

Uff Da!

Jack Dyville



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ArtAge Publications

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by

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CAST

CURTIS FULLER: The Stage Manager, an easy going man in his mid 50s. Very calm until chaos interrupts his world of order. In the play within a play, he is the Captain.

LAUREL NOLAN: An over-the-hill B-movie actress, primarily known for TV infomercials. She is at least 55, but does she admit it? A diva, she plays stardom to the hilt. In the play within a play, she is Miss Peachie, a southern madam at the Pleasure Palace.

MARGARET HAMPTON: The kooky character actress, in her early 60s. She has a fondness for her flask – *or is it medicine?* She is a loud, outspoken woman, but with a heart of gold when she is sober. In the play within a play, she is Sadie the Maid at the Pleasure Palace.

WALLACE W. WALTERS: Nicknamed Wally, the character man, 60, has been an actor for decades. He is a balding, whining, mama's boy. In the play within the play he is forced to improvise the role of the 21-year-old birthday boy, Randolph. He also plays Franz the Choral Director.

GERTRUDE DAHL: A Norwegian Lutheran, 60s, an amateur community theatre actress, head strong with a wild and wicked tongue at times. A member of the Red Hat Society and dressed appropriately in a purple dress and red hat. In the play within a play, she is seen as the young lady of the evening, Sunny.

HELGA SUE BJORNSON: A Norwegian Lutheran, and Gert's best friend and sidekick, 60s. She, too, can prove she has a mind of her own. A Red Hat Lady with purple dress.

MILDRED QUALLEY: A mild and meek Norwegian Lutheran, 50s. She is a spinster, very prim and proper, and is proud to also be a community theatre actress. In the play within a play, she plays Bertha the Cook and Marie Osmond.

CONSTANCE HAGEN: A Red Hatter, 50s-60s.

LENA BERG: A Red Hatter, 50s-60s.

PRODUCTION NOTES

More Red Hat Ladies can be seated in the audience to be extras during the show within a show.

The term UFF DA (pronounced oof duh'), literally translated, is a Norwegian expression meaning no more than "What the hell!" Feel free to make any changes to undesirable language. That's no problem! Just produce and see the fun your actors and audience alike will have! Three men to portray the ministers with clerical collars could be added. It could be fun to have them and the additional Red Hat ladies mingle with the audience at intermission and sit throughout Act 2. This is the perfect show for that theatre with more women than men. But if you need to eliminate the roles of Constance and Lena, feel free to assign those lines to the major three Red Hat Ladies.

With regard to the setting, depending on your facility, the exits can be placed at your choosing. Act 1 needs a separate stage manager's office, or just a simple desk with a phone near the stage door. Next to the door is a call board and prop table. In the center of the room is the backstage green room, with a table and chairs or a couch and few chairs. Your choice. There is one entrance/exit to the dressing rooms.

For Act 2, the Pleasure Palace should be in pink and purple. It should look like an elaborate lobby or a shabby run-down old hotel lobby, with perhaps a pouf-lounge as center and a door stage right that leads to the outside. The kitchen and rooms are off stage left. In the final scene, a highly decorated bed replaces the lounge at Center for Sunny's bedroom with end tables and a chair.

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ACT 1

Setting: A sign on the stage reads, "THE FARGO THEATRE and SHERMAN SHOWHALTER present the 4th National Bus and Truck Co.'s Bedroom Bedlam! starring TV Spokesmodel LAUREL NOLAN."

At Rise: Lights come up on the backstage area where CURTIS FULLER is at the Stage Manager's desk, talking on the phone. His back is to the stage door. LAUREL NOLAN enters the stage door carrying a bouquet of roses. She quickly checks to see if anyone is watching, then goes to the call board/table area where she leaves the flowers and exits to the dressing rooms. WALLY and MARGARET, who has a mouthwash bottle in her hand, enter through the stage door and proceed to the call board.

WALLY: Hiya, Curtis.

CURTIS: *(on the phone)* Excuse me sir, but the cast is beginning to arrive. *(waving)* Good evening, Wally. *(into the phone)* Yes, sir, I know we'll get reimbursed for our transportation home, but it's the principle. Yes, sir, you told me. Your assets are frozen!

MARGARET: *(Signing in at the call board, her mouthwash bottle in hand, she overhears Curtis.)* I don't know who the hell he's talking to, but my ass is frozen out here in this arctic tundra as well.

WALLY: It's only a split-week engagement. You'll thaw. *(double take)* Hold it a minute, Margaret. It's July.

MARGARET: Aha! But July in North Dakota!

WALLY: *(refers to her mouthwash bottle)* Take a shot. That'll warm you up.

MARGARET: Good advice, Wally. *(takes a swig from the bottle)*

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CURTIS: Hey, Wally! Margaret! Be with you in five. Soon as Miss Nolan arrives.

MARGARET: (*referring to the bouquet of roses Laurel left*) If these are any indication, she has arrived!

CURTIS: Guys, just give me a second. (*into phone*) I don't mean to sound rude, sir, but I don't think this cast will care two cents about your assets.

MARGARET: Curtis, I'll be in my dressing room. When you're ready for us, give a little whistle.

WALLY: I'm with her. (*Wally whistles a bit of a tune. They exit to dressing rooms.*)

CURTIS: (*into phone*) No, sir, I have it all written down. Yes, sir, I'll email you a copy. Yes, I can certainly fax one to you as well. And with any luck, someone in the cast may have a nest egg set aside to get us back to New York, sir!

(*Three Red Hat Ladies enter through the stage door, looking lost.*)

MILDRED: Goodness gracious, so this is what backstage of a real, live professional theatre looks like. Isn't it exciting?

HELGA: Where's the glitz and glamour?

GERT: (*spotting Curtis*) That must be him.

CURTIS: (*notices the ladies*) Now what? (*into phone*) No, no. Sir, there are three strange looking, little old ladies. Wearing the silliest red hats you ever saw.

GERT: (*crossing to Curtis*) You must be the little weasel.

CURTIS: I beg your pardon?

HELGA: Don't you understand English?

CURTIS: Yes, ma'am. Excuse me just a second. (*into phone*) Okay, Mr. Showhalter, It's time for me to hang up. Yeah, it was great fun while it lasted. (*hangs up phone*)

GERT: Are you Mister Fuller?

CURTIS: (*hesitantly*) Yes. May I help you?

GERT: Why do you think we're here?

CURTIS: I have no idea.

MILDRED: For your help.

HELGA: You see, Mister Fuller, we have a *slight* problem.

GERT: We have a *huge* problem.

HELGA: And the lady in the box office said we had to talk to you.

GERT: (*to Curtis*) Look, sonny, we drove all the way from western North Dakota.

HELGA: All the way from the west to the east.

MILDRED: And that's a long, rough ride.

CURTIS: (*picks up a pamphlet on his desk.*) I was just reading about that in this North Dakota brochure. So that's why you're called the Rough Rider State?

GERT: (*perturbed*) That's not funny.

HELGA: (*proudly reciting*) They call it that because President Theodore Roosevelt once lived way out there in the Badlands, don't you know.

MILDRED: You betcha. But to tell the truth, Mister Fuller, we're also known as the Peace Garden State.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!