

1 me for fighting. You ever been to Garr? You ever been
2 around that area? You think you are so tough. You
3 people with your SAT classes and your honors classes,
4 you have it so easy here, April. Even your name is easy.
5 I could kill you just because your name is so annoying.
6 *(She gets up.) But I won't.*

7 APRIL: *(Starting to get up)* I'm not afraid of you.

8 JULIE: You should be. The last person I got into a fight with
9 is still home recovering. I told you I didn't want to fight,
10 but you didn't listen. You gonna listen now? Huh? Are
11 you?! *(She slaps APRIL as APRIL slapped her.)*

12 APRIL: Yeah ...

13 JULIE: I thought so. You spread the word. You leave me
14 alone, your friends leave me alone, stay away from me
15 and from the people I make friends with. I'm starting
16 over, and this is my last chance. You mess it up for me
17 and you will pay and pay big. I'll have nothing to lose if
18 I blow this chance and I will take you down with me.
19 Am I understood?

20 APRIL: Yeah ...

21 JULIE: Good. Now get your stuff and get out so I can finish
22 my homework.

23 APRIL: Fine. *(She gathers her things.)* I'll see you around.

24 JULIE: If that's a threat, I'd reconsider it. If it's an invitation
25 to be friends, don't make me laugh.

26 APRIL: Whatever. *(She starts to go.)*

27 JULIE: Oh, and April. It looks like bullies do back down
28 when confronted, doesn't it?

Different Paths

Cast: Ariana, Zana, Paria

Setting: Inside Paria's house

Prop: A cell phone

1 ARIANA: What time is it?

2 ZANA: It's about five minutes later than the last time you
3 asked what time it was.

4 PARIYA: What is your problem, Ariana?

5 ARIANA: You know I have to be in by nine o'clock.

6 ZANA: Oh, grow up.

7 ARIANA: I am growing up.

8 PARIYA: Not fast enough.

9 ARIANA: Faster than my mom and dad would like me to ...
10 at least that's what they are always telling me.

11 PARIYA: Your mom and dad need to back off.

12 ZANA: For real.

13 ARIANA: My mom and dad are OK.

14 ZANA: Yeah ... whatever. Paria, did you bring your cell
15 phone?

16 PARIYA: Of course.

17 ZANA: Let me borrow it for a sec. I need to call Joey.

18 PARIYA: I thought he broke up with you.

19 ZANA: He did. That's why I am using your phone. He has my
20 number on caller ID. He doesn't know yours.

21 ARIANA: If you aren't going out with him anymore, why are
22 you calling him?

23 ZANA: To find out who he's with.

24 ARIANA: You guys aren't together. Why do you care?

25 ZANA: Why don't you shut up? How's that for a great idea?

26 PARIYA: Jeez, Ariana, what's your problem?

27 ARIANA: Me? Zana is using your unidentifiable phone to
28 call Joey to find out who he's with, they aren't together

1 anymore, and I'm the one with the problem? OK.
 2 ZANA: Listen, he may not want to be with me, but that
 3 doesn't mean I don't want to be with him. And as long
 4 as he is not with someone new, then there's a chance
 5 we can get back together.
 6 PARIA: Exactly.
 7 ARIANA: But what if he is seeing someone new?
 8 ZANA: Then I go kick her butt.
 9 PARIA: Exactly. And we will be right there with you.
 10 ZANA: 'Cause that's what friends do.
 11 ARIANA: You're saying you want to fight some girl over
 12 Joey?
 13 ZANA: (*Belligerent*) Hey, are you judging me?
 14 ARIANA: I just think it's stupid, that's all.
 15 PARIA: Stupid? Why? She's fighting for what she believes in.
 16 ARIANA: She's fighting over a guy. Puh-leeze.
 17 ZANA: He's my guy. Broken up or not, he's still mine.
 18 ARIANA: OK ...
 19 PARIA: You got a problem with that?
 20 ARIANA: I just think that fighting is stupid.
 21 ZANA: You *are* judging me!
 22 ARIANA: Since when do we fight other girls?
 23 ZANA: Since I tell you to.
 24 ARIANA: Since you tell me to? What is that about?
 25 PARIA: Listen, mommy's girl, you need to decide who your
 26 loyalties are with. Are you one of us or not?
 27 ARIANA: We're friends. We've been friends forever.
 28 PARIA: Doesn't seem like it too much anymore.
 29 ARIANA: What are you talking about?
 30 ZANA: When we go out, you say you can't go. When we just
 31 want to hang out, you have to be somewhere else. When
 32 we want to take off to the mall, you always have some
 33 reason why you can't.
 34 ARIANA: Yeah, well my reasons are my parents. They don't
 35 like me to just hang out. And when you want to go to

1 the mall, you always are leaving during school instead
 2 of waiting 'till after school.
 3 PARIA: School is for losers.
 4 ZANA: I hate this place. It's a huge waste of time.
 5 PARIA: I was talking to my mom and told her I was going to
 6 take the GED and leave at the semester.
 7 ZANA: That's such a great idea.
 8 ARIANA: Leave school? In your junior year?
 9 PARIA: It doesn't matter one way or the other. Hell, girl, I've
 10 cut so many classes this year that I wouldn't graduate
 11 on time anyway unless I took night school. Which I am
 12 definitely *not* doing!
 13 ARIANA: And your mom is OK with this?
 14 PARIA: Yes. She wants me to get a job anyway and start
 15 paying rent.
 16 ARIANA: You're only sixteen!!
 17 PARIA: My mom was married when she was sixteen.
 18 ZANA: Ariana, sixteen is old enough to grow up. Look at
 19 Romeo and Juliet. They were only sixteen.
 20 ARIANA: And look what happened to them. And to your
 21 mom, Paria.
 22 PARIA: What?
 23 ARIANA: She got married at sixteen, had two kids, divorced
 24 at twenty-one, married again at twenty-five, had
 25 another kid, divorced again, and now she's living with
 26 that guy.
 27 PARIA: You better watch what you say about my mom.
 28 ARIANA: You are not seriously considering dropping out of
 29 school?
 30 ZANA: It's not dropping out. It's taking a test then getting a
 31 job. Growing up.
 32 PARIA: Target is hiring full-time, too.
 33 ZANA: That's a great job! Good discounts, too.
 34 ARIANA: OK, wait a minute. First (*Indicating ZANA*) you're
 35 talking about finding out who your ex-boyfriend is

1 seeing so you can go get in a fight with her, and then
 2 you (*Indicating PARIA*) are talking about dropping out
 3 of school and getting a job at Target. What about
 4 school? What about college? And, Zana ... what about
 5 dignity?
 6 ZANA: Since when are you judge and jury over everyone's
 7 lives?
 8 ARIANA: You can't honestly think that it is a good idea to
 9 get in a fight with another girl?
 10 ZANA: If she's crossing my territory, yeah, I do. You got a
 11 problem with that, we can take it out back right now.
 12 ARIANA: And do what?
 13 ZANA: Settle it.
 14 ARIANA: Fight? With each other?
 15 ZANA: I got no problem with that.
 16 ARIANA: Paria, you're OK with this?
 17 PARIA: Just take it outside. Don't do it in my house.
 18 ARIANA: You can't be serious.
 19 ZANA: Oh, yeah I can.
 20 ARIANA: Why don't you just call the park and reserve your
 21 trailer?
 22 PARIA: You did *not* just say that.
 23 ARIANA: What? You think I'm afraid of you? I'm not.
 24 PARIA: I bet you are. Mommy's girl.
 25 ARIANA: I may be a "mommy's girl," but at least I know
 26 who my daddy is.
 27 ZANA: (*Going for her*) How dare you!!
 28 PARIA: (*Holding Zana back*) I said *not* in my house! (*To*
 29 *ARIANA*) Ariana, I can't believe you just said that. That
 30 was just wrong!
 31 ARIANA: Yeah, well so are a lot of things that are being said
 32 by both of you lately. Fighting, dropping out of school,
 33 cutting classes, hanging out with guys that are such
 34 losers. Those are not choices I am going to make.
 35 ZANA: You're the loser. Little miss high and mighty,

1 thinking you're better than everyone else. You're so
 2 locked in to doing exactly what your parents tell you to
 3 that you can't think for yourself.
 4 ARIANA: Of course I can. You expected me to go with you to
 5 beat up some girl who might be seeing a he's-a-big-
 6 giant-loser of a guy who doesn't want you anymore.
 7 ZANA: Joey's not a loser.
 8 ARIANA: He didn't even graduate from high school! And
 9 what's he doing now?
 10 PARIA: He works at Target. That's how I am getting my job.
 11 ARIANA: And that makes it even worse. Is that all you two
 12 want out of life? A future in a red shirt and loser guys?
 13 PARIA: I won't be at Target forever. It's a job, though. I
 14 won't be taking money from my mom, like you do. I'll
 15 be paying my own way.
 16 ARIANA: On five sixty-five an hour. That ought to keep you
 17 in Mickey D's big meals.
 18 ZANA: Your problem is you never had to take responsibility
 19 for anything. Mommy and Daddy do it all for you. "Get
 20 up, Ariana. Go to school, Ariana. Be home by nine
 21 o'clock, Ariana. Who you going out with tonight,
 22 Ariana? Leave a phone number where we can get you,
 23 Ariana. Let us wipe your bottom for you, Ariana."
 24 ARIANA: Screw you.
 25 PARIA: Your problem is you're a big baby.
 26 ARIANA: Your problem is that you are both too stupid to see
 27 where you are headed.
 28 PARIA: Get out of my house.
 29 ARIANA: Fine.
 30 ZANA: I knew that you'd end up being this way. Ever since
 31 we were small, you always felt like you were better than
 32 us.
 33 ARIANA: No. I always knew it. I just hoped that you two
 34 would want to achieve more than your parents have
 35 and take a higher road. But, apparently you two have

1 chosen to head to a life of trash.

2 **PARIA:** It's different choices, Ariana, just different.

3 **ZANA:** We're ready to move on, you're not.

4 **ARIANA:** No, it's more than that. I want more out of life

5 than to work at a going nowhere job or to stalk some

6 guy who isn't worth the time it takes to dial his phone

7 number. I'm focused on the long-term future, you two

8 can't see two days ahead of what you want right now.

9 **ZANA:** You just think you are so much better, don't you?

10 **ARIANA:** *(A long look at both of them)* Yeah. I do.

11 **ZANA:** Watch your back, girl.

12 **ARIANA:** I'm really scared, Zana.

13 **PARIA:** She's serious. So am I.

14 **ARIANA:** So what? What's the worst that can happen? We

15 get in a fight? I get a black eye? Maybe get bruised up a

16 little? So? I'll still go to school, and then I will go to

17 college, and then I will meet someone worthy of me

18 who respects me. And it will all be on my terms. And at

19 the ten-year high school reunion, I'll feel great. But I

20 bet you two won't even be there 'cause you'll be too

21 embarrassed about what's become of your lives.

22 **PARIA:** You gotta be alone on the street sometime, girl.

23 **ARIANA:** I'm gonna be alone out there right now. You two

24 are big talk. But I'm the one who's got action. See ya in

25 the checkout line, Paria. And Zana ... I guess I'll look for

26 you on Ricki Lake. *(She leaves.)*

27 **ZANA:** Let's go kick her butt.

28 **PARIA:** *(After a moment)* No.

29 **ZANA:** No?

30 **PARIA:** *(Looking at ZANA for a moment, making a choice)* No.

31 I don't think I will. Not tonight.

32 **ZANA:** Well, at least come with me to cruise by Joey's house.

33 **PARIA:** Nope. Not that, either.

34 **ZANA:** What's up with you?

35 **PARIA:** I've got things to do. I have an early job interview

1 tomorrow.

2 **ZANA:** But what if that girl is at Joey's house? What then?

3 **PARIA:** You do what you have to do.

4 **ZANA:** So, I'm on my own?

5 **PARIA:** I guess we all are. *(She exits.)*

6 **ZANA:** *(Shakes her head in disbelief.)*