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Dramatic Publishing



THE BULLY PLAYS

24 Short Plays by

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Lisa Dillman

Richard Dresser

José Cruz González

Stephen Gregg

D.W. Gregory

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Dwayne Hartford

Barry Kornhauser

Trish Lindberg

Brett Neveu

Ernie Nolan

R.N. Sandberg

Geraldine Ann Snyder

Werner Trieschmann

Elizabeth Wong

Y York

Compiled and Edited by Linda Habjan

Foreword by Susan Sugerman, MD, MPH



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(THE BULLY PLAYS)

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Happy Birthday, Heather Higby (I Am Plotting Your Doom)

By Stephen Gregg

CHARACTERS

MERCY NIGHTINGALE a student
CHARLENE..... a student
HEATHER HIGBY..... a student
MONSTER HEATHERa monster (non-speaking)
TEACHERS (two)
A MECHANICAL VOICE (offstage)
SPIES (at least two)
RUMORS, RUMOR HANDLER
PASSERBY STUDENT, SECOND PASSERBY

(LIGHTS up on a cupcake with a candle in it, sitting on a pedestal.)

MERCY *(enters; speaks directly to audience)*. All right, everyone, listen up. My name is Mercy Nightingale. I have brought you here under false pretenses. This is not actually a play. This is more like a trap. Every single person here is going to help me destroy my arch-nemesis, Heather Higby.

SPY ONE *(enters)*. Eight minutes!

MERCY. Thank you.

(MERCY has a stopwatch, which she sets. SPY ONE exits.)

MERCY (*cont'd*). Heather is on her way here even as I speak, so we'll need to move fast. Here is a quick lesson on what we're doing and who we're doing it to. This is Heather Higby.

(MONSTER HEATHER enters. While MERCY introduces her, CHARLENE enters, casually replaces the candle in the cupcake. She exits without MERCY having noticed.)

MERCY (*cont'd*). This is not actually Heather. This is a more appealing stand-in. Note the crazed expression in the eyes. (*MONSTER HEATHER obliges with a crazed expression.*) Note also Heather's claws, useful for stabbing people in the back. (*MONSTER HEATHER reveals claws.*) And of course, the fangs, designed to make sure something unpleasant happens every time she opens her mouth. (*MONSTER HEATHER reveals her horrible fangs.*) Say hello, Heather. (*MONSTER HEATHER snarls loud and long.*) This is a birthday cake. Today, [this day's date] isn't Heather's birthday in the traditional sense. Your birthday isn't only the day you're born. Your birthday is also the day that people start to see you for who you really are.

CHARLENE (*enters*). Excuse me.

MERCY. Yes?

CHARLENE. I hate to be—you jumped the gun. You're on next. After us.

MERCY. No.

CHARLENE. Yeah, you are. Check the program. (*She has a program with her, or borrows one from the audience.*)

My play—it's actually more like performance art—is called *Sparks*. It's scheduled right before yours.

MERCY. Yes, Charlene, and look at the bottom, where it says "Order of plays subject to change."

CHARLENE. Well, my mom has to visit my aunt, who's sick, so I have to get home to watch my little sister.

MERCY. We already started.

CHARLENE. I know.

MERCY. Plus, my timing is crucial. I have a "guest" arriving in six minutes and thirteen seconds.

CHARLENE. Well we can do our plays side by side. You know, sort of alternate scenes.

MERCY. That's not gonna work.

CHARLENE. I already got Mrs. Persimmon's [or an actual teacher's] permission.

MERCY. She's not here.

CHARLENE. She will be if I call her and tell her what you're doing.

MERCY. What's your art thing about?

CHARLENE. Gossip and rumors.

MERCY. All right, that's not an excellent companion piece, theme-wise.

CHARLENE. Actually it sort of is.

MERCY. No.

CHARLENE. I'm taking the pro-position.

MERCY. Pro?

CHARLENE. Uh-huh. I'm all for spreading rumors. I think we should gossip more.

MERCY. You're right, this could work. Spies! (*The SPIES enter.*) These are my spies. Spy One.

SPY ONE (*says his/her first name*). Hi.

MERCY. And Spy Two.

SPY TWO. Hey there. (*Says his/her first name.*) A spy.

MERCY. I need a few extra minutes. Find a way to slow
down Heather.

SPY TWO. Done.