

Portfolio Annotations

Max Tootleman

February 10, 2022

In the portfolio that was submitted there is a lot of paperwork for a couple of different shows. The first show that is presented is *Sorry, Shakespeare!*. This is the play that I directed my junior year of high school. *Sorry, Shakespeare!* is about four high school students who are putting on three different Shakespeare plays - *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* - and end up mixing all of the scripts together. The students pick up a handful of pages and just start performing adding in bits of other plays they know. Included in the portfolio is my script with all of my notes from my first read and throughout the entire rehearsal process. There is even a mini scenic layout at the beginning of the script detailing how stage blocks, music stands, and chairs would be used to create the set. The castle of Macbeth was set up upstage left with stage blocks and chairs on top to create the spires. The road to Padua was left in the middle with no set to represent the empty road and upstage right I used music stands at different heights to create a forest.

The next set of documents in my portfolio is all of my paperwork and my script for the one-act play that I directed my senior year of high school, *The Least Offensive Play In The Whole Darn World*. My script again contains all of my notes throughout the production that was given to my cast and a majority of my blocking notes as well. Along with the script, there are a couple of pages of paperwork used during the production of the play. There is also my cast list and my tech chart with a french scene breakdown. These include the different scenes, the set, the props, and the costumes used in the production. *The Least Offensive Play In The Whole Darn World* called for a large cast,

so I had to double and triple cast a lot of characters to ensure I was able to put on the production with the small cast the I was able to compile.

Next, there is the scene from *Picnic* by William Inge along with the research work around the play. I directed this french scene in my directing class at Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU). I was tasked with casting, dissecting, directing, blocking, and even having my cast perform during class. In the paperwork, there is research on William Inge, the time period of *Picnic*, the setting, plot, and information on the scene. I broke the scene down into the different lines in a table and figured out what each line meant and the action behind the line. This packet, before I put in the breakdown of the script, was given to my two cast members to give them a little background information on the time period and setting of the play and playwright. I even added pictures to explain what certain lines meant and what things were including Neewollah, a Halloween festival in Independence Kansas where William Inge grew up and the play takes place.

Along with *Picnic*, the research on *Lysistrada* is also from my directing class. I conceptualized the ancient greek drama into Syria during the Syrian Civil War. The sex strike was still viable because the men were still sleeping at home with their wives during the war. I included research on the civil war and even the original plot and setting because even though the play would be different because of the concept, the cast and creative team should know the original story. Again there is information about the playwright and pictures of Syria during the war. This concept was never done but is still a very logical concept for *Lysistrata*. The last thing in my portfolio is my research for *Hay Fever*, a play that I assistant directed this past fall on our mainstage at FDU. I was

tasked by the director with the original research of *Hay Fever* and running the understudy rehearsals. I even worked to convince the director to allow the understudies to have their own performance because of all the hard work that they put into the show.



Sorry, Shakespeare!

By Mike Willis

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Sorry, Shakespeare!

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Dedicated for a special group of high school students:
Carrie, Megan, Josh, Jason, Wendy, Page,
Jennifer, Paul and Drew.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Four high school students have anxiously reported to the high school auditorium for a play rehearsal, only to find that the director is not coming. To add to the confusion, one of the cast members has dropped the three rehearsals scripts, all the pages of which are unbound and unnumbered. No problem, unless of course the scripts are *MacBeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, three plays by William Shakespeare. And, as the cast says, "We don't know anything about Shakespeare, but it all sounds the same anyway, so grab some pages. We came to rehearse and we're going to rehearse." The mayhem that results will have you wondering if this play is "To be, or not to be."

Sorry, Shakespeare!

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 M, 2 W)

JASON.....A high school student.
CARRIE.....A high school student.
MEGAN.....A high school student.
JOSH.....A high school student.

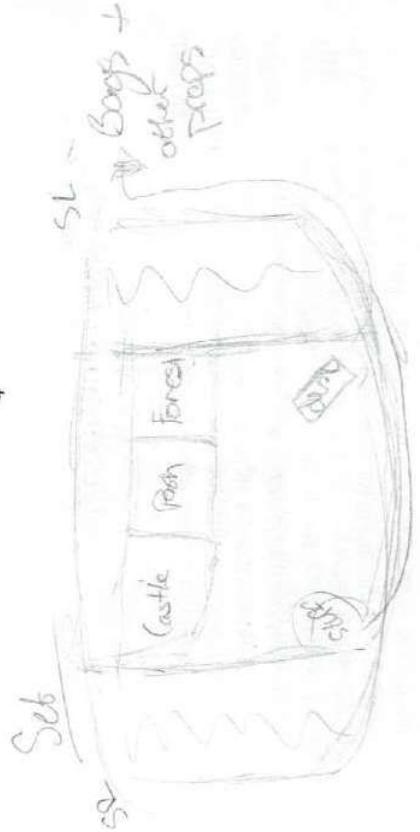
TIME: Present.
PLACE: The bare stage in a high school auditorium.

*Jason - typical theatre nerd
Student director/assistant
Carrie - fashionable diva, arrogant*

*Megan - Tiny Tom esque, a little oblivious,
proper
Josh - the cool guy who somehow got
dropped into acting
A Jason will be slightly unprepared*

~~*Ross - the bringer of fun
or John
Megan was a
poor hoodie*~~

Sorry, Shakespeare!
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Use stage blocks to make sets

Sorry, Shakespeare!
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SORRY, SHAKESPEARE!

(AT RISE: The stage LIGHTS come up revealing a bare stage. JASON enters from SR carrying a sheaf of papers. As he nears CS, he stumbles and the papers he is carrying spill out onto the stage floor.)

JASON: (*Crouching down to pick up papers*) Oh, no...now what am I going to do? They're all mixed up. Let's see, which is which? Oh, man, this is great...I'll never get this straightened out, I don't know one of Shakespeare's plays from another. (*Holding up a paper*) Is this from *MacBeth* or....

(CARRIE, MEGAN and JOSH enter from SL.)

JERRIE: Hi, Jason. Have you got the scripts? Are you ready to rehearse?

JASON: Yeah, I've got the scripts. (*Pointing to the papers on the floor*) There they are.

EGAN: Well, pick them up and let's get started.

SON: Yeah, let's get started. I've got a serious date late!

SON: By the time I get this mess straightened out your date may be half way through college.

ARRIE: What do you mean?
SHI: Just put the pages back together in order.

SON: They're not numbered
EGAN: They're numbered

SON: (Turning to MEGAN) Read my lips. They are not numbered. **For Preview Only**

SONN: *What's it?*
SONN: *Oh...A Midsummer Night's Dream...* *cut off*

SON: MacBeth...
ARRIE: Well, even so—*cut off*

JASON: *The Taming of the Shrew.*

SEGAN: Three plays by William Shakespeare?

CARRIE: None of them are numbered?

JASON: Nooo....

JOSH: Let me get this straight. What we have here are three plays by Shakespeare all mixed up, and no way of knowing which is which?
*more
different*

JASON: That's right.

CARRIE: I don't believe this.

MEGAN: Me, neither.

JOSH: I do. Four years in high school and I finally get a date...and now, what happens? Jason mixes up Shakespeare. I'll be late...I'll never get to go on a date.

CARRIE: What are you talking about? You had a date for the prom last year.

JOSH: That wasn't a date, that was an appointment. My mom set that up.

MEGAN: Even so, it was a date.

JOSH: Was not.

MEGAN: Was so.

CARRIE: Listen! It doesn't matter. The director will be here soon and he will be able to straighten everything out. I hear he's really up on his Shakespeare.

JASON: Aaaah...*(EVERYONE looks at JASON.)*

CARRIE: What is it?

JASON: He's not coming.

MEGAN: What? He's not coming?

JOSH: I knew it. I knew it! I'll never get a date.

CARRIE: Shut-up! *(To JASON)* What do you mean he isn't coming?

JASON: Just that. He isn't coming, he had a better offer.

CARRIE: What do you mean "a better offer"?

MEGAN: Yeah, what kind of offer?

JASON: Aaaah...*(Quietly)* He went for a beer and a pizza.

JOSH: What?

MEGAN: What did you say?

JASON: He was hungry, he went to grab a pizza and a beer.

CARRIE: Pizza and a beer! What kind of a director is he? He's supposed to be a role model, an educator, a leader of young people.

JASON: A leader...well...

CARRIE: Well, what?

JASON: I'd kind of like to go out for a beer and some pizza.

JOSH: All I want is a date.

MEGAN: Will you two be quiet.

CARRIE: Yes, we came here to rehearse, and by God, we're going to rehearse with or without a director.

JASON: But...none of us know anything about Shakespeare and the scripts are all mixed up.

CARRIE: So what? It all sounds the same, so everyone grab some pages. *(They ALL pick up some papers.)*

JOSH: Yeah, I went to a Shakespeare play once...I didn't understand any of it.

MEGAN: I don't doubt that.

CARRIE: How many pages do you have?

JASON: Ten.

CARRIE: Megan?

MEGAN: Ten.

JOSH: I've got ten, too.

CARRIE: I've got eleven, I'll play anything extra.

JASON: OK...let's see...we have to have a setting for our play. Check your pages, see if it says anything about where the play takes place.

MEGAN: Here...mine says it takes place in a woods outside Athens.

JASON: Great.

CARRIE: Mine says it's on a road to Padua.

JASON: Padua? Is that near Athens?

CARRIE: Padua is in Italy. Athens is in Greece.

JASON: Ooooh...

JOSH: Mine's the castle of MacBeth.

JASON: Italy?

JOSH: Scotland.

JASON: What? Why couldn't Shakespeare write all his plays in one country?

CARRIE: He wrote them all in one country...England.

JASON: Well...no matter, we'll just make do. *(Indicating areas of the stage)* This area here will be the forest outside Athens, *(area 1)* *(area 2)* *(area 3)*

through which the road to Padua, Italy runs. Once through the woods the road comes to the castle of the Scotch guy.
MEGAN: MacBeth. His name is MacBeth. And, he's Scottish not Scotch. Scotch is either a type of tape or liquor.
JASON: Right...MacBeth...anyway, Mac lives right over there.
JOSH: This is never going to work.

JASON: Sure it will, you'll see. OK...so now we need some parts. Josh, you'll be MacBeth. Megan, you Lady MacBeth.
MEGAN: I want to be Katherine. It looks like she has some great lines.
JASON: All right. We'll have to double up anyway. You can be both.

CARRIE: I want to be Puck. It says here that Puck is shrewd and knavish.
JASON: Great, and I'll be...uh...Petruchio. We'll assign any other parts as we go along.

JOSH: "To be, or not to be..."

JASON: What's that from?

MEGAN: Hamlet...it's from Hamlet. My mother took me to see it once.

JASON: (Looking through H/S pages) Maybe we can use that. Do we have that?

CARRIE: He's Danish.

JASON: What?

CARRIE: He's from Denmark. We already have people from Greece, Italy and Scotland, there is no way we can add Denmark!

JASON: OK, we'll forget Hamlet.

JOSH: But...I was already off-book for part of Hamlet.

CARRIE and MEGAN: No Hamlet.

JOSH: OK, no Hamlet.

JASON: Well, let's get started. Josh and Megan, you enter from over by the castle. You have just killed the king.

JOSH: Uh...what king?

JASON: I don't know what king. Anyone know what king?

MEGAN: Duncan. It says here his name is Duncan. He's the king of Scotland.

JASON: All right...enter MacBeth and Lady MacBeth, you have just killed the king.
JOSH: (As MACBETH) Hark, I have done the deed. Didn't thou not hear a noise?
MEGAN: (As LADY MACBETH) I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

JOSH: I didn't know crickets could cry.

JASON: Just read the lines!

JOSH: (As MACBETH) Infirm of purpose. (Pause)

JASON: What's the matter?

JOSH: We need a knock here.

JASON: Oh...OK. (HE knocks on the floor)

JOSH: (As MACBETH) Whence is that knocking. How is't with me, when every noise appalls me?

MEGAN: (As LADY MACBETH) My hands are of your colour, but I shame to wear a heart so white. (Pause)

JASON: Now what?

MEGAN: We need another knock.

JASON: Oh... (HE knocks.)

MEGAN: (As LADY MACBETH) I hear a knocking; retire we to our chamber. A little water clears us of this deed. (THEY pause and look at JASON.)

JASON: Again? (THEY nod and JASON knocks again.)
MEGAN: (As LADY MACBETH) Hark. More knocking.

JOSH: (As MACBETH) To know my deed twere best not know myself. (THEY look at JASON, who knocks.) Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! (The MACBETHS exit.)

JASON: (Looking at CARRIE) Your turn.

CARRIE: (As PUCCY) What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here, so near the castle of the fairy queen? What, a play toward! I'll be an auditor; an actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Verona, for a while I take my leave, to see my friends in Padua; but of all, my best beloved and approved friend...uh...uh...uh...MacBeth; and I trow, this is his house. (Gesturing to CARRIE) Here, sirrah Grumio; knock, I say. (Pause, then whispering) Carrie, play Grumio.

Carrie
Landon
Xominey
Landon Xominey

CARRIE: Grumio is a guy.
JASON: So?
CARRIE: I don't want to play a guy.
JASON: Just think of Grumio as being either sex.
CARRIE: I don't want to be either sex, I want to be a girl. Grumio
is a boy's name.
JASON: (*Looking at H/S script*) OK...let's see...what's a girl's
name? Hermia...I'll call you Hermia, and you play the part of
Grumio.

CARRIE: You won't call me Grumio?

JASON: I'll call you Hermia.

CARRIE: All right, just don't call me Grumio.

JASON: Stand right there. (Looking at HIS script.) Blah, blah, blah, and I trow this is his house: here, sirrah...Hermia; knock I say.

CARRIE: (As GRU/HER) Knock, sir! Whom should I knock? Is there any man has rebused your worship?

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Villain, I say, knock me here soundly.

CARRIE: (As GRU/HER) Knock you here, sir? Why, sir, what am I sir, that I should knock you here, sir?

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Villain, I say, knock me at this gate, and rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pate.

CARRIE: (As GRU/HER, aside) My master is grown quarrel-

some, (to PETRUCHIO) I should knock you ill, and then know after who comes by the worst.
JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Will it not be? Faith, sirrah, and you'll not knock I'll ring it; I'll try how you can sol, fa, and sing it. (JASON grabs CARRIE by the ear.)
CARRIE: (As GRUH/HER) Help, masters, help, my master is mad!
JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Now, knock when I bid you; sirrah villain! JASON looks for JOSH and motions for him to enter.)

You come in now.
JOSH: (As MAC/HOR) How now! What's the matter? My old friend Grumio, and...
CARRIE: Hermia! Call me Hermia! (To JASON) He called me Grumio.
JASON: (To JOSH) She wants to be called Hermia. She says

Grumio is a boy's name.
JOSH: But, it says in the s
JASON: I know what it sa
her Hermia.
JOSH: (As MAC/HOR) and my good friend...uh
JASON: Petruchio! My na
JOSH: (As MAC/HOR) All you all at...uh...Scotland!

JASON: (As PETRUCH/O) Signor MacBeth, come you to part the fray?

JOSH: (As MAC/HOR) Rise Gru... (CARRIE looks threateningly at H/M...) ...Hermia, rise; we will compound this quarrel.

CARRIE: (As GRU/HER) Nay, 'tis no matter, sir. Look you, sir, he bid me knock him, and rap him soundly, sir: well, was it fit for a servant to use his master so?

JASON: (As PETRUCH/O striking at CARRIE) A senseless villain! Good... MacBeth, I bade the rascal knock upon your gate, and could not get him for my heart to do it.

CARRIE: (As GRU/HER) Knock at the gate! O Heavens! Spake you not these words plain, Hermia, knock me here, knock me soundly, and come you now with... knocking at the gate?

JOSH: (As *WAC/HISTORY*) Petruccio, patience, I am Heinrich's
pledge: why this a...
MEGAN: Stop! ... Stop!... Stop!
JASON: What's the matter?
MEGAN: We've got to move on. We've already had one
knocking at the gate. Remember? Besides, I'm tired of sitting
over there and doing nothing. *Wants to go*
JASON: Oh, you're right. We have already had one knocking.
Well...we'll just go a little further and then switch to something
else. (To *CARRIE* and *JOSH*) Keep going.
JOSH: (As *MAC/HOR*) So, tell me Petruccio, what happy gale
blows you to...Scotland from old...Athens? (As *H/MSELF*)
Excuse me, is there a storm in this play? It's talking about a
gale here.
JASON: No! There is no storm.

over my shoulder *keep going!*
MEGAN: Keep going!
JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) MacBeth, I have thrust myself into
this maze, haply to wive and thrive as best I may.

JOSH: (As MAC/ATOR) Petruchio, shall I come roundly to thee,
(JOSH grabs MEGAN and stands her in front of JASON.) and
wish thee to a shrewd, ill-favored wife?

JASON: But...

JOSH: (As MAC/HOR) Her only fault...and that is fault
enough...is that she is intolerably curst.

CARRIE: But...Megan is your wife.

JOSH: Not any more. I want a divorce.

MEGAN: Granted!

JASON: Well...let's just skip over here, to where Petruchio and
(Indicates MEGAN) her meet. Carrie, you and Josh will be
observers, this is the wooing scene.

CARRIE: How romantic.

JOSH: Quiet, I may be able to use this on my date.

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Good-morrow, Lacy MacBeth; for
that's your name, I hear.

MEGAN: (As LADY MAC/KAT) Well have you heard, but
something hard of hearing: They call me Big Mac, that do talk *pyromaniac*
of me.

JOSH: This is making me hungry. *grinned*

CARRIE: Shut-up!

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Myself, am moved to woo thee for
my wife.

MEGAN: (As LADY MAC/KAT) Mov'd! In good time: Let him that
mov'd you hither remove you hence! (MEGAN strikes
JASON.)

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) Come, come, you wasp, i'faith you
are too angry.

MEGAN: (As LADY MAC/KAT) If I be waspish, best beware my
sting. (SHE strikes HIM again.)

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) No, not a whit. I find you passing
gentle. And to conclude upon Sunday is the wedding day.

MEGAN: (As LADY MAC/KAT) I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday
first.

JASON: (To CARRIE) Keep going, read Gremio.

CARRIE: Is Gremio a guy or a girl?
JASON: A guy, but... (CARRIE says nothing but points to JOSH
who shrugs and starts to read the part of GREMIO.)

JOSH: (As MAC/GRE) Hark, Petruchio; she says she'll see
thee hang'd first.

CARRIE: (As PUCK, aside) My master with a monster is in love.

JASON: Where's that at?

CARRIE: From A Midsummer Night's Dream...I want to play
Puck again.

MEGAN: (To CARRIE) Did you call me a monster?

CARRIE: It's only a play.

MEGAN: I don't care. I don't like being called a monster.

CARRIE: (Indicating a place in HER script) Well, at least I didn't
use this line here by Titania.

JOSH: What's that?

CARRIE: (Looking at MEGAN) Methought I was enamour'd of
an ass.

MEGAN: That's it! That's it! I refuse to do this part of the play
anymore...let's move to something else or I quit.

JASON: Oh...all right, let's just move on. Now...uh...Petruchio
has just married Lady MacBeth.

JOSH: My wife has remarried? What about me?

JASON: You're single now.

JOSH: Great!

JASON: Try to find a way out of this in your scripts. (They ALL
look at *their* pages.)

CARRIE: Here! It says the Duke and Hippolyta have been
married and are waiting to see a play.

JASON: (As PETRUCHIO) That's great! Lady MacBeth has just married me...so,
we'll stand off over here while you two do the play. (MEGAN
and JASON move to the side while CARRIE and JOSH start
reading from the play within a play from A Midsummer Night's
Dream.)

CARRIE: We're going to have to skip some of these parts. Josh,
you be Pyramus and I'll be Thisby.

JOSH: (As MAC/PYR, reading from the script) What is
Pyramus, a lover or a tyrant?

MEGAN: An idiot.

CARRIE: Pyramus is a lover who has just killed himself most valiantly for love.
JOSH: (As MAC/PYR) That will call for some true tears in the performing of it. If I do it let the audience look to their eyes. (HE starts to cry very badly and melodramatically.)
CARRIE: Josh! (JOSH stops crying as SHE points to another place in the script.) We'll start right here. You kill yourself, and then I, as your lover, will come in and find you dead.
JOSH: Why am I killing myself?
CARRIE: You think I have just been eaten by a lion.

JOSH: So?

CARRIE: You love me.

JOSH: No, I don't.

CARRIE: It's a play, fake it!

MEGAN: Idiot!

CARRIE: (To JOSH) Start right here.

JOSH: (As MAC/PYR) O wherefore, nature, didst thou lions frame? Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my... (Screams and falls to the floor)
CARRIE: Devoured!
JOSH: (As MAC/PYR) Devoured my dear: which is...no, no... which was the fairest dame that liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd with cheer. (Drawing an invisible sword) Out, sword, and wound the pap of Pyramus: Ay, that left pap, where heart doth hop; (Stabbing HIMSELF) Thus die I, thus, thus, thus. (MEGAN and JASON applaud.) Now am I dead, now am I fled; My soul is in the sky. Now die, die, die, die...

MEGAN: (Crosses and kills JOSH) Die! (JOSH falls and sprawls on the stage floor.)

JASON: (Aside) With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover and prove an ass.

MEGAN: Silence. Here comes Thisby, I hope she will be brief.

JASON: She has spied him with her sweet eyes.
CARRIE: (As PUCK/THISBY) Dead, dead? A tomb must cover thy sweet eyes. These lily lips, this cherry nose, these yellow cowslip cheeks, are gone are gone: (To JASON and MEGAN) Lovers, make moan! (JASON and MEGAN give a half-hearted moan.) Come, trusty sword, come blade, my breast embrue: and farewell friends: thus Thisby ends: Adieu, adieu, adieu.

(CARRIE collapses on JOSH then rises and addresses JASON as herself.) I'm sorry, Jason, that really wasn't very good. Can I try again?

JASON: (Reading from the script) No, I pray you. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead there need none to be blamed. But come, let us hear an epilogue. (Pause as the OTHERS look at each other)

JOSH: What epilogue?

JASON: I don't know. I screwed up the line...uh, Puck's closing speech, I guess.

CARRIE: Oh...Puck, that's me...OK...let's see...uh....

MEGAN: Will you get on with it!

CARRIE: OK, here goes. (SHE continues as PUCK)

If we shadows have offended, Think but this and all is mended...

That you have but slumber'd here

While these visions did appear.

Gentles, do not reprehend;

If you pardon, we will mend

And, as I am an honest Puck,

If we have unearned luck

Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue we...

JOSH: Hey! Hey! Wait a minute.

CARRIE: What is it?

JOSH: (To JASON) I want to play the snake.

JASON: What snake?

JOSH: The one Carrie just talked about trying to escape from. The snake costume must be great.

JASON: There is no snake. The serpent's tongue means someone who says wicked things about someone or something, a bad person, a liar, someone who hurts somebody, get it?

JOSH: Why doesn't it just say bad person then, or liar, why bring up the snake at all?

JASON: Because, Shakespeare doesn't use lines like, bad person or liar. He uses a more sophisticated and lyrical language. (To CARRIE) Continue.

Get it all
done

CARRIE: (As PUCK)

We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call: so....

JOSH: Uh...Excuse me!

JASON: What, now?

JOSH: She said liar. I thought you said Shakespeare didn't use the word liar. She said, "Else the Puck a liar call." (To JASON) OK...so I was wrong...there still isn't any snake! (To CARRIE) Let's get through this.

CARRIE: (As PUCK) So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,

And Robin shall restore amends.

JOSH: (To JASON) What about the bird? Can I play the bird?
JASON: What bird?

JOSH: The robin. Carrie said, the "Robin shall restore amends." It won't be as cool a costume as the snake, but....

JASON: There is no robin! There is no bird! Robin is another name for Puck.

JOSH: No bird? (JASON shakes his head no.) Figures.

MEGAN: So, now what?
JASON: That's the end, I guess. That was Puck's last speech.

MEGAN: That's lame.

JOSH: No kidding.

CARRIE: Maybe one of the other pages has a better ending.

JOSH: Let's look for something with more action.

MEGAN: (Pointing to a page in HER script) Here's a sword fight.

JOSH: A sword fight? That sounds like fun. Where is it?
MEGAN: (Holding up a page) Look for this page.

JASON: Here it is, I've got it. It looks like a sword fight between MacBeth and some guy named MacDuff. I'll play MacDuff and Josh can keep playing MacBeth.

CARRIE: (Indicating HERSELF and MEGAN) What about us?
JASON: You can be two spectators, uh...Puck and Lady MacBeth.

MEGAN: Great.

JOSH: Wait, who wins the sword fight?

JASON: (Looking at the script) MacDuff, I do.

JOSH: I want to be MacDuff then.

JASON: What? *angry*
JOSH: I don't like to lose.
JASON: (Pointing) I'll enter over there...you girls stand over there, and Josh you stand right here with your back to me. (To JOSH) Remember, we have to be sword fighting in between our lines. OK, let's get ready. (They ALL get in their assigned places.) OK...here we go. (JASON as MACDUFF) Turn, hell-hound, turn! *dog* *dog* *hounds*
JOSH: Stop! I want to play the dog from hell.
JASON: What dog from hell?
JOSH: The hell-hound. You said hell-hound.
MEGAN: Not this again.
JASON: You are the hell-hound! MacBeth is the hell-hound!
JOSH: Do I get a dog costume?
JASON: No! You do not get a dog costume!
CARRIE: Josh, there is no dog. Hell-hound is a figure of speech, meaning that MacBeth is a bad person.
JOSH: Why doesn't he call me a serpent's tongue then?
CARRIE: What?
JOSH: A serpent's tongue, that's what Jason said Shakespeare used when he was talking about a bad person. *bad person* *bad tongue*
MEGAN: He used something different this time, all right?
JASON: Let's get on with it. (THEY take their places.) Turn, MacBeth, turn.
JOSH: (As MACBETH) Of all men else I have avoided thee.
JASON: (As MACDUFF) I have no words, my voice is in my sword. (THEY have a mock sword fight with the invisible swords.) *Mock sword fight*
JOSH: (As MACBETH) Thou lostest labour: Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests; (THEY fight.) I bear a charm'd life, which must not yield to one of woman born.
JASON: (As MACDUFF) Despair thy charm; and let the angel whom thou still hast serv'd tell thee, MacDuff was from his mother's womb, untimely ripp'd.
JOSH: (As HIMSELF) Untimely ripp'd? What the heck does that mean?
CARRIE: (Explaining) It means that MacDuff was not born through normal childbirth. There must have been

French Scenes Introduction	Costumes Suits	Props Vacuum	Set NO SET
Glengarry Glen Ross	Suits		Table and two chairs stage right
Romeo And Juliet		Balloons and Pumps	NO SET
Medea	Ropes/Sheets	Emoji Pillows Some Sort Of Fruit	Two stands center stage
Frankie And Johnny In The Clair De Lune	Pajamas	Knitting Stuff Novel Reading Glasses	Two chairs stage right far apart from each other
This Is Our Youth	Teenage Drug Addict Outfit	Tissues	Table stage right
Angels In America	Robe		NO SET
Rent			NO SET
Phantom Of The Opera	Dresses	Light Bulb Attached To Stick By String	NO SET

Get rid of chairs and make Tom and Shelly stand and pitch the product

Cricket Sounds

Applause Sounds

Drum Roll Sounds

22

✓ Shelly - Diana Richards Professional Clothes

✓ Tom - Peyton Estabrook Professional Clothes

✓ Roma - Brittany Suit?

✓ Williamson - Josh Suit?

✓ Lingk - Ronald Suit?

✓ Tybalt - Emily Cape? hat? black shirt/Black Jeans

✓ Romeo - Keitlyn Riggio

✓ Mercutio - Ronald Macedo

✓ Abraham - Josh

✓ Benvolio - Shea Hazzan

✓ Page - Jordan Tucy

✓ Jason - Brittany

✓ Chorus 1 - Shea

✓ Chorus 2 - Josh

✓ Chorus 3 - Jordan

✓ Medea - Tiffany

✓ Frankie - Josh

✓ Johnny - Shea

✓ Dennis - Emily Costumes - Red Plaid/White Shirt/J

✓ Warren - Jordan " "

✓ Harper - Tiffany

✓ Mark - Shea ✓ Sweater, dark jeans, black shoes, ^{stripe see} glasses

✓ Roger - Jordan Leather Vest (Mine), plaid scarf (shea), Jeans, ^{black} watch, ^{black} belt

✓ Female Opera Singer - Josh

✓ Cast of Phantom

✓ Crew Holding Light - Ronald Black shirt/pants

6 to R

Stutter + Ronald
Covering face - Tash

Tom & Shelby

A little slower
Anunciate

vrushali wednesday

Frye
Theo

~~costumes~~ ~~sets~~

Watch her face

sound
effects

lightbulb

string

1 Death & Etc

2 Kangaroo Court

3 I Remember

4 The Least Offensive Play In The Whole Damn World

**THE LEAST OFFENSIVE PLAY IN THE WHOLE
DARN WORLD**
by Jonathan Rand

GENRE Comedy
LENGTH Short play, 15-25 minutes
CAST 5 females, 12 males, 7 either
(8-35 actors possible: 4-27 females, 7-30 males)
SET No set; minor props

Want to perform a classic play too offensive for your high school? Then the ScriptCleaner5000 is the product for you! Sit back and relax as Cynocorp representatives Shelly and Tom present sample scenes from plays that have been treated with this exciting new technology. Wipe away that dirty David Mamet profanity! Violence in Shakespeare? Gone. And what about those pesky sex scenes? The ScriptCleaner5000 has got you covered!

"A brilliant comedy."

—*Kings County Record*

"A funny and clever one-act gem."

—*Honolulu Advertiser*

THE LEAST OFFENSIVE PLAY IN THE WHOLE DARN WORLD Jonathan Rand Playscripts, Inc.

**THE LEAST OFFENSIVE
PLAY IN THE WHOLE
DARN WORLD**

A SHORT COMEDY BY
Jonathan Rand

Playscripts, Inc.



Playscripts, Inc.

Cast of Characters



The Least Offensive Play in the Whole Damn World, St. Francis High School, St. Francis, Minnesota (2005).

SHELLY - Diana
TOM - Peyton
ROMA - Brittany
WILLIAMSON - *Josh*
LINGK - *Reid*
TYBALT - Emily
ROMEO - *Ronald*
MERCUTIO - *Ronald*
ABRAHAM - *Josh*
BENVOLIO - *Shea*
PAGE - *Jordan*
JASON - Brittany
CHORUS 1 - *Sue*
CHORUS 2 - *Josh*
CHORUS 3 - *Jordan*
MEDEA - *Tiffany*
FRANKIE - *Josh*
JOHNNY - *Shea*
DENNIS - *Emily*
WARREN - *Jordan*
HARPER - *Tiffany*
MARK - *Shea*
ROGER - *Jordan*
FEMALE OPERA SINGER - *Josh*
THE CAST OF PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

(*Apart from Shelly and Tom, all parts can be double-cast.*)

THE LEAST OFFENSIVE PLAY IN THE WHOLE DARN WORLD

by Jonathan Rand

*Spotlight on
SHELLY, TOM, and
(Lights up on TOM and SHELLY, spokespeople. They are
presentational and phony.)*

SHELLY. Good evening, America, and thank you for joining us for this special presentation.

TOM. We come to you this fine evening to introduce you to a product so useful, and so marvelous, we guarantee you'll be satisfied, or your money back.

SHELLY. That's right, Tom.

TOM. Throughout the history of the world, mankind has yearned for one thing only: to perform classic plays at high schools!

SHELLY. But more often than not, high school students and teachers are forced to *settle*. Instead of performing what they'd *like* to perform, they end up having to perform a less-than-classic play, all because of the offensive language or content of their original choice.

TOM. Until now.

SHELLY. Indeed. We at Big Corporation Incorporated have developed an exciting new product, scientifically proven to be the perfect tool for any theatre company in trouble. That product...is the Script-Cleaner5000!

TOM. Shelly, how does this amazing product work?

SHELLY. It's quite simple, Tom, allow me to set up a scenario: Imagine I'm the drama teacher of a high school...

TOM. (Closes his eyes:) Okay.

SHELLY. ...and I want to direct David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, but it's just *filled* with ugly words!

TOM. Goodness gracious!

SHELLY. As a teacher, I would lose my job if I were to allow my students to use curse words on stage. So what should I do?

TOM. I suppose you would choose a different play by David Mamet, one without curse words.

Clap
"High schools" can be changed to fit your particular venue.
Around

SHELLY. A fine idea, but no.

TOM. You would choose a play by a different author.

SHELLY. Wrong again! I would perform *Glengarry Glen Ross* by David Mamet.

TOM. But *how*?

SHELLY. With the ScriptCleaner5000, any production can be automatically wiped clean of all offensive words.

TOM. I don't understand.

SHELLY. Well Tom, actions speak louder than words, don't they?

TOM. I'll say. — *Walks in front of S*

SHELLY. I will *show* you what I mean. We will now present a gripping scene from David Mamet's masterpiece, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, but not before treating it with our very own ScriptCleaner5000. Ladies and gentlemen, we bring you David Mamet...as you've never seen him before!

(Lights shift to a real estate office.)

ROMA. Ron... *Enter SC*

WILLIAMSON. Your papers went out to headquarters.

LINGK. You deposited the cash?

WILLIAMSON. We...

ROMA. Mr. Williamson...

WILLIAMSON. Your cash was deposited last week. And we're completely covered, no matter what.

LINGK. (To ROMA.) You deposited the cash?

ROMA. Not under my watch, no...

(Pause.)

LINGK. DARN it all! (Starts out the door.) Gee willikers, Ron... This was *somebody's* boo-boo.

(LINGK exits angrily. Pause.)

ROMA. (To WILLIAMSON.) You stupid meany-butt. You, Williamson... I'm talking to *you*. You just wasted eight thousand dollars, poopie-head.

(Clear air throw)

(Pause.)

WILLIAMSON. Jiminy cricket.

ROMA. Eight thousand dollars. And one flipping Chrysler. What do you have to say to that? What do you have to say to that, jerk jerk jerk? You gosh darn piece of *horse manure*. How did this happen, huh? (Pause.) You son of a gun. (With a quiet intensity:) You son of a gun...

SL lights out, Spot up

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.)

TOM. Wow! That was *amazing*!

SHELLY. Oh it only gets more amazing. Tom. ScriptCleaner5000 doesn't just clean up language. It has *hundreds* of other uses.

TOM. Hundreds?

SHELLY. Tom — have you ever heard of William Shakespeare?

TOM. No!

SHELLY. Neither had I, until our researchers informed me that he's a writer of some local renown. But I'll tell you something, Tom: Renown or no renown, we receive letters every day from customers who are very much concerned that this "Shakespeare" sometimes includes *violence* in his plays.

TOM. Goodness me.

SHELLY. My sentiments exactly. Which is why the ScriptCleaner5000 was developed specifically to help scrub away even the bloodiest of scenes! Take a look...

Spot out,

SL lights

(Lights shift to a public place in Verona. We see ROMEO, TY-

BALT, MERCUTIO, BENVOLIO, ABRAHAM, and a PAGE.)

TYBALT. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries that thou hast done me; therefore turn and draw.

ROMEO. I do protest, I never injured thee, But love thee better than thou canst devise,

Till thou shalt know the reason of my love: And so, good Capulet, — which name I tender As dearly as my own, — be satisfied.

MERCUTIO. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission! Alla stoccatà carries it away.

(Still enraged, MERCUTIO reveals an uninflated long balloon. He proceeds to inflate it. Everyone waits, still intensely in character, during the inflating process. If a balloon is not possible, an

alternative would be a pool "noodle" – noodles are long, flimsy foam pool toys. If you can find the kind that squeak when shaken, so much the better. He uses the balloon/noodle as a sword. If none of the aforementioned is possible, he can "drive" his finger and fight with that.)

MERCUTIO. Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk? – *walks*

TYBALT. What wouldst thou have with me? – *ds*

MERCUTIO. Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives.

TYBALT. I am for you.

(TYBALT draws his own pool noodle; or blows up a long balloon; or reveals his finger.)

ROMEO. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up. – *down to* 

(MERCUTIO and TYBALT fight. The more intense and exciting the fight, the better.)

ROMEO. Hold, Tybalt! good Mercutio! 

(ROMEO pulls MERCUTIO from the fray. TYBALT then stabs MERCUTIO. A moment of intensity. TYBALT exits with ABRAHAM and any other followers. The noodle or balloon protrudes out of MERCUTIO's body as he dies – this should contrast in a very silly way with the passionate and sorrowful death scene. All characters should treat the balloon-wound as if it were a sword-wound.)

MERCUTIO. A plague on both your houses!!

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.)

(TOM. My, that was intense!

SHELLY. It only gets better, Tom. It only gets much, much better.

TOM. Let me ask you this, Shelly: Can the ScriptCleaner5000 do anything about a scene where the violence has already taken place onstage, but the audience is still left with the bloody aftermath?

SHELLY. As a matter of fact, yes. What I believe Tom is referring to is the classic play *Medea*, when the title character enters with her two young children whom she just killed.

TOM. Terrible. Just terrible. I blame it on video games.

SHELLY. Now if your town is anything like mine, audience members would *riot in the streets* if they saw a dead child onstage – let

alone two. The last thing your Grandma Blanche wants to see is a nasty case of onstage double-infanticide.

TOM. Don't tell me the ScriptCleaner5000 has a solution for onstage double-infanticide, too!

SHELLY. If I didn't tell you, Tom, I'd be withholding the truth. And *Patricia* lying is not what America is all about. America is about truth, and freedom, and making sure that no one is ever offended by anything. Which is why we will now show the American people exactly how the ScriptCleaner5000 – by making a single tiny script modification – can transform *Medea* from an unacceptable piece of garbage... into pure dramatic gold. Let's watch.

(Lights shift to outside the home of Jason and Medea in Corinth.)

CHORUS 1. Your boys are dead, killed by their own mother.

JASON. No. What are you saying? You have destroyed me.

CHORUS 2. They are dead. You must focus your thoughts on that fact.

CHORUS 3. Open the doors and you will see them, your slaughtered children. *Stabs* You in there, remove the bar on the door at once, so I may see two things – my dead sons and their murderer, that woman on whom I shall exact revenge.

JASON shakes the doors of the house, which do not open.

MEDEA appears from elsewhere – with two grocery-store frozen chickens, one in each hand.)

MEDEA. Why are you shaking the doors like that, trying to find the bodies and me, the one who killed them? Stop trying. If you want something from me, then say so. But you'll never have me in your grasp.

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM. TOM is crying.)

TOM. That was beautiful...

SHELLY. Now I know some of you out there may be thinking, "But what if a member of my cast happens to be a vegetarian?"

TOM. (Instantly recovered from his cry:) That's exactly what I was thinking!

SHELLY. Well, don't you fret, because the ScriptCleaner5000 is always a step ahead.

(Lights shift back to outside the home of Jason and Medea in Corinthus.)

JASON. (Shouting into the house, as he shakes the doors.)

You in there,
remove the bar on the door at once,
so I may see two things –
my dead sons and their murderer, that woman
on whom I shall exact revenge.

(JASON shakes the doors of the house, which do not open.
MEDEA appears exactly as before, but with two wretchednesses.)

MEDEA. Why are you shaking the doors like that,
trying to find the bodies and me, the one who killed them?
Stop trying. If you want something from me,
then say so. But you'll never have me in your grasp.

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM. TOM is wide-eyed, in disbelief.)

TOM. In – credible...

SHELLY. I'm telling you, Tom, this product is so wonderful, so fantastic, and so effective in removing the offensive parts of plays, you'd have to be a retard to pass this offer up!

TOM. Now Shelly, what about plays that deal with – how shall I say it – "relations" between a man and a woman...?

SHELLY. I'm glad you asked, Tom. As we all know, many classic plays contain graphic scenes involving nudity, and the act of "bedtime intimacy." And as we all agree, there is no place for this on a high school stage.

TOM. Because teenagers do not partake in such acts.

SHELLY. Precisely. For this reason, our product was designed to wipe away any situation involving the "consummation of love." Let's watch as the ScriptCleaner5000 works its magic on Terrence McNally's award-winning drama, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*.

(Lights shift to FRANKIE and JOHNNY in bed together – but they are far apart from one another, sitting up in bed. JOHNNY wears reading glasses and reads a novel; FRANKIE is knitting.

They both wear full-body pajamas. Both characters deliver the entire scene completely expressionless and devoid of emotion.)

JOHNNY. Oh. Oh. That's it.

FRANKIE. My oh my. Oh Johnny. Oh.

JOHNNY. That's right. Yes. Yes.

FRANKIE. Right there. You got it. Uh.

JOHNNY. All right. Oh.

FRANKIE. Oh.

JOHNNY. Oh.

FRANKIE. Oh.

(Pause.)

JOHNNY. That was amazing. Was it good for you.
(Pause.)

FRANKIE. Mm.

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.)

TOM. Fantastic! It was like I was watching the original production.

SHELLY. That's the miracle of the ScriptCleaner5000.

TOM. What else can this product do for me?

SHELLY. I'm glad you asked. Have you ever had problems with drugs?

TOM. Have I! (Coughs.)

SHELLY. Well, the ScriptCleaner5000 can turn such problems into solutions! Never again will your audiences have to face the realities of drug use.

TOM. Hug use, ladies and gentlemen – not drug use.

SHELLY. To demonstrate what I mean, we will present a scene from Kenneth Lonergan's critically-acclaimed play *This Is Our Youth*. The scene you are about to witness involves some young adults in 1982 and their experience with drugs.

(Lights shift to an apartment in 1982.)

DENNIS. I can't believe you stole all that money from your dad.

WARREN. I know.

DENNIS. What are you gonna do with it?

WARREN. Don't know.

DENNIS. Man... (Beat.) Hey listen, I got something.

WARREN. What?

DENNIS. Some blow.

WARREN. Yeah? Is it any good?

DENNIS. Yeah it's good.

WARREN. Okay.

(DENNIS reaches into his bag and brings out a box of tissues. He looks at it reverently. Then he holds it out to WARREN.)

DENNIS. Do the honors, my friend.

(WARREN takes the box of tissues. Pauses. Carefully pulls out a single tissue, then blows his nose quickly and sharply. He leans back and takes it in.)

DENNIS. That's some strong blow, right?

WARREN. Shut up.

DENNIS. You know I'm right, man.

WARREN. No, you're right.

DENNIS. Yeah. Hand it over.

(WARREN gives the box to DENNIS, who also partakes of the product.)

DENNIS. Oh yeah. That's hot.

(Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.)

TOM. That scene used to be about drugs?

SHELLY. Now we move on to an even more complex feature of the ScriptCleaner5000. It helps clean plays of something even more damaging than cocaine: Homosexuality. (Beat.) What do you know about homosexuality, Tom?

TOM. A great deal, Shelly. I have a very close friend who's a homosexual.

SHELLY. What's his name?

TOM. I don't remember. (Beat.) Don't you have a homosexual co-worker?

SHELLY. That's right, Tom.

TOM. How is that coming along for you?

SHELLY. I tolerate her every day! = *pat T on shoulder*

TOM. Terrific!

SHELLY. But next time you put on a play with gay themes in it, your audiences won't even have to *worry* about tolerance. Because the ScriptCleaner5000 takes care of everything for you by automatically removing all homosexual characters from the script.

TOM. Wonderful!

SHELLY. Let's watch as the ScriptCleaner5000 changes Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* into something that *everyone* can enjoy. The alterations are so subtle, you won't even notice the difference.

(Lights shift to Harper and Joe's apartment. HARPER is "arguing" with an unseen and unheard Joe. She plays the scene as if he's there. Lives in brackets are Joe's "responses.")

HARPER. Where do you go every night?

[What? What are you talking about?]

HARPER. You heard me, where do you go?

[You need to calm down.]

HARPER. Don't tell me to calm down. Where do you go?

[Why does it matter?]

HARPER. Because it's late, Joe. Because I'm your wife. [If you're trying to ask me something, then just ask me. Just do it.]

HARPER. Stop it! I don't want to ask what I have to ask. Just tell me the answer to the question you already know. [Ask what you want ask!]

HARPER. That's easy for you to say. I can't. I can't. Joe... [Why do you do this to yourself?]

HARPER. Right, blame it on me. I'm the horrible wife.

[Just ask what you want to ask! Okay?! Ask what you want –]

HARPER. Are you gay?

(Pause.)

Are you? If you walk away right now, so help me— Now answer the question. Are you?

[And if I was?]

HARPER. Joe! Stop it! Give me a real answer! Give me a real answer!
(*She is shaking "Joe" with her hands, pounding his chest in a frustrated rage.*)

(*Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.*)

TOM. Gripping. Just gripping. That actor playing Joe has Tony Award written all over him.

SHELLY. While we're on the subject of awards: In 1996, the world was taken by storm by a Pulitzer- and Tony-winning phenomenon called *Rent*. *Rent* is a rock opera that deals with a number of issues, including sex, drug use, mugging, strippers, violence, rioting, gays, lesbians, homelessness, drag queens, suicide, and AIDS.

(*Pause.*)

TOM. Those things are bad.

(*Beats.*)

Is there cursing?

SHELLY. There's rarely a moment without it.

TOM. Don't tell me the ScriptCleaner5000 can help *that* trainwreck.

SHELLY. I won't tell you; I'll *show* you. Ladies and gentleman, I bring you the musical sensation *Rent*, completely free of offensive material!

(*Lights shift to the opening scene of Rent, with MARK and ROGER in their bohemian apartment. They wear the classic Rent costumes, ROGER holds a guitar, etc.*)

(*And...nothing happens. For several seconds, MARK and ROGER simply do nothing, looking around a little. Maybe ROGER strums his guitar once or twice. MARK lets out a little augh. But for the most part, nothing.*)

(*Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.*)

TOM. I can't wait to see what happens next!

SHELLY. As you have seen tonight, ladies and gentlemen, the ScriptCleaner5000 is the answer to all your theatrical needs. This product

will take care of any problem, no matter what inappropriate material a playwright foolishly wrote. And that's not all!

TOM. It isn't?

SHELLY. It isn't. If you order within the next five minutes, we will include the popular companion product, the SetShrinker! On a tight budget? Performing in a cafeteria? No problem! The SetShrinker will scale down any elaborate set, guaranteed! Watch how seamlessly our product changes the famous "falling chandelier" moment in Andrew Lloyd Weber's musical enchantment, *The Phantom of the Opera*.

(*Lights shift to the end of Act One of The Phantom of the Opera. THE CAST is all onstage, appropriately costumed. In lieu of the famous chandelier, a light bulb on a string swings down from above, and ends up near the general vicinity of the cast. The FEMALE OPERA SINGER shrieks in terror. If rigging a string above the stage isn't possible, an unexpressive crew member can come onstage and pull off the same effect with a light bulb attached to the end of a fishing pole.*)

(*Lights shift to SHELLY and TOM.*)

TOM. Well, I'm convinced. I hope all of America is, too.

SHELLY. I hope so, too, Tom. I hope so, too. Goodnight America, God bless, but most of all...

ALL. ORDER NOW!

(*Blackout.*)

End of Play

Picnic by William Inge

Playwright - William Motter Inge

William Inge was born in Independence, Kansas on May 3, 1913. Inge was the youngest of five children. William Inge was actually part of a Boy Scout Troop that met in the Civic Center, which was a two-thousand seat theater where shows were held. The Boy Scouts were often invited to sit in the balcony after their meetings, so Inge was able to see many shows. These shows that were held in the Civic Center were shows that had one night performances in Kansas City.

Inge graduated from the University of Kansas at Lawrence with a Bachelors in Speech and Drama. Inge actually took more than four years because Inge took off one year because he wanted to travel with a tent theater company. Later, Inge returned to school and earned a Master of the Arts Degree from George Peabody College for Teachers in 1943. Upon completing his degree, Inge moved to St. Louis and worked for the *St. Louis Times*. While he was working as the drama critique, he met Tennessee Williams and went with Williams to a performance of *The Glass Menagerie* and he even said "it was the finest I had seen in many years. I went back to St. Louis and felt, 'Well, I've got to write a play.'" Recently after seeing *The Glass Menagerie*, Inge finished *Farther Off From Heaven*.

Inge wrote *Picnic* in 1953 and it opened at The Music Box Theatre in New York City. *Picnic* won a Pulitzer Prize, the Drama Critic Circle Award, The Outer Circle Award, and the Theatre Club Award. Inge's mother died in Independence, Kansas in 1958 at the age of 86.

In 1973, William Inge was believed to have committed suicide.

Time Period - 1950s

The 1950s were described by historians with one word, "boom." There were many things booming at the time of the 1950s including the economy, suburbs and the reproduction rate. In the 1950s there were about four million babies born each year.

In the 1950s, the US was also in the midst of the Cold war with Russia and just entering the Korean War. There was a lot of conflict and I think that William Motter Inge took that into consideration when he was writing *Picnic*. He didn't necessarily think of the wars, but he probably had the idea of conflict and used that to create conflict within the characters in *Picnic*.

In the 1950s, society ran into capitalism and consumerism. There were many strong Unions and problems in the workforce. In 1956, the federal government authorized the Interstate Highway Act.

The 1950s also had the Civil Rights movement. The Supreme Court ruling of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* was in 1954 and the ruling opened the door to the beginning of all Americans being treated equally regardless of race, creed, or religion.

In *Picnic*, Act 1 Scene 6, Rosemary says, "S my new fall outfit. Got it in Kansas City. Paid \$22.50 for the hat." This is how much the hat cost in 1953, \$22.50. In 2018, that hat would've cost \$209.66. That is one expensive hat. During the 1950s, the average school teacher salary of \$4,400.00. This salary would be worth \$41,000.56 today as a salary.

Setting/Plot

Picnic is set in a small Kansas town on Labor Day in the 1950s. Rosemary, the spinster school teacher fears she will continue to live her life without someone to take care of her. Inge recalled, "When I was a boy in Kansas, my mother had a boarding house. There were three women school teachers living in the house. I was four years old and they were nice to me; I liked them. I saw their attempts and, even as a child, I sensed every woman's failure. I began to sense the sorrow and the emptiness in their lives and it touched me." *Picnic* is based on this childhood memory that Inge had where he saw the rejection and the sorrow that was left from three female school teachers in his town.

The play takes place in the shared yard of Mrs. Potts and Flo. The whole play takes place over one day. The play starts with a man named Hal appearing in the yard starving. Hal has been traveling to the small town trying to find his old friend from college, Alan. Mrs. Potts walks out of the house and starts talking to Hal. She realizes he is hungry and asked him if he would like some breakfast, but Hal insists that he does yard work to pay her back for breakfast.

Flo and her daughters Madge and Millie met Hal and Flo did not like him at all. She thought that he was some sort of riff raff. Madge, although she was dating Alan, Hal's friend from college, she took one look at Hal and it was as if it was love at first sight. She could not stop looking at him every chance that she got.

A little later on in the play, Millie got upset because everyone in the town always thought of Madge as beautiful, but never thought of her as beautiful as well. Madge and Millie started calling each other names and acting like normal siblings. When Alan came over and discovered that the nice young boy that was working for Mrs. Potts was his friend from university, they started some of their old university life. They turned into kids again. Hal told his story of how he had gotten there and why he was there, while Millie started to heat up the shower in their basement so that Hal could take a shower.

Later that evening, everyone was getting ready to go to the picnic in the park and they were packing up the baskets. From down the street music started playing and Millie and Hal started to dance. Hal started trying to teach her how to dance, but Madge walked out the front door and was able to do what Hal was trying to teach Millie, but she was able to do it seductively. Madge was seducing Hal by wearing her brand new dress her mother made her, that her mother had told her not to wear, and by dancing. Further on in the dance Hal takes Madge's hand and brings her in close.

Picnic is set in Independence, Kansas. The town that holds Neewollah and the same town that William Inge grew up in himself. Kansas is located in the center of the United States surrounded by land and ocean. The land was purchased during the Louisiana Purchase and later became Kansas. By 1940, the population of Kansas dropped by 80,000 and less than 58% were farmers even though in the 1930s, about 60% were farmers. In the 1950s, Kansas and the entire Midwest underwent some significant social changes. The number of farms started to decline and people moved to towns and cities to take large influential jobs. In 1950, Kansas was in the top four states nationally in percentage of adults graduating from high school. So during the time of *Picnic*, it was highly recommended and wanted for people to graduate high school.

Independence, Kansas, the hometown of William Inge and the setting for *Picnic*, is in the southeast corner of Kansas near Oklahoma. Harry Sinclair, also raised in Independence, brought jobs and money to the town in the early 1930s when he built the Sinclair Oil pipeline. The pipeline employed both highly educated workers for their office jobs and they also hired less educated individuals for the work on the pipeline itself. Many towns in Kansas, including Independence, encouraged community participation including the Boy Scouts, Elks, or the American Legion. Inge grew up in the 1920s at

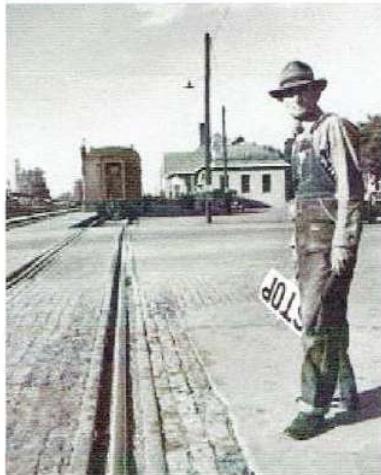
the time that Independence, Kansas was a wealthy town, but when he left for college, he should have seen the impact that the pipeline and the Great Depression yielded on his hometown.

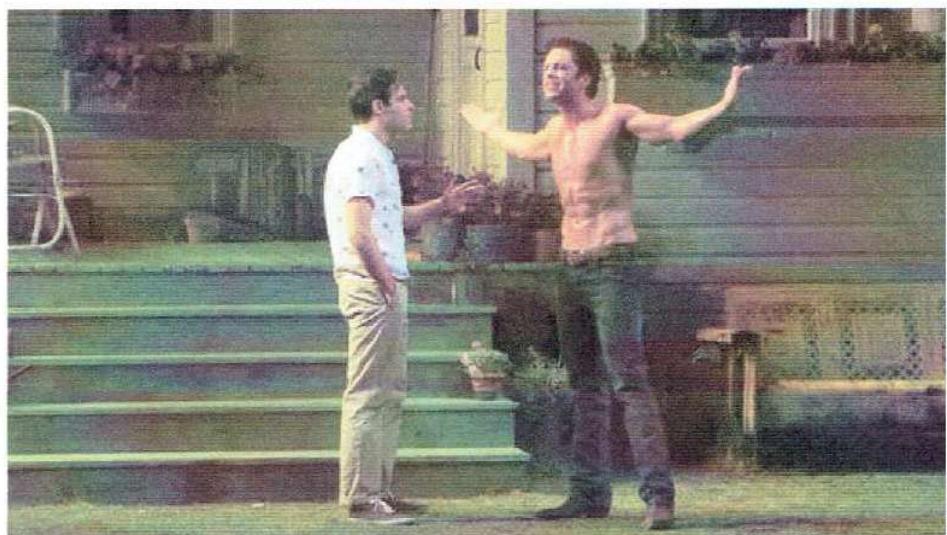
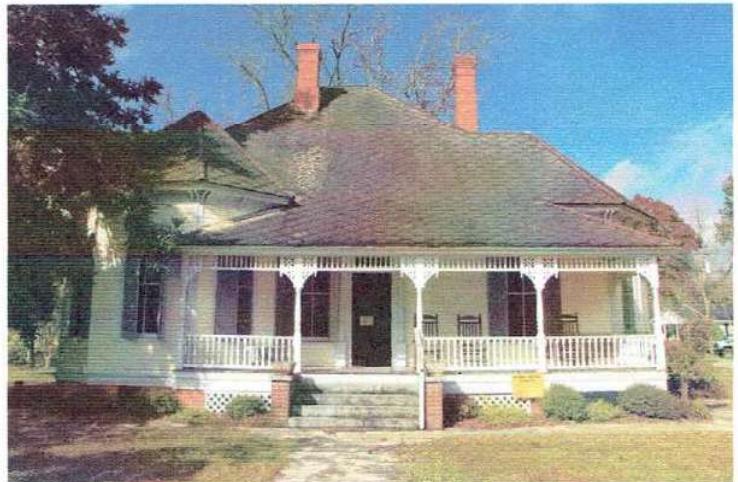
Flo's husband was a travelling salesman and was not respected by the community, so when Flo sees Hal in the backyard, she looks down on him.

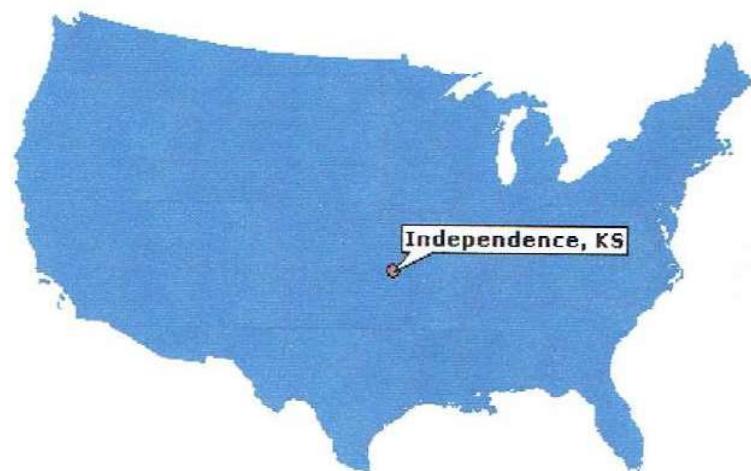
Flo's* husband, a travelling salesman, would not be a respected member of the community, and when Flo sees Hal* working in the backyard, she looks down on him, calling him a tramp. Hal is disappointed when Alan* suggests he get a job on the pipeline, because this job will not earn him respect from the town. Alan's family would have lived in the wealthy part of Independence, in a large house near the exclusive Country Club, and Alan would be expected to meet his future wife in college. Having become the Queen of Neewollah would have raised Madge's* status to a local celebrity, which may explain why the Independence society (and Alan's parents) would overlook the class difference between Madge and Alan. For Flo, the best chance for her family's security and advancement would be for Madge to marry Alan. The class tensions in the play may have been inspired by Inge's first-hand observations of people and relationships during his Kansas youth.

Quote

William Inge once said, "Picnic is a memory of women, all sorts of women – beautiful, bitter, harsh, loving, young old, frustrated, happy – sitting on a front porch on a summer evening."







Script	Analysis
MADGE. Don't feel bad. Women like Miss Sydney make me disgusted with the whole female sex.	Madge is comforting Hal. Madge is trying to get his attention.
(Recalling something, smiling.) Last year she and some of the other teachers made such a fuss about a statue in the library. It was a gladiator and all he had on was a shield on his arm. Those teachers kept hollering about that statue, they said it was an insult to them every time they walked into the library. Finally, they made the principal-I don't know how to say it, but one of the janitors got busy with a chisel and then they weren't insulted any more. The next day there was a sign hanging on the statue—"Miss Sydney was here."	Madge tries to use humor to get a response. Hal half laughs at her story.
I know you're not in the mood for funny stories, but you just have to laugh at Miss Sydney.	Madge goes back to comforting Hal trying to get Hal to talk to her.
HAL. What's the use, Baby? She saw through me like an X-ray machine. I'm a <i>bum</i> ! There's just no place in the world for a guy like me.	Hal is destroyed. He feels he has no meaning in this world and is trying to get Madge to not like him. He is protecting her.
<p>MADGE. I know how you feel. Millie's so smart and talented. I get to feeling so jealous of her and worthless when I try to be like her.</p> <p>Then I tell myself that I'm not Millie-I'm <i>me</i>! And I feel lots better.</p> <p>HAL.I'm <i>me</i>.</p> <p>MADGE. Sure!</p>	<p>Madge has a realization and confesses it to Hal trying to make him feel better. She is trying to relate to Hal.</p> <p>Madge sees herself differently.</p> <p>Hal is confused.</p> <p>She is trying to break through to Hal.</p>

HAL. Sure. But what's that?	
MADGE. Well, you're very entertaining. I mean...I think you say all sorts of witty things. And you're a wonderful dancer.	Madge is confessing things to Hal.
HAL. What good's dancin'?	Hal is trying to get Madge to loathe him.
MADGE. Oh, I can tell a lot about a boy by dancing with him.	Madge is seducing Hal.
HAL. You can?	
MADGE. Some boys, even though they're very smart, when they take a girl in their arms to dance, they're kind of awkward and she feels sort of uncomfortable.	Madge is making Hal feel better by talking about how awkward she feels with Alan when they dance.
HAL. She does?	
MADGE. But when you took me in your arms to dance, I had the most wonderful feeling you knew exactly where you were going and I could follow every step of the way. So you're not so bad. I don't care what you say.	Madge expresses her love her Hal.
HAL. Oh, yeah? Look, kid, lemme level with you. When I was fourteen I spent a year in a reform school. How do you like that?	Hal is defending himself and protecting Madge from him.
MADGE. What for?	
HAL. I stole a guy's motorcycle. Yeah, I stole it. I got not excuses. I stole it 'cause I wanted to get on the damn thing and go so far away, so fast that nothin' would ever catch up with me.	Hal is defending Madge from loving him and trying to keep her safe.
MADGE. Sure	
HAL. Then my old lady went to the	Hal is confessing everything he has ever

<p>authorities. "I've done everything I can with the boy," she says. "I can't do another thing with him."</p>	<p>worried about.</p>
<p>So off I go to the damn reform school. And the old lady's real happy 'cause my Dad's always loaded and she's got a new boyfriend and I'm in the way.</p>	<p>Hal is continuing to protect her.</p>
<p>MADGE. Gee...</p>	
<p>HAL. Well, there you are. And I never told anybody about that-not even Seymour-'caue Seymour's Seymour and I'm...me.</p>	<p>Hal finally understands "I'm me."</p>
<p>So if you want to get sick or run inside and lock your door or faint...go ahead. I ain't gonna stop you 'cause-</p>	
<p><i>(Madge suddenly kisses him. After the kiss he looks at her for a moment.)</i></p>	<p>Madge wants to calm Hal down.</p>
<p>Gee, baby, you come out here on the porch lookin' like a pretty little doll, but you're a real woman, aren't you?</p>	<p>Hal confesses his love for Madge.</p>
<p>MADGE. I want to be.</p>	
<p>HAL. You are.</p>	
<p>MADGE. Am I? <i>(Now Hal kisses her. After a moment Madge breaks away.)</i> We gotta go on the picnic.</p>	<p>Madge defends herself. She knows this is wrong.</p>
<p>HAL. Do we? There's other places...with not so many people. <i>(He pulls her to him and kisses her passionately. He releases her, grabs her hand and runs upstage with her and they run off together up left through the alley.)</i></p>	<p>Hal breaks down her defense.</p>

Event of Scene - Madge and Hal go off to have sex at the end of the scene.

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Picnic by William Inge
Character Descriptions

Hal Carter - Hal is in his 20s. Hal is good-looking and sexy. He is always desperately trying to fit in somewhere. He has had a hard life. Hal is a strong man, but is weak-hearted. He has never been able to fit in with the crowds he has been forced into, including his fraternity. Hal was never treated like a real person and that has made him weak and vulnerable.

- Madge Owens - Madge is 18 and she is exceptionally beautiful. Madge has been repressing her feelings and what she wants to do with her own life for a long time, since her mother has a plan for her life. She is invariably trying to escape the small town life and find something better out in the wide open world and Alan is her only link to that world outside of this small little town.

Helen Potts - Mrs. Potts is a widow in her 50s. She is pleasant to be around, even-tempered, and has a sweet spirit. She is very nurturing and takes in many borders and helps people out as much as she can. She is also taking care of her mother who is in her 80s.

Millie Owens - Millie is 16 and is a very intelligent student. She goes to school, she is assertive and also very talented. She can draw and write too. She has dreams of getting out of the small town that she is trapped in a moving to New York to have a successful life.

Bomber Gutzel - Bomber is in love with Madge and picks on Millie because she is more of a tom boy than a girl. Bomber is in his teens, around the same age as Millie. Bomber, just like Millie is a smart mouth and "knows everything."

Flo Owens - Flo is the mother of Millie and Madge Owens. She is in her 40s and she is very protective of her daughter, especially from Hal. She doesn't like strangers, which is why she has a problem with Mrs. Potts taking in all of her borders. On the outside, Flo seems harsh, but on the inside she is only a mother that wants what is best for her daughters. She was also left with her two daughters when her husband left her.

Rosemary Sydney - Rosemary is a school teacher in her late 30s early 40s. She is lonely, desperate, and in love with Howard. She is not very thrifty and spends her money willy nilly because she does not have a man that she has to ask before she can buy something. She also likes to brag about everything and thinks she is always right.

Alan Seymour - Alan is a well respected college student in his 20s. His father is a well respected businessman and pulls some influence in the town. He is in love with Madge and Madge likes him. He shows off his father's wealth with his outer appearance. Alan is a true down to Earth guy that is about to leave for school.

Irma Kronkite - Irma is a school teacher with Rosemary, but enjoys being single and doesn't care much for romantic interests. She is not the nicest person and she makes a lot of jokes when she is around Rosemary.

Christine Schoenwalder - Christine is another school teacher in her 30s. She is not the most extroverted person in the town and is kind of shy. Irma tries to push her out of her comfort zone and Christine looks up to Irma and Rosemary.

Howard Bevans - Howard is a business owner at the age of 42. He is kind, friendly, and loving. Howard is in love with Rosemary, but does not want to marry her. He wants to enjoy his single life.

PICNIC

by William Inge

WINNER OF THE 1953 PULITZER PRIZE

4M, 7W

The play takes place on Labor Day weekend in the joint backyards of two middle-aged widows. The one house belongs to Elo Owens, who lives there with her two maturing daughters, Madge and Millie, and a boarder who is a spinster school teacher. The other house belongs to Helen Potts, who lives with her elderly and invalid mother. Into this female atmosphere comes a young man named Hal Carter, whose animal vitality seriously upsets the entire group. Hal is a most interesting character, a child of parents who ignored him, self-conscious of his failings and his bad luck. Elo is sensitively wary of the temptation Hal poses for her daughters, Madge, bored with being only a beauty, sacrifices her chances for a wealthy marriage for the exciting Hal promises. Her sister, Millie, finds her balance for the first time through the stranger's brief attention. And the spinster is stirred to make an issue out of the dangling courtship that has brightened her life in a dreary, minor way.

*"Few writers have captured women in their social environment as well as William Inge and it's in that respect that *Picnic*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1953, retains its power."* — *CuriousUp.com*

Also by William Inge
BUS STOP
A LOSS OF ROSES
SPLENDOR IN THE GRASS
and others
DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.

ISBN: 978-0-8222-0892-1



★
DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

slow & close book
down to house Dives ~~closed~~ when ~~closed~~ down

FLO. Go upstairs and change, this minute. I mean it! You come with Rosemary and Howard! (Madge runs inside front door.)

MRS. POTTS. Let's go. All the tables will be taken.

FLO. Alan, help me with Millie. Millie, darling, are you feeling better? (Flo and Millie go off alley R.)

MRS. POTTS. Young man, you follow their car —

ALAN. Oh, Mr. Bevans, will you tell Madge I'll see her out there. (He exits alley R.)

MRS. POTTS. —I mean our car. Oh, dear. (Mrs. Potts follows the others off alley R. We hear the Cadillac drive off. Hal is sitting silent and beaten on the edge of the porch. Howard and Rosemary are by the shed.)

HOWARD. He's just a boy, Rosemary. You talked awful.

ROSEMARY. (Crosses below stump then u. to U. C. lawn.) Howard, what made me do it? What made me act that way?

HOWARD. You gotta remember, men have got feelings, too — same as women. (To Hal, crosses to above stump.) Don't pay any attention to her, young man. She didn't mean a thing.

ROSEMARY. I don't want to go on the picnic, Howard. This is my last night of vacation and I want to have a good time.

HOWARD. (Crosses u. for the bottle.) Anything you say, dear.

ROSEMARY. I wanna go for a ride, Howard. I want to drive into the sunset! I want to drive into the sunset! (She runs off towards the car, through alley R. Howard following. Howard's car drives away. Hal starts to rise. Madge comes out front door. She is wearing another dress. Hal quickly sits again. She sits on the bench on the porch and finally speaks in a gentle voice.) to her house 'U.R.

MADGE. Don't feel bad. Women like Miss Sydney make me disgusted with the whole female sex. (Recalling something, smiling.) Last year she and some of the other teachers made such a fuss

about a statue in the library. It was a gladiator and all he had on was a shield on his arm. Those teachers kept hollering about that statue, they said it was an insult to them every time they walked into the library. Finally, they made the principal — I don't know how to say it, but one of the janitors got busy with a chisel and then they weren't insulted any more. The next day there was a sign hanging on the statue — "Miss Sydney was here." I know you're not in the mood for funny stories, but you just have to laugh at Miss Sydney.

HAL. What's the use, Baby? She saw through me like an X-ray

Conversing

machine. I'm a bum! There's just no place in the world for a guy like me.

MADGE. I know how you feel. Millie's so smart and talented. I get to feeling so jealous of her and worthless when I try to be like her. Then I tell myself that I'm not Millie — I'm me! And I feel lots better.

HAL. In me.

MADGE. Sure!

HAL. Sure. But what's that? (Raises crosses to u. L. of Hal.) Well, you're very entertaining. I mean . . . I think you say all sorts of witty things. And you're a wonderful dancer.

HAL. What good's dancin'?

MADGE. Oh, I can tell a lot about a boy by dancing with him.

HAL. You can?

MADGE. Some boys, even though they're very smart, when they take a girl in their arms to dance, they're kind of awkward and she feels sort of uncomfortable. reFerencing A

HAL. She does?

MADGE. (She stays at his side.) But when you took me in your arms to dance, I had the most wonderful feeling you knew exactly where you were going and I could follow every step of the way. So you're not so bad. I don't care what you say.

HAL. Oh, yeah? (He turns to face her.) Look, kid, lemme level with you. When I was fourteen I spent a year in a reform school.

HAL. How do you like that?

MADGE. What for?

HAL. I stole a guy's motorcycle. Yeah, I stole it. I got no excuses. I stole it 'cause I wanted to get on the damn thing and go so far away, so fast, that nothin' would ever catch up with me.

MADGE. Sure.

HAL. Then my old lady went to the authorities. "We've done every thing I can with the boy," she says. "I can't do another thing with him." So off I go to the damn reform school. And the old lady's real happy 'cause my Dad's always loaded and she's got a new boy friend and I'm in the way.

MADGE. (She turns away.) Cee . . .

HAL. Well, there you are. And I never told anybody about that — not even Seymour — 'cause Seymour's Seymour and I'm . . . me. A

So if you want to get sick or run inside and lock your door or

spend eye

② turns to ♂

faint . . . go ahead. I ain't gonna stop you 'cause — (Madge suddenly kisses him. After the kiss he looks at her a moment.) Gee, baby, you come out here on the porch lookin' like a pretty little doll, but you're a real woman, aren't you?

MADGE I want to be.

HAL. You are. *She breaks and x DSC*
MADGE Am I? (Now Hal kisses her. After a moment Madge breaks away and walks over near Mrs. Fotts' steps. Hal follows her to her R, turns her to him.) We gotta go on the picnic.

HAL. Do we? There's other places . . . with not so many people. (He pulls her to him and kisses her passionately. He releases her, then goes upstairs and looks off R. and L. to see that no one is around. He turns to Madge and holds out his hand to her. After a moment she gives him her hand and they walk off slowly together through alley R.)

④ turns to her ④ runs CURTAIN
④ crosses her ④ runs CURTAIN
U.S through a alley

U 21 D

Event 15
Aug 10
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22

ACT III

SCENE 1

It is after midnight. A great harvest moon shines in the sky, a deep, murky blue. The moon is swollen and full and casts a pale light on the scene below. The light on Flo's porch is burning. A stick lies on the lawn at R. near the porch. Off R. we hear Howard's Chevrolet chugging to a stop by the house, then Howard and Rosemary come on R. through alley. Rosemary first. Wearily, a groggy depression having set in, she makes her way to the doorsstep and drops there, sitting on porch corner. Howard enters quickly as she sits. He crosses D. to D. C. lawn. She seems preoccupied at first and her responses to Howard are mere grunts.

HOWARD. Here we are, Honey. Right back where we started from.

ROSEMARY. (Her mind elsewhere.) Uhuh.

HOWARD. (Sits at her L. on porch edge.) You were awful nice to me tonight, Rosemary.

ROSEMARY. Uhuh.

HOWARD. Do you think Mrs. Owens suspects anything?

ROSEMARY. I don't care if she does.

HOWARD. (Rises, crosses L. to C.) A business man's gotta be careful of talk. And after all, you're a schoolteacher. (Crambling to get away.) Well, I guess I better be gettin' back to Cherryvale. I gotta open up the store in the morning. (Crosses to her.) Good night, Rosemary. Good night. (He kisses her cheek.) Maybe I should say, good morning. (He starts off—crosses to U. C. lawn.)

ROSEMARY. (Just coming to.) Where you goin', Howard?

HOWARD. (Crosses D. a bit.) Honey, I gotta get home.

ROSEMARY. You can't go off and leave me.

HOWARD. (Crosses D. to D. C. lawn.) Honey, talk sense.

Lysistrata by Aristophanes

Playwright - Aristophanes

Aristophanes was born circa 448 BCE and died circa 388 BCE. He is a Greek comedy playwright whose works have been preserved. Aristophanes was also sometimes referred to as the father of comedy. Aristophanes was an Athenian citizen and he belonged to the clan of Pandionis, but no one actually knows his real birthplace. Aristophanes started writing in 427 BCE with the *Daitaleis*, which appears to have been a satire on his contemporaries' educational and moral theories. Aristophanes has been believed to have written 40 plays. A large part of Aristophanes' work is influenced by the social, literary, and philosophical life of Athens and things that were provoked by the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE). The Peloponnesian War was a conflict between the imperialist Athens and the conservative Sparta.

Aristophanes' comedies are loosely put together in terms of plot construction. They often decay at the end into a series of disconnected stories. Aristophanes' greatness lies with satire, especially when he mocks the tragedian Euripides. Aristophanes was not afraid to take risks. His first play *Daitaleis* or "The Banqueters" won second prize at a drama competition when he started writing in 427 BCE and his next play *The Babylonians*, won first prize. These plays contained a lot of embarrassing things for the Athenian authorities and some citizens that had influence.

Setting of Concept - Syria

My concept of Lysistrata is placed in current day Syria which is during the Syrian Civil War. During this Civil War, men are forced to live in their homes with their wives. They are off at war during everyday and the women are left to take over the country. Lysistrata sees the country how it is and how bad it is and tries to take charge. Lysistrata and all of the women would be wearing traditional Burkas and full Syrian wear while the men would be wearing light khaki clothes with some camouflage as well. They will also be wearing the huge phalluses to represent the sexual frustration that

they have during the sex strike. The Syrian women fight back and have a sex strike against the men.

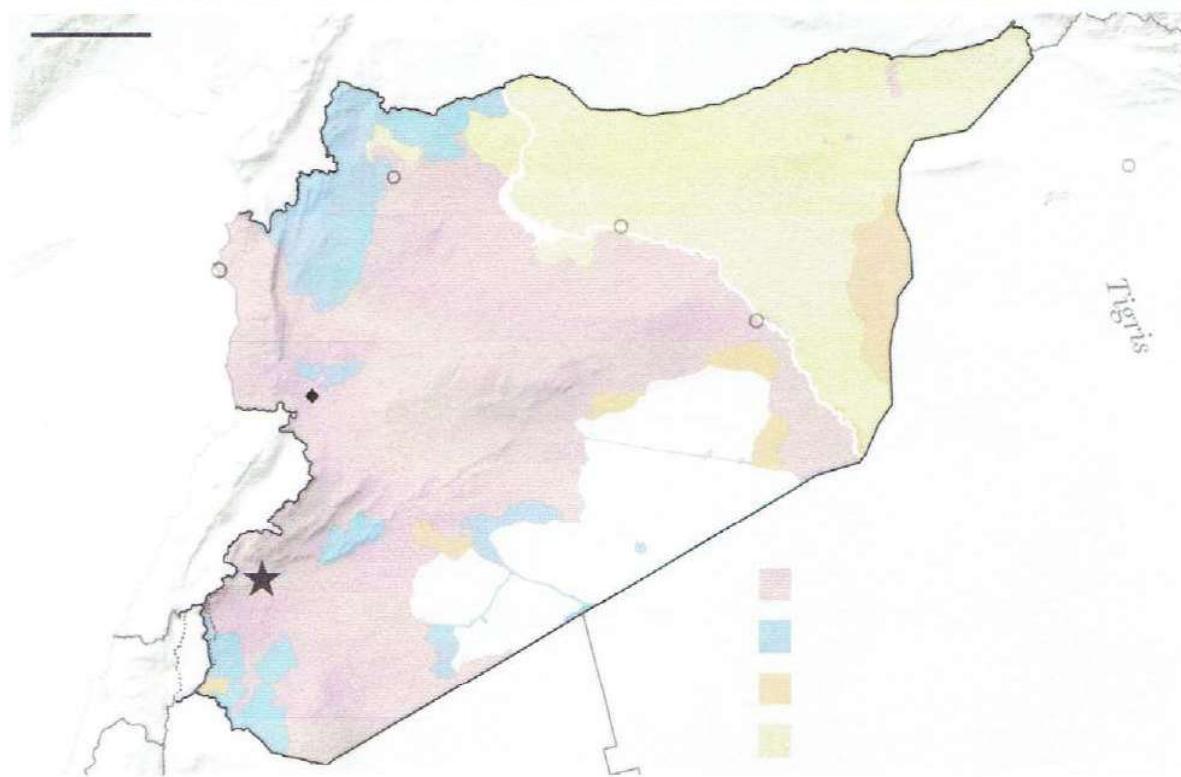
The sex strike will work in Syria because of the fact of the men living in the same houses as their wives just as in Greece. They did not have anywhere else to go so when the women refused to have sex with their husbands, it caused a lot of problems.

There have been articles written about Syrian women being sexually exploited to receive the small amounts of aid that they need including food, medicine, and shelter. They have been forced to do this because the men that work in the UN and the aid organizations will not do anything to help the Syrians that are left in their homes without protection, food, water, medicine, and sometimes without even a home when their husbands are off at war in the Syrian Civil War. They will not help a small country without asking for something in return, sex.

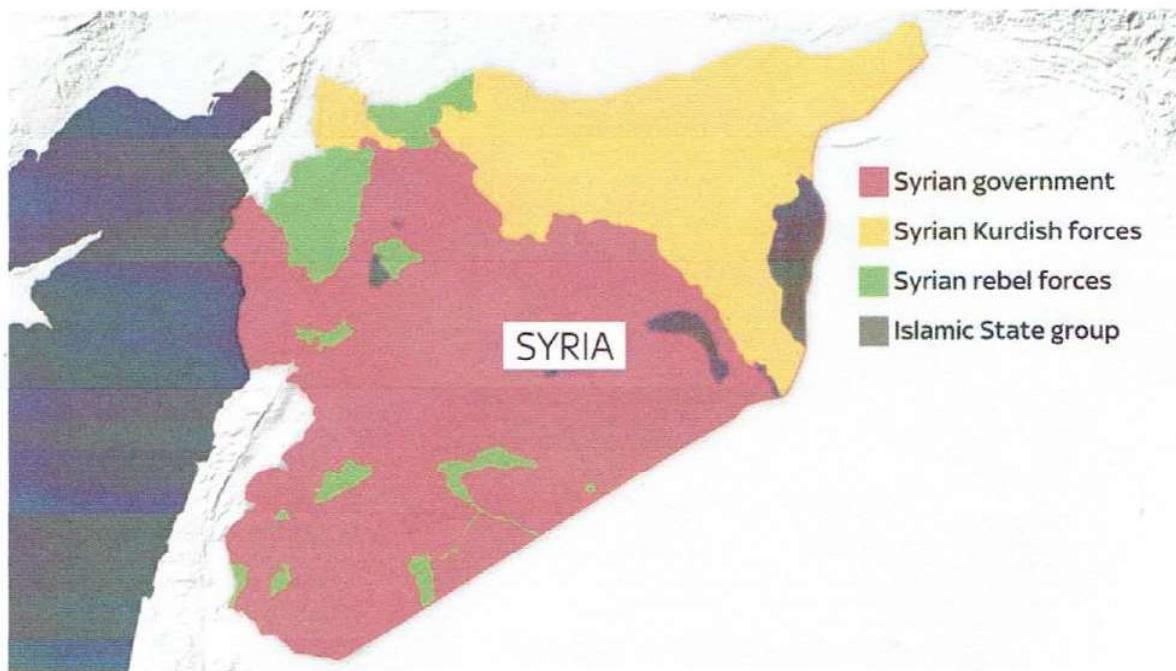
The women of Syria could have a sex strike and try to fix the country themselves, like they do in *Lysistrata*, but they cannot do so because of the men taking over. This is the reason that I decided to place *Lysistrata* in Syria, because it is these specific circumstances that cause the women of Syria to give out sex in exchange for help. It is this problem that can cause the outrage of *Lysistrata* to start the sex strike and start the revolution against the war and against the men running the country and all other countries.

Original Setting/Plot

This comedy was written not long after the catastrophic defeat of the Athenian expedition to Sicily (413 BCE) and not long before the revolt of the Four Hundred in Athens, whereby an oligarchic regime ready to make peace with Sparta was set up (411 BCE). *Lysistrata* (411 BCE; Greek *Lysistratē*) depicts the seizure of the Acropolis and of the treasury of Athens by the city's women who, at Lysistrata's instigation, have, together with all the women of Greece, declared a sex strike until such time as the men will make peace. The women defy their menfolk until the peace is arranged, after which both the Athenian and Spartan wives are reunited with their husbands. The play is a mixture of humour, indecency, gravity, and farce.







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Hay Fever Research
By: Max Tootleman

Cookham

- 20 Miles North of London
- Very Rich Area
- Lies on the River Thames

Etiquette & Manners

- Politeness is key
- Courteousness at all times
 - Saying excuse me, Please, and thank you
- Handshakes are always used when meeting someone knew
- Never asking personal questions
 - Salary, relationship status, weight, or age.
 - Punctuality is VERY important
 - Advisable to arrive 5-10 minutes early out of respect for the host of the event or meeting

Time Period

Known as the Roaring Twenties

- WWI Just ended
 - The war was very profitable for a lot
 - A lot of people now live a more lavish lifestyle
 - People used this lifestyle as an escape from the war
- Women now took more responsibility. They now have the right to vote and were employed in factories during the war
 - New independence of women was displayed in their fashion of shorter hair, shorter dresses, women smoking, drinking, and driving cars.
- This is the time that the “flapper” came to be
 - The “flapper” shocked society with her free living/wild behavior and actions
- Families were generally smaller, only two or three children

Historical Events

- 1920, the 19th Amendment gives American women the right to vote
- 1920, short hair styles become the norm for women throughout the decade
- 1923, Mother's Day, first celebrated in America in 1907 (in reaction to suffragettes disrupting Wilson's inauguration), is celebrated in Europe.
- 1923, the first birth-control clinic opens in New York

- 1925, Mrs. Nellie Taylor Ross of Wyoming becomes the first woman governor in America
- 1925, Hay Fever premiers in London
- 1925, female fashions feature straight dresses (which meant women no longer wore corsets) without a waistline and skirts above the knee
- 1925-1927, with short skirts, flesh colored stockings are introduced
- 1925, the Charleston becomes fashionable
- 1925, the state of Tennessee forbids sex education in the schools
- 1926, Gertrude Ederle becomes the first woman to swim the English Channel
- 1927, African-American Josephine Baker becomes a dance sensation in Paris
- 1928, Women's vote in Britain reduced from age 30 to 21
- 1928, Amelia Earhart is the first female pilot to fly across the Atlantic
- 1929, the stock market crashes
- 1929, Margaret Bondfield becomes first woman British Privy Councilor

Noel Coward

- Life of Noël Coward: Actor, Composer, Playwright, Director, Author, Celebrity *(Classic Magazine)
 - 1899 Born in Teddington, Middlesex 16th December.
 - 1907 First public stage appearances.
 - 1922 Spends winter in New York on a subsistence income, and becomes frequent guest at the home of Laurette Taylor and Hartley Manners.
 - 1923 Composes London Calling; writes The Vortex (produced 1924); writes Fallen Angels (produced 1925); Weatherwise (produced 1932).
 - 1924 Appears in The Vortex; writes Hay Fever; produced Easy Virtue.
 - 1925 Directs Hay Fever at the Ambassadors and Criterion Theatres. Production transfers to Maxine Elliott Theatre, New York (in collaboration with Laura Hope Crews).
 - 1930 Writes the songs, "Mad Dogs and Englishmen", "Any Little Fish", "Half-Caste Woman", "Someday I'll Find You". Writes Private Lives. Plays Elyot Chase in Private Lives.
 - 1932 Hay Fever revived in New York.
 - 1937 Writes autobiography Present Indicative
 - 1941 Writes and directs Blithe Spirit.
 - 1944 Blithe Spirit filmed, Coward writes screenplay for Brief Encounter.
 - 1945 Brief Encounter filmed.
 - 1954 Future Indefinite (autobiography) published in London and New York.
 - 1955 Plays Hesketh-Baggott in the film Around the World in 80 Days.

- 1961 The Vortex and Hay Fever revived on British television.
- 1964 Hay Fever revived at Royal National Theatre London.
- 1973 Noël Coward dies, in Blue Harbour, Jamaica 26th March.

The Taylor Family

In the years prior to Noel Coward writing Hay Fever, he spent many an enjoyable evening with the Taylor family in New York, playing games and entertaining their endless stream of houseguests. Anton Chekov heralded Laurette Taylor as "America's greatest actress," and her flair for drama did not stop at the stage door. Her and her family's antics were Coward's inspiration for Hay Fever's Bliss family, and the personality of Laurette, her husband, and her two children are very evident in this wonderful play.

"On Sunday evenings... we had cold supper and played games, often rather acrimonious games, owing to Laurette's abrupt disapproval of any guest (whether invited by Hartley, Dwight, Marguerite, or herself) who turned out to be self-conscious, or unable to act an adverb or a historical personage with proper abandon. There were also, very often, shrill arguments concerning rules. These were waged entirely among the family, and frequently ended in all four of them leaving the room and retiring upstairs, where, later on, they might be discovered by any guest bold enough to go in search of them, amicably drinking tea in the kitchen.

It was inevitable that someone should eventually utilize portions of this eccentricity in a play, and I am only grateful that no guest of the Hartley Manners thought of writing Hay Fever before I did." (N. Coward, Present Indicative, p. 136)

Quotes By Noel Coward

"Lose yourself and you lose your audience"

Glossary of Terms

Setting: Cookham

- Cookham is a small village North of Windsor and South of Oxford on the river Thames. It is probably about 45 minutes drive from London.

Potty

- Slightly crazy

Poseuse

- Means one (in this case a female) who poses; a phony

Au fond

- Literally: at the bottom; or in the end, or, in the deepest sense.

Caste

- A division of society based on differences of wealth, inherited rank or privilege, profession, or occupation

Oil of cloves

- An oil made from the dry bud of a tropical tree; dentists traditionally used this essential oil for its healing and soothing properties, to ease pain, of their patients – hence Sorel's suggestions. It is also used in perfumes and soaps.

Dresser

- In theater cliché, the dresser is the star's main connection to reality. The dresser is expected to know everything about his or her charge. In addition, the dresser takes care of costuming the star. For an actor at that time, an actor/manager is running the business, and the entire character comes from the costume, so the person in charge of the star's "look" was very important. Probably the closest contemporary analogy is that of a movie star's personal assistant.

Delphiniums

- Kind of flower

Asters

- Asters are often used as "filler" flowers in bouquets. They are small flowers the size of coins distributed over airy sprays, visually connecting one flower to another within an arrangement. These dainty, daisy-like flowers with yellow centers, come in a rainbow of pastels.

Callow

- Lacking adult sophistication; immature

Ingénue

- The stage role of a naïve young girl or woman: also the actress playing that role

Dandle

- To move up and down in one's arms or on one's knee in affectionate play; pamper or pet

Punkah

- A fan used especially in India that consists of a canvas-covered frame suspended from the ceiling and that is operated by a cord

Punt

- A long narrow flat-bottomed boat with square ends usually propelled with a pole.

Milieu

- Environment or setting

Landed gentry

- A member of the aristocracy having an estate in land

Cur

- A mongrel or inferior dog – a surly or cowardly fellow

Arrant

- Being notoriously without moderation, usually used in the context of a quote from Hamlet, "we are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us."

Ripping

- Excellent or delightful

Marlow

- Marlow is the next village North of Cookham along the Thames.

Calceolarias

- Tropical American plants with flowers shaped like little slippers and that are mostly yellow colored

You're so gallant and chivalrous—much more like an American than an Englishman.

- This is an interesting and early to mid-century cliché about Americans. That is that a slight provincialism is a cover for a more genuine way of behaving and the Puritanical background leaves way for very nice manners indeed. This idea also comes up in the works of Henry James. It's interesting that an English person's idea of an American today has changed to be loud and boorish (an idea that began when all the GIs were stationed in England).

Borgia of Rosine

- Myra's perfume:

Dieppe

- City in France and a resort destination for English lower class travelers on summer holiday. A bit tacky.

Mah Jong

- A game of Chinese origin usually played by four persons with 144 tiles that are drawn and discarded until one player secures a winning hand.

Frowsy

- Having a slovenly or uncared-for appearance

Maidenhead

- Maidenhead is in the county of Berkshire and about 25 miles (40 kilometers) west of London. Maidenhead is only 2 miles South of Cookham.

Crippen

- Early 20th century murderer who murdered his wife and then flayed her, hiding her body in the cellar. He was eventually caught.

Reformatories

- A penal institution to which young or first offenders are committed

Susceptible

- Open, subject, or unable to resist some stimulus, influence, or agency

Cap

- Judith means a sign of respectability. Caps are used as a sign of a respectable married woman, esp. in the wedding scene in The Taming of the Shrew. Judith sites an archaic custom.

Spurious

- False; outwardly similar or corresponding to something without having its genuine qualities

Cad

- A person without gentlemanly instincts; meaning in this case that Sandy didn't have any more than physical desires for Sorel and feels (when caught by Judith) a bit guilty

Barometer

- An instrument for determining the pressure of the atmosphere and hence for assisting in judgment as to predicting the weather and determining the height of an ascent

Haddock

- Food fish; a relative of cod that occurs on both sides of the Atlantic

Ten bob

- Bob is British slang for a shilling, which is now obsolete British monetary unit equal to 12 pence or 1/20 of a pound. So even in 1920s money, Sandy and Jackie are not being very generous.

The Haymarket

- A London theatre near Piccadilly Circus. The Haymarket is still a working theater, part of the West End theater row.

Waifs and strays matinee

- Like a student matinee, but a performance for children in an orphanage

Perambulators

- British word for baby carriage

Scarlet Hispano

- A Hispano is a French car with a long body made from about 1907-1936.



Anglo-EU Translation Guide

What the British say	What the British mean	What others understand
I hear what you say	I disagree and do not want to discuss it further	He accepts my point of view
With the greatest respect...	I think you are an idiot	He is listening to me
That's not bad	That's good	That's poor
That is a very brave proposal	You are insane	He thinks I have courage
Quite good	A bit disappointing	Quite good
I would suggest...	Do it or be prepared to justify yourself	Think about the idea, but do what you like
Oh, incidentally/ by the way	The primary purpose of our discussion is...	That is not very important
I was a bit disappointed that	I am annoyed that	It doesn't really matter
Very interesting	That is clearly nonsense	They are impressed
I'll bear it in mind	I've forgotten it already	They will probably do it
I'm sure it's my fault	It's your fault	Why do they think it was their fault?
You must come for dinner	It's not an invitation, I'm just being polite	I will get an invitation soon
I almost agree	I don't agree at all	He's not far from agreement
I only have a few minor comments	Please re-write completely	He has found a few typos
Could we consider some other options	I don't like your idea	They have not yet decided



