HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM
TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Michael Wehrli

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SYNOPSIS: It’s three days before opening night and there’s a half-finished set, a complete lack of props and costumes, the light and sound board operators are off videotaping a wedding, and the playwright is about to have a heart attack. Throw in an actress with an extremely jealous boyfriend, a dictatorial stage manager, a very organic method actor, and a techie running power tools during rehearsals and you have a splendid disaster of a comedy. Join the cast and crew as they hilariously struggle through this debacle of a tech rehearsal.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(FLEXIBLE CAST OF SEVEN: TWO MEN, TWO WOMEN, THREE EITHER)

LUANNE/JASON (m/f) .................. An upper classman student with lots of theatre experience. The stage manager. Gruff, no-nonsense. At times abrupt, but extremely dedicated to keeping things going and on time.

BRIAN/MICHELLE (m/f).............. A younger student who is a playwright. Passionate, high strung, though strives to be the “nice guy.” He desperately wants his play to come off well.

TRISHA (f)................................. A student. An actress. Very strong personality and quick to frustration. Consumed with her own petty problems.

MATT (m)................................. A student. An actor. Very serious about his craft but has a cool and supportive personality. Extremely concerned about Trisha.
DERRICK/DENISE (m/f)................. An upper classman student with lots of life and theatre experience. The director of Brian’s play. Pleasant personality, very easy going. Takes everything in stride.

DANIELLE (f)............................ A student. A techie. A “does everything” kind of techie. Has to push herself to the limit because she is so slow in getting things done.

MARCUS (m).............................. A student. Trisha’s boyfriend. Very possessive of Trisha and easily jealous. Sometimes lets his passions take over his reasoning.

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Dates: February 22, 2003
Venue: Mesquite Arts Center Black Box Theatre (Mesquite, Texas)
Company: Rover Dramawerks

Dates: March 26, 2010
Venue: Grout School Theatre (Portland, Oregon)
Company: New Moon Productions

ORIGINAL CAST

Luanne: Shannon Marie
Michelle: Debbie Darwin
Matt: Chris Niedzwiecki
Trisha: Audra Hatchett
Derrick: Tim Shane
Daniel: Dave Miller
Marcus: Brandon West
SCENE
A high school or middle school theatre or auditorium. A younger student has written a play that is being produced completely by fellow students (directed, acted, tech, etc.) with the occasional supervision of their theatre teacher, Mr. Pauley.

TIME
The present.

SET/TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS
The set can be dependent on the school or group’s resources. The idea is that the construction on the set has just barely begun, or hasn’t happened at all. You can use whatever you have in stock (a platform, a couple of flats, etc.). Or, you can just leave the stage bare except for the chairs and table mentioned in the script.

Lighting is a basic general wash of the stage.

COSTUMES are everyday clothes that would be worn to a rehearsal. TRISHA puts on a rehearsal skirt.

PROPS NEEDED: (2) Small Tables, (5) Chairs, Prompt Script, Play Scripts, (2) Cell Phones, Stopwatch (or watch), Paper Plates, Plastic Utensils, Plastic Cups. If you wish, you can dispense with the table items (paper plates, etc.) and just have the actress pantomime the action in the script.

The SOUND EFFECTS can be done live off stage (sounds of a drill gun, a circular saw, and hammering) or done with standard recordings.

PRODUCTION NOTES
The best way to bring out the full comedy of the play is for the actors to play it honestly. All the characters are doing the best they can with this situation. Actors should strive to make their characters likable so the audience is rooting for them.
SETTING:
A school theatre or auditorium.

AT RISE:
Six o’clock on a Monday evening at tech rehearsal. In the BLACKOUT, we hear a few grunts and grumbles. Soon, the work LIGHTS come up abruptly over the stage. We see 1-2 platforms and 1-2 non-descript flats creatively placed. If your school does not have these readily available, just use the chairs and table mentioned below on the bare stage. To the side of the stage are a chair and a small table set up for the stage manager.

If there is any type of “set” at all, follow these directions. If not, skip to the next paragraph. LUANNE, the stage manager, enters from the side of the stage. She is slow moving, huffing and puffing and grunting all the way. When she gets there, she takes a look at the set. She grunts and shakes her head. Slowly, she goes over and “tests” the various set items to make sure they are sturdy. Finally, she grunts an “Uh-huh” then goes about slowly and begrudgingly setting the stage with the set pieces: a table with one chair, three chairs pushed together to be a “sofa,” and paper plates, cups, and plastic utensils stacked up on the table. If you wish, you can dispense with the table items (paper plates, etc.) and just have the actress pantomime the action in the script.

If there is no “set” at all, follow these directions. LUANNE, the stage manager, enters from the side of the stage. She is slow moving, huffing and puffing and grunting all the way. LUANNE reacts to the lack of a set. All that’s on stage are a table with one chair, three chairs pushed together to be a “sofa,” and paper plates, cups, and plastic utensils stacked up on the table. If you wish, you can dispense with the table items (paper plates, etc.) and just have the actress pantomime the action in the script. LUANNE starts re-arranging the items so they will be in the “right place.”
BRIAN, the writer, enters in an excited haste from the back of the theatre, singing softly to himself and is very happy. Once he reaches the stage, he stops in total horror.

BRIAN: Oh. Oh! Oh, no…no… (He quickly runs around looking in disbelief at the lack of a set. Eventually, he runs over to LUANNE - who is still setting up.) Uh, Luanne. Where is the—

LUANNE: (Putting up a hand.) Setting up.

BRIAN: But—

LUANNE: Busy!

LUANNE goes back to business. BRIAN is aghast and doesn’t know what to do. He takes his script, notebook, etc. and nervously sits to the side of the stage. MATT and TRISHA enter from the back of the theatre. She is in the middle of a conversation - talking a mile a minute about her boyfriend.

TRISHA: …yeah, and then he’s all like, “You practice all the time” – practice, like it’s some sort of sports thing – anyhow, he says, “You practice all the time” and like, he’s all, “If you want me to stick around, you better find more time for me.” Yeah, right. As if I’m gonna give up what I love to watch him play video games.

MATT: Whoa.

TRISHA: Yeah! And then he jumps my case about the scene with the kiss—

MATT: No way!

TRISHA: Uh, yeah! I mean, does he think he owns me? What an idiot. He so totally doesn’t get the whole acting thing!

MATT: Tell me about it. So how come you are— (They both stop dead when they see the lack of a set.) Whoa.

TRISHA: No way.

They walk up to the stage. LUANNE is still setting up. She gets irritated that they are in her way, and finally shoos them away. They see BRIAN and go over to him. As they do, the stage LIGHTS come up to a bland general wash of the stage. Off-stage, we hear DERRICK, the director, murmuring on the phone, as he makes his way down from the light booth.
MATT: Lights. Cool. *(Calling out.)* Thanks Mr. Pauley!
DERRICK: *(From off-stage)* Nope, it's me. *(Goes back to talking on
the phone as he continues to make his way down from the light
booth.)*
MATT: Oh. Hey, Brian.
BRIAN: Hey.
MATT: What, you're nervous? Dude, your play's going to come off
beautifully. Trust me.
BRIAN: Yeah.
TRISHA: What's up with the set?
BRIAN: Uh...I don't know. Pretty depressing, really.
MATT: Whoa.
TRISHA: Whatever. Come on. *(They start walking to a far corner of
the stage.)* So anyway, I tell Marcus that just because— *(Her
phone rings.)* Aargh! Right on cue. What's he gonna whine about
now?

She answers the phone and goes on quietly ad-libbing as they make
their way to a far corner of the stage. She alternates between talking
on the phone and talking to MATT.

BRIAN: This is not happening...Luanne, when is Mr. Pauley
supposed to get here?
LUANNE: Later. He gave me the keys then headed off to grab some
dinner.
BRIAN: But he's supposed to be here—

DERRICK comes bustling in. He is on his cell phone talking to his
uncle about a computer problem.
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DERRICK: *(On the phone.)* Tell me again what the blue screen says? *(Pause.)* Hmm…not good. I suppose you’ve already done the memory check diagnostic routine? *(Pause.)* Okay then. Hmm… hope it’s not your hard drive. Wwwwell, don’t sweat it, Uncle Terry. I can get up there in a couple of hours and take a look at your computer. *(Pause.)* No, no, seriously. It’s not a problem. I’ll just cut rehearsal a little short this evening.

BRIAN: What? Uh, Derrick, you’re not serious, are—

DERRICK: *(On the phone.)* Hang on, Uncle Terry. *(To BRIAN.)* Just a sec, Brian. *(Back on phone.)* So anyhow, sit tight, Uncle Terry, okay? *(Slight pause.)* Okay, great. Will see you soon. Let me know if there is anything else I can do for you, all right? Later. *(To BRIAN.)* What’s up, bud?

BRIAN: *(Flustered.)* Early? You can’t—first tech—leave?—no Mr. Pauley?—opening Thursday—leave early?! Oooh, LOOK!

*Turns DERRICK towards the stage.*

DERRICK: Hmmmm…

BRIAN: Sorry, Derrick. I’m just really flustered. But… *(Gestures to the stage.)*

DERRICK: Wwwwell…the set’s not as far along as I’d have hoped.

BRIAN: That’s the understatement of the year! What’re we going to do?!

DERRICK: Don’t sweat it. It’ll get done.

*DERRICK smiles to BRIAN and then crosses to LUANNE who by now is sitting at her “station” with her prompt script out. BRIAN takes a deep breath then follows him.*

DERRICK: Hey, Luanne.

LUANNE: Hey. Ready?

DERRICK: Yeah, just give me a sec.

LUANNE: Uh huh.

BRIAN: Derrick, look, I’m not trying to be a pain, but last week Mr. Pauley said Danielle would be finished with the set before tonight’s rehearsal.
DERRICK: Well...that's what he told me, too. But it'll get done, don't bust your gut over it.

BRIAN: But we only have three more days till opening!

DERRICK: I know.

BRIAN: I have a newspaper critic coming!

DERRICK: Yup. (Smiles, nods.)

BRIAN: Derrick, this play is my baby. Please, please tell me things are going to come together?

DERRICK: Things are going to come together.

BRIAN: Uh, good. Good. So...

DERRICK: Ssssooo...we better get started. Are Matt and—?

LUANNE: Over there.

DERRICK: Good deal.

DERRICK starts leafing through LUANNE's prompt script. She reacts. Pause.

BRIAN: (To LUANNE.) Uh...are you...going to get them?

LUANNE: (Glares at BRIAN and he backs away. She bellows.) MATT, TRISHA, WE'RE STARTING. (Looks at the script with DERRICK.)

TRISHA: (Still on the phone.) In a minute.

BRIAN: (Looks at his watch.) Oh, man....

LUANNE: NOW!

MATT and TRISHA return.

TRISHA: (Still on the phone.) Get off of my case! I'll wear what I want to when I want to! (Pause.) Oh, right. Well, too bad.

LUANNE: Can it. Time to start.

TRISHA: Don't you talk to me li—

LUANNE: (Stands.) Time to start!

TRISHA: Okay, okay... (Makes a face when she's turned away from LUANNE. On phone.) Gotta go. Bye.

MATT: Oh, dude, I gotta pee.

LUANNE: (Starts her stopwatch.) Ninety seconds.
MATT rushes off.

DERRICK: Hey girl.

Hugs TRISHA.

TRISHA: Derrick.
DERRICK: (Overly concerned.) What’s going on, honey?
TRISHA: Oh, it’s just my jerk-face boyfriend.
DERRICK: Same ol’ stuff?
TRISHA: Yeah, and more of it. Today, he starts in on me with—
LUANNE: No time for that. Get your rehearsal skirt on—

LUANNE hands her a well-worn rehearsal skirt. TRISHA shoots LUANNE a nasty look then grabs it from her and puts it on. Below dialogue overlaps.

BRIAN: Uh, what about the costumes? —
TRISHA: (To DERRICK.) —anyhow, so, he’s all like “I’m not gonna sit and watch you kiss some other guy.” And I’m like—
LUANNE: Get to your place.
TRISHA: Luanne…
DERRICK: Hey kid, don’t let him get to ya’. You’ll work it out.
TRISHA: I don’t know…
DERRICK: And no worries, we’re not cutting the kiss.
TRISHA: You bet we’re not!
BRIAN: Uh, what’s that about cutting?
LUANNE: NOT cutting. Chill. (Checks her stopwatch.)
BRIAN: Not cutting. Good. Good…
DERRICK: (To TRISHA.) Just take a deep breath, hon’.
LUANNE: TIME! (MATT rushes back in, zipping up his pants.)
MATT: Sorry, sorry.
LUANNE: Uh huh. Derrick, ready?
DERRICK: Yeah. We’ll skip warm-ups tonight, I suppose. Let’s start from the top.
MATT: Cool.
TRISHA: All right.
BRIAN: Uh, Derrick…I don’t mean to be a problem, but isn’t this supposed to be first tech?
LUANNE: Guess you didn’t get my e-mail. The sound and light board ops are helping their dad video a wedding. They’ll be here at nine thirty.
BRIAN: Nine thirty? But we open in—
DERRICK: It’s all good, Brian. They’ll be here soon enough.

A huge crash is heard from back stage. DANIELLE, the techie, stumbles in. She has slept in the theatre overnight and looks like it. She lumbers in, tools in hand.

BRIAN: What on earth…
DERRICK: Someone’s had a fun night.
TRISHA: She’s totally wrecked.
LUANNE: What are you doing? How’d you get in?

Below dialogue overlaps.

DANIELLE: Ohhhhhh hey. Derrick. Sorry man. Just woke up—
BRIAN: —uh, Danielle, why haven’t—
DANIELLE: —Mr. P. let me work here yesterday and I just kinda stayed and pulled an all-nighter—
LUANNE: —all right, now—
DERRICK: —sounds like fun. Did that a couple times during Dickensfest.—
DANIELLE: —yeah, cool—
BRIAN: —the set was supposed to be—
DERRICK: —there was one stretch where I had worked three days solid—
BRIAN: —uh, Derrick—
DERRICK: —and at four in the afternoon I found myself leaning against a streetlamp and had no idea how long I’d been there—
LUANNE: —come on, wrap it up—
DANIELLE: —sounds like the time I—
BRIAN: Can we PLEASE get back to the REHEARSAL?! (ALL stop and look at him.) Sorry. Sorry. But, can we, uh, get started here? Please?

DERRICK: It’s all right Brian, we have plenty of time.

BRIAN: Plenty of time…

LUANNE: PLACES for the top of the show.

MATT and TRISHA get into their “places.” TRISHA has her script with her and she sets it on the table. During the below dialogue, MATT and TRISHA prepare for the scene in the most ultra-serious “actor-y” way—stretching, making sounds, etc. Towards the end, MATT aids TRISHA in “getting ready”: he puts his hands on her shoulders, puts his forehead to her forehead, and gives her lots of very quiet encouragement. The below dialogue happens during the above action.

DANIELLE: Man, I would’ve never made it last night without the Mountain Dews.

DERRICK: I’m a Dr. Pepper man myself.

DANIELLE: Yeah, those’re cool, but M.D. has tons more caffeine.

DERRICK: Really? Ya’ learn something every day, don’t ya’?

DANIELLE: Sometimes without trying.

DERRICK’s cell phone rings. He answers it.

DERRICK: Hey Lorie, what’s up?

BRIAN: Oh, good grief…

DERRICK: (Motions for them to keep going.) Whoa whoa, slow down. We’ll take care of things. Now tell me what’s happening with the props…

Ad-libs a conversation as he goes off stage. We should still hear him slightly when he’s off stage. DANIELLE exits to backstage. By now, MATT and TRISHA are done with their preparation ritual. LUANNE looks at TRISHA who is now holding her script.

LUANNE: What are you doing with that?
TRISHA: I’m having trouble with—
LUANNE: We open Thursday, lose it.
TRISHA: Can’t I just keep it here in case—
LUANNE: LOSE IT.
TRISHA: Okay, okay. Fine. We’ll see how far I get…
MATT: Sshhh. It’s all right, Trish. You got it. All is well. All is well.
TRISHA: Maybe.

MATT smiles at her. Pause.

BRIAN: (Muttering to himself.) Right. All is flipping awesome…
MATT: Hey, I thought we were supposed to have props tonight?
LUANNE: Derrick’s on the phone with Lorie now. Just deal with it.
MATT: That’s cool, that’s cool.
BRIAN: Are we EVER going to get started?!

ALL stop and glare at him. Pause.
LUANNE: Do I have to toss you out?
LUANNE: Ready?
MATT: Give us one more sec.

MATT and TRISHA do one last bit of “preparing” for the scene. They end with some vigorous shaking of their bodies. Eventually, MATT exits when they are fully “prepared.”

LUANNE: Lights up.

The scene begins. TRISHA goes about her stage business: setting the table with the plastic silverware and paper plates. (Or she pantomimes this action.) Her character looks quite miserable. Eventually, her character breaks down crying. MATT enters, sees her in tears, crosses dramatically towards her, and just as they are about to embrace, the SOUND of a drill gun goes off back stage and continues during the below.

BRIAN: Aaaarrggghhhhh! Does she HAVE to do that now?!
LUANNE: You want the set done?
BRIAN: But how can they—
LUANNE: They’ll deal with it. They’re actors, right?
TRISHA: Aaargh. I am totally out of the moment.
LUANNE: Find it.
BRIAN: Heaven help us.

Drill gun SOUND stops. DANIELLE pokes head in.

DANIELLE: Did you need something?
LUANNE: We’re good. Keep going.
BRIAN: Uh, Danielle, can you, uh, please try and keep it down if you can?
DANIELLE: (Looks at him.) Yeah.

Exits.

During the above dialogue, MATT and TRISHA go through a shortened version of their “preparing” ritual. MATT exits. They start the scene again. TRISHA goes through the same moves as before, this time with less energy and commitment. MATT enters again, crosses to her and embraces her precisely the same way he did before. Just then, the SOUND of a circular saw goes off backstage. MATT and TRISHA react. They get a look and a gesture from LUANNE as if to say “Go on!” MATT and TRISHA struggle for a moment then proceed with the scene. They have to yell to be heard.

MATT: (Yelling.) “Guinevere, my dearest...It is my deepest hope this downpour of sorrow upon your cheeks are not shed for me.”
TRISHA: (Yelling.) “In truth, darling Reginald, my morose and sullen nature has overwhelmed my spirits. For, knowing that...for, knowing that...” OOOHHH!!! I can’t do this! NO ONE could do this with THAT going on.

Circular saw SOUND stops.
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**MATT:** Trish, hon. We’ll get through it—

*Below dialogue overlaps.*

**LUANNE:** I don’t have time for this—
**BRIAN:** —none of us do—
**LUANNE:** Just think of it as a concentration exercise.
**TRISHA:** —give me a break—
**BRIAN:** —during tech week—
**LUANNE:** —so get on with it.
**TRISHA:** I’ve had just about enough of—
**MATT:** Trisha, Trish— *(Pulls her aside.)*
**TRISHA:** I’ll show her “get on with it”…
**MATT:** Calm down, baby, calm down. Deeeeep breaths…

_He puts his forehead on hers, takes her hands, and mutters some affirmations._

**LUANNE:** Actors…
**BRIAN:** I’m going to be the laughing stock of the entire school. Where is Mr. Pauley?

*MATT and TRISHA start where they left off in the scene.*

**LUANNE:** Lights up.
**TRISHA:** “In truth, darling Reginald, my morose and sullen nature has overwhelmed my spirits. For, knowing that…For, knowing that…. ”  OOOOHHHH! What is that stinkin’ line?!
**LUANNE:** Don’t break character.
**TRISHA:** I KNOW WHAT I’M DOING! Just give me the line.
**LUANNE:** Uh huh. “For knowing WHAT my instincts have told me.”
**TRISHA:** Aarghh. Got it, got it… *(Goes back to the scene.)* “For knowing WHAT my instincts have told me—”
**DERRICK:** *(Entering, still on the phone.)* Well. Don’t sweat it hon’. I’ll take care of it. *(Hangs up. SOUND of a circular saw and drill gun backstage begins.)* Lorie said Stageplay Theatre won’t let us use their props.
BRIAN: (Yelling.) What?!
DERRICK: (Yelling.) Stageplay says we can’t use their props!
BRIAN: (Yelling.) We can’t use their props!?
DERRICK: (Yelling.) No! (Circular saw SOUND stops.)
MATT: Whoa. That’s not so good. (Drill gun SOUND stops.)
TRISHA: What jerk-faces! I can’t believe they’d—

SOUND of hammering comes from backstage. It happens intermittently during below.

LUANNE: Calm down, everyone. Five minute break! (Starts stopwatch.)

TRISHA is very upset. MATT takes her aside and tries to calm her down.

MATT: Trish, Trish, it’s okay. They’ll take care of it.

Hammering sounds.

BRIAN: Uh, I thought we already had it worked out with Stageplay?
DERRICK: Apparently not.
BRIAN: What was she getting from them?
DERRICK: Everything.

Hammering sounds.

BRIAN: ALL the props?!
LUANNE: I’m gonna make you sit outside.
DERRICK: No worries, Brian, I’ll handle it. I’ll just head on out and see what I can dig up.

Starts to exit, BRIAN stops him.

BRIAN: It’s our first tech rehearsal!
DERRICK: Yup. The board ops will be here soon enough. So if they arrive before I get back—
BRIAN: No, no, no! Derrick you can’t leave!

Hammering sounds.

LUANNE: For once, I agree.
DERRICK: Well, I can’t get them after rehearsal, because Terry’s computer is—
BRIAN: I DON’T CARE!

Hammering sounds.

MATT: Dude’s head’s gonna explode.
BRIAN: I’m sorry. Sorry. Look. Look...I’ll ask my mom to get the props tomorrow, I guess. She’ll understand. I hope...
DERRICK: Your choice. *(Hammering sounds.)*
BRIAN: Good. Good. Now here’s a radical suggestion: can we please get on with the rehearsal?

Hammering stops.

DERRICK: Sure. No problem.
LUANNE: *(Looking at stopwatch or watch.)* Break’s over! PLACES.

DERRICK’s phone rings. He answers. During the below dialogue, MATT and TRISHA again go through a shortened version of their “preparing” and then go to places.

DERRICK: Hey Dad, what’s up? Oh nothing, just rehearsing here. *(Holds the phone to his shoulder for a moment.)* My Dad.

Gestures for them to go on. He exits talking on the phone.

DERRICK: No, it’s gonna be a while. After rehearsal, I’m off to Uncle Terry’s—his hard drive may be close to crashing... *(Exits.)*

MARCUS, Trisha’s boyfriend, enters unseen from the back of the theatre. He watches the “rehearsal” from the audience.
BRIAN: That’s not the only thing close to crashing…
LUANNE: Start with: “In truth, darling…”
TRISHA: Yeah. Yeah. (Takes a breath. Pause.) “In truth, darling Reginald, my morose and sullen nature has overwhelmed my spirits. For, knowing what my instincts have told me to be true, I simply cannot bear it.”
MATT: “You must have faith in the future. Remember my love, scandal is gossip made tedious by morality.”
TRISHA: “Your words do bring solace, dear Reginald. Oh! My true companion, what ever would I do without you?”
MATT: “My love, my love.”

*MATT takes her in his arms dramatically. Slowly, dramatically, their lips meet and they kiss. MARCUS crosses to the stage.*

MARCUS: I told you to cut this scene or we are done!
TRISHA: Well I guess you know my choice then!
LUANNE: What are you doing—

*There is a HUGE CRASH from backstage and DANIELLE screams.*

DANIELLE: (Off stage.) Yeaow! I think I broke my leg!
BRIAN: Good grief!
LUANNE: I got it.

She slowly gets up and slowly exits. TRISHA walks over towards MARCUS who by now is on the stage and very near one of the wings.

TRISHA: You don’t own me, Marcus!
MARCUS: I never said I did! But I’m not going to watch you make out—
TRISHA: It was just a kiss! Lighten up, you freak!
MARCUS: Watch it, Trisha!
MATT: Whoa. Why don’t we all—
MARCUS: Stay out of this!
TRISHA: Don’t yell at him!
MARCUS: I’ll do whatever I want!
MATT: It’s all right Trish—
TRISHA: No, it’s not. *(To MARCUS.)* You’re an IDIOT!
MARCUS: I told you…NEVER call me that!
TRISHA: Idiot, idiot, I-D-I-O-T!!!
MARCUS: KNOCK IT OFF!!!
MATT: *(Gets in-between them.)* All right, all right, this has gone far enough. Just take a deep—
MARCUS: I told you to mind your own business!
MATT: Whoa! Just take a second to calm down, dude.
MARCUS: Don’t tell me to—

*MARCUS punches MATT.* NOTE: If the actors are not proficient with stage combat, then MARCUS can shove MATT who then tumbles off stage and a loud crash is heard. TRISHA screams. MARCUS has a look of horror with the realization that he’s let himself get out of control.

BRIAN: He was my leading actor!
MARCUS: Uh, yeah. S…sorry. Guess I lost my head. But he was after my girl!
MATT: *(Re-entering.)* Whoa, man! You knocked out a tooth!
BRIAN: Why’d it have to be his mouth?
MATT: I think my nose is broken too…
TRISHA: WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?!
BRIAN: I can’t believe this is happening…
MARCUS: Okay. Okay. I’m s…sorry, Trisha. I just can’t stand to see another guy—
MATT: It’s just a play! It’s called ‘acting’, you idiot!
MARCUS: Don’t call me an—
TRISHA: Then stop acting like one!

*Trisha shoves MARCUS. DERRICK re-enters still talking on the phone, this time to the costumer. He is oblivious to everything else.*

MARCUS: Trish, I’m sorry. Really. I can’t help it, girl – I love you so much and I lose my head somet—
TRISHA: Will you still love me when I break your neck?! (Starts backing him away.)
MARCUS: Aw come on now, you don’t mean that.

LUANNE enters helping a limping DANIELLE to walk.

TRISHA: You don’t think so?!
DANIELLE: Oh, hey there Bun-bun?
BRIAN: Bun-bun?
MARCUS: Danielle?!
DANIELLE: Yeah, BF! I didn’t know you were stopping by. (Smiles.)
TRISHA: BF?! As in ‘boyfriend’?!
MARCUS: Uh, I can explain…
DANIELLE: Whoa, Marcus, you told me you two were done weeks ago!
TRISHA: What?! You’re a player, Marcus?!
MARCUS: Well, uh, you see—

TRISHA grabs MARCUS by his shirt.

TRISHA: Yeah, Marcus! Tell me all about it!

TRISHA shakes MARCUS vigorously.

DANIELLE: Take it to him, Trisha! He is one sorry—
TRISHA: I’ll deal with you later!
MARCUS: Hold on now! Don’t go crazy on me!
TRISHA: I’LL SHOW YOU CRAZY!

DERRICK is still talking on the phone but he notices TRISHA as she shoves MARCUS and then chases him off stage, yelling at him all the way. MATT slowly makes his way to DERRICK.

DANIELLE: Man, that was intense. I can’t stand liars…
LUANNE: Ditto.
DERRICK: (Still on the phone.) Ooookay then. Wwwwell, Don’t worry about it. Just keep plugging away. Later. (Hangs up.)
MATT: Dude, I better hit the emergency room.
DERRICK: Hmm. Probably a good idea. Looks like you’ve lost a tooth.
MATT: Yeah.
LUANNE: Hold on. You can ride with us.
BRIAN: Aaahh!
DANIELLE: Hey Derrick, remember the time you busted your—
LUANNE: No time. Let’s move.

They start exiting.

MATT: I’ll catch you tomorrow. Hopefully.

Starts exiting.

BRIAN: Hopefully?!

MATT, LUANNE and DANIELLE exit.

DERRICK: I’ve told Trisha all along to lose that guy…
BRIAN: (Pitifully sits down, muttering to himself.) This is a disaster. I’ll have to transfer to another school. There is no way…no way…
DERRICK: Oh listen, Brian. I was just on the phone with Svea… (BRIAN has a blank look.) The costumer…
BRIAN: Huh?
DERRICK: Seems she underestimated the amount of time it’d take.
BRIAN: …and…
DERRICK: Oh don’t worry, bud, I’ve worked with her before. We’ll have the costumes by opening.
BRIAN: By opening? BY OPENING?! AARGH! I CAN’T STAND THIS ANY MORE!

Exits ad-libbing to himself.
DERRICK: Hmm. What got into his coffee this morning? (Phone rings.) Hey there Mr. Pauley, what's up? (Pause.) Oh? What kind of scheduling trouble? (Pause.) Hmm. Wwwwell, when's the church group supposed to be in here? (Slight pause.) Thursday? Mr. Pauley, that's our opening night. (Pause.) Ah. Didn't know it was the principal's church group. Wwwwell...Uh...when're they done? (Pause.) Ah. That late, huh? Oookay. I guess we'll work around it. (Pause.) Ah. Thanks for lining up the gym. (Slight pause.) Yeah, I'll lock up. See ya' tomorrow. (Hangs up, pause. Sighs.) Houston, we have a problem...

Slow BLACKOUT.

THE END