

The New Kid on the Block

*A comedy of secrets
by Pat Cook*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

They say that the harder you try to keep a secret the harder it tries to get out. But what secrets could there be between Carl, Lloyd and Parker, three older gentlemen who live in a four-bedroom house? After all, they simply want to rent out that fourth bedroom to help with the rent. And when Will shows up, their problem seems to be answered ...except that Will turns out to be a lady.

"I like her," Parker admits.

"We're not voting on prom queen!" Carl barks at him.

However, when it comes down to a vote, Lloyd and Parker vote Will in. What these two don't know is this was part of a plan thought up by Carl. You see, Will is Carl's sister. She protests to her big brother, saying they should tell Parker and Lloyd.

"Are you kidding?" Carl argues, "You should've heard those two last year when I wanted to get a dog!" These two plotters are just about to decide when to reveal all when Will's daughter Jolene shows up having just left her husband. On top of this, Carl keeps disappearing. And then Morgana, the neighborhood gossip, shows up.

Before you know it, it's all over the area that Carl and Will are sweethearts. Meanwhile, Lloyd has put on his army fatigues and is running night maneuvers, and Parker is sneaking around the neighborhood with his walkie-talkie. Then the woman in black visits, telling Will that if she knows what's good for her, she better leave the house. This isn't just a matter of who's who, it's who is telling who what? Who is telling the truth about who else? And, for that matter, who is really who?

"Don't forget to pick up a scorecard," Jolene points out. "Without a scorecard you won't know the players."

From the same author of "Every Little Crook and Nanny" and "Barbecuing Hamlet," this one-set show has more turns than your uncle's map to grandma's house. And you'll finally find out just who really is "The New Kid on the Block."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 4 w)

CARL CARLYSLE: Rather bossy 75-year-old man.

LLOYD TIMBERLAKE: Southern gentleman, retired from the Army, late 70s.

PARKER KLAWSON: Genial, impish man in his late 70s.

WILL STEWART: Cautious 73-year-old lady with a secret.

MORGANA BOLTON: Bombastic gossip in her early 60s.

JOLENE BALFOY: Will's sarcastic daughter.

ELEANOR DUMFRIES: Dramatic 70-year-old lady.

Time

The present.

Setting

The living room of the house rented by our heroes. The room shows signs that while it is in a somewhat older house, it is clean and well kept. There are three doors utilized in this floor plan. The front door is located on the SR wall, flanked by two large windows, complete with floral drapes. The second door, located center on the US wall, leads into the kitchen. There is an arched entrance located on the SL wall which leads to the hall and bedrooms.

The furniture consists of a sofa, located DSL, which faces out. It is flanked by two end tables, on which are two matching lamps. There is an arm chair near the SL arm of the sofa, near the SR wall, angled slightly toward the sofa. A small table rests between the chair and the wall, on which sits a telephone. DS on the SL wall is an entertainment center, on which rests a television which is angled toward the sofa. There is a dining table with four matching chairs resting in the USR corner of the room. Behind the table, on the US wall is a buffet. In the USL corner are overflowing wooden bookshelves. Around the walls are photos and art prints.

See **Props** and **Sound Effects** lists at back of script.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: As the LIGHTS come up, CARL is pacing behind the sofa. LLOYD is sitting in the chair and PARKER is sitting on the sofa. All are wearing ties and their best shirts and pants. Parker is also wearing a sports jacket. Lloyd is sitting erect but sound asleep. Carl paces a bit, stops and looks at his wristwatch, paces again, stops again and looks at his watch, then paces again.)

PARKER: *(Suddenly.)* Will you stop that? You look like a bear in a shooting gallery.

CARL: *(Stops.)* I just wish he'd get here, that's all. I hate it when people are late. Not a good sign when people are late.

Here he's coming here for the first time and he's late.

PARKER: *(Turns and looks at HIM.)* How late is he?

CARL: *(Looks at his watch.)* He'll be late in thirteen minutes.

PARKER: *(Relaxes, then catches this.)* He'll BE late in thirteen minutes? You're looking forward to him being late?

CARL: I have a knack for that kind of thing.

PARKER: No kidding. What time is it? *(CARL again looks at his watch.)* You just LOOKED at your watch!

CARL: Just to see how late he was.

PARKER: Will be.

CARL: *(Paces again.)* Just hope he's not some doddering old fool.

PARKER: Carl, WE are doddering old fools.

CARL: No such thing. *(Stops.)* I do NOT dodder.

PARKER: Left that "fool" question up in the air, though, I noticed.

CARL: I am still sharp as a tack. So are you. So is Lloyd.

(THEY look over at LLOYD who is dozing blissfully.)

PARKER: *(After a slight pause.)* He reminds me of a clock we used to have when I was a kid. Looked like an owl and the eyes would go back and forth, clicking off the seconds.

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CARL: *(Kicks the back of the chair.)* Lloyd!

(LLOYD rouses and, without moving, darts his eyes right and left.)

PARKER: *(Watching HIM.)* One second, two seconds, three seconds –

CARL: Wake up, Lloyd!

LLOYD: I wasn't asleep.

CARL: You were asleep.

LLOYD: I was not asleep; what time is it?

PARKER: Ask the bear.

(LLOYD gets a curious look on his face and, leaning forward, looks around the room.)

CARL: Maybe he's lost?

PARKER: That can't be.

CARL: Why not?

PARKER: He's got another ten minutes before he could be lost.

CARL: I mean he could be lost now!

PARKER: Oh, so now he gets lost early? You haven't even met the man.

LLOYD: We have a bear? Did a bear come in while I was asleep?

PARKER: You said you weren't asleep.

LLOYD: I must'a been if I missed a bear.

PARKER: I don't mean a real bear.

LLOYD: You mean somebody pretendin' to be a bear came in while I was asleep?

PARKER: You said you weren't asleep.

CARL: *(Looks at his watch.)* Nine minutes.

LLOYD: Till what?

PARKER: Till he's either late and/or lost and/or both.

LLOYD: And HE'S the one pretending to be the bear?

CARL: *(Irritated.)* There's no BEAR!

LLOYD: *(Sniffs indignantly.)* Well, not with THAT attitude. I guess not.

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PARKER: *(Leans over to LLOYD.)* The guy who's coming to rent the room.

LLOYD: Uh HUH. *(Slight pause.)* And you think he's going to look like a bear.

CARL: Will you forget the BEAR?!

PARKER: *(Rises.)* What's his name again?

CARL: Stewart. Will Stewart.

(PARKER moves to the DS window and looks out.)

PARKER: And you talked to him over the phone?

CARL: No, not him. I think it was his daughter.

LLOYD: Wait a minute, I knew a Billy Stewart in the Army. Durin' my first hitch.

PARKER: Do you think you'd recognize him after fifty years if you saw him again?

LLOYD: *(Thinks, then shakes his head.)* Naw, he died in a jeep accident.

PARKER: *(Stares at LLOYD and also shakes his head.)* Then I don't think this is him. *(Turns to see CARL looking at his watch again.)* You're not going to announce the time again, are you?

CARL: Said they'd be here at one o'clock.

(CARL holds up his fist so that PARKER can see the watch. PARKER then holds up his fist to CARL.)

PARKER: She said THEY'D be coming? She's bringing him?

CARL: I told you what she said.

PARKER: No, you didn't.

CARL: *(Trying to be patient.)* She called yesterday. She said she'd seen the card we put up on the grocery store bulletin board and asked me about the room. I told her just what we wrote on our card, that we were three senior gentlemen in a four bedroom house and wanted to rent out that fourth bedroom. West Oaks area, quiet neighborhood. Then she said "We'll be over at one o'clock tomorrow."

LLOYD: They's coming tomorrow? Then why are we all dressed out today?

End of Freeview

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