

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

A Play In One Act

Gross Encounters
of the
Worst Kind

BY
BILL MAJESKI



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

***** 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 fees are given in our current catalogue and are subject to change without notice. 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 anytime it is acted before an audience. All inquiries concerning amateur and stock rights should be addressed to: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

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

©MCMLXXVIII by
BILL MAJESKI

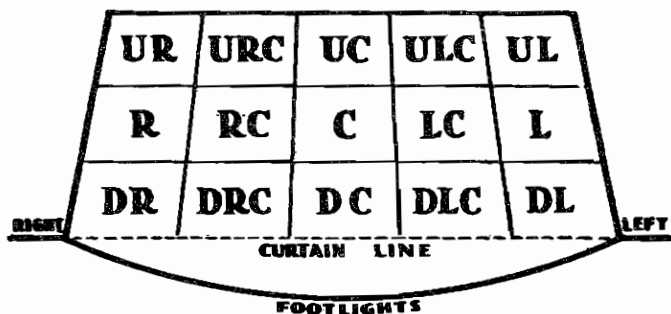
Printed in the United States of America

All Rights Reserved

(GROSS ENCOUNTERS OF THE WORST KIND)

ISBN 0-87129-076-6

CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



STAGE POSITIONS

Upstage means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: UR for *up right*, RC for *right center*, DLC for *down left center*, etc. A territory designated on the stage refers to a general area, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

GROSS ENCOUNTERS OF THE WORST KIND

A One-Act Comedy

For 5 Men, 9 Women, Extras, 4 Male Voices

CHARACTERS

SAM ANDREWS	Father
LOUISE ANDREWS	Mother
TRISH ANDREWS	Their attractive 17-year-old daughter
SQUISH ANDREWS	Younger sister, brash, noisy
SUSQUEHANNA	Grandmother
MRS. FARRAGUT	High school principal
DR. FURBELOW	Board of Ed.'s emotional therapist
C2B4U (Arly)	Visitor from Star Shores
SALLY	Young Waitress
DANNY DAYTON	Big, handsome high school football star
SNIPPY SNYDER	One of his girl friends
CAPTAIN	Stern, authoritarian figure from "out there"
3 ANALYSTS	Either male or female
4 MALE VOICES	

TIME: Present.

PLACE: Any small town, U.S.A.

ACT ONE
Scene One

SETTING: The living room of the ANDREWS home. SAM ANDREWS is sitting in an easy chair reading the evening newspaper. His wife, LOUISE, is knitting, seated across the room.

SAM: (Puts paper down) Look at that. A 67-year-old man is arrested trying to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

LOUISE: (Absently) I wonder how his parents feel.

SAM: No, you don't get it. I mean he's 67. He's doing something.

LOUISE: I thought they stopped him.

SAM: He was trying to do something. He's famous. He did something.

LOUISE: Almost did something.

SAM: I never have. (Looks at paper) Abner Crosscatch, 67 years old.

LOUISE: Why would you want to be arrested?

SAM: I mean I'm 45 and the only time I got my name in the paper was when we got married.

LOUISE: And you know you don't swim all that well.

SAM: And they spelled my name wrong.

LOUISE: Niagara Falls.

SAM: Samovar Andrews. They called me Samovar.

LOUISE: In a barrel yet.

SAM: And another thing. I wish my name wasn't Sam. Lance. That's it. Lance Andrews. Race car driver. (Stands up, walks around, entranced by it all) Rex Andrews. Lion tamer. Fearless. Name on billboards. Can't you see it?

LOUISE: (Putting knitting down, becoming more aware)
What was that?

SAM: Lion tamer. Fearless. Name on billboards.

LOUISE: The fellow who went over the falls?

SAM: You don't listen. Me. I should have been Rex Andrews. Lion tamer. And who am I? Nobody.

LOUISE: Now, now, dear. We all go through that wishful thinking stage.

SAM: And who am I?

LOUISE: A wonderful husband and father of two lovely daughters.

SAM: A nothing. Dull. Drab. Color me gray.

LOUISE: You have a nice home.

SAM: An assistant manager in the hardware section of a discount store.

LOUISE: But it's one of the largest discount stores in the state.

SAM: Abner Crosscatch. 67. (Shouts) Go get 'em, Abner!

(Doorbell rings. SAM heads for it)

SAM: I'll get it. (Calling out) Sorry, we don't want any. (We hear door opening) Oh, hello, Mrs. Farragut. Come in.

(MRS. FARRAGUT enters with SAM. She is a dignified lady who looks the part of a school principal, which is just what she is)

LOUISE: Mrs. Farragut. How nice to see you.

MRS. FARRAGUT: Thought I'd drop in on my way home. Oh...and call me Edna.

LOUISE: Edna.

FARRAGUT: Is Trish home?

LOUISE: Not yet. Is there anything wrong? (Gestures to a seat) Sit down.

FARRAGUT: (Sits down) I just wanted to tell you that Trish is a bright girl.

SAM: Thank you.

FARRAGUT: But...

SAM: Oh-oh...

FARRAGUT: Lately her marks have been falling...she's not completing her homework and most of all...she seems so dreamy...

LOUISE: Don't most 17-year-olds go dreamy?

FARRAGUT: Yes...but this is different. Her mind seems to be in—well, outer space.

LOUISE: She has been moody lately...but I didn't think she was letting down in school.

SAM: We'll have a talk with her.

FARRAGUT: Trish is a lovely girl. I thought surely she was headed for college and a scholarship of some sort. But now...

LOUISE: We appreciate your dropping in like this...Edna.

FARRAGUT: Just wanted to let you know. Don't tell her I was here.

SAM: We won't. And thanks.

(FARRAGUT rises and heads out. LOUISE walks her to the door as SAM flops back in his seat)

SAM: (Closes eyes) Outer space. An astronaut. Gordy Andrews, astronaut.

(LOUISE returns and overhears last remark)

LOUISE: Astronaut?

SAM: (Opens eyes quickly) Nothing. I was thinking of the principal saying that about Trish—being in outer space.

LOUISE: We'll have to talk to her, Sam. Will you?

SAM: I got an idea. Why don't you talk to her?

LOUISE: (Sighs) Me again?

SAM: You're better at it. Just be calm. Don't upset her. You know, be reasonable. But get the message across.

LOUISE: If I'm so much better at talking to her, how come you're giving me advice?

(A peppy young girl bounces into the room, turning to shout at her playmates who aren't seen. This is SUSIE "SQUISH" ANDREWS)

SQUISH: (Shouting) My name is Susie, so call me Susie. Or I'm calling you Fathead! (She flops down on the sofa)

LOUISE: Susie, that's not nice.

SQUISH: Who needs friends?

SAM: Especially fatheaded friends.

LOUISE: Don't encourage her, Sam.

SAM: What did I do? (To SQUISH) Is she really fatheaded?

SQUISH: The fattestheadedest.

LOUISE: When you see her you apologize.

SQUISH: How would you like to be called Squish?

SAM: I don't even like to be called Sam

SQUISH: Just because my older sister is named Trish, they call me Squish. Trish and Squish.

SAM: Sounds like an old vaudeville act.

SQUISH: They can't call me Miss Susan Andrews. All I am to them is Squish. Squish. Squish.

SAM: Did someone step on an orange?

SQUISH: See that? (She gets up and starts out) Why me? Why me? (Dramatic flourish to audience) I seek an identity! (She scampers out)

LOUISE: (Following and calling) Squi...Susie...start packing for our trip to Uncle Stuffy's for the weekend.

SAM: We can leave right after we eat.

LOUISE: I'm all packed.

(SQUISH comes back on at stage left and stands there with her hands on her hips)

SQUISH: Trish, Squish and Uncle Stuffy! What a family!
(She makes a fast exit)

LOUISE: She's a gem.

SAM: (Lovingly) And a joy.

(Door slams and two more women enter. One is pretty 17-year-old TRISH ANDREWS. The other is her grandmother, SUSQUEHANNA STUART. The older woman is limping. They're carrying tennis rackets).

LOUISE: (Noticing her mother's limp) What happened?

TRISH: We were playing tennis.

SUSQUEHANNA: She beat me.

TRISH: And she tried to leap over the net to congratulate me.

LOUISE: Mother! That's foolish.

SUSQUEHANNA: They do it on TV all the time. I would have made it but the wind shifted.

SAM: Great try, Ma. Abner Crosscatch would have been proud of you.

SUSQUEHANNA: Who's Abner Crosscatch?

LOUISE: Some 67-year-old man who wanted to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. They arrested him.

SUSQUEHANNA: Should have let him try. At least it would keep him off the streets.

SAM: Right. And he was king for a day. Famous. Right Trish?

TRISH: (Helping SUSQUEHANNA to a seat) What?

SAM: King for a day. Famous.

TRISH: I'm afraid I wasn't listening. (She sits down away from everyone and stares out the window. There is a momentary uncomfortable silence)

LOUISE: You all right, Trish?

TRISH: Oh sure.

SUSQUEHANNA: She took a couple of short naps on the court, too. I nearly beat her. Can't go into a trance when you play Susquehanna Stuart, Trish.

TRISH: (Giving her a dutiful smile) That's right, Grandma.

LOUISE: (To TRISH, after looking at SAM) Is your homework all done, Trish? We're going up to Uncle Stuff's for the weekend.

TRISH: I don't feel like going.

LOUISE: You're going. They haven't seen you in years.

TRISH: I just don't feel like it. I have reading to do.

SAM: Hey, come on, Trish. He's got that nice cabin. Go fishing...there are some horses we can ride.

TRISH: No...I don't like fishing...I don't like horses...

LOUISE: Come on with us, Trish. There'll be lots of fun and activity.

TRISH: I'm not in the mood for activity.

LOUISE: You can't stay home and sulk.

TRISH: I'm not sulking.

(SQUISH enters, overhears the last remark)

SQUISH: It's boy trouble. I recognize it right away.

TRISH: Go way, Squish.

SUSQUEHANNA: She's worn out from nearly getting beat by me, Squishie.

SQUISH: Squishie? That's even worse.

LOUISE: Did you finish packing?

SQUISH: Yes, I finished packing. (To TRISH) It's Danny Dayton, right?

TRISH: (Ignoring her presence) No.

SAM: Squish, go wash up and get ready for dinner.

SQUISH: If I wash up again I'll look like a wrinkled old prune.

SAM: Go wash and stop when you start looking like a kumquat.

SQUISH: Nobody respects me as an individual. (She stamps her foot and walks out) I'm just a face in the crowd!

LOUISE: Trish, are you sure about this weekend?

TRISH: Yes, mother.

SAM: (Goes to TRISH) Okay, Trish. You stay home and have a nice quiet weekend. We'll say hello to your relatives. Tell them you were busy.

TRISH: (Absently) That's good.

SUSQUEHANNA: Sure, let her stay home with me. I may even trounce her at tennis tomorrow.

LOUISE: (After a pause) All right. It's about time to eat.

(LOUISE starts off. SAM pats TRISH's shoulder and then exits behind his wife)