

HOW I SURVIVED CAMP COOTIES

A THREE ACT PLAY

by
Megan Orr



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HOW I SURVIVED CAMP COOTIES

A Three-Act Play

by
Megan Orr

Time: Present-day; July

Setting: Camp Still Water, a boot camp in Kentucky for troubled teens

ACT I,

SCENE 1

SET: Camp Still Water campground

LEIGH: (*dramatically*) I . . . am a survivor. And the things that I have survived are more terrible than any a fourteen-year old boy has ever had to face. My name . . . is Leigh Rawlins. And this . . . is my story.

Lights rise. A group of CAMPERS hover at downstage left. Each carries a backpack and none look very happy to be there.

LEIGH: (*cont'd*) (*to PATRICK*) Boy, this place looks like a real dump.

PATRICK: Yeah, no kiddin'. I can't believe my parents are actually *leaving* me here for an entire month!

LEIGH: What's your name?

PATRICK: Patrick. . . . And if you call me Pat, Patty, or Patsy, I'll knock your socks off!

LEIGH: Okay . . .

PATRICK: Or Patricia! I don't like that one neither.

LEIGH: Right . . . So . . . why are you here? What did *you* do wrong?

PATRICK: (*getting worked up*) Who me? Nothin'! I didn't do nothin' wrong, man!

LEIGH: Nothing? Yeah . . . right.

PATRICK: What? You don't believe me? You wanna make something of it??

LEIGH: (*turns away*) Okay then. I guess we know who's here for anger management issues.

PATRICK: (*yelling*) Hey! I'm talkin' to you! You wanna piece of me?? Bring it!

(*BRIAN holds back PATRICK as DRILL SERGEANT SHEFFIELD and CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN enter, stage right. The DIRECTOR carries a clipboard. CORPORAL ABBY follows them in with a bounce in her step.*)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: (*to PATRICK*) All right. That's quite enough. Settle down.

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Okay, kids. Let's get started! First of all, my name is Jocelyn Schaefer, and I'm the camp director here. And let me welcome each one of you to Camp Still Water! I want you all to know that even though this is a camp for "troubled teens," we here at Camp Still Water still think that each one of you is *very* special. Isn't that right, Sergeant Sheffield?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: Uh, yeah. Right. Special. (*under his breath*) No-good bunch of hooligans.

PATRICK: Hey! I heard that! You wanna piece of me??

(*SERGEANT SHEFFIELD glares at PATRICK and crosses to him.*)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: (*shouting in PATRICK's face*) Recruit! Drop and give me twenty! On the double!

(*SERGEANT SHEFFIELD shoves a petrified PATRICK to the ground. PATRICK begins frantically doing push-ups. SERGEANT SHEFFIELD glares at the rest of the CAMPERS.*)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: (*cont'd*) Anyone else??

(*The rest of the CAMPERS shake their heads fearfully.*)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Oh, well, that's nice. Looks like we're all gettin' better acquainted. Wonderful. Well, now, the next thing to do is to go ahead and split the fellas from the ladies. Gentlemen, when I call your name, go ahead and grab your things and come on over here with Sergeant Sheffield. He'll take you across the lake to your

cabin. *(looking down at her clipboard)* Okay. Mark O'Bannon . . . Adam Goldsmith . . . Brian Young . . . Jacob Moyer . . . and Patrick Brady.

(As each name is called, the guys cross cautiously to downstage right, shooting nervous glances at SERGEANT SHEFFIELD as they pass him. When PATRICK's name is called, he attempts to get up, but SERGEANT SHEFFIELD steps on his back and PATRICK continues his push-ups.)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: Eighteen . . . Nineteen . . . twenty. Okay. Now get up.

LEIGH: *(to JOCELYN; a bit rudely)* Uh . . . excuse me?

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: All right, boys. You all have a lovely time with Sergeant Sheffield!

LEIGH: Excuse me?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: *(shouting)* Recruits! Single-file line! IMMEDIATELY!

(The GUYS quickly try to form a straight line, bumping awkwardly into one another.)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: *(cont'd)* Come on, come on! Do you call that a line? My blind granny could make a better line than that!

LEIGH: *(to JOCELYN)* Excuse me! Hey, hello! Are you deaf or something?

(CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN and SERGEANT SHEFFIELD whirl around to face LEIGH. JOCELYN looks shocked; SERGEANT SHEFFIELD glares at him; LEIGH clears his throat awkwardly.)

LEIGH: *(cont'd)* Uh . . . what about me?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: You just wait your turn, young lady. She'll get to you in a minute.

LEIGH: Young lady?

(The GUYS begin to snicker. SERGEANT SHEFFIELD whirls around to face them.)

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: What are you laughing at?? All of you! Drop and give me twenty. IMMEDIATELY!

(The GUYS all fall to the ground and begin doing push-ups.)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Oh, you boys will soon find out that Sergeant Sheffield doesn't take guff from anyone. Isn't that right, Sergeant?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: *(staring at the GUYS, arms crossed)* Hmph.

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Especially since he's going to be your cabin commander for the summer.

(The GUYS groan.)

ANNIE: *(under her breath)* Ha, ha. Serves you right. Stupid boys.

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: All right, now. Time for the ladies. But first, let me introduce you to *your* cabin commander, Corporal Abby Wright. Go ahead and wave, Abby.

(ABBY waves eagerly. By this time, the GUYS are beginning to stand up, exhausted.)

ADAM: *(whispering to BRIAN)* They get Snow White for a cabin commander while we're stuck with Hulk Hogan??? How is *this* fair?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: Recruits! *Atten-tion!* Ten-mile trek to camp to commence immediately! All whiners, gripers, and malcontents will be left behind for the wolves!

JACOB: *(to PATRICK)* Wolves?? Is he serious?

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: Silence in the ranks! About face! Forward march!

(The GUYS march off stage right with SERGEANT SHEFFIELD following behind them.)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: All right! And the boys are off! Well . . . now that it's just us girls—

LEIGH: Excuse me. I don't mean to be rude, but—

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Then wait your turn. Okay. When I call your name, ladies, please step forward. Jenna Hurst . . . Annie Lennox . . . Katelyn Marshall . . . Leigh Rawlins . . .

LEIGH: Uh, yeah. That's me. But I'm not a—

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Mackenzie Rush . . . and Elle Thomas. Well, looks like everyone's here. Corporal Wright? I leave them all in your capable hands. *(turning to the GIRLS)* I'll see you girls after lunch for your midday calisthenics.

(CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN exits upstage left.)

ELLE: (*nervously*) Lunch?

MACKENZIE: (*making a face*) Calisthenics??

JENNA: (*hopefully*) Will the boys be there?

ANNIE: I *hope* not. (*under her breath*) Stupid boys.

LEIGH: (*yelling after JOCELYN*) But I'm not a--!

(CORPORAL ABBY blows her whistle loudly. The CAMPERS quiet.)

CORPORAL ABBY: (*pacing as she speaks*) There. That's better. Now, as you already know, my name is Corporal Abby Wright. But what you probably don't know about me is that I am not only a cabin commander here at Camp Still Water, but I was also a camper just like you at this very camp last summer.

ELLE: Wow. Really? What were you here for?

CORPORAL ABBY: That . . . is not important anymore. This camp changed me completely and it no longer matters why I came here. (*to ANNIE*) Excuse me, young lady, but could you please stand up straight? Thank you. (*to CAMPERS*) Now, you can go ahead and set your bags down because for the next few minutes, I want to take some time to get to know your names. All right. Why don't each of you step forward one at a time and then you can tell me your name again and why you're here at Camp Still Water.

MACKENZIE: Oh, I'll go first! My name is Mackenzie Rush. Well, actually, it's Mackenzie Elizabeth Luann Perkins-Rush, but a lot of people call me Kenzie or Mack or Mack-Daddy, but you all can call me whatever you want. I don't mind. Well, I did mind when someone called me Magpie once, but that was a long time ago. I think I was in fourth grade or something like that, and my teacher said—

ANNIE: Oh brother. Will you *stop talking* already?? (*to CORPORAL ABBY*) I had to sit next to her on the bus the entire way here, and if I have to listen to any more of this—

CORPORAL ABBY: All right. Calm down. Mackenzie, why don't you just tell us why you're here?

ANNIE: Isn't it obvious?

MACKENZIE: Oh, I'm a hypochondriac.

JENNA: (*gasping*) That's terrible! How in the world do you shower if you're afraid of water?

ANNIE: She said "*hypo*-chondriac" not "*hydro*-chondriac," you nitwit.

CORPORAL ABBY: Okay now. Name-calling is strictly forbidden here at Camp Still Water, so I don't want to hear another mean name for the rest of the month. Understood?

ANNIE: (*grumbling*) Yes.

CORPORAL ABBY: (*to ANNIE*) Why don't you go next?

ANNIE: (*sighing*) Fine. Annie Lennox. I'm here because my Dad's a total—

CORPORAL ABBY: (*warningly*) Annie . . .

ANNIE: (*with fake perkiness*) . . . a totally amazing man who thinks I need to work on my people skills! There. You happy?

CORPORAL ABBY: Thank you. Who's next?

LEIGH: Uh, yeah, I've got something I need to say . . .

(JENNA jumps in front of LEIGH.)

JENNA: Ooh! Ooh! I'll go next! My name is Jenna. Jenna Hurst. And I . . . uh, I . . . (*between giggles*) I *really* like boys!

(JENNA pushes ELLE forward.)

JENNA: (*cont'd*) You go next!

ELLE: Okay. Um, I'm Elle Thomas, and, uh, my parents made me come here because they don't think I eat enough. But I do! Honest! I mean, I ate half a banana today for breakfast and that was totally filling. I just don't want to get fat, you know?

LEIGH: Okay, I *really* need to say something—

KATELYN: I guess I'm next. I'm Katelyn Marshall, and my parents sent me here because they think I'm a—

(CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN reenters from upstage left.)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Excuse me, Corporal Abby, but has anyone seen my—

(CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN notices KATELYN holding her clipboard. She crosses to KATELYN and takes it. CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN gives KATELYN a look and then exits upstage left.)

KATELYN: (*sheepishly*) Yeah, I can't help it. I admit it. I'm a klepto.

CORPORAL ABBY: All right. . . . Well, I guess we'll all just have to keep a closer eye on our things! Okay. Well, that leaves us with just one more!

(The GIRLS turn to LEIGH.)

LEIGH: (*sarcastically*) What, you mean I can *finally* get a word in edgewise? Really?? Oh, you shouldn't have.

ANNIE: (*to MACKENZIE, under her breath*) Looks like I'm not the only one who needs to work on people skills.

LEIGH: Okay. Listen up and listen good. My name is Leigh Rawlins, and I am *not* a girl!! I am a boy. And I belong on the *other* side of the camp. *Not* here. Get it??

(There is a brief pause.)

CORPORAL ABBY: (*suddenly; knowingly*) Ohhhhhh, I see!

LEIGH: (*suspiciously*) What? See what?

CORPORAL ABBY: (*to GIRLS*) I think I know what Leigh's problem is. Do any of you girls want to guess what her problem is?

MACKENZIE: She's mean?

KATELYN: She's rude?

ANNIE: She's obnoxious?

ELLE: She eats too much?

JENNA: And she is so never going to get a boyfriend with clothes like that.

(CORPORAL ABBY puts an arm around LEIGH.)

CORPORAL ABBY: Nooooooo. Leigh here has a very rare psychological disease called Genderperplexia. I've read about it. In essence, she's a girl who has convinced herself that she's a boy.

JENNA, ELLE, ANNIE, KATELYN, MACKENZIE: (*knowingly*) Ohhhhhh!

LEIGH: I am *not* a girl. I am a boy!!!

CORPORAL ABBY: Sure you are, Leigh. (*to GIRLS*) Now, girls, I'm sure we all want to help Leigh get over her fear of becoming the woman she is, so I have an idea. Instead of calling her Leigh, let's start by giving her a more feminine name. Does anyone have any suggestions?

JENNA: Ooh, I know! We could call her Beulah!

LEIGH: Beulah?!?

ANNIE: Beulah's a dumb name.

(CORPORAL ABBY gives ANNIE a look.)

ANNIE: (*cont'd*) Uh, I mean . . . Beulah's a . . . decent name.

CORPORAL ABBY: Actually, Jenna, I was thinking more of giving her a name that's closer to her real name.

ELLE: Like Lizzie?

LEIGH: Lizzie?

CORPORAL ABBY: Yes. Exactly.

KATELYN: How about Leslie?

LEIGH: Leslie?!?

CORPORAL ABBY: That's pretty good.

MACKENZIE: Oh, I know! We can call her Leah! Get it? Leigh? Leah?

CORPORAL ABBY: Perfect! Okay, everyone. From now on, we'll call Leigh, Leah.

LEIGH: For the last time . . . I . . . am . . . NOT . . . a . . . GIRL!!!

CORPORAL ABBY: All right, girls. We've only got about two hours or so until lunch. We better start the trek to the cabin so you can get all your things put away before then.

(The GIRLS groan as they pick up their backpacks.)

ANNIE: Ugh. Ten miles. I did *not* sign up for this.

CORPORAL ABBY: Ten miles? . . . Who said it was ten miles to our cabin?

JENNA: Aren't the boys on a ten-mile trek to *their* cabin?

CORPORAL ABBY: Yes. But their cabin's not ten miles away. It's actually only about five minutes that way.

(CORPORAL ABBY points off stage right.)

CORPORAL ABBY: *(cont'd)* Sergeant Sheffield just likes to give the boys a good workout on their first day here, so he takes them around the lake a few dozen times. Our cabin's just two minutes this way. Follow me.

(CORPORAL ABBY exits stage left. MACKENZIE, KATELYN, ELLE, ANNIE, and JENNA follow her, relieved.)

LEIGH: Hmmmm . . . maybe being stuck with the girls won't be so bad after all.

(LEIGH picks up his backpack and exits stage left after the GIRLS. Lights fade.)

End of Scene.

ACT I, SCENE 2

SET: Camp Still Water girls' cabin; later that night

Lights rise on an empty bunkhouse. A few moments later, LEIGH drags himself through the door, stage right. With an utterly exhausted groan, he flops down onto the bed at downstage left.

LEIGH: I will . . . NEVER . . . move . . . again!

(A few moments later, the GIRLS rush in, stage right, full of energy and talking eagerly, with the exception of ANNIE who is her usual silent self.)

MACKENZIE: And then I said to him, "Are you *really* going to finish eating that hot dog? I mean, that's like your fifth one, right?" And he said, "Yeah, but they're not *all* for me. These two hot dogs are for Harry," so I said—

ELLE: You guys, do you think hot dogs can make you fat? I swear, I think I gained another pound just over dinner. Look at my belly. Does it look bigger to you?

KATELYN: That's ridiculous. You can't gain a whole pound at one meal, can you?

ANNIE: You can if you eat a pound of hot dogs. Or a pound of chips. Or a pound of anything.

ELLE: That makes sense. *(worriedly)* So how much do you think half a hot dog weighs? Because maybe I should have only eaten—

KATELYN: Elle! For the hundredth time, you're not fat!

MACKENZIE: Yeah. Lighten up!

ELLE: Lighten up?? Oh, no! You *do* think I'm fat!

ANNIE: Good going, Loud Mouth.

JENNA: *(dreamily)* You know who's got a cute mouth? That tall boy. You know. The one who had to eat his dinner standing up tonight because he told Sergeant Sheffield that if he sat down—

(MACKENZIE jumps on the bed next to LEIGH.)

MACKENZIE: Leah! There you are! We were looking all over for you! First we checked the cafeteria and then we went to the gymnasium and then to the camp store and then to the infirmary, and we thought about dragging the lake for your cold, lifeless dead body but Annie said—

(LEIGH groans.)

KATELYN: What's wrong, Leah? Are you sick?

ELLE: *(sympathetically)* Was it the hot dogs?

LEIGH: No. It was all the drills *after* the hot dogs. *(groaning)* I will never walk again.

MACKENZIE: Oh, come on. It wasn't so bad. That was equivalent to, like, the first twenty minutes of cheerleading practice. You know. With the running and the jump-roping and the crunches and the—

LEIGH: Ugh. Now I know why I play football!

JENNA: You play football?? But . . . football's such a *guy* sport.

ANNIE: No, it's not. I played football once.

LEIGH and JENNA: You did??

ANNIE: Yeah. Until I kicked the quarterback in the face. Then they kicked me off the team. It was the first day of practice.

LEIGH: Surprise, surprise.

JENNA: So, Leah . . . do any cute guys play on your team???

KATELYN: Well, those drills reminded *me* of the aerobics class I take back home. Two hours a day, five days a week.

MACKENZIE: You *do* have really nice abs.

KATELYN: Thank you.

(ELLE rubs her abdomen self-consciously.)

ELLE: I wish I had really nice abs.

ANNIE: Well, we all know *that's* impossible. In order to have *nice* abs, you need to have . . . abs.

ELLE: *(looking down at her belly)* That's true . . . maybe once I lose this baby fat . . .

KATELYN and MACKENZIE: You're not fat!

JENNA: You know who had *really* great abs? That boy with the dark hair. What was his name?

LEIGH: Yeah, about that never walking again thing. I've reconsidered.

(LEIGH jumps up out of bed and crosses to stage right.)

KATELYN: Where are you going, Leah? It's almost time for lights out.

JENNA: *(jumping up)* Ooh! Maybe she's going to sneak over to the boys' side of camp! I want to come with you!

MACKENZIE: Me too!

ANNIE: I'd like to go. Just so I can pound some of those idiots.

KATELYN: Yeah. They were acting extra idiotic at dinner tonight. Does anyone know why?

JENNA: *(enviously)* All I know is, they were certainly paying a lot of attention to *you*, Leah. Pointing and laughing and whispering . . . how'd you do it?

LEIGH: Okay. That's it. I'm outta here.

(LEIGH exits stage right.)

GUYS: *(offstage)* Get him!

SOUND: Squirt guns, LEIGH's shouts, and the GUYS laughter.

(A moment later, LEIGH reenters, stage right, his face and hair dripping.)

ELLE: Oh, no! Leah!

MACKENZIE: You're sopping! Let me get you a towel. It's a pink towel. I got it from my sister when she went to . . .

(MACKENZIE keeps talking as she exits stage left to get a towel, her monologue gradually fading.)

ANNIE: Those morons! Lemme at 'em! I'll push 'em in the lake!

(KATELYN catches ANNIE by the arm.)

KATELYN: Save it, Annie. We'll get back at them tomorrow when we completely toast them in the Cabin Challenge.

LEIGH: Cabin Challenge?

KATELYN: Yeah. Weren't you listening at dinner?

LEIGH: How could I? The guys kept shoving peas in my ears.

JENNA: *(with a wistful sigh)* Lucky duck.

KATELYN: Right. Well, our cabin has to compete in a challenge against the boys' cabin every day. And at the end of the month, we'll race them in the final Super Survival Challenge.

LEIGH: *(sarcastically)* Well . . . isn't that just . . . wonderful.

(MACKENZIE reenters stage left with the towel, still talking.)

MACKENZIE: . . . I mean, whose bright idea was it anyway to let them bring water guns to camp? They're boys! Of course they're going to use them on us. And it's not like there's anything we can—

JENNA: Wait a minute. Back up. . . . That was the boys out there?! Aw, why didn't somebody tell me??

KATELYN: *(shaking her head)* Jenna . . . you're hopeless.

(CORPORAL ABBY enters stage right.)

CORPORAL ABBY: All right, girls. It's after nine. Lights out.

(CORPORAL ABBY "switches off" the lights. Lights dim. CORPORAL ABBY exits, stage right. A moment later, CORPORAL ABBY steps back into the room, "switches on" the light, and straightens an item in the room.)

CORPORAL ABBY: *(cont'd)* There. That's better. All right. Good night, girls.

(CORPORAL ABBY "switches off" the light and exits again, stage right. Lights dim.)

ANNIE: Did Corporal Abby ever tell us *why* she was a camper here last year?

ELLE: No. I don't think so. Why?

ANNIE: Just wondering.

(KATELYN, JENNA, MACKENZIE, ELLE, ANNIE, and LEIGH cross to their beds. There is a moment of silence.)

MACKENZIE: Hey, has anyone seen my pillow?

(There is another moment of silence.)

ANNIE, ELLE, JENNA, and MACKENZIE: Katelyn!!

(KATELYN sits up sheepishly and throws a pillow at MACKENZIE.)

KATELYN: Sorry.

(Lights fade.)

End of Scene.

END OF ACT 1

ACT II

SCENE 1

SET: Camp Still Water girls' cabin; early in the morning one week later

SOUND: Relaxing music playing softly (optional)

Lights rise very slowly and dimly. All is peaceful and quiet as the girls and LEIGH sleep. And then . . .

SOUND: Trumpet blowing a loud fanfare

(The GIRLS jump up in their beds in shock. LEIGH jumps and falls out of his bed. CORPORAL ABBY enters stage right with a trumpet in her hand and a big smile on her face.)

CORPORAL ABBY: Good *morning*, campers! Rise and shine! It's nearly 6 A.M. Time to get up, girls!

(CORPORAL ABBY exits stage right. LEIGH collapses back onto the floor, facedown and groans. The GIRLS begin to get up sleepily, except for JENNA, who rolls over and goes back to sleep.)

KATELYN: Not again.

ANNIE: Must . . . kill . . . trumpet.

KATELYN: Don't bother. I'll just swipe it when she's not looking.

ANNIE: Good idea.

(MACKENZIE, ANNIE, and KATELYN exit stage left. ELLE notices JENNA still in bed and crosses to her.)

ELLE: Hey. Jenna. You better get up before Corporal Abby gets back. Remember what happened yesterday morning?

JENNA: I don't care. I'll do kitchen duty again. I'm in the middle of a fantastic dream.

ELLE: Well, maybe *you* don't care, but *I* do. I don't want to be stuck over a sink of soggy leftovers again! They're bad enough the first time around. Now, please . . . get up!

(ELLE exits stage left.)

JENNA: *(sitting up)* Oh, all right. Fine.

(JENNA notices LEIGH still on the floor.)

JENNA: *(cont'd)* Hey, Leah? You okay?

(LEIGH groans.)

JENNA: *(cont'd)* Okay. Just checking.

(JENNA exits stage left. LEIGH sits up, exhausted and frustrated.)

LEIGH: I . . . can't . . . *take it* anymore! I've gotta find a way out of here!

(LEIGH looks around furtively. Then HE grabs his backpack and tiptoes toward stage right. CORPORAL ABBY steps through stage right just before LEIGH can exit.)

CORPORAL ABBY: Well! Good morning, Leah! All ready?

LEIGH: Uh . . . yeah. Almost. Just forgot one last thing.

(LEIGH crosses to his bed and grabs a baseball cap, which HE puts on his head.)

CORPORAL ABBY: You know, Leah, if you spent a little more time on your appearance it might help you start feeling more feminine. Why, just look at you! You look like a . . . like a . . .

LEIGH: Guy??

CORPORAL ABBY: Well . . . yes.

LEIGH: That's because I *am* a—

(KATELYN, ANNIE, ELLE, JENNA, and MACKENZIE reenter, stage left, MACKENZIE still brushing her teeth and JENNA still running a hairbrush through her hair.)

KATELYN: Corporal Abby, it's just not fair!

ANNIE: Those stupid boys are dirty rotten cheaters!

JENNA: *(to ANNIE)* Hey, don't be so mean. They're not stupid.

ANNIE: But they *are* dirty rotten cheaters!

JENNA: Yeah . . . I guess they are.

CORPORAL ABBY: Now, girls, I know that yesterday's challenge in the archery range didn't exactly go in our favor—

KATELYN: *I'll* say. They nearly pinned Leah to a tree by her elbow!

ANNIE: Probably on purpose.

ELLE: *(putting a hand on LEIGH's shoulder)* Poor Leah!

CORPORAL ABBY: . . . but I happen to know that today's challenge is one that you girls should *definitely* be able to win . . . a relay race around the lake! So grab your running shoes and meet me down by the lake in fifteen minutes!

(CORPORAL ABBY exits stage right.)

ANNIE: Humph. We're never going to win these stupid challenges if the boys keep cheating.

KATELYN: Yeah.

LEIGH: Well . . . you could always try beating them at their own game.

(Everyone turns to look at LEIGH.)

ELLE: What do you mean?

JENNA: The boys have their own game? Ooh! I want to play!

LEIGH: They're using your weaknesses against you. Think about it. Why did you lose the fishing challenge?

ANNIE: Because Jenna was too busy batting her eyes at the boys to notice that her line was caught in a tree.

JENNA: Hey, it wasn't all my fault! They distracted me!

LEIGH: Okay. And why did you lose the canoeing challenge?

JENNA: (*eager; pleased to know the answer*) Oh, I know! Because Annie splashed the boys with her canoe paddle and tipped us over!

ANNIE: They were antagonizing me.

LEIGH: And why did you lose the pizza-eating challenge?

KATELYN: Because Elle said eating more than half a slice would make her fat.

ELLE: And Katelyn stole our pizza cutter.

ANNIE: And Mackenzie wouldn't stop talking long enough to eat.

(*Everyone looks over at MACKENZIE, who is still calmly brushing her teeth.*)

JENNA: You know, Mackenzie, you *are* awfully quiet in the mornings.

KATELYN: Yeah. What's up with that?

(*MACKENZIE pockets her toothbrush and shrugs.*)

MACKENZIE: I don't do mornings.

ANNIE: (*sighing with relish*) I love mornings.

LEIGH: *Anyways*, what I'm saying is that you're letting them use your weaknesses to keep you from winning. So what you need to do is—

KATELYN: Use *their* weaknesses to keep *them* from winning! All right!

LEIGH: Well, that's not *exactly* what I had in mind.

ELLE: But . . . how are we supposed to know what their weaknesses are?

(*Everyone looks at one another for a moment. Then they all turn to JENNA.*)

ANNIE, KATELYN, ELLE: Jenna . . .

JENNA: (*confused*) What? Why are you all looking at me?

KATELYN: Because you know the guys better than any of us!

ELLE: Yeah! You can help us beat them!

JENNA: But . . . but what if I don't *want* to beat them?

ANNIE, KATELYN, ELLE: Jenna!

JENNA: (*cowering*) All right, all right. I want to beat them. What do you want to know?

(*Lights fade.*)

End of Scene.

ACT II, SCENE 2

SET: Camp Still Water campground; later that morning

Lights rise. The guys stand at downstage right in a group. The girls and LEIGH enter stage left.

PATRICK: Well, well, well. If it isn't the girls. All six of them.

KATELYN: Congratulations. You can count.

ADAM: (*to LEIGH*) I'm surprised you dared to show your face today after yesterday's humiliation, Leigh. . . . Or should I say *Leann*?

ANNIE: Once again, Adam, the stupidity of your insults never ceases to amaze me.

ADAM: Don't worry about it. He knows what I'm talking about. Don't you, Leann?

LEIGH: You're going down, man.

(CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN enters stage right, clipboard in hand. SERGEANT SHEFFIELD and CORPORAL ABBY enter behind her.)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: All right, campers! Are we ready for today's Cabin Challenge?

(The CAMPERS respond unenthusiastically.)

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: *(cont'd)* I can't hear you!

CAMPERS: *(cheering more energetically)* Yes!

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Okay then! Each of you will be making one lap around the lake. Make sure to tag up with your teammate before you start. The first team to finish wins!

MACKENZIE: Wait a minute. That's not fair. There are six girls and only five guys.

JACOB: *(under his breath)* Ha. That's what *you* think.

ADAM: No, there are six guys. Me, Patrick, Brian, Mark, Jacob, and Harry.

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: *(looking down at her clipboard in confusion)* Harry? Who's Harry?

KATELYN: *(to ADAM)* Invisible friends don't count. *(turning to JOCELYN)* One of the boys should have to go twice.

PATRICK: Or one of *you* should have to sit out.

ANNIE: *I think you* should go twice.

PATRICK: *(getting into ANNIE's face)* Well *I think you* should sit out!

ANNIE: Go twice!

PATRICK: Sit out!

ANNIE: Go twice!

PATRICK: Sit out!!!

SERGEANT SHEFFIELD: Brady! . . . Settle down.

ADAM: *(patting the air beside him, consolingly)* It's okay, Harry. She didn't mean it.

CAMP DIRECTOR JOCELYN: Okay. Well, it looks like we *do* need one of you boys to run twice. Any volunteers?

END OF FREE PREVIEW