

# DAPHNIE, COMING TO TERMS

By Alan Haehnel

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# DAPHNIE, COMING TO TERMS

*A One Act Comedic Drama*

**By Alan Haehnel**

**SYNOPSIS:** Somehow, Daphnie has to come to terms with her break-up from Peter. The process is hilariously non-linear as Daphnie and her stand-ins go down linguistic, symbolic, and even fairy tale digressions. When Peter shows up on stage, Daphnie's world threatens to come crashing down. Will Daphnie have the strength to carry on?

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(16 females, 6 males, 7 either, 4-5 extras; gender flexible)*

- DAPHNIE (f) ..... A high-strung, heart-sick girl trying to come to terms.  
*(85 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 2 (f) ..... A stand-in for Daphnie, coming to terms with Something.  
*(22 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 3 (f) ..... A stand-in for Daphnie who speaks about an apple.  
*(12 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 4 (f) ..... A scientific stand-in for Daphnie, ready to perform an autopsy. *(15 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 12 (f) ..... An angry stand-in for Daphnie who narrates a fairy tale.  
*(55 lines)*
- DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** ..... Daphnies 5-11. Stand-ins for Daphnie who act as her cheerleaders.
- DAPHNIE 5 (f) ..... *(23 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 6 (f) ..... *(23 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 7 (f) ..... *(24 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 8 (f) ..... *(24 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 9 (f) ..... *(24 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 10 (f) ..... *(23 lines)*
- DAPHNIE 11 (f) ..... *(23 lines)*

PRINCESS DAPHNIENIUMIUMIUM (f)	. A fairy tale stand-in for Daphnie. (39 lines)
SOMETHING (m)	..... A generalized issue Daphnie 2 is coming to terms with. (28 lines)
RAM (m)	..... A surly impatient representative audience member. (19 lines)
PETER (m)	..... Daphnie's ex-boyfriend, the cause of her stress. (36 lines)
KING (m)	..... King of the kingdom. (4 lines)
VILE SORCERER (m)	..... His title says it all. (1 line)
SIR PEE-PEE (m)	..... Born Sir Pete-Pete Petoski. A fairy tale Prince stand-in for Peter. Also plays other Peter stand-ins. PETER THE PLAYER (smarmy). PETER THE ROBOT (unfeeling), PETER THE SPYMASTER (sneaky). (27 lines)

**WICKED WIND PEOPLE:**

WICKED WIND 1 (f)	..... (2 lines)
WICKED WIND 2 (f)	..... (2 lines)
WICKED WIND 3 (f)	..... (1 line)

**SNEAKY INSECTS:**

SNEAKY INSECT 1 (m/f)	..... (4 lines)
SNEAKY INSECT 2 (m/f)	..... (4 lines)

**KINGDOM CHARACTERS:**..... An assortment of stereotypical fairy tale kingdom characters.

KINGDOM CHARACTER 1 (m/f)	..... (5 lines)
KINGDOM CHARACTER 2 (m/f)	..... (5 lines)
KINGDOM CHARACTER 3 (m/f)	..... (5 lines)
KINGDOM CHARACTER 4 (m/f)	..... (5 lines)
KINGDOM CHARACTER 5 (m/f)	..... (5 lines)
TECHIES (m/f)	..... 4-5 Techies. An energetic crew who is quite visible doing a variety of duties during the play. (Non-Speaking)

**DURATION:** 45 minutes.

**SETTING:** A bare stage.

### PROPS

- Air horn
- Jar of Applesauce
- Body Bag (with a body like form)
- Cellphone
- Table
- Two Chairs
- Water Pitcher
- Two Glasses
- Paper
- Two Pens
- Apple
- Peeler
- Surgical Instruments
- Gift-Wrapped Box
- Large Stuffed Heart on a Chain
- Dark Pixie Dust
- Lab coat
- Metallic Helmet
- Royal Hats
- Trench Coat
- Sunglasses
- Violins
- Trumpets
- Fairy Tale Accouterments (a two-dimensional castle, some trees, etc.)

### SOUND EFFECTS

Sound Effects are optional and can be pantomimed.

- Trumpets playing for a royal entrance
- Violins playing a romantic tune

**AUTHOR NOTES**

The character Daphnie is present on stage throughout most of the play. Her stage direction is at the director's discretion, when she is not part of the dialogue.

DAPHNIENIUMIUMIUM is pronounced "Daphnie-neum-eum-eum."

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**AT RISE:** *A pool of light appears on a bare stage. DAPHNIE enters. She walks toward the pool of light but hesitates for moment. She squares her shoulders and steps into it. Obviously trying to be brave, she faces us and takes a deep breath before speaking.*

**DAPHNIE:** Hello. My name is Daphnie Cole. D-A-P-H-N-I-E space C-O-L-E. *(Stares straight ahead. Her eyes fill with tears. She whimpers slightly and takes in another deep breath and shakes her head as if to clear away the negativity so she can forge on.)* No, no. Okay. Daphnie. Daphnie Cole. I have no middle name. And even though I seem to be making a big deal of it by saying it and spelling it and saying it again, my name is not the issue. My name is simply something I know and can hold on to, cling to, like a floating piece of a ship that has sunk. Disappeared beneath the... *(This analogy stirs up too much emotion. Closes her eyes for a long moment. She gets down into the typical legs-crossed meditation position, and breathes in and out several times.)* My breath comes in. My breath goes out. I see it. Coming in. Going out. *(In control for the moment, she opens her eyes again.)* I am trying very hard to come to terms with something. *(Pause.)* And suddenly, even though they are very familiar, the words “come to terms” don’t make sense to me.

*SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2 enter.*

**SOMETHING:** Hello.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Hello.

**SOMETHING:** I am Something.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Yes, I realize that.

**SOMETHING:** Do you know why we are meeting right now?

**DAPHNIE 2:** I am supposed to come to terms with you.

**SOMETHING:** I am Something.

**DAPHNIE 2:** I know. I am supposed to come to terms with something.

**SOMETHING:** That’s me.

**DAPHNIE 2:** I know.

**SOMETHING:** So let’s do this.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Do what?

**SOMETHING:** Come to terms.

**DAPHNIE 2:** How do we do that?

**SOMETHING:** Well, we could use a table.

*TECHIES enter quickly and set up a table.*

**SOMETHING:** And chairs.

*TECHIES exit running and quickly enter with two chairs placed on either side of the table.*

**SOMETHING:** And a pitcher of water with water glasses.

*TECHIES exit running and quickly enter with the water pitcher and glasses, which they hastily fill. They stand, expectantly waiting for SOMETHING'S next request.*

**SOMETHING:** This looks right.

*TECHIES quickly exit.*

**DAPHNIE 2:** Do we sit?

**SOMETHING:** We do.

*DAPHNIE 2 and SOMETHING sit.*

**SOMETHING:** And now we come to terms.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Why?

**SOMETHING:** Because we are in conflict.

**DAPHNIE 2:** We are?

*After a pause, SOMETHING reaches over and slaps DAPHNIE 2.*

**DAPHNIE 2:** Ouch.

*After a pause, DAPHNIE 2 reaches over and slaps SOMETHING.*

**SOMETHING:** Ouch. Yes, we are in conflict. We need to come to terms.

**DAPHNIE 2:** How do we do that?

**SOMETHING:** We need paper.

*TECHIES quickly enter with paper.*

**SOMETHING:** And pens.

*TECHIES exit running and quickly enter with pens they then exit running.*

**SOMETHING:** We need to drink our water.

*SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2 raise their glasses simultaneously. DAPHNIE 2 sips hers and puts it down. SOMETHING chugs his entire glass.*

**DAPHNIE 2:** You are something.

**SOMETHING:** Yes. Yes, I am.

*SOMETHING reaches out and slaps DAPHNIE 2. She quickly returns the favor, slapping SOMETHING.*

**DAPHNIE 2 and SOMETHING:** Ouch.

**SOMETHING:** We are still in conflict.

**DAPHNIE 2:** I concur.

**SOMETHING:** You need to write down what you think we must do to end this conflict. I need to do the same.

*SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2 quickly bend to their papers and scratch out a few words.*

**DAPHNIE 2:** Shall I read mine?

**SOMETHING:** Please.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Let it be known that from this moment forward and on into perpetuity, Something and I will henceforth cease and desist from laying hands upon one another's personages.

**SOMETHING:** Ok.

**DAPHNIE 2:** What did you write?

**SOMETHING:** You no slap me, I no slap you.

**DAPHNIE 2:** Ok.

*SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2 exchange papers.*

**SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2:** Sign here, please.

*SOMETHING and DAPHNIE 2 sign one another's papers. SOMETHING spends a long time writing his elaborate signature with numerous ceremonious flourishes. At the end of his routine, they hand the papers back to each other.*

**DAPHNIE 2:** *(Looking at SOMETHING'S signature.)* That is  
Something.

**SOMETHING:** I am Something.

*SOMETHING stands and holds out his hand. DAPHNIE 2 shakes it.*

**SOMETHING:** And you have just come to terms with me.

*DAPHNIE 2 and SOMETHING exit. TECHIES quickly enter and begin removing the water pitcher, glasses, pens, paper, chairs, and table. They then exit running.*

**DAPHNIE:** Now I remember what it means to come to terms. And again, just as I over-emphasized the spelling of my name so you might have thought this whole thing was going to be about my name, but it's not, I have likewise over-emphasized my momentary confusion over the term "coming to terms" to such a degree that you might think that this whole thing is about that phrase. But it's not. I mean, it is about me coming to terms with something, but it's not about "coming to terms," the words themselves. I'm sure you're getting impatient with me. I would be getting impatient with me.

*RAM enters.*

**RAM:** I am getting impatient with you.

**DAPHNIE:** Hello. I believe you are a Representative Audience Member or RAM, for short.

**RAM:** That is true.

**DAPHNIE:** Hello.

**RAM:** You already hello-ed me.

**DAPHNIE:** I know. Hello.

**RAM:** Your insistence on hello-ing me is making me further impatient. You need to get to your point.

**DAPHNIE:** I know I do. I'm sorry.

**RAM:** Don't apologize. Don't hello. Don't personify Something and create an alternative version of yourself to have an overly-long conversation with Something in order to demonstrate the term "coming to terms."

**DAPHNIE:** Well, I was confused for a...

**RAM:** And don't bring me out on stage as a Representative Audience Member to further waste time.

**DAPHNIE:** You'd rather I didn't bring you into existence?

**RAM:** You're stalling.

**DAPHNIE:** I mean, at least you get to...

**RAM:** Quit stalling.

**DAPHNIE:** You know, I wonder if the term "stalling" has anything to do with...

**RAM:** You're a staller.

**DAPHNIE:** Oh, now, name-calling isn't nice.

**RAM:** I'm leaving. I will not be part of this.

*RAM exits.*

**DAPHNIE:** Wait, couldn't we...? He's right. I am stalling. All right. I am going to count to three, and then I am going to come clean. At the end of those three seconds, I am going to divulge what, precisely, I am trying to come to terms with. In just three measly seconds, all will be known! Rome wasn't built in a day, but my case is going to be built in three seconds. Are you ready for this? I am ready for this. I am so ready for this three-second countdown, you just wouldn't believe it! The number three is a beautiful number, and boy, is it ever going to serve us well today. In just three...

*RAM enters with an air horn, which he blasts once. DAPHNIE screams.*

**RAM:** Get on with it!

*RAM exits.*

**DAPHNIE:** That was rude and uncalled for. All right, all right! *(Closes her eyes.)* Three, two, one! *(Opens her eyes. Tries to speak. Closes her eyes.)* Three, two, one! *(Opens her eyes. With great difficulty, speaks.)* My...name...is...Daph...nie...and...and...!... *(Long pause.)*...have an apple!

*DAPHNIE 3 enters, holding an apple on her palm as if displaying it for sale.*

**DAPHNIE 3:** This is an apple. Now, much can be said about apples. How juicy and nutritious they are, how linked to tradition, how they have been used symbolically throughout history. Much, also, can be said about this particular apple. How it is an Empire apple, which is the name of a clonally-propagated cultivar of apple derived from a seed grown in 1945 by Lester C. Anderson, a Cornell University fruit nutritionist. Thank-you, Wikipedia. How it sits in my hand and has a particular weight and texture. How I can call it my apple. How it shines under the lights.

**DAPHNIE:** Now, before any of you think this is just another side-track, another stalling tactic; and before the RAM comes out here and blasts his air horn or punches me in the head because I'm being boring, please understand that this apple is not a purely digressive fruit diversion. No. It has a purpose. It is a stone along the path to my point. It is--in a subtle, even mysterious way, I will admit--getting me closer to coming to terms. Please believe me. Back to the apple.

**DAPHNIE 3:** This apple, as is the case with all apples, has a peel. An outer portion. But it is an essential part of the apple. *(Takes out a peeler and puts it against the apple.)* You can...

**DAPHNIE:** Oh, no.

**DAPHNIE 3:** You can peel away the peel. Like this. *(Presses the peeler into the apple.)*

**DAPHNIE:** Aah!

**DAPHNIE 3:** *(Demonstrating.)* With a turning and pressing motion, you can separate two essential parts of the apple.

**DAPHNIE:** It hurts. It hurts!

**DAPHNIE 3:** But no matter how careful one is, no matter how delicately one might attempt to remove the skin from the flesh...

**DAPHNIE:** The skin and the flesh!

**DAPHNIE 3:** The operation can never be accomplished cleanly. When the skin drops away... *(Drops a piece of apple peel onto the floor.)*

**DAPHNIE:** Oh!

**DAPHNIE 3:** *(Picks up the apple peel.)* Flesh remains adhered to the skin, skin to the flesh. Try as one might to take them apart, they are inseparable.

**DAPHNIE:** Inseparable!

**DAPHNIE 3:** *(Holding up the peeled apple.)* This is not an apple! *(Holding up the apple peel.)* This is not an apple! They are but mangled parts of what was once a beautiful whole.

**DAPHNIE:** Mangled. Mangled.

**DAPHNIE 3:** Notice I peeled with care. Let us not talk of those who attempt to separate the apple from itself and cut deeply! *(Sinks the peeler deep into the apple as she pulls off the peel.)* Let us not talk of those who...

*DAPHNIE suffers both vocally and physically, reacting to DAPHNIE 3'S violence on the apple as if DAPHNIE 3 is doing it to her.*

**DAPHNIE 3:** *(Demonstrating.)* Slice and gouge and stab!

**DAPHNIE:** *(Still Suffering.)* Enough! Enough! I can't take it anymore. Please.

**DAPHNIE 3:** I will leave, carrying the dismembered carcass of my apple.

*DAPHNIE 3 exits solemnly.*

**DAPHNIE:** That was progress. It was painful and harrowing, but it was progress.

*RAM enters with a jar of applesauce. He crosses to DAPHNIE and hands it to her.*

**DAPHNIE:** What is this?

**RAM:** Applesauce.

**DAPHNIE:** Why are you handing me applesauce?

**RAM:** Because if peeling and stabbing an apple was progress, then I figure maybe this can be the end and we can all go home?

**DAPHNIE:** Your attitude it is not at all helpful. Please take your applesauce and leave.

**RAM:** Fine.

*RAM blows his air horn in a short blast. DAPHNIE yelps and jumps.*

**RAM:** Get to your point.

*RAM exits.*

**DAPHNIE:** Again, rude and uncalled for. I am trying to get to my point. I am trying to find my point. I am attempting to come to terms. I am...being repetitious and boring. I would love to get directly to my point. I would love to be scientific and detached and objective. I would love to be ruled by rationality. Look! Look, there I am, being scientific and rational and detached and objective and dressed in a lab coat!

*DAPHNIE 4 enters and faces straight out.*

**DAPHNIE 4:** I am here to perform an autopsy.

**DAPHNIE:** An...?

**DAPHNIE 4:** Autopsy.

**DAPHNIE:** Which means that something is...

**DAPHNIE 4:** Dead. I am here to examine a dead thing.

**DAPHNIE:** Can it be an apple?

**DAPHNIE 4:** No. I have a table.

*TECHIES quickly enter and set up a table.*

**DAPHNIE 4:** I have the instruments for cutting.

*TECHIES exit running and quickly enter with surgical instruments.*

**DAPHNIE 4:** I have a very bright light.

*A spotlight hits DAPHNIE 4 and the table.*

**DAPHNIE 4:** I have everything I need to perform an autopsy of a dead thing except... (*Quickly turns her head toward DAPHNIE.*)

**DAPHNIE:** The dead thing.

**DAPHNIE 4:** The dead thing!

**DAPHNIE:** The thing is, while I appreciate very much the scientific, rational representation of myself.... I want you to know I appreciate you.

**DAPHNIE 4:** I want you to know I don't care.

**DAPHNIE:** Lovely.

**DAPHNIE 4:** I need a body.

**DAPHNIE:** Yes, well, in order to produce a body, I would need to admit what the nature of that body is, and I'm not quite ready to do that.

**DAPHNIE 4:** I am in the mood to slice, cut, chop, dissect, and thereby thoroughly analyze. Bring me the body!

*TECHIES run across the stage and exit. DAPHNIE runs towards where they exited.*

**DAPHNIE:** No, no, no, no!

**DAPHNIE 4:** Bring out the body!

*TECHIES enter, carrying a body bag. DAPHNIE stops them.*

**DAPHNIE:** Not yet!

**DAPHNIE 4:** I require the body!

**DAPHNIE:** *(To TECHIES.)* Stay right there! Please, you have to understand what kind of stress I'm feeling right now. Not only have I been through something very traumatic with which I am trying to come to terms, but I have also, somehow, ended up in this dramatic representation that calls for me to divulge my trauma in a very public way and under some sort of very stringent timeline. I can understand the audience's need to...

**DAPHNIE 4:** Let me at that body!

*TECHIES start to move toward the table with the body bag when DAPHNIE turns and speaks to them menacingly.*

**DAPHNIE:** If you take one more step across this stage with that body, I will not be held responsible for the damage I will inflict upon you, your families, your acquaintances, and your pets down to the last flea living on the last mouse living in the remotest corner of your attic!

*TECHIES and DAPHNIE 4 begin backing away from DAPHNIE pulling the table until they have exited.*

**DAPHNIE:** I'm sorry. That was the stress talking. I'm sorry, but this has all been so negative so far! Couldn't we just lighten things up a bit? I mean, I fully intend to reveal what I am dealing with, and I fully intend to come to terms with it. But I feel so rushed. Instead of pressure, I could use some encouragement.

*DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS enter energetically.*

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Go, Daphnie, go, Daphnie, go, Daphnie, go!

**DAPHNIE:** How nice! Thank-you!

**DAPHNIE 5:** We know you can do it!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** You just said so!

**DAPHNIE 6:** You're going through a tough time!

**DAPHNIE 7:** You're feeling lots of stress!

**DAPHNIE 8:** You're really trying hard to get it...

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Off your chest!

**DAPHNIE:** So true. So true!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Go, Daphnie, go, Daphnie!

**DAPHNIE 9:** Gonna feel better!

**DAPHNIE 10:** This thing is bugging you...

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Like an itchy sweater!

**DAPHNIE:** That is an apt comparison!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Go, Daph, go, Daph!

**DAPHNIE 11:** Get what you need!

**DAPHNIE 5:** You're capable and lovable!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** You're gonna succeed!

*DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS surround DAPHNIE, yelling and cheering for her.*

**DAPHNIE:** Oh, guys, that is so nice! Thank-you! I feel a lot better.

**DAPHNIE 6:** You're awesome, Daphnie!

**DAPHNIE 7:** We love you!

**DAPHNIE:** Well, even though you're all incarnations of me, I'm still going to take those compliments at face value.

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Yay!

**DAPHNIE:** Yay is right! Go me, go me, go me, go! I'm gonna be sure not to eat yellow snow! Yay! Yay!

*DAPHNIE looks around and sees DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS are not thrilled with her cheer.*

**DAPHNIE:** Okay, so I may not be great at that. But while we're stopped, look! Everybody line up! Line up! (*To audience.*) I'm sure you've noticed the resemblance. You might wonder why I'm doing this, having this gang, this posse, this gathering of alter-me's out here. One me did the coming to terms bit; another peeled the apple, which was horrifying; a third me was the logical, scientific one which I scared off with my psycho moment; and now we have six more me's cheering me on!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Yay, yay, here all day,  
All of us are called Daphnay!

**DAPHNIE:** Daphnay?

**DAPHNIE 8:** Sometimes rhymes make you do bad things.

**DAPHNIE 9:** Like butcher names.

**DAPHNIE:** Why not, “Yay, yay, here we be,  
All of us are called Daphnie”?

*DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS look at one another for a moment, then suddenly smile in unison.*

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** That works!

**DAPHNIE:** Anyway, the reason for all of my alter egos is that the event I am coming to terms with has left me totally beside myself. Many times over, beside myself. I am broken into multiple parts. I am left staring out the windows of my eyes at the numerous other selves from which I am separated. All of these Daphnies are pieces of me, but only pieces, and I am not certain I will ever be whole again.

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Daphnies, Daphnies, Daphnies all,  
That’s so sad we’re going to ball. *(All begin to cry loudly.)*

**DAPHNIE:** Guys, guys, my Daphnies, I’m sorry! Yes, I am beside myself--myselfs, all of you--but you’re here to remind me that I can do it, right? I can face and even come to terms with what’s happened. I can’t believe I’m being cheerleader to my cheerleaders, but don’t let me get me down. You down. Me down. Us down. We can do this, right?

**DAPHNIE 10:** *(Tentatively.)* Daphnie is our girl, yeah.

**DAPHNIE 11:** *(Trying to build.)* She can rock our world, yeah.

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** *(Slowly getting out of the funk.)* She can rock it, she can rock it, she can rock our world! Yeah!

**DAPHNIE 5:** Daphnie has a posse; Daphnie has a crew!

**DAPHNIE 6:** With all of us with all of her...

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Just watch what we can do!

**DAPHNIE 7:** Daphnie is beside herself!

**DAPHNIE 8:** Daphnie ten times over!

**DAPHNIE 9:** It’s lucky that we’re here with her!

**DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS:** Just like a four-leaf clove...

*RAM and PETER enter. DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS see them, break from their cheer and cower away. DAPHNIE does not see RAM and PETER at first.*

**DAPHNIE:** Clover! Clover! You have to finish the rhyme or else you leave... (*Turns to see RAM and Peter. She screams and jumps back to where DAPHNIE CHEERLEADERS are.*) What have you done?

**RAM:** Yeah, hi. I was out in the lobby trying to get a cell signal so I could call somebody to pick me from this thing you're doing and maybe go do something more fun like have emergency surgery when I saw this guy wandering around and we started talking and he said he knew what your problem was so I brought him out here to speed things up. (*To PETER.*) So dude, for the sake of all that is holy, speed things up, huh?

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