

“aftermath”

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT

By Michael Blevins

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SYNOPSIS: The fact is, teenagers *can* make wise choices about drug and alcohol usage, dieting, sexual promiscuity, and other issues pertaining to respect for one’s body. But what choices are they making? And why are they making them?

Penned by an award-winning playwright, and originally produced by NY’s Group Theatre Too for their Social Awareness Theatre program, “*aftermath*” chronicles the lives of seven young people as they face daily choices about substance abuse, promiscuity, diet, other social issues and the inevitable consequences of the choices they make. Follow Brody and his six friends in this well-crafted story of discovery and respect for your body. Knowledge is power - - arm your students with the power of positive choices. “*aftermath*” shows young people the awesome power in every choice they make.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 MEN, 4 WOMEN)

BRODY (m)..... Teenage male. The All-American boy next-door. Into fitness. *(43 lines)*

J.D. (m)..... Teenage male. Always looking for a good time, the “partier.” *(19 lines)*

DARREN (m) Teenage male. Older than the others, yet immature and unsure of himself. Brody’s best buddy. *(16 lines)*

ROBIN (f)..... Teenage female. Craves attention and spoiled rotten. Darren’s girlfriend. *(14 lines)*

LINDSAY (f)..... Teenage female. The goody-good of the bunch. Strives to do the right thing and not well-liked. (19 lines)

HALLE (f) Teenage female. Honor roll member and straight “A” student. A “pot-head.” (20 lines)

TIFFANY (f)..... Teenage female. Flaunts her attractive physical attributes suggestively. Has a promiscuous reputation. (17 lines)

SETTING

Several “square” boxes of neutral color are in a line from upstage to downstage. They are easily moved and rearranged by the cast throughout the play to suggest different locations and times. Upstage is a small black box containing the props for the play such as drinking cups, a football, vase, etc.

TIME: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow.

*SPECIAL NOTES

For performance of such songs and recordings mentioned in this play as are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain must be substituted.

Throughout the play the characters speak in both past and present tense about the character Brody - - this is intentional by the author.

Dedicated to my parents, Bette Creech Lucas and Ballard Houston Blevins, in addition to anyone who suffers from addictions, low self-esteem and lack of faith.

AT RISE:

MUSIC IN. (The author suggests Pink Floyd’s “Another Brick in the Wall, Part Two.” *See Production Notes.)

LIGHTS come up to reveal **BRODY**, a 17 year-old young man dressed in all black. **HE** is placed among the “squares” and begins performing sit-ups and push-ups on and around the boxes. The **OTHER CHARACTERS** enter from the audience one by one and begin to rearrange the boxes in a new formation. **THEY** are all dressed in black with only one easily removable piece of clothing that is red. Once **THEY** are settled they strike a tableau on and around the square boxes.

BRODY: Body.

New tableau depicting “body” from the actors.

HALLE/LINDSAY: Mind.

New tableau depicting “mind” from the actors.

J.D./DARREN: Voice.

New tableau depicting “voice” from the actors.

ROBIN/TIFFANY: Choice.

New tableau depicting them all standing tall and straight among and on the boxes.

ALL: Power.

The actors once again rearrange the boxes to depict the “squares,” THEIR “hang-out” spot at school. MUSIC fades OUT. THEY sit in a group but address the audience during the following dialogue. BRODY, is opposite, alone, doing pushup and light calisthenics.

HALLE: (*Front.*) I respect my body. So I smoke up every now and then. What's the big deal? It's a recreation not a lifestyle. It's not like I smoke cigarettes.

DARREN: (*Front.*) I have respect for my body. Obviously she did too or she wouldn't have done that to me. She just went down on me. It's not like we had sex or anything.

TIFFANY: (*Front.*) Call it disrespect if you want. But that's not what I'd say. I'd say, I'm a sexually aggressive woman who knows how to enjoy her body. Now that's respect.

LINDSAY: (*Front.*) I take good care of myself. I totally watch what I eat. I'm not about to get fat. So, yeah, I respect my body. Why wouldn't you?

ROBIN: (*Front.*) After years of trying my cousin and her husband finally adopted. So it's not likely anything's gonna happen to me. But I use protection anyway if he's got it handy. It's not like I don't respect my body.

J.D.: (*Front.*) Well, I don't smoke pot. I don't do any drugs. All I do is drink. I've got respect for myself and my body.

BRODY: (*Front.*) Me too. I practically live at the gym and the health food store. I have to if I want to keep my wrestling title. All the working out, the vitamins, the energy drinks; it's really paying off.

HE jogs away from the group and continues speaking directly to the audience. The OTHER TEENAGERS continue to stay quietly in their "scene" opposite. DARREN, TIFFANY, and J.D. have involved themselves in a card game of Blackjack. ROBIN watches the game. LINDSAY sits reading a book and HALLE is stretched out doing homework.

BRODY: You know, I really am lucky. I’m doing well in school, plus, look at all the friends I have. (*Indicating the OTHERS.*) Not that I wasn’t expecting them to be here, especially with this being my big day and all. We know a lot about each other. (*BRODY begins to move about the OTHER TEENAGERS as THEY continue their “scene.”*) Over the years we’ve become a tight group. I guess because we all arrived at high school in the same situation. Freshmen. Excited, scared, hoping to be heard, alone, trying to fit in and find our way while we discovered who we were. If we didn’t want to keep walking the halls in fear, we needed to grow up fast. (*HE passes the card game, coaching DARREN on what cards to play.*) Stay. (*Back to audience. HE continues moving about the group of TEENAGERS.*) Who we were that first day of freshman year was given, but who we were to become would be up to us. Eventually we discovered the squares. (*The OTHER TEENAGERS briefly laugh and become noisy and then focus is back to BRODY.*) That’s what we called it anyway. Really they were just these old cement blocks in the back of the parking lot. It became our meeting place. Every day, after math. (*HE now steps into the “scene” and it comes to life as the TEENAGERS begin to interact with one another audibly now.*)

TIFFANY: Math sucks.

LINDSAY: You say that every day. Do you have to say that every day?

TIFFANY: Why not? It sucks every day!

LINDSAY: So do you but I don’t run around sayin’ it, do I?

TIFFANY lunges out at LINDSAY. BRODY steps in between THEM stopping the scuffle.

BRODY: (*Breaking it up.*) Hey, that’s enough - -

Once again BRODY addresses the audience and the OTHERS continue their non-verbal scene. When HE speaks of the OTHER TEENAGERS HE points them out to the audience.

BRODY: That's Lindsay. (Indicates LINDSAY) She's the goody-good, and though I respect that, I think everyone else is getting a little sick of her.

TIFFANY: *(Under her breath.)* Bitch.

BRODY: That's Tiffany. Tiffany loves everyone and I mean EVERYONE including the whole football team, the whole baseball team, the whole wrestling team, oh wait, . . . not the *whole* wrestling team.

LINDSAY: Hey, Brody did you finish your obituary for English?

BRODY: Yeah, I did it yesterday, after math. But I'm skipping English to run a few laps. Will you hand it in for me?

BRODY removes the folded obituary assignment from his pocket, unfolds it, and gives it to LINDSAY.

DARREN: Oh, man, I forgot to write one.

ROBIN: Why is she making us write an obituary? I'm not dying anytime soon. I just copied one out of the newspaper.

DARREN: Anybody got a newspaper?

DARREN grabs BRODY's obituary assignment from LINDSAY. After a brief chase/transition, LINDSAY recovers the obituary assignment from DARREN and THEY mingle back into the TEENAGERS' "scene" as BRODY once again addresses the audience. LINDSAY keeps the folded assignment in her pocket throughout.

BRODY: *(Continues pointing out the OTHER TEENAGERS to the audience.)* That's Darren. He was my first real friend. And Robin. Well, Robin would do anything for attention from a guy. Especially Darren. I always knew she had a thing for him. I think 'cause he was a little older than the rest of us. He didn't always act it though.

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DARREN makes a crass gesture such as the ol’ “fart under the arm” trick, a big “raspberry” or other expression of immaturity.

BRODY: Their specialty was getting out of crap they didn’t want to do. No matter how bad they screwed up they always managed to escape without suffering any of the consequences.

Our focus reverts to the TEENAGERS’ “scene.”

J.D.: Guess whose dad is going out of town Friday night?

The OTHER TEENAGERS all shout and cheer with enthusiasm as THEY gather around J.D.

BRODY: *(To audience.)* That’s J.D. His whole life is a party. You can always expect a good time when J.D.’s around.

J.D.: *(From the TEENAGERS’ “scene.”)* Bring ping-pong balls!

The TEENAGERS ad lib. “Beer pong!” “J.D., you’re crazy!” etc.

TRANSITION: MUSIC IN. THEY rearrange the boxes creating “The Party.” THEY drink from plastic cups. Opposite, HALLE has made her way over to BRODY as THEY separate from the OTHERS who finish rearranging the boxes. MUSIC fades.

BRODY: Hey, what’s the most commonly talked about part of the human anatomy?

HALLE: I don’t know. What is the most commonly talked about part of the human anatomy?

BRODY: The ear.

HALLE: The ear?

BRODY removes a rolled-up plastic bag of marijuana and uses it briefly as a joint and takes a drag.

BRODY: *(HE speaks while holding his “toke” and passes the rolled-up bag of marijuana as if it were a joint.)* Ear. Man, ‘ear.

HALLE: *(Taking bag of marijuana cautiously looking around as SHE puts it away in her pocket.)* Thanks for holding my stuff.

BRODY: What are friends for?

HALLE: I know. But you don’t even smoke.

BRODY: Maybe I should. If I got the grades you got I wouldn’t need a wrestling scholarship to get in a good college.

HALLE: You make good grades.

BRODY: Only B’s.

HALLE: B’s are good.

BRODY: But they’re not A’s.

ROBIN has left “The Party” scene and approaches HALLE with a drink. HALLE takes the cup from ROBIN and THEY move back to the party scene.

ROBIN: Hey guys, Halle’s here!

SHE is welcomed at the party by the OTHERS as BRODY continues addressing the audience.

BRODY: Halle is great to hang out with after math. She’s so laid back. She doesn’t let anything bother her or get in her way. Halle’s got her whole life planned out. Plus, she’s got her license and a new car. She’s smart too. She got a 2800 on her SAT’s. We learned a lot in high school. The real important stuff isn’t in any text book. You have to figure it out for yourself. Either you get it or you don’t.

BRODY joins “The Party” as TIFFANY sits alone speaking directly to the audience.

TIFFANY: I’ve never been with Brody. I don’t know why I’m not attracted to him that way. He’s not like other guys. He’s really strong. Inside. He treats people right, you know? I mean, he has a great body, almost perfect. Not too fat not too thin. I guess he’s buff ‘cause he spends so much time in the gym. I’m so glad I know him. He always has some corny joke to tell you. It’s usually so stupid you laugh. *(From the group of TEENAGERS there is big laughter as we see BRODY once again telling his “ear” joint joke. TIFFANY continues speaking to the audience.)* Somehow he makes you feel important. *(SHE moves to the TEENAGERS and takes BRODY by the hand and leads him opposite. HE walks with her and then THEY stop. TIFFANY continues addressing the audience while SHE admires BRODY who stands next to her, facing front.)* When I hang out with him I think maybe I do count. I never felt that from any other guy. Not even my father. Brody didn’t want just my body. He’s a good guy. Everybody likes him.

HALLE: *(To DARREN and ROBIN as SHE rolls a joint among the OTHER TEENAGERS.)* He was great to chill with after math ‘cause I always had the munchies and he never finished his lunch.

TIFFANY returns to the group of OTHER TEENAGERS.

LINDSAY: *(Moving from the group “scene” and addressing the audience.)* I feel bad. I forgot to hand in Brody’s assignment. I hope he isn’t mad at me. Brody’s the only person I feel I can really be myself around. I remember once at this big drinking party J.D. had, Brody was sitting alone drinking a soda. *(SHE moves to join BRODY and the OTHER TEENS.)*

LINDSAY: Hey, Brody, I can’t believe you’re drinking diet soda?

BRODY: Why? What should I be drinking?

LINDSAY: Oh, diet soda is good.

BRODY: What are you drinking?

LINDSAY: *(Hesitantly.)* Oh, vodka, the usual.

BRODY: Can I taste? *(He takes her cup and sips.)* Vodka? I think that's water.

LINDSAY: Please don't tell. It's my cover. I don't like to drink. It's too fattening.

BRODY: Hey, I understand. I have to weigh in every week. Your secret is safe with me.

LINDSAY: Thanks. *(Moving away and addressing the audience.)* Brody would always stand-up for you. I remember when J.D. called me "fat" in ninth grade.

J.D.: Hey, fat-so!

The OTHER TEENAGERS react with laughter and BRODY moves in to J.D. defensively.

LINDSAY: *(Still to audience.)* Brody really let him have it. There probably would have been a fight except J.D. was too drunk to defend himself.

J.D. takes a sloppy punch at BRODY. J.D. misses and falls flat in a drunken stupor on the floor.

LINDSAY: I really connected with Brody that night. We began exercising together. *(BRODY and LINDSAY briefly jog around one of the boxes as SHE continues speaking.)* I just wanted to burn off every calorie I ate. We wore out those treadmills in the gym. Then I started running after school with him too. We both started losing weight. *(LINDSAY stops and sits on the box still speaking front. BRODY moves away.)* I felt good about myself. Being thin wasn't my goal - - I just wanted to get back at J.D. If it wasn't for J.D. being a jerk and Brody helping me out, I might really be huge now. Once I lost the 20 or so pounds, Brody told me to slow down. I guess he didn't want me to be like him. Obsessed. *(BRODY approaches her carrying a flower vase. HE polishes it with his shirt*

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and gives it to LINDSAY.) Oh, yeah, then J.D. asked me out. I said, “Forget it - - no way!” (LINDSAY douses J.D. with water from the vase and places the empty vase on one of the prominent boxes which should now remain up center throughout the rest of the play.)

BRODY: *(To audience.) We’re kids. We see with kid eyes. It’s not our fault we don’t have much experience. (BRODY speaks to J.D. and helps him to his feet.) If you think you don’t count, you’re too stupid to know that being loved has nothing to do with how much you deserve it. It’s all about the other person and their ability to love you. (To audience.) Kids just can’t think that way. It’s tough because sometimes we have adult experiences but no experience being adults. We really needed to grow-up quick.*

TRANSITION: MUSIC in. The TEENAGERS now rearrange the boxes into “The Classroom.” THEY sit about the boxes and raise their hands eager to answer the class question. BRODY is chosen and stands dumbfounded. HE tries to answer the question.

BRODY: *Huh . . . uh, duh . . .*

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