

PERUSAL SCRIPT



Newport, Maine

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HOME COOKING ON THE WASATCH RANGE

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HOME COOKING ON THE WASATCH RANGE

CAST OF CHARACTERS (8M, 2W)

TONY, 23, a recent convert from New Jersey

CHER, 22, a senior at BYU from New York

BRAD, 25, a physics graduate student from Utah

JENNY, 20, a PE major from Utah

B.J., 22, a student leader from Utah

AL, 20, a young mobster

FRANK, 56, mobster from Chicago

BOB, 21, home teacher

JIM, 21, home teacher

JOE, 24, strong, mean mobster

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 WASATCH RANGE by *Jack Weyland*. 9M2W. 1 Interior. 2hrs. Third place winner in the 1979 Encore Playwriting Contest. This is it!! A smash hit in it's extended and sold out Premiere run at Brigham Young University. A delightful spoof on BYU, dating and the family (Mafia style). This rib-tickling play, 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 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! **ORDER #2047.**

STAGE SETTING

The set consists of the kitchen and living room of a typical off-campus apartment at BYU. 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 preparation, a refrigerator and stove. In the living room are two stuffed chairs as well as a couch and coffee table. A small push-button phone with long cord is located in the living room. A portable blackboard is set up in the living room

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

All of the action of the play takes place in a typical, BYU off-campus, four-person apartment.

ACT I

Scene One -- Registration Day for Winter Semester at BYU. 3:00 p.m

Scene Two -- later that afternoon

Scene Three -- 7:00 p.m. that night

Scene Four -- later that night

ACT II

Scene One -- a week later

Scene Two -- a day later

Scene Three -- two days later, near dinner time

Scene Four -- the next day

Scene Five -- the next day, 4:00 p.m.

Scene Six -- Sunday morning

Scene Seven -- a few hours later

Scene Eight -- four days later

Scene Nine -- Later that day

Scene Ten -- a few days later

Scene Eleven -- a few days later

Scene Twelve -- that night

ACT III

Scene One -- Saturday afternoon after the wedding, about 2:30 p.m.

Scene Two -- a half hour later

Scene Three -- Monday night

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE -- Registration day for second semester, about three o'clock in the afternoon. BRAD enters the apartment and turns on a cassette tape of a physics lecture by someone with a strong German accent. He goes to the blackboard and writes down a couple of equations. The phone rings but he doesn't notice it. BJ yells from offstage then rushes in to answer it, his face covered with shaving cream.

BJ: *(Running)* I'll get it!

(Answers phone)

Hello. Yes, the concert's definitely been cancelled I'm a big fan of the Captain and Tenille too Well, one of them came down with the flu... No, I don't know which one. Why-- does it matter? ... I can't picture her throwing up either, but I guess she would if she had to ... Relax, okay? We'll refund your money tomorrow ... Goodbye.

(BJ hurries to finish shaving. BRAD picks up a ball and studies it carefully. There's a knock at the door. BRAD doesn't notice because of his intense concentration. The knock gets louder. Now the phone begins to ring. BJ comes running in, razor in hand.)

Hello ... Yeah, I'm the one in student government who ordered the popcorn for the concert.

(Outside the knocking changes to a pounding.)

That's right, the concert's been cancelled, I'm sorry. I just forgot to phone you ... You've already popped the corn? ... Well, actually, we don't need it now.

(There's a kicking at the door.)

For crying out loud, get the door will you?

(BRAD looks up, absently shuffles to the door and opens it, carrying the ball with him.)

TONY: I came about the vacancy.

(BRAD turns and goes back to the blackboard. TONY steps inside. BRAD holds the ball in front of him and drops it, studying it as it falls.)

BJ: *(Waves his razor in the air)* I know I ordered it, but ...

(BRAD picks up the ball, writes some equations on the board. He prepares to drop it again. TONY stands next to BRAD, watching him.)

TONY: Do you still have the vacancy in the apartment?

(BRAD drops the ball and watches it bounce. TONY gives up on ERAD and approaches BJ.)

I need a place to stay.

(BJ, with his razor, waves TONY away and begins to pace the floor, phone in his other hand.)

BJ: You think I gave 'em the flu? ... No, we're-not substituting your cousin's Dog and Pony Show. Look, there's no concert, and no concert, no popcorn. You follow that?

(CHER enters the apartment, carrying several damp shirts rolled up in a plastic bag. She wears glasses.)

I know that, but listen to me ... quit interrupting me, will ya?

(BRAD is on his knees, holding the ball level with his chin, dropping the ball again and again. CHER sets up an ironing board and iron.)

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No, I don't know how much space five hundred pounds of popcorn takes up ... That much? Look, fella, you're talking to the Vice President of Cultural Affairs

(BJ, still on the phone, walks off-stage into the hall. TONY turns off Brad's German physics cassette tape and approaches CHER.)

TONY: Sprechen zie Deutsch?

CHER: What's that supposed to mean?

TONY: Talk to me please. Nobody else will.

CHER: I thought you were doing physics with Brad.

(BJ comes into the room, still on the phone.)

TONY: *(To CHER)* I want a place to stay.

CHER: You'll have to talk with him.

BJ: All right! We'll pay you half-price, but this is the last time we ever buy popcorn off campus!

(BJ slams down the phone, then immediately picks it up and dials.)

Rats! It's busy.

(With phone in hand, BJ walks over to CHER and feels the shirt she's ironing.)

Not so much starch next time.

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

BJ: Did they tell you how much the rent is?

TONY: Right.

BJ: The phone's extra. Cher comes in once each day and cooks our supper. We each pay her fifteen dollars a week and she buys our groceries and takes out a little something for herself. Oh, my name is B.J. Roberts.

(They shake hands.)

TONY: I'm Tony Versalino.

BJ: Just got off your mission mid year, right?

TONY: I haven't gone on a mission.

BJ: *(Surprised)* You haven't gone on a mission?

TONY: I just joined the church nine months ago.

BJ: Well, you should think about a mission. It's wonderful leadership training. Take me for instance. I was a zone leader on my mission. Here at BYU I'm one of the vice presidents. So it just goes to show you ...

TONY: Goes to show me what?

BJ: What a person can do if he applies himself ... You're new in the church. Let me give you a little advice.

There's just two kinds of people in the world ... those who are the leaders ... and those who aren't.

TONY: Let me give you a little advice. There's just two kinds of people in the world ... Those who say there are just two kinds of people in the world ... and those who don't.

(BJ is stunned that TONY isn't in awe of him.)

CHER: BJ, the lather on your face is turning to cement.

BJ: *(Looks at watch)* Good grief, I've got to go.

(To TONY with little enthusiasm)

Great to meet you.

(BJ goes into hall. TONY watches CHER iron the shirt. BRAD shuffles out, bouncing the ball and studying it.)

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TONY: I have a few shirts that need ironing too. There's no hurry though.

CHER: Good -- take 'em to the cleaners.

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

CHER: It isn't -- I just do BJ's shirts.

TONY: My does he get special treatment?

CHER: I been wondering that myself lately.

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

CHER: Queens, Long Island.

TONY: No kidding. I'm from Jersey What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?

CHER: A place like what? BYU?

TONY: It's depressing.

CHER: Are you out of your mind? What's depressing about it?

TONY: Well, for one thing, the campus. See, I like a little litter -- a few beer cans on the lawn'd be nice... And then I don't like people smiling all the time.

CHER: People here are happy.

TONY: That's another thing that bothers me -- overt happiness. It's like you're defying nature to strike you down ... Are your parents members?

CHER: There's just my dad now. He's not a member but he's sent me here for four years ... this is my last semester here.

TONY: After four years, I bet you're anxious to graduate, right?

CHER: Are you kidding? I'm not married yet. If you're a guy here and that happens, they just say you're choosy. But if you're a girl, they say, "Hey, don't worry. My aunt didn't get married 'til she was forty seven years old." It's terrible ... Now people are starting to say I have a sweet spirit.

TONY: Who'd say a rotten thing like that?

CHER: I don't know. Look, just forget what I said. I don't even know why I'm talking to you like this ... I hardly know you ... probably because you remind me of Murray Zittlemeyer.

TONY: Is that good?

CHER: He 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 ... Then in the ninth grade his father went into stretch socks ... They moved away. ..You ever hear of Zittlemeyer socks? ... After Murray left, I never talked to anyone that way again.

TONY: But you have roommates here. Don't they talk about things?

CHER: They talk, but I can't open up to them. They're so virtuous, and lovely, and of good report ... So I have to watch it so I don't give myself away ... You understand?

TONY: You mean the thoughts from before you knew about the Church that still keep creeping out?

CHER: (*Amazed*) You know about that?

TONY: Sure. Before I joined the Church, I used to swear like ...

(Catches himself)

... a lot. There, it happened again.

CHER: It's okay.

TONY: Even after I joined the Church, the words still keep coming to mind. So I have to filter what I say now.

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CHER: No kidding. Me too. You know, you're the first person I've talked to about this. I wonder why they don't have a pamphlet about it ... Anyway the best thing for me is to live the Gospel and hope the bad thoughts will eventually all go away. That's why I don't talk very openly to Utah Mormons ... for fear they might find me out.

TONY: You can talk to me then I'll be your new Murray Zittlemeyer.

CHER: I'd like that. I really would.

(CHER hangs up shirt. TONY walks over to window and looks out.)

TONY: I can't believe that mountain. What is it? Five blocks away. It's like a huge stage prop ... You've been here almost four years? Don't you miss New York? The delis, the subways, the muggings in Central Park?

CHER: *(Brightly)* Not at all. This is Zion

(More realistically)

Well, okay, maybe a little. It's just that when I joined the Church, suddenly I wanted to be Mormon in everything ... I even learned to make funeral potatoes.

TONY: But where will you live after you graduate?

CHER: BJ and I'll get married and live in Spanish Fork.

TONY: *(Confused)* What?

CHER: It's a town.

TONY: Is there a Spanish Spoon too?

CHER: Yeah-it's further south on the interstate.

TONY: So you and BJ are 'engaged'?

CHER: Not formally. He's so busy with student government now. He belongs to the people. But we have an understanding... What about you? What will you do after you graduate?

TONY: Go back east and find a job.

CHER: My dad hires people.

TONY: Oh, what does he do?

CHER: He's in the hotel business. You ever hear of Sleepy Inns? Maybe you've seen the TV ads. Well, Daddy's the owner. He's Sergeant Sleepy.

TONY: You don't look rich.

CHER: I'm not. My dad is and he's very careful with his money.

TONY: *(More than curiosity)* How many others here know about your father?

CHER: Not very many, why?

TONY: I think it'd be better if people didn't know.

CHER: Better?

TONY: Safer unless you want to end up like Patty Hearst.

CHER: You mean married?

TONY: Kidnapped.

CHER: Here? This is Happy Valley.

TONY: Don't be so sure. Does BJ know about your father?

CHER: I told him Daddy is in the hotel business. I think BJ pictures him as a desk clerk... Look, I've got to get some groceries for supper.

TONY: I'll go with you.

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CHER: No, that's okay. Why don't you talk to Brad while I 'm gone.
(*CHER leaves. TONY approaches BRAD at the blackboard.*)

TONY: I'm Tony.
(*No response*)

... And you must be Brad. How's it going?

BRAD: I got a problem.

TONY: Care to talk about it?

BRAD: Talk about it?

TONY: Sometimes it helps.

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.

(*A long bewildered pause.*)

TONY: You got another problem you'd rather talk about? How do you get along with girls?

BRAD: Fine. I don't talk to them, and they don't talk to me.

TONY: What about marriage? It's a commandment, you know.

BRAD: There'll be time enough for that after quantum mechanics.

TONY: Tell me, how does BJ feel about Cher?

BRAD: He likes the way she does his shirts.

TONY: Well, I'd better get moved in. Ok if I room with you?

BRAD: Sure

(*Moves toward bedroom*)

I've been using your bed for my pet tarantula ... but I guess I can put him in the closet.

(*TONY hurries after him.*)

TONY: Just show me exactly where in the closet you put him.

SCENE TWO -- *Later that afternoon. TONY comes out of the bedroom, makes sure he's alone, then calls on his phone.*)

TONY: Mr. Weiss, please. Hello. Yes sir, I've seen your daughter. I'm in the apartment where she cooks supper so I'll be seeing her often ... No, I haven't seen anyone suspicious hanging around. You really think they'll try to kidnap her? ... Yes sir, I'll keep on my toes.

(*CHER walks in, carrying a bag of groceries.*)

I'd better run now ... That's right ... Goodbye.

(*TONY hangs up. CHER goes into the kitchen to unpack the groceries. TONY helps her. He pulls out four large steaks from the bag.*)

We're having this for supper?

CHER: What do you think?

TONY: Typical New York response. Answer a question with a question.

CHER: I can talk Utah Mormon if I want

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(Bright, optimistic manner)

... *Isn't this lovely meat? It will make such a nutritious meal for those I love.*

TONY: I surrender.

(While CHER works, he looks at the price of the steaks.)

How do you cook like this on what we're giving you for food and still make any money?

CHER: *(Evasive)* I shop bargains.

TONY: These steaks alone add up to twenty dollars.

CHER: It's not costing you more, so what's the big deal?

TONY: You're kicking in your own money to feed us? Why?

CHER: *(Glumly)* I don't know why anymore.

TONY: For BJ?

CHER: Don't tell him, okay?

TONY: But why?

CHER: To find a way for him to pay some attention to me ... like he did before his mission.

TONY: You waited for him?

CHER: The rottenest two years of my life.

TONY: Did you date while he was gone?

CHER: Not me. I stayed in my room and wrote long letters and knitted ... It was awful. I think I've already been through mid-life crisis. The other girls in the apartment started calling me Mom ... Finally he got back. I showed him what I'd done ... There he was, twenty one years old and already the father of two boxes of knitted booties. He said he needed a little time to adjust. And that's where it is now. I know where I went wrong. I should've knitted negligees.

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

CHER: Just last week.

TONY: He proposed?

CHER: No -- he took five freshly ironed shirts and said I'd make a good wife someday.

(The phone rings. TONY answers it.)

TONY: Hello ... Ok, I'll see.

(To CHER)

It's the home teachers.

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

TONY: They want to come before the end of the month. When will BJ be here?

CHER: He promised me he'd be back for supper at six o'clock. I'm cooking a special meal for him. But let's see, he has something else at seven.

TONY: *(Into phone)* How about six thirty? You can't come then ... No, and look, I think that's really tacky...Okay, call back when BJ's in.

(Hangs up)

Can you believe that? They wanted to come a little before midnight on the thirtieth, and stay long enough to count it for both months.

(Knock at 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.

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

(That cinches it for TONY.)

TONY: Al, you'll be fine. Just move all your things into BJ's room.

(AL steps out again and brings in a suitcase, a bow and arrow, a carton of Coca-Cola and an Indian head-dress.)

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

AL: What?

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

AL: **Poker game** in Albuquerque.

(AL goes into the hall.)

CHER: I need to get a jello mold in my apartment.

TONY: I'll go with you.

(TONY and CHER leave. AL comes out, look around, and dials.)

AL: Yeah, give me Frank. Uncle Frank? It's me, Al. I just got in...I'm in the same apartment she cooks in ...

Don't worry, I'm not going to mess this one up. Besides the last job was really your fault anyway. All you said was to make him an offer he couldn't refuse ... so that's what I did ... eight hundred thousand dollars ... No, I don't know what you're going to do with a pig farm ... Relax, this' ll be easy. All I do is pick the best tune to nab her, call you up, and you'll send Louie and Jake to take her away ... After you get her, what'll you do if her old man won't agree to your terms? ... That's gross ... I know the price of feed is high, but still ... No, I'm not going soft ... Right... Goodbye.

(Hangs up, about to throw up.)

Feeding her to the pigs ... All that blood...

(Runs for bathroom)

SCENE THREE -- *Seven o'clock the same day. TONY, BRAD and AL wait silently around the table. CHER is near tears as she picks up some of the wilted lettuce and drops it back in the bowl. BJ rushes in with a flourish and sits down.*

BJ: Hey, how's it going?

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

BJ: *(Looks at watch)* A little before seven .. Let's see ... we should have a blessing on the food.

(They all bow their heads, except for TONY, who is still fuming.)

TONY: If you'd been here at six like you told Cher, then the food wouldn't need a blessing. Now it needs a miracle.

BJ: Brad, will you say the blessing?

(They all bow their heads, except for TONY.)

TONY: wait a minute. How come you decide who says the Frayer?

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

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(They all bow their heads, except for TONY.)

TONY: Says who?

CHER: Could we just eat? I don't think our prayers'd get out of the room anyway.

(They begin to eat, except for TONY, who glares angrily at BJ.)

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

BRAD: I wonder if that's caused by a chemical action of the blood in the meat.

AL: *(Offended)* Don't talk about blood in the meat. That's disgusting.

BJ: *(finishing big mouthful)* It tastes okay.

(Notices AL)

Who's he?

TONY: Okay? Is that all you can say? This isn't Burger Bob's you know. This is quality food. Tell Cher you like it.

BJ: *(mechanically)* I like it. Who's he?

TONY: Your new roommate.

BJ: Who said he could move in?

TONY: I did.

BJ: You had no right to do that

(To AL)

What priesthood do you hold?

AL: What?

BJ: You know, are you a deacon, teacher, priest, elder or seventy?

(Pause)

AL: I'm an eighty.

BJ: Seriously, have you ever been on a mission?

AL: Maybe I have, maybe I haven't.

BRAD: I went on a mission.

BJ: I didn't know that, Brad. What did you do?

BRAD: I taught and baptized.

BJ: Oh sure. I was a zone leader you know.

AL: *(Sudden decision)* I went on a mission too.

BJ: Terrific.

(Glaring at TONY.)

That makes seventy-five percent of our apartment who've done the right thing.

(The phone rings and BJ jumps up to get it, then sits back at table.)

Hello Oh, Marcia, how's it going?

(Continues to eat and talk at the same time.)

... Well, has your committee met yet? ... I see ... When do you think you could get the posters out? ...

(In order to shovel the food in, BJ pushes all the food on the plate onto a slice of bread, folds it over to make a sandwich.)

Just a minute, let me get the minutes of the last meeting.

(BJ leaves the table, runs to his room, leaving the phone on the table.)

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TONY: Does he always do this at supper?

CHER: There are so many who look to him for direction.

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

BRAD: Look, see your image in the spoon ... This way it's upside down and ...

(Flips spoon to the back.)

... and this way it's right side up.

(BJ comes back to the table.)

BJ: Marcia, I just looked at the minutes. We need the posters by tomorrow...

(CHER shows TONY the spoon trick.)

TONY: I've never noticed that before ... Isn't that strange how you can have something right under your nose and never notice it?

(AL tries it with the spoon.)

AL: Hey, it's upside down!

BJ: *(Offended)* Could we have it a little quiet here? Can't you see I'm on the phone?

TONY: I can fix that.

(Takes his phone and turns it off.)

BJ: *(Incensed)* Do you know what you just did? Do you realize who I am? ... Do you know who Marcia is?

CHER: *(Jealous)* I'd like to know who Marcia is.

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

(Hangs up)

I've got to go.

(Picks up his sandwich)

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

BJ: I'll have it when I get back.

TONY: By then the whipped cream topping'll be turned back into a puddle.

BJ: What are you, Martha Stewart? It's your fault I have to leave anyway. Marcia feels rejected, and I need her for posters.

(BJ goes into the hall, and reappears with a newly pressed shirt on a hanger.)

BJ: I'll change at a stoplight.

AL: Could I go with you to the girl's dorm? I just want to sit in the lobby and smell perfume as they walk past me.

(BJ and AL leave. BRAD goes into the hall. CHER sits looking over the destroyed meal.)

TONY: It doesn't bother you that he's wearing one of the shirts you washed, starched, and ironed on his date with Marcia?

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

TONY: But he's impressing another girl with your creases!

CHER: Let's not talk about it, okay?

TONY: Okay, we won't talk about it. It doesn't bother you?

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CHER: Only when there's lipstick on the collar

TONY: What are you anyway, chopped liver?

CHER: *(Looks at him)* It's been a long time since I heard anyone say that.

TONY: I'm serious. You're from New York. You yell at cab drivers, you shout at rude store clerks, you complain about the subways ... So why do you let him 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, Marcia 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.

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: Let's talk about doing something different.

SCENE FOUR -- *Later that night. CHER finishes cleaning up the kitchen, hangs up her apron and sits down beside TONY, who has been writing at the kitchen table.*

TONY: *(Referring to paper)* I've made a list of things a guy looks for in an LDS girl. I thought we'd go over 'em and maybe pick out some goals. Okay?

CHER: *(Shrugs her shoulders)* Yeah.

TONY: I listed testimony first.

CHER: I've got one. I really do.

TONY: Fine. I'll check that one.

(Marks paper)

The next one I listed is body.

CHER: That didn't take you long, did it?

TONY: Now you can break the body down to face, and then figure. First is face.

CHER: I don't know ... What do you think?

TONY: Hmm ...

(Moves aside her hair to look at her neck.)

You got a neck and ears. That's good ... Overall, I'd say it's a good face.

CHER: Except for the glasses.

TONY: What are you going to do? You gotta see.

CHER: I'll get contact lenses.

TONY: I like you the way you are.

CHER: It's not you I'm trying to please though.

TONY: Right.

(Writes)

Next we have figure.

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(CHER stands up and slowly turns around. TONY clears his throat.)

CHER: Well?

TONY: It's fine.

CHER: *(Facing him)* I'm not too, well, you know ...

TONY: Don't worry about it.

CHER: Isn't that important to men?

TONY: I read where they did studies and found out the lower the IQ of a man, the greater his obsession with that ... What's BJ's IQ?

CHER: I think it's high.

TONY: You got nothing to worry about. The next one on the list is common interests. Since BJ's biggest interest is BJ, at least you've got that in common.

CHER: Tony, be constructive.

TONY: Okay Let's see, common interests. Guys from the West are crazy about killing deer. Do you know anything about that?

CHER: What's there to know?

TONY: Well, do you know how to clean a deer?

CHER: Do they get dirty?

TONY: That brings us to the next me on the list, a sense of humor.

CHER: I'm not sure BJ has one.

TONY: For you, being married to him'd be a joke.

CHER: What's the next one?

TONY: A supporting attitude, like cooking his favorite foods. What does he like?

CHER: Dry, black, crusty burnt pot roast. It's like a burnt offering ... Okay, I'll start burning his food for him.

(TONY writes that dawn.)

TONY: That's all I have on my list. By all counts you oughta be married.

CHER: There must be more. Maybe I should do things that Utah girls do, like learning to dry apricot pits ... I know, I still have some of my Eastern cynicism. I need to be sincere and say things like, "Today is the first day of the rest of my life."

(CHER leans over to write it down. TONY likes having her close to him. BRAD comes in and sits down with them at the kitchen table.)

BRAD: Tony, I've been thinking about what you said today. Marriage is a commandment and I should be obedient ... like Abraham, willing to sacrifice his son ... I'm twenty five years old and in four months I'll be through at the Y. I should get married by then. Who do I see about that?

CHER: See? First you have to start dating.

BRAD: I don't know anybody.

CHER: How about in your ward?

BRAD: I'm a ward clerk so it's not like I'm a stranger to girls in the ward. My name's on all their ward lists.

(Pause. TONY and CHER look at each other.)

CHER: Maybe you could take my roommate out. She's only a sophomore but I think she'd agree to go out with you ... one time.

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TONY: See there?

CHER: Her name is Jenny Stewart. Her parents are on a mission to Australia.

BRAD: No kidding! My parents are living in New Zealand this year on a sabbatical.

CHER: But, Brad, she's not into science. She's more of a physical education type, so don't go dropping any equations around her.

BRAD: Physical education? Do I have to be alone with her? She's not going to make me run laps, is she?

CHER: How about if we invite her for supper? I'll talk to her tonight.

(BJ rushes into the room, carrying a large poster which reads BJ ROBERTS FOR PRESIDENT.)

BJ: *(Showing off sign)* Well, what do you think?

TONY: Nice lettering. Did you do it yourself?

BJ: Marcia and a group of girls in Robison Hall gave it to me. They want me to run for president.

CHER: Are you going to?

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

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

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

TONY: Really.

BJ: *(Hanging up poster on wall)* We all need to get working. This'll encourage us to reach our goal.

CHER: BJ, what about us?

BJ: I only want to serve the people.

TONY: You could get a job as a custodian at the Wilkinson Center to do that.

BJ: Cher, if I can get the votes from the girls' dorms, I can carry the election.

CHER: *(Resigned to it)* I'll help you any way I can.

BJ: I knew you would.

CHER: I could go by the dorm and tell them about you.

TONY: *(Negative)* Actually, I'd like to do that too.

BJ: Maybe I'd do better if they thought I was, well, you know, available, I mean if they didn't think I was ... going with anybody.

CHER: *(obviously hurt)* Oh.

(Thinking again.)

Oh?

BJ: It's just a few weeks 'til the election. After that, I can be seen with you again.

CHER: *(Devastated)* Oh.

BJ: And Cher, I'll need more shirts each week too. It'll be hard work, but it'll all be worth it.

(BJ turns to face the poster.)

TONY: Will it?

BJ: Sure ... just think how this is going to look on my resumé.

BLACKOUT

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE -- *A week later. TONY on the phone.*

TONY: No sign of anything so far ... Yes sir, I'm spending a lot of time with her. I'm going over now to walk her to the store ... No sir, I'm not messing around with her ... No, it's not because there's anything wrong with her ... Yes sir. Goodbye.

(TONY leaves. A few seconds later AL enters the apartment and dials.)

AL: Uncle Frank? About the you know what ... It's a little hard to give you a definite time ... Sundays are out. I never spent so much time in church. They announced a fireside. I went but there was no fire ... No, Mondays are out ... It's family home evening ... Tuesdays there's a young adult meeting ... Wednesday afternoon we're going to the family history center to work on genealogy ... By the way, what branch of the Mafia do we come from?

(BJ walks into the apartment.)

Look, I'll talk to you later.

(Hangs up.)

Hey, how's it going?

BJ: Rotten. The guy running against me is using unfair tactics. He's better qualified.

AL: Maybe I could help. What if the rumor got around he paints his toenails?

BJ: Is that true?

AL: Rumors don't always have to be true, do they?

BJ: Can you take care of it?

AL: Piece of cake.

BJ: Why don't you come with me tonight? I'm going to talk to a group of public-minded, civic-spirited, concerned freshmen girls from California.

SCENE TWO -- *A day later. AL on the phone long distance.*

AL: Uncle Frank? What do you mean, me and my pig farm? ... The Feds got Louie ... and Jake too? What for?... Failing to file an environmental impact statement. The Feds say we got dirty pigs? ... So with Louie and Jake gone, who's gonna nab the girl? ... Me? I can't do that ... Well, for one thing, I don't even know how to begin ... You'll help me... Okay, what do I do? ... Knockout drops? ... Where am I gonna get knockout drops in Provo, Utah?

BLACKOUT

SCENE THREE -- *Two days later, near supper time. The table is set with a white cloth. BRAD wears a*

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conservative gray suit, with strange tie. His blackboard has been wiped clean. Two large campaign posters with BJ's smiling face adorn the living room wall. The coffee table is set for light refreshments. BJ enters the room as CHER, TONY, and BRAD work to prepare for JENNY. BJ sets up a sound system.

BJ: Quiet everyone! I'm going to record now.

(TONY waits until just after BJ turns on the recorder.)

TONY: Why do you want it quiet?

BJ: *(Erasing tape)* You had to wreck it, didn't you?

TONY: I just asked a simple question.

BJ: Well, for your information, I'm taping a message of hope and encouragement to campaign workers in Heritage Halls. It'll mean a great deal to them to hear my voice while they work on posters tonight.

(BJ turns on the recorder. Then, in a distinguished voice:)

My fellow workers, sisters in the campaign. I'm so happy to have this opportunity to speak to you tonight and personally thank you for all your dedicated labors. This is an arduous campaign and we need all of you working ... for me. We must push onward and upward, never give up, fix on our goals, plan our work, work our plan, push through and on and forward and upward, putting our shoulders to the wheel, our eyes on the target, our feet on the ground, and our hands to the plow.

(TONY, amused by all this, sits down to watch.)

I'm reminded of something that happened while I was on my mission, serving as a mission assistant. One day our kitchen drain wouldn't drain. We bought some liquid drain cleaner and poured it down ... It still didn't drain ... Finally we called the landlord. When he came, he got a wrench and undid the trap in the bottom.

(TONY can't figure out why BJ is telling this. He leans forward to look at him with curiosity.)

Much to our surprise, he found a small bottle cap trapped there. We could've put drain cleaner in all day ... and to no avail. I'll never forget what he said when I asked him why he hadn't poured down liquid drain cleaner ...

(Impressive moral)

NO USE DOING THAT UNTIL YOU FIRST FIND OUT WHAT'S PLUGGING IT UP ... I've never forgotten that important lesson.

(TONY begins to snicker, but manages to stifle it.)

How many of us in the DRAIN PIPE OF LIFE don't first find out what's plugging us up? Isn't that just like life?...Isn't that just like this campaign?

(AL enters the hallway, dressed as impressively as BJ. TONY is in tears with suppressed laughter. He stuffs part of a pillow to his mouth to muffle his laughing. BJ, terribly offended, clicks off the machine, and stands up. TONY removes the pillow and roars.)

I fail to find anything funny about an important lesson I learned on my mission.

TONY: *(Hardly able to talk)* I know, I know That's why it's so funny ... The drain pipe of life?

(Loses control again.)

BJ: Well, at least I know better than to cast my pearls before swine.

AL: *(Looks at CHER)* I know what you mean. It's a sad thing to feed your swine a girl ... I mean pearl.

BJ: Oh, Cher, I won't be eating here tonight. I'm speaking to a group of concerned cheerleaders ... They want

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longer half times.

CHER: *(Cooly)* I didn't plan on you anyway.

BJ: You didn't? Oh Let's go Al.

(BJ and AL leave. CHER sets out two candle sticks on the table and admires the effect.)

CHER: I think we're ready. Jenny should be here any minute.

(BRAD nervously wipes his forehead with a linen napkin from a place setting and drops it back on the table.)

BRAD: What am I going to do? I don't know what to say.

CHER: You can always talk about the weather.

BRAD: Oh sure.

(Fresh Panic)

Tell me what to say about the weather.

TONY: It's hot for this time of year.

BRAD: Thanks.

(Knock on the door. CHER gets it. JENNY energetically bounces in.)

JENNY: Sorry I'm late -- my karate class went overtime.

(BRAD flinches.)

CHER: Jenny, this is Brad and this is Tony.

TONY: Hi Jenny. Cher's told me a lot about you.

(BRAD walks over and, missionary style, shakes her hand.)

BRAD: Sister Jenny, it's certainly a pleasure to be here today...

(Decides to copy TONY.)

Everybody' talking about you.

CHER: *(on her way to the kitchen)* Why don't you all sit down and I'll get us something to nibble on while the casserole cooks.

(They sit down. BRAD sits ramrod straight and fiddles with his tie.)

JENNY: Well, here we are.

(Dead silence)

BRAD: Yes, we are ... we're here.

(Dead silence)

BRAD: *(Desperately)* I'm hot for this time of year!

JENNY: You are?

(Dead silence)

TONY: I think he means it's hot for this time of year.

JENNY: Oh, sure.

(CHER returns with chip dip and a bowl of potato chips.)

Oh, Cher, this is so nice.

(Tastes dip)

It's delicious! What is it?

CHER: A shrimp and clam dip. My aunt taught me how to make it ... before she passed away.

BRAD: *(worried)* How soon before?

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(TONY glares at BRAD then tries the dip.)

TONY: Say, this is excellent.

(BRAD dips a chip, but instead of dipping down and up, he dips sideways, knocking the dip bowl onto the carpet. In panic, he scoops the dip up in his hands and plops it down on the coffee table.)

BRAD: I'm sorry! Oh, what a dumb thing to do!

(CHER heads for the kitchen to get rags to clean up. BRAD wipes his hands on the cloth tablecloth on the coffee table, managing to spill the chips on the floor also.)

BRAD: I uh ... it slipped!

TONY: A long time ago, I'm afraid.

(CHER comes back and begins to clean up. TONY picks up chips from the floor. JENNY lightly touches BRAD's arm, causing him to jump.)

JENNY: Could I give you a little advice? You're so tense. You need to learn to relax your body.

BRAD: My body's just demolished an entire bowl of chip dip and you ask me to relax?

JENNY: Let me teach you an exercise that'll help you to relax ... Let's all do this together.

(TONY and CHER quit cleaning.)

For this, you need to take off your suitcoat and tie.

(JENNY helps BRAD off with his suitcoat and tie.)

Okay, now let's all sit down on the floor.

(They sit down.)

Now just lie back.

(They lie down.)

This is a good exercise when you've been studying and need to relax for a minute ... Okay, are we ready?...

Concentrate on your toes ... Completely relax your toes Think of calmness flowing over your toes.

(BRAD's toes twitch.)

BRAD: *(Sitting up)* I don't think my toes are ever that tense.

JENNY: Okay, lie back Now let's relax our ankles.

(BRAD lies back down.)

Is everyone concentrating on relaxing your ankles? Okay, now we go to the legs. Let's all relax our legs...

Think of the calming essence flowing over your legs. Now let's relax our lower trunk...

(BRAD suddenly gets up.)

What's wrong?

BRAD: I have to go to the bathroom.

(BRAD leaves. The rest sit up.)

CHER: Jenny, I'm sorry about this You're being such a good sport about it though.

JENNY: I feel such potential in him, don't you?

TONY: Potential for what?

CHER: *(Diplomatically)* Well, sure, I guess so. I definitely think he could be more than he is.

(BRAD returns.)

CHER: Well, back to the kitchen for me.

TONY: I'll help you.

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(TONY and CHER leave. BRAD sits on a chair, his back still tense.)

JENNY: Do you want to continue the relaxing exercises?

BRAD: *(His voice cracking)* No, no. I'll practice it the next time I'm tense.

(JENNY walks behind the chair he's sitting in, and begins to massage his neck and shoulders. BRAD likes it.)

JENNY: *(Massaging his shoulders)* You have such strong muscles here.

BRAD: That's from doing this.

(Shrugs his shoulders)

JENNY: You know, between the two of us I bet we know a lot. I'm a PE major, so I'm concerned with the body. And you're a physics major, so you're involved with the mind ... Tell me about yourself.

BRAD: I'm a ward clerk.

JENNY: Really? That's such a big responsibility. My father was a stake clerk before my parents left for their mission.

BRAD: If your father were here right now, do you know what I'd do? I'd ask him about my 42-FP report.

JENNY: And he'd help you too.

(Runs her fingers through his hair)

BRAD: *(Greatly distracted by her)* If the other secretaries would just get their reports in on time, my job 'd be a lot easier.

JENNY: That's just what Daddy used to say.

(JENNY sits next to him.)

You have a nice nose ... I've made noses my hobby ... I even have a nose scrapbook. I like your nose very much.

(BRAD touches his nose and feels its shape.)

BRAD: I never even think much about it 'til I have a cold.

JENNY: You've just neglected your body, haven't you? Can you swim?

BRAD: Oh sure. I'm an Eagle Scout.

JENNY: An Eagle Scout? I'm just so impressed.

BRAD: Sometimes I go to the swimming pool I like to submerge and sit motionless on the bottom of the pool.

JENNY: No kidding? I work as a lifeguard on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Wait! I've seen you on the bottom of the pool. Small world, isn't it? Do you remember seeing me there?

BRAD: On the bottom all I notice are toes.

JENNY: I've never in my whole life had a date with an Eagle Scout ... Tell me some more about yourself.

BRAD: I went on a mission to Nebraska.

JENNY: Tell me about Nebraska.

BRAD: It's mostly rural, you know.

JENNY: Really?

BRAD: Yes, they have farms and ranches in Nebraska. More farms in Eastern Nebraska, but more ranches in Western Nebraska.

(BRAD reaches out to hold her hand, but hesitates, his hand in mid-air.)

JENNY: How do they ever decide on that?

BRAD: I think it depends on the type of soil.

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JENNY: Oh sure, it would, wouldn't it? That's so educational. See, I'm already learning from your mind.

(BRAD plunges ahead, grabbing her hand.)

BRAD: And I'm learning from ...

(Stops because he anticipates the logical end of the sentence)

... also. Now you tell me about yourself.

JENNY: There isn't much to tell really. I'm certainly not an Eagle Scout ... I teach the family relations class in Sunday School.

BRAD: I think family relations are so important, especially to a family.

JENNY: That's so true. Some couples, before they get married, don't sit down and talk about important things ... like how many children they want.

BRAD: I want as many as my wife and I can stand ... I mean handle.

JENNY: Communications are very important to a marriage. A husband and wife should be able to talk like, well, like we are tonight.

BRAD: I agree.

JENNY: You do?

BRAD: Oh yes.

JENNY: Of course we have an advantage, being members of the church. Starting with a temple marriage- Kneeling in the temple together. Committing to love each other for time and eternity. It's very important to me. I don't want anything else, do you?

BRAD: I'm happy to report that I have a current temple recommend. Want to see it?

(He pulls out recommend.)

JENNY: I'm so proud of you. It hasn't been easy, has it? There are so many opportunities to go wrong in this life.

BRAD: There are?

(TONY and CHER come into the living room.)

CHER: Well it's finally ready. I bet you've both been starving to death.

BRAD: Oh no, we've had a very interesting conversation.

JENNY:(Holding his arm to be escorted) This Brad is quite a man. Did you know he's an Eagle Scout?

(They all walk toward the kitchen.)

BRAD: After supper, if you want, I'll teach you all how to do semaphore signaling.

BLACKOUT

SCENE FOUR -- *The next day. AL on the phone, holding a glass of coke in his hand.*

AL: You think two knockout drops are enough? ... Okay, I'll drive straight through and meet you in Chicago.

(BJ hurriedly comes in. AL hangs up.)

BJ: Wow, I'm late. I'm meeting with the girls from Heritage Halls tonight.

AL: Can I go with you?

BJ: I think it's better if just one guy is there.

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AL: Why?

BJ: It's easier to discuss the issues.

AL: What issues?

BJ: You know, like promising 'em more returned missionaries on campus. I should do this myself ... It's my duty.

AL: Just let me come along and look at the voters.

BJ: Sorry, not this time.

(BJ goes into hall. CHER comes in with groceries and goes into the kitchen. AL picks up the drink and approaches her.)

AL: I fixed you a drink.

CHER: Oh, that's so considerate.

(Takes the glass)

What is it?

AL: Just a coke.

CHER: Oh, gee, Al, thanks anyway, but I don't drink cola drinks.

(Sets glass down)

AL: *(Panic)* What do you mean? This is the real thing!

CHER: I really appreciate the thought though Wow, look at the time. Gotta run and help Jenny get ready for a date with Brad. See you later.

(CHER leaves. BJ comes out, official blue blazer and all.)

BJ: Well, I'm on my way.

(Sees glass.)

Oh, could I have a drink of that?

AL: *(Watching him drink)* It's a cola drink.

(BJ finishes, sits down, and suddenly falls asleep. AL drags him into the bedroom and in a few seconds returns putting on BJ's blazer and humming to himself. As he leaves, he practices his speech.)

AL: Girls, I'm here for one purpose only and that's to ... and that's to speak for BJ Roberts, who earlier this evening collapsed from exhaustion. Being his right hand man, I decided to come and look ... I mean, talk to you tonight...

BLACKOUT

SCENE FIVE -- *The next day, about four in the afternoon. BRAD and JENNY play chess in the living room. CHER prepares supper.*

JENNY: Tell me again how the bishops move.

BRAD: Diagonally.

JENNY: I knew a bishop once who moved like that.

(Moves her bishop)

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There.

BRAD: Checkmate.

JENNY: Tell me again what that means.

BRAD: It means I can take your king. The game's over.

JENNY: Over? I still have plenty of others left.

BRAD: My queen can take command. When the king's gone, the game's over.

JENNY: A man made up this game, right?

(CHER heads for the door.)

CHER: I'm going to get some bread. If BJ wakes up, tell him we'll be eating at six. He's sure been sleeping a long time.

(CHER leaves.)

BRAD: Want a rematch?

JENNY: *(Serious)* Brad, there's something I need to talk to you about.

BRAD: You want to change the rules for chess?

JENNY: No, it's not that. It's something you should know ... Brad, I'm waiting for a missionary.

BRAD: You are?

JENNY: His name is Jeff Turner. I met him last year when we were both freshmen. He's been gone almost a year now.

BRAD: Is he an athlete?

JENNY: He played freshmen football.

BRAD: *(Defeated)* A football player? I should've known someone like you would be taken ... Just my luck. It's the story of my life ... when I was five years old, I was the only kid who didn't find one egg on an Easter egg hunt ... I guess you want me to quit seeing you, don't you?

JENNY: Just like that?

BRAD: In life same people find the Easter eggs and some don't.

JENNY: I'm not an Easter egg.

BRAD: Yeah, and I'm not a winner -- but that must've been obvious from the beginning. What was I Jenny, an extra credit project?

(He gets her coat and helps her on with it. They start to walk toward the door, when she turns and lashes cut at him.)

JENNY: You don't know beans!

BRAD: Like what?

JENNY: *(Shouting)* "When the going gets tough, the tough get going!"

BRAD: Oh yeah? Did your jock boyfriend tell you that?

JENNY: No, but he could have. Believe me, he'd never give up just because a girl told him she was waiting for a missionary! No sir! Not him! Especially if he cared for her. That'd only make him more determined to win her love. He'd never quit!

(A long pause as BRAD thinks about that.)

BRAD: What would he do?

JENNY: He'd take me in his arms and tell me he loves me.

BRAD: He would?

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JENNY: Sure -- that's the kind of a guy he is.

(BRAD marches over to her, and puts his arm around her. It seems a little awkward.)

BRAD: Like that?

JENNY: Not so much around my neck. I can't breathe.

(BRAD loosens up.)

BRAD: Better?

JENNY: Much.

BRAD: Jenny, I love you. Now what would he do?

JENNY: He'd kiss me.

BRAD: He would?

(BRAD kisses her. It's a long kiss)

BRAD: *(Finally breaking away, now elated)* He sounds like a wonderful guy! What's that saying again?

JENNY: When the going gets tough, the tough get going!

(He kisses her again.)

BRAD: *(Very enthusiastic)* You know, we need to support our missionaries! Why don't we bake him some chocolate chip cookies tonight?

(They kiss again. TONY comes in, at first doesn't see them kissing, puts down his books, turns around and sees them. He clears his throat loudly, and they break apart.)

Jenny was just telling me about her missionary. We're going to bake him some chocolate chip cookies.

TONY: The way you two were going, you won't even need an oven.

BRAD: *(laughing with delight)* Well, you know what they say -- when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

(Kisses her again.)

SCENE SIX -- *Sunday morning. AL is on the phone in an empty apartment.*

AL: She wouldn't drink it, I'm telling you ... Well, cola drinks have caffeine in 'em ... I'm sorry about your credibility too. Ok, I'll have her out of here first thing today.

(CHER comes into apartment carrying a recipe book. AL hangs up.)

CHER: *(Looking at recipe book)* Let's see, it says two hours at 400 degrees. I'll raise it to 500 degrees for four hours. That oughta burn it the way BJ likes it.

(AL gets a carton of milk from the table, pours several drops of knockout drops in it, and then approaches CHER.)

AL: Can I drive you to church?

CHER: Sure, just a minute while I get this in the oven.

AL: You mean it? You'll go with me to church?

CHER: Sure. Tony had to go early for a meeting.

AL: How about a nice glass of milk before we leave?

CHER: *(Turns around)* Al, I'm surprised. Don't you know what day this is?

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AL: Don't tell me. It's a day you don't drink milk/

CHER: It's Fast Sunday. I'm fasting.

AL: Fasting?

(BRAD comes out of the bedroom.)

BRAD: Can I get a ride to church?

AL: No! She's mine! She's going with me alone!

CHER: That's silly, Al. He can come with us, can't he? And we might as well pick up Jenny too. BJ isn't up yet -- the old sleepy head.

(They leave. BJ staggers out of the bedroom, just waking up from the knockout drops.)

BJ: *(Staggers to the table)* I see what they mean about cola drinks.

(He sees the glass of milk, takes a drink, and his head falls onto table unconscious.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE SEVEN -- *Later that day. JENNY and CHER clean up after a big Sunday dinner.*

JENNY: I can't understand why BJ is sleeping so much lately.

CHER: It's the best thing for him. He's been under a lot of pressure lately with the election coming up.

(They work silently for a few seconds.)

JENNY: Cher, you waited for BJ. Maybe you can help me. I need to talk to someone.

CHER: You want to learn to knit?

JENNY: I want to learn how to write a Dear John letter ... I think I'm falling in love.

CHER: Yeah? Who with?

JENNY: Brad.

CHER: You're kidding?

(Looking at her.)

You're not kidding. But why? Jeff has more in common with you. I remember last year when you'd come back from playing tennis. There'd you be, both sweating like crazy and smelling like two draft horses ... It was so romantic... Besides, Jeff's counting on you to wait.

JENNY: I didn't plan this. It just happened. Brad's the best friend I've ever had.

CHER: *(Haunted by TONY)* I don't think it's a good idea to marry someone who's also a good friend.

JENNY: You mean like you and Tony?

CHER: Yeah, like that. I've told him everything about me... We know each other's weaknesses ... I don't want my future husband to know me that well.

JENNY: Cher, that's silly.

CHER: No, it's not. A wife should be on a pedestal, above her husband, lifting him up ... At least he needs to be fooled into thinking that ... So I decide on the kind of person I want to be and force myself into that mold.

He won't know ... and someday I'll actually fit that mold.

JENNY: You mean straight jacket.

CHER: It's easy for you to talk. You're already good. I've seen the picture of you graduating from Primary with the little sash draped around you All those Primary awards-But me, I had to repent like crazy when I started

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the missionary discussions ... Now I'm not sure which is the real me ... But one thing I know. My husband's never going to know my weaknesses ... and someday if I keep it up, I may end up as a Relief Society president.

JENNY: What are all these weaknesses you keep talking about?

CHER: I don't want to shock you.

JENNY: I don't shock easy, so try me.

CHER: ... You know those specials at Carson's Market? Only one to a customer ... Well, I make two trips.

JENNY: I still love you.

CHER: There's more. Three months ago on Fast Sunday I bore my testimony and I wasn't even fasting ... I may have looked like I was fasting but that was because I slept in and didn't have time to do my hair. I looked so rotten ... I figured I should take advantage of it ... sort of the female version of John the Baptist in the wilderness. That was the time everyone told me how spiritual I was.

JENNY: (*Laughing*) I've done that too.

CHER: No, Jenny, don't try and make me seem like you. I'm not like you ... I'm not a good person ... don't you understand? I'm not like you people. I'm an imposter. Look, I've never admitted this to anyone -- but even the thought of canning fruit makes me ill. I figure if God wanted us to can peaches, he wouldn't have given us grocery stores.

JENNY: Cher, all this time you've felt inferior, yet I look up to you as a good example for me.

CHER: Not me.

JENNY: Yes you. You've changed your life so much since you joined the church. You must be the world expert on repentance. Well, look, Girl, I need to repent too, you know. Everybody does. And for that, I think you're a champ.

CHER: (*Silence*) Actually there might be one or two other things ... You know all those booties everyone thinks I knitted while I was waiting for BJ ... Well, actually I paid someone to do it ... I thought it'd impress BJ ... Her name is Ida Jensen ... she's seventy four years old ... When anyone asks me if I made 'em myself, I always say, "Ida made 'em ..." And they just think it's my Eastern accent ... Jenny, I don't know how to knit ... But look, I'm gonna learn. I gave up coffee and tea and sleeveless dresses, so I can learn to knit ... You'll see...

(*Points to imaginary scene in the sky*)

Someday I'll knit you a doily ... I can see it now. You'll be so proud of me then...

SCENE EIGHT -- Four days later. AL is on the phone.

AL: C'mon, Uncle Frank, I've just about got her ... You can't scare me with that bit about feeding me to the pigs if I don't nab her soon ... Yeah, I read about that missing mayor ... You know where he is?... Why are you singing "My Bologna Has a First Name."...

(*Sudden realization, about to throw up*)

... Okay, tomorrow for sure...

(*Hangs up, runs to bathroom. BRAD and JENNY enter the apartment.*)

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BRAD: Anyone here? ... I guess not.

(BRAD pulls out the blackboard and picks up a piece of chalk.)

You're sure you won't be bored?

JENNY: No, you go ahead I've never seen a scientist work before. What kind of homework do you have?

BRAD: Quantum mechanics.

JENNY: Is that like auto mechanics?

BRAD: *(Distracted by her)* You start with curves -- I mean, waves.

(He puts the chalk down, touches her face, quits, picks up the chalk.)

See, you have this uncertainty principle.

(He puts the chalk down, picks it up, starts toward her, stops, picks up the chalk, lays it down, grabs her and kisses her. Then, with great self-discipline, he breaks away, and begins pacing the floor like a caged lion.)

JENNY: Is something wrong?

BRAD: Don't ask.

JENNY: Don't you like to kiss me?

BRAD: I like it--that's my problem.

JENNY: I don't understand.

BRAD: *(Stops pacing)* All right! Do you want me to spell it out for you? Is that what you want?

JENNY: Sure, if that'll make it clearer.

BRAD: *(Shouting)* All right! I will spell it out for you! H-0-R-M-OP-N-E-S! Do you know what that spells? It spells...

(Embarrassed. Then quietly:)

You know what it spells.

JENNY: *(Bewildered)* All I did was ask about your homework.

BRAD: Jenny, go home. I'm not worthy to be with you.

JENNY: But we haven't done anything wrong.

BRAD: But we could, and that worries me. I guess it serves me right. I always figured I was above all this. In high school I never could figure out why there were so many lessons on chastity ... It was easy for me ... I wasn't dating ... and, besides, I had calculus ... Now look at me.

JENNY: Do I need to dress more modestly?

BRAD: Could you wear a parka? No, it's not you. It's me. I'm sorry, but the more we kiss, the more of a problem it is for me. Jenny, we've got a problem ... when we're apart, I'm miserable. And now lately when we're together I'm miserable, but in a different way.

(They sit down, at opposite ends of the couch.)

JENNY: So what are we going to do?

BRAD: I should know. We had so many lessons on this in priest's quorum. Our adviser even made us carry a set of rules in our wallets.

(Goes for his wallet.)

Want to hear 'em?

JENNY: I always wondered what guys talked about in priesthood meeting.

BRAD: Rule number one: "Never be alone in a room with a member of the opposite sex."

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(They look warily around the room.)

Let's get out of here. We'll wait outside 'til Tony gets home.

JENNY: But it's snowing outside.

(Helps her on with her coat, then puts his on.)

BRAD: *(Reading)* Rule number two 'When temptation comes, run three miles a day.'

JENNY: So that's why so many guys jog.

BRAD: Rule number three: 'When You're tempted, sing a church hymn.'

(As they exit, BRAD begins to sing quietly, "Shall the Youth of Zion Falter?" As he continues, he sings with increasing determination and enthusiasm.)

Sing, Jenny, sing!

(They exit singing.)

SCENE NINE -- *CHER works in the kitchen. AL comes out of the bedroom, wearing dark glasses and carrying a gun. He points the gun at CHER.*

AL: All right! Get away from there, nice and easy, and nobody'll get hurt.

(CHER turns around and looks at him without a word.)

Now I'm calling the shots, see. You be real quiet, we're gonna walk to the car, and you're gonna drive, but I'm gonna have my gun on you all the way to Chicago. You got that?

(CHER stares at him, expressionless, for several seconds.)

CHER: I got it! Robert Duvall in "Chicago Mobs." Right? I guessed it, didn't I?

AL: What?

CHER: Terrific impersonation. Well, I gotta go finish my homework while the meat burns.

(CHER leaves. AL is powerless to stop her.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE TEN -- *A few days later near suppertime. CHER peels potatoes. TONY enters and walks over to her.*

TONY: So how are you?

CHER: You want me to talk Utah Mormon or New York?

TONY: Let's try Utah Mormon.

CHER: *(brightly)* I'm so happy to be here today and I mean that sincerely. It's such a wonderful time in the history of the world to be alive. And today is the first day of the rest of our lives.

TONY: I can't take it anymore. Give me New York. How are ya?

CHER: Ehh and you?

TONY: Don't ask I'd have to improve to flunk.

(They laugh. CHER reaches into her purse and pulls out a bottle of time-release perfume capsules.)

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CHER: I got this at the bookstore today. It's a time-release perfume with a programmed fragrance ... it starts out mild, but in two hours, it's dynamite.

(Scatters the beads on her hair.)

Want to smell?

(TONY smells her hair.)

TONY: It's the way my third grade teacher used to smell.

CHER: Yeah, well just wait.

TONY: The wonders of science strikes again. Speaking of science, where's Brad?

CHER: Guess.

TONY: With Jenny again? Have you noticed them lately, standing outside in the afternoons. Yesterday I thought they were snowmen 'til they started walking toward me.

CHER: Jenny's been acting very strange. I caught her yesterday reading a Physics book.

(CHER pulls out the goal list she and TONY worked on. She looks through it.)

I've been working on the goals we talked about. I think it's working. Yesterday BJ asked me where I learned to cook meat ... And I pick up my contact lenses Saturday ... And look at this, I've been working on it...

(CHER gives a sincere gazing-at-the-heavens look.)

TONY: Something wrong with the ceiling?

CHER: I'm looking at the clouds as the sun breaks through.

(TONY walks over beside her and looks up with her.)

TONY: What clouds?

CHER: You know the movies that end with someone gazing into the sunset? Now that's a sincere look, right? And I've got it, right?

(As she continues to look up, TONY takes a dish towel and drapes it over her head. She pulls it off and tosses a small glass of water at him.)

TONY: *(Laughing)* All right, you asked for it!

(He runs into the hall, appears a second later with a bucket, chasing her around the kitchen. They both start giggling.)

I'll teach you to mess with someone from Jersey.

CHER: Tony, don't!

TONY: Save your breath, kid! You'll need it for running. I was the cross country champ at Newark.

(He finally corners her.)

CHER: Truce! King's X!

TONY: Now that's a sincere look!

(He tosses the water at her, but the bucket turns out to be empty. She screams, then laughs when she realizes the bucket was empty. They both collapse laughing. He puts his arm around her in a brotherly hug, telling her how funny she looked when he threw the water. Then they embrace. He kisses her. She breaks away suddenly.)

CHER: *(walking away)* Did I tell you I pick up my contacts Saturday?

TONY: *(following her)* Cher? I need to talk to you There's some things about me you need to know.

CHER: *(Flustered)* I think BJ' will like 'em on me. That's why I'm getting 'em. For BJ ... because I love him ... We're going to get married.

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(The phone rings. TONY answers it.)

TONY: Hello ... No, he isn't here ... Okay, I'll tell him ... Bye.

(Hangs up.)

It was one of the home teachers. He wants to talk to BJ about a home teaching visit.

(BJ and AL rush in.)

BJ: We can't stay! I just need to pick up some things before me meet with a group of girls from Arizona ... They want hitching posts on campus.

CHER: *(For Tony's sake)* BJ, I love you.

BJ: *(Glancing through mail)* I appreciate you too, Cher.

(Glancing up from mail)

Did you finish my shirts?

CHER: They're in the hall.

BJ: Great. Catch you later.

(Goes into hall.)

CHER: Al, a package came for you.

(CHER gives AL a package.)

AL: *(Opening it)* I wonder what it is.

(He looks into the box, starts gagging, and runs for the bathroom. TONY looks in the box.)

CHER: What made him do that?

TONY: Nothing to get sick about ... Somebody sent him a package of pork sausage.

(BJ comes out of the hall, wearing a different shirt.)

BJ: What's wrong with Al? He just locked himself in the bathroom.

CHER: Maybe it's the flu.

BJ: Tell him to watch what he drinks. In fact, tell him not to drink anything.

TONY: Oh, the home teachers called. They want to know when to come.

BJ: Have 'em keep calling 'til I'm home, okay? Well I gotta run. See you around.

(BJ leaves.)

CHER: *(Disappointed)* He didn't even notice my perfume ... If I hear one more talk about marriage and the family, I'm gonna scream. I'm doing the best I can.

(BRAD and JENNY burst in singing, "Have I Done Any Good in the World Today?". BRAD wears sporty, casual clothes, no more grays, and his hair is done more handsomely. They enter, arm in arm, physically close, delighted with each other, and a little silly.)

JENNY: Here we are, the stars of physics research! Brad took me through his lab ... He made me a diamond out of pencil lead.

BRAD: *(Modestly)* Actually it was just a tiny diamond.

CHER: Have you eaten?

BRAD: *(Giggling)* I don't know. Have we eaten?

JENNY: I don't know. After you gave me that tiny diamond and proposed, I can't remember anything after that.

TONY: Proposed?

BRAD: We're going to get married.

TONY: When?

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BRAD: When, Jenny?

JENNY: Any time you want.

BRAD: How about Saturday?

JENNY: I always wanted to get married on a Saturday. Can we stay up and watch "Saturday Night Live?"

BRAD: Jenny, we'll be Saturday Night Live!

TONY: You just can't get married like that!

CHER: Jenny, you have to pick out a wedding dress. And there's invitations and a reception to plan. It takes weeks to get everything planned.

JENNY: That's what you do when your parents are around, but ours aren't. Besides, the main thing is to get married in the temple.

TONY: You'd better talk to your bishop about this.

BRAD: We did.

TONY: What did he say?

BRAD: Congratulations.

TONY: You've only known each other for a few weeks. Take more time to find out if it's really going to last.

BRAD: *(Looks at watch)* That's fifteen seconds. I still feel the same way. How about you, Jenny?

JENNY: I waited for you.

TONY: How many girls have you ever dated?

BRAD: What difference does it make? I'm twenty-five years old. This isn't exactly a teenage wedding
(Remembers JENNY)

Is it?

JENNY: No, but just barely.

CHER: Jenny, he's much older than you.

TONY: Look at it this way -- when he was in high school, you were still watching "Sesame Street."

BRAD: I'm tired of singing and jogging! I've taken so many cold showers this week I may have diaper rash ... I want to get married! Tony, we need you to drive us from the temple to the motel ... I'd be too embarrassed to tell a taxi driver to take us to a motel ... He'd suspect something.

TONY: Can't you two at least wait 'til your parents get back to the states?

JENNY: I'd just like to know why you both are against us getting married.
(CHER and TONY look at each other.)

CHER: Why are we?

TONY: Brad, I pictured you marrying someone like Madam Curie ... She's stand by you at the blackboard.

CHER: And I pictured Jenny marrying another PE major doing morning calisthenics together.

BRAD: *(Holding Jenny's hand)* Before I met Jenny, I thought in black and white. Graphs, equations, logic. Then I met her and discovered reds and yellows and blues. Delicious colors and beautiful sounds. It's like seeing the world for the first time. Without her, life is no fun.

JENNY: Brad is the nicest guy I've ever known. He's good and kind and faithful in the Church. And he's very smart. Do you know he has nearly all the Church hymns memorized?

CHER: *(Softening)* Where will you go for your honeymoon?

BRAD: We reserved a room at a motel for Saturday and Sunday. We thought we'd take a small hot plate from the physics lab and a few groceries. We'll save money that way.

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TONY: All right, you win. I'll drive you both from the temple the motel. Cher can come with us to cheer Jenny up.

BRAD: She won't need cheering up will you?

(JENNY wraps her arms around BRAD and kisses him. When he breaks away, breathing with difficulty, he begins singing, "Choose the Right." Jenny joins in.)

SCENE ELEVEN -- *One day later. AL alone in the apartment. The phone rings and he answers it.*

AL: Hello ... Uncle Frank? We really have a good connection this time. It doesn't even sound like long distance... Yeah, I'm here alone in the apartment, why?

(The door flies open and JOE, the meanest, largest, toughest looking Eastern mobster, scouts out the place. A second later, FRANK steps inside.)

FRANK: Where is she? I want her now! When I give an order, I want action! Not excuses! You! ... You're a disappointment to the Family! People used to ask me where all the new punks are going to come from, and I'd say, "Watch my nephew. He's as rotten as they come." But look at you. Can't even nab one girl ... I'm ashamed of you.

AL: Uncle Frank, how much do you really know about the Mormon Church?

FRANK: What?

AL: Oh sure, you've heard about polygamy but I think if you'd look at it with an open mind ...

FRANK: Aw, shut up! Where's the girl? Joe here will persuade her to come with us, won't you, Joe?

(JOE laughs wildly, and smashes his fist through the wall.)

AL: She's in class now, then there's a Young Adult activity after that.

FRANK: You give me a time within the next forty-eight hours when she'll be here and you have her here then or Joe's gonna play basketball with your head.

(JOE lifts AL up and pushes him against the wall.)

AL: All right! Put me down! Tomorrow after the wedding. About three o'clock.

(JOE puts him down.)

FRANK: Okay, tomorrow, three o'clock. Don't think about crossing me either. Do you know what I do to guys that cross me? I cut off their fingers and stuff 'em up their noses. You can't run fast enough to get away from me.

(To JOE)

Let's go. I don't want to miss the stock market report ... I wonder how pork bellies are doing today.

BLACKOUT

SCENE TWELVE -- *That night. TONY and AL in apartment. BJ enters, very excited.*

BJ: I won! I won!

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TONY: We heard on the radio.

BJ: Neither of you seem very happy about it. How about you, Al? Part of this victory belongs to you.

AL: I guess it shows what can be done with rumors.

BJ: Well, I'm happy.

TONY: Now that you've won, I guess you'll be paying more attention to Cher, won't you?

BJ: I don't know ... what for?

TONY: You did ask her to marry you, didn't you?

BJ: Sure, but that was before my mission.

TONY: So?

BJ: I'm not tagged to her now.

AL: Yeah, what about that girl you've been seeing lately?

BJ: I met her during the campaign She's the daughter of a stake President.

TONY: Then why have you been keeping Cher ironing your crummy shirts and cooking your food, if you have no intention of marrying her?

BJ: Cher likes being domestic.

(TONY heads for BJ, but AL stops him.)

AL: Violence never solves anything Wait, did I just say that?

TONY: *(To BJ)* What are you going to do about Cher?

BJ: You're right, I should do something. I'll thank her for her work, say how much I've appreciated it... then I'll tell her to buzz off, and then I'll find myself a good laundry.

(TONY rips BJ's campaign poster in two, then turns to do the same thing to BJ.)

AL: Tony, let me talk with BJ. Go outside for a minute, okay?

(TONY scowls and leaves.)

I'd like you to treat Cher with more consideration. She's a good person. She doesn't deserve bad things happening to her.

(Pause)

I'm gonna get in big trouble for this, but I want you to take her out of town right after the wedding. Take her to your parent's place for the weekend.

BJ: Why should I?

AL: Because I found out you never were a mission assistant on your mission.

BJ: You'd never tell, would you?

AL: I might even tell about us spreading rumors about your opponent just before the election.

BJ: This is blackmail!

AL: You learn fast.

BJ: Okay, a weekend with my parents, but that's all.

AL: I'll go tell Tony.

(AL leaves. The phone rings. BJ answers it.)

BJ: Hello You want to come home teaching? Why -- you've never come before ... Okay, okay I'll let you repent... Why don't you come Saturday afternoon after the wedding? All right. Goodbye.

(Hangs up. BJ kneels down reverently to pick up the pieces of his sign.)

BLACKOUT

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