

Mud Lakers
from
Mud Lake School
Mud Lake

present

It Sure Helps

Cast

Narrator	Stephanie Best
Ms. Stern (Social Services Worker)	Ashley Best
Dana Parker (Oldest Sister)	Randi Best
Christy Parker (Baby Sister)	Samantha Groves
Brooke Parker(Middle Sister)	Laura Chaulk
Ben Parker (Middle Brother)	Wallace Chaulk

Teacher Advisor

Bill Cooper

This presentation shows us a family of four children who have suddenly lost their parents. We see both the attachment the children have to one another and the difficulty they experience in coping with loss and with everyday life.

It Sure Helps

Stage opens with three children sitting at a table. Ben is eating his food. Brooke is trying to pay some attention to Christy. Christy is telling what she did in her pre-school the previous day. Dana is putting food on the table, and tidying up the kitchen.

Christy- ...and we painted pictures, mine was of a horse. Danny ATE his paint so...(Cut off by Brooke.)

Brooke- Can you pass me the toast Dana? *(Dana gets up and passes toast to Brooke.)*

Christy- NOBODY'S LISTENING TO ME! BROOKE. BROOKE!

Brooke- I can hear you, you were drawing a picture and Ronnie ate his paint.

Christy- NO! It was Danny who ate his paint, now listen! You listen to everybody else except for me! So Listen!

Ben- Ha. Brooke got told off by Christy. I knew you had no back bone.

Brooke- Shut-up Ben, just because I don't flip out whenever someone talks back to me, doesn't mean I have no back bone. And stop encouraging Christy to be brazen, cause who knows, she might end up like you someday.

Ben- Only if she's lucky, sis.

Dana- Can you please stop your petty arguments? Just get along for once!

Ben- I don't have to listen to you, you're not my mother. My mother is dead.

Christy runs off stage right, Dana runs out after her. Brooke was left in the room with Ben, just staring at him, and Ben is silently eating.

Narrator- Okay, before we go on any further with our story I might need to make a few things clear. Dana, Brooke, Ben and Christy Parker are all brother and sisters. They are living on their own. Their parents were killed two months earlier in a car accident. Ever since then Dana had to be in charge of her family. It was a nasty shock for all of them, believe me, I've been watching them ever since. Dana had to try and cover every need, from financial to emotional. As you can see none of them adjusted to the change just yet.

Scene II

Brooke is playing dolls with Christy, Ben is watching T.V.

Narrator- It is a day after the argument in the kitchen. Dana is at work, and Ben, Brooke and Christy have been home for a long time by themselves. Brooke gets home from picking up Christy. Ben comes home and destroys the kitchen. Brooke plays with Christy. And you will see what else is normal for this family.

Narrator stays on the stage.

Ben- Same old Simpson's reruns on TV again.

Brooke- You should help me clean instead of watching T.V.

Ben makes a mocking face to Brooke and Brooke sticks out her tongue to him.

Christy- Ben, when is Dana coming home?

Ben- I dunno, she's taking some long time though. I'm starven (*He holds his stomach*), that accident that Brooke calls Kraft Dinner wasn't any good. It tasted like something...

Brooke- I'd like to see you make better. All you do is complain, why don't you ever cook? God, you'd swear I was feeding you poison, not Kraft Dinner.

Ben- So that wasn't rat poison? Okay so it was just your cooking, good to know.

Brooke- You little... your so bad there isn't a word for someone as shallow as you.

Christy- Oh my, you guys argue A LOT.

Dana enters stage left.

Dana- Hi guys.

Christy- Hi Dana, their (*Points to Ben and Brooke*) fighting again.

Dana- Yeah well, what's new? So anything happen today, besides their arguing?

Brooke- Ms. Stern came by. I told her that you were in the shower.

Dana- Did she say if she was coming back later?

Brooke- Well she didn't say, but ... *(Someone knocks on the door.)* I'll get it.

Brooke exits stage left. Dana sits next to Ben on the couch, Ben moves away from his sister.

Dana- So how was your day at school Ben?

Ben- I dunno, *(Turns on the T.V.)*

Dana- What did you do?

Ben- Nothing.

Dana- So you just sat at your desk all day doing nothing?

Ben- I guess so.

Dana- Ben, drop the attitude.

Ben- I didn't do anything important. Now if you will drop the "good mommy" act,
I want to go to my room.

(Ben exits stage right)

Dana- Oh my Christy. What are we going to do with him?

Christy- I don't know. *(She thinks for a minute.)* Can we sell him?

Dana- *(Laughs at her little sister.)* No doll, we can't sell him.

Brooke enters stage left.

Brooke- Dana, Ms. Stern is outside. I tried my best to get her to go home, but she wouldn't go.

Dana- Perfect timing, the house is a mess, Ben's acting up again, and I'm still in my dirty work clothes. *(Dana wipes her clothes and rubs her hair down.)*

Ms. Stern enters stage left.

Ms. Stern- ... Now Ms. Parker, I don't appreciate being kept waiting. Didn't you teach your sister better manners than that?

Brooke- Ms. Stern, it isn't Dana's fault.

Dana- Brooke, can you take Christy to her room and play with her for a little bit, please?

Brooke- Come on Christy, let's go and play your snakes and ladders game.

Christy- Okay, good bye Ms. Stern.

Brooke and Christy exit stage right.

Ms. Stern- Snakes and ladders, not a very educational game now is it?

Dana- I think it teaches her how to count- and about the pitfalls of life.

Ms. Stern- *(Sarcastically)* Oh I see.

Dana- Anyway, I'm sorry for the mess Ms. Stern, it normally isn't like this. Please, have a seat.

Ms. Stern- *(Sarcastically)* Yes, it's only like this when I drop by for my inspections. Now Ms. Parker, I came by earlier, and that poor Brooke said that you were in the shower. I'm on my own time, just so you know. *(She opens her brief case, and takes out a folder and starts to take notes.)*

Dana- Oh yes I'm sorry about that Ms. Stern. Um, you see, I had to get cleaned up before I went to work. Would you like some tea, or coffee?

Ms. Stern- No thank-you. Okay now I have to ask you some questions, What were your working hours for this week?

Dana- Umm, I dunno, I did about fifty hours so far.

Ms. Stern- Well how many hours did you put in today?

Dana- I did twelve hours.

Ms. Stern- So you come back to shower then you went back to work?

Dana- Ahh, no. You see... *(Looking worried)*

Ms. Stern-*(Says loudly and firmly)* I don't appreciate being lied to.

Dana-I'm doing the best I can. My brother and sisters depend on me. I'm not able to
be here all the time, I'll be the first one to admit it. I have to be at the bakery
a lot, minimum wage means I have to do long hours. It's all time and
money.

Ms. Stern- So you admit that it's hard.

Dana- Well yes. I think I'm doing pretty well, now honestly, would you want to be
an eighteen year old, having to provide for three other children as well as
yourself, and... *(pause for a few seconds)* What I'm saying is that it's hard
for any single parent and even harder for me, I only became a parent two
months ago, when mum and dad died. Our Mum and Dad were orphans and
now we are. Do you know how hard it is to give support to children, when
your still hurting? When you have to be strong for other people, when your
screaming on the inside?

Ms. Stern- Dana, that's exactly what I'm saying, no one is capable of carrying
your burden. Something's got to be done here. You've bitten off more than
you can chew. You're children- I , I mean your, your... siblings are
suffering.

Dana- I'm going to do this, I Am Not going to let this family fall apart.

Ms. Stern- Well, we'll see tomorrow after the meetings with your siblings.

Dana- Okay, good-bye.

Ms. Stern- Good-bye Ms. Parker.

Ms. Stern exits stage left. Brooke enters stage right.

Brooke- Is she gone? I heard shouting.

Dana- Yes she's gone. *(She let out a sigh.)* Don't mind the shouting it was nothing...

Brooke- She left and...? *(Moves her hand in a circular motion.)*

Dana- Point-blank, she thinks I'm gonna choke.

Dana exits stage right and Brooke is left on stage.



Scene III

Ben enters stage, sees a pile of mail and picks it up, exits stage he comes back and sits on the couch.

Enter Dana, Brooke and Christy. Dana and Brooke start to sweep up and wipe off table, Christy joins them but dusting.

Narrator- The Parker family are all getting ready for Ms. Stern, but before the day is done they will have more then one surprise.

Dana- Ben can you please help us? There is a lot of work to be done.

Ben- Your doing a good job without me, I'll just stay here and supervise. *(After a few seconds.)* Umm Dana...

Dana- Yes?

Ben- You missed a spot over there.

Dana- Ben, quit it. You either help, and "supervise" as much as you like or not help and be quiet.

Ben- Fine by me.

Dana, Brooke and Christy sit down on the couch to wait for Ms. Stern. The phone rings, Dana exits stage right.

Ben- When is Ms. Stern suppose to be coming? She is slower then Dana.

Dana enters stage right.

Christy- Who was that Dana?

Dana- That was Ms. Stern, she won't be able to make our meeting today. She said that she'll have to re-schedule it for Monday.

Ben- Oh great what a waste of a Friday afternoon. Well, I'm going over to Joel's house, he got a new X-Box.

Dana- Wait, I have to talk to you all about something very serious while I got you all here.

Ben- Yippee, a meeting.

Dana- Ben! Please this is serious and I want you all to pay attention.

Brooke- Okay Dana, we're listening. *(Nudges Ben)*

Dana- Okay I don't know how to say this... I know that none of you are going to like what I've done but ... I've applied for Welfare.

Brooke- Dana what are you talking about? *(Laughing)* Were not going on welfare.

Dana- I didn't tell anyone, not even Ms. Stern.

Ben- So she doesn't know, and she's our social worker? Man, your confusing. She's suppose to know all this stuff Dana.

Dana- Ya I know that but she wouldn't agree with me so I had to do it on my own.

Christy- What's welfare?

Ben- It's for poor people Christy.

Christy- Are we poor now Ben?

Ben- I guess so.

Brooke- We're going on welfare. We are going on welfare.

Dana- Well yes, unless the Magic Money Fairy comes to us with A Lot of Money, were going on welfare.

Christy- I could pull out some teeth and then the tooth fairy will come and leave me some money, I could give you that Dana so we don't have to go on welfare

Dana- Thanks doll, but that's okay. The money you get from the tooth fairy is yours to keep.

Christy- Okay but if I lose any teeth, you can have my money.

Ben- *(He stands up to leave.)* Be back later.

Dana- Where are you going?

Ben- I dunno, I'll just be back later.

Christy- Ben can you take me to the park? *(She stands up.)*

Ben- I dunno, ahh...

Christy- Please Ben.

Ben- Ohh okay, come on.

Christy- Dana, can I go?

Dana- Be back in time for supper.

Ben and Christy exit stage left Ben not looking too happy, Dana and Brooke are left.

Brooke- Why do we have to go on welfare?

Dana- Brooke, im getting minimum wage, and you know how many hours I'm doing. It just isn't enough.

Brooke- *(After a few moments silence.)* Well, who knows, maybe something good will happen to us so then we won't have to go on welfare.

Dana- Please Brooke, I've prayed so much for something good to happen over the last two months, and all we got was more trouble's. I've almost given up hope.

Brooke- Dana, don't say that.

Dana- I'm sorry Brooke but it's true, we lost our parents, were losing each other, I don't see what's so good about it.

Brooke- You can't give up hope, it's the only good thing that we have to hold

onto.

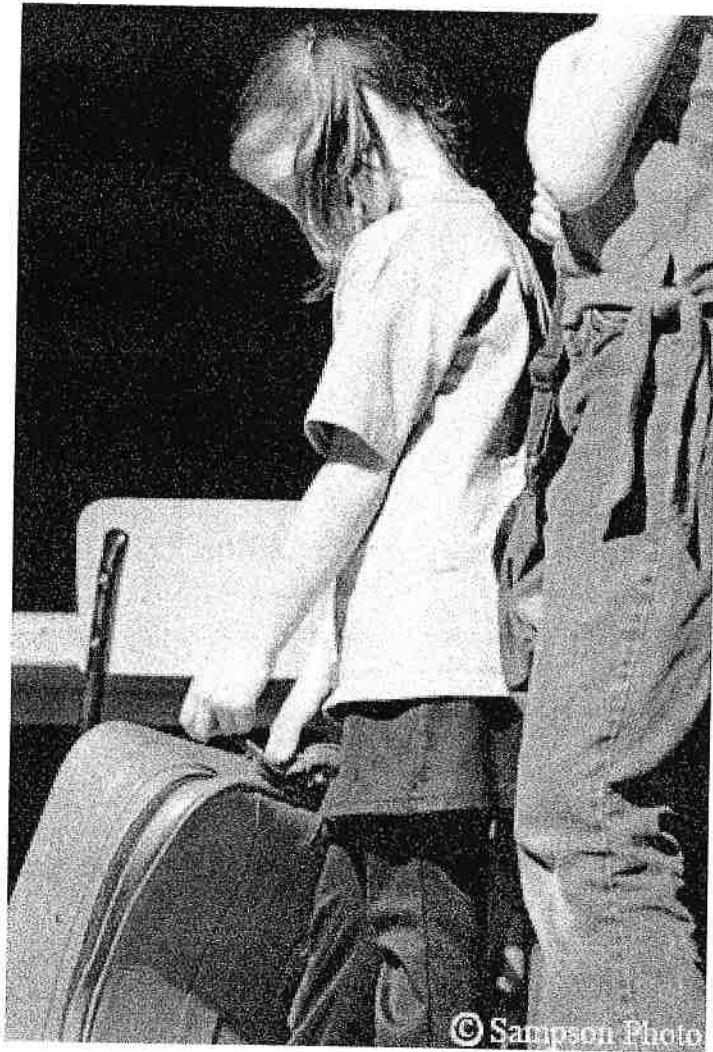
Please Dana, tell me that you won't give up hope.

Dana- Like I said Brooke, I gave hope a chance and it just slapped me in the face.

Brooke- Give it one more try. If you don't you might as well say your good-byes now.

Brooke goes off stage left.

Dana- I know, girl. I guess that before this is over I'll be black and blue.



Scene IV

The scene opens with Ben, Brooke, Christy and Ms. Stern in the living room. Ms. Stern is looking impatient. Brooke is looking worried, Ben is looking amused and Christy is doing some ballet.

Narrator- Today is the day of the meetings with Ms. Stern. Dana isn't here yet.

Ms. Stern is looking at her watch, tapping her foot and lets out a loud sigh.

Ms. Stern- Your sister is taking a long time.

Brooke- I'm sure she will be here any minute.

Ben- Yeah, and I'm sure that pigs will fly any minute.

As Ben says this Ms. Stern sits down, and takes out her notepad and looks at Ben oddly.

Christy- Ben, pigs don't fly, they walk. Your soo silly.

Ms. Stern- What do you mean by that Ben?

Ben- Oh I dunno, it's just that having Dana home at four o'clock in the afternoon happens once in a blue moon.

Ms. Stern writes down what he says.

Ms. Stern- Oh I see, so she leaves you here by yourself for most of the day?

Brooke- I don't think that we should start the meetings until Dana gets here.

Ms. Stern- Yes of course.

Ben- Man, I gotta get outta here.

Brooke- We have to do this first Ben.

Christy- How come this is taking so long?

Ben- Because Dana is taking so long, everything that she does effects us, and I'm sick of it.

Brooke- *(in almost a whisper)* Ben, shut-up.

Ms. Stern- What was that Brooke? *(Taking notes the whole while)*

Brooke- Nothing.

Ben- She told me to shut up, because I'm speaking the truth about our dear older sister.

Brooke- Ben stop it please!

Ms. Stern- Okay, I think that we better start now, I'd like to talk to Christy first.

Brooke- But Ms. Stern-

Ms. Stern- Brooke I can't wait any longer, If you two would please leave the room.

Brooke- I don't think-

Ben- Yes we all know that you don't think, so get out of the room, and leave the thinking to the adults.

Ben drags Brooke off stage right, Brooke saying : "Ben we can't leave Christy in there..." As she gets taken out of the room.

Ms. Stern- Hi Christy, I'm going to ask you some questions now okay?

Christy- Okay. But not hard one's like in school.

Ms. Stern- No it won't be like that. How often do you see Dana?

Taking notes whenever Christy speaks.

Christy- Whenever she's home- you silly.

Ms. Stern- Yes I am silly aren't I? Okay... well, how often is she home?

Christy- (*Christy plays with her hands.*) In the mornings when we go to school and sometimes when we get tucked into bed at night. Sometimes after school, but she can't play with us as much as she used to when Mum and Dad were here. She's a lot busier now, and not as fun.

Ms. Stern- Can I ask you some questions about your Mum and Dad?

Christy- I don't like talking about that.

Ms. Stern- Didn't Dana talk to you about your parents... being gone?

Christy- Yes, she told me that Mum and Dad are gone to a better place and that they are still watching over us and that sometime when we're really old, we will be with them again. But Ben keeps on saying that their dead.

Ms. Stern- You don't understand what's been happening over the last two months do you? Christy, your mum and dad are in heaven. I don't know how to say this...

Christy looking like she is going to cry, she stands up.

Christy- (*Talks very loudly.*) Ms. Stern your lying to me, my Mum and Dad aren't in heaven cause if your in heaven that means your dead and my parents are alive. I want everyone to stop lying to me, MY MUM AND DAD (*Stomps foot*) AREN'T DEAD. (*Christy runs out of the room crying to stage right*)

Ms. Stern- Oh my, I have more problems to deal with then I thought, that poor child is in serious denial and Ms. Parker's applied for welfare without my okay. I don't know what I'm going to do with this family.

Enter Ben from stage right.

Ben- Christy in one of her fits again?

Ms. Stern- Well, we were talking about your parents and she didn't know how to handle it.

Ben- Ahh that's nothing, it's a day-to-day thing around here.

Ms. Stern- I see. So Ben could I ask you some questions now?

Ben- Whatever.

Ms. Stern- How is it having Dana as your guardian?

Ben- Oh man, she is never here to feed us, and when she isn't here I have to eat Brooke's slop. When she does come home she has to clean and she has to rest. We never see her.

Ms. Stern- Okay, what about being disciplined?

Ben- (*sounding sarcastic*) O yeah, she's good at that, five times a day at times. She got the good 'ol paddle in her room, her personal favorite.

Ms. Stern- Oh my goodness, your not serious!?

Ben- No, no...just kidding.

Ms. Stern- Now Ben, behave.

Ben- Okay.

Ms. Stern- How's school Ben?

Ben- Boring, a waste of time, and not worth going to, everything they teach there I could learn on T.V.

Ms. Stern- I see...How are you doing in your courses?

Ben- I don't care, I don't pay attention to that anymore. Well not since...

Ms. Stern- Not since what Ben? You can tell me.

Ben- It's not important, it's nothing.

Ms. Stern- I think I know what you were going to say.

Ben- How do you know? You don't know me.

Dana enters stage left, she stays back and listens.

Ms. Stern- Ben it isn't healthy to keep it all bottled up.

Ben- So, it's not your problem is it?

Ms. Stern- Yes it is, I have to make sure your alright.

Ben- Like I said it's not your problem if I'm alright. That's for me to worry about.
(He looks at Ms. Stern's face.) Okay you want to know what I'm feeling?
Okay, I feel like everything was turned upside down and I can't put it back together again. According to people they passed away, but in reality they were stole. I never got to say good-bye.

Ms. Stern- Yes Ben, I understand.

Ben- No you don't. No one does.

Ms. Stern- Ben, I know that this is kinda sudden, but how would you like to live with a loving family, you'd have a mom and dad, and never have to worry about money?

Ben- That sounds great.

Ms. Stern- Okay I have to talk to Dana yet, but everything will be fine. We can have you in Corner Brooke by Wednesday.

Ben- Hold on, is Corner Brooke across town or something?

Ms. Stern- No Ben, it's in Newfoundland.

Ben starts to look worried, Dana comes in the scene behind Ben.

Dana- *(To Ms. Stern)* What do you think your doing? Your not allowed to start until I'm here.

Ms. Stern- Ms. Parker, You were taking so long, I couldn't wait any longer and besides the children were anxious to get started.

Dana- That's a load of crap if I ever heard it, you had to force it out of Ben, and who else, Christy, Brooke?

Ben- You heard what I said?

Dana- Yes I did, and he's not going to Corner Brooke.

Ms. Stern- Well from what he told me your lucky I'm not sending him to Toronto
(*Ben gets up and leaves stage right.*) He is troubled Ms. Parker, and I don't
think this home is helping him.

Dana- So being around the people that loves him won't help him? Ms. Stern, do
you really think that sending him to strangers is going to help him?

Ms. Stern- Yes I do. You applied for welfare, why?

Dana- We ... We need more money, so I can spend more time here.

Ms. Stern- That just proves my point, you can't handle this situation, I've killed
that application.

Dana- Ms. Stern you stopped any hope of us getting that money we need. Why
can't you just bloody well leave us alone!?

Ms. Stern- Ms. Parker, why can't you understand that all I want to do is help? By
my taking them out of your care, you'd be able to live your life the way an
eighteen year should, being free and responsible for only yourself.

Dana- What do you mean by taking them out of my care?

Ms. Stern- From the meetings today, I've decided that the children should be taken
into foster care. (*Ms. Stern closes her brief case and stands up.*) I'll be back
to get them in two days. I know that this is a shock to you, but they have to
go. Good day Ms. Parker.

*Ms. Stern exits stage left, Dana is left on stage, she goes and sits down at the
table, puts her head down and cries. Dana hears footsteps coming down the hall
and she quickly wipes her tears. Enter Brooke and Christy from stage right.*

Christy- Hi Dana, your home early today.

Dana- Yes hey. I have to tell you two something. (*They sit and look at Dana.*)
Okay you both know that I love you right. No matter where you go I'll
always love you, no matter how far apart?

Brooke- Dana, your scaring me, what are you getting at?

Dana- You guys are going to have a new home, with a new mommy and daddy,

and maybe new brothers and sisters.

Christy-But I already got a family that I like. And I don't want to live somewhere else. Please don't let me go Dana.

Christy gets up and gets in Dana arms, she hugs her. Brooke looks at Dana, stands up and goes out of the room to stage right.

Christy- Please don't make me go Dana.

Dana rubs down Christy's hair, and just holds her.

Dana- I wish I didn't have to.

Scene V

There are three suitcases to the right of stage. Ben enters, picks up mail and puts it somewhere off stage right. Ben enters again.

Ben- I don't want to go to Corner Brooke. Even though they can drive me crazy sometimes, they are family. I don't want to lose them. But there's nothing we can do now.

Ben exits to stage right. Dana, Brooke, and Christy all come in and sit down on couch. Dana sits in the middle with Brooke or Christy on either side, in her arms.

Narrator- Ms. Stern is coming to get Ben, Brooke and Christy to take them away. Everyone feels they tried and lost, but they don't know that the answer to all their problems is in their very home.

Brooke- Why can't I stay here?

Christy- I don't want to go.

Enter Ben from stage right.

Brooke- Me neither.

Ben- Me neither.

Dana- What?

Ben- I don't want to go. I was wrong all along.

Brooke- Kinda late there Ben, Ms. Stern is coming to take you to Corner Brooke any minute.

Ben- Please... I don't wanna go. Dana can I talk to you alone for a minute?

Dana- Sure Ben.

Brooke and Christy exit to stage right.

Dana- Ben what is it?

Ben- You can't laugh at me.

Dana- Okay.

Ben- I...I went to see ... the guidance counselor, yesterday. And he said that I need some help, well, a lotta help.

Dana- Ben why would I laugh? That's the best news I heard in two months.

Dana goes and hugs Ben. Knocking at the door.

Dana- I guess that's her.

Dana gets up and exits to the left, Brooke and Christy enter from stage right again.

Christy- I'm going to miss you Ben and Brooke. *(She hugs Brooke.)*

Brooke- I hate this!

Ben- Your not the only one.

Enter Ms. Stern and Dana from stage left. Christy stands up and goes to Dana.

Ms. Stern- Okay children ready?

Ben, Brooke, Christy- No!

Ms. Stern- What do you need?

Christy- To be together.

Ms. Stern- Okay children, come on. *(They stand up and pick up their suitcases.)*
You have the papers signed and ready for me?

Dana- Papers?

Ms. Stern- Yes the papers Ms. Parker, I mailed them weeks ago. Don't tell me you haven't received them.

Dana- No I haven't received anything from you. Come to think of it, I haven't gotten a bill, a report card, nothing.

Ms. Stern- Well the children can't leave until those papers are signed.

Christy- Yippee.

Dana- No doll, that isn't good, I need those papers and bills.

Ben- Dana, what are you talking about, we got loads of mail.

Dana- Where?

Ben- I've been putting the mail in Dad's den, you know where it was always put...? Ahh Hold on!

Ben exits stage right, Dana looks at the others.

Brooke- I didn't know about it.

Ben enters stage right holding a box.

Ben- Now see what I'm talking about?

Dana- Where did all this come from?

Ben- The mail man.

Ms. Stern- Ms. Parker, if you will please get the papers you have to sign, were trying to catch a plane.

Dana- Yes Ms. Stern. There's a lot to go through.

Dana leafs through the mail and picks out an envelope.

Dana- Oh my god, ninety four dollars for the phone bill!

Ms. Stern- See? This is why these children have to go out of your care.

Dana- So you said before. *(She takes out another envelope and opens it)*. Seven hundred and sixty dollars for the electric bill! Final Notice?! Oh my god, I'm never going to be able get these paid off.

Ms. Stern- Ms. Parker can you please hurry up, the plane won't wait for Ben. And I can't wait all day either. If you could please find the papers and sign them, we'll be on our way.

Dana picks out one more envelope.

Dana- This is weird, what would I get from the Co-operators?

Ms. Stern- Its probably an overdue notice for house insurance .Ms. Parker please.

Dana- "To whom it may concern, In regards to the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Parker there is an outstanding balance of a two hundred and fifty thousand dollar policy (double indemnity) to be paid into said estate. We await...*(Trails off)*... OH My God Two Hundred Thousand dollars!

Christy- Do we have to pay that!?

Ben- Or does it mean we're rich?

Ms. Stern- Did you say double indemnity?

Dana- Yes - what's that mean... ?

Ms. Stern- Dana, this means that you get double - five - hundred thousand dollars.

Brooke- What?!