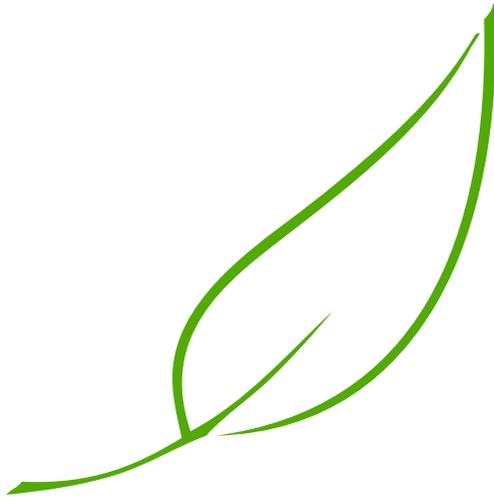


FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK

by Ken Bradbury



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ACT 1

Scene 1: WHAT IS IT

Scene 2: FEE FI FO FLUB

Scene 3: I REMEMBER IT WELL

Scene 4: DARK AND STORMY NIGHT

Scene 5: HELP ME

Scene 6: SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ADULT

ACT 2

Scene 1: WHEREFORE ART WHO

Scene 2: HI HO WHAT

Scene 3: THE DOC SHOP

Scene 4: COMPLETELY SAUCED

Scene 5: TIME IN A BOX

Cast (52)

Lee	Lainie
Wallace	Tommy
Jack	Doofun
Mother	Goofus
Narrator	Rufus
Jim	Elroy
Goldie	Snow White
Richard	Nurse Farquar
Mary	Beasey
Younger Richard	Mrs. Torrent
Younger Mary	Dr. Misery
Edith	Mrs. Misery
Kensington	Dr. Psyche
Insp. Holmes	Johnny
Penelope	Jerry
Periwinkle	Laura

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Hannah	Homer
Ellie	Rosey
Bob	Dog
Rex	P.J.
Sean	Carey

ACT ONE

Scene 1: WHAT IS IT?

Cast: Lee, Wallace

(The “Returns and Refunds” Department. Lee enters. Wallace is behind the counter)

LEE: Excuse me?

WALLACE: Could I help you?

LEE: Is this the Returns and Refunds Department?

WALLACE: Certainly. How can I help you?

LEE: I want to bring this back ... *(reaching into an imaginary purse or pocket)* ...

WALLACE: Wait! Wait! Hold it! Let me guess!

LEE: What?

WALLACE: It’s a little game I play to pass the time. Sometimes I can look at a person’s face and tell what they’re returning.

LEE: You can? That’s remarkable.

WALLACE: Not really. I’m usually wrong.

LEE: Well, I really doubt that ...

WALLACE: No, no, let me try. *(thinking)* Let’s see ... your height, your weight, your disposition ... If I were guessing, I’d say...

LEE: Look, it’s just a ...

WALLACE: Stop! Didn’t I tell you to let me guess it?

LEE: But I don’t have time to ...

WALLACE: Like I do. You think this is all I do all day long?

LEE: Isn't it?

WALLACE: Well, yes. I suppose it is. Look, can't you just let me have a little fun? I promise not to take long. Just let me guess, okay?

LEE: This seems ridiculous.

WALLACE: Humor me.

LEE: Okay, okay. What is it?

WALLACE: Is it large?

LEE: No.

WALLACE: Is it small?

LEE: That would make sense, yes.

WALLACE: Please don't get short with me. This is a tough job.

LEE: It wouldn't be a tough job if you'd just let me tell you!

WALLACE: I'll hurry. I promise.

LEE: (*shouting*) Just give me my money back and I'll go!

WALLACE: (*shouting back*) How dare you shout at me!

LEE: What?

WALLACE: (*beginning to sob*) You don't know what it's like. You just have no idea what I have to go through. Four kids! I'm raising four kids all alone on a single, lousy salary! And little Jimmy! Do you know about little Jimmy?

LEE: I don't even know you.

WALLACE: Little Jimmy has this disease ... this ... condition ... no, it's more like an affliction ... a plague! A scourge! It's an epidemic!

LEE: My goodness!

WALLACE: He has these spells where he ... oh, it's too horrible to describe. And there's Maria's therapy.

LEE: Maria?

WALLACE: My youngest ... and largest ... it's horrible. Three times a day I have to pay for her to ... oh, you've broken my heart. I can't go on. You've just broken my heart.

LEE: Look, I'm sorry ... I didn't know ...

WALLACE: And Franklin!

LEE: Your son?

WALLACE: My dog. Our dog. Our poor little Franklin ... have you ever had a schizophrenic Pomeranian?

LEE: Your dog is schizophrenic?

WALLACE: Don't you dare laugh!

LEE: I wasn't laughing ... really!

WALLACE: You ... you people who walk around all day long with normal children and well-adjusted dogs and two cars and ... and ... such a perfect life. You make me sick, you know that? S---I----ICK!

LEE: Look, I just wanted to return this and ...

WALLACE: Oh yes! That's very important, isn't it? My whole life is falling apart before your very eyes but that doesn't matter to you ... You, with normal children and sane dogs ... Because you've got to return your stupid little ...

LEE: How dare you to talk to me that way! I'm leaving!
(turns to go)

WALLACE: Hold it! Wait! Please! I was kidding!

LEE: What?

WALLACE: I was kidding about the kids and dogs. I don't have any kids and dogs make me sneeze.

LEE: Then what were you ...?

WALLACE: Just teasing ... really ... just passing time. Look, our store is in tough competition with K-Wall down the street. It's a part of our customer service policy. They want us to entertain the customer ... make 'em laugh. Hey, if I get Employee of the Month I'll get my own parking spot and a bonus.

LEE: You?... *(begins to smile then laughs a little)* You certainly had me fooled.

WALLACE: Good, aren't I?

LEE: You're very, very good.

WALLACE: Thanks. Two years at UCLA in their acting school.

LEE: No kidding? What're you doing here?

WALLACE: I'm between movies. Did you see Mississippi Jones and the Temple of Brooms?

LEE: You were in that?

WALLACE: Third Intergalactic Warrior from the left.

LEE: No kidding!

WALLACE: Three lines. Wanna hear ‘em? “Wait! He’s got a torch!” and ... “Look out!”... and my really big scene at the end where the temple comes crashing down ... You ready? (*screams in pain*) “Ahhhhhhh!”

LEE: That’s ... that’s wonderful.

WALLACE: Yeh. But I’m lying. I’m not even an actor.

LEE: You?!!! (*leaving*) I’m outta here!

WALLACE: Wait! Hey, I did see the movie! Really!

LEE: (*turning, exasperated*) Why ... why do you keep doing this?

WALLACE: I need the job.

LEE: I mean lying to me! Why do you keep making up these silly things?

WALLACE: You don’t like it?

LEE: No.

WALLACE: Okay ... then I’ll quit. Back to the old humdrum. In spite of my sick aunt who’s depending on this salary.

LEE: You’re lying again.

WALLACE: Yeh. I just thought I’d spice up your day a little, but if you want to talk business, then what are you returning?

LEE: (*begins to pull it out, then thinks otherwise*) No ... wait a minute. Guess.

WALLACE: You’re kidding, right? You want me to guess what you’re returning?

LEE: Guess.

WALLACE: Look. This store has a half a million items! How am I supposed to guess what’s in your pocket?

LEE: A letter of complaint to your manager wouldn’t look good for an Employee of the Month.

WALLACE: Hey, don’t do this. Really. Look behind you ... there’s a line of people waiting.

LEE: You think I caused that? It was your stupid schizophrenic dog! (*grabbing him or her by the shirt front*)

Now guess, or I'll tell your manager what a loony she's got working for her!

WALLACE: You're serious, aren't you?

LEE: As a schizophrenic Pomeranian.

WALLACE: I need this job!. Please don't mess with me.

LEE: Mess with you! I'm double parked, I should have been back to work ten minutes ago, and if I don't get my money back on this I can't pay my rent. I'm gonna be homeless tomorrow because of you and you think I'm messing with you?

WALLACE: That's terrible. I mean ... I'm really sorry.

LEE: Now guess what I'm bringing back or I'll scream for the manager!

WALLACE: Uh ... uh ... a toaster? (*Lee shakes head ... Wallace is frantic*) Uh ... uh ... lawn mower...no, it's in your pocket ... uh ... toothpaste? Chewing gum? Dental floss? (*collapses onto the floor, sobbing*) I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I can't guess! I can't guess!

LEE: That's okay. I was kidding about the rent.

WALLACE: You think you're funny, don't you?

LEE: And I have a neurotic German Shepherd.

WALLACE: What are you bringing back?

LEE: Guess.

WALLACE: What are you bringing back!!!!?

LEE: Keep guessing! Keep guessing!

WALLACE: (*rapidly*) A microwave! Peanut butter! Foot powder! Baseball bat! A schizophrenic Pomeranian!! Next customer!

LEE: Keep guessing! What is it? What is it?

WALLACE: (*pushes Lee aside*) Next customer, please!!!!

LEE: (*stops ... looks on the floor behind*) Oh! You've broken it!

WALLACE: (*frantic*) What? I've broken what?

LEE: Oh, like you don't know.

WALLACE: I don't know! I promise I don't know! How can I know what I just broke when you won't tell me what it is?

LEE: Look at it ... all broken and busted and torn apart and stepped on ...

WALLACE: (*pushing Lee aside and looking at the floor*)
What are you? There's nothing here.

LEE: I'm a professional actor. I was in Star Bores, Return of the Chef.

WALLACE: I quit.

LEE: What?

WALLACE: I quit this job. I'm going crazy. (*leaving*) Tell them I quit.

LEE: Congratulations!

WALLACE: (*stops*) Huh?

LEE: You win!

WALLACE: Win what?

LEE: Employee of the month! This was all a test! It was a gag! To see if you could put up with nutty customers! Congratulations!

WALLACE: You're kidding!

LEE: Yes! Yes, I am! (*storms out angrily*)

WALLACE: (*turns to the audience and says*) What is it?

Scene 2: FEE FI FO FLUB

CAST: Jack, Mother, Narrator, Jim, Goldie

(Jack backs in, followed by his angry Mother.)

JACK: Come on, Mom! Gimme a break! Please!

MOTHER: I can't believe you! What a stupid thing to do!

JACK: I thought it was a good idea, Mom!

MOTHER: A bean! A stupid bean! You traded our only cow for a stupid bean?! Are you out of your mind?

JACK: It seemed ... I don't know ... it seemed like the thing to do!

MOTHER: We had one cow. Count 'em, Jack! One! One cow for milk and cheese and butter and fertilizer ... and You! You traded her for a bean? What kind of idiot are you?

JACK: I'm just a kid, Mom! Gimme a break!

MOTHER: Your father. You're just like your father is what you are. Looney, irresponsible ...

JACK: Dumb.

MOTHER: Dumb. (*crying*) Oh what are we to do, Jack? You've ruined us! We shall starve! We shall starve? *crying, she exits by turning her back to the audience*)

JACK: (*after she's gone*) Man. It's been a rotten day so far.

NARRATOR: Poor Jack didn't know what to do.

JACK: Who are you?

NARRATOR: I'm the narrator. Just ignore me.

JACK: What are you doing here?

NARRATOR: I'm helping you tell the story.

JACK: Says who?

NARRATOR: You want to argue? Watch this. Jack suddenly had a terrible cramp in his stomach.

JACK: (*bends over in pain*) Ouch!

NARRATOR: A splitting headache!

JACK: (*grabbing his head*) Owww!

NARRATOR: And ingrown toenails.

JACK: (*falls to the floor and grabs his foot in pain*) Stop it! Stop it!

NARRATOR: You got the idea?

JACK: I got it! I got it!

MOTHER: (*turning*) What's all the noise?

JACK: It's the narrator.

MOTHER: Oh. (*looks at Jack*) Get up off the floor, Jack. (*points to Narrator.*) We've got company

NARRATOR: Jack was suddenly healed!

JACK: (*jumps up*) Halleluiah!

NARRATOR: And while his poor mother cried herself to sleep that night ... (*Mom wails offstage*) ... Jack crept out into the back yard and planted his bean in the ground.

JACK: I'd rather eat it.

NARRATOR: He suddenly began to itch all over!

JACK: (*itching*) Stop! Stop! I'll plant it! I'll plant it! (*digs with his hands*)

NARRATOR: The itching disappeared and Jack planted his bean.

JACK: (*mumbling*) I still think it's a stupid ...

NARRATOR: The itch came back!

JACK: (*itching*) Great idea! Great idea!

NARRATOR: So Jack went to bed that night, listening to the sounds of his mother's crying. (*Mother wails again as Jack turns to exit*) But during the night, the most amazing thing happened ...

MOTHER: (*turning*) Jack got a brain?

JACK: (*turning*) Mom!

NARRATOR: No! (*they both stare at the narrator then turn away from the audience*) The bean began to grow ... and grow ... and grow ... And when Jack woke up ...

JACK: (*turning*) Wow!

MOTHER: (*turning*) Holy garbanzo beans! Look at that thing! What is it?

JACK: It's my bean, Mom!

NARRATOR: ... said Jack.

MOTHER: (*indicating the Narrator*) Who is she, again?

JACK: Don't mess with her, Mom.

NARRATOR: Jack decided to climb the beanstalk.

JACK: Are you crazy? That thing's a mile high!

MOTHER: Oh, go ahead, Jack. We don't have anything for lunch anyway.

NARRATOR: And Jack began to climb.

JACK: (*climbing the imaginary stalk, fearfully*) I hate heights.

NARRATOR: He climbed and climbed and climbed ...

JACK: (*terrified*) Mom!!!!!!

MOTHER: Can you see WalMart from there?

JACK: Mom!!!!!!

NARRATOR: And when he reached the top, he couldn't believe his eyes!

JACK: (*shuts eyes as mother turns her back*) That's because I'm afraid to open them.

NARRATOR: He opened his eyes ... (*he does, carefully*) ... and saw ...

JACK: A castle!

MOTHER: (*turning forward*) A what?

NARRATOR: But his Mother could no longer hear him.

MOTHER: Oh. (*turns away*)

NARRATOR: It was the castle of a ferocious giant!

JACK: Oh, shoot.

JIM: (*his back to the audience*) Fee Fi Fo Fum! I smell the blood of a kid who's dumb!

JACK: Is he talking about me?

NARRATOR: You see another idiot?

JIM: Who's there? I said, "Who's there?"

JACK: Uh ... it is I! Jack! The scared and stupid.

NARRATOR: The giant got closer!

JIM: (*stomping his feet as if walking*) I am getting closer!

NARRATOR: And closer!

JIM: And closer!

JACK: Oh, no! (*closes his eyes*)

NARRATOR: And then Jack opened his eyes to see ...

JACK: (*opens eyes*) A giant?

JIM: I am the ferocious giant!

JACK: No, you're not.

JIM: Yes, I am.

JACK: But you're little.

JIM: I'm a little giant. I'm Jim the giant.

JACK: I thought giants were big.

JIM: That's my brother, George the Giant. He was born first.

JACK: Oh.

NARRATOR: The giant asked ...

JIM: (*in a "big" voice*) What are you doing in my castle?

JACK: Well, I ...

NARRATOR: So Jack told him about the cow and the bean

...

JIM: That was dumb.

NARRATOR: He told him about his Mother, how she cried ... (*Mother wails offstage*) ... and how Jack planted the bean.

JIM: That's ridiculous.

JACK: I know.

JIM: Beans can't grow like that.

JACK: (*indicating the narrator*) Tell her that.

JIM: Get out of here!

JACK: (*moving to climb down*) No problem!

NARRATOR: But Jack didn't leave!

JACK: You wanna bet?

NARRATOR: You wanna itch?

JACK: I'm staying. I'm staying.

JIM: Don't you dare try to steal my goose that lays golden eggs!

JACK: What?

JIM: Oops. Wish I hadn't said that.

JACK: Golden eggs?

JIM: Forget I said that. Legs. She's got golden legs.

JACK: You said eggs.

JIM: I stutter. I'm in therapy.

NARRATOR: So when the giant went to sleep that night ...

JIM: I'm not even tired.

JACK: Don't mess with her. (*Jim begins to doze.*)

NARRATOR: Jack went looking for the goose that laid the golden eggs.

JACK: (*searching around*) Here goosy, goosy, goosy ...
Here ...

GOLDIE: (*squawking loudly and turning around*) Aaaaaak!
What are doing?

JACK: I was just ...

GOLDIE: Watch your hands, buster. I was right in the middle of 14-carat gold masterpiece and I feel these cold hands ...

JACK: Quiet! I'm going to steal you!

GOLDIE: You're going to what?

JACK: I'm going to kidnap you!

GOLDIE: Think again, honey.

JACK: Look, my poor Mother is crying ... (*Mother wails offstage*) ...

GOLDIE: That woman needs therapy.

JACK: And we need money. You're my only hope. Now climb up on my back before the giant wakes up.

GOLDIE: (*trying to climb on his back*) The things I do for fairy tales ...

NARRATOR: But just then the giant woke up.

JACK: (*to the Narrator*) Thanks a lot!

NARRATOR: And he shouted ...

JIM: Fee Fi Fo Fum! Where's my goose? Go get my gun!
(*Jim turns*)

JACK: Gun!!!

NARRATOR: Jack began to scramble down the beanstalk!
(*he mimes climbing down the beanstalk with the goose*) (*Mother wails offstage*)

GOLDIE: Would somebody shut that woman up? Gaaaaak!
(*Goldie and Jack crash to the ground*)

NARRATOR: They finally reached the ground!

GOLDIE: I need a parachute.

NARRATOR: And Jack's mother came to greet him!

MOTHER: (*turning*) Oh, Jack! Jack! Jack!

JACK: Mama! Mama! Mama!

GOLDIE: This is too much.

MOTHER: You have saved us, Jack! You have stolen the goose that laid the golden egg and we can eat again!

JACK: (*grabbing Goldie's arm and beginning to bite*) Great! I'm hungry!

GOLDIE: Hey!

MOTHER: No! We shall sell her golden eggs, buy a condo, and move to Miami!

NARRATOR: But the giant was coming down the beanstalk!

JACK: Oh, great.

MOTHER: Chop it down, Jack! Chop down the beanstalk!

JACK: But I kinda like the guy!

JIM: (*climbing down*) I'm gonna grind your bones to make my bread!

JACK: Where's the ax?

NARRATOR: So Jack chopped and chopped and chopped

...

JIM: What're you doing!!!!?

JACK: I'm chopping!

JIM: I know that! Why?

JACK: She told me to!

JIM: Are you tryin' to kill me?

JACK: I think so. *(to the Narrator)* Am I? *(Narrator nods Yes.)*

GOLDIE: *(Xing to the Narrator)* You're a jerk, you know that?

NARRATOR: You can't talk to me that way! You're a goose!

JACK: *(getting desperate as Jim continues to climb down)* Should I chop???

NARRATOR: Yes!

JIM: No!

GOLDIE: The kid's a thief! You can't let make him a murderer too!

NARRATOR: But it's the story!

GOLDIE: Then it's a lousy story. *(shouting up to the giant)* Come on down, Jim! *(grab's Jack's ax)* I got Jack's ax. *(Mother wails.)*

JACK: Mom! Be quiet! *(Jim thumps to the ground.)*

JIM: I'm a nervous wreck.

NARRATOR: *(to Goldie)* You have ruined this story!

GOLDIE: Good!

NARRATOR: You think you know everything? You think you're so smart! Then YOU be the narrator!

GOLDIE: Huh?

NARRATOR: You make the story come out right! You've already ruined it.

GOLDIE: Me?

JACK: Go ahead!

GOLDIE: *(a pause, a thought, then a light in her eyes)* Once upon a time there was a Narrator ... and she started to itch ... *(Narrator begins to itch)* ... and itch ... and itch ... and itch ...

NARRATOR: (*going crazy with the scratching*) Stop it! That's not fair! That's not fair!

GOLDIE: And she had ingrown toenails.

NARRATOR: (*falling to the floor, scratching, holding her foot in pain*) Stop it! Stop it! Tell it right! Tell it right!

GOLDIE: Oh, I will ... And they all lived ...

GOLDIE, JACK, JIM & MOTHER: Happily ever after!

Scene 3: I REMEMBER IT WELL

Characters: Richard, Mary, Younger Richard, Younger Mary

(Mary, an elderly lady, sits on her front porch, watching the world. Richard, her husband of approximately the same age, slowly enters.)

MARY: Hurry up! The sun's going to be down any minute.

RICHARD: (*moving toward his chair beside her*) I am hurrying.

MARY: That's your top speed?

RICHARD: Top speed, Mary. Look out or I may not be able stop and I'll run right over you.

MARY: In your dreams, old man.

RICHARD: That's about right. (*sits slowly ... the pains of old age cause him to grimace a bit*) Oh ... feels good to sit.

MARY: Look at that sunset, Richard. Ever see one so beautiful?

RICHARD: (*squints*) Where is it?

MARY: Right there ... over the hardware store.

RICHARD: (*still squinting*) I've never seen a white sunset.

MARY: That's the Methodist church. (*points*) There's the sunset over there ... pink and orange and red ...

RICHARD: Oh ... yes. Yes, Now I think I see it. Beautiful isn't it?

MARY: That's what I just said.

RICHARD: I thought that was you. Did you bring the coffee?

MARY: Coffee keeps you up. Let's just sit tonight. Wanna hold hands?

RICHARD: (*looks at her hands, then his*) Would you mind if we didn't tonight? My balance isn't good today.

MARY: That's fine. Remember our first sunset, Richard?

RICHARD: (*thinks a long moment, then*) No. I don't think I do. Remind me.

MARY: First grade ... Sunday evening services and they'd let the kids play. We were out back of the church, sitting on the door of the root cellar. That sunset was the first one I ever noticed ... and you reached over and ...

RICHARD: You sure it was me?

MARY: Of course it was you. You leaned over and said ...

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*turns and speaks ... Younger Richard and Younger Mary appear in the memory of their older counterparts*) Wanna slide?

YOUNGER MARY: Mama said not to. She said to sit out here and not make noise if we couldn't be quiet in church.

YOUNGER RICHARD: I could be quiet. Just didn't want to. Come on, let's slide down the old door. It's fun! I done it lots!

YOUNGER MARY: Mama says I shouldn't hang around you so much, Richard. She says you're a bad example for me.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Am I?

YOUNGER MARY: (*looks at him, then giggles with delight*) Yes! Let's slide! (*they "slide" out of the scene*)

MARY: You nearly got me spanked that night.

RICHARD: You sure it was me?

MARY: Who else got me in trouble all the time? You'd make me laugh so hard that my face hurt.

RICHARD: Like the high school dance when ...

MARY: Oh my ... it's a wonder my father ever let me date you again.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*again appearing and speaking as the older Mary and Richard reminisce*) Hey, lady! You ready?

YOUNGER MARY: Richard! It's your Dad's Model T! How'd you get it?

YOUNGER RICHARD: He doesn't know. Come on, Mary! Hop in! Hop in!

YOUNGER MARY: Richard, we shouldn't ...

YOUNGER RICHARD: I know. Let's go! (*they both hop into the "car"*) Razzamatazz and Twenty-three Skiddo!

YOUNGER MARY: Shhh! Don't use that language! Daddy's in the back yard! (*the car jerks forward*) Richard! You're going too fast! Richard!

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*looking at the speedometer*) Thirty-five miles an hour! Look at that, Mary! We're flyin'! We're flyin'! (*and they "fly" out of the scene*)

MARY: You could have killed me.

RICHARD: You sure that was me?

MARY: Of course it was you! Zipping around town in that thing. Thirty-five miles an hour! We scared every horse in town!

RICHARD: (*squinting*) Where's the sun now?

MARY: (*pointing*) There ... just over the convenience store.

RICHARD: Ah, yes. Blue now isn't it?

MARY: Red. It's all red.

RICHARD: Oh. Like our wedding day? Remember the sunset over the church?

MARY: We got married in the morning, Richard.

RICHARD: Oh. Yes, I remember it well.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*rushing in, pulling on his "suit"*) Hurry up, Mary!

YOUNGER MARY: Richard! The groom isn't supposed to see the bride before the wedding!

YOUNGER RICHARD: I've seen you all my life, Mary. What's the big deal? Hurry up. Your Dad's waiting for you in front of the church.

YOUNGER MARY: Oh, Richard, I don't know if I can do this.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Get married?

YOUNGER MARY: Nothing personal.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Nothing personal? Mary, there are a hundred sweaty people sitting in the church right now, we've

dated for 12 years, and your Dad had to take out a loan to pay for that dress! Whatta you mean “Nothing personal?”

YOUNGER MARY: It’s not you ... it’s ... I’m just nervous, Richard! Can’t we just ...?

YOUNGER RICHARD: The music’s starting, Mary. Razzamataz and 23 Skidoo, Baby! (*grabs her arm*)

YOUNGER MARY: Richard! (*and he whisks her off*)

MARY: You nearly broke my arm.

RICHARD: You sure that was me?

MARY: Who else did I marry?

RICHARD: I suppose so. (*looking around*) It’s starting to get dark.

MARY: Your glasses are dirty.

RICHARD: Oh. I suppose so. (*takes off his imaginary glasses and begins to clean them*) I wonder whatever became of Dad’s Model T?

MARY: Who knows? Dust to dust ...

RICHARD: Rust to rust ... Lots of water under the bridge since then. (*peers out*) Who’s that?

MARY: The neighbor kids on their bikes. Kids all over the street tonight. Children always make me happy, Richard.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*running in, frantic*) Now? You’re ready now?

YOUNGER MARY: (*turning, her hand on her back and very pregnant*) Calm down, Richard. It’s just a baby.

YOUNGER RICHARD: I’ll get the car!

YOUNGER MARY: You’ve already got the car, Richard. You’ve had in running for two days.

YOUNGER RICHARD: A pillow! You need a pillow!

YOUNGER MARY: I need a doctor. Richard, just pull the car up out front and we’ll go to the ...

YOUNGER RICHARD: Aspirin? You need an aspirin, Mary? Cough medicine? Mary, I’ll get you anything you ...

YOUNGER MARY: I don’t have a cold or a headache, Richard. I have a baby and he’s about to ...

YOUNGER RICHARD: Ice cream! We can stop and get some chocolate ice cream and ...

YOUNGER MARY: Do not stop for anything, Richard. It's just a baby. He doesn't need ice cream.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Wait right there!

YOUNGER MARY: Where are you going?

YOUNGER RICHARD: I'll get the camera! We want to remember this.

YOUNGER MARY: Don't you dare take my picture, Richard! Just get me to the hospital.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*taking hold of her gently and leading her to "the car"*) You're right. You're right. Gotta get to the hospital. Gotta move fast. Baby's coming. Baby's coming.

YOUNGER MARY: Call a cab, Richard. You're in no condition to drive.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*hyper out of his mind by now*) I'm fine! I'm fine, Mary! Really! I'm fine! I'm fine!

YOUNGER MARY: Razzamatazz, Baby. (*and the pair are off*)

MARY: It's a wonder we made it at all.

RICHARD: I got better with the second one ...

MARY: And the third and the fourth.

RICHARD: Four?

MARY: Four, Richard. We have four children.

RICHARD: Oh. I suppose so. You need a sweater?

MARY: No. I like to be a little chilly ... especially at this time of day. Just sitting here and remembering ... all the good things ... taking a drive on a pretty road ... lying in bed at night and listening to the rain ...

RICHARD: ... running through sprinklers and watching your open a present ...

MARY: ... hot towels fresh out of the dryer. Chocolate milkshakes ...

RICHARD: I like vanilla.

MARY: No worries, Richard. It's strange. I almost miss them.

YOUNGER MARY: (*entering in a hurry*) I know she's alright, Richard. I trust her.

YOUNGER RICHARD: (*extremely worried and upset*) I've called everywhere. The malt shop, the school, her friend's house.

YOUNGER MARY: It's prom night, Richard. Kids always stay out late. You told her she wouldn't have to be home until midnight.

YOUNGER RICHARD: And it's almost eleven! Where is she?!

YOUNGER MARY: Eleven is not twelve. I know it's her first prom, but she's a good girl and she's got a calm head on her shoulders ... unlike her father.

YOUNGER RICHARD: I knew when I looked at that boy's face ... I just knew it, Mary. I shouldn't have trusted him with our daughter.

YOUNGER MARY: Richard, we didn't sell her! He's a nice boy! I know his mother! She works at the hardware store and she bakes cookies for the church bazaar.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Ah! Then he's a rebel! He's purposely rebelling against his parents! I knew it, Mary! He's probably on his motorcycle now headed for the state line.

YOUNGER MARY: Go to bed, Richard. I promise I'll wake you up when she gets here.

YOUNGER RICHARD: I tried going to bed. How can I sleep when I think of my daughter out there in the hands of some young heathen who probably smokes cigarettes and reads crime magazines? Mary, I'll never forgive myself if something

...

YOUNGER MARY: (*touching him*) Richard, there's a car in the driveway.

YOUNGER RICHARD: It's the police! They've found the bodies!

YOUNGER MARY: It's our daughter, Richard. He's bringing her home early.

YOUNGER RICHARD: Where's his motorcycle?

YOUNGER MARY: He doesn't have a motorcycle, Richard. Look ... it's his grandpa's Model T. Isn't that cute? Come on, let's go act like we're not worried. (*they exit*)

MARY: I'm worried, Richard.

RICHARD: About what?

MARY: Do you think our fun is over? You think there's anything left for us except sitting here on the porch and watching the sun go down?

RICHARD: We could play cards.

MARY: You keep forgetting what cards you've got..

RICHARD: We could take a walk.

MARY: Your walker keeps getting stuck in the grass.

RICHARD: Yes. I suppose so. (*a pause, then*) How about ...?

MARY: Yes?

RICHARD: How about we just sit here ...? Sun's almost down.

MARY: Nearly.

RICHARD: It's good to remember, isn't it? We've got lots of good memories, Mary.

MARY: Lots. (*a pause*) And I guess we can be thankful for that.

RICHARD: Wanna hold my hand?

MARY: What about your balance?

RICHARD: Oh, let's live wild tonight. Take a chance. (*he extends his hand to her... she takes it and smiles ... then ...*) Where'd it go?

MARY: What?

RICHARD: The sun. (*squinting*) I can't find it.

MARY: Then remember it, Richard. Just remember.

Scene 4: A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT

Cast:

Edith: a maid.

Kensington McPike: a rich, spoiled, and irritating young man.

Inspector Holmes: of Scotland Lawn

Penelope Flibberjibbet: an aspiring actress

Periwinkle Smithmore: a dead man.

(It is a dark and stormy night, somewhere in the hills of Northbrumptonshire, just south of Southwarwicktown, and a bit down the road from Easthamptonwith.)

(The body of Periwinkle Smithmore lies dead on the floor.)

EDITH: *(entering)* Oh dear, someone's dropped something on the carpet! *(sees the dead body of Periwinkle)* What the ...! Blimey! He's dead! Help somebody! *(she screams)* He's dead! *(she begins jumping up and down going into something of a fit)* He's dead! He's dead! He's dead!

KENSINGTON: *(entering)* I say, what's all the ruckus?

EDITH: He's dead, Master McPike! Mr. Smithmore is dead!

KENSINGTON: *(looks at the body)* Dear me. So he is. And right before dinner. You think we should do something?

EDITH: It's too late! He's dead!

KENSINGTON: I can see that, dear girl. After all, I'm his brother. I should be the one screaming and jumping about.

EDITH: Then why don't you?

KENSINGTON: Very well. *(and he goes into a similar fit, jumping and screaming)* He's dead! He's dead! He's dead!

PENELOPE: *(entering, a very posh young lady whose every move is studied and affected)* I say! What's all the ruckus?

KENSINGTON: *(in a screamy voice)* He's dead! He's dead! Periwinkle Smithmore is dead!

PENELOPE: I hardly see any need to make a scene.

KENSINGTON: *(to Alice)* See. I told you.

EDITH: But he's my employer! And someone's killed him! Whatever shall we do?

KENSINGTON: What say we begin by getting him up off the carpet. Look ... there's a bit of blood starting to trickle out of his left vestibule. Come on now, let's have at it, shall we? *(The three of them bend down and laboriously pick up the dead body.)*

EDITH: Oh, he's all squishy.

KENSINGTON: It's the blood. Think of it as raspberry jelly or something.

PENELOPE: (*dropping her end in horror*) Ooooo!

KENSINGTON: Oh, now look what you've done, Penelope. You've dropped your end. Not at all sporting.

PENELOPE: I can't touch a dead body!

KENSINGTON: Of course you can. Think of it as a live body that doesn't complain. After all, you're an actress.

PENELOPE: But when I'm acting I just ... you know ... act. This is so ... real.

KENSINGTON: Then act like he's alive but pretending to be dead.

PENELOPE: You think that would work?

KENSINGTON: I'm sure of it. Heave ho, now. (*the three again lift Periwinkle, this time plopping him onto three chairs set up to resemble a sofa*) There we are. Safe on the sofa.

EDITH: He looks terrible.

KENSINGTON: He should. He really is quite dead. Can you hold dinner for a few minutes?

PENELOPE: Oh, how can you think of dinner at a time like this!?

KENSINGTON: Simple ... I'm hungry.

PENELOPE: Quite so. Perhaps we could eat then deal with dear Periwinkle after dessert.

KENSINGTON: Smashing idea.

EDITH: I ... I can't eat with a dead body lying about in the drawing room!

KENSINGTON: Well, you won't actually eat with it, you ...

EDITH: I mean ... mean it's all too horrible!

PENELOPE: We must call the police.

KENSINGTON: I'm sure they've already eaten.

PENELOPE: I mean to investigate, Kensington! Ring them up, Edith! Quick!

EDITH: (*picking up a phone*) Hello? Scotland Lawn? There's been a murder! And the dead body is quite deceased. We suspect foul play! Yes, you have a good day, too.

KENSINGTON: Edith, you're my brother's most efficient maid. (*moving close to her, romantically*) I can't tell you how much you mean to me at a time like this.

PENELOPE: There's someone at the door!

KENSINGTON: Drat!

EDITH: I'll get it!

KENSINGTON: They always say that.

HOLMES: (*entering*) No need. I let myself in.

PENELOPE: I say. Jolly quick.

HOLMES: I had a strong tailwind. (*offering his hand to each of them*) Inspector Watson Holmes of her Majesty's Royal Scotland Lawn. You are?

KENSINGTON: Kensington McPike, brother of the deceased Periwinkle Smithmore.

HOLMES: Your last name is different.

KENSINGTON: By jove. That does seem curious.

HOLMES: That's why I'm a detective. I notice these things. And you?

EDITH: Edith, Master Smithmore's humble, obedient and only slightly coherent maid.

HOLMES: Charmed. And you?

PENELOPE: Penelope Flibberjibbet, engaged to be married to the deceased ... and part-time actress in several amateur but promising productions.

HOLMES: Ah yes. Lady Conchitta Bonita in *Son of Henry the Third part Four, The Sequel, Part Two*.

PENELOPE: You know my work!

HOLMES: I read the papers. And this ... this must be Periwinkle Smithmore, lately of Stately Manor.

KENSINGTON: My word. He is sharp.

HOLMES: Well, he was the only one in the room not breathing.

KENSINGTON: Ah! Astute! Astute!

PENELOPE: (*throwing herself onto the dead Smithmore and sobbing*) Oh, I did love him so, inspector!

EDITH: (*also throwing herself onto Smithmore*) As did I! As did I!

KENSINGTON: (*looks around a bit, shrugs, then*) He was my brother! (*throws himself down in a similarly mournful pose*)

HOLMES: I see. But which one killed him? (*Kensington, Edith, and Penelope freeze in their positions*)

SMITHMORE: Bit of a puzzle, isn't it?

HOLMES: Indeed. I don't suppose you could be of any help?

SMITHMORE: (*carefully easing himself off the couch, moving a hand of the frozen actors out of the way to work himself into a standing position*) Well, they all had their motives. And it did hurt quite remarkably. (*turns to show his back*) See the knife? Quite uncomfortable.

HOLMES: Ah yes. Stabbed right through, weren't you. Painful.

SMITHMORE: For a moment, then ... how did Shakespeare put it? "All is nothingness?"

HOLMES: Well said.

SMITHMORE: Thank you.

HOLMES: Now ... as to the murderer. I assume you know these people.

SMITHMORE: Quite well, actually. (*as he points them out*) She was my most trusted maid and also named in my will. He was my dear brother set to inherit my estate, and she was to marry me next Tuesday but had been having second thoughts after I gave her a hugely expensive diamond ring.

HOLMES: Anyone else?

SMITHMORE: No, she was the only one I planned to marry.

HOLMES: I mean suspects.

SMITHMORE: Oh. Not really. Am actually quite popular ... was quite popular.

HOLMES: Where were you standing when you felt the blow?

SMITHMORE: (*pointing to a spot*) Just there. Sipping a brandy. Napoleon the Third. Quite good actually. Care for some?

HOLMES: Perhaps later. I should get to the questioning.

SMITHMORE: Do hurry if you can. Dinner's at eight and the cook is an absolute terror.

HOLMES: Thanks much.

SMITHMORE: (*getting back into his dead position*) Don't mention it. Glad to help. (*as he lies down, the others come to life*)

PENELOPE: Oh, it's so bloody awful! I feel faint!

KENSINGTON: Come to me, Penelope. I can't tell you how much you mean to me at a time like this.

HOLMES: (*stepping between them*) He was stabbed.

KENSINGTON: Drat.

HOLMES: What's that?

KENSINGTON: Oh, I was just trying to be a bit of comfort to dear Penelope.

HOLMES: Time for that later. Smithmore was stabbed in the back.

PENELOPE: With a knife?

HOLMES: Sharp girl. Here, let's get him up. I'll show you. (*Alice helps Holmes raise Smithmore to a sitting position.*) There now. See the knife? (*the move to look*)

EDITH: A kitchen knife!

PENELOPE: Oh, I don't think I can eat supper now.

KENSINGTON: Of course you can. We have plenty of other knives.

PENELOPE: The sight! The thought! The tragedy of it all!

SMITHMORE: (*opens eyes only long enough to speak and only Holmes hears him*) Lovely girl. Dreadful actress.

HOLMES: Quite.

KENSINGTON: I certainly hope no one suspects me!

SMITHMORE: I would. He's an idiot. A spoiled, selfish idiot.

HOLMES: I agree.

EDITH: Well, don't look at me!

SMITHMORE: Why not? Isn't it usually the maid? I don't have a butler.

HOLMES: Indeed. So! Three suspects! Three different motives. (*to Alice*) The maid, who has conveniently been

written into poor Smithmore's will. (*to Kensington*) The grieving brother who stands to inherit most of the estate. (*to Penelope*) The bride to be, who now happens to own a very large diamond ring.

KENSINGTON: But Inspector! How can you know all these things?

HOLMES: There's much that a dead body can tell you, Mr. Kensington. (*Smithmore giggles*)

PENELOPE: What was that?

HOLMES: I coughed. Forgive me. Three suspects. Three potential murderers.

KENSINGTON: What about the gardener?

EDITH: We don't have a gardener.

KENSINGTON: Oh. Pity. Should we get one?

HOLMES: (*to Alice*) You!

EDITH: Me?

SMITHMORE: Ask her about the dusting.

HOLMES: What about the dusting?

EDITH: How did you know that? Master Smithmore never liked the way I dusted the rhododendrons.

KENSINGTON: The what?

HOLMES: Flowers. (*to Penelope*) And you!

SMITHMORE: The cigars. She could never stand my cigars.

HOLMES: The cigars!

PENELOPE: Oh! That was between dear Peri and I! I hated the smell of those things!

HOLMES: (*to Kensington*) And finally ... you. (*a long stare ... Smithmore says nothing*) (*to Smithmore*) Well?

SMITHMORE: Oh, sorry. I was dead. Ask him about the rocking horse.

HOLMES: The rocking horse!

KENSINGTON: Dear me! No one but Periwinkle and I knew that he once broke my hobby horse! That's astounding!

SMITHMORE: He deserved it. He stole my jump rope.

HOLMES: You stole his jump rope!

KENSINGTON: (*grabbing his heart*) I'm in shock! No one knew that! (*sits and knocks Smithmore over*) Oh, dear. Sorry Periwinkle.

EDITH: Now look what you've done. You've knocked over Master Smithmore!

HOLMES: You okay?

SMITHMORE: Fine. Still dead. Thanks.

HOLMES: I now I shall announce the murderer! (*All three living people gasp!*) The murderer is... (*looks at Smithmore. He says nothing*) ... the murderer is ...! (*to Smithmore as the others freeze*) I say, I don't suppose you could be of some help here?

SMITHMORE: Sorry. My back was turned. I say, this is quite uncomfortable. I don't suppose you could ...

HOLMES: Oh ... sorry. (*tipping him back up*)

SMITHMORE: Thanks. (*he begins to tip into Kensington's lap*) Oops. Here I go again.

HOLMES: (*as the three unfreeze*) The murderer is....

KENSINGTON: (*sees his dead brother in his lap*) Oh, heavens! I have a dead brother in my lap!

EDITH: (*quickly sitting on Smithmore's other side and pulling him upright*) There's a good Master.

HOLMES: The murderer is ...! (*Smithmore falls into Edith's lap*)

EDITH: Crikey! He's on me now!

PENELOPE: Oh, bother! (*she stands in front of the three, reaches down to get Smithmore, and once he's upright, he falls onto the floor on top of her*) Help me! Help me!

KENSINGTON: Oh bother. (*they freeze*) Well, I suppose there's no solving it now.

HOLMES: Not quite.

KENSINGTON: Really?

HOLMES: It was me, actually.

KENSINGTON: You don't say!

HOLMES: How do you think I got here so quickly? I thought I could surely pin the murder on someone but it's not often I find a talking corpse.

KENSINGTON: Sorry.

HOLMES: Oh, no. And I apologize for the knife. Work was slow, I needed a bit of a promotion ... you know how it goes.

KENSINGTON: I understand completely. Can't blame you at all.

HOLMES: Well, I suppose I'll leave you. Got your revenge, eh?

KENSINGTON: Yes. They're in a proper dither now. Good fun. Good meeting you.

HOLMES: And you. Sorry again about the...

KENSINGTON: No worries. I'll get through this.

HOLMES: Cheerio, then.

KENSINGTON: Carry on, Inspector. Carry on! (*The Inspector leaves*)

Scene 5: HELP ME!

Cast: Hannah, Ellie

(Ellie sits alone, reading.)

HANNAH: (*rushing in, grabbing her*) Ellie, you've got to help me.

ELLIE: Look out. My nails are wet.

HANNAH: I'm in big, big trouble, Ellie!

ELLIE: I know. You've got Midnight in Malibu all over the palm of your hand now.

HANNAH: This is serious!

ELLIE: You're tellin' me. That stuff is awful to get off.

HANNAH: Would you listen to me?

ELLIE: Talk fast. My Mom got me tickets for the concert tonight at the Convention Center. I've got to get dressed in a few minutes.

HANNAH: You can't go.

ELLIE: I what?

HANNAH: You cannot go, Ellie. Not if you're my friend.

ELLIE: What does going to hear Kenny Chesthair have to do with our friendship?

HANNAH: That's what I'm trying to tell you. I'm in big, big trouble and you've got to help me get out of it.

ELLIE: What trouble?

HANNAH: I can't talk about it.

ELLIE: *(a long pause as she stares at her ridiculous friend)* You're crazy, Hannah. You want me to get you out of trouble but you won't tell me what it is.

HANNAH: Okay. I'll tell. You know Alec Beard?

ELLIE: Everybody knows Alec Beard. He's captain of the football team and one hot ...

HANNAH: Yeh. That's him. He asked me out tonight.

ELLIE: Was he sick?

HANNAH: Funny. To the movies.

ELLIE: Oh. It'll be dark then. Nobody will notice.

HANNAH: Would you quit that! This is serious!

ELLIE: Hannah, any date with Alec Beard is serious. Way to go, girl! That's awesome!

HANNAH: It's not awesome.

ELLIE: You afraid of the dark?

HANNAH: I was already going out with Andy Anderson tonight.

ELLIE: *(a long stare, then)* You're crazy.

HANNAH: I know.

ELLIE: That's insane, Hannah! How could you do something like that?

HANNAH: Andy and I are just friends ... you know that. We've dated off and on for years ... like brother and sister. I think he's going to ask me to prom. He asked me if I wanted to do something tonight and said yes, then Alec called and ... I couldn't resist, Ellie! Alec Beard! Can you imagine that?

ELLIE: No. Not with Andy in the next seat. I can't imagine it at all, Hannah.

HANNAH: That's why you've got to help me.

ELLIE: I can't. I don't even own a gun.

HANNAH: You've got to go with Andy tonight!

ELLIE: I what?!

HANNAH: Come on, Ellie. Just this once. I'll owe you big time ... anything. Anything you want me to do, I'll do it. I'll clean your room! (*and Hannah begins moving about the room as she talks, quickly throwing things here and there*) I'll do your homework all year. I'll do your laundry. I'll buy you a new outfit ...

ELLIE: Hannah!

HANNAH: I'll babysit your kids, I'll ...

ELLIE: I don't have any kids!

HANNAH: Yet. Someday you'll be wanting a babysitter and all you'll have to do is call me and ...

ELLIE: Hannah! Stop cleaning my room! Just stand still! (*she does*) Watch this very closely. (*points to her own mouth*) No.

HANNAH: No, seriously. I need help.

ELLIE: Okay. Watch again. I---don't---care.

HANNAH: Ellie! You're my friend!

ELLIE: I know! And friends don't let friends make fools of themselves! Call Alec back and tell him you made a mistake!

HANNAH: I can't do that!

ELLIE: Of course you can!

HANNAH: He'll never ask me out again!

ELLIE: Who cares? Have you ever heard of honesty, Hannah? Ever heard of telling the truth?

HANNAH: Maybe later. When I can afford it. Right now I'll settle for a little lie.

ELLIE: A little lie! Why do you always get yourself into these things, Hannah? Always! You sign up for everything, you say yes to everybody, you try to do it all then it hits you ... Duh! I can't do it! You're never going to learn unless you have to suffer a little and honey, it's time to suffer.

HANNAH: Does that mean you won't help me?

ELLIE: Can you hear? That's exactly what that means! You can't do that to Andy! It'll break his heart!

HANNAH: You can't do this, Hannah!

ELLIE: Yes, I can, Ellie!

HANNAH: You don't have a choice!

ELLIE: Yes, I do!

HANNAH: No, you don't! I already called Andy!

ELLIE: (*a very long beat as Ellie is momentarily speechless, then finally*) You what?

HANNAH: I ... you know ... sort of called Andy.

ELLIE: You didn't.

HANNAH: I did.

ELLIE: And told him what?

HANNAH: I told him ... uh ... promise you won't hate me, Ellie.

ELLIE: Impossible! I hate you already! (*Hannah begins to scurry about the room, throwing things around*) What are you doing?

HANNAH: I'm getting rid of everything you can throw at me.

ELLIE: (*grabbing her*) Ellie, stop it! What did you tell Andy?

HANNAH: I told him ... you know ... it was a real nice conversation and everything ... and ...

ELLIE: (*shaking her*) What did you tell Andy!?

HANNAH: (*in a burst of words*) I told him that you'd always wanted to go out with him and I was looking forward to our date but since you were my best friend I wondered if he'd go out with you instead! (*A long beat as Ellie simply stares at Hannah while Hannah, frightened, stares at Ellie*) (*finally*) Say something, Ellie. Ellie, I've never seen that look before. Ellie, talk to me.

ELLIE: (*with inappropriate calm*) I'm going outside now.

HANNAH: (*moves to stop her*) Ellie ...

ELLIE: ...and when I return I expect you to be gone ...

HANNAH: Where can I go?

ELLIE: The moon is good. The bottom of a fiery pit would be even better. Just so I never see you again.

HANNAH: You know, Ellie, we've got to serious about this. Andy's going to be here in 5 minutes.

ELLIE: You're kidding.

HANNAH: Ellie ...

ELLIE: You have got to be kidding me. Say you're kidding me, Hannah.

HANNAH: I'm not kidding. He said that he was really looking forward to being with you. (*drops to her knees, grabs Ellie's hands and sobs*) Ellie, I'm sorry. It was a stupid thing to do and I wouldn't blame you if you never spoke to me again. Please, Ellie. Please do this one thing for me ... I'm an idiot and I admit and you're my only hope. (*she looks at Ellie who's simply staring back at her*) (*quietly and most sincerely*) You're my only hope, Ellie.

ELLIE: (*takes a deep breath, crosses away from her, then*) Put your hand in the air.

HANNAH: Huh?

ELLIE: Put your hand in the air. (*Hannah complies.*) Repeat after me. "I solemnly swear ..."

HANNAH: I solemnly swear ...

ELLIE: "That I'm a complete idiot ..."

HANNAH: That I'm a complete idiot.

ELLIE: And that if I ever do anything like this to my best friend I'll jump headfirst into the nearest ocean ...

HANNAH: I swear! (*rising, going to Ellie and hugging her*) Oh Ellie! I love you! I really love you!

ELLIE: (*pushing her away*) Not now, I'm not in mood ... and I've got to get dressed because ... (*looking out the window*) ... Andy's in the driveway!

HANNAH: Oh, no! He can't see me here! He'll think we've planned it all!

ELLIE: Well duh!

HANNAH: Someone's knocking on your door.

ELLIE: Yeh, they often do that.

HANNAH: I'll hide! I'll hide!

ELLIE: Hannah, don't be a fool ... (*but it's too late...Hannah has already hidden behind a chair*) Too late. (*Ellie takes a deep breath and opens the door*) Andy! Good to see you! I'm really excited about tonight! You, too? Yeh, it's gonna be a great time. I love her like a sister but Hannah's probably getting a little tired of the same old thing. (*Hannah*

makes a noise and Ellie gives her chair a backward kick) She said you were a nice guy and all but she was ready for something different. *(Again, Hannah makes a muffled noise and Ellie kicks the chair)* What's that? You're kidding? Alec is sick tonight? Allergies? *(Hannah begins to rise but Ellie again kicks the chair)* Gee, that's really too bad. And he was trying to call Hannah earlier but her line was busy? *(Hannah pokes her head up out of Andy's sight, and Ellie pushes it back down.)* You know what, Andy. Prom's coming up and I know it's sort of unusual for a girl to ask a guy, but it's a whole new world, right? Oh, don't worry about Hannah. Like I said, she was getting really tired of dating you ... no offense. She said it was too much like dating her own brother. *(Again Hannah raises up and again Ellie stuffs her back down.)* But she cares a lot about you and said that she'd only feel safe if you were dating me. Look, I'm sure Mom wouldn't mind giving up her ticket *(moving close to him)* to such a strong, handsome, exciting man like you ... so I've got *two* tickets to the Kenny Chesthair concert tonight. *(Hannah makes a choking/gasping noise and rolls over onto her back, holding her head.)* Shall we go? Great! Look, just give me a minute to change and I'll meet you at the car, okay? Yeh ... I think you're pretty cool, too, Andy. *(Andy leaves)* *(Hannah groans.)*

HANNAH: Shoot me. Just shoot me now and put me out of my misery.

ELLIE: Look Hannah, since you're not busy tonight, would you clean up my room?

HANNAH: *(groans)*

ELLIE: And I've got some math there on the table you can do ...

HANNAH: *(groans)* And if you get really bored, I hear there's a good movie down the street. So long ... friend!

ELLIE: *(groans)*

Scene 6: SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ADULT?

Cast: Bob, Rex, P.J., Sean, Caery

BOB: Stand by ... in five, four, three, two and one!

REX: (*hurries on with a pasted-on smile which he manages to keep every moment of his waking life*) (*those offstage hum a peppy game show tune*) Hey! Hello out there and welcome to TV's hottest new game show ... "So You Want to be an Adult?"! What's the show about, Bob?

BOB: (*the same great smile*) Glad you asked, Rex. The show is ...

REX: (*interrupts*) Thanks, Bob.

BOB: Don't mention it, Rex! In "So You Want to be an Adult", a contestant gets the chance to ... well ... become an adult!

REX: What's she got to do, Bob?

BOB: Glad you asked, Rex. She's got to pass our series of hilarious challenges and if she wins ...

REX: Yeh, Bob?

BOB: Rex, if she wins, then ... well ... we'll make her an adult!

REX: Thanks, Bob!

BOB: Don't mention it, Rex!

REX: So, who's our contestant today?

BOB: Glad you asked, Rex! Today's lucky contestant is from all way out in Attitude Falls, Nebraska! Please welcome Miss P.J. Sullen! (*Sean and Carey, their backs still to the audience, applaud as P.J. enters. P.J. has "attitude" written all over face. She looks around the set, bored.*)

REX: Hello P.J.! And welcome to So You Want to be an Adult!

P.J.: Yeh. Whatever.

REX: So before we get started, tell us ... Just why do you want to be an adult?

P.J.: Stupid question.

REX: (*still smiling*) Thanks.

P.J.: Because I am an adult.

REX: You are?

P.J.: You got a problem with that?

REX: Certainly not! Do you have a problem with that, Bob?

BOB: No way, Rex! Glad you asked!

P.J.: So when do I get the prize?

REX: Prize?

P.J.: The adult thing. Just give it to me and I'll blow this joint.

REX: Say! Not so fast! We've got to have a little fun first. Are you ready to become an adult?

P.J.: Yeh. My parents treat me like I was kid. They won't let me do what I want. They always gotta ask me questions about where I've been. Can you spell possessive, man?

REX: Gee ... I'm not sure! Can you spell possessive, Bob?

BOB: Sure can, Rex! Glad you asked!

REX: But let's get on with our game. Are you ready for your first challenge?

P.J.: Yeh. Lay it on me. I can handle this stuff. It's easy. I've watched my folks do for years. A no brainer.

REX: Okay, here we go! Bob, what's our first challenge for P.J.?

BOB: Glad you asked, Rex! It's called ... *(Sean and Carey do a drum roll on their thighs, still offstage)* Money!

REX: Yes!

SEAN: *(appearing suddenly)* Miss Sullen?

P.J.: Yeh?

SEAN: You're two months behind on your car payment. I'm afraid we'll have to take it back.

P.J.: You can't take my car!

CAREY: P.J. Sullen?

P.J.: What?

CAREY: I'm from the credit card company. Remove all formattingremove current card and your interest rate is now 71%.

P.J.: You can't do that!

SEAN: *(as another character)* Miss Sullen, I'm from the I.R.S. We have some questions about your deductions for bubble gum.



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