

Rochelle's Dad and The Producers

Bernie and Producers

AMBER

Hester

Bernie

Sheara and Jasmine

Rochelle and Sheara

SIDES:

Rochelle's Dad and The Producers-

The phone rings, ROCHELLE'S DAD grabs it.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. Elaine?

PRODUCERS. Not the last time I checked.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. Oh. Sorry, boss. I thought you were someone else.

PRODUCERS. We need you to come in today.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. Today?

PRODUCERS. We wouldn't ask but it's urgent.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. As in today, today?

PRODUCERS. Is there a problem?

ROCHELLE'S DAD. No.

PRODUCERS. Good. Then I'll see you -

ROCHELLE'S DAD. Actually, yes. My daughter. We were supposed to be spending the day together.

PRODUCERS. We totally understand.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. You do?

PRODUCERS. Absolutely.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. I really appreciate it.

PRODUCERS. It will be no trouble, just bring her with you.

ROCHELLE'S DAD(*disappointed*). Bring her...

PRODUCERS. No need to thank us.

ROCHELLE'S DAD. Right. Yes. Thank you, I'll see you.

Bernie and Producers -

BERNIE Is it me? Right. I'm Bernadette. Or Bernie, if you can tolerate abbreviations. I'm thirteen, I like West End musicals, long walks and

PRODUCERS. I'm going to pause you there. Could you read off the autocue?

BERNIE. Auto-what?

PRODUCERS. Just there. You see that script?

BERNIE looks out to the audience

BERNIE. Yes.

PRODUCERS. Stick to that.

BERNIE. Right?

PRODUCERS. Go ahead.

BERNIE. I'm Bernadette. Also known as The Brain

PRODUCERS. Carry on.

BERNIE. The others better watch out. Cos when it comes to numbers, I'm your one.

AMBER -

~Across the room, AMBER - still wearing her headphones - starts humming to herself along with the music. She unpacks her bag. She pulls out huge packets of biscuits and sweets

SHEARA. You brought snacks, good idea.

~AMBER doesn't answer, engrossed in what she's doing.

You like sweet things, then?

ROCHELLE. I don't think she can hear you?

~SHEARA taps AMBER on the shoulder AMBER takes her headphones off to speak.

AMBER. I didn't do anything!

SHEARA. Oh, sorry I didn't mean to scare you.

AMBER. Don't tell my nan, okay?

SHEARA. Okay?

AMBER. She'll flip her lid if she finds out.

JASMINE. Finds out what?

AMBER. My supply. She said no treats cos I didn't practise my piece last night.

HESTER Of course. Amber..

AMBER Yeah?

HESTER. I thought I recognised you. I couldn't place you without the violin, It's me, Hester.

~Beat

We met before.

~Beat. AMBER looks blank

Backstage. Royal Albert Hall. My aunt curated the evening you were a part of.

JASMINE. Am I missing something?

HESTER. Amber Appleby. As in the Amber Appleby. I saw her play a concerto. Tchaikovsky. My dad and I go to the Proms every year, family tradition.

AMBER. Oh, that.

HESTER. It was a superb evening, wasn't it?

AMBER. I got a light-up stick which Nan said was a waste of money. Then she did a really loud fart on the coach home.

HESTER. What was it like, though?

AMBER. Sort of egg sandwich mixed with perfume.

Hester -

HESTER. A memory. I'm in Year 4. And Dad comes to pick me up from school. He tells me Granny's in hospital. I don't know much about hospital. But I do know my dad. And his face is saying- this is bad news.

That night I made a deal with myself. If I ate all my vegetables, then Granny would feel a bit better. If I did my homework extra fast, then she would be able to sit up in her bed. If I didn't touch the bottom step on the landing then she would be able to walk about again. I did this every day. And a week later, Granny came out of hospital.

Since then I make deals like that all the time, That if I get an 'A' no one will get sick. If I win the hundred metres the ice caps won't melt. Earthquakes, global warming... as long as I don't give up, nothing bad will happen. As long as I don't give up.

Bernie-

BERNIE (to ROCHELLE). Do you know where the word 'prodigy' comes from?

ROCHELLE. What?

BERNIE. The Latin. Prodigium. 'A monster that violates the natural order.'

ROCHELLE (struggling to understand). Okay?

BERNIE. You shouldn't have told them..About my memory.

ROCHELLE. It's nothing to be ashamed of.

BERNIE. No?

ROCHELLE. You're lucky. Some people would do anything to be like you. To have a kid like you.

BERNIE. Now it's like being back at school. People don't like it when things come easier to you. They don't like being around someone who makes them feel stupid. They don't like... me.

Sheara and Jasmine -

SHEARA. Jas, don't you ever get tired?

JASMINE. Told you we should have got to bed earlier.

SHEARA. No, I mean tired of this. Competing.

JASMINE. It's only one day.

SHEARA. It's every minute of every day.

JASMINE. What are you

SHEARA. Why are you better at everything than me?

~Beat

JASMINE. I'm not.

SHEARA. First to walk. First to ride your bike.

JASMINE. You're talking rubbish.

SHEARA. We're meant to be the same.

JASMINE. We are. You just need more confidence. Don't worry so much about other people.

SHEARA. You mean don't make friends.

JASMINE. Friends like Rochelle?

SHEARA. She's nice.

JASMINE. She's obviously clever.

SHEARA So?

JASMINE. So it's a bit suspicious, isn't it? How she just happened to be here at the right moment.

SHEARA. You just think everyone wants to win as badly as you do

JASMINE. They do! Anyone who says different is lying.

Rochelle and Sheara -

ROCHELLE. Hey.

SHEARA. Hey.

ROCHELLE Congratulations.

SHEARA. Oh. Yeah. Thanks.

ROCHELLE. Just came to collect my stuff.

SHEARA Sorry you didn't get to the final

ROCHELLE. It's fine.

SHEARA. I didn't realise you wanted to. I mean, you never seemed bothered.

ROCHELLE. I don't think I realised either.

~Beat

Where's Jasmine?

SHEARA. Bathroom. Even she draws the line at joint toilet breaks.

ROCHELLE. It must be nice. Having someone to share everything with. Like you must never get lonely.

SHEARA You know, my mum's got this picture of us. From when she was pregnant. She said every time they did a scan, me and Jas had our heads pressed up against each other, like we were whispering secrets. Our little hands gripping together tight. I always thought I knew everything about her. But now...

~Beat.

I dunno. I've never been on my own. It's different to never being lonely.