

The Worst Play In The World

By

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Cast of Characters

<u>Ryan:</u>	A male student, leader of the Drama Club
<u>Rachel:</u>	A female student, very serious actress
<u>Abigail:</u>	A female student who loves Musical Theater
<u>Jordan:</u>	A male student who loves Musical Theater. Abigail's boyfriend
<u>Shelby:</u>	A female student in charge of the group's hair and makeup
<u>Jenna:</u>	A female student who refuses to speak
<u>Sparky:</u>	A male student, the theater 'techie'
<u>Mrs. Watson:</u>	The Drama Instructor
<u>Professor Duncan:</u>	Professor of Drama at the State College

ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING: The Drama Room at Millard Fillmore High School.

AT RISE: A group of students are in the classroom, awaiting the arrival of their drama instructor, Mrs. Watson. *STAGE RIGHT* is RYAN, the defacto leader of the group. He is tall, handsome and liked by all in the class. Also *STAGE RIGHT* is a female student named RACHEL. She is pretty but reserved and is very serious about drama, intending to one day be a professional actress. *LEFT* of RACHEL is ABIGAIL who is obsessed with Musical Theater. She is wearing a Phantom of the Opera T-shirt and is quiet singing the theme song to the musical as the curtain rises. Her male counterpart is JORDAN who is leaning against a step ladder placed *UPSTAGE*. He is also obsessed with musicals and is humming along with ABIGAIL as she sings. He and ABIGAIL are 'in love' and dream of appearing on someday appearing on Broadway together. *DOWN CENTER* is SHELBY. She is in charge of the hair and makeup for the Drama Club and is busily teasing the hair of another female student, JENNA, who is seated in a chair. JENNA is wearing a sweat shirt emblazoned with a large smiling photo of the pop singer, Justin Bieber. She has a cord with a notepad hanging around her neck which she uses to communicate. She is able to speak but has taken a 'vow of silence' and refuses to speak aloud until Bieber is inducted into the Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame. *STAGE LEFT* is SPARKY, the theater 'techie' who is in charge of lights, sound and special effects. He is wearing a heavy metal t-shirt and has thick glasses that ride low on his nose. SPARKY is sitting at a small table working on a lighting fixture which has been broken down into multiple parts.

RYAN:

Okay... the bet is \$10. Who's in?

RACHEL:

Put me down for Hamlet...

The group moans. RACHEL pulls a bill from her purse and hands it to RYAN who makes a note on small pad.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:

I love Hamlet, you guys...

SHELBY:

"Frailty, thy name s woman!"

The group groans again and RACHEL sticks out her tongue at them.

RYAN:

Abby?

ABIGAIL:

(she climbs a few steps up the ladder and sings her answer)

O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?

JORDAN:

(he gets down on one knee and sings a response)

Here I am, baby. Here I am..

RYAN shakes his head and collects their money. He turns to SHELBY who is now applying eye shadow to JENNA.

RYAN:

Shelby?

SHELBY:

Well, after carefully consideration of the merits of each of William Shakespeare's plays, I think I shall choose...

ALL:

A Midsummer Night's Dream...

SHELBY:

Duh.. have you seen the costumes and makeup?

She reaches into her shirt pocket and pulls out a bill and hands it over to RYAN as he makes a note onto his pad.

RYAN:

And you, Jenna? Doth thou dare speak your selection?

JENNA looks up at RYAN and frowns, then writes on the pad hanging around her neck. She shows it to SHELBY who reads the answer.

SHELBY:

Has Justin Bieber been inducted into the Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fame yet?

RYAN:

No...

JENNA writes again and shows it to SHELBY.

SHELBY:

Then I shall not speak until he is.

RYAN:

Well.. are you in? Give me a hand signal or something.

JENNA writes on her pad and shows it to RYAN.

RYAN:

Ten dollars on Macbeth.

JENNA hands over the cash and RYAN takes it.

RYAN:

Would you like a receipt?

JENNA opens her mouth to speak but catches herself and shakes her head no. Ryans laughs.

RYAN:

Almost got you that time.

RYAN walks over to SPARKY who is busy soldering a cable.

RYAN:

What do you say, Sparky? Want to get in on the action?

SPARKY looks up, adjusts his glasses and then speaks.

SPARKY:

Any of them Shakespeare plays have blood?

RACHEL:

Lots of Shakespeare's works were violent... Hamlet stabs Claudius, Edmund is mortally wounded in King Lear. Macduff chops off Macbeth's head. Eliabethan theater goers loved violence so there's tons of blood in Othello, Richard III and Julius Ceasar.. and don't forget the suicides... Brutus, Cleopatra and the most famous of them all, Romeo and Juliet..

ABIGAIL and JORDAN suddenly break into a musical version of the famous play.

ABIGAIL:

Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished.

JORDAN:

For never was a story of more woe..

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

The two embrace and then take a bow. JENNA smiles and claps for them.

SPARKY:

I don't like the kissing stuff. I'll take that Othello fellow... he sounds like the kind of guy who would carry around a bucket of blood with him everywhere..

RYAN holds out his hand and SPARKY pulls four dog-eared bills from his pocket and hands them over. RYAN counts it quickly.

RYAN:

That's not but eight.

SPARKY sighs and digs into his pocket. He pulls out a handful of change and hands it to RYAN.

RYAN:

Close enough.

SHELBY:

Why does Mrs. Watson put us through this torture every year?

RACHEL:

Torture? Shakespeare wrote some of the most beautiful tragedies in literary history. And his comedies..

SPARKY:

I heard he didn't even write them. Didn't you see that Anonymous movie on Netflix. Some dude named Edward de Vergo or something wrote them.

RACHEL rushes over to SPARKY, livid

RACHEL:

You take that back.

RYAN:

Rachel!

SHELBY:

I saw it too.. they said there was no way Shakespeare could have written his plays because he was illiterate.

RACHEL:

(turning on Shelby)

That's not true. Shakespeare was the greatest playwright who ever lived. Who ever will live. He wrote every single word in every one of his gloriuous plays.

SPARKY:

How do you know? There were written like a thousand years ago. Were you there?

RACHEL:

No..

SPARKY:

Then how do you know.. I mean, this Vergo might have been shy or something.. maybe he didn't like crowds or had a phobia about shaking hands..

SHELBY:

Chiraptophobia.

SPARKY:

Huh?

SHELBY:

That's what you call it. Chiraptophobia. I learned that from watching Howie Mandel on 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire.'

SPARKY:

Yeah.. maybe that Vergo fellow had that... crapaphobia or something. That's proably where the word vertigo comes from.

RACHEL:

Verti... (she screams).. you are such an idiot.

RYAN:

Rachel... get a hold of yourself.

ABIGAIL:

Yeah, Rach.. chill why don't you?

JORDAN:

(sings)

Chill...

ABIGAIL joins him and they harmonize the word 'chill' several times between them.

RACHEL:

Chill? What Leonard is saying is slanderous.

SPARKY jumps to his feet, furious.

SPARKY:

Don't call me that... nobody calls by that.. other name..

RACHEL:

Then don't say that William Shakespeare was a fraud because he was not.

RYAN:

Everybody just calm down. It's just a stupid contest. We have it every semester. Nothing to get in a twist about. Sparks, say you're sorry.

SPARKY:

Me? Why me? She was the one that called me a name.

RACHEL:

'Cause that is your name, Leonard!

SPARKY:

She did it again, Ryan.

RYAN:

Just say you're sorry. The both of you, okay?

SPARKY sulks a little then holds out his hand to RACHEL. She shakes it hesitantly.

SPARKY:

I'm sorry.. I just thought it was a good movie. Especially the lighting.

SHELBY:

What about Vanessa Redgrave's hair. Her stylist is a God!

RACHEL:

I'm sorry.... Sparky.

SPARKY:

No harm, no foul. You know, maybe we should come up with a nickname for you. Something like tight..

RYAN interrupts

RYAN:

Leonard!

SPARKY:

Sorry.

ABIGAIL:

Why can't we do a musical this year?

JORDAN:

Yeah... something like... (he tucks his thumbs into the waist of his jeans and starts to sing a tune from Oklahoma!) "Chicks and ducks and geese better scurry.. when I take you out in the surrey.."

ABIGAIL bows to him and they join together singing and dancing through the next phrase

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

"When I take you out in the surrey with the fringe on top!"

RYAN:

Mrs. Watson is not going to let us do Oklahoma! Or Singing in the Rain or Rent... it's Shakespeare or nothing. That's the way it's always been.

SPARKY:

You think she might have been dropped on her head as a baby?

SHELBY:

Maybe she had electro shock therapy and thinks she's living in the 17th Century..

RYAN:

I don't know why she won't let us do anything but Shakespeare every year but there's nothing we can do about it. Mrs. Watson is the Drama Teacher and she gets to choose.

RACHEL:

Well, this year I hope it's Hamlet.. there is such grace and lyrical beauty in Hamlet.

SPARKY:

Any blood?

SHELBY:

There's blood in every Shakespeare play. The man was twisted.

RYAN:

Well.. we'll find out soon enough. Anybody want to change their bets? Rachel?

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:

Hamlet for me.

RYAN:

Abby? Jordan?

ABIGAIL and JORDAN sing their answer. She climbs a few steps up the ladder.

ABIGAIL:

Romeo..

JORDAN:

Juliet?

ABIGAIL:

Oh, Romeo.. wherefore art thou Romeo?

JORDAN:

Down here my love.

SPARKY:

If that Juliet chick had gotten herself some glasses then maybe the two of them wouldn't have had to kill themselves.

RYAN:

Shelby?

SHELBY:

Keep my ten on Midsummer. I'm ready to do some big hair and sew some goat costumes.

RYAN:

Jenna?

The group chants, "Speak, speak, speak" while Jenna writes on her notepad. She holds it up to SHELBY who reads it aloud.

SHELBY:

Justin would make a great Macbeth. He's dreamy.

The group gags.

RYAN:

Sparks?

SPARKY:

I'm sharpening my swords for Othello.

RYAN:

Alright.. the pot stands at seventy bucks.. may the best man...

RACHEL:

Or woman...

RYAN:

Or woman... win..

As if on cue, MRS. WATSON enters from STAGE RIGHT. She is a tall, thin woman wearing a modest grey skirt and white blouse. She is holding a stack of scripts in her hand.

MRS. WATSON:

Did you call role, Ryan?

RYAN:

Yes, ma'am. We're all here just waiting to see what glorious theatrical work you have chosen for this semester.

MRS. WATSON:

Well.. this year it's going to be...

JORDAN starts to sing and ABIGAIL joins him.

JORDAN:

Oklahoma...

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

Where the wind come sweeping down the plains.

They do a quick two step and stop in front of MRS. WATSON in an exaggerated pose.

MRS. WATSON:

I'm sorry, Abby and Jordan, but it's not Oklahoma..

The two sulk for a momenth, then break into a melody from Phantom of the Opera.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

Your/My spirit and my/your voice is one combined, the Phantom of the..

MRS. WATSON cuts them off.

MRS. WATSON:

We're not doing that either.

ABIGAIL and JORDAN sigh heavily and then return to the ladder.

(CONTINUED)

SPARKY:

Mrs. Watson.. I was thinking...

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, Leonard..

SPARKY begins to get angry but then forces himself to keep control.

SPARKY:

I was thinking that we could do Carrie this semester. You know, that show by Stephen King.

MRS. WATSON:

Leonard, I have told you time and time again that we cannot use blood on stage.

SPARKY:

But it won't be human blood. My dad works at the sausage factory and I've got plenty of...

MRS. WATSON stops him from finishing.

MRS. WATSON:

Sparky.. we're not using blood on stage.. human or...

SPARKY:

Pig..

MRS. WALTON approaches JENNA. She has been trying to get the girl to speak all year without success.

MRS. WATSON:

Jenna, how are you today?

JENNA writes on her pad and holds it up to SHELBY to read.

SHELBY:

In pain.

MRS. WATSON:

I'm sorry, dear. Do you need to go see the school nurse?

JENNA writes on her pad again.

SHELBY:

No. I need to go to Columbus, Ohio and picket in front of the Hall of Fame.

MRS. WATSON:

I see. I tell you what might make you feel better. I have decided that I am going to let you pick the play for our spring production.

JENNA holds her hand to her chest in a gesture that says 'Me?'

MRS. WATSON:

That's right. It can be anything you want. All you have to do is speak it.

JENNA looks around the room as her classmates chant and call out encouragements for her to speak. Everyone leans in as she opens her mouth to speak. With a wry smile, she closed he mouth loudly and then writes on her pad.

SHELBY:

Nice try. No thank you.

MRS. WATSON sighs and shakes her head.

MRS. WATSON:

Oh well.. Jenna could have saved you but alas, she has decided to throw you under the Shakespearean Bus. Ryan? Help me hand these out?

RYAN:

Yes ma'am.

RYAN takes a few of the scripts and passes them around the room. The students tear open the booklets in anticipation. Together they groan and speak the title of the play.

ALL:

Macbeth!

RYAN:

And the winner is.. (he pulls out his pad and reads the name)... Jenna.

The rest of the students groan as RYAN hands JENNA her winnings. She smiles broadly as he counts the bills into her hands.

MRS. WATSON:

I know you all want to do something modern and contemporary but I feel that if you truly want to be a great actors then you must immerse yourself in the Master.

RACHEL:

I love Shakespeare.

SPARKY:

Suck up.

RACHEL:

Although I had been hoping for Hamlet. I have always wanted to play Gertrude...

(she suddenly does a dramatic reading from the play)

'No, not the drink, the drink! O my dear Hamlet! The drink, the drink! I am poison'd!

RACHEL grasps her throat, makes a dramatic choking noise and falls to the stage, dead.

MRS. WATSON:

I shall consider that your audition. (to class) Now, I have clearly marked each person's role. The play is far too long for us to attempt the work in its entirety so I have marked through the lines that we shall skip. Rehearsal will start tomorrow immediately after school. Any questions?

ABIGAIL and JORDAN suddenly break into a song from Wicked, alternating lines.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

Something had changed within me. Something is not the same. I'm through with playing by the rules. Of someone else's game...

MRS. WATSON cuts them off.

MRS. WATSON:

We are NOT doing Wicked. Stop singing and start learning your lines. I'll see you tomorrow, ready to get to work.

MRS. WATSON exits. The class sits for a moment and flips through the scripts. Finally, RACHEL speaks.

RACHEL:

Well, I for one look forward to doing something challenging. Come on guys..this is going to be fun.

ABIGAIL:

What does sooth mean?

Suddenly JORDAN bursts out.

JORDAN:

This is bogus, man...

ABIGAIL:

Jordan! We made a promise to only sing in Drama Class as a show of solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Musical Theater.

JORDAN:

I don't care about the brothers or the sisters any more, Abby. I cannot.. I will not be in another play by Elizabethan blowhard, Shakespeare...

RACHEL:

Shakespeare was not a blowhard.

RYAN:

Jordan's right. I can't do it any more. I've played King Lear, Richard the Third, Henry the 6th, Henry the 8th.. heck, I've even dressed in drag and played two of the Merry Wives of Windsor.. I can't do it anymore, Rachel. I just can't.

There is a moment of silence as each of the friends shakes their heads in agreement.

JORDAN:

So, what are we going to do?

RYAN:

I don't know. What can we do?

SPARKY:

We can screw it up.

RYAN:

What?

SPARKY:

We can screw it up. Haven't you even been asked to do something by your Dad, like paint the garage, and you screwed it up so badly that he never asked you to paint, or re-wire the house, again?

RACHEL:

We hired painters when we remodded our house.

ABIGAIL:

That's smart. You waste a lot less paint that way.

SPARKY:

This isn't about painting. This is about butchering Macbeth so badly that Mrs. Watson will burn the entire

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SPARKY: (cont'd)

Collected Works of William Shakespeare on top her desk
by the end of the semester.

RYAN:

Hey, you might be on to something.

ABIGAIL:

You know, that might work.

SPARKY:

It will work. Instead of a stellar production of
Macbeth, the Millard Fillmore High Drama Club will
present...

RYAN:

The Worst Play in the World.. we can play whatever
characters we like.. a cowboy, a ballerina, an
astronaut... the crazier, the better.

ABIGAIL:

We can do a musical?

RYAN:

Why not?

*ABIGAIL and JORDAN look at each other and start to
sing the theme from Singing in the Rain.*

RACHEL:

Wait a minute! We can't do this. We'll be the laughing
stocks of the school.

SPARKY:

So what?

RYAN:

Yeah, so what? If it means Mrs. Watson swears off
Shakespeare for the rest of her life, it will be worth
it.

RACHEL:

But my parents come to the shows. And my Nana, too.

SHELBY:

Then, we'll give ole Nana something that will make her
dentures fall out. Count the makeup and costume
department in.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

(singing)

The Music Theater Department is in.

(CONTINUED)

RYAN:
Jenna?

JENNA writes on her pad and SHELBY reads it.

SHELBY:
Sounds like something Justin would do.

RYAN:
Sparky? Can you whip us up some special effects to put a little icing on the cake?

SPARKY:
I'm thinking barrels of hot tar being sprayed on the audience while a wall of flames consumes the stage.

RYAN:
How about just a couple of colored lights?

SPARKY:
I'm on it, Chief.

RYAN:
Rachel?

RACHEL:
But my Nana will be here. What will I say to her?

SHELBY:
Just tell her that after all these years, she's going to finally see something worth staying awake for.

RACHEL:
Okay... if everyone else is going to play dress-up, I guess I will, too. I'm in.

RYAN:
Good.. we can't let Mrs. Watson know. Come to rehearsals and learn your lines, but on the night of the show...

SPARKY:
Mayhem...

ALL:
Mayhem..

END of Scene

ACT 1Scene 2

SETTING: The Drama Room at Millard Fillmore High School. The next day.

AT RISE: MRS. WATSON is standing CENTER STAGE. RYAN is standing to her right, studying his script. RACHEL is standing on MRS. WATSON's left, no script in hand (she is already off-book!) ABIGAIL and JORDAN are DOWN STAGE RIGHT silently working on a dance routine. The ladder is still UPSTAGE RIGHT but now there is a light fixture clipped to it and SPARKY is making adjustments to the fixture with a large wrench. JENNA is sitting at the table, UP STAGE LEFT, while SHELBY busily applies various shades of eye shadow to her face. MRS. WATSON is explaining the context of the scene the group is rehearsing but it is apparent that the only one listening is RACHEL, who hangs on her every word.

MRS. WATSON:
Okay, in this scene, Macbeth... (she notices RYAN daydreaming).. that's you, Ryan!

RYAN:
Yes, ma'am..

MRS. WATSON:
You don't want to kill Duncan but your wife, Lady Macbeth... (she points to RACHEL who curtsies)... Rachel... she has just called you a coward and told you how she is going to frame Duncan's guards for the murder.

SHELBY:
Now which one is Duncan? He's the general, right?

MRS. WATSON:
No... that's Banquo... Duncan is the king.

SPARKY:
I thought Duncan was Thane of Fife.

MRS. WATSON:
No, that's Macduff.

SPARKY:
Macduff. I thought Ryan was playing a guy named Macbeth.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. WATSON:

He is.. Ryan is Macbeth. Jordan is Macduff.

SHELBY:

Who's Macduff?

MRS. WATSON:

Jordan.

SHELBY:

No, who is Macduff?

MRS. WATSON:

He's the one who kills Macbeth.

SPARKY:

So, Macduff and Macbeth aren't the same guy?

MRS. WATSON:

No... Macduff is a general.

RACHEL

And Macbeth is a general, too.

MRS. WATSON:

Just not the same general.

SHELBY:

I'm confused. Who is Banquo?

RACHEL:

He's a general.

SPARKY:

I thought Macbeth was a general.

SHELBY:

No, that's Macduff.

RACHEL:

They're all three generals.. (exasperated) Mrs. Watson?

MRS. WATSON:

I know it's a little confusing. Let's just take it from page 40, where Macbeth enters.

RYAN:

I come in from?

MRS. WATSON:

Up Stage.. (she points) Leonard, would you please move that ladder.

(CONTINUED)

SPARKY:

I'm just about done, Mrs. Watson. And can you please not call me that.

MRS. WATSON:

What?

SPARKY:

Leonard. I hate that name. Can you just call me Sparky like everyone else?

MRS. WATSON:

But I think Leonard is a fine name.

SPARKY:

Yeah... well, it was fine for my grandfather. Not so much for me. Just Sparky, okay?

MRS. WATSON:

I'm sorry. When you finish, please move the ladder, Le.. I mean, Sparky.

SPARKY:

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. WATSON:

Okay, Ryan.. you enter from there and approach Lady Macbeth. You're torn with guilt after having stabbed you king. (she steps to left as RYAN moves off stage) Okay.. Macbeth enters.

RYAN enters and approaches RACHEL.

RYAN:

I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

RACHEL:

(she put on a thick English accent,
attempting to get into character)

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry. Did not you speak?

RYAN:

When?

RACHEL:

Now.

RYAN:

As I descended?

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:
Ay.

RYAN:
Hark!

MRS. WATSON claps her hands and crosses to CENTER.

MRS. WATSON:
Good. Very good.

RACHEL raises her hand to ask a question.

MRS. WATSON:
Yes, Rachel?

RACHEL:
I was wondering how you wanted me to play Lady Macbeth. Some see her as a this evil monster but I think she is more, I don't know, vulnerable.. not evil, but just flawed.

MRS. WATSON:
Well, I suppose Lady Macbeth could be considered vulnerable. Flawed, definitely. (she puts her arm around RACHEL and pulls her close) Very good, Rachel. (to class) Class, see how wonderful and deep Shakespeare can be? There are so many emotions... so many...

RYAN:
Lines..

MRS. WATSON:
Yes, Ryan.. there are lots of lines. And I suggest you start working on your's and ditch that script as soon as possible. (to class) Okay, everyone.. that was a good start. I expect you to take home your scripts and work on them tonight. We'll pick up there tomorrow. I'll see you then.

The students look at each other but nobody moves. MRS. WATSON is confused.

MRS. WATSON:
I said, rehearsal is over for today. You can go home now.

RYAN:
We heard you. It's just that, well.. we know how important this show is to you and all, so we thought that we might just stay late and work on our lines some more. If that is okay with you.

MRS. WATSON:

You want to stay late and work on your own?

SHELBY:

Yes ma'am. We are very committed to making this the most memorable play every produced at Fillmore. Aren't we, Jenna?

JENNA writes a quick note on her pad and holds it up for MRS. WATSON to read.

MRS. WATSON:

I'm pumped. Well, I think that is very admirable, wanting to put in extra work on your own time. I cannot wait for our audience to see how truly special this performance is going to be.

RYAN:

Oh, it's going to be special alright. I guarantee it.

MRS. WATSON:

Well.. I've got to get home and check on Mr. Watson. His gout has been acting up and I've got to help him soak his feet. I'll see you all tomorrow afternoon.

MRS. WATSON exits STAGE LEFT. SHELBY follows, checks to make sure she is really gone, comes back on stage and gives RYAN a thumbs up.

RYAN:

Okay, everybody get out the real script.

The students pull another script from their pockets and purses.

RACHEL:

Ryan, do you really think this is a good idea? I mean, you saw how excited Mrs. Watson was when she was talking about Lady Macbeth. If we screw this up, she will be devastated.

RYAN:

You want to keep doing Shakespeare, semester after semester, until you die?

RACHEL:

I don't mind. I like Shakespeare.

SPARKY:

Well, we don't.

RYAN:

That's right, Rachel, the rest of us are sick of Shakespeare. And unless we take drastic measures, we'll spend the rest of our high school years wearing tights and butchering English accents.

RACHEL:

But..

ABIGAIL:

Rachel.. wouldn't you like to do something different.

JORDAN:

Yeah.. something like.. Annie!

ABIGAIL smiles and starts singing

ABIGAIL:

The sun will come out tomorrow.

JORDAN:

Or maybe... Grease.

ABIGAIL changes her song, mid-sentence. JORDAN joins her singing.

ABIGAIL:

You're the one that I want... oo, oo, oo, honey..
you're the one that I want.. oo, oo, oo, honey..

They continue to sing and dance quietly as the other students chime in.

SPARKY:

It'll be fun, Rach... instead of dressing in one of those drab Shakespeary dresses, you can be a...

RACHEL:

A robot?

SPARKY:

What?

RACHEL:

I want to be a robot. I've always wanted to play character that is emotionless. Doing Shakespeare is... exciting... but when we're through with the show, I feel so drained.. you know, emotionally. For once, I'd like to play a character who doesn't follow me home at night.

RYAN:

Okay.. you can be a robot. Shelby, what are you going to be?

SHELBY:

I can be anything or anyone?

RYAN:

Anything you can imagine.

SHELBY:

I want to be a lion. No, a tiger. A big Bengal tiger. But not a scary one who eats his castmates. A big cuddly tiger who loves to be scratched on her belly.

JENNA reaches over and scratches SHELBY's stomach. She laughs and growls like a tiger.

RYAN:

Okay.. that's weird, but whatever. Jenna? Any thoughts on a character you can play and still maintain your cone of silence?

JENNA thinks for a minute and then writes something on her pad. She holds it up to SHELBY.

SHELBY:

Edward Scissorhands. Perfect! I'll do the makeup.

RYAN:

And who knows, maybe Justin will get a wild card bid into the Hall of Fame and you'll actually get to speak your lines.

SHELBY:

I wouldn't count on it.

JENNA looks up at her, angrily.

SHELBY:

Sorry.. you're right, it could happen.

JENNA nods her head in agreement.

RYAN:

Abby? Jordan? Any thoughts on the character's you'll be morphing into during this particularly nasty portayal of Macbeth?

ABIGAIL and JORDAN stop their dance routine and look at each other.

JORDAN:

Tevye and Golde from 'Fiddler on the Roof?' (he sings and dances) If I were a rich man, yubby dibby dibby dibby dibby dum..

ABIGAIL:

You could grow a beard!

JORDAN:

Or, Maria and Captain Von Trapp..

ABIGAIL claps her hands with glee, spreads her arms and whirls around the room.

ABIGAIL:

The hills are alive with the Sound of Music...

JORDAN:

We'd have to get a bunch of kids to make it work.. anybody got brothers or sisters?

The group shakes their heads.

ABIGAIL:

Oh, I got it.. this would be perfect for us.. Tony and Maria from...

JORDAN joins her to finish the line and they both squeal.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

West Side Story!!

They do a stylized dance and sing.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

I feel pretty.. oh, so pretty... I feel pretty and witty and gay..

They continue to dance silently as RYAN approaches SPARKY

RYAN:

What about you, Sparks? You want to be in on this?

SPARKY puts down his wrench and steps forward, looking at ABIGAIL and JORDAN

SPARKY:

Do I have to do any of that?

RYAN:

No.

SPARKY:

What about makeup? Do I have to wear makeup?

SHELBY:

Everyone has to wear makeup on stage.

SPARKY:

Then, no thank you. I'll just stick to coming up with some special effects that will make old Mrs. Watson run screaming from the building.

RYAN:

Sounds perfect. (to class) Now, everyone needs to study their lines.

RACHEL:

Which lines? The real Shakespeare or... (holds up the script RYAN handed her and reads the title)... or Mac.. blech?

RYAN:

It's Mac-Blech (he says the title dramatically with a heavy accent) You're going to have to learn them both. But, feel free to ad-lib and change things up. Remember, if we're going to cure Mrs. Watson from ever wanting to see another man in tights, we've got to make sure this is the worst play she has ever seen.. the worst play anyone has ever seen.

SPARKY:

Mac-Blech... I like that. Sounds like I'm trying to clear a big wad of phlegm out of my throat.

SHELBY:

That's Shakespeare alright.

RYAN:

I'm going to tell Mrs. Watson that we're staying late after every rehearsal to run scenes so everybody needs to plan on staying late. Okay?

Everyone nods their agreement.

RYAN:

Alright, let's get to work. We've got theatrical history to make. Open your scripts to page one. Jenna, you're playing all three witches, so you better bring a lot of paper...

JENNA gives him a thumbs up.

RYAN:

Okay, let's take it from the top... there's thunder and lightning as the lights come up on the three...

The Lights Fade as he continues to describe the first scene and his voice fades.

End of Scene

ACT 1Scene 3

THE SETTING: The Drama Room at Millard Fillmore High School.

AT RISE: There is a small table and two chairs UP STAGE LEFT. The ladder has been moved DOWN STAGE RIGHT. SPARKY is standing near the top of the ladder holding a metal bucket and length of rope. RYAN enters from STAGE LEFT.

RYAN:

Hey Sparks.

SPARKY:

Hey, Ryan. I'll be done here in a minute.

RYAN walks over to the ladder and watches SPARKY as he lifts up the bucket towards the ceiling and then starts measuring out rope.

RYAN:

What's that for?

SPARKY:

I already told you, man. The bucket of blood.

RYAN:

I said okay, but NOT from the ceiling.

SPARKY:

But that's how it HAS to be done, Ryan. Didn't you ever watch Carrie?

RYAN:

Yeah, my sister has it on DVD. That Chloe Moretz was hot!

SPARKY:

Not that Carrie. That one was garbage. I'm talking about the original Carrie. The one with Sissy Spacek.

RYAN:

Who's that?

SPARKY:

Sissy Spacek, man. Coal Miner's Daughter?

RYAN:

They made a movie about the daughter of a coal miner? That sounds pretty boring.

(CONTINUED)

SPARKY:

No... it was about Loretta Lynn..

RYAN:

Who?

SPARKY:

Listen man, all you need to know is that the original Carrie was awesome.. near the end, they dump a bucket of blood on Carrie and that girl goes crazy.. blowing up stuff, setting things on fire... I was thinking that for the finale of our show, we could dump a bucket of blood on... I don't know.. maybe Jenna since she won't say anything.. and then I could set off some pyro..

RYAN:

Some what?

SPARKY:

Some pyro... pyrotechnics... you know, squibs, fire cannons, flash bombs, ignitor cord, Class B composite solid propellants..

RYAN:

Wait a minute? You want to have real fire on stage?

SPARKY:

Yeah man.. I thought you said you watched Carrie?

RYAN:

I did..

SPARKY:

Then you know what I'm talking about. They drop that bucket of blood on Carrie's head and she just goes berserk.. man it's going to be glorious!

RYAN:

No it's not!

SPARKY:

Yeah it is, man... flames going up the walls, flash bombs under the seats.. imagine a curtain of sparks coming out of the ceiling..

RYAN:

We are not having flames up the walls..

SPARKY:

Flash bombs?

RYAN:

No flash bombs!

SPARKY:

No curtain of sparks?

RYAN:

No curtain of sparks! I can't have you burying down the auditorium, Sparky!

SPARKY:

But I thought you said you wanted something spectacular.. something that would blow Mrs. Watson's mind!

RYAN:

I do.. but you'll have to do it without fireworks... or buckets of blood hanging from the ceiling..

SPARKY:

Oh man... I can't hang my bucket?

RYAN:

Nope.. get down from there.. and maybe if you're good, I'll let you light a sparkler.

SPARKY sighs heavily and starts down the ladder. He slowly cleans up and moves the ladder back UP STAGE over the next several minutes. SHELBY enters from STAGE LEFT. She is carrying a large make-up kit under her arm.

RYAN:

Is she gone?

SHELBY:

Yep.. I stood by those big windows in the library and watched her pull out of the parking lot. Mrs. Watson will be off campus until tomorrow morning.

RYAN:

Good.

SHELBY:

Hey, come over here and let me show you what kind of makeup I had in mind for Macbeth.

SHELBY and RYAN cross to the table and sit. SHELBY opens her makeup case and starts to pull out her materials.

SHELBY:

Okay... so I've been reading Macbeth for Dummies and the guy who wrote it said that by the end of the play, Macbeth is hollowed out. Like his soul has left body because of all the evil stuff his wife makes him do, right?

RYAN:

I guess.

SHELBY:

So I started to think.. when someone's soul leaves their body, what are they?

RYAN:

Dead?

SHELBY:

No, not dead.

SPARKY has been listening to the conversation and chimes in.

SPARKY:

Yeah, I'm pretty sure that he's dead. Your soul just doesn't take a little stroll down to coffee shop and then come back. When it leaves, you are pretty much toast.

RYAN:

Yeah, toast.

SHELBY:

No, you guys aren't thinking like Shakespeare. Macbeth was hollowed out from all the guilt he was carrying around with him. His life was meaningless. He didn't have any purpose. What does that sound like to you?

SPARKY:

Mr. Folsom, the chemistry teacher?

The two boys laugh and high-five each other.

RYAN:

Yeah, that dude is D-U-L... dull!

SHELBY:

No.. it means that Macbeth is like a ghost. So I figured you should wear heavy white make up. You konw like a ghost.

RYAN:

Ghosts wear makeup.

SPARKY:

The ugly one's do.

They laugh and high five each other again.

SHELBY:

No, ghosts are white. The blood has left their bodies and they're pale.

SPARKY:

That's vampires.

RYAN:

Yeah, we're not doing Twilight.

SHELBY:

No.. not like a vampire. Here, let me show you.

SHELBY pulls out a small box of white 'pancake' makeup and starts to smear it all over Ryan's face while SPARKY watches.

SPARKY:

Shouldn't he be wearing a dress?

RYAN:

What?

SPARKY:

You know.. since the play is set in Scotland and all.

SHELBY:

Those are not dresses. Those are kilts. And Macbeth was a general, so he would be wearing a military uniform. Tilt your head back.

RYAN lifts his chin as SHELBY starts applying the white makeup on his neck.

SPARKY:

I'm just saying, those guys in 300 were soldiers and they wore dresses. It looked really manly to me so I think Ryan should wear a dress.

RYAN:

I am not wearing a dress, okay?

SPARKY:

(he holds up his hands in defeat)
Okay, Okay. (he pauses) What about just a skirt. You would look good in a skirt.

RYAN starts to get up and chase SPARKY but SHELBY grabs him and pulls him back.

SHELBY:

Hey, be careful. I spent my entire allowance on this white stuff. I don't want you smearing it.

SPARKY crosses back to his ladder and materials, mumbling to himself.

SPARKY:

I'm not suggesting you wear a pencil skirt. That wouldn't look good on you anyway. I was thinking maybe something pleats.

RYAN:

I am not wearing a dress or a skirt!

SPARKY:

Okay.. okay.

RACHEL enters. She is running her lines out loud as she walks and doesn't seem to notice the others. She immediately goes CENTER STAGE and starts to recite a soliloque very dramatically.

RACHEL:

Come, thick night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell, That my keen knife see not the wound it makes, not heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, to cry, "Hold, Hold!!"

While she is speaking, RYAN sneaks up behind her. When she finishes, he adds the next lines from the play.

RYAN:

Great Glamis!

RACHEL jumps back from fright and screams. RYAN bows low before her.

RYAN:

Good evening, my Lady.

RACHEL:

You frightened me. I thought you were a ghost.

SHELBY:

Told you!

RYAN:

I'm sorry. Shelby is trying out her interpretation of Macbeth's makeup. What do you think?

RACHEL reaches out and dabs the make up while frowning.

RACHEL:

It's a little thick. But overall, I think it is an interesting concept.

SHELBY:

Told you!

RACHEL:

I mean, by the end of the play, Macbeth is...

RACHEL & SHELBY:

(they speak together)

Souless...

The two look at each other, surprised. RACHEL continues.

RACHEL:

Macbeth has been forced by Lady Macbeth to do things that are purely evil... he's... I don't know..

The two speak together again.

RACHEL & SHELBY:

Hollow!

RACHEL crosses towards SHELBY who is packing up her makeup case.

RACHEL:

I didn't know you were such a fan of Shakespeare.

SHELBY:

I'm a fan of any play that let's met stretch my creative legs and do something a little crazy.

SPARKY:

Rachel, what do you think about Ryan wearing a dress in the play?

RACHEL:

What?

SPARKY:

Or maybe a skirt. Maybe a nice A-line?

(CONTINUED)

RYAN turns and chases SPARKY off stage.

RYAN:

I'm going to give you an A-line!

RACHEL:

What was that all about?

SHELBY:

Oh, nothing. Just Sparks trying to help Ryan connect with his feminine side.

RACHEL:

So, you're into Shakespeare, huh?

SHELBY:

I wouldn't exactly say I'm 'into' him, but the dude wrote some pretty twisted characters, that's for sure.

RACHEL:

Which one is your favorite?

SHELBY:

Which Shakespeare character?

RACHEL is excited now to discover someone who seems to love Shakespeare as much as she does. She sits at the table and reaches across grabs SHELBY's hands.

RACHEL:

Yes.. the character that just... (dramatically).. reaches down into your soul and speaks to you.

SHELBY:

Well.. I guess....

RACHEL interrupts her.

RACHEL:

Mine is Viola from Twelfth Night. After the twin sister of Sebastian is washed up on the shores of Illyria, she does something absolutely unheard of for that time. Do you know what it is?

SHELBY:

Wonders if her cell phone is ruined?

RACHEL:

No.. she puts on a man's clothing and pretends she is Cesario. She pretends to be a man. Can you believe that?

(CONTINUED)

SHELBY:

Well, I guess. I mean, I drew a moustache on myself one time just to see what it looked like.

RACHEL:

Sebastian.. that's her twin brother... he says that 'she bore a mind that envy could not but call fair.'

RACHEL releases SHELBY's hands and gets up, claspng her hands tightly in front of her chest

RACHEL:

Oh, Shelby.. doesn't that just speak to you?

SHELBY:

What? Dressing up as a dude?

RACHEL:

No, the way that she was so strong and willful. I think that she is the most captivating of all Shakespeare's heroines. Don't you?

SHELBY:

Sure... captivating.

RACHEL rushes over and gives SHELBY a big hug.

RACHEL:

Oh, I knew that we shared a love of Shakespeare. For years, I've been able to see it in your eyes.

SHELBY:

Uh... those are colored contacts.

RACHEL:

You know what we should do? We should have a sleep over. I've got Twelfth Night on DVD.. the one starring Imogen Stubbs as Viola... I could pop a big bowl of fat free, vegan popcorn and we could watch it all night, over and over again...

SHELBY:

Sorry.. I'm busy that night.

RACHEL:

I haven't even said what night yet.

SHELBY:

Okay.. what night?

RACHEL:

This Saturday.

SHELBY:

I'm busy.

ABIGAIL and JORDAN enter from STAGE LEFT. It is obvious that they are fighting.

ABIGAIL:

I can't not believe you just said that!

JORDAN:

I'm sorry, but it's just the way I feel.

RACHEL:

What's the matter, Abby? Jordan?

ABIGAIL:

Tell her Jordan. Tell her what you just said.

JORDAN:

Well, City Theater is doing Porgy and Bess in May and and we've been talking about auditions.. and... I said...

ABIGAIL:

Tell her, Jordan. Tell her the vile thing that you just said to me in the hall.

SHELBY:

Was it how Abby always wears too much blush on stage.

ABIGAIL:

(to SHELBY)

I've told you a hundred times, I have assymetrical cheekbones. Just like Liza Minelli.

RACHEL:

I think you're makeup looks fine, Abby.

SHELBY:

Says the girl who refuses to wear false eyelashes.

RACHEL:

I have very sensitive eyelid skin... I brought you a note from my dermatologist.

SHELBY:

It said you were mildly sensitive to glue, Rachel. Mildly.

RACHEL:

You're not the one who has to pry their eyelids apart after every show.

(CONTINUED)

ABIGAIL:

Who cares about your stupid eyelid glue.

SHELBY:

I care. I make that glue myself. It's all natural and hypoallergenic.

RACHEL:

Do you know what it feels like to have to use a pair of tweezers to pull apart your eyelids?

SHELBY:

Do you know what it feels like to watch you up there on stage with no eyelashes?

ABIGAIL:

This is not about you.(points to RACHEL) Or you!
(points to Jordan). This is about me and the horrible thing that Jordan just said to me out in the hall. Tell then, Jordan.

JORDAN:

Well.. I just said that...

ABIGAIL:

(interrupting)

He said that I shouldn't audition for the part of Clara because she has to sing Summertime.. he said.. he said... (she starts to sob)

JORDAN:

I said it's too high for her.

ABIGAIL:

(she screams)

It's not too high for me!

JORDAN:

It goes up to a high B at the end, Abby. You know your voice starts to get a little breathy past F#5..

ABIGAIL:

My voice does not get breathy after F#5... you're just jealous because Stage West cast me in Carousel in April and you're just an understudy.

JORDAN:

I don't care about that. The Hillside Players cast me as Professor Harold Hill in The Music Man, so there...

ABIGAIL:

That's in June! You know we agreed to be in My Fair Lady together at the Yellow Rose Theatre in June.

(CONTINUED)

JORDAN:

That's what I thought until I found this tucked in the cover of your Calculus book..

JORDAN reaches into his back pocket and pulls out a flyer. ABIGAIL tries to take it from him but JORDAN pushes her away.

JORDAN:

(reading from the flyer)

The MidTown Players present Open Auditions for Little Shop of Horrors... performances to be held June 12th-23rd.

ABIGAIL:

I can do both!

JORDAN:

Not if you can't hit a high B, you can't!

The glare at each other for a moment and then cross to opposite corners of the stage.

SHELBY:

Wait a minute. You guys audition for shows every week?

ABIGAIL:

Not every week.

JORDAN:

Sometimes we just go to workshops so we can work on things like.. I don't know.. like Abby not sounding so breathy after F#5.

ABIGAIL:

Or Jordan learning how pick up his big flat feet in the dance numbers.

JORDAN:

I told you I have fallen arches. At least I can hit a high B.

ABIGAIL:

You want to hear me hit a high B? I'll show you I can hit a high B!

She crosses towards JORDAN and they meet CENTER STAGE.

JORDAN:

Give it your best shot...

ABIGAILS starts to sing Summertime but starts too high. The notes come out weak and breathy.

ABIGAIL:

Summertime and the living is easy...

JORDAN:

Breathy!

ABIGAIL tries again but the tone is still weak.

ABIGAIL:

Summertime... (clears her throat).. Summertime.. and the... (she continues to try to find the right key)

RYAN and SPARKY enter from STAGE RIGHT. SPARKY is carrying his bucket of blood and sets it down upon entering. They are still arguing about the dress.

SPARKY:

Okay, maybe you could just wear skorts. They're shorts that just kind of look like a skirt.

RYAN:

I'm not wearing skorts to play Macbeth.

JORDAN:

Breathy!

ABIGAIL:

You try it then, flat feet.

JORDAN:

Okay.. (He clears his throat and starts to sing. He also starts the song too high) Summer... summer..

ABIGAIL:

Ha! It's not so easy, now is it?

ABIGAIL and JORDAN continue to battle back and forth attempting to sing a higher note than the other. Meanwhile, RYAN and SPARKY continue to argue as RACHEL and SHELBY jump back into the argument about eyelash glue.

SPARKY:

Nobody will care if you're wearing a skirt on stage.

RYAN:

I'll care.

SPARKY:

Rachel, do you think Ryan wearing a skirt makes look less masculine?

RACHEL:

I don't know. Does me not wearing false eyelashes make me look less feminine.

SHELBY:

I didn't say that not wearing them makes you look less feminine. I just can't see your eyes and you that makes me look like I don't know what I'm doing with costumes and makeup.

RACHEL:

You don't know what you're doing, Shelby. Your eyelash glue is made from turnips.

SHELBY:

A great source of starch which is the primary ingredient in glue.

RACHEL:

It smells like wet socks.

SPARKY has pulled out a tape measure and is measuring RYAN for a skirt. RYAN pushes him away.

SPARKY:

Hold still so I can get your inseam.

RYAN:

Get off me, man!

SHELBY:

My glue does no stink!

ABIGAIL:

Summertime.... (voice cracks)...

SPARKY:

We can make it out of leather.

RACHEL:

No, it reeks.. (to SHELBY).. like turnips!

JORDAN:

All I hear is breathy.. breathy, breathy, breathy...

The scene devolves heavy arguing between the six students. JENNA enters from STAGE LEFT. She is wearing a t-shirt that says 'Free Justin'. She stands and watches the scene for a moment and then crosses to where SPARKY set down his bucket. She picks it up and crosses to the group. As the arguments reach a crescendo, she dumps the bucket of blood (actually shredded red confetti) onto the heads of her classmates. They scream.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:

What is this?

SHELBY:

It's blood!

The girls scream and furiously wipe the 'blood' from their clothes.

SPARKY:

Not really. Just corn syrup and red dye. I asked my mom if I could bleed the cat but she said no. (he licks his fingers) It's quite tasty, don't you think?

RYAN:

Jenna, what are you doing?

JENNA writes a note on the large pad around her neck and holds it up for them to read.

SHELBY:

The play is in three days.

JENNA writes again.

SHELBY:

We've worked too hard to start fighting now.

The group looks at each other, ashamed.

RYAN:

You're right, Jenna. I'm sorry, Sparks. If you think I'd look good in a part of skorts, then measure away.

SPARKY smiles and kneels down and starts to measure RYAN's hemline.

RACHEL:

I'm sorry, Shelby. Your eyelash glue doesn't smell like turnips.

SHELBY:

What does it smell like?

RACHEL:

Kale.

SHELBY:

Kale. Very hip. I can live with that.

RACHEL and SHELBY hug. RYAN turns to ABIGAIL and JORDAN.

RYAN:

Abby? Jordan? We can't do this play without you guys.

ABIGAIL and JORDAN look at each other, still a little angry.

ABIGAIL:

Am I really too breathy above F#5?

JORDAN:

Not for me. I like it when you breath.

ABIGAIL:

Oh, Jordan.

The two embrace.

RYAN:

Okay... we've got a lot of work to do if we're going to pull this off. Shelby, are the costumes ready?

SHELBY:

Which ones? The real Macbeth costumes or the worst costumes in the history of the theater?

RYAN:

Both.

SHELBY:

Just got to finishing hemming your skirt and we'll be ready to go.

SHELBY and SPARKY high-five each other.

RYAN:

So, the whole skirt thing was Shelby's idea.

SPARKY:

She thought it would be easier coming from a guy. (to SHELBY) Make it 18 inches and go long on the hem just in case he hikes it up during the show.

RYAN:

Abby and Jordan? Do you have your big musical number ready?

ABIGAIL:

Doing the final choreography tonight.

JORDAN:

(he salutes RYAN)
Flat feet and all.

RYAN:

Jenna, are you going to be ready with your lines?

JENNA writes on her pad and holds it up for SHELBY to read.

SHELBY:

As Justin says, "Never Let You Go"

RYAN:

Okay... then let's get to work. We've got a play to ruin.

End of Scene

Intermission

ACT 2Scene 1

THE SETTING: The rehearsal room.

AT RISE: RYAN is standing CENTER STAGE. He is wearing a Roman military uniform and holding a large wooden sword. MRS. WATSON is standing to his right holding a clipboard. The remainder of the cast is standing in the 'wings'. ABIGAIL is on her cellphone, texting. JORDAN is also dressed in a military uniform and is trying to balance his wooden sword on his nose. RACHEL is pacing, silently reciting her lines. SHELBY is sitting at her table, now pulled far UP STAGE LEFT, giving JENNA a manicure. SPARKY is UP STAGE RIGHT kneeling on the floor painting red streaks on the neck of a mannequin's head to be used in the scene.

MRS. WATSON:

Okay, this is the climax of the play. Fate has finally caught up with Macbeth. He recognizes the prophesies of the Weird Sisters... (she calls out to JENNA who now has her feet on the table as SHELBY files her toenails).. I said, he recognizes the prophesies...

JENNA holds up a sign that reads "A dismal and a fatal end!"

MRS. WATSON:

Good. Seyton has just told Macbeth that his wife is dead.

SHELBY:

Now, which one killed her?

RACHEL:

No one. She kills herself, right Mrs. Watson?

MRS. WATSON:

That's right. After persuading her husband to kill so many people in order to become, Lady Macbeth is overcome with guilt. She starts to sleep walk, raving about washing her hands of the blood..

RACHEL:

(she steps forward and recites the famous lines while furiously rubbing her hands together)

Out, damn't spot! out, I say! One.. two.. why, then 'tis time to do't Hell is murky!

(CONTINUED)

MRS. WATSON:

Very good, Rachel. Make sure you do it with that same gusto tomorrow night, okay? Those words will bring the audience to the edge of their seats.

SPARKY:

That's not the only thing that's going to have them on the edge of their seats.

MRS. WATSON:

What was that, Leonard... I mean, Sparky?

SPARKY:

Nothing, ma'am. I was just saying how this is going to be the most... ah, unique... rendition of Shakespeare people have ever seen.

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, I believe you are corret. Now, back to the play, Ryan. So, Lady Macbeth is dead. You realize that the Weird Sisters' prophecies have come true...

*JENNA holds up another sign. This one reads,
'Doomed!'*

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, doomed. And this is where you and Macduff fight. (to SPARKY) Get ready with the fake head, Leo.. Sparky.

SPARKY:

Yes, ma'am.. just putting on a fresh coat of blood.

MRS. WATSON:

Okay, let's take it from where Macduff enters.

They all look at JORDAN who is now using the sword like a baton and singing 'Yankee Doodle Dandy' as he marches around in a tight circle.

MRS. WATSON:

That's you, Jordan.

JORDAN:

What?

MRS. WATSON:

You're on. The fight, remember?

JORDAN:

Oh, yeah...

MRS. WATSON:

Take it from where you enter, Jordan.

RYAN and JORDAN meet CENTER STAGE.

JORDAN:

Turn, hell-hound, turn!

RYAN:

Of all men else I have avoided thee. But get thee back;
my soul is too much charged with blood of thine
already.

JORDAN:

I have no words. (he breaks character) So, I'll sing...

*JORDAN sings his next lines, dancing around RYAN
as he does. ABIGAIL hears this and rushes forward
to supply background vocals.*

JORDAN:

My voice is my sword!

ABIGAIL:

He said, his voice is his sword...

JORDAN:

Thou Bloodier Villian!

ABIGAIL:

There will be blood, oh, there will be blood.

*The two get caught up in the song and start to
dance together, singing the "There will be blood"
over and over. MRS. WATSON yells for them to
stop.*

MRS. WATSON:

Stop it.. there is no music in Macbeth. I've told you
that over and over, Jordan and Abby. No music. No
dancing. This is Shakespeare!

ABIGAIL:

Well, then Shakespeare is boring.

She releases JORDAN and returns UP STAGE

MRS. WATSON:

Just fight, you two. Okay?

*The two look at each other for a moment and then
JORDAN yells the famous line from the movie
Braveheart.*

JORDAN:

Freedom!

MRS. WATSON buries her face in her hands as the two boys dance around each other. RYAN stabs at JORDAN who dances out of the way. As they swing their swords at each other, they begin to giggle and their classmates start to laugh. Finally, JORDAN takes a big swing at RYAN, obviously the cue that this is the fatal blow. RYAN drops his sword and dies very melodramatically.

RYAN:

I will not yield. To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet and to be baited with the rabble's curse..

He falls to the stage, gurgling loudly and writhing in pain. As he lays still, SPARKY rolls the mannequin's head across the stage. It hits RYAN in the head and he yells out loudly in pain.

RYAN:

Hey watch it.

SPARKY:

You can't talk. Jordan just cut off your head.

JORDAN raises his sword above his head and the class cheers. ABIGAIL claps her hands and chants.

ABIGAIL:

Hercules! Hercules!

MRS. WATSON shakes her head and is about to correct her class but gives up.

MRS. WATSON:

Okay, that's enough for today. Everyone go home and study your lines. You, Sparky, practice your bowling. Your call is going to be 5 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Makeup and costumes on by six and curtain at seven. Any questions?

SHELBY:

Remind Ryan that he has to wear a skirt.

MRS. WATSON:

It's not a skirt. It's called a Lappet. More like an apron.

SHELBY:

And he has to wear one.

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, Shelby. Ryan has to wear a lappet.

SPARKY:

(he chants)

Ryan's going to wear a dress! Ryan's going to wear a dress!

RYAN picks up the head and tosses it at SPARKY

MRS. WATSON:

Everybody just go home and get some rest. We want to have a great show, don't we?

The cast answers 'yes' in unison

MRS. WATSON:

Well, this show is going to be truly special. You might even say 'life changing' for some of you.

The students look at each other, suspiciously.

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, life changing. Now go home and practice your lines, I'll see you tomorrow afternoon.

The students look at each other again and slowly exit the stage, all except RACHEL. After everyone is gone, she slowly approaches MRS. WATSON who is making some notes on her clipboard.

RACHEL:

Mrs. Watson?

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, Rachel.

RACHEL:

Can I ask you a question?

MRS. WATSON:

Of course you can, dear. You're my little star. The one I can always count on to give 100% to make every show great.

RACHEL:

Yeah, well that's kind of what I need to talk to you about.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. WATSON:

What do you mean, dear?

RACHEL:

Well.. it's just that.. well.. if you knew someone, or someones... were about to do something really.. ah, terrible.... would you tell someone about it.

MRS. WATSON:

Is someone you know going to hurt themselves? Is it Jenna? You know, you really have to keep your eye on the quiet ones. Has she said something to you that makes you think she wants to hurt herself.

RACHEL:

No, ma'am. She hasn't said anything to anybody in seven months. It's not Jenna.

MRS. WATSON:

Oh... well, what is it dear?

RACHEL:

Well... its just that .. well, I know a secret.. a secret that... well.. something bad is about to happen but I promised not to say anything about it.

MRS. WATSON:

Are people going to be hurt if you don't tell keep their secret?

RACHEL:

Hurt?

MRS. WATSON:

You know... will people be injured if you don't do something to stop it?

RACHEL:

No, I don't think so.

MRS. WATSON:

Well, dear, then it probably best if you just keep it to yourself, whatever this little secret. You know, Shakespeare said, 'This above all: to thine own self be true. And it must follow, as night follows day. Thou canst not then be false to any man.' In other words, the way we keep the confidence of other speaks volumes about our own trustworthiness.

RACHEL:

Shakespeare wrote that?

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, Polonius said it in Hamlet. It is one of my favorite lines from all of Shakespeare's plays. And it is kind of my life's mantra. I cannot control what other's do, whether they have integrity or not, but I am in full control of what I do. I think it is a good ideal to live by, don't you, dear?

RACHEL:

Yes, ma'am. To thine own self be true.

MRS. WATSON lightly taps RACHEL's heart.

MRS. WATSON:

To thine own self be true.

RYAN enters.

RYAN:

Rachel, are you coming?

RACHEL:

Be right there.

RYAN exits.

MRS. WATSON:

Was there anything else, dear?

RACHEL:

No, ma'am. I guess I'll see you tomorrow night.

MRS. WATSON:

Tomorrow night. It's going to be a great show. I can feel it. One of my best.

RACHEL:

Yes, ma'am. One of your best.

RYAN calls from offstage.

RYAN:

Rachel, let's go!

RACHEL:

Goodnight, Mrs. Watson.

She exits.

End of Scene

ACT 2Scene 2

THE SETTING: Backstage prior to the show. The traveler curtain has been pulled midstage.

AT RISE: ABIGAIL and Jordan are standing UP STAGE LEFT. They are warming up their voices by 'vocolizing' and singing phrases.

ABIGAIL:

Repeat after me. (she sings in a high pitch) ... la,
la, la, la, la, la...

JORDAN:

Lu, Lu, Lu...

ABIGAIL:

No... it's 'la', not 'lu'...

JORDAN:

What difference does it make?

ABIGAIL:

Remember when I took that course last year at the
community college?

JORDAN:

Theater Intense?

ABIGAIL:

Yes. Well, my professor, Dr. Greenwald used to be the
assistant to the understudy for Chorus Member #7 in the
Scarsdale Community Theater's production of Cabaret...

JORDAN:

Wow!

ABIGAIL:

And he said that the proper way to warm up your vocal
chords before a show was to sing 'la, la, la' over and
over again until your throat felt raw.

JORDAN:

Okay.. how's this? (he clears his throat and sings in
a very high pitch) La.. la... la.. la.. la...

ABIGAIL:

Higher!

(CONTINUED)

JORDAN:

(he sings so high that his voice starts
to crack)
La.. la.. la... la...

ABIGAIL:

That's better... does it hurt?

JORDAN:

Yes...

ABIGAIL:

Then its working. (she pulls a thermos from her bag and starts to pour some of the liquid into a cup) After you've sung 'la la' until your throat starts to bleed, then Professor Greenwald said you should always drink something that further irritates the vocal chords. He says that when he was the assistant to understudy to Chorus Member #7 in the Scarsdale Community Theater's production of Cabaret he always drank this...

ABIGAIL hands the cup to Jordan who takes a small sip and grimaces

JORDAN:

What is it?

ABIGAIL:

A mixture of buttermilk and cayene pepper. (she reaches out and pushes the cup towards Jordan's mouth) Drink up!

Jordan drinks and gags. They continue to 'vocalize' and do stretch throughout the scene. RYAN and SHELBY enter from STAGE RIGHT.

SHELBY:

Hold still so I can adjust your lappet.

RYAN:

This thing is stupid.

SHELBY:

Stupid or not, you've got to wear it. (she bends over and starts to pin the skirt. RYAN cries out in pain) Oops.. sorry.

SPARKY enters from STAGE LEFT. He is carrying a large box full of props.

SPARKY:

Okay... who gets the cowboy hat?

JORDAN:

That's me!

SPARKY crosses to Jordan and hands him a large pink cowboy hat from the box. He puts it on his head.

JORDAN:

Wow! You remembered how much I love pink!

RYAN:

Take that off! You don't want Mrs. Watson to walk in here and see you wearing that, do you?

Jordan takes off the hat and hands it back to SPARKY.

RYAN:

You've got everything on the list?

SPARKY:

Yep.... rubber chicken, bowling shoes, two cans of Silly String and a waffle iron.

RYAN:

What about the... (he cries out again)... hey, Shelby, watch it, why don't you?

SHELBY:

Sorry... I've never had to hem a skirt on a guy before.

SPARKY laughs

SPARKY:

Told you it was a dress!

RYAN:

It's not a dress.. it's a lappet. Did you get the pirate outfit? Rachel is going to need that in the third act.

SPARKY:

I just hung it up in her dressing room...

As if on cue, RACHEL enters from STAGE RIGHT. She is holding the pirate costume. She is clearly angry. Seeing how angry RACHEL appears, he slips off stage, LEFT.

RACHEL:

What is this?

RYAN:

It's your costume for the third act.

RACHEL:

I am not wearing this. My grandmother is going to be in the audience.

RYAN:

But Rachel, you have to. We're trying to produce the worst play in the history of the theater and nothing says I hate Shakespeare like Lady Macbeth dressed as a pirate.

RACHEL:

But my Nana is going to be here...

ABIGAIL:

I'll switch with you. You can wear the chicken suit and I'll wear the pirate outfit. I like pirates. Argh, matey!

Jordan laughs and joins her in repeating 'Argh' over and over again.

ABIGAIL:

Higher, Jordan. Higher! You've got to make your vocal chords bleed for it to do any good.

JORDAN:

Argh.. argh!

RYAN:

Just wear it, okay. We've got to ruin this play so badly that Mrs. Watson will give up on Shakespeare for good. Don't you want to do something besides boring old Hamlet or Othello before we graduate.

RACHEL:

Well.. it might be nice to stretch out a little..

RYAN:

That's all we want to do. Stretch a little. I mean, I'd love to be able to play a normal person on stage for a change instead of always having to wear a skirt.

SHELBY:

It's not a skirt. It's a lappet.

RYAN:

It's a skirt, Shelby. It's always a skirt or a bed sheet or something with Shakespeare. Do you know that I have never actually worn shoes on stage before.

SHELBY:

It guess it would be nice to play someone... I don't know... modern?

RYAN:

Exactly. That's all we want to do. Play a part that doesn't require us to speak in a British accent or have to wear a stupid skirt.

SHELBY:

It's a lappet!

RYAN:

It's a stupid skirt, Shelby!

ABIGAIL:

You know, when I played the part of Catherines in the Attic Players production of Pippin, they let me actually go on stage with my real hair. It was so... refreshing.

JORDAN:

Your real hair?

ABIGAIL:

Yes.... it felt wonderful.

RYAN:

You see, Rachel? That's what I want to experience on stage just once. A role that lets me be just a little normal. And wear pants!

SPARKY enters. He is carrying a large piece of fabric that looks like fur.

SPARKY:

I found the gorilla suit!

RACHEL:

Gorilla suit?

SPARKY hands the fabric to Jordan.

JORDAN:

For Macduff. I think the suit helps express his primal rage.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:

Macduff is not a monkey!

JORDAN:

I know... he's a gorilla.

RACHEL:

But... (she is exasperated)

RYAN crosses to RACHEL and puts his arm around her.

RYAN:

It's going to be alright, Rachel. We're just going to have a little fun. And teach ole Mrs. Watson a lesson about making us drown in Shakespeare. (he looks at RACHEL closely) Shelby, I think Rachel needs bigger fake eyelashes, don't you?

SHELBY crosses to RACHEL and leads her UP STAGE

SHELBY:

I'm on it, boss.

RYAN:

Okay.. is everybody ready?

SPARKY:

Has anyone seen Jenna?

SHELBY:

She'll be here. Justin had a court appearance this morning and she can't leave the TV until she hears whether he'll make bail or not.

RYAN:

Sparks, go text her. Tell her curtain is in 15 minutes.

SPARKY exits STAGE LEFT. RYAN calls after him.

RYAN:

And make sure she brings her signs, okay?

SPARKY:

(from offstage)
Okay.

RYAN:

Alright. Is everyone committed to the plan?

Everyone answers yes except RACHEL.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL:

But..

RYAN:

Rachel? The plan won't work without you.

RACHEL:

I still think it's wrong to ruin Mrs. Watson's show.

RYAN:

It's not Mrs. Watson's show. It's our show. And we are going to butcher it, aren't we guys?

Everyone cheers and chants. While they are chanting, MRS. WATSON enters from STAGE RIGHT. She claps her hands to get everyone's attention.

Hearing her from offstage, SPARKY re-enters.

MRS. WATSON:

Attention everyone. Has everyone checked and double checked their props?

The class answers yes.

MRS. WATSON:

Reviewed your lines? Warmed up your voices a little?

ABIGAIL and Jordan chant 'la, la, la, la'

MRS. WATSON:

Good. Where's Jenna?

SPARKY:

She's on the way. Justin was on TV.

MRS. WATSON:

Okay. You guys have workd so hard and I have a feeling this is going to be one of our best shows ever.

The class snickers.

MRS. WATSON:

I know you guys aren't big fans of Shakespeare.. (she crosses to RACHEL and pulls her close)... like Rachel and I are. But, I promise that after tonight, you are going to see all of your hard work pay off. In fact, tonight's performance is going to change some of your lives forever.

The class looks puzzled.

ABIGAIL:

Forever?

JORDAN:

Are we going to jail, Ryan? I just wanted to have a little fun. I don't want to go to jail.

MRS. WATSON:

Jail.. what are you talking about, Jordan?

RYAN:

Just a little joke we have. You know, whoever forgets their lines the most will be sentenced to spend the coming days locked away by their shame.

MRS. WATSON:

Oh... well, anyway. Like I said, this show is going to be life changing for some of you. I've been hiding this for several weeks now, but I can't keep it a secret any longer. Wait right here.. this is so exciting.

MRS. WATSON exits.

JORDAN:

She knows.

RYAN:

Mrs. Watson doesn't suspect a thing.

JORDAN:

I can't go to jail, Ryan. I just can't.

RYAN:

Nobody's going to jail, Jordan. We haven't done anything.

RACHEL:

Yet.

RYAN:

What?

RACHEL:

We haven't done anything yet. But as soon as Jordan goes out there in a monkey suit, well...

JORDAN:

We're going to do hard time. I knew I should have never agreed to this. (he starts to hyperventilate)

(CONTINUED)

ABIGAIL:

Breath, Jordan. Just breath. Everything is going to be okay. (Jordan starts to fan himself and ABIGAIL hands him another cup of her buttermilk concoction) Here.. drink this.. it will make you feel better.

Jordan takes a sip and gags. MRS. WATSON enters. With her is a distinguished looking man wearing a sweater and tweed jacket.

MRS. WATSON:

Ah.. here they are, Professor Duncan.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Hello.

MRS. WATSON:

Class, this is Professor Duncan. He is the chairman of the Theater Department at State College and he is here to see the show.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I hear that I am in for quite a treat.

JORDAN:

Oh, boy. This is worse than jail.

MRS. WATSON:

Professor Duncan is the surprise that I've been keeping from you these last few weeks. He is here because... (turns to PROFESSOR DUNCAN)... oh, why don't you tell them, Professor.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

With pleasure. State College was very fortunate to have one of our alumni make a sizeable donation to the Theater Department with the purpose of creating scholarships for promising young actors.

RACHEL:

Scholarship?

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Yes, young lady. This fall, we will be awarding a total of ten full scholarships to talented young actors who wish to pursue a career in theater.

MRS. WATSON:

Tell them the best part.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Yes.. I have been tasked to visit area schools to seek out the most promising young actors to receive these

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR DUNCAN: (cont'd)

scholarships and when I read that your school would be performing Macbeth, I could not resist but call your teacher and ask her if I could attend.

MRS. WATSON:

To give out scholarships! (she claps her hands with glee)

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Well... not tonight, mind you, but to at least find promising young students who we feel exemplify the kind of disciplined and talented young thespians that would most benefit from this program.

ABIGAIL:

Does State College have a Musical Theater program?

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Yes, we do. One of the finest in the region.

ABIGAIL and Jordan look at each other and then rush over to PROFESSOR DUNCAN. They quickly pupt on an impromptu 'audition' singing and dancing to one of the songs from Oklahoma!

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

That was very.. (he looks to MRS. WATSON, embarrassed)

MRS. WATSON:

I'm sorry, but Abigail and Jordan are very...

She is interupted as ABIGAIL and Jordan kneel before PROFESSOR DUNCAN, arms outstretched with big grins on their faces.

ABIGAIL:

Talented!

JORDAN:

Committed!

ABIGAIL:

Flexible!

MRS. WATSON:

I was going to say enthusiastic. Please, you two, give the Professor some room.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

As I was saying.. I'm here to just get a feel for what kind of talent you have in your program. I can't make any promises but what Mrs. Watson has said about you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR DUNCAN: (cont'd)

and your show, I think I just might be able to offer several of you an opportunity to be a part of our Theater Department. With a full scholarship.

The class just stand there, stunned.

MRS. WATSON:

Well, class.. what do you say to Professor Duncan.

There are mumbled replies of 'Thank you' but everyone is in shock at this news. MRS. WATSON seems a little embarrassed at their reaction.

MRS. WATSON:

They're just saving their energy for the show, Professor. How about I show you to your seat and maybe get you something from the concession stand. Do you like corndogs?

MRS. WATSON pushes PROFESSOR DUNCAN ahead of her as exits.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Break a leg!

Just before dissapearing backstage, MRS. WATSON glares at the students agrily.

MRS. WATSON:

(from offstage)

Let's get you that corndog, shall we?

The class is silent, absorbing what they just heard. Finally, SPARKY breaks the ice.

SPARKY:

Well, what are we going to do now?

RACHEL:

It's obvious. We've got to do the original show. You heard the guy. He's here to give out full scholarsihps to theater school. Full scholarships. You think he's going to hand out a scholarship to somebody playing Macduff whose dressed in a gorilla costume.

RYAN:

I don't know.

RACHEL:

You don't know? What do you mean, you don't know? Full scholarships, Ryan, to one of the best theater schools in the state.

RYAN:

Who cares about a scholarship? It's just another way they try to control you.

RACHEL:

Not all of us have rich parents. My Mom and Dad barely have enough money saved to send me to community college, much less State. I need that scholarship. Come on, guys. We've had our fun trying to come up with ways to butcher Shakespeare. But this is our chance.. this is MY chance... to go to a really good school. Abigail, you heard Professor Duncan. They've got a great Musical Theater program.

ABIGAIL looks at Jordan tentatively.

ABIGAIL:

I know. But me and Jordan have worked so hard on our dance number for the when Macbeth is named the Dean of Candor.

SHELBY:

Thane of Cawdor.

ABIGAIL:

What?

SHELBY:

Macbeth is names the Thane of Cawdor, not the Dean of Candor.

ABIGAIL:

Whatever. All I know is that Jordan and I have put a lot of time into our lifts and backflips and stuff and I'd hate to see all that work wasted. Right, Jordan?

JORDAN:

Yeah... did he say a full scholarship?

RACHEL:

Yes... a full scholarship to State. Can your folks afford that?

Jordan looks embarrassed.

JORDAN:

No.

RACHEL:

Abby?

ABIGAIL:

I don't know. Maybe if my Dad takes a second job.

RACHEL:

(to RYAN)

See, Ryan? Some of us need this scholarship. If we screw this up, then we may never get to live out our dreams.

RYAN:

Shelby? Sparky? You feel that way, too?

SHELBY:

I don't know. I don't want to ruin anybody's chances of getting a full ride to college but I also can't wait to see the look on ole Mrs. Watson's face when Jordan puts on that monkey suit.

SPARKY:

I don't care, man. Whatever you say. I'm going into the Navy after high school so I say let's set fire to this thing and burn it down.

RACHEL:

Sparky, no!

RYAN:

Listen, Rachel. Why don't you go out there and give the Professor everything you got. But I'm going to do my best to give the worst performance of my life and just the chips fall where they may. Everybody with me?

The students look at each other for a moment and then everyone but RACHEL yells in agreement. As the cheer dies down, JENNA enters from STAGE LEFT. It's obvious she's been crying. SHELBY rushes over and hugs her.

SHELBY:

What's wrong, Jenna?

JENNA writes a note on her pad and shows it to SHELBY. She reads each sentence aloud as JENNA continue to write notes and hand them to her.

SHELBY:

They're making Justin do community service. He's going to have to wear an orange jump suit and pick up trash. Justin looks terrible in orange.

After the last note, JENNA starts to cry again.

(CONTINUED)

SHELBY:

It's okay, Jenna. I'm sure he'll accessorize and it won't be so bad.

SPARKY looks at his watch and steps CENTER STAGE.

SPARKY:

Two minutes til curtain. Places everyone.

The cast exits STAGE LEFT. After a moment, MRS. WATSON and PROFESSOR DUNCAN enter from STAGE RIGHT with folding chairs. They set the chairs DOWNSTAGE RIGHT and sit. DUNCAN is holding a large corn dog.

MRS. WATSON:

How's the corndog, Professor.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

(he takes a small bite of the corndog and smiles)

Delicious.

MRS. WATSON:

One of our parents make them. Raises the goats herself.

Hearing this, PROFESSOR DUNCAN chokes.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Goats.

Before he can protest further, the curtain opens. JENNA is standing CENTER STAGE in front of a large flat onto which has been drawn a large boiling pot. She is wearing a long black robe but still has on her shirt with Justin Bieber's face. SPARKY is standing beside the flat with a fire extinguisher. He sprays short blasts of smoke as JENNA begins to hold up a series of cards with the opening lines of the play.

JENNA holds up first poster. It reads: When shall we three meet again. In thunder, lightning or in rain?

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I must say, this is an interesting approach to the start of Macbeth.

MRS. WATSON:

Yes, that's Jenna. She's on a hunger strike because of some boy name Justin Beaver.

(CONTINUED)

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I think you mean Bieber?

MRS. WATSON:

Well, whatever his name, Jenna has not spoken a word since last spring. Other than that, she is a fine actress.

JENNA holds up another poster. It reads: When the hurly burly's done. When the battle's lost and won. She holds up the next card. It reads: That will be ere the set of sun. JENNA tries to turn over the next card but realizes that she has left the rest of them backstage. She smiles and quickly writes a note on her pad and holds it up to SPARKY to read.

SPARKY:

Flair is fail and foal is fall.

JENNA becomes agitated and taps on the note loudly. SPARKLY reaches into his pocket and pulls out a pair of thick reading glasses and puts them on. JENNA holds the note out at arms length so he can read it.

SPARKY:

Oh, sorry. Fair is foul and foul is fair.

SPARKY lets out a large burst of smoke from the fire extinguisher and then the two of them exit, dragging the flat behind them. RYAN and Jordan enter, cross to CENTER STAGE.

RYAN:

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

He looks at Jordan who is clearly torn by what he is about to do. RYAN repeats his lines, louder.

RYAN:

I said, so foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Jordan hesitates again. ABIGAIL steps from the wings and feeds him his lines.

ABIGAIL:

Choppy fingers. Skinny lips.

JORDAN:

By each at once her chopping fingers laying; Upon her skinny lips. You should be women.

RYAN smiles, knowing what's coming next. SHELBY runs on stage and quickly puts a woman's wig on RYAN's head and a handbag over his shoulder.

RYAN curtsies as JENNA steps back on stage. She is holding a large poster that reads: All hail, Macbeth. As if on cue, the rest of the cast step from the wings and repeat the phrase.

ALL:

Hail Macbeth.

The cast steps back off stage as Jordan continues with his lines.

JORDAN:

The earth has bubbles.

RYAN opens his purse and pulls out a small bottle. Using the wand, he begins to blow bubbles in the air as Jordan continues.

JORDAN:

And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?

RYAN:

Into the air. As breath into the wind.

RYAN blows a few more bubbles and the two exit, STAGE LEFT.

MRS. WATSON:

I'm so sorry, Professor Duncan. I don't know..

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

You didn't tell me that you were performing an avante garde production of Shakespeare. (he claps his hands together) How delightful.

MRS. WATSON:

Yes.. how delightful.

RACHEL enters from STAGE LEFT. She is dressed in a long flowing robe and is very solemn.

MRS. WATSON:

This is my star, Rachel. She would make an excellent candidate for a scholarship.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Very impressive entrance.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL has reached CENTER STAGE and delivers her lines very dramatically.

RACHEL:

How now! What news?

She looks off stage but gets no reply.

RACHEL:

I say, what news?

RYAN enters. He is riding a child's pogo stick and is wearing a large cowboy hat. He speaks with a heavy Texas drawl.

RYAN:

Yipee kuy yeah!

RACHEL:

What news, Macbeth?

RYAN:

Well, howdy there little lady.

RACHEL:

(between gritted teeth)
What news, husband dear.

RYAN:

News? Well... let's see... I haven't eaten anything but beef jerky in six months and have got myself a bad case of the scurvy and my trusty stead here, Tonto, just threw a shoe.

A tennis shoe comes flying in from off stage. RACHEL continues on with her lines as if nothing has happened.

RACHEL:

Was the hope drunk; Wherein you dress yourself? Hath it slept since?

RYAN:

Well, ma'am, I'm not sure what you mean by all that fancy talk. All I know is I need a good meal and a hot bath. Now, if you'll excuse me, little lady, its time for me and Tonto to ride.

RYAN tips his hat to RACHEL, gallops a couple of times around her and then rides off the same way he came.

(CONTINUED)

RACHEL looks around for a moment, not sure what to do, then slowly and gracefully exits. MRS. WATSON is appalled by what just happened and starts to apologize to PROFESSOR DUNCAN.

MRS. WATSON:
Professor... I am..

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:
Excellent.. excellent. How you melded the innocence and bombast of the American Cowboy to interpret Macbeth's self doubt upon being urged to commit murder by his wife was simply brilliant.

MRS. WATSON:
Well, thank you, Professor. That was certainly what we were going for.

SPARKY enters, he is holding a pole upon which is attached a mirrored ball and a boom box. He sets the boom box on the floor and presses the play button. Suddenly the room is filled with loud techno music. SPARKY holds the pole up and then pulls a flashlight from his pocket and shines it onto the rotating ball, filling the room with small specks of light. As the music reaches a crescendo, ABIGAIL and Jordan enter. They are dressed in elaborate dance costumes. As they stand UP STAGE waiting for the dance to begin, SHELBY comes in and applies a fresh coat of lipstick to their lips.

JORDAN:
You got it on my teeth.

SHELBY:
(she pulls out a napkin and wipes his mouth)
Sorry.

ABIGAIL and Jordan are both holding microphones and began to sing, not necessarily in tune with the music. They stare relentlessly at PROFESSOR DUNCAN, large fake smiles on their faces.

ABIGAIL:
How goes the night, boy?

JORDAN:
The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

ABIGAIL:

Well, I know what time it is.

JORDAN:

What time is it?

ABIGAIL:

It's time to dance!

Suddenly, the two break into a frenetic (and terrible) dance. The choreography is horrible as the two bumble their way around the room. At some point, they come over to where PROFESSOR DUNCAN is sitting and dance very close to him, chanting with the music. As the music comes to an end, the two are entwined CENTER STAGE in a terrible final pose. There is soft applause from backstage as ABIGAIL and Jordan bow with great enthusiasm. They turn and bow multiple times towards PROFESSOR DUNCAN, softly mouthing the words 'Thank you' over and over again as they back off stage.

SPARKY picks up the boom box and carries it and pole offstage, RIGHT.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I've never really understand Musical Theater folks....

MRS. WATSON:

Professor Duncan, I am so...

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

.. but I would have to say that that dance captured the anguish and remorse with which Macbeth slayed the King like no other performance I have ever seen. Bravo, Mrs. Watson.. Bravo!

Suddenly, RYAN and SHELBY run across the stage, screaming. They are being chased by Jordan wearing a bedsheet with two small holes cut out for his eyes.

RYAN:

Alas.. tis the ghost of Banquo..

SHELBY:

Make haste and hither, my Lord.

The two run off stage LEFT and the 'ghost follows.' JENNA enters from STAGE LEFT and crosses to CENTER STAGE. She is holding several pieces of white poster board. As she reaches CENTER, RYAN

(CONTINUED)

and SHELBY run back on stage, screaming again. Jordan in the white sheet enters behind them and the three run circles around JENNA as they speak.

RYAN:

Avaunt! And quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee

SHELBY:

Yeah... leave us alone.

RYAN and SHELBY race off stage, LEFT. In an effort to catch them, Jordan lunges across the stage and bumps into JENNA who drops her poster boards.

JORDAN:

Sorry...

JORDAN helps her pick up her cards and manages to get the eye holes turned around. He staggers off stage, entangling himself in the curtain as he exits.

JENNA watches him exit, then holds up her cards. The first card read: Thrice, the brinded cat hath mew'd. In response, someone from backstage mews loudly like an angry cat. JENNA holds up the next card: Thrise and once the hedge-pig whined. One of the actors backstage snorts loudly like a pig. JENNA holds up the last card: Harpier cries, 'tis time, 'tis time. Round about the cauldron go.

SPARKY enters from STAGE LEFT. He is holding a large pot that contains steaming liquid (dry ice). He sets it in the center of the stage and for a moment, JENNA just stares at the pot. From backstage, RYAN whispers loudly.

RYAN:

Walk around it.

JENNA slowly walks around the pot on the floor. RYAN enters. He follows JENNA in walking around the pot.

RYAN:

Tell me thou unknown power.

JENNA stops and looks around, realizing that she left one of her posters backstage. She uses the pad hanging around her neck and writes a note, holding it out for RYAN to read. The two start circling the pot again.

RYAN:

I don't have my contacts in. (he looks off stage)
Shelby!

SHELBY enters from STAGE LEFT. She is holding a wig in one hand and spraying it with hair spray.

SHELBY:

What? I've got to get Abby's wig ready for the big finale. The fireworks singed the last one and we're having to go with the Dolly Parton.

RYAN:

Read the note.

SHELBY:

Huh?

RYAN:

(pointing to JENNA)

I need the next line.

By this time, MRS. WATSON is mortified. She is now sitting with her head in lap, seeming to cry into her palms. PROFESSOR DUNCAN, however, is enjoying himself immensely and is sitting on the edge of his seat watching the play and eating his corndog.

SHELBY joins in the circle going around the pot. She tries to read the note but is having a hard time seeing it as they three go around in a circle. Finally, she can make out the words.

SHELBY:

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware of Macduff!

As she reads, SHELBY veers off towards the center of the circle and trips over the pot. She goes spralling on the floor, dropping the wig and can of hairspray. She yells to SPARKY.

SHELBY:

We need cleanup. Sparky!

SPARKY enters from STAGE RIGHT. He is trying to untangle a large knot of Christmas lights.

SPARKY:

What?

SHELBY:

We got a spill.

(CONTINUED)

SPARKY:

Okay... here, hold this for me.

SPARKY hands the lights to RYAN. He looks at them and then hands them to JENNA who continues to walk in a circle around the spilled pot.

SHELBY crawls across the stage and retrieves her wig as SPARKY enters with a mop and bucket. He crosses CENTER and begins to mop up the spill. JENNA widens her circle and begins to walk around him as he mops.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN claps his hands with glee at this sight.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Glorious metaphor of Macbeth contemplating how he will ever be able to clean his hands of the blood that will soon be spilled. Glorious!

RYAN crosses and helps SHELBY to her feet.

SHELBY:

Abby's wig is ruined. I'm going to have to go with the Taylor Swift!

RYAN:

It'll be okay. (he begins to lead her off stage, RIGHT)

SHELBY:

No, it's not... it's way too curly for her!

RACHEL enters regally. She steps around JENNA and SPARKY to CENTER STAGE to deliver her next lines.

RACHEL:

Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed!

As RACHEL strikes a dramatic pose, SPARKY realizes that these lines are his cues. He runs off stage RIGHT and re-enters carrying an inflatable mattress. He has his mouth against the stem and is blowing furiously. He closes the valve and hands the mattress to RACHEL. She looks at it incredulously and throws it down on the floor. With a huff, RACHEL exits.

ABIGAIL calls from backstage.

(CONTINUED)

ABIGAIL:

Sparky, where's our music.

SPARKY runs off stage LEFT and grabs his boom box. He re-enters and hands it to JENNA who is still walking in a circle. He picks up the mop and continues to clean the spill. JENNA presses the play button and loud disco music can be heard. At the moment, ABIGAIL and Jordan enter from STAGE LEFT, arms linked doing a series of 'music line' kicks across the stage. As they cross CENTER, ABIGAIL's foot catches the edge of the mattress and trips. She goes sprawling on the floor. Jordan reaches down to help her but she pushes him away.

ABIGAIL:

No, leave me. You've got to get your sword for the big battle.

JORDAN:

Yeah, right.

Jordan dashes off STAGE LEFT. Before he can get fully off stage, RACHEL enters and she shoves him aside.

RACHEL:

Get out of my way, you idiot. I am not going to let you ruin my big moment.

She steps CENTER and begins to recite Lady Macbeth's most famous lines from the play. She has to scream to be heard over the thumping music from the boom box.

RACHEL:

(she continues to yell the following lines through the chaos that follows)

Out, damned spot! out- I say! One: two: why then, 'tis time to do't - Hell is murky! - Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? Yet, who would have thought the old man to have so much blood in him.

While she recites her lines, Jordan enters. He is wearing a plastic Roman soldier hat and holding a long grey sword above his head.

JORDAN:

My voice is my sword!

(CONTINUED)

ABIGAIL:

(still sitting on the mattress)
Go, baby!

RYAN enters from STAGE RIGHT. He is pulling on his own plastic helmet. He looks at SPARKY.

RYAN:

Sparky, I can't find my sword.

SPARKY drops the mop.

SPARKY:

It's on the prop table, next to the bucket of...

RYAN and SPARKY gaze at each other for a moment and RYAN smiles devilishly.

RYAN:

Get it!

SPARKY, obviously gleeful, dashes off stage LEFT.

JORDAN:

I said, my voice is my sword.

ABIGAIL:

Sing it, baby!

JORDAN:

What?

ABIGAIL:

Sing it, like we practiced.

Jordan clears his throat and sings his next lines.

JORDAN:

My voice is my sword! Turn, hell-hound, turn!

ABIGAIL screams with glee and rises from the mattress to cheer on Jordan. RYAN steps forward and picks the mop up off the floor. RACHEL continues to recite her lines as Jordan and RYAN begin to fight behind them, Jordan with a sword and RYAN with the mop handle. JENNA continues to walk in circles.

RACHEL:

The thane of Fife had a wife!

(CONTINUED)

SHELBY runs back in. She has the long blond wig and the hairspray in her hands. She runs towards RACHEL.

SHELBY:

I got most of the tangles out. I think it'll be okay.

SHELBY tries to put the wig on RACHEL'S head as she resists wildly, still reciting her lines.

RACHEL:

Where is she now? What, will these hands ne'er be clean?

The sword battle has escalated into nothing but a flailing of plastic sword and mop. In the heat of battle, RYAN hits ABIGAIL in the head with the mop head and she screams. Suddenly, SPARKY dashes on stage. He is carrying a large bucket of blood (red confetti) and heads straight for RACHEL. As he lifts the bucket to pour it on her, RACHEL suddenly steps forward to recite her lines.

RACHEL:

No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that!

SPARKY trips on the mattress and falls forward. He cannot stop his forward motion and dumps the 'blood' squarely onto PROFESSOR DUNCAN'S head. MRS. WATSON screams and the cast freezes. JENNA turns off the music. For a long moment, no one dares moves.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN reaches up and wipes the 'blood' from his eyes and the cast braces themselves for his outrage. But instead, he smiles broadly and jumps to his feet, clapping loudly.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

Bravo! Bravo! What a wonderful interpretation of the chaos that engulfed Macbeth through to the bitter end. And the blood. Who's idea was that?

SPARKY raises his hand feebly.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I have always thought that the ending of the movie *Carrie* bore a striking resemblance to Shakespeare's penchant for vicious and bloody revenge. Bravo, Bravo!

The cast looks relieved. MRS. WATSON stands, clearly pleased and steps forward, pulling RACHEL and RYAN close in her outstretched arms.

MRS. WATSON:

Well, that's exactly how we rehearsed it, wasn't it guys.

The cast mumbles agreement, knowing they are in trouble.

MRS. WATSON:

So, Professor, did you see anything tonight that looked like scholarship material?

PROFESSOR DUNCAN:

I believe I did, Mrs. Watson. How about if we step back to your office and discuss it further.

MRS. WATSON:

Absolutely!

PROFESSOR DUNCAN exits STAGE RIGHT. MRS. WATSON looks around the stage at her students for a moment and they prepare themselves for her outburst. Instead, she smiles.

MRS. WATSON:

Well, I think that went well. I can't wait to see how you're going to try to ruin Hamlet.

The class groans and MRS. WATSON smiles. Without another word, she follows the PROFESSOR offstage. For a moment, the cast just stands there, looking at each other. Finally, RACHEL speaks.

RACHEL:

Did you hear that? I think I'm going to get scholarship.

RYAN:

Me, too.

ABIGAIL AND JORDAN:

Us, too.

RACHEL:

What do you say we go listen through the door?

The cast laughs and starts to exit STAGE RIGHT. SPARKY picks up his bucket and smiles as he slowly follows.

SPARKY:

I knew the blood was a good idea.

Everyone exits except for JENNA. She stands CENTER STAGE for a moment, watching her classmates go. She opens and closes her mouth a couple of times and then blurts out.

JENNA:

Hey, wait for me!

JENNA runs off stage.

End of PLAY