

**PERUSAL SCRIPT**

**Home Cooking  
on the  
Teton Range**

by  
Jack Weyland



Newport, Maine

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## **HOME COOKING on the TETON RANGE**

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## **Cast of Characters -- 9m, 3w**

**TONY**, 23, a recent convert from New Jersey

**CHER**, 22, a Senior from New York

*(Note to Director: After you cast the part of Cher, talk to her folks and her roommates and get a list of cute things she does. They can be substituted for the things that TONY talks about in Act Two.)*

**BRAD**, 25, a physics Graduate Student from Utah

**JEN**, 20, A PE major from Idaho

**BJ**, 22, a student leader

**AL**, 20, a young mobster

**FRANK**, 56, mobster from Chicago

**LOUIS** -- any age, Frank's henchman

**JAKE** -- any age, Frank's Henchman

**LUELLA**, 50, the owner of the apartment building

**SAMUEL**, 21, Home Teacher, letter of the law.

**JEFFREY**, 21, Home Teacher, also letter of the law.

## **Scenes**

### **Act One**

Scene -- an apartment near BYU-Idaho, early January.

### **Act Two**

Scene One -- the apartment, three days later, late afternoon

Scene Two -- the apartment, the following Sunday after Church

Scene Three -- the apartment, late Monday afternoon

### **Act Three**

Scene -- the apartment, several days later

The SET consists of the kitchen and living room of a typical off-campus apartment at BYU Idaho. We see the entrance door and also a doorway leading to the bathroom and bedrooms. The kitchen consists of a table and chairs, a counter for food prep, a refrigerator and a stove. In the living room are two stuffed chairs as well as a couch and coffee table. A portable blackboard is set up in the living room.

## SYNOPSIS

A delightful spoof on BYU-Idaho, dating and the family (Mafia style). This rib-tickling play, sensationally popular in its run, written by the author of the popular novels "Charly" and "Sam" and others, will leave you chuckling as the daughter of a rich New Yorker looks for happiness by pretending to be a "Utah/Idaho Mormon". A play saturated with characters your audience will like and situations they've experienced. A guaranteed evening of fun. To say that this play is only a comedy would be ridiculous!

## BIO

**Jack Arnold Weyland** (born 1940) is a professor of physics at BYU–Idaho, and a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He is a prolific and well-known author of fiction for LDS audiences, including many novels and short stories, mostly placed in contemporary settings. In fact, the modern genre of Latter-day Saint-themed popular fiction is one he is largely responsible for creating with his overwhelmingly popular novel, *Charly*, which was made into a feature film in 2002.

Weyland was born in Butte, Montana. He graduated from Billings Senior High School and then attended Montana State University where he majored in Physics. Upon graduating he served a mission for the LDS Church in New York and Pennsylvania. After completing his mission he went to BYU and received his Ph.D. in Physics.

While attending BYU, Weyland decided to take an elective course in creative writing. After a few weeks Weyland realized he was in trouble; he was not a very good writer. Weyland said, "The one time I ventured to tell my instructor I wanted to write LDS fiction, he said, 'You're not serious, are you?' Certainly a fair question based on what he had seen of my writing. I became discouraged and dropped the course and didn't think about writing again for several years."

He married his wife Sherry and they had a daughter named Barbara. After Barbara was born they left BYU and went to South Dakota, where Weyland taught physics at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. While in South Dakota they had four more children, Dan, Brad, Jed, and Josie.

In the summer of 1971 Jack had the opportunity to work for the BYU physics department doing high-pressure research. While at BYU Weyland decided to take a correspondence writing course. "Especially I wanted it to be by correspondence. Never again would I tell anyone face to face that I wanted to write. The course cost me, as I remember it, \$37.50. In addition there was the typewriter to rent." Weyland decided that he wanted to write an article for the New Era magazine.

Weyland's first two stories that he sent into New Era were accepted, but his third entry was rejected. After having this rejection he was done writing, but the next summer he found himself submitting another article to New Era that was accepted.

Each summer Weyland found himself writing in his spare time. In 1979 he made a goal to write a novel that would be published by October, he finished his first novel, *Charly*. After completing his goal of writing a novel Weyland said, "The Lord blesses us richly for any service we give. He helps us discover talents we never know existed within us." In his writing career, Weyland has published about three dozen books and more than 50 short stories in the New Era.

Although successful in his LDS publications, Weyland has continued to teach physics. He taught at Ricks College, (now BYU–Idaho) from 1993 to 2005, and has even continued teaching after retirement as a "campus service missionary". He explained "I enjoyed physics then and still do today. It is, after all, what I spend most of my time doing." He and his wife have also served as missionaries for the Church Educational System in Long Island, New York and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## Home Cooking On The Teton Range

### ACT ONE

**SCENE** -- Late afternoon on the first day of classes for BYU-Idaho's winter semester. BRAD enters the apartment burdened down with a heavy backpack, wearing a "Nanook of the North" parka, and carrying a large beach ball. He turns on a CD of someone lecturing in German. He goes to the portable blackboard and writes down several equations. A cell phone in BJ's backpack goes off but Brad, fascinated with the physics of the beach ball, ignores the phone.

**BJ:** Brad, would you get my cell phone?

*(BRAD drops the beach ball. He seems surprised that it falls to the floor. BJ, his face covered with shaving cream, rushes in to answer the phone.)*

Why didn't you get it? Do I have to do everything around here?

*(BRAD lies on his back, holding the beach ball directly over his head. BJ answers the cell phone and restlessly paces while shaving.)*

What? Yes the concert has definitely been canceled.

*(BRAD drops the ball. It lands on his face. He's delighted.)*

**BRAD:** My space time continuum is warped.

**BJ:** Yeah, that sounds about right.

*(BJ, with cell phone to his ear, looks for something in the refrigerator, then turns to face BRAD.)*

All right, who moved my cheese?

*(There's a knock on the door. BRAD positions the ball on the floor leans over the ball and lets himself drop on the ball. His forehead strikes the ball.)*

*(On the phone)* I'm the one in student government who ordered popcorn for the concert...Well, we don't need it now.

*(BRAD stands up, holds the ball away from his body and slams it into his forehead. Outside the knocking on the door changes to a pounding.)*

Brad, get the door!

*(BRAD picks up the beach ball, balances it on his chin, and shuffles to the door. He opens the door.)*

**TONY:** I'm here about the vacancy.

**BRAD:** *(nodding)* Excellent question.

**TONY:** Actually, it wasn't a question.

**BRAD:** What is a vacancy? What is a vacuum? If the universe is expanding, then space is being created? But from what?

*(BRAD goes to the blackboard and writes more equations. Tony steps inside the apartment and closes the door.)*

**BJ:** *(On his cell phone)* The popcorn was for the concert. Okay? You got it so far? But the concert was canceled. So do you really think that we need the popcorn now? Huh?

*(BRAD uses his chin to fix the beach ball to the wall. TONY decides to try it again with BRAD.)*

**TONY:** Like I said, I'm here about the vacancy. Not the vacancy in the universe, okay? The one in the

apartment, you know, this apartment? Where we are right now? Is any of this getting to you?

*(TONY waves his hand in front of BRAD's face to see if he's functioning. BRAD hits the beach ball with his chin. It hits the wall and bounces back. He hits it again and again with his chin, so it ricochets back and forth.)*

**TONY:** You see, the thing is, I need a place to stay.

*(BJ pulls food from the shelf looking for his cheese.)*

**BJ:** *(on the phone)* No, we're not substituting your niece's jump-rope team for the concert! I don't care if they did jump for the President.

*(CHER enters the apartment. She is carrying several damp shirts and two bags of groceries.)*

Cher, do you know where my cheese is?

**CHER:** Sorry, BJ, I don't.

*(CHER sets the groceries on the counter and sets up an ironing board.)*

**BJ:** I always keep it in the same place but this morning, when I woke up, it was gone.

*(The German lecture on the CD becomes more strident, beginning to sound "Nazi-like." BRAD tries to get the beach ball to spin on his finger, but lacks the coordination to make it happen. It rolls off his finger. TONY catches it and keeps it.)*

*(On the phone)* No, I don't know how much space five hundred pounds of popcorn takes up...Really? That much?

**BRAD:** I could figure that out. All I need is the density of popcorn.

*(BJ walks off stage back into the bathroom. CHER plugs in an iron and pulls out one of BJ's shirts to iron. TONY switches off the German lecture and approaches CHER.)*

**TONY:** Sprechen zie Deutsch?

**CHER:** What's that supposed to mean?

**TONY:** Talk to me please! Nobody else will.

*(BRAD, without the beach ball to play with, puts on his parka and leaves the apartment.)*

**CHER:** I thought you were doing physics with Brad.

**TONY:** No, I just need a place to stay.

**CHER:** You'll have to talk with BJ.

*(BJ comes back into the room.)*

**BJ:** (angry) All right, we'll buy the popcorn! But this is the last time we're buying off campus!

*(BJ walks over to CHER and looks at the shirts she's about to iron.)*

Could you do the blue shirt first? I want to wear it tonight.

**CHER:** This guy wants to talk to you about the vacancy.

**BJ:** *(to Tony)* Did they tell you how much the rent is?

**TONY:** Yeah, right.

**BJ:** Cher comes in once a day and cooks our supper. We each kick in thirty dollars a week. She buys our groceries out of that, and takes what's left for herself. You okay with that?

**TONY:** Yeah, sure, why not?

**BJ:** Then, you're in. Oh, I'm BJ Roberts.

*(They shake hands.)*

**TONY:** I'm Tony Versalino.

**BJ:** Just got off your mission, huh?

**TONY:** Actually, I haven't gone on a mission. I just joined the church three months ago.

**BJ:** You should go on a mission. It's a tremendous leadership training. I was a zone leader on my mission you know. So it just goes to show you.

**TONY:** Goes to show me what?

**BJ:** Let me put it this way--there's basically two kinds of people in the world-- those who demonstrate real leadership and those who blindly follow.

**TONY:** So which group are you in?

**BJ:** You know what? I'm not sure you'd really fit in here. Maybe it'd be better if you looked some place else.

**TONY:** *(spoken as only a New Yorker can do.)* Hey, who died and made you king?

**BJ:** *(confused)* What are you saying?

**CHER:** I know what he's saying. He's saying, Who died and made you king?

**BJ:** *(to Tony)* Look, I'm asking you, very politely, to go find yourself another apartment where you'll fit in better.

*(TONY waves a receipt in BJ's face.)*

**TONY:** You see this? It's a receipt. I already paid for the room. So guess what? You and me, we're roomies. Or are you looking for a law suit?

**BJ:** *(shrugs his shoulders)* Well, I guess you could room with Brad.

**TONY:** They said there were two vacancies. What about me rooming with you?

**BJ:** I need the extra space.

**TONY:** Why?

**BJ:** I'm a student leader.

**TONY:** What do you need the extra room for? Your ego?

**BJ:** Cher, I'll see you later.

**CHER:** You'll be back for supper, won't you, BJ?

**BJ:** Yeah, sure, no problem.

*(BJ leaves. TONY looks in the fridge, finds the cheese and starts munching on it. CHER resumes ironing shirts.)*

**CHER:** Where'd you get the cheese?

**TONY:** In the compartment labeled "Cheese."

**CHER:** What do you know? It was there all the time.

**TONY:** Yeah, right. Oh, I've got some laundry too. There's no hurry though.

*(TONY walks around, opening doors, checking windows, doing a security check.)*

**CHER:** I'm glad there's no hurry. That way you won't be rushed when you haul 'em off to the laundromat and do 'em yourself.

**TONY:** Sorry, I thought it was part of the service.

**CHER:** I only do BJ's things.

**TONY:** How come he gets special treatment?

**CHER:** Good question. I been wondering that myself lately.

**TONY:** You're from back East, aren't you?

**CHER:** Queens.

**TONY:** I'm from Jersey. So, how'd a nice Long Island girl get stuck in a place like this?

**CHER:** What are you talking about?

**TONY:** This place is depressing. Does the wind always blow this hard?

**CHER:** No, not always. Sometimes it's worse.

**TONY:** Another thing-- I don't like people smiling all the time. Makes me wonder what they're up to. So why'd you come here? Are your parents members?

**CHER:** I joined my senior year of high school. My dad's not a member but he's paid for me to attend here. This is my last semester.

**TONY:** Man, I bet you can hardly wait to get out of this place.

**CHER:** Well, not exactly.

*(TONY checks the closets.)*

**CHER:** What are you doing?

**TONY:** Just looking around. How come you don't want to leave?

**CHER:** Because I'm not married.

**TONY:** Yeah, so?

**CHER:** Look, just forget it, okay? I don't even know why I'm talking to you...Maybe it's because you remind me of Murray Zifflemyer.

**TONY:** Who's he?

**CHER:** Murray and I grew up in Queens. He lived next door. Every day after school in junior high we'd sit on my front porch and talk. We could talk about anything.

**TONY:** So, what happened between you two?

**CHER:** In the ninth grade his family moved. I've never had anyone I could talk to like I could to Murray.

**TONY:** What about your roommates? Can't you talk to them?

**CHER:** Not really. They're virtuous, lovely, and of good report. So I have to be careful.

**TONY:** You don't want 'em to know about the way you lived before you joined the Church, right?

**CHER:** Yeah. Is it the same with you?

**TONY:** Is it. Before I joined the Church, I used to swear like heaaaaa...

*(corrects himself)*

... I used to swear a lot. Sorry.

**CHER:** I got a whole drawer full of Britney Spears tank tops. I have no idea what to do with 'em here.

**TONY:** Sew 'em together and you'd have enough to cover a postage stamp. She's a big success though.

**CHER:** Yeah, she's made quite a navel for herself.

*(They both laugh.)*

**CHER:** You know what? I like talking to you.

**TONY:** Hey, maybe I could be your next Murray Zittlemyer.

**CHER:** That'd be great. I'd like that.

**TONY:** Tell me something. You do BJ's laundry, so are you two engaged?

**CHER:** Not yet. He's very busy with student government right now. He belongs to the people.

**TONY:** No kidding? Do they ever ask for their money back?

**CHER:** Not so far. What about you? You got someone waiting for you in Jersey?

**TONY:** Not really. I pretty much lost all my friends when I joined the Church.

*(CHER opens the refrigerator and starts looking for something.)*

**TONY:** You want me to show you where the cheese is?

**CHER:** No...not really. You know what? I think I left a bag of groceries in my car. I'll be right back.

**TONY:** You want me to go with you?

**CHER:** This is Idaho. What could happen?

*(CHER leaves. TONY grabs his cell phone and makes a call.)*

**TONY:** Mr. Weiss please....Hello...This is Tony Versalino, sir. I'm staying in the apartment where your daughter cooks supper so I will be seeing her a lot. I haven't seen anyone suspicious hanging around...Do you really think they'll try to kidnap her?...Yes sir, I'll keep on my toes.

*(Knock on the door.)*

Someone's at the door. Yes, sir, I'll keep you informed.

*(TONY opens door. LUELLA comes in like she owns the place.)*

**LUELLA:** I told you to come to the office but you didn't come back.

**TONY:** Oh, I forgot. Why did you need to see me again?

**LUELLA:** I didn't give you the housing rules. I was waiting for you to come back, but you never showed up.

See, that's not good. I just hope you're not like the last guy who was in here. He just left. Didn't say a thing.

**TONY:** So? He paid for the entire semester, right? What do you care if he leaves? You got his money?

**LUELLA:** He left without doing a clean check. That makes work for me. I don't like it when people leave without doing a clean check.

*(LUELLA walks over the wall and runs her hand across it.)*

Who's going to wash the walls if there's no clean check?

**TONY:** You, I guess.

**LUELLA:** You think I got nothing else to do but wash walls? This place is a plumber's nightmare. Let me tell you something, you're in an apartment where the toilet actually flushes. Yes sir, my boy, you're one of the lucky ones.

*(LUELLA starts to leave.)*

Don't you even think about leaving here without doing a clean check! I'm just below you and I can hear what's going on...when I have my TV off.

*(LUELLA is on her way out as CHER returns, carrying a bag of groceries.)*

**CHER:** Oh, Mrs. Williamson, we're having a little trouble with our toilet.

**LUELLA:** Really? That's so unusual. I've got a plumber coming He'll be here any day now. They're so hard to get these days, but I'll put you on the list.

*(LUELLA leaves.)*

**TONY:** You want me to unpack your groceries for you while you finish ironing BJ's shirts?

**CHER:** That'd be great.

*(TONY pulls out a several big steaks from the grocery sack and checks out its price.)*

**TONY:** We're having this for supper?

**CHER:** Tomorrow night. Tonight we're having a pot roast.

*(grin)*

You want me to talk like I'm from Idaho?

*(distorted Idaho accent)*

It is such an honor to make delicious, nutritious meals for those I love.

**TONY:** How do you cook like this on what we give you for food and still make any money?

**CHER:** *(evasive)* I shop bargains.

*(TONY looks at the price of each steak.)*

**TONY:** These are no bargains. You'd better take 'em back.

**CHER:** It's not costing you any more, so what's your beef?

*(TONY waves the meat in her face.)*

**TONY:** My beef is...well..this beef. You're kicking in your own money to feed us, aren't you? How come?

**CHER:** *(glumly)* Anymore...I don't know.

*(CHER starts to set the table. Without asking, TONY helps her.)*

**TONY:** For BJ?

**CHER:** Don't tell him, okay?

**TONY:** Okay, but why do you do this?

**CHER:** So he'll pay attention to me like he did before his mission.

**TONY:** You waited for him on his mission?

**CHER:** Yeah. Worst two years of my life.

**TONY:** Did you date while he was gone?

**CHER:** No, not me. I stayed in my room and wrote long letters and learned to knit. It was awful. I think I've already gone through a mid-life crisis. The other girls in my apartment started calling me mom.

**TONY:** So what happened when he got back?

**CHER:** I made a mistake of showing him what I'd done. There he was, 21 years old, and already the father of two boxes of knitted booties. He said he needed time to adjust. And that's where we are now. A year later, he's still adjusting.

**TONY:** That's some adjustment.

**CHER:** I know where I went wrong. I should've knitted negligees.

**TONY:** When was the last time he talked about marriage?

**CHER:** Well, actually, just last week.

**TONY:** He proposed?

**CHER:** No, he took the shirts I'd ironed and told me I'd make a good wife someday.

*(The phone rings. TONY answers it.)*

**TONY:** Yeah...Ok, hold on...

*(to CHER)*

It's the home teachers.

**CHER:** They never come. They set up appointments but they never come.

**TONY:** *(on the phone)* When were you thinking of coming to home teach us?...That is such a stupid idea!...Look, are you just going to go through the motions, or are you going to actually do some good?... I see, you're just going to go through the motions. Look, You'd better call back when BJ is here.

*(TONY hangs up the phone.)*

Can you believe it? They wanted to come a little before midnight on the last day of the month and stay long enough to count if for both months.

**CHER:** They stopped by on Halloween. Their message which they left at the door was "Trick or Treat: the eternal perspective."

*(Knock at the door. TONY gets it. AL is at the door.)*

**AL:** They said you have a vacancy. I'd like to take it. My name is Al...Jones.

**CHER:** Tony, BJ likes to look over anyone who's thinking about moving in here.

*(That does it for Tony.)*

**TONY:** You know what? You'll fit in real well here. Just move everything into BJ's room.

**AL:** Thanks. I got a few things. I left it just by the door.

*(AL steps out and brings in a suitcase, a bow and arrow and an Indian headdress.)*

**CHER:** Did you go on a mission to the Lamanites?

**AL:** What?

**TONY:** How'd you get all the Indian gear?

**AL:** Card game in Albuquerque.

*(AL takes his things into the hall where the bedrooms are.)*

**CHER:** Whoops, I forgot Kool Whip! I'm going to need to go to Broulims

**TONY:** Bro Lims?

**CHER:** It's a grocery store.

**TONY:** For rappers? Hey, Bro!

**CHER:** No. There's not that many rappers here. In Idaho their idea of diversity is to put marshmallows in their lime Jello.

**TONY:** Let me go with you to Bro- Lims.

*(Black accent)*

We got a Bro Lims in the 'hood.

**CHER:** You don't have to go with me.

**TONY:** I know but, you know, I'd like to go with you...

*(double meaning)*

I mean I'd like to be with you.

*(Groans)*

When you go to Broulims, that is.

*(They leave. AL comes out, makes sure everyone is gone, and pulls a pistol from his jacket.*

*Knock at the door. AL opens it. FRANK, LOUIE and JAKE rush into the room.)*

**FRANK:** Jake, check the rooms. Louie, put a bug in the kitchen. Me, I'll talk with AL.

*(JAKE goes down the hall to check the bedrooms. Louie goes to the kitchen. FRANK slugs AL in the gut.)*

**AL:** What'd you do that for?

**FRANK:** You think I wouldn't find out? Is that what you thought? I give you one easy job and you totally blow it! What were you thinking of?

**AL:** You told me to make the guy an offer he couldn't refuse. So I did. One point two million dollars.

**FRANK:** You idiot! What am I going to do with a pig farm, for crying out loud?

*(Gently puts his hand on AL's head)*

It's okay though. You know why? Because you're my nephew.

*(Slaps him on the head)*

You mess up this job though and you're history.

**AL:** I'm not going to mess up anymore, Uncle Frank. You'll see.

**FRANK:** You know what to do?

**AL:** Sure, I find a good time to kidnap the girl and then I call Louie and Jake, and they come and take her away.

What will you do if her old man won't agree to your terms?

**FRANK:** Well, I've been thinking. Maybe having a pig farm isn't that bad. The price of feed is very high these days, if you catch my drift.

*(AL, once he understands, runs for the bathroom to throw up. Frank watches him go and shakes his head.)*

People ask me where the next generation of thugs is going to come from.

*(Shakes his head)*

I wish I knew.

*(Knock at the door. Louie and Jake pull guns out of their jackets. Jake goes to the door. Louie goes to the window and looks out.)*

**LOUIE:** It's a woman. She's not a kid. She's older. She looks mad. You want I should blow her away?

**FRANK:** No, let me handle it. You guys get behind the door in case I need some muscle.

*(FRANK opens the door. LUELLA fills the doorway.)*

**LUELLA:** Did I tell you to come to 214? No, I did not. I distinctly said 412. I'm not paying for whatever you've done here. Room 412 is where the problem is.

**FRANK:** What's the problem in 412?

**LUELLA:** Do all plumbers have short term memory loss? I just talked to you on the phone. The water won't drain and the toilet's plugged up. So, are you going to fix it or not?

*(LOUIE and JAKE hold up their guns, asking in effect if they should blow her away. FRANK shakes his head.)*

**FRANK:** We'll fix it, Ma'am. Right away. Let me introduce you to my assistants Louie and Jake.

*(LOUIE and JAKE are about to come out behind the door with their guns. FRANK hits them on the head and glares at their guns. They put them in their jacket pockets and come out from behind the door.)*

**LUELLA:** Will I be paying for three of you?

**FRANK:** No, Ma'am, it's just the basic cost. They're just learning.

**LUELLA:** I'm sorry to be so rude but ever since my husband died, I've had to manage this place all by myself. It hasn't been easy. Money always going out but not enough coming in.

**FRANK:** I have the same problem.

**LUELLA:** Well, I'll walk you over to 412 so you can get started.

*(Just as they leave, CHER and TONY return.)*

**TONY:** What's going on?

**AL:** Plumbers.

*(CHER looks at the clock, opens the oven and checks the roast.)*

**CHER:** It's almost six so I think I'll put the food on the table so when BJ comes he can just sit down and eat.

**AL:** What are we having?

**CHER:** Pork roast.

**AL:** From pigs? I don't feel so good. I'm going to go into my room and lie down.

*(AL, holding his stomach, leaves. TONY helps CHER put food on the table. It's as if their bodies have already decided they like each other but their heads haven't caught on. They seem to be in each other's way all the time, causing them to get closer than their minds would feel comfortable with. CHER is about to set a bowl of cooked carrots on the table. She backs up into TONY who is holding a large loaf of French bread in his hand. He has no choice but to hold the French bread*

*up and bring it down, so it's in front of her. It's almost like a hug except that instead of his hands being around her waist, it's the French bread that's next to her waist. She can't maneuver much because of the bowl of carrots.)*

**CHER:** Small kitchen.

**TONY:** Yeah, very. This probably happens all the time.

**CHER:** Not really. We need to do something to get out of this predicament. Maybe if I just scooted down.  
*(CHER tries to scoot down, but as she does so, she has to bring the bowl of carrots closer to her. Tony has to lean forward and move the loaf of french bread away so she can get the bowl of carrots past his arms. As he does so, his face is next to hers, and her hair is in his face. He sniffs.)*

**TONY:** Your hair smells good.

**CHER:** This isn't working out as well as I would have liked.

**TONY:** I'm probably not as unhappy about it as you are.

**CHER:** Tony, I really don't want to be this close to you.

**TONY:** I understand. This is only our first meal together.  
*(Noise at the door.)*

**CHER:** Someone's coming! I don't want BJ to see us like this!  
*(TONY tosses the loaf of French bread into the air, steps back, moves in front of her, and catches the loaf in mid air. BRAD enters the apartment. His parka is covered with snow.)*

**BRAD:** They say that no two snow flakes are ever the same. I was lying on the ground watching it snow. I think I found two that are the same. I put one on this finger and the other on this finger.  
*(BRAD looks closely at the two index fingers. The snow has already melted. He shakes the water from his hands.)*

Never mind.

**CHER:** We're about ready to eat.  
*(CHER quickly finishes putting the rest of the food on the table. They sit down and look at the clock.)*

BJ said he'd be here at six. I'm sure it'll just be a minute or two before he shows up.  
*(Uncomfortable silence.)*

**TONY:** *(to pass the time, to Brad)* So, how's it going?

**BRAD:** I've got a problem.

**TONY:** Care to talk about it?

**BRAD:** I'm supposed to derive with the help of the method of saddle point integration a formula for the partition function of an ideal gas.  
*(TONY looks to CHER for help. She shakes her head.)*

**TONY:** You got another problem you'd rather talk about?...Like how do you get along with girls?

**BRAD:** Good. I don't talk to them and they don't talk to me.

**CHER:** What about marriage?

**BRAD:** There'll be time enough for that after graduate school.

**TONY:** Maybe, maybe not. Sometimes you meet somebody and it's not a part of your plan and it's not convenient, but you have certain feelings that develop.  
*(TONY glances quickly at CHER, who looks away.)*

**CHER:** We might as well get started eating. We'll have the blessing on the food later, when BJ shows up.

*(They pass the food around the table.)*

**BRAD:** Marriage is a commandment, that's for sure.

**TONY:** Big time commandment, Brad. Better shape up.

**BRAD:** I suppose I should be obedient. Like Abraham willing to sacrifice Isaac. I'm twenty four years old and in four months I'll graduate, so I should get married by then. Who do I see about that?

**CHER:** See?...First you got to start dating.

**BRAD:** I don't know anybody.

**CHER:** How about in your ward?

**BRAD:** I'm an assistant ward clerk so it's not like I'm a stranger to the girls in the ward. I enter their donations in the ward's computer.

*(TONY and CHER look at each other and shake their heads.)*

**CHER:** Maybe, for starters, you could take my roommate out. She's only a sophomore but I think she'd agree to go out with you...once.

**TONY:** You see there, Brad? You're on your way, my man!

**CHER:** Her name is Jen Stewart. Her parents are mission presidents in Australia.

**BRAD:** Amazing! My folks are in New Zealand. My dad's on a sabbatical. He's a volcanologist. And right now there's this huge volcano that's wiping out one village after another. My dad couldn't be happier.

**CHER:** But, Brad, Jen's not into science. She's a P.E. major, so don't go dropping equations around her, okay?

**BRAD:** Do I have to be alone with her? I've seen girls who major in P.E. Anyone of 'em could crush me like a bug.

**CHER:** She's really nice, Brad. How about if we invite her for supper sometime? If you want, I'll talk to her tonight.

**BRAD:** I guess that's be all right. Tell her I don't do calisthenics though, okay?

*(BJ rushes into the room, carrying a large poster which reads 'BJ for President'.)*

**BJ:** *(excited)* You won't believe what just happened to me!

**TONY:** Do you have any idea what time it is?

*(BJ sits down at the head of the table.)*

**BJ:** Sorry I'm a little late.

*(CHER gets up from the table.)*

**CHER:** I'll go see if Al is feeling good enough to eat.

*(CHER leaves.)*

**TONY:** *(barely under control)* If you say you're going to be here at six, then you should be here at six! Not ten after six, not fifteen after six, not six twenty, but six.

**BJ:** Something came up.

**TONY:** Oh, was there an earthquake? Or a blizzard? I can't think of anything else that would justify you being this late. Do you have any idea how much work Cher put into this meal?

*(CHER helps AL into the room. He still looks a little queasy.)*

**BJ:** Who's he?

**TONY:** Your new roommate.

**BJ:** Who said he could move in?

**TONY:** I did.

**BJ:** Into my room?

**TONY:** Yeah, we just threw our junk that was on his bed onto yours.

**BJ:** You had no right to tell him he could move in.

**TONY:** Oh, sorry. Well, he's already here, so what are we going to do? Oh, Al, please remember what the doctor said about trying not to spread your rash.

**BJ:** He has a rash?

**TONY:** No, he doesn't. I was just joking around. Really.

**BJ:** He does have a rash, doesn't he? You're just trying to lull me into a sense of security.

**CHER:** He doesn't have a rash, BJ. Look, could we just have a blessing on the food?

**BJ:** Brad, will you say the blessing?

*(They all bow their heads except for Al and Tony.)*

**TONY:** *(to BJ)* How come you get to decide who says the blessing?

**BJ:** I'm the presiding elder in the apartment.

*(They all bow their heads, except for Tony.)*

**TONY:** Says who?

**CHER:** Let's just start eating. I don't think our prayers would make it out of the room anyway.

*(They all begin to eat, except for Tony, who glares at BJ.)*

**TONY:** Cher went to a lot of trouble for this meal, and you come when the meat's all cold and leathery.

**BRAD:** I wonder if that's caused by blood in the meat.

**AL:** *(queasy)* Please don't talk about blood in the meat.

**BJ:** *(mouth full, stuffing himself)* It's not that bad.

**TONY:** Is that the best you can do? This isn't Burger Bob's! This is quality food.

*(BJ's cell phone rings. He answers it.)*

**BJ:** Yeah?...Oh, Celeste! How's it going?

*(Continues to stuff food in his mouth as he talks)*

...When do you think you could get all the posters done?...That'd be great!

*(Brad has discovered that by looking at his image in a spoon, he can get it to be upside down or right side up depending on which side of the spoon he looks at. He shows Cher.)*

**BRAD:** See your image in the spoon. This way it's upside down

*(flips spoon over)*

and this way it's right side up.

**BJ:** *(chewing)* Uh huh...uh huh...Aaah...Uh. huh. Well actually we need the posters by tomorrow. Uh huh....Aaah...Yeah...Okay..Uh huh.

*(In order to shovel the food in, BJ pushes all the food onto a slice of bread, folds the bread in two and begins eating it as fast as he can.)*

Uh huh...Yeah...Sure...

*(AL tries the image thing with the spoon.)*

**AL:** Hey, I'm upside down!

**BRAD:** Now turn it over.

**AL:** Now I'm right side up.

**BJ:** Could we have a little quiet here? I'm on the phone.

**TONY:** I can fix that.

*(TONY grabs BJ's cell-phone and pulls it apart, yanks the battery out and throws it on the floor.)*

**BJ:** I was on the phone with Celeste! Do you have any idea who Celeste is?

**CHER:** I'd like to know who she is.

*(BJ gathers up his battery, puts them in the phone and punches in a phone number.)*

**BJ:** *(on the phone)* I'm sorry about that, Celeste... No, I didn't hang up on you...No, I'm not mad at you...I think you're doing a terrific job, Celeste. Look, don't cry, Celeste. I think you're being way too emotional about this...Okay, I'll be right over.

*(Ends connection)*

I've got to go to talk to Celeste.

**TONY:** Don't go until you've had dessert.

**BJ:** I'll have dessert when I come back.

**TONY:** By then the Kool Whip topping will be turned into a puddle.

**BJ:** Who are you anyway, the Galloping Gourmet? I have to go. Celeste feels rejected, and I need her for posters.

**TONY:** Posters for what?

**BJ:** Celeste and a group of girls in Aspen Apartments made it for me. They want me to run for president.

**CHER:** What do you think about that?

**BJ:** Well, it really makes me feel humble to think of all these girls who have confidence in me.

**TONY:** Humble, yeah, that's how I'd describe you.

**BJ:** But if the people call, how can I refuse?

**CHER:** BJ, what about you and me?

**BJ:** I just want to serve the people.

**TONY:** Then get a job as a custodian.

**BJ:** Cher, if I can get the votes of the girls on campus, I can carry the election.

**CHER:** I'd be happy to go by all the girls dorms and apartments and tell them about you.

**TONY:** I'd like to tell them about you too.

**BJ:** Actually, Cher, I was thinking maybe I'd do better if they thought I was, well, you know, not going with anyone.

**CHER:** *(obviously hurt)* Oh...

**BJ:** After the election of course I could be seen with you again. It's not long until the election.

**CHER:** I see.

**BJ:** Oh, and I'll need more shirts each week. It'll be hard work, but it will all be worth it.

**CHER:** It will?

**BJ:** Sure, just think how this is going to look on my resume. Well, I got to run.

**AL:** Where are you going?

**BJ:** Girls dorms.

**AL:** Can I go with you. I'd like to help you with the voters.

*(BJ nods and they leave. Brad takes the spoon and grabs the beach ball and goes to his room.*

*CHER sits staring at BJ's partially eaten food.)*

**TONY:** It doesn't bother you that he's wearing one of the shirts you washed and ironed on a date with Celeste?

**CHER:** It's not a date. It's just about posters.

**TONY:** But he's impressing another girl with the creases you put in his shirt. Doesn't that bother you?

**CHER:** Only when there's lipstick on the collar.

**TONY:** What are you anyway, chopped liver?

**CHER:** It's been a long time since I heard anyone say that.

**TONY:** I'm serious...You're from Long Island...You tell at cab drivers...you shout at rude store clerks. You complain about the subways...So why do you let BJ walk all over you?

**CHER:** I love him.

**TONY:** That's a stupid reason. Anyway he's not interested in you as a wife. It's you for shirts, and Celeste for posters.

**CHER:** What right have you got to come in and stir things up? He's going to ask me to marry him. I waited for him, for crying out loud.

**TONY:** (*backing off*) Okay...but I'm not going to let you go on this way. Either give him up or do something different. I suggest giving him up...Well?

**CHER:** (*big sigh*) Let's talk about doing something different.

**(BLACKOUT)**

*Act Two has 25 pages*

*Act Three has 3 pages*