

***Brand New Script***

*a short, dark comedy about drama, denial & permission*  
**by Jennie Webb**

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## ***Brand New Script***

### **Characters:**

**BRIT:** Intense and intentionally quirky, definitely not popular but smart and probably could be if she set her mind to it. Or maybe not.

**ZOEY:** More awkward than her friend, smart but often seems clueless, almost opaque. Could never instinctively approach cool but might learn.

**DINA, DANA & DEANA:** Three inseparable girls known as Triple-D. Dina's the leader. Deana does the legwork. Dana gets caught in the middle. Together, they define top tier teen.

**Setting:**      **On campus, a space between classrooms**

**Time:**         **During the school year**

### *Casting:*

*One or more of the teens who comprise Triple-D could be played by Trans, non-binary or male actors who are comfortable playing characters who identify as female.*

### *Dialogue Notes:*

*— Indicates a character's dialogue is interrupted, by another character speaking, an event or a character abruptly shifting gears within a line of dialogue.*

*... Indicates a character is searching for words, does not complete a thought or leaves a line of dialogue open.*

### **Synopsis:**

*Brand New Script* is a short, dark comedy about drama, denial & permission that takes a slightly absurdist look at the role of prescription drugs on campus.

*Originally written as part of the immersive project, "Hall Pass," performed at San Diego and NYC high schools. Produced by Blind Spot Collective, "Hall Pass" was part of La Jolla Playhouse's Without Walls Festival 2019.*

## **Brand New Script**

*From a distance, we see two very young women hurrying across a space on a high school campus. They have left a classroom and head toward us. The first girl, Brit, is quite intense and wears her heart on her sleeve; she is followed by Zoey who is harder to read, almost like she's opaque. Brit is a little "cooler" than Zoey, but neither of them would be picked first for any team. They speak and move with a heightened immediacy.*

ZOEY:

Hey! Wait up! Where are you—?

BRIT:

*(interrupting)* Just leave me alone, okay?

ZOEY:

I don't understand... Slow down!

BRIT:

I should not have to explain myself to you, or to anyone!

ZOEY:

No, no, no. I get it. But—

*She's interrupted by Brit suddenly stopping in front of us. Perhaps Zoey runs into her.*

BRIT:

You just said you didn't.

ZOEY:

*(trying to catch her breath)* What?

BRIT:

Understand. You said you didn't understand. You "get it," but you don't understand?

*The two girls look at one another. Then Brit takes off again.*

ZOEY:

Wait! No...

*She hurries after Brit.*

I mean, yes! Please! Stop!

*We follow as they move to a different part of the space.*

BRIT:

I'm not the one who needs to stop. They need to stop.

ZOEY:  
Stop what? Who?

BRIT:  
Who do you think? And you: Stop following me. I want to be alone!

ZOEY:  
Okay, I know. But I... Hey! Please! I don't want to be alone, either!

BRIT:  
No! I said I *want* to be alone. Leave me alone! Go away.

ZOEY:  
No. No, please! I can't...

*Brit stops. Zoey looks as if she might collapse. She breathes hard as Brit watches and the audience begins to catch up with them. Then,*

BRIT:  
Are you going to be okay?

ZOEY:  
Yeah.... Yeah... I'm okay.

BRIT:  
Okay. But you have to admit it: What they did was completely inappropriate.

ZOEY:  
What did they do?

BRIT:  
Hello? Were you not there?

ZOEY:  
Well, yeah! I was sitting in the—

BRIT:  
*(interrupting)* Oh, my god. You are such an airhead. Are you *ever* there is the real question.

ZOEY:  
You mean about Noah?

BRIT  
Yes. About Noah. What was all that?

ZOEY:  
I...

*Very short pause.*

ZOEY:  
I don't understand.

BRIT:  
Everyone loves Noah. Noah's fantastic. Let's all talk about Noah and his awesome pecs and how he almost slipped out of his Speedo at the last swim meet!

ZOEY:  
Uh huh...

BRIT:  
Can we just move on from Noah? Or at the very least, take an afternoon Noah break?

ZOEY:  
Well, yeah...

BRIT:  
Thank you!

ZOEY:  
I mean, he is dead.

*Pause.*

BRIT:  
I know he's dead.

ZOEY:  
And that's why everyone's—

BRIT:  
*(interrupting)* I know! This is precisely my point. Enough already talking about dead people. Why is everyone so in love with death and tragedies around here? Can't we have organized discussions about nice things? About people who are still alive and it matters to?

ZOEY:  
It matters to the rest of us. It helps us process.

BRIT:  
So they say. But all this sitting around and "sharing" is like... we're not getting help dealing with horrible events, we're drowning in them. Who does that help?

ZOEY:  
A lot of people.

BRIT:

Oh. Like Triple-D? What's *that* about? My god. Could not shut them up.

ZOEY:

They were very close to him.

BRIT:

As close as they get to anyone besides themselves.

ZOEY:

No. Dina, Dana and Deana: They all really loved him.

BRIT:

You think? They're probably the ones who gave him the pills.

ZOEY:

Why would you say that?

BRIT:

Please! They're always talking about having scripts for everything and anything. "What's wrong? Swallow this!" He OD'd on prescription painkillers and now he's dead. You think they'd admit it was them?

ZOEY:

What? No. It definitely wasn't them. They said.

BRIT

Like I'd believe anything that comes out of Triple-D's collective mouth.

ZOEY:

No. Everyone said: He got them from his dad.

*Short pause.*

BRIT:

The pills?

ZOEY:

Yes. His dad has cancer.

BRIT:

Noah's dad? That's terrible!

ZOEY:

I know.

BRIT:

Has cancer or had cancer? Is he going to...? Oh, god, never mind. Puppies and rainbows. That's all I want right now. Keep your tragic updates and death toll to yourself, please.

*She looks straight at us, suddenly aware of the audience watching and listening to her for the first time. Then she heads through the middle of the audience to find another space, speaking as she moves.*

BRIT:

*(to the audience)* Excuse me. *(making her way through)* What, are they bringing in a bunch of randos to play on-campus mourners, here?

ZOEY:

*(to the audience)* Sorry, she's... *(to Brit)* Wait up! *(to the audience)* Excuse me. Sorry...

*She hurries through the audience after Brit. As we turn to follow them we see that Brit has already encountered three girls who define top tier teen. This is Triple-D.*

*There is a moment strained silence as Brit stands silently in front of them. Zoey is still with us, in the audience. When Triple-D speaks, it's as if from one being.*

DINA:

*(to Brit)* Hey.

DANA:

*(to Brit)* Hi.

DEANA:

*(to Brit)* So?

BRIT:

How did you—? I thought you were still in class, keening for Noah.

DINA:

Ooooooooooooooh we could not be more sad.

DANA:

Soooooooo sad!

DEANA:

So incredibly, incredibly sad!

BRIT:

I can tell. So why are you out here? They ran out of Kleenex?

DINA:

The question is, why are *you*? Should we worry?

DANA:

We were worried.

DEANA:

When you left, we were really, really worried.

BRIT:

Really? Well, you can always worry. But I'm fine. I had no idea my abrupt departure would cause such grave concern. No pun intended. I just needed to be alone. To get away from...

*She turns back around and sees the audience again. Zoey steps forward.*

ZOEY:

*(to Triple-D)* Hi, guys. How's it going? I'm really sad, too. Noah was a great guy. I know you were really, really close. *(to Brit)* What's keening?

*Brit gestures to Triple-D, who resume where they left off.*

DINA:

*(to Brit)* Ahhhhhhhh it's such a tragedy.

DANA:

A reeeeeeeal traaaaaagedy.

DEANA:

Aaaaaand his family's been through so much already!

DINA:

*(to Brit)* You know about the cancer?

DANA:

His father's got cancer.

DEANA:

Almost lost him last year.

DINA:

And the mother? Arthritis. Rheumatoid. It's crippling

DANA:

She had to have both hips replaced.

DEANA:

Lots of pain in that house.

DINA:

His older sister? Migranes.

DANA:

Soooo much pain in that house.



DEANA:

It's all too too too too much. For anyone.

BRIT:

What does that even mean?

*She turns and looks to the audience, as if for help.*

*(to the audience)* Just so you know, I did not ask for this and I don't need to hear it. This is Noah's family, not mine. It's none of my business!

ZOEY:

But it is our business! It's all of ours, they said. His mom and dad. It was like he was one of us, and we're all going through this. All of us, together. And they brought cupcakes! But it's still very... *(to Triple-D)* Like you said. Sad.

*Triple-D considers this. They then turn back to Brit.*

DINA:

*(to Brit)* We thought you might be depressed.

DANA:

It's easy to get depressed.

DEANA:

Really easy. I think I'm depressed.

DINA:

You're depressed?

DANA:

*(to Deana)* You didn't say you were depressed.

DEANA:

I know. But I feel it coming on. I think I have PTSD.

DINA:

I definitely have PTSD.

DANA:

I think the whole school has PTSD.

DEANA:

Well, that's depressing.

DINA:

You can get a script for that.

DANA:

PTSD?

DEANA:  
No, depression.

DINA:  
No, both. They go hand in hand.

ZOEY:  
Because they're cause and effect. PTSD causes depression. And anxiety. And many other symptoms, including antisocial behavior on occasion.

*Triple-D considers Zoey.*

DINA:  
Huh.

*And then,*

*(to Dana)* Do you feel anxious?

DANA:  
Not really. Not so much.

DEANA:  
But do you feel antisocial? Would a cupcake help?

*This hangs in the air. Triple-D then breaks out into hysterical laughter. Brit grabs Zoey and they move away.*

BRIT:  
*(to Zoey)* Let's get out of here.

DINA:  
No! Don't go.

*Triple-D follows the two girls.*

We're all in this together, right?! *(to the audience)* Come on!

ZOEY:  
*(to Brit, on the move)* See?

BRIT:  
You don't wanna know what I see.

DEANA:  
*(to Dina, pointing to Zoey, as they move)* Look at her. She's so on the spectrum.

DANA:  
You think?

DEANA:  
Or obsessive compulsive.

*Zoey stops.*

ZOEY:  
What?

DEANA:  
OCD? You can take something for that.

BRIT:  
Cut it out.

DINA:  
Hey! We're only trying to help, here!

ZOEY:  
*(to Brit)* It's okay.

BRIT:  
It is not! *(to Triple-D)* Just leave us alone.

DINA:  
You really think that's safe? We saw how you were in class.

DANA:  
You looked anxious.

DEANA:  
Do you have a panic disorder?

DINA:  
My mother has a panic disorder.

DANA:  
She does?

DEANA:  
So does mine. She got it after my stepfather died.

DANA:  
Really?

DINA:  
That's right! Talk about rare diseases.

DEANA:  
He couldn't figure out what to take!

DINA:  
That would give me a panic disorder!

DANA:  
My mother's bipolar.

*Very short pause.*

DINA:  
Yes. We know.

DANA:  
I'm just saying. It makes it very difficult. At our house.

DEANA:  
Does she go off her meds? If she's manic depressive—

DANA:  
*(interrupting)* Not the same as bipolar.

DINA:  
Are you sure?

DANA:  
Yes! It's my mother!

ZOEY:  
Actually, bipolar is just a newer name for manic depression. They both refer to the same disorder, a cycle of highs and lows, and medication is designed to even things out but sometimes a patient will quit taking the medication and then, in a manic episode which only others may recognize as dangerous, convince themselves that there's no need for pills at all.

*Pause.*

DINA:  
Wow.

DANA:  
Yeah.

DEANA:  
Okay. So who in your family...?

ZOEY:  
Oh. No one. I just read about it.

DEANA:  
*(to Dana)* What did I say? *(to Zoey)* Aspergers, right?

DINA:  
Definitely Aspergers.

DEANA:  
(to Zoey) What are you on?

ZOEY:  
What am I on?

BRIT:  
Listen. Have loads of Big Pharma fun, girls, but we're out of here.

ZOEY:  
No, it's okay. (to Triple-D) I'm actually not on anything. I am a bit OCD and we tried beta blockers which can be remarkably effective but my therapist decided I was better off without them.

DEANA:  
But... you're ADD, aren't you?

DINA:  
Who isn't ADD?

DANA:  
I'm not ADD.

DINA:  
Why not?

DEANA:  
It doesn't matter. You can get a diagnosis anyway.

DINA:  
(to Zoey) I can give you some of my pills. They'll help you focus.

ZOEY:  
No. My brother's ADHD.

DEANA:  
So you're set!

ZOEY:  
Why am I—?

DINA:  
(interrupting) You can just take his!

ZOEY:  
His pills? They work for him. He's the one with—

DEANA:

*(interrupting)* But you're the one who clearly needs help.

DINA:

Why don't just you try 'em?

DANA:

They're just pills.

DEANA:

It never hurts to try!

BRIT:

Hello? Did you hear what you just said? Or do you never actually listen to yourselves? "Just pills?"

*Triple-D can't quite process this. Brit then turns to the audience.*

*(to the audience)* Obviously I'm the only one with a problem here!

*She starts to leave again.*

DINA:

*(to Brit)* Wait! Are you in pain, sweetie?

*Brit turns back to Zoey.*

BRIT:

*(to Zoey)* Are you coming with me?

DANA:

Don't leave us!

DEANA:

Let us help you.

BRIT:

You can't help me! I am in pain because terrible things are happening in our lives, in the world. Life sucks and it's like all you want to do is sit around, swaddling yourselves in its suckage!

DINA:

That is totally untrue!

DANA:

And totally unfair!

DEANA:

And you don't have to be in pain! You can get any prescription you want.

DINA:  
Or you can use one of ours.

DANA:  
Did I tell you I have lupus?

DEANA:  
Since when?

DANA:  
And fibromyalgia.

DINA:  
Ooooooh! Now we're talking chronic pain! They have great stuff on the market.  
You have a new script yet?

BRIT:  
*(to Zoey)* Now do you understand what I mean? What's going on around here?  
Now do you get it?

ZOEY:  
I understand... but I don't get it.

BRIT:  
Believe me, neither do I. I don't want to live in a one-pill-fits-all society, thank you very much.

ZOEY:  
But where do the pills come from?

BRIT:  
Two words...

DINA, DANA & DEANA:  
Medicine! Cabinet!

*Triple-D again breaks out into hysterical laughter.*

BRIT:  
That isn't what I—

ZOEY:  
*(interrupting, to Triple-D)* But whose? Any medicine cabinet?

DINA:  
Ask your mother.

DANA:  
Ask your father.

DEANA:

No! Ask your brother!

BRIT:

I was going to say “Your Doctor.” A doctor needs to—

DINA:

*(interrupting)* Oh, believe me: You can always find a doctor. Our parents are all on board.

DANA:

Totally on board.

DEANA:

Yours will be, too!

BRIT:

*(to Triple-D)* So it doesn't matter what you take? Do you not want to feel the pain, or do you not want to feel anything?

*Triple-D considers this.*

*(to Zoey)* They don't care about making stuff better around here, they're just looking for something to take them away from it. Pretend like everything's safe when it's not!

ZOEY:

And how is that any different than running away?

BRIT:

What?

ZOEY:

You said all you wanted was puppies and rainbows. Which are great—especially puppies—but there's so much more to life than that. Even if it does suck. Or isn't safe and doesn't make sense. Sometimes especially if it doesn't make sense—because then it's way more interesting and actually, nothing is ever 100% safe but you can't just hide and if you run away, then you have to go back and figure it out while everyone else is way ahead of you. That really sucks.

*Short pause. Brit looks at the audience. Then,*

BRIT:

Let's go back to class.

*She heads back through the audience, followed by Zoey and Triple-D.*

DINA:

Ooooooooooh, I'm so glad we could help! So much right now *doesn't* make sense.



DANA:  
It's hard. It's sad.

DEANA:  
But take it from us: Problems don't go away all by themselves.

DINA:  
You need a prescription!

BRIT:  
*(moving away)* Right. *(to Zoey)* Maybe there are still cupcakes.

DANA:  
And if not, we'll find you a something good.

DEANA:  
I've got a brand new script that will take care of anything!

ZOEY:  
*(moving away, to Brit)* You see? That does not sound at all safe.

DINA:  
Oh, it's totally safe! I looked it up. It's all online.

*Brit suddenly turns back around to face the audience and Triple-D.*

BRIT:  
You know what else you can look up? Our friend Noah. Who is now dead!

*Short pause.*

You have a brand new script that will take care of that?

*Triple-D, now surrounded by the audience, considers this and for the first time, can't even begin to come up with an answer.*

***End of Play***