



sExtOrtiOn

by Patrick Thomas McCarthy

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All characters and situations are fictional only suggested by actual incidents

Characters

The Boys: [in their 20's to play teens]

Donny Doirko: DD, small, dark, a troubled loner

Buck Cummings: BC, jock, control issues

Bennett Benjamin: BB, jock, tallest & biggest of the boys, object of desire

Bradley Michael White: the BMW, golden boy athlete, promised to Brenda

Brent Dodge: BD, average teen, marching band geek, Britany's boyfriend

Quin Quimby: QQ, out gay male teen

The Girls: [in their 20's to play teens]

Brenda Fenton Flair: BFF, cheerleader, promised to Brad

Britany Gray: BG, cool girl, office monitor, Brent's girlfriend

The Adult: *Mr. Zee: the administrator, also voices Quin's offstage dad*

Synopsis

*In **sExtOrtiOn**, a lonely outcast hatches a scheme that draws his entire high school and its Middle American community into a harrowing ride into the dark world of teen sexting. Posing as a girl on a social media site, he entices his classmates to send him compromising photos and videos, then "sextorts" them into physical encounters with the threat of exposure. Suggested by an actual teen "sexting" and extortion scandal, **sExtOrtiOn** digs beneath the superficial and sensationalistic treatments in national media accounts to explore the roots of adolescents' fluid sexual identity, experimentation, and recklessness, and the consequences of bullying, pack behavior, and hidden violence. **sExtOrtiOn** takes place over a year during which none of the "sextorted" boys reveals what is happening until the central character inexplicably turns himself in. Over the course of the play's 90 minutes, the nine characters of **sExtOrtiOn** struggle to make sense of the story's myriad unanswered questions & to disguise what is actually happening.*

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Setting: Middle Falls, Midwest, USA. Large upstage screen or blank wall for projected computer screen display. Stage right table, serves as lunch table. Up center table serves as Donny's desk, Brad's desk & Mr Zee's office desk. Stage Left, raised platform with bedding & pillows serves as bed in Quin's bedroom. Imaginary lockers at the downstage edge of the stage with character nameplates on the stagefloor. The locker lineup as well as the lineup for the news conference from stage right: Buck, Ben, Brent, Donny, Quin, Britany, Brenda, Brad.

[At start: Donny Doirko UC sitting with back to audience in front of up center table, Bradley Michael White, not texting, and Brenda Fenton Flair, texting, stand hand in hand wearing Promise rings, Britany Gray stands near Brent Dodge, both are texting, Buck Cummings & Ben Benjamin stand back to back both of them texting, Quin Quimby enters with laptop and bookbag first noticing Donny up center, then noticing all the others, then moves downstage center-right using his phone to text as he speaks, Donny sees him & casually announces...]

DONNY: Faggot.

QUIN: Yeah, Donny ***[Indicating Donny]*** was a pain in my ass, a real pain in my ass ... not that way, we never did anything like that, not that I ever would with Donny, but ever since I'd known him, he was always on my ass. I was the only out kid at Middle Falls High School, and he would ride me all the time. In junior high, he would actually chase me down the halls and call me fag. It always made me wonder why he was riding me so hard, if there was something else. But he was always on my ass. Not like he was on the others, like they say, he was on the others. But I was never one of the files. I've got standards. Quin Quimby's got his freak flag to hold up high. So, I never came up as one of the files. And I never hid who I was or what I am, and I took my share for it. It toughened me up and it also earned me respect from those that you would never expect to respect anything. They say I had a reliable posse of friends, they were almost all girls. And girls have powers that can make guys do things that you would never expect them to do. I'm not sure why they took up with me as one of their own, but they did and I got on board for a wild ride. ***[Gets up starts to cross past Buck, texting & Ben, as the rest move off]***

BEN: On your way to sex ed class Q-boy?

QUIN: That's Quin to you, B-boy.

BEN: That's Bennett to you, rim teaser.

QUIN: **[Under his breath]** That's didn't know your rim could be teased, B-boy.

BEN: What did you say, Q-boy?

BUCK: **[Snaps a camera phone shot as he speaks]** Ben-boy, Quin-boy, you're both pretty.

QUIN: And B-boy here doesn't seem to know the power of his own attraction. Aren't you going to come between us so you don't lose him?

BUCK: Get the freak away from us, Q-bite.

QUIN: With little winged feet. I flit, I flee, I fly.

BEN: What?

QUIN: Bone up on your musical theatre references if you expect to have conversation with the Quin.

BEN: We'd both bone up on you, but you'd like it too much.

MR. ZEE: **[Enters]** Is there a problem here gentlemen?

QUIN: No, Mr. Zee, the boys here were just telling me they have to bone up on all sorts of things.

MR. ZEE: Is that true gentlemen, that you're going to "bone up" right here in the halls?

BUCK: No, Mr. Zee we'll leave that to the Q here.

BEN: He's the one who's gonna flit and flee.

QUIN: And fly.

MR ZEE: Buck and Ben, get to class.

BUCK: Say please Mr. Zee.

MR ZEE: Mr. Cummings & Mr. Benjamin, get to class.

BUCK: So, we're the bad guys here?

MR ZEE: Go.

BUCK: We're gone. **[Punches Ben in arm]** Come on. **[Stare down with Quin before they go]**

MR ZEE: Now. **[Buck slaps Ben's ass and they leave]** You stay.

QUIN: So, I'm late for class and catch flak for that?

MR ZEE: Quin, you've got to stop antagonizing the other boys.

QUIN: **[Mr. Zee freezes]** And we'll stop right there, we've just established the kind of world where I live. Mr. Zee continued on **[Mimes the advice]** with all sorts of advice of what I shouldn't be doing. How I'm the problem. All of that, you don't need to hear. **[Mr Zee leaves]** He finally leaves and I'm late for class. Typical of my life, I am perceived as the problem. Donny **[indicating Donny]** wasn't the problem until later, finally taking some of the heat off me. And also typical of my life, few would be seen in the lunchroom with me. But I would soon count on Brad, and my girls Brenda and Britany, to be there for me.

[Brad, Brenda, & Britany, texting, enter as their names are announced and sit at a lunch table]

BRAD: Quin? Ain't you got no place to sit? Come on Q-boy, come and sit with the girls.

QUIN: The girls?

BRAD: These are my girls. Most especially Brenda here. **[He nuzzles her, she giggles]** And they like you. So, I like you too. Come on sit down.

QUIN: Aren't you concerned about being seen with the Q- boy?

BRAD: Concerned? **[Gets up moves to Quin puts his arm around him]** Everybody! If I could have your attention please. Yo, drop your Ronald McDonalds and listen up. I want to apologize to Quin here for calling him Q-boy like everybody else does. His name is Quin, not Q-boy, or mo-boy, or queerbait, or gaybite, or fazmat, or dicktickler, or cockswallower, or fudgepacker, or any of those other names you might have called him. Now we should all call him, Quin, instead of any of those other fag names. And he is going to be sitting at this table with us. So, I hope none of you have a problem with that. And if you do, you can bring it up with me. You can now all go back to your regularly scheduled lunchtime. Bon appetite. I'm taking the French, you all. **[Goes to sit down]**

BRENDA: Brad!

BRAD: What?

BRENDA: Oh my god, you are such a freak.

BRAD: And a natural athlete who's taking the French.

BRITANY: Freak! **[Snaps pix of his freakishness]**

BRAD: Help me Quin-boy. I need protection from my girls here.

QUIN: **[Sits]** The last thing you need is my protection.

BRAD: Guys gotta stick together.

BRENDA: Just shut up Lord Dweeb.

BRAD: Or what are you gonna do? Take back your promise?

QUIN: You're promised?

BRAD: Yeah. **[Shows purity ring]** Brenda and me are promised.

BRENDA: **[Shows her purity ring too]** We're waiting for marriage....

BRAD: To do the deed.

BRITANY: Dweebs.

BRENDA: Don't be a hater. Brad and I have committed our futures to each other. And we'll stay pure until the time we marry.

BRAD: Or until I can't stand it no more.

BRENDA: Brad! **[She play pummels him]**

BRAD: See why I need the protection?

BRITANY: From himself, Lord Dweeb.

BRENDA: No, I'm the only one who can call him that.

BRITANY: Sorry, dweebette. Officially, asking pardon, dweebster. **[Snaps pic]**

QUIN: **[All freezes, he stands]** Had I officially dropped in from another universe? Sometimes I thought so, but somehow a bond developed where the girls, and Brad, took me in as sort of their badge of coolness. I always sat at their table, the girls even came over to my house for study sessions. I guess Brenda **[Gets up, kisses Brad,**

and leaves] felt safe her “promise” wouldn’t be threatened by me, and Britany ***[Gets up and pokes Brad as she leaves]*** hung with me so she wouldn’t be hassled by the B-boys. Brad, even started seeking out my opinion about things.

BRAD: Hey Quin, my man. ***[Pulls Quin down next to him]***

QUIN: Be careful what you wish for.

BRAD: What? No, not my man, like you’re the man, my man.

QUIN: Got it. Got it.

BRAD: And if I ever turn, you’re gonna be my first because you’re my man.

QUIN: That’s very flattering. I promise I’ll wait for you to turn. You promise?

BRAD: I’m already promised.

QUIN: That’s right. You forgot. What do you need?

BRAD: I don’t think I can wait.

QUIN: To turn?

BRAD: For Brenda.

QUIN: Oh, the promise.

BRAD: I need it.

QUIN: We *all* do.

BRAD: Do you think...

QUIN: What?

BRAD: Since you’re tight with the girls...

QUIN: If they would?

BRAD: Any of them?

QUIN: If they would? No. No, since I am tight with them and since all the girls I know are tight with Brenda, and she is tightly promised to you, that’s just crazy. And since when am I Dolly Gallagher Levi?

BRAD: Who?

QUIN: Keep up, keep up. Use your hand man. Do what you have to.

BRAD: I use my hand ten times a day. I need something that isn't attached to me.

QUIN: An oven mitt? A melon? An American Pie?

BRAD: Man, I need some help with this, or I'm going to do something I don't want to.

QUIN: Brad, my man, you are quite a specimen, anyone, including me, would be glad to have you, in that way. But since you made that promise ***[He signs it badly]***, you are on that hook until you depromise ***[Reverse signs it even more badly]*** yourself. And since it seems you can't imagine yourself depromising right now, you're going to have to suck it up with your hand. Ten times a day, or more.

BRAD: I can't. I'm gonna do something.

QUIN: Brad, look at me. Look at me, I'm your man. If you're gonna do something, whatever that is, call me first. ***[He writes his number on Brad's hand]*** I'm writing my number on your hand in permanent marker, instead of putting it in your address book, so you can always see it to call me when you think you're going to do something. Okay? You call me.

BRAD: Isn't that gay?

QUIN: No, that's friendship. Trying to make sure your friend doesn't do something bad. That's friendship. That's paying attention.

BRAD: To me.

QUIN: Yes, to you.

BRAD: Nobody pays attention to me... ***[Gets up and leaves]***

QUIN: Brad! And I was suddenly gay Dr. Phil, advising those not like me on how to live their lives. Sort of like a priest advising married couples. And was that the problem? Attention was not paid to any of the police files that were to be? How would I know? ***[Gets up and crosses]*** I wouldn't know much of anything until way after Donny started his special messaging.

[Brent sneaks up from out of the shadows, he stops behind Quin as if he has his back to a wall that is a 90 degree angle from where Quin stands]

BRENT: Quin?

QUIN: ***[Stops to turn]*** Yes?

BRENT: Don't turn around.

QUIN: Brent?

BRENT: Yeah, don't look.

QUIN: Is that you, Brent?

BRENT: ***[Deepens his voice]*** No. I'm a B-boy.

QUIN: Right. So, I'm guessing you can't be seen talking to me.

BRENT: That's right.

QUIN: But you want something from me.

BRENT: That's right.

QUIN: Why, when you treat me like this, should I do anything for you?

BRENT: Because I'm you're oldest friend.

QUIN: Oldest friend? I don't have friends.

BRENT: You have friends. Girls.

QUIN: Girls.

BRENT: That's what I wanted to ask you about.

QUIN: Girls?

BRENT: Yeah.

QUIN: Because of my posse...

BRENT: You know all the girls.

QUIN: And I can snap my fingers and they'll just jump on anyone I tell them to?

BRENT: Maybe.

QUIN: Or maybe not.

BRENT: Will you? At least mention my name?