

### Cast of Characters

KATE, female, 16. A tornado of RAAAAAWWWRRR.

JACKIE, female, 16. A tornado of Pfffff.

BEE, female, 15. A tornado you never saw coming.

### Production Note

Despite the presence of the word "like" in the speech of these girls, they are not "valley girls." No. They are semi-intelligent quick-talkers. The "likes" are just their way of trying to catch up to their own rapidly moving thoughts. There are very few—if any—pauses in or between their lines.

## CHEKHOV'S THREE SEAGULLS by Amanda Claire Buckley

*(Winter. Monday. After school in JACKIE's living room. Awkward silence. BEE and JACKIE are studying. BEE has her laptop open and types intermittently. JACKIE reads. Suddenly, KATE, all tornado-like, enters the house slamming the door behind her holding a copy of The Seagull. KATE and JACKIE make eye contact.)*

**KATE.** I liked The Seagull.

*(Slams The Seagull down in front of JACKIE.)*

**JACKIE.** You liked The Seagull?

**KATE.** I loved The Seagull.

**JACKIE.** Okay, third reading I thought it was pretty good—

**KATE.** *Loved The Seagull. Read it during study hall and nearly peed myself. I mean this guy comes onstage with a dead seagull, throws it at this chick's feet and goes, "I killed a seagull for you."*

**JACKIE.** Yeah?

**KATE.** That's awesome. Imagine it now.

*(Throwing an imaginary seagull at JACKIE's feet.)*  
"I killed a seagull for you."

**BEE.** Let's run away together.

**KATE.** And then the girl goes mad, and can only say: "I am the seagull. I am the seagull. I am the seagull."

**BEE.** *(BEE picks up the play. Looks at it.)* That's what this is about?

**JACKIE.** *(Taking the play out of BEE's hands.)* Yeah, pretty much. Then he kills himself. It was an hour and a half of Chekhov stroking his ego, that's what it was. *(About to start a new topic but then—)* How can you like The Seagull?

**KATE.** *(KATE takes off her jacket, scarf, etc. and throws them on the floor. JACKIE begins to follow her around picks up after her.)* I love The Seagull. I can't believe you like even tried to tell me it would suck. It's just—I will admit, like, as all plays that have to go through translation do, there's a bit of a hump to get over—

**JACKIE.** I'll give you this—the first two times I read it I had a really, really crappy, terrible translation.

**KATE.** Yeah, when you're reading something that's not in the original language, the translation's like—it makes all the difference. I mean as we saw with, uh—remember that play we read? *God—Flight?* There was, like, this *amazing* and then "What the shpuck is this?"

**JACKIE.** So what you're saying, Kate, is you *didn't* talk to the guidance counselor about—

**KATE.** Yeah, no. There was a line outside her office but I think the really important thing to note here is that, like, the translation can y'know make or break the play. So I guess I really liked *this* translation.

**JACKIE.** I guess. No, I love the translation, that's why it went from "I effing hate this play" to "it's pretty good."

**KATE.** 'Cause I can see *why* you would hate it, but I feel like there's actually like—I *like* the fact that all the characters are d-bags.

**JACKIE.** That's very Chekhov-specific, he *always* does that, he always makes all his characters d-bag-ish—in what I've read—I've read two plays by him—but, in my experience, they're always tools.

**KATE.** But they're *relatable* tools.

**JACKIE.** They're sometimes relatable, but it's like, I don't know.

**BEE.** They found a meteor in Antarctica that probably started life.

**KATE.** You're like, "Dude, like I've been there. I've been a tool in that way also."

**BEE.** That sounds fun.

**JACKIE.** Okay. It's like "I've also been a tool in that way also" but at the same time it's like "Stop jerking off, Chekhov, stop jerking"—

**KATE.** I don't think it is!

**JACKIE.** No, with the whole "THEATRE SHOULD BE. THEATRE SHOULD BE" and then it's—UGH. He's preaching his intellectual *schmush* at us like a mother-loving Neti Pot.

**BEE.** Neti Pot?

**JACKIE.** Yeah I said it. Chekhov is like a stuck-up self-loving Neti Pot.

**KATE.** No, he's not. What that actually is, is the characters not talking about what they should be talking about but instead talking about theatre which is just stupid.

**JACKIE.** It *was*! It was stupid! Why the hell is it on stage?

**KATE.** No, I don't think he was writing and going, like, "Oh, they're gonna think I'm a genius!" No, it was more like "all the characters

now are gonna say some stupid things. And die." But the thing is, it's in what the characters *aren't* saying, is where, like, the play is.

**JACKIE.** True but it's like: (*Makes a jerking around sort of motion.*) "Pffffffttt."

**KATE.** No, I can feel it, when reading it, like there'll just be a line and then another line and not even like, like, in modern plays they put a line in there and are like "beat" and then like another line, but you can feel, like, between the word, the *words*, the character gives another character, like you can, I just, like you can feel like the *slifting* of like, just the, RAAAAWWRRR.

**JACKIE.** I guess, cause then you get to like the end where she's effing bonkers and she's *still* not talking about what she should be talking about.

**KATE.** Yeah, exactly!

**JACKIE.** Like, I get that not talking *bleh*. I still don't like it for some reason. Like, it's like, I *like* it—I really wanna love it. But I, I can't. I can't.

**KATE.** I really liked it. I just like the image—

**JACKIE.** Of the dead seagull?

**KATE.** "I killed the seagull for you." I just—I love the idea that like this emo kid just walks up and goes like—

**JACKIE.** He's *such* an emo kid.

**KATE.** He's *so* emo! It's so great; he's like the emo kid with a dead seagull. Going to like this chick he loves—"I killed a seagull for you."

**JACKIE.** Yeah. Okay, I get that. I do. But I still don't understand why you didn't talk to the guidance counselor about your thing with Ben.

**KATE.** It didn't come up like things like that—**BEE.** (*Overlapping.*) What "thing with Ben"?

**KATE.** (*Overlapping.*) —they just don't come up and the best part is when the writer comes back out and sees the seagull and is like "Huh. A dead seagull"—I like it. I *like* it.

**JACKIE.** I liked it, I just couldn't love it.

**KATE.** I loved it.

**BEE.** Apparently so.

(*BEE starts towards the bathroom, off stage.*)

So is this the new criteria for the boy of your dreams?

KATE. Kill me a seagull.

BEE. Along with the recovering drug-addict thing?

KATE. Recovering drug-addicts are like the best people.

BEE. Hold on to that thought. I'll be back in a minute.

(Pause. KATE and JACKIE watch BEE exit. Coast is clear.)

JACKIE. Kate, I still don't get why you didn't—

KATE. Aw man. Did she go into the bathroom?

JACKIE. —you need to tell someone—

KATE. Because I kind of need to like go.

JACKIE. You need to tell someone who is not—

KATE. But if I go to the bathroom after her that would be awkward.

JACKIE. You need to talk to someone who is *not* me about Ben.

KATE. Except that I walked into, like, the office and I just could not, *could not*. I just like couldn't find the, y'know, the frrrrr, words.

JACKIE. Fine but if you don't say like *something* he's gonna keep doing it and it'll be no one's fault but your own.

(BEE re-enters.)

KATE. I think what may be like the problem here is that you read The Seagull as a dramatic sort of thing when, really what it is like is a comedy.

JACKIE. You've got about a horse head and a half up your crazy clock if you think The Seagull is a comedy.

(KATE grabs The Seagull and flips to the title page.)

KATE. Look, no, it says, it says, it literally says right in front, of the—"a comedy in four acts." Look, Chekhov was like, *grrrrr*, y'know?

BEE. So, Jackie, you're out of toilet paper.

KATE. So it *would* be like awkward if I went now?

BEE. What?

JACKIE. Kate, why couldn't you just tell or say to the guidance counselor what you said at me last night?

KATE. Because I didn't mean to like say anything and it's nothing anyway. It's like whatever nothing.

BEE. You guys hung out last night?

KATE. Yeah. But then um. Oh wait, what was I saying? But like—

JACKIE. But in the like canonical history of comedies The Seagull does not fit the structure—

BEE. Oh my God.

(BEE starts hitting her head against the table.)

KATE. Okay, but who gives a *schipuck* about the structure—

JACKIE. I'm just saying if we are like going to get into the argument of what makes something a comedy and what makes something like a tragedy—

KATE. Which we've discussed—

JACKIE. We've discussed before—

KATE. And I still don't understand why we need to go and define—

JACKIE. Yeah but still, structurally, The Seagull is not set up like a comedy.

KATE. The Seagull doesn't need to be "structurally" set-up as a *conventional* comedy to be funny.

JACKIE. Look, when The Seagull was written, the term "comedy" did not mean—

BEE. I swear to God if anyone says "seagull" one more time I'm going to tell the entire school that Ben's copping a feel during biology. Right, Kate?

(The she-did-not-just-say-that silence.)

KATE. I think if Chekhov wrote "Comedy" in like we should honor that.

JACKIE. You said no one else knew.

KATE. We should look at that and go like "Yes this is what he wants."

BEE. I sit behind you in biology, Kate. I sit like literally directly behind you and as fascinating as mitochondria is, I can still hear the disgusting crap he says to you, can still see Ben, under the table, slipping his hand—

(KATE slams The Seagull down, hard.)

KATE. It's funny. It's so funny. It's like the emo kid waits years for this cray-cray girl to come back for him and when she finally does, she like oozes about this dead baby she had with the man who's like with this guy's mother, which is like so Oedipal, y'know and then like she just scampers off like ugh! And then emo-boy shoots himself and then they all go play Gin Rummy. He puts a gun to his head, blows his brains out, and they all go play Gin Rummy. It's so. Freaking. Funny.

BEE. Fine. I'm telling the—

KATE. Did I say the word seagull, Bee? Did I say SEAGULL at all? Where in that last statement did I say the word *seagull*?

JACKIE. It happened again today?

BEE. Yep.

JACKIE. And you just watched...?

*(So much judging. Maybe BEE will say something? She doesn't.)*

JACKIE *puts on her coat.*

JACKIE. Sorry, I think I told my mom I'd pick up Jack from school.

*(JACKIE exits. KATE and BEE alone.)*

KATE. So. You up for a game of Gin Rummy?

*End of Play*