

SEAGULLS WILL EAT YOU

A play by Will Homel

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CAST

MIKEY.....An 8 year old boy played by a young adult

SUSANAn 8 year old girl played by a young adult

MS. DUGAN.....A bitter elementary school P.E. teacher

TONY.....A short 8 year old bully played by a young adult

JESSE.....A tall 8 year old bully played by a young adult

At rise: Two kids, MIKEY and SUSAN (about 8 years old, but played by adults) sit on the floor of an outdated elementary school gymnasium. They are wearing P.E. clothes. Some distance away JESSE and TONY (8 year old bullies played by adults) sit on the floor playing with pogs.

TONY

That slammer's a cheat!

JESSE

Nuh-uh.

TONY

Yeah-huh!

TONY and JESSE continue to argue over pogs as MIKEY and SUSAN speak.

MIKEY

Where is everybody?

SUSAN

They all got letters from their parents excusing them from P.E.

MIKEY

You can do that?

SUSAN

Yep. Your mom or dad just has to say you have flat feet.

MIKEY

So, you don't have flat feet.

SUSAN

No, but I do have honest parents. I asked them to write me a letter but they wouldn't do it. Ever since Ms. Dugan started teaching, P.E. is really bad. Mr. Louis was scary sometimes, but Ms. Dugan is scary all the time. She's just mean.

TONY and JESSE start to approach MIKEY.

MIKEY

Yeah. I'm so scared when she yells at me. I like when she yells at the other kids though. (Gleefully) They deserve it.

Hey Mikey!

TONY

Oh! Hey guys...

MIKEY

You want a hertz-donut?

TONY

Oh yeah, I love donuts!

MIKEY

JESSE twists his hands around MIKEY's wrist and gives him an "Indian burn."

Hurts. Don-it!

JESSE

JESSE and TONY laugh.

Ow! I don't get it!

MIKEY

Leave Mikey alone!

SUSAN

Aw! Does wittle Mikey need a girl to protect him?

TONY

Why are girls allowed in P.E. class anyway?

JESSE

Yeah. You should be off learning how to make food or something.

TONY

I know how to make food!

JESSE

JESSE recites the following immature rhyme as he gestures to his nipples, crotch, and butt accordingly.

JESSE

MILK MILK, LEMONADE, AROUND THE CORNER FUDGE IS MADE!

JESSE and TONY laugh hysterically.

SUSAN

Argh! Boys are so stupid!

MIKEY

Not all boys... Do you really think I'm stupid, Susan? (Whimpering) Why is everyone being mean to me?

SUSAN

I wasn't talking about you, Mikey.

TONY

Ooooh!

TONY & JESSE

SUSAN AND MIKEY SITTIN' IN A TREE,
K-I-S-S-I-N-G

TONY and JESSE start to give MIKEY a wedgie as they continue the song.

MS. DUGAN (Weathered and middle aged P.E. teacher) enters unseen.

TONY & JESSE

FIRST COMES LOVE,
THEN COMES MARRIAGE

SUSAN

Come on guys! Cut it out!

TONY & JESSE

THEN COMES A BABY IN A BABY CARRIAGE!

MS. DUGAN

Quiet pipsqueaks!

JESSE doubles down on the wedgie, almost lifting MIKEY off the floor.

MS. DUGAN walks up behind TONY and JESSE, blows her whistle, grabs them by their collars, and drags them away from MIKEY who runs and hides in the corner.

MS. DUGAN

Jesse and Tony! I knew you two were trouble the first day of class.

JESSE and TONY are trembling.

TONY

You...you can't do anything to us!

JESSE

Yeah, yeah. My dad is airport security!

MS. DUGAN

You boys think you're pretty tough huh. Well guess what. I know some big mean fifth graders who might want to prove you wrong. Unless you want them getting word of how "tough" you are, you'd better give me fifty push-ups on your knuckles! Both of you!

TONY

I can't. I have a flat feet!

JESSE

Yeah yeah, and I have, um, gluten intolerance!

MS. DUGAN

Then get your butts to the principal's office.

MS. DUGAN shoves TONY and JESSE toward the door and blows her whistle. They scamper out.

JESSE

I'm telling my dad.

MS. DUGAN turns to MIKEY and SUSAN

MS. DUGAN

Well, what do you have to say for yourself now, Mikey?

MIKEY

Um... thanks for chasing Jesse and Tony away?

MS. DUGAN

No. Don't thank me, Mikey. You should have stuck up for yourself back there. When are you kids going to learn to fight back when people push you around?

MIKEY

Sorry Ms. Dugan...

MS. DUGAN

No! There you go again. Apologizing about everything.

MIKEY

Sorry for being sorry Ms. Dugan.

MS. DUGAN rolls her eyes.

MS. DUGAN

No-...Just forget it.

SHE blows the whistle.

MS. DUGAN

Two pipsqueaks left. Time for jumping jacks!

MIKEY and SUSAN groan and reluctantly stand up.

MS. DUGAN

No whining! One! Two! Three! Four!

MS. DUGAN keeps pace by blowing her whistle between each number.

After a while SUSAN interrupts.

SUSAN

Argh. I just want to go back to the classroom and study math.

MS. DUGAN

What did you say, Susan!?

They stop doing jumping jacks and MS. DUGAN glares at SUSAN.

SUSAN

Mr. Kipling is a way better teacher than you. Sometimes he lets us watch Carl Sagan videos to learn about science.

MS. DUGAN

Well I'm sorry, but I'm not a babysitter. This is gym class! I'm here to prepare you for the real world! ...Time for the crab walk!

SUSAN

(Whining) Noooooooo!

MS. DUGAN

Crab walk! Now!

MS. DUGAN blows her whistle. SUSAN and MIKEY get down on the floor and start doing the crab walk.

SUSAN

When will I ever need to know how to do this!?

MS. DUGAN

What's the matter? Not having "fun"? It's plenty fun! You get to pretend you're a crab! Watch out for seagulls!

MS. DUGAN flaps her arms like wings and chases SUSAN and MIKEY around the gym.

MS. DUGAN

Caw! Caw! Look out! The seagulls are going to eat you!

SUSAN

This is so stupid!

MS. DUGAN

This is life, Susan! If you don't stay on your toes it'll eat you alive. You think the third grade is hard? Well, I've got news for you, kiddo. The bullies just get meaner, the homework gets harder, and before you know it there's no more recess. Then you move away from home and go to college. You think you've got an exciting life ahead of you, but you don't. You'll think you can change the world until the world changes you. You've got nothing but a dead-end job waiting in your future. If you're smart or lucky, you have kids of your own and live for their dreams. If not, well, you just get up every morning, look in the mirror at your blood shot eyes, your sagging jowls, and the dental work you couldn't afford; and you think, "My God, what have I become? Oh yeah. That's right. I'M A P.E. TEACHER!!!"

MS. DUGAN walks to a closet and grabs a red ball.

MS. DUGAN

We're playing dodgeball now.

SUSAN and MIKEY stand up.

MIKEY

Someone always gets hurt when we play dodgeball.

MS. DUGAN

Only the losers.

MS. DUGAN hands MIKEY the ball.

MIKEY

But there's only two of us.

MS. DUGAN

One-on-one sounds like a fair game to me.

MIKEY and SUSAN stand across from each other.

MS. DUGAN

Throw the ball, Mikey.

MIKEY

I don't want to.

MS. DUGAN

Throw it.

MIKEY

I have to go to the bathroom.

MS. DUGAN

There is no bathroom! Throw the damn ball!

MIKEY

I don't want to hurt Susan.

MS. DUGAN

Sometimes, if you're not willing to hurt people, they'll end up hurting you instead. Just throw it.

MIKEY lobs the ball. It bounces on the floor and rolls to *SUSAN*. *SUSAN* picks it up.

MS. DUGAN

Throw the ball, Susan.

SUSAN throws the balls firmly. It hits *MIKEY* in the chest. *MS. DUGAN* blows her whistle.

MS. DUGAN

You lose, Mikey. That's life.

MIKEY begins to whimper, progressing to loud sobs as the others notice.

SUSAN

Mikey, are you okay?

MS. DUGAN

Oh come on. You didn't get hit that hard.

MIKEY cries louder.

SUSAN

I'm sorry, Mikey. I didn't mean to hurt you.

MS. DUGAN

He's just trying to get attention. (To *MIKEY*) Time to man up, kid. You're mommy's not here. You can't just start crying every time someone hurts you.

MIKEY

It's not that.

SUSAN

What's the matter, Mikey?

MIKEY takes a little time to calm down.

MIKEY

(Still sobbing) I like P.E. class.

MS. DUGAN

What?

MIKEY

I like P.E. class. No one ever wants to play with me at recess. I like P.E. class 'cause the other kids have to play with me. I don't care if I always lose the games (sob). It was so cool when you told Jesse and Tony to shut up. They always think they're so tough, and you almost made them pee their pants. I thought maybe one day... (sob)

MS. DUGAN

Maybe one day what?

MIKEY

I thought maybe one day... I could be a P.E. teacher like you. That's what I want to be when I grow up (cries).

MS. DUGAN

Why!?

SUSAN

You can do it, Mikey! You can be whatever you want to be. That's what my mom says!

MS. DUGAN

I don't think your mom was talking about being a P.E. teacher, Susan.

MIKEY

What's wrong with being a P.E. teacher? You get to stand up to bullies, and teach kids how to be tough and stick up for themselves and, and you get a cool whistle...

MS. DUGAN

Okay, well maybe being a P.E. teacher isn't that bad, but wouldn't you rather be a racecar driver, or an astronaut, or... a venture capitalist?

MIKEY

I get motion sickness, and I don't know what that last one is so I should probably be a P.E. teacher.

MS. DUGAN

Life's not as easy as you think, Mikey. It's tough. I mean it's hard work. Nothing in life is free. You've got to fight for it. You've got to blow away the competition and take no prisoners. It's a dog eat dog world out there and only the strong survive but... If you do your best and... and you don't quit. You can do...anything... You can even become a P.E. teacher if you really want to.

MIKEY

Do you really mean it?

MS. DUGAN

What else can I say... You know what? We still have ten minutes left. What game do you want to play, Mikey? We can play whatever you want.

MS. DUGAN hands MIKEY her whistle.

MIKEY's eyes open wide with wonder, and he thinks for a second.

MIKEY

I wanna play "Space Jam."

MS. DUGAN

I'm afraid I don't know that game.

MIKEY

It's easy! Everybody gets their own basketball, and they can do whatever they want with it. There are no points. Nobody wins or loses, but everybody gets to play!

MS. DUGAN

Okay, Mikey.

MS. DUGAN goes to the closet and gets a basketball.

MS. DUGAN

You won't get far in life by ignoring the scoreboard... but I guess for now it's alright. Let's play "Space Jam."

MS. DUGAN hands MIKEY the ball. MIKEY blows the whistle.

The lights go out except for a spot on MIKEY. He clumsily dribbles the ball as music like the "Space Jam" theme song fades in.

MIKEY

I'm doing it! I'm playing! I'm having fun!

End of play