

## ***A Tough Pill to Swallow* Audition Packet**

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### **Audition Information**

Thank you for showing interest in auditioning for my play, *A Tough Pill to Swallow*! Please keep in mind this is an **all-freshmen production**. I am planning on running auditions in a slightly unconventional way—nothing crazy, don't worry—so there are no scenes for you to prepare beforehand. At the audition you will be paired off with a scene partner; you and your partner will be given five minutes to prepare a scene I give you. After five minutes everyone will be called to perform their scenes in front of everyone. We'll do as many rounds of this as the hour permits so that everyone gets to read for as many characters as they'd like. All you have to do to prepare for the audition is to read the following information and character descriptions and consider which characters you'd like to read for! Contact me at my email above for any questions. *Only characters with an asterisk by their name will be featured in audition scenes.*

### **Timeline**

Auditions: **Friday, January 19, 5 pm, HQ 132** (please check YCA website nearer to the audition day in case this changes).

First rehearsal: **January 23, 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Location TBA** (hopefully a classroom in WLH).

Rehearsals will be held on Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesdays will be for blocking, so only a few actors at a time will be called in; Fridays will be for rehearsing blocked scenes and working on character, so the entire cast will be called in. On average, you will be spending three hours a week in rehearsal.

Rehearsal times are not fixed; if they do not work for you and you are casted in a role, I will rearrange the schedule accordingly.

Tech Week: **March 25 - 30**

Show Dates: **March 29 & 30**, Showtimes TBA. Venue: Lighten Theater.

*All dates are subject to change.*

### **Production Team**

Playwright & Director: Mia Bauer

Producer & Stage Manager: Sophia Liu

### **Synopsis**

When John's and Sarah-Anne's teenage daughter Sonia runs away from her Hamptons home to join the hippie movement in New York City, long-running family tensions snap. The play is set a year later: January 1st, 1972, a night which marks a turning point in each family member's life. It is closing night at the Broadway musical *Company*, and John, who plays the leading role, must decide whether to return home to Sarah-Anne or leave his broken family behind. While he debates the benefits (or lack thereof) of marriage, Sarah-Anne throws a "Welcome Home" dinner party for John, but when John himself does

not show, well-kept family secrets are revealed to the guests. That same night marks Sonia's boyfriend's last night in New York before he moves to California; will Sonia go with him, or will their relationship end that night? The three conversations are interwoven, coming together to form an examination of the transformative power of love and honesty and of why we choose to love when it is so often painful.

## **Characters**

**John Dempsey\***, male, late forties. Sarah-Anne's husband, Sonia's father, and an actor playing the leading role in Sondheim's *Company* on Broadway. The kind of person who effortlessly draws people in, all the more so for the way his personality frequently and rapidly swings from energetically charming and engaging to brooding and introspective.

*Note: this character is required to change out of his costume into another onstage, entailing being seen briefly in his boxers.*

**Sonia Dempsey\***, female, eighteen. A sweet and naive, free-spirited, rebellious, highly emotional poet who ran away from home to live with her activist boyfriend. Despite living among the New York City hippie scene, she seems incapable of letting go of traces of her upper middle class lifestyle; her motivation and sincerity seem questionable.

*Note: this character is required to kiss another character on stage several times. Character also might be required to be seen in her underwear while wearing a long shirt.*

**Sarah-Anne Dempsey\***, female, late thirties. John's wife and Sonia's mother. A fussy, materialistic housewife. Her exaggerated, phony demeanor hides a deep disappointment and a naturally loving and servile personality.

**Nick\***, male, late thirties. John's career-long best friend and current castmate in *Company*. He grapples with his simultaneous admiration of and disappointment in John, whose shadow he has lived in for the entirety of his career.

*Note: this character is required to change out of his costume into another onstage, entailing being seen briefly in his boxers.*

**Russel\***, male, twenty-two. Sonia's boyfriend and a free-spirited anti-war activist moving to California to join an activist group. His radical idealisms, anger directed at anything mainstream, and tendency to preach his nonconformist philosophy to all who listen make him particularly appealing to Sonia and particularly unappealing to most other people. His love for Sonia, however, leaves him questioning his stance.

*Note: this character is required to kiss another character on stage several times.*

**Ruth Greenfield\***, female, thirties. Adam's wife. An old friend of Sarah-Anne's from the office. As phony as Sarah-Anne, but her phoniness hides a sharp and highly observant personality, which she uses to manipulate Sarah-Anne and circulate gossip.

**Adam Greenfield**, male, thirties. Ruth's husband. A journalist for the *New York Times* seeking to write an exposé on John's and Sarah-Anne's tumultuous family life.

**Chelsea Bingham**, female, thirties. Michael's husband and a friend of Sarah-Anne.

**Michael Bingham**, male, thirties. Chelsea's husband and lawyer.

Feel free to contact me at my email above for any questions. I hope to see you on Jan. 19!