

From Breaking News

OLIVIA, 17, a reporter

SHADOWY FIGURE, can be male or female

OLIVIA is reporter for the school newspaper. She gets a tip from a Shadowy Figure.

OLIVIA

This is Olivia St. John doing a hard-hitting investigative series on... Pilates, which is about sculpting... and toning... I will be reporting my results because I have no self-esteem and this is what you have to do to be a journalist.

(She stops the recording. Erases it. Starts over.)

Olivia St. John here! And it's time to get physical! Not in a physical science sort of way, but in a pointless exercise of tedious drudgery! Yes, once again it's time to put my body through pain to realize an impossible beauty standard foisted on us by popular culture! Hit it, girls!

(She stops. Erases.)

Life is meaningless. Therefore, I exercise.

(short pause)

Yayyyy.

(She stops again, turns off the music.)

(her phones rings.)

Hello?

(Lights up on a SHADOWY FIGURE elsewhere on stage, on the phone.)

SHADOWY FIGURE

Olivia?

OLIVIA

Who is this?

SHADOWY FIGURE

I am a shadowy figure.

OLIVIA

What?

SHADOWY FIGURE

I've got a big story for you.

OLIVIA

What kind of story?

SHADOWY

About the truth. The truth of what's really happening at this school.

OLIVIA

What truth?

SHADOWY FIGURE

Meet me in boys' locker room after school and I'll tell you.

OLIVIA

Oh come on.

SHADOWY FIGURE

I mean um... meet me behind the school.

OLIVIA

The school's a big place.

SHADOWY FIGURE

By the tree.

OLIVIA

Got it. Which tree?

(But it's too late. The SHADOWY FIGURE has hung up.)

(OLIVIA talks into her phone.)

This is Olivia St. John, reporting.

(Lights change to the tree. OLIVIA enters. Looks around. Nothing.)

(SHADOWY FIGURE, dressed in a trenchcoat, with a fedora pulled down over its face, steps out from behind a tree.)

SHADOWY FIGURE

Olivia?

OLIVIA

Ah! You really are a shadowy figure.

SHADOWY FIGURE

Everything I say is the truth. This is the beginning of the story – if you follow it, it might lead you all the way to the top. Here.

(Hands OLIVIA a manila envelope.)

OLIVIA

What is this?

SHADOWY FIGURE

It's a manila envelope.

OLIVIA

No, I mean, what's inside this?

SHADOWY FIGURE

I figured you were blind or something. You couldn't see what I was actually handing you. I was being helpful.

OLIVIA

What's in here?

SHADOWY FIGURE

Two sets of books. One is the receipts reported for the annual school fund drive, and the other is the actual money received.

OLIVIA

I don't get it.

SHADOWY FIGURE

One is the money the school received from the fundraiser, the other is the amount the fundraiser raised.

(OLIVIA takes out the pieces of paper.)

OLIVIA

So the fundraiser looks like it raised 1.2 million dollars, and the school received fifty-three thousand dollars.

SHADOWY FIGURE

It was a really good fundraiser. We sold those bobblehead dolls.

OLIVIA

We sold 1.2 million dollars worth of bobblehead dolls?

SHADOWY FIGURE

They were seriously awesome.

OLIVIA

But the school only got fifty-three thousand? What happened to the rest of the money?

SHADOWY FIGURE

What do you think happened to it?

(SHADOWY FIGURE's cell phone rings with a funny ringtone.)

Wait, hold on.

(SHADOWY FIGURE answers it.)

Hi Mom. Yeah, I'm just hanging out. Sure, I'll pick Sammy up from daycare. Okay. Yes I did my algebra homework. Mom. Mommmmm. Come on. All right I gotta go. No I'm talking to my friends. Stop it.

(SHADOWY FIGURE hangs up.)

That's all I can tell you. Follow the money. Find the truth.

OLIVIA

Okay.

(Pause.)

SHADOWY FIGURE

I'm going to hide behind the tree again. Do you mind?

OLIVIA

No that's cool.

(SHADOWY FIGURE slips behind the tree.)