

I Can't Go Out There!

A One-Act Comedy

by Burton Bumgarner

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Here is a one-act comedy in four scenes which chronicles the different stages of the stage. In elementary school, a frustrated teacher deals with stage fright while trying to direct young children in a play about jackrabbits and a mean old dog.

In middle school, two students who've been cast as Romeo and Juliet realize that the play is a love story, and that kissing may be involved. A third student tries to ease their minds.

In high school, a teacher is holding auditions for a production of "Anne of Green Gables." Actors audition with a rather violent monologue from "Titus Andronicus," a rap version of the soliloquy from "Julius Caesar," a gothic version of Poe's "The Raven," a song from a musical, and a monologue that the student made up.

In community theater, a production of "Dial 'M' for Murder" is missing a lead actor, and the understudy is not prepared for going on stage.

"I Can't Go Out There!" is easy to produce, and absolutely hysterical.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

7 m, 8 w, 3 flexible

(minimum with doubling: 2 m, 3 w, 3 flexible)

Scene 1: Elementary School – “The Little Jackrabbit” (2 m, 3 w.)

MRS. CRUMLEY: Elementary teacher, directing a play.

REBECCA: Student, playing a jackrabbit.

CAMERON: Student, playing a jackrabbit.

BRANDON: Student, playing a jackrabbit.

TRACY: Student, playing a dog.

Scene 2: Middle School – “Romeo and Juliet” (2 m, 1 w.)

CLAIRE: Student, playing Juliet.

KYLE: Student, playing Romeo.

BEN: Student, playing Mercutio.

Scene 3: High School - Auditions (2 m, 2 w, 3 flexible.)

DIRECTOR: High school teacher holding auditions for a play.

ACTOR 1: Male, auditions with “Titus Andronicus.”

ACTOR 2: Goth female, auditions with Poe’s “The Raven.”

ACTOR 3: Male, auditions with rap version of “Julius Caesar.”

ACTOR 4: Female, auditions with song from “Annie.”

ACTOR 5: Male or female, auditions with made-up script.

ASSISTANT: Helps the director.

Scene 4: Community Theater – I Can’t Go Out There!

(1 m, 2 w.)

NADIA: Director for “Dial ‘M’ for Murder.”

KELLY: Actress.

CAMERON: Understudy. From Scene 1, now grown up.

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PROPS AND COSTUMES

Bunny ears
Dog ears
School books
Lunch bags
Backpack
Script
Breath mints
Notepad and pen
Red wig
Tabloid
Cell phone
1940s costume

SETTING

Scene 1: Park bench USC.
Scene 2: The same.
Scene 3: A table and chair.
Scene 4: Several chairs SR.

I Can't Go Out There!
Scene 1
Elementary School – “The Little Jackrabbit”

(AT RISE: MRS. CRUMLEY enters and looks around as if examining her set.)

CRUMLEY: Rebecca! Cameron! Children! Let me see your costumes! *(REBECCA and CAMERON enter. They are wearing bunny costumes. Mrs. Crumley straightens Cameron's bunny ears.)* You've bent your ears, Cameron.

REBECCA: *(Nervous.)* How many people will be here, Mrs. Crumley?

CRUMLEY: A whole lot, I hope. All the parents and brothers and sisters. Probably some grandparents and some aunts and uncles.

CAMERON: Rebecca's chicken.

REBECCA: Am not!

CAMERON: Are so! Your hands are shaking!

REBECCA: Are not! Look! *(Holds out her hands, which are trembling.)*

CAMERON: Looks to me like they're shaking.

REBECCA: Does not! I don't feel good, Mrs. Crumley.

CRUMLEY: I'm sure you'll be fine, Rebecca. Where is our dog?

REBECCA: My stomach hurts.

CAMERON: Rebecca's chicken.

REBECCA: Am not!

CAMERON: Are so!

CRUMLEY: You'll be fine. Remember our rehearsals?

REBECCA: I didn't feel sick then.

CRUMLEY: Let's hear your lines. I bet if you say them you'll feel better. Remember your lines? *(REBECCA nods.)*

CAMERON: I remember our lines.

CRUMLEY: We'll have a little rehearsal right now. Let me hear your lines.

CAMERON: "Run, little jackrabbit! Run home! That dog will eat you!"

CRUMLEY: Very good. Now, Rebecca. Can you say your lines?

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REBECCA: *(Nods. Mournfully.)* "Run, little jackrabbit. Run home. That dog will eat you."

CAMERON: That was terrible!

CRUMLEY: Cameron! It was not terrible! It could use a little more expression. *(Looks around.)* Where are Tracy and Brandon?

(TRACY and BRANDON enter. Tracy wears dog ears. Brandon wears a bunny costume.)

TRACY: Here, Mrs. Crumley.

CRUMLEY: Where is the rest of your costume?

TRACY: It's at home in the washing machine.

CRUMLEY: Why isn't it here? Doesn't your mother realize the performance is this afternoon?

TRACY: She realizes it, all right. It's just that my little brother messed up the rest of the dog.

BRANDON: How did he do that?

TRACY: I was trying to change his diaper and I was wearing the bottom part of the costume

CAMERON and BRANDON: GROSS!

(REBECCA holds her stomach.)

CRUMLEY: I think we get the picture.

TRACY: Usually I can change them without it making such a big mess.

REBECCA: I don't feel good!

TRACY: But this time I wasn't so lucky.

BRANDON: That's so sick!

CRUMLEY: Okay, Tracy. I know you're a big help to your mother.

TRACY: *(Preens.)* I am. My brother turned into twins, you know.

CRUMLEY: So I've heard.

TRACY: My mother is always losing her mind. That's what she says. How do you lose your mind, Mrs. Crumley? Isn't it stuck inside your head?

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CRUMLEY: Let's talk about the play. I guess we can do without the rest of the dog costume. (*Examines BRANDON'S costume.*) Brandon? What's on the front of your costume?

BRANDON: Pizza.

CAMERON: At least it isn't baby --.

CRUMLEY: (*Interrupts.*) All right, Cameron! That's enough! Now, let's go over the scene. Take your places. (*No one moves.*) Go! Move! Scoot!

(*SHE physically places REBECCA and CAMERON upstage, BRANDON DSR, and TRACY offstage left.*)

CRUMLEY: (*Continued.*) Rebecca and Cameron, look for the dog. (*THEY both look at TRACY.*) Maybe you could look around a little bit, then spot her. (*They stare at Tracy.*) Or maybe not. Okay. You see the dog and you're frightened. You need to warn the little jackrabbit. (*Waits but nothing happens.*) Say your lines together.

TRACY: (*Yells offstage.*) If you don't warn the little jackrabbit, I'm going to eat him!

BRANDON: Say it!

CAMERON: Say what?

BRANDON: Run, little jackrabbit.

CAMERON: (*To MRS. CRUMLEY.*) Do we say it now?

CRUMLEY: Yes, Cameron. Now would be a good time.

CAMERON: (*Takes a deep breath and begins.*) "RUN, LITTLE JACKRABBIT! RUN HOME!" (*To REBECCA.*) You're supposed to say it with me.

REBECCA: (*Almost in tears.*) I don't want to.

CRUMLEY: Please, Rebecca? Say it for me?

REBECCA: (*Meekly.*) "Run, little jackrabbit. Run home."

CAMERON: (*Yells in HER face.*) SAY IT LOUDER!

(*REBECCA, startled, begins to cry. MRS. CRUMLEY tries to comfort her.*)

CRUMLEY: Cameron! That wasn't nice!

CAMERON: She's gonna ruin it!

REBECCA: My stomach hurts!

End of Freeview

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