

## NOTES

In recent years, bullying has become one of the most difficult social issues facing our nation. In the following two alternating monologues, we witness bullying from two different perspectives: the bystander, who witnesses the bullying, and in a small way, is a participant in the act, and we meet the target of the bullying. This selection should be performed by a male and be entered in Dramatic Interpretation, or this play could be performed by two males and be entered in Duo Interpretation. Bullying is a mystifying activity concerning today's youth. The psychological impact this activity has on all involved is far more unsettling than merely two people at odds with each other. This play could be a tour-de-force for the right performer(s), and careful thought should be given to how best to illustrate the internal dynamics of both characters involved. The ending *should* leave the audience members pondering what they would do when encountering bullying themselves. It's an important subject, so play it with 100% honesty.

**Dave:** I have lived in this small town all my life. Like a lot of towns in West Texas, the population may be small, but the lay of the land is as far as you can see. Gives a guy a lot of room to spread out, you know? I've had the same friends since I was in first grade. And we're tight, you know? Really tight. There's me, Jack, Kevin, Tommy, Calvin, and Mike. The six of us have played football together since we were old enough to run with a ball. Everyone in town knows we're destined for a football championship before we graduate, and we expect to deliver! Mr. Phillips, down at the *Pump and Go* gives us free fountain drinks every time we come into the store. And Mr. and Mrs. Hill, who run the local *Dairy Queen*, never charge us for burgers and shakes after the game—even when we lose...which, by the way, has only been once this season. Shoot, the people in town treat us like we're celebrities or something.

**Tag:** When my parents told me we were moving from Los Angeles to Texas, I thought, 'Great! It will be just like in the movies!' Besides, going to such a large school, it's hard to make friends. Everyone has his or her clique, and it's really hard to get to know anyone. Going to a big school is like going to a department store. (*Laughs*) No, really. It's like...Preppies over here...Jocks over there. Stoners outside...Gothic kids in the back... I looked forward to being able to know everyone in the school by their first and last names. My parents said the change of environment would be

good for all of us. My sister has a lot of allergies, and Dad said the fresh air would cure her in no time. It was going to be a new beginning for all of us.

**Dave:** Our senior year was going just as we had planned. It was almost time for the playoffs, and our coach said if we stuck to the game plan, our state championship was just four games away! Then this new kid shows up. He looked like he was dressed for Halloween or something. His hair was all spiked up; he wore metallic shirts, and had an earring. Talk about *Hitchhiker from Another Galaxy*...we thought an alien had invaded! His name was Taylor, but he wanted everyone to call him by his nickname, Tag. I think he was from California or something...but he might as well have been from Mars as far as we were concerned.

**Tag:** It was harder than I thought to make friends at a small school. The teachers were nice, but the kids at school kept their distance. My mother suggested I get involved in some school activities, but it's hard to join anything halfway through a semester. The cheerleaders were asking students to make "spirit gifts" and present them to the team on Friday before their big area championship game. So, I decorated the boxes with all we had in Mom's box of craft supplies—puffy paint—then filled the boxes full of Mom's chocolate chip cookies. Looking at my finished 'spirit gifts,' I thought...they'll probably laugh and think they're "gag gifts." Honestly, the boxes looked like the Teletubbies made them.

**Dave:** So it's Friday at lunch, and people are giving us stuff left and right. Then, the new kid walks over to our table and hands us these boxes. He said his mother made the cookies, so they're edible. Then he said, "Good luck at the game tonight," and starts to walk away. Mike shouts back, "Thanks, Fag!" The guy turns around slowly and says, "It's Tag." Mike says, "Whatever." And the other guys start laughing, while Jack and Tommy are giving each other high fives. I just get up and put my tray away. I felt sorry for the guy. I really did.

**Tag:** That night, my parents decided to take my sister and me to the game. Since it's in town, we can watch the game and afterwards, go eat dinner at the downtown café. During the game, I notice the guys looking up in the stands to where my family is sitting. Dad asks me if these are my new friends. I just stare at the field and say, "Yeah."

**Dave:** During half time, the guys in the locker room start making "after-the-game" plans. Then, Calvin starts saying something about the "fag in