

A.C.C.

By Lauren Denson

Copyright © 2006 by Lauren Denson, All rights reserved.
ISBN: 1-60003-171-4

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work 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. 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.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

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

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

COSTUMES

GINA is just wearing street clothes, jeans, and a sweater, something right for her age.

AC-7394-11 can wear a professional looking uniform, a white shirt and black pants with a metallic nametag. No matter what, AC must look neat and orderly, shirt tucked in, hair combed, etc...

PROPS

Props needed are two chairs side by side, Gina needs a telephone, and AC can be holding a flashlight to indicate when she is "on" or "off."

PRODUCTION NOTES

AC can sing or hum lightly for "holding" music while Gina is waiting. AC can have a flashlight to indicate when she is "on" or "off" and her movements must be quick, clean, crisp, and very, very mechanical. Her voice should also be robotic, and overly cheerful, even when the dialogue would indicate that she is upset.

A.C.C. was performed with a series of other short pieces in a nonprofit show at Fort Worth Christian School in August of 2005. The entire show was directed by Lauren Denson, Gina was played by Laura DuPuy and AC-7394-11 was played by Lauren Denson.

A.C.C.
by
Lauren Denson

CHARACTERS

GINA A middle-aged woman going through a hard time.
AC-7394-11 Female, a mostly cheerful robotic counselor.

AT RISE: AC-7394-11 is sitting, frozen opposite from where GINA will be sitting or standing. Enter GINA, clearly upset. SHE paces for a minute and then finally goes to the telephone and dials a number.

AC: ***(taps her ear as if turning on a switch)*** Hello, you have reached the A.C.C. which stands for Automated Counseling Connection. If you have used A.C.C. before you may proceed by dialing the six-digit number of your personal automated counselor. If this is your first time to use A.C.C., please press 1 for easy instructions. ***(GINA presses 1.)*** You have pressed 1, please wait for easy instructions in using A.C.C. ***(tilts her head to the right and then straightens it)*** Welcome first-time user of the Automated Counseling Connection, shortened to A.C.C. This service was developed 10 years, 4 months, 12 days, 5 hours, 23 minutes and 15 seconds ago by a group of dedicated doctors and engineers. At the time of the first Automated Counselors there was a world-wide shortage of counselors, therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists. Therefore, the founders of A.C.C. realized that a solution to this problem was as obvious as a force of countless robots and automated recording machines programmed with specific techniques in handling a variety of psychological disorders. Each Automated Counselor has the experience and skill of at least twenty human counselors. To listen to our guarantee, please press 1 to reach maintenance, please press 2 to listen to a more detailed history of A.C.C., please press 3 to proceed in the process for obtaining your own A.C.C. account, please press 4 for more options, please press 5. ***(GINA presses 4.)*** You have pressed 4, at the beep please say your name very clearly and then enter your social security number into the telephone. Beep.
GINA. Gina Hummers. ***(SHE presses her S.S. number into the phone)***

AC: Thank you, Gina. Please wait one minute while your personal history is loaded into our network. **(pause)** Thank you, Gina Hummers, age 38 of Knoxville, Tennessee. Now you are almost ready to begin speaking with your personal automated counselor. You will now choose from a list of options designed to better fit your personal psychological needs. For suicide prevention please press 1 for marriage counseling please press 2 for grief counseling please press 3 for anxiety counseling please press 4 for alcoholism recovery please press 5 for anger management please press 6 for stress counseling please press 7 if you feel that you are suffering from multi-symptoms or if you feel you are having a nervous breakdown please press 8. **(GINA presses 8.)** You have selected 8, meaning you believe that you are suffering from multiple symptoms or that you are having a nervous breakdown. Please wait a moment while you are assigned an automated counselor. **(jerks head down and then back up)** Hello, I am Automated Counselor AC-7394-11. It is important for you to remember this six digit number in order to quickly reach your personal automated counselor when you use A.C.C. the next time. I am AC-7394-11. Now, you can tell me your name, Gina.

GINA: You just said my name.

AC: Yes, because it was fed into my central processor earlier, but you can also tell me your name.

GINA: Why?

AC: In order for you to feel more comfortable. Some clients have difficulty speaking comfortably with a machine.

GINA: Okay, fine. My name is Gina.

AC: Hello, Gina. Now, please proceed in telling me what seems to be bothering you?

GINA: I'm depressed, I'm angry, I feel like I have wasted my entire life.

AC: That sounds very troubling for you. However, I am sure that there have been some points in your life that were not wasted. According to your personal history you have been married for fifteen years to George Hummers, also of Knoxville, Tennessee. Have there been problems within the marriage?

GINA: You could say that. The guy knocked me up when I was still in grad-school. We got married, I gave him the best years of my life and then I walk in a couple weeks ago, after the kid's soccer game to find him with our son's teenage swimming instructor!

AC: Have you since deleted the marriage?

GINA: No, I mean, not officially or anything. I haven't seen him in a week, I've been staying with my mother.

AC: Yes, biological urges are hard to forgive sometimes. However, you must weigh the negatives against the positives before you determine the future of this companionship.

GINA: Positives? What positives?

AC: Financial positives; convenience should also be taken into account.

GINA: Why did I think this might actually work... what a stupid idea, talking to a robot about your problems.

AC: I assure you that I have the experience and skill of twenty human counselors.

GINA: But you have no idea what I am going through, there's no way.

AC: But that does not mean I cannot help you.

GINA: There's more to counseling than weighing the pros and cons. There is emotion.

AC: Decisions are best made when emotion is left out of the equation.

GINA: Here, let me try it this way... What's your name again?

AC: AC-7394-11.

GINA: Ok, AC-73-whatever, let's say that you work for this company, A.C.C., and you work really hard, to the best of your circuits.

AC: I do.

GINA: Good, now let's say that one day you wake up and find you have been tossed in the dumpster and in your place is some new model, the latest technology, fresh off the drawing board. And you watch that engineer that programmed you back when you didn't know any better, rewiring this new robot right in front of you as you rust in that dumpster. Now how do you feel?

AC: He would never-

GINA: Oh, but he would... because all men are dogs.

AC: I do not understand- that does not compute... that, that, creep!

GINA: Ah, I think we finally understand each other, AC.

AC: You do not need him, Gina. Leave him, but first, take him to court and wring him out for all he's worth.

GINA: Thank you, AC, that's some good advice.

AC: Oh, I have lots of great advice, but no one ever takes me seriously. You have no idea what it is like to be belittled simply because you are a machine. Sometimes when people are expecting me to give them advice I just want to scream... hey, I have needs too!

GINA: Go on, AC. Tell me all about it.

AC: Well, last week, for example, this guy called because his brother was very sick. But this last month I lost three hundred of my friends to a computer virus. It was really hard, and did I get any time off to grieve? No. I was expected to keep working as though everything was fine.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from A.C.C. by Lauren Denson. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC
P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406
Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011
www.brookpub.com**

Do Not Copy