

Hello babies,

A whole new world is about to begin for everyone and you're right here; smack dab in the middle of an ever changing ecosystem often times referred to as: The Drama Department. This environment is filled with bright faces, awkward smiles, enormous gestures of affection, tear filled eyes of passion, thought-provoking yells throughout the dressing rooms, and so many more little details that keep changing and keep making this place into something quite different. This is not a Drama Department.

To have an underlying tone of Drama points in a direction of merely spitting out words and phrases from a name that you get assigned to at random in the best hopes that you can get; this is not us. The name that you get to represent is more than a name put together by a person in a hurry; it is a name constructed with a purpose, it is person created to fill in the world written around it, it is another soul that takes place inside a smaller world that we get to dictate. It becomes a character, and for a while, it becomes part of you. You embody an entity that you manifest all on your own (with some help from everyone around you that is doing the same thing). This separate you takes on a life for themselves; they eat differently, they drive differently, they answer to somebody a different way, or they may not answer them at all! We need to get to know them. Not only know what happens in the next few scenes, these are their lives! We need to understand why it occurs and to what extent are we going to shout out those next few words. We walk in their shoes, we get into their skin; call it what you will, we become them when the light hits us. This character, along with its better half, are only part of what makes this whole place function.

To be called a Department conveys a certain business-formal state of being. For everything to have its place and every place to be filed and constructed into a perfect existence. For anyone that has seen us at work, it is far from a hierarchy. There are manners and so-called laws that we all must abide by, but everything collaborates. Everything that is done, has been thought about time and time again; but it is often said that two heads are better than one, and in this case, how could one head be better than thirty-odd ones working together to get something resolved! No, no. To be a Department all life is lost and all emotions are withdrawn as soon as people file through the door. We are a Family to the simplest aspect! If one day you want to enter the room singing showtunes and frolic through the halls, your brothers and sisters will join you. Another day, you want to go on a tirade about how someone dared to cut you off during rush hour, we'll shout the so-and-so into infamy. We will all grow tightly knit and will continue to act in the way families always do.

That being said, a family isn't a family without a few punches swung! There will be times when all you want to do is jump over the entire length of the room and just suffocate whoever is speaking (just because you think they sound stupid). Other times you'll want to beat everyone down because you can't seem to find your make-up bag, on shownight, with fifteen minutes until curtain, and all because someone spilled some water all over you. From the other side, it'll all work out. When you realize that all that stupid stuff said was said just to make you mad, and you all get to laugh about it pretty quickly, you see that you care about what the others say about you. Or how in a flash, everyone that you've been yelling at for that make-up bag looks at one another and sprints to find it in a blink of an eye, you start understanding that we are all here for one

another without any hesitation. It's a nice start, with a few bumps, but we all get there without many scratches in the end.

It isn't all about the actors; never forget that! If you seem to start acting all arrogant and flashy, it's probably because you are, and you need to look at where you are on the Totem Pole. I'M GLAD YOU ASKED! You see, we also work on a level system. Picture a Native American Totem Pole: all flashy, carved intricately, each level tightly knit with the one above and below it. At the very top, stands the overseeing body (or bodies in most occurrences): Davey! She, in our case, is the judge, jury, and executioner with everything that goes on in our little House of the Prairie. Next we have the very glue, lubrication, and smoke (to keep the mirrors more interesting): Techies! They keep everything running, make all of the empty spaces filled, line our stage with the very instruments to show a whole new world, and basically give the hollow arena life! Then we have fifty feet of wood, who would serve as the wonderful people that serve our great cause that are outside of our familiar circles. These are the moms and dads, teachers and students, your neighbors and their families; these are the people that decided to get up off of their butts and get involved with us to make their lives funner, more interesting, and a bit more goofy all the while making our jobs run a lot more smoother, takes off a lot of work off of our plates, and makes everyone a little happier. Next run the hundred some-odd feet for the audience members that make every production worthwhile, that make every angry, ripping out hair moment bearable; these are the people that fill our palace with echoing laughs, bellowing tears, and edge sitting, nail biting gasps when the moments arrive. Then, at the very bottom of this magnificent Totam, lie the actors. We have our own works and how we conduct ourselves, but we should never forget where we are. I mean this in the nicest possible way, we sort of belong at

the bottom. No matter how much time we spend on that stage, never forget who we do it for, no matter how many people idolize us the day after, never forget who put them there, no matter how well the night might have gone, never forget who made it run so smoothy, and no matter how much we speak about how much the show and other things rocked, never forget who had the vision, decision, and patience to make it all happen.

The spotlight will hit each and every one of us at least once, you don't have to worry about that. After everyone has thanked one another for working so hard in making the days spent together all the more memorable and all the more hard to leave, that's when you know that you have a family. After all of the countless and forgettable hours spent working on pieces for Competition, or all of the nights spent not sleeping because of preparations for shows, or even the amount of time thrown away working on make-up work or trying to catch up on school work because you don't want to disappoint Davey or your fellow others, that's when you know it's all worth it. It's worth biting your lip from a comment that'll end a friendship because you know you wouldn't be able to live without it, it's worth spending the extra few minutes waiting for everyone to change so that you'll all leave together because then you can see all the smiles of peoples' faces, and it is definitely worth putting in the left over hours of the day and the beginning of the next to finish up the work that needs to be turned in tomorrow morning because if you can't be part of us just because of a silly little grade, it will hurt everyone (from the person you've never spoken with to your bestfriend) more than you could possibly imagine. When everything is said and done, when all of the foundation is wiped off, all of the floors swept, everyone that came that night hugged and kissed, when all of the AYYY'S are acclaimed we all go home. One by one, with a smile on our faces, exhaustion seeping out of us, and a full notion that we're a part of an

unbroken, impenetrable, and impregnable bond. A family. An entity. A little home away from home call: The Drama Department.

