

WHAT IS YOUR NAME???

By Jane Lindstrom

CHARACTERS

MR. BRENDAN	The cool camp counselor. Exhausted and underpaid college student. Sequin fanny pack. Colorful sunglasses. A very bright, 80s workout vibe.
JONNY	A high strung little dude. Not the most socially adept, has a puppet friend.
ROBBIE	Will go through an emo phase in high school, but for now is just stuck with the inexplicable existential dread a kid doesn't know what to do with. Loves his slippers.
BIANCA	A truly terrifying child. But she's little, and adorable, and wears a lot of pink. Always equipped with her headlamp and pinwheel.
MISHLA	Jonny's puppet. Green and fuzzy and homemade. A very high pitched voice.

SETTING

A summer camp.

TIME

Summertiiiiiiime and the living is easy. But not for these kiddos! Ha.

NOTES

These kids may seem a bit more intelligent than the average kid. Like maybe they have a stronger grasp on articulating themselves than most young ones. But they're still kids. And they should act like it.

OH AND!! The ice cream freeze is a fairly simple dance that can be adapted and personalized as needed. (Originated by Hannah Montana, which, if you're unfamiliar with, you're uncultured. Sorry, I don't make the rules.)

(We are in a summer camp cabin. Or maybe we are outside in the woods, or on a porch. But we are at SUMMER CAMP. Robbie, Jonny, and Bianca are waiting for their counselor.)

ROBBIE

So property law is like a foundational aspect of our country and--

(Mr. Brendan bursts in, ready to rumble.)

MR. BRENDAN

OH-kay! Hello team!

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA

Hi Mr. Brendan.

MR. BRENDAN

We're gonna start this mediation off with a fun and flirty ice-breaker. I know tensions have been a little high, but that doesn't mean we can't have some FUN together, right? Because what are we?

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA & MR.
BRENDAN

A community!

MR. BRENDAN

What are we here for?

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA & MR.
BRENDAN

To get along!

MR. BRENDAN

And what's the one thing we can control?

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA & MR.
BRENDAN

Our attitudes!

MR. BRENDAN

Ah-mazing. So. We are all familiar with the ice cream freeze?

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA (with varying
levels of enthusiasm)

Yes.

MR. BRENDAN

Alright!!! You know it's my favorite! All together!

JONNY, ROBBIE, BIANCA & MR.
BRENDAN (singing & dancing the ice
cream freeze)

Do the ice cream freeze, strike your pose, then you do the milkshake, shake it
shake it down low, do the snow cone slide left to right, put your hands in the air
and we can party all night. Do the ice cream freeze, strike your pose, then you do
the milkshake, shake it shake it down low, do the snow cone slide left to right, put
your hands in the air and we can party all night.

MR. BRENDAN

Woooooo!!!! AH-MAZING!! Do we feel good? Do we feel warm? Are we ready to
bang this problem-solving out? Are we ready to do this oh so efficiently so we can
join the rest of camp at the weekly campfire? YES! WE! ARRREEE!!! Okay!
Let's all sit down in a nice little circle of trust.

(They sit, in a nice little circle of trust.)

MR. BRENDAN

Today we will be going through the VOMP cycle of conflict resolution, okay?
Vent-Ownership-EMpathy-Plan. So, first, we will each have a turn venting out our
feelings and we will NOT interrupt each other during their turn. Good? Yes?
Jonny, you can start us off.

JONNY

Um. Okay. So. Bianca has been invading our privacy, disrespecting our personal
property, and violating basic boundaries.

BIANCA

That's not even true.

MR. BRENDAN

Let's not interrupt, Bianca. Continue, Jonny.

JONNY

Bianca has been standing outside our cabin at night, staring in through our
window, and then acting like she can't hear us when we confront her about it. I
have found her under Robbie's bed on multiple occasions, she pantses me all the
time, and then also... She's like, so mean to me, like she keeps trying to steal
Mishla and flush her down the TOILET. AndAndAndAndAnd she like
breathes on me a lot! Which! I don't like!!

MR. BRENDAN

Okay, great, thank you, Jonny. Robbie?

ROBBIE

I'm pissed because she stole my slippers. And, well. That makes me upset.
Because... it's upsetting.

BIANCA

You can't prove that.

ROBBIE

Ok so, you're literally wearing them right now.

BIANCA

Can't prove that either.

ROBBIE

Ummmmmm--

MR. BRENDAN

Mhmm! Mhmm! Okay! Agree to disagree. Moving right along. And now, Bianca, tell us how you're feeling.

BIANCA

I'm feeling like I want to leave.

MR. BRENDAN

Okay, well, we can all leave and get to that really cool, super fun party, once we come to some sort of conclusion about how we'll be moving forward. But in order to do that, we will need you to take your turn venting.

(Bianca smiles at Mr. Brendan.)

MR. BRENDAN

Bianca?

(Bianca maintains eye contact with Mr. Brendan and blows on her pinwheel.)

MR. BRENDAN

Bianca, I'm gonna need you to cooperate here hun--

(Mr. Brendan reaches out to touch Bianca's shoulder and in seconds she's straddling him and has him pinned to the ground.)

BIANCA

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?????????

MR. BRENDAN

Excuse me?

BIANCA (turning on her headlamp)

WHAT!! IS!! YOUR!! NAME!!

MR. BRENDAN

Brendan George?!

(Bianca gets off him, turns off her headlamp, and retreats.)

JONNY

Ex-squeeze me, what was that?!

BIANCA

Self-defense.

(The lights shift and Mr. Brendan addresses the audience:)

MR. BRENDAN

I love my job, I really do. But lately? I've been at the end of my fucking rope. This week alone, I've dealt with some ridiculous shit. On Tuesday, I had the following conversation with a child: "Mr. Brendan, I have a hole in my ear!" To which I said, "We all have holes in our ears!" to which she then said, "Julia pierced my ear with a safety pin! It's a BLOODY HOLE!" Then yesterday? I spent a solid 45 minutes trying to wrangle a girl who was running around in the rain wearing only a bathing suit and a cowboy hat screaming the lyrics to a Frozen song. I have been woken up between the hours of 2 and 4 AM almost every night to kill a spider. And one time it was already dead. I'm tired, okay? And the sooner I get these kids down to the campfire, the sooner I can go on my night off. And I NEED some me-time. I do not need to be tackled by a child. So just, don't judge me, please? For making this quick and dirty. Don't judge me on this.

(The lights shift back, and he returns to camp-counselor-mode.)

MR. BRENDAN

OH-kay, well, if Bianca does not want to vent it out, that is... a-okay! and we can just move right along to the Ownership step. So we all need to go around and own up to how we have been contributing to the conflict.

JONNY

Um... Well. I guess I can own up to losing my patience with Bianca when she's been terrorizing us all night. And... I guess for wearing pants? If I didn't wear pants, she wouldn't be able to pants me. So, I guess I'm sorry... For that.

(Lights shift again, and now it's Jonny who breaks and addresses the audience:)

JONNY

For the record, I am not sorry for wearing pants. I am, generally, in favor of public decency.

(And we're back.)

ROBBIE

I'm not really sure what I need to own up to... She stole my personal property. That's kinda the bottom line here. So...

(Lights shift. Robbie looks to us:)

ROBBIE

I may be 10 years old, but I don't fuck around, okay?

(And we're back.)

MR. BRENDAN

Okay, so that's... kind of... Good enough! Now, Bianca, it's your turn. Really give it your best shot here.

(Bianca blows on her pinwheel. She looks at Mr. Brendan. She looks at Robbie. And then, lights shift and she steps forward:)

BIANCA

Robbie makes me feel itchy inside. I don't really know how to handle it. But I want to be with him all the time and I don't know how. I read somewhere that if you just walk in someone else's shoes, you can see their experience better, and you can be with them every step of the way. And I just want to be with Robbie. All the time. As for Jonny, well. His terror makes me feel good when Robbie's existence is making me feel bad.

(Lights return to normal. Bianca turns back to Mr. Brennan. And in one breath:)

BIANCA

I own up to stealing the slippers, stalking Robbie, harassing Jonny, pantsing Jonny, threatening Jonny, breathing, etc.

MR. BRENDAN

OH-kay team!! We! Are! Getting somewhere! I think we are ready to begin the empathy phase. Try to empathize and acknowledge how your actions have been making the others in the group feel.

ROBBIE

Okay, but I've truly done nothing to make Bianca feel bad at this point, other than calling her out, just now, for literal theft.

JONNY

I can't empathize with my tormenter. That's not really how trauma works.

MR. BRENDAN

Okay, but let's just TRY / our best here--

BIANCA

No. In my opinion, this mediation is unnecessary.

JONNY

Wow. How can one person have so many wrong opinions?

BIANCA

I'm done speaking to you.

(She turns her headlamp to strobe mode and blows on her pinwheel.)

JONNY

Fine. If you won't talk to me, talk to Mishla.

(Jonny begins to speak through his puppet, Mishla.)

MISHLA

I think we all need to be working harder to HEAR each other and LISTEN to what we are all SAYING.

MR. BRENDAN

Never thought I'd say this, but let's all listen to the puppet!

MISHLA

Bianca, can you please just tell us all how we make you feel? It might actually help.

BIANCA

Mishla, you look like a toilet brush so you make me feel like I'm going to vomit.

MISHLA

Okay ouch.

BIANCA

Jonny makes me feel worried for our generation's future.

JONNY

That's rude. See this is the kind of TORMENT I am dealing with--

BIANCA

Still not talking to Jonny. Mr. Brendan, you make me feel like I'm living in a Disney world nightmare.

MR. BRENDAN

Unfortunately not a nightmare, Bianca. That's my reality.

BIANCA

And Robbie, you make me feel like... Um.

ROBBIE

This'll be good.

BIANCA

Like you're...

ROBBIE

Yep, go ahead.

BIANCA

Like I'm. Dying. Or something.

ROBBIE

Okay, well I feel like I'm dying looking at your feet in my slippers, so.

(Bianca retreats with her pinwheel.)

MR. BRENDAN

Pause. Rewind. Reverse it. Aaaaaand let's remix this real quick. I know what's going on here. Bianca. You are in love with Robbie!

(A silence.)

JONNY

That... Seems a bit off-base to be honest.

MR. BRENDAN

No. This is the truth. Robbie makes her feel like she's DYING? It's textbook pre-pubescent romance! Bianca's lashing out at Robbie through thievery is a frustrated expression of her love. And Bianca's torture of Jonny is... Well, I'm not totally sure how that fits in yet, but I'll get there.

ROBBIE

I see where you're coming from here, Mr. Brendan, but I seriously doubt that anything of that sort is at play here--

(Bianca runs to Robbie, grabs him by the shoulders and stares at him.)

ROBBIE

Okay, hello.

(Bianca squeezes her eyes shut and sticks her lips out in the biggest pucker possible.)

ROBBIE

Oh. OH. Oh, I see. So something like that IS at play here. Um. Ok.

(Robbie rotates his face and puts Bianca's lips on his cheek.)

MISHLA

Oh no.

MR. BRENDAN

Oof. He went for the cheek. Brutal.

(Bianca pulls away in despair, sits down alone and focuses on her pinwheel. Maybe she turns the headlamp back onto the strobe setting.)

MR. BRENDAN

Robbie, I think you hurt her feelings.

JONNY

She has been TERRORIZING us! She "kinda hurt" our feelings first!

ROBBIE

She just-- scared me! That's all.

MR. BRENDAN

Hey man. Listen.

(Mr. Brendan takes a knee and invites Robbie to come sit. He puts a hand on Robbie's shoulder, it's a very touching, but a little uncomfortable, paternal moment.)

MR. BRENDAN

We still gotta complete the VOMP. We need a P. We gotta make a Plan.

(Mishla puts a hand on Robbie's other shoulder. It's a... maternal? moment?)

MISHLA

Just rip the band-aid off.

ROBBIE

I don't know what to say!

MR. BRENDAN

Look at me. Look into my eyes. Right now. Just tell her how you feel.

ROBBIE

How I feel... Um, okay.

(He hesitates.)

MISHLA

C'mon Robbie. Just do it.

ROBBIE

Hey uh, Hey Bianca! Can I talk to you for a sec?

(Bianca stands up, walks to Robbie briskly and looks into his eyes, a little too close.)

ROBBIE

Hi. Hey. What's up?

(Bianca turns her headlamp on.)

ROBBIE

Oh, okay, yep. That's bright. Cool. Um, soooo...

BIANCA

I've been thinking about burning these slippers. To erase them from this earth. But MAYBE you can have them back. Like, if you want them or something.

ROBBIE

Wow, that's super generous of you. I really appreciate that. Okay, so... Listen.

BIANCA

I know. You don't like me. It's fine. No one does.

ROBBIE

No, no... I... I LIKE you, you're... sooooo coool! But...

MR. BRENDAN

It's like a car crash. I just can't look away.

(Bianca curls into a ball on the floor.)

MISHLA

Ohp. There she goes. Robbie, I think you broke her.

ROBBIE

No! Bianca wait! I want to talk about this! Oh man. Someone help... Jonny? Mishla? Do something!

JONNY

Uhhh...

(Jonny walks over to Bianca's frozen corpse ball and reaches out his hand and Mishla's hand. She instantly pins him.)

MR. BRENDAN

Ohp, okay, this again.

BIANCA

WHAT IS YOUR NAME!!!!

JONNY

JONATHAN HORTON, I PROMISE!

BIANCA

AND WHAT IS YOUR NAME!!!???

MISHLA

MISHLA!!

ROBBIE

Bianca! Come here, please, now!

(Bianca stands and faces Robbie. Too close, again.)

MR. BRENDAN

Ok, ok, ok. Finish the VOMP. Vomp it out. Make that plan. I believe in you two.

ROBBIE

Bianca. I like you. You're cool. In a scary way. Really... Scary way. And I think it would be easier for me, slash I mean, I know it would be easier for me, to really like you, if you were maybe a little less scary. Like a lot less. So I wasn't always... Scared. Of you.

BIANCA

Oh. Ok.

JONNY

And just generally be a better person, that would be great.

BIANCA

Bite me.

JONNY

See? Bad person.

BIANCA

You have a puppet.

MR. BRENDAN

Robbie, finish strong!

ROBBIE

You're cool, Bianca. And all I really want is my slippers back.

(Bianca nods and sadly slides the slippers off her feet.
Robbie puts them on his feet. Smiles.)

ROBBIE

Thanks.

(Robbie squeezes his eyes shut and leans forward with big
awkward lips.)

BIANCA

Oh!

(She leans forward too and they kiss. There should be like 3
feet between them and honestly their lips should BARELY
touch. It's gotta be really awkward, but you know, sweet.
Maybe Robbie opens his eyes mid-kiss to check to see if
it's still happening.)

JONNY

Okay, I feel like this solves nothing for me.

MR. BRENDAN

YAY!! This solves everything!! Good job guys!!!! Love seems like a solid plan to me!! VOMP: COMPLETE! Now let's get down to that campfire!

(Mr. Brendan has an epic victory move, like a heel click, or something else vaguely impressive.)

JONNY

Cool, so I hate summer camp.

MR. BRENDAN

Let's leave the lovebirds alone for a minute, Jonny.

(Mr. Brendan and Jonny exit for the campfire. Bianca and Robbie end their weird kiss. Robbie takes off one slipper and offers it to Bianca. She takes it. Holds it in her arms. Sniffs it happily. Robbie cautiously puts his arm around her and, wow, would you look at that, she's pinned him. He's immediately yelling his answer:)

ROBBIE

ROBBIE!! MY NAME IS ROBBIE!! ROBERT LEVERETT!

(Bianca releases him.)

BIANCA

Ha! Got you!

ROBBIE

Oh! Haha! Ha... Good one. Oh God...

BIANCA

Oh, right. I won't be scary anymore. Starting now. I'm sorry, Robbie.

ROBBIE

No, actually, Bianca. You're scary. And scary is cool. You're cool-- in a scary way-- and that's cool.

(Pause.)

ROBBIE

So, do you want to sit with me at the campfire?

BIANCA

Okay.

(Blackout, leaving only the light from Bianca's headlamp
on Robbie.)

END OF PLAY