

## The Show- The Venue in Which it is Performed

*The playwright enters, and then addresses the audience.*

### **Playwright:**

Hi. How are you guys?

*If no response.*

It's a stage. I can hear you.

*If still no response.*

That means answer.

*Wait for response.*

So, I know you all payed to come see a show, and the tickets are non-refundable, and that because of that I am contractually obligated to entertain you with something, but unfortunately, I didn't write a script. Well, that is, I didn't write a good one. You see, I started out with this drama- it was a two-person show about these lesbians who fall in love in the middle of Missouri during the civil war, called *My Bleeding Heart* and the complication came in when one, well... candlelit evening they were going at it and found out through some *impassioned* dialogue that they were on opposite sides of the conflict. Well, after waiting until we were three weeks into rehearsal, my husband told me that that was about the dumbest thing he's ever read and so I was back at square one. This is why I say to all men: tell us what you think- we can take it. Usually. Well, I mean if he were to say I were the worst playwright he ever read- I would not be happy with him. But you knew that. Ah well. Anyways, I was back at square one. I knew I had to have one thing in common with the original- Two lesbians. I had already at that point made the posters and I did not want to tear them down. So, I knew one thing- two lesbians. Well, two lesbians and the title *My Bleeding Heart*. And it being in the Civil War. Well,

## Playwright:

that part wasn't settled. I just had the two flags in the background. But not the civil war flags... Not both. I had the confederate flag, and then my graphic designer I hired off of Tumblr put in a modern American Flag. Don't ask me how, don't ask me why. I didn't tip him; in case you're wondering. Nope, I just gave him his four hundred dollars and sent him on his way. Serves him right. Fortunately, the son-of-a-bitch didn't follow my request to have them kiss. So, I later discovered that I was not indebted to have two lesbians. I went into the theatre the next day and asked for an extension of our rehearsal period, push it back a month or so. Well, it turns out, that when you put a poster out with two attractive females and the confederate flag, you appeal to a certain audience. Not the theatergoing type, usually. Jim, the creative director of our little stage here wasn't thinking. At all. He unwittingly booked a bus tour of white supremacists for the fourth weekend of our show. You may laugh, sir, but I am not joking. Well, needless to say, at this point I am up the metaphorical creek without the symbolism paddle.

*Like a mother after Pinot, the playwright revels in the last metaphor.*

No? Do you people not use that one? You're missing out. Where was I? Oh yes! The Nazis! So, Jim and I had a conundrum, it's one thing to call the other thousand people who had pre-booked seats, but neither a flamboyant theatre owner, nor a half-crazed playwright is exactly the type to tell these skinheads that we're cancelling a bus tour. Nor are we going to tell them that they had accidentally booked a bus tour to see a historical drama about gay rights in the 1860s. So, we sat down and drank some wine. And then drank some more. And then some more. And when we had just finished off the second bottle, this asshole brought out schnapps! So, me being the nice houseguest I am, I took a shot. And the next thing I know, he and I are in an Uber at 11:00 at night to go sharpie these posters interracial.

Now, I know what you're thinking: "Why the hell would you do that"?

## Playwright:

And yes, it was a really bad idea one might call it a terrible idea. But in my defense, I don't remember making it. In fact, I don't remember doing it. I don't even know if we did it, legally speaking. All I know was the next morning, I felt like I had been hit by a truck, and I had black marks all over my arms. Naturally, being the adaptive creature I am, I brushed it off as just some fun. I woke up, got my coffee and banana bread, and I watched a movie. Well, I started to. I have this tape of *Hello, Dolly!* I got at a yard sale a while back. Yes, a tape.

*Almost proud of the fact.*

I have tapes. I'm retro.

*Returning to the narrative.*

And this is one of my favorite movies. I mean, come on, when Barbra Streisand comes down those stairs in that red dress with the big feathers on her head. What I wouldn't give for a night like that. But anyways, my husband is not the most careful man, and he had decided to tape over my VHS of *Hello, Dolly!*, and what's more, he did not tell me he taped over my VHS of *Hello, Dolly!* so, I meander ever so slowly to the VHS player and pop in my tape, smiling through the excruciating headache. Hoping to drown out the ringing in my ear with the soft sounds of "Put on Your Sunday Clothes" on super low volume. I naively grab the blanket from the basket beside the couch and proceed to roll myself up in a little burrito and wait for the video to begin playing. Safe, secure, cozy. Well, my husband had apparently been watching something very quiet last night, because the television in our apartment- the place we share as a loving, happy, married couple, our kingdom- Yes my loving husband who does everything for me must have thought that the bigger number meant that it would be quieter.

*A Vaseline smile.*

## Playwright:

The next thing I know, my ears are being bombarded with gunshot and the sound of glass shattering inside Nakatomi Plaza! My husband had replaced the VHS in the *Hello, Dolly!* case with his copy of *Die Hard*. He's funny like that. Now, I, in my hungover state, am running to the T.V. to shut it off, which I do by unplugging the VHS player. And ladies, in the silence, do you know what I hear? That's right. I hear my husband, snoring. So, I retreat from the television, and lay back down on my couch, getting my blanket and forming a protective covering around myself, cuddling up against the pillows, this time remembering the remote...! And I turn on the now muted television. What do my eyes behold except for a scrawny little old reporter standing next to one of our dear posters. We had apparently, been the victims of a hate crime! Next thing I know, my phone is ringing. So, I answer it to hear Jim speaking much too loudly.

"Hey, (Insert name) did you see the news"

"Shhh... I'm watching it now"

"What do we do?"

"Hell, if I know! It was your idea"

He hung up on me! I kept watching, and it turns out, that the controversial new play had apparently caused two drunken, more importantly unidentified vandals to go and cross out the face of the union girl on the poster in protest. This was all I could hope for! Well, not the racism. That was not intended, I promise. But anyways, under the guise of this new scandal, I released a twitter statement that read "Due to the recent events surround my new play *My Bleeding Heart*, premiering at (insert name of venue), I have decided for the safety of the cast and crew that we will cancel the production in favor of a new, less controversial play. So, I was back at square one. The funny thing about starting over is despite having nothing, you've still done something. For instance, even though I was now

## Playwright:

Without a script, and I had lost the ability to use that one, I now knew at least what not to do. For instance, just because you have a special effect, doesn't mean you have to use it. If you didn't know, this theatre has a fly system, which means that we can attach wires to our actors and make them fly. Well, this is a pretty cool effect if you're doing *Mary Poppins*, or *Peter Pan*, but, as my husband told me, not a good idea for a dream ballet. You see, when the second act of *My Bleeding Heart* started, we had the two girls flying around in the air, reading love letters to each other, to represent their yearning to be with each other. The flying showed the audience that they were in a dream, and the letters were their love. But apparently, my husband thinks it's "cheesy" to have a woman fly while saying that her spirits are soaring. Well, my bad. But all in all, I had learned it was. So, I decided that I would take a piece of character's lives and present it as it happens, because when every playwright has run out of ideas, they imitate Chekov. The play I wrote was called: *The Tea Sippers*. It was a woman and her husband, and they were old and wealthy, they had a family, and this big, grand, palatial home in Palm Beach. Well, one night, the woman dies, offstage of course, because, well, Chekov. But anyways, she leaves her husband the home and a bit of the money, but the rest of the money she puts in a vault, to be left to the friend or family member who unlocks it. The only way to find the combination is by looking inside of the tea bags that they drink. Now, there's a catch revealed in Act 3- if they do not drink the tea, but just open the bags, they cannot claim the money. So, they sit, drink, and talk, and reminisce about life. The daughter is caught in a love triangle, the son is trying to write a jazz-electro funk musical, and the whole time they drink underneath the woman's prize possession, a taxidermized seagull. In the end, the daughter cannot choose a man, so she goes downstairs and finds the door unlocked, but all the money is still there, so she grabs a case and walks upstage into a light. And that's the end.