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Dramatic Publishing



PROMAGEDDON



Comedy
by
Dan Dietz

Premiered at Actors Theatre of Louisville

“SHOW-STEALING” —*leoweekly.com*

“Totally succeeds ... An on-target playlet centering on a quartet of high-schoolers trapped in a basement on prom night while the world burns.” —*Backstage.com*

PROMAGEDDON

Comedy. *By Dan Dietz.* *Cast: 2m., 3w.* When a nuclear apocalypse hits on prom night, there are only four survivors: a cruel and popular cheerleader, a music-obsessed emo boy, the star quarterback, and his socially hopeless geek sister. Trapped in a high-school basement, these four kids are forced to socialize with the very people they wouldn't have been caught dead with just hours earlier. Struggling to figure out their next move, they discover that the mysterious secrets they've each kept hidden from the rest of the world could be the keys to their survival. A hilarious dark comedy about the end of the world—and what comes next. *One int. set. Approximate running time: 25 minutes. Code: PH3.*

Cover: Actors Theatre of Louisville, Louisville, Ky.
(l-r) Jordan Brodess, Havalah Grace, Ellen Haun and
Scott Swayze. Photo: Joe Geinert. Cover design: Susan Carle.

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By
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DAN DIETZ

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(PROMAGEDDON)

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“Commissioned by and premiered at the 2011 Humana Festival
of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville.”

Promageddon premiered at the 2011 Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville. The directors were Amy Attaway and Michael Legg with the following cast:

Gil	Scott Swayze
Theo	Jordan Brodess
Dot.	Havalah Grace
Alexis	Ellen Haun
Kimmy	Dinah Berkeley

PROMAGEDDON

CHARACTERS

GIL	18 years old
THEO	18 years old
DOT.	17 years old
ALEXIS.	18 years old
KIMMY.	17 years old

PROMAGEDDON

(A storage room in a public school basement. ALEXIS and DOT are in formal gowns. ALEXIS wears hers well, DOT significantly less so. THEO and GIL are in tuxedos. GIL stands in front of the door, guarding it. THEO strums an acoustic guitar and sings a sad folk tune.)

THEO.

WENT TO THE DANCE ALONE
TOOK A CHANCE, I SHOULD HAVE STAYED
HOME
NOW I'M TRAPPED IN RIVERSTONE
MMMMM-HMMMMM

(He finishes with a flourish.)

ALEXIS. That's it? The entire song?

THEO. Songlet. They're called "songlets." I'm pushing the envelope of brevity.

ALEXIS. Yeah? Well, try pushing something useful—like him. *(Trying to shove GIL aside.)* Move it, meatbag.

GIL. I told you: nobody's going anywhere 'til I say it's safe.

ALEXIS. You may be the star quarterback up there on the field, Gil, but down here you're not the boss of anything except industrial-sized rolls of toilet paper, anti-

bacterial soap, and...the janitor's half-used can of chewing tobacco EW!

GIL. You're a cheerleader, Alexis. You're supposed to cheer me *on*, not like, *off*.

ALEXIS. If you're so cheerworthy, how come you showed up tonight with your little sister on your arm? Oh wait, that's right, I dumped you for Zander Perkins.

GIL. She couldn't get a date. It's called a favor.

ALEXIS. It's called you got arrested last week for streaking around the neighborhood butt-naked yelling, "Look at me! I'm a freak!" so now me and everybody else at this school want nothing more to do with you.

GIL. You can't crush my spirit. I'm a natural-born leader. And I'm gonna lead us out of this.

THEO. I seriously doubt the playbook for the Riverstone Civets has in any way prepared you for what's on the other side of that door.

GIL. Shut that mopey little face of yours, dude, or so help me I will find the nearest water source and swirly you into oblivion.

LEXIS. Yeah, Theo. We don't know what's out there. It could all be fine. Like a false alarm or something.

THEO. Did you not hear the wailing screams half an hour ago? Feel the earthshattering thuds? Enjoy the delicious buzz of a mild to moderate concussion as the floor slammed up to meet your face?

ALEXIS. Okay, I know you like to think of yourself as some musical poet...

THEO. Folk rock singer-songwriter.

ALEXIS. ...but I'd appreciate a little less hyperbole and a little more "keeping your panties dry."

THEO (*singing with a snarl*).

SHE TOLD ME TO KEEP MY PANTIES DRY

THINKS SHE'S THE QUEEN BITCH OF

RIVERSTONE HIGH

GIL. Enough, you two! We're a team, and we're gonna start acting like one. Now can I get a "Go Civets"?

ALEXIS. Oh, I'll give you a "Go Civets."

DOT. Please.

ALEXIS. In fact, if you don't step two feet to the left and get out of my way...

DOT. Everybody, please.

ALEXIS. ...I'm gonna take my hotly manicured tensies here and claw the words "Go Civets" right into your—

DOT. COULD EVERYBODY PLEASE SHUT UP? (*They stare at her.*) We all could have *died*. We all could have died and we all still could die and we ought to have respect enough for the sledgehammer of that fact to be quiet for five fucking minutes. I mean Christ: THERE WAS A NUCLEAR WAR ON OUR PROM NIGHT. (*Beat.*)

GIL. So what does that mean for like, tux rental?

(*ALEXIS pulls out her cell phone and starts texting.*)

ALEXIS. "Status update: Trapped in basement storage room with ex-bf, emo freak, and a prom dress that appears to have eaten 1990s Janeane Garofalo. Please advise."

DOT. Do you really think anyone's gonna get that?

ALEXIS. Send. (*She stares down at her phone.*) Come on... Come on... (*Nothing. She hurls her phone to the floor. Silence.*)

THEO. God. Nuclear war? It's so... *(with disdain)* retro.

ALEXIS. I know, right? That's our parents' apocalypse.

Can't we have anything of our own?

DOT. Okay. I'm not sure the reality is sinking in with you guys. So I'm gonna try one more time: Up above us, everyone that used to be alive is either dead or dying. The heat from the blast has turned many people into a fine atomic mist and given many more people burns from which they cannot possibly survive. Buildings are now rubble. Water is now steam. The sky is in perpetual twilight. Civilization has ended. *(Pause.)*

ALEXIS. Or... Up above us, people are dancing. Music is thumping. Booze and pot and other amazing things are secretly trickling into the bodies of all our classmates like answered prayers. Zander is looking for me. Squeezing his tightly muscled frame through a crush of velvet and sequins and ill-advised hair. The world is turning. All is rad. And any minute, they're going to announce the king and queen. I have to go. I have to go! *(She wrestles with GIL.)*

DOT. Alexis. We all heard the sirens. We all got the texts. We all saw Mr. Havister stop the band, get up on stage, and make the announcement. And then we all did exactly what he told us not to do: run. There's nothing up there now.

ALEXIS *(stops wrestling and gives a howl of frustration)*.

I was supposed to be queen! Fucking China!

THEO. Well, more accurately, Iran. Then Israel. Then Pakistan. Then India. Then China.

ALEXIS. Then Us. Then fucking Us. *(Pause.)* I'm a cheerleader. I have a 4.0. I have a new boyfriend so hot his tweets burn my retinas. This can't be how it all ends for

me. If I'd have known I was going to spend my last days on earth stuck in a storage room with three of the biggest freaks ever to roam the Riverstone halls, I'd have taken Kimmy Whitman's hand when she jumped off that bridge last year and gone with her, all the way down.

THEO. Wow. Where do I begin? First, if you think being a cheerleader with a hot boyfriend is a guarantee against a bleak and meaningless future, check out our parents' facebook profiles. Second, you only have a 4.0 because pathetic geeks are willing to let you cheat off them in exchange for a couple of lousy sexts. And third, shallow, self-obsessed people like you are the reason Kimmy Whitman jumped in the first place. (*Quiet.*)

DOT. That was the worst day ever. Well, besides...

THEO. Yeah. It really was.

DOT. And that YouTube video? Of the guy finding her?

ALEXIS. He throws up like forever. It was disgusting.

THEO. Not the point, Alexis.

DOT. Seaweed and algae and stuff dripping off of her. Her skin was the color of the moon. And the weirdest expression on her face. Like the tiniest smile. Like she knew something we all didn't.

THEO. Are we ever gonna see the moon again?

GIL. Yes. I'm gonna make sure of that.

ALEXIS. Well I know I'm relieved.

THEO. The point, Alexis, is that none of us would have chosen this as our way to go out. But none of us knew this was going to happen.

GIL. Well... Maybe one of us did.

DOT. Gil. Don't.

GIL. Are you gonna tell them, Dot, or am I?