

TEARDROPS

TALES OF THE MACABRE

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Draft 1

MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE
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LOGLINE

Guarding the doorway to the afterlife (whatever it may be) is Teardrop; a sad, mute clown. In order to pass through his purgatorial circus, those who end up there must find what is humorous in how they passed. All characters are performed by three individuals, referred to as "Puppets."

CHARACTERS

Puppet 1 (M)

Plays Mr. May

A large Ringmaster.

Puppet 2 (M)

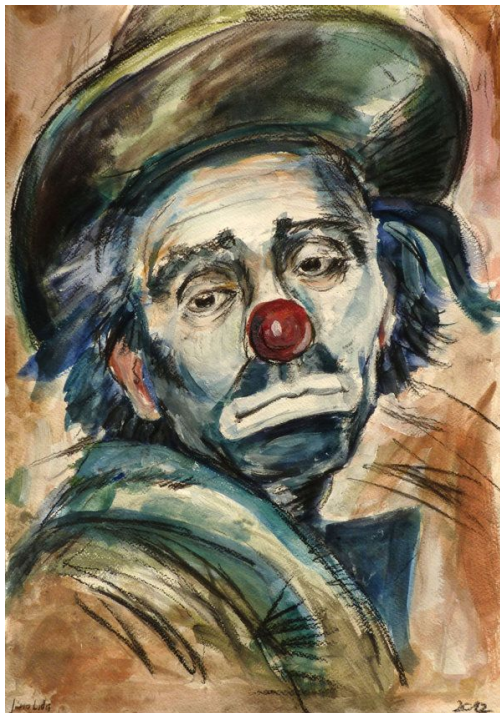
Plays Percy

An earnest young man.

Puppet 3 (F)

Plays Eloise

An ingénue with range.



Teardrop Inspiration

ONE

PUPPET 1
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.
BOYS AND GIRLS.
GALS, BLOKES AND NON-BINARY FOLKS.
IT IS MY UTMOST, GUT ROASTINGEST
PLEASURE TO PRESENT TO YOU...
THE CLOWN WITH A FROWN.
TEARDROP!

PUPPET 3
Oh audience, you will think twice -

PUPPET 2
Of the tales you see tonight.

PUPPET 1
They all are true - just not to
you.

--

PUPPET 1
Who here would like to hear their
fears?

PUPPET 2
Speak, Marc Antony! I'm all ears!

PUPPET 1
On Death is the pulpit this puppet
shall speak.

PUPPET 3
I'm weak in the knees!

PUPPET 2
I've wetted my seat.

PUPPET 1
We fear the most what we do not
know.

PUPPET 3
The final bow.

PUPPET 2
The end of the show.

PUPPET 1
Why though must we be afraid?

PUPPET 3
There's humor in death.

PUPPET 2
And decay.

PUPPET 1
The clown guards the sacred way,
the path to heaven beyond the fray.

PUPPET 2
But what must one do to pass
through the gate?

PUPPET 1
Give me a moment, and I shall say.

Simply find what's funny in how we
all pass.

PUPPET 3
To look at death...

PUPPET 1
And simply... Laugh.

TWO

PERCY

What the... Where... Where am I?

PUPPET 1

We've already explained things, kid. The Clown. The Gates. Purgatory. Skip to the part where you explain how you died.

PERCY

Ah, right. *Ahem*.
I was headed to this neat social.

PUPPET 1

Too far. No one knows your name.

PERCY

Oh, right-O. I'm Percy J Alcott. I'm nineteen and my daddy owns a tobacco plantation. Oh, boy, oh... Oh! I was headed to this neat social, I remember because I was headed to New York City where I'd never been but we were in a Roadster, a real hayburner but a nice car all the same, I remember because Ernest Cunningham road second and he tried to tell me this real wise tale about his best uncle selling boot legged hooch. Ernest Cunningham doesn't even have a best uncle! Anyway, we were headed to this swell social with a bunch of the other preparatories 'round Pennsylvania.

ELOISE

Hello.

PERCY

Oh, hi. 'scuse me. I'm Percy J Alcott. I go to William Charter.

ELOISE

I'm Eloise May. I go to Linden Hall.

PERCY

Get out of town! That's real nearby. Do you like the social?

ELOISE

Mmhmm. It's a rub alright.

PERCY

...

My daddy owns a tobacco plantation!

ELOISE

Everyone's daddy owns a tobacco plantation. Doesn't mean you're not a dewdropper.

PERCY

I ain't a dewdopper. I'll show you, I got talent. *Aspirations*. Hand me that linen. Thank you kindly.

ELOISE

You can't write on the linens!

PERCY

It's not writing, it's sketching. Here.

ELOISE

It looks just like me.

PERCY

Well not just like you. You're much more lovely than on a napkin. Do you dance.

ELOISE

On occasion.

PERCY

Would you like to dance with me?

ELOISE

Yes I would.

PERCY

I'm Percy J Alcott, so you know.

ELOISE

You've already told me this.

PERCY

I know. I just like to say it again just incase someone forgets or wasn't listening the first time. I'm terrible with names.

ELOISE

But great with faces I suppose?

PERCY

I'm grand with faces! I never forget 'em.

ELOISE

Eloise May. Now you have a name for the face.

PERCY

Dance with me, Eloise May?

ELOISE

I'd be delighted, Mr. Alcott.

PUPPET 1

Oh, young love. Oh unwieldy, cumbersome, pubescent love. The type of young love where you don't know the birds and the bees from the who's and the what's. Where you blame those flushed faces and sweat soaked Arrow collars on urges not of fornication, but to dance the Charleston. That was the love Percy and Eloise found that night in a hotel ballroom somewhere near the heart of New York City, in the era of flappers and prohibition and F. Scott Fitzgerald somewhere smacking the hell out of a woman who wrote his best stories. Oh young love in the rip-roaring twenties. And from love, comes life. But if you haven't surmised so by now, then you should know. It also breeds death.

ELOISE

Our car is leaving, curfew is in one hour and three quarters.

PERCY

Ah damn, Eloise. But it feels as though the night just started. Tell me I can see you again.

ELOISE

I can tell you, but it won't make it so.

PERCY

Ah, dammit so. Why's tonight have to end. I wish things could stay this ducky forever.

ELOISE

If things were always this ducky, then nothing would be ducky at all.

PERCY

Right. Still.

ELOISE

Here. Write to me, Percy.

PERCY

Gee, I will!

ELOISE

Goodnight now!

PERCY

Goodnight. Say, Eloise - wait!

ELOISE

Huh?

PERCY

I was wondering, uh, if maybe you would give me a cash? Since it's been such a swell night and all. Maybe a smooch would make it the best night.

ELOISE

I can't kiss you here! What would the chaperones think?

PERCY

Ah, hell with 'em! They've been reading dime store novels all night, they won't know a thing. Come'on, don't be a bluenose, just a peck!

ELOISE

Promise you'll still write?

PERCY

Swear it.

--

PERCY
Goodnight, Eloise May.

ELOISE
Goodnight, Percy J Alcott.

PERCY
Alright, oh-boy, alright! First thing I did when I got home was start penning long love letters with my best drawings enclosed. Her eyes and hair and the crook of her neck.. Eloise May was the bees-knees. We wrote everyday.

PUPPET 1
"Dearest Eloise, our love is like a sunset. Strong."
Jesus, stick to the drawings, would'ya? Hey, Kid. Butt me.

PERCY
Uh, sure thing, mister.

PUPPET 1
Ahhhhhh... That's a strong cigarette. Too bad smoking kills, you know.

PERCY
Kills!? Oh, you're joshing me. The surgeon general says smoking gives you a healthy heart. And lungs!

PUPPET 1
Ah, you'll be dead before it matters. Keep smoking kid, it's jake.

PERCY
Eloise and I arranged to meet through the balcony of her dormitory. We were madly in love, so we were going to consummate it. Just like Romeo and Juliet. The idols we reflected our love upon.

PUPPET 1
Kid, do you know how that story ends.

PERCY

Umm... No sir. My literature studies halted right as Romeo slew Tye-Bolt. Why?

PUPPET 1

Forget it. Go get her.

PERCY

At half past midnight I scaled her trellis.

ELOISE

Percy, you came.

PERCY

Of course, love. I couldn't stand another moment away.

ELOISE

Aren't you worried you'll be caught?

PERCY

Oh no, the boys are covering for me back at Williams. Besides, once Ernest Cunningham heard I was stealing away to Linden Hall for the night he was right green with envy. Next time he's on about his best uncle on a toot I'll remind him I ankled over to Linden Hall to see the most swell girl in the world. He can put that in his pipe and smoke it.

ELOISE

You're too much.

PERCY

I drew this for you.

ELOISE

Oh... Percy I'm speechless.

PERCY

I had to imagine the details. What they- what you looked like. I hope you don't mind.

ELOISE

Would you like to stop imagining?

PERCY

More than anything in the world.

ELOISE

Won't you come inside.

PERCY

Don't worry about that, I hocked some rubbers from the drug store two days ago.

PUPPET 1

Naivete is such a damning presence in the midst of young love. And how could two virgins recognize that the act of coitus is confusing, embarrassing and leaves one at the mercy of contracting unwanted variables. Luckily and unfortunately for these lovebirds, the only thing they contracted was a noise complaint from Eloise's bunk mate.

PERCY

They're expelling her from Linden Hall? It's phonus balonus I can't believe it!

PUPPET 1

Believe it, young man.

PERCY

She's moving back to Connecticut with her father. He'd kill me if he knew I was the boy that got her the boot. So we're going to write in secret, I'll mark my return address as Penelope from Linden Hall.

PUPPET 1

Young man, you would save yourself a lot of trouble if you simply let her go. You had a fun dance, you've committed quite the escapade to memory should you ever need to call upon it again when your bunkmates are out fencing. Let this be a sign.

PERCY

Tell it to Sweeney, would'ya? We're

(MORE)

PERCY (CONT'D)

in love.

PUPPET 1

It's your funeral.

PERCY

So we continued to write every day. We talked of the future and the plans it held. We'd rent out a small apartment in the city and visit magnificent parties every night, every day would be a sockdolager! I sent her drawings, too. Beautifully crafted drawings. Charcoal landscapes, blissful sunsets, plentiful nudes. You understand. After a month or so of writing, her father got curious of the mysterious girl Eloise was always writing but never spoke of. He opened a letter to reveal one of my drawings. He was not pleased.

PUPPET 1

To his credit, any man who found an anatomically correct drawing of his daughter would be, how Percy puts it, "not pleased."

PERCY

The next letter I received was from Mr. May himself. It stated if I ever corresponded with his daughter again, he would come down from Connecticut and shoot me. He sent the Sears, Roebuck catalog he purchased the gun from. He circled the model. I had only one choice.

PUPPET 1

Leave the girl alone?

PERCY

I picked up my own peashooter and made like Billy the Kid on a train to Connecticut to steal Eloise away.

--

PERCY

Knock knock.

MR. MAY

Can I help you?

PERCY

Mr. May, sir. My name is Percy J Alcott. My daddy owns a Tobacco Plantation and I've come to call on Eloise May.

MR. MAY

You... You...

PERCY

Yessir?

MR. MAY

You daft son of a whore.

ELOISE

Daddy grabs Percy and pulls him into the house.

--

ELOISE

Daddy, stop!

PERCY

Mr. May starts bashing me against the wall, real tough-like.

MR. MAY

I SHOULD BASH YOUR HEAD IN.

PERCY

Mr. May, I don't want to fight you!

MR. MAY

ELOISE MAY, GET MY GUN.

ELOISE

NO, DADDY!

PERCY

That's when Eloise starts crying.

ELOISE

And Daddy takes his right hand, the hand he wears his big Yale ring on, and smacks Percy across the face with it hard.

MR. MAY

And the kid starts bleeding out his

(MORE)

MR. MAY (CONT'D)

teeth real bad.

PERCY

And I begin to wonder how many
Krauts Mr. May has killed and if
he'd take trouble adding me as a
notch. I taste blood through my
teeth and begin to think not.

MR. MAY

ELOISE. GUN. NOW.

ELOISE

NO, DADDY! NO!

--

ELOISE

Daddy socks Percy in the stomach
real hard and Percy falls to the
floor, trying to catch the wind
back in him.

MR. MAY

FINE, GIRL. I'LL GET IT.

PERCY

While Eloise's dad is gone she
helps me to my feet.

ELOISE

He can't stand and he's leaking
like a faucet.

PERCY

Eloise, I've come to take you away.

ELOISE

Your face, Percy-

PERCY

It's jake. Come on, we can run.

--

PERCY

We look up to find Eloise's father
standing in the doorway, cocking a
rifle.

MR. MAY

You can leave now or through a
washrag scrubbed off the walls.
It's your choice, son.

PERCY

I notice he calls me son and
contemplate if this is a step
towards acceptance.

ELOISE

DADDY, NO! PERCY, PLEASE.

PERCY

I remember the Smith and Wesson
poking out of the waist of my
slacks, hidden beneath my prep
jacket. I say a silent prayer.
--

PERCY

Eloise, I'm sorry.
--

PERCY

I make the draw.

ALL

BANG!

ELOISE

A red dot appears on Percy's
forehead. It begins dripping down
his nose. I look down and realize
my blouse is speckled with him.
Like a splattering art form there
is no name for.

MR. MAY

The kid falls down. Dead.
--

PUPPET 1

DRUMROLL PLEASE!

PUPPET 2

Take my hand.

PERCY

Thanks.

PUPPET 1

Let me think... Yes... Yes... I've
got it! LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:
PERCY J. ALCOTT. THE ARTIST WHO
COULDN'T DRAW!

PERCY

Uh... Oh! Haha. Hahahahaha! I like that! That's clever. That's funny, funny like you read about! Thanks! --

PUPPET 1

And thus ends the first Tale of the Macabre.

PUPPET 3

Will we tell anymore?

PUPPET 2

Wait, my heads awfully sore.

PUPPET 1

Of course we'll tell more! There's billions of people dying every day.

PUPPET 2

From the vilest slays

PUPPET 3

In the funniest of ways.

PUPPET 1

So listen from the crypt people die to get in.

PUPPET 2

'Cause you'll wish you paid attention...

PUPPET 3

When it's your own coffin your stuck in.

FIN.