

GOAT COASTER

By Louise Schwarz

GOAT COASTER

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GOAT COASTER

*dedicated to my mother and father, Janet & Philip Schwarz,
who endeavored to teach me both skepticism and curiosity about the way history is
presented in both fraught and bizarre locations*

GOAT COASTER

CAST: 9 WOMEN, 1 MAN

KELLY	16, a sensitive girl who is a bit submissive to her best friend Delaney in particular, but does have backbone
JO ANN	17, a loner, comes across as an angry young woman
IONE	17, female, a bit of a know-it-all but means well
SABRINA	16, female, very inquisitive, curious, warm, and messy
GINA	16, female, somewhat droll, very smart
FIONA	19, female, former class president, super-confident, big personality, big gestures, very Type-A
EVE	16, female, shy and nervous, self-conscious
DELANEY	17, female, loves attention, not quite as great at holding court as she thinks she is
COOPER	17, male, affable but short-tempered
BRIANA	16, female, sarcastic, smart, a little tough

Casting Notes: The characters of Gina or Eve can be gender-swapped (or played as non-binary) as Gino or Evan if necessary.

Punctuation Notes: A slash in the middle of a line of dialogue (e.g., “I guess I must’ve / just thought because of”) indicates the moment at which the line should be interrupted by the next speaker. If the punctuation looks confusing, such as a question that ends with a period, a declarative sentence that ends with a question mark, what feels like a missing comma, etc., this is an indication of how the line should be delivered (e.g., with disinterest or as a rhetorical question, with uncertainty, rushed and excited, etc.).

Running Time Notes: It is permissible to remove some or all of the even-numbered scenes for the purpose of fitting into a one-act time slot. The running time of the full play is approximately 50-55 minutes, while removal of the even-numbered scenes can get it closer to 35-40 minutes.

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A theme park. Locations include a staff break room, a turnstile, and a games/refreshment stand.

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SCENE 1

The employee break room at Golden Olden Adventure Towne (GOAT), an amusement park in the exurbs of a major Southern city. Lockers, benches, small tables.

At rise, DELANEY is trying to button up her costume, a dress which tries to be that of a wealthy colonial woman, but is neither accurate nor well-fitting. KELLY is trying to help her with it. KELLY is wearing a standard GOAT uniform. IONE enters in her street clothes.

IONE. *(Entering.)* OH MY GOD.

DELANEY. What?

IONE. That's not what I think it is, is it?

KELLY. What do you think it is?

IONE. That's not like a -- *(Whispers loudly.)* Slave costume, is it?

DELANEY. Oh my God, what is your problem?

IONE. I have no problem, I'm saying maybe *this* is a problem!

DELANEY. No, it says -- *(Picks up a folder.)* "Puritan woman." So I'm a Puritan woman.

IONE. Oh.

KELLY. She's a Puritan woman! Obviously!

IONE. Okay good, I was just making *sure*, because that would be really messed up!

DELANEY. Yeah, it's just like a random colonial lady, I don't know. Is this what you think *slaves* wore?

IONE. I guess more like a *slaveholder*.

DELANEY. Uh, *no*, I think this is *before* all that stuff.

IONE. Oh yeah, what year?

DELANEY. I don't know, like the 1700s?

IONE. If it's after 1619 I have bad news for you.

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KELLY. Well what do they have *you* wearing?

IONE. I don't have a costume, I'm an engineer.

DELANEY. A what? No you're not.

IONE. Yeah, I'm a ride engineer.

KELLY. So you know about like the hydraulics of roller coasters and stuff?

IONE. Log flume.

DELANEY. Lucky.

IONE. Fair warning, everyone's about to *descend* on y'all.

KELLY. Who, what do you mean?

IONE. *(Picks out a locker, starts putting away her things.)* I mean Gina's parents just pulled up in the airport shuttles.

KELLY. Who's coming from the airport?

DELANEY. Who's Gina?

IONE. Gina Severino who played the tuba in band?

DELANEY. She works here too?

IONE. Uh *yeah*, and her parents have the airport shuttles.

KELLY. What are you talking about, Ione? Who's coming from the airport?

IONE. Nobody, *Kelly*. Gina's parents own that airport shuttle company thing?

KELLY. Oh.

IONE. So they're moonlighting as a shuttle company to bring everyone who's working here.

DELANEY. What do you mean moonlighting? *(All of a sudden, SABRINA, BRIANA, JO ANN, GINA, EVE, and COOPER come into the room, chatting excitedly, all in street clothes. During the following dialogue, Jo Ann has her head down and makes a beeline for the locker farthest away from anyone else. She sees it has something in it already and slams it shut and moves to the next one. This hostility clearly startles Eve, who goes in the opposite direction to pick a locker. During all of this, the others are each at various stages of checking their folders, picking lockers, and putting things away. After Jo Ann puts a few things away, she sits on the bench, clutching her backpack.)*

SABRINA. Do we know where we get locks?

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IONE. No locks. Honor system.

SABRINA. Really?

DELANEY. Uh hello, Cooper?

COOPER. What. Oh hey Delaney.

DELANEY. What are you *doing* in here?

COOPER. Comin' to work.

DELANEY. But you're a *guy*.

COOPER. Guys work here.

KELLY. I think she means 'cause this is the girls' changing room?

COOPER. No it's not.

DELANEY. What?

COOPER. This is everyone, it says right out front "Employee Break Room."

(Delaney's eyes widen.)

KELLY. Oh my god.

DELANEY. Oh my god! Oh my god, you guys! *(Trying to get the whole group's attention.)* You guys, oh my god, you will not believe what just happened! This is so embarrassing!

KELLY. Hilarious!

SABRINA. What happened?

EVE. Are you okay? Is everyone okay?

DELANEY. I *totally* thought this was the *ladies'* room!

SABRINA. *(Points.)* No that's over / there.

DELANEY. No I mean I totally just changed in here! Just stripped right down, just hanging out all over, I thought it was just the *ladies'* locker room!

(Cooper walks off and picks a locker.)

KELLY. That would've been the *worst* if someone walked in!

DELANEY. Yeah, see I must've thought that because when I came for my *character* training I just changed in here with, like, all the college girls and stuff, so I guess I must've / just thought because of

IONE. No, the ladies' room is there *(Points.)*, men's room is there and the gender-neutral bathroom is there.

(Eve exits in the direction of the ladies' room.)

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DELANEY. Yeah, so funny, someone could've just. Walked in. And seen me *naked*.

SABRINA. Are we supposed to get naked?

DELANEY. What?

SABRINA. Why were you naked, are we not supposed to wear our regular (*Whispers loudly.*) *underpants* with our costumes? (*During this, Briana and Cooper each go off to the restrooms with their bags. Gina notices this and follows a moment later.*)

DELANEY. You're a character? I didn't see you here for the character *training*.

SABRINA. I came last Saturday, they had a bunch of different time slots.

DELANEY. Oh.

SABRINA. (*Meekly holding up part of her costume.*) I'm a bird?

DELANEY. Oh I see, so you're like a cartoon person, that makes sense that we had different training. I'm playing an *actual* character.

SABRINA. (*Putting her costume on a bench.*) Who's your character?

DELANEY. Frontier Woman!

IONE. I thought it was Puritan Woman?

KELLY. Isn't it Pioneer Woman?

DELANEY. (*Doing a pose.*) What do you think I look like?

KELLY. A glamorous Southern Belle!

DELANEY. No, I don't wanna be *that*, that's so *loaded* now.

SABRINA. (*To Jo Ann.*) What do you think? (*Walks over.*) What's your name again? Miss Walker's Government class, right?

JO ANN. Jo Ann.

SABRINA. Jo Ann, right! (*Points to herself.*) Sabrina.

KELLY. Do you think Delaney looks like a Pioneer Woman, a Puritan Woman, or a Frontier Woman?

JO ANN. (*Shrugs.*) I think she looks like an old-timey woman.

KELLY. Yes, that's it!

DELANEY. No, *Kelly*, that's really vague, okay?

SABRINA. (*Tugs on Jo Ann's backpack.*) So what's your character / Jo Ann?

JO ANN. (*Jumping up.*) BACK OFF!

SABRINA. (*Jumping back.*) Whoa! Jeez. Okay.

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IONE. *(To Jo Ann.)* Are you okay?

SABRINA. What about me?

IONE. Jo Ann?

JO ANN. I'm *fine.* *(Sabrina crosses back to Delaney and Kelly.)*

SABRINA. Um, did you guys / see that??

IONE. So are you a vendor? 'Cause they have uniforms, so you might want / to ask the

JO ANN. I'm a *ride engineer.* *(Awkward pause.)*

IONE. Really?

JO ANN. Yes, is that a problem? Are you the *empress* of ride engineers here at Golden Olden Adventure Towne?

DELANEY. The *empress*?

KELLY. That's funny! The "empress!"

IONE. So like, which ride? No big deal, just curious. I'm at the log flume, but I'm pretty experienced here.

JO ANN. Double Millennium Kamikaze Coaster. *(Silence. This is the premiere ride of the park.)*

IONE. But that's -- but that's brand new.

KELLY. Wow! How do you –

(FIONA bursts in, in her managerial GOAT uniform, clapping her hands. Fiona is 19, graduated from high school last year or the year prior, was class president, and has a very big, confident personality. She tends to punctuate what she says with very large physical gestures.)

FIONA. Boom boom boom, young whippersnappers, it is the *big moment!* Let's go, let's go! *(Eve, Gina, Cooper, and Briana rush back in. Cooper is in a colonial costume, Briana is a bunny, and Eve and Gina wear standard GOAT vendor uniforms.)*

DELANEY. *(To Briana.)* Oh my god are you a *rabbit* that's so *weird!*

BRIANA. Your mom is weird.

GINA. What'd you say about my mom??

BRIANA. Nobody said anything about / your mom

FIONA. Okay kids, let's everyone take a big deep breath, today is the first day of the summer season, are y'all ready to make it the best Golden Olden Adventure Towne summer ever? *(A few scattered "mm-hms." Eve claps*

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lightly and nervously.) I said, are y'all ready to make it the best Golden Olden Adventure Towne summer ever??!!

COOPER. Yeah, okay.

JO ANN. *(To the floor, oddly angrily.)* HELL YEAAAAHHHHHH!!!!

(Everyone looks at Jo Ann. Fiona is thrown for a moment.)

FIONA. Well. Okay great, that is the kind of enthusiasm I like to see.

Look, y'all. I get it. I was y'all's age once, I know it feels "so stupid" and customers are "annoying," and y'all can come back here on your breaks and vent and blow off steam and complain till the cows come home, okay?

But the job is the job, y'all, so you gotta go out there and put on a big goofy smile and make these people feel like this is the happiest place in the world and also it's the olden times or Dixie Times or -- *(Ione clears her*

throat.) No, not that, we're not sayin' that, just *colonial* times but just the good parts where people were polite and friendly, okay y'all? The nice

colonial times but also right now and real current and trendy with the scariest, coolest rides anywhere in the country. Or the *hemisphere*, y'all.

And do not have one single interaction with a park visitor without mentioning the Double Millennium Kamikaze Coaster, it can be real tongue twister. So just say it a hundred times fast, right? Okay? So I'm gonna take y'all on one last quick tour and make sure everyone else is where they're supposed to be, okay? Let's do this, y'all! Woo-hoo! *(She turns and motions for them to follow her, there are a few scattered claps and "woo-hoos" as they file out. Almost immediately, Sabrina comes back in. She goes into Cooper, Briana, and Kelly's lockers and pockets*

something from each that we cannot see. Then she grabs her bird costume, which she'd left on a bench. As quickly as she came in, she rushes off.)

SABRINA. Sorry, forgot my costume, let's do this!! It's gonna be so fun!! *(Music. Blackout. End of scene.)*

SCENE 2

A refreshments stand in the park. Gina stands behind it in her uniform and an apron.

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GINA. (*Deadpan.*) Can I help you? Or may I help you? We have an absolute smorgasbord of goodness for your refreshment. Can I get you a Coke? Or a Diet Coke? Or a Clear Coke? (*Beat.*) Okay, a Sprite? Or Orange Coke Cherry Coke Blackberry Coke Vanilla Coke Diet Coke with Lime? Or maybe an Icee? (*Beat.*) We have all the flavors of Icee, Cherry, Blueberry, Coke, Diet Coke, Orange Coke Cherry Coke Blackberry Coke Vanilla Coke Diet Coke with Lime Icee? (*Beat.*) No, take your time. (*Beat.*) No that's okay, sometimes it's real hard to decide. You gotta pick just the right thing to quench that thirst. (*Pause.*) You ready? (*Pause.*) Okay, is this an *existential* crisis, or...? (*Music. Blackout. End of scene.*)

SCENE 3

The employee break room. A general buzz as people are getting their things together at the end of the shift. Kelly, Jo Ann, Ione, Sabrina, Eve, Delaney, Cooper, and Briana are there.

BRIANA. Okay but wait, but wait! Here's my question! So there's people who get whole *degrees* in the United States Constitution, right? Like constitutional scholars, right?

COOPER. Right.

BRIANA. And everybody's constantly debating each other all the time, like trying to parse the *meaning* of the Constitution, like trying to decide what the forefathers meant and how that applies to some modern legal situation or civil rights issue.

SABRINA. Are we supposed to leave the costumes here overnight or do we take them / home with us?

EVE. Um, I think we leave costumes but take uniforms?

BRIANA. Yeah we share costumes so they stay but we rent the uniforms for the whole season, it gets docked from our pay. And so *first* of all the Civil War happens not even a whole one hundred years after they sign the Constitution which, if you think about it is really not very long so maybe

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it's *slightly* hyperbolic to talk about it like it's the greatest foundational document in the history of the / world, best country builders ever or –

GINA. (*Entering from ladies' room in street clothes.*) Treason! Treason! Off with her head!

BRIANA. Oh my God would you please. So but my point is, the *other* thing is, so there's the whole heated debate about slavery and everything and you've got *one* side saying "hey, slavery's completely unconstitutional, this isn't what the founders meant at all" and you've got this other side saying, "no way, it's completely baked into constitutional language, the founders absolutely meant for this to be absolutely as American as *baseball*," right?

(*Cooper is trying to listen but also a little freaked out, digging around in his things.*)

IONE. I highly doubt there was baseball before the Civil War.

BRIANA. There was baseball before the Civil War.

IONE. I highly doubt that.

BRIANA. Well, there was.

GINA. Get to the point!

BRIANA. Well plus there was a whole other side that was like "no, the constitution *totally* defends slavery *and* slavery is evil so we have to burn the constitution, it's bad."

GINA. Like I said, *treason*.

JO ANN. Garrison.

BRIANA. What?

JO ANN. William Lloyd Garrison. Nothing.

BRIANA. But what I'm saying is, I get why we have all these debates and experts and people who spend their lives interpreting this document *now* but why was that happening in like 1850?

KELLY. (*Quietly.*) Um, you guys? (*Touches her neck, looks in her backpack, touches her neck again, on the verge of tears.*)

DELANEY. Because, *Briana*, it was still the law of the land!

BRIANA. I know, but why did they need to interpret it? It was new! Why'd they have to be like "well, according to eminent scholar so-and-so" when they could just be like "hey Dad, what'd you mean when you wrote this part of the Constitution?"

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IONE. Okay but it wouldn't really be anyone's dad, because the life spans / back then

KELLY. You GUYS!

BRIANA. What?

KELLY. I'm *really freaking out here!*

DELANEY. What happened? (*Cooper slams his locker shut.*)

SABRINA. Are you okay?

KELLY. My locket! I can't find it!

DELANEY. Oh no.

GINA. What locket?

EVE. It's not with your stuff?

KELLY. No, I looked through *everything*, I put it *right here in the locker!*

SABRINA. I'm sure it's fine, are you sure you were even wearing it today? Maybe you weren't even wearing it today!

DELANEY. No, she was definitely wearing it, she always wears it, it's from her *birth mother*.

KELLY. Delaney!

BRIANA. A locket from your birth mother? What are you, Little Orphan Annie?

KELLY. (*Through tears.*) Who *is* that?

BRIANA. From the -- seriously? From the movie!

COOPER. My wallet's gone.

DELANEY. (*Gasps.*) Oh my God!

EVE. Are you sure?

COOPER. Yeah I'm *sure!*

GINA. But why would you leave your wallet here?

COOPER. I don't know, they said the room was locked, it was too big to carry with me, I don't have any pockets!

DELANEY. On your costume? There's totally pockets on your costume! (*Touches him playfully.*) They're here, and here, and here –

COOPER. Stop, Delaney, there's no pockets on Colonial Man, Colonial Man's pockets are all decorative!

DELANEY. Oh. (*Steps back.*) Sorry.

COOPER. What about everyone else? (*To all.*) Is anyone else missing anything? (*Everyone else starts going through their things.*)

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SABRINA. I've got everything.

EVE. I didn't really have much.

IONE. I don't think I'm / missing anything?

DELANEY. Oh my God, thank *God*, you guys, my Faberge earrings are still here.

GINA. Sorry, your *what*?

DELANEY. My Faberge earrings!

GINA. Yeah, I know what you *said*, I just mean / what are you even *talking* about?

BRIANA. Hold on! Hold on!

COOPER. You missing something, too?

BRIANA. (*Digging around.*) I can't find my lip ring. Or my eyebrow ring!

DELANEY. Why'd you take those off? You never take those out!

BRIANA. *Because*, Delaney, bunnies don't have facial piercings!

DELANEY. Oh, I'm so *sorry*, they also don't have human faces but / here you are!

COOPER. Okay, so what do we do? Who all's missing stuff? So far me, Briana, and (*Points to Kelly.*) her. What's your name?

KELLY. (*Still on the verge of tears.*) Kelly? I was first chair trumpet and sat next to you for three years in middle / school?

COOPER. Right, sorry, who else?

DELANEY. I've got everything.

SABRINA. Me too.

EVE. Me three. (*Giggles.*) I mean, I have everything.

GINA. I'm good.

IONE. I think I'm good. (*Everyone looks at Jo Ann, who just sullenly sits with her backpack, looking down.*)

DELANEY. Hello?

SABRINA. Jo Ann?

JO ANN. What.

COOPER. Did you check your stuff?

IONE. Do you have everything?

JO ANN. Oh. Yeah.

DELANEY. (*Gives Kelly a knowing look.*) Oh...*kay*.

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IONE. Well, Fiona checks us out at the gate, so I guess y'all should just report it to her when we're leaving?

SABRINA. Maybe we should just wait till tomorrow and see if the stuff turns up? We don't want to cause a whole drama / if nothing's really –

BRIANA. You really think all *three* of us are just too stupid to look in the right place?

SABRINA. No, that's not what I'm saying! Just... maybe there's some explanation!

DELANEY. *(Looking at Jo Ann.)* Yeah, I think there is an explanation. *(Grabs Kelly the arm to walk her out.)* Let's *definitely* report this to Fiona. *(Everyone grabs up the last of their things and starts to head out.)*

IONE. *(To Gina.)* Gina, sorry there's probably gonna be a *thief* in your parents' airport shuttles, you should probably warn them to keep an eye out, you know, to protect their *business*.

GINA. Please stop, Ione. *(Music. Blackout. End of scene.)*

SCENE 4

A turnstile. Fiona stands by it with her clipboard, checking things off as she speaks.

FIONA. Mmkay, so I'm gonna need y'all to walk to the *left* past the gate to the employee lot, okay? *(Gestures with one arm like she's directing traffic.)* *Do not*, I repeat, *do not* ever walk out the visitor gate, even after the park is completely closed! Do not ever go to the visitor parking lot after your shift, *even if your little friends are there!* To the left, to the left! *(Checks a few folks off on her clipboard.)* If you are here any other day *as a visitor* on your generous employee 10%-off discount, you may use the visitor entrance and exit on those days *only*. *To be clear!* You may in fact only use the visitor areas when you are here at Golden Olden Adventure Towne as a visitor, you may *not* duck into or out of any staff facilities for convenience at that time! They are for *on-shift staff only*. Those of you on the walkies, to refresh the codes: *(Looks at clipboard.)* Code Stonewall

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Jackson is a *vomiting* situation. Code Tippy Canoe is a *bleeding* situation. Learn it, live it! The distinction *matters!* (*Turns to the left, holds up her hand.*) Listen up, listen up! I understand there has been a potential *incident* in the staff break room this evening regarding some personal items and I want to assure y'all that this *will be handled appropriately.* Everyone who was on this shift tonight should meet thirty minutes before tomorrow's shift *on the dot.* (*Makes a "dot" gesture with her hand.*) Do y'all see this? Do you see this? On. The. Dot. We *will* deal with this and we will have a Golden Olden Adventure Towne NO DRAMA SUMMER! Thank you and good night! (*Blackout. End of scene.*)

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