

A NICE DAY IN THE PARK

By Ev Miller

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Several cheerleaders are having a picnic in the park to learn to know each other. There is a bitter rivalry between Joyce and Kathleen over a boyfriend. Most of the girls are jealous of Kathleen since she is rich and gets everything she wants - even down to ousting another girl for the cheerleading position. The girls have a plan to scare Kathleen, but she, in the meantime, has learned of their plan and plots retribution.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 M, 5 W)

JOYCE: Attractive high school girl

RENAE: Another

BONNIE: Another

MARGO: Another

KATHLEEN: Another

MAN: Escaped from Jamestown

SETTING

The entire play takes place in a shelter in Pioneer Park, two miles from town. The only necessary stage furniture is a picnic table.

TIME

Summer - evening.

Playing time - about 30 minutes.

PROPS

Bags of potato chips, cooler for soft drinks, paper plates, etc., knife, blanket, and \$50 bill

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(AT RISE: FIVE GIRLS are on stage. They are dressed in jeans, tops, shoes, etc., of modern times. Only KATHLEEN, an attractive blonde, is dressed differently. She is attired in more expensive clothing and carries herself with a haughty air. The girls are talking as the play begins.)

JOYCE: Anyone want another coke?

BONNIE: Sure.

MARGO: I never get enough coke. You know that, Joyce.

JOYCE: *(Reaching into the cooler to take out bottles or cans.)* There's plenty left. Kathleen?

KATHLEEN: *(Nervously.)* No ... I've had enough. *(SHE looks around.)* It's starting to get dark ... I think we should be going soon ...

MARGO: It's still early.

KATHLEEN: I know, but ...

BONNIE: It's so nice to be out here.

RENAE: We'll go soon, Kathleen.

JOYCE: In a few minutes. Remember, pretty soon school will be starting again and we'll have to get up early every morning at the crack of dawn. At least we can all sack in for a couple of weeks.

BONNIE: Hah! Maybe you can. My mother yells at me every morning to get up and get the housework done. I think I'd rather go to class.

MARGO: Oh, gag! Don't even talk about that! I have to take physics this year.

RENAE: Me, too. I just know I'm going to flunk it.

BONNIE: Well, at least it's our last year.

RENAE: Yeah ... big seniors ... at last.

BONNIE: I can hardly wait to graduate. That school drives me nuts.

MARGO: I'm waiting for college. That's going to be the greatest. *(SHE looks at KATHLEEN who is glancing around nervously.)* Are you okay, Kathleen?

KATHLEEN: What? Oh, yes ...

MARGO: You seem so nervous.

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KATHLEEN: I just don't like the dark much.

BONNIE: Oh, Kathleen! There's nothing to be afraid of.

KATHLEEN: I ... I don't know. I've always been afraid of the dark.

RENAE: The dark doesn't bother me when I'm with someone.

KATHLEEN: *(Suddenly.)* They still haven't caught that man, you know.

RENAE: Man? What man?

KATHLEEN: You know ... the one who escaped yesterday from Jamestown.

JOYCE: Oh, you mean the guy from the state insane asylum?

KATHLEEN: Yes.

MARGO: I heard my folks talking about that last night. What did he do?

KATHLEEN: He killed a couple of girls about ten years ago.

MARGO: Killed? How?

JOYCE: It was with a knife, I think. *(SHE looks at KATHLEEN.)* Over in the eastern part of the state.

MARGO: A knife? And he wasn't in the penitentiary?

JOYCE: *(Shrugs.)* He was judged insane, I guess. My dad is always lecturing about that kind of thing. Anyway, he's been at Jamestown until he escaped last night.

KATHLEEN: *(More nervous.)* I really think we should be going. It's almost dark and I told Daddy I'd be home early.

JOYCE: Relax. We'll go soon. If that guy hasn't been caught already, he's probably halfway across the country by now. He sure wouldn't stay in this area.

KATHLEEN: *(Glancing around into the darkness.)* I don't know...

JOYCE: But, it's up to you, I guess. It's your car we're using, Kathleen. If you want to leave, I suppose we'll have to leave. *(HER voice indicates displeasure at the idea.)*

KATHLEEN: Well, very soon, anyway.

RENAE: Come on, you guys. Let's talk about something else!

BONNIE: Yeah. We were talking about college.

JOYCE: College! Freedom from my parents!

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MARGO: Boys!
RENAE: Parties! (*THEY all laugh.*)
JOYCE: Are you still set on the university, Renae?
RENAE: Yes, definitely.
MARGO: Me, too.
BONNIE: I'm going to Colorado State if I can convince my dad to lay out the money. He's so tight, I can't believe it.
JOYCE: That's the way my dad is. Do you believe he actually wants me to go here in town to the junior college for two years!!
MARGO: Oh, ick!
JOYCE: I still have a year, though. I'll talk him into letting me go out of town. How about you, Kathleen?
KATHLEEN: What? Oh, my parents want me to go to a private school in the East.
JOYCE: (*Sarcastically.*) Really?
MARGO: Wow!
RENAE: Yeah! Must be nice to have money.
KATHLEEN: (*Not knowing what to say.*) Daddy's generous. He doesn't want me to go to just any old school.
BONNIE: Huh! Tell us about it! That new car he just bought you must have set him back a bundle. What was the occasion?
KATHLEEN: My birthday was last week.
MARGO: Wow! A new car for your seventeenth birthday! I got a lousy outfit for mine.
JOYCE: (*An edge to HER voice.*) Well, I suppose when your daddy is in oil, you can have just about whatever you want. (*Short embarrassed silence.*)
MARGO: Anyway, Kathleen, we're glad you could come out here with us today.
JOYCE: Yes. Since we're all football cheerleaders for this year, it seemed like a good idea to get to know each other a little before the season starts.
KATHLEEN: I ... I'm sort of surprised you asked me.
JOYCE: Oh? Why?
KATHLEEN: Well, the four of you were cheerleaders with Carla Stern last year and when I was elected in her place this spring ... well, I thought ...

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