

The Boy *WITH NO FACE*

(selection)

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The Boy With No Face

Characters:

JASON BURK Male, 15 Years Old.

The Chorus:

NATHAN MILLER Male, 14 Years Old.

ZOEY RANDALL Female, 15 years Old.

MERRYN BURK Female, 45 Years Old.

DAVID BURK Male, 45 Years Old.

LIZA MILLER Female, 42 Years Old.

SAGE GRAHAM Female, 23 Years Old.

Setting:

Reality is crumbling

The world is a tape record run so thin, it's breaking.

A school hallway, long since abandoned.

Relatively bare stage, with two rows of chairs facing each other on the edges of the hallway.

Time is loose.

Notes:

Every actor stays onstage for the duration of the play, and are always visible. Actors never 'exit' in a conventional sense, and instead either peter on the edge of the stage or sit down in one of the chairs around the hallway.

A "/" indicates two characters speaking over one another that results in dialogue occurring at the same time for a few moments.

A "..." indicates a pause specific to a character.

The Boy With No Face

Early Morning.

JASON BURK stands alone upstage, center.

The CHORUS (MERRYLYN BURK, DAVID BURK, NATHAN MILLER, ZOEY RANDALL, and SAGE GRAHAM) sits in profile along the edges of the hallway.

Scene One:

JASON BURK takes his time looking to the other six characters, still seated. No one returns the gaze. The tension is palpable. He then walks slowly to the front of the stage and stops for a few moments looking out before he finally begins.

JASON BURK:

I woke up in the middle of the night and I couldn't breathe.
The sweats. The sweats. Breathe – *Breathe*.
The light of the bus drifting by flickered through my curtains.
The weight of everything piling up around me – there's so much shit.
I'm buried in – *shit*. The walls of my room up and up – and I'm falling.
I'm falling but I'm so weighted. Like I can feel everything - miles and miles of atmosphere just pushing against me. Jumping out of my skin – but I can't move. I can't scream. I can't cry.

A bus stop where the bus doesn't stop anymore.
It just... Goes right on past.
Goes to another one closer to the Macs.
Goes to another one closer to the mall.
To the swimming pool.
But it doesn't stop by here anymore.

Someone once told me that we're all special little snowflakes.
Probably a kindergarten teacher or something stupid like that. We're all 'special little snowflakes' we all 'deserve a bus stop right outside our house' and all we need to do is 'find what we're good at.'
Everyone's good at something.
Something.

One car. Two Car. Three Car.
Breathe. *Christ Jason*. Just breathe.

JASON BURK closes his eyes.

I'm... I'm standing on the edge of a desert.

*NATHAN MILLER stands/bumps into JASON BURK'S shoulder causing JASON BURK to fall on the ground.
NATHAN MILLER helps JASON BURK up.*

NATHAN MILLER: Sorry – uh – sorry.

JASON BURK: No it's... Uh...

NATHAN MILLER: It was my fault – I – I didn't see you and –

JASON BURK: It's okay. It's okay.

NATHAN MILLER: And I was in a rush – looking for room... Uh... Room Two Oh Four.

JASON BURK: That's where I'm headed too.

NATHAN MILLER: Really?

JASON BURK: Mrs. Schmuck's class?

NATHAN MILLER: Yeah! ...Yeah. And like – what kind of name is 'Schmuck' anyways??

JASON BURK: ... Right? *(Small Awkward Pause.)*

NATHAN MILLER: So... Do you know anyone?

JASON BURK: Like. Here?

NATHAN MILLER: Yeah.

JASON BURK: No.

NATHAN MILLER: Well, my name's Nathan Miller.

JASON BURK: Jason Burk.

NATHAN MILLER: I guess now you know someone...

JASON BURK: Thanks...

NATHAN MILLER: You're gunna love St. Jude's. It's kind of a shit show sometimes – but I think that's kind of adds to its charm.

JASON BURK: ... Yeah?

ZOEY RANDALL enters.

ZOEY RANDALL: *Heyyyyy Jason – wait – who’s this guy?*

JASON BURK: Nathan.

ZOEY RANDALL: Looks like a nerd.

JASON BURK: ‘Least he’s not a slut.

ZOEY RANDALL: RUDE.

JASON BURK: This is Zoey.

NATHAN MILLER: Nice to meet you.

JASON BURK: Nathan’s in our class.

ZOEY RANDALL: No shit?

NATHAN MILLER: Are you new here too?

ZOEY RANDALL: Yup! From St. Cath’s to St. Jude’s.

NATHAN MILLER: St. Catherine’s?

JASON BURK: That’s the one.

NATHAN MILLER: No way – that’s right by where we... Well. Where we used to live.

ZOEY RANDALL: *Used to?*

NATHAN MILLER: Parents got divorced... Uh. I’m not really allowed to talk about / it -

ZOEY RANDALL: Like – why not?

NATHAN MILLER: I dunno. My mom –

JASON BURK: Is that your Mom over there – taking to my Mom?

*MERRYLYN BURK and LIZA MILLER stand on the sidelines.
LIZA MILLER waves.*

NATHAN MILLER: She’s sooo embarrassing.

ZOEY RANDALL: Parents. What can you do?

JASON BURK: What's on your arm?

NATHAN MILLER: Oh... This? It's a dragon.

ZOEY RANDALL: A what?

NATHAN MILLER: A western dragon though. Not an Eastern one. Eastern ones are different.

ZOEY RANDALL: ... Why's it on your arm?

NATHAN MILLER: I dunno... I like drawing them.

ZOEY RANDALL: That's really weird.

JASON BURK: I think it looks pretty good.

NATHAN MILLER: Really?

JASON BURK: Yeah.

NATHAN MILLER: ... Thanks.

ZOEY RANDALL takes NATHAN MILLER by the arm and they walk the perimeter of the stage back to their seats. JASON BURK follows.

*LIZA MILLER takes out her phone and calls someone. (She continues redialing throughout).
The sound of a cellphone. No one hears it except for JASON BURK*

JASON BURK: Can you hear that? Can any of you hear that?

*The sound of a cellphone.
Red and Blue Lights.*

JASON BURK: Someone answer it – *answer it already* –

NATHAN MILLER (*recorded*): You've reached Nathan Miller. Please leave a message after the beep.

SAGE GRAHAM: Ringing... Ringing. *Ringing.*

The sound of the cellphone.

SAGE GRAHAM: That sound. That sound. *That sound...*
Digging inside of me. Boring into my skull.
Shaking my core...

NATHAN MILLER (*recorded*): You've reached Nathan Miller. Please leave a message after the beep.

SAGE GRAHAM: *It's everywhere.*
I'm driving and – there it is. I'm cooking and – ring, ring, ring.
I'm sleeping – and I wake up. I'm. I'm *anything* and - and I'm...
And I grin and bear it. I toss and I turn, I toss and turn, toss – turn,
toss, turn. Toss – RING – RING – *RING.*

And I never want it to stop.
I never *want* to forget.
I don't... *deserve* to forget.

*SHIFT – SAGE GRAHAM turns around facing the STUDENTS
(ZOEY, NATHAN and JASON) who are sitting in the seats.*

SAGE GRAHAM (*to the STUDENTS*): Whose phone was that - whose phone?

STUDENTS: ...

SAGE GRAHAM: You know that St. Catherine's has a strict policy – *I'm talking to you, Nathan.* There's no way your crotch is *that* funny.

NATHAN MILLER: I – I don't know what you're talking about Ms. Graham!

SAGE GRAHAM: I see you – staring down – smiling to yourself.
You can have your phone back at the end of the day.

NATHAN MILLER: Oh gosh. I'm sorry – I'm -

SAGE GRAHAM: *Nathan.*

NATHAN MILLER hands her the phone.

SAGE GRAHAM: As I was saying...
Definitions for Force:
A force is a push or pull.
Force is the capacity to do work or cause physical change.

The sound of a phone.

SAGE GRAHAM: Force equals Mass times acceleration.

SAGE GRAHAM: A force is that which changes or tends to change the state of rest or motion of a body.

Once again – only JASON seems to be able to hear the phone.

NATHAN MILLER (*recorded*): You've reached Nathan Miller. Please leave a message after the beep.

Red and Blue Lights.

LIZA MILLER: I'll call his phone just to call it.
It's out of habit - but mostly – it's on purpose.
"You've reached Nathan Miller. Please leave a message after the beep."
And... That's all I'll hear. "You've reached Nathan – "
He is – *was* - going through puberty – so it's *rea*-ched. There's a squeak there. That's how I know it's him.

LIZA MILLER keeps on redialing, and redialing, though there is no more volume. MERRYLYN BURK stands in front of JASON BURK and directs this to him.

MERRYLYN BURK: Seven pounds. Forty Centimeters.
Two Thirty Three in the Afternoon.
October Twenty-Second. Two Thousand.
Red faced and crying. Tears in Eyes. Crying.
Crying out for life – breathe – *breathe*.
I exist. I'm here. I'm *here*.

LIZA MILLER looks over while redialing. She also directs this / the following to JASON BURK

LIZA MILLER: I have this fantasy.

MERRYLYN BURK: David comes over.

DAVID BURK: Never thought of myself as a father.
Didn't even think I'd be home in time.
Turns out – flew in at just the right moment.

MERRYLYN BURK: God knows he almost fainted.

DAVID BURK: Never felt so useless. So sidelined.

MERRYLYN BURK: And he reaches over.

DAVID BURK: She hesitates.

MERRYLYN BURK: I don't want to let him go. This living person. This person that came from me.

DAVID BURK: I stare into his eyes.
And... This feeling overwhelms me.
This... Bubbling from the pit of my stomach to the back of my throat.

MERRYLYN BURK: David always does this thing with his eyebrows when he's thinking.

LIZA MILLER: I have this *fantasy*...

DAVID BURK: And I can't stop smiling. I can't stop smiling.

MERRYLYN BURK: And he cries.

DAVID BURK: Holding this little life.

MERRYLYN BURK: Watching him hold that child. When everything – when *everything* hurts.

DAVID BURK: Feeling his heart beat next to mine. Feeling him squirm against my skin.

MERRYLYN BURK: He's alive.

LIZA MILLER: I Have This Fantasy...

DAVID BURK: I'll never forget the look in his eyes.

MERRYLYN BURK: A pair of boyish grins. A sheepish smile.

DAVID BURK: We laugh.

MERRYLYN BURK: Although it hurts – it hurts so to laugh.

DAVID BURK: And then he pees –

MERRYLYN BURK: He pees right there in his arms.

DAVID BURK: The little shit!

MERRYLYN BURK: Our little angel.

LIZA MILLER pushes through MERRYLYN and DAVID to directly face JASON.

LIZA MILLER: I'm sitting on top of *you*, fucker.
My thumbs pressed into your eyes.
And you're *sc-r-e-a-m-ing*
You're screaming but I don't give a shit.
You're writhing. You're crying.
And I think: good. *Good.*
I can feel the blood streaming from your sockets.
The jelly mashing mash, mash, mashing against my thumbs.

And I push further.
I push as hard as I possibly can.
You don't get to see. You don't get to see.

You're bound and gagged.
Blood seeping through the cloth over your eyes.
You're covered in gasoline
I hold the match. I see the terror.
I savor your fucking fear.
And I watch you burn.
I. Watch. You. Burn.

DAVID BURK is distracted by LIZA MILLER.

MERRYN BURK: I've thought of a name.

DAVID BURK: ...

MERRYN BURK: Jason.

DAVID BURK: It's... a good name.

LIZA MILLER: *I. Watch. You. Burn.*

*DAVID BURK watches LIZA MILLER return to her seat.
MERRYN BURK returns to her seat.*

*Only DAVID BURK is left standing.
Red and Blue Lights.*

DAVID BURK: I keep coming back to that same moment.
It's in the bureau.
Bureau's next to the bed.
Bed's in my room.
Door's locked. Door's across from Merryn's.
Jason's – next to hers.

As DAVID BURK talks, he paces around the perimeter of the stage.

DAVID BURK: Tossing. Turning.
Sometimes I wake up – and there's shit all around that's not really there.
I open my eyes and there's this figure.
Long inky-black fingers.
A back that goes up – up curves against the ceiling it's so tall.
A giant shadow with large yellow eyes.

*DAVID BURK'S back to JASON.
JASON BURK stands.*

DAVID BURK: And it's looking at me.
No.
It's looking straight through me.

I close my eyes and it's gone.
But... So's something else.

*Everyone gets up and darts about for this as they speak.
Chaotic.*

LIZA MILLER: *Redial. Redial –*

SAGE GRAHAM: *The sound of a phone – the sound of a phone –*

DAVID BURK: *Where is it – where is it? It was in the bureau – in the bureau –*

MERRYN BURK: *A plaid shirt. No – beige pants. No – black shoes –*

ZOEY RANDALL: *So fucking late. So fucking late. I've never been this father-fucking -*

NATHAN MILLER: *I don't want to go – I don't care about math –*

JASON BURK: Stop it...

SAGE GRAHAM: *There's a student on the ground. There's a student on the ground.*

MERRYN BURK: *I just got an automatic text warning. And Liza said – Twitter. Twitter!*

SAGE GRAHAM: *There's someone on the floor...?*

LIZA MILLER: *Where's Nathan?*

NATHAN MILLER: Jason?

ZOEY RANDALL: *Nathan?*

LIZA MILLER: *Don't be stupid.*

SAGE GRAHAM: *I spill my coffee. There's coffee everywhere.*

MERRYN BURK: *It's a girl – no – it's a girlish looking boy –*

DAVID BURK: *Where the hell is it – where the hell is it -*

JASON BURK: Stop.

MERRYN BURK: *In the cafeteria – no in the hallway –*

SAGE GRAHAM: *He's just lying there – there's something – Was it a...?*

ZOEY RANDALL: *What's going on? What's going on -*

LIZA MILLER: *Pick up the phone – Pick up –*

SAGE GRAHAM: *The sound of a phone. The sound of a phone.*

DAVID BURK: *There was someone at the foot of the bed, There was someone –*

MERRYN BURK: *There are pictures of police officers outside –*

NATHAN MILLER: Jason?
Jason.

JASON BURK: STOP. STOP. STOP.

*Everyone's sound snaps off.
A ringing sound like the after-shock of an explosion.
An unearthly silence as the ringing fades away.*

JASON BURK: Please. Stop it. *Stop it.*

*Everyone freezes.
Lighting shift – purples and blues.*

JASON BURK: Focus on something.
Focus on something.
The sidewalk. The sidewalk...

JASON BURK: The concrete – two perfect steps in each little square.
Don't step on the lines – *don't step on the lines.*

Sand grits at my toes.

There are all these cracks in the sidewalk.
From people stepping on it.
Falling on it.
Taking it for granite.
Sorry. For taking it for granted.
Ha. A pun. *A pun.*
That's funny.

Just... One step in front of the other.
Walk the pavement for no other reason.
Walk the pavement because it's mine.

[END OF SELECTION]