

# Audition Advice 101

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# Auditions!

## What is an Audition?

A sample performance by an Actor, Singer, Musician, Dancer, or other performer!

## What happens at an audition?

The performer auditioning performs some sort of piece for the person casting the show.  
Typically in Theatre this is the Director or Casting Director.

## What is performed at an audition?

This is very dependent on the specific show! Often some sort of prepared piece is needed  
like a song or a monologue

## Types of Auditions:

**Musical Theatre Audition:** Typically requires a cut of a song to be sung, usually 16 or 32 bars (30 or 60 seconds). Usually a song from a musical but some require pop songs.

**Play Audition (Monologue):** Typically requires a monologue to be read! A monologue is a solo reading from a play. Typically 60 to 90 seconds

**Play Audition (Sides):** Sides are short segments of text from the play. Can be just one person reading or multiple

**Dance Call:** Typically a part of a Musical Theatre Audition although is seen with some plays. Involves learning a short dance cut and performing it for those casting the show.

**Cold Read:** This is when you read the material for the first time at the audition. No preparation is needed beforehand.

**Improv Audition:** This is quite literally doing improv at an audition! Oftentimes it goes along with another type of audition (reading sides and doing improv, improvising a dance, ex.). Can be the entire audition, in which you show up and do a variety of improv!

# Auditions Tips

- **Pick Material you are comfortable with:** You being comfortable and confident should be the number one priority. It allows you to showcase yourself well, and will help you be less nervous.
- **Be prepared:** Practice your material well. If you are supposed to be memorized, be memorized. Even if you aren't, be close to memorized. Do everything you can before the audition to get ready. It will help you be confident and will show the director that you care.
- **Read the audition announcement carefully:** Often there is information in there that may be different from your last audition. Reading it carefully ensures you will prepare the right stuff, and will not have an unexpected surprise at the audition.
- **Showcase your personality:** Pick material that shows who you are and what you offer to this show.
- **Know the show:** Read the script beforehand. Listen to the music. This will help when you pick audition material and if questions about the show are asked.
- **Show Variety:** Make different choices throughout your monologue, sing a wide range, show multiple emotions. This shows the director that you aren't a one trick pony
- **Embrace the action:** Acting Means do not talk, use your full body when performing. Be in the moment and make physical choices.
- **Arrive on Time to an Audition:** Typical “on time” means 15 minutes early. Arriving late will show you don't prioritize the show and can harm your chances.
- **Dress appropriately:** If you need to dance, wear clothes you can dance with. Follow basic school dress code. Make sure your clothes are clean and relatively nice.
- **Be friendly inside and outside the audition room:** The audition starts before you enter the room. Those checking you in will talk to the director if you are being rude.
- **Don't watch the director:** Making eye contact with the director mid audition is weird and will make them uncomfortable. Don't do it.
- **It's ok to be nervous:** Nerves are normal. The more you audition the less they happen but it's ok to be nervous.

# Audition Misconceptions

- **“I need to pick a song/monologue no one has heard of”:** Although it is a nice addition to have a unique song, don't make it a priority. Pick something you are comfortable with over something no one has heard before.
- **“Picking “edgy” material will make me seem mature”:** NO! Adults do not enjoy this. It makes them uncomfortable and will negatively impact your audition.
- **“I need to pick a song from the show, so they know I can sing it”:** Picking a song from the show when they do not specify it is a bad idea. It shows you haven't read the audition requirements. It will make you seem like you can't follow instructions and make you look like you think you know better than the casting director.
- **“I should bring props or other materials to help enhance an audition”:** If you can not sell your performance with just your own acting, props will not help and will distract.
- **“I can just go in and wing it and be fine”:** Being prepared for an audition shows. It shows the director that you care about this show which directors like. Being unprepared in an audition tells them that's how you will be at rehearsals and during the actual show, which is a negative thing.
- **“Going big will be embarrassing”:** Making big choices will help you stand out and will show the director that you are not afraid to be big on stage. Going big (when it serves the material) can really help an audition
- **“It doesn't matter if I do a longer cut than they ask for”:** Not following directions makes it seem like you didn't care enough to read the audition information or that you think you know better than the director. Audition with the amount they ask for.
- **“If I audition for someone once and don't get cast, they will never cast me in the future”:** Not getting cast once does not mean you won't get cast again. Auditioning again after a no and then coming back shows the director you can take a no well and that you will keep trying. One no is not a no forever, it is often you were just not right for that show at that time

# Improv!

**What is improv?:** Improv is acting without a script or a starting plan. Simply it is acting on the spot, usually with other scene partners and trying to create something that is coherent, followable and that follows your objectives (meeting CROW, using variables, ex.)

**What is crow?:** Crow is an acronym of what you need to remember when improvising.

It stands for:

Character

Relationship

Objective

Where/When

**What does “Yes, and” mean?:** “Yes, and” is a common phrase used in improv and is representative of what you are meant to say to your partner in an improv scene. “Yes” is said because agreement is extremely important in improv, the yes is saying yes to an idea a partner has given. The “and” part means that you are expanding on that idea and contributing an additional idea to the scene that is in agreement and adds to what they said.

**What does Robot, Pirate, Ninja mean?:** These 3 terms are used to describe different types of improvisers. Pirates often are first to initiate scenes, they typically make big choices and draw focus. Robots help support others in the scene, often they play the straight character and help meet the scenes goals. Ninjas swoop in with stealth, making choices without necessarily being highly visible, but when the moment is right they often steal the scene.

**Is the goal of improv to be funny?:** No. Although being funny in an improv scene is a nice addition, supporting those around you, and getting through the scene is more important. Comedy will happen naturally when scene partners work together, not when individuals try to be funny.

**What types of improv are there?:**

**Short Form Improv:** Typically short scenes that don’t go with one another. Can have no rules or can have specific format and requirements.

**Long Form Improv (Harold):** A longer piece of improvised material. Can consist of initial short scenes that then inspire a series of longer scenes, but can also be one long show without initial scenes.

**Improv Within a Written Work:** Happens when a scripted show has moments meant for improvisation. Often this can be with the audience.

# Improv Tips

- **Make those in the scene with you look good:** Supporting those around you is ALWAYS the top goal, if you can set them up to be funny set them up
- **Start first, think later:** Thinking is the death of improv. Go with your first instinct and don't think about it
- **You don't need to always stay in the scene:** Staying in the scene when you aren't needed is harmful. When it is your time to go, go!
- **Listen!:** "Bad actors act when they're speaking. Great actors act when they're listening!" Listening to
- **Raise the Stakes:** Is your character going to lose \$100 if they don't win the game, or are they going to get abducted by aliens? High risk is entertaining and engaging.
- **Don't talk constantly:** Many amateur improv scenes fail when people talk over one another or talk so much that others can't get a word in. Say what you need to to move the scene along and then let others speak.
- **Use your body:** Physicality is good and often funnier than words. Talking gets boring. Make physical choices and be big!

# Resume Basics

**What is a resume?:** A resume is a document created and used by a person to present their previous shows, and training to someone. Typically the director of a show you are auditioning for.

**Do I need a resume?:** Not necessarily. Often children's theatre auditions have a resume as an optional element. However, if you have enough information to fill a resume (even a small one) it is recommended you submit one!

## What should I put on my resume?:

### Required:

- Your Name
- Contact Information/Parents Contact Information
- Previous Shows
- Previous Classes, training, and education (This class is one you can add!)

### Optional:

- Pronouns (it's very common place nowadays and highly recommended!)
- Voice Type
- Height
- Eye/Hair Color
- Voice Training
- Dance Training
- Awards (should be relevant to theater)
- Non Show Performance Experiences (Improv Teams, Choir, specialty performances, ex.)
- Special Skills (Only ones relevant to performing. Keep it brief. Can include improv experience!)

### Don't Include:

- Home Address
- Weight (This is going out of practice. But especially don't include because you are growing children who don't need to worry about their weight)
- Grammatical Errors
- Lies! (Lying is bad. Don't lie on your resume. It will end poorly)

# Lila Thompson

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Voice Type: Soprano

Height: 4'10

Email: [lilathompson@gmail.com](mailto:lilathompson@gmail.com)

Phone Number: 123-456-7890

## Theatre Experience

The Little Mermaid Jr	Ensemble	Alexandria Children's Theatre
Beauty and the Beast	Chip	Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre
Matilda: The Musical	Ensemble	The Little of Alexandria

## Training/Education

Alexandria Children's Theatre Summer Camp- "Broadway Bound", July 2024

Alexandria Children's Theatre Weekend Classes - September-November 2024

## Dance

Ballet, Metropolitan School of the Arts, 2021-2023

Modern, Metropolitan School of the Arts, 2022-Present

## Special Skills

- Violin (2 Years Training)
- Improv Experience
- Bird Noises



# Resume Starter

Name:

Pronouns (She/Her, He/Him, They/Them, ex.):

Contact Info (can also be parents contact info):

Shows I've Done (ACT Summer roles, community theatre, school theatre):

Classes I've Taken (ACT Summer camp, in school theatre classes):

Voice Training (Private lessons, choir, featured solos):

Dance Training (Classes, recitals, featured solos):

Special Skills (Languages spoken other than english, instrument training, accents, improv training, ex.)

# Music Book Basics

**What is a music book?:** A collection of musical theatre songs, that you would feel comfortable singing at an audition.

**When is this used?:** In Musical Theatre auditions it is sometimes required to bring your book with you in case they want you to sing an additional song. It is also just generally good to have to help keep track on the songs you have and make sure you have a wide variety of songs in your back pocket!

**Is this required?:** Probably not. But it is a helpful tool to have a good idea to start working on it if you are interested in auditioning for musicals!

## What should I include in my music book?:

### Required:

- Multiple Musical Theatre songs
- Name of those songs
- Title of the shows they are from
- Sheet music for those songs

### Optional:

- Pop/Disney Songs
- Year the songs were written
- Composer of the songs
- Type of song (Ballad, uptempo)

### Don't Include:

- Songs you don't know
- Songs you don't like to sing

# Music Book Example

## Musical Theatre

Song	Show	Year
Happily Ever After	Once Upon A Mattress	1959
Quiet	Matilda	2010
Good Girl Winnie Foster	Tuck Everlasting	2015

## Pop

Song	Artist	Year
The Best Day	Taylor Swift	2008
Who Says	Selena Gomez	2011
Flowers	Miley Cyrus	2023

## Disney

Song	Movie	Year
Part of Your World	The Little Mermaid	1999
When Will My Life Begin	Tangled	2010

# Musical Theatre

Song	Show

# Pop

Song	Artist

# Disney

Song	Movie

# Song Suggestions

## Musical Theatre Uptempo

- **Naughty-** From “Matilda”
- **I Want It Now!-** From “Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory”
- **Good Girl Winnie Foster-** From “Tuck Everlasting”
- **Born to Entertain-** From “Ruthless”
- **I Always Knew-** From “Annie”
- **If Only You Would Listen-** From “School of Rock”
- **What It Means to Be a Friend-** From “13: The Musical”
- **I Speak Six Languages-** From “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”
- **I Know it's Today-** From “Shrek the Musical”
- **Morning Person-** From “Shrek the Musical”
- **I’m Not a Loser-** From “SpongeBob SquarePants The Musical”
- **Shy-** From “Once Upon a Mattress”
- **Happily Ever After-** From “Once Upon a Mattress”
- **Pulled-** From “The Addams Family”

## Musical Theatre Ballads

- **Maybe-** From “Annie”
- **Home-** From “Wonderland”
- **Quiet-** From “Matilda”
- **Sing Your Own Song-** From “Dear Edwina”
- **Six Hours as a Princess-** From “Children’s Letters to God”
- **The Girl I Mean to Be-** From “The Secret Garden”
- **Writing Down the Story of My Life-** From “Junie B. Jones”
- **Good Kid-** From “The Lighting Thief The Percy Jackson Musical”
- **My Grand Plan-** From “The Lighting Thief The Percy Jackson Musical”
- **Happiness-** From “You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown”

## Disney Songs

- **The Wish-** From “Wish”
- **Part of Your World-** From “The Little Mermaid”
- **Home-** From “Beauty and the Beast”
- **How Far I’ll Go-** From “Moana”
- **Just Can’t Wait to Be King-** From “The Lion King”
- **Proud of Your Boy-** From “Aladdin”
- **When Will My Life Begin-** From “Tangled”
- **Go The Distance-** From “Hercules”
- **Touch the Sky-** From “Brave”
- **In Summer-** From “Frozen”

# Monologue Suggestions

## Comedic Monologues

- **“Holka Polka” By D.M. Larson:** The wolf tries to explain how he has acquired a bad reputation that he doesn't think he deserves.
- **“A Very Bad Girl Scout” By John P. McEneny:** Mandy suddenly admits to a crime of eating 150 boxes of Girl Scout cookies; she tries to get her boyfriend, Burton, to help her cover up the evidence.
- **“The Other Side” By Paige U:** Barbie's younger sister reveals the truth about playing second fiddle to her famous sibling
- **“Grow Up” By Isaac T:** A kid gets called childish by their parents. But is that really true?
- **“Locked in the Library” By Natalie R:** An enthusiastic reader gets locked in the library at night. Is it scary?
- **“Horror Movies Are Stupid” By: Kylie Frankle:** A rant about all the problems the speaker find with horror movies
- **“Babysitting Nightmare” By Naomi Hill:** A teenager explains their babysitting troubles.
- **“Adults and Their Sanity” By Durga Kalantre:** Do you ever question why adults say the things they do?
- **“Unlikely Art Thief” By Max Edwards:** A kid denies stealing a famous painting.
- **“Too Many Ducks” By Bryce Fox:** Too many ducks can be troublesome.
- **“Green Beans” By Thureaux Natupani-Rohrman:** A young Native boy describes why he used to hate green beans but likes them now.
- **“Pizza Problems” By Artemide Rota:** A person calls to complain about their pizza delivery.
- **“Roller Coaster of Emotions” By Elizabeth Ramirez:** An overprotective parent complains about the roller coaster at an amusement park.
- **“I’m Not Coming Out of This Tree” By Michelle G:** A tree is a good place to go when you are in trouble

## Dramatic Monologues

- **“A Wrinkle in Time” By Madeleine L'Engle:** Calvin talks about the joy his friendship has brought him
- **“Peter and the Starchater” By Dave Barry Ridley Pearson:** Molly doesn't like childish behavior and discuss the adult she will be
- **“Brighton Beach Memoirs” By Neil Simon:** Nora is often resentful of her younger sister and angry at her father for dying.
- **“Half Magic” By Edward Eager:** Jane criticizes her siblings for thinking Hugo could ever replace their father, who passed away when they were young.
- **“The Last Mistake” By Lizzy-Jane R:** Aaliyah is a light fairy who was adopted by a group of flower fairies. She doesn't fit in and is feeling like a failure
- **“All Because of an A-” By Isaac T:** Description: A girl is excited to share her most recent test score with her mom and gets an unexpected response.
- **“Does School Care About Me” By RyLeigh F:** A student looks for help when they are feeling upset.
- **“The Girl in the Corner” By Nora Temperly:** Life can look different for people after the school bell rings.
- **“First Day of 6th Grade” By Naomi Hill:** A girl worries about being “enough” as she starts school.

**“Holka Polka” By D.M. Larson**

WOLF: Man, you accidentally knock down some pig's house with a sneeze and they start telling stories about you. And now there's this little girl and her red hood. Who knows what they'll say about this one. I have self-a-team issues too. Everyone is always going around saying "what a big nose you have" and "what big teeth you have." It hurts. I just want to go away some place where I won't bother anyone. They're always promising happy endings but where's my happy ending? All that happily ever after seems to be reserved for princesses and cute little animals. Especially bunnies. Why are rabbits always getting happy endings? They're rodents, I tell you. Rodents!

**“The Very Bad Girl Scouts” By John P. McEneny**

MANDY: I'm so ashamed. Burton, close the door. (He closes the door.) Good. Please dim the lights. (He dims the lights.) Don't think I'm a bad person but I ate them all. You have to help me hide the wrappers. My mother is going to be home from Bingo any minute and we need to hide the evidence. I ate them all, Burton. I'm a terrible person. I ate the Thin Mints, the Do-si-dos, the Trefoils, the Tagalongs, and even the Carmel Delites. And I don't even like the Carmel Delights. No one does I'm never going to get that cookie connection badge now. I've let down everyone. Everyone. Mad Dog, Toastito, Rashida, Miss Lick, my grandmother, the whole troop. My mother is going to kill me. I mean really kill this time. She's got a temper, especially after Bingo. Once when I lost my retainer, she had to be restrained and tranquilized. Not really. But I had to slip some Benedryl in her Snapple just to get her to calm down. Stop laughing. I'm serious. I think I may have eaten a thousand dollars of crap this evening. Maybe we could go to the A&P and buy a bunch of fake cookies and stuff them back into the boxes. No one will know the difference. We'll sell them to your Aunt Dotty. She's blind and she's always liked me. It's such a rip off anyway, 15 cookies in a box for four bucks! Obscene! That's almost 24 cents a cookie, Burton. Do you think she has a thousand dollars? She'll never know the difference. Burton, I can't kiss you right now. I'm feeling a little nauseous. It's not you. It's the thin mints.

**“The Other Side” By Paige U.**

Stop looking at me like you don't know who I am...I'm the girl whose arms won't bend any further than this... what... you still don't recognize me? Maybe you know my sister. She's tall, blonde, and has skin as smooth as plastic. *(beat)* My older sister Barbie has already done everything. She's been an astronaut, teacher, CEO, surgeon, reporter, coach, chef, pilot, Olympic medalist, dog walker, and even President of the United States. How do I compete with that? I might just have to be a professional rollerblader or lifeguard – like my sister's boyfriend- Ken. *(beat)* Everyone thinks Barbie and I are so much alike, but *(whisper)* I've never admitted this to anyone... I HATE the color pink. I know it's almost as shocking as my nail polish color. Maybe it has something to do with the big pink box I was locked up in for months. That box was sooo claustrophobic I could barely breathe. I thought I was never going to get out of there. I

don't even sound like Barbie, (*Valley-girl voice*) "Hi, I'm Barbie. Like welcome to my Dream House". (*wink- laugh*) Phewww. (*beat*) Yes, I'm Anastacia Roberts... better known as Stacie... It's nice to meet you.

### **"The Last Mistake" By Lizzy- Jane R.**

I messed up again. Seems to be all I do lately. Mess up. I know I messed up because Iris gave me that look. The look that said that she wished I had never existed. Today, I made the biggest mistake of my life. Even bigger than when I accidentally burned the pie. Bigger than when I forgot to close the door, and the worker mouse, Chestnut, escaped. I'm not going to get into how much cheese it took to get him back inside again. Bigger than when I got distracted and forgot to harvest the carrots for dinner, and the cook, Aspen, had nothing to work with. This was bigger than that. Orchid asked me to hold up a rock while she pulled something out from underneath it. I pulled up the rock and held it there, but then a hummingbird zipped past, and I forgot Orchid was underneath the rock, and it dropped it right on her. I didn't even realize what I had done until I heard her screaming. All the other fairies came to help. Luckily, she only broke her ankle. My mistakes are annoying, but they've never hurt anybody before. Lilly told me that I have to keep going. But how am I supposed to keep going if the only thing I feel like doing is giving up? Especially when I hear the others talking about me behind my back. Iris said that I wasn't even a real nature fairy and that I didn't belong here. I know that I wasn't born into this breed of fairies, and I'm not like everyone else. I don't have the dirt-brown hair or the dirt-brown eyes. My hair is pale, and my eyes are blue. I'm a light fairy, and I don't belong among the nature fairies. That's all I hear lately. Alliyah messed up. Alliyah made a mistake. Alliyah doesn't belong here. Alliyah's a failure! I think it's time for me to go. I'll pack a few things and leave tomorrow night. No one wants me here, anyway. Maybe I'll fit in somewhere else. Maybe I'll find another light fairy. And maybe I'll finally find someone who loves me.

### **"Grow Up" By Isaac T.**

You'll never believe it, but my parents called me childish today. ME! Childish! The nerve of some people! I mean, I'd get it if I acted like my younger siblings, throwing tantrums over practically everything, yet nothing at the same time. But really, come on. I've never felt so insulted in my twelve years of life! I honestly have no idea what encouraged such name-calling, but it's totally unacceptable! If I had the power to do so, I'd throw those two parents of mine into the rubber room because something's seriously got to be messed up in those brains of theirs to think that I'm the childish one. In fact, I'm the most mature person in my family! It's the two of them who are the childish ones! Like, come on, you don't see me over there talking in goofy voices and pinching the baby. And I sure as heck don't go through the trouble of doing silly things to see if I can make the kid smile. What for? To see his gummy mouth? If I want to see gums, I can go to the senior center! Those people are always smiling at you without their dentures in. And if that stuff wasn't enough, you also got everybody over there wanting to feed that diaper-wearin'-goofball with a spoon they call "The Choo-choo." I don't know about you, but I don't find any joy in naming my eating



utensils. Oh, and let's not forget the "Tea Parties" they go to with my sister and her dolls. Not only do they sit there with a bunch of plastic-headed, button-eyed dolls, but there's not even real tea at these tea parties! What's up with that?! Yet there's Dad over there pretending he needs a refill! A refill of what? Air?! You know, as time goes on, I'm slowly starting to realize that even though my parents look old – at thirty-six years of age, they're practically antiques! They're actually just a pair of little kids in disguise. And despite what they say, it's really those two who need to grow up!

### **"Locked in the Library" By Natalie R.**

*(Sitting in a secret spot in the library, reading a book with expression)* "I saw blood spilling onto my clothes, soaking my shirt where Dracula had bitten me. Everything folded into darkness as the shadow faded away." *(Closing the book)* That was an intense ending. I love my quiet little reading nook here in the library. It's the perfect place to escape my loud and obnoxious family. Right here behind the bookcase in the fiction section, because...fiction rules! Well, it's getting late, I suppose I should head home. *(Crawling out from the bookcase)* Looks like the coast is clear. *(Looking around)* Hmmm, the library is darker than usual. Hello? Is anyone here? *(Realizing the library is closed)* Uh oh. I really need to get out of here. Oh no, the door is locked! Hello! Anyone? Maybe a janitor is here? *(Turns and stumbles over a book)* "The Curse of the Singing Ghost." Oh! I should check this out next time. *(Reading from the book)* "I look over and see a white shape drifting towards me." *(Looking up and letting their imagination get the best of them.)* Ahhhh! I see a white shape drifting towards me!!! This is a lot scarier than books make it out to be. Get away from me! There's nowhere left to run! These are my final moments. I will go out like a warrior, blazing as the only light in this dark, dark, world. I bravely spring toward the cursed ghost and am confronted by unchecked books on a metal cart. Great! The ghost is just a sheet and there's nothing to be afraid of. You know, the library at night is not that different than it is during the day, just darker. I can wait this out until the morning. *(Sees a spider)* Ahhhh! A spider. . . let me out!!!

### **"Horror Movies Are Stupid" By**

People in horror movies are so stupid. Horror movies are so stupid! Like, I'd run away if I saw the lights start to flicker. Meanwhile, those side characters are just casually playing with the POSSESSED doll! And for some reason, the main characters are always immortal or something! They could be thrown off of a cliff and survive with just a scratch! And the plots are so confusing! Picture the movie, The Threat. It's about a girl who went missing as a baby, and came back as the famous murderer, "The Threat". First of all, that name sucks, right? Right. Second of all, why do they always say, "Hello? Is someone there?" GET THE HECK OUT OF THAT HOUSE AND CALL 911!!! YOU'RE BASICALLY ASKING THEM TO FIND YOU!!! DON'T RUN UPSTAIRS! RUN OUT THE DOOR! IT'S RIGHT THERE!!! We're on the same page, right? Right??? Okay. Case closed.

### **“Babysitting Nightmare” By Naomi Hill**

“Do you babysit?” you ask. “Is it fun?” you ask. No. No, it is not. It seems fun in the beginning. Until you experience the terrible twos. Everyone says, “Oh, it can’t be that hard.” Sure. Until you have to do it yourself. Who knew that two-year-olds knew so many words? And who knew that much poo could fit in something so tiny? Yes, they’re cute at first. But it’s all a big con! They put on a smile to trick you into watching them. And then they charm you with their cute little personalities. But I swear kids are another species. They can scream for two minutes straight, without taking a breath. And when it’s time to say goodbye, you try to contain your excitement. But it’s hard because the kids cling on to you like snotty little sloths. They refuse to let go, and in that moment, it feels like an endless raincloud is hanging over you. Drenching you with tears. Then finally, after what feels like an hour, they let go. And you want to scream at the top of your lungs, “I’m free!” But we both know that we can’t do that.

### **“Adults and Their Debatable Sanity” By Durga Kalantre**

I think adults are reliable and trustworthy, most of the time. I hope. They look out for me and care about my interests and needs, even if they may be sucking me into the vortex of expectations. What I don’t like about grownups is that sometimes, they act as if they know everything. They say, “Don’t talk back!” But they also say, “Why are you being so quiet?” It’s kinda confusing. Like, do you want me to shut my mouth or open it? Be CLEAR, please. I can never tell when they’re being sarcastic so when they say something like, “You think this is funny, do ya?!” I want to say “No! I don’t think this is funny. You are screaming your head off; why would that be funny to me?” And another thing: when grownups do something outrageous they don’t seem to realize that children are going to question them. It’s natural: imagine someone starts acting like a beaver and commands you to do beaver stuff with them, but they don’t tell you why. They just give you the “I’m-older-than-you-so-you-better-listen-to-me” look. It’s confusing! But honestly, I suppose it’s all just to make me a better person. UNLESS THEY WORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND ARE BENT ON TAKING OVER THE WORLD AND TURNING CHILDREN INTO CYBORGS. Probably not. If not, I’ll go with the first explanation.

### **“Unlikely Art Thief” By Max Edwards**

Trust me! I don’t even like art. Ask anyone, I hate going to museums. All you do is walk around and look at a bunch of old stuff. I’m more of a sports person if you know what I mean. There is no way I would have stolen that painting. I mean, what would I do with it? Hang it in my bedroom? Give it to my mom as a birthday gift? And how would I have smuggled it out of the museum? Under my coat? In my backpack? Come on guys. I know you are top-notch detectives and all, but why would a kid like me go to the museum and steal a priceless Picasso? (*Beat*) How did I know it was a Picasso? Um...well...I guess I heard you talk

about it. (Beat) No? Okay...well...um...maybe I just guessed right? (Beat) Would you believe me if I said the ghost of Picasso told me to do it?

### **“Too Many Ducks” By Bryce Fox**

What happens when you have too many ducks? I'll tell you what happens. You see, I love ducks. I have 3,217 of them. But these ducks can get out of control. They pretty much run my house, WHICH I PAY RENT FOR! They've also caused a few disturbances with my neighbors, the poor mailman, and my best friend's cat. The neighbors constantly talk my ear off about the ducks! “I find their droppings in my yard!” Or, “They're too noisy at night!” I GET IT, BUT I CAN'T STOP THEM SUSAN! And then there's the mailman. He's too afraid to come to my house, and my neighbors have a pit bull! I have to go all the way down to the end of the street to get my mail, and even then I get an earful from him! It's so annoying. I wish I could do something about it, but these ducks are in charge now. I suppose I could pay for my friend's vet bill. Yeah, one of the ducks got territorial and took a chunk out of the cat's tail. It was gruesome to see. I haven't heard much from him since then, but that's to be expected. Sometimes, I just want to run away from home because these ducks have become more than an issue. Or, maybe they need to go. I don't know anymore. But one thing hasn't changed, I still love ducks.

### **“Green Beans” By Thureaux Natupani-Rohrman:**

When I was little I didn't like green beans. When my mom gave them to me I would spit them in the toilet. No one asked me why I didn't like them, but the truth is that I thought they were slimy, like snails. The French people like snails for dinner, but not me. I'm not French. My mom says that I'm Navajo. I'm native and I should eat green beans. But maybe I didn't like them because they came from a can. Since I started living at my grandma's – she has a garden and she's out there planting and watering every day. She brings in fresh green beans and one day she made me try them raw, then cooked. “Just try them,” she said. “Okay, okay.” So I tried them. (*Act out trying it*) And you know what? Green beans are pretty good! Now I eat them for dinner every night with a bit of Lawry's salt. Have you ever had Lawry's salt? You should try it. It makes everything taste good.

### **“Pizza Problems” By Artemide Rota**

Hello? (*pause*) Yes, I called because I want a complete refund on my pizza order. (*pause*) Ok, so the problem is that I ordered a pepperoni pizza with extra cheese and extra pepperoni, but there are no toppings on the pizza. Just plain! I paid 6€ for this, and all I get is white and mushy, circle-shaped pizza dough? (*pause*) What? I have to flip the pizza? Why on earth would I have to do that?! (*pause*) So you're telling me that if I flip it I will have all the toppings I asked for? Is this some kind of joke? The toppings won't appear magically as soon as I flip the pizza! (*pause*) Ok, ok, I'll try it, even if this makes no sense.

*(flips pizza and all the toppings are there)* Oh, would you look at that, it actually worked! But this is still your fault because it was delivered to me flipped. Can you at least tell me who delivered this pizza because they should be fired instantly for giving it to me all lopsided? *(pause)* “NO”? Oh, alright then, I see how it is here. You just lost a customer, and that’s on you!

### **“Roller Coaster of Emotions” By Elizabeth Ramirez**

Excuse me, sir? I just want to say something about your so-called rides. They’re supposed to be fun, for the whole family. Let me ask, what is your deranged, complicated, vision of fun?! Those rides are certainly not for anyone! And as the parent of four lovely children, this cannot go unspoken! We just went on the “Hell Whirl” upon the suggestion of my son, Dylan. You said it was for the entire family! What kind of theme is that?! Despite my reluctance, we went on it, because I didn’t pay 140 dollars for nothing. The ride lived up to its title. It was one big thrill machine, far too extreme for kids, or anyone for that matter! Seriously, only people who do bad things deserve to go on that ride! That was not a rollercoaster of fun like it was presented, it was a rollercoaster of emotions! I will never come back to this, to this...land of frights that you call an amusement park! Farewell to you, sir! This will be the last time you’ll see my face around here.

### **“I’m Not Coming Out of This Tree” By Michelle G**

I am not coming out of this tree. I’m gonna live here forever. Nobody understands me. Nobody listens. I get in trouble for everything, even if it’s not my fault. I wasn’t the only one who made a mess in the kitchen, but I’m the one who had to clean it up. I didn’t mean to break the window when we were playing baseball, but I still got in trouble. And I didn’t finish my homework because I don’t like homework! So yeah, I am just going to live up here for the rest of my life. You can just send my meals up in a bucket tied to a rope. And if you wouldn’t mind, I’d appreciate a blanket. And a pillow. And my toothbrush. And a flashlight. And my stuffed animals. And...ugh! This is too complicated. I’m coming down.

### **“A Wrinkle in Time” By Madeleine L'Engle; adapted by Morgan Gould**

CALVIN: Jeez, are there any more morons like you and Charles around? If so, I should meet them! I know I just met you but for the first time in my life I feel like I’m not alone anymore! Do you realize what that means to me? There hasn’t been anybody, anybody in the WORLD I could talk to! Sure I can function on the same level as everybody else, I can hold myself down, but it isn’t me. How did all this happen? Isn’t it wonderful? I don’t understand it but I feel as though I were just being born!

**“Peter and the Starchater” By Dave Barry Ridley Pearson**

You stop that right now. I won't answer any such question. You're leaning toward the sentimental and that's all well and good for a boy, but the fact is we girls can't afford to be sentimental. We must instead be strong. And when I marry, I shall make it very clear to this person - that sentimentality is not on the calendar. He will have to lump it or leave it. And if he should leave, I'll stay a spinster and pin my hair back and volunteer weekends at the hospital. And I will love words for their own sake, like "hyacinth" and "Piccadilly" and "onyx." And I'll have a good old dog, and think what I like, and be a part of a different sort of family, with friends, you know? - who understands that things are only worth what you're willing to give up for them.

**“Brighton Beach Memoirs” By Neil Simon**

NORA: I can't believe it. You mean it's alright for you to leave us but it wasn't alright for me to leave you? It was my future. Why couldn't I have something to say about it? I need to be independent. So I have to give up the one chance I may never get again, is that it? I'm the one who has to pay for what you couldn't do with your own life. I'm not judging you. I can't even talk to you. I don't exist to you. I have tried so hard to get close to you, but there was never any room. Whatever you had to give went to Daddy, and when he died, whatever was left you gave to Laurie....I have been jealous my whole life of Laurie because she was lucky enough to be born sick. I could never turn a light on in my room at night or read in bed because Laurie always needed her precious sleep. I could never have a friend over on the weekends because Laurie was always resting. I used to pray I'd get some terrible disease or get hit by a car so I'd have a leg all twisted and crippled and then once, maybe just once, I'd get to crawl into bed next to you on a cold rainy night and talk to you and hold you until I fell asleep in your arms..just once..

**“Half Magic” By Edward Eager, adapted by Karissa Elliott**

JANE: Has everyone in this family gone utterly and completely insane? Don't you know why he's so interested in us and nice about things? Haven't you seen the way he and Mother keep looking at each other? Do you want some old stepfather moving in here and changing everything? Do you really think he could ever take Father's place? Him and his old beard!

Don't you know what stepfathers always turn out to be like, once the fatal deed is done? Oh!

It's not use! You don't understand! I wish... (JANE pauses in alarm, remembering the charm.

Then she plunges her hand in her pocket.) Yes, I do! I wish I belonged to some other family! I wish it twice!

**“All Because of an A-“ By Isaac T.**

Mom! Guess what?! I got an A- on my math test! I told you all that studying would pay off!!! *(beat)* I thought you'd be happy for me. Isn't an A- a good grade? *(beat)* But it's still an A, right?*(beat)* Mom, are you serious?! It's my BEST friend's party!!! I've been waiting for this for months on end. I used all of my allowance to buy her a gift and now you won't let me go? *(beat)* It was HALF a point off!!! A 94.5 is BASICALLY a 95! Why can't I go? I studied for two hours straight every day for three days without you even telling me to! *(beat)* Well, no...but why? *(beat)* Mom, please- I tried my best. *(beat)* Fine. I'll call her

and tell her that I can't go because I have a MOTHER who doesn't let me do ANYTHING. *(beat)* Mom, please. She's my only friend. I don't want to lose her.

**“Does School Care About Me?” By RyLeigh F.**

I get sent home with a paper trail of homework each day, but when I start falling asleep in class I get told to wake up and start going to bed earlier. And when I act off or upset or unproductive, I get sent to the principal who doesn't care about the reason why. The first few weeks after my parents got divorced, school was tough, and I was really upset. I was in and out of detention because of it. The guidance counselor took weeks to talk to me, but it didn't help. Nobody at school seems to care about my mental health. Do they want me to suffer? I am trying my hardest, but sometimes I mess up and I feel like I'm being punished for not being enough. Do you ever feel that way?

**“The Girl in the Corner” By Nora Temperly**

Have you ever seen someone sitting alone, doing nothing? Just a blank mind, completely zoned out from everyone else? Or, have you seen someone so self-absorbed that the only thing they care about is themselves? I want you to think about the parallels between the boy in the front of the class and the girl in the corner. I may not be much for storytelling, but I know this one very well. The boy in the front of the class would always laugh and joke with his friends, ignoring how much he bothered others around him. The girl in the corner would stay silent, never saying a word, wishing she was somewhere quiet. But once you take away the friends, the loud noise and laughter, and go home, what happens to them? The boy in the front of the class is all alone now. He doesn't laugh or joke or mess around because he doesn't have friends there to build him up. The girl in the corner? She changes for the better. When she gets to be alone, she has freedom. She makes herself laugh. She builds herself up. She doesn't need the noise. She can mess around and not worry about the popular life the boy has. I used to know them both. I knew the boy in the front of the class and the girl in the corner. I used to be them. I used to be the class clown! But I also knew the sad girl in the corner, with no friends to boost her up until she got home and got to be herself. I know what it's like to be scared of the eyes, but I also know what it's like to need the eyes on you to please everyone. So don't judge the boy in the front of the class. And don't forget the girl in the corner. You never know what's going on with them after the bell rings.

**“First Day of 6th Grade” By**

Tomorrow is the first day of 6th grade. I'm feeling really nervous. What if my hair isn't perfect? What if my clothes aren't cool enough? What if people make fun of me? I guess when it comes down to it, I'm scared that I won't make any friends and that I'll be all alone. I've got a million butterflies in my stomach. *(pause)* It didn't used to be this way. I never used to feel like I wasn't good enough. I used to be confident in everything I did. How do I get that back? What am I good at? *(long pause)* I'm good at math. I'm good at soccer. I'm good at reading. I'm good at biking and crocheting. You know what? I'm really good at a lot of things. And that's good enough. That's more than enough. I am enough.