

CRISIS: MY BROTHER'S UGLY SHIRT

By Bradley Walton

Copyright © 2016 by Bradley Walton, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-60003-872-3

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.

Reservation of Rights: 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, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation.

Modifications: There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to this Work or title of this Work, unless directly authorized by the publisher or otherwise allowed in the Work's "Production Notes." This includes changing of character gender, cutting or adding of dialogue, or alteration of language.

Royalties: 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. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice and will be set based upon your application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged. Any licensing requests and questions concerning rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Credits: 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). 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.*

Reproduction: 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.

PUBLISHED BY BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS

1-888-473-8521

CRISIS: MY BROTHER'S UGLY SHIRT*A Ten Minute Comedy Duet***By Bradley Walton**

SYNOPSIS: Once upon a time, Charlie was given a shirt so ugly that no one would ever dare wear it. Only now, he's decided to wear it, because the shirt is so awful that he figures people will pay him money to keep away from them. It's strictly a business thing. Charlie's sister, Dana, is horrified by the prospect of her brother wearing the shirt to school and ruining her social standing. How far is she willing to go to avert the crisis of her brother's ugly shirt?

CAST OF CHARACTERS*(1 male, 1 either; gender flexible)*

CHARLIE (m) A senior in high school.
(69 lines)

DANA/DAN (m/f) Charlie's sibling, a junior in
high school. (69 lines)

COSTUMES

CHARLIE – is wearing sweats.

DANA – is dressed in comfortable, around-the-house clothes.

PROPS

- Dollar Bill
- Cell Phone
- Ugly Shirt or Bag containing a "Shirt"

PRODUCTION NOTES

Dialogue may be changed to match the gender of DANA/DAN as necessary. You may also mime all props if performing for competition.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The first few lines of this script are nearly word-for-word an actual conversation I had with my wife, except it was about a pair of pants. I had put on weight over Christmas, and when I attempted to squeeze into my work pants at the end of winter break, they barely fit. Fortunately, those pants are solid black, and nothing like the horrid monstrosity of a shirt in this script.

Do Not Copy

AT RISE: CHARLIE is exercising—running in place, jumping jacks, etc. DANA enters.

DANA: Charlie, you've been at that for a while now.

CHARLIE: Hour and fifteen minutes. Almost done.

DANA: You're shaming me and my lousy workout habits.

CHARLIE: Sorry. Not trying to. This is about my shirt.

DANA: What, it doesn't fit?

CHARLIE: Not if I want to breathe while I'm wearing it.

DANA: Yeah. That's always a good motivator. (*Beat.*) What shirt are we talking about?

CHARLIE: The one grandpa gave me for my birthday a couple of years ago.

DANA: The one he found at the yard sale?

CHARLIE: (*Stops exercising and breathes heavily.*) Yeah. That one.

DANA: You're kidding.

CHARLIE: Why would I be kidding?

DANA: Charlie, you *cannot* wear that shirt!

CHARLIE: Why not?

DANA: It looks like something a clown would be embarrassed to wear in a circus! Grandpa bought that as a joke—it was a gag gift to make everybody laugh. He never intended for you to wear it.

CHARLIE: I know, Dana. But I'm pretty sure I can use it to make some money.

DANA: How?

CHARLIE: I think if I wear it, it'll make people so uncomfortable that they'll pay me to leave them alone.

DANA: That's ridiculous.

CHARLIE: Okay, if somebody wearing that shirt walked up and asked you for a dollar, what would you do?

DANA: Try to get away from them.

CHARLIE: And what if they just kept bugging you?

DANA: I'd tell them to get lost.

CHARLIE: And if they wouldn't leave?

DANA: I dunno...haul off and whack them?

CHARLIE: And then you'd get sued. No...sooner or later, you'd give them the dollar.

DANA: You'd get the same outcome if they were wearing a normal shirt.

CHARLIE: But the ugliness ratchets up the discomfort level, making it more likely for the wearer to get what he wants, and get it faster.

DANA: Charlie, if you wear that thing in public, you'll turn yourself into a social outcast.

CHARLIE: Look, Dana, in the fall, I'm going to college three hundred miles away. No one will know me, and what I did or wore here won't matter.

DANA: What about your friends? Don't you want to, I dunno...not lose them?

CHARLIE: Well, let's see...my girlfriend dumped me for my best friend, and since he was more popular than me, most of my other friends have gravitated to him, and the ones that are left are more like casual acquaintances than friends, so... no.

DANA: Look, it would be personally embarrassing for me if you walked out of the house with that shirt on, so if I ask you nicely, would you please not wear it?

CHARLIE: What's it worth to you?

DANA: What do you mean, "what's it worth?" I'm asking nicely!

CHARLIE: And I appreciate that. But the whole idea is to make a few bucks.

DANA: No! You are not bribing or blackmailing me, or whatever this is!

CHARLIE: It's a business proposition.

DANA: You're my brother, Charlie! I do not do "business" with you.

CHARLIE: Okay.

DANA: I'll find the shirt and burn it.

CHARLIE: Oh, you don't have to bother looking for it. I'll tell you where it is.

DANA: Why would you do that?

CHARLIE: Because you can't get to it.

DANA: Wanna bet?

CHARLIE: Sure. How much?

DANA: Oh, come on!

CHARLIE: I told you already—I'm doing this to make money.

DANA: Fine. I'll bet you a dollar that if you tell me whatever obscure, disgusting, idiotic place you've got it stashed, I can get my hands on it.

CHARLIE: It's in my safe deposit box.

DANA: What?

CHARLIE: At the bank.

DANA: How'd you get a safe deposit box?

CHARLIE: The same way as everybody else. I paid for one. It was an investment to keep my shirt safe.

DANA: You're serious about this.

CHARLIE: Very serious. Now give me my dollar.

DANA grudgingly pulls a dollar out of her pocket and hands it to CHARLIE.

DANA: Fine. Here. But if you're really going to wear that shirt, you'll have to get it from the bank. And when you do, it'll be vulnerable.

CHARLIE: Not as long as I'm wearing it.

DANA: You'll have to take it off to shower.

CHARLIE: I can lock the bathroom door.

DANA: You'll have to wash it.

CHARLIE: I can stand next to the washing machine and wait.

DANA: You'll have to take it off to sleep.

CHARLIE: Why?

DANA: Um...I don't have a good answer for that.

CHARLIE: But really, none of that'll be a problem.

DANA: Why?

CHARLIE: Well, since I don't have a first period class, I don't have to be at school until 9:30...

DANA: *(With significant alarm.)* You can't—

CHARLIE: *(Ignoring her.)* That gives me plenty of time in the mornings to stop by the bank, get my shirt, and put it on. Then I can stop by the bank again to store it after school is over. Maybe hit a Laundromat in between if I need to.

DANA: You can't wear that to school!!!

CHARLIE: Why not?

DANA: Because we are related by blood and your shirt will implode my social life. I will lose friends!

CHARLIE: If they ditch you because of my shirt, then they're not very good friends, and you're better off without them.

DANA: I don't care that you're absolutely right.

CHARLIE: That's kind of shallow, Dana.

DANA: I'm a junior in high school! I'm supposed to value quantity over quality in my social circles. That is normal. I am normal. Do not expect me to not be normal. Unlike you, I value my casual acquaintances.

CHARLIE: Well, good for you.

DANA: Yes, good for me. And I do not need you destroying the delicate social fabric of my life with your shirt. I could also do without the entire school mocking me and whispering behind my back. *(In a string of mocking voices.)* "Hey! There's that girl. The one with the brother who's got the shirt. Wonder what she's got in *her* wardrobe?" "She probably has one just like it." "She totally loves it." "I bet she likes to rub it against her face when she does laundry." You can't do that do me!

CHARLIE: It's my shirt. I have the right to wear it if I want.

DANA: It's my life! I have the right to not want it ruined.

CHARLIE: I'll make you a deal.

DANA: I already said that I am not doing "business" with you!

CHARLIE: Then stop harassing me about my shirt and let me wear it in peace!

Beat.

DANA: *(Grudgingly.)* Tell me about this deal.

CHARLIE: I was hoping to make enough money to buy a small TV for my dorm room at college, which would be about two hundred bucks.

DANA: Two hundred—?

CHARLIE: So the way I see it, I'm out two hundred bucks if I were to do what you're asking. Would that be fair to me?

DANA: You are out of your mind.

CHARLIE: I don't think that would be fair at all. Do you know what I think *would* be fair?

DANA: You want me to give you two hundred dollars.

CHARLIE: I feel that you'd have an obligation to compensate me for the loss you're asking me to take.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from CRISIS: MY BROTHER'S UGLY SHIRT by Bradley Walton. 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