The Actor's Nightmare

By
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DEDICATION

This play is lovingly dedicated to my darling nieces,
Anastasia, Sofia, and Eden...
...and to my best buddies,
Lucky, Buster, Beanie, and Happy.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The title says it all, and every actor and actress who has ever graced the stage knows it all too well. Bobby, Danni, and Christina are three high school students who share the same bad dreams of forgetting their lines, blanking on their monologues for a big audition, looking foolish in a death scene, or being in a really bad play where you don't even know what it is or any of the cast members in it! They stumble through the ridiculous scenarios by any means necessary, improvising and freaking out at the same time. Chaos and calamity reign supreme as they deal with their fears under some outrageous circumstances that just seem too weird to be true. In the end, we find out that all of the nightmares were just a figment of one actress' vivid imagination. But she quickly discovers that while some dreams do indeed come true, so do some nightmares!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(May be cast with as few as 5 m, 6 w, to as many as 8 m and 14 w, not including extras. Some roles are not gender specific. Doubling possible.)

Scene 1
BOBBY
MARGIE
OLIVIA
KLAUS VON WISENHEIMER
PIP
PROFESSOR PEACH
MRS. KETTLE
FORTUNE TELLER
MADAME GREYSTOKE
POLICEMAN
COOK

Scene 2
DANNI
MOM
DAD
MANDY
BRANDY

Scene 3
CHRISTINA
JESSICA
MELISSA
HERMAN GORGONCHUCK
ANDY
LINDSAY MORLEY

Scene 4
OLIVIA
MOM

EXTRAS: *3 - 10 person ensemble as the Audience, Classmates, Family, and the Photographer.*

SET

The stage is bare except for three walls/dividers that serve as borders to the playing area. (One angled upstage left, one at upstage center, and one angled upstage right). There are stage entrances to the playing area at down left, up left, and down right, up right. Numerous props, set pieces and costumes may be used and carried on by the actors entering the stage for scene set-ups and strikes. The director/set designer may dress the set as much or as little as desired.

PROPS

This play is very flexible when it comes to prop and costume use. For example, the rubber ducky could be changed to a teddy bear, or the rodeo-clown costume could be changed to a Halloween costume, etc. Directors may have creative freedom in changing or adjusting the props and costumes in the script to better serve their own productions of the play.

Scene 1: Stopwatch for Margie; several set pieces as chairs and small tables carried on by actors; Sherlock Holmes-style hat, jacket, magnifying glass and smoking pipe for Bobby; beret and riding crop or a megaphone for Klaus; script for Olivia to give to Bobby; a board game, possible murder weapons, and maps and diagrams either put on the table, hung up on the wall or strewn on the floor by actors; camera for Photographer; rubber ducky in Bobby's jacket pocket.

Scene 2: Coffee; travel bag for Mom; cell phone for Mandy; scripts/books in a bin; headshots/resumes for Danni.

Scene 3: Clothes that make Christina look foolish as a clown wig, an oversized housecoat, etc; small bouquet of roses and a tiara for Margie to give to Christina; rubber ducky for Lindsay to attack Christina.

Scene 4: "Thespy" award in Olivia's bag.

The Actor's Nightmare

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The curtains open. Lying on center stage, curled up and sleeping on the floor is BOBBY, a high school senior thespian. He is snoring loudly.)

MARGIE: *(From offstage.)* Bobby!! Bobby, where are you?

(A short and bossy stage manager, MARGIE, comes running on stage and immediately darts to BOBBY, trying to wake him up.)

MARGIE: *(Cont'd.)* Just what do you think you're doing?! You go on in ten minutes!! Sleeping on the job is inappropriate!

(MARGIE starts propping BOBBY upright, frantically trying to revive a now awake but very groggy actor.)

MARGIE: *(Cont'd.)* What's the matter with you, Bobby!?! You got a show to do!!

(SHE starts clapping loudly right into BOBBY's ears. It works. He jumps to his feet and snaps to attention.)

BOBBY: I got a…what?
MARGIE: You got a show to do in… *(Looking at the stopwatch hanging around her neck.)* 8 minutes and 36 seconds, and you haven't even been to hair and make-up yet.

(MARGIE grabs BOBBY by the arm and starts to drag him offstage. Bobby halts just before they reach the exit.)

BOBBY: Wait a minute, wait a minute…what show? What are you talking about!? I don't know any show. Who's doing a show?
MARGIE: Now is not the time to start trying out some experimental acting technique, Mr. "I'm-a-Method Actor." Now really, seriously, we have got to go!

(MARGIE yanks HIM offstage. As they exit downstage right, a small GROUP OF PLAYERS, dressed up like characters from a murder mystery board game, enter from upstage left. As they enter and cross to center, they do various vocal and verbal warm-ups, carrying and setting up a few set pieces, such as chairs and small tables.)

OLIVIA: Can you all please keep it DOWN!! I am trying to prepare.
PIP: We're all trying to prepare, Olivia. That's why it's so loud and distracting.
OLIVIA: Pip, was I talking to you?
PIP: Well actually…
OLIVIA: No. No, I wasn't talking to you. So go back to playing your stupid video games and leave me alone.
PIP: Technically they're not actually video games. And there are millions of online players that you can --
OLIVIA: *(Cutting him off.)* I don't care!!

(MARGIE and BOBBY enter upstage right. Margie is putting a hat and jacket on Bobby, making him look like a cartoonish version of Sherlock Holmes.)

BOBBY: But I don't even know what play we're doing!! I don't know my lines!!
MARGIE: *(Calmly.)* Don't worry…you'll be fine.
BOBBY: *(Panicking.)* Don't worry?! That's your answer. "Don't worry"? Are you kidding me? I don't know my lines!!
MARGIE: Just say whatever pops into your head when you're out there…they'll love it.
BOBBY: You're joking. This is a joke, right? Are they all in on it too?

End of Freeview

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