

DAY 2 DRAMA

Characters: ODA GRIM, YOUNG PROF, PROFESSOR, AVERY, ROBO, QUEEN JOSEPHINE

(Theme music beginning)

(Scene begins with the stage lights full and YOUNG PROF sitting on a stool and asleep at his lab desk. It's the next morning and he was up all night working on a solution to his time machine problem. Then AVERY enters carrying a small package and a cup of coffee. ROBO is standing motionless near the counter with his head down.)

AVERY: *(from backstage)* Why are the lights on? *(as she emerges from backstage)* Am I late? *(she looks at her watch and checks to make sure it's still working, then she sees YOUNG PROF asleep at his desk; she continues with a loud whisper)* Oh . . . that explains it. *(she sets her package and coffee down, then walks toward his desk)*

(YOUNG PROF stirs a bit but remains sleeping.)

AVERY: Poor thing . . . probably up all night. Hmm . . . I don't want to wake him, but I've got so much to do . . . *(pause)* . . . I'll just have to be reeeally quiet. *(then she tries to tear open the package, but can't)* Hmm . . . I need scissors. *(she stoops behind her desk to look for a pair but doesn't find any)* I'll bet there are some on his desk. *(careful not to make a sound, she starts to walk toward the PROFESSOR'S desk)* Shhh . . . *(she winces as the floor creaks [sfx] with her next 3 steps; then it creaks once more before she steps and she gives the sound booth a dirty look)*

(YOUNG PROF stirs again, but remains sleeping.)

AVERY: Wow . . . he's really out. *(she grabs the scissors and walks back to the counter, taking a wide berth around the squeaky area; she opens the package and retrieves what's inside)* Yes, the final piece of the puzzle! *(then she walks over to ROBO and switches him on)* Okay, Robo. Time to install your voice box. *(as she goes to work installing the small piece of equipment)* There . . . all done. *(to ROBO)* Okay, now, here's the deal. Your voice box is in, but I'm not going to turn it on yet because we have to be really, really quiet. You see, the Professor is sleeping over there and we don't want to wake him up. Do you understand?

(ROBO shakes his head no.)

AVERY: You don't?

(ROBO nods his head yes.)

AVERY: You do?

(ROBO shakes his head no.)

AVERY: Well, which is it? Do you or don't you??

(Then suddenly, ODA GRIM, disguised as the new janitor, enters wearing headphones and pushing a vacuum cleaner. AVERY quickly runs over to stop her.)

ODA GRIM: *(she stops the sweeper and removes her headphones)* What's the problem??

AVERY: *(loud whisper)* Shhhh!! The Professor is sleeping!!

ODA GRIM: Sleeping?! At this hour??

(Curious, ROBO sees the headphones, tries them on, then starts "moving" to the music.)

AVERY: Shhh! *(with her index finger to her lips)* Yes. He was up all night working.

ODA GRIM: *(curious)* Was he now. On what, I wonder . . . *(as she takes a couple steps toward YOUNG PROF)* Wait a second . . . that's the kid that was here yesterday.

AVERY: Yeah . . .

ODA GRIM: But you called him, "the Professor."

(ODA GRIM sees ROBO with her headphones and takes them back. Then ROBO walks over to the sleeping YOUNG PROF to get a closer look.)

AVERY: *(realizing her mistake, she quickly back peddles)* I did? I mean, you're right. I did. You see, we call him "the Professor," too, because he's always wearing that silly lab coat.

ODA GRIM: Really? *(pause)* Say, where is the Professor anyway? The real Professor, I mean. I haven't seen him yet.

AVERY: Oh . . . he's around. He's just not quite himself right now. *(pause)* Why don't you come back later.

ODA GRIM: Oh, don't worry, sweetheart. I'll be back. I'll definitely . . . be back.

(ODA GRIM smiles, quickly scans the lab, and laughs to herself as she leaves. Meanwhile, ROBO is fascinated by the YOUNG PROF sleeping with his mouth wide open. He looks into his mouth, listens to his breathing sounds, then tries to close his mouth.)

AVERY: That was creepy. *(then she glances over to see ROBO with his hand on the YOUNG PROF'S jaw, trying to get it to stay closed)* Oh no!

YOUNG PROF: *(finally wakes up with a start)* Ahhhh!!

AVERY: Sorry, I didn't realize he was over here.

YOUNG PROF: That's okay. He just startled me, that's all. It's not everyday that you wake up with a robot staring you in the face.

AVERY: So you never made it home, huh?

YOUNG PROF: Nope . . . here all night. *(as he looks ROBO over)* Wow . . . he looks great. So you're finished with him?

AVERY: Yep. Just installed his voice box a couple minutes ago. Which reminds me. I need to turn it on. *(as she walks over to ROBO and works on the back of his neck)* Okay . . . let's hear you talk.

ROBO: *(mouths the pre-recorded words)* "What would you like me to say, Miss Avery?" *(a little girl's voice, [sfx])*

AVERY: Oooo . . . that won't do. *(as she makes another adjustment)* Okay, now . . . say something else.

ROBO: *(in a normal voice)* Something else.

YOUNG PROF: Much better.

AVERY: And what's your name?

ROBO: My name is . . . Mephibosheth *(pronounced "Meh-FIH-bo-sheth")*.

AVERY: What? Your name is not Mephibosheth. It's . . . Robo!

ROBO: My name is not Mephibosheth, it's Robo.

YOUNG PROF: Well, I'm pleased to meet you, Robo. And I can't wait to see what you can do.

ROBO: And I cannot wait to show you. I have many capabilities. *(as he slips and falls)*

AVERY: Oh, dear.

(AVERY and YOUNG PROF help ROBO back to his feet.)

ROBO: I do not understand this phrase, "Oh, dear." What does it mean?

AVERY: Oh, it's just an expression of concern. That's all.

ROBO: I will remember that.

YOUNG PROF: Well, I guess I should get back to work. *(then he looks at one of his watches)* Wow . . . is that right? 2:15? Oh, wait . . . wrong arm. *(then he checks his other watch)* That was Munich time!

AVERY: So how's it coming? Did you make any progress?

YOUNG PROF: *(frustrated)* Not yet. I've gone over my calculations a million times, but I still can't figure out what went wrong!

(Upon hearing that, ROBO walks over to the blackboard to look at the Professor's calculations.)

AVERY: That's not good. What if you can't change back?

YOUNG PROF: You mean, what if I'm stuck like this—a 60-year-old man in a 12-year-old body? Well . . . in a way it would be nice to live my life over again, but, no . . . I will not accept defeat. I don't care how long it takes. Failure is not an option!

AVERY: Well, I'm sure you're hungry. Can I get you some breakfast?

YOUNG PROF: Not until I figure this out. *(as he stares at the blackboard)*

ROBO: *(pointing to a calculation)* That minus sign is incorrect.

YOUNG PROF: What?

ROBO: It should be a plus sign.

YOUNG PROF: *(a bit condescending)* Ha . . . I don't think so . . . I mean *(pause as he looks at his calculations)* . . . wait a minute. You may have something there. *(pause)* You know what? That may be it!

AVERY: Really??

YOUNG PROF: Yes! I think it is! I really think that's it! How could I have made such a clumsy error? *(as he grabs a piece of chalk and corrects his error)* Good work, Robo! So, let's see . . . that would change the input sequence to . . . *(as he scribbles down some numbers on an index card)* . . . this! *(he hands it to AVERY)*

AVERY: What? What do you want me to do?

YOUNG PROF: Simple. I'm going to get into the Machine. And as soon as the door is closed, you input that code sequence.

AVERY: Are you sure this is going to work? I mean, what if something goes wrong again? What if you come out even younger??

YOUNG PROF: *(joking)* Then you'll have to fetch some diapers and a sippy cup! *(as he steps inside the Machine and closes the door)*

AVERY: This better work! That's all I can say!

(AVERY types the code into the Machine computer, which starts a series of light and sound effects [sfx]. When the sounds stop, the PROFESSOR emerges, amidst a cloud of smoke, through the door of the Machine.)

PROFESSOR: Well? How do I look?

ROBO: You look like an old man.

AVERY: Robo!

PROFESSOR: Then it worked!

AVERY: I'm so relieved! So . . . what does this mean? The Machine works now?

PROFESSOR: Possibly. I'll have to try it to find out. But, c'mon, let's have some breakfast! I'm starving!

AVERY: You want me to come along?

PROFESSOR: Absolutely! I want to hear how things are going with your history paper!

AVERY: Oh, that . . . thanks for reminding me. *(pause)*
Hey, Robo . . . wanna join us? We're going to the café.
(as she and PROFESSOR are exiting the stage)

ROBO: Café . . . a small, informal establishment serving light meals, baked goods, and expensive coffee. Yes . . . I would like to see this.

(PROFESSOR and AVERY exit the stage with ROBO not far behind. As soon as they're out of sight, ODA GRIM steps out from the shadows. She witnessed the whole thing.)

ODA GRIM: *(as she walks over to the Machine)* So, what exactly do we have here, Professor Henry Haas? Something very special . . . that's for sure! A machine that can change someone into a young boy and then change them back. Just think of all the mischief I could do with something like this! *(Suddenly, ODA GRIM hears AVERY and ROBO returning from the café)* Uh-oh! Here comes someone.

(ODA GRIM ducks out of sight as AVERY and ROBO enter the lab.)

AVERY: You can't insult people like that.

ROBO: What kind of people can I insult?

AVERY: No, I mean you can't talk to people that way.

ROBO: Why not? I was just stating a fact.

AVERY: Because it hurts their feelings.

ROBO: Feelings . . . a very difficult concept.

ODA GRIM: *(as she steps out into the open)* Oh, hi! I was just doing some cleaning. That's some robot you have there. He'll probably have my job someday.

AVERY: Oh, that reminds me. I meant to say something earlier, but we don't need a janitor any longer. We've decided to do our own cleaning.

ODA GRIM: Really? Did I do something wrong?

AVERY: Oh no . . . it's not that at all. It's just that . . . well . . . we've got things in here that are extremely fragile . . . and even hazardous.

(ROBO accidentally knocks something over.)

AVERY: You understand, of course.

ODA GRIM: But what if I'm careful? And when I say careful, I mean like, really, REALLY careful.

AVERY: I'm sorry . . . the decision has been made.

(ROBO sees AVERY'S backpack and starts to examine its contents.)

ODA GRIM: *(to herself)* Rats! Now, what am I going to do? I'll have to come up with Plan B.

AVERY: Excuse me?

ODA GRIM: Nevermind. I was just talking to myself.

(ODA GRIM exits.)

AVERY: Hmm . . . that is one strange janitor. *(as she watches ODA leave and then walks over to where she was hiding to see if everything is okay)*

(Then the PROFESSOR enters with a carryout bag and a cup of coffee.)

PROFESSOR: So, what happened? Why'd you leave the café?

AVERY: Let's just say that Robo doesn't have the social skills to be out in public just yet.

PROFESSOR: Well . . . give it some time. He'll learn.

ROBO: Yes . . . I am learning things all the time. Who's Philip? *(as he holds up a letter that he pulled out of AVERY'S backpack)*

AVERY: *(embarrassed)* Give me that! You know, I think it's time for your nap!

ROBO: Oh dear.

AVERY: *(she grabs the letter and promptly puts him in sleep mode)* There. *(to PROFESSOR)* Now we can talk.

PROFESSOR: Okay, tell me about your paper. Did you make a decision yet?

(ROBO starts to snore.)

AVERY: Wait a second. *(as she hits ROBO on the back to stop his snoring)* Sorry about that. So . . . yes, I took your advice. After yesterday, I'm convinced that Jesus is the most important person in history. So that's who I'm going to write about.

PROFESSOR: I think that's a great choice.

AVERY: Yes, but will my professor think so?

PROFESSOR: There's no reason why he shouldn't. Jesus was a real person . . . just like Thomas Edison, Abraham Lincoln, or Alexander the Great.

AVERY: I know. It's just that you can talk about those men and no one objects. But mention the name Jesus and, well . . . it can cause a stir.

PROFESSOR: I suspect it's because Jesus claimed to be God, which means he has the authority to tell us what to do. And many people don't like that.

AVERY: But some people don't believe he was God. They think he was just a good moral teacher.

PROFESSOR: I know, and that makes no sense at all.

AVERY: Why do you say that?

PROFESSOR: Because someone who was just a good moral teacher wouldn't claim to be God, wouldn't accept people worshipping him, and wouldn't tell them that he was the only way to heaven.

AVERY: Hmm . . . that's a really good point.

PROFESSOR: No . . . there are only 3 options. He was either lying, or he was crazy, or he really was and is the Son of God. And if you've read the Bible at all, you know he wasn't a liar and he wasn't crazy.

AVERY: (*pondering*) So . . . he must have been telling the truth. (*pause*) Well, anyway . . . I've made up my mind. Even if it affects my grade, I just want to learn more about him.

PROFESSOR: Good. Well, you better get to work.

AVERY: I know.

PROFESSOR: No, I mean on your report. Take the rest of the day off.

AVERY: But, Professor . . .

PROFESSOR: I mean it. I want you to do a really good job on that paper. You do have a Bible, don't you?

AVERY: Yeah, I think so.

PROFESSOR: Hmm . . . you think so. Well, that's a discussion for another day. In the meantime, here . . . take this one. (*as he hands her a Bible taken from the bookshelf*). Start with the Gospels . . . you know . . . Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

AVERY: (*uncertain*) Right.

PROFESSOR: They're in the New Testament. Oh . . . and these books might be helpful. (*as he hands her 4 or 5 books*) . . . and this one, too (*as he hands her another book*) and these also (*as he loads her with 4 or 5 more books*) . . . oh, and you've got to read this one (*as he hands her one more*). It talks about Jesus in the Old Testament and all the prophecies and Christophanies.

AVERY: Kris—TAW--funeez?

PROFESSOR: Oh, yeah . . . that's when Jesus appeared in various forms in the Old Testament before he was born in the New Testament. He did it many times.

AVERY: Really? Wow . . . that sounds interesting (*as she struggles to hold the stack of books*) Well . . . I better get going. I've got a lot of reading to do. Thanks, Professor.

(*AVERY exits the lab.*)

PROFESSOR: My pleasure. (*then looks up to heaven and prays*) Lord Jesus . . . open her eyes as she reads and help her understand the truth. (*pause, then with excitement*)

All right, Robo . . . time to wake up. I've got a job for you! (*as he turns him back on*)

ROBO: (*he raises his head*) Merry Christmas!

PROFESSOR: Huh . . . that was random. (*shrugs shoulders*) Whatever. Okay, now listen . . . I'm going to try out the machine and I need your assistance.

ROBO: I am here to help you. Just tell me what to do.

PROFESSOR: Okay . . . after I enter the machine and secure the door, I want you to input this code sequence. (*as he hands him an index card*) Then, when the prompt appears, select "go." Do you think you can do that?

ROBO: Yes, Professor. I can do that and much more. Would you like to see me juggle?

PROFESSOR: Uh . . . maybe later. Now . . . let's see. Will I need anything? Maybe a jacket. (*as he takes off his lab coat and grabs his jacket*) And a couple power bars. (*as he grabs some power bars from his desk*) That should do it this first time. Okay . . . I guess I'm ready. As soon as I close the door, you can proceed.

(*PROFESSOR enters the Machine. Then ROBO types in the code sequence which causes lights and sounds, but then a malfunction [sfx] occurs and the Machine shuts down. Then the PROFESSOR exits the Machine.*)

PROFESSOR: (*frustrated*) What happened??

ROBO: I entered the code sequence, then an error message appeared. Would you like to see me juggle now?

PROFESSOR: Uh . . . no, Robo . . . I meant much later. Let's try it again.

(*PROFESSOR re-enters the Machine. Then ROBO enters the code sequence again, which causes the same lights and sounds, but then a malfunction [sfx] occurs and the Machine shuts down again. Then the PROFESSOR exits the Machine.*)

PROFESSOR: (*frustrated*) I had no idea time machines could be so temperamental! I'm too tired to dissect the program now. I've got to get some sleep! (*as he heads for the exit*)

(*After the PROFESSOR exits, the stage lights dim as if he turned out the lights.*)

ROBO: Professor?

(*The Machine suddenly springs to life with lights and sounds [sfx] as ODA GRIM is seen hiding near the Machine. She's creating more mayhem and loving it!*)

ROBO: Something is happening. The Machine is working again. I do not know what to do.

(*The door to the Machine opens. Then QUEEN JOSEPHINE slowly emerges amidst a cloud of smoke. She's speechless as she exits the Machine and takes in her surroundings.*)

QUEEN JOSEPHINE: *(apprehensive)* I have no memory of this place. *(pause)* Cristiana? *(pause)* Prince Garin? *(pause)* Pray, do not jump out at me. *(pause; then she turns and sees ROBO staring at her)*

ROBO: Hello.

(QUEEN JOSEPHINE promptly screams and then faints.)

ROBO: Oh dear.

(Theme music ending)