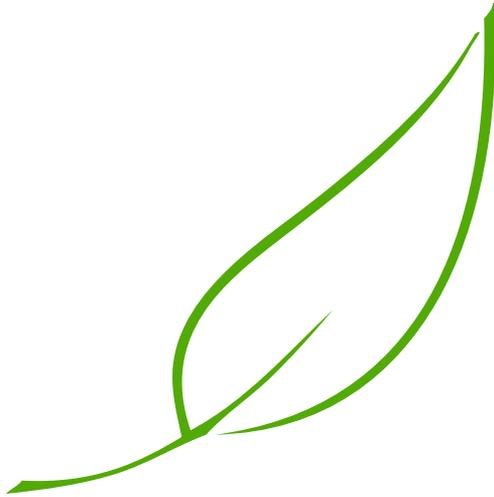


ONE-PART HARMONY

by Ken Bradbury
and Robert L. Crowe



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ONE-PART HARMONY

A Play in Two Acts

by **Ken Bradbury and Robert L. Crowe**

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Cast of Characters (35)

+ Narrators: Host I & Host II

Act I

Scene 1: The Great Awakening

Oscar

Mom

Scene 2: Handsome Prince School

Bob

Pat

Henry

Rupert

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Jodi

Richard

Georgie

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Logan

Micah

Scene 5: Hail Caesar

Calpurnia

Julius Caesar

Sillius

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Boy

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Herbert

Estelle

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Nobis

Quinn

Boston

Washington

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Loxley

Rupert

Marigold

Scene 4: Beating the Rap

Ace

Trey

Scene 5: The Last Days of
Lenny's Hideaway

Lenny

Mrs. Blue

Scene 6: The Tale of the Dogs

Mrs. Prunty

Toby

Miss Francis

Charlie

ACT ONE

HOST I: Good evening ... or in case it is still afternoon ... good afternoon. I am your delightful host, (*actor's name*).

HOST II: Actually, you are the co-host but we will see how this afternoon-evening goes. Perhaps it will be best if you took all the blame. I'm your affable ...

HOST I: ... laughable ...

HOST II: ... co-host (*actor's name*). We were pushed out here at this time to "warm-up" the audience but it is really a chance to give you a warning.

HOST I: And it is this: the cast is going to finish the play regardless of what you think. Whether there be thunderous applause or scattered clapping, the show will go on.

HOST II: Whether there be booing or soft and edible materials thrown at the stage, our players have decided to consume what is edible and save the rest for the cast party. But ...

HOST I: ... the show will go on. We hope you are still here when it ends because that is the best part.

HOST II: We have for your tolerance a varied collection of incidents ... or ... accidents, if you prefer. Since it will not be obvious to you, we want to point-out that the various scenes of the play are all related by a common thread. We are offering a substantial prize to anyone who can name that thread.

HOST I: For this production, and maybe for this performance only, we have gathered a stable of actors ...

HOST II: ... they are always horsing around in rehearsal ...

HOST I: ... and they are among the finest in their field. However, those fields are chemistry, botany and Spanish. None has been in drama.

HOST II: Here's a hint to the common thread: We could have named this production: "Our School!"

HOST I: That's more than a hint. I think that's the answer. At least that title would make some sense.

HOST II: Ahhh. You are thinking, "I can't wait to see this!" So we will grant your wish. Here is their first attempt. The scene is the home of every student on a school morning. For lack of any other wording, we call it "The Great Awakening."

(lights down while actors are set, then lights up)

SCENE 1: The Great Awakening

Characters: Oscar and Mom

- MOM:** (*facing the audience*) Oscar! Oscar, are you awake? Oscar! Oscar, the bus is going to be here in twenty minutes! Are you hearing me, Oscar?
- OSCAR:** (*turning to face the audience*) It's like this every morning.
- MOM:** Oscar, get up!
- OSCAR:** Every ... single ... morning.
- MOM:** Oscar!
- OSCAR:** That ... and then ...
- MOM:** You'll never amount to anything if you don't change your ways!
- OSCAR:** And ...
- MOM:** Am I gonna have to come up there?
- OSCAR:** "No, Ma. I'll get up." Every morning. Every morning the same old thing. Who'd want to get up just to hear someone yelling at them? Why can't mothers be more pleasant? Once ... just once I'd like to start the day with something like ...
- MOM:** (*and the two now face each other in real time*) Sweetheart? Darling? Oh wonder child of the universe?
- OSCAR:** (*to the audience*) I like that one.
- MOM:** Honey, I know you were sleeping soundly and I know that you need your sleep, but sweetheart, I only want the best for you and I've fixed your favorite breakfast and I have your clothing all laid out neatly as soon as you're ready.
- OSCAR:** (*to the audience*) Now what would be wrong with that? Instead, I get ...
- MOM:** You want to lie in bed all day? Then start paying rent, you bum! Now get out of there!
- OSCAR:** See what I mean? Surely not all mothers have been like this. I mean, the famous people in history? Surely they didn't have to put up with this.
- MOM:** George? Oh, Georgie?
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mama?
- MOM:** It's time to rise and shine, sweetheart.
- OSCAR:** But I'm tired, Mama.
- MOM:** Oh, I know you're tired. Poor darling. But what will the other children think when little Georgie Washington doesn't show up

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to play this morning? Honey, if you're going to grow up to be the father of your country then you really should get out of bed. It's so much easier being President standing up.

OSCAR: Is it cold out this morning, Mama?

MOM: Yes, and you've got to make that long trip across the Delaware so you need to get an early start. Now come on down to the kitchen where Mama's got some hot porridge waiting for you.

OSCAR: Thank you, Mama.

MOM: I'll go get some firewood out of the yard. Someone cut down the cherry tree last night.

OSCAR: Instead, I get ...

MOM: You want me to get the water? I swear I'll drown you with a glass of cold water if you don't get out of that bed!

OSCAR: And so it goes. I guess I'll never be President. Got the wrong mother.

MOM: Oscar!

OSCAR: Yes, Mom! ... If she could just be a little more ... I don't know ... gentle. Poetic.

MOM: (*ala Shakespeare*) Hark! What light through yonder window breaks! It is the sun, my son!

OSCAR: Mother ... dearest.

MOM: Yes, oh gentle son of mine?

OSCAR: Mother, must I rise so soon? Seems 'twas only a moment ago when first I laid my tender head upon yon downy pillow.

MOM: Oh, how times does fly, my young hero, when dreams are sweet.

OSCAR: To sleep or not to sleep ... that is the question. Now is the morning of my discontent.

MOM: Ah, we are such stuff as dreams are made of, but it is time to rise!

OSCAR: Doth I smell pancakes?

MOM: Ah, a pancake by any other name would smell as sweet. Arise, my son!

OSCAR: A robe! A robe! My kingdom for a robe!

MOM: 'Til we meet below, dear son! Adieu! Again, I say adieu!

OSCAR: Adieu, dearest Mother!

- MOM:** (*ala Mom again*) And again I say I'm going to come up there and dump that bed on top of you if you don't get your tail out of that bed!
- OSCAR:** Alas. Bummer. Same old thing. I mean, if I at least had something exciting to wake up to. Just day after day the same routine. If I just had some ... I don't know ... mystery!
- MOM:** (*dramatically*) Son!
- OSCAR:** Mother!
- MOM:** Son! Son!
- OSCAR:** Mother! Mother!
- MOM:** It was a dark and stormy night last night!
- OSCAR:** I know! I lay awake in fear all evening! (*aside to the audience as Mom freezes her pose*) She had that look in her eyes. I could tell something big ... something really big was coming. (*She unfreezes.*) What's happening, Ma?
- MOM:** (*aside to the audience as Oscar freezes his pose*) How could I tell him? His father was lost in a blizzard, the first floor of our house had been blown away in a tornado, and our family dog was starting to act very peculiar. (*Oscar comes out of his freeze.*) Oh, nothing.
- OSCAR:** Ma, is there something you're hiding from me?
- MOM:** I never hide anything from you, kid. (*aside as Oscar freezes*) But I was lying. His uncle left him a cool two million but I didn't tell him. I keep it hidden in the bathtub, but he never takes a bath. (*Oscar unfreezes.*) Oh, nothing.
- OSCAR:** (*as Mom freezes*) There was something in the way she held that bar of soap ... something in the way she acted ... I couldn't quite put my finger on it. (*Mom unfreezes.*) Well, I guess I'll take a bath.
- MOM:** No! Don't touch that faucet!
- OSCAR:** But Ma! I gotta go to school!
- MOM:** Stay where you are! I'll call you in sick. Now excuse me. I've got to go clean the bathtub.
- OSCAR:** (*as Mom turns away from the audience*) Yeah ... yeah, that's more like it. Instead, I get ...
- MOM:** You want trouble, Oscar? I'll give you trouble! Just wait 'til I tell your father!

- OSCAR:** *(to the audience)* I thought he was lost in a blizzard. Gosh, you'd think the whole world depended on me getting up in the morning. Heck, if I ruled the world I could just sleep.
- MOM:** Napoleon!
- OSCAR:** Oui, Ma-ma!
- MOM:** Napoleon, mon ami! Bonjour! Ees time to awaken, my darling!
- OSCAR:** Oh, Ma-ma! But ees so early!
- MOM:** But mon ami, you must get up and conquer Switzerland today!
- OSCAR:** But Ma-ma! Yesterday I arose and took control of Italy and Germany! It made me so very tired!
- MOM:** Oh, mon sweetheart ... perhaps a bite of crepe suzette will make your little French heart go pitty-pat! Bon appetite!
- OSCAR:** Merci, Ma-ma! S'il vous plait! Perhaps some French toast before I march into Russia?
- MOM:** Oh, Oui! Oui! Oui!
- OSCAR:** All the way home. But instead I get ...
- MOM:** *(ala Mom)* This is your last chance! I'm warning you, Oscar! You want to see me angry? You've never seen me angry! I'll show you what angry looks like! Now get out of bed!
- OSCAR:** Oui, oui, Mama. Darn. Same old thing. Dog-gone it, I just want to sleep. I was born at the wrong time. Too many obligations, things to do. I wish life was simpler ... back in the old days.
- MOM:** Son?
- OSCAR:** Yeah, Ma?
- MOM:** It's time you best be gettin' up, son.
- OSCAR:** Is it mornin' already, Ma?
- MOM:** Yep. I already fed the cows and milked the chickens.
- OSCAR:** Already?
- MOM:** Yep. And the chickens wasn't none too happy about it. They was up all night fightin' off the ranchers.
- OSCAR:** The ranchers?
- MOM:** Yep. They shot your daddy, burnt down the corn crop and made the dog mighty nervous.
- OSCAR:** Oh, no, Ma! Not the dog!
- MOM:** Yep ... he got mad and run off with your baby sister.
- OSCAR:** Dern! I was gettin' used to her!

- MOM:** Well, she was just a little thing. If the dog hadn't got her the coyotes would have probably drug her off. So ... you reckon you ought to be gettin' out of bed? It's nearly sun-up.
- OSCAR:** I suppose so, Ma. I'll take my bath.
- MOM:** Make it quick. The tub on the back porch froze over last night.
- OSCAR:** Good. I'll just slide along the top. (*Mom turns her back.*) Man, that seemed so much easier back then.
- MOM:** (*shouting*) Are you up yet?
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mom!
- MOM:** Are you lyin' to me?
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mom!
- MOM:** Oscar!!!
- OSCAR:** Yes, Mom!!! (*to the audience*) There's gotta be a better way to wake up in the morning. (*Oscar begins making sounds providing the rhythm for Mom's rap.*)
- MOM:** Hey get up, you lazy bum!
You've slept two hours beyond the sun!
Throw back those covers! Shake a leg!
You're gonna miss your ham and eggs!
I say Get up! . . . and do it now!
Ain't gonna wait on you anyhow!
Don't like my rappin'? That's too bad!
Gonna rap this around your sleepin' head!
- OSCAR:** (*as Mom takes over the rap percussive sounds*)
Oh, Mom! Oh Mom! I hear your voice!
But gettin' up early, that ain't too nice!
Just let me sleep! I plead! I beg!
You can keep your dog-gonned ham and eggs!
Oh let me snooze! Oh let me snore!
And please don't yell at me anymore!
Don't want to go to school today!
Let's just pretend it's Saturday!
(*as his rap ends*) But it never turns out that way.
- MOM:** You want trouble? I'll give you trouble! Now get up, Oscar!
- OSCAR:** My mom is getting to be a royal pain. I mean it. A royal ... a royal ... yeah, that's what I need! Something more royal!
- MOM:** (*entering with a flourish*) Your highness!
- OSCAR:** Yes, dearest Mumsy?

- MOM:** The dawn is breaking over our kingdom! Your people are waiting down below your balcony to give you your royal morning cheer!
- OSCAR:** I shall go greet them, Mumsy!
- MOM:** Perhaps your highness would like to put on some pants, first?
- OSCAR:** Oh. How silly of me. A king needs his pantaloons.
- MOM:** Your servants are drawing your royal bath and the royal cooks have prepared a breakfast of caviar, truffles, foie gras, and peacock tongues!
- OSCAR:** Oh, how yummy, Mummy!
- MOM:** For your tummy, Sonny.
- OSCAR:** It is so delightful to be King! I arise when I wish! I eat what I want! I go wherever my fancy takes me! Oh, the joy! The joy!
- MOM:** (*ala her old self*) You want joy? I'll give you joy. How about the joy of not being thrown out of your bed if you don't get up right now? The school bus is coming down the street!
- OSCAR:** Mom! Come in here!
- MOM:** (*enters*) Yes, Oscar?
- OSCAR:** Can we talk?
- MOM:** Sure.
- OSCAR:** Mom, I've looked at this getting-up problem from several different angles and I think it's time you and I simply had a little chat about this problem. I mean, it's okay that we disagree on one or two minor points, but I think if we just sat down and discussed this calmly then we could come to some sort of a solution.
- MOM:** I've already got one.
- OSCAR:** You do?
- MOM:** Yeah. Get up, get dressed, and get on the bus.
- OSCAR:** That's it?
- MOM:** That's it.
- OSCAR:** (*to the audience*) Moms! Gotta love 'em.

HOST I: The curtain came down on that delightful story but let me tell you how it ends. Oscar gets up and goes to school but is suspended for sleeping in class. Too bad his mom wasn't there to help.

HOST II: He needed more "pep!" He should go to a "pep school."

HOST I: You mean a "prep" school.

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HOST II: Just to move things along, let's say that's what I meant.

HOST I: Good. Because our next story is about a prep school. Did you ever wonder how anyone studies to become a king? I mean, what's the major? That's the problem faced by the guys in the next story. They are all set to inherit a kingdom but have no idea how to go about it. Don't people have the greatest ideas? Somebody organized a prince school. It's where guys go to study to be a prince and other ... stuff.

HOST II: We call it the "Handsome Prince School."

SCENE 2: Handsome Prince School

Characters: Bob, Pat, Henry, Rupert

- PAT:** Come in! Come on in! This is the place. Just stand right here.
- BOB:** Hi. I'm Bob.
- PAT:** Good for you. Now just wait a minute while I see who we have today. Your name?
- BOB:** Bob.
- PAT:** I was talking to him.
- HENRY:** Henry. My name's Henry.
- PAT:** That's too bad. We can fix that. And you?
- RUPERT:** Rupert.
- PAT:** Tell me you're kidding.
- RUPERT:** No. That's my name. My mom's idea.
- PAT:** Okay. Whatever. And you must be Bob.
- BOB:** That's me! And I just want to tell you how excited I am to be here! This has always been my dream, you know! Ever since I was a little kid! I've always wanted to attend this school!
- PAT:** Easy, Bob. Just take it easy. So you guys all know about the Handsome Prince School?
- THE THREE:** We do!
- PAT:** Good. Good. That'll make things easier. Gentlemen, this is a school to turn ordinary, rather plain looking guys into handsome princes.
- BOB:** Oh, boy! Oh, boy! This is so exciting! I can just feel it down in my soul!

- PAT:** Right. Whatever, Bob. Guys, the world is short of handsome princes. Nearly every fairytale has a handsome prince but those guys get old, they start falling off their horses, their tights start sagging and well ... before you know it they've got to retire. That's why we here at the Handsome Prince School have a job to keep turning out more handsome princes.
- BOB:** (*to the others*) I am so totally excited! Are you excited?
- HENRY:** Uh. Yeah. Excited.
- PAT:** Then let's get right to work, gentlemen! Okay, first. Your names are all wrong. Bob, Henry, Rupert. Sounds like Snow White's Dwarves. You'll need something manly ... something dashing and tough. You, Rupert ... You're Prince Lance.
- RUPERT:** I like it. Prince Lance! Yeah. Yeah.
- PAT:** Henry, you're Prince Dirk.
- HENRY:** That's so cool.
- PAT:** Bob ... let's see. You're Prince Rip.
- BOB:** Why?
- PAT:** Because I said so.
- BOB:** Oh.
- PAT:** Now. First lesson. Princess Kissing.
- HENRY:** What?
- PAT:** Princess Kissing. The handsome prince always has to kiss a princess at the end of the story.
- HENRY:** Can I call my mother?
- PAT:** No. Okay, boys. Let's see how well you can pucker.
- RUPERT:** Do what?
- PAT:** Pucker! Pucker! You can't go into a kiss with your mouth drooping! You've got to learn to pucker. Okay, let me have a look. On the count of three! One, two, three, pucker!
(*They all give an exaggerated pucker. Pat stares at them a long moment, then*) Oh, my. My, my. You make me think I'm in a fish market.
- RUPERT:** (*as they un-pucker*) We gotta kiss a girl?

- PAT:** Don't you read your fairytales? Sleeping Beauty slept for a hundred years before the Prince came along and kissed her awake.
- HENRY:** A hundred years? Can you imagine her breath?
- PAT:** Hey, this is no easy job being a handsome prince. That's why you're here. Okay, let's see you slay a dragon.
- BOB:** Do a what?
- PAT:** Dragon. Slay. Kill. Slash-slash, roar, ouch, you're outa here. You know.
- BOB:** Look, maybe I should re-think this. I thought being a prince was all about wearing cool outfits and being cute.
- PAT:** That's part of it. Sure.
- BOB:** Great!
- PAT:** After you slay the dragon.
- HENRY:** But how can we ... you know ... practice?
- PAT:** Easy. I get a dragon and you slay it.
- RUPERT:** Where are you gonna get a dragon?
- PAT:** I keep one in the closet.
- BOB:** That's ridiculous.
- PAT:** (*opens an imaginary door*) Meet the dragon.
- (*The three student princes jump on chairs, jump on each other, cower in the corner, scream, cry, wail, and generally become terrified.*)
- PAT:** (*after some time of this*) Okay! Okay! Maybe that was too much. (*shouting into the closet*) Easy, Roger. (*shuts the door*) Roger's hungry.
- HENRY:** (*whimpering*) I wanna go home! I wanna go home! I wanna call my mommy and I wanna go home! Anybody got a blanket? I need a blanket really, really bad. And warm milk? I gotta have some warm milk. Do you mind if I suck your thumb?
- PAT:** (*looking at the three cowering princes*) Okay! Okay! So maybe Roger the Dragon was starting out with too much.
- RUPERT:** What do I smell burning?
- HENRY:** Me.

- PAT:** Look, let's try something easier. A handsome prince does a lot of posing.
- RUPERT:** What?
- PAT:** Posing. He doesn't actually do much but he looks really good doing it. To be a handsome prince you've got to be able to strike some really heroic poses. Okay, let's see. Prince Lance, strike a noble pose.
- RUPERT:** Who?
- PAT:** That's you. Hit a pose, Prince Lance. (*Rupert hits an awkward pose.*) That's it? That's a noble pose? You look like a sick giraffe.
- RUPERT:** I ... uh ... I've got a cold.
- PAT:** Okay Prince Dirk. Hit it! (*Henry hits an even more awkward pose.*) I think maybe you've got being a prince mixed up with ballet. You look like a twit.
- HENRY:** (*hits another pose*) How about this? "I am a noble prince!"
- PAT:** You look more like a UPS man with shingles. Okay, Prince Rip. Gimme your best pose. (*Bob hits a very dramatic and over-the-top pose.*) Not bad.
- BOB:** Really?
- PAT:** ... if you're trying to sell shoes to an elephant. Look guys, have you ever thought about maybe working in fast food? I just don't see any future for you in the prince business.
- HENRY:** I think I may cry. I'm not kidding. I feel a really big cry coming on right now.
- PAT:** Yeah. Yeah. That's just what a prince would do.
- BOB:** One more chance? Please? Please? I can do this! We can do this! Right guys?
- HENRY & RUPERT:** We can do this!
- PAT:** Okay, okay. One more chance. And you've got to pass this one. I mean, it's an absolute requirement.
- BOB:** Tell us! Tell us! What is it?
- PAT:** Maiden rescue.
- HENRY:** Do what?

- PAT:** Advanced Maiden Rescue 101. It's a requirement for the course. If you can't rescue a beautiful maiden then you're pretty much useless as a handsome prince.
- BOB:** This sounds exciting!
- RUPERT:** Can I call my mom?
- PAT:** No! Now look, here's the set-up. I'm a beautiful maiden.
- HENRY:** You are?
- PAT:** Look, play along, okay? I'm a beautiful maiden locked up in a high tower. My evil stepmother has put me here and the tower is surrounded by a very deep moat and a fierce dragon.
- THE THREE:** Dragon!
- PAT:** Okay. Forget the dragon. The tower is guarded by a fierce ... uh ... uh ...
- RUPERT:** Hamster. Hamsters are nice.
- PAT:** You've got to be kidding.
- BOB:** But they bite! It's a biting hamster.
- PAT:** Some days I wonder why I took this job. Okay, I'm locked up in a tower surrounded by a deep moat and I'm being guarded by a fierce, biting ... uh ...
- RUPERT:** Hamster. His name's Roy.
- PAT:** What?
- RUPERT:** Roy the hamster.
- PAT:** So ROY the HAMSTER is guarding me. Okay, handsome princes, you've got to get me out of this mess. (*as a helpless maiden*) "Alas! Alas! Oh whatever shall I do! Poor, helpless, beautiful Me is locked in my tower and I can't get out!" (*Pat looks at the others.*) Well?
- BOB:** Have you tried calling 9-1-1?
- PAT:** What!?!?
- HENRY:** Or maybe an elevator. Just take the elevator. Push "G" for ground floor, and ...
- PAT:** Oh good grief!
- RUPERT:** Could I call my mother?

PAT: No! No! You can't do any of those things! You've got to save me! Come on, princes! I'm getting old up here!

(as the three students assume princely characterizations)

HENRY: The moat! Let us swim the moat!

**BOB &
RUPERT:** Let us swim the moat!

(the three students prepare to dive in, then)

HENRY: Wait! It has water in it!

BOB: And crocodiles!

HENRY: And icky moss.

RUPERT: And we can't swim.

HENRY: We shall jump across!

**BOB &
RUPERT:** We shall jump across!!

HENRY: One, two! ... *(They stop.)* You first.

RUPERT: Me?

HENRY: Thou.

RUPERT: Why me?

HENRY: In case we don't make it. We can step on your floating, dead body.

RUPERT: Me likest this not.

PAT: I'm getting older by the minute up here!

BOB: The tree! The tree! We shall climb into yonder tree, then jump across to the tower!

RUPERT: But the tree is too far away!

BOB: Then we shall move the tree!

(The three students go to an imaginary tree, throw their arms around it and begin tugging with much angst and no progress.)

HENRY: Stop! Stop! The tree will not move!

RUPERT: Oh, blasted, wicked tree!

PAT: Hello? Anybody gonna rescue me?

- BOB:** (*to the tree*) Will thou not move even an inch for our beautiful princess?
- PAT:** You want to stop talking to the tree a minute? The hamster's beginning to climb the wall!
- RUPERT:** The hamster! I forgot about Roy the hamster!
- PAT:** He's getting closer ... and closer!
- RUPERT:** Oh, shoo, Roy! Shoo! Shoo, you nasty little beast.
- BOB & HENRY:** You nasty little beast!
- PAT:** What am I supposed to do?
- BOB:** Jump! Jump, fair princess and we shall catch you!
- HENRY & RUPERT:** We shall catch you!
- PAT:** You sure?
- THE THREE:** (*look at each other a brief moment, then*) Sure!
- PAT:** (*as Pat jumps into their arms*) Geronimo!!!
- (*The four end up in a pile on the ground, all half-stunned.*)
- PAT:** (*after a very long pause*) Well, that didn't work out so well.
- HENRY:** I think I broke something.
- BOB:** Whatever it was, I landed on it.
- RUPERT:** Can I call Mummy?
- OTHERS:** No!
- HENRY:** So what do we do?
- PAT:** Props.
- BOB:** What?
- PAT:** Props. Fairy tales always need props. Which one of you can play a golden goose?
- HENRY:** Oh, me! Me! Me! I've always wanted to play a golden goose!
- PAT:** How about a poisoned apple?
- RUPERT:** I dream of playing a poisoned apple! Mummy would be so proud!

- PAT:** (*looking at Bob*) Well, Bob?
- BOB:** (*stands up and hits a hunched-down pose*)
- PAT:** What's that?
- BOB:** Ladies and gentlemen! Children of all ages! Presenting ... the world's finest ... Tuffet! Come on, Miss Muffet! You want some of this?

HOST II: I've seen that scene a number of times in rehearsal and he still doesn't look like a tuffet to me. Where do you suppose Miss Muffet would sit to eat her oatmeal? Very awkward.

HOST I: I think we best leave that story. I don't think additional analysis will help.

HOST II: Our next story is especially exciting because it involves one of our graduates. She is more qualified than most of our grads and we join her on the first day of her new job. In school she majored in Customer Service and today she will have a chance to apply her many skills.

HOST I: We'd like you to imagine the scenery because we're too cheap to have actual scenery. In the background we see a large wheel that goes around and a giant slide that goes somewhere. There are little boats and a moon rocket. There is a ...

HOST II: That's enough. They got the picture. With the magic of the theatre we transport you now to a Wonderful World!

SCENE 3: Wonderful World

Characters: Diana, Wonderful World instructor; Jodi, a new employee; Richard, Georgie's father; Georgie, a less-than-wonderful young brat.

DIANA: Good morning and welcome to Wonderful World! Wonderful World! Wonderful World! The most wonderful world in the world! My name is Diana, the lovely and charming Diana, and I'll be your host as we walk the wonderful streets, see the wonderful sights, smell the wonderful smells and eat the wonderful food of Wonderful World! Wonderful World! (*to Jodi*) See how it's done? Easy.

JODI: When do I start?

DIANA: You start in just a few minutes.

JODI: Now? I start now?

DIANA: This is our peak season, kid. We don't have any break-in period. (*pointing off*) Look at that. The crowds are already lining up.

- JODI:** But I just got here yesterday!
- DIANA:** You want the job or not?
- JODI:** Yes! Yes, I want the job! Okay ... okay ... what was that again?
- DIANA:** You greet them right here at the Wonderful Gate of Wonderful World.
- JODI:** It looks like a fence.
- DIANA:** Bite your tongue! This is Wonderful World! There are no such things as just fences or birds or sidewalks! Everything is wonderful! (*holds up her foot*) See that? That's a Wonderful Shoe!
- JODI:** Wow. Looks like a Reebok.
- DIANA:** You're fired.
- JODI:** Sorry. It's a Wonderful Shoe.
- DIANA:** That's better.
- JODI:** But this costume?
- DIANA:** You're the Wonderful Princess! You make dreams come true! You can't do that in cutoffs and a tank top. You look wonderful.
- JODI:** Sequins. I've got so many sequins I'm a lightning rod. Can I run for cover if it storms?
- DIANA:** Just say your speech. It's time to open.
- JODI:** (*taking a fairy-like stance, then*) Hello! I'm the lovely and wonderful Jodi, your guide to wonderful Wonderful World where everything is wonderful! My shoes are wonderful! My sequins are wonderful! The grass and the cracks in the sidewalks and spiders and garbage cans ...
- DIANA:** Whoa, whoa, whoa! Don't get carried away, Princess Jodi. Just stick to the script.
- JODI:** Hey, I'm not kidding I'm really not ready for this! Seriously! I need another day!
- DIANA:** Too late. Here come your first customers.
- JODI:** But I can't do this!
- DIANA:** Don't worry, kid. I'll be around the corner listening. Oh, Princess Jodi, you'll be just ...

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- JODI:** I know. Wonderful!
- DIANA:** Wonderful! (*turns to guests*) Hi there, folks! Here's your guide to Wonderful World! Princess Jodi!
- RICHARD:** You the one taking tickets?
- JODI:** Hi, I'm the Wonderful Princess Jodi, your host to Wonderful World and ...
- GEORGIE:** Is she for real? How come you're sparkling, lady?
- RICHARD:** Georgie, behave or we're going back to the hotel.
- GEORGIE:** This place looks creepy.
- JODI:** Hi, my name is the Wonderful Princess Jodi and ...
- GEORGIE:** You already said that.
- RICHARD:** Georgie!
- JODI:** Let me give you a quick tour of all the wonderful sights you're going to see today.
- GEORGIE:** Do they all sparkle like you?
- JODI:** Everything sparkles in Wonderful World, little boy! Now if you take the path to your right you'll be on the road to Wonderful Water World where you can climb into a real-life Plexiglas log and ride down a genuine plastic stream and end up in an authentic concrete lake!
- GEORGIE:** Do you have Wi-Fi?
- RICHARD:** Georgie, pay attention! This place costs a fortune to get into and it was your idea!
- GEORGIE:** It looked better online.
- JODI:** And the wonderful path to your left will take you to Wonder Waffles, the home of the best food in the state!
- GEORGIE:** Waffles. We drove all this way for a lousy waffle.
- JODI:** (*moving threateningly toward Georgie, her hands upon his little neck*) Look kid, if you don't like it, you ...
- DIANA:** (*suddenly rushing in and placing herself between the two*) Hey there, little guy!
- GEORGIE:** She was gonna choke me!
- DIANA:** Choke you? Oh no, no, no! Princess Jodi is one of our Wonderful Actors here at Wonderful World!

- RICHARD:** It certainly looked like she was going to choke him.
- DIANA:** Oh, how silly! Tell them, Princess! Tell them about our ... uh ... our Wonder Ninjas!
- JODI:** Huh?
- DIANA:** You see, we sometimes imitate Ninja Warriors just for fun! Wasn't that fun, Georgie?
- GEORGIE:** I think my tonsil's broke.
- DIANA:** Oh, Georgie is such a funny little boy! He knows we're just having fun!
- GEORGIE:** I do?
- RICHARD:** You do.
- GEORGIE:** Oh. Okay. Yeah ... yeah, that was a load of laughs.
- DIANA:** Now Princess Jodi will continue her wonderful tour! (*to Jodi as she exits*) I forgot to mention ... no choking.
- RICHARD:** So can we go now?
- JODI:** A few more little details. If you take the path straight ahead, that'll take you to Wonder Zoo, the home of all the ...
- GEORGIE:** Don't tell me. Wonder Animals.
- JODI:** How'd you know?
- GEORGIE:** I wonder. Hey Dad, I'm hungry. Gimme a Wonder Burger.
- RICHARD:** We just ate at the hotel.
- GEORGIE:** I wasn't hungry then. I gotta use the bathroom. You got a Wonder John in this place, lady?
- JODI:** There are plenty of places to eat and ... whatever ... just down this path right here. Now if you'll follow me.
- GEORGIE:** Why is your stomach blinking?
- JODI:** My what?
- GEORGIE:** Your stomach. It's blinking at me. Are you gonna explode?
- JODI:** Oh. That's our Wonder Bleepers. They tell us when ...
- DIANA:** (*entering*) They tell us when there are thousands of people waiting to get in and we need to hurry along! Turn off your beeper, Princess.

- JODI:** (*poking her stomach*) I don't know how to turn it off. (*pokes harder*) Ouch! Oh! Oh, no! Oh, no!
- RICHARD:** What's the matter?
- DIANA:** Uh ... this happens sometimes. The battery on Princess Jodi's beeper comes in contact with the metallic sequins on her wonderful princess dress.
- JODI:** (*in pain*) Ow! Ouch! Stop it! Make it stop!
- GEORGIE:** (*going to his knees in laughter*) That is hilarious! That's the funniest thing I've ever seen! (*reaches out and touches Jodi's stomach*)
- JODI:** Ow! Stop that, kid!
- GEORGIE:** (*keeps poking Jodi's belly beeper*) Look, Dad! A dancing Princess!
- DIANA:** Stop your son!
- RICHARD:** Hey, Georgie's always been fascinated with science.
- GEORGIE:** (*as he continues to poke her beeper*) This is the most fun of the whole vacation!
- JODI:** That's it! (*and she grabs Georgie and holds him from behind. He's trapped.*)
- GEORGIE:** Hey! Hey, what're you doin'! Dad! Dad, she's killin' me!
- RICHARD:** Well, those things happen.
- DIANA:** Princess Jodi! Stop trying to kill our guests!
- GEORGIE:** I can't breathe, Dad! I can't breathe!
- RICHARD:** You know, I'm getting hungry myself. Do you have pizza at Wonderful World?
- DIANA:** Oh, yes! The Wonder Pizza Palace is right down Pepperoni Lane!
- RICHARD:** Is it any good?
- DIANA:** It's Wonderful!
- RICHARD:** Figures.
- GEORGIE:** Dad!!! Dad, can't you see what's happening?
- RICHARD:** Yeah. Yeah, son, I can. There's a whole line of people and they look like they're hungry. I need to beat them to the pizza line. Georgie, now be a good boy. I'll be right back.

DIANA: I'll show you the way. (*The two exit.*)

GEORGIE: Dad!!! Daddy!!!! Faaa-ther!

JODI: (*still holding him*) You little brat! You think I don't have enough problems without some little hoodlum trying to shock me to death?

GEORGIE: Let me go! Let me go!

JODI: Why? It's feeding time down at the Wonder Zoo! The tigers haven't eaten all week! (*starts to drag him off*)

GEORGIE: No! Wait! Wait!

JODI: (*stopping*) What?

GEORGIE: I promise. Let me go and I promise to stop acting like a jerk.

JODI: Why should I believe you?

GEORGIE: Because ... uh ... because I'm cute and lovable and highly intelligent for my age and my parents have spoiled me but I'm really a very nice kid and ... and I think you're breaking my arm.

JODI: (*letting him go with a push*) You better not be lying to me.

GEORGIE: (*rubbing the various wounded parts of his body*) I think you broke my sternum.

JODI: Where's that?

GEORGIE: I don't know, but I think it's broken.

JODI: Look, I'm sorry kid, but this is my first day on the job and it's a lousy job and you were my first customer and ...

GEORGIE: ... and I was a jerk.

JODI: Yeah. You were a jerk. Did I hurt you?

GEORGIE: I think I got sequins down my shirt.

JODI: Good. You'll twinkle in the dark.

(*They both laugh.*)

GEORGIE: Hey, you're not such a bad princess.

JODI: (*laughing*) Actually, I'm a pretty lousy princess. I'm just not such a bad person.

GEORGIE: So why'd you take this job?

JODI: It's a long story.

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GEORGIE: Go ahead. It takes my dad forever to eat pizza. He has dentures.

JODI: Well ... I ran away from home when I was twelve. My folks didn't care. I wandered the streets for years eating out of dumpsters and asking for handouts. Then they threw me in jail for loitering in doorways. I was just trying to keep warm. So when I saw this job at Wonderful World I had to take it. It was either that or starve.

GEORGIE: *(a long, sorrowful moment as Georgie realizes what he's done, then)* Oh gosh. I am so sorry! I really am! I am so sorry about the way I treated you! That just breaks my heart! *(and he falls into Jodi's arms, saddened)*

JODI: Hey ... hey, don't worry about it.

GEORGIE: But the way I acted ...

JODI: Want to know a secret?

GEORGIE: Yeah.

JODI: I just made that up. I saw it in a movie last night.

GEORGIE: What?

JODI: Good story though, wasn't it?

(a long pause, then both break into laughter)

GEORGIE: *(laughing)* That's terrible! And you are really funny!

JODI: So how about you?

GEORGIE: I guess I'm just a spoiled brat.

JODI: Well I can see that, but what else?

GEORGIE: Dad gets me on weekends. He's bored when he's with me but he thinks it's something we ought to do.

JODI: Gee, that's too bad. Sorry to hear that.

GEORGIE: He's okay. Sometimes ... sometimes I've just got to do things to get his attention. You know what I mean? Sometimes I've got to be a real idiot just to get him to notice me.

JODI: *(looking off in the direction of Richard's exit)* Doesn't always work, does it?

GEORGIE: Sometimes it never works.

JODI: Look Georgie ... it's not like we know each other very well, but let me give you a little advice, okay? Just be yourself.

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Some people will like that and the others ... well, we don't always live in Wonderful World. You know what I mean? You turned out to be a pretty good kid once you quit pretending.

GEORGIE: Really?

JODI: *(smiles at him, then)* Really.

GEORGIE: *(looking off)* Uh-oh. Here comes Dad and your boss.

JODI: Oh, darn.

GEORGIE: Quick! Grab me!

JODI: Do what?

GEORGIE: Grab me again! Quick! *(She puts him in their previous wrestling hold.) (as Richard and Diana are entering)* Help! Help! She's killin' me, Dad! She's killin' me!

RICHARD: *(to Diana)* The deep dish was the best ... but too much cheese. I don't like it when they use too much cheese.

DIANA: *(pulling the two apart)* Princess! I think that perhaps you should move on to our other guests!

JODI: But I'm not done with this one yet!

DIANA: I think you are! And I think that perhaps tomorrow you should wait tables down at Wonder Taco. *(crossing to Richard)* I'm truly sorry about this, sir. I hope you'll come back again.

RICHARD: Sure, sure. Maybe I'll try the spaghetti next time.

DIANA: *(to Jodi and Georgie)* ... and I hope you two never run into one another again.

JODI &

GEORGIE: *(pretending to be angry at each other, nose to nose)* Me, too!

RICHARD: Let's go, Georgie.

DIANA: Princess! Follow me!

GEORGIE: *(whispering to Jodi)* See you next time?

JODI: *(whispering to Georgie)* You got it, kid. And remember ...

GEORGIE: Yeah?

JODI: It's a wonderful world.

(Richard takes Georgie off in one direction as Diana pulls Jodi off in the other.)

HOST I: We'll say goodbye now to that lovely group.

HOST II: Wonderful! Jodi is going to be just fine because she applied those qualities she acquired in her Customer Service classes here at our school.

HOST I: Although we have yet to win any awards ...

HOST II: ... at anything ...

HOST I: ... but our curriculum is second to none. And that's because no one else offers the major as part of their curriculum. But our school does.

HOST II: We have a unique opportunity for students who want to major in customer service. There is nothing quite as satisfying as helping someone who has a complaint or a problem with a product.

HOST I: Our next story is about one of our grads, named Logan, who starts in customer service but self-promotes into higher administrative levels. Here's what happens when a customer wants to return a busted widget.

SCENE 4: The Busted Widget

Characters: Logan and Micah

(Logan is busy straightening his counter, arranging items on shelves, etc. as Micah enters).

LOGAN: Good morning!

MICAH: Hi.

LOGAN: Welcome to Widgets Unlimited! May I help you?

MICAH: Well ... yes. I bought this yesterday.

LOGAN: A widget?

MICAH: Yeah. A widget. I bought this widget here yesterday and when I got it home it didn't work.

LOGAN: Oh, I'm sorry. When did you break it?

MICAH: I ... uh ... I didn't break it. It just doesn't work.

LOGAN: An unworkable widget?

MICAH: Yeah ... unworkable. It doesn't work.

LOGAN: Again, I apologize. It's our goal at Widgets Unlimited to have nothing but satisfied customers. I assure you that we'll take care of it. *(takes the imaginary widget from Micah)* Looks okay.

MICAH: Yeah, I thought so, too. But it doesn't work.

LOGAN: *(pushes something on the item)* You're right. What kind of widget did you buy?

MICAH: What do you mean?

LOGAN: Was it a Wee Widget or a Wonder Widget?

MICAH: I didn't know there was a difference.

LOGAN: Oh my, my yes. Widgets have come a long way.

MICAH: It's for my mother, actually. She collects widgets.

LOGAN: Really?

MICAH: Yeah. All her life. Whenever she got enough spare cash together she'd buy another widget. She even has some of the old ones ... without the electric cord.

LOGAN: Amazing. I've never seen one of those. My grandfather had a coal-operated widget but that was a long time ago. Look, you'll need to take this next door to our Department of Returned Widgets.

MICAH: Next door?

LOGAN: Sure. Just the next door down.

MICAH: Oh. *(takes the widget)* Okay ... thanks.

LOGAN: We're just here to serve! *(Micah leaves the room as Logon turns with back to the audience.)*

MICAH: *(looking at the signs on the imaginary doors)* Rehab. Real Estate. Ah! Returns. *(enters this new room)*

LOGAN: *(a rough-talking grouch)* Help you, pal?

MICAH: Weren't you just ... uh ...

LOGAN: What? Wasn't I what?

MICAH: Weren't you just next door?

LOGAN: How could I be? I'm right here. You got a problem?

MICAH: Uh ... yes. My widget doesn't work.

LOGAN: Your widget doesn't work?

MICAH: Yeah. I'd like to return it.

LOGAN: For what?

MICAH: Well ... another widget.

LOGAN: And you expect me to do something about it?

MICAH: Well ... yes. I mean, I bought it in your store and it doesn't work so I'd like you to replace it.

LOGAN: You see the sign out front?

MICAH: The one that says "Returns"?

LOGAN: Yeah. Returns. It doesn't say anything about replacements. You want to return it, that's okay. You want it replaced, you'll have to go next door.

MICAH: Next door.

LOGAN: Next door. That's the door next to this one.

MICAH: Oh ... uh ... thanks. (*and Micah exits as Logan turns*) (*looking at the signs, then*) Oh. "Replacements." (*enters*)

LOGAN: (*bright and cheery*) Hi there! Welcome to Replacements!

MICAH: Oh, thank goodness. This is getting strange ... but you look ...

LOGAN: I look like just the person to help you. Now ... how may I help you?

MICAH: I'd like my widget replaced.

LOGAN: Very well. With what?

MICAH: With what?

LOGAN: With what? What do you want me to replace it with?

MICAH: Well, I'd like you to ...

LOGAN: Oh! Don't tell me! (*turning around, looking at shelves*) How about a toaster?

MICAH: A what?

LOGAN: Toaster. You make toast with it.

MICAH: I know that. But I want a ...

LOGAN: Oh, I can see that look in your eye! Silly me! (*grabbing another item*) I'll bet you'd like your widget replaced by a ... (*puts it on the counter*) ... salad. A nice fresh salad!

MICAH: No, I want ...

LOGAN: Wait! Wait! (*reaching for something else*) I've got it! (*placing it on the table*) A poodle! A beautiful French poodle!

MICAH: I don't want a poodle! I want a widget and I don't want a stinking poodle!

LOGAN: (*covering the dog's ears*) Oh, Fifi! Don't listen! Don't listen to this horrible person! Look! Fifi is crying!

MICAH: I've got a broken widget!

LOGAN: And I've got a sobbing poodle! Listen, if you have a complaint, go down to the complaint department!

MICAH: I will! (*storms out the door as Logan turns*) This is insane! I just want to get my stupid widget replaced and ... (*looks up at the*

sign on a door) There! Complaints! (*explodes into the room*) I've got a complaint!

LOGAN: (*sobbing*) May I help you?

MICAH: This widget ... (*Logan continues to sob.*) ... this widget that I bought here ... (*more sobbing*) ... Are ... are you all right?

LOGAN: Oh. (*sobs*) ... don't mind me. I'm okay. Go ahead. Go ahead.

MICAH: But you're ...

LOGAN: I'm the Complaint Department. Do you have any idea what that's like? Standing here all day listening to people complain? Look, I'm sorry. It's not your problem. So what if my life is a wreck? So what if I haven't had a happy day in fifteen years? So what? So what???

MICAH: Oh, gosh. I'm really sorry.

LOGAN: Your widget's busted, isn't it?

MICAH: Well ... yes. It doesn't work.

LOGAN: Another busted widget. My life is filled with busted widgets. Just one busted widget after another! (*sobs*) So go ahead ... complain ... complain.

MICAH: But I don't really want to ... you know ... cause a fuss. I just. Well, I bought something and it doesn't work and the other departments sent me here and ...

LOGAN: Oh, they all do. Anytime a customer isn't happy they send them to me. Go ahead! Yell! Scream! Hate me!

MICAH: No! No! I don't hate you! I just want a new widget.

LOGAN: Oh, don't we all? Don't we all? How simple life would be if we all had working widgets. Go ahead! Scream! Berate me!

MICAH: (*screaming*) I'm not going to scream. (*quietly*) I'm screaming. Sorry. Look, could we just handle this calmly?

LOGAN: I remember when my daddy gave me my first widget. It was red. That's all I asked for that Christmas, just a red widget. I spent hours with my widget. Whenever I was getting on Mommy's nerves she'd say, "Go play with your widget!" and I'd run up to my bedroom and we'd spend hours together ... just my widget and me.

MICAH: That's ... uh ... touching. Would there possibly be a way to get myself another widget?

LOGAN: Mine?? You want my widget?

MICAH: I don't want your widget!

LOGAN: Don't you dare touch my widget! Okay! You've complained! You've screamed at me, you've shouted, you've called me all those awful names!

MICAH: I didn't do any of that!

LOGAN: You're still not satisfied? Then go see the boss! Go ahead! You think you know so much! Take it right to the top, Bubba! Just take your busted widget and march right down the hallway!

MICAH: (*begins to leave*) I will!

LOGAN: And don't forget how you broke my heart today! (*Logan turns.*)

MICAH: Oh, good grief! (*exits, begins angrily looking for signs*) ... I can't believe this is happening. What a mess! (*reading the signs*) Widget Wrapping. Widget Wiring. Widget Washing. Here it is! The Boss! (*enters*) I want to see the boss!

LOGAN: (*entering*) Excuse me?

MICAH: The boss! I want to see the boss! My widget's not working and I demand satisfaction!

LOGAN: Why are so you upset?

MICAH: You would not believe what I've gone through today!

LOGAN: I'm truly sorry. Look, just calm down. I own this place. I'll take care of whatever you want.

MICAH: Really?

LOGAN: (*points to a picture on the wall*) See that? That's a picture of my Grandpa. Walter Widget.

MICAH: Wow. He was the one ...?

LOGAN: ... who invented the widget. Yeah. Oh, he didn't start out with widgets. When he was a little boy he peddled thingamajigs on the street. Then when he got older he moved up to doohickeys. Then it was thingamabobs, then doodads. Then one day ... one day he sat down on the bank of the river and said, "You know ... what this world needs is a good widget. Nothing fancy, just a good, old-fashioned workable widget." And the rest ... well ... that's history.

MICAH: That's ... that's truly amazing.

LOGAN: Then he passed the company down to my father who kept the same basic design but added the lights and batteries.

MICAH: What did they do before batteries?

LOGAN: You had to crank them.

MICAH: Crank widgets?

LOGAN: Yes. Then there was the windup widget, but that didn't last long. Then the electric widget and now the all-new solar widget. I see you have one there.

MICAH: Uh ... yes. In fact, that's the reason I came here today.

LOGAN: You love your widget, don't you?

MICAH: Well, it's hard to say. You see when I got it home ...

LOGAN: You fell in love with it. I know. Always happens that way. You pick one up in the store and think, nice ... nice ... maybe I'll use it someday. Then you get it home and ... I don't know ... something just happens. Widget love. Go ahead. It's okay to admit it. You love your widget.

MICAH: You see, that's the problem. I don't know if I love my widget because ...

LOGAN: ... because you're afraid it won't love you back? Of course it will. They always do. The bond between man and widget is one of the strongest in the universe.

MICAH: But how can I ... ?

LOGAN: Do it! Just do it! (*putting arm around Micah*) Don't be afraid of starting a relationship! Jump into this headfirst! Become a part of your widget and your widget will become a part of you! I could tell you stories. Uh ... what's your name?

MICAH: Uh ...

LOGAN: It doesn't matter. I could tell you stories of people whose lives have been changed once they let a widget into their lives. Families have been brought together. Whole nations healed! It's more than a widget, my friend. Oh, much, much more. A widget is ... how do I say it? A way of life! Yes! A widget is a way of life! The widget way! Now go! (*moving Micah toward the door*) Go out there and change the world with that wonderful widget of yours! Go out there and tell the world ... This is My Widget! This is My Widget and There's Nothing You Can Do About It! Go! Go! Go! (*and Logan has moved Micah out and Logan closes the door*)

MICAH: (*confused and sorrowful, finally*) My ... but you see, my ... my widget's busted.

HOST II: There's a good chance that the Customer Service training is busted, also. So ... let's train our thoughts on something else.

HOST I: That something else is the history department. The department is renowned for their creative interpretation of what really happened. We

stop short of saying they are making-up stuff. Let's say they have a fresh approach that is entertaining without being burdened with facts.

HOST II: For example, I seriously doubt that the Spanish-American War was about a soccer match in Mexico City or that the Irish Republican Army fought the Irish Democratic Army.

HOST I: So it is with a degree of hesitancy that we await for their next history lesson. Today's instruction deals with a famous event in world history. We take you back to March, 44 B.C. ... in ancient Rome.

SCENE: 5: Hail Caesar

Characters: Julius Caesar and his wife Calpurnia; Caesar's guard, Sillius; Calpurnia's handmaiden, Calamatus

CALPURNIA: (*entering*) Caesar! Julius, darling?

CAESAR: (*entering*) Yes, my love?

CALPURNIA: Are you dressed yet?

CAESAR: I can't tell. My pajamas and my toga look so much alike. Am I dressed?

CALPURNIA: Close enough. Do you remember what today is?

CAESAR: Thursday?

CALPURNIA: I mean your schedule. You're to address the Roman Senate today.

CAESAR: Oh. I knew there was something.

CALPURNIA: Look darling, I hate to bring this up, but I had this dream ...

CAESAR: Not another dream! Calpurnia, you're always having dreams. I've warned you about eating roast pig right before bedtime.

CALPURNIA: Oh, very well.

CAESAR: So what was the dream?

CALPURNIA: Oh, nothing.

CAESAR: Come on, tell me.

CALPURNIA: It was nothing ... really.

SILLIUS: (*a guard, bursting into the room and shouting*) Hail Caesar!

CAESAR: (*nearly jumping out of this skin*) Would you stop that!!!?

CALPURNIA: What is it, Sillius?

SILLIUS: (*still shouting*) Your chariot awaits!

CAESAR: That's it? You scared me half to death for that?

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- SILLIUS:** Sorry, your highness.
- CAESAR:** Now leave me.
- SILLIUS:** Yes, sir. (*shouting*) Hail Caesar! (*He exits.*)
- CAESAR:** Stop that! My nerves ... I think I need a pill. Now tell me about your dream.
- CALPURNIA:** Well, it was really nothing, but if you insist.
- CALAMATUS:** (*a handmaiden, entering, shouting*) Great Caesar!
- CAESAR:** (*again, reacting with a start*) Oh, good grief.
- CALPURNIA:** What is it, Calamatus?
- CALAMATUS:** (*a very high-strung, rapid speaking, flibberjibbet*) Something's wrong! I just know that something's wrong, because when I feel that something's wrong then I just know that something's wrong.
- CAESAR:** (*a long pause, then*) Is something wrong?
- CALAMATUS:** You knew! You already knew! How did you know? Oh, I should have known that you knew ... you know. Then it must be true! It can't be false if it must be true!
- CALPURNIA:** Calamatus!
- CALAMATUS:** Ma'am?
- CALPURNIA:** Cool it! What's your problem, girl?
- CALAMATUS:** Oh, I dare not say!
- CALPURNIA:** Very well.
- CALAMATUS:** But I will.
- CALPURNIA:** Oh, dear.
- CALAMATUS:** It's Caesar! I have a feeling that he will be murdered today!
- CAESAR:** Say what?
- CALAMATUS:** Murdered! You! In the Roman Senate!
- CAESAR:** I say. That's not good news.
- CALPURNIA:** Calamatus, see to your housework and stop bothering us.
- CALAMATUS:** Yes, Ma'am. (*She exits in a flurry.*)
- CAESAR:** Silly girl.
- CALPURNIA:** Silly, indeed.
- CAESAR:** So tell me about your dream.
- CALPURNIA:** Dream?

- CAESAR:** You had a dream ...
- CALPURNIA:** Oh. Oh yes, that! Look Julius, it's probably nothing.
- CAESAR:** Then why bring it up?
- CALPURNIA:** I just thought you should know.
- CAESAR:** So tell me.
- CALPURNIA:** Oh, it's probably nothing.
- CAESAR:** Woman, you are driving the Emperor out of his mind!
- CALPURNIA:** Alright! I'll tell you. Promise you won't take it personally?
- CAESAR:** I promise.
- CALPURNIA:** I dreamt you were murdered in the Senate today.
- CAESAR:** I ... I what?
- CALPURNIA:** Murdered. You. In the Roman Senate. Don't take it personally.
- CAESAR:** I say ... this morning is getting off to a bad start.
- CALPURNIA:** But it was probably nothing.
- CAESAR:** Bad pork.
- CALPURNIA:** Yes, bad pork.
- SILLIUS:** (*entering with a shout*) Hail Caesar!
- CAESAR:** Would you cut that out!!!
- SILLIUS:** The senators are gathering, your Highness!
- CAESAR:** Good. That's what senators do. Do they seem to be in a good mood?
- SILLIUS:** (*shouting*) They seem to have ...
- CAESAR:** (*shouting*) You don't have to shout!
- SILLIUS:** (*more calmly*) They seem to have daggers hidden under their togas.
- CAESAR:** Daggers under their togas? Is it hunting season?
- SILLIUS:** Your chariot awaits, Sire. (*shouting*) Hail Caesar! (*He exits.*)
- CAESAR:** Stop that! (*But he is gone.*) Oh, never mind. So what should I make of this, Calpurnia?
- CALPURNIA:** The toga? I think it's too tight. You ate pretty well in Greece and Egypt.
- CAESAR:** I mean about your dream ... and all these depressing omens.

- CALPURNIA:** Can I be honest?
- CAESAR:** Certainly.
- CALPURNIA:** You won a lot of wars, yes. Italy, Greece, Africa ... but coming home and declaring yourself “Dictator for Life” ... well, do you think that was perhaps going a bit too far? That wasn’t a big hit in the Roman Senate.
- CAESAR:** But I’m the greatest Roman of them all.
- CALPURNIA:** In your mind, maybe.
- CAESAR:** If I could just get my friends, Romans, and countrymen to lend me their ears, then they’d understand.
- CALAMATUS:** (*entering in a tizzy*) Oh, it’s awful! It’s just awful!
- CALPURNIA:** Now what?
- CALAMATUS:** This little man outside ... this little old man ... he told me ... he told me ...
- CAESAR:** What did he tell you, dear?
- CALAMATUS:** He said, “Tell Caesar! Beware the Ides of March!”
- CAESAR:** What’s that?
- CALPURNIA:** The fifteenth.
- CAESAR:** Is that tax day?
- CALPURNIA:** No, dear, that’s April.
- CAESAR:** Ides. Ides. That sounds so familiar. What am I forgetting?
- CALPURNIA:** You forgot to wear something under that toga. Don’t stand in the sunlight, okay?
- CALAMATUS:** He was serious, your Highness! He begged me to tell you! Oh, what shall we do? What shall we do? If only I knew what to do then I’d know what to do!
- CALPURNIA:** The moat. Go scrub the moat. Please, Calamatus, leave us alone!
- CALAMATUS:** Alone! Alone! I shall leave you alone! You shall be all alone when I leave you alone!
- CALPURNIA:** Go!!!
- CALAMATUS:** Gotcha. (*She exits quickly.*)
- CAESAR:** You know, maybe I could put off this speech today ... call in sick.
- CALAMATUS:** Dictators don’t get sick. They’re immortal, I think.
- CAESAR:** Oh, I suppose you have a point. So, this dream of yours ...

- CALPURNIA:** Indigestion. I'm certain it must have been indigestion.
- SILLIUS:** (*entering with a shout*) Hail Caesar!
- CAESAR:** Would you cut that out?
- SILLIUS:** It's Brutus, Sir! He says you must come to the Senate now!
- CAESAR:** Brutus?
- SILLIUS:** Your best friend, Sir.
- CAESAR:** Oh. Oh yes, that Brutus.
- SILLIUS:** Son of the great Luscious who was son of Nauseous who was son of the Mighty Obnoxious.
- CAESAR:** That's the one. Tell him I'll be right there.
- SILLIUS:** Very well. (*shouting*) Hail Caesar! (*He exits.*)
- CAESAR:** (*wincing*) Where did we get him?
- CALPURNIA:** He was a trade-in on fifty Egyptian greyhounds.
- CAESAR:** Oh yes. Well Calpurnia, what should I do?
- CALPURNIA:** Send him back. He's a pain.
- CAESAR:** I mean about all these omens. Your dream, the senators all carrying daggers this morning, the old man at the gate, the nervous handmaiden. One or two little coincidences are one thing, but they seem to be piling up.
- CALPURNIA:** Have you thought about retiring?
- CAESAR:** How can a Dictator for Life retire?
- CALPURNIA:** Oh. Only one way, I suppose. He'd have to die.
- CAESAR:** Not the way I'd planned my retirement. But Calpurnia, these men are my friends.
- CALPURNIA:** Julius, you've been gone a lot. I mean a lot. Things change, you know?
- CAESAR:** But Brutus! Surely Brutus will defend me! I can always count on Brutus.
- CALPURNIA:** Have you read the papers?
- CAESAR:** No. They're all in Latin.
- CALPURNIA:** Your good buddy Brutus has been stirring things up. They're senators, Julius, and you've declared yourself Dictator. Not a good mix.
- SILLIUS:** (*entering, shouting*) Hail Caesar!
- CAESAR:** Would you stop that?
- CALAMATUS:** (*entering, shouting*) Caesar!

- CAESAR:** Where are my pills?
- SILLIUS:** Caesar, the Roman Senate demands your presence!
- CALAMATUS:** The citizens are shouting your name, oh great Caesar!
- CAESAR:** See? I told you that my people loved me.
- CALAMATUS:** That's not what they're shouting, oh great Caesar!
- CAESAR:** Oh. Drat.
- CALPURNIA:** Let's play a game!
- CAESAR:** Do what?
- CALPURNIA:** A game, Caesar! You know how I love games! Just for today ... just this once, let's play dress up!
- CAESAR:** Dress up?
- CALPURNIA:** Sillius!
- SILLIUS:** Yes, your Majesty?
- CALPURNIA:** Take off your toga!
- SILLIUS:** Ma'am?
- CALPURNIA:** Take it off! Take it off! Now Caesar, you take off yours and trade with Sillius!
- CAESAR:** But it's cold in here.
- CALPURNIA:** Oh please! Play along with my dress up game! Now go ahead, boys ... go ahead ... switch togas! (*The two men mime exchanging togas.*)
- CAESAR:** Could you at least turn your heads, ladies?
- CALPURNIA:** Oh, such prudes. Very well ... turn around Calamatus. Are you done yet?
- SILLIUS:** I've never worn the robes of an emperor! This is exciting!
- CALPURNIA:** Oh, it'll get more exciting once you get to the senate. Now Sillius, pull your hood up over your head ... hurry now ... this is such a delightful game! Caesar, in those peasant robes you look like the young boy I married.
- CAESAR:** I was thinner then.
- CALPURNIA:** (*moving Sillius out the door*) Now hurry along, Sillius. Hop in Caesar's chariot and when you get to the Senate it'll be such a surprise! They'll think you're Caesar!
- SILLIUS:** But what about those death threats?
- CALPURNIA:** Oh, don't be silly! Who'd kill a poor Roman guard? Go along now. Go along. Calamatus, you go along with him. Help him keep his toga straight or something.

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CALAMATUS: This is so exciting!

CALPURNIA: And believe me, the fun is just beginning! Now off with you both! (*The two servants exit.*)

CAESAR: What did you just do? Did you send them off to their death?

CALPURNIA: They were loud.

CAESAR: Yes. Yes, I suppose they were. (*moving to an imaginary window*) He does look quite nice in my toga.

CALPURNIA: (*looking out the window with him*) Like a Dictator for Life. (*shouting out the window*) Hail Caesar!

CAESAR: (*shouting*) Hail Caesar! (*a short pause, then*) Is there any of that roast pig left?

HOST II: There is a chance that all of the other history books have it wrong and the previous scene is what actually happened. But that's all it is ... a chance.

HOST I: Not a real chance.

HOST II: No. A make-believe chance.

HOST I: If you believe that, maybe you're going crazy.

SCENE 6: I Am Going Crazy

Character: Boy

Can we talk? I mean just for a minute. Can we talk? And if you don't listen to me, that's okay, because nobody else does either. I want to tell you a secret. You listening? I ... am ... going ... crazy. No, no ... don't worry. I'm not dangerous ... just crazy.

Have you ever been a boy? Okay, some of you have and some of you are and some of you never will be, but have you ever been one? A boy, I mean? It's not easy. I mean, if somebody offers you the job, don't take it. It makes you crazy. My mom says it's my chromosomes. She's always got an answer for everything. She says that girls have two X chromosomes and boys have an X and a Y and as far as I'm concerned that doesn't explain anything. Like basketball. Chromosomes have nothing to do with basketball. You look like you're confused. I'll explain.

No. No, I won't. That's too confusing. Let me start with something easier. Dads! Yeah, let's start with dads. I like dads. Dads are necessary. In fact, I like my own dad. He's pretty cool. He helps me with stuff and doesn't

try to butt into my business too much, but there are times when I just wish he'd ... well ... chill. Mellow out a little bit.

Which brings me to basketball. Are you confused? Good. That means you might be a boy. Dad works with me on my shots and rebounding. When he comes home from work he hollers, "Hey Sport! Let's shoot some hoops!" So we go out behind the garage and he shows me the way they used to play basketball back when he was a boy which isn't even close to the way we play now, but I play along with him. It's easy to hurt a dad's feelings.

So I play along with him and he teaches me how to play the zone defense even though everybody today plays man-to-man, and I humor him and say, "Hey! That's great, Dad! Thanks a lot!" and he smiles like he's just created the next NBA star and we go in and eat supper while he tells me stories about how he helped win the district championship back in the dark ages. Then they all took a victory lap on their horses.

Okay, I'm making that part up, but he's not a boy anymore ... until the game starts. Dad never misses a game and that's pretty cool since not every kid's dad comes to every game, but if he'd just sit down and watch, then everything would be great. But he doesn't. He shouts. Dad shouts a lot. If the game gets boring then people in the stands turn around and watch Dad. He'll shout, "Get in your zone, Sport!" Dad, we don't have zones anymore. Did I mention I'm going crazy?

And if he wasn't bad enough then there's the lady he married. Around home we just call her Mom. She's one of the XX chromosomes. Mom has this mission ... she wants to turn me into the perfect child. She's got these sayings memorized ... "Are you deaf or something?" "All I do is follow you around picking up after you!" "Call me when you get there so I'll know you're okay." And "Did you flush?" Okay, some of things are necessary, but not in public! Mom! Not ... in ... public! You can raise me however you want, but not in public! Not around my friends. You're standing there talking to some of your friends and your mom comes up and starts telling some old story about when I was little. This is not cool, Mom. You're making your boy crazy. They'll find me locked up in a loony bin some day and there'll be this sign that says, "Driven crazy by his mother who was obsessed with his flushing!"

(to an audience member) See those bags under this eye? They're caused by parents. And see the bags under this other one? That's a sister bag.

She's older and that's unfortunate. Older does not mean smarter, no matter what she says. She's big into clothing. I mean her whole world is clothing. And this is no problem except that she thinks she knows how I should dress. The Declaration of Independence says that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator." Not their sisters! "with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." It says absolutely nothing about shoes. Nothing. I've looked. Thomas Jefferson wore heels so he had nothing smart to say on the matter. But my sister insists that your Nike's have to be washed every night or you'll like be banned from civilization. You'll be forced to walk around the rest of your life with a sign hanging around your neck saying, "Beware. Dirty tennis shoes." And the same goes for my jeans and shirts and everything else. She thinks I have to stand in front of her and pass inspection every time I go out in public.

Did I mention I am going crazy? Are you starting to get the hint? Everybody I know tells me, "You've got to learn to think for yourself!" but buddy, just try it once and see what happens. Your teacher tells you what to do, your coach tells you what to do, your parents and sister and friends and ... well, just try thinking for yourself and see what happens. They ... don't ... like it.

Look, when I was seven years old I'd had enough so I ran away from home. I packed up my cell phone, an extra pair of underwear, three bags of Fritos and I set off to see the world. I still remember it. It was great. The world was mine ... for about two hours. I think I got as far as Wal-Mart when somebody saw me and called Mom. The world is full of spies ... did you know that? Secret agents that comb the world looking for boys trying to get their freedom. They spy on them, they report them, then they tell your mother and she comes and gets you and asks you if you flushed while you were on your journey.

I ... am ... going ... crazy.

One final topic, then I'll go have myself locked up. Girls. Look, if this is going to embarrass any of you, then you can leave now. I wouldn't blame you, but if I'm going to tell the whole story then I've got to tell you all of it. Girls. Women. Remember how in school they talked about the old days when parents would arrange marriages? How as soon as a kid was born they'd pick out a girl for him and he had no choice? Remember how bad that sounded?

Well, let me tell you a little secret ... it hasn't stopped! It still happens! Oh, they don't drag you down the aisle and make you marry someone, but they drop these little hints. Big hints. You'll be eating supper with your family and Mom will say, "That Wilson girl. She seems very nice, _____ [*insert your name*]. Do you ever talk to her? Do you think she's nice?" Mom, I really don't need this.

Or my sister will say, "I met the coolest girl today. She just moved into our school and she's really sweet. _____ [*Insert your name*], why don't you talk to her tomorrow? Get to know her." Would you people just get out of my life? Look, I know what a girl looks like. I've seen girls before. I know my way around XX chromosomes. I don't need your help. I really don't need your help.

And the worst ... the very worst is if your family finds out that you are interested in a certain girl. If this happens then they'll never stop quizzing you. "So, _____ [*insert your name*]. Are you still sweet on that girl?" "What girl?" "Oh, you know who I'm talking about. Are you still hanging around her? The one you really like?"

Sometimes I feel like just shouting, "We ran off to Las Vegas last night when you were all sleeping! We robbed the banks, bought a jet plane and flew to Paris where we parachuted off the Eiffel Tower, got arrested, and got away from them just in time to get back for breakfast this morning!" And if I actually did say that sometime, then Mom would probably say, "Yes, but did you flush?"

My dad once sat me down and said, "You know, you've got it pretty good, son. Things were a lot tougher when I was a boy." And he said that with a straight face. He was my own dad so I didn't just say, "Dad, if things were any tougher then you wouldn't be alive today." There's no way my dad had to put up with what I do right now. How would he know? He plays the zone defense.

So I've thought about what to do ... therapy is really expensive, and I've already run away from home once so I think my mom had my picture put up on the wall at Wal-Mart telling them to be on the lookout. I can't talk to my sister because she's part of the conspiracy to make my life miserable. My friends are no help. They just say, "You think you got it bad?" ... then they tell me their own stories about going crazy ... trying to be a boy. I'd try changing chromosomes but that sounds really painful. So I've decided to just

sit here ... to just sit here and wait ... wait to grow up. I'll wait until I grow a moustache and get my drivers license and start paying taxes and joining a bowling league and playing a few rounds of golf at the Country Club and get kids of my own so I can tell them how much harder life was when I was a boy.

And in the meantime. I ... am ... going ... crazy!

HOST II: See. It's catching. We better keep moving

HOST I: Maybe some professional acting would help.

HOST II: No doubt.

HOST I: But since we're not about to get any professional acting, let's try for professional actors ... sort-of. Here are a couple of hams.

SCENE 7: Hams on Toast

Characters: Herbert, Estelle

(Faux British accents would be just dandy.)

HERBERT: *(entering)* I say, where is everyone?

ESTELLE: *(entering)* Is he here yet?

HERBERT: Not a soul.

ESTELLE: Pity. We were to start rehearsal at two. Do you suppose something happened?

HERBERT: At the moment, nothing is happening.

ESTELLE: Here I am, the world's most esteemed actor, and our director is missing.

HERBERT: Most esteemed compared to me, of course.

ESTELLE: Quite.

HERBERT: Quite.

ESTELLE: But we go on in an hour. Word has it the Queen will be in attendance today.

HERBERT: Oh, it's always someone, isn't it? I hope she doesn't bring her dogs.

ESTELLE: They cough.

HERBERT: Indeed. Coughing dogs. A bother.

ESTELLE: What say we go ahead?

HERBERT: Go ahead?

- ESTELLE:** Rehearse without him. Who needs a director when you have a living legend like me?
- HERBERT:** I'm sure you meant like me.
- ESTELLE:** Let us not quibble, Herbert. You know how quibbling disturbs my concentration.
- HERBERT:** I wasn't quibbling, Estelle. You were the quibbler.
- ESTELLE:** You're quibbling.
- HERBERT:** I'm not.
- ESTELLE:** Are so.
- HERBERT:** But who shall give us direction?
- ESTELLE:** My dear Herbert, the directions are in the script ... or we can just make them up as we go along. Are you game?
- HERBERT:** Dashing idea, Estelle. Let's do it!
- ESTELLE:** Indeed! From the top?
- HERBERT:** From the top! ... and no quibbling.
- ESTELLE:** Wouldn't dream of it.
- HERBERT:** Quite.
- ESTELLE:** Quite.

(They go to separate sides of the stage, take a moment to compose themselves, then ...)

- HERBERT:** And remember, we must provide our own directions.
- ESTELLE:** I have a memory, Herbert.
- HERBERT:** Just checking.
- ESTELLE:** You were quibbling. Lady Ashmore walks onto the balcony of her estate. "Oh I say ... what a lovely day, Rupert!"

(The actors perform all the actions indicated.)

- HERBERT:** Rupert, the dashing leading man, strolls to her side.
- ESTELLE:** The script doesn't say you're dashing.
- HERBERT:** I'm improvising. Rupert strolls to her side and says, "Looks a bit like rain, darling."
- ESTELLE:** "Quite."
- HERBERT:** "Quite. I say, old girl. Did you notice anything strange about your daddy the Duke at breakfast this morning?"
- ESTELLE:** "Strange?"
- HERBERT:** "Yes. Something out of the ordinary?"

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