

Yellow

by Del Shores

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



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**Originally produced at The Coast Playhouse, West Hollywood, CA
by Louise H. Beard, Emerson Collins, Jason Dottley and Del Shores**

YELLOW was originally produced by Louise H. Beard, Emerson Collins, Jason Dottley, and Del Shores for JD3atrical at The Coast Playhouse in West Hollywood, California on June 11, 2010. It was directed by Del Shores; the set was by Robert Steinberg; set construction by Jeff Robinson; the lights were by Kathi O'Donohue; the sound was by Drew Dalzell and Mark Johnson. Musical arrangements were by Joe Patrick Ward; choreography was by Louise H. Beard; the costume design was by Craig Taggart. Casting was by Rich Delia; photography was by Brian Putnam and Rosemary Alexander; graphic design was by Jason Dottley; publicity was by David Elzer/DEMAND PR. The stage manager was Craig Taggart; the assistant stage managers were T. Ashanti Mozelle and Chris Pudlo. The original cast, in order of appearance, was as follows:

BOBBY WESTMORELAND David Cowgill
KATE WESTMORELAND Kristen McCullough
DAYNE WESTMORELAND Luke McClure
GRACIE WESTMORELAND Evie Louise Thompson
KENDALL PARKER Matthew Scott Montgomery
SISTER TIMOTHEA PARKER Susan Leslie

Important and appreciated appearances during the run were:

Rachel Sorsa (shared the role of **KATE**), Robert Lewis Stephenson and David Steen (**BOBBY**), Brett Fleisher (**DAYNE**), Caroline Shores (**GRACIE**), Kinna McInroe, and Madonna Cacciatore (**TIMOTHEA**).

Additional voices were: Rosemary Alexander, David Steen, David Cowgill, Ted Detwiler, Wyatt Earp, Tate Taylor, and Newell Alexander.

Pre-show dialogue and music was by Levi Kreis.

The singing waiters and cast of *Oklahoma* were: Rosemary Alexander, Emerson Collins, Rachel Sorsa, Kinna McInroe, Luke Stratte-McClure, Matthew Scott Montgomery, Del Shores, and Craig Taggart.

CHARACTERS

BOBBY WESTMORELAND – 40's. A football coach and family man. Easy-going, laidback, still handsome and in shape.

KATE WESTMORELAND – 40's. A therapist. Strong-willed, opinionated, smart, sexual and pretty. Great mom, runs her house.

DAYNE WESTMORELAND – 17. A high school senior. This family's golden boy. Confident and very handsome. The best fullback to come out of the state of Mississippi.

GRACIE WESTMORELAND – 15. An overly-dramatic high school sophomore who is consumed with acting and sibling rivalry.

KENDALL PARKER – 15. Effeminate, too pretty to be a boy. Wise beyond his years. He escapes his fundamentalist mother through his love for theatre.

SISTER TIMOTHEA PARKER – 40's. A conservative, crazy religious fundamentalist who abuses her son and justifies it in the name of the Lord.

SETTING

The play takes place in Vicksburg, Mississippi, at the Westmoreland home.

TIME

The play begins in early Fall and ends the following Spring.

*For
Greg Julian*

*In Memory of
Kendall Moore*

ACT ONE

Scene One

(The set is a prominent home in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The home is clean, but lived in, somewhat cluttered. The main playing area is a family room/kitchen. A stairway leads to a small landing with two doors on each side. One door is to a teenage boy's bedroom. Another playing area is the front porch outside the home.)

(In darkness, waiters and restaurant customers sing.)

WAITERS & CUSTOMERS. *(voice-over)* “Happy Anniversary, Happy Anniversary, Happy Anniversary, Happy Anniversary!”

(claps, cheers and ad-libs)

(Dayne's bedroom. Lights come up on DAYNE WESTMORELAND, a handsome 17-year-old, who is laying out his clothes for school the next day. DAYNE wears only boxer shorts as he chooses socks, jeans and a football jersey, placing them on a chair. His body is lean and muscular, an obvious athlete. On his wall is a signed poster of a football hero and on the chest-of-drawers are countless football trophies. Dayne's room is much neater than the rest of the house.)

(Front porch. Laughter is heard, a man's and a woman's, and lights slowly come up as KATE WESTMORELAND, 40-ish, and BOBBY WESTMORELAND, also 40-ish, stroll up to the house, hand in hand, a little tipsy. Lights now reflect that a full moon is lighting the happy couple. BOBBY looks up and points.)

BOBBY. Look at the moon. It's a full moon.

KATE. You always did love a full moon.

(Dayne's bedroom. DAYNE looks through a drawer, coming up empty.)

DAYNE. Shit, shit, shit.

(He closes the drawer, then opens another and rummages through it.)

(front porch)

BOBBY. Happy anniversary, baby.

KATE. Happy anniversary. Nineteen years. How did that happen?

BOBBY. Fast. That's how. Too fast. Pretty soon we'll both be dead and we'll wonder why the hell we were so stressed.

KATE. Always the eternal optimist.

(BOBBY takes KATE in his arms, kisses her.)

(Dayne's bedroom. DAYNE gives up, closes the drawer.)

DAYNE. Shit.

(He exits his room.)

(front porch)

BOBBY. I love you more right now than the day we got married.

KATE. You told me on our wedding day that it was impossible for anyone to love more than you loved me that day.

BOBBY. Well, I was wrong. I've evolved. *(kisses her)* Katie, make me a promise.

KATE. Okay.

BOBBY. Promise me that when I die –

KATE. Oh God, no! Not death talk again. Not on our anniversary! Why do you always go there?

BOBBY. Because I think about it. Ever since Billy was killed in that car wreck, I think about how precious life is. And I worry.

KATE. Well, stop! Billy died over ten years ago. I don't like it when you talk like this. It makes me –

BOBBY. Shh. Just put up with me for one minute. Please.

KATE. Okay, but make it quick. I don't want to dwell on your death on our anniversary. (*sexily*) There are other things I want to dwell on that do not require planning a funeral.

(*She reaches down and strokes him.*)

BOBBY. (*laughing*) Stop, Miss Horny Toad. Just sit and let me finish what I need to say. Put up with me for a minute.

KATE. (*sighs*) Okay.

(*Stairs. DAYNE rushes down the stairs, carrying a load of laundry. He rushes through the kitchen and offstage where we assume he puts his clothes in a washing machine.*)

(*Porch. BOBBY pulls KATE onto a small bench that sits on the porch, and he stares at the moon.*)

BOBBY. If anything ever happens to me...you know that you and the kids are set.

(*Living room/kitchen. DAYNE enters from the offstage laundry room, opens the refrigerator. Finding nothing of interest, he closes it, looks in the cabinet, grabs a jar of peanut butter, closes the cabinet, then grabs a banana and spoon and begins eating peanut butter on a banana as he sits on the counter as he studies a football playbook that sits on the bar.*)

(*front porch*)

KATE. (*impatient*) Yes, yes, we'll be millionaires. You're worth more dead to me than you are alive. And the trust portfolio is in the safety deposit box and the key is in your little jewelry box that Gracie made you in Vacation Bible School, where you keep your watches and cuff links.

BOBBY. You are such a smart-ass.

KATE. So, are we done with this conversation?

BOBBY. Just one more thing. It's about the moon.

KATE. The moon?

BOBBY. Yes, the moon. And not just the moon. The full moon. Like that one. You know how I love a full moon.

KATE. Yes, and you also have an unusual fixation with squirrels.

BOBBY. I do. I love those little critters. (*pause*) When I'm gone, I want you to think of me whenever you see a full moon.

KATE. What about squirrels? Do I have to think about you when I see squirrels? Because there are an awful lot of squirrels...Bobby, are you crying?

BOBBY. Maybe a little. I'm mourning my own death, okay?

KATE. You are so silly. (*She wipes his eyes.*) That's what I love about you, Robert Dayne Westmoreland. You're this big ol' handsome lug of a football coach, but when we saw *Terms of Endearment*, you cried like a Mexican widow at a funeral.

BOBBY. That is not politically right, Katie.

KATE. Oh, who cares. (*yells*) Nobody's listening.

BOBBY. Promise me, Katie. Promise you'll think of me whenever you see a full moon. When I'm dead and gone and you look up and see a full moon, promise me you'll think of me.

KATE. Okay. If I happen to look up and see a full moon between my shopping sprees with all that life insurance money, yes, I'll do my utmost best to think of you.

BOBBY. The stores are closed at night, Katie.

KATE. Not during moonlight madness sales. Can we *please* go inside and get naked? I want to do it when I'm still a little tipsy. You know how wild I get when I'm tipsy.

(*She kisses BOBBY.*)

BOBBY. Dance with me first.

KATE. Oh dear God in heaven!

(*BOBBY gets up and takes KATE's hand.*)

BOBBY. In the moonlight.

KATE. Did you get a prescription for romance pills?

BOBBY. Are you complaining? Because I could be one of those guys that forgets anniversaries and never compliments your hair and only wants to get it on after watching porn on the computer.

KATE. Eeww. Who does that?!

BOBBY. Jesse Carlton does. And every man I know who's been married over five years – except me.

KATE. Well, that's disgusting. I will never be able to look at Jesse Carlton the same way again. Pervert. And poor Rhonda Kaye. Does she know? I was supposed to have lunch with her tomorrow. Oh, I wish you hadn't told me that.

BOBBY. Shhh. Just dance with me. Under the moon, under the stars, then under the sheets.

KATE. No, above the sheets and we'll move the mirror by the bed –

BOBBY. Now you're talkin' –

KATE. (*whispers*) Then I'll... (*She whispers something in his ear.*) ...all over my husband's hot naked body.

BOBBY. Damnation! I love it when you talk dirty.

KATE. (*playfully*) So, you still wanna dance?

BOBBY. (*pause, thinks for a moment.*) Just for a moment.

KATE. (*sighs*) We don't have any music.

BOBBY. It'll be in our heads. I'm hearing "Sea of Love".

KATE. Oooh, I like that one.

(*They begin to dance.*)

BOBBY. I need to work out more. I've lost the six-pack.

KATE. Yeah, but the hard six-plus-one right under where that six-pack once was feels pretty good to me.

BOBBY. Remember that night you measured it?

KATE. You asked me to!

(*They laugh.*)

You tried so hard to make it seven. So, so close.

(He presses against her.)

BOBBY. I bet it's seven tonight.

(He pushes closer. She strokes him again.)

KATE. Let's go inside, and I'll measure it again.

(She tries to pull him towards the house. He pulls her back into his arms.)

BOBBY. Wait. I want you to remember this night when you see a full moon, us dancing, then making love, a little loving, a little dirty, then falling asleep in each other's arms naked, completely content.

(They make out intensely, KATE throws her leg around BOBBY.)

KATE. *(breaking)* Come on! I'm dying here! This is like... like tantric dancing.

(Family room/kitchen. BOBBY and KATE enter.)

BOBBY. After you, my dear.

(They laugh and dance some more. BOBBY dips KATE.)

DAYNE. Happy anniversary, kids.

(KATE jumps upon seeing DAYNE, sitting at the counter.)

KATE. Jesus, Dayne! You scared me half to death!

BOBBY. I'd stay and talk son, but I might just lose some momentum, if you know what I mean –

DAYNE. *(covers ears)* La, la, la, la, la, la. Don't want to hear this. Parents aren't supposed to have sex! Especially as often as y'all do! Go! Go!

BOBBY. And you go to bed. It's our big game tomorrow. First game of the season.

DAYNE. I'm ready! We gonna kick some Cougar ass!

KATE. Come on!

(KATE and BOBBY laugh and exit. DAYNE turns off the light in the kitchen and heads up the stairs.)

DAYNE. *(calling)* Mom, will you put my clothes in the dryer when you get up in the morning? I need my lucky boxers.

KATE. (*offstage*) Yes...

(*blackout*)

(*during blackout*)

MRS. LANE. (*voice-over*) Your audition will consist of a one minute monologue and a song of your choice. And I do *not* want you to do any songs or monologues from *Oklahoma*.

GRACIE. (*voice-over, whispers*) This is retarded.

MRS. LANE. (*voice-over*) Gracie Westmoreland, if you have something to say, say it to the entire class.

GRACIE. (*voice-over*) Oh...Well, Kendall and I were wondering...Mrs. Lane, why is that? That we can't do something from the musical we're auditioning for? We don't understand.

MRS. LANE. (*voice-over*) It's my way of directing. I like to see the acting and singing ability outside the play we're doing.

KENDALL. (*voice-over, whispers, sarcastic*) Oh, that makes so much sense.

MRS. LANE. (*voice-over*) Did you say something, Kendall Parker?

Scene Two

(It's the next morning before work and school.)

(Family room/kitchen. KATE, professionally dressed, makes breakfast while talking on a cordless phone.)

(Dayne's bedroom. DAYNE, in his bed, is still asleep.)

(Family room/kitchen. GRACIE WESTMORELAND, a dramatic 15-year-old, sits at the piano, pecking out a melody and singing.)

GRACIE. "There's a place I sometimes go... there is a place...place...I sometimes go..."

(She continues.)

KATE. *(on phone)* Al, Al, Al! You have to stop crying because I can only understand about half of what you are saying. *(covers receiver)* Gracie. Gracie! Could you hold off on that for just one moment and go make sure your brother is awake.

GRACIE. *(attitude)* Oh, of course. Because my career is not important to this family at all –

KATE. You're in high school, you don't have a career. Now go wake up your brother. *(back in phone)* Al, Al...AL! –

GRACIE. I hate my existence.

(GRACIE starts up the stairs, pauses at the mirror on the landing to primp.)

KATE. Our session is in less than two hours. Compose yourself and don't do anything drastic, promise me.

(She goes to the front door, opens it, grabs the newspaper and sets it on the bar.)

(Dayne's room. GRACIE slams Dayne's door, hard! DAYNE stirs, doesn't wake up.)

Yes, yes, I know she's cheated on you before, but that doesn't mean... Well, I'm sure she has a logical explanation for that. Al! Put down the gun, you're a democrat. I really have to go now! I'll see you at nine.

(KATE hangs up and pours orange juice into glasses. BOBBY enters, wearing a blue polo/coach shirt, khaki pants and a baseball hat.)

BOBBY. Today's the day! First game of the season. Our son's senior year. And it's...it's gonna be a good one.

(He kisses KATE, then picks up the newspaper sitting on the bar, settles at the table.)

KATE. I'm feeling state champions third year in a row.

(Dayne's bedroom. GRACIE enters, looks around disgusted.)

GRACIE. God, I hate perfection.

(She rearranges some of Dayne's trophies, smiles, then takes his neatly laid out clothes and throws them on the floor.)

(family room/kitchen)

BOBBY. Who was that? On the phone?

(KATE brings BOBBY some bacon and eggs. She sets the plate on the table, then takes off his hat, puts it on the table.)

KATE. A patient. It's just too early to deal with suicide threats, which are not valid. I hope. Hmmm, you smell good.

BOBBY. It's that Hugo stuff you got me.

KATE. Boss. Hugo Boss. I have very good taste.

BOBBY. You married me, didn't you?

(Dayne's bedroom. GRACIE goes over and pushes DAYNE, hard.)

GRACIE. Get up!

(DAYNE grunts, stirs. GRACIE exits.)

(family room/kitchen)

KATE. You were a crazy man last night.

BOBBY. I was inspired.

(Dayne's bedroom/landing/stairs. As GRACIE pauses and primps again, DAYNE jumps up, looks at alarm.)

DAYNE. Shit!!! *(yells)* Why didn't someone wake me up?!

GRACIE. *(yells back)* I just did, genius! And you're welcome!

(DAYNE notices the out-of-place trophies.)

DAYNE. *(mutters)* Little bitch. *(yells)* Mom, tell Gracie to leave my stuff alone!

(He puts them back the way they were, then sees the jeans, picks them up.)

(Family room/kitchen. GRACIE enters.)

KATE. What did you do?

GRACIE. Nothing.

KATE. You know how I feel about lying.

GRACIE. Yes, *(quoting)* "lying and violence are the two things I will not tolerate young lady."

(GRACIE goes back to the piano as KATE hands BOBBY a plate of biscuits as he begins to read the sports section.)

BOBBY. *(to GRACIE.)* Hey, angel face. You good this morning?

GRACIE. No!

KATE. *(to BOBBY)* And why would today be different from every other day.

BOBBY. Well, you hang in there, Gracie. Before you die, you might just have one good day yet. Something to look forward to.

GRACIE. Not funny, Dad!

KATE. Gracie, come eat your breakfast before it gets cold. *(yelling)* Dayne! Breakfast!

(Dayne's bedroom)

DAYNE. I'll be right down after I shower.

(He then exits to an offstage bathroom. There is a knock at the front door.)

(family room/kitchen)

GRACIE. I'll get it. It's Kendall. (*back to KATE*) And I'm not eating. I have to lose five pounds by my audition – thanks to you and your gene pool. (*answers door, overly dramatic*) Hey, Kendall. I am in so much trouble. I can't find the right song to sing for the audition and I'm fat.
(*KENDALL PARKER enters. He's 15, effeminate, too pretty for a boy, GRACIE's best friend.*)

KENDALL. Well, I don't know what monologue to do, but with my song I'm going to take a risk and please don't judge me because I've made up my mind. Are you ready? I'm singing "On My Own" from *Les Mis*.

GRACIE. Isn't that a – ?

KENDALL. I know, I know, it's a girl's song, sung by Eponine just longing to be with Marius and eaten up with jealousy of Cosette. The given circumstances are so complicated...I can go so deep...not being able to be with the man you love and living through fantasy. So sad.

GRACIE. Please don't cry! The auditions aren't 'til this afternoon.

KENDALL. I'm not! Oh, and it's perfect for my range. I'm changing all references to the genders and singing it really, well...manly. But who can do a monologue in just one minute? It's just unreasonable!

GRACIE. I know! I'm freaking out, Kendall!

KENDALL. And why do they always choose those tired old musicals? *Oklahoma*? Please! Why not *Nine* or *Chicago*?

BOBBY. Mornin', Kendall.

KENDALL. Hello, Coach Westmoreland. (*to GRACIE*) I guess Vicksburg, Mississippi is just too conservative for *Nine* and *Chicago*. And they would never do *Kiss of The Spider Woman*! I could tear up Molina. I hope I have a shot at Curly but I'd be happy with Will. I do not want Judd!

GRACIE. I don't think you have to worry.

BOBBY. Gracie, angel face, you look beautiful the way you are. You don't want to be one of those anorexic looking models who –

GRACIE. Oh, yes I do! And if you had been kind enough to pass me your genes instead of just to Dayne, then I wouldn't have the Fuller women thunder-thigh problem.

BOBBY. (to **KATE**) Like I had a choice.

KATE. So now I have thunder thighs?

BOBBY. No, you don't.

GRACIE. Yes, you do! (back to **KENDALL**) I thought you were going to do the closing argument from *To Kill A Mockingbird*?

KENDALL. Too long! Can't figure out what to cut. And it's just too important to damage. In my opinion, one of the most perfect literary pieces ever written. It would be sacrilegious to cut one single word!

GRACIE. I don't get why we can't do a song from *Oklahoma*? I just don't know what to choose! Those stupid audition rules! Although "Surrey With The Fringe On Top" is so retarded. What the hell is a "surrey" anyway?

KENDALL. A carriage. A horse-drawn carriage. And I don't mean to be harsh, but Mrs. Lane is just not a director. She doesn't understand an actor's process.

GRACIE. I know! Old school. (sing-song) Those who can't, teach.

KATE. Morning, Kendall.

KENDALL. Good morning.

KATE. Would you like to have some breakfast? There's plenty since Gracie isn't eating, and I probably shouldn't with my massive thunder thighs.

KENDALL. No, ma'am, I'm just a bundle of nerves and would just throw up all over the place if I ate anything. But thank you.

KATE. Well, that's very considerate of you. You are the best singer in the whole school, Kendall, so I don't think you'll have a problem getting cast.

KENDALL. Thank you.

*(He heads over to the bar and sits to talk to KATE.
GRACIE continues to study her song, half listening.)*

KATE. How's your mother? Does she know you're auditioning this year?

KENDALL. Oh God no! Mrs. Lane knows my situation and already told me that if I got cast, she wouldn't schedule anything on Wednesday night so I won't miss prayer meeting. And no shows or rehearsals on Sundays. I've told my mother that I joined the Math Club and the Science Club and the Spanish Club and now that I'm in student government as Drama Club representative, it'll be easy to make up after school meetings and not get caught.

GRACIE. Well, at least I don't have religious fanatics for parents.

KENDALL. Parent. Just one. Thank God!

KATE. I wish your mother could see how wonderful you are.

(family room/kitchen)

KENDALL. Well, she sees me sing at church and I had a great solo in the Christmas cantata. Remember?

GRACIE. Yeah, great.

KENDALL. That's enough for her. *(imitating)* "Theatre is the devil's playground." Well, that and movies and television and rap music and even Celine Dion! Trust me, it's better to just not tell her. She's so clueless about anything but the church that –

(DAYNE rushes down the stairs, in warm-ups, wet hair, no shirt. He goes to the bar, chest at KENDALL's eye level.

KENDALL completely loses focus, stops talking and stares as KATE hands DAYNE a glass of orange juice.)

DAYNE. I need my lucky boxers –

KATE. Oh crap. Honey, I forgot to dry them.

DAYNE. Mom! Granddaddy Fuller gave me those for luck! You know I have to wear them on game days.

GRACIE. (to **KENDALL**) Close your mouth, Kendall, and help me with my song.

(**KENDALL** obeys, then heads to the piano as **DAYNE** sits at the table by **BOBBY**.)

KATE. Honey, I'm sorry, I was dealing with a patient.

DAYNE. Thanks a lot.

BOBBY. Hey! Give your mom a break. She does important things. Maybe prevented a suicide. How often can you say you've done that, huh? (*slugs DAYNE*) Just throw them in the dryer. They'll be dry in less than ten minutes.

KATE. I'll do it. Eat some breakfast, sweetie.

(**KATE** exits. **DAYNE** grabs a couple of biscuits, fills them with bacon and starts eating. **KENDALL** keeps glancing over at **DAYNE** as he sits at the piano and thumbs through a songbook with **GRACIE**.)

BOBBY. You excited?

DAYNE. (*gobbling bites*) Yep. I'm running so late. I don't know what's wrong with me. I can't wake up in the mornings and I stay too tired. I hope it doesn't affect my game.

BOBBY. You stay up too late. You're probably still on summer time. Got to hit the hay earlier. You sure looked good in practice this week. Better than ever.

(**KATE** enters, carrying an *Ole Miss* sleeveless T-shirt.)

KATE. All done. Here, put this on. (*hands him the T-shirt*) I'm sorry I forgot, Dayne. Do you want some eggs?

DAYNE. Uh-huh. It's okay. Sorry I was pissy.

(**DAYNE** puts the shirt down.)

KATE. Uh-uh. You know you don't sit at the table without a shirt.

(**DAYNE** puts on the shirt.)

DAYNE. (*mutters*) Stupid rule.

(**BOBBY** smiles and nods, picks up his hat to show **DAYNE**, agreeing.)

DAYNE. Will you pick me up some vitamins today, Mom? I need more energy. And my weight-gain powder. I lost more weight.

KATE. (*whispers*) Well, don't tell Gracie.

BOBBY. It's because of all the practice. Lean, mean fighting machine.

KATE. I'll stop by the Vitamin Shack.

(**KATE** scrambles some eggs. **KENDALL** starts playing piano and **GRACIE** starts to sing.)

GRACIE. (*singing*) "There is a place, I sometimes go –"

DAYNE. (*mock look around*) Do I hear cats fighting?

GRACIE. I heard that! (*bursting into tears*) I'm insecure enough about my singing as it is, asshole!

BOBBY. Hey, potty mouth!

GRACIE. Yeah, go ahead and take his side like you always do! Dayne can never do anything wrong –

DAYNE. I was just kidding.

GRACIE. I hate you!

KATE. (*overlapping*) Say you're sorry. Hurry!

GRACIE. Well, it's my day too!

DAYNE. (*overlapping*) Sorry, jeez –

GRACIE. Just because it's the first game of the stupid season doesn't mean I don't have a life too! I get so tired of you and football. Nobody supports the arts –

KENDALL. I do –

KATE. Honey, we love your acting.

(**KATE** serves **DAYNE** his eggs. **DAYNE** gets up, opens the refrigerator and pours himself some milk.)

GRACIE. But I'm not a good singer! Just say it! Dayne already did! I have to audition today and I have to sing. You don't know what it's like. It'd be like Meryl Streep's husband telling her that her accent wasn't right when she auditioned for *Out of Africa* or *Cry In The Dark* or *Sophie's Choice* –

DAYNE. Here we go with Meryl freakin' Streep –

(DAYNE sits and eats his breakfast.)

KENDALL. I don't think Meryl Streep has to audition.

GRACIE. Oh shut up, Kendall! That's not the point. (*turns on DAYNE*) And don't call her "Meryl freakin' Streep"! She happens to be the best actress that ever walked the face of the earth and you just said I couldn't sing and I wasn't going to get cast in the Fall musical again. (*bangs table*) Dayne! Just because you already have scholarship offers, UNDER THE TABLE, illegal recruiting –

BOBBY. Hey, don't talk about that – !

KATE. Okay, this is getting absurd –

BOBBY. You can't talk about that, Gracie.

GRACIE. Well, since you're a therapist, make it better, *Mother!* And you never missed one of Dayne's games and you missed my performance in *A Fairy Tale Review*.

KATE. When you were in sixth grade! I had the Hong Kong flu! I was in bed with a hundred and three temperature!

GRACIE. Whatever.

BOBBY. And I was there.

DAYNE. So was I. You were riveting as "Little Red Riding Hood".

GRACIE. Shut up, Dayne! This has nothing to do with you!

DAYNE. Oh, I thought it did. I thought it was called sibling rivalry. That you are jealous 'cause –

GRACIE. And it's not fair that you got Dad's gene pool and I got Mom's thunder thighs –

KATE. My thighs are not thunderous!

BOBBY. Okay, stop it! We're very supportive of your acting and you know it –

(DAYNE gets up, rinses his plate, glass, and silverware and puts them in the dishwasher.)

KENDALL. I just think you're feeling insecure about your singing –

GRACIE. No shit, genius!

BOBBY. Hey, potty mouth – !

DAYNE. I'm out of here. Yell at me when my lucky boxers are dry.

KATE. Did you get enough breakfast? It's game day and –

GRACIE. Great! Back to Dayne. It's all about Dayne!

(KENDALL stares as DAYNE passes by. DAYNE gives him a mock punch and smiles.)

DAYNE. Good luck with your audition, Ken. And try and get Hysterical Hannah to calm down –

GRACIE. SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP! I AM NOT HYSTERICAL!!! *(to KENDALL)* And quit staring at him all the time, Kendall! You're just proving my point that he got all the good genes and I got Mom's thunder-thighs and nobody can sing in this family and I am so screwed –

BOBBY. Okay, stop it, Grace Louise. Now! Enough!

GRACIE. *(screaming)* AHHHHH! You know I hate my middle name, so don't call me Grandmother Fuller with the big ol' thunder thighs name!

BOBBY. Okay, I'm sorry. But just calm down and sit down for a moment.

GRACIE. No!

BOBBY. Now!

(Dayne's bedroom. DAYNE enters, picks up his football playbook, studies it.)

(Family room/kitchen. GRACIE sits, arms crossed.)

GRACIE. Okay, *what?*

BOBBY. Angel face, we love you so much and we are so proud of you. You are a brilliant actress –

GRACIE. I know that!

KATE. You're going to be the next Meryl Streep.

GRACIE. *(crying)* But Meryl can sing.

BOBBY. She can?

GRACIE. Hello?! *Postcards From The Edge, A Prairie Home Companion –*

KENDALL. *Mama Mia.*

GRACIE. Meryl's got it all and I don't.

KATE. There are lots of other actresses, sweetie, Academy Award winners, who cannot sing. Kate Winslet. Cher. And Meryl has a good voice, but it's not great –

GRACIE. But I want to be in the musical! Acting is my life and if I don't get cast, I'll just die. What'll I do all Fall? Watch Dayne make touchdowns? Kendall's right. I'm just insecure about my singing and I've worked so hard, but Molly Miller's going to get "Laurie," I just know it. I can act circles around that little bitch –

BOBBY. Hey – !

GRACIE. ...but she has that voice and musical theatre is *not* known for good acting. And why did the auditions have to be on the same day as Dayne's first game? He's gonna be the superstar and win and I'm not going to get cast again! I hate musicals! They're stupid and unrealistic!

KENDALL. I don't think you should even audition for "Laurie". Audition for "Ado Annie", then you can sing in a character voice.

GRACIE. I am *not* a character actress! I am a leading lady! And who the hell breaks into song in real life anyway?

KENDALL. I sometimes do –

GRACIE. Of course you do!

KATE. Don't be mean to Kendall. He's just trying to help –

GRACIE. Is it your mission in life, *Mother*, to take everybody's side except mine?!! I hate my existence!

(She storms up the stairs.)

KATE. Where did she come from?

BOBBY. Your gene pool.

(lights begin to fade)

(Dayne's bedroom. DAYNE puts the book down, rises.)

DAYNE. *(yelling)* Mom! Are my lucky boxers dry yet?

(blackout)

(during blackout)

(crowd cheers throughout)

FOOTBALL ANNOUNCER. *(voice-over)* Westmoreland to the twenty-five! To the twenty! He's got daylight! One man to beat! Oh what a move! To the ten... five. Touchdown!!! Touchdown Bobcats! Dayne Westmoreland racks up another huge gain on a thirty-two yard scamper for the touchdown as the Bobcats go up thirteen, zero! *(pause)* Short screen to Westmoreland on the right side. Look out, he's got blockers out front. He's to midfield...to the forty... the thirty...nobody is going to touch him! And Dayne Westmoreland walks into the end zone for the fourth time tonight as the Bobcats go up twenty-seven, zero! *(pause)* And that folks is what you call an old-fashioned blowout! Final score, Vicksburg Prep Bobcats, twenty-eight, Yazoo City Trojans, a big fat zero!

Scene Three

(Front porch. TIMOTHEA PARKER, 40, high, 1970's Pentecostal hair; no make-up or jewelry, sits on the bench outside the front door of the Westmoreland home. Her dress is conservative, four inches below the knee. She is clutching a white Bible tightly, praying. She is very troubled and is crying softly.)

TIMOTHEA. I know there are demons in this world, Lord, and if my boy is possessed, I ask that you send an angel or your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to exorcise that demon from him so he will walk with thee, dear Lord. *(quoting)* "And Jesus rebuked the demon and he departed out of him, and the child was cured from that very hour." Matthew 17:18. I gave him a test and he failed just like when Christ did to Peter who betrayed him three times before the cock crowed. I want to be a good Mother. I want to raise my boy in thy light, dear sweet precious Savior, to be a God-fearing disciple of thine, but I have failed. *(crying)* I have failed! And I need you to help me get this child of mine on your spiritual path to Glory –

(A car approaches and headlights hit the house.)

In thy precious holy name, Amen. *(squints; yells)*
Matthew Mark! Matthew Mark!

(A car door slams.)

KATE. *(offstage)* Timothea?

(KATE enters, carrying two bags of groceries and never puts them down during her conversation with TIMOTHEA.)

Is everything okay?

TIMOTHEA. This world is exactly as it should be, Kate Westmoreland, because our Lord and Savior is in command –

KATE. I assume you're looking for Kendall.

TIMOTHEA. Please do not utter his secular name in my presence. The boy's name is Matthew Mark. Biblical name. Disciples of our Lord and Master. And by him taking that secular name, he has defied me and his Lord –

KATE. Okay, Ken...Matthew Mark went with us to the football game –

TIMOTHEA. As I suspected. Sinful sport –

KATE. It was over about thirty minutes ago. Bobby is bringing them home. He'll be here shortly. Vicksburg won.

TIMOTHEA. I do not care, Kate Westmoreland –

KATE. Kate is more than adequate. And why don't you give the boy a little breathing room. He's such a good kid.

TIMOTHEA. Uh, uh, uh. Do not tell me how to mother my child, Kate Westmoreland. (*emotional*) He's all I have left. After I lost his twin. And his worthless daddy left us for that...woman.

KATE. Okay, I'm sorry I brought it up. I know that's painful for you.

TIMOTHEA. Oh, I pray for you daily, Kate Westmoreland. I pray that the Father will reach down into the depths of your soul. So you will get off that broad and winding road that leads to destruction –

KATE. Look, I've told you before, I don't want to discuss religion with you. It's a no-win situation.

TIMOTHEA. Oh, I've already won, Kate Westmoreland. My mansion is already built –

KATE. (*can't resist*) Why do you people always have to have such luxury in heaven? Streets of gold. Mansions? Seems a little materialistic to me.

TIMOTHEA. Oh, like the great gospel songwriter-singer Dottie Rambo wrote, "Build my mansion next door to Jesus and tell the angels I'm coming soon!" The Lord wants the very best for those who have accepted him as their personal Savior. And he has a place for you. He has a mansion for you! There is room. Don't you want

that? You are a sinner, Kate Westmoreland, and he is giving you free will. You have set your children on a path of destruction and your soul is in grave danger –

KATE. Like I said, *I am done!* And if I don't get to tell you how to mother your child, don't you dare tell me how to mother mine.

TIMOTHEA. Will you sit and pray with me, invite Jesus into your heart?

KATE. No! We're Episcopalians –

TIMOTHEA. Catholics light –

KATE. (*can't resist*) Okay, I'm sorry, but you really think you deserve that real estate next door to Jesus? Over, oh say, Mother Theresa? Ghandi? Billy Graham – ?

TIMOTHEA. (*laughs, amused*) Buddists do not go to heaven. Ghandi is in hell. With Mother Theresa most likely. Catholics are not real Christians with their idolatry, their statues and praying to Mary, a mere mortal –

(*A car approaches, headlights hit the house.*)

KATE. Thank God –

TIMOTHEA. (*squints*) Matthew! Matthew Mark!

KATE. Ghandi was Hindu.

(*TIMOTHEA turns, gives KATE a questioning look.*)

TIMOTHEA. I don't think so.

(*KENDALL and GRACIE enter, followed by BOBBY.*)

Why must you defy me, Matthew Mark?

KENDALL. Mother! I told you I'd be home after the game –

BOBBY. Evening, Mrs. Parker.

TIMOTHEA. Hello, Bobby Westmoreland. And I'd appreciate you calling me Sister Timothea. I am no longer married to that man who betrayed the sanctity of our vows. I am now married to Jesus.

BOBBY. Well, that conjures up images that I'm not real comfortable with. Gracie, come on.

(*BOBBY and GRACIE walk into the house, they both head to offstage bedrooms to change.*)

TIMOTHEA. (*glares at BOBBY, then to KENDALL*) And I told you to choose between a secular football game and visitation with the elderly and afflicted at the Fairhaven Nursing Home, where you would have brought one ounce of joy into those pitiful, sad, lives by singing hymns with the beautiful voice the Lord bestowed upon you, but instead –

KENDALL. You said I had a choice – !

TIMOTHEA. And I expected you to make the right one!

KENDALL. Then that's not a choice! I don't like singing for those old people. It smells there.

TIMOTHEA. “Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.” Ephesians 6:1.

(*off KENDALL rolling his eyes*)

You are corrupted, Matthew Mark. Your Father corrupted you before he left with that Jezebel – and this family – these Episcopalians – are corrupting my one and only child. (*emotional*) I'm losing you, Matthew Mark –

KENDALL. I want to be called Kendall!

TIMOTHEA. (*flinches*) I will not utter that name. That is the name of the demon inside of you –

KATE. Oh for crying out loud! I think you need to leave.

TIMOTHEA. Yes, I shall and I will!

KENDALL. (*to KATE*) Sorry. (*to TIMOTHEA*) Let's just go! Jeez!

TIMOTHEA. Do *not* use the Lord's name in vain. That word is a slang word for Jesus Christ, our Lord, Master, and Savior!

KENDALL. You're embarrassing me!

(*KENDALL stalks off the porch, TIMOTHEA follows.*)

TIMOTHEA. You let me down, Matthew Mark. But most of all, you let down the Lord and all of His creations who are knocking on death's door –

(*Family room/kitchen. KATE enters the house, goes to the kitchen and puts up the groceries. BOBBY comes from the*

bedroom to help with the groceries, GRACIE comes down the stairs.)

KATE. That poor, poor boy –

GRACIE. She scares me. She speaks in tongues, you know?

KATE. Yes. Pentecostals.

GRACIE. When I went to their church that time, she did it in the middle of the Christmas Cantata. Scary.

(GRACIE pulls out her cell phone, looks at a text, then starts text messaging back and continues all throughout the scene.)

KATE. I know.

GRACIE. She made a shepherd cry.

KATE. Now could you stop for one moment and be thankful for your parents.

GRACIE. No. Because there are parents who are better than you.

KATE. Of course. She actually said that Ghandi and Mother Theresa are in hell.

BOBBY. Sorry I missed that conversation. Hey, how about that game!?

KATE. It was a great game, Bobby.

GRACIE. It was good. I've seen better.

KATE. Gracie, you want ice cream? Now that your audition is over.

GRACIE. No! If I get "Laurie," I don't want to have to take off the five pounds you are trying to put on me to make yourself feel better about your own obesity.

(She rolls her eyes, then texts messages with fervor.)

KATE. Now I'm obese?

BOBBY. You're not obese, Katie. Well, I want ice cream. Time to celebrate. You want some?

(BOBBY scoops a bowl of ice cream.)

KATE. Not with these thighs.