

GHOST LIGHT V: THE VOICE OF GLENN

By Greg Cummings

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GHOST LIGHT V: THE VOICE OF GLENN

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: Ghost Light V! Seventeen more very short plays about high school theatre life. After a show, two friends struggle over how to tell their best friend that her performance was terrible. Between productions, a very intense actress decompresses by turning into an actual zombie. And, after studying with a New Age acting teacher at a pop-up store in the mall an actress learns to audition for a production of “Cats” by actually becoming a cat! Plus: fourteen more comedies and dramas for both beginning and advanced acting students. Perfect for both scene study and performance.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5-32 females, 3-23 males)

CAST NOTE: *All onstage characters are in their teens. Many roles can be cast as gender flexible.*

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

VIOLET (f)

LOGAN (m)

CAL (m)

LEAH (f)

RUBY (f)

NOLAN (m)

CLAIRE (f)

STRIKE THREE!

ROSIE (f)

SAM (m)

MOTHER GOOSE IS COOKED!

ELENA (f)
ALICE (f)
BETTY (f)
HENRY (m)
EMILY (f)
SASHA (f)

MEMORIES

HARPER (f)
ELEANOR (f)
LIZ (f)

ZOMBIE BARD

JAY (m)
OWEN (m)
MADISON (f)

CORPSING

JACKSON (m)
MATEO (m)
SHELLY (f)

WAIT! IS THAT A TRUE APOTHECARY?

WESLEY (m)
AVERY (f)
LUCAS (m)

BITTEN BY THE DIRECTING BUG

GRACIE (f)
WYATT (m)
NAOMI (f)

THE HECKLING

NOAH (m)
AVA (f)

CGI JULIET

TED (m)

JACK (m)

CHLOE (f)

FOOTBALL AND THE BARD

PENELOPE (f)

BENNETT (m)

RILEY (f)

CINDERELLA'S GLASS SNEAKER

JENN (f)

GARY (m)

LILLY (f)

BOY MEETS GIRL MEETS BOY

TEDDI (f)

BRADLEY (m)

YOU WERE... AMAZING!

CHARLIE (m)

JAMIE (f)

ALEX (f)

YVETTE DANCES POETRY

ODELIA (f)

YVETTE (f)

DEVIN (m)

TO BE SEEN

IRENE (f)

RUTH (f)

THE VOICE OF GLENN

BLAKE (m)

LUNA (f)

GLENN (m)

VOICE OVER (m)

DEDICATION

Sewickley Academy Performing Arts Students

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: A novice actor realizes the true meaning of “the show must go on.”

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 3 males)

VIOLET (f) No-nonsense Stage Manager. *(23 lines)*
 LOGAN (m) Actor, but not really committed to it. *(21 lines)*
 CAL (m) Committed actor. *(5 lines)*
 LEAH (f) Committed actor. *(5 lines)*
 RUBY (f) Committed actor. *(3 lines)*
 NOLAN (m) Ruby’s helper. *(3 lines)*
 CLAIRE (f) Ruby’s helper. *(3 lines)*

SETTING: A bare stage representing the stage right wings.

TIME: Dress rehearsal of a “lost drawing room comedy” of Oscar Wilde.

AT START: *VIOLET on headset downstage left. LOGAN enters stage right, trying to draw attention to his sniffle. VIOLET doesn’t notice. As LOGAN crosses downstage left...*

LOGAN: Oh, hey, Violet, listen, I’m happy we’re doing this “lost drawing room comedy of Oscar Wilde” play, whatever, but since I don’t really get it, and since this is my first play, and since I don’t know all your “backstage theatrical rules and procedures,” and since this is only dress rehearsal, I’m going home. *(Points to his nose.)* These sniffles are killing me. I’ll probably be OK for the actual show tomorrow, I’ll let you know. *(Turns to exit stage right.)*

VIOLET: Just a minute... Cal has an entrance. *(Calls off stage right.)*
 Cal! You’re on!

CAL, in pain, enters stage right with a sprained wrist and crosses to downstage left.

CAL: Ow.

LOGAN: Hey, Cal, are you OK?

CAL: Yeah, yeah, school nurse said it was just a bad sprain. I know! I can hide my sprained hand in my pocket and gesture with my good hand and nobody will notice!

VIOLET: Good thinking, Cal!

LOGAN: What?

CAL: Yeah! Like a British gesture thing! *(Puts his sprained hand in his pocket.)* Ow!

VIOLET: There's your cue, Cal!

LOGAN: His cue? He can't go on! He's in pain!

CAL: No, no! "The show must go on!"

VIOLET: That's the spirit, Cal!

LOGAN: What?

VIOLET: *(To CAL.)* Go!

CAL: *(Pastes a smile on his face, fakes an English accent, and addresses another character "onstage"—off downstage left.)* Lady Danforth! Look! It is I! I have just now arrived! From the Continent! Ha ha ha! *(CAL exits downstage left.)*

LOGAN: *(A little embarrassed.)* Yeah, well, as I was saying... since it's only dress rehearsal tonight, and these sniffles of mine are a real pain, I figured I could...

VIOLET: Be right with you, Logan. Leah has an entrance. *(Calls offstage right.)* Leah! You're on!

LEAH enters limping. She uses a crutch.

LEAH: Ow!

LOGAN: Whoa! Leah, what happened to you?

LEAH: Maybe a broken tibia, not really sure, school nurse said I should get it x-rayed or something, but it can wait. I know! I'll just pretend my character's foot fell asleep.

VIOLET: Good thinking, Leah!

LOGAN: What?

LEAH: *(Hands her crutch to VIOLET, then steps on the hurt leg.)* Ow!

VIOLET: There's your cue, Leah.

LOGAN: Her cue? She can't go on! She can't walk!

LEAH: No, no! "The show must go on!"

VIOLET: That's the spirit, Leah!

LOGAN: What?

VIOLET: *(To LEAH.)* Go!

LEAH: *(Pastes a smile on her face, fakes an English accent, and addresses another character "onstage"—off downstage left.)* Lady Danforth! Look! It is I! I have just now arrived! From the Continent! Ha ha ha! *(LEAH exits, limping, downstage left.)*

LOGAN: *(A little more embarrassed.)* So, listen, Violet, about my sniffles....

VIOLET: One sec., Logan. Ruby has an entrance. *(Calls off downstage right.)* Ruby! You're on!

NOLAN and CLAIRE enter downstage right holding a motionless RUBY by the shoulders and drag her from stage right to stage left.

LOGAN: You've got to be kidding me!

NOLAN: They called the ambulance, it'll be here in twenty minutes.

VIOLET: Good!

LOGAN: Good? An ambulance? Calling an ambulance is good?

CLAIRE: In the meantime, right before Ruby passed out, she told us to do three things:

NOLAN: Number one: Drag her here.

VIOLET: Check.

CLAIRE: Number two: slap her awake.

NOLAN and CLAIRE gently slap RUBY awake.

RUBY: *(Awakening with a groan.)* Wha...?!

VIOLET: Check! And number three?

NOLAN and CLAIRE: Number three? Whisper this in her ears *(THEY whisper in her ears.)* The show must what? The show must....

RUBY: *(With a jolt.)* The show must go on!

VIOLET: That's the spirit!

LOGAN: What?

VIOLET: *(To RUBY.)* Good! There's your cue!

LOGAN: Her cue? She can't go on! She's barely alive!

VIOLET: *(To RUBY.)* Go!

RUBY: *(Pastes a smile on her face, fakes an English accent and addresses another character "onstage"—off downstage left.)* Lady Danforth! Look! It is !! I have just now arrived! From the Continent! Ha ha ha! *(Whispers to NOLAN and CLAIRE.)* Now!

NOLAN and CLAIRE gently shove RUBY offstage left, slap high five then exit downstage right.

VIOLET: *(Finally paying attention.)* Now, Logan, what were you saying?

LOGAN: *(Sighs to himself.)* Nothing.

VIOLET: What?

LOGAN: *(To himself, resigned.)* The show must go on.

VIOLET: Louder.

LOGAN: *(A bit louder.)* The show must go on.

VIOLET: One more time.

LOGAN: I said, "The show must go on," OK?! "The show must go on!"

VIOLET: That's the spirit! Good! There's your cue! Go!

LOGAN: *(Pastes a smile on his face, fakes an English accent and addresses another character "onstage"—off downstage left.)* Lady Danforth! *(Sniffles, for VIOLET'S benefit.)* Look! It is !! *(Muttering to himself.)* Sniffles are really no laughing matter, you know.

VIOLET: What was that?

LOGAN: *(Mutters.)* Nothing.

LOGAN pastes his smile on his face and exits downstage left. Blackout.

END OF PLAY

STRIKE THREE!

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: A Diva learns that there are consequences for skipping strike after a play.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male)

ROSIE (f).....Diva. (16 lines)

SAM (m).....Techie. Terse. (14 lines)

SETTING: A bare stage.

TIME: Monday afternoon, after the weekend of the big mainstage show.



AT START: ROSIE enters stage left, wearing a scarf and carrying a theatrical tote bag, crosses downstage center, closes her eyes and basks.

ROSIE: Ahhh.

SAMUEL enters from the auditorium. He wears a tool belt, carries a push broom, and wears a “techie” T-shirt.

SAM: Rosie.

ROSIE: Samuel? Is that you? Of course, it is! Glorious, glorious Samuel! “Techie to the Stars” is what I call you! I’d recognize you anywhere! What am I doing here? Well, it’s a little something I am compelled to do! Drawn to do, if you will! Yes, Samuel, you see, every Monday afternoon after a show closes you can find me here, in this now-empty theatre! And do you know why, Samuel? I’ll tell you why! To hear what I call, “memories of applause.” The rounds and rounds and rounds of applause, well-earned applause, as you know, that I received on Saturday night—that applause still lingers here, in this old auditorium! And I can still hear that applause,

Samuel! I can still feel it! The applause is still in my soul! And...
(Closes her eyes.) the applause is fading, fading... gone. (Opens her eyes.) Ah, well. Ta ta, Samuel! Till the next theatrical endeavor!
(Turns to exit.)

SAM: Rosie.

ROSIE: (Stops, turns to him.) I am so sorry! Our director must have sent you here to me now for a reason!

SAM: Right.

ROSIE: And I bet I know what that reason is! To remind me that auditions for the musical are next week! Well, good job, Samuel, but be sure and tell our intrepid director to have no fear! His star, as always, will be more than prepared to audition! (Turns to exit.) Ciao, Samuel!

SAM: No.

ROSIE: (Stops, turns to him.) No?

SAM: No.

ROSIE: Perhaps I misheard you. Did you say "no?" To me?

SAM: Yeah. You skipped strike.

ROSIE: I "skipped strike?"

SAM: Yeah. We struck the set. Saturday night. After the show.

ROSIE: I know what strike is! What's your point, "Sammy?!"

SAM: The point is, you skipped strike.

ROSIE: Of course I skipped strike! After a show, I need my beauty sleep!

SAM: The director says you always skip strike.

ROSIE: Well, he's right.

SAM: After every show.

ROSIE: Yes. After every show, I need my beauty sleep! What are you trying to say??

SAM: The director said you have to help tech every day after school this week.

ROSIE: And if I don't?

SAM: You can't audition for the musical.

ROSIE: You're kidding me!

SAM holds the broom to her.

ROSIE: What's that for?

SAM: The loading dock needs another sweep.

ROSIE: The “loading dock needs another sweep?” This is so unfair!

SAM: Your choice. *(He places the broom on the floor and exits.)*

ROSIE crosses to the broom, looks down at it, and calls after him.

ROSIE: Fine! Did you hear me? I said, “Fine!” *(Looks around.)* Where is this “loading dock,” anyway? *(To herself.)* What is a loading dock? *(Looks at the broom, then to herself.)* This broom doesn’t even match my outfit. *(Calling after SAM.)* Samuel? Samuel? Do you have any brooms in puce? Samuel?

Blackout.

END OF PLAY

MOTHER GOOSE IS COOKED!

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: A production of “Mother Goose’s Nursery Rhymes” is hijacked by an odd costumer.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 1 male)

ELENA (f) Frightened. Responsible. (17 lines)
 ALICE (f) Confused, then frightened. (17 lines)
 BETTY (f) Frightened actress. (Non-speaking)
 HENRY (m) Frightened actor. (Non-speaking)
 EMILY (f) Frightened actor. (Non-speaking)
 SASHA (f) Frightening “Student Director.” (Non-speaking)

SETTING: A bare stage

TIME: Minutes before a production of “Mother Goose’s Nursery Rhymes.”

AT START: ELENA paces nervously.

ALICE: (From auditorium.) Elena! Elena!

ALICE, gleeful, enters from auditorium.

ALICE: OK, final check! The buses from the local elementary schools are arriving. Mr. Swirbs will collect them all in the lobby and bring them all into the theatre at the same time. The little kids will love this!

ELENA: I hope so...

ALICE: So! Is the cast of “Mother Goose’s Nursery Rhymes” ready? (Glancing backstage.) I don’t see them.

ELENA: They’re back there. You just can’t see them.

ALICE: Why?

ELENA: Because... they're... in costume...

ALICE: (*Squinting backstage.*) But the costumes are so brightly colored they almost glow in the dark!

ELENA: Not the new costumes.

ALICE: The new costumes? Who gave them new costumes?

ELENA: Olivia.

ALICE: Olivia? The whiz kid from AP Psych?

ELENA: And Mr. Swirbs's Student Director!

ALICE: Elena! Calm down! What happened?

ELENA: About twenty minutes ago she just showed up and, and, she revamped the entire production!

ALICE: What do you mean, she revamped the entire production?

ELENA: I mean, she revamped the entire production! Costumes, props, music, choreography! She changed them all! Alice, Olivia transformed "Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes" into a deep, dark showcase of Jungian archetypes!

ALICE: "Jungian archetypes?" For a bus-in audience of fourth graders?! That's nuts!

ELENA: I know!

ALICE: What did Mr. Swirbs say?

ELENA: Mr. Swirbs doesn't know!

ALICE: And the cast?

ELENA: The cast is scared to death of her!

ALICE: And you?

ELENA: Have you *met* Olivia?!

ALICE: Right. Olivia scares everybody.

There is a sound from the rear of the auditorium. ALICE and ELENA regard it.

ELENA: It's Mr. Swirbs!

ALICE: And two hundred elementary school students, with their teachers. (*Incredibly nervous but trying to laugh it off.*) Well, come on, I guess we should go sit with Mr. Swirbs.

ELENA: I can't.

ALICE: Why?

ELENA: Olivia has me on percussion.

ALICE: There's percussion for Mother Goose?

ELENA: There is now. Goodbye, Alice! Remember me!

ELENA hugs ALICE tightly then pushes her away. ALICE, scared, enters into the auditorium. ELENA, scared, exits stage left. Offstage left, one loud percussion note. ELENA enters stage left, trying to be cheery and not freaked out, reads from a script, and addresses the audience.

ELENA: Hey, fourth graders! Welcome to our school! And welcome to our production of “Mother Goose’s Nursery Rhymes,” which we made just for you! Our first rhyme will be “Hey, Diddle Diddle!” Do you know it? If you do, come on, and say it with us!

ELENA exits stage left. Pause. Incredibly loud percussion begins off stage left and continues. BETTY, EMILY, SASHA, and HENRY enter from all about the stage. EACH is dressed in a dark plastic garbage bag with holes cut for their heads and arms. EACH has a sign taped to their bag: “Belonging” (BETTY), “Love” (EMILY), “Death” (SASHA), and “Fear” (HENRY). ALL gyrate maniacally to center stage, stop and scream the rhyme in unison, in a theatrical display meant to shock and disturb. (Think Christopher Walken stubs his toe.)

ALL: Hey! Diddle! Diddle!
The cat! And the fiddle!
The cow! Jumped over! The moon!
The little dog laughed!
To see such sport!
And the dish ran away! With! The! Spoon!
The Spooooooooooooooooon! (*THEY writhe.*)
The Spooooooooooooooooon!

Blackout.

END OF PLAY

MEMORIES

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: After studying with a New Age acting teacher at a pop-up store in the mall, an actress auditions for a production of “Cats” by actually becoming a cat!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 females)

HARPER (f).....Confident, snarky veteran actress. (24 lines)

ELEANOR (f).....An actress who has learned to transform herself. (11 lines)

LIZ (f).....Eleanor’s friend/manager. (25 lines)

SETTING: A bare stage.

TIME: The present.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE: This play asks that an actress briefly hold an actual cat. If this isn’t possible the actress may briefly hold a cat doll or a cat puppet and act like it’s an actual cat.



AT START: HARPER enters downstage left. She crosses imperiously to downstage center and surveys the auditorium. She warms up physically, mentally, and emotionally. Unnoticed, LIZ, wearing flowing robes, enters upstage left. ELEANOR accompanies LIZ. ELEANOR sits cross-legged upstage left and closes her eyes. HARPER, all warmed up, steps forward and starts to sing “Memory” from “Cats.”

HARPER: (Singing.) Memories, all alone in the—

ELEANOR: (Chants.) Om.

HARPER: Whoa! What the...? Liz? Eleanor?

LIZ: Harper.

HARPER: What are you doing?

LIZ: What are *you* doing?

HARPER: I'm preparing for my "Cats" audition tomorrow!

ELEANOR: Om.

LIZ: So's Eleanor.

HARPER: Excuse me?

ELEANOR: Om

LIZ: Eleanor. She's preparing for her "Cats" audition tomorrow, too.

HARPER: Eleanor? Is auditioning for "Cats?" Ha!

LIZ: Don't be rude, Harper.

HARPER: Liz, please! You know that every year Eleanor says she's going to audition for the musical and every year she chickens out!

LIZ: This year is different.

HARPER: Is it?

LIZ: This year, Eleanor, with my help, found an inspiring acting teacher. More than inspiring, transformative! He changed her art. And her life.

HARPER: Oh, really? Who?

LIZ: Oh, just someone you don't know.

HARPER: Try me. I know everybody.

LIZ: He's someone outside of school.

HARPER: Where?

LIZ: Nearby.

HARPER: "Nearby?" Wait a minute. Are you talking about that guy who opened up that "Acting Studio Kiosk" in the mall, next to Pet Smart?!

LIZ: Lotus.

HARPER: Lotus?

LIZ: Lotus. That's the man's name.

HARPER: His name is "Lotus?"

LIZ: Yes. And Lotus showed Eleanor a way to truly and fully transform herself into any character she chooses.

HARPER: Oh, did he now?

LIZ: Yes, yes he did.

ELEANOR: Om.

HARPER: (*Sarcastically.*) Fine! You know what? After school today I think I'll take a little trip to Pet Smart myself and pay a visit to this "Lotus" guy! I need a good laugh!

LIZ: He's not there anymore.

HARPER: What?

LIZ: Lotus has vanished. He is no longer at the mall. Where did he go? No one really knows. Some say his own finely tuned transformational skills brought him to another, less visible state of being. That he now glides, invisible, among us.

HARPER: (*Mocking.*) And some say that this bozo con man just blew into town, signed up some local suckers for his “new age-y” acting class, then skipped town with all their cash.

ELEANOR: Om.

LIZ: Eleanor says that’s a small price to pay for everything she’s learned.

ELEANOR: Om.

LIZ: And the confidence she’s gained. In her art. And her life.

ELEANOR: Om.

HARPER: Oh my God! Stop “om”-ing!

Suddenly, ELEANOR stands.

HARPER: OK, what’s she doing now?

ELEANOR: Om.

LIZ: Eleanor’s final transformation has begun.

HARPER: Her final transformation into what?

LIZ: Well, she is going to audition for the role of Grizabella. From “Cats.” So...

ELEANOR, slowly wafting, exits stage right.

HARPER: (*Calling offstage right.*) Thank you, Eleanor! For leaving!

LIZ: Oh, Eleanor hasn’t left. She’s just begun her transformation. Sh. Listen.

ELEANOR: (*Softly, offstage right.*) Ommmmmmmeow...

HARPER: (*Squinting offstage right.*) What was that?

LIZ: Wait for it...

ELEANOR: (*Softly, offstage right.*) Meow...

LIZ: That’s it!

HARPER: (*Stunned by what she sees offstage right.*) Oh, my....

LIZ: Yes! And now, you see! To audition for the musical “Cats,” Eleanor has fully transformed herself into a... (*LIZ exits stage right.*)

ELEANOR: *(Offstage right.)* Meow!

LIZ: *(Offstage right.)* Good job, Eleanor!

LIZ enters stage right, holding and petting ELEANOR, who has transformed into an actual cat. (Or cat puppet or stuffed animal.) Awed, HARPER faints. Fade to black.

END OF PLAY

DO NOT COPY

ZOMBIE BARD

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: Between theatrical productions a very intense actress decompresses by turning into an actual zombie.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 2 males)

JAY (m)Actor. Knowledgeable. Best friend to Owen and Madison. *(30 lines)*
 OWEN (m).....Jay's best friend. Theatre novice. *(30 lines)*
 MADISON (f).....Intense Shakespearean actress. *(1 line)*

SETTING: A bare stage.

TIME: Minutes after a Shakespeare production.

AT START: OWEN enters stage right and JAY enters stage left.

OWEN: Jay!

JAY: Owen!

OWEN: Wow!

JAY: So, was I right?!

OWEN: You, my friend, were right! What a show! I knew you were going to a performing arts high school now, but wow! That was, by far, and I can say this unequivocally, that was the very best high school Shakespeare production I have ever seen!

JAY: Owen, was that the only Shakespeare production you've ever seen?

OWEN: Very funny! Answer: yes! But still!

JAY: And what about my best friend, Madison? Incredible?

OWEN: Madison? Incredible? Oh my God! Again, answer: yes! But she was so much more than incredible! She was... stupendous! I'm still reeling!

JAY: Me, too! From what I've heard, Madison is, by far, the best Shakespearean actress in the school.

OWEN: I believe it! You know, she just might be the best Shakespearean actress in any school anywhere, ever!

JAY: (*Looking around.*) Wait.

OWEN: But boy, she must be wiped out! She was onstage for over two hours! The physical, emotional, and mental strain that must have put on her!

JAY: (*Looking around.*) Owen?

OWEN: I don't get it! How does anyone even start to recover from such an ordeal!?

JAY: Owen!

OWEN: What?

JAY: Where is she?

OWEN: Where's who?

JAY: Madison!

OWEN: Oh, I dunno...

JAY: Owen! I told you to watch her!

OWEN: I did watch her!

JAY: Well, then, where is she?

OWEN: Uh. The Green Room! Yeah, the Green Room!

JAY: What?

OWEN: Yeah. I watched her for a while, but she was so tired she just crashed on the Green Room couch.

JAY: And you just let her?

OWEN: What was I supposed to do? She was exhausted! What's the matter with you?

JAY: Owen! Madison gets so drained after a show that she becomes a zombie!

OWEN: Jay! Do you blame her? If I did what she did tonight, I'd be like a zombie, too!

JAY: Not "like" a zombie, Owen, a zombie zombie!

OWEN: A zombie zombie?

JAY: An actual zombie!

OWEN: Your friend Madison becomes an actual zombie? You're nuts!

JAY: Owen! It's her pattern! Madison gets so spent after a show, that if she falls asleep, she becomes an actual zombie! A zombie zombie!

OWEN: (*Scoffing.*) Jay, Jay, Jay. We both know that one can only become an actual zombie if one is first bitten by an actual zombie!

MADISON: (*Offstage right.*) Growl!!!!

BOTH look offstage right and are frightened.

JAY: You tell her.

MADISON, a zombie now, enters and stands, growls at them.

OWEN: Jay? Jay?

JAY: I'm thinking, I'm thinking!

OWEN: Well, think faster!

MADISON starts slowly lurching towards them. OWEN and JAY are frozen in place.

OWEN: Jay, I know zombies can't run, but they can lurch pretty fast!
And right now, I can't seem to move my feet! What do we do?

JAY: I've got it! Shakespeare!

OWEN: Shakespeare?

JAY: Shakespeare! I heard that this happened to her once before! And that quoting Shakespeare calmed her down!

OWEN: Well, if quoting Shakespeare calms her down, then quote some Shakespeare!

JAY: I will! I will! Let me think, let me think!

MADISON continues to growl and lurch toward them.

OWEN: Think quicker! Think quicker!

JAY: I've got it! Madison! Listen to me! "To be or not to be. To be or not to be!"

Suddenly, MADISON stops lurching toward them.

OWEN: It worked! It worked! Jay, more Shakespeare!

JAY: "To thine own self be true!" Madison: "To thine own self be true."

MADISON calms down even more. Her growl has now become a sweet gurgle; she smiles, turns, and starts to exit stage right.

JAY: Whew! That was close!

OWEN: Hey, this looks like fun! My turn!

JAY: Owen? You know Shakespeare?

OWEN: Sure, why not? Hey, Madison! "May the force be with you."

JAY: What?

MADISON stops exiting.

JAY: "May the force be with you?"

Suddenly, MADISON growls, springs back into full zombie mode, growls and turns to face them.

OWEN: What just happened?

JAY: "May the force be with you!?" That's not Shakespeare, you idiot!
That's *Star Wars*!

OWEN: Uh oh.

*MADISON growls loudly, and lurches after them as they exit stage left.
Fade to black.*

END OF PLAY

CORPSING

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: Two frenemies from childhood compete to be in a Stage Combat project.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 2 males)

JACKSON (m).....A non-actor, crushing on Shelly. Mateo's childhood pal. *(29 lines)*
MATEO (m).....A non-actor, crushing on Shelly. Jackson's childhood pal. *(29 lines)*
SHELLY (f)A student in a Stage Combat class. *(10 lines)*

SETTING: A bare stage.

TIME: The present.

AT START: JACKSON enters stage left; MATEO enters stage right.

JACKSON: Mateo.

MATEO: Jackson.

JACKSON: What are you doing here?

MATEO: What do you mean, what am I doing here?!

JACKSON: Don't you have some towels to fold for the baseball team?

MATEO: Hey! Being Team Manager still gets me a varsity letter.

Which reminds me: aren't you supposed to be in detention right about now?

JACKSON: Oh, didn't you know? My detention ended yesterday.

MATEO: Did it now? Well, I'm sure you'll break another regulation soon enough, and land right back in detention.

JACKSON: Oh, really?

MATEO: Yeah, really!

JACKSON: Oh, really?

MATEO: Yeah, really!

JACKSON: Stop it! We both know why we're here! The amazing Shelly is holding open auditions tomorrow for her Stage Combat project! And we both came here to practice our auditions.

MATEO: So what are you waiting for? Leave, so I can practice!

JACKSON: No! You leave so I can practice!

MATEO: You leave!

JACKSON: You leave!

MATEO: Stop it! I've got an idea!

JACKSON: What?

MATEO: A death off!

JACKSON: A "death off?"

MATEO: Yeah. Stage combat scenes always end with one combatant dying a fantastic theatrical death, right?

JACKSON: Good stage combat scenes do. Continue.

MATEO: Right. So we both act out a death scene right now.

JACKSON: And whoever has the most fantastic, the most theatrical death scene auditions for Shelly tomorrow?

MATEO: Yeah. A "death off," if you will.

JACKSON: A "death off," huh? I like it. I like it a lot. But who'll be the judge?

MATEO: Not you!

JACKSON: Not you!

SHELLY: *(From the auditorium.)* How about me?

MATEO and JACKSON: *(Softly, to themselves.)* The amazing Shelly...

SHELLY enters from the auditorium. MATEO and JACKSON are entranced.

SHELLY: *(Entering.)* Hi, guys! I'm Shelly!

MATEO and JACKSON: *(Softly, to themselves.)* We know. The Amazing Shelly....

SHELLY: *(On stage.)* Listen, I have so many people signed up to audition for me tomorrow—no surprise, given who I am!—so why don't you two just audition for me right now? It'd save time! And, you know what? I really like the idea of a "death off!" Sounds like fun! I might even use it for tomorrow's auditions!

MATEO and JACKSON: *(Awed.)* OK...

SHELLY: So... *(With a notepad.)* What are your names?

MATEO: *(Awed.)* I'm Mateo...

JACKSON: *(Awed.)* And I'm Jackson...

SHELLY: *(Writing.)* Mateo! And Jackson! Perfect! So, I'll be in the center of the auditorium! You two just start your "death off" scene whenever you're ready! And I'll choose the winner! Exciting!

SHELLY exits into the auditorium. MATEO and JACKSON, still entranced, talk quietly to themselves.

JACKSON: You know, Mateo, we've never actually competed against each other. For anything.

MATEO: We've never let anything come between us.

JACKSON: Or get in the way of our friendship, ever since...

MATEO:ever since kindergarten.

JACKSON: No. Ever since Pre-K!

MATEO: Pre-K. You're right, ever since Pre-K

JACKSON and MATEO: Ever since Pre-K. *(Smile.)* Good times, Pre-K.

SHELLY: *(From the auditorium.)* All right, Mateo and Jackson, I'm ready to see your competing "death off" scenes, whenever you are!

JACKSON: *(Winks to MATEO.)* Famous movie death scene quotes?

MATEO: *(Winks to JACKSON.)* Famous movie death scene quotes!

MATEO, smiling, slowly exits stage left; JACKSON, smiling, slowly exits stage right. Pause.

SHELLY: *(From the auditorium.)* And now, let the great "death off" begin!

Pause.

MATEO and JACKSON: *(Offstage.)* One, two, three! "Say hello to my little friend!"

From offstage, right and left, JACKSON and MATEO make loud machine gun sounds, then enter, "dying."

JACKSON: For Narnia!

MATEO: For Sparta!

JACKSON and MATEO make lightsaber sounds, then continue to die theatrically with much gurgling and thrashing about the stage...

MATEO: The age of Ultron!

JACKSON: "There is only one path to peace... your extinction!"

JACKSON and MATEO make explosion sounds and then continue to die theatrically with much gurgling and thrashing about the stage...

JACKSON: Pirates of the Caribbean!

MATEO: "...dying is the day worth living for!"

JACKSON and MATEO make sword-slashing sounds and then continue to die theatrically with much gurgling and thrashing about the stage...

JACKSON and MATEO: Terminator! (Mimicking Arnold Schwarzenegger.) "I'll be back!"

JACKSON and MATEO make robot dying sounds and then continue to die theatrically with much gurgling and thrashing about the stage. They end motionless, next to each other, on the floor.

SHELLY: (Applauding from the auditorium.) Oh my God! Mateo! Jackson! That was so good!

JACKSON and MATEO burst "back to life" with intense laughter. They stand, laughing.

SHELLY: (In the auditorium.) I can't decide! You know what? I won't decide! I want both of you in my Stage Combat project! You don't even need to audition again! You're in! You're both in!

SHELLY makes her way to the stage. JACKSON and MATEO, having re-kindled their childlike sense of play, however, exit together, theatrically dying, and laughing.

SHELLY: *(On stage alone, looks around.)* Mateo? Jackson? Boys?
Where are you? Boys? Boys?

Blackout.

END OF PLAY

DO NOT COPY

WAIT! IS THAT A TRUE APOTHECARY?

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: After his mom bans him from all social media, a young man develops so much empathy that he believes theatre is real.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 2 males)

WESLEY (m).....An actor. *(11 lines)*

AVERY (f).....An actress. *(9 lines)*

LUCAS (m).....A student whose mom has banned him
from all social media. *(21 lines)*

SETTING: A bare stage.

TIME: The present.

AT START: WESLEY and AVERY enter, each reading a copy of “Romeo and Juliet.” WESLEY also carries a small bottle of water. LUCAS is in the rear of the auditorium and talks quietly to himself. Neither WESLEY nor AVERY hear him, yet.

LUCAS: Hey look, it’s Avery and Wesley. What are they doing here?

AVERY and WESLEY cross to center stage. AVERY puts her script on the floor and lies down.

LUCAS: And why’s Avery taking a nap on the stage in the middle of the day?

WESLEY takes one last look at his script, then places it on the floor.

LUCAS: Huh. I wonder what Wesley was reading?

WESLEY: *(Reciting.)* “Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavory guide,
Thou desperate pilot,”

LUCAS: “Thou desperate pilot?” What the heck is he talking about?

WESLEY: *(Reciting.)* “now at once run on

The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!”

LUCAS: “Sea-sick weary bark?” I don’t get it!

WESLEY: *(Reciting as he raises his water bottle.)* “Here’s to my love!”

LUCAS: “His love?” Whoa! I didn’t even know Avery and Wesley were dating!

WESLEY toasts AVERY with the water bottle.

LUCAS: Talking crazy talk, then toasting his girlfriend, I guess, who’s still sleeping, with a water bottle? I am so lost!

WESLEY drinks from the bottle, then acts as if he’s dying.

WESLEY: O true apothecary,

Thy drugs are quick!

LUCAS: “Drugs?” What? Did Wesley just drink poison? Did Wesley drink poison just because Avery’s taking a nap?

WESLEY: Thus with a kiss, I die. *(Bends to kiss AVERY.)*

LUCAS: *(Loudly, now.)* Die? Die? Not on my watch, mister! *(LUCAS runs onto stage and starts hitting WESLEY’S back.)* Spit that poison out, Wesley! Spit! That! Poison! Out!

AVERY: *(Sitting up.)* Lucas!

LUCAS: *(Sarcastically.)* Oh, nice time to wake up, Avery! After your boyfriend tries to poison himself! Thanks a lot, but I’ve got this! *(As he continues to slap WESLEY’S back.)* Don’t worry, Wesley, Lucas is here! Oh, I know we’re not buddies or anything, and we’ve never really talked to each other, about anything, but I understand what you’re going through! I feel your pain! I feel your love! I feel your loss! You’re just reading a book on a stage, and for some awful reason your girlfriend takes a nap and that upsets you so much that you decide to drink poison disguised in an ordinary water bottle—I get it! I get it! I get it all! Trust me! Oh, I’ve never had a girlfriend, and I’ve never really read a book, either, except, well maybe “PC Gamer Magazine,” I guess that counts, but, I don’t know, somehow: I understand! I do! I feel your pain! I feel everything so deeply now!

AVERY: Lucas! Stop! Wesley’s not in pain!

LUCAS: *(Still hitting WESLEY'S back.)* Go back to sleep, "sweetie," I'll save your boyfriend all by myself!

AVERY: Lucas, Wesley is not my boyfriend!

LUCAS: *(Still hitting WESLEY'S back.)* And now you're dumping him? Dumping a boyfriend *after* he drinks poison? *(Sarcastically.)* Rude, Avery, very rude!

AVERY stops LUCAS from hitting WESLEY, who starts to recover.

AVERY: Lucas, there's no poison in his system! *(To WESLEY.)* Wesley? Wesley? Are you all right?

WESLEY: *(Recovering.)* Not in pain. Not her boyfriend. No poison. No poison. *(Showing the water bottle.)* Water, Lucas. Just water.

LUCAS: Just... water?

AVERY gruffly hands her script to LUCAS. LUCAS begins to awaken, as if from a deep sleep.

AVERY: "Romeo and Juliet!"

LUCAS: *(Reading the title.)* "Romeo... and Juliet?"

WESLEY: We were rehearsing a scene!

LUCAS: Rehearsing... a scene?

AVERY: For acting class!

LUCAS: Acting... class?

WESLEY: Lucas! What is wrong with you!

LUCAS: I... don't know. Everything's hazy. I remember... last week... my mommy said I was ignoring my chores. And my school work. And my friends. That I'd stopped talking to the family at the dinner table. That I had lost the ability to empathize with others. To understand and share their feelings. "Share feelings." *(Explaining.)* That's how Mommy talks. Mommy's a therapist.

WESLEY and AVERY: Ah.

LUCAS: So last week... my mommy took away all my devices. To help me learn to empathize with others better.

WESLEY: But, Lucas! You were empathizing with fictional characters!

AVERY: From four hundred years ago!

LUCAS: Yeah. I guess I got a little carried away.

WESLEY: Ya think?!

LUCAS: Yeah. yeah.

LUCAS, groggy, stands.

AVERY: Lucas? Where are you going?

LUCAS: *(Groggy.)* Home. To get my devices back. *(Calling into the auditorium.)* Mommy? Mommy?

Groggy, LUCAS exits into the auditorium. WESLEY and AVERY are left on stage, smiling but a little shaken. Fade to black.

END OF PLAY

DO NOT COPY

BITTEN BY THE DIRECTING BUG

By Greg Cummings

SYNOPSIS: The Student Director of the fall play is so “bitten by the directing bug” that she starts directing the people in her everyday life.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 1 male)

GRACIE (f).....An actress. Naomi’s best friend. Wyatt’s
ex. (13 lines)
WYATT (m)Gracie’s ex. (24 lines)
NAOMI (f).....Director. Gracie’s best friend. (19 lines)

SETTING: A nearly bare stage. A chair, center.

TIME: The present.

AT START: GRACIE sits in the chair, center. WYATT enters stage left.
GRACIE whispers to him.

WYATT: Gracie!

GRACIE: Wyatt! What are you doing here?

WYATT: (*Crossing to her.*) Gracie, we need to talk!

GRACIE: Not now.

WYATT: Yes, now! Please! I need to know why you dumped me!

GRACIE: Later!

WYATT: What?

GRACIE: Wyatt! Please! We can talk later!

WYATT: Speak up, I can’t...

NAOMI: (*From auditorium.*) Cut!

WYATT: “Cut?” What...?

GRACIE: (*To WYATT.*) I tried to warn you.

WYATT: (*Peering into auditorium.*) Is that... Naomi?

NAOMI enters from auditorium.

NAOMI: (*Entering.*) OK. Gracie, the whole “sitting by yourself in the chair?” It works. It continues to work for me.

WYATT: What?

GRACIE: Thanks, Naomi.

NAOMI: You’re welcome. Unfortunately, Wyatt...

WYATT: What?

NAOMI: Wyatt. I’m sorry. It was all wrong.

WYATT: What was all wrong?

NAOMI: Everything. Everything you did. Everything you said. The way you did everything. The way you said everything. Your entrance, your “Please! Gracie! We need to talk! Please! I need to know why you dumped me.”

WYATT: I don’t get it.

NAOMI: I’ve got it!

WYATT: You’ve got what?

NAOMI: Desperation!

WYATT: Desperation?

NAOMI: Desperation! Everything you do and say needs more... desperation! Oh, I so hate to give line readings to actors, but I need you to understand! So, for more desperation, try this: (*She acts desperate.*) “Please! Gracie! We need to talk! Please! I need to know why you dumped me!” Now you try it, Wyatt, but don’t just copy me, put your own spin on it, you know, I need you to really own the words! Own the desperation, Wyatt! Own the desperation! You two talk it over! Tell me when you’re ready!

NAOMI exits into auditorium. GRACIE and WYATT whisper to each other.

WYATT: What the heck is wrong with her?

GRACIE: Nothing’s wrong with her, Wyatt. Naomi was just student director for the fall play last weekend!

WYATT: I know Naomi was student director for the fall play last weekend! You *were in* the fall play last weekend! I saw you in the fall play last weekend! I saw you every single night of the fall play last weekend! And then, you dumped me! Why?

GRACIE: Wyatt, Naomi got bitten by the directing bug!

WYATT: The what?

GRACIE: Naomi was bitten by the directing bug!

WYATT: Is “bitten by the directing bug” even a thing?

GRACIE: I don’t know! I guess Naomi just loved directing the fall play so much, the blocking, helping actors develop business, etc., that, well, she started directing people in her everyday life. She’ll probably stop when she starts student directing the winter musical!

WYATT: When’s that?

GRACIE: Next week.

WYATT: Next week? So you’re going to let Naomi “direct your everyday life,” for another full week? Gracie, you’re nuts!

GRACIE: Maybe I am, Wyatt, maybe I am! (*Stands.*) But Naomi is my best friend! My best friend since childhood! She’s always been there for me, always, and if this is all it takes for me to repay her just a little bit for all of that, I’m all in! Because you know what? That’s how the idea of “best friends” works, Wyatt! Something you never understood! And you know what, Wyatt, I just realized something: that is why I dumped you! Yeah! I didn’t need a boyfriend at all, Wyatt, I just needed, I just needed... a friend!

WYATT: Gracie, I...

NAOMI: (*From auditorium.*) That’s it! Enough planning, actors! Show me what you’ve developed!

WYATT: Gracie, I...

GRACIE: Exit, Wyatt! Exit, so you can enter again! (*She sits.*)

Dejected, WYATT slowly exits stage left.

NAOMI: (*From auditorium.*) And... action! Sitting... the sitting remains good, Gracie. I like that you’re adding a bit of... I’m sensing a sadness, now. A sense of remorse. Good job, Gracie! Keep it up! And... cue Wyatt!

WYATT enters stage left.

NAOMI: *(From auditorium.)* Now *that* is desperation! A perfect desperate entrance, Wyatt! Pause. Good. Now slowly cross to her. Cross to her. Wyatt? Wyatt?

WYATT slowly crosses to GRACIE.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* Yes! Yes! Remorse from the Gracie character and continued desperation from the Wyatt character! It works! Go on! Go on!

WYATT: *(Sad, sincere.)* Thanks, Gracie. For telling me why you dumped me. And, I just wanted to say, I'm sorry.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* I can't hear you! Speak up! Project!

WYATT: *(Smiles, then louder, to GRACIE.)* I'm sorry, Gracie.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* Perfect!

WYATT: And if it's not too late, I would just like to be your friend. Please?

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* Excellent improv! Excellent! He hit the ball to you, Gracie, now hit it back!

GRACIE regards WYATT.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* Ooh. Establishing intense eye contact! Good choice, Gracie! Good choice!

GRACIE stands.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* She stands! The tension builds!

GRACIE takes a step to WYATT. GRACIE and WYATT continue eye contact.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* She steps to him! The audience is on the edges of their seats! What will they do next?

GRACIE holds out her hand for WYATT to shake. WYATT takes her hand. They smile and hold hands, friends.

NAOMI: *(From the auditorium.)* Perfect! And... freeze! Freeze! *(As she walks to the stage.)* Stay right there, you two. I just have a couple of notes. Nothing major, I promise!

Fade to black.

END OF PLAY

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GHOST LIGHT V: THE VOICE OF GLENN

By Greg Cummings

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