

SORRY, SHAKESPEARE!

A Comedy in One Act

By Mike Willis

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Sorry, Shakespeare!

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*Dedicated for a special group of high school students:
Carrie, Megan, Josh, Jason, Wendy, Page,
Jennifer, Paul and Dreu.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

Four high school students have anxiously reported to the high school auditorium for a play rehearsal, only to find that the director is not coming. To add to the confusion, one of the cast members has dropped the three rehearsal scripts, all the pages of which are unbound and unnumbered. No problem, unless of course the scripts are *MacBeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, three plays by William Shakespeare. And, as the cast says, "We don't know anything about Shakespeare, but it all sounds the same anyway, so grab some pages. We came to rehearse and we're going to rehearse." The mayhem that results will have you wondering if this play is "To be, or not to be."

Sorry, Shakespeare! was originally written for high school one-act play competitions and acting competitions. It was first performed at Platteville High School in Platteville, WI, on December 22, 1993, with the following cast:

JASON.....Jason Long
CARRIE.....Carrie Van Deest
MEGAN.....Megan Ryan
JOSH.....Josh Kopp

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 M, 2 W)

JASON: A high school student.

CARRIE: A high school student.

MEGAN: A high school student.

JOSH: A high school student.

TIME: Present.

PLACE: The bare stage in a high school auditorium.

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SORRY, SHAKESPEARE!

(AT RISE: The stage LIGHTS come up revealing a bare stage. JASON enters from SR carrying a sheaf of papers. As he nears CS, he stumbles and the papers he is carrying spill out onto the stage floor.)

JASON: (Crouching down to pick up papers) Oh, no...now what am I going to do? They're all mixed up. Let's see, which is which? Oh, man, this is great...I'll never get this straightened out, I don't know one of Shakespeare's plays from another. (Holding up a paper) Is this from *Macbeth* or....

(CARRIE, MEGAN and JOSH enter from SL.)

CARRIE: Hi, Jason. Have you got the scripts? Are you ready to rehearse?

JASON: Yeah, I've got the scripts. (Pointing to the papers on the floor) There they are.

MEGAN: Well, pick them up and let's get started.

JOSH: Yeah, let's get started. I've got a serious date later.

JASON: By the time I get this mess straightened out your date may be half way through college.

CARRIE: What do you mean?

JOSH: Just put the pages back together in order.

JASON: They're not numbered.

MEGAN: They're not numbered?

JASON: (Turning to MEGAN) Read my lips. They are not numbered.

CARRIE: What play is it?

JASON: Oh...*A Midsummer Night's Dream*...

JOSH: That should be easy enough to—

JASON: *Macbeth*...

CARRIE: Well, even so—

JASON: *The Taming of the Shrew*.

MEGAN: Three plays by William Shakespeare?

JASON: Yeaah....

CARRIE: None of them are numbered?

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JASON: Nooo....

JOSH: Let me get this straight. What we have here are three plays by Shakespeare all mixed up, and no way of knowing which is which?

JASON: That's right.

CARRIE: I don't believe this.

MEGAN: Me, neither.

JOSH: I do. Four years in high school and I finally get a date...and now, what happens? Jason mixes up Shakespeare. I'll be late...I'll never get to go on a date.

CARRIE: What are you talking about? You had a date for the prom last year.

JOSH: That wasn't a date that was an appointment. My mom set that up.

MEGAN: Even so, it was a date.

JOSH: Was not.

MEGAN: Was so.

CARRIE: Listen! It doesn't matter. The director will be here soon and he will be able to straighten everything out. I hear he's really up on his Shakespeare.

JASON: Aaaah...(EVERYONE looks at JASON.)

CARRIE: What is it?

JASON: He's not coming.

MEGAN: What? He's not coming?

JOSH: I knew it. I knew it! I'll never get a date.

CARRIE: Shut-up! (To JASON) What do you mean he isn't coming?

JASON: Just that. He isn't coming, he had a better offer.

CARRIE: What do you mean "a better offer"?

MEGAN: Yeah, what kind of offer?

JASON: Aaaah...(Quietly) He went for a beer and a pizza.

JOSH: What?

MEGAN: What did you say?

JASON: He was hungry, he went to grab a pizza and a beer.

CARRIE: Pizza and a beer!? What kind of a director is he? He's supposed to be a role model, an educator, a leader of young people.

JASON: A leader...well...

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CARRIE: Well, what?

JASON: I'd kind of like to go out for a beer and some pizza.

JOSH: All I want is a date.

MEGAN: Will you two be quiet.

CARRIE: Yes, we came here to rehearse, and by God, we're going to rehearse with or without a director.

JASON: But...none of us know anything about Shakespeare and the scripts are all mixed up.

CARRIE: So what? It all sounds the same, so everyone grab some pages. *(They ALL pick up some papers.)*

JOSH: Yeah, I went to a Shakespeare play once...I didn't understand any of it.

MEGAN: I don't doubt that.

CARRIE: How many pages do you have?

JASON: Ten.

CARRIE: Megan?

MEGAN: Ten.

JOSH: I've got ten, too.

CARRIE: I've got eleven, I'll play anything extra.

JASON: OK...let's see...we have to have a setting for our play. Check your pages, see if it says anything about where the play takes place.

MEGAN: Here...mine says it takes place in a woods outside Athens.

JASON: Great.

CARRIE: Mine says it's on a road to Padua.

JASON: Padua? Is that near Athens?

CARRIE: Padua is in Italy. Athens is in Greece.

JASON: Oooh...

JOSH: Mine's the castle of Macbeth.

JASON: Italy?

JOSH: Scotland.

JASON: What!? Why couldn't Shakespeare write all his plays in one country?

CARRIE: He wrote them all in one country...England.

JASON: Well...no matter, we'll just make do. *(Indicating areas of the stage)* This area here will be the forest outside Athens, through which the road to Padua, Italy

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JASON: (*Cont'd.*) runs. Once through the woods the road comes to the castle of the Scotch guy.

MEGAN: Macbeth. His name is Macbeth. And, he's Scottish not Scotch. Scotch is either a type of tape or liquor.

JASON: Right...Macbeth...anyway, Mac lives right over there.

JOSH: This is never going to work.

JASON: Sure it will, you'll see. OK...so now we need some parts. Josh, you'll be Macbeth. Megan, you Lady Macbeth.

MEGAN: I want to be Katherine. It looks like she has some great lines.

JASON: All right. We'll have to double up anyway. You can be both.

CARRIE: I want to be Puck. It says here that Puck is shrewd and knavish.

JASON: Great, and I'll be...uh...Petruccio. We'll assign any other parts as we go along.

JOSH: "To be, or not to be..."

JASON: What's that from?

JOSH: I don't know. It's the only Shakespeare I know.

MEGAN: *Hamlet*...it's from *Hamlet*. My mother took me to see it once.

JASON: (*Looking through HIS pages*) Maybe we can use that. Do we have that?

CARRIE: He's Danish.

JASON: What?

CARRIE: He's from Denmark. We already have people from Greece, Italy and Scotland, there is no way we can add Denmark!

JASON: OK, we'll forget *Hamlet*.

JOSH: But...I was already off-book for part of *Hamlet*.

CARRIE and MEGAN: No *Hamlet*.

JOSH: OK, no *Hamlet*.

JASON: Well, let's get started. Josh and Megan, you enter from over by the castle. You have just killed the king.

JOSH: Uh...what king?

JASON: I don't know what king. Anyone know what king?

End of Freeview

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