

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE



A collection of four short comedies

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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**BIG DOG PUBLISHING  
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**PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE**

8 M, 8 F, 15 flexible, extras

(With doubling: 3 M, 4 F, 9 flexible, opt. extras)

**COMEDY COLLECTION.** There's plenty of theatre drama and laughs in this side-splitting collection of four short plays. In "**Please Turn Off Your Audience**," rebellious audience members reject all rules of theater etiquette. In "**Saturday Night Stage**," two radio broadcasters provide ridiculous play-by-play commentary on a student production of *Romeo and Juliet*. In "**Ushered**," two militant ushers harass theatre-goers as they try to gain admittance to a children's play. And in "**Boo Me!**" an actress begs the audience to stop giving standing ovations during a horrendous student performance. Suitable for middle schools, high schools, and community theatres. Easy to stage with just one simple set for all four plays. Plays may be performed individually, if desired.

**Performance Time:** Approximately 45-60 minutes.

## PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE

(3 M, 1 F, 9 flexible, opt. extras)

**ANNOUNCER:** Authoritative announcer who recites theatre rules; flexible. *[Note: A voiceover may be used, if desired.]*

**RENAISSANCE PAINTER:** Angry painter; has a beard and carries a painter's palette; flexible.

**MIME:** Mime who acts as if she is trapped in a box; flexible.

**CLOWN:** Clown who makes balloon animals; wears a clown costume; flexible.

**PIZZA DELIVERY:** Tries to deliver a pizza to Audience Member 6; flexible.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 1:** Doesn't like mimes; pulls out a Jenga game; flexible.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 2:** Boos Announcer; wins game of Jenga; flexible.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 3:** Starts the wave; plays Abraham Lincoln; male.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 4:** Plays Donald Trump; male.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 5/PATRICIA:** Blows an air horn; accuses Audience Member 6 of being "pizza blind"; female.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 6/PAUL:** Blows an air horn; loves pizza and denies he is "pizza blind"; does a horrible impression of Marlon Brando; male.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 7:** Waves a large protest sign; encourages other Audience Members to engage in choreographed pirate combat with balloons and plastic swords; flexible.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 8:** Waves a large protest sign; flexible.

**EXTRAS (opt.):** As additional Audience Members.

## SATURDAY NIGHT STAGE

(3 M, 1 F, 2 flexible) or (1 M, 1 F, 4 flexible)

**SIMON "SILKY" CRANSTON:** Broadcaster for the radio show, "Saturday Night Stage"; wears a shirt with a pocket large enough to hold a chicken strip; male.

**BARRETT "TWO BOWS" BRAXTON:** Broadcaster for the radio show, "Saturday Night Stage"; considered a "wise theatrical Yoda" who was once a two-time understudy for Biff Loman in "Death of a Salesman"; male.

**JULIET:** High school student who plays Juliet; likes to take selfies on stage; female.

**ROMEO:** High school student who plays Romeo; male.

**ACTOR 1:** High school student in "Romeo and Juliet" who bites her thumb too hard; wears a potato sack and bowler hat; flexible.

**ACTOR 2:** High school student in "Romeo and Juliet"; wears a potato sack and bowler hat; flexible.

**NOTE:** The names and gender of the broadcasters may be changed, if desired.

## USHERED

(2 F, 2 flexible)

**USHER 1:** Militant theatre usher; wears all-black clothing with a riot gear helmet and flak jacket; flexible.

**USHER 2:** New theatre usher; wears all-black clothing with a riot gear helmet and flak jacket; flexible.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER 1:** Audience member trying to enter the theater with a cell phone; female.

**OLD WOMAN:** Audience member trying to sneak kettle chips into the theater; wears granny clothes, a sizable hat, and walks with a walker; female.

## BOO ME!

(2 M, 4 F, 7 flexible, opt. extras)

- ANNOUNCER:** Tries to speak over the audience's applause; flexible.
- JULIET/AMANDA:** Student who plays Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet"; convinced she has completely botched her monologue; female.
- ROMEO:** Student who plays Romeo in "Romeo and Juliet"; blissfully ignorant of his lack of acting skills, winks at the audience, smiles most of the time, and has a good time even though he barely knows his lines or when to enter or exit; male.
- NURSE:** Student who plays the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet"; delivers her lines in an exceptionally wooden way with her volume wavering between shouting and whispering for no discernable reason; female.
- MOM/NURSE:** Amanda's proud mother who is sitting in the audience; delighted Amanda is playing the role of Juliet; fills in as the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet"; female.
- STAGE MANAGER/CASEY:** Stage Manager who fills in as Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet"; wears a headset; female.
- SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR:** Actor in "Romeo and Juliet" who can't remember his lines; wears a Renaissance costume; flexible.
- JASPER:** Amanda's cousin who is sitting in the audience; male.
- AUDIENCE MEMBERS 1-7:** Audience members who clap at anything; non-speaking; flexible.
- EXTRAS (opt.):** As additional Audience Members.

## SETS

### PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE

**A theater.** At CS is an empty playing space defined by lighting, or a simple raised platform may be used. On each side of the playing space is a collection of chairs/seats (a minimum of four per side). If possible, the chairs should look like the seating in your theatre. Risers may be used, if desired.

### SATURDAY NIGHT STAGE

**Crockmorton High School, near the end of a performance of "Romeo and Juliet."** At CS is a small empty playing space that's either a small platform or is defined by lighting. On each side is a collection of chairs. If possible, the chairs should look like the seating in your theatre. In front of the seats is a small table where the two broadcasters sit.

### USHERED

**Theatre lobby, before a performance of "The Three Little Pigs."** A bare stage or an empty space in front of the curtain will suffice.

### BOO ME!

**Theater stage, during a performance of "Romeo and Juliet."** At CS is a small empty playing space defined by a small platform or lighting. On each side is a collection of chairs. If possible, the chairs should look like the seating in your theatre. Risers may be used, if desired.

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## PROPS

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE

8 Cell phones  
Painter's palette  
Small balloon to make balloon animal  
2 Air horns  
Large poster that reads, "Beans are the best!"  
Large poster that reads, "Ban the beans!"  
Jenga tower  
Stovepipe hat  
Trump mask or orange face paint  
Pizza box  
Assorted balloons  
8 Plastic swords

## SATURDAY NIGHT STAGE

Two large microphones or headsets  
A chicken strip  
Cell phone  
Large plastic dagger  
Fake blood (opt.)  
Table large enough for Romeo to lie on



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## USHERED

Cell phone  
2 Tickets  
Walker with a small bag hanging on the front  
Bad disguise with a large fake mustache  
Tissues  
Bag of kettle chips

## BOO ME!

Programs  
Cell phones  
Headset  
Sign that reads, "After much bad Shakespeare and much  
applause..."  
Cords  
Costume piece for Juliet to give to Stage Manager

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jo

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE  
I

"WHAT'S THE POLICY  
ON HIGHLY CHOREOGRAPHED COMBAT  
WITH BALLOONS AND PLASTIC SWORDS  
FEATURING A LOT OF LOUD PIRATE NOISES?"

—AUDIENCE MEMBER 7

## PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE

*(Pre-show lights up. In the middle is an empty playing space defined by lighting or a simple raised platform. On each side of the playing space is a collection of chairs/seats, a minimum of four per side. Risers may be used as well. During pre-show seating, actors playing Audience Members 1-8 are seated on the chairs on stage. Ushers may direct them to their onstage seats. Audience Members 1-8 should act as if they are actual members of the audience. Lights dim on the real audience. Audience Members 1-8 are staring intently at their cell phones.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Welcome to “Please Turn Off Your Audience.” Before we begin our show, we’d like to make a few announcements. At this time, we ask everyone to please turn off your cell phone.

*(Audience Members 1-8 look up from their cell phones as if considering this request. Slight pause. They go back to staring intently at their cell phones.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Thank you. For the safety of our performers and for the courtesy of your fellow audience members, we remind you that during the show flash photography is strictly prohibited.

*(Audience Members 1-8 take several flash photos [e.g. selfies, silly poses, etc.]*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Copyright laws also preclude the use of Renaissance portrait painters.

*(A bearded Renaissance Painter enters, carrying a painter’s palette.)*

RENAISSANCE PAINTER: No! No! No! [Sono un artiste! Artiste!] *(Storms off.)* ["I'm an artist. An artist!"]

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Also make note that miscellaneous miming—besides being just weird—is also a major no-no.

*(A Mime enters and acts as if she is trapped in a box. Audience Members 1-8 don't respond. Mime shrugs and looks at Audience Members 1-8.)*

MIME: *(To Audience Members 1-8.)* You get it? I'm trapped in a box.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: *(Raises hand.)* Excuse me. I didn't think mimes were supposed to speak.

MIME: Oh, shut up! *(Hangs her head and exits.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* I don't think we even have to mention our policy on clowning.

*(Clown enters.)*

CLOWN: *(To Announcer.)* Sorry, what is the policy?

ANNOUNCER: Ah, we're agin' clownin'. Hard-core agin' it. Didn't you see the movie "It"?

CLOWN: No.

ANNOUNCER: Go see it and get back to us.

CLOWN: Wait, I can make balloon animals. *(Pulls out a blown-up balloon and quickly tries to make it into a balloon animal.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(Annoyed.)* Hey!

*(Clown gives up.)*

ANNOUNCER: Goodbye, Clowny.

*(Clown exits.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Before we begin, we ask you to take a moment and practice your applause. *(Bewildered, Audience Members 1-8 look at each other, unsure what to do.)* Oh, come on. You know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: Boo! Boo!

*(A few other Audience Members start to "boo" and then the rest smile and join in, thinking they've solved it.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members 1-8.)* No, no! Listen, you dolts! Applause! *(Condescending.)* Aaapplaussee. Give us some applause, you know, with your hands?

*(Still baffled, Audience Members 1-8 stop, shrug, and look to one another for the answer. Audience Member 3 gets an idea and whispers something to Audience Member 4, who is sitting beside him. Audience Member 4 motions to the other Audience Members to sit down. Audience Members 1-8 sit down. Audience Member 3 stands and starts the wave. Audience Members 1-8 do the wave three or four times, complete with "whoooo" sounds. Once done, Audience Members 1-8 stop, smile, and look at the Announcer for approval.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* I've had smarter slushies.

*(Audience Members 1-8 shake their heads and sit down.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To audience.)* Where were we? *(Remembers.)* Oh, right! The management of this theater asks that during the performance, you refrain from using air horns— *(Audience Members 5, 6 stand and blow air horns.)* And, please, do not engage in protests with large protest signs—

*(Audience Members 7, 8 wave large protest signs. One protest sign reads "Beans are the best!" The other protest sign reads, "Ban the beans!")*

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AUDIENCE MEMBER 7: (*Waving sign.*) Beans are the best!  
Beans are the best!

AUDIENCE MEMBER 8: (*Waving sign, facing off against  
Audience Member 7.*) Ban the beans! Ban the beans!

ANNOUNCER: (*To audience.*) And we also ask that during  
the performance, you don't play Jenga.

(*Audience Member 1 presents a Jenga tower and Audience Member  
2 pulls out a piece and makes the tower tumble.*)

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: Jenga!

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**

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"TONIGHT WE'RE  
SEEING SHAKESPEARE  
IN POTATO SACKS  
AND BOWLER HATS."

—SILKY



## SATURDAY NIGHT STAGE

(AT RISE: Crockmorton High School, near the end of a performance of "Romeo and Juliet." At CS is a small empty playing space that's either a small platform or is defined by lighting. On each side is a collection of chairs that resemble the chairs in your theater or auditorium. In front of the seats, there is a small table where Silky and Barrett sit. Lights up on Silky and Barrett, who are sitting at a small table on one side of the small stage/playing space. [Note: Lights are down on the stage/playing space.] Silky and Barrett speak into sizeable microphones or into headsets. )

SILKY: (To audience.) Annnndddd we are back from our break and ready to give our audience the exciting finish to this evening's performance of "Romeo and Juliet." Welcome to "Saturday Night Stage." We're coming to you live from the cafeteria-slash-utility room at [Crockmorton High School]. I am Simon "Silky" Cranston, and, as always, I'm joined by my partner at the broadcast table, Barret "Two Bows" Braxton. Barrett is the wise theatrical Yoda of this broadcast team as he has been a two-time understudy for the role of Biff Loman in the [Scranton Dinner Theater's] "Death of a Salesman." [Or insert name school.] [Or insert name of local theater.]

BARRETT: Hey-ho, Silk.

SILKY: (To audience.) Like I always say, nothing beats a night at the theater unless I'm getting one of my bi-monthly, doctor-mandated colonoscopies.

BARRETT: Theater rules, buddy, but you gotta keep the intestines running on time.

SILKY: Right you are, Bar. (To audience.) Let's get back to the matter at hand, which is the classic tale of two star-crossed lovers delivered with the theatrical magic only [Thespian Troupe 458 of Crockmorton High] can deliver. [Or insert another name and school.]

BARRETT: (*Out of the blue.*) Boy, I hate magicians, Silky.

SILKY: (*Confused.*) Is that right?

BARRETT: One of those guys stole a quarter out of my ear in elementary school and never gave it back to me.

(*Pause. Silky stares at Barrett.*)

SILKY: All righty. (*To audience.*) We can report it's been a special night here as these plucky patrons of the arts take on the timeless tragedy of love, loss, and codpieces. It's been something to see [Crockmorton High's] cafeteria-slash-utility room converted into the Bard's faraway kingdom of Verona.

BARRETT: (*To audience.*) I can still smell the chicken strips...

(*Lights up on playing area. Wearing a potato sack and bowler hat, Actor 1 is standing CS.*)

SILKY: (*To audience.*) One thing you can always count on with [Crockmorton High], also known as ["The Fightin' De Niros,"] are the costumes. [Crockmorton] always brings a little somethin'-somethin' to the costume game. [*Or insert another school and nickname.*]

BARRETT: They're wearing potato sacks and bowler hats.

SILKY: That's right, Barrett. (*To audience.*) Tonight, we're seeing Shakespeare in potato sacks and bowler hats.

(*Wearing a potato sack and bowler hat, Actor 2 enters and faces off against Actor 1.*)

BARRETT: For the life of me, Silky, I don't know why they made that costume choice.

SILKY: (*To audience.*) It's a mystery wrapped in a potato sack and adorned with a bowler hat. (*Chuckles. To audience.*) In any case, the theatrical action has been hot and heavy here

from the get-go. The do-you-bite-your-thumb-at-me-sir scene was electric with tension.

*(Actor 1 bites her thumb.)*

ACTOR 1: Owwww!

SILKY: *(To audience.)* That scene, unfortunately, was cut short when one of the [Crockmorton High] actors bit her thumb so hard she had to be rushed to the hospital.

*(Holding her bleeding thumb, Actor 1 is quickly escorted off by Actor 2. [Note: Fake blood is optional.]*

BARRETT: Method Acting claims another victim, Silk.

SILKY: Right you are, partner.

BARRETT: When will this senseless maiming of our acting youth end?!

SILKY: I don't have an answer—

BARRETT: Darn it, I don't mean to get on my "high boxhorse," here, but I hope the powers that be—and by that I mean specifically President Meryl Streep—are paying attention. This can't continue.

SILKY: Barrett, Meryl Streep is not the president.

BARRETT: I beg to differ with you there, Silk.

*(Pause. Silky stares blankly at Barrett.)*

SILKY: *(To audience.)* Down an actor and saddled with costumes that look like they were designed by a demented Dr. Seuss, the [Crockmorton High] troupe said "nay" to the naysayers and powered ahead with their "Romeo and Juliet."

BARRETT: "Nay." Good one, Silk! Oh, yeah. Tell 'em about the balcony scene.

*(Romeo and Juliet enter. Romeo gets on his knees.)*

JULIET: *(Craning her neck up so she can't see Romeo.)*  
"Wherefore art thou Romeo?"

SILKY: *(To audience.)* In a highly unorthodox move, the balcony scene did not, in fact, take place on a balcony, but instead, Romeo played the entire scene on his knees.

BARRETT: That was different, but what I'm talking about—

SILKY: Oh, you mean when the scene devolved into a game of Marco Polo?

*(Juliet closes her eyes and extends her arms. Romeo tries to avoid her.)*

JULIET: *(Calls.)* Romeo?!

ROMEO: *(Calls.)* Polo!

JULIET: *(Calls.)* Romeo?!

ROMEO: *(Calls.)* Polo!

*(Lights down on Romeo and Juliet.)*

BARRETT: *(To Silky.)* No, I mean, it seems like Romeo and Juliet are really in love. Somebody needs to warn them that, like, their parents hate each other.

*(Pause. Silky stares at Barrett.)*

SILKY: That's, of course, the plot of—

BARRETT: Man, I'm freakin' hungry! I sure could use a couple of those chicken strips, Silk.

SILKY: Barrett, being our resident poobah in this area, what would you say about the acting we've seen up to this point?

BARRETT: You sure you're not hidin' a chicken strip in your shoe?

SILKY: Very sure.

BARRETT: Gotta tell ya, Silk, I've been quite impressed with these [Crockmorton] thespians.

SILKY: Home of ["The Fightin' De Niros"]!

BARRETT: The reason why I say that is that it appears that each actor knows what part they're playing.

*(Silky stares at Barrett and then pulls a chicken strip out of his shirt pocket.)*

BARRETT: Uh, Silk, is that a chicken strip?

*(Silky smiles and starts to eat the chicken strip.)*

BARRETT: Anyway, one time in college, I was in "A Streetcar Named Desire." I played the whole show thinking I was Stanley, when, in fact, I was an usher. I didn't even have a part!

SILKY: I could see that...

BARRETT: Boy, did I have egg on my face. Eggs! That sounds good, doesn't it?

SILKY: *(To audience.)* Well, it appears we're caught up and ready to pick up the action here in "Romeo and Juliet."

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**

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"HAVE YOU BEEN ON STAGE  
AND HEARD SOMEBODY OPENING  
A TINY PIECE OF HARD CANDY?"

—USHER I

## USHERED

(AT RISE: Theatre lobby, before a performance of "The Three Little Pigs." An empty space either in front of the curtain or a bare stage will suffice. Lights up on Usher 1, who is wearing all-black clothing with a riot-type helmet and a flak jacket. Usher 1 is alone, practicing karate chops or other aggressive maneuvers to stop an invisible foe. Usher 2 rushes on, wearing all-black clothing and the a helmet and flak jacket. [Note: Make sure the helmets do not obstruct the actors' faces.]

USHER 2: (To Usher 1.) Sorry, sorry, sorry!

USHER 1: You're cutting it close! They're filing in any minute.

USHER 2: (Adjusting helmet.) Okay, uh, do we really need all this equipment?

USHER 1: Can't believe they stuck me with the rook, the newbie. What's your name?

USHER 2: I'm Sh—

USHER 1: No, don't tell me. You won't last. They never do.

USHER 2: (Enthusiastically.) I'm gonna last! I've done the training. I'm prepared for whatever they throw at me!

USHER 1: (Doubtful.) Uh-huh. Sure.

USHER 2: (Worried.) Uh, what are they gonna throw at me?

USHER 1: You ever have a nightmare?

USHER 2: Oh, yeah. There was one where I showed up late at my birthday party on an airport runway, holding a bunch of unripe bananas, wearing a onesie and—

USHER 1: You're annoying me already, rook.

USHER 2: But I don't understand any of this. All that we're doing is—

USHER 1: All we're doing is what?

USHER 2: We're just making sure...I mean, it's only—

USHER 1: Are you questioning the mission? Listen, newb, don't you dare question the mission.

USHER 2: Well, it is just a performance of "The Three Little Pigs" ...in a cafeteria.

USHER 1: Oh, I am so sorry we don't have a Broadway performance of ["Wicked"] for you to usher, rookie. I've been an usher for several equity tours, and I've seen with my own eyes my partners go down. You don't forget a thing like that. *[Or insert another Broadway show.]*

USHER 2: You don't mean...so you mean they...died?

USHER 1: *(Gravely.)* No. They got paper cuts from the programs.

*(Audience Member 1 enters and approaches Usher 1, 2. She is holding a cell phone.)*

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: *(To Usher 1.)* Excuse me. Here's my ticket.

*(Audience Member 1 holds out her ticket to Usher 1.)*

USHER 1: Uh-huh.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: Aren't you going to take my ticket?

USHER 1: No admittance. You're in possession of contraband.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: What does that mean?

USHER 1: You have a cellular-phonic device in your possession. You will not gain admittance with that device. Not on my watch.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: Oh. Sure. Of course. I'll just put it on vibrate.

USHER 1: Vibrate?! This is a theatrical performance, not some prison rodeo! Be gone!

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: But...but....

*(Usher 1 points in the direction of the exit. Audience Member 1 slinks off. Usher 1 turns to Usher 2.)*



USHER 2: *(To Usher 1, impressed.)* That was...it was...incredible!

*(Wearing a sizeable hat, Old Woman enters with a walker and approaches Usher 1.)*

USHER 1: *(To Usher 2, nods toward Old Woman.)* You thought so? Let's see ya in action, rookie.

OLD WOMAN: *(To Usher 2.)* Hello. My granddaughter is performing in this play.

USHER 1: *(Scoffs.)* Likely story.

OLD WOMAN: She's such a cutie patootie in her costume. I'm so looking forward to this!

*(Old Woman passes Usher 2.)*

USHER 1: *(Shouts.)* Hold on!

USHER 2: *(To Old Woman.)* Yeah, that's right. Hold on, uh, I need to see your ticket.

OLD WOMAN: My goodness, how silly of me! I almost forgot. I have it right here.

*(Old Woman fishes around in the small bag tied to the front of her walker.)*

USHER 2: Oh, that's okay. Take your time.

*(Disappointed, Usher 1 shakes his head at Usher 2.)*

USHER 1: Cough it up, Granny! We don't got all day!

OLD WOMAN: Here it is.

*(Old Woman holds out her ticket to Usher 1.)*

USHER 1: I'm not taking your ticket. *(Indicating Usher 2.)* That's his job.

*(Old Woman turns to Usher 2 and holds out her ticket.)*

USHER 2: *(Looking at the ticket.)* Looks legit.

USHER 1: Whatever. I got a nose for trouble, and this is smellin' like a neglected truck stop bathroom.

USHER 2: I was thinking the same thing.

USHER 1: *(To Old Lady.)* Hey, Dentures, you wouldn't happen to be in possession of a cell phone, would ya?

*(Usher 1 and Usher 2 are standing on either side of the Old Woman.)*

OLD WOMAN: Heavens, no! I don't even own a cell phone.

USHER 1: Do you mind if we search your person, just t' be, ya know, sure?

OLD WOMAN: I don't see why that's necessary. I would like to go in and sit down now. I'm sure the play is about to begin.

USHER 1: *(To Usher 2.)* Here we go. They're always complaining that the show is about to start or they're having a stroke.

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR AUDIENCE

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"AFTER MUCH BAD SHAKESPEARE  
AND MUCH APPLAUSE..."

—STAGE MANAGER

## BOO ME!

*(AT RISE: An empty stage. Brief pause. Audience Members file somewhat robotically to their seats. Pause. Audience Members lift up their programs at the same time and then put them back down at the same time. Audience Members sit in complete silence with their hands in their laps and show little to no expression.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members.)* Welcome to “Romeo and Juliet.” Before we begin our show, we’d like to make a few announcements.

*(Loud applause from Audience Members. Applause goes on for a moment or two longer than necessary.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members.)* At this time, we ask everyone to please turn off your cell phones.

*(Audience Members lift up their cell phones and turn them off.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members.)* Oh. Uh. Thank you.

*(Loud, sustained applause from Audience Members.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members.)* And we ask you to please refrain from any flash —

*(Applause from Audience Members.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members, trying to speak over the applause.)* Flash.

*(Applause from Audience Members continues.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members, trying to speak over the applause, louder.)* I said... *(Shouts.)* ...flash!

*(Audience Members' applause fades and then stops.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members, continuing very rapidly.)*  
...photography and no food or drinks inside the theater  
annnnnnnd...there will be 15-minute intermission.

*(Audience Members do not applaud.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(To Audience Members.)* Okay. Good.  
Um...that's it. That's all the announcements. Enjoy the  
show.

*(Audience Members give the Announcer a standing ovation. Lights dim on the Audience Members. Audience Members immediately stop applauding and sit. Slight pause. Lights up on the playing space. A Shakespearean Actor, dressed in a Renaissance costume, enters.)*

SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR: *(To Audience Members.)*

"Two households, both alike in dignity,

In fair Verona, where—" *(Can't remember next line.)*

"Where, ah, was...rats..." *(Slight pause.)* No.

"Where we lay our scene—" Yeah, that's it! "Where we lay  
our scene—"

*(Audience Members immediately stand and applaud. Shakespearean Actor smiles and gives a thumbs-up to Audience Members. Audience Members and Shakespearean Actor freeze. A Stage Manager, wearing a headset, walks on, and holds up a sign that reads, "After much bad Shakespeare and much applause...")*

STAGE MANAGER: After much bad Shakespeare and much  
applause...

*(Audience Members unfreeze and immediately begin to applaud. Stage Manager looks at the Audience Members in disbelief and shakes her head. Stage Manager snaps her fingers and the Shakespearean Actor unfreezes.)*

STAGE MANAGER: *(To Shakespearean Actor.)* Time to get off the stage, you big piece of ham. *(Shakespearean Actor smiles.)*  
*(Looking up or out toward the booth.)* Fire cue 10!

*(Stage Manager and Shakespearean Actor rush off in different directions. Audience Members sit. Lights dim. Juliet enters. Light up on Juliet, who is in the middle of her long monologue. [Note: After Juliet's monologue, Juliet is convinced that she has completely botched her monologue. While she does blow a line, the rest of her performance should appear solid. Juliet and Audience Members overreact in different ways to the performance.]*

JULIET: *(From Act III, scene 2.)*

"Hood my unmann'd blood, bating in my cheeks,  
With thy black mantle, till strange love grow bold,  
Think true love acted simple modesty.  
Come, night, come, Romeo, come, thou day in night,  
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night,  
Whiter than new snow upon a raven's back.  
Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-brow'd night..."  
*(Can't remember the rest of her lines.)*

"Come gentle—. Come...snow... *(For lack of anything else to do, she paces.)* Arrggghhh! *(Remembers.)* Oh!

"Give me my Romeo, and, when he shall die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night,  
And pay no worship to the garish sun.  
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
But not possess'd it, and though I am sold,  
Not yet enjoy'd. So tedious is this day

As is the night before some festival  
To an impatient child that hath new robes  
And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,  
And she brings news; and every tongue that speaks  
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence."

*(Nurse enters, carrying cords. Nurse appears almost frozen stiff with stage fright. [Note: Though Nurse knows her lines, she delivers them in an exceptionally wooden way with her volume wavering between shouting and whispering for no discernible reason.]*

JULIET: *(Recites.)*

"Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the cords  
That Romeo bid thee fetch?"

NURSE: *(Recites.)* "Ay, AY, the cords!"

*(Nurse violently throws down the cords and wrings her hands in an odd fashion.)*

JULIET: "Ay me! what news? Why dost thou wring thy  
hands?"

NURSE: "Ah, weraday, he's dead, HE'S dead, he's dead!  
We are undone, LADY, we ARE undone!

Alack the day, he's gone, he's kill'd, he's DEEEAAAAD!"

JULIET: *(Reacting to Nurse.)* Okay. Uh.

"Can heaven be so envious?"

NURSE: *(Rapidly.)*

"ROMEO CAN,  
Though heaven cannot. O Romeo, Romeo!  
Who EVER would have thought it? Romeo!"

*(Unsure if Nurse is finished, Juliet looks at Nurse.)*

NURSE: *(To Juliet, trying but failing to whisper.)* That's all I'm  
supposed to say. That's it.

JULIET: (*Can't remember her lines.*) Um..."Can heaven—" No, wait—

*(Romeo enters. [Note: Romeo is blissfully ignorant of his lack of skills as an actor. He winks at the audience, smiles most of the time, and is generally having a blast even though he barely knows his lines or when to enter or exit.])*

ROMEO: Hey...what's up? Nurse. Juliet. Hey.

JULIET: Romeo?! What are you doing here? The Nurse just told myself that thou was dead. Dead.

ROMEO: Aww, really? Don't be ridic, Juliet.

JULIET: What did thou say?

ROMEO: Juliet, I said you're being ridic.

JULIET: (*Explodes.*) "Ridic"?! "Ridic"?! Bobby, are you kidding me? Is that Shakespeare?!

ROMEO: Uh, yeah, sorry. Thouest being ridic, Juliet.

NURSE: (*To Juliet.*) Are we done? Let's just end the scene.

JULIET: Fine, yes, let's all goest sort this out in...another part of Verona...

*(Romeo, Nurse, and Juliet turn to exit. As they do, Audience Members leap to their feet and start to applaud. Juliet, incensed, turns back and goes CS.)*

JULIET: (*To Audience Members.*) Are you kidding?! Stop! Seriously! (*Shouts.*) Stooooopppp!

*(Audience Members stop applauding. Lights change. Stage Manager rushes on.)*

STAGE MANAGER: (*To Juliet.*) Amanda? What are you doing?

*(Romeo and Nurse approach to see what is going on.)*



JULIET: *(To Stage Manager.)* Casey, we can't let this go on.

NURSE: *(To Stage Manager.)* Are we done? Tell me we're done. My stomach hurts. I don't want to act anymore.

STAGE MANAGER: Of course, it has to go on. It's a play.

JULIET: *(To Audience Members.)* I'm sorry, but how can you all give a standing ovation to that...garbage? *(Silence.)* Yes, I'm talking to you all out there. Tell me because it makes no sense to me.

MOM: *(Stepping forward from the audience.)* Well, Amanda –

JULIET: Mother, you're not allowed to answer.

MOM: You're always so wound up, Amanda. It was delightful.

JULIET: It was not! We blew the lines! Romeo came in at the wrong time!

ROMEO: *(To Audience Members, smiling.)* Aww, man, it's all good.

JULIET: No, it's not, you doofus! It certainly didn't deserve a standing ovation. *(Points to Jasper, an Audience Member.)* You! Didn't you think it was bad?

MOM: Oh, Amanda, that's your cousin, Jasper. I forgot to tell you he was coming to see the show.

JASPER: *(To Juliet, calls.)* Hey, Cuz!

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**