

# TEENAGE NIGHTMARE

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By **Laura Toffenetti**

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# TEENAGE NIGHTMARE

By Laura Toffenetti

**SYNOPSIS:** Touching on the trials and tribulations of being a teen, this one act satire brings teen life center stage in the form of a live news magazine. Loaded with teen-friendly sketches such as “Shopping With Mom,” “Babysitting a Child Named Moose,” and “Trying to Ask a Girl on a Date,” it also includes a flashy street interview titled, “Dumb Things Parents, Teachers, and Kids Say” in addition to four short scenes between parents and teens on “What Happened in School Today.” Find the latest in teen fashion, poetry, and of course, advice columns on makeup and shaving from Babs and Philipe, your favorite editors. Besides the babysitting horror stories and red-hot dating files, the play includes two commercials: “Zitaway: A Unique Blend of Vitamins B1-27” and “Parents in a Box: All of the Comforts of Home.” A quick reality check and it continues with “Chores That Bore,” a comical stand-off between parents and teens on cleaning their rooms and taking out the trash.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(FLEXIBLE CAST OF 25; DOUBLING POSSIBLE)*

### ALMOST THIRTEEN SCENE

NARRATOR.....Can easily be divided into two parts.  
(12 lines)

SUZANNE.....Reporter #1. (5 lines)

LIZZIE.....Teen girl who is about to turn  
thirteen.  
(4 lines)

### BABYSITTING SCENE

MOM.....(5 lines)

SARA.....Babysitter. (36 lines)

FRANKIE.....Four year old played by a teen-sized  
kid. (16 lines)

MIKE.....Nine year old played by a teen-sized  
kid. (21 lines)

**DUMB THINGS SCENE**

PAMELA .....Reporter #2. (3 lines)

ASSORTMENT OF TEENS.....Numbered 1-12, but could be smaller group. (TEEN 1-11: 2 lines; TEEN 12: 1 line)

**ZITAWAY COMMERCIAL**

VOICE OVER.....(1 line)

MODEL .....Walk-on.(Non-Speaking)

MAD SCIENTIST .....Walk-on. (Non-Speaking)

**SHOPPING SCENE**

SHOPPING MOM .....(23 lines)

CHELSEA.....(24 lines)

CLERK.....(12 lines)

**PARENT/TEEN RELATIONSHIP SCENE**

PARENT #1 .....(4 lines)

TEEN #1 .....(4 lines)

PARENT #2 .....(4 lines)

TEEN #2 .....(3 lines)

PARENT #3 .....(3 lines)

TEEN #3 .....(3 lines)

PARENT #4 .....(4 lines)

TEEN #4 .....(4 lines)

**EDITORIAL**

MIRANDA.....(1 line)

JED.....Reporter #3. (2 lines)

DAN.....Teen boy who is about to turn thirteen. (3 lines)

**TAKE OUT THE TRASH SCENE**

PARENT .....(17 lines)  
 HOMEWORK TEEN.....(2 lines)  
 PHONE TEEN .....(2 lines)  
 NAIL TEEN.....(2 lines)  
 AGGRESSIVE TEEN.....(2 lines)  
 TEEN ONE .....(4 lines)

**DATE SCENE**

BOB .....(38 lines)  
 DAVE .....Friend of Bob. (17 lines)  
 MARY.....(30 lines)  
 SUE.....Friend of Mary. (15 lines)  
 BOB #2 .....(8 lines)  
 GIRL #1 .....(1 line)  
 GIRL #2 .....(1 line)  
 GIRL #3 .....(4 line)  
 FATHER.....(1 line)  
 GIRL #4 .....(1 line)

**PARENTS IN A BOX COMMERCIAL**

DAD .....(1 line)  
 MOM.....(1 line)  
 TEEN .....(4 lines)  
 ANNOUNCER.....(5 lines)  
 (TWO) MODELS.....(Non-Speaking)

**BEAUTY TIPS**

BABS .....New Yorker complete with accent.  
 (1 line)  
 PHILIPPE.....Frenchman complete with accent.  
 (1 line)

**HAVE YOU CLEANED YOUR ROOM YET**

SOLOLIST.....(14 lines)  
 CHORUS .....(16 lines)  
 CONDUCTOR.....(Non-Speaking)

**DURATION:** 30 minutes

**SETTING:** The play is similar to an entertainment news show. The sets are minimal. There is a podium with a live microphone stage right on apron. Upstage center is a bed. Center stage right is a couch and a small end table with phone.

### PRODUCTION NOTES

This play is extremely flexible. The format is that of an entertainment news show. The transition from scene to scene should be quick. The set is minimal to assist in these transitions. The play can be done exactly the way it is presented here. However, you have permission to update any of the dialogue and to add or delete scenes as necessary. Students often like to write their own commercials so you could easily replace/add commercials to the play. Costumes should be up-to-date teen fashion. The cast can support as many as 25 actors or feel free to double and eliminate parts. Obviously, adding a new commercial would increase cast size.

**PROPS**

- Four phones
- Purse
- Deck of cards
- Box of tictacs
- Barney tape
- Purse with money
- Assortment of dresses, one of which should be polka dot and one very short and skimpy
- Clothes rack
- Two teen magazines
- Large box
- Car keys
- Zitaway—before and after posters
- Viking helmet with braids
- Spear
- Two music stands
- Shaving cream
- Shaver without blade
- Towel
- Toilet paper
- Assortment of makeup
- Hand microphones for reporters
- Lollipop
- Pages of the “have you cleaned your room today”
- Spoken lines: one line per page so they can be turned with a flourish
- Conductor’s baton
- Fog machine (optional)

**AT RISE:** *The NARRATOR stands at the podium receiving last-minute makeup as lights come up. A VOICE is heard from off stage.*

**VOICE:** We're live in three, two, one . . .

**NARRATOR:** Good evening and welcome to "Teenage Nightmare." Tonight we will be looking into the mysterious nightmares of two teenagers-to-be. Let's go to our roving reporter, Suzanne Springsteen, in the Field of Dreams. How are things, Suzanne?

*Lights come up on LIZZIE and SUZANNE. SUZANNE is standing next to the bed. LIZZIE is sitting on the bed.*

**SUZANNE:** I am standing in the bedroom of little Lizzie Thompson. She's just gotten ready for bed on this most important night. Tomorrow when she wakes up she will be an official teenager. Hello, Lizzie.

**LIZZIE:** AH!! Who are you? What are you doing in my bedroom?

**SUZANNE:** Suzanne Springsteen. WSNUZ News . . . how does it feel to be almost thirteen?

**LIZZIE:** Well, I'm really excited about it. I've been waiting to be a teen for a really long time and now the day is almost here!

**SUZANNE:** Uh huh. And what are your expectations once you have achieved this momentous event?

**LIZZIE:** Well, there's like, so much I want to do. I can't wait to get my license. And you know, like wear makeup and babysit.

**SUZANNE:** How long have you wanted to be a babysitter?

**LIZZIE:** Ever since I found out how much money they make. Do you have any idea how expensive it is to go to a movie? And I know babysitting is a really easy job because, like, I have to take care of my younger sister, you know? And she's like three and she loves Barney? I know Barney's like really gaggy and stuff but all I have to do is put her in front of the TV with a Barney tape and she doesn't move, you know? It's soo easy!

**SUZANNE:** Well, we wish you luck on your brave new venture. Sweet dreams!

Lights go down on SUZANNE and LIZZIE. LIZZIE stays in bed, SUZANNE exits. [Optional] Fog pours in near the bed as "spooky music" plays. Lights come up as MOM and SARA enter from stage left.

**MOM:** Hi! I'm so glad you're here. I don't know what it is about teenagers now-a-days. No one seems to want to work. They babysit one time and they never come back.

**SARA:** Well, don't worry about me. I'm delighted to babysit. I love little kids and I can really use the money.

**MOM:** That's terrific! Maybe we can do this once a week!

**SARA:** That would be great! I brought a Barney tape. I thought the kids might like to watch it. My little sister loves Barney. She can sit and watch this tape for hours and hours.

**MOM:** Isn't that cute. (*Smiles sweetly.*) Now where are my little angels? Ah, here they are! (*Kids enter wrestling with each other. FRANKIE is a huge four year old. Actually, he's the size of a teenager. He's busy licking a lollipop. MIKE is a very savvy nine year old, also teenage size. Maybe wears a poker shade and a garter on the sleeve. Could flip a coin.*) Frankie, Mike, say "hi" to Sara.

**FRANKIE:** No.

**MIKE:** Hi ya, babe. You're a pretty good-looking chick.

**SARA:** How old did you say they were?

**MOM:** Oh, Frankie here is four and Mike is nine. Aren't they adorable?

**SARA:** Yeah. Adorable.

**MOM:** Well, I have to run or I'll be late for my kick-boxing class! Have fun! Ta!

**SARA:** (*Pats FRANKIE on the head.*) So. You little four year old you. Heh. Let's have some fun!

**FRANKIE:** No.

**SARA:** No? You don't want to have fun?

**FRANKIE:** No fun.

**SARA:** Sure you do! Fun is, fun!

**FRANKIE:** No fun.

**SARA:** How about Barney? You like Barney. Every little kid likes Barney.

**FRANKIE:** No Barney.

**MIKE:** I gotta agree with him there. Barney's a little too weird for me.

**SARA:** Oh, well. You're too old for Barney. How about cards! How about we play some Old Maid?

**FRANKIE:** No.

**SARA:** *(Desperately to MIKE.)* Go fish?

**MIKE:** Poker. Five card draw. Queens to open, trips to win. One-eyed Jacks are wild.

**SARA:** Poker? I don't think playing poker is such a good idea. How old did you guys say you were?

**MIKE:** I'm nine. He's four.

**SARA:** Isn't he, uh, awfully big for four?

**MIKE:** Yeah. He's a moose.

**FRANKIE:** Moose! *(FRANKIE puts hands up to his head like antlers and charges SARA and butts her.)*

**SARA:** Ah!!! *(Picking herself up off the floor.)* You sure you guys don't want to watch Barney? My sister loves it. She watches it for hours and hours and—

**FRANKIE:** Wrestling.

**SARA:** *(Gulps.)* Wrestling?

**MIKE:** Yeah. He likes wrestling.

**SARA:** Uh. I didn't think wrestling is on right now. You sure you don't want to watch Barney? Sesame Street? Blues Clues?

**FRANKIE:** WRESTLING! WRESTLING! WRESTLING!

**MIKE:** He only likes wrestling.

**SARA:** Your mom let's you guys watch wrestling?

**MIKE:** Sure. All the time. Show her, Frankie.

*FRANKIE growls and does wrestling poses then charges SARA and gets her in a head lock.*

**SARA:** *(In headlock.)* Heh heh. That's terrific. That's really wonderful. Could you, like, let me go now?

**FRANKIE:** No.

**SARA:** What do you mean "no"? Get him off of me!

**MIKE:** You have to promise him something.

**SARA:** I'm open to suggestions.

**FRANKIE:** Gum.

**SARA:** Oh gum! Sure! I can get you some gum! Later. After supper.

**FRANKIE:** (*Tightens grip and growls.*) Now!

**SARA:** Did I say later? Ha ha! I meant now. Of course now. What flavor? (*FRANKIE lets go of her to consider what flavor he wants as SARA races to her purse and digs madly for the gum.*) Does your mom let him have gum?

**MIKE:** Not too much. Sometimes. The last babysitter kind of had a problem with her gum.

**SARA:** (*Freezes.*) What kind of problem?

**MIKE:** Not that big a problem. We saw her at the store the other day and she looked pretty good with short hair.

**SARA:** Short? How short?

**MIKE:** (*Indicating half inch.*) Did you know it's practically impossible to get gum out of hair?

**SARA:** (*Fakes a look in purse then responds in overly bright, false cheer.*) Oh darn! I'm all out of gum! (*FRANKIE starts to growl and SARA responds hastily.*) Tictacs! I have tictacs! Wouldn't you like to have a tictac? (*SARA shakes box. FRANKIE grabs box and sits on the floor and dumps them all in his mouth.*)

**FRANKIE:** (*With a full mouth.*) I want to play a game.

**SARA:** I know! How about Duck Duck Goose?

**FRANKIE:** (*Delighted and sits on floor.*) Duck Duck Goose! Duck Duck Goose!

**MIKE:** Okay. But don't say I didn't warn you. (*Points to chair nowhere near FRANKIE.*) Sit there.

**SARA:** Don't you want me to play?

**MIKE:** He doesn't like to play with anybody but me.

**SARA:** Oh, but . . . How are you going to play with only two people?

**MIKE:** Watch and learn. (*MIKE circles FRANKIE patting him on the head with each "duck."*) Duck. Duck. Duck. Duck. Duck. Duck.

**SARA:** Excuse me. Excuse me. Aren't you supposed to say "goose"?

**MIKE:** He hates being the goose.

**SARA:** Riiiiight. Anybody want to watch Barney?

**FRANKIE:** Wrestling.

**SARA:** Wrestling.

**FRANKIE:** (*Sings "The Barney" song.*) I like you. You like me. We're a happy family. (*FRANKIE sits on top of SARA, squishing her with affection.*)

**SARA:** Well, isn't this ducky.

**MIKE:** (*Phone rings and MIKE answers as SARA struggles to get to phone. This is not possible because FRANKIE is on top of her.*) Hi, Mom.

**SARA:** Let me . . .

**MIKE:** (*Ignoring SARA'S struggle.*) No, everything is fine. Frankie likes her!

**SARA:** Could I just . . .

**MIKE:** We're watching Barney. (*Winks.*)

**SARA:** Could you move just a little?

**MIKE:** Sure . . . No I'm sure it's okay with her.

**SARA:** Stop! Don't hang up!

**MIKE:** Bye! That was Mom. She said she's gonna be a little late. (*Turns on wrestling.*) Wrestling!

**SARA:** Help!

**BLACKOUT.**

*Lights come up on podium.*

**NARRATOR:** Let's hope our little teenager survives her first business venture. We sent out our roving reporter to the local junior high to get some feedback on dumb things people say. Let's go to Pamela Pugnaki now.

*Lights go down on podium and up on PAMELA and TEENS as they enter. TEENS are waving at the "camera."*

**PAMELA:** Hi! I'm here in the halls of a typical junior high asking typical junior high students to tell us some of the typical dumb things parents say. Kids?

**TEEN ONE:** Go ask your mother.

**TEEN TWO:** Go ask your father.

**TEEN THREE:** Don't fight with your brother.

**TEEN FOUR:** Money doesn't grow on trees.

**TEEN FIVE:** Save your money.

**TEEN SIX:** I'll think about it.

**TEEN SEVEN:** We'll see.

**TEEN EIGHT:** Maybe.

**TEEN NINE:** Turn down the music.

**TEEN TEN:** You call that music?

**TEEN ELEVEN:** Because I said so.

**TEEN TWELVE:** RISE AND SHINE!

**PAMELA:** No surprises there! Now kids, let's hear some of the typical dumb things typical junior high teachers say.

**TEEN ONE:** Homework is due tomorrow.

**TEEN TWO:** Homework is due the day after Christmas vacation.

**TEEN THREE:** Can't we have a day when everyone brings in their homework and everyone is prepared?

**TEEN FOUR:** Don't forget to study.

**TEEN FIVE:** What do you mean you don't have a pencil?

**TEEN SIX:** Where's the capitol of the United States?

**TEEN SEVEN:** Food belongs in the cafeteria.

**TEEN EIGHT:** No gum.

**TEEN NINE:** No drinks.

**TEEN TEN:** No fooling around.

**TEEN ELEVEN:** Did anyone do extra credit? *(TEENS all laugh at that ridiculous thought.)*

**PAMELA:** And last but not least let's hear some typical dumb things that typical teenagers say. *(Kids exit.)* Kids? Hey, come on! I'm on live here! Kids? Kids? *(Exits after kids.)*

**NARRATOR:** We'll be back with more TEENAGE NIGHTMARE right after this message from our sponsor.

**COMMERCIAL VOICE OVER:** (*MODEL enters carrying poster with a drawing of a face covered with zits.*) This is me when I had zits. (*Everyone off stage says "EW!"*) I tried using strips, pads, lotions, cleansers but they only made the problem worse. Then I discovered ZITAWAY. (*MAD SCIENTIST is stirring up a bizarre batch of chemicals.*) With it's unique blend of Vitamins B1 through 27 and all natural aloe barsadenses gel, triathalomine, dentonium, bensoate, disodium EDTA, radio active toxins, premium radicals, and oxidents, poisons and dyes, scents and other natural purees, ZITAWAY will remove your zits in a split second! I tried it and it worked! Look at me! (*MODEL enters with poster which has SCREAM mask on it.*) Use ZITAWAY for all your daily cosmetic needs! Caution: Using ZITAWAY drastically increases your chances of all known cancers. ZITAWAY has been known to cause mutations as well as decrease users IQ by 27 points.

**NARRATOR:** And welcome back. Next we have our sports update. Chuck? Chuck? (*Whispers off stage.*) Where's Chuck? What do you mean he's not here? He's supposed to handle the . . . What? (*Suddenly remembers the audience.*) Oh right! Uh . . . Chuck's not here at the moment so I guess we'll just go straight to the event. It's the traditional drudge match: shopping for school clothes. Teen versus Mom. I believe we are in the new stadium, the Buckland Mall! Let's go live now to the main event. (*STORE CLERK enters rolling a garment rack with dresses on it. He rolls the rack to downstage left. SHOPPING MOM and CHELSEA enter and stop downstage center.*)

**CHELSEA:** Mom, I have an idea. This year why don't you just give me the money and I'll get my own back to school clothes.

**SHOPPING MOM:** But honey, this is our together time. We always shop back to school together. Come on. It'll be fun.

**CHELSEA:** I know. I'll go shopping and I'll meet you back at the food court in about two hours. We can have lunch together!

**SHOPPING MOM:** Isn't that cute. We can do lunch! But I think I'll stick with you.

**CHELSEA:** You can go to Filene's. And I'll go to those places that always play that loud music you hate.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Why, Chelsea! If I didn't know better I'd say you were trying to get rid of me. Don't worry. I won't embarrass you. I've kept my finger on the pulse of fashion. I read People Magazine. Come on. Let's go in here. This looks like a "hip" place.

**CHELSEA:** Oh joy.

**CLERK:** Hello, ladies. Can I help you?

**SHOPPING MOM:** Well, my daughter here is shopping for school clothes.

**CLERK:** Your daughter? Why I thought you were sisters!

**SHOPPING MOM:** Oh, silly.

**CHELSEA:** Mom, please.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Tell the nice wo/man what you want, honey. I promise I won't get in the way.

**CHELSEA:** I need some jeans.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Jeans! Don't you want to get a nice dress for the first day?

**CLERK:** We have plenty of nice dresses over here . . .

**CHELSEA:** Jeans. I want jeans.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Just one dress? For me?

**CHELSEA:** What do I need a dress for? I never wear dresses.

**SHOPPING MOM:** But you look so pretty in them. You have such lovely legs. I bet Brad likes to see a young woman in a dress. Brad is her boyfriend. He's so good-looking.

**CHELSEA:** Mom!

**SHOPPING MOM:** What? Hold still a minute you have a smudge.  
(*MOM licks finger with spit and cleans a spot on CHELSEA'S face.*)

**CHELSEA:** Mom!

**SHOPPING MOM:** Do you see anything you like?

**CHELSEA:** Not really.

**CLERK:** What do you think about this little number? It's a very popular style. I saw the identical dress on 90210.

**CHELSEA:** It's pink.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Isn't it the prettiest pink you ever saw? Pink's her favorite color. It helps get rid of that pasty look she has.

**CHELSEA:** No pink.

**CLERK:** How about yellow stripes?

**CHELSEA:** I hate yellow. I hate stripes.

**SHOPPING MOM:** I don't think you are giving these dresses a chance, dear. Hold it up against you. You know, she's right. She really does look terrible in that color. Yellow has always been a great color on me but she has her father's coloring. How about a nice floral print?

**CLERK:** This one is simply smashing, baby. (*Holds up a very short dress.*)

**CHELSEA:** (*Looks interested.*) That's not too bad.

**MOM:** Isn't that awfully short?

**CHELSEA:** No.

**CLERK:** Everybody's wearing them short these days.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Well not my daughter. She'd look like an I-don't-know-what in that skimpy thing. Don't you have something a little more, well, modest? Something just above the knee.

**CHELSEA:** Mom, you'll make me look like a freak! Just let me get the jeans I wanted.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Don't get discouraged. It takes time to find the right outfit. Trust me. I know how important it is for you teenagers to wear the right clothes. You want to fit in, now don't you?

**CHELSEA:** Jeans are the right clothes.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Not for the first day of school, dear. Now show us something a little longer. With a higher neckline. And sleeves.

**CLERK:** I have just the thing. Polka dots!

**SHOPPING MOM:** Isn't it charming? It reminds me of the dress I made for you one Easter. Remember? With the little jacket?

**CHELSEA:** NO polka dots! No stripes! No yellow! No pink!

**CLERK:** Lace?

**CHELSEA:** No lace.

**CLERK:** Green checks? Purple plaid?

**CHELSEA:** No and no.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Well, young lady, I believe you are getting into one of your moods where nothing will please you. I think we'll just get that nice polka dot dress. I'm sure once we get it home you'll change your mind.

**CHELSEA:** I am not going to wear that thing.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Nonsense.

**CLERK:** Good choice. She'll look absolutely adorable in that.  
Will that be cash or charge?

**SHOPPING MOM:** How much is it? I think I have enough cash

**CLERK:** That will be seventy-five twenty-one with tax.

**SHOPPING MOM:** Seventy-five dollars??? That little dress costs seventy-five dollars? That's outrageous! Who would wear a dress that costs seventy-five dollars? She never wears dresses anyway! Who would pay seventy-five dollars for something they never wear? I hate polka dots anyway, they look so old-fashioned. Maybe I could make you a dress . . .

**CHELSEA:** Mom. Please.

**SHOPPING MOM:** *(Defeated.)* I tell you what. I'll just give you some money and you can get what you need.

**CHELSEA:** *(Gives MOM a hug.)* Thanks, Mom. You're the best.

**SHOPPING MOM:** You're going to get a couple pair of jeans, right? Not too tight. And not those horrid baggie ones either. I hate the way those look. How can kids walk in them? Make sure they are the right length. I don't want you getting a pant leg caught in an escalator. Are you sure you don't want me to come with? *(CHELSEA runs off stage as MOM calls after her.)*  
And don't forget to buy new underwear!

**BLACKOUT.**

**NARRATOR:** That was quite a bout. The Mom had her on the ropes but the teen managed to get in a few good blows. In our attempts to better understand the complicated and often confusing relationship between parents and teens we set up hidden cameras in kitchens across America. Our staff spent hundreds of hours sifting through footage until we narrowed it down to what we believed to be the essence of the Parent-Teen relationship. Take a look. We think you will find it enlightening. *(Lights go down on podium. The "parent/teen" sets are sitting on stools. Spots come up on one group at a time.)*

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