

SAMPLES FROM:

Bullies:

Monologues

on

Bullying

for

Teens and Adults

by

Jim Chevallier

*This document includes the start of each piece in the collection.
For the complete pieces, see the book.*

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Introduction

“I've tried being other people and being me suits me best.”
Chris Colfer (*Glee*)

In the mid-Nineties, a group of bullies at an English girls' school put feces in a thirteen-year-old's bed. That was only one of the things they did to her before she changed schools. Why? Apparently because she was too tall and had eczema.

A few years later, in New York, others took a young woman they'd been tormenting and threw her in a trash can.

In 2011, the first victim, Kate Middleton, married Prince William and became the Duchess of Cambridge. The second, Lady Gaga, already at the height of her success, put out an anthem - “Born This Way” - for all who are different. Yet in a documentary she is seen, tired and discouraged, wondering if she will always be the girl who got thrown in a trash can.

The duchess and the “lady” are only two of the many people who have succeeded brilliantly in life after surviving bullying in high school. Often, as with Middleton's height, people are bullied for one of the very things that makes them stand out later. So many people discover that, like the ugly duckling in the folk tale, they never fit in with the ducks because... they were a swan.

But to do that, you have to survive...

High School (Teens)

Long Way Home

If I take the long way home, they won't see me. But I have to be quiet. If they spot me, they'll come after me. Then I'll have to run. Which makes them laugh. They like that, that I'm scared. The more scared, the better. It's like a game: the more scared I am, the more points they get.

Fun. All kinds of fun.

It's probably my fault....

Refinements

I could hurt him. I could hurt him bad. But I don't.

In fact, I hardly hit him at all. Little taps; a thump on the back. A hard thump, so he can feel it. But not so's it'll hurt him. Nah.

Enough so's he's scared, is all. Just at the sight of me, way up the hall. Hoping I won't come towards him. Hoping I won't get close. And if I do get close, right up on top of him, so's he has to look up at me – even when he's trying hard to pretend I'm not there, even then I can see him. Like a cat with its ears drawn back, hair standing up. Hoping for one thing; his heart beating with one hope.

That I won't hurt him....

Examples

Here's what I've figured out: everyone's got a weak spot, something they hope that no one will notice. Me, I notice. But I don't always talk about it. Sometimes just enough to let them know I *could* talk about it. But that's for the dangerous ones, the ones who could hurt me.

Some, I'm not afraid of. Them, I'll talk about.

They're my examples.

Here's a for instance. Buster, who everyone's afraid of? He sees a doctor. A special kind of doctor. Do I know what kind? No. I just know his office is by the cupcake shop, the pricey one downtown. One day my mother went there and left me in the car. Who do I see but Buster, being dropped off at the building next door. It's only doctors. I checked. Mind doctors, mostly.

So a few weeks later, out of the blue, he starts in on me. "What's your problem?" I say. "Those cupcakes got you wired?" He stops cold. "Cupcakes? What the - ?" "You know, like they sell at that place downtown." You should have seen his face. Dead white....

Collateral Damage

It's not like we beat her up or anything. We put up a Web site. With some jokes. That's all they were: jokes.

We never thought people would believe that stuff. Or start spreading it around. Or spray paint her car.

We didn't do that. Don't blame us.

I don't even know how it started, to tell you the truth. It's just like, I don't know, someone got annoyed at her and someone else made a few

jokes and then someone, maybe me, I'm not saying it wasn't, I just don't remember, said it would be funny to put the jokes up on-line....

The Ant's Answer

I had this dream once where I was invisible and I tripped. Right there in the hallway, with everybody hurrying by. And they kept stepping on me. I'd cry out but no one could even hear me. They'd just keep hurrying, hurrying on. Stepping all over me.

That's what school's been like for me. If anyone noticed me at all, it was to give me a hard time. Like he used to. But even then I didn't matter. He and his friends would have their fun and then... be on their way. Once they were done, they'd forget all about me.

It's like when I was little and I'd tear ants into pieces just to see if the pieces could walk. Once I was done, I really didn't care where the pieces went. That's how people were with me. They'd tear me up, just for fun, and then move on.

Only, I couldn't move on....

Different

I wish I could be like everyone else. But I'm not.

So what do I do about it? Keep my head down? Hope they don't notice me?

'Cause they will, you know. They'll notice you when you're different. It's like there's a scent. Something in the air. The moment you come in you can see their nostrils widen, you can see their lips curl. They'd hurt you if they could. If they thought they'd get away with it.

Mostly they avoid you. Shrink away. Or make jokes. Ugly jokes.

Because they're afraid.

Isn't that it? As scared as I am of them, aren't they scared of me?
Because I'm different....

Somebody

Did you see how he dressed? How he acted? All the time. In front of everyone. Like, he wasn't even ashamed. Like he thought we should all accept him. Accept him like he was.

Come on. You know what my dad would do if I ever acted half as weird as that kid?

He'd let me have it, that's what he'd do. He'd let me have it good.

Because that's what you do when people don't act like they're supposed to. You let them know it. And how.

I tried too, tried getting in his face. And you know who got in trouble? Me. That's right, me.

Come on. Is that right?....

Toadmouth

Why don't kids like me? Everybody likes you, right? And you're funny-looking.

Well you are. That's just the truth. Come on, no one's ever told you that?

But nobody calls you “Toadmouth”. Or hacks your web page to show you with toads and snakes coming out of your mouth.

What's that about, anyway?

You get invited to parties. Think how that makes me feel? They'll even invite you, but not me.

Do you know how wrong that is?

I think it's because I'm smarter. I can't help that. Or that some of the other kids are so stupid....

Liked

It's not that I don't like you. Don't get me wrong. But the other kids don't - the kids who count. The kids I want to like me.

You can understand that, right? Wanting to be liked? Everybody does, right? Only, I don't know what it is, a lot of kids don't like you.

Don't ask me why. Seriously, I like you fine.

Don't ever say I said that. Because as far as they're concerned, I don't. I don't even talk to you. Nope, you're outside, in the cold. And I'm inside, where it's warm. One of them.

I like that, being warm. And safe. No one looking at me funny, no one making jokes about me they know I can hear....

Mystery

There's things I just don't get.

SAMPLES FROM *BULLIES: MONOLOGUES ON BULLYING*

I'm a weirdo. I know that. If I didn't before, I would by now, the way people treat me around here. It's like I smell bad. They can't get away from me fast enough. Like I've got some kind of disease. Even the kids who hassle me, they do their thing and then they're gone. Like they're afraid they'll catch it. Catch what I've got.

I get that. I do. Message received, loud and clear. I try to stay out of people's way, not sit too close to anyone at lunch. They want to act like I'm not there, I'll oblige. I'll do my best to be invisible.

'Cause you can get hurt. You can get hurt if people see you and wish they hadn't.....

Big Help

You don't have to be so fat, you know. You could lose weight if you wanted.

I'm sorry if that sounds mean. But it's true. You're gross. I don't know why you bother to wear such nice clothes. It just draws attention. If I were as big as you, I'd hide it. I'd wear stuff that was baggy and dark, so that nobody would notice me. Aren't you embarrassed? Aren't you thinking to yourself, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry it's so disgusting to look at me."

I'll bet you are. You act all smiley and confident, like you think you're fine like you are....

Manners

My mother says manners are really important And one thing she always says is, "Don't be contrary. People like it better when you agree. See what everybody else thinks and try to stick with that. That's just good manners, to try to get along."

That's why people like me. I go along. And my friends. People like my friends too. Not that we're a clique or anything. People just like us, that's all.

Some people liked Audra, too, when she first came to school. But one of our friends didn't and so that was that; none of us did.

But the guys did. Brandon especially. And everybody likes Brandon. He's a big deal. Only he had had a few dates with my friend Mindy. So when he started dating Audra, we all got mad.

Then someone said we should get her back. For stealing Brandon....

Stupid

Because she was stupid. That's why. That was the only reason.

Her mother's stupid too. How'd she fall for Sonny's trick? He made his voice go deeper, but you could tell. You could tell he was just a teen, not the assistant principal like he said.

“We need you to come in tomorrow, first thing in the morning. To talk about Colleen. Oh, and please don't bring your daughter.” And she did it, that moron. She drove off, right after breakfast, and left Colleen in the house.

Alone. Just like we wanted....

Best Friend

I'm her best friend, so I see it all. I was there after the crash when she lost her leg. I was there at her brother's funeral. It doesn't matter that he was driving; she still misses him everyday.

And I'm there now. After she gets the texts, I'm always there. The ones that make her cry. Or just scared. 'Cause some of them say: 'You're the one who should have died. And you will. Because I'm going to kill you.' But it's the ones about sex that upset her most. "How's it feel doing it with only one leg, you whore?" That's what a lot of them say: "Whore, slut, tramp."....

Crooked

You don't understand. I had to scare them, I had to make them think I was dangerous, that's why I bought it, so they'd know not to mess with me, so they'd take one look and go, "Oh no. That guy's trouble. We better keep away."

It wasn't so I could hurt anyone. I didn't mean for that, I didn't mean for that to happen at all.

Least of all, a teacher. Who expected a teacher to get involved? That was wrong, that wasn't in the plan. Only, don't you see, I was already scared, I was already on the lookout.....

Not Even Me

I don't have to hurt, you know. I don't have to be scared.

I know a guy who'll get me beer and there's places I can go, like down the alley near our house or in the bushes by the highway, and I can drink and I can think about being someplace else, someplace where no one wants to hit me, no one wants to make fun of me, no one even knows I'm there. That's the best, the best of all, when nobody sees you, when you're

invisible, because they can't hurt you if they can't see you...

Revelation

You won't believe what just happened!

Robert – this is no surprise, right? – Robert started in on Brian. You know he was gonna, sooner or later. Poor Brian. He's a sweet guy, but he keeps trying to keep his head down, hoping no one will notice him. That's raw meat to a guy like Robert. I think he was letting him simmer, just letting him hope he wouldn't be on him the way he's on so many other kids. He's not that big, Robert, if you look at him, but there's something mean about him. There just is. Maybe just the fact that he likes being mean, that he really enjoys it. Like you never know what he might do.

So whenever he gets going on some kid, everybody else is so happy it's not them, they just stand away. They don't interfere....

High School (Adults)

The Closed Door

She goes into her room, closes the door and sits at her computer and you have no idea what she's looking at. Whom she's meeting.

Or thinks she's meeting.

She said she'd met a boy. On-line. It seemed harmless. Good, even. For two weeks, she was so happy. She'd come out humming and smiling. We both felt great, seeing her like that: light, for once, and carefree. Because she'd been so moody, we'd been worried. We even sent her to see someone.

But all at once she was over that. After she'd met this boy. That is, thought she had. Because they were always talking on-line, but never in person. Never face to face....

Lords of the Jungle

Look. Kids get bullied. That's part of high school. What are you gonna do? You can't be everywhere. They have to learn to fend for themselves.

Now granted these kids did go a bit far. Teasing's one thing, but when it gets physical, let me tell you, that's where I draw the line. You never know how that might end. Though it's not like they hurt him badly. No worse than what happens on the football field.

Why one of the same kids who roughed him up was in the hospital last year. With a concussion. You think he complained? Hell no. Never

said a word...

Lovely Girl

You must understand, We all love Penelope: the other students, the staff. Everyone. She is the most delightful girl. Are you sure your daughter's not exaggerating? Oh, I know, girls can be thoughtless sometimes, hurtful, even. But to spread the kind of vile lies you're talking about, that's not like our Penny at all. And you know your own daughter, well, Winifer is a sweet girl, of course. But she is a little shy, you know, she doesn't mingle very well. I myself, I tried to talk to her, to draw her out, and, well, she's very guarded isn't she? Very watchful....

Parenting Skills

Wait a minute, you! Don't walk away from me!

Did you tell the principal my kid's a bully? Was that you? That he's been pushing your poor little darling around? Huh?

Where do you come off? What's the matter with you? Do you get off on causing trouble?

Don't you think you should think about that? Huh? Don't you think you should really, really think about that?

Look. They're kids. They do things. That's the way kids are. But they can handle it. They can work it out. If they've got any backbone, that is.....

Lesson

Are you sure, Mr. Marshak? Are you sure you want to answer the question? I don't want you to embarrass yourself. It's admirable that you keep trying, but let's face it, you're not the sharpest knife in the drawer. I understand you might get flustered by people looking at you but it's not your awkward appearance you should be ashamed of, I'm not the kind of teacher to embarrass a boy about his weight....

Torch

The last time someone snuck backstage? I let Security do the talking. There's some crazy fans out there. But I'm listening to you and it's not about talking to a star, is it? You want something else.

You want advice. You want to know how to get through it; how to survive high school when you're different...

Which, and never forget this, just means you're being yourself. People who do that, who stick to that, will always be different. Oh sure, some of us, we're different in a way that comes with a label, a label that's stamped crisp and clear in other people's minds. And that makes it harder. Because people have their ideas about that label....

Heart to Heart

That boy is scared, Matthew. To you and your friends, it's just a game. But your game makes him afraid to leave his house. His mother called me at work. She told me he hates school; that he's starting to fall behind in class.

Do you have any idea what that can mean for his future?

Do you enjoy this, seeing him trying to avoid you, trying to find a spot where you can't sit behind him and tug his hair? Or cut it. Didn't one of your friends do that? Cut off a bit of his hair?

I hope it was one of your friends. I hope it wasn't you....

Hindsight

I was a bully at his age. I see that now.

I didn't think I was. I thought I was a nice guy. So did my schoolmates. Most of them. And the ones who didn't? The ones who flinched when they saw me coming? They didn't matter. They didn't count.

That's what made it OK. OK to make fun of them. OK to scare them a little. Or maybe even hit them when no one was watching.

Not that I thought of it as hitting. More like rough-housing. A shove in the hallway, a punch on the arm.

All good fun, you know?

Nobody ever told me it was wrong. If anything, they cheered me on....

Guardian

You want to protect your child. You want to put your arms around her and curl your body over her and take any blow the world tries to give her. You want her to wear your love like a cloak, a cloak that will ward off any evil.

SAMPLES FROM *BULLIES: MONOLOGUES ON BULLYING*

But you don't get to be there every minute. You don't get to be on the school bus, you don't get to be in the hallway. You don't get to be out behind the school where the teachers never check.

And when she comes home and you ask if she's alright and she tells you everything's fine, you don't get to peer behind her eyes and see what makes you think it isn't and when she just closes up all the more when you try to coax her out, you don't get to know what is lurking there in her own dark. You don't know what to protect her from...

College

Jerome

Guys, you gotta hear this. Last year, there was this freshman on the ground floor. And he kept to himself, just stayed in his room. He'd say hello if you spoke to him, but never quite looked you in the eye, you know?

OK. So one night we got some shrooms. Primo shrooms. And a few of us did them in my room. Then we went downstairs to Schuyler's. He had some vodka, so we drank that and then did more shrooms.

Someone said, "Hey, where's your neighbor?" And Schuyler said, "Where do you think he is? Hibernating. We probably won't see him until next Spring." And we all laughed. But someone else said, "That's rude". And someone else agreed. "Yeah, what's he think we are? Trolls?" And we all began to hunch over and make troll sounds until finally someone said, "Let's scare the bear!" and before we knew it we were all out in the hallway....

The Rally

Hey, man, Did you hear? There's a rally tonight for Timothy. Over on the Common.

Here's the scoop. Timothy and the other guys in Stone House, they're all really cool. Timothy, he's this super talented musician. And his roommate's a poet. A slam poet. Check him out; he's on line, This one guy, though, Ernie, well, Ernie's the odd man out. Real uptight, stick to the rules, kind of guy. And he wasn't down with some of what was going on. The music late at night. And other stuff.

I mean, they're artists. They party, right?

So he complained, first to them, but of course they blew him off, and then to the Administration. Which is so not cool.

So Timothy decided he needed a nudge. You know, to make him want to change dorms...

Rocket

Oh my God! You're telling me you're a virgin? My own roommate has never had sex? Never? My god, how can you even admit being such a freak?

Seriously, I can't begin to tell you what you're missing. You've never made it with a guy? Wait until I tell Rocket. She'll think it's the funniest thing she's ever heard. Oh come on, I have to tell Rocket; we do everything together. Absolutely everything. She won't believe you've never done it.

'Cause Rocket's experienced. I'm telling you, she's an expert. You wouldn't believe some of the things she's taught me. Do you know, I'd never been on a motorcycle until Rocket took me out? Oh yeah. Just her holding the handlebars and me holding her. And when it broke down? She fixed it. She's good with her hands, let me tell you. She knows all kinds of things. And all kinds of people. But someone our age who's a virgin? Seriously? That's one for the records....

You Can Tell

She must be a lesbian. That's why she's so weird. Even her hair. It never looks quite right. Oh sure it's girly enough, but that doesn't mean anything. They don't all have short hair, you know. And don't be fooled.

SAMPLES FROM *BULLIES: MONOLOGUES ON BULLYING*

When she says how she wishes she was pretty so she could meet a guy, that's just something they say. So people won't know. You can't go by that.

All you have to do is look at her. She's not, you know, like the rest of us. Not playing to the same beat. Not hip to the program. Oh she's friendly enough. It's not like she badmouths people or anything.

Which I hate. I hate when people talk about other people behind their back....

Clothes

Where'd you get that shirt? From a cut-out bin? And those jeans? "Cavin Kein"? Seriously?

C'mon. You're smart, right? You must be, with all those scholarships. So you see it, right? You've gotta see that other people don't dress like that.

And please, spare me your usual line about, "I don't have the money." You worry way too much about money, man. Why don't you just ask your parents for a credit card? That's what I did. How do you think I got to Cabo?

Ask them. What? Are you afraid you'll embarrass them? Put them on the spot? C'mon. It's not like they're paying for your education, right?....

Sisters

Whap!

We took their pants down. Whap!

No cute little shorts or designer jeans. Whap! That's for when you're a sister. Whap! When you're in. Whap! Whap! Whap! When you're one of us.

After the initiation.

Becka, she's the pretty one. Whap! I wanted her. Whap! She's the one who cared the least if she got in. Why should she? She'd be popular

anyway. Whap! It's only because her mother was in, and her older sister. Whap! That's why she went along. That's why she let us do this. "C'mon," I said – Whap! - "It's just a spanking, you big baby!" 'Cause she wanted to cry, I could see that, each time the paddle landed. Whap! Whap! Whap! She wanted to let it out. But she didn't, not even when the welts came up; not even when there was blood. Whap! Whap! "So, you want to be a sister?" Whap! "You think you're good enough?" Whap! "You want to be one of us!" Whap!

There was blood on the paddle now. I know I should have stopped, but I was waiting for her to ask. Whap! I was waiting for her to beg! Whap! I wanted her to know she wasn't better....

Thinking

Did his parents come pick up his stuff? I thought of being there. To apologize. But they don't want to see me. I know they don't.

Can you blame them?

Look, I want you to know, it was never about how he was. That didn't matter to me. I liked the guy. I liked him fine. Sure, I knew he'd be embarrassed, once the video hit the Net. But that was it, you know? Embarrassed.

I never would have guessed. I never would have thought he'd take it so hard.

My parents heard it on the news. Before I could call them....

SAMPLES FROM *BULLIES: MONOLOGUES ON BULLYING*

The Adult World

Troll

I'm just a screen name to you. One more person posting on-line. You don't know what I look like, you don't know who I am.

You just know I'm mean. I don't know you either, I've never even met you, but I know just enough about you to get under your skin. To make you afraid to speak out. Why bother? You know I'll jump on you. You know I'll call you an idiot, or catch you in an error, or twist what you say just enough that you sound like the mean one, you sound like you're trying to start something. It doesn't matter that you didn't exactly say that; you know no one will go back and check. And so you try to defend yourself, and then I tell you to stop getting upset, and that gets to you some more, really, really gets to you, that and how mean I sound, just out-of-the-blue, no explanation, just because, mean....

The Hard Knock of Opportunity

Didn't I trust you? Didn't I give you a chance? I could have managed those programmers myself; you know I could. You think I got to be the boss by accident? But I gave you an opportunity. That's what you have to understand. I gave you a chance to show what you can do.

Which, it turns out, isn't much. Wouldn't you agree? Am I wrong?

If I'm wrong, just tell me. Go ahead and tell me.

And don't go telling me it's because I was always stepping in. I had to

get involved, didn't I? Because you just weren't cutting it. But it's still your responsibility.

Don't go trying to shift this mess.

What am I supposed to tell the client? Don't you think he's going to blame me? Of course he will. Only, don't kid yourself. He knows I put you in charge; he knows I try to give my people a chance. Because that's what a good manager does. And I'm a good manager.

You'd agree with that, right? You wouldn't say any different, would you?....

With My Little Ax

Don't get me wrong, Jack. I like Stu. Everybody likes Stu. Whenever the guys in the group go out, he's the first one they ask. Like it wouldn't be the same without him. The clients like him too. He's really popular.

And sure, he's good at what he does. As far as it goes. But here's the thing: how far does it? Can he ever be more than a worker bee? And what about it? What about his being so nice?

If you make him project manager, he's going to have to make some tough choices. Things that won't be popular. You think he's got that in him? Especially with him being friends with everyone in the group?

I just don't see any vision there, any larger view. ...

The Lizard Queen

Twenty-five? Come on. Add a decade to that and you might be close.

Let me tell you, Elly hates her. Just between you and me, Elly had her hopes regarding Conrad. That's a laugh, huh? I like Elly, but let's face it, even if she lost a few pounds, Conrad would be way out of her league. The important thing is, Elly's got the Web skills. Oh, I've may have a PhD, but that stuff's way beyond me. Damian and I, we're the wordsmiths; the "content providers", I believe is the term of art. And there's others. Trust me. Lots of people have it out for this chick.

But Elly especially. Right from the start, she just loved the idea. Went right to work on our subject's picture, adding scales up and down her neck and a reptile tongue flicking out of her mouth.

Oh yeah, because what we're calling the Web page is: "The Lizard Queen". Catchy, huh? Not that the... uh... girl is exactly svelte – you know Conrad went for that chest, it sure wasn't her brains –.....

The Second Lesson

We put you on the spot, didn't we?. About who gets the office. I know I thought I was just making my case, laying out the facts, straight and plain. But you could tell, couldn't you? You could tell there was more to it for me.

Here's the thing. I told you once how I hated high school, how I was one of the kids people picked on. What I never told you was why it all stopped. All at once.

One day this kid, one of the nastier ones, started in on me. Exactly like he had a bunch of times before. Only this time, it was like a switch flipped inside me. I decided I wasn't going to take it. Just like that. So instead of covering my head like he expected, or trying to get away, I hit him back. And he couldn't believe it. Oh, he knocked me around a bit. But that didn't stop me. Because I'd made up my mind. And he could see that. He could see that, this time, I was going to stand my ground.

And that was that. He turned and walked away.

That was an amazing day for me. Amazing....

Car

It was just like a real car. At least to a six-year-old. Low to the ground and made of blue metal and when I sat down in it and pedaled, I felt as grown-up as could be, tooling around the sidewalk.

So you can imagine how proud I felt when two older kids came up and checked it out. "That's some wheels you got there, buddy." I didn't know these kids; they weren't from the neighborhood. They looked pretty tough. But then so did a lot of our neighbors.

I got out so one of them could take a look at it. Meanwhile, the other kid was super friendly. He started talking to me about his dad's red sports car. "It's right down the block," he said and pointed behind me. I turned around, but I couldn't see it. I felt stupid because he kept pointing and saying it was right there, I just had to look harder.

Then I remembered my car....