

A KNOCK AROUND THE BLOCK

by Kimberlee Mendoza



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A Knock around the Block

Fabulous fifties dinner theatre

by Kimberlee Mendoza

CAST OF CHARACTERS

GREGORY PATTERSON

Grumpy but likeable dad (male, 40s)

MARTHA PATTERSON

Really jolly and a bit naive mother (female, 40s)

PETER PATTERSON

Happy, slightly goofy jock (male, 12-16)

KAY PATTERSON

Annoyed rebellious girl (female, 15-18)

WILSON BRYANT

Ditsy jock friend (male, 14-16)

SANDY BRYANT

Wilson's sister/Kay's friend (female, 12-16)

JASON GREEN

Jock friend/Kay's love interest (male, 15-18)

DUNE

Neighbor/greaser, troublemaker (male, 16-18)

CREDO

Greaser who likes to rhyme (male, 16-18)

OFFICER GREEN

No-nonsense police officer (male or female, late 20s)

GRANDMA (voice only)*

Mean grandma of Dune (backstage)

ANNOUNCER (voice only)

Crisp announcer voice (pre-taped)

*GRANDMA may be a character in the play, an audience member, or an Off-stage voice.

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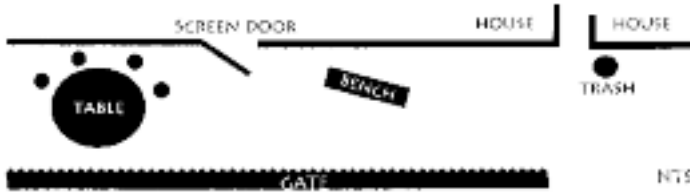
PRODUCTION NOTES

Location and Time

A family's back yard in Akron, Ohio, circa the 1950s.

Set

The back patio of a 1950s-era house. There is a table with chairs at Stage Right and a screen door. Consider placing fake grass, flowers, and a picket fence against the stage. At Center Stage there is a bench, hammock, or lawn chair. At Stage Left, there is a flat that looks like the corner of another house. There should be a gap for an actor to enter and exit. There should also be a trash can at the corner of the house.



Props

Gardening gloves, gardening tool, place settings, bowls of breakfast food, product containers (Pillsbury pancake mix, Aeroplane's grape jelly, Betty Crocker chocolate cake mix, Nucoa margarine, Merchant's lemonade), bag of trash, baseball, gloves, bat, *The Secret Garden* book, pebbles, 1950s magazine, coffee mug, briefcase, newspaper, glass of orange juice, pills, plate of sandwiches, comb, yardstick, Yahtzee game, glass of lemonade, iced tea and plate of cookies, piece of bat with name "Peter," and fruitcake.

Costumes

All costumes should be 1950s attire. There are costume changes for each day.

GREGORY PATTERSON — Nice pants, button shirts, suit jacket, cardigan, tie, hat, watch.

MARTHA PATTERSON — Nice dresses with an apron.

PETER PATTERSON — Jeans, T-shirts, letterman sweater, glasses.

KAY PATTERSON — Poodle skirts, dressy shirts, cardigans.

WILSON BRYANT — Jeans, T-shirts, letterman sweater.

SANDY BRYANT — Poodle skirts, dressy shirts, cardigans.

JASON GREEN — Jeans, T-shirts, letterman sweater.

DUNE — Jeans, T-shirts, leather or gang jacket.

CREDO — Jeans, T-shirts, jean or gang jacket.

OFFICER GREEN — Police uniform.

Sound Effects

Laugh tracks, buzzing of bugs sound, car horn, motorcycles, slamming door sound, thump or whacking sound, doorbell.

The Evening

Have the characters or a waitstaff serve beverages as the guests arrive. If you have live entertainment, serve the main course during the pre-show. The dessert may be served at intermission.

Ambience: Consider decorating the room to look like a garden party in the 1950s. Some oldie but goodie music plays as guests enter. For the table centerpieces, scatter some '50s penny candy and bubble gum about and arrange an old board game in the middle. These Websites carry '50s candy: www.NostalgicCandy.com, www.OldTimeCandy.com, and www.RetroCandyOnline.com.

Menu Suggestions

- Barbecued hamburgers or fried chicken
- Potato salad or baked beans
- Ambrosia or Jell-O Salad
- Strawberry shortcake, parfaits, cookies, 50/50 bars, hot fudge sundaes, or cake for dessert
- Lemonade and iced tea

Schedule of Events

- Guests arrive
- Cast mingles among audience
- Beverages are on table
- Possible entertainment while main entrée is served
- Act I
- Intermission/Dessert and coffee served (Cast mingles in audience)
- Act II
- Guests depart

Play Run Time

Script: Approximately 50 minutes

Play, pre-show, and full meal: Approximately two hours

Director's Note: The dialogue is meant to be snappy with quick delivery. Consider having your actors watch old 1950s sitcoms to learn how to deliver the lines with the right cadence appropriate to the time.

ACT I

Scene 1

ANNOUNCER: *(Taped or Off-stage)* This is taped before a live studio audience. *(MARTHA is gardening. PETER enters from house tossing a ball without a glove.)*

PETER: Mom! Mom! Oh, there you are. Have you seen my glove? *(PETER poses and the same pose is captured in black in white on a screen up front with his real name as "Peter" — for example, "Starring Joe Smith as Peter." Or he can face the audience and hold a slide or sign that reads "Peter." MARTHA stands with a smile.)*

MARTHA: Of course, dear. You left it out here last night. Here you go. *(MARTHA hands him the glove, then poses and the same pose is captured in black and white on a screen up front with her real name as "Mom." Or she can face the audience and hold a slide or sign that reads "Mom.")*

PETER: That's swell, Mom. The boys are going to be here soon. Do you think we could have some soda pop?

MARTHA: Of course, dear. I'll bring some out when they get here. For now, eat your breakfast. I made date-nut pancakes with the all-new ... *(She shows box and smiles at audience)* ... Pillsbury pancake mix. It's so easy even you can do it, sport.

PETER: Neat-o. *(GREGORY enters.)*

GREGORY: Those hooligans messed up my lawn with their noisemakers again. *(GREGORY poses and on the screen up front the same pose is captured in black and white with his real name as "Dad." Or he can face the audience and hold a slide or sign that reads "Dad.")*

MARTHA: Motorcycles, dear. I believe they're called motorcycles.

GREGORY: *(Voice rising)* They're called scrap metal, and I have an inclination to call the dump to come take them all away!

MARTHA: Your blood pressure, dear. Now, sit down and eat your breakfast before the honeybees get it. *(Buzz sound.)*

GREGORY: Ah! *(Looking at PETER)* Don't ever let me find you

- 1 acting like those street thugs; you got that, young man?
- 2 **PETER:** No sir! I'm going to be someone important when I
- 3 grow up, like Babe Ruth or Johnny Carson. (*KAY enters*
- 4 *with her book, The Secret Garden.*)
- 5 **KAY:** More like _____ (*Insert someone from the congregation*
- 6 *who is a good sport*) or **Howdy Doody.** (*KAY poses and the*
- 7 *same pose is captured in black and white on a screen up front*
- 8 *with her real name as "Kay." Or she can face the audience and*
- 9 *hold a slide or sign that reads "Kay."*)
- 10 **MARTHA:** Now, Kay, be nice and apologize to your brother.
- 11 **KAY:** Oh, I'm sorry, baby brother. What was I thinking? I
- 12 know you can't help being a nerd.
- 13 **GREGORY:** Obey your mother.
- 14 **KAY:** Sorry, squirt. (*To MARTHA*) Breakfast on the patio
- 15 again?
- 16 **MARTHA:** We only have a few more days of summer left, and
- 17 I want to enjoy it as much as possible. Now everyone sit
- 18 and eat. I made freshly squeezed orange juice with my
- 19 all-new Bakelite fruit juicer. It's divine. (*Holds up cup,*
- 20 *smiles at camera, and drinks. Then coughs because it went*
- 21 *down the wrong pipe. But she ends with a smile. There are*
- 22 *mounds of food on the table. GREGORY sits but is more*
- 23 *interested in his newspaper than the food.*)
- 24 **PETER:** Thank you, Mom. You're the best. I need to be fueled
- 25 up and ready for when the guys get here.
- 26 **KAY:** Here? What do you mean *here*?
- 27 **PETER:** The boys are coming over to talk over strategies for
- 28 our big game, and then maybe toss the ball around for a
- 29 little while.
- 30 **KAY:** Oh, no you don't. The girls are coming over for our
- 31 monthly book club. Right, Mom?
- 32 **PETER:** You can do that inside.
- 33 **KAY:** No, we're reading *The Secret Garden*. I promised them
- 34 ambiance, like in the book. Mom even made flower
- 35 cupcakes and everything.
- 36 **MARTHA:** Oh yes, using Betty Crocker's new chocolate
- 37 recipe. (*Holds up box.*) I'm sure it will work out for
- 38 everyone. Chocolate cake can solve all the world's

- 1 problems. *(Pause)* Don't you agree?
- 2 GREGORY: *(Looking over newspaper)* Send the president a
3 cupcake, dear. Ol' Ike could use all the help he can get.
- 4 PETER: *(Snort laughs.)* Good one, Dad.
- 5 MARTHA: Kay, sit and eat your breakfast.
- 6 KAY: I'm not hungry.
- 7 GREGORY: Starving kids in China would love to have your
8 food.
- 9 KAY: That's because they have to deal with a bunch of
10 Communists doling out their food supply, Dad. Not
11 because I didn't eat my eggs.
- 12 MARTHA: *(Nervous, looks around and up.)* Now darling, let's not
13 talk like that. We don't say that word around here.
14 *(Whispers.)* They might hear you.
- 15 KAY: What word? Who might hear me?
- 16 MARTHA: *(Whispers and spells it out.)* The C-o-m ... *(Thinks for a*
17 *second)* m-u-n-i-s-t-s. The Russians might be listening
18 and drop the bomb on us at any second. *(Looks at sky.)*
19 She didn't mean it. She's a good girl, I promise.
- 20 KAY: All this because I mentioned Communism at the
21 breakfast table?
- 22 MARTHA: Shush! Oh my, Gregory, do something. Please!
23 Before your daughter destroys this family. *(MARTHA*
24 *exits quickly.)*
- 25 GREGORY: Your mom is right. You can never be too careful.
26 You don't know what kind of satellite is up there right
27 now, pointing down on us. Listening to our every word.
28 *(He looks all around, suspicious.)* You should wait until the
29 shelter is built. Then we can talk more freely.
- 30 KAY: I doubt anyone out there cares about our square
31 family. We're about as interesting as an ant on a
32 sidewalk.
- 33 PETER: Speak for yourself. *(Pause)* Wait ... you were. *(Laughs*
34 *with snort.)* Get it? Speaking for yourself, 'cause you're
35 about as interesting as an ant.
- 36 KAY: Sit on it, Peter. You're such a goober. Jokes are only
37 funny when you don't have to explain them.
- 38 PETER: Well, if you had more of a brain, maybe I wouldn't

1 have to explain it.

2 **KAY:** Maybe if your jokes were funny, we could start there.
3 *(MARTHA enters with briefcase and coffee mug. GREGORY*
4 *reaches for it, but cringes.)*

5 **MARTHA:** Your tennis elbow acting up again?

6 **GREGORY:** Yes. Do you know where my pills are?

7 **MARTHA:** Let me get them. *(MARTHA exits.)*

8 **KAY:** So, what is the decision on who gets the back yard?

9 **GREGORY:** You can both use it. *(Looks at watch.)* Oh, I need to
10 get to work.

11 **KAY:** That's not fair.

12 **GREGORY:** Someday when you have a husband and your
13 own house, you can have your own way. Until then, it's
14 all about me.

15 **KAY:** It's the 1950s, Dad. Get modern. Maybe I don't want a
16 husband. Maybe I'll join the Peace Corps and see the
17 world, or play professionally on a baseball team, or run
18 away to join the circus.

19 **PETER:** Yeah, you could be the bearded lady.

20 **KAY:** Better than the world's puniest boy. *(Looks at*
21 *GREGORY.)* Trust me, I'm as strong as any boy. *(Looks at*
22 *PETER.)* And stronger than others. *(MARTHA enters with*
23 *two pills in her hand and hands them to GREGORY, who takes*
24 *them with a glass of orange juice from the table.)*

25 **MARTHA:** Here you go, dear.

26 **GREGORY:** Do something about your daughter, Martha.
27 She's talking nonsense.

28 **MARTHA:** Kay, stop talking nonsense.

29 **KAY:** What? I just pointed out that it's the late 1950s.

30 **GREGORY:** And so it is. *(Kisses MARTHA.)* See you tonight.
31 *(GREGORY exits. MARTHA cleans up plates and exits.)*

32 **KAY:** Well, I'm not budging.

33 **PETER:** Me either.

34 **KAY:** We'll see.

35 **PETER:** Yes ... we shall. *(Lights out as they stare each other*
36 *down.)*

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Scene 2

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(*Lights come up, KAY and PETER haven't budged. JASON, WILSON, and SANDY enter from house right.*)

JASON: OK, I have one. Who is the lovable rogue on *The Phil Silvers Show*?

SANDY: That's too easy. Master Sergeant Ernest Bilko. You've got to do better than that. I live for trivia.

JASON: (*Notices KAY and PETER.*) Your friends are a little strange.

SANDY: Brother and sister rivalry? (*To KAY and PETER*) You two OK?

WILSON: OK, I have one.

JASON: This should be good.

WILSON: Who does Ricky love on the *I Love Lucy* show?

JASON: (*Sarcastic*) Oh, I don't know. Ethel.

WILSON: Wrong! It was Lucy. I knew I could stump you! (*Laughs a dorky laugh.*)

JASON: (*Laughs.*) You got him all right.

SANDY: Don't encourage him.

JASON: OK, my turn. (*Pause*) Which show has the characters Bud, Kitten, and Princess?

WILSON: *Lassie and Friends*? (*They look at him and shake heads.*) What? It sounds true. Those are animal names ... right?

SANDY: No. It's *Father Knows Best*.

WILSON: It's not fair. Jason has had a television for years. I'm still waiting for my family to get one.

SANDY: We share the same parents. How does that work?

WILSON: It just does. Somehow.

SANDY: (*Shaking head*) Hey, Kay, you two about finished with your staring contest?

PETER: As soon as Kay goes inside, we can begin.

KAY: Never going to happen.

JASON: Is this your sister?

KAY: (*Not looking*) Yes, and any friend of my annoying brother is no friend of m — (*Looks at him and gasps.*) Well, maybe a friend of mine. Hi, I'm Kay.

- 1 JASON: Jason.
- 2 WILSON: So, what's the problem, Peter?
- 3 PETER: Kay won't let us have the back yard.
- 4 JASON: We could probably share it.
- 5 PETER: No. She's having a garden party with her
6 girlfriends.
- 7 WILSON: Will there be girls here? (*Laughs goofy.*) I'm OK with
8 that.
- 9 SANDY: (*Sarcastic*) Of course you are.
- 10 WILSON: Can you blame me? Wait. Will there be other girls
11 besides my sister? Because she's not really a girl.
- 12 SANDY: Of course I'm a girl.
- 13 WILSON: Not really. You don't count.
- 14 SANDY: Peter, I count, right?
- 15 PETER: (*Laughs nervously.*) Um, sure, yeah!
- 16 WILSON: Double yuck. (*MARTHA enters with a plate of*
17 *sandwiches. Everyone takes one.*)
- 18 MARTHA: Everyone, eat up. Can't have you wasting away to
19 nothing.
- 20 JASON: Thanks, Mrs. Patterson. I love peanut butter and
21 jelly.
- 22 MOM: Made with Aeroplane's fresh grape jelly. (*Poses with jar,*
23 *then exits. DUNE and CREDO enter with trash bags and dump*
24 *them in the can and lean against fence.*)
- 25 CREDO: Hey, look — it's Akron's biggest nerd herd.
- 26 SANDY: Beat it, will you? We're having a party and you're
27 not invited.
- 28 DUNE: My property, my bash. So get bent. We're staying.
- 29 CREDO: (*Says it like forced rhyme*) Yeah, it's a free country. We
30 don't have to go, you know.
- 31 DUNE: (*Under breath to CREDO*) Don't start rhyming.
- 32 CREDO: Sorry, Dune.
- 33 DUNE: But he's right, this is a free country. You got that,
34 freak?
- 35 CREDO: So stow it, geek. (*DUNE shoots CREDO a look.*)
- 36 PETER: Well, no greasers allowed within spitting distance of
37 this place, unless you want trouble.
- 38 DUNE: You getting smart, nerd?

- 1 PETER: Golly, I *am* smart. My IQ is 180.
- 2 CREDO: More like a dumb thumb. Doesn't even know he's
3 being insulted.
- 4 DUNE: (*To PETER*) Be quiet, nerd, before I pound your face
5 in.
- 6 CREDO: Let the rumble begin.
- 7 DUNE: (*Snaps.*) Cool it.
- 8 CREDO: I just thought —
- 9 DUNE: Leave the thinking to me, sandpit. You're not
10 qualified. If you were, you'd be the head of the Raptors
11 like me. See?
- 12 CREDO: Now who's rhyming?
- 13 DUNE: Hush, before I blow my top!
- 14 CREDO: Right-o.
- 15 JASON: Aren't you a little far from the pound, Dune?
- 16 DUNE: Oh, a wise guy.
- 17 CREDO: Ha, wise guy. We're gonna make you cry. (*CREDO*
18 *snaps his fingers.*)
- 19 PETER: Go home, Dune.
- 20 DUNE: How would you like a knuckle sandwich, jock?
- 21 WILSON: No, he already ate a peanut butter and jelly
22 sandwich. They were good. Want one? I think there's
23 one left. (*Looks.*) Wait, no, they're all gone.
- 24 DUNE: I think your boy is a little short on gray matter.
25 Tackled one too many times, maybe?
- 26 WILSON: Tackled? Wait, what? There's no tackling in
27 baseball. (*Thinking*) Right, Jason?
- 28 JASON: Beat it; we're trying to talk here.
- 29 DUNE: Ha! Check it out, Credo. The squares here think they
30 can get rid of us.
- 31 CREDO: What a spaz. (*Pause*) What a disgrace. You gonna toss
32 a football at our face?
- 33 WILSON: What football? We're baseball players.
- 34 JASON: And they called you dumb.
- 35 WILSON: They did? When?
- 36 DUNE: I know you're not stupid enough to insinuate that
37 *I'm* stupid. Chains and zips might change your tune.
- 38 KAY: Come on, boys. No fighting. (*DUNE pulls back his fist*

1 *when MARTHA enters.*)

2 **MARTHA:** Oh, more friends. I'm out of peanut butter, but I
3 have some margarine. Would you like some toast made
4 with Nucoa margarine? (*Displays margarine tub.*) It's
5 simply divine!

6 **PETER:** No, Mom. They aren't staying.

7 **MARTHA:** Oh, well, nice to meet you boys.

8 **DUNE:** You too, ma'am. (*He snaps his fingers and they turn to go.*)
9 You can't hide behind your mama's skirt forever, Petie
10 ol' boy. (*DUNE snaps his fingers. They exit.*)

11 **MARTHA:** What a silly thing to say. You haven't done that in
12 years. (*MARTHA picks up the plates and exits.*)

13 **JASON:** Something's got to be done to that greaser.

14 **PETER:** My dad has been saying that for weeks. They wake
15 us up at the crack of dawn revving their motorcycles.
16 **KAY:** Yeah, and they're always tossing stuff over the fence.
17 Mom doesn't know Dune does that, but if she did, she'd
18 clock him one.

19 **WILSON:** So why didn't you want us to fight them?

20 **KAY:** Because I like Jason's face the way it is.

21 **JASON:** You do? (*JASON turns to her and runs a comb through his*
22 *hair.*)

23 **PETER:** Oh, gee. Can we get on with our day now?

24 **KAY:** (*She locks eyes with JASON. They seem to only see each other.*)
25 Yeah, you go on.

26 **PETER:** And take the yard?

27 **KAY:** Whatever you say.

28 **PETER:** Golly, thanks. Jason?

29 **JASON:** Yeah, sure. Sure. Whatever she says.

30 **PETER:** Jason!

31 **JASON:** (*Blinks.*) Yes, what?

32 **PETER:** Meeting? Now. Here.

33 **JASON:** Maybe we should postpone —

34 **SANDY:** What about the book club? Rhonda and Janessa will
35 be here any minute.

36 **KAY:** Oh, right. (*Blinks.*) Um ... maybe we should all go to the
37 park. The boys could play ball, and we could discuss
38 *The Secret Garden.*

18
19 **DUNE:** *(From Backstage)* OK, Grandma. Just wait, will ya?
20 *(Pause)* You don't have to get rough. Ouch! You're going
21 to throw your back out again. Stop! OK! I'll take it.
22 *(DUNE enters with trash and walks it to the trash can. He*
23 *stops and looks at his neighbor's house and watches them*
24 *without them realizing it.)*
25 **KAY:** Why can't we sit inside? The bugs are out in full force.
26 *(Buzzing sound. Smacks her neck.)* And I think they like me.
27 **PETER:** I don't know why they would. You're super-duper
28 sour.
29 **MARTHA:** Now Peter, remember, girls are sugar and spice
30 and everything nice.
31 **GREGORY:** Yes. You're probably sweet like honey.
32 **KAY:** Thanks, Dad. *(Smacks arm.)* Aah! I still wish we could go
33 inside. *Leave It to Beaver* will be on soon. We could set
34 the card table up and watch it while we play.
35 **MARTHA:** Summer is almost over, and we only have a few
36 nights like this left. I want to play a game as a family on
37 the porch. *(MARTHA is holding up the Yahtzee box with a*
38 *smile.)*

- 1 KAY: OK, but can we play Chinese checkers? We always play
2 Yahtzee.
- 3 GREG: Indulge your mother one more time, and then we'll
4 play Chinese checkers next.
- 5 KAY: Fine. (*CREDO enters, but DUNE doesn't see him. He looks*
6 *from DUNE to where he's looking and is confused.*)
- 7 CREDO: What's buzzin', cousin?
- 8 DUNE: (*Jumps.*) Shhhh! They'll hear you. (*Pushes him back.*) I
9 was just curious why, how they ... (*Realizes he's said too*
10 *much.*) What are you doing here? Stop rhyming all the
11 time.
- 12 CREDO: So I rhyme.
13 Is that a crime?
- 14 DUNE: You're rattling my cage, nosebleed. Get bent!
- 15 CREDO: The Raptors sent me
16 To come get thee.
17 We've gotta go,
18 Daddy-o.
- 19 DUNE: Why? What's brewing?
- 20 CREDO: There may be a rumble tonight.
21 Last night was quite the sight.
22 Little Tommy got hurt
23 When the Panthers tossed him in the dirt,
24 And there was blood all over his shirt.
- 25 DUNE: (*Rolls eyes.*) What'd he do?
- 26 CREDO: Flirt ... (*DUNE punches his fist in his hand.*) I mean,
27 with ... I mean, he likes one of the leader's sisters.
- 28 DUNE: Over a girl? Figures. Well, I can't come right now.
- 29 CREDO: Why? It doesn't look like you're doing anything
30 important here. Just watching silly squares.
- 31 DUNE: It's none of your business what I'm doing here. Or
32 there. Or anywhere. Got that? Now split, Dr. Seuss.
- 33 CREDO: Doctor who?
- 34 DUNE: Go.
- 35 CREDO: But you're the leader of the Rap —
- 36 DUNE: Beat it! (*FAMILY looks up. DUNE pulls CREDO and*
37 *himself behind the trash cans.*)
- 38 MARTHA: Did you hear something?

- 1 **GREGORY:** Nah, I think it's the cat. Roll, please.
- 2 **DUNE:** *(Slowly stands up.)* Go before I blow my top.
- 3 **CREDO:** Sure thing, Dune. See you later, alligator. *(CREDO*
4 *exits. DUNE covers trash can and glances back at the family.*
5 *MARTHA is shaking the dice in the cup without dumping them.)*
- 6 **DUNE:** So that's normal.
- 7 **GRANDMA:** *(Off-stage voice)* Harvey Doonsberry, I need my TV
8 antenna fixed now! You're going to make me miss *The*
9 *Cisco Kid*. Get back in here this instant before I sic the
10 dog on you.
- 11 **DUNE:** Coming, Grandma! *(GREGORY looks up. DUNE exits.)*
- 12 **GREGORY:** That hooligan, making all that racket at this
13 time of night. Someone needs to punch his lights out.
- 14 **MARTHA:** Gregory! Not in front of the children.
- 15 **GREGORY:** I didn't mean I was going to do it. Especially in
16 front of the kids. Don't be absurd.
- 17 **MARTHA:** Well, I do agree that he could use some manners.
18 A few more spankings would help him out. And I have
19 the perfect tool. *(Holds up yardstick.)* The board of
20 education, specially handcrafted at Mike's Hardware
21 on Fifth Street.
- 22 **KAY:** I didn't think you knew who he was.
- 23 **MARTHA:** Of course, dear. Mike has been supplying us with
24 spanking utensils for as long as you've been alive.
- 25 **KAY:** I meant Dune. You were so nice to him this afternoon.
26 Even offered him buttered toast.
- 27 **MARTHA:** One can be civil, dear. That is the difference
28 between him and us. Civility.
- 29 **GREGORY:** Martha, roll please.
- 30 **MARTHA:** Oh, is it my turn again?
- 31 **GREGORY:** It never stopped being your turn. We've been
32 waiting for the past five minutes.
- 33 **MARTHA:** Well, I just love the sound of the dice rolling
34 around in the cup. After all, they were created by
35 Milton Bradley. *(Displays cup and smiles.)*
- 36 **GREGORY:** And I love the sound of them falling on the table.
37 *(She rolls. MARTHA cheers and FAMILY improves response as*
38 *lights fade.)*

Scene 4

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(Scene opens with JASON tossing pebbles at a window.)

JASON: *(Whispering)* Kay? Psssst! Kay!

KAY: *(Comes behind him, but he doesn't notice.)* Yes?

JASON: *(He jumps.)* Kay? I thought —

KAY: You do realize that's my father's bedroom. It's a good thing he's a heavy sleeper.

JASON: Oh, right. Um, I was wondering ...

KAY: If I'd take a walk with you at ten o'clock at night?

JASON: Sure! Wait, no. I, um ...

KAY: So you don't want to walk with me?

JASON: No. I mean, yes. Wait ... What did you ask again?

KAY: *(Giggling)* Take a deep breath before you hurt yourself. I promise I won't bite.

JASON: *(Rambling)* I felt bad about something.

KAY: And it couldn't wait until morning?

JASON: *(Runs words together nervously.)* All week I meant to ask you to the end-of-the-summer barbecue, and now it's tomorrow, and I'm such a chicken, and if you can't or won't or don't have a dress, or don't want one — I mean, to wear to the barbecue — I would completely understand, because I should have asked and I didn't, and I — *(KAY cuts him off with a peck on the cheek.)*

KAY: I'd love to go with you, even though you realize the barbecue is in my backyard.

JASON: But I'd be your escort.

KAY: I'd like that. And yes, I already have a dress. *(Pause)* My brother told me you wanted to ask me. Lucky for you, I'm a very patient woman. *(Car horn. JASON and KAY look Stage Right.)*

JASON: Sorry, Wilson is waiting for me in the truck. *(Pause)* What time should I pick you up?

KAY: It's in my backyard.

JASON: Right. Well, what time — *(DUNE and CREDO enter, cutting him off.)*

CREDO: Awwww, isn't that sweet?
Two lovebirds in the street.

- 1 DUNE: Super sweet. A nerd and his broad.
- 2 JASON: Come on, Kay. I'll walk you in. (*JASON turns to go, but*
3 *CREDO grabs his arm.*)
- 4 DUNE: Where do you think you're going?
- 5 JASON: Let go.
- 6 CREDO: I don't think so. No, no, I don't think so.
- 7 DUNE: Credo, so help me, stop with the rhyming this instant,
8 or else *you're* going to get it instead.
- 9 CREDO: The rhyming is over, put to bed.
10 (*Under breath*) Completely dead.
- 11 JASON: Kay, go inside.
- 12 KAY: He doesn't scare me.
- 13 CREDO: Oh, yeah?
- 14 KAY: Yeah.
- 15 JASON: Kay, please. I'd feel better if —
- 16 DUNE: Listen square, you talk when I say talk. (*He turns to*
17 *KAY.*) You look here, girly. You tell that dad of yours
18 that if he doesn't stop throwing stuff at my bike, your
19 boyfriend here is going to get it. Understand?
- 20 KAY: You don't frighten us.
- 21 JASON: (*Voice cracks.*) Well ... (*CREDO squeezes JASON's arm.*
22 *WILSON enters with a baseball bat.*)
- 23 WILSON: These boys bothering you?
- 24 KAY: Doesn't matter. I know you, Dune. Or should I say
25 Harvey Denton II?
- 26 CREDO: Harvey? Who's Harvey?
- 27 DUNE: Someone who's dead. (*To KAY*) Remember, Kay, I
28 know where you sleep. You want to wake up with the
29 same pretty face, don't push me. I'm a bad guy.
- 30 JASON: Hey, that's no way to talk to a lady. You better knock
31 it off.
- 32 DUNE: Or you'll what? Call your daddy?
- 33 JASON: My what?
- 34 DUNE: Yeah, I know your dad is on the police force.
- 35 JASON: It's my uncle, not my dad. And anyway, that should
36 give you a good reason to watch it. I have no problem
37 calling my uncle.
- 38 DUNE: I ain't afraid of no fuzz.

- 1 CREDO: Yeah, we eat fuzz for breakfast.
- 2 WILSON: Yuck. You eat fuzz.
- 3 DUNE: (*Looks at KAY.*) Watch yourself, Kay. (*He snaps his*
4 *fingers and starts walking away.*) Come on, let's roll. And
5 Kay, (*Looks back*) you better tell that father of yours to
6 stop messing with my property, or else things are going
7 to get pretty ugly at the Patterson house. (*CREDO and*
8 *DUNE exit.*)
- 9 KAY: Ooooh, those guys just make my blood boil. Someone
10 needs to give those two a knuckle sandwich.
- 11 JASON: Yeah, well, personally, I think you'd be better to stay
12 clear.
- 13 WILSON: I'm so glad that ended, because there was no way I
14 was going to hurt my bat.
- 15 JASON: Why'd you bring it then?
- 16 WILSON: I didn't want it to be left in the truck. Someone
17 might steal it.
- 18 JASON: Oh, brother. (*Pause*) You can go back and wait in the
19 car. I'll just be a minute.
- 20 WILSON: OK, but if you need me again, just make a sound
21 like this. (*Makes up a silly sound.*)
- 22 JASON: I don't think I'll need that.
- 23 WILSON: You might. Try it.
- 24 JASON: (*Starts to, but stops when he looks at KAY.*) Yeah, I think
25 I'll just yell for you. Will that be OK?
- 26 WILSON: I guess. Not as fun. Nor as cool as James Dean.
- 27 JASON: I don't think James Dean ever made a sound like
28 that.
- 29 WILSON: Well, he should have.
- 30 JASON: So, can you give us a minute?
- 31 WILSON: For what? (*Stares with smile. JASON shoots him a look.*
32 *It takes WILSON a minute to get it.*) Oh, right. (*Walks away*
33 *making the sound and exits.*)
- 34 JASON: Sorry. (*Pause*) Look, be careful, OK?
- 35 KAY: You aren't seriously frightened of those greasers, are
36 you?
- 37 JASON: (*Playfully*) At the risk of making myself look like a
38 complete coward, I choose to remain quiet on the

30 *(PETER and WILSON are tossing the ball around. JASON*
31 *and KAY are sitting on the side, giggling with one another.*
32 *KAY is wearing JASON's sweater. SANDY looks bored reading*
33 *a magazine. PETER looks over and shakes his head.)*
34 **PETER:** OK, so I was thinking if we put Wilson in to pinch
35 hit ... Jason? *(JASON isn't listening.)* You do realize we
36 have a big game coming up Friday, right, Jason?
37 *(JASON looks up, but keeps his interest on KAY.)*
38 **SANDY:** Just leave him be. They seem to like each other.

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- 1 PETER: Yeah, I know. They just got pinned.
- 2 SANDY: I didn't even notice. Look — she's wearing his
3 sweater.
- 4 WILSON: (*Hoots.*) Well, all right! Good deal. That's super neat-
5 o. I want to give my sweater to a cold girl someday. That
6 would be ... (*Pause*) Wait, what happens when *he* gets
7 cold?
- 8 SANDY: I guess he wears a different sweater.
- 9 WILSON: Oh, right. (*Thinks.*) Wait, but what if he only has
10 *one* sweater?
- 11 SANDY: I think Jason has other jackets, moron.
- 12 WILSON: But let's say he doesn't.
- 13 SANDY: We don't need to. I know he has an Officer Green
14 one and ...
- 15 WILSON: How do you know what sweaters he has?
- 16 SANDY: I, um, no reason.
- 17 WILSON: Do you pay attention to his wardrobe? Do you like
18 him?
- 19 SANDY: No. I mean, *did*. Past tense. Look, just plan your
20 dumb ballgame with your team.
- 21 WILSON: Fine, but you never explained what happens when
22 you only have one sweater.
- 23 PETER: Don't worry, Wilson. You don't have to give your
24 sweater away just because you like a girl.
- 25 WILSON: (*Sighs.*) Good, because I only have the one. (*PETER*
26 *and SANDY exchange smiles. GREGORY comes charging out*
27 *of the house angrily, storms past them, and marches toward*
28 *DUNE's place. JASON and KAY look up.*)
- 29 PETER: Dad?
- 30 WILSON: He didn't look very happy.
- 31 PETER: No, he didn't. (*PETER tosses a ball to one of the guys and*
32 *starts after his dad.*)
- 33 JASON: Should we follow them?
- 34 WILSON: I don't know if we should. You're the pitcher. If you
35 got broken fingers, what would we do? I mean ... I'm
36 just a catcher, but still, I kind of like my fingers where
37 they are. Connected to my wrist. Yes, I need my wrist.
38 Catchers use their wrists. Right? Yes, of course. I need

1 my wrist. And you need your fingers. And Peter, well,
 2 he's first baseman, and a first baseman has to have his
 3 fingers. So, following him, I'm not so sure. Probably not
 4 ... not a good idea. To follow him, I mean.

5 SANDY: Take a breath, goober. We're not following him.

6 WILSON: But you don't play baseball. You could. *(Pause)* But,
 7 wait — you're a girl. *(KAY looks mad. GREGORY is yelling*
 8 *Off-stage with GRANDMA. They all listen in.)*

9 GREGORY: Harvey, you open this door right now!

10 KAY: So just because we're girls, we can't go?

11 WILSON: You need your fingers for cooking.

12 KAY: More like knocking you upside the head.

13 GRANDMA: Who are you?

14 PETER: Shush, I'm trying to hear.

15 GREGORY: Your neighbor. Where's your grandson?

16 GRANDMA: He's not home! Now be gone!

17 GREGORY: Fine, but you tell that hoodlum that if he comes
 18 within a yard of my place, I'll wrap my rake around his
 19 neck. You understand me?

20 GRANDMA: Don't you threaten my Harvey. He's a good boy.

21 GREGORY: He's as good as strychnine in a well.

22 GRANDMA: I don't like your tone, young man.

23 GREGORY: And I don't like your grandson. Keep him away
 24 from my family and my property.

25 GRANDMA: Gladly. *(Sound of door slamming, then GREGORY*
 26 *comes stomping back through, muttering as he goes. He exits*
 27 *back through to his house. PETER follows, but stops at GUYS.)*

28 SANDY: What happened?

29 KAY: I think my dad just signed Dune's death warrant.

30 PETER: Or ours.

31 WILSON: Is it because of what happened last night?

32 PETER: What happened last night?

33 KAY: It's nothing. Don't worry about it.

34 WILSON: It *was* something. I had to bring out my favorite
 35 bat. Imagine if I had to use it. It could have broken.
 36 Then what would I hit the ball with?

37 SANDY: Your head.

38 JASON: Dune and Credo threatened your family and Kay.

1 *(To KAY)* Didn't you tell your parents?

2 KAY: No. I don't think my dad knows.

3 JASON: So that's not why he's mad then?

4 KAY: I guess not.

5 WILSON: Well, I wouldn't say that.

6 KAY: Wouldn't say what?

7 WILSON: Well ...

8 SANDY: Wilson?

9 WILSON: I kind of ran into Mrs. Patterson this morning and
10 may have let something slip.

11 KAY: What did you let slip?

12 WILSON: That he threatened to make you ugly while you sleep.

13 PETER: That happens every morning. Don't need Dune for
14 that.

15 KAY: Shush, Peter. (To WILSON) Why did you do that?

16 **SANDY:** Wilson, you have such a big mouth.

17 WILSON: Was that wrong? Telling them? Shouldn't they
18 know?

19 KAY: No, Wilson, because now my dad will do something
20 really crazy. You know, like he just did.

21 WILSON: Walking next door is crazy? Oh, wow. I won't leave
22 that way from now on.

23 SANDY: Moron.

24 JASON: (To KAY) Now are you worried?

25 KAY: Yeah. Things are about to get much worse. (*Lights out.*)

Scene 6

30 (MARTHA is clearing the table. GREGORY sticks his head out
31 the door.)

32 GREGORY: Martha, why isn't Peter home? It's past his
33 curfew. The streetlights went on over an hour ago.

34 MARTHA: He went with his friend Jason to play in a
35 neighborhood baseball game tonight. They should be
36 home in a little while.

37 GREGORY: I don't like him out and about right now. Not
38 after ...

- 1 **MARTHA:** You threatened the neighbor boy.
- 2 **GREGORY:** Somebody had to say something. Maybe I
- 3 overdid it.
- 4 **MARTHA:** Oh, dear.
- 5 **GREGORY:** Do you blame me, Martha?
- 6 **MARTHA:** I understand that you're protecting our daughter.
- 7 I can't blame you. It makes me super mad too. About as
- 8 mad as that one time the dog bit a hole in my flour bin.
- 9 *(Her tone changes and she scowls like she is remembering.*
- 10 *Then she rolls it off and smiles.)* So what will happen now?
- 11 **GREGORY:** Just keep our family safe.
- 12 **MARTHA:** Should we call Officer Green?
- 13 **GREGORY:** We'll see. I just wish that boy hadn't threatened
- 14 our family.
- 15 **MARTHA:** Yes, yes. Whatever happens, he had it coming.
- 16 **GREGORY:** How about some pound cake, Martha?
- 17 **MARTHA:** Sara Lee? And I got strawberries from the Riley's
- 18 Farmer's Market on Blaine Boulevard.
- 19 **GREGORY:** Even better. *(GREGORY and MARTHA exit. DUNE*
- 20 *enters and stares up at the house. CREDO enters.)*
- 21 **CREDO:** Dune, the Raptors are on their way. They have some
- 22 stuff to say to you. What are you going to do?
- 23 **DUNE:** Why? What do they want?
- 24 **CREDO:** I overheard some disturbing stuff, Dune. Or should
- 25 I say ... Harv-ay?
- 26 **DUNE:** You born with the name Credo?
- 27 **CREDO:** Well, no.
- 28 **DUNE:** Where'd you get it?
- 29 **CREDO:** Panther gave it to me my first week on the Raptors.
- 30 It's like daddy-o and my name.
- 31 **DUNE:** What was your birth name?
- 32 **CREDO:** Creighton.
- 33 **DUNE:** Well, Creighton, mine was Harvey. Big deal. No one
- 34 cares. Now scram before I kick you back to Wednesday.
- 35 **CREDO:** I'm getting tired of you always sending me away.
- 36 It's not OK. I'm supposed to be your friend.
- 37 **DUNE:** Cry me a river.
- 38 **CREDO:** You're always staring at that house. Get real. What's

1 the deal?

2 DUNE: I'm plotting.

3 CREDO: Cool. I can help you. Let me plot too.

4 DUNE: No, this is my fight. You need to go head off the
5 Raptors. They come here, and it'll get ugly. No one
6 challenges me, understand?

7 CREDO: I think we're beyond words. You're not yourself
8 anymore.

9 DUNE: No one knows what that is. Not even me. Now, scram.

10 CREDO: You're going to be sorry, Dune. Soon, very soon.
11 *(CREDO exits. KAY walks up behind him.)*

12 KAY: You talk a big talk, but I know you.

13 DUNE: Why are you here? Aren't you scared?

14 KAY: Of you? No.

15 DUNE: Well, you should be.

16 KAY: I *know* you.

17 DUNE: Why do you keep saying that?

18 KAY: We played together when we were kids, Harvey.

19 DUNE: Stop calling me that.

20 KAY: Why? It's your name.

21 DUNE: Not anymore.

22 KAY: Look, I know it was tough when your parents died and
23 your grandmother shipped you off, but —

24 DUNE: I'm warning you — stop talking!

25 KAY: Even before your parents died, you always talked
26 about wanting a square family like mine. Not sure why,
27 but I know that's all you want. Why don't you come over
28 and —

29 DUNE: I'm the leader of the Raptors. I have family. I don't
30 need anyone, especially a bunch of squares. Now, get
31 lost before I act on my threats.

32 KAY: You won't hurt me.

33 DUNE: Scram.

34 KAY: *(Shrugs.)* Fine, I'll go. But I'll be praying for you.
35 Praying you find peace, Harvey. *(KAY exits.)*

36 DUNE: Dune! *(Acts angry, but then sighs and kicks at dirt.)* You
37 don't know how lucky you are. *(Lights start to fade as a*
38 *dark figure comes out and lifts a baseball bat high in the air. A*

1 *crack and thump sound are heard as the lights go out. House*
 2 *lights come on.)*

3 **MARTHA:** I'm so glad you could all come to our end-of-the-
 4 summer barbecue. I'm sorry the police are ruining
 5 everything. But don't fear. We've got plenty of
 6 Merchant's lemonade. *(She lifts a can and says the brand*
 7 *name.)* And my kids are going to come around and give
 8 you all some dessert. Feel free to use the restroom, and
 9 I'm sure we'll be able to get back to business as usual as
 10 soon as the nice policemen are finished investigating.
 11 *(Sees OFFICER GREEN and her tone changes.)* Hey, get out
 12 of my begonias, mister!

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Intermission

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16
 17 *(Actors may serve desserts. Have OFFICER GREEN go table to*
 18 *table and ask guests if they saw anything or have anything that*
 19 *they can add to the investigation.)*

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ACT II

22

Scene 1

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25 *(Audience members are given character identities prior to the*
 26 *play starting with the instructions to stand and read from their*
 27 *cards—found in the appendix—as OFFICER GREEN asks*
 28 *them questions. The scene starts with OFFICER GREEN*
 29 *pacing. GREGORY is sitting at the table, frustrated that he is*
 30 *detained. KAY and PETER are also sitting at the table but*
 31 *seem interested in what is going on. MARTHA enters with iced*
 32 *tea and cookies.)*

33 **MARTHA:** Here you go, Officer. Now if you'll take a seat, I
 34 can pour you a proper glass of iced tea. It's Typhoo tea,
 35 and it is guaranteed to revive you. I also have fresh-
 36 baked cookies as well.

37 **OFFICER GREEN:** Thank you, ma'am, but I think I'll stand
 38 for now. *(Turns to audience.)* So, many of you were

1 witnesses. Some of you are suspects. I have my
 2 suspicions, of course, but I want to talk to the witnesses
 3 before I start accusing anyone. I hear the victim's
 4 grandma is with us. Can she please stand? (*Wait for*
 5 *audience member to identify that she is GRANDMA.*) So, what
 6 do you have to share with us, Mrs. Doonesbury?

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER 1 (*"Grandma"*): This man, Mr.
 8 Patterson, came over to my house this afternoon with
 9 some pretty strong threats aimed at my boy. Harvey is
 10 a good boy, and I don't tolerate that from no one.

11 OFFICER GREEN: I see. So Mr. Patterson, what do you have
 12 to say about that?

13 GREGORY: He threatened my daughter, among other things.

14 OFFICER GREEN: What kind of threats?

15 GREGORY: Said he'd hurt her while she was sleeping.

16 PETER: I think it was more about him making her more ugly
 17 than she already is. Big chore.

18 OFFICER GREEN: I see. And why didn't you call the cops?

19 GREGORY: I figured I'd take care of this one on my own. It
 20 seemed the neighborly thing to do. Give the boy a
 21 chance to do the right thing.

22 OFFICER GREEN: I see. And did you?

23 GREGORY: Did I what?

24 OFFICER GREEN: Take care of it yourself. Did you hit the
 25 young man over the head?

26 MARTHA: Gregory, no!

27 GREGORY: Hush, woman. Of course not, Officer. (*OFFICER*
 28 *GREEN picks up a cookie and takes a bite.*)

29 OFFICER GREEN: The evidence is surely heading your way,
 30 Mr. Patterson. I hope you're being upfront with me. Is
 31 there anyone who can vouch for Mr. Patterson?

32 AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: I can, Officer. Everyone knows
 33 Gregory has tennis elbow. He stopped bowling with us
 34 at the club years ago because he could barely pick up
 35 the ball, let alone throw it. The man couldn't swing a
 36 bat if he wanted to. I seriously doubt it was him.

37 GREGORY: And if I did, I'd be at the hospital, not sitting on
 38 my back porch talking to you while you eat my cookies.



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