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# THE DRAMA CLUB

By  
ROBERT INMAN



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Bruce LaRow, Executive Director;  
Allan Poindexter, Artistic Director;  
Lucy Hazlehurst, Literary Manager.

World premier production opened March 2009,  
the McColl Family Theatre, Charlotte, N.C.

*The Drama Club* premiered at Children’s Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte, N.C., March 2009. Directed by Alan Poindexter, the production included the following:

### CAST

Camera Kid . . . . . Jon Parker Douglas  
Emily . . . . . Johanna Jowett  
Tasha . . . . . Shon Wilson  
Flora . . . . . Ericka Ross  
Cassie . . . . . Caroline Bower  
Carlos . . . . . J.R. Adduci  
Max . . . . . Michael Mittman  
Tucker . . . . . Samuel Crawford  
Demetrius . . . . . J. R. Jones  
Marcus . . . . . John Say  
Mr. Brady . . . . . Mark Sutton  
Mr. Pettigrew . . . . . Sidney Horton

### PRODUCTION STAFF

Costume Designer . . . . . Courtney Burt Scott  
Choreographer . . . . . Delia Neil  
Video Projection Design . . . . . Jay Thomas  
Stage Manager . . . . . Elisabeth Purkey  
Properties Designer . . . . . Peter Smeal  
Sound Designer . . . . . Elisheba Ittoop  
Lighting Designer . . . . . David M. Fillmore Jr.  
Production Manager . . . . . Andy Brown  
Technical Director . . . . . Jeff Weeks  
Costume Shop Manager . . . . . Amy Akerblom Holroyd

Literary Manager . . . . . Lucy Hazlehurst  
Master Carpenter . . . . . Andrew Gibbon  
Scenic Artist . . . . . Tim Parati  
Master Electrician . . . . . Barbara Berry  
Audio Engineer . . . . . Van Coble Jr.  
Costume First Hand. . . . . Marina Arconti  
House Carpenter. . . . . Jeremy Holroyd  
Electricians . Paul Setzer, Hallie Gray, Eric Winkenwerder,  
Dan Mulder, Patrick Kirby, Jeremy Holroyd  
Wardrobe Supervisor . . . . . Kehlee Walsh  
Makeup and Wig Stylist . . . . . Barbi VanSchaick  
Production Intern . . . . . Robyn Smith



# THE DRAMA CLUB

## CHARACTERS

MR. PETTIGREW. . . . . black, the principal, new this year

MR. BRADY . . . . . white, the drama teacher and director of  
the Drama Club

THE CAMERA KID. . . . . a student who prefers to look at  
school through a video lens

EMILY . . . . . white, a talented actress struggling with a  
dysfunctional family

TASHA. . . . . black, a new student transferring in from  
Germany

FLORA. . . black, daughter of a strident community activist

CARLOS. . . . . Hispanic, determined to stay out of  
black-white conflict

DEMETRIUS . . . . . black, outspoken, angry

MARCUS . . . . . white, outspoken, angry

### OTHER WHITE STUDENTS

CASSIE

TUCKER

### BLACK STUDENT

MAX

## SETTING

A contemporary high school. It's the beginning of a new school year, and the Drama Club is holding auditions for its fall production. As the acknowledged leader of the club, Emily is sure she will be offered the lead role—until the arrival of an equally talented transfer student named Tasha challenges Emily's position as the best actress in school. A volatile rivalry between the two becomes more than a contest for a part in a play, and tensions between the Caucasian and African-American girls spread from the Drama Club to the entire school. Students wrestle with their peers, their racial prejudices and themselves. Cracks in the social strata reveal the simmering complexity beneath. What will boil over and what will be left...for better or worse? *The Drama Club* explores a modern dilemma that schools continue to face: how do we truly connect with one another and what are the stakes if we fail?

## STAGING

*The Drama Club* makes extensive use of projected images—moving video and/or still photos—to set scenes and provide scene transitions. [If moving video is employed it should only be used for transitions between scenes.] The play can be performed on a bare stage with chairs and a principal's desk.

## ACT ONE

*(IMAGES: High school interior and exterior—hallway crowded with students, teachers; classes in session; athletic activity, students lounging in a courtyard, talking on cell phones, interacting.)*

*Light up on THE CAMERA KID, holding a camcorder, watching the images. Turns to the audience.)*

THE CAMERA KID. My school. Me...well, everybody just calls me the Camera Kid, because I've always got this *(indicates camera)* with me. It's like my right arm and half my brain, maybe more than half. I like seeing things through a lens. I can zoom in, zoom out, move around, stand still. Ignore the crap, focus on things I think are interesting. It's my own version of reality. I tell everybody I'm making a visual record of our school year. Cool. As long as I don't cause any trouble, they pretty much leave me and the camera alone. It's pretty much like any high school, I guess.

*(IMAGES: Characters.)*

THE CAMERA KID *(cont'd)*. The usual characters: the preps, the dorks, the nerds, the jocks, the Goths, the

druggies, and a few like me who defy definition. Gays and straights, blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asians, hybrids.

*(IMAGES: Teachers. Light up on MR. BRADY as he crosses the stage, carrying a briefcase.)*

THE CAMERA KID *(cont'd)*. Teachers—some good, some bad, some bored out of their skulls.

*(IMAGES: Principal's office. Light up on MR. PETTI-GREW as he crosses the stage, brandishing a walkie-talkie.)*

THE CAMERA KID *(cont'd)*. Mr. Pettigrew, the principal. Brand new this year. He likes to say we're a big, diverse family, all working toward the same goals. Truth, beauty, school spirit. *(Sarcastically.)* Really?

*(IMAGES: Lunchroom. Students separated at tables by race, ethnicity, all ignoring one another.)*

*IMAGES: Older students stuffing a younger student in a locker.)*

THE CAMERA KID *(cont'd)*. Family. Yeah, right. Hey, it's high school. We're just trying to get along, get by. Either don't call attention to yourself, or *really* call attention to yourself. Have a few friends, hope you can count on some of 'em. Hang out. Don't take any of this stuff too seriously, or it'll fry your brain.

*(IMAGES: Drama Club room.)*

THE CAMERA KID (*cont'd*). There is one bunch, though...they're kinda different. The Drama Club. They're pretty...what's the word?...eclectic. And they're really into this theatre stuff.

*(Light up on the Drama Club room. Students laughing, chattering. A diverse group: MAX, DEMETRIUS, FLORA—black; EMILY, MARCUS, CASSIE, TUCKER—white; CARLOS—Hispanic. Funky clothes, some with spiked and colored hair, body piercing. Others more mainstream. The atmosphere is laid-back communal, a family of mutual interest—people who are comfortable with one another's differences. MR. BRADY enters, followed by TASHA—black.)*

BRADY. Okay, guys. Let's go to work. (*Indicates TASHA.*) New student. Tasha. Say hi to Tasha.

OTHER STUDENTS. Yo Tasha, etc. (*All acknowledging TASHA except EMILY, who turns away.*)

BRADY. Transferring in from... (*Consults a paper.*)

TASHA. Germany.

BRADY. Make yourself at home. We're finishing our prepared monologues today, final tuneup for auditions Monday for our fall production.

CASSIE. You still haven't said what we're auditioning for.

BRADY. You'll find out Monday.

FLORA. Hope it's not something old and boring.

MARCUS. Like that Greek thing we did last year.

BRADY. Marcus, *Antigone* isn't some "Greek thing."

TUCKER. My dad fell asleep.

BRADY. Well, this one could be another classic...or I may decide on something thoroughly modern.

CARLOS. High School Musical! (*OTHER STUDENTS groan.*)

BRADY. Not on your life. Which leaves a wide field—farce, psychological thriller, deeply moving drama. Iambic pentameter, street slang... Whatever it is, you'll love it because I picked it. What do we say?

STUDENTS. It ain't a democracy.

BRADY. Right. And you'll perform it with skill and gusto, just like you did the "Greek thing" that put Tucker's dad to sleep. Okay... (*Consulting sheet.*) Emily, you're the last monologue. On the boards.

*(EMILY moves to the front. She's a senior, dresses and carries herself with attitude.)*

BRADY (*cont'd*). What do you have for us?

EMILY. *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Act Two, Scene One. The Fairy.

TUCKER. Oooh...a fairy!

EMILY (*gives the group an evil smile*). Laugh and you're dead meat. (*Everybody laughs.*)

BRADY. Emily, we're all yours.

EMILY. Over hill, over dale, / Through bush, through brier, / Over park, over pale, / Through flood, through fire, / I do wander everywhere, / Swifter than the moon's sphere; / And I serve the fairy queen, / To dew her orbs upon the green. / The cowslips tall her pensioners be: / In their gold coats spots you see; / Those be rubies, fairy favours: / In those freckles live their savors. / I must go seek some dewdrops here / And hang a pearl in every cowslips' ear./Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone: / Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

*(EMILY has a fine talent, the best in the club. But this is a tossed-off, half-hearted effort. Restrained applause from the other students.)*

BRADY. Comments? Marcus?

MARCUS. Really good, Emily. I liked it.

CARLOS. Suits your personality.

TUCKER. Yeah, it's lighthearted.

BRADY. Others?

FLORA. I thought you were a little quick with it.

CASSIE. Yeah. Quick.

EMILY. What do you mean?

FLORA. It was like you were rushing through it, just to get it done.

CASSIE. You coulda slowed down a little and played with it. *(EMILY gives a dismissive shake of her head.)*

TUCKER. What the heck, guys, it's a fairy talking. Not a witch or something.

BRADY. Anybody else? *(EMILY starts toward her seat.)*  
Whoa, not so fast. I get the last word. Why did you pick this for your monologue?

EMILY. I don't know, I just liked it. It sounded cool.

BRADY. Lighthearted, like Tucker said. Fits your personality. You were comfortable with it.

EMILY. Sure.

BRADY. What if you had chosen something that made you *uncomfortable*?

EMILY. Such as?

BRADY. Something that *doesn't* fit your personality.  
Know what I mean? *(EMILY shrugs.)* Look, people, what's the whole idea of these monologues?

MAX. Practice.

BRADY. What else?

CASSIE. Get ready for auditions.

MARCUS. Try stuff.

BRADY. Right, Marcus. Try stuff. What you choose for a monologue, and how you perform it...that tells us something about who you are. All this week, I've been looking for risk takers...people who try something that isn't easy or natural. Something that stretches you. Some of you have taken risks. If it worked, great. If not, you tried, you pushed, and maybe next time it *will* work. But you've gotta try. *(Beat.)* Okay, Emily. *(EMILY takes a seat. BRADY starts handing out papers.)* Monday, it's for real. Most of you know the drill. Before you can audition, you have to sign this form. It says you agree to accept any role I give you and play it to the best of your ability. You'll do what's necessary to make the production a success. When you're scheduled to rehearse, you'll be here, no excuses, or you'll be dismissed from the show. *(Beat.)* It's not a class anymore, it's a play. It's the Drama Club. I don't have to be nice. I give you my honest best effort, you give me yours. Questions? Okay. Have a good weekend, be safe, don't do anything stupid.

*(Students start gathering their things, preparing to go.)*

TASHA *(raises her hand)*. Mr. Brady...

BRADY. Yes. Tasha.

TASHA. I have a monologue. I'd like to do it.

BRADY. Tasha, it's your first day. You don't have to do anything.

TASHA. No, really. I've got something ready, something I've been working on for a while.

BRADY. Okay, everybody...settle down.

*(Students reluctantly take seats as TASHA moves to the front, takes a moment to gather herself.)*

TASHA. This is from *The Tempest*, Act Three, Scene One. Miranda. *(Beat.)* I do not know / One of my sex; no woman's face remember, / Save, from my glass, mine own; nor have I seen / More that I may call men than you, good friend, / And my dear father: how features are abroad, / I am skillless of; but, by my modesty, / The jewel in my dower, I would not wish / Any companion in the world but you, / Nor can imagination form a shape, / Beside yourself, to like of. But I prattle / Something too wildly and my father's precepts / I therein do forget. / Do you love me? / I am a fool / To weep at what I am glad of. / At mine unworthiness that dare not offer / What I desire to give, and much less take / What I shall die to want. But this is trifling; / And all the more it seeks to hide itself, / The bigger bulk it shows. Hence, bashful cunning! / And prompt me, plain and holy innocence!

*(Silence. The students realize that she is quite talented. FLORA applauds, then the others follow, except for EMILY.)*

BRADY. Comments?

EMILY. It's just acting.

BRADY. You want to elaborate on that?

EMILY *(to TASHA)*. Well, there's all this little stuff with your voice and your hands and all, but I didn't think you

were really into it. *(A look exchanged between EMILY and TASHA. The seeds of a rivalry being planted.)*

DEMETRIUS. I understood it. A lot of Shakespeare, you don't know what the hell he's talking about. But this...I got it.

EMILY. And what the hell *is* she talking about?

DEMETRIUS. What I heard is, she loves the guy. She doesn't have anybody to compare him with, but she loves him.

EMILY. Well, good for you, Demetrius.

BRADY. Anybody else get what Demetrius did?

FLORA. I did. I thought you brought it to life.

CARLOS. It worked. It was good.

BRADY. Nicely done, Tasha.

TASHA. Thanks. *(Applause.)*

BRADY. We've got an unusual circumstance here. The standard practice is, I choose from my classes to audition for Drama Club productions. Tasha hasn't had a chance to work in class, but I've seen some talent here, and I'd like to give her a chance to audition Monday. Anyone object? *(Silence. The students exchange odd looks. EMILY looks stunned, but she doesn't say anything.)* Tasha, would you like to audition?

TASHA. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Brady. Thanks, everybody.

BRADY. Okay. Come Monday with your game faces on. Let me have those signed forms before you go.

*(The class breaks up, gathering stuff, EMILY and TASHA exchanging another look. The students exit, handing their forms to BRADY. EMILY hangs back until the others are gone.)*

EMILY. What was that all about, Mr. Brady? My monologue.

BRADY. I thought I made it pretty clear, Emily. You didn't take any risks up there. And you gave a pretty half-hearted effort.

EMILY. You're on my case all the time.

BRADY. I'm on everybody's case all the time.

EMILY. Especially mine.

BRADY. Do you think I'm picking on you?

EMILY. Yes.

BRADY. Okay, let's for a moment say that's true. I'm picking on you. Why would I do that?

EMILY. I don't know.

BRADY. Don't you? (*Beat, no response.*) You've got as much raw talent as any student I've ever seen.

EMILY (*sarcastically*). Thanks for the compliment.

BRADY. It's not a compliment, it's a criticism...because I can't for the life of me figure out if you're gonna do anything with it. Emily, theatre can be a brutal business. How many people do you think there are out there with raw talent?

EMILY. Lots, I guess.

BRADY. Not lots, thousands. Tens of thousands. All beating their brains out for a handful of jobs. Most give up eventually. The few who make it have both talent and drive. And some luck. (*Beat.*) Do you know what I saw up there today?

EMILY. I was good, Mr. Brady.

BRADY. "Good" isn't good enough, not for you.

EMILY. What the hell, it was just a monologue.

BRADY. No it wasn't. It was an opportunity. Every time you get on stage, it's an audition for the rest of your life

in theatre. Slack off in a class monologue and you'll do it again when there's a lot on the line. *(Beat.)* Do you understand what I'm saying?

EMILY. Yeah, I guess I do.

BRADY. Anything else?

EMILY *(starts to say something, hangs back)*. No. I guess not.

BRADY. Give me your best Monday. In a couple of months, you'll be trying to convince that scholarship committee. With them, you get one chance to be your best. To be *the* best.

EMILY. I gotta have that scholarship, Mr. Brady. It's the only way...

BRADY. Then do the work. Get your butt in gear, Emily.

*(Light down on BRADY and EMILY.)*

*IMAGES: Kids clearing out lockers for the weekend.*

*(Light up on THE CAMERA KID.)*

THE CAMERA KID. Kids today, we're all about video. Images. Cell phones, camcorders, YouTube, TV, all that stuff. My family was visiting this big aquarium not long ago, and people were so busy taking pictures with their cell phones, they weren't looking at the fish. They missed the real thing. *(Beat, a wry look.)* I'm guilty? Maybe, like, taking pictures of school instead of really being here?

*(IMAGES: School exterior. TASHA enters, crosses nearby.)*

THE CAMERA KID (*cont'd*). Hey.

TASHA. Hey yourself.

THE CAMERA KID. You're new.

TASHA (*warily*). Yeah, what about it?

THE CAMERA KID. Could I interview you?

TASHA. For what?

THE CAMERA KID. I'm doing this video about the school. I want to get everybody in it.

TASHA. Everybody?

THE CAMERA KID. It's gonna take me all year.

TASHA. Couldn't we do this later?

THE CAMERA KID. I might forget. (*He points the camcorder toward TASHA.*)

TASHA (*glancing at her watch*). What do you want to know?

THE CAMERA KID. I heard you're from Germany.

TASHA. Yes.

THE CAMERA KID. *Sprechen ze Deutch?*

TASHA. *Warum fragt diese stummer Junge mich, so viele Fragen?* (Translation: Why is this dumb little boy asking me so many questions?)

THE CAMERA KID. Whoa! How'd you learn to do that?

TASHA. We've been there two years. My dad's in the army.

THE CAMERA KID. They call you guys army brats, right?

TASHA. Yeah. Anyway, I was in an American school, but we studied German pretty intensely, and I spent a lot of time working on it.

THE CAMERA KID. Why? Are you gonna go back and spend your life in Germany?