

# **THE SHOW MUST GO ON (DURING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE)**

**By Bradley Walton**

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## SYNOPSIS

The school is putting on a play. The rehearsals were plagued with difficulties, but the cast, crew, and especially the director took the saying “the show must go on” to heart, and they’ve made it to opening night. Now, as the curtain rises, there’s a new problem—the zombie apocalypse has begun. But even though zombies are eating audience members while the stage manager fights off zombies attacking the cast onstage, the performance continues, because the show must go on!

## CHARACTERS

*(17 roles: 2 males, 2 females, 13 either, extras possible  
With doubling, 13 actors possible: 2 males, 2 females, 9 either)*

DIRECTOR (M or F)	Director of the play “Teenage Problems”
CRYSTAL / CHRIS (F or M)	Stage manager of the play “Teenage Problems”
“MEL” (F)	A narcissistic and self-absorbed character in the play “Teenage Problems”
“JACK” (M)	A character in the play “Teenage Problems,” sees “Mel” for what she is
“SUSAN” (F)	A character in the play “Teenage Problems,” “Mel’s” friend
“BOBBY” (M)	A character in the play “Teenage Problems,” has a crush on “Mel”
“PATRICIA” / “PATRICK” (M or F)	A character in the play “Teenage Problems,” a super-active jock being played by an actor on crutches with a broken leg
“ANNIE” / “ARNIE” (M or F)	A character in the play “Teenage Problems,” a party hostess being played by an actress wearing an eye patch

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1 (M or F)

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2 (M or F)

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3 (M or F)

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4 (M or F)

ZOMBIE 1 (M or F)

ZOMBIE 2 (M or F)

ZOMBIE 3 (M or F)

ZOMBIE 4 (M or F)

ZOMBIE 5 (M or F)

## **FLEXIBLE CASTING**

### **DOUBLING**

Depending on how elaborate your production's zombie makeup is, it is possible for the AUDIENCE MEMBERS to double as ZOMBIES 2, 3, 4 and 5. (Actually, it would work out very nicely for AUDIENCE MEMBER 4 to come back as ZOMBIE 5.)

### **EXTRAS**

There may be additional AUDIENCE MEMBERS who get up and leave during the show. These AUDIENCE MEMBERS can then double as additional PARTYGOERS for the party scene.

## **DURATION**

Approximately 25 minutes

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

### **COSTUMES**

The CHARACTERS in the play-within-the-play are dressed in contemporary teenage attire.

The DIRECTOR should wear something dressy and nice-looking.

CRYSTAL is the stage manager and should be dressed in all black. She may have multiple changes of the same outfit in progressively more and more ragged condition as her appearance becomes increasingly disheveled from fighting zombies as the show progresses.

The AUDIENCE MEMBERS are dressed in normal street clothes.

The ZOMBIES wear torn and bloodied clothes.

### **STAGING**

There are two scenes in “Teenage Problems,” the play-within-the-play. The first is a school hallway. Some lockers or a flat with lockers painted on it would be ideal for this scene, but it could also be performed on a bare stage if need be. The second scene is in a living room where a party is being held. A sofa is needed here, along with a table with a stereo. Some other living room furniture would be useful to help set the scene as well. Alternatively, it would be fine to paint or draw the furniture pieces on small flats and place them around the stage.

### **DIRECTOR NOTES**

Since the zombies are introduced part way through the show, some groups may want to keep the undead element a secret and completely surprise the unsuspecting audience. This may be particularly effective if the play is performed as a school assembly. (If you're charging admission, it may not be such a good idea.) If you feel that surprising your audience would be beneficial to your particular production, it is permissible to advertise the show with the title “Teenage Problems” and use that title in your programs. Actors playing AUDIENCE MEMBERS and ZOMBIES may be listed as “additional cast members.” The DIRECTOR and CRYSTAL could be listed as “student director” and “assistant stage manager,” and CRYSTAL’s name can be changed to

that of the performer. Proper credit must still be given to the author on all programs, posters, and advertising. At the end of the show, a slide that reads as follows must be projected on a screen or wall:

This has been a production of  
~~Teenage Problems~~  
**The Show Must Go On**  
**(During the Zombie Apocalypse)**  
by  
Bradley Walton

If the play is being performed at a festival or competition, it must be entered and listed in all programs and advertising under its real title.

### **AUTHOR NOTES**

At this point in my career, *The Show Must Go On (During the Zombie Apocalypse)* is my second-favorite idea for a play that I've ever had. (The first being *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee in Your Pants*, which is about a teenager trying to walk nonchalantly through a mall while wearing a diaper full of coffee under his pants. And yes, I've given up on ever becoming a completely mature adult.)

I've never been a big fan of the zombie genre, with *The Walking Dead* (both the comic and the TV show) being a major exception. But the idea of zombies attacking a school play... and the performance *just keeps going...* I had to do it. Just had to.

### **PROPERTIES – PERSONAL**

clipboard – DIRECTOR  
cell phone – “MEL”  
cell phone – “BOBBY”  
cell phone – AUDIENCE MEMBER 1  
cell phone – AUDIENCE MEMBER 2  
cell phone – AUDIENCE MEMBER 3  
crutches and leg cast – “PATRICIA”  
music stand or stool – CRYSTAL  
crowbar – CRYSTAL  
roll of duct tape – CRYSTAL

## THE SHOW MUST GO ON (DURING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE)

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***In front of the closed curtain, the DIRECTOR enters, holding a clipboard, and addresses the audience.***

DIRECTOR: Good evening. I'd like to welcome everyone to (*insert name of school or organization*)'s production of "Teenage Problems." My name is (*insert name of performer*) and I directed (*or "student-directed"*) this show. It's been an interesting few weeks. Prepping a play is always a challenge, but this one was more challenging than usual. Due to various scheduling conflicts in our auditorium (*or "theatre"*), we were forced to hold most of our rehearsals on the school's tennis courts (*or "in the alley out back"*). One cast member moved to Italy a week after auditions, but we were able to re-cast the role. The following week, another cast member sustained a severe eye injury while brushing her teeth. Happily, she was able to rejoin the show. Then on the one day we were able to rehearse in the auditorium, another cast member fell off the stage and broke a leg. Literally. But she's a brave girl—she hasn't let that stop her and she's still with our production. This morning, on top of everything else, our stage manager's goldfish died, but I'm very proud to say that she soldiered through it. Crystal, why don't you come out here for a second? (*CRYSTAL enters from R, looking slightly embarrassed.*) Stage managers don't get a lot of recognition, so I want to recognize Crystal. She runs things backstage, and if there's any kind of a problem back there during the show, she's the one who deals with it. Everybody, let's give Crystal a nice round of applause. She conducted a toilet-side funeral with her family earlier today, but she's here now and I admire her dedication. I respect the dedication of *everyone* involved in our show. Through all of the problems and tribulations we've weathered over the past few weeks, the one thing that I have repeated to my cast, over and over, is that the show must go on. No matter what. And now, here we are. I hope you enjoy the show.

(*CRYSTAL exits R. The DIRECTOR takes a seat in the front row of the audience. Curtain opens for SCENE 1, a hallway in a school. "JACK" is standing by his locker as "MEL" talks to him.*)

MEL: I don't believe this! My life sucks!

JACK: Bummer.

MEL: “Bummer”? I tell you that my life sucks and all you have to say is “bummer”?

JACK: What else am I supposed to say?

MEL: You could say you’re sorry. You could ask why my life sucks.

JACK: If you want to tell me why your life sucks, then tell me why your life sucks. Don’t make me ask you.

MEL: But if you ask me, then that means you care and you’re interested.

JACK: If it’s bad enough and important enough for you to tell me, I wouldn’t have to ask. But since I do have to ask, then that means it’s something trivial and personal that doesn’t affect me and really isn’t any of my business.

MEL: You sit next to me in English. My business is your business.

JACK: Not really, no.

MEL: But we spend an hour a day sitting three feet apart from each other. If I’m radiating negative energy, it affects you.

JACK: No it doesn’t.

MEL: Yes it does.

JACK: How?

MEL: Because it’s like, radiating out from me and you’re sitting nearby.

JACK: Okay. Wow. That clears that up. Thanks for explaining.

MEL: You like, soak up my negative energy. And that’s bad for you. It makes you suffer. Don’t you want to know why you’re suffering?

JACK: Why am I suffering?

MEL: Are you going to make this about you? Seriously?

JACK: But...

MEL: You’re supposed to ask what my problems are. You’re supposed to be concerned about me!

JACK: What are your problems? Why does your life suck?

MEL: Thank you.

JACK: You’re welcome.

MEL: I gained a pound.

JACK: You gained a pound?

MEL: Yup.

JACK: One pound?

MEL: One whole pound.

JACK: That’s it?

MEL: No, of course that’s not it. How shallow and self-absorbed do you think I am, anyway?

JACK: Do you really want me to tell you?

MEL: Only if you promise to lie. And then, as if gaining a pound wasn’t enough, it was raining this morning.

JACK: Yeah, I noticed that. Had you spent a lot of time on your hair or something?

MEL: No.

JACK: So why is the rain bad?

MEL: It screws up my mood.

JACK: Ah.

MEL: Just makes me want to sink down inside of myself and not come out.

JACK: Maybe you should consider doing that.

MEL: But I want to be better than that.

JACK: Oh.

*(“SUSAN” enters from L.)*

SUSAN: Mel, it's like the worst thing ever!

MEL: *(assuming this has something to do with “SUSAN”)* No it's not.

SUSAN: You're so brave.

MEL: *(catching on that “SUSAN” is talking about her)* Absolutely. What are you talking about?

SUSAN: Don't you know?

MEL: No.

SUSAN: Then why did you—?

MEL: I thought you were going to talk about your problems.

SUSAN: Yours seem more pressing.

MEL: Of course they are. *(Beat.)* Do I have a problem that I don't know about?

SUSAN: Bobby Larson wants to ask you to the prom.

MEL: That's not funny.

SUSAN: I'm not kidding.

MEL: You should be kidding.

SUSAN: I'm not kidding.

MEL: Crap.

JACK: What's wrong with Bobby? Bobby's a nice guy.

MEL: Bobby has a really hairy back.

JACK: So?

MEL: Like, his back looks like he's about fifty years old. Susan and I saw him at the pool last summer. It was gross.

JACK: It's not like he's going to be taking off his shirt at prom.

MEL: I know. But if I'm dancing with him and my hands are touching the back of his shirt or his jacket, I'm going to be thinking about the hair underneath and it's going to freak me out and make me go all like, “ugh.” Because it's just not normal. Sixteen-year-old guys shouldn't have backs like gorillas.

JACK: I hate to break this to you, but you really can't judge a person by their back hair.

MEL: Sure you can.

JACK: Okay, you can. But that doesn't make it a good judgment, you know? Bobby's friendly. He's smart. He's funny. I'm pretty sure he qualifies as reasonably good looking. To get all stressed about him asking you to prom because of his back hair... that just seems...

MEL: You realize you're judging me, right?

JACK: How can you get upset about me judging you when you're judging Bobby?

MEL: I have a reason to judge Bobby. He has a hairy back and he wants to ask me to prom. That affects me. That's a problem. Me judging Bobby does not affect you, therefore you have no reason to judge me, and it's a really crummy thing for you to do, because I have enough problems already.

JACK: You don't know what a problem is! I would love to have your problems!

MEL: Okay... if I find out any of my girl friends have hairy backs, I'll let them know you're interested. Actually, here... *(pulls out a cell phone and pushes some buttons on it)* "Jack likes girls with hairy backs." There, I posted it online for you. You're welcome.

*("MEL" exits R.)*

JACK: Is it my imagination, or is she a completely self-absorbed, narcissistic wench?

SUSAN: Jack?

JACK: Yeah?

SUSAN: The problem's not her. It's you.

*("SUSAN" exits R. "BOBBY" enters from L, holding a cell phone.)*

BOBBY: Jack.

JACK: Hey, Bobby.

BOBBY: *(looking at his cell phone)* You're into girls with hairy backs?

JACK: Um...

BOBBY: My sister is looking for a prom date.

JACK: I never really thought about it before.

BOBBY: That's pretty shallow of you, man.

JACK: Apparently, I'm a horrible person. I assume you're following Mel's posts online?

BOBBY: Yeah, sure.

JACK: She just posted that about me to be nasty.

BOBBY: What's nasty is that you dismiss my sister without even knowing her because she's got a hairy back.

JACK: Listen, Bobby, I heard you wanted to ask Mel to prom.

BOBBY: I was thinking about it, yeah. How'd you know?

JACK: Did you tell Susan?

BOBBY: I was trying to feel her out to see if she thought Mel would go with me.

JACK: What'd she say?

BOBBY: Not much. She looked like she was trying hard not to laugh. I think somebody had just told her a joke or something.

JACK: I think she might have been laughing at you.

BOBBY: At me? Come on, Jack! That'd be mean.

JACK: Bobby, I hate to break it to you, but Susan and Mel don't respect you very much.

BOBBY: Sure they do. Why wouldn't they? I'm nice to everybody. I get decent grades. I'm athletic.

JACK: Apparently, you have a hairy back.

BOBBY: Duh. Anybody who's ever seen me at the pool knows that. It runs in my family.

JACK: Mel and Susan think it's a turn-off.

BOBBY: They're not that shallow. The only person here who's that shallow is you.

JACK: Because Mel and Susan aren't here.

BOBBY: Don't go bad-mouthing them behind their backs!

JACK: All I said was that they weren't here!

BOBBY: But that's not what you meant!

JACK: Okay, no, it wasn't.

BOBBY: I'm very fond of Mel.

JACK: I know.

BOBBY: I think she's really pretty.

JACK: She is really pretty.

BOBBY: Are you trying to steal her away from me?

JACK: No.

BOBBY: You are. You're trying to turn me against her so you can have her for yourself.

JACK: I'm not.

BOBBY: I've had my eye on Mel for months and I've finally worked up the nerve to do something about it and I'm not letting you get in my way. So if you know what's good for you, back off!

*(“BOBBY” exits R. “PATRICIA” enters from L. SHE has a cast on one leg and is on crutches.)*

PATRICIA: Hey, Jack.

JACK: Hey, Patricia. What's up?

PATRICIA: Not much. Going skiing with my boyfriend this evening.

JACK: Cool. You guys spend a lot of time together and you never seem to get sick of each other. That's terrific.

PATRICIA: We've got a lot in common so that helps. We're both into hiking and ice climbing in the mountains... which is what we'd be doing this weekend if I didn't have the cross-country meet. But yeah... we're a really good match for each other and we knew it from the get-go.

*(AUDIENCE MEMBER 1's cell phone rings out in the audience.)*

We're lucky. Some people go through years and years of chasing after the wrong person and I never had to deal with any of that.

*(AUDIENCE MEMBER 1 answers the ringing phone.)*

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: Hello? Can I call you back? I'm at a play right now.

PATRICIA: *(visibly trying not to be distracted)* I can't imagine what a drain on a person's life it is to pursue a romantic interest in somebody who's completely wrong for them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: *(standing up and talking loudly)* What? For real? Oh my gosh! *(Begins to exit the auditorium.)* Get the car packed up and I'll be there as soon as I can! *(Hurriedly exits.)*

*(“JACK” and “PATRICIA” watch AUDIENCE MEMBER 1 go. THEY are clearly thrown by this.)*

DIRECTOR: *(from audience)* Keep it going!

PATRICIA: *(refocusing on the play)* Um... yeah. Some people are completely wrong for each other, and that's um... bad.

JACK: Yeah. Um. Like Bobby.

PATRICIA: Is he chasing after somebody who's totally wrong for him?

JACK: He's got a thing for Mel and wants to go to prom with her.

PATRICIA: Mel's a snotty, self-entitled narcissist.

JACK: I know. And she's not interested in him at all, but he refuses to believe it.

PATRICIA: Bobby's a nice guy. He deserves better than to waste his time pining away for her.

JACK: Any suggestions?

PATRICIA: Annie's having a big “Twister” party at her house tomorrow night. If we can get Bobby and Mel there together, maybe we can get her to straight-out acknowledge that she's not interested, or even better, maybe we can get him to see what a jerk she really is.

JACK: Do you think you could get us all invited?

PATRICIA: Yeah, sure. Annie likes to have big, epic games of “Twister.” The more people, the better. She and Mel are friends, so Mel will

probably go. And if I tell Bobby that Mel's going, he'll definitely go. Shouldn't be any problem at all.

JACK: Is this going to screw up any plans of yours?

PATRICIA: Actually, it works out great. My boyfriend's busy tomorrow night and I love a good game of "Twister."

*(Blackout. Curtain. AUDIENCE MEMBER 2's phone rings in the audience.)*

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(answering phone)* Hello? Hey. This is a bad time. *(Pause.)* I'm at the school *(or "theatre")*. Why?

*(AUDIENCE MEMBER 3's phone rings in the audience.)*

What do you mean, it's all over the news? What's all over the news?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(answering phone)* I can't talk right now. I'm at a play.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone)* Are you sure it's not a TV movie?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone)* That's impossible.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone)* It sounds like a movie.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone)* Helicopters?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone)* The National Guard?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone)* A quarantine?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone, getting up to leave)*

Okay, I'm coming.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone, getting up to leave)*

Granddad's old hunting rifle is in the closet in the spare bedroom.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone, on way out of auditorium)* You stay put 'til I get there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone, on way out of auditorium)* The bullets are in the bathroom closet behind the toilet cleaner.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: *(speaking into phone, exiting auditorium)* I'm on my way, okay?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: *(speaking into phone, exiting auditorium)* I think the whole idea was that nobody would find them there.

*(As the play progresses from here, there may be extra AUDIENCE MEMBERS who receive text messages on their phones and leave. The curtain now opens on SCENE 2, a living room at "ANNIE's" home where a party is being thrown. There is a sofa, a table with a stereo, and there may be other furniture as well. The basement is offstage L, the TV room is offstage UC, and the front door is offstage R. "BOBBY" and "ANNIE,"*

*the party hostess, are onstage, talking. "ANNIE" is wearing an eye patch.)*

BOBBY: Thanks a bunch for the invite, Annie.

ANNIE: Sure. Glad you could make it.

*("PATRICIA" enters from L on crutches.)*

BOBBY: Hey, Patricia.

PATRICIA: Hey, Bobby.

ANNIE: Having a good time?

PATRICIA: Definitely.

ANNIE: Are you kicking everybody's butt at "Twister" down in the basement?

PATRICIA: Pretty much, yeah. I took a breather so somebody else could have a chance to win.

BOBBY: I haven't made it down there yet. Who all's playing?

PATRICIA: Susan and Mel and some others.

BOBBY: Cool. I was hoping to talk to Mel.

ANNIE: Jack's here, too.

BOBBY: He is?

ANNIE: Yeah.

BOBBY: We had kind of an argument yesterday. I'm not sure I want to see him right now.

PATRICIA: Tell you what... I'll go down and see if I can get Mel to come up here.

BOBBY: Okay... but don't tell her it's because I want to talk to her. I um... I don't want there to be any pressure, you know?

ANNIE: Tell her I want to show her the new 3-D television my parents just got.

BOBBY: Thanks.

ANNIE: Sure. No problem.

PATRICIA: Be right back.

*("PATRICIA" exits L. ZOMBIE 1 enters at the back of the auditorium.)*

ANNIE: Not that it's any of my business, but what'd you want to talk to Mel about?

ZOMBIE 1: Brainnnnsssss...

*(BOBBY looks out into the audience at ZOMBIE 1. ANNIE stays focused on BOBBY.)*

BOBBY: Oh. Nothing.

ANNIE: Sorry. Overstepped my bounds there. Sorry for the awkward moment.

BOBBY: No. No. It's okay.

*(ZOMBIE 1 attacks AUDIENCE MEMBER 4.)*

ZOMBIE 1: Eat brains!

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4: Let go of me! Leggo! Aaaggggh!!!

*(ZOMBIE 1 makes biting and chewing noises. AUDIENCE MEMBER 4 screams and thrashes, then dies. ZOMBIE 1 drags AUDIENCE MEMBER 4 out of the auditorium. ANNIE and BOBBY stare.)*

DIRECTOR: *(from audience)* Ignore it! Keep going! The show must go on!

ANNIE: Um... sorry for the awkward moment.

BOBBY: No. No. It's okay.

ANNIE: I really feel like I put my foot in my mouth there.

BOBBY: Don't worry about it.

ANNIE: Body parts aren't meant for eating.

BOBBY: Only in zombie movies.

ANNIE: *(laughs weakly)* Yeah. Only in zombie movies.

BOBBY: Actually, I was kind of thinking about asking Mel to prom.

ANNIE: Really?

BOBBY: Yeah. Do you think she'd go with me?

ZOMBIE 2: *(offstage)* Rrrrr.

CRYSTAL: *(offstage)* Hey, you're not allowed back here!

ANNIE: You're a really nice guy, Bobby.

CRYSTAL: *(offstage)* What are you doing? Are you seriously trying to bite me?

ANNIE: But it's hard to figure out sometimes whether two people will have good chemistry together. Some people just have very specific tastes.

ZOMBIE 2: *(offstage)* Brainnnss!!!

ANNIE: I'm sure that there are girls who'd be into you so much that you'd have to fight them off.

*(CRYSTAL and ZOMBIE 2 enter from R. CRYSTAL is backing onto the stage, trying to hold off ZOMBIE 2 with a stool, music stand, or other piece of backstage equipment.)*

CRYSTAL: Get away from me!

(“ANNIE” and “BOBBY” look at CRYSTAL and ZOMBIE 2, then at the DIRECTOR in the audience. HE holds up a hand and makes a circular gesture, indicating that THEY should keep going.)

BOBBY: Fight them off?

ANNIE: Yeah.

BOBBY: You think so?

ANNIE: Definitely.

BOBBY: I've never had that problem before.

ANNIE: You probably will. Just give it time.

(CRYSTAL and ZOMBIE 2 exit L.)

BOBBY: But how do you think Mel feels about me?

(A loud crash is heard offstage L.)

CRYSTAL: (offstage) Got you, you stinking, disgusting monster!

(“MEL” enters from L, looking very alarmed.)

MEL: Hey, Annie. Patricia said you wanted to show me your new 3-D TV. (Notices “BOBBY.”) Oh. Hi Bobby.

BOBBY: Hey Mel.

MEL: Didn't know you were coming.

BOBBY: Yeah. Small world.

ANNIE: I figured I'd invite all my friends for this one.

MEL: Who else is coming?

ANNIE: I've kind of lost track. Pretty much whoever shows up.

(ZOMBIE 3 enters from R. CRYSTAL enters from L, dashes across the stage, grabs ZOMBIE 3, and wrestles IT offstage R.)

CRYSTAL: (offstage) Get the fire extinguisher!

MEL: Is that so?

(The sound of several metallic thuds can be heard offstage R.)

ANNIE: Would you guys like to see the new 3-D TV?

BOBBY: Sure!

MEL: You know what? No, I don't think so. My depth perception's not very good and 3-D gives me a headache.

ANNIE: Aw, I'm sorry to hear that. I was just watching the 3-D version of *(insert name of popular zombie movie)*, and it looked amazing. It's like the zombies are reaching right out at you.

MEL: I think I'm gonna go play some more "Twister" downstairs with Susan and Patricia.

*("MEL" exits L.)*

ANNIE: Sorry. Tried.

BOBBY: Thanks anyway.

*("JACK" enters from L.)*

JACK: Hey, Bobby. Glad to see you made it.

BOBBY: So you've been playing "Twister" with Mel, huh?

JACK: Nah. I suck at "Twister." I've just been watching and pigging out on the food.

ZOMBIE 4: *(offstage)* Brraainnnns!!!

JACK: You want to go down and get some?

BOBBY: Not with you.

JACK: Okay, fine. I'll stay up here. You go downstairs.

BOBBY: I'm not happy with you right now.

JACK: I know.

BOBBY: You stay out of my way.

*("BOBBY" exits L.)*

ANNIE: So Bobby likes Mel?

JACK: Yup.

ANNIE: Bummer.

JACK: Yup.

*(Another loud crash is heard offstage R.)*

ANNIE: Mel's my friend and I don't like her.

JACK: Do you think she'd actually tell him to his face that she's not interested?

ANNIE: No. She'll just go out of her way to keep avoiding him.

*("MEL" enters from L.)*

MEL: Hey Annie, can I see that TV now?

ANNIE: I thought your depth perception was bad.

MEL: It was, but it got better.

JACK: You know what I think we should do?

ANNIE: What?

JACK: Put on some music and get everybody up here and dance.

MEL: Why?

JACK: It's a party.

MEL: Just because it's a party doesn't mean there has to be dancing.

JACK: Parties are better with dancing. It's fun.

MEL: Just because it's a party doesn't mean there has to be fun.

*(A loud scream is heard offstage L. CRYSTAL enters from R holding a crowbar, runs straight across the stage, and exits L.)*

ANNIE: I think that's a great idea. Here, let me get some music.

*(“ANNIE” turns some music on and then yells offstage L.)*

Hey! Everybody come up here and dance!

MEL: You really shouldn't put yourself out for this, Annie. I know how much you love “Twister” and all.

ANNIE: It's okay. It's good to shake things up a little once in a while.

*(“PATRICIA”, “SUSAN”, “BOBBY”, and several additional, optional PARTYGOERS enter from L, along with ZOMBIE 4. EVERYONE attempts to dance while avoiding the lurching and biting ZOMBIE. ZOMBIE 5 enters the auditorium and heads for the DIRECTOR.)*

BOBBY: So, Mel... I've been meaning to ask you...

MEL: Sorry, excuse me a second!

*(“MEL” ducks out of the way as ZOMBIE 4 tries to bite HER.)*

Hey, Susan, do you think maybe we ought to be going soon?

SUSAN: Yeah, probably so. I've still got homework to do.

BOBBY: Aw, don't run off. It's a great party!

MEL: You know what? I uh... I have to go to the bathroom!

*(“MEL” runs or jumps off the stage into the audience and runs out of the auditorium.)*

DIRECTOR: *(calling after “MEL” as SHE exits)* No! Get back here! *(To CAST on stage.)* Don't stop! The show must go on! We'll figure something out before her next entrance!

*(ZOMBIE 5 attacks the DIRECTOR in the audience. The DIRECTOR shields himself with his clipboard and makes his way to an exit at the front of the auditorium, where HE exits with ZOMBIE 5 following behind HIM.)*

BOBBY: *(to "SUSAN")* Is Mel okay?

SUSAN: Sure. Why wouldn't she be?

BOBBY: I don't get the impression she's enjoying the party.

SUSAN: Nah. She's having the time of her life.

*(“JACK” trips ZOMBIE 4, who falls down behind the sofa. CRYSTAL rushes onstage from L with a crowbar and slams it down several times behind the sofa, then exits L.)*

JACK: Wow. Some party.

ANNIE: Thanks.

PATRICIA: Why don't we all go and check out the 3-D TV now?

ANNIE: Sure.

BOBBY: Okay.

PATRICIA: *(to "BOBBY")* Except for you.

BOBBY: Huh?

PATRICIA: You stay out here so that when Mel comes back, you can tell her where everyone is.

BOBBY: Oh. Okay. Good idea.

*(EVERYONE except "BOBBY" exits UC. "BOBBY," a dumbfounded expression on his face, looks around, clueless as to what HE should do now. The DIRECTOR backs onto the stage from R, followed by ZOMBIE 5, from whom the DIRECTOR is still shielding himself with his clipboard.)*

DIRECTOR: *(to "BOBBY")* Here's our new "Mel"! Finish the scene!

*(The DIRECTOR runs or jumps off the stage into the audience and returns to his seat, leaving "BOBBY" onstage with ZOMBIE 5. "BOBBY" stares in disbelief for a second and then dodges out of the way as ZOMBIE 5 lurches at HIM.)*

BOBBY: Mel! Hey! Glad you decided to come back upstairs. You uh... feeling all right? You don't look so good.

*(CRYSTAL enters from L with a roll of duct tape, several feet of which are already extended from the roll. SHE gets behind ZOMBIE 5, loops the duct tape over ZOMBIE 5, and proceeds to wrap the roll around ZOMBIE 5 to restrain its arms. ZOMBIE 5 thrashes, loses balance, and*

*falls. CRYSTAL wraps up ZOMBIE 5's ankles in duct tape. There is a scream from somewhere offstage L. Upon hearing it, CRYSTAL dashes off L to deal with the problem. ZOMBIE 5 writhes around on the stage, attempting to bite "BOBBY" as HE talks.)*

So, um... I was thinking. Now that you and I are alone together, maybe we could talk.

ZOMBIE 5: Graah!

BOBBY: No... please. Don't run off again. This is important. At least to me. Listen, it's kind of hard for me to just come out and say this, but I really like you. For real. I mean, I guess that's not surprising. You're like... really pretty and stuff. But I know that beauty isn't skin deep, and I know in my heart that you're as beautiful on the inside as you are on the outside.

ZOMBIE 5: Brraiinsss!

BOBBY: You're smart. You take AP classes. You're the whole package. So anyway, I was wondering, if, maybe, y'know... you might like to go to prom with me?

ZOMBIE 5: Arrurrgh!

BOBBY: If that's what you need to do, sure. Although, I mean, you really shouldn't need to think about it, should you? It seems to me like it ought to be a pretty clear-cut yes or no. Unless you were going to leave me hanging and never intended to get back to me with an answer. You weren't going to do that, were you? Were you?

ZOMBIE 5: Grrr!

BOBBY: Why? What's wrong with me? Is there something about me that bothers you? If there is, just tell me.

ZOMBIE 5: Garrr!

BOBBY: You can't be serious. My back hair? You don't want to go to prom with me because I have a hairy back? You look like you've gained a pound, but I don't care! Superficial stuff like that doesn't matter to me! Why does it matter to you? You're as bad as Jack.

ZOMBIE 5: Arrughgah!

BOBBY: You can't mean that!

ZOMBIE 5: Graharrgh!

BOBBY: You're worse than Jack! How can you possibly say something so cruel?

ZOMBIE 5: Ugharrgh!

BOBBY: I thought you were a decent human being! I thought you had a soul!

ZOMBIE 5: Grrrrrr!

BOBBY: Oh, no. It's too late! The words are out of your mouth!

ZOMBIE 5: Rrrrrrr!

BOBBY: You can't take it back!

ZOMBIE 5: Urrggrah!

BOBBY: Now I see you for the monster that you really are! Get out of here! Go on! Go!

*(CRYSTAL enters from L, grabs ZOMBIE 5's feet, and drags IT offstage R. A few seconds later, several metallic thuds can be heard offstage R. "JACK", "SUSAN", "PATRICIA" and "ANNIE" enter from UC.)*

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from THE SHOW MUST GO ON (DURING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE) by Bradley Walton. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

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