

WHO'S IN CHARGE? or RODNEY, THE ULTIMATE GIFT TO THEATER

By E. Jack Williams

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**WHO'S IN CHARGE? or RODNEY,
THE ULTIMATE GIFT TO THEATER**

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SYNOPSIS: Mr. Wilson, veteran play director, experiences the “break-a-leg” theater axiom by taking a tumble off the stage. He not only breaks a leg, he breaks two. Football Coach Perko is reluctantly selected as the replacement play director for *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Josi, the school custodian with a passion for drama, is there to help assist.

Mrs. Wilson is lurking around every corner spying at rehearsals to report back to her husband. Adding to Coach’s head ache is the “unusual” theater group consisting of Rodney, the Ultimate Gift to Theater, and Ginger, a “Marilyn” clone. Auditions highlighted the talents of this “strange” group of Thespians. Jaimee recites an original poem, *Down on the Farm I Lost My Arm*. Frank practiced his demonstration speech for *Sun Tea*. Kris played a trombone solo with her toe. There was even a group that performed a skit on how to *Spit Catch*.

The final performance includes ALL the elements of a Friday Night Football Game complete with National Anthem, play-by-play announcers, cheerleaders, referee, a live marching band, vendors, and the wave.

Who’s In Charge? or Rodney, the Ultimate Gift to Theater, gives the audience a theatrical experience they will be talking about for years.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 MALE, 9 FEMALE, AND 5-8 EITHER, 6-20 EXTRAS.)

PRINCIPAL LAURA LANGON (f)..... A no-nonsense school principal.
(32 lines.)

MRS. WILSON (f)..... The doting, protective wife of Mr. Wilson. *(9 lines.)*

MS. O’KEEFE (f) English teacher and enthusiastic cheerleader. *(1 line.)*

- MRS. DUFF (f)..... Physical education teacher and enthusiastic cheerleader. (2 lines.)
- MRS. GRAY (f)..... Art teacher and enthusiastic cheerleader. (2 lines.)
- MR. WILSON (m)..... Long time drama coach unable to direct the school play due to an unfortunate accident. He fell off the stage and “broke a leg.” (15 lines.)
- COACH PERKO (m)..... Single-minded, head football coach. His life revolves around football and is clueless about the fine arts. (133 lines.)
- JOSI (f) The hardworking custodian with a passion for theater. Plays the Referee. (43 lines.)
- JAIMEE (f) The “hip” looking “brain” with a deep interest in theater. Plays the Wall. (14 lines.)
- KATIE (f)..... The “athlete.” Plays the Wall. (17 lines.)
- GINGER (f)..... Clone of “Marilyn.” She is infatuated with Rodney. Plays the Wall. (34 lines.)
- RODNEY (m)..... Theater student with limited acting ability but thinks he is the “Ultimate Gift to Theater.” Plays Pyramus. (68 lines.)

WHO'S IN CHARGE? or RODNEY, THE ULTIMATE GIFT TO THEATER

FRANK (m) “Macho” student who has a predictable reaction to having to play the part of a girl. Plays Thisbe. (22 lines.)

SNUGGY (m/f)..... Shy student, lacking confidence. Plays the Lion. (9 lines.)

STARVELING (m/f) Cautiously, confident student. (19 lines.)

SNOUT (m/f)..... Nervous student, dragged into theater because friends think it would be a good experience. Plays Moonshine. (12 lines.)

JACKIE (m/f)..... High energy and confident speaker. Captain of the debate team. Plays an Announcer. (26 lines.)

KRIS (m/f)..... Radio voice of the school sports teams. Plays an Announcer. (29 lines.)

EXTRA FACULTY/VENDORS (m/f)..... Stereotypical teachers and vendors.

6-10 MARCHING BAND (m/f) Members of the school band.

NOTE: If a Marching Band is not available, the School Song and National Anthem could be sung to prerecorded music.

THE SET

ACT ONE:

Scene 1: Staffroom with chairs, sofa, table, waste basket, coffee pot, and coffee cups

Scene 2: Performed in front of the Acting Curtain with a portable set of student lockers center stage, “Pyramus and Thisbe” poster and easel

Scene 3, 4, and 5: Empty stage with the back wall exposed, chairs, benches, ladder center stage, portable chalkboard, trash can, theater prop box stage left, Coach’s table and chair stage left

ACT TWO:

Scene 1: Theater locker room, portable chalkboard, and four benches

Scene 2 and 3: Scene opens in front of the Acting Curtain. When the Acting Curtain opens the announcer’s table and chairs stage right, large free standing portable acting curtain center stage, bench upstage right and two benches stage left, Coach’s stool far stage left, orange rubber cones downstage right and left, padded gymnastic mats pre-set in the Orchestra Pit

SOUND

Transition music, offstage crash, telephone ring, cell phone ring, and whistle

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

TIME: The Present

LOCATION: Any School USA

ACT ONE:

SCENE #1 –THE PROBLEM

SCENE #2 –RODNEY

SCENE #3 –THE AUDITION

SCENE #4 –MEETING OF THE CAST

SCENE #5 –THE REHEARSAL

HALF TIME or INTERMISSION

ACT TWO:

SCENE #1 –PEP TALK

SCENE #2 –"PYRAMUS AND THISBE"

SCENE #3 –THE CRITIQUE

COSTUMES

PRINCIPAL LAURA LANGON: Business suit

MRS. WILSON: Dark rimmed glasses, long coat, red scarf, red pillbox hat, red purse, red shoes, high school cheerleader costume, pompoms, baseball cap, and janitor coveralls

MR. WILSON: Pajamas, sling for right arm, plaster cast for left arm, plaster casts for right and left legs, neck brace, cane, shirt, sweater vest, and pants

COACH PERKO: Baseball cap, sweatshirt, sweatpants, sneakers and whistle

JOSI: Baseball cap, janitor coveralls, black and white striped referee shirt, white cap, black pants, yellow penalty flag, and whistle

MS. O'KEEFE, MRS. DUFF, MRS. GRAY: Stereotypical faculty clothes, cheerleader costumes and pompoms

JAIMEE, KATIE, GINGER: Contemporary teen attire, sweatshirt, sweatpants, football jerseys, pants, shoulder pads, and sneakers

RODNEY: Contemporary teen attire, sweatshirt, sweatpants, fake beard, football jersey, pants, shoulder pads, and sneakers

FRANK: Contemporary teen attire, wig, pompoms, cheerleader costume and work boots

SNUGGY: Contemporary teen attire and lion costume

STARVELING: Contemporary teen attire, purple football jersey, and Viking horned hat

SNOUT: Contemporary teen attire, green football jersey, cheesehead hat, lantern, tree branch, and stuffed toy dog

JACKIE: Contemporary teen attire and sport coat, pants, shirt, and tie

KRIS: Contemporary teen attire and sport coat, pants, shirt, and tie

EXTRA FACULTY: Stereotypical faculty clothes, vendor coats and vendor candy boxes

MARCHING BAND: Band uniforms

Do Not Copy

PROPERTY LIST

Small table	Pencil and notebook
Chair	2 cell phones
Staff coffee cups	Telephone
Wheelchair	Newspaper
Neck brace	Paper bag
Arm sling	Backpack with laptop computer
Left arm cast	Theatrical prop box
2 leg casts	Donkey head
Box of play materials	Pinch style pick-up tool
Scripts for "Pyramus and Thisbe"	Football
Lottery cardboard box	Tablecloth with SHSL (call letters) printed on the front
Blank slips of paper	3 live microphones
Slip of paper with large "black dot"	Framed paper banner with "Pyramus and Thisbe" painted on the front
Coach Perko's clipboard	Free standing portable acting curtain for "Pyramus and Thisbe" performance
Coach Perko's whistle	Football yard markers
Push broom	4 benches
Trash can	Ladder
Dustpan	Megaphone
Portable hall lockers	Lantern
"Pyramus and Thisbe" audition poster	Tree branch
Easel	Stuffed toy dog
Chairs and benches	Josi's whistle
Portable chalkboard	Yellow penalty flag
Audition try-out forms	3 vendor boxes with neck straps
Spoons	Vendor candy
Freestanding shower curtain	2 pompoms for Thisbe's mantle
Shower cap	Rubber cone for Pyramus' sword
Gallon jar with pouring spout	Cane for Mr. Wilson
6 tea bags	
7 "Spit Catch" signs	
Trombone	
Chewing gum	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Midsummer Night's Dream – William Shakespeare

The Road Not Taken – Robert Frost

The National Anthem, Star Spangled Banner – Francis Scott Key

ORIGINAL CAST AND CREW

Who's In Charge? or Rodney, the Ultimate Gift to Theater was first performed on April 19, 2012 at Waseca High School, Waseca, MN with the following cast:

Principal Langon Verronica Veroeven
Mrs. Wilson..... Samantha Sell
Mr. WilsonAaron Roessler
Ms. O'Keefe/Cheerleader/Vendor Mia Conway
Mrs. Duff/Cheerleader/VendorKatherine Masberg
Mrs. Gray/Cheerleader/Vendor..... Katrin Vuleta
Coach Perko Levi DeLong
Josi/Referee..... Allison Zimmerman
Jaimee/Wall.....The role was combined with Katie and Ginger
Katie/Wall Jadea Conway
Ginger/Wall..... Whitney Storvick
Rodney/Pyramus James Zimmerman
Faculty/Jackie/Announcer Tristan Jensen
Faculty/Krissy/Announcer Carlee Diedrich
Frank/Thisbe Valarie LaDue
Faculty/Snuggly/Lion..... Amelia Richards
Faculty/Starveling Cora Engesether
Faculty/Snout/MoonshineRebecca Crume
Marching Band..... Erica Hall, John Lewer, Matthew Metzдорff
Nathan Rux, Jacob Denn, Kevin Glynn
Director E. Jack Williams
Assistant Director/Sound Karen Pfarr
Lights Britteny Nordwall
Stage Manager Krissy Palmer
Make-up Allison Zimmerman
Promotion..... Gerri Fritz, Dawn Skinner, Mary Williams

ACT ONE, SCENE 1
THE PROBLEM

SCENE: Any school USA.

TIME: The present.

MUSIC: SCHOOL THEME SONG - UP. SPOTLIGHT – UP on PRINCIPAL LANGON sitting behind a small table - far stage right. MUSIC plays under the lines of PRINCIPAL LANGON.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: (*PRINCIPAL LAURA LANGON taps on a live microphone.*) Is this on? (*Tapping.*) Is this on? (*Tapping.*) This is a reminder regarding the faculty meeting after school today in the teacher staffroom. Thank you. (*SPOTLIGHT – OUT.*)

At Rise: (*STAGE LIGHTS - UP on staffroom. Faculty sitting and standing. They are dressed in stereotypical teacher attire - science, math, shop, home economics, etc. MRS. WILSON and PRINCIPAL LANGON enter and stand center stage. MRS. WILSON wears dark rimmed glasses, a long coat, red scarf, red pillbox hat, red shoes, and carries a red purse. MUSIC: SCHOOL THEME SONG – OUT.*)

PRINCIPAL LANGON: May I have your attention please? Attention, please! The wife of Mr. Wilson would like to make a few comments before he arrives. (*Gesturing her to address the staff.*)

MRS. WILSON: (*Stepping forward.*) Thank you, Principal Langon. (*Pause.*) Mr. Wilson is very appreciative of the support you have shown. As you know, it has been difficult for him since his unfortunate accident. We need to pick up his spirits. He is quite depressed because he will be unable to direct the school play. This is the **FIRST** time in thirty years he won't be working on a production. It will be a **MAJOR** adjustment for him. We are anxious to find out who his replacement will be. Mr. Wilson promises to provide as much support and assistance as possible.

The staff applauds as MR. WILSON enters in a wheelchair pushed by MRS. GRAY. His neck is in a brace, right arm in a sling, and the left arm and both legs in casts. A box of play materials rests on his lap. His voice is in exaggerated pain.

MR. WILSON: Thank you for your visits, flowers, cards, and phone calls. It is nice to know that so many of you have expressed concern. It brings me to tears.

MR. WILSON begins to choke up. MRS. WILSON hands him a tissue to wipe away a tear.

MR. WILSON: Thank you! *(Pause.)* I would also like to congratulate my replacement and give some guidance about casting, rehearsals, directing and to do whatever I can to make the play a success.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: *(PRINCIPAL LANGON leads the staff in applause.)* We hope you have a complete and speedy recovery. *(Addressing the staff.)* Since Mr. Wilson will not be able to direct the school play, I'm asking for a volunteer to take over his duties.

Immediately they all look in different directions, avoiding eye contact with PRINCIPAL LANGON.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Anyone? *(Silence.)* Oh, come on! *(Begging.)* Anyone? What about you, Ms. O'Keefe?

MS. O'KEEFE: *(Standing.)* Sorry. During the time of the play, I think I'm going to be teaching an evening class, "The Proper Use of Semicolons."

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Mrs. Duff, what about you?

MRS. DUFF: *(Groping for an excuse.)* My husband ... needs ... help in the field. We have the crop harvest thing to do. Sorry.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Mrs. Gray, what's your excuse?

MRS. GRAY: My sick mother is visiting and she will be sick and visiting for a long, long time. Sorry!

PRINCIPAL LANGON: I anticipated this reaction, so I prepared a lottery. (*The PRINCIPAL holds up a box with small blank slips of paper.*) Each of you will select a piece of paper from this box. (*She holds up a piece of paper with a black dot.*) The staff member holding this dot will direct the school play. (*She folds the paper and places it in the box.*) Don't open your paper until everyone has one. I'll be first.

PRINCIPAL LANGON takes out a piece of paper and the staff does the same. Offstage the sound of running footsteps can be heard followed by a prolonged CRASH of cans. Offstage "OUCH." COACH PERKO rushes into the room late for the meeting, as usual. He wears a baseball cap with "COACH" printed on the front, a sweatshirt with "FOOTBALL" across the front, sweatpants, COACH'S whistle, and carries a clipboard. He is out of breath and limping.

COACH PERKO: Sorry I'm late! What did I miss?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: We are looking for a staff member to replace Mr. Wilson as the school play director. He was in a terrible accident

COACH PERKO: Really? When did that happen?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Two weeks ago!

COACH PERKO: Nobody told me. Willy, sorry to hear about your accident. (*COACH taps MR. WILSON on his shoulder.*)

MR. WILSON: (*The tap on his shoulder sends a pain to the inside of his body as he emotes a muffled scream.*) Geeehaboy...

COACH PERKO: How did it happen?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: He fell off the stage. (*Disgusted.*) It's only been in the announcements for the past two weeks! Anyway, we are looking for a replacement.

The box is handed to COACH PERKO. Not really aware of what is taking place, he takes out a slip of paper and hands the box to the next staff member.

COACH PERKO: (*Speaking in a stage whisper to MRS. GRAY.*) Anyone can direct a play. What could be so difficult about that? What's with the paper?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Did everyone get a slip of paper?

COACH PERKO: What is this for - a turkey? *(He laughs.)*

PRINCIPAL LANGON: All right, open your papers.

One by one, they reveal blank slips of paper. A sigh of relief is expressed with each unveiling. COACH is the only staff member holding his paper.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Coach, could we see your paper?

COACH unfolds his paper, revealing a black dot.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Congratulations, you WON!

COACH is in a fog as to what just transpired.

MRS. GRAY: Congratulations! Turkey!

COACH PERKO: What?

MR. WILSON: What just happened? Who won the drawing?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Coach Perko won the lottery. *(Takes the box of play materials off the lap of MR. WILSON.)*

MR. WILSON: WHAT?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Coach Perko will direct the play. It's all taken care of. We're finished here.

The faculty exits.

COACH PERKO: What?

MR. WILSON: *(Panic is in his voice.)* You can't have HIM direct the play! HE doesn't know a thing about theater! HE has never seen one of our plays! HE has no clue what it takes to put on a show! *(MR. WILSON is beginning to sound like a madman.)* NO! NO! It will be a DISASTER! Cancel the show! CANCEL THE SHOW! HELP! HELP!

MR. WILSON is wheeled offstage by MRS. GRAY.

MR. WILSON: DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN! NOOOOOOOOO!

MRS. WILSON: *(Walking to COACH PERKO.)* Over the years, Mr. Wilson has worked hard to develop an outstanding theater program... don't destroy it. *(Speaking in a threatening way, gritting her teeth.)* Do YOU understand?

COACH PERKO: *(Dumbfounded.)* I... I... I...

MRS. WILSON: I'll be watching your every move. *(For emphasis, MRS. WILSON places two fingers in a "V" shape to her eyes then points them in the direction of COACH.)* Do YOU hear me? *(MRS. WILSON repeats the finger pointing. Exits.)*

COACH PERKO: *(Speechless, eyes frozen wide open.)* I... I... I...

PRINCIPAL LANGON and COACH stand center stage.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Coach Perko, Coach Perko! Are you all right?

COACH PERKO: Do I really have to do this?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Yes. *(Handing COACH the box.)* Here are the scripts, audition information, and rehearsal schedule. Try-outs are set for next week. "Break a Leg!"

COACH PERKO: That's what Willy did. In fact, he broke two.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: "Break a Leg" is theater talk meaning "good luck." You DO have a lot to learn.

COACH PERKO: Where do I start?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Coach, you're on your own. Just have the play ready by opening night. Oh ... one more thing, I give you the keys to the theater. Guard them with your life. *(PRINCIPAL LANGON hands the keys to COACH PERKO.)*

COACH PERKO: What's the name of the play anyway?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: "Pyramus and Thisbe" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare. *(PRINCIPAL LANGON exits.)*

COACH PERKO: Pyramus and who? Shakespeare? Really? You can't have ME direct a play! I don't know a thing about theater! I'VE never seen one of his plays. I have no clue what it takes to put on a show! *(COACH is starting to sound like a madman.)* NO! NO! It will be a disaster. Cancel the show! CANCEL THE SHOW! HELP! HELP!

JOSI, the custodian, enters with push broom, dust pan, and trash can.

COACH PERKO: DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN! NOOOOOOOOO!

JOSI: (*JOSI is singing a tune from a Broadway Musical. She stops and looks at COACH who is banging his head with his clipboard.*) Why are you flipping out?

COACH PERKO: (*With panic in his voice.*) I have to direct the school play. Shakespeare!

JOSI: So?

COACH PERKO: I don't know the first thing about theater, let alone Shakespeare!

JOSI: "You got trouble, right here in River City." (*Pause.*) Let me think about this for a moment. (*Pause.*) What's your passion? What hobbies do you have? What do you do when you're not in school? What movies do you watch?

COACH PERKO: My passion is football. I love FOOTBALL! My hobby is a fantasy football league! When I'm not in school, I watch FOOTBALL! Movies, I've watched PIGSKIN GRIDIRON 309 times.

JOSI: Football, hum! Football... (*The wheels are turning.*) Football is similar to Greek Theater. You have a coliseum (*Pointing to an imaginary football stadium.*) and a performance area (*Pointing to an imaginary football field.*) There is your antagonist, the opponent and the protagonist, your team. (*JOSI is starting to get excited.*) You could even compare football to Comedia Dell'arte.

COACH PERKO: Comedia Dell whatay?

JOSI: An improvisational comedy group developed in Italy. But, instead of wearing masks they wear helmets. The actors or players, improvise the story until they reach the denouement.

COACH PERKO: Huh?

JOSI: It means THE END of the play. (*Pause.*) That's it. Prepare for the play the same way you would a football game. There's no difference! You have your playbook – script. Practice the scenes. Execute the game plan. Walla! Opening night performance! COSTUMES! LIGHTS! ACTION! PLAY BALL! (*JOSI starts to exit.*)

COACH PERKO: How do you know so much about theater?

JOSI: You don't clean the auditorium while they're practicing for a play and not pick up a few tidbits of theatrical knowledge.

COACH PERKO: Josi, if I need some help, would you...

JOSI: Sure. Just give me a call. (*JOSI exits singing.*) "There's no business like ..."

TRANSITION MUSIC – UP.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2
RODNEY

STAGE LIGHTS - UP. The scene is played in front of the Acting Curtain. JAIMEE, KATIE, and GINGER are center stage in front student lockers. SPOTLIGHT – UP on PRINCIPAL LANGON sitting behind a small table - far stage right. Her voice is heard over the public address system. Tapping on a live microphone. The trio looks at an imaginary speaker hanging above the audience.

TRANSITION MUSIC – OUT.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Is this on? (*Tapping.*) Is this on? (*Tapping.*) Attention for a late afternoon announcement! Attention! Try-outs for the school play will be held tomorrow at 3 o'clock in the auditorium.

JAIMEE: (*Talking to GINGER.*) Have you like heard what play we're doing?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: This year the Drama Department has selected Shakespeare's "Pyramus and Thisbe" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

GINGER: (*GINGER is a "MARILYN" clone. She chews gum to distraction.*) "Pyramus and Thisbe"! I LOVE THAT PLAY!

KATIE: Mr. Wilson is out of commission for three months. Who will direct the play?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: The play will be directed by Coach Perko.

KATIE: Coach Perko?!

JAIMEE: Coach Perko?!

GINGER: Coach Perko? What does HE know about directing a play?

PRINCIPAL LANGON: Nothing ... (*PRINCIPAL LANGON clears her throat.*) Sorry. Nothing more to announce. Good afternoon!

SPOTLIGHT – OUT. MUSIC: RODNEY’S ROYAL ENTRANCE THEME – UP and OUT. SPOTLIGHT RODNEY’S entrance. His attitude is that of the “ULTIMATE GIFT TO THEATER.” GINGER snuggles up to RODNEY as the other girls swoon over his mere presence.

GINGER: Rodney, did you hear the announcement about try-outs for the school play?

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is always uncomfortable when GINGER is near.*) I... I guess ... I caught some of the announcement.

GINGER: You are going to try-out for the play, aren't you?

RODNEY: (*RODNEY appears to be a little coy.*) I'm not sure.

GINGER: (*Shocked.*) REALLY? BUT YOU HAVE TO!

JAIMEE: You've had the lead in every play since like forever.

KATIE: Who would they get to replace you?

GINGER: No one is as good as you.

RODNEY: (*RODNEY’S ego continues to grow.*) Yes, I know!

COACH enters carrying a “Pyramus and Thisbe” poster with audition information painted in large letters and an easel. He is stopped center stage by RODNEY.

RODNEY: Coach, I understand that you're directing the school play.

COACH PERKO: Correct. (*COACH continues his cross to downstage right and sets up the easel and poster.*)

The girls surround COACH. RODNEY stands alone center stage.

JAIMEE: Rodney has been in ALL the school plays for like the past four years.

COACH PERKO: (*Unimpressed.*) Really?

KATIE: Rodney is the most experienced actor in school.

COACH PERKO: Hm...

JAIMEE: Rodney was like outstanding as Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*.

COACH PERKO: Wow!

KATIE: Rodney was unforgettable as Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*.

GINGER: Who could ever forget his performance as George in *Our Town*? (*A thought just popped into her head.*) Oh, Coach, I just had an idea. Instead of "Pyramus and Thisbe," why don't we do (*Pause.*) *Titanic*?

COACH PERKO: (*GINGER catches COACH off guard.*) Ginger, that's a good idea. We'll do that next year.

GINGER: Okay! (*Smiling.*)

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is expecting COACH to beg him to be in the play.*) Coach Perko, as far as the school play is concerned ... I don't think that I am going to try-out. (*Very dramatic.*) I don't think there is anything you can say to change my mind.

COACH PERKO: (*COACH looks at RODNEY.*) Okay. (*COACH starts to exit.*)

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is caught off guard. He is devastated.*) I... I...

COACH PERKO: (*COACH returns to RODNEY.*) Rodney, I have a question to ask you.

RODNEY: (*Anticipating that COACH has had a change of heart.*) Yessss?

COACH PERKO: With your experience in theater and being familiar with the auditorium... would you consider... being my... head usher? You would be a natural. I don't need an answer right now.

RODNEY'S jaw drops.

COACH PERKO: Think about it. (*COACH exits.*)

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is even more devastated than before.*) Head usher? (*He is near tears. The girls console him.*) Coach wants me to be HEAD USHER!

TRANSITION MUSIC – UP.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3
THE AUDITION

STAGELIGHTS – UP. COACH and JOSI stand center stage. Chairs and benches line the back wall. COACH'S table and chair are set stage left. A portable chalkboard is placed upstage center. MRS. WILSON, covered with a black cloth, is hiding behind the chalkboard.

TRANSITION MUSIC – OUT.

COACH PERKO: Josi, thanks for helping me. Do you have any final words before auditions?

JOSI: Don't forget – WHO'S IN CHARGE?

COACH PERKO: I'M IN CHARGE!

JOSI: You're the man.

They give each other a high-five.

COACH PERKO: *(COACH calls to the students standing in the back of the auditorium.)* Come down to the stage. Come on. Don't be bashful.

Students walk down the aisle, carrying audition try-out forms, and move to the chairs and benches. COACH, talking to himself.

COACH PERKO: Who's in charge? I'm in charge! *(Addressing the students.)* Welcome! Josi will collect your try-out forms.

JOSI collects the forms.

COACH PERKO: When your name is called, step forward and show us your talent. Sing, dance ... do whatever you feel comfortable doing. Use your imagination.

GINGER raises her hand.

COACH PERKO: Yes, Ginger. Do you have a question? *(COACH sits at a small table stage left.)*

GINGER: (*GINGER approaches COACH.*) Coach, Mr. Wilson usually has us read from the play script.

COACH PERKO: That's a good idea. We'll do that next year

GINGER: Okay! (*Smiling.*)

JOSI: (*JOSI reads.*) Jaimee, you're first.

STAGE LIGHTS DIM as JAIMEE Steps into the LIGHT center stage. COACH'S table LIGHT will remain UP during this scene.

JAIMEE: I am going to like recite an original poem called – “Down on the Farm I Like Lost My Arm.”

Down on the farm I like lost my arm
It wasn't my fault at all.

I just like called for my dog and to my alarm
He came running and made me bawl.

He like tugged and he pulled until it was loose.
When the dust settled the arm wasn't there at all.

I like thought, to myself, oh what is the use.
I'll just ask my mom for a bigger doll.

JAIMEE bows.

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

COACH PERKO: Thank you, Jaimee. Next...

JOSI: (*JOSI reads.*) Jackie, it's your turn...

JACKIE: (*Stepping to LIGHT center stage.*) I would like to twirl my baton and tap dance, but I forgot my baton and tap shoes at home so I'm borrowing Josi's broom and spoons from the cafeteria. (*JACKIE taps the spoons on her thigh as she dances and twirls the broom. She finishes with a flurry by throwing the broom in the air and ducking for safety.*) TA DA!

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

COACH PERKO: Thank you, Jackie. Josi, who do we have next?

JOSI: (*JOSI reads.*) Katie, you're up.

KATIE: (*Stepping to LIGHT center stage.*) I would like to sing my favorite song.

FRANK places a free-standing shower curtain center stage. KATIE steps behind the curtain.

COACH PERKO: (*Bewildered.*) Katie, what are you doing?

KATIE: (*KATIE, wearing a shower cap, peeks around the shower curtain.*) I feel more comfortable singing in the shower. I'm going to sing my favorite rain song. (*KATIE sings from behind the shower curtain.*) "I'm singing in the ..." (*When finished, KATIE bows and moves the shower curtain offstage.*)

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

COACH PERKO: Thank you, Katie. Next...

JOSI: Frank, what'cha got for us today?

FRANK: (*Stepping to LIGHT center stage.*) I would like to practice my demonstration speech for you.

COACH PERKO: The whole speech?

FRANK: Yup!

FRANK loosens the cap off of a gallon jar of water with a pouring spout and places it on a small table. SNUGGY assists by unwrapping six teabags. One at a time, FRANK places the teabags in the water. When finished, he puts the cover back on the gallon jar, takes a bow and says...

FRANK: SUN TEA!

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

JOSI: Starveling, Snuggy, and Snout would like to perform a skit.

STARVELING moves to the LIGHT stage right. SNUGGY and SNOUT step to the LIGHT center stage.

STARVELING: We call our skit – SPIT CATCH (*Holding up a sign that reads - SPIT CATCH.*) Our first spit is called – REGULAR SPEED SPIT. (*STARVELING holds up a sign that reads – REGULAR SPEED SPIT.*)

SNOUT: (*SNOUT pretends to prepare for a spit. When ready, makes a spit sound, "PFFFT."*) PFFFT.

After a short period of travel time, the imaginary spit is caught in a tin coffee can being held by SNUGGY. The sound of a spit being caught is created by SNUGGY aggressively hitting the bottom of the can with his thumb.

STARVELING: The next SPIT is called – FAST SPIT. (*Holding up a sign that reads – FAST SPIT.*)

SNOUT: PFFFT. (*The catch follows immediately after the spit.*)

STARVELING: The - SLOW SPIT. (*Holding up a sign that reads – SLOW SPIT.*)

SNOUT: PFFFT. (*The spit, a long pause and then the catch.*)

STARVELING: The – OFF THE FLOOR, CEILING, AND WALL SPIT. (*Holding up a sign that reads – OFF THE FLOOR, CEILING, AND WALL SPIT.*)

SNOUT: PFFFT. (*The spit bounces off the floor, ceiling, and wall. SNUGGY makes a circus catch.*)

STARVELING: The – CURVE SPIT. (*Holding up a sign that reads – CURVE SPIT.*)

SNOUT: PFFFT. (*The spit curves over the heads of the audience and into the can.*)

STARVELING: The next and last SPIT is called - LOB SPIT. (*Holding up a sign that reads – LOB SPIT.*)

SNOUT: PFFFT. (*The spit is aimed to go directly over the head of SNOUT. SNUGGY moves around as if the spit keeps changing direction until it lands in the can.*)

STARVELING: Thank you!

STARVELING, SNOUT and SNUGGY take a bow and go back to their seats.

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

COACH PERKO: Very interesting.

JOSI: (*JOSI reads off KRIS' name.*) Kris, what do you have for us?

KRIS: (*Stepping to LIGHT center stage.*) I would like to play the trombone (*Pause.*) with my toe. (*Sitting.*)

COACH PERKO: (*COACH calls JOSI over to him.*) Josi, she's going to do what?

JOSI: She is going to play a trombone with her toe.

COACH PERKO: OH... go ahead, Kris.

KRIS: (*KRIS plays the trombone with her toe. When finished, takes a bow.*) Thank you.

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

JOSI: Our last student to audition is Ginger.

GINGER steps to center stage. KATIE, holds the gallon jar of SUN TEA. GINGER removes her chewing gum and places it on top of the SUN TEA lid.

GINGER: I will be presenting a dramatic monologue inspired by Helen Keller. (*GINGER kneels, takes some water from the pouring spout of the jar. She feels the water and speaks dramatically.*) "Wa... wa..." (*GINGER stands and bows.*) Thank you. (*She retrieves her gum.*)

STUDENTS: (*Applaud and cheer.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

JAIMEE: (*JAIMEE sees RODNEY in the back of the auditorium.*) Rodney IS HERE! Rodney IS HERE!

The girls jump with excitement.

KATIE: THANK HEAVEN!

GINGER: WONDERFUL! WONDERFUL!

MUSIC: RODNEY'S ROYAL ENTRANCE THEME – UP and OUT. SPOTLIGHT RODNEY'S entrance stage right – UP and OUT.

RODNEY: I was just walking by and thought I would look in on you guys. How is it going?

STUDENTS: (*Unenthused mumbling is heard.*) Mumble, mumble, mumble, mumble...

COACH PERKO: Rodney, are you here to audition?

RODNEY: Well, I...

The girls rush over to RODNEY.

JAIMEE: You like have to, Rodney!

KATIE: It won't be a success without you!

GINGER: (*Flirtatious.*) Will you do it for me?

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is a little flushed and at a loss for words.*) Well,
I... I...

JAIMEE & KATIE: Pleassssse!

GINGER: (*In a soft breathy voice.*) Pleassssse!

RODNEY: (*RODNEY is butter in the hands of GINGER. He takes a deep breath and finally speaks with a high pitched voice.*) Sure, I'll try-out. (*Clearing his throat and speaking in his normal voice.*) If, that is what you wish. (*He crosses to LIGHT center stage and takes a moment to get into character.*) I will be reciting THE ROAD NOT TAKEN by Robert Frost. (*His interpretation is dramatic and somewhat questionable. Too many arm gestures and unnatural vocal patterns.*)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear –

RODNEY bows at the conclusion of his presentation.

STUDENTS: (*The STUDENTS applaud as if they have just witnessed the greatest performance in the history of theater. Giving RODNEY a standing ovation.*) Way to go! Good job! Woof! Woof!

RODNEY: Thank you. Thank you.

JAIMEE: Coach, what did you like think of that?

COACH PERKO: (*COACH trying to hide the fact that he was not impressed with RODNEY'S presentation.*) Words cannot express what I thought of Rodney's performance. I've never heard anything like it before.

KATIE: Rodney, did you hear that? Coach thought you were GREAT!

RODNEY: *(With a “what did you expect” attitude.)* Well...

GINGER: *(Still speaking in a flirty “Marilyn” voice.)* Oh, Rodney, you were wonderful!

RODNEY: *(Confident.)* Yes, I know.

COACH PERKO: That concludes the audition. Thank you for trying-out. I am pleased to announce that ALL of you will have a part in the play. I will be announcing the specific parts at our first cast meeting at 3 o'clock tomorrow.

GINGER: *(Stepping forward.)* Mr. Wilson usually posts the cast in the morning.

COACH PERKO: We'll do that next year.

GINGER: Okay! *(Smiling.)*

COACH PERKO: One more thing. I want you to meet me at the FOOTBALL FIELD tomorrow at 3 o'clock. Be on time and ready to ROCK AND ROLL!

RODNEY: *(Sounding surprised.)* The FOOTBALL FIELD? The field is a mile away from the theater!

COACH PERKO: *(Very emphatically.)* THE FOOTBALL FIELD! YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT!?

RODNEY: *(RODNEY accepts the COACH'S request without question.)* 3 o'clock at the football field. Take pains, be perfect, adieu, adieu. Parting is such sweet sorrow.

RODNEY leads the students offstage. He is a regular Pied Piper.

JOSI: That went pretty well. What did you think, Coach?

COACH PERKO: *(COACH has the look of “a deer in the headlights.)*
NOW what do I do?

JOSI: Use your gut feeling and match the students with the characters in the script. Then pick your “starting line-up.”

COACH PERKO: Josi, I don't know how to thank you, I do appreciate your help.

JOSI: You'll earn your membership in the Thespian Society yet.

COACH PERKO: What?

JOSI: I'll explain it to you. *(JOSI explains to COACH as they exit.)*

MUSIC: SUSPENSE – UP and OUT. MRS. WILSON appears from behind the portable chalkboard center stage where she has been hiding. She makes a notation in her notebook.

MRS. WILSON: Interesting. Very...interesting. *(She dials her cell phone.)*

LIGHT – UP on MR. WILSON reading his newspaper far stage right. He is seated in his wheelchair with a small table and telephone to his right. The TELEPHONE RINGS. We see MR. WILSON'S comical attempt to answer the telephone. His arms and legs are still in casts. After five RINGS he picks up the phone cord with his teeth.

MR. WILSON: Hello! *(Breathing heavy.)*

MRS. WILSON: Honey, are you ready for the latest report? *(LIGHTS FADE on MRS. WILSON.)*

MR. WILSON: Really? *(Pause.)* He did what? *(Pause.)* You have got to be kidding! *(Pause.)* I don't believe it. I don't believe it.

MUSIC: JOGGING TRANSITION – UP.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4 MEETING OF THE CAST

HOUSE LIGHTS – UP. A loud COACH'S WHISTLE is heard from the hallway in the back of the auditorium. COACH and JOSI enter jogging followed by the CAST in single file. RODNEY is last in line. He can barely keep up. They run, huffing and puffing, up one aisle and down the other until they reach the stage. STAGE LIGHTS – UP. Running in a large circle they form one long line, but continue to run in place. RODNEY, standing at the end of the line stage left. He is seen hyperventilating and breathing into a paper bag. HOUSE LIGHTS – OUT.

COACH PERKO: RUN IN PLACE! STOP! JUMPING JACKS ...
SIMULTANEOUSLY! READY...

GINGER: (*Raising her hand as she steps forward.*) Coach, couldn't we just do the jumping jacks together instead?

JOSI: (*JOSI steps forward before COACH blows a gasket.*) Good idea, we'll do them together. READY... GO! 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10.

The CAST proceeds to do ten jumping jacks.

COACH PERKO: STOP! GIVE ME TEN PUSH-UPS! GO! 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10.

The CAST proceeds to do ten push-ups.

COACH PERKO: TAKE A BREAK!

MUSIC: JOGGING TRANSITION – OUT. *The CAST slowly moves to random locations on stage. They show various levels of fatigue.*

RODNEY: (*RODNEY breathing heavily.*) Coach, why are you (*Takes a breath.*) having us (*Takes a breath.*) do all these exercises?

COACH PERKO: You have to be in physical shape to perform. It stimulates the brain as well.

RODNEY: Oh. (*RODNEY takes another deep breath and sits with the rest of the CAST.*)

The CHEERLEADERS and MRS. WILSON enter and approach COACH. MRS. WILSON is dressed as a cheerleader but still wears her red pillbox hat and glasses.

CHEERLEADER: Coach, would it be okay if we watch practice? We'll be as quiet as church mice.

COACH PERKO: Sure, go right ahead.

The CHEERLEADERS sit upstage right.

COACH PERKO: Are we all here?

RODNEY: Coach, first, tell us what the play is about and then read the names of the cast. (*Pause.*) IF that is what YOU want to do.

JOSI: The play is a most distressing comedy, and the most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe.

RODNEY: "Pyramus and Thisbe," a very good piece of work, I assure you. Now Coach Perko, call the actors in the order of their appearance. (*Pause.*) If that is what YOU want to do.

COACH PERKO: Okay... Rodney!

RODNEY: (*RODNEY leaps forward.*) Ready. What part will I play?

COACH PERKO: You, Rodney, are set to play Pyramus.

RODNEY: Is Pyramus a lover, or a tyrant?

JOSI: A courageous and honorable lover who kills himself for love.

RODNEY: (*RODNEY takes a moment to get into character.*)

That will ask some tears in the true performing of it.

Let the audience look to their eyes;

I will move storms. I will condole in some measure.

To the rest; yet my chief humor is for a tyrant;

I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks

And shivering shocks

Shall break the locks

Of prison gates;

And Phibbus' car

Shall shine from far

And make and mar

The foolish Fates.

That was AWESOME!

GINGER: (*GINGER is very impressed. Crossing to RODNEY.*) That was wonderful!

RODNEY: I just gave myself goose bumps. Now name the rest of the cast.

COACH PERKO: Frank!

FRANK: Here!

COACH PERKO: Frank, you must play Thisbe.

FRANK: Thisbe? Is he a knight?

JOSI: It is the lady that Pyramus loves.

FRANK: (*FRANK in a whining high pitched male voice.*) What? Don't make me play a woman. I have a beard coming.

COACH PERKO: You can perform in a mask, and speak in as small a voice as you can.

RODNEY: (*RODNEY leaps forward.*) Oh! Oh! Let me play Thisbe too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice. (*RODNEY speaks, alternating between a feminine and masculine voice.*)

"Thisne, Thisne;

Ah, Pyramus, lover dear!

Thisne dear and lady dear!"

COACH PERKO: No, Rodney. You must play Pyramus and Frank will play Thisbe not Thisne.

RODNEY: Okay, go on.

COACH PERKO: Kris and Jackie.

KRIS and JACKIE: (*They step to center stage and speak in unison.*)

Here, Coach!

COACH PERKO: I have created special characters for the two of you. I've marked your parts in the script. Start memorizing your lines.

They stand and look at the scripts.

COACH PERKO: NOW!

KRIS and JACKIE run back to their spots and start to study their parts.

COACH PERKO: Snuggly!

SNUGGY: (*Quickly jumping up and running forward.*) Yes, Coach!

COACH PERKO: Snuggly, you will play the Lion.

COACH PERKO does not hand SNUGGY a script.

SNUGGY: Do you have a script for me? I hope so, because it takes me a long time to memorize lines.

COACH PERKO: All you do is roar.

RODNEY: (*RODNEY leaps forward.*) Oh! Oh! Let me play the Lion too. I will ROAR, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me. I will ROAR so well that the audience will say, "Let him ROAR again, let him ROAR again!"

KRIS: That would scare the audience, especially my mother. She is easily spooked.

RODNEY: Grant you, I could scare the wits out of the ladies, but I will change my voice so that I will roar as gently as any singing dove; I will roar you as if I were any nightingale.

COACH PERKO: (*COACH is trying to control his frustration. He speaks in hush tones.*) I am in charge. I am in charge. I am in charge! Rodney, you can play no part but Pyramus. Therefore, YOU MUST PLAY ONLY Pyramus!

JOSI: (*Trying to calm down COACH.*) For Pyramus is a sweet-faced man, a proper man, a gentle man.

RODNEY: All right, have it your way. What beard will I wear?

COACH PERKO: WHAT?

RODNEY: A straw-color beard, orange beard, purple beard or your perfect yellow beard?

COACH PERKO: Surprise me. (*Handing out scripts to the rest of the CAST.*) We will meet at the football field again tomorrow at 3 o'clock. Be on time and ready to ROCK AND ROLL!

RODNEY: (*Sounding very whiny.*) NOT THE FOOTBALL FIELD! THAT'S A MILE AWAY!

COACH PERKO: THE...FOOTBALL...FIELD!

RODNEY: We will meet at the football field. Take pains, be perfect, adieu, adieu, parting is such sweet sorrow.

RODNEY leads the students offstage. COACH and JOSI stand center stage.

JOSI: Well...that was a start.

COACH PERKO: Josi, I don't know what will happen tomorrow at our first scrimmage... practice... rehearsal. Whatever it's called. I hope I'm ready. It's crunch time.

JOSI: Remember, Coach. WHO'S IN CHARGE? (*JOSI exits.*)

COACH PERKO: I'M IN CHARGE! (*COACH exits.*)

MUSIC: SUSPENSE – UP. STAGE LIGHTS DIM. CHEERLEADERS exit. SPOTLIGHT – UP on MRS. WILSON far stage left. She takes out a notebook and makes a notation. MUSIC: SUSPENSE – OUT.

MRS. WILSON: Interesting...very interesting.

SPOTLIGHT – OUT on MRS. WILSON dialing her cell phone. The TELEPHONE RINGS. SPOTLIGHT – UP on MR. WILSON sitting in his wheelchair located far stage right. We hear him grunting as he struggles to answer the telephone.

MR. WILSON: Grrrrrr ... Hummmmmmp ... (The TELEPHONE RINGS six times but MR. WILSON never manages to answer the telephone.)

MUSIC: JOGGING TRANSITION – UP.

FADE TO BLACK.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 5
THE REHEARSAL**

HOUSE LIGHTS – UP. A loud COACH'S WHISTLE is heard coming from the hallway in the back of the auditorium. COACH and JOSI enter jogging followed by the CAST in single file. RODNEY is last in line. They run up one aisle and down the other until they reach the stage. STAGE LIGHTS – UP. Huffing and puffing they jog onto the stage running in a large circle and form a line. They continue to run in place. RODNEY is seen putting his head into a garbage can. HOUSE LIGHTS – OUT.

COACH PERKO: STOP! RUN IN PLACE! JUMPING JACKS – ALL TOGETHER! GO! 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10. GIVE ME TEN PUSH-UPS! GO! 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10. TAKE A BREAK!

MUSIC: JOGGING TRANSITION – OUT.

COACH PERKO: Is everyone here?

RODNEY: (Winded.) Coach?

COACH PERKO: What is it, Rodney?

RODNEY: (*Out of breath.*) There are things in this play that will not please the audience. (*Taking a breath.*) First, Pyramus takes out a sword to kill himself, which the ladies in attendance won't be able to stomach. What will you do about that?

SNOUT: That is a real problem. It's true.

STARVELING: We will have to leave the killing out.

RODNEY: No, I've got an idea that will fix the problem. Write me a prologue that will tell the audience that we will do no harm with our swords and that Pyramus isn't really dead and that I'm playing Pyramus, but I'm not really Pyramus, I'm Rodney. This will put them out of fear.

COACH PERKO: Okay, I'll write a prologue.

SNOUT: Coach, what about the Lion? Won't the Lion scare the ladies?

STARVELING: I'm worried about the panic the Lion would bring.

RODNEY: There's no scarier animal than the Lion, and don't forget that.

SNOUT: No, we can just introduce the actor by name, and have his face stick up through the Lion's costume. He should say, "Ladies" or "Fair ladies," "I wish you" or "I would request you" "not fear, not to tremble, my life for yours. I value your lives as highly as my own. If you think that I am a Lion. No, I am no such thing. I am a man, just like other men." And, then he should say I'm Snuggy.

COACH PERKO: All right, that's what we'll do then.

GINGER: How are we going to bring moonlight into a room? Because, you know, Pyramus and Thisbe meet by moonlight.

KATIE: Will the moon be shining on the night we perform our play?

JAIMEE takes out a laptop computer from her backpack.

GINGER: Find the date of opening night on the calendar!

KATIE: Look up almanac!

GINGER: Look up moonshine! Look up moonshine!

JAIMEE: Like settle down. (*She types in the information.*) Yes, the moon will shine that night.

GINGER: Well then, you can leave one of the windows open in the auditorium and the moon can shine in through the window.

COACH PERKO: Good idea. We'll do that next year.

GINGER: *(Very bubbly attitude.)* Okay!

COACH PERKO: *(Overwhelmed by all of the suggestions, COACH finally puts his foot down.)* ENOUGH ALREADY! This is what we will do. I will put a disclaimer in the program about the deaths of “Pyramus and Thisbe.”

GINGER: Coach, what about the Lion?

COACH PERKO: And I will warn the audience about the ferocious Lion. Someone will have to come in carrying a bush and lantern and say he’s here to play the part of Moonshine. Snout, you will have to play the part of Moonshine. *(Pause.)* But the story calls for a Wall. Because, Pyramus and Thisbe, says the story, did talk through a chink in a Wall.

GINGER: You can never bring in a Wall. *(She laughs.)*

SNOUT: What do you think, Rodney?

RODNEY: *(RODNEY is in deep thought.)* Someone must present the Wall. Let him have some plaster or foam, clay or some stuff, to signify that he is a Wall. They can hold their fingers in a V-shape like this and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisbe whisper.

COACH PERKO: If we can do that, everything will be all right. Jaimee, Katie, and Ginger, may I talk to you.

They huddle in a secret discussion. MUSIC: SUSPENSE – UP. MRS. WISON, disguised as a custodian dressed in coveralls, red pillbox hat, and dark rim glasses, enters sweeping the floor. She stops center stage and sweeps up a pile of dirt into a dustpan. She deposits the dirt into a garbage can stage left. MUSIC: SUSPENSE – OUT.

COACH PERKO: Give me your attention while I diagram our game plan. Now sit down, everybody, and button your lips! *(COACH starts to diagram the movement on the chalkboard, using X’s and O’s.)* Pyramus, you start here. When you have said your lines, go hide in that bush or by the garbage can. *(Pointing to down stage left on the chalkboard.)*

JOSI: *(Standing next to the chalkboard.)* That would be down stage left.

COACH PERKO: Everyone else, go here . . . *(Pointing to upstage right on the chalkboard.)*

JOSI: Upstage right.

COACH PERKO: And stay there when you're not onstage. (*COACH claps his hands to get their attention.*) COME ON. MOVE IT! LET'S GO!

The CAST quickly move to their spots. Pyramus and Thisbe step to center stage.

COACH PERKO: Speak, Pyramus. Thisbe, come forward.

RODNEY: (*As PYRAMUS.*) Thisbe, flowers of odious savors sweet

COACH PERKO: ODORS! ODORS!

MRS. WILSON writes in her notebook.

RODNEY: (*As PYRAMUS.*) Odors, savors sweet, so hath thy breath, my dearest Thisbe dear. But hark, a voice! Stay thou but here awhile. And by and by I will to thee appear. (*RODNEY exits stage left and discovers a theater prop box. He is distracted by the contents and finds a donkey head.*)

FRANK: Must I talk now?

COACH PERKO: Yes. You must understand that Pyramus goes out to see a noise that he heard, and will be right back.

FRANK: (*As THISBE.*) Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue, of color like the red rose on triumphant brier, most briskly juvenal and eke most lovely Jew, as true as truest horse that yet would never tire, I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

COACH PERKO: That's "Ninus' tomb." You must not speak that yet. You said your whole part at once, cues and all. Pyramus, enter. You missed your cue. It is "never tire."

MRS. WILSON again writes in her notebook.

COACH PERKO: Say it again.

FRANK: Oh! (*As THISBE.*) As true as truest horse that yet would never tire.

RODNEY: (*RODNEY appears with a donkey head stuck on his head. He struggles to pull it off. He continues with the scene. As PYRAMUS.*) If I were handsome, my lovely Thisbe, I would still want only you. (*He continues struggling to remove the donkey head.*)

COACH PERKO: Take a break, everyone! (*He proceeds to help RODNEY with the donkey head. He pulls, yanks, and tugs but the head does not move.*) Take a break! FIVE MINUTES!

COACH, RODNEY, and CAST exit. MUSIC: SUSPENSE – UP. MRS. WILSON makes a notation in her notebook.

MRS. WILSON: Interesting ...very interesting. (*She dials her cell phone.*)

MUSIC: SUSPENSE – OUT. LIGHTS – UP on MR. WILSON sleeping in his wheelchair far stage right. A newspaper covers his head. TELEPHONE RINGS. We see the comical scene as he tries to escape the entrapment of his newspaper to answer the telephone. His arm and legs are still in casts. MR. WILSON finally picks up the telephone with a pinch style pick-up tool.

MR. WILSON: Hello! (*Breathing heavy.*)

MRS. WILSON: Honey, are you ready for the latest report?

STAGE LIGHTS – FADE on MRS. WILSON.

MR. WILSON: Really? (*Pause.*) NO! (*Pause.*) NO! (*Pause.*) NO! (*Pause.*) He can't do that! (*Pause.*) You can't be telling me the truth. (*Pause.*) I don't believe it. I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

MUSIC: TRANSITION – UP. LIGHTS – OUT on MR. WILSON. A SPOTLIGHT follows PRINCIPAL LANGON to center stage. She carries a live microphone.

PRINCIPAL LANGON: We will be taking a brief intermission. The girl's bathroom is over there (*Pointing.*) and the boy's bathroom is over there (*Pointing.*) This is a short break so be back in your seats before the house lights go off! (*Yelling to the stage manager.*) **TURN UP THE HOUSE LIGHTS!**

HOUSE LIGHTS – UP. PRINCIPAL LANGON exits. FOLLOW SPOTLIGHT – OUT. MUSIC: TRANSITION – OUT.

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