

THE DIRECTOR



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Big Dog Publishing

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THE DIRECTOR

FARCE. After recent budget cuts, a theater department is forced to combine three plays—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and an experimental freeform body piece—into one production. The actors have to cope with an egomaniacal “artistic” director, read their lines from greasy napkins stained with pizza sauce, and suffer through the director’s “avan-tee-guarda” version of *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, which features a ship, an iceberg, and a hockey puck. The laughs never end in this hilarious play!

Performance time: Approximately 30 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(1 M, 3 F, 21 flexible)
(With doubling: 1 M, 3 F, 11 flexible)

CAPTAIN: An egotistical, condescending “artistic” director who is directing an “avan-tee-guarda” version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; loves videogames and “pizzzaaaaahhhh”; male.

MISS SALLY: Abusive director who is directing her own version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* in which there is no script; female.

MISS MAGGIE: Director of an experimental freeform body piece; female.

KELLY: Actor who refuses to perform a triple back flip with a fiery baton in her hand; female.

ACTORS 1-7: Actors in the Captain’s version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in which they play a ship, an iceberg, and a hockey puck.

ACTORS: 8-12: Actors assigned to Miss Sally’s version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* in which there are no scripts.

ACTORS: 13-21: Actors performing in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in which they are in a commercial for a prescription sleeping medicine that was sold to them by a hockey puck in the middle of summer.

OPTIONS FOR DOUBLING

Kelly and Actors 13-21 can be played by Actors 1-12.

SETTING

School theatre.

SET

Blank stage with a chair and a small table with a computer on it. A desk can be used instead of a table.

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PROPS

Script

Greasy napkins with writing and pizza sauce stains on them

Steering wheel

Penny

Paperclip

Paper balls

**“I’m a director,
and I’m also artistic.
That makes me
an “artistic director,”
which means
I know everything.”**

—Captain

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(AT RISE: *Miss Sally and Miss Maggie are sitting in the audience chatting. The Captain stands downstage staring with disbelief at Kelly.*)

CAPTAIN: (*To Kelly.*) What do you mean you *can't* do it?!

KELLY: I mean, I just don't think it's very safe.

CAPTAIN: If you want safe, then go work in a bomb factory.

This is theatre! This is life! We don't play by the rules.

Now, do a triple backflip with a fiery baton in your hand, or else!

KELLY: I don't even have a baton, and doesn't the fire marshal have to approve something like that?

CAPTAIN: The only person whose approval matters here is mine because I speak for the audience. I know what they're going to think, and they're going to think that this play would be a lot more interesting if *Kelly* was doing a triple backflip with a fiery baton in her hand. Now go!

KELLY: But I—

CAPTAIN: (*Shouts.*) Go!

KELLY: (*Hesitant.*) Okay...uhhh...all right...ummm...

CAPTAIN: (*Shouts.*) Go!

KELLY: (*Screams.*) Ahhh!

(*Slowly and poorly, Kelly attempts a round-off but falls. Pause.*)

CAPTAIN: What was that?

KELLY: I told you I can't do that.

CAPTAIN: The only reason you can't do it is because you're not in character. Now get off my stage! You're ruining my play!

(*Crying, Kelly runs off.*)

MISS MAGGIE: If you keep scaring them away like that, we're not going to have anyone left.

CAPTAIN: I know what I'm doing here. Tennessee Williams once sneezed on my mother. He said, "a-choo," but Mother always told me that what he meant to say is that your child is going to be a star! And here I am!

MISS MAGGIE: What are you talking about?

MISS SALLY: I think he's saying that Tennessee Williams's boogers gave him special powers. Remind me next time I see someone talented to have them spit in my face. Maybe I'll start flying around the room.

CAPTAIN: You know the whole moon landing thing is actually just one big conspiracy. Neil Diamond never even actually landed on the moon, but only people on the up and up know that.

MISS MAGGIE: (*Sarcastic.*) Oh, well, lucky we know one of those people.

CAPTAIN: And now I will deliver a special address to myself. (*As if speaking to thousands.*) Hello and welcome. Welcome to this beautiful space provided by our beautiful donors. And just so all of you know, we have a very wealthy donor right now who is going to leave us a large sum of money when he dies...which will hopefully be soon. So, if any of you wonderful, stupid people know a hit man, let me know. Ha! Seriously.

MISS MAGGIE: (*To Miss Sally.*) Who's he talking to?

MISS SALLY: I have no idea.

CAPTAIN: (*As if speaking to thousands.*) And here we are at the very first rehearsal of our very special first interdepartmental production. Because of budget cuts, we can only afford to direct one play, and since everyone wants a piece of the pie, we are combining three productions into one. We will be performing my version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" combined with Miss Sally's "A Streetcar Named Desire" and Miss Maggie's very experimental freeform body piece. It's going to be very "avan-tee-

guarda." There isn't much of a script right now, but who really needs a script, huh? (*Slight pause.*) No, I'm asking. (*Shrugs.*) Most playwrights are just quacks anyway. And by that, I mean I think some of them may have secret double lives as ducks. Well, without further ado, as they say in Mexico, "C'est la vie!"

MISS MAGGIE: Who are you talking to?

CAPTAIN: The only important person in this room, Miss Maggie, and I would appreciate it if you referred to me by my new title that I gave myself just this morning.

MISS SALLY: And just what is that, Your Highness?

CAPTAIN: It's not "Your Highness," but it's close. "Captain." I think it has a science-fiction ring to it, and I just want to make sure that people know how important I am. I am a very important person.

MISS SALLY: (*Sarcastic.*) And I'm Susan B. Anthony.

CAPTAIN: Oh, I met her recently at a conference I spoke at.

MISS SALLY: She's dead.

CAPTAIN: Oh, well, maybe it wasn't that recently.

MISS MAGGIE: She died in 1906.

CAPTAIN: I gave a great workshop at that conference all about a new directing technique that I personally invented. It's called "fear throwing." Let me demonstrate it for you. Maybe you'll learn something.

[END OF FREEVIEW]