

BRENDA'S HAT
by Maria I. Arreola

The beginning is devised. What's JULIET and BRENDA's relationship like? No words need to be spoken. The actor that plays CHAMELI will double as BRENDA.

Transition. MOLLIE is busy at work bringing out brunch and setting the table. KATELYN sits at the table, unbothered. No one but MOLLIE can see KATELYN.

MOLLIE

Am I forgetting something? I feel like I'm forgetting something.

KATELYN

This is not gonna to work. You need to rip the bandaid right off.

MOLLIE

Spoons!

MOLLIE hurries to the kitchen to get spoons.

KATELYN

Why do I even bother?

There's a timid knock at the door.

MOLLIE

Juliet?

CHAMELI

It's me.

KATELYN

You invited her too? Incoming headache.

MOLLIE

Come on in! The door's open.

Another knock.

MOLLIE

Chameli, the door is open!

CHAMELI finally enters.

KATELYN

Now what?

CHAMELI

It smells good.

CHAMELI grabs something to munch on.

KATELYN

Are you even listening? I asked you a question. It's very rude not to respond.

CHAMELI

She's not here?

MOLLIE

Not yet.

KATELYN

Fine, ignore me! It's not like I'm trying to help you.

CHAMELI

I was thinking... Maybe we shouldn't. Say anything. To Juliet. This ... What are you calling it again?

MOLLIE

Intervention.

KATELYN

Waste of my time.

CHAMELI

It's premature, I think.

MOLLIE

It's been a year. No, more than a year.

KATELYN

A miserable year.

MOLLIE

And it's time for a fresh start. For a new love interest. For a new hat.

CHAMELI

I don't want to make her sad or, or upset. Or angry.

MOLLIE

She's not happy already.

CHAMELI

What if we make it worse?

KATELYN moves around the room, distracting MOLLIE.

MOLLIE (hushed, to KATELYN)

Could you stop?

CHAMELI

Did you say something?

JULIET enters, wearing a ridiculous fish hat.

JULIET

What's up bitches!

(beat)

I'm just kidding unless... Did it sound cool? Like objectively. Answer not as my friends but as objective bystanders.

MOLLIE

It's different.

CHAMELI

I think I liked it. Uh objectively.

JULIET

Rad.

(beat)

Wait, should I say bitches or biatches?

KATELYN

Put me out of my misery.

CHAMELI (chewing with her mouth open)

They both sound very ... sophisticated.

KATELYN

What do you know about sophistication? Nothing.

JULIET

I'm leaning towards biatches.

Taking notice of the food:

JULIET

Is that...?

MOLLIE

Your favorite.

JULIET

It's like almost too good to be true.

JULIET takes a seat. MOLLIE attempts to shoo KATELYN away from the only other open seat.

MOLLIE (referring to the seat)

I need that.

JULIET

Do you want my seat? We can switch spots.

MOLLIE

No, it's fine. I'm sitting right here.

MOLLIE non-verbally communicates *leave* to KATELYN. But she remains.

CHAMELI

Mollie, are you okay?

MOLLIE takes a seat in the very corner of KATELYN's seat, trying to keep some distance between the two of them. A bit irritated.

MOLLIE

Feel free to start eating.

Even before MOLLIE finishes her statement, JULIET starts eating.

MOLLIE

I'm not hungry. Go ahead.

CHAMELI

Are you sure?

KATELYN

Is someone angry?

MOLLIE

I AM NOT!

CHAMELI

Sorry?

KATELYN

Are you at least comfortable?

MOLLIE balances precariously, not comfortable at all.

JULIET

So what's the occasion?

CHAMELI

Nothing. We ... we missed you.

JULIET

You see me literally all the time.

CHAMELI

Not enough.

JULIET

Mollie never cooks. So, what's up?

MOLLIE

Juliet...

KATELYN

Finally we're getting to the good part.

MOLLIE

As your friend it's my responsibility, no it is my duty to tell you this.

JULIET

This?

MOLLIE

Your hat.

JULIET

It's actually Brenda's.

KATELYN (mimicking the way JULIET speaks)

And that 'actually' makes it worse.

JULIET

She gave it to me, remember?

MOLLIE

You wear that hat everywhere. It's time to move on to other hats.

JULIET

What's wrong with Brenda's hat?

MOLLIE

It's uuuunconventional, but not in a good way.

KATELYN

It's so ugly. Tell her that it's ugly.

JULIET

You don't like the hat?

CHAMELI

No, we love the hat. Much love to that hat.

MOLLIE

It's not the hat itself. It's more what the hat represents. Chameli knows what I mean. Chameli, back me up here.

Chameli takes a big bite of food and chews slowly.

KATELYN

Looks like you're on your own.

MOLLIE

In all honesty, I just don't want to see you all sad and heartbroken anymore or constantly trying to change yourself to win her back.

JULIET

Do I look sad? Do I look sad to you biatches?

MOLLIE

Yes!

CHAMELI

A little.

MOLLIE

And you're so lost in Brenda. It's cliché to say, but there are plenty of fi— Never mind.

CHAMELI (looking around)

Plenty of ... spoons.

JULIET

I miss her.

MOLLIE

I know you do. It's why you wear that stupid hat everywhere.

KATELYN

You finally said it! Finally!

JULIET

You think Brenda's hat is stupid?

MOLLIE

She is so stupid. I mean she broke up with the most amazing person I know.

CHAMELI

And someone who is very cool, objectively.

KATELYN

Debatable.

JULIET

You're just saying that cause you're my friends.

CHAMELI

We mean it.

JULIET

She's not stupid.

MOLLIE

Can you take off the hat?

JULIET hesitates.

MOLLIE

Just for now, you can put it back on later. It would be nice to ... to see your head. All of it.

JULIET turns to CHAMELI.

CHAMELI

But we love you, hat or no hat.

MOLLIE

Of course.

JULIET hesitates, but ultimately decides to keep the hat on.

KATELYN

Let's not waste any more time.

KATELYN and MOLLIE have a moment, reaching an agreement MOLLIE removes JULIET's hat and drops it on the floor.

KATELYN

My work here is done.

THE END.