

EXCERPT OF

Ghostlight:

A Fargeddy in 2 Acts

With Musical Elements

By Ethan Shaw

Intellectual Copyright: 2024

Actual Copyright: TBO (To Be Obtained)

Written on a Vast Ombre of Style and Genre Whose Aforementioned Vastness is yet to
be Specified

Inspired by the Human Experience

Which Includes Hunger

Is it Lunchtime yet?

How Long's this Play Supposed to Be Anyways? "2 Acts" is Pretty Nondescriptive of the Measure of the Chronos for Something Like This. And What's a "Fart-gedy" anyways??? Sounds Pretty Ridiculous to me. A Regular Play is What? Two and an Half Hours? I Don't Even Know if I want to Spend That Much Time on Something I Don't Know Will Come Out and Impact me in a Way I deem Meaningful. I Guess We'll Have to Buckle Down and See. But Wait, I First Must Relieve my Pee.

Hey that was in factic Procrastinate!

Playwright's Note:

As I begin to write, I feel a rush of exhilaration, nervousness, and excitement. It's not dissimilar to having a crush on someone.

Interesting.

Whether or not this play will ever be produced is now beyond my control and must be relinquished and unconsidered as the writing begins, lest it color my writing. I want to thank Richie, Stefan, Amanda, Stephanie, my undergraduate mentors, the theatre greats of the past, my friends, my preparation, and the sense of fear and excitement I mentioned before. I hope it keeps me going through the preplanning, anxiety, and hyper-ambition to succeed, which often leads to my failure.

Upon Doors Opening:

A PIANO PLAYER, who is not the actor in the play, meanders onto the stage, looking for their destination: the piano, which is upstage left. They sit. Musical improvisation begins between unseen solo voice (PLAYER) and the pianist and continues for duration of this segment. Sometimes it should be solo piano, sometimes it should be solo voice. Ethereal. Primal. The Old World rampant. Free and easeful mostly, to not tire the singer, who is also PLAYER. No actual lyrics. Use sounds, syllables, and vowels to convey emotion.

A series of sound effects begins. May include realistic sounds (e.g. the scribbling of a pencil, the wadding up of paper, the paper hitting the rim of a trash can), naturalistic sounds (e.g. showerhead spraying, water heater humdrum, squeal of a tea kettle), or other sounds. Other sound effects may include anything from futurist to dada, surrealist to epic. Long tones, frequencies, laughing, growling, slobbering, glass breaking, static, writing on a chalk board, bicycle bell ringing, etc. Think Theatre of Cruelty. Play with silence. Distinct and indistinct words whispered and yelled, near and far. Overlapping of sounds, one sound at a time, and volume should be played with. General increase of frequency, volume, and entropy of sound, though the progression of sound effects should occasionally ebb and occasionally flow, the end of this section being the loudest part. The sounds should be normal and foster an atmosphere of hubbub for most of the time and only amp up when most of the audience is in the house. The silence following this series of sound effects should be more deafening than the climax of the series of sound effects.

At the drop of the curtain, when the house is full, the pianist should panickily realize they have forgotten their water bottle or sheet music or something and run offstage.

Pre-Pre-show Announcement:

MASTER OF CEREMONIES walks downstage center. If they already have a microphone taped to their face, there's no need to worry further. If not... put a mic downstage or something, I dunno, figure it out.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES. *(to audience)* Hi everyone! How're we doing tonight??!
Yeah!!! That's what we like to hear. Before we get this party started, I have some *acknowledgements* to make: We *acknowledge* we reside and operate on the territories of the eight tribes of Utah, who have been living, working, and residing on this land from time immemorial. We *acknowledge* these tribes are the Confederated Tribes of the

Goshute Indians, Navajo Nation, Ute Indian Tribe, Northwestern Band of Shoshone, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, San Juan Southern Paiute, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, and White Mesa Band of the Ute Mountain Ute. We *acknowledge* these lands carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity. We *acknowledge* Elders past and present as peoples who have cared for, and continue to care for, the land. In offering this land acknowledgment, we *acknowledge* Indigenous self-governance history, experiences, and resiliency of the Native people who are still here today. *(Long pause. Looking up:)* And yeah! That's it! We acknowledged the land we're on not being ours, and that's all that there is to do about that! Acknowledging the problem fixes it! It's not like uuhhh.... we can *do*, uhhhh... do anything... about it

Long pause.

Without further ado, tonight's entertainment!!!

Lights go down.

Pre-show Announcement and More Shenanigans:

Low rumbling a la airplane. The following must take place on an oscillating wave of extremely unintelligible to extreme clarity. The typical pre-show announcement information must be conveyed, but the fun is in the non-typical pre-show announcement stuff, which should be concerning to the audience

PILOT (V.O.). *(Fairly coherent)* Good evening, folks, and welcome to Lyric Airlines. This is your captain speaking. We're cruising today at a whopping 4534 ft. If you look to your right, you'll probably see the person sitting next to you. If you look to your left *(muffled... pause, and then:)*

Thunderclap and sound of engine exploding. Calmly:

PILOT (V.O.). Oh shoot, that was crazy! PLEASE don't look to your left, actually, if you're sitting in a window seat. Good thing we got another engine, eh, trusty co-pilot?! If you look to your left, you'll probably see the love of your life sitting next to you, even if you don't know it yet. If you're sitting in one of those left-hand side window seats, DO look to your RIGHT. PLEASE. Take this time to get to know your new friend. It's gonna be a long flight. *Really* long... We ask everyone to please not forget to *(muffled)* as it is *integral* to our survival for the duration of this flight. Turning off your cell phones would also be helpful, you know, so you can really get this spark between you and the person to your left raging into a bonfire by the time we land. If you have any babies, especially of the crying variety, please just exit the plane. You[have time to do that now. There will be one 15-minute intermission, but feel free to stay on the plane! Oh, I almost forgot:

Act I: The Fart

Scene 1

The stage is unlit. No... a brownout? Whatever the lighting terminology is. It's dimly lit. We see a set... maybe of a deconstructionist or minimalist nature... maybe not. Either way, it is at least heavily reminiscent of those of a Modern Master's play. Maybe Chekhov's Three Sisters. Maybe William's Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Maybe O'Neill's A Long Day's Journey into Night. Or maybe that's too on-the-nose. Point is, it needs to provide a livable environment for our character... who is... coming soon? It's already almost a quarter past the hour, so I'll send Stage Management to go look for him. Dark at the Top of the Stairs. Staircase leading to nowhere upstage center. Plain background that can drop or raise. Maybe brick. Wooden chairs, cabinets, tables, etc. And a piano (the grander the better), but we already talked about that. We hear the general kerfuffle of the last of a cast and crew leave as the doors to the theatre are locked. Oh yeah. We are in a theatre. The stage is the set for an ongoing production in this Notown, USA. This beautiful, historic theatre is right next to a bar. A ghost light has been set up downstage center. It comes on after the last bit of pre-show shenanigans... or maybe before and is set up by the speaker of the pre-show. It's the future... but not futuristic. The ghostlight should flicker, grow in intensity and stray from constancy in any other way throughout the show at the discretion of the light designer in collaboration with the director.

ACTOR 1 (V.O.). Ohhh yeah. Y'know what, you sound just like my first ex-wife. That's definitely something my first ex-wife would say. My... hahaha... ohhhh... (*intense, contrasting emotions crescendo and decrescendo, fight for victory, back and forth, like the most exciting arm-wrestling contest in the history of mankind, then... devolves into sobbing*)

ACTOR 2 (V.O.). Heyyyyy, mannnn, dude buddy... (*ad lib.*) Why don't we get a drink next door? Playing (*insert famous Modern Master's Sob Story Character Here. Vanya works.*) must be tough. Let's go next door. I know the *Rumpled Stiltskin* has gotta be...

ACTOR 1 (V.O.). CLOSED. CLOSED THEY'RE CLOSED, LES. (*ACTOR 2's name is the name of the character that antagonizes the character that ACTOR 1 plays.*) (*sobbing devolves to hysterics*)

We hear the doors close, making the two voices muffled. One last voice:

STAGE MANAGER (V.O.). Actors...

The doors are locked or rattled one last time. Silence. Uncomfortable silence. The ghost light flickers intermittently. Maybe each flicker gets longer.

CONTACT PLAYWRIGHT FOR FULL
SCRIPT