

# THE ILL COSTUMED ROMEO

By Edith Weiss

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## The III Costumed Romeo

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### Characters: 1 Male, 1 Female, 1 Flex

BRAD: The actor playing Romeo, a high school athlete who would rather be playing football.

CHRIS: Brad's girlfriend, who passionately loves the theater

KARL: The student director, calm, mature beyond his years

*(Enter BRAD, in short puffy pants, furious, KARL, and CHRIS, BRAD'S girlfriend, SR.)*

BRAD: You've got to be kidding me! I'm not wearing these!

CHRIS: *(following)* Brad, do you know how long it took me to make those?

BRAD: I can't wear these pants. Look at this! Could these pants be any poofier? I feel ridiculous!

KARL: That's what they wore back then.

CHRIS: Brad, we're doing one of the most beautiful love scenes ever written, so please-

BRAD: And why do we have to do Romeo and Juliet? Why couldn't we do the swordfight scene in Hamlet where everybody dies? Now that's cool.

KARL: Brad, think of it this way—Romeo and Juliet, you and Chris- it'll be like playing yourselves.

BRAD: What kind of a girlfriend makes her boyfriend wear pants like this? Do I really have to wear these pants?

CHRIS: I'm not your girlfriend anymore if you don't!

KARL: *(quickly, before BRAD can respond)* Places!

*(KARL moves STAGE LEFT, CHRIS gets on a chair, BRAD stands next to her.)*

CHRIS: "Dost thou love me? O gentle Romeo, if thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully. Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won, I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay, so thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world. I should have been more strange, I must confess, but that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware, my true-love passion. Therefore pardon me, and not impute this yielding to light love, which the dark night hath so discovered."

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*(Pausing, SHE waits for ROMEO'S answer. HE has become distracted by trying to flatten his very puffy pants.)*

KARL: Brad, it's your line.

BRAD: Sorry. Give me the cue again.

CHRIS: I said, *(back into her Juliet persona)* "Therefore pardon me, and not impute this yielding to light love, which the dark night hath so discovered."

BRAD: *(listlessly)* Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow-

CHRIS: Don't say lady like that!

KARL: Chris, I'll handle-

BRAD: You're not the director, so quit directing me!

CHRIS: You sound like an irate mall cop. You're being impossible!

KARL: If everyone could calm down-

BRAD: I just don't understand half of what Juliet says! And I hate these pants! They're so-

CHRIS: *(interrupting)* Don't start with the pants again!

KARL: This isn't a fashion show-What's important are the lines. What don't you understand, Brad?

BRAD: Like when she says "I should have been more strange." Why does she want to be weirder than she is?

KARL: It doesn't mean weird; it means she shouldn't have treated him in such a familiar way and asked him straight out if he loved her. She should have acted more like a stranger, get it?

BRAD: Yeah.

KARL: "Therefore pardon me and not impute this yielding to light love." means, don't think my love is like a silly little crush, it's true love! "...which the dark night hath so discovered." Okay. That's your cue, Brad.

BRAD: All right. *(mechanically)* "Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow that tips with silver all these fruit tree tops-"

CHRIS: Now you sound like a robot! Nobody can act with you!

BRAD: It's just stupid! Why does Shakespeare have to go on and on and on?

CHRIS: I don't believe you. You are inane.

KARL: Come on, guys, how are you going to do this scene if all you do is fight?

CHRIS: He started it. He's not even trying. It's like acting with a pillow in pantaloons.

BRAD: And who made the stupid pantaloons?

CHRIS: It took me hours-

KARL: Let's take five-

BRAD: *(starting to exit)* I'm outta here.

CHRIS: Get back here or I am breaking up with you right now!

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BRAD: Oh, yeah? Well, I'm breaking up with you! It's over!

*(BRAD goes UPS and fumes, KARL crosses to CHRIS)*

CHRIS: *(yelling after BRAD)* Good! *(to KARL)* He dumped me!

KARL: It was kind of a mutual dumping, really. Let me talk to him.

*(CHRIS goes UPSTAGE LEFT. KARL crosses to BRAD)*

KARL: Brad, what's up?

BRAD: I'd rather be playing football. The only reason I'm here is that Chris asked me to do it. And I hate this costume.

KARL: Acting isn't about cool costumes – it's not about being cool at all. You can't be cool and be any good. Being cool can be really boring, you know. You gotta care. You care about Christina, right?

BRAD: She just dumped me!

KARL: It was really more of a mutual dumping, don't you think? Anyway, let's do the scene the way it was written – with emotion, with passion - like that fight you guys just had. Or the way you play football. All right?

BRAD: All right. Chris, can we try this again?

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