

# creature features

A TALES OF THE CUL DE SAC PLAY

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Susan Beaker - Susan is a housewife and shopaholic. Completely oblivious that her husband is secretly working on a project. She is perky, caring, and hopeful until she gets let down and becomes Godzilla. Protective mother.

Bill Beaker - Secretly working on an archeology project after some encouragement from a neighbor. Actually a bioengineer. Wants his son to be in a bioengineer career also so he tries to push him on that path.

Tyler Beaker- Susan and Bill's son. Extremely talented student trying to be average teen. A good kid but like most kids his age he is confused about his path, over stimulated, and addicted to energy drinks.

Pearl Hannity- Girl from down the street that Tyler is tutoring in science. They both have a crush on each other but too afraid to say.

Holly Hannity- Pearl's all business mother.

Agent Leo Pluridon - Government Agent investigating pet disappearance before Pearl goes missing.

Benji - Delivery man

## Act 1

(We open on the setting of a common family home. Stage left is the front door, coat hanger, a small table maybe a window with some small potted plants around it and pictures on the wall. Stage right is the door to the kitchen and a small dining area with table and chairs. Upstage right is the entrance to the basement. Upstage left is the stairway to the upstairs. In Between is a bookshelf with books, knick knacks, and pictures. It's a well maintained and organized home. Bill enters from basement with a paper advertisement. He is blowing on it to get the ink to dry. He heads to the front door and exits. He quickly returns through the door with a newspaper.

Bill

Ok... we'll just put you in there. (He opens the paper and puts the advertisement in then removes the other ads when one catches his eye) Oh, 25 cents off on peanut butter?... nah.. (He takes them all out then he runs to the kitchen and comes back to the stage without the paper. He sits down calmly.) And now, cue the wife.

Susan

(Enters from upstairs and heads to Bill. She kisses him on the head) Hi, honey. Sorry I was upstairs so long. The day seems like it's gotten away from me!

Bill

That is just fine. We are all that way sometimes. Oh hey, I brought in the paper and made some coffee. A cup full of joe, cream, sugar, and the local news is waiting for you in the kitchen. (He motions toward the kitchen but doesn't attempt to get up)

Susan

Oh my goodness. That is just too sweet. How did I get so lucky, Bill? (She is actually gushing as she crosses toward the kitchen)

Bill

Hey! We all know I'm the lucky one. I married way out of my league.

Susan

You're a catch if I ever saw one. Thanks, hun. (She walks into the kitchen and Bill runs over and puts his hand up to his ear to listen at the door)

Bill

(Listening carefully then celebrates a moment before quickly returning to his seat and mumbling to himself mimicking Susan) Well let's see what's in the news today! Oh,

Political Scandal! Oh, Girl saved by masked vigilante! Oh, Obituaries... and three, two, one...

Susan

(From offstage) Oh my gosh! It's exactly what I was looking for!

Bill

Bingo!

Susan

(Enters from kitchen mumbling to herself) Gotta go, gotta go, gotta go. Keys. Where are the keys? How am I supposed to go shopping without the keys? Where are the... (She reaches into her pocket and pulls out the keys) Check!

Bill

(He is acting like he doesn't want Susan to leave when he actually is trying to get her to go) Oh Hun, did I hear that correctly? (He gets up from his seat and sulks over to her) Are you going shopping again today?

Susan

(Feeling awful that she is even thinking about going, but this is Bill's plan) I wasn't planning to but I was looking through the pages in the paper and out pops this spectacular ad for handbags across town. It was a deal I just couldn't pass up. It's as if the ad was speaking directly to me. Fate!

Bill

You don't say.

Susan

Just look, Bill. (She lifts up and points at the ad that Bill placed) It's the exact same bag that I showed you the other day for 50 percent off and an extra 20 percent off for being a shopping member. I wanted it anyway but at this price it's a steal. I might get 5 just to sell a couple! (She puts her hand on Bill's shoulder) You understand, right?

Bill

Of course I do. Where exactly is this spectacular shopping extravaganza happening?  
(Playing dumb)

Susan

It is the strangest thing. This ad says it's at our pharmacy on the other side of town.  
Greg's Pharmacy!

Bill

The one that always has the really really long lines and the parking lot is always full?

Susan

Yeah! The one where they always have to ask a manager something but the manager is on break!

Bill

And the really slow cashier that is about a hundred years old that can't hear what you are saying?

Susan

Yeah, that's the one. When did they start selling handbags?

Bill

I don't know. Must be a seasonal thing.

Susan

I don't even know where they would put handbags in the store. They never seem to stock their shelves with new items. I'm pretty sure the polydent has been there on the same shelf since 1986.

Bill

That is so strange, but there it is right in front of your eyes in retina popping vivid color. You should go there and check it out.... right now. Let me get your coat! (Bill guides her to her coat and helps her put it on) I mean, if it's a deal you can't pass up then... don't pass it up. You know?

Susan

Bill, are you sure? (She takes his hands) I know I haven't been spending much time at home with you lately...

Bill

Nonsense! I was going to suggest we go out anyway just to celebrate how wonderful you are all the time... and beautiful. Did I mention beautiful? But... (fake cough fake cough) I've been feeling a little under the weather since I got up this morning... I just don't think I should be out in the elements today. I don't want to spread around the sickness. It could become an epidemic.

Susan

Out in the elements? It's just a tiny bit rainy out.

Bill

It's a good amount of drizzle.

Susan

It's a mist at best. Not a monsoon.

Bill

Oh Susan. You're so witty! (Fake laugh then Fake cough) Since you are going out to the pharmacy anyway maybe you should pick up some cough drops too! It would mean the world to me. You know the ones I like.

Susan

Sure, I can do that... poor baby. Do you need anything else? I can use my new handbag to haul it all in.

Bill

I guess I could use a few things (pulls pre prepared list out of pocket and hands it to her as he is pushing her out the door) Just a few trinkets ranked by importance while you're out. You are the best!

Susan

(Reading list) Economy pack syringes, rubber tubing, beakers.... air compressor? Bill, what is this? What are you doing?

Bill

It's for my model car collection...

Susan

It's not a collection if you only have one.

Bill

It's a work in progress and it is very in depth. Have you ever made a model car, Susan?

Susan

Well... no... but....

Bill

Good! Er... I mean it's a delicate process and involves so much more than you'd think... especially the use of an air compressor that's portable with a 150 psi max tank. You understand, right?

Susan

Bill, I didn't know you needed a...(checks list) small centrifuge for that.

Bill

Paint mixing! To get just the right tone. You don't want to end up with an improperly mixed batch.

Susan

I'll see what I can do, honey.

Bill

And the printer is out of color ink by the way... I had to print something out earlier and darn it if it didn't use it all.

Susan

What were you printing? A photo album of rainbows? We just refilled the ink last week.

Bill

Just been improving my photoshop skills and printing the pictures of us.... Thought about touching up some of our wedding photos to hang up all over our home. (Points to a picture already hanging on the wall) That's a good spot right there.

Susan

Bill, that's a picture of my Mother.

Bill

But just think, it could be a picture of "not your Mother". Now you better go so you don't miss that amazing sale. And take your time. No need to rush. I'll see if I can get dinner done while you are out!

Susan

But I thought you were under the weather! You're supposed to rest! I don't want you to push yourself too hard.

Bill

I'm a trooper, but if you insist. Go on... Get! (Basically pushing her out the door)

Susan  
Bye Hun!! So excited! (Squeals)

Bill  
See you, sweetie! (slamming the door in her face. He then relaxes a beat and then gets a sinister grin and laughs maniacally) Months of preparation have boiled down to this single moment. (He begins to convert the dining area into a laboratory and bringing out hidden science equipment from all over while he says the next few lines) The breakthrough of a lifetime for Archeology, Cryptozoology, and any other -ology that applies. The eyes of fate are currently watching down as the mysteries of life are analyzed and categorized in the name of Science! I, Bill Beaker, will be the first to analyze and unlock the secrets of the ancient local life form from this exact area. No man has dared dig up and analyze the bones of the world's most ancient squirrel... until today! I know it may have been the product of dishonesty but Susan just wouldn't understand this.... obsession I have. She couldn't understand. It would be so awkward to tell her at this point. I just have to move on. I mean, she'll forgive me once I have completed my study and am world-renowned. I'd forgive me. And of course Tyler left to work his part time job this morning so... wait...wait... it's Saturday... right? (Runs to calendar frantically) FRIDAY!!! (Checks watch) No, no, no! Tyler will be home from school any minute! (Runs around hiding the lab) Stupid mistake, Bill! (He cleans it up just in time for Tyler to enter. Bill is panting)

Tyler  
Hey Dad. (Walking in and setting down his things, his back pack, etc)

Bill  
Hey Sport! What did you do, sprint home? The track team could use some of that speed, Flash! Haha... Am I right? Is it warm in here? (Chuckles through panting)

Tyler  
Just came straight home from school is all... are you OK? Why are you breathing so heavy?

Bill  
Old age... just came up the basement steps... (Still panting and resting leaned on the couch)

Tyler  
(Approaching Bill) Is this a heart attack? Or, like dementia? Cause this really isn't a good time for me...



Bill

Nope. I'm good...ish. What...er...what are your plans for today? You hanging around?  
Or, leaving? Just curious. Probably leaving, right?

Tyler

Actually, you remember Pearl from down the street? She asked if maybe I could tutor her for science class. She's having kind of a tough time which surprises me cause she is really smart.

Bill

You mean Holly's daughter? Of course she's having a hard time with HER mother the drill sergeant. I've seen planks of wood with more personality. All I can say is if she is anything like her mother the only thing that would help her is a swift knock on the head.... with a tack hammer.

Tyler

Charming! You're not gonna say that while she is here, are you? I tend not to try and insult people's family to their face.

Bill

Here? You are tutoring her he....here?? Why would you do that?

Tyler

Well, yeah. I didn't think that would be a big deal, you know. I've always tutored at our house here in the living room.

Bill

Well.... What's wrong with her house in her living room? I bet it's comfy.

Tyler

Well, her mother is there and from what I'm told, she could use "a swift knock on the head" for one!

Bill

You two are young kids! You should be out and about....not...not stuck in a stuffy house! Maybe you should take her out?

Tyler

To study? In the rain? Are you sure you are ok? Is there a gas leak? Where's Mom? I'll talk to her. Is her head on right today?

Bill

Your mother is out shopping. She saw a deal that was tailor-made for her. (Maniacal laugh, cuts self off) She, uh, couldn't turn it down.

Tyler

Again?! She's been out shopping a ton lately. Is my college fund still intact or has it gone to handbags and vases now?

Bill

Crazy kid... how about I give you some of the shekels your mother hasn't spent and you can buy your pupil and her Mother some pizza over at THEIR house!

Tyler

Dad, it seems like you don't want me here. At all. I've been wrong before, but this seems an awful lot like you're pushing me out of the house.

Bill

WHAT!! I love my kiddo.... so much... I just wanted the quiet house cause..... I was gonna take a nap!

Tyler

A nap?! You?

Bill

Yeah, a nap. Why wouldn't I take a nap? Normal people take naps all the time. Super common.

Tyler

I've never seen you nap a day in my life. Mom told me the other day that she saw you sleeping with your eyes open!

Bill

I've napped before!

Tyler

Dad, you are immune to naps. Remember, when you were having surgery a while back and they had to put you out? You nearly made the anesthesiologist cry because you were such a challenge.

Bill

Well, that's cause I didn't WANT to sleep then. Big difference.

Tyler

Is something up? What's going on here?

Bill

Whatever do you mean?!

Tyler

For one, you were all sweaty. Second, mom is out of the house again shopping for who knows what. Third, I've recently refilled the ink in the printer more times than I can count. Fourth, you are "taking a nap like normal people." Fifth, the only time anyone says "whatever do you mean" is when they are super English or lying.

Bill

Lying?! (chuckles) What is this, the inquisition? Maybe I was wrong when I said you should be a bioengineer like your old man, Mr. Detective... ha ha... Am I right?

Tyler

So nothing is up?

Bill

Tyler, you know me. When have I ever been up to something?

Tyler

So is that a no?

Bill

Come on you crazy kid. This is your Dad you're talking about.

Tyler

You're not actually answering the question.

Bill

Oh, look at Mr. Lawyer over here, huh. Gettin' all judicial. "I plead the fifth."

Tyler

Alright, fine. Have it your way. It's a little too weird around here for company anyway. I'll just go meet Pearl at her house before she tries to head this way.

Bill

That's my boy! Doing the gentlemanly thing and not making the girl walk here. I knew I raised you right! Proud of you, son!

(Tyler picks up his school things and heads to the door)

Tyler

It is the "gentleman" thing to do, isn't it. (Reaches for the door before stopping) Oh, Dad...

Bill

Yeah Son?

Tyler

Can I get that dinner money? Buying dinner for Pearl's mom is a pretty slick idea. It would get us off on the right foot for the tutoring session.

Bill

Sure Tyler. Of course. (Meets him by the door and reaches into his wallet and pulls out some cash) Oh, and Tyler... I know you've got a little thing for this girl so you treat her nicely.... if you get pizza let her decide the toppings.

Tyler

Classy! Thanks Dad... (Opens door and steps through) I'll see you soon!

Bill

(Practically slams the door in his son's face) Hopefully not TOO soon! (Listens for footsteps. Satisfied that he heard nothing he begins converting the room back into the laboratory room. While his back is turned, Tyler quietly opens the door and comes back in to see what he is doing)

Tyler

What do you think you are doing, Dad? What is going on?

Bill

Tyler, what are you doing back? It's not what it looks like! I swear! I don't know how this stuff got here!

Tyler

I'm not dumb,, Dad. You were being super sketchy so I pretended to leave. I could tell you were listening by the door so I waited. I heard everything clinking and thumping as you set this stuff up! What is going on?

Bill

I told you. It's not what it looks like.

Tyler

What does it look like Dad? To me it looks like you have been lying and doing some sort of weird experiment in our dining room on our table that we eat at... occasionally.

Gross.

Bill

No, no... Its... I was... cleaning. Yeah, this is my old high school science equipment. I'm gonna have a yard sale and thought I would clean them up first.

Tyler

Try again Dad. I'm not buying it.

Bill

No really... I.... I... I was, um...

Tyler

Stop stalling, Dad.

Bill

(He gives in and blurts out everything) Ok... so....This is not my high school science equipment. (Sighs) This is hard to explain buddy. Umm.. I dug up a prehistoric bone while gardening in our yard a little while back. I've been secretly decoding the DNA from the bone which is from the earliest form of Squirrel this planet has ever seen, called the Nagasaurus, all from the living room while you and your mother have been out of the house. There. I said it. (Long pause) Well, you just gonna stare at me?

Tyler

This. This is the dumbest. You are so busted! Why do you care about the oldest squirrel? WHO would care about the world's oldest squirrel? I'm dumbfounded.

Bill

Hey! I've got a great idea! Why don't we make this a father/son bonding experience?

Tyler

No. Not happening.

Bill

I know you're great at science. It's been such a long time since we did anything as a team! Not since your 6th grade science fair project.

Tyler

No, thanks. Besides I don't think Mom would be too keen on the fact of us, as a team, lying to her.

Bill

Come on! You could hand me syringes and test tubes and I can yell at you cause you gave me the wrong size! Like old times!

Tyler

Dad, I'm going to take a big ole' pass on it at this time. My eyebrows just grew back last year from that exact father/son experience!

Bill

It wasn't my fault that you got so close to the Bunsen burner!

Tyler

It wasn't? Are you sure? Cause I seem to recall you asked me to hand the burner to you. I said my hands were full. You said to USE MY TEETH! Next, thing I know...

Bill

(Interrupting him) Let's stop living in the past, hmm. Besides, your mother would be thrilled if we were a team again! I just know it!

Tyler

You didn't let me finish earlier Dad...I was going to add that Mom wouldn't be too keen on us, as a team, turning her dining room into Dr. Frankenstein's laboratory. Is she really out shopping? Or is she just tied up in the house somewhere?

Bill

I didn't tie her up.... and the neighbor borrowed my handcuffs. I'm going to have to get those back from Maude at some point.

Tyler

I really don't need to know that.

Bill

Yes, she is shopping... More or less.

Tyler

More or less? What have you done?! Is this why she's been shopping so much lately and coming home disappointed?

Bill

Maybe...

Tyler

Not cool. I'm the one that has to hear her complain when she can't find the sale! Is that your doing?

Bill

Ummm... sort of. I've been making up ads for sales and printing them out and putting them in the paper before I give it to her in the morning. (Smiles sheepishly)

Tyler

That is devious. Brilliant but devious. What happens when she gets to the store and the sale is not happening?

Bill

Well, for one, she looks like a crazy person. Then she usually demands to see a manager. Then she argues with him or her for a bit before giving up and going to the store she knows has what she wants and buys it full price.

Tyler

And she hasn't caught on to your ridiculous scheme?

Bill

I don't like to throw around the word scheme, however she REALLY likes shopping.

Tyler

How long has this been going on?!

Bill

Let's see... (thinking back)

Tyler

Never mind. (Gathering his things before heading into the kitchen for a snack) The less I know the better. I'm gonna grab a snack before Pearl heads over here. Can you clean this stuff up?

Bill

I thought you were going over there!

Tyler

Too late to change plans now. You better finish up what you're doing before she gets here because you're taking up all the prime study area.

Bill

If you're not going over there, you're not gonna need that cash. Hand it over.

Tyler

Sorry! No can do. That's "hush" money now! Have fun with your science lies! (exits to kitchen)

Bill

(Doing his best Rodney Dangerfield impression) I tell ya, I get no respect. (Cracks his knuckles) Back to work... I just have to be quick. (talking to the bone) Hello my Darling! I'm almost there! This will be over before you know it. Just have to extract a sample my precious. (Pulls out absurdly large syringe and extracts liquid from the bone then talks to himself 'sing songy') Oh I'm gonna take your DNA and be showered with some fame! Nagasaurus!!! This is incredible.... amazing... (Tyler enters holding a can of energy drink and some chips)

Tyler

What's amazing? Find a new place to hide some beakers and burners?! Did you convert Mom's vase into a distillery? (Points to the shelf with the vase)

Bill

Tyler, this is a huge discovery (Pointing to the syringe) You know what this is?

Tyler

It looks to me like a cry for help? They have people you can call... someone else. Not me. I can get you the number if you want.

Bill

It's liquid bone marrow! Do you understand that this stuff has been sitting for millions of years! It should be fossilized, but instead it is intact. It's a huge breakthrough!

Tyler



(Intrigued, shoves all the chips in his mouth and washes it down with a swig and puts the can down on the table) That can't be right. You must be mistaken! There's no way.... that actually WOULD be a huge breakthrough...

Bill

Don't say it like you're shocked I could make a breakthrough! That's offensive.

Tyler

The last huge breakthrough you had was when you remodeled the bathroom and we still have a picture covering the hole in the wall.

Bill

I know. I really gotta fix that.

Tyler

How did it do that?

Bill

I told you, the hammer flew out of my hand by accident. In my defense I was very sweaty that day.

Tyler

Not the hole! The marrow! How is it still liquid when it shouldn't be? How did it stay in that state for millions of years?

Bill

I don't know... yet. Can you make sure to keep what you've seen a secret.... since you are not planning on joining in?

Tyler

(Apprehensive) Alright, deal... do your thing... I'm going to go get ready to tutor. (Heads toward the steps upstairs) Oh, and Dad...

Bill

Yes, Tyler?

Tyler

Good luck! That is pretty awesome.

(Bill is humorously talking to himself and calculating when the phone rings and he aggravatedly picks it up)

Bill

WHAT! Oops, I'm sorry, I mean Hello? Oh hey Honey! Car problems? I don't know why your car would be sputtering and knocking. What do you mean you are on your way home? (Frantically tries to run to put things away but ties himself up in phone cord.) On our road? Er... (hangs up on his wife and begins converting everything back to normal but forgets to hide the syringe. Susan can be heard just outside the door. Bill sits down next to the syringe calmly before doing a double take when he sees it. He jumps up and hides it behind his back as Susan enters.)

Susan

Bill, this day has been one disaster after another. First, I made it to the pharmacy and they swore they've never carried handbags!

Bill

Ever?

Susan

Ever! And then.... (looks at Bill) why are you so sweaty?

Bill

My fever just broke. I'm ... uh... just gonna go in the kitchen and make some soup.  
(Starts edging towards the kitchen)

Susan

I didn't know you had a fever! Why don't you let me make it.... I don't want you to over exert yourself.

Bill

Yeah OK... I'll just stay here and rest then.

Susan

Or you join me in the kitchen and I'll tell you what's wrong with the car and about how I've now been banned from the pharmacy!

Bill

Great! (He really means crap)

Susan

Great that I'm banned or are you excited to hear about the car?

Bill  
Pick one, I suppose.

Susan  
Car it is!

Bill  
Sounds perfect! (They both head towards kitchen, Bill trying to hide the giant syringe behind his back) After you, my love! (As they are exiting) Oh you know what! Tyler is home... why don't you get the stuff for soup together and I'll see if he wants some for a snack!

Susan  
For a snack? Who eats soup as a snack?

Bill  
It's all the rage with the kids these days! All the kids are doing it. Souping, they call it. Yeah the kids yell to each other "yo bruh. You soupin'." "Ah yeah boyee... getting minestrone up in here" "What! That's off the chain, yo!" (Pause) Or so I've heard.

Susan  
Stop talking. You are hurting my soul with your words. Just go ask the boy and come right back.

Bill  
OK hun! (She pivots and exits. Bill frantically searches for a place to hide the syringe. He sees the can of energy drink that Tyler left sitting. He speedily passes it but after a beat backs over to it with his eyes fixated. He injects the syringe in the can then walks over the door and throws the syringe out the front door. Sigh of relief from Bill, cry of pain from Pearl outside. Unflinching Bill heads back to the kitchen while whistling.) The boy's not soupin today, hun! (Stops at can) Stay. (Exits to kitchen)

(After a beat, there is a doorbell ring. Tyler bolts downstairs)

Tyler  
I GOT IT! (Opens the front door and sees it's Pearl holding her eye)

Pearl  
Hi... ummm

Tyler

(Slams the door in her face nervously. Checks himself out in the mirror. Then checks his breath and is unhappy with the results. He looks around and sees the can of energy drink and grabs it and gargles with it. Makes a face) Must be trying a new formula. (Sets can back down and nervously opens the door again) Hellooooo Pearl...erm... I mean.

Hi. Hello. Nice day today, huh?

Pearl

I guess it's nice for a gloomy rainy day... um.. can I come in?

Tyler

Oh! Yeah, of course. Come on in.

Pearl

(Cautiously walks in with a backpack on. She is a bit nerdy and clumsy but seems like she really has a kind heart... if only she could get past her shyness.) Umm, hey Tyler. Is it too early? I know you said 4 o'clock since you needed to clean up and it's 3:55 now. If

I'm too early I'll just go outside and wait in the drizzle.

Tyler

No! No, it's...

Pearl

Too early. Got it. (Heading straight for the door) I'll just wait outside for five minutes!

Tyler

But...

Pearl

Oh, is five minutes not long enough? Well maybe I'll just go home for an hour or day or lifetime or something...

Tyler

No, don't do that (Tyler tries to cut her off before the door)

Pearl

Oh, did I do something wrong? Maybe this wasn't such a good idea. Could we possibly reschedule for next decade...

Tyler

Come on (Brushes by her and grabs her hand to take her to the couch. Both stop shyly and realise he is holding her hand for a beat and they drop it. Tyler continues to the

opposite side of the room.) Why don't we just have a seat on the couch and just jump right into this tutoring session. (She nods in agreement and sits at the far side of the couch.)

Pearl  
Sure, let's do that.

Tyler  
Awesome.

Pearl  
I really like your house from the inside.

Tyler  
Thanks. I live here. Um... but you already knew that which is why you are here to be tutored.

Pearl  
That's ok. I don't know why I'm so nervous. We're just studying.

Tyler  
Right? Just two people studying science sitting on a couch.

Pearl  
So where should we start?

Tyler  
(Dazed) Start with what?

Pearl  
Tutoring?

Tyler  
Oh of course. Let's go over the test you got back today and maybe learn from the mistakes... Now the test was on attraction...I'll... erm... just scoot a little closer.... I mean... if that's ok with you...

Pearl  
Yes! Ahem.... I mean... that's fine. In the name of science, of course.

Tyler

(After a few moments as Pearl is getting her test out) You know what, Pearl?

Pearl

You want me to leave, don't you?

Tyler

No! I was just thinking that this room gets the highest traffic in the house and I don't want us to be disturb... I mean... bothered by my parents walking in and out. You know how parents can be.

Pearl

Extremely strict helicopter parenting skills that are incredibly overbearing and borderline crazy?

Tyler

Well, I was going to say nosey.

Pearl

Yeah, ok. That makes more sense I suppose.

Tyler

Would you.... want to go to my room and study. If you want. No pressure. I mean...

Pearl

Your room (Swallows hard).

Tyler

Yeah.

Pearl

Where you sleep? (voice cracks a little)

Tyler

I guess that's true.

Pearl

Sure, why not (She giggles a little but tries to control it and collects her things. They get up and make their way to the stairs. Tyler forgets all his papers and the energy drink sitting on the table.)

Tyler

I hope you don't mind. My room might be a little messy.

Pearl

That's ok with me. I don't mind.

(They exit up the stairs but Tyler returns to retrieve his can of energy drink).

Tyler

Almost forgot you. You may not be the tastiest but you're still satisfying.

Pearl

(From off stage) Tyler! Which room is it? (Tyler runs off giddily)

Tyler

Second door on the right... (exits up the stairs)

Susan

(Entering from kitchen with Bill. Bill carries a mug of soup) So you think I'm just low on power steering fluid? Alright, I'll give it a try I guess. How's the soup?

Bill

(Under his breath) Not as satisfying as squirrel DNA.

Susan

What was that?

Bill

Oh I said it's the best in the world, yay! Thank you so much hun. It hits the spot.

Susan

I was thinking, Perhaps I've been shopping too much.

Bill

(Bill chokes on soup) What?!

Susan

(Worried about the choking.) Bill, what's the matter?

Bill

(Covering) Burnt my tongue... what...what about shopping?

Susan

We could be developing a savings instead of me spending, spending , spending all the time. So I'm giving up for a while, no matter how good the sale is and, on top of that, I'm not going out without you anymore. I mean, had you been there today I would not have had to turn around and come home. We can SPEND together! (Cheesy joke alert)  
Spend time together that is! What do you say, Big Guy!?

Bill

(Bill's world is decimated and he poorly tries to hide it) But... but.. that's... umm... (he is saved by Tyler entering to retrieve a teaching guide he forgot) Tyler! There's my boy.  
Your mother was just telling me a really funny joke.

Tyler

I'm just running down here to get my science notes for the test (as he picks it up from the table and quickly turns to run back up the stairs)

Susan

Oh! Are you tutoring someone today?

Tyler

Yeah, didn't Dad mention it?

Susan

Nope... why are you in your nasty room? You usually study down here where your guest isn't liable to get tetanus.

Tyler

No reason... just didn't want ... you know, interrupted I guess. No big deal Mom.

Susan

Why? Is it a girl?

Bill

Susan!

Tyler

Mom!

Susan



Oh my goodness! It is, isn't it!! But.... you... oh (goes to hug on him) my little boy is growing up so fast. Remember to open doors, compliment her, and nice pretty gifts work wonders. Do you need some money to buy her something?

Tyler

Well, I guess I could use some...

Bill

Now hold on just a second!

Susan

Bill, Tyler needs some money to entertain his lady friend!

Bill

Now, just hold on a minute.

Susan

Bill, give our son some money NOW!

Tyler

Yeah Dad! (Alluding that he could tell Susan about the lab) Don't worry. I'll keep it "hush"!

Bill

Is twenty enough? I can run to the bank if I need to. (Immediately getting out his wallet)

Susan

He needs at least 50 for a proper DATE with a GIIIIIRL!!! (Giddily laughing)

Tyler

Mom! Cut it out. She's gonna hear you. This is strictly tutoring!

Susan

Sure it is, loverboy...

Tyler

Mom, please don't do this.

Susan

Why don't you bring her down to introduce us?

Tyler

For one, that would make it awkward since we are just studying. I am not taking her on a date and don't need 50 dollars again.

Susan  
Again?

Tyler

And secondly, you already know her so let's not make it a big deal. It's just Pearl from down the street.

Susan

Pearl? Really?! Awwww Tyler... Pearl is such a cute nice girl. Isn't she nice Bill?

Bill

Oh yeah... she is the nicest. Tyler why don't you head back up there so she doesn't get lost in your amazing amount of clutter in your room.

Tyler

Good idea (Begins to head up the stairs and is stopped again by Susan)

Susan

Wait! Let me look at you (Fixes his hair, licks her fingertips to use the saliva to get his hair to lay, tries to pull up his pants and arrange his shirt until he stops her)

Tyler  
Can I go now?

Susan

Just wait a minute! I've got to tell you something first, Tyler.

Tyler

Fine but please make it quick.

Susan

Now, that girl up there is expecting you to be a good man to her. A knight in shining armor. And right now, you're more like Oscar the Grouch.

Bill

Well, his room does look like he lives inside a trash can.

Susan

So real quick we're gonna give you some lessons on being a good man. (To Bill) Aren't we, Bill?!

Bill

Oh no, this is all on you!

Susan

See son, that was your first lesson... in what not to say to a woman. Ever. Bill, you're helping me whether you want to or not. (She sits next to Bill) See, normally, your father is... well... obsessive, poorly dressed, he's a mouth breather, and can't hold a conversation that doesn't put people to sleep to save his life...

Bill

Well thanks Hun. I love you too, but you can take it easy on the compliments. My ego is big enough as it is.

Susan

No! I'm not trying to belittle you but I'm about to make a point. All of those things are things I grew to tolerate a little bit by little bit, but while we were courting....

Bill

I was her knight in shining armor! And nobody calls it courting anymore hun. I don't think they called it courting when WE were courting.

Susan

He knew he wanted to keep me around so he worked hard to be loyal, kind, and gentlemanly, always picked up the check, opened doors, tipped the waitstaff, picked up after himself.

Bill

You know, I think he gets the point.

Susan

Nice to the elderly...

Bill

Susan, he's got it now.

Susan

Closed his mouth when he chewed...

Bill

That is enough, Susan. He gets the picture!

Susan

Really!? Are you sure?

Tyler

Yeah I get it. I'll close my mouth when I chew. And now I better get back up there before she feels abandoned.

Susan

Good point. Go young man! (Tyler bolts to the stairs) Wait! (Tyler stops again)  
Remember, be a gentleman and don't screw it up. (Tyler exits quickly)

Bill

Susan, let him go!

Susan

I'm just trying to help. I've got insight into the womanly mind that he could use. Why won't he just learn the lessons I'm telling him. They are gold! I have volumes of information in my head that could help keep that girl on his arm.

Bill

He's gone now!

Susan

Do you think any of that at all sunk in with him?

Bill

Umm... I don't know. I think I was too busy being obsessive to notice. And a... what was it... poor dresser? Mouth breather?

Susan

Oh, don't be a baby. Besides, you clean up real nice.... when I dress you.

Bill

Words hurt, Susan.

Susan

You know what? Tyler forgot to get some soup while he was down here.

Bill  
Susan...

Susan  
Maybe I should take it up to him?

Bill  
Leave him alone, Susan.

Susan  
But Bill.... he's soupin'!

Bill  
He's what? Oh I mean.... No, he's not soupin' right now!  
(Tyler and Pearl enter from stairs. Pearl looks as if she is sick)

Pearl  
It's fine. I promise.

Tyler  
Are you sure you are ok?

Pearl  
Yeah, I'm just not feeling very well and I'm gonna go home.

Tyler  
Oh.... ok.

Pearl  
Maybe we can reschedule something...

Tyler  
Absolutely, just let me know when is good for you. I am completely open.

Pearl  
Thanks... and sorry for ruining your afternoon.

Tyler  
Oh no. I didn't have plans anyway.

Pearl

Well, I better go now. (Exits)

Tyler

(Turns around to see his parents staring at him) What?! She was sick! I'm feeling a little bit nutty too. I'm going to go and lay down in bed for a while.

Bill

Ok Son. Hope you feel better.

Susan

Alright.... oh Tyler.

Tyler

Yeah Mom.

Susan

You screwed it up!

(Curtain)

## Act II

(The curtain opens and Bill sits at the table impatiently tapping his fingers as loudly and annoyingly as possible. After a bit he gets up and paces. He has a ton on his mind.)

Bill

(Talking to himself) I'll just go up there and get the can. The boy leaves half drunk cans all around the house all the time. I can't believe I didn't notice he took the can. Maybe I can act like I'm cleaning his room and quietly take the can. Who am I kidding? He's a teenager, it would look really sketchy if I was trying to clean his room. Besides, there are probably a dozen cans sitting around up there. It's been three days, though, and I haven't seen him. I can hear him rustling around. I should just go up....

(Susan enters now with an empty jar in her hand)

Susan

Bill, next time you use up all the peanut butter in this can you will be banned! Hear my words, I'm tired as heck from dragging you to the store to replace everything in the house. I am trying to keep my oath to spend more time with you and at the store you make it so difficult. Just stop devouring the peanut butter every second of the day!

Okay?

Bill

What are you talking about? I've been too worried to eat!

Susan

Too worried about what?

Bill

Excuse me?

Susan

You said you were too worried to eat. What are you so worried about?

Bill

Er... umm... Reverse osmosis! Our water bottles are all filtered that way and I'm worried it's the wrong way to do it. Who knows what someone could consume unexpectedly! What if Tyler ingested something that was dangerous?

Susan

Whatever, Bill. So I guess Tyler is to blame for the peanut butter then? (Sets the jar down in front of Bill) Is Tyler at school?

Bill

Long weekend this week. He's up in his room. You going to ask him about the peanut butter?

Susan

I have bought a new jar every day for the past 3 days, but every time I go to the kitchen the jar is on the counter empty.

Bill

(Picks up jar and inspects it) Did Tyler wash it out? It looks spotless.

Susan

I think it was licked clean. Teenagers! Anyway, I gotta run to the grocery to get more, and I know I said you would be coming too but...

Bill

But?

Susan

You're driving me absolutely bananas, Bill!

Bill

Ain't that flattering!

Susan

I can't stand it. I get the shopping done so much quicker when you aren't there moping around. So we'll just have to make the rest of our time together special as opposed to being around each other all the time. What do you think? You think we can just make our time together special?

Bill

I think I'll miss you terribly! Now get out of here! (He gets up grabs her purse and puts it on her shoulder and is pushing her to the door) I was hoping for a peanut butter sandwich anyway, so this works great.

(Bill opens the door and ushers Susan out unceremoniously)

Susan

I'll be back soon.



Bill  
Miss you already

Susan  
Oh, did you want the regular peanut butter or the chu...(As he slams the door in her face.)

Bill  
Love you too honey. (He doesn't even wait before he turns around and starts getting the lab set up. He half does it and brings the fossil out and sets it on the table) I know I already extracted some of your marrow little fossil but I'm sure you got more in there. Just a small amount and we will be golden. After that it will be all about documenting, publishing, and then a straight trip to the Nobel Prize. Huh. Nobel Prize for uncovering an ancient squirrel. Life is strange. Wish I still had the original sample.... I can't really use an energy-drink-tainted sample anymore. Right?! What was I thinking? (He brings out a syringe to do the extracting when suddenly Susan re-enters the house with Agent Leo Pluridon and they are both shocked at what they are seeing.)

Susan  
Well! (She says loudly so that it scares Bill who shrieks like a frightened preteen girl)  
Good thing you're here, Officer Pluridon! There's a dead man in my house!

Bill  
Honey! (To Susan) Strange man I've never met before! (To Leo) I can explain. I can explain everything!

Susan  
We're gonna put a BIG pin in this for right now, because this gentleman would like to ask us some questions, Bill, but believe me we are going to discuss this in spectacular detail. Understand!?

Leo  
No! That's ok...Please explain!! I've seen some wild things in my job but I just gotta know the story behind this.

Bill  
I'm sorry... who are you? Why are you in my house? Why am I explaining to you?

Leo  
Oh, my apologies. My name is Agent Leo Pluridon. I'm a government agent on business.... but let's get back to you, Dr. Moreau!

Susan  
Can't wait to hear it.

Bill  
Hold on! The Government? For what government agency do you work?

Leo  
Unfortunately, I can't officially tell you that as the department I work for is top secret with all other information on a need to know basis. All I can say is that I have a badge and make people disappear on a moment's notice. (He pauses, letting that sink in) I'm just messing with ya! It's the P.A.N.S.I.E . The Public Animal and Nature Social Investigation Effort. Now, please, if you will, continue your story.

Bill  
Ok... Susan, this was.... is killing me. I've been wanting to tell you. Here goes. I've come across a rare and interesting fossil that I dug up in our own yard from a prehistoric squirrel breed and I've been experimenting on it on the weekends when you've been out shopping to look at its DNA.

Susan  
On my good dining room table!! (Pointing at the dining room) Bill, we eat there (Bill shoots her a glance) ....sometimes... at Thanksgiving!!

Bill  
It's the best lit room in the house so I made it my work station. Surprise! (Nervous and shaking)

Leo  
Classic! Wait... what if she wasn't going to go shopping?! (Both Susan and Bill look at Leo with a "who are you to ask anything" look)

Susan  
He's got a good question though. What if I wasn't going shopping? (Stands with arms folded with a piercing stare)

Bill  
What?! I don't know what you're talking about. Crazy lady! You? Not go shopping? Unheard of.... (Chuckles) Why are you looking at me like I got something to hide.... besides this stuff of course?

Susan

Spill it Mister, or so help me I'll put ammonia all over that thing and invite my Mother to come live with us and all you'll be able to do for the rest of your life is watch daytime soap operas and eat sugar free jello!!

Bill

Talk about Nagasaurus.... Fine. I've been printing out fake ads for things you want and then I put them into the newspaper for you to find. Ya happy now?

Leo

So you put the idea in her head without her knowing...It's kind of like Inception. Only not.

Bill

You. You're not helping.

Leo

That is devious!

Susan

It is devious!

Bill

Why does everyone keep using that word? I did what I thought I had to do! Susan, you hate this "boring science stuff." I spared you the unnecessary details!

Susan

Bill, you lied!

Bill

I omitted.

Susan

Bill, we are going to talk about this later... in private (acknowledging Leo). Agent Pluridon, will you please come in and make yourself comfortable.

Leo

Ma'am I'm pretty sure "comfortable" went out the window when you told me your husband was a dead man. But if you two take a seat on the couch I'll just state my business, ask you some questions and be on my way!

Susan

Sure. (Bill and Susan take seats on the couch about as far away from each other as possible)

Leo

(Pacing) I've been asked to come here and talk with the community by my superiors because your street has become the epicenter of a mass animal disappearance over the course of the last three days. Our call center has been ringing off the hook for days with reports of missing pets, strays, livestock, fish, even the kindergarten class guinea pig Fluffles. Now, that wouldn't be such a big deal except now an area girl has gone missing and my department thinks the instances may be linked.

Bill

Linked how? I don't understand.

Susan

Well maybe if you'd let him finish... Go on Agent Pluridon

Leo

Maybe the abductor is new to this and had to work his or her way up to kidnapping an actual person. Gaining confidence and experience. It happens all the time. It's a terrible thing.

Bill

And the department of Public Animals and Nature Science Investigation Effort handles these things often?

Leo

I'll be honest. This is the first case of its kind.

Susan

I thought you said it happens all the time?

Leo

Not at this scale. That's why the Agency sent the best of the best. I always get my man...or animal.

Susan

Oh my... how can we help?

Bill

Absolutely. Anything we can do?

Leo

Yes. Actually you can help in a big way. I'm told this is the last place the girl was seen.  
Can you tell me what happened here three nights ago?

Bill

Wait? Are you...

Susan

Oh my. The missing girl is Pearl? Oh dear. Agent Pluridon...

Leo

I apologize. I was under the assumption you already knew who it was. I assumed someone had told you she was missing. Yes, it is Pearl who is missing. Also, you can call me Leo...

Susan

Leo, she came over here to be tutored by our son. She wasn't here very long as she left here ill in a bit of a hurry.

Bill

Yeah, she bolted right out the front door! That poor girl!

Leo

You say your son was tutoring her? Is he here... and may I have words with him?

Bill

He should be here. I've been hearing him up in his room all day. Sounds like he's rearranging his room.

Susan

I'll go get him. Oh, he's just going to be devastated! Bill, entertain Leo please. (Susan gets up exits up stairs)

Bill

Mr. Pluridon?

Leo

Agent! or just Leo.

Bill

Agent Pluridon... would you like a drink or snack or anything?

Leo

Mr. Beaker, I've trained my whole life for an opportunity to show the Department what I can do. I'm relentless. I'm quick. I'm confident. And on top of that I always get to the bottom of any situation. As I will tell any culprit, you can try to run cause everyone does, but you'll find you're not good enough because I'm the man. I can handcuff three men simultaneously you know. Figure that one out. Do you know how I can be so confident?

Bill

Um... no.

Leo

I. Don't. Snack.

Bill

(Pause) A simple no probably would have done it. (Under his breathe) Show off.

Leo

I'm sure you understand the pressure I'm under with this, Mr. Beaker!

Bill

That's King or just Bill (Leo looks at him weird). I was trying to bring some levity to the room. Sorry. It was getting depressing up in here.

(Susan re-enters pretty flustered)

Susan

Mr. Pluridon... I mean Agent Leo...

Bill

He prefers Fluffles

Susan

Whatever your name is... I'm afraid our Tyler must have stepped out for a while without telling us.

Leo

He's not here?

