

You CAN Try IT

By George F reek

WHY I LIKE IT: *Drama Editor JANET EHRLICH COLSON writes...*

YOU CAN TRY IT, by George Freek is a slamming good old-fashioned comedy in two acts. It's a nod to a time when plays were full of twists and capers à la Noël Coward and just what we need right now as an antidote to our collective cabin fever. What we've got here is the family matriarch haunted by the spectre of her dead husband to the point of distraction not only for her, but for everyone else in the MANION household as well. Surely someone can convince CHRISTINE that she didn't kill her husband with laxatives. And surely something can be done to get CHRISTINE to stop obsessing about this departed toxic male and start living her life. Can anyone say séance? Get ready to get your Freek on in this marvelously madcap alternative to your coffee and Zoloft– and keep an eye out for this outrageously talented playwright. Yes, you can try it (free sample below):

LORRAINE

Now mother, will you please listen to me. I'm sure that pleasure deprivation is not recognized by the American Medical Association as a certifiable cause of death! If it were, I don't think anybody would be left alive! So will you please be reasonable and eat your food!

CHRISTINE

(She looks at her food, perhaps a sausage) I keep thinking of your father.

(Spacing and format is playwright's own.)

YOU CAN TRY IT

(A Comedy in Two Scenes)

by

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YOU CAN TRY ITTHE CHARACTERS

CHRISTINE MANION, Judge's Ezra Manion's widow, 40s

LORRAINE MANION, The Judge's Daughter, 20s

DELMORE MANION, The Judge's son, 20s

CAPTAIN OLE OLSEN, A Captain in the Merchant Marines, 40s

PETER WOOD, In love with Lorraine, a chemist, 20s

DAISY WOOD, Peter's sister, in love with Delmore, 20s

THE PLACE

The Manion home

THE TIME

Recently

YOU CAN TRY ITScene 1

(The MANION livingroom, with breakfast nook to one side. Lights up, CHRISTINE and LORRAINE are sitting at the nook table. Dominating the livingroom is an extremely large, full-length portrait of a stern, forbidding man in a judge's robe)

LORRAINE

(Concerned) Mother, won't you please eat your food?

CHRISTINE

I'm sorry, Lorrie, I don't feel like eating.

LORRAINE

But you have to eat!

CHRISTINE

Why do I have to eat?

LORRAINE

(Sighs) That's a rather stupid question. For heaven's sake, I fixed your favorite for you.

CHRISTINE

I know, dear, and I appreciate it. But it was also your father's favorite food.

LORRAINE

Well, what of it?

CHRISTINE

If I eat it, I'll feel like I'm depriving him.

LORRAINE

Mother... he's dead.

CHRISTINE

I know that, Lorrie. And you know that...

LORRAINE

Well then...

CHRISTINE

But I get the feeling *he* doesn't know it. (She looks fearfully at the portrait).

LORRAINE

Mother! Will you please try to think rationally!

CHRISTINE

I'll try... but I also get the feeling that he thinks I'm responsible for his death.

LORRAINE

He's beyond thinking anything now.

CHRISTINE

But I... deprived him, Lorrie. He must have told me that a thousand times. He said he suffered from pleasure deprivation!

LORRAINE

Pleasure deprivation! Well, what about *you*. You certainly never got any pleasure from *him*. Didn't you deserve any pleasure?

CHRISTINE

But he said that would be sacrilegious.

LORRAINE

What does that mean?

CHRISTINE

I think it has something to do with the fact that Man was created first and Woman was created second, so Man is in the dominant position. Heavens, he used to read that passage from the Bible to me every night before we went to bed.

LORRAINE

Now mother, will you please listen to me. I'm sure that pleasure deprivation is not recognized by the American Medical Association as a certifiable cause of death! If it were, I don't think anybody would be left alive! So will you please be reasonable and eat your food!

CHRISTINE

(She looks at her food, perhaps a sausage) I keep thinking of your father.

LORRAINE

Oh, mother, please! You know you like it.

CHRISTINE

I'm sorry. I just can't.

LORRAINE
(Cajolingly) Oh, come on, just taste it.

CHRISTINE
Ugh!

LORRAINE
(Teasing) Oh, go on! Try it.

CHRISTINE
No!

LORRAINE
(Getting angry) Good grief! Just take a bite!

CHRISTINE
I can't.

LORRAINE
(Puts a piece of meat on her fork) Eat it!

CHRISTINE
Take it away! Get it away!

LORRAINE
(Starts to shove it in CHRISTINE's mouth) Eat it, you silly woman!

CHRISTINE
Ach! I'm... choking! (She has apparently swallowed the food, but is coughing and spitting).

LORRAINE
For heaven's sake! That wasn't so horrible, was it?

CHRISTINE
I'm... choking! (She gags, coughs and splutters).

LORRAINE
Oh, I'm sorry, mother... But you're so *frustrating*!

CHRISTINE
That's what your father used to say!

(Then there is a knock. LORRAINE is about to answer it, when PETER enters.)

PETER

Hello, Lorrie, Hi, Mrs. Manion...

CHRISTINE

(Chokes out) Good evening... Peter. (PETER stares at her).

LORRAINE

(Quickly) Hello, Peter. Peter, tell me, have you—

PETER

Yes, I have those pills you wanted me to analyze right here. (He holds up a bottle of tablets) And you were right, Lorrie. They're simply a strong laxative.

LORRIE

There! You see, Mother! Are you satisfied now?

CHRISTINE

But Peter, could they be... dangerous?

PETER

(A mischevious look) Well... I suppose if you took a whole lot of them, Mrs. Manion, they'd create some, um... powerful problems. (He chuckles).

CHRISTINE

I knew it! I did it! Now he'll never forgive me! (She exits, in despair).

LORRAINE

Why did you have to say that?

PETER

(He shrugs) What did I say?

LORRAINE

Oh, it doesn't matter, anyway!

PETER

(Pause. PETER prepares himself for a 'speech') Now look here, Lorrie... I came over here this evening with something important to say to you—

LORRAINE

Oh Good Grief, Peter! I'm warning you! I'm in no mood to listen to another one of your ultimatums!

PETER

(Immediately crestfallen) You're not?

LORRAINE

No, I'm not!

PETER

But—

LORRAINE

So if that's what you had in mind—

PETER

Now hold on, Lorraine Manion! Just a darn minute! You could at least hear me out! It's been quite a while since I gave you my last ultimatum, but I promise you that this will be the *final* one! I think I've been pretty patient, Lorrie, but everyone has his limit, and I've finally reached mine! So what I am saying is that we set a date for our wedding tonight, or else we just call it off! And I think that's very fair!

LORRAINE

(Pause) Yes, so do I, Peter.

PETER

(Pop-eyed with disbelief) Do you!

LORRAINE

Yes, I do, Peter.

PETER

Well... all right then... Why don't we—

LORRAINE

And that's why we have to call it off.

PETER

Yes, that's exactly what—We *what!* But... I thought you loved me, Lorrie?

LORRAINE

It's not you, Peter. It's someone else...

PETER

You mean there's someone else!

LORRAINE

Oh, Peter, don't be a baboon! You've seen my mother! She is obsessed with the fact that somehow she's responsible for my father's death! Well, I can't marry you until she's gotten over that crazy idea, and I can't promise you when that will be. It's not fair to string you along this way, holding out false hopes—

PETER

Now wait a minute, Lorrie...

LORRAINE

No! It isn't!

PETER

But I think I should decide—

LORRAINE

No, you won't! And so I think you should just get out of here right now!

PETER

(Pause) Lorrie, I take back that final ultimatum.

LORRAINE

You can't do that! You have every right to give me that ultimatum!

PETER

Nonsense!

LORRAINE

The situation isn't fair to *you*, Peter!

PETER

Who says it isn't?

LORRAINE

I do!

PETER

But for Pete's sake! It would be pretty selfish and insensitive of me to leave you high and dry at a time like this! What kind of a person do you think I am!

LORRAINE
Oh, I don't know...

PETER
You don't!

LORRAINE
Well... I do think you're very kind, Peter.

PETER
(Embarrassed) Oh. Well...

LORRAINE
But you also must be a complete idiot!

PETER
Thanks!

LORRAINE
I mean to put up with all of this!

PETER
Now listen, Lorrie... I've been considering your mother problem...

LORRAINE
Peter, I don't have a mother problem. I have a problem mother!

PETER
Be that as it may, I can see no reason why if intelligent people put their heads together, they can't come up with a solution to this mess!

LORRAINE
I know two heads are better than one, but if one of the heads is, say, *Delmore's*—

PETER
Now what's wrong with your brother?

LORRAINE
(Shakes her head) I think he's as haunted by father as my mother is!

PETER
Huh! You know I always thought Delmore was a mother's boy.

LORRAINE

Oh, he is! That's the point! He's *exactly* like her!

(Then, DELMORE enters. He does look a lot like CHRISTINE. He is also a bit dazed)

DELMORE

Do I resemble that remark?

LORRAINE

Delmore! Where have you been?

DELMORE

I've been talking to mother.

LORRAINE

Good. Then you must realize that we have a problem.

DELMORE

Oh boy, do we!

LORRAINE

I mean you've seen how bizarrely mother has reacted to father's death.

DELMORE

(He looks at the portrait, shivers slightly) Well, he does have that effect, doesn't he?

LORRAINE

Yes, I know... but after all he *is* dead.

DELMORE

(He smiles eerily) You'd like to think so, wouldn't you?

LORRAINE

And so it is up to us to convince mother that she is mistaken.

DELMORE

Boy, I'm with you there!

LORRAINE

Thank heavens!

DELMORE

Um... mistaken about *what*?

LORRAINE

Listen, I know it sounds strange, Delmore... but I think mother actually believes that father is haunting her!

DELMORE

(He stares at LORRAINE) And you *don't*! Let me tell you when I look at that portrait I get the chills up my spine... And my blood runs cold! (He shivers, has a haunted look)

PETER

(Pause) That's not good.

LORRAINE

Peter! Now listen, Delmore... are you a man or a wimp!

DELMORE

(He shivers again) What do *you* think!

LORRAINE

But... I know you disliked father.

DELMORE

Oh Lordy yes! The things he did to me I wouldn't do to my worst enemy! (He gets a gleam in his eye) Well, yes, maybe to my *worst* enemy! So I guess that gives you an idea of what we're talking about! I mean there was that cute puppy he brought home, and then gave it to the neighbor's kid! The kid who had beat me up! And those camping trips when he left me alone in the woods without food! Oh, I know, I know! He said he wanted to make a man of me... but at *six*! I ask you! And then the ladies of the evening...

LORRAINE

(Shocked) He didn't!

DELMORE

No, he didn't! That's something else I hold against him. I tell you he still gives me the willies!

LORRAINE

All right... but Delmore, you have to get over it! He is dead!

DELMORE

But that's just my problem. Don't you see?

LORRAINE

(Pause) No, I don't. (To PETER) Do you!

PETER

(Shrugs) Delmore often has me stumped.

DELMORE

The point is I never had a chance to tell him how I felt about him. Whenever I tried, I got weak-kneed and backed down. And then he goes and *dies* on me! And so I feel that wherever he is, he's laughing at me knowing I never had the courage to face up to him... Knowing that I was a *coward*! (He turns and buries his face in his hands, but peeks out to see what effect he's having).

PETER

(Shakes his head) Not nice...

LORRAINE

Oh good grief!

(Suddenly, a knock, and then DAISY enters. She is small but feisty, a little 'manly')

DAISY

Hello, everyone. Oh boy, now what gives with Delmore!

LORRAINE

Maybe you can help us, Daisy. We're having some trouble with him.

DAISY

Oh, maaan! Not that father hang-up again!

LORRAINE

We can't get him to see reason.

DAISY

(She raises her fist humorously) You know there are times when I'd like to get him to see stars!

DELMORE

(To DAISY) And there are times when you remind me of father! What does *that* say?

DAISY

Oh, I'm sorry, babe! It's just that some times you get me soooo upset!

LORRAINE

We know what you mean!

DAISY

But then I say... (She shrugs)... if you can't beat 'em, join 'em!

LORRAINE

Daisy!

PETER

(Rather admiringly) You can say what you will! My sister is certainly practical!

DAISY

(To DELMORE, but with a wink at LORRAINE and PETER) Now come here, babe, and give me a big hug!

DELMORE

That's more like it! (He does so)

PETER

(Aside to LORRAINE) But if I know her she's got something up her sleeve.

DAISY

Oh... will you look at the time! (She takes out an extra large pocket watch) How do you like my watch, babe?

DELMORE

Your watch? (He looks at it, however, as she begins to swing it back and forth) It is very nice, isn't it? In fact... it's quite... soothing...

DAISY

It is, isn't it? Now... just keep looking at it. (As she swings the watch back and forth, DELMORE continues to stare at it, becoming mesmerized) Are you beginning to feel... relaxed?

DELMORE

Yes...I... am...

DAISY

Very relaxed...

DELMORE

(Head moving back and forth with the watch, speaking slowly) If I was any more... relaxed... I'd be... dead...

DAISY

Good. And now you are feeling very calm and very serene... aren't you?

DELMORE

(Like an automaton) Yes, I am feeling very calm... and very serene...

DAISY

And you feel like you want to take me to dinner, don't you?

DELMORE

Yes, I feel like I want to... take you to dinner...

DAISY

At a very expensive restaurant...

DELMORE

At a very expensive restaurant...

DAISY

(She stops swinging the watch) Okay. Delmore... Delmore! (She gives him a good slap on the side of the face. He shakes his head).

DELMORE

(Shaking his head) What happened?

DAISY

Nothing much... How do you feel, babe?

DELMORE

I don't know. I feel... strange.

DAISY

(To herself) Uh-oh! I wonder if it worked?

DELMORE

I mean I thought I was *upset*, but suddenly I feel very calm and serene! (Shakes his head again) And I feel like I want to take you to dinner... at a very expensive restaurant.

DAISY

Well then, come on, what are we waiting for? (She takes his arm and they start off)

PETER

Just a minute, Daisy! Where did you learn to do that?

DAISY

There's nothing to it. It's a little trick I picked up in my psych class. We'll be seeing you.

DELMORE

(In high spirits) Yes, we'll be seeing you! (They exit).

LORRAINE

That was amazing!

PETER

(Light bulb over his head, if possible) Yes, it was! And Lorrie, that gives me an idea!

(Before PETER can elaborate, there is another knock on the door, and CAPTAIN OLE OLSEN enters. He's VERY fat, wears an oldstyle naval outfit, and an eye patch)

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Hello der, Miss Lorrie, I vant to speak vith yore mudder, if dats awright vith you.

LORRAINE

Oh, it's all right with me, Captain Olsen, but I'm not sure about mother.

CAPTAIN OLSEN

(Alarmed) Py Yiminy! Is she feelin' poorly?

LORRAINE

Yes, she is. (She looks at him) Captain, I don't quite know how to say this...

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Vell now, maybe I just got it figgered out myself...

LORRAINE

Maybe you do at that. Tell me Captain. Did you know my father?

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Oh yah! And I know your mudder before your fadder efen!

LORRAINE

Did you!

PETER

(Quietly to LORRAINE, rather confused) Did he... *what?*

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Oh yah, now I ain't one to be disrespectin' the departed, put Py Yiminy, yore fadder vas a real shtinker! God Forgif me! But he vas rich and respected and yore mudder vas yust a poor voman! Must I say more?

PETER

(Aside to LORRAINE) What *did* he say?

LORRAINE

Perhaps you'd better say more, Captain.

CAPTAIN OLSEN

You t'ink so! Vell den, Py Yingo, I'll belay my cards on da table! Miss Lorrie, I vas always in luf with yore mudder! And I always figger dat she and me ve would be married! But I had no right to ask her ven I was yust a poor sailor, so I vork myself up to Captain, but Yumpin' Yehosaphat, py dat time yore mudder had married yore fadder. So it vas pack to the sea vit me, until I hear dat yore fadder has suddenly drop dead!

LORRAINE

And you've been in love with my mudd—I mean with my mother all these years!

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Yah! Of course I vent trew a coupl' a vives in da meantime. Der's no point in peing a pig fool!

LORRAINE

I understand. I... think. Captain, what I'm trying to say is that mother has been acting very strangely since father died.

CAPTAIN

Yah! Py Yiminy I seen dat! But den I figger it's pen many long year since I last seen yore poor mudder! And den losin' yore fadder like dis...

LORRAINE

No, it's not that. In fact, just between you and me, Captain, I don't think mother ever really loved father...

CAPTAIN OLSEN

No! Vell vat about dat!

LORRAINE

That's right. Mother is upset... about something else.

CAPTAIN

Vell vat can I do! I'll do anyt'ing for yore mudder, Py Yolly!

LORRAINE

Well, the truth is mother feels that father is still exerting an influence over her... even from the *grave*!

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Frum da Grafe! Now hold on! Yore making my hair stant on ent, yung laty!

LORRAINE

But then you see our problem?

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Yah! I see dat somepody's off der nut!

LORRAINE

But it's only temporary, I assure you! Can you help us!

CAPTAIN OLSEN

I'm sorry, Miss Lorrie, but I don't mix vit spooks! Us seafarin' men are a superstitoos punch o' lubbers! I'm sorry. (He backs quickly out of the room, tripping as he does).

LORRAINE

But Captain...

PETER

Oh, forget him, Lorrie. Besides, I can't understand a word he says. Listen to me. I have a plan! Now do you think you can get everyone together here tomorrow night around nine?

LORRAINE

(She stares at him) I suppose so... but why so mysterious?

PETER

Now listen, here's what we're going to do... (As he whispers in her ear...

BLACKOUT

YOU CAN TRY ITScene 2

(The same room. LORRAINE is speaking to CHRISTINE, who appears skeptical)

LORRAINE

But mother, we're doing this for Delmore's sake!

CHRISTINE

All right, but *what* are we doing for his sake?

LORRAINE

I've told you. We're holding a mock séance.

CHRISTINE

Yes, you've told me that. But you haven't told me how that is supposed to help Delmore.

LORRAINE

(She sighs) Look, mother, haven't you noticed how adversely father's death has effected Delmore?

CHRISTINE

Well...I have noticed something a bit strange... I thought it was lumbago...

LORRAINE

Well, it's not! So anyway, Daisy's idea was if we had a mock séance, and we could pretend to conjure up father, and then if father were to apologize to Delmore for all the terrible things he did to him, maybe Delmore could be rid of him.

CHRISTINE

But how does she propose to do *that*!

LORRAINE

Oh, I don't know... something with smoke and mirrors I suppose.

CHRISTINE

(Suddenly anxious) It sounds like exorcism to me!

LORRAINE

It's harmless, I'm sure, mother. (Pause, nervously) I'm leaving the details to Daisy.

CHRISTINE

(She shivers slightly) I don't know about this, Lorrie. It sounds decidedly unhealthy!

LORRAINE

But mother! Don't you want to help Delmore?

CHRISTINE

Well... if I really thought this might help him...

LORRAINE

Don't you want to help him get over this guilt he feels about father?

CHRISTINE

(Perhaps also thinking of herself) Well... yes, I do.

LORRAINE

So then...

CHRISTINE

Oh, all right, but how does Delmore feel about it? I mean won't he see through this flimy ploy?

LORRAINE

We have to trust Daisy to pull it off. After all, she is his fiancée.

CHRISTINE

(Not entirely convinced) I'll tell you. *I'm* not entirely convinced.

(And then DAISY enters. She wears a multi-colored robe and other psychic attire)

DAISY

Here I am.

CHRISTINE

(Looks at her) You certainly are!

DAISY

What! Am I late?

LORRAINE

Well no. Peter had to work, and I'm afraid we don't know *where* Delmore is.

DAISY

Uh-oh!

CHRISTINE

Frankly, I'm beginning to feel very nervous about this whole thing!

DAISY

Well, Mrs. Manion if you want to forget about it that's okay with me...

LORRAINE

(Aside to DAISY, kicking her) Daisy!

DAISY

But I know *Delmore* is really counting on your support!

CHRISTINE

He is? (She sighs) Oh well... what harm can it do?

LORRAINE

Now that's the spirit.

CHRISTINE

(Alarmed, she looks at the portrait) Don't say that!

LORRAINE

Oh, good grief...

(And then DELMORE suddenly enters. He is quite anxious, is biting his nails)

DELMORE

Here I am, but I don't mind telling you I'm quite anxious about this.

LORRAINE

(Smiling awkwardly) Yes! That's exactly what we were just telling mother.

DELMORE

Then you're really going through with it?

CHRISTINE

What do you mean? But I thought...

LORRAINE

(Quickly) That's right, Delmore! Just like you wanted us to!

DELMORE

But... I can feel something in the air...

DAISY

You can feel it too! Oh, that's a very good sign! (She kicks him) And can you feel that?

DELMORE

Ouch!

CHRISTINE

(To LORRAINE) Lorrie, what is going on? You told me Delmore was really looking forward to this.

DAISY

(To DELMORE) Oh hey, I've got something in my eye, babe! Come over in the light and have a look, okay? (She pulls him to one side).

CHRISTINE

Lorrie, I want to know what's going on!

LORRAINE

Well... Daisy seems to have something in her eye. (She looks over at DAISY and DELMORE. DAISY has taken out her watch and is swinging it back and forth).

CHRISTINE

But I don't think Delmore is very pleased.

LORRAINE

Sure he is.

CHRISTINE

No. I don't think so.

LORRAINE

But he will be, I promise.

CHRISTINE

No, I've had enough! I'm going to bed!

LORRAINE

Mother, you can't do that! Think of Delmore!

CHRISTINE

But I don't think Delmore is really looking forward to this at all!

(Then DAISY and DELMORE return. Delmore is now speaking automaton-like)

DELMORE

You know I'm really looking forward to this.

CHRISTINE

You are!

LORRAINE

There, you see! I told you so!

DELMORE

I'm very excited about it.

CHRISTINE

(Aside to LORRAINE) There is something *very* odd about your brother.

LORRAINE

You've just noticed that?

CHRISTINE

Now that is not nice, young lady!

DAISY

Well look, I think we can begin. When Peter gets here he can always catch up.

CHRISTINE

(To herself) Catch *up*?

DAISY

Everyone, will you please come to the table? Delmore, sit here by me, babe. (He does so) Lorrie, will you sit there? And Christine, will you sit right here, please? (They all sit) Now... We must all join hands. (They do so. CHRISTINE reluctantly).

DAISY

Now then... let us begin. (Suddenly, the lights darken).

CHRISTINE

What's that!

LORRAINE

Shush! It's only for effect.

CHRISTINE

(Whispering) But who did it!

DAISY

(Eyes suddenly rolling, speaking in a deep voice) Ashtoreth, Astarte, Ishtar... I beckon you. Come forth! Come *forth!* In the name of Asphodel and Filomel, come forth! Amo, amas, amat... veni, vidi, vici... In Hoc signo vincit... Come forth, I say! *Come forth!*

CHRISTINE

(Whispering) Oh, really...

DAISY

(High-pitched voice) What do you wish? To whom do you wish to speak?

LORRAINE

(After a startled pause) To... Ezra Manion...

CHRISTINE

What...

DAISY

(Same Voice) Ezra Manion... I can do that! Ezra! Ezra, come forth...

CHRISTINE

(Whispering, but clearly frightened now) Lorrie, this is going too far—

PETER

(Off, EZRA's voice) Who called me from my peace? What do you want? Who's there!

LORRAINE

(A Pause, finally nudging CHRISTINE) Mother! Say something! Go on...

CHRISTINE

(Frightened, whisper to LORRAINE) No! I... can't...

LORRAINE

Father, it's me, Lorraine! You treated mother terribly, didn't you? You must apologize!

CHRISTINE

(Suddenly blurts out) Ezra! I didn't blab, I promise!

PETER

(Voice of EZRA) Oh, but Christine, I *did* mistreat you! And now by the light of eternity I see how wrong of me it was...

(Some smoke; then, PETER, steps from behind the portrait, in a robe and fake beard)

CHRISTINE

Ezra!

PETER

Forgive me, Christine! I was really mean to you! Can you ever forgive me!

CHRISTINE

Oh...

DELMORE

(Suddenly emboldened, starts towards PETER) Hey, how about *me*! Remember all those rotten things you made *me* do! Don't I get some of this apology, too? Do you remember all those times when you—

CAPTAIN OLSEN

(Now comes bursting in the door) Christy, I'm here fore you! I vas chicken... (He looks at the scene before him) Yumpin Yehosaphat! Vat is dis! Esra! Iss dat you! I see I'm yust in time to gif you piece of my mind, you tirty pum! (He advances warily towards PETER, who quickly retreats).

CHRISTINE

(Suddenly lets out a scream, which has been trying to force itself out of her for a minute and a half) Ahhhhh! (And then she faints).

LORRAINE

(The lights now go completely dark) Mother! Mother?

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Christy! Christy! Ver in da heck are yuh! Christy!

(There is a minute of total darkness and silence. Then the lights come up with PETER at the light switch. He finds himself temporarily alone. Then LORRAINE comes in)

PETER

Lorrie! Where's your mother?

LORRAINE

(Dejected) Captain Olsen carried her to her room.

PETER

And... what about Daisy and Delmore?

LORRAINE

I don't know... I guess they got lost in the chaos.

PETER

Boy! What a fiasco!

LORRAINE

(Sarcastic) You think?

PETER

You don't have to say it, Lorrie! I know everything was my fault! It was my brainstorm!

LORRAINE

Well... it didn't exactly work out as planned, did it?

PETER

If only I'd stayed behind the portrait!

LORRAINE

I don't think that really mattered, Peter.

PETER

I honestly thought that Captain Olsen was going to murder me!

LORRAINE

(After a pause) Peter look here. (Pause) We *are* going to be married next month!

PETER

I know you're right, Lorrie, I was a big... (He looks at her, shocked) What! *We are?*

LORRAINE

(Resolute) Yes, we are! My mother is an adult! I've tried to help her! Heaven knows I have, but enough is enough! She has to deal with this... *fantasy* of hers by herself!

PETER

(Pause) But... you realize I probably pushed her over the edge tonight?

LORRAINE

Oh, gosh! Peter, how in the world did you ever think up such a *hare-brained* scheme!

PETER

Now wait a minute! I mean... you went along with it!

LORRAINE

That's because I was desperate! You should have realized that!

PETER

Now that's not fair! I think—

(Then suddenly DELMORE and DAISY re-enter. They both look rather pleased)

DELMORE

Well did I do okay? I mean wasn't I... *fantastic!* Did I stand up to him or not!

LORRAINE

Well... yes... you did. (She looks at PETER. He shrugs).

DAISY

I always knew he had it in him. You just needed a little help. Didn't you, babe?

DELMORE

And will you look at what Daisy gave me for an engagement present! (He reveals her watch).

LORRAINE

Delmore... did you say 'engagement present'?

DAISY

(A broad smile) That's right... next month...

DELMORE

No, next *week*... (He suddenly swings the watch back and forth in front of her)... isn't that right... dear?

DAISY

Stop that! I said next *month*!

DELMORE

(Shakes his head, about the watch) I can't seem to get the hang of this thing.

DAISY

(To PETER and LORRAINE) So... now it's your turn.

PETER

(He looks at LORRAINE, who looks depressed).

(Before she can speak, CHRISTINE enters with CAPTAIN OLSEN, arm-in-arm)

CAPTAIN OLSEN

(Smiling) Yore mudder iss fine now, Miss Lorrie.

LORRAINE

She *is*!

CHRISTINE

And I feel so *relieved*!

LORRAINE

You do!

CHRISTINE

Yes! I feel like a tremendous *weight* has suddenly been lifted from me! (Then they all look at CAPTAIN OLSEN, somewhat shocked).

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Yumpin' Yiminy, vhy iss everypody lookin' at me! (Then everyone laughs, and...)

THE PLAY IS OVER

THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS: *I've had many influences ranging from Shakespeare to Ibsen, Strindberg, O'Neill and Pinter. But mostly as material for parody. I look for the pretentious or the emotionally exaggerated, then carry it one step farther. The result is always parody! Humor is therapeutic. That's a cliché, but expressions become clichés because they're true, I guess.*

AUTHOR'S BIO: George Freek has spent playwrighting residencies at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; Southern Methodist University; Southern Illinois University; and Eastern Illinois University. His plays have been published by Playscripts, Inc.; Lazy Bee Scripts; Blue Moon Plays; and Off The Wall Scripts.

