

THE ORIGINAL CAST

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By Mike Willis

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TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

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SYNOPSIS: There was never really any doubt that this revival was going to be a big success. When the director invites the three actors who originated the roles to opening night, the revival becomes a stroke of casting genius with a few unforeseen twists, turns, punches and new dialogue.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 males, 2 females, 1 either, 0-2 extras)

OLIVER “OLLIE” (m)An aging character actor who is full of himself. OLLIE is always performing. HE suffers from germaphobia. OLLIE never goes anywhere without a spray bottle of Lysol and hand sanitizer. HE dresses lavishly with an ascot and long fur coat. His clothes are at least 20 years out of date and show signs of wear. OLLIE thinks of himself as an accomplished classical actor although he hasn’t had anything but an occasional bit part in years. He speaks with an affected accent. *(95 lines)*

ELIZABETH “LIZ” (f)A former leading lady. LIZ is only in her late 40s or early 50s, but she did not age well. Her clothes are too tight and she wears a lot of makeup. LIZ is brash. If she hadn’t had some success as an actress, she would most likely have been either a hooker or the proprietress of a trailer court. Over her dress, she wears a mink coat. *(83 lines)*

RICHARD “RICKY” (m).....A former leading man. RICKY is around fifty, but looks much older. He is content with never acting again and enjoys drinking and smoking pot while he lives off of his investments. RICKY is unshaven with long hair. He looks like an aging hippie in his jeans and rock band t-shirt. Over the t-shirt he wears an old sport coat with leather patches on the sleeves, which is his effort to dress up for the occasion. He is feeling very mellow.
(72 lines)

PENELOPE “PENNY” (f).....A young woman in her twenties. PENNY is the artistic director as well as house manager and technical director for a small off-Broadway theatre company. She is very energetic and takes her job very seriously. PENNY hopes to direct on Broadway someday. She is dressed in high heels and a well-fitting business suit.
(41 lines)

BACKSTAGE VOICE (m/f).....A shrill voice from backstage. (4 lines)

EXTRAS:

THE MAID (f).....Optional, non-speaking role. The MAID is dressed in a very sexy maid’s uniform. She is in her 20s.

THE WIFE (f).....Optional, non-speaking role. THE WIFE is dressed in a sexy negligee. She is in her 20s.

(All line counts are approximate)

DURATION: 22 minutes

THE ORIGINAL CAST

SETTING

A small off-Broadway theatre. The stage is bare, with the exception of four chairs or theatre seats placed center-stage. The seats are staggered with two in front and two in back.

TIME: The present.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Milder language options suitable for most audiences along with alternative staging suggestions can be found below. THE WIFE and THE MAID are optional non-speaking roles. The addition of these characters is strictly a director's choice.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Original Cast is an adult comedy and uses language that some theatres may find unsuitable for their audiences. In these instances, objectionable language may be altered or omitted as per the discretion of the director. Some examples are as follows:

- CAT'S ASS change to CAT'S BEHIND
- SHIT change to CRAP
- All variations of FUCK can be changed to SCREWED or FREAKIN'
- BITCHIN' BOOTY BABE can be changed to just BOOTY BABE
- GODDAMN can be shortened to DAMN or eliminated
- DAMMIT can be eliminated
- BIG ASS CAR can be changed to BIG OL' CAR

STAGING

It is entirely possible to perform this play with the actors seated in the audience and leaving the stage entirely bare or containing only scattered odd pieces of furniture. Some theatre venues may afford an area somewhere in the midst of their audience seating where four seats can be isolated and the play performed. This would require some creative directing to afford good sight lines, but would be very effective. Two non-speaking roles can also be added if desired. THE MAID enters after LIZ says, “Shhh, watch the play” and she begins dusting. THE WIFE enters and they begin flirting after Ollie’s line “...big beer belly.” BOTH exit after Penny says, “Bring the house lights up.” THE MAID and WIFE are both in their 20s and dressed very sexy.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

The Original Cast was chosen as one of the winners of the Village Playhouse of Wauwatosa’s Twenty-Ninth Annual One-Act Play Contest and premiered at Inspiration Studios in West Allis, WI in August of 2014. The play ran for three weeks along with six other plays. At the end of the run, *The Original Cast* was presented with two awards: Best Performance and Best Script. These awards were based on audience voting. The play was directed by Jerry Proffitt and the cast was as follows:

PENELOPE “PENNY”	Elizabeth M. Havicam
RICHARD “RICKY”	Paul Weir
OLIVER “OLLIE”	John Galobich
ELIZABETH “LIZ”	Tamara Binsfeld
THE MAID.....	Kelli Hook
THE WIFE	Silvia Ludena

SETTING:

Four chairs are placed center-stage facing the audience. The chairs are staggered with two chairs in front and two in the rear. The chairs in the second row are slightly raised. The rest of the stage is bare.

AT RISE:

PENNY enters from the wings, looks around nervously at the audience, the light booth, and the rest of the theatre before exiting. OLLIE enters and crosses center-stage. OLLIE is carrying a program and a ticket stub. He looks at the ticket stub and finds his seat which is in the first row stage right. OLLIE looks at HIS seat intently and then looks around at the rest of the theatre.

OLLIE: *(Muttering.)* My God, this place is a dump.

OLLIE returns to HIS seat and inspects it closely. He takes a spray bottle of Lysol from his coat pocket and begins spraying down his seat. Satisfied that he has covered everything, he takes a white handkerchief from his coat pocket and wipes the chair off very carefully. He sits, but finds that his coat is too confining so he rises and takes his coat off and starts to place it on the seat next to him. OLLIE catches himself at the last minute and gets out his Lysol bottle and sprays the seat next to him and wipes it down just as he had done to the first chair. He then puts the Lysol bottle and handkerchief in the coat pockets and places the coat gently on the chair next to his. LIZ enters carrying a program and a ticket stub. LIZ crosses to OLLIE.

LIZ: Hey Ollie, how they hangin'?

OLLIE: *(Obvious distaste.)* Oh, it's you.

LIZ: Why, of course it's me. You were expectin' maybe Angelina Jolie?

OLLIE: One can always hope.

LIZ: Sorry to disappoint ya. So, how have ya been?

OLLIE: *(Very proper.)* I prefer Oliver. And, if you really must know, I have been fine thank you.

Short pause while LIZ strikes a sexy pose.

LIZ: Well, aren't you going to ask me how I've been?

OLLIE: (*Rising.*) All right, if I must. How have you been Elizabeth?

LIZ: I prefer Liz. And, I'm holdin' up. (*Pushing up on her breasts.*) A few nips and tucks here and there, but I've still got all of my parts.

OLLIE: I can see that, but I'm not sure all of your parts are occupying the same space as they used to.

LIZ takes off her mink with a flourish.

LIZ: Now play nice, Ollie.

OLLIE: Oliver. (*Looking at LIZ's behind.*) It's just that some of the parts seem to have gotten considerably larger.

LIZ: (*Sexy laugh.*) Sometimes, larger is a good thing. You jealous Ollie? If you must know, I'm going for that Mae West look.

OLLIE: Quite admirable. Maybe they'll name a flotation device after you.

LIZ: Very funny. (*LIZ reaches for OLLIE'S coat.*) Is this your rag? It's in my seat.

OLLIE: Stop!

LIZ: What?

OLLIE grabs HIS coat.

OLLIE: I prefer that you do not touch my garment?

LIZ: (*Laughing.*) Still the same ol' germaphobe, Ollie?

OLLIE: One can never be too safe.

LIZ: Not a motto I've chosen to live by I'm afraid.

OLLIE: Yes, I am quite sure of that. (*Looking around the theatre.*) By the looks of this, uh... *theatre*, we'll both be lucky if we survive the evening without experiencing some sort of respiratory failure or in need of a tetanus shot.

OLLIE sits. LIZ throws her mink on her seat and begins walking around the stage. She checks out the audience, the light and sound booth, taking in the entire theatre space.

LIZ: What a crazy space. This theatre is the cat's ass, Ollie.

OLLIE: Yes, and probably just as clean.

LIZ: I'm serious, this place is wonderful. This is what theatre is all about.

OLLIE: (*Sarcastic.*) Yes, it's just wonderful... damp, dingy, dirty, and full of patrons with questionable hygiene who will spend the next two hours coughing and hacking all over one another.

LIZ: Come here Ollie, I want you to take in this whole experience and remember where theatre all began.

OLLIE remains seated. LIZ crosses to OLLIE and reaches for him.

LIZ: Come on Ollie. Oliver, if you don't come with me, I'm going to drag your sorry ass out of that seat.

LIZ reaches for OLLIE who gives in.

OLLIE: All right. You win. I'm coming, just don't touch me.

OLLIE places his coat on his seat and he and LIZ cross down-stage.

LIZ: Feast your eyes out there Ollie. What do you see?

OLLIE: Dilapidation? Disease? Desperate theatre goers who couldn't afford the price of a ticket for a *real* Broadway show?

LIZ: Wrong. You, my dear Oliver, are looking into the birth canal of theatre.

OLLIE: How appealing.

LIZ: This is where it all began. A lonely, abandoned storefront converted into a theatre. Low ceilings, a makeshift light system with a few harsh bulbs, and the sound coming from some ancient tape player. Real live theatre, where a captive audience sits huddled shoulder to shoulder, their eyes intently focused on the narrow runway of a stage, so close they are tempted to reach out and touch the actors. Pure unadulterated theatrical intimacy, Ollie.

OLLIE: I believe you just described a strip-tease establishment.

LIZ: Exactly, Oliver. This is strip-tease theatre, where the actor's talents and emotions are laid bare due to the sheer proximity of his audience.

OLLIE: Strip-tease theatre... sounds like the type of venue where even someone with your level of expertise could acquire work.

LIZ: Precisely. And, it's work I'd give my left nut for, if I had one.

OLLIE: I'm surprised to hear that you are missing one. Good God, you must be desperate. Things are going that bad for you are they?

LIZ: No worse than for you.

OLLIE: I will have you know that I have been working quite regularly.

LIZ: On what? What have you done since that male diaper commercial two years ago?

OLLIE: Well, I... I'll have you know that that commercial is still airing.

LIZ: Only because they couldn't find another incontinent actor who would agree to climb into a diaper so they could shoot a new one.

OLLIE: You, are disgusting. I am not going to continue this line of discussion any further.

OLLIE crosses to his seat and LIZ follows.

LIZ: If you are so flush with work, what are you doing here?

OLLIE: This event happened to fall on an evening where I had nothing else on my plate.

LIZ: Yeah, I can believe that. I had nothing on my plate either. That's why we're both here for the free dinner after the performance.

OLLIE: (*Feeling superior.*) I'll have you know, apart from the reception dinner, I am receiving an appearance fee.

LIZ: So, what? I'm receiving one too, it's not like a hundred bucks is going to buy much.

OLLIE: Excuse me. Did you just say that you're receiving one hundred dollars to attend tonight's performance?

LIZ: Yeah, that and free food after. Why?

OLLIE: There must have been some mistake.

LIZ: What makes you say that?

OLLIE: It's just that I... uh, nothing, never mind.

LIZ: No, come on. Why did you say there must be some mistake?

PENNY hurries on stage and crosses to LIZ and OLLIE.

PENNY: Oh, you're here. This is wonderful, just wonderful. (*PENNY shakes hands with LIZ.*) I can't tell you how excited we all are that you are here, Elizabeth.

LIZ: Please, call me Liz.

PENNY: (*Shaking LIZ's hand.*) Why thank you, Liz. Oh, what an honor it is to have you at our opening.

LIZ: My pleasure. I...

OLLIE: (*Loudly.*) Ah hem...

PENNY turns to OLLIE.

PENNY: Oh, and Ollie. It is a pleasure to have you here as well.

OLLIE: Oliver.

PENNY: What? Oh, yes of course, Oliver. The cast is so looking forward to meeting all of you at our post performance dinner. I can't begin to tell you how delighted we all are to have three actors from the original Broadway cast join us. I hope our little remake of the play you introduced on Broadway twenty years ago brings back some happy memories. You should both be receiving a check in the mail to cover your appearance fee. (*To OLLIE.*) Oh, and Oliver, I spoke with our board of directors and was able to get your appearance fee increased to fifty dollars.

LIZ: (*Looking at OLLIE.*) Fifty dollars?

PENNY: (*To LIZ.*) Yes, I'm afraid that the board of directors only wanted to pay Oliver twenty-five dollars for an appearance fee. I told them this was insufficient... even if Oliver did only play one of the lesser characters in the original Broadway production. After all, there are no small parts, only small actors. I explained to the board that Oliver should receive at least enough for cab fare to and from the theatre.

OLLIE: Lesser characters? Small parts? Why...

PENNY: There is no need to thank me Oliver. My, but you've done well since then though, haven't you? I saw your diaper commercial on TV. As a matter of fact, in the past two years, you are the only actor I've ever seen wearing that diaper and doing that commercial. It's a testament to your staying power.

LIZ: That's our Ollie's strong suit, staying power.

OLLIE: (*Angry.*) Why, I never...

PENNY: Thought of it that way? Well, you should. I see that you have found your seats, so if you will both excuse me I need to tend to my cast.

LIZ: Wait. You said three from the original cast, who else is joining us?

PENNY: Oh, I'm sorry, I thought I mentioned that your co-star, Ricky, would also be attending.

OLLIE: Richard?

PENNY: Yes. Actually, he is already here. He's outside.

OLLIE: Outside?

PENNY: Yes, he said he needed to smoke-up before the play started. Or was it toke-up? I'm not sure, but anyway he should be joining you soon. Enjoy the show.

PENNY exits. OLLIE crosses to his seat and picks up his coat.

OLLIE: Richard. My God, this evening just keeps getting worse.

LIZ crosses to her seat.

LIZ: Going somewhere Ollie?

OLLIE: No, I am under contract to be here. Like a true professional I will fulfill my obligation. Yes, I will remain the consummate professional, in spite of the fact that it appears that I am being paid a substandard fee, one accorded to someone who played a *lesser character*.

LIZ reaches out to pinch OLLIE'S cheek.

LIZ: *(Baby talk.)* Did we get our little feelings hurt, Ollie?

OLLIE: Stop touching me! And no, I did not get my feelings hurt. I will merely file her comments regarding *lesser characters* and *small actors* in the category I reserve for comments made by *morons*!

LIZ: She did like you in your diaper.

RICKY enters. He is feeling very mellow. RICKY crosses to LIZ.

RICKY: Hey, hey... there she is, my little Lizzie.

RICKY gives LIZ a big hug and steps back so he can get a better look at her.

Look at you. Wow, you got this like hot little hoochie-mama thing goin on, ya know. Sweet.

LIZ: Thanks, Ricky. I may have put on a few pounds, but I think I've still got it.

RICKY: Oh man, no doubt. You're smokin'.

LIZ: *(Pleased.)* Thanks, Ricky.

RICKY: Hey, no problem. *(RICKY looks over and sees OLLIE.)* Ollie? Am I totally wasted or is that... it is, it's Ollie!

RICKY rushes to OLLIE to give him a hug but OLLIE retreats in fear.

OLLIE: Stop! Stop! Do not touch me! I don't want you touching me.

RICKY stops.

RICKY: Holy shit, I'm sorry man. Like, I forgot that you're crazy. I didn't mean to make you pee your pants.

OLLIE: I most certainly did not urinate in my pants.

LIZ: *(To RICKY.)* Not a problem, he wears diapers.

OLLIE: And, I am not crazy.

RICKY: *(Very serious.)* Why sure ya are man. I mean, with this germ thing... you're certifiable man.

OLLIE: Richard!

RICKY: No, like it's like totally cool man. You see I get it, this whole crazy thing. Everyone's a little crazy... even famous people. Look at Howard Hughes. He had the same germ thing going on that you do. You may be fucked up, but at least you're fucked up the same as some rich guy.

LIZ: He has a point, Ollie.

RICKY: Sure I do. I mean if you're gonna be crazy, it's good to be crazy like some famous person right? I mean, that's cool... not like sharin' crazy with some criminal or some out of work actor or someone, ya know.

LIZ laughs.

OLLIE: Richard, I am not crazy. I just prefer to alienate myself from contamination.

RICKY: Denial. Perfectly cool man, been there myself. The whole denial thing...

OLLIE: I am not in denial.

RICKY: Sure ya are man. I mean, I was too. Everyone told me I was a drunk and smoked too much pot and I kept sayin' no, no you're wrong. Then one day while I was drinkin' a beer and smokin' a joint, I had this vision.

LIZ: You had a vision?

RICKY: Yeah, I took a big drag on this joint I was smokin' and I look up and here's this dude in a white robe standin' there, and he says... "Ricky, you're a drunk and you smoke too much pot." After that I was a believer. I mean, right then I knew I was a drunk and a pothead and I accepted that. I've been a happy man ever since.

OLLIE: Are you expecting us to believe that you saw God?

RICKY: I'm not sayin' for sure it was God, it might have been Howard Hughes, because when I tried to touch him he ran away just like you, Ollie.

The lights in the theatre blink.

LIZ: Finally, it looks like we're about to get started. We'd better take our seats.

LIZ tosses her mink on the seat behind her. RICKY jumps into the seat in the second row behind OLLIE'S seat. OLLIE anxiously looks for somewhere to place his coat.

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