

You

Characters

JOHN, JUAN, JOE (17)

Setting

A bare stage. An empty high school hallway.

Three angry teenagers stand outside the principal's office. JUAN stands in the middle between JOHN and JOE.

JUAN: I can't believe I'm standing here. It's not like I'm a criminal. How dare he treat me like a criminal. I have never stood out in front of the principal's office, not once, ever. I do not deserve to be here. *(he looks left and right)* You're both here on a regular basis I'll bet. Look at you.

JOHN: Shut up.

JUAN: What?

JOHN: Shut up.

JUAN: You can't tell me what to do.

JOHN: You don't think so?

JUAN: This is all your fault. Isn't it.

JOHN: Is it?

JUAN: It's someone's. It's not mine. It must be you.

There is a pause.

JOE: You. *(pause)* You. *(pause)* It was you.

JOHN: Huh.

JOE: It was you.

JOHN: Was it?

JUAN: Wasn't it?

JOHN: *(to JOE)* Sure it wasn't you?

JOE: It was you.

JOHN: *(to JUAN)* Or you?

JUAN: I just said it wasn't.

JOHN: So you say.

JUAN: That's right.

JOHN: Still.

JUAN: What?

JOHN: Could be you.

JOE: I knew it was you all along.

JUAN: Who?

JOE: You.

JUAN: Why not you?

JOE: Huh.

JUAN: Could just as easily been you.

JOE: Not a chance.

JUAN: So says you.

JOE: Sure it wasn't you? *(to JOHN)* Or you.

JOHN: Wasn't me.

JOE: You sure?

JOHN: I know.

JOE: Huh.

JUAN: So you say.

JOHN: I have sources.

JUAN: What?

JOHN: Sources. Who know.

JUAN: You?

JOE: You don't know nothing.

JUAN: Who do you know?
 JOHN: People.
 JOE: You?
 JOHN: People who know things.
 JUAN: Nobody.
 JOHN: People who tell me things.
 JOE: Then why are you standing here?
 JUAN: If you know.
 JOHN: I know.
 JOE: So you say.
 JOHN: I know and you know, both of you know. You know.

From here on in, they don't address each other directly with the 'You's' They face front and talk out.

JOE: It's you.
 JUAN: You.
 JOE: You.
 JOHN: It's you.
 JUAN: You know it's you.
 JOE: You are in big trouble.
 JUAN: You should look at yourself.
 JOHN: There are only so many places the finger can point.
 JOE: Point it at yourself.
 JOHN: Point at you.
 JUAN: You know.
 JOHN: There were only so many people there.
 JUAN: There's no 'so many.' There were three.
 JOE: That's right.

JUAN: Me and you and you.
 JOE: It's you.
 JOHN: You did it.
 JOE: You.
 JOHN: You ratted us out.
 JUAN: You told.
 JOE: You know the truth.
 JUAN: The truth will come out.
 JOHN: You know it will.
 JUAN: It always does.
 JOE: You know better than I.
 JOHN: What's that supposed to mean?
 JOE: You tell me.
 JOHN: The truth will come out.
 JUAN: You know what a rat looks like.
 JOHN: You should look in the mirror.
 JUAN: You should.
 JOE: You.

JOHN steps forward. He now addresses the audience. The others freeze in place and can't hear him.

JOHN: I didn't do it. I didn't tell anybody. I didn't want anybody to know. Why would I want that? I slept just fine at night with everything the way it was and now... I can't believe one of them opened up their big mouths. Just wait till it comes out. They're not going to know what hit them. I'll sell them down the river so fast they won't have time to come up for air. It wasn't my fault anyway. The whole thing was an accident and if they had kept their mouths shut we all would have went on sleeping like babies. We could have gone on with the rest of our lives like we were supposed to. The body would have been found. Eventually.

JOHN steps back into place. He's back in the action.

JUAN: You know what a rat looks like.

JOHN: You should look in the mirror.

JUAN: You should.

JOE: You.

JOHN: I know you did it.

JUAN: You might as well confess.

JOE: It'll only get worse for you, the longer it goes.

JOHN: You can only hide for so long.

JUAN: The longer you wait, the worse it'll be.

JOHN: You might as well confess.

JOE: There's nothing you can hide behind.

JUAN: You're the one. You did it.

JOHN: You should have kept your big mouth shut.

JUAN steps forward and talks to the audience. The others freeze.

JUAN: I have a scholarship. I have a ticket in my hand. Why would I tell? I can't believe I got caught up in this. It's not my fault, I did nothing wrong. I was in the wrong place at the wrong time and that girl was... that's that. Wrong place, wrong time. They're both such losers. Losers who would think nothing about taking me down. Destroying my future. Bringing me down to the mud, down to their level. They're jealous. They're jealous of me and what I have and what I'm going to become. I wouldn't be surprised if this was all a conspiracy. A plan hatched up between the two of them to ruin my life. Why couldn't they keep their mouth shut? How am I going to get out of this?

JUAN steps back with the others.

JOE: You talk too much.

JOHN: You know you told.

JUAN: You should look in the mirror.

JOHN: You know what's there.

JOE: All I know is it's all going to come out. This is all going to explode. Explode all over you and you won't be able to hide or run or do anything.

JUAN: You're all talk.

JOE: You think so?

JOHN: You talk too much.

JOE: You think so?

JUAN: You talk too much.

JOHN: You think so?

JOE: You're all talk.

JUAN: You talk too much.

JOE: You'd know about talking more than me.

JUAN: Talk, talk.

JOHN: You've done all kinds of talking.

JOE steps forward. The others freeze. JOE paces like a caged animal.

JOE: I'm gonna kill someone. I'm gonna rip someone's head off their shoulders. This is why you never work with other people. I know the only person I can trust is me. I know that. It doesn't matter how many times you say, 'Keep your mouth shut.' It doesn't matter how many times they say, 'You can trust me!' It's all nothing. They'll stab you in the back every time. You can't trust nobody.

JOE moves back to the others.

JUAN: You talk too much.

JOHN: You're the one talking.

JOE: Rats know about talking.

JOHN: So do liars.

JUAN: Liars are good talkers.

JOE: Liars know.

JUAN: Liars do.

JOHN: Don't they, liar.

JOE: Who you calling a liar?

JOHN: You.

JOE: You better watch.

JOHN: You're the snitch.

JUAN: Talk, talk.

JOE: You.

JOHN: You.

JOE: Soon as I find out which one of you told, you're a dead man.

*JOHN and JOE start to get in each other's faces with
JUAN right in the middle.*

JOHN: You blaming me? You callin' me out?

JOE: You're a dead man.

JOHN: You wouldn't know how.

JOE: I'll kill you where you stand.

JUAN: Hey...

JOHN: You think you know?

JOE: You're a dead man.

JOHN: Keep talking dead man.

JOE: Keep opening up that big mouth of yours.

JOHN: I'm gonna ram my fist down your throat.

JOE: I'll rip your tongue outta your mouth.

JOHN: You're a dead man.

JOE: Dead man.

JOHN: You're dead!

JOE: Dead!

JOHN: Dead!

JUAN confesses and drops to his knees.

JUAN: PLEASE! I don't want to be a dead man. I didn't mean it. I don't want to die, I don't want to be dead. I don't want to die. I don't want to die. I don't want to. Please.

JOHN and JOE stare down at JUAN. They slowly and with menace look up to stare at each other.

— THE END —