant?

SCHUYLER: (*Realizes.*) Ohhhhh, that's what you mean by "arrogant."

MS. BAKER: I think it's possible, that despite your top grades and your charitable works, it was your attitude that caused Harvard to turn you down.

SCHUYLER: But—

MS. BAKER: You can always apply again next fall, you know.

SCHUYLER: But I want to go *this* fall!

MS. BAKER: Maybe take a year off from school and learn something about life. Get a job or internship. Have experiences.

SCHUYLER: I was hoping you would call Harvard Admissions and register a formal complaint.

MS. BAKER: That's not what high school counselors do.

SCHUYLER: Do you really think I could apply again?

MS. BAKER: It might be the best thing for you. Nothing says you have to go directly from high school to college. A gap year might be just the thing for you.

SCHUYLER: Think my parents would understand?

MS. BAKER: I took a gap year before I went to college.

SCHUYLER: You did?!

MS. BAKER: It was one of the best years of my life.

SCHUYLER: Really?

MS. BAKER: And it could be one of the best years for you, too. Give you a chance to grow up, and—

SCHUYLER: And maybe learn to be less arrogant?

MS. BAKER: I couldn't have said it better myself.

(*Blackout.*)

SCENE 3

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Ms. Baker is sitting at her desk. Clare enters.)

MS. BAKER: Good morning, Clare

CLARE: (*Sing-songy.*) Good morning, Ms. Baker.

MS. BAKER: Take a seat. (*Tents her fingers, peers at Clare.*)
What can I do for you?

CLARE: My mother thought I should come and see you...to talk about college.

MS. BAKER: Where are you thinking of applying?

CLARE: (*Whines.*) I don't knooooow. I'm cofuuuuused...

MS. BAKER: If you're worried about grades, I promise you, there is a college that is right for everyone.

CLARE: I told my mother that and she said, "There might be, but that doesn't mean I'm going to pay for it."

MS. BAKER: (*Chuckles.*) Before we find the perfect fit, what would you like to major in?

CLARE: I don't know. Stuff.

MS. BAKER: You haven't given this too much thought, have you?

CLARE: I guess not.

MS. BAKER: Let's see...do you draw?

CLARE: No.

MS. BAKER: Do you like science?

CLARE: No.

MS. BAKER: Uh-huh. How about math?

CLARE: (*Shivers.*) Ewww.

(*Ms. Baker looks around the room, rhythmically taps a pencil on her desk and then offers Clare a hard candy, which she refuses. Ms. Baker gets an idea.*)

MS. BAKER: What about rocks?

CLARE: I *love* rocks! I've been collecting rocks since I was, like, three years old. I can tell you the name of every rock in the rock garden in front of the school. Do you know the difference between gabbro, basalt, and shale? (*Ms. Baker shakes her head no.*) I do! Want to hear what kind of rocks are on the moon?

MS. BAKER: Sounds like you *do* know what you want to study...rocks.

CLARE: (*Crinkles her nose.*) I don't think so. I'm tired of rocks.

MS. BAKER: How about stones?

CLARE: (*Excited.*) That's a terrific idea! I'd love to learn about stones. They're very different from rocks, you know. Let me tell you how...

(*Lights fade to black as Claire explains.*)

SCENE 4

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Ms. Baker is sitting at her desk. Ralph enters.)

MS. BAKER: Glad you could make it, Ralph.

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "Glad you could make it, Ralph."

MS. BAKER: Now, now, we need to be serious.

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "Now, now, we need to be serious."

MS. BAKER: You've been warned many times already by

[Mrs. Balf], [Mrs. Schwartz]— [*Or insert other names.*]

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "You've been warned many times already by [Mrs. Balf], [Mrs. Schwartz]—"

MS. BAKER: (*Annoyed.*) Really, Ralph?

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "Really, Ralph?"

MS. BAKER: Try to control yourself, please. You're in school, not hanging with your friends.

RALPH: I can't. I really can't control it.

MS. BAKER: I don't think— (*Realizes.*) Wait a second. You just did. You just uttered a unique sentence that did not mimic mine.

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "You just uttered—"

MS. BAKER: (*Holding out her hand, making a "stop" gesture.*) Cease and desist.

RALPH: I'm trying. I really am.

MS. BAKER: I don't believe you.

RALPH: I don't believe *you*.

MS. BAKER: No, *I* don't believe *you*.

RALPH: No, *I* don't believe *you*.

MS. BAKER: This is ridiculous.

RALPH: This is incredible.

MS. BAKER: "Ridiculous" is what I said.

RALPH: (*Mimics her.*) "Ridiculous is what I said."

MS. BAKER: Until you can speak seriously with an adult, I don't want to see you in my office again, got it?

Take a Seat

21

RALPH: So I'm excused from all my classes because of this awful, terrible affliction?

MS. BAKER: No, that's not what I meant.

RALPH: *(Mimics her.)* "No, that's not what I meant."

MS. BAKER: The only affliction you have is being mischievous. *(Sticks out her thumb, making a "get lost" gesture.)* Bye, Ralph.

(Ralph rises.)

RALPH: *(Waves.)* "Bye, Ralph." *(Just stands there.)*

MS. BAKER: Yes?

RALPH: How will I know if I really have an affliction? What are the signs?

MS. BAKER: I'll know the signs when I see them, and I'll let you know if they appear. See you around, Ralph.

RALPH: *(Mimics her.)* "See you around, Ralph."

(Ralph exits. Blackout.)

TAKE a SEAT

ZZ

SCENE 5

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Ms. Baker is standing at a filing cabinet, looking through folders. Kath, a freshman, rushes on.)

KATH: *(Breathless.)* Do you know where the gym is?

MS. BAKER: Basement.

KATH: Great. Thanks. *(Rushes off. Rushes on.)* Do you know where the basement is?

MS. BAKER: Well, we're on the ground floor right now. Take the stairs down one flight.

KATH: Great. Thanks. *(Rushes off. Rushes on.)* Do you know if there's a sign?

MS. BAKER: You can't miss it. You will hear students yelling, basketballs bouncing, and it will give off the unmistakable odor of "gym-ness."

(Kath rushes off and rushes back on.)

KATH: Thanks!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 6

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Larry is lounging on Ms. Baker's desk chair with his feet up on her desk. Ms. Baker is sitting in one of the chairs opposite her desk.)

LARRY: I hope you know I'm here for you, Ms. Baker. If anything is bothering you, I want to help.

MS. BAKER: *(Smiles.)* Thanks, Larry. That's a real relief. Can I have my seat back?

LARRY: *(Doesn't move.)* Don't be too hasty rejecting my help, Ms. B. I'm guessing that your job is pretty stressful...that you might need to unburden yourself.

MS. BAKER: Yes, well, I don't unburden myself to students.

LARRY: Don't think of me as a student. Think of me as your father confessor.

MS. BAKER: I don't need a father confessor. *(Gestures that he should get up. Begins to cough. Holds up her finger. Gasps.)* Water! I'll be right back!

(Ms. Baker rushes off. Bickerstaff appears in the doorway.)

LARRY: Bickerstaff, come in! Come in and share your troubles with me. I will do everything in my power to help.

BICKERSTAFF: Where's Ms. Baker?

LARRY: I'm substituting.

BICKERSTAFF: I've never heard of a substitute counselor.

LARRY: It's a new thing they've started at school.

BICKERSTAFF: *(Suspicious.)* I don't believe you.

LARRY: I just want to help. Talk at me.

(Bickerstaff sits.)

BICKERSTAFF: This is private, right? Nobody else in school will ever know, right? I can trust you, right?

LARRY: (*Sincerely.*) My lips are sealed. They can draw and quarter me, tar and feather me, pull my fingernails out slowly, one by one. I will never share a word of what you say in this office. I promise you, Bickerstaff, I never will.

BICKERSTAFF: All right. Here it is... (*Dramatically.*) ...I hate my name. What do you think I should do about it?

LARRY: What's wrong with your name?

BICKERSTAFF: What's wrong with "Bickerstaff"?! It's the most ridiculous first name in the history of first names! My mother is an English teacher so she named me after some old writer's pseudonym. I hate it. "Bickerstaff" is just a straight-out stupid, idiotic, absurd, awful name.

LARRY: (*Tents his fingers like Ms. Baker.*) Hmm...here's what I think. I think you might be missing the fun of having an unusual name. I once knew a guy named [Maneschewitz]. And he made it work. [*Or insert another name.*]

BICKERSTAFF: What fun? Kids have been teasing me about it since pre-school. (*Sing-songy, mockingly.*) "Bickerstaff, Bickerstaff, with a name like that you gotta laugh."

LARRY: I feel ya. (*Thinks.*) How 'bout this? A fabulous nickname!

BICKERSTAFF: What do you mean?

LARRY: I will start calling you "Bix." (*Tents his fingers.*) I promise you it's a nickname that will catch on all over school. And, eventually, that's what you'll be known as.

BICKERSTAFF: "Bix"?

LARRY: "Bix."

BICKERSTAFF: Ya think?

LARRY: I do think.

BICKERSTAFF: But everyone already knows me as "Bickerstaff."

LARRY: Not for long, they won't. You start signing all your papers and tests and things as "Bix," and tell your teachers to start calling you "Bix," and have T-shirts made up that

say "Bix," and then, mister, you've got a solution to your "Bickerstaff" problem.

BICKERSTAFF: *(Tries out the name.)* "Bix." I like it. It's me.

LARRY: Absolutely.

(Bickerstaff high-fives Larry.)

BICKERSTAFF: Thanks, Larry! I wasn't too optimistic when I first came in here and saw you sitting in Ms. B's chair, but talking to you has restored my faith in peer-to-peer counseling.

LARRY: Happy to be of service. Tell your friends who to go to when they're in need of helpful, sensible advice.

(Bickerstaff exits. Larry smiles to himself. Ms. Baker enters, holding a cup of water.)

MS. BAKER: Nice work, Larry.

LARRY: Thanks, Ms. B.

MS. BAKER: You really think "Bix" will catch on?

LARRY: I really do. And more importantly, so does he. And isn't that what we're all about as supportive, caring counselors?

MS. BAKER: Welcome to the club.

LARRY: Have you reconsidered my offer to listen to *your* troubles?

MS. BAKER: No, Larry, I haven't. Mind getting your feet off my desk?

(Larry removes his feet from her desk. Blackout.)

SCENE 7

(AT RISE: Ms. Baker's office. Ms. Baker is sitting at her desk. Pam enters, carrying a form.)

PAM: Ms. B., can you approve these electives for me?

(Pam hands Ms. Baker the form.)

MS. BAKER: Take a seat, Pam. (Pam sits. Looking at form.)
Let's see...you'd like to take "Conversational Urdu."
Interesting. "Basket Weaving Made Simple." Okay. And,
"The Good, the Bad, and the Awful of Monsieur Barzun,
French Teacher."

PAM: Any problem with those?

MS. BAKER: This school doesn't offer these electives. In fact, I
cannot think of a school anywhere that would. You've
invented these classes, haven't you, Pam?

PAM: Not entirely...

MS. BAKER: I've worked at this school for 15 years. We have
never offered these electives, and we never will.

PAM: Don't you find it disturbing that this school refuses to
offer the kind of electives that students yearn for?

MS. BAKER: Nope.

PAM: Don't you find it remiss that the real list of electives we
can take is so...so...uninspired?

MS. BAKER: Nope.

PAM: Haven't you ever wondered—?

MS. BAKER: Nope.

PAM: I think I can fix your problem.

MS. BAKER: My problem?

PAM: Let's call it *our* problem, then. I have so many clever
ideas for electives that will excite and animate
everyone...students and teachers alike. If you would take a
quick peek at this Excel spread sheet... (Unrolls a long Excel

spreadsheet. Note: For comic effect, the longer the spreadsheet, the better.)

MS. BAKER: My gosh! What do you have there? *(Pam hands Ms. Baker the spreadsheet. From spreadsheet, reads.)* "Now You See Me, Now You Don't. A high-stakes game of hide-and-seek, where students conceal themselves all around the school. If the teacher can't find them all in ten minutes, class is dismissed." *(Looks at Pam.)* Again, never gonna happen.

(Ms. Baker shows Pam the door.)

PAM: You haven't looked at the rest of my ideas!

MS. BAKER: Why don't you leave it with me? I'll look it over...sometime.

PAM: Really?! You will?!

(Ms. Baker nods unenthusiastically. Pam exits. Ms. Baker sits at her desk and peruses the spreadsheet.)

MS. BAKER: Hmm...I might take the basket weaving class...

[END OF FREEVIEW]