

BOOGIE-MAN

4F, 2M

WHO

FEMALES



Gillian
Harper
Jessica
Mother

MALES

Father
Patric

WHERE Scene 1: Jessica's bedroom; Scene 2: The kitchen.

WHEN Present day. Scene 1: Night; Scene 2: Morning.

-  Color your words. For example, how can you make the word "creepy" sound creepy?
-  Try writing your own play about one way a parent can embarrass a kid. Make the play center around the characters' relationships rather than a lot of action.

Scene 1: Scary

(It's dark. PATRIC holds a flashlight.)

PATRIC: *(In a scary voice.)* It was a dark and stormy night. No one was around for miles. The kids were abandoned. Alone. The chaperones were lying dead at their feet. The silence was deafening. Then, a sound was heard in the distance.

(Suddenly, MOTHER enters. JESSICA, HARPER, and GILLIAN scream.)

MOTHER: That's enough. It's time for all of you to go to bed. Patric, off to your room.

PATRIC: At least let me finish my story.

MOTHER: I think you've done enough. OK, girls, into bed!

JESSICA: Mom, we're not tired.

GILLIAN: I promise I won't scream again.

MOTHER: Come on, let's go. Your parents won't be very happy with me if I return two exhausted girls to them tomorrow morning.

HARPER: I don't think I can sleep now.

GILLIAN: Don't be a baby, Harper.

HARPER: I can't help it!

PATRIC: Ha, ha, gotcha!

MOTHER: Harper, I don't know what stories Patric was telling you, but I assure you, you are totally safe here tonight. Now go to sleep. Patric, let's go.

(Reluctantly, the GIRLS get into their sleeping bags and PATRIC exits the room. MOTHER exits as they settle down.)

HARPER: I can't help it. I'm scared.

GILLIAN: I'm not. It's all fake.

JESSICA: You're scared, too. Don't lie, Gillian.

GILLIAN: No way. In fact, I'll finish Patric's story.

HARPER: That's OK. You don't have to.

JESSICA: Go on, then. You'd better be good.

GILLIAN: OK. The sound from the distance was coming closer and closer. The kids yelled out, "Is anyone there?" There was no answer. Just the sound of breathing and a final moan of pain from Mr. Lanker, lying dead at their feet.

JESSICA: If Mr. Lanker is dead, how can he make noise?

GILLIAN: Shut up, Jessica. Lying *almost* dead at their feet, OK? The kids tried to figure out what to do as the figure came closer and closer and closer. They didn't have anything they could use as a weapon except the pocket knife the killer used to tear Mr. Lanker to shreds.

HARPER: Can you kill someone with a pocketknife? Aren't they really small?

JESSICA: If you bleed enough, I guess you can die from anything.

GILLIAN: Be quiet! As I was saying . . . The killer had carved the six times table on Mr. Lanker's chest. Suddenly, Harper felt something touch her sleeve—

HARPER: Hey! Why is she called Harper? Not fair!

JESSICA: Because she is! Just be quiet!

GILLIAN: Harper said, "Is that you MaryAnn?" MaryAnn said, "I'm way over here trying to get a signal on my cell phone." "Well, then," Harper said, "Who's pulling at my sleeve?" No one answered. Total silence. Then—

(PATRIC bursts into the room roaring menacingly. The girls scream.)

PATRIC: Ha, ha, ha. I so got you.

GILLIAN: Only because I was telling an excellent story.

HARPER: It was OK. Even I wasn't so scared.

GILLIAN: Liar! You were about to wet your pants.

HARPER: Was not!

(MOTHER enters.)

MOTHER: I thought I told all of you to go to bed.

JESSICA: Mom, Patric keeps bothering us.

MOTHER: Patric, what did I tell you?

PATRIC: I just wanted to finish my story. Can't I, Mom?
It will only take one more minute.

HARPER: I think I need to know how it ends. But change
the girl's name to something else!

GILLIAN: No, she's Harper.

HARPER: Stop!

MOTHER: Be nice, girls.

JESSICA: Please, Mom, can Patric finish his story?

MOTHER: I thought you wanted him to leave you alone.

JESSICA: I do, but . . . we just want to know the end. Then
we want him to go away.

MOTHER: Well . . . One more minute, Patric. No more.

PATRIC: OK, Mom.

(MOTHER exits.)

PATRIC: OK. Hold onto your hats; this is gonna be good.

JESSICA: Just get on with it.

GILLIAN: Wait! So this girl Harper—

HARPER: MaryAnn! Call her MaryAnn!

GILLIAN: She feels something touching her sleeve, and it's
not one of the other kids. And the math teacher, Mr.
Lanker, is dead at their feet.

JESSICA: With the six times table carved into him.

PATRIC: That's good. Nice touch.

GILLIAN: Thank you.

PATRIC: OK. So, Harper—

HARPER: MaryAnn!

PATRIC: Harper feels something cold and clammy, almost
metallic touch her arm. It's a hot, dry night in the
desert, so the coldness gives her a chill. She moves
away, closer to the group. Or at least she tries to. After
one tiny step, she finds she can't move any further. Her
clothes are caught on something! There are no trees,
so she hasn't gotten caught on any branches. And
though it's dark, she can make out the forms of her
friends in front of her. Should she turn around? Should
she rip her clothes and try to get free? Harper's breath-
ing gets quicker as she tries to decide what to do. Just
then she hears a voice. "Tell me your six times table,"
he hisses, in a quiet, menacing voice. Harper's throat
is dry with fear. She begins, "Six times one is six, six
times two is—"

*(FATHER bursts into the room, making the KIDS
jump.)*

FATHER: Wooo! You kids are up late! Mom said she
wanted you in bed now. Let's get moving!

*(FATHER turns up the lights. He is wearing 1970s
disco clothes—gold chains, tight pants, etc. The KIDS
are stunned into silence.)*

JESSICA: Dad, you promised not to come to my party!

FATHER: Come on, munchkin, give your old man a break!
I just checked in to see how you were doing. Besides,
I was always cool in school. All the kids liked me. I had
the best moves in town. Very popular with the ladies,
if you can believe it. I'm an old man now, but I've still
got my moves.

*(FATHER starts disco dancing wildly. The KIDS all
scream in horror.)*

JESSICA: Dad, stop!

PATRIC: Please, I'm begging you!

GILLIAN: It's horrible!

HARPER: I'm scared!

FATHER: It's not a party without dancing, right? Who
wants to dance with me? Jessica?

JESSICA: No way, Dad!

FATHER: Ah, when Jessica was a little girl, we'd boogie
every night after dinner.

JESSICA: Shut up, Dad!

FATHER: Patric there had some mean moves, too. He
could spin just like Michael Jackson.

PATRIC: That information does not leave this room!

FATHER: Come on, let's dance!

(FATHER pulls HARPER onto her feet.)

FATHER: Woo! Yeah!

*(HARPER stands totally still as FATHER dances
around her.)*

FATHER: Come on, show me some dance moves, Harper!
Don't be shy!

HARPER: I—I—

FATHER: Gillian, you're the bold one here. I bet you've
got some mean moves you do at the school dances.

*(FATHER approaches GILLIAN who screams and
buries herself in her sleeping bag. MOTHER enters.)*

MOTHER: OK, that's it. Enough excitement for one night.
Everyone, get in bed and go to sleep.

FATHER: The party was just getting started!

MOTHER: Gerry, these kids need to get some sleep.

FATHER: Don't be uncool and heavy, Helen. We're hav-
ing fun. Right, kids?

MOTHER: Come on, Gerry. We can have a party of our
own downstairs.

FATHER: You'll boogie with me, baby?

MOTHER: Sure.

FATHER: OK! You kids get in bed. Sleep well!

(FATHER dances out of the room.)

JESSICA: Mom, you said he wouldn't come!

MOTHER: Now, Jessica, he's your father. He just meant well.

PATRIC: His "moves" are a little old, Mom.

MOTHER: Patric, don't speak that way about your father!

PATRIC: I was just telling the truth, Mom. You like it when I tell the truth.

MOTHER: Enough! I've heard enough from you. Now get to your room, Patric.

(PATRIC exits.)

MOTHER: I expect you girls to settle down and get to sleep. We'll have pancakes in the morning.

(MOTHER exits. Long silent beat.)

JESSICA: You guys, I'm so sorry. My dad is a total embarrassment.

GILLIAN: No! All dads are kinda embarrassing. My dad calls everyone by weird nicknames. Most of them are food names like cupcake and cookie and stuff. I don't know what his deal is with that. Once I called him creampuff and he *liked* it! He thought it was cute. I thought it would get him to stop. Pumpkin, sugarplum—the list goes on and on. And it's bad enough he'd do it to me. He'd do it to you, too. He can't stop himself. He'll call anyone by a silly food name. He'll say it to waitresses and stuff. "I'll have an egg salad sandwich, tootsie pop, with a

coke." And then they're like, "We don't have tootsie pops." And I just wanna die. I swear. One time I called him banana cream pie. One time I called him brussel sprout casserole. He didn't care! You could call him spinach and hair milkshake, and he'd think you really thought he was swell. What's wrong with that man? So all dad's are weird, Jessica. Just in different ways.

JESSICA: Not like that.

HARPER: He seemed nice.

JESSICA: He is nice, he's just . . . Listen, he's a really nice guy and a good dad. He just doesn't know that it's the twenty-first century. It escaped him somehow. And we've tried buying him other clothes, but he won't wear them. And we've tried getting him not to dance, but he won't listen. He won a trophy in a disco contest on TV in 1978. You know how some guys win football games in high school, and it's, like, the most important thing in the world to them for the rest of their lives? Well, that's how disco dancing is for my dad. Actually, he was really good. For that kind of old-fashioned dancing. He could pick a girl up and hold her over his head and turn her around. And she wouldn't fall! And he'd put her down, and they'd spin. They'd spin so fast, almost like ice skaters. It was amazing. But, you know, lame. So he just keeps doing it. He doesn't know he's scary. I try to tell him, but . . .

HARPER: It's OK, Jessica.

JESSICA: I know, but . . . Sometimes I wish I had another dad.

GILLIAN: I'm tired. Let's get some sleep.

Scene 2: Cruel

(HARPER, GILLIAN, JESSICA, and PATRIC sit around the breakfast table.)

HARPER: I'm so glad it's morning. Everything always seems better in the morning.

GILLIAN: That's the real test, Patric, if you can be scary in the morning.

JESSICA: He's scary all the time.

GILLIAN: He's a brother. They can't help it.

(MOTHER enters.)

MOTHER: Good morning, kids. Did everyone settle down and get some sleep last night?

JESSICA: Yes, Mom.

MOTHER: How about you, Harper?

HARPER: Well, not really. I just kept thinking about that story with the girl and the man with the hook.

MOTHER: Patric, I told you not to tell that one.

PATRIC: That's a good one!

(FATHER enters.)

FATHER: Gooooood morning! I am digging this sunshine today!

(MOTHER, PATRIC, JESSICA, GILLIAN, and HARPER all go completely still and silent.)

FATHER: Why all the long faces? It's a groovy morning!

PATRIC: Dad, how many times do I have to tell you that no one unbuttons more than three buttons on a shirt?

FATHER: Son, you are one funny cat.

MOTHER: Honey, what can I get you for breakfast?

JESSICA: You guys should have breakfast out.

MOTHER: We have plenty of food here.

JESSICA: It would be good for you to go *out* together.

FATHER: Your mom's right. I'd like a nice, quiet breakfast at home with my family and my daughter's friends.

JESSICA: Daaad!

GILLIAN: I'm done with my breakfast. My parents will be wondering when I'm coming home. I'm, uh, supposed to clean the garage or something today.

FATHER: I wish I could get these kids to do that!

MOTHER: You're a very good daughter, Gillian.

GILLIAN: Thanks. So, I'll be going.

HARPER: Wait! Um, I should walk home with you. My parents don't like me to walk home alone.

FATHER: I could give you a ride home.

HARPER: That's OK. I can walk.

GILLIAN: So let's get going now.

HARPER: Bye! Thank you!

GILLIAN: Yeah, thanks for everything!

JESSICA: Bye, you guys!

(GILLIAN and HARPER exit. Beat.)

JESSICA: Thanks a lot, Dad.

FATHER: For what?

JESSICA: For completely embarrassing me in front of my friends!

FATHER: How did I do that?

JESSICA: With your stupid clothes and your dance moves! You're a total humiliation! You look like an idiot, Dad.

MOTHER: Jessica! That's enough!

JESSICA: What? It's true. No one wants to be around him. It's not 1978 anymore, Dad. Try living in the present day already!

PATRIC: Jess, calm down.

JESSICA: Easy for you to say! Your friends weren't here. So they'll still be talking to you in school on Monday.

FATHER: I was nice to your friends. I think you're being a little sensitive.

JESSICA: Maybe I am! But that's the way it is. I'll be a laughingstock in school forever, thanks to you! I wish I had a different father! I wish I lived in a different house! I wish you would disappear!

MOTHER: Jessica, that is enough! Go to your room!

FATHER: No, no, Judy. It's OK. Maybe she's right.

MOTHER: She's not right! She's being cruel and childish and insensitive.

FATHER: Well, maybe we should go out to breakfast after all, Judy. Let's go get some pancakes.

MOTHER: Fine. But you are not to leave the house all day, young lady! I want you to think about what you've done while we're gone. We will speak to you later!

(MOTHER and FATHER exit. Beat.)

PATRIC: Good job, moron.

JESSICA: What are you talking about? You should thank me.

PATRIC: For what?

JESSICA: For shocking Dad into living in this century.

PATRIC: Why would I thank you for that?

JESSICA: Because maybe now he won't be a total embarrassment to be around.

PATRIC: He's not so embarrassing.

JESSICA: Yes, he is!

PATRIC: Well, he is a little, but it's not like Mom's not embarrassing, too. She made me go out with her last week to buy new underwear. It was horrible.

JESSICA: Yeah, but that's just mom stuff. She *has* to buy you underwear. That's not the same.

PATRIC: Sure it is! *Everyone's embarrassing in some way. Like you, for instance.*

JESSICA: I'm not embarrassing!

PATRIC: Oh yes, you are.

JESSICA: Oh yeah? How!

PATRIC: *You're annoying, you're a kid, you're a girl kid, you love the color pink, you call me Patty sometimes even though my name is Patric—*

JESSICA: Mom calls you Patty—

PATRIC: *—you giggle all the time, if I talk to a girl you say things like "Are you going to marry her, Patty?" in a really annoying voice, you leave these teen magazines around the house and tell my friends that they're mine . . . Should I keep going?*

JESSICA: No.

PATRIC: And now you're pouting. Like I hurt your feelings. Don't you get it? You're such a dimwit, I swear. That's how it feels to be Dad. You're always picking at him. Telling what's wrong with him. He's just trying to be cool. He's not, but he's trying. That more than a lot of kids get.

JESSICA: I know, I know, he's not beating me or anything.

PATRIC: It's more than that. He's trying to be *nice*. He's trying to be a *dad*. Maybe he's not perfect. But you shouldn't be such a brat.

JESSICA: Like you never are.

PATRIC: I didn't say I was perfect. I'm not. But you shouldn't be so mean. Try to be a little mature.

JESSICA: Whatever.

(PATRIC exits. GILLIAN enters.)

GILLIAN: Hey!

JESSICA: Hey! Why are you here?

GILLIAN: I forgot my toothbrush.

JESSICA: Oh.

GILLIAN: I had a really good time yesterday. I swear I've never screamed so much in my life. Your dad is crazy!

JESSICA: Yeah, about that—

GILLIAN: Could he really pick up a lady and spin her over his head like a disco dancer?

JESSICA: Well, yeah—

GILLIAN: That is so awesome. I wish I could pick someone up over my head. I'd throw my little sister in the trash! Harper was saying on the way home how embarrassed she was about not knowing how to dance. I don't know how to dance either! No one ever taught me. And she was so scared going home by herself after those ghost stories! Oh, I gotta grab my toothbrush and get home. My dad is going to kill me if I don't clean the garage. I wish I didn't have to! I wish my dad were cool with the garage being a wreck like everyone else's is! Thanks so much for a really fun time, Jessica. I swear I almost wet my pants screaming and laughing! That's the mark of a really good party in my book. Your dad is excellent. Maybe you could teach us some boogie moves sometimes. It would be so funny to break those out at a school dance and be like, "We're cool. Don't you wish you could do this?" Well, see ya!

(GILLIAN starts to exit.)

JESSICA: Wait! You really had to go home to clean the garage?

GILLIAN: Yeah. Pretty stupid, right?

JESSICA: And Harper was really scared to walk home alone?

GILLIAN: Definitely! It was so funny. I made her jump a

couple of times on the way home, too. Well, I gotta run!

(GILLIAN exits. PATRIC enters.)

JESSICA: Patric, want to do something today? I'm grounded, I guess.

PATRIC: No way, little dweeb!

JESSICA: Please?

PATRIC: What do you want to do?

JESSICA: We could watch a movie.

PATRIC: We don't like the same movies. Face it, kid, we're different.

(PATRIC exits.)

JESSICA: Why is everyone so confusing?