

# TOM, DICK & HARRIET

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An original comedy

By

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## TIME

The present and 10 years in the future

## SET

Abstract set with areas suggesting beach, beach deck, bedroom, geneticist's office

## CHARACTERS

### TOM

Dignified man in his 20s in first scene; 30s in later scenes

### DICK

Athletic, adventurous man in his 20s in first scene; 30s in later scenes

### HARRIET

Attractive, artistic woman in her 20s in first scene, 30s in later scenes

### SIDNEY

Ten-year-old nerd

### CAULFIELD

Brash, 19-year-old newsman in first scene, 10-years older in later scenes

## SCENES

Scene 1.....A beach

Scene 2.....Ten years later, the deck of a beach house

Scene 3.....Same

### ACT II

Scene 1.....Same

Scene 2.....Bedroom

Scene 3.....Geneticist's office

# ACT I

## SCENE 1

Setting: A beach scene with a large beach umbrella lying on its side, an ice chest, a picnic basket, towels and other beach items. The Jefferson Airplane song, Triad, is the house music.

At Rise: Upstage in half light or silhouette, Tom and Dick are miming a serious argument. Even in swimwear, Tom looks elegant and Dick looks cool. Harriet is with them, listening to their argument. As lights come to full, she breaks off and approaches the audience. The men freeze.

### HARRIET

(finally; directly to audience)

I'm in love with two men and they're in love with me. We've all been living together for years. They're great guys, but so different. Tom speaks in complete sentences and Dick never met an adventure he didn't enjoy. One is dedicated, ambitious and loves the good things in life, the other is athletic, artistic and loves fighting for his causes. I want to combine all these qualities in one person by having their baby. But to make a baby with one man would be to lose the other and break up our wonderful little family. It's a guy thing. Men don't like it when another man makes a baby with the woman they love. Victory is important to Dick and possessions are important to Tom. And no victory is sweeter than making a woman pregnant and no possession is more valuable than a baby. It seems like an impossible predicament. But I have a plan.

She reveals a small box. She hides the box away. Harriet removes the shirt to reveal her swim suit. She limbers up with stretches.

## HARRIET (CONT'D)

(continuing; to audience)

Showtime.

She walks seductively toward the men, but they are too busy with their discussion to notice her. The men walk to the picnic baskets and Harriet trails behind them, disappointed.

TOM

I should never have attacked the NRA. Not in this state.

DICK

It was a great campaign. You stood up for what we believed in.

TOM

And I lost. What's worse, a guy like Bradley won.

DICK

You won a moral victory.

TOM

Dick, Bradley is in bed with the gambling industry, he wants to make contraceptives illegal and he's going to wage war on our civil liberties. You call that a victory? The gun issue was a lost cause, and I let it take down everything else with it.

DICK

Congress needs more politicians who stand up for what they believe

TOM

Politicians serve no one if they don't get elected. I'm through with hopeless gestures. And I'm through running as an independent. Bradley outflanked me, with that wife and two babies of his. He painted me as an irresponsible, rudderless bachelor.

Harriet comes up between them and puts an arm around each. The men slowly realize they have something better to do than argue.

DICK

You're the sexiest woman in the world. Harriet, I love you.

TOM

You're the most beautiful woman in the world. I love you even more.

HARRIET

I love you both, too. I have something serious --

DICK

Wait. Tom might have lost the election, but as far as I'm concerned he's still a winner. Here's the victory speech I was writing for him.

Dick tenderly takes a sheet of paper from his bag.

TOM

Dick, maybe we should hold off reading this until I win an election.

HARRIET

You've been laboring on this baby for months, nurturing it, feeling it kick inside your body, finally pushing it out into the world and giving it the most precious gift of all -- life.

DICK

Huh?

She smiles at him and he shakes his head that she's crazy.

DICK (CONT'D)

(continuing; reading)

In advocating civil disobedience against the government and constitution, Henry David Thoreau said, "I would remind my countrymen, that they are to be men first, and Americans only at a late and convenient hour." Laws, lawyers and politicians are only the instruments of the majority, the genteel face of brute force. This country was founded on the premise that the real patriots are those who stand up to their government. This, my fellow Americans, is the ideal that will guide me during all my days in Washington.

Dick looks to a disheartened Tom for approval, but this speech he wouldn't be able to give because he lost hurts too much.

DICK (CONT'D)

One day you'll give this speech.

Tom nods sadly. Harriet nods energetically.

DICK (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Tom)

Just like one day Harriet's going to be a best selling novelist.

Harriet suddenly looks glum. Dick puts his arm around Tom's shoulder.

DICK (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Tom)

The two of us have got to learn from Harriet. She's so focussed, single-minded. She wants to be a writer, and she is willing to exclude every distraction from her life --

HARRIET

(uncomfortably)

Actually, I have something much more important to talk about than my novel.

DICK

Nothing is more important than your writing. Let's celebrate the novel you are about to finish and the election that Tom will one day win.

Dick grabs a giant economy size bottle of wine and styrofoam cups.

TOM

(to Dick)

That isn't wine.

Tom tenderly takes an elegant wine bottle from his wicker basket.

TOM (CONT'D)

This is wine.

(throwing away the styrofoam cups and bringing out elegant wine glasses)

And these are wine glasses.

He pours wine into the glasses and Dick takes a mouthful.

TOM (CONT'D)

Don't swallow!

Dick stops, his mouth full, with a pleading look to Tom for direction.

TOM (CONT'D)

Savor it.

MAN'S VOICE ON BULLHORN

This is private property. The public beach is down the road.

Dick and Harriet jump and look around.

MAN'S VOICE ON BULLHORN  
(CONT'D)

Yeah. You three near the water. This is private property.

Dick points to the beachhouse in the distance.

DICK

There. In that beachhouse.

MAN'S VOICE ON BULLHORN

Get off my land.

DICK

Who the hell does that guy think he is? The sea belongs to all of us. No one needs a redwood deck, hanging 40 feet over the surf.

TOM

It's a beauty alright. Harriet, can you see us sipping wine on that deck at sunset?

DICK

It's disgusting how rich people can get in this country.

TOM

Rich people are not the problem. What's wrong is that there are too many poor people in this country.

DICK

(affectionately)

When you see someone living in a mansion like that, you want to live like him.

TOM

What's wrong with being rich? You can be rich and have a conscience, too.

DICK

Not without being prodded. To comfort the afflicted, you must afflict the comfortable.

(shouting)

Hey you in the glass house, the people have taken over your beach. What are you going to do about it? You gonna call the cops? Someone's got to teach that bastard a lesson.

He goes to his bag and pulls out a large white cloth with a peace symbol, which he waves like a flag.

TOM

Do you carry that thing everywhere?

Dick marches off to do battle.

TOM (CONT'D)

You've got to hand it to that guy. No injustice is so small that he doesn't try to right it.

HARRIET

He is wonderful that way.

TOM

He just doesn't realize the best way to fight the system is from the inside.



HARRIET

That's what I wanted to talk to you about. Making changes ... inside.

TOM

It's so beautiful here, Harriet. The sea, that house -- you.

HARRIET

Tom, have you given any thought to becoming a father?

TOM

(dreamily)

A baby. And a house in the suburbs. With a lawn. A nice big van for all our stuff. And one day a mansion like that after I win my seat in Congress. But first --

Tom gets down on one knee.

TOM (CONT'D)

Will you marry me? We can honeymoon in Venice, dance the night away in Paris, kiss in front of the Taj Mahal.

HARRIET

You'll be a wonderful husband. You're kind, considerate, dependable. I want to spend the rest of my life with you. And with Dick.

Dick returns with the peace flag wrapped around his shoulders.

DICK

The coward wouldn't come out and talk. Oh God. Tom's proposing again.

TOM

One day she'll say yes.

DICK

Why would Harriet want one husband instead of two lovers?

TOM

I want her to be mine.

DICK

Our lease is in your name, our telephone is in your name and now you want a piece of paper that says Harriet belongs to you. Why do you have to own everything?

TOM

So I know they'll be there for me.

Harriet takes his hand.

HARRIET

Nothing is going to go away.

DICK

And if they do, something else will come along.

Harriet gives him a dirty look.

TOM

(looking deeply into Harriet's eyes)

Some things can't be replaced.

Tom and Harriet tenderly kiss.

MAN'S VOICE ON BULLHORN

Off the beach.

Dick waves his flag. Tom stops him.

TOM

(to Dick)

The problem with protests is they get everyone's back up. Much better to sit that guy down over a glass of wine and talk to him.

DICK

You can't argue with a guy like that.

TOM

I'm going to talk to him, Dick, not argue with him.

Tom pours a glass of wine and exits in the direction of the house with two glasses.

DICK

I love that guy, but he's a fool on a fool's errand.

Dick lovingly puts the flag away.

HARRIET

Dick, have you given any thought to passing on your genes ...by having a baby...with me...now?

DICK

A baby?

(she nods)

You and me?

(she nods)

Now?

(she nods)

I thought you wanted to become a best-selling novelist.

HARRIET

I will become a best-selling novelist.

DICK

It's either mother or novelist, not both.

HARRIET

Men do both.

DICK

Men don't give birth. They don't nurse. They don't change diapers.

She gives him a dirty look.

DICK (CONT'D)

It's a slippery slope. First a baby. Then you'll need a mansion with a lawn. A gas-guzzling SUV. By the time you're through, you're living like that bastard in the beachhouse.

HARRIET

I only want a baby.

DICK

When you jump off a cliff, you end up a bloody mess no matter how carefully you plan to fall.

Tom returns, still holding the two glasses of wine.

TOM

I tried to talk to him but he was watching me through one of these TV surveillance things over the door. Harriet, the house is really beautiful.

Dick looks shocked at Tom's sellout. The far-off sound of police sirens is heard.

HARRIET

There's a part of me that says one man shouldn't own so much while others have so little.

She kisses Dick's hand.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

But there's also a part of me that likes beautiful things.

She kisses Tom's hand. The sirens grow loud.

DICK

Holy shit. That son of a bitch has called the cops.

The sound of the police sirens is joined by the sounds of more sirens and an approaching helicopter.

TOM

Oh my God, they're coming to get us.

HARRIET

(apprehensive)

They're coming to get us?

DICK

(jubilant)

They're coming to get us!

DICK (CONT'D)

(raising his arms and waving madly)

Here I am, you sons of bitches! Come and get me you mother -

The sound of the chopper gets very loud.

DICK (CONT'D)

(continuing; pointing at the sky)

Look, Action Cam Six!

TOM

(amazed)

2 TV?

2

Tom whips out a comb and mirror and starts to get ready for TV interviews.

HARRIET

Bad things happen in jail.

DICK

We're going to get recognition.

TOM

We're going to get publicity.

HARRIET

We're going to get raped.

The sirens are screaming now. The helicopter is very close. The sound of the police sirens and the helicopter grows to a deafening pitch and then begins to fade.

DICK

What the - ? The cops aren't coming for us. Something's happening down by the public beach.

Two more helicopters pass overhead, their shadows darkening the stage.

DICK (CONT'D)

There goes our media op. We would have gotten attention if we had been real revolutionaries and burned that house down.

TOM

Change comes from political leadership not revolutionaries.

DICK

All the greatest leaders were revolutionaries. Malcolm X.

TOM

Shot to death.

DICK

Martin Luther King.

TOM

Shot to death.

DICK

Gandhi.

TOM

Shot to death.

DICK

(an angry expletive)  
Jesus Christ.

TOM

Crucified. Revolutionaries come and go. The establishment lives forever.

DICK

Small groups of people change the world.

TOM

Yeah. The Federal Reserve Board.

Harriet intervenes.

HARRIET

You need revolutionaries to prick the conscience of politicians and set idealistic goals.

DICK

See?

HARRIET

But then you need socially responsible politicians to achieve those goals.

TOM

See?

Joe Caulfield, a fresh-faced 19-year-old rushes onto the scene. He's dressed in khaki pants, a blue oxford shirt and tie and a mismatching sports jacket.

CAULFIELD

See it? The shark attack. Over there in the cove. You've got a perfect view.

TOM

We didn't see anything.

HARRIET

Sharks? Was anyone hurt?

DICK

Who the hell are you?

CAULFIELD

Joe Caulfield. From the Tribune.

DICK

A reporter?

CAULFIELD

Yeah. Look, you must have ...

Dick grabs Caulfield by the collar and takes him over to look at the beach house in the distance. Caulfield waves uneasily at the beach house.

DICK

(shouting at the beachhouse)

Hey, you asshole in the beachhouse. We got the press out here asking questions.

CAULFIELD

Did you see the sharks?

DICK

We're protesting against private property.

CAULFIELD

Screw private property. Did you see fins in the water?

DICK

(realizing he must change tactics)

Fins in the water?

CAULFIELD

(triumphantly)

You saw them, didn't you?

DICK

Clearly. The fins moved menacingly toward the beach, the public beach, overcrowded with people. The poor people couldn't escape because there was no place to run, not on the crowded public beach.

CAULFIELD

(hastily writing this all down)

You were scared?

DICK

Terrified.

(getting carried away)

The vicious sharks bit, ripped and tore the flesh of the trapped people.

CAULFIELD

No one was hurt.

DICK

No one was hurt?



CAULFIELD

Would I waste time interviewing you if someone was bleeding? OK, what are your names?

TOM

I'm Tom Widener.

DICK

I'm Dick Stuart.

HARRIET

I'm Harriet Rosenthal.

CAULFIELD

Tom, Dick and Harriet? You're kidding.

He searches pockets for his cellphone.

CAULFIELD (CONT'D)

(continuing; dreamily to himself)

One day they'll find a way to make these tiny cell phones easier to find. They sure as hell can't get any smaller.

HARRIET

(dreamily, looking into the future)

And one day our son will go to a school where he learns about the environment and world peace.

DICK AND TOM

Huh?

CAULFIELD

(pulling out tiny flip-open cell phone, he dials)

Caulfield here. I got the shark reaction.

CAULFIELD (CONT'D)

(continuing; dictating)

Three terrified onlookers described the carnage this way. Fins in the water headed menacingly toward the crowded beach. The poor people on the crowded public beach tried to get away, but there was nowhere to run. The vicious sharks bit, ripped and tore at people's flesh. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

(listens)

Page 1? Alright, great, see you back in the office.  
(hangs up; to the others)

Thanks a lot.

He starts to leave.

DICK

What about our protest against private property?

CAULFIELD

Shark attacks go on Page One. Little protests go inside the paper. I don't do inside the paper.

DICK

A shark attack that never happened is more important than a protest against real injustice?

CAULFIELD

It's on Page One, isn't it?

Caulfield keeps going.

DICK

Caulfield, you're a reporter. You're supposed to be fighting for the little man, protecting him against the strong and the powerful.

CAULFIELD

Sharks are strong and powerful.

He exits.

DICK

(yelling after him)

You don't deserve to be protected by the First Amendment.

CAULFIELD (O.S.)

Have a nice day.

DICK

Asshole.

They sit down on the beach, refill their glasses. Each in his or her world, Dick looks sadly towards the public beach, Tom looks longingly toward the beach house in the opposite direction. Harriet, in the middle, looks at both men and then rubs her depressingly unpregnant belly.

HARRIET

(finally)

I have something serious to talk about.

DICK

(Very concerned)

Is it a medical thing?

HARRIET

Yes. We've all known each other for a really long time so I think ...

TOM

You've been looking a little pale lately. Oh God, we don't have health insurance.

DICK

It's because the damn politicians won't give us national health insurance.

TOM

Jesus Christ, this is no time for one of our discussions. Harriet's sick. She might be dying.

DICK

That's ridiculous. She's not dying.

(He laughs but Harriet's serious expression doesn't change. Dick is shocked.)

You're dying?

HARRIET

I'm not dying.

TOM

Then what's so serious, serious?

HARRIET

(looking at Dick)

I want you to...

(looking at Tom)

...to help me make a baby. Right now. Behind that umbrella.

TOM

Right now? You want me to make you a baby right now?

DICK

I think she means me, Tom.

TOM

She was looking at you as she said "I want." But then she looked at me and said "make a baby."

Harriet indulgently kisses Dick.

HARRIET

I want you to be the daddy.

DICK

(to Tom)

See?

Tom looks devastated. Harriet indulgently kisses his hand.

HARRIET

(to Tom)

I want you to be the father.

DICK AND TOM

Huh?

HARRIET

I want you both to help me conceive.

TOM

Both of us?

HARRIET

Yes.

DICK

I can see how making a baby would be fun, but why would you want one?

HARRIET

To make a better next generation.

DICK

How many babies do you want?

Harriet smiles an "as many as I can" smile.

TOM

You can't have a baby unless you're married.

DICK

Tom. Yes you can.

TOM

Why don't you marry one of us, say, me, and then we can get working on it.

HARRIET

It would be the end of our family. Besides, I want to combine both of your qualities in Sidney.

DICK

Sidney?

TOM

Only one of us could be the real father.

HARRIET

Genes are not that important. It's a matter of attitude. If we all think we're the parents, we will be and he'll grow up to be like all of us.

DICK

Why now?

HARRIET

Why not now?

TOM

It is a romantic spot.

DICK

And private property.

After an awkward pause, Harriet gets up. One by one the men stand up beside her and nod gravely.

HARRIET

Before we do this, let's make one promise to each other. No matter what happens, we'll stick together, the three of us.

TOM

We'll always be Tom, Dick and Harriet.

DICK

One for all!

HARRIET AND TOM

And all for one!

She puts out her hand palm down, and one by one the men interlock their palms over hers. She covers the last palm with her second hand. They throw their hands up and cheer.

HARRIET

I want us to remember this moment. Always.

She takes out the box and reveals three rings. She takes Tom's right hand and offers the box to Dick to put a ring on Tom's finger. He does so. Tom takes Dick's right hand and Harriet puts a ring on Dick's finger. Dick takes Harriet's right hand and Tom puts the last ring on her finger. They hug and embrace.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Well, I'm off to conceive.

Unsure, the men wave goodbye. She disappears behind the umbrella. As the men gaze at the umbrella, Harriet throws out her bra and panties.

Tom and Dick pick them up.

DICK

I think she's ready.

He heads for the umbrella.

TOM

It's the last guy in who fertilizes the egg, you know.

Dick halts, returns to Tom.

DICK

It's the other way around. The first insemination blocks the second.

TOM

Where did you learn that?

DICK

Public television.

HARRIET (V.O.)

I'm waiting.

Tom and Dick clasp hands as if they are embarking on a dangerous adventure.

DICK

One for all!

TOM

And all for one!

They both disappear behind the umbrella. Lights fade to black. After several beats, the lights come up and Tom and Dick are sitting, side by side, with unlit cigarettes in their hands.

TOM (CONT'D)

I think we made a baby.

DICK

(hopefully)

Maybe she's not pregnant. She had her period two weeks ago.

TOM

Isn't that when they get pregnant - two weeks after their period?

DICK

I thought it was two weeks before.

Dick sighs heavily.

DICK (CONT'D)

Think we did the right thing?

TOM

Too late for cold feet.

Harriet emerges from behind the umbrella, wearing a beatific smile and a robe. Dick stares at her warily.

HARRIET

I need a cigarette.

(Smiling slyly at each man)

Maybe two.

They each quickly offer their unlit cigarettes.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

I better not, not now. I feel like I'm glowing. Do we have pickles and ice cream?

Tom and Dick put the cigarettes back in the pack. Tom rushes to bring out a pint of almost melted ice cream from the cooler and retrieves a jar of pickles from the knapsack.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

It's really kind of amazing, what's happening inside my body, right now.



Tom gives her the ice cream and pickle. As she continues talking, she keeps dipping the pickle into the ice cream, eating it absent- mindedly.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

One cell becoming two. Two becoming four. Four becoming eight. Eight becoming sixteen. Multiply, multiply, multiply. And finally -- Sidney.

TOM

(with awe)

My son.

DICK

(with trepidation)

My son.

HARRIET

Little organs forming inside of me. A little face, sleeping, little lips, a little smile.

TOM

(To Harriet)

May I?

Tom very gently touches her belly.

HARRIET

(saying the numbers with growing tenderness)

One thousand, twenty-four. Two thousand, forty-eight.

TOM

(with reverence)

Many times I have touched this belly, but today it feels different, knowing all that's happening inside.

Harriet invites Dick to touch her belly but Dick is reluctant to get involved.

HARRIET

Five thousand and ninety six.

Tom gently lifts her hand to his mouth and kisses her ring. She kisses his ring.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

We're so lucky. All three... all four of us. His first steps, his first words, his first ear infection.

Dick looks alarmed.

TOM

(dreamily, resting his head against Harriet's stomach)

Late night feedings. Temper tantrums. Diapers. Why has it taken me so long to see that I always wanted to be a father?

The sound of thunder in the distance is heard.

DICK

We better start packing up. Those clouds look ominous.

They start collecting their beach stuff while still talking.

TOM

(to Dick)

We'll have to get jobs. A kid needs financial stability.

DICK

Already it's happening, that fucking slippery slope.

TOM

(to Harriet)

I'll be in the delivery room with you, holding your hand, wiping your brow, urging you to push. And then Sidney...our son. He's going to be a serious boy who dresses well, speaks in full sentences and treasures the good things in life. What do you see our son being, Dick?

Dick shrugs his shoulders.

TOM (CONT'D)

You don't see anything?

DICK

Damn it, Tom, I don't know. An athlete, a writer, a chess prodigy? It's about to rain. Let's get the hell out of here.

TOM

Harriet, what are you hoping for -- a serious boy who dresses well, speaks in full sentences and treasures the good things in life or an athlete, writer, chess prodigy?

HARRIET

(looking at both men)

Yes, that's exactly what I want.

Harriet sees that Dick is not joining in the happy banter and goes to him.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

Dick looks at Tom, at first with bewilderment and then sorrow and then at Harriet.

DICK

We had something special, the three of us.

TOM

We still have something special.

HARRIET

We made a promise to each other. No matter what happens, we'll stick together, the three of us.

TOM

Sure. Nothing's going to change.

The sound of thunder, a little closer.

TOM (CONT'D)

Come on, Harriet, we better get to the car.

They walk off, leaving Dick to fold up the beach umbrella. He looks at it sadly for several beats, as though it was the marker for a grave. He decides against closing up the umbrella but instead goes to his bag, pulls out a cell phone and dials. There is thunder and he huddles under the umbrella.

DICK

(on the phone, to recording device)

Hi, Jim, Dick here. It's Sunday. Listen, don't give me any shit about this but something's come up and I...well...I need a favor.

(to himself)

I can't believe I'm doing this.

(into the phone)

Fuck. Forget about it.

He hangs up. He starts to pick up the beach towels. He stops, picks up Harriet's bra and panties and looks at them sadly. He regards the ring on his finger with great earnestness.

Holding the panties and bra in one hand, he dials the phone with the other.

DICK (CONT'D)

(continuing; into the phone)

It's me again. I need to know if there are any openings at the paper. Call me.

He snaps the phone shut.

TOM (O.S., FROM A GREAT DISTANCE)

Hey, Dick, you coming with us?

DICK

(dispiritedly)

Yeah, sure.

He closes up the umbrella as the lights fade to black. The sound of thunder turns into a raging storm with howling wind and lightning. The sound should provide a bridge that lasts all the way into the next scene.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

## SCENE 2

Lights come up on Harriet, downstage center, changing costumes by putting a sundress over her bathing suit and combing out her hair. She addresses the audience as she does this

## HARRIET

It's been five years since that day on the beach. Tom and Dick were with me in the delivery room when Sidney was born. Tom held my hand and mopped my brow while Dick shot the whole thing on video. Dick got a job at the Times, and did so well that they offered him a foreign assignment. At first he said no, but he really wanted the assignment so Tom convinced him to go. Tom joined the Democratic party. Party leaders like him a lot but they didn't like him being a single father so Tom and I got married. Dick came back to be best man. The three of us went off together on a honeymoon. Sidney wanted to come, too, but we told him a honeymoon was too grown-up for a four-year-old boy. It was a great honeymoon and Dick said he'd be back soon to spend time with Sidney, but that's not happened. So Sidney hardly knows his daddy. I've finally finished my novel and am looking for a literary agent.

Lights fade on Harriet and come up on Tom, downstage right. He is putting the finishing touches to his costume for the next scene. He's wearing a conservative business suit with jacket and tie.

## TOM

Sidney celebrated his seventh birthday last week. He's the spitting image of me. You can see my genes all over that boy. He's at the top of his class but we're not at all happy with the city's public school system. I was elected to the state senate by such a landslide that the party is talking about running me again against Bradley. I'm really ready for him this time. Harriet finished her second novel, which also hit the best seller lists, and there is talk of a movie contract. And Dick won the Pulitzer Prize for some really fabulous stories. He still thinks he's part of the family though he's never here. He's always sending us emails but that's not the same. Last year he came back for a week at Christmas, and acted like nothing had changed.

He plonked his bags down in our bedroom. And Harriet let him. I've got to get rid of that king-size bed and get a queen bed, so he gets the hint next time.

Lights fade on Tom and come up on Dick, who is upstage center. He wears khakis, a flak jacket and other clothing used by journalists in war zones. He is sitting at a laptop computer and reading a printed-out email message. He looks up at the audience.

DICK

Sidney's 10th birthday is next month. It's hard to believe that so much time has come and gone.

(looking at the e-mail communication)

His emails are getting more and more fantastic. I pretend to believe them and that only encourages him to go even further. Such an imagination. I've hardly spent any time with him but he's just like me. My genes are all over that boy. Tom and Harriet are doing great. Tom is running for Congress, on the Democratic ticket no less. Harriet's gotten a big movie contract. And they've moved out to the suburbs. Oh well, we knew that would happen, didn't we? I won my second Pulitzer Prize this year and protests are springing up all over the country in opposition to our foreign policy. My articles have done more than I ever expected. I should be very happy, but everything feels like an anti-climax. I've never felt so empty, so alone.

Dick sadly starts typing on his laptop as the lights fade to black.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

## SCENE 3

A modernistic sound, similar to the ones used by computers and other electronic devices to signal something is about to happen, is heard.

## ROBOTIC VOICE

Good afternoon, Tom, Good afternoon, Harriet. This is your Wrist Watch World Watch reporting. Current time is 4 PM. Outside temperature is 68 degrees. Computer models suggest three terrorist activities will occur somewhere in the world today. Avoid public transportation, tunnels, bridges, restaurants, shopping malls, tall buildings, small buildings, sports stadiums and all public places or risk being blown up. Have a nice day.

Lights slowly come up on area with elements suggesting the redwood deck of the beach house referred to in Scene 1. It's 10 years in the future. Prominently placed on the deck is a cardboard cut-out of a human being, used for target practice. There are bulls-eyes drawn on the head, heart and other vital organs, and bullet holes all over. Nearby is a chess board all set up and an antique sundial. Harriet is seated at a table packing envelopes with campaign literature.

Tom is walking back and forth with excitement as Harriet watches him warmly and with amusement.

## TOM

Damn it, Harriet, I really might beat him. This magazine article is going to put me over the top - 92,613 votes.

## HARRIET

The pollsters keep saying it's too close to call.

## TOM

That's why, when that reporter gets here, we've got to keep him focused on the issues.

Can't let him start asking a lot of soft questions about our family life and favorite meals and the last book we read. Feature writers are like that. Caulfield writes all the cover stories for the Sunday magazine. What we want is a hard-hitting piece. Bradley's all fluff. All he does is parade around the district with those five kids of his, spouting bumper-sticker slogans. I want to come across as smart, tough.

Tom's finger phone rings. Use of a finger phone involves wearing a ring and putting an extended thumb near the ear and an extended pinkie to the mouth, just as people currently mime phone conversations. "Hanging up" involves stretching all five fingers wide and then closing the palm into a fist.

TOM (CONT'D)

(continuing; on phone)

Yeah, Steve ... Oh no! ... You got the chart on hologram? ... Let me check.

Tom takes his hologram goggles from the table and puts them on.

TOM (CONT'D)

(continuing; looking at polling chart through his glasses)

Damn. Now it's six points. I'll hit back in the magazine article.

Tom hangs up. Harriet's finger phone rings. She answers it.

HARRIET

Hello...Yes, Tom'll be there...No speech.

(winking at Tom)

Just a few words saying how wonderful it is to have a famous author for a wife....OK. See you tonight.

She hangs up.

TOM

(uncomfortable)

Steve thinks I shouldn't go with you to the book signing.



HARRIET

The TV cameras will be there, showing that you have an intelligent wife who's a bestselling author.

TOM

That's what's got Steve worried. If you'd written a book on child-rearing or cooking, maybe, but not a novel about a menage a trois. It's too edgy for suburban swing voters.

HARRIET

Bradley's wife just stands by his side, nods at everything he says and looks pretty.

TOM

Steve likes that.

She goes to the railing of the deck and he follows her.

TOM

(continuing; pleading)

Harriet, I know it doesn't make sense. It shouldn't make sense. But I'm in a dead-heat with a guy who's won re-election four times because of his family-values campaigns.

She is silent.

TOM

(continuing; pleading)

Bradley just ran an ad showing his five kids reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and he went up six points in the polls.

HARRIET

That's ridiculous. This country is facing more important issues.

TOM

I know. I've been going to bed lately fantasizing about all the great things I'm going to do in Washington. Finally there'll be someone down there representing the little guy. There are so many things I want to do. I'm going to speak out against the wars we've been fighting all these years. I'll advocate for a Department of Peace, to head off wars.

It'll attack the underlying causes with food and construction programs and financial support. If we need to hold our noses and do some things to get elected, I say it's worth it.

HARRIET

Dick refused to do that when he was your campaign manager.

TOM

Dick only wanted to stand up for principles. Steve wants to win.

HARRIET

Funny we haven't heard from Dick in a while.

TOM

I wouldn't worry. I think he was going undercover again for that series he's been writing.

HARRIET

I wish he'd get out of that country.

TOM

It's what he loves doing.

HARRIET

Do you think he still wears that ring?

TOM

He probably lost it on some battlefield.

Tom heads back to the table and trips over the target.

TOM

Goddamit, what the hell is that thing doing here?

HARRIET

Sidney's homework. Tom, we've got to get him out of that school.

TOM

It's an NRA-sponsored charter school. Bradley would attack me for being weak on national security. Call me a coward. The American People do not like cowards.

HARRIET

You mean Americans.

TOM

No, American People. You have to say it that way.

HARRIET

I don't know, Tom. BB guns in preschool, .22s in first grade, shotguns by third grade, automatic weapons in fourth. When's it going to end?

TOM

(sarcastically)

When we find weapons of mass destruction.

HARRIET

We never should have sent him to Charlton Heston Elementary.

TOM

The other special interest charter schools are worse. Heston is a pretty damn good school except for the weaponry stuff.

Tom's finger phone rings.

TOM

(continuing; on phone)

Yeah, Steve ... He's not? What kind of a writer is he?

Tom listens for several seconds, with growing concern.

TOM (CONT'D)

(continuing; on phone)

How did he get that? ... Yes, I'll be careful.

Tom looks stunned as he hangs up.

TOM (CONT'D)

Caulfield isn't a feature writer, he's an investigative reporter. Steve says the guy is incredible, has sources all over the place, knows what you're going to do even before you do.

HARRIET

You've got nothing to hide.

TOM

He's gotten hold of Sidney's birth certificate. No father is listed.

Sidney enters. He is finishing a conversation on his finger phone and is carrying an attache case. He is meticulously dressed, like Tom.

SIDNEY

Hello, father.

TOM

Hello, son.

SIDNEY

Could you put my phone on the charger?

TOM

Certainly.

Tom puts the ring on one of the fingers of the charger, which is in the form of an outstretched hand.

SIDNEY

Thank you, father.

Tom and Sidney shake hands. Sidney goes to his mother.

SIDNEY

Hello, mother.

HARRIET

Did you have a nice day at school, dear?

Sidney kisses her cheek.

SIDNEY

Yes, mother.

He opens his attache case and takes out a landmine. She looks at it questioningly and with concern.

SIDNEY

(continuing; answering their inquisitive looks)  
It's a landmine. Homework for my personnel weapons class.

HARRIET

Come here, darling. Let me see your landmine.

He hands it to her. She takes it gingerly.

HARRIET

My, this is very advanced work for a 10 year-old.

SIDNEY

(haughtily)  
I'm in advance placement, mother.

She hands it back to him with an expression that suggests it might explode.

HARRIET

Please be careful when you play with this, darling.

SIDNEY

I'm not playing with it, mother, I'm studying it.

Sidney walks away with the mine.

HARRIET

(as an afterthought)  
It is disarmed, isn't it?

Sidney doesn't respond.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Tom, not so sure)  
I've sure even Heston wouldn't give children landmines that could maim and kill people.

SIDNEY

(reciting the NRA mantra)

Landmines don't kill people. People kill people.

HARRIET

I know Sidney has to do his homework. I don't like it but I accept it. But these horrible things have become more than school projects. Now, they're his hobby, too. Why can't he just play soccer like other kids?

Sidney walks over to his parents with adult authority.

TOM

The school says these are age-appropriate activities.

HARRIET

Other fathers play sports with their sons.

TOM

You want me to teach him golf?

Sidney puts his arms around both of them.

SIDNEY

I don't want this to become a divisive issue in our family. I'll stop playing with weapons after school.

HARRIET

(eagerly)

Yes.

TOM

No.

(covering up Sidney's ears and whispering to Harriet)

He's using reverse psychology on us.

(To Sidney, uncovering his ears)

I want you to continue playing with your weapons.

HARRIET

No, I mean yes.

SIDNEY

All right, I will.

TOM

(to Harriet)

He's always one step ahead of us.

(to Sidney)

Sidney, I want to tell you something very important. A reporter is coming here to interview us today.

SIDNEY

Will he interview me?

TOM

He might. And you must be very careful about what you say to him.

SIDNEY

Why?

TOM

Because...

(trying to figure out the answer)

...he's a reporter. He might ask a lot of questions. You should answer everything, but don't volunteer information on your own.

SIDNEY

Why?

TOM

Sometimes reporters get confused when they get too much information. For instance, you shouldn't say anything about Dick being your daddy.

SIDNEY

Why not?

TOM

Because it's confusing.

SIDNEY

It's not confusing to me.

TOM

Reporters can understand how some children have fathers and some children have daddies but they get very confused when you tell them that you have a father and a daddy, too. Pretend the interview is one of your chess games and your opponent is laying a trap for you.

SIDNEY

I'm good at avoiding traps.

TOM

That's my boy. You're going to sound like a whiz in that article.

HARRIET

(with a touch of sarcasm, to Tom)

What are you saying, dear, that voters like candidates with smart kids and dumb wives?

A modernistic doorbell rings.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Thin, dark haired male. Pheromone analysis suggests inquisitiveness and unpleasantness.

TOM

It's the reporter.

Tom exits.

HARRIET

I know this must be a little scary for you.

SIDNEY

I'm not scared, mother.

HARRIET

I'm a little scared.

SIDNEY

I know what to say to reporters. I see it on television.

TOM (O.S.)

You're Caulfield?



Tom enters with Caulfield. Caulfield is in his late twenties, with glasses now. He is dressed smartly, in a suit, and looks like a secret service agent. Where his manner on the beach was that of a rookie reporter trying to make his name with shark attacks, he is now a suave, investigative reporter. His manners have changed, but his instincts are the same.

TOM (CONT'D)

Harriet, this is Joe Caulfield, the reporter I was telling you about.

Recognizing Caulfield from 10 years earlier, Harriet looks at Tom with a shocked expression and Tom, who is standing behind Caulfield, gesticulates his own shock. Harriet and Caulfield shake hands.

TOM (CONT'D)

And this is my son, Sidney.

Tom puts an arm around Sidney. Harriet nods and tries to look pretty.

TOM (CONT'D)

(continuing; indicating Harriet and Sidney to Caulfield)

I know it sounds corny in these cynical times, but I'm a patriotic, loyal, family man

Harriet goes to his side and Tom puts his arm around her.

TOM (CONT'D)

And I'm proud of it.

HARRIET

Yes, darling.

Caulfield whips out a camera.

CAULFIELD

May I?

Tom, Harriet and Sidney make their grins even broader. Caulfield takes several photos, as the grins wear thin. The final photo is taken as Tom and Harriet take an uncertain glance at each other. Caulfield puts away the camera, and takes out his reporter's pad and pen.

CAULFIELD (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Sidney)

Hello, young man. How are you?

SIDNEY

No comment.

TOM

(rebuking)

Sidney.

SIDNEY

Fine, thank you.

TOM

Can I get you something, Joe?

CAULFIELD

No thank you, Mr. Widener.

Caulfield goes to the railing and looks out to the beach and ocean.

CAULFIELD (CONT'D)

Hell of a view you've got. That's the crowded public beach way over there, isn't it

TOM

(becoming uneasy)

Wonderful resource for the people.

CAULFIELD

Especially for the people who own a house on the beach.

(responding to Tom's sharp look)

Nothing wrong with being affluent, my daddy used to say. Gives the poor something to shoot for.

One of the first stories I ever wrote was about that beach. A shark attack. The vicious sharks bit, ripped and tore at people's flesh. God, it was a blood-soaked massacre.

TOM

(trying to change the subject)

Would you like something to eat?

CAULFIELD

I found these three people on the beach -- right over there where that beach umbrella is now. Their names sounded like a joke. Tom, Dick... and Harriet.

Tom and Harriet laugh awkwardly. Caulfield considers the possibility that this is not a coincidence and then sees the cardboard cut-out.

CAULFIELD

(continuing; looking at the cut-out)

Sidney must be in Charlton Heston Elementary. Is that where you go to school, Sidney?

SIDNEY

Yes.

CAULFIELD

We send our daughter to Marlboro daycare. She's already up to a pack a day. Do you like your school, Sidney?

Sidney looks to his father for guidance. Tom subtly nods.

SIDNEY

Yes.

CAULFIELD

Aren't you opposed to special interest charter schools, Mr. Widener?

TOM

Children should get the best possible education.

CAULFIELD

Is that possible with NRA money?

TOM

Money spent on education is money wisely spent.

CAULFIELD

Doesn't the the NRA have an agenda?

TOM

The NRA is dedicated to shooting animals and fighting terrorists.

CAULFIELD

Do you support the NRA, Mr. Widener?

TOM

The NRA is a patriotic American institution.

CAULFIELD

Should anti-terrorist money go back into public education?

TOM

Education is important in a democracy.

CAULFIELD

Then education is your number one priority?

TOM

Education and fighting terrorism.

(said earnestly, eager to convince Caulfield )

Do you know what is at the base of all the troubles in the world, Joe? Conflict. Why is there conflict? Because people don't agree. Why don't they agree? Because they have opposing views. As liberals and conservatives move closer to the center, they disagree less and less. When they reach the center, we have peace. At the center, to disagree with your opponent is to disagree with yourself. That's the genius of revolutionary centrism. We oppose everyone, while opposing no one.

Caulfield perks up at the word "oppose" thinking he has found controversy, and is then deflated.

TOM

We disagree with everyone, while agreeing with everyone. We are everyone.

Caulfield perks up at the word "disagree" and then is deflated.

TOM

Goddammit, it's time the center took sides.

CAULFIELD

Your campaign literature says you are a dedicated father.

TOM

That's true.

Caulfield pulls out a sheet of paper from his pocket. He shows it to Tom.

CAULFIELD

Then perhaps you can clear this up for me. I was looking over Sidney's birth certificate. And I just happened to notice that no father is listed.

TOM

(feigning surprise)

Really?

Tom shows it to Harriet.

HARRIET

Bizarre.

TOM

Must have been an oversight.

Harriet stands at Tom's side, nods dutifully.

TOM

A computer glitch.

CAULFIELD

(to Harriet)  
So who's the father?

HARRIET

(indicating Tom)  
This man is the father of our beautiful child.  
(hating to say this)  
I'm not very good at history the way my husband is, but I think our founding fathers would have been proud of our happy, patriotic family.

CAULFIELD

(with exaggerated legal exactitude; to Tom)  
So you are saying, on the record, that you are Sidney's father?

TOM

(drawing himself up proudly)  
I am Sidney's father.

CAULFIELD

(to Sidney, indicating Tom)  
He's your daddy?

SIDNEY

No.

TOM AND HARRIET

Sidney.

HARRIET

Don't play word games with the reporter.

CAULFIELD

(to Sidney, indicating Tom)  
It's very important that you answer this question fully and honestly, young man.

SIDNEY

I don't want to confuse you.

CAULFIELD

Confuse me? I'll listen very carefully. Is this man your father?

SIDNEY

Yes.

CAULFIELD

But didn't you just say he wasn't your daddy?

TOM

I think we've already answered that question, Joe. I'm his father.

Caulfield turns to Sidney for confirmation. Sidney nods. Caulfield draws Sidney aside, to make sure the information he is getting is not being influenced by Tom. Tom and Harriet watch apprehensively.

CAULFIELD

(to Sidney)

You must be pretty proud of your daddy.

SIDNEY

No comment.

CAULFIELD

You're not proud of your father?

SIDNEY

I've very proud of my father.

CAULFIELD

You're confusing me.

SIDNEY

Father said that would happen.

CAULFIELD

What would happen?

SIDNEY

Oops.

A finger phone rings. Everyone, but Caulfield, answers their finger phones. The call is for Caulfield.

TOM

(to his finger phone)

Tom Widener.

HARRIET

(to her finger phone)

Harriet Rosenthal.

SIDNEY

(to his finger phone)

Sidney Rosenthal Widener Stuart

Caulfield listens carefully to Sidney's complete name. He is now suspicious. Caulfield answers his finger phone.

CAULFIELD

(into finger phone)

Caulfield here ... Haven't confirmed it yet, but I think I've just stumbled on to something very interesting.

(hanging up, he addresses Sidney)

Sidney Rosenthal Widener Stuart? That's a pretty long name. How old are you, young man?

SIDNEY

I will celebrate my 10th birthday next week.

CAULFIELD

That's a big birthday, Number 10.

(to Tom and Harriet)

And what about you two. How long have you been married?

HARRIET

We will celebrate our sixth wedding anniversary next month.

Harriet freezes, realizing her faux pas. She and Tom exchange a frightened look. Caulfield smiles a self-satisfied smile.

CAULFIELD

Well, I'm all finished. Thank you very much.



TOM

But aren't you going to...

CAULFIELD

I've got all that I need.

Caulfield exits.

TOM

(indicating Sidney; to Harriet)

He says his tenth birthday is next week and you say our sixth wedding anniversary is next month? Damn it, Harriet, did you have to be so specific? He's going to destroy me.

HARRIET

Why would he take that happy family photograph if he was going to destroy you?

TOM

(indicating Sidney)

The American People won't vote for me if I can't take care of this problem.

SIDNEY

I'm a problem?

HARRIET

No, you're not a problem.

TOM

This is grown-up talk.

HARRIET

It doesn't interest you. Go to your room. Now, Sidney.

Sidney exits.

HARRIET

Maybe we're jumping to conclusions.

TOM

The hell we are. He walked out right after you said our sixth wedding anniversary is next month.

I can just see the headline: "Bastard's Father Runs for Congress." Jesus Christ. Bradley has five squeaky clean kids, and my only son is a bastard.

HARRIET

The circumstances of Sidney's conception is no one's business but ours.

TOM

The next story will be that Sidney doesn't even know who his father is.

HARRIET

That would be terrible.

The sound of a garbage can being dumped over is heard.

TOM

What the hell.

Tom snaps on his goggles.

TOM

That son of a bitch is going through our garbage.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Tom and Harriet, you have a new e-mail.

TOM

(with exaggerated distinctness)

Read e-mail.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Message from Dick Stuart. Hello, all you crazy, wonderful people. I have a great big surprise for you. I'm coming home, for good. Will let myself in. Can't wait to start things up again. Love you all. Dick.

HARRIET

Coming home?

TOM

For good?

HARRIET

Let myself in?

TOM

Start things up again?

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

Online Sample Reading Only

## SCENE 4

Several weeks later. A modernistic sound, similar to the ones used by computers and other electronic devices to signal something is about to happen, is heard.

## ROBOTIC VOICE

Good day, Tom and Harriet. Here's some news you can use: The Attorney General has reported that same-sex relationships constitute a terrorist threat and are a danger to national security. The FBI, CIA, NSA, EPA, FDA have been placed on high alert and the Homeland Security Advisory System has raised the threat level to mauve.

Lights come up on the red-wood deck. It is late afternoon. Harriet is seated at a table, signing novels and fondly watching Tom and Sidney bonding. The two are standing with golf clubs, looking at a virtual reality golf course through the hologram goggles. They wear identical, elegant golf clothes. Tom takes a swing, driving a virtual ball high into the air. They both look up with their hologram glasses as though following the ball through the air down a virtual fairway.

## TOM

Damn.

Sidney explodes with laughter. Tom gives him a disapproving look.

## SIDNEY

Right into the lake.

Tom kneels by Sidney and puts an arm around his shoulder. He clearly loves his son.

## TOM

Don't you want to win friends and influence people?

SIDNEY

Yes, father.

TOM

Making fun of your opponent's misfortunes isn't a good way to do that. Try again.

SIDNEY

OK.

Tom takes another shot at the virtual ball, which takes the exact same course into the lake. Sidney shakes his head, sadly.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

(continuing; sounding especially adult)

Bad luck, father. It was the wind. But if anyone can get the ball off the bottom of the lake, you can.

TOM

That's my boy.

They take off their hologram glasses and sit down.

TOM

(continuing; to Sidney)

It's not how you play the game, son, it's how you say the game. The masculine art of giving good sports talk is the key to making friends.

SIDNEY

How many friends do you want?

TOM

Tom puts on his hologram glasses.

HARRIET

Have they posted the article yet?

TOM

It should be going up on the web any minute now.

HARRIET

Sidney, go put on the clothes I laid out for you. You've got to practice wearing clothes like that.

SIDNEY

Those clothes are tasteless.

HARRIET

It's what boys your age wear.

SIDNEY

But I hate baggy pants that hang off my hips. The shirt is two sizes too big.

Harriet is unmoved.

SIDNEY

(continuing; to Tom)

Do you really want to see your only son wearing a tattoo?

TOM

(to Harriet, shocked)

A tattoo?

HARRIET

(to Tom)

It's just one of those peel-off things.

(to Sidney)

You want to look like your Daddy when he gets here, don't you? The only thing Daddy wears is jeans, unless he's dressing up and then he wears baggy khakis.

(to Tom)

The boy dresses like a banker.

TOM

He dresses like me.

SIDNEY

You think I'm a nerd?

TOM

No. You're, you're ...

HARRIET

You're special.

SIDNEY

I told daddy I was a jock and that all the girls like me.

HARRIET

It's wrong to lie or mislead the people you love. Now mess up your hair and look like a ...

(looking for a neutral word )

... school boy.

Sidney reluctantly moves a single lock of hair.  
Harriet messes it a lot.

HARRIET

(continuing; seeing Sidney's landmine)

Oh my God, your landmine. Sidney take that thing to your room.

Sidney gets his landmine and exits.

HARRIET

I can't believe that Dick expects to let himself in.

TOM

You don't just let yourself into someone's house in the suburbs.

HARRIET

(laughing)

I know.

TOM

We have locks. We have alarms.

Jarred by the implications of what Tom has just said, Harriet looks around at the affluence around her, as if she is seeing it for the first time.

HARRIET

You don't think Dick will get the wrong idea and think we've become rich and sold out?

TOM

There's nothing wrong with being rich. I'm proud of all the things we've accomplished.

HARRIET

We have three cars. We have a beachhouse with a deck hanging 40 feet over the surf. All Dick's predictions came true. We went out on that slippery slope and slid right down to the top. I've forgotten what a police siren sounds like.

TOM

In a perverse sort of way, I'm kind of looking forward to him coming here and sneering at all the neat things we have.

HARRIET

None of our neighbors are ethnic minorities.

TOM

A Japanese family has just moved in.

HARRIET

(heatedly)

Japanese don't count. How did we get all this stuff?

TOM

It would have been wrong not to spend some of the money you made on those novels.

HARRIET

You shouldn't have spent so much on those hologram goggles. You have remote controls for everything. This ancient sundial cost \$10,000.

TOM

(chuckling at the thought)

The damn thing is a work of art. I know it's an extravagance, but we could afford it. I'm damned if I'm going to let Dick put me down for enjoying the good things in life. This time I'm raring for a fight. I wonder how I could slip it into the conversation that the damn thing cost a fortune.



HARRIET

We have to simplify our lives, save the world's limited resources.

TOM

What about that light on the porch? Do we need to keep it on all night?

HARRIET

You want to get up in the middle of the night and shut it off?

TOM

We could buy a timer.

HARRIET

Done.

They high-five each other.

TOM

We've no reason to be ashamed of what we've achieved. We should be like Dick.

HARRIET

Dick ought to be ashamed. He abandoned us.

TOM

He won two Pulitzer Prizes, and forced the American People to question the xenophobia of politicians like Bradley.

HARRIET

Sidney needed a daddy.

TOM

He had a father.

HARRIET

Yes, of course he did.

Tom puts on his hologram glasses.

TOM

Ah, they're uploading it now.  
(reacting to what he's viewing.)

Yep, it's the cover story. And he did use our photograph on the cover--- with our smiling faces and a red circle and a big X.

HARRIET

Oh God.

TOM

(reading)

The headline says, "The not-so-perfect family."

(reading)

Congressional candidate Thomas Widener's pure and wholesome image is neither pure nor wholesome. Brth records obtained by the Tribune and extensive interviews with the candidate's family reveal that Tom Widener married his wife four years after their alleged son was born.

(speaking; lifts the goggles for a moment)

This is an invasion of privacy.

(looking through the goggles again and reading)

The birth records also reveal that Sidney Widener's real father is unknown, raising speculation that the candidate's wife was sleeping around.

HARRIET

(exploding)

They're calling me a slut.

Tom removes the goggles.

TOM

Well, you were having sex with two men at the same time.

HARRIET

That makes me a slut?

TOM

(hesitating)

That makes you ...

(looking for a kind word)

special.

Tom's phone rings.

TOM

(on the phone)

I'm looking at it now... No. You're kidding ... Bradley must have known about that story weeks ago ... What press release? ... I don't know about that. I'll call you back.

Tom hangs up

TOM

Bradley's given his five kids DNA tests and he's going to release the results at a press conference.

Harriet starts laughing. He gives her a sharp look. She becomes serious.

HARRIET

Maybe they're not all his.

TOM

Christine Bradley cheating on her husband? For God's sake, she was a virgin when she married him.

HARRIET

How do you know that?

TOM

It's in their press release.

HARRIET

They put that in a press release? I'd want to keep something like that secret.

TOM

We're finished.

HARRIET

Bradley gets kickbacks from the gambling and tobacco lobbies, he cuts off funding for the arts, he guts education, he wants spy cameras in every home, he's in bed with the gun nuts, he votes for every war in sight and you can't go to Congress because your wife wasn't a virgin?

TOM

There's no point being intelligent, Harriet. This is an election. I know what Bradley's going to do at that press conference. We've got to be prepared. Bradley's going to challenge me to give Sidney a DNA test.

HARRIET

He wouldn't.

Tom gives her a come-on-you've-got-to-be kidding look.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

All right he would. But you can't. We all agreed.  
(pointing to the ring)  
Not knowing was the best way.

TOM

That was 10 years ago.

HARRIET

Even so.

TOM

This'll cost us the election.

HARRIET

What if the test proves that you're not the father?

TOM

The boy is the spitting image of me. He thinks like me. All his mannerisms are mine. All along we've known who the real father is.

Harriet looks very worried.

TOM (CONT'D)

The test is just a formality, for the media. It's going to make Bradley look like a fool. There's absolutely nothing to worry about.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

CURTAIN ACT I

## ACT II

Online Sample Reading Only

## SCENE 1

Lights come up on the deck in the late afternoon. Harriet is running around the deck, straightening things up. Tom is talking on his finger phone.

HARRIET

Oh my God, Sidney's homework. I don't want Dick to see that. Tom, will you get off the phone?

She hides the target cut-out under the table.

TOM

(on the phone)

I want to hold the press conference tomorrow afternoon, just after we get the test results...Nothing is going to go wrong. I want all the media there.

HARRIET

(to Tom)

Dick will be here any minute.

TOM

(on the phone)

OK, I've got to go. I'll call you from the hospital.

Tom hangs up.

TOM (CONT'D)

What's Dick going to do while we're at the hospital?

HARRIET

He'll come with us. We're not going to do this behind his back.

TOM

Then you're the one who tells him that we had Sidney tested.

HARRIET

I'm not volunteering to do that.

TOM

Then you've got to tell him about the sex.

HARRIET

What about the sex?

TOM

You said you were going to tell him.

She doesn't reply.

TOM

You want me to tell him you've cut him off?

HARRIET

I haven't cut him off. I've just decided to be...  
 (the word is painful to say)  
 ...monogamous.

TOM

That's the same thing.

HARRIET

It's totally different.

TOM

OK, then I'll tell him you're monogamous.

HARRIET

No, it wouldn't sound right coming from you. Makes me sound like your property and that you've decided he's going to be cut off.

TOM

Who's going to tell him about the living arrangements?

HARRIET

He's going to be staying with us...  
 (responding to Tom's stern look)  
 ... for a while...  
 (responding to an increasingly harsh stern look)  
 ...for a few days, until he gets a place. I'm not telling him he's not wanted here.

TOM

He is wanted here, just not overnight, not all the time. Maybe he'll get the hint and we won't have to say anything. After all, if we're married, and he can't have sex with you anymore, we're living an ordinary life in the suburbs, and I'm running for office. Surely Dick has the sensitivity and intelligence to realize --

(realizing that Dick wouldn't get it)

We have to tell him.

HARRIET

We'll drop this on him the moment he walks in and get it out of the way.

TOM

I'll go first.

HARRIET

No, I'll tell him my thing first.

TOM

You should have e-mailed him that sex was over when you decided three years ago.

He looks to her for confirmation but she averts her eyes. Modernistic voice-front-door alert is heard.

ROBOTIC VOICE

Fit male -- pheromone analysis indicates arrogance and heightened sexuality.

TOM AND HARRIET

It's Dick.

They both put on their goggles. Harriet looks with a mixture of anger and lust. Tom looks with apprehension.

TOM

I forgot how badly he dresses.



HARRIET

I forgot how ...  
 (wants to say "sexy")  
 fit he is.

Tom heads off to get him as Harriet watches on the goggles. Tom enters with Dick, who has a knapsack hanging from one shoulder. Dick and Harriet hesitantly size each other up. Dick sweeps Harriet up in his arms and gives her a deep kiss. She pulls away. He is surprised and hurt.

DICK

(finally)  
 You look very...  
 (meaning sexy)  
 ...fit.

HARRIET

(sarcastic)  
 It's been a long time, Dick.

DICK

(realizing the sarcasm, uneasy)  
 It's been too long, I know. I can't believe you really bought this place.

TOM

We thought we could live in it for a while until you returned. Now we can burn it down.

Tom laughs, Dick and Harriet don't. Dick goes to the railing. Tom goes to get drinks.

DICK

So this is what that beach looked like from the perch of the filthy rich. I can't tell you how many times I've played this scene in my mind, sitting in muddy battlefields with bombs going off all over. The three of us back together again.

Harriet joins Dick at the railing.

HARRIET

I spend a lot of time on the deck, writing and looking out at the water. The ocean is always the same, but every day it's different.

DICK

(to Harriet)

So why did you move to this place?

Dick places an arm lovingly around Harriet's shoulders. Harriet moves away.

HARRIET

(finally, hint of anger)

Sidney? Our son? Your son?

Dick doesn't read her mood.

DICK

Sidney is such a great kid. He wrote me about being a soccer star, his late night hi-jinks, juggling girlfriends ...

(with swagger to Harriet)

Bet you see my genes in him all the time, eh?

(to Tom)

I want to be a real father to that boy.

I need a drink.

HARRIET

Me too.

Tom hands out the drinks.

DICK

A toast. To Congressman Tom Widener.

They toast and drink. Harriet watches Dick warily.

DICK (CONT'D)

I still have the ring.

HARRIET

(touched)

You do?

Dick holds up his hand with the ring.

DICK

What about you guys?

They both hold up their hands with the rings.

DICK (CONT'D)

It's amazing how the three of us have stuck together like this, all these years. One for all and all for one, huh? I've got to tell you guys something. Ten years ago on that beach Tom said something I've been thinking about a lot lately.

(to Tom)

Some things can't be replaced. That's what you said. And you're right. All this, what we have, can't be replaced. What we've got is rock solid.

TOM

Rock solid?

DICK

Rock solid. You know why we've stayed together? Honesty. We've always been totally honest with each other. Full disclosure.

Dick is disturbed to see Tom and Harriet looking away with a hint of embarrassment.

TOM

(awkwardly)

To full disclosure.

HARRIET

(awkwardly)

Full disclosure.

They clink glasses.

During the next exchanges, Tom and Harriet gesture silently to each other when not being seen by Dick.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Dick, I have to tell you something.

TOM

(heading her off)

The schools in the city are awful. We were very lucky to get Sidney into Heston Elementary. It hasn't worked out the way we expected. Dick, I have something to tell you about Sidney.

DICK

I have a birthday present for Sidney.

TOM

How nice. Isn't that nice, Harriet?

DICK

I sure as hell wasn't going to miss my son's 10th birthday. I've missed so many of his years growing up.

HARRIET

Then why the hell weren't you here, damn it?

DICK

(shocked by the outburst)

What?

HARRIET

I was having a baby and you just walked out of here and disappeared, for 10 years. For 10 years, Dick.

DICK

I came back.

HARRIET

Now and then you deigned to come back for a week or two to check us out, thank you very much.

DICK

(appealing to him)

Tom.

TOM

She's got a point, Dick.

DICK

I was writing important stories. It would have been irresponsible to turn my back on all the bad things that were happening over there.

HARRIET

You didn't give a damn about your son.

DICK

I wanted to be with my son.

TOM

Maybe your son.

DICK

But I had the chance of a lifetime -- to write the truth about what our government was doing.

HARRIET

You were one of Sidney's fathers.

DICK

I had an obligation to society.

HARRIET

You had an obligation to our family.

They grow silent, the anger spent.

DICK

( finally)

Harriet, for the first time in my life I had a chance to make a difference.

She softens, realizing how painful it must have been wanting to make a difference all these years and not being able to until now.

HARRIET

I know it took courage to put your life on the line like that.

He goes to her.

DICK

I wanted so often to come home, to chuck everything. Being away from you was hell.

She nods that she understands. Dick hugs her and she lets him. Tom watches with concern.

HARRIET

They were marvelous stories. You should be very proud.

She touches his cheek tenderly. Tom becomes more concerned over Harriet's renewed warm feelings towards Dick.

TOM

Isn't there something you wanted to tell Dick?

HARRIET

Not just now.

TOM

I thought you wanted to be first.

HARRIET

Dick just got here.

TOM

I thought that's when you wanted to do it.

DICK

What are you guys talking about?

HARRIET

(hurriedly, to Dick)

We're just happy to have you back.

DICK

And that makes me happy. To tell you the truth, I was a little afraid that things might have changed between us after all these years.

(picking up the sundial and inspecting it)

Expensive?

TOM

(proudly)  
Yes, I spent ...

HARRIET

Piece of junk. Found it on the beach. Right out there.

Dick goes to the table with finger phones charging.

DICK

You need five phones?

HARRIET

We really live a very simple life, Dick.

DICK

Every month I sent you a check because I thought you guys were scraping by.

HARRIET

We looked forward to getting your little contribution.

DICK

Little contribution? It was half my pay.

HARRIET

We put the money in an investment fund for Sidney.

TOM

Socially responsible stocks.

DICK

I'm sorry. I'm having a little trouble with all this affluence. I've spent the last 10 years in countries where people had nothing. Families drawing water from wells poisoned with arsenic, mothers with AIDS nursing babies because they can't afford healthy milk.

TOM

The same thing is happening right here. Poor people riding in cars without air bags, and schools with only one computer per classroom.

(sternly, responding to Dick's contemptuous frown)  
Deprivation is relative.

Dick peers under the tablecloth at the cardboard cut out showing the bullet holes. He fingers some of the holes.

DICK

Has crime gotten so bad?

HARRIET

It's one of Sidney's school projects.

(responding to Dick's look of alarm)

It's an NRA charter school. We're not thrilled about the curriculum.

Dick's attention is drawn to the Universe goggles.

DICK

What the hell are these?

TOM

(with pride)

My Universe goggles.

HARRIET

Dick isn't interested.

TOM

Of course he is.

(trying to provoke Dick)

They're very expensive and I'm very proud of them.

Tom waits for Dick to pounce on this but he doesn't.

TOM

Here let me show you. I'll put on the external speakers. Incredible 3-D sound.

He puts on the sound. The roar of race cars going around a track is heard.



TOM (CONT'D)

The Indy 500.

(giving Dick the goggles)

Here put them on. They'll put you right in the middle of the racetrack.

He fits the goggles onto Dick's head.

DICK

Oh, my God.

Dick jumps to the side as though he's about to be run over as the sound of a car whizzes by.

TOM

See?

DICK

You like watching this stuff? How much did those things cost?

TOM

Fifteen thousand.

DICK

Dollars?

TOM

Yes, of course.

DICK

That could keep a hundred babies in Africa from getting AIDS.

HARRIET

You're right, Dick.

Tom looks at Harriet with increasing concern.

DICK

Inequitable distribution of resources. That's what we were fighting against, when we were on that beach yelling up at this house and the asshole who lived here. Is this the goal of Revolutionary Centrism -- Universe goggles in every home?

TOM

(firmly)

The goal of Revolutionary Centrism, Dick, is to make this country a better place for everyone, not just the rich and privileged.

DICK

How did you make the money to buy all this stuff, off your creative writing?

TOM

I made a few pennies from my poems.

DICK

What's this house worth?

TOM

(hoping for a reaction)

Four million dollars.

DICK

How many poems did you have in that book?

TOM

DICK

That's a lot of money for 20 poems.

TOM

Two of them were long. Actually, Harriet made most of the money from her novels and movie contracts.

The sound of garbage cans being overturned startles Dick, but Tom and Harriet take little notice.

TOM

Reporters going through our trash. Some of them check the garbage at night to scoop the reporters who check it in the morning. All the garbage that's fit to print.

Dick hands the goggles back to Tom.

TOM

(continuing; waving the goggles and indicating the hidden reporters)  
Having toys like this proves to them that I support the American Dream.

(indicating the source of the crashing cans, whispering)

If they ever found out that I put conservation ahead of consumption, they'd brand me un-American. I want the American People to see me as one of them, not better than them. I want those reporters to write stories saying that we are just ordinary people. That's why we sprinkle our garbage with receipts from Dollar Stores. Dick, these are tense times. Everyone is watching everyone else, looking for signs that their friends or neighbors are terrorists. Refuse to consume in the land of consumption? Nothing could be more suspicious.

DICK

You've gotten to be like all politicians. You've given up on everything we stood for.

TOM

(with pride)

Dick, we recycle.

DICK

All politicians talk about changing things from the inside.

TOM

I'll be different.

DICK

You didn't accomplish one thing when you finally got on the school board.

TOM

I had to make compromises to become a state legislator.

DICK

You did nothing as a state legislator.

TOM

I had to make compromises to get to the senate.

DICK

You did nothing in the senate, either.

TOM

I had to make compromises to run for Congress.

Dick gives Tom a knowing look.

TOM

Dick, once I get to Congress I'll be able to stop making compromises and do the right thing.

DICK

We were doing the right thing back then. We had hope, ideals, great sex.

HARRIET

I do miss those good times.

DICK

You miss the old times, Tom?

TOM

Wouldn't change a minute. Well, maybe a few minutes. Our old lifestyle is causing some political problems for me.

DICK

(laughing)

I bet. Living in a menage a trois gets you three votes, but that's about it.

TOM

I wish you wouldn't use that term

DICK

Think of what the media could do with what we were doing back then.

Dick laughs some more.

TOM

The Trib's already done a story on how Sidney's father is unknown.

DICK

Sidney's father is known. He is us.

TOM

Bradley gave his five kids DNA tests to prove that he is their real father. I had to counter this. It's not something that I...that we wanted to do, but we had no choice. We had to...

HARRIET

You had to.

TOM

All right, I had to.

DICK

Had to what?

TOM

Harriet, didn't you want to go first?

Harriet firmly shakes her head. Tom frowns.  
Dick waits.

HARRIET

(pointedly to Tom)

This sounds like a good time to talk to Dick about what you wanted to talk about.

Tom takes a deep breath, then loses his nerve.

TOM

So you're giving up your foreign assignment?

DICK

I'll be on the national staff.

HARRIET

Where will you live?

DICK

Here, of course.

The disturbed expression on the faces of Tom and Harriet cause Dick to think that he might be assuming too much.

DICK

That's what I was assuming.

TOM

We're married, Dick.

DICK

I know. I was with you on the honeymoon, remember?

TOM

Your presence was unforgettable. Now we're married with all that that implies.

DICK

I know what this marriage implies.

TOM

This marriage implies something different now. We're married, married.

DICK

Congratulations. Congratulations.

TOM

Damn it, Harriet, will you tell him?

Harriet can't find the words.

DICK

Tell me what?

HARRIET

What I wanted to tell you is...is...is that I love you. I love you very, very much.

TOM

Sure. We all love each other, but --

DICK

(to Harriet)

And I love you very, very much.

Dick extracts an elegantly wrapped package and hands it to Harriet.

DICK

(continuing; to Harriet)

I got this for you.

She opens it and takes out a skimpy chemise.

DICK

It's ecologically responsible. Used a very small amount of natural resources.

HARRIET

Oh dear.

DICK

(mistaking Harriet's talk of love for an invitation)

I'm exhausted from that trip. Maybe we should all go upstairs and lie down together?

TOM

(glaring at Harriet)

We're not exhausted. from the trip.

HARRIET

But I am a little tired.

TOM

No, you're not.

DICK

Where's the bedroom?

HARRIET

Our bedroom is upstairs to the left.

DICK

(to Harriet)

You want to show me upstairs?

TOM

Your bedroom is to the right. We've put you in the best guest room, with its own fireplace.

DICK

(shocked)

The guest room?

(realizing what he thinks is a joke)

You got me on that one. For a minute I thought you were serious.

(he laughs some more)

The guest room.

He looks at Tom and Harriet who are not laughing. He stops laughing. His smile is slowly replaced by a look of concern.

DICK

This isn't a joke.

Harriet looks away.

DICK

(continuing; to Tom)

What's going on?

TOM

You go away for ten years. Things happen.

DICK

(indicating his surroundings)

I can see that, all right.

TOM

We're not the same people. You haven't been around.

DICK

I kept coming back.

HARRIET

Twice, for a couple of weeks.

DICK

I think I know what you're trying to say. I was a fool to think that you guys would have waited for me, that everything would have stayed the same.

(looking at his ring)

I guess I put too much faith in this.



TOM

We all wear our rings. Just this one thing has changed. Harriet, Sidney and I have become a family.

DICK

And what have I become?

HARRIET

Our dearest friend.

TOM

As you've always been and always will be.

Sidney arrives in the doorway.

DICK

You're both forgetting something. Sidney. He's as much mine as --

Dick is surprised to see Sidney standing in the doorway. He's wearing an outsized soccer shirt and shorts. He carries a soccer ball.

SIDNEY

Hello, Daddy.

DICK

Hey, little fella. You're not so little now. Let me get a look at you.

They hug.

DICK

So now you're captain of your soccer team.

Tom and Harriet look sternly at Sidney for having lied to Dick in one of his e-mails. Sidney looks at them with embarrassment.

DICK

I bought you a cake, to celebrate your birthday.

SIDNEY

You did?

DICK

(getting a soccer ball from his bag)

And an autographed soccer ball...

SIDNEY

I'm not really captain of the soccer team, daddy.

Dick kneels before Sidney and places his hands on his shoulders.

DICK

Tell me about the competitive cycling you've been doing.

Sidney looks to his parents who are still looking sternly at him.

SIDNEY

I ride a bike to school.

DICK

Girls?

SIDNEY

No.

HARRIET

(to Sidney)

What exactly have you been telling your daddy?

Dick pulls a piece of paper from his pocket.

DICK

I still have your wonderful e-mail.

(reading the e-mail)

Dear Daddy, I was trapped in an ice storm on Mount Rainier last weekend. I hung to the side of the cliff with my crampons, as the wind howled about me. When dawn broke, I saw a beautiful girl trapped in a crevasse. I rappelled down to her, and resuscitated her with mouth to mouth. Then I carried her all the way back to base camp. The TV news called me The Hero of the Slopes.

SIDNEY

I like writing fiction.

DICK

Maybe one day you'll win a Pulitzer just like I did. Do you still play chess?

SIDNEY

I dabble.

DICK

(to Harriet)

Chess is in the genes. Star chess players are born knowing how to win. Do you play with with your father?

SIDNEY

Father doesn't play chess. I play with mother.

Dick goes to the chessboard, grabs a white and black piece in either hand and holds out his closed fists to Sidney. Sidney picks the white piece.

Tom indicates to Harriet that he is not happy about the skimpy chemise or the way Harriet has been ducking the sex issue and he wants to talk to her about this. They exit.

DICK

Son, I want to warn you, I play to win.

Sidney moves a piece. Dick moves a piece. Sidney moves a piece. The exchanges are very rapid as they go through the moves of a well known opening. Dick is amazed at the boy's ability. Sidney grows bored with Dick's clumsy responses.

DICK (CONT'D)

Dabble you say? Many a night I spent playing chess, waiting for the executions of political leaders. I beat some of the best players in the world.

SIDNEY

(disbelieving)

You did?

DICK

Of course they were at a disadvantage. Knowing they were going to be executed in the morning, they had trouble concentrating.

Dick makes a move. Sidney instantly responds.

SIDNEY

Check.

DICK

What?

Dick concentrates on the game. The seconds pass. Dick triumphantly moves his piece.

DICK (CONT'D)

Your move, little fella.

Sidney moves instantly.

SIDNEY

Check.

DICK

What?

Dick moves his piece, more worried than triumphant this time.

DICK (CONT'D)

What are you going to be when you grow up?

SIDNEY

A reporter. My father says reporters are brave. He said you risk your life to tell people the truth.

DICK

Your father said that about me?

SIDNEY

I'm the editor of my paper in school.

DICK

You know what that means, don't you? We're colleagues.

SIDNEY

We are?

DICK

Sure.

SIDNEY

Checkmate.

Dick studies the board and then looks up at Sidney, who is tense, not knowing how Dick is going to respond to his defeat. Slowly Dick smiles.

DICK

Give me five, little fella.

SIDNEY

It's Sidney.

DICK

Give me five, Sidney.

They high-five each other. Tom enters with Harriet and they watch unobserved.

DICK

Are you the best chess player in your school?

SIDNEY

Yes.

DICK

I bet it makes you popular with all the other kids.

SIDNEY

I don't have a lot of friends. Father is trying to teach me how to make friends.

Dick gets down on his knees beside Sidney and puts an arm around him.

DICK

I didn't have a lot of friends when I was in school.

SIDNEY

(surprised)

You didn't?

DICK

When I was your age I wanted to be the most popular kid in my class and I did everything I could to get the other kids to like me.

SIDNEY

You did?

DICK

I laughed at their dumb jokes.

SIDNEY

I do that.

DICK

I hung around with the most popular kids even though they ignored me. I did everything they did. I dressed like them. I walked like them. And I talked like them, even though it was kind of dumb talk.

SIDNEY

I don't dress like them, but I do all those other things.

DICK

I wasn't very happy.

Sidney sadly nods that he understands from personal experience.

DICK

All I had were a few good friends. Then I made a very important discovery that changed my life. You want to know what it was?

SIDNEY

(eagerly)

Yes.

DICK

It's doesn't matter if everyone doesn't like you. A few good friends are all you need. It's not good to act like everyone else just to make friends because then you're not yourself, you're nobody.

SIDNEY

I have a couple of good friends.

DICK

Then you're all right. You're doing just fine.

Sidney looks questioningly and Dick nods to emphasize the point. A smile of relief fills Sidney's face. He and Dick embrace. Harriet is very touched by this. Tom goes to them.

TOM

Of course, the more friends you have, the better. You know that, don't you son?

SIDNEY

Yes, father.

DICK

(firmly, frowning at Tom)

But everyone doesn't have to like you, son.

SIDNEY

No, daddy.

DICK

The boy is one hell of a chess player.

(to Harriet)

They say chess is in the genes.

(to Tom)  
His concentration is amazing.

TOM

(to Harriet)  
That must have come from me. They say concentration is hereditary.

DICK

(to Tom)  
Family. I tell you, it's the only thing that matters.

TOM

Ah, yes, let's talk about family, Dick.

Tom indicates to Harriet that she take Sidney away so he doesn't hear.

HARRIET

Sidney, come here. I want to show you something.

DICK

Oh, so this is something you don't want the boy to hear. Something tells me I'm about to get hit right between the eyes again.

TOM

Polls indicate that 87 percent of the American People think it is important for children to know the identity of their fathers. As you can see, that puts me in a rather delicate political situation.

DICK

The identity of Sidney's father is known -- he is us.

TOM

The American People are fickle. One father is a must, but two are too many. It's only a matter of time before some reporter gets hold of Sidney and puts the question to him: Which one of those guys is your father. He'll say, "both of them."

DICK

That will get their attention.



TOM

It already has. Next it will be late night TV comedians, crank callers at three in the morning, news helicopters buzzing over the house.

DICK

They're not going to use helicopters --

The sound of an approaching helicopter is heard.  
Garbage cans crash.

TOM

Sidney's paternity has already become a big issue in the campaign. Caulfield got hold of Sidney's birth certificate. No father is listed on it.

DICK

That was careless.

TOM

Careless hell. That's the way you wanted it. Dick, I've got to prove that I'm Sidney's father. That's why we had him tested.

DICK

Tested?

TOM

DNA.

DICK

(outraged)

You gave our son a DNA test?

TOM

We get the results from the hospital tomorrow.

DICK

(exploding)

Do you have any idea what this test will do to us? It'll turn us into a two-parent family.

TOM

You can still be Sidney's uncle.

Sidney's eyes snap open in shock on hearing the word "uncle."

DICK

That's a demotion.

Dick pushes Tom away angrily.

TOM

The test won't change anything really.

Sidney stands up suddenly, his face wet from tears.

SIDNEY

It will change everything.

He runs from the room crying with Harriet chasing after him.

HARRIET

Oh Sidney, Sidney.

She exits.

TOM

It's a lot easier having ideals when ideals are all you have.

Dick is pointedly silent.

TOM

(continuing; pleading)

You know I can't win with this hanging over my head.

DICK

Sidney is lucky to have two fathers like us.

Harriet enters.

HARRIET

He wants his father.

Tom rushes off, and Dick follows close behind.  
Harriet fingers the sexy chemise thoughtfully,  
feeling its fabric at her cheek.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

Online Sample Reading Only

## SCENE 2

A little while later. A modernistic sound, similar to the ones used by computers and other electronic devices to signal something is about to happen, is heard.

## ROBOTIC VOICE

Good evening, Tom, Dick and Harriet. Here's some news you can use: TheDepartment of Homeland Security has determined that high-fat, high-caloric foods are killers and terrorist threats to the American People. The Department has declared consumption of ice-cream, sour cream and whipped cream illegal.

Lights come up in the master bedroom. Tom and Harriet are lying in bed, dressed in their pajamas. They are not happy with each other.

## HARRIET

This has not gone well.

## TOM

He was bound to be disappointed.

## HARRIET

I feel like we kicked him in the groin.

## TOM

He ought to have gotten the hint years ago.

## HARRIET

I feel like something very special died here tonight.

## TOM

What are you talking about, Harriet? You don't want things to go back to the way they were back then, do you?

She doesn't reply.

TOM (CONT'D)

Harriet?

HARRIET

There's a lot to be said for our old life.

TOM

Three penniless people on a beach?

HARRIET

Three people in love with each other. A family.

TOM

A family consists of two parents and a child, or children.

HARRIET

Just because that's the way everyone does it? We had such a wonderful, workable situation, the three of us. You loved to cook. Dick liked fixing things. I planned our vacations. I liked action movies and Dick liked to go with me. You and I liked romantic flicks, which Dick hated. You and Dick were always talking about politics. We didn't need three different cars, three different televisions, three different everythings. We shared our lives.

TOM

And?

HARRIET

We shared each other.

TOM

And you miss it?

HARRIET

Why is that wrong?

TOM

It's not natural. A woman should have only one husband. A man should have only one wife. And children should have only two parents.

HARRIET

Why?

TOM

Why? Because... I don't know why. Because. Because it's not natural. It's terribly confusing to poor Sidney, having a father and a daddy. At least the test will clear that up.

HARRIET

Sidney loves having both a father and a daddy. He's going to lose one of you because of that damn test. He can't win. Sidney went to bed crying, he's so scared.

TOM

We need to do this to win the election, Harriet.

HARRIET

If our son has to make a sacrifice like that, maybe winning the election isn't worth it.

TOM

I have to know.

HARRIET

Stop thinking of yourself for a second and ask yourself what's best for Sidney.

TOM

This is best for Sidney. He's my son. He's part of me. Good night.

HARRIET

Me. Me. Me. He's not part of you. He's not an extension of you or me or Dick. That's what we were thinking that day on the beach, but we were wrong. Sidney is Sidney. He's his own person.

He turns away from her. She turns the other way and tries to go to sleep. But she is restless. She finally gets out of bed, exits to go to the bathroom. When she returns, she has changed into the sexy chemise that Dick gave her.

TOM

What are you wearing?

HARRIET

Ecologically responsible clothing.

She heads for the door.

TOM

Harriet. We are married.

HARRIET

So?

TOM

That should say it all.

TOM

I'm a very liberal man. It wouldn't bother me if you and Dick went out to dinner by yourselves. It wouldn't bother me if you went to one of those awful action movies that you two like and I despise. It wouldn't bother me if you two hung out alone if I became a Congressman and had to spend lots of time in Washington. But the thought of you and Dick being in bed together is something I can't take anymore. Go ahead, call me crazy. But everyone I know is crazy like that.

HARRIET

Foucault says...

TOM

Will you shut up about Foucault already.

HARRIET

Monogamy is like having tenure. You only need it when you're in trouble.

TOM

Monogamy is the accepted practice by everyone in this country.

HARRIET

Only because everyone practices it.

Sidney enters on Tom's side of the room, dressed in his camouflage pajamas and carrying a teddy bear, which is also in camouflage. Harriet hastily gets back into bed and pulls the sheets over the chemise.

SIDNEY

Father?

TOM

(sitting up)

Sidney, couldn't you fall asleep?

Harriet pats the bed and Sidney clambers onto it, between them.

HARRIET

It's the test.

Sidney nods.

She takes him in her arms.

HARRIET

I know it's very scary going to this doctor tomorrow. But I'm not scared. You know why?

He shakes his head.

HARRIET

Because I love you. And because I know your father loves you, very much. And because I know your daddy loves you. That's what's important, not a piece of paper.

TOM

The doctor will explain everything to you. She'll call you into her office -- just you and her -- and she will tell you everything that is going to happen and answer all your questions. Then she will give me a piece of paper that says I'm your father.

SIDNEY

Why do we need a piece of paper to say that?

TOM

It's like this, Sidney. Ten years ago your daddy and I were on the beach with your mother and one of us put you inside of her.

SIDNEY

You said that God put me in you.



TOM

Him too.

SIDNEY

Mother was on the beach with three guys?

TOM

The test will show who did what to whom. I mean, we know who the whom is, but we don't know who the who is.

HARRIET

I don't think Sidney is at all interested in all this clinical information.

SIDNEY

That's not true, mother. I'm very interested in the clinical data.

TOM

Once the test proves that I'm your father, I'll just keep doing what fathers always do. I'll read to you at night and tuck you into bed. I'll hug you when you have nightmares. I'll answer all your questions.

SIDNEY

And what will Daddy do?

TOM

Dick will be your uncle. He'll bring you presents and buy you ice cream. You see, Sidney? Nothing will change.

SIDNEY

What if the test says you're the uncle?

TOM

It won't. I know you're my son.

SIDNEY

But it could, couldn't it?

TOM

It could, but...

SIDNEY

So you'll be the uncle who buys me presents.

HARRIET

(sarcastically)  
Don't forget the ice cream.

TOM

(disturbed)  
It's not going to happen.

SIDNEY

(close to tears)  
But it could.

Sidney jumps off the bed and heads for the door.

SIDNEY

(continuing; shouting over his shoulder)  
You know it could. I wasn't born yesterday. And I was only pretending about God. I know what really happened on that beach. Sexual intercourse.  
(to himself, with disdain)  
Yeah, sure, God put me in you.

Sidney exits.

HARRIET

I hope you're satisfied.

TOM

Sexual intercourse? What the hell are they teaching kids in that damn school?

Furious, Harriet gets out of bed.

TOM (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

HARRIET

I want to make sure Dick has everything he needs.

She exits. Tom gets up to go after her, changes his mind and sits back down on the edge of bed, trying to hear what's going on in the guest room. The sound of an approaching helicopter grows to a roar as the lights dim to black.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

Online Sample Reading Only

## SCENE 3

The next morning. A modernistic sound, similar to the ones used by computers and other electronic devices to signal something is about to happen, is heard.

## ROBOTIC VOICE

Good day Tom, Dick, Harriet, and Sidney. Here's some news you can use: The National Endowment for Officially Sanctioned Art has declared that people attending plays that satirize the American way of life are threats to national security. Please report any suspicious activity such as laughter to the Department of Homeland Security.

Lights come up on a sterile waiting room of a geneticist's office. The room is dominated by an unlit neon sign that reads "Genetics r Us" with the letter "r" backwards. Caulfield is sitting in the corner, in a disguise, his head bent over as though he is asleep. Off-stage the sound of parents trying to calm a child throwing a minifit is heard. Tom enters.

## UNSEEN VOICE

(cheery, as in a commercial)

Welcome to Genetics r Us, a division of We Know Who You Are, Incorporated. Please enter your patient number.

Activated by the door being opened, the sign lights up and starts to blink. Tom goes to a computer keyboard and types. Dick, Harriet and Sidney enter. Tom is angry, Dick is sad, Harriet is distressed and Sidney is on the verge of throwing a tantrum. Sidney carries a backpack. Dick is no longer wearing the ring that Harriet gave him at the start of the play.

## UNSEEN VOICE

(continuing; cheery voice)

Thank you for your patient registration number. Your appointment with the doctor will start in

(switching to electronic voice)

Fifteen minutes.

The sign stops flashing.

SIDNEY

I don't want to do this.

TOM

This is something your parents want you to do.

SIDNEY

Mommy doesn't want to do it.

They sit down, alienated from each other. Tom keeps his distance from both of them, angry about the night before. Sidney wanders over to the computer screen and keyboard and starts pushing buttons.

HARRIET

(to Tom)

You haven't said a word all morning.

TOM

There's nothing to say.

Sidney succeeds in activating the unseen voice.

UNSEEN VOICE

If you are here to give blood for a genetic analysis of your risk for -

(switching to rapid electronic voice)

Breast cancer, lung cancer, heart disease or schizophrenia

(switching back to cheery voice)

press one now.

Sidney, stop playing that machine.

Sidney hastily tries to find a way to stop the device.

UNSEEN VOICE

If you are here to be cloned press two now.

DICK

That's enough, son.

Sidney is desperately trying to find the right button.

UNSEEN VOICE

(cheery voice)

If you want to find out whether you will die in the next

(rapid electronic voice)

months

(cheery voice)

press three now.

TOM

For God's sake, Sidney, shut it off.

Sidney hits the right button and shuts the computer off. There is silence for a long minute. Sidney walks away from the machine and checks his back-pack.

UNSEEN VOICE

Case 937, the doctor would like to see the child alone for a few moments first.

Sidney takes a revolver from his backpack and conceals it under his coat.

Tom, Dick and Harriet cluster around Sidney to give him confidence.

Sidney heads for the doctor's office, pulling out the revolver. Harriet rushes to him, grabs the revolver, which she passes to Tom, who passes it on to Dick. Sidney immediately raises his arms, knowing that his mother will pat him down, which she does. Sidney exits.

HARRIET

(watching Caulfield)

This test ought to clear things up with that reporter, Caulfield.

Without lifting his head, Caulfield surreptitiously takes notes in a small notepad.

TOM

That bastard is not going to get any more dirt on Tom Widener.

Harriet sees Caulfield taking notes and becomes suspicious.

HARRIET

You're too smart for him, Tom.

TOM

I guess I'm good for something.

HARRIET

What's gotten into you?

Suddenly Harriet realizes that the man pretending to doze in the corner of the room is Caulfield.

TOM

Even if I'm not able to satisfy you, I still can --

HARRIET

(pointedly interrupting)

I've never seen a TV producer get tears in his eyes like that. You were something, Tom.

Tom and Dick are bewildered. Harriet surreptitiously indicates Caulfield.

TOM

What the hell are you talking about?

Harriet indicates Caulfield with increasing agitation.

HARRIET

(with emphasis)

Caulfield...

(indicating Caulfield)

...is going to end up with egg on his face.

TOM  
Caulfield?

DICK  
Caulfield?

HARRIET  
(strongly indicating Caulfield)  
Caulfield!

TOM AND DICK  
(finally understanding)  
Caulfield!

TOM  
(seeking direction)  
Why is Caulfield going to end up with egg on his face?

HARRIET  
(with exaggerated slowness)  
Because of the TV show. The TV show that will make Caulfield look like an idiot.

DICK  
Yes. Yes. The TV show. Yes.

HARRIET  
You explained that Dick and I were deeply in love. How you were our best friend. And when Dick made me pregnant ...

TOM  
What?

HARRIET  
We thought he had been killed covering a war and you married me. You raised another man's son, so Sidney would never think he didn't have a father. You did it out of a dedication to the American way and values of the American People. It's going to be the most heart-warming television interview in history.

Caulfield writes furiously, then puts away his notebook, stands and prepares to leave, concealing his face from Tom, Dick and Harriet.



HARRIET

(continuing; calling to Caulfield)

Excuse me, sir, are you Joe Caulfield, the Tribune reporter who gets all those scoops?

Caulfield proudly reveals himself.

CAULFIELD

You're going to read about all this heartwarming stuff, in tomorrow's Tribune.

TOM AND DICK

(with feigned horror)

Caulfield!

CAULFIELD

(to Tom)

You tried to hide the facts. It's not going to work. Your dirty little secret is out.

(with contempt)

You're a patriotic, loyal, family man.

TOM

(with mock anger)

How dare you eavesdrop on us.

HARRIET

The truth. Isn't that what you want? I'll tell you the truth. The three of us were a menage a trois. We had wild sex, all three of us together, every night.

TOM

(to Harriet)

Are you crazy?

Caulfield shakes his head sadly at this unbelievable story.

HARRIET

(recalling Churchill's World War II speech, stirring and sincere)  
 We did it on the beaches, we did it on the landing grounds, we did it in the fields, and in the streets, we did it in the hills. Yes, Caulfield, we did it on that beach, that very beach where you came to interview us. A private beach. We broke the law on private property and the rules on sexual propriety. I wanted to make a baby and asked both these men to have sex with me. That's why we're here today -- to find out which one is the biological father.

CAULFIELD

I wasn't born yesterday.

He begins to march off.

HARRIET

Caulfield, wait. Don't you want the truth?

CAULFIELD

The hell with the truth. I've got the facts.

Caulfield exits. The Genetics r Us sign flashes.

DICK

(calling after him)

Have a nice day.

Tom and Dick come up on either side of Harriet and clap her on the back. She holds hands with both Tom and Dick.

DICK

(continuing; to Harriet)

You're a genius.

HARRIET

We're a team again.

DICK

Just like old times.

TOM

(to Harriet)

You're going to win the election for me.

DICK

Congratulations, Congressman Widener.

HARRIET

(hastily)

Now we don't have to get the test results. We can let everything stay the way it is. Sidney doesn't have to lose one of his fathers. Isn't that wonderful, Tom?

He lets go of her hand and turns away angrily.  
Harriet and Dick are still holding hands.

HARRIET

What is the matter with you?

TOM

I haven't forgotten about last night.

HARRIET

There's nothing to be angry about.

Tom looks extremely skeptical.

DICK

Let the truth be told. She turned me on and then she turned me down.

TOM

I wasn't born yesterday.

DICK

(throwing up his hands)

OK, we made mad, passionate love for three hours.

TOM

(to Harriet)

You weren't gone that long.

HARRIET

(with tenderness)

That's right. I thought I wanted to when I left our bed. But as much as I wanted to, I realized I couldn't do anything that would hurt you.

(reaching into her pocket, she pulls out a ring)

Dick gave it back to me last night.

Dick shows Tom his ring-less finger.

TOM

Oh.

Tom kisses Harriet. Tom puts the ring into his pocket.

HARRIET

(to Tom)

Let's get Sidney and get the hell out of here.

TOM

(finally)

I still want the test results.

HARRIET

Why? This time tomorrow the American People will think you're a brave man who gave his all to take care of the son of his best friend.

TOM

I've cared for the boy from the moment he was born. I've looked after him. I've held him when he was hurt. I've organized birthday parties for him, and cleaned up after him, and helped him with his homework. I was here, god damn it, not halfway around the world winning prizes, when Sidney had nightmares and couldn't sleep at night. If I'm going to do everything that a father does, I want the title, too. I want to be the father, the only father.

Harriet and Dick are stunned at Tom's real reason for the DNA test.

HARRIET

(Finally, with feeling)

I know what you've done. Dick knows what you've done.

Sidney knows what you have done. The boy obviously loves you. That's why he is so freaked out by this test.

DICK

Everytime I got an email from Harriet she was telling me all the wonderful things you were doing with Sidney and what a great father you were.

HARRIET

You've been a wonderful father to our son.

DICK

You don't need any test to prove that you're Sidney's father.

TOM

I know he's mine. But you don't.

DICK

You finally got Harriet in your name, along with everything else we've ever shared. Now you want to add Sidney? When's it going to end?

HARRIET

Everyone loves you. Let's go home.

TOM

Don't patronize me.

HARRIET

That's patronizing, saying everyone loves you?

TOM

It's how you say it that is patronizing.

(mimicking her)

Everyone loves you. You've always patronized me. Both of you. I've always been Tom the boring fuddy duddy. Tom who wants a conventional family. So what if I'm monogamous? It's OK to be dependable. It's all right to believe in family and country. God damn it. I'm proud to be an evolutionary centrist.

DICK

This test is a huge mistake --

TOM

Sure you think it's a big mistake because it'll show that you're the loser.

DICK

You've got to be kidding. I was on the beach, too, you know. And I remember performing a lot better than you behind that umbrella.

Harriet is shocked.

TOM

You might have fired that big gun of yours, but you were shooting blanks.

DICK

If anyone was shooting blanks it was you. I notice you have only one kid. After 10 years, this is the best you could do, without my help? Doesn't that make you just a little bit concerned about that little gun of yours?

TOM

Harriet wanted to wait.

DICK

For what?

HARRIET

(to Dick)

I didn't want to have a baby without you.

(realizing her gaffe, that Tom might think she meant she wanted Dick to impregnate her)

Oh, dear.

TOM

What?

(mimicking)

I didn't want to have a baby without you?

HARRIET

We were going to do everything together. That's what we promised each other on the beach. All of us. One for all and all for one.

TOM

That's what you were waiting for -- for the three of us to get behind that goddamn umbrella again?

HARRIET

Maybe we shouldn't have waited.

DICK

You need all the help you can get.

Sidney enters. He is angry and close to tears.  
The men race to him.

SIDNEY

The doctor will see you now. The results are ready.

TOM

It's going to be OK, son, these tests are never wrong.

Tom and Dick bring Sidney to a chair and sit on either side of him. They try to reassure Sidney, but the boy is having none of it.

DICK

The test will pick the right person to be your father.

TOM

You've got my genes. You're a worrier just like your father.

DICK

(to Sidney)

Playing chess and those letters you wrote, my genes are all over you.

(to Tom)

He's got my chin, you know?

TOM

He's got my nose.

Each one grabs the body part being described, much to Sidney's annoyance.

HARRIET

Stop it you two.

DICK  
He's got my hair.

TOM  
He's got my walk.

DICK  
He's got my talk.

TOM  
Oh yeah?

DICK  
Yeah.

The men are eyeball to eyeball, and nearly crush Sidney between them. He pushes them apart.

SIDNEY  
(angrily)  
Father. Daddy.

TOM  
I give you my word, son, that test will show I'm your real father.

DICK  
And I give you my word, son, that test will show I'm your real father.

HARRIET  
This is crazy.

TOM  
I'm getting those test results.

DICK  
Good!

Tom marches off. Sidney is crumpled into a chair. He is distraught. He removes the revolver from his backpack and idly spins the chambers. Several beats pass. Harriet cradles Sidney in her arms.



HARRIET

(to Dick)

You're only interested in winning. Name one time you've put someone else's interest before yours.

He thinks about it.

DICK

(finally)

I'm sure I could come up with a time when I put someone else's interests ahead of mine.

HARRIET

I'm waiting.

DICK

Sidney. I came back because he needs another father.

HARRIET

You came back because you need a son.

DICK

He is my son.

HARRIET

Your son?

(softly, indicating the distraught child)

If you really care about Sidney, you wouldn't put him through this.

DICK

I never realized I could feel this way about a kid.

A long beat.

DICK

In the beginning, the emails between us were just these silly little exchanges with some person I'd never met. But after a while I found myself looking forward to getting his emails.

HARRIET

You only care about your causes or whatever battle you happen to be fighting. You want victories.

DICK

God knows that's all I wanted for a while. But once I had them, they weren't important anymore. I was afraid what would happen when we finally came face to face. I never thought it could be this good, being with that boy. He calls me dad, but Tom's right. He's the father. And now he wants to lock me out of Sidney's life. I can't blame him. But I can't help that I want to be with Sidney, too. I've lost Tom, I've lost you and the only way I can be a part of Sidney's life is through that goddamn test. Isn't that ironic.

HARRIET

Much as I love you, I think it would have been better if you had never come home.

Tom enters, carrying a large manila envelope. He is somber. They both look at him expectantly. He shakes his head and looks at Dick with anger. Sidney gets up terrified.

HARRIET

Oh, Tom. I'm so sorry.

(goes to comfort Tom)

I don't care what that test says. I love you and you will always be...

TOM

I haven't opened it yet.

He walks away from her and she follows him. Sidney pointedly loads the gun with bullets and sticks the revolver in his belt.

TOM

You thought you'd picked the wrong horse.

HARRIET

For a moment when you looked at Dick like that --

Sidney grabs the envelope and runs away from his parents, angrily crumpling up the envelope, trying to destroy it.

TOM, DICK & HARRIET

No!

They try to grab him. Sidney pulls the gun from his belt.

SIDNEY

Back! Back! Or I'll shoot.

HARRIET

Is that gun loaded?

SIDNEY

An unloaded gun is just a paperweight.

HARRIET

Sidney, I want you to put that gun...

SIDNEY

Back, mother.

TOM

How can you talk to your mother this way?

SIDNEY

I'm better armed than she is.

TOM

I'm going to count to five. When I'm through, I expect you to put that gun down. One, two, three, four ...

Sidney puts the gun down.

TOM

(continuing; to Harriet, with pride)

See, you just have to be firm and--

Sidney pulls a hand grenade from his pocket.

SIDNEY

This is an old Russian AK 9-2-5 hand grenade from my comparative weapons class. Ten-second fuse.

Tom, Dick and Harriet jump back in alarm.

TOM

(grimly, to Harriet)

The hell with the American People. We're pulling him out of Heston elementary tomorrow.

Sidney pulls the pin out of the grenade.

SIDNEY

Ten ... Nine.

TOM

(To Dick)

It is a dummy, isn't it?

DICK

Seven.

HARRIET

Heston wouldn't issue live grenades.

SIDNEY

Five.

HARRIET

Would they?

DICK

Four.

TOM

Put it down gently.

SIDNEY

Three.

DICK

Two.

SIDNEY

One.

HARRIET

Oh my God.

DICK

Oh shit.

TOM

Sidney!

Sidney drops it on the ground close to himself.

TOM, DICK &amp; HARRIET

No!

Dick leaps on top of the grenade, to shield the others with his body. Tom leaps on top of Dick. Harriet leaps on top of both of them. Nothing happens for several beats. They all sit up slowly. Sidney takes the envelope and darts away.

SIDNEY

Zero.

(revealing prior knowledge)

They told us the grenades were dummies.

Tom, Dick and Harriet get up. Harriet straightens her clothes and wheels on Sidney. Tom and Dick join her.

HARRIET

Give us that envelope.

TOM

That's an order.

DICK

Now!

HARRIET

Listen to your fathers.

Tom, Dick and Harriet approach Sidney from different directions. Cornered, Sidney hands Tom the crumpled envelope. Harriet goes to Sidney. As Harriet and Dick watch, Tom opens the envelope. He reads. His shoulders slump. Silently, he hands the envelope to Dick, who turns his back to Sidney and faces the audience as he reads. A smile spreads over Dick's face. Tom kneels by Sidney, holds him and buries his face in the boy's chest.

SIDNEY

(to Harriet)

What does it say?

She cannot bring herself to tell him.

SIDNEY

(continuing; to Tom)

Father. What does it say?

Tom cannot bring himself to tell him. He is in tears.

SIDNEY

(continuing; to Dick)

Is Father still my father?

A long beat. Dick looks at the terrified expression on Sidney's face.

DICK

I'll read you the report, Sidney.

(triumphantly reading from the paper)

Dear Mr. Tom Widener: Blood samples taken three days ago...

HARRIET

No, Dick.

DICK

...have been genetically analyzed and conclusively prove ...

Tom, Sidney and Harriet brace for the devastating news. Dick stops long enough to show the audience that he is realizing that this information will hurt Sidney.

DICK (CONT'D)

Sidney.  
(with love)  
Tom is your real father.

HARRIET

What?

TOM

What?

SIDNEY

What?

DICK

That's right, Sidney, your father is your father.

SIDNEY

(exploding with joy)  
He is?

TOM

(stunned)  
I am?

HARRIET

He is?

Sidney stays with Tom for a long moment, to show the intensity of his fear that has now subsided. Then he goes to Dick, and looks up at him plaintively.

SIDNEY

(to Dick)  
Are you still my daddy?

Dick is rendered speechless. He wants to say yes, but knows he can't; he can't bring himself to say no.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Tom)

Is Daddy still my daddy?

Tom is silent. Dick holds Harriet in one arm and Sidney in the other. Tom sees the obvious love that Sidney and Harriet have for Dick. Sidney and Harriet bury their faces in Dick's shirt. Dick extricates himself from them. He takes a couple of steps toward the door.

DICK

(to Harriet)

I'll call you in a day or so and tell you where to send my stuff.

Dick starts to exit. Tom watches him for a second, and then turns to Harriet. She looks grief-stricken. He turns to Sidney. Sidney is close to tears. Tom shows the audience that he realizes that Dick's banishment would deeply hurt Harriet and Sidney.

TOM

(to Dick)

No.

Dick stops.

TOM (CONT'D)

(continuing; to Sidney)

Sidney, your daddy is still your daddy.

Tom, Dick, Harriet and Sidney embrace. One by one, they start laughing. They lock hands one over the other.

TOM, DICK & HARRIET

One for all!



Sidney places one hand on the others and points the gun in the air. Tom, Dick and Sidney freeze. Harriet walks towards the audience, smiles and gives a thumbs up. She returns to the others, puts her hand over theirs, the action resumes.

TOM, DICK & HARRIET  
(CONT'D)

And one for all!

SIDNEY

Me, too.

Sidney fires the gun in the air. It goes off with a loud bang. They exit, arm in arm. Lights go black, leaving only the flashing "Genetics r Us" sign. Then it goes black.

CURTAIN

END OF PLAY