

ROMEO & WHAT'S HER NAME

By Rusty Harding

Copyright © MMXIV by Rusty Harding. All Rights Reserved.
Brooklyn Publishers LLC in association with Heuer Publishing LLC

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 Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. 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 Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work 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.

BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (888) 473-8521 • FAX (319) 368-8011

ROMEO & WHAT'S HER NAME

By Rusty Harding

SYNOPSIS: A harried director has only two weeks to bring Shakespeare's timeless classic to life, but he's never auditioned a Juliet quite like this.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 male, 1 female, 1 either)

DIRECTOR (m)..... (36 lines)

ASSISTANT (m/f)..... (15 lines)

JILLIAN (f)..... (22 lines)

JANITOR (m)..... (16 lines)

SETTING: Should be minimal; a bare stage only.

PROPS

- Mop
- Clipboard
- Pen/pencil
- 2 play scripts
- Cell phone
- Small paper bag

AT RISE: *DIRECTOR and ASSISTANT walk onto an empty stage. JANITOR silently mops the floor in one corner. ASSISTANT carries a play script and scribbles notes on a clipboard as DIRECTOR speaks.*

DIRECTOR: ...And we need to make sure that we have plenty of fake blood for the dueling scenes. Make sure it's the good stuff; not that black junk we got online. Last play we did it looked like all of our wounded were zombies.

ASSISTANT: Check. Real-looking fake blood. Anything else?

DIRECTOR: Yes. Is it possible to buy Tylenol in bulk?

ASSISTANT: I don't know. Maybe at Costco?

DIRECTOR: See if you can find a couple of cases. Or better yet, make it Vicodin.

ASSISTANT: Problems?

DIRECTOR: Our illustrious producer has informed me that the only way he'll continue to fund this little fiasco is if we cast his daughter in the lead.

ASSISTANT: Ah. I take it she's not an actress?

DIRECTOR: I'm not even certain she's human.

ASSISTANT: Come on, Frank, she can't be that bad.

DIRECTOR: Just wait. *(Sighing wearily.)* All right, let's not delay the pain any longer.

ASSISTANT: *(Shouting to offstage.)* Actors on set, please!

A young actress, JILLIAN, enters from the wings. She smiles and waves to the director.

JILLIAN: Hi, Mr. Kelly!

DIRECTOR: *(Forcing a smile back.)* Hello, Ms. Evans. How are you today?

JILLIAN: I'm fine, thanks. Daddy said to tell you hello.

DIRECTOR: Did he? How nice of him. And how is his bankbook?
(Quickly.) I mean back-ache?

JILLIAN: He's doing better.

DIRECTOR: Good, good. We need to keep him in good health. Let's get started, shall we? *(Glancing around anxiously.)* Where's our Romeo?

ASSISTANT: I haven't seen him.

DIRECTOR: (*Frustrated.*) Great! Just what I needed today. (*Sees JANITOR.*) Dave, can you help us out, please?

JANITOR: (*Startled.*) Me?

DIRECTOR: Yes, you. I need a stand in for Romeo.

JANITOR: You mean, you want me to act?

DIRECTOR: No, I just want you to read a line of dialogue at the proper time.

JANITOR: (*Eagerly.*) But I'll be acting, right?

DIRECTOR: Yes, Dave, if it makes you feel better, you'll be acting. (*Rolling eyes at ASSISTANT.*) Darvocet.

ASSISTANT hands JANITOR a copy of the script.

JANITOR: What do you want me to do?

DIRECTOR: Just stand there opposite Juliet, and read the highlighted line when I point to you.

JANITOR: (*Striking a theatrical pose.*) Like this?

DIRECTOR: Yes, that's fine.

JANITOR: (*Changing poses, more dramatic.*) Or maybe this would be better?

DIRECTOR: However you want to stand is fine, Dave.

JANITOR: But I really want to do it right.

DIRECTOR: Dave, it's just one line. You can stand on your head if you'd like.

JANITOR: But I want to make sure—

DIRECTOR: (*Losing it.*) Just read the stupid line!

Everyone looks at DIRECTOR anxiously.

DIRECTOR: Sorry, sorry! Just a little wound up today. My apologies to all. Let's just try to get through this as painlessly as possible, all right? From the balcony scene, please.

JILLIAN: (*Tapping at her script.*) Mr. Kelly, I have a couple of questions.

DIRECTOR: (*Quietly, as if not to be overheard.*) Why am I not surprised? (*Pleasantly.*) And what might those be, dear?

JILLIAN: This Shakespeare guy, was he Russian or what? I mean, what exactly is this language? 'Cause it sure ain't English.

DIRECTOR: It ain't? I mean, it isn't?

JILLIAN: It can't be! Thee, thou, wouldst; who talks like that?

DIRECTOR: Ah, well, that would be Early Modern English, Ms. Evans. That's the way people used to talk, a long time ago.

JILLIAN: (*Nodding thoughtfully.*) Oh. Like back in the Sixties?

DIRECTOR: (*After a pause.*) Yes. (*Beat.*) Yes, exactly like the Sixties. In fact, I'll never forget that great Beatles hit, "I Wish To Hold Thy Hand". (*Sighing.*) Please, let's just continue.

JILLIAN: (*Assuming a pose.*) Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo... (*Suddenly leaving character.*) Why is she asking that, anyway?

DIRECTOR: Excuse me?

JILLIAN: Why is she asking where Romeo is? (*Gesturing to JANITOR.*) I mean, he's standing right there below her. Does she need glasses or something?

DIRECTOR: (*Hyperventilating.*) Our father, who art in heaven...

ASSISTANT: (*Hurriedly patting DIRECTOR'S shoulder.*) Easy, Frank, take it easy. Remember the funding.

DIRECTOR: Funding? Funding, yes. Thank you, Chris. Always nice to keep things in perspective. (*To JILLIAN, calming.*) She's not asking where he is, Ms. Evans, but rather, *why* he is.

JILLIAN: Huh?

DIRECTOR: Why is he a Montague. His family and her family are feuding, they don't get along. Juliet is lamenting the fact that Romeo can't be someone different, so she would be free to love him.

JILLIAN: Oh, you mean it's like philosophical or something? I took philosophy in college. Didn't really get it, though, so I dropped it for interpretive dance.

DIRECTOR stares at JILLIAN catatonically.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from ROMEO & WHAT'S HER NAME by Rusty Harding. 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