

The Patron Saint of Geeks

by

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DESCRIPTION

Bobby and Chad are close friends in the fifth grade. Classified as “geeks” in the school’s social structure, they are harassed by Rad and his gang (a year older and members of the Boys Club football team) and the Pearls (a group of girls whose “clique” is very exclusive). Pushed by their bullying to the edge of their patience, Bobby and Chad contemplate using a gun to equalize the imbalance in power. The play not only examines the consequences of social stereotyping but also the choices the weak make when continually oppressed by the strong.

CHARACTERS

- BOBBY, in the fifth grade—plain kind of guy.
- MOM AND DAD, BOBBY’s parents; referred to as “Mrs. D.” and “Mr. D.”
- CHAD, BOBBY’s close friend, equally plain kind of guy.
- MUSCLE MAN, a spirit—played by an experienced body builder, reminiscent of Charles Atlas.
- RAD, a bully at school—in the sixth grade; on the Boys Club football team.
- RAD’S GANG, a group of four who follow RAD around; on the Boys Club football team as well. Though they dress individually, they all wear something that indicates their sports status, e.g., a jacket, sweater, tee-shirt.
- THE PEARLS, four girls in the sixth grade who hang together; while dressed individually, they wear some article that signifies their group: a jacket with the name on it, Che berets, or anything that would be current in their culture.
- DICK POWERS, coach of the Boys Club football team.

SETTING

Various locations in a small town in western Massachusetts: BOBBY’s bedroom; the school; the football field; the Boys Club weight room

MISCELLANEOUS

Current music—director’s and actors’ choices

Four chairs, two used as twin beds in BOBBY’s bedroom

Several muscle magazines

A set of weights and a weight bench

Football equipment for RAD and BOBBY: helmets, shoulder pads, jerseys, pants, sneakers

A small wooden box, large enough to hold a .25-caliber gun; also, key to the box

Backpacks

NOTE: Actors are onstage for the entire play and assist with set changes, etc.

NOTE: race/ethnicity—The characters can be played by any race/ethnicity. But the director should pay close attention to subtle messages in his or her choices. For instance, if DICK POWERS is played by a black man, the role will have a very different feel than if played by a white man. If BOBBY is the son of an “integrated” couple, or if CHAD is a different “race” than BOBBY, it sets up resonances that need to be addressed. Making these choices should add spice to the production, not a distraction.

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Single light, down stage center. Music as if coming from a radio or boombox. BOBBY and CHAD stand in the light, in gym shorts and tee-shirts, barefoot; the feel should be that they’re getting ready for bed. They make body poses, as if they were body-builders at a competition, though they are clearly not body-builders.

On the floor near them are several body-builder magazines. The four chairs sit upstage; the two middle chairs have sheets folded on them. At first, BOBBY and CHAD work through their individual routines, with color commentary. Then they will do a synchronized routine together. As they do these initial moves, MUSCLE MAN comes on, upstage of them and slightly in shadow.

BOBBY
(posing)

And, yes, the crowd cheers as he works his way through his routine.

CHAD

He’s got ‘em on the run now. Especially the women—he’s got ‘em going crazy in the aisles!

BOBBY

Look at those lats. Look at ‘em! Look at ‘em!

CHAD

The biceps are bulgin’, buckoos.

BOBBY

I got a twelve-pack of abs.

CHAD

I got a whole case.

They begin a synchronized series of movements, a choreographed routine, that they’ve obviously worked out together over time. MUSCLE MAN also does it with them. At each move,

BOBBY and CHAD make some kind of sound—an exhalation, a slight grunt, etc.—which punctuates the move. Even though they're geeks, there should be some grace to the movement.

At one point, BOBBY does one thing and CHAD does another. It breaks the flow. Music out.

BOBBY

No, man, you do this—this, then over to this.

CHAD

Nope—this, then this.

BOBBY

No—

CHAD

Yes—that's how we worked it.

BOBBY

(to MUSCLE MAN)

Which is it?

MUSCLE MAN

Chad's right—this, then this.

CHAD

Score!

BOBBY

I still like doing this.

CHAD

But that ain't it. This, then this—

Does it more slowly, to mock him—gently.

CHAD

See, this, then this—

BOBBY

Fine.

BOBBY drops to the floor and tries to do a one-handed push-up.

MUSCLE MAN

The muscle boys had 'em going there, though, for a minute.

BOBBY

Muscle men, if you don't mind.

BOBBY can't do the push-up, so he starts doing sit-ups. CHAD starts doing them, too, and it becomes a race to do them as fast as possible. They collapse after about half a dozen or so. They both get to their knees and do a few more poses from there.

BOBBY

Yeah, once you got it, you got it, and ain't nobody going to take it away.

MOM appears.

MUSCLE MAN flexes his arms in a classic "biceps" pose; BOBBY and CHAD hang from his arms.

MOM

Bobby, are you getting ready for bed?

BOBBY

(shouting back)

I was born ready for bed.

MOM

No smart-mouth. Chad?

CHAD

Ready, Mrs. D.

MUSCLE MAN puts them down. They plant their feet against his and, holding each of their hands, MUSCLE MAN lets them lean out from either side. They sway.

MOM

Teeth?

BOBBY

Whiter than Chad's, Mom.

MOM

Hands?

Fine, Mrs. D. CHAD

Then ready for bed. MOM

You just said that. BOBBY

We'll be up in a minute to say good night. MOM

Why do grown-ups repeat themselves so much? BOBBY

MUSCLE MAN pulls BOBBY and CHAD upright. BOBBY stands as if he's in front of a mirror; CHAD sits on the floor and leafs through one of the magazines. BOBBY slaps his guts and sucks it in, pinches the fat on his arms, etc.

What'd'ya think? BOBBY

It's a body. MUSCLE MAN

Yeah, but what kind? BOBBY

Geek body. CHAD

The kind that works—it's healthy— MUSCLE MAN

Stomach seems a little harder— BOBBY
(distracted)

Yeah, right. CHAD

It's well-fed. MUSCLE MAN

BOBBY
(distracted)

Not really harder at all.

MUSCLE MAN

And handsome.

BOBBY

These arms—pathetic!

CHAD

Quit looking, then.

BOBBY
(to MUSCLE MAN)

Huh?

MUSCLE MAN

Handsome.

BOBBY
Handsome? Man, you gotta get some eyes!

MUSCLE MAN
It gets good grades in school.

BOBBY
(still distracted)

Quadriceps—lame!

MUSCLE MAN

Parents who love you.

BOBBY takes CHAD's magazine. CHAD picks up another one.

BOBBY

Look at this.

MUSCLE MAN

Don't believe the magazines.

BOBBY
(ignoring him)

Man, these guys are great!

MUSCLE MAN

Don't.

BOBBY

And this! Look at her!

BOBBY hands the magazine to MUSCLE MAN to have him hold it open, then tries to imitate what he sees.

BOBBY

See, if I could just push this a little—

(gives up)

I'll never look like that.

MUSCLE MAN

Why do you want to?

BOBBY stands and looks at MUSCLE MAN as if MUSCLE MAN is the most complete idiot in the world.

BOBBY

Huh? Are you kidding? If I had a body like that, those—those—

CHAD

Go ahead, say it.

BOBBY

Assholes at school, Rad and his rat pack, wouldn't bother me.

CHAD

Us—

BOBBY

Us.

CHAD

That's a fact.

MUSCLE MAN

Better watch your language.

BOBBY

That's what they are.

MOM

Bobby, Chad.

BOBBY

(yelling back)

Yeah, Mom. We're jumping under the covers right now.

(to MUSCLE MAN)

You don't know how it is, what Rad is like.

CHAD

Rad and his rat pack.

BOBBY

Sometimes—sometimes—

MUSCLE MAN

You want to hurt them, right?

BOBBY

Yeah! Oh yeah! Bad!

BOBBY picks up another magazine and moves toward the beds.

CHAD

Me—I want to stay away.

MUSCLE MAN

Make them feel what you feel.

They get into bed.

CHAD

I like my teeth to stay in my mouth.

BOBBY

Yeah! Exactly! I want a body like this so that Rad pees in his pants when he sees me. I want to do a one-hand dumb-bell press with him and his thugs.

MUSCLE MAN

Thugs—

CHAD

The geek speaks.

MUSCLE MAN

Impressive word.

BOBBY

Slam them on the ground. Soccer kick his head. Drop-knee to his nose.

CHAD

Lips flapping.

BOBBY

I want my foot on his neck, laughing at him, spit coming out of my mouth, and saying, "You're never gonna do that again."

MUSCLE MAN

That would feel good to you?

BOBBY

Oh, yeah—to me and about fifty million other people at school.

(to CHAD)

Right?

(making fake crowd sounds)

"Rad is dead. Long live Bobby!"

(jumps at MUSCLE MAN, who catches him)

Up on their shoulders; I'd be a hero.

MUSCLE MAN

(hoists BOBBY on his shoulder)

Long live Bobby!

BOBBY

Make him bleed.

MUSCLE MAN

And you'd be happy.

BOBBY

Just once, man. Just once.

MUSCLE MAN

And you'd be happy.

BOBBY

Put me down.

MUSCLE MAN puts him down. BOBBY looks in the mirror one more time.

BOBBY

This body sucks.

MUSCLE MAN

No, it doesn't.

BOBBY

I want to be like you.

MUSCLE MAN

I'm just a dream. I'm just a wish of yours.

CHAD

He's not real.

BOBBY

But you know what I mean when I tell you these things.

MUSCLE MAN

But I can't do anything about them—

CHAD

See?

BOBBY

You can't just, like, abracadabra me into looking like you?

MUSCLE MAN

Longer and more messy than that.

BOBBY

Will you help me?

CHAD

Not-real—can't help.

MUSCLE MAN

I will try.

MOM enters. MUSCLE MAN retreats into the half-shadows.

MOM
(to BOBBY)

C'mon, young man, into bed.

BOBBY is momentarily confused, having to switch realities. MOM picks up the magazines.

MOM
And let's try to keep the room at least semi-straight for a moment.

BOBBY
I'll take 'em.

DAD appears.

MOM
I don't see what you see in those magazines.

DAD
It's a "guy" thing, mother dearest—
(to the boys)
—isn't it?
(to MOM)
They have your magazines—we have ours.

By this time, BOBBY has placed the magazines under the chair, which is his "bed," and is seated, putting the sheet over his legs. MOM sits in the chair next to the "bed."

MOM
Well, I don't think it's beautiful at all.

DAD
(making mock poses)
It's not about beauty, mon cher—though I would argue with you about the beauty thing.

MOM
Why would they go and—inflate themselves like that?

DAD
Power. Right, bucko?

BOBBY
The hour of power.

CHAD
The music of muscle.

DAD
Right!

MOM
They get so tight they can hardly walk—or scratch their armpits.

BOBBY
That's not true, Mom.
(to CHAD)
They're so lame.

MOM
Then explain it to me

BOBBY
They're athletes just like everyone else, Mom. They train, they gotta eat right, they compete. Some of them make a lot of money—

DAD
The babe's got a point.

BOBBY
—and nobody messes with them. Nobody. That's the coolest thing.

MOM
I could outrun them—

BOBBY
It's how they look. They just have to walk into a room—

DAD
Occupy space.

BOBBY
—and everyone sees them—

(makes a muscle pose)
—sees them—and no one's even going to bother them to begin with because they see how big they are, and I think that's cool because then you don't have to do anything and people leave you alone.

DAD

A Ph.D. in the making.

MOM

It just seems—weird, that's all.

BOBBY

It's not weird, Mom.

MOM

Chad, doesn't it seem weird to you?

DAD

(to CHAD and MOM)

No weirder, heh, than 25 ways to groovier toenails or "16 ways you can thin your thighs and earn money at the same time."

CHAD

(laughs)

I see those magazines at the store.

MOM

I don't read those—

DAD

They zero in on your weak spots, like Dracula breaking into the blood bank.

CHAD

Ughhh!

MOM

You're saying Mr. Muscle Magic magazine is about weak spots?

In the shadow, MUSCLE MAN goes through his routine as an underscore to the story of Charles Atlas.

DAD

Always. Remember Charles Atlas? Do you know who Charles Atlas was?

BOBBY

Real name Angelo Siciliano.

CHAD

Born 1894, came to the United States in 1903.

DAD

(to MOM)

See, they learn from those magazines. Then you know about his system, "Dynamic-Tension."

CHAD

Invented while watching lions stretch at the zoo.

BOBBY

Declared the "Most Perfectly Developed Man" in 1922.

DAD

Supposedly the story was real: Some bully kicked sand in his face at the beach, and he vowed to never to let that happen again. So he bulked himself up and promised the same for other men with his patented "Dynamic-Tension" system.

(to MOM)

Let me use your chair.

MOM

What are you doing?

DAD moves the chairs away downstage and prepares to do a "dipping exercise": a push-up done with the hands on the chairs and legs straight back, so that the body is angled; then down and up.

DAD

This was called the "dipping" exercise.

MOM

Where did you learn this?

BOBBY

Dad!

DAD
(ignoring both of them)
You go like this—and then like this—

DAD tries it twice more, and then collapses.

DAD
To be done faithfully every morning and night.

BOBBY
I got his genes—

DAD
I'll start tomorrow, hey? The Charles Atlas system for men who felt weak and tiny and insignificant. Like most men feel most of the time, I might add.

MOM
Oh, please!

DAD
(sitting down)
It's true.

MOM
Men don't feel weak and tiny and insignificant.

DAD
Wrong.

MOM
(to BOBBY)
Don't believe him.

DAD
(to BOBBY)
For guys like us, Mr. Atlas knew, because he became the patron saint of geeks. What was his motto?

BOBBY
"No one picks on a strong man."

DAD

People would send away for his books, and keep sending away for them. Your grandfather did that, when he was about your age.

BOBBY

Grandpa?

CHAD

Did it work?

DAD

I don't know, to tell you the truth.

DAD walks over to MOM. He starts massaging her shoulders.

DAD

He looked pretty skinny all his life. I only learned that he did it because I found the instruction books in the attic.

MOM

Remember the gangs—ooh, that feels good—

BOBBY

Grandpa was in a gang?

MOM

No—bullied by gangs—a little softer—

DAD

Don't know my own strength.

MOM

They'd steal his money and pull his pants down.

BOBBY

Really?

DAD

When he was about your age. Pretty regular, it was—kind of a dance. It seemed that no matter which route he took, the bullies would be waiting. Beat him up if he didn't have money—

MOM

Right there—ah—

DAD

Beat him up if he had money—they just wanted to beat people up.
But there was Charles Atlas in the magazines.

(to MOM)

That okay?

MOM

Thanks.

DAD

Promising salvation.

BOBBY

I can understand that.

DAD

Yeah?

BOBBY

Yeah. I can completely, completely, completely understand that.

CHAD

Yeah.

MOM and DAD look at each other, hearing something in their words.

MOM

Is everything okay?

BOBBY

Yeah.

MOM

Chad?

CHAD

Yes.

DAD

Everything all right at school?

BOBBY

Yeah, no sweat.

Sure? DAD

Yeah. BOBBY

Chad? DAD

Everything's fine. CHAD

MOM
You know, you can tell us anything—

BOBBY
Everything's fine, Mom.
(shows his teeth)
See, clean.
(shows hands)
See, clean, too.

BOBBY elbows CHAD, who holds out his hands as well.

MOM
You guys got hot dates?

BOBBY
Mom—

MOM
I don't know—they are getting kind of handsome.

DAD
Kind of handsome?
(to the boys)
Sheesh, it's hard to get a compliment out of her.

MOM
Don't want to spoil the goods.

DAD
Took me years to get one. I think they've got all the right ingredients.

Kisses BOBBY good night. ruffles CHAD's hair.

DAD

I do.

MOM

I do, too.

(kisses BOBBY and CHAD)

Good night.

DAD

Buenas noches, señores. And sweet dreams of Charles Atlas.

As they leave, MOM turns back.

MOM

Are you sure everything's okay?

BOBBY

It's fine, Mom.

MOM

All right—just checking. You are both handsome, you know.

BOBBY

And Dad is Charles Atlas.

CHAD laughs.

MOM

(laughing)

You wait—I'll bet you he starts his "dips" tomorrow! Sweet dreams.

MOM leaves. MUSCLE MAN comes and sits down by the bed.

MUSCLE MAN

They mean well. They do pretty well, too.

BOBBY

They're clueless.

CHAD

I like your folks.

MUSCLE MAN

They're not clueless—they just have different clues.

BOBBY

Yeah? I wish they had a clue for me.

MUSCLE MAN

They can only read the clues you give them.

CHAD

Give 'em a break.

BOBBY

(tightens his bicep)

What'd'ya think?

But BOBBY lets it go and doesn't even wait for an answer.

BOBBY

Monday— Rad— My grandfather— I don't think I want to go to school.

MUSCLE MAN

Unless you have the plague, Mom will call you at 7 a.m.

BOBBY

The time of doom.

MUSCLE MAN

I wish I could help you more.

BOBBY and CHAD close their eyes. Lights fade out. MUSCLE MAN exits. Transition music.

* * * * *

A dream sequence, with appropriate music and lighting. RAD and his boys stand upstage left. POWERS stands behind CHAD and BOBBY, in dim light. The PEARLS stand downstage center and about two arms lengths apart. During BOBBY's and CHAD's lines, they primp themselves in a choreographed way.

The music is a heavy rhythm, pulsing. As it starts, BOBBY wakes up, a confused look on this face. He stands on his chair. Music goes to underscoring.

BOBBY

Chad, what the—the—hell is going on here?

CHAD

(gets on chair)

Don't ask me—I was in a nice dream, and then I'm dragged over here!

BOBBY

I don't like this.

CHAD

Look, the Pearls!

BOBBY

Them, here? They treat us like toxic waste.

CHAD

And that's when they're treating us nice!

Music comes up to full. The following lines should be choreographed with simple but coördinated movements.

PEARL 1

We are the Pearls.

PEARL 2

The stand-up girls.

PEARL 3

Everyone likes us.

PEARL 4

In the whole wide world.

PEARL 1

We got the grace.

PEARL 2

To make our case.

PEARL 3

And if you don't like us.

PEARL 4

Then we're in your face.

Music stops. The PEARLS gather together downstage center in a posed group. Lights come up on RAD and his boys: cool and cruel but handsome.

The PEARLS slowly turn their heads upstage to look and speak as if tasting a good food.

PEARLS

Um, um, um.

Music begins again, underscoring.

CHAD

Oh, man, you can really ruin a dream! Rad and his apes.

BOBBY

I didn't invite them!

CHAD

But they're here. My butt hurts, and they haven't even kicked it yet!

PEARL 1

Look at Rad.

PEARL 2

He is fine, fine, fine.

PEARL 4
(to PEARL 3)

She needs to get her eyes checked.

PEARL 3

Nothing wrong with her eyes.

A light comes up on POWERS.

POWERS
(heavy voice)

You better respect my players.

CHAD

Oh great—Coach Powers.

POWERS

Because you two can't cut it.

CHAD

The ex-Marine nut case.

POWERS
(laughing)

Look at those arms!

RAD
(to PEARL 1)

You like what you see?

CHAD

All the mean people together.

POWERS

I wouldn't even use you as waterboys.

CHAD

Shoulda made popcorn.

BOBBY

Will you shut up?

RAD

You got good eyes.

Similar heavy musical beat.

RAD

My name is Rad.

BOYS

We are his gang.

ALL
Wherever we want to.

RAD
We do a hang.

RAD
We don't like goths.

BOY 1
We don't like geeks.

BOY 2
We don't like anyone.

RAD
Who's soft and weak.

Music stops. Both the PEARLS and RAD and the gang point at CHAD and BOBBY.

ALL
Like you!

Then RAD's boys look at the PEARLS.

THE BOYS
(as if tasting a good food)
Um, um, um.

RAD's GANG and the PEARLS join each other downstage, in dim light, pairing up. RAD goes up to CHAD and BOBBY and, pulling them off the chairs, hauls them downstage center. The pairs move so that they circle behind RAD, CHAD, and BOBBY. POWERS stands on the chair that was BOBBY's "bed," arms folded, tough. Throughout the next lines, the PEARLS and RAD's GANG will strike poses that show their cruelty. They strike their first pose.

RAD
Here are the geeks. What do you say?

ALL
Geek salute!

They all give BOBBY and CHAD the geek salute—director's discretion to create this salute with the actors.

RAD

What should we do with them?

PEARL 1

Hog feed.

RAD 1

Death wedgies.

PEARL 4

Tattoo on the forehead.

RAD 3

Clean the toilet bowl with their tongues.

Second pose.

PEARL 2

Bang their teeth on the water fountains.

RAD 2

Make 'em kiss—naw, they probably already do that.

PEARL 3

Suck my snots.

RAD 4

Drown 'em.

Third pose.

RAD

What'd'ya got to say for yourselves?

POWERS

Come on!

RAD

Come on—I don't hear the magic words.

Smacks CHAD on the back of the head. Fourth pose.

CHAD
(to BOBBY)

You have the suckiest dreams.

RAD
Shut up. Answer me. What are the magic words?

POWERS
Come on!

CHAD
I don't know. May the farts be with you?

Smacks CHAD again. Fifth pose.

CHAD
Don't be a smart-ass.

BOBBY
Don't hit him.

Smacks BOBBY.

RAD
I'm equal opportunity. Maybe you know the answer.

BOBBY
Stop it, and I'll say what you want us to say.

RAD
(to everyone)
He knows his lines!

Sixth and last pose.

RAD
Coach?

POWERS
Yeah?

RAD
I wouldn't even let 'em pick up the jock straps.

POWERS

Too low even for that.

RAD
(to BOBBY)

Well?

Music begins, low, percussive, but not as driven as before. BOBBY looks at everyone around him, turning to do so. They can respond to him as they see fit: a smirk, a dismissal, etc. When he returns to his original position, he speaks.

BOBBY
(to CHAD)

Sorry about this—

(to RAD)

I'm sorry—

RAD

Nope, nope, not right.

(points to the ground)

Knees.

BOBBY

Come on.

RAD

Knees.

The PEARLS and RAD's GANG begin chanting "Knees! Knees!", not loud but insistently.

POWERS
(with a shout)

Knees!

BOBBY gets on his knees. CHAD also gets on his knees.

RAD

Better. Now—begin.

BOBBY

I apologize—

CHAD

I apologize—

BOBBY
For being a geek—

CHAD
For being a geek—

BOBBY
And less than perfect—

CHAD
And less than perfect—

BOBBY
That I'm not cool—

CHAD
That I'm not handsome—

BOBBY
That I'm not like you.

CHAD
That I'm not like you.

Music stops. Beat.

RAD
(to everyone)
I don't know about you, but that made me feel better.

Music begins: good strong dance music. The PEARLS, RAD, and RAD's GANG start dancing while BOBBY and CHAD keep kneeling and POWERS looks over everything with arms folded, as if he were a cruel king. RAD walks up and stands on the chair next to him and folds his arms. Lights fade out while the music continues during the scene transition.

* * * * *

During the scene transition, several things happen. RAD and RAD's GANG get dressed in gym clothes, and a weight set and a weight bench is brought on. There should be two bars, one on the bench and one on the floor, and assorted weights and dumb-bells. These weight don't necessarily need to be real weights—they could be weights made out of cardboard, for a touch of surreality, or even mimed, with sound effects for the metallic sounds. Music could be playing.

The boys are there, with POWERS, working out. CHAD and BOBBY, also in gym clothes, walk up to what would be the door of the weight room. The GANG can ad lib lines, but they should not interfere with the lines being said between CHAD and BOBBY. As they're talking, MUSCLE MAN enters behind them.

CHAD

Let go of me! You have no brains left. I'm not going in there.

BOBBY

I am.

MUSCLE MAN

Bobby—

CHAD

Membership dues doesn't cover broken bones.

BOBBY

I'm in.

MUSCLE MAN

I understand why you're doing this.

CHAD

Go later. When they're not here. You could do that.

BOBBY

Now.

MUSCLE MAN

But you have to be careful.

CHAD

An hour won't make any diff[erence]—

BOBBY

(turning on him)

You pansy!

CHAD

What?

BOBBY

You geek! You wuss!

MUSCLE MAN

Be careful.

BOBBY

You like that?

CHAD

No.

BOBBY

Do you?

CHAD

No.

BOBBY

I'm sick of it. It makes me sick.

(facing the weight room)

I'm Charles Atlas.

CHAD

You're whacked.

BOBBY

I'm Charles Atlas.

CHAD

Bobby—

BOBBY

The patron saint of geeks.

BOBBY takes a step toward the weight room.

CHAD

Don't!

MUSCLE MAN catches BOBBY in mid-stride and escorts him into a separate light. Lights dim on everyone else, and everyone stops what he is doing and pays attention to the conversation between MUSCLE MAN and BOBBY.

MUSCLE MAN

It's one thing for you to do this. It's another thing to shame your best friend.

BOBBY

He's a coward.

MUSCLE MAN

Stop that. Anger makes you stupid.

BOBBY

Always be strong, right?

MUSCLE MAN

Always act strong. It's not just muscles.

BOBBY

Well, I don't feel strong right now. In fact, I'm about to mess my shorts walking into that room.

MUSCLE MAN

If you're scared, tell Chad. Don't pull a "Rad" on him—don't morph into the thing you hate. Be strong? Be honest.

BOBBY

You won't leave?

MUSCLE MAN

You know I can't do anything—I'm just a thought of yours, a hope.

BOBBY

But hopes can help?

MUSCLE MAN

Yes.

BOBBY

So don't leave.

MUSCLE MAN

As long as you need me.

They walk back to CHAD. The action resumes.

CHAD

Where'd you go? Just staring off into space.

BOBBY

I told you—Charles Atlas. Hey, old buddy, old pal—

CHAD
(warily)

What?

BOBBY

Stupid award for sticking you with the names.

CHAD

Good. Now—home? Home?

BOBBY

I'm scared.

CHAD

Then home.

BOBBY

Don't really want to—but I have to.

CHAD

Home is this way.

BOBBY

I called you names because I was scared. You don't have to come. Making my own mess.

CHAD

Brown outs in the underwear?

BOBBY

Level 5 brown outs.

CHAD

That bad, huh?

BOBBY

Yeah.

CHAD

And you're gonna?

BOBBY

“Dynamic-Tension.”

CHAD claps his hands together once, then gestures with his right hand to go into the weight room. BOBBY enters.

CHAD

Kitty litter for brains.

Everyone in the room turns to them. MUSCLE MAN retreats upstage.

RAD

Sound the geek alert.

BOBBY

(points to the sign)

Weight room’s open.

RAD

For them who know what they’re doing. Coach—

POWERS

It’s reserved, boys.

BOBBY

I’m gonna work out.

CHAD

Me, too.

POWERS

We have the room till five.

BOBBY

It’s five-thirty. We’re members. An adult’s in the room. So, we’re gonna start.

RAD

Next thing you know, Coach, he’s gonna want to join the team.

POWERS

Let him pay his dues.

RAD makes an extravagant gesture towards the weight bench. BOBBY, knowing exactly what to do from reading all this magazines, goes to it, indicating for CHAD to follow him. Everyone else in the room gathers around to watch, ringing them in.

BOBBY

We're going to do some bench presses.

CHAD

We?

BOBBY

Me.

The bar has more weight on it than BOBBY wants, so BOBBY and CHAD start taking off the weights. They know how to do this from reading, but they've never really handled the weights, so it is a combination of awkward and knowledgeable, compounded by everyone watching. They leave two 25-pound weights on. BOBBY gets on the bench.

BOBBY

Now, spot me.

CHAD

Spot you—right.

BOBBY lifts the weights off the rack and does one press.

RAD

That's one.

BOBBY does one more.

RAD

That's two.

(to everyone)

Breaking the record, huh?

BOBBY does one more.

RAD

Three!

As BOBBY goes for his fourth, RAD gestures to two of his GANG, and when BOBBY has the bar on his chest, they move in and hold it there, so that he can't push it up. CHAD can't do a thing. They start to press it into this chest, making it difficult for him to breathe.

RAD

You're really stupid.

BOBBY

You're cr[azy]—

RAD

Go buy a weight set and do it in your bedroom—the way you do a lot of things alone in your bedroom.

BOBBY

I can't br[eathe]—

CHAD
(to POWERS)

Come on!

POWERS

You're spotting him—you do something.

CHAD actually makes a rush toward one of the GANG holding the bar, but he gets smacked and falls to the ground. He's up almost instantly.

BOBBY

Don't—

POWERS

Hard to get a good spotter.

CHAD grabs a 5- or 10-pound weight and holds it as if to throw it or hit someone with it.

CHAD

Let him go!

Everyone laughs.

POWERS

Rad—enough.

The boys release their grip. The bar rests on BOBBY's chest—he does not have the strength to move it. CHAD puts the weight down and goes to help BOBBY raise the bar to the rack. Then he kneels beside BOBBY.

You okay? CHAD

I feel great. BOBBY
(sitting up)

Yeah? CHAD

BOBBY nods yes.

Yeah, me too. Great. CHAD

Great workout. BOBBY

Sweating like a pig. CHAD

Yeah, good start. BOBBY

BOBBY stands, painfully but also proud.

Same time tomorrow, right, Chad? BOBBY

Yeah. We'll be back. CHAD

Curls tomorrow. BOBBY

Dips, too. CHAD

Let's go. BOBBY

The move out of the weight room. The GANG continues to lift weights, and their lines intersperse with BOBBY and CHAD. MUSCLE MAN follows them. BOBBY is in a little bit of pain.

BOBBY

I hate them.

MUSCLE MAN

Be careful.

CHAD

Don't want to go back.

MUSCLE MAN

What do you want to do, Bobby?

BOBBY

I hate them.

CHAD

I don't want to go back.

BOBBY

I hate them.

CHAD

Don't say it again.

MUSCLE MAN

"Don't say it again" is right.

BOBBY rubs his chest.

BOBBY

(to MUSCLE MAN)

What do you know?

(to CHAD)

Nothing to our parents.

CHAD

Right.

MUSCLE MAN

What do you want to do?

Looks back at the weight room, then decides.

BOBBY

I want to go home.

CHAD

I want to go home, too.

CHAD starts to move away. BOBBY winces in pain as takes the classic Charles Atlas stance.

BOBBY

Look at me—Charles Atlas. Useless.

BOBBY joins CHAD.

BOBBY

Dinner?

CHAD

Deal.

BOBBY

Thanks.

CHAD
(sniffing)

Level 5 brownout, man!

BOBBY walks bow-legged, pulling on his shorts.

BOBBY

Level 6.

They exit. MUSCLE MAN watches them until the lights are out. Transition music.

* * * * *

During the transition, the weight set is moved off and BOBBY's bedroom is set up. BOBBY is in bed; his MOM and DAD sit on either side. Even before the lights comes up, DAD is talking, so that we catch him mid-sentence.

DAD
—this stupid joke about Gandhi at work today.
(to BOBBY)

Wanna hear it?

BOBBY
Huh?

DAD
Gandhi. This joke.

MOM
You were awful quiet at dinner.

BOBBY
Yeah, Dad. Who is Gandhi?

DAD
(to MOM)
Who is Gandhi?

MOM
Different generation.

DAD
Gandhi. Gandhi lived in India, and he helped his country get independence from England. A long time ago England went to India and stole everything, and Gandhi was the guy that helped people get it back. He was a strange man. He never wore shoes, so he built up these enormous callouses on his feet. He was also skinny because he didn't eat a lot, which also gave him bad breath. And he liked to pray a lot. So—

MOM
Sooo— The joke?

DAD
Sooo—Gandhi was known as the super-calloused fragile mystic expelling halitosis. Eh? Eh? Get it?

MOM
Barely registers on the Laughometer.

No. BOBBY

Not pretty lame? DAD

No, I don't get it. BOBBY

Mary Poppins? DAD
(begins to sing)
"Supercallifragilistic—"

Save us all! MOM

Yeah, Dad. BOBBY

DAD
Well, it's clear that my attempt to raise your spirits has failed completely. And Chad didn't eat much tonight.

MOM
He just picked.

DAD
In fact, Chatterbox Chad didn't say much, either. You both looked like a funeral. Everything okay?

BOBBY
Great.

MOM
I don't know—
(feeling his forehead)
Honey—

BOBBY
(pulling away)
Mom!

MOM

You don't feel warm.

DAD

Maybe we should let him get to sleep.

(to MOM)

Just a mood.

(to BOBBY)

I'll try to get some better jokes.

They kiss him goodnight and start to leave.

BOBBY

Charles Atlas is a fake, you know.

DAD

What?

BOBBY

Charles Atlas is a fake.

DAD sits back down by the bed.

DAD

A "fake."

BOBBY

A liar. He's weak.

DAD

Well, weak, yeah—he's been dead for quite a while.

MOM

(sotto voce)

No jokes—

BOBBY

Dead. Yeah.

DAD

Well, okay—you're right, he's dead.

BOBBY

Since 1972.

Bobby— MOM

Goodnight, Mom. BOBBY

DAD kisses BOBBY.

DAD
Definitely better jokes. Sleep tight.

MOM
Don't let the bedbugs bite.

DAD
And if they do—

MOM
Take a shoe—

They wait.

DAD
Hey, pardner, you're supposed to chime in!

BOBBY
(reluctantly)
And whack 'em till they're black and blue.

MOM
Sweet dreams.

They exit.

BOBBY
Till they're black and blue.

BOBBY, as before, pulls the covers up over his head. Lights change, music starts—new dream sequence. RAD comes out dressed in a football outfit: shoulder pads, jersey, pants, sneakers. He carries his helmet. He is also dragging another set of equipment. The PEARLS comes on as well, dressed as cheerleaders with pom-poms, and are joined by POWERS. When not speaking, The PEARLS will do a simple, silent, choreographed cheerleading routine. POWERS mimes coaching from the sidelines of the action, though he never talks directly to RAD.

RAD

Bobby! The skunk! The jerk! Get your rear-end out here!

BOBBY comes out from under his cover.

PEARLS

2, 4, 6, 8 / Isn't Rad just lookin' great!

RAD

(pointing to the equipment)

Put it on!

BOBBY starts getting dressed.

PEARLS

Rah, rah, la di dah!

RAD

What was that stunt all about? Me looking stupid in front of my friends and the coach? You are going to pay. Pay. Pay.

PEARLS

No pain, no gain / That's our / refrain.

RAD

Come on, hurry up!

PEARLS

Rad'll drive Bobby / So insane.

RAD

You think you can go head to head with me, you think you're better than me. You need a lesson.

BOBBY is dressed in full gear except for helmet.

BOBBY

I don't want to do this.

RAD

No choice. Get down!

They put their helmets on. BOBBY awkwardly gets down in a three-point football stance. RAD breaks down into a linebacker's stance.

PEARLS
(in a loud whisper)

Hit 'em / Hit 'em low.

RAD

Come on.

PEARLS
(in a loud whisper)

Hit 'em where / Their cherries grow.

BOBBY
(stands up, takes off his helmet)

I don't want to—

RAD
(takes off helmet)

Your mother sucks!

BOBBY

Stop it.

RAD

She sucks a big, long—

PEARLS

Suck, sucks!

BOBBY

Stop it—

RAD & PEARLS

Mama sucks! Mama sucks!

BOBBY

Just stop it!

RAD

And your father—heh. A jerk, just like you.

PEARLS

Bobby's dad / Has got no class.

RAD & PEARLS

He's just a little / Pansy-ass.

BOBBY

Not real, none of this is real—

RAD

This is your life, dog-butt. Get used to it.

RAD puts on his helmet.

PEARLS

Hut, hut, hut / Bobby's just a dog butt.

RAD

Do it!

PEARLS

Look at Bobby dance / He's peeing in his pants.

RAD

Do it, butt-wipe!

PEARLS

Bobby's gonna cry / Bobby's gonna die.

RAD

(screaming)

Do it!

The following needs to be carefully choreographed. The PEARLS continue their choreography. In a fit of rage, BOBBY puts on his helmet and charges RAD, who, with one forearm, deftly throws him to the ground. BOBBY does it again, and so does RAD. On the third charge, RAD hits BOBBY under the chin and knocks him down flat. RAD stands over him. While RAD speaks, BOBBY pulls himself up.

RAD

(grabbing his own crotch)

You don't have it here, man, where it counts. You're nothing, you're less than nothing. Slime.

PEARLS
(in a very low whisper)

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

RAD
(slaps BOBBY's helmet)

Crap.

(slaps him again)

Slug.

Goes to slap him a third time, but BOBBY ducks, causing RAD to miss.

RAD
Oh, man, you die now!

PEARLS
(in a very low whisper)
Die, die, die.

RAD
Get down.

When BOBBY doesn't obey, RAD pounds him on the shoulder pads, forcing BOBBY down.

RAD
Assume the position, dead man.

BOBBY gets into a four-point stance, visibly shaken. RAD gets into his linebacker stance. The PEARLS stop and watch the action.

RAD
One more time, meatball.

BOBBY attacks, and instead of hitting him, RAD grabs his face mask and leads him, twisting his neck until RAD throws BOBBY to the ground like a roped cow. BOBBY lay there, unmoving; RAD puts his foot on BOBBY, pounds his chest, and shouts like a gorilla.

RAD
Ahhhhhh!!!!

PEARLS
Two stars, four stars, six stars, a comet / When I look at Bobby—

RAD & PEARLS

I just want to vomit!

(a finger or two in their mouths)

Agggghhhh!

If possible, the PEARLS should pick up RAD and carry him off. If not, they surround him, in both situations chanting "Rad, Rad / He's so bad / He's the worst mutha gangsta / We ever had" in a loud stage whisper as he walks off in triumph. As he exits, RAD turns to BOBBY; POWERS stands behind him.

RAD

Worthless. Worm food. You got nothing. Might as well die right now and save us the trouble of putting up with your miserable little life.

PEARLS

(in a loud whisper)

Yeah!

They exit. BOBBY gets up slowly, takes off his helmet.

BOBBY

Where are you? Where are you?!

MUSCLE MAN enters. BOBBY starts getting out of the equipment.

MUSCLE MAN

Right here.

BOBBY

You're worthless.

MUSCLE MAN

I told you that—

BOBBY

Hope is worthless.

MUSCLE MAN

Hope doesn't always work.

BOBBY

You made me a promise.

MUSCLE MAN

Hope doesn't always work when you want it to work.

BOBBY

No more hope.

MUSCLE MAN

Don't say that.

BOBBY

No more hope. No more you. All on my own. I am all alone.
(makes a flicking motion)

You, gone.

MUSCLE MAN

You have Chad.

BOBBY

Worse than nothing. I might as well drop 'em and bend over now.

MUSCLE MAN

You are not alone.

BOBBY

I will be when you leave.

BOBBY moves the equipment toward MUSCLE MAN. He makes the flicking motion again.

BOBBY

Gone.

BOBBY goes back to his "bed."

BOBBY

In here all on my own.

BOBBY pulls the covers up over his head. Lights out. Transition music. MUSCLE MAN takes off the football equipment.

* * * * *

CHAD's house. Music changes into something quietly ominous. In the darkness, a small table is brought on and on it is placed a wooden box about the size of a cigar box. In the box is a .25-

caliber pistol: the Raven MP-25; however, the gun is never shown. A single light comes up on the box. If possible, the lighting here should be spooky without being hokey—something to establish danger without overdoing it.

BOBBY and CHAD appear in the dimness, now fully dressed and carrying school backpacks, and look at the box. CHAD looks at BOBBY and BOBBY at CHAD. They then walk to the box but do not touch it. They drop their backpacks. Music out.

BOBBY
Open it.

CHAD
No.

BOBBY
Open it.

CHAD
I don't want to.

BOBBY
Open it.

CHAD
It's my mother's.

BOBBY
I don't care—you said—

CHAD
It was stupid.

BOBBY
But you said it, and you can't take it back.

CHAD
I can.

BOBBY
You can't. You promised it, and now it's there, and you have to do what you said. What you promised. Or else—

CHAD
Or else what? Or what?

BOBBY
I will hate you. I will hate you forever.

CHAD
Hate me?

BOBBY
Yeah.

CHAD
You wouldn't do that.

BOBBY begins to circle CHAD.

BOBBY
I would.

CHAD
You can't hate me.

BOBBY
Then show me.

CHAD
I'm your best friend.

BOBBY
Best friends help each other out.

CHAD
You can't hate me. I'm your best friend.

BOBBY
Then show me. Do it.

CHAD
I can't.

BOBBY
Then you're not my best friend.

CHAD
I am your best friend! But I can't do this.

BOBBY
Then why did you tell me? Why did you tell me?

CHAD
I don't know!

BOBBY
Because you hate him, too.

CHAD
Don't hate anybody.

BOBBY
Liar.

BOBBY stops circling.

BOBBY
Hate, hate, hate—

CHAD
Stop it!

BOBBY
Don't you? Huh?

CHAD
(hesitating)
Yes.

BOBBY
Him. All of 'em. Right?

CHAD
Yes.

BOBBY
The guys.

CHAD
The guys.

BOBBY
They hate us, too.

CHAD
The guys hate us.

BOBBY
And they will never leave us alone.

CHAD
Because they're guys.

BOBBY
And we aren't. And the girls hate us, too.

CHAD
They hate us, too.

BOBBY
They like guys.

CHAD
And we're not guys.

BOBBY
We're jerks—

CHAD
Wusses—

BOBBY
Morons—

CHAD
Retards—

BOBBY
Geeks—

CHAD
Losers—

Nerds— BOBBY

Wimps— CHAD

But not guys. So— BOBBY

CHAD digs into his pocket and pulls out a key, holds it up in the light.

CHAD
My mother doesn't know. She doesn't know I know where this is.

So— BOBBY

CHAD goes to the box and unlocks it, but he doesn't open it. He steps away from it. BOBBY goes up to the box and opens it, stares at the contents, then circles the box.

It's not big. CHAD

Doesn't have to be. BOBBY

She bought it for protection. CHAD

It's beautiful. BOBBY

But she got scared of it. CHAD

It can talk. BOBBY

CHAD
I remember when her and my father brought it home.

BOBBY
It's not big, but it can talk loud. It can talk louder than me or you.

It made me scared. CHAD

Did she ever use it? BOBBY

No. She wanted to get rid of it, but my father wouldn't let her. He wanted her to be protected, he said. CHAD

BOBBY stops circling.

Where are the bullets? BOBBY

In another box. CHAD

Do you have that key? Do you? BOBBY

Yeah. CHAD

BOBBY moves away from the box.

You could hide that in your pocket. Right here. BOBBY

Stop it. CHAD

Or here. And the next time Rad mouths off— BOBBY

Don't, okay? CHAD

Why not? BOBBY

CHAD
(goes to close the box)
Let's get it out of here.

BOBBY
Don't!

CHAD stops.

BOBBY
Why did you get the keys?

CHAD
What?

BOBBY
Why did you get the keys?

CHAD
I want to get it out of—

BOBBY
Why?

CHAD
Why?

BOBBY
Why don't you tell your mom and dad you know?

During the "interrogation," CHAD gets increasingly irritated as BOBBY gets closer to CHAD's true feelings.

CHAD
About the keys?

BOBBY
Yeah.

CHAD
I don't know.

BOBBY
You could've told them.

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
And they'd hide the keys, and you wouldn't get scared again.

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
Because you're pretty scared right now, right?

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
But you didn't tell them.

CHAD
No.

BOBBY
You're keeping a secret.

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
From them.

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
You know where her gun is.

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY

And they don't know you know.

CHAD

No.

BOBBY

It's a big secret. You're keeping a big secret from your parents.

CHAD

Yeah.

BOBBY

Bigger than Charles Atlas.

CHAD

What?

BOBBY

Bigger than hope.

CHAD

I don't understand—leave me alone.

BOBBY

Why?

CHAD

Leave me alone.

BOBBY

(imitating the PEARLS, in a heavy whisper)

"Rad, Rad / He's so bad—"

CHAD

Shut up!

BOBBY

(in the same whisper)

"He's the worst mutha gangsta / We ever had."

CHAD

You're going weird!

BOBBY

Why don't you tell them you where the keys are? Why?

CHAD

(hesitating, indicating the box)

That—

BOBBY

What?

CHAD

That—

BOBBY

Yeah? That—

CHAD

That doesn't make me feel—

BOBBY

Yeah?

CHAD

It doesn't make me feel as scared as some other things make me feel—scared.

BOBBY

Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. Exactly.

BOBBY walks to the open box. He indicates for CHAD to come closer. CHAD hesitates; BOBBY encourages him. CHAD comes forward, and BOBBY puts CHAD's hand on the gun inside the box. They stand there with their hands on the gun.

BOBBY

(in a whisper)

“Rad, Rad / He makes you mad—”

(pause)

“Someone needs / To hurt him bad.”

CHAD

Yeah.

BOBBY

All of them.

All of them. CHAD

The guys. BOBBY

Clean things up. CHAD

I hate them. BOBBY

I hate them, too. CHAD

They look at each other. They take their hands off the gun.

Well? CHAD

Yeah? BOBBY

Do you want? CHAD

Do you want? BOBBY

Yeah. And no. CHAD

We do it together—or we don't. BOBBY

Right—together, or not. How? CHAD

What? BOBBY

I mean, how? You know—how? CHAD

You mean— BOBBY

Yeah—you know. Like, who carries it? CHAD

Carries it? BOBBY

Yeah. CHAD

I don't know. BOBBY

You? CHAD

I don't know. BOBBY

Me? CHAD

You don't want to. BOBBY

Right. CHAD

You can't. BOBBY

I don't think I can. So then it'd be you. Right? CHAD

I guess. BOBBY

You'd have to carry it. CHAD

We gotta decide that. BOBBY

Yeah— CHAD

That's important. BOBBY

Yeah—especially if it's done together, like we said. CHAD

Yeah. And when. BOBBY

Yeah—and when, too, right. CHAD

When—I didn't think of that. BOBBY

So we can be there together. Like we said. CHAD

Like we said. BOBBY

This is harder— CHAD

Really harder. BOBBY

Are you thinking? CHAD

Yeah, I'm thinking. BOBBY

Me, too. That's good, right? CHAD

BOBBY
What?

CHAD
That we're thinking. About all this.

BOBBY
My mom and dad always told me to think first.

CHAD
Mine, too. So it's good—

BOBBY
Yeah.

CHAD
Yeah.

CHAD touches the gun, and then takes his hand away.

CHAD
I get pictures—

BOBBY
What kind?

BOBBY does the same.

CHAD
You, too?

BOBBY
What kind?

CHAD
I don't know—bad. I don't only get 'em in my head.
(hand on his stomach)
Here. All—jumpy.

BOBBY
Like lifting weights, huh?

CHAD
(laughing softly)

Yeah!

(taking a muscle pose)

Spot Man!

BOBBY

Yeah! And Rad like a ten-pounder dumbbell. Me, too. Bad pictures. All over.

CHAD

That means something, right?

BOBBY

I think so.

CHAD

I think so, too.

BOBBY closes the lid. CHAD locks it.

BOBBY

We know.

CHAD

Yeah.

BOBBY

We know what we coulda done.

CHAD

Yeah.

BOBBY

We coulda done it.

CHAD

It's right there.

BOBBY

And we know what we're not gonna do.

CHAD

We know what we're not gonna do. Yeah. "Rad, Rad, he's so bad—"

BOBBY

Um, um—"He don't know / The good luck he's had." Hey, not bad, huh?

CHAD

For off the top of your tongue.

BOBBY

You should put it away.

CHAD

Yeah. Should I tell them about the keys?

BOBBY

That's up to you.

CHAD

It would be good, wouldn't it?

BOBBY

I guess so—

CHAD

I guess so, too. No more secrets, huh?

BOBBY

Yeah—no more secrets.

CHAD

I don't think my head can take any more secrets.

BOBBY

Or my stomach.

BOBBY and CHAD pick up their backpacks and come downstage, right or left. The lights dim on the box. MUSCLE MAN walks to the box and stands by it, watching the two of them.

BOBBY and CHAD stand for a moment, awkward in each other's presence, not sure what to do next. Slowly, tentatively, CHAD punches BOBBY in the arm, softly, more of a nudge. BOBBY, looking at CHAD, does the same, lightly, playfully.

Jerk— BOBBY

Wuss— CHAD

After the first two terms, they start to go through their muscle routine again but without the verve they had before. They say the words as they make the movements.

Moron— BOBBY

Retard— CHAD

Geek— BOBBY

Loser— CHAD

Nerd— BOBBY

Wimp— CHAD

They drop the routine.

Do you hate me? CHAD

No. BOBBY

I don't hate you, either. CHAD

BOBBY
My mom and dad woulda been real disappointed.

CHAD
Mine, too. I like your parents.

I like your parents, too. BOBBY

What're we gonna do? CHAD

School tomorrow. BOBBY

No different. CHAD

Rad— BOBBY

Bad— CHAD

Scared— BOBBY

Yeah. CHAD

It makes me sick, sometimes. BOBBY

Sometimes I don't know whether to breathe or puke. CHAD

Puke or breathe. BOBBY

Well, if we could puke on them, they maybe they'd let us alone. CHAD

Yeah! Yeah! A whole "puke brigade," get all the geeks in a line— BOBBY

And when Rad and the rats walk by— CHAD

BOBBY
And the Pearls in their big hair—

CHAD
We all just—

BOBBY
On the count of three—

They make exaggerated puke sounds and motions.

BOBBY
Man, top to toe.

CHAD
Get out the hoses!

BOBBY
Dripping off their ears!

CHAD
All up their noses!

A few more puke sounds and motions.

BOBBY
Yeah!

CHAD
Yeah!

Finish laughing.

BOBBY
You know—

CHAD
You think?

BOBBY
My stomach feels a whole lot better thinking about it.

CHAD

Can't wait to see the movie!

BOBBY holds out his fist; CHAD takes his fist and touches the top of BOBBY's with it; they reverse, and BOBBY does the same to CHAD. Then they lightly bang their knuckles together, put their arms around each other and walk off making puke sounds. MUSCLE MAN watches them, then picks up the table and box. Lights out.

* * * * *

BOBBY's bedroom; CHAD is sleeping over. CHAD is on the floor, on his back, while BOBBY stands over him, one foot on CHAD's stomach. CHAD is faking as if he's pinned to the floor by BOBBY's foot.

BOBBY

(in a mock announcer's voice)

And Chick Chimichanga, that bad-ass bandito from Baja, has got Buck Buff pinned to the floor with his patented "foot of death," patent number 56933—

CHAD

(same announcer's voice, interrupting)

But Buff ain't beaten yet. He executes his patented California Roll.

CHAD rolls so that he's between BOBBY's feet.

CHAD

—and executes his "Elevator Shaft" move.

CHAD moves his body into a triangle so that his butt is against BOBBY's crotch.

BOBBY

(same voice)

And Chick is chucked to the floor, writhing—

CHAD

Writhing—

BOBBY

Writhing in pain!

CHAD

And defeat!

CHAD walks around the room in a victory walk, pumping his arms, etc. BOBBY's DAD walks in with a muscle magazine in his hand.

BOBBY

Dad—knock, all right?

DAD

A thousand pardons, my thrice potent master.

CHAD

Buck Buff scores! Hi, Mr. D.

DAD

Buck Buff, huh?

CHAD

(pointing to his butt)

Got the tightest glutes this side of Hell and Armageddon.

DAD

You guys make this stuff up?

BOBBY

Dad!

DAD

Sorry—don't want to interrupt the world cham-peen-ship here. Got you the newest Pump It Up.

BOBBY and CHAD start circling one another.

BOBBY

Not doing that any more.

DAD

Really? Since when?

CHAD

(to BOBBY)

2, 4, 6, 8

BOBBY

(to CHAD)

It's your bones I'm gonna break, ol' Buck-A-Luck.

CHAD
(to BOBBY)
No, you ain't, you chimichanga chimpanzee.

They grapple in mock battle.

DAD
So you don't want the magazine?

BOBBY
(in a struggle)
No thanks, Dad.

DAD
Chad?

CHAD
(in a struggle)
No thanks, Mr. D.

DAD
Hmmm.

MOM enters.

DAD
He doesn't want the magazine.

MOM
Thank God for small favors. Come on you two steaming hunks of junk, time for bed.

BOBBY
I'm going to take you down.

CHAD
I'm gonna take the whole universe with me.

MOM
Bobby! Chad!

They mock wrestle—it should be very funny because they're just goofing. They finally end up on the floor. MOM goes over, kneels, and slams her hand three times on the floor.

MOM

One—two—three! And the winner is—I can't tell! They both win!
Now, into bed, both of you.

MOM hauls up BOBBY, DAD hauls up CHAD.

BOBBY

Cosmic Wrestling Federation rules!

DAD

And the winner is—

(raises CHAD's hand)

Buff Butt.

CHAD

Buck Buff.

DAD

Easy to get the names mixed up.

MOM

Into bed.

BOBBY and CHAD get into bed.

MOM

It's nice to see you two guys smiling again. Settle down!

They pretend to settle down, lying stiff, their eyes closed, snoring, pretending that they're asleep.

DAD

The beasts are asleep. Do you think we can leave them alone?

MOM

I don't know. They're pretty dangerous.

DAD

Naw. I think they're pretty tame on the inside.

MOM

(tickles BOBBY)

But they're oh so ferocious on the outside!

BOBBY
(trying to maintain his posture)
We're sleeping!

CHAD
We're trying to sleep!

DAD
Better let sleeping dogs lie.

MOM and DAD get up.

DAD
Good night, sweet princes.

MOM
And may flights of angels sing thee to thy rests.

BOBBY
(eyes still closed)
Ssshh!

MOM and DAD exit. There are several beats.

BOBBY
(opens one eye)
They gone?

CHAD
Yeah.

BOBBY
Good. Ready?

CHAD
Yeah.

Lights change. BOBBY gets the magazine from DAD's chair and stands up on his bed. He rips the magazine in half. As he does so, MUSCLE MAN comes out.

MUSCLE MAN
You won't need me any more.

BOBBY

Not like you are.

CHAD

But you come in a lot of different flavors—

BOBBY

So we'll see you around.

BOBBY hands MUSCLE MAN the magazine. The rest of the crew come out, in pairs, the GANG with the PEARLS and RAD with COACH POWERS. They form a semi-circle around the beds, each pair in its own light.

BOBBY

(in his announcer's voice)

And now—

CHAD

(in his announcer's voice)

Ladies and germs—

BOBBY

The final round—

CHAD

Of the Cosmic Wrestling Federation's—

BOTH

Tag Team Tornado!

BOBBY

And the winners are—

In the next sequence, BOBBY and CHAD will snap their fingers; at each snap, a light goes out on one of the pairs and on MUSCLE MAN. RAD and COACH POWERS are the last pair. This will leave BOBBY and CHAD the only people lighted.

CHAD

2—

Snap fingers, light out.

BOBBY

4—

Snap fingers, light out.

6—

CHAD

Snap fingers, light out.

8—

BOBBY

Snap fingers, light out.

Who do we—

CHAD

Appreciate?

BOBBY

Snap fingers, light out on RAD and COACH POWERS.

Sorry.

CHAD
(to MUSCLE MAN)

Me, too.

BOBBY

They snap their fingers, and MUSCLE MAN is in darkness.

BOTH
2, 4, 6, 8 / Who do we appreciate?

They both strike the same muscle pose: arms to the side, 90 degrees, tightening their biceps. As they tighten their muscles, they exhale with a big grunt at the same time. All the time, they have big smiles on their faces.

Hunh!!

BOTH

Blackout.