

SEAFOOD SCIENCE LAB

A Ten-Minute Comedy Duet

by
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CAST: A and B

NOTE: Two high school students, male or female, are seated side by side on stools or, if no props are used, on the floor. In either case, their actions should make clear they are sharing a table in a science lab.

Speech and actions throughout this duet should be frantic to mirror a frantic situation. Voices should be slightly hushed so as not to attract the attention of classmates or the teacher, Mr. Zimmermann.

A: What do we do now?

B: What do we *do*? I say you've done just about everything.

A: That's not much help.

B: Well, it's true. Why the heck does Mr. Zimmermann always put me next to you in science lab?

A: It's the alphabet. We'll be partners forever.

B: Not if you eat *me*.

A: What are you talking about?

B: Well, you'd eat anything *else*, wouldn't you?

A: It's just this once. I was curious. I'd never done it before.

B: *Curious?*

A: Mr. Zimmermann told us we should try to satisfy our curiosity in science lab, didn't he?

B: **(Raising voice)** He didn't mean you should -

A: Keep your voice down! He'll hear you.

B: **(Lowering voice, looking at top of lab table)** Look at what you've done to that poor thing.

A: Well, we're supposed to be dissecting it anyway. **(Quickly looks up, then down; quickly makes dissecting motion.)**

B: What are you doing?

A: Shhh! Pretend we're dissecting! Zimmermann was looking over here.

(Both pretend to dissect.)

B: There's hardly anything left to cut. **(Wiping near A's mouth)** There's more on your face than on these bones.

A: Crustaceans don't have bones.

B: Because your head's got them all.

A: Now don't be -

B: How can anybody possibly eat a crayfish he's **(or SHE'S)** supposed to dissect?

A: I said I was curious. *Plus* I was hungry. It won't be lunch period for over an hour yet.

(Beat)

B: You know, you might not live that long.

A: *What?*

B: It's true. Formaldehyde can't do your insides any good. I suppose it *will* keep you well-preserved, though, after you pass on.

A: What do you think I am? An idiot?

B: Well, now that you mention it -

A: I wouldn't eat anything preserved in formaldehyde.

B: But you just -

A: No way. I know exactly what I'm eating. Those crayfish were caught last week. They were in the freezer until last period yesterday.

B: Who told you that?

A: Dale Fuller. One of the seniors. My brother's friend. It's because of all the budget cuts. Milton High supplies its own crayfish for science lab. Catches and freezes 'em. No preservatives. That's why I couldn't stop eating it.

B: Are you saying it tasted *good*?

A: Delicious. All it needed was a bit of lemon and tartar sauce.

(B picks up the tiny leftovers of the crayfish; contemplates tasting it but declines.)

B: Okay, it doesn't look so terrible. But you could have gone to Turner Creek to catch your own.

A: I don't like fishing.

B: *Fishing?* This isn't a fish, idiot.

A: Well, it's not a *crayhorse*.

(Beat)

B: You may be off the hook with formaldehyde, but you may not make it to lunch anyway. If Zimmermann finds out -

A: I know! Keep your voice down!

B: **(With German accent)** Vot haf ve here, Herr **(or Fraulein)** Kennedy? Are you making a mockery - or should I say a cookery - of my science lab?

A: That's enough.

B: **(With accent)** Oh, zat's enough, is it? You don't vant to eat any more? Next veek ve'll be dissecting frogs, so perhaps you'll vant a little French food zen. Are you sure you wouldn't like some more crayfish? Maybe vis some nice tangy lemon and a little tartar sauce on za side? A serving of rice, too, perhaps? Shall I turn on za Bunsen burner, or would you prefer a barbecue? Is apple strudel all right for dessert? A little red vine, too? Or vite? Maybe some schnapps?

(Beat) Vere do you sink vee are, Herr Kennedy - za Red Lobster? **(A laughs.) (In normal voice)** All right. We'll get through this together. As usual. **(A stops laughing.)**

A: I'd do the same for you. **(Makes a face.)**

B: What are you doing?

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