

THIS DREAM

A TEN MINUTE PLAY

by
Chris Stiles



Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

Toll-Free 888-473-8521

Fax 319-368-8011

Web www.brookpub.com

Copyright © 2011 by Chris Stiles
All rights reserved

CAUTION: Professionals & amateurs are hereby warned that *This Dream* 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 one-acts or full-length plays, 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.

THIS DREAM

by
Chris Stiles

SCENE ONE

AT RISE: *ALL of the STUDENTS appear to be busy taking a test. The TEACHER is occupied with her own work. None of the CHARACTERS notice the ACTORS who are speaking, unless it is indicated in the script.*

UNDERWEAR BOY: *(speaking to audience)* I have this dream, this recurring dream. I'm at school, taking a test, and suddenly my pencil lead snaps... and I get up to sharpen my pencil... *(HE rises, moves in front of desk. HE is wearing nothing but a shirt and boxer shorts.)* And I have no pants. That's right, no pants, just underwear. It's always the most ridiculous underwear. Today, I see, it's Napoleon Dynamite. Vote For Pedro. Anyway, I have no pants, and there's nothing I can do. It's not like I can ask the teacher for help. Inevitably, the teacher will ask...

TEACHER: *(looking up)* So what happened to your pants, anyway?

UNDERWEAR BOY: And I'll say, "I don't know. The dream started like this." And I run to the pencil sharpener. *(HE crosses left to pencil sharpener, begins sharpening pencil.)* Because it has this magic power to it. As long as I'm standing here, I'm safe. There's some sort of invisible shield to protect me. Nobody can notice my lack of pants. It's stupid, I know, but in the dream it makes perfect sense. Of course, now I'm afraid to leave the pencil sharpener, and I stand there, sharpening and sharpening, willing to spend the eternity of this dream at the sharpener, if I have to. But eventually the teacher says...

TEACHER: Isn't that thing sharp yet?

UNDERWEAR BOY: And I tell her, "It just won't sharpen." And she says...

TEACHER: Maybe that's because it's a mechanical pencil.

UNDERWEAR BOY: And she glares at me. Glares and stares because she knows, knows that behind the magical shield of the pencil sharpener, I'm standing there with no pants. She can't wait until I walk away from the magic pencil sharpener so she can point out to the class, point out to the school, point out to the world that I have no pants and I'm a failure and I deserve this humiliation. And the only way out of this horrible embarrassing situation is for...

(All of the alarm clocks on the desks go off simultaneously, then blackout.)

SCENE TWO

AT RISE: *Everything looks exactly as it did at the beginning of the first scene.*

LEAD ARM GIRL: I have this dream, this recurring dream. I'm at school, taking a test... And I'm looking at the test, and nothing looks familiar. I don't know the material... I don't know the subject. Surely I'm in the wrong class. Am I supposed to be here?

(The UNDERWEAR BOY rises, crosses to pencil sharpener.)

And why doesn't that guy have any pants? I need to check my schedule, to see if I belong here... but if I look in my backpack, the teacher will think I'm cheating, and I'll be banned from the class, banned from school, banned from the college of my choice! I'll raise my hand, ask for permission. *(SHE attempts to raise her hand, but her arm won't move.)* But I can't raise my hand. It won't move. My whole arm won't move. It's paralyzed, or filled with lead, unable to move more than a couple inches. *(SHE continues the desperate attempt to move her arm.)* I cry out: "Can somebody help me? My arm is filled with lead!" But nobody notices, not even the teacher, who does nothing but look at Underwear Boy and say...

TEACHER: Isn't that thing sharp, yet?

LEAD ARM GIRL: And Underwear Boy says....

UNDERWEAR BOY: It just won't sharpen.

LEAD ARM GIRL: And the teacher says...

TEACHER: Maybe that's because it's a mechanical pencil.

LEAD ARM GIRL: And Underwear Boy keeps sharpening, like he thinks nobody will notice that he has no pants as long as he's at the pencil sharpener. But we know, and the teacher won't take her eyes off him, and I'm trying to get the teacher to notice me, because class is almost over, and I haven't started the test! If only I could raise my lead filled arm. *(Again attempts to raise her arm, but it remains paralyzed.)* But I can't, and the only way to get out of this horrible embarrassing situation is for...

(Alarm clocks go off. Blackout.)

SCENE THREE

AT RISE: *The same as the previous scenes.*

SLACKER GIRL: *(rising, walking downstage, addressing the audience)* I have this dream, this recurring dream, where I'm at school, taking a test. It all seems normal, until this guy gets up to sharpen his pencil –and he's not wearing pants.

(UNDERWEAR BOY rises, crosses to pencil sharpener.)

Who would walk around school in their underwear? Unless it was for a play or something... and that's when something clicks. A play? I tried out for the school play weeks ago... and I got a part. But I never went to rehearsals! I kept meaning to go, but I put it off, and I never

learned my lines. And as I'm thinking this, I look out and... oh my gosh! There's an audience! I'm onstage! It's opening night, and I don't know my lines... I'm not even sure what the play is about, except that it takes place in a classroom and students are taking a test and some guy is walking around in his underwear... maybe if I hear the first line, I think, maybe it will come back to me and I'll know what to do. I look around at everyone onstage... (*SHE crosses left, towards the pencil sharpener.*) The Underwear Boy, who keeps sharpening his pencil... (*SHE crosses right, towards the TEACHER.*) This teacher character, who won't stop staring at the kid in his underwear... (*SHE crosses right, towards LEAD ARM GIRL, who is struggling with her arm.*) Then this girl over here, who seems to have a problem with her arm. Maybe she'll help me, I think. I ask her, "Do I have a line coming up?" And she says...

LEAD ARM GIRL: Can somebody help me? My arm is filled with lead!

SLACKER GIRL: Oh, that's a lot of help. But then again, maybe that's the plot of the play! A play with a girl with a lead filled arm! And if I can remember the plot, I can remember my lines! But then the teacher character confuses things when she says...

TEACHER: Isn't that thing sharp yet?

SLACKER GIRL: And the kid in his underwear says...

UNDERWEAR BOY: It just won't sharpen...

SLACKER GIRL: Wait... it's coming back! If I had another line...

TEACHER: Maybe that's because it's a mechanical pencil.

SLACKER GIRL: (*crossing to SR*) It all makes sense! It's a play about a boy in his underwear, who thinks the pencil sharpener has a shield to keep people from noticing, and he's in conflict with the teacher who knows he has no pants, and if she can only get him away from the pencil sharpener, she can prove it. Meanwhile, there's the subplot of the girl whose arms are filled with lead and she's paralyzed and helpless. It's all coming back! I do know this play! And I have a very important line coming up! I stand before the audience and say, "The lawnmower is of no use to the water buffalo."

(*EVERYONE onstage, including the extras, look at SLACKER GIRL with surprised and horrified expressions.*)

It's the wrong line! It's not even a line, it's nonsense! But I've said it, and the cast stares at me, knowing I've ruined the play. And the audience stares, dead silent. The eyes of the universe stare, judging me for not going to rehearsals and not studying my lines and not showing any commitment whatsoever. And the only way out of this horrible embarrassing situation is for...

(*Alarm clocks go off. Blackout.*)

SCENE FOUR

AT RISE: The same as the previous scenes.

TEACHER: (*rising, moving downstage and addressing audience*) I have this dream, this recurring dream, where I'm at school, giving a test. But something's not right. It doesn't quite feel like a normal school day. Of course, the first clue should be when a student gets up to sharpen his pencil and he's wearing no pants. A student in his underwear! That's rich. It reminds me of this play I read once... Wait a minute. I don't read plays. Why would I read a play? Wait. Some months ago, I was asked to direct the spring play, and I said yes, even though I've never directed and... could this be the play? To confirm my nightmare, one of the students says...

SLACKER GIRL: Do I have a line coming up?

TEACHER: (*crossing R towards SLACKER GIRL*) And I realize this is the play and we're performing. It's opening night and my leading lady doesn't know her lines. And one of the supporting characters says...

LEAD ARM GIRL: Can somebody help me? My arm is filled with lead!

TEACHER: Which is part of the play, but not this act! The play is a disaster and I'm not backstage like a director is supposed to be. But then again, since I'm onstage and one actor doesn't know her lines and the other is in the wrong act, I might as well save the day and say the right lines. (*SHE crosses L towards the pencil sharpener.*) So I say, "Isn't that thing sharp yet?" and my underwear actor says...

UNDERWEAR BOY: It just won't sharpen.

END OF FREE PREVIEW