

RS#7 Welch, Ernie, Ken, Claire, Chris, & Cookie

76

RUMORS

LENNY. No, I'm anxious to come as Charley. *(He goes into Charley's room and closes the door.)*

(The doorbell rings again.)

KEN. Okay, Claire, put on the music.

ERNIE. Let's go, kids. Hurry up. Get your partners.

(They do.)

Okay.

(CLAIRE turns on the stereo. It is a loud rendition of "La Bamba." The three COUPLES dance furiously.)

(We hear loud banging on the front door, and then it is opened.)

(Two POLICEMEN stand there. One, OFFICER WELCH, a strong, vigorous man. The other, OFFICER PUDNEY, is a woman in her late twenties.)

(They stand watching the couples dance. No one seems to notice the police.)

Start



WELCH. *(Yells.)* Can you shut that thing off, please!

(No one notices.)

SOMEBODY PLEASE SHUT THAT DAMN THING OFF!

(KEN turns the music off. They all look surprised that the police are in the room.)

ERNIE. *(Indignant.)* I beg your pardon. May I ask what you're doing here?

WELCH. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to bust the door open.

ERNIE. Then why didn't you ring first?

WELCH. I did. Five times.

ERNIE. *(Crossing near the POLICE.)* Five times? We didn't hear it.

WELCH. I guess the music was on so loud, you couldn't hear anything.

ERNIE. Of course. The music.

KEN. That's why we didn't hear you.

CLAIRE. No wonder we didn't get any phone calls. We wouldn't hear them.

CHRIS. That's what it was. The music.

COOKIE. It was on...

ALL. ...*So loud.*

ERNIE. (*Congenial.*) Now, what seems to be the trouble, Officer?

WELCH. Well, just sort of routine investigation, sir. My name is Officer Welch. This is Officer Pudney. Is this your house, sir?

ERNIE. My house? No, no. I live elsewhere. Other than here.

KEN. As I do. Live elsewhere. Could you tell us what this is about, Officer?

EVERYONE. Yes, what's this about? Is anything wrong? Why are the police here? I can't imagine what's going on.

WELCH. All right, all right, take it easy. Calm down. I just want to ask a few questions... May I ask who the owner of this house is?

KEN. We'd be delighted to tell, Officer, but I believe it's customary first for you to inform us as to why these questions are being asked of us.

WELCH. You're a lawyer, aren't you.

KEN. Yes, I am.

WELCH. Well, as a lawyer you understand you're not obligated to answer these questions. I was hoping someone would be cooperative enough to tell me the owner's name.

(They all look at each other.)

CLAIRE. Brock. Charley Brock.

WELCH. Could you tell me if Mr. Brock is at home at present?

(They all look at each other.)

CLAIRE. I'm not sure. Chris, is Charley at home?

CHRIS. Charley? I think he went to walk the dog.

WELCH. Then he'll be back soon?

COOKIE. I don't think so. It's a Dachshund. They take very small steps.

KEN. (*Wanting no trouble.*) He's home. He came back, Officer.

WELCH. Well, then could I possibly see Mr. Brock for a moment?

KEN. (*Coming downstage, taking charge.*) Well, it's an awkward time, Officer. As you can see, we're celebrating a party.

WELCH. Yes, I've noticed. What's the occasion?

KEN. The tenth wedding anniversary of Charley and Myra Brock.

WELCH. (*Crossing to KEN.*) I wouldn't take long. I just need a minute of his time.

KEN. Well, unfortunately, Mr. Brock is sleeping.

WELCH. Sleeping? In the middle of his anniversary party?

KEN. He was feeling depressed. He took a sleeping pill.

WELCH. Well, could I see Mrs. Brock?

KEN. Mrs. Brock is not here.

WELCH. She's not?

KEN. That's why Mr. Brock is depressed.

WELCH. Where is she?

(*They all look at each other.*)

ERNIE. ...Her father broke his hip. She had to take him to the hospital.

(*They all glare at him.*)

WELCH. During her anniversary party? Couldn't someone else take him to the hospital?

CLAIRE. Her father lives in California.

End

~~CHRIS. It has to do with cousins and warts and hips. It's very complicated.~~

~~WELCH. (*Crossing to GLENN, who is hiding his face with his hand.*) You, sir? Something wrong with your eye?~~

~~GLENN. Me? Yes. I put some drops in tonight and the cap fell off. Most of the bottle went in.~~