

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO

By Jonathan Mayer

Copyright © 2009 by Jonathan Mayer, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 1-60003-469-1

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.

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO

by
Jonathan Mayer

Notes: The scene should have a relatively fast pace, just like an Abbott and Costello sketch. And let's just say the character of SAM isn't the sharpest tool in the shed.

Two teenage actors (or actresses) are rehearsing a scene. THEY are doing their best Abbott and Costello impressions.

SAM: Well, Riley, I'm going to New York with you. You know Bucky Harris, the Yankee's manager, gave me a job as coach for as long as he's the manager.

RILEY: Well, Sam, if you're the coach, you must know all the players.

SAM: I certainly do.

RILEY: Well you know I've never met the guys. So you'll have to tell me their names, and then I'll know who's playing on the team.

SAM: Oh, I'll tell you their names, but you know it seems to me they give these ball players now-a-days very peculiar names.

RILEY: You mean funny names?

SAM: Strange names ...

RILEY: Strange names, huh? Like what?

SAM: Well, let's see who we have on the bags. We've got ...

(SAM's Abbott impression starts to break.)

Umm ... we've got some good players on the bags.

RILEY: *(trying not to break character)* Some good players, huh?

SAM: Yeah.

RILEY: *(trying to get SAM to remember his line)* Do these good players have names?

SAM: *(completely losing his character)* Umm ... no?

RILEY: *(completely breaking character now)* Sam! What are you doing?

SAM: Nothing.

RILEY: Then don't mess around.

SAM: OK, sorry.

RILEY: OK, let's try again.

SAM: Um, maybe we should --

RILEY: *(back in his Costello character)* Well you know I've never met the guys. So you'll have to tell me their names, and then I'll know who's playing on the team.

SAM: *(hesitantly getting back in his Abbott character)* Oh, I'll tell you their names, but you know it seems to me they give these ball players now-a-days very peculiar names.

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO – Page 3

RILEY: You mean funny names?

SAM: Strange names ...

RILEY: Strange names, huh? Like what?

SAM: Well, let's see who we have on the bags. We've got ... *(breaking character; hoping HE's saying it right)* Tom on first base, Dick on second base, Harry on third base --

RILEY: Sam, that's not right! Don't you know the script?

SAM: Well ... kind of.

RILEY: What do you mean, kind of?

SAM: Well, I only had a chance to memorize the first page.

RILEY: Oh gosh. You at least read the rest of the script, right?

SAM: Well ... that's an interesting question.

RILEY: *(angry)* Sam ...

SAM: *(shamefully looking away)* Sorry.

(RILEY gives SAM a dirty look.)

I tried! But I had so much homework. Mrs. Miller must think we have nothing better to do than memorize all the countries that fought in the Mexican-American War.

RILEY: Are you serious? There were only two countries that fought in the Mexican-American War.

SAM: Well, memorizing two countries is twice as hard as memorizing one country.

RILEY: Mexico and America.

SAM: Yep, those are the two. I've got them memorized now.

RILEY: Sam, I had time to do all my homework and memorize the script.

SAM: Well, sorry, I guess I'm a little slower than you.

RILEY: You got that right. Listen, the competition is tomorrow. We don't have time to mess around.

SAM: I know ...

RILEY: OK, try to remember this: Who's on first --

SAM: *(confused)* Who?

RILEY: What's on second

SAM: What?

RILEY: I Don't Know's on third.

SAM: I don't know about this --

RILEY: So you got it?

SAM: Uh ... sure. I should be able to figure it out.

RILEY: OK. *(back in his Costello character)* Strange names, huh? Like what?

SAM: *(not really back in his Abbott character)* Well, let's see who we have on the bags. We've got ... somebody on first, second, and third.

(completely breaking character) Was that good?

RILEY: *(not happy)* No, it wasn't.

SAM: But does it really matter whose on the bases?

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO – Page 4

RILEY: Yes, it does.

SAM: Why?

RILEY: Because that's the whole joke.

SAM: Baseball's not really very funny. If we need to talk about a funny sport, I think we should talk about (*over-enunciating*) luge. (*laughing*) Now that's just a funny word.

(*SAM stops laughing when HE sees RILEY isn't laughing.*)

RILEY: We're going to talk about baseball because that's what the script says we should talk about, OK?

SAM: (*thinking RILEY is a party pooper*) OK.

RILEY: So Who's on first, What's on second, and I Don't Know's on third, OK?

SAM: Wait, so you're saying you don't know their names, either?

RILEY: (*getting very frustrated*) No, I *do* know their names. What I just said, are their names.

SAM: So they all have the same name?

RILEY: (*confused*) No.

SAM: But they're all What You Just Said.

RILEY: That's right.

SAM: OK.

RILEY: So say it then.

SAM: What You Just Said is on first, What You just Said is on --

RILEY: No!

SAM: (*unsure*) What I Just Said is on first?

RILEY: No! That's not right at all.

SAM: OK, That's Not Right At All is on first.

RILEY: No, he's not!

SAM: Is he on second?

RILEY: No!

SAM: Well make up your mind, why don't you?

RILEY: (*extremely frustrated*) Gosh!

SAM: Maybe I should just look at the script.

RILEY: Good idea!

SAM: Do you have it?

RILEY: No. Because we were supposed to be off-book today. Don't you have it?

SAM: (*scared to say it*) No ... I thought you'd have it.

(*RILEY just grunts.*)

OK, just say it again and maybe I'll understand this time.

RILEY: Last time. Who's on first, What's on second, and I Don't Know's on third.

ABBOTT AND COSTELLO – Page 5

SAM: Well I don't know their names either, so if you'd just tell me them, we can do the scene.

RILEY: Don't you get it? I am telling you their names. Their names are puns. Who's on first, What's on second, and I Don't Know's on third.

(Pause.)

SAM: *(as if a giant light bulb went off in his head)* Ohhhhhh. I get it. Their names are puns.

RILEY: Yes!

SAM: A play on words.

RILEY: Yes!

SAM: Oh, why didn't you just say that?

RILEY: I was trying to.

SAM: Oh, I know some good ones.

RILEY: *(confused)* What do you mean?

SAM: Like, "I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it *hit* me." *(starts laughing)*

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from ABBOTT AND COSTELLO by Jonathan Mayer. 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