

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

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

by

Tim Kelly



The Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • Wilton, Connecticut • Melbourne, Australia

☆ NOTICE ☆

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR HIS AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES.

This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts, and conscientious observance of copyright law is not only required by federal law, it encourages authors to continue their creative work.

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in this 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; electrical or mechanical, including but not limited to photocopy, recording, videotape, film or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. All rights, including but not limited to, professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication, and reading are reserved.

Copyright © MCMXC by
Tim Kelly

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF)

This work may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. The amateur and stock acting rights in and to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performances of this work 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. Royalty information is given in our current catalogue, however printed fees may be subject to change without notice. All inquiries concerning stock and amateur performance rights should be addressed to:

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
311 Washington Street, Woodstock, Illinois 60098

On all programs and publicity materials this notice should appear: "Produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois."

Cover Design by Susan Carle.

ISBN: 0-87129-006-5

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

A Hair-Raising Comedy Spoof in Two Acts
For a Flexible Cast of Twelve
(7 Female, 5 Male or 6 Female, 6 Male)

CAST OF CHARACTERS (In Order of Appearance)

MRS. GRIMM housekeeper
JOAN TARBUCKLE attorney
LITTLE MESSALINA child terror
ALGERNON SNIPES* master of Gargoyle House
HUMPHREY weird handyman, Mrs. Grimm's son
HUSHABYE neighbor with a leaky boat
CONNIE PIGEON new governess
BUZZ HALLIBURTON Algernon's nephew;
an entertainer whose partner is a penguin
VERONICA Colonel Snipes' wife, a femme fatale
COLONEL SNIPES a soldier-of-fortune, gung-ho
BORIS an unexpected guest
SHERIFF BIRDSONG investigates murder
OLGA a gypsy of the old school

*The roles of ALGERNON and COLONEL SNIPES are played by the same actor.

PLACE: The action of the play takes place in the sitting room of Gargoyle House, a Scottish castle long since moved to a small island off the coast of Massachusetts.

TIME: The present.

PRODUCTION STYLE

This spoof of werewolf films should be played very broadly, getting all the laughs it can. However, it will be much funnier if the actors perform the play as if the plot were genuinely serious. This way the absurd situations, bizarre personalities and non-stop action will be hilarious.

The pacing should be fast, but not hurried.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene One: A foggy night.

Scene Two: One week later. Day.

Scene Three: That evening.

ACT TWO

Scene One: Later that night.

Scene Two: One hour later.

Scene Three: Shortly thereafter.

STORY OF THE PLAY

One reviewer describes the wild plot this way—"The attempt is to reproduce one of those daffy Bob Hope mystery farces from another era. The sort where wall paintings have eyes that move. The silliness is good-natured and easy to take." Buzz Halliburton, an entertainer fallen on hard times, is summoned to Gargoyle House, a spooky castle on a lonely New England island. With him is his partner, Admiral Byrd, a penguin who can tap dance to "Puttin' on the Ritz." The relatives turn out to be candidates for the funny farm. Colonel Snipes plots to blow up the island. Veronica, his wife, wears evening gowns in the daytime. Little Messalina is a child terror who has baby piranha fish for pets. The housekeeper, who often appears without her head, is menacing; the gardener probably insane. One grisly murder takes place before Buzz's arrival, but there are more to follow! Because of the family curse there's a werewolf in the house. But who can it be? The new governess? Sheriff Birdsong? The neighbor with the leaky boat? Olga, the gypsy, who still uses a wagon and horse? Things really get hot when Buzz is declared heir to the Snipes fortune and a young man claiming he is the real Buzz Halliburton shows up only to be wolfed down. Whodunnit?

Everything is here from a touch of light romance to a classic "will-reading" scene with fiery red eyes at the window. The laughs never stop and there are plenty of chills. The spoof is energetic and crazy and will keep your audience howling. Simple to stage. Suitable for all groups.

P.S. You don't need a real penguin.

ACT ONE

SETTING: *The sitting room of Gargoyle House, the ancestral home of ALGERNON SNIPES. Everything about the almost medieval room suggests mystery and dark deeds. It's gloomy and forbidding—a place where no sane person would care to stay for any length of time.*

PRIOR TO CURTAIN: *Frightening mood music—like the soundtrack from a classic monster movie. Gradually it fades, to be replaced by the spine-chilling howl of a wolf, or “something” that sounds like a wolf. Whatever it is, it is not “human.”*

AT RISE: *The sitting room is in shadows. Some light comes from the fireplace, where a burning log is about finished. The drapes are drawn apart at the French doors and a shaft of moonlight is glimpsed in the garden, where puffs of fog rise like deadly vapors. Then—thud! Something has leaped into sight at the French doors. We can barely make it out. Is it human? Is it animal? It's bent over as if it were ready to spring. It makes angry canine sounds and holds its hands like paws. Sound of knocking at the front door. The sound echoes. The “THING” at the French door reacts. Again—the knocking.*

MRS. GRIMM'S VOICE (*from OFFSTAGE, DR.*) *Imagine. At this hour. Some people have no respect.*

(MRS. GRIMM enters. Because of the dim light, we can't get a good look at her. She steps to a switch by the portrait and flicks on the wall scones. Alarmed by the light, the "THING" at the French doors throws one arm over its face. However, we manage to get a look. Bushy beard, furry hands, wild hair. There can be no doubt—a WEREWOLF! MRS. GRIMM looks like something from another century. She wears a floor-length black dress. Her hair style is severe. There's a leather belt around her waist and from the belt dangles a ring of keys. Her face is dusted with white powder and her lips are black. This odd makeup gives her a somewhat ghoulish effect. More knocking.)

MRS. GRIMM *(turning)*. Always something. *(Afraid of being seen, the WEREWOLF lopes OFF into the fog. MRS. GRIMM exits UC, into the hallway, and OFF, R. Pause.)*

MESSALINA'S VOICE *(from OFFSTAGE, DL)*.

“Three blind mice, three blind mice,
See how they run! See how they run!
They all ran after the farmer's wife,
Who cut off their tails with a carving knife.
Did you ever see such a sight in your life
As three blind mice.”

(A second passes and LITTLE MESSALINA enters. She is a thoroughly nasty child; mean, willful, uncaring, probably vicious. She wears braids, a pinafore over her dress, black pumps and white ankle socks. Although she projects the image of a ten-year-old, she is obviously much older; maybe 14–16. Our first impression is that she's a mental case. She crosses for DR. Halfway there she

stops, looks into the AUDIENCE. With a hateful expression on her face, she sticks out her tongue, pouts, and continues on and out.)

MRS. GRIMM's VOICE *(approaching from hallway, R).*

The master didn't say anything to me about it.

TARBUCKLE's VOICE. I'm not lying.

MRS. GRIMM's VOICE. No one said you were, Miss Tarbuckle.

(MRS. GRIMM enters, followed by JOAN TARBUCKLE, an executive type, capable and self-assured. She projects an undercurrent of something shady. She carries an attache case. Dressed conservatively but with considerable flair.)

MRS. GRIMM. I wonder why the master wishes to see you?

TARBUCKLE. That's none of your business, Mrs. Grimm.

MRS. GRIMM *(haughtily)*. Whatever you say. *(MRS. GRIMM moves DL. Before she exits, she turns back to TARBUCKLE, scoffs.)* Ha. *(She exits.)*

TARBUCKLE. Old witch.

(Plain to see there is no love lost between the two. TARBUCKLE looks for someplace to set down the attache case. She crosses to the desk and sets it on top. LITTLE MESSALINA enters. She ignores TARBUCKLE, faces AUDIENCE, curtsies.)

LITTLE MESSALINA. "Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who's the fairest one of all?"

(TARBUCKLE pays no attention to the girl. It's as if she weren't even in the room. TARBUCKLE produces a compact mirror and checks her coiffure. This enrages LITTLE MESSALINA.) Didn't you hear me?

TARBUCKLE *(attention on compact mirror)*. Whenever you're around, Little Messalina, one hears you.

LITTLE MESSALINA *(stomping her foot)*. Look at me when you talk to me. *(No response.)* If you don't look at me, I'll hold my breath until I die, die, die.

TARBUCKLE *(not turning)*. Promise?

LITTLE MESSALINA *(threatening)*. You'll be sorry. Just you wait. *(LITTLE MESSALINA holds her breath. Her cheeks puff out. She exits DR, furious.)*

ALGERNON'S VOICE *(from OFFSTAGE, DL)*. I won't be needing you any more this evening, Mrs. Grimm. You may retire.

MRS. GRIMM'S VOICE. Whatever you think best, sir.

ALGERNON'S VOICE *(irritated)*. Go ahead, go ahead. I can manage.

(MRS. GRIMM enters, gives TARBUCKLE another dirty look.)

MRS. GRIMM. Ha. *(Crosses R and out.)*

ALGERNON'S VOICE. Be there in a minute, Tarbuckle.

TARBUCKLE. No hurry, Mr. Snipes. My time is your time. *(She puts away the compact, steps behind the sofa. Looks DL from where ALGERNON'S VOICE continues to be heard.)*

ALGERNON'S VOICE. I'm not as young as I used to be, remember.

TARBUCKLE (*sotto*). How could I forget?

ALGERNON's VOICE. Almost there.

TARBUCKLE. Splendid.

ALGERNON's VOICE. Few more steps.

TARBUCKLE. Bravo.

ALGERNON's VOICE. Here I come.

TARBUCKLE. May I help?

ALGERNON's VOICE (*testy*). Certainly not. What's the matter with you, Tarbuckle? You know better.

(TARBUCKLE gives a resigned sigh and ALGERNON enters. [NOTE: The actor who portrays ALGERNON will also play his identical twin brother COLONEL SNIPES]. ALGERNON bears quite a resemblance to the WEREWOLF we saw briefly at the French doors. Beard, wild hair, no furry hands. He wears a dressing gown and cap, spectacles. He's very arthritic and moves bent over, with the aid of two canes. The effect is of a spider or land crab walking. He moves to the sofa, sits.)

ALGERNON (*sighing*). Made it all by myself.

TARBUCKLE (*forcing a smile*). Indeed you did, sir.

You're a marvel.

ALGERNON. Don't fawn. I can't bear fawning and I can't twist around. (*Points L.*) Stand over here where I can see you. (*TARBUCKLE moves L.*) That's better. (*Suddenly, ALGERNON is all business.*) You've found Boris?

TARBUCKLE. I wish I had good news for you, Mr. Snipes.

ALGERNON. That, I take it, means you *haven't* found my nephew.

TARBUCKLE. As you know, I've had private detectives on the case. I've advertised. Your sister's son has dropped from the face of the earth.

ALGERNON. Don't be absurd. No one "drops from the face of the earth."

TARBUCKLE. I shall, of course, continue to search.

(Cautiously, MRS. GRIMM steps into view, DR, eavesdrops.)

ALGERNON. I had hoped my nephew would take over my affairs.

TARBUCKLE. Are you dissatisfied with my work?

ALGERNON. You've got a surprise coming, Tarbuckle.
(He chuckles unpleasantly.)

TARBUCKLE. Surprise?

ALGERNON *(snapping)*. Where's the will?

TARBUCKLE. Which one?

ALGERNON. You're a smart attorney, Tarbuckle. Don't play dumb.

TARBUCKLE. The second will.

ALGERNON. Of course.

TARBUCKLE. I have it with me.

ALGERNON. What are you waiting for then? *(TARBUCKLE crosses to the attache case, opens it, takes out a legal document. ALGERNON studies her carefully.)*
You seem nervous tonight.

TARBUCKLE. Nervous?

ALGERNON. Don't repeat my words. Give it to me.
(TARBUCKLE crosses back and hands him the will. ALGERNON flips a few pages.)

TARBUCKLE. Since that's the original, I think it should remain in my office.

ALGERNON. I'll keep it with me.

TARBUCKLE (*resigned*). If you insist.

ALGERNON. I do insist. Are you staying?

TARBUCKLE. I'm afraid not. I have an early appointment in Boston. Hushabye is waiting at the dock.

ALGERNON. The sea's rough tonight and the fog is thicker than glue. It must be an inconvenience to visit me on this lonely island.

TARBUCKLE. I look upon it as an adventure.

ALGERNON. Do you? Most people are afraid of the place. An old castle on a lonely island. Sounds downright "spooky." However, you're handsomely paid for any inconvenience. (*He chuckles again and this unnerves TARBUCKLE.*)

TARBUCKLE. If there's nothing further, I'll be on my way.

ALGERNON. Here one moment, gone the next. People nowadays are so impatient. Before you go, tell me—those bonds you had me purchase. How are they doing?

TARBUCKLE. You mean the government bonds or the Moroccan oil stock?

ALGERNON. Both.

TARBUCKLE. They're doing exceptionally well.

ALGERNON. Glad to hear it. I'm afraid Mrs. Grimm has retired. You'll have to show yourself out.

TARBUCKLE. No problem. (*She crosses for attache case, picks it up.*)

ALGERNON. Good night, Tarbuckle.

TARBUCKLE. Good night, Mr. Snipes. (*TARBUCKLE crosses for hallway, exits R.*)

ALGERNON (*to himself*). A surprise coming, Tarbuckle. (*He chuckles. He gives another quick look at the will and*

folds it, puts it beside him. With the aid of his canes, he hoists himself to a standing position. He looks L and R. MRS. GRIMM pulls back so as not to be seen. Thinking he's alone, ALGERNON drops the canes and picks up the will.) Where to hide it? Where to hide it? (He spots the grandfather clock and he smiles.) Father time! How appropriate. (Sprightly, with no suggestion of stiff limbs, he moves to the grandfather clock, turns the key and opens it, tucks the will safely inside. As he does this, MRS. GRIMM observes. ALGERNON closes the clock door and pockets the key.) Safe and snug. (MRS. GRIMM withdraws from view. ALGERNON takes a step toward the portrait, addresses it. He affects a Scottish brogue.) Ah, Sir Harry. There's more than one way to make mischief.

(French doors fling open and the weird young handyman, HUMPHREY, staggers in, dressed in what appear to be rags. He has a hump and his arms seem to dangle from his shoulders, and there's a silly grin on his face. He wears gardening gloves.)

HUMPHREY. Visitor.

ALGERNON. Eh? What? Who? *(Turns.)* Oh, it's only you, Humphrey.

HUMPHREY. Only Humphrey. Hee, hee. Only Humphrey.

ALGERNON. What do you want?

HUMPHREY. Visitor. Lady. Hee, hee.

ALGERNON. That was Tarbuckle. My attorney. She's gone back to the mainland.

HUMPHREY *(finger to one eye)*. Humphrey see things.

ALGERNON. So what? You're always seeing things.

(ALGERNON crosses to HUMPHREY.) Go to bed.

HUMPHREY. Danger.

ALGERNON. Eh?

HUMPHREY. Something outside the house.

ALGERNON. What?

HUMPHREY. It howled.

ALGERNON. Rubbish. If there's any howling to be done around here, I'll do it.

HUMPHREY *(impulsively)*. I don't want harm to come to you. *(With that, he seizes ALGERNON's hand and, slobbering, rubs it against his cheek.)* Friend. You are Humphrey's friend.

ALGERNON. Stop that. You know I hate slobbering. Don't slobber. *(The slobbering gets worse. HUMPHREY uses his teeth.)* And don't bite! Auuuugh! *(ALGERNON whacks at poor HUMPHREY. Whimpering like a kicked dog, HUMPHREY limps into the fog. ALGERNON checks the bite.)* He's got teeth like a ferret. I'll have to watch Humphrey. He's getting worse. *(Suddenly from the grounds, comes the terrifying wolf howl. ALGERNON reacts, faces the French doors.)* Who's out there? Answer me! *(He looks about for some weapon.)* I'll soon put a stop to this. *(He gets the canes and holds them together to make a club.)* Whoever you are, you've met your match in Algernon Snipes! *(Gripping the "club" tightly, he strides through the French doors and OFF. Pause. We hear the sounds of a terrible struggle: howls, barks, growls. Interspersed with this hideousness are the shouts of ALGERNON's VOICE, OFF.)* No, no! Get back! Back, I say! Let go! Monster! Beast! Demon! Auuuuuuuugh! *(Pause.)*

(ALGERNON stumbles back into the room. His hands are to his throat. Breathing heavily, he makes it to sofa and collapses. Alarmed by the ruckus, MRS. GRIMM hurries in from DR. She screams when she sees ALGERNON in his agony.)

MRS. GRIMM. Mr. Snipes, sir. What has happened?

ALGERNON. It's come back. The curse, the curse. The curse of the werewolf! *(He pulls away his hands and we can see that his throat has been savaged. MRS. GRIMM gasps. ALGERNON dies. From the fog, comes another howl...and another. Quickly, the lights fade. End of Scene One.)*

SCENE TWO

AT RISE: *One week later. Day. MRS. GRIMM is cleaning with a feather duster. The French doors are open and the view outside is quite pleasant minus the fog.*

HUSHABYE's VOICE *(from hallway, R).* Hushabye! *(MRS. GRIMM stiffens, frowns. She turns U.)* Hushabye!

(HUSHABYE enters. She's a crusty New Englander, wears a rain slicker and fisherman's hat.)

MRS. GRIMM. There's a knocker on that front door, Hushabye. I wish you'd use it.

HUSHABYE. Why bother? Waste of time. Besides, we're neighbors, ain't we?

MRS. GRIMM. Alas.

HUSHABYE (*removing hat*). Ferried two over from the mainland...

MRS. GRIMM. That would be Miss Tarbuckle and party.

HUSHABYE. Don't know nothing 'bout no "party." She said her name was Pigeon. Connie Pigeon.

MRS. GRIMM. Ah, yes. The new governess for Little Messalina. The agency recommended her highly.

HUSHABYE (*dubious*). This Pigeon girl ever met Little Messalina?

MRS. GRIMM. No.

HUSHABYE. In that case, I don't think she'll be staying. If you ask me it was Little Messalina who murdered Algernon Snipes.

MRS. GRIMM. Nobody asked you.

HUSHABYE. She's got beady eyes and there's something wrong with the way she breathes. That girl is a murderess if ever I saw one. I know the type.

MRS. GRIMM. That's a terrible thing to say about a child.

HUSHABYE. I don't think Little Messalina is a child. I think she's a tall midget—and a mean one.

MRS. GRIMM. You wouldn't talk like that if the master were still alive.

HUSHABYE. I speak my mind.

MRS. GRIMM. That could be most—"unhealthy."

HUSHABYE (*alert*). What's that supposed to mean?

MRS. GRIMM. Enough chatter. Where is Miss Pigeon?

CONNIE'S VOICE. Coming

(CONNIE enters. She is a pretty young woman with a pleasing personality. We like her at once.)
