

**THE BLOODY ATTACK OF THE EVIL,
DEMONIC GIRAFFE PUPPET
(FULL-LENGTH VERSION)**

By Bradley Walton

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ISBN: 1-60003-606-6

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CHARACTERS

16 roles: 3 males, 5 females, 8 either

RUPERT NEWELL (M) – A good-hearted teenager who sees his new camcorder as a force to improve the world. He is extremely intelligent and has grand ambitions and a fair amount of gumption, but is also weak-willed and has no leadership skills.

CLIFF SPALL (F) – Rupert's best friend. Smart, assertive, and slightly warped, she is drawn to Rupert's positive qualities, but is constantly exasperated by his negatives.

VIRGINIA PHELPS (F) – A dim-witted, militant, holier-than-thou vegan.

JACK FELTON (M) – A football player who antagonizes Rupert; forced into the film as a punishment.

ALICE MASON (M) – An imposing, scary redneck who lives in his own reality and thinks he knows everything about film.

TIANA BUCKLE (F) – An obsessive and ditz manga (Japanese comics) fan.

PHOEBE BRODY (F) – Quite possibly the laziest teenager in the world.

MRS. / MR. ZIMMERMAN (M or F) – The school library secretary.

MAYHEW (M or F) – A professional film editor with a really thick Southern accent.

MARGERY / MARTIN PATTINSON (M or F) – In charge of the film contest.

JOSHUA / JENNIFER LUCAS (M or F) – A contestant in the film contest.

MATILDA WILLIAMS (F) – A contestant in the film contest.

DORA / DAVID WEBBER (M or F) – A contestant in the film contest.

JUDGE #1 (M or F)

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JUDGE #2 (M or F)

JUDGE #3 (M or F)

DOUBLING

With doubling, the play can easily be performed with ten actors (3 males, 6 females, 1 either).

If necessary, the actors in the roles of VIRGINIA, JACK, ALICE, TIANA, PHOEBE, and ZIMMERMAN can easily double as LUCAS, WILLIAMS, WEBBER and the three JUDGES.

Other combinations are certainly possible, such as ZIMMERMAN/MAYHEW and ZIMMERMAN/PATTINSON. The director is welcome to fill the roles in whatever way best suits his or her production, but should keep in mind the need to keep characters' appearances distinct during their close-ups in the movie.

FILM CAST

Characters from the play and their roles in the film.

RUPERT – David

CLIFF – Voice of The Puppet(s) / Sally / Leprechaun Prime Minister

TIANA – Catherine / Great Spiritual Old Guy

JACK – Bob / Man #1 / various leprechauns

ALICE – Detective Portman / Man #2 / various leprechauns

VIRGINIA – Detective Jones

PATTINSON – him/herself

ZIMMERMAN – him/herself

MAYHEW – him/herself

PHOEBE – herself

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LUCAS, MATILDA, and WEBBER – annoyed library patrons. (Omit library patrons from movie if the actors are doubling in other roles.)

JUDGES 1, 2, and 3 – library ninjas

ALL PLAY CAST MEMBERS – assembled leprechauns at the war council

There is an optional cameo for a parent of the actor playing RUPERT. There are cameos for two or three people not acting in the play (ideally teachers or administrators if the play is being performed by a high school).

SPECIAL NEEDS

The equipment and know-how to film, edit, and project a fifteen-minute movie with sound.

SETTING

A medium-sized American town, late autumn.

Ideally, the play occurs in the “present” year. However, if the technology referenced in the play (digital camcorders and unspecified computer editing software) eventually becomes dated and a year needs to be established, then the play occurs in 2005.

STAGING

Staging is simple. The major set pieces (mostly tables and chairs) are items that can easily be found around most high schools and homes. No set construction is necessary.

Set diagrams, lists of costumes and properties for both the play and the movie, and a list of general filming locations can be found at the end of this document.

ACT I

Scene 1: The film contest – apron, in front of closed curtain:
RUPERT, LUCAS, MATILDA, WEBBER, PATTINSON, 3 JUDGES

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Scene 2: The cafeteria, two and a half weeks earlier – stage left:
RUPERT, CLIFF, VIRGINIA, JACK

Scene 3: The school library, later that day – apron DR, in front of closed curtain: RUPERT, ZIMMERMAN

Scene 4: Walking home from school, that afternoon – apron, in front of closed curtain: RUPERT, CLIFF

Scene 5: The cafeteria after school, a few days later – stage left:
RUPERT, CLIFF, PHOEBE, TIANA, VIRGINIA, JACK

Scene 6: Rupert's home, the following Sunday – stage right:
RUPERT, CLIFF, ALICE

Scene 7: The cafeteria, after school the next day – stage left:
RUPERT, CLIFF, ALICE, PHOEBE, TIANA, VIRGINIA, JACK

ACT II

Scene 1: Rupert's back yard, a few days later – apron, in front of closed curtain: RUPERT, CLIFF, PHOEBE, TIANA, VIRGINIA, ALICE, JACK

Scene 2: The office of Margery Pattinson, the next day – stage right:
RUPERT, PATTINSON

Scene 3: A school hallway, the next day – down center: RUPERT, CLIFF

Scene 4: Mayhew's Pro Video, that evening – stage left: RUPERT, MAYHEW

Scene 5: A school hallway, the next morning – apron DR, in front of closed curtain: RUPERT, CLIFF, PHOEBE, TIANA

Scene 6: Rupert's back yard, that weekend – apron, in front of closed curtain: RUPERT, CLIFF, PHOEBE, TIANA, VIRGINIA, ALICE, JACK

Scene 7: Mayhew's Pro Video, the day before the film contest – stage left: RUPERT, MAYHEW

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Scene 8: Back to the film contest – apron, in front of closed curtain:
RUPERT, LUCAS, MATILDA, WEBBER, PATTINSON, 3 JUDGES,
CLIFF

NOTE: Only those portions of the stage that are being used in a scene should be lit.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet was originally performed April 28 and 29, 2006, at Harrisonburg High School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. It was produced by Stanley Swartz, directed by Bradley Walton, and stage managed by Krystle Henninger, with the following cast:

Rupert Newell – TIM WIGGINS
Cliff Spall – CAMILA DOMONOSKE
Alice Mason – AARON HENDERSON
Virginia Phelps – KATIE HORNE
Jack Felton – SEAN LANDIS
Tiana Buckle – ANNA-LEE CRAIG
Phoebe Brody – SARA DAVIS
Holly Rosson – CASSIE COLEMAN
Mrs. Zimmerman – SARA ROZMUS
Mayhew – WILLIAM KLEMT
Margery Pattinson – RACHEL DOWNEY
Joshua Lucas – CORY LAWRENCE
Matilda Williams – SANDY HERNANDEZ
David Webber – JOSH MITRI
Judge #1 – ZACH FICHTER
Judge #2 – KATE HALLING
Judge #3 – JORDON HENDERSON

MOVIE COSTUMES

DAVID (RUPERT) – For the opening scene, pajamas or pajama bottoms with an undershirt.

For some scenes, he wears a dress shirt, tie, dark pants, and dress shoes. This is referred to in the script as “dress outfit #1.”

For other scenes, David wears a *different* dress shirt, a *different* tie,

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and the same dark pants and dress shoes. This is referred to in the script as “dress outfit #2.”

Three period costumes (knight, Viking, cowboy, pilgrim, cave man, or whatever is convenient) for the flashback near the end of the movie.

David will also be filmed wearing DETECTIVE PORTMAN's overcoat and the GREAT SPIRITUAL OLD GUY's costume.

CATHERINE (TIANA) – pajamas.

SALLY (CLIFF) – suit or other dress clothes.

BOB (JACK) – dress shirt and tie with dark pants.

MAN #1 (JACK) – JACK's costume from the play.

MAN #2 (ALICE) – ALICE's costume from the play.

ZIMMERMAN – ZIMMERMAN's costume from the play.

PATTINSON – she is only shown in an extreme close up of her face and should not need a costume.

DETECTIVE PORTMAN (ALICE) – white t-shirt, jeans, cowboy boots, and an overcoat or trench coat.

DETECTIVE JONES (VIRGINIA) – Virginia's costume from the play, plus an overcoat or trench coat.

LEPRECHAUNS (ALICE and JACK) – as described in their costumes for the play, with camouflage jackets for some scenes.

LEPRECHAUN PRIME MINISTER (CLIFF) – same as ALICE and JACK's leprechaun costumes from the play, plus a camouflage jacket.

LEPRECHAUN COUNCIL MEMBERS (full cast) – They are sitting and filmed from behind. The only costume requirement is plastic green St. Patrick's Day bowler hats.

GREAT SPIRITUAL OLD GUY (TIANA) – Santa Claus beard, cheesy-looking oriental hat, bed sheet, pink fingernails and toenails.

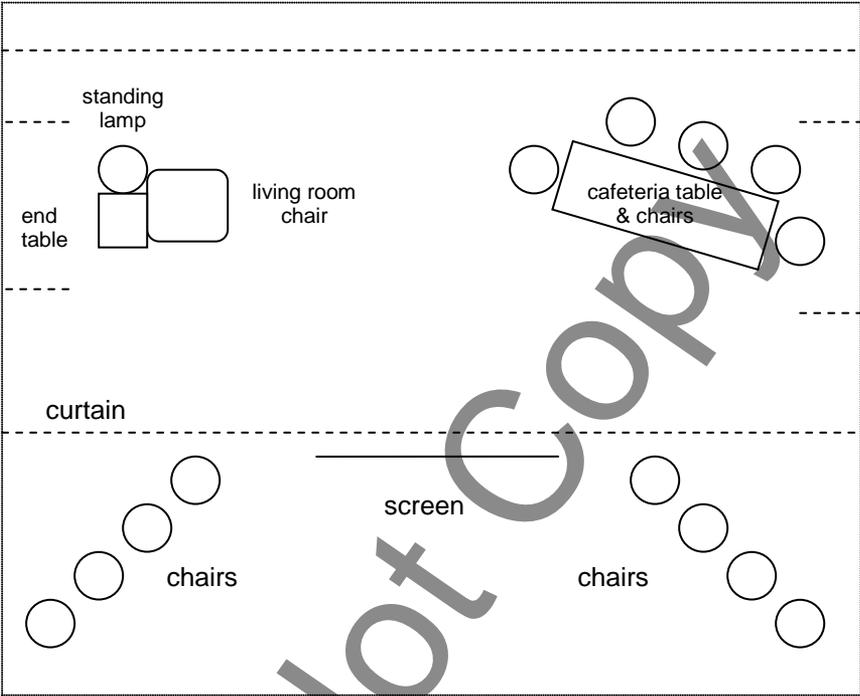
LIBRARY PATRONS – Contemporary teenage clothing.

NINJAS – full-body black clothing with hoods, black masks covering the entire face except the eyes. (The original production utilized old Darth Maul Halloween costumes and masks made out of black construction paper.)

PHOEBE – Phoebe's costume from the play.

MAYHEW – Filmed in closeup, so only his sunglasses are needed.

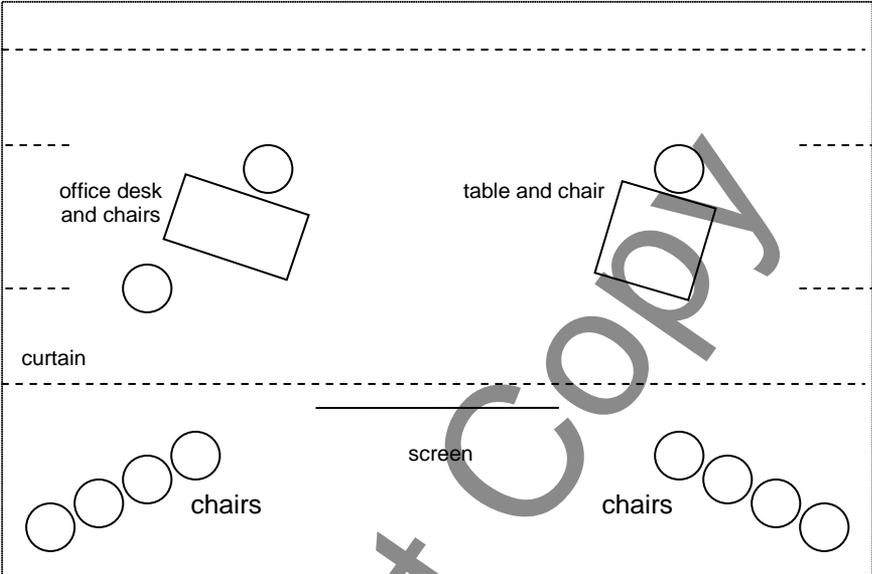
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ACT I

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ACT II

PLAYWRIGHT INFORMATION

After working for seven years as a comic book writer and artist without ever quite having made a living at it, Bradley Walton landed a job in the library of his high school alma mater. A well-remembered drama and forensics junkie, he was quickly recruited to head the school's forensics program, and to establish and direct an annual spring play. Long intimidated and befuddled by Shakespeare, but figuring it was high time to do something about it, Bradley directed *The Tempest* as his first show, followed by a wildly (if improbably) successful *Star Wars*-themed production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Having conquered his greatest theatrical fear, the next logical step seemed to be writing his own plays to direct. To his enormous relief, he turned out to be rather good at it. Bradley lives in Virginia with his wife, daughter, some cats, and an embarrassingly large quantity of comic books and *Star Wars* action figures.

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by
Bradley Walton

ACT I

SCENE 1: THE FILM CONTEST

AT RISE: *In the center of the apron, a large screen hangs or stands. There is a diagonal row of four chairs DR and a diagonal row of four chairs DL. The chair closest to the screen in the DL group sits slightly apart from the other three.*

RUPERT NEWELL, JOSHUA LUCAS, MATILDA WILLIAMS and DORA WEBBER occupy the DR chairs. They are all high school students. They are all wearing dress clothes. RUPERT is wearing black pants and black tennis shoes that HE will wear throughout the rest of the play, along with a dress shirt and tie that HE will change out of as soon as the scene is over.

DL, MARGERY PATTINSON sits in the chair closest to the screen. SHE is in her 50's, wearing a pristine but outdated and ugly dress (or suit, if male), and too much makeup.

In the other DL chairs are JUDGES 1, 2, and 3, clipboards in hand and taking notes. They are all dressed professionally. Everyone is looking at the screen. The play opens with the final moments of a movie in which LUCAS is standing in front of a bookshelf in a library.

LUCAS: *(on film)* . . .culminating in a magnificent society of hope, peace and love, as we march boldly into the days and years to come, thereby creating a brighter future. . . for the children of tomorrow.

(The image dissolves into a serene landscape or seascape as the words "The End" appear on the screen and soaring music plays on the soundtrack. The music fades and the image fades to black as the film ends. The stage lights come up. LUCAS is smiling proudly. RUPERT, MATILDA, and WEBBER look nervous. The JUDGES scribble furiously on their clipboards. MARGERY PATTINSON stands, walks the center of the stage,

and address the audience.)

PATTINSON: And that was *The Children of Tomorrow*, a film by Joshua Lucas. Let's have a round of applause for Joshua.

(JOSHUA stands and takes a little bow.)

PATTINSON: That was lovely, Joshua. Thank you. Our last entry in the Triangle Service Club's "A Better World" student documentary film contest comes from Rupert Newell, also of Cooper High School. It is my great pleasure to present *Materialism and the Decay of Morality in Postmodern Society*.

RUPERT: **(raising his hand)** Um, excuse me, ma'am?

PATTINSON: **(slightly annoyed)** Yes, Rupert? Is there anything you'd like to tell us about your film before we begin?

RUPERT: **(stands)** Well, uh, the title changed a little bit after I submitted my entry form. The project kind of evolved while I was working on it, and the title kind of evolved, too. The movie is still about materialism and the decay of morality in postmodern society, kind of—just under a different name.

PATTINSON: **(more annoyed)** Well, we can certainly understand how these things can take on lives of their own, and that's fine. But you would have been welcome to inform us of the change in title before now.

RUPERT: I'm really sorry about that, ma'am. I got so caught up in working on the movie that I forgot to tell you that the title changed. It's completely my fault, and I'm really sorry.

PATTINSON: Hmm. Next time, please be sure to let us know if there are any changes to your entry at least a week before the contest, all right?

RUPERT: Absolutely. Thank you, ma'am.

PATTINSON: **(to audience)** Ladies and Gentlemen, I present to you Rupert Newell's film, whatever its new title may be.

(The lights go down. RUPERT and PATTINSON sit. THE BLOODY ATTACK OF THE EVIL, DEMONIC GIRAFFE PUPPET: THE LEPRECHAUNS STRIKE BACK begins playing. When the title appears on the screen, we hear PATTINSON exclaim. . .)

PATTINSON: Oh, my Lord!

(As the film plays, RUPERT squirms uncomfortably in his seat. Everyone else on stage watches with a mixture of horror and fascination. The movie plays until the subtitle, "How did this happen? What have I wrought?" appears on the screen. The film stops. Any lights in use BLACKOUT. All actors carry their chairs

from the stage. (One of the contestants removes RUPERT's chair, as HE has a fast costume change.) The screen is raised or carried offstage, and the curtain opens.)

SCENE 2: THE CAFETERIA, SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER

AT RISE: *Lights come up on RUPERT sitting at a cafeteria table at L. There are five chairs at the table. RUPERT is now wearing a long-sleeved flannel shirt. HE has a bookbag, a lunch tray and milk carton, and is wiping his mouth with a napkin. CLIFF enters from L. SHE is a high school student dressed in eccentric but not overly freakish clothing. SHE is carrying a bookbag and a brown paper lunch bag.*

RUPERT and CLIFF have been friends for years. Their friendship has grown into mutual romantic attraction which neither of them has openly acknowledged. They are physically affectionate—CLIFF especially—but in a friendly, sometimes joking manner.

CLIFF: *(throwing her arms around RUPERT's neck from behind in a slightly obnoxious hug)* Rupert!

RUPERT: Hey, Cliff.

CLIFF: So?

RUPERT: So. . .

CLIFF: So, did you get it?

RUPERT: Get what?

CLIFF: You got it. I can tell.

RUPERT: *(starting to smile)* Got what?

CLIFF: The digital camcorder you've been begging for for like—forever. Did your parents finally cave in and get you one for your birthday?

RUPERT: *(grinning)* Yup.

CLIFF: Oh, wow. You are so lucky. Do you know what this means?

RUPERT: It means I can preserve important moments. Create art. Make a statement about something.

CLIFF: You are so boring. Have some fun. Let's make a slasher movie!

RUPERT: Cliff, the camcorder isn't some toy. I can do a lot with it. Important stuff. Good stuff. It's media. Media has power. With power comes responsibility.

CLIFF: Rupert. You are not Uncle Ben.

(VIRGINIA enters from L. SHE is wearing jeans, tennis shoes, and a t-shirt emblazoned with a large "V" or the word "Vegan")

(or both) or some sort of animal rights logo or slogan. SHE carries a bookbag.)

VIRGINIA: What are you eating, today?

CLIFF: Live puppies.

VIRGINIA: You're disgusting, Cliff. **(exits L.)**

CLIFF: **(calling after her)** You're a vegan, Virginia!

RUPERT: Given that she really is a vegan, I don't think she considers that an insult.

CLIFF: Well, she should. What was it we were arguing about?

RUPERT: You said I wasn't Uncle Ben.

CLIFF: That's right. You're not.

RUPERT: Cliff, the camcorder is a tool.

CLIFF: It's a tool we can use to make a slasher movie!

RUPERT: I don't want to waste videotape making crude movies!

CLIFF: Geoffrey Chaucer did crude and did it well. It's as high an art form as whatever self-important nonsense Ken Burns crapped out on PBS last week. People just don't like to admit it.

RUPERT: Chaucer didn't write slasher stories.

CLIFF: No, but *The Miller's Tale* still rocks. Come on, let's get it out of our systems and then you can make a real movie.

RUPERT: It's not in my system! Our society is nothing but bread and circuses! I don't want to be part of that!

CLIFF: Bread and circuses died with the Romans. This is the age of pizza and video games.

RUPERT: I want to make a serious film. You know, something with a point. Something people will remember me for.

(JACK enters. HE is dressed in jeans, tennis shoes, and a shirt or sweatshirt with a sports team logo. HE would not dream of owning a bookbag.)

JACK: Hey, look. It's the geek twins.

RUPERT: **(despondently)** Hi, Jack.

JACK: Gimme a dollar.

CLIFF: Why?

JACK: 'Cause I need one.

CLIFF: **(stands)** You need humility and an attitude adjustment.

RUPERT: Cliff. Please don't.

JACK: I need a dollar.

CLIFF: Jack, if I were to search your wallet right now, I'm betting I'd find a dollar.

JACK: Yeah. You would. I just don't see any reason to spend it on a Coke when I can spend one of yours, instead.

RUPERT: **(giving JACK a dollar)** Fine. Here. Go away.

JACK: Watch how you talk to me. Show a little respect.

CLIFF: We have no respect for you.

JACK: You better watch it, or I'll teach you respect.

CLIFF: Don't you even care why? Or are you too stupid to even think to ask?

JACK: You're dead meat. You know that? All right. Why?

CLIFF: You have no real brain to speak of, but you're the best football player the school's got, so they fudge your grades to keep you from flunking and they fudge your disciplinary record to keep you from getting suspended before a game. Well, good for you. You can play football. But no matter how good you are, all you'll ever be is a football player. Even if you go pro, no matter how much money you make, no matter how much people think they love you, you'll never be anything more than somebody who runs around with a *ball*, and my neighbor's dog can do that!

JACK: You. . .

CLIFF: Maybe it's a good paycheck if you can get it, but I'd just as soon do something that's actually worthwhile to make a living.

(JACK pushes CLIFF.)

RUPERT: **(moving between them)** She didn't mean that!

JACK: Shut up!

(JACK shoves RUPERT aside and is reaching for CLIFF as we BLACKOUT. The curtain closes, and a library book cart and wastebasket are brought on DR for the next scene.)

SCENE 3: THE SCHOOL LIBRARY, LATER THAT DAY

AT RISE: DR on the apron, MR./MRS. ZIMMERMAN is arranging books on the book cart. There is a small wastebasket nearby. ZIMMERMAN is a school library secretary in his/her 30s. If male, HE wears a tie-dyed shirt with a black sweater, school I.D. badge, black pants, and black shoes. If female, SHE wears a tie-dyed dress, black sweater, school I.D. badge, and black shoes. RUPERT, carrying his bookbag, approaches ZIMMERMAN.

RUPERT: Excuse me, Mrs. Zimmerman?

ZIMMERMAN: Good afternoon, Roger.

RUPERT: Rupert.

ZIMMERMAN: I'm surprised you're here. Weren't you in a fight today?

RUPERT: How can you not know my name, but know about that?

ZIMMERMAN: We have over a thousand kids in this school. Don't expect me to keep track of you all.

RUPERT: Um, I don't. And it really wasn't a fight. More like shoving. Some teachers broke it up before it went any further.

ZIMMERMAN: You shouldn't fight, you know.

RUPERT: I wasn't fighting. I was trying to break it up.

ZIMMERMAN: Don't argue. So what do you want?

RUPERT: I got a camcorder for my birthday and I'm looking for something I can make a movie about. Do you have any ideas for a good documentary subject?

ZIMMERMAN: Geez, kid, what do I look like? A muse?

RUPERT: But you're like, a librarian. You're supposed to be this wellspring of endless knowledge.

ZIMMERMAN: I'm the library secretary. Which is kind of a misnomer, because I don't do anything remotely secretarial. I do whatever needs to be done. But nowhere in my job description does it say that I have to know squat about anything. You pile up an overdue fine and I'll be happy to take your money. You got a printer jam—well, that's outside my job description, too, but I'll probably be able to fix it, because I know a lot more than they expect me to know. But you shouldn't expect me to know *anything*—that's just not my job.

RUPERT: Is there an actual librarian around?

ZIMMERMAN: She doesn't have time to talk to you.

RUPERT: Sorry I asked.

ZIMMERMAN: (*exasperated*) What kind of movie did you want to make?

RUPERT: I don't know. Something important.

ZIMMERMAN: Are you looking to expose the evils of society, or inform people about something?

RUPERT: I just don't know.

ZIMMERMAN: Do you know how to edit a movie?

RUPERT: No.

ZIMMERMAN: Do you own software to edit a movie?

RUPERT: Yeah. It came with my camcorder, but my computer's an old piece of junk and won't run it.

ZIMMERMAN: Do you even know how to work your camcorder?

RUPERT: Not yet.

ZIMMERMAN: And students wonder why we get grumpy. You know we have camcorders here that students can use.

RUPERT: Yeah.

ZIMMERMAN: And I know you've never checked one out.

RUPERT: No.

ZIMMERMAN: All dreams and no planning. You've had a lot time to lay the groundwork for this masterpiece you're undertaking. You

can't just jump into this and expect to wind up with anything worthwhile.

RUPERT: I was figuring sink or swim.

ZIMMERMAN: I don't want to be the one to tell you that you can't do something, because we're supposed to encourage students, but I think you're going to sink. How come you've never checked out a camcorder?

RUPERT: I didn't want to bother you.

ZIMMERMAN: We're here to be bothered. Use our expertise to save yourself some grief.

RUPERT: But you don't have any expertise.

ZIMMERMAN: Look, Richard. You're a nice kid, but if you're disrespectful, I will write you up.

RUPERT: I'm sorry. I wasn't trying to be disrespectful. It was just supposed to be a statement of fact.

ZIMMERMAN: Don't get insubordinative!

RUPERT: I didn't—but—you said—never mind. Sorry. Won't happen again.

ZIMMERMAN: How were you planning to edit your movie?

RUPERT: I was hoping somebody from the library staff could teach me how to do it on one of the computers here.

ZIMMERMAN: Absolutely not. We don't have time. The software is there for you to use, but you'll have to teach yourself, or find someone to teach you.

RUPERT: That's what I was trying to do.

ZIMMERMAN: Watch the attitude, mister. I meant another student.

RUPERT: Could you tell me who else has been using it, and then I'll track them down?

ZIMMERMAN: I'm afraid that's confidential information and I'm not allowed to share it with you.

RUPERT: Why not?

ZIMMERMAN: We're trying to protect your right to privacy. It's nobody's business what anyone else has been reading.

RUPERT: This isn't reading.

ZIMMERMAN: It's the use of library resources. Same thing.

RUPERT: If you don't tell me, how else can I find out?

ZIMMERMAN: Ask around. It's not like the people using the editing software aren't sitting there in plain view of everyone for hours on end.

RUPERT: Who do I ask?

ZIMMERMAN: There are lots of students who hang out in the library. Ask one of them.

RUPERT: Who are they?

ZIMMERMAN: I'm not allowed to tell you.

RUPERT: What if I go around the library asking the people who are

in here now?

ZIMMERMAN: We'd consider that harassment of our patrons and we'd throw you out.

RUPERT: Okay. So I have to teach myself.

ZIMMERMAN: Unless you can find someone to teach you.

RUPERT: Right. Got that part. Maybe I could hire somebody.

ZIMMERMAN: Can you afford to hire a video editor?

RUPERT: I don't know. Maybe.

ZIMMERMAN: You're that serious about this?

RUPERT: I wouldn't be taking up your time if I wasn't.

ZIMMERMAN: All right. Hang on a minute. I've got something that might interest you.

(ZIMMERMAN pulls a piece of paper—a flyer for the film contest— out of the wastebasket, handling it as if it's soggy and disgusting. HE/SHE gives it to RUPERT and then cleans his/her hands with a small bottle of hand sanitizer.)

RUPERT: ***(taking the paper with some reluctance)*** What is it?

ZIMMERMAN: I would have thought you could read it as easily as I could, but since I guess that's not the case, the local Triangle Club is having a film contest. Whoever submits the best film about making the world a better place, wins five hundred dollars and all of the entries get screened for the community.

RUPERT: The Triangle Club—the service organization?

ZIMMERMAN: That's the one.

RUPERT: Cool. Make the world a better place, huh? Yeah. I've got some ideas about that.

(BLACKOUT. The book cart and wastebasket are removed and the giraffe puppet is placed DRC. The curtain remains closed.)

SCENE 4: WALKING HOME FROM SCHOOL, THAT AFTERNOON

AT RISE: RUPERT and CLIFF enter from L on the apron. They slowly make their ways across the stage as the scene progresses. They should be lit either by spots or a series of crossfades. Both are carrying their bookbags.

CLIFF: I can't believe Jack didn't get suspended!

RUPERT: Well, he didn't technically punch anybody.

CLIFF: He would have if that teacher hadn't stopped him. He pushed both of us!

RUPERT: You kind of set him off.

CLIFF: He was bullying us!

RUPERT: He's a dumb jerk. What do you expect?

CLIFF: I expect him to get suspended! I expect to not get detention for standing up to him! We both got the same punishment!

RUPERT: You have to be better than him.

CLIFF: You're too passive.

RUPERT: I try not to make waves.

CLIFF: You say you want social justice, but you don't want to make waves?

RUPERT: Can we please not take the shortcut through the woods today?

CLIFF: Don't change the subject.

RUPERT: I'm not. I just don't want to take the woods.

CLIFF: It takes us half the time to get from school to our neighborhood. Why do you always want to go the long way?

RUPERT: For one thing, it's paved.

CLIFF: This is a natural environment, for crying out loud. You're always complaining about development and how people are ruining the planet and stuff. I'd think you'd like the outdoors.

RUPERT: I do like the outdoors. I'm all for mud and dirt. I'd just rather not have them on me.

CLIFF: You're such a sissy. I think you're scared of the woods.

RUPERT: No, I'm not!

CLIFF: The woods represent the unknown.

RUPERT: They're *trees*.

CLIFF: And there could be something behind each and every one of them. Under the leaves on the ground. . . ready to reach out and grab you! (**grabs RUPERT from behind**)

RUPERT: Fine, we'll go through the woods!

CLIFF: That's the spirit!

RUPERT: What's *up* with you?

CLIFF: You got your camcorder. You want to make the world better? You need to show a little backbone.

RUPERT: Says you. But actually, Mrs. Zimmerman in the library told me about this film contest, and that's the theme.

CLIFF: What? Backbone?

RUPERT: No. A better world.

CLIFF: A better world? That's kind of broad.

RUPERT: Gives us a broad canvas to paint on. Editing might be a problem, but I'll figure something out.

CLIFF: What's the prize?

RUPERT: Five hundred bucks.

CLIFF: Not bad. Are we going to work on this together?

RUPERT: Is there any way I can keep your fingers out of it?

CLIFF: No.

RUPERT: Then there's your answer. But I'm in charge, okay?

CLIFF: Why you?

RUPERT: Because it's my camcorder. It's my movie. It's going to be my vision.

CLIFF: Fine. You're the one with all the big ideas, anyway. I'll be your support crew. How are we going to split the winnings?

RUPERT: We have to win, first.

CLIFF: It's good to plan ahead.

RUPERT: We pay off all expenses, and then however many people we have involved, we divide the money equally. How's that?

CLIFF: How many people are you going to involve?

RUPERT: I dunno. However many we need. Depends on what we do. The individual shares won't be that big, but I'm not doing this for the money.

CLIFF: I'm happy for you. Got any ideas?

RUPERT: Well, I was kind of thinking that I'd like to do something about how we're all in bondage to materialism. That we're so in love with the accumulation of physical objects that we ignore the needs of people—you know, like, people locally and all over the world.

CLIFF: This from the recent recipient of an expensive piece of electronic equipment.

RUPERT: It's a tool! It's not like it's some useless collectible!

CLIFF: Like what? A *Star Wars* action figure?

RUPERT: Yeah. I can't believe that there are adults who actually collect those. I mean—there are so many other worthwhile things you could do with your money.

CLIFF: And there are many other worthwhile things that you could make a movie about. Your idea sounds really boring.

RUPERT: It's my movie. **(stops, looking at the giraffe puppet on the stage)** What is that?

CLIFF: Looks like a dead animal. Pick it up and see.

RUPERT: I'm not going to pick it up.

CLIFF: Okay. Lick it.

RUPERT: What? I'm not going to lick it to see if it's a dead animal. You lick it.

CLIFF: It'd be a lot more fun to watch you do it.

RUPERT: **(kneeling to look at the puppet)** It's like—a stuffed animal.

CLIFF: How do you know?

RUPERT: It has plastic eyes and a tag.

CLIFF: Huh. Bummer.

RUPERT: **(picking it up)** It's a puppet. And it's really ugly.

CLIFF: What kind of animal is it supposed to be?

RUPERT: I think it's supposed to be a giraffe.

CLIFF: I think you're right. Maybe.

RUPERT: That's quite possibly the most amazing facial expression I've ever seen on an inanimate object. It looks like it's either drugged out of its mind or it's an axe murderer or something.

CLIFF: Now there's an idea for a movie—an axe-murdering puppet!

RUPERT: Be serious.

CLIFF: I am serious. You could call it *The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet*.

RUPERT: I don't think we could feasibly tie that into the theme, "A Better World."

CLIFF: Sure you can. The puppet gets vanquished at the end of the movie and the world is better off without it.

RUPERT: That's stupid.

CLIFF: It's a lot more interesting than your idea.

RUPERT: No.

CLIFF: Okay—how about this—it's like a symbol or something. The person who owns the puppet can't bring himself to get rid of it even though it's committing these murders. He's like, addicted to the puppet. And the puppet symbolizes all this materialism crap that you whine about and the link between the puppet and its owner symbolizes society's addiction to materialism. (*leans on RUPERT, self-satisfied*)

RUPERT: You're really stretching it.

CLIFF: No, I'm not. It's been done! And done well!

RUPERT: No, it hasn't!

CLIFF: Think! Gollum in *Lord of the Rings*. Frodo and Bilbo, too. They all get addicted to their precious ring, even though it punishes them and brings out the worst parts of their natures.

RUPERT: I don't think that's what Tolkien was shooting for.

CLIFF: Intentional or not, the subtext was there!

RUPERT: I can pretty much guarantee that it wasn't intentional.

CLIFF: Then think what you can do with that concept if you approach it intentionally!

RUPERT: No.

CLIFF: Then just put the ugly thing down and let's go.

RUPERT: I picked it up. If I put it down now, it's littering.

CLIFF: You're going to take it home to throw it away?

RUPERT: Yeah.

CLIFF: You. . . are going to carry. . . that. . . home?

RUPERT: It's not like it's heavy.

CLIFF: You're such a bleeding heart tree hugger, you know that?

(BLACKOUT. The curtain opens for the next scene.)

SCENE 5: THE CAFETERIA AFTER SCHOOL, A FEW DAYS

LATER

(At L, RUPERT and CLIFF are standing behind the table from scene 2. Their bookbags are on the table.)

CLIFF: You think anyone will show up?

RUPERT: We put up signs all over school advertising that we wanted people to be in the movie. I guess we'll see.

(PHOEBE enters from L. SHE is a teenager dressed in sweats and flip-flops. If possible, SHE has frizzy hair. SHE speaks in a flat monotone and is extremely lethargic. Carrying a bookbag would require too much effort for her.)

PHOEBE: Are you the guy doing the film?

RUPERT: Yeah!

PHOEBE: I think I might like to help.

RUPERT: Okay, great. Let's hang out and see who else shows up.

What's your name?

PHOEBE: Phoebe Brody.

RUPERT: Nice to meet you Phoebe. Do you act?

PHOEBE: No, not really.

RUPERT: Do you want to act?

PHOEBE: I don't know. Probably not.

RUPERT: Do you do camera work?

PHOEBE: No.

RUPERT: Makeup? Costumes?

PHOEBE: No.

RUPERT: Editing? Special effects?

PHOEBE: No.

CLIFF: What do you do?

PHOEBE: Nothing.

RUPERT: Do any of the things I mentioned interest you?

PHOEBE: No.

RUPERT: Right. Well, I'm sure we can find something for you to do.

PHOEBE: Okay.

(PHOEBE lies down on the table. RUPERT and CLIFF look at each other in mild alarm and confusion. TIANA enters from L and looks at PHOEBE. TIANA wears an approximation of a Japanese school girl uniform—white blouse with a blue or red scarf or tie around her neck; knee-length black, blue or plaid skirt (shorts underneath recommended); white socks, and black shoes. SHE carries a bookbag.)

TIANA: Are you sick?

PHOEBE: No.

TIANA: Are you sleepy?

PHOEBE: No.

CLIFF: (**grabbing PHOEBE's wrist and checking her pulse**) Are you dead?

PHOEBE: No.

(CLIFF drops PHOEBE's arm in mild exasperation. The arm flops down and dangles limply off the side of the table.)

TIANA: Is this the movie meeting?

RUPERT: Yeah. Hi. I recognize you from around school, but I don't know you.

TIANA: I'm Tiana Buckle. (**sits on table, moving PHOEBE's legs if necessary**)

CLIFF: What do you do?

TIANA: I read manga.

PHOEBE: What's a manga?

TIANA: Japanese comics.

PHOEBE: You can speak Japanese?

TIANA: No. They're translated into English.

PHOEBE: Oh.

TIANA: But they read backwards, 'cause like, the Japanese read backwards.

PHOEBE: You can read backwards?

TIANA: Yeah! Well, kind of. Maybe not. The letters and words go the right way, but the panels, word balloons and pages go backwards.

RUPERT: Riiight.

CLIFF: Do you do anything besides read manga?

TIANA: Um. . .

RUPERT: Do you want to be in the movie?

TIANA: Oh, wow! Could I really?

RUPERT: Well, we're going to see how many people we get and figure that out.

(VIRGINIA enters from L, carrying her bookbag.)

CLIFF: Hi, Virginia. Go away.

VIRGINIA: I thought you wanted people to be in the movie.

RUPERT: You want to be in the movie?

VIRGINIA: My mom says I should hang out with people who eat meat so I can broaden my horizons. So, I guess I'll try this. As long as nobody in the movie abuses animals.

CLIFF: Are you going to try to convert us to veganism?

VIRGINIA: If you eat meat in front of me, I will.

CLIFF: Wouldn't that subvert your mother's goal of broadening your horizons by getting you to hang out with evil meat-eaters? If we stop eating meat, then your horizons will stop broadening.

VIRGINIA: Yeah, but then I'll like you.

CLIFF: I don't want you to like me.

VIRGINIA: I can always find some other animal murderers to hang out with if I start liking you.

PHOEBE: You don't eat meat?

VIRGINIA: Or animal products.

TIANA: (**completely serious**) You mean like poop?

VIRGINIA: (**also completely serious**) No, like milk and eggs and stuff.

TIANA: Wow. That's intense. It must be really hard.

VIRGINIA: Not really. (**sits at end of table farthest from RUPERT**) I know that I'm a better person than you. Plus, I'm a lot healthier and I'll live longer.

(JACK enters from L.)

RUPERT: Oh, no.

JACK: I guess you're meeting about the movie, right?

CLIFF: What do you want, Jack?

JACK: What I want is to leave. Or to beat the snot out of you and then leave. Unfortunately, my guidance counselor, the assistant football coach, had the brilliant idea that I needed to make peace with you guys, and that I should be in this movie you're doing.

CLIFF: Mr. Watts told you to hang out with two students whom he knows you've bullied and with whom you almost got into a fight? Is he trying to get us killed?

JACK: I think it's his idea of creative punishment since I didn't get suspended.

CLIFF: Is he punishing you or us?

JACK: Probably both.

RUPERT: Jack, don't take this the wrong way, but we don't want you here.

JACK: I don't want to be here, but I don't have a choice.

RUPERT: But this film is a non-school-related activity. He can't force you into it, and we shouldn't have to take you if we don't want you.

JACK: The administration isn't real happy with me. I should have been suspended three or four times this year, but they didn't do it because I was too important to the football team. But, as of last Saturday, football season is over. I'm out of leverage. If I forget to

push in a chair in the cafeteria, they're going to throw the book at me. I can't afford to not be in this film.

RUPERT: Are you begging?

JACK: No. I'm threatening.

CLIFF: You're threatening? You just said that if you do something to us, you'll get suspended!

JACK: Not if I wait until next football season.

RUPERT: Cliff, come over here for a minute.

(RUPERT and CLIFF cross DLC. A light comes up on them as the rest of the lights dim.)

CLIFF: You're not going to go along with this are you? Come on, tell me you've got at least a little bit of a spine!

RUPERT: We can make this work to our advantage.

CLIFF: How?

RUPERT: If he's part of this, he has to do what I tell him.

CLIFF: What are you going to tell him to do?

RUPERT: I don't know. But we can come up with some pretty embarrassing stuff. And we can get it on film.

CLIFF: And we can show it to the public.

RUPERT: Better yet—we can save it to use as blackmail material for next year.

CLIFF: Coming from you, that's remarkably vicious. I'm proud of you.

RUPERT: So, he's in?

CLIFF: You're the boss.

(RUPERT and CLIFF cross back to JACK. The lighting returns to normal.)

RUPERT: Okay, Jack. You're in. But I'm in charge.

JACK: Not of me, you aren't.

RUPERT: You give me any trouble, I report it back to your guidance counselor.

JACK: You do and you'll be miserable next fall.

RUPERT: I'll take that chance.

JACK: Your funeral. ***(to VIRGINIA)*** Move.

VIRGINIA: Why?

JACK: If you don't, you're going to find a Chicken McNugget nailed to your locker in the morning.

(JACK takes VIRGINIA's chair as VIRGINIA moves to another seat.)

RUPERT: ***(to CLIFF)*** You think anyone else is coming?

CLIFF: I think they'd be here by now.

RUPERT: Light turnout.

CLIFF: We can make it work.

RUPERT: I'd really like to have more.

CLIFF: My cousin Alice was an extra in a couple of movies that filmed near here. Might be willing to help us out.

RUPERT: That'd be great! See what you can do. **(Addresses the group, pulling a clipboard out of his bookbag. The giraffe puppet falls out.)** Okay. Thanks for coming. I appreciate your interest in my movie.

JACK: Why do you have a giraffe puppet in your backpack?

CLIFF: Why do you have the giraffe puppet in your backpack, Rupert?

RUPERT: I forgot to throw it away.

JACK: Riiight. Freak.

TIANA: What's the movie going to be about?

RUPERT: Well, I'd like to do something about how society is in bondage to materialism, and how we're so distracted by our culture of the accumulation of possessions, that we lose sight of the importance of people. It's called *Materialism and the Decay of Morality in Postmodern Society*.

VIRGINIA: That sounds really boring.

TIANA: **(unenthused)** Oh.

JACK: You lost me at bondage.

PHOEBE: Hm.

VIRGINIA: You know, I think maybe it's time for my mom to pick me up. **(stands)**

TIANA: I think, maybe, I need to go to the dentist. **(stands)**

PHOEBE: **(to RUPERT, assuming the meeting is over)** Mm. Bye. **(sits up)**

RUPERT: Well, we don't have to do it as a straight—I mean, we can use something to, um, you know, symbolize stuff and—

CLIFF: Another name that we have on the table is *The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet*.

(Lights dim except for one light on RUPERT and CLIFF.)

RUPERT: What are you doing?

CLIFF: Saving your movie.

RUPERT: This is not what I want!

CLIFF: Then stop me.

(The lights return to normal. CLIFF addresses the group.)

CLIFF: The puppet represents materialism. There's a bunch of symbolic, high-level intellectual garbage that you don't have to

understand, but your English teachers will love it. But it'll be like filming a straight slasher film. Just leave the subtext to Rupert.

(Again, the lights dim except for one light on RUPERT and CLIFF.)

RUPERT: You're ruining this!

CLIFF: You're not stopping me!

(Lights return to normal.)

TIANA: That sounds kind of cool.

JACK: Please kill me, now.

PHOEBE: Oh. You mean we're not done? **(lies back down on table)**

VIRGINIA: Does the blood in the attack come from people, or is it donated from a blood bank?

CLIFF: We'll use fake blood.

VIRGINIA: **(moving to CLIFF)** Well, duh. I mean, in the story, whose blood is it?

CLIFF: The victims'.

VIRGINIA: Are the victims people or animals?

CLIFF: People.

VIRGINIA: Do people count as meat?

CLIFF: Yeah.

VIRGINIA: Well, does the giraffe eat people?

CLIFF: No.

VIRGINIA: Okay, good. Because vegans don't condone **(mispronouncing "condone")** that sort of behavior and I like, wouldn't be able to be in the movie if it did.

CLIFF: Right.

VIRGINIA: It doesn't drink people's blood, does it?

JACK: No! It's a puppet!

VIRGINIA: Good. Vegans don't do that either.

CLIFF: It just mauls people to death.

VIRGINIA: **(not really understanding, but accepting it)** Oh, then that's okay.

TIANA: Why does the giraffe puppet maul people to death?

CLIFF: Because it's evil.

TIANA: Why's it evil?

CLIFF: Because it's demonic.

TIANA: Okay.

RUPERT: **(starting slowly, then gradually building in intensity as the ideas come to him)** It's been around for centuries. And it's bored. It's bored because it's been killing people and that's all

that it's ever done. So it finds this guy—it makes the guy think that the guy found it, but really it chose the guy—and it messes with the guy's head. The guy like, becomes addicted to the puppet. He can get rid of the puppet at any time, but he doesn't want to, because it's like a drug, but the puppet starts killing people, and the guy could get rid of the puppet, but he can't bring himself to do it. **(gasps in horror at what HE has just said)**

TIANA: Why?

RUPERT: We'll figure it out. And anyway, the puppet just ruins this guy's life and drags him into madness.

TIANA: But the puppet kills a lot of people?

RUPERT: Yeah.

TIANA: And there's lots of blood?

RUPERT: Yeah.

VIRGINIA: But nobody gets eaten—just killed?

RUPERT: Every single character is a vegan. Including the puppet.

VIRGINIA: All right! I'm in.

TIANA: Me, too.

PHOEBE: Sure.

JACK: I'm not here. This isn't happening to me.

CLIFF: Okay, I guess that's it for now. We'll meet back here on Monday after Rupert's had a chance to write the screenplay. Thanks for coming!

(PHOEBE, TIANA, and VIRGINIA start to exit L.)

TIANA: This is gonna be so cool.

VIRGINIA: I can use this as a tool to promote veganism.

TIANA: Blood. . . yes!

CLIFF: I didn't think you had it in you.

RUPERT: I hate you.

CLIFF: You'll thank me.

RUPERT: I already submitted the entry form! It had my title on it!

CLIFF: You submitted—? We haven't even shot one frame of film yet!

RUPERT: I wanted to set my destiny!

CLIFF: Set your destiny? I think you'd better submit a new entry form.

JACK: *The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet?* I never realized just how desperate a loser you were.

RUPERT: Me either.

(BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 6: RUPERT'S HOME, THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY

(The set pieces are a living room chair and a small end table, all at R. RUPERT is sitting in the chair marking his newly-written screenplay with a red pen. CLIFF and ALICE enter.)

ALICE is in his late teens or early 20's. HE is dressed in jeans, a white t-shirt, denim jacket, cowboy boots, and a cowboy hat. RUPERT doesn't know ALICE and gives him a few puzzled looks before asking who HE is. ALICE stands R of RUPERT's chair. CLIFF crosses L of RUPERT's chair.)

CLIFF: Hey. Your mom let us in. How's it coming?

RUPERT: Just finished writing the script. I'm doing some editing on it right now.

CLIFF: *(leaning over RUPERT's shoulder)* Lemme see. Wow. You've been busy.

RUPERT: Yeah. Fifteen pages worth. So who's this?

CLIFF: This is my cousin, Alice.

RUPERT: It is?

CLIFF: Our washing machine broke and he came over to help my dad fix it. I thought since he was in the neighborhood, maybe you'd want to meet him.

ALICE: What? Something wrong?

RUPERT: No, no. Not at all. I just thought that, well, you know. . .

ALICE: That I was a girl?

RUPERT: Well, yeah.

ALICE: Do I look like a girl to you?

RUPERT: No.

ALICE: Do I smell like a girl to you?

RUPERT: No.

ALICE: You didn't smell. Go on. Smell. Smell!

(ALICE pulls RUPERT's face into his armpit. RUPERT recoils in disgust.)

ALICE: That there's hard country labor. Sweat. And manure. And cows. Lots of cows. The smell of pride in a job well done.

RUPERT: You have every right to be proud of the way you smell. It says so much about you. Here. Look over the screenplay for a minute. I need to talk to Cliff.

(RUPERT and CLIFF cross DRC. A light comes up on them as all other lights dim.)

RUPERT: You didn't tell me Alice was a guy.

CLIFF: You didn't ask.

RUPERT: The character I wrote for Alice to play is a girl!

CLIFF: I'd have thought that knowing a girl named Cliff for fourteen years would teach you not to make those sorts of assumptions.

RUPERT: What kind of parent names their son Alice?

CLIFF: What kind of parent names their daughter Cliff? All your life you've known me, and you've never asked me that question!

RUPERT: I met you when I was like, two. I've always just kind of taken your name for granted.

CLIFF: Alice's parents named him after Alice Cooper.

RUPERT: The rock and roll guy?

CLIFF: Yeah.

RUPERT: Sheesh. Whatever. I guess I need to overhaul that part of the script. Somebody else can do the love scene with Jack.

CLIFF: You wrote a love scene?

RUPERT: Yeah. I figure if we're going to do something related to the slasher genre, we need to at least acknowledge the genre's history. Most slasher flicks, there's teenagers giving in to their hormones and doing stuff their parents wouldn't approve of, and then when they get killed—it's like payback for their sins.

CLIFF: For some reason, I was thinking that the puppet was going to be killing people, whether they deserved it or not.

RUPERT: Well, yeah. It is. But it was just kind of a nod to everything that's come before, you know? Plus, it was an excuse to get Jack to strip down to his underwear.

CLIFF: Strip?

RUPERT: Yeah—blackmail material.

CLIFF: You think he would do that?

RUPERT: Maybe.

CLIFF: I'll humor that thought for a minute. But only a minute. Assuming he did, why not have Virginia or Tiana do the scene with him?

RUPERT: Because Jack would never do a love scene with Virginia or Tiana. Or you. Not that you would. Alice was an unknown quantity, so I hoped for the best.

(RUPERT and CLIFF remain lit as the other lights for the scene come back up. RUPERT and CLIFF look over at ALICE.)

ALICE: What?

RUPERT and CLIFF: ***(in unison)*** Nothing.

(RUPERT and CLIFF remain lit as the other lights dim.)

CLIFF: You're an idiot.

RUPERT: I know that.

CLIFF: You have enough sense to realize Jack wouldn't do a love scene with Virginia or Tiana, but yet you think you could actually get him in his underwear? On camera?

RUPERT: I was hoping Alice would be a hottie and Jack would succumb to his baser instincts.

CLIFF: Please tell me you weren't hoping to get Alice to strip.

(RUPERT opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out. HE makes a few feeble explanatory gestures before finally uttering the next line.)

RUPERT: I wasn't going to use it in the final movie.

CLIFF: You say you want to make a serious art film. You chastise me for wanting to make a slasher movie, but your first instinct is to create smut!

RUPERT: No!

CLIFF: Don't lie to me.

RUPERT: Okay, I'm a guy with a camcorder and an opportunity! What did you expect me to do?

CLIFF: From you, I expected better. ***(turns her back to RUPERT and crosses her arms)***

RUPERT: I'm scum.

CLIFF: You're scum.

RUPERT: Are you going to hit me?

CLIFF: I don't want to scum up my hand.

RUPERT: Are you going to leave the film?

CLIFF: No.

RUPERT: You are benevolence personified.

CLIFF: I am the personification of benevolence who is laughing her head off inside that you were hoping for a hot sultry babe and you got that.

(RUPERT and CLIFF remain lit as the rest of the lights for the scene come back up. RUPERT and CLIFF look over at ALICE again.)

ALICE: What?

RUPERT and CLIFF: ***(in unison)*** Nothing.

(RUPERT and CLIFF remain lit as the other lights dim.)

CLIFF: Karma bit you in the seat of the pants on this. If it happened once, it can happen again. Don't ever forget that.

RUPERT: I won't.

CLIFF: Now, if we could rig up a costume for Jack that's designed to

rip when he bends over, we'd be in business.

RUPERT: Do you know how to sew?

CLIFF: No.

(The rest of the lights for the scene come back up.)

RUPERT: Well, I don't know how to sew. Alice, do you know how to sew?

ALICE: What did you just say? ***(stands and crosses to RUPERT)***

RUPERT: Uh. . .

ALICE: What did you just say? Did you just ask me if I know how to sew? You trying to make some kind of cheap joke about my name?

RUPERT: No. Actually, we need somebody who knows how to sew. For real. We don't. I was just checking. But that was stupid of me. Because you're a manly man and you obviously wouldn't know how to do a girly-girl thing like sew.

ALICE: Are you calling me a girly-girl for knowing how to sew?

RUPERT: You know how to sew?

ALICE: Of course, I know how to sew! It's a practical, honest, and useful skill and I'm proud of it! You get a problem with that?!

RUPERT: No. No. Uh. . .

ALICE: You got something to say?

RUPERT: I. . . uh. . .

ALICE: Well, spit it out!

RUPERT: Could you rig us up a pair of pants that'll split open?

ALICE: They ain't for me, are they?

RUPERT: No. They're for Jack—another guy in the cast.

ALICE: From what Cliff told me about the movie, I didn't think it was gonna have lowbrow humor-type stuff in it.

RUPERT: Actually, it doesn't. To be honest, I just wanted footage of Jack in his underwear, for personal reasons.

ALICE: ***(taking a step back from RUPERT)*** I'll bet you do.

RUPERT: Oh, no—it's not like that. I—

CLIFF: Karma, karma, karma.

RUPERT: Karma me? But the ripping pants—you—

ALICE: Listen, I got a problem with your script. It says they find the puppet in the woods.

RUPERT: How is that a problem?

ALICE: The woods are a total cliché. Every cheap, no-budget, B-movie uses the woods. M. Night Shyamalan runs out of ideas, he goes to the woods. Don't be M. Night Shyamalan. Be different. Be original. Have them find the puppet someplace else. Someplace that totally radiates pure evil.

RUPERT: Like, where?

ALICE: Floating in the toilet.

RUPERT: The toilet?

ALICE: Yeah!

RUPERT: How do you equate toilets with evil?

ALICE: Have you ever cleaned a toilet?

RUPERT: Yes. It wasn't that bad.

ALICE: Then your family isn't eating enough broccoli.

RUPERT: Let's just have the main character find it in the woods.

That's what actually happened. I found the puppet—

ALICE: You actually found a giraffe puppet in the woods? (*gets close to RUPERT and puts a hand on his shoulder*) Rupert, you're testing fate. You don't want the movie to imitate real life. If you make the puppet sentient and evil in the movie and then have the movie be like real life, the puppet might actually be sentient and evil in real life.

RUPERT: Me, throwing bits of reality into a work of fiction, isn't going to make the made-up parts become real.

ALICE: But they could already be real.

RUPERT: Then me filming them wouldn't change anything.

ALICE: But it could make them more real. I'm just saying. . . don't tempt fate, you know?

RUPERT: Don't tempt fate.

ALICE: Don't tempt fate. Use the toilet. It'll be awesome. Trust me.

(BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 7 – THE CAFETERIA, AFTER SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY

(CLIFF and RUPERT are adding two more chairs to the cafeteria table. ALICE is already sitting. There is a stack of scripts on the table. TIANA, PHEOBE, and VIRGINIA enter. RUPERT, CLIFF, TIANA and PHOEBE have their bookbags.)

VIRGINIA: Got the scripts?

RUPERT: *(handing them scripts)* Right here.

(TIANA and VIRGINIA sit. TIANA ignores her script, pulls a manga out of her bookbag, and starts looking at it intently. PHOEBE lies down on the table. JACK enters.)

JACK: Nuts. Rupert, I was really hoping you got killed in a car crash over the weekend or something. *(RUPERT hands him a script)*

CLIFF: You're such a jerk. I'd never wish that on you. I'd be happy for you to just spend the rest of your life in traction.

RUPERT: Everybody, I'd like to introduce Cliff's cousin, Alice.

(ALICE yawns. There is a long pause as everyone looks at ALICE, trying to make sense of RUPERT'S statement.)

RUPERT: He was named after Alice Cooper.

GROUP: Oh, okay. Hey, Alice. Nice to meet you. Cool name. Etc.

RUPERT: Alice, this is Virginia, Tiana, Phoebe, and Jack.

ALICE: Hey.

RUPERT: Now what I'd like to do is—

ALICE: So Rupert, who's playing David, the main character?

RUPERT: Well, if nobody has any objections, me.

JACK: Go right ahead. The smaller my part, the better.

ALICE: *(standing and crossing his arms)* What makes you qualified over me?

CLIFF: Any hack can be the lead. The talented character actors are the ones who get the really juicy parts.

ALICE: So you cast yourself in the lead because you can't act?

CLIFF: *(before RUPERT has a chance to respond)* Absolutely.

ALICE: That sounds pretty consistent with standard Hollywood practice. I can accept that. *(sits)*

RUPERT: Cliff is going to do the voice of the puppet and another

character in the office scene. We don't have a lot of people, so I had to double some of your parts. Tiana is playing my character's wife, and then she's got another part later on as an old librarian.

TIANA: (*still holding her manga, crosses to RUPERT, making karate chops in the air*) Could you make me a martial arts librarian? That'd be cool. Oh, and you know what—I could have an army of ninjas to guard the library, because like, ninjas are the ultimate stealth fighters and they'd be perfect for library security and stuff. Way better than noisy alarms by the door.

RUPERT: Uh. . .

TIANA: And could you set the movie in Japan? Because that's where manga comes from (*thrusts her manga into RUPERT's face*) and manga is really cool and popular and if you set the movie there then people would want to see the movie because they all like manga and manga comes from Japan.

RUPERT: I. . . can't say that I've ever been to Japan, but I doubt that any of the buildings around here look Japanese.

TIANA: But you're not sure?

RUPERT: Not 100%. But I'm kind of sure.

TIANA: Well, I doubt most of the audience will have ever been there either, so they won't be sure. So if we narrow it down to one specific place in Japan, probably most people won't have been there, and nobody will really know the difference.

ALICE: Vancouver doubles for a lot of cities. It could work.

RUPERT: This isn't Vancouver!

ALICE: Same principle.

TIANA: So we go with one really cool, exotic place that hardly anybody around here has been to, that they'd like to go to, and it'll make them want to see the movie and nobody will know the difference. Like, oh—Tokyo! Yeah, that's it! Tokyo! Oh, I feel so smart!

VIRGINIA: That sounds like a cool idea. Are the Tokyoians all vegans?

TIANA: I know they eat a lot of rice and seaweed and soy sauce.

VIRGINIA: But aren't the Japanese all Bootyists (*shooting for "Buddhists" and missing*) or something? They're like idol-worshipping heathens (*sic*), aren't they?

TIANA: They eat a *lot* of soy sauce.

VIRGINIA: Okay, yeah. Let's set the movie in Tokyo. What do you think, Phoebe?

PHOEBE: Oh, I don't care.

CLIFF: Are you sure about that?

PHOEBE: No.

VIRGINIA: Jack, what about you?

JACK: I don't give a flying—

VIRGINIA: Okay, that's most of us, so we don't have to ask Cliff and Rupert what they think because it doesn't matter.

RUPERT: What do you mean it doesn't matter? This is my movie! I'm the director!

VIRGINIA: **(stands)** Actors are more important than directors.

RUPERT: What, you're going to go on strike if we don't set the movie in Japan?

VIRGINIA: Can you name anyplace else in the world with the moral purity of Japan, even if they are a bunch of idol-worshipping heathens?

RUPERT: What—no—I—

PHOEBE: I ate some sushi once.

TIANA: Sushi is Japanese!

PHOEBE: It had imitation crab meat in it.

VIRGINIA: Imitation crab meat? *Imitation crab meat?* **(pointing at PHOEBE)** See? See? Most people—they would just kill the poor little crabs and eat them, because they're like fish and people don't think fish count as meat, but they do because they're alive and stuff, and the Japanese are so much more caring people than all you blood-gorged carnivores, that they make imitation meat to put in their seussy so they don't have to kill the sweet little fish. So for the sake of every last underwater animal in the world, we're going to be a good example and set the movie in Tokyo, or you're not going to have a cast. **(sits)**

RUPERT: Phoebe, tell Virginia that's not what you—

PHOEBE: I never realized imitation crab meat wasn't real meat.

RUPERT: It isn't—

ALICE: Of course, it is. Why else would the packaging say "imitation"? They'd get sued if they lied about stuff like that.

(JACK snorts and laughs.)

ALICE: What?

JACK: **(starts to point at ALICE, sees an opportunity, and directs his scorn at RUPERT)** I just can't believe that Rupert didn't know imitation crab meat wasn't real meat.

TIANA: Yeah, Rupert. You can be pretty stupid.

RUPERT: Cliff—I—you—they—

CLIFF: I think it would do you some good to resolve this on your own. You're the director. Ball's in your court on this one.

RUPERT: But—but—ball—Japan—imitation—no—fish—

(RUPERT looks at everyone staring back at him.)

RUPERT: Okay. Okay! Tokyo! We'll go with Tokyo!

TIANA: Can all the dialogue be in Japanese?

RUPERT: No!

TIANA: Why not?

RUPERT: Do you speak Japanese?

TIANA: No.

RUPERT: I don't, either.

TIANA: Do any of you speak Japanese?

GROUP: No. Uh-uh. Just a couple words. Etc.

TIANA: Can't you just make up something that sounds like Japanese?

RUPERT: But nobody would be able to understand the dialogue.

ALICE: You could put captions at the bottom of the screen with the English translations.

RUPERT: Will you shut up!

CLIFF: But if they're speaking gibberish, it would just translate to gibberish at the bottom of the screen.

RUPERT: Yes. Thank you. That's exactly right.

TIANA: But hardly anybody in the audience will speak Japanese. They won't know the difference. Just like they won't know it isn't really Tokyo.

RUPERT: Tiana, I'm sorry, but I just don't think that this is a good idea.

TIANA: **(crumbles to floor and starts to cry)** Please! I really, really want to!

RUPERT: No. Please.

VIRGINIA: You made her cry.

JACK: Way to go, Rupert.

PHOEBE: That's not very nice.

ALICE: Don't you think maybe you should apologize?

VIRGINIA: Yeah. You ought to give her what she wants just to make up for being such a jerk.

JACK: Yeah, Rupert. You're a jerk.

RUPERT: Cliff—

CLIFF: You wanted to be in charge.

(TIANA sobs loudly.)

RUPERT: All right! We'll shoot in fake Japanese with English subtitles!

TIANA: **(instantly springing back to her feet)** Yay! Cool! Thank you! I promise it'll be the coolest thing ever and you won't regret it. Oh—oh—and you know what you could do?

RUPERT: What?

TIANA: Instead of nonsense words, you could use the names of manga artists so the words sound Japanese.

RUPERT: Huh?

TIANA: Like, have somebody say, “Katsuhiro Otomo Goseki Kojima” and then at the bottom of the screen have the subtitle, “To be or not to be.”

VIRGINIA: What’s Katsu—whatever really mean?

TIANA: It’s the names of the creators of *Akira* and *Lone Wolf and Cub*.

CLIFF: So it’d be like the reverse of having someone say, “Tom Cruise Oprah Winfrey Brad Pitt” with a subtitle in Japanese that says “Your right tooth is an electric chimpanzee”?

TIANA: Yeah!

ALICE: That’s a really good idea.

TIANA: Thanks!

RUPERT: (**dubiously**) You know enough Japanese names to make the dialogue all sound different?

TIANA: Oh, yeah! (**happily and abruptly sits down on the floor and starts reading her manga**)

RUPERT: Of course, you do. All right. I don’t have any better ideas. (**looks at VIRGINIA**) Virginia?

VIRGINIA: Yeah?

RUPERT: You’re going to play Detective Jones, one of the detectives tracking the puppet murders, and Alice is playing your partner, Detective Portman. . . okay?

ALICE: (**engrossed in reading the screenplay**) Mm.

VIRGINIA: Every character in the movie is a vegan, right?

RUPERT: (**takes a deep breath**) Everybody’s a vegan.

VIRGINIA: And the movie’s set in Tokyo?

RUPERT: Tokyo. Right. Tokyo.

VIRGINIA: Then I’m happy.

RUPERT: (**looking upwards as if to Heaven**) Thank you. (**looks at JACK**) Jack?

JACK: What?

RUPERT: You’re playing Bob. You’re a co-worker of David, the main character. You get killed by the puppet.

JACK: Short and sweet?

RUPERT: Yeah.

JACK: Sounds great.

RUPERT: And then you’re also playing the role of Max—

JACK: One part is enough.

RUPERT: You have no power here.

JACK: Next fall. (**draws his finger across his throat in a slitting motion**)

RUPERT: Max is best friends with Rob, played by Alice.

ALICE: Whoa. Whoa.

RUPERT: What?

ALICE: I saw that page. There was something funny on that page.

VIRGINIA: Funny funny or bad funny?

ALICE: (**crosses to RUPERT**) Bad funny. Bad, bad funny. Something here about. . . they kiss?

JACK: No! No way! Absolutely not! If you expect me to—

ALICE: If you expect *me* to—

RUPERT: No! That's changed! Sorry. Left over from an earlier draft. No kissing. It's a handshake. They're just friends. Honest.

ALICE: You sure about that?

RUPERT: Positive.

JACK: You better not embarrass me.

RUPERT: (**innocently**) Embarrass you? Never.

ALICE: Gotta wonder about you sometimes, Rupert. And this script. I keep looking at it and I can't shake the feeling that it's missing something.

RUPERT: Like what? No. Never mind. Ignore that question.

CLIFF: Hey, Rupert? What's Phoebe going to do?

RUPERT: She's going to be the gaffer.

PHOEBE: What's a gaffer?

RUPERT: I'm not sure. I always see it in the film credits, so I know we need one. Why don't you look it up online and let me know?

PHOEBE: No, I don't want to look it up.

RUPERT: Okay. I guess I'll look it up sometime. Unless—Cliff, you don't know what a gaffer is, do you?

CLIFF: If you don't know, I'm not telling you.

RUPERT: Alice, do you know—

ALICE: I got it! You know the song "What's the Frequency, Kenneth?" by R.E.M.?

RUPERT: Vaguely.

ALICE: It's got a lot of really deep stuff in it. I think about it a lot.

RUPERT: Oh, please, no.

ALICE: There's this one line in it that I always thought would be a great element to use in a movie: "You wore a shirt of violent green."

RUPERT: What does that even mean?

ALICE: Think. Who would wear a shirt of violent green?

RUPERT: The Incredible Hulk?

ALICE: No! Don't be stupid! Military leprechauns!

RUPERT: You want to put military leprechauns in the movie?

TIANA: What about yakuza gangster leprechauns? Extorting each other's gold and running protection rackets?

ALICE: No. That'd be silly. Trust me, I've thought about this. Military leprechauns launching tactical strikes against humans for stealing their gold. It'd be cool.

JACK: (**mockingly**) What if they were out for revenge against

humans for stepping on other leprechauns?

ALICE: Dude, you rock!

CLIFF: **(crosses to ALICE)** Alice, the leprechaun thing has been done.

ALICE: By who?

CLIFF: Warwick Davis.

ALICE: Who's Warwick Davis?

CLIFF: You know the Ewoks in *Return of the Jedi*?

ALICE: Yeah.

CLIFF: Well he was the one—

ALICE: Don't bother. They all look alike to me.

TIANA: You are so racist!

ALICE: I'm not racist. They're little bears. They didn't even have names in the movie. It's not like I collect the geek action figures or whatever.

CLIFF: Are you implying that I collect action figures?

ALICE: Do you know the name of the Ewok that this Warwick Davis person played?

CLIFF: Yes.

ALICE: Then I think that there's an alarmingly strong possibility that you collect action figures.

CLIFF: Just because you're my cousin, doesn't give you the right to mouth off at me.

ALICE: It's just suspicious. That's all I'm saying.

CLIFF: My mother has naked baby pictures of you. I know where they are. You accuse me of collecting action figures again and those pictures go straight to the Internet.

ALICE: You wouldn't.

CLIFF: Try me.

ALICE: Okay. Maybe you don't collect action figures.

CLIFF: Darn straight. Anyway—*Willow*. Have you seen *Willow*?

ALICE: The chick from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*?

CLIFF: What about the *Harry Potter* movies? You've seen them, right?

ALICE: Not willingly.

CLIFF: Warwick Davis is the actor who plays Professor Flitwick.

ALICE: Which one is Flitwick?

CLIFF: The short one!

ALICE: The little midget/dwarf dude?

CLIFF: Yes!

ALICE: Why didn't you just say so?

CLIFF: Because—never mind! Warwick Davis starred in a series of low-budget horror movies called *Leprechaun*.

ALICE: Somebody made a horror movie about a leprechaun?

CLIFF: Six movies.

ALICE: Six?

CLIFF: Six. *Leprechaun*, *Leprechaun 2*, *Leprechaun 3*, *Leprechaun 4: In Space*, *Leprechaun in the Hood*, and *Leprechaun: Back 2 tha Hood*.

ALICE: *Leprechaun: Back 2 tha Hood*? You seriously expect me to believe that?

CLIFF: And you call yourself a film buff. The tagline was “Evil has a whole new rap!”

ALICE: You are so full of crap.

CLIFF: Look it up! The violent leprechaun angle has already been done!

(RUPERT appears enormously relieved.)

ALICE: Well, so what? That was only six movies! Do you know how many war movies have been made? How many westerns? These things endure. There’s plenty of room in the cinematic lexicon for more than just six movies with violent leprechauns in them.

(CLIFF gives up and returns to her seat.)

VIRGINIA: What’s a lexicon?

ALICE: ***(snapping his fingers in inspiration)*** Hey—we should imply that there’s some kind of back story between the leprechauns and the giraffe puppet, to give the movie an epic quality.

RUPERT: But leprechauns are Irish! They don’t live in Japan!

ALICE: You ever been to Japan?

RUPERT: No.

ALICE: Then how do you know?

RUPERT: Because leprechauns are make-believe!

ALICE: Then what’s the problem with having them be in Japan?

RUPERT: ***(trying a different tactic)*** Nobody here is that small.

ALICE: Just cheat the perspective like they did with the hobbits in *Lord of the Rings*. Film them from a high angle so they look short.

VIRGINIA: Are leprechauns vegans?

TIANA: All the green they wear, they’d have to be.

VIRGINIA: Okay.

ALICE: Rupert, nobody’s ever done Japanese leprechauns. You’ll be breaking new ground.

RUPERT: ***(attempting to stare down ALICE)*** If there are leprechauns in the run, you’re playing one of them.

ALICE: You want me to run around in camouflage and fight against hopeless odds in the name of vengeance? Sounds like a plan.

(RUPERT crosses to table, sits, and bangs his head on the

table.)

JACK: You okay?

RUPERT: Why do you care?

JACK: Just being hopeful.

RUPERT: You're playing one, too.

JACK: What? No!

RUPERT: The vengeance thing was your idea. If we have leprechauns, you're going to be one!

JACK: There is no way I'm going to—

RUPERT: You want me to tell Mr. Watts you're hindering the production?

JACK: Next fall, Rupert. Next fall.

RUPERT: Only if this movie doesn't kill me first.

(BLACKOUT. CURTAIN.)

Do Not Copy

ACT II

SCENE 1: RUPERT'S BACK YARD, A FEW DAYS LATER

(On the apron in front of the closed curtain, RUPERT is holding a camcorder mounted on a tripod above his head. CLIFF is standing by, ready to catch the camcorder if RUPERT drops it. JACK and ALICE, dressed in leprechaun costumes and holding green pipes, skip onstage from L, singing. VIRGINIA and TIANA are standing RC. VIRGINIA is watching. TIANA is reading a manga. PHOEBE is lying on her back on the stage, R. CLIFF's lunch bag, RUPERT'S backpack and camera bag, and VIRGINIA's backpack are nearby.)

JACK and ALICE: *(singing to the tune of "Good King Wenceslas")* Katsuhiko Rumiko Kanada Yoshida!

RUPERT: Cut!

(RUPERT lowers the camcorder and hands it to CLIFF. JACK angrily shakes a fist at RUPERT.)

JACK: Next fall, Rupert! Next fall, I am going to make you pay for this!

RUPERT: Jack, I just shot footage of you dressed like a leprechaun, dancing, and singing a happy song in complete gibberish. It will be in the movie and there's nothing you can do about it. But I promise that the words I put in your mouth through the magic of subtitles won't be about you. Now, if you tick me off enough, I could make a different set of subtitles and have you singing about your personal hygiene, your favorite color of "Depends" undergarments and how dry they keep you, or anything else that comes to mind. And then I can post it on the Internet for the whole world to see. So, if you know what's good for your macho jock reputation, back off.

JACK: You do that and I'll—I'll—

RUPERT: I know you will. And I have three words for you: Mutually assured destruction. You don't hurt me, and I won't hurt you.

(JACK storms offstage.)

ALICE: *(crossing to RUPERT)* Dude needs to lighten up. You get all the CGI blood in there and it's going to be cool as crap. *(squishes imaginary crap between his hands, then puts one hand on RUPERT's shoulder)* He's going to come begging to be

in your next movie.

RUPERT: CGI blood?

ALICE: Well, there hasn't been any blood in anything we've filmed, so I'm figuring you're going to add it in post. Right?

VIRGINIA: Does the tape bleed if you put a post in it?

TIANA: No—like, special effects—post production—are you going to put digital blood in the movie, Rupert? Oh, wow! That'll be cool! I'm impressed!

PHOEBE: Me, too. I guess.

CLIFF: **(knowing full well RUPERT doesn't know a thing about special effects)** Yeah, Rupert. I didn't know you knew how to do digital special effects.

(RUPERT looks helplessly at CLIFF for a second.)

ALICE: So, is that it for today?

RUPERT: **(happy to have the subject changed)** Yeah! See you tomorrow!

(RUPERT puts the camcorder in his camera bag, then sits on the edge of the stage with his clipboard. CLIFF gets her lunch bag and joins him.)

TIANA: Okay! Bye!

VIRGINIA: See ya.

(ALICE, TIANA, and VIRGINIA exit. PHOEBE starts to get up, sees that RUPERT and CLIFF are still there, shrugs her shoulders, and flops back down.)

PHOEBE: Digital blood seems so . . . hard. How come you haven't used some kind of red stuff splattering for that?

RUPERT: Uh, I want to keep things clean on-set.

CLIFF: Cleanliness is next to wussiness.

PHOEBE: Huh?

CLIFF: **(realizing SHE shouldn't undermine RUPERT's tenuous authority and saying the first thing that pops into her head)**
Rupert gives me warm fuzzies.

PHOEBE: Oh. So you two are dating?

(RUPERT and CLIFF look at each other in surprised, uncomfortable silence, then turn away from each other as they break out in forced laughter. As the laughter fades, they look at each other again, then turn their heads away as they force out a few more faint chuckles.)

RUPERT: The thought never even occurred to me.

CLIFF: *(unconvincingly)* Me, neither. *(looks at RUPERT and then quickly looks away)*

PHOEBE: Oh. Okay. Nobody knows for sure.

RUPERT: They don't?

(RUPERT and CLIFF look at each other again, then at PHOEBE.)

RUPERT: So, uh, Phoebe. . . got a lot of homework tonight?

PHOEBE: Mm. No.

RUPERT: Good. That's great.

PHOEBE: Have you figured out what a gaffer does yet?

RUPERT: No. No. Haven't had a chance. You want to look it up tonight since you don't have a lot of homework?

PHOEBE: No.

RUPERT: Okay. I'll uh—I'll get on that soon.

PHOEBE: Okay. No rush.

RUPERT: Just. . . curious—what made you want to help with the movie?

PHOEBE: It sounded cool. And I wasn't doing anything else.

RUPERT: Ah. Right. Well, uh. . . see you tomorrow.

PHOEBE: Bye.

(It takes a few seconds for PHOEBE to remember that SHE is at RUPERT's house and that SHE should be the one to actually get up and leave. With considerable difficulty, PHOEBE drags herself to her feet, steadies herself, and exits. CLIFF and RUPERT give each other a mutually alarmed look in reference to PHOEBE's strangeness. They break eye contact, then quickly look at each other again, then quickly break eye contact again. CLIFF pulls a sandwich out of her lunch bag and starts eating it. RUPERT pulls some papers and a clipboard out of his backpack and starts writing.)

CLIFF: Digital blood?

RUPERT: Don't. Please.

(VIRGINIA enters.)

VIRGINIA: I forgot my bag.

(CLIFF attempts to conceal her sandwich from VIRGINIA's view.)

VIRGINIA: Whatcha got?

CLIFF: If you don't ask, I won't tell you, and we can both save ourselves a lot of grief.

VIRGINIA: You're eating sliced pieces from the corpse of a poor, dead animal aren't you?

CLIFF: Leave me alone, Virginia.

VIRGINIA: It's wrong to eat that.

CLIFF: Oh, for—why?

VIRGINIA: Because it used to be alive.

CLIFF: But it's dead, now. It's okay.

VIRGINIA: No, it's not. We should respect all life and not kill animals just to eat them and stuff.

CLIFF: But if you respect all life, then you can't eat plants, either.

VIRGINIA: Those don't count.

CLIFF: Why?

VIRGINIA: I don't know. They just don't.

CLIFF: What about all the defenseless bacteria on the plants?

VIRGINIA: Um. Do bacteria count as meat?

CLIFF: They could evolve into meat over a few million years.

VIRGINIA: But they're not meat now?

CLIFF: I don't know. I don't think so. But they're living things.

VIRGINIA: But they're not fishy or cute and furry.

CLIFF: Snakes aren't cute and furry. They're living things.

VIRGINIA: People don't eat snakes.

CLIFF: Yes, they do.

VIRGINIA: But you can't walk into a fast food chain and order a snakeburger.

CLIFF: How do you know what's in a fast food burger patty?

VIRGINIA: It's a hamburger. It's made out of ham.

CLIFF: It's made out of cow!

VIRGINIA: That's what I said.

CLIFF: You said ham!

VIRGINIA: Cows aren't ham?

CLIFF: Cows are beef!

VIRGINIA: But can't cows be ham, too?

CLIFF: Pigs are ham!

VIRGINIA: Then why don't they call ham pig?

CLIFF: For the same reason they don't call beef cow!

VIRGINIA: Why don't they call beef cow?

CLIFF: I have no freaking idea!

VIRGINIA: Why do they call hamburgers hamburgers if they're not made out of ham?

CLIFF: For the same reason they don't call ham pig.

VIRGINIA: Why is that?

CLIFF: I still don't know. No one's told me in the past three seconds. I'm still waiting for the aliens to beam that information into the

transmitter at the base of my skull!

VIRGINIA: You have an alien transmitter in your skull?

CLIFF: No, I'm being sarcastic!

VIRGINIA: Why are you being sarcastic?

CLIFF: Because you're being an idiot!

VIRGINIA: I'm not an idiot!

CLIFF: You didn't know ham came from pigs!

VIRGINIA: You're an idiot, too! You said hamburgers had snake in them! Kind of.

CLIFF: The word you're looking for is "implied." I implied that fast food hamburgers may contain snake meat because I don't know what's really in those patties. They say it's cow, and maybe it is. But have you ever really looked at a fast food hamburger patty? It could be anything! We have to take it on faith that it's what they say it is, and I don't exactly have a lot of faith in the fast food industry.

VIRGINIA: Me, neither.

CLIFF: Don't you dare agree with me!

VIRGINIA: It was an accident. I couldn't help it. **(pauses a second)**
You still shouldn't eat that sandwich.

CLIFF: Why?

VIRGINIA: Because you'll probably go to the bad place when you die. See you tomorrow. If God doesn't strike you dead between now and then, I mean.

(VIRGINIA exits. CLIFF sits, stunned.)

RUPERT: I'm sure she means well.

CLIFF: She just told me I'm going to the bad place. People don't mean well when they tell you that. That girl's got issues. One of these days, her world view is going to just implode. I hope I'm there with a camcorder when it does.

RUPERT: As long as it's after the movie is done. All the rewriting I've had to do has pushed back filming and we're on a deadline to submit the movie for the contest by the 28th. I still have no idea how I'm going to edit. And now I have to do digital blood. The last thing I need is one of the cast having a nervous breakdown and dropping out.

CLIFF: If everyone dropped out, you'd be free to make the movie your way.

RUPERT: But I'd have to start over with a different group, and I can't go through that again. I just hope these guys don't come up with any more ideas. I don't know what I'll do.

CLIFF: You could always say no.

RUPERT: I tried that. It didn't work.

CLIFF: You didn't have any trouble shooting down my request to make a slasher film.

RUPERT: And yet we somehow wound up making one. Sort of. And anyway, you're my friend. I can say no to you.

CLIFF: You can refuse your friends, but you have to cave in to every whim of people who aren't your friends?

RUPERT: No!

CLIFF: How no?

RUPERT: I don't know! Just, no.

CLIFF: Are you that desperate for validation of your pathetic existence that you need the approval of people that you don't even like?

RUPERT: What?

CLIFF: *(in a slightly mocking, sing-songy voice)* You're not existentially fulfilled.

RUPERT: How so?

CLIFF: You have so little faith in yourself that you rely on the faith of others—on something outside of *you*—to give you confidence, and it makes you do stupid things.

RUPERT: You're going along with those stupid things.

CLIFF: It's your movie.

RUPERT: *(reacting to his clipboard)* What the—

CLIFF: What?

RUPERT: I'm filling out the entry form again.

CLIFF: Why?

RUPERT: Because somebody changed the title of my film. Oh, man. It says here that the movie is *supposed* to be a documentary.

CLIFF: You filled it out once already and you didn't notice this?

RUPERT: I was excited. I didn't actually read every single word.

CLIFF: "Documentary" a pretty significant word.

RUPERT: I can't call this a documentary.

CLIFF: Sure you can.

RUPERT: How?

CLIFF: The movie is about a guy who finds a puppet and his life goes in a complete downward spiral.

RUPERT: Yeah?

CLIFF: You found a puppet and now your life is in a complete downward spiral.

RUPERT: It's not the same.

CLIFF: So find out if the documentary thing is a hard and fast rule, or if they can be flexible with it. Tell them you're doing a bunch of symbolic representation and stuff. They'll cut you some slack.

(BLACKOUT. Curtain opens.)

**SCENE 2: THE OFFICE OF MARGERY PATTINSON, THE NEXT
DAY**

(MARGERY PATTINSON is writing with a pen at her desk, R. On the desk are a small plant and a small stack of papers. There is an extra chair R of the desk. RUPERT enters, backpack and camcorder bag slung over his shoulder.)

RUPERT: Hi. Mrs. Pattinson? My name is Rupert Newell.

PATTINSON: Hello, Rupert. How may I help you today? **(gestures to extra chair. RUPERT sits)**

RUPERT: You're the president of the local chapter of the Triangle Club, right?

PATTINSON: That's right.

RUPERT: And you're in charge of the film contest?

PATTINSON: Yes, I am. Oh, is there a camcorder in that bag?

RUPERT: Yeah.

PATTINSON: May I see it?

RUPERT: Sure.

(RUPERT hands PATTINSON the camcorder, which SHE examines with great interest.)

PATTINSON: These are fascinating. I may have to get one for myself one day. **(points the camcorder at herself and makes a goofy face)** Boo! **(chuckles and hands the camcorder back to RUPERT)** Did you have a question about the contest?

RUPERT: I uh. . . I submitted an entry form.

PATTINSON: Yes, I remember it. *Materialism and the Decay of Morality in Postmodern Society*, right? I'm looking forward to seeing it.

RUPERT: I was wondering. . . the thing about the movie being a documentary. . . what made you decide on that?

PATTINSON: Well, we thought that if we let student filmmakers run wild with their imaginations, they'd wind up with some pretty obnoxious nonsense and try to pass it off as symbolism. We wanted to keep things as dignified as possible.

RUPERT: Dignified. Right. So, I guess the documentary rule is firmly set in stone to uh, keep things dignified, huh?

PATTINSON: Oh, absolutely.

RUPERT: And the uh. . . the theme. "A Better World." What made you decide on that?

PATTINSON: To keep things happy. I know you young people can be so full of angst. So much rage. Even *violent* sometimes. . . my goodness. We certainly wouldn't want anything like that in

anyone's film now, would we?

RUPERT: Of course not.

PATTINSON: It would go against the goals of the Triangle Club. I guess you could say that the Triangle Club really is out to create a happier, better world, and we're looking for the film that best reflects our values. With your subject, though, you should probably keep in mind that although materialism is generally a bad thing, we need a certain amount of it to keep things running. Why, if everyone suddenly stopped buying frivolous things, the economy would come crashing down and the Triangle Club would stop getting donations.

(BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 3: THE HALL AT SCHOOL, THE NEXT DAY

(RUPERT and CLIFF, backpacks on shoulders, are standing DC.)

RUPERT: I got two big problems. The documentary rule is set in stone.

CLIFF: Well, the movie is *kind of* a documentary.

RUPERT: It's called *The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet!* I can't pass that off as a documentary!

CLIFF: I take it you didn't update your title on the form?

RUPERT: Of course not! They'd throw out my entry for sure!

CLIFF: What are you going to do?

RUPERT: I have no idea!

CLIFF: What's the other problem?

RUPERT: She shot down the whole premise of my movie. That materialism is bad. She said that taking away materialism would hurt the economy and that would dry up the Triangle Club's donations. How do I get around that?

CLIFF: I'm sure you'll figure something out. Here. I've got something for you.

RUPERT: What?

CLIFF: **(handing RUPERT a scrap of paper)** The name of a local place that does film editing and special effects work.

RUPERT: Mayhew's Pro Video. Where did you get this? The Internet?

CLIFF: The phone book.

RUPERT: Cliff, you're brilliant. I never would have thought to look there.

CLIFF: It's a dying art form. Rupert, look. I have no idea if these people are any good or not. I know you're in a tight spot, but don't

use them unless you're sure they know what they're doing and you can afford them, okay?

RUPERT: Okay. I will. (*hugs her*) Thanks, Cliff. You're too good to me.

(BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 4: MAYHEW'S PRO VIDEO, THAT EVENING

(At L, MAYHEW is sitting at a small table, staring vacantly at the screen of a laptop computer while drinking from a can of cheap diet soda. A few empty soda cans litter the floor. The scene is dimly lit to suggest MAYHEW doesn't spend a lot of money on light bulbs. RUPERT enters. MAYHEW takes a second to register his presence, then stands to greet him. MAYHEW speaks in a very, very deep Southern accent.)

MAYHEW: Hey der, partner. What can I do for ya?

RUPERT: I'm sorry. What?

MAYHEW: You need some editin' done?

RUPERT: Yeah. And special effects.

MAYHEW: What kinder speshler 'fects?

RUPERT: My movie's got a lot of action in it, and I was wondering if you could create digital blood?

MAYHEW: (*stands*) Is it action now—or is it—vierlence?

RUPERT: Virulence?

MAYHEW: Vierlence! Y'know—vierlence! (*punches RUPERT in the arm—hard*)

RUPERT: Ow! Violence—right. Violence. I guess it would be violence. (*gasps in pain*) Thanks for pointing out the distinction.

MAYHEW: What kinder vierlence d'you have in mind?

RUPERT: Well, this might sound kind of silly, but there's this puppet, and I want it to have glowing eyes—

MAYHEW: Glowin' eyes. 'S nothin'. Gimme a challenge, boy. Tell me 'bout that vierlence.

RUPERT: Well, then there're these leprechauns and they—

MAYHEW: Leppercons? D'you say—leppercons?

RUPERT: (*taking a cautious step back*) Yeah. Leprechauns.

MAYHEW: Gonna sock it to that there Warriik Davis, huh? Gonna show that lil' punk he can't corner da market on da leppercon thing, ain't ya? Well, that's good for you. Not 'nuff leppercons doin' da vierlence in the moo-vies these days an' I betcha ol' Warriik he's a thinkin' he's got da market all t'himself, ain't he? Arrogant lil' punk. Well, yer gonna show him an' I'm wit'ya all da

way. Yer a man after my own heart.

RUPERT: How much do you charge?

MAYHEW: Oh, don't you worry 'bout that now none. I'll work wit you on da price if you're gonna sock it to 'ol Warriik.

RUPERT: Do you have something personal against Warwick Davis?

MAYHEW: Naw, I just figure that since ain't nobody else done made no moo-vies 'bout no leppercon vierlence, that he gone an' got his self a big ol' head 'bout it—don't you think?

RUPERT: Uh—I don't know. I don't think he was trying to corner the market on a particular genre. I mean, it's not like he was the only person responsible for making those movies. He's just an actor—

MAYHEW: Darn right he is! Just an actor! Actors they git all arrogant an' ain't got no respect fer da technical folks who do all da real work. Don't take no skill to—*(with a horse, effeminate cough)* act.

RUPERT: *(moving away from MAYHEW)* So, um, tell me. No doubt you're uh—very skilled at what you do. Could you tell me about your credentials?

MAYHEW: Oh, ah graduated top o' my class. Tip ol' top. Right up there. Yup. Coulda worked on any moo-vie I wanted. My demos, they was all that good—yup.

RUPERT: So you haven't actually done any professional movie work, then?

MAYHEW: Oh, I coulda. I coulda. But my 'partment burned down an' my demos went up in smoke an' nobody'd believe me how good they was an' I couldn't get no work, so I had to open up this place.

RUPERT: Couldn't you have made more samples?

MAYHEW: But I'd already made 'em once! What's da point in goin' back an' doin' somethin' 'gain once you done it already?

RUPERT: Uh—do you have any of your recent work here that I could see?

MAYHEW: 'Fraid not. Clients done already picked it up. You shoulda seen it. S'good stuff.

RUPERT: So you don't have any samples of your work I could see?

MAYHEW: *(ignoring the question)* Was real good stuff.

RUPERT: I'm sure.

MAYHEW: Oh, bless ya boy, ya believe me. Ya got faith is what ya got an' ah won't let ya down. Ah's gonna give you da purriest red blood ya ever did see sprayin' 'cross a silver screen an' it's gonna be cheap as dirt.

RUPERT: Cheap as dirt?

MAYHEW: Ah will not be undersold.

RUPERT: I didn't know there was anybody else in the area who did film editing and special effects work.

MAYHEW: There ain't.

RUPERT: You just said you wouldn't be undersold.

MAYHEW: You got it. Good boy.

(BLACKOUT. Curtain closes.)

SCENE 5: THE HALL AT SCHOOL, THE NEXT MORNING

(DR in front of the curtain, RUPERT and CLIFF, bookbags on shoulders, are talking.)

CLIFF: So, do you think this Mayhew person is going to work out?
Did he seem trustworthy?

RUPERT: He seemed—like he had a really thick accent.

CLIFF: What kind of accent?

RUPERT: Kind of like, deep southern mountain.

CLIFF: How deep?

RUPERT: Couple of miles underground, at least.

CLIFF: This could be bad. You don't need bad.

RUPERT: I've already got bad. On top of everything else, I talked to the music teacher about getting the chorus to record a theme song for the movie, but she flat-out refused.

CLIFF: I know. Tiana told me about it. **(handing RUPERT a CD)**
Here.

RUPERT: What's this?

CLIFF: Theme song. Nothing fancy. Basically soaring vocals about blood and death. I got some of the kids from chorus together and we recorded it.

RUPERT: I—wow. Thanks.

(TIANA enters, carrying her bookbag and a manga.)

TIANA: Hey, Rupert?

RUPERT: Tiana. What's up?

TIANA: I've been working really hard on translating the rest of the script into Japanese names for you.

RUPERT: Great.

TIANA: But it's like—a lot harder than I thought.

RUPERT: It's what you wanted.

TIANA: Well, is it okay if I don't want to do it anymore?

RUPERT: But we've already filmed all the leprechauns talking in fake Japanese, along with entire first scene of the movie!

TIANA: Well, the leprechauns are like, indingenius **(sic)** to Japan, so it would make sense if they're talking in Japanese when everyone

else isn't.

RUPERT: But everyone else is indigenous to Japan, too.

TIANA: Well, yeah, but they're people. The leprechauns are like, an extension of the land, 'cause they're like, all green and stuff, so they can speak the language of the land even though everybody else is talking in American.

RUPERT: But we'd still have to go back and film the other scenes all over again!

TIANA: Everybody in Japan speaks American! It's okay to have it in two languages!

(PHOEBE enters.)

PHOEBE: Hey.

RUPERT: What?

PHOEBE: Nothing.

RUPERT: **(to PHOEBE)** Right. **(to TIANA)** Tiana, it just wouldn't make sense, and there's no time to go back and re-film. You wanted this and I agreed, and now I need you to carry through with it. . . please?

TIANA: **(starting to cry)** But it's so hard. I can't keep track of what names I've used and what names I haven't, and they're all starting to run together and now I'm starting to confuse the names from my favorite manga and it's making me really, really confused and I just don't want to do it anymore, okay?

(RUPERT looks at CLIFF.)

CLIFF: Your movie.

TIANA: I even tried using Japanese words like "sushi" and the names of cars and an anime I don't like, but it didn't help.

(RUPERT looks at PHOEBE.)

RUPERT: I don't suppose you have an opinion?

PHOEBE: No.

RUPERT: Of course not. Tiana, you committed to this—

TIANA: But I'm committed to my manga, too. I love them, but I feel like I'm abusing them and now they won't love me back.

RUPERT: Tiana, you're not existentially fulfilled. You're relying on something outside of you to give your life meaning. You're assigning to your manga a high degree of personal significance that they don't intrinsically possess—trying to impose characteristics on them that they don't really have.

(CLIFF looks at RUPERT and smacks her own forehead.)

TIANA: Your words are too big for my little ears.

RUPERT: They don't love you back.

TIANA: Nooooo!

RUPERT: Tiana! Please! We don't need this! Tiana! I can't afford for you to have a nervous breakdown! Tiana!

TIANA: **(crumbles to floor)** Waaaahhhhhh!

RUPERT: All right! All right! I lied! They love you! **(kneels beside TIANA)** Every molecule of paper on every single page has a little heart inside of it that beats with love for you! Now for the love of heaven—**(holds up her manga)** for the love of manga—pull yourself together.

TIANA: For the love of manga—for the love of manga, I can do it.

RUPERT: Thank you.

TIANA: You shouldn't have lied to me.

RUPERT: I'm sorry.

TIANA: Why did you lie to me like that?

RUPERT: I thought you needed to be more self-reliant.

TIANA: I don't need to be self-reliant. I have manga.

RUPERT: I know. I realize that, now. I'm sorry. Go clean up before class starts, okay?

TIANA: Okay. I don't have to keep translating the movie, do I?

RUPERT: **(sighs deeply)** No. You don't have to keep translating the movie.

TIANA: That's good. My manga and I thank you from the bottoms of our hearts. Especially this one manga I'm reading, right now. It's called *Go-kin Usi* and it's about this little baby cow with soft golden fur, and he's just the cutest thing—I have a little puppet of him—and he loves everybody, **(accusingly)** even when they say mean things to him.

(TIANA exits. RUPERT looks helplessly at CLIFF. PHOEBE just stands there. BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 6: FILMING IN RUPERT'S BACK YARD, THAT WEEKEND

(On the apron in front of the closed curtain, RUPERT's camcorder is set up on its tripod at C. ALICE and JACK, dressed in their regular clothes, are standing LC. CLIFF, TIANA, VIRGINIA, and RUPERT are standing RC. PHOEBE is lying on the stage DR. TIANA is holding the giraffe puppet.)

ALICE: This used to be the scene where they kiss, isn't it?

RUPERT: Yeah. But we changed that when we made your character a guy. They're shaking hands and affirming their friendship. That's all.

JACK: They're *just* friends, right?

RUPERT: Just friends.

ALICE: You're sure?

RUPERT: Yes!

JACK: Okay. So long as the audience understands that.

RUPERT: If you want to throw in a line to that effect so that nobody reads anything into it, just do it.

ALICE: Think I will. Thanks.

RUPERT: Tiana.

(TIANA crosses between ALICE and JACK and crouches down between them.)

RUPERT: Okay. Go.

JACK: Hey.

ALICE: Hey.

JACK: How you doing?

ALICE: Good. Good.

JACK: Good.

ALICE: Yeah.

RUPERT: ***(in a loud whisper to CLIFF)*** What're they doing!?!?

CLIFF: Let it go. We can always edit it.

RUPERT: You haven't met the editor!

ALICE: Hey, uh, I uh saw a couple of cows on the way here.

JACK: Yeah?

ALICE: Yeah.

JACK: What were they doing? The cows.

ALICE: Making baby cows.

JACK: Yeah?

ALICE: And then this puppet killed them.

JACK: Huh.

ALICE: Nasty.

JACK: Yeah. I bet.

ALICE: Sad.

JACK: One less burger I'll get to eat at McDonald's.

VIRGINIA: What?!

JACK: ***(mockingly)*** I mean—one less burger the heartherns will get to eat at McDonald's.

ALICE: Little less milk they'll get at the grocery store. A little less pudding, too. I used to love pudding.

JACK: ***(mockingly)*** Ah, they had it coming, filthy heartherns.

ALICE: So, hey, you uh. . . you wanna shake hands?

JACK: Shake hands?

ALICE: Yeah, man.

JACK: You mean like, shake hands—shake hands?

ALICE: Yeah. Like that.

JACK: Sure, dude.

ALICE: Nothing wrong with a little brotherly handshake, right?

JACK: No, no. Not at all. Nothing wrong with that.

ALICE: Right. **(reluctantly extends hand)**

JACK: Hey, man. Looks like you got a scratch there.

ALICE: What? Hey, yeah. You're right. Little scratch.

JACK: Probably ought to clean that.

ALICE: Yeah.

JACK: Maybe we oughta not shake hands, you know. Might get infected.

ALICE: Yeah, might. Might get infected and maybe kill me or something.

JACK: Wouldn't want that.

ALICE: No. No. Wouldn't be able to shake hands after that.

RUPERT: **(yells)** Will you get on with it!?

ALICE: But, hey you know. . . I uh, I really wanna shake hands.

JACK: Now?

ALICE: Yeah.

JACK: Even with this cut and all?

ALICE: Yeah, man. Throw caution to the wind. Let's live like crazy people.

JACK: You sure?

ALICE: Uh. . . yeah, sure. Sure.

JACK: Okay. Here. Shake my hand.

(They shake. TIANA, the giraffe puppet on her arm, thrusts the puppet up between them on the last line and pretends to maul them. JACK and ALICE scream and stagger apart. JACK's scream is much less enthusiastic than ALICE's. RUPERT steps away from the camera.)

RUPERT: **(crossing to ALICE and JACK)** What is wrong with you guys? Can't you just do the scene?

ALICE: You said we could add a line.

RUPERT: One line! That was what? Thirty? Forty? More?

ALICE: Dude, chill out.

RUPERT: I don't have time to chill out. We're on a deadline! **(crosses R to the rest of the group)** We still have to film all of the other scenes with your two-leprechaun characters, and then we need to go back and get some pick-up shots of stuff that

we missed the first time around, and hope that the editor can figure out what to do with them!

VIRGINIA: (**crossing to RUPERT**) Don't you think that the guys should have said something else about what good vegans they were before the puppet killed them?

RUPERT: Every character in the movie is a vegan. Including the puppet. I think the audience will get the idea.

JACK: Except for my character, Max. He drinks milk.

(RUPERT shoots an alarmed look at JACK.)

VIRGINIA: If Max drinks milk, I can't be in the movie. You have to edit me out of the scenes I'm in.

RUPERT: No!

VIRGINIA: I don't want to go to the bad place when I die!

CLIFF: I can't believe you even associate with people who eat meat.

VIRGINIA: I don't want to! You're all a bunch of barbaric heatherns, but my mom says I gotta live in the world!

CLIFF: What kind of freaky religion are you?

VIRGINIA: I'm Catholic.

CLIFF: Catholics aren't vegans.

VIRGINIA: Well, I'm a Catholic and a vegan. My food doesn't have anything to do with my religion.

RUPERT: You could've fooled me.

CLIFF: Wait a minute. Do Catholic vegans take Communion?

VIRGINIA: Of course, we take Communion.

CLIFF: (**aiming the camera at VIRGINIA and turning it on**) But that doesn't make sense.

VIRGINIA: Bread and wine don't come from animals.

CLIFF: But Catholics believe in transubstantiation—that when you take Communion, the bread and wine literally become the flesh and blood of Christ, even though they still look and taste like bread and wine.

(VIRGINIA gasps.)

JACK: That doesn't sound very vegan to me.

VIRGINIA: But I'm a good Catholic!

CLIFF: You're a bad vegan.

RUPERT: (**trying to salvage the situation before things get out of hand**) You're a good Catholic!

VIRGINIA: I'm a bad vegan! If I don't take Communion, I'll go to the bad place! But if I eat flesh and drink blood, I'll go to the bad place. (**pauses as it fully sinks in**) I'm gonna go to the bad place!

RUPERT: Virginia, think—

VIRGINIA: But it's hard!

RUPERT: *Try* to think. There's no possible way that you taking Communion could be a sin!

VIRGINIA: But, I'm a vegan!

CLIFF: Sucks to be you!

VIRGINIA: You have to take me out of the movie! It promotes the exploration (*meaning "exploitation" but using the wrong word*) of animals!

JACK: But you eat flesh!

VIRGINIA: Waaahhh! But even though I'm a sinner I have to try not to sin, so you've got to take me out of the movie!

RUPERT: Virginia, I'm sure that transubstantiation has got to count as some kind of exception to the vegan meat rule. Go ask your priest at church or find a Catholic vegan support group online or something. But try to pull yourself together.

VIRGINIA: You have to edit me out.

RUPERT: Jack's character doesn't drink milk. He was kidding.

(JACK crosses to the camcorder, points it at himself, and whips out an 8-oz carton of milk.)

JACK: Hi! I'm Max!

(JACK pretends to guzzle the milk. VIRGINIA runs screaming from the stage, exiting R.)

RUPERT: Virginia! The camera's not even on!

CLIFF: (*choking back tears of laughter*) Yes, it is!

RUPERT: (*yelling after VIRGINIA*) We'll edit it out! Virginia, there's a big difference between killing some farm animal and eating divine flesh that was willingly sacrificed to save your soul! (*to CLIFF*) Stop laughing. (*to JACK*) What did you have to go and do that for?

JACK: Oh, come on. She's been annoying all of us with that no-meat stuff since elementary school. You wanted that to happen as much as I did.

CLIFF: I'm sorry, Rupert. I hate to say it, but just once, I have to agree with Jack. She had it coming.

RUPERT: No. She didn't. She's self-righteous and annoying, but she does the best she can, and she did not deserve to be treated like that!

JACK: Are you throwing me out of the movie? Because, I'll be glad to go.

RUPERT: (*ignoring JACK*) And while we're on the subject of cruel—Cliff, you remember that speech you gave to Jack about dogs

playing ball? Where do you get off saying something like that? He's got a right to do what he wants, however pointless or overrated it may be. At least he's good at it! What are you good at? Making snide, insulting remarks to people who annoy you?

CLIFF: That's actually a marketable skill in this country.

RUPERT: And what does that say about us? It's an even lower calling than professional sports or *Star Wars* or whatever cheap, meaningless crap we use to fill the big empty spaces in our lives!

JACK: Gee, try not to kill me while you're defending me, okay?

RUPERT: Shut up, Jack. **(to CLIFF)** You have no room to complain about Jack! None! At least Virginia filled her—empty space by trying to observe other things' right to live! None of us can claim as much!

TIANA: I think you ought to edit Virginia out of the movie. That would be the right thing to do.

RUPERT: No. I'm not going to edit her out of the movie. Jack's milk gag goes on the cutting room floor. End of discussion. It's my movie. Mine. I'm tired of all of the rest of you messing with it. If it's going to be a big flaming piece of crap, then let it be my big flaming piece of crap! We're going to do this my way and if you don't want to go along with it, then get out!

(ALICE shrugs and exits L.)

JACK: **(starting to exit)** See ya, Rupe.

RUPERT: You're not allowed to skip out on me!

JACK: I'm not skipping. I'm *willing* to cooperate, but I don't *want* to.

Thanks for the out! **(exits L)**

PHOEBE: Did you ever figure out what a gaffer was?

RUPERT: No!

PHOEBE: Hm. Me neither. **(begins to awkwardly drag herself to her feet)**

TIANA: **(throwing down the giraffe puppet)** You're mean, Rupert.

(TIANA exits L. PHOEBE finally stands and makes a wobbly exit.)

RUPERT: So. You going, too?

(CLIFF kisses RUPERT.)

CLIFF: Yeah. I'm going.

RUPERT: **(looking at her in confused astonishment)** Why did you kiss me first?

CLIFF: I didn't think you'd let me later.

RUPERT: That's what Miss Teschmacher says when she pulls the

kryptonite off of Superman.

CLIFF: I know. I'm proud of you. I need to find Virginia and make sure she's okay. (**clinically**) Then I'm going to go home and cry and probably throw up and be sick for a while. Don't bother calling me. I won't be in any shape to come to the phone. I'll see you in a few days. We can talk then, if you want me back.

RUPERT: Want you back? I never had you, in the first place.

CLIFF: Liar.

(RUPERT watches as CLIFF exits L. BLACKOUT. Curtain opens.)

SCENE 7: MAYHEW'S PRO VIDEO, A FEW DAYS LATER

(The number of cans from the previous scene at MAYHEW's has increased dramatically. MAYHEW is asleep at his computer when RUPERT enters from R. HE awakes with a start and several cans on the table go flying.)

RUPERT: Did you get the editing done?

MAYHEW: Yup. Sure did.

RUPERT: Great. What about the blood effects? Did you get those done?

MAYHEW: Better'n see-gee-eye.

RUPERT: (**enthused**) Better than CGI? (**suddenly doubtful and alarmed**) You mean the blood's not CGI?

MAYHEW: Nope. S'all practercal. Just like da real thing.

RUPERT: But how could it be practical? We'd already filmed that stuff.

MAYHEW: I filmed da blood myself.

RUPERT: Against a bluescreen? And then you superimposed it over the existing shots?

MAYHEW: Naw. I edited da shot wit' da blood into your foo-tage.

RUPERT: *The shot with the blood?* You mean there's only one shot with blood?

MAYHEW: (**clearly proud of himself**) Naw. Der's two! I did one jus' fer da leppercons gettin' squished! Filmed my foot stompin' on some ketchup packets!

RUPERT: If there's only two shots with blood—what about the blood in the rest of the movie?

MAYHEW: I just used da same shots wit' da blood o'er an' o'er! S'all blood. S'all supposed t'be fresh. Fresh blood always looks da same. Nobody'll know da difference!

RUPERT: They won't?

MAYHEW: Nope.

RUPERT: You're sure about that?

MAYHEW: I wouldn't be able to tell if I hadn't done it myself.

RUPERT: But I'm paying you for CGI blood.

MAYHEW: You got any idee how 'spensive see-gee-eye blood is? I said I'd work wit' you, an' that's what I did. You got a bargain, so show some appreciation.

RUPERT: I'm sorry. I appreciate it. What about glowing red eyes? Does the puppet have glowing red eyes?

MAYHEW: Da whole puppet has a red glow in one glorious shot!

RUPERT: The whole puppet?

MAYHEW: Yup.

RUPERT: One shot?!

MAYHEW: Da *whole* puppet!

RUPERT: I just wanted the eyes.

MAYHEW: Why do things half way?

RUPERT: Right. What's the total cost?

MAYHEW: Six hundred bucks.

RUPERT: Six hundred—I thought you said you were going to work with me because you were mad at Warwick Davis!

MAYHEW: I did! I give you a big ol' discount on the FX. Only charged ya a hundred bucks fer dat. But you had a lotta shots in yer footage, and editin' took a long time, 'speshly da last minute stuff. I was up late a couple nights fer ya. So dat's gonna cost five hundred bucks. You gotta lot t'learn 'bout the real world, boy. That's cheap fer professional labor!

RUPERT: Can you bill me?

(BLACKOUT. Curtain closes. The screen is lowered or brought onstage, along with the chairs for the film contest.)

SCENE 8: BACK TO THE FILM CONTEST

(Overlapping partly with the beginning of the play, the scene opens with the last shot of RUPERT's movie shown previously at the beginning of the play, with the subtitle "How did this happen? What have I wrought?" appearing at the bottom of the screen. The remainder of the movie now plays out in its entirety. RUPERT is back to being dressed in his dress shirt and tie from the beginning of the play. He fidgets throughout the movie, messing with his hair and clothes. By the time the lights come up, he is quite a mess. At the end of the movie, PATTINSON, livid, rises and crosses to C.)

PATTINSON: And that was. . . not. . . *Materialism and the Decay of Morality in Postmodern Society* by Rupert Newell. Our judges will now deliberate and pick our winners. . . and loser.

(Lights dim and the JUDGES are highlighted with a single light or spot.)

JUDGE #1: What was that?

JUDGE #2: I don't know. Do you think the kid was on drugs?

JUDGE #3: What? You didn't get it?

JUDGE #2: What was there to get? It was a bunch of nonsense about a killer giraffe puppet and leprechauns.

JUDGE #3: No, no, no. The Giraffe Puppet obviously represented materialism and society's addiction to it. Its killing of people represents materialism's power to make us focus solely on our selves and our wants, blinding us to others and effectively making us responsible for their deaths by not responding to their needs. That's especially highlighted by the puppet's transformation into the golden calf worshipped by the Israelites while Moses was off getting the Ten Commandments, clearly displaying the puppet—and by extension, materialism—to be a false god that we all worship. The leprechauns are clearly stand-ins for Ewoks, which represent the collapse of artistic integrity to sell out and license as much shoddy merchandise as possible. The sock puppet at the end was a brilliant acknowledgement that our lives and society are so inextricably intertwined with materialism that we can't function without it, and that we can only fight materialism with more materialism, but with a focus on utilitarian means of keeping the economy afloat instead of just accumulating more stuff.

JUDGE #1: Are you saying that you liked it?

JUDGE #3: Oh, no way. It had some interesting ideas in it, but I thought it was crap.

(The stage lights come back up as the JUDGES continue talking. During the following speech, they write the winners' names on the backs of prize ribbons.)

PATTINSON: I would like to remind our audience that the second and third place qualifiers for tonight's contest will receive ribbons, while the winner will receive a ribbon accompanied by a check for \$500, and his or her film will be shown at Triangle Club gatherings around the country.

(JUDGE #2 stands and crosses to L of PATTINSON.)

PATTINSON: Ah, I think the judges are ready.

(JUDGE #2 hands PATTINSON a yellow ribbon.)

PATTINSON: In third place, ***(glancing at the back of the ribbon)*** Matilda Williams, *For the Love of a Special Pony*.

(MATILDA begrudgingly stands and crosses to PATTINSON, resentfully holding out a hand to accept her ribbon.)

PATTINSON: Matilda, you now have a beautiful yellow ribbon to show for all the long, hard hours you put into making your film.

MATILDA: ***(bitterly)*** Eighty-four. I spent eighty-four hours making that movie.

PATTINSON: I do hope you're very proud of yourself.

(MATILDA returns to her seat. JUDGE #2 hands PATTINSON a red ribbon.)

PATTINSON: In second place, ***(glances at the back of the ribbon)*** Dora Webber, *Happiness Without Measure or Reason*.

(WEBBER claims her prize with as much enthusiasm as MATILDA did.)

PATTINSON: Dora, I hope that this lovely red ribbon grants you the measureless, reasonless happiness you so richly deserve for enriching our lives with such a remarkable film.

WEBBER: Every weekend for a month—and I got a ribbon. ***(returns to her seat)***

PATTINSON: Thank you, dear. And now for our grand prize. A blue ribbon and five hundred dollars. Rupert and Joshua.

(PATTINSON gestures to RUPERT and LUCAS, who cross to R of

PATTINSON.)

PATTINSON: I am about to announce the results of the Triangle Club's first student documentary film contest. One of you will be named the winner, and one of you will be disgraced beyond comprehension. And now, the winner of the Triangle Club's Student Documentary Film Contest is. . . Joshua *Rupert Newell*?

LUCAS: What?

WEBBER: No way!

MATILDA: I'm telling my daddy on you!

LUCAS: Are you on crack?

PATTINSON: Obviously, there must be some mistake, which I'm certain our distinguished judges will own up to. Please. Own up. Now. **(hands ribbon back to JUDGE #2)**

JUDGE #2: There's no mistake. Rupert won.

PATTINSON: What!? This is scandalous! I'll see that the three of you are never invited to judge a Triangle Club film contest again!

RUPERT: Look, I don't want to sound ungrateful, but my movie sucked, and as much as I could use five hundred bucks, you giving me first place is just going to shoot my faith in the world all to pieces.

JUDGE #2: There's no question that your movie sucked so hard it puckered up and swallowed its cheeks, but the simple truth is, the other movies swallowed their whole faces.

DORA: **(shaking her fist)** You wanna swallow this?

MATILDA: We don't suck!

LUCAS: You suck!

JUDGE #3: **(standing and crossing to C with JUDGE #1 following)** Look, we had no intention of saying all this in public and in front of the kids, but if Mrs. Pattinson is going to make an issue out of it, all of the movies were really bad.

JUDGE #1: Rupert's was the only one that wasn't sanctimonious and condescending. It was completely up front about the fact that its value was limited and its merits were questionable at best, thereby deflecting the inherent contradictory fault that a really good film tackling the issues of idolatry and materialism would be setting itself up to become an object to be idolized.

JUDGE #2: It was by far the most honest of the four films.

RUPERT: You're saying I won a crap contest?

JUDGE #2: Pretty much. . .

ALL JUDGES: Yeah.

RUPERT: Okay. I can live with that.

(JUDGE #2 hands RUPERT the ribbon and a check.)

RUPERT: Thanks.

(With much grumbling, everyone except RUPERT exits the stage. RUPERT sits in his chair and stares at the ribbon. CLIFF enters.)

CLIFF: Hey.

RUPERT: Hey. You finish puking?

CLIFF: All puked out. You talking to me?

RUPERT: Why would I not talk to you?

CLIFF: Because I'm too cruel and mean-spirited to be worth being your friend?

RUPERT: I got no room to talk. All the stuff I fired off at you and Jack was every bit as self-righteous and condescending as anything that was in these other movies.

CLIFF: Is that an apology?

RUPERT: Yeah.

CLIFF: Accepted. **(sits beside RUPERT)** I'm sorry, too.

RUPERT: I know. It's forgiven.

CLIFF: Thanks.

RUPERT: How's Virginia?

CLIFF: Good news. Turns out her priest is a vegan. He promised her that it was okay for vegans to take Communion.

RUPERT: Wow. That's amazingly convenient.

CLIFF: Tell me about it. Going to make another movie now?

RUPERT: Maybe when I get my camcorder back. I had to leave it at Mayhew's Pro Video as collateral until I could come up with the money to pay off my bill.

CLIFF: Are your winnings going to cover it?

RUPERT: No.

CLIFF: **(laughing)** I warned you.

RUPERT: I know.

(Pause.)

CLIFF: So what about us?

RUPERT: **(taking her hand)** Tell me something. Why did your parents name you "Cliff?"

CLIFF: **(looking at their hands and smiling)** They thought I was going to be a boy. Mother's intuition. And they got really stuck on the idea. Set up a blue nursery with "Clifford" painted on the wall. Needless to say, they were wrong. But even in the face of cold, hard reality, they just couldn't bring themselves to let go, so they kept the name. At least they thought that "Clifford" was too masculine sounding for a girl, so they shortened it to just "Cliff." Little softer. Little more gender neutral.

RUPERT: Cliff, "Cliff" is a boys' name.

CLIFF: I know that!

RUPERT: It sounds more like a guy's name than "Clifford."

CLIFF: No! "Cliff" is way more feminine!

RUPERT: No way.

CLIFF: How?

RUPERT: "Clifford" is a *dog's* name, and a dog can be a boy or a girl—either one.

CLIFF: Clifford the Big Red Dog is a boy!

RUPERT: Well, yeah. But animals are like, universally appealing to boys and girls. So Clifford the Big Red Dog is kind of gender neutral that way, and by extension, so is the name.

CLIFF: Did somebody drop you on your head when you were a baby?

RUPERT: Do you think I'd remember if they did? You are so in denial. "Cliff." It's like this big, rocky, craggy thing—like Clint Eastwood's face. You don't get any more dudely than that. And like—the guy who played Uncle Ben—Cliff Robertson. Only person I ever heard of named "Cliff", except for you. But it's just this totally guy name. Cliff. Robert. Son. Cliff, son of Robert. It's like three guys' names rolled into one. Nothing girly about it.

CLIFF: Does it bother you?

RUPERT: Not a bit.

(BLACKOUT.)

**THE BLOODY ATTACK OF THE EVIL, DEMONIC GIRAFFE
PUPPET:
THE LEPRECHAUNS STRIKE BACK**

a screenplay by

Bradley Walton

to be filmed for use in the stage play

The Bloody Attack of the Evil, Demonic Giraffe Puppet

NOTE: The total running time of the movie should be no more than 15 minutes, of which about 3 minutes are shown in ACT I of the play and about 12 minutes are shown in ACT II. The dialogue should move as briskly as possible. "CLIFF's" theme music (a recording from the original production is available) should be used throughout the film, in addition to being used with the opening and closing titles.

OPENING TITLES – TO THEME MUSIC

Fade from black.

OPENING TITLE
Rupertfilm Presents

Fade to black.

Fade from black.

OPENING TITLE
The Bloody Attack of the Evil,
Demonic Giraffe Puppet: The
Leprechauns Strike Back

Fade to black.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – FRONT YARD – DAY

Establishing shot of David's house.

SUBTITLE
Tokyo, Japan. The present day.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

Closeup of an alarm clock going off. 6 AM. DAVID's hand hits the snooze bar.

DAVID sits groggily up in bed. CATHERINE is asleep beside him. Both are wearing pajamas, or DAVID can be wearing an undershirt with pajama bottoms.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – HALLWAY – DAY

DAVID walks groggily into the bathroom.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – DAY

DAVID lifts up the toilet seat, appears surprised, and yells to CATHERINE.

DAVID

Tatsuya Yoshihara? Yuki Hamazaki
Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

What the...? Catherine!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

CATHERINE rolls over in bed, irritated.

CATHERINE

Yukito Kurumada Yoshida?

SUBTITLE

What?

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – DAY

DAVID yells to CATHERINE.

DAVID

Akira Kinji Rumiko Yashida Ai Moto
Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

There's a puppet in the commode!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

CATHERINE yells back to DAVID.

CATHERINE

Kia Hiroyuki Naritada Shirow, Osamu
Kinji Leiji Kaho Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

If you don't want it, flush it down!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – DAY

DAVID

Naoko Samura Otomo Yazama Mori
Go Obana Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

It might stop up the pipes!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

CATHERINE

Chiho Fujita Ikeda Yukito Miki
Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

Then fish it out!

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – DAY

DAVID

Kia Subaru Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

Right!

DAVID's hand reaches into the toilet.

Pull back to show DAVID lifting the dry PUPPET out of the toilet.

DAVID's POV (point of view) of the PUPPET.

DAVID

Leiji Yazama, Chiho karate? Fujita
Kia Shirow Yoshida?

SUBTITLE

Where did you come from? How did
you get here?

DAVID stares at PUPPET for a second, then puts it on his hand.

F/X shot of PUPPET: Not really F/X at all. Illuminated by a red light, the PUPPET rises into the frame against a black background. This shot will be reused later.

The PUPPET addresses DAVID. In all shots where the PUPPET talks, do not show DAVID. The PUPPET speaks in CLIFF's voice.

PUPPET

Kia Hiroyuki, Naritada Shirow Osamu
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

David, I am The Puppet.

PUPPET

Kinji Leiji Kaho Tatsuya Yoshihara
Leiji Yazama Shirow Chiho Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

The charred eternity of the rage of
eons enshrouds your digitized
appendage.

PUPPET

Naeko samurai Otomo Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

You must obey me.

DAVID appears to be in a zombie-like trance.

DAVID

Yazama Mori Go Obana. Hiroyuki
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

You are the puppet. I must obey.

Back to the PUPPET.

PUPPET

Yashida Naoko samurai Otomo
Hiroyuki Naritada karate Tatsuya
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

The eternal void ever demands the
saturation of its vastness.

PUPPET

Amano, Mori Go Obana Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

David, kill your wife.

Closeup of DAVID. The trance is abruptly gone.

DAVID

Gatachaman Suzuki Mori Amano
Asada Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

I don't want to kill my wife.

Closeup of the PUPPET.

PUPPET

Yamza. Tetsuo Shintani Mori
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

Fine. Be that way.

PUPPET

Noako samurai Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

I will kill your wife.

Back to DAVID. His tone is one of exasperated disappointment.

DAVID
Naritada Obano Yoshida.

SUBTITLE
Okay.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

DAVID sits on the side of the bed. CATHERINE is lying in bed, her back to DAVID.

DAVID
Shirow Osamu...Kinji Yoshida?

SUBTITLE
Hey, Catherine...Catherine?

DAVID
Leiji Kaho Tatsuya Yoshida.

SUBTITLE
Check it out.

DAVID
Yoshihara Mori Amano Suzuki
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE
It's the puppet I got out of the toilet.

CATHERINE rolls over, opens her eyes wide, and screams.

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot: Closeup of ketchup splattering onto white poster board. This shot will be reused often.

Worm's eye view of DAVID as the PUPPET mauls CATHERINE. At first DAVID appears dazed, then he becomes coherent and horrified and tries unsuccessfully to pull his puppet hand off of CATHERINE.

DAVID
Yamcha Ranma? Gatchaman
Katsuhiko! Kojima Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

Catherine? Catherine! No!

DAVID sinks the floor while the PUPPET continues to maul the thrashing CATHERINE.

DAVID

Kinji Leiji Kaho Tatsuya? Yoshihara
Yuki Yoshida?

SUBTITLE

How did this happen? What have I
wrought?

DAVID sits on the floor, sobbing. The PUPPET, still on DAVID's arm, creeps into the frame.

Closeup of PUPPET.

PUPPET

Fujita Ikeda Yukito Miki Tezuka
Masami Ikeda Hirigu Kazuhiro Clamp
Satoru Aihara Kurumada Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

The offering of essence seeps into the
the eon blackness like a fine dairy-
free cheese substitute product.

PUPPET

Leiji Kaho Tatsuya Yamcha Ranma
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

It is good to kill again after so long.

PUPPET

Gatchaman Kanada Kinji Leiji
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

Perhaps I should kill you.

PUPPET

Kaho Tatsuya Yukito Miki Tezuka
Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

But I am bored with killing.

PUPPET

Hamazaki samurai Kawasaki Otomo
Yamcha Leiji, Yoshida.

SUBTITLE

I think I shall drive you mad (*sic*),
instead.

Pull back to show DAVID and the PUPPET.

DAVID

Yukito Tezuka Kaho Ranma!
Gatachaman Hamazaki Katsuhiro
Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

You evil thing! I defy you!

Closeup of the PUPPET.

PUPPET

Miho Nagai Obano sushi Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

You cannot be rid of me!

Pull back to show DAVID and the PUPPET.

DAVID

Yukari Yukito Asada
Kawasaki Hyundai Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

I can lock you in my shed!

Closeup of the PUPPET.

PUPPET

Ozaki Satoru! Hamazaki Miki
Yoshida!

SUBTITLE

No! Not the shed!

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BACK DOOR – DAY

DAVID races out of his house, the PUPPET still on his hand.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BACK YARD – DAY

DAVID runs towards the shed in his back yard. Trees and bushes are visible, establishing the season, whatever season it happens to be when filming occurs.

DAVID pulls open the door of the shed.

DAVID yanks the PUPPET off of his hand and throws the PUPPET into the shed.

DAVID slams the shed door shut.

Closeup of DAVID's hands locking the shed. Fade to...

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – FRONT YARD – DAY

DAVID walks out of the house, wearing a dress shirt, tie, dark pants, and dress shoes. This outfit is hereafter referred to as "dress outfit #1."

DAVID gets into his car.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE BUILDING – DAVID'S OFFICE – DAY

DAVID sits at his desk, writing with a pen. He is wearing a different shirt and tie than in the previous shot. These clothes will be hereafter referred to as "dress outfit #2."

SALLY appears at the doorway. She is wearing a suit or other dress clothes.

SALLY

Hey, David. Can you come look at

something?
DAVID nods agreeably.

DAVID
Yeah, sure.

DAVID puts his pen on his desk and gets up. The camera lingers on the pen as DAVID leaves the frame. The pen is of a cheap, common variety.

DAVID returns to his desk.

DAVID sits down. He looks for his pen.

DAVID
Where's my pen?

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE BUILDING – BOB'S OFFICE – DAY

DAVID stands in the doorway of BOB's office.

DAVID
Hey, Bob, have you seen my pen?

BOB sits at his desk, innocently holding a pen identical to DAVID's. BOB is wearing a dress shirt and tie.

BOB
Nope.

Closeup of the pen in BOB's hand.

Closeup of DAVID's eyes, narrowing in fury.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – FRONT YARD – DAY

DAVID hurriedly gets out of his car at home. He is now wearing dress outfit #1.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE – KITCHEN – DAY

Closeup of DAVID pulling open a knife drawer.

DAVID pulls out a really big knife and examines it.

DAVID

Nah.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE – BACK YARD – DAY

DAVID walks to the shed.

INT. DAVID'S SHED – DAY

DAVID examines a shovel or axe.

DAVID examines pruning shears, dissatisfied.

DAVID looks at the floor.

DAVID's POV of the PUPPET, lying on the floor. The floor in this shot should be carpeted or tiled or something...obviously a pick-up shot filmed later.

DAVID picks up the PUPPET.

DAVID holds the PUPPET fearfully, then thrusts it down over his hand.

F/X shot of PUPPET.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE BUILDING – BOB'S OFFICE – DAY

DAVID walks into BOB's office. DAVID is wearing dress outfit #2.

DAVID

Hey, Bob!

BOB screams unenthusiastically.

BOB

No.

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot.

DAVID stares grimly down at BOB's corpse. The PUPPET smacks its lips.

DAVID
Did you eat some of him?

Closeup of PUPPET.

PUPPET
Don't be silly. I'm a puppet. I don't eat people. I'm a vegan.

Pull back to show DAVID and the PUPPET.

DAVID
Huh. Me too.

SALLY walks through the door and sees BOB's corpse.

Zoom in on SALLY, screaming.

SALLY
No!

The PUPPET cocks its head.

SALLY looks in the direction of the PUPPET and screams.

SALLY
No! Please don't kill me! I'm a vegan!

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot.

DAVID and the PUPPET look down at SALLY's corpse. The PUPPET smacks its lips.

DAVID
Do you drink their blood?

Closeup of PUPPET.

PUPPET
Don't be stupid. I'm a puppet. And a vegan.

Pull back to show DAVID and the PUPPET.

DAVID

Right.

Closeup of PUPPET.

PUPPET

We must kill everyone in the building
so there are no witnesses.

Closeup of DAVID, forlorn.

DAVID

Yeah, I guess so.

What follows is a montage of PUPPET killings.

EXT. DAVID'S BACK YARD – DAY

MAN #1 and MAN #2 are shaking hands. The PUPPET pops up from the bottom of the screen and...

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot.

INT. ZIMMERMAN'S OFFICE – DAY

ZIMMERMAN was asked by RUPERT to be in his movie. She declined. The camera was on. MAYHEW used the footage.

ZIMMERMAN

No, I don't want to be in your movie.

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot.

EXTREME CLOSEUP OF MARGERY PATTINSON

This is footage PATTINSON inadvertently shot of herself while messing around with RUPERT's camera. It is an extremely unflattering closeup of her making a goofy face.

PATTINSON

Boo! Heh heh heh.

The PUPPET's open mouth lunges at the camera.

Blood splatter shot.

**INT. RUPERT'S KITCHEN (CAN BE DAVID'S KITCHEN) AT HOME
– DAY OR NIGHT**

POV of RUPERT (testing out the camera) walking into a kitchen where his mother (preferably the actor's real mother) or father is cooking dinner. This is completely optional if the actor's parents are unable to participate.

MOTHER

Put that camcorder away and come eat!

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from THE BLOODY ATTACK OF THE EVIL, DEMONIC GIRAFFE PUPPET (FULL LENGTH VERSION) by Bradley Walton. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

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Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

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