

DRAMA CAMP

By Craig Sodaro

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CHARACTERS

(10 Males, 16 Females)

PEGGY WEBSTER	16, high school sophomore
MOM	Peggy's mother
DAD	Peggy's father
MADAME RUBICOV	50s, head of Drama Camp
SARA BURNHEART	18, drama diva
TAYLOR DIAMOND	18, her best friend
SLY DELANEY	40s, a Hollywood agent
BUNNY BURNHEART	40s, Sara's mother, a movie star
LAILA LEE	17, a student at the camp
CINDY WYNN	17, another
KAREN	another
ANGEL VALENTINE	40s, assistant camp director
DANNY BREMMER	16, a student
HUBIE BOGART	16, his best friend
MRS. GRIMM	60s, the camp cook
JEANETTE FRANCIS	18, a student
RUSS	16, another
DAWN	15, another
BARRY GILLIS	18, another
STAN CALUA	18, his best friend
CHLOE ZZUCO	15, another

TAMMY	another
STUART KLEPNER	17, the handy man
RUPERT	30s, Madame's half-nephew
JEWELL	30s, Madame's niece
KAREN'S MOM	
SHERIFF	

NOTE: Karen's Mom can be played by Peggy's Mom, while the part of the Sheriff can be played by Peggy's Dad

SETTING

Crystal Lake Drama Camp. Several trees and bushes fill the upstage area. At center is a platform (perhaps 12' x 8') which serves as the camp stage. A backdrop behind it proclaims "Crystal Lake Drama Camp." Traditional theater masks decorate the colorful backdrop. Several benches sit downstage facing the platform suggesting an audience. At left is the exterior of a small building extending into the wings. We see the door, above which is a sign: "Chow Hall." Leaning against what we see of the building are oars, tennis rackets, several beach balls, and so on. At right is the corner or suggestion of another building, one of the bunkhouses. No door is needed.

Ages are listed for each character, but this play is easily adaptable for teenage student actors.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

SCENE 1	Peggy's house, played before the curtain. Early summer.
SCENE 2	Drama Camp, two weeks later.
SCENE 3	The same, that evening.
SCENE 4	The same, the following evening.

ACT II

SCENE 1	The same, the following morning.
SCENE 2	The same, later that afternoon.

PROPS

FOR PEGGY WEBSTER

Hand-held tape recorder
One page script
Button
Several costumes
Cell phone

FOR MADAME RUBICOV

Clipboard and pencil
Cane
Cast list
Paper
Cell phone

FOR SARA BURNHEART

Newspaper

FOR SLY DELANEY

Cell phone

FOR BUNNY BURNHEART

Cell phone

FOR ANGEL VALENTINE

Beach ball
Whistle
Clipboard and pencil
Shovel
Newspaper
Ledger book
Large bottle of calamine lotion
Cream pie

FOR DANNY BREMMER

Hockey mask

FOR MRS. GRIMM

Rolling pin
Cream pie

FOR STAN CALUA

Sweet roll

FOR STUART KLEPNER

Rake
Shovel
Hoe
Garbage bag full of leaves

FOR SHERIFF

Plastic bag

FOR JEWELL

Greens that look like poison ivy
Gloves

FOR RUPERT

Brochures: Sunset Village,
Restville Retirement Haven,
Lake of the Aged, Happy
Acres
Plastic bag labeled “Pepper”
Greens that look like poison ivy
Gloves

FOR ALL KIDS

Scripts

COSTUMES

FOR KIDS

Everyday dress for the Kids, as suits their characters. Since they're at a summer camp, shorts, T-shirts, and so on will work well. Sara and friends might opt for more glittery outfits befitting drama queens. Stuart wears jeans and a T-shirt.

FOR MADAME RUBICOV

Madame wears a very dramatic outfit—lots of flowing fabric, jewelry, color, and a feather or two in her hair.

FOR ANGEL VALENTINE

Angel wears a jungle jacket belted at the waist and Bermuda shorts, looking like a refugee from a Tarzan movie.

FOR MRS. GRIMM

Mrs. Grimm wears a flowery dress and a white, frilly apron, looking like somebody's grandmother.

FOR RUPERT AND JEWEL

Rupert and Jewell dress stylishly and expensively. They must wear long sleeves when they appear with the poison ivy. Rupert wears a black or very dark outfit when he's portraying the hockey mask phantom. His jacket should have conspicuous buttons.

FOR SHERIFF

Sheriff wears a uniform shirt with badge and stripes on the sleeve along with a policeman's belt.

Craig Sodaro

ACT I

SCENE 1

Peggy's house, played before the curtain. Early summer.

AT RISE: PEGGY enters Left, holding her small tape recorder.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) It's me, Naomi. It's Monday. That's like the first day of summer vacation. I don't have a job yet. Burger Barn doesn't need anybody. I called Dairy Cream, but haven't heard back from them yet. Even my usual babysitting jobs are on vacation, so I'm already bored. My grandmother gave me this stupid thing to help me study or something. She said it would help me learn French faster. Record the phrases and then play them back over and over. I wasn't even taking French. But I found it in my nightstand this morning and I thought I might use it . . . you know . . . to talk . . . like we used to. I can't call you like I used to thanks to your stupid father getting transferred to Argentina. Well, he's not stupid, but the whole thing is. Anyway, this will be my substitute best friend. Only friend. And right now, I don't even care. I heard my parents jabbering away about me this morning.

(*MOM and DAD enter Right.*)

MOM: She's going to be sulking all summer.

DAD: She's just got to get over Naomi's move and that's it.

MOM: But it's so hard. She and Naomi have been best friends since third grade.

DAD: She'll just have to meet other kids.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) Oh, brother . . . now I *am* in trouble! I know everybody in town. They all know me. We're all friends, but not real friends, you know?

MOM: You know, Roger? Peggy's always wanted to go to a drama camp.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) That was when I was ten and thought I'd be the next Julia Roberts (*or other contemporary star*)!

DAD: I remember that battle.

MOM: Maybe it's time we lost that battle.

DAD: How much?

MOM: What's your sanity worth?

DAD: Hmmm . . . you've got a camp in mind?

MOM: Crystal Lake Drama Camp is only two hours away . . . up in the mountains.

DAD: Crystal Lake . . . that rings a bell.

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MOM: It would give Peggy something to do for a couple of weeks and she'd meet new kids—

DAD: At least learn how to meet new kids.

MOM: And she'd be doing something she loves.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) I haven't been in a play since fourth grade! I don't want to be in plays! I can't memorize all that stuff!

DAD: I think learning to memorize lines in a play really helped me remember things later.

MOM: I read something about that. They've done these studies—

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) Oh, no! I'm a guinea pig now!

DAD: Maybe this will give Peggy a bit of a direction. After all, she'll be a junior next year.

MOM: Time to think about college! Roger, you've turned so pale all of a sudden. What's wrong?

DAD: (*dismally*) I was just wondering if the lumber yard will be needing extra help on the weekends to help pay for college.

MOM: Let's worry about that later.

DAD: You're right. We've got to worry about how we'll survive this summer first.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) I could just stay in my room and watch game shows and soaps all day. I promise I'll only come out for meals.

MOM: I'll give Madame Rudicov a call and see if there are any openings.

DAD: Madame Rubicov?

MOM: It says here she studied with Stanislavski.

DAD: Didn't he make those million-dollar violins?

MOM: He was a man of many talents!

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) Naomi, if I ever get to Argentina, I'll kill you!

(*Blackout or exits*)

SCENE 2

Crystal Lake Drama Camp, morning. Several trees and bushes fill the upstage area. At Center is a platform (perhaps 12' x 8'). A backdrop behind it proclaims "Crystal Lake Drama Camp." Traditional theater masks decorate the colorful backdrop. Several benches sit downstage facing the platform. At Left is the exterior of a small building with a door. Above the door a sign reads "Chow Hall." Leaning against the building are oars, tennis rackets, several beach balls, and so on. At Right is the suggestion of another building (no door is needed). This is the bunkhouse.

AT RISE: MADAME stands on the platform, dressed in a dramatic outfit, complete with feathers in her hair. ANGEL stands behind her. MRS. GRIMM stands by the door Left, cheerfully stirring batter in a bowl. SHE is liberally covered with flour. PEGGY sits on end of bench,

facing audience, her recorder in hand. All OTHERS face MADAME. SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, STAN, CINDY, LAILA, and JEANETTE sit on one bench. DANNY, HUBIE, KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, RUSS, and CHLOE sit on the other bench. THEY can also sit on the floor, if desired. BUNNY and SLY stand up Right, BUNNY checking her make-up and hair frequently. SLY is on his phone. MOM and DAD stand down Left. EXTRAS as parents can fill in here and there. ALL freeze when PEGGY talks into the recorder.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) So here I sit! Drama Camp at last. I tried to worm my way out of this by being as cheerful as possible, but I got fired from Dairy Cream for yelling at little kids because they had ice cream running down their chins. I don't know . . . I just couldn't stand to see their happy, cheerful faces anymore! That was yesterday. And my parents said it was the last straw. They had the car packed in ten minutes.

Today Madame Rubicov has got us in the palm of her hand.

MADAME: Our mission here at Crystal Lake Drama Camp is to find the next Olivier! The next Brando! The next Meryl Streep!

SARA: (*raising her hand*) Right here!

TAYLOR: Oh, just wait until you see Sara act!

SARA: It's in the blood!

(*SARA blows a kiss to BUNNY, who catches it and blows one back.*)

SLY: What're you doin', Bunny? Passin' germs around? You gotta shoot tomorrow, remember?

(*SLY'S phone rings.*)

Yea, Sly Delany here.

(*MADAME clears her throat.*)

Whatdaya mean you changed locations? We got a red eye to Detroit tonight!

(*MADAME clears her throat again.*)

BUNNY: Sly, take it over there!

SLY: It's gonna cost a fortune!

BUNNY: Sly! Get lost!

SLY: (*exiting right, into phone*) Oh, sure! Easy for you to say, but we're the ones that gotta change the reservation! It's an extra twenty-five bucks to do that! (*he's gone*)

SARA: You can continue now, Madame Rubicov's Cube.

MADAME: Rubicov! And as I said, our mission is clear! We shall study acting! Improvisation! Stage Combat! I am a master having studied

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under Stanislavski himself! And we shall put your newfound skills all together in my newest opus, the crowning glory of our summer, “Comrade Cinderella!”

LAILA: Cinderella! That’s my story!

MADAME: No, my pet! It’s *my* story! The story of a poor peasant girl forced to toil in the cinders of her bourgeois step-family . . . until one night—

CINDY: She meets Prince Charming at the royal ball.

MADAME: No, no, no! She meets Vladimir, the young revolutionary serving champagne at the Czar’s New Year’s Eve party. And while the sparks fly for an instant, they might have lost one another in the swirl of revolution had it not been for—

KAREN: Her glass slipper!

MADAME: Her combat boot! This is a real story of life, death, and passion! And you will be in it . . . and you! And you! And you!

SARA: Well, don’t forget moi!

MADAME: How could I forget such fire, such enthusiasm?

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) And so many teeth! That girl has more teeth than a three year old at Churchill Downs!

MADAME: We, my young friends, shall become family. We shall be brothers and sisters dedicated to . . . the theater!

(DANNY and HUBIE look at the girls on either side of them and move away from them.)

Now, allow me to introduce you to the rest of our family. First, Ms. Angel Valentine, my assistant director.

ANGEL: (*pacing, a la drill sergeant*) So this is the new lot? I’ve never seen a greener, less talented litter of puppies in my entire career! Sit up! Straighter! Take a deep breath! Deeper! Deeper! Now hold that breath! Hold it! Feel our toughness! Feel our grit! Feel our deep sense of commitment!

DANNY: (*still holding his breath*) Can we breathe now?

ANGEL: At ease!

(EVERYONE exhales, gasping for breath.)

Oh, we’re gonna have fun over the next two weeks!

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) If we get a chance to breathe!

MADAME: Thank you, Ms. Valentine! And finally our dear, dear chef, Mrs. Grimm, who is so famous for her gingerbread houses.

GRIMM: Oh, why, you flatterer, Madame Rubicov! Now I’ve looked over all your dietary requests and we’ll have three gluten free, lactose free, salt-free, fat-free, meat-free, and carb-free squares a day.

(GRIMM exits into “Chow Hall.”)

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) What’s left? Celery?

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MADAME: At this time, we customarily take leave of our parents, neophytes, and I turn you over to Ms. Valentine for your first workout!

HUBIE: Hey! Who's she calling a nepo-bite?

JEANETTE: Neophyte, lamebrain. It means apprentice.

HUBIE: Oh, well, that's better. Hey! What's an apprentice?

DAD: Peggy, this is goodbye!

MOM: Madame Rubicov wants to meet with us for a few minutes . . .

DAD: But two weeks will fly by and we'll be back to see you starring in that Cinderella thing.

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* Don't count your chickens!

MOM: Not with an attitude like that! You just do your best, young lady!

DAD: Make us proud! Bye!

(MOM and DAD exit Right following MADAME.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* You just gotta love 'em. Their cheery optimism is almost infectious. Almost.

BUNNY: Oh, Sara, poopsie! Are you going to be all right?

SARA: Of course, darling!

TAYLOR: I'll take good care of her!

BUNNY: But what about your manicures? Pedicures? Cucumber wraps?

SARA: Mummy, this is roughing it. You know, like you did on your last picture!

BUNNY: Don't remind me! Location shooting can be hell! If I ever see Chicago again, it will be too soon!

SLY: Hey, Bun! We gotta go! They changed the shoot from Detroit to Cincinnati. We got a flight in five hours.

BUNNY: Cincinnati? I hope that's not in Canada someplace!

(BUNNY blows a kiss to SARA as SLY drags her off Right.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* Naomi, I don't really have a very good feeling about this whole thing now that I'm here. Not that I had a really good feeling before. But now that I've got faces and names, my stomach is beginning to tumble and churn and I'm not so sure I want to know what's coming next.

ANGEL: The first thing you're all gonna do is called "Break the Ice." *(grabs a beach ball)*

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* Uh oh.

SARA: Oh, this is nothing to be afraid of! We've done it hundreds of times, haven't we, Taylor?

TAYLOR: Toss a beach ball? Well, sure!

ANGEL: We won't just be tossing the beach ball, ladies! I'll toss the beach ball to someone. When you get the ball, you tell us a fact about yourself, like how old you are, what shows you've been in, your favorite sandwich,

anything. If you don't tell us something by the time I blow the whistle, (*ominously*) you come into the center of the circle.

RUSS: (*nervously*) What . . . what happens then?

ANGEL: You just don't want to end up in the center of the circle, got it? All right . . . everyone in a circle. (*stands at Center against the platform*)

(*The KIDS—PEGGY, SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, STAN, CINDY, LAILA, JEANETTE, DANNY, HUBIE, KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, RUSS, and CHLOE—fan out from her, eight on one side, seven on the other. ANGEL looks intently at the KIDS on her Right, then the Left. SHE throws the ball to DAWN, who catches the ball, but stares nervously.*)

SARA: Well, come on!

TAYLOR: What's your name?

DAWN: (*shyly*) Dawn. I . . . I'm fourteen.

ANGEL: Good, Dawn Fourteen. Throw the ball to someone else.

(*DAWN throws the ball to DANNY.*)

Well?

DANNY: This is stupid.

(*ANGEL moves to DANNY, hoisting her shorts up and achieving her full, powerful height.*)

I mean Danny. I'm Danny. I'm a junior. In high school, not a junior junior.

ANGEL: Throw it, Danny!

(*DANNY throws the ball to HUBIE.*)

HUBIE: Hey! I'm Hubie . . . I'm a junior . . . and I thought this was a soccer camp.

(*HUBIE tosses ball to PEGGY.*)

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) Gosh! I caught it at least. But what do I tell them, Naomi? I've got blue (*or other color*) eyes. I read Les Miserables. I love math. I can ski blacks without breaking my leg. I love to sew and made this top. My favorite movie is Casablanca. I have a best friend who moved to Argentina and I'm going to see her down there one of these days. I'm going to study marine biology in college! Oh, what'll I tell them?

(*ANGEL puts whistle to her mouth.*)

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I'm Peggy. I'm a sophomore.

(PEGGY throws the ball to SARA.)

SARA: Oh, hi! My name's Sara Burnheart and I'm named after the greatest actress of all time, except, like, we spell our names differently. I'm a senior and I've already starred in fourteen shows. My first role was an elf in my third grade pageant. I parlayed that success into the role of Mrs. Santa Clause—I know, it was a stretch—in fourth grade. In fifth grade I—

ANGEL: Toss it, sweetie!

SARA: *(incensed)* Well!

(SARA hands ball to TAYLOR.)

TAYLOR: I'm Taylor Diamond. I go to school with Sara. I've been in oodles of shows, but I've never had any lines. I don't care, though, because it's not the part that's small, it's the actor.

SARA: Bravo!

(TAYLOR tosses ball to BARRY, who winks at her.)

BARRY: The name's Barry. Barry Gillis. I think girls in plays are hot.

ANGEL: You better take a cold shower, Gillis.

(BARRY tosses the ball to JEANETTE.)

JEANETTE: *(to BARRY)* I think you're revolting.

ANGEL: Facts, people! Facts!

JEANETTE: I'm Jeanette, a senior, my forte is English literature. *(quoting, dramatically)* A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!

(CHLOE raises her hand.)

ANGEL: Whatdaya want?

CHLOE: Do we get to go horseback riding?

JEANETTE: I was merely quoting the Bard.

STAN: Bart Simpson never said that about a horse.

JEANETTE: The Bard! The Bard! Shakespeare!

(JEANETTE throws ball angrily to STAN.)

STAN: You don't gotta be so touchy!

JEANETTE: We're waiting!

CINDY: Yeah! I haven't even had a chance!

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(ANGEL blows her whistle.)

STAN: Hey! That wasn't long enough! I was thinkin'!

ANGEL: Into the middle, young man!

STAN: Stan's the name.

ANGEL: The middle!

(STAN moves to Center stage.)

STAN: So now what?

ANGEL: Come in closer, everyone! Closer! Closer!

STAN: Hey! Hey! I saw this in a movie once!

(KIDS move in on STAN until HE can't be seen. ANGEL stands up on platform.)

ANGEL: Group hug!

(PEGGY breaks from group and moves downstage slightly as STAN screams.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* Lesson number one. Think fast unless you want to get the full Dr. Phil treatment!

ANGEL: All right, as you were!

(KIDS move back to their respective positions.)

We'll come back to you, young man!

STAN: Don't worry! I'll be ready. I don't need any more bruises!

(STAN throws ball to KAREN.)

KAREN: Oh, hi! I'm Karen. I'm a freshman. I love everything about the theater, especially the applause!

ANGEL: Well said, Karen!

(KAREN throws ball to LAILA.)

LAILA: Call me Laila. Laila Lee. I'm a senior and I've already made a commercial.

SARA: No way!

LAILA: Yes, way!

TAYLOR: What for?

LAILA: Baby food. I was pushing applesauce.

SARA: That doesn't count!

LAILA: *(to RUSS)* Here you go, Tiger.

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RUSS: You can call me Tiger, toots, but I'm really Russ. R-U-S-S, and my agent handles all my calls.

CHLOE: You got an agent?

RUSS: Sure, don't everybody?

ANGEL: All right, hot shot, toss it!

RUSS: Eenie meenie miny moe . . . which way should the bally go?

(RUSS tosses ball to CINDY.)

CINDY: Well! My name is Cindy Wynn, I'm a junior, and I have been in three plays: Our Town, Arsenic and Old Lace, and Barefoot in the Park. I specialize in geriatric parts.

STAN: Geriatric?

BARRY: It's got somethin' to do with your feet.

CINDY: Oh, such peasants! I play old ladies!

ANGEL: But at Crystal Lake Drama Camp we'll expand your horizons!

CINDY: Great! I get tired of orthopedic shoes. Okay . . . I think I'll toss this to . . . you!

(CINDY tosses ball to TAMMY.)

TAMMY: Oh, gosh! Oh, gosh! I . . . I . . . don't know what to say!

BARRY: You had twenty minutes to think about it!

STAN: Group hug!

(ALL start moving in on TAMMY.)

TAMMY: Okay! Okay! Like I'm Tammy! My mom liked that song and so she named me after Debbie somebody who was in a movie called *Tammy*. I'm a sophomore and I've never been in a play before, but my mom wanted a peaceful summer, so she sent me here. I like cats, dogs, birds . . . I guess anything that has a tail that wags.

ANGEL: Thanks, Tammy—

TAMMY: Not that birds have tails that wag, but they got tails and they're cute and colorful. I don't have a pet right now because my turtle Fred died just before I came here, but he was twenty-four years old, so he had a long—

(ANGEL puts her hand around TAMMY'S mouth.)

ANGEL: Toss it!

(TAMMY tosses ball to SARA.)

SARA: Oh, goodness! Me again?

CHLOE: No! Me! I haven't had a turn yet!

SARA: Well, excuse me!

(SARA tosses ball to CHLOE.)

CHLOE: I'm Chloe. I'm always last. I'm the last of five brothers and sisters. I'm always the last one picked in P.E. I always get the last seat in the movie.

TAYLOR: Gosh! That's a strange coincidence.

CHLOE: No it's not. My last name's Zzucco with two Z's.

SARA: Can I have the ball back now?

(MADAME enters Right.)

MADAME: All right, company! I have an important announcement before Ms. Valentine shows you to your bunks.

SARA: Bunks?

ANGEL: We got three bunkhouses, two for girls, one for boys.

SARA: I *do* have a suite, don't I?

ANGEL: Same suite as everybody else! A bed and a locker to put your clothes in!

MADAME: Now, may I continue? Tomorrow we will be having auditions for "Comrade Cinderella." You will need to prepare a one minute reading with your partner.

CINDY: We've got to have a partner?

MADAME: I need to see interaction . . . interfacing . . . internalization!

TAYLOR: Sara . . . you and me?

SARA: But, of course!

BARRY: Stan and me'll be partners.

(STUART enters raking an area downstage.)

MADAME: Oh, no! No! Your partners have been selected randomly.

SARA: I can't just work with anybody!

MADAME: No . . . you'll work with Russ.

RUSS: Me and her? Vavavavoom!

MADAME: Let's see . . . Taylor and Chloe, Hubie and Laila, Cindy and Tammy, Dawn and Barry, Stan and Jeanette, Danny and Karen.

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* Hold it! I thought Chloe said she was always picked last. There isn't anybody left for me, Naomi . . . unless I get stuck with the drill sergeant herself. Hey, maybe Madame Rubicov forgot about me. Maybe I won't have to go through this whole audition thing. That'd be okay. Maybe if I just kind of slink down behind everybody else she won't even notice me.

MADAME: *(as PEGGY tries to be unnoticeable)* And you . . . what's your name?

PEGGY: Peggy. Peggy Webster.

MADAME: Hmmm . . . I have you down with Fabiola Fonzelli.

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ANGEL: She canceled, Ruby, remember? Broke her leg chasing a cat up a tree.

MADAME: Oh, dear, well, then . . .

PEGGY: It's okay, I don't really need to try out.

SARA: She can do props or something, can't she?

MADAME: No, my dear! You must try out . . . (to *STUART*) You, young man.

*(No response from *STUART*.)*

TAYLOR: Hello! Janitor boy!

STUART: Me?

MADAME: Yes, you'll read with this . . . this . . . Peggy Webster tomorrow at auditions.

STUART: Look, I got hired to keep this place clean. You know . . . the handyman kind of stuff. I don't go up on stage or anything like that. No way! (*STUART exits into Chow Hall.*)

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) I guess I don't blame him. Maybe he'd have read with Sara. Even Taylor or Cindy or any of the other girls. But, like I said, I'd be real happy if I don't even have to try out at all.

MADAME: Well, Peggy Webster, we'll get this straightened out, won't we, Ms. Valentine?

(ANGEL hoists up her shorts once more, rubs her hands together, and forcefully enters the Chow Hall.)

PEGGY: Really, it's okay with me. I really wouldn't mind doing costumes or sets or something.

MADAME: Not to audition would be like going to a Chinese restaurant and not opening your fortune cookie, no?

PEGGY: No! I mean, yes . . . I mean . . . oh, brother, I sure wish I'd have been a whole lot cheerful at the Dairy Cream.

DAWN: Madame Rubicov? Where do we get our scripts for the audition?

MADAME: You write them! You and your partner put your heads together and you write your scripts yourselves.

BARRY: Hey! I didn't know we had to write or anything here.

STAN: Yeah . . . what about the fun stuff?

RUSS: We get to go canoeing, don't we?

CINDY: And do arts and crafts?

JEANETTE: There's a literary circle, isn't there?

SARA: Except you'll be the only one in it.

TAYLOR: We learn about make-up, don't we?

MADAME: Let me assure you . . . all your dreams will come true!

(STUART bursts from the Chow Hall and storms off Right. ANGEL follows him on Right. SHE moves to MADAME.)

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And here's Ms. Valentine to show you to your bunks.

ANGEL: Your suitcases are stacked in front of the bunkhouses. Grab what's yours and meet me inside.

PEGGY: Excuse me . . . what did you tell that boy?

ANGEL: Wouldn't you like to know?

(ANGEL exits Right. NO ONE moves. ANGEL blows her whistle off Right. KIDS all start to exit Right.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* With my luck I'll end up right between Sara Burnheart and her number one fan. I just hope you're having a lot of fun doing the tango in Argentina!

(KIDS exit. MADAME checks a list, moving Right as RUPERT and JEWEL enter Left.)

RUPERT: Well, if it isn't Aunt Ruby!

MADAME: I wish I could say this is a pleasant surprise. What are you two doing here?

RUPERT: Another summer session at Crystal Lake Drama Camp.

JEWELL: A dozen little moppets treading the boards . . .

RUPERT: Prancing about in one of your silly dead-end plays.

JEWELL: Wasting this absolutely breathtaking scenery!

RUPERT: Scenery people would pay plenty to look at—

JEWELL: If there were a luxury resort right here instead of . . .

RUPERT and JEWELL: Crystal Lake Drama Camp.

MADAME: How long have you been rehearsing your lines?

JEWELL: Long enough to believe in them.

MADAME: *(pointing Left)* Then maybe you should take your show on the road. It's right out there and it'll take you far away from here.

RUPERT: *(sarcastically)* Oh, Aunt Ruby . . . we don't just want to eat and run.

MADAME: Nobody invited you for dinner.

JEWELL: Aunt Ruby! We're family. Your only family.

MADAME: A greedy niece and her dimwit half-brother don't qualify as family in my book.

RUPERT: Well, maybe you ought to get the revised edition.

MADAME: What are you talking about?

JEWELL: We've got a buyer for this place.

MADAME: Tell him thanks, but no thanks. I'm not selling.

RUPERT: Aunt Ruby, look at this place! It's falling down! That bunkhouse is leaning so far over it'll slide into the lake before summer's out.

MADAME: It's rustic, that's all. It's what the kids come here for. It's what the parents send their kids here for.

JEWELL: They send them here to get them out of the house for the summer.

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MADAME: They are here to learn from a master!

RUPERT: (*sarcastically*) Yeah, right!

MADAME: I studied under Stanislavski!

JEWELL: His great grandson, for crying out loud! His great grandson!

MADAME: Go away! I don't want you here!

RUPERT: The buyer says he'll pay fifteen thousand for this place.

JEWELL: Pretty good price, ha?

RUPERT: Just think what you can do with fifteen thousand bucks!

MADAME: Fifteen thousand wouldn't be a down payment on a Winnabego!

JEWELL: But it could set you up in a nice little condo somewhere. We've got a few brochures here . . .

(*RUPERT whips out brochures and fans them out under MADAME'S nose.*)

RUPERT: Sunset Village, Restville Retirement Haven, Lake of the Aged, Happy Acres.

MADAME: You act like I've got one foot in the grave!

JEWELL: Well, you're nearer than we are!

RUPERT: We can make something of this place!

MADAME: Uncle Dimitri and I already have! We built these buildings with our own hands . . . I remember nailing this stage together . . . and his sign. He painted that sign himself. We were such a fine team. There was no better drama camp in the country!

JEWELL: So, now it's time to rest on your laurels.

MADAME: This camp is mine and it will stay mine!

RUPERT: But Aunt Ruby! Only half is yours. The other half is ours.

JEWELL: Don't you remember how we helped you over that little financial bump a couple of years ago?

MADAME: I never should have signed that contract!

RUPERT: But you did.

MADAME: Well, I will not hear of selling my half!

JEWELL: We're only thinking of you.

RUPERT: There's nothing in it for us.

MADAME: If I believe that, then I'm a bigger fool either of you two thinks!
You know the way out! (*MADAME exits Right.*)

RUPERT: I knew it! She's as stubborn as an old mule.

JEWELL: Good thing we've got plan B.

RUPERT: Yeah! I just wish we didn't have to stay in a tent out there.

JEWELL: Poor Rupert! But it won't be for long. Once we ruin this place's reputation, she'll have to sell.

RUPERT: And we can split the million bucks—

JEWELL: Minus Aunt Ruby's fifteen thousand.

RUPERT: (*laughing*) I suppose we can spare it!

JEWELL: All right, brother dear . . . ready for round one?

(From his pocket, RUPERT pulls a plastic bag labeled “pepper.” HE hides upstage of the Chow Hall as JEWELL knocks on Chow hall door. MRS. GRIMM opens door.)

MRS. GRIMM: Oh, why it’s Miss Jewell. How nice to see you!

JEWELL: How are you, Mrs. Grimm?

(RUPERT comes out of hiding and slips into the Chow Hall without being seen by MRS.GRIMM.)

MRS. GRIMM: Oh, just fine! I just got the biscuits in the oven and the macaroni and cheese is almost finished and we’ve got hot dogs and hamburgers and ice cream for dessert.

JEWELL: Sounds like you’ve been working very hard.

MRS. GRIMM: Yes, so if you’ll excuse me . . .

JEWELL: Well, I asked you out here to see if you could tell me what kind of bug that is. *(JEWELL points to spot on ground.)*

MRS. GRIMM: Oh, why, my dear, that’s a Japanese beetle.

JEWELL: It sure is big.

MRS. GRIMM: But not as big as the one crawling up your pants.

(JEWELL screams, jumps up on the stage dancing around as the curtain falls.)

SCENE 3

The same, that evening.

AT RISE: KAREN, DAWN, RUSS, TAMMY, and CHLOE enter Right, crossing to Chow Hall.

DAWN: I hear the food here’s pretty good.

KAREN: We’ll find out in a few minutes.

TAMMY: *(sniffing)* Smells okay.

DAWN: That’s the barn!

RUSS: *(sarcastically)* Mmmm! Like good ole home cookin’!

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CHLOE: I wish you were home cooking!

RUSS: *(to CHLOE)* What's the matter, too cool for you?

DAWN: Just because you get to work with Meryl Streep—

KAREN: I'll bet she takes the wind out of your sails.

TAMMY: Do you think she's that good?

CHLOE: I heard that her mother's going to put her in a movie when camp ends.

DAWN: Some people have all the luck!

RUSS: And some people have me!

(Exasperated, DAWN, CHLOE, TAMMY, and KAREN enter Chow Hall, followed by RUSS, who slicks back his hair and walks cool. A moment later, PEGGY enters Right, talking into the tape recorder.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* I lucked out! The drama queens are in the other bunk. But they're nice enough. Sara let me use a bit of her lotion. It comes from Egypt. It's the only kind her mother uses. It's made from papyrus.

(STUART enters up Right with shovel.)

(into recorder) After dinner I'm going to have to find the janitor because that's who I get to do my scene with. Can you believe it? *(not into tape recorder)* The janitor!

STUART: I'm officially the handy man.

PEGGY: *(embarrassed)* And I've officially got my foot in my mouth.

STUART: Who were you talking to?

PEGGY: Oh, nobody.

STUART: Are you a spy or something? I mean . . . that's a tape recorder, isn't it?

PEGGY: Yeah. But I'm not a spy.

STUART: What are you, then?

PEGGY: Oh, just somebody who misses her best friend. I mean . . . misses talking to her.

STUART: Where'd this best friend go?

PEGGY: Argentina.

STUART: That's a long way away.

PEGGY: Tell me about it. I send her tapes because . . . well, I don't have an international cell phone yet.

STUART: They're pretty expensive! *(a beat)* You eat yet?

PEGGY: No. I thought I'd wait 'til the line was down.

STUART: Oh, there's no line. It's family style. Mrs. Grimm's a really good cook.

PEGGY: Have you been here long?

STUART: This is my second summer.

PEGGY: Like it?

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STUART: It's a job. The kids are a little . . . well you know . . . dramatic at times.

PEGGY: Goes with the territory.

STUART: *(after a slight pause)* Well . . . I better get something to eat.

PEGGY: Maybe . . .

STUART: Yeah?

(There are screams from inside the Chow Hall.)

What's going on?

PEGGY: Sounds like somebody's hurt!

(SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, STAN, CINDY, JEANETTE, LAILA, DANNY, and HUBIE run out to Center stage, gasping for breath, their mouths on fire.)

BARRY: Water! Water!

STAN: The lake's over there!

CINDY: Where?

STAN: *(points Right)* There!

(They ALL race off Right as MADAME, ANGEL, and MRS. GRIMM enter from Chow Hall.)

MRS. GRIMM: I don't understand it! I only put sugar in the Kool Aid!

ANGEL: *(gasping)* Tastes like a five alarm fire!

MADAME: How could you have made such a foolish mistake?

MRS. GRIMM: I . . . I don't think I did!

MADAME: Don't you know what this can do?!

(MRS. GRIMM begins to cry.)

STUART: Somebody peppered the Kool Aid?

(RUSS runs out followed by KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, and CHLOE.)

RUSS: And the mac and cheese!

KAREN: Water! Water!

PEGGY: That way to the lake!

(RUSS, KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, and CHLOE race off Right.)

MADAME: This could ruin us!

MRS. GRIMM: Oh, Madame Rubicov, I'm sorry! I don't know what happened!

ANGEL: Maybe one of our little thespians is trying to spice up the drama around here.

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MADAME: Well, from now on, Stuart . . . you taste the food before anybody else.

PEGGY: That's not fair!

STUART: It's okay. I can take a little hot sauce.

(SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, and STAN enter Right.)

SARA: I'm calling my lawyer!

MADAME: Oh, Sara, it was just an accident.

MRS. GRIMM: I feel terrible! It won't happen again.

STUART: I'll make sure the food's okay.

(A scream off Right.)

ANGEL: What now?

(ANGEL marches off Right as DANNY and HUBIE run on Right.)

DANNY: That's the biggest rat I've ever seen!

HUBIE: Yeah! I think he carried off one of the girls!

MADAME: Stuart, go get rid of that rat.

STUART: Right away, Ma'am.

DANNY: Hope he doesn't bite you.

HUBIE: He's probably poisonous.

DANNY: Maybe you can throw a saddle on him and ride him back to town!

(DANNY and HUBIE laugh hard as STUART exits Right.)

PEGGY: That's not very nice!

HUBIE: What?

PEGGY: Laughing at somebody else's problem.

DANNY: Hey! What century is this? We laugh at everything!

(HUBIE and DANNY laughingly exit into Chow Hall.)

MRS. GRIMM: I'd better go make sure the ice cream isn't full of jalapenos or something!

(MRS. GRIMM exits into Chow Hall. SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, and STAN enter Right. SARA holds a newspaper.)

SARA: And just what is the meaning of this?

MADAME: What's wrong now?

TAYLOR: Sara found this newspaper tacked to the back of our bunk house door!

(SHE hands it to MADAME.)

BARRY: It's pretty creepy!

STAN: Yeah . . . even I don't have such a sick sense of humor.

MADAME: *(suspiciously)* I don't think it's meant to be funny.

SARA: Is it true?

(PEGGY takes clipping from MADAME.)

PEGGY: *(reading)* Hockey Mask Phantom Terrorizes Teens at Crystal Lake.

MADAME: It's nonsense! Just a ridiculous . . . rumor.

BARRY: That newspaper is dated 1971.

STAN: That's a long time ago.

TAYLOR: Yeah, like before the Civil War.

MADAME: There's absolutely nothing to worry about.

PEGGY: Especially since this newspaper is printed on only one side. I think somebody just . . . printed this thing up for a joke.

SARA: Well, it's not very funny!

MADAME: The food might have a bit too much pepper in it, but we certainly don't have a masked phantom running around Drama Camp!

(CINDY, LAILA, JEANETTE, KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, and CHLOE run on Right.)

Girls! What's wrong?

BARRY: There's nothing to be afraid of.

STAN: It's all just a—

(DANNY runs in Right wearing a hockey mask. ALL but MADAME run off in various directions screaming. HUBIE and RUSS enter Right laughing.)

MADAME: *(angrily)* Where did you get that?

HUBIE: Danny found it under his bunk.

RUSS: Great, ha?

DANNY: *(removing mask)* Now was that a performance or what?

(The curtain falls.)

SCENE 4

The same, the following evening.

AT RISE: STUART is painting the exterior of the Chow House. PEGGY enters Right, but doesn't see him.

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) I guess we all had a good laugh over the newspaper and the mask thing. And even the pepper wasn't so bad. Most of the kids are nice, but it's like everybody's got a friend or two, so I'm odd man out. I don't care, though. If you can't be your own best friend, who else will? (*SHE notices STUART*) Oh, my gosh!

STUART: Hi.

PEGGY: I . . . I didn't see you.

STUART: Do I fade into the woodwork that well?

PEGGY: Yes! I mean, no. I . . . I was just preoccupied.

STUART: Your friend in Argentina.

PEGGY: I guess you think that's pretty stupid.

STUART: Not really. It's hard finding a friend here. I mean a real friend.

You know how you actors are.

PEGGY: Boy, do you have me wrong! When I was ten I wanted to be Julia Roberts. I forgot that, but my parents didn't.

STUART: Really? I guess I just figured that everybody who comes here is, you know . . . trying to be somebody. I mean Really Somebody.

PEGGY: Must be kinda tough on you. I mean . . . your working here and all. They're probably always wanting something or other.

STUART: I don't think any of them even knows I'm here unless they spill something.

PEGGY: I guess they will after tryouts.

STUART: I tried to get out of that. I mean for your sake. But Ms. Valentine can be pretty persuasive.

PEGGY: Oh, no! I'm okay. Really. I don't mind reading with you.

STUART: What are we going to read?

PEGGY: I . . . I wrote out a script.

STUART: Great. I didn't really have time.

PEGGY: Well, I know . . . I mean, not with working and all that.

STUART: Madame Rubicov wants me to make sure rats, mice, pepper, and guys in hockey masks stay out of the camp.

PEGGY: So far so good.

STUART: So, what've you got?

PEGGY: Here.

(*PEGGY hands him a one-page script.*)

STUART: I'm "Boy."

PEGGY: Right. And I'm "Girl."

STUART: At least the casting is dead-on.

PEGGY: You think?

(*As STUART reads, PEGGY moves downstage.*)

(into recorder) Oh, brother, Naomi! Could I be making a bigger fool of myself? And I don't know why! Stuart is just like any other guy. He's not like taller or cuter or funnier or stupider than anybody else here. He's just a guy! He's just the help. He works here. That puts him on a whole different level from the rest of us. Yeah. He's not spoiled. He's not trying to impress anybody else. But he is impressing somebody. No! No! This is stupid! I don't care about any of this.

(STUART taps PEGGY on her shoulder. SHE screams.)

STUART: What do you say we try this out?

PEGGY: Oh, I . . . I guess we ought to.

STUART: I mean . . . you want to do your best. Since you're going to have a part, you might as well try for a good one.

PEGGY: It doesn't matter.

STUART: You really don't care about any of this, do you?

PEGGY: Oh, no! You heard me . . .

STUART: I wasn't eavesdropping or anything. Really. I just . . .

PEGGY: Oh, go ahead. You start.

STUART: *(reading, awkwardly)* Nice day. Is this your first time on board a ship?

PEGGY: *(reading)* Not really. I've been out lots of times on my uncle's—

(SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, and STAN enter Right.)

SARA: Oh, don't stop on our account!

TAYLOR: It sounds real cute.

BARRY: Better than ours. Man, we could have really made the stage sizzle, Sara.

SARA: Oh, Barry, I don't need you to set the place on fire.

STAN: At least you won't put the audience to sleep! Jane Austen's got us doing something from Shakespeare!

TAYLOR: She can't! We had to write it!

STAN: Well, it's a pretty good imitation!

SARA: Now you two just go ahead and we'll sit here and be an audience.

(SARA, BARRY, TAYLOR, and STAN sit. CINDY, LAILA, and JEANETTE enter Right.)

CINDY: Is it time to start?

LAILA: We're not late, are we?

JEANETTE: *(to STAN)* Do you have your lines memorized?

STAN: Give me a break! We're just supposed to read them, right?

JEANETTE: But it's best to have them memorized! You can't really act with a script in your hand!

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SARA: Shhhhh! Guys, these two are practicing.

PEGGY: (*embarrassed*) No! Actually . . . we were just . . . finished.

STUART: (*ibid*) Right.

TAYLOR: If that was it, you're finished all right.

SARA: Well, honestly, Taylor, what do you expect from the janitor?

PEGGY: Hey . . .

(*MADAME enters Left with MRS. GRIMM.*)

MADAME: Oh, there you are, Ms. Burnheart. It's you and Taylor in the kitchen tonight to help get the dishes washed.

SARA: What?

MRS. GRIMM: Oh, girls, you know you're all assigned to jobs at camp.

TAYLOR: Dishes? You mean like wash them?

SARA: Don't you have a dishwasher?

MRS. GRIMM: The pots and pans don't fit.

TAYLOR: Can't he do it?

BARRY: Yeah . . . that's what he's here for.

(*ANGEL enters Right.*)

ANGEL: Stuart! Clean up in bunk 2!

SARA: Just hold on! He's got dishes to wash.

ANGEL: You got dishes to wash. He's got something else to tend to! Now git!

TAYLOR: We didn't pay big bucks to do slave labor.

STAN: Yeah! My dad's a lawyer, and I can have him take a look at this whole set-up.

MADAME: Why don't you boys help Ms. Burnheart and Ms. Diamond. You'll get done faster that way.

SARA: That's a great idea!

TAYLOR: Come on, guys!

(*SARA and TAYLOR follow MRS. GRIMM into Chow Hall.*)

STAN: You said the *girls* would be hot, Barry . . . not the dishwasher!

(*BARRY takes a swing at STAN, who ducks and runs into Chow Hall.*)

(*BARRY recovers and exits into Chow Hall.*)

MADAME: Have you two had enough time to rehearse, Ms. Webster?

PEGGY: Oh, sure! We're good, aren't we?

STUART: Right.

(*ANGEL pulls STUART off Right.*)

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ANGEL: (*exiting*) All righty . . . let's move it, Stuart. You can't imagine the amount of shaving cream in a can until it explodes all over a bathroom.

PEGGY: Madame Rubicov?

MADAME: Yes, my dear?

PEGGY: I really don't mind making costumes or painting scenery or any of the behind the scenes stuff. I really don't.

MADAME: Don't you worry, Peggy, we'll find out together where your talents lie. (*MADAME exits Right.*)

PEGGY: (*into recorder*) And just what makes her think I've got any talent? I mean, you know me, Naomi. I really don't excel at anything except maybe sewing. I can do that as long as somebody gives me a pattern. But the rest of it around here? Forget it! At least one good thing. Handyboy and I haven't even read through the script once, so there's no way I'm getting any kind of part. I guess I ought to stop calling him Handyboy.

(*JEWELL and RUPERT enter Left.*)

(*into recorder*) He's got a name after all. Stuart. Stuart Klepner. Kind of Nordic, if you ask me. Like a Viking.

JEWELL: Isn't that sweet? She's rehearsing!

RUPERT: Bravo! You must be having tryouts for Auntie's little play tonight.

PEGGY: Auntie?

JEWELL: Madame Rubicov is my aunt.

RUPERT: And my half-aunt.

PEGGY: How do you get half an aunt?

JEWELL: Rupert and I are half-brother and half-sister. Have you seen the old dear around anywhere?

PEGGY: She walked over to the bunks.

JEWELL: Well, thank you. That will be all.

RUPERT: Don't you have to go put on make-up or something?

PEGGY: No.

JEWELL: Well, then, will you go find my aunt and tell her we want to see her?

PEGGY: Okay.

(*PEGGY exits Right, glancing back at JEWELL and RUPERT who try to act nonchalant.*)

RUPERT: I think you're nuts!

JEWELL: Rupert, we're just . . . upping the ante!

RUPERT: We just need to give our little tricks some time!

JEWELL: That doesn't mean we can't grease the wheels a bit.

RUPERT: Five thousand dollars is a lot of grease.

JEWELL: We'll be able to afford it when this place sells!

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(MADAME enters Right.)

MADAME: I told you two to get out of here and stay out!

JEWELL: Oh, Auntie, how nice you look tonight.

MADAME: Quit trying to butter me up!

RUPERT: But we've got a bit of grease—

JEWELL: Rupert! Allow me, please! I have good news, Auntie!

MADAME: You're both moving to Siberia?

JEWELL: Aren't you a barrel of laughs.

RUPERT: We just came from the buyer.

MADAME: I'm not selling!

JEWELL: He's gone up five thousand dollars. He'll now pay twenty thousand dollars for this place.

RUPERT: We told him it wasn't worth it, but he just didn't want to treat you unfairly.

MADAME: Are you going to leave or do I have to get tough?

JEWELL: Auntie! How can you threaten us in such a way when we've come all this way to bring you good news?

MADAME: Angel! Angel, get in here!

(ANGEL enters Right, hoisting up her shorts.)

RUPERT: I don't exactly see any wings on that angel!

ANGEL: But you'll see some stars if you don't get lost!

JEWELL: Well, Auntie, if that's the way you feel about it.

RUPERT: But you'll change your mind. We guarantee it!

(JEWELL and RUPERT exit Left.)

ANGEL: What'd those two want?

MADAME: Oh, Angel, they're trying to force me to sell. And the price has gone up five thousand dollars and I just think . . .

ANGEL: You just think what? Sell the place off and be done with it? Well, I've got just one question for you, what would Dimitri say?

MADAME: Dimitri! Oh, how could I have forgotten? This was his dream . . . our dream. This is where he still lives. Right here on this very stage!

ANGEL: Now you're talking!

MADAME: How could I have thought of selling . . . even for an instant? They'll never get their hands on Drama Camp! Never!

(MADAME and ANGEL exit into Chow Hall. RUPERT and JEWELL sneak on Left carrying greens pulled from the ground. THEY are wearing gloves and long sleeves.)

RUPERT: Are you sure this won't hurt me?

JEWELL: Shut up, Rupert!

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RUPERT: I just hope you know what you're doing!

JEWELL: I got the brains! Just remember that.

RUPERT: Right, Brains!

(JEWEL leads RUPERT off Right. Lights dim to indicate a passage of time. If possible they stay dim except for the platform in the center. ANGEL and MADAME enter from Chow Hall. THEY hold clipboards. ANGEL blows her whistle. SHE then opens lawn chairs for MADAME and her, setting them down Left. SARA, TAYLOR, BARRY, and STAN enter from Chow Hall, wiping their hands, trying to fix their hair and so on. CINDY, LAILA, JEANETTE, KAREN, DAWN, TAMMY, RUSS, DANNY, HUBIE, and CHLOE enter Left, holding scripts. THEY are all nervous as THEY take their seats on the benches. PEGGY enters Left as OTHERS get comfortable.)

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* So here I am at the audition with a capital "A." I have no idea why anybody would put themselves through this. Half the kids here are scared to death and are sure they'll end up playing a tree. The other half is sure they'll be the star and that when the cast list is posted, the earth will suddenly start revolving around them instead of the sun.

SARA: Oh, Peggy! Yoo hoo! Where's Handyboy?

PEGGY: *(into recorder)* I guess maybe the sun has already been replaced.
(to SARA) I guess he's still cleaning up.

TAYLOR: I hope you didn't write any kissing into your script! He's probably full of sawdust.

BARRY: Or something!

(KIDS laugh and shout "Ooooo!" good-naturedly. MADAME moves to platform.)

MADAME: All right, company! That's enough! We want to begin your auditions now for parts in "Comrade Cinderella," a revolutionary tale about a girl, a boy, and a wicked aristocracy. When I call your names, you will come up on stage. At my signal, you will begin your one-minute presentation. There will be no talking during any presentation.

(MRS. GRIMM enters from Chow Hall.)

MRS. GRIMM: Am I late?

(KIDS turn to her, put their fingers to their lips and say "Shhhhhh!" MRS. GRIMM sits by Chow Hall. MADAME sits in her chair.)

MADAME: Danny and Karen.

(KAREN steps up on stage.)

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DANNY: Why do I always gotta go first?

HUBIE: Look on the bright side. You're getting it over with!

KAREN: Are you coming?

DANNY: (*jumping up on stage, but falling*) I meant to do that!

KAREN: My name is Beatrice, the Princess.

DANNY: I am Lord Salamander.

HUBIE: You look like a lizard!

(*ANGEL clears her throat.*)

DANNY: (*pantomimes knocking*) Knock, knock.

HUBIE: Who's there?

ANGEL: What did Madame Rubicov say?

HUBIE: I couldn't resist!

KAREN: (*almost in tears*) But that was my line!

MADAME: Begin again, please!

DANNY: Knock, knock.

KAREN: Who's there?

DANNY: Lord Salamander!

KAREN: Oh, are you tall, dark, and handsome?

DANNY: You got it, baby!

KAREN: That's not in the script! It says "I am a fair prince, Ma'am."

DANNY: I just wanted it to sound natural, okay?

KAREN: Have you come to rescue me from the wicked clutches of Prince
Draggo the Dim-Witted?

DANNY: But yes, my fair one, a thousand times yes! In other words, you
betcha!

KAREN: First you must say the magic words to open the locked door.

DANNY: And those would be what?

KAREN: Abracadabra.

DANNY: Abracadabra sis cum bah! Shake it up baby, rah! Rah! Rah!

KAREN: That's not what it says! You ruined it all!

(*KAREN plunges off stage back to her seat.*)

DANNY: Hey, I got the magic door open, didn't I?

(*DANNY steps down from platform as OTHERS clap.*)

MADAME: Thank you, Danny and Karen. All right, Stan and Jeanette.

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