

DRAMA GEEKS

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By **Bradley Hayward**

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SYNOPSIS: Nine over-dramatic high school students gather on a bare stage. They've been invited by a cheeky narrator who poses a question that has confused actors for generations: "To be or not to be?" When knowing the answer becomes the difference between chic and geek, the stakes are raised and tempers begin to flare. A couple of jokers in the tech booth add light and sound effects to the mix and it becomes every actor for himself. Will this ensemble figure things out before it's time to raise the curtain? Nobody knows, but Shakespeare is on the edge of his seat...

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 MEN, 2 WOMEN, 6 EITHER GENDER)

NOTE: ALL LINE COUNTS ARE APPROXIMATE

NARRATOR (m/f)	(122 lines)
ACTOR 1 (f)	(30 lines)
ACTOR 2 (m)	(32 lines)
ACTOR 3 (m/f)	(25 lines)
ACTOR 4 (m/f)	(34 lines)
ACTOR 5 (m/f)	(15 lines)
ACTOR 6 (m)	(32 lines)
ACTOR 7 (f)	(28 lines)
ACTOR 8 (m/f)	(36 lines)
ACTOR 9 (m/f)	(38 lines)

The characters are often referred to by name. Simply replace the name in the script with the actors' real names.

SETTING

The present.

SCENE

The setting should be entirely nondescript, with a variety of levels made up of blocks, ramps, risers, stairs or whatever you have on hand. The play could also be performed on a completely bare stage.

COSTUMES AND PROPS

The actors wear matching T-shirts and jeans. All props are pantomimed.

LIGHTS AND SOUND

Since the settings and costumes are minimal, lighting and sound effects can play a huge role in creating various moods and settings. The cues as written may be elaborated upon or eliminated all together, depending on your resources. The acting ensemble can easily provide the sound effects, if desired.

RUNNING TIME

30 minutes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Drama Geeks was first presented by Carrot River Junior/Senior High School in Carrot River, Saskatchewan. It was directed by Dean Armstrong with the following cast and crew:

- NARRATOR..... Kyle Morris
- ACTOR 1..... Taryn Freemantle
- ACTOR 2..... Matt Tremblay
- ACTOR 3..... Emmett Shortt
- ACTOR 4..... Jordan Wouters
- ACTOR 5..... Karissa Collison
- ACTOR 6..... Cameron McCrea
- ACTOR 7..... Courtney Bergen
- ACTOR 8..... Chantelle Bernard
- ACTOR 9..... Brenna Morris

- Stage Manager Samantha Fast
- Asst. Stage ManagerStacey Mamer
- Lights and Sound Spencer ‘Spinner’ Nicklen, Michael Enns

AT RISE:

From the darkness comes a voice.

NARRATOR: Lights, please. *(Nothing happens.)* Ahem! I said lights please. *(The house lights rise.)* Wrong lights. *(The house lights go out.)* Try again. *(A spotlight raises stage right.)* Nope. *(Another spotlight raises stage left.)* Not there, either. *(Another spotlight raises center stage, illuminating the NARRATOR. She smiles.)* Thank you. But kill the other two. I'm the star here. *(The center stage spotlight goes out.)* You gotta be kidding me. *(She walks into the light at stage left.)* I want to stay center so everyone can see me. *(The stage left spotlight goes out.)* Now you're just trying to tick me off! *(She sprints across the stage and into the stage right spotlight.)* Is this where you want me? *(The stage right spotlight goes out, leaving the stage in complete darkness.)* I know where you live. *(The center spotlight rises.)* Thank you. Now let's get this show on the road. *(SOUND EFFECT: A noisy car squealing its tires.)* Oh, great. Now the sound guy is involved. *(SOUND EFFECT: Loud and thunderous applause.)* They always gang up on me like this. *(SOUND EFFECT: Raucous laughter. She gestures to the booth, making a fist.)* Do I have to come up there? *(SOUND EFFECT: Organ music from the start of an NHL hockey game. All three spotlights flash on and off at various intervals.)* Enough already! *(Simultaneously, the spotlights and music quickly go out and the house lights rise.)* If that's the way you want it, fine. The audience can all go home. But any refunds are coming out of your paycheck. *(The house lights go down and the spotlight returns center stage, on the NARRATOR.)* That's better. Now no more funny business. Got it? *(The spotlight flashes off and on.)* What about you, sound guy? *(SOUND EFFECT: A horse whip.)* Now that we've got that settled, we can bring out the actors.

A faint light rises behind her, illuminating a set made of various levels. NINE ACTORS wander in and take their places on the set, sitting and posing on the various levels. None of them have any perceivable characteristics. They are just a bunch of teens dressed in t-shirts and jeans.

NARRATOR: With actors, you never quite know what you're going to get. *(The ACTORS change poses.)* Thespians are a bunch of odd ducks and dealing with them is always a crap shoot. Sigmund Freud spent his entire life studying the human condition. *(The ACTORS change poses.)* An unfortunate waste of fifty-two years, if you ask me. He could have learned all he needed to know by sitting front and center in this hallowed place we call... *(She steps to the side and takes a seat.)* The theater!

The ACTORS change their poses as the lights fully rise on them. They stare at the audience, frozen.

NARRATOR: There are dramatic actors.

ACTOR 1: *(Over dramatic.)* To be or not to be. That is the question. *(She poses.)*

NARRATOR: Comedic actors.

ACTOR 2: *(As a comedian.)* A guy walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "To be or not to be? That is the question." And the bartender says, "Can't you read, pal? The sign says no soliloquies!" *(He poses.)*

NARRATOR: Character actors.

ACTOR 3: *(Evil and with a German accent.)* To be or not to be. Dat ees da question. Muah ha ha! *(She poses.)*

NARRATOR: Movie actors.

ACTOR 4: *(Into an imaginary mirror.)* To me or not to me. *(Kisses her reflection.)* There is no question. *(She fixes her hair and poses.)*

NARRATOR: Child actors.

ACTOR 5: (*Jumping up and down.*) I said to be, to be, to be! Stop asking stupid questions, dummy! (*She sticks her thumb in her mouth and poses.*)

NARRATOR: Method actors.

ACTOR 6: (*Doing his best Robert DeNiro impression.*) You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? Look at me when I ask you a question. You wanna be or not? (*He poses.*)

NARRATOR: Over actors.

ACTOR 7: Oh my god, you guys! Is it to be or not to be?! We better think about this carefully because it's the biggest, hugest, most important decision ever and if we make the wrong one we're all gonna die! (*She poses.*)

NARRATOR: Bad actors.

ACTOR 8: (*Slow and monotone.*) Not to be or to be. Is that a question? (*She poses.*)

NARRATOR: Then there's the worst of the worst, the lowest of the low, the bottom of the barrel. And they are what our play is about tonight. High school actors.

ACTOR 9: (*Not caring at all.*) To be... um... To be... uh...

ACTOR 2: (*Whispers.*) Or not to be.

ACTOR 9: What?

ACTORS 4, 6, 8: (*A little louder.*) Or not to be.

ACTOR 9: Huh?

ACTORS 1, 3, 5, 7: (*Louder still.*) Or not to be.

ACTOR 9: (*Thinking.*) To be...

ACTORS: (*Yelling.*) Or not to be!

ACTOR 9: Oh yeah. What they said. Can I go home now?

All of the ACTORS pose.

NARRATOR: Freud, eat your heart out. (*SOUND EFFECT: A loud belch.*) The life of a high school actor is not an easy one.

At once, the ACTORS stamp their feet and reach out toward the audience. They freeze, with horrified looks on all their faces. The NARRATOR walks amongst them.

NARRATOR: Look at their faces. Just look at them! Sad, sad, pathetic faces. One and all. Especially this one. Wow, poor guy. Poor all of them. Reaching out to us as if to say —

ACTORS: HELP!

NARRATOR: That's an awfully big word for only four letters. But maybe there's something we can do about this. It never hurts to ask, now does it? *(She goes to ACTOR 9 and pulls him down stage. His upper body remains frozen.)* Let's start with this young thespian. A few probing questions might help us understand why he's chosen to spend his teen years on the stage. At ease. *(ACTOR 9 shakes his upper body.)* In fact, you all can relax.

EVERYONE unfreezes, shakes the kinks out of their bodies and has a seat.

NARRATOR: What's your name?

ACTOR 9: Actor number nine.

NARRATOR: No, not your name in the script. Your real name.

ACTOR 9: Oh, sure. Cody.

NARRATOR: Nice to meet you, Cody.

CODY: If you say so.

NARRATOR: Why are you in drama?

CODY: *(Rolls his eyes.)* My dad made me.

NARRATOR: Why?

CODY: 'Cause he's lame.

NARRATOR: In what way?

CODY: Pretty much every way. *(A light rises stage left as ACTOR 2 walks into it to play DAD. He alters his appearance as CODY describes him.)* He's short. Fat. Bald. Hunchbacked. Oh, and he has a limp.

NARRATOR: Really?

CODY: Yep. One leg is shorter than the other so he walks in tiny little circles. (*ACTOR 2 walks in tiny little circles.*) It's hilarious.

NARRATOR: Aha! So he's not completely lame.

CODY: Just what are you getting at?

NARRATOR: Unless you live in Notre Dame, I don't think your dad is quite the ogre you've painted for us.

CODY: Fine. I exaggerated. But isn't that what drama is all about?

NARRATOR: Very good. But why this attack on your father?

CODY: Because he said I was —

CODY/ACTOR 2: Boring. (*CODY walks over to ACTOR 2.*)

CODY: I'm not boring, dad.

ACTOR 2: I didn't say you are boring. I said your life is boring.

CODY: What's the difference?

ACTOR 2: Describe your typical day.

CODY: School. (*A few ACTORS quickly pose with their fingers to their temples, thinking. Simultaneously, there is a SOUND EFFECT: School bell.*) Homework. (*A few ACTORS pose as though they were doing homework. SOUND EFFECT: Sad trombone.*) X-Box. (*The rest of the ACTORS pose as though they were holding game controllers. SOUND EFFECT: Rapid gunfire.*) Repeat. (*The ACTORS repeat their poses one after another, a little bit faster and with the accompanying SOUND EFFECTS.*)

ACTOR 2: See. Boring.

SOUND EFFECT: Snoring. The ACTORS drop their heads and arms as if they were asleep.

CODY: Speak for yourself. I find nothing fulfilling.

ACTOR 2: Exactly why you should join the drama club.

CODY: No, you don't get it. Nothing makes me happy. Literally. Doing nothing is very exciting for me.

ACTOR 2: I don't follow.

CODY: Of course you don't. If you want me to join drama, fine. But if you don't understand me, you might as well forget about Shakespeare.

The ACTORS spring into action, gesturing dramatically.

ACTORS: If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? *(They pose in a whole new formation.)*

ACTOR 2: What the hell?

CODY: *(To NARRATOR.)* See. Lame. *(CODY and ACTOR 2 both drop their heads and snore.)*

NARRATOR: Well, that explains why he's here. Sorta. But what about the others?

The ACTORS snap awake and crowd around the NARRATOR. They practically knock her over. They all shout at the top of their lungs, explaining frantically why they are in drama. None of this is comprehensible. Finally, the NARRATOR stops them.

NARRATOR: Hold it! *(She stamps her feet and pushes out her arms. In one movement, the ACTORS lean back around her and freeze with their arms outstretched.)* Jeez. One at a time.

ACTOR 7 breaks from the pack. She's energetic to the point of exploding. Everything she says comes with an exclamation point.

ACTOR 7: I'll go first because I'm the prettiest!

NARRATOR: Okay. What's your name?

ACTOR 7: Rachel!

NARRATOR: Pleasure to meet you.

RACHEL: You bet it is! Someday I'm going to be a huge movie star and everyone the world over will love me and adore me and boys will hang posters of my beautiful face above their beds!

ACTOR 6: In your dreams.

RACHEL: No, in *their* dreams! I'll be the last thing they see before they go to sleep and the first thing they see when they wake up. Everybody twirl!

EVERYONE twirls.

ACTOR 6: Somebody get the hose.

RACHEL: But first I have to change my name. Rachel is a big yawn, so I need something fabulous and wonderful that suits my personality.

ACTOR 6: And rhymes with air head.

RACHEL: I was thinking either Belle or Ariel or Jasmine or Tiana or Aurora or Cinderella. What do you think?

ACTOR 6: You want to be named after a Disney princess?

RACHEL: If the shoe fits. Which means I should be Cinderella. Good thinking, Rachel!

NARRATOR: *(To ACTOR 6.)* What's your name?

ACTOR 6: *(Cool as a cucumber.)* Bjorn. Yo. Good to know ya. *(He goes to shake the NARRATOR'S hand, but snaps his away at the last second to slick his hair.)* Psych.

NARRATOR: Why are you an actor?

BJORN: Dude. Take a look around. How many chicks do ya see?

NARRATOR: Lots.

BJORN: And how many guys?

NARRATOR: Not very many.

BJORN: *(Grins and sticks his hands up in the air.)* Score!

ACTOR 1: Wait. You mean you're here just to meet "chicks"?

BJORN: Chicks. Babes. Hotties. Whatever. The line forms here.

ACTOR 1: That's so sexist.

NARRATOR: And you are?

ACTOR 1: Emily.

BJORN: She's here for the same reason I am.

EMILY: Am not.

BJORN: Are too.

EMILY: Bite me.

BJORN: If you're not here for all the boys, then how come you're dating Nick?

EVERYONE makes kissy noises.

EMILY: We are so not dating anymore.

ACTOR 2: We're not? Since when?

EMILY: Since you took me to that Boy Scout movie where all the guys lit their farts on fire.

NICK: Come on, that was hilarious!

EMILY: It was gross.

NICK: So they got a little gassy by the campfire. Big deal.

BJORN: That sounds awesome!

NICK: Totally. They roasted marshmallows and ate smelly smores.

BJORN: Wicked.

RACHEL: Ooooh, I love *Wicked*! I'd be an awesome singing witch!

NICK: You got that right.

EMILY: My parents met and fell in love on this very stage. They were starring in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and their chemistry poured over the footlights and into the audience.

BJORN: Then they got their groove on in the green room.

SOUND EFFECT: A cat's meow.

EMILY: So I'm here to meet the man of my dreams and walk happily into the sunset together.

BJORN: And that's not sexist?

EMILY: It's romantic. Besides, I'm a girl. I'm allowed to be sexist.

NARRATOR: So, Nick. Does that mean you're here for all the girls too?

NICK: Nope. I'm here because of my balls.

EVERYONE snaps their head toward NICK, shocked.

NARRATOR: Please let there be more to that.

NICK: Baseballs. Basketballs. Footballs.

ACTORS: Whew.

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