

LOOPY

By Shawn Deal

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ISBN: 978-1-61588-460-5

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SYNOPSIS: Winning the science fair should be easy, when you're on the A-team. This group has got all the components to win: the idea person, the writer, the graph creator, and the presenter. However, this A-team struggles to agree on the perfect project. Reality splits causing the students to experience multiverse theory, chaos theory, and time travel. Watch these students loop through time and space as science is physicalized in this zany, hilarious play.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 either)

GREG/KAT (m/f) A high school student with anxiety issues.

(50 lines)

CONNIE/CONNOR (m/f) A no nonsense high school student.

(77 lines)

ARTHUR/JODI (m/f) A high school student. *(49 lines)*

LOIS/TAYLOR (m/f) A high school student. (Although it is not mentioned anywhere in the body of the play, I wrote this character to be a high functioning teen with autism. Feel free to interpret the character as you wish.)

(41 lines)

CAPTAIN CHAOS (m/f) An embodiment of chaos theory. *(2 lines)*

DURATION: 35 minutes.

TIME: Present day.

SETTING: A room.

SET

A living room or kitchen or bedroom. (Location is not tremendously important. Any generic room set will be fine.) A table and three to four chairs are needed. Some sort of door to walk in and out of.

PRODUCTION NOTES

This play is intended to bring about scientific concepts in a fun way. Three scientific concepts are explored in this play: multiverse, chaos theory, and wormholes with the effect of time travel.

Anytime you see [—————] it signifies a change to another multiverse. Please assign a sound and/or a light effect to mark every instance a multiverse change occurs.

Anytime you see [*****] it signifies a change in time. The characters are traveling either backward or forward in time. Please assign a sound and/or a light effect to mark every instance a time change occurs. (*NOTE: This sound and/or light effect needs to be significantly different than the multiverse effect.*)

PROPS

- four first place ribbons
- six hats
- surgical mask
- can of worms
- pizza
- bag of hamburgers
- bucket of fried chicken
- carton of eggs
- box of donuts
- pillow
- paper bag (lunch size)
- pipe
- many pens
- piece of paper
- confetti

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

Loopy premiered at the High School One Act Play Festival sponsored by Stageworks Northwest Theatre in Longview, Washington on January 20, 2019, with the following cast:

KAT/GREG..... Cadence Guest
CONNIE/CONNOR.....Ryan McKay-Beach
ARTHUR/JODI.....Juliah Clark
TAYLOR/LOIS.....Hope Russell
CAPTAIN CHAOS Shelby Bond

DO NOT COPY

AT START: GREG, CONNIE, and LOIS are onstage. There is a table and chairs onstage. On the table is an assortment of energy drinks and other drinks. There are some papers, a science textbook or two, a pen, and some paper.

GREG: I can't believe we can't figure this out. This is supposed to be the easy part.

CONNIE is pacing back and forth agitated.

CONNIE: What? Are you kidding me? This is always the hard part.

GREG: It shouldn't be. We are all straight 'A' students. We're literally the A-Team. We should have a long list of ideas already.

CONNIE: But see there is the problem. You have categorized us into a group of "A" students (*Uses finger quotes.*) but that category is completely arbitrary. We all get "A's" but that doesn't mean we all have the same interests in science. We all want to go in different directions.

LOIS: Like four directions on a map: North, South, East and West.

GREG: Maybe we could do something about cartography?

LOIS: Ahhhh that's... (*Thinking about it.*) not enough to go on. (*Rubs her head, she has a headache.*)

GREG: It's just a science project for the science fair. We're the best students in class.

CONNIE: The A-team—you said.

GREG: We should be able to come up with something. This should be easy.

LOIS: I hope we can do better than just—something. I want to be spectacular. (*Her headache is clearly bothering her.*)

CONNIE: Why do we even make a good team?

GREG: Remember—I can write the paper. Lois—can put everything on the computer. She is a whiz at putting together graphs, charts and everything else we need. Connie, you can speak so eloquently and give the presentation.

CONNIE: And Arthur?

GREG: He's great at the number crunching—interpreting the data. We are sure to win, if only we can get some sort of topic.

CONNIE: It can't be anything lame. No volcanoes or crystals or anything like that.

GREG: Certainly not.

LOIS: Guys stop. Let's take a moment and think. Besides I have a headache. *(Her hand on her forehead.)*

CONNIE: Drink some water. A big glass. That will help. You're probably dehydrated.

LOIS drops to the ground. She rests on her knees, her back humped up and her arms thrown out in front of her. It looks a lot like a yoga position.

GREG: *(Who has been actively pacing back and forth. Stops his pacing and stares at LOIS.)* What are you doing? Actually, I don't care. We have to come up with a topic.

CONNIE: Lois, what are you doing?

LOIS: Turtling.

CONNIE: Is that a word?

LOIS: More like a concept.

CONNIE: Could you clarify that?

LOIS: I am making the shape of a turtle because it is a very calming yoga position and sometimes helps me get rid of my headaches.

CONNIE: I understand.

GREG: Do you?

CONNIE: *(Shakes her head.)* No. But it is something sympathetic and nice to say. My counselor says I need to say things like that more often. It's just so hard. Would you stop pacing!

GREG: I can't help it. My anxiety is shooting way up and my anxiety medication needs to be adjusted.

ARTHUR enters through the door carrying pizza and wearing a hat.

ARTHUR: *(Looks around stage at his friends.)* Okay, so, what did I miss?

CONNIE: Lois is being a turtle, Greg's anxiety medication is not working and I am trying to be sympathetic without being lame.

Beat.

ARTHUR: Okay, so nothing really. (*Places pizza on table.*) Do we have a topic yet?

GREG, CONNIE, and LOIS groan out loud.

ARTHUR: Okay. Let me spitball a few ideas at you guys then.

LOIS: I don't like spitting. (*Jumps up. Grabs her head which is still hurting.*) Unless you happen to be *Gromphadorhina portentosa*—the spitting, hissing cockroach from Madagascar—they are so cool.

GREG: (*Excitedly, anxiously.*) Ooo could we get some of those?

LOIS: They can be frozen for years and thawed back to life.

CONNIE: I am quite sure they are endangered.

ARTHUR: I have an idea—how about multiverse theory?

SFX: multiverse light/sound effect. At this point slight changes happen due to this being another multiverse. ARTHUR exits and when he enters he will be wearing a different hat and carrying different food. GREG is sitting at the table. LOIS is making the shape of an elephant.

CONNIE: Lois, What are you doing?

GREG thumps the table with his fingers and bounces his leg in a fit of nervousness.

LOIS: Elephanting.

CONNIE: Is that a real word?

LOIS: More like a concept.

CONNIE: Could you clarify?

LOIS: I am making the shape of an elephant because it gets my head in the right position to drain my sinuses and alleviate my headache.

CONNIE: I understand.

GREG: Do you?

CONNIE: No. Not at all. And would you please stop doing that! You are going to drive me crazy if I have to hear that all night.

GREG: You sound like my mother. I can't help it if my anxiety is shooting up, my anxiety medication needs to be adjusted.

ARTHUR enters with a bag of hamburgers.

ARTHUR: *(Looking around at his friends.)* Okay so what did I miss?

CONNIE: Lois is being an elephant, Greg needs a lot more medication, and I'm being overly motherly.

ARTHUR: Okay, so nothing really. *(Places the bag of hamburgers on table.)* Do we have a topic yet?

CONNIE, LOIS, and GREG: NO!

ARTHUR: Okay, so let me throw a few things your guys's way.

LOIS: *(Ducks.)* I can't catch. Don't throw anything at me.

GREG: Is that a possibility, doing something with hand coordination and dexterity.

Beat. Everyone thinks.

CONNIE: No, that won't work. We would have to practically test everyone in the high school to get a big enough sample size.

ARTHUR: How about multiverse theory?

More silence as everyone thinks.

ARTHUR: You know the theory that there is an infinite of possible universes.

CONNIE: Including the one we are in.

ARTHUR: Yes, and together all those universes comprise everything that exists: the entirety of space, time, matter, energy, and the physical laws and constants that describe them.

CONNIE: So if one small thing changes in one universe then another universe spins off and we have a slightly different universe.

ALL look at each other.

ARTHUR: Yes, exactly. So what do you think?

SFX: multiverse light/sound effect. Again slight changes happen as we are now in another multiverse. ARTHUR exits and when he enters he will be wearing a different hat and carrying different food. GREG is holding a paper lunch bag. He can be back at the table or standing. LOIS is acting like a frog.

LOIS: Frogging.

CONNIE: Could you clarify that?

LOIS: I am making the shape of a frog because they are such a tranquil creature, and I am hoping, or in this case, hopping it will help my headache.

CONNIE: I understand.

GREG: *(Who has been breathing into a paper bag hyperventilating.)*
Do you?

CONNIE: Not a clue. What's wrong now?

GREG: I am hyperventilating and nauseous. I can't help it if my anxiety is shooting up and my medication needs adjusting.

ARTHUR enters with a bucket of fried chicken.

ARTHUR: *(Looking around at his friends.)* So, what did I miss?

CONNIE: Lois is being a frog. Greg is having an anxiety attack. And I am utterly clueless.

CONNIE crosses her arms and challenges ARTHUR with a stare to say what he usually says.

ARTHUR: Okay so noth—

CONNIE shoots a finger up to stop him from continuing.

ARTHUR: *(Fumbles into.)* ...it's a good thing I brought food. *(Places the bucket of chicken on the table.)*

LOIS: It's a good thing those aren't frog legs.

GREG confused by the statement looks at LOIS and back at the chicken and then peeks into the bucket of chicken and smells the food and throws up in the paper bag.

ARTHUR: Do we have a topic yet?

GREG: *(Looks inside the paper bag.)* Can we do anything about vomit?

The others all react to the vomit comment.

ARTHUR: Okay. Let me float a couple of ideas past you then.

LOIS: Life preserver. I'm going to need a life preserver.

GREG: Let me guess—you can't swim.

LOIS: Oh no. I can swim like a dolphin. *(Swims around.)* I just thought it was safe to be prudent.

GREG: I can't think of one thing we could do with dolphins.

CONNIE: Good because we are not even close to tropical waters.

ARTHUR: How about multiverse theory?

Beat as everyone thinks.

ARTHUR: You know the theory that...

GREG: *(Exasperated.)* We know the theory.

CONNIE: Remember, we are all in science class with you.

ARTHUR: All right, then what do you think?

Beat as everyone thinks.

LOIS: How can we possibly show something like that?

ARTHUR: I don't know. I am just the idea guy.

GREG: Then give us another idea.

ARTHUR: Okay... what about... chaos theory.

SFX: multiverse light/sound effect. Again slight changes happen. ARTHUR exits and when he enters he will be wearing an outlandish hat. LOIS starts slowly to cluck and strut like a chicken making accompanying chicken like noises. GREG is pounding his head against a wall, or notebook, or table.

CONNIE: I understand.

GREG: *(Stops pounding his head.)* You do?

CONNIE: She is clearly an Americana.

GREG: Really? I would have said a barred rock, or golden laced Wyandotte... no she is a Rhode Island Red.

CONNIE: Come here, Lois.

LOIS crosses to CONNIE in a chicken like way. CONNIE plucks a feather from LOIS and examines it.

CONNIE: Wrong plumage.

GREG goes to the table pounding his head once again.

GREG: Greg's anxiety is shooting way up. And Greg's medication is not working. Greg thinks he is going into a psychosis. Plus Greg thinks he has Lois's headache. *(Starts looking around and waving randomly around the stage. A nice smile is on his face.)*

CONNIE: So do I. *(Rubbing her temples.)*

ARTHUR enters wearing an outlandish hat. GREG wildly waves at ARTHUR. ARTHUR hesitantly waves back.

ARTHUR: *(Looking around at his friends.)* So, what did I miss?

CONNIE: So far, the start of a pandemic with some sort of super virulent strain of headache induced madness. Alert the media! Alert the CDC! The W.H.O., the President—but save yourself!

CONNIE pushes ARTHUR offstage through the door. Beat. ARTHUR enters carrying a carton of eggs and a pillow.

CONNIE: What are you doing back here? I am trying to save your life.

ARTHUR puts up a finger to silence her. ARTHUR takes off his hat. Under his hat is a surgical face mask, which he puts on.

CONNIE: That's all well and good but you couldn't have had time to alert everybody to this major health crisis. Unless... you have telepathy.

ARTHUR nods.

CONNIE: You sent out a mass telepathy like voice mail to everyone concerned.

ARTHUR nods.

CONNIE: That is so cool. Can you teach me?

ARTHUR puts his thumb up. ARTHUR and puts a dozen eggs on the table.

LOIS: *(Stops her chickening and goes to the table.)* Oh my babies!

ARTHUR places a pillow on the table as GREG wildly waves at him. Gently ARTHUR places his hands on GREG'S head and places it on the pillow.

ARTHUR: Do we have a topic yet?

LOIS: How fast can we spread our headache madness disease? My babies want to spread...

ARTHUR: That may have some merit to it.

GREG: *(Sits up suddenly.)* Do we have a topic? Please say we have a topic.

CONNIE: No. We would most certainly drive all the judges at the science fair mad. We can't do that.

A chorus of agreements by the other three. GREG drops his head back on the pillow.

ARTHUR: So let me proffer a couple of ideas out your way. How about multiverse theory?

CONNIE: To confusing.

LOIS: To repetitive the babies don't like that.

CONNIE looks at LOIS in frustration.

GREG: No one's going to understand.

ARTHUR: Okay. Okay. Okay. Chaos Theory.

LOIS: That has some merit. The babies approve.

CONNIE is more frustrated at LOIS'S comment.

GREG: *(Head springs up suddenly from the pillow.)* Yes, totally worth thinking about.

CONNIE: But that could become too overwhelmingly crazy. *(Trying to stay calm.)*

GREG: True. We would have to be totally bonkers.

LOIS: Anything could happen. I don't want to put my babies in danger. They are too young.

CONNIE: *(In anger towards LOIS.)* They aren't even fertilized Lois. So do you want them fried or scrambled?

LOIS: *(Aghast towards CONNIE.)* How dare you? *(To egg carton.)* Don't listen to her my little dodecatuplets.

ARTHUR: It wouldn't have to be like that. We could use the butterfly effect.

LOIS: Excuse me, the chicken effect. My babies need a positive role model.

CONNIE: How so?

ARTHUR: The butterfly effect—*(Glare from LOIS and loud chicken noise.)* sorry the chicken effect is if a chicken lays an egg in Hong Kong, you get rain in New York instead of sunshine. All we have to do is make one small change. Introduce just one element of chaos.

GREG: It would have to be totally random.

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