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*Dramatic Publishing*

FROM THE NOVEL BY  
JERRY SPINELLI

# Stargirl

DRAMA BY Y YORK



**“Brave and moving.”** —*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

**“Adult themes seen through the perspective of youthful eyes will provide moments to warm the soul.”** —*BroadwayWorld.com*

# Stargirl

**Drama.** By Y York. From the novel by Jerry Spinelli. Cast: 4m., 2w. All is copacetic in the fall of the new school year as junior Leo Borlock settles in to produce his moderately popular school TV show, *The Hot Seat*, and keep himself safely behind the camera and out of anybody's line of fire. His safe existence implodes with the arrival of the weirdly fabulous Stargirl, whose impetuous enthusiasm for all-things-Leo forces him to choose between his own secure conformity and the glories offered by the girl from the stars. “Poignant and powerful Stargirl celebrates kindness, true love and striving to serve each other as fellow human beings to make the world a better place in life's brief moments shared on earth.” (*BroadwayWorld.com*) Area staging. Approximate running time: 1 hour, 40 minutes. Code: S2F.

Cover: People's Light and Theatre, Malvern, Pa., featuring Saige Hassler.  
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# Stargirl

By  
Y YORK

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JERRY SPINELLI



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## IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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*Stargirl*

By Y York

Based on the novel by Jerry Spinelli

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“This play was first produced April 20, 2013, at the People’s Light and Theatre Company, Malvern, Pa., Abigail Adams, Artistic Director, and Grace E. Grillet, Managing Director.”

*Stargirl* received its world premiere on April 20, 2013, at People’s Light and Theatre Company.

Cast:

Stargirl.....Saige Hassler  
Hillary .....Margaret Ivey  
Kevin.....Gregory Mallios  
Leo Borlock ..... Aubie Merrylees  
Wayne..... Mark St. Cyr  
Professor ..... Tom Teti

Production Staff:

Director ..... Samantha Bellomo  
Producer ..... Peter Pryor  
Stage Manager .....Kate McSorley Fossner  
Assistant Stage Manager..... Betsy Pierce  
Dramaturg ..... Wendy Bable  
Production Manager..... Chaz Brastow  
Costume Designer and Shop Manager..... Marla Jurglanis  
Sound Designer..... Fabian Obispo  
Lighting Designer .....Nancy Schertler  
Set Designer ..... Yoshi Tanokura  
Technical Director..... Joe Franz  
Assistant Technical Director .....Dylan Jamison  
Carpenter ..... Chris Wilson  
Sound Engineer.....Michael Hahn  
Props Master .....Liz Stump  
Assistant Props Master..... Sarah Pierce  
Scenic Charge ..... Will Scribner  
Master Electrician ..... Greg Miller  
Assistant Master Electrician .....Chris Hallenbeck  
Wardrobe Manager..... Bridget Brennan  
Run Crew .....Sonia Tavani

# Stargirl

## CHARACTERS

LEO BORLOCK (m): 16.

KEVIN MCKEON (m): 16.

WAYNE PARR (m): 16.

HILLARY (w): 16.

STARGIRL (w): 15.

PROFESSOR (m): 66.

CINNAMON (m): A rat, no lines. Probably a hand puppet manipulated by Stargirl. Don't use a live rat.



## TIME AND PLACE

It is now, although it sometimes feels like an earlier time. A week and a half in October. In Arizona, a high school, a bedroom, the professor's outside "lab" and the desert.

Start the design with the rat and go from there. Let the design be implied, transparent, theatrical. No blackouts between the scenes.

## NOTES REGARDING TEXT

"..." is a hesitation, a breath, half a thought; a very little amount of time has passed, but there has been a shift.

"—" is an interruption, often by the next speaker, but sometimes the current one interrupting his or her own thought.

# Stargirl

## ACT I

### Scene 1

*(Monday, day one. High-school TV lab: camera, talk show set with small on-set studio gallery. LEO BORLOCK checks his phone for messages, none. KEVIN MCKEON enters with a coffee.)*

LEO. Where have you been? It's almost time to start.

KEVIN. Didn't you get my text?

LEO. There's no text. What? You had to stop and get coffee?

KEVIN *(waves a page)*. I had to print the questions—

LEO. Why didn't you do that last night?

KEVIN. I was on Virtual with somebody in Alaska until two.

LEO. Two *a.m.* the night before the *Hot Seat*?

KEVIN. It wasn't 2 *a.m.* in Alaska.

LEO. Then go do a TV show in Alaska.

KEVIN. Dial down, Leo. It's not like we're live.

LEO. We're supposed to stick to a schedule.

KEVIN. A *flexible* schedule. I am nothing if not flexible.

LEO. I'm trying to be professional. It's professional to make a schedule and stick to it.

KEVIN *(affixing a microphone to his lapel)*. I look around, the lights are not on, nobody is in the jury, the hot seat is empty, and Wayne Parr is in the bathroom tackling his hair. Cheers.

LEO. What's wrong with his hair?

KEVIN. He brought the wrong “product.”

LEO. What are you talking about?

KEVIN. Product. It comes in a jar, it smells like coconuts and looks like motor oil. Apparently it’s the wrong kind. Hillary’s brushing it out.

LEO. In the boys’ room?

KEVIN. Yeah. They may never make it out of there.

*(They take a moment to glance toward the boys’ room.)*

LEO. It was your idea to put him on.

KEVIN. Don’t worry—it’s going to be great.

LEO. Sit down so I can focus.

KEVIN *(sits in hot seat)*. Ouch, oo, ouch ouch.

LEO. What?

KEVIN. Hot seat is very hot today.

LEO *(sarcasm)*. Funny, Kevin. *(Puts on headphones.)* Talk.

KEVIN. “Hello, Mica Area High, this is your host, Kevin McKeon, welcoming you to this fall’s fifth installment of the Mica Area High *Hot Seat*, Kevin McKeon and Leo Borlock, producers.” How’s that?

LEO. You sound phony, as usual. Let me see the questions.

KEVIN. Why?

LEO. I don’t want you to chicken out because he’s popular.

KEVIN *(keeping the page, theatrically)*. I will chop him into messes.

*(WAYNE PARR and HILLARY.)*

WAYNE. OK, I’m all set.

HILLARY. Get out of the frame, Kevin.

KEVIN (*surprisingly deferential*). Just helping focus—

WAYNE. Where should I stand?

LEO. You don't stand—

HILLARY. You have to show his outfit.

KEVIN. Yeah, righteous rags, Wayne.

HILLARY (*proud*). A gift from the ad agency because he saved them so much money.

LEO. You work cheap?

WAYNE. No, I do not work cheap. I save them money because I'm fast.

HILLARY. Where is everybody?

KEVIN. Nobody likes to get to school this early.

HILLARY (*typing on phone*). This is so lame. I have to do everything myself.

KEVIN. I posted the time—

HILLARY. Did you post that *Wayne* was the guest?

LEO. We have to start, or we won't finish before first bell.

WAYNE. Maybe we should postpone it.

LEO. We have a schedule—

HILLARY. We will have my people here in two minutes. (*KEVIN's phone, and then WAYNE's, buzzes.*) Kevin, I didn't know you were one of my people.

LEO (*to KEVIN, appalled*). What?

KEVIN. Um. It must be a coincidence. (*Checks phone.*) Yeah. It's my friend. I'll call him later.

LEO. Let me see—

KEVIN. No time. Roll tape.

HILLARY. Shoot him full length, Leo.

*(Lights on WAYNE; HILLARY sits in the gallery; gallery in shadow. LEO videos as WAYNE stands up straight. KEVIN is professional. STARGIRL enters and sits in the gallery.)*

HILLARY. Start wide, then slowly zoom to his shoes.

KEVIN. Don't worry, Hillary, we'll make him look great.

HILLARY. He doesn't need your help for that.

LEO. Sit down, Wayne. I got enough footage of your clothes.

HILLARY. Did you get the shoes?

LEO. Yeah, that's why they call it *footage*.

STARGIRL *(laughing in the shadows)*. Good one.

WAYNE *(looking toward the gallery)*. What?

LEO. Rolling.

KEVIN. Say your whole name into the camera, Wayne.

WAYNE. Wayne Parr the Second.

KEVIN. Welcome, Wayne. Last spring you were voted most likely to succeed sophomore. In your mind, have you succeeded?

WAYNE. Well ... I got into algebra two after retaking geometry last summer—

KEVIN. Tell us about the modeling, Wayne. How's that going?

WAYNE. It's fine ... it's going fine. I've gotten a lot of gigs and I've saved some money toward—

HILLARY *(from the shadows)*. Tell them about your spread in next month's *Arizona Life*, Wayne—

KEVIN. An unsolicited comment from the jury—

WAYNE. That worked out OK. They shot it at the Horse Mesa Dam. *(Excited.)* The issue is about the desert water table and how it's deeper now than it's ever—

HILLARY. Tell us what you wore!

KEVIN. And another.

WAYNE. I wore a lot of different stuff—school casual and formal.

HILLARY. And you were the only model. Why do you think you're such a popular model, Wayne?

WAYNE. I don't know. (*Joking.*) Maybe Leo's right. Maybe because I work cheap.

HILLARY. It's because the camera loves your face.

(*A very brief pause.*)

STARGIRL (*from the shadows*). Are you a model for the rest of us?

WAYNE. I'm—what do you mean, Hillary?

HILLARY. That wasn't me.

KEVIN. Lights on the jury, Leo.

(*Lights on the gallery, revealing STARGIRL. She wears a backpack and a long old fashioned dress.*)

STARGIRL. How can we ordinary people model ourselves after you?

HILLARY (*before WAYNE can answer*). Buy the clothes.

That's why they hire Wayne. So people buy the clothes. If you buy the clothes that means the ads are working.

STARGIRL (*to HILLARY*). And then we'll be like Wayne?

HILLARY. No one can be like Wayne.

STARGIRL (*to WAYNE*). So you're not really a *model*—you're more like an out-of-reach *ideal*—

HILLARY. No, he's a model. (*To the camera.*) Don't let her talk.

LEO. You started it.

STARGIRL. Or maybe that's what a model *always* is—a goal that's out of our reach, but we still try—we *try* to be better, to be smarter, to be kinder—lovelier! To evolve into the better human being that's hiding inside our DNA. (*Amazed and pleased.*) If we somehow *reached* our ideal, maybe we'd stop trying.

KEVIN. Did you get all that, Leo?

LEO. I've got her in close-up.

STARGIRL. Hi, Leo Borlock.

LEO. Do I know you?

STARGIRL. I'm Stargirl.

HILLARY (to LEO). These are Wayne's *Hot Seat* minutes. He shouldn't have to share them.

STARGIRL. Sharing is hard. Particularly sharing the lime-light ... or the *white* light in the case of *this* light. I don't mean to steal your thunder, Wayne Parr the Second.

WAYNE. It's OK—I didn't even want to do it.

HILLARY (to LEO). Who is she?

STARGIRL. She is still Stargirl. But she's sort of moving, so maybe she's *moving* Stargirl.

HILLARY. Do you go here?

STARGIRL. I go here as of today.

HILLARY. What are you dressed as?

STARGIRL. *Little House on the Prairie*. It's for a theatre in Seattle.

HILLARY. Well, you're a little lost. Seattle is a thousand miles that-a-way.

STARGIRL. Fourteen hundred ten miles. And (*Pointing, correcting.*) that-a-way. (*Sincere.*) You can borrow my atlas if you need it. (*Sensing something in her backpack.*) Uh oh. This has been interesting, but my friend is scurrying and that means he has to pee. Bye, bye. (*She exits.*)

HILLARY. ... What was that?

LEO. Wrap it up, Kevin.

KEVIN. Thank you ladies and gentlemen, that was our interview with Wayne Parr. Thank you for tuning in to Mica Area High School's *Hot Seat*, Kevin McKeon and Leo Borlock, producers.

*(Lights up.)*

HILLARY. You have to edit her out.

LEO. She was funny.

WAYNE. There won't be anything left if you take her out.

HILLARY. An *atlas*? "My friend is scurrying for a pee?"

LEO. The jury can say what it wants.

HILLARY. Fine. I'll take care of this. *(Types on her phone.)*

LEO. Take care of it how?

WAYNE. She's alerting her people.

LEO. Do you really have people? Nobody showed up.

HILLARY. I have people. Nobody showed up because it's the crack of dawn.

*(KEVIN's phone buzzes. WAYNE's phone buzzes.)*

LEO *(referring to KEVIN's being one of HILLARY's people)*.

I don't believe this, Kevin.

WAYNE. Believe it, Borlock. It's the only way to know what's going on around here.

HILLARY. Come on, Wayne. I told you this was a bad idea.

WAYNE. You're the one who said I should do it.

*(WAYNE and HILLARY exit. KEVIN reads his phone.)*

LEO. What's it say?

KEVIN. "Stargirl equals zero. Beware."

LEO. Let me see those. *(He grabs interview questions.)*

"How long have you lived in Mica? Who's your favorite designer? Which running shoe do you prefer?" *(Sarcastic.)*  
Really tough questions here.

KEVIN. Give me a break, Leo. He's the most popular guy in school.



LEO (*accusing*). You were never going to chop him.

KEVIN. You could have jumped in at any time.

LEO. Why did you put him on?

KEVIN. I'm trying to bump the ratings. Why do people like them?

LEO. Nobody likes them. Everybody is scared of them.

KEVIN. Not everybody.

LEO. Yeah, who?

KEVIN. Stargirl. She sounds like the professor: "Evolve into the perfect human."

LEO. She doesn't know the professor. We would have seen her there.

KEVIN. She knows you. She knows your name.

LEO. Maybe she's a *Hot Seat* fan.

KEVIN. She didn't know *my* name. She didn't say, "Hello, Kevin McKeon."

LEO. I never saw her before.

KEVIN. Let's put her on *The Hot Seat*.

LEO. How is that going to help the ratings?

KEVIN. Did you see how she's dressed? By second period she'll be infamous.

LEO. Do we chop her?

KEVIN. Into messes. Give me your phone. (*Types on LEO's phone.*)

LEO. What are you doing?

KEVIN. Signing you up so you can follow what Hillary says about her.

LEO. All right. We begin our Stargirl file.

## Scene 2

(*Later. STARGIRL is in a school hallway with her ukulele and song sheets.*)

STARGIRL (*sings*).

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND, THIS LAND IS MY LAND,  
FROM CALIFORNIA TO THE NEW YORK ISLAND—

(*Enter LEO.*)

STARGIRL (*cont'd*). Hi, Leo Borlock. Here's a lyric sheet so you can sing along.

LEO. Um ... thanks. (*He takes it and passes on, but lingers to watch.*)

STARGIRL (*sings*).

FROM CALIFORNIA TO THE NEW YORK ISLAND—

(*Enter HILLARY.*)

STARGIRL (*cont'd*). Hi, Hillary. Here's the lyrics. Most people forget that New York is an island. The song is a good reminder of the island nature of things. (*Realizes.*) Except "no man is one," according to the poem by John Donne.

HILLARY. We studied that poem in ninth grade.

STARGIRL. What did you learn about it?

HILLARY. Nothing. Why do you dress like that?

STARGIRL. A costume reveals character and content—a person, a time, a place. It makes the viewer think and know.

HILLARY. Well, I *think* and *know* you are a hundred years out of style. Are you a transfer?

STARGIRL. Home schooled. The last time I went to real school, we packed up and left town the kids were so mean. But I was little and got my feelings hurt too easy. I'm older now so—

HILLARY. Too much information.

STARGIRL. Really? That was the short version.

HILLARY. I think you're a plant.

STARGIRL. Hibiscus?

HILLARY. Oh my—No, not hibiscus. Some *plant*. Somebody the teachers paid to go to school here, to shake things up.

STARGIRL. I'd love to get paid to go to school. How can I get that job?

HILLARY. It's not a job. A plant is a ... I don't know—not a real kid—somebody from a TV show. Like there's a hidden camera to catch our reactions.

STARGIRL. They have shows like that?

HILLARY. Yes, they have shows like that. Don't play dumb.

STARGIRL. We don't have TV.

HILLARY. They hide the camera and see who is stealing or who is racist or who is cheating.

STARGIRL. It sounds mean.

HILLARY. The bad people deserve it.

STARGIRL. It sounds like a sting. A sting isn't fair.

HILLARY. A sting is the truth.

STARGIRL. It isn't the whole truth. (HILLARY's phone buzzes and she reads a text.) Your phone buzzes in C. (*Strums a C chord.*)

HILLARY (*upset*). Oh, come on!

STARGIRL. Bad news?

HILLARY. You just got here. Why did you ... ?

STARGIRL. What? Why did I what?

HILLARY (*forced recovery*). No ... not at all. Not a problem. So. (*Breathes, pretends to be nice all of a sudden.*) Did your parents name you that?

STARGIRL. No, and they didn't name me Stargirl, either.

HILLARY. What?!

STARGIRL. You said did my parents name me *that*. *That* isn't a name.