

SCENE ONE

MOTHER / FATHER

FATHER. Honey, I'm home!

MOTHER. Right on time, Father!

FATHER. And it's so very nice to be home after such a long day at the office. You know, Mr. Smith from accounting said it perfectly this morning when he said just how lucky we are to have such perfect homes, with our perfect jobs and our perfect families.

MOTHER. You are so right, Father! Such a perfect day. And how was papa bear's day at work?

FATHER. Oh, you know, mama bear, the usual. A little bit of this, a little bit of that, and a whole lot of paperwork.

MOTHER. Well, isn't that perfect, dear. I just love it when you do important things like paperwork.

FATHER. Oh, and that project I've been working on is finally finished.

MOTHER. Oh, honey, I forgot to tell you why this is such a perfect evening.

FATHER. It looks like it's going to work perfectly. Everything just came together.

MOTHER. Tonight we are getting together with the Joneses and the Smiths and the Davises! That's my surprise, papa bear, we're going to have a dinner party!

FATHER. Of course, I was surprised to discover that my project will probably cause the inevitable destruction of the entire world and every living creature on it ...

MOTHER. Won't it be delightful?

FATHER. A complete and total apocalypse.

MOTHER. With the very best guests.

BOTH: Isn't that just perfect !?

SCENE TWO

MOTHER / LITTLE SISTER

MOTHER. Father, look, our daughter is home just in time to help Mommy get ready for our dinner party. And how was my little lady today?

LITTLE SISTER. Today, when I was on the playground, I pushed Timmy Smith off of the monkey bars.

MOTHER. That's nice, sweetie. Now go change into your pretty dress so that our guests will see how perfect our little house is and how we can have a perfect dinner party.

LITTLE SISTER. And when he fell, he cried a lot and I laughed, because boys aren't supposed to cry, even when you break your arm falling off the monkey bars. So I made him eat dirt for crying and teacher said...

MOTHER. That's nice, but remember that we have guests on their way and there's not much time left-for anyone...

LITTLE SISTER. And after he ate the dirt, I twisted his broken arm and he started to scream and I liked it!

MOTHER. MOTHER SAID GO TO YOUR ROOM OR THIS WILL INDEED BE YOUR LAST DAY ON EARTH. DO IT NOW BEFORE MOMMY GETS ANGRY. *(Big pause)* Love, Father, love is why we are having a dinner party tonight. Because I love our perfect home, our perfect lives and our perfect children

SCENE THREE

MOTHER / SON

SON. Guess who has good news?

MOTHER. Why, it's my perfect son! And what is this good news?

SON. Well, this is just about the most important news ever!

MOTHER. Oh I doubt that.

SON. I'm going to be the new quarterback for the football team! Isn't that grand!? Being quarterback is just about the most important thing that will ever happen to me, even if I live to be 100 years old!

MOTHER. Well, that's not likely! Now run along and get changed. Tonight the Joneses and the Smiths and the Davises are all coming over for dinner, and I want everything to be perfect! *(He shrugs her off; she is shocked and outraged.)* Father will have to discipline you if you keep up that behavior!

SON. All Dad will do is read his paper and smoke his smelly old pipe.

MOTHER. Because that's what fathers are good at, Junior. If you work real hard, you'll be a man like him someday and be able to read about important things and make your own special smells. Dinner will be ready soon, and we don't have very long-not long at all. But until then, go change.

SON. Gee wilikers, Mom.

MOTHER. *(suddenly shifts into evil mother)* GO AND CHANGE RIGHT NOW BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! *(Big pause)* Papa bear, I know there is nothing more important than relaxing after a hard day. Not even the end of the world could tear a workingman away from his entertainments. *(Spaces out momentarily)* Not even the end of the world ...

SCENE FOUR

MOTHER / Civil Defense Warden / SISTER

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. Do you realize that having your lights on is an invitation to disorder and chaos? It's in the manual!

MOTHER. You see, you don't seem to understand. I have been planning this dinner party for a very long time and nothing, not even the end of the world, is going to stop it from happening. So whether your little manual says so or not, those lights are staying on, and there will be a dinner party tonight.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. But I can't secure the rest of Area B9 until I turn off the lights here! If I could just- *(Goes to turn off lights.)*

MOTHER. Touch that light switch and you will lose a hand! What you will do is STAY AND EAT MEATLOAF, OR YOU WILL NOT LIVE TO SEE THE APOCALYPSE WITH EVERYONE ELSE! *(He is intimidated into sitting abruptly. She smiles brightly and continues.)* I'll go get another chair.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. I guess I could stay for a minute, but we don't have long.

MOTHER. Remember, I'm watching you, little man. *(CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN realizes that she is gone and gets up to leave but is interrupted by LITTLE SISTER as she enters dressed exactly like MOTHER. She should be a carbon copy of MOTHER in miniature, right down to her hair.)*

LITTLE SISTER. I like your uniform, it's just perfect. Mother says that men in uniforms are good to have at dinner parties because good conversations come from uniforms. I saw a man at the filling station that looks just like you, but his uniform was different.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN *(stands at attention)* I am the Civil Defense Warden for Area B9. That is a very important job, especially in the event of the end of the world.

LITTLE SISTER. Father said that filling station workers are grease monkeys and that we shouldn't talk to them because they aren't important. You really look like the man at the filling station.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. Well, I am NOT a grease monkey! I only work at the filling station on weekends and Wednesdays. My real job is important, very important, and you will refer to me as Mr. Civil Defense Warden!

SCENE FIVE

NURSE / GRANDPA / Civil Defense Warden

GRANDPA. der wurlf it gerna ent, kaput, ta beeg changlee!

NURSE JANE. He says thank you for the invitation and we would love to stay. *(Pushes him on past MOTHER's obvious protest.)*

GRANDPA. *(looking at NURSE JANE like she's crazy, he gestures for her to come close with his remaining finger, which takes effort. When she is very close he yells).* Parfin gliggle taruck parf, der wurlf it gerna ent, kaput, ta beeg changlee farth... tend ifter wirt! Steeerffin beetle crastank! Maggle farf tankle donk, stipple trank neeeeeerrrrfff! Kaput? *(GRANDPA is so agitated that he seizes up in whatever position is appropriate and funny and stares off into space and drools.)*

NURSE JANE. Now don't get yourself excited or your angina will act up and you'll have another spell.

MOTHER. Is he all right? It isn't because of the meatloaf is it? I knew I should have made a casserole!

NURSE JANE. Oh no, he loves meatloaf! He does this every time I vacuum the floor. There I am, pushing the vacuum back and forth and back and forth... *(She pantomimes vacuuming in a way that positions her derriere in front of GRANDPA.)* and he just gets all upset. I think it's the sound of the vacuum cleaner that upsets him.

GRANDPA. TER FER DER FLIN POOK AH STU BLASTERFLUP.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. *(obviously enamored with NURSE JANE)* Um, hello there, ma'am. Allow me to introduce myself. I am the Civil Defense Warden for Area B9.

NURSE JANE. Oh, I just love a man in uniform!

SCENE SIX

MARTHA / GEORGE / MOTHER / Civil Defense Warden

MOTHER. Father, put down that paper, the neighbors have stopped by.

MARTHA. And so George says to me, "Martha," he says, "Since the TV says it's the end of the world, I'm sure the neighbors wouldn't mind us borrowing a cup of sugar so you can make me a cake." And I says, "A cake, right now, with everything about to end?" And he says, "I really would like a cake, Martha." As if I didn't have enough to worry about, not that he ever thought about me or what I wanted.

GEORGE. Now, Martha. (*Pushes her out of the way.*) What my wife is trying to say is that your lights are the only lights on in the neighborhood, and what with this whole end of the world business, we thought we would just hop on over...

MARTHA. Don't interrupt me, George, it's not polite. Anyway, since we saw your lights on, and since it is the end of the world-

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. I told them that leaving the lights on was against regulations!
(*MOTHER glares him back into silence.*)

MARTHA. We thought we'd just hop right over and see if you might let us borrow a cup of sugar.

MOTHER. Is it just a cup you need? I can get that right now.

MARTHA. Well, actually, if you had a little more, then I could make a bigger cake for George, not that he needs any more cake considering how big around the middle he's getting. (*She laughs in the most obnoxious manner possible.*) George says that the starvation following catastrophes like this one will be horrible, so one last cake...

GEORGE. Now, Martha, let's not tell them everything

SCENE SEVEN

AVON LADY / NURSE / GRANDPA / MOTHER

AVON LADY. AAAAVON calling! Are you the lady of the house?

MOTHER. Why, yes I am. I am the lady of the house.

AVON LADY. Well let me introduce you to our new line of cosmetics for the end of the world. We have a whole new line of blushes that fit just this occasion!

NURSE JANE. Did you say blushes?! I have 36 different shades of blushes in my purse right now! *(She bends over to retrieve them.)*

GRANDPA. Wanga farpin carfun parta crank.

NURSE JANE. That's nice, Grandpa, I know it itches sometimes. Did I tell you that I just love blush!

MOTHER. And it shows perfectly well. And while I'm sure you have some perfectly nice blushes and lipsticks and eye shadows, I only use ...

AVON LADY. What you SHOULD be using are Avon products! And you are in luck today because I just happen to be the Avon lady, and I sell Avon products.

MOTHER. But I have guests on their way...

AVON LADY. Oh please let me at least show you something. I simply couldn't leave without someone buying Fiery Flirt blush #42. Remember, beautiful people don't die in apocalypses, they die in sports cars!

NURSE JANE. *(to AVON LADY)* Can I try some of the blushes you have? I think mine has rubbed off! I just love blushes.

AVON LADY. Certainly, let's just go to the ladies room. We have several that match your skin tone. #67 Mushroom Cloud Chartreuse is very pretty when your skin is melting off in a blast of superheated gases. Or you could try Burnt to a Crisp Brown, our new base!...

SCENE EIGHT

MOTHER / SUZIE / SON / Civil Defense Warden

MOTHER. Oh my, it's Suzie Smith, how unexpected:

SUZIE. Hello ma'am, my mother and father told me to bring over this cake on my way to the bonfire tonight. They said it was for the dinner party.

MOTHER. Oh my, I am so happy you came by, Suzie. And I so look forward to having a perfect dinner party with your parents. *(Walks to CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN and drops the cake in his lap.)*

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. What do you want me to..

MOTHER. Make yourself useful and take this to the kitchen ... NOW! *(To SUZIE.)* Would you like for Junior to come out and visit? I can call him if you want.

SUZIE. Oh, no ma'am, that would be too forward for a girl like me. Although, he did say that he wanted to go to the bonfire with me. But he never came by!

MOTHER. Well, we'll just have to find out why he didn't come calling. *(Calling offstage.)* Junior, oh Junior! Suzie Smith is here to see you!

SON. *(entering, clutching a teddy bear and wearing footie pajamas)* Mother, that is not a funny joke when I am so upset... Suzie??

SUZIE. Oh, hello

SON. Um, hello... Suzie, I know I asked you about the bonfire...

SUZIE. *(hopeful)* I'm really am looking forward to it.

SON. Well, about that, you see, I don't think I can go tonight, what with the world ending and all.

SUZIE. What do you mean, the world ending? I just knew you didn't want to go with me, but to come up with an excuse like that!

SON. No really, it's not an excuse, I really wanted to!

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. *(re-entering)* Oh, it's not an excuse! It says right here in my civil defense announcement that the world ends at 7:36 today!

MOTHER. LET THE LOVE BIRDS TALK, GREASE MONKEY!

SUZIE. You mean, the world is really ending? Well, if the world is ending, then I guess I can drop the squaresville act, *(Rips of her costume to reveal hotpants and a tight top.)* we can get out there and light some fires, maybe boost a car or two, lift some hubcaps, knock over a soda counter!

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. That's called looting and that is strictly forbidden

SCENE NINE INSURANCE SALESMAN / Civil Defense Warden / MOTHER

INSURANCE SALESMAN. Why, hello there friends! Carter Palek, Kingsford and Sons Insurance.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. Finally! Sir, I am the Civil Defense Warden-
(*SALESMAN silences him by whacking him with his briefcase.*)

INSURANCE SALESMAN. Now I know what you are thinking. Tonight is not a good night to have an insurance salesman call on me, what with the world ending and all.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. Well, actually- (*SALESMAN silences him again.*)

INSURANCE SALESMAN. But since I saw your lights on, I thought I'd stop by and share with you a very special deal - one you're not likely to see again!

MOTHER. (*entering*) Oh, look, another unexpected guest on the same night I am having a dinner party. I am just so perfectly happy about how this is turning out.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. I told you that lights should be off and that we should duck, cover and remain calm!

MOTHER. ONE MORE TIME

INSURANCE SALESMAN. Well, ducking and covering is one way to avoid risk, but as part of your end of the world, apocalyptic preparations, you really should consider insurance coverage.

SCENE TEN *POLITICAL ACTIVISTS*

POLITICAL WOMAN 3. As the only house with your lights on

POLITICAL MAN 1. We, the citizens of this neighborhood, thought we should stop by

POLITICAL WOMAN 2. To ask you to join us.

POLITICAL MAN 2. We are tired and fed up!

POLITICAL WOMAN 1. How can the government force an apocalypse on us without first having a debate?

POLITICAL WOMAN 2. Or a public hearing.

POLITICAL WOMAN 1. Or a referendum!

POLITICAL MAN 1. Join us as we march on city hall.

POLITICAL WOMAN 1. We demand an explanation from those frauds in office.

POLITICAL MAN 2. Who do they think they are?

POLITICAL MAN 1. Deciding things like this for everyone?

POLITICAL WOMAN 1. It's un-American!

POLITICAL MAN 1 & 2. Communistic!

POLITICAL WOMAN 2 & 3. Downright fascist!

POLITICAL WOMAN 2. There should be limits on when the government can announce things like apocalypses.

ALL POLITICAL ACTIVISTS. Yeah!

POLITICAL MAN 2. Armageddons!

ALL POLITICAL ACTIVISTS. Yeah!

POLITICAL MAN 1. Ends of the world!

ALL POLITICAL ACTIVISTS. Yeah!

POLITICAL WOMAN 1. We demand representation before annihilation!

SCENE ELEVEN

Dorothy and Followers / CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN

FOLLOWER 3: Because your lights are on, we know that the mothership holds favor with you.

FOLLOWER 4: We are here to warn you, sister!

FOLLOWER 1: Warn you about the doom that is about to be visited upon you.

FOLLOWER 2: We know that the end is near because we have been told.

FOLLOWERS 1-4: Ommmmmmmmmmmm.

DOROTHY. The government has lied to you.

FOLLOWERS 1-4. Lies!

CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN. Hey, the government never lies. They leave that to the newspapers!

DOROTHY. They know that the world isn't ending for everyone, just for those who refuse to see the truth, the truth about "the mothership."

FOLLOWERS 1-4. Ommmmmmmm.

DOROTHY. It was revealed to me by direct psychic connection that there is a rescue ship from the home planet.

FOLLOWER 1. It's on its way here right now to rescue the true believers.

FOLLOWER 2. The ones who listen to the psychic wisdom of the ancients as it has been revealed through the cosmic interfaces of the void.

FOLLOWERS 1-4. Ommmmmmmm.

DOROTHY. Come, sisters, we must meditate!

FOLLOWERS 1-4. Yes, meditate.

SCENE TWELVE

MOTHER, SHRINERS 1-3, CIVIL DEFENSE WARDEN

MOTHER. More unexpected guests!

SHRINER 3. We were so glad to see your lights were on since we need to talk to our lodge brother about important lodge business.

SHRINER 1. We are here for your husband.

SHRINER 2. As grand master of the lodge, he is the ultimate authority.

SHRINER 1. As imperial potentate for our fraternity —

SHRINER 3. He will decide whether the lodge will support or oppose —

SHRINER 2. This whole apocalypse thing.

SHRINER 1. Of course, all lodge business must remain secret.

SHRINER 2. Yes, secret.

SHRINER 3. Definitely secret.

SHRINER 1. May we speak with your husband?

MOTHER. I don't know, I mean, it's not like I was planning a DINNER PARTY TONIGHT!