

**"Water Brats"**

**A Play in Two Acts**

**Written by**

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Synopsis:

Six middle-school age girls from varying backgrounds get themselves trapped together in a large underground outfall connected to an abandoned treatment plant for the local sewer system. They need to find their way out in two hours before the next water discharge floods the tunnel. They have to travel from the diffuser tunnel to the outfall tunnel, or approximately two miles under sea level, in order to reach the other exit located near the bottom of the outfall shaft, one hundred feet under water. Along the way, they find a bag filled with money and the inscription "Millborough Savings Bank" along the side. But they can't tell any adult because, while down there, anyone with a cell phone finds that their devices aren't working sufficiently, thus they cannot call for help letting anyone know they're trapped. However one text message is received and comes through on a cell phone VERY clear: "I'm coming for you!"

**Time: July, 2013**

**Setting: The Town of Millborough**

**CAST : 5 Females, 1 Male**

(All teens are between the ages of 11 and 14)

**NANCY** - A thoughtful girl, even tempered, level headed. Just got braces and is concerned about her skin complexion. Has an infected left ear from a recent piercing, so she wears a large bandage over it. Can't stand how Claire treats everybody.

**CLAIRE** – A “big boned” girl with a nasty temper. Comes across as hating everybody, at first. Pulls cruel pranks such as tossing water balloons and spit balls at people. Uses her Attention Deficit Disorder as an excuse to hate her teachers at school. Has an older brother, Steven, who is about to be sent overseas to serve in the military. Loves to eat ice cream “push-up” pops, carrying them in a cooler on her bike.

**MARY** – Although she is friends with Claire and Nancy, Mary is a bit of a loner, quiet, doesn't care about much. Gothic in appearance. At home, her parents argue all the time. She is very superstitious, into witchcraft and astrology. Enjoys wandering through the Millborough Graveyard in search of ghosts.

**LAURIE** – Peggy’s sister, a very “high maintenance” young girl, a bit prissy, spoiled rotten, a prima ballerina. Always looking for praise from the others. Enjoys Greek mythology, especially the Goddess Venus, with whom she identifies. Makes and wears her own butterfly belts, which she gives as presents to others. Always bragging to her friends about the number of boys who like her and NOT Peggy. Wears curlers in her hair and make-up on her face.

**PEGGY** - Mary's sister, the self-proclaimed “leader” of the girls, although her leadership capabilities are tested. Constantly arguing with Claire. Secretly has a crush on Claire's older brother, Steven. Loves to play "Truth or Dare". Spends a lot of time in the Millborough Library studying other people's genealogy. Keeps old scanned photos and copies of old newspaper articles on her person.

**EILEEN** - The jock of the group, a tom-boy, athletic. Parents are divorcing. Mother tries to get her to dress up more often. Has a lot of "uncles", meaning men whom her mother is dating. She is moving to go live with her father. Loves playing basketball, regardless of rain, thunder or lightning. Has a pet cat she keeps losing in the Millborough Graveyard. Enjoys the town of Millborough's Fourth of July fireworks celebration and looks forward to it every year, but especially this year, because it will be her last summer to enjoy them with her friends.

**MATTHEW** - A boy, a bit of nerd, two years younger than the girls. Has an innocent crush on Peggy.

**EILEEN’S MOTHER** – Offstage voice. Very loud and nasally.

Note: These characters should not be played as caricatures, but as real girls with typical “tween” issues.

**Act 1, Scene 1 – Eileen’s Driveway – Late Afternoon on a Hot Summer Day**

(At LIGHTS UP, Eileen is seen tossing hoops with a basketball. Her hair is long but pulled back. She is dressed in a rather sweaty and grimy blue and white tank top. She has obviously been working out for quite awhile. All of a sudden, we hear a cat meow as if it was being chased by a dog. EILEEN stops and listens. Then there is the sound of a cat running away. EILEEN'S MOTHER calls out to her)

EILEEN'S MOTHER – (Offstage) Eileen! That stupid "Sister" of yours has run away again!

EILEEN – Oh, no, not again. Was Bixby chasing her around again?

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) Of course he was. He got off his stupid leash as I was giving him his bath. Next thing I know the two of them are tearing up the damn house. I opened the door and that dumb Sister goes tearin' on outta here!

EILEEN - I'll go get her. I know where she runs to.

EILEEN'S MOTHER – (Offstage) Yeah, me, too. That stupid graveyard. One of these days, I'm gonna make sure that stupid cat stays there!

EILEEN - Mom!

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) I mean it! You wanted that stupid flea carrying feline, not me. So, the next time you're stupid father decides to give you a stupid gift, make sure he clears it with me first.

EILEEN - (Rolling her eyes) She doesn't have fleas and he's NOT stupid! All right. I'll go get her. (Puts the basketball under her arm and starts to leave. Turns back, still angry) You know, she only goes to the cemetery on account of the mice and rats! Maybe she'll bring one home and we can keep it? (Pretends her mother just made a threatening gesture) All right. I know. I'm going. I'm going. (Begins to go)

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) Don't forget to take your cell phone with you.

EILEEN – (Returns quickly) Where is it?

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) On the window sill.

EILEEN - (Picks up the cell phone and looks at it) Is it charged?

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Beat, offstage) Ooops. Well, there should be enough of a charge to last you. I'll stick it in the charger before we go out later.

EILEEN - We're going out? Where?

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) Don't tell me you forgot that you've gotta get cleaned up for the Fourth of July fireworks celebration tonight.

EILEEN - It's tonight?

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) Well, it *is* the fourth. And you're wearin' your new dress!

EILEEN - Aw, man! No, way, Mom! Not the dress! I wanted to ...!

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) I bought that dress so you'll look like a girl for a change! Your uncle will be over at seven to pick us up.

EILEEN - He's NOT my "uncle". He's *your* boyfriend.

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) You wanna go, or what?

EILEEN - Yeah. Okay. I'm going. (Starts to go, then turns back again) I'm gonna stop by Laurie's to see if she has a nice "butterfly belt" to go with that (muttering) stupid ugly rotten dress.

EILEEN'S MOTHER - (Offstage) I heard that! Get going! (EILEEN walks off as LIGHTS DIM. Scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 2)

### **Act 1, Scene 2 – Nancy's House – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP on NANCY'S bedroom. It is a typical teenage girl room, with any appropriate posters adorning the wall. NANCY is seen sitting at a mirror, applying pimple cream onto her face. She smiles and we see that she is wearing braces. She is also wearing a large bandage around her right ear from a recent ear piercing that got infected. EILEEN knocks on the bedroom door, stage right.)

NANCY - I told you I don't want to see anybody!

EILEEN - (Barges in) Even me?

NANCY – (Startled, screams, hiding her face) Ahh! (Dives to the side of her bed and hides) What are you doing here, Eileen?

EILEEN – (Sarcastic) There's a nice greeting. (Jumps onto NANCY'S bed and hops on it, gently tossing the basketball up and down in the air at the same time) Hey. C'mon. Sister got out and I gotta go find her.

NANCY - (Stands up) Sister? Oh, yeah, your cat. (Beat) She got out again? (EILEEN turns and sees NANCY and is startled at the site)

EILEEN – (Startled) Yikes! (Hops off the bed) What happened to you? You get into a fight?

NANCY - Very funny.

EILEEN - I'm not kidding. If you won, I can only imagine what the loser must look like! (Laughs)

NANCY – Shut up! You know I don't like to be teased.

EILEEN - I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'll stop. (Pauses for a long look at NANCY, then starts laughing again).

NANCY - That's it! Get out! Out of my room!

EILEEN - C'mon! I need your help. I gotta go into the Millborough Graveyard to find her. I don't wanna go in that place by myself.

NANCY – Well / don't wanna go out in public looking like *this*.

EILEEN - (Joking) Looking like...what? (Snickers as she tosses the basketball at NANCY, who catches it)

NANCY - See? And you're supposed to be a *friend* of mine. (Tosses the basketball back to EILEEN) Can you imagine what *Claire* would say or do if she saw me like this?

EILEEN – She'd "tear you a new one".

NANCY – What does that mean?

EILEEN – Dunno. My mom's boyfriend says it a lot, though. Anyway, Claire shouldn't talk. Besides, I'll be with you.

NANCY – Considering your reaction just now that doesn't fill me with confidence at the moment.

EILEEN - C'mon...please? I gotta find her and get back before dark. I told my Mom that I need to stop at Laurie and Peggy's house before bringing Sister back home.

NANCY - "Sister". What a dumb name for a cat.

EILEEN - Don't get on my case about that again. My Mom's already being a pain. Wants me to go with her and her stupid boyfriend to the fireworks tonight.

NANCY - Oh! That's right. Tonight'll be the last time you'll get to see 'em, huh?

EILEEN - (A little melancholy) Yeah. So you'll come?

NANCY - Oh (Gives EILEEN a hug), I'll miss you. (Reconsiders) All right. Let me just wipe some of this stuff off.

EILEEN - Huh? Oh, okay. Sure. (NANCY sits back down at the mirror as EILEEN bounces on the bed)

NANCY - Please leave my bed alone. It's done nothing to you!

EILEEN - Sorry. (EILEEN stops bouncing and sits next to NANCY, watching her take off the pimple cream)

NANCY - Where'd I put that towel?

EILEEN - Hey! What happened to your ear?

NANCY – What? (Feeling her bandaged earlobe) Oh, this? Mary tried to pierce my ear.

EILEEN - With what? A chainsaw?

NANCY - She said she'd do it for free.

EILEEN - It's free when you buy earrings at the Millborough Mall!

NANCY - But Mary said she'd done it before.

EILEEN - Duh, to Claire, and that's how Claire lost part of *her* ear lobe!

NANCY - I know that...*now!* You know, though, it actually looked pretty decent for about an hour.

EILEEN - Yeah?

NANCY - Yeah. But then it got all infected and started looking like a Big Red Dog.

EILEEN - Yeah. Well, listen to me, "Clifford", it's swollen so much now it looks like you could hook it up to a leash and take the whole thing out for a walk. (NANCY takes a towel and starts wiping the pimple cream from her face. EILEEN takes a long look at her) Man, why do you put so much on?

NANCY - (Moves the towel away from her face) Do you *mind*?

EILEEN - (Backs off, laughing) Sorry, sorry.

NANCY – Laurie recommended it to me. Said it works wonders for her face. The instructions on the tube say "apply liberally on most *pronounced visible areas*". Well, I got a lot of "*pronounced visible areas*". Greasy skin runs in my family.

EILEEN – I wish you wouldn't phrase it like that. (After a beat) It does?

NANCY - Yeah. My brother? My older brother, Lenny? Did you ever meet Lenny?

EILEEN - Nah.

NANCY - No? Huh. Hey! Say, wait a sec...aren't you supposed to be wearing your retainer?

EILEEN - I, uh, can't find it.

NANCY - Careful, or you'll have to have full out braces like me. See? (Shows her big, wide silvery smile to EILEEN)

EILEEN - Lenny, Nancy. You were talking about *Lenny*, remember?

NANCY - Oh, yeah. Well, anyway, Lenny had such a bad skin complexion he almost missed the whole seventh grade.

EILEEN - (Skeptical) Get outta here! That can't happen. That's impossible!

NANCY - It's true! He'd go, but then he'd duck out before attendance so nobody would see him. You know, he spent most of the summer making up the entire year?

EILEEN - Because of a bad case of zits?

NANCY - I'm telling you it can be really traumatic. (After a beat) That and he did have this bad bladder control problem, too. I think that might have had something to do with it, but I dunno. I still think it was the zits.

EILEEN - (Annoyed) Nancy?

NANCY - What?

EILEEN - Can we *go* now?

NANCY - Sure. (Puts the towel away) All set. How do I look?

EILEEN - Between the zits, that stupid contraption in your mouth and that stupid bandage, I don't know what'll be scarier, you or the stupid graveyard!

NANCY - You know you say "stupid" a lot?

EILEEN - It's a family thing. Let's go. (They exit as LIGHTS DIM. Scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 3)

### **Act 1, Scene 3 – A Wooded Path – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP on a wooded path. Traveling to LAURIE and PEGGY's house, EILEEN and NANCY are talking, tossing the basketball back and forth to each other)

EILEEN - Maybe after we find Sister, we can shoot some hoops.

NANCY - I dunno...

EILEEN - C'mon. It'll be the last time I can before I move.

NANCY - Where are you goin' again?

EILEEN - Some stupid town in North Carolina. Morganton, I think?

NANCY - How long?

EILEEN - Dunno. Maybe awhile. (Looking off in the distance) Is that Claire and Mary?

NANCY - Where?

EILEEN - (Pointing off) Over there. Think they'll wanna play?



NANCY - Nah. Mary might, but not Claire.

EILEEN - Why not Claire?

NANCY – (Joking) Because there's *movement* involved. (Laughs)

EILEEN – (Laughs, but only a little) Nancy, that's not nice.

NANCY – (Laughter subsides) Okay, okay, I'm sorry. But hey, she can be mean to me, too, sometimes. Remember when we all played "Killer B-Ball in the Rain" at the park? She'd just stand on the sidelines, and every once in awhile she'd catch a foul. Then, she'd spike people in the *face* with it!

EILEEN - (Smiling, recalling) Yeah. That was a fun night!

NANCY – (Annoyed) Fun? She got me...*twice*. I think that's why my teeth are all screwed up and out of alignment now and why I have to wear these lousy braces.

EILEEN – Nancy, I mean the whole night itself was a lot of fun. Remember how, as we waited out the storm, we all sat out in those raggedy old lawn chairs and just hung out and talked? I'm gonna miss nights like that the most.

NANCY - Are you kidding? There was thunder and lightning all over the place and we were sitting in metal chairs! And when we started playing again, all Peggy did was complain the whole time about how Laurie was whining about breaking a nail.

EILEEN - (Sighs) Dude, I wish those two would get along.

NANCY - They're sisters. What do you expect? (After a beat and don't call me "dude". (A rumbling sound is heard)

EILEEN - Was that thunder?

NANCY - Dunno. Maybe they're testing the fireworks?

EILEEN - Dunno. Let's go. (LIGHTS DIM as scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 4)

#### **Act 1, Scene 4 - Peggy and Laurie's House – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP on the shared bedroom of PEGGY and LAURIE, where the GIRLS are seen arguing over how to decorate it. There are two beds with matching dresser drawers, one set all pink and the other all white. LAURIE is in curlers with white cream smeared all over her face)

PEGGY - You are *not* going to mess up my room by turning everything pink, Laurie!

LAURIE - It's my room too, Peggy, and I think if we redecorate, then pink would make this look much more like a girl's bedroom instead of a hospital.

PEGGY - A little bit of pink? Fine, but the chairs and everything? Forget it!

LAURIE - Better than wicker! Nobody owns wicker furniture anymore. Not even old people.

PEGGY - (Indignant) Some people do.

LAURIE - Are you kidding? Not even Grammie owns wicker and she's ancient! I mean way over forty.

PEGGY - Well, I'm older so I get to choose.

LAURIE - Why do have to be so bossy?

POEGGY – Are you accusing me of being too dictatorial?

LAURIE – No, but only because it sounds like a dirty word and I don't know what it means.

PEGGY – That figures. (Both continue ad lib arguing as EILEEN and NANCY enter the room)

EILEEN - Hey dudes! How's the redecorating going? (LAURIE and PEGGY start arguing over each other)

LAURIE - I want to have a room that looks like a girls' room and she...

PEGGY - Would you please tell this imbecile that having a totally pink room is the dumbest...

NANCY - Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! One at a time! One at a time! (PEGGY and LAURIE stop for a beat. They take a deep breath and then begin arguing again)

PEGGY – (Overlapping, simultaneous) I want to have a nice statue in the corner here and she...

LAURIE – (Overlapping, simultaneous) Isn't that dumb? I want to have a mural of a family tree on this wall and...

EILEEN - Stop it! (PEGGY and LAURIE stop again)

NANCY - (To LAURIE) Laurie, really, a statue? (PEGGY starts to talk but NANCY stops her) Ah-ah! *Just* Laurie.

LAURIE - Well, I...

EILEEN – Hold on a sec. (Grabs a towel hanging on the back of LAURIE's chair) Here. You look like a mime.

PEGGY - That's right, Laurie. You have to wipe that crap off your face before anyone can take you seriously.

LAURIE - I was giving myself a makeover. It helps with my complexion.

PEGGY - (Grumbling) I'll give you a makeover, little miss priss.

LAURIE - Better than being a zit face.

PEGGY - Zit face? Why you dirty little...(advances toward LAURIE)

EILEEN - (Stops her) Peggy, come on. Now, what is this about a statue, Laurie?

LAURIE – Yes, well, I made a replica of Venus in art class, and I want to put it in the room.

PEGGY - (Muttering) It wasn't that great.

LAURIE - (Hearing PEGGY, defensive) I got an "A".

PEGGY - You always get "A's" in art. It's every other class you're failing.

LAURIE - Hey! That's not nice.

NANCY - Uh, it may not be nice...but it *is* true, though, Laurie.

LAURIE - I don't care. It's still not a nice thing to say.

EILEEN – Fine. A statue. (To PEGGY) And what was it *you* wanted to do with the room, Peg?

PEGGY - (Excited) I thought it would be exciting to take up the *whole* wall and do this *total* family tree theme.

NANCY - Interesting.

LAURIE – Yawn. Yawn. Yawn. Boring!

EILEEN - I dunno. Both sound kinda *tedious* to me.

LAURIE – Is that anything like “dictatorial”?

PEGGY – (To EILEEN) Well, my idea is certainly not as boring as Venus.

NANCY - The planet?

LAURIE - No, silly. Venus. The Greek Goddess of Love.

PEGGY - Wrong again, genius. She was the Roman Goddess of Spring, Love and Beauty. Aphrodite was the Greek Goddess of Love.

EILEEN - How do you know?

PEGGY - I read! (Lies down on her bed and opens a book)

LAURIE - (Finishing wiping her face) Constantly. Explains why she's never had a *date*.

PEGGY - Hey! Screw you, Kim Kardashian! (To EILEEN) Eileen, you are so lucky to be an *only* child. I'd give anything *not* to have a sister.

NANCY - Peggy, you can't mean that.

PEGGY - Oh, I do, Eileen. Trust me. Some days I just want to flush her down the toilet. (Reads)

EILEEN – What a pleasant thought, Peg. (To LAURIE) Hey Laurie, you know those "butterfly belts" you made in arts and crafts last year? Well, do you have a spare one? I need one for tonight. My mom got me a dress and it would look great with it.

LAURIE - As a matter of fact, I've got one in my drawer someplace. (LAURIE goes to her dresser and pulls out a wrapped box. Hands it to EILEEN) Here you go.

EILEEN - What's this?

LAURIE - The belt. I wrapped it up for you.

EILEEN - Thanks. I think. Wow. Gift wrapped and everything? That's...really weird. Um, I'll pay you for it, if you want.

LAURIE - No-no-no, silly. I was going to *give* it to you anyway. As a going away present. I'll miss you.

EILEEN - Aw, that's sweet, dude!

LAURIE - But I certainly won't miss you calling me "dude".

EILEEN - Sorry. Bad habit. (After a beat) Dude.

PEGGY – (To EILEEN) Yeah, we're all gonna miss you. (Sits up, puts book down) So, why *are* you guys here?

LAURIE – (Annoyed) Girls. (ALL look at LAURIE) When did it become so wrong for us to be called "girls"? Not "dudes", not "guys", but just simply, "girls"? I like being called a "girl".

PEGGY – I call you "Bozo" because right now, looking at your face, it fits.

LAURIE – (Exasperated) Whatever.

PEGGY – (Mocking) "Whatever". (To EILEEN and NANCY) Look, you two didn't come over all this way just for a belt, so what's up?

NANCY - Eileen's cat got out again and she needs help finding it.

PEGGY - (Stands up on her bed) Ah ha! A mystery! All right! Let's go!

EILEEN – Uh, it's not really a mystery. I know where she is.

PEGGY - (Steps down off the bed) Aw, man. She didn't go to that graveyard again, did she?

EILEEN - Probably. That's where she always go.

PEGGY - Lame. All right. Let's go. (To PEGGY) Come on, "Bozo". (PEGGY grumbles. They ALL exit the room as LIGHTS DIM and scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 5)

### **Act 1, Scene 5 - The Millborough Graveyard – Moments Later**

(At LIGHTS UP the girls are all walking along a path just outside the graveyard entrance)

PEGGY - Okay. Here we are. Everybody keep a look out.

NANCY - Right, boss.

LAURIE - I hate this place. Not good for the complexion or my hair.

NANCY - Your hair?

LAURIE - I just sprayed it. If I'm in the damp air too long it makes my hair go all frizzy.

PEGGY - Yeah. (Chuckling) She starts looking like one of the guys from dad's old eighties "hair band" records. (Walks a few steps forward and leans over) Hey. Look at this. Cat tracks in the dirt.

NANCY - How do you know they're not doggie paw prints?

PEGGY - Well, a dog's paw print shows four toes and claws. Cats retract their claws when they walk or run. (Points down) Look. No claws.

EILEEN - How do you know it isn't a raccoon or something else?

PEGGY - Same deal. Raccoons, skunks, coyotes, foxes, and dogs leave claw marks. Cats usually don't.

NANCY - I didn't know that.

LAURIE – It's because she such a (ad lib grumbling quietly) smarty-pants.

PEGGY - Read a book, Bozo.

LAURIE – Stop calling me "Bozo".

PEGGY – Whatever. (Pointing left) The tracks head that way.

LAURIE - I hate this place.

PEGGY – (Losing her temper) For the last time, stop whining, Laurie, or go home.

LAURIE – Fine.

PEGGY – Fine.

LAURIE – Fine!

ALL GIRLS – Fine!

EILEEN – Shut up, already, wouldja?

PEGGY - (After a long silence as the girls search the premises) Hey. Anyone up for truth or dare?

EILEEN - Here?

NANCY - Now?

PEGGY – Why not?

NANCY – Cause we’re surrounded by death.

PEGGY - It'll help pass the time and keep our minds off that as we look around.

LAURIE - Okay.

EILEEN - Sure.

NANCY - Whatever.

PEGGY – “Whatever”. Okay. Who's first?

LAURIE - I'll go.

PEGGY - Fine. Laurie. Truth or dare?

LAURIE - (Thinks about it) Truth.

PEGGY - Is it true my teacher Mrs. Kamisky found you kissing Billy Hicks under the stairwell before Science Class?

NANCY - Laurie!

EILEEN - Eww gross! Billy Hicks?

LAURIE - Well, I can't help it if boys find me attractive. As a matter of fact, there are *many* boys who like me. Many, many, many, *many* boys. Then, there's the other end of the spectrum, right Peggy?

PEGGY – Hey! Watch it, zit face!

LAURIE – Fine, so tell me, Peggy – Truth? (After a beat) or *dare*?

EILEEN and NANCY – (Together, singing a dramatic) Dun-dun-dunnn!

PEGGY – (Defiant) I've got *nothing* to hide.

LAURIE - Oh, no? What about Steeve? (PEGGY becomes nervous)

PEGGY – What? You wouldn't.

EILEEN - Claire's brother?

NANCY - Oooh, what about him?

PEGGY - Dare.

LAURIE - Someone's got a crush on him.

LAURIE - Dare.

EILEEN - But Steve's seven years older.

NANCY - He's ancient!

PEGGY - Dare! Dare! Dare, already! (Suddenly there is a sound effect of breaking water balloons being hurled at the group. The girls ALL scatter off stage saying the following lines)

PEGGY - Incoming!

EILEEN - Watch out!

NANCY - Run!

LAURIE - Not the hair! Not the hair! (CLAIRE and MARY enter onto the stage, each carrying a water balloon. CLAIRE also has a cooler with her. They laugh as they throw them off stage after the girls. LAURIE gets hit with one offstage) Oh, no!

CLAIRE - Oooh! Got one of them.

MARY - Which one was it? (The GIRLS ALL slowly return in this order: EILEEN, NANCY, a laughing PEGGY and LAURIE, who now has totally wet hair)

LAURIE - It's not funny, Peggy!

PEGGY - It is from where I'm standing!

EILEEN - Claire, that was a crappy thing to do!

CLAIRE - C'mon. Where's your spirit of fun and adventure?

NANCY - There's nothing fun or adventurous about ambushing people.

CLAIRE - You're still upset about the basketball in the face thingy, huh?

NANCY – (Showing CLAIRE her braces) Yes! (NANCY approaches CLAIRE ready to fight)

EILEEN - (Pulls NANCY away) All right, all right. That's enough. We've gotta get back to finding Sister.

CLAIRE and MARY – (Simultaneously) Again?

MARY - That friggin' cat sure does get out a lot.

LAURIE - So, Claire. How's Steve? Heard from him lately? (PEGGY steams as NANCY and EILEEN chuckle. CLAIRE and MARY have no idea what the joke is)

MATTHEW – (Offstage) Peggy! Hey! Peggy! (Almost singing out to her) Oh Peggy!

PEGGY - (To the girls) Oh, no. Just keep walking girls. Just KEEP walking.

CLAIRE – Look, Peggy. It's your boyfriend, Matthew!

MATTHEW – (Offstage) Hey, Peggy! Wait up!

PEGGY – (To CLAIRE) He is NOT my boyfriend. He's at least two years younger than me, for crying out loud. (The others giggle) It's NOT funny!

LAURIE – (Mocking) It is from where *I'm* standing.

EILEEN – So why you so afraid of him?

PEGGY – I'm not afraid of him. I just don't want anyone to see me with him. They might think we're going out or something.

LAURIE – So you're *not* afraid of him.

PEGGY – *Absolutely* not!

MATTHEW – There you are, Peggy!

PEGGY – Quick. Somebody hide me. (Jumps behind all the girls. MATTHEW stops and looks at them)

MATTHEW – Uh, didn't I just see Peggy standing here with you girls?

PEGGY – (From behind LAURIE and MARY) No. Nope. Nope. You certainly didn't.

(CLAIRE and MARY step away, revealing a crouching PEGGY cowering behind them. MATTHEW leans over)

MATTHEW – Oh, *there* you are, Peggy.

PEGGY – (Looking up at LAURIE) He can see me now, can't he? (LAURIE nods. PEGGY stands up straight and adjusts herself) Hello, Matthew.



MATTHEW - Your folks said you came here. How come?

ALL GIRLS - (Ad lib) Cat. Eileen's cat. Stupid Sister. Dumb cat, etc.

MATTHEW - Again?

LAURIE - What did you want with *Peggy*, Matthew?

MATTHEW - Oh, well, it's kind of personal, Laurie. Could I speak with Peggy? (Takes a beat as he looks at the girls) Um, alone? (ALL start to spread out, leaving PEGGY and MATTHEW alone on stage)

PEGGY - What is it, Matthew?

MATTHEW - I wanted to know if you had a partner for the summer science festival next month.

PEGGY - Matthew, we're in a graveyard. I've just been attacked by water balloons looking for a stupid cat. And, on top of all that, Eileen's leaving after the fireworks tonight. Couldn't you have picked a better time to ask?

MATTHEW - Well, we need to let Mrs. Kamisky know through the online system by Monday.

PEGGY - Why they let kids from different grades work together on these summer projects, I'll never understand.

MATTHEW - Well, I'm glad because there's no one I'd rather work with than you, Peggy. (Smiles) You're brilliant! (ALL the girls giggle, overhearing)

PEGGY - "Brilliant"? Matthew, nobody says "brilliant" anymore. Smart. I'm just smart. (To those overhearing she emphasizes) Really, really smart.

LAURIE - (Leaning in) Humble, too. (The GIRLS giggle)

PEGGY - Shut up. (To MATTHEW) Oh, all right. I'll think about it and let you know tomorrow, okay?

MATTHEW - Okay, great! Thanks, Peggy! You're bril-- I mean, awesome! (Runs off. ALL return. Loud thunder is heard)

PEGGY - Oooh, thunder.

NANCY - I really think it's just the guys over at the park testing out the fireworks. (It begins to downpour) Crap. Perhaps not.

LAURIE - My hair!

PEGGY - Never mind your stupid hair! Let's get out of here!

EILEEN - Sister! I've got to find her! She hates the rain!

CLAIRE - Then tell her to stay indoors from now on, why dontcha? (All of a sudden, Eileen hears her cat, Sister, meow)

EILEEN - Sister. That's Sister! It's coming from over there.

PEGGY - Come on! Let's go! (LIGHTS DIM as the thunder and rain continues. Scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 6)

### **Act 1, Scene 6 - The Millborough Sewer System – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP as the GIRLS enter the sewer through an unseen large steel door. There is a loud sound effect of a door closing shut several times and a constant sound effect of dripping water. EILEEN enters first as she walks down some steps into a large cavernous area located under the cemetery. NANCY, PEGGY, MARY and CLAIRE all follow. CLAIRE still carries her small cooler pouch from her bike that has the push-up pops in it)

MARY - What is this place?

PEGGY - We're in the entrance to the sewer which runs under the graveyard.

MARY - Where does it go?

PEGGY -It travels underneath Millborough Bay. (All of a sudden, the sound of a big door closing shut. LAURIE then enters with a rusted door handle in her hand)

PEGGY - Laurie! What's that?

LAURIE - It just came off in my hand.

EILEEN - It's the door handle! (The GIRLS all rush to check the door, which is locked shut)

PEGGY – You idiot!

CLAIRE - What's the matter with you, Laurie?

MARY - Now we're stuck in here!

LAURIE - It wasn't my fault!

EILEEN, MARY, and NANCY - (Call out) Help! Help! Anyone!

PEGGY - Save it, guys. There's nobody around, remember? We're underground in the middle of the graveyard.

CLAIRE - This is too creepy for words.

PEGGY – Dank, murky, spooky, sinister, ominous, gloomy, foreboding...shall I go on?

CLAIRE – I hate you.

NANCY - Come on, Claire. (Mocking) Where's your spirit of fun and adventure?

CLAIRE - Not funny, Nancy! This totally sucks!

MARY - Peggy, your dad works for the Water Treatment Plant in town, doesn't he?

PEGGY - Uh-huh. He actually brought some of us here from school once before for a field trip.

CLAIRE – (Sarcastic) What? Was the museum *closed*, or something?

PEGGY - No. It was when they asked our parents to show us where they work. It was actually pretty interesting.

LAURIE - It was gross.

PEGGY - No it wasn't.

MARY - Well, since this door is closed, and nobody can hear us, is there another way out of here?

PEGGY - I think so. The water comes in through the large drain located above our heads and then fills the tunnel.

CLAIRE - (Looking up) Up there?

PEGGY - Yeah. It flows for miles under the city and travels out into the bay.

MARY - Wait a minute! Are you saying we're gonna be swimming in raw sewerage?

CLAIRE - Eww! Gross!

PEGGY – I'm afraid it's worse than that.

EILEEN - How come?

PEGGY - It's raining, and if it's a heavy downpour the tunnel will flood from the rain within the next hour or so.

NANCY - Well, maybe it'll just be a light mist? (The sound of the rain intensifies) Crap. Perhaps not.

PEGGY - You *really* need to stop talking, Nancy.

CLAIRE - Anybody got a cell phone? (They ALL pull out their cell phones and start moving around trying to get a signal. They check their phones for displayed messages)

MARY - "No signal found".

NANCY - "No service".

LAURIE - "Not in service area".

CLAIRE - "Top Up Now"?

EILEEN - "Finding signal". (To the others) Well, at least it's trying.

PEGGY - Mine's no good, either. Can anybody text out? (MARY tries)

MARY - Nope. Mine says "feature isn't working".

PEGGY – GPS? Anybody? (ALL shake their heads) Crap.

EILEEN - So, I guess we have to find another way out.

CLAIRE - But how far do we have to walk?

LAURIE - My hair is going to look horrible!

PEGGY - Enough about your hair you, you, you mop!

NANCY - This is gonna be killer on my acne.

CLAIRE - You should be more concerned about that wire in your mouth rusting.

EILEEN – Shut up! I've still gotta find Sister. She's down here. I can feel it.

MARY - Who are you? The "cat psychic"? Actually, I think it's kind of cool down here.

LAURIE - Yes. I'm freezing.

MARY - No. I mean I like it. Kind of got that "goth" feel to it, know what I mean?

EILEEN - I *never* know what you mean, Mary.

MARY - It's dark, cold, damp, like a dungeon. (Beat) Probably filled with rats, spiders and other vermin. (Beat, smiles) Way cool.

CLAIRE – (To PEGGY) So is this where all the yucky stuff travels?

PEGGY - No. I just told you. The water is disinfected before it gets pumped out into to the water. The water that comes through here has already been "cleaned". But it travels about nine miles in order to get to the outfall tunnel.

MARY - I suppose you think we all understood what you just said, right?

NANCY - What about the rain?

PEGGY - Yeah, that passes through here, as well. (Points up to an unseen grate above their heads) Look up there. (ALL the GIRLS look)

CLAIRE - What's that?

PEGGY - The water builds up *outside* then travels down in here into a trap, which then releases way down in the tunnel. It'll finally flow out into the bay.

EILEEN - Your dad told you this?

LAURIE - Yeah. Our dad said that the tunnel was made by boring through solid rock more than a hundred feet below the ocean floor.

EILEEN - We're not that far down now.

PEGGY - No, but the further you get into the tunnel, pretty soon you will be.

MARY - Wait a minute. Peggy: are you saying it's almost ten miles to the next nearest exit?

CLAIRE - And we gotta walk underwater to get there?

PEGGY - No. We're in the diffuser tunnel.

MARY – The diffu...the what?

CLAIRE - What the heck is that?

PEGGY - We're in around the tunnel's last mile and a half, which includes about forty or fifty separate release points known as "diffusers."

MARY - What's a release point?

CLAIRE - What's a diffuser? Talk English, already!

MARY – Or at least American.

PEGGY - They're the same things, you dorks! It's just how the water gets let out into Millborough Bay more evenly. What we have to get to is the outfall shaft. We should be close to it.

EILEEN - What if it's closed up, too?

PEGGY - Let's just hope that it isn't. See, that's the bad thing. That water release thingy I mentioned? Well, it flows through here every couple of hours...and it *floods* the entire tunnel. (LIGHTS DIM as the flowing water becomes louder. Scene TRANSITIONS to Act 1, Scene 7)

**Act 1, Scene 7 – Further Down the Sewer Tunnel – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP as the GIRLS are seen walking down the tunnel. EILEEN is calling for her cat)

EILEEN - Sister! Sister! Here kitty! Here kitty!

CLAIRE - (Sarcastic) Here kitty...you lousy freakin' mangy little fur ball.

NANCY - Stop it, Claire.

CLAIRE - (Mocking) "Stop it, Claire". (Whining) Seems like we've been walking forever.

PEGGY - You're exaggerating.

CLAIRE - Then how long HAS it been?

PEGGY – Twenty minutes.

CLAIRE – (After a beat) Seems longer. Besides, I've got A.D.D.

NANCY - What?

PEGGY - "Attention Deficit Disorder"? What's *that* got to do with anything?

CLAIRE - (After a beat) Nothing.

MARY - She uses that as an excuse for everything. Kept her out of Math class for almost half the year.

CLAIRE - (Whining) I'm hungry. Can't we stop for a minute?

PEGGY - (Impatient) No. We've got to stay ahead of the water.

LAURIE - (Listening) Wait a sec. I don't hear it anymore.

NANCY - What?

LAURIE - The rain. I don't hear the rain anymore.

NANCY - Maybe it stopped. (Rumbling sound heard) Crap.

ALL GIRLS - Perhaps not.

PEGGY – No, wait. (Listening closer) That's just thunder. Laurie's right. The rain has stopped. Maybe the storm has moved off. (Deciding) All right. Everybody rest for a minute. Eileen (EILEEN comes up to PEGGY) why don't you run up and see what's ahead?

LAURIE - I'll go, too!

PEGGY - No. You stay with me. (Concerned for her sister, but doesn't want her to know it) Eileen's the jock and can move faster than the rest of us. If she finds another exit, she can come back quick and let the rest of us know. You'll just, uh, slow her up.

LAURIE - I will not.

PEGGY - Laurie, you stay with me. Understand? (LAURIE nods)

EILEEN - All right, all right. I'll go. At least I won't have to listen to you two fight all the time. (Runs off)

(LAURIE sits down next to NANCY. MARY and CLAIRE sit next to each other. PEGGY tries her cell phone again. CLAIRE opens up her cooler and takes out a push up pop)

LAURIE - What's that? Is that a box of push up pops?

CLAIRE - (Putting the pop away) Uh, maybe?

LAURIE - Can you share?

CLAIRE - No. They're mine!

LAURIE - Figures. (Beat, then to NANCY) We'd be further along if we didn't have to wait for *her* to catch up all the time. (CLAIRE overhears the remark and stands up, putting the cooler down. In retaliation, she reaches along the wall and pulls out a wet worm she finds crawling along. She places the worm into LAURIE's hair)

LAURIE - What did you do? (Feels the worm) Did you put something in my hair?

CLAIRE - Just a worm.

LAURIE - (Screaming, jumping up and down) Eeek! Get it out! Get it out! (As LAURIE flails about, she starts messing up her hairdo, making her look pretty ridiculous. NANCY pulls the worm out of her hair and throws it away) Is it out?

NANCY - It's out. Claire. That was a crappy thing to do. How would you feel if somebody did that to you?

CLAIRE - Mary. (MARY without missing a beat goes along the wall, pulls out another worm and places it into CLAIRE's hair. CLAIRE, without hesitation, takes the worm out of her hair and eats it. All the GIRLS except MARY are repulsed at the sight) Any questions?

NANCY - I think I'm going to throw up.

CLAIRE - Hey! In other countries it's a delicacy.

NANCY - Yeah? Well in America we call it "bait". Why do you have to be so, so...*you* all the time?

CLAIRE – What’s *that* supposed to mean?

PEGGY - Forget about it, Nancy. Some people are just not nice, that’s all.

CLAIRE – Stop it.

PEGGY – Year after year, all you do is give us crap. I don’t know why Mary hangs around you.

CLAIRE – (Becoming angry and upset) You shut up.

PEGGY – No! I won’t “shut up”. I’m sick of you. You have to be the meanest bitch in the whole town!

MARY - Cut it out!

PEGGY – (After a beat) What?

LAURIE – Oh, come on, Mary.

NANCY - You can't really be defending her, Mary. Are you?

MARY - You guys ain't so perfect, you know. Did it ever occur to you that maybe Claire's been picked on, too? Don't you think that maybe after years of being crapped on she'd decide to dish out as much as she's taken? I...

PEGGY – (Hearing something) Wait! Hold on a sec. I think I hear something up ahead.

LAURIE - Is it Eileen?

PEGGY - I don't know. Shhh. Let me listen. (A faint sound or voice is heard off in the distance)

PEGGY - Could be Eileen.

CLAIRE - Well who ELSE could it be? (CLAIRE picks up her cooler)

PEGGY - Nancy, run up and see if you can see anything. (NANCY runs ahead. She is heard stumbling over something)

LAURIE - Nancy! (THE GIRLS run to where NANCY is. NANCY has stumbled over a bag and has injured her right leg)

PEGGY - Nancy! Are you okay?

NANCY - My leg!

MARY - Here. Let me help you up.



LAURIE - Me, too. (MARY and LAURIE help NANCY to her feet as NANCY winces in pain)

MARY - Is it broken?

NANCY - I don't know. I've never had anything broken before.

CLAIRE - I have. Let me see. (SHE checks her ankle as PEGGY goes over and inspects the bags) It's okay. Just twisted, looks like.

PEGGY - Oh no.

MARY - What's in the bags, Peggy?

PEGGY - There's four bags of money here, and they're all wrapped in some sort of waterproof clear plastic. And I think I know where they came from.

ALL GIRLS - Where?

PEGGY - (Joking) The "Treasure of Monte Cristo". (She laughs. The girls ALL give PEGGY blank stares and shrugged shoulders) You know, like in the "Count of Monte Cristo"? " (More blank stares and shrugged shoulders from the girls) Seriously. Read a book sometime, wouldja please?

LAURIE - Stop joking, Peggy. Where'd the money come from?

PEGGY - Remember the bank robbery from a couple of years ago and how the robber disappeared and the money was never recovered?

ALL GIRLS - No.

PEGGY – (Sighs, exasperated) Anyway, there were six bags of cash taken.

MARY - But there's only four here.

PEGGY - Hmmm. Perhaps the robber was hiding the money down in the sewer and he comes back occasionally to get some of it? (Examines the bags) Looks like the clear plastic keeps the money dry. There's faded printing on the bag. I can't quite make out what it says, but the writing does look familiar.

LAURIE - To me, too.

PEGGY - (Still looking at the bags) I doubt that, Laurie.

LAURIE - How come?

PEGGY - Because I'm not sure you know how to read.

LAURIE – Nice. Fine. Forget it. (Walks away from PEGGY)

NANCY - I thought I heard Eileen calling for help.

CLAIRE - Oh great. Do you think that maybe there's somebody else down there with us? (Suddenly they ALL hear the sound of a cat screech and a huge metal thud)

PEGGY - Eileen?

NANCY and LAURIE - Eileen!! (They ALL call down the tunnel for EILEEN, but there's no response)

CLAIRE - Oh, no. Maybe the robber got her?

PEGGY - That's right, Claire. Keep thinking those positive thoughts. There's no chance that the robber's down here. It's been two years. He's probably long gone by now.

CLAIRE - Oh yeah? How do *you* know? How do you know he hasn't come back for the rest of his loot?

PEGGY - His "loot"? What are you? A character from a cop show in the seventies? He hasn't come back.

NANCY - I hate to say it, but Claire does have a point, Peggy. How do you know?

PEGGY - (Long pause as she considers) I - I don't. (Suddenly they ALL hear a humming sound)

CLAIRE - What's that?

LAURIE - It sounds like your phone, Peggy. (PEGGY pulls out her cell phone, which is humming)

MARY - You got a signal?

PEGGY - It's faint. (Opens it up and speaks into it) Hello? (Beat) Hello? (To the GIRLS) Nothing there. (Looks at the phone) Oh. I have a text message, though.

NANCY - What's it say? (The GIRLS all gather around as PEGGY retrieves the text message)

MARY - Yeah, what?

PEGGY - It says, "I got Eileen. Now I'm coming for you." (PEGGY looks up) The phone's dead.

CLAIRE – (Frightened) And so are we. (LIGHTS DIM)

**Blackout.**

**End of Act One.**

**Act 2, Scene 1 – Further Down the Sewer Tunnel – Moments Later**

(The dripping sound effect continues at LIGHTS UP. The GIRLS are ALL seen eating some of CLAIRE's push up pops. LAURIE's hair is incredibly wild and frizzy now. NANCY is nursing her injured leg. PEGGY paces back and forth as they ALL discuss what to do next)

PEGGY – It's been almost an hour. Why don't we go back to the door? Maybe Eileen got out, found help, and is heading back that way?

MARY - Head back?

CLAIRE - No way! I don't have the energy.

PEGGY - That figures. (CLAIRE responds with an unkind look)

LAURIE - Peggy, you know we can't go back.

PEGGY - Why?

LAURIE - Because we wouldn't have enough time before the next flood comes through the tunnel.

PEGGY – (Sarcastic) Wow. That had some intelligent thought in that, Laurie. I'm *stunned*.

LAURIE – (Sarcastic right back to her) I *do* make it to the library every once in awhile. (To the GIRLS) Anybody got a spare rubber band? I want to tie my hair back.

MARY - Here. (Hands her one from her pocket) I'm for going back.

CLAIRE - Why?

MARY - If we go forward we might run into the robber who killed Eileen.

PEGGY - We don't know that there's any robber.

CLAIRE - (Whining) But what about the message?

PEGGY - Could have been Eileen. The message said "I'm coming for you".

CLAIRE - Uh-uh! It said "I GOT Eileen. NOW I'm coming for YOU."

PEGGY - Oh yeah.

CLAIRE - That means the killer got Eileen and was going to get the rest of us.

PEGGY - That's crazy, Claire. If the guy is a two bit bank robber, we can assume he's not a killer.

CLAIRE - Four dollar words. My mom always say it's stupid to assume. Assumptions can get you killed!

PEGGY - Ah, go back to feedin' your freakin' fat face, lardass. (CLAIRE slowly builds into a rage, then instead of getting angry, she cries. MARY comes up and hugs CLAIRE)

MARY - Hey! That wasn't nice.

CLAIRE - (Whining) I've got a condition.

PEGGY – Get off it, Claire. ADD doesn't make you gain weight.

CLAIRE - Stop it!

NANCY - Leave her alone.

PEGGY - Thanks, Nancy.

NANCY - I meant you. *You* stop it, Peggy.

LAURIE - Yeah. Leave Claire alone.

PEGGY - You? You're defending her? You're the one who said we'd be further along without her.

LAURIE - I know, and that was mean, too. I'm sorry, Claire. It wasn't your fault.

CLAIRE - (Timid) That...that's okay.

PEGGY – (Incredulous) I simply do not believe you guys. I can't believe you're sticking up for her.

CLAIRE - You wanna know why I do the stuff I do? Why don't you guys think back to when you all used to make fun of me in third grade. Do you think that was being nice?

PEGGY - We were just kids then.

MARY - Easy for you to say.

PEGGY - Why's that?

MARY – Because you picked on her more than anyone.

PEGGY - I did not. (After a beat, considers) Did I?

CLAIRE - For years you guys have constantly called me fat and stupid because I was always failing in school.

MARY - I didn't.

CLAIRE - (Subtle) I know. I'm not lying. I do have a glandular problem. I have Diabetes. I do have a learning disorder.

PEGGY - You can get help, you know. You don't have to take your problems out on the rest of us.

CLAIRE - I do get help for my ADD, and for my weight, but you know, it doesn't go away overnight. Kids like you never understand. Both are out of my control. (ALL GIRLS look at PEGGY)

PEGGY - Well, I didn't know. Maybe we would have understood if you had just talked about it.

NANCY - It's not always that easy to talk with you, Peg.

PEGGY - And what's that supposed to mean?

MARY - She means cause you think you're always smarter than the rest of us.

PEGGY - That's crap. Besides, it was all a long time ago when we were just kids, so Claire should just get over it.

LAURIE - You've always been bossy, Peggy.

PEGGY - I am *not* bossy.

LAURIE - Yes. You are. (PEGGY is taken aback) And now that I think about it, it was you in third grade.

PEGGY - What was me?

LAURIE - It was you then who was just as mean as Claire is now. So, maybe you're to blame for how she is today.

PEGGY - Oh, you can't blame how she is on me.

LAURIE - Can too.

PEGGY - Can *not*!

LAURIE - Can too! And I think I'll tell her.

PEGGY - You keep quiet!

CLAIRE - Tell me what?

LAURIE - Peggy's got a crush on Steven.

CLAIRE - My brother?

PEGGY - (Grabbing LAURIE) You lousy little! I'm gonna...

(The TWO GIRLS grab each other and throw one another down to the ground to fight. CLAIRE and MARY cheer the fight on)

CLAIRE and MARY - Fight! Fight! Fight!

NANCY - (Struggling to stand up) Don't do that! Stop it! Stop them! (MARY and CLAIRE separate LAURIE and PEGGY)

PEGGY - I can't believe you told her!

LAURIE - I'm glad! And I hope she tells him so he can cut you down to size.

PEGGY - You rotten...I hope you die! (MARY holds PEGGY back as CLAIRE hears Peggy's threat and begins to cry. The GIRLS ALL stop and turn to CLAIRE)

NANCY - What's wrong, Claire?

CLAIRE - My brother. He's been called. His unit shipped out last month. I won't see him for two years. What if he gets killed?

NANCY - Oh, Claire. I'm sorry.

LAURIE - (To PEGGY) See what you've done?

PEGGY - What I've done? What are you talking about? (They argue again as MARY bursts in)

MARY - Stop it, everyone! You guys all argue more than my parents! You're supposed to be friends. Try to act like it!

LAURIE - Is that why you go with the dark, moody "goth" clothes? Why do you like this, this..."Blair Witch" look?

MARY - (Long pause, then firmly) I dress the way I feel. When you live in my house, and nobody talks, nobody likes each other, nobody...feels...anything...for anybody. Yeah, I dress how I...feel.

LAURIE - (Long pause, then firmly) Good reasons. (A trickling water sound is heard)

CLAIRE - (Listening) What's that? Is that the rain again?

PEGGY - (Listening) Could be.

NANCY - (Listening) I don't think so. (Rain intensifies) Rats!

PEGGY - Well, you're nothing if not consistent, Nancy. Okay. We've got to get moving again. I don't know if this is gonna be the "big flood" or not.

LAURIE - Where's it coming from?

PEGGY - The rain build up. It may be starting to enter in and flood the outer tunnel, making its way down to us.

CLAIRE - What do we do now? (PEGGY looks at CLAIRE) Please?

PEGGY - (Unsure of everything) I don't know. I really don't.

CLAIRE - (Beat, then again even more sincerely) Please?

PEGGY – Well, I guess the only thing we can do is to keep moving forward (rain intensifying) and quickly.

CLAIRE - What about the killer? I mean, robber?

PEGGY - All right. IF the robber is there, I'll hold him off giving you all a chance to escape. (PEGGY pauses to take a good long look at the GIRLS, who look at each other first) Um, does that sound okay to you guys? (They once more acknowledge, for the moment, that Peggy should act as their unofficial leader once more)

CLAIRE – Sure. I'm in.

NANCY - Me, too. We stick together.

MARY – Let's do this. (Looking back as the rain continues) Like I got a choice.

PEGGY - Laurie? (Beat, then smiling) Sis?

LAURIE - Oh, let's just go.

PEGGY - Great. (A faint squeaking sound is heard, and suddenly grows louder with more intensity)

PEGGY - Oh, no!

CLAIRE - Now what?

NANCY - Is that what I think it is, Peggy?

PEGGY - Yes. Rats!

CLAIRE - Rats?

PEGGY - Rats!

MARY - Cool!

CLAIRE - (Screams) Rats! Ahhhh! No! Not rats!

MARY - What are you freaking out about? You just ate a worm!

CLAIRE - No I didn't. (She pulls the worm out of a pocket) I just pretended. Oops. Wait a minute. (Pulls out the other half of the worm from the pocket) It split in two.

NANCY - That is so gross.

PEGGY - The rats are running from the water. Everybody up against the wall! (MARY, NANCY and LAURIE get up against the wall. CLAIRE drops to the ground, defeated and scared out of her wits)

CLAIRE - I can't! I can't!

PEGGY - (Grabs CLAIRE and assures HER) Claire. It'll be okay. They're not interested in us. They're trying to escape the flood. They'll run right past us and show us the way out.

CLAIRE - What if they run to a dead end?

PEGGY - They won't! (Gets up against the wall and extends her hand) Think positive! (Reaching for CLAIRE) Trust me! (CLAIRE gets up and gets pulled to the wall by PEGGY. The girls lean hard against the wall as the sound of the rats increases and the lights fade. During a quick blackout a large steel door gets put into place to be moved onto stage left as Scene TRANSITIONS to Act 2, Scene 2)

### **Act 2, Scene 2 –Sewer Tunnel – Same Location, Moments Later**

(The sound of the rats fades out at LIGHTS UP. The GIRLS ALL come forward from the wall. The sound of running water is heard)

PEGGY - Girls. Take a money bag and let's go.

CLAIRE - What about my cooler?

PEGGY - Money bag or cooler. You decide.

CLAIRE - (Looks back at the cooler and money bags twice)

NANCY - Just consider the rats missed the money bags, but they did run right over the cooler.

CLAIRE - Money bag. (THE GIRLS walk forward a little bit as they get to a door. PEGGY walks up to it and tries to open it)

PEGGY - It's locked. (An offstage male voice is heard. It is MATTHEW)

MATTHEW – (Offstage) Quick! You're in the outfall shaft! Get outta there! (The door starts to open. PEGGY turns to the frightened GIRLS as the sound of water intensifies)

CLAIRE - Peggy, don't! It's the robber!

NANCY - Are you sure?



CLAIRE - Who else would be down here?

PEGGY - All right. You girls ready? (PEGGY opens the door and charges in. She makes all sorts of noises as the GIRLS follow, MARY and CLAIRE helping NANCY through. But the door unexpectedly closes before LAURIE gets there. She turns to see the water filling up)

LAURIE - Girls! Help! The water! Open the door! Help! Help! (LIGHTS DIM as the sound of rushing water continues. The scene TRANSITIONS to Act 2, Scene 3)

### **Act 2, Scene 3 – Room on the Other Side of the Door – Moments Later**

(LIGHTS UP on a room that looks like a control room for the tunnel's operation. We hear the GIRLS ALL struggling with someone in a pig pile on the floor)

MATTHEW – Help! Help me!

PEGGY – (Still punching MATTHEW) Help! Help!

MARY - Get him off her, Claire!

CLAIRE - (Shouting) Listen here, mister! I've faced worms, rats and flooding waters today and I'm in no mood to see one of her friends hurt!

MATTHEW - Stop! Stop! I surrender!

ALL GIRLS - Matthew!! (They get up off the floor to reveal...MATTHEW in a fetal position, frightened out of his wits)

PEGGY - (Holds out her hand and helps MATTHEW up) How'd you get here! (NANCY is off to the side holding onto her ankle)

MATTHEW - I ran into EILEEN who told me to come here and wait for you while she went to get help.

PEGGY - (Looking around) Wait a minute. Where's Laurie? (LAURIE is heard from behind the door screaming)

LAURIE - Peggy! Peggy! Help me!

PEGGY - She's still down there! (PEGGY rushes to the door and opens it. She "dives" behind the door)

CLAIRE - What do we do?

MARY - We can't close the door.

NANCY - Rope. Get some rope. (CLAIRE and MATTHEW find some rope. MARY opens the door wider and they ALL throw the rope through)

MARY - Peggy! Grab onto the rope!

CLAIRE - Hurry! (A moment passes. EILEEN enters alone)

EILEEN - The police are on their way. Where is...? (CLAIRE and MATTHEW lose their grip on the rope and it disappears from view)

MARY - The rope!

MATTHEW - It's gone!

NANCY - Quick! Help them! (EILEEN sees MARY, MATTHEW and CLAIRE struggling. She takes off the butterfly belt and joins in to pull PEGGY out. PEGGY is clutching on tightly to a now soaked LAURIE, who is unconscious and not breathing, lying on her side)

EILEEN - What happened? (PEGGY rolls LAURIE over)

MARY - (Panting) Saved...by a butterfly belt?

PEGGY - Laurie, the things I go through for you. I swear if you ever make me...

NANCY - Peggy! (Points to LAURIE) I-I don't think she's breathing!

PEGGY - (Turns LAURIE over onto her back) Laurie! Don't you leave me, Laurie! Not now. Not ever!  
(Starts chest compressions and basic CPR)

CLAIRE - She'll be all right, Peggy.

MARY - Don't worry.

PEGGY - (Shouting at LAURIE) You stay with me, Laurie. Do you hear? You stay with me! I'm sorry for all the rotten things I said earlier. Don't you die! Don't you die on me! (Leans over closer to LAURIE's face) Do something! Do something to show me you're alive. (As if on cue, LAURIE spits up water all over PEGGY)

CLAIRE and MATTHEW - Ewww! Gross! (LAURIE coughs and rolls over as PEGGY just stares in awe)

MARY - (Laughing) Well, now she's gone and done it, huh Peggy?

PEGGY - (Holding LAURIE softly saying) It's all right. It's all right.

NANCY - (Laughing) So how about it, Peg? Your sister just puked all over you.

EILEEN - Yeah. You gonna get her back, or what? (There is a long pause as PEGGY holds her sister close, strokes her hair softly then says smiling) Maybe later. (LIGHTS DIM as the scene TRANSITIONS to Act 2, Scene 4)

**Act 2, Scene 4 - Millborough Park - Later That Evening**

(LIGHTS UP on a bare stage with several lawn chairs. We are in Millborough Park. All the GIRLS except LAURIE and EILEEN are gathered together and reviewing the day's events)

PEGGY - So, Eileen told me that Matthew sent the message. She called 911. The police, fire department and paramedics were all tied up with a fire across town. That's why it took them so long to get there.

CLAIRE - Where's Laurie now?

PEGGY - With my folks. The medics said she's fine. She should be here soon. Just getting cleaned up.  
(MATTHEW arrives)

MATTHEW - Hi girls!

MARY - Hey! It's our hero!

MATTHEW - Aww, shucks, girls.

PEGGY - Matthew, the money! What did the police say?

MATTHEW - They took it back to the bank. They had already caught the bank robber a while ago, but they never found the money.

NANCY - Ooh. Was there a reward?

MATTHEW - Oh, yeah. (Pulls a wad of cash out of his pocket and hands it to PEGGY) Here you go. (PEGGY grabs the money and counts it)

PEGGY - Seventy dollars? That's it?

MATTHEW - Your folks all took it. They all agreed that you should split seventy dollars between you girls. (Taking a ten dollar bill from PEGGY) Oh, and me.

PEGGY - (Annoyed, but laughing) Figures. All right. Who's first? (Passes out the money. EILEEN enters wearing a nice dress. She is with a tired but cleaned up LAURIE)

CLAIRE - Laurie!

MARY - Eileen! (The TWO get up and hug the other GIRLS. NANCY remains seated)

EILEEN - Hi.

LAURIE - Hi.

NANCY - I'd get up, but the doctor told me to stay off my foot for about a month.

PEGGY - (Gets up out of HER chair and offers it to LAURIE) Do you...wanna...sit here?

LAURIE - (Nods, smiles) Thanks. (PEGGY and LAURIE take a moment to look at one another, then hug each other close)

CLAIRE - (Weeping) It's so beautiful. I think I'm gonna cry. (ALL laugh)

MARY - Oh brother. (LAURIE sits down and PEGGY sits on the ground next to the chair and the two hold hands)

CLAIRE - (Pulls out a new box of push pops) Say! Anybody for a push pop? (Stands up and starts passing them out to everyone)

PEGGY - (Rises and speaks to CLAIRE) Claire. I'm sorry if I ever treated you bad. I really am.

CLAIRE - Don't worry about it. I'm sorry, too. (Hands her a push pop) Push pop?

PEGGY - Sure. (Unwraps it and starts to eat it) Say, this is good. What kind is it?

CLAIRE - Worm. (PEGGY quickly spits out the ice cream and everybody laughs, then slowly, so does she)

MATTHEW - Peggy! You are brilliant! (EVERYBODY laughs again)

PEGGY - That's awesome! And don't you forget it! (A rumbling sound is heard)

CLAIRE - Oh, no! Not again!

MARY - What is it?

EILEEN - Is it thunder?

NANCY - I think so. (Fireworks begin) Wow. Well, what do you know? (The GIRLS all settle down and begin to watch the fireworks in the sky in front of them. PEGGY sits back down with LAURIE and holds her hand again)

EILEEN – (To NANCY) Like I said, Nancy. I think I'm gonna miss this the most.

PEGGY - Laurie, I've been thinking.

LAURIE - What about?

PEGGY - I'll make you a deal. I won't put a mural on our wall if you don't put up a Venus statue.

LAURIE - Okay. (Long beat) What about Mercury?

PEGGY - No way.

EILEEN - Yep. I'm definitely gonna miss this the most. (Fireworks continue as LIGHTS DIM)

**Blackout**

**The End.**