

Herbert Sherbert



A Three Act Play
For Middle Grades

By Kathy Warnes

HERBERT SHERBERT

Cast of Characters

Jenny	Mean Mike
Herbert	Mrs. Sherbert
Susie	Lunchroom Lady
Mrs. Higgenbottom	Coach Big Ben Brown

ACT I.

(Herbert, Jenny and Susie are standing in the corner of the gym. There are benches in the background. Mrs. Higgenbottom, the gym teacher, is standing with them. She is dressed in gym shorts, tennis shoes, a sweat shirt and has a whistle hanging around her neck.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Okay, kids, you're the last three to try out for the Girls Track Team at Greenfield Grammar School. We're racing against the boy's team and they have a good team. The events will consist of pole vaulting (she points to a long pole), skipping rope (she dangles a jump rope for them to see), throwing a ball (she throws a huge ball to them) and running. (She points to three pair of oversized tennis shoes sitting on the bench. Contestants, attention! (She blows her whistle) Jenny! Jenny walks over and stands next to her. Susie! Susie runs over and stands, running in

place.) Herbert. Herbert??? Herbert Sherbert, are you sure you're in the right place? Herbert walks over to her with an oversize bowl and spoon in his hand. There is a scoop of cardboard sherbert in it.

HERBERT:

I...I think I'm in the right place, Mrs. Higgenbottom. Don't worry, one bite of my sherbert and I'll be a faster runner than even Mean Mike on the boy's team.

MEAN MIKE:

(Running on stage carrying a note) Five seconds from the boys gym to the girls gym! That even breaks my old speed record. Here, Mrs. Higgenbottom the coach sent you a note. (He hands it to her)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Thank you, Mike.

MEAN MIKE:

I can tell you what it says. Coach Big Ben Brown says he wants you to let Herbert Sherbert run on the girl's team, because he isn't fast enough for the boys.

SUSIE:

We don't want a boy on our team, Mrs. Higgenbottom.

MEAN MIKE:

We don't want him on our team either. He's a loser!

JENNY:

Don't talk about him like that.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Reading note) Herbert will be on the girl's team at the request of head coach Big Ben Brown.

And that's the final word.

MEAN MIKE:

(Jeering) Ha, ha, you'll lose for sure now. Herbert Sherbert runs like a turtle! Like Myrtle the Turtle with a girdle! Wait 'til I tell the guys! (He runs offstage)

HERBERT:

But I'm getting faster every day. Wanna see?

SUSIE:

Show us, Herbert.

HERBERT:

(Without putting down his dish of sherbert, Herbert goes over to the bench and picks up a pair of tennis shoes. He bends over to put them on. As he bends over, Mean Mike tiptoes up behind him and pushes him over. The dish of sherbert and spoon fall on the floor with a loud clatter.)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

You better go back to the boys team and practice, Mike. You'll need it.

MEAN MIKE:

(Laughing and pointing at Herbert) It doesn't take practice to beat him! He points at Herbert, then runs off stage laughing and sticking out his tongue.)

SUSIE:

If you can't hold on to a dish of sherbert, Herbert, how are you going to run on the girls track team?

HERBERT:

I'll show you. (He sits on the bench and reaches for his tennis shoes. He sits too close to the end and his weight tips the bench and spills him off.)

SUSIE:

(Scowling) I don't think you're going to do much for us, Herbert. You can't even put on y our shoes without falling.

JENNY:

(Walks over and helps Herbert to his feet. She hands him his dish, spoon and tennis shoes). Sit on the floor Herbert and I'll help you put on your shoes.

HERBERT:

(Sits on the floor. He puts on one of the oversized tennis shoes, and holds the dish of sherbert in his other hand.) Odffff! Ompppphh! Boy, is this hard work!

SUSIE:

If you can't get your shoes on, how are you going to run in them? Besides, no shoes are faster or better than mine. (She holds out her feet with tennis shoes on them) I have a picture of a chicken on my tennis shoes. I can run faster than you!

HERBERT:

I'll show you I can run just as fast! (He tugs at his tennis shoes. Jenny helps him pull them on.) One shoe on, just one to go!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Kneeling beside Herbert) Here, I'll help you on with this one. (She pulls and tugs and Herbert

leans forward, trying to get the shoe on. He loses his grip on the dish of sherbert and spoon and it falls, landing on Mrs. Higgenbottom's head. She shakes her fist and rubs her head) Coach Big Ben Brown, I'm going to get you for this! Herbert, do you have to take that dish of sherbert everywhere you go? You can't win a race with a dish of sherbert

HERBERT:

I can't run a race without my sherbert! Here, I'll show you what I mean. (He finishes tying the shoe and tries to get up, but falls back.)

JENNY:

I'll help you, Herbert. (She pulls him up.)

HERBERT:

Here, I'll leave my dish of sherbert sitting here and you'll see what I mean. Come on Susie and Jenny, let's race! (They run to the starting line where Mrs. Higgenbottom is standing. Herbert leaves his sherbert and spoon sitting on the bench.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

On your mark, get set.....(She blows her whistle) GO!!!

(They run. Jenny and Susie are neck and neck because both are good runners. Herbert walks.

HERBERT:

Puff, puff, puff. This is a real hard race. I'm running so fast I can't see my feet. (He walks slower and slower). Are we at the finish line yet?

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Hides her head in her hands) Oh no, no, no!!

SUSIE:

(Starts the second lap. She tickles Herbert as she runs by). Don't run so fast Herbert, you might get out of breath.

HERBERT:

Puff, puff, pant. I'm out of breath. I have to stop. (He walks slowly)

JENNY:

I'll help you Herbert! (She runs over to the bench and picks up Herbert's sherbert dish and spoon. She hands them to Herbert) Here's your sherbert, Herbert. Now go!!

HERBERT:

(Takes a bite of the sherbert) Wow, I needed this! I can't run without my sherbert.

JENNY:

Run, Herbert!

HERBERT:

(Ups his pace from a slow walk to a trot) Wow, I didn't know I could run so fast.

JENNY:

Faster, Herbert!

HERBERT:

(Runs faster and overtakes Susie.)

JENNY:

Come on Herbert. (She runs by and puts another scoop of cardboard sherbert in his bowl) Now run, Herbert! (Herbert runs. He overtakes Susie and crosses the finish line ahead of her)

JENNY:

Hooray for Herbert! (She jumps up and down and grabs Herbert's sherbert dish from him. She bangs the spoon against the dish). You did it Herbert!!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

I don't believe it!

HERBERT:

I'll do it again, Mrs. Higgenbottom. I like being on your team!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Run around the track again, Herbert.

HERBERT:

(Tries to run, but goes only a few feet, then sits down in the middle of the track.) I ran out of sherbert, Mrs. Higgenbottom. But I'll get more and I'll run again, I promise!

SUSIE:

I'll fix him for beating me.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Okay, Herbert, let's see you throw the ball! (She tosses the ball to him and he misses it. He has to chase it and bring it back.)

HERBERT:

(Picks up the ball and throws it a few inches) Is that the way, Mrs. Higgenbottom?

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Groaning) I don't believe it. (She picks up the ball and throws it offstage) That's how you throw a ball, Herbert. Now go get it and try again.

JENNY:

I'll help you find it, Herbert.

HERBERT:

(Runs after the ball, puffing and groaning. Jenny follows. They go off stage to get it and come back. Herbert is carrying the ball. He crawls back to Mrs. Higgenbottom, he is so tired.

JENNY:

We found it, Mrs. Higgenbottom!

HERBERT:

(Puffing and groaning) Here it is, Mrs. Higgenbottom.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Herbert, if you get this tired just chasing the ball, how tired are you going to get trying a championship throw?

SUSIE:

I don't think Herbert's track team material, Mrs. Higgenbottom.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Susie, that's my decision. (She looks worried) Herbert, do you think you could practice throwing the ball?

JENNY:

I'll help him!

SUSIE:

You're a boy lover, that's what you are, Jenny. Just wait 'til I tell the rest of the girls you're helping a boy! And Herbert Sherbert of all boys!

JENNY:

Go ahead and tell them!

HERBERT:

I know what I need. Wait a minute and I'll throw that ball out the door and over the gate.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

You don't need to throw it over the gate. Just throw it far enough to win!

HERBERT:

(Takes a bite of sherbert and swallows noisily.) There, now I'm ready! (He picks up the ball and throws it offstage. There is a crashing sound.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Mrs. Higgenbottom runs over to the edge of the stage and looks off. She hits her forehead with her hand) Oh no, Herbert, you broke the cafeteria window! Oh no! What will the principal say?

HERBERT:

He'll say I'm a good pitcher. Maybe I'll even try out for the Tigers now. I never broke a cafeteria window before!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Let's try the pole vaulting. (She grabs the pole and hops around with it) Let's see you do it, Herbert. (She hands him the pole)

JENNY:

Be careful, Herbert. Pole vaulting can be tricky.

HERBERT:

Jenny, I can't do this. I know I can't.

JENNY:

I'll coach you, Herbert.

HERBERT:

Would you Jenny? None of the boys would help me. They just laughed at me. And Coach Big Ben Brown said I couldn't even try out for the team.

JENNY:

It will take a lot of hard work, Herbert, but you can do it.

HERBERT:

I can do it as long as I have my sherbert, Jenny. Without it, I can't do anything.

JENNY:

But Herbert...

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Herbert, get on with your pole vaulting.

HERBERT:

(Grabbing the sherbert dish and taking a huge bite. He swallows with a noisy gulp.) Now watch me, Jenny! (He grabs the pole and throws it. It sails through the air and lands offstage).

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Grabbing her hair) Oh no! I can't believe it! Herbert, you're supposed to use the pole to jump with! You're not supposed to throw it!

JENNY:

(Runs to the edge of the stage and looks off) Mrs. Higgenbottom, the pole landed across the goal

post in the football field. All of the football players are standing around it jumping up and down and waving their arms!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Handing Herbert the jump rope) This should be safer, Herbert. Try jumping rope.

HERBERT:

(Tries to jump rope, but misses every step) I can't do it, Mrs. Higgenbottom.

JENNY:

(Holding out a bite of sherbert to him) Try this, Herbert.

HERBERT:

(Slurps noisily. Then he picks up the jump rope and jumps without missing a step!

JENNY:

You're going to practice every day, Herbert. You're going to be the best Junior Olympic team boy on the girl's team!

SUSIE:

We don't want a boy on the girl's team.

JENNY:

Herbert's a nice boy!

SUSIE:

He eats sherbert.

JENNY:

You eat spinach!

SUSIE:

Don't let him on our team, Mrs. Higgenbottom. We want to win!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

We're having the final tryouts tomorrow and if Herbert makes it, he's on the team.

SUSIE:

Wait until I tell the other girls. They're going to be mad at you, Jenny. They're going to write your name on the blackboard and scribble all over it. Nobody wants HerbertSherbert on our team but you!

JENNY:

He's my friend. Come on Herbert. If you're going to make the team, we need to start practicing.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

I'm going to find coach Big Ben Brown. He and I need to have a talk. (She walks off stage)

HERBERT:

I need to go home and get more sherbert. My dish is empty!

JENNY:

You're not going home until we practice jumping rope! Come on, Herbert. (She hands him a jump rope and jumps with him) That's it, Herbert...one...two...three...fell down andscratched my knee....four....five...six...patched it up with stinky Vicks!!

SUSIE:

(While they are jumping rope, the empty sherbert dish and spoon lie on the bench. Susie sees them and sneaks over) I'll fix that Herbert for beating me in the race. I'll fix that Herbert for trying to get on the girl's team. (She picks up Herbert's sherbert dish and spoon and tiptoes off

with it).

HERBERT:

(Jenny and Herbert still are jumping. Herbert is jumping better and better and puffing and panting more and more. Finally, he stops and wipes his forehead. He falls onto the bench) I have to go home and get more sherbert, Jenny. I can't jump another jump, I'm so tired. Maybe I have one little drop left in my dish. (He reaches for his sherbert dish) My sherbert's gone! The dish and spoon are gone!

JENNY:

They can't be. They were sitting right here on the bench!

HERBERT:

My dish and spoon and sherbert are gone. What am I going to do? I can't do anything without my sherbert. And the dish and spoon were my moms. I'll be in trouble with her if I don't find them.

JENNY:

Don't panic. The first we'll do is go to your house and get some more sherbert.

HERBERT:

Let's go, Jenny. I'm awfully tired. I need my sherbert. And my mom is going to be mad at me if I don't find that dish and spoon.

JENNY:

We'll find them, Herbert, don't worry. (She picks up the jump rope) Let's take this with us, so we

can practice jumping at your house too. (They start off for Herbert's house. Susie walks alongside them, but they don't see her. She is holding the sherbert dish and spoon)

SUSIE:

Ooooh, here's a squishy mud puddle. Be careful, Herbert. Don't walk through the mud puddle or you'll drop your dish and spoon. (She splashes through the mud puddle) I'll show you, Herbert. (She knees down and puts the dish and spoon in the mud puddle. Then she walks back and forth and makes muddy footprints on the floor. She takes squishy steps and leaves a line of muddy foot prints. She holds up two of them for everyone to see). I'll fix you, Herbert Sherbert!!

ACT II

(Two benches are arranged to be table and chairs. There is a cardboard refrigerator which can also be used in the lunchroom scene. Herbert's mother is sitting at the table. Herbert and Jenny burst into the kitchen)

HERBERT:

Mom, I want you to meet my friend, Jenny.

MRS. SHERBERT:

That's nice, dear.

JENNY:

I'm happy to meet you, Mrs. Sherbert.

HERBERT:

Jenny and I are practicing for the Olympic tryouts tomorrow, mom.

MRS. SHERBERT:

That's nice, dear.

HERBERT

(Whispers to Jenny) She sounds like she's in a good mood. I guess I'd better tell her.

JENNY:

Wait a while, Herbert. Maybe we can find them.

HERBERT:

Jenny's my coach, mom.

MRS. SHERBERT:

That's nice, dear.

HERBERT:

Mom, somebody took my sherbert dish and spoon. You know the ones you gave me....

MRS. SHERBERT:

That's nice dear...oh Herbert, can you get them back? Cardboard is hard to find.

HERBERT:

I'm sorry, mom. I'll try to get them back.

MRS. SHERBERT:

Oh dear, I was so fond of them both. (She puts her head down on the table and starts to cry)

JENNY:

We're terribly sorry, Mrs. Sherbert.

MRS. SHERBERT:

That's nice dear. But that doesn't bring back my dish or my spoon!

HERBERT:

Maybe they ran away with each other like the two in the nursery rhyme!

MRS. SHERBERT:

Herbert, how can you joke at a time like this? Where were you when this terrible thing happened?

JENNY:

We were jumping rope, Mrs. Sherbert. The Olympic tryouts are tomorrow and Herbert wants to be on the team. He was using his sherbert for strength.

MRS. SHERBERT:

Oh dear, oh dear. (She opens the refrigerator and peers into the freezer) And me without any more sherbert in the freezer!

HERBERT:

(Alarmed) Mom, the tryouts are tomorrow! What am I going to do? I have to pass the Junior Olympic tryouts tomorrow and I can't do it without my sherbert.

MRS. SHERBERT:

What do you have to do?

HERBERT:

I have to run around the gym and jump rope and throw a ball and pole hop.

JENNY:

It's pole vault, Herbert. Not pole hop.

HERBERT:

Hop, stop, mop! I have to do something with that pole and if I don't get my sherbert all I'll be able to do is look at it!

MRS. SHERBERT:

Oh dear, oh dear. This is terrible! (She opens the cardboard refrigerator and finds a box of cookies.) Try these, Herbert. (She holds out the cookies and Herbert eats one.

JENNY:

Now try a throw, Herbert. (She hands him a cookie. He tries to throw it, but can only get it as far as the table)

MRS. SHERBERT:

(Puts the empty box on the table and sits down.) Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear.

HERBERT:

We have to think fast, Jenny.

JENNY

(Opens the refrigerator door and takes out a box of candy.) Ummm, chocolate covered cherries!

Here, Herbert try one. Maybe candy will work as well as sherbert.

HERBERT:

(Eats one) I don't feel any different.

JENNY:

(Hands him another piece of candy) Throw this and see what happens.

HERBERT:

(Throws the piece of candy. It lands on the kitchen table by Mrs. Sherbert. She picks it up and eats it. Herbert sits down next to her.) Oh dear, oh dear!

JENNY:

I have an idea. We can go to the supermarket and get some more of your sherbert

HERBERT:

That's the best idea I've heard all day. Let's go!

MRS. SHERBERT:

Get some cookies while you're there, Herbert.

HERBERT:

I don't want more cookies. I need my sherbert.

JENNY:

We 'd better hurry, Herbert. We have lots of practicing to do.

(Herbert and Jenny walk across the front of the stage on their way to the supermarket. Jenny trips over something and falls).

JENNY:

Ouch! Did you trip me, Herbert?

HERBERT:

I didn't trip you, but this did! (He bends over and picks up a muddy footprint. He holds it up for everybody to see.) Look, it's a tennis shoe footprint! And look what it has on the bottom of it.

JENNY:

A picture of Wondergirl. That footprint could belong to only one person we know.

JENNY AND HERBERT TOGETHER:

Susie!!

HERBERT:

I wonder why Susie left her muddy footprints from my house to wherever she's going.

JENNY:

Maybe she's running away. Maybe she's looking for some place to hide ! Let's follow her tracks and see where she went.

HERBERT:

Let's get my sherbert first.

JENNY:

Okay, Herbert, we'll stop at the supermarket first. But let's run. It's about the same distance from here to the supermarket as it is from one end of the gym to the other.

HERBERT:

On our mark, get set...wait a minute, Jenny. I can't run without my sherbert. I haven't had any sherbert for an hour now.

JENNY:

When we get more sherbert and find you bowl, you can have a double dose of sherbert. Now let's go! (She runs ahead of him)

HERBERT:

Wait a minute...wait a minute Jenny. I can't have any more sherbert. I won't be able to run or jump rope or pole hop or throw the ball.

JENNY:

(Running back to him) Why not?

HERBERT:

Because I won't have anything to eat the sherbert in or anything to eat it with.

JENNY:

Let's get the sherbert first, then we'll worry about eating it. Now, on your mark, get set...go!

(Jenny and Herbert race to the opposite end of the stage. There is a wooden sign with tin cans and lettuce painted on it. It says in big black letters: SUPERMARKET. There is a few real tin cans in front)

JENNY:

The footprints lead all of the way here. See, here's the last one. (She holds up a large footprint with a picture of Wonder girl painted on it)

HERBERT:

Maybe Susie went in the supermarket with my sherbert dish and spoon.

JENNY:

She might have. Why don't you go inside and buy your sherbert and look for Susie, Herbert? I'll

stay out here and look for her.

HERBERT:

Okay, I'll go buy my sherbert. I'm getting weaker and weaker. (He staggers around the end of the sign and disappears)

JENNY:

(Stands waiting for a few minutes. She looks around. As Jenny turns her head, Susie crawls across the stage with the sherbert dish and spoon in her hand. With one hand she is picking up the muddy footprints. She stops and looks over her shoulder. As she looks over her shoulder, Jenny spots her. Jenny puts her hand to her lips in a shhh sign. She creeps up behind Susie and taps her on the shoulder.)

JENNY:

Are you looking for somebody, Susie?

SUSIE:

Yeowwww! (She jumps so hard she throws the sherbert dish and spoon and footprints all into the air. There is the sound of tearing paper..

JENNY:

Now see what you've done. You tore Herbert's sherbert dish! How's he going to eat his sherbert without his dish?

SUSIE:

You two were following me!

JENNY:

We were coming to the supermarket and tripped over your muddy footprints. What's the big idea stealing Herbert's sherbert?

SUSIE:

I don't want him on our team. Who ever heard of a boy being on the girls olympics team?

JENNY:

Herbert will do a good job if you just give him a chance.

SUSIE:

Good job! He can't do anything! He can't even run unless he eats his sherbert first.

JENNY:

We have to have faith in Herbert. He'll do a good job. He just needs confidence in himself.

SUSIE:

We don't have time to wait around while he gets his confidence. The races are tomorrow. You want to beat the boy's team don't you?

JENNY:

Sure I do. But I'm Herbert's friend, too.

SUSIE:

Herbert Sherbert doesn't have any friends!

JENNY:

Yes, he does. He has me! You quit talking about him like that. Now what are you going to do about his sherbert dish? You tore it?

SUSIE:

(Crawling and picking up the pieces) We can glue it.

JENNY:

We'd better hurry up and glue it before he comes out of the supermarket with his sherbert. Do you have any glue?

SUSIE:

Why would I be carrying glue?

JENNY:

Here's my allowance for this week. You go in the store and buy some glue. You can pay me back tomorrow. (She hands Susie some money)

SUSIE:

Here's the pieces of the dish.

JENNY:

And don't let Herbert see you. He knows you're the one who took his dish.

SUSIE:

You're a squealer, Jenny. You told him I took his dish!

JENNY:

I didn't tell him anything. He tripped over your footprints too.

SUSIE:

Don't worry, I won't let him see me. (She crawls around the supermarket sign and disappears)

JENNY:

(Stands outside the supermarket sigh, waiting and whistling. As she 's standing there, Mean

Mike comes up behind her and hits her in the rear with a slingshot. She jumps and drops the pieces of the sherbert dish) Ouch! Now look what you made me do! (She bends down and tries to pick up all of the pieces of the dish)

MEAN MIKE:

Ha, ha ha! You jumped high enough to win the pole vault. Too bad that jump doesn't count!

JENNY:

(Jumps up to face him) I thought that was you, Mean Mike! Why don't you go home and practice your running and jumping so you don't lose by too many points.

MEAN MIKE:

We won't lose. We've got the best runners and jumpers in school. And we have strikeout Sam, the best pitcher in the city.

JENNY:

We have Herbert Sherbert. You boys don't have a chance!

MEAN MIKE:

You mean Herbert Sherbert??? (He laughs) Him???He couldn't run or throw or jump his way out of a balloon. Just wait until I see him! I'll throw him down the schoolhouse hill.

JENNY:

He'll throw you up the schoolhouse hill! You just wait, Mean Mike.

MEAN MIKE:

What are you doing here, Jenny? Why aren't you home practicing?

JENNY:

I'm waiting for Susie.

MEAN MIKE:

Why are you holding those pieces of paper in your hand?

JENNY:

I have to glue them back together. Leave me alone, Mike!

MEAN MIKE:

(Prys her hand open) I wanna see that paper.

JENNY:

I said leave me alone, Mean Mike. (She dashes around the sign into the supermarket. Mean Mike follows her. They run to the other part of the stage where five or six cans are stacked up)

JENNY:

Susie, where are you? Susie? Herbert?

SUSIE:

(Pops up from behind the cans) Jenny, what are you doing in here? I thought you were going to wait outside. I got the glue to fix Herbert's dish. And you have ten cents coming in change as soon as I go through the checkout.

JENNY:

Hurry up Susie! Mean Mike's after me! He saw me standing in front of the supermarket and shot me with his slingshot. I dropped the dish and broke it in another place. We're going to have a big gluing job ahead of us.

SUSIE:

Let's get started. (She walks away and sees Mike coming up behind them) Uh, uh, Jenny, he's

back.

JENNY:

(Turning around quickly) Go away, you big bully!

MEAN MIKE:

I'm not going away! I want a piece of that paper! (He grabs a piece of paper out of Jenny's hand and Jenny and Susie chase him up and down the stage. They corner him by the cans and he picks up one and starts after them with it.)

JENNY:

Herbert Sherbert, help! Help, Herbert Sherbert!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

(Peeking out from behind the cans) Why are you hollering for help, Jenny?

JENNY:

Mean Mike is bothering us.

HERBERT:

(Walks over to Mean Mike) Let those girls go, Mean Mike. They aren't bothering you.

MEAN MIKE:

(Panting) They can run faster than I thought. Maybe I'd better fix them so they can't run in the Olympics.

HERBERT:

Maybe you'd better get lost, Mean Mike.

MEAN MIKE:

(Doubling up his fists. Who's gonna make me get lost, Herbert Sherbert.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Me! But wait a minute! (Herbert Sherbert edges over to Jenny) Hey Jenny, isn't there even a scrap of sherbert left in the bowl? Not even a lick or a drop.

JENNY:

Not even a drop. And there's something else you should....

MEAN MIKE:

(Kicks down the cans. They make a loud clatter and roll across the stage)

HERBERT:

I think we'd better talk about it later, Jenny. Right now, I have to fight Mean Mike. (Mean Mike comes towards Herbert, swinging his fists. Herbert runs over to the stack of cans. He whispers to Jenny and Susie.) When I say go, make a run for the door.

JENNY:

What about you, Herbert Sherbert?

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I'll be right behind you. I have to do something first.

JENNY:

What do you have to do, Herbert?

MEAN MIKE:

(Comes up and grabs Herbert Sherbert) I got you now!!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

GO! (Jenny and Susie ran for the supermarket door. Herbert gets away from Mean Mike. He

picks up two of the cans and rolls them under Mean Mike's feet. Mean Mike trips and falls flat on his face)

MEAN MIKE:

Offff!

HERBERT:

I'm going to practice my running, Mean Mike. (He runs over a can) And my jumping. (He jumps over a can) And my throwing! (He throws a can in Mike's direction)

MEAN MIKE:

I'm gonna get you Herbert Sherbert!

HERBERT:

(Runs toward the door after Jenny and Susie.) Jenny! Susie! Wait for me! (Herbert catches up with them)

JENNY:

Where's Mike? Is he chasing you?

HERBERT:

No, some cans are chasing him. Let's get out of here! (They run in step).

SUSIE:

Herbert, you were so brave rescuing us from Mean Mike. And you don't even leave tracks when you run like I do!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I thought you took my sherbert dish and spoon and left tracks all over the place. Give them back

and we'll forget it.

SUSIE:

I'm sorry, Herbert. I wish I could, because you saved us from Mean Mike. But I can't.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Why can't you?

SUSIE:

I dropped the dish and broke it, Herbert Sherbert.

HERBERT:

My mom's dish! Oh no, I'll be grounded for a year! She'll take away my sherbert! Susie, how could you do this to me?

SUSIE:

I'm sorry, Herbert. I was just trying to play a joke on you.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

It's a joke on me all right. I don't have any sherbert dish and I don't have any sherbert. The supermarket doesn't have any more sherbert and it won't until sometime next week. (Herbert Sherbert walks slower and slower, then stops. He sits on the curb, his chin in his hands)

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can't do anything without my sherbert. I can't jump or pole hop or throw. And I can't run.

SUSIE:

I won't run in the race without you, Herbert.

JENNY:

I won't run in the race without you either, Herbert.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I'll never run again!

JENNY:

You'll run again, Herbert Sherbert. I just had an idea!!

ACT III

(Jenny, Herbert Sherbert and Mean Mike are sitting on a bench. Susie is sitting across from Herbert Sherbert. Herbert Sherbert's sherbert dish and spoon are sitting on the table in front of him. There is a sign above everyone labeled "Lunchroom." The cardboard refrigerator sits there. The Lunchroom Lady sits at the head of the table, watching them. There are also some brown paper bags sitting on the table.)

LUNCHROOM LADY:

No throwing peas, beans, greens or blue jeans, No hitting, knitting, flitting or spitting, We want you to be real neat, So just shut your mouth and eat!!

JENNY:

How can we eat if our mouths are shut?

SUSIE:

I'm finished. My mom gave me peanut butter again, so I ate fast.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I have a graham cracker left. Do you want half?

SUSIE:

That sounds good. Throw me half, Herbert.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Wait 'til I take a bite of sherbert, then I'll throw you the graham cracker. It was nice of you and Jenny to glue my sherbert dish back together, Susie.

SUSIE:

That's the least I can do for a friend.

MEAN MIKE:

He can't throw a pea, he can't throw a flea, he can't even throw a bee!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Wanna bet? You just wait and see!! (He goes to take a bite of sherbert, then he remembers) I couldn't get any sherbert! I don't have any power!

JENNY:

Maybe there's some sherbert in the refrigerator! (She gets up and opens the refrigerator and looks inside) No, there's just ice in here.

LUNCHROOM LADY

Jenny, close that refrigerator door. The ice will melt.

MEAN MIKE:

(Holds a paper bag and blows air into it. Then he pops it with a loud boom! He throws the bag at Jenny and hits her in the nose with it)

JENNY:

Ouch! Quit that, Mean Mike!

MEAN MIKE:

I won't quit! (He pops the bag and throws it at Jenny.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Quit picking on Jenny! That's me!

MEAN MIKE:

Why do you think everybody calls me Mean Mike?

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Quit it, Mean Mike! If I had some sherbert, I'd show you!

MEAN MIKE:

Well you don't have any sherbert, so shut your mouth or I'll punch you! (He grabs another bag, pops it, and throws it at Susie)

SUSIE:

Ouch! That hurt!

JENNY:

Make him stop, Herbert Sherbert. You can do it without your sherbert.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I'll try! (He grabs a bag and throws it at Mean Mike. The bag hits Mean Mike on the arm)

MEAN MIKE:

(Grabs his arm) Ouch, that hurts. Ow! (Jumps up) I'm going to coach Big Ben Brown and have him put a heating pad on my arm. Then I'm coming back and I'm going to punch you!

JENNY:

You'll have to wait until after the Olympics. They're this afternoon and we have practice in the gym. You and Susie go ahead, Herbert Sherbert. I'll catch up with you.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

What are you going to do, Jenny?

JENNY:

I'm going to pick up these bags for the Lunchroom Lady.

LUNCHROOM LADY:

Bags, bags, bags, tags, somebody better pick them up!

JENNY:

I'll pick them up. Go ahead Herbert Sherbert. I'll bring your sherbert dish. Just jump rope with Susie until I get there. Okay?

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Okay, but I'm not going to do anything without my sherbert.

JENNY:

I'll find some sherbert for you, Herbert Sherbert. Now go.

SUSIE:

Come on Herbert, let's jump. (Herbert Sherbert and Susie jump off stage)

MEAN MIKE:

I'm gonna go see the coach now, but I'll be back! (He goes off, holding his arm)

JENNY:

I need to get back into your refrigerator for just a minute, Lunchroom Lady.

LUNCHROOM LADY:

Eeeek! You want to peek in my refrigerator??

JENNY:

I'm not going to take any of your food. I just want some of the ice from the freezer.

LUNCHROOM LADY:

Take some of my ice. The less I have to defrost will be nice!

JENNY:

(Opens the refrigerator door and scrapes some ice off of the freezer. She puts it in Herbert Sherbert's bowl.) That should be cold enough to convince Herbert Sherbert it's sherbert. And I'll put some food coloring in it, so it looks like sherbert. (She reaches on top of the refrigerator and takes down a huge bottle of green food coloring. She shakes some of it into the dish) Now it's ready for Herbert Sherbert. Thank you very much, Lunchroom Lady.

LUNCHROOM LADY:

You're very welcome, I'm sure, but don't come back until next year! (Jenny goes to the other end of the stage where the gym benches are set up. Herbert Sherbert and Susie are jumping rope. Mean Mike sneaks up behind them and pushes Susie out of the way. He trips Herbert and Herbert falls)

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Offmmppphh! Susie are you okay? (He gets up and hurries over to Susie who is rubbing her knees).

SUSIE:

Mean Mike pushed me!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Get out of here and quit bothering us, Mean Mike. We have to practice for the Olympics.

MEAN MIKE:

You can't make me quit bothering you!

JENNY:

Herbert, guess what? I found your sherbert. The Lunchroom Lady had some in the refrigerator.

Here, take a big bite.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

(Runs over to Jenny and takes a big bite of sherbert) I can make you quit bothering us now, Mean Mike. Leave us alone or I'll punch out your lights!

MEAN MIKE:

(Jutting out his jaw and holding up his fists) I dare you to punch out my lights!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

You asked for it, Mean Mike! (He takes the pole vaulting pole and hooks it under Mean Mike's collar. He pulls Mike over to the edge of the stage) Now just stay over here until it's time for the race to start. (Herbert walks back over to the girls) We should be allright now. My sherbert did it again! (He sticks his finger in it). Wow, that's extra good sherbert, Jenny. We'll have to ask the Lunchroom Lady where she got it.

JENNY:

We can ask her later. Right now we'd better run some practice laps. I see Miss Higgenbottom and

Coach Big Ben Brown coming.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

One more quick bite of sherbert and I'll be ready to run. He takes a quick bite of sherbert and slurps it. Then he sets the bowl and spoon on the bench and races off with Jenny and Susie. They run back and forth across the stage with Mrs. Higgenbottom. While they're running Mean Mike sneaks over to the sherbert dish and spoon)

MEAN MIKE:

I'm gonna take that creep's sherbert and hide it inside my coat. Then our team will be sure to win the race! (Mean Mike takes the dish over to his side of the bench and puts his heavy coat over it). I'll show that smart aleck Herbert Sherbert. (Mean Mike goes over to where the two coaches are standing. Coach Big Ben Brown has a huge black moustache).

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Look here, Coach Big Ben Brown. It looks silly having a boy on the girl's team. What will the girls say? What will the boys say? What will everyone say?

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

People won't even notice that Herbert isn't a girl. He's got long hair, and he runs so slow that everyone will think he's a girl.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Coach Brown, my girls and Herbert are going to beat you!

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

The girls have never beaten the boys before.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

The girls have never had Herbert Sherbert before. Look at him! (She points to Herbert who is zooming around the track.)

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

Wow! He's picked up speed in the last day. I think I'll put him on my team after all.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

You can't. I have it right here in your own handwriting. He's supposed to be on my team! (She waves the note under Coach Big Ben Brown's nose).

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

We're going to beat you. Mean Mike is a fast runner.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

He's not faster than Herbert Sherbert. (She points to Herbert, still zooming around the track)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Herbert, come back in and rest for a few minutes before the races start. You don't want to use up all of your energy on practice laps!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I feel great, Mrs. Higgenbottom. My sherbert gives me so much energy I can run ten more times around the track. Just let me take another bite and I'm off again! (Herbert runs over to where his sherbert had been sitting, but it's not there).

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Oh no, oh woe, oh no!

(Jenny and Susie come running)

JENNY:

What's wrong, Herbert Sherbert?

HERBERT SHERBERT:

My sherbert and my dish and spoon are gone again!

JENNY:

They've got to be here somewhere. (She looks around the bench)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Blowing her whistle) Line up teams. It's time for the big race to start.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can't do anything without my sherbert.

JENNY:

Here we go again! I'll find it, Herbert. But just run the race, please.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can't do anything without my sherbert, Jenny.

SUSIE:

You have to, Herbert! Here comes Mean Mike and he's ready to run.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can't do anything without my sherbert!

JENNY:

Herbert, we're counting on you.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Herbert, I admit when you first came on the team I doubted you'd be any good, but after I saw

you run, I knew you could do it. I know you can do it now.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can win with my sherbert, not by myself.

JENNY:

Try Herbert. Try jumping rope. We practiced that.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I'll try. (Herbert and Mean Mike jump rope . Mean Mike misses most of the time, but Herbert jumps without a miss.)

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

I proclaim Herbert Sherbert the winner! (Mean Mike mutters and scowls at Herbert)

MEAN MIKE:

You just wait until the ball throwing. I'll show you!

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

It's time for the ball throwing. Jasper Jenkins will throw the ball for the boys' team. On your mark, get set, THROW!

(Someone throws the ball from backstage and it goes about halfway across the stage. Clapping and cheering from everyone on stage)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

Now, the girls team. Jenny! On your mark, get set, THROW!

(Jenny throws the ball across the stage. Everybody claps and cheers)

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

I proclaim Jenny the winner.

MEAN MIKE:

It's now or never. I gotta get them now! (He creeps over and breaks Susie pole)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

The next event is pole vaulting. Susie will go first for the girl's team. On your mark, get set,

POLE....(Susie tries to move, but the pole breaks. She falls)

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

Nice try, Susie. Now Mean Mike will go for the boy's team.

(Mean Mike grabs a pole and goes over the bench. There is clapping and cheering)

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

I proclaim Mean Mike of the boys team the winner.

SUSIE

:(Holding up the piece broken from her pole) Somebody cut my pole and I'll bet I know who did it!

MEAN MIKE:

(Sticking his fist under her chin) Can you prove it?

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

Can you prove it?

SUSIE:

He did it, I know he did!

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

Mean Mike is the winner unless you can prove he did something to your pole. Let's go on to the

next event.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

The next event is running.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Jenny, I can jump rope without my sherbert, but I can't run without it.

JENNY:

You can do it, Herbert. You can run faster than Mean Mike!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I can't run without my sherbert.

MEAN MIKE:

I'm gonna make sure you can't run, Herbert Sherbert. (He sneaks around to his coat) Your sherbert's here and I'm gonna eat all of it so I run faster than you do!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

You can't eat my sherbert!

MEAN MIKE:

I did! (He eats it)

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Blowing whistle) On your mark, get set....

HERBERT:

I can't run without my sherbert.

JENNY:

I have to tell you the truth, Herbert. That wasn't sherbert. It was just colored ice. I put some food coloring into some ice from the lunchroom refrigerator.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Why did you do that Jenny?

JENNY:

I wanted to show you you can do things by yourself. You don't need sherbert to do things.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Then Mean Mike doesn't have my sherbert either.

JENNY:

Herbert, go out there and run. You can do it! (She shoves him) Go Herbert, you can do it!

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Without my sherbert?

JENNY:

Without your sherbert. (Herbert Sherbert walks over to the starting line. Mean Mikeswaggers up to the starting line, wiping his mouth)

MEAN MIKE:

I ate your sherbert, Herbert. You're going to lose.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

I'm not going to lose. You are, because you don't have anysherbert.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

On your mark, attenshun, run!!! (She blows her whistle. Mean Mike shoves Herbert out of the

way and runs. Herbert chugs along and Mean Mike gets a big lead over him.)

JENNY:

(Shouting) Come on Herbert, you can do it!

HERBERT:

If Jenny thinks I can do it, maybe I can. (He runs a little faster. Mean Mike slows down.)

SUSIE:

Come on Herbert, you can do it! (Herbert runs faster. He is even with Mean Mike now.)

MEAN MIKE:

I'll show you, Herbert Sherbert. (He reaches out his foot to trip Herbert, but Herbert jumps over it and passes him up)

MEAN MIKE:

Just for that I'm going to tear up your sherbert dish.

HERBERT SHERBERT:

Oh no you're not! (He runs faster and passes Mean Mike. He crosses the finish line and grabs the sherbert dish and spoon. He runs over to Mrs. Sherbert and hands them to her.

HERBERT:

Keep these mom. I don't need them anymore. I can run without my sherbert and I can jump rope without it. I may be able to do lots of things without it. I'm going to try.

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

I proclaim Herbert Sherbert the winner of the race! The Junior Olympics is a tie, so we will have one more event to decide the winner.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

I've decided that the tiebreaker will be a sherbert eating contest.

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

That's all right with me.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

I'll go to the lunchroom refrigerator and get the sherbert. (She hurries away)

HERBERT:

Not that sherbert.

MEAN MIKE:

Why not?

HERBERT:

Jenny, tell him what that sherbert is made out of.

JENNY:

Refrigerator ice with food coloring.

MEAN MIKE:

(Grabbing his stomach) I'm gonna die! I just ate a big dish of it

HERBERT:

You have to eat more of it or tell the coach what you did to Susie's pole.

MEAN MIKE:

I'm not telling him anything.

HERBERT:

All right, we'll have the sherbert eating contest.

MRS. HIGGENBOTTOM:

(Coming back with two big bowls of sherbert) Here it is. (She sets one bowl on the bench in front of Herbert and one in front of Mean Mike. She blows her whistle) On your mark, take your seat, EAT!!!

MEAN MIKE:

I can't eat this....this...stuff...Look, it's green. I can't do it. I did it! I did it! It's my fault. Coach Big Ben Brown, I cut Susie's pole so she'd fall off of it and lose. Please don't make me eat any more of this awful green sherbert.

COACH BIG BEN BROWN:

I proclaim the girls team the winner of the GreenfieldGrammar School Junior Olympics, aided and abetted and headed by Herbert Sherbert. (Everybody cheers and claps.)

HERBERT:

(Tugs coach by the arm) Uh, coach, my name is Herbert. I can do everything with just plain Herbert now. And the first thing I'm going to do is make Mean Mike eat some of that sherbert. (He goes over to Mean Mike and Mean Mike starts eating the sherbert as fast as he can.

CURTAIN