

A Reader's Theater Script for
The Year of the Book
Written by Andrea Cheng
Script Adaptation by Mary Pettit, TBA Committee Member

Readers:

Narrator 1

Anna 1 (what Anna says outloud and in unison with Anna 2 for emphasis)

Anna 2 (Anna's actions, thoughts, feelings)

Ray Allison Laura

Lucy Ms. Simmons

Suggestion: Have the two Annas stand together, perhaps Anna 2 slightly behind Anna 1

Narrator: Ray, the crossing guard, is waiting at the curb in his orange vest that catches the sunrise.

Ray: How's my girl?

Anna 2: I show him the lunch bag that I sewed yesterday.

Anna 1: It's fabric left over from my bedspread.

Ray: So your lunch matches your bed.

Anna 2: Laura and Allison join us at the curb.

Allison: How many more minutes until the bell, Ray?

Narrator: Ray glances at his watch.

Ray: You got about three minutes today, girls.

Anna 2: Then he walks into the intersection and holds out his arms so we can cross. I'd rather stay with Ray than go onto the fourth grade playground...

Anna 1 and Anna 2: [in unison] where Laura and Allison stand so close that there's no space left for me.

Laura: Hey, what's that?

Anna 1: A lunch bag.

Allison: Homemade?

Anna 2: I nod.

Narrator: Allison looks at Laura. Their eyes meet.

Anna 1: At recess, I stand by the fence. Laura and Allison and Lucy come my way.

Laura: My mom can type so fast you can't even see her fingers.

Allison: Is she a secretary?

Laura: [shaking her head] An executive assistant.

Lucy: My mom's a high school principal. You should see the kids when my mom walks by. It's all about respect.

Anna 2: I hunch my shoulders.

Allison: Hey, Anna, what about your mom?

Anna 2: I can't just say that my mom vacuums and mops every Saturday or that she learned English almost perfectly and now she is going to college so someday she can be a nurse.

Anna 1: She works in one of those high-rises. With a view of the river.

Lucy: In an office?

Anna 1: Sort of.

Narrator: Allison looks over my head at Lucy. Then she and Lucy and Laura link arms and walk toward the tetherball.

Anna 2: My brother, Ken, and the other third-graders are in the grassy area, chasing each other up and down the hill. Last year Laura and I were there too, and when we got sweaty, we sat in the shade of the school building and played a Chinese game with little rocks that Mom taught me, kind of like jacks without the ball.

Anna 1 and Anna 2: [in unison] But this year Laura found Allison and Lucy.

Anna 2: I found Ray but he goes home while we're at school. I sit down on the blacktop and open my book.

Ms. Simmons: Anna. Hurry. It's time for lunch.

Anna 2: There is nobody left out on the playground except me. I go to the back of the line behind the boys who are always messing around. On the way home from school, Ray has five acorns for me. I put them in my empty lunch bag.

Ray: That bag comes in handy. I wish I had one.

Anna 1: They're not hard to make.

Ray: [shaking his head] I'm not so sure about that. Now you have a nice afternoon, hear?

Anna 2: Laura and Allison are way ahead of me. My brother Ken is talking and laughing with his friends. I take out my book and read-walk all the way home.

Narrator: Will Anna ever have friends? Will she stop being ashamed of her mother? Will she learn to embrace being an "ABC," an American Born Chinese?

Entire cast: [in unison] To find out, read *The Year of the Book* by Andrea Cheng.

THE END

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