

THE GLORIOUS FOURTH by Robert Sugarman

JERRY, mid-thirties, a writer forced by the McCarthy blacklist to "ghost" fora living, reads a novel he hopes to adapt for the screen. He is trying to concentrate on the book, while at the same time making his daughter feel she has his undivided attention.

SCENE: East Hampton, Long Island. The beach.

TIME: 1957.

GERRY: I *didn't* watch honey, and the reason I didn't is that I have to read this. Today! I know what day it is, but I have to. I *was* watching, but I didn't see what you *just* did. ...you did it for the first time? If you do it again, you'll get my full attention. I promise. ...you will? Good. (*He sits up, leans forward*)

...*that was great*. I'd applaud, but this'll blow away.... it's a new novel. ...it hasn't covers because it hasn't been published yet, these are *proof* sheets. ... no, it's *not* good, it's terrible. ...I'm reading it because I may be making a movie script from it, but it's a *secret*, so don't tell anybody. ...Scott, Jason, Kevin—any of your buddies, don't tell them. Promise? ...thanks. ...it's a secret because—because that's how things are these days.

...what you did? It was wonderful, what difference does it make what it's called. Names aren't everything. My name's not going to be on this script, but I'm going to write it. ...yes, I *would* like to have my name on it, I'd make more money and it's fun seeing my name up there on the screen. You're right, names *are* important, but I don't know what that's called. ...honey, if *you* don't know what it's called and you did it, how would a middle aged poop from Milwaukee know? You know so much stuff I don't. You grew up with pools and beaches,

I didn't. In Topeka we didn't *play* in water, we *washed* in it and we only did that when we could afford it. You know so much I never heard of. *Triceratops. Grand jete*. Do you think I had ballet lessons?

...damn right I suffered, that's why I'm resting. Well, I'm working, but I'm resting too. Watching, too. ...that's what grown ups do, lots of things at the same time. ...OK, I'll *only* watch and maybe the name'll come to me (*He folds the proofs around the notebook*) Take your time, deep breath, --GO!

...good, that's even better. ...no, the other wasn't bad, but you're experienced now, you present it better. You're a clever kid. Did I ever tell you that? ...can't help it, true is true, but if you arch your back more, it'll keep you straighter. Don't rush, take your time, deep breath—. ...that's it! I even know what it is. It's a *cartwheel*. *We* did those in Topeka in an empty lot filled with broken bottles. ...right, cut our hands all the time. All this sand—you got it so easy.

...excellent, straighter, but maybe that's enough for a while. People are designed to be upside down for limited periods of time. ...nobody told me, I just know. Isn't it great I'm here to share all this with you? I have to read now, OK? Believe me, I'd never read this if we didn't need the money. (*He resumes*)

...what? ...honey, I watched and I have to—. ...no, and I know this is a disappointment but your cartwheel is *not* sexy. It's athletic.

...if *what*? If you had *what*? ...honey, in public we call them (*softly*) "breasts." ...yeh, I guess then it would be sexy. ...who thought you were a boy? It's that dopey hair cut. "Gamin look"—you *are* a gamin. Old folks like Audrey Hepburn *need* to cut their hair like that, you don't.

...hot dogs? They're in the cooler, we'll cook them later. ...yes, I remembered the charcoal *and* the lighter stuff. ...you can't do cartwheels all that time, we're going to be here for hours. It has to be dark before they start the fireworks. Look at that sun—no!—not *directly*! It's going to be a long time. Can you see? I'm over here. Hi! Then comes the Big celebration—the Glorious Fourth. Did I tell you about the Glorious Fourth? ...I'm getting old, I forget. OK. One more. ...that was good. Sexy. It was thank you, I *will*. (*He goes back to the proofs, realizes he must adjust the umbrella and gets up to do it*) ...this is *not* my only exercise. I swam—with you. Kids, no memory, no appreciation.

