

Breaking Badly

a play by Jonathan Rand

jonathanrand.com
jr@jonathanrand.com
@MrJonathanRand

Cast of Characters

(In order of appearance:)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER

KIMMY

ERIC

JACK

LILY

BILL

CARRIE

DEBBIE

JOEY

WENDY

BIG TONY

BOSS

ACCOUNTANT

TIM BRODY

THIEF

GREAT AUNT MIDGE

ALAN

SERENA

GREG

EMMA

MEDIC #1

MEDIC #2

PAM

J.D.

CHRISTY BARNES

ANDREW FARRAH

JESSICA

RICHARD

CASEY

AIRLINE CAPTAIN

KATE

SIMON

DOMINO

HENRY

MAY

JAY

FAY

RAY

Production Notes

If a setting isn't specified in the script, feel free to get creative. For example, instead of a breakup happening at a café, it could happen at a mini golf course.

If necessary and effective, please use music or other sound to transition between scenes – though ideally the transitions are quick.

Most characters can be any gender, so feel free to cast roles regardless of actor gender, and either make changes to names and pronouns when necessary, or have actors play against gender.

If any technology or pop culture reference becomes dated, please replace with a more modern reference.

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Dedication

For Miles

Breakup 1

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 7419, filename “Gimme a Break.”

(KIMMY and ERIC are laughing boisterously together.)

ERIC. That did *not* happen.

KIMMY. I *swear* it did!

ERIC. But a clarinet *and* a Filet-O-Fish? AHHH, that’s *crazy*!

KIMMY. I *know*!

ERIC. WOW that was a great story. I’m really glad I heard it from start to finish.

KIMMY. Yeah, it wouldn’t make sense if you only heard part of it.

(They’ve finally collected themselves.)

ERIC. Oh man... Hey so listen I know we’ve only been “official” for a few months, but my cousin’s getting married this summer, and I thought maybe you wanted to be my date?

KIMMY. Awwww! Thank you so much for asking!

ERIC. Of course!

KIMMY. (*Sudden change in tone:*) I wanna take a break.

(Beat.)

ERIC. Sorry, what?

KIMMY. A break.

ERIC. From what?

KIMMY. From this.

ERIC. This?

KIMMY. Our relationship.

ERIC. Oh. That’s disappointing.

KIMMY. It *is*? Why?

ERIC. Well I *like* you. I thought it was going well.

KIMMY. It *is* going well! And I like you, *too*!

ERIC. Then why break up with me?

KIMMY. What? I’m not breaking up with you!

ERIC. But isn’t “taking a break” just code for “I’m dumping you”?

KIMMY. No! I *absolutely* want to stay in a relationship with you. I just think we should take a break, that's all.

ERIC. For how long?

KIMMY. Indefinitely.

ERIC. Indefinitely?

KIMMY. Yeah. I'll let you know when the break's done.

ERIC. And are we still gonna hang out or call or text or —?

KIMMY. Oh absolutely *not*. We cease *all contact*.

ERIC. I don't know... This sounds a lot like a breakup.

KIMMY. No-no-no-no-no-no-no-no! We're just taking a *break*. Y'know, a *break*. During which we cut off all communication, date other people, and never see each other again.

ERIC. Until *when*...?

KIMMY. Like I said: indefinitely. It'll be clear when it's time for the break to end, which will most likely be after one or both of us eventually dies.

(*Beat.*)

ERIC. So a *breakup*.

KIMMY. A *break*!! B-R-E-A-K! No "up."

ERIC. Okay, fine. A break...

KIMMY. Finally. FINALLY. I knew you'd understand. We are *still together*.

ERIC. We're still together.

KIMMY. Good, good, good. Hey can I borrow your phone?

ERIC. (*Handing it to her:*) Sure, why?

(*In one fell swoop, KIMMY holds her phone in one hand, Eric's in the other, simultaneously begins thumb-tapping both.*)

KIMMY. Oh nothing, just changing our Facebook statuses to Single and hellohhhh Tinder.

(*KIMMY is now speed-swiping on her phone exclusively.*)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Present Day A

(JACK and LILY appear, either with lights revealing them already on another part of the stage, or perhaps somewhere in the audience. JACK holds a clipboard.)

JACK. And there you have it: one of literally *thousands* of breakups from our extensive video archives.

LILY. And these are *real* breakups?

JACK. That's right. Here at The Breakup Center we have amassed an extensive digital video database of nearly every breakup from the last four decades, each one covertly recorded using highly-legal, and 100% moral, hidden surveillance cameras.

LILY. Actually that sounds illegal and immoral.

JACK. Oh, you haven't heard our TV jingle. (*Singing:*) The Breakup Center: No Longer Illegal or Immoral Since 2014¹!

LILY. Whatever, I'm just desperate for a way out of this relationship.

JACK. Well we are here to help, so let's get started! (*Poised with his clipboard:*) Now are you looking to end a casual romance, a serious relationship, or a marriage?

LILY. Serious relationship.

JACK. (*Checks a box*) Serious relationship. Okay. So here's how it works: We show you a wide range of breakups after which *you* choose which breakup method fits you best. Then we put you through a grueling, six-week training intensive where we prepare you for: Breakup Day.

LILY. Okay, let's do it!

JACK. Outstanding! Let's dive back in, shall we? And three, two, one: *Breakups!*

Breakup 2

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 3314, filename "Ready, Set, Gone."

BILL. I don't think we should see each other anymore.

CARRIE. Really? Why?

BILL. I'm just not ready for a relationship right now.

CARRIE. What does that even *mean*?

BILL. What does it *mean*? What does it *mean*?

¹ Use a very recent year.

CARRIE. Yes.

BILL. What does it *mean*?

CARRIE. Yes.

BILL. It means a relationship is *tough*. You can't just *rush* into being the kind of guy who can handle a relationship. You have to be *ready*. And I'm not ready. I'm just not ready. I'm not ready.

CARRIE. I get the sense you're not ready.

BILL. How could I be ready for all the *curveballs* life just keeps throwing at me?

CARRIE. Such as...?

BILL. Well, I'll tell you: I'm not ready for my birthday party next week. Last-minute guest list adjustments. Furniture setup to get the right feng shui. *Tortilla* chips.

Also I'm not ready for the *election*. I mean, who can *decide*? With all those *campaign* ads with that scary deep-voiced narrator? I don't know which candidate would destroy America *more*.

Also I'm not ready for bathing suit season. Have you *seen* my left quad? *Garbage*.

And y'know, I'm not ready to consider myself 100% potty trained. I'm *almost* there — like 95% — but it just feels safe knowing I've got the diaper there.

(*Beat.*)

CARRIE. Yeah, you're not ready for a relationship.

BILL. Well speak for yourself. *You're* not ready for a relationship.

CARRIE. Not with *you*.

BILL. Not with *anyone*. You're not ready for a *relationship*. You're also not ready for what The Rock is cookin', and frankly, I don't think you're ready for this jelly.

(*He stands; does a brief, deadpan twerk, all while pointing to his "jelly"; sits.*)

But while I may not be ready for much, I *am* ready...for the Apocalypse.

CARRIE. Offfff *course* you are...

BILL. I'm ready with this ten-year stockpile of homemade horse jerky. (That sample's on the house.) I'm ready with this inflatable bomb shelter that'll protect me from a nuclear blast. And after almost everyone's dead and I'm bored, I'll be ready to play this entrancing game. (*Reveals a paddleball and plays with it:*) Whooooooooaaa!! I could do this for *years*!!

CARRIE. I'll be sad to miss that.

BILL. Oh but you might not *have* to! 'Cause if you're still alive, I *will* need someone to birth a large brood of offspring.

CARRIE. No thanks.

BILL. Well I guess I was right: You *aren't* ready for this jelly.

(He repeats the exact same twerking move.)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 3

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 3819, filename "Cloudy with a Chance of More Clouds."

DEBBIE. *(To JOEY:)* Oh, I'm so glad you're here. What a day this is turning out to be, right? How are you holding up? *(Realization.)* Oh, you didn't hear the news. Oh no, I hate to be the one to tell you. Brace yourself, okay? Brace yourself. *(Beat.)* Tomorrow? It's going to *rain*. *(Beat.)* I know what you're thinking, maybe it won't, but the odds are really high. Oh look! It's Channel Twelve meteorologist Wendy Wexler!

(WENDY appears.)

WENDY. There is a 100% chance of rain. I'd stake my reputation on it.

DEBBIE. You hear that? Her reputation.

(WENDY comforts JOEY by massaging his shoulders.)

WENDY. Shhhhhh, it's going to be okay.

DEBBIE. Thank you, Wendy. We'll get past this. I know it.

WENDY. Stay strong.

(WENDY exits.)

DEBBIE. *(To JOEY:)* You're so brave. I can't believe you have to live with that bad news given what happened with Big Tony's. *(Realization.)* Oh no, you didn't hear about Big Tony's either?? Honey, your favorite pizza place was shut down! Ohhhh it hurts so bad. Hey look! It's Big Tony himself. Big Tony, come over here.

BIG TONY. What a day, what a day. So sad, so sad. Mamma mia...

DEBBIE. We'll miss your calzones the most.

(BIG TONY comforts JOEY by massaging his shoulders.)

BIG TONY. Shhhhhh, it's going to be all right.

DEBBIE. Thank you, Big Tony.

BIG TONY. Thank *you* for buying my calzones.

(BIG TONY *exits*.)

DEBBIE. (To JOEY:) Can you believe all of this bad news? And I know what you're thinking: why did Wendy Wexler and Big Tony happen to be nearby? Well instead of trying to figure *that* out, let's get distracted by *more* people randomly showing up with bad news. Oh look! Your boss!

(Each person moves in and out of the scene very quickly – a conveyor belt of people.)

BOSS. We're letting you go.

DEBBIE. Your accountant!

ACCOUNTANT. You're broke.

DEBBIE. Your favorite quarterback, Tim Brody!

TIM BRODY. (Via crutches or a wheelchair:) Just tore my ACL.

DEBBIE. A random thief!

THIEF. Say goodbye to your irreplaceable childhood toy, Professor Fluffypaws.

DEBBIE. Your Great Aunt Midge!

GREAT AUNT MIDGE. (Frail:) I've got one week left to live. Byyyye...

DEBBIE. Oh and also I'm breaking up with you. But that other news? – oh my goodness, that is all such *bad news*!

JOEY. Hold on. I'm so confused...

DEBBIE. I know. It's all so *tough*.

JOEY. Okay, first of all, after all that, you're breaking up with me?

DEBBIE. No no no, don't focus on that. Focus on all that other bad news! I mean, can you believe Tim Brody is out for the season? That news *completely* overshadows my breaking up with you. Or your Great Aunt Midge? – dying? I mean, who could even *think* about anything else at a time like this? Yeah, sure, I'm dumping you, but your job!! Your savings!! *Professor Fluffypaws!!!*

(Beat.)

JOEY. Wait, did you *pay* all those people to give me fake bad news so that dumping me wouldn't seem bad by comparison?

DEBBIE. No!

JOEY. No...?

DEBBIE. Well, yes, I did pay them, but no it's not *all* fake news. In reality it won't rain tomorrow, Big Tony's is open, your job's secure, Tim Brody is fine, no one stole your bunny, and Aunt Midge is in the best health of her life. BUT... I did steal all your money to pay all those people so you *are* broke. Oh and our relationship is over.

(GREAT AUNT MIDGE and TIM BRODY suddenly appear, and MIDGE catches a pass from BRODY.)

GREAT AUNT MIDGE. This is the greatest day of my life!

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 4

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 287, filename "Sunny With a Chance of More Sunny."

(ALAN is a local news anchor beginning his always-professional broadcast.)

ALAN. Good evening. I'm Alan Ponly. Tonight's top stories: Global warming has been fixed, cancer has been cured, world peace has been achieved, and I'm right this second publicly breaking up with my girlfriend, Serena Smithwick. But let's focus on those first three stories, because they will surely overshadow the last one. To bring you more on those first three stories and completely look past the relatively insignificant fourth one, we now bring you *live* to reporter Serena Smithwick – Serena!

(SERENA stands there, microphone in hand, stone-faced. A moment passes.)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 5

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 6821, filename "Digital Dump."

(GREG and EMMA face each other. EMMA is glued to her phone, not looking up at all.)

GREG. How's it going?

(EMMA taps on her phone. Ding! – GREG's phone notification goes off. He looks.)

Oh. A smiley face. Well that's good.

So you want a coffee or something?

(Ding! – Greg's phone again. He squints at it.)

Is there really an iced mocha emoji?

(Ding!)

(Reading:) “This is hard for me to say, so I’m just going to be direct about it: I’d like to end this relationship.”

(To EMMA:) Did you just break up with me over text?

(Ding!)

Why did you send me a *link*? (Taps it.) You already *blogged* about the breakup?

(Ding!)

You’re *live-tweeting* this conversation??

(Ding!)

You’re getting breakup feedback on *Reddit*???

Just *talk* to me.

(EMMA holds the phone in selfie mode.)

EMMA. So this guy I’m breaking up with? He wants to talk face to face like he’s a hundred years old or something. What does he think this is, 2012?² (Shifts tone:) Hey everyone out there: if you like my videos, then subscribe!

(She makes a duck face.)

(Then back to tapping on her phone.)

(Ding!)

GREG. There’s no way that video already has a million YouTube views.

(EMMA had covertly turned her phone around to face GREG and then flipped back around to face her and tapped more.)

(Ding!)

GREG. You posted *another* video? Wait, is that *me*?!

(Taps.)

GREG’S VOICE ON HIS PHONE. (Voiceover:) “There’s no way that video already has a million YouTube views.”

GREG. Okay, enough! I’m taking your phone.

² Pick a year that’s just 2-3 years prior to the current year. Or maybe 2012 is actually most fitting.

(He does. EMMA desperately reaches for her phone, then starts gasping for breath, as if she needs the phone to live. This goes on for a little, at the end of which she makes one last giant gasp for air before suddenly losing consciousness.)

(We hear a very brief ambulance siren as MEDIC #1 and MEDIC #2 burst in. MEDIC #2 immediately checks Emma's vitals.)

MEDIC #1. *(To GREG:)* What happened?

GREG. I just took her phone for a second.

MEDIC #1. You did *what*? Are you *insane*?

MEDIC #2. I'm sorry but... she's gone. *God I hate this job...* *(Beat. Suddenly upbeat, to MEDIC #1:)* Hey lemme do a Vine with this dead body.

(MEDIC #1 points her phone to record MEDIC #2, who does some insensitive move next to Emma's corpse, like the hand-horns with his tongue way out of his mouth while he makes some stupid sound. Or he might dance next to the body while singing "A corpse, a corpse, a lovely lady corpse." Really it could be anything stupid.)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Present Day B

JACK. *(Laughing:)* I'll tell you: these videos never get old.

LILY. Did that woman really die?

JACK. Breakups can be tough.

LILY. I definitely don't want to die.

JACK. Noted. *(Checking a box on his clipboard.)* So: tell me a little more about the relationship you're looking to end.

LILY. Well, for starters: he was unfaithful.

JACK. Ohhh, that's the worst, I'm so sorry. *(Checks another box:)* Unfaithful.

LILY. And knowing that about him *should* make the breakup easier, but it's still hard to muster up the courage.

JACK. Ah, but if you select the right breakup type, courage is *optional*. Let me show you one of our *Platinum Level* breakups, where you get *others* to do the heavy lifting. Watch this... Three, two, one: *Breakups!*

Breakup 6

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 4068, filename “The Finest Print.”

(PAM sits across from J.D., who’s sitting next to suit-wearing CHRISTY BARNES and ANDREW FARRAH.)

BARNES. Our client hereby exercises Section 12 of the agreement executed with the party hereafter referred to as “The Girlfriend,” ergo terminating their symbiotic interaction hereafter referred to as “The Relationship.”

PAM. You hired lawyers to dump me.

FARRAH. As stipulated under the agreement —

PAM. What agreement?

FARRAH. *(Handing her a stack of papers:)* On May 5th, 2015³, provisions related to The Relationship were appended to iPhone update agreement of The Girlfriend, who selected “I Agree.”

PAM. You hid relationship provisions in that iPhone agreement nobody reads?

FARRAH. Pursuant to Section 12.1, within the designated 30-week probationary period, our client may terminate should The Girlfriend violate one of the Termination Triggers.

PAM. Termination Triggers...

BARNES. Schedule D: The Girlfriend must outlay equal expenditures for all costs, i.e. “split the check.”

PAM. We *always* split the check.

FARRAH. On the contrary. On June 4th, our client remunerated 50.3% of cash payable to a Baskin-Robbins LLC for the acquisition of the product hereafter referred to as...

(Both BARNES and FARRAH search through various papers, looking for a detail. J.D. then whispers inaudibly to FARRAH.)

...Jamoca Almond Fudge.

PAM. So you paid a penny more than I did for ice cream.

BARNES. Schedule H: Bi-weekly, to describe our client, The Girlfriend must use four of the designated pet names, which shall include:

³ Use a date within a few months prior to today’s date.

FARRAH. Sugar Pie, My Hero, Mighty Man of Muscle Mountain, My Big Strong Boy, Cutie Patootie, Turbo, or My Little Pumpkin Spiced Latte.

PAM. I just threw up a little.

BARNES. Schedule Q: Per fiscal quarter, The Girlfriend shall enact greater than fifty iterations of Positive Digital Reinforcement.

PAM. Positive *what*?

FARRAH. Examples of Positive Digital Reinforcement shall include: an Instagram double-tap, retweet, or Facebook Like hereafter referred to as *(Without looking up, finishes the sentence by holding up a large printout of the Facebook "thumbs-up" image.)*

BARNES. Vis-à-vis compensation negotiation, in the event of plaintiff *regret*, our client requests three post-termination snuggles.

PAM. More like zero.

BARNES. *Two* snuggles.

PAM. Zero.

BARNES. One.

PAM. Zero.

BARNES. *(As she writes:)* Zero snuggles.

FARRAH. Moreover, our client offers The Girlfriend a rejection-mitigating severance package in the form of this bag of Peanut M&Ms. *(He reveals exactly that and holds it out to PAM.)*

PAM. *(Taking the bag:)* Agreed.

BARNES. In witness whereof, as of the date hereunder, the parties have executed the termination of The Relationship. Effective immediately, The Girlfriend is now The Ex-Girlfriend. *(Extends her hand to PAM:)* Congratulations.

PAM. *(Shakes hands:)* It's a real honor.

BARNES. *(To PAM:)* And for any future relationship termination needs, *(Handing over her business card:)* do give us a call.

PAM. Definitely.

(PAM takes the business card, turns around, rips it in half, drops it, and makes her exit.)

BARNES. *(To FARRAH:)* Okay, back to the office.

FARRAH. Christy?

BARNES. What?

FARRAH. (*Puppy-dog mokey:*) You never call *me* your Mighty Man of Muscle Mountain.

BARNES. (*Wearily:*) I am so dumping you.

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 7

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 9460, filename "Close Confines."

(*Three people sit in adjacent chairs, in this order: JESSICA, CASEY, RICHARD. They all stare straight ahead.*)

JESSICA. Richard, I hope this isn't awkward, but I think we should break up.

(*RICHARD is surprised by this news and noticeably tries to hold back his emotions.*)

(*The "bing" airplane announcement sound.*)

AIRLINE CAPTAIN. (*Over intercom:*) Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. Just sit back and relax as we spend the next 21 hours together flying to lovely Sydney, Australia.

RICHARD. (*To JESSICA, barely keeping it together:*) But why? WHY?

(*Total stranger CASEY subtly reveals large, noise-canceling headphones and puts them on.*)

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 8

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 27005, filename "Hook, Line, and Sinker."

(*KATE is waiting by herself. SIMON enters, and is noticeably lazy and apathetic – his demeanor, his tone, his outfit, etc.*)

SIMON. Hey.

KATE. Did you get my texts?

SIMON. Hm? What? Yeah, I got 'em.

KATE. We were supposed to meet at five.

SIMON. Were we? What time is it now?

KATE. Seven.

SIMON. Oh, so like an hour late?

KATE. Two hours.

SIMON. (*Scoffing:*) Yeah okay...

KATE. Is something wrong? You seem out of it.

SIMON. No, I'm great, actually. Just got fired. (*Holds up a high five.*) Up top.

KATE. Oh I'm so sorry.

SIMON. No, it's awesome. Now I can finally fulfill my dream of becoming a drifter! I always wanted to live on a train, surviving on nothing but my wits and also baked beans. I even bought this cool stick and bindle. (*Shows it.*) Look! Polka dots!

KATE. You told me your goal was to become a thoracic surgeon, and maybe run a marathon.

SIMON. *BO-RING.* It's all about this baby right here. (*Pets and kisses the bindle.*)

KATE. I don't know what to say. You're suddenly nothing like the guy I've been dating.

SIMON. Maybe. Or maybe you're distracted by my odor.

KATE. Is that *you*?

SIMON. Oh it's definitely me. To get a head start on drifter life, I haven't showered for a week.

KATE. Wow.

SIMON. Hygiene's overrated.

KATE. That's false.

(*DOMINO bursts in.*)

DOMINO. Hey, babyyyyyy!

SIMON. Dominohhhhhhhh!!!

KATE. *Domino?*

SIMON. I've told you about Domino. My girl on the side?

KATE. *Girl on the side?*

SIMON. Oh, you'd rather I call her my *mistress*? So *posh*...! Fine, Domino's my "mistress." C'mere, "mistress."

(*They make out; it's sloppy.*)

All right, go sit over there and wait for me.

DOMINO. Bye, babyyyyyyy!

(DOMINO *gleefully heads somewhere nearby.*)

KATE. Okay, that's it. Clearly we're done.

SIMON. You're breaking up with me?

KATE. All of a sudden you're awful and gross and a cheat. Yeah, I am.

SIMON. But it's official, right? You're ending our relationship?

KATE. Yes, I'm officially ending our relationship.

(SIMON *takes a brief moment to let that sink in, then throws up his fists in relieved victory.*)

SIMON. And they said it couldn't be done!

KATE. *Who* said *what* couldn't be done?

SIMON. Baiting you into breaking up with me. All I needed was a little trick up my sleeve called *reverse psychology*!

KATE. Sorry...?

SIMON. I'm not really all those bad things. I *meant* to get here late. I don't *really* smell; I bought this spray online called Funky Funk. (*Holds up a can or bottle.*) And Domino's not really my mistress; it's just my cousin doing me a favor. (*Suddenly sure to clarify:*) Distant cousin. *Distant.*

KATE. That makes no sense. Why go through that trouble to trick me into dumping you? Why not just dump me?

SIMON. Dump you? Then *I'd* be the jerk.

KATE. You *are* the jerk.

SIMON. Uhhh, speak for yourself. You just dumped your boyfriend for no good reason.

KATE. Here's a reason: You just made out with your cousin.

SIMON. *Distant* cousin.

DOMINO. Like third, we think.

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Breakup 9

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Playback ID 5488, filename "Shoot, the Messengers."

(At a gym. Everyone wears workout clothes of some sort. The characters should use any gym equipment that works best.)

(HENRY is lifting small free weights. MAY walks over, picks up different free weights, starts lifting them. They both face forward. A few moments pass. Still facing forward, MAY pauses lifting.)

MAY. Cans of pickled mango juice.

(MAY resumes lifting.)

(Then, HENRY pauses with a very slight look of confusion, unclear if the statement was meant for him. He continues lifting.)

(After another moment or two, MAY pauses lifting again. This time, a little more emphatically.)

MAY. Cans... of pickled... .. mango juice.

(MAY continues lifting.)

(HENRY stops lifting, looks to MAY.)

HENRY. I'm sorry, what?

(MAY stops lifting.)

MAY. *(Obviously/simplely:)* Cans of pickled mango juice.

HENRY. What does that mean?

MAY. Y'know, that's a good question. Never thought about it. Hunh.

(MAY resumes lifting.)

(A moment.)

(HENRY resumes lifting.)

(Another moment.)

MAY. *(Still lifting, spoken quickly:)* Cans of pickled mango juice.

HENRY. *(As he stops lifting:)* Okay, please stop.

MAY. Hey don't look at me. That guy Jay told me to tell you that.

HENRY. Who's Jay?

MAY. JAY!

(JAY suddenly appears wearing boxing gloves, punching the air.)

JAY. Hey May.

MAY. Hey Jay. This guy wants to know why you told me to tell him, "Cans of pickled mango juice."

JAY. I didn't say "Cans of pickled mango juice"; I said "Candlesticks in Monday's news."

MAY. Ohhhhh, I must've misheard you. (To HENRY:) Hey: Candlesticks in Monday's news.

HENRY. That doesn't make sense either.

MAY. Fair point. Jay?

JAY. Beats me. That girl Fay told me to tell you to tell him that.

HENRY. Who's Fay?

MAY / JAY. FAY!

(FAY suddenly appears doing a workout with a medicine ball or jump rope.)

FAY. Hey Jay. Hey May.

MAY / JAY. Hey Fay.

JAY. This guy wants to know why you told me to tell May to tell him "Candlesticks in Monday's news."

FAY. I didn't say "Candlesticks in Monday's news"; I said "Can you shrink a monkey stew."

JAY. Ohhhhh. (To MAY:) Can you shrink a *monkey stew*.

MAY. (To HENRY:) Can you shrink a monkey stew?

HENRY. Who *are* you people?

FAY. Look, that old guy Ray told me to tell Jay to tell May to tell you that.

HENRY. Ray??

MAY / JAY / FAY. RAY!

HENRY. (To himself:) I gotta find a different gym...

(RAY — a frail old man — appears with a heavy weight hanging from a head harness.)

RAY. Hey, May. Hey Jay. Hey Fay.

MAY / JAY / FAY. Hey Ray.

FAY. This guy wants to know why you told me to tell Jay to tell May to tell him, "Can you shrink a monkey stew."

RAY. I didn't say "Can you shrink a monkey stew." I said "Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew."

FAY. Ohhhhhhhhh. (To JAY:) Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew.

JAY. (To MAY:) Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew.

MAY. (To HENRY:) Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew.

FAY. (To RAY:) Who told you Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew?

RAY. My bridge partner's yoga instructor's bank teller's granddaughter left a voicemail to pass those exact words to Fay to Jay to May to that guy. Actually, I should listen to that voicemail in my *good* ear. (He does.) Ohhhhhhhh, she didn't say "Kanye's drinking Mountain Dew." She said "Connie's breaking up with you."

FAY. (To JAY:) Connie's breaking up with you!

JAY. (To MAY:) Connie's breaking up with you!

MAY. (To HENRY:) Connie's breaking up with you!

HENRY. Connie's breaking up with me...?

(Pause.)

(FAY, JAY, and MAY then realize Henry just got dumped via this game of telephone. Maybe they all fly over to give him a big, comforting group hug.)

FAY / JAY / MAY. Oh nooo! / Oh man... / So sorry. / That's awful. / etc.

(Beat.)

RAY. Wait, this guy was dating Kanye?

SOOTHING VOICEOVER. Breakup Complete.

Present Day C

JACK. So, what'd you think? Pretty great, huh?

LILY. Those were horrible.

JACK. But *effective*.

LILY. I don't know. This doesn't feel right.

JACK. Listen: as CEO and majority shareholder of The Breakup Center, I've made a *fortune* solving problems just like yours. So you can trust me. I know what I'm doing.

LILY. I guess...

JACK. And besides: your deposit is nonrefundable!!

(Laughs hard. Then he poises his pen over the clipboard.)

So – which breakup method fits *you* best?

LILY. *(Reluctantly:)* Maybe I could do that last one – with the messengers?

JACK. Excellent. *(Checks a checkbox.)* One of our most popular packages. And for a small additional fee we can provide additional messengers – up to *sixteen*.

LILY. That's all right; I only need one.

JACK. One? Oh no! *(Chuckling:)* I'm sorry, but years of experience in breakup analytics has taught me that you'll need at the very least three messengers to be effective.

LILY. No, one is fine. Watch, I'll show you: Ursula is breaking up with you.

JACK. Ursula? Wait, who *are* you? How do you know my Ursula?

LILY. Not yours anymore. She knows all about the secret Maui getaway with your assistant.

(JACK desperately tries to respond with "But..." but is tongue-tied.)

JACK. Buh – Buh –

LILY. Oh that's okay – I'll do the honors: *(Impression of the soothing voiceover:)* Breakup Complete.

(She takes his clipboard and pen, broadly checks a checkbox. Blackout.)

End of Play