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All My Raisins in the Son
by John Twomey

Characters

NORA O’REILLEY – a charismatic, eccentric woman in her 40s

VICTORIA TURNER – an enthusiastic, idealistic woman in her early 20s

SUSAN WAGNER – a harsh, ruthless woman in her 30s

SAL VINCENT – a rakish, debonair man in his 40s

FLORENCE GOLDBERG – a frumpy, caustic woman in her 50s

FELIX WHITE – a meek, meticulous man in his 30s

Setting

A teachers’ lounge in an urban high school: two doors; one to the hall stage right and one to the bathroom stage left. The room contains items typically found in a teachers’ lounge: lockers, a bulletin board, a refrigerator, a sink, a PA speaker, a coffee maker, file cabinets, books, teaching supplies, etc. There are also three tables: Florence uses the stage left table; Nora and Sal use the stage center table; Felix uses the stage right table. Victoria and Susan do not have established tables.

Time

September – December, the present

Etc

Winner – Neil Simon Festival 2013 New Play Contest
Winner – Theatre Conspiracy 2013 New Play Contest
Winner – Broadway World.com (Ft. Myers/Naples) 2013 Best Original/New Work

“All My Raisins in the Son” ripples with laughter whenever playwright John Twomey plucks the strings of public school paranoia...Funny, sharp, witty, and with a sextet of well-drawn characters in defined arcs, he’s got something...It will have you rolling your eyes and laughing in your seat.”

-- The Naples Daily News
All My Raisins in the Son  
by John Twomey

**Scene One**

*AT RISE: FLORENCE GOLDBERG is sitting at the stage left table, reading a newspaper as she eats from a box of donuts. NORA O’REILLEY enters, carrying a package of construction paper.*

**NORA**  
Are you just going to sit there until your next class?

**FLORENCE**  
I took a bathroom break.

**NORA**  
I found some construction paper in the general office.

**FLORENCE**  
Have a donut.

**NORA**  
What color should I use for the bulletin board?

**FLORENCE**  
What color was it before?

**NORA**  
Gray. Dismal gray.

**FLORENCE**  
It fit our decor.

**NORA**  
I want something more cheerful. What about red?

*NORA starts stapling red construction paper to the bulletin board.*

**FLORENCE**  
Red. The color of the failing grades I give my students.
What are you reading?

My obituary.

Not that rag. It caters to the intellectually bankrupt.

That’s why I read it.

I wouldn’t even let my students read that.

There’s an article about our school.

I hope it’s positive.

It's about Schwartz.

Let me see.

(Reading from paper) In Norman Schwartz’s final year as English assistant principal at Lincoln High School, standardized test scores rose 10%.

They don't mention that he spent a weekend locked in his office changing the students' answers.

(Reading from paper) At Schwartz’s final graduation appearance, the entire senior class gave him a standing ovation.

They don't mention that he mooned the entire senior class.
NORA
(Reading from paper) Over the summer Schwartz informed Principal Samuel Taft of his decision to retire.

FLORENCE
They don't mention that over the summer Principal Taft told Schwartz that he had better retire or else.

NORA returns the paper to FLORENCE.

NORA
It’s a shame. Schwartz was a good man.

FLORENCE
He was alright for an administrator.

NORA
It’s disheartening.

FLORENCE
He was going off the deep end.

NORA
All that pressure about getting better statistics, and when he gives them what they want, they throw him under the school bus.

FLORENCE
I’m not surprised.

NORA
I wish I could have done something.

FLORENCE
What? Help him change the answers?

NORA
But to just let this happen.

FLORENCE
You could have done nothing.

NORA
As a teacher, doesn’t this make you feel inadequate?

FLORENCE
I don’t need this job to make me feel inadequate.
NORA
This doesn’t bode well for education.

FLORENCE
The school system is a sinking ship and we’re all just waiting for the lifeboat of retirement.

NORA
We could try plugging the holes.

FLORENCE
You know I’m right. And I’m boarding that boat as soon as my son finishes school.

NORA
How much longer does he have?

FLORENCE
At the rate he’s going he’ll have to finish up with my death benefit.

NORA
Don’t be so hard on him.

FLORENCE
Just wait until you have to pay for college.

PA ANNOUNCEMENT
Will Ms. Goldberg please call the main office. Will Ms. Goldberg please call the main office.

FLORENCE
marches to the PA speaker and hits it with her newspaper.

FLORENCE
She's dead. Call someone else.

NORA
What's that all about?

FLORENCE
They want me to cover another one of Susan Wagner’s classes.

NORA
I still can't believe it.

NORA starts to make a pot of coffee.
Believe it.

NORA

Schwartz’s job couldn't have gone to a less qualified person.

FLORENCE

When you're daddy's girl, you don't have to be qualified.

VICTORIA TURNER enters, carrying a knapsack. She passes NORA, who is preoccupied with the coffee, and approaches FLORENCE.

Excuse me, Ms. Goldberg?

FLORENCE

What are you doing in here?

VICTORIA

I'm looking for Ms. Wagner.

FLORENCE

She’s not here.

VICTORIA

It’s about my program.

FLORENCE

Then go to the programming office.

VICTORIA

But I need to see Ms. Wagner.

FLORENCE

Or go see your guidance counselor.

NORA puts down the coffee pot.

NORA

The coffee maker is broken.

FLORENCE

Like everything else around here.
Ms. O’Reilley?

NORA

This room isn’t for students, honey.

FLORENCE

So leave.

NORA

This is the teachers’ lounge.

VICTORIA

I know.

FLORENCE

She knows. Listen to her. She knows. Isn’t anything sacred anymore? Where can we hide?

VICTORIA

I’m not a student. At least not anymore.

NORA

Victoria?

VICTORIA

Ms. O’Reilley, do you remember me?

NORA

Victoria Turner. How could I not remember you? Florence, remember Victoria Turner?

FLORENCE

No.

NORA

She was valedictorian.

FLORENCE

Don’t remember.

NORA

You must have graduated, my God, how many years ago?

VICTORIA

Five.
Five years. Where does the time go? Florence, Victoria was the star of my Advanced Placement class.

NORA

Whoopty-do.

FLORENCE

One of my best students ever.

NORA

Only because you made me the best, Ms. O'Reilley.

VICTORIA

Oh, it was all you, honey. You must have your bachelor’s degree by now.

NORA

And my master’s.

VICTORIA

I’m so proud of you.

NORA

In education.

VICTORIA

Education?

NORA

You were my inspiration.

VICTORIA

But I wanted you to follow your heart and fulfill your deepest dreams.

NORA

And I did.

VICTORIA

Are you teaching yet?

NORA

I’m about to start.

VICTORIA

Where?
Mr. Taft just hired me.

Here?

I'm the new English teacher.

I don't believe it.

You must be taking Ms. Wagner's classes.

I don't know. He just told me to report to her.

Here's the crap I've been giving your classes. Good riddance.

So what do I do now?

Have a seat and start counting the years to retirement.

Shouldn't I have something to give out to the students?

Here's your union application. You have rights, no matter what anyone around here tries to tell you.

What about books?

Not on your first day.

Shouldn't the students start working?
NORA hands VICTORIA a stack of index cards.

NORA
Give them index cards to fill out. Name, address, favorite books, things like that.

VICTORIA
This will take the entire period?

FLORENCE
Girly, they're not rocket scientists. If they finish early, tell them they screwed up and have to do them over.

VICTORIA
Do them over?

FLORENCE
It kills 40 minutes.

VICTORIA
What about tomorrow?

FLORENCE
Go over the school regulations sheet.

NORA
Assign them seats.

FLORENCE
Slowly.

VICTORIA
Isn't that wasting too much time on non-teaching tasks?

NORA guides VICTORIA to the stage right table.

NORA
Non-teaching tasks?

FLORENCE
Daddy’s girl is going to love you.

NORA
Oh, honey. You've got a lot to learn.
SAL VINCENT enters, puts down his briefcase, and proceeds to the coffee maker without breaking his stride. He tries to pour a cup of coffee.

What the hell?

SAL

It's broken.

NORA

Shit.

SAL

SAL notices VICTORIA. He hands her some change.

Hey kiddo, run down to the teacher's cafeteria and get me some coffee.

VICTORIA

But Mr. Vincent.

SAL

And if that blue-haired bitch at the register hassles you, tell her she'll have to deal with me.

NORA

Don't you remember Victoria?

SAL

Remember her? She's in my drama class.

VICTORIA

Was in your drama class.

SAL

Last year?

VICTORIA

I was in the class that did The Taming of the Shrew.

SAL

That was years ago.

VICTORIA

I'm the new English teacher.
NORA

Makes you feel old, doesn’t it, Sal?

SAL

_Taming of the Shrew?_

VICTORIA

I hope I can make my classes as exciting as you made drama, Mr. Vincent.

SAL

Did you play Kate or Bianca?

VICTORIA

Neither. I was on the stage crew.

SAL

Such a beautiful young lady, and I didn't cast you in a major role?

NORA

Don't forget, Sal. You're married.

SAL

Separated. And soon to be divorced.

NORA

She could be your daughter.

SAL

Younger sister.

NORA

Just back off.

_FELIX WHITE enters. He walks with anal-retentive precision to the refrigerator, puts in his lunch, and walks to stage right table._

FELIX

Excuse me, young lady. I beg your pardon, but I believe that you may be in the wrong place. This room is for teachers.

FLORENCE

Ask her for her ID card.
Do you think I should?

SAL
Felix, I think you forgot something at home.

FELIX
What?

SAL
Your spine. Tell me. How do you stand in front of a class for 45 minutes without a backbone?

FELIX
Young lady, may I see your ID card?

VICTORIA
Mr. White, I don't think you remember me.

NORA
Victoria Turner, Felix.

FELIX
Ms. Turner, this room is for teachers.

VICTORIA
But I'm a teacher now.

FELIX
You must leave at once.

VICTORIA
Mr. Taft just hired me.

FELIX
Oh. Then you're in my chair. Please get up.

NORA
There are plenty of other chairs.

FELIX
But that's my chair. I always sit in that chair. Without exception. Everyone knows that. Right?

NORA
Does it really matter?
FELIX
I cannot function properly if I am not in my traditional seat.

SAL
You can't function properly period.

FELIX
(Manic) Please get out of my seat.

NORA gestures for VICTORIA to sit at the stage center table.

NORA
Over here, honey.

FELIX
Thank you very much.

FELIX takes out a handkerchief, wipes the seat and table, and sits. He then takes a laptop and office supplies from his briefcase and arranges them.

NORA
Is that a new tie, Felix?

FELIX
Yes. My mother bought it. Do you like it?

NORA
Oh yes. It's very becoming on you.

FELIX
Thank you.

NORA
You look very professional.

FELIX
I always wear a tie. My mother says that no matter how uncomfortable the weather might get, always wear a tie. And I always do. And I always make a good impression.

NORA
Maybe if Mr. Taft had seen you in that tie, you’d have made a good impression and he would have made you the new assistant principal.

FELIX
That's what my mother said.
SAL
You must be pissed off, losing out to daddy's girl.

FELIX
I'm not a sore loser.

SAL
Not the least bit mad? Come on.

FELIX
If Mr. Taft thought that Ms. Wagner was a better choice than I, that's Mr. Taft's problem, not mine.

SAL
I think the problem is the tie.

SUSAN WAGNER enters, carrying a stack of booklets.

SUSAN
Good morning, one and all.

SAL
Not anymore.

SUSAN
I have exciting news to share with everyone.

The others ignore SUSAN.

SUSAN
I attended a very enlightening education workshop.

FELIX
What was the topic?

FLORENCE
Don't encourage her.

SUSAN notices VICTORIA.

SUSAN
Who let a student enter the teachers' lounge?

NORA
This is Victoria Turner.
SUSAN
You must leave, Ms. Turner. Immediately.

NORA
She's been looking for you.

SUSAN
I'm too busy for any students today.

VICTORIA
You don't understand.

SUSAN
I'm an assistant principal. What do you mean, I don't understand?

VICTORIA
I'm not a student.

SUSAN
You were in my class.

VICTORIA
When I was a sophomore.

SUSAN
What are you now?

VICTORIA
A teacher.

SUSAN
A teacher?

VICTORIA
I'm the new English teacher.

SUSAN
This is another one of their silly jokes.

VICTORIA
But I am the new teacher.

SUSAN
You're a senior. Who put you up to this?

FLORENCE
Taft just hired her.
Without consulting me?

FLORENCE
He didn't consult us when he made you assistant principal.

NORA
Aren't you going to welcome her?

SUSAN hands VICTORIA the stack of booklets.

SUSAN
Here. You can distribute these.

VICTORIA distributes the booklets to the others.

FLORENCE
What's this?

SUSAN
The English Department handbook.

NORA
Since when do we have a handbook?

SUSAN
Since I became assistant principal.

SAL
You're kidding. Who's going to follow it?

SUSAN
Everybody.

FLORENCE
This is in violation of the teachers’ contract.

SUSAN
Then take it up with Mr. Taft.

FLORENCE
I will.

SUSAN
He gave me the authorization.

NORA
We don’t need a handbook.
SUSAN
I see this as an opportunity to renew our commitment to education, to our school, and especially to our students.

FLORENCE
Ain't nothing for me to renew.

SUSAN
No doubt you’ve all noticed, as I have, a decline in our school and our department over the last few years.

NORA
No, actually. I haven't.

FLORENCE
What are you getting at?

SAL
You telling us we're not doing our jobs?

NORA
I find that offensive.

SUSAN
Not at all. Nothing could be further from the truth. All I'm saying is that we have to raise the bar.

NORA
How so?

SUSAN

FLORENCE
These kids are morons. Don't blame us for rotten statistics.

SUSAN
Then who is to be held accountable? Are we not teachers? Are we not educators?

*The bell rings.*

SUSAN
And now, I believe you all have classes to teach. Our students are waiting. Please don't be tardy.

*SUSAN exits.*
SAL

(Mimicking) Are we not teachers? Are we not educators?

FLORENCE

I'm holding you accountable.

SAL

No, I'm holding you accountable.

FELIX

Ms. Wagner is looking to improve our school, and I think she deserves our support.

NORA

My, aren't we the gracious loser?

FELIX

I hope there's a homework policy in the handbook. We really need a good homework policy.

FELIX tries to read the booklet as he exits. He bumps into the door.

FLORENCE

I don't read student homework. Does she really think I'm going to read this?

FLORENCE throws the booklet in the trash as she exits.

SAL

Daddy's girl has got to be kidding.

SAL tears the booklet and throws it in the trash as he exits.

NORA

Not what you expected, is it, honey?

Not exactly.

NORA

Having second thoughts?

No.

NORA

Are you sure?
Not at all.

Good.

Everyone looks the same.

It's like we're frozen in time, isn't it?

All the faces, just the same.

Maybe a little more wrinkled.

Not you, Ms. O'Reilley.

Oh, they're there. Just don't look too closely. My son is starting high school.

He was in elementary school when I was in your class.

I can't believe it.

I'm sure he's a very good student.

My little Wallace is intellectually gifted.

Is he a student here?

Oh, no. Private school.

Next thing you know, he'll be in college.

Ivy League, if I have anything to say. My, how the time flies
VICTORIA
I can’t believe Ms. Goldberg is still here.

NORA
I don’t think she can either.

VICTORIA
Does she ever smile?

NORA
On the last day of school. She smiled a bit when she heard that Mr. Schwartz was leaving, but it turned back into a frown when she heard Ms. Wagner was getting his job.

VICTORIA
I don’t know if I should say this, but Ms. Wagner was the worst teacher I had in this school.

NORA
You wouldn’t be the first.

VICTORIA
What about Mr. White? Do the kids still steal his chalk and erasers?

NORA
Now they pull the plug on his electronic blackboard.

VICTORIA
I always felt a little sorry for him.

NORA
I guess you can call it technological progress.

VICTORIA
Mr. Vincent’s class was fun.

NORA
The kids like him.

VICTORIA
He was more like an actor than a teacher.

NORA
He would certainly agree with you about that.

VICTORIA
He told us he was offered a role on a TV show but turned it down because he would have to give up teaching and would miss his classes too much.
That sounds like something he would say.

No one really believed him.

He has his dreams.

Ms. O'Reilley, I really meant it when I said you were my inspiration.

That's very kind of you to say.

It's the truth.

I wish my current crop of students felt the same way.

Even in college, I never had a better teacher.

Oh, there are better.

I'd be happy to be a fraction as good as you.

The gauzy haze of nostalgia.

I really mean it.

I know. And it’s very sweet.

But I really do.

I’d better get to class.

NORA tries to toss the booklet in the trash as she exits but misses.
NORA
I wouldn't want to be late and get Ms. Wagner all bent out of shape.

VICTORIA picks up the booklet and starts reading.

Scene Two

FLORENCE is at the stage left table, writing grades on papers.

FLORENCE

VICTORIA enters, carrying a large stack of books and folders.

FLORENCE
You shouldn't be carrying all that crap.

VICTORIA
I don't have any place to keep it.

FLORENCE
Daddy's girl should have given you a place.

FLORENCE opens a file drawer and returns to her seat.

FLORENCE
Take her old drawer. It's empty.

VICTORIA puts all but a folder into the drawer.

VICTORIA
I gave my classes a writing assignment based on the short story unit we've been studying.

VICTORIA sits at the stage left table and takes a paper from the folder.

VICTORIA
I have some questions about grading them. Maybe you can help me.

FLORENCE
I'm busy.

VICTORIA hands FLORENCE the paper.
I tried to use the grading rubric from Ms. Wagner's handbook, but I don't understand what any of it means.

*FLORENCE writes a grade on the paper and returns it.*

Seventy-five.

You didn't even look at it. How can you tell?

*FLORENCE takes the paper, writes on it again, and returns it.*

Ok, fifty-five.

Fifty-five?

Tell him he didn't read the book.

But what if he did?

Is this a remedial class?

Yes.

Then he didn't read the book.

Is that a fair characterization?

If he did his reading assignments he wouldn't be in remedial.

Remedial students can be motivated.

Did that essay make any sense to you?
Not really.

Then fifty-five is a gift.

*FELIX enters from the bathroom and scurries to the sink.*

Mr. White, would you—

*FELIX takes a roll of toilet paper from under the sink, looks up at VICTORIA and then towards the bathroom.*

Never mind.

*FELIX scurries back to the bathroom.*

There's something I don't understand.

Yes?

Why, girl, why?

I have to grade them.

Get out while you can.

Excuse me?

It might look good now. Out by three, holidays off, summer vacation with pay.

That's not why I went into teaching.

I know. The help the children thing. But one of these days you'll wake up and ask yourself, "why?" Trust me.
That won't be the case with me.

That's what you say now.

I went into teaching to make a difference.

All of a sudden you're hitting 40; you have tenure and decide making a change would be too great a risk. The young teachers who get out fast are the smart ones.

The smart ones?

But until you come to your senses, there’s one golden rule to always follow.

Golden rule? What?

Never give out the bathroom pass. Never.

But what if—

Never. And never, ever park near the school.

I take the bus.

Good. Because they’ll get your car if you do.

I don’t think my students would.

You can’t be too careful.

I’ll keep that in mind.

And try to find your niche.
VICTORIA

My niche?

FLORENCE

Grade advisor, dean, union rep. Something to get you out of the classroom.

But I want to be in the classroom.

FLORENCE

If you want to be in a classroom, go back to school and study something else.

I don’t want to study something else.

FLORENCE

I tell my son, study business, law, something that will get you somewhere.

But I don’t like business or law.

Neither does my son.

What does he like?

FLORENCE

Spring break and frat parties.

And I like teaching.

FLORENCE

In that case, stick with remedial. Nobody has any expectations so you are not expected to do much.

FELIX enters from the bathroom, wiping his hands on a paper towel, and walks to the stage right table.

Grading essays, Ms. Turner? How wonderful. There's nothing more exciting than sinking your teeth into a well-written student essay.

Don’t get too excited, Felix.
FELIX
Come join me at my table. Let's have a look.

*VICTORIA sits at the stage right table and hands Felix the paper.*

VICTORIA
I tried using Ms. Wagner's rubric.

FELIX
This student didn't use the proper school heading.

VICTORIA
The paper has a heading.

FELIX
He put the date where the class should be and he didn't even include your name. What if the paper were misplaced? How would it be returned to you?

VICTORIA
I never thought of that.

FELIX
And the student wrote in pencil.

VICTORIA
He didn't have a pen.

FELIX
There is no excuse for being unprepared. Students must always carry two blue or black pens.

VICTORIA
I'll remind them.

*FELIX starts reading the essay.*

FELIX
The commas are all wrong. And the student clearly does not understand how to use a semicolon.

*FELIX returns the paper to VICTORIA.*

FELIX
Proper punctuation is the student writer's best friend, Ms. Turner.

VICTORIA
I'll work on it with them.
FELIX
Until you do, I cannot be of any assistance.

VICTORIA gets up as SAL enters.

VICTORIA
Mr. Vincent, maybe you can help me?

SAL
Felix, stop annoying Victoria.

VICTORIA
I'm having trouble with some student essays.

SAL
Student essays are one damn pain in the ass.

VICTORIA
The rubric from the handbook doesn't make any sense.

SAL takes the paper and glances at it.

SAL
Seventy-five.

VICTORIA
Seventy-five? You didn't even read it.

SAL
I didn't have to.

VICTORIA
Then how do you know?

SAL
It's the rule of seventy-five.

VICTORIA
What rule is that?

SAL
Seventy-five is the utilitarian, all-purpose grade. It's low enough to tell the motivated students that they need to do better, but high enough to make the slow students think that they are smarter than they are.

VICTORIA
You made that up.
SAL
In a nutshell, everyone's happy, no one complains, and no one's on your back.

VICTORIA
What about comments? Suggestions for improvement?

SAL
Students don't read comments. All they care about is the grade.

VICTORIA
Then how do they learn?

SAL
The learning is in the process. They learn by doing, or they don't learn. Whether you spend five seconds or five hours looking at their shit isn't going to change that.

*SAL returns the paper to VICTORIA, who retreats to the stage center table. SAL joins FLORENCE at the stage left table.*

SAL
Another mental health day?

FLORENCE
I needed it.

SAL
You have any more coming to you?

FLORENCE
Used them all.

SAL
There's always next month.

FLORENCE
How do they expect us to get by on just one sick day a month?

SAL
It's rough.

FLORENCE
And we sure got screwed with the holidays this year.

SAL
Tell me about it.
FLORENCE
Even Rosh Hashanah fell on a weekend. I'm Jewish and I couldn't even enjoy it.

SAL
I have to use my days to meet with my lawyer. My soon to be ex wants to cut me off from my daughter.

FLORENCE
I’d like to be cut off from my son. And my husband for that matter.

SAL
Want my lawyer’s number?

FLORENCE
At this point, divorce isn’t worth the bother.

FELIX
I've never taken a sick day.

SAL
Aren’t you the school system poster boy?

FELIX
But I have been called for jury duty.

FLORENCE
Jury duty!

SAL
You struck gold.

FELIX
Of course, I had it deferred until summer vacation.

SAL
Summer vacation?

FLORENCE
Are you nuts?

FELIX
I couldn't do that to my students.

SAL
I could.

FELIX
They'd be terribly disappointed.
SAL

That they will.

FELIX

They're preparing for state examinations, after all.

*SUSAN storms in holding some folders.*

SUSAN

Ms. Goldberg, back from your illness, I see. Here.

What's this?

FLORENCE

The assignments I gave your classes.

I don't want them.

*SUSAN drops the folders on the stage left table.*

SUSAN

You didn't leave substitute lesson plans.

FLORENCE

What do you expect me to do with them?

SUSAN

I told your classes that they would be marked and counted towards the report card grade.

FLORENCE

You gave the assignments, you mark them.

SUSAN

That is not my responsibility.

FLORENCE

What's the point of calling in sick if it creates more work?

*FLORENCE drops the folders in the trash.*

SUSAN

That was a blatant act of insubordination.

SAL

Doesn't someone have to be a figure of authority for it to be insubordination?
SUSAN
You all will regret your attitudes.

SAL
Put a letter in my file.

SUSAN does a quick perusal of the room.

SUSAN
Things are getting a bit untidy in here.

FELIX
My table is very tidy, Ms. Wagner.

FELIX starts to put his supplies and papers in his briefcase.

SUSAN
A lot of changes need to be made.

SAL
Then leave.

SUSAN
Mr. Schwartz was a little too lenient with you people. This is a room for professional activities.

FELIX
I always behave in a professional manner.

SUSAN
It should have a professional appearance.

FLORENCE
What about getting us an air conditioner and a copy machine that works?

SUSAN
Only work related activities should be conducted in here. No eating, no newspaper reading.

SUSAN takes a newspaper off the stage left table and tosses it in the trash.

FLORENCE
I didn't finish reading that.

SUSAN
You shouldn't have been reading it in the first place.
FELIX
I only read educational journals in this room.

FELIX exits.

SUSAN
I have a good mind to have that refrigerator removed.

You want us to starve?

SUSAN
The teachers' cafeteria is perfectly fine.

SAL
I don't see you eating down there.

SUSAN
Ms. Turner, you can be assured that the unprofessional tone in this room is about to change. If my father ever saw what went on in this school.

Oh God.

SAL
Please, not the father stories.

SUSAN
I'm a third-generation educator, you know.

That's frightening.

SAL
You'd figure one generation would warn the next.

SUSAN
It's in the blood.

FLORENCEx
Blood is the only reason you got that job.

SUSAN
The principal would not tolerate such shenanigans.

SAL
She calls her father "the principal."
Well that's what he is. Or was. He's retired.

Was told to retire.

That's not true.

In his final years he wore spats and played military marching music over the PA during the change of classes.

The principal was trying to instill a sense of discipline.

Like father, like daughter.

When I was growing up, the principal ran the household just as if it were a classroom.

Beware, Victoria.

I had an assigned seat at the dinner table.

These people are running the schools.

I assure you, I received a tardy in his attendance book. He always carried his attendance book with him. Still does.

Most fathers take away privileges when their children are bad and reward them when they are good. The principal gave us report cards. He always gave me excellent report cards. I was always an excellent student.
VICTORIA
I'm sure you were, Ms. Wagner.

SUSAN
The principal would expect nothing less. He was very proud of me.

VICTORIA
I’m sure he was. And I’m sure that he still is.

SUSAN
What are you suggesting, Ms. Turner?

VICTORIA
I mean, I’m sure that he’s proud you are an assistant principal.

SUSAN
Of course he is. Why wouldn’t he be?

VICTORIA
I don’t know.

SUSAN
I won’t let him down.

VICTORIA
I'm sure you won’t.

SUSAN
I trust all is going well with your classes, Ms. Turner.

VICTORIA
I’ve been having a bit of trouble grading some papers.

SUSAN
If I can be of any assistance at all, please don’t hesitate to ask.

VICTORIA
I don't quite understand your grading rubric.

SUSAN
I hope those malcontents aren’t having a negative influence on you.

VICTORIA
Not at all.

SUSAN
You don’t want to become one of their ilk.
No, Ms. Wagner.

SUSAN
Don't believe all that union propaganda Ms. Goldberg will try to push on you.

I won't.

SUSAN
All this talk of teachers' rights. It's just an attempt to get out of doing their jobs.

I'll keep that in mind.

SUSAN
Mr. White is harmless enough. He's probably the most qualified educator in the department, next to myself, of course. If you need help and I'm not around, go to him.

About that help.

SUSAN
But he's just so milquetoast. The principal would never put up with such spinelessness. As for Mr. Vincent, he still thinks he's going to be a movie star. What a laugh. You know, he even took a leave one year to go to Hollywood.

He's a very good drama teacher.

SUSAN
They sent that no-talent back fast. Over-the-hill washout. He still thinks he's a kid. Look closely at that hair. He thinks no one notices that it's dyed.

It looks natural to me.

SUSAN
And Ms. O'Reilley. Hah. She thinks she's smarter than everyone else with her fancy Ivy League degrees.

Ms. O'Reilley is very smart.

SUSAN
Oh, she puts on a good act. But I know better, and she knows that I know better.
Ms. O’Reilley was my best teacher.

And this phoniness about caring for the students.

She does care.

She can’t stand the students.

That’s not true.

Then why doesn’t she let her son go to this school?

I’m sure she has her reasons.

I’m sure she does. Don’t let them fool you.

They won’t, Ms. Wagner.

Everyone around here is out for themselves.

I’m starting to see that.

The principal warned me about envious, conniving colleagues.

One has to be careful.

There’s a conspiracy afoot. Don’t let yourself be drawn in.

I won’t, Ms. Wagner.

New teachers are especially vulnerable.
I’ll be careful.

SUSAN
You don’t want to be sucked into the machination.

SUSAN exits. Exasperated, VICTORIA returns to her papers.

Scene Three

SAL is at the stage center table, engrossed in a magazine. FELIX is at the stage right table, also reading a magazine.

FELIX
Is that an educational journal you’re reading?

SAL
Yeah, it’s very educational.

FELIX
I love to keep abreast of educational issues.

SAL
It’s one of my hobbies.

FELIX
What’s the topic?

SAL
The best places to meet women.

FELIX
I’m reading about the reintroduction of punctuation into the high school English class.

SAL
Keep reading.

FELIX
Punctuation is my passion.

SAL
Wine and women are mine.
FELIX
I'm preparing a professional development workshop on the teaching of punctuation.

SAL
Save me a front row seat.

FELIX
Can I share something with you?

SAL
About punctuation? I don't think so.

FELIX
I’m on the prowl.

SAL
The prowl?

FELIX
For a lady.

SAL
Is that so, Felix?

FELIX
I thought maybe you could offer me a few tips.

SAL
Tips?

FELIX
I’m looking for Ms. Right.

SAL
Ms. Right for what?

FELIX
Ms. Right to be Mrs. White.

SAL
I wouldn’t know where to start.

FELIX
Maybe you have a friend, or have a friend who knows somebody.

SAL
I’d like to keep the few friends that I have.
FELIX
My mother says that any girl who lands me should count her blessings.

SAL
Because you’re such a blessing, Felix.

FELIX
I won’t just settle for anyone, you know.

SAL
You wouldn’t be the one settling.

FELIX
Do you have any advice you could offer me?

SAL
Settle.

FELIX
Settle?

SAL
Hey. Maybe you can woo someone at your punctuation workshop.

FELIX
Do you really think so?

SAL
You’ll make them swoon, Felix.

FELIX
Proper punctuation will do that.

SAL
It does it to me.

FELIX
And me too.

SAL
They’ll be begging you to get between their parentheses.

FELIX
That’s obscene.

SAL
Of course it’s obscene. Who gets excited over punctuation?
FELIX
One day you will regret your disdain of punctuation.

SAL
You're the only one who gives a damn about punctuation.

NORA enters wearing a full-length plain black dress with a scarlet "A" across the chest.

NORA
Pearl? Pearl? Where is my Pearl?

SAL approaches NORA from behind and puts his hands around her waist.

SAL
Ravishing Hester, if I were Arthur Dimmesdale, I'd have grabbed you in the forest too.

FELIX
Punctuation is very important.

NORA
Have you seen my Pearl?

SAL
No, but he's seen a few misplaced commas.

NORA
Oh my. Call the punctuation police.

SAL
He might have us arrested and sent to professional development.

NORA
Give me a long jail sentence over professional development.

FELIX
I call my workshop “pertinent punctuation pointers.”

NORA
Alliterative. How exciting.

FELIX
It happens to be very beneficial to the students. And interesting.

NORA
I bet.
Hey wait. Felix may be right.

FELIX
Of course I'm right.

SAL
Two students in my drama class were arguing about the period.

FELIX
See? Students are concerned about the proper use of punctuation. What specifically was the argument over?

SAL
Can a girl get pregnant when she's having her period?

FELIX
Laugh now. We'll see who has the last laugh at exam time. (*FELIX returns to his magazine.*)

SAL
So Nora, aren't you bringing out Hester a bit early?

NORA
What can I do? They're a rough group this year.

SAL
My drama class is the only one I can stand.

FELIX
I enjoy all my students. Each and every one.

SAL
They sure don't enjoy you.

NORA
I can't get them to read.

SAL
The teacher who can figure that one out should be given a million dollars.

FELIX
Pop quizzes. An oldie but a goodie.

NORA
I don't want to just make them read. I want to make them want to read.
SAL

Then don't teach *The Scarlet Letter*.

NORA

High school students should be exposed to the classics.

SAL

Should be, yes. Are willing to be, no.

FELIX

Gimmicks have no place in the high school classroom.

NORA

I don't partake in shtick. But I have to keep the interest up.

SAL

Yours or theirs?

NORA

Hey.

SAL

After so many years this can get a bit tedious.

FELIX

Not for me.

NORA

They seem so much harder to motivate.

SAL

That they are.

NORA

They're not exactly the most academically inclined group we've ever had.

SAL

No, they're not.

*VICTORIA enters.*

PA ANNOUNCEMENT

May I have your attention. The eagle has landed. I repeat, the eagle has landed.

*SAL and FELIX stampede out of the lounge, practically knocking VICTORIA over. A few moments later, FLORENCE stampedes out of the bathroom, also almost knocking her over.*
NORA
Why don't you get your check, honey?

VICTORIA
It's not there.

NORA
Why not?

VICTORIA
I'm not on the payroll.

NORA
Not yet? It's been over a month.

VICTORIA
Somebody at the district office entered my social security number incorrectly into the computer system.

NORA
Oh boy. An education bureaucrat plus a computer equals disaster.

VICTORIA
I talked to the payroll secretary. She told me to call the personnel director at the district office. She wouldn't talk to me, but her assistant told me to call the assistant to the director of the Office of Salary Status. He told me to call the head of the High School Staffing Unit, who told me not to believe what assistants say and to talk to the director of the Office of Salary Status. She told me to call the Office of Human Resources, who told me that I'd passed away on the 30th of August and should contact the state pension system about collecting my death benefit.

NORA
How typical.

VICTORIA
What do I do now? My student loans are starting to come due.

NORA
Did you talk to Florence? The union should be able to do something about this.

VICTORIA
She said that I should collect my death benefit and spend it before they figure out that they made a mistake.

NORA
Can't your parents help you?
VICTORIA
They’ve done enough for me already.

NORA
But you’re their daughter.

VICTORIA
They can barely pay their own bills.

NORA
There’s got to be a way.

VICTORIA
I guess I could ask my boyfriend.

NORA
So there is a way.

VICTORIA
I suppose.

NORA
What's your boyfriend's name?

VICTORIA
Thomas.

NORA
Is Thomas a teacher too?

VICTORIA
An electrician. He works for his father.

NORA
He must be very proud of you.

VICTORIA
He's not too happy about all the time I have to put into marking and prepping.

NORA
I've forgotten how time consuming those first years can be.

VICTORIA
When he leaves his job he actually leaves it. It seems like I’m a teacher 24/7.

NORA
That will change.
VICTORIA
Being a teacher means everything to me. It's all I ever wanted. I don't think Thomas understands that.

NORA
My God, I remember my first years.

VICTORIA
Was your stomach always in a knot?

NORA
With excitement. I was so excited. Young and excited. Just like you.

VICTORIA
In college the professors made teaching seem so noble.

NORA
When I was your age I believed that I could make the world a better place.

VICTORIA
You mean like they did in the 1960s?

NORA
How old do you think I am?

VICTORIA
You did a unit on 1960s American literature with my class.

NORA
You remember that unit?

VICTORIA
You made it seem like such a vibrant time.

NORA
You were in a vibrant class.

VICTORIA
And what about now?

NORA
Now?

VICTORIA
Do you still believe that you can make the world a better place?

NORA
Time isn't always so kind.
Ms. O'Reilley, can I ask you something?

Of course, honey.

Why are you dressed like Hester Prynne?

Wild, isn't it? I'm teaching The Scarlet Letter.

But a costume?

I'm trying to bring the book alive for the kids. They don't want to talk about a bunch of anal-retentive Puritans. But if I can show them that Hester was a sensuous, passionate woman who was made to suffer, maybe—

Maybe what?

Maybe I can hold their attention for a few fleeting moments.

You never resorted to wearing costumes when you were teaching my class.

Your class was another breed. You were on a higher level.

I don't think we were any different.

There's a world of difference.

Is dressing as Hester Prynne acceptable educational methodology?

Acceptable educational methodology? Oh, honey.

What's so funny?
NORA
Victoria, forget all those mumbo-jumbo theories you learned in your education classes.

VICTORIA
Mumbo-jumbo?

NORA
They're all meaningless.

VICTORIA
Is everything meaningless around here?

NORA
Of course not.

VICTORIA
It sure seems that way.

NORA
A lot around here is not what it seems.

VICTORIA
Does anyone in this school take teaching seriously?

NORA
We wouldn't be here if we didn't.

VICTORIA
It wasn't like this when I was a student.

NORA
You're just seeing things from a different perspective.

VICTORIA
Am I?

NORA
You need time to adjust.

VICTORIA
I've been teaching for almost two months.

NORA
It takes a lot longer than two months.

VICTORIA
Maybe it does.
Of course it does.  

VICTORIA

Maybe you're right.  

NORA

Of course I am.  

VICTORIA

Maybe everything I learned is mumbo-jumbo.  

NORA

What's wrong, honey?  

VICTORIA

Nothing I do is working.  

NORA

What's not working?  

VICTORIA

I tried cooperative learning.  

NORA

And?  

VICTORIA

They don't cooperate.  

NORA

Sounds like my classes too.  

VICTORIA

I tried establishing class rules and enforcing them.  

NORA

Classroom management is tough at the start.  

VICTORIA

Then they realized that if I enforced the rules they'd all fail so they stopped following them.  

NORA

They know the game.  

VICTORIA

They don't pay attention. They don't do their homework.
Tell me about it.

NORA

Maybe I've made a mistake becoming a teacher.

VICTORIA

Don’t say that.

NORA

A big, big mistake.

VICTORIA

You're being too hard on yourself.

NORA

I should have gone into something else.

VICTORIA

What else were you considering?

NORA

I only considered teaching.

VICTORIA

So you made the right choice.

NORA

Everyone warned me. Don't go into teaching.

VICTORIA

Who?

NORA


VICTORIA

You can only listen to yourself.

NORA

Last Friday after my final class I sat in the back of the room and closed my eyes. And I realized that after all this time in college—I don't know what I'm doing.

VICTORIA starts sobbing.

NORA

Oh, honey.
What a mistake.

NORA

It's all part of being a new teacher.

VICTORIA

A big, big mistake.

NORA

Everybody feels like that at the beginning. Everybody.

NORA embraces VICTORIA.

Scene Four

FLORENCE is at the stage left table, stapling together papers. FELIX is at the stage right table, working intently at his laptop.

FLORENCE

Take a look at my union newsletter.

FELIX

I'm occupied.

FLORENCE

Doing what?

FELIX

Developing a lesson plan.

FLORENCE

Are you still developing those things?

FELIX

I like to keep my instruction fresh.

FLORENCE

Can't you just recycle the same shit like the rest of us?

FELIX

My lessons reflect the new standards.

FLORENCE

New standards? Haven't you heard, Felix? There's nothing new under the sun.
FELIX
Oh, I beg to differ. These are exciting times in education.

FLORENCE
I’ll try to contain my enthusiasm.

FELIX
Done! I’ve reached my instructional objective, included relevant core standards, and tied everything up neatly in my summary.

*FLORENCE hands FELIX a newsletter.*

FLORENCE
These are the issues we’re going to discuss at this month’s union meeting.

FELIX
I can’t attend.

FLORENCE
Why not?

FELIX
I’m otherwise engaged.

FLORENCE
Doing what? You don’t have a life outside of this job.

FELIX
If you must know, I don’t approve of the union’s agenda.

FLORENCE
What’s wrong with it?

FELIX
It protects loafers and malcontents.

FLORENCE
If the union isn’t going to protect us, who is?

FELIX
A teacher who is doing his or her job has no need for protection.

*FELIX returns to his laptop.*

FLORENCE
Just wait until they come gunning for you.

SAL enters. *FLORENCE hands him a flyer.*
FLORENCE
Sal, I know I can count on you for today's meeting.

SAL
Not this time.

FLORENCE
Why not?

SAL
I have to deal with the miserable shrew.

FLORENCE
First item on my agenda is Susan Wagner.

SAL
I mean my wife.

FLORENCE
Oh, that shrew.

SAL
I'm meeting with my lawyer. My divorce is final next week.

FLORENCE
Well it's about time.

SAL
I may be the actor, but she's the drama queen. She's made the divorce more difficult than the marriage.

FLORENCE
How bad?

SAL
Right now all I care about is my daughter.

FLORENCE
Your wife is getting custody?

SAL
My lawyer says there's not much I can do about that.

FLORENCE
How old is she now?

SAL
She'll be ten.
FLORENCE
Mine will be twenty-two. He’s as useless as his father.

SAL
Twelve years of marriage hell.

FLORENCE
Twenty-nine for me.

SAL
How do you do it?

FLORENCE
Marty and I ignore each other.

SAL
I tried that.

FLORENCE
I'm a football widow.

SAL
It didn't work.

FLORENCE
I dread the end of football season.

FELIX
You two make a mockery of the marriage institution.

SAL
You try marriage and then see what you have to say.

FELIX
I most certainly intend to.

*SAL looks over FELIX’s shoulder.*

SAL
What’s that you’re looking at, Felix?

FELIX
What I look at is private.

SAL
That doesn’t look like an educational website to me.
FELIX
What I look at is my business, not yours.

SAL
Is that a dating website?

SAL tries to get a better look but FELIX closes the laptop.

FELIX
That’s none of your business.

SAL
Does your mother know about this, Felix?

FELIX
My mother need not know everything I do.

NORA enters dressed as Daisy Buchanan from *The Great Gatsby*. She's carrying a portable CD player.

NORA
Is everyone here for my party?

SAL
I hope you have some bootleg gin.

NORA puts the CD player down and turns it on. Twenties jazz plays as she starts dancing the Charleston.

FLORENCE
Who the hell is she now?

FELIX
I believe that Ms. O'Reilley is a flapper.

NORA
Dance with me, Jay.

SAL starts dancing as well.

SAL
What happened to Hester?

NORA
Hester is my honors class.
Then who's Daisy?

Daisy is my non-honors class.

Ms. Wagner should not tolerate this behavior.

That so, Felix?

NORA pulls FELIX out of his seat. SAL stops dancing and steps away.

You go, Felix.

FELIX stands motionless while NORA dances around him.

Come on, Felix. Shake that booty.

Go Felix. Go go go.

Stop it. Stop it. You two just stop it.

FELIX returns to the stage right table.

Felix, your tie is crooked.

VICTORIA enters. NORA approaches her and dances a few Charleston steps.

I'm teaching Gatsby. Like?

VICTORIA turns off the music.

Mr. Taft came to visit my class today.

Unannounced?
I don't like this.

So what did he say?

Nothing.

Nothing?

He just sat in the back of the class and watched.

How long did he stay?

For the whole period. He left just before the bell.

And he didn't even say anything when he left?

No. But he wrote a lot on his clipboard.

His clipboard?

He had his clipboard with him?

Was it a formal observation?

Formal? I don't know. I guess.

Mr. Taft always brings his clipboard to formal observations.

So it was a formal observation?

Looks like it was.
NORA
Taft should not be doing a surprise formal observation on a new teacher.

VICTORIA
Then why did he do one on me? Is something wrong?

FLORENCE
Don't worry too much about it.

VICTORIA
Should I be worried?

FLORENCE
You're a union member and you have rights.

VICTORIA
Rights?

FLORENCE
To protect you.

VICTORIA
Protect me from what?

NORA
Don't scare her, Florence.

FLORENCE
If more teachers stood up for their rights we wouldn't be the punching bags we've become.

NORA
For all we know, Taft thought it was a wonderful lesson.

VICTORIA exits to the bathroom.

SAL
Wonderful lesson? Taft eats new teachers for lunch.

NORA
Well not Victoria.

FLORENCE
Lunch?

NORA
I'm not going to let that happen.
FLORENCE
I'm starving. Anyone else want the lunch lady special?

SAL
What is she trying to pass off as food today?

FLORENCE
Meatball heroes with mashed potatoes.

NORA
How yummy.

FELIX
You mean slaughterhouse scraps and meat-by-products smothered in a chemically flavored brown sauce with reconstituted potato particles on the side.

Who asked you?

FLORENCE
I have a nutritious lunch. Tuna fish, packed in water of course, with fat-free mayonnaise on oat bran bread. For dessert—

FELIX
For dessert I'm having one of those packaged goodies in which partially hydrogenated vegetable oil and high fructose corn syrup are the two best ingredients. I don't care what kind of fruit you brought with you today.

FELIX
An orange, for anyone who wants to know.

NORA
Florence, those school lunches will send you to the grave.

FLORENCE
If this job hasn't killed me by now, nothing will.

FLORENCE exits as SUSAN enters.

SUSAN
Mr. Vincent, you missed our meeting.

SAL
What meeting?

SUSAN
I put a memo in your mailbox.
Then it must be in the circular file.

SUSAN
We need to discuss your students’ play.

SAL
I gave you a copy.

SUSAN
And I've read it.

SAL
Pretty good, isn't it?

SUSAN
Some of the situations and some of the subject matter are a bit inappropriate for our student body.

SAL
It's a play by teenagers about teenagers. What's inappropriate?

SUSAN
I'd like to meet with you and the two young ladies to discuss what needs modification.

SAL
Modification?

SUSAN
Yes, modification.

SAL
No way. Absolutely not.

SUSAN
Excuse me?

SAL
Those girls, my entire class, worked very hard on this play and you are not going to step in and ruin it for them.

SUSAN
If you'd done your job as a drama teacher, you'd have realized the inappropriateness of the play and required changes. Since you didn't, I'm forced to step in.

SAL
You're not changing a thing. As drama teacher, my job is to foster and protect creativity and self-expression. That is my responsibility.
SUSAN
The alternative is to cancel the production to prevent offending parents, school board members, and others, and casting a negative light on the school. As assistant principal, that is my responsibility.

SAL
You just try to cancel my students' play.

NORA steps between them and starts dancing the Charleston with SAL.

Another costume, I see.

NORA
I'm transporting my students back to the Roaring Twenties.

SUSAN
The Roaring Twenties? Don't forget, Ms. O'Reilley, that you teach English and not history.

NORA stops dancing.

I'm teaching The Great Gatsby.

FELIX
The Great Gatsby is a novel set in the 1920s, Ms. Wagner.

SUSAN
I knew that. Are you suggesting that I didn't know that?

FELIX
Of course not, Ms. Wagner.

VICTORIA enters from the bathroom.

SUSAN
Ms. Turner, I understand that Mr. Taft visited your class today. I need to discuss that visit with you.

NORA
What, exactly, do you need to discuss?

SUSAN
This is between Ms. Turner and myself.
I'm concerned about Ms. Turner.

Your concern is duly noted, but I'm the supervisor.

According to Mr. Taft, you need a lot of help, and I'm going to provide that help. I'm going to observe some of your classes so I can see what you're doing wrong.

Wrong?

What about what she's doing right?

Do you mind, Ms. O'Reilley?

Yes, I do mind. I mind the negativity.

There's nothing negative about constructive administrative intervention.

Constructive administrative intervention. An oxymoron if I ever heard one.

Straight from the mouth of a moron.

Is that an appropriate comment to make to Ms. Wagner?

Don't you have your mother’s nutritious lunch to eat?

It’s not twelve-thirty yet.

And then, Ms. Turner, I'm going to model some instructional techniques in your classes so you can see how a master teacher performs.
Master teacher?

SAL

You?

NORA

Do you think all this interference on your part is really necessary?

SUSAN

Interference?

NORA

Intervention.

SUSAN

Intervention on behalf of new teachers is one of my functions.

NORA

With all the new responsibilities you have, do you really need one more thing to worry about?

SUSAN

Are you suggesting that I ignore my responsibility?

NORA

Not at all.

SUSAN

What greater responsibility can I assume than the guidance of an inexperienced new teacher?

NORA

I can mentor Victoria.

SUSAN

I don't know if that's feasible.

NORA

I can find the time.

SUSAN

You, or this Great Gatsby woman, or that woman who wears the "A", or whatever character you dress up as next time.

NORA

Hester Prynne and Daisy Buchanan.
Whoever.

At least know their names.

I can't keep track of everything.

So leave Victoria to me.

Ms. O'Reilley, in all good conscience, I can't do that.

And why not?

You haven't exactly been engaging in proper pedagogical practice.

Proper pedagogical practice?

Try saying that fast five times.

The rest of the school thinks you've lost your marbles.

I don't care what they think.

And parents have complained.

That's nonsense. You're making that up.

Both Mr. Taft and myself have received complaints from irate parents.

Whose parents?

Parents. I don't remember their names.
NORA
Well you should remember their names if you're going to take heed of their complaints.

SUSAN
Ms. Turner, we'll finish this discussion in my office. Now.

*SUSAN marches out.*

VICTORIA
Now what do I do, Ms. O'Reilley?

NORA
You're certainly not going to take anything she says seriously.

I can't just defy her.

VICTORIA
Pay her lip service. Listen to what she says and thank her for the advice.

But her advice is never of any help.

NORA
You come to me for help.

Or me.

SAL
Now go. Listen. Play the game.

*NORA exits.*

FELIX
Education is not a game, Ms. O’Reilley.

SAL
Around here it’s a joke.

NORA
I have a bad feeling about this.
Scene Five

FLORENCE is at the stage left table unwrapping a sandwich. NORA, dressed in her regular clothes, enters.

Another lunch lady special?

NORA

Pigeon posing as turkey.

NORA

How scrumptious.

FLORENCE

Can I offer a bite?

NORA

I'd rather eat the rats scurrying about the cafeteria kitchen.

FLORENCE

Who are you supposed to be today?

NORA

Myself. I'm between books.

FLORENCE

What if your classes don't recognize you?

NORA

I noticed you had a visitor in your 3rd period class.

FLORENCE

Intruder is more like it.

NORA

She had her clipboard too.

FLORENCE

Surprise observation. The hutzpah.

NORA

How did it go?

FLORENCE

Harassment by observation. She figures if she takes out the union rep she'll neutralize everyone else.
As if we're the enemy.

Does she know who she's dealing with?

Better you than Victoria.

The day you were absent, Victoria bugged me with question after question.

I hope you were helpful.

Even during lunch.

You weren't grouchy with her?

She wouldn't leave me alone.

She's inexperienced.

Is that my problem?

She's looking for guidance.

She actually thought I could help her.

What an unrealistic thing to expect from a teacher.

She should have gone to Sal.

You could have at least made an effort.

I tried to answer her questions.
You should have tried harder.

What do you expect?

She needs confidence. She wants people to believe in her. Is that too much to ask?

She gets that from you.

She should get it from everybody.

I don’t know why you bother.

Bother?

You’re wasting your time.

Helping a bright and eager young teacher is not a waste of time.

If she’s really bright and you really want to help her, tell her to quit and find a better profession.

This is the profession she wants. She wants to have an impact. She wants to make a difference.

Hey look, you and I both know that no one around here makes one damn bit of difference.

Speak for yourself.

I speak for everyone.

You don’t speak for me.
FLORENCE
Sure I do. You just won't admit it. We have no impact and we make no difference.

NORA
I most certainly do.

FLORENCE
You don't think these kids can be educated.

NORA
That's not true.

FLORENCE
Sure it is. That's why instead of teaching them you dress like a clown and put on a freak show.

NORA
Freak show?

FLORENCE
Keep them amused and the time will go faster.

NORA
You can go to hell.

VICTORIA enters holding some booklets.

VICTORIA
Ms. O'Reilley, are you busy?

NORA
For you, never.

VICTORIA
Everything OK?

NORA
I'm fine. Just tired.

VICTORIA
Ms. Wagner gave me more teaching guides. Like all the others she's given me, they make no sense at all.

NORA
When they make sense, that's when you should worry.

NORA takes the booklets and looks at them one by one.
NORA
Written by someone who never set foot in a classroom. Put out by a publisher with a big school contract. Developed at an educational think tank.

NORA tosses them into the trash.

NORA
Rubbish, all of it.

VICTORIA
Ms. Wagner says that I should be using data based instruction. Based on my assessments and prior standardized assessments given by the state, I should find appropriate instructional objectives from the core standards, being sure to vary my methodology so as to incorporate differentiated instruction so as to reach every student in the class.

NORA
She said all that without stopping to breathe?

VICTORIA
This language made no sense in grad school. What does it all mean?

NORA
I haven't a clue.

VICTORIA
I'll have to do this over the weekend.

NORA
I'm sure your boyfriend won't be happy about that.

VICTORIA
No, he won't. He's getting madder and madder about how little time I've been spending with him.

FLORENCE
Look Victoria, I'm sure your intentions are good, but don't waste your weekend.

VICTORIA
I don't have much choice, do I?

FLORENCE
The kids aren't worth the effort. They don't appreciate it.

NORA
Maybe in your case there's nothing to appreciate.

FLORENCE
These kids don't appreciate anything. What's the point of wearing yourself out for them?
She cares.

Victoria, you want some real advice?

Haven't you said enough?

Teach gym.

Gym?

You don't have to work.

I was an English major. I don't think I'm qualified.

Can you scratch your butt and burp at the same time?

Good thing you never became a gym teacher, Florence. The kids would walk out on crutches.

More sit-ups. One thousand one, one thousand two.

I don't understand why my dream of being a teacher is such a joke to you.

I've been doing this job a long time. I know what I'm talking about.

When I was a student I thought your anger and indifference were an act.

Oh, they're real.

Why are you still a teacher?
FLORENCE
I know I come across as this burnt out, cynical timecard puncher counting the minutes to retirement.

NORA
Well that's what you are.

FLORENCE
Maybe. But I ask you. If kids cared about being educated—if teachers were treated with respect—if our rights and benefits weren't being chipped away bit by bit—Don't you think I'd be different?

NORA
No.

VICTORIA
Why did you become a teacher?

NORA
Yeah Florence, why?

VICTORIA
I picture you as something else.

FLORENCE
Like a doctor or a lawyer?

VICTORIA
Maybe a prison matron.

FLORENCE
I took a vocational aptitude test.

VICTORIA
And the result was teacher?

FLORENCE
Who'd have thought you could fail a vocational aptitude test?

VICTORIA
You should have taken the test again.

FLORENCE
I wanted to be a lawyer.

NORA
I never knew that.
Then you should have gone to law school.

Easier said than done.

What happened?

I didn't have the grades and my parents didn’t have the money.

I’m sorry.

I had to be practical.

SUSAN enters carrying a folder.

Ms. Turner, I need to see you right away.

Not so fast.

This doesn’t concern you, Ms. Goldberg.

What the hell were you doing in my class?

This isn’t the time.

Then make it the time.

What was I doing? My job, Ms. Goldberg. My job.

Unannounced?

I don't need an appointment.
FLORENCE
No one walks in unannounced on me.

SUSAN
As assistant principal, it's my right and obligation. And the question should be, "What were you doing in your class?" Certainly not your job.

FLORENCE
You're targeting the wrong teacher.

SUSAN
We'll discuss this at your post-observation conference.

FLORENCE
I want to discuss it now.

SUSAN
I have a professional responsibility to maintain teaching standards in this department.

FLORENCE
Don't pull that professional responsibility crap with me.

SUSAN
You did not have a properly planned lesson.

FLORENCE
Of course I did.

SUSAN
Your class was watching a movie.

FLORENCE
Of the book they were reading.

SUSAN
Where was the student engagement in the lesson?

FLORENCE
They had a worksheet.

SUSAN
In this day and age, a worksheet just doesn't cut it.

FLORENCE
There's nothing wrong with a worksheet.

SUSAN
Which is why your lesson will be rated unsatisfactory.
You check the teacher contract.

SUSAN

The teacher contract?

FLORENCE

My lesson had everything that is required.

SUSAN

I answer to a higher standard than the teacher contract.

FLORENCE

The union won’t stand for this.

SUSAN

Your toothless union can’t defend teacher incompetence.

FLORENCE

You picked the wrong battle.

*FLORENCE storms out. SUSAN turns to VICTORIA and hands her a paper from her folder.*

SUSAN

Does this essay look familiar, Ms. Turner?

VICTORIA

This is James Dylan’s essay. I graded it and returned it last week.

*NORA takes the essay and starts reading it.*

SUSAN

And what grade did you give that essay?

VICTORIA

A failing grade.

SUSAN

What kind of a message does a failing grade send to a student?

VICTORIA

He didn't read the book.

SUSAN

I was on the phone with James's mother for almost an hour. Do you know who James's mother is?
SUSAN
She's Mrs. Dylan, president of the parents association. She was very upset with that grade. The grade will have to be changed.

NORA
You're letting a parent tell you how to do your job?

SUSAN
I'm listening to the concerns of an apprehensive parent.

NORA
Did you read this essay?

SUSAN
Of course I read the essay.

NORA
And you don't think it deserves to fail?

SUSAN
According to the departmental rubric, this is an excellent literary essay.

NORA
His chosen book is "All My Raisins in the Son."

SUSAN
An appropriate choice for this essay.

NORA
"All My Raisins in the Son?"

SUSAN
"All My Raisins in the Son" is the beautiful yet heartbreaking story of an African American family, of color, whose son's plane is shot down over Vietnam.

NORA
There's no such book as "All My Raisins in the Son."

SUSAN
Ms. Turner taught that book. It's a wonderful book.

VICTORIA
I taught All My Sons and A Raisin in the Sun.
He got the titles mixed up.

NORA
How can you expect Ms. Turner to pass the student if he wrote about a nonexistent book?

SUSAN
He followed the rubric. He demonstrated mastery of the core standards for the English curriculum. Whether the book he wrote about actually exists is irrelevant.

NORA
What kind of standards would make the literature in a literary essay irrelevant?

SUSAN
Obviously you are not familiar with the latest in educational theory and policy.

SUSAN exits.

NORA
Obviously.

NORA tears the essay and throws it away.

Scene Six

FLORENCE is at the stage left table going through a folder. SAL enters, enraged.

SAL
This is outrageous.

FLORENCE
It takes a lot to be outrageous around here.

SAL
Susan Wagner has pushed me too far.

FLORENCE
You and everyone else.

SAL
I want to file a grievance.

FLORENCE hands SAL a paper.
Fill it out and put it in my mailbox.

Your mailbox?

What more do you want?

I want something done.

Grievances take time.

I don't have time.

That's the way the system works.

Some system.

I didn't create it.

How long will this take?

The union is still handling grievances from last year.

Last year?

Justice takes time.

What kind of a union is this?

We live in an anti-union world.

What are we paying dues for?
FLORENCE
You think you can do a better job, you run for union rep after I retire.

SAL

Maybe I will.

FLORENCE
You’ll see it’s not so easy.

NORA
enters dressed as Blanche Dubois from A Streetcar Named Desire.

NORA
They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, but I ended up at this godforsaken school.

FLORENCE
Who the hell are you today?

NORA
Why, Mr. Kowalski, is my acting off today? Ms. Goldberg knows not who I am.

NORA drops into a seat at the stage center table.

NORA
My God, I'm exhausted.

SAL
Rough day?

NORA
I don't know what's gotten into these kids.

FLORENCE
I'm sure a lot of it is illegal.

NORA
Maybe they're too immature for Streetcar.

SAL
They're juniors, aren't they?

NORA
They might as well be junior high school.

FLORENCE
You give these kids too much credit.
NORA
You should have heard them hooting and howling like a bunch of Stanley Kowalskis.

FLORENCE
What do you expect, dressed like that?

SAL
What happened?

NORA
We were discussing Blanche and her past. The way they reacted you'd have thought I'd stripped naked.

FLORENCE
The union couldn't help you if did that.

SAL
The union couldn't help you if you had a hangnail.

NORA
I had to stop the class. I never had to stop a class before.

SAL
Teachers have bad days. Even the best of us.

NORA
Not I. Or at least until recently, not I.

NORA exits to the bathroom. VICTORIA enters.

VICTORIA
I've never seen this much commotion in the hall.

FLORENCE
I try not to walk in the hall during the change of classes.

VICTORIA
I almost got knocked over.

SAL
Put your stuff down. Relax.

SAL guides VICTORIA to the center table.

VICTORIA
I’m looking forward to your class’s play, Mr. Vincent.
There’s nothing to look forward to.

I told my students that if they attend they’ll get extra-credit.

There isn’t going to be a play.

Why not?

Susan Wagner cancelled it.

She did what?

Hence my grievance.

I’ll talk to Taft.

He already told me he must defer to Ms. Wagner’s decision.

But your class worked so hard. I saw them rehearse. They were very good.

My daughter was coming to the show. She wanted to see what Daddy does.

Better she not know.

Does she want to be an actress?

Not if she wants heartbreak and rejection and total humiliation.

Tell her not to become a teacher either.

I don’t get to tell her much of anything anymore. My time with my daughter is becoming more and more fleeting.
SUSAN enters.

SUSAN

Where is Ms. O’Reilley?

SAL

We have to talk.

SUSAN

Make an appointment.

SAL

We have to talk now. About my play.

SUSAN

I have more pressing matters on my mind.

SAL

You can't cancel my students' play.

SUSAN

We'll discuss this another time, Mr. Vincent.

SAL

We'll discuss this now. Why the hell did you cancel my students' play?

SUSAN

Assistant principal's prerogative.

SAL

Bullshit. My kids made all the changes you asked for.

SUSAN

Very reluctantly.

SAL

You had no right.

SUSAN

I had every right.

SAL

On what grounds?

SUSAN

Things were getting out of hand.
SAL
What things?

SUSAN
The noise and commotion coming from the auditorium?

SAL
What? Rehearse in silence?

SUSAN
The lack of any real work in that class?

SAL
My kids are the hardest working students in the school.

SUSAN
It's all just playtime. For the students and the teacher.

SAL
I bust my ass in that class.

SUSAN
What about the core standards? What about student achievement expectations? What about upcoming standardized tests?

SAL
What about all that crap?

SUSAN
Crap? Your students' low scores will ruin our data.

SAL
My students will outperform everyone else.

SUSAN
I doubt that very much.

SAL
You'll see.

SUSAN
That's why I'm reevaluating the relevance of a drama program to this department's goals and objectives.

SAL
You won't be getting rid of the drama program so long as I'm around.
SUSAN
As the drama program goes, so goes the drama teacher.

SAL
I hope you've been listening, Florence. I want that grievance fast-tracked.

NORA enters from the bathroom.

NORA
Victoria, did your class like the poem I suggested?

VICTORIA
Not only did they like the poem, they got the poem. Thank you.

SUSAN
Ms. O'Reilley, I need to see you in my office.

NORA
I just got out of class.

SUSAN
Right away.

NORA
It can wait.

SUSAN
I've just received the most disturbing report.

NORA
More data-driven drivel?

SUSAN
I've been told that you exposed yourself to your third period class.

NORA
I what?

SUSAN
Word is that you tore off your blouse and thrust out your chest for all to admire.

FLORENCE
This the latest in motivation?

NORA
I most certainly did not.
SUSAN
Three students have already written witness statements attesting that you did.

NORA
Students? Who?

SUSAN
I promised that they'd remain anonymous.

FLORENCE
Don’t say a word without proper union representation.

NORA
I don't need representation.

SAL
This must be a joke.

SUSAN
I don't joke when it comes to matters of lewdness in the classroom.

NORA
Lewdness?

FLORENCE
Don’t say anything to her.

*FELIX enters, sits at the stage right table, and occupies himself with his papers.*

NORA
You're making a big deal over nothing.

SUSAN
Nothing, Ms. O'Reilley?

NORA
We were having a class discussion of Blanche DuBois's past. I was demonstrating how she might have behaved in a class of young budding Brandos, teaching a passage of provocative poetry.

SUSAN
And you exposed your breasts.

NORA
I most certainly did not.
Then exactly what did you do?

NORA
I accidentally dropped my book and bent to pick it up. Maybe they saw a little cleavage.

SUSAN
So it's true!

NORA
Not the way you describe it.

SUSAN
There's proof.

NORA
Proof? A few coerced student statements?

SUSAN
One of the boys recorded it on his cell phone and posted it on the Internet.

FELIX opens his laptop.

NORA
For God's sake, what's the big deal anyway?

SUSAN
What's the big deal? Inappropriate teacher conduct is always a big deal.

NORA
They're just breasts. Some of the girls in this school walk around with their breasts about to pop out of their tops and nobody tells them to wear something else.

SAL
It's often the highlight of the day.

SUSAN
Breasts don't belong in school.

NORA
Should we just leave them at home?

SAL
If more teachers showed their hooters there'd be fewer dropouts.

SUSAN
That's right, Mr. Vincent. Make light of her dirty deed.
Oh my goodness.

SAL

Found it, Felix?

SAL, FLORENCE and SUSAN stand behind FELIX.

SUSAN

Very interesting. Very interesting indeed.

SAL

I don't see anything.

SUSAN

I'm sure Mr. Taft will want to see this.

SAL

See what?

SUSAN

Can you play that part again, Mr. White?

FLORENCE

What are we looking at?

SUSAN

That.

FELIX

It's a disgrace that Ms. O'Reilley would show her br... Her...br...her...br...

SAL

Breasts, Felix. Breasts. They're called breasts.

FLORENCE

That's not a breast.

SUSAN

Of course it is. Are you blind?

FLORENCE

It's somebody's thumb.

SAL

Florence is right. It is a thumb.
SUSAN
I think we should leave it to the proper authorities to determine what is a breast and what is a thumb.

PA ANNOUNCEMENT
Will Ms. O'Reilley please report to the principal's office. Will Ms. O'Reilley please report to the principal's office.

SUSAN
I'm sure that Mr. Taft will have plenty to say.

NORA
I'll have plenty to say as well.

NORA exits.

SUSAN
Whatever she may have to say, I’m sure that it will not be enough. Evidence is evidence.

Evidence for what?

SAL
I think it’s evident. Ms. O’Reilley’s days as a teacher may be coming to an end.

An end?

SUSAN
This behavior cannot be tolerated.

VICTORIA
You can’t get rid of Ms. O’Reilley.

SUSAN
With her bizarre classroom antics, something like this was bound to happen. An educator she is not.

VICTORIA
She's the best teacher in the school.

SUSAN
How would you know?

VICTORIA
Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Vincent, something has to be done.
SUSAN
You're becoming very vocal for somebody who's still on probation.

FLORENCE
The union will fight this. I can promise you that.

SUSAN
The union can fight all it wants.

SAL
It's very difficult to get rid of a tenured teacher.

SUSAN
Not necessarily.

SUSAN exits.

Scene Seven

NORA, dressed in regular clothing, is sitting at the center table, sipping from a coffee mug. SAL enters, humming a Christmas carol and holding a paper bag.

SAL
Have some Christmas cheer.

SAL takes a Scotch bottle out of the bag.

NORA
Maybe when the meeting is over.

SAL takes a coffee mug from the cabinet. He joins NORA at the center table.

SAL
Don't worry. Daddy’s girl won't get away with this.

NORA
The representative from the Office of Investigations seemed very impressed by her. Not only did she have those student witness statements she coerced, she had letters from parents asking for my removal.

SAL
All the parents want their kids in your classes.
NORA
Daddy’s girl seems to have talked a few into wanting otherwise.

SAL
What about the union lawyer?

NORA
He spoke legalize. I couldn't quite understand what he was saying, though I do think he was trying to suggest that mental distress on my part was a factor.

SAL
This job causes mental distress. Thank God for Christmas vacation.

NORA
I bet you can't wait to see your daughter.

SAL
It's not going to happen.

NORA
What happened to your plans?

SAL
My ex-wife is taking her to Florida to visit her parents.

NORA
Can't you still see her?

SAL
It would take a miracle for that to happen.

NORA
Miracles can happen.

SAL
Tell that to the judge who set the custody and visitation conditions.

NORA
But it’s Christmas. Can't you join them?

SAL
My ex and I in the same room do not a holiday make.

NORA
So what will you do?

SAL
Memorize my lines. And rehearse.
You’re acting again?

NORA

My wife made me stop. But now that there’s no wife, why not start again?

SAL

Good for you.

NORA

I got a part on my first audition.

SAL

Maybe this is a harbinger of better things to come.

NORA

At my age?

SAL

You never know.

NORA

Wouldn’t that be something.

SAL

FELIX enters and proceeds to the file cabinet to retrieve some papers.

FELIX

Am I having a flashback, or do I smell rexograph fluid?

SAL

Want some Scotch, Felix?

FELIX

I will not be corrupted.

SAL

No Christmas cheer?

FELIX

Alcohol kills brain cells.

FELIX

Thank God there isn’t some poor woman whose Christmas you can ruin.

NORA

There will be.

FELIX
Don’t get your hopes too high.

SAL

I have a date.

FELIX

With a woman?

SAL

Good for you, Felix.

NORA

She’s a nice girl.

FELIX

I’m sorry to hear that.

SAL

She won’t let alcohol eat away at her insides.

NORA

I’m sure you’ll give her a reason to start.

FELIX

Alcohol consumption in school is in direct violation of the pedagogical code of conduct.

SAL

So go rat me out to daddy’s girl.

FELIX

I have no need to.

FELIX exits as VICTORIA enters, holding a card and small present.

VICTORIA

I’m not dead anymore. I finally got paid.

NORA

(To SAL) And you don’t believe in miracles.

VICTORIA

Eight paychecks rolled into one. Now I can start my Christmas shopping.

NORA

Maybe you’ll be getting a special present.
Special?

From Thomas?

Oh, no. There won't be a ring.

No ring?

We broke up after Thanksgiving.

I'm sorry.

Too many fights. I think he was becoming jealous of my job.

His loss. Who's the present for?

Me. It's from my last class.

The one that was giving you such a hard time?

That's the class.

Open it.

_VICTORIA unwraps the present._ It’s a mug.

_(Reading)_ World’s greatest teacher.

Read the card.
VICTORIA
(Reading) Dear Ms. Turner. Merry Christmas. Anybody who can put up with us and still remain cool has to be a good teacher. Your favorite class."

Sal pours a shot into Victoria’s mug.

SAL
Things are starting to work out for you. All you had to do was hang in there a little while.

FLORENCE enters.

The Queen is dead.

NORA
I never thought myself a queen.

FLORENCE
Not you. You’ve been exonerated.

SAL
Hey! Merry Christmas.

SAL hugs NORA and pours her a shot.

FLORENCE
The investigator's office said Susan's accusations could not be substantiated and did not warrant further investigation. Taft happily concurred.

NORA
So who’s the queen?

FLORENCE
Daddy’s girl.

NORA
Susan?

FLORENCE
She’s been beheaded.

NORA
How so?

FLORENCE
Taft removed her as assistant principal.
He fired her?

NORA

Tyranny is dead.

SAL

SAL kisses NORA.

SAL

I'm going to give Taft a big kiss too.

FLORENCE takes the Scotch bottle from SAL.

FLORENCE

I don't need another teacher investigation.

SAL and FLORENCE exit.

VICTORIA

Ms. O’Reilley, congratulations.

NORA

Funny, I don’t feel much like congratulations.

VICTORIA

Why? You beat Ms. Wagner’s charges.

NORA

A hollow victory.

VICTORIA

You should be elated.

NORA

Maybe I should. But this is a battle I shouldn’t have had to fight.

VICTORIA

You won. Ms. Wagner lost.

NORA

I won the battle. But what about the war?

VICTORIA

What war?

NORA

This has been a portentous sign.
A portentous sign? How?

NORA

Maybe Florence is right about me. There are days I wake up and wonder why I should bother getting out of bed and coming to work. There aren't many of them, mind you, but sometimes.

Everybody feels like that.

NORA

You want to hear something funny?

Sure.

NORA

Remember when you asked Florence why she was still a teacher and she couldn't give you an answer?

Yes.

NORA

Well I was so scared you'd ask me next.

SUSAN enters.

SUSAN

Gloating over your little victory, Ms. O'Reilley?

It's not much of a victory.

SUSAN

It was a conspiracy.

NORA

And I suppose I was the leader.

SUSAN

You were all in cahoots from the get-go. Out to undermine my authority.

NORA

Authority has to be earned.
SUSAN
You've always resented my aspirations.

NORA
Resented your aspirations? I could just never fathom.

SUSAN
Sabotage and subversion.

NORA
Why this demented desire to dominate?

SUSAN
I strive to raise the caliber of education, and this is what I get.

NORA
Raise the caliber?

SUSAN
Obviously you don't understand.

NORA
What makes you want to be in control? As a means to an end, maybe I could understand. But as an end?

SUSAN
Bitter and envious.

NORA
My God. What goes through your mind? Lucky thing we won't have to put up with your ignorance and delusions of grandeur any longer. And especially lucky that Victoria won't either.

SAL and FLORENCE enter. FLORENCE is eating from a box of donuts.

SUSAN
No, Victoria won't have to put up with my ignorance and delusions of grandeur. And she won't have to put up with my replacement either.

NORA
What are you talking about?

SUSAN
Your little protégé is out of a job.

VICTORIA
Ms. O'Reilley?
NORA
Taft fired her?

SUSAN
He will.

SAL
On the last day before Christmas?

NORA
He wouldn't dare.

SUSAN
Since I'm returning to the classroom, she's no longer needed.

NORA
Florence, that can't be true?

SUSAN
Remember, she was hired to replace me.

FLORENCE
I'm afraid it could.

NORA
This isn't right. What can the union do?

FLORENCE
Not much. Budgets are budgets.

NORA
We'll see about that.

NORA exits.

VICTORIA
What do I do now?

SUSAN
You can start by cleaning out your file drawer. I'll need it back.

VICTORIA
Can the union help me?

FLORENCE
Finding a position midway is rough. You could substitute.
But I want to teach.

FLORENCE

There's always September.

VICTORIA

Next September?

SAL

I'm sorry, Victoria.

*SAL hugs VICTORIA*

VICTORIA

I'm going to miss it here.

SAL

I know this is hard. But let me tell you something from one who's been around a while. You're too good for this job. There are better opportunities out there for you.

SUSAN

Don't get too teary over this.

*FELIX enters.*

FELIX

May I have everyone's attention?

SUSAN

You really aren't cut out for teaching anyway.

SAL

You'll find something better than this.

FELIX

I said, may I have everyone's attention.

SAL

Stop annoying us.

FELIX

But I have something special to share with everyone.

SAL

Whatever it is, Felix, none of us give a damn.
FELIX
You're going to wish you hadn't said that.

SAL
Is that so?

FELIX
Yes it is.

SAL
Really?

FELIX
I've just been chosen as the new English Assistant Principal.

SUSAN
What?

SAL
You?

FLORENCE
The new assistant principal?

SUSAN
There has to be a mistake. This can't be. This has to be a joke.

FELIX
I don't participate in jokes.

SUSAN
Who put you up to this?

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes