

Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

THE BULLY PLAYS

24 Short Plays by

Sandra Fenichel Asher

Cherie Bennett

Max Bush

José Casas

Gloria Bond Clunie

Eric Coble

Doug Cooney

Linda Daugherty

Lisa Dillman

Richard Dresser

José Cruz González

Stephen Gregg

D.W. Gregory

Brian Guehring

Dwayne Hartford

Barry Kornhauser

Trish Lindberg

Brett Neveu

Ernie Nolan

R.N. Sandberg

Geraldine Ann Snyder

Werner Trieschmann

Elizabeth Wong

Y York

Compiled and Edited by Linda Habjan
Foreword by Susan Sugerman, MD, MPH



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 311 Washington St., Woodstock IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMXI by
DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(THE BULLY PLAYS)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-723-1

Downhill

By Eric Coble

CHARACTERS

CYNTHIA..... a woman with employee problems, 30s to 40s
MICHAEL..... a man with boss problems, 40s
JACOB a teenager with parent problems, 17
TRAVIS..... a teenager with teenage problems, 16
EMMA..... a younger girl with markers

SETTING AND TIME: An office, a home, a school, another home. Now.

PRODUCTION NOTES: *Downhill* can be performed by actors of any gender or ethnicity. The names are a guideline, not a requirement: for example, Cynthia can be changed to a man or Jacob to a woman. Sets should be simple or non-existent for maximum speed and flow between scenes.

(CYNTHIA, in sharp business dress, faces off with MICHAEL, in a shirt and tie, holding file folders. They are in CYNTHIA's office.)

CYNTHIA. One simple thing.

MICHAEL. I know.

CYNTHIA. I gave you one simple thing to do, Michael.

MICHAEL. And I was mostly successful—

CYNTHIA. And Lewis and Franklin Dwardzik were mostly successful in creating an airplane in 1894. Except that their machine crashed and killed them both in a horrible

mass of broken metal. You know who *did* succeed? The Wright Brothers. Which ones do we talk about today?

MICHAEL. The Wright Brothers.

CYNTHIA. The Wright Brothers. Not the Dwadzik Brothers. The Wright Brothers.

MICHAEL. Do the Dwadzik Brothers even really exist?

CYNTHIA. They did! Before they died as horrible failures! Are you trying to take this company down with the Dwadziks, Michael?

MICHAEL. No, ma'am.

CYNTHIA. Then why did you screw up?

MICHAEL. I didn't screw up, we're on our way to making it work, just two more days—

CYNTHIA. Which I did not give you.

MICHAEL. —which you did not give us—

CYNTHIA. You know why I didn't give you those two more days?

MICHAEL. Because—

CYNTHIA. Because I see the big picture, Michael. It is my job to keep the big picture in my mind at all times, Michael. It is your job to do what I tell you to do, Michael. Is that so hard?

MICHAEL. No, ma'am.

CYNTHIA. Is that beyond your capabilities?

MICHAEL. No, ma'am.

CYNTHIA. Are you a Dwadzik?

MICHAEL. No, ma'am.

CYNTHIA. Then why do you keep screwing up?!

MICHAEL. I'm trying. We're all trying—

CYNTHIA. Dwadzik.

MICHAEL. Oh, come on—

CYNTHIA (*in his face*). Dwadzik, Dwadzik, Dwadzik.

MICHAEL. This is not—

CYNTHIA. Dwadzik! (*MICHAEL glares at her, silently.*)
Breathe in. What do you smell?

MICHAEL. ...nothing.

CYNTHIA. Exactly. There are no stinking piles of fail in my office. However, every time I walk past your cubicle, there is the undeniable stench of fresh fail reeking from your chair, your desk, your shoes. I did not start this company so you could track your mess in here every time you slouch through my door. So unless you want to go on sitting in your stinking pile of failure—which you can do on your own time, that can be arranged—I suggest you take a success shower, wash your clothes in high-heat success detergent, and show up ready to work for once! Do I make myself clear?

MICHAEL. Completely.

(CYNTHIA exits. MICHAEL turns, slams down his file folders as JACOB walks in, texting. They are at home.)

JACOB. Hey, Dad.

(MICHAEL nods. JACOB sits and texts.)

MICHAEL. Have you finished your homework?

JACOB. Most of it.

MICHAEL. Then off with the phone. You know the rules.

JACOB *(texting)*. I just gotta finish checking with Brian about the party.

MICHAEL. No. Homework now.

JACOB. In a minute—

MICHAEL *(grabbing the phone)*. Now, Jacob!

JACOB. Hey!

MICHAEL. One simple thing! I ask you to do one simple thing!

JACOB. I know—

MICHAEL. Are you keeping up with your math?

JACOB. I'm pretty good, can I—

MICHAEL. No, not pretty good. You know who was pretty good? Your grandfather, who dropped out of school and had three kids to support, going door to door to door with his junk used Hoover vacuum cleaners. I did not get where I am today so you could end up like him and the Dwadzik Brothers!

JACOB. Who?

MICHAEL. Is school somehow beyond your brain's abilities?

JACOB. No.

MICHAEL. Are you your grandfather and his Hoovers?

JACOB. No!

MICHAEL. Then why do you keep screwing up?

JACOB. I don't! I try!

MICHAEL. Hoover.

JACOB. I'm doing my best—

MICHAEL (*in his face*). Hoover Hoover Hoover.

JACOB. You're not even—

MICHAEL. Hoover! (*JACOB glares at him.*) You want to be a screw-up, you do it on your own time, you get a job, your own house, your own food and clothes. As long as you are under my roof, you will not sit there in a big stinking pile of fail, crying "I tried" "I tried" "I tried," do you understand me?

JACOB. Yes, sir.

MICHAEL. Then get to work!