

# WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG?

By Craig Sodaro

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# CHARACTERS

*(Minimum cast required: 4 male, 5 female):*

## **SCENE ONE**

*(1 male, 3 female)*

KERRI  
MOLLY  
JULIE  
RAMON

## **SCENE TWO**

*(2 male, 3 female)*

MANDY  
CARLY  
NAOMI  
SKEETER  
BRADLEY

## **SCENE THREE**

*(3 male, 4 female, 1 either)*

SAVANNAH  
JEN  
NEW GIRL (MS. JOHNSON)  
NEELY  
MIKE  
ALEX  
JOHN  
PRINCIPAL (Either male or  
female)

## **SCENE FOUR**

*(2 male, 4 female)*

LASHAWN  
CAROL  
DAWN  
JEFF  
MR. DAWSON  
NATALIE

## **SCENE FIVE**

*(4 male, 2 female)*

DARIA  
BRITTANY  
BLAKE  
TREY  
NEIL  
FELIX

## **SCENE SIX**

*(5 female, 2 male)*

MARIAN  
KATE  
SAM  
DEKE  
ARI  
MS. SLEDGE  
MS. SCOBODA

## **SCENE SEVEN**

*(2 male, 4 female)*

DESIREE  
TONI  
ASHLEY  
BRIANNA  
TIM  
JAKE

## **SCENE EIGHT**

*(1 male, 1 female)*

MARCIE  
GEORGE

**NOTE:** With roles for 17 males, 26 females, and one either male or female, much doubling is possible and recommended. The show can be done with a minimum cast of nine, four males and five females.

## **PROPS/COSTUMES/SET REQUIREMENTS**

For all characters, unless noted under each specific scene, modern everyday student or teacher dress is required.

The following are needed to meet the various set requirements for each scene:

- A minimum of five student desks
- One teacher desk with chair
- One small table with two chairs
- One or two benches

An alternative would be to use blocks of varying sizes and colors, maneuvering them into position for each scene.

### **PROPS, SET REQUIREMENTS, AND OTHER NOTES ARE LISTED BELOW FOR EACH SCENE**

#### **Scene 1: FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

**SETTING:** A foreign language classroom. Teacher's desk and chair down left, several student desks facing audience.

**PROPS:** Backpack (Ramon); pointer from teacher's desk (Kerri)

#### **Scene 2: ALIEN INVASION**

**SETTING:** A science classroom. Student desks facing left. Teacher's desk and chair at left. Poster showing a flying saucer and reading "Aliens—Then and Now" sits on teacher desk.

**PROPS:** Pieces of a science project in progress (Carly, Mandy); note cards (Carly, Mandy); make-up and purse (Naomi); backpacks (Bradley, Skeeter); small spray can from Naomi's purse (Mandy)

#### **Scene 3: THE TEST**

**SETTING:** A social studies classroom. Teacher's desk and chair down right. Student desks face audience.

**COSTUME NOTE:** New Girl wears floppy hat, old coat, glasses, etc. as a disguise.

**PROPS:** Notebook and pencil (New Girl); cell phone (Principal); spiral notebook (Savannah)

#### **Scene 4: THE AUDITION**

**SETTING:** Student desk right and left facing center stage, allowing a playing area between them. Small table and two chairs upstage center.

**PROPS:** Scripts (Students); Clipboard and pencil (Mr. Dawson); book (slides on left)

#### **Scene 5: STICKY FINGERS**

**SETTING:** Yearbook room. Several student desks here and there. Teacher's desk at left holds signs reading "Bake Sale" and "Make It Merry! Buy a Brownie!".

**PROPS:** Plate of brownies pre-set on teacher desk; money (Daria, Brittany); regular and digital cameras (Trey); wad of money and change (Neil)

#### **Scene 6: CALL ME ISHMAEL**

**SETTING:** English classroom. Student desks face audience with the teacher's desk and chair left.

**PROPS:** Paper and pencil (Marian); typed essay (Marian); backpack (Marian); piece of paper and pencil (Sam); backpack (Deke); typed essay (Deke); laptop (Ms. Scoboda); copy of Moby Dick (Ms. Scoboda)

## **Scene 7: THE CHALLENGE**

**SETTING:** Gym. A bench or two facing the audience.

**PROPS:** Sign reading “Teen Challenge” (Toni and Desiree); wheelchair (Jake)

## **Scene 8: THE JITTERS**

**SETTING:** Boiler room. Teacher's desk or table and chair. Tools and box of photos and personal items on desk or table.

**COSTUME NOTE:** George should wear a custodian's outfit.

**PROPS:** Backpack (Marcie); cigarette (Marcie); mop and bucket (George); photos (George); cell phone (George)

### **SETTING**

The play can be done with a series of stacking boxes which can serve as student desks, teacher desks, tables, or benches, as desired. They simply need to be moved into different positions for each scene. Alternatively, four or five student desks can be used along with boxes that can serve as desks and tables. The boxes can be used for the bench in Scene 7. The most important thing is to keep the set simple and fluid.

### **COSTUMES**

Either everyday clothes can be worn by cast members, or all can dress in black or some other color, as desired.

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### PRELUDE

*The cast stands facing upstage. Each actor turns around to face the audience on his or her line and holds that position.*

ONE: Welcome to high school!

TWO: Our home away from home.

THREE: Within these walls, we're here to learn.

FOUR: A squared plus B squared equals C squared.

FIVE: The fifth vice-president of the United States was Elbridge Gerry.

SIX: Ulaanbaatar is the capital of Mongolia.

SEVEN: We are here to make friends.

EIGHT: I notice you're in my English class.

NINE: Doing anything Friday night?

TEN: I'll pick you up at eight.

ELEVEN: Maybe some other time.

TWELVE: We are here to learn teamwork.

THIRTEEN: We'll give it all we got!

FOURTEEN: C'mon, guys! Try harder!

FIFTEEN: Thataway, Baby!

SIXTEEN: Better luck next time!

SEVENTEEN: We are here to have fun.

EIGHTEEN: That party was a blast!

NINETEEN: If my parents ever found out—

TWENTY: Shhhhhhh!

TWENTY-ONE: We are here to build memories.

TWENTY-TWO: When we look back at our yearbooks—

TWENTY-THREE: We'll just sit and wonder—

TWENTY-FOUR: Who were those people?

TWENTY-FIVE: And how did they ever survive high school?

Scene One: FOREIGN EXCHANGE

A foreign language classroom. Student desks in rows facing the audience. A teacher's desk down left. (Note: in the script, the class will be a French class. It can easily, however, be turned into a Spanish or other language class.)

*AT RISE: KERRI and MOLLY lounge in their desks.*

KERRI: This school is just so boring!

MOLLY: (*Sighing*) I know. Nothing ever happens. I swear I'll die of boredom before I get to be a senior!

KERRI: And you know something? I hear senior year is the most boring of all!

*(KERRI and MOLLY sigh together as JULIE enters right.)*

JULIE: (*Bubbling with excitement*) Hi, guys!

KERRI: (*Bored*) Where were you when the tardy bell rang?

JULIE: Studying.

KERRI: (*Dropping her head on her desk*) Boring!

JULIE: (*To MOLLY*) What's wrong with her?

MOLLY: (*Sighing*) She's bored.

JULIE: (*To KERRI*) What's wrong with her?

KERRI: (*Looking up*) She's bored, too.

JULIE: Why are you two so bored?

*(KERRI and MOLLY shrug.)*

We're having a test today. Madame Bouchard said it would be a real challenge.

*(KERRI and MOLLY shrug.)*

We've got to be able to conjugate twenty irregular verbs! Six tenses!

KERRI: What difference will it make?

JULIE: A lot if you want a good grade!

MOLLY: What do grades matter?

KERRI: They're nothing but a label attached . . . then forgotten.

JULIE: Well, I've got exciting news.

MOLLY: (*Bored*) What? I've been elected homecoming queen?

JULIE: Better!

KERRI: They found asbestos everywhere in this school and it has to be closed down?

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JULIE: Better! I'll give you a hint: he's gorgeous!

MOLLY: (*Perking up*) Who is?

KERRI: (*With interest*) Did Sam Drake bleach his hair again?

JULIE: No! Ramon is gorgeous!

MOLLY: Who's Ramon?

JULIE: Our new foreign exchange student. He just got here this morning. I saw him in the office getting his schedule, and he's to die for!

KERRI: Oh, gosh! He speaks fluent French!

MOLLY: We'd better study those verbs!

KERRI: He can probably conjugate like crazy!

JULIE: And I don't think he speaks a word of English.

MOLLY: How do you know?

JULIE: Madame Bouchard was translating everything for him.

KERRI: Then he's going to need a lot of help!

MOLLY: We can teach him everything about (name of school).

KERRI: This is so exciting!

(*RAMON enters shyly, his backpack in tow.*)

JULIE: Oh, my gosh!

(*JULIE, KERRI, and MOLLY giggle. RAMON sits in upstage desk.*)

KERRI: (*Bravely*) Bonjour.

(*RAMON smiles, but doesn't answer.*)

Je m'appelle Kerri.

(*RAMON doesn't respond.*)

Me Kerri.

MOLLY: (*To RAMON*) Oh, don't mind her. She's crazy! (*gestures craziness*) I'm Molly. Welcome to (name of school). We are soooo honored to have you here as a foreign exchange student.

JULIE: (*To RAMON*) You don't understand a word she's saying, do you?

(*RAMON goes to say something, but--*)

KERRI: Well, you don't have to! We'll explain everything, right?

MOLLY: Sure!

JULIE: Exactly.

KERRI: (*Pointing to each*) Kerri, Molly, Julie.



**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 9**

*(RAMON waves weakly and smiles.)*

KERRI: *(To MOLLY)* Isn't he cute?

MOLLY: Kerri, he's not a Chihuahua!

KERRI: *(Conspiratorially)* He might as well be. He can't understand a word of English. He'll just think I said I'm having tofu for lunch.

RAMON: Tofu?

JULIE: You know about tofu?

*(RAMON is about to respond when--)*

KERRI: Well, now, what do you want to know?

MOLLY: Classroom! This is a classroom! Can you say classroom?

RAMON: Classroom.

JULIE: Excellent!

KERRI: He's got such a cute accent!

MOLLY: *(At the teacher's desk)* Desk.

RAMON: Desk.

*(KERRI grabs pointer from desk and stands behind it facing student desks.)*

JULIE: *(Pointing to KERRI)* Teacher.

RAMON: Teacher.

KERRI: Madame Bouchard!

RAMON: Madame Bouchard.

MOLLY: You're catching on quick!

KERRI: Not only gorgeous, but smart, to boot!

JULIE: Madame Bouchard is very mean.

MOLLY: Mean.

KERRI: Like this!

*(KERRI makes a mean face.)*

RAMON: Mean.

KERRI: *(Mimicking her teacher)* Class! Class! Silence! Silence! You, back there . . . you will be quiet or you will go to Mr. Grimky's office and you know what will happen there!

MOLLY and JULIE: *(In mock terror)* Ooooooo!

RAMON: *(Imitating them)* Ooooooo.

KERRI: *(Continuing as the teacher)* Now, class, today we will learn some basic phrases. Repeat them after me! Le crayon est sur la table. Repeat!

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 10

JULIE and MOLLY: Le crayon est sur la table.

KERRI: No! No! No! (*With more emphasis*) Le crayon est sur la table!

JULIE and MOLLY: (*Mimicking*) Le crayon est sur la table.

KERRI: Passable, passable. You won't get a table at a French café, but passable.

JULIE: Madame Bouchard?

KERRI: What is it, Julie?

JULIE: Why do we have to know how to say "The pencil is on the table" if we're going to a French café?

KERRI: Well . . . well . . . well! Well, perhaps you are signing your credit card bill and the waiter can't find a pen, but you see a pencil on another table . . . you might just want to suggest to him, "Le crayon est sur la table." Sa va?

MOLLY: C'est magnifique!

KERRI: Our next phrase is "C'est dommage." Repeat!

MOLLY and JULIE: C'est dommage.

KERRI: No! No! No! C'est dommage!

MOLLY and JULIE: C'est dommage!

KERRI: (*Pointing to RAMON*) You, monsieur!

RAMON: C'est dommage.

(*KERRI shrugs as if it's a mediocre pronunciation.*)

JULIE: (*To RAMON*) No matter how good you pronounce something, Madame Bouchard will just shrug it off.

MOLLY: You can't get anywhere with that woman!

KERRI: And the homework! (*Mimicking*) You will turn to page 38 in your grammar and for tomorrow I want exercises A through X completed.

JULIE: But, Madame Bouchard, we have a game tonight!

KERRI: And you must write out the complete sentence for every exercise!

MOLLY: That's . . . that's . . . fifty-eight sentences!

KERRI: C'est dommage.

JULIE: And to think . . . we'll have to have Madame Bouchard for French IV next year.

KERRI: Unless we can get rid of her!

MOLLY: We're trying. We put a whoopee cushion under the front seat of her car.

JULIE: And one night we soaped the windows of her house.

KERRI: But the best one was the time she stayed after school one night

. . .

MOLLY: And we had volleyball practice 'til five-thirty.

JULIE: It was dark by then.

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 11

KERRI: We got some fake blood and bandages and make-up and we made ourselves look like we were ghosts.

KERRI: Oh, he doesn't understand a word of this.

JULIE: Then let's show him!

*(JULIE, KERRI, and MOLLY move to opposite side of room. THEY assume zombie-like positions and begin to move towards RAMON.)*

KERRI: Madame Bouchard!

MOLLY: Madame Bouchard!

KERRI: We are coming for you!

MOLLY: We will take you with us!

JULIE: To the land of the living dead!

KERRI: Since you're already so boring you're probably dead!

*(RAMON registers fear and horror. The GIRLS laugh.)*

MOLLY: Oh, look! We scared him!

JULIE: I guess we're not really welcoming him much.

KERRI: I know! I know! Ramon, how about you and me . . . *(Gestures grandly)* Go out on a date?

MOLLY: Kerri, he doesn't know what a date is.

KERRI: Date . . . *(Indicates with her fingers that SHE and RAMON are walking, SHE then pantomimes the following.)* We walk to the movie theater. You pay. The boy always pays. We go inside. We sit down and watch the movie. We laugh. We cry. You put your arm around me. I snuggle. The movie is over. We get up. We walk to a restaurant. Restaurant . . . eat . . . eat . . . and then you take me home. You kiss me goodnight. *(Finishes by wrapping her arms around herself)* That's a date.

RAMON: Date.

JULIE: But I'm more fun on a date!

MOLLY: No, I am!

KERRI: I asked him first!

JULIE: But I saw him first!

MOLLY: But I'm the cutest!

KERRI: Oh, really? Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

JULIE: And your beholder's a little off target, Molly.

MOLLY: I can still tell a good thing when he walks into the room.

KERRI: Too bad you didn't ask him first.

JULIE: I know I'm going to find out who his host family is and then I'll see if I can take him out.

MOLLY: The Snowball Dance is Friday! *(To RAMON)* You'll go with me.

JULIE: I was going to ask him to the Snowball Dance!

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 12**

KERRI: I asked him first!

MOLLY: You asked him to a movie!

KERRI: But the Snowball Dance is more fun!

RAMON: Then why don't we all go together?

*(For a moment, the GIRLS are frozen.)*

JULIE: Oh, gosh!

MOLLY: *(Horrified)* You . . . you must have learned that phrase in . . . English class, right?

RAMON: I guess I did.

KERRI: You know a little more English than we thought.

RAMON: My mother taught me.

MOLLY: She speaks English?

RAMON: We live in London.

JULIE: Oh, my gosh! I'm so embarrassed!

RAMON: Don't worry. I won't tell my aunt a thing.

KERRI: Your aunt?

RAMON: Madame Bouchard. My name's Ramon Bouchard. She's my host family for the next six months.

JULIE: *(Dejectedly)* There goes college.

RAMON: Oh, I know Aunt Betty can be a pain—

MOLLY: No! No! She's a wonderful teacher!

KERRI: Our absolute favorite! We love her! We wouldn't miss her class for anything!

JULIE: She's taught me everything I know.

RAMON: Oh, she'll be glad to hear it because she warned me about three other girls who act like zombies sometimes.

MOLLY: Oh, we just love her sense of humor!

KERRI: Her *joi de vivre* just kills us!

JULIE: *(Earnestly)* Oh, forget it, guys! Ramon . . . please, please, please, don't say a word!

RAMON: Don't worry. *(To KERRI)* But we've got a date for a movie, right? *(To MOLLY)* And we're going to the Snowball Dance, right?

GIRLS: *(Dreamily)* Yeah!

RAMON: Just one thing. In my country, it's the girls who pay.

KERRI: What?

MOLLY: That's not what I've heard.

RAMON: Then I'll just have to tell Aunt Betty all about the whoopee cushion!

JULIE: You wouldn't dare!

RAMON: And who soaped her windows . . .

KERRI: That's blackmail!

MOLLY: I don't suppose you've heard of that in your country!

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 13

RAMON: Wrong! We invented it!

*(KERRI, MOLLY, and JULIE chase RAMON out of the room adlibbing shouts of “You won’t get away with this!” “Like aunt, like nephew!” and “Get back here!” and so on.)*

### Scene Two: ALIEN INVASION

**A science classroom. Student desks face stage left, where a table or larger desk sits. On this desk sits a poster showing a flying saucer. The poster bears the title “Aliens—Then and Now.”**

***AT RISE: CARLY and MANDY are putting the finishing touches on their science project, which they will be presenting soon to a full class. They stand behind the table and face the student desks. NAOMI sits downstage center. BRADLEY and SKEETER sit on top of desks upstage and do nothing but stare at NAOMI who puts her make-up on during MANDY and CARLY’S speeches. Other students fill the desks and do pay attention.***

MANDY: *(Looking at her note cards)* According to Dr. Wendall Javits from the National Space Institute, and I quote, “There is no good reason NOT to believe that extraterrestrials have landed on earth and are now walking amongst us. In all probability, it is assumed that these aliens can assume human form and characteristics while retaining special powers indigenous to their own species.”

CARLY: *(Also using note cards)* With such high-powered authorities that we have cited along with the statistics indicating the rapid rise in UFO sightings, it seems childish to assume that we are alone in the universe . . . or even here on earth.

MANDY: It seems that a key event . . . perhaps the pivotal event of the new millennium will be contact with visitors from another planet!

CARLY: Will you be ready when that happens?

MANDY: Will any of us?

CARLY and MANDY: Thank you for your rapt attention.

*(MANDY and CARLY relax as a bell rings and extra students get up and exit Left.)*

MANDY: What’d you think?

CARLY: Mr. Newman didn’t react at all. He just went into his office.

MANDY: But he was scribbling notes the whole time.

CARLY: Is that good?

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MANDY: Either very, very good or we flunked and he was thinking up reasons why.

CARLY: We did everything we were supposed to do.

MANDY: I'm worried, though. Maybe our topic wasn't scientific enough.

CARLY: What can be more scientific than little green men in flying saucers?

MANDY: When you put it like that, I'm sure we got an A.

CARLY: Speaking of which . . . that new girl, Naomi?

MANDY: Oh, yeah . . . spider woman . . .

CARLY: Spider woman?

MANDY: That's what everybody's calling her. She attracts guys into her web like a spider.

CARLY: Look at those two.

MANDY: I know . . . Bradley and Skeeter. They haven't taken a breath since she sat down. Like they'd have a chance with Naomi.

CARLY: It's like they can't help themselves. They're under a spell.

MANDY: I think we're exaggerating.

*(BRADLEY and SKEETER get up but can't take their eyes off NAOMI. BRADLEY backs out of room Left. SKEETER follows, but smashes into the table. Both BOYS leave their backpacks on the desks they were sitting on.)*

CARLY: You don't call that a spell?

MANDY: Do you suppose she's an alien?

CARLY: Don't be silly!

MANDY: Look what Dr. Javits said. They are undoubtedly here on earth assuming human form.

CARLY: Her form is definitely human.

MANDY: But perfect! Nobody should look that good!

CARLY: Yeah . . . she's completely . . . completely . . . synchronized!

MANDY: Her face is absolutely symmetrical. As if her two halves were made in a mold then stitched together.

CARLY: Maybe they were!

NAOMI: *(Walks to table)* I really liked your presentation, girls.

MANDY: Thanks, Naomi.

CARLY: Yeah.

NAOMI: I don't tell this to everybody, but one time I saw a UFO.

MANDY: *(Winking at CARLY)* Really?

CARLY: Was it like our flying saucer here? *(Points to poster)*

NAOMI: More like a tube of lipstick. It landed in my backyard.

MANDY: That explains a lot.

CARLY: It didn't have, like . . . relatives of yours in it or anything, did it?

NAOMI: Of course not. They were complete strangers.

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MANDY: (*Worriedly*) So . . . did they . . . did they . . . teach you anything?

NAOMI: Like what?

CARLY: Well, you know . . . like . . . we've noticed that guys . . . well . . . they . . .

MANDY: They drool all over you.

CARLY: And it's kind of like they're in a different world from the rest of us when they look at you.

NAOMI: (*Sighing*) I know . . . and I wish they'd stop.

CARLY: It must be terrible to live like that.

NAOMI: I wish they'd drool over somebody else for a change.

MANDY: It's a dirty job, but we'd be more than willing to take the burden off your hands.

CARLY: Sure! If you'd just show us a few tricks they use on your planet—

NAOMI: You two are so silly! I'm just a regular girl like you two.

MANDY: Unleaded is regular. You're high-octane.

NAOMI: Why? Because I walk a little differently?

CARLY: A whole lot differently.

(*NAOMI walks elegantly, like a model on a runway.*)

MANDY: Yeah . . . that gets some stares. How do you do it?

NAOMI: One foot in front of the other, like this. (*Demonstrates again*)

CARLY: Let me try that . . . (*Imitates NAOMI'S walk*)

MANDY: Let me try! Like this, right? (*Tries and stumbles a bit*)

CARLY: Maybe it's easier carrying books or something.

MANDY: (*Grabbing books*) Like this? (*Tries to walk like NAOMI, but overdoes it*)

CARLY: (*Disappointedly*) But it's not just walking. It's the . . . the . . . you know something, Naomi? You always look like you're just a bit out of breath.

NAOMI: The air is a bit thinner up here.

MANDY: On the second floor?

(*MANDY drags CARLY away from NAOMI.*)

It's the oxygen! On her planet they probably breathe Chanel or . . . or . . .

CARLY: My Sin!

MANDY: (*To NAOMI*) So, we've got to walk like we're catching our breath all the time.

CARLY: Breathing through our mouths.

NAOMI: What else would you breathe through?

MANDY: (*Winking at CARLY*) Yeah . . . what else?

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CARLY: But you know . . . you use your arms differently, too. I mean . . . they kind of wave a bit when you walk.

NAOMI: I didn't realize.

MANDY: It's like you're not used to standing on two feet and you're trying to keep your balance.

NAOMI: It's the novelty of having arms . . . their symmetry . . . and all the possibilities. They can reach out and wrap around anything I want!

*(CARLY and MANDY instinctively back up, frightened.)*

CARLY: Like boys, right?

NAOMI: They're such funny little creatures, don't you think?

MANDY: You make them sound like goldfish.

NAOMI: They look like goldfish when they look at me. Their eyes are huge and their mouths open and close like this.

CARLY: Stimulus-response.

MANDY: Just like Pavlov's dogs!

NAOMI: They're actually weaker than we are. You know that?

MANDY: Except when you've got to change a tire.

NAOMI: We'll outwork . . . outplay . . . and outlive them all!

CARLY: I . . . I guess you've got a longer life span on your . . . well, wherever you come from.

MANDY: Yeah . . . it's got to be a whole lot different from here. I mean the atmosphere must be a lot thicker and gravity's stronger and you sure have a different way of dealing with the opposite sex. Exactly where do you come from?

NAOMI: Texas *(or another "rival" state)*.

CARLY: *(To MANDY)* That must be where she landed.

MANDY: Yeah! They probably can't ever reveal the name of their planet.

*(NAOMI moves Left.)*

CARLY: Naomi, where are you going?

NAOMI: I've got to get to my next class.

MANDY: But . . . but how do you get that . . . look?

NAOMI: What look?

CARLY: Like this! *(Makes a face mimicking NAOMI's with huge eyes, open mouth, hair tossing)*

NAOMI: Lots of soap and water.

MANDY: That's no secret. What do you use for makeup?

NAOMI: Makeup?

CARLY: Yeah . . . you've got to have some kind of foundation and powder.



## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 17

NAOMI: I don't use makeup.

MANDY: (*Suspiciously*) Just naturally luminescent!

CARLY: I don't believe it! What have you got in your purse?

NAOMI: Nothing! No makeup, anyway . . .

MANDY: We'll just see about that! (*Snatches NAOMI's purse and dumps it on desk*)

NAOMI: Hey! You can't do that!

CARLY: (*Looking at items*) Comb, wallet, cell phone . . .

MANDY: (*Holding up a small spray can*) Hey! What's this?

NAOMI: No! Don't touch that!

CARLY: What is it?

NAOMI: If you must know . . . pepper spray.

MANDY: I've never seen pepper spray before.

CARLY: I guess you might need it when the cute little creatures get too close.

MANDY: Here . . . (*Hands NAOMI her purse*) you're right . . . no makeup.

NAOMI: I told you, good old soap and water.

CARLY: Well, Zest might work for you, but I think we need a bit more help.

NAOMI: You've got all the secrets . . . but the biggest one is easy. Stop feeling sorry for yourselves.

MANDY: Here . . . you want your pepper spray?

NAOMI: That's okay . . . keep it. You might need it. (*Exits Left*)

CARLY: Yeah, right.

MANDY: Now you never know. Maybe we'll run into the abominable snowman on the way home.

CARLY: Don't you wonder why Naomi has pepper spray instead of a ray gun or something? I mean . . . she's from another planet. Are they so backwards they have to rely on pepper spray?

MANDY: Maybe they put all their energies into looking gorgeous and acting sophisticated and not weapons.

CARLY: You mean like this?

(*CARLY and MANDY now mimic NAOMI's speech and actions just as BRADLEY and SKEETER enter Left. MANDY and CARLY don't see them at first.*)

MANDY: Yes, you look absolutely devastating!

CARLY: On my planet we ALL look like this!

MANDY: These poor earthlings . . . they're soooo ugly!

CARLY: But they'll improve once we take over the planet.

MANDY: And we give them all makeovers!

BRADLEY: (*Nervously*) Hey, Carly . . . Mandy . . .

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 18

CARLY: *(Coming on strong as a joke)* Oh, Bradley . . . you look out of this world!

BRADLEY: I . . . I do? Gosh!

MANDY: And Skeeter . . . *(Moves close to SKEETER, out of breath)*  
You're such a hunk of human!

SKEETER: Me?

BRADLEY: Maybe . . . maybe you girls would want to walk home with us?

CARLY: Walk home? I think we can handle that.

MANDY: Can you?

SKEETER: Oh, my gosh!

MANDY: We'll go get our . . . things.

CARLY: Yes . . . our things.

*(MANDY and CARLY move Right as the BOYS move upstage to get their backpacks. MANDY and CARLY high-five.)*

MANDY: Wait right here!

CARLY: We'll be back before you can say "Welcome Earthling!"

*(MANDY and CARLY exit left.)*

SKEETER: Bradley . . . what's up with them?

BRADLEY: It's obvious, Skeeter. As plain as that big nose on your face.

SKEETER: My nose isn't that big! Mandy thought I was handsome.

BRADLEY: For an earthling.

SKEETER: What?

BRADLEY: Don't you get it?

SKEETER: Get what?

BRADLEY: Those two are aliens! They're from another planet and they've landed here as part of a fifth column.

SKEETER: You've been reading too many comic books!

BRADLEY: All right, how did they get all this stuff about flying saucers, ha? And how come they're acting so weird? It's like . . . it's like . . .

SKEETER: They're not human! So we're going to walk them home?

What if they turn into monsters and try to stick big suction cups on us and drain our life forces away?

BRADLEY: Not to worry. *(Takes out a small spray can)*

SKEETER: What's that?

BRADLEY: There's one thing every space alien hates.

SKEETER: What?

BRADLEY: Pepper spray!

*(MANDY and CARLY enter Left with backpacks.)*

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 19

MANDY: Ready, fellas?

BRADLEY: Let's blast off!

CARLY: Funny, but we never noticed you two before today.

SKEETER: Same here. But you guys are really out of this world!

*(MANDY, CARLY, BRADLEY, and SKEETER exit Left.)*

### Scene Three: THE TEST

**A sociology classroom. Teacher's desk right, student desks facing downstage.**

***AT RISE: MIKE, ALEX, SAVANNAH, and JEN sit around the room nervously. Unnoticed, a NEW GIRL sits in the back of the room wearing a floppy hat and old coat. SHE writes and doodles in her notebook.***

MIKE: It's been five minutes.

ALEX: Maybe she's in the bathroom.

MIKE: Teachers don't go to the bathroom.

SAVANNAH: Mike, you idiot! Of course they go to the bathroom.

MIKE: Not at school.

JEN: What an idiot.

MIKE: Why am I an idiot?

ALEX: Why are you so bent out of shape because Ms. Johnson isn't here?

MIKE: Ms. Johnson is **never** late.

SAVANNAH: *(MIKE's right.)* Yeah . . . and we're supposed to have a test.

JEN: *(Shocked)* We are? Does it count?

SAVANNAH: Of course it counts!

ALEX: What's it over? We'd better study, Jen.

MIKE: It's over what we covered the last three days.

JEN: What was that?

SAVANNAH: Don't you guys pay attention?

ALEX: No.

MIKE: It's on something about society.

SAVANNAH: Good, Mike! This **is** sociology class.

MIKE: You know what I mean. It was all about equality or something.

JEN: That's kind of general. How many questions can she ask about that?

SAVANNAH: It was about responsibility.

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 20**

ALEX: What's that?

MIKE: You know.

JEN: It's like babysitting.

ALEX: I don't babysit. I tried once. I babysat for my neighbor's kid Rudolph. Can you imagine naming your kid Rudolph like the reindeer?

JEN: What happened?

ALEX: He started crying when I asked him where his red nose was. Then his parents threw me out.

SAVANNAH: (*Sarcastically*) Very compassionate, Alex.

ALEX: So the kid couldn't take a joke.

JEN: But your joke hurt his feelings.

ALEX: Why did he have to be so sensitive?

MIKE: Some people are, that's all.

ALEX: So we're having a test on babysitting?

SAVANNAH: No! Our responsibilities as citizens.

MIKE: Like we've got to vote.

JEN: Oh, yeah!

ALEX: That's a drag.

SAVANNAH: Why? It's a constitutional right.

ALEX: It doesn't make any difference who you vote for. They're all the same.

MIKE: How would you know? You've never voted.

ALEX: My dad told me.

SAVANNAH: It's not on those kinds of responsibilities. It's on the kind we've got as people, you know?

MIKE: People?

SAVANNAH: One to another.

JEN: Like don't step on people's feet when you're crawling past them in a movie theater?

SAVANNAH: Yeah . . . and if you do step on 'em you do the right thing.

ALEX: Yeah, you say "If your feet weren't so big, people wouldn't step on 'em, so get 'em out of the way!"

SAVANNAH: No, numbskull!

JEN: You say, "I'm so sorry," and act like it's all your fault even though everybody knows his feet are too big in the first place.

MIKE: Guys, we're making Savannah mad and that's not good at a time like this.

ALEX: Sorry. I know . . . I'm worried, too.

SAVANNAH: Where could Ms. Johnson be?

ALEX: I'm not worried about that. I'm worried about this test!

MIKE: That's where she is! She's probably running the test off right now.

(*JOHN and NEELY enter Left.*)

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 21**

JOHN: No, she's not!

NEELY: We looked everywhere for her.

JOHN: It's kind of like she vanished.

SAVANNAH: Why would she vanish?

ALEX: Maybe the school's haunted.

JEN: *(With growing enthusiasm)* Like Hill House . . . and the school needs human energy so it sucks in people once in a while just to stay alive!

MIKE: You call *(name of school)* alive? I don't see any walls breathing.

NEELY: Hey, who's the new kid?

JEN: New kid? Where?

*(NEELY points upstage.)*

MIKE: *(Sighing)* Not another one!

SAVANNAH: We ought to go over there and say hi.

ALEX: Be my guest.

SAVANNAH: Well, isn't that one of our responsibilities Ms. Johnson mentioned?

JOHN: Saying hi to new kids?

NEELY: She was talking about more important things than that.

JOHN: Yeah . . . voting rights and discrimination and all that.

JEN: Look at that hat!

NEELY: I wouldn't be caught dead in that thing.

MIKE: I saw those on sale at the second hand store.

JOHN: Right next to the coat she's wearing.

JEN: She looks pretty serious about getting her work done.

SAVANNAH: What's wrong with that?

JEN: Everything if you've got a life.

SAVANNAH: I'm sure she has a life, guys.

JOHN: Yeah! I saw her move!

*(JOHN, MIKE, and ALEX laugh.)*

NEELY: That doesn't mean anything these days. She could be computer generated or a hologram or something.

JEN: Computer generated fashion queen.

MIKE: You know what?

JOHN: What?

MIKE: I bet her folks work at the new big box store.

SAVANNAH: They hired two hundred fifty workers . . . and they're all starting this week.

JEN: Just what we need!

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 22**

NEELY: Broken down cars and runny-nose kids.

MIKE: Alex can babysit 'em!

SAVANNAH: What? The cars or the kids?

MIKE: Both!

*(KIDS laugh as PRINCIPAL enters Left.)*

PRINCIPAL: Students? Has Ms. Johnson shown up yet?

SAVANNAH: No, Mr. Norris. And we're really getting worried.

JEN: She's **never** late.

NEELY: Especially when she's giving a test.

PRINCIPAL: Maybe the copier broke down.

JOHN: We thought of that. But it's working fine.

PRINCIPAL: Well, I'm not sure what we ought to do . . . we called her home and she left for school right on time. But nobody has seen her since.

MIKE: Maybe we ought to call the cops.

*(PRINCIPAL pulls out cell phone and dials.)*

ALEX: You'll get 'em faster if you dial Dunkin' Donuts direct.

PRINCIPAL: Alex, you are not to make fun of our trusted institutions.

*(into the phone)* Hello, this is Principal Norris. Is the chief in? Dunkin' Donuts? I'll do that, thanks.

ALEX: I told you!

NEELY: *(Looking out window Right.)* Hey! Hey!

*(KIDS rush to NEELY.)*

That's Ms. Johnson's car!

MIKE: The Jetta?

JOHN: That's mine.

MIKE: The Land Rover?

SAVANNAH: That's mine.

MIKE: The Lexus?

JEN: I drove that today.

MIKE: The Pinto?

NEELY: That's hers! I've seen her drive it.

ALEX: Where does anybody get parts for something like that?

NEELY: I'll bet our new girl knows.

MIKE: Hey! That's probably where Ms. Johnson is! She's at the junk yard looking for a fender or something!

PRINCIPAL: Hello, Chief? Principal Norris here. I'm afraid we've misplaced one of our teachers.

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 23

SAVANNAH: Mr. Norris? Ms. Johnson's got to be in the school! Her car is still here.

PRINCIPAL: Oh, the children say that her car is in the lot. We should? We should? We shouldn't. We should? We shouldn't.

MIKE: Well, should we or shouldn't we?

PRINCIPAL: Thank you very much, Chief.

ALEX: What's he want us deputies to do?

PRINCIPAL: A room by room search immediately.

SAVANNAH: Neely and I will take the art and music wing.

MIKE: Alex and I will take the gym, locker rooms, and pool.

JOHN: Jen and I will search the classrooms.

PRINCIPAL: Meet back here in five minutes. Leave no door unopened!

MIKE: (*Saluting*) Aye, aye, captain!

(*MIKE, ALEX, NEELY, SAVANNAH, JOHN, and JEN exit Left.*)

PRINCIPAL: (*To NEW GIRL*) You're not going to help them? Oh, you're the new girl, aren't you? Well, you wait right here. I'm sure your teacher will show up soon. (*Under his breath*) She'd better!

(*PRINCIPAL exits Left. NEW GIRL gets up, then takes off coat and hat revealing that SHE is, in fact, MS. JOHNSON. SHE fixes her hair, then sits at her desk, hiding the coat and hat behind it. A moment later ALEX, MIKE, SAVANNAH, NEELY, JOHN, and JEN enter Left.*)

MIKE: Ms. Johnson!

SAVANNAH: You're back! We're sure glad to see you!

ALEX: Yeah . . . wow!

NEELY: We really are. Test or no test.

JOHN: Where were you?

MS. JOHNSON: I wasn't feeling well.

JEN: I always feel like that before tests, too. But there's something you can do to make you feel better right away.

MS. JOHNSON: What's that, Jen?

JEN: Don't give the test.

MS. JOHNSON: That's one thing I love about you, Jen . . . you're always joking around.

JEN: Who's joking!

SAVANNAH: Are you feeling better now?

MS. JOHNSON: Unfortunately a whole lot worse.

ALEX: I got some Roloids here.

MIKE: What are you doing with Roloids?

ALEX: Pizza always gives me heartburn.

MIKE: We haven't had lunch yet.

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 24

ALEX: I'm talking about breakfast.

NEELY: Shut up, guys! You're making Ms. Johnson feel worse.

MS. JOHNSON: Why don't you all sit down and we can get started.

ALEX: Please, Ms. Johnson! Half the period's gone! Don't give us a test! We won't have time to finish it!

MS. JOHNSON: Alex, really . . .

NEELY: *(To ALEX)* You're pathetic. Groveling like a toady!

ALEX: What's a toady?

NEELY: You!

SAVANNAH: Alex does have a point, Ms. Johnson. We don't have time to take our test.

MS. JOHNSON: Oh, it's a very short test.

JEN: Can we review?

MS. JOHNSON: I don't think that would help.

JEN: It would! It really would!

NEELY: Especially if you weren't paying attention the first time around.

MS. JOHNSON: It doesn't seem like any of you were paying attention yesterday.

SAVANNAH: I was! I've got all my notes right here! *(Holds up her spiral notebook.)*

MS. JOHNSON: Really? Can I see them?

*(SAVANNAH proudly hands MS. JOHNSON the notebook. MS. JOHNSON reads.)*

Responsibilities in the modern world involve not only participation in the democratic process, such as voting, but in understanding and appreciating fellow citizens for their talents and differences.

SAVANNAH: See?

ALEX: *(To SAVANNAH)* What are you, a court reporter?

MS. JOHNSON: It's our responsibility to help each individual within our job, school, or play site to become an active member in order to enable that individual to reach his or her potential. We can all contribute, especially to one another.

NEELY: *(Sighing)* That is so noble!

JOHN: Where do you think up stuff like that, Ms. Johnson?

ALEX: We don't have to have that memorized for the test, do we?

MS. JOHNSON: No, Alex.

ALEX: Great!

JEN: Then what's on the test?

MS. JOHNSON: You ought to know. You just took it.

SAVANNAH: We didn't take any test . . .

MS. JOHNSON: Oh, no?



## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 25

(MS. JOHNSON puts hat on her head. Shock register on the KIDS' faces as the lights dim to darkness.)

### Scene Four: THE AUDITION

The drama classroom. Desks on Right and Left facing one another with a center area for performing. Two chairs and a small table sit upstage.

**AT RISE:** LASHAWN BEAUPREY stands at Center practicing her lines with CAROL, who holds a script. JEFF and DAWN sit in or on desks watching.

LASHAWN: (*Dramatically*) Oh, my precious sister, would that you would trust me again (*pronounced a-gain*) as you once did when we would frolic among the hollyhocks.

(*No response. With emphasis,*)

When we would frolic among the hollyhocks.

(*Again, no response*)

Hollyhocks! That's your cue, Carol!

CAROL: (*Desperately looking through the script*) I can't find any hollyhocks!

LASHAWN: It's right here! (*Points to a spot on an open page of the script*) Right there! H-O-L-L-Y-H-O-C-K-S for crying out loud!

CAROL: Oh, okay.

LASHAWN: So when I say "hollyhocks," that's your cue. (*Into character*) When we would frolic among the hollyhocks.

CAROL: (*Flatly*) But you have wronged me grievously and my heart has been torn asunder (*pronounced asoonder*).

LASHAWN: Asunder! Asunder! Your heart was torn asunder!

CAROL: That's it! Get yourself a new partner!

LASHAWN: Carol! Please, no! We've got to audition in five minutes!

CAROL: I'm just trying to help.

LASHAWN: (*Trying to be tolerant*) I know. Just try to help a bit harder.

JEFF: Why don't you just chill, LaShawn?

DAWN: Yeah . . . ever since Mr. Dawson announced tryouts for the play, you've been driving everybody nuts.

LASHAWN: I have not!

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 26**

JEFF: You have, too! All you do is recite lines from that stupid scene you picked.

LASHAWN: (*Horrified*) “Field of Grief” is hardly stupid! It’s a classic!

CAROL: A classic? I don’t even know what a hollyhock is.

JEFF: It’s part of a horse’s hind leg.

LASHAWN: It’s a flower, for crying out loud!

DAWN: You know, LaShawn, you’re going to do a lot better at the audition today if you’re relaxed.

LASHAWN: That might work for some people, but relaxing doesn’t work for me! I’ve got to be on! I’ve got to be focused! I’ve got to soar!

JEFF: How many cups of coffee did you drink today, LaShawn?

LASHAWN: Before or after lunch?

JEFF: You’ve got to calm down!

DAWN: Why don’t you try some breathing exercises?

LASHAWN: Good idea! (*Begins to pant*)

CAROL: Breath deeply and slowly.

LASHAWN: That’s what I’m doing.

JEFF: You’re panting like my rotweiler.

DAWN: You still got that dog?

JEFF: I can keep him if I’m the only one he bites.

LASHAWN: This isn’t helping and you’re not helping talking about your pets! I’ve got to focus!

CAROL: Look, LaShawn, you’re probably going to get the part, so why sweat it?

LASHAWN: Probably? Probably? I’ll have you know I **am** Medea! And Mr. Dawson had better be able to see that loud and clear! There’s no one else who can do this part!

JEFF: Diana Rigg did a great job on Broadway.

LASHAWN: And just what did she know about Medea’s pain and suffering? I feel that pain! I see that suffering! And I’ll make the audience suffer right along with me!

CAROL: (*Under her breath*) You can say that again.

LASHAWN: It’s what Mr. Dawson wants. And since he’s new, we’d better do exactly what he says.

JEFF: He said pick a scene from any play and perform it with or without a partner.

DAWN: He just wants to see our range.

LASHAWN: Range? He hasn’t seen range ‘til he sees mine! I can laugh! I can cry! I can do vegetables!

JEFF: Raw or cooked?

LASHAWN: Funny! But I’ll be the one laughing on the way to the curtain call on opening night.

CAROL: Have you guys heard Natalie is trying out?

LASHAWN: (*Struck with fear*) Natalie who?

## WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 27

CAROL: Natalie Birch.

JEFF: I didn't know she can act.

LASHAWN: I'm sure she can't.

DAWN: What's she been in?

LASHAWN: I remember her in the third grade pageant. We were playing the lost colonists of Roanoke and, boy, was she lost! She had two lines, and she blew them both.

JEFF: But we're in high school now. Maybe she'll give you a run for your money.

LASHAWN: A run? The only one at this school who has a run as an actress is me! No offense, but who was Pollyanna in *Pollyanna*?

Anne Frank in *The Diary of Anne Frank*? Rebecca in *Rebecca*?

JEFF: And the mattress in *Once upon a Mattress*!

LASHAWN: I hope you end up playing somebody I condemn to death!

MR. DAWSON: (*Enters Right with clipboard*) Well, I'm glad to see we've got a few people to start with.

LASHAWN: We're all you need, Mr. Dawson.

MR. DAWSON: Well, there are a few more characters than this.

CAROL: LaShawn wants to play them all.

LASHAWN: I don't want to be greedy, Mr. Dawson. I'll be happy with Medea.

MR. DAWSON: It'll be a lot of work.

LASHAWN: Nobody works harder than me!

MR. DAWSON: And you've got to have a huge range.

LASHAWN: I'm home on the range!

MR. DAWSON: And how about the rest of you? Up for a bit of classic theater?

JEFF: Whatever.

MR. DAWSON: That's what I like, Jeff, somebody who's laid back at auditions.

JEFF: Well, I figure there won't be many guys trying out, so what's the hassle?

MR. DAWSON: How about you going first? You're working with LaShawn?

LASHAWN: Are you kidding? Mr. Dawson, I can't play off just anybody.

DAWN: I'm working with Jeff.

MR. DAWSON: Well, good, Dawn. Let's see what you two have come up with.

(*JEFF and DAWN set a small table at Center with a chair on either side. DAWN sits at table. JEFF moves Right.*)

DAWN: Paris. Night. 1942.

JEFF: (*"Enters" the scene*) Monique! Is that you, Monique?

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 28**

DAWN: Andre! (*Looks around nervously*) Do not speak my name!

JEFF: Is this seat taken?

DAWN: Does it look taken?

JEFF: No.

DAWN: Then sit.

(*JEFF sits quickly.*)

Cigarette? (*Pantomimes offering him a cigarette*)

JEFF: But, of course! (*Pantomimes taking one and lighting it, HE takes an imaginary puff. HE coughs.*)

DAWN: You haven't changed.

JEFF: I wear the same size. I still have all my teeth. But I am not the same man, Monique.

DAWN: I told you! Do not say my name!

LASHAWN: (*With a laugh*) Are you two serious?

MR. DAWSON: LaShawn, we don't interrupt other people's auditions.

LASHAWN: Sorry.

MR. DAWSON: Go ahead, you two.

DAWN: How have you changed, Andre?

JEFF: This occupation . . . it's sapped the life from me! I don't know why I get up in the morning.

DAWN: For the same reason any of us gets up in the morning!

JEFF: Why? Tell me why!

DAWN: To fight! To resist these fiends! To beat them back until there are none left on French soil!

JEFF: Oh, you're so right, Monique!

CAROL: (*Reading from script*) It is Monique, the resistance fighter.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

(*DAWN falls to the floor, dying from a wound.*)

JEFF: Oh, no! I'm so sorry! It's all my fault!

DAWN: I know! I told you not to say my name!

(*DAWN and JEFF stand and bow. OTHERS clap.*)

MR. DAWSON: Great! Very heartfelt.

LASHAWN: You two have improved so much since last year.

MR. DAWSON: Okay, LaShawn. Let's see what you and Carol have got.

(*LASHAWN takes a deep breath and shakes her hands. SHE and CAROL remove the "café setting."*)

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 29**

LASHAWN: We don't need any props. And now, we'd like to present a cutting from "Field of Grief."

*(LASHAWN and CAROL move Right, then turn back and "enter" the scene.)*

CAROL: *(Reading from her script)* I haven't spoken to Lord Whimsey since last Michaelmas, sister dear.

LASHAWN: I wish you'd tell me the truth.

CAROL: Upon my honor, 'tis the truth.

LASHAWN: Nay, for there has been talk among the servants.

CAROL: Oh, no! Pray, what do they say?

LASHAWN: They whisper of a dalliance between you and Lord Whimsey.

CAROL: *(Mispronouncing it)* A dalliance?

LASHAWN: *(Angrily, but trying to control it)* Yes, a dalliance! The cook said Lord Whimsey was here at Easter. The butler said he was here in May. The upstairs maid said he was here in June. And the downstairs maid said he was here yesterday.

CAROL: What do they do, mark their calendars when he visits?

LASHAWN: So, 'tis true! You have lied to me!

CAROL: Not exactly.

LASHAWN: Oh, my precious sister, would that you would trust me again as you once did when we would frolic among the hollyhocks. Hollyhocks.

CAROL: I know. I heard you! But you have wronged me grievously and my heart has been torn asunder. *(mispronounced)*

LASHAWN: Asunder! Asunder! Asunder!

CAROL: That's what I said!

LASHAWN: But 'tis not I who have been wronged! I am betrothed to Lord Whimsey yet you are carrying on right under the noses of our servants! Oh, shame! There is nothing left for me to do but—

CAROL: But what, sister dear?

LASHAWN: End it all! *(Pantomimes dramatically stabbing herself, then falling to the floor)*

CAROL: Oh, sister! Forgive me. All Lord Whimsey and I were doing was planning a surprise party for your birthday, which is but a week hence.

LASHAWN: My birthday? Then you mean there was no dalliance?

*(SHE coughs as CAROL shakes her head.)*

Then at least I die happy. Tell Lord Whimsey that for me . . . and, sister dear, take good care of him.

**WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE TARDY BELL RANG? – Page 30**

CAROL: Oh, I shall! I certainly shall!

*(LASHAWN “dies.” Then SHE and CAROL stand and bow as OTHERS clap.)*

MR. DAWSON: Very dramatic.

LASHAWN: I wanted you to see my range.

MR. DAWSON: It was pretty apparent, LaShawn. Anybody else coming?

CAROL: Natalie said she was going to come.

LASHAWN: And she'd be perfect in a small part without too many lines.

*(NATALIE enters Left, terrified.)*

DAWN: Here's Natalie.

JEFF: What's wrong?

NATALIE: *(Terrified)* Is she out there?

MR. DAWSON: *(Concerned)* Who?

NATALIE: She . . . she chased me up the stairs!

JEFF: *(Looking off Left, nervously)* . . . I don't see anybody.

MR. DAWSON: Who chased you?

NATALIE: A woman all dressed in white!

CAROL: You're shaking. Sit down . . . and maybe we ought to call the police.

MR. DAWSON: They'll want to know what happened. Where'd you first see this woman?

NATALIE: The library. That's where she's from, isn't it? The library? I'd just checked out a book and was turning the corner to go down to the main hall, when she snatched the book from my hands and threw it back into the library.

CAROL: Why would she do that?

NATALIE: You don't know?

JEFF: Know what?

NATALIE: I suppose they keep it a secret, don't they, Mr. Dawson?

MR. DAWSON: They must be pretty good at it, because I don't know what you're talking about either.

NATALIE: The Woman in White is a ghost. She haunts the library!

LASHAWN: Where'd you hear that?

NATALIE: I . . . I didn't hear it. I read it.

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