

LUNCH MONEY

A short play by

Arianna Rose

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Characters

(in order of appearance)

SONDRA, female, 11. Smartest girl in her school.

DEX, male*, 11. Likes SONDRA, bullying tendencies. Leader of the “Tuffs”.

LEE, any gender, 11. Friend of DEX. Athletic, a “Tuff”.

CECIL, male, 11, British. Mature for his age.

TIME:

The present.

PLACE:

The cafeteria of Hemingway elementary school.

Author’s Note: This play can be done with children the approximate ages of the characters, or by adults pretending to be children.

Any ethnicity for any of the characters.

**Dex can be played by a female. Check with the playwright to see which lines need to be changed if you want to downplay the attraction DEX has for SONDRA.*

SCENE ONE

(The lunchroom of Hemingway Elementary School. SONDRA, DEX and LEE are sitting at a table. They have pizza slices on their lunch trays)

Food! Yes!

DEX

I failed that math test big time.

LEE

Me too. What about you, Sondra?

DEX

I thought it was easy.

SONDRA

Queen of the nerds.

LEE

I hate when you call me names, Dex.

SONDRA

Too bad.

DEX

Tuffs rule!

LEE

Tuffs rule!

DEX

You sound like idiots.

SONDRA

You used to be an idiot too. A founding member of the Tuffs.

DEX

That was third grade! We are sixth-graders now.

SONDRA

The rules still apply. Once a Tuff, always a Tuff.

DEX

I don't agree. Some people mature.

SONDRA

LEE

(mocking her)
“Some people mature”.

SONDRA

Stuff it, Lee.

DEX

Ever since we got back from summer break you’ve been so different.

SONDRA

And you’re the same.

DEX

What’s that supposed to mean?

SONDRA

...I can’t believe I hang out with you guys.

DEX

I can’t believe we made it to Friday.

LEE

Pizza Day!

DEX

Only the best day of the week.

(CECIL enters with a lunch bag)

CECIL

Might I sit here?

LEE

(mocking)
Might I sit here?

DEX

What are you, British?

CECIL

Yes. Cecil Johns. It’s a pleasure.

DEX

The new kid.

LEE
“Theth-il”.

DEX
Good one!

SONDRA
That’s not how you pronounce it.

DEX
Whatever. It’s a stupid name.

CECIL
It’s been in my family for years. My father just got transferred here.

SONDRA
That’s so cool!

DEX
Are you in love with him now?

SONDRA
I’m not in love with anybody.

DEX
I can be British too you know. *(affects a Sean Connery accent)* The name’s Bond. James Bond.

CECIL
Excellent impersonation.

DEX
Are you making fun of me?

CECIL
What gave you that impression?

DEX
I’m warning you, Cecil.

LEE
This is our turf. And we’re the Tuffs.

SONDRA
Never mind them. Do you have your lunch money? It’s pizza day.

CECIL
Yes, I heard. But...

DEX

Lee, look! *(to Cecil)* He has a bag lunch!

LEE

A bag lunch! What are you, five?

(DEX and LEE both laugh)

CECIL

My mum- she likes to do this for me...you know how it is.

DEX

Aww, mummy made him an eeny weeny lunch.

SONDRA

Stop it!

LEE

Look around, Brit boy. Everybody here buys their lunch.

DEX

Just steal the money out of her purse, man. That's what I do.

SONDRA

That's awful.

DEX

You didn't mind so much when I was able to buy you that extra Ding Dong.

LEE

You could at least spring for a lunchbox, man. A paper bag is so...

DEX

Sixth grade.

SONDRA

Ignore them, Cecil. What do you have for lunch?

CECIL

Umm...rice, some chicken thing...

SONDRA

Do you want my extra milk?

CECIL

No! No, thank you.

DEX

Baby doesn't want his milk.

SONDRA

Why are you being so mean?

DEX

Why are you being so nice to him?

CECIL

I don't mean to cause any trouble.

DEX

If you are going to sit at our table, you have to eat what we eat.

LEE

(moving a pizza slice towards Cecil's mouth)

Here it comes!

CECIL

I'd really rather not...

(DEX grabs CECIL's bag lunch away.)

(DEX and LEE play a game of "Monkey in the Middle" with CECIL trying to get his lunch back back)

SONDRA

I swear, Dex, if you don't stop that right now...

(CECIL grabs his lunch bag as Dex is distracted by SONDRA)

CECIL

Ha!

SONDRA

Come on, Cecil, let's find a new lunch table. Without these creeps.

(Enraged, DEX grabs CECIL by the arm and indicates to LEE to grab the other arm)

DEX

Our school...

DEX, LEE

Our rules!

(LEE holds CECIL'S arms back as DEX tries to shove the pizza into CECIL'S mouth. CECIL clamps his mouth shut and move his head from side to side)

CECIL

(making closed mouth sounds for 'No' 'Stop')

SONDRA

Leave him alone!

DEX

Your girlfriend wants to protect you.

SONDRA

You jerk!

(SONDRA attacks DEX, trying to get him off CECIL. DEX nods to LEE. LEE drops CECIL's arms, and DEX and LEE start to walk away. CECIL starts to pull himself together.)

DEX rushes CECIL, pries open Cecil's mouth and shoves in a piece of pizza)

CECIL

Aagghh!

(CECIL starts having a reaction to the dairy. The others back off, horrified)

SONDRA

What's the matter?

(CECIL frantically grabs for his epi-pen, in his pants pocket or backpack)

CECIL

Allergic...

(CECIL injects himself with the epipen. The children react)

SONDRA

Wow.

LEE

You're allergic to pizza?

CECIL

To the cheese. To dairy.

SONDRA

You could have killed him!

DEX

I didn't know!

SONDRA

I don't know why I ever liked you. You're a – criminal!

DEX

Shut up!

LEE

You should have told us.

SONDRA

That...was pretty awesome. How did you learn to do that?

CECIL

My mum's a nurse. She taught me. I've had to use it a few times...birthday parties,
(looking at DEX) bullies...

LEE

Help! *(pause)* Why are there never any teachers around?

CECIL

Go to the office. Call 911 for an ambulance, then my parents. I have to go to the emergency room and they'll take care of me there.

DEX

Are you going to – die?

CECIL

Not if you get me to the emergency room.

LEE

On it. DEX...are you coming?

DEX

...Alright. Sorry.

(to SANDRA)

Sandra! I'm sorry.

(SANDRA shrugs.)

(LEE and DEX exit)

SONDRA

Do you need some water? To lie down? ...I don't know what to do.

CECIL

It's okay. It's not the first time this has happened. Is Dex your- boyfriend?

SONDRA

No. He likes to think he is, but...I'm only eleven! I don't want a boyfriend.

CECIL

Oh.

SONDRA

But I like having – friends.

CECIL

I'm an excellent friend.

SONDRA

I bet you are. I have plans, you know. I'm going to be the first woman to run for Senate in this district. I'm going to be the lead singer for a rock band, and I'm also going to find a cure for cancer.

CECIL

Well, you'd best get on it then. That's a lot for one lifetime.

SONDRA

I'm starting small, of course. I'm going to run for class president.

CECIL

You've got my vote.

SONDRA

Thank you! That's why I have no time for boyfriends.

CECIL

Fair enough. Perhaps I could be your campaign manager. I could...make buttons and posters and circulate surveys...

SONDRA

...Perhaps.

CECIL

There's a lot to plan then.

SONDRA

I guess so.

CECIL

Then when I get out of the hospital, I suggest we sit together at lunch so we can strategize your campaign.

SONDRA

Only if you promise not to eat any dairy.

CECIL

That will be a very easy promise to keep.

(The sound of an ambulance siren is heard. SONDRA holds out her hand to CECIL. He goes to take it, but she drops coins into his hand instead)

CECIL

What's that for?

SONDRA

Lunch money.

CECIL

Thanks.

(Lights fade to BLACK as the siren gets louder)

THE END