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WOWIE, HOWIE!

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“DON’T FORGET
THE CHICKEN MONSTER.”

—MRS. WILSON

WOWIE, HOWIE!

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WOWIE, HOWIE!

FARCE. Howie, a college freshman, has a problem meeting girls – they don't want to meet him. Howie is so socially inept, his best friend is his pet canary, Larry, and the two even wear matching outfits! When a sorority desperate for members accidentally accepts Howie as a pledge, Howie moves into the sorority house thinking this will help him meet girls. But when he spills a huge sack of birdseed all over the floor, gets his pants stuck in the toilet, drinks a glass of slime, and annoys just about every girl in the house, Howie finds his chances of getting a date rather slim, especially when the campus police chief arrives to close down the sorority after reports that a huge yellow chicken was seen entering the premises.

Performance Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(5 M, 14 F, opt. extras)

WHITNEY: College senior, president of the sorority.

RODAH: College junior, vice president of the sorority.

NYLA: College junior, secretary-treasurer of the sorority.

EMILIA: College sophomore, rush chairperson.

COOKIE: Tiny, but tough pledge. Note: She can be any size.

LAUREN: Overly happy pledge.

CELESTE: Very shy pledge.

HOWIE: College freshman; his hair is mussed and he wears eyeglasses, a crooked bow tie, a patterned shirt, a differently patterned open vest, mismatched pants, and socks.

LARRY: Howie's smart-alecky human-sized pet canary and best friend; his wardrobe matches Howie's.

MRS. WILSON: Middle-aged; sorority counselor; no-nonsense, business-oriented.

CHIEF: College security officer; wears a campus police uniform with a gun and holster belt, a badge, and a cap; flexible.

TOM: Nerdish member of the Alpha Male Fraternity; wears a dress shirt and tie but no jacket; his hair is plastered to his scalp.

JOHN: Nerdish member of the Alpha Male Fraternity; wears a dress shirt and tie but no jacket; his hair is plastered to his scalp.

GIRLS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Sorority girls.

EXTRAS (Optional): As sorority girls.

NOTE: The names of characters may be changed to reflect the ethnic makeup of the cast

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SETTING

The present. The Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode Sorority House on the campus of the Spotted Turtle State College. There are chair groupings, decorative wall hangings, house plants, and a telephone. At SL is a doorway into the kitchen. At SR is the door that leads outside. UC is a large arched opening with hallways right and left. Left goes upstairs (the stairs do not have to be visible) and right goes to the broom closet and other rooms.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: The interior of the sorority house following fall rush.

ACT II: The interior of the sorority house the next evening.

PROPS

Papers	Small CD player and speakers
Watch, for Nyla	Bag of balloons
Watch, for Rodah	Semi-formal dresses, for sorority girls
Watch, for Whitney	2 Colored CDs (can be colored with CD/DVD markers)
Cardboard boxes	Robe or smoking jacket and ascot, for Howie and Larry
Suitcases, or boxes, or bags	2 Straws cut in half
Comic books	Ugly, ill-fitting dress, large fan or shawl, for Howie and Larry
Books	2 Large brightly-colored mop sponges
Leash	Bathrobe, nightgown or pajamas, hair curlers, for Mrs. Wilson
3 Glasses of water	Pajamas, for Chief
Note	Handcuffs
Bags	Misc. personal belongings, for Sorority Girls
Small umbrella	Half a bag of cookies
Phone	Pizza boxes
Cell phone	Sodas
Huge bag of birdseed	
Glass of green liquid	
Armchairs and/or sofa	
Twinkie or cupcake	
Vase of flowers	
Long boxer shorts, for Howie	
Large cooking pot	
Trashcan	
Half-deflated balloons	
Ugly party decorations	
Table	

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SOUND EFFECTS

Doorbell or knocking

Whack sound (made by
slapping two planks
together)

Telephone ringing

Clanging of pots and pans

Agonizing scream

Raucous dance song

Romantic song

Upbeat song

Loud noisy song

ACT I

(AT RISE: The interior of the Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode sorority house following fall rush. The room is totally trashed with empty pizza and fried chicken boxes and soda cans. An angry Whitney, president of the sorority, paces in front of Rodah, Nyla, and Emilia. Other Sorority Girls may be present. Whitney is carrying papers.)

WHITNEY: *(Indicates papers.)* I can't believe it. I don't believe it. This is impossible. Entirely impossible.

EMILIA: But true.

WHITNEY: *(Angrily.)* Did I ask you, Emilia? Did I?

EMILIA: Sorry.

WHITNEY: We've got to do better than this. We've got to do a lot better than this. *(Sorority Girls ad-lib "Yes!" "Much better," "You're right," etc. Pointedly to Rodah.)* You've got to do better than this.

RODAH: But, Whitney, I'm only the vice-president. I gave Nyla the authority to spend all the money necessary to get more recruits.

(Whitney turns to Nyla. Nyla looks up from her notes.)

NYLA: *(To Whitney.)* Well, don't look at me. I gave the entire treasury to Emilia.

(Nyla points to Emilia.)

WHITNEY: And how much was that?

(Nyla quickly checks her notes.)

NYLA: Five dollars and 39 cents.

WHITNEY: (*Angrily to Emilia.*) For that much money, Emilia, we should have more than three new pledges. (*Pause. To Nyla.*) Five dollars and 39 cents?!

NYLA: And I chipped in the 39 cents.

WHITNEY: (*To Rodah.*) That's all? Five dollars and 39 cents?!

RODAH: We had a rush party.

WHITNEY: We had over a thousand dollars in that fund.

RODAH: We had a *big* rush party.

NYLA: Yeah. We probably ought to clean up. (*The other Girls glare at her.*) Next week, maybe. Or the week after.

WHITNEY: (*To Emilia.*) So what did you do with the five dollars and 39 cents?

EMILIA: I bought each of our pledges a Coke.

WHITNEY: We only had three pledges.

EMILIA: Have you seen what they're charging for Cokes in the cafeteria these days? I had to add 44 cents from my own very thin wallet. Course, I did have chips with my Coke.

WHITNEY: Emilia, will you shut up?!

EMILIA: I guess so.

WHITNEY: Then do it! You've got to be the worst recruiter this side of the moon.

EMILIA: The moon is in outer space.

WHITNEY: Which is exactly where your head is.

EMILIA: Then why did you reappointment me?

RODAH: 'Cause nobody else would do it.

WHITNEY: (*To Emilia.*) This is the second year you've been our recruitment counselor.

EMILIA: And the fourth year we've been last in recruitment. It didn't start with me.

WHITNEY: I'm thinking of de-pledging you.

EMILIA: I'm not a pledge. I'm a member.

WHITNEY: Then maybe I'll have you arrested on some trumped-up charge and sent to prison for life. (*Pause.*) For *three* lives maybe.

EMILIA: Why do I get the impression I'm not respected here?

RODAH: I respect you, Emilia.

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WHITNEY: What?!

RODAH: (*Cowed.*) Well, I mean, not for the recruitment.

EMILIA: (*To Whitney.*) Why do you blame me for everything?

WHITNEY: I don't blame you for everything.

EMILIA: You do. When we had a leaky roof, you blamed me because I had climbed up there to retrieve a kite.

WHITNEY: You put your foot through the roof and left a hole there.

EMILIA: It was your kite I rescued.

WHITNEY: Definitely your fault.

EMILIA: And you blamed me when your boyfriend stood you up last year.

WHITNEY: Well, you were manning the phone.

EMILIA: But he didn't call.

WHITNEY: I can't believe that.

EMILIA: And now you blame me for not having enough new pledges when I only had five dollars to court them with.

NYLA: And 39 cents.

EMILIA: I get blamed for everything that goes wrong in this house.

RODAH: And with justification. Right, Whitney?

WHITNEY: Right, Rodah. (*To Emilia.*) I guess I do blame you for everything, Emilia. (*Pause.*) Because everything is your fault.

EMILIA: (*Exasperated.*) Argh!

WHITNEY: Let's get back to the subject at hand. We're in serious trouble here. Our charter could be revoked for lack of members. (*All Sorority Girls except Emilia ad-lib "Oh no," etc. and gasp.*) And our house could be shuttered for lack of funds to pay the mortgage. (*All Sorority Girls except Emilia ad-lib "Oh no," etc. and gasp.*) Then we would be left on the street to beg for pennies from the Gamma-Gamma-Poo-Poo and the Kappa-and-a-Gown-a Sororities. (*All Sorority Girls except Emilia ad-lib "Oh no," etc. and gasp. Building in power.*) Oh, yes! And each of us could be stripped—I said "stripped"—of our membership in...stand up, girls! (*The*

Sorority Girls stand at attention and hold their hands in their secret position.) Our membership in...

ALL: ...Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode Sorority.
Mmm-mmm, good! *(They give the secret salute that ends with an audible sound.)* Ooh!

(All but Whitney sit.)

WHITNEY: We, whose proud symbol is a slice of delicious blueberry pie with a generous scoop of vanilla ice cream on top, are in total meltdown. We needed a big year in recruitment. And what did we get? Three new pledges. Other sororities have 30, 40, 121. We have...three! *(She stares at Emilia.)* What do you have to say for yourself, Emilia? Huh?

EMILIA: But Whitney...

WHITNEY: At this moment, I am not Whitney. I am Madam President. Tomorrow I will probably be Madam Homeless-Bum-on-the-Street. But today I am Madam President.

EMILIA: Okay. Madam President—

WHITNEY: Don't talk to me. I'm too angry to be talked to. *(She glances at the pages in her hand.)* If these high school grades of our new pledges are to be believed, all three will flunk out the first week of classes.

EMILIA: I think Celeste can make it the entire term.

(The others glare at Emilia.)

RODAH: *(Skeptical.)* Yeah. If we hire someone to take her exams for her.

NYLA: That's a thought.

(Whitney looks over a different sheet.)

WHITNEY: As for Cookie, at least she reads. She says her favorite books are "I Was a Teenage Zombie" and "Aliens Under My Bed."

EMILIA: Those are comic books.

WHITNEY: Oh, great. (*Looking at her sheets again.*) And Lauren's favorite sport is kissing and making out.

NYLA: I can go for that.

WHITNEY: (*To Nyla.*) Nyla, are you crazy?

NYLA: A little. Why?

WHITNEY: Never mind. Emilia, you were supposed to get us some high-quality recruits. (*Pause.*) Skip the "high quality" part. To get us recruits. Any kind of recruits. But more than three recruits.

EMILIA: Well, actually, I did. I got...four.

WHITNEY: There are only three names on the list.

EMILIA: Well, she sorta, you know, missed the deadline.

WHITNEY: She's such an idiot she missed the deadline?

EMILIA: We needed every body we could get.

WHITNEY: What's her name?

EMILIA: (*Looking suspicious.*) Uhhh, don't know.

WHITNEY: What's her GPA?

EMILIA: Don't know.

WHITNEY: What's her sport?

EMILIA: Don't know.

WHITNEY: Don't know, don't know, don't know? You invited her to join our sorority, and you don't know anything about her?

EMILIA: He's a warm body.

NYLA: Then he's qualified.

WHITNEY: He?

EMILIA: "She." I meant "she." You know I meant "she."

WHITNEY: But we never saw her at any of our parties.

EMILIA: What's to see? She has two eyes, two ears, and a nose in the middle of her face. She looks normal. I guess.

RODAH: I move we accept her.

EMILIA: And she agreed to live here in the sorority house.

WHITNEY: *(Smiles.)* Oh! Well, in that case. Everybody in favor of accepting her because she might prevent us from becoming decertified and tossed out on the street, raise your hands. *(Before they have a chance to respond, Whitney continues.)* Accepted. Well, that's something. We have so many empty rooms upstairs that a family of mice has claimed two of them. And they don't pay rent.

(She is interrupted by the ringing of the doorbell or a knocking at the door at SR.)

RODAH: That must be them now.

EMILIA: I'll get it.

(Emilia goes to the door. Nyla checks her watch.)

NYLA: Yeah. Fashionably late.

(Rodah checks her watch.)

RODAH: Fashionably late is 15 minutes or so. Two and a half hours late is impossibly rude. Isn't that right, Madam President?

(Emilia opens the door.)

EMILIA: Hi. You're late. That's impossibly rude.

(Very upbeat and vivacious, Lauren screams a happy scream, Aiiee!, and hugs Emilia.)

LAUREN: Oh, a super hello to you. I'm Lauren. It's so nice to see you again. I have seen you before, haven't I?

EMILIA: Every night for the past two weeks. I'm Emilia.

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(Lauren sees the other Sorority Girls and screams again. She rushes to them and hugs each and every one and adlibs, "I'm Lauren," "I love it, I love it," "I love you," "I love Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode! With ice-cream on top," "This is so neat," etc.)

LAUREN: This is wonderful. I'm going to be so happy here.

(She looks at Emilia.) Aren't I?

EMILIA: Oh, yeah.

LAUREN: I knew it, I knew it! This is going to be so much fun.

(Lauren moves aside. Cookie enters from the open door carrying an open cardboard box. She is tiny [or can be any size], but bitter and tough.)

EMILIA: This is Cookie.

COOKIE: *(She growls.)* Any of you stink bombs read the comics? I mean, I could read real books if I had to, but all of modern philosophical thinking can be summed up in two words.

WHITNEY: And those two words are?

COOKIE: Comic books! *(She pulls a handful from her cardboard box.)* And anybody who laughs at my comics gets my fist right in the eye.

NYLA: I thought you were supposed to laugh at comics.

COOKIE: Not these. These are serious comics. I got through two high school literature classes and one history class by reading nothing but comics.

WHITNEY: *(Trying to smile.)* Well! Bully for you.

COOKIE: Who's a bully?

WHITNEY: Nobody. Nobody's a bully. Just sit. *(Cookie snarls.)* Please.

(Cookie sits. Celeste enters from the still open door carrying a suitcase or box. She has a very nervous shake.)

CELESTE: Hi, everyone. I'm...uhhh...my name is...uhhh....

EMILIA: Celeste.

CELESTE: No, no. That's not right. Wait. Is that right? I'm who?

EMILIA: Celeste.

CELESTE: Okay. That sounds familiar. *(To the others.)* I'm sorry. I get a little nervous when I'm...nervous. You know, like now.

EMILIA: You were nervous at all our parties, too.

WHITNEY: On Thursday night, you spilled your drink all over your dress.

RODAH: On Friday night, you spilled your drink all over my dress!

NYLA: On Saturday night, you tripped and fell into the punch bowl.

CELESTE: *(She giggles nervously.)* Oh, well, that's me. You know. Parties make me...nervous. *(She shakes all over in an exaggerated style.)* Excuse me. Can you show me to my room? I need to lock myself inside the closet for a while. I'm so...so....

EMILIA: Nervous?

CELESTE: Yeah. I think so. Nervous.

(Just as Emilia pushes the front door closed, Howie steps into the doorway and is hit by the door and knocked backward. Note: A loud "whack" sound is heard offstage when the door hits Howie. The noise can be made by slapping two planks together.)

HOWIE: Owwww!

RODAH: I think you beaned someone, Emilia.

EMILIA: Oh! *(She starts to reopen the door.)*

WHITNEY: *(To Emilia.)* Forget it. It was just a guy.

EMILIA: Yeah, but, he might be....

WHITNEY: I thought you said there were four pledges.

EMILIA: Right. That's what I said. Four.

WHITNEY: Well, I count three. One, two, three.

EMILIA: There are four.

WHITNEY: Well, we can't wait on the last one. Come on, girls. We'll show you to your rooms.

(She crosses to the archway UC, followed by Nyla, Rodah, and the new pledges. As usual, Lauren screams happily, Cookie looks around snarling, and Celeste stumbles every step from nervousness. If there are other Sorority Girls, they remain in the room and mime chatting among themselves or reading. Emilia pauses at right.)

LAUREN: *(Screams in delight.)* Our very own private rooms!
(She screams again.)

WHITNEY: *(To Lauren.)* Do you scream a lot?

LAUREN: Only when I'm happy. Or sad. Or in-between.
(She screams.) I can't help it!

RODAH: Have you ever been choked?

LAUREN: No. Why?

RODAH: I'm thinking about trying it.

WHITNEY: Quiet, Rodah. I'm sure we'll think of some way to help poor Lauren.

LAUREN: Help me? What's wrong with me?

WHITNEY: Upstairs, girls. Emilia, while we're gone, get us something to drink. Something cold and juicy and sugary. Come on, girls.

(Involved in small conversations, they exit through the archway and turn SL.)

EMILIA: *(To herself.)* What am I...the slave around here? *(She crosses to the archway and calls after them.)* The only thing we have is water... *(To herself.)* ...if the water company hasn't cut it off yet.

(Emilia exits to the kitchen down left. Howie enters from the front door, reeling and holding his head. His hair is mussed and he wears

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eyeglasses, a crooked bow tie, a patterned shirt, a differently patterned open vest and mismatched pants and socks. He carries some books and papers and holds a leash that extends out the door.)

HOWIE: Wowie, Howie! I think I have a slight headache.

(First half of Girls scream, "Ahhhhhh!")

GIRL 1: It's a man! A man!

GIRL 2: It's a boy.

GIRL 1: A male! A male person in our sorority house!

(First half of Girls scream "Ahhhhhh!" and exit in several directions, spinning Howie around as they pass him.)

HOWIE: What? What's going on?

(The second half of the Girls seem frightened but remain.)

GIRL 3: What's the leash for? You got a dog?

HOWIE: Not exactly. *(He calls off left.)* Larry! Come on in, Larry. Come on.

(Larry enters. He is a man-sized bright yellow canary on a leash. He wears eyeglasses, a crooked bow tie, and an open vest, all matching Howie's. Since Larry talks in canary-speak, no one but the audience can understand him. Larry, however, seems to understand people-talk. Larry whistles a brief merry tune and waves a wing toward the Girls.)

LARRY: Hidey-ho!

(Second half of Girls scream a different scream, "Yeeiii!")

GIRL 3: It's a bird! A bird!

GIRL 4: It's a blimp! A big yellow blimp!

GIRL 3: A giant blimp! A giant male blimp in our sorority house!

(Second half of Girls scream "Yeeiii!" and exit in several directions, spinning Howie and Larry around.)

HOWIE: Wow! That was some reception!

LARRY: A blimp? Did they call me a big yellow blimp? *(He shakes his feathers in anger.)* One could be insulted by that.

HOWIE: Don't feel badly, Larry. You don't look anything like a... *(He looks Larry over.)* Well, I guess you could stand to lose a little weight.

LARRY: I am not that big!

HOWIE: *(Calls out softly.)* Hello? Anybody home? Hello? *(To Larry.)* Nobody's home.

LARRY: Yeah, right. It was the wind that slammed the door on your head.

HOWIE: The headache has gone straight to my face. It's the worst face-ache I've ever had.

LARRY: What about the time I pecked you on the nose so hard your nose sank into your face, and you had to tie a string to it to pull it back out? Huh? What about that?

HOWIE: Of course, one time I did have a nose ache. Not the same thing. *(Pause.)* Once I get settled in, it'll be time to set up my dates for the next month.

LARRY: You don't have a lot of luck with women, Howie. You'll be lucky to set up a date for next year.

HOWIE: The women really love me, Larry. To them, I'm adorable.

LARRY: Oh, yeah? What about the time Rachel smacked you on the head with your own frying pan?

HOWIE: Of course, there was the time Rachel hit me. But that was just a love tap. *(Pause.)* Of course, she was in such a hurry to leave that she dove out the window...while the window was still closed.

LARRY: Did you have the impression she wanted to get away from you...real fast?

HOWIE: The worst part was that she took my frying pan with her. I reported the theft to the police, but I never got it back.

LARRY: And then there was Sophie...

HOWIE: I don't want to think about Sophie. There was that time I tried to kiss her and got my tongue stuck in her braces. And Bridget...

LARRY: Bridget was big.

HOWIE: How could I have known she played right tackle for the New York Giants?

LARRY: She crushed every piece of furniture in your apartment—some by sitting on them, others just by looking at them.

HOWIE: She broke my little pinkie... *(He holds it up.)* ...before she broke every other bone in my body. You know what, Larry? Dating has been a disaster for me.

LARRY: You and women don't mix.

HOWIE: I should stay away from women.

LARRY: You should not date women. In fact, you shouldn't even call them.

HOWIE: Remember how Beatrice busted my eardrum just talking on the phone? *(Pause.)* And she was talking to somebody else at the time.

LARRY: Poor Howie.

HOWIE: No more women. I'm swearing off women. That's it. I quit. I'm having nothing to do with them for the rest of my life. *(Pause.)* Or until I get a date. Whichever comes first.

(Emilia enters from the archway with three glasses of water. When she sees Howie, she stops.)

EMILIA: Uhhh...?

HOWIE: *(To Larry.)* Larry, look. A person.

LARRY: It's been so long since you've had a date, you don't even recognize a girl when you see one.

HOWIE: I used to know what you call that species, but I've forgotten.

LARRY: Well, that "person" is carrying three glasses of water. Watch out for the big splash.

HOWIE: *(To Emilia.)* Wowie, Howie. I'm hi. I mean...

LARRY: He's tongue-tied around "persons."

HOWIE: Hi. I'm Howie.

EMILIA: Oh. It's about time you got here. *(She looks at the door.)* How did you get in?

HOWIE: Oh. *(With bravado.)* Well, I used my superior strength to knock the door off its hinges, and I walked right in. *(He glances at the door.)* I quickly repaired the hinges.

EMILIA: Do you always have a giant chicken with you?

LARRY: *(Insulted.)* Chicken? Did she say "chicken"? Hey! I'm a canary. You eat chickens, but you do not eat canaries. I mean, you've never heard the phrase, canary pot pie, have you? And it's not Kentucky Fried Canary.

HOWIE: Chicken? Oh, you mean Larry. He's a canary.

EMILIA: Larry the canary?

HOWIE: Yeah. You don't eat canaries, you know.

EMILIA: Sure you do. They're considered a delicacy in Lower Amphibia.

LARRY: *(Nervously, to Howie.)* Make sure we never visit this Lower Amphibia place.

HOWIE: *(To Emilia.)* Are you serious?

EMILIA: Just as serious as you are about knocking the door off its hinges.

HOWIE: Oh. Okay. *(Pause.)* I'm confused.

EMILIA: Not as confused as you're about to be.

(Whitney, Rodah, and Nyla appear at the archway but do not yet notice Howie or Larry.)

WHITNEY: *(Angrily.)* Emilia!

(Emilia crosses up to them.)

EMILIA: What? Why are you using my name in vain?

HOWIE: *(Exited, To Larry.)* Girls, Larry. Those are girls.
More people to idolize me.

LARRY: When they start idolizing you, Howie, you can bet
pigs have started flying and the bad place has frozen over.

WHITNEY: *(To Emilia.)* Why are you standing here with three
glasses of liquid refreshment when there are three new
pledges upstairs dying of thirst? *(She looks at the glasses.)*
What is that anyway?

EMILIA: Water.

WHITNEY: I asked for something sweet.

EMILIA: I added sugar.

WHITNEY: Emilia, can't you do anything right?

EMILIA: Oh. Well, do you remember when I told you we had
four new pledges?

WHITNEY: Even though only three showed up. Yes?

EMILIA: Well, I think the fourth one has arrived.

NYLA: Oh, good. Then we'll be able to pay our utilities.
Maybe. If I added right. Just barely, but I think we made it.

EMILIA: There's a problem.

RODAH: What? She's ugly?

EMILIA: Worse than that.

RODAH: There's something worse than being ugly?

EMILIA: Here. Take this water. *(She hands a glass to each girl.)*
You may need it.

WHITNEY: We don't need any water. We need to know
what's wrong with the new girl.

EMILIA: Well, the new girl...is a guy. *(She steps back and
gestures toward Howie and Larry.)* And he comes with a
"friend."

*(Whitney, Rodah, and Nyla simultaneously gasp and then take a
quick swig of water.)*

WHITNEY: Oh, my gosh!

(Whitney and the others move into the room. Larry waves his wings.)

LARRY: Hidey-ho! *(He whistles a brief tune.)*

RODAH: It's a yellow elephant...that whistles.

LARRY: I am not that big.

NYLA: No, no. It's a yellow cab that's smashed into our common room.

LARRY: A cab?!

EMILIA: Not the canary. Him. *(She points to Howie.)*

HOWIE: Wowie, Howie. I'm hi. No, no. I always get that part mixed up. *(He smiles. To Larry.)* Do you see how they're staring at me? They can't take their eyes off me.

LARRY: That's because they've never seen a crazy person up close before.

HOWIE: They're admiring my clothes.

LARRY: The only way they would admire your clothes is if they were blind.

WHITNEY: What...what are you doing here?

HOWIE: Oh. Well. *(He reads a small note in his hand and mispronounces some of the words.)* Is this the Tah-oh Tah-oh, Too Too Jimmi Jimmi Pi something or other house?

WHITNEY: That's close. What do you want?

HOWIE: Uh, to see my room?

WHITNEY: Your room?

HOWIE: Yes. I'm Howie. Howard. Howard Peterson. I was going to share a mansion on Posh Drive with a very wealthy friend this term, but I decided I would rather rough it, you know, live in poverty like regular students so I could get an honest feel for earthy college life, so I accepted your invitation to live here.

RODAH: That's impossible. See, this is a sorority house.

NYLA: A sorority house is for women only.

HOWIE: *(To Larry.)* Wow! This is even better than I had hoped.

LARRY: No, Howie. This is a very bad omen.

(Whitney glances at Emilia, who shrugs.)

WHITNEY: *(To Howie.)* Why don't you try the dorms? The office is in the main building.

HOWIE: No. See, I have the papers right here. *(He rifles through his papers, dropping half of them.)* Oh. Sorry. Those are just my accumulation of stocks and bonds I purchased before leaving home. I'll pick them up later.

NYLA: Why bother? They'll just blend in with the rest of the trash.

HOWIE: Here. *(He shows the paper to Whitney.)* Thirteen Sisterhood Drive. Is this 13 Sisterhood Drive?

WHITNEY: *(Tentatively.)* Yes.

HOWIE: *(He smiles.)* Good. As you can see, I've already paid for my room. Well, actually, my parents paid, but I delivered the check.

LARRY: He's real good at delivering things. *(Pause.)* But lousy at everything else.

WHITNEY: No. You don't understand. You can't stay here.

HOWIE: *(Ignoring her.)* So if you would show me to my room.

WHITNEY: *(Screams.)* You can't stay here!

RODAH: *(Equally loudly.)* No, you can't.

NYLA: *(Equally loudly.)* Absolutely not.

(Larry flutters his wings wildly and prances in a circle.)

LARRY: Yes, he caaaaaan!

HOWIE: *(To Larry, delighted.)* I know women. And women always mean the opposite of what they say. This is great. They can't wait for me to move in.

LARRY: Or move on.

HOWIE: I'll, uh, have my valet bring in my things. *(He turns to the door and turns back.)* Well, actually, I sent him home, so I guess I'll have to get them myself. *(Pause.)* Unless someone would like to help me. *(Silence.)* Okay, fine. Be right back. Come on, Larry.

LARRY: Don't expect me to carry anything. I don't carry things. I'm just here for my cuteness.

(Larry and Howie exit SR.)

WHITNEY: Did he hear a word we said? *(To Emilia.)* This is your fault.

EMILIA: My fault? What did I do?

WHITNEY: You invited her to join our sorority without even seeing her...I mean, him. And look what happened.

EMILIA: He was approved by the Pan-Hellenic Council. I thought he was a she.

WHITNEY: "Howie" is not even a girl's name.

EMILIA: Howie was I to know?

WHITNEY: Stop doing that. You got us into this mess. You've got to get us out of it. Get rid of him. Right now. Don't let him back into the house. Lock the door.

EMILIA: The lock has been broken since summer.

WHITNEY: Since summer?

EMILIA: Yeah. When you lost your key and broke down the door.

WHITNEY: Okay, well, let's bar the door. Girls! Shoulders against the door.

(The Girls start toward her.)

EMILIA: Stop. Stop. *(Girls stop.)* Whitney, you said we needed four pledges. We have four.

WHITNEY: So? We still can't let a man stay in a sorority house. It's against the rules.

EMILIA: If we don't, we'll lose the house to the mortgage company. You said so yourself.

NYLA: That's true. We're down to zip in our account. And I don't like the idea of living downtown at the soup kitchen.

WHITNEY: Soup kitchen? Do they really serve soup?

NYLA: For breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

(Whitney thinks.)

WHITNEY: All right, all right. But for only one semester.

RODAH: We can't do this. *(Pause.)* Can we?

EMILIA: He's in, or we're out.

WHITNEY: Looks like we're fresh out of choices.

RODAH: You're going to allow a guy to live here?

WHITNEY: *(Determined.)* Yes. Yes, yes, yes. *(Doubtful.)* I guess so. *(Whitney, Rodah, and Nyla pause two seconds, and then simultaneously gasp and drink another swig of water.)* But we'll have to keep this very quiet. If anyone finds out—the pledges, our advisor, or the council—we'll be decertified on the spot.

RODAH: And how are we going to keep him a secret? He looks so much like a...a...a him.

WHITNEY: Emilia will think of something. *(To Emilia.)* And then I'll deal with you.

EMILIA: Great. I save the sorority, and I get the heave-ho.

(Singing loudly and happily, Howie enters SR carrying bags, boxes, papers, and anything else he can get into his hands, arms, and mouth. Whistling and carrying a small open umbrella, Larry happily follows him.)

HOWIE: Which way?

(All three of the Girls toss what's left of their water into Howie's face.)

LARRY: *(To Howie.)* I told you to watch out for the “big splash.” But did you listen to me? Oh, nooooo.

HOWIE: *(To the Girls.)* What was that for?

WHITNEY: For being a guy!

HOWIE: *(He smiles.)* Oh. *(To Larry.)* You see? They love me already.

LARRY: *(To the Girls.)* Don’t look at me. I don’t want any water in my face. *(Pause.)* But if you have some birdseed, I would be happy to take it off your hands.

RODAH: *(Stiffly.)* The rooms are upstairs.

(Rodah indicates the doorway UC. Howie and Larry start that way but are stopped by Whitney.)

WHITNEY: Rodah, what are you doing? *(To Howie.)* No! No, you can’t go up there.

HOWIE: Huh?

WHITNEY: There are bedrooms up there.

HOWIE: Yeah?

WHITNEY: Girls’ bedrooms. Your room is, uh...

EMILIA: Go left. First door on the right.

(Emilia pushes him toward UC.)

LARRY: Thank you ever so much.

(Howie and Larry are pushed off up SR.)

RODAH: But that’s the broom closet.

EMILIA: It’s a big broom closet.

RODAH: But there are brooms and mops in there.

(Emilia looks around the room.)

EMILIA: Not that we’ve used any of them lately.

NYLA: Last Christmas, I think it was. Bobby was trying to make out with me, so I hit him with a mop.

EMILIA: What were the two of you doing in the broom closet?

NYLA: Why do you ask stupid questions?

WHITNEY: Emilia, will you shut up?!

EMILIA: Nyla brought it up.

WHITNEY: You've caused enough trouble for one day.

NYLA: And it's not even lunchtime yet.

WHITNEY: This has to remain a secret. Among the four of us. No one else—and I mean no one else—can know that we have a guy living with us. Is that understood?

NYLA: Are you saying this is a secret?

WHITNEY: Congratulations, Nyla. That is correct. Yes! That's what I'm saying. Tell no one. If anyone asks, lie. Under no circumstances can anyone outside this room at this moment know about this.

NYLA: Can we tell them about the chicken?

WHITNEY: No!

RODAH: Won't people see them?

WHITNEY: No. *(She turns to Emilia.)* Because Emilia will keep them hidden. Won't you, Emilia?

EMILIA: You want me to hide a giant yellow canary?

WHITNEY: Only if you want to remain a member of this cherished sorority. Girls! *(The Girls stand at attention and hold their hands in a particular position.)* We, the members of...

WHITNEY/EMILIA/RODAH/NYLA: ...Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode Sorority. Mmm-mmm, good!

WHITNEY: Swear that we will obey our supreme commander—me!

EMILIA/RODAH/NYLA: We swear.

(Whitney, Emilia, Rodah, and Nyla give the secret salute that ends with an audible sound, "Ooh!")

WHITNEY: *(As she holds up her empty water glass.)* We will now deliver one glass of sugar water each to our new pledges upstairs.

(Whitney, Rodah, and Nyla head for the upstage arch.)

EMILIA: What about me?

WHITNEY: Keep the prisoner under tight guard. Come on, girls.

(Whitney, Rodah, and Nyla exit through the archway and off left.)

EMILIA: *(Angrily, she growls.)* Arrggghhh!

(Howie enters from up right.)

HOWIE: *(To Emilia.)* My room is awfully small.

EMILIA: What? Oh, well, we're cramped for space.

HOWIE: In order to lie down, I have to put my legs halfway up the wall.

EMILIA: Well, don't get scuff marks on it.

HOWIE: And there's a pail of stinky water in the sink.

EMILIA: Well, drain it.

HOWIE: I did. Now the sink's stopped up. I'm going to call a plumber.

(Howie heads for the phone and picks it up.)

EMILIA: No! *(She snatches the phone from his hand.)* You can't do that.

HOWIE: Why not?

EMILIA: Why not? Oh. Well, uhhh, the phone's out of order.

HOWIE: Okay. I'll use my cell. *(He pulls it from his pocket.)*

EMILIA: No, don't!

HOWIE: Why not?

EMILIA: It's out of order, too.

HOWIE: No, it's not.

*(Emilia takes it from him, throws it on the floor, and stomps it.
Note: Of course, use a fake cell phone here.)*

EMILIA: Now it is.

HOWIE: Oh. *(Pause.)* Did you just stomp on my phone?

EMILIA: No. You dropped it, and I accidentally...put my foot
down on it.

HOWIE: That looked like a stomp to me.

EMILIA: It wasn't a stomp. It was an accidental "step-on."

HOWIE: Okay. *(He picks it up and looks at it.)* I think it's a
goner.

EMILIA: Sorry.

HOWIE: Okay, well, I've got to go out.

*(Howie heads to the door at right. Emilia jumps in front of him and
bars the door.)*

EMILIA: Out? Out where?

HOWIE: Out to my car. I was going to drive my Rolls Royce
to school, but I lent it to a friend, so I drove my second car.
It's a, uh...1959 Dodge. A prized relic. It's old, but it runs.
Sometimes.

EMILIA: I can't let you go out.

HOWIE: I've got to get birdseed to feed my canary.

EMILIA: Yes, but...

HOWIE: He gets real upset if he's not fed on time.

EMILIA: Oh. Well...just a minute. *(She quickly looks out the
door.)* Okay, go!

HOWIE: What are you doing?

EMILIA: Just go, will you?! Go, go, go. *(Howie exits. Emilia
closes the door behind him and throws herself against it and sighs.)*
This seemed like such a good plan when I planned it. Now
I'm not so sure.

(Cookie enters from inside the archway and left. She carries an empty glass in one hand and a comic book in the other. As usual, she is scowling.)

COOKIE: *(To Emilia in a gruff voice.)* Hey, you...scum bucket. What's your name?

EMILIA: Emilia.

COOKIE: Well, Emilia, I was thirsty as a horse, but Nyla brought me a stupid empty glass. An empty, *used* glass. It has a lipstick stain on it. Do I look like I like used lipstick on my glass?

EMILIA: Oh, well, definitely not. *(She takes the glass.)* I'll wipe it off for you.

COOKIE: I don't want it wiped off. I want a fresh glass.

EMILIA: *(Intimidated.)* A fresh glass. Okay.

COOKIE: With something in it.

EMILIA: Will water do?

COOKIE: Do the Ziadeez of Elooma drink water?

EMILIA: The who? Of where?

COOKIE: They're characters in this neat comic I'm reading.

EMILIA: Well, I don't know. Do they drink water?

COOKIE: *(Angrily.)* No. They drink only green things. And that's what I want. Something green.

EMILIA: Like...?

COOKIE: Like limeade. Or green tea. Or water with green food coloring in it. Anything green. *(She opens her comic book and reads.)*

EMILIA: How about some slime?

COOKIE: What?

EMILIA: Uhhh, nothing. *(She moves UC to the archway. To herself.)* I'll get you something green...from the broom closet.

(Emilia exits up right. Howie enters from down right with a huge bag of birdseed thrown over his shoulder. When he spots Cookie, he stops, smiles, slicks down his hair, and clears his throat.)

HOWIE: *(In his "smoothest" voice.)* Wowie, Howie! I'm hi. *(He is angry with himself.)* Darn it!

COOKIE: Deliveries are made in the back, slouch man.

HOWIE: What?

COOKIE: Deliveries. In the back.

HOWIE: Okay. If I get any, I'll know where to go. *(Pause. Romantically.)* Need any birdseed?

COOKIE: Birdseed? Why would I need any birdseed?

HOWIE: Well, you never can tell...when you might run into a, you know, bird...or something. And want to feed it.

COOKIE: I'm reading. And I don't feed birds.

HOWIE: I get only the best quality. Here, let me show you. *(He unties or pulls apart the top of the bag while it is still resting on his shoulder.)*

COOKIE: I don't want any birdseed.

HOWIE: Okay. Oh, I love comics. What are you reading? Blonde? Dennis the Menace? Garfield? I love Garfield.

COOKIE: Too tame for me.

HOWIE: Oh, yeah. For me, too. I liked Garfield when I was younger, but now that I'm more...mature...it's too tame for me.

COOKIE: *(She half-smiles at him.)* Really? What do you like now?

HOWIE: What? Oh, uh, well, you know, comics that, uh, walk on the, uh, wilder side. What are you reading?

COOKIE: The Ziadeez of Elooma.

HOWIE: *(Brightly.)* Oh, yeah! The Ziadoze of...whatever. My favorite.

COOKIE: Really?

HOWIE: Oh, yeah. I read it...every chance I get. It's wild. My favorite. Really-how-about-a-date?

COOKIE: A what?

HOWIE: A date? I'm a great date. I would take you to the fanciest restaurant in town, but I know you would think I was trying to impress you, so I would be willing to downsize just for you. We could go to [Krystal]. *[Or insert*

the name of another cheap eatery.] That's pretty unimpressive. They have great fries.

COOKIE: I like [Krystal].

HOWIE: I knew it. *(Pause.)* You're the first person I've ever met who liked [Krystal]. That means we're made for each other. *(Pause.)* Baby.

COOKIE: *(Angrily.)* What did you just call me?

HOWIE: Well, I thought since we're going steady, I could call you..."baby."

COOKIE: Going steady?

HOWIE: Well, surely you don't want me seeing other girls.

COOKIE: What are you jabbering about? Forget the [Krystal]. I'm not going.

HOWIE: What? You can't back out now. Once you accept a date, you're obligated to date. We're going on a date.

COOKIE: We are not going on a date.

(She moves to a chair and sits. Howie follows her.)

HOWIE: You're breaking a date before we've even had it?

COOKIE: Hey! Who are you anyway? *(She moves to another chair and sits.)* I told you deliveries are made in the back.

(He follows her.)

HOWIE: I'm not delivering anything. I'm just bringing this birdseed to Larry.

COOKIE: Who's Larry?

HOWIE: My canary.

COOKIE: That's an awful lot of seed for a canary.

HOWIE: Not for Larry.

COOKIE: Look. Stay away from me. Get away, get away.

(She pushes him.)

HOWIE: I'm not leaving you, baby, because I know you want me. One kiss will be the proof.

(He leans over to kiss her, but the birdseed falls out of the bag and all over her and the chair. Emilia enters from the archway carrying a glass of green liquid and stands in shock.)

COOKIE: *(Screams.)* Ahhh! Stop it, stop it! What are you doing? *(She moves away from him.)* If I ever see your face again, I'm going to shove that birdseed down your throat—while it's still in the bag! Get away! Ahhhhhhh!

(Cookie breaks away from Howie and runs upstairs. He follows her to the archway, spilling birdseed the entire way.)

HOWIE: *(Calls after her.)* I lied. I really do love Garfield! And I have no idea who the Ziadope of Galoopy is! So there!

EMILIA: Howie!

HOWIE: What? *(He turns and sees Emilia.)* Emilia.

EMILIA: You're dripping birdseed all over everything.

(He stops the dripping.)

HOWIE: Oh, sorry. It's all right. Larry loves to dine in the living room. *(He adjusts the bag so it will not leak.)*

EMILIA: Howie, you can't frighten our pledges that way.

HOWIE: Why? Is there a better way?

EMILIA: No. You can't frighten them at all.

HOWIE: Even on Halloween?

EMILIA: Howie, no!

(He spots the glass she is carrying.)

HOWIE: Is this for me?

EMILIA: No.

HOWIE: My voice could use a little liquid refreshment. *(He takes it and swallows a big gulp. Then he licks his lips suspiciously.)* That's disgusting. What is it?

EMILIA: Slime.

HOWIE: A new soft drink?

EMILIA: No. It's real slime.

HOWIE: Oh, yuck!

EMILIA: From your stopped-up sink.

HOWIE: Yeeiii! *(He goes into major coughs and sputters.)* Oh, ouch! Ohhh, bleeghh! *(He staggers off UC and right.)* Ohhhh!

EMILIA: I have a feeling this is not going to turn out well.

(The telephone rings. Emilia picks it up. Howie pokes his head into the room.)

HOWIE: *(Still gagging.)* I thought you said the phone was out of order.

EMILIA: It was. Now it's in order.

HOWIE: Bleeghh! *(He exits.)*

EMILIA: Hello. Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi Ah La Mode Sorority. Mmm-mmm, good! *(She gives the secret salute.)* This is Emilia. What can I do for you? *(Pause.)* Who? Mrs. Wilson? *(Pause.)* Oh, hi. Oh, yes. I'm fine. We're fine. Everything's fine. *(Pause.)* Everything's not fine? *(Pause.)* No! *(Pause.)* No! *(Pause.)* Oh. A complaint? *(Pause.)* And you're coming right over? With Security? Well, that's fine. *(Pause.)* Oh, no, wait. That's not fine. You can't come right over. *(Pause.)* Why? Oh, well, we're studying for final exams. *(Pause.)* Well, I know classes haven't started yet, but we're, uh, getting a head start on them. *(Pause. Defeated.)* Okay, yes, right, fine. We'll be ready. *(Pause.)* Yes, ma'am. Bye. *(She hangs up and screams loudly.)* We're in... *(Spells.)* ...t-r-o-u-b-l-e spells trouble!

(Emilia runs off through the archway and SL. Howie re-enters, rubbing his mouth and sputtering. Celeste enters from up left of the center arch carrying a Twinkie or a cupcake.)

HOWIE: *(Sees Celeste.)* All right! *(To Celeste.)* Howie! I'm Larry. No, no. Larry is my pet canary. I'm hi. Uh, Howie.

(Celeste sees him and immediately begins to shake nervously.)

CELESTE: Ohhh! Stay away from me. Please stay away. I get a little nervous around...guys.

HOWIE: Don't think of me as a guy. Think of me as a...man...a man of the world.

CELESTE: W-w-which world?

HOWIE: The world of... *(He glances at the vase of flowers.)* ...flowers. *(He pulls them from the vase. They are dripping water.)* Which pale in beauty next to you. Do you like them?

CELESTE: They...they're dripping water.

HOWIE: Then they're yours.

(He shoves them into her chest. Since she makes no attempt to grasp them, he takes her empty hand and wraps it around them.)

CELESTE: Now my chest is d-d-d-dripping water.

HOWIE: You're welcome. And in return, how about a kiss?

CELESTE: Y-y-y-you want to k-k-kiss me? With your m-m-m-mouth?

HOWIE: That's the preferred way. *(He puckers up, closes his eyes, leans toward her, and points to his lips as he makes a kissing noise.)* Mmm, putt-putt-putt...

CELESTE: *(Screams.)* Aeeiiii!

(He opens his eyes and looks at her.)

HOWIE: What is it? What's wrong?

CELESTE: Your m-m-mouth. It's all distorted. And it's making all these disgusting noises.

HOWIE: (*Smiles.*) Oh, you like that, huh? Okay, here's some more.

(He repeats it. As he leans forward, she leans backward and shakes all over.)

CELESTE: No, no, no, no. Don't...don't touch me. Please.

HOWIE: Kissy, kissy.

CELESTE: Please take these soggy things back.

(She slams the flowers back into his chest. He holds them there.)

HOWIE: You don't like the flowers?

CELESTE: I'm allergic to dripping things.

HOWIE: Well, how about the kiss? (*He puckers again.*)

CELESTE: I'm allergic to drooley things, too.

HOWIE: Then how about giving me a bite of your [Twinkie]?

[Or substitute "cupcake" if it is not a Twinkie.] Hmmmm?

CELESTE: My Twinkie?

HOWIE: The one in your hand. Right there.

CELESTE: Oh. This Twinkie. Well, I... (*She becomes very nervous again.*)

HOWIE: Come on. (*He holds his mouth open.*)

CELESTE: (*Her hand is visibly trembling.*) I've eaten p-p-part of it. It's g-g-got my slobber all over it.

HOWIE: I love your slobber. (*He points to his mouth.*) Right there. Put it right there.

CELESTE: Well, ok-k-k-k-kay. (*As she moves her shaking hand near his mouth, she accidentally smashes her Twinkie into his face and screams loudly.*) Aeeiiii! I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Look what I did. I didn't mean to do that. I've made a mess of your face. Oh, I make a mess of everything. So sorry. Aeeiiii! (*She runs off down left.*)

HOWIE: *(Calls after her.)* Hey! You forgot the rest of your [Twinkie]. *(He turns toward the audience and wipes off some of the Twinkie.)* Maybe I should have held out for the kiss. *(He licks some of the icing and smiles.)* Nope. The Twinkie's a winner. I'll go for the kiss next time. I'll have to tell Larry about my...conquests today.

(Howie exits through the archway and off right. Whitney, Nyla, Rodah, and Emilia scramble into the room from UC and off left.)

WHITNEY: *(To Emilia.)* We're in... *(Spells.)* ...t-r-o-u-b-l-e?

NYLA: Stop spelling things. That's what my parents do when they don't want me to know what they're talking about.

EMILIA: We're in deep yuck.

NYLA: Okay. I know what that means. *(Pause.)* No, wait. I don't know what that means.

RODAH: It means we have a problem, Nyla.

NYLA: Oh, I know. Russ and I broke up last night.

RODAH: Not that kind of problem.

NYLA: He's still complaining about my hitting him with the mop.

EMILIA: Mrs. Wilson is on her way over here this minute.

RODAH: The Mrs. Wilson who's our sorority counselor?

EMILIA: With Security. And you know what that means.

NYLA: We all know what that means. *(Pause.)* What does that mean?

EMILIA: We're in deep yuck.

WHITNEY: Okay, let's look at this rationally. What's the problem?

EMILIA: The Kappa Kappa Eavesdroppers next door complained that a '59 Dodge is parked in their hedges.

WHITNEY: Then why did they call us?

EMILIA: They didn't. They called Security, who called Mrs. Wilson. And she called us.

RODAH: Why? What did we do?

EMILIA: Well, they saw a big yellow blob get out of the car and come into our house.
NYRA: A big yellow blob?
RODAH: Howard's chicken.
WHITNEY: Oh, I knew he was going to be trouble the first time I saw him. *(To Emilia.)* The first time *you* brought him into our house.
EMILIA: We can argue that later. What are we going to do now?
NYRA: Hide!
WHITNEY: Won't work.
RODAH: Lie!
WHITNEY: Might work.
EMILIA: Has to work.
WHITNEY: Well, let's get our story straight before they get here.
EMILIA: Maybe we should get the room straight, too.
WHITNEY: Good idea. Girls... *(They stand at attention.)* We don't have time for that now. Clean up, sweep up, mop up! Go! Do it!

(As each girl starts cleaning up in a different place, they are interrupted by the ringing of the doorbell or a knock at the door. They freeze.)

WHITNEY/EMILIA/NYLA/RODAH: Uh-oh!
MRS. WILSON: *(From off right.)* Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi, open up!
WHITNEY: That can't be her. Nobody's that fast.
WILSON: This is your counselor, Mrs. Wilson, speaking.
WHITNEY: That's her.

(Girls simultaneously drop whatever they picked up.)

CHIEF: *(From off right, angrily.)* This is Chief Bronco of Campus Security speaking. If you don't open up within the next three seconds, I'll bash this door in! One!

WHITNEY: Quick! Hide whatever you can.

(The Girls quickly hide things – under a chair, behind the sofa, under a tablecloth, behind the up center archway, etc. Most are still in plain view.)

MRS. WILSON: Whitney? I know you're in there.

WHITNEY: Coming, Mrs. Wilson. *(She looks around the room.)*

That looks good. Well, as good as usual.

CHIEF: Two!

(Whitney dusts her hands off and moves to the door and starts to open it. As she reaches for the knob, Howie appears at the UC archway. He is dressed as usual, except his pants are missing. He wears long boxer shorts.)

HOWIE: Can somebody help me? I flushed half my pants down the toilet, and I can't get them out.

(The Girls see Howie and scream.)

EMILIA: No! *(She rushes to him.)* You can't come in here.

CHIEF: *(Off right.)* I heard somebody scream!

HOWIE: I don't want to come in there. I want somebody to come back here.

MRS. WILSON: *(Off right.)* Whitney, are you being attacked?

WHITNEY: No, Mrs. Wilson. It's all right. *(To Emilia.)* Get rid of him!

HOWIE: *(Frightened.)* Get rid of me? No, please! I'm too young to die.

EMILIA: *(As she rushes to him.)* Not that kind of "get rid of." Come on. I'll help you fish your pants out of the toilet.

HOWIE: Oh, good. I don't want to put my hands down in there.

CHIEF: *(Off right.)* I know I heard a scream. This is an emergency. *(Yells.)* Stand aside! I'm coming in! *(Emilia pulls Howie off up right center as the other Girls stand at attention and Whitney opens the front door. As if he were shouldering the door open, the Chief falls into the room, across the room, and offstage left into the kitchen. He is dressed in the uniform of a campus policeman with a gun and holster belt, a badge, and a uniform cap. As he crosses the room.)* Yeeiiiiiii!

RODAH: That's the kitchen. Do you suppose he's hungry?

(There is a very loud clanging of pots and pans off left, followed by a scream of agony from the Chief.)

CHIEF: *(Offstage left.)* Ohhhhhh!

NYLA: Well, he should have asked our permission before helping himself.

WHITNEY: Good morning, Mrs. Wilson. You got here awfully quickly.

(Mrs. Wilson steps into the room.)

MRS. WILSON: That's because I called from the curb. On my cell. *(She surveys the mess.)* Well!

WHITNEY: We cleaned up—just for you.

MRS. WILSON: Exactly what did you clean up?

(The Chief staggers on from SL with a big pot on his head and a trashcan stuck on his foot.)

CHIEF: I, uh... *(He points at the pot on his head.)* ...and then I, uh.... *(He lifts his foot to show the trashcan.)* So now I think I will, uh.... *(He faints and falls to the floor.)* Oh!

NYLA: Shouldn't we help him? I mean, do artificial perspiration or something?

RODAH: I could check his pulse to see if he's still breathing.
MRS. WILSON: His pulse has nothing to do with his breathing.
RODAH: Really?
MRS. WILSON: And I'm here on more important business.
RODAH: More important than his breathing?
MRS. WILSON: Whitney, whose vehicle is that illegally parked in the Kappa Kappa Eavesdropper's shrubs next door?
WHITNEY: Oh, well, I think it belongs to, ummm, a guy. I guess. Or a girl. I don't know.
MRS. WILSON: This...person...was seen coming into this house.
WHITNEY: Oh. Well, no. Maybe he...or she...was just passing by this house.
MRS. WILSON: The Eavesdroppers are very good at eavesdropping, and they said – he, she, it – came in here.
WHITNEY: Oh.
RODAH: Oh, well, sure, Mrs. Wilson.

(Whitney glares at her.)

MRS. WILSON: What?
RODAH: I meant, oh, no. That's impossible.
MRS. WILSON: This person was dressed in a bright yellow suit. With feathers on it.
NYLA: *(Does a silly laugh.)* Ha-ha-ha-ha...
MRS. WILSON: What's so funny?
NYLA: Well, I mean, a bright yellow suit with feathers on it? That's crazy.
MRS. WILSON: Are you calling me crazy?
NYLA: *(Correcting herself.)* Oh, no. Of course not.
WHITNEY: But, surely, Mrs. Wilson, there's no such person. I mean, can you really picture someone like that?

(Larry appears in the UC archway from SR. He looks around.)

MRS. WILSON: Well, no. Not really. *(She sees Larry, but the others do not. Her mouth drops wide open.)* But, yes. Really. Right...right there. *(She points at him.)*

(Larry exits in the up center archway to stage left. The Girls turn upstage, but do not see him. They turn back to her.)

WHITNEY: Mrs. Wilson, are you all right?

MRS. WILSON: Yes, yes. I'm all right. For a minute there, I thought I saw... *(Larry crosses from left to right in the archway. She points to the archway.)* I did! I saw a huge, great big, yellow chicken.

(The Girls looks again, but Larry is gone.)

NYLA: No. That's a canary.

MRS. WILSON: What?

NYLA: Uhhh, I said, "Oh. That's scary."

(The Chief wakes up. He carefully stands, moaning and holding his head.)

CHIEF: Ohhh. My head is spinning. *(Larry crosses above the archway going from right to left. He sees Larry.)* Ohhh. My head is spinning so much I'm seeing giant chickens! *(He faints and falls to the floor.)* Ohhh.

MRS. WILSON: *(She points through the archway and off left.)* You see? He saw it too.

WHITNEY: He's delirious.

RODAH: He's imagining things.

NYLA: He's nuts.

(Larry enters the room from the archway and left. He sees the birdseed.)

LARRY: There it is. My dinner. Excuse me, folks, but I'm going to dive right in. *(He stoops over and shoves birdseed into his mouth – mimed of course.)*

MRS. WILSON: *(Screams.)* Aeeiii! There it is, there it is! A big yellow bird!

WHITNEY: Oh, my. So it is.

MRS. WILSON: Well, do something. Do something quick.

(Nyla shrugs, picks up a handful of birdseed, and shoves it into Larry's mouth.)

NYLA: There you go, big bird.

LARRY: I can feed myself, thank you.

(Larry spits out what she gave him and goes back to his own feeding.)

MRS. WILSON: *(Screams.)* Not that kind of "do something."

NYLA: You want me to wring its neck, pluck its feathers, and bake it for dinner?

LARRY: Absolutely not.

MRS. WILSON: I don't care how you get rid of it. But get rid of it. It's illegal to keep chickens in a sorority house.

(Howie enters dressed in long boxer shorts.)

HOWIE: Can somebody help us? Emilia's foot is now stuck in the toilet.

MRS. WILSON: Aeeiii! A man, a man! There's a man in the house. And he's naked.

(Howie looks around.)

HOWIE: Where?

MRS. WILSON: You, you, you, you!

HOWIE: Me, me, me, me?

MRS. WILSON: You.

HOWIE: I think I'm sufficiently covered.

MRS. WILSON: Well, you're not. I can see your legs.

HOWIE: Well, thanks for noticing. *(He smiles and struts into the room.)* You're a little older than I am, but I might consider a date with you. If we go Dutch. Or, better yet, if you want to treat. Shall I pick you up around eight? I left my candy apple red Corvette at home, but I have my 1959 Dodge here. It's a genuine antique. Worth millions of dollars, at least. Or it would be if it still had a transmission.

MRS. WILSON: Ha! So that's your car!

WHITNEY: Howie, please, please disappear.

HOWIE: Why? We're getting along just fine. *(To Wilson.)* It's missing a couple of doors and part of the windshield, but it gets me where I'm going. True, sometimes my date has to push, but girls love to do that. It gets them all sweaty and...you know...

(Mrs. Wilson rushes to the Chief and pulls him to a standing position. The pot on his head keeps getting in his eyes, but the trashcan is no longer on his foot.)

MRS. WILSON: Chief? Chief, arrest this man. Arrest him right now.

CHIEF: *(Still reeling.)* Right, Mrs. Wilson. Then I'll arrest the chicken.

LARRY: Who, me? For what? For having my butt up in the air while I eat?

(Chief turns away from Howie.)

CHIEF: You're under arrest.

MRS. WILSON: No, no. He's over here.

(She turns him to face Howie.)

CHIEF: And you, too. Cuff yourself and let's go.

HOWIE: Why would you want to arrest us?

MRS. WILSON: Because you smashed the bushes next door.

HOWIE: It's against the law to smash a few ugly bushes?

CHIEF: Which way did he go?

HOWIE: *(Now leery.)* Uh, Larry, I think we should make a quick exit.

LARRY: I'm in the middle of my meal.

HOWIE: Uh, Larry, I think we should go—now!

(Howie grabs Larry's leash and tries to pull him off the birdseed, but Larry is too strong. Howie is pulled back and falls down.)

MRS. WILSON: He's not cuffing himself. He's trying to get away.

WHITNEY: Nyla! *(She gestures wildly.)* Do something.

NYLA: Huh? *(Trying to read her gestures.)* My shoestring is untied? *(She looks down.)* I don't have any shoestrings.

WHITNEY: No, no. Get them out of here.

NYLA: Oh, right.

(She grabs Howie and pulls him down left into the kitchen.)

HOWIE: Whoaaaa! *(He grabs Larry's leash again.)*

LARRY: Talk about... *(Howie pulls him off left.)* Whoaaa!

CHIEF: Don't worry, Mrs. Wilson. I'll catch them. *(He runs right and stops.)*

MRS. WILSON: But they went that way. *(She points off left.)*

CHIEF: Ha! But this is a shortcut. *(He runs off right.)*

MRS. WILSON: Whitney, I don't know what's going on here, but you have put this previously honorable sorority in jeopardy.

NYLA: What? We're going on the quiz show?

MRS. WILSON: What?

NYLA: "Jeopardy." It's a quiz show.

MRS. WILSON: *(To Whitney.)* I think some remedial teaching might be in order here.

(Howie enters from down left pulling Larry and exits down right. Nyla trails them. At the same time, the Chief enters from down right and moves to center, where he sees Howie and stops. Before he can turn, though, he is met by Nyla, who grabs his arm and pulls him down left.)

CHIEF: Wait a minute. They went that way. *(He points off down right.)*

NYLA: Which is why we're going this way. *(She pulls him off down left.)*

MRS. WILSON: *(To Whitney.)* Are you trying to help that young man get away?

WHITNEY: Who, me? No, ma'am. *(She points down left.)*
That's Nyla.

(Larry runs on from down right.)

LARRY: Neither rain, nor sleet, nor the threat of arrest can keep a canary from enjoying a good meal.

(Larry begins to eat the birdseed on the floor. Howie enters from down right and grabs Larry's leash.)

HOWIE: Come on!

LARRY: But then Howie comes along and spoils everything.

(They exit through the archway and off left.)

WHITNEY: Wait! You can't go up there! The girls' rooms are up there.

MRS. WILSON: If he disturbs any of the Tau Tau Tu Tu Gimmi Gimmi Pi a La Mode girls, he'll really be in trouble!

(Sorority Girls enter from left above the archway and scatter in various directions screaming. Sorority Girls ad-lib "Ohhh!" "There's a man in my room!" "Aeeiii!" "Run, run!" "Get out as fast as you can!" etc. Chief enters from left, still wearing the pan on his head and the trashcan on his foot.)

CHIEF: What's going on out here? *(Sorority Girls ad-lib "Ahhhh!" "Another man!" "A chicken!" "There's a giant yellow chicken up there!" "And another man down here!" "Run for your lives!" etc. Some of the other Girls run past the Chief, spinning him around and pushing him back offstage down left. He screams in confusion. Others exit in all directions. Still reeling.)* Is it time for lunch?

MRS. WILSON: Not until you catch the lawbreaker and his yellow cohort.

CHIEF: Where are they?

MRS. WILSON: They went upstairs. *(She points out the archway and off left.)*

CHIEF: *(He straightens himself.)* I'll get them! If I don't fall down the stairs.

MRS. WILSON: They're upstairs.

CHIEF: I could still fall down them when I get to the top.

(He rushes toward the archway but is blocked by Whitney.)

WHITNEY: You can't go up there.

CHIEF: Why not?

WHITNEY: It's the girls' private rooms. Mrs. Wilson?

MRS. WILSON: I think all the girls have vacated their rooms. Go ahead, Chief.

(As the Chief turns to the archway, Cookie enters from it, waving her fists.)

COOKIE: Where is that delivery guy?

wOw!e, hOW!e!

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(She shoves the Chief, who falls backward and onto the floor.)

CHIEF: Hey!

COOKIE: I'll smack him so hard, one ear will go in and come out the other ear!

(Howie and Larry appear at the archway. Cookie turns and sees them.)

HOWIE: Uh-oh!

COOKIE: I told you what I would do if you bothered me again – especially when I'm reading intellectual stuff.

(Cookie twists Howie's arm behind him and leans him across the back of an armchair or sofa.)

HOWIE: Ouch, oww, ouch, oww, ouch, oww.

LARRY: She's got you, Howie.

HOWIE: *(He smiles.)* I love it when a woman gets tough!

MRS. WILSON: Arrest him, Chief.

(Chief tries to stand and spins around.)

CHIEF: Huh?

MRS. WILSON: And the chicken.

(Celeste enters from down left.)

CELESTE: Security?! I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to hit him with my Twinkie. Please don't put me in jail!

CHIEF: What?

(Lauren enters from the archway and off left. She smiles broadly and does her happy scream, "Aeeeeiii!")

LAUREN: That was so much fun! I love this sorority.

MRS. WILSON: Well, that's too bad, because, Whitney...?

WHITNEY: *(Meekly.)* Yes, ma'am?

MRS. WILSON: This sorority is closed, effective immediately!

WHITNEY: Oh, Mrs. Wilson, you can't do this.

MRS. WILSON: I can't?

WHITNEY: I mean, don't do this. Please don't do this.

MRS. WILSON: It's done. Nice work, Chief.

CHIEF: What'd I do?

(Emilia enters from the archway off right with Howie's soaked and dripping trousers. She holds them up.)

EMILIA: I got your pants out of the toilet, Howie. Want to put them on now?

WHITNEY: Emilia, you did this—and you're going to pay for it!

EMILIA: Huh?

(Blackout. Intermission.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]