

**PERUSAL SCRIPT**

# **One Blue Tarp**

by  
Travis G. Baker



Newport, Maine

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**ONE BLUE TARP**

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**Characters: 3m, 4f, 1boy, 1 dog**

**David Stillman** (65+) — A Mainer.

**Joan Stillman** (60+) — His wife.

**Judy Stillman** (30ish) — Their daughter, a Boston lawyer who needs to do something with her hair.

**Buddy Stillman** (10) — Grandson of David and Joan by their son, Larry, who is serving overseas. He's up for the summer.

**Ira Jacobson** (60+) — Their neighbor, a selectman.

**Daisy** (Rosco if a boy) — Ira's dog.

**Gale Pritchard** (50+) — A rich widow from away.

**Hester Pritchard** (28) — Her daughter. A mystery writer.

**Carl Ray** (30ish) — The town deputy.

**2013 – Best of Maine  
Clauder New England Playwrights Competition**

Premiered at the Penobscot Theatre Company in Bangor, Maine - February, 2014.

Set:

- The main set is the porch and yard of the Stillman's two-story home. House should be old, but not shabby. It is set back from the road a bit, surrounded by trees. A portion of the yard is dominated by a big pile of junk covered with a worn and weathered blue tarp.
- There is one scene in the first act on the viewing pier of the Pritchard Estate, and a scene in the second act at the town Grange Hall.

**ONE BLUE TARP** a comedy by Travis G. Baker. 3m, 4f, 1boy, 1dog. Contemporary Costumes, *A man, his tarp and the town that tries to take it away from him*. David Stillman, a retired Mainer, has just replaced the old, worn out tarp that covers a heap of odds, ends and whatnots out in his yard with a brand new one. It ought to last ten more years but then he finds out from his neighbor that the town of Clara has recently outlawed blue tarps out in folks yards in an effort to spruce things up a bit and attract more tourists. Not one who likes to be told what to do with his own junk, David vows to fight the new ordinance and the rich woman from away, Gail Pritchard, behind it. Undeterred by the pleas of his wife, Joan, David enlists his grandson, Buddy, to help defend the tarp vowing that they can have it when they "pry it out from under my cold, dead, butt. Meantime, his daughter Judy, a Lesbian Boston lawyer, looks to get an injunction against the ordinance while fending off the advances of Gail's daughter, Hester, and the past fancies of Officer Carl Ray who is just trying to keep the peace and get a date to the contra dance. The forces from Maine and away come to a head at a good old fashioned town meeting where tradition meets development and how the way things are wrestles with how life should be. Sometimes we have to let go of the past and all the stuff that reminds us of it, and sometimes freedom is one blue tarp. One Blue Tarp was named the Best of Maine in the 2013 Clauder New England Playwrights Competition and premiered at the Penobscot Theatre Company in Bangor in the winter of 2014 setting box-office records for a non-musical and that with two blizzards. **ORDER #3365**

**TRAVIS G. BAKER** - *Hockey Mom* premiered at the Penobscot Theatre Company in March, 2022 after earning the Literary Award for Drama by the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance in 2021. . Other PTC productions include *SQUATCH* (2019), *Hair Frenzy* (2016) and *One Blue Tarp* (2014) - named the Best of Maine in the 2013 Clauder Competition for New England Playwrights. *Boy Missing* (2018) and *The Store* (2019) were included in the Maine Playwrights Festival. New York plays include: *Sex & Violence* (2010) and *God & Mr. Smith* (2001 and 2003) with Kaleidoscope Theatre Co. He received a Berilla Kerr Award for *Cold* (NYFringe-1997) and *The Weatherbox* (Rattlestick-1998) and was an Edward F. Albee Foundation fellow. He studied theatre at the University of Houston and went on to work at the Signature Theatre Co. (1995-98) in New York. He has an MA in English (University of Maine-Orono) and an MFA (Fairfield University). He is an Illustrator for Foundations EIC and BHP for Watch Me Shine, a pre-school for children with special needs. He resides in Orono, Maine with his wife, Holly Twining, and their boys, August and Zane.

**Special thanks to:**

Bari Newport, Dan Burson, the cast and crew at PTC, Unity College, The University of Maine, Da Chen, Bruce Pratt, Holly, Zane, Augi, Susan Walker, Erin Albanese, the interns at Portland Stage, the Relford Group, Horton Foote, Edward Albee, William Inge, Arthur Miller and blue tarps everywhere.

## ONE BLUE TARP

### ACT 1

*SCENE 1 — EARLY MORNING — A newspaper flies on and lands DSL. DAVID STILLMAN enters from the house. He wears a flannel shirt, corduroy pants and good boots. He makes his way down the steps and heads DSL to retrieve his morning paper. On his way back US he stops to regard the large mound SR that is covered by the tattered blue tarp. He picks at the frayed edges, and fingers the rent holes and grunts. He tosses the paper on the front steps and goes around the side of the house. The sound of a shed door being wrenched open and some clanging and banging. DAVID returns to the front of the house, carrying a large, folded, brand new blue tarp. He sets about peeling the old tarp off revealing various items that never sold at the yard sale including a dishwasher, a broken chair, an old dresser, a bunch of broken toys and lawn ornaments, a lamp and the kitchen sink. He begins putting the new one on. IRA JACOBSON enters from SL. He is dressed in similar fashion to David. He carries a dog leash. IRA watches David for a bit.*

**IRA:** Morning, David.

**DAVID:** Morning, Ira.

**IRA:** New tarp?

**DAVID:** Yep.

**IRA:** Nothing like a new tarp.

**DAVID:** No, sir.

**IRA:** I do like the blue tarps best. Don't you?

**DAVID:** I do.

**IRA:** Ain't afraid to say, 'Here I am! I'm a tarp!'

**DAVID:** I always feel like those green ones are hiding something.

**IRA:** You know I once saw a yellow tarp with purple polka-dots!

**DAVID:** You didn't!

**IRA:** I did.

**DAVID:** I don't know what this world is coming to with polka-dotted tarps.

**IRA:** Yes, sir. Old one about worn out, then.

**DAVID:** Yep.

**IRA:** What all you got under there?

**DAVID:** Not quite sure.

**IRA:** Firewood, look like.

**DAVID:** That, yep.

**IRA:** Odds and ends.

**DAVID:** This chair. Broke when Paul sat on it.

**IRA:** That was a hoot. Him sitting down and just kept on sitting until he was sitting on the floor looking around as to what happened and you and me both laughing.

**DAVID:** I was laughing at first.

**IRA:** Shame about his hip.

**DAVID:** That was some years ago.

**IRA:** He still walks funny.

**DAVID:** Doesn't trust my chairs now.

**IRA:** Not your's nor anyone's. He was at the Grange meeting last month, circled the hall three times before he could pick out a chair he might trust. That a dishwasher?

**DAVID:** Yup. Those boys come to put in the new one that time and they get up into the house and ask what this one here is still doing in the place and I say that I was waiting for them to come and swap them out. But they say they just deliver, I need some type of plumber to hook it up and I said, what the hell do you mean? I paid for delivery and hooking the appliance up and they say that that ain't the case and they show me the delivery order. Now you know I'm good with the woodworking and the home repair but I just never could get the hang of plumbing.

**IRA:** Plumbing's a tricky business. All those pipes and whatall.

**DAVID:** And hell to pay if you get it wrong.

**IRA:** That's the truth. (calls off) Daisy! Get out of there!

**DAVID:** Well I don't like to cause a ruckus on account of my heart being a little cranky but I called up Drufus and gave him an earful and he says he'll send his boy Chester over to hook up the new washer but there will be a \$20 fee for taking away the old one.

**IRA:** \$20!

**DAVID:** That's what he said.

**IRA:** That's robbery.

**DAVID:** That's what I said to him, but he said it was in the contract that it was \$20 and I said, hell, I'll just give these two boys standing here in my house doing nothing but tracking mud all over Mother's kitchen floor \$5 to haul it down the steps and stick it under the tarp and he says that's my right if I want to so that's what we did.

**IRA:** That's showing him. That a dresser there?

**DAVID:** Yep. Judy's old dresser. And Larry's too before then. Keep meaning to break it up for kindling.

**IRA:** How's Larry doing?

**DAVID:** Keeping on. Joan sent him off another care package yesterday. You know they make those boys buy their own gloves?

**IRA:** It doesn't seem right.

**DAVID:** With all the damn taxes we pay, ought to be able to at least equip our boys properly.

**IRA:** One would think. Judy still down in Boston?

**DAVID:** Still down in Boston.

**IRA:** Still lawyering?

**DAVID:** Still lawyering.

**IRA:** Still walking on the other side of the fence, so to speak?

**DAVID:** I don't know what this fence is you're talking about?

**IRA:** The fence. The fence that separates things.

**DAVID:** I look around here, Ira and I don't see any fences so just give a hand on that side.

**IRA:** Yes, sir.

*(IRA puts down his dog-poop bag and leash and helps pull the new tarp up over the pile of junk. He*

*stops, picking up an old lamp.)*

What's this here? Lamp?

**DAVID:** Wiring went out or something.

**IRA:** Seems like a nice lamp.

**DAVID:** Guess it was, once.

**IRA:** Wife might like to put it in her reading corner.

**DAVID:** Be a good reading lamp.

**IRA:** I could fix it right up. Just go in here, replace these here, put in a new...

**DAVID:** Do you want the lamp, Ira?

**IRA:** Oh, I wouldn't want to just take it from you.

**DAVID:** It wouldn't be taking if I gave it to you.

**IRA:** I couldn't.

**DAVID:** Go on, Ira.

**IRA:** I just couldn't. I'm sure it's got sentimental value for you. Sitting out here under this tarp.

**DAVID:** Ira, I ain't gonna beg you to take the lamp but if you want it you can have it.

**IRA:** That's mighty generous of you.

**DAVID:** You're welcome. Now set it to the side and get that end down and tuck it under the wood.

**IRA:** Wood seems to have gone to rot, most of it.

**DAVID:** Still good for mulch, maybe.

**IRA:** Something always good for something. That's what's wrong with the world today, always throwing everything away.

**DAVID:** Men our age, we understand the value of things, getting real value out of what we have. Today they all talk about recycling this and recycling that.

**IRA:** They got the Zero Sort now over in Ryland.

**DAVID:** I heard about that. You still have to sort the trash parts from the recycling parts which makes it



more of a One Sort, I'd say. When we were growing up there wasn't any of this silliness, it was just making do with what you had because we never did have all that much.

**IRA:** That's truth right there, it is.

*(BOTH stand back and admire the new tarp over the old junk.)*

**DAVID:** There, last another ten years I wager and I can use this old one for insulation in the shed.

**IRA:** That's putting things to use.

**DAVID:** It is.

**IRA:** Guess you didn't read about the new Town of Clara ordinance then or are you just thumbing your nose at authority?

**DAVID:** What are you talking about?

**IRA:** The new town ordinance.

**DAVID:** What new town ordinance?

**IRA:** The one that prohibits the use of blue tarps in folk's yards.

**DAVID:** Are you shitting me?

**IRA:** No need for salty language, David.

**DAVID:** You're saying some sort of joke.

**IRA:** No, sir. The law's been set.

**DAVID:** When the hell was this?

**IRA:** After the election.

**DAVID:** Were we supposed to vote on this?

**IRA:** No, sir. It was the special town selectmen meeting where we decided on the tarp ordinance.

**DAVID:** How come I never heard of it?

**IRA:** Oh, it was a secret meeting. That lady from away, Mrs. Pritchard, called it. She's the new Selectmen Executive Secretary and a real nice lady. Well, I wouldn't say nice but she is a lady. And rich. And real active in the community since she bought Bayview.

**DAVID:** She the one bought that big old place?

**IRA:** That's her. Fixed it up real nice. Went to a garden party there last summer. She had a gardener up from Stonington, she did and a couple of fellas from Camden did all the designing and decorating, I'm told. And she ain't stopping with just her place, you know. She's set on beautifying the whole town. Got all sorts of ordinances and initiatives going on.

**DAVID:** Like what?

**IRA:** Like no blue tarps and town fences need to be whitewashed and siding needs to be installed within five days of insulation going up and car radios can't be more than 80 gigahertz or something of that account.

**DAVID:** When all was this?

**IRA:** Like I said, at the secret selectmen meeting.

**DAVID:** So, how'd you hear about it?

**IRA:** I'm a selectman.

**DAVID:** Since when?

**IRA:** Since I was selected. Anyway, we posted the ordinances on the Clara website last month and there was a good deal of grumbling about it at the Grange hall. Tarps and taxes was generally the most popular topic that evening, though the Governor got his fair share. I come over to tell you about it, but you all were away.

**DAVID:** Must have been down in Boston helping Judy move.

**IRA:** She move again?

**DAVID:** She and her roommate weren't getting along no more.

**IRA:** Roommates are tricky relationships.

**DAVID:** Listen here, Ira. Are you telling me you helped pass an ordinance outlawing that there tarp you just help me put on?

**IRA:** Yes, sir.

**DAVID:** Why in the hell did you do a dumb thing like that?

**IRA:** Just being neighborly.

**DAVID:** I mean about the ordinance!

**IRA:** Oh, that. Made sense at the time. You should hear Mrs. Pritchard speak about it.

**DAVID:** I'm sure she talks real slick for a foreigner.

**IRA:** Her grandparents were born in Hollowell.

**DAVID:** That don't make her nothing but a foreigner in my book. I can understand about the whitewashing, some of those fences downtown have been let to serious neglect and I can understand about the radios being too loud because I can hear them teenagers blasting by even being back from the road like we are but blue tarps? Why there's nothing more Maine than a blue tarp out on the lawn, you know that.

**IRA:** Well...

**DAVID:** Wasn't that the second place finisher for naming that pro-basketball team down in Portland?

**IRA:** The Red Claws.

**DAVID:** That's right. Second place was the Blue Tarps.

**IRA:** I don't know about that.

**DAVID:** It was. Go look it up on your websites.

**IRA:** I'll check.

**DAVID:** You do that and while you're at it you find some place in the Constitution that says I can't do what I want on my own damn land and that includes putting a tarp out!

**IRA:** It's a town ordinance, David.

**DAVID:** And what the hell does that mean?

**IRA:** Means if you live in the village boundaries of the town then you can't put a tarp out and you live in the village boundaries of the town, that's why you have the sewer lines and the front door mail delivery and I have to trudge out to the road to get my mail, not that I mind most days because I'm out walking Daisy anyway and it's not such a trouble but some blizzard days it's not the most convenient aspect of rural life.

**DAVID:** You live right next door!

**IRA:** And that's where the village boundary ends, right there on our property line.

**DAVID:** You don't have the sewer?

**IRA:** Septic.

**DAVID:** Water?

**IRA:** Well.

**DAVID:** But you could put a blue tarp out and leave your fence unpainted?

**IRA:** I could but I don't have a tarp and, as you so aptly noted, no fence.

**DAVID:** But you could?

**IRA:** I could.

**DAVID:** 100 feet that way?

**IRA:** I make it about 95.

**DAVID:** How is it you can be a town selectman and not live within the town limits?

**IRA:** Well, there's the town limits and then there's the limits of the town, if you catch my meaning.

**DAVID:** MOTHER!!!

**IRA:** Joan about?

**DAVID:** MOTHER, come on out here!

*(JOAN STILLMAN enters from the house. She's dressed in comfortable cottage clothes, pants, a sweater, maybe a fleece vest. She is a few years younger than David but the difference is slight. She holds a nearly complete baby sweater she's been knitting on.)*

**JOAN:** What is it, David?

**DAVID:** Mother, this nincompoop of a neighbor of ours says the town passed some idiotic ordinance that says we can't have this here blue tarp out on the yard protecting our goods while he can put blue tarps all over the place and play his music as loud as he wants and let his fences go to hell and have wild orgies if he wants to just because he lives past the town line, which most conveniently, sits about a hundred feet that way.

**JOAN:** I...what?

**IRA:** Morning, Joan.

**JOAN:** Morning, Ira.

**IRA:** What's that you're knitting there?

**JOAN:** Just a little sweater for my grandniece.

*(She holds it up. It's purple with yellow stars and has some lettering knitted into it.)*

**IRA:** What's that say on there?

**JOAN:** "Twinkle-twinkle little star."

**IRA:** Ain't that something.

**JOAN:** She's just about to turn one.

**IRA:** That so. That's your sister's boy's little girl?

**JOAN:** My fifth brother's girl's little girl.

**IRA:** That's right. They were up here in the fall, yes?

**JOAN:** No, that was my third sister's family.

**IRA:** Came for the foliage.

**JOAN:** They were on a family RV trip.

**DAVID:** DID YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID!

**JOAN:** I heard you David, but I have no idea what you're talking about.

**DAVID:** They outlawed my tarp!

**JOAN:** Just your tarp?

**DAVID:** Every tarp in town!

**JOAN:** Well, it's about time. Should have gotten rid of all that junk a long time ago. Take it down to the dump is what I've been saying for years.

**DAVID:** Costs \$10 for the dump!

**JOAN:** And well worth it.

**DAVID:** Dammit woman, it's the principle of the matter!

**JOAN:** What principle? That it's every Mainer's God-given right to own a blue tarp and put all sorts of junk under it?

**DAVID:** Well, when you say it like that...but that ain't the point!

**JOAN:** What is the point?

**DAVID:** This here is my property!

**JOAN:** Our property.

**DAVID:** You know what I mean.

**JOAN:** Do I?

**DAVID:** This here is our property and if we want to put out a tarp to protect our goods, that's our right!

**JOAN:** But I don't want the tarp out here. I never have.

**DAVID:** But if you did want to...

**JOAN:** I don't.

**DAVID:** But if you did!

**JOAN:** I don't!

**IRA:** Sounds like she don't want the tarp.

**DAVID:** Will you keep quiet!

**IRA:** I haven't said a word.

**DAVID:** You did so just now!

**IRA:** I didn't say a word until then.

**DAVID:** You do nothing all day but say words!

**IRA:** How else am I supposed to get by?

**DAVID:** By shutting up!

**IRA:** Allrighty, then. Shuttin' up.

**DAVID:** I... where was I? Oh, yes...if you did...(Joan starts to speak)...I KNOW YOU DON'T! But if you did, you ought to have the right to. Yes? That's what Larry's overseas fighting for, ain't it? Our rights. That's my point. Shouldn't be up to some fancy-pants uppity foreigners.

**JOAN:** Is that who it was?

**DAVID:** Some fancy lady from away got all these fools...our supposed selectmen to vote for the thing in some secret election.

**JOAN:** Is that what happened?

**DAVID:** Ask Ira, he's one of them!

**JOAN:** Is that right, Ira?

**IRA:** Permission to speak, sir?

**DAVID:** Oh, go on!

**IRA:** Well, that's not quite how the whole thing went down but that's about the gist of it too.

**JOAN:** Well, I can't say I agree with the process.

**DAVID:** You see there, Ira!

**JOAN:** But then, I don't agree with putting all our junk out in the yard, either, for everyone to drive by and point at.

**DAVID:** That's what the tarp is for.

**JOAN:** That's just covering up the problem. Like those people that just kick leaves over their dog's poop along the shore trail and you don't know until you've stepped in it that there's dog poop there.

**DAVID:** Ought to have an ordinance against that, Ira.

**IRA:** We do.

**DAVID:** Fat lot of good it does you.

**IRA:** It is a concern.

**JOAN:** I almost wish they'd just leave the poop out so you could at least see it and not step in it.

**IRA:** We have signs up everywhere and even a doggie-bag dispenser but some people just can't bother.

**JOAN:** Some people are just plain inconsiderate.

**IRA:** It's mostly the seasonal folk. Not so bad in the winter.

**JOAN:** Well, you can't hardly walk along the shore in the winter. Remember poor Francis.

**IRA:** Went walking on the trail and slipped right into the ocean.

**JOAN:** I felt so sorry for Liddy.

**IRA:** She's moved down to Hartford I hear to be closer to her grand-children. Say, is Buddy coming up for the summer?

**JOAN:** Be here in a few weeks.

**IRA:** What a treat. How old is he now?

**JOAN:** Just turned 10 in March. Looks so much like his father at that age.

**DAVID:** You two have gone clear off the subject!

**JOAN:** Oh, David. Just call up Norman and his boys and have them clear out all that mess and fold your tarp up and put it in the shed. We can set up a garden right there.

**DAVID:** It's a brand new tarp!

**JOAN:** You can put it over the boat.

**IRA:** Technically, he can't.

**JOAN:** Not even a boat?

**IRA:** No tarps is the ordinance.

**DAVID:** What about all the boats down at the marina? They're covered in blue tarps far as the eye can see.

**IRA:** They have a commercial exemption. Beside's they'll be all out in the water come summer when the tourists show up.

**DAVID:** And that's what's important is it? Tourists!

**IRA:** The town's just trying to spruce things up a bit and get some investment coming in. Lot of folks depend on the seasonal population to get by.

**JOAN:** Ira makes a good point, David.

**DAVID:** And this is my point...what sort of town do we want to have? A town run by folks from away? The sort of folks who want all of us locals to fetch them lobsters, smile and show them how to crack them open? They get this picture in their heads from *Down East* magazine about what Maine's supposed to look like and when they get here they get all bent out of shape about a few tarps and people living in a double-wide that's been welded to a Winnebago. Well, that is Maine. Maybe it ain't the way 'life should be' but that's what it is.

**IRA:** But, David, what Mrs. Pritchard is saying is it doesn't have to be. We're all trying to create opportunity! If there had been any sort of opportunity here, maybe my boys would have stuck it out. Maybe Larry wouldn't had to join up. Maybe your Judy would have stayed. Well maybe not but, maybe she'd a just gone far as Portland. They're pretty liberal down in Portland...jeeze but I feel like I stepped in one of those poops hidden under a pile of leaves.



**JOAN:** I believe you have.

**IRA:** All I'm trying to say is folks from away...

**DAVID:** That there is my whole point! People from away don't have any concept of what Maine is really like, what we think or how we live. The tarp stays!

**JOAN:** Lord, here we go again.

**DAVID:** What the hell are they gonna do, anyway? They can't even catch a few dog poopers!

**IRA:** Well, there's a fine and then the fine doubles and then the public works can come out and haul everything away and send you a bill.

**DAVID:** Bring it on!

*(LIGHTS out)*

*SCENE 2 — A FEW WEEKS LATER — David sits on top of his tarp with a rifle in his hands. Joan comes out from the house.*

**JOAN:** Weatherman said its going to be a nice day.

**DAVID:** They're not taking my tarp.

**JOAN:** Might reach 50 today.

**DAVID:** Not taking my tarp.

**JOAN:** Summer has nearly arrived. David, are you going to spend this entire wonderful day perched on your pile of junk? There's about a dozen more productive things I can think of that need doing.

**DAVID:** Mother, they are not going to take my tarp.

**JOAN:** No one's coming to take your silly tarp away, dear.

**DAVID:** They sent me a notice! Notice said, if I didn't comply they'd come and remove my so called "disused property and unlawful covering" and charge me for the effort.

**JOAN:** Oh, goodness gravy. Did they say when they would come?

**DAVID:** Said, within 30 days.

**JOAN:** And how many days ago was that?

**DAVID:** Yesterday.

**JOAN:** And you're planning on spending every day of this month out here?

**DAVID:** I'm retired. I've got nothing but time.

*(BUDDY STILLMAN (10) enters. He is a bright young lad, looks like his father did at that age. He wears pajamas and needs to pee.)*

**JOAN:** That's just silly.

**BUDDY:** What's going on? What's granddad doing up on top of the junk pile?

**DAVID:** Man's got to protect what's his, Buddy.

**JOAN:** Your granddad's being ridiculous. Couldn't you see them coming up the drive, David?

**BUDDY:** Who's coming up the drive?

**DAVID:** The law! Might not be able to make it up to the top o' the tarp in time. Took me half-an- hour this morning on account of the frost.

**JOAN:** Why didn't you just lay a ladder up to it?

**DAVID:** Because I didn't.

**BUDDY:** Can I go up there?

**JOAN:** No, you may not.

**DAVID:** Best not, son. There might be shooting.

**BUDDY:** Cool! I'll get my .22!

**DAVID:** Go pee first, you're doing that dance thing you do. And get your clothes on.

**BUDDY:** I will!

*(BUDDY runs back in the house.)*

**JOAN:** *(calling after)* And brush your teeth and eat your breakfast!

**BUDDY:** *(off)* I will!

**DAVID:** He's a good boy.

**JOAN:** What about going to the bathroom? You know how you have to go to the bathroom every twenty minutes when you get your coffee in you.

**DAVID:** I've hooked up a system.

**JOAN:** What kind of system?

**DAVID:** This tube here.

*(DAVID shows Joan the business end of a plastic tube that snakes down behind the pile.)*

**JOAN:** Goodness, David! Where does that go?

**DAVID:** Back of the shed.

**JOAN:** Into the brook?

**DAVID:** No!

**JOAN:** Under the shed?

**DAVID:** Just behind it!

**JOAN:** Next to the brook?

**DAVID:** No.

**JOAN:** You're not supposed to pee into the brook, David.

**DAVID:** I'm peeing in the tube!

**JOAN:** Which goes into the brook.

**DAVID:** Well so what? Birds and bears and every other thing pees into the brook.

**JOAN:** It runs down into the stream and then down into the river where we get our drinking water from.

**DAVID:** And the treatment plant filters out all the bird, bear, fish and every other thing pee from it so why the hell can't I pee on my own property!

**JOAN:** What about a #2?

**DAVID:** Never mind about that.

**JOAN:** Do you have a tube for that too?

**DAVID:** No.

**JOAN:** What are you going to do then?

**DAVID:** Hold it in.

**JOAN:** Well, good luck with that.

**DAVID:** I've got water, beef jerky and a big jug of those little cheese puffs I like.

*(displays a big jug of cheese puffs.)*

I can hold out indefinitely.

*SFX: car CRUNCHING on gravel and getting closer.*

**DAVID:** Who's that then?

**JOAN:** That's...

**DAVID:** And you said they weren't coming! Come and get some you bastards!

**JOAN:** David!

**DAVID:** What?

**JOAN:** That's Judy!

**DAVID:** What is that she's driving? Is that a go-kart?

**JOAN:** I think they're called "Minis".

**DAVID:** What's she doing here?

**JOAN:** She's come to talk some sense into you, I hope.

*(BUDDY bursts out of the house, still in his pajamas, loading a .22.)*

**BUDDY:** Is that the bastards, Grandpa!

**JOAN:** It's your aunt Judy, dear.

**BUDDY:** Ah, nuts.

**DAVID:** At ease, trooper!

**BUDDY:** I'm not a trooper, I'm a marine, like my Dad.

**DAVID:** Right! At ease, marine!

*(BUDDY puts his rifle by his side as JUDY STILLMAN enters. She is a woman in her early-30's who would be much better looking if she knew how to dress and did something with her hair.)*

**JUDY:** Hi, Dad!

**DAVID:** Hi, Honey!

*(JOAN goes to Judy.)*

**JOAN:** Hello, dear.

**JUDY:** Hi, Mom.

*(THEY embrace.)*

**BUDDY:** Hi, Aunt Judy!

**JUDY:** Buddy! Look at you! You've gotten so big!

**BUDDY:** I'm the second biggest in my grade. Hanna Sevrence is the biggest.

**JUDY:** Girls mature faster.

**BUDDY:** She says I'm her boyfriend but I just run away from her.

**JUDY:** Okay.

**JOAN:** Is this how you usually wear your hair?

**JUDY:** Yes.

**JOAN:** At work?

**JUDY:** Sometimes.

**JOAN:** You have such pretty hair. You should do something with it.

**JUDY:** I do things with it, Mom.

**JOAN:** Is it a lesbian thing?

**JUDY:** What?

**JOAN:** How you have your hair?

**JUDY:** No, Mom. It's just for driving.

**JOAN:** Is that how lesbians wear their hair when they drive?

**JUDY:** I don't know!

**JOAN:** I'm just asking, dear.

**JUDY:** It's just my hair!

**JOAN:** You should do something with it.

**JUDY:** Like what?

**JOAN:** Lord, I don't know. You should go see Tina while you're here. Down at Hair Frenzy.

**JUDY:** I'm not going to some place called 'Hair Frenzy'.

**JOAN:** She does my hair.

**JUDY:** It looks great, Mom.

**JOAN:** Do you like it?

**JUDY:** It looks great.

**JOAN:** I just get it trimmed a bit and Tina puts a splash of color in, because, you know, I've gone white for the most part.

**JUDY:** Mom?

**JOAN:** Yes, dear?

**JUDY:** Why is dad sitting on top of his junk pile with a gun?

**JOAN:** He's afraid they might come and confiscate all his junk.

**DAVID:** This is our junk! Some of this is your junk, Joan and yours too Judy and Larry's.

**BUDDY:** Mine, too?

**DAVID:** Someday, my boy, all this will be yours.

**BUDDY:** Wicked!

*(BUDDY heads over to help defend the tarp.)*

**DAVID:** Not until you've changed your clothes and brushed your teeth.

**JOAN:** And eaten some breakfast!

**DAVID:** Hurry along now, Marine!

**BUDDY:** Yes, sir. Oo-rah!

**DAVID:** Oo-rah!

*(BUDDY exits quickly.)*

**JUDY:** Do we really think it's wise to let a ten-year old run around with a loaded gun?

**JOAN:** It's just a .22, dear. You and Larry had .22's.

**DAVID:** That's right. You were raised right and Larry's raising Buddy right. Teaching him about gun safety and freedom and the need to defend that freedom. Taught him about rights! The right to bear arms and the right to defend my tarp. They can have my blue tarp when they pry it out from under my cold, dead butt!

**JUDY:** Oh, Dad.

*SFX: two more cars coming up the drive.*

**DAVID:** Here we go! You can have my blue tarp when you pry it out from under my cold, dead butt!

**JOAN:** Oh, hush up, David!

*(Officer CARL Ray, Mrs. GALE Pritchard and her daughter, HESTER enter, both of whom are dressed like models showing off the business Spring casual line of L.L. Bean. HESTER carries her phone in her hand and taps at it from time to time.)*

**CARL:** Good Morning, Mrs. Stillman.

**JOAN:** Morning, Officer Carl.

**CARL:** Judy. Been awhile.

**JUDY:** Hello, Carl.

**CARL:** Mr. Stillman.

**DAVID:** Who are they? I didn't invite any of you on to my property. You're all trespassing as far as I'm concerned!

**JOAN:** David! Hush!

**JUDY:** Let me do the talking, Dad.

**CARL:** Is that a registered firearm, Mr. Stillman?

**DAVID:** It is and it's loaded.

**CARL:** Can you do me a favor and put the firearm down, Mr. Stillman. We only came to talk.

**JUDY:** Dad, put the gun down!

**DAVID:** Why? I'm on my property! I have a permit!

**JUDY:** Just put it down so we can talk.

**DAVID:** You can have my blue tarp when you pry it out from under my cold, dead butt!

**GALE:** Oh, just shoot him and be done with it.

**JOAN:** Excuse me?

**CARL:** No one's going to shoot anyone, right Mr. Stillman?

*(DAVID grunts and lays the firearm aside.)*

**JOAN:** Who are you?

**GALE:** My name is Gale Pritchard, Mrs. Stillman and if your husband is going to be so pigheaded as to hold a rifle while sitting on top of his illegal pile of disused items then I say we let Officer Ray shoot him so we can all move on with our lives.

**JOAN:** You have no cause to talk like that to my husband, Mrs.Pritchard.

**GALE:** I wasn't talking to him, I was talking to you but now I see that's just as much of a waste of time.

*(turns to Judy)*

You, what's your name? Are you related to these people?

**JUDY:** They're my parents.

**GALE:** Then I assume you can talk some sense into them.

**JUDY:** I sincerely doubt it.

*(HESTER laughs. GALE shoots her a look.)*

**HESTER:** Sorry, Mother.

*(IRA enters.)*



**IRA:** Morning folks! What's all the hubbub?

**DAVID:** The day of reckoning is upon us, Ira. The day of reckoning.

**IRA:** Oh, I hope not. I was just about to harvest the rhubarb.

**GALE:** Mr. Stillman!

**DAVID:** Mrs. Foreign Interloper?

**GALE:** We've sent you three notices, Mr. Stillman.

**DAVID:** Made excellent starts to the fire.

**GALE:** Everyone else in town has complied.

**DAVID:** More fool them.

**GALE:** No, Mr. Stillman. You are the one acting like a fool. Everyone else in this town is stepping up to the plate and kicking the ball through the fences. They're making a real effort to save this little backwater town towards progressing. But there's always some selfish little crab who can't see past his own shell and you know what we do with the shells up here...

**DAVID:** Make a bisque?

**GALE:** That's right. This is your final warning, Mr. Stillman. Clean it up. Get it out of here or we'll do it for you. And if you insist on guarding your junk with a rifle then we'll be more than happy to pull it out from under your 'cold, dead butt'. You have 24 hours.

**DAVID:** Lady, let me tell you something. My son, Larry, is overseas right now defending our freedom and I ain't about to let that freedom die right here in my front yard.

**GALE:** I appreciate what your son is doing, Mr. Stillman. I hope you appreciate that he might be fighting for more than a piece of plastic made in China. Come along, Hester.

*(GALE exits. HESTER approaches Judy.)*

**HESTER:** My mother's a bit of a bitch, but she's serious.

**JUDY:** I can see that.

**HESTER:** She's really not that bad when you get to know her. You should come by the house sometime. Later today maybe? It's the big one on the beach just past the Pajamamakmak bridge.

**JUDY:** Pasamjemek.

**CARL:** Pasamagamak, actually.

**JUDY:** Really?

**CARL:** Oh, yes. I'm part Pasamagamak. Not that there's many parts left.

**HESTER:** Pass-me-a-hammok?

**JUDY:** Pasamagack.

**CARL:** Pasamagamak.

**HESTER:** That's the one!

**GALE:** Hester!

**HESTER:** It's the big one on the beach. Toodles!

*(HESTER exits. BUDDY runs on from the house half-way dressed, gun in hand.)*

**BUDDY:** Is them the bastards, Grandpa?

**DAVID:** Them's the bastards, son.

**BUDDY:** Can I shoot them?

**DAVID:** Not today, my boy. Go finished getting dressed.

**BUDDY:** Awwwww...

*(BUDDY exits.)*

**JUDY:** When did we get a beach?

**IRA:** She means the mud flats.

*SFX: Dog BARK OS*

Daisy!

*(IRA Exits SL. CARL approaches Judy)*

**CARL:** You remember the mud flats, Judy?

**JUDY:** Yes, Carl.

**CARL:** I remember the mud flats.

**DAVID:** What the hell's all this talk about mud flats! We're talking tarps here!

**JUDY:** Carl, you wouldn't actually shoot my Dad, would you?

**JOAN:** No one's going to shoot anyone, isn't that right Officer?

**JUDY:** Carl...

**CARL:** No one's shooting anyone, right Mr. Stillman?

**DAVID:** Says you!

**CARL:** Judy, can I talk to you a second.

**JUDY:** Sure.

*(THEY step downstage.)*

**CARL:** How's Boston treating you?

**JUDY:** Oh, fine.

**CARL:** I get down there a couple times a year. Go to Fenway.

**JUDY:** Fenway's fun.

**CARL:** Yeah.

**JUDY:** Yep.

**CARL:** Are you still a lesbian?

**JUDY:** Yes.

**CARL:** Oh.

**JUDY:** Anyway...

**CARL:** Yeah. Mrs. Pritchard's daughter, Hester is her name, she's a lesbian, too.

**JUDY:** She is?

**CARL:** What she said when I asked if she wanted to go to the contra dance. Seems like all of a sudden I'm surrounded. Feels like a man drifting out at sea. Surrounded by water he can't drink.

**JUDY:** Carl?

**CARL:** Yeah?

**JUDY:** About my dad.

**CARL:** Sorry. Look. I don't want to shoot your dad.

**JUDY:** That's a start.

*(JOAN busies herself removing David's tube.)*

**CARL:** But Mrs. Pritchard's right. He's got 24 hours to comply with the ordinance...

**JUDY:** Not if I get an injunction.

**CARL:** Well, there's that. You maybe could get one from Judge Diel. He'll be having lunch at McCall's today as usual. I'd catch him just after. He gets pretty liberal at lunch.

**JUDY:** Thanks, Carl.

**CARL:** But listen. If you don't get the injunction and the town sends a crew out here to clean off the junk pile and your Dad takes a shot at them then we've got a whole different situation here and I'll have to protect them and uphold the law. You understand?

**JUDY:** I understand.

**CARL:** So do us all a favor and get your Dad down from there and that pile cleared off. I'll even come by after work, if you folks want some help. I could bring my truck and my brothers. We could have it cleared off in no time and then maybe we could go get some dinner or something.

**JUDY:** Carl.

**CARL:** Yeah?

**JUDY:** I'm still a lesbian.

**CARL:** Oh. Right. Check. Gotcha. Okay...Officer Carl is out.

*(turns and waves)*

Have a good day, folks.

*(to Judy)*

24 hours.

*(CARL exits.)*

**JOAN:** What did Officer Carl say, Judy?

**JUDY:** He said Dad has 24 hours to sober up.

**DAVID:** I'm not drunk!

**JUDY:** Then stop acting like an idiot. I'm going to go to the bathroom and then I'm going in to town to try to get an injunction but if that doesn't work the town's crew will be here tomorrow and if you start shooting at them then Carl will shoot back.

*(IRA re-enters.)*

**DAVID:** Bring it on!

**JUDY:** Dad, this is serious!

**IRA:** Best listen to her, David.

**DAVID:** Ira, if you don't get yourself and your damn dog back across your property line the first bullet will be between your eyes.

**IRA:** Oh, David. I know you're just funnin' because you were never a good shot, anyhow. I remember the time you finally got your moose permit and we went up north and you had that big fellow right in your sites and you end up...

**DAVID:** ALRIGHT! Heard that story enough times.

**JUDY:** Dad.

**DAVID:** What?

**JUDY:** Look down.

**DAVID:** What?

**JUDY:** Look at what you're sitting on?

**DAVID:** I know what I'm sitting on. There's a pack of memories underneath my backside. There's the old dryer, Mother. The one you used to say always made the towels extra fluffy and how the new one can't quite get them fluffy like you liked. Maybe it's all rusted out now, but it was ours. And maybe there's things under here that won't ever be of use to anyone ever again but there's also the old lamp that we found, right Ira?

**IRA:** That's right. Works fine, now. Wife certainly enjoys it in her reading corner.

**DAVID:** You see there! There's treasure down here. Buried treasure!

**JUDY:** Oh, Dad.

**DAVID:** Alright, maybe not treasure but all the stuff that you accumulate in a lifetime that you don't get rid of and no one wants to buy. There's Larry's old weight set and your old dresser, Judy. The one you used to keep your socks and shirts in with the top drawer where you'd make a bed for your stuffed bunny and the bottom drawer where you'd hide your Playboys...

**JUDY:** You knew about that?

**DAVID:** Your mother told me.

**JUDY:** You knew about that?

**JOAN:** Maybe if you'd picked up your room once in awhile I wouldn't have had to put your clothes away for you all the time.

**IRA:** I kept mine in a box in the closet under my hockey gear. Even my mother didn't go near the hockey gear on account of the smell.

**DAVID:** Thank you, Ira!

**IRA:** You're welcome.

**JUDY:** Okay, I really need to go to the bathroom and go to town.

**JOAN:** Don't forget to fix your hair.

**JUDY:** And fix my hair. Dad, you can come down, you know. They won't be back until tomorrow.

**DAVID:** No thank you. Don't trust them. You saw that woman! Don't trust them as far as I can throw them, which wouldn't be very far at all with my back these days. No, sir. I'll be right here. You go do your lawyer thing and when that don't work I'll be right here, ready, able and willing and when they come you know what I'll say?

**JUDY:** "You can have my blue tarp when you pry it out from under my cold, dead butt"?

**DAVID:** That's right. You can have my blue tarp when you pry it out from under my cold, dead butt.

**IRA:** That's a good saying, David. You should put that on a bumper sticker. Well, you folks have a good day.

*(IRA exits. JUDY shakes her head and goes inside.)*

**DAVID:** You know, that ain't a bad idea. You think folks would buy a bumper sticker like that?

**JOAN:** I was about to say, "No", but then I thought about it for a second and I expect they would. People

will buy just about anything these days. They just can't decide where to put it. I suppose we could just put everything under your cold dead butt.

*(With that, she goes inside. LIGHTS out.)*

**SCENE 3** — *BAYVIEW, LATER THAT DAY* — Gale sits on an authentic Maine made Adirondack chair on her private pier that overlooks the beach out back of the Pritchard mansion reading one of those murder mystery books with a striking cover. On top of a matching Maine made Adirondack table is a mug of tea. Taking a sip of tea Gale notices something much to her dislike.

**GALE:** You there! You! Yes, You! This is a private beach!

*(JUDY trudges OS along the beach. She carries a plastic bag filled with bits of trash.)*

**JUDY:** Mrs. Pritchard?

**GALE:** Yes?

**JUDY:** I'm Judy Stillman. We met this morning.

**GALE:** You're the daughter of that David Stillman.

**JUDY:** Yes, I am.

**GALE:** What's that in your hand? Plastic?

**JUDY:** I have this bad habit of picking up trash wherever I go.

**GALE:** I do the same thing. Where does it all come from?

**JUDY:** People, I guess.

**GALE:** This area, this whole area from the Pajamamakmak bridge down there to the point out there is private property now.

**JUDY:** The Pasamagamak Bridge.

**GALE:** Ugh! That's another thing that needs to change around here...bridges with names you can pronounce. Pritchard Bridge, I should think.

**JUDY:** Of course.

**GALE:** In honor of my late husband.

**JUDY:** Who did so much for the community.

**GALE:** He bought this house. He bought this property and he gave me the means to restore it to its historic state.

**JUDY:** Just the way the Pasamagamak found it.

**GALE:** Oh, much better. We have garden parties. Otherwise, I don't allow anyone on it.

**JUDY:** What about the clammers?

**GALE:** Yes, them. They're part of the scenery. Do you think they're the problem?

**JUDY:** What problem?

*(GALE points at the bag.)*

**GALE:** That! The plastic bags and plastic water bottles! The candy wrappers and beer cans! I come out every day and there's always more. Where does it come from?

**JUDY:** I don't know. It's sad isn't it?

**GALE:** It is sad! It's terribly sad when people just ruin the aesthetic.

**JUDY:** I was thinking of the waterfowl and marine life that choke on this stuff.

**GALE:** Well, of course! I mean, how unpleasant would that be? To see a waterfowl choking to death! There goes the day right there.

*(JUDY scrambles up onto the pier. She drops her bag of trash and pulls out a legal document.)*

**JUDY:** I got an injunction.

**GALE:** Excuse me?

**JUDY:** Against your tarp ordinance. Judge Diel signed off on it after lunch.

*(GALE puts down her book.)*

**GALE:** He would never do such a thing.

**JUDY:** Well, he did.

**GALE:** I'm going to go make a phone call and we'll see how long this silly little injunction lasts. I know certain things, you see.



**JUDY:** What sorts of things?

**GALE:** Things you just never you mind about. And while I'm at it I'll call the police about trespassers trespassing on private property and littering all over the place.

**JUDY:** I was picking it up.

**GALE:** So you say. How do I know you're not the whole problem right there in yourself?

**JUDY:** I live in Boston.

**GALE:** Precisely my point. You're from away. So why don't you let the people who do live here, who are trying to make a real difference do what they need to do to get done?

**JUDY:** You have this weird way of talking thing going on.

**GALE:** It's called good sense.

**JUDY:** What doesn't make sense, Mrs. Pritchard is that my dad can't keep his stuff on his lawn but you get a beach all to yourself.

**GALE:** And thank goodness for that!

*(HESTER enters. She skips up to Judy.)*

**HESTER:** You came!

**GALE:** This woman is trespassing.

**HESTER:** No, she isn't.

**GALE:** She is.

**HESTER:** I invited her.

**GALE:** When did you invite her?

**HESTER:** At her parents house.

**GALE:** You did not.

**HESTER:** I did. I do things like that.

**GALE:** I'm going to go make a phone call.

*(GALE exits. HESTER looks at Judy and smiles. JUDY smiles back in a much more self-conscious manner.)*

**HESTER:** I was watching you trudge along from my window. You trudge really well. I was trying to imagine what you were thinking about. I wrote some of them down. Tell me if I got one right.

*(HESTER pulls a slip of paper from her pocket.)*

**JUDY:** Okay.

**HESTER:** Me?

**JUDY:** No.

**HESTER:** A beautiful dark haired woman trapped in a musty old castle?

**JUDY:** No.

**HESTER:** How your parents are crazy and you wish they weren't so crazy but they're your parents and you do what you can to make their passing to the afterlife not so painful?

**JUDY:** That's pretty close.

**HESTER:** I knew it! I knew when I saw you trudging along the beach that that's what you were thinking about! I mean, why else would you trudge? I should have said that first. If you were thinking about the beautiful dark haired princess you'd be skipping or something, right?

**JUDY:** Right.

**HESTER:** Of course, it's not really a beach is it? It's more of a mud flat.

**JUDY:** It's the closest thing we had and now it's off limits.

**HESTER:** That's just to protect it from the hooligans, but you're free to walk or skip or trudge along here all you want thinking your thoughts about parents or princesses or me. If you wanted to. Just, you know, 'Leave No Trace'.

**JUDY:** There's a lot of history to these mud flats. Traces everywhere.

**HESTER:** Oh, sacred ground.

**JUDY:** In a way.

**HESTER:** I'm really into sacred thoughts. I do yoga. Do you do yoga?

**JUDY:** I try to. Sometimes. I keep meaning to.

**HESTER:** It's all about breathing. Here, breathe with me. (Hester sets her phone down and goes to Judy.) Now, let's open up that heart space.

*(HESTER places one hand on Judy's upper chest and one on her lower spine to straighten her posture.)*

**JUDY:** Okay.

**HESTER:** No talking. Breathing.

*(HESTER and JUDY breathe together.)*

**JUDY:** I feel dizzy.

*(JUDY sits in the chair.)*

**HESTER:** I know, right! I feel like that all the time! Like I'm riding on the wind!

**JUDY:** What happens when the wind stops?

**HESTER:** I float down, ever so gently, like feathered kittens to alight on the downy soft earth and there await the next breeze.

*(beat)*

I saw you yelling at Judge Diel today. You've got spirit, kid. I could never do anything like that. Not with Mother around. She takes care of the yelling in the family since father died.

**JUDY:** I'm sorry.

**HESTER:** It was his own fault, of course and he left mother too much money and too much time on her hands but then, mother had pretty much given up before that, you know. It's about the only thing she's ever given up on. My father. We came here about six years ago for the summer and then she started staying longer and longer...into November even.

**JUDY:** Goodness!

**HESTER:** I know. Past peak!

**JUDY:** She's a crazy woman.

**HESTER:** I'm surprised we haven't met before.

**JUDY:** I don't get back much.

**HESTER:** I stick it out until about middle-October and then I make sure I have a book tour scheduled or a retreat of some kind or another.

**JUDY:** You're a writer?

**HESTER:** Oh, yes. That's what I was doing when I happened to look out the window and saw you trudging along. I was writing. Trudging really. This book is taking awhile. The first few were easy. I got so bored up here. I needed a task and Mother told me to write a book and I did. That's it there.

*(JUDY looks at the book on the table next to her.)*

**JUDY:** "The Killer in the Cove".

*(picks book up and inspects the author picture)*

You're H. S. Pritchard!

**HESTER:** Yes.

**JUDY:** You write trashy murder-mystery novels set in a small, Maine, coastal town.

**HESTER:** I don't know if 'trashy' is the right word.

**JUDY:** Cheesy?

**HESTER:** Gripping!

**JUDY:** You've sold like millions of books.

**HESTER:** You know, honestly, I don't count, I mean, who could count millions anyway, but I don't think you're far off.

*(consults her iphone.)*

**JUDY:** Hasn't your Mom read this before?

**HESTER:** Oh, dozens of times. She likes to know how things end. 3,987,723. That's how many books I've sold, I guess. Whoops. 724. Gosh that's a lot.

*(GALE re-enters.)*

**GALE:** That Judge Diel isn't answering his phone the big coward. Excuse me, that's my chair.

*(JUDY stands.)*

**JUDY:** Sorry.

**GALE:** What are you two talking about?

**HESTER:** Literature!

*(JUDY laughs. A plastic bag blow across stage. GALE yelps and chases it OS.)*

**JUDY:** There are brilliant writers out there that have been at it for years that no one will ever read or hear and your Mother tells you to write a book and you sell 3,456,744 copies.

**HESTER:** Well, it wasn't just the one book. It's a series.

**JUDY:** I know it is! I've read them all!

**HESTER:** You're a fan! Do you follow me on twitter?

**JUDY:** Yes! Oh, God! Your books are such crap!

**HESTER:** That hurt. I took an online course in plots and structures I'll have you know and it's all there, all the plots and structure. And the designer does a great job with the covers. That's half the battle right there, they say. And they're all set here in Maine. I mean, everyone loves Maine because it's so pretty.

**JUDY:** Have you been to the state fair? Maine ain't pretty.

**HESTER:** I guess I meant the scenery.

**JUDY:** Like the clammers.

**HESTER:** You know I can never get the hang of the whole water and butter thing. They really need to start making clams without all the sand.

**JUDY:** And lobsters without shells.

**HESTER:** I know, right! And that green stuff! Ewww!

**JUDY:** I like that green stuff.

**HESTER:** Do you like old movies? Sunsets? Walks on the mud flats?

**JUDY:** You're the enemy of all I hold dear.

**HESTER:** Oh, I don't think that's true. Do you like book stores and toy shops and ice cream parlors?

**JUDY:** Yes.

**HESTER:** Well, with my best selling gripping book sales I bought the building in town where they are and I don't charge them rent. That's giving back that is. I don't think you can disagree with that.

**JUDY:** No.

**HESTER:** I thought not. Anyway, in all the old movies the children of the sworn enemies hook up and then everyone lives happily ever after. You just need some fresh air, some exercise and maybe do something with your hair. There's this girl, Tina, down at Hair Frenzy that does amazing things with hair.

**JUDY:** So I've been told.

**HESTER:** We'll make a day of it! We'll take a yoga class, get some lunch, get our hair done, do some shopping, have dinner...we have a home theatre at the house. Lots of old movies...

**JUDY:** Okay! Thanks, Hester.

*(JUDY drops the book and starts to exit via the mud flat.)*

**HESTER:** Is it a date?

**JUDY:** Goodbye.

*(JUDY exits.)*

**HESTER:** Stay golden!

*(GALE enters.)*

**GALE:** We have to go into town, Hester. That pimple of a judge is ignoring my phone calls. Is that girl leaving?

**HESTER:** Yes, mother.

**GALE:** You stay away from her. We've worked too hard...

**HESTER:** Oh, mother, you're so silly.

*(HESTER exits toward the house.)*

**GALE:** I haven't been silly since I was six!

*(LIGHTS out)*

**SCENE 4 — NIGHT AT THE STILLMAN'S** — *Buddy sits on the top of the tarp looking at his phone. Both his and David's guns are up there with him. David enters scrambles up the pile.*

**DAVID:** Any activity to report?

**BUDDY:** None, sir.

**DAVID:** It's a damn shame Mother took away my tube. Up and down every hour it seems like...

**BUDDY:** (*pointing at a map app*) He's right here, Grandpa.

**DAVID:** What's that?

**BUDDY:** A satellite photo of Dad's base.

**DAVID:** Well, look at that!

**BUDDY:** He might not be there though. He might be out on patrol. He sent me the coordinates for the base because everyone over there already knows where the base is because its a base but when they go out on patrol he can't say where he's going because the enemy might be listening.

**DAVID:** Makes sense. Can you zoom out a bit?

**BUDDY:** Sure.

*(BUDDY taps his phone.)*

**DAVID:** Little more. Gosh, look at that. Middle of nowhere on the other side of the world.

**BUDDY:** Dad says it sucks big hairy...

*SFX: Daisy BARKS Off-Stage.*

**DAVID:** It does. I was in the Navy four years, I know. None of that language around your grandmother, okay?

**BUDDY:** Yes sir.

**DAVID:** That's man talk.

**BUDDY:** Yes, sir.

**DAVID:** Women are different, Buddy. They're like delicate flowers.

**BUDDY:** This is fun out here, Grandpa. It's like we're camping. Except without the campfire and the hot dogs and the s'mores and the tent.

**DAVID:** But we've got the tarp.

**BUDDY:** When are we going up to camp?

**DAVID:** Oh, I sold that old place this past winter.

**BUDDY:** No!

**DAVID:** I'm sorry son. It wasn't getting so much use as it had been and this company is putting in a big resort on the lake, which is sad to say but they made me an offer and it was a good one. Real good one and with the economy the way it is and the plant looking for early retirees, I just couldn't pass it up.

**BUDDY:** Don't people know what they do to people!

**DAVID:** But we'll go camping for real. We'll take our tents and tarps out into the woods and do it up right.

**BUDDY:** Okay. Can we go tomorrow?

**DAVID:** We're on duty, tomorrow.

**BUDDY:** Oh, right.

*SFX: A car pulls into the drive sending the two guardians into high alert.*

**DAVID:** WHO GOES THERE!

**JUDY:** *(OS)* Your daughter!

**BUDDY:** What's the password?

**JUDY:** *(OS)* Flash.

**BUDDY:** Thunder. She's a friendly, sir.

**DAVID:** Good work, marine.

**BUDDY:** Oo-rah.

*(JUDY enters.)*

**JUDY:** You can come down, dad. I got an injunction.

**DAVID:** What does that mean?

**JUDY:** It means you can keep your tarp for 30 days until the hearing.

**DAVID:** What hearing?

*(JOAN enters from house.)*

**JOAN:** Judy! You're back. Oh, you've still got your hair.

**DAVID:** There's going to be a hearing somewhere.

**JUDY:** In front of the judge. The town will present their case and then we can present ours.



**DAVID:** And then what happens?

**JUDY:** If we win, you'll get to keep your tarp and all that junk underneath it.

**DAVID:** I keep saying it ain't junk...

**BUDDY:** What if we lose?

**JUDY:** Then Grandpa will have to get all this cleaned up. But in any case you'll get to present your side without all the guns.

**BUDDY:** Ah, man!

**DAVID:** Hardly seems sporting.

**JOAN:** Does that mean your father can come down now?

**JUDY:** Yes. The town can't remove anything until the hearing.

**DAVID:** I don't trust them.

**BUDDY:** Does that mean we can go camping?

**JUDY:** Yes.

**BUDDY:** Yeah!

**DAVID:** I don't trust a single one of them.

*(IRA enters.)*

**IRA:** Evening folks! Heard some conversation going on over here and thought I might come over if there was something worth discussing.

**DAVID:** Ira, do you ever not come over?

**IRA:** Well, not when it's the wife's reading time or her bath time or the murder-mystery is on. Did you know they're going to make a movie-of-the-week out of that H. S. Pritchard book that was set right here. Do you think I might get a part in the movie?

**DAVID:** I expect they'll need somebody to hold up the scenery.

**IRA:** Maybe Paul Newman will be in it.

**JUDY:** Paul Newman is dead, Ira.

**IRA:** Oh, don't say that.

**JOAN:** I always did love Paul Newman.

**BUDDY:** Who's Paul Newman?

**IRA:** He was an actor.

**JOAN:** A great actor.

**DAVID:** Alright, alright.

**JOAN:** I just love the old movies.

**IRA:** Me too.

**DAVID:** Well, I don't. I like the new 3-D, like that one Buddy and I saw last summer with zombie robots.

**BUDDY:** They were vampire robots, Grandpa, and you said it was junk.

**DAVID:** I did not.

**BUDDY:** You did.

**JOAN:** Your Granddad is just being contrarian.

**BUDDY:** What's contrarian?

**DAVID:** It means I'm the only one making sense.

**BUDDY:** I don't really think so. Can we go see a movie after we go camping?

**IRA:** You all going camping?

**BUDDY:** Yes, sir. Aunt Judy got injuncticated so we can go camping.

**IRA:** Well, that is news. Where you going to take him, David?

**DAVID:** I don't know. I don't know if we're going. I don't trust the lot of you.

**IRA:** Who?

**DAVID:** You town-but-don't-live-in-town people with your septic tanks and free-thinking.

**JOAN:** David, that's enough.

**DAVID:** Well, it's true.

**JUDY:** DAD!

**DAVID:** What? Why are you yelling?

**JUDY:** I drove all the way up here to help you out and I manage to get a injunction from Judge Diel and have a very awkward conversation with Gale Pritchard, not to mention her daughter and all I keep hearing about is how you don't trust anyone, blue tarps, old movies, and Tina from Hair Frenzy!

**JOAN:** You should see her in the morning.

**JUDY:** Mom! Stop it with the hair! Dad! Get down from there and go to bed! Ira, go home! Why do I come back here!

*(BUDDY's phone beeps.)*

**DAVID:** What's that?

**BUDDY:** It's just the usual message from my dad.

**JUDY:** What does it say?

**BUDDY:** Time for bed. And, you know, he says he loves me and he'll tell me a story when he gets home. He can only send messages when he's at the base, so that means he's safe. I have to get to bed, Grandpa.

**DAVID:** Dismissed, Marine.

*(BUDDY slides off the tarp with his .22 and heads inside.)*

**JOAN:** I'll come read you a story.

**BUDDY:** I can read, Grammy.

**JOAN:** I know, but I'd like to.

**BUDDY:** Okay, but I have to go pee first. I have to pee wicked bad.

**JOAN:** Why did you hold it so long?

**BUDDY:** Because you took the tube away and I was on sentry duty protecting freedom, justice, the American way and Granddad's blue tarp.

**JOAN:** David!

**DAVID:** What did I do?

**JOAN:** We'll talk about this later.

**DAVID:** You took the tube away!

**JOAN:** Come on, Buddy.

**BUDDY:** Goodnight everyone.

**ALL:** Goodnight.

*(BUDDY and JOAN go inside.)*

**IRA:** Well, goodnight.

**JUDY:** I'm sorry for yelling, Ira.

**IRA:** Oh, don't even worry yourself. You come from a long and distinguished line of yellers.

**DAVID:** Goodnight, Ira. See you in the morning.

**IRA:** We doing something?

**DAVID:** I see you every morning, Ira.

**IRA:** That's being neighbors.

*(IRA exits.)*

**JUDY:** It's been a long day.

**DAVID:** It has. Lots of doings and now a camping trip to pack for. You sure it's safe to come down?

**JUDY:** It is.

**DAVID:** Alright then. Maybe I will take the boy camping if you say it's gonna be all right.

**JUDY:** It will be.

**DAVID:** All right then.

*(DAVID descends with a bit more difficulty than Buddy did.)*

**JUDY:** Are you okay, dad?

**DAVID:** I think so.

*(He checks his parts)*

Everything's okay. I need a drink.

**JUDY:** Me too.

*(THEY head up to the house. DAVID stops.)*

**DAVID:** You sure it's safe?

**JUDY:** As safe as the law will allow.

**DAVID:** Just so you know, my butt is still symbolically up there!

**JUDY:** Then they'll have to pry it symbolically out from under it to take it away.

**DAVID:** You know we love you.

**JUDY:** I know, Dad.

**DAVID:** Even with that hair.

**JUDY:** Don't start.

*(DAVID kisses his Judy on the cheek as she goes inside. He turns to the tarp.)*

**DAVID:** Goodnight, sweet tarp.

*(LIGHTS out)*

**•INTERMISSION•**

[During intermission the tarp is placed aside and the pile of junk is removed by Officer Carl and his brother (a stagehand). As they work they shoot the breeze, take a coffee break but eventually get everything (except a small brass button) off.]

**33 MORE PAGES IN ACT TWO**