

LE^APERS

Ten-Minute Dark Comedy Duet

by
Jonathan Dorf



Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

Toll-Free 888-473-8521

Fax 319-368-8011

Web www.brookpub.com

Copyright © 2007 by Jonathan Dorf
All rights reserved

CAUTION: Professionals & amateurs are hereby warned that *Leapers* is subject to a royalty. This play is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, Canada, the British Commonwealth and all other countries of the Copyright Union.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this play are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion pictures, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS & ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this play are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. If necessary, we will contact the author or the author's agent. PLEASE NOTE that royalty fees for performing this play can be located online at Brooklyn Publishers, LLC website (<http://www.brookpub.com>). Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. You will find our contact information on the following page.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged. Only forensics competitions are exempt from this fee.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

<http://www.brookpub.com>

TRADE MARKS, PUBLIC FIGURES, & MUSICAL WORKS: This play may include references to brand names or public figures. All references are intended only as parody or other legal means of expression. This play may contain suggestions for the performance of a musical work (either in part or in whole). Brooklyn Publishers, LLC have not obtained performing rights of these works. The direction of such works is only a playwright's suggestion, and the play producer should obtain such permissions on their own. The website for the U.S. copyright office is <http://www.copyright.gov>.

COPYING from the book in any form (in whole or excerpt), whether photocopying, scanning recording, videotaping, storing in a retrieval system, or by any other means, is strictly forbidden without consent of Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

TO PERFORM THIS PLAY

1. Royalty fees must be paid to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC before permission is granted to use and perform the playwright's work.
2. Royalty of the required amount must be paid each time the play is performed, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.
3. When performing plays of any length, enough playbooks must be purchased for cast and crew.
4. Copying or duplication of any part of this script is strictly forbidden.
5. Any changes to the script are not allowed without direct authorization by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.
6. Credit to the author and publisher is required on all promotional items associated with this play's performance(s).
7. Do not break copyright laws with any of our plays. This is a very serious matter and the consequences can be quite expensive. We must protect our playwrights, who earn their living through the legal payment of script and performance royalties.
8. If you have questions concerning performance rules, contact us by the various ways listed below:

Toll-free: 888-473-8521

Fax: 319-368-8011

Email: customerservice@brookpub.com

Copying, rather than purchasing cast copies, and/or failure to pay royalties is a federal offense. Cheating us and our wonderful playwrights in this manner will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Please support theatre and follow federal copyright laws.

LE^APERS
by
Jonathan Dorf

CHARACTERS

ANNE late 20s
THOMAS same age or perhaps slightly younger

(Labor Day. ANNE, late 20s, stands on the roof of a tallish building. SHE looks over the edge. SHE even takes a few steps, as if measuring the jump. SOUNDS of a distant parade. Enter THOMAS, around the same age and carrying a backpack, through the door on the roof.)

ANNE: Stay back. Don't try to stop me.

THOMAS: You've got to be kidding.

ANNE: I'm serious. You come any closer and I'll jump.

THOMAS: Don't you dare.

ANNE: Like you care.

THOMAS: I sure do care.

ANNE: You don't even know me.

THOMAS: I know you shouldn't jump.

ANNE: You know that.

THOMAS: Yes.

ANNE: Just like that.

THOMAS: Trust me. Get off the roof, go home, think it over. If you still feel you should do it after that, come back tomorrow.

ANNE: Don't patronize me.

THOMAS: You don't want to be patronized? Fine. Today is *my* day. Mine. I picked it out, it has great symbolic value, I've been planning it for a long time--

ANNE: This is so high school.

THOMAS: First you say I'm patronizing you, and now I'm being immature.

ANNE: No--this is so high school, as in this is exactly what happened to me in high school. *(beat)* Bobby Plezko. Actually, his last name was completely unpronounceable, but we all said Plezko. I think it might have been *(pronounced Plezzko-vid-ih-wicks)* Plezkovidwicz.

(The lights flicker, and THOMAS becomes BOBBY, 16. ANNE becomes her younger self, 17.)

BOBBY: Hi, Anne.

ANNE: Hi, Bobby.

BOBBY: That's a nice dress.

ANNE: Thank you. I want to be buried in it.

BOBBY: That's cool. I want to be buried in this.

ANNE: But you're just wearing jeans and a ratty T-shirt.

BOBBY: Why are you so mean? Why is everyone always so mean?

ANNE: Bobby, I'm sorry--I'm--

BOBBY: It's OK. Excuse me.

(The lights flicker, and it's back to ANNE and THOMAS in the present.)

ANNE: And five minutes later, he hangs himself from the flagpole on top of the gym.

THOMAS: And. . . ?

ANNE: And! *(beat)* It was the middle of lunch. People were screaming and fainting--at least two cheerleaders vomited on the principal. And before we know it, we're being hurled in front of grief counselors and lighting candles and people who haven't said boo to me all year are hugging me and crying and drooling on my shoulder. The captain of the soccer team, who'd been leaving rotten bananas in my locker on and off since third grade, locks onto my arm so tight it's like a crocodile going into a death roll. *(beat)* That was my day, my day to go, but no, I'm five minutes too late and my life is completely wrecked.

THOMAS: *(beat)* Can I ask a stupid question?

ANNE: There are no stupid questions, only stupid people asking questions. My Dad used to say that. He may still. We've been estranged since this morning--I thought my passing might be easier for him to take that way.

THOMAS: The Bobby Plezko thing, that didn't happen yesterday, right?

ANNE: I said it was high school. You should listen more carefully.

THOMAS: So it was a while ago.

ANNE: Yes. So?

THOMAS: So why didn't you kill yourself the next day or the next week or month or year or any number of next years? It seems like you've had an awful lot of chances to step up to the plate, so you should back off and give someone else a chance.

ANNE: And that someone, of course, would be you.

THOMAS: You snooze, you lose.

ANNE: I have not been snoozing. I've been waiting for an opportunity.

THOMAS: For what? Five years?

ANNE: Eleven actually, but thank you for thinking it's only been five.

THOMAS: So in eleven years you can't find one moment to get it together and kill yourself?

ANNE: I'm not going to do it when I'm not miserable and hopeless! Do I look stupid? **(beat)** I figured I'd ride out the good times as long as they lasted, and when it was clear they were over, then I'd do it.

THOMAS: So it's taken you eleven years to feel miserable and hopeless again?

ANNE: I'm a patient person.

THOMAS: OK. You're right. I'm sorry if I offended you.

ANNE: You should be.

THOMAS: I am. And to prove it, I want you to jump.

ANNE: What?

THOMAS: Go ahead. Jump. You've got my full support.

ANNE: This is a trick, right? I start to jump, and you tackle me when I'm focusing on my take-off, which is of course when I'm at my most vulnerable. You're obviously bigger than I am, and while I'm knocked flat by the force of your assault, you're airborne and home free.

(THOMAS sits.)

THOMAS: Better?

ANNE: What are you doing?

THOMAS: Now there's no way I could possibly get up in time to stop you. So go ahead. **(beat)** What? This is what you want. **(HE scoots around so that his back is to her. Beat.)** It's like I'm not even here. The runway is clear. **(HE opens his backpack and pulls out a pocket chess board. HE begins to play.)** Don't mind me.

ANNE: You're breaking my concentration.

THOMAS: By silently playing chess?

ANNE: It's silly to play against yourself.

THOMAS: Why? I always win. **(beat)** Cat got your leaping leg?

(SHE sits next to him.)

ANNE: You think I'm not going to do it.

THOMAS: The thought has crossed my mind.

ANNE: I'm waiting for the parade. **(THOMAS nods.)** I am.

THOMAS: OK.

ANNE: Why don't *you* jump? Five minutes ago you were Mr. Gung Ho Get Off My Building It's My Day. You can jump right now.

THOMAS: I'm waiting for the parade. Anyone with a clue knows that if a tree falls in the forest and there's no one to hear it. . . do you need me to finish the sentence?

ANNE: I have a clue, thank you.

END OF FREE PREVIEW