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Dramatic Publishing



Martina: Lost and Found



Comedy/Drama by
R.N.Sandberg

"This is full-out intelligent, original writing
for young and family audiences."

—Sandra Fenichel Asher

Martina: Lost and Found

Comedy/Drama by R. N. Sandberg. Cast: 2 to 3 m., 3 to 4 w., 6 either gender; extras as desired. Martina is an almost teenager who knows her life is simply the worst. Her face is breaking out. Her hair is monstrous. Her life is unfair. Her world is full of pressures, boundaries and contradictions. When she slams the door to her room and yells that she wants everybody to get out of her life, her "wish" is granted. Martina's waking nightmare journey brings her face to face with scary street people, a gang of raucous crows, a mythic make-over witch and other monstrous figures grown large out of her everyday life. Originally conceived and premiered by Metro Theater Company under the title *Frankenstein's Children*, the play is based on interviews with kids 10 to 18 years old and guided by the fact that Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* as a teen who had run away from home to escape to a new better life and that in her book, Frankenstein's "child" is a violent, intelligent, vulnerable, misunderstood monster. *Martina: Lost and Found* is a fantastical, realistic whirlwind about confronting fears and important choices to set a course of growth and responsibility. "A treasure to parents and educators searching for a way to make sense out of the confusion all children face." (*St. Louis Magazine*) *Unit set. Approximate running time: 60 to 70 minutes.*

Cover photo: Metro Theater Company, St. Louis, Mo.
(clockwise from lower left) Crystal Dickinson, Elizabeth G. Watt,
Christopher Mannelli, Nicholas Kryah and Ruth Heyman.
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Martina: Lost and Found

By
R. N. SANDBERG

Commissioned and produced by
Metro Theater Company
as *Frankenstein's Children*



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For Carol

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Martina: Lost and Found was commissioned by the Metro Theater Company of St. Louis, Missouri, as *Frankenstein's Children*. The first touring performance was presented at the St. Louis County Detention Center in January 2002. The first public performance was presented in March 2002 at the Missouri Historical Society. Directed by Carol North, the Metro production included the following artists:

Crystal Dickinson	Martina
Ruth Heyman	Martina's Mom, Victor Frankenstein, Crow Lady, Zero
Nicholas Kryah	Mr. D'Andrey, The Creature
Christopher Mannelli	Bad Boy, La Sueñaba, One
Elizabeth G. Watt	Voodoo Girl, Street Kid, One Junior
Artistic Director	Carol North
Managing Director	Joan Briccetti
Resident Artist/Technical Director	Nicholas Kryah
Music/Sound Design	Michael Keck
Set Design	Nicholas Kryah
Costume Design	Ruth Hanson
Assistant Director/Dramaturg	Emily Petkewich
Lighting Design/Stage Manager	Shelly Osburn

Martina: Lost and Found

A Play in One Act

CHARACTERS

MARTINA an almost-teenage girl
MARIA her mom
BAD BOY a combative monster
VOODOO GIRL a controlling monster
VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN a parental monster
THE CREATURE an ugly monster
LA SUEÑABA a gorgeous monster
MR. D a pedagogical monster
THE CROW LADY a gentle monster
STREET KID a homeless monster
ONE a pack monster
ONE JR a younger pack monster
ZERO an even younger pack monster

Though the play can be performed by 13 actors, ideally MARIA, VICTOR and CROW LADY should be played by the same actress.

It is possible to add extras to the street, woods and classroom scenes.

To fully capture Martina's nightmare world, a production may want to perform the play with 5 actors doubled as follows:

MARTINA
BAD BOY/LA SUEÑABA/ZERO
VOODOO GIRL/STREET KID/ONE JR
CREATURE/MR. D
MARIA/VICTOR/CROW LADY/ONE

SETTING

Martina's room—and world.

NOTE: All set pieces and props should be part of Martina's room from the top of the play. The "wind" "blows" these items off, on, or into different configurations to create the various settings.

Martina: Lost and Found

SCENE 1: Home

(MARTINA's room. A bed. A chair. A closet door. A huge TV. MARTINA, a hat pulled tightly over her head, stomps into the room.)

MARTINA. Stupid, stupid, stupid. *(She throws herself on her bed. She pounds on her pillow.)* Ahhhhh! *(She stops.)* Oh no. *(She takes a small, stuffed beanbag frog from under her pillow. She hugs it tightly.)* Oh, Shelley, I'm sorry. I forgot you were there. *(She kisses the frog.)* Are you all right? *(She has the frog kiss her back.)* That's nice. You're the only one who isn't a jerk. I wish we could make them all just disappear and it was just you and me and we were living in some beautiful place and everything was clean and we were rich and there was nothing to do all day but—sleep. *(Her voice gets very quiet.)* I'm glad you weren't at school today. I'm not goin' tomorrow. I'm not ever goin' again. *(Distant thunder. The phone rings.)* That's Mr. D, I know it. He's gonna tell mom. I don't care. It's not my fault. He's a dumb teacher. And those two so-called friends of mine are jerks. All the time, she's tryin' to get in my head and he's pushin' me. If it were you, you'd kick 'em, right? Mr. D, too. You'd protect yourself. Get them before they

get you. I mean, if you were out in the woods, you wouldn't let some bird gobble you up. You'd smash it as hard as you could. *(She laughs as she repeatedly smashes the frog into her. Closer thunder.)*

MARIA *(off)*. Martina?

MARTINA. Oh no.

MARIA *(off)*. Martina, I want to talk to you!

(MARTINA grabs the remote, flicks on the TV. Thunder and horror movie music from the TV as MARIA enters.)

MARIA. Martina—

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN *(on TV)*. Listen to me, it is I, Victor Frankenstein, scientist and student of life.

MARIA. Turn that off.

VICTOR. I created you.

MARIA. It's going to give you nightmares.

VICTOR. I brought you into this world.

MARIA. Tina, we need to talk.

VICTOR. I made you good!

MARIA. Martina!

VICTOR. You are glorious! *(MARIA grabs the remote.)*
My beautiful, beautiful child!

MARIA *(flicking off the TV)*. Why do you watch that stuff?!

MARTINA. It's Frankenstein. It's scary. Just like you.

MARIA. What?

MARTINA. Nothing.

MARIA *(takes a deep breath, calming herself)*. Martina, what's wrong?

MARTINA. Who was the phone?

MARIA. What's going on with you?

MARTINA. There's nothing going on.

MARIA. You seem like there's some problem.

MARTINA. Why do you always say that? Just 'cause you see things at the hospital doesn't mean there's something wrong with me. There's nothing wrong.

MARIA. Then why did you stomp off and slam the door?
It's like you turn into a monster sometimes.

MARTINA. Leave me alone.

MARIA. Did something happen in school today?

MARTINA. No.

MARIA. Did something happen walking home?

MARTINA. Leave me alone!

MARIA. Maybe, you should just go to bed.

MARTINA. I'll go to bed when I'm ready.

MARIA. You need to calm down.

MARTINA. I don't.

MARIA. You need to—

MARTINA. I don't, I don't, I don't! (*A huge crash of thunder.*) I'm not a baby anymore. I'll sleep when I want. You can't scare me with some story about a woman who'll drown me if I don't go to bed. (*The wind starts to blow.*)

MARIA. Martina, Mr. D'Andrey called.

MARTINA. I knew it!

MARIA. He's at the end of his rope, Martina. He told me you attacked someone.

MARTINA. I didn't.

MARIA. He said you flew into a rage—

MARTINA. I didn't.

MARIA. Completely lost control.

MARTINA. I didn't! I didn't do anything! Why is everyone always pickin' on me?! Everybody! None of you

understand! It's 'cause you're old and stupid! There's nothing wrong with me! Nothing! You're the monsters! You're the freaks! Just get away from me! Get out! Get out of my life! Get out!! Get out!! Get out!!!

(Wind swirls through the room as MARTINA throws a massive tantrum, knocking over and tossing things every which way. Furniture even seems to move by itself. It's complete chaos. At the height of the tantrum, huge thunder crashes and the power goes off. Pause. MARTINA's rage is spent. She tries to catch her breath. She looks around the room, surveying the damage.)

MARTINA. Mom? Mom?

(She's nowhere in sight. The TV flicks on. Eerie music. VICTOR's voice is female.)

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN *(on TV)*. Listen to me, it is I, Victor Frankenstein, scientist and student of life.

MARTINA *(staring at the TV)*. Mom?

VICTOR. I created you.

MARTINA. You're on TV?

VICTOR. I brought you into this world.

MARTINA. How can you be on TV?

VICTOR. I made you good.

MARTINA. This is totally nuts. *(Calling for her.)* Mo-om?

VICTOR. You are glorious!

MARTINA *(grabs the remote and tries to control the TV to no effect)*. Stop it.

VICTOR. My beautiful, beautiful child!

MARTINA. Mom!

VICTOR. You need not be frightened. I shall not hurt you.

MARTINA. Are you talking to me?

VICTOR. Yes. I—shall—not—hurt— you.

MARTINA. Shut up! (*The TV flicks off.*) How can the TV be talkin' to me? How can my mom be on TV turned into Dr. Frankenstein? No, I must have imagined it. I'm in my room. Everything's okay. (*The closet door slowly starts to open.*) Oh no. My closet door's opening by itself. (*Louder squeaking.*) I'm goin' crazy. (*She pulls the blanket over her head.*) Leave me alone.

(*BAD BOY emerges from the closet. He bangs into MARTINA. She screams.*)

MARTINA. It's you.

BAD BOY. Who were you expecting, Frankenstein's monster?

MARTINA. Look, I don't know how you're here. I don't know if you're a ghost or in my mind or what. But I just want to be left alone, okay? I'll see you in school tomorrow, okay?

BAD BOY. You broke my arm, today.

MARTINA. I didn't break your arm.

BAD BOY. You wanted to.

MARTINA. I just pushed you down.

BAD BOY. You're ugly. (*He tries to grab her hat.*)

MARTINA (*holding it on tightly*). Don't.

BAD BOY. 'Fraid we'll see your hair?

MARTINA. Why do you have to hassle me?

BAD BOY. 'Cause you're stupid.

MARTINA. This is my room. I should be safe here. Please, please, leave me alone.

BAD BOY (*bangs into her*). No can do. The Bad Boy's gotta get you. Gotta get the goody, goody girl. (*He bangs into her.*)

MARTINA. I'm not a goody girl.

BAD BOY. You think you are. I gotta show you the truth. (*He bangs into her.*)

MARTINA. Stop it! (*She grabs him and flings him hard across the room. He goes sprawling. She's horrified at what she's done.*) This is today all over again.

BAD BOY. See? See, Teeny Tina? You're angry, mean and—

(*VOODOO GIRL pops out from under the bed. She wears designer jeans, a fashionable top and carries a metal lunchbox.*)

VOODOO GIRL. Bad! (*MARTINA screams. BAD BOY screams. VODOO GIRL screams, then laughs.*) And I'm the one who made her bad.

MARTINA. You're here, too.

VOODOO GIRL. Best friends.

MARTINA. If you were my friend, you wouldn't be here. You'd leave me alone. You wouldn't call me bad. I'm not bad.

BAD BOY. You're not good.

VOODOO GIRL. And I'm gonna make you even badder. Look. (*She takes a small doll from her lunchbox. She begins a ritual with the doll.*) My spell. You am she. You am she and I the power.

MARTINA. What?

VOODOO GIRL. You am she, I the power, now you be you be mine.

MARTINA. What are you doin'?

VOODOO GIRL (*doll voice*). No, no, no.

MARTINA. You're crazy.

VOODOO GIRL (*ritual voice*). Yeh-es, I the power, you
be you be mine. Do that do that evil.

MARTINA. I'm not scared.

VOODOO GIRL. The evil's deep inside you and you know
it. I'm gonna make it bubble right out.

BAD BOY (*bumps MARTINA*). Gonna break my other
arm, right Teeny?

MARTINA. Why are you guys doin' this?

VOODOO GIRL. Do that do that evil.

MARTINA. I just wanna go to sleep. I just wanna do the
right thing.

BAD BOY. Like this? (*He bumps her again, extra hard.*)

VOODOO GIRL. Hit him, Teen. Show your power. That's
the right thing.

BAD BOY. Come on, Teeny. It'll feel good.

MARTINA. I could do it.

BAD BOY. Hit me.

MARTINA. I could drop you easy.

VOODOO GIRL. He makes you mad.

MARTINA. I could hurt him.

VOODOO GIRL. Do that do that do that.

MARTINA. But I—

BAD BOY. Do it.

VOODOO GIRL. Break de break de arm.

MARTINA. I—

BAD BOY. Do it. Do it!

MARTINA. No! I don't wanna do it again! Help me!
Someone stop me!

(VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN pops out of the TV.)

VICTOR. You need no help!

(The THREE KIDS freeze.)

MARTINA. What?!

VICTOR. Yes, it is I, Victor Frankenstein, scientist and student of life.

(BAD BOY and VOODOO GIRL scream and escape into the closet, slamming the door behind them.)

MARTINA. You're not Victor Frankenstein. You're my mother dressed up like him trying to drive me crazy.

VICTOR. Martina, listen to me.

MARTINA. This is totally out of control.

VICTOR. You did not transgress.

MARTINA. All I want is to be left alone.

VICTOR. You did not do violence to his arm.

MARTINA. To have my room back to myself.

VICTOR. You are good.

MARTINA. What?

VICTOR. So very, very good.

MARTINA. I am?

VICTOR. You recognized your destructive passion.

MARTINA. I wanted to hurt them both.

VICTOR. No, no, no. You wanted to be gentle. That is why you called for me. You are pure and good. I know because—I created you.

MARTINA. What?

VICTOR. I, Dr. Victor Frankenstein, am your creator. I am the fountain of your life.

MARTINA. You're crazy is what you are.

VICTOR. Just like all the others! Doubters of my powers! Disbelievers in the possibilities of the world! Gaze upon this and tell me I cannot create life.

(The CREATURE enters. He has spiked hair and a dog collar around his neck. Pierces stick out of his face like bolts. He walks with an awkward gait and speaks with a garbled, almost incomprehensible speech. He carries some belts and other leather goods. He's unaware of MARTINA and VICTOR and tries to sell his belts to imaginary customers.)

CREATURE. U uhn oo eye? [You want to buy?]

MARTINA. I know him.

CREATURE. Iz ood suf. [It's good stuff.]

MARTINA. He's that ugly punk who's always hassling people on the street.

CREATURE. O ook, iz ee-lee ood suf. [No look, it's really good stuff.] *(He exits.)*

MARTINA. People say he's crazy, that he burned down his family's house, that he, he—does stuff to kids.

VICTOR. He is a monster. And I created him. I created an unbearable, hideous horror. But that is all in the past, because now, now I have created you. I have created perfection.

MARTINA. I'm not perfect.

VICTOR. You are wondrous, child. Extraordinary. Magnificent.

MARTINA. Really? I'm all that?

VICTOR. Yes. And I want the whole world to see.

MARTINA. The whole world, wow.

VICTOR. But first, we must go to class. I must show my professor what I have achieved.

MARTINA. You want me to go to school?

VICTOR. I must prove to him that it is possible to create a child like you, a child of pure goodness.

MARTINA. I was in a fight today. They're gonna suspend me, I think.

VICTOR. Do not be afraid, child.

MARTINA. I'm not afraid.

VICTOR. We will go together. They will see how glorious you are.

MARTINA. Glorious?

VICTOR. Glorious!

MARTINA. That is so awesome.

VICTOR. Indeed.

MARTINA. All right. I'll give it a try. I'll go to school. But it's not gonna be easy. You don't know all the stuff I gotta deal with. Even just to walk out the door. *(She looks in the mirror. She lifts her hat a little, trying to peek under.)* Like this. Come on, be good today. Please. *(She tries to slowly remove her hat. Her hair seems to explode out, two tons of frizz practically knocking the hat out of her hands.)*

VICTOR. Aaahh! Gorgon, Medusa! Hideous, hideous hair! *(He flees.)*

(MARTINA tries to hold back her tears. She clutches her frog.)

MARTINA. Oh, Shelley. How can I be so ugly? Why does everybody think I'm so awful?

(She sobs. Overly dramatic music. The closet door opens. A woman [LA SUEÑABA] in a fiesta dress is there. Gorgeous. Huge, perfect hair.)

LA SUEÑABA. I don't think you're awful, *chica*. I just think you're a girl who don't know what to do. And crying ain't goin' to help, *bebé*. It just goin' to give you those bloodshot eyes.

MARTINA. I don't care.

LA SUEÑABA. You got to care.

MARTINA. Wait a minute. I don't know you. What are you doin' here? Why does everyone keep comin' into my room? Why don't you all just leave me alone?

LA SUEÑABA. 'Cause your hair is a monster, *chica*. It devours your head, then your head devours your mind and your mind devours your life. Look at me. You need to do what I do. See? Wouldn't you like to look like this? *(Glamorous pose.)* La Sueñaba.

MARTINA. La Sueñaba?

LA SUEÑABA. Lady of Your Dreams.

MARTINA. My mother told me about you. You drown little girls in the river.

LA SUEÑABA. Yes—but big girls I make beautiful forever. Come to me, *bebé*. Come to me and find out.

MARTINA. You're crazier than I am.

LA SUEÑABA. Yes. *(She makes a sound like she's breathing fire.)* But I look so good. That's your problem, you know? If you looked like me, you wouldn't be so unhappy. You wouldn't be so nasty all the time.

MARTINA. I'm not nasty.

LA SUEÑABA. You wanna get them all, don't you? That Bad Boy, your doll friend, your hospital mother and monster teacher? Come here, *cariña*, I'm gonna help you. I'm gonna make you one big, hot girl.

MARTINA. Yeah?

LA SUEÑABA. When I get through with you—everybody's gonna love you. Nobody's gonna tell you when to go to bed. When to go to school. Nothin'. They just gonna say—ai yai yaiiii!

MARTINA. Ai yai yaiiii! All right!

LA SUEÑABA. Sit, sit, sit.

(MARTINA sits on the bed. LA SUEÑABA puts the blanket over her like a cloth in a salon and pulls her kit from under the bed. During the following, LA SUEÑABA gives MARTINA a "makeover.")

LA SUEÑABA. This won't take no time at all. Just got to bring out the natural highlights in your skin and get rid of the frizz in your hair. You got everything you need, little one. You got a big voice, sharp words, shiny teeth. Nobody's gonna mess with you. They try, just forget about it, right?

MARTINA. Yeah, I'll bite 'em right where it hurts. *(She bites the air and laughs.)*

LA SUEÑABA. You're a handful. A bad, bad girl. *Cuidado, mami!*

MARTINA. Are you makin' me look better?

LA SUEÑABA. Whata you think?

MARTINA. Lemme see.

LA SUEÑABA. Just a minute.

MARTINA. No, come on, I wanna see.

LA SUEÑABA. Wait, wait, wait.

MARTINA. Am I good now?

LA SUEÑABA. Miss Thing! You stop. Just let me put these last—there. Now you look.

MARTINA. Hmm.

LA SUEÑABA. Soo baaaddd.

MARTINA. Yeah?

LA SUEÑABA. Oh, yeah.

MARTINA. I feel bad.

LA SUEÑABA. You are baaaddd.

MARTINA. Good.

LA SUEÑABA. So now you ready.

MARTINA. For what?

LA SUEÑABA. To strut your stuff. To go where the wind blows. *(There's a knock on the closet door.)* Oh, yes. Gawhead, *chica*, open it. You ready.

(MARTINA opens the door. A man is there.)

MARTINA. Mr. D?

MR. D. Oh, my goodness.

MARTINA. Mr. D'Andrey, I—

MR. D. You are so naughty.

LA SUEÑABA. Oh yeah, she sizzlin'. So get out the way, *paco*.

MR. D. I don't think so. I'm taking her to school.

LA SUEÑABA. Not this one.

MR. D. This one most of all. She was a bad girl. She hurt someone. She's got to make up for it.

LA SUEÑABA. That right? You gonna let this burro tell you what to do, *bebé*?

MARTINA. You just called him a burro.

LA SUEÑABA. Lay him out and let's fly.

MR. D. Fly? That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. How could you possibly fly?

MARTINA. I don't know.

LA SUEÑABA. Oh, I see, you don't wanna ride the wind. Maybe that's 'cause you scared, scared you gonna fall. Well, you gonna fall whether you fly or not, *bebé*. You gonna land flat on your salsa-covered pancake face just like everybody else.

MARTINA. Why are you being so mean? I thought you were helping me.

LA SUEÑABA. Nobody can help you, selfish. Go ahead. Do what you want, go with this burro, go to school.

MR. D. And good advice that is. Your test scores, your quizzes, your temper, everything needs improving.

LA SUEÑABA. Sure, that's no surprise looking like she do.

MARTINA. Lookin' like what? You said I looked good.

LA SUEÑABA. No, I said you looked baaadd.

MARTINA. But that's good.

LA SUEÑABA. Yeah, if you like little things all over your face.

MARTINA. Little things?

LA SUEÑABA. Yeah, like that spot, that pimple, that zit, that red and white Popocatepetl mountain that's growin' and growin', about to erupt all over your face. You want me to squeeze it and watch the lava run?

MARTINA. Stop it! I hate you!

MR. D. Why do you associate with degenerates like this? That's precisely why you're doing so poorly.

MARTINA. Why do you all keep rippin' on me?!

MR. D. You know, young lady, if you had a better attitude,

LA SUEÑABA. And you weren't so *fea*

MR. D. If you completed your homework on time,

LA SUEÑABA. With your monster hair

MR. D. If you studied for tests,

LA SUEÑABA. And volcano skin

MR. D. And if you didn't dress like such a hoodlum—

MARTINA. Aaahhhh! (*She throws another tantrum. The wind begins to blow.*)

MR. D. You've got to keep your room clean.

LA SUEÑABA. 'Cause everybody love to look at you.

MR. D. Hang up your clothes.

LA SUEÑABA. Love you like a diet.

MR. D. Get rid of that make-up.

LA SUEÑABA. You make them sick to their stomach.

MR. D. And watch only educational TV.

LA SUEÑABA. They lose so much weight.

MR. D. You need to act like a civilized human being.

MARTINA. Get out! Get out, both of you! This is my room! My own room!

MR. D. I am trying to help you.

MARTINA. I don't care.

LA SUEÑABA. 'Cause you so scared.

MARTINA. I'm not! I'm not, I'm not, I'm not! I'm gettin' away from you. Gettin' outa here. I'm leavin'.

LA SUEÑABA. Good! Now, you gonna see!

MARTINA. Get outa my way.

MR. D. You don't have to run, Martina.

MARTINA. Let me go.

LA SUEÑABA. Now you doin' it.

(*The wind is blowing MR. D and SUEÑABA around.*)

MR. D. Come with me to school.

MARTINA. I'm out!!

LA SUEÑABA (*as she's blown off*). Bye, bye, pimple baby angel face!

MARTINA. I'm doin' what I want!

MR. D (*as he's blown off*). I won't give up on you!

MARTINA. What I want! Ha hah! (*She grabs her hat and stuffs her hair in as best she can. The wind blows the rest of her room away.*) Yeah!! Where the wind blows!! I'm free!! Free!! (*She is out in the elements.*)
