

COMPOUND FRACTURES

by Ken Bradbury
and Robert L. Crowe



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A Play in Two Acts

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

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Cast of Characters (44)

Act I (25 – 9m, 16f)

Scene 1: A Little Breezy Down Below (2m, 2f)

Gary
Ramsey
Paris
Mickey

Scene 2: Camp Outlaw (4m)

Pecos
Zippy
Wilfred
Myron

Scene 3: Family Court (3m, 2f)

Mark
James
Phyllis
Hannah
Ralph

Scene 4: I've Got to Be a Princess (3f)

Samantha
Polly
Jessica

Scene 5: Molly is My Cousin (4 f)

Gina
Molly
Karen
Rene

Scene 6: The Life of a Girl (5 f)

One
Two
Three
Four
Five

Act II (19 – 7m, 12f)

Scene 1: The Making of a Star (1m, 2f)

Morgan,
Natasha
Louie

Scene 2: A Good Sport (2m)

Buffalo
Percy

Scene 3: Hawk and the Sparrow (2 m)

Hawk
Sparrow

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Officer
Driver

Scene 5: Hickory Dickory What? (3f)

Hickory
Dickory
Doc

Scene 6: Bubbles (1f)

Narrator

Scene 7: Let the Games Begin (4f)

Darlene
Jessica
Erin
Missy

Scene 8: Sorry, I Just Got Here Myself (1m, 1f)

RUSTAL
VACHEL

ACT I

Scene 1: A LITTLE BREEZY DOWN BELOW

The characters: Gary, an extremely vain TV weatherman; Mickey, the makeup person; Paris, a hair stylist; and Ramsey, the director of a local TV newscast.

RAMSEY: (*entering*) Where is he?

PARIS: He's always late.

RAMSEY: Big star. I hate working with guys who think they're big shots.

PARIS: He's the most popular weatherman in the tri-state area. He's a big deal, Boss.

RAMSEY: He's a big ego. The guy's more concerned with his hair than getting the weather right.

MICKEY: (*running in*) Where's Gary?

RAMSEY: You tell me.

MICKEY: I've got to do his makeup. We're almost at news time.

RAMSEY: (*shouting*) Gary! Anybody scene the fabulous Gary Galloway?

GARY: (*poking his head in, smiling*) Somebody call me?

MICKEY: I've got to do your makeup, Mr. Galloway.

PARIS: And your hair. We've only got a few minutes.

GARY: I need a coffee.

RAMSEY: Now?

GARY: I can't go on without my coffee. It's in my contract.

RAMSEY: (*as he begins to exit*) Good grief!

GARY: Two sugars, one cream.

RAMSEY: Is that in the contract, too?

GARY: Paragraph 12, section six, under "star requirements." Hurry, would you?

RAMSEY: I'm the director!

GARY: Oh. Sorry. I keep forgetting. Then at least move quickly.

RAMSEY: (*exiting*) I give up.

PARIS: (*trying to comb his hair*) Please hold still, Mr. Galloway.

MICKEY: (*dabbing on makeup*) Could you lower you head just a bit, sir?

GARY: (*to Mickey*) The shadows. I have shadows under my eyes this morning. I was up late last night receiving the Most Charming Weatherman Awards. Block out my shadows. (*looking at himself in an imaginary hand mirror*) What are you doing? There's gray in my hair.

PARIS: That's, uh, because you have gray in your hair, Mr. Galloway.

GARY: That's impossible! I'm much too young and handsome to have gray in my hair. It must have come off someone else and fallen onto my head. Spray it! Spray it, quickly! (*Paris begins to spray*) Oh, the things I must go through to be the area's most lovable weatherman! The trials I must endure.

RAMSEY: (*entering*) Here's your coffee, Dreamboat.

GARY: (*taking the coffee*) Ramsey, I want to talk to you about yesterday's broadcast. You know, I wasn't very happy about that.

RAMSEY: I know. You predicted sunny skies and we got three inches of rain.

GARY: I mean the camera angle. When you shoot me from that angle it looks like I have a double chin.

RAMSEY: That's because you have a double chin. In fact, you have three of them. I could only cut one out. But you missed the forecast completely!

GARY: Oh, who cares? The important thing is to make me look like I know what I'm talking about.

RAMSEY: What?

PARIS: Please hold still, Mr. Galloway.

MICKEY: One minute and we're on.

PARIS: If you don't hold still I can't fix your hair.

GARY: Look, people only watch this station because of me!

RAMSEY: Oh, gimme a break!

GARY: Have you looked at the ratings? We've got the top spot on the chart! If it weren't for me, all of you would be out of business.

PARIS: (*trying valiantly to comb a moving target*) Mr. Galloway if you don't ... (*she bumps him*) Oh. Oh, my gosh. Sorry.

GARY: (*looking at his pants*) You clumsy fool! I've got coffee on my pants! You spilled the coffee on my pants!

PARIS: But you were the one who ...

GARY: What do I do?

RAMSEY: Take 'em off!

GARY: Take 'em off! Quick! (*to the other two*) Help me! (*and the three mime removing Gary's pants*) What are you?!?! This is unbelievable! This is humiliating.

RAMSEY: Yeah, and you got funny legs, too. (*handing the pants to Mickey*) Here! Clean that stain! Quick!

PARIS: Thirty seconds!

GARY: My pants!

RAMSEY: Hurry!

GARY: My pants!

MICKEY: (*offstage, scrubbing furiously*) I'm trying!

PARIS: Twenty seconds!

GARY: My pants!

RAMSEY: Done yet?

MICKEY: It won't come out!

RAMSEY: My gosh!

GARY: My pants!

PARIS: There's the music!

RAMSEY: Get ready to roll!

GARY: No!

PARIS: In five, four, three, two ... (*Ramsey points at Gary who at the count of "one" quickly pulls a chair in front of him. He looks dead straight into the camera, shocked. Numb. Then suddenly an extremely stupid smile appears on his face.*) Ha ha. (*a pause, then*) Hi, there. (*looks down, adjust the chair*) This is, uh, this is ...

RAMSEY: (*whispering loudly*) Gary Galloway.

GARY: Who?

RAMSEY: Gary Galloway.

GARY: This is Gary Galloway. With, uh ...

RAMSEY: ... the weather.

GARY: Huh?

RAMSEY: Weather! Weather!

GARY: I'm the weather.

RAMSEY: No, you're Gary Galloway with the weather.

GARY: Yes, I am. And today ... today we have, uh, a warm pants front

...

RAMSEY: What?

GARY: Warm front! Warm front! We have a warm front coming up from the pants ...

RAMSEY: South! Coming up from the south!

GARY: And it's breezy.

RAMSEY: Huh?

GARY: Really breezy. Oh boy is it breezy! And this chair ... is, uh, this chair is the warm front.

RAMSEY: I hope it doesn't move east.

GARY: And I can feel the cool air coming right through ...

RAMSEY: Temperature! Give the temperature!

GARY: It's getting chilly. It starts down low then it sort of works its way up to ...

RAMSEY: Commercial! Cut to commercial!

GARY: And now it's time for a word from our fine sponsor ... Drawers Are Us!

RAMSEY: Cut! Cut! (*coming onto the set as Paris begins to adjust Gary's hair*) Where are those pants?

GARY: Yes! Where are my pants!

MICKEY: (*entering, still scrubbing*) It won't come out.

RAMSEY: You had to have cream in your coffee, didn't you?

GARY: (*grabbing for the pants*) Give me those pants! I'll wear them like they are.

MICKEY: (*pulling the pants back on*) You can't wear them like this!

GARY: (*pulling pants*) It's better than nothing.

RAMSEY: It certainly is.

MICKEY: (*pulling*) Just one more minute ...

GARY: I don't have a ... (*he pulls. A long pause, then*) ...

PARIS: Your pants just ripped in half.

GARY: My pants just ripped in half.

MICKEY: You got two pants now.

PARIS: Ten seconds!

GARY: I have two pair of pants.

RAMSEY: Get ready!

GARY: Somebody help me! (*he quickly grabs Mickey and Paris, and pushes them down kneeling in front of him, all three facing the camera*)

PARIS: Hey! What're you doing?

RAMSEY: In five, four, three, two ... one. (*points at Gary*)

GARY: (*standing there with the two others in front of him, covering his bottom half*) Hey! We're back! And now our five day forecast! (*seeing the two kneeling*) Oh, I forgot to mention. We found these two poor children wandering around the streets during the commercial. As you can see, they're lost and hopeless ...

MICKEY: What?

GARY: (*bobbing Mickey slightly on the head*) Quiet. And we thought we'd give them a little thrill by being on television today!

PARIS: Huh?

GARY: (*bobbing Paris on the head*) Shhh. Remember, you're hopeless. Now, as you can see by the weather map behind me (*and he reaches down to grab the heads of Paris and Mickey, dragging them along with him as he moves*)... This low-pressure system is creeping up from the south.

MICKEY: Ouch! That hurts!

GARY: And it hurts me to say this, but it'll be hitting our area around noon tomorrow.

PARIS: What do you think you're doing?

GARY: You may wonder what it's doing in our neck of the woods, well

...

PARIS: Big jerk.

GARY: It's going to jerk this rain up from Florida.

MICKEY: This is ridiculous.

GARY: And we're going to get a ridiculous amount of rain. Now, here on the other side of the weather map (*and he drags the two assistants along by their heads*) ... we have a storm front.

PARIS: Wait'll I get my hands on ...

GARY: But we'll have to wait 'til we get our hands on a more detailed forecast. Meanwhile ...

MICKEY: ... This really hurts.

GARY: ... a snow storm will be *hurtling* down toward us from Canada by next week! (*he turns his back on the camera to point to the map*) As you can see by this weather map, we're in for a real surprise. (*Paris and Mickey look at each other, then, since Gary's looking the other way, they crawl out of the camera shot.*) (*still unaware that he's now uncovered*) Now, as you can see down here at the bottom, we see some strange patterns. (*the others try to stifle their giggles*) Yes, sir! It'll come as a real surprise to all the flowers and grass and crops and ... (*he turns, sees that no one's covering him*)... and ... and ... weathermen. (*a long, embarrassed pause, then*) And now ... and now, uh, and now a word from Bare Necessities Boutique.

RAMSEY: We're out! (*they all stop. They look at Gary. Gary looks mortified.*) Well, that'll bring in the ratings.

PARIS: The phones are all ringing.

GARY: I'm ruined.

MICKEY: (*looking offstage*) There's a whole line of people outside the station. They seem angry.

GARY: My career is over.

RAMSEY: Hey, things happen.

GARY: How can I show my face in public again?

PARIS: Should be easy. You've shown everything else.

GARY: No more awards.

MICKEY: Not for what we saw.

RAMSEY: Look Gary, we've got a job opening at the station.

GARY: What job?

RAMSEY: Well, it's not much ... we need somebody to come in at night and sort of clean things up.

GARY: A cleaning boy?

RAMSEY: Well ... yeah. Sort of.

GARY: (*a pause, then*) Do I get a uniform?

RAMSEY: Sure.

GARY: (*a pause, then a light in his eyes and he begins rattling*) Could it be blue? I've got this great idea for this great blue uniform. Maybe some pinstripes down the side? And my hair. I'll need a different hairstyle. I mean, you never know who's going to walk into the station ...

RAMSEY: ... at two in the morning.

GARY: Ah! An evening outfit! Maybe black? Yes! Yes, that's it! A dashing black uniform with maybe a little flower in the lapel. Nothing large ... just to sort of set off the jacket?

RAMSEY: Take him away, guys. (*Paris and Mickey take each arm as they lead the babbling Gary offstage*)

GARY: What shade of makeup goes with night lighting? Do you think we could put a few amber lights over the mop closet? And pants! I want pants this time! (*and they are gone*)

RAMSEY: (*to the audience*) You know ... at times like this I just want to ... (*but he stops*) Oh, just forget it. More news at ten. (*he exits*)

Scene 2: CAMP OUTLAW

Cast (4m): *Pecos, a rough and tough, ornery, spitting and scratching old outlaw; Wilfred, a well-bred somewhat delicate wannabe rustler; Myron, mostly an idiot; Zippy, a hyper little bundle of spastic enthusiasm.*

PECOS: Alright, you worthless no-good greenhorns! Drag your tails out here and fall in line! So! You think you're gonna be cattle rustlers, huh? You think you got what it takes to me a low-down sneak thief? A train robber? An outlaw? (*he looks at them*) Well? Do ya?

WILFRED: I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

PECOS: No.

MYRON: What'd he say?

ZIPPY: Oh, I do! I wanna be an outlaw! I wanna be a bad guy! Wanna see me shoot? Huh? Wanna see me shoot? I can shoot real good! You wanna see me?

PECOS: Zip it! You are one spastic steer, son. What the heck's your name?

ZIPPY: Zippy! My name's Zippy! But you can call me Dirty Dan because Dan's a dirtier name than Zippy 'cause Zippy's not dirty, but I think Zippy's pretty dangerous too, don't you, Mr. Pecos?

PECOS: (*right in his face*) You must of sucked up the bottom of the coffee pot, kid. (*to Wilfred*) And just what sort of dude are you?

WILFRED: Wilfred VanDyke Seymour the Third. Perhaps you'd like to call me Will. It sounds more cowboyish, don't you think?

PECOS: I think you're pretty strange, son. (*to Myron*) How 'bout you?

MYRON: Me what?

PECOS: Your name, son.

MYRON: Uh ... (*thinking*) ... Could you start with somethin' simpler?

PECOS: Oh, dear me, ain't you somethin'? I'll call you Myron. That okay with you, Myron?

MYRON: Who's he talkin' to?

PECOS: Forget it. (*strolling in front of the three*) You tenderfoots are now at Pecos Cody's Wild-West Shoot-em-Up Really Bad Guy Outlaw Camp. This is where we take worthless, no-good greenhorns and turn 'em into worthless, no-good bank robbers, horse thieves, and outlaws.

ZIPPY: Ooooo, I'm ready! I'm ready Mr. Pecos! I'm really, really ready to be a bad guy! Wanna see me shoot?

PECOS: (*a pause, then*) No. I wanna see you shut up so I can teach you to become an outlaw.

ZIPPY: I'm shuttin', Mr. Pecos! I'm shuttin' right up! You ain't gonna hear another peep outta me! No, sir! My lips are sealed, you betcha. I'm ...

PECOS: Hey!

ZIPPY: Huh?

PECOS: Zip it, Zippy! (*to Wilfred*) What about you? You ever ride a horse?

WILFRED: Well, when I was very young. I mean, we all start out very young, don't we? I mean, it wasn't my fault, I was born that way. Young, I mean.

PECOS: Come on!

WILFRED: Oh. Well, my father ... a dear, dear man. My father bought me this tiny rocking horse and ...

PECOS: Rockin' horse?!

WILFRED: Red ... mostly. Of course it had a little yellow and blue around the legs, but it was mostly red. Oh, how I loved my little Poppy. That's the name I gave him ... Poppy the Pony. Isn't that darling?

PECOS: (*a pause, then*) Yeah. Darling. A red rocking horse. (*to Myron*) What about you, Cowboy Myron?

MYRON: My what?

PECOS: Horse! You ever ride a horse?

MYRON: I don't remember. Why? You missin' one? I never touched it, mister.

PECOS: Ride! Ride! You know! (*demonstrates mounting horse and riding*) Giddy up! Giddy up! (*he dismounts*)

MYRON: That looks like fun! Can I go for a ride? (*pats imaginary horse on the head*)

PECOS: Leave my horse alone! (*Myron returns to the line*) How 'bout you, Zippy? You ride horses or do you just talk 'em to death?

ZIPPY: Ooooo ... I can ride! I can really ride, Mr. Pecos! You ought see me ride! And I can shoot my six-shooter while I'm ridin'! Ain't that somethin'? Ride then shoot then ride then shoot then ...

PECOS: Zip it! (*he does*) I think I may retire. Okay, you mealy-mouthed misfits, listen up! The first thing you gotta do is mount your horse. It's almost impossible to ride up to a movin' train, outrun the sheriff's posse, then high tail it forty miles into the sagebrush unless you use a horse. You all know what a horse is, right?

MYRON: Huh?

PECOS: I wasn't talkin' to you, Myron. Wilfred?

WILFRED: Yes, yes, of course. Red with a little blue and yellow and ...

PECOS: Forget it. Zippy?

ZIPPY: Oooooo! I know my horses! Oh boy, do I know my horses!

PECOS: Okay! Zip it! Just to review. (*he moves to one side, grabs a pair of imaginary reins, and leads his horse to a position in front of them*) This is a horse. I call him Ned because that's his name. Come on up and talk to Ned. (*Wilfred and Zippy go to the horse's front while Myron inspects the other end.*) Now, notice that Ned has two ends, the front and the back. We call them "front" and "back." (*seeing Myron at the other end.*) Myron, if you talk to that end you won't like the answer you get. Get your tail over here.

(*Myron joins the others.*) Gentlemen, this horse is your friend. He could very well be the difference between life or death when bein' pursued by a lawman in the desert.

WILFRED: Excuse me.

PECOS: Yes, Wilfred?

WILFRED: The starter.

PECOS: The what?

WILFRED: I don't see the starter button. Where do you push to make him go?

PECOS: My mama said, "Be a lawyer. Be a store clerk," but no. Wilfred, this is a horse, dang nabbit! It ain't got no starter button! YOU are the starter button.

WILFRED: Oh, dear. Sounds a bit dicey.

ZIPPY: Ooooo, let me on 'im, Pecos! Let me on 'im! I'll show you! I'll show how I can ride. And I can shoot! Did I tell you I can shoot?

PECOS: Yeah, Zippy. You mentioned it. There'll be no shootin' 'til you learn to ride a horse.

MYRON: I like horses.

PECOS: You do.

MYRON: (*petting the horse*) She's pretty.

PECOS: You tell Ned that she's pretty and you'll be pickin' yourself out of the cactus patch, Myron. Go head, Myron. You first. Hop on up there.

MYRON: Oh, boy.

PECOS: (*sighing*) Oh, boy.

MYRON: Here I go! (*and he jumps up on the horse, ending up facing backwards*)

PECOS: Now, that's real good, Myron. You got up there just fine. But tell me ... do you notice anything strange?

MYRON: Yeah. No steering wheel.

PECOS: That's good, Myron. You ain't got a steering wheel. Anything else?

MYRON: Radio? Don't see no radio.

PECOS: No radio, Myron. But tell me ... anything strange that you *do* see?

MYRON: My horse's head fell off.

PECOS: There ain't no head on that end, Myron.

MYRON: His head's on the wrong end?

WILFRED: I believe that you're on the wrong end, dear boy.

ZIPPY: (*moving to the rear of the horse*) Yep! I just checked! Ain't no head here, Boss! Nothin' but tail ... and Myron.

PECOS: Get down, you idiot.

MYRON: Could he run in reverse?

PECOS: No, he don't run in reverse! Now get off my horse! (*Myron dismounts.*) Your turn, Zippy.

ZIPPY: Oh, boy. My own horse! This is my own horse! I get to ride my own horse! (*he takes a run and misses, ending up on the ground*) No, no! I can do it! I can do it! That was just a test run! Here I go! Giddy-up Zippy! (*he again takes a run at the horse but again ends up splat on the ground*) I think he moved. Honest, Boss, I think he moved on me at the last minute. Just one more time ... really ... I got it this time. Here I go! Here I go, Boss! Hi-Ho, Zippy! (*and again he ends up face-first on the ground*) (*a pause then*) Am I doin' somethin' wrong?

PECOS: Yeah. You're breathin'. Get up off the ground you numbskull. (*to Wilfred*) How 'bout you, Fancy Pants?

WILFRED: (*walking around the horse*) Dear me. Tall isn't he?

PECOS: Yeah, he's a biggun.

WILFRED: And a bit wild, wouldn't you say? A bit untamed and all that?

PECOS: Wild? No. Bored ... maybe. Would you just climb on the confounded horse, Wilfred?

WILFRED: (*still walking around gauging the animal*) My, my, my ... so much bigger than my dear little Poppy.

PECOS: Don't call Ned "Poppy." Makes him nervous.

WILFRED: I don't suppose ...

PECOS: What now?

WILFRED: I don't suppose you have a little ladder? Perhaps a chair or something? I mean, I'd hate to just jump onto the animals back ... without a proper introduction or anything.

PECOS: Come 'ere! (*as Pecos grabs Wilfred and brings him roughly to Ned's head*) Ned, this is Wilfred. Wilfred, this is Ned. Okay, now you're good friends. Jump on!

WILFRED: But we just met!

PECOS: Then meet him again! (*throwing Wilfred up onto Ned's back*) There! You're bosom buddies!

WILFRED: (*grabbing his heart*) Oh ... oh ... my heart. My heart.

MYRON: You love your horse?

WILFRED: No! I'm ... I'm just startled, that's all. I've never actually been this far off the ground. (*looking out*) Look! I can see the bunkhouse.

PECOS: Stands to reason. It's right there.

WILFRED: So, what do I do next?

PECOS: Get down.

WILFRED: By myself?

PECOS: I don't see nobody else up there with ya.

WILFRED: Would you all mind turning your heads?

MYRON: Huh?

WILFRED: This might be awkward and I don't want to embarrass myself.

PECOS: You're already about ten minutes too late for that. Okay boys, turn around so Willy can hop down from his hobbyhorse. (*the three of them turn*)

WILFRED: Sorry to be a bother. Now let's see. Should I start with my right foot?

PECOS: (*still with his back to Wilfred and Ned*) Just get off the dernelled horse!

WILFRED: I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm ... (*but Ned takes off with Wilfred hanging on for dear life. Wilfred emits only a small but terrified whine as the two ride offstage.*)

PECOS: (*still standing with the other two, their backs turned*) Okay, Wilfred. (*a pause*) Get off the horse, Wilfred. (*turning*) Wilfred, would you just get off the ... (*they've all turned. No Wilfred, no Ned. Nothing.*) Where'd you go Wilfred?

MYRON: Wow. It's magic.

PECOS: It ain't magic! It's a loose horse! Ned! Ned! Here boy! (*the three watch the imaginary Ned come trotting up to them*) (*petting his horse*) Good boy, Ned. Any idea where you left Wilfred?

ZIPPY: He's gone! He's gone! Just poof and he's gone!

MYRON: Magic. It's magic.

PECOS: Ain't so such thing!

ZIPPY: I knew it! I knew it! I shoulda pulled my gun. I shoulda pulled my gun! I knew something like this was gonna happen! I can shoot! Did I tell you I can shoot?

PECOS: Who was you gonna shoot, Ned or Wilfred?

ZIPPY: Oh.

MYRON: (*to Zippy*) Cool.

PECOS: What.

MYRON: (*indicating Zippy*) I found somebody dumber'n me.

PECOS: How in the heck am I supposed to run this camp for no-good cattle rustlers if all I got to work with is a bunch of no-good idiots?!

ZIPPY: I'll find 'im, Mr. Pecos! (*jumping up on the horse*) Come on, Ned! This is our big chance! Let's go fetch Wilfred!

PECOS: Get off that horse!

ZIPPY: Yippee-Kai-O-Kai-Ay! (*and with a startled scream Zippy is off! ... and offstage*)

PECOS: Hey! Hey, come back here, runt! (*as he's gone*) Dern.

MYRON: Zippy left.

PECOS: You catch on pretty fast, Myron.

MYRON: (*laughing*) Huh-huh. Me not so dumb.

PECOS: I didn't say that. Well, it looks like it's just you, Tex. (*looking up*) Well, hello, Ned. Back so soon? (*looking up to the empty saddle*) I see you lost another one. (*to Myron*) Well, I guess you're all we got left, Myron. Hop up there, son. Maybe we can make somethin' out of you.

MYRON: (*chuckling*) Huh-huh. Others go bye-bye. Me the Lone Ranger now.

PECOS: Yeah, you're the Lone Ranger. All alone ranger. Say, you look like you know what you're doing.

MYRON: Myron not so dumb. Me watch other dummies. Me cowboy.

PECOS: Okay, but whatever you do, Myron. Don't touch Ned right there. (*pointing to the horse's flank*)

MYRON: Me know. Ned's flank. Touchy.

PECOS: Yeah. Whatever you do, don't touch him on the flank.

MYRON: No way, Boss. Me gonna be a good cowboy.

PECOS: (*is trying to get Myron to touch the flank but it isn't working*) Because if you touch him *right there*, he won't like it.

MYRON: Yep. Ride 'em cowboy. Whooppee.

PECOS: So you ain't gonna touch him there?

MYRON: Nope.

PECOS: Dern. Then I'll have too. (*slaps Ned in the flank*) Giddy-yup, Ned!

MYRON: Hey! (*as he dashes off desperately trying to hold on*) Whoa! Whoa! (*and he is gone*)

PECOS: Well, I guess that about does, that. Wonder when the next group's comin' in? Let's see. Three greenhorns an hour for a hundred bucks a crack ... should be able to run through maybe ... I don't know ... 12 a day. (*looking up*) Howdy, Ned. Back so soon? You're gettin' good at this. Dump 'em in the usual place? Good boy. That ditch is deep. It'll take 'em the rest of the day to get out of there. They don't call me the sneakiest rustler in the West for nothin'. Well, lookee here what's comin'! (*to a new and invisible group of gullible cowpokes*) You tenderfoots are now at Pecos Cody's Wild-West Shoot-em-Up Really Bad Guy Outlaw Camp. Welcome!

Scene 3: FAMILY COURT

Cast (5): Mark (the son), James (the dad), Phyllis (the Mom), Hannah (the sister), Ralph (the dog).

MARK: (*entering and shouting offstage*) I will! I will! Mom, it's Saturday! I don't need my room cleaned up 'til Monday! Come on! (*to himself*) I give up! The whole world's against me. At least my family's out to get me. (*shouting off*) What? No, it's Hannah's turn to take out the garbage! Dad, I just did it last month! Come on! Gimme a break! (*to himself*) You'd think I broke the law or something. My sister ... the little Princess ... she gets everything she wants. Me? It's like I'm the family convict! (*shouting off*) Mom, make Hannah do something once in a while! (*he listens. Nothing*) Mom? That's weird. They always shout back to me. (*more quietly*)

this time) Mom? Dad? Where'd they all go? Hey, what am I complaining about? I finally got some peace and quiet!

PHYLLIS: (*barging in, loudly*) All rise!

MARK: What?

PHYLLIS: The 2nd District Court of the 3rd Jurisdiction of the 4th Sub-category will now come to order! The Honorable Judge James Papa presiding! (*to Mark, who's sat during this*) I said, "All rise!"

MARK: (*standing quickly*) Mom! What's going on?

PHYLLIS: Out of order! Here comes the judge! (*James enters and takes a seat at center*) Be seated! (*to Mark*) I said be seated!

MARK: Mom? Dad? What are you guys doing?

PHYLLIS: You will address His Honor as Your Honor.

MARK: You mean Dad?

JAMES: I'll hold you in contempt, young man!

MARK: Yes, Dad! ... Uh, Your Honor! Yes, Your Honor? Now would somebody tell me ...

JAMES: Quiet! First witness!

MARK: What is this?

JAMES: Young man, you claim to have been treated unfairly in his family unit. We are here today to see if your complaint has any validity.

MARK: I'm in court!

PHYLLIS: You could hang.

MARK: (*standing*) I object!

JAMES: Sit down! Read the complaint!

PHYLLIS: (*reading*) "Mark, the son, hereafter referred to as "Son," claims that he has been treated unfairly in the family unit. He further states that he is constantly nagged by his mother, ignored by his father, and that his sister always gets her way."

MARK: (*standing*) Yeah! Yeah! All that's true!

JAMES: Sit down! (*Mark sits*)

PHYLLIS: The estate is counter-suing the Son for being a lazy, irresponsible, whining pain in the neck.

JAMES: How to you plead?

MARK: (*standing*) I didn't do it!

JAMES: That's what they all say! Sit down! (*Mark sits*) Call your first witness.

PHYLLIS: I call Hannah the Sister to the stand. (*Hannah enters*)

MARK: (*standing*) Hannah!

JAMES: Sit ...

MARK: ... down. (*he sits*)

PHYLLIS: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you or we'll take away your cell phone?

MARK: Huh?

HANNAH: I do.

PHYLLIS: Hannah ... may I call you "Daughter?"

HANNAH: Sure, Mom.

MARK: (*stands*) This is ridiculous. (*they all glare at him as he sits*) I'm sitting. I'm sitting.

PHYLLIS: Is it true that on or about the last 30 days the defendant, Mark, has failed to do any of his chores around the house?

HANNAH: He's a jerk.

MARK: I object!

JAMES: Overruled!

PHYLLIS: Is it also true that the aforementioned Mark never does his share of the work around the house?

HANNAH: He's worthless.

MARK: The witness will answer the question!

HANNAH: I just did. Weren't you listening? He's a goofball and all he does is complain about how much he has to work which he really doesn't do at all because he's a lazy, no-good brother.

MARK: Where's your proof?

HANNAH: (*holding something up*) Right here.

MARK: What's that?

HANNAH: A picture of you!

JAMES: Guilty as charged!

MARK: Wait a minute! Wait a minute! Don't I get to defend myself?

JAMES: Oh, very well. It won't do a bit of good, but go ahead.

MARK: Your honor, I want to cross-exam the witness!

PHYLLIS: Good luck.

MARK: (*Xing to her*) Isn't it true that every time Mom has something that needs to be done, you suddenly get a stomach ache and have to go to your room?

JAMES: Oh, poor girl!

MARK: Judge!

JAMES: Oh ... carry on.

MARK: Answer the question!

HANNAH: I sometimes have a tummy ache.

MARK: Like every time we have to put the dishes in the dishwasher, vacuum our rooms, make our beds or take out the garbage.

JAMES: Oh, poor, poor girl!

MARK: Dad!

JAMES: What!?

MARK: I mean, Your Honor! Let me question her.

JAMES: But be nice. She's such a sweet little Princess. (*Hannah sticks her tongue out at Mark*)

MARK: Did you see that?

JAMES: Yes! She seems to have spots on her tongue! Are you alright, sweetheart?

HANNAH: I just ate a fruit roll-up.

JAMES: Oh, thank goodness.

MARK: Please, Your Honor! (*to Hannah*) Isn't it true that you get special treatment around the house?

HANNAH: No.

MARK: What?

PHYLLIS: Your Honor, I object to the Son accusing the Daughter of getting special treatment? Is that chair too hard? Would you like a pillow, my dear?

JAMES: How about some ice cream?

MARK: I'm going crazy!

PHYLLIS: He's pleading insanity!

JAMES: You can't plead insanity! That's nuts!

MARK: I give up.

PHYLLIS: You plead guilty?

MARK: No ... I'm ... I'm just confused.

JAMES: Call your next witness!

PHYLLIS: I call ... Ralph!

MARK: Ralph? He's our dog!

PHYLLIS: Here, Ralph!

JAMES: Here, Ralphie! Here boy! (*whistles and Ralph comes bounding in and takes the witness chair as Hannah moves away*)

PHYLLIS: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help your Alpo?

RALPH: (*his paw in the air*) Ruff!

MARK: A dog can't testify in court!

RALPH: (*whimpers*)

PHYLLIS: Oh, look! You've made him cry!

JAMES: Stop badgering the witness! (*leans over and pets him*) There, there, Ralphie boy. Don't take it personally. You can tell he's guilty by looking at him.

MARK: Your Honor!

JAMES: Proceed!

MARK: What does a stupid dog know?

HANNAH: I'm calling the ASPCA!

RALPH: (*pumping his fist*) Yes!!!!

MARK: You can talk?

RALPH: Of course!

MARK: I didn't know that.

RALPH: This is the first time I've had something I wanted to say. I think you're guilty.

MARK: What?

RALPH: You gripe, you never do what you're told without complaining, and you always blame everyone else for your mistakes!

JAMES: Ah! The wisdom of a dog! Guilty as charged!

PHYLLIS: Guilty as charged.

HANNAH: Guilty!

RALPH: (*howls*)

MARK: Stop it! Stop it! I don't even know what's going on? I just came into my bedroom after supper and suddenly ...

JAMES: Court's adjourned!

MARK: What?

PHYLLIS: Court's adjourned! The prisoner will now be quiet.

HANNAH: (*goes to Mark, sticks her tongue out and exits*)

MARK: You can't do this!

PHYLLIS: There he goes again. Same old excuses. Don't forget the garbage. (*she exits*)

MARK: Mom!

JAMES: (*leaving*) Don't forget to brush your teeth.

MARK: Dad!

RALPH: I hope we can still be friends. (*sticks his paw out for Mark to shake and Mark, still dazed, accepts the paw-shake. Ralph exits*)

MARK: (*a long pause, then*) Did that just happen? Mom!

PHYLLIS: (*offstage*) Mark, clean up that room!

MARK: Yes, Ma'am! (*he begins to frantically straighten the room*)

JAMES: (*offstage*) Mark, have you done your homework?

MARK: (*quickly switches to flipping through a book*) Doin' it right now, Dad!

HANNAH: (*offstage*) Mark, have you seen my video game?

MARK: (*jumps up and begins searching*) Just a minute, Hannah! I've got it here somewhere!

RALPH: (*howls offstage*)

MARK: Okay, Ralph! I know you want to go out! I'll be right there. (*as he hurries to the door, he stops and addresses the audience*) Look, I don't understand what just happened either but let me give you some advice. If somebody asks you to do something, just do it. (*begins to exit, then stops again*) Just do it! (*and he's gone.*)

Scene 4: I'VE GOT TO BE A PRINCESS!

(*Polly is onstage, straightening an imaginary pillow*)

SAMANTHA: (*entering*) You ready?

POLLY: Yep. This is so cool! My first sleepover of the year! I'm glad Jess's mom let us stay here tonight.

SAMANTHA: I think she's crazy. Three girls in one room ... all night long.

POLLY: Don't worry. I'm going right to sleep.

SAMANTHA: Right.

JESSICA: (*entering*) I love this! My two best friends ... all night long! (*noticing Polly*) Hey ... that's my bed.

POLLY: Oh. Uh ... you don't mind if I use it just for tonight, do you?

JESSICA: It's my bed.

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POLLY: But I'm your guest, remember? Hey, Jess, I get really bad backaches when I sleep on the floor. Honest. It was something I was born with.

JESSICA: A princess complex?

SAMANTHA: Come on, Jess. We can sleep down here on the floor. Let the Princess have her throne.

POLLY: I'm not making this up.

JESSICA: Yeah ... like you're not making up that you have a sore neck so I have to take the bottom locker in gym class?

POLLY: Honest. It's hereditary.

SAMANTHA: Your mother's a whiner, too?

POLLY: Sam!

SAMANTHA: Oh, just go ahead, your highness. Your humble servants will be sound asleep here at your feet in case you want a sip of wine or a white horse during the night.

POLLY: Come on, guys. It's just a bad back.

JESSICA: You did six consecutive cartwheels in cheerleading practice when the boys' basketball team walked through the gym.

POLLY: Yeah. It was like a miracle. (*Samantha and Jessica look at each other, roll their eyes and recline on the floor*) Really ... it was like something came over me!

SAMANTHA: I know. His name was Derrick. Night, girls.

POLLY: Night.

JESSICA: Night, your highness.

POLLY: (*they all are silent a moment, then Polly rises to sitting*) They just don't understand. I mean, I always thought that it'll be cool to be a Princess, but ... oh ... never mind. I'm tired. (*she reclines*)

SAMANTHA: (*a very long pause, then suddenly sitting up*) 'Tis morning!

JESSICA: (*sitting quickly*) 'Tis morning!

POLLY: Huh?

SAMANTHA: (*she and Jessica scurry around the room, setting things in order ... much hub-bub*) We must awaken the Princess!

JESSICA: But what if she objects?

SAMANTHA: She cannot object! This is the day!

JESSICA: This is the day!

POLLY: Huh?

SAMANTHA: (*moving closely and gently to the still-reclining Polly, in a sing-song voice*) Your Majesty!

JESSICA: (*in similarly sweet and tuneful tone*) Wakey-wakey, Your Majesty!

POLLY: What's going on?

JESSICA: This is the day!

SAMANTHA: The day is here!

POLLY: Tuesday? Math test today?

JESSICA: (*raising Polly to her groggy feet*) Oh, your silly-silly majesty! Her majesty jests!

SAMANTHA: She jests! Come, Your Highness! We must get you dressed!

JESSICA: In the finest for today!

SAMANTHA: The very finest!

POLLY: What's going on? Did I miss an announcement? (*sees what Jessica is holding*) Wow! Now, that's a dress!

JESSICA: Of course, it's a dress! You had it specially made by the royal dressmaker! Come! This is the day!

POLLY: The day for what? (*Jessica and Samantha look at each other then burst into giggles*) (*as the two begin to put the dress on Polly ... it takes some doing*) This is mine? You're putting this fancy dress on me?

SAMANTHA: (*behind her, pulling hard on the stays as Polly reacts, wide-eyed*) Ugh! Your Highness should have skipped the Royal Pastry last night!

JESSICA: Pull harder!

POLLY: What are you ... (*but she's suddenly jolted by a huge tug from behind*) ... ah! What are you doing?

SAMANTHA: Doing? We are preparing you for your great day!

JESSICA: Your great day!

POLLY: I can't breathe!

SAMANTHA: Hark! I hear the trumpet's call!

JESSICA: The trumpet's call!

POLLY: I don't hear anything.

SAMANTHA: Oh, your silly-silly Majesty.

JESSICA: Silly, silly Majesty!

POLLY: Would somebody tell me what's going on here?

SAMANTHA: Don't forget your sword!

POLLY: My what?

JESSICA: (*picking up an imaginary sword*) The Princess's Sword!
(*Both Jess and Sam bow as Jess presents her with the sword. Polly takes it but the weight immediately drops her to the floor*)

POLLY: Aammph!

SAMANTHA: Oh, dear!

JESSICA: Oh, dear, indeed! Her Majesty has fallen!

SAMANTHA: Her back!

JESSICA: Her bad back! Summon the surgeon!

SAMANTHA: (*shouting off*) Bring the Royal Surgeon!

JESSICA: (*helping Polly to her bed*) Oh dear, dear, dear.

SAMANTHA: Dear, dear, dear indeed, dear! Her Royal Back aches!

POLLY: I'm fine! Really!

JESSICA: (*turning toward the door*) The Royal Surgeon approacheth!

SAMANTHA: With the Royal Cutting Torch!

JESSICA & SAMANTHA: The Royal Cutting Torch!

SAMANTHA: You must cut out the Royal Ache out of Her Majesty's Royal Back!

POLLY: (*sitting up*) Do what?

JESSICA: (*pushing her back down*) Turn her over! (*the two girls flip Polly onto her stomach*) Please quiet yourself, Your Majesty! 'Twill soon be done!

POLLY: What's he doing?

JESSICA & SAMANTHA: The Royal Cutting Torch!

SAMANTHA: Cut away! Cut away!

JESSICA: We must prepare you for your special day!

SAMANTHA: Spare no blood, noble Surgeon! Cut deep! Hack away!

JESSICA: Oh! Cover the Royal Floor with her Noble Blood!

POLLY: What!!!!!!? (*sits up*) Get him away from me! I'm fine! I'm fine!

SAMANTHA: But...

POLLY: I'm great! I'm peachy! Really! Wanna see me do a cartwheel?

SAMANTHA: She is cured! The Princess Polly is cured!

POLLY: (*standing*) Of course I'm cured! And what's the deal with the sword? I don't need a sword!

JESSICA: For the wedding!

POLLY: Who's wedding?

SAMANTHA: Oh, the Princess is such a jester! YOUR wedding, of course! You are to wed Prince Derrick!

POLLY: (*a pause ... a smile ... then ...*) Cool! I don't need a sword for that!

JESSICA: Oh, how brave!

SAMANTHA: How brave, indeed!

POLLY: Brave? To marry that hunk without a sword?

JESSICA: To fight your way through the snakes!

POLLY: Snakes?

SAMANTHA: The Royal Custom! The Princess must fight her way through the den of snakes to reach the bridegroom!

POLLY: Huh?

JESSICA: After she climbs though the cave of blood-sucking bats!

POLLY: Bats!!!!

SAMANTHA: And before she swims across the lake of eels!

POLLY: Eels!!!! To get married!

JESSICA: 'Tis the custom, Your Highness!

SAMANTHA: 'Tis the custom!

POLLY: No, it isn't!

JESSICA & SAMANTHA: What?

POLLY: I mean ... I don't know. I don't even know what's going on here! I don't want to be a Princess! I quit!

JESSICA: Your whole life, Your Majesty! Your whole life you asked to be a Princess and now you sit on the Royal Throne ...

SAMANTHA: ... and eat at the Royal Table ...

JESSICA: ... and use the Royal Locker ...

SAMANTHA: ... and sleep in the Royal Bed!

POLLY: This whole thing is a royal pain! I want out! I'm not getting married!

SAMANTHA & JESSICA: (*in unison*) Gasp! Horrors! Oh, woe! Woe! Woe!

POLLY: Who got me into this Princess business?

SAMANTHA: Why you, Your Highness! All your life you've wanted to be a Royal Princess and now you seem sad!

POLLY: Sad? Sad? Snakes and bats and eels and ... and a Royal Surgeon hacking into my backbone! "Sad" doesn't even come close, sister! I quit!

JESSICA: Quit! But no one has ever quit the Royal Princess-ship!

POLLY: Well, you're looking at Quitter Number One! I resign! I want to be just like everybody else!

SAMANTHA: Common? You would choose to be common rather than live the life of a Princess?

POLLY: Exactly. (*climbing back into her bed*) I'm going to bed. Wake me when the snakes are gone.

JESSICA: Oh, woe! Oh, woe!

SAMANTHA: Oh, woe indeed! We no longer have a Princess!

POLLY: Would somebody turn out the light?

JESSICA: But this means you can no longer sleep in the Royal Bed!

POLLY: I can't?

JESSICA: Only a Princess may put her head upon the Royal Pillow.

POLLY: But I like this pillow.

SAMANTHA: Remember the snakes!

POLLY: I hate this pillow. (*she moves to the floor*) I'll take the floor. Floors are good. Anybody got a blanket?

JESSICA: Oh, we shall keep you warm! (*and the two girls snuggle in to each side of her*) Never fear Your Highness.

SAMANTHA: Ex-Highness.

JESSICA: Ex-Highness.

POLLY: I hate bats.

SAMANTHA: Yes, Your Majesty.

POLLY: I hate eels.

JESSICA: Yes, Your Majesty.

POLLY: And Derrick's not that big a deal.

SAMANTHA: I'd never turn cartwheels over him.

POLLY: (*yawning*) I'm tired. I'm going ... (*getting drowsier*) ... to ... sleep. (*the other two smile at each other then recline beside Polly*) (*a long pause, then, sitting up*) What am I doing on the floor?

SAMANTHA: I thought it was getting crowded down here.

POLLY: You wouldn't believe the dream I just had!

JESSICA: Really?

POLLY: Snakes and eels and bats and swords and some guy was coming at me with a hack saw!

SAMANTHA: I knew it. Tacos before bedtime.

POLLY: (*standing quickly and gathering her things*) Come on! We gotta get ready for school! No ... I'll make the bed ... and I'll take the bottom locker in gym class. Come on guys, we gotta get ready. I'll tell you about my dream on the way to school. It was unbelievable! (*and she exits*) (*Samantha and Jessica watch her go, look at each and smile, then shake hands.*)

Scene 5: MOLLY IS MY COUSIN

Gina is a special needs child. Please play her honestly. To Molly, her world is every bit as real as ours.

GINA: (*entering*) Come on in, Molly. This is the school. Come on. It's okay. (*taking Molly's hand and bringing her into the area*) Come on, Molly. It's really okay. (*Molly, a special needs child, enters, timidly*) This is where I go to school ...

MOLLY: No.

GINA: Yes it is. This is where *I* go to school. It's not *your* school, Molly. This is Gina's school.

MOLLY: Not Molly's.

GINA: No ... yours is a different kind of school. This is where I go. It's just one day, Molly. You'll be okay.

KAREN: (*entering*) Gina!

GINA: Hi, Karen.

KAREN: Who's ...

GINA: My cousin Molly. She's ... you know ...

KAREN: Hi, Molly.

MOLLY: Not my school.

KAREN: Huh?

GINA: She's ... look, Molly's my cousin. Her folks came in for a family thing and Molly's just visiting our school.

KAREN: I didn't know you had a cousin Molly.

GINA: Yeah ... I do. She's my cousin.

MOLLY: Not my school.

KAREN: Why does she ...?

GINA: She's ... she's different. I mean, she's nice. But she goes to sort of a special school.

MOLLY: Not mine.

GINA: I know it's not your school, Molly. Come on. We gotta get to class.

KAREN: You still goin' to town with us tonight?

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GINA: Oh, geesh. I can't. I've gotta ... (*indicates Molly*) You know.
KAREN: Oh. Too bad. She could come along and ...
GINA: No. No, she couldn't. We gotta go.
RENE: (*as Karen exits*) Gina! Did you get my message?
GINA: I been kinda busy.
RENE: Who's ...?
GINA: My cousin Molly.
RENE: Hi. (*Molly doesn't answer ... a long pause*) Oh. Okay. (*begins to leave*)
GINA: No. Molly's ... I mean, it's okay. She's just ...
RENE: Your cousin? I didn't know you had a cousin Molly.
GINA: I don't, uh ... you know ... I don't talk about her a lot.
MOLLY: Go home.
RENE: Huh?
MOLLY: Go home.
GINA: We can't go home, Molly. This is my school.
MOLLY: Not my school.
GINA: Molly, I know it's not your school. It's my school and ...
MOLLY: (*putting her hands over her ears, beginning to break down a bit*) Not my school! Go home!
RENE: Whoa.
GINA: Molly, you've got to be ...
MOLLY: (*shouting*) Go home! Go home! Not my school! Go home!
GINA: Oh, gosh ...
RENE: I gotta go ...
GINA: Don't ... (*grabbing Rene before she exits*) Look, she's got problems, you know. She's just different.
RENE: Yeah. Very. I'm not making fun of her.
GINA: I didn't say you were.
RENE: Then why are you grabbing me?
GINA: I'm not grabbing you. I just wanted to tell you that.
KAREN: Hey guys, first hour's about to start.
MOLLY: Go home! Go home!
GINA: Molly, be quiet!
MOLLY: (*sitting on the floor, hands over her ears, shouting*) Not my school.
KAREN: You gotta do something.
GINA: What?
KAREN: I don't know. She's your cousin. This isn't gonna work. (*to Rene*) Gina's busy tonight. wanna go to town?
RENE: Sure. Who else is goin'?
KAREN: Everybody. (*looks at Gina*) I mean ... you know. Maybe another time.
RENE: (*she and Karen exit*) Come on, we'll talk on the way to class.

GINA: (*Gina watches them go. She looks at Molly, still on the floor, hands over her ears, crying and rocking a bit. .A long pause. What should she do? Finally ...*) (*quietly*) Molly? (*Molly continues in her own terrified world.*) (*a bit louder*) Molly? (*Gina carefully looks around to see if anyone's watching then he eases herself onto the floor to sit beside her cousin.*) Molly, you've got to get up. (*Molly continues.*) Molly, we can't sit out here on the middle of the hall. (*nothing*) I can't take you back home, Molly. Nobody's there today. Your mom and dad won't be back 'til ...

RENE: (*running in*) Sorry, I forget something. (*stops*) Oh. Something wrong? (*Gina just sighs and looks at her.*) Can I help?

GINA: (*looks at Rene a moment, looks at Molly, then*) I don't know. I don't think so.

RENE: You can't just sit out here.

GINA: I know. But what do I do?

RENE: Call somebody.

GINA: I can't. Her folks thought she could just spend a day around ... you know ...

RENE: Normal?

GINA: Don't say that.

RENE: Sorry.

GINA: They thought she'd be okay.

RENE: She's not okay.

GINA: I know that. Just go to class. Don't get into trouble. I'll just ... I'll just sit with her a minute.

RENE: I'm sorry.

GINA: It's okay. Just ... just go.

KAREN: (*entering*) Hey, are you guys gonna ...? (*sees the two girls on the floor and stops*) What's the matter?

GINA: Nothing's the matter, just leave us alone, okay? Everything's gonna be all right! Just go to class and leave us alone!

KAREN: Whoa.

RENE: (*as she begins to leave with Karen*) No problem.

GINA: (*shouting after them*) Hey! Hey, I'm sorry, okay? (*but they are gone*) (*a long look at Molly, then*) Well, Molly. Now what? Those were my two best friends ...'til now. Molly? (*Molly uncovers her ears, not paying attention*) Molly, this isn't going very well.

MOLLY: Home.

GINA: We can't go home.

MOLLY: Home.

GINA: We ... Look ... you wanna take a walk? I'm supposed to be in class but I'm in trouble anyway.

MOLLY: Not my school. (*a long pause as Molly stares off into the distance and Gina sits there absolutely clueless as to what to do*) Not my school.

GINA: Not your school.

MOLLY: Home.

GINA: (*a long pause, then*) Wanna hear a story?

MOLLY: Huh?

GINA: A story. Would you like to hear a story?

MOLLY: Bears? Got bears?

GINA: I don't know any bear stories, Molly. Maybe about, uh ... gosh ... It's been a long time since I told a story. How about ... How about a princess?

MOLLY: Bears.

GINA: No, a Princess. A really, really pretty princess.

MOLLY: Pretty.

GINA: Very, very pretty. And she lived in a big, tall castle. And she wore pretty dresses and she had pretty hair and she had ... uh ...

MOLLY: Bears.

GINA: (*laughs a little*) Okay, Molly. She had bears!

MOLLY: Yes!

GINA: She had lots and lots of bears!

MOLLY: Bears!

GINA: Yes! Bears! And every night the bears would come to her and say, "Oh pretty princess, won't you please come out and play with us?"

MOLLY: Big bears!

GINA: Really, really big bears! And they wore dresses, too!

MOLLY: (*laughs*)

GINA: And the biggest ... the really, really biggest bear said, "Come dance with us, Princess!"

MOLLY: (*getting up, excitedly*) Yes!

GINA: Come out into the night and dance with us and we shall have a ... a ...

MOLLY: Birthday!

GINA: A birthday! (*rising to Molly*) A big, bear birthday!

MOLLY: Yes!

GINA: And so they danced! The princess and the big bears danced and danced and danced ... (*Molly begins to laugh and twirl around*) And they were all so happy! (*Molly begins to sing, first humming then rather loudly, nonsensical but happy sounds*) And then all the people came out to see what was going on! And then ... (*but Molly's singing and dancing has become more than Gina had planned upon. She becomes worried*) Easy Molly!

MOLLY: (*still dancing and singing to herself*) Bears and bears and bears and bears!

GINA: Molly! (*trying to stop her*) Molly, we're in school. Molly, you've got to be quit.

MOLLY: Big bears!

GINA: Molly!

MOLLY: (*as she continues to twirl and dance and Gina tries desperately to stop her*) Big, big, big, bears!

GINA: Please Molly! (*but someone else has entered the hallway. Gina stops and looks but Molly continues to dance*) Huh? Look, I'm sorry. What? We're dancing. Permission? I hadn't gotten to the office yet and ... Molly, please! (*but Molly continues, shouting over her*) Molly! (*to the other person*) I can't ... I mean, she won't ... she's ... She's my cousin and this isn't her school and ... (*in tears*) Molly, please! You're getting us in trouble!

KAREN: (*entering with Rene*) What's all the ...?

RENE: The principal.

GINA: Mrs. Wade, I'm really sorry. Molly, please stop. (*to the principal*) What? I can't get a detention for this! It wasn't my fault! (*grabbing Molly so firmly that she stops, confused*) Molly! Really! (*to principal*) It wasn't my fault! This isn't fair! It wasn't my ...

KAREN: My fault.

GINA: Huh?

KAREN: The dance.

GINA: What are ...?

KAREN: (*nudging Rene*) The dance?

RENE: For English!

KAREN: Huh?

RENE: We had to come up with this dance to show how the new music is just a modern version of Shakespeare's sonnets and we're supposed to demonstrate it to the class so we brought in Gina's cousin Molly ...

MOLLY: Not my school.

RENE: ... who comes from a different school where they study more Shakespeare and she was just showing us a project she was doing for her Advanced Studies course. (*a very long pause as all three of the other girls stare at Rene's bit of improvised imagination in absolute wonder and admiration*)

MOLLY: (*finally ... after a very long pause*) Home.

RENE: It's called "Home."

MOLLY: Bears.

RENE: The Home Bear dance!

MOLLY: Yes!

RENE, KAREN & GINA: Yes! (*Then all eyes turn toward the principal hoping ... hoping*)

GINA: Oh, yes, we will, Mrs. Wade. We'll do it more quietly. (*the four girls watch the unseen principal go*) What just happened?

KAREN: (*to Rene*) Where'd you come up with that?

RENE: I don't have a clue.

GINA: That was brilliant.

RENE: I think you're right.

GINA: Hey guys, this is awesome. You really saved me. I could have been in big trouble ... and since I've got to stay with Molly tonight, you'll ... you know ... you'll ask me to hang around some other time, right?

KAREN: Absolutely not.

RENE: Karen!
KAREN: No way we can make it another night. It's gotta be tonight.
GINA: But I've got Molly, and ...
KAREN: Molly's going with us.
GINA: You're kidding.
RENE: After all, she's an expert on Shakespearean dance.
GINA: But ... I mean, how come ...
KAREN: Are you kidding? *(as she puts her arm around Molly)* Molly's my cousin!
RENE: *(slipping her arm around Molly)* She's my cousin!
GINA: Awww ...
MOLLY: Me too! *(the four friends exit)*

Scene 6: THE LIFE OF A GIRL

ONE: You've heard it said ...
TWO: Over and over ...
ONE: ... and over again ...
THREE: The History of Man!
TWO: Mankind's Greatest Achievements!
ONE: Man marches onward!
THREE: But what about ...
TWO: Yeah. What about ...
FOUR: The girl!
ALL: The girl!
FOUR: The Life of a Girl!
TWO: Presented in one short act. No intermission. If you've got to go do something, do it now and please turn off all electronic devices.
ALL: The girl!
ONE: She is born!
THE GIRL: *(her back still turned to the audience, begins whimpering in the high-pitched cry of a small baby)*
TWO: She enters the world!
THE GIRL: *(coming into the playing area, looking around)* Well, hello there, world!
ONE: She is adorable!
THE GIRL: Thanks.
TWO: Everyone absolutely loves her!
THE OTHERS: *(adoringly)* Ahhh
THREE: Her father thinks she's the most beautiful child in the world.
TWO: *(as Father)* What a babe.
THREE: Her mother knows she's the smartest girl ever born.
ONE: What's the capital of Uganda, sweetheart?
THE GIRL: Huh?

ONE: Kampala! I know she said Kampala! Did you hear her say “Kampala?”

THREE: Mothers have very good ears.

FOUR: She learns to walk.

THE GIRL: Walk? Watch this! (*she does some fancy dance steps as the other actors provide a rhythm backup*)

FOUR: She learns to speak!

THE GIRL: Arf!

THREE: Wrong.

THE GIRL: Oh. Yo! Dude!

THREE: That’s better.

FOUR: She is the perfect little girl!

THE GIRL: Thanks.

FOUR: But of course all little girls are perfect ... until ...

THREE: Until ...

TWO: Until ...

THE GIRL: Until what?

THE OTHER ACTORS: Adolescence!

THE GIRL: What’s that? A disease?

TWO: Yes!

ONE: She discovers ... Boys!

THE GIRL: What’s that? A disease?

TWO: Yes!

THE GIRL: Yes! (*sees a boy*) This is getting better all the time. When do I get my car?

TWO: And suddenly ...

THREE: ... suddenly ...

FOUR: Suddenly everything changes.

ONE: (*As Mom*) Sweetheart. Are these your grades?

THE GIRL: I dunno.

TWO: (*as Dad*) Honey, your mother and I are very concerned.

THE GIRL: Me too. I’ve lost that guy’s phone number. Dad, can I have ten dollars?

ONE: (*as Mom*) I think it’s time we all sat down and had a good talk!

THE GIRL: Could you just text me? I’ve got a date tonight. Anybody seen that red blouse?

TWO: (*As Dad*) No daughter of mine is going to dress like that!

THE GIRL: It’s Mom’s blouse.

TWO: (*As Dad, to Mother, angrily*) Sweetheart!

ONE: (*as Mom*) Sorry.

THREE: Her life is one, big whirlwind of conversations, flirtations, misunderstandings, and other four-syllable words!

THREE: Too many problems!

THE GIRL: Too many syllables.

FOUR: And then it happens!

THREE: It really happens ...

THE GIRL: What? What? This is going too fast! My head is spinning!

FOUR: High School!

THE OTHER ACTORS: Drama!

ONE: (*Xing to the girl*) Did you hear what she said about you?

TWO: I can't believe what I just heard!

THREE: Everybody's saying it.

FOUR: You need to tell her off.

ONE: He's the one who told her.

TWO: You don't have to take this.

THREE: It's all over the school.

THE GIRL: Stop it! I hate all this drama! (*the others are silent*) I just can't stand the way kids tear each other up! It makes me sick! I'm serious! I don't want to hear any more of it. (*a long pause as they look at her, then*) But what did he say about me?

ONE: (*the others huddle around The Girl and talk in mime*) And so it goes on and on and on. The boys of the world dribble their way through life, causing most of the problems, and never suffering the drama, while The Girl goes to school each day as if she's in the middle of a really bad movie ... until.

OTHER ACTORS: Until!

TWO: (*to The Girl*) Have you picked out a college yet?

THE GIRL: I'm just a kid! How can I make a decision like that?

THREE: It's no biggie. It'll just determine your lifetime average earning, your success in finding the right mate, your ability to raise children in a healthy and stable home environment, and your chances of maintaining a youthful figure long into the retirement home.

THE GIRL: Gosh! How do I decide?

FOUR: Easy! Pick the one with the biggest dorm rooms!

THE GIRL: Cool!

ONE: Congratulations! You're in college!

TWO: Whee!

THREE: Ding! Ding! Ding! Ding!

THE GIRL: I've got it made! The world is mine! I'm going to change the world!

FOUR: (*as the others hum a little game show music in the background*) Congratulations and Welcome to The Girl Enters the World! Say, Jack! What kind of prizes do we have for today's lucky contestant?

THREE: Hey Biff! For today's winner of The Girl Enters the World, the magic number is 77!

THE GIRL: 77?

THREE: That's right! That's the percentage of salary you'll make!

THE GIRL: 77 percent of what?

THREE: The average male! Congratulations! (*Others cheer in background*)

THE GIRL: Wait a minute! Wait a minute! That's not fair!

THREE: You're right! And you'll get to keep the house in order, while working a second job to support your husband! Congratulations! (*the others cheer*)

THE GIRL: Did I sign up for this?

FOUR: And what about our big prize, Jack?

THREE: Glad you asked, Biff! Here it comes! Drum roll, please! (*the others provide a drum roll*) For your grand prize ...Children!

ALL OTHERS: Whoopee!

ONE: Mom, he hit me.

TWO: Did not!

THREE: Can I get a tattoo?

THE GIRL: You're only three!

THREE: I'll get a little one.

ONE: Mom, tell him to stop hitting me!

FOUR: (*as her husband on his cell phone*) Honey, I'll be late again tonight.

THE GIRL: What?

FOUR: Me and some of the guys are going bowling after work.

THE GIRL: Do you know what's going on in his house?

FOUR: Of course not. I'm a father. Love you. (*hangs up*)

ONE: But then ...

TWO: Yes ... then...

ONE: Then there are those truly special moments of motherhood...

THREE: (*nestling up to her*) Mom, I really love you.

THE GIRL: I love you, too, sweetheart.

THREE: You are just the most special, special mom in the whole world.

THE GIRL: That's very nice, sweetheart. That makes Mommy feel good.

THREE: Can I start dating?

THE GIRL: You're in second grade.

THREE: I know. I've been waiting for just the right guy.

THE GIRL: Go to bed.

THREE: What about ...?

THE GIRL: Bed. Now. Go.

THREE: Mom!

FOUR: (*on phone*) Honey, could you fix a late supper? We're having a really good time.

TWO: Mom, the cat is stuck in the toilet.

THE GIRL: What?!

FOUR: I said I'll be a little later. How about that special casserole your mom used to make?

THREE: But he asked me to marry him, Mom!

THE GIRL: Go marry the cat!



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