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Anne-Arky**

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ANNE-ARKY

A BACKSTAGE COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Lindsay Price



Anne-Arky

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Casting

MR. O'NEILL

Teacher/stage manager who is too stressed out

JULIE

Student stage manager who is too normal to be in theatre

MARK

Backstage lackey who is too dangerous to have backstage

THE SOUND GUY

The “too-cool” sound guy

BETH (ANNE)

Prone to mood swings

TAMARA (DIANA)

Much too flaky for her age

DOUG (GILBERT)

Wise-cracking Don Juan

LAUREN (MARILLA)

Yearning to be free

GLEN (MATTHEW)

Leaning towards being a psych major

CHERYL (CHORUS)

Slightly psycho

Setting

Backstage before, during, and after the opening night of
Anne of Green Gables

SCENE I

It is the general hustle and bustle before the opening night production of “Anne of Green Gables.” This is a behind-the-scenes play. The “fake” audience is upstage. The real audience looks at the backside of two large flats. There is a flat stage left and one stage right with a space between them at centre stage. The “cast” is on “stage” (i.e. in front the flats) with their backs to the real audience, warming up. BETH is not warming up. THE SOUND GUY is stage left at the sound table looking busy. MARK is stage right watching the cast warm up and seriously imitating the movements. MR. O’NEILL has a clipboard and is checking off items on a list.

TAMARA: OK everybody breathe in.

MARK: Breathe in.

MR. O’NEILL: (*moving away from the sound table*) Sound table set up, check.

TAMARA: And out.

MARK: And out.

MR. O’NEILL: (*checking the sand bags at each flat*) Flats are secure, check.

He stands up centre stage to look at the front of the flats. He sees something wrong with the stage right flat and tentatively touches it.

TAMARA: And breathe in

MARK: Breathe in.

MR. O’NEILL: (*to himself*) This flat is still wet.

TAMARA: And out.

MARK: And out.

MR. O’NEILL: (*moves downstage to the SOUND GUY*) This flat is wet.

SOUND GUY: Mr. Taylor was just working on it.

MR. O’NEILL: We can’t have a wet set.

TAMARA: And one more time. Breathe in.

MARK: I'm getting dizzy.

SOUND GUY: He said the trees weren't right.

MR. O'NEILL: (*goes back to look at the front of the flats*) What's wrong with the trees?

SOUND GUY: They looked like bushes.

MR. O'NEILL: (*writing on clipboard*) Tell cast not to lean on the set. Why does everything have to happen opening night?

TAMARA: OK everybody, now we're going to be a tiny seed.

There is a full cast groan.

TAMARA: None of that!

DOUG: (*comes "backstage" to MR. O'NEILL*) Mr. O'Neill, Tamara's making us do the seed thing.

TAMARA: (*calling from "onstage"*) Who's leading these warm ups anyway?

DOUG: I'll do anything but the seed thing.

TAMARA: (*she makes her way "backstage" to MR. O'NEILL*) Mr. O'Neill.

DOUG: Mr. O'Neill.

MR. O'NEILL: Come on Doug, it can't be that bad.

DOUG: Do I look like a seed to you?

TAMARA: Doug King, my very special sources have informed me that Keanu Reeves did this very exercise every night before he performed Hamlet. If Keanu Reeves can do it so can you.

DOUG: Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: Do the seed thing Doug.

TAMARA drags DOUG back "on stage."

TAMARA: Now we're all going to be a tiny seed.

DOUG: I'm doing this under protest!

TAMARA: We're going to start at the beginning of life and then we're going to grow and grow and stretch our arms out tall and strong and when we're done we'll be a forest of trees.

*The cast does the exercise as TAMARA talks it out.
MARK also does the exercise.*

TAMARA: First off we have to crouch really low.

MARK: I've never been a seed before.

TAMARA: And then we straighten our legs out. Slowly, gracefully.
Think like a tree everybody.

DOUG: Do I look like a tree?

MR. O'NEILL: Be quiet Doug.

TAMARA: Don't think like any tree. You have to pick a tree. What kind
of tree are you?

SOUND GUY: Do you know how to think like a tree Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: I have trouble enough thinking like a person.

MARK: (*concentrating very hard*) I'm a oak tree. I'm a oak tree.

SOUND GUY: (*to MR. O'NEILL*) What is Mark doing?

TAMARA: That was great. I would like you all to know that I was a
willow tree. Everybody shake it out.

MARK: Shake it out. (*He begins to thrash wildly*)

TAMARA: Loosen up your arms and legs.

MARK: (*really getting into it*) I'm loose. I'm loose.

MR. O'NEILL: (*to MARK*) What are you doing?

MARK: (*a little ashamed at being caught*) I'm warming up.

MR. O'NEILL: The crew doesn't need to warm up Mark.

MARK: Why not Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: Because.

MARK: Because why?

MR. O'NEILL: (*exasperated – he's dealt with MARK before.*) Because we
don't. We just don't. (*starts to look around*)

TAMARA: That's it everybody. You're loose. You're warm. Nobody can
stop you now! Have a good show!

There is weak applause and a scattering of the cast. Some leave. Some stay on stage and go through some blocking.

MR. O'NEILL: *(still searching)* Where's my coffee? Has anybody seen my coffee? What did I do with it?

SOUND GUY: You quit Mr. O'Neill.

MR. O'NEILL: Oh right. What a dumb thing to do. *(He sighs and goes back to his clipboard)*

MARK: *(He is now quietly jogging on the spot – he's still warming up)* What's the matter Mr. O'Neill? You seem really nervous.

MR. O'NEILL: I just want the show to be flawless tonight.

MARK: *(now he's doing neck rolls)* Why?

MR. O'NEILL: *(still looking at clipboard)* An old friend of mine is coming. He used to be a professional stage manager.

MARK: *(he stops dead)* A professional stage manager?

MR. O'NEILL: Yes. So you better do a good job tonight. I don't want anything to go wrong.

JULIE comes on with a basket of apple blossoms and puts them down centre stage between the flats.

MR. O'NEILL: Julie! What are you doing with those apple blossoms?

MARK: *(standing dead still, talking to himself)* I better do a good job?

JULIE: I have to put them on the tree.

MARK: *(full of wonder)* The professional stage manager is coming to see me?

MR. O'NEILL: The tree has far too many as it is.

MARK: *(mulling it over)* I'm going to become a professional stage manager?

MR. O'NEILL: The actors are going to hit their heads.

JULIE starts taking blossoms out of the basket and tying them to the tree, which is on the "stage" and out of view from the real audience.

JULIE: Mr. Thompson had a dream last night. The show bombed because there weren't enough apple blossoms.

MR. O'NEILL: Why would a show bomb because of the number of flowers on a tree?

MARK: *(the light bulb has come on)* I'm going to be famous! A famous stage manager! *(He does a little "I'm going to be a famous stage manager" dance.)*

JULIE: You'll have to ask him.

MR. O'NEILL: *(looks at his watch)* Where is our director anyway?

MARK: *(stops dancing)* I'm not dressed to become a famous stage manager. I've got to change. *(Runs offstage right)*

MR. O'NEILL: *(to the "actors" on "stage")* Have any of you seen Mr. Thompson?

TAMARA: Is he missing?

GLEN: *(out of sight)* I heard him practising the guitar a little while ago.

MR. O'NEILL: Guitar. We go on in an hour and he's practising the guitar?

GLEN: *(peeking out behind far side of stage left flat)* Classical guitar.

MR. O'NEILL: Well thank God it's classical.

JULIE: Do you want me to go look for him?

MR. O'NEILL: No we'll send Mark. *(Moving stage right, to where he last saw MARK)* Mark! Mark?

JULIE: Do you want me to look for Mark too?

MR. O'NEILL: Just don't get lost. I don't want to do the show by myself.

DOUG: *(sneaking up behind JULIE)* I can see the headlines now...
Missing: One Stage Crew! They disappeared one by one down the underground passage...

JULIE: You're giving me the creeps.

DOUG: Was it Mr. Thompson in the dressing room with the lead pipe?
Or Mr. Sharp in the underground passage with the conductor's baton! *(Lifts his arm as if to strike TAMARA and gives a bloodcurdling laugh. TAMARA pushes DOUG back and he falls on the ground)*

MR. O'NEILL: Knock it off Doug! Julie, go look for Mark.

JULIE: By myself?

MR. O'NEILL: There is no one in the underground passage Julie.

DOUG: That's why you named it the dungeon, right Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: Thanks Doug.

DOUG: No problem.

MR. O'NEILL: We're running out of time Julie. Go look for Mark.

JULIE: OK, but if I get killed, my mother's not going to be very happy!
(*She leaves stage right*)

GLEN: (*touching the front of the stage right flat*) Hey, this flat is wet.

MR. O'NEILL: Don't touch that! Mr. Taylor was putting some finishing touches on the trees.

GLEN: That's good. They looked like bushes yesterday.

MR. O'NEILL: Let me check you guys off... Tamara is here, Doug is here, Glen is here...

TAMARA: Doug, do you know where your sister is? She didn't come to the warm-ups and she's not going to be prepared for the show.

MR. O'NEILL: Beth is missing?

TAMARA: I never miss a warm-up.

MR. O'NEILL: Where is Beth? Anne of Green Gables will be a little short if we don't have an Anne.

DOUG: (*now standing*) She's here. Mr. Thompson wanted something done with her wig. I think they're in the dressing room.

MR. O'NEILL: Here. (*Hands clipboard to GLEN*) I have to go talk to Mr. Thompson about those apple blossoms. (*He dashes offstage right.*)

TAMARA: What's wrong with Mr. O'Neill? He seems really nervous. More nervous than we are. Not that I'm nervous.

SOUND GUY: (*he's still at the sound table, but he's been reading a magazine for some time*) Some manager friend of his is coming tonight.

All of the "actors" look at the SOUND GUY.

DOUG: Manager friend? Manager?

TAMARA: Manager? As in an agent? That kind of Manager?

DOUG: As in an acting agent?

SOUND GUY: I guess so. (*He finishes his magazine and leisurely leaves upstage right during the following dialogue.*)

TAMARA: I didn't know Mr. O'Neill knew any agents. Why didn't he tell me?

GLEN: Why would an agent come to a high school show in the middle of nowhere?

TAMARA: It happens all the time.

GLEN: Yeah, in California.

TAMARA: Why wouldn't an agent come to the middle of nowhere? There's lots of theatrical talent in the middle of nowhere.

DOUG: Especially if he's a friend of Mr. O'Neill's.

LAUREN comes on stage right.

GLEN: OK if an agent is coming tonight, to a high school production of Anne of Green Gables, which one of us is he coming to see?

LAUREN: An agent is coming tonight?

DOUG: He's a friend of Mr. O'Neill's.

GLEN: (*making a check on clipboard*) Lauren is here.

LAUREN: Well who is he coming to see?

TAMARA: That's what we're trying to figure out.

DOUG: (*breaking from the group to move downstage left*) Well Mr. Thompson said the other day that my Gilbert was the best he has ever seen.

LAUREN: (*coming up behind DOUG*) You sing off-key.

DOUG: I do not.

TAMARA: I sing way better than you.

LAUREN: (*moving to stand with GLEN*) Glen and I have the hardest parts. Marilla and Matthew are old. We have to play old people. I'll bet he's here because of us.

GLEN: Maybe he's not here to see anybody.

DOUG: Why don't we ask Mr. O'Neill?

GLEN: Maybe he doesn't know.

LAUREN: Maybe it's supposed to be a surprise.

TAMARA: A surprise?

LAUREN: I've read about that. The agents sneak into shows and they don't tell anybody so they see a good performance.

TAMARA: That's right. I've heard of that.

DOUG: But I want to know. I don't want to be surprised.

BETH runs on stage with a very very red wig.

BETH: TAMARA! Look what Mr. Thompson did to my wig.

TAMARA: Holy cow.

LAUREN: It wasn't like that yesterday was it?

BETH: He thought it needed a little more colour.

GLEN: A little colour?

TAMARA: You could stop traffic with that wig.

BETH: I can't go on stage with this.

*She sinks to the ground stage right and starts to cry.
The other actors, except for DOUG, semi-circle around her.*

LAUREN: I thought Anne was supposed to have carrot red hair.

BETH: My parents are coming tonight.

GLEN: Have you ever seen a carrot look like that?

BETH: My grandparents are coming tonight.

TAMARA: A radioactive carrot maybe.

LAUREN: It looks like a maraschino cherry.

DOUG: *(calls across the stage)* Wait till the agent gets a load of you.

BETH: *(she stops crying immediately)* Agent? What agent?

TAMARA: He's a friend of Mr. O'Neill's.

GLEN: We think he's an agent.

LAUREN: He's come to see Glen and I. We have the hardest parts.

TAMARA: Of course he's an agent. That's why Mr. O'Neill is so nervous.

BETH: (*she stands and starts to straighten herself*) I've got the lead.

DOUG: (*moving to BETH*) You just run around. There's nothing hard in that.

BETH: I've been taking singing lessons.

DOUG: That's because you sound like a sick moose.

BETH: (*gives DOUG a little shove*) I'm going to tell mom you said that.

DOUG: (*gives BETH a little shove*) You better not. Or else I might kiss you on stage.

BETH: (*goes after DOUG*) I don't care if you are playing Gilbert. If your lips come anywhere near my lips, I'll hit you so hard you'll see out the back of your head!!

TAMARA: Sisterly love. It's so touching.

DOUG: (*taunts BETH*) Kissy Kissy Kissy.

GLEN: (*comes between DOUG and BETH*) What do you think an agent will do if he sees you two fighting on stage?

BETH: He's right! (*She leaps away from DOUG*)

TAMARA: We're all going to have to behave.

MARK struts on stage right; he's wearing sunglasses, a top hat and a scarf.

DOUG: Mark, why are you dressed like that?

MARK: (*he gives DOUG a manly slug on the shoulder*) I wish I could tell you Dougie but I can't.

DOUG: Dougie?

MARK: It's all very hush hush. (*He slings an arm over BETH'S shoulder who slings it right off*)

BETH: Hush hush?

MARK: That's right. (*He shoots at TAMARA with his fingers*)

TAMARA: That top hat is for the show. (*She swipes it off his head*)

MARK: Don't worry. (*He ruffles GLEN'S hair*) I'll always remember the little people. (*He turns and walks into the wall stage right*) Oww.

MR. O'NEILL rushes on stage right

MR. O'NEILL: What are all of you still doing on stage? Get down to the dressing rooms!

GLEN: (*gives the clipboard back to MR. O'NEILL*) Did you find Mr. Thompson?

MR. O'NEILL: Somebody saw him in the parking lot and now he's nowhere to be found.

LAUREN: We can't go on if Mr. Thompson isn't here.

MR. O'NEILL: Yes we can. You don't want to cancel the show now do you?

BETH: That's right! We don't want to disappoint the agent. (*gets elbowed by DOUG*)

DOUG: Right Beth! That's right. The show has to go on.

LAUREN: Right.

TAMARA: The show must go on!

BETH: Right...

GLEN: You guys are nuts.

JULIE: (*entering stage right*) House is opening! They're letting the audience in! What are you guys still doing on stage?

MR. O'NEILL: Everybody off! (*Starts to shove them offstage right*)

DOUG: We're on our way. And don't worry Mr. O'Neill. We're going to do a great job.

LAUREN: That's right. A great job.

MR. O'NEILL: Well, good.

TAMARA: We won't let you down at all.

MARK trips and falls right into MR. O'NEILL.

MARK: Oww. (*Takes off the sunglasses*) Why do they make sunglasses so dark?

MR. O'NEILL: Why did I pick this week to quit coffee?

Blackout.

SCENE 2

We are now in the middle of the show. THE SOUND GUY is at the sound table. MR. O'NEILL is following a script. He is behind the stage right flat. JULIE is watching the action from extreme stage right. MARK is coiling a rope on stage right. He still has the sunglasses on but the scarf is gone. BETH and TAMARA are in the wings preparing to go on stage for the tea party.

BETH: How do I look? *(She has huge black freckles on her cheeks)*

JULIE: Beth, what happened to your face?

BETH: I didn't think my freckles were big enough.

JULIE: Those are craters, not freckles.

BETH: Anne is a happy-go-lucky person who happens to have a lot of freckles.

JULIE: I see.

BETH: I'm just being true to my character.

JULIE: Your character is supposed to be on stage. *(She gives BETH a push)*

BETH: Sorry. *(She goes "on stage" and hits her head. NOTE: All head-hitting is done out of the audience's sight.)* Oww.

JULIE: Watch out for the apple blossoms.

TAMARA: How's my singing? Were you listening to me sing?

JULIE: I didn't notice anything different.

TAMARA: Are you kidding? I was great.

JULIE: Tamara are you feeling OK?

TAMARA: I'm fine. *(She is now practising how she will act when she meets the agent)* Thank you. Yes it was very hard work. Why thank you!

JULIE: What are you doing?

TAMARA: I'm just... nothing.

JULIE: All the actors are acting so weird tonight.

MARK: Why do I have to coil this rope? I'll bet the really famous stage managers don't have to touch rope.

JULIE: Everybody's acting weird.

TAMARA: It's just opening night jitters. You never know who's going to be in the audience. *(She goes on stage)*

JULIE: Watch out for the...

TAMARA: *(she hits her head)* Oww.

JULIE: Too late.

MR. O'NEILL: *(leans over to JULIE from behind the stage right flat)* Things are going well, don't you think?

JULIE: Mr. Thompson should be pleased. Did you ever find him?

MR. O'NEILL: I found his guitar.

JULIE: I hope he's watching the show.

MR. O'NEILL: Have any of the actors touched the set?

JULIE: The trees are fully intact.

DOUG rushes on from stage right.

DOUG: Julie! I need to hide! I need to hide!

JULIE: What's the matter?

DOUG: You never saw me.

JULIE: Doug!

MR. O'NEILL: Doug! Shhhhh.

DOUG runs downstage and hides in front of MARK.

DOUG: You never saw me.

MARK: Hey!

DOUG: Shhhhh be quiet. And don't move.

GLEN comes on stage right escorting a sobbing CHERYL.

MR. O'NEILL: What's going on? Shhhhh.

CHERYL: *(sobbing)* Where is that scum-sucking slime!?

MR. O'NEILL: Keep your voice down!

CHERYL: *(sobbing)* That dastardly deserter!

MR. O'NEILL: We're in the middle of a show!

CHERYL: That... that creep!!

MARK: (to DOUG) You are in trouble.

DOUG: Shhhhh.

GLEN: Have you seen Doug, Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: I don't know.

MARK: You are in big trouble.

DOUG: Shhhhh.

JULIE: What happened?

CHERYL: Waaaaaaa.

GLEN: He dumped Cheryl here.

MR. O'NEILL: Doug, how could you?

DOUG: Aagh. (Stands up)

CHERYL: There you are!

She chases DOUG in a very small circle stage right. DOUG tries to keep MARK between CHERYL and himself. GLEN, JULIE, and MR. O'NEILL stay out of the way.

DOUG: I didn't do anything.

CHERYL: Yes you did.

MR. O'NEILL: We're right in the middle of the show.

GLEN: Doug, why don't we talk about this?

MARK: Not so rough. Not so rough.

DOUG: You wanted to see other people!

CHERYL: I didn't mean it!

MR. O'NEILL: Did you have to do it right in the middle of the show?

DOUG: How was I supposed to know that?!

CHERYL: You should just know!

GLEN: You can't run away from this Doug.

MARK: Watch my sunglasses!

MR. O'NEILL: Does the phrase "We're in the middle of a show" mean anything to any of you?

GLEN: Doug, how are things going at home?

DOUG: I have to get out of here.

MR. O'NEILL: Good idea. Why don't all of you get out of here?

MARK: OK.

MR. O'NEILL: Not you Mark.

DOUG: I'll just be in the dressing room.

DOUG dashes offstage right. GLEN and CHERYL follow.

CHERYL: Come back here! I'm not finished with you.

JULIE: Don't go too far. You're on soon.

GLEN: Doug, are you eating enough fruit?

CHERYL: My parents are here tonight!!

MARK: The nerve of some people.

MR. O'NEILL: I need a coffee.

JULIE: It's OK, Mr. O'Neill. Things are still going smoothly. I don't think anybody in the audience heard.

MR. O'NEILL: We're up to the tea party. How are they doing?

JULIE: Right as rain. I think.

MR. O'NEILL: *(he hears something in her voice)* Now what's the matter?

JULIE: *(unconvincing)* I'm sure it's nothing.

MR. O'NEILL: Julie... tell me what's happening on stage.

JULIE: It's just that Tamara has never waved her arms like that before.

We can see the scene on stage between the two flats. TAMARA is wildly waving her arms, pretending to be drunk on current wine.

MR. O'NEILL: Is that all? A little arm flail. She's just being a little creative that's all.

JULIE: You're absolutely right. She's just being expressive.

MR. O'NEILL: Everything is going to be fine. The show is going to be just fine.

MR. O'NEILL goes back to following along in the script. TAMARA flails her hand so hard she knocks off BETH's wig. BETH dives under the table and starts groping downstage (towards the real audience) for the wig. She should be almost between the two flats so that MR. O'NEILL can see her and she can see him. We see the back of TAMARA as she tries to cover up for the mishap.

JULIE: Oh Mr. O'Neill...

TAMARA: Oh, aren't we having a lovely tea party? Yes we are. It's so lovely.

MR. O'NEILL: (*looks up from the script*) Those lines aren't in the script.

TAMARA: I said to myself, "This would be a lovely tea party day." And low and behold here we are having tea. Yes. Two cups. One for you Anne and one for me. Diana. That's me. I'm Diana and you are Anne.

BETH: (*whispers*) Mr. O'Neill!

MR. O'NEILL: (*whispered to BETH*) What are you doing?

BETH: I can't find the wig.

TAMARA: That would be two. Since there isn't anybody else around.

MR. O'NEILL: What?

TAMARA: Nobody around at all.

BETH: I can't find the wig.

TAMARA: (*hears BETH*) What? (*Tries to cover up*) I mean what a lovely thing tea is. I try to have at least fifteen cups a day.

JULIE: Keep stalling Tamara.

BETH: Got it. (*She finally gets the wig and puts it on*)

JULIE: She's got the wig.

MR. O'NEILL: Thank goodness.

TAMARA: (*hearing BETH*) Thank goodness... for tea that is. Thank goodness for tea.

BETH: (*still under the chair*) Sorry Diana. I just fell for a minute.

She sits up with her face to the real audience first so we see that she has the wig on backwards. She then turns to TAMARA.

TAMARA: Oh Anne. Oh my.

BETH: Um, are you ready for another cup of tea Diana?

TAMARA falls on to the ground and starts to laugh.

JULIE: Yes, this play is going very smoothly.

MR. O'NEILL: Very smooth indeed.

LAUREN: (*coming on stage right beside JULIE*) How is it going out there?

JULIE: (*still looking on "stage"*) It's the most unbelievable thing I've ever seen in my life.

LAUREN: That good eh?

JULIE: Sort of. Good luck.

LAUREN goes on stage. She hits her head on the apple blossom tree.

LAUREN: Oww

JULIE: Watch out for the apple blossoms!

The scene between BETH, TAMARA, and LAUREN continues silently. For the past couple of minutes THE SOUND GUY has been trying to get his flashlight to work. He tries to gesture frantically to MR. O'NEILL.

SOUND GUY: Psssst. Psssst.

MR. O'NEILL: What is it?

SOUND GUY: My flashlight just went out. The batteries are dead.

MR. O'NEILL: I don't believe this.

SOUND GUY: I can't see the script!

MR. O'NEILL: I can't cross the stage. The audience will see me.

SOUND GUY: I can't see the script. How can I do the sound cues if I can't see the script?

MR. O'NEILL: Don't panic. Don't panic. Mark! Mark!

MARK: Yes Mr. O'Neill? (*Turns his head the other way*)

MR. O'NEILL: Take those sunglasses off Mark.

MARK: (*takes his sunglasses off and turns to MR. O'NEILL*) Oh there you are.

MR. O'NEILL: You have to take my flashlight to the sound guy.

MARK: OK.

MR. O'NEILL: You have to get to the other side of the stage.

MARK: (*he takes the flashlight from MR. O'NEILL*) OK.

MR. O'NEILL: You're all right about that? You know you can't walk across, because the audience will see you.

MARK: No problem Mr. O'Neill.

MR. O'NEILL: Great.

Everybody goes back to doing his or her job. We should hear the "onstage" conversation very quietly. MARK walks to the lip of the stage. He thinks he can go around a back way. But there is no back. He looks very confused. He looks left, then right, then back at MR. O'NEILL. He goes to say something and then thinks better of it. He shrugs then wanders offstage right.

SOUND GUY: Mr. O'Neill.

MR. O'NEILL: It's OK. Mark is coming with my flashlight.

SOUND GUY: What?

MR. O'NEILL: Mark is coming with my flashlight!

SOUND GUY: I can't hear you!

MR. O'NEILL: (*does wild gestures with the words*) Mark is coming with my flashlight!!!!!!

SOUND GUY: Why didn't you say so?

MARK walks back on stage right, still very confused.

MARK: Mr. O'Neill...

MR. O'NEILL: Back already? That was quick.

MARK: How do I do it?

MR. O'NEILL: Do what?

MARK: How do I get to the other side of the stage?

MR. O'NEILL: You haven't gone yet?

SOUND GUY: Where's the flashlight!?

MARK: I can't just walk across because the audience will see me.

MR. O'NEILL: Mark.

SOUND GUY: What about the flashlight!?

MARK: And I can't find the back way, is there a hidden door or something?

MR. O'NEILL: Mark.

MARK: And I went down to the underground passage but that just goes to the dressing rooms.

SOUND GUY: Mr. O'Neill!

MR. O'NEILL: (*to SOUND GUY*) We're coming! Mark. We've been rehearsing for months. Are you telling me, in all that time, are you telling me you've never noticed that you can't get to stage left from the inside?

MARK: You can't get to stage left?

MR. O'NEILL: No.

MARK: There's no back way?

MR. O'NEILL: No.

MARK: What a dumb design.

MR. O'NEILL: We know Mark.

SOUND GUY: I need the flashlight!!

MARK: You should talk to somebody about that. The principal or somebody.

MR. O'NEILL: Mark! You have to go outside.

MARK: Outside?

SOUND GUY: Flashlight!!

MR. O'NEILL: Go out that door, run around the back and give the flashlight to the sound guy.

MARK: Outside?

SOUND GUY: I've got a cue coming up. I can feel it!

MR. O'NEILL: It's the only way.

MARK: But it's January!!

MR. O'NEILL: We don't have a choice. He can't see his script.

MARK: But it's January.

MR. O'NEILL: If you run really fast you won't feel a thing.

MARK: Can't I pretend to be a bush or a tree and go across the stage?
No one will ever know.

MR. O'NEILL: GO NOW!! GO NOW! GO NOW!!

MARK: I hope this stage manager knows what I'm doing. I'm risking life and limb here! (*Leaves stage right*)

JULIE: Ten bucks he gets lost in the parking lot.

MR. O'NEILL: Come on Julie. Positive thinking.

JULIE: Twenty bucks he gets lost in the parking lot.

MR. O'NEILL: Maybe he'll be able to find Mr. Thompson.

SOUND GUY: What's happening Mr. O'Neill?

MR. O'NEILL: Mark is coming with the flashlight.

SOUND GUY: What?

MR. O'NEILL: Mark is coming with the flashlight.

SOUND GUY: I can't hear you.

MR. O'NEILL: Mark is... Oh forget it.

MARK appears with flashlight on stage left.

SOUND GUY: Finally.

MARK: Here. I hope you appreciate this.

SOUND GUY: (*tries to turn on new flashlight*) It doesn't work either.

MARK: Sure it does. (*Takes flashlight and bangs it on the table*)

MR. O'NEILL: Be quiet over there.

SOUND GUY: It doesn't work.

MARK: Maybe it only works on the right side of the stage.

SOUND GUY: You're going to have to go get me another one.

MARK: I'm not going outside again. It's January out there!

SOUND GUY: But I can't see the script!

MARK: Here, use my lighter.

SOUND GUY: Why are you carrying around a lighter?

MARK: You never know when you'll come across sound guys and dead flashlights. Here, I'll hold it for you.

Over on stage right there is the sound of a thump and an OWW!!

MR. O'NEILL: That didn't sound like an apple blossom "ow."

JULIE: Lauren fell.

LAUREN is helped backstage by TAMARA and BETH. They put her down behind the stage right flat.

BETH: Help!

TAMARA: Lauren fell.

LAUREN: I can't walk.

MR. O'NEILL: What do you mean you can't walk?

LAUREN: I can't walk.

BETH: She hurt her ankle.

LAUREN: I hurt my ankle. I slipped on an apple blossom.

MR. O'NEILL: Of course you can walk. WALK!!

LAUREN: I can't.

JULIE: What are we going to do? She can't go back on stage with a hurt ankle.

BETH: We can't cancel now!

MR. O'NEILL: Let me think.

TAMARA: Julie, you go on.

JULIE: Me!

LAUREN: She can't do my part.

JULIE: I could if I wanted to.

MR. O'NEILL: Let me think.

LAUREN: If she does my part that agent will never hire me!!

JULIE: What agent?

BETH: Shhhhhh.

TAMARA: She's delirious.

LAUREN: I'll never become a famous actress and I'll have to work at McDonald's for the rest of my life!!

MR. O'NEILL: Be quiet all of you. OK. Beth, you go and try and find your brother and some of the other guys so they can carry Lauren to the dressing room.

BETH: Doug's hiding from Cheryl.

MR. O'NEILL: Well drag him out, OK?

BETH: OK.

MR. O'NEILL: Tamara, you go find some ice.

TAMARA: Alright. (*TAMARA and BETH run offstage right*)

MR. O'NEILL: Julie, do you know if we've got any crutches in the storage room?

JULIE: I don't think so.

MR. O'NEILL: Are you sure?

JULIE: Pretty sure.

LAUREN: What am I going to do?

MR. O'NEILL: OK. Julie I want you to look through the window in the flat very, very slowly.

JULIE: OK.

MR. O'NEILL: Just look out a teeny tiny bit. And I want you to see if there is...

JULIE: AAAAAH (*she ducks back down and everybody jumps*) I thought my mother saw me.

MR. O'NEILL: Get over here. Hold her.

LAUREN: What are you doing?

MR. O'NEILL: I'm looking for a cane.

JULIE: In the audience?

MR. O'NEILL: Maybe we can borrow somebody's cane 'til the end of the show.

LAUREN: I can't walk.

MR. O'NEILL: (*looking back at LAUREN*) Think of your character Lauren. Marilla wouldn't give up this easily would she? No! She's got spunk! She's got nerve! She's got a will of iron.

LAUREN: But she never had a sprained ankle.

JULIE: She does now.

MR. O'NEILL: Can you hobble?

LAUREN: I guess.

MR. O'NEILL: OK. Everybody look through the window very slowly and scan the audience for canes.

*They all go slowly up and look through the window.
Then they go "AHHHHH" at the same time and duck
down.*

MR. O'NEILL: (*to JULIE*) Your mother has sharp eyes.

LAUREN: I think I saw one in the second row.

MR. O'NEILL: (*he's looking through the window*) Second row.

LAUREN: On the left.

MR. O'NEILL: Voila!!

JULIE: Now how are we going to get it?

MR. O'NEILL: You are going to go up to the man at intermission and ask him very nicely if we can borrow his cane for the good of the show.

JULIE: What if he says no?

MR. O'NEILL: Grab it and run off.

JULIE: I'm not going to do that!

MR. O'NEILL: She has to go on! We have to keep going!

JULIE: I am not going to walk off with someone's cane.

MR. O'NEILL: OK. I'll go do it.

LAUREN: You're not going to steal his cane are you? I won't go on if you get that cane under false pretences.

MR. O'NEILL: Don't worry. I won't steal it.

LAUREN: Promise.

MR. O'NEILL: I promise. There. Feel better?

LAUREN: Thank you.

MARK and THE SOUND GUY are beating the script on the table.

MR. O'NEILL: Be quiet over there.

MARK: The script is on fire!

MR. O'NEILL: What!!!

SOUND GUY: I told you not to hold the lighter so close!

MARK: The script is on fire!

MR. O'NEILL: Do something!

MARK picks up the script and starts to jump up and down on it. After he's finished jumping he looks up to find everyone on stage looking at him in complete horror. He thinks he's done something good and he grins at MR. O'NEILL.

MARK: Quick thinking huh?

MR. O'NEILL covers his face and gives a loud groan.

Blackout.

SCENE 3

The lights come up and we should hear the sound of applause. We see the backs of the cast as they are bowing to the fake audience. It's the end of the show. JULIE and MARK are sitting downstage right. MR. O'NEILL is upstage right watching the end of the show. JULIE is wrapping MARK'S hands in lots and lots of gauze.

MR. O'NEILL: One more minute... one more minute.

MARK: (*sullenly*) I hate the theatre.

JULIE: Be quiet.

MR. O'NEILL: The show is almost over... we've almost finished the show... nobody died.

MARK: We almost set the stage on fire.

JULIE: You almost set the stage on fire.

MARK: I hate the theatre.

MR. O'NEILL: Everybody is bowing... They're clapping... It looks like Doug and that girl are back together.

JULIE: Tamara and Glen held them down during intermission.

MR. O'NEILL: Thank God.

JULIE: That could have been a disaster. Gilbert Blyth might have lost a limb or something during one of the production numbers.

MARK: I hate the theatre.

JULIE: It's your own fault.

MR. O'NEILL: I hate cast romances. Where's my coffee?

JULIE: You quit Mr. O'Neill.

MR. O'NEILL: What a stupid thing to do.

MARK: I don't want to be a famous stage manager.

JULIE: You had one job. One job in the whole show. You had to lay a rope across the stage and you forgot.

MARK: How was I to know the rope would get stuck on the carriage wheel?



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