BEACH BLANKET MURDER

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Jacqueline Lynch

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Put on your glad rags and join the fun at the secluded beach house of that Swinging Surfer Girl, Little Debbie Dawn. It's a cool time (after Elvis, but before the Beatles), but life is not so cool lately for the teen starlet whose fantastic movie career suddenly seems empty and shallow. Even her screen boyfriend, Troy, wonders why he must be a teenager in love -- especially now that he's 26.

The real problems, and the fun, begin when Debbie's no-good manager plots her murder to cover the fact he's lost all her money on shady business deals. An inept hit man gets himself pummeled, knifed, shot and really disgusted just trying to get near Debbie. Her beach house is more like a madhouse because "TV Sock Hop" host Del Murdock arrives to broadcast his show live with the town's hippest teens. And all the teens want to do is get Debbie's autograph and tear the clothes off Troy!

Add one studio photographer, a disgruntled "fire and brimstone" minister who thinks rock and roll leads to communism, and Hollywood bombshell, Vicky Zest who is really Debbie's secret on-screen singing voice, and you have one slapstick happening, man.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 m, 5 w, 2 flexible)

LITTLE DEBBIE DAWN: Teen star of a series of *Beach Party* movies. She is amazingly like the character she always plays - innocent, perky, but not very bright.

TY VEGAS: Debbie's unscrupulous business manager and agent. He has lost most of her money in bad investments, and plans her murder to keep from being exposed.

TROY FABIAN: Movie idol, co-star in many of Debbie's films. He is weary of the Hollywood glitter and grind, and rents Debbie's secluded beach house to get some rest.

DEL MURDOCK: Well-groomed host of a popular TV rock n' roll dance show. He also rents Debbie's beach house for a live location shoot. He is his own biggest fan.

VICKY ZEST: Would-be starlet and bombshell and Debbie's secret on-screen singing voice. She will do anything to get famous, including being a last-minute replacement on Del's panel of "celebrity" judges.

REVEREND MOODY: Flexible part. Dour, glum and moody as his name, he's been hired to perform the secret marriage of Vegas to Debbie.

MYRON "THE SNAKE": The hired killer. Dressed in black, all business and sinister-looking. By the end of the play we feel sorry for him.

"FLASH" GORDON: Flexible part. Publicity photographer at Debbie's and Troy's studio and general pest.

BENNY THE BOX BOY: A nerd.

MARY LOU: Loves Troy Fabian. Wants to be Debbie.

BOONDOGGLE: Surfing god. The gang's leader.

PEGGY SUE: Boondoggle's girl. Loves Troy Fabian, wants to be Debbie.

BONGO: Beatnik. In his own way, more nerdy than Benny.

BARBARA ANN: Leader of the girls. Loves Troy Fabian, thinks she <u>is</u> Debbie.

PLACE: Debbie's isolated beach house, somewhere on the coast of southern California. Early afternoon.

TIME: Sometime after Elvis, but before the Beatles, when Coke was something things went better with.

SETTING

The set is comprised of one large living room sparsely furnished. A small set of stairs DSR leading to an extended landing gives the room a modern split-level effect. The only door on the open landing/hallway leads to Debbie's bedroom. A set of French doors UPS show the beach and ocean beyond. There is a door USR to the bathroom, a closet USL. A front door is DSR leading outside and an open hallway is DSL leading to the kitchen and a back door. A small area of the kitchen may be exposed for dimension. There is a couch, a coffee table, one or two tables with "modern" lamps or knickknacks on them. A small mini-bar is against the wall by the door SR, a stereo (perhaps on a bookcase with records) against wall SL. One or two of Debbie's movie posters, and perhaps a few painful examples of modern art could decorate the walls; otherwise, the less furniture and clutter the better to evoke the era, and to accommodate a large cast which is together on stage for most of the play.

SOUND EFFECTS

Car door slams, door knocks, thud of body falling from balcony, doorbells, gunshot.

MUSIC

A medley of songs for the lip-synching by the "TV Sock Hop" participants might include 30-second clips of "At the Hop," "Surfin' Safari," "Love Potion No. 9," "Run-around Sue," "It's My Party," "Little Darlin'," and "Peppermint Twist." All evoke the era and are pretty silly.

ACT I

(AT RISE: It is early afternoon on a typically sunny day. VEGAS and MYRON enter from the kitchen.)

VEGAS: All right. So, that's the kitchen...pretty simple layout, and now I want you to see the upstairs. Don't worry, they won't be back from the photo shoot for a while.

MYRON: I'm not worried, Mr. Vegas. This is all pretty routine to me.

VEGAS: Really? How many people have you killed?

MYRON: That's kind of a personal question. Besides, you don't want to know.

VEGAS: No, I don't. Don't tell me. I don't want to know. I don't want to know anything. *(Takes 8 x 10 photo out of HIS jacket)* Here, I brought you this picture so you can identify her. I wouldn't want you to kill the wrong person.

MYRON: I know what Little Debbie Dawn looks like. Big teen movie star, huh? Thanks. *(Reads)* "To Myron the Snake, Best wishes…X" X?

VEGAS: Oh, yeah, X, see, that's how she signs her name.

MYRON: I don't think it was such a good idea to have this inscribed to me, Mr. Vegas.

VEGAS: Oh, you mean evidence...clues. Yeah...sure, sorry. This is the first time I ever had anybody killed. Excuse me.

MYRON: It's all right. What's upstairs?

VEGAS: Her room. C'mon, I'll show you. There's a balcony facing the beach...bet you could pop out at her from there. Just knock her on the head with something. That should do it.

MYRON: Just leave this to me, all right, Mr. Vegas? I am a professional.

VEGAS: *(As THEY go up to her room)* You're probably wondering why I want to have her killed. I mean after all, Debbie is my client. I've been her business manager since before she could surf.

MYRON: Really doesn't matter, Mr. Vegas. It's just a job to me.

VEGAS: I don't mind. Look at this house. Look at those furs in her closet. She's got a collection of Capri pants that could choke a horse. I got her all that. Me...Ty Vegas. The best manager in the business. I'm like Midas, everything I touch in the entertainment racket turns to gold. Trouble is, everything I touch in other areas is lead. Worse than lead. Mud. Muck. Crap that sticks to your shoes.

MYRON: Please, will you? Jeez, I'm trying to work, here.

VEGAS: Excuse me. I'm not sure I like the idea of a hit man with a weak stomach. Anyway, I make a few side investments, right? To protect the kid when she's old and fat, when she can't flop on a beach and pout over some male juvenile lead, also a loser. A few investments for her future. Well, all right, for my future, too. I gotta look out for myself, don't I?

MYRON: Mr. Vegas, just let me check the place out and then you can talk to yourself all you want.

VEGAS: What's with you? Don't you know plot exposition when you hear it? You'd go nowhere in Hollywood. Where was I? Oh, yes, so, I put some money into sure things. Sure things, right! You know what one guy sold me on? *(Takes some small thing out of HIS pocket, unseen by the audience)* See this?

MYRON: *(Leans away from HIM, as if the thing is scary or smells bad)* What is it?

VEGAS: Calls it a computer chip.

MYRON: What does it do?

VEGAS: Not a thing. I've been watching it all week. I could cry.

MYRON: So you lose some of your client's money, and you want her dead.

VEGAS: 'Cause I'm gonna go to jail for embezzlement if she's alive.

MYRON: Murder is OK?

VEGAS: Hey, you're doing the murdering, I'm just paying the tab.

MYRON: *(Suspicious)* With what?

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