

PICNIC SIDES

SIDE #	MEN	WOMEN
1	Hal, Alan	-
2	Howard	Rosemary
3	Hal	Madge
4	Alan, Bomber	Millie, Irma, Christine
5	Howard	Rosemary
6	Madge, Millie	-
7	Madge, Flo	-
8	Flo, Helen	-

Sides do not need to be memorized. Copies will be available at auditions.

If you are submitting a video audition, please record a video of you reading 1-3 sides and send them to Hannah Sochowski at hjski1874@gmail.com. The deadline for video auditions is April 14. When your video is received, you will get a reply with the audition form for you to fill out and send back.

Any character name that is struck through on the side means they only have one or two lines and will be read by a member of the production team at the audition.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

MEN

Hal Carter, college age, a young vagabond

Alan Seymour, college age, boyfriend of Madge

Howard Bevans, 40s, friend of Miss Sydney

**Bomber Gutzel*, 16-18, the paperboy

WOMEN

Helen Potts, 60s, a neighbor

Flo Owens, 40s, mother of Madge and Millie

Madge Owens, 18, a beautiful girl

Millie Owens, 16, sister of Madge

Rosemary Sydney, 30s-40s, a schoolteacher

**Irma Kronkite*, 30s-40s, a schoolteacher

**Christine Schoenwalder*, 30s-40s, a schoolteacher

*These roles are only in 2-3 scenes and will likely assist on the crew if needed.

#1: HAL AND ALAN (28-30)

HAL. Then I thought, what's a poor bastard like me ever gonna do.

ALAN. You don't sound to me like you'd had such a bad life.

HAL. Yah. Never cut classes...understood the lectures... *(Sits up.)* took notes!

Alan laughs.

HAL. What's so funny?

ALAN. The one authentic hero the University had, and he envied me!

HAL. Yah! Big hero, but just between the goal posts. Seymour, you're the only guy in the whole fraternity ever treated me like a human being.

ALAN. I know.

HAL. Those other phonies always watchin' to see if I used the singular instead of the plural.

ALAN. You just imagined that.

HAL. In a pig's eye, I did!

ALAN. Why do you feel you're worse than everybody else?

HAL. *(Lies down, head L.)* Maybe I'll tell you someday.

ALAN. Your father drinks. So what? It happens in the best of families.

HAL. He died in jail, Seymour, the last time they scraped him up off the sidewalk.

ALAN. Gee, Hal, I'm awfully sorry to hear that.

HAL. The old lady wouldn't even come across with the dough for the funeral. They had to bury him in Pauper's Row.

ALAN. What about the filling station?

HAL. Oh, he left it to me in his will, but the old lady wanted it so bad she was gonna have him declared insane. So I let her have it. Who needs it?

ALAN. Yeah. When did you get into town?

HAL. This morning, on a freight.

ALAN. Why didn't you come to see me right away?

HAL. I didn't want to walk into your palatial mansion lookin' like a bum.

ALAN. That wouldn't have made any difference.

HAL. I wanted to pick up some change and buy a new shirt. I was hoping maybe you and your old man, between you, might fix me up with a job.

ALAN. What kind of a job, Hal?

HAL. What kinda jobs you got?

ALAN. What did you have in mind?

HAL. *(Sits up.)* Oh, something in a nice office where I can wear a tie...and have a sweet little secretary...and talk over the telephone about enterprises and...things.

Alan walks away to D.L. of stump. Hal rises – crosses to D.C.

HAL. I've always had the feeling, if I just had the chance, I could set the whole world on fire.

ALAN. (*Reasonably.*) Maybe you could, Hal. (*Turns to Hal.*) But for the time being you've got to be content to work hard and be patient.

HAL. Yah! That's something I gotta learn. *Patience!*

#2: HOWARD, ROSEMARY, HAL, MILLIE (54-55)

HOWARD. Here, Honey.

ROSEMARY. No, Howard, I'm not gonna touch a drop.

HOWARD. One little drink won't hurt you.

ROSEMARY. I said "no" and I mean "no."

HOWARD. Come on, Honey, have one little drink just for *me*. (*Bumps her with his knee.*)

ROSEMARY. (*Beginning to melt.*) Howard, you oughta be ashamed of yourself.

HOWARD. (*Innocent.*) I don't see why.

ROSEMARY. I guess I know why you want me to take a drink.

HOWARD. Now, Honey, that's not so. I just think you should have a good time like the rest of us. (*To Hal.*) Schoolteachers gotta right to live. Right?

HAL. Right!

Howard turns back to Rosemary.

ROSEMARY. Now, Millie, don't you tell any of the kids at school.

MILLIE. (*Disgusted at being taken for a child.*) What do you take me for?

Hal puts arm around Millie.

ROSEMARY. Anyone coming? (*Crosses U.R. of front door.*)

HOWARD. Coast is clear.

Howard crosses to Rosemary, gives her the bottle. Rosemary takes a hearty drink.

ROSEMARY. Whew! I want some water!

HOWARD. *(Crosses to C.)* Millie, why don't you run in the house and get her some?

Millie starts up.

ROSEMARY. No, Howard! I'll get a drink from the hydrant!

She runs off to Mrs. Potts' yard D.L. Millie comes to above and between Hal and Howard.

#3: HAL AND MADGE (65-66)

HAL. What's the use, Baby? She saw through me like an X-ray machine. I'm a *bum!* There's just no place in the world for a guy like me.

MADGE. I know how you feel. Millie's so smart and talented. I get to feeling so jealous of her and worthless when I try to be like her. Then I tell myself that I'm not Millie – I'm *me!* And I feel lots better.

HAL. I'm *me*.

MADGE. Sure!

HAL. Sure. But what's that?

MADGE. (*Rises – crosses to U.L. of Hal.*) Well, you're very entertaining. I mean...I think you say all sorts of witty things. And you're a wonderful dancer.

HAL. What good's dancin'?

MADGE. Oh, I can tell a lot about a boy by dancing with him.

HAL. You can?

MADGE. Some boys, even though they're very smart, when they take a girl in their arms to dance, they're kind of awkward and she feels sort of uncomfortable.

HAL. She does?

MADGE. (*Sits at his L.*) But when you took me in your arms to dance, I had the most wonderful feeling you knew exactly where you were going and I could follow every step of the way. So you're not so bad. I don't care what you say.

HAL. Oh, yeah? (*Turns to face her.*) Look, kid, lemme level with you. When I was fourteen I spent a year in a reform school. How do you like that?

MADGE. What for?

HAL. I stole a guy's motorcycle. Yeah, I stole it. I got no excuses. I stole it 'cause I wanted to get on the damn thing and go so far away, so fast, that nothin' would ever catch up with me.

MADGE. Sure.

HAL. Then my old lady went to the authorities. "I've done everything I can with the boy," she says. "I can't do another thing with him." So I off go to the damn reform school. And the old lady's real happy 'cause my dad's always loaded and she's got a new boyfriend and I'm in the way.

MADGE. *(Turns away.)* Gee...

HAL. Well, there you are. And I never told anybody about that – not even Seymour – 'cause Seymour's Seymour and I'm...me. So if you want to get sick or run inside and lock your door or faint...go ahead. I ain't gonna stop you 'cause–

Madge kisses him.

#4: ALAN, BOMBER, MILLIE, IRMA, CHRISTINE (76-78)

IRMA. (*Coming on from L. alley.*) Girl, I hope Rosemary is ready. I promised the principal that I'd be there early to help with registration. (*Crosses to R.C. lawn.*)

Christine follows Irma on from L. alley, stops at L.C. lawn.

CHRISTINE. How do I look, Irma?

IRMA. It's a cute dress. Let me fix it in the back.

Irma adjusts the hang of the dress as Christine turns her back.

CHRISTINE. I think a teacher should dress up first day of school, to give the students a good first impression.

IRMA. (*Crosses to porch.*) Good morning, Millie!

Christine follows to U.L. of armchair.

MILLIE. Hi.

IRMA. (*Opens front door.*) Is Rosemary ready?

MILLIE. Go on up if you want to.

Irma starts in front door and is stopped by Christine saying:

CHRISTINE. (*To Millie.*) We missed seeing Madge on the picnic last night.

Millie does not answer.

IRMA. (*Gives Christine a significant look.*) Come on, Christine.

They go inside front door. Bomber rides on from L. alley, gets off his bicycle, throws a paper on Mrs. Potts' steps, then on Flo's back porch. Then he climbs up on Mrs. Potts' porch so he can look across into Madge's room.

BOMBER. Hey, Madge! Wanta go dancin'? Let me be next, Madge!

MILLIE. You shut up, crazy.

BOMBER. *(Jumps down - crosses D.C.)* My brother seen 'em parked under the bridge. Alan Seymour was lookin' for 'em all over town. I knew she liked guys.

He sees Alan approaching off beyond the Owens house, and leaves quickly out L. alley.

MILLIE. *(Not aware that Alan is approaching.)* Someday I'm really gonna kill that ornery bastard.

Alan enters D.R. She turns and sees him.

MILLIE. Hi, Alan! Madge got home all right. She finally had to walk all the way.

Alan crosses to C. Millie rises, crosses to D.L. of steps.

ALAN. Hal drove her home. Could I see her, Millie?

MILLIE. *(Crosses to R.C. lawn; calls up to Madge's window.)* Madge! Alan's here!
(Back to Alan.) It'll probably take her a few minutes.

ALAN. Sure. *(Crosses and sits on porch corner.)*

MILLIE. *(Sits on stump facing him.)* I...I always liked you, Alan. Didn't you know it?

ALAN. *(With some surprise.)* Like me?

MILLIE. (*Nods her head.*) It's awfully hard to show someone you like them, isn't it?

ALAN. (*With just a little bitterness.*) It's easy for *some* people.

MILLIE. (*Turns away.*) It makes you feel like such a sap. I don't know why.

ALAN. (*Crosses to her; rather touched.*) I...I'm glad you like me, Millie.

MILLIE. I don't expect you to do anything about it. I just wanted to tell you.

#5: HOWARD AND ROSEMARY (69-72)

HOWARD. We'll talk it over Saturday.

ROSEMARY. We'll talk it over *now*.

HOWARD. (*Stops, crosses D., sits on stump; squirming.*) Well...Honey...I...

ROSEMARY. (*Looking at him.*) You said you were gonna marry me, Howard. You said when I got back from my vacation, you'd be waitin' with the preacher

HOWARD. Honey, I've had an awful busy summer and...

ROSEMARY. Where's the preacher, Howard? Where is he?

HOWARD. Rosemary, I'm 42 years old. A person forms certain ways of livin,' then one day it's too late to change.

ROSEMARY. (*rises, crosses to C.*) I'm no spring chicken either. Maybe I'm a little older than you think *I* am. I've formed my ways, too. But they can be changed. (*Turns, crosses R. to steps.*) They *gotta* be changed. It's no good livin' like this, in rented rooms, meetin' a bunch of old maids for supper every night, then comin' back home alone.

HOWARD. (*Rises, crosses to C.*) I know how it is, Rosemary. My life's no bed of roses either.

ROSEMARY. (*Turning to him.*) Then why don't you do something about it?

HOWARD. I figure...there's some bad things about every life.

ROSEMARY. There's too much bad about mine. Each year, I keep tellin' myself, is the last. Something'll happen. Then nothing ever does...except I get a little crazier all the time.

HOWARD. (*Hopelessly.*) Well...

ROSEMARY. A well's a hole in the ground, Howard.

HOWARD. I wasn't tryin' to be funny, Rosemary.

ROSEMARY. All this time you've just been leadin' me on.

HOWARD. (*Vehement.*) Rosemary, that's not *so!* I've not been trying to lead you *on.*

ROSEMARY. I'd like to know what else you call it.

HOWARD. Well...can't we talk about it Saturday? I'm dead tired and I got a busy week ahead, and...

ROSEMARY. (*Runs to him desperately.*) You gotta marry me, Howard.

HOWARD. (*Tortured.*) Well...I can't marry you now.

ROSEMARY. (*Looking at him.*) You can be over here in the morning.

HOWARD. Sometimes you're unreasonable.

ROSEMARY. You gotta marry me.

HOWARD. What'll you do about your job?

ROSEMARY. (*Encouraged.*) Alvah Jasckson can take my place till they get someone new from the agency.

HOWARD. I'll have to pay Fred Jenkins to take care of the store for a few days.

ROSEMARY. Then get him.

HOWARD. *(Turns away D.L.)* Well...

ROSEMARY. I'll be waitin' for you in the morning, Howard.

After a moment's troubled thought, Howard crosses to D.L. of steps.

HOWARD. No. I'm not gonna marry anyone that says, "You gotta marry me, Howard." I'm not gonna.

He is silent. Rosemary stares at him. Slowly Howard reconsiders.

HOWARD. If a woman wants me to marry her...she could at least say "please."

ROSEMARY. *(Beaten and humble.)* Please marry me, Howard.

HOWARD. Well...you got to give me time to think it over.

ROSEMARY. Oh, God! Please marry me, Howard. Please...*(Sinks to her knees.)*
Please...please...

HOWARD. *(Turns.)* Rosemary, don't! *(Goes to her, lifts her up.)* Honey, you go get some sleep. I'll call you in the morning.

ROSEMARY. I won't sleep a wink, Howard, till I hear.

He lifts her gently to her feet. She crosses to steps at R.—U on top step.

ROSEMARY. Good night, Howard.

HOWARD. I'll call you first thing. *(Crosses to her — squeezes her hand.)*

ROSEMARY. Good night.

HOWARD. 'Night, Rosemary. *(Crosses U.C. lawn.)*

ROSEMARY. *(Holding in her tears.)* Please call.

HOWARD. *(Turning back a step.)* I'll call. *(Starts again.)*

ROSEMARY. Please call.

HOWARD. *(Stops.)* I will, Rosemary. I will. *(Starts.)*

ROSEMARY. Please call.

HOWARD. *(Stops.)* Honey, don't worry.

ROSEMARY. Good night.

HOWARD. Good night.

#6: MADGE AND MILLIE (39-41)

MADGE. I don't know why you couldn't have helped us out in the kitchen.

MILLIE. (*Lightly, giving her version of the sophisticated belle.*) I had to dress for the ball.

MADGE. (*Sits C. chair in yard.*) I had to make the potato salad and stuff the eggs and make three dozen bread-and-butter sandwiches. (*Puts her feet up on stump.*)

MILLIE. (*Crosses to U.L. of stump; in a very affected accent.*) I had to bathe...and dust my limbs with powder...and slip into my frock.

MADGE. Did you clean out the bathtub?

MILLIE. Yes, I cleaned out the bathtub. (*Becomes very self-conscious.*) Madge, how do I look? Now tell me the truth.

MADGE. You look very pretty. I always knew you could.

MILLIE. I feel sorta funny.

MADGE. You look wonderful in the dress. You can have it if you want to.

MILLIE. Thanks.

A pause.

MILLIE. Madge, how do you talk to boys?

MADGE. (*Takes feet down.*) Why, you just talk, silly.

MILLIE. How d'ya think of things to say?

MADGE. I don't know. You just say whatever comes into your head/

MILLIE. Supposing nothing ever comes into my head?

MADGE. You talked with him all right this morning.

MILLIE. (*Moves close to stump.*) But now I've got a *date* with him, and it's *different!*

MADGE. You're crazy.

MILLIE. (*Crosses to R. of Madge.*) I think he's a big show-off. (*Turns to Madge.*) You should have seen him this morning on the high diving board. He did real graceful swan dives, and a two and a half gainer, and a backflip...the kids stood around clapping. He just ate it up.

MADGE. (*Her mind elsewhere.*) I think I'll paint my toenails tonight and wear sandals.

MILLE. And he was braggin' all afternoon how he used to be a deep-sea diver off Catalina Island.

MADGE. Honest?

MILLIE. And he says he used to make hundreds of dollars doin' parachute jumps out of a balloon. (*Crosses to L. of porch corner.*) Do you believe it?

MADGE. I don't see why not.

MILLIE. You never hear Alan bragging that way.

MADGE. Alan never jumped out of a balloon.

MILLIE. (*Sits on porch corner.*) Madge, I think he's...er...girl crazy, too.

MADGE. You think every boy you see is something horrible.

MILLIE. Alan took us into the Hi Ho for Cokes and there was a gang of girls in the back booth - Juanita Badger and her gang.

Madge groans at hearing this name.

MILLIE. When they saw him, they started giggling and tee-heeing and saying all sorts of crazy things. Then Juanita Badger comes up to me and whispers, “I think he’s the cutest thing I ever saw.” Is he, Madge?

MADGE. *(Not willing to go overboard.)* I wouldn’t say he was “the cutest thing I ever saw.”

MILLIE. Juanita Badger’s an old floozy. She sits in the back row at the movie so the boys that come in will see her and sit with her. One time she and Rubberneck Krauss were asked by the management to leave – and they weren’t just kissin’, either!

MADGE. *(Laughing.)* I never even speak to Juanita Badger.

MILLIE. Madge, do you think he’ll like me?

MADGE. If you give him a chance, he will.

MILLIE. I don’t really care, I just wonder. *(Turns away, attempting unconcern.)*

MADGE. Why ask me all the questions? You’re supposed to be the smart one.

MILLIE. Not when it comes to boys. I’m absolutely ignorant.

#7: FLO AND MADGE (12-13)

FLO. Did you and Alan have a good time on your date last night?

MADGE. Uh-huh.

FLO. What'd you do? (*Continues to work on dress.*)

MADGE. (*Trying to avoid the cross-questioning.*) We went over to his house and played some of his classical records.

FLO. (*after a pause*) Then what'd you do?

MADGE. Drove over to Cherryvale and had some barbecue.

FLO. (*a hard question to ask*) Madge, does Alan ever...make love?

MADGE. When we drive over to Cherryvale we always park the car by the river and get real romantic.

FLO. Do you let him kiss you? After all, you've been going together all summer.

MADGE. Of course I let him.

FLO. Does he ever want to go beyond kissing?

MADGE. (*Embarrassed.*) Mom!

FLO. I'm your mother, for heaven's sake! These things have to be talked about. Does he?

MADGE. Well...yes.

FLO. Does Alan get mad if you...won't?

MADGE. No.

FLO. *(to herself, puzzled.)* He doesn't...

MADGE. He doesn't get *mad*.

FLO. Do *you* like it when he kisses you?

MADGE. Yes.

FLO. You don't sound very enthusiastic.

MADGE. What do you expect me to do – pass out every time Alan puts his arm around me?

FLO. No, you don't have to pass out. But it seems to me you could at least–

MADGE. *(Turning to her.)* What?

FLO. *(Rises.)* Hold this dress up in front of you.

Madge rises, holds dress. Flo sits U.L. of her in beach chair and continues work.

FLO. Madge, it'd be awfully nice to be married to Alan. You'd have charge accounts at all the stores – automobiles – trips. You'd be invited by all his friends to parties in their homes and at the country club.

MADGE. *(uncomfortably.)* Mom, I don't feel right with those people.

FLO. What do you mean? You're just as good as they are. My father was in the State Legislature and my mother's family was one–

MADGE. *(gives dress to Flo and crosses to C.)* I know, Mom, but all of Alan's friends talk about colleges and trips to Europe. I feel left out.

FLO. You've just got to get over those feelings. Now, Alan will be going back to school in a few weeks. There won't be many more opportunities like the picnic tonight. You better get busy.

MADGE. Busy what?

FLO. Madge, a pretty girl doesn't have long – just a few years when she's the equal of kings and can walk out of a shanty like this and live in a palace with a doting husband who'll spend his life making her happy.

MADGE. (*Turning away.*) I suppose, but–

FLO. Because once, *once*, she was young and pretty. If she loses that chance, she might just as well throw all her prettiness away.

MADGE. I'm only eighteen.

FLO. And next summer you'll be nineteen, and then twenty, and then twenty-one, and then forty.

#8: FLO, MRS. POTTS, AND VOICE (21/45)

MRS. POTTS. It's so hot and still this time of year. When it gets this way I'd welcome a good cyclone...even if it blew everything away.

FLO. Hm...not me.

MRS. POTTS. (*Looking off at Hal.*) Look at him lift that washtub as if it was so much tissue paper!

VOICE. (*Offstage from Mrs. Potts' house.*) Helen! Helen!

MRS. POTTS. I'm visiting Flo, Mama. You don't need me.

FLO. What did you feed him?

MRS. POTTS. Biscuits.

FLO. Helen Potts - you went to all that trouble?

MRS. POTTS. He was *so* hungry. I gave him ham and eggs and all the hot coffee he could drink. Then he saw a piece of cherry pie in the icebox and he wanted that, too!

FLO. Helen, have you gone to the trouble of baking another cake?

MRS. POTTS. An old lady like me, if she wants any attention from the young men on a picnic, all she can do is bake a cake! I feel sort of excited, Flo. I think we plan picnics just to give ourselves an excuse...to let something thrilling and romantic happen to us -

FLO. Such as what?

MRS. POTTS. I don't know. That's what's so exciting.