

FULL FRONTAL NUDITY

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By Jerry Rabushka

Copyright © MMIII by Jerry Rabushka

All Rights Reserved

Heuer Publishing LLC, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

ISBN: 978-1-61588-187-1

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this work is subject to a royalty. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. All rights to this work of any kind including but not limited to professional and amateur stage performing rights are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. Inquiries concerning rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

This work is fully protected by copyright. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission of the publisher. Copying (by any means) or performing a copyrighted work without permission constitutes an infringement of copyright.

All organizations receiving permission to produce this work agree to give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production. The author(s) billing must appear below the title and be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. All programs, advertisements, and other printed material distributed or published in connection with production of the work must include the following notice: **“Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.”**

There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to the work, including the changing of character gender, the cutting of dialogue, or the alteration of objectionable language unless directly authorized by the publisher or otherwise allowed in the work’s “Production Notes.” The title of the play shall not be altered.

The right of performance is not transferable and is strictly forbidden in cases where scripts are borrowed or purchased second-hand from a third party. All rights, including but not limited to professional and amateur stage performing, recitation, lecturing, public reading, television, radio, motion picture, video or sound taping, internet streaming or other forms of broadcast as technology progresses, and the rights of translation into foreign languages, are strictly reserved.

COPYING OR REPRODUCING ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS BOOK IN ANY MANNER IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW. One copy for each speaking role must be purchased for production purposes. Single copies of scripts are sold for personal reading or production consideration only.

PUBLISHED BY

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC

P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406

TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

FULL FRONTAL NUDDITY

By Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: A small-town community theater performing original work has trouble drawing patrons due to the competition of a much larger playhouse that puts on familiar full-scale musicals. Leading man Conrad decides the best way to bring in an audience is to give it what it wants. Suddenly the rumors start flying . . . full frontal nudity! Leading lady Shelly is none too pleased when she realizes everyone thinks it's going to be her.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(7-11 MEN, 7-13 WOMEN, 0-2 EITHER, 0-5 EXTRAS)

SHELLY (f).....	Female lead in a community theater play. <i>(231 lines)</i>
CONRAD (m).....	Male lead. <i>(191 lines)</i>
CAMILLA (f).....	Writer and director of the play. <i>(88 lines)</i>
BRAD (m).....	Shelly's brother. <i>(69 lines)</i>
CRITIC (f).....	Mrs. Hack. Can also play Lana and/or the Nurse. <i>(49 lines)</i>
ANNOUNCER (m).....	For a local public TV station. Can double as Another Follower. <i>(26 lines)</i>
BART (m).....	Head of set construction. <i>(36 lines)</i>
DILLON (m).....	Shelly's boyfriend. <i>(48 lines)</i>
LANA (f).....	An actress, on occasion. Can also play the Critic and/or the Nurse. <i>(16 lines)</i>
PATRON (m).....	Can also play Buckingham. <i>(4 lines)</i>
CALLER (f).....	Can also play Follower and/or Woman. <i>(5 lines)</i>
OLD MAN (m).....	Can also play Grandpa. <i>(10 lines)</i>
MOM (f).....	Shelly's mother in the play. Can also play First Woman. <i>(38 lines)</i>

BY JERRY RABUSHKA

DAD (m).....	Shelly's father in the play. Can also play Follower. (21 lines)
WOMAN (f).....	In the cast of the play. Can also play Caller and/or Follower. (3 lines)
MOTHER (f).....	Camilla's mother. Can double as Grandma. (4 lines)
PREACHER (m).....	(34 lines)
FOLLOWERS (m/f).....	Four speaking roles plus extras. (FOLLOWER - - 5 lines, ANOTHER FOLLOWER - - 1 line, FIRST WOMAN - - 3 lines, ANOTHER WOMAN - - 1 line)
BUCKINGHAM (m).....	Also a follower of the preacher. Can also play Patron. (39 lines)
GRANDMA (f).....	In the audience at the play. Can double as Mother. (28 lines)
GRANDPA (m).....	Her husband. Can also play Old Man. (28 lines)
CHRIS (m).....	Their grandchild. (14 lines)
VOICE (m/f).....	Offstage. (1 line)
NURSE (f).....	Can also play the Critic and/or Lana. (3 lines)
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR (m/f).....	Offstage. (2 lines)
BOX OFFICE (f).....	Can also play Another Woman. (55 lines)
YOUNG WOMAN (f).....	Scantily clad. (Sings optional song Act One, Scene 12.)

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Feel free to double characters as your casting situation requires - - here are a few suggestions. Lana can be played by the same actress as the Critic and the Nurse. The Old Man can be doubled with Grandpa. Camilla's Mother can double as Grandma. Patron can be played by the same actor as Buckingham. The Caller, Follower and Woman can be played by the same actress. Mom can be doubled with First Woman. Box Office can be doubled with Another Woman. Dad can double as the Follower. The Announcer can also play Another Follower. In

FULL FRONTAL NUDITY

addition, various characters not written into Act One, Scene 8 with the preacher can play Followers. The light board operator and voice could be played by any offstage cast member.

DO NOT COPY

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

SETTING:

Present day, a small "anytown" in America.

AT RISE:

At the box office of a small community theater . . . it can simply be a desk or a small table where the young lady running it sits with a cash box, tickets, etc.

CRITIC: (A falsely gregarious woman in her mid-fifties, and dressed as if she's living in the mid-fifties.) I'm sorry I'm late. I have a comp ticket for Hack.

BOX OFFICE: Hack! Right! One or two?

CRITIC: One. (She's happily negative and loves it.) No one else wants to come see this drivel.

BOX OFFICE: (Happy to report.) Actually it's a packed house. (Hands her the ticket.) Well, enjoy the show.

CRITIC: (As if!) Oh, I'm afraid that's not possible.

BOX OFFICE: (Affronted but trying to stay polite.) Well, do your best!

CRITIC: (Cheerful as can be.) I haven't enjoyed a show in years!

BOX OFFICE: Then why do you go? My own mother won't come to see me.

CRITIC: You're just the ticket taker.

BOX OFFICE: I'm in theatre! She should be here to support.

CRITIC: I'm a critic with the *Times*. (It's just lovely!) Oh, I despise community theatre! Give me a professional non-equity anytime. (Pulls out a paper.) Look!

BOX OFFICE: (Reads with horror.) You've already written the review!

CRITIC: (Cheerful.) Oh, of course. It's due tomorrow, and by the time the show's over I'm usually too numb to write anything insightful.

BOX OFFICE: (Reads further, aghast.) Lana Thompson!? She's not even in the show anymore!

CRITIC: Well, good. (Pulls back the paper but points something out to BOX OFFICE.) Because if you notice, she stunk!

BOX OFFICE: (Reads.) "Frankly, you'd have a better time staying home eating canned spinach!" How do you know?

CRITIC: Oh, I did my good review last week. Hated that show too, but I write a good one to give them hope every now and then. (With a laugh, pulling her paper away, she starts to leave, but turns back.) You're in for it. (Exit.)

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

AT RISE:

On stage, during a rehearsal. CONRAD and SHELLY are playing lead characters Michael and Felice in a new play, but are running lines on their own. They're both mid-twenties or so, dressed casually for the practice. Neither of them is very confident about the lines, nor serious, so they are very consciously thinking of what they're doing and saying.

CONRAD: *(As Michael.)* I know you've been frustrated for a long time.

SHELLY: *(As Felice.)* I just want the truth from you. *(Thinking, then she remembers what to say.)* I want to know where this is going.

CONRAD: I have something for you!

SHELLY: For me?

CONRAD: What have you always wanted?

SHELLY: *(Breaking character, but the audience doesn't have to know this yet.)* You know what I want! Bring it on, big boy!

CONRAD: *(Breaking character.)* Look, you little hussy, just chill out!

SHELLY: *(Picks up a script.)* I think we better stick to the script, Conrad.

CONRAD: *(Takes it from her and tosses it away.)* I hate the script, Shelly. *(Playing on how she says his name, they bat their names back and forth for awhile.)*

SHELLY: Then why did you try out for this play, Conrad?

CONRAD: Because it was this or do *The Sound Of Music* for the 49th time, Shelly. I'm getting too old to do Liesl.

SHELLY: Fine, Connnrad. Try it again. *(Resigned to an eventual performance.)* We have to get this right eventually.

CONRAD: *(Back into character and resuming their original positions.)* I know you've been frustrated for a long time.

SHELLY: I just want the truth from you. I want to know where this is going.

CONRAD: I have something for you!

SHELLY: For me?

CONRAD: What have you always wanted from me?

SHELLY: An engagement ring. *(CONRAD kneels down in front of her and hands her a pantomime box.)* Oh, you didn't! *(Opens the pantomime box and breaks character again.)* Oh, you still didn't! Are we ever going to get an engagement ring?

CONRAD: *(He keeps going, shrugs his shoulders.)* I scrimped and saved and gave up everything just so you can have this ring, Felice! Will you . . . !

SHELLY: *(Runs to look out a "window.")* Michael, where's the car?

CONRAD: I hocked it to get you this damned gold loop! Now, come on! I don't know the lines as it is.

SHELLY: It's a premiere. No one's going to know the difference. Why can't Michael just propose like normal people?

CONRAD: *(A little sarcastic, as he tends to be even when it's not necessary.)* Because this is special. That's why it's a play. *(Trying to give SHELLY some motivation.)* We've been dating for four years. I'm broke. I drank up my savings and snorted up the escrow. So when I pop out that ring, you're naively assured of my eternal commitment and *(Picks her up and whirls her around.)* you're so happy that we kiss! *(Puts her down and tries to kiss, but she shies away.)*

SHELLY: No, we don't.

CONRAD: *(Whirls her around again.)* We kiss! *(She shies away again.)* We have to sooner or later.

SHELLY: *(Insistent and a little afraid.)* No, we don't.

CONRAD: *(Understanding.)* Boyfriend?

SHELLY: *(Breaking down, briefly.)* He's such a possessive jerk.

CONRAD: Then why do you go out with him?

SHELLY: Because I love him, duh. And when he sees you kiss me, he'll beat the poo out of both of us. Now let's do this before Miss Curiously Pompous Camilla-the-Writer-Director shows up.

CAMILLA: *(She's in her forties or fifties, and this is the first time she's seen a play of hers come to life, so she's more excited and nervous than she should be.)* Too late! *(Smiling and sarcastic at the same time.)* Sorry, but now you have to rehearse with supervision!

SHELLY: Can we rewrite this?

CAMILLA: *(Shocked and mortally wounded.)* Never!

SHELLY: I know you wrote it but . . .

CONRAD: It's good, but it's kinda stilted.

CAMILLA: I wrote it twenty-five years ago, and I want it to stand as a monument to where I was at the time. If it's stilted, it just stands taller. So, no. It needs to be preserved.

SHELLY: We don't understand the scene!

CAMILLA: There's nothing to understand. Just give her the ring, say yes, and kiss. It's the climax of the play. Surely you understand a climax.

CONRAD: We have no ring, and she won't say yes until we get one. *(To SHELLY.)* Materialistic weasel.

SHELLY: Call me selfish, but - -

CAMILLA: *(Takes off her own.)* Oh, here! This is useless anyway.

SHELLY: But . . . this is your engagement ring. *(It dawns on her.)* This is the ring you wrote the play about!

CAMILLA: No matter. *(This is way more than anyone needs to know.)*
He cheats! He lies. He makes a shambles of our vows! I don't want the damned thing anymore. He's sleeping with that critic from the *Times*, and she still panned our last show. *(She calms down.)* Now let's try it again. From where you're down on your knees. *(CONRAD gets on his knees and offers SHELLY the ring.)*

SHELLY: Oh, you didn't! An engagement ring!

CONRAD: *(Hands her the ring.)* Will you - -

SHELLY: *(Throws her arms around him.)* Oh, Michael!

CAMILLA: Kiss!

SHELLY: I can't.

CONRAD: Boyfriend problems.

CAMILLA: It's blocking, not cheating. Use the passion you reserve for your boyfriend to motivate you into the kiss of a *(She says this with flair.)* young woman in love.

SHELLY: *(Not impressed.)* Uh, no.

CONRAD: *(Trying to convince her.)* I've kissed fifty girls since I started acting. It doesn't mean a thing, really.

SHELLY: Maybe not to *them*.

CAMILLA: *(Woman to woman.)* Why don't you just dump that low-grade lout?

SHELLY: *(Tired of hearing this.)* Because!

CONRAD: *(Mocking SHELLY, since he's heard this for weeks.)*
Because she loves him. She forgets they have trash pickup twice a week. *(Grabs her and kisses her briefly and says without emotion.)*
Ooh, baby! So that's what I've been missing.

SHELLY: Stop that! We have to approach it delicately!

CAMILLA: You better approach it soon. We open in a week.

CONRAD: Really? Why don't we ever rehearse scene threeeeeee?

SHELLY: Where's the set?

CAMILLA: It's coming. *(Loud crash is heard offstage. This crash happens several times. The same sound effect can be used each time or it can become increasingly intense.)*

BART: *(He's the set construction guy, says offstage.)* Shit!

CONRAD: Sounds like it's coming down.

BART: *(Enters. He's dirty and filthy and full of dust, tends toward the sarcastic. He stays by the entryway, tends to act effeminate on occasion but in a totally masculine context.)* Uh, Camilla?

CAMILLA: Uh . . . Bart? I don't like that "uh . . ."

BART: *(This explains it all.)* Uh . . . *(Shakes his head.)* Yeah . . .

SHELLY: Can't you hurry it up? We're supposed to be in my bedroom . .

BART: *(Quietly.)* Eeewww.

SHELLY: (*Ignores him.*) And right now this whole play takes place in a back alley.

CONRAD: What's the difference?

SHELLY: Conrad, stop it!

BART: Why don't you get your wonderful stud-jock-abusive-bigoted-assed boyfriend to come help build this damned thing? I thought he could do anything. (*Annoyed and pissy.*) Everyone wants to be on stage, but everybody's too good to hammer. Everyone's too good to screw.

SHELLY: (*Sticking up for her boyfriend when she shouldn't.*) Dillon doesn't work on theater. (*Digging at BART.*) He thinks it's faggy.

BART: (*As if that's acceptable.*) Oh, faggy! Yeah. Faggy. (*Explaining after a pause.*) He's lazy. He's ascribing homosexuality to theater in a negative context as an excuse to sit at home and watch Oxygen. (*So there!*) Well, I think football's faggy. (*Proud of himself.*) Now he can't watch it . . . ever again.

CAMILLA: Can we just get through this play just once without a major disaster?

BART: (*Laughs, then goes serious.*) No. (*Exit, then a crash.*) Ow!

Lights dim on stage. SHELLY and CONRAD study their scripts, and CAMILLA walks into the audience.

CAMILLA: (*Walking among the audience as if she's directing.*) For this next scene, I want you to think about what it feels to be a (*She loves this phrase and has annoyed everyone with it for weeks.*) young woman in love. (*To someone in particular.*) Yes, you. (*If she can approach an older man, so much the better.*) A young woman. In love. I want you to think of me. Twenty-five years ago. In love. With you. (*More to everyone.*) This play is the story of how my husband gave up drinking, gambling, and womanizing because he wanted to marry me. I left out the part about how he went back to that six months later. And how twenty-five years later, he won six million dollars in the lottery and left me. (*Shrugs.*) In accordance with state laws, he left me half. I made a substantial contribution to the New Globe Theater, and as a reward, they're letting me put on this play to open the fall season. Finally, after twenty-five years in a drawer gathering cobwebs, roach legs, and mouse poop - - not unlike our marriage itself - - my long-lost creation can finally see the light of day.

So I want this play to take you back, as it took me, to a time when you were a young woman in love. (*To an audience member, threatening.*) I don't see that "young woman in love" look in your eyes! (*Looks again.*) That's better.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3

AT RISE:

Back at the box office. LANA THOMPSON enters and tries to walk past the BOX OFFICE, who grabs her and brings her back. A bit of a struggle ensues.

LANA: *(She's a spoiled upscale girl about SHELLY's age who usually gets all the leading roles.)* Excuse me.

BOX OFFICE: Excuse you? You need to buy a ticket! *(Laughing.)*
Excuse . . . uh . . . you! Good one.

LANA: *(As if everyone should know.)* I'm in the play.

BOX OFFICE: *(Knows better and can't believe it.)* No, you're not!

LANA: I'm the lead!

BOX OFFICE: Shelly's the lead.

LANA: I'm Lana Thompson!

BOX OFFICE: *(Not impressed.)* I'm sorry to hear that.

LANA: I told them I couldn't make any rehearsals, but I'd be back for the show. I've done it before. I'm just late. I hope you're holding the house.

BOX OFFICE: You're about four weeks late. We replaced you.

LANA: Yeah, like that's possible. When?

BOX OFFICE: *(Snotty and enjoying it.)* I think it was after you said "See you in a month"? Something like that.

LANA: *(She wrote the book on snotty.)* Well, my month is over, I'm back, and Florida was wonderful! Ha! Waste my time in rehearsal. I know all my lines . . . see? *(Quotes, taking over the stage.)* Mom, I love Michael, and he's going to marry me. I know he's poor. I know he has to use butcher paper for bedsheets! I know all that. *(Overacting, and trying to push BOX OFFICE out of the way again.)* But Mother, you won't stand in my way.

BOX OFFICE: I'm not your mother, and I *will* stand in your way. Now, twelve bucks or sit it out.

LANA: *(Stops in her tracks.)* Twelve bucks?

BOX OFFICE: *(More conversational than snotty.)* I can't believe it either. It was eight, but once they started up this "New Globe" nonsense, they upped the price to pay for the tradition.

LANA: What tradition?

BOX OFFICE: New Globe hearkens back to the old Globe Theater in London. We're just a continuation of Shakespeare. So it's four extra dollars a seat.

LANA: *(They start to scuffle again.)* Look! I was cast in the lead, and I'm going to play the lead. *(She barrels her way past.)*

BOX OFFICE: *(Straightens her outfit and sits back down.)* Wait 'til she sees the review!

ACT ONE, SCENE 4

AT RISE:

SHELLY and CONRAD taking a break at rehearsal. They pull up a couple of chairs that are lying around.

SHELLY: I can't sell any tickets to this thing.

CONRAD: Maybe if you'd stop saying *(Imitating her all too well.)* "I have to sell tickets to this stupid play I'm in!" people might shell out, Shelly.

SHELLY: Have you?

CONRAD: Oh yeah. I put New Globe on the map. I've sold about a hundred and fifty!

SHELLY: A hundred and fifty! We got less than that our whole last season. *(Bitter.)* They all wanted to see musicals.

CONRAD: Yeah. I found a way to reach into the hearts of the people.

SHELLY: How?

CONRAD: *(Leading her into something.)* We're giving them what they want.

SHELLY: Really? What they *want* is something they've seen 100 times before. I'm afraid this play's going to be a stinker. I know Camilla means well, but . . . *(Still can't believe it.)* a hundred and fifty?

CONRAD: That's just for opening night. The fire marshal's gonna shit! It was kind of a focus group thing. I found out what the public wanted, and I told them they could have it. *(He steps away a bit, and offers a passerby a ticket and a flyer.)* Would you like to come see our new play? World premiere at the New Globe!

PATRON: *(Takes a look at the flyer, hands it back unimpressed.)* Is there any nudity in it?

CONRAD: Uh . . . no. *(Following the PATRON.)* But it's a world premiere.

PATRON: So? You can't have nudity in a world premiere? Feh! I want to see some nudity.

CONRAD: Nudity shmudity. *(PATRON starts to walk away, CONRAD chases after.)* We've got drama! We've got emotion! We've got the human condition.

PATRON: So you can't do the human condition with some nudity? Feh! *(Pushes CONRAD off, exits. A woman talking on a cell phone comes along.)*

CONRAD: *(A little more intense this time.)* Would you like to come see our new play? World premiere at the New Globe.

CALLER: *(Into the phone.)* Excuse me. *(Puts the phone down.)* Is there any nudity in it?

CONRAD: Well . . . no. But it's a world - -

CALLER: *(Into the phone.)* He wants us to see a show with no nudity! *(Caller, unheard, asks who it is.)* I don't know. Some shumck. *(To CONRAD.)* I only see shows with nudity in them.

CONRAD: In this town? We've never had nudity. *(Reconsiders.)* Once, I rolled up my sleeve.

CALLER: Yeah? Well, that's why I've never been to a show in this dive. Chicago, they have nudity. New York? Nudity! Los Angeles. Nothing *but* nudity. You think it ain't gonna happen, but dagnabbit, they deliver. *(Getting uncomfortably close to CONRAD.)* They get ya! They make you sit through the whole show before. You get the nudity in act one, we leave at intermission. *(Reminiscing.)* Ah, Los Angeles! *(Annoyed.)* All we get here is drama! Emotion! The human condition! Feh! Who needs it? My daughter, what she puts me though! I need the same thing at the theater? *(With broad hand gestures.)* You show me a good piece of ass, now *that's* entertainment. *(Exit, and an OLD MAN enters slowly.)*

CONRAD: *(Frustrated, talking a bit louder so the OLD MAN can hear.)* Would you like to by a ticket . . . *(Realizes he has to speak up.)* Would you like to buy a ticket to our show? World premiere at the New Globe.

OLD MAN: *(Drooling and disgusting.)* Is there any nudity in it?

CONRAD: *(To SHELLY.)* And then I finally figured it out! *(To OLD MAN.)* Yes! Tons of it! *(In OLD MAN's ear, who smiles big.)* You want nudity?

OLD MAN: Oh, yes! I want nudity!

CONRAD: You got nudity!

OLD MAN: I love nudity! *(He pulls out some money, buys a ticket, clicks his heels if possible, and runs off a lot faster than he came in.)*

CONRAD: *(Talks to SHELLY but still selling tickets.)* And suddenly . . . *(Folks flock around him, buying tickets, ad libbing, "I'll take three! Four! Five!" and they start pulling off CONRAD's clothes as an ANNOUNCER, a dignified man in his mid fifties or so, comes up to the other side of the stage.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(Enters to the side and addresses the audience.)* So, if you want to continue to see quality programming like this . . .

CALLER: *(Holding up CONRAD's shirt.)* We do!

ANNOUNCER: We can't continue to give you quality programming like this.

EVERYONE: *(In unison.)* Awww . . .

ANNOUNCER: Without your help!

EVERYONE: *(Unison.)* Ohhhhhhhh? *(CONRAD grabs his shirt while they're looking at the ANNOUNCER, runs off, but they follow him.)*

ANNOUNCER: So if you want to keep receiving this level of performance, be generous. Show your support for the arts. Donate at intermission. Or we just might not come back.

CONRAD walks back to SHELLY wearing a trench coat. Others walk briefly on stage as if they're on the street, carrying pieces of CONRAD's last costume.

PATRON: Finally. Cutting-edge theater!

OLD MAN: I've been waiting to see that pair of zonkers for years!

CALLER: *(On a cell phone.)* Honey? It's ok. We don't have to move back to Los Angeles after all!

SHELLY: *(To CONRAD, astounded.)* You didn't.

CONRAD: I did! And I'm sitting on over 1,200 dollars. Guess who gets the lead in the next three shows at New Globe?

SHELLY: That's not how it works.

CONRAD: It is after \$1,200. Besides, I'm the best actor in town.

SHELLY: Whatever. I was a replacement for Lana Thompson.

CONRAD: Oh, she'll be back opening night demanding to get on stage. You just watch.

SHELLY: *(Walks around a bit, trying to digest this.)*
Soooooooooooo . . . nudity.

CONRAD: *(Walks around a bit as well.)* Nudity.

SHELLY: Nudity.

CONRAD: Yes, nudity. You seem unfamiliar with the concept.

SHELLY: In this town?

CONRAD: Obviously there's a pent up demand. See? We've been staid! Stoic! Conservative! Boring! We can't *pay* people to sit in our chairs!

SHELLY: Our chairs are wood! With staples.

CONRAD: Popycock! Our chairs are the vehicle for transmission of the reinterpretation of the human experience! *(Picking up steam.)* Our chairs are a means to transport our audience to a world they've never seen before! *(Catches up to SHELLY.)* And finally! Finally, in its 525th season, the New Globe Theater will present to its audience . . . *(He takes off something with every word. It looks like he's exposing himself to her at the end, although we can't see it.)* Full! Frontal! *(Pulls open the trench coat.)* Nudity!

SHELLY: *(She looks at him, aghast, and finally says after a pause.)* 525th season?

CONRAD: *(Like everyone understands the concept.)* Yeah! We're the New Globe! Appropriated from Shakespeare. Founded in 15 or 16 hundred. So yeah! 525 years of tradition flouted and flaunted, finally!

SHELLY: *(Looks again.)* Will you cover that up??

CONRAD: *(Just a tad embarrassed.)* Oh. Sorry. But yeah. We took on their name so we could take on their history. We're the folks that produced *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Romeo & Juliet*. So *Felice's Engagement* isn't our first world premiere.

SHELLY: And you think this is going to be a big deal because you told them you were going to be naked.

CONRAD: I didn't.

SHELLY: You didn't?

CONRAD: I told them *you* were.

SHELLY: Me?

CONRAD: Well, who wants to see *(Opens up his coat again.)* this?

SHELLY: *(Grossed out.)* I don't, stop it!!!

CONRAD: Exactly.

BART: *(Offstage.)* Who hasn't?

CONRAD: Quiet!

SHELLY: I don't think so.

CONRAD: Well, you have to. I'm sitting on twelve hundred dollars worth of folks who want to see your Fort Lauderdale.

SHELLY: My - -

CONRAD: It's what my mother used to call it. It's a little north of Miami Beach. Long story.

SHELLY: Well, I'm sorry, but my Fort Lauderdale is not open for tourism. *(Understands CONRAD's euphemism.)* We always called it a Corpus Christi.

CONRAD: Aren't you really sick of playing to no audience? *(Imitating various show goers, quickly.)* I'll try to make it. Oh, that was *(Hitting this word like it's demonic.)* interesting. How much longer is there? No liquor? Sorry, but we were tired.

SHELLY: This play doesn't need an audience! *(Shouting offstage.)* It needs a rewrite!

CRITIC: *(Popping her head on stage, with pen and notebook, cheerful as usual.)* Oh, that's so catchy! I'm using it in my next review. *(Exit.)*

SHELLY: Oh, all right. But I'm not taking my clothes off. That's why I didn't do that Aristophanes play last year.

CONRAD: They had nudity in Aristophanes?

SHELLY: I was in a workshop in Los Angeles. Aristophanes was an afterthought.

CONRAD: Well, it's up to you. We can be (*Grand.*) California, or we can be small-town America. It's on your shoulders - - or whatever. (*Crash.*)

BART: (*Enters, dusty.*) He's such a jerk!

SHELLY: What?

BART: That excuse for a boyfriend you have working with me so he can spy on you. Mr. Macho. Doesn't know a wrench from a screwdriver. Now *that's* faggy.

DILLON: (*Offstage.*) Ouch! Bart, I can't screw with this little thing.

CONRAD: I didn't think a screwdriver was in the budget.

BART: It's not. We're using a Susan B. Anthony. (*To SHELLY, quietly.*) He's a jerk!

DILLON: (*Off.*) Am not!

SHELLY: (*To BART.*) Don't remind me.

DILLON: (*Enters.*) I said, am not!

BART: Are too! (*Pushes him off.*) Why do you go out with him?

SHELLY: (*Aggressively defending herself.*) Because I love him.

BART: Oh, that's so "last century." (*Exit.*)

SHELLY: (*To CONRAD.*) He finally decided to help out so he could keep an eye on me. Bigoted, jerky, and dangerously possessive!

DILLON: (*Enters, belligerent.*) Who are you talking to?

SHELLY: (*A bit afraid.*) Nobody, Dillon, I'm just running lines!

DILLON: You better be. (*Exit.*)

SHELLY: (*To CONRAD.*) Anyway, I finally got a way to get him off your back about the kissing thing.

CONRAD: (*Hopeful.*) You're dumping him?

SHELLY: Oh, then he'd blame you and beat the living crap out of you. I told him you were gay.

CONRAD: You what?

SHELLY: I told him you were - -

BART: (*Enters again, perhaps leaning on a 2x4.*) Oh, that's news.

CONRAD: Aren't you teaching her boyfriend to screw? (*Pushes BART off.*)

SHELLY: I had to tell him something.

CONRAD: (*As if this entire line is DILLON's full name.*) Mr. Macho-Jock-Stud-Homophobe-Dillon-thinks-he-rules-the-world-with-a-closed-mind-and-a-closed-fist?

SHELLY: Yep. Him.

CONRAD: God, what a jerk

DILLON: (*Off, a bit whiny.*) Am nooooooo!

BART: (*Off, imitating him.*) Are toooooooooooooooooo!

SHELLY: It seemed like a safe bet. Anyway - -

CONRAD: Anyway, what? One way or another, he's going to beat the living crap out of me.

SHELLY: Well, we all thought you were anyway.

CONRAD: I'm not.

SHELLY: You've had the lead in the last five musicals this town's put on. I just assumed.

CONRAD: Well, stop assuming and start thinking.

SHELLY: Everyone assumes. I guess you're the last to know. You say you've kissed 50 women on stage? I've kissed 50 guys, and not one of them is straight. No wonder I go out with Dillon.

CONRAD: Well, now he'll punch my lights out anyway, just for the hell of it.

SHELLY: Probably.

CONRAD: Why do you love him? Where's your taste? Your sense of honor? Your - -

SHELLY: He's hot.

DILLON: *(Enters.)* Shelly, who are you talking to?

SHELLY: I'm running lines. Now, don't worry about it.

DILLON: Yeah? Well, show me where *those* lines are.

CONRAD: Oh, that would assume you can read.

DILLON: At least I'm not a fag.

CONRAD: Yeah? Well, you should be. You're totally screwed up the - -

SHELLY: Dillon, stop being such a - -

DILLON: *(Grabs CONRAD.)* I'm gonna punch his lights out.

LIGHT OPERATOR: *(This can be a "real tech" from the back of the crowd.)* Nobody touches the lights! I just got them set up.

CAMILLA: *(Grabs DILLON.)* You heard him. The lights stay where they are. Now, you get back to work. I don't have time to waste with bellicose masculine posturing. *(Silence, she flies off the handle.)* Do you hear me?

DILLON: *(Cowed.)* Yes, ma'am. *(Exit.)*

SHELLY: How did you do that?

CAMILLA: Twenty-five years of marriage. Men call it being a bitch. Women call it survival. *(To the audience, re: SHELLY.)* Ah! Young women in love! *(Makes a face as if SHELLY's a mess.)*

ACT ONE, SCENE 5

AT RISE:

At the Box Office, the OLD MAN approaches.

OLD MAN: *(He's still drooling and disgusting.)* Hey, is this the play with the . . . heh heh . . . nudity in it?

BOX OFFICE: We're not sure.

OLD MAN: I came to see some . . . heh heh *(Drools, up in her face.)* nudity.

BOX OFFICE: Aren't you married?

OLD MAN: That's just my wife. I want something that doesn't drag on the floor.

BOX OFFICE: You're a leech. If you're not here to see the plot, the characters, and the tech, then I don't think you should be here.

OLD MAN: Across the street, they're showing a play with plot, character, and tech. And you know what? Everyone's here. Now is she gonna peel it off, or is she gonna keep the rind on the cantaloupe? Hey, little girl . . . *(Tries to grope BOX OFFICE, who is appalled.)* why don't we start with you!

BOX OFFICE: Me?

OLD MAN: Sure . . . after my wife, anything's a treat.

BOX OFFICE: *(Pushes him off, sees he's unhappy, so she takes off a shoe and holds it up.)* Happy?

OLD MAN: Oh . . . yes!!! Nudity! *(Takes the shoe, kisses it, holds it high above his head, and exits.)*

ACT ONE, SCENE 6

AT RISE:

Back in the rehearsal hall.

BRAD: *(Timid, approaching CONRAD. He's a young man of about 20, walks with a pronounced limp.)* Hey, Conrad.

CONRAD: What? Shelly's brother, right?

BRAD: I'm Brad.

CONRAD: Well, how's it holding together?

BRAD: Ha. Heard it. Hey . . . uh . . . uh . . . Shelly . . .

CONRAD: Spit it out.

BRAD: Well . . . Tom said that Joe said that Carla said that Ming said that - -

CONRAD: Ming said?

BRAD: Yeah. Ming.

CONRAD: I thought Ming was mute!

BRAD: Not with this kinda news.

CONRAD: What?

BRAD: That you might be . . . uh . . . damn!

CONRAD: I'm not.

BRAD: God, I wish we lived in New York!

CONRAD: Why?

BRAD: This wouldn't matter. Well, everybody thought you were, and it just got around that you really were, but *(People start coming on stage to get ready for a scene, including those who will later play MOM and DAD.)* I just was wondering if you were, that maybe you wanted to maybe do something or something I mean, if you're . . .

CONRAD: *(Looks around.)* I have to rehearse.

MOM: You're what? Are you what we think you are?

CONRAD: *(Defensive, this obviously isn't the first time he's had to deal with it.)* I'm nothing, okay? Nothing at all!

DAD: But you've had the lead in the last five musicals. No straight guy could ever pull that off.

CONRAD: I hate people who start rumors! Looks, Camilla's still on bathroom break. Just go away. *(They all leave, BRAD waits until they leave.)*

BRAD: Oh. I was just gonna ask you, if you wanted to - - *(Everyone comes back in.)*

MOM: *(Nosy.)* To what?

CONRAD: *(The other people start to scare him.)* Well, don't.

BRAD: Are you sure? No one has to know. *(To everyone else, shooing them away.)* No one has to know. *(They leave again.)* I mean, don't you get lonely? Hiding like this?

CONRAD: I've had the lead in the last five musicals. I have more girls than I know what to do with.

BRAD: But when the curtain falls.

CONRAD: Why do you limp?

BRAD: Car crash. I wanted to act too, but no one will give me a part. Everyone has to be perfect in theatre.

CONRAD: Well, you can't really do a walk on.

BRAD: That wasn't very nice.

CONRAD: Look, she said that to get her boyfriend off my back. I have talent, and he's jealous. It's a common problem with people at my level.

BRAD: Well, I thought you were anyway. He's shit to me. He's shit to Shelly, but she puts up with it. He wants to beat me up, but I'm beat up enough already. I came out, remember? I was brave! You stay up here on stage and kiss all the girls.

CONRAD: I'm not!

BRAD: I liked you. But I don't know if I should now.

CONRAD: Well . . . I'll do something with ya sometime. Just not like that. I mean you know, if you like me that much.

BRAD: Yeah. Cool. No, really. Cool. Hey, be glad I like you. I haven't gotten much out of it. It took guts to come up here and ask you.

CONRAD: I'm not trying to be a creep. I'm just under a lot of pressure. I have too many things going on. I don't need one more problem. I don't know how to deal with all that's happening already.

BRAD: *(Goes up to CONRAD.)* Try learning your lines. *(Exit, as everyone else comes in.)*

ACT ONE, SCENE 7

CAMILLA: *(Lights on CAMILLA, then up slowly as we see she's addressing the cast, walking among them, which at least includes MOM, DAD, and CONRAD, and another WOMAN who will be a silent character in the "play" in Act Two. As she talks, SHELLY gets more and more uncomfortable and distressed.)* Now, I want us to approach this next scene and strip it down to the bare bones. I want us to take a look at it in the raw. I want us to take this apart, layer by layer until we leave ourselves wide open for all the audience to see. Peel off the façade, piece by piece! Because before we can get into costume, we have to be comfortable with what we look like in the nude.

SHELLY: *(Overreacting.)* Stop it!

CAMILLA: Oh, Shelly, you're so literal. I'm just trying to find a way to help you flesh out your characters!

SHELLY: She wears five petticoats and a corset. She doesn't want to flesh out.

CAMILLA: *(Gleeful.)* I want your character to be stripped to the core!

SHELLY: Conrad, did you tell her?

CONRAD: I think it spread around town like herpes in a warehouse.

MOM: Are you gonna?

WOMAN: I wouldn't take off my clothes in front of this sick city.

DAD: *(Giggling.)* Remember, there are no small parts, just small actors.

CAMILLA: Okay! We have to have a talk. A talk where I talk and everyone else listens. As usual, as some of you would say. *(Crash.)*

BART: *(Offstage.)* You jerk!

CAMILLA: I want to talk to you about respect!

BART: *(Off.)* Dillon, you loser idiot!

CAMILLA: Well, respect for me! Respect for this script! Respect for being a *(Sighs.)* young woman in love. *(They all react, annoyed with that phrase.)* Respect for the New Globe and its 525th season! We have a tradition to uphold. The tradition of *Hamlet*. The tradition of *Romeo and Juliet*. And now, the tradition of *Felice's Engagement*. At the time I wrote this play, no one wanted to take a chance on it. Over the past 25 years, no one wanted to take a chance on it. Finally, the New Globe, due to, of course, a significant financial investment on my part, wants to take a chance on it. I wrote it to commemorate my own marriage. When my husband scrimped and saved and changed his ways, against all odds, and against my overbearing mother.

MOTHER: *(All her lines can be offstage or someone can jump up and say them from the audience.)* I am not overbearing!

CAMILLA: Yes, you are!

MOTHER: *(Storms up on stage if she's in the audience.)* You take that back right now!

CAMILLA: No!

MOTHER: *(Threatening.)* Right now, Camilla.

CAMILLA: Sorry, Mom. *(MOTHER sits, assuaged. CAMILLA whispers so everyone can hear.)* Overbearing.

MOTHER: *(Jumps up.)* Take it back!

CAMILLA: *(Screaming.)* I said I'm sorry! *(MOTHER sits back down or exits should she be seen. CAMILLA makes a nasty gesture at her mother and takes a short moment to recover.)* Now, I've also heard some lurid gossip going around that the only reason anyone is planning to see the play is because of something that isn't in the script at all. Am I right? *(Silence.)* Am I right?

CONRAD: *(Takes \$1,200 out of his pants.)* Uh . . .

CAMILLA: Where did that come from?

CONRAD: *(A bit scared of her.)* Ticket sales!

CAMILLA: Ticket sales based on the worth of the play or ticket sales based on the lascivious rumor about an inappropriate costume to be worn by the leading lady? A rumor that's spreading through town like venereal disease through an army camp. A rumor for which, unlike gonorrhea, there is no cure.

CONRAD: *(Hands her a dollar.)* Ok, here's the money for folks who want to see the show, and *(Hands her the rest.)* here's from the folks who just want to see a nice set of tits. Hey, we'll fill the theater. Someone might even notice there's a show going on.

SHELLY: He said I would be naked, but I don't notice him wanting to show off his Baja California.

CAMILLA: His Baja California?

SHELLY: Everything in our family is geographical. It's really hard for us to take a vacation.

CAMILLA: *(Taking control.)* You can have it in Hollywood. You can have it in New York. You can have it on cable TV. You can even have half of it on *NYPD Blue!* But I will not have my play debased by the so-called beauty of the human form. I won't have my reputation sullied on account of some human rendition of cucumbers, melons, weenies, or franks.

DAD: *(Thinks she's behind the times.)* No one calls it a frank.

CAMILLA: We did! Once "sausage" became common, we had to change euphemisms. *(Explains.)* Uncle Frank was flattered until he found out we were simply discussing Uncle Henry's fetishes. But I must put my foot down on it!

CONRAD: Ow!

CAMILLA: On the subject of nudity, there will be none. My husband didn't even see any cleavage until we'd been married for 10 years. And then it wasn't mine. So, nudity plays no part in my autobiography. *(She says this as if she has no idea what hot sex is.)* I've just put some hot sex in the play to spice it up.

DILLON: *(Off.)* Ow!

BART: *(Enters, bitchy.)* Shelly, your macho-stud-perfect-phobic-asshole boyfriend just ripped his jeans on a nail. *(All the cast members but SHELLY and CONRAD run off to look.)*

CAMILLA: Get back here!

BART: And he pulled over the bedroom. Again.

DILLON: *(Offstage.)* These were my best jeans!

BART: I can't work with him. He could destroy Stonehenge.

SHELLY: You can't work without him. He thinks I'm messing around with Conrad.

BART: But Conrad's gay!

CONRAD: I am not!

EVERYONE: Yes, you are!

WOMAN: And you should go out with that one guy. *(Everyone agrees, as if they've talked it over.)*

BART: Shelly, can't you just dump him? Patch it up after the show, I don't care.

SHELLY: But I love him!

BART: Bullshit. Dump him, or we won't have a set. *(Crash.)*

DILLON: *(Whiny.)* Oooowwww!

SHELLY: This is entirely too much pressure. "Take off your clothes!" "Dump your boyfriend." It's community theater! It's supposed to be fun! Inspiring! Social! Uplifting! I come to rehearsal so I don't have to stay home and watch my gay brother with a limp fight my boyfriend with a lobotomy. If this keeps up, I'm walking out!

CAMILLA: Yes, you are. You're walking out on stage and you're going to do a bang-up job.

CONRAD: *(Quietly, and smirky.)* In the nude!

SHELLY: That's it! I quit! *(Stomps out.)*

CAMILLA: Shelly! *(DILLON crawls on, a total mess.)*

ANNOUNCER: *(Enters from the side.)* If you want to - - *(Trips over DILLON.)*

DILLON: Ow! *(Reaching up.)* Shelly!

ANNOUNCER: *(Starts over.)* If you want to continue to see quality drama like this - -

CAMILLA: We can't continue to see quality drama like this if the leading lady walks out.

ANNOUNCER: All the more reason to give! Give! Give! If you give, I'll find you a new lead. *(Changes attitude, drops his grandiose demeanor, and sidles up to CAMILLA.)* If you don't, we'll pan your fat ass after opening night.

CAMILLA: You can't pan my fat ass if we don't have a show.

ANNOUNCER: Sure we can. We've already written the review. It doesn't matter if you do the show or not. But . . . *(Shows her some more papers.)* you'll notice how the review improves at each level of giving.

CAMILLA: You know what I'm giving? I'm giving you three seconds to get your ass out of here or I'll pan it from here to . . .

ANNOUNCER: *(It can't hurt to ask.)* Will you spank me?

CAMILLA: Out!! *(ANNOUNCER starts to go.)*

MOM: I will!

ANNOUNCER: *(Beckons back with a finger.)* I've been naughty. Verrrry naughty. *(MOM runs after him..)*

CAMILLA: *(Frustrated.)* Smoke break!

BY JERRY RABUSHKA

*Thank you for reading this free excerpt from FULL FRONTAL NUDITY
by Jerry Rabushka. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of
the script, please contact us at:*

Heuer Publishing LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-800-950-7529 • Fax (319) 368-8011

HITPLAYS.COM

DO NOT COPY