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Dramatic Publishing

A Comedy in One Act

by

ROGER CLARK

Where's That Report Card?



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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WHERE'S THAT REPORT CARD?

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(WHERE'S THAT REPORT CARD?)

Where's That Report Card?

A Comedy in One Act

FOR TWO MEN AND FOUR WOMEN

CHARACTERS

FATHER..... *on the rampage*
MOTHER..... *who tries to quiet him*
HELEN..... *who has a date*
MARY..... *who also has a date*
JUNIOR..... *who has a date, too*
ALICE..... *an innocent bystander*

PLACE: *The living-room of the Compton home.*

TIME: *The present. Spring.*

PROPERTIES

GENERAL: Sofa and cushions; coffee table; end tables and lamps; desk and chair; table and easy chairs; easy chair and footstool; magazines on table and coffee table; books on desk, among other accessories; odds and ends in desk drawer; rugs, pictures, and other furnishings as size of stage permits.

MOTHER: String.

FATHER: Handkerchief.

HELEN: Manicure set.

JUNIOR: Brush, three envelopes containing report cards, kettle.

MARY: Glass of water.

STAGE CHART

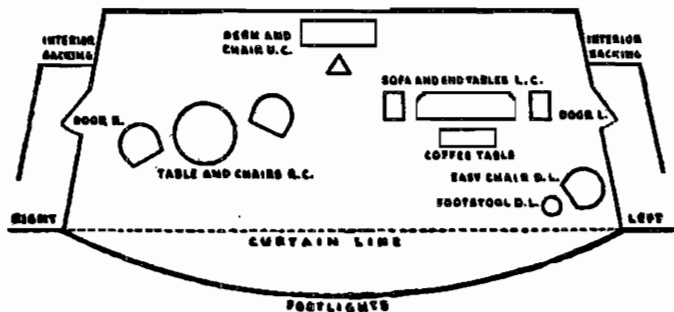
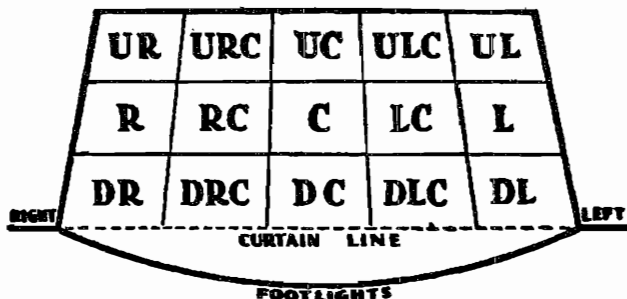


CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



STAGE POSITIONS

Upstage means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: U R for *up right*, R C for *right center*, D L C for *down left center*, etc. One will note that a position designated on the stage refers to a general territory, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

Where's That Report Card?

SCENE: *The Compton living-room. A door in the R wall leads to the front hallway and the stairs, while a door L goes into the dining-room and kitchen. There is a sofa at L C, with a coffee table in front of it, and end tables with lamps on either side. A desk and chair are U C. At R C are a table and two easy chairs. A large easy chair is DL, with a footstool in front of it. Rugs, pictures, and other accessories complete the furnishings of a room that is comfortable and attractive.]*

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: *Right at the moment, however, things are upset. FATHER is making a violent search of the room, tearing things up as he goes. He flings the magazines around on the table R C, and then he jerks the cushions off the sofa and looks behind them. Then he crosses U C and jerks open a drawer in the desk and begins pawing through it, tossing odds and ends up on the desk. He slams around a couple of books on the desk, making a fearful racket. FATHER is really a "nice" man when he's rational. Just now he isn't. He wears a business suit.]*

FATHER [*in a complete rage, as he can't find what he wants*].

Martha! [*He calls louder.*] Martha!

MOTHER [*offstage L*]. Yes, dear?

FATHER. Martha!

[*MARTHA enters L. She is just the opposite of FATHER, quiet and composed. She wears a house dress, and has a large quantity of string which she is rolling into a ball.*]

MOTHER [*coming to left of the sofa*]. What is it?

FATHER [*coming down to C*]. Where are they?

MOTHER. What?

FATHER. They came in the mail! I saw them! Now, they're gone!

MOTHER. I don't know what you mean.

FATHER [*exploding*]. *The report cards!* [*He moves back of the sofa.*] The children's report cards!

MOTHER. Are you sure they came?

FATHER [*indignantly*]. I saw three envelopes from the school right there. [*He points to the table R. C.*]

MOTHER [*nodding, as she moves to the table and searches*]. They must have been the report cards. They're due now.

FATHER. Overdue! All three of them were right there. [*He moves to C.*] Mary's card—Helen's card—[*He speaks with extreme grimness.*]—and Junior's.

MOTHER. I do hope Junior did better this semester.

FATHER. If he didn't—[*He continues with menace.*]—I warned him!

MOTHER. Now, Harold! . . .

FATHER [*even grimmer*]. I warned him! [*He sinks down on the sofa, exhausted, wiping his brow with a handkerchief.*]

MOTHER. You're judging before you even see the report card.

FATHER. What do you think I've been looking for?

MOTHER [*glancing back at the table again*]. They were on the table.

FATHER [*nodding*]. I left them there myself. You know I always wait till the whole family's together before I look at the report cards. And this time I had them mailed—specially.

MOTHER. But where could they be? [*She moves up to the desk and looks helplessly at the mess.*]

FATHER [*exasperatedly*]. That's just what I'm trying to find out! [*He rises and crosses D L, looking under the chair cushion.*]

MOTHER. They couldn't have just walked out by themselves.

FATHER. Brilliant!

MOTHER [*coming down to C*]. Maybe you misplaced them.

FATHER [*angrily*]. I didn't misplace them!

MOTHER. I wish you'd be calm.

FATHER [*shouting*]. *I'm always calm!* [*He speaks bitterly.*] I bet Junior knows where they are. He looked pretty guilty to me.

MOTHER. It's only natural for all the children to worry a little about their marks.

FATHER [*sitting on the sofa again*]. They've got good reason to worry. You know what I told them. If they get any more low grades—I'll have to use psychology—[*He looks at his clenched fist.*]—psychology!

MOTHER. Harold—

FATHER. There's going to be discipline—*strict* discipline!

MOTHER [*with horror*]. Still more discipline?

FATHER. Absolutely! [*He speaks with relish, as he rubs his hands.*] I'm going to lay down the law!

MOTHER. But you already laid down the law—day before yesterday.

FATHER. And I'll do it again and again—till we have discipline. Real discipline—like when I was a boy.

MOTHER [*sitting beside him*]. Didn't you ever get low marks? [*She rolls the string into a ball as she talks.*]

FATHER. I was always glad to show my report card.

MOTHER [*insistently*]. But didn't you ever get low marks?

FATHER [*rising, moving to c*]. I used to hand my report card to my father with pride—I wasn't afraid—a good job well done. Why? Because I studied. I wasn't worrying my head about dances and such things—

MOTHER. Oh, weren't you?

FATHER. No—facts—that's what I was studying—good hard facts.

[*HELEN enters R, unobserved. She is manicuring her nails. HELEN is seventeen, the beauty of the family—and well aware of it. She is "dressed up" for her date.*]

MOTHER. But I asked you—did you ever get low marks?

FATHER. *Never!*

MOTHER. Never?

FATHER [*swallowing*]. Except *one* time. But the teacher was prejudiced against me. It was the most unfair thing I've ever seen.

HELEN [*coming D R*]. What did you flunk, Dad?

FATHER [*turning, upset*]. I didn't say I flunked. And you shouldn't be sneaking around—listening.

HELEN. I wasn't sneaking!

MOTHER. Helen, do you know anything about the report cards?

HELEN [*sitting right of the table R C as she continues with her nails*]. Me?

FATHER. They were left on that table. [*He points to the table R C.*]

HELEN. I didn't touch them. I was just coming in to find out how good my marks are.

FATHER [*rising*]. Somebody took them.

HELEN. I'll bet it was Junior.

MOTHER. You give me your word that you—

HELEN. Certainly. I just wonder if my average will be over ninety-seven again this semester.

FATHER. I don't see why it should be. With the way you've started going out on dates.

HELEN [*in a superior tone*]. Really, Father—after my marks last semester. Do you really think a person with my brains needs to study?

FATHER. It's just that you're getting lax—too darn lax!

HELEN. Why don't you find the report cards before you make remarks?

MOTHER. That's what he's trying to do.

HELEN. Better ask Junior—

FATHER [*grimly, pacing U C and back*]. That Junior—if he's responsible for this—[*He looks at his clenched fist again and mutters.*] Psychology . . .

MOTHER [*apprehensively*]. Harold!