

Baby Goats

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CHARACTERS

Sandra 9 years old

Ricky 8 years old

Terry 8 years old

Michael 5 years old

The year is 1959. July, 98 degrees F.
The set is the back seat of a 1953 Chevy.
On one side of the stage is a bar-b-que with a fork, on the other side is a representational closet with a few coats hanging in it and a flashlight in one of the coat pockets. The seat of the Chevy must be large enough to accommodate four adults playing the roles of four children, all related, Michael and Terry being brother and sister, and Sandra and Richard cousins. The children have been riding for six hours in the back seat and their tempers are wearing thin. The children are barefoot. Their sandals or tongs are on the floor of the car. They are wearing shorts and cool shirts, simple but of a style that would be found in 1959. When the adult speaks, the children acknowledge the adult's existence only by their own responses to the adult's questions, comments or commands. Left to right they are sitting, Sandra, Terry, Ricky and Michael. They begin to sing.

You are my sunshine

My only sunshine.

You make me happy

When skies are gray.

You'll never know, Dear

How much I love you.

Please don't take

My sunshine away.

RICKY: Sandra, you're messing up my singing.

You're singing like this—

MIMICS SANDRA'S OFF-KEY SINGING.

SANDRA: I do not!

RICKY: No that's too good. You sound like this—

SINGS EVEN MORE OFF-KEY.

MICHAEL: She doesn't sing that way. She sounds
like this—

SINGS SLIGHTLY OFF KEY.

RICKY: Shuttup.

MICHAEL: You shuttup.

SANDRA: Who cares what you say. Never pay any attention to anything Ricky says.

RICKY: What if I say: Watch out here come a big truck!

TERRY AND MICHAEL JUMP, LOOKING FOR THE TRUCK WHICH ISN'T THERE, OF COURSE. SANDRA DOESN'T MOVE.

SANDRA: Oh hum.

RICKY: You could've gotten killed if it was a real truck.

SANDRA: But it wasn't, was it, Goofy head.

RICKY: Blockhead.

SANDRA: I know you are, but what am I?

RICKY: Monkey face.

SANDRA: I know you are, but what am I?

TO TERRY.

What's the matter?

TERRY LOOKS NAUSEATED.

Mom, I think Terry's gonna throw up.

RICKY SLIDES AS FAR AS HE CAN FROM TERRY,
SQUEEZING MICHAEL AGAINST THE CAR DOOR.

MICHAEL SLIDES TO THE FLOOR OF THE CAR.

RICKY: Not on me, you better not!

MICHAEL: I'm getting down here!

RICKY: Stay over there—

SANDRA: Can you hold it for a minute?

TERRY NODS DESPERATELY. THE CAR PULLS TO
THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND SANDRA AND TERRY
JUMP OUT. MICHAEL AND RICKY WATCH THROUGH
THE WINDOW. SANDRA COMES BACK.

SANDRA: Give me those Kleenex.

MICHAEL HANDS HER A PACKET OF KLEENEX.

SANDRA GOES BACK TO TERRY.

RICKY: There goes her hot dog and orange juice.

MICHAEL: There goes her Frosty Freeze.

RICKY: There goes her corn flakes and banana.

MICHAEL: She didn't have corn flakes this morning.

RICKY: Yes she did.

MICHAEL: She had Cheerios.

RICKY: No she didn't.

BEGINS SNAPPING HIS FINGERS AROUND

MICHAEL.

MICHAEL: Don't snap on me.

RICKY: I didn't snap on you.

MICHAEL: You did it again.

RICKY: Nope, it's a butterfly with the hiccups.

MICHAEL: Nossir. Uncle Albert, didn't Terry have
Cheerios?

ADULT SPEAKS

RICKY: Dummy. Uncles and dads never know.

MICHAEL: So what, I know what my big sister ate and
you don't. She's my big sister, not
yours.

RICKY: So what? I have my own "big" sister.

TERRY AND SANDRA CLIMB BACK INTO THE CAR.

SANDRA: You'd better sit by the window this time.

MICHAEL: Terry, did you have corn flakes and
bananas or Cheerios and bananas?

TERRY: Oh no!

SHE JUMPS OUT OF THE CAR AGAIN.

SANDRA: What's the matter with you? You don't
talk about bananas just after somebody
finishes throwing up.

MICHAEL: I sowwy.

SANDRA: You don't have to talk baby-talk.

MICHAEL BEGINS TO SNIVEL.

SANDRA: Don't start crying now! Shhh! It's okay,
you probably helped her, she didn't get it
all out the first time.

RICKY: Michael is a cry baby.

MICHAEL: DRYING HIS TEARS.

I am not.

TERRY RETURNS. THEY CLOSE THE DOOR AND
THE CAR IS BACK ON THE HIGHWAY AGAIN.

SANDRA: You feel better now?

TERRY: A little bit better.

MICHAEL HAS DECIDED TO STAY ON THE FLOOR.

RICKY: Get off my leg. It's too hot and you're
making me sweat.

MICHAEL: I'm not on your leg.

RICKY: Yes you are.

MICHAEL: Shuttup.

THEY BEGIN NUDGING EACH OTHER UNTIL
MICHAEL PINCHES RICKY AND RICKY KICKS
MICHAEL. MICHAEL BEGINS TO CRY.

ADULT SPEAKS.

RICKY: He pinched me first.

MICHAEL CRIES LOUDER.

ADULT CHASTISES RICKY WHICH SATISFIES
MICHAEL WHO STOPS CRYING AS SUDDENLY AS HE
STARTED.

RICKY: Cry baby. . . Tattletale.

ADULT TELLS RICKY TO DO SOMETHING
CONSTRUCTIVE, SUCH AS COUNTING BLUE CARS.

RICKY: TO TERRY AND SANDRA.

You can count cars. I'm not going to
count stupid ol' cars.

SANDRA: I'm going to draw.

TAKES OUT A NEWSPRINT DRAWING PAD WITH
CRAYON AND BEGINS DRAWING.

ADULT SPEAKS.

What? . . . I want to draw something
right now. Terry can count cars.

TO TERRY.

Start counting all the blue cars.

TERRY ALWAYS ACCOMMODATING, BEGINS
COUNTING BLUE CARS.

TERRY: One. . . two. . . three. . .

RICKY: Only dummies count cars.

TERRY: No sir, I want to count cars. . . Four.
. . .

RICKY: Thirty-two,

TERRY: Five. . .

RICKY: Seventeen-

TERRY: Six.

RICKY: Sixty-four-

TERRY: Seven.

RICKY: Eleven-

TERRY: Eight, Nine.

RICKY: 42, 18, 25-

TERRY: Ten.

RICKY: I know why you go to Catholic school. You
were getting in too many fights.

TERRY: I only got in four fights.

RICKY: I bet you started them all.

TERRY: Uh-uh, they didn't want to share.

RICKY: They wanted to send you to the school for bad kids but instead you had to go to Catholic school.

TERRY: So what, I like going there. The nuns look so pretty in their long dresses.

RICKY: And you have to pray all the time.

TERRY: You're supposed to pray.

RICKY: Not all the time.

TERRY: As much as you can, you're supposed to.

RICKY: I don't.

TERRY: Then you're going to Hell.

RICKY: So what? My dad says, if you go to Heaven, you'll all by yourself.

TERRY STEPS OUT FROM THE CAR SET. LIGHT DARKENS ON THE OTHER THREE AND A SOFT LIGHT FOCUSSES ON TERRY WHILE SHE SPEAKS.

After Mom and Dad were divorced, my father would come and take us to a movie, buy us

a toy. But that was only in the beginning when he still had hopes of getting back with Mom. I remember my thirteenth birthday, he took me to a restaurant. I was eating a banana split while he watched. I watched him too, looking bored and sad at the same time.

He said he had been reading the Bible lately and where Jesus' suffered The Agony in the Garden reminded him of his own pain. I didn't like that. Big Mike comparing himself to Jesus our Lord.

See, my mom found out he was cheating on her. She busted him and Adeline, caught them having a drink in their favorite bar.

She went home, packed up all his clothes and sent them to Adeline in a taxi. When Michael and I got home from school the first thing I noticed was how clean the house was. Up until then my mother had been a terrible house keeper.

Maybe it was the times. I don't know, but it happened so fast, Michael was nine and I was twelve and Dad was gone. She never let him come back.

Part of me almost forgave him, but I was so. . . I was so—I had my own axe to grind. I wasn't about to admit how much me, myself had suffered. Things like that, nobody knows what to do. You're just swept along.

RETURNS TO THE CAR SEAT.

I've seen ten blue cars so far, Nina Rosy.

RICKY: There ain't that many blue cars.

SANDRA: Aren't that many blue cars.

RICKY: I like to say ain't.

MICHAEL: I like to say not.

RICKY: The cowboys say ain't all the time.

TERRY: Their wives don't.

RICKY: Cowboys don't have wives.

MICHAEL: Sandra, you dropped this.

HANDS HER A CRAYON HE HAD SNUCK OUT OF THE
BOX.

SANDRA: Thank you. They have girlfriends.

TERRY: Sometimes they have wives.

SANDRA: But cowgirls say ain't also. Remember
that movie we went to go see with Uncle
Chano?

TERRY: Her name was Annie like our Aunt Annie.

SANDRA: Annie Oakly. She said ain't all the time.

MICHAEL: Is Grandma Annie's mommy?

RICKY: She could shoot all the bottles.

MAKES CONSECUTIVE SHOOTING SOUND.

RICKY: Pow-Pow, you're dead.

MICHAEL: Uh-uh. Terry, Annie said Grandma was her
mommy.

TERRY: She is.

MICHAEL: Oh.

RICKY: When she took the rope and tied him up,
that was funny.

TERRY: But then he helps her—

SANDRA: And he goes—

DEMONSTRATING ON TERRY.

I love you, my Darling, forever and ever—

TERRY: Then she faints. That means she's going
to have a baby.

RICKY: Annie Oakly didn't faint.

MICHAEL: But how is Grandma a mommy?

TERRY: I mean in other movies.

TO MICHAEL.

I told you already.

MICHAEL: Tell me again.

RICKY: What other movies?

TERRY: I don't remember which one, but all of
them.

MICHAEL: Tell me again.

TERRY: Mother, Grandmother, Grandma is a
grandmother, she's mommy's mommy.

MICHAEL: And Sandra's mommy?

SANDRA: No she's my mother's mother.

BEGINS ANOTHER DRAWING.

MICHAEL: That's what I said. And she's Nino
Albert's mommy?

TERRY: She can't be everybody's mommy.

SANDRA: My dad has his own mother.

RICKY: You can't marry your own sister.

MICHAEL: Why not?

SANDRA: Because you have to bump into your wife by
accident.

TERRY: That's how it works.

MICHAEL: Oh. And Ricky's mommy belongs to Grandma
too?

RICKY: No, she's my dad's mom.

TERRY: She's Chano's, and Mommy's and Nina Rosy's
and Annie's and Vicky's and Uncle Raymond
and. . .

SANDRA: And big Richard and Gilbert's and Silvia
and Danny.

MICHAEL: Uh uh, Silvia is my cousin.

RICKY: She's our aunt. Why do you think she
lives with Grandma?

MICHAEL: She's too little to be my aunt.

TERRY: Silvia's the youngest kid, like you.

RICKY: And me. I'm the youngest too.

MICHAEL: And Sandra?

SANDRA: No. I'm the only child.

MICHAEL: Uncle Gilbert and Uncle Raymond don't live
with Grandma.

SANDRA: You know what Silvia told me when we went
to the store? We saw a skull-

RICKY: What store?

SANDRA: Where we buy the tortillas-

TERRY: The butcher shop.

RICKY: They have funny stuff there.

SANDRA: And she told me it was a goat's head and
they call it Birria.

RICKY: Bear-uh?

SANDRA: Birria, birria, say it right.

TERRY: ATTEMPTS TO PRONOUNCE IT.

Beeria.

MICHAEL: GIVING IT THE BEST PRONUNCIATION.

I can say it, biria.

RICKY: Bora, booga, oogah-

SANDRA: And people eat them.

RICKY: No sir!

SANDRA: I cross my heart and hope to die!

TERRY: At my other Grandma's house, they cooked
one in the oven for a long time. Then my
daddy ate one eye and my uncle ate the
other eye. It tasted like a potato chip.

RICKY: Did you taste it?

TERRY: No! That's what my uncle told me. It almost made me sick again.

RICKY: I'd never eat a goat's head.

SANDRA: You eat cow muscles.

RICKY: I do not.

SANDRA: You do so. Every time you eat a hamburger. Ask my mom.

MICHAEL: But Uncle Raymond and Uncle Gilbert don't live with—

TERRY: Because they're married. Just like Mom and Dad.

SANDRA: And Gilbert and Linda's baby is our cousin.

TERRY: Yes! How many times do I have to explain it to you?

MICHAEL: SHAKING HIS HEAD AND SPEAKING AT THE SAME TIME.

Grandma can't be a mommy if she's a grandma.

TERRY: God is three people, the Father, the Son
and the Holy Ghost.

MICHAEL: No Sir.

SANDRA: Don't pay attention to him, he's acting
dumb. Look, this is what the goat's head
looked like. Something like this.

SHOWS THEM THE DRAWING.

RICKY: Let me see.

TERRY: Yep, that's what it looks like.

MICHAEL: It looks so real.

SANDRA: You have to practice.

ADULT TELLS SANDRA DRAWING IN THE CAR IS
NOT GOOD FOR HER.

SANDRA: It doesn't hurt my eyes.

TERRY: My mom says reading in the car is bad for
your eyes.

SANDRA: I'm not reading.

TERRY: But it's the same.

SANDRA: I don't care if it's bad and I'm never going to care, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, .

RICKY CROSSES TO CLOSET AND SITS AGAINST THE WALL. HE FINDS A BAG WHERE HE KEEPS A FLASHLIGHT FOR THESE OCCASIONS.

I'll never be good. I'll never, never, never, never, never, never, be good. I hate you. You're ugly. You're not my mommy. You're a devil. I hate you, hate you, hate you.

PULLS UP HIS SHIRT AND EXAMINES HIS WELTS.

I'm going to kill you when I grow up. I'm going to beat you up and lock you in the closet. I'm going to tell my daddy when he gets home.

PAUSE.

My daddy never spansks me.

FOOTSTEPS CAN BE HEARD APPROACHING. HE QUICKLY SNAPS OFF THE FLASH LIGHT AND

RETURNS IT TO ITS HIDING PLACE AND BURIES
HIS HEAD IN HIS ARMS.

HE STANDS UP LOOKING AT HIS BRAND NEW
TIMEX WATCH. AND AS HE RETURNS TO THE
BACKSEAT HE COUNTS THE HOURS SILENTLY.

Uncle Albert—?

SANDRA: Don't call him Uncle. He doesn't like to
be called uncle.

RICKY: Nino Albert?

ADULT ANSWERS.

RICKY: Are we going home?

ADULT ANSWERS.

RICKY: Is this the same way my dad takes?

ADULT ANSWERS.

RICKY: It seems—because it's six o'clock and we
left at ten minutes after twelve and my
dad only takes four hours to get home from
Grandma's house.

SANDRA: Shh. My dad likes to take as long as he
can.

RICKY: Why?

SANDRA: Because that's what he likes to do.

RICKY: But why?

SANDRA: Because we're supposed to look at the
scenery.

RICKY: What for?

TERRY: You have to get used to it.

MICHAEL: I'm not used to it.

RICKY: Shuttup. I'm not talking to you.

MICHAEL: You shuttup.

RICKY: I've seen this junk a thousand times. A
million times. I like the way my dad
drives better.

TO MICHAEL.

I can tell time and you can't

MICHAEL: So can I.

RICKY: No you can't.

MICHAEL NODS EMPHATICALLY. PAUSE AS RICKY
CONSIDERS.

RICKY: No you can't.

MICHAEL: Yes I can.

RICKY: What time is it then?

SHOWING MICHAEL HIS WATCH.

MICHAEL: Six o'clock.

RICKY: You heard me tell Uncle Albert it was six
o'clock, didn't you?

MICHAEL: No I didn't.

RICKY: CHANGES THE TIME ON THIS WATCH.

Okay, now what time is it?

TERRY PEEKS BEHIND RICKY'S BACK, SEES TIME
AND ATTEMPTED TO TELL HER BROTHER THE
TIME.

TERRY: WHISPERING.

Twenty to Four o'clock.

MICHAEL: WHISPERING.

What?

RICKY: No Fair cheating!

TERRY: You're the cheater.

RICKY: You're telling him the answer.

MICHAEL: No she didn't, 'cause I already know the
time. It's twenty-fourteen o'clock.

RICKY: There's no such number, twenty-fourteen.

MICHAEL: One, two, three, four, five,

RICKY: Shuttup.

MICHAEL: Six, seven, eight, nine-

RICKY: BRINGS HIS FACE MENACINGLY CLOSE TO
MICHAEL'S AND WHISPERS SAVAGELY.

I'm gonna knock you block off.

TERRY: Better not try it, Buster.

MICHAEL: Ten, eleven-

RICKY: RAPIDLY. Twelve, thirteen, fourteen!

MICHAEL: Terry, there's another blue car.

TERRY: Twelve.

RICKY: I am not the cheater.

TERRY: Yes sir, because he's little and you're
big. Thirteen.

RICKY: Where's thirteen?

TERRY: That one.

RICKY: That's not blue. It's green

TERRY: It is too!

TO SANDRA.

What color is it?

SANDRA: I don't want to look at it. I don't like
blue.

TERRY: See, it is blue.

RICKY: She didn't even look.

MICHAEL: I saw it. I saw it, and it was blue.

RICKY: Look, you missed one.

TERRY: Which one?

RICKY: Too late, you missed it.

TERRY: I'm not going to miss any more.

GLUES HER FACE TO THE WINDOW.

MICHAEL: Can you draw a cement mixer?

SANDRA: If I wanted to.

MICHAEL: Can you draw me one?

SANDRA: Not right now, I have to finish this
drawing first. It's hard work.

TERRY: Fourteen.

MICHAEL: What is it?

SANDRA: You'll know when I'm finished.

MICHAEL: Oh. Terry, did Mommy and Daddy bump into
each other?

TERRY: Yes.

MICHAEL: Did Nino Albert and Nina Rosy bump into
each other?

TERRY: Fifteen. Yes.

MICHAEL: When do you bump into your wife?

TERRY: When you start minding your own business.
Now will you please be quiet so I can
count the cars?

MICHAEL STEPS AWAY FROM THE OTHER THREE,
SITS ON THE CHAIR AND PICKS UP THE
STYROFOAM COFFEE CUP.

MICHAEL: Hello, my name is Michael, and I am an
alcoholic. It's been six weeks since my
last drink. I—I'd like to talk about it.
I guess. Dave said I should—but I want
to. Or um. . . I need to talk.
Right?

Six weeks ago Mary and I—Mary's my wife,
we were driving home and I was drunk as
usual. Not drunk—drunk. But—well, yeah
I was drunk. See I never thought that I
was ever that drunk.

I'm making excuses, aren't I? I was
shit-faced. I just didn't think I was, I
was so used to it, I guess. Anyway, I
didn't see the guy coming—in time, that
is. I wasn't even in the wrong—
technically. But I was, because if I had
been sober, I would've been able to
prevent it. I don't know for sure—maybe
not. But that's it, I don't know for sure

because I'd been drinking. That's the bottom line.

My dad was a drunk too—an alcoholic. But I don't think he ever went to an AA meeting. I didn't know this stuff runs in families—but then I hadn't bothered to know anything about this disease until lately. With my Dad, I mean you just didn't talk about him.

Mary was in a coma for almost a week. That was Hell, I'm telling you. See, I got a cousin who was in a motorcycle accident and was in a coma for a long time You know, they got him all hooked up—catheter and stuff. His mind's a blank. Sad thing, you know. I mean he was quite a character. a real ladies' man, chess champion—I don't know, he'd played in competitions, stuff like that. Always doing something—an actor too. So when I saw Mary like that—the tubes and machines. So here I am.

I've just come from the hospital. We talked for a long time. We been together since high school. And I want to keep it that way. For a lot of reasons. She wants to stick with me too. She's beautiful, you know. I don't want what happened to my old man to happen to me. It's not that I'm down on him. Not at all. Maybe I'm the only one who ever understood him, and then, not until now after he's been five years dead. I'm luckier than he was, maybe. I got his life and my life to learn from. So here I am. Sober. Six weeks, two days and fifteen minutes.

MICHAEL RETURNS TO HIS PLACE ON THE CAR FLOOR. HE CUPS HIS EARS WITH HIS HANDS AND BEGINS HUMMING AS HE COVERS AND UNCOVERS HIS HEARS.

MICHAEL: Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh. Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

TERRY: You want to count cars, Michael?

MICHAEL: Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaat?

TERRY: Do you want to count the cars?

MICHAEL: Whaaaaaat? Whaaaaaaat did you say,
Terrrrrrrrryyyy?

TERRY: RAISES HER VOICE AND HOLDS MICHAEL'S HANDS
FROM HIS EARS.

I said, do you want to help me count the
cars?

ADULT SPEAKS.

TERRY: We're not fighting.

MICHAEL: We're not fighting.

ADULT SPEAKS.

SANDRA: We were yelling but we weren't fighting.
What?

ADULT SPEAKS.

SANDRA: What kind of game?

ADULT SPEAKS.

SANDRA: We're too old to count cars, Mom.

TO THE OTHER.

Why don't you guys behave? I'm always the one who gets in trouble. Just because I'm the oldest. I hate being the oldest.

MICHAEL: I hate being the littlest.

RICKY: I hate being the middlest.

TERRY: I hate being the one who always throws up.

MICHAEL: That's the worstest.

RICKY: I'm the bestest.

MICHAEL: You're the bratiest.

RICKY: You're the shrimpiest.

MICHAEL: You're the smelliest.

RICKY: I'm gonna knock your block off—I'm gonna—

SANDRA: Well?

RICKY: Well what?

SANDRA: What kind of game do you want to play?

RICKY: Baseball.

SANDRA: Never mind. I just thought of a game.

MICHAEL: Oh boy.

BEGINS DRAWING ON HER PAD.

RICKY: What kind of game?

SANDRA: A guessing game.

MICHAEL: In kindergarten, Miss Roberts plays What's in the Bag and we have to feel it first to see if we can guess what it is before we can look inside.

RICKY: I hate guessing games.

TERRY: What is it?

SANDRA: You'll see.

MICHAEL: It's a guessing game.

RICKY: It looks like a big fat head.

SANDRA WRITES 'T' ON THE FIRST LINE AND 'R' ON THE SECOND LINE. SHE LEAVES THE THIRD LINE BLANK. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE SHE WRITES, WHAT IS THIS? AND GIVES IT TO TERRY.

MICHAEL: What does it say?

TERRY: What is this?

SANDRA: Write your answer on the line with the T
for Terry on it.

TERRY: WRITES.

C-L-O-U-D.

SANDRA: Now it's your turn—where it has the R for
Ri—

RICKY: I know, I know.

WRITES.

M-U-D P-U-D-D-L-E.

MICHAEL: What does it say?

TERRY: I wrote Cloud and Ricky wrote Mud Puddle.

MICHAEL: MUTTERING TO HIMSELF.

I can't write.

SANDRA: Okay, let me have it.

WRITES.

F-A-R-T.

PASSES PAPER TO TERRY AND RICKY. ALL
THREE GO INTO A FIT OF REPRESSED LAUGHTER.

MICHAEL: What does it say? What does it say?

RICKY: Shuttup! TERRY: Quiet! SANDRA:

Shhhh!

RICKY: Let me draw one.

DRAWS A VOLUMINOUS FART. FLIPS TO OTHER
SIDE OF PAPER AND FINISHES DRAWING.
WRITES. KING KONG FART AND SHOWS IT TO
THE OTHERS WHO CAN HARDLY CONTAIN THEIR
LAUGHTER.

RICKY: It's a King Kong one.

TERRY: What are these?

RICKY: Airplanes falling.

TERRY: Let me do one.

MICHAEL: I want to draw too!

TERRY TAKES A SHEET, FINDS A RED CRAYON
AND DRAWS AN ELONGATED OVAL, WRITING,
'CHILE FART. '

TERRY: It's a chile one—They burn the same way
coming out the way they did going in.

MICHAEL: Sandra, can I draw too?

SANDRA GIVES HIM PAPER AND CRAYON TO SHUT
HIM UP.

SANDRA: Here, now be quiet!

RICKY, UNSEEN BY THE OTHERS, HAS TAKEN A
SHEET OF PAPER, WRITTEN, 'SMELL THIS ONE'
AND STUCK IT IN HIS PANTS. SANDRA DRAWS
A WRINKLED ONE AND WRITES. 'OLD FART'.

TERRY: It's all wrinkled up!

SANDRA: It's an old one.

RICKY: IN OLD VOICE.

Get out of my way, you young
whippersnapper.

SANDRA: What's this?

TERRY: Clam chowder ones, like a clam. See the
snappers.

SANDRA: That's not how a clam looks. They're more
like this.

MICHAEL: This is my Daddy on his cement mixer!

THE OTHERS MAKE THE MISTAKE OF IGNORING
HIM AS THEY PASS NOTES BACK AND FORTH,
MICHAEL DECIDES TO COLLECT THEM.

RICKY: SNATCHING THE DRAWING FROM SANDRA.

Put a little snap in you life—

TERRY: Don't grab, it's not nice.

RICKY: Snot nice—

Oh, look, it makes a funny noise when you
wrinkle it this way.

TERRY: Snap crackle pop!

SANDRA: POPS UP.

Snap crackle oops!

RICKY: Snap crackle poop-poop-poop!

SANDRA: Shh! Not so loud!

TERRY: Boop boop de doop poop!

RICKY HAS PULLED OUT HIS SPECIAL SHEET OF
PAPER AND HANDS IT TO TERRY AND SANDRA WHO
SMELL IT.

RICKY: Smell this one!

SANDRA: Yuk! What did you do?

TERRY: Phew! You pig, Ricky—

THEY ARE GIGGLING WILDLY WHEN MICHAEL
TAKES THE DRAWINGS HE HAS BEEN COLLECTING
AND TOSSES THEM ALL TO THE FRONT SEAT.
THE CHILDREN LOOK ON IN HORROR. SANDRA
LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW.

ADULT SPEAKS.

SANDRA LOOKS AT THE OTHERS. THEN GIVES
HER PAD AND CRAYONS TO ADULT.

SANDRA: TO MICHAEL.

We're never going to talk to you again.
Nobody talks to Michael.

RICKY: Yeah—you're a tattletale. You're a brat.

MICHAEL: I have to go to the bathroom, Nina Rosy.

RICKY: Oh brother, now we have to stop because of
the little baby.

MICHAEL: I'm not a little baby.

SANDRA: Don't talk to him. He wants you to talk to him.

RICKY: I'm not talking to him, I was talking to you.

ADULT SPEAKS.

SANDRA: I went the last time.

TERRY: No, thank you, Nina Rosy.

RICKY: I might as well.

MICHAEL AND RICKY BOTH GET OUT OF THE CAR.

SANDRA: Now we can lay down.

THEY LIE DOWN, OPPOSITE EACH OTHER WITH HER HEAD AGAINST THE DOOR.

TERRY: Feet fight. No, wait—wait—wait. First we have to start foot to foot. Okay, now get on your mark.

SANDRA: Get on your foot.

TERRY: Get on your foot, get set. Go!

THEY BEGIN FEET WRESTLING.

TERRY: I know, pretend we're pirates!

SANDRA: Okay—I'll be the pirate and I kidnapped you.

STRADDLES TERRY HOLDING HER WRISTS DOWN.

You try to get away but you can't

TERRY: Let me go! Help-Help!

SANDRA CLAMPS HER HAND OVER TERRY'S MOUTH,
PUTTING HER FACE VERY CLOSE TO HERS.

SANDRA: If you scream, I'll kill you. You'll
never get away.

TAKING HER HAND FROM TERRY'S MOUTH. SHE
COMES CLOSE ENOUGH TO KISS HER.

TERRY: Oww! It's too hot.

THE MOOD IS BROKEN AND SANDRA GETS OFF.

SANDRA: I know, pretend we're orphans.

TERRY: And we're sisters.

SANDRA: But we're like sisters already.

TERRY: But we still have to pretend we're sisters
because we're not really sisters.

SANDRA: I know, but I'm saying we're almost like sisters because we get to spend the night all the time and my mother tells your mother everything—Get down!

THEY BOTH GET DOWN.

TERRY: What?

SANDRA: I saw a man. He looks like the kidnapper I saw his picture at the post office.

TERRY TRIES TO PEEK.

SANDRA: He'll see us!

TERRY STAYS DOWN. THEN SANDRA PEEKS OUT.

SANDRA: Okay he's gone now.

TERRY: Where did he go?

SANDRA: He sneaked into the store. Okay so pretend we're sisters and we're in this forest. And the bad king is looking for us because we have his magic ring that makes us invisible but he stole it from our father—he killed our father and now—

TERRY: No, he didn't kill our father—He—

SANDRA: But he had to if we're orphans.

TERRY: No, better if he kidnapped him and has him
in jail—

SANDRA: He had him locked up in the dungeon with
alligators swimming around and rats
crawling everywhere—

TERRY: And we have to save him.

SANDRA: Yeah, but we can't until we turn the king
into a. . .

TERRY: Into a nice king.

SANDRA: We should turn him into a horny toad.

TERRY: Okay, at first but then he learns his
lesson.

SANDRA: HESITATES A MOMENT.

Okay but then—

NOTICES THE BOYS RETURNING.

Get down, here he comes again! He's coming
this way!

Did you lock the door?

BOTH TURN TO LOOK AT THE UNLOCKED BUTTON.

RICKY OPENS THE DOOR. TERRY AND SANDRA
SCREAM.

TERRY: I thought you were the kidnapper!

RICKY: What kidnapper?

TERRY: Sandra saw him in the Post Office and now
he's here.

RICKY: What post office?

MICHAEL: What post office?

SANDRA: At grandma's house.

RICKY: Where is he now?

SANDRA: He left.

TERRY: But he had a hat and a mustache.

SANDRA: And long fingernails.

TERRY: And one finger was missing and the other
finger had a ring with a pirate's skull on
it.

RICKY: You fibber.

SANDRA: I know you are but what am I?

MICHAEL: I want to sit by the window.

RICKY: That's dumb—that's a dumb thing to say.

TERRY & SANDRA: I know you are but what am I?

RICKY: Copy cats.

RICKY, TERRY & SANDRA: I know you are but
what am I?

MICHAEL: I said, it's my turn to sit by the window!

RICKY DOESN'T SAY A WORD TO MICHAEL, HE
JUST PLANTS HIMSELF BY THE WINDOW AND
LOOKS OUT.

RICKY: TO OTHERS.

If I don't sit by the window, I'll
probably have to throw up on somebody.

TERRY: Won't you at least tell us before?

RICKY: It always happens before I can say
anything. but don't worry, I won't do it
on you or Sandra.

SANDRA: Well, since there's nobody else in here
then you'll be throwing up on nobody.

RICKY: That's right.

MICHAEL: I'm sitting next to my big sister.

MICHAEL SITS BY THE WINDOW NEXT TO TERRY
SO THAT THE CHILDREN ARE NOW SEATED LEFT
TO RIGHT, MICHAEL, TERRY, SANDRA AND
RICKY. TERRY CROSSES TO BAR-B-Q AND
BEGINS TURNING THE HOTDOGS.

TERRY: Well, it's about time. I was wondering
if you were going to make it.

SANDRA: Sure—I wouldn't miss this for the world.

TERRY: Even Ricky's here.

SANDRA: Really? Where?

TERRY: That last picnic table, beating everybody
at chess. Even Annie's husband who's
supposed to be some kind of genius.

SANDRA: Oh, the school teacher.

TERRY: He's a principal now.

SANDRA: There he is. Christ—I haven't seen him in ten years, more like fifteen.

TERRY: They say he's got an older girlfriend.

SANDRA: Oh yeah, some starlet from the 50's. My dad was so impressed he refused to believe it.

TERRY: He's been in a few movies.

SANDRA: Really? Which ones?

TERRY: One was a TV Movie. I saw it, he played a male stripper.

SANDRA: I saw that. That was Richard? Amazing. He wasn't bad at all.

TERRY: Didn't you recognize him?

SANDRA: Well it's been so long since I'd seen him. I just never thought he'd become an actor.

TERRY: I think she got him into it.

SANDRA: That's great. That's funny. So that was old Ricky. What a brat he was. Speaking

of brats, where are your kids—I haven't seen them since the last one was born.

TERRY: They're with the rest of the pack on the monkey bars, I think.

SANDRA: How old are they now?

TERRY: Well Judy is eight and Sean is six.

SANDRA: Just like you and Michael.

TERRY: Well it worked fine for us. Girls are more responsible, if you ask me. Sean is Mr. Terrible. I turn around this morning and you know what he's doing? He's got poor Betsy, that's our chou-chou—trying to put her in the dryer! He'd just given her a bath. Buster, I told him, you give that poor dog one more bath and I'm going to feed you cooked carrots for three weeks. That always works.

SANDRA: Remember when your mother got her first dryer and we decided to wash your Raggedy Ann doll and stuck her in the dryer afterwards?

TERRY: It might've worked if we hadn't put her through the wringer first. Remember when you found your dad's old love letters to your mom and called me up to tell me how it was done. I was in shock.

SANDRA: So you ran and told your mother.

TERRY: I used to tell her everything.

SANDRA: I know. You never had a sneaky bone in your body.

TERRY: Well, when I got older. Remember that time when we were coming home from Fresno and you and me and Michael and Ricky were all in the back seat and we started drawing all those fart notes and somebody wrote one that said Smell this one.

SANDRA: Richard.

TERRY: Oh yeah—that figures. Then your mother somehow got hold of them and smelled it. We just sat there watching her slowly bring it up to her nose. How did she find out anyway?

SANDRA: Michael threw them to the front seat.

TERRY: Really? Are you sure?

SANDRA: Don't you remember?

TERRY: Uh-uh.

SANDRA: It sort of makes sense. . . when you think about it.

TERRY: What do you mean?

SANDRA: Well, he's your little brother.

TERRY: Yeah?

SANDRA: You just forgive and forget things like that.

TERRY: Are you sure it was Michael?

SANDRA: Of course, he got mad because we were ignoring him.

TERRY: Oh. Poor kid. So what are you doing these days? I hear you're painting.

SANDRA: Well I had a gallery showing about six months ago and I've been selling a few paintings here and there. Slow but steady.

TERRY: What do you paint?

SANDRA STEPS AWAY FROM HER COUSIN AND
FACES THE AUDIENCE:

What could I tell her? I paint the failures of our idealism, the triumph of a drunken gathering? My paintings are a dissertation on this obsessive-compulsive society, of anger, dreams, trauma, ecstasy, orgasm, frustration and love? I remember an incident from say, our childhood and paint the emotion, filtered by years, layered by the subjectivity of the successive stages of our lives? When she asks, why did you paste this Oscar Meyer label on top of this sort of landscape thing?—what lovely colors! Do I tell her, it's the mind of our pre-phallic indoctrination?

TERRY: You were always so creative.

SANDRA: See what I mean—how do I paint that? How do I paint my reaction to that? Color and form tumbling out of my brush in a fever to capture before its gone. Or do I just

give her the titles. . . Wet crowd
distancing itself from a lone planet. .
. Native arms in red paint beseeching a
chain link fence.

Here we are again, my innocent
unattainable sister. You, the full circle
of self-actualization and I, scattered
amongst the canvasses of some insatiable
curiosity, or desire to possess or, or. .
.

TERRY: Sean! Sean! That kid—Watch these a sec—
I'll be right back.

HANDS SANDRA THE BAR-B-Q FORK AND RETURNS
TO SEAT. SANDRA SET THE FORK DOWN.

SANDRA: I was so jealous of you. You were always
so correct, so bound for Heaven. In a way
I still am.

SHE TURNS AROUND AND SEES TERRY WHISPERING
TO MICHAEL. SANDRA STARES AT TERRY.

SANDRA: You traitor! I hate you!

TURNS TO STARE OUT THE WINDOW.

RICKY: Sandra.

SANDRA: What?

RICKY: I'm not talking to that little cry baby as long as I live.

SANDRA: Yes you will.

RICKY: No I won't.

SANDRA: Don't be dumb, you have to talk to him some time.

RICKY: No I don't. She has to because she's his sister. But I don't have to and I won't.

SANDRA: Okay. Fine. Who cares what you do.

RICKY: I care what I do. I'm going to be a fireman.

SANDRA: How do you know?

RICKY: Because I can do whatever I want when I grow up and nobody can tell me what to do or I'll beat them up and I'm going to have a motorcycle and fight fires in the forest.

SANDRA: You can't beat everybody up.

RICKY: Yes I can.

SANDRA: Who tells you what to do anyway?

RICKY: My mom tells me what to do, or else.

RICKY AND SANDRA FALL SILENT FOR A MOMENT
WHILE MICHAEL AND TERRY STEP OUT.

RICKY: Look at those baby goats!

SANDRA: STILL SULKY. Where?

RICKY: Over there three four—six of them!

SANDRA: It looks like they're staring at us.

RICKY: Look that one is running this way.

SANDRA: Maybe he wants to come with us.

RICKY: Run little goat—He's going to catch up to
us—

THEY WATCH FOR A MOMENT. THEN BOTH SHOW
DISAPPOINTMENT.

RICKY: The fence is there to keep them safe.

SANDRA: Yeah, so they don't run away. So they'll grow up and then they'll chop off their heads and cook them in the oven for a long time and eat their eyes.

SANDRA JOINS MICHAEL AND TERRY LEAVING RICKY STARING OUT THE CAR WINDOW. THEY ARE ADULTS AGAIN.

MICHAEL: He's a lot better than he was.

SANDRA: How was he before?

TERRY: He was in a coma for eight weeks.

SANDRA: He just stares into space.

MICHAEL: His mother says he watches television.

SANDRA: But he can't possibly understand anything.
He won't even blink once for yes and twice for no-nothing. He's a-a vegetable!

TERRY: She said he smiles when he hears the audience laughing.

SANDRA: You mean the laugh tracks?

TERRY: Maybe that's what she meant.

SANDRA: A human vegetable smiling with the laugh tracks.

MICHAEL: Maybe he'll get better.

TERRY: The doctors said not a chance.

MICHAEL: They always say that.

SANDRA: It's so tragic, it's funny.

TERRY: I don't see anything funny about it.

SANDRA: You don't? Like the time Michael ratted on us by throwing those drawings to the front seat.

MICHAEL: When was that?

SANDRA: When we were kids. I mean, it was very tragic—a very tragic moment—a betrayal. But it was funny. Do you see what I mean?

TERRY: Richard being a vegetable is nothing like that.

MICHAEL: I don't remember throwing any drawings to the front seat.

FOR A MOMENT THEY FREEZE, LOOKING AT ONE ANOTHER THEN, THEY BEGINS SINGING, SOFTLY

AT FIRST THEN BECOMING MORE CHILDLIKE AND
LOOKING AT RICHARD WHO HAS REMAINED IN THE
CAR, GAZING OUT OF THE WINDOW.

The other night, Dear

As I lay sleeping

I dreamed I held you in my arms.

When I awoke, Dear,

I was mistaken

So I hung my head and cried.

LIGHTS DOWN.