

THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SNOW BUSINESS

By Claudia Haas

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Is it possible to perform a Shakespearean scene fest without male actors, costumes, or scenery? A blizzard has stranded the guys who went to pick up everything for opening night. So now the gals are faced with performing alone on a bare stage. At first nobody thinks they can do it. With such different personalities, from the practical director to the spoiled daddy's girl, to the airhead and valley girl, it seems like too many egos clash. But even so, drama students pull together to prove at the end that the show must go on! A delightful play with such evenly distributed parts that every actress gets a chance to shine.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(14 w)

PATRICIA: Stage manager, actress wanna-be, take charge.

ASHLEY: Director, means well.

MERCEDES: Grossly miscast as Cleopatra.

HEAVENLEA: Heavenly person miscast to play Lady Macbeth.

SHELBY: Understudy Lady Macbeth, doesn't plan on going on.

NIKKI: Understudy for Juliet, doesn't "get" Shakespeare.

IAN: Could be British, miscast as Ophelia, would be good Hamlet.

SKYLAR: Understudy for Ophelia, good casting as Ophelia, close friends with Ian.

ZELDA: Understudy for Cleopatra, rich, take charge, probably would be a good Cleopatra.

VERONICA: Cast as Titania, a diva.

VIOLET: Understudy for Titania, VERY sunny person.

SAMANTHA: Cast as Kate ("Taming of the Shrew"), a Daddy's girl.

CINDY: Understudy for Kate, theatre lover.

CECE: Cast as Juliet, a Valley-girl.

TIME: Opening night, January, current year.

PLACE: Local community theatre.

PROPS

Winter coats with "snow" for each cast member

Scripts and pens for Pat and Ashley

Plank of wood for Zelda

Colorful sheet for Cindy

Nail polish for Zelda

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: LIGHTS up on a basically a bare stage with only a few rehearsal chairs and tables scattered about. PATRICIA, the stage manager, enters covered with snow, carrying scripts, and drops everything on table. Takes off jacket, looks around. It is about two hours before curtain.)

PATRICIA: No scenery, no costumes, no cast and no director. YES! This is my lucky break. A chance to shine. A one-woman show! If only there were an audience.

ASHLEY: *(Enters, also covered with snow.)* How many cast members have arrived? Thank goodness I insisted on understudies.

PATRICIA: I'm the cast so far.

ASHLEY: Great. One stage manager and one director for a large-cast Shakespearean scene fest.

(SCREAM offstage. A beat, then HEAVENLEA comes limping on assisted by SHELBY and NIKKI.)

HEAVENLEA: Oh the pain! The pain! I need a chair.

(SHELBY and NIKKI assist HEAVENLEA to the chair. PATRICIA and ASHLEY rush over.)

ASHLEY: Can you go on tonight? I mean, are you all right?

PATRICIA: Get her some ice.

SHELBY: Where? There's no refrigerator.

NIKKI: Outside. You'll find some ice outside.

MERCEDES: *(Entering, truly covered with snow.)* Anyone want to make snow angels?

PATRICIA: Quick, Mercedes, here. Shake your jacket off on Heavenlea's foot.

MERCEDES: Why?

ASHLEY: It's swollen. She fell and it may be sprained.

MERCEDES: Okay. *(Does so.)*

(Enter ZELDA and VERONICA.)

ZELDA: We're here, so the show can go on.

MERCEDES: Hi, Understudy!

ZELDA: I hate when she says that.

VERONICA: I know. Someone should muzzle her.

MERCEDES: What's a muzzle? Sounds cute.

ZELDA: When people ask me what I am doing in this play, I tell them I am understudying a turnip.

(Enter IAN and SKYLAR.)

IAN: Shakespeare can rest easy. We have arrived.

NIKKI: Oh look, it's the Ophelias ... the one with the boy's name and Sky King.

IAN: Skylar. Her name is Skylar, thank you very much.

NIKKI: It's hard to remember your names when they're so strange.

IAN: Most everyone here seems to have a strange name. Besides, "What's in a name?"

NIKKI: What?

IAN: "What's in a name?" Does that line ring a bell? You are understudying Juliet, aren't you?

NIKKI: The key word is understudy. It's not like I need to know the lines or anything. Besides, if I go on, I'm going to change a few things around so the audience can understand me.

SKYLAR: You're not going to rewrite Shakespeare, are you?

NIKKI: What's wrong with that? He's a bit outdated, don't you think?

IAN and SKYLAR: No.

MERCEDES: Who's Shakespeare?

VERONICA: I'd better get working on that muzzle.

(Enter CINDY, SAMANTHA and VIOLET.)

VIOLET: Isn't this the most beautiful weather? It reminds me of a poem by Robert Frost.

CINDY: It's just gorgeous. Cars stalled everywhere, we'll probably have no audience and no critics will come. Gorgeous.

SAMANTHA: Well, what do you care? I'm here so you won't go on anyway.

CINDY: You may still lose your voice ... stranger things have happened.

SAMANTHA: Listen, I understand that you think you'd make a better Kate than me ... but the director DID cast me as the Shrew. If you ask me, I was born to play Juliet.

SHELBY: More great casting from the director.

ASHLEY: I like to cast against type.

VIOLET: Please, no fighting. Aren't we lucky to be here together on such a beautiful evening, and involved in an artistic endeavor designed to lift the spirit?

MERCEDES: Huh?

ZELDA: It's over your head, Cleopatra.

(Enter CECE.)

CECE: Like, hi, dudes.

NIKKI: Great. Juliet's here.

ASHLEY: Let's get started. Everyone please gather around.

VERONICA: Now comes the pep talk.

MERCEDES: I just love peppy talks.

HEAVENLEA: So do I.

ASHLEY: As you know, there's a blizzard outside.

CECE: For sure.

ASHLEY: It's like this. The guys are stuck in Riverton where they went to pick up the scenery pieces. The bridge is closed and they can't get here tonight. Also, they picked up the costumes on the way to Riverton, so I'm afraid we have an opening with no scenery, no costumes and no actors. We do have, however, an overabundance of actresses.

CECE: But what will I do for a Romeo? Nikki? I don't suppose you would be willing.

NIKKI: Not a chance.

End of Freeview

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