

# MEDS! THE MUSICAL

## Cast of Characters

- Cindy: A woman in her 40s.
- Vincent: A man in his mid-20s; Cindy's son.
- Kari: A woman in her 20s.

## Scene

The waiting area of a bus station. For minimalism, four identical chairs facing the audience and a sign or two to indicate TICKETS and BUSES will work.

## Time

The present.

## Musical Numbers

AROUND THE CORNER	Vincent
WAITING/AROUND THE CORNER REPRISE	Kari and Vincent

Piano accompaniment can be recorded or live. The playwright is happy to provide digital sound files helpful for learning and/or performing the music.

## Length of Play

10-15 minutes

AT RISE:

VINCENT is on the chair farthest SR and CINDY is beside him, both dressed to suggest their poverty-to working-class status. Immediately at rise, the mother is clapping her hands almost as if she's applauding the appearance of the audience. VINCENT is wearing bulky headphones and staring out at the audience in a trance, and we realize that CINDY is clapping to bring him out of it.

CINDY

Vincent! *Vincent!* Snap out of it!

VINCENT does so, removing his headphones.

You *have* to take the new meds! You *have* to!

VINCENT turns away.

They will kick you out of the study if you don't take the meds they gave us! I can't constantly— Vincent, these new meds might let you focus. And they're free! But they'll kick you out of the study if you don't— Why do you refuse to take your meds?

VINCENT finally turns to face her, but remains silent.

Yeah, yeah. You prefer your song and trance acts.

VINCENT

Is that what you're calling them now? My song and trance acts?

CINDY

I've never figured out *what* to call them.

VINCENT

I started calling them *hallusicals*.

CINDY

(beat)

What are you saying?

VINCENT

*Hallucinations* about being in Broadway *musicals*. *Hallusicals*.

(looks hopeful)

CINDY

It's not funny, Vincent.

VINCENT slumps. CINDY'S eye is caught by KARI, who enters while struggling with a stuffed duffle bag. She carries three bus tickets—all attached like an “N”. KARI is pretty, but her heavy mascara and black clothes—including a jacket that is leather and/or has a lot of metal on it—are as much about intimidation and keeping a distance as they are about rebellion and cool. CINDY continues to watch as KARI drops her heavy bag onto the chair facing DS that's farthest from VINCENT and CINDY. She remains standing, looking through her sequence of tickets and rubbing her neck.

CINDY

(to VINCENT)

Look at these people around us. All going to different places. All for different reasons. Doesn't that interest you? Why are they stuck taking the bus? Can't they afford a car? Or a plane ticket? Are they all so boring that you need to— Vincent, you're *twenty-four years old!* You can't hold down a job! How long are you going to be living at home?

VINCENT

Look. I can get to the clinic by myself. I'm twenty-four. I won't mess up this time.

CINDY

Absolutely not. You tried riding the bus by yourself before. You went into one of your trances—your stop came and went—and you wound up in Oklahoma!

VINCENT

I was never in Oklahoma.

CINDY

(beat)

Not the *musical!* The state! The *state* of Oklahoma! You need to take these new meds! I don't under— Don't you want to live in just *one* world? Instead of going off to your musical la-la land? Instead of—instead of living a life *split in two?* You don't live in a Broadway musical! You don't live in some old movie! You live *here!* Those meds might help you get yourself *together!*

CINDY sighs and then starts to read a paperback that is clearly a romance novel. Meanwhile, KARI has her smart phone out and is fiddling with it. VINCENT sneaks peaks at her. Gradually, he begins to stare at her. The music begins, and VINCENT sings “Around the Corner.” During the song, he rises and wanders around KARI, swaying and swirling as he sings. She remains oblivious, though, as does CINDY.

VINCENT

AROUND THE CORNER.  
AROUND THE BEND.  
I’M SEARCHING FOR HER,  
SO WE CAN SPEND  
THE REST OF OUR LIVES TOGETHER.  
THE REST OF OUR LIVES AS ONE.  
THE BEST RHYME I’VE GOT IS “WEATHER,”  
BUT THAT RHYME IS OVERDONE.  
I’M DONE WITH COPING.  
SHE’LL BE MY CURE.  
WITH HER, I’M HOPING  
I COULD ENDURE  
THE REST OF MY LIFE TOGETHER.  
THE REST OF MY LIFE AS ONE.  
“TOGETHER” CAN RHYME WITH “LEATHER,”  
AND THAT COULD BE KIND OF FUN.

VINCENT has now returned to his original seat. Noticing that he’s staring blankly at KARI, CINDY claps her hands to snap him out of his trance as the audience (hopefully) applauds.

CINDY

So. Which one was it this time?

VINCENT

(still finding his bearings)

Hmm? Which one what was it?

CINDY

Which *hallusical*?

VINCENT

Oh. It was just—uhm—Around the Corner. The one I’m writing.

CINDY

Writing in your *head*. Are you ever going to write it down on *paper*? At least then there would be something to show for— At least *then* you'd have *accomplished* something!

VINCENT

It's not worth writing down. It's not very good.

CINDY

But you'd rather fantasize about being in some musical than here in this—

(gestures to their surroundings, then realizes where she is)

Yeah, well, fine! Look, if you're not going to take your new meds, give them to me. I'll explain to the doctors that we failed the experiment. That we'd rather live in some musical fantasy than in a crummy bus depot and a crummy apartment and a crummy— Give me your meds. I'm tired of nagging you to— I'm tired of being your private nurse!

VINCENT

(digs an orange, plastic bottle out of his pocket and, as he's about to hand it over, his eyes grow wide)

*Tether!*

CINDY grabs the bottle and shoves it in her purse, moving her head from side to side with utter hopelessness.

Tether. Rhymes with “together.” Better than “weather.” Or “leather.”

CINDY

I— I'm just— I'm gonna go ask how long before our bus—

CINDY rises and exits. VINCENT once again glances over at KARI, and it turns into staring. KARI senses VINCENT watching her. She puts her phone and tickets down on top of her bag and sits on the chair beside her bag, one seat away from VINCENT.

KARI

Hey, are you feeling all right? That looked like medication you handed to that woman.

(moves to the seat CINDY had been in)

Are you feeling all right? It's okay to tell me. I'm a nurse. You seem kind of— somewhere else.

VINCENT

(shaking it off again)

Oh. Was I staring again? Sorry. It's just— Well, it's complicated. That medication is experimental. They're doing a study. And I'm one of their lab rats. Wait, you're a *nurse*? You don't look like a nurse

KARI

I get that a lot. But I know the kind of studies you're talking about. It's very brave of you to help advance medical science!

VINCENT

Heh. Yeah. So where are you headed?

KARI

I'm going to New York City! Sounds corny, but I'm gonna see if I can make it in show business!

VINCENT

(beat)

Really. A nurse who wants to be in show business? Really?

KARI

Uh-huh. Sure, it's a long shot, but I figure I can support myself with nursing. And wouldn't you know, I just found out my bus is delayed. Gosh, I hate all this waiting. Don't you just hate all this waiting?

VINCENT

Funny. I really don't seem to mind very—

VINCENT is interrupted by the introduction to "Waiting/Around the Corner Reprise." KARI embellishes the song with wristwatch checking, slumping, etc. Once VINCENT joins the duet, the two are free to interact with as much choreography as seems right. Once the song finishes, KARI is standing exactly where she had been *before* she first spoke to VINCENT, and he's back in his original chair.

KARI

WAITING.  
SITTING HERE, WAITING.  
KINDA DEGRADING,  
THIS WAITING AROUND.  
FADING.  
MY YOUTH IS FADING.  
THIS GETS A RATING  
OF TWO THUMBS WAY DOWN.  
PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE,  
AND IT'S PLAIN TO SEE  
WAITING CANNOT HURT YOU,  
BUT IT'S KILLING ME!  
DID I MENTION THAT I'M  
WAITING.  
GRADUALLY HATING.  
SLOWLY DEFLATING  
FROM WAITING AROUND.

VINCENT

AROUND THE CORNER.  
AROUND THE BEND.  
I'M SEARCHING FOR HER  
SO WE CAN SPEND  
THE REST OF THE OUR LIVES  
TOGETHER.  
THE REST OF OUR LIVES AS ONE.  
OUR ARMS, JOINING LIKE A TETHER,  
WILL NEVER BECOME UNDONE.

KARI

CHANGING.  
MY SONG IS CHANGING.  
THERE'S AN INVADING  
HARMONIOUS SOUND.  
PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE,  
BUT THIS IS CREEPY.  
PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME  
HURT YOU.  
*QUIT STARING AT ME!*

VINCENT

(the applause snaps him out of another trance)

I'm sorry. Did you—what did you say?

KARI

I said quit staring at me! It's creepy as hell!

VINCENT

I wasn't really—I didn't realize I was staring. I thought we were— There was *counterpoint!*

KARI

(grumbles as she massages her neck)

God, I hate bus stations.

VINCENT

So—but are you really headed to New York to be in show business? Aren't you a nurse?

KARI

(after long stare, disbelief bordering on disgust)

Do I *look* like a nurse?

KARI grabs her bag and plops it down on the floor on far SL. She resumes using her smart phone while massaging her neck. VINCENT is left to consider all that has just happened. CINDY enters and sees that KARI has moved away. The mom's shoulders slump, and she gives VINCENT a look of desperation. VINCENT looks up at his mother sheepishly.

CINDY

Come on, Vincent. The clerk says the bus is due in fifteen minutes. Some people have already started to form a line.

VINCENT

Do you think maybe I'll have time to— Would it be okay—

(musters his courage)

I'm ready to start taking my meds.

CINDY looks skeptical at first, but she pulls the orange, plastic bottle out of her purse and hands it to VINCENT.

Why don't you go save us a place in line, and I'll go get something to wash this down. Do you know where there's a drinking fountain?



A bit flummoxed, CINDY points in a direction that sets VINCENT in the direction of KARI. He freezes when she looks up from her phone at him.

KARI

Nuh-uh! Go around!

VINCENT goes *around the corners* to avoid KARI and to exit. KARI returns to her phone. CINDY watches her and then approaches. KARI looks up.

CINDY

Thank you.

CINDY nods and then exits, leaving KARI baffled.

KARI

(grumbles while staring at her phone)

God, I hate bus stations.

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF PLAY)