

The Twilight Cone

A one-act comedy
by Wade Bradford

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DEDICATION

To Aunt Diane

STORY OF THE PLAY

It's Marcus' first day on the job at The Twilight Cone. This unusual ice cream shop is owned by his Great-Aunt Diane. Marcus has already been trained on the milkshake machine and scooping ice cream when suddenly his eccentric aunt needs to run to the store to get more chocolate syrup. What could go wrong if she leaves him alone? She reluctantly decides to let him open the shop but makes him promise not to serve any flavor but vanilla. When five young women, Kaitlyn, Alexa, Chelsea, Lola, and Kirsten, come in to the shop, Marcus' promise is forgotten. Little does he know that each unique milkshake flavor causes an unusual reaction. The Narrator, unnoticed by all, enters and explains the power of each shake. As the five women drink their shakes, they quickly realize something is not normal. Kaitlyn's shake allows her to rewind time. She no longer worries about embarrassing herself in front of her crush Marcus. She can simply rewind the conversation and begin again. Alexa's shake slows time. With her shake, forgotten Lola finds out what it's like to be the center of attention while the star Chelsea is no longer recognized. Kirsten shake allows her to let down her polite guard and speak her mind. Oops! With embarrassment and hurt feelings, how will these friends get back to normal? Aunt Diane returns and sets things right ... well, as soon as they can get rid of that pesky narrator.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 characters: 1 m, 5 w, 2 flexible)

MARCUS: Young man. He is a bit nervous because it's his first day on the job.

DIANE: His great-aunt who runs the place. She is a strange, funny old lady with a gray wig. She knows an awful lot about people, and even more about frozen desserts.
(Could be his uncle Dwayne with some minor changes to the script.)

NARRATOR: He speaks to the audience in the same way Rod Serling spoke to his television audience on the old show "The Twilight Zone." *(Could be male or female.)*

KAITLYN: Young woman who is kind.

ALEXA: Young woman who is flirtatious.

CHELSEA: Young woman who is adventurous.

LOLA: Young woman who is cynical from being the forgotten member of the group.

KIRSTEN: Young woman who is judgmental but covers it up with politeness.

SETTING

The Twilight Cone Ice Cream Shop could be an indoor or an outdoor establishment. There are a few benches or chairs, and at least one table at which to sit. There should be a table, bar, or counter in which some of the action can be hidden, such as making milkshakes or scooping ice cream, thereby removing the need for extensive props.

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(AT RISE: MARCUS, dressed with a server's apron over his clothes and wearing a server's cap, is wielding an ice cream scoop. He and DIANE are getting ready to open the store.)

DIANE: Your hat is on crooked.

MARCUS: *(Tries to fix it.)* Better?

DIANE: It's worse.

MARCUS: How about now?

DIANE: Scooch down. You're so tall. You should be a basketball player. *(SHE fixes HIS hat.)*

MARCUS: I just seem so tall because you're so short.

DIANE: Hey, watch it. You might be my grand-nephew, but you can't sass me when you're wearing that uniform. I'm your manager. You gotta be professional.

MARCUS: Yes, Aunt Diane.

DIANE: Now, I've taught you the art of operating the cash register. You've mastered the milkshake machine. All we need is for you to learn the secrets of the scoop *(Twirls ice cream scoop.)* and then you'll be ready for your first day.

MARCUS: *(Reaching down to scoop some ice cream.)* Okay. So, I'm guessing you just put the scoop in the ice cream—

DIANE: Whoa—whoa! Stay away from the strawberry. You're only a trainee. Let's start with the vanilla.

MARCUS: But I'm so bored of vanilla!

DIANE: Watch the sass!

MARCUS: Sorry, Aunt Diane, but ever since I was a kid, vanilla is all I've ever tasted. You kept all the other flavors off-limits. I never understood why.

DIANE: *(Squishes HIS cheeks.)* Oh, my sweet little nephew! You always did ask too many questions. Now, back to Scooping 101. First, you want to give your customer a good once over to figure out which flavor's right for them—half of this job is matching the right flavor to the right person.

MARCUS: Why don't you let the customer decide?

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DIANE: This ain't Dairy Queen! This is *my* ice cream shop— so I make the rules. I decide what flavor goes into what cone. Now, when you hold the scoop, make sure your thumb is— *(Suddenly, SHE stops talking and sniffs the air.)*

MARCUS: What's wrong?

DIANE: We're almost out of chocolate syrup! *(SHE ducks behind to check her supplies.)*

MARCUS: How can you—

DIANE: *(Hops back up.)* Down to the last teaspoon! What a fool I am! And here with the store just about to open. I'll be right back!

MARCUS: I'll hold down the fort.

DIANE: You'll hold down nothing. Don't sell a single scoop until I get back.

MARCUS: But I know what I'm doing.

DIANE: *(On her way out.)* No sass out of you.

MARCUS: Don't you trust me?

DIANE: *(Just about to exit, SHE pauses and thinks about her nephew's words for a moment.)* Fine. You can open the shop. But until I get back, don't sell anything but vanilla!

MARCUS: But what if someone—

DIANE: *(Switches a sign around, changing it from "Closed" to "Open." Smooshes MARCUS' cheeks together.)* You be a good boy and I'll be right back.

(MARCUS gives her a salute and SHE exits, shaking her head as if she already regrets her decision. As Marcus arranges the cups and fiddles with a scoop, a NARRATOR enters. Marcus is oblivious to his presence.)

NARRATOR: Picture a young man... It's the first day of the job at a local ice cream shop, known for its unusual owner and its more than unusual flavors. Despite his first day jitters, Mr. Marcus Sherbert is confident he will prove himself worthy of his great-aunt's faith, believing that this is the just one of many steps on the path to adulthood.

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NARRATOR: *(Cont'd.)* But what he doesn't realize is that this path actually leads to a bizarre little corner of the universe few get to visit, because the name of this ice cream shop is none other than...The Twilight Cone.

(The NARRATOR exits, just as MARCUS glances around.)

MARCUS: Hello? *(Still sees no one.)* Hmm. *(Looks around, checking for anything else to be done. To himself.)* So far, this job is easy.

(On the other side of the stage, FIVE YOUNG WOMEN enter. They peer at MARCUS, giggle, and then regroup into a huddle. They are far enough away that Marcus doesn't hear them. He is busy wiping things down, and his back is often turned, so he doesn't yet see them.)

ALEXA: Is that him?

KAITLYN: Yes.

ALEXA: He is cute.

CHELSEA: I approve.

KIRSTEN: He seems nice.

ALEXA: Nice? Don't listen to Kirsten. She says everyone is nice. He is way better than nice. He is dreamy.

KIRSTEN: *(Sounding sincere, not sarcastic.)* Thank you, Alexa. You always know just the right word.

KAITLYN: Well, we got everyone's opinion, we can go now.

CHELSEA: Whoa, whoa – you forgot to ask what Lola thinks.

KAITLYN: Oh yeah.

LOLA: *(Puts on her glasses.)* He looks like the kind of guy who wouldn't give me the time of day.

ALEXA: Right, so he's hot.

KIRSTEN: Oh, wait I know him. We're in band together. He plays the saxophone.

CHELSEA: *(Nudging KAITLYN.)* Ooh, the saxophone.

KIRSTEN: He's third chair.

ALEXA: Ooh, third chair.

KAITLYN: Is that good?

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KIRSTEN: Third chair is a very nice place to be.

CHELSEA: How many chairs are there?

KIRSTEN: Three.

ALEXA: So, he's a lousy musician. Who cares?

KAITLYN: *(To KIRSTEN.)* I'm sensing underneath that polite exterior, you're not impressed.

KIRSTEN: He's fine. Very nice. It's just that he called me Kristen.

CHELSEA: Oh, the dreaded Kristen instead of Kirsten conflict.

KIRSTEN: Well, it shouldn't be so hard for people to remember. But it's fine. I don't mind. I've gotten used to it.

ALEXA: Let's focus. This isn't about you, *Kristen*. This is about Kaitlyn, and the cute guy from her math class.

KAITLYN: All right, I showed him to you. Now let's get out of here.

CHELSEA: No, no. If all goes well, you'll get a date to the winter formal and we'll get hooked up with some free milkshakes.

(CHELSEA and ALEXA pull KAITLYN near the counter. LOLA and KIRSTEN follow, not nearly as enthusiastic.)

MARCUS: Welcome to the Twilight Cone. How may I—oh, Kaitlyn! Hi.

KIRSTEN: He pronounces *your name* correctly.

KAITLYN: We were just in the neighborhood---

ALEXA: Looking for something sweet—

KAITLYN: -- Thought we'd say hi on your first day.

MARCUS: Wow. Thanks. How did you know it was my first day?

KAITLYN: Oh, actually, I—

ALEXA: She stalks you on Twitter.

CHELSEA: *(Pulling ALEXA back.)* Why don't we let Kaitlyn do the talking? After all, this poor boy has no idea who the rest of us are.

MARCUS: Actually, I think I already know most of you. *(To CHELSEA.)* You're Chelsea Moore. You were the star of the school play last year. You were amazing.

End of Freeview

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