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A pink heart with a halo and wings is centered in the background. The wings are white with pink outlines, and the halo is a simple pink ring. The heart is a solid pink color.

Credit Check:

A Collection of Short Plays

**Comedy
by
Eddie Zipperer**

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A Collection of Short Plays

Comedy. By Eddie Zipperer. Cast: 13m., 8w., 3 either gender. May be doubled to as few as 3m., 2w., 3 either gender. Atlas, arguing monkeys, a real estate angel, Sherlock Holmes, and even a golfing God show up in this surreal collection of short comedies. Weight of the World: Atlas discovers the world may not need as much help as he thought. The Banana Trial: JoJo and Millie, two laboratory orangutans, attempt to solve a problem in hopes of receiving a banana. Wine, Candles & Anthrax: Drew is uncomfortable having to go to his unstable ex-girlfriend's house to retrieve his iPod, and he realizes he was right to be afraid when an anthrax scare causes the two to be trapped in quarantine together. Heroes of Literature & the Caveman: In hopes of impressing Joanne, Barry, a literary snob, throws a party where everyone must be in character as a character from literature. Veronica's Test of Worthiness: Billy tries to cut his girlfriend loose by introducing her to his dysfunctional family. Credit Check: While a married couple checks out real estate in the afterlife, they argue over whether or not death is the right time to part. Simple sets. Approximate running time: 60 minutes. Code: CN2.

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Credit Check: A Collection of Short Plays

By
EDDIE ZIPPERER



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EDDIE ZIPPERER

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(CREDIT CHECK: A COLLECTION OF SHORT PLAYS)

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Credit Check: A Collection of Short Plays

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Weight of the World

Weight of the World was produced at The ArtsCenter in Carrboro, N.C., by the following artists in 2011:

Director Sylvia Mallory
Atlas Geraud Staton
Athena Ros Schwartz
Zeus Matt Garner

The show was produced at the Secret Rose Theatre in North Hollywood, Calif., by the following artists in 2011:

Director Ayman Samman
Atlas Josh Polizzi
Athena Bati Parnass
Zeus Peter Nikkos

Weight of the World

CHARACTERS:

ATLAS a large man carrying the world

ATHENA goddess of wisdom. Looks like a librarian

ZEUS king of the gods

SCENE: An empty stage.

TIME: Whenever.

SETTING: *A bare stage with a large pile of books.*

AT RISE: *ATLAS is onstage. On his shoulders, he holds a giant globe. The bigger the better. He looks like he could crumple under its weight, but he doesn't. He's still for a moment, and then he begins to scrunch his face. He does this for a few seconds, then...*

ATLAS. Nose itch! NOSE ITCH!

(ATHENA enters. She wears glasses and is carrying a book. She looks like a librarian. A brainy lady.)

ATLAS (*cont'd*). Thank Zeus you're here!

ATHENA. What is it?

ATLAS. Itchy nose. (*She scratches it.*) Thank you.

ATHENA. Of course.

ATLAS. Whenever I need another soul, it's always you that appears.

ATHENA. How are your knees?

ATLAS. Still killing me.

ATHENA. And your back?

ATLAS. Not good.

ATHENA. Before I read to you today, should I get a heating pad?

ATLAS. No. A lesser man might need a heating pad. But me, I'm of another breed. Some men aren't meant for a great destiny, but look at these muscles. (*She looks at his arms and nods.*) And my leg muscles too. (*She looks and nods.*) Yes, it's clear that with muscles like these—did you see them? I was meant to carry heavier burdens than ordinary men.

ATHENA (*thinking he's done*). I—

ATLAS. An ordinary man may feel stressed by his mortal responsibilities. He may think, "Wow. I feel like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders." But he does not know how that feels.

ATHENA. It looks very heavy.

ATLAS. It's beyond heavy, it's...very heavy.

ATHENA. Can I see? (*She moves like she's going to touch the world and test it's heaviness.*)

ATLAS. No! It is my burden, and I wouldn't dream of ...making you have to... What are you reading?

ATHENA. Oh, this? This is the most wonderful little book I found.

ATLAS. What's it called?

ATHENA. It's called *The Application of Quantum Mechanics and Astrophysics to Interstellar Bodies*. And it's sooo good.

ATLAS. I know.

ATHENA. You've read it?

ATLAS. A long time ago.

ATHENA. What was your favorite part?

ATLAS. I liked it all equally.

ATHENA. But if you had to pick one.

ATLAS. Well, it's at the end, and I don't want to ruin the ending for you.

ATHENA. Oh, good point! Hold on! *(She turns her attention back to the book and begins reading the rest of it. She reads about a page a second. When she has finished the book, she sighs and clutches it to her chest as though it were a beautiful love story.)* Oh my! I can see why that was your favorite. Isn't the universe amazing!

ATLAS. Sure is.

ATHENA. Everything seems so random and chaotic, you know?

ATLAS. Totally. The universe is so random and chaotic.

ATHENA. But it's not! There are all these beautiful, simple scientific principles keeping everything in order.

ATLAS. Yeah I know. I didn't finish. I was going to say, "The universe is so random and chaotic, until you read that book and learn all those sciency doodads and what-not." Then you're like, "Hey it's not random and chaotic." Right?

ATHENA. Exactly. So do you think it's possible?

ATLAS. What?

ATHENA. For photons to be quantized, silly? Like it says at the end of the book.

ATLAS. Totally.

ATHENA. But how?

ATLAS. Well, it's pretty complicated. I'm not sure you'd be able to follow. Photons are like...you said photons, right.

ATHENA. Yes.

ATLAS. Photons are like...

(ZEUS enters.)

ATLAS *(cont'd)*. *Holy Deus ex machina*, Zeus is here!

ZEUS. Atlas? What are you still doing here? I told you—

ATLAS. Zeus! Just the god I was wanting to speak to.

Could you excuse us for a few minutes, Athena?

ATHENA. Of course. Just let me grab a new book. *(She puts her quantum mechanics book back on the stack and then joyfully searches for another. She finds one that excites her.) Advanced Concepts in Discrete Mathematics!* How have I not read this yet? *(She exits reading the book. She's through about ten pages of it by the time she's made it across the stage.)*

ATHENA *(laughing)*. That's complexity class N-P for you. *(She exits.)*

ZEUS. What are you still doing here? I told you, you can go.

ATLAS. Explain it to me one more time.

ZEUS. Okay, but this is the last time.

ATLAS. I just want to be sure I understand.

ZEUS. You may not be capable of understanding.

ATLAS. Please. Have you seen my muscles?

(ZEUS pulls out a flip chart full of extremely simplistic illustrations. He flips through it as he explains.)

ZEUS. Right. Well, on Earth, we have what's called gravity which is caused by the spinning of the Earth.

ATLAS. It's not spinning.

ZEUS. It is, but so slowly you don't notice.

ATLAS. Are you certain?

ZEUS. A hundred percent.

ATLAS. That explains the rash on my back.

ZEUS. Gravity forces everything toward the ground. You drop something it goes straight down.

ATLAS. So that's why I'm given this strenuous destiny. Oh heavy burden!

ZEUS. But we're not on Earth.

ATLAS. Exactly. Because if we were, there would be no one holding it up, and the whole thing would drop into the underworld and we'd all be dead. Without me, there can be no life.

ZEUS. No, we're not on Earth. Which means there's no gravity caused by the Earth spinning. Which means if you move—

ATLAS. We're all dead.

ZEUS. No.

ATLAS. We'll crash right into the sun.

ZEUS. No! It'll just float there.

ATLAS. This is a test. You're testing my perseverance. Don't worry. These muscles shall never let go of their burden!

ZEUS. It's not a test and it's not a burden. Just step away.

ATLAS. I mustn't.

ZEUS. Okay. (*ZEUS walks behind him.*) I suppose you " know what you're— (*ZEUS shocks him with his staff.*)"

ATLAS. Ow. (*He jumps away and puts both hands on his butt.*) That really— (*ATLAS looks at the Earth. Floating there on its own. He walks all the way around it. He's mystified.*) It's...a miracle."

ZEUS. No it's not."

ATLAS. It's like I held it with such strength that even if I" step away for a moment...my...residual strength..." seems to...keep it in the air. Could it be possible?"

ZEUS. No. But the gravity thing I explained to you four" times is more than possible. It's indisputable law."

(*ATLAS quickly retakes his place underneath the world.*)"

ZEUS (*cont'd*). What are you doing?"

ATLAS. You didn't see it sort of teeter?"

ZEUS. No."

ATLAS. It was about to fall."

ZEUS. No it wasn't."

ATLAS. We have to face the truth. I'm all that stands be-" tween the Earth and certain doom."

ZEUS. Atlas. I know you know. I saw you let go twice" yesterday."

ATLAS. If I'm not really holding this up how do you ex-" plain the pain in my knees? Oh the pain! It's like they" may give out at any moment, but I mustn't allow that."

ZEUS. I know this has been your whole life..."

ATLAS. It's like there are porcupines in my knees!"

ZEUS. ...and now you feel like you have no purpose..."

ATLAS. Giant mutant porcupines!"