

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA ORPHANS

BY GRIZZLY K. SUNSHINE

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA ORPHANS
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For Galaxy...

CHARACTERS

Dallas
Loco Motive
Babyface
Frosty
Miss Gladys
Molly Cruel
Big Daddy Valentine
Trixie Valentine
Tiger Valentine
Flor Picante
Cop/Scumbag Tony
Dad
Mom
Junior
Turtle #1
Turtle #2
Bank Guard
Bee/Reagan

MALE: 6-8; **FEMALE:** 5-8; **M/F:** 6-8; **TOTAL:** 17+

Casting Note: Make this script work for your group. Make any gender or name changes as necessary. Cut as needed. Doubling suggested for Cop/Scumbag Tony.

SOUND DESIGN

Try to separate the kid world from the adult world with sound. In all the scenes with orphans, make their sound effects (SFX) over-the-top, 1980s, arcade-game sounds. Realistic sounds should only apply to the adult world (gunfire, mostly). When a character crosses over from the safety of their childhood world to the cruel adult world, their SFX should change too, to signify the end of their youth. This sound strategy really helps end act one with a bang!

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA ORPHANS

ACT 1 SCENE 1

Lights up on a brick alley in Emerald Island, Hawaii.

Halloween, 1987.

Emerald Island is a city at the base of a volcano that boasts a few skyscrapers and one claim to fame: The Paradise Emerald, which is worth five million dollars, maybe more, locked away in the famously secure bank vault downtown.

This Emerald Island alley hosts a charmless orphanage, a power hub that controls the city's electricity, and a large dumpster. Silver trash cans and crumpled newspapers are scattered throughout. The Paradise Emerald has been spray painted on one of the dented silver trash cans in vibrant color.

Perhaps the only obvious beauty in this alley can be seen in a few displays of exotic Hawaiian flowers outside of the orphanage, which sits a little too close to the glowing, lava-soaked volcano.

FROSTY, 50, a mute hobo with a rock edge, enters pushing a shopping cart. He can only communicate through 80s rock lyrics that he plays on his boombox. Frosty sets up shop for the night near his dumpster, which is covered with tattered QUEEN posters. The alley's only streetlight is above the dumpster.

Thunder SFX. Frosty quickly covers his head with newspaper to keep dry. Brilliant lightning strike. Electrical surge SFX. Visible explosion from the city power hub. Sparks, then smoke. Power outage SFX.

Blackout.

In the dark, Frosty lights a beautifully improvised newspaper torch and goes to the smoking electrical hub. He uses his teeth to pull his sleeve over his fingers to protect his hand from an electric shock. He jiggles a few wires to get the streetlight right above his dumpster to dimly flicker. Satisfied, he does an air guitar riff, tongue out, using a broom as a makeshift guitar. He then goes down for a nap with a newspaper quilt he duct-taped together, made mostly of the music section.

Thunder SFX.

SCENE 2

DALLAS, 13, an orphan with a flat top, enters the shadow drenched alley from the orphanage with a flashlight. He is dressed as Donatello (the purple one) from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. His costume is made from household items like bath rugs, towels, and rubber gloves.

DALLAS. Power's out! Again! (*LOCO MOTIVE, 12, a tough, Honduran, temper follows. He is dressed as Rafael (the red one) and is wearing an old mining helmet that has a flickering light.*)

LOCO. Stupid volcano gods! (*To the volcano.*) Enciende las luces, ¿No sabes que es Halloween? (*Turn on the lights, don't you know it's Halloween?*) (*BABYFACE, 5, a germaphobe and Loco's kid brother follows dressed as Michelangelo (the orange one) with his inhaler and a keychain light. He is struggling to put his turtle shell on and Loco, somewhat violently, helps him.*)

BABYFACE. (*Using his inhaler.*) Is Halloween cancelled on account of darkness?

LOCO. If it's cancelled, I will set fire to this entire island! (*To Babyface.*) Are you with me, baby brother?

BABYFACE. Absolutely not! We are orphans. That means we steal candy bars and spray paint buildings. We don't commit felonies! Not until after puberty! Them's the rules.

LOCO. You've never spray painted a building!

BABYFACE. *(Saucy.)* Have you?

LOCO. *(Serious.)* I'm wanted for murder in Honduras.

BABYFACE. *(His catch phrase.)* Yeeeeeaaah, right.

DALLAS. I stole a car once.

BABYFACE. *(Impressed.)* Really?

LOCO. I remember that!

DALLAS. Of course you do! You were in the passenger seat!

BABYFACE. Why did you steal a car, Dallas?

DALLAS. My bike had a flat tire. *(Babyface laughs admiringly.)*

LOCO. Too bad we only made it a few blocks before—

DALLAS. That fire hydrant came out of nowhere!

BABYFACE. Now look at us! Broken down here in the dark.

(Heartbroken.) Halloween can't get cancelled! It just can't!

DALLAS. Not on my watch! Ninjas!! Assemble! *(Ninja Gong SFX. A gang of YOUNG ORPHANS that are also dressed in homemade Ninja Turtle costumes burst from their hiding places in the alley. They have been hiding there since the beginning of the show so the audience should be surprised by their entrance. The little turtles explode into sight, weapons ready. Dallas snaps and they gather around him. Dallas holds a flashlight beneath his face in the dark.)*

DALLAS. Okay, my little turtles, listen up! *(The turtles hold flashlights and shine them on Dallas as he speaks.)* Tonight, we are heroes.

Tonight, we will walk among the dead. Tonight, our sewers will run red, with blood! Tonight, the sinister spirits...are real!

BABYFACE. Too scary, Dallas! *(All the flashlights go to Babyface and go back and forth between speakers.)*

DALLAS. Hey! *(Pause.)* I'm not Dallas. Tonight, I'm Donatello. *(Dallas pulls his purple mask over his eyes. The other turtles do the same with their masks.)*

BABYFACE. Too scary, Donatello! *(Using his inhaler.)* Some of us are still watching PG-rated movies out here...

LOCO *(Frustrated.)* Do you want to be little turtles your whole life? Or do you want to be tigers?

BABYFACE. Neither. We're bumble bees. Like the one buzzing by your ear!

(The turtles buzzzzzzzzzz.)

LOCO. Qué? (What?) *(In a quick panic, Loco spins and falls to the ground trying to avoid getting stung by the imaginary bee.)*

LOCO. Aye! *(The turtles laugh.)* Stop laughing! Bees are like bullets to me. Even

just one can kill me. I am deathly—

ALL. —allergic to bees. We know!

LOCO. Buzz off!

DALLAS. As I was saying, tonight is no ordinary night, turtles. Our mission? Candy. The obstacle? Darkness. But we ain't scared of the dark, are we?

ALL. No!

DALLAS. That's right. We ain't scared of nothing!

LOCO. Turtle power!

ALL. TURTLE POWER!!!

DALLAS. To the sewers!

ALL. YEAH!!!

DALLAS. Wait! Shh! Not so fast! Did you—

LOCO. *(Playing along.)* What is it, Dallas?

DALLAS. I thought I heard something... *(Suspenseful, 80's, arcade music plays as*

the gang moves closer to the noise.)

TURTLE #1. *(Spooked.)* Where?

TURTLE #2. When I get scared I sneeze! *(Turtle #2 sneezes. Babyface quickly*

takes cover using his turtle shell as a shield. Grossed out, he sprays his shell with

Lysol. Then, Turtle #2 gets sprayed.)

DALLAS. It's coming from the dumpster...

LOCO. I can feel the energy of the devil here...

BABYFACE. El diablo!

DALLAS. Stay sharp, turtles... *(They close in on the dumpster. The dumpster violently shakes and the turtles jump.)*

LOCO. Something is in there...

TURTLE #1. *(Terrified.)* I think it's a lava monster!

BABYFACE. Or worse! A flesh-eating bacteria beast! Or a mutant-sized germ!

LOCO. Someone needs to look in there...

BABYFACE. *(Spraying the dumpster with Lysol making a cross.)* El diablo!

DALLAS. *(Nervously.)* I'll do it. It's probably just a stray dog or something and we're all going to laugh about this tomorrow. Turtles, get ready. I'm going to unleash whatever beast lies within...

TURTLE #1. What if it's a lava monster?

DALLAS. Then at least it will be a quick death. *(Pause.)* Ready?

ALL. Yes/Be careful/Don't die, Dallas/I have to go to the bathroom! *(As the suspenseful arcade music builds to a crescendo, Dallas flips open the dumpster lid and there is nothing inside, as seen by quivering, fearful flashlight beams. While the lid is open, Frosty gets into place behind the dumpster.)*

BABYFACE. *(Afraid to look, quivering.)* Is it...is it...anthrax?

LOCO. It's empty!

DALLAS. See! It must have just been the volcanic winds...

TURTLE #1. No way that was just the wind!

TURTLE #2. *(Upset.)* That dumpster was moving!

DALLAS. You turtles have such over active imaginations! It was nothing! There is nothing to be afraid of!

BABYFACE. Except for Salmonella, E.coli, Pink Eye...

DALLAS. Relax! We survived the imaginary monster. *(Dallas slams the lid shut revealing a zombified Frosty, who was hiding behind the lid, looking extremely scary in a blood red strobe light. Screeching SFX. Zombie moans.)*

FROSTY. GRRR!

ALL. AHHHHHHH!!!! *(Dallas, Loco, and Frosty break character and laugh. They shake hands and bow in celebration of their successful*

prank. The little turtles are confused and shook. Power surge SFX. The power returns to the alley.)

LOCO. The power is back! *(To the volcano.)* Thank you, volcano gods.

DALLAS. Before your treat, we had to give you a trick! Happy Halloween!

BABYFACE. *(In shock.)* It was all a trick!?! I think I have shell shock!

TURTLE #2. *(He sneezes.)* I almost had a sneeze-ure!

LOCO. *(To Babyface.)* Lighten up, Mr. Clean. You need to toughen up, Babyface.

BABYFACE. Spare me...

LOCO. *(Teaching him.)* Listen, brother. Being tough is in your Honduran blood! If you're half as tough as me, you're going to do just fine in this crummy world! Nothing makes me afraid ever! I'm too tough. I ain't scared of nothing! *(Explosion SFX from inside the orphanage. Loco, severely startled, screams like a dolphin as he locks up with fear, falling over. The little turtles laugh. MISS GLADYS, 50, comes storming out of the orphanage covered in soot. Miss Gladys wears a military-like uniform with unbelievable strength. She could crack any of these little turtles' shells and they all know it. Miss Gladys only understands one thing: muscle.*

GLADYS. *(Livid.)* Who did this?

BABYFACE. What happened, Miss Gladys?

GLADYS. Who put firecrackers in my oven? *(Silence.)* My kitchen is a disaster zone! The guilty wretch will step forward now! *(Silence.)* This strategic plan of silence will fail. *(She waits.)* So be it. No trick-or-treating for ANY of you tonight!

ALL. That's not fair/No way/But we made costumes/I still have to go to the bathroom!

GLADYS. Be snapping turtles and snap it SHUT! Fall in line! *(The turtles sadly shuffle back into the orphanage grumbling except for Dallas.)*

DALLAS. Miss Gladys, you can't do this to them.

GLADYS. Dallas, retreat, before you end up with toilet and toothbrush duty.

DALLAS. They look forward to this all year—

GLADYS (*Wiping soot from her uniform.*) My laundry mountain grows higher!

DALLAS. –it’s free candy. For orphans, that’s a pretty big deal. We don’t get Christmas presents, or birthday presents, most of us don’t even know when our real birthday is! Don’t take away their Halloween...

GLADYS. A bomb breached my breakfast nook, son!

DALLAS. It’s not like there were any casualties! (*Gladys goes back into the orphanage with a snort, coughing up soot. Dallas sits on the orphanage doorstep. Frosty sits next to him and offers him some garbage to eat. Dallas declines politely.*) I know what you’re thinking, Frosty. But it wasn’t me. I didn’t blow up the kitchen. Where do you even get firecrackers in October? (*Beat.*) But I’m still going to make it up to my little turtles anyway. Somehow. (*Frosty smiles and goes back to sleep. Dallas tucks him in with newspaper blankets and goes inside.*)

SCENE 3

MOM, DAD, and JUNIOR enter. Junior is dressed as Pacman and dragging an overflowing trash bag of Halloween candy. Dad is holding his video Camcorder 2000. Mom and Dad are dressed as the colorful monsters that chase Pacman. They are all smarmy, rich, Country Club types. Junior runs into the alley ahead of them.

MOM. (*Out of breath.*) Junior! Don’t run off like that! (*Frustrated.*) Why did the nanny have to quit right before Halloween?

JUNIOR. I need more candy!

MOM. I think you’ve hit every house in Hawaii already! Where are we?

DAD. (*Holding his Camcorder 2000.*) Talk to the Camcorder, Junior.

JUNIOR. (*Annoyed.*) Daaaaddd! Again?

DAD. Junior! I bought this video Camcorder 2000 to capture family memories so be memorable! Now!

JUNIOR. You have enough already! (*Playing along with fake, burnt-out emotion.*) I love Halloween candy. So happy. Family memories.

Yay... *(Back to himself.)* But we are seriously too close to that volcano! My chocolate bars are melting!

DAD. Oh no! My Camcorder battery is getting low! We'd better get the family shot before it dies...

MOM. Oh, no, honey. Not on this side of town. I don't want to be seen on video in this horrid alleyway. What would the women at the Country Club think?

DAD. We have taken a family photo every year on Halloween since Junior here was a baby. Do you really want to break that tradition?

MOM. It's just odd. We're by a dumpster. And an orphanage. And garbage just lives on the street here...

JUNIOR. Do you think the orphans will have Pop Rocks? *(Junior knocks on the orphanage door obnoxiously.)* Wait. Am I getting a different colored little brother?

MOM. *(To Dad.)* Honey, should I be wearing pearls in a neighborhood like this?

DAD. *(Gunfire SFX.)* Probably not. *(Beat.)* Okay, it's family photo time! *(Mom and Junior groan.)*

MOM. Wait! I have an idea! We can use this orphanage! If we get the sign in the background of our family photo we can make it seem like we were volunteering...

DAD. You want to volunteer here?

MOM. Don't you see? Everyone at the Country Club will think we spent Halloween volunteering with orphans on the east end of the city. Then—

DAD. *(Excited.)* —then maybe we can get out of volunteering Christmas Eve at that soup kitchen with those dirty hobos! *(Frosty jerks awake, causing Mom to scream, and then he goes back to sleep under his newspaper quilt, unbothered.)*

MOM. Exactly! Volunteering with the homeless ruins my Christmas every year!

JUNIOR. Then just blow it off! *(Junior knocks again, even more obnoxiously than before.)*

MOM. We can't!

DAD. It's very complicated...

MOM. Everyone at the Country Club has to volunteer...

DAD. It's the worst part about being rich...

MOM. So, we're going to fake it!

JUNIOR. *(Pause.)* Or you could actually volunteer...

DAD. Good one, Junior! *(Looking at the camera.)* The battery is blinking red. That means we have five minutes left! I just need to set up the Camcorder somewhere...

(Dallas answers the obnoxious knock from Junior.)

JUNIOR. Trick or treat!

DALLAS. Trick.

JUNIOR. No, you're supposed to have a treat. You know, candy...

DALLAS. This is an orphanage. You think we have extra candy to just give away?

DAD. Perfect! Orphan, can we ask you a favor?

DALLAS. All favors cost ten dollars around here...

MOM. Oh, boy. Your parents sure dodged a bullet with you...

DAD. We just need a family video taken of the three of us. Before my battery dies.

(Frosty crosses downstage to look through a trash can.)

JUNIOR. Maybe we can ask the dirty hobo for help...

DALLAS. Leave Frosty alone. He doesn't speak. Give me the camera. What button do I push?

DAD. It's actually a video Camcorder 2000 and you don't push any buttons. Just get a short video of us together as a family waving and make sure to get the orphanage sign in the background. Got all that?

DALLAS. Sure, do. Stand here. Just so... *(Dallas lines up the family in such a way that Frosty can photo bomb their precious family photo unnoticed.)*

DAD. Wave everyone. Look memorable!

MOM. And charitable! *(The family waves. Frosty ruins the video by exposing his heart covered boxer shorts in the background. While the family is distracted, Frosty also switches out Junior's candy bag with a full trash bag that looks exactly like it.)*

DALLAS. I think we got a memorable shot for sure! What do you think Frosty? Do you believe we got the shot? *(Frosty takes out his boombox*

and plays the lyrics: “Don’t stop believing, hold on to that feeling,” from Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believing”.) Yeah, I believe we got it too!

DAD. *(Taking back the camera.)* So...Frosty. He can’t speak?

DALLAS. Nope. Doesn’t know sign language neither. He just uses that boombox to talk for him. *(Beat.)* Now, for my fee.

DAD. Fee?

DALLAS. Ten dollars. For the favor.

DAD. You were serious about that?

DALLAS. Yeah, that or a new oven. Whichever you have on you.

MOM. Oh, just give him the cash. We can write it off as a charity case on Tax Day!

DAD. That’s why I love you, Muffin! *(To Dallas.)* Do you take American Express?

(He laughs at his own joke.)

DALLAS. Your dad joke just got declined... *(Dallas snaps his fingers and Loco enters with an arcade game pixel toy gun that the family treats as a real gun.)*

DAD. Who is this?

DALLAS. We call him Loco. Short for Loco Motive.

MOM. Why?

LOCO. Because I’m Spanish crazy—

DALLAS. Loco.

LOCO. –and I always have a reason to kill.

DALLAS. Motive.

LOCO. *(Crazy whisper.)* Loco-Motive...

DAD. Put that gun away, young man!

LOCO. *(Firing into the air an arcade ray gun blast SFX.)* Tu no me conoces, tonto! *(You don’t know me, fool!)* *(Loud locomotive train whistle video game SFX. The family cowers behind Dad.)*

MOM. Please!

DAD. How can we work this out?

DALLAS. I’ll give you two options. Option one. I keep your camera—

DAD. It’s actually a video Camcorder 2000 with—

LOCO. *(Firing into the air again.)* Silencio! *(Silence!)*

DALLAS. Option two. I let my associate fire away, and then we feed you to Frosty.

(Thunder. Frosty plays the lyrics: "And I'm hungry like the wolf," from Duran Duran's song Hungry Like the Wolf on his boombox as he sways in his shopping cart.)

DAD. Keep the Camcorder 2000, it's yours!

JUNIOR. Just don't eat us!

DALLAS. Fine. But you still owe us ten dollars!

LOCO. *(Pause.)* Each! *(Loco fires the arcade blast SFX into the air again and the family exits in a hurry. Game Over SFX.)* Vamos! *(Let's go!)* *(The boys laugh as the family runs off and they nod to Frosty who plays the lyrics: "You've been hit by, you've been struck by, a smooth criminal," from Michael Jackson's Smooth Criminal. He does a proud Michael-esque spin celebrating his candy caper. Then bows.)*

SCENE 4

LOCO. The smooth criminals strike again!

DALLAS. *(To Frosty.)* You know half that candy is going to my little turtles, right?

(Frosty silently protests in frustration and then nods in acknowledgement. Dallas gives him the Leonardo mask (the blue ninja turtle) as a thank you. Frosty smiles.)

LOCO. You saved Halloween!

DALLAS. The candy part at least. Thanks for the crazy Mexican chaos.

LOCO. *(Correcting him.)* Honduran chaos. And de nada (you're welcome). *(Beat.)* Game over for Pacman!

DALLAS. Wow! Look at this camera...

LOCO. *(Mocking Dad.)* Uh, it's actually a video Camcorder 2000...and it's worth a lot I'll bet. Maybe if we give this to Miss Gladys she will let us all go trick-or-treating.

DALLAS. Maybe we should keep it.

LOCO. Keep it? What for?

DALLAS. That family probably has tons of pictures and videos of their dumb kid. Every Halloween, every Easter...they capture his childhood. Nobody does that for us dumb orphans.

LOCO. Not true! I have a mugshot somewhere...

DALLAS. *(Looking through the lens.)* Maybe we should start taking video of all the orphans here so they have some childhood memories too...

LOCO. You actually want to remember being an orphan? *Estas loco.* *(You are crazy.)* *(Miss Gladys enters. She has a bottle of bleach spray and wears rubber gloves.)*

GLADYS. Who was at the door, Dallas?

DALLAS. Some kid. Wanted candy.

GLADYS. Report inside now. And keep the kitchen clean, I just bleached away the firecracker mess. *(She sprays the bottle in his direction to get his attention.)* You hear me?

LOCO. What's on the dinner menu tonight? *(Hopeful)* *Sopa De Frijoles y arroz con pollo?*

GLADYS. Peanut butter and bread. And all the knives are dirty so use your finger.

LOCO. Mantequilla de mani? Orta vez? *(Peanut butter? Again?)* That's what we have every night!

GLADYS. Quit complaining. Put some salsa on it.

LOCO. *(Excited.)* Do we have salsa?

GLADYS. No.

LOCO. I can't wait to have a real mother one day that will cook a huge family dinner for me. With so much food, we have extra to give away...*(Frosty perks up.)*

DALLAS. Yeah. *(Sincerely.)* Or just someone to throw the baseball around with in the backyard. Little stuff, you know. *(Toughening back up.)* But I'd settle for a dad that would dive in front of a crazy Mexican with a gun for me.

LOCO. I'm Honduran! *(To Gladys)* A hungry Honduran! *(Frosty throws Loco*

piece of candy. Arcade style 'Level Up' SFX. Loco goes back inside the orphanage

with a smile and a nod to Frosty.)

GLADYS. Water my flowers before you come back in, Dallas. That's an order.

(Loco pops his head back outside.)

LOCO. Let them die! I hate those flowers! No me gusta! (I don't like it!)

GLADYS. Why?

LOCO. Flowers have pollen. Pollen brings bees!

GLADYS. Nonsense, Loco. *(Lying.)* There are no bees in Hawaii!

DALLAS. Is that true? That can't be true. Or is that one of those strange facts that sounds crazy but turns out to be true?

GLADYS. Harmless honey bees...maybe...

LOCO. A bee is a bee to me! One sting, and I'm a goner. Your stupid flowers will look beautiful... at my funeral!

GLADYS. *(Unbothered.)* They are beautiful, aren't they? *(To Dallas.)* Water them!

(Thunder SFX. It begins to drizzle.) At ease, Private! Provisions have been

provided...by Mother Nature! *(Thunder SFX. Gladys and Loco hurry back inside*

arguing in Spanish. Gladys leaves the bleach spray behind in her hurry to get out of

the rain. Frosty offers Dallas a newspaper to protect him from the rain. Dallas

accepts. Dallas put some newspaper over the camera too. He reads one of the newspapers.)

DALLAS. *(To Frosty.)* Look here. Last week's headline. More news about the war in Grenada. My dad is fighting in that war right now. Where is your dad, Frosty?

(Frosty plays the lyrics: "Another one bites the dust," from QUEEN'S Another One Bites the Dust.) He's dead? *(Frosty nods.)* Not my dad. He's a hero. Fighting for our country. *(Frosty rolls his eyes and sits for another nap under his newspaper quilt.)* He's going to come back a war hero and take me away from the contagious crime of Emerald Island. I just know it. *(Beat)* You know, most of us orphans pretend we don't care. But we all want a family more than anything. Even a crummy family would do. But we just get stuck sometimes. Stuck where we

don't belong. And I admit, with no one looking out for me, no one yelling at me, no one to show a report card to, I got a little far away from innocent. But hey, we are all bad...in someone else's story. (*The rain stops. Dallas checks on Frosty and puts a few newspapers over him to tuck him in. He sees Frosty's boombox and moves it out of the rain and, in doing so, turns it on accidentally. Radio tuning SFX. We hear President Ronald Reagan addressing the nation. The war in Grenada is over.*)

REAGAN. (*V.O.*) After a time of violence, the fighting in Grenada has come to an end. The United States military has done a fine job making our world a safer place, and tonight, our boys will be on their way back home...

DALLAS. (*Ecstatic.*) Frosty, did you hear that!?! (*Frosty wakes up violently.*) The war is over! My dad is coming home!! He's going to be back to rescue me! I knew this day would come! I knew it! I'm finally going to have a family! I'm finally going to have my own room, all kinds of food, someone to protect me from crazy Hondurans with guns! (*Pause.*) I'll have a home! (*Beat.*) I've got to pack!

SCENE 5

Dallas beams with a smile and runs inside the orphanage but as he gets to the door, all the little turtles burst out into the alley with excitement.

DALLAS. Did you guys hear too? The war is over!

BABYFACE. What war?

DALLAS. President Raegan just—

LOCO. Forget about that!

BABYFACE. Miss Gladys said we could go trick-or-treating!

DALLAS. How?

BABYFACE. She caught the kitchen bomber! Found red hairs at the crime scene!

LOCO. It was Molly! Do you believe it! She's at large!

DALLAS. The new girl? She has got guts.

LOCO. Let's go, everyone! Before all the Pop Rocks are gone! (*Gladys pops her head out.*)

GLADYS. Hault, Babyface! Your sugar high is being scrubbed.

BABYFACE. Scrubbed? (*Devastated.*) As in cancelled?

LOCO. Why?

GLADYS. I almost forgot his interview this evening!

LOCO. Interview? For adoption?

GLADYS. No, for McDonald's! Of course, adoption! The rest of you, march on!

BABYFACE. But it's Halloween! (*Loco pulls Babyface aside.*)

LOCO. Don't fight her. She's going to force you to go. She's got orders.

BABYFACE. But—

LOCO. Just go. When you get there do a bunch of weird stuff to freak them out and scare them away.

BABYFACE. Like what?

LOCO. You obsess about every disease and germ, right? (*Giving him an idea by scratching his arm.*) Maybe you have something contagious...

BABYFACE. You're an evil genius. I can use red make up and fake rubella! I've always wanted to fake rubella! Forget dinner theater. This is going to be *disease* theater!

LOCO. You'll be back for candy in no time. Go, and don't forget your inhaler, Shakespeare. (*Gladys and Babyface go inside the orphanage. To the turtles.*) He'll catch up.

DALLAS. So will I. Get going before we lose power again.

LOCO. Are you sure?

DALLAS. (*Long pause.*) I'm right behind you... (*Loco leads the gang of turtles offstage into the mist. Dallas speaks to the Camcorder 2000.*)

Hey, turtles. It's me, Dallas. I hope you had a great time trick or treating tonight. But, by the time you're seeing this tape, I'll be gone. I'm going to the boat yard, right now, to meet my dad's ship so I can be there when his platoon docks. (*Smiling.*) That's right. He's coming back...I didn't want to ruin Halloween so I'm going to say my goodbyes here. Little turtles, there's a little extra candy in a trash bag behind the water heater. Make sure Frosty gets it. Babyface, you'll grow out of that germaphobe

thing, I just know it. You've got a bright future kid, because you have a brother who cares. I wish I was so lucky. That brings me to Loco. You're in charge now. I'm really going to miss your crazy *Honduran* chaos. We were the smoothest criminals Emerald Island has ever seen. No matter what, I will always have your back. *(Dallas walks over to Miss Gladys' flowers and pours the bleach cleaning solution she left behind all over them. The flowers wither and die. No more bees.)* Turtle power, right? *(Pause. Beat.)* But I have the real thing on the way now, the dream, a family...and I hope you understand why I have to go. It's not like I have a choice. My dad needs me now. You don't turn your back on family... *(MOLLY, 12, a mousy, red-headed, science geek pops out of one of the trash cans.)*

MOLLY. And yet, that is exactly what you are doing, dork!

DALLAS. Molly?

MOLLY. Shh! I don't want Miss Gladys to know I'm hiding out here.

DALLAS. Word on the street is that you are the one that blew up the kitchen.

MOLLY. I was testing out a new invention when...KABOOM! It was an accident, sort of.

DALLAS. Oh, yeah, you're the science girl. You sure know how to make an impression on your first week as an orphan.

MOLLY. I should have strapped an explosive device on you instead!

DALLAS. That's sinister.

MOLLY. Not sinister. Science.

DALLAS. Why me?

MOLLY. You are standing here talking to that contraption—

DALLAS. Video Camcorder 2000.

MOLLY. —and you don't realize what a hypocrite you are!

DALLAS. What?

MOLLY. “You don't turn your back on family.” That's what you said!

DALLAS. That's good advice!

MOLLY. Then why don't you follow it?

DALLAS. Huh?

MOLLY. *(She circles him, interrogation style.)* What do you think you have *here*, dummy?

DALLAS. I have nothing here. None of us do.

MOLLY. Not true. Are *you* not the one that takes the little ones trick-or-treating every Halloween?

DALLAS. Yes, but—

MOLLY. Is it not *you* who fights for them when Miss Gladys gets a little crazy?

DALLAS. I lose every time. She bench pressed me once.

MOLLY. And, I'm quite sure that it was *you* making all that racket with Loco tonight giving those kids a Halloween thrill...

DALLAS. So what?

MOLLY. So you have more of a family here than you know. *(Pause.)* Just make sure you know what you're leaving...

DALLAS. Stick to science, new girl. Not social work.

MOLLY. You're sure not who they said you were...

DALLAS. What does that mean?

MOLLY. I asked around about you. You have quite the reputation! Some people called you their rock. But I don't see a rock. I see Francium. An unstable isotope!

DALLAS. Maybe I'm sick of all the pressure, okay? Did you ever think about that, Lady Einstein? You think it's easy taking care of all these little turtles? *(Long pause.)* I've never been a turtle! Not even for one day! Maybe it's my time now...

MOLLY. Fair enough. *(Pause.)* We don't have anything here. You're correct about that. But at least we have you. *(Pause.)* Had you. And take it from me, someone who knows how to make a bomb. Losing you...will be a truly devastating blow. *(Pause, romantic twinge.)* For all of us.

DALLAS. Maybe. *(Waving the newspaper.)* But my dad—

MOLLY. What dad? He left.

DALLAS. To serve his country! He's a soldier! It was his duty!

MOLLY. It was his duty to be your dad first!

DALLAS. My dad is a real hero. He is keeping us safe.

MOLLY. I see the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, Donatello. *(Pause.)* We'll miss you around here, you unstable isotope. *(Police*

lights flash. Police siren SFX. Dallas steps in front of Molly to protect her out of instinct. She notices.)

SCENE 6

A hefty COP escorts a thrashing TIGER, 14, a rebellious teen in a leather jacket, to the orphanage. Cop knocks on the orphanage door while Dallas and Molly are still.

DALLAS. Is that...Tiger?

MOLLY. Who?

DALLAS. Tiger. He was an orphan here for a decade. Ran away a year ago. He was my best friend. *(Gladys answers Cop's knock. Molly keeps out of sight from Gladys.)*

GLADYS. What is it, officer?

COP. Miss Gladys, you're not going to believe this! We found him!

GLADYS. Tiger? Can it really be you?

COP. He was living in a burnt-out car by the beach with a stray dog.

TIGER. *(Thrashing.)* Don't you touch my dog!

GLADYS. I see the tiger can still roar! Welcome back to headquarters.

(Gladys smacks Tiger across the back of the head. Then awkwardly hugs him.)

Get your toothbrush and report to the toilets! *(Cop escorts Tiger inside the orphanage.*

Gladys follows.)

DALLAS. I thought for sure he was dead...

MOLLY. I guess he got lucky.

DALLAS. Doesn't look like it to me. He's back here, isn't he?

MOLLY. It doesn't matter where you are. *(Molly pulls a flower out of the trash*

can.) Bloom where you're planted, right?

DALLAS. Huh?

MOLLY. Bloom where you're planted. If this flower can look beautiful inside a trash can, you can be beautiful at this orphanage. Yes?

DALLAS. I don't know.

MOLLY. *(Pause.)* You're the type that can be beautiful anywhere... *(Tense, romantic pause. After a slightly awkward moment, Molly exits offstage, but not before placing the beautiful flower near Gladys' dead flowers. Suddenly, Tiger bursts out of the orphanage door and tries to escape. Cop is right behind him and tackles him to the floor. Dallas falls into the shadows.)*

COP. Freeze, punk!

TIGER. Get off me!

COP. C'mon kid, my shift has been over for an hour...

TIGER. I want my dog! Get off of me! You can't keep me from my dog!

COP. Slow down, hot shot. Your dog's been taken by the state of Hawaii.

TIGER. What does that mean?

COP. That means that you should stay here.

TIGER. No! *(Tiger breaks free. He grabs Cop's nightstick and has a shot.)*

COP. Easy, kid. *(Cop stands up slowly.)*

TIGER. I just want my puppy.

COP. Give me the nightstick and I will take you to see your dog.

TIGER. You promise?

COP. Yes. Nice and slow. *(Tiger gives him the weapon. Cop handcuffs Tiger to the dumpster.)*

TIGER. What is this?

COP. You're a flight risk.

TIGER. What about my dog?

COP. Your dog's dead, kid.

TIGER. What?

COP. She was a stray. These things happen.

TIGER. *(Livid.)* You lied to me.

COP. Sure did. *(He moves away.)* Good luck finding a family, kid.

TIGER. Ten years! I was here ten years and no family came along.

COP. Kid—

TIGER. So, I made my own family—

COP. Make me a pizza while you're at it.

TIGER. —and you took that from me! You broke everything I built.

COP. You don't need a dog kid, you need a dad.

TIGER. (*Testing the cuffs.*) Tell me, what's my crime?

COP. Kid, stop trying to act tough. You're about as harmless as my daughter's floppy bunny doll. (*Calling inside, with a knock.*) Miss Gladys!

TIGER. I should have bashed your skull in when I had the chance!

COP. Keep it up, tough guy. We both know you wouldn't squash me if I was a roach. You're harmless! And you'll always be harmless! (*Gladys enters.*) He's not going to run again, ma'am. Here's the key. He's your problem now. Keep the cuffs. You may need 'em. (*To Tiger.*) If you run away again, I'm taking *you* to the pound!

TIGER. You will pay for this!

COP. Doubt it. (*Cop exits. Tiger holds up his hand waiting to be uncuffed. Thunder SFX. It begins to rain again.*)

GLADYS. I'll be back to uncuff you when you learn some manners.

TIGER. I'm going to get sick if you leave me out here in the rain!

GLADYS. Good! Because I've been worried sick about you for a year! (*Gladys opens her umbrella calling inside.*) Babyface, let's go.

BABYFACE. (*Coming out.*) Go where?

GLADYS. Your interview.

BABYFACE. I can't. I feel sick. I think I have rubella.

GLADYS. Listen to me, Babyface. An adoption interview is a shot at a home!

BABYFACE. I got a home already.

GLADYS. No. You don't. So, put a smile on. Now!

BABYFACE. But—

GLADYS. Bah! Dallas, you're on little turtle duty while we're gone.

TIGER. Dallas!?

DALLAS. (*Coming forward.*) Actually, I was just heading out...

GLADYS. Well, now you're not. (*Gladys exits with Babyface in hand. Tiger spots Dallas.*)

TIGER. Dallas! You're a sight for sore eyes. Cut me loose! (*Frosty hands Dallas a newspaper to keep his head dry.*)

DALLAS. Thanks, Frosty.

TIGER. Frosty! I see you're still doing terrible in life. (*Frosty gets out his stereo and plays the lyrics: 'I get by with a little help from my friends,' from Joe Cocker's A Little Help From My Friends as he hands a newspaper cover to Tiger.*) Yeah, yeah. Thanks, man. (*After a moment, Frosty attack hugs Tiger and ruffles his hair so happy he's back alive.*)

Dallas, find me something sharp in the trash so I can pick this lock.

(*Dallas finds a needle and kicks it to Tiger. Tiger picks the handcuff lock easily.*) Thanks. So, how's it been around here? Still eating PB&J every day?

DALLAS. We ran out of jelly six months ago.

TIGER. Just peanut butter now? Brutal.

DALLAS. And we get less. Half a sandwich per meal. But we've learned to share. Had to, to survive.

TIGER. I hate sharing more than anything on this entire island. It's why I left.

DALLAS. (*Pause.*) Where have you been all this time?

TIGER. I was with family.

DALLAS. Yeah, I overheard. Sorry about your dog. (*Tiger looks away concealing sadness.*)

TIGER. (*Pause.*) Listen Dallas, I didn't mean to leave you high and dry...

DALLAS. I just hope it was worth it.

TIGER. It was, I was free! No one telling me what to do. No more interviews, no more rejection, no more sharing anything! I was leading the life!

DALLAS. Really?

TIGER. No. Not really. (*Beat.*) But what I had was my own.

DALLAS. When I leave, I know it will be worth it.

TIGER. What? Where are you going?

DALLAS. To see *my* family.

TIGER. Have you been adopted, Dallas? Finally!

DALLAS. My dad is coming home from fighting overseas tomorrow.

TIGER. You're kidding me, right?

DALLAS. No, President Reagan said it on the radio and everything.

TIGER. No, I mean about your dad.

DALLAS. What about my dad?

TIGER. You really drank the Kool-Aid, didn't you?

DALLAS. What are you talking about?

TIGER. *(Pause.)* I can't tell you.

DALLAS. Why not?

TIGER. Because it's messed up if I do. You don't tell a little kid Santa isn't real.

DALLAS. I'm no little kid.

TIGER. But you still believe in Santa, so to speak...

DALLAS. Just spit it out.

TIGER. Dallas—You've been lied to...

DALLAS. Lied to about what?

TIGER. Your dad. He's not a soldier.

DALLAS. Yes, he is! What do you know about it?

TIGER. Dallas, think about it. What's more likely, that your dad is some war hero, or that Miss Gladys made that up to make you feel better?

DALLAS. You're lying...

TIGER. I wish I was. But I'm not. Gladys told me my dad was an astronaut. Turns out he left my mom when she was nine months pregnant with me. And then he overdosed in a motel the day I was born...

DALLAS. I don't believe you...

TIGER. It's the truth.

DALLAS. Shut up!

TIGER. Hey, man. Go see for yourself. You drive. I remember you stole that car.

DALLAS. So?

TIGER. So, what are you still doing here? Answers are out there.

(Pause.) Everything's out there.

DALLAS. It looks like 'everything' ate you up and spit you out.

TIGER. Look at you. Tough guy in the middle.

DALLAS. The middle?

TIGER. It's where you live. In the middle. Because that's where you can't fall off.

DALLAS. Better than flying off the edge.

TIGER. Is it?

DALLAS. I guess I'll find out. *(Dallas goes inside the orphanage but not before quickly handcuffing Tiger back to the dumpster and dropping the needle just out of his reach.)*

TIGER. Dude!

SCENE 7

Gunshot SFX. Mobsters, BIG DADDY VALENTINE, 40s, and his pregnant wife TRIxie VALENTINE, 20s, enter. Big Daddy is an aging mobster with a gambling problem who has been shot in the shoulder. Trixie is a beautiful dingbat with a mean streak, wearing an apple sized diamond ring and doing makeshift surgery on Big Daddy's shoulder as the scene goes on. Even though Big Daddy is an imposing figure, the much smaller Trixie quite clearly has no problem standing up to him. Tiger stays out of sight, still handcuffed.

BIG DADDY. *(Catching his breath.)* I think we lost them, Trixie.

TRIXIE. That was too close! Big Daddy! You've been shot!

BIG DADDY. *(Sucking up the pain.)* Third time this week. Bad luck, babe. **TRIXIE.** Let me see. And this wasn't bad luck. Those people have been after you for months! This is getting out of hand!

BIG DADDY. They'll forget about me soon enough, Trixie.

TRIXIE. Who are they exactly?

BIG DADDY. My friends. From the mafia.

TRIXIE. Some friends you got!

BIG DADDY. I owe them money. They can be impatient. I totally understand. I would do the same thing in their position. It's a mafia thing...

TRIXIE. How much money?

BIG DADDY. Don't worry about it. (*Trixie bumps Big Daddy's wound, intentionally hurting him.*) Eh, oh!

TRIXIE. Try again. How much do we owe?

BIG DADDY. I'm ashamed to say. (*Trixie stops surgery, takes off her enormous diamond wedding ring with bloody hands, and offers it to Big Daddy.*)

TRIXIE. This should cover it.

BIG DADDY. (*Declining to take the ring.*) That's sweet of you, Trix, but this wouldn't even cover the down payment. (*She puts her ring back on and continues the surgery.*)

TRIXIE. What? What kind of a hole have you dug for us, Big Daddy?

BIG DADDY. We're in deep, babe.

TRIXIE. Have you been gambling again?

BIG DADDY. Don't worry. I have a solution all worked out.

TRIXIE. It had better be brilliant! (*Pointing to her stomach.*) We've got a brat on the way!

BIG DADDY. It is. Brace yourself. (*Pause.*) We're going to steal the Paradise Emerald.

TRIXIE. (*Laughing.*) That's a riot, doll! But what's the *real* plan. (*Big Daddy doesn't laugh.*) One of those bullets must have hit the thinking part of your brain!

BIG DADDY. We may be getting older, but we are still the same dastardly delinquents we've always been.

TRIXIE. I'm about to pop like a balloon, you have a dozen bullets in you, and you want to steal the most protected thing on this entire island? We're not exactly in our prime anymore.

BIG DADDY. Babe—

TRIXIE. No. Just no! The Paradise Emerald is protected by a security guard, a laser field, and one the most elaborate safe doors known to man! It can't be done!

BIG DADDY. Where there is a will, there's a way, my little meatball. (*Big Daddy winces in pain as Trixie works on his injury.*)

TRIXIE. We need to clean out your wound, my little meat head. (*Pointing to the orphanage.*) I wonder if this place can help us.

TIGER. *(Leaning into the light.)* I can help you. *(Big Daddy and Trixie are caught off guard and the sudden movement causes Trixie to really hurt Big Daddy.)*

BIG DADDY. Ahh! Beat it, kid.

TRIXIE. Help us, how?

TIGER. You need someone that can help you steal the emerald...

BIG DADDY. *(Angry.)* Curiosity killed the cat!

TRIXIE. Calm down! Your aorta will pop!

BIG DADDY. He heard our plan! What if he's a stool pigeon? Hand me my gun!

TIGER. I'm no dirty rat. I have a plan, too. For us to help each other.

BIG DADDY. How?

TIGER. I'm going to help you steal the emerald tonight.

BIG DADDY. *(Getting impatient from the pain.)* How's that?

TIGER. I can pick a lock. I've been cracking safes since I was in diapers.

BIG DADDY. Prove it.

TIGER. Kick me that needle. *(Trixie does and Tiger picks the lock setting himself free.)* See?

BIG DADDY. Okay. You've got some skills, kid. I'll give you that. But handcuffs and a bank safe are two very different tamales. Go home to your mother now.

TIGER. She's dead. I'm an orphan. They call me Tiger.

TRIXIE. I can't get this bullet out! *(Tiger goes over to Big Daddy and uses the needle to fish out the bullet. Big Daddy grinds his teeth to bare the pain.)*

TIGER. Got it!

BIG DADDY. Thanks, kid.

TIGER. You need me to help you steal the emerald, and I need a family. Can we help each other or not?

BIG DADDY. I don't know. No offense, but I hate kids.

TRIXIE. *(Holding her baby bump.)* Me too.

TIGER. *(Sincerely.)* Listen, I know this is weird. But I swear I'm worth it. I have lost two families in my life and I'm not going to lose another one. I will be a valuable asset, I swear. I WILL get you that gemstone.

TRIXIE. We hear you. Give us just one second, Jaguar.

TIGER. It's Tiger.

TRIXIE. Whatever. *(Trixie pulls Big Daddy downstage.)* This may seem crazy but what do we have to lose? Getting that emerald is going to be dangerous. Let this kid take all the risks for us. And let's face it. Neither one of us is smart enough to crack that safe...

BIG DADDY. Look at him. He can't pull this off. This is a professional job. He'll get killed.

TRIXIE. What do we care if he dies? We need this money and maybe, just maybe, the little kitty cat can pull this off! And if he can't, meh.

BIG DADDY. You're going to make a great mother.

TRIXIE. I know. Rawr! *(Big Daddy and Trixie affectionately rub noses.)*

TRIXIE. *(To Tiger.)* Panther! Today is your lucky day.

TIGER. It's Tiger, actually.

TRIXIE. We've decided to take you up on your offer.

BIG DADDY. You help us snatch the emerald and we'll let you board our sinking ship.

TRIXIE. *(Laughing.)* It's true, we're going down fast! *(Big Daddy and Trixie affectionately rub noses again.)*

TIGER. It's a deal! All families are a little messy, I guess.

BIG DADDY. Whatever you say, kid.

TRIXIE. But you have to do everything we say. Got it? Things like armed robbery, kidnapping, foot rubs, and eventually, babysitting. Lots and lots of babysitting...

BIG DADDY. Just know this kid. If you can't follow orders, there will be severe consequences.

TIGER. I understand. Once you're in, you're in. Like the mafia.

TRIXIE/BD. Exactly!

TIGER. I'm in. Let's steal that emerald!

TRIXIE. Calm down, Cougar. Before we do anything, we need to get our hands on the bank blueprints. We're not going in blind.

BIG DADDY. I know how to get those...Where's my pistol? *(Miss Gladys and Babyface return.)*

BIG DADDY. Let's high tail it out of here.

TRIXIE. Shake a leg! (*Big Daddy and Trixie exit with Tiger.*)

SCENE 8

GLADYS. (*To Babyface, exposing his fake red arm.*) That was a nasty prank you played! You probably scared that couple to death with your fake Nutella!

BABYFACE. (*Correcting her.*) Rubella! But I never want to see them again!

GLADYS. Why not?

BABYFACE. They only want me!

GLADYS. They already have two kids of their own.

BABYFACE. Not my problem. (*Babyface motions for Miss Gladys to come down to his level. He uses both hands to squish her face ensuring her attention.*)

BABYFACE. I told you, doll. Me and my brother Loco are a package deal. A set. It's the both of us adopted or nothing at all. Got it?

GLADYS. (*Smooshed.*) Babyface...

BABYFACE. I'm going to catch up with the turtles. (*Babyface exits.*
Dallas comes

out.)

DALLAS. Is it true?

GLADYS. Where is Tiger?

DALLAS. Is it true?

GLADYS. (*Picking up the cuffs.*) He'll be back. You'll see.

DALLAS. Don't ignore me!

GLADYS. Is what true, Dallas?

DALLAS. About my dad.

GLADYS. What about your dad?

DALLAS. Is he a soldier or not?

GLADYS. Oh. Um. It's possible...

DALLAS. You told me my dad was fighting in Grenada.

GLADYS. Dallas—

DALLAS. Why did you lie to me?

GLADYS. Sometimes when a kid is crying you tell them what they want to hear.

(Very loud thunder SFX.) Like when they're scared of thunder. You tell them it's

angels bowling.

DALLAS. I've been waiting for my father to come home from war like a fool!

GLADYS. I gave you something to hope for. I thought it was a good mission plan.

DALLAS. False hope is no hope.

GLADYS. I'm not so strong with all the mushy stuff. I avoid it. There's the truth. Hate me for it if you want, but you were too young for the truth.

DALLAS. Don't leave it there...

GLADYS. Fine. I guess you're old enough now. *(Pause)* Your dad and mom were too young. Way too young. In high school. They didn't want you ruining their lives. And you know the odds of someone your age getting adopted are slim to none...

DALLAS. I guess Tiger was right. If I'm not going to find a family here, I might as well go out and look for one myself! *(Dallas runs offstage. Music plays. Rain and thunder.)*

GLADYS. Dallas! Dallas!! Come back! That's an order!

SCENE 9

Dallas runs in the rain. Music continues. He finds another darkened corner of Emerald Island to rest. Gunshot SFX. Dallas takes cover. Tiger, Big Daddy and Trixie enter in a hurry. Big Daddy has been shot in the other shoulder. Trixie is carrying a rolled-up tube that contains the blueprints to the bank.

BIG DADDY. My other shoulder!

TRIXIE. *(Waving around the tube.)* Ha! We got it!

BIG DADDY. Can someone dig this bullet out of me please? *(Tiger does.)*

TIGER. That was intense!

TRIXIE. You done good, kid.

TIGER. What's in the tube?

BIG DADDY. The bank blueprints. Now we can see what they don't want us to see. Now, we can be prepared.

TRIXIE. *(Looking at the blueprints.)* Uh, oh. We got a problem here!

BIG DADDY. What now?

TRIXIE. Bank security is tighter than I expected. We're going to need a bigger team! We may need to adopt the entire orphanage for this job!

TIGER. What? No. I can get the emerald alone.

TRIXIE. No. You can't.

TIGER. I said I can!

BIG DADDY. Don't be stupid...

TIGER. We don't need to add any more people to this family! *(Dallas comes forward.)*

DALLAS. I disagree.

TIGER. Dallas, what are you doing here? *(Pause.)* Let me guess, you found out the truth, didn't you?

DALLAS. I'm trying out the edge.

TIGER. Not here! This is my thing I got going on here!

BIG DADDY. Who's this?

DALLAS. I'm Dallas.

BIG DADDY. I killed a guy in Dallas once.

DALLAS. How nice for you.

TRIXIE. What do you want, kid?

DALLAS. To join your family. And to play catch once in a while in the backyard.

BIG DADDY. I love baseball! I'm a big fan of the Cubs!

TRIXIE. Oh, brother. Another one here! What are we? Orphan magnets?

TIGER. We don't need him.

BIG DADDY. Hold on a second. We brought Tiger along because he can crack the bank safe. What can you do, orphan number two?

TIGER. Nothing.

DALLAS. I can drive.

TRIXIE. (*Intrigued.*) We always need a good getaway driver!

BIG DADDY. I'm assuming you can reach the pedals and I'm assuming you can go faster than a turtle.

DALLAS. Well, I'm assuming you're smart and will let me prove my worth.

BIG DADDY. I like this kid.

TRIXIE. What was your name? El Paso? Houston? Austin!

DALLAS. Dallas.

TRIXIE. (*To Big Daddy.*) Even if we use Fort Worth, we still need two more!

DALLAS. Leave that to me!

TIGER. What are you doing, Dallas?

DALLAS. I can put together a team. I know a few people...

TIGER. You need to go. Find your own scumbags! These are mine!

TRIXIE. I'm with mountain lion. San Antonio looks too weak. (*She starts to push him out.*)

DALLAS. No. Wait! Let me audition!

ALL. Audition?

DALLAS. Let me and my team have a shot at the emerald tonight.

TIGER. Dallas, you don't know what you're saying!

DALLAS. We used to be the greatest team, Tiger. Let's work together again!

TIGER. This is my thing! Mine! You don't belong here! (*SCUMBAG TONY, 30s, enters. Cop can be doubled as Scumbag Tony.*)

BIG DADDY. Tony! You're late!

TONY. It's complicated...

BIG DADDY. No, it's not. It's real simple. You owe me money...

TONY. I know. And you know that I've been working on it—

BIG DADDY. For almost a year now. I'm all out of patience. Where's my dough?

TONY. If, if, if...you could just...give me a little more time—

BIG DADDY. More time? You've got some nerve to come here asking for more time! Time's up, Tony. Hand over my dough. (*Scumbag Tony hands Big Daddy cash.*) What's this?

TONY. It's all I could steal plus everything under my mattress. And I even sold a kidney!

BIG DADDY. This isn't even half!

TONY. Listen, it's all I have right now. But—

BIG DADDY. Tony, Tony, Tony. What am I going to do with you? You're like family to me...

TONY. I am your family! I'm your cousin...

BIG DADDY. And yet you missed a deadline. *(Beat.)* You know what happens next, don't you? *(Big Daddy takes out his pistol.)*

TONY. No! You can't whack me! I got kids! I will get you the money, I swear on my family!

BIG DADDY. Cousin! Don't be ridiculous. I'm not going to kill you. *(Pause, looking at Dallas.)* He is. *(Trixie pushes Dallas forward.)* You wanted an audition right, kid? Here it is! Blow this bum away! *(Gun loading SFX. He hands the pistol to Dallas.)* It's time to see if you have what it takes to be in this family.

DALLAS. What kind of family is this exactly?

BIG DADDY. *Thee* family. La Cosa Nostra!

DALLAS. You mean...the mob? Like gangsters and stuff?

TIGER. This is no place for you!

TRIXIE. Welcome to the big leagues, kid...

TIGER. He's little league at best!

BIG DADDY. Do it. Now!

TONY. Don't listen to him! I just need more time! Have a heart kid! You, you, you...don't have to do this.

BIG DADDY. Have to? He *gets* to! Do you know how many brats would die to have this chance? *(To Dallas.)* You kill this scumbag and you're going to get made into the mob. Do you know what that means?

DALLAS. A real family.

TRIXIE. That's right. The mob will take care of you forever. Just look at me. I got made. Isn't that what all you little orphans want? A filthy family.

DALLAS/TIGER. *(Quietly.)* Yes.

BIG DADDY. Pull the trigger!!!

TONY. No! Please. I'll, I'll, I'll...do better. I just—

BIG DADDY. Shut your mouth! *(Police siren SFX.)* Pull the trigger!

TRIXIE. The cops are coming! We need to get out of here!

BIG DADDY. Pull the trigger!!! NOW!!! *(Long pause as Dallas tries to summon the courage to pull the trigger. He breathes heavily. Police sirens get louder. Dallas shakes as he looks for the strength. After a moment, Tiger knocks him over and picks up the gun. Tiger shoots and kills Scumbag Tony. The gunshot SFX should be realistic and not arcade style, symbolizing Tiger's transition from his safe childhood into the rough adult world. Music intensifies. Blackout.)*

END OF ACT ONE

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS –
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