
THE BABE

A comedy in two acts

FIRST ACT -- SAMPLE

Robert J. Wheeler
15 Windsor Cres.,
London, ON N6C 1V6
Canada
robwheeler999@gmail.com
519-642-4844
www.wheelerscripts.com

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The Babe. 2020. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-7-7.

The Treasure Seekers. 2020. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-2-9.

Having Harry – A Ghost Story. 2019. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-5-3.

Life Matters – Almost Heaven, Nearly Hell. Written and produced 2018. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-8-4.

Oh, Brother!!. 2017. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-3-9.

Who'll Come A Waltzin' With Me?. Written and produced 2017. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-1-2.

Misadventures In Marriage. 2016. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-6-0.

The Last Stop. Written and produced 2016. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-4-3.

Oh Canada – Fast Forward. Written and produced 2015 as *Good To The Very Last Droplet*. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-7390405-0-5.

I'll Miss Me When I'm Gone. 1999. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390405-0-5.

Let There Be Angels. 1994. Published May 2022. <http://wheelerscripts.com/>. Playwrights' Guild of Canada Copyscript. ISBN: 978-1-7390143-2-2.

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Enquiries regarding production details please contact robwheeler999@gmail.com

THE BABE

By Robert J. Wheeler

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
TAYLOR SMITH	Husband of Jenna, programmer/bank loans officer	25-50	Male
JENNA SMITH	Wife of Taylor. Interior decorator	25-40	Female
DET. O'NEAL	Police Detective	50-65	Male
MARJ	Mother of Taylor	50-65	Female
MR. DILL	Taylor's bank manager	50-65	Male

The sound of gunfire can be recorded, produced in the booth.
The playwright can produce any weapons needed (wooden).

FOUR ACTORS REQUIRED

SETTING

A Living room.

ACT 1, SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP ON:

Time: Late afternoon.

Place: Living room of Taylor and Jenna.

An average contemporary living room. D.R. is the entrance to the house with a long, narrow mirror and a small table under it.

U.R. is a swinging door entrance to the kitchen.

On the U.C. wall is a 70's bar with bar fridge, two stools and small radio. A large print is on the wall above the bar.

U.L. is an exit into the bedrooms and a large window.

D.C. is the living room -- a sofa with end tables with lamps on both ends of the sofa and a coffee table in front. A phone is on one of the end tables. A matching sofa chair with floor reading lamp or swag is SL of coffee table.

A few bars of "Love Will Keep Us Together" plays.

TAYLOR SMITH (25), a sophisticate, ENTERS through the DR front door dressed in an immaculate business suit with a gym bag. Taylor drops the gym bag, goes through six letters from the mail table.

TAYLOR *(looking at mail, sung)* Honey Bunny, I'm home.

JENNA *(O.S. sung)* Taylor, Sweetie.

TAYLOR *(looking at mail, sung)* Yes, Dearest.

JENNA *(O.S.)* Are you ready for your surprise?

A perplexed look from Taylor.

TAYLOR Dearest, if I'm ready, it won't be a surprise.

JENNA (O.S.) I've made you something wonderful!

JENNA SMITH (25), in a colorful apron that covers a red checked blouse and business attire, RUSHES from the kitchen holding a smoking meatloaf pan with oven mitts (dry ice).

Taylor's surprised, throws the mail into the air as she charges toward him, causing him to back up.

JENNA (joyous, proud) Voila!

TAYLOR Whaaaaaaaaaaaaa . . .

Jenna backs him into the wall behind him.

aaaaaat?

Taylor looks down into the pan.

You made lava?!!!

JENNA (joyous, proud) No, silly, it's my very own Betty Crocker meatloaf!

TAYLOR (dire, looking at the meat loaf) Jenna!!!

JENNA What, Sweetie?

TAYLOR (a dire cringe) It's burning!

JENNA (oblivious) Oh.

Jenna blows on the meat loaf.

Better?

Stunned look from Taylor.

(joyous) The top's a little crispy, but you'll love the rest.

Taylor waves smoke away, squints to see her.

TAYLOR (tactful) It's, it's . . . I'm at a loss for words.

Jenna giggles, takes it as a compliment.

JENNA It's my first delicious meatloaf.

TAYLOR (*trepidation*) I've found a word.

JENNA Wonderful, spectacular, fabulous, amazing? Which one?

TAYLOR It's uh, ah . . . a four-letter word.

JENNA (*joyous*) Love has four letters.

TAYLOR (*dread*) It does, but that's not . . .

JENNA Perfect!

Jenna tries to kiss him, but smoke and the hot pan are in the way.

Taylor tries to dodge the hot pan, gets a finger or two burned.

They fumble around until she holds the meat loaf with one hand from the edge with one mitt, puts the other oven mitt on the table, the meatloaf pan on the mitt and the other mitt over the meatloaf.

They kiss.

Missed you.

Jenna grabs Taylor, bear hugs him hard, turns him facing DS.

Taylor's arms fly out, face shows he's breathless.

(*joyous*) Three months married, and it still feels new, fantastic.

Jenna releases the hug. Taylor gasps, out of breath and dazed but she does not notice.

Taylor?!

TAYLOR Yes, yes. (*takes a breath*) Fantastic . . . but dangerous.

JENNA How was your day, my Sweet?

Taylor gathers himself.

TAYLOR My day? Right, the day I had. My dear, your loans officer, computer I.T. genius husband had an exceptional day at the bank.

JENNA (*joyous*) That's because . . .

Taylor twirls, swings his arms and gym bag around, spins. Jenna poses model-like, expecting him to notice her.

TAYLOR The GDNP is above predicted. The threat of recession is over. Our trade surplus is skyrocketing. Mr. Dill says it's a dream time for bankers!

JENNA (*annoyed*) Your bank manager?!!

Taylor hasn't noticed Jenna is miffed it's not her that's making him happy.

TAYLOR Yes! The economy is heating up!

Jenna takes an oven mitt without Taylor seeing, holds it behind her back.

JENNA (*frustrated scream*) Ahhhhhhha!

Taylor's stunned, stops spinning.

The economy?!

Taylor turns quickly toward the meat loaf.

TAYLOR (*fearful*) The lava loaf?!

Jenna whacks him with an oven mitt, throws the mitt over her head and back and holds her arms out to him.

JENNA Us!!!

TAYLOR (*confused*) Us? (*sees what she means*) Of course, us! Lovers! Definitely lovers, my Sweet.

Taylor hugs her.

JENNA It's Friday night!!

TAYLOR So?

Jenna ends the hug, pushes him back.

JENNA *(excited)* Did you get it?

Taylor shrugs.

T-a-a-a-y-lor! It's our plan! The bank's closed until Tuesday because it's the holiday weekend. You didn't forget?

TAYLOR Maybe I did, and maybe . . .

JENNA *(joyous)* You got it! I know you did! You're forgiven!

TAYLOR The things I do for love.

JENNA It's not like you're stealing anything.

Taylor gives her the gym bag and moves US.

Heavy.

Jenna holds it to her heart, dances with it DS.

TAYLOR A million dollars is a lot of paper.

Taylor relaxes on the sofa.

JENNA It's got to be turning you on, right?

TAYLOR *(macho)* Jenna Darlin', this man, your man, doesn't have an off switch.

JENNA More than normal?

Taylor moves to Jenna.

TAYLOR Having a million dollars of bank money in our love nest, does raise my blood pressure a tad.

JENNA What denominations?

TAYLOR Hundreds.

JENNA Wow, hundreds!

*A few bars of "Money, Money, Money" plays.
Jenna dances with the gym bag.*

(enthused) Feel the power! You gotta feel it! You're sure the bank won't miss it?

Music stops, she stops dancing.

TAYLOR The safe can't be opened until eight a.m. Tuesday morning. I was the last one out tonight and I'll be the first one in Tuesday morning when I return the money, and no-one will be the wiser.

JENNA What about the cameras?

TAYLOR Mr. Dill wants to save money on hydro so has the cameras turned off before every holiday weekend.

Jenna puts the gym bag on the sofa, dances around.

JENNA I feel bad, like I've committed some horrible crime.

TAYLOR Jenna, it's borrowed money. You know the million needs to go back?

JENNA I was imagining. Don't you ever imagine?

TAYLOR I imagined us married.

JENNA *(incredulous look with sarcasm)* Right.

Jenna rushes to Taylor, hugs him.

What if we pretend it's Mafia money? Let's imagine dirty Mafia money.

TAYLOR Dirty Mafia money?

*LIGHTS FADE AWAY AROUND THEM, TRANSITION TO ONLY
ON THEM, THE SOFA.*

JENNA Yeah. We walk the docks at night, the perilous waterfront! It's a deadly dark and dangerous night! We walk arm-in-arm on the grimy, dim, crime, and rat-infested docks.

(MORE)

Sour face from Taylor. Jenna pulls Taylor along.

Black water surges in. Just a few dingy dim lights to guide us. We go on because we're . . .

Jenna indicates she wants him to finish her sentence.

TAYLOR . . . mentally unstable?

JENNA In love!!! We love the smell of ocean, (*takes deep breath*) the sound of gulls.

TAYLOR Gulls at night?

Jenna grabs his shoulder.

JENNA Night gulls!

TAYLOR I've never seen . . .

JENNA They're night flyers, black, so they blend in . . . see?

TAYLOR No.

JENNA Good. (*enlivened*) We're at the murky, churning water's edge, the edge of absolute darkness. Shots ring out ahead! A drug deal gone bad!

Jenna clicks her heels into the floor rapidly -- gunfire.

The unmistakable sound of automatic weapons, so we . . .

TAYLOR . . . run for cover

JENNA Unafraid, we push on! Your shirt is soaked in sweat, muscles tight, swell, ripple. Muscles want to burst the shirt, so you rip it off.

(MORE)

Taylor takes off his jacket and tie, tries to tear off his shirt, but it won't tear, so

settles for undoing the top two shirt buttons, throws his chest out, does a he-man pose. Jenna runs her hands over his upper body, pulls him along.

We keep moving, step over bullet-riddled bodies.

Sour face from Taylor. Jenna looks to the sofa.

We see it! A black, machined gunned limo, been peppered with bullet holes, engine still idling. On the hood is an open bag of drug money!

Jenna takes the gym bag, puts it on the sofa arm and opens it.

A million dollars, waiting for us to take. We grab it and . . .

Jenna indicates she wants him to finish her sentence.

TAYLOR . . . run like hell?

Taylor closes the gym bag.

JENNA No! We push on! Two shots ring out . . .

Jenna bangs her heels on the floor twice.

. . . tear into the limo! You jump in front of me.

Jenna jumps behind him, hides.

My protector from harm, no matter how dangerous.

Taylor tries to move but she holds him there.

TAYLOR You're sure you're with me?

JENNA One of the bodies wasn't dead, shooting at us!

Jenna bangs her heels on the floor twice. Taylor ducks.

(MORE)

You grab an uzi from a dead hand!

Taylor has a confused look.

Machine gun!

Jenna makes his hand look like a gun, takes his arm, points it at an imaginary target.

Jenna rapid clicks her heels on the floor for the sound of automatic fire.

You took him down hard and for good.

Taylor throws and spits out the imaginary uzi.

TAYLOR We have the money?!!

JENNA Yes, yes, yes! You pick the money and me up and . . .

Taylor picks up the gym bag and her, putting her over one shoulder while holding the gym bag.

TAYLOR And?

JENNA Run to our mansion on the cliff and throw me on the bed.

Taylor runs around the sofa with Jenna over his shoulder, stops DC, dumps her on her onto the sofa.

TAYLOR Where we count it?

JENNA Scatter the whole mill on me!

Taylor opens the gym bag and dumps twenty bundles of money on Jenna from the gym bag.

Jenna's bombarded, is startled, fights them off.

(sits up, surprised) I'd imagined loose bills. (overjoyed) We go to it on the cash. That's power! That's my man!

Taylor moves to jump on her, pulls back, looks closely at a bundle.

TAYLOR What about paper cuts?

Jenna sits up, holds two bundles.

JENNA We're not afraid! We take what we want! Love every moment of being fully alive!

TAYLOR Yes!!!

ALL LIGHTS UP

JENNA That's what we love. *(looks to Taylor)* What do you think?

TAYLOR Me? What do I think?

Taylor stands, paces, big build up.

I see, I see, *(thinking)* a very sexy . . . sensual . . .
. erotic . . . highly stimulating . . . three-day . . .

Jenna hangs expectantly overjoyed on his words "sexy . . . sensual . . . erotic . . . stimulating . . . three-day," then . . .

. . . interest free loan!

JENNA *(disappointed)* Taylor, think wild!

Taylor pauses to mentally calculate, walks around.

TAYLOR Jen, two days at five per cent interest on a mill, comes to around *(pause while thinking)* two hundred and seventy-three dollars and ninety-seven cents.

JENNA Compounded?

TAYLOR Before compounding! Now that's wild!

JENNA *(mocking)* Whoopee. I'll work on what you see.

JENNA How much in each bundle?

TAYLOR *(takes a bundle)* This one's twenty-five thousand.

JENNA I've got goose bumps.

TAYLOR *(smug)* I get used to dealing with large amounts.

Jenna takes two bundles and juggles them.

JENNA My fifty-thousand-dollar act.

Taylor sits on the sofa, watches her.

TAYLOR Very nice. Can you get the hips going?

Jenna hip gyrates and juggles. Taylor applauds. Jenna uses the bundles like weights, pushes them over her head.

Taylor moves to her, kisses her. Jenna puts the bundles into the gym bag and closes it.

JENNA *(enthused)* We'll have my fabulous meatloaf after.

TAYLOR *(dread)* Torchered meatloaf.

JENNA *(joyful)* It's a Betty Crocker recipe, so it has to be delicious!

Jenna happily dances the gym bag into the bedroom.

(O.S.) Don't forget our dinner.

Taylor picks up the meatloaf pan with trepidation with an oven mitt, moves toward bedroom door.

TAYLOR What if it explodes?

JENNA *(O.S.)* Money doesn't explode.

TAYLOR No. The lava loaf!!!

Taylor EXITS into the bedroom.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 1

ACT 1, SCENE 2

LIGHTS FADE UP.

Time: Morning.

Place: Living room of Taylor and Jenna.

The sound of "YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE" plays.

TAYLOR (O.S. western accent) Wowie!

JENNA (O.S. western accent) Wowie!

TAYLOR (O.S. western accent) Double wowie. Good Saturday morning Nelly Mae.

Jenna ENTERS in an askew blonde pigtailed wig, same red and white checkered blouse, cut off blue jeans.

Jenna has the gym bag of money, dumps ten to twenty bundles of money from it onto the coffee table in front of the sofa then collapses on the sofa.

JENNA (western accent) Triple wowie!!!

Taylor STAGGERS in from the bedroom wearing a robe and cowboy hat with a large "Sheriff Star" pinned to robe, crashes onto the sofa beside Jenna.

(western accent) Billy-Bob-Tom-John, that was the best.

TAYLOR (western accent) Nelly Mae, I've been a wonderin' why does Billy-Bob-Tom-John, your fearless Quako County sheriff, have so many names?

JENNA It's cause o your Moma.

TAYLOR Moma Daisy Mae?

JENNA She couldn't decide which beau she loved most, so ...

Jenna shrugs. Taylor has a confused look. She kisses him.

TAYLOR (western accent) That makes me one happy Quako County sheriff.

The phone on the end table RINGS. Taylor answers it.

(into phone, western accent) Howdie pardner. You're talkin' to the big man his'self, Sheriff of Quako County. *(pause)* Who might you be? *(pause)* *(as himself)* Mr. Dill? Don't hang up. *(pause)* Yes, it's me, Taylor. Really, it's me. If the computer has crashed again, I'll be right down. Don't worry. I'll . . .

JENNA *(eyes gleaming)* Your boss! He knows!

TAYLOR *(puts hand over receiver, to Jenna)* He can't know.

Jenna jumps up and down beside Taylor.

(into phone) Yes, Mr. Dill. *(pause)* Is anything, uh, wrong? *(pause)* You sound upset. *(pause)* Sergeant Kelly called, told you to call the staff about a problem at the bank? *(pause)* Maybe it wasn't robbed. Maybe the money was borrowed, or could be an accounting glitch?

Jenna stops jumping. Taylor jumps up, paces the length of the sofa back and forth, listens into the phone for seven seconds.

(to Jenna) Crooks tunneled into the safe from the laundry next door!! The safe was entirely cleaned out!!

Taylor wavers, like his is about to pass out.

The bank's closed! It's a crime scene!

Taylor drops the phone, sits on the sofa.

The one million, three hundred and twenty-two thousand, four hundred, sixty-three dollars and thirty-two cents is, is, is gone!!

Taylor tries to stand, wavers, passes out onto the floor. Jenna picks up the phone, speaks into it.

JENNA Hello, Mr. Dill. It's Jenna, Taylor's wife. *(pause)* Taylor's unconscious on the floor! *(pause)* That's because Taylor loves money! *(pause)* Police? *(pause)* They'll want to question us sometime today or tomorrow? Fine.

Jenna gives a guilty look.

We've got nothing to hide.

*Jenna hangs up, helps Taylor onto the sofa.
He's groggy. She puts her wig and his cowboy
hat on the sofa.*

TAYLOR Jen, I had a scary nightmare. The worst I've ever had.
Mr. Dill was hysterical on the phone, telling me . . .

Jenna slaps him gently on the face.

It wasn't a nightmare!

JENNA The bank was robbed last night while we were in heaven.
And we've got most of the loot in front of us.

TAYLOR The bank?!

JENNA The cops will be dropping by. They'll want to question
us about, you know, the robbery.

TAYLOR Probably think it's an inside job. We never stole
anything, but . . .

JENNA . . . having the million makes us look, you know ...
very much ... like ...

TAYLOR . . . crooks! I'll confess to everything. Make a clean
breast of it, take what's coming to me.

JENNA I'll miss my Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

TAYLOR When will the cops get here?

JENNA Mr. Dill said today or tomorrow.

TAYLOR I'll give up. They can take me away!

JENNA Probably in handcuffs.

TAYLOR I suppose so.

JENNA I'll miss you.

TAYLOR I'll get a minimum of ten years. You, maybe a month or
two as an accessory.

JENNA We did it for our love.

TAYLOR For the best sex in my life!

JENNA Our lives.

TAYLOR Right.

JENNA You'd get ten hard years.

Taylor's horror stricken, turns away from her, DS.

TAYLOR *(worried)* Hard years?

JENNA Yes. Ten hard years in a prison, surrounded by shiny, treacherous razor wire.

Taylor shivers.

TAYLOR *(fathoms)* Ten hard years and treacherous razor wire?

JENNA Livin' in a small cell with a filthy, never cleaned toilet.

Taylor cringes.

Then there's the cold cement walls.

TAYLOR *(worried)* Cold walls?

JENNA A window the size of a pizza box.

TAYLOR Extra-large?

JENNA Small. Tiny window with thick, rigid steel bars.

TAYLOR *(extremely worried)* No vitamin D!

JENNA A narrow, hard, lumpy cot to sleep on.

TAYLOR Sleepless nights, tossing and . . . *(extremely worried)* What about bed bugs?

JENNA Big, hairy, hungry prison bed bugs!

TAYLOR Ouch!

JENNA Tin cups and plates.

TAYLOR *(winces, new idea)* What about cutlery?

JENNA Plastic! Yes, it'd be plastic knives and forks.

A look of horror from Taylor.

It won't matter.

TAYLOR No?

JENNA You'll be getting corn beef hash. No steak for you!

TAYLOR Ahhhhaaaa!

JENNA Think about something else.

TAYLOR What?

JENNA Working in the prison laundry.

TAYLOR *(relieved)* I like clean clothes.

JENNA Working in the steam laundry with big, rough deviants.

TAYLOR *(worried)* Laundry deviants?

Jenna turns away with a shrug and a "can't believe you said that look".

JENNA Something like that.

TAYLOR *(extremely worried)* You mean sexual de, de . . .

JENNA *(happy)* . . . viants?

TAYLOR *(high pitched, squeaks it out)* Yeah.

JENNA But you'd think our million-dollar sex was worth ten miserable, long years in prison, with the . . . you know . . . the . . . the . . .

TAYLOR . . . deviants?

SHIRLEY Yeah.

TAYLOR Noooo!

JENNA No?

TAYLOR I'd be doing hard time! Hard labor! Breaking rocks! Making license plates! The sweaty steam laundry.

JENNA Then there's the showers with the . . . you know.

TAYLOR Deviants?

JENNA Yeah.

TAYLOR I'll need a ton of wet wipes.

JENNA Taylor, listen. What's important?

TAYLOR Staying away from the deviants?!

JENNA No!

TAYLOR No?!!

JENNA Knowing we've got each other and tonight. (*new idea*)
What if we don't confess?

TAYLOR Lie?

JENNA Don't lie. We could overlook telling them we've got the
million. They won't ask if we borrowed the money.
They'll ask if we stole the money.

TAYLOR There'll be questions. A lot of questions.

JENNA Where were you on the night of the robbery? Did you rob
the bank? Did you conspire with anyone to rob the bank?
Taylor, we're borrowers, not thieves.

TAYLOR We don't look like tunnellers.

JENNA They'll search the place.

TAYLOR They need a warrant . . .

JENNA . . . and are coming here with it!

Stunned looks at each other.

(MORE)

Hide the money!

*Jenna jumps on the sofa and bounces, hands in
hair, thinking. Taylor throws the money into
the gym bag, jumps up, runs in circles around
the room. Five seconds elapses.*

Jenna points into the kitchen.

The garbage can!

Jenna runs into the kitchen, comes out with the garbage can and two new plastic garbage bags.

She dumps the money from the gym bag onto the coffee table, takes the full plastic garbage bag from the garbage can and puts it into the gym bag.

She lines the garbage can with a new plastic bag, throws the money into the garbage can.

She takes the second new garbage bag and puts it over the money in the garbage can.

She throws a little garbage from the gym bag into the garbage bag that covers the money in the garbage can.

She zips up the gym bag and closes the lid on the garbage can, then flops on the sofa exhausted. Taylor plops down beside her.

Jenna talks like Nelly Mae and Taylor talks like Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

Jenna puts on her wig.

JENNA What happened to my Billy-Bob-Tom-John, my sheriff o Quako County, who'll stand up to cops, crooks or grizzly bears?!

Taylor puts on his cowboy hat.

TAYLOR County line's at the bedroom door.

JENNA So, we're not in Quako County anymore? We're in a different county?

TAYLOR Yup.

JENNA What county's that?

TAYLOR Terrified-out-of-my-mind County.

JENNA I noticed something about my Billy-Bob-Tom-John.

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By Robert J. Wheeler

TAYLOR What's that?

JENNA With blood going to his lower region, my sheriff, my
Billy-Bob-Tom-John, don't think so straight.

She unpins and takes his badge.

Sheriff Billy-Bob-Tom-John's goin' on vacation!

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act 1 Scene 2

ACT 1, SCENE 3

Time: The next morning.

Place: The same.

LIGHTS UP ON:

Taylor's gym bag sits on the coffee table. The sound of birds singing. Light streams in the window. Jenna is dressed casually as she looks out the front door, towards the driveway.

The sound of "OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING" plays.

JENNA I'm happy you liked the brownies, Detective Wilson. Thank you for the visit, Detective O'Neal. *(pause)* You're very considerate officers. I'll call your office and say how well the search went. *(pause)* I hope we've been of help.

Jenna waves out the door. The sound of a car doors slamming, car starting and driving away. Jenna closes the door, locks it and fastens the chain lock.

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* Are they gone?

JENNA Yes!

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* Good.

JENNA Taylor. What are you doing?

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* They left the bedroom a mess. The bed, my dresser. Then, guess what?

JENNA What?

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* They put my socks in my underwear drawer and my underwear in my socks drawer!

JENNA *(sarcastic)* Those bastards!

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* This will take a while to straighten out.

JENNA They believed us!

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* You're sure they're gone?

JENNA Yes.

TAYLOR *(O.S.)* Did you see their car drive away?

Jenna rushes to the front door, opens it and looks out. She slams the door and turns toward the bedroom area.

JENNA They are definitely gone. No car. Nothing. We did it!

Taylor, dressed in casual wear, rushes out. They sing the next part.

TAYLOR *(singing)* We did it? We did it! I didn't think we could, but . . .

JENNA We did it!

TAYLOR We did it!

JENNA You thought we'd end up in jail, but . . .

TAYLOR We didn't! We didn't! I'll miss steel bars, tin cups, bad food, making licence plates, sweaty laundry, and thank God, most of all . . .

JENNA The deviates?!

TAYLOR The deviates!

They stop singing, collapse on the sofa, have a passionate kiss.

JENNA Wow!

TAYLOR The money! The adventure! It's a definite high! You feel it?

JENNA I'm floating, in Heaven.

TAYLOR Maybe we can have Heaven in the bedroom.

JENNA I need to look at our beautiful money.

(MORE)

Jenna races into the kitchen and brings out the garbage can, puts it on the coffee table.

Jenna takes out the garbage bag that is partially full of garbage, lays it by the

can. They hold each other, stare into the can.

Isn't it cute?

TAYLOR All cuddled together in soft, white plastic.

JENNA Like a babe in swaddling white plastic. Our babe that we saved from the Money Gestapo.

TAYLOR Yeah.

JENNA Who want to march it into the cold, bank safe concentration camp.

TAYLOR We take care of our own.

JENNA You don't mind if I call the million our babe do you?

TAYLOR Not at all. The babe's a member of the family now.

Jenna puts the garbage bag over the money, closes the lid, EXITS with the garbage can into the kitchen.

JENNA (O.S.) Sleep tight little babe.

TAYLOR The babe is safe and sound.

Jenna ENTERS without the garbage can. They sit on the sofa.

JENNA Did you notice Detective O'Neal react to the garbage in the gym bag?

TAYLOR I'm sure he thought he'd reveal a body part and put two sick serial killers behind bars.

JENNA He thinks we're crazy to keep garbage in a gym bag. You came through with . . . what was it?

TAYLOR My fear of bacteria. I forgot to tell you. I suffer from bacteriophobia.

JENNA You almost blew it when you washed your hands after the handshakes.

TAYLOR I didn't know where their hands had been.

JENNA Taylor, they're cops.

TAYLOR They could have come from a murder scene! Cops come across all kinds of kooks.

JENNA (*a "can't believe my ears" look*) Thankfully, your kookiness didn't faze them.

TAYLOR Kookiness and phobias are not the same. Although it was nice of Detective O'Neal to take the garbage out.

JENNA After you went on and on to educate them on how you've been devastated by your phobia they practically begged to be set free. Bacta . . . what?

TAYLOR Bac . . . ter . . . i . . . o . . . phob . . . i . . . a.
Haven't you noticed the yellow rubber gloves I wear to take out the garbage?

JENNA No.

TAYLOR Actually, the doctor's not sure if it's bacteriophobia, the fear of bacteria or the fear of germs. If it's germs, then it'd be verminophobia.

JENNA Verma what? Sounds crazy.

TAYLOR Ver . . . min . . . o . . . pho . . . bia. Or the other option . . .

JENNA Taylor, stop!!!

TAYLOR Why?

JENNA You're giving me a phobia phobia!

TAYLOR A fear of being afraid? That's a new one.

JENNA My particular phobia today is called the babal . . . on . . . a . . . lot . . . pho . . . bia. The fear of long words that bore people to death!

TAYLOR I know all about phobias and that's not . . .

JENNA Stop!!! (*about to hit him with a cushion*) My phobia phobia is turning physical! Taylor, you pulled off the perfect crime.

THE BABE

By Robert J. Wheeler

*Jenna moves to the radio and turns it on.
"You Are My Sunshine" plays. She dances to
him, jumps into his arms.*

That's a major turn on!

They dance.

TAYLOR An unintentional crime isn't a real crime. Whatever it was, we did it together.

JENNA Dance us over to the babe. I want to look in on our babe.

*They dance into the kitchen and dance out each
holding one side of the open garbage can.*

*Then Jenna and Taylor take the garbage can
and dance with it into the bedroom.*

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act 1 Scene 3

ACT 1, SCENE 4

Time: The next morning.

Place: The same.

LIGHTS UP ON:

*Taylor reads from a magazine on the sofa.
Jenna ENTERS from the kitchen wearing an
apron.*

JENNA While you were busy recovering from last night, I took the babe shopping.

Jenna EXITS into the bedroom.

TAYLOR You went shopping with the garbage can?

JENNA Not the can, silly. I slipped the babe into my shopping bag and zipped it up. I got some very nice items for the babe.

TAYLOR You know the police are still looking for our babe?

JENNA I know, but the babe is very vulnerable. I wanted to make our babe safe and secure. I've got a surprise.

TAYLOR If it's another Betty Crocker surprise I'm surprise proof.

JENNA You'll like this surprise.

Taylor has a bewildered look.

TAYLOR As long as I don't have to eat it.

JENNA I'm getting it. Spoiled sport.

*Jenna EXITS into the bedroom. When she
RETURNS, she pushes a child's stroller in.*

TAYLOR *(throws magazine over his head)* Earth to Jenna. Come in Jenna. Are you in there? We don't actually have a child. We didn't adopt one, and you didn't give birth so . . .

*Jenna zoom wheels the stroller into the
bedroom.*

JENNA *(O.S.)* It's a perfect new home for the babe, but you don't like it, so . . .

TAYLOR Jenna!

JENNA *(half sobbing O.S.)* You don't like my surprise.

TAYLOR Jenna. I like it. It's just . . .

Happily, Jenna wheels the stroller back out.

JENNA Good. Now I can take the babe for walks.

TAYLOR You must be kidding!

JENNA I was thinking, the recorded serial numbers make the babe illegitimate, right?

TAYLOR In a manner of speaking.

JENNA I'd like the babe to be legitimate, equal to all the other bills. Isn't there something you can do about it?

TAYLOR I'll think about it.

JENNA Good. You're behaving like a real dad.

TAYLOR There could be a problem, a discovery regarding the robbery.

JENNA You know who the thieves are?

TAYLOR Other than us, no?

JENNA What's the problem?

TAYLOR You know I have a background in accounting. That's why I became a banker and not a sky diver or jet pilot.

JENNA I like you as an accountant.

TAYLOR Accountants don't think the same way other people think, don't always do things other people do. Like what sky divers do. I wouldn't know the first thing about folding a parachute or how to jump out of a plane.

JENNA My God man, spit it out.

TAYLOR I left an IOU in the safe in place of the million.

Jenna jumps up.

JENNA A you owe who what?!!!

TAYLOR It's an IOU! Accountants, me, I've always needed the books to balance.

JENNA The books?!!

TAYLOR Yes. With an IOU where the million would be, until Tuesday morning, was the intention, then everything balances.

JENNA The books?!!

TAYLOR When I return the money, I take the IOU and leave the money. But that didn't happen.

JENNA So you wrote out an IOU to the bank for a million? Why?

TAYLOR I just told you! Because I'm not a thief, not even a weekend thief! Everything needs to balance! When everything balances, I feel fine! Otherwise, I feel like a crook! See?!

JENNA Okay. Settle down. I understand. What's the problem?

TAYLOR The IOU hasn't turned up. It's possible the thieves have it.

Jenna contemplates, jumps up.

JENNA You mean a bunch of dirty, grimy, low life tunnel crooks could come busting in here looking for our babe?!

TAYLOR Yes, that could happen.

JENNA We have to protect the babe! With our lives if necessary!

TAYLOR I'll put more locks on the door!

JENNA Good. (*fondly*) It's play time.

Taylor goes to hug Jenna. She turns to the stroller.

The babe! I love juggling our babe.

Jenna reaches into the stroller and takes two bundles of money out, moves toward the bar, juggles the money.

Miffed, Taylor moves to the mirror by the door, admires himself in the mirror.

JENNA You're perfect.

TAYLOR Thank you, my love.

A KNOCK on the door. Taylor opens it.

DETECTIVE. O'NEAL (64) storms in. Detective O'Neal is a typical detective in a trench coat.

Jenna has her back to the front door as she juggles the money.

Detective O'Neal!

O'NEAL The garbage! It's in the garbage can!

Jenna turns, drops the bundles, stands in front of them as O'Neal, head down, storms into the kitchen and comes out with the garbage can turned upside down. O'Neal knocks on its bottom, inspects it then puts the can down, looks to Taylor.

It occurred to me if you keep garbage in a gym bag then the money had to be in the garbage can!

TAYLOR It's my high efficiency garbage disposal system. I hope to phase out the garbage can entirely.

Jenna eases herself down, picks up the bundles of money, scoots to the stroller, deposits the bundles into the stroller, reaches in.

The sound of a SCREAMING BABY comes from the stroller. Taylor and Det. O'Neal jump.

JENNA (to O'Neal) Look what you've done.

Taylor is aghast.

TAYLOR Our babe's developed lungs?

JENNA Taylor!

TAYLOR Yes, my love.

JENNA I'm taking the babe for a feeding.

TAYLOR Good, good idea, Love.

Jenna pushes the stroller with screaming baby sounds into the bedroom. The screaming stops.

O'NEAL Something's going on here. I can smell it. I've been smelling it for over thirty years. It's here, in this room, somewhere.

TAYLOR Garbage from the gym bag?

O'NEAL No.

TAYLOR Poopy diapers in the bedroom?

Det. O'Neal looks around as he strolls in the living room.

O'NEAL Diapers?

TAYLOR The babe.

O'NEAL It's something else.

Det. O'Neal moves toward the front door.

I've met some strange people in my time, but let me tell you this, Taylor Smith, you're absolutely crazy!

Det. O'Neal EXITS the apartment. Slams the door.

TAYLOR (*shouts*) You don't know the little woman!

Jenna pushes the stroller in from the bedroom.

JENNA Why can't men close a door without slamming it?

TAYLOR You've kidnapped an actual baby and you made it cry!!

JENNA You think I forced it cry?!

TAYLOR How else could we get those sounds?

JENNA I spent a hellish hour recording a screaming baby in the maternity ward at the hospital! I told them my sister just had one.

TAYLOR Boy or girl?

JENNA The loudest!

TAYLOR Whew. I thought you'd really lost it.

JENNA You know I wouldn't break the law. I had to endure actual baby screams! You know how sensitive I am.

TAYLOR God knows I know.

Jenna goes to the stroller, brings a portable tape recorder out of the stroller, shows it to him.

JENNA Hold it like this. Press the play for screams and stop for no screams.

Jenna holds it underneath, pressed the play button with her thumb. The sound of screams.

For relief.

Jenna presses the stop button with her thumb. The sound of screams stops.

Taylor takes it, holds it underneath, presses the play button with his thumb, gets screams, presses the stop button with his thumb, screams stop.

Jenna puts the tape recorder into the stroller, and they sit on the sofa.

JENNA Have you legitimized our babe? Is this simple task too much for you?

TAYLOR Changing the recorded numbers on file for the babe is not simple. I'm writing a program to search for numbers like threes or sevens, then on and on, changing them to random ones.

JENNA I'm counting on you.

THE BABE

By Robert J. Wheeler

TAYLOR I'll come through my Sweet.

Taylor picks up a newspaper, silently reads it as he talks.

JENNA I got some nice things for the babe while you were "recovering".

TAYLOR You didn't spend any of our babe?

JENNA I'd never spend the babe.

Jenna reaches into the stroller, takes out a DOLL WITH ARTIFICIAL SCARY ROSY CHEEKS.

It looks like a BABY in a large, white red dotted fleecy zippered sleeper. Little arms stick out. Jenna holds it up. The sleeper bulges with money.

I did the cheeks myself. What do you think?

Taylor glances over the newspaper, sees the doll, throws the newspaper over his head behind him and jumps up.

TAYLOR An obese, weird Voodoo doll?!

JENNA No. Can't you see? It's our beautiful million-dollar babe!

Jenna unzips the sleeper, takes a bundle of money from inside the sleeper, shows it to Taylor and tucks it back inside with the other bundles and zips it up again.

I saw the doll in a toy store window and the sleeper in a department store. Isn't the babe cute?

Speechless, Taylor staggers around, flops on to the sofa.

TAYLOR Jenna, dearest. We're getting into an actual Twilight Zone episode here. Aliens will drop through the ceiling and take you, me and the babe away!

JENNA We'll keep the babe safe, won't we?

Jenna walks around the room with the babe in her arms.

TAYLOR *(numb, defeated)* At all costs. *(pause)* We've created an actual monster! *(pause)* I need a drink.

Taylor goes to the bar, pours a drink, gulps it down.

I'll run through the program again. I don't want last minute bugs.

Taylor sits at the bar, brings a briefcase from under the bar, takes out the clipboard and a pen, studies papers on the clipboard.

JENNA Good.

Jenna strolls the room with the babe over her shoulder, hums, rocks it periodically like a real mother would.

Taylor studies a flow chart on his clipboard. Jenna goes to the stroller, puts a hand in and pulls out a big, angry-looking-clunky handgun.

She strolls around the room with both.

I got another surprise for the babe yesterday.

Taylor studies the paper on the clipboard.

TAYLOR That's nice Jenn. That's great.

Jenna aims the gun at a lamp, pretends to pull the trigger.

JENNA *(quietly)* Bang. *(normally)* Aren't you interested in what I got our babe?

TAYLOR *(absentminded)* A soother. All babes need soo-soos.

JENNA No. I'll get one tomorrow.

Jenna points the gun at the door.

(quietly) Bang. Bang. Bang.

TAYLOR A little babe pillow?

JENNA No. I'll get that tomorrow.

TAYLOR Jenn, what is it?

Jenna slides the gun under the sofa chair cushion as he turns to her.

JENNA It's a secret.

Taylor pretends to faint. She jumps up.

TAYLOR Send your loser brother to the bank tomorrow. I'll get him the loan he's been hounding me for.

JENNA Why the change of heart?

TAYLOR With him sitting in my office I'll be free to complete the serial number switch.

JENNA What if he doesn't pay it back?

Taylor stands, stretches.

TAYLOR I expect him to, but if he doesn't that's okay.

Jenna joins him, hugs him.

I've got a perfect record on loans. A bad one makes me seem human.

JENNA I know something else that makes you seem human.

Jenna turns on the radio. "Money, Money, Money" plays. Taylor turns off the lights.

LIGHTS DIM

Jenna dances Taylor to the stroller. They push it into the bedroom area. The song ends.

LIGHTS OUT

END ACT 1, SCENE 4

ACT 1, SCENE 5

Time: Morning.

Place: The same.

The sound of birds chirping. The song "Here Comes The Sun" plays.

There are four bolt locks on the inside of the door into the house.

LIGHTS FADE UP ON

Taylor's groggy, disheveled as he ENTERS from the kitchen in a robe, with two mugs of coffee and a newspaper under his arm. He carries them carefully, sits on the sofa and puts one cup on the coffee table, sips the other and reads from the newspaper.

Jenna, disheveled, staggers in from the bedroom wearing a housecoat with the babe, turns off the radio, sits on the sofa, sits the babe between her and Taylor, sips the coffee from the coffee table.

TAYLOR *(as Long John Silver)* Captain Long John's a happy captain.

JENNA *(as damsel)* Rescuing me and the treasure on the desert island made my life complete.

TAYLOR The babe supercharged our lives.

JENNA Thanks babe.

TAYLOR Thanks babe.

JENNA And the thieves.

TAYLOR And Mr. Dill making me pass out.

JENNA And Detective O'Neal.

TAYLOR That was a close one.

JENNA It all helped.

TAYLOR I've been thinking. You know what we are?

JENNA Well, we're . . . uhm, not really.

TAYLOR We're adrenalin junkies. It's our aphrodisiac.

JENNA But . . .

TAYLOR Why else would we go through what we've been going through?

JENNA You're right!

TAYLOR (*stunned*) I am?

JENNA But we won't dwell on it.

TAYLOR That's sweet, my love.

JENNA We should get breakfast.

TAYLOR I only hunger after you.

A LOUD BANGING on the door. Taylor jumps up, runs to the door. Jenna grabs the babe and puts it into the stroller.

TAYLOR Who is it?!

MARJ (*O.S. deep voice*) Open up!

TAYLOR What do you want?

Jenna rolls the stroller behind the sofa, does a front roll over the sofa, lands on her knees in front of it, grabs the gun from under the sofa chair cushion, rests her arms and heel of the gun on the coffee table, points it at the door.

Taylor faces the door, doesn't see Jenna or her gun.

MARJ (*O.S. deep voice*) Is Taylor Smith in there?

TAYLOR W-w-what do you want?

JENNA Stand away from the door!

Taylor moves to the side without looking back.

TAYLOR (louder) What in God's name do you want?

MARJ (O.S. deep voice) Taaaaaylorrrr, it's me!

TAYLOR No!!!

Jenna cocks the hammer on the gun.

JENNA Cops?

TAYLOR Worse!

JENNA Crooks?

TAYLOR Worse!

JENNA What?

TAYLOR Mother?!!!

Jenna returns the hammer and slips the gun under the sofa chair cushion while Taylor unlocks and opens the door.

Jenna pushes the stroller through to the bedroom area.

MARJ (62) ENTERS with a suitcase in one hand and a set of golf clubs in a bag over the opposite shoulder.

Marj is dressed like a bizarre, middle-aged country girl -- white rhinestone blouse, cowboy hat and skirt -- a rhinestone light show. Her accent is western, sounds like a country girl.

TAYLOR Hi Mom.

MARJ Gimme some skin, ma boy.

Taylor and Marj hug. Taylor takes the suitcase and clubs, puts them at the end of end table.

Jenna ENTERS from the bedroom.

JENNA Moma Marj?

MARJ In the flesh.

Marj twirls, does a short tap dance.

TAYLOR After Dad died Mom sort of freaked, passed out. When she came to she had a desire, more of a persistent yearning to . . . uh, herd cattle. She's a genuine cowboy-girl-womanish person now.

MARJ Yup. My overwhelming urge to herd cattle got me hired onto a ranch, and the rest is history.

JENNA You said she was an aide worker in an underdeveloped country.

TAYLOR Herding cattle in Redknife, the Yukon? *(shrugs)*

MARJ I was born to be wild! I'm a chilln' with you and your misses on a bunk o yourn, son o mine.

A perplexed look from Taylor and Jenna.

You cool with me crashin' in your bunkhouse?

More perplexed looks from Taylor and Jenna.

You dig my drift?

JENNA Bunkhouse?

TAYLOR Our bunkhouse?! We don't have . . . you mean HERE?!!!

MARJ Yup. I'm the lead hand, bean counter, bronco buster, calf roper, bill payer, the works, the whole caboodle. You got room for your Calamity Jane Mom, don't you, son o mine?

TAYLOR Absolutely.

MARJ Dy-no-mite!

TAYLOR You'll join us for breakfast.

Jenna EXITS into the kitchen.

MARJ *(loud)* There's this far out cloggers competition in town. So we girls decided to win it. What you think of our costume?

*Jenna ENTERS with milk, plates, utensils,
cereal on a tray.*

We're the Quad W Ranch Wonders. You otta see our brand.

*Marj writes four joint "W"s in the air with
her finger.*

Cattle beasts don't cotton to it none, but it's damn
distinctive.

JENNA What's cloggin'?

TAYLOR Think of Celtic Dancers, add arms and old ladies.

Marj does a few clogging steps.

MARJ We have a hoedown of a good time dancin' up a storm.

TAYLOR *(looks to golf clubs)* We don't golf?

MARJ The clubs remind me of good times with your father. Was
the only thing he was real good at doin'.

They fix and eat cereal.

TAYLOR We've got a spare bedroom.

JENNA Although, we have a babe staying with us.

MARJ A tot?

JENNA My, my, my, uh, girlfriend had to go in for an
operation. She's a single mother, so . . .

MARJ Balderdash!

JENNA The father's an alcoholic drug addict, who's sworn to
steal the babe back.

TAYLOR That's why all the locks on the door.

MARJ How old is it?

TAYLOR I had them put on last night. Had to pay a locksmith
double time.

MARJ Block head! The babe! How old is the child?

Jenna and Taylor look at each other, a loss for words, then say the following simultaneously.

TAYLOR Three months. JENNA Six months.

MARJ Say what?

JENNA &
TAYLOR (*slowly reading each other's lips*) Four . . . and . . .
a half months.

MARJ Can I see it?

JENNA It's sleeping.

MARJ A boy or a girl?

Jenna and Taylor say the following simultaneously.

JENNA Girl. TAYLOR Boy.

Jenna and Taylor say the following simultaneously.

TAYLOR No, it's a girl. JENNA No, it's a boy.

MARJ Talk about livin' sheltered lives!!! You're psyching me out. Where's the kid? I'll tell you what it is.

TAYLOR In the bedroom.

JENNA Marj, to be frank, you might not be comfortable here. There could be some loud crying. It sometimes lasts all night.

Jenna, behind Marj, imitates pushing the tape recorder button as she did earlier for Taylor. Only Taylor sees her.

TAYLOR But I'm sure the crying can be controlled when necessary, right, Jenn?

Taylor motions like he's pressing a button on the tape recorder. Marj sees him, is horrified.

JENNA Babies cry whenever they feel like it.

*Jenna imitates pushing the recorder button.
Only he sees her.*

TAYLOR But the babe won't, will it, Jenn?

JENNA I hope not. So, even though the babe could cry, you'll stay?

TAYLOR Of course Mom will stay.

JENNA What about the babe's incessant, loud crying?

*Jenna imitates pushing the tape recorder
button. Taylor motions like he's pressing the
button with his thumb. Marj sees them both.*

TAYLOR We'll stifle the babe!

*To Marj it looks like he's strangling an
imagined babe.*

MARJ Taylor! You wouldn't choke a defenseless baby to get a night sleep? You're talkin' weird dung. I've a notion to go back to the ranch and try to forget I ever had yu!

TAYLOR Once the babe has had enough to eat it'll settle down fine and sleep like a baby, won't it, Jenn?

MARJ A baby that age has formulae!

Marj gets up, starts for the bedroom.

Give me the child. I'll see to it.

Taylor stops her.

TAYLOR We don't want to wake the babe. She's a mean screamer.

MARJ So, it's a girl.

TAYLOR I'm talking about Jenna.

MARJ What's the babe's name?

Taylor and Jenna blank look each other.

You must at least know the poor child's name.

JENNA There was a problem with naming the child.

TAYLOR It was a big problem with the alcoholic, drug addicted
father.

JENNA Very big.

TAYLOR He wanted to call it something horrid and the mom,
Jenna's friend, the mother, wanted to name it something
lovely.

MARJ A no-name child of undetermined sex.

JENNA So we call it babe.

TAYLOR Is that wrong?

MARJ It's a shade better than hey you. I need a cold shower.

LIGHTS OUT.

(END OF ACT 1 SCENE 5)

ACT 1 SCENE 6

Time: Evening.

Place: The same.

LIGHTS UP ON

The light outside the window is dim. The golf clubs stand in a corner near the window.

A KNOCK on the door, sounds like the Little Teapot Song.

Jenna, wearing an apron, ENTERS from the kitchen, races to the door, unlocks, opens it.

Taylor wears a business suit as he rushes in with two half full plastic bags, drops them on the coffee table, races into the bedroom area.

Jenna holds her nose. The sound of RUNNING WATER. Taylor returns to Jenna, dries his hands on a towel. Jenna looks for an explanation.

TAYLOR For the babe.

JENNA Smells horrid.

Taylor puts the towel down.

TAYLOR I saw a woman pushing twins in a stroller. Paid her ten dollars for two poopy diapers. She thought I was crazy. It was torture, but I thought they would keep the babe safe.

JENNA Smart move, my love.

Jenna inhales, makes a face.

It's . . . distinctive.

Jenna takes the bags into the bedroom area and returns without them.

They're in the hall closet.

TAYLOR Thank you, my love.

Jenna tries to kiss him. Taylor looks at her hand that had the diaper. Jenna runs into the bathroom/bedroom area. The sound of RUNNING WATER. Jenna returns.

Thanks.

They have a sensual kiss.

With Mom staying here it adds a whole new dimension to the drama of our lives.

JENNA Drama?

TAYLOR The babe, thieves, Detective O'Neal, Mother, adrenalin. My blood pressure!

JENNA Tonight sex will be out of this world.

Little Tea Pot KNOCK on the door. Taylor moves to the door.

JENNA Wait.

Jenna goes to the bedroom, comes in with a baby bottle and the stroller, positions it near the door, leans into the stroller, then the sound of a SCREAMING BABY comes from the stroller.

TAYLOR Perfect.

Taylor unlocks and opens the door. Marj ENTERS.

MARJ That baby's hungry. I need to see it.

JENNA Go right ahead, Mom, have a look.

MARJ Groovy.

Taylor blocks Mom from the stroller.

TAYLOR Jenn, that might not be a good idea.

Jenna takes a pair of reading glasses from her apron pocket and holds it above her head. Only Taylor sees them. Jenna puts the glasses

in her apron, bends into the stroller with the bottle. Crying stops.

Jenna stands aside so Marj can see the babe.

Marj bends in for three seconds, jumps back, gives a horrific look, is shaken.

MARJ My God!

JENNA So?

MARJ It's sort of . . . sort of . . . cute . . . and . . . oddly proportioned.

JENNA The babe will sleep better in the bedroom.

Jenna wheels the stroller into the bedroom.

Dazed, Marj collapses on the sofa chair and Taylor sits on the sofa.

TAYLOR How was your hoedown?

MARJ Hoedown? Oh, right. A bronk buster! The eight of us danced great. Didn't win. Came second. Totally awesome. Me and the girls were born to be wild. We were way wild tuesday.

TAYLOR It's good you're having fun.

MARJ Right on, greenhorn. We're goin' with the flow.

Marj high fives Taylor. Taylor secretly wipes his hand.

TAYLOR Have you ever thought about finding someone to share your life with?

MARJ Son, I don't want to be held back by an old square dude looking for a Jane to nurse him into the afterlife.

TAYLOR Or nurse him better.

MARJ As sure as the sun'll shine tomorrow, I'd finish him off.

Marj sniffs the air.

MARJ That smells like a diaper.

Marj stands, sniffs, EXITS into the bedroom area and ENTERS with two diaper bags.

Taylor, are you still afraid of germs?

TAYLOR (*lying*) No.

Marj starts toward Taylor with the diaper bags.

And yes. In the closet they're fine, but in my face, I'm terrified.

Marj changes direction, goes toward the bathroom.

Where are you taking them?

MARJ The bathroom. They need to be washed out.

TAYLOR Mom. I don't want to see those diapers ever again. Garbage! The gym bag!

Taylor points toward the kitchen. Marj EXITS into the kitchen with the diapers then ENTERS without them.

MARJ Son, I tied the bags and tucked them into the gym bag with the other garbage and closed it up tight. Don't open it . . . ever.

Taylor gives her a look.

I washed my hands.

Marj sits on the sofa chair. Jenna ENTERS from the bedroom.

JENNA The babe's asleep.

MARJ There's something under . . .

Marj is uncomfortable, reaches under the sofa chair cushion.

Jenna tackles Marj. They roll off the sofa onto the floor.

TAYLOR (to Jenna) That's my mother!

MARJ I'm okay.

JENNA I've got a birthday surprise for the babe under the cushion.

They stand.

MARJ It's not our birthday. You can show us.

JENNA I want it to be a surprise for everyone.

TAYLOR Ever since the babe arrived it's been one ongoing surprise.

MARJ I've never been so boshed out. I'm going to bed.

Marj moves toward the bedroom area, stops, turns back.

I've misplaced my reading glasses. I hope I didn't leave them at the competition.

TAYLOR I'm sure they'll turn up.

Taylor gives Jenna a look.

Marj EXITS into the bedroom.

Taylor sees a few letters on the table by the door, goes through them and stops at one.

This one is different.

JENNA The crooks?

Taylor opens the letter and silent reads it.

What do you think?

TAYLOR It's from the thieves. They've got the IOU. They're after our babe. Want us to switch the babe for the IOU. Money bag for IOU bag.

He lays it on the coffee table. Jenna reads the letter.

JENNA Take the babe to the Pizza Shed on Main Street, five p.m. tomorrow night. We exchange the money bag with the IOU bag that will be under the table in the far corner.

TAYLOR If the IOU is sent to the police, we could lose the babe and go to jail.

JENNA (*indicates the letter*) It's signed the mob. Does the mob sign demand letters? Seems hoakie.

TAYLOR We'll be dealing with dangerous thugs. I'll wear my ultra-intimidating power suit.

JENNA In this corner, desperate crooks, and in this corner, Taylor in his ultra-power suit.

TAYLOR I find it very intimidating at the bank.

JENNA Does the note sound like it's written by the mob?

Taylor shrugs.

We take the gym bag with garbage and diapers and exchange it for the IOU bag. It'll let them know we're playing hardball. Your Mom could babe sit.

LIGHTS DOWN. END ACT 1. END OF SAMPLE