

IT'S A HOWL

A Hairy Comedy in Two Acts

By *TIM KELLY*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Teenager Jane Hastings inherits remote and creepy Wolfbane Abbey. It's a combination school and clinic for students who have trouble "adjusting." No wonder ... they're werewolves!

The doctor who runs the Abbey decides Jane must be driven out of her mind so he can be trustee. This isn't as easy as it sounds ... even though the place is filled with more horrors than a wax museum.

The big trouble starts when Alexander, a nasty student who jumped the fence with his dog dish in his mouth, returns to Wolfbane because he's becoming "too human." He demands the doctor make him ferocious because he's starting up a punk rock group called "The Electric Werewolves" and he wants media attention. If Alexander doesn't get his way ... watch out!

Jane, with two friends, does her best to sort out the Abbey's problems and "curse." The characters are great fun to play in this fast-paced spoof, including bewildered police, a werewolf hunter, a real estate agent who makes the mistake of wearing fur, weird students, a gypsy who spends most of her time in a scary laboratory, and a reporter from a scandal magazine who plans to write an expose entitled, "My Uncle Coughed Up a Fur Ball." And that's just for openers. Don't forget the vampire.

Laughs collide with screams and the ending has plenty of bite. Very easy to rehearse, easy-to-memorize lines, easy to stage. Complete instructions and suggestion are included. This is a hilarious and hair-raising joyride that will have your audience howling for more.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Flexible cast of 22. Approximately 14 females, 8 males, plus extras. In order of appearance:)

ROSA ELENA: Gypsy who knows too much.
SNAP: Unruly teenage werewolf.
DR. KING WOLVERINE: Runs Wolfbane Abbey.
DORA: Maid.
MISS MOORPARK: Legal assistant.
MISS EFFIGY: Secretary and nurse.
POOCH: Girl werewolf.
POODLE: Another.
CYNTHIA STORM: Music teacher.
JANE HASTINGS: Teen who inherits Wolfbane Abbey.
PAMELA HALL: Jane's friend.
TOM JOHNSON: Another friend.
SYBIL BREWSTER: Reporter for *Class Trash*.
DANGERELLA: Young werewolf hunter.
ALEXANDER: Bad werewolf.
COYOTE: Rock musician.
LUPE: Another.
OFFICER JOHN FRANKLIN: Policeman.
OFFICER MARY KIP: His partner.
BUD JONES: Magazine salesman.
WENDY SCOTT: Real estate agent.
THE COUNT: Teenager with problem.

(Extras at Abbey STUDENTS or ROCK BAND MEMBERS can be added, if desired.)

FLEXIBLE CASTING

Many roles can be changed from male to female and vice versa. For example, DR. KING WOLVERINE to DR. QUEEN WOLVERINE; BUD JONES to BEA JONES; THE COUNT to COUNTESS; EFFIGY can become a medical orderly, FRED; SYBIL might become BILL, and so forth. Make whatever changes are necessary to accommodate your available talent. If you are using additional abbey students and rock band members, it's okay to divide up some of the dialogues so that they can speak a line here and there.

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SYNOPSIS

The action of the play takes place in Wolfbane Abbey, a strange school located many miles from the nearest town. The time is the present.

ACT I

Scene 1: A dark and stormy night.

Scene 2: Following day.

Scene 3: Later.

ACT II

Scene 1: One hour later.

Scene 2: That night.

Scene 3: Shortly thereafter.

LIGHTING

It adds to the spooky atmosphere if you can include flashing lights for the electrical panel and the storm effects. Also reddish or greenish lighting for Jane's "nightmare."

SOUND EFFECTS

Storm sounds of thunder and wind; telephone; door banging (*manual*), police whistles, machinery noises for electrical panel.

ABOUT THE SETTING

There is no curtain. We see four locations inside Wolfbane Abbey, a dark and creepy locale of weird noises and shadows. The forestage represents a hallway.

Extreme DR is a laboratory suggested by a table covered with some scientific and medical odds and ends as bottles with colored liquids, test tubes, beakers. There's a stool under the table. Also, in the laboratory is an electrical panel with knobs and a switch, maybe some colored lights. Frankenstein-looking. The entrance/exit is off right. There's another way into the laboratory, SL, from the sitting room. The "door" is pantomimed.

Extreme DL is the office of Dr. Wolverine. A desk, with a telephone, faces out to the audience. There's a chair behind the desk, small chair in front. The office can be entered from off left or from the sitting room. This "door" is also pantomimed.

Most of the action takes place in the large sitting room. There's a sofa CS. Behind the sofa is an unseen box, strong enough to support an actor. To the right of the sofa there's a small table. DR of the sofa there's a chair; another DL. This one is lightweight.

SR are French doors that open onto the Abbey grounds. A chair is to one side. UC is the entrance into the sitting room from the UPS hallway. Right in the hallway leads to the front door; left to other areas of the dwelling, including the upper stories.

In the sitting room, UR and UL, are bookcases with volumes. SL is an exit that leads to various areas, including the dining hall and the kitchen beyond. UPS of this exit is a table with a telephone.

This describes the basics needed for blocking. However, additional properties might include some lamps, wall sconces, chandelier, paintings, fireplace, footstool, rugs, other tables or chairs, etc.

NOTE: Additional information concerning properties and costumes can be found in the Production Notes.

ACT I
Scene 1

(PRIOR TO CURTAIN: Sound of a storm - lightning, thunder, wind. AT RISE: Night. The lights in Wolfbane Abbey flicker, reacting to the wild storm. Working in the laboratory is ROSA ELENA, a gypsy. She's a mysterious type with a foreign accent. Wears a floor-length skirt, head kerchief and enough junk jewelry to stock a garage sale. She pours some liquid from a test tube into a glass bowl or jar, stirs it. From off SR, outside the laboratory, comes the howl of a wolf! ROSA ELENA freezes. She doesn't like the sound. Another howl. Same reaction. Storm effects fade. The general stage lighting comes up, revealing the Abbey to be a scary sort of place. Once again - the wolf howl. Rosa reacts, afraid.)

ROSA: The wolf howl! I must get Dr. Wolverine. He'll know what to do.

(ROSA starts to exit SR, but is stopped by the appearance of SNAP, a student at the Abbey. He is definitely weird. He holds his hands like paws and when he isn't speaking, he gnashes his teeth and makes nasty little growling noises. His hair is messy. His sideburns are bushy mutton chops. His eyes are wild-looking. He doesn't just enter, he LEAPS into the lab - as if jumping from a tree. At this point he's dangerous.)

ROSA: *(Backing away from HIM.)* You're not supposed to be in here.

SNAP: Full moon. Potion! *(HIS voice is dark and menacing.)*

ROSA: It is not a full moon. The potion is only for a full moon. You know the rules.

SNAP: *(Advancing on HER.)* Potion.

ROSA: Doctor's orders. If you don't get out, I'll report you. It'll mean detention.

(SNAP angrily waves HER aside. His eyes settle on the mixture in the glass bowl or jar.)

SNAP: *(Pleased.)* Potion! *(HE starts to pick it up.)*

ROSA: It's not ready. Beware. I warn you! *(HE growls, drinks from the bowl.)* Watch what you're doing. It's dribbling all over your chin. Don't be a pig.

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(SNAP puts down the bowl. He gets worse and worse. His fingers curl like claws, his jaw juts forward, his lower teeth move up and down. His eyes dart from side to side.)

ROSA: *(Cont'd.)* Oh! You wicked, wicked creature! *(SHE starts to run out SL. SNAP cuts her off. She runs SR.)* Dr. Wolverine!
Dr. Wolverine!

(SHE'S out. SNAP growls and snarls. Finally, he tosses his head back and gives an ear-shattering howl. Pleased with himself, he leaps from the laboratory in pursuit of ROSA. From offstage, we hear Rosa scream and another howl from Snap. TELEPHONE rings in office. WOLVERINE enters from SL. He's a very cool, professional type. Wears a white medical smock over his suit. Picks up receiver.)

DR. WOLVERINE: *(Professional tone.)* Wolfbane Abbey. Dr. King Wolverine speaking. How may I help you? *(Listens.)* I'm afraid you've been misinformed. We never accept new students. *(Listens.)* From time to time we do make an exception, that's true. But only in extreme cases. *(As HE speaks, he picks up something from atop his desk. It's a dog leash and collar. He holds it high so audience gets a good look. Listens.)* I suggest you write me a lengthy letter. Explain, in detail, why you think this Abbey is the place for your beast - *(Quickly corrects HIMSELF.)* - I mean, boy. *(HE puts down the leash and collar. Loud BANGING from outside the Abbey, off UR.)* Who did you say recommended Wolfbane Abbey? *(Listens.)* I see. You'd rather not say. I understand.

(DORA, the maid, appears in the UC hallway, from left. She wears a black dress, white apron and cap. Moves for the front door.)

DR. WOLVERINE: *(Still on the phone.)* Thank you for calling. I'll look forward to your letter. Good-bye.

(HE hangs up, puts leash and collar into desk drawer, takes out a manila file and flips it open. Sits, studying the contents of the file. From off SR comes the sound of another HOWL. WOLVERINE reacts, frowns. Checks his watch. Returns to the file. DORA appears UC, from SR.)

End of Freeview

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