BLACK AND BLUE FRIDAY
BY KAREN JONES

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Appearance)

SECURITY CHIEF .......................head of mall security 23
JACKSON HEWITT TYLER ................smart, sophisticated husband of Ellie 34
ELLIE PLUNKETT TYLER ................daughter of Floyd and Aggie Plunkett; raised country, wed city 33
SECURITY GUARD ONE ..............mall security guard 3
BUBBA PLUNKETT ....................Ellie’s brother; typical redneck teenage boy 44
VIRGIL PLUNKETT ...................another brother 29
SECURITY GUARD TWO ...............another mall security guard 6
FLOYD PLUNKETT ......................Ellie’s father; a simple country man who hates the government and the city 12
AGGIE PLUNKETT .......................Ellie’s mother; a “take charge” outspoken country woman 20
GERTRUDE SMOOT ..................Aggie’s niece; unsophisticated; raised on a pig farm 7
MAYBELLE SMOOT ..................another niece 10

SETTING

Time: The present.
Place: Security office of a shopping mall.

SET DESCRIPTION

The mall security office is easily represented with a desk that has a computer, monitor and piles of paper on top. There should be a desk chair plus at least two other chairs in the office. There’s a boot under the desk. Feel free to dress up the set as desired to further convey an unglamorous, small, crowded office.
BLACK AND BLUE FRIDAY

1 AT RISE: The SECURITY CHIEF is busy working at his computer. ELLIE and JACKSON ENTER.

JACKSON: Excuse me, Officer. I’m Jackson Hewitt Tyler, and this is my wife Ellie. You left a message with our housekeeper that we’re needed down here. Some kind of emergency, I believe.

SECURITY CHIEF: (Stands.) Nice to meet you, Mr. Tyler. (Proud.) Pat Hale, head of mall security. (Beat.) I’m glad you could make it down right away. It seems we had a little incident down here, and the perpetrators insisted that we call you.

JACKSON: I don’t understand. Do you have their names?

SECURITY CHIEF: As a matter of fact, I do. (Sorts through the papers on his desk.) A Virgil and Bubba Plunkett.

ELLIE: Oh no.

SECURITY CHIEF: I take it you recognize these names.

ELLIE: They’re my brothers. But what in the world are they doing here?

JACKSON: More to the point, what damage have they done?

ELLIE: Now, Jackson, let’s not jump to any conclusions. I’m sure it’s just a big misunderstanding.

SECURITY CHIEF: Well, I’ll let them explain it. If you all will make yourselves comfortable, I’ll go bring them in. (EXITS. JACKSON and ELLIE sit down to wait.)

JACKSON: Wonder what they managed to do this time?

ELLIE: Now just stay calm. It’s probably nothing at all. Just give them the benefit of the doubt.

JACKSON: (Sarcastic.) Yeah, right. I remember the havoc they caused at the wedding.

ELLIE: I told you it was a bad idea to give them the keys to the limo.

JACKSON: Well, I didn’t expect them to destroy it.

ELLIE: They didn’t mean any harm. They just happen to love fireworks. They’re just a little exuberant.


ELLIE: Well, lunatics or not, they’re still my family.

JACKSON: Don’t remind me. (SECURITY CHIEF ENTERS leading BUBBA and VIRGIL. BUBBA is only wearing one boot, and the seat of VIRGIL’S pants are wet.)

BUBBA: Hey, sis.

ELLIE: Bubba, what in the world are you all doing down here?

BUBBA: Well, when you didn’t show up at Pappy and Mee Maw’s for Thanksgiving yesterday, everybody thought something terrible
had happened. Nobody passes up Mee Maw’s roast turky with rhubarb stuffing unless something awful happens.

ELLIE: Well now, Bubba, I told Mama that I just couldn’t make it this year. After all, Jackson and I just got married, and it’s our first year together. We have to alter our traditions a little to accommodate both families. This year we decided to entertain Jackson’s family. And since they couldn’t get together until today, I spent yesterday getting the house ready. I just couldn’t make it to both.

VIRGIL: Yeah, we know. So that’s why we’re here. Ma thought that you could use some help, this being your first time and all.

JACKSON: Help?

ELLIE: Oh, Virgil, we don’t need any help. We’re going to have it catered.

BUBBA: Cakered? Now, Ellie, you know you’ve got to serve more than cake.

VIRGIL: It’s a good thing that Ma saved all those leftovers from Mee Maw’s. That’ll feed your new family good and proper. Never let it be said that anyone walked away hungry from a Plunkett sit down.

BUBBA: The only thing we forgot was the paper plates. So that’s why we stopped at this here store. We didn’t count on this many people though. Thought we’d never find a parking place. Had to go around and park at one of them there loading docks.

SECURITY CHIEF: You did what?

VIRGIL: Aw, we ain’t in nobody’s way. Besides, there just wasn’t any other place to go. I never seen such a passel of people.

SECURITY CHIEF: That’s because it’s Black Friday. (VIRGIL and BUBBA quickly remove their caps, place them over their hearts and bow their heads.)

BUBBA: Oh, my. We’re mighty sorry to hear that. Who passed?

SECURITY CHIEF: What?

ELLIE: No one passed, Bubba. Black Friday is the name they give the first shopping day after Thanksgiving. It’s the start of the Christmas season.

BUBBA: But black is the color of mourning.

VIRGIL: And Christmas is the most joyous time of the year. Why in the world would a body do such a thing?

JACKSON: It has to do with economics.

BUBBA: Echo— What?

ELLIE: Money, Bubba.

BUBBA: Oh. (Pauses, puzzled.) But ain’t money green?

ELLIE: Never mind, Bubba. Just get on with the story.
BUBBA: Well, like I said, we thought any place this big was bound to have some paper goods.
VIRGIL: Some proper paper goods that is. Ma said she didn’t want to embarrass you in front of your new family. She wanted to find some of that fancy Chinet stuff.
BUBBA: None of that there flimsy, cheap stuff this time. After all, we don’t want a repeat of that little Fourth of July incident that happened while ya’ll were on your honeymoon.
VIRGIL: That’s for sure.
JACKSON: Why, what happened?
VIRGIL: Well, you see, Uncle Bruce tried to snuff out his cigarette on one of them flimsy paper plates, and dang if it didn’t catch on fire. But Bubba here, he saved the day. He grabbed ahold of that there plate and sent it flying through the air like it was one of them there Frisbees. Only thing is, he sent it flying right into the bed of his truck where he had stashed the fireworks.
BUBBA: Ooh-wee, but that was a sight! The whole county is still talking about it.
VIRGIL: Won the prize for the best fireworks that year.
BUBBA: And it only took the volunteers at the fire department two tankers and a helicopter to get it under control. Those are some good dudes, I tell you. (VIRGIL nods in agreement.)
ELLIE: Oh my! Was anybody hurt?
BUBBA: Well, Uncle Bruce got his whiskers singed a mite, and Pappy can’t hear as good any more.
VIRGIL: But then Mee Maw still has a fine set of lungs so they can still get along all right.
ELLIE: What about the truck?
VIRGIL: Well now, that’s a different story.
BUBBA: Yeah, but we can piece it together ag’in.
JACKSON: Okay, enough. Just tell us happened down here today.
VIRGIL: Oh. I’m afraid Bubba caused a little ruckus down at the frozen pond.
JACKSON: Frozen pond?
SECURITY CHIEF: He means the skating rink down at the Sports Center.
JACKSON: What did he do? Slip on some ice? That’s not so bad. Hardly constitutes an emergency.
SECURITY CHIEF: Well, it’s not quite that simple. The owners had the rink decorated like the North Pole for Christmas. They had
Christmas trees, snowmen, candy canes and, to top it off, a life-size ice sculpture of Santa and his reindeer.

**BUBBA:** It sure was purty, too.

**JACKSON:** Was?

**SECURITY CHIEF:** It's all gone now.

**ELLIE:** Gone? *(To BROTHERS.)* What did you do?

**VIRGIL:** Now wait a minute, Ellie. I was just trying to catch Bubba's boot.

**JACKSON:** His boot?

**VIRGIL:** Yes, sir. It came a’flying through the air. It could’ve cold-cocked somebody for sure if’n I hadn’t been there.

**JACKSON:** Okay, wait a minute. Let’s back up and start at the beginning. Bubba, just how did your boot happen to become airborne?

**BUBBA:** *(Steps forward. Sheepishly.)* I’m sorry, Jackson. But I just had to try it.

**ELLIE:** Try what?

**BUBBA:** Them there moving stair steps. Did ya ever see such a thing? Why, if’n you can get on it, it’ll do the walking fer ya.

**SECURITY CHIEF:** You mean the mall escalators?

**BUBBA:** Esci-what? I don’t rightly know what you’re talking about. I’m talking about them there moving stair steps down the way apiece.

**JACKSON:** They’re actually called an escalator, but never mind that. Just tell us what happened.

**BUBBA:** Well, sir, while Ma and Pa and the gals went off a’hunting for their fancy Chinet plates, I decided to give those steps a whirl.

**VIRGIL:** I told him to stay away from those things. A body needs to do its own walking.

**BUBBA:** Well, it looked harmless. I was just gonna ride them right down and back up ag’in. It weren’t going to take me more than a couple of minutes.

**JACKSON:** So how did it go?

**BUBBA:** Well, sir, it weren’t as easy as it looked! I was being real careful like and only put one foot on to start off. But by the time that there step was actually formed, my other foot was still three or four steps behind. I kinda got drugged onto it. And there I was, ‘bout split in two, a’hanging on for dear life. And then, here comes the end, and I thought to myself, “how in the world am I a’going to step off with me in that there position?”

**JACKSON:** Okay then, what did you do?

**BUBBA:** Well, ya know, since I had that incident with the fire department last summer, they told me that for my own protection I needed to
learn a little technique called the Stop, Drop and Roll. So I did just that.

ELLIE: And how did that work?

BUBBA: Well, it got me off ’em at least.

5 VIRGIL: Yeah, but that little old lady and her dog didn’t appreciate that maneuver of yours very much.

BUBBA: Aw, she weren’t hurt real bad. If she had been, she wouldn’t been able to whup me with her pocketbook like she did.

ELLIE: Then what happened?

BUBBA: Well, after some Good Samaritan pulled that crazy old biddy off’n me, and I finally plucked that che–waa-waa of hers off’n my boot, I started studying how to get back up those stairs without any more mishaps.

JACKSON: And?

BUBBA: Well, I figured I had to get both feet on the same step somehow, so I jest took a running go and jumped onto those critters.

JACKSON: Did it work?

BUBBA: Like a charm. I was right proud of myself.

ELLIE: Well, then what went wrong?

BUBBA: Ya see, in all that mess with the che-waa-waa, I didn’t realize that my boot lace had come undone. So when I tried to jump off those things at the top, it had caught in those treads, and I come right out of that boot.

JACKSON: (Shakes his head.) Oh dear, here it comes.

BUBBA: Yep, there I was sprawled out on the floor, and when I got turned around, there was my boot just a’dancing a jig on that top step. I tried to crawl back to get it, but before I could, it busted loose and came a’whizzing right at me.

ELLIE: And you weren’t able to catch it?

BUBBA: Uh… no. (Lowers his head.) I just ducked. I mean it was a natural reflex, you know. It’s a powerful big boot. Steel toe and all. But ol’ Virgil here, he went for it like a bullet. You remember he was the football star back home.

VIRGIL: And I almost got it, Ellie. Only when I took a leap up to grab that critter, I hooked my foot on that there bench and did a somersault over it. And the next thing I knowed, I was zooming over that there ice heading right fer ol’ Santa.

BUBBA: You should have seen it, Ellie. Took out those reindeer in nothing flat. Looked like a bowling ball knocking down all them pins. And to beat it all, he got himself wedged under that there sleigh.

End of Script Sample
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE
Desk with computer and piles of paper on top and VIRGIL’S other boot underneath, desk chair, at least two extra chairs.

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON
Wallet (JACKSON)
Shopping bag with paper plates and broken sleeve of paper cups (AGGIE)
Wadded piece of paper (FLOYD)
Skirt with ragged waistline (MAYBELLE)

COSTUMES
SECURITY CHIEF and GUARDS wear standard uniforms.
FLOYD wears overalls and flannel shirt.
BUBBA wears a t-shirt, jeans, a trucker hat and one boot.
VIRGIL wears a t-shirt, jeans, a trucker hat and boots. The seat of his pants are wet at the top of the show.
AGGIE, GERTRUDE and MAYBELLE wear old jeans and sweatshirts.
ELLIE wears dress pants or a skirt and a sweater.
JACKSON wears dress pants, a shirt and a sports jacket.

FLEXIBLE CASTING
The roles of SECURITY CHIEF, SECURITY GUARD ONE and SECURITY GUARD TWO can be either male or female.
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