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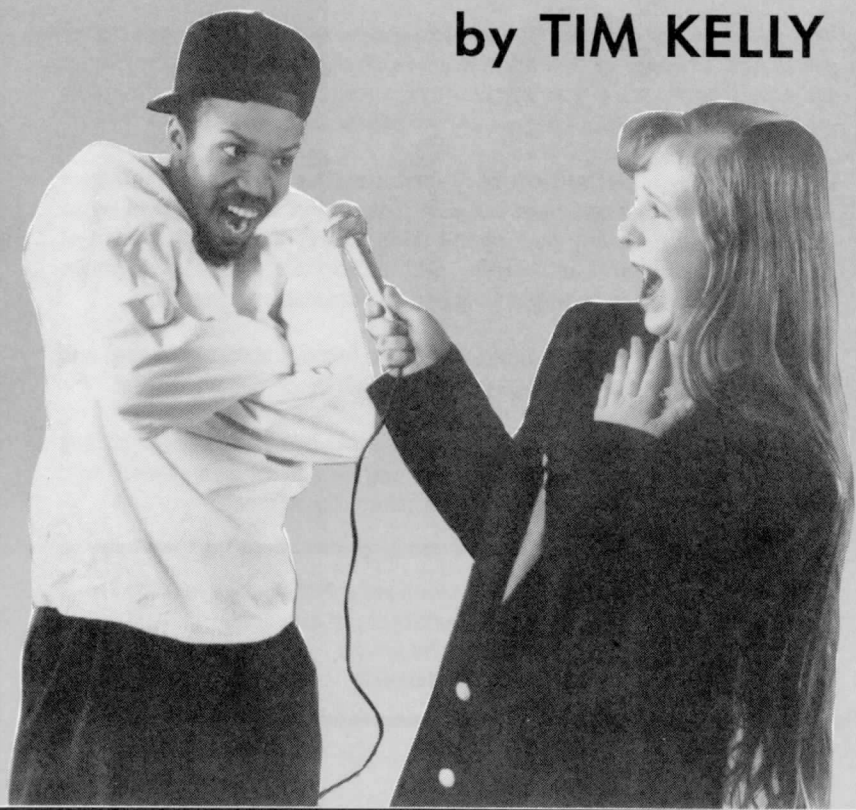
**FUNNY BONES**

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# FUNNY BONES

*The Silence of the Hams*

by **TIM KELLY**



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

**Contemporary Drama Service**

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(In order of speaking)*

**DAISY BAXTER** ..... Student, about 15  
**ILKA**  
**WIENERSCHNITZEL** .... Academy principal  
**MONICA PLEADWELL** .. Teaches speech and drama, also  
auto mechanics  
**ETHEL** ..... No-nonsense maid, about 18  
**HANNIBAL** ..... Creepy gardener  
**JUNO** ..... Academy cook  
**CLANCY** ..... Asylum orderly  
**ALEX DUMAS** ..... Teaches fencing and Thai cooking  
**BARRY NOLTE** ..... Private investigator  
**THEODORA**  
**HOLLAND** ..... Private investigator “in training”  
**SYLVIA** ..... Student leader, about 17  
**SOPHIE** ..... Student  
**LILLIAN** ..... Another student  
**VICTORIA**  
**PEARLSTRINGER** ..... Attorney  
**JEZEBEL**  
**FLOWERLIPS** ..... Hates scandal and publicity  
**ARCHIE** ..... Sylvia’s boyfriend  
**BETTY** ..... New student  
**MRS.**  
**BEETLEHOFFER** ..... Betty’s mother  
**SUSAN BAXTER** ..... Daisy’s older sister  
**NURSE DELIRIUM** ..... Works at asylum  
**FRANKLYN**  
**(“GRISLY”) GRIMM** .... Charming madman  
**GEORGE PUTTY** ..... Television Reporter  
**ANNABELLE**  
**PINKHAM** ..... Another student, soon to be an  
heiress  
**PRINCESS FRIZZLE** .... Gypsy ghost chaser  
**OFFICER KENT** ..... The law

Some extras can be added as additional students, if desired.

## ***PRODUCTION NOTES***

### **On Stage:**

Sofa, two armchairs (or matching chairs), small table. Large chest, table with magazines, flowers in vase. Servants' bell cord or hand bell. Bookshelves with books. Wall light switch, desk or writing table with chair, lamp, telephone. French doors with drapes.

Additional set dressing as desired: (Rug(s), lamps, small table(s), pictures.

FOR ACT TWO, SCENE 1. Asylum: Dressing screen or two angled scenery flats, two stools.

### **Brought on, Act One, Scene 1:**

Book (MONICA), mop and pail, apron (ETHEL), bone (DAISY), large (thigh) bone (tossed in from garden).

### **Brought on, Act One, Scene 2:**

Laundry basket with bones, apron and chef's cap (JUNO), fencing foil (ALEX), bone (HANNIBAL), painter's mask (ILKA). Overalls, kerchief, wrench, soiled workcloth (MONICA). Attaché case, check, fashionable eyeglasses (VICTORIA). Expensive-looking coat [fur?], jewels, lapel or wristwatch (JEZEBEL).

### **Brought on, Act One, Scene 3:**

Skeleton or large zipper clothes bag (SOPHIE, LILLIAN).

### **Brought on, Act Two, Scene 1:**

Clipboard, ring of large keys, extra large hypo (NURSE DELIRIUM), football or hockey helmet with face guard, straightjacket (GRIMM).

### **Brought on, Act Two Scene 2:**

Hand mike (GEORGE), suitcase, slouch hat (JUNO).

### **Brought on, Act Two, Scene 3:**

Cup and saucer (MONICA), business cards (PRINCESS FRIZZLE), arrest pad, pencil, whistle (OFFICER KENT). Vase with flowers (HANNIBAL), check (ILKA).

### **Brought on, Act Two, Scene 4:**

Tape recording device (small enough to fit under jacket)

(BARRY), straightjacket (NURSE DELIRIUM). If you can't obtain a straightjacket, use a white jacket and put it on backwards. Add some straps and buckles.

### **Costumes**

Modern. If there's anything requiring special attention, it's mentioned in the script. Might give some thought to having the students dressed in school uniform — maybe skirts and blazers.

### **Sound**

Howling wind, telephone, barking dog (can be done by member of stage crew), thunder, mad laughter.

### **Miscellaneous**

**ABOUT THE CHEST:** If you can't locate one large enough, or have one made, cut the chest and work the scenes this way: In Act One, Scene 1, DAISY looks for a place to hide. Instead of the chest, there can be a large chair or potted palm. She hides behind it. Later in the scene, MONICA will say her line "If I kicked Miss Wienerschnitzel in the heart, I'd break my toe." DAISY will come from behind her hiding place and say, "It's me, Miss Pleadwell." MONICA will say, "I trust you have a satisfactory explanation for hiding," and the scene will proceed as written (thus cutting all the lines about the chest and DAISY hiding in it).

At the end of Act One, Scene 2, ARCHIE (as The Shadow) will pop out from Stage Right, say his line "Gesundheit! Good health!" and run into the hallway and off. If you're using the chest, ARCHIE will quickly get into it between Act One, Scene 1 and Act One, Scene 2. In Act Two, Scene 4, instead of popping up from the chest, GRIMM will simply enter from Stage Right.

**ABOUT THE SKELETON:** In Act One, Scene 3, SOPHIE and LILLIAN wheel in a skeleton. If you can't locate a skeleton, have them carry in a large clothing bag, zipped up. The implication is that the "skeleton" is inside. But make sure you give the bag some weight; otherwise, the audience will surmise the clothing bag is empty.

**ON STAGING FARCE** — and this is **IMPORTANT**: *The play must move*. Entrances and exits are fast. Cues are picked up with no lag. There must be no dead spots. Cast must speak loud and clear. Once the farcical situation has been established, *the action must not slacken*. It builds and builds, wilder and wilder, until the final curtain.

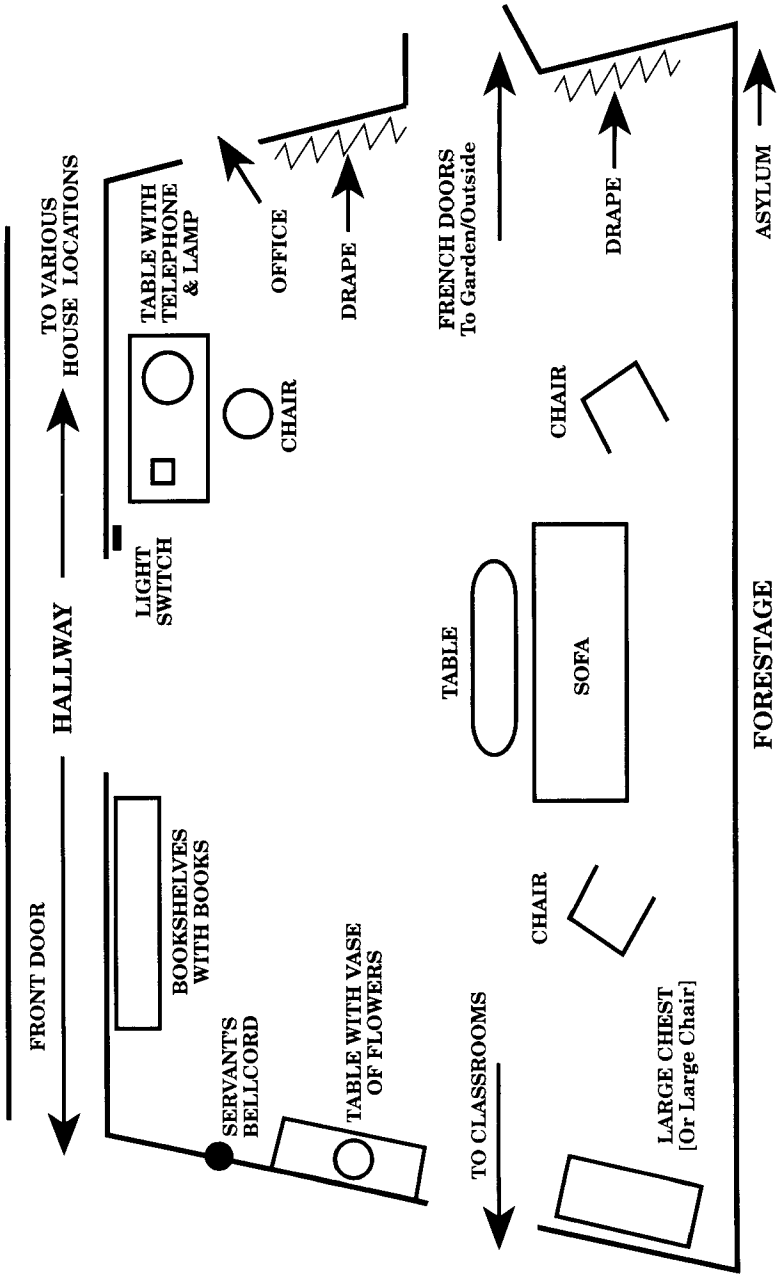
During rehearsals, some funny business that isn't in the script is bound to turn up. If it's good, use it.

**FLEXIBLE CASTING:** Don't be afraid to adapt the script to your specific needs. For example, ALEX can be switched to a female role (ALEXANDRA DUMAS). VICTORIA PEARL-STRINGER might become VICTOR PEARLSTONE, GEORGE PUTTY might be changed to GEORGIANA; OFFICER KENT might be played by an actress. ARCHIE could double in the role of GEORGE, etc.

## **SETTING**

The common room of Ditchburn Academy, a multipurpose enclave for relaxing, receiving guests, reading, writing letters, etc. The basics: Sofa Center. An (arm)chair to the Right of sofa, another to the Left (chairs matching, if possible). Small table behind sofa. Large chest Down Right (large enough to hide a body). Moving up from the chest is an entryway that leads to Off-stage classrooms. Stage Right, against the wall, is a table with magazines and a floral arrangement of some kind. A servants' bell cord to one side, or hand bell on table. Up Right there's a bookshelf. Up Center is an entryway or archway that leads into a corridor or hallway. Light switch to one side. Right in the hallway goes to the front door. Left goes to other areas of the academy. Up Left Center is a desk or writing table with a chair in front. On desk: telephone and lamp. Up Left (door or entryway) leads into the principal's office. Stage Left are French doors that open onto the garden and grounds. Practical drapes on each side of the doors. To these basics can be added various odds-and-ends to "dress up" the stage picture — rug(s), lamps, small table(s), pictures on the wall. Ditchburn Academy has been around for many years — consequently the room is nice enough, but it has a "well-worn," somewhat faded look.

# BASIC FLOOR PLAN - "FUNNY BONES"





## ***SYNOPSIS***

The action of the play takes place mostly at the “Ditchburn Academy for Girls,” an institute for learning located somewhere in the depths of Connecticut.

The present.

### ***ACT ONE***

Scene 1: The common room. Night.

Scene 2: Two days later. Morning.

Scene 3: Later the same day.

### ***ACT TWO***

Scene 1: The asylum. One hour later.

Scene 2: Outside Ditchburn Academy.

Scene 3: The common room. Night.

Scene 4: Moments later.

ACT I  
Scene 1

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*AT RISE:* A night in spring. There's a howling windstorm. Sound effect plays for a few moments, fades. As the stage lights dim up, we can see the room in shadowy light. It looks quite mysterious. The sort of place in which anything might "happen." The French doors stand ajar.

**DAISY'S VOICE:** *(From the grounds)* **Miss Wienerschnitzel!**  
**Miss Wienerschnitzel!** *(DAISY runs in, nervously looking over her shoulder. She's fifteen, a student at the academy.)*

**DAISY:** **Miss Wienerschnitzel! Help!** *(Moves in front of sofa, shaking in fear.)* **Miss Wienerschnitzel! Miss Wiener —**  
*(Suddenly, a FIGURE dressed all in black [ARCHIE] — ski mask, gloves, trousers and sweater — jumps swiftly into view outside the French doors. Fast, he slams them shut and disappears into the night. DAISY doesn't see FIGURE, but she hears the sound of the closing doors.)* **What was that?!** *(Looks Stage Left, notices that the French doors are now closed.)* **The doors! I didn't close them. (Shaking) I've got to hide. Find someplace where I'll be safe.**

**ILKA'S VOICE:** *(From private office)* **Who's out there? Who's making all that commotion?**

**DAISY:** *(Stiffens.)* **Miss Wienerschnitzel. Hide, Daisy, hide.**  
*(Disoriented because of fright, DAISY looks left and right, Upstage, back to right and the classrooms entryway.)* **I know! I'll hide in a classroom. No one would think to look in a classroom.** *(She starts to exit, but is stopped by the approaching voices of MONICA PLEADWELL, ETHEL, Off Right.)*

**MONICA'S VOICE:** **You should have seen me on the stage, Ethel. When I was in my prime, I was something to see.**

**ETHEL'S VOICE:** *(Flat)* **That don't surprise me.** *(Another quick pan of the room by DAISY. She spots the chest, Down Right.)*

**DAISY:** **The chest.** *(Fast, she steps to the chest. Lifts lid. Gets inside and pulls the lid shut, as MONICA PLEADWELL, the speechi*

1           *drama/auto mechanics teacher, enters. [NOTE: If you don't wish*  
2           *to use the long chest as a hiding place, CONSULT*  
3           *PRODUCTION NOTES.] MONICA is matronly, likeable, zany.*  
4           *She's given to extravagant gestures and mannerisms. Her longish*  
5           *dress looks like something pulled from an old theatrical trunk.*  
6           *Carries a small opened book.)*

7   **MONICA:** I was a *brilliant* actress, if I say so myself. (*ETHEL,*  
8           *a young, no-nonsense housemaid, enters behind MONICA. She*  
9           *holds a mop and pail. Wears an old apron, a bandana wrapped*  
10           *around her head.)*

11 **ETHEL:** That's right, Miss Pleadwell, blow your horn if you  
12           never sell a fish.

13 **MONICA:** Don't be vulgar. I'm not conceited, Ethel. If that's  
14           what you're thinking. (*Attention on her book*) Ah,  
15           Shakespeare. Each and every word a jewel. Such a  
16           comfort.

17 **ETHEL:** You can keep the words, give me the jewels.

18 **MONICA:** You're mercenary, Ethel.

19 **ETHEL:** I'm hungry, too. Think I'll fix me a liverwurst  
20           sandwich. With a slab of Bermuda onion. Mayonnaise on  
21           top. Pickle on the side.

22 **MONICA:** You won't sleep a wink. Forget about ordinary  
23           food, Ethel. (*Indicates book.*) Feast, instead, on William  
24           Shakespeare.

25 **ETHEL:** I would, only I ain't no cannibal.

26 **MONICA:** (*Horried*) "Ain't! Ain't!" Your grammar is  
27           deplorable.

28 **ETHEL:** I don't write no better.

29 **MONICA:** Double negative. Hopeless. (*With a sigh of*  
30           *resignation, MONICA sinks onto the sofa. ILKA WIENER-*  
31           *SCHNITZEL, the Headmistress/Principal, enters from her*  
32           *private office. She has a tendency to get her words twisted. She*  
33           *is dressed in a tailored suit and her hair is pulled back in a bun.)*

34 **ILKA:** It's you, Miss Pleadwell.

35 **MONICA:** (*Turns her head.*) How nice to see you, Miss

1           **Wienerschnitzel.** Always a pleasure. My, everyone seems  
2           to be up rather late this evening.

3   **ILKA:** Why were you calling out for help?

4   **MONICA:** When?

5   **ILKA:** A few moments ago. I would have answered sooner,  
6           but I had an important telephone call. A Mrs.  
7           Beetlehoffer. I couldn't be interrupted. The painters have  
8           left a terrible mess in my office. The smell of fresh paint  
9           has given me a headache.

10   **MONICA:** I'm sorry about your headache, but I assure you,  
11           Miss Wienerschnitzel, whoever you heard it wasn't me.

12   **ILKA:** Ethel?

13   **ETHEL:** (*Curtsies in stupid fashion.*) No, ma'am, Miss Wiener-  
14           schnitzel. Wasn't me.

15   **ILKA:** Have you finished classrooming the mops? (*Corrects*  
16           *herself.*) I mean — "mopping the classrooms"?

17   **ETHEL:** Yes, ma'am. You could eat fried eggs off them floors.

18   **ILKA:** Why would I want to do something as repulsive as  
19           that? Go to bed.

20   **ETHEL:** I was going to make myself a liverwurst sandwich.

21   **ILKA:** (*An order*) I said go to bed.

22   **ETHEL:** (*Dutifully*) Yes, ma'am. Bed. (*ETHEL crosses Up Center,*  
23           *turns back. Another stupid curtsy*) Good night, all.

24   **ILKA:** (*Fierce*) **Good night.** (*ETHEL forces an idiotic smile, exits*  
25           *into hallway and Off Left.*) Such a stupid goose, that Ethel.

26   **MONICA:** You're too hard on her, Miss Wienerschnitzel.  
27           Ethel may be rough around the edges, but she's a hard  
28           worker.

29   **ILKA:** So am I, but I don't curtsy. (*All business*) If it wasn't you  
30           calling for help, it must have been one of the girls.  
31           (*Shrugs.*) Ah, well. If it's important, I'll hear about it. (*Starts*  
32           *to move back into her private office. MONICA quickly rises and*  
33           *moves to her.*)

34   **MONICA:** Miss Wienerschnitzel.

35   **ILKA:** Yes?

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