

Playing at Plays.

Act 1

DAY 1

Scene 1

A week before the performance of the play "Parallel Vixens", the cast & crew are trying to get the final touches done. The conflicts that always arise between different jobs are really beginning to show.

2 actors are doing a scene on stage.

Good Angel - So what we gonna play for?

Bad Angel - That girl your fella has would be perfect for my guy.

Good Angel - Your job is to take care of your guy, your not his pimp. Stay out of my plans I've done everything to make sure these 2 get together and it's been a hard job, cause they're keep fucking it up. She's an ex boyfriend who's always trying to get back with her and its making her heart split in two.

Bad Angel - You hypocrite! Here's the deal either we play for the girl or I'm gonna take her understand?

Good Angel - Look your guy is no good for this girl.

Bad Angel - How do you know?

Good Angel - Cause all he wants is a ride! And my god is in love with her!

Bad Angel - Bullshit! We're playing for her. Cards or dice?

Good Angel - Lets make it a series, whoever wins dice, cards and coins.

Bad Angel - 3 out of 3? Thats fucking impossible 2 out of 3 thats fair.

Good Angel - Fine lets play.

They have missed their lighting positions and are half shadowed by the lights. They have trouble remembering lines and are generally a train wreck to watch.

Enter the Director & Producer.

Lights change rapidly to a more open rehearsal lighting

Director - What was that?

Lead 1 - What do you mean?

Producer - Your performance. We open next week. What happened to learning your lines?

Lead 2 - Hey! Its not our fault. The writer wrote a terrible script.

Producer - Oh yeah. Typical. Actors blaming the writer.

Jimmy (Voice of Techie, never seen) - If there's a problem its always the actors!

Producer - Cheers Jimmy.

Director - Enough. *to Producer* I can criticize the actors on my own thank you.

Producer - Ok.

Producer sits down and pulls out his phone, he starts texting someone.

Director - Alright, your delivery was all over the place. *to Lead 1* I don't know what you were doing with your hands but don't do it again. *to Lead 2* And you don't pause between sentences. It comes across like you don't know them.

Producer - Maybe they don't know them.

Director *ignores him* - What happened with your lighting Jimmy?

Jimmy (Voice only) - My lighting was fine. They missed their positions.

Director - Ok, *to Actors* I'll get the positions taped down for this week but they won't be here during the performance. So you better practice moving around the space.

Lead 1 - I have a question about this part of scene 2. He's talking about gambling with the other angel. Exactly what are they gambling?

Lead 2 - Does it matter?

Lead 1 - For me to get into character. I need to know the full backstory.

Director - Ok I'll make a note of it and ask the writer.

Producer - Any other questions?

Silence.

Producer - Good. Now get outta here. Go eat be back here in *checks watch* an hour.

Exit Actors

Director - We need to fix the script.

Producer - Yeah I know.

Director - I'm serious it needs work. He keeps re-writing every scene. I wake up every morning and there is a new draft. I now have about 20 different plays with the same title on my computer.

Producer - I know he emails me too.

Director - Well your the producer, fix it.

Producer - I know a guy he'll sort it out for us.

Director - Is he good?

Producer - He's the best. He's fixed that play an "Elephant in Paris".

Director - Yeah? I heard about that. Made a couple thousand.

Producer - Yeah.

Director - Was the script as bad as ours before he fixed it?

Producer - Worse.

Director - Worse? What was in it?

Producer - The writer originally had a can-can at the end of the funeral scene.

Director - Really? I'd love to have seen that.

Producer - So would I but it would have been ridiculous. *takes out phone* I'm going to call him now. Be back in 5.

Exit Producer

Director walks around the empty stage. The lights begin to flicker.

Director - Hey Jimmy everything ok?

Jimmy (Voice) - Oh yeah, I just need to reset the lights.

Director - Thats cool.

Jimmy (Voice) - LIGHTS GOING DOWN.

Scene 2

Stage is plunged in darkness. Sound of footsteps are heard then a smack of two people walking into each other.

Light up.

The Director is staring at the Producer and the Writer as they both look pissed off.

Director - What happened?

Producer *ignores him* - Jimmy!! What are doing turning off the lights?

Jimmy (Voice) - I needed to reset the lights.

Writer - Hi. I'm the writer.

Director - Hi I'm your director a pleasure to meet you. Its great to finally meet you in person instead of communicating via email. You've met our producer?

Writer - Oh yeah, he approached me a while back about the script.

Producer - I was sent his script.

Director - I see. Well we've been having some difficulties with the script.

Writer - Really? I'm sorry to hear that. Anything I can do to help...

Producer - Thanks, well there is something. We need you to give us permission to bring in another writer just to make some cosmetic changes.

Writer - What kind of cosmetic changes?

Director - Some dialogue changes.

Writer - I don't see any problems with that.

Producer - Thats great. If you could just sign this form. *hands over form* Its just a formality. Basically you've signed over the rights to change your script to our production.

Writer - Well this is my first script to be put on professionally so I'm kinda lost in the legal side of things.

Director - Well don't worry we're not going to cross you.

Writer - Well maybe I should have someone look at this contract before I sign it, just to be sure.

Producer - Look I know your nervous, this is your first play and I understand its your baby. However this is standard for all plays.

The writer goes over to read the script in a corner. The Producer looks over at the Director and give him a thumbs up signal. The Director grins.

The writer walks over with the form.

Writer - Ok I'll trust you on this. Do you have a pen?

Producer - Sure. *hands over pen. Writer signs*

Writer - Ok. So when do I meet the guy going through my script?

Producer - Tomorrow.

Writer - Ok. *looks around* Where's the set?

Producer - The Set Guy is coming tomorrow. *checks his watch* I gotta meet the manager of this theatre. I need to sort out the ticket prices. I'll talk to you later.

Exit Producer

Writer - Is he always that busy?

Director - Pretty much, that his job. *checks his watch* The actors should be back soon. We're only using the two leads today. The rest of the cast should be here tomorrow.

Enter Actors

Director - Right on cue. How was lunch? I'd like you to meet the writer.

Lead 1 - Hi.

Lead 2 - Its nice to meet you.

Director senses that the Actors are about to say something to the Writer.

Director *to writer* - Would you mind if I just worked with the actors? Its been a stressful day and I think they just want to work. Also the writer being there when they work is a little distracting.

Writer - I understand. Thats no problem. I'll see you tomorrow.

Director - Thats great we'll be here from 10.

Writer - Cheers. *to actors* Keep up the good work.

Exit Writer

Lead 1 - What a jackass.

Lead 2 - How much experience does he have?

Director - First play.

Lead 1 - So no experience.

Director - Yeah.

Lead 2 - Could you please keep the Producer off our backs. Its not at all helpful.

Lead 1 - Yeah we're doing a very stressful job and we don't need some prick to come in here lording over us.

Director - I know. However he works hard.

Lead 1 - I don't care. I don't like being treated that way. If he keeps doing it I'll walk.

Director - Actually you can't.

Lead 1 - What do you mean?

Lead 2 - You signed a contract.

Lead 1 - So?

Lead 2 - I know this Producer, he can stop you working if he chooses to.

Lead 1 - Yeah right.

Jimmy (Voice) - Do you guys remember Kathy Sullivan?

Lead 1 - Yeah.

Jimmy (Voice) - Guess who stopped her working?

Lead 2 *to Lead 1* - You see what I mean?

Director - My advice to both of you is to... *he's interrupted by a phone call* Sorry I have to take this.

Exit Director

Lead 1 - I wonder what the advice was.

Jimmy (Voice) - Keep your opinions to yourself.

Lead 1 - Hey screw you.

Jimmy (Voice) - You wish.

Enter Director

Director - Sorry had to take that. So where was I?

Lead 2 - Advice to us?

Director - Yes. Keep loose talk to yourselves. The last thing we need is tension between people.

Lead 1 - Ok. I'll see what I can do. Alright I've to go. I'll be here at 10 tomorrow morning.

Director - See you then.

Lead 1 *to lead 2* - You coming?

Lead 2 - I'm going to stay here for a bit.

Lead 1 looks at Lead 2 & the Director.

Lead 1 - I see.

Exit Lead 1

Lead 2 - I think he knows.

Director - So?

Lead 2 - As long as you know that it will eventually filter back to the Producer.

Director - Its my personal life. I can do as I please.

Lead 2 - Somehow I doubt he's the understanding type.

Director - It'll be fine.

Lead 2 reaches up and kisses the Director

Lights begin to fade. And romantic music starts

Director - Jimmy!

Lights return, music stops

Jimmy (Voice) - Just wanted to get the mood right.

Offstage the Producer is heard.

Producer - I don't care about your van. You get here tomorrow morning or I will personally make sure you never build as much as a door!!!

Lead 2 hears this and hurriedly exits.

Enter Producer

Producer - That Set Guy is a real cowboy.

Director - What was the shouting about?

Producer - Wanted us to pay petrol money for his van.

Director - Why?

Producer - Cause he was picking up materials today and he wanted extra money on top of what we're paying him.

Director - How much we paying him?

Producer - Too much.

Director - So he's here tomorrow?

Producer - Yeah. And the Co-writer at some point and possibly the marketing guy.

Director - What marketing guy?

Producer - I brought someone in. To do the PR.

Director - Bit late isn't it?

Producer - Well I did it for the last 3 weeks. Now I'm bringing in a specialist. To do the posters, sort out the newspaper & radio ads. Do the interviews. All that crap.

Director - Makes sense. Do you honestly think this play will sell?

Producer - Absolutely.

Director - You're certain?

Producer - Look I've produced 5 very successful plays this year. You gonna have to trust me.

Director - Alright.

Producer - Good. Come on I'll give you a lift home.

Director - No its alright. I've got someone waiting for me.

Producer - What's her name?

Director - None of your business.

Producer - What a strange name! Does she have a sister?

Director ignores him and start to put his gear into his bag.

Producer - See you tomorrow.

Director waves his arm.

Exit Director

Producer sticks about for a bit longer looks around

Producer - Jimmy, shut it down. We'll see you tomorrow at 10.

Exit Producer

Lights down.

DAY 2

Scene 3

Lights come up, the lighting looks like the dawn. As the lights rise up to their full power. The song, "Good Morning" from Singin' in the Rain is being played. As the song plays out, the Producer is first in with a cup of a coffee and a sheaf of papers, followed by the Writer with a sandwich. The music becomes more background music getting quieter every few seconds.

The Producer carefully sits down on a chair careful not to spill any coffee. The Writer walks up behind him and starts talking.

Writer - Hey how are you?

Producer *gets a jump* - Jesus! Don't do that. *He spills coffee on the ground. Don't sneak on people. He takes some tissue from his bag and mops up the mess.*

Writer - You're really prepared for everything.

Producer *is looking at looking at his notes* - Its what I'm paid for.

Writer - You know how I'm new at this playwright thing?

Producer - Yeah.

Writer - Any tips?

Producer *stops reading his notes and looks at the writer* - Keep writing. And don't get discouraged. Also make sure that any play you write is doable. Don't go setting plays in Medieval Mongolia cause they're too expensive to make. If you do write anything like that let me know cause my cousin is a film producer and is always looking for scripts.

Writer - Thanks.

Producer - No problem.

At this stage the music is gone. And lights have gone from a dawn effect to normal rehearsal lighting.

Enter Director, he is engrossed in croissant. He has sugar all over his mouth. He sits down beside the producer and finishes his croissant and carefully wipes his mouth with a tissue. Enter Lead 2, she is very self-conscious and draws attention to herself. She takes out her script and goes through it. Enter Lead 1, he walks in makes a lot of noise with the door and walks around doing stretches.

Director to lead 1 - Enough of that. We'll do a proper warm-up.

The Director & the Actors start to do a proper warm-up, the Producer and Writer stand away from them and watch.

Producer - They look like idiots don't they.

Writer - Yeah what are they doing?

At this stage the Actors are silently stretching the arms up to the ceiling and down to the floor.

Producer - Some sort of bizarre prayer.

Writer - You mean to the Sun?

Producer - Yeah Aztecs. All we need now is a sacrifice.

Enter the Co-Writer. He looks very confused at the Actors warm up.

Producer - Hey! How are ya?

Co-Writer - Good. What the hell are they doing?

Writer - Warm ups.

Co-Writer - You the Director?

Writer - No, the Writer.

Co-Writer - Well I'm the Co-Writer. Nice to meet you.

Writer - Same to you.

Co-Writer *takes out a script* - I've done some revisions. Why don't you have a look at them.

Writer - I will, cheers.

The Writer heads to a corner and starts to read the re-writes. The Director & Actors have finished their warm-ups. The Director comes over to the Producer & Co-Writer.

Director *to Co-Writer* - Hi I'm the Director. Are you the Set Guy?

Co-Writer - No. I'm the Co-Writer.

Director - The fixer.

Co-Writer - Yeah.

Director - How did you find it?

Co-Writer - It has potential but it needed an extra kick.

Producer - How do you think he'll take it? *Indicates to the Writer.*

Co-Writer - He'll either like it or hate it.

Director - Thats comforting.

Co-Writer - He signed the contract right?

Producer - Yeah.

Co-Writer - Then you have nothing to worry about.

The Writer comes over looking unhappy.

Writer to Co-Writer - Could you come with me over here. *Indicates the corner.* I want to go through some of this with you.

Co-Writer - Sure.

The two Writers head over to the corner and sit down and begin to talk about the script but quietly so no one can hear them.

Producer - Actors are warmed up?

Director - Yeah. You should take part. Its good for your heart.

Producer - No thanks.

Director - I need that set today for the actors.

Producer - He'll be here soon.

Writer - What do you mean? I wrote this script! I own it.

The Writer runs over to the Producer followed by a laughing Co-Writer.

Writer to Producer - He *points at Co-Writer, who is smiling* just told me he is cutting all the actors down to 2!!!

Co-Writer - Its cheaper. And it makes the script run more smoothly.

Producer - That sounds good to me.

Writer - Well I'm not happy with it.

Co-Writer - You signed a contract, we have the right to change some of the script.

Writer - Change not destroy my script.

Director - Ok ok. *to Writer* How about you and me go outside and talk about the changes.

Writer - Ok.

Exit Writer

Director to Co-Writer - 2 Actors is much better the others were more for show anyway.

Exit Director

Producer - Well I owe you one. You just saved me some money.

Co-Writer - When you gonna tell the other actors?

Producer - I'll call them in a bit.

Lead 2 by this stage has dozed off and Lead 1 stands up and walks over to the Co-Writer & Producer.

Lead 1 - Do you know when the set is getting here?

Co-Writer - No idea.

Producer - When the Set Guy arrives.

Lead 1 - Well is there any point in us waiting here?

Producer - Got somewhere better to be?

Lead 1 - Yeah, bed.

Producer - Practice your lines. Maybe if you practice enough you'll finally be able to say them properly.

Enter Set Guy.

Producer - You the Set Guy?

Set Guy - Yeah. You the Producer?

Producer - Yeah.

Set Guy - You make a terrible first impression.

Producer - I'm sorry about that.

Set Guy - So one of you guys wanna help me move my stuff in here?

Lead 1 - I'll help.

Co-Writer - Me too.

Exit Lead 1 & Co-Writer

Producer *to lead 2* - You awake?

Lead 2 - Sorry just dozed off.

Producer - Thats quite alright. There's a lot of sitting around in your job.

Lead 2 - The complete opposite of yours.

Producer - Yeah. *pause*. So how long you been sleeping with the Director?

Lead 2 - I'm not.

Jimmy (Voice) - YES YOU ARE!!!

Producer - You were saying?

Lead 2 - Not that long.

Producer - Is it serious?

Lead 2 - I dunno.

Producer - Wonderful. Don't let it get in the way of work. Last thing I need is him distracted by a nice pair of legs.

Lead 2 - Thanks.

Producer - Your welcome.

Enter Set Guy followed by the Lead 1 & the Co-Writer. They are carrying in tools, cable and paint etc. Lead 1 is huffing & puffing under the strain.

Set Guy to Lead 1 - You're awful soft! When was the last time you did some hard labour?

Lead 1 - Before I became an actor.

Co-Writer - Wise choice.

Set Guy - Hey! I've a great job.

Producer - Yes you do. Now would you please do it?

Set Guy - I can't until I get a plan of what I'm supposed to build.

Producer - You never got the design?

Set Guy - No.

The Actors sensing a fight, leave quietly followed by the Co-Writer. The Director passes them oblivious to the hassle his is about to receive. Lead 2 tries to get his attention but he is in his own world.

Producer to Director - You didn't send the design?

Director - Was I supposed to?

The Set Guy sits down and starts laughing.

Producer - Yes you were.

Director - Sorry well. I've got it here. *pats pocket*.

Producer - Good. Hows the writer?

Director - I chilled him out. But you should talk to him. Go through the script changes with him and the Co-Writer. Did you know that he cut the cast to 2?

Producer - He what? Ok. I'll go deal with that now.

Exit Producer

Director - Hi, I'm the director.

Set Guy - I'm the set guy. So whats this design?

Director *takes out a sheet of paper and hands it over* - Its quite simple.

The Set Guy takes the paper and studies it for a minute.

Director - So you been doing this long?

Set Guy - A couple of years. One thing, what is that? *points to something on the page* And what does that say?

Director - Bridge.

Set Guy - Maybe you should have typed this.

Director - Handwriting isn't important to this job.

Set Guy *looks back at the sheet of paper* - So you want a bridge?

Director - Yeah. I want it to be like a bridge between this world and the next.

Set Guy - Uh huh. Well how big do you want it?

Director - I don't understand.

Set Guy - There are no specs here. How many feet long? How high? All that stuff. Where's your designer?

Director - I'm the designer.

Set Guy *looks around the stage* - Unless we lose this front row of seating. We're not going to be able to put any sort of structure that you want in here. I can put a raised platform but it will look awful.

Director - So what do you think we should do? We can't lose that row of seats. Thats lost income.

Set Guy - Ok. Well how about I come up with another design. You got a script I could look at?

Director - Have mine. *hands over script.*

Set Guy - Cheers. I'll be back in a few minutes just need to study this.

Exit Set Guy.

Enter Actors

Lead 1 - So is the set being built?

Director - Soon. We're just making some revisions.

Lead 2 - Any serious ones?

Director - Just minor stuff. Why don't you guys run some lines? Jimmy could we have some lights?

Lights change to a theatrical setting. Low romantic music sets the scene

Director - Ok lets go for Scene 3. Are you off script?

Lead 1 - I'm a little shaky on some lines.

Lead 2 - I've mine off.

Director - Ok. *to Lead 1* Use the script for now. But I want you off them by tomorrow. Lets start.

The Actors start the scene, the lights change to a more dramatic setting. The lines are terribly cliched and old fashioned. Lead 2 has her lines down and delivers them with flair while Lead 1 is reading off the script and is clumsy and stuttering.

Lady (Shaking the Prince) - Wake up, my Lord.

Prince - Oh! Thank God it's you I had a terrible dream about two angels. They seemed to dislike each other immensely and one of them was warning me about something but I can't for the life of me remember what it was.

Lady - I'm sure it was most invigorating. My Lord...

Prince - Yes.

Lady - When do I meet your father?

Prince - At the wedding. I'm sure he'll be as enchanted by you as I am.

Lady - I'm unsure what he'll make of me, I keep thinking he might hate me. I'm sorry my love, I'm full of foreboding about meeting him.

Prince - Don't be he'll adore you. (he kisses her, then moves back slightly) My love, my friends are against me marrying you.

Lady (pushing him away) - What! Why? It's because I'm lesser born isn't it? Oh God! They might say something to the King! What have I done to deserve this?

Prince - Why are you so upset? I didn't agree with them. (he walks toward her) Now now my love don't worry it will be all right.

Lady (running into his arms) - My Lord this weighs heavily on my mind. What did I do for them ruin it on us?

Prince - Calm down. What they think has no bearing on the wedding or my father, I'll make sure of that.

As they are doing their lines. The Set Guy has entered, a look of disgust is plastered all over his face. The Producer enters behind him followed by the Writer & Co-Writer. They stand in a group and watch the performance. When the scene is finished there is a stunned silence.

Director - Ok. *to Lead 2* That was perfect. *to Lead 1* What was that?

Producer - I agree. What was that?

Co-Writer *to Writer* - That's the first scene that has to go.

Writer *to Set Guy* - I'm embarrassed to say I wrote that scene.

Set Guy - You should be!

Jimmy (Voice) - Damn right!

Lead 1 - Hey I'm trying to work here.

Director *to Producer* - Do you mind?

Producer - Well we need to plan out the set.

Director *to Actors* - We're going to to use the back room. Lets go.

Exit Director & Actors

Producer *to Set Guy* - Let me make something clear here. I control the money on this gig. So whatever deal you made with the Director is off. You understand me?

Set Guy - Hey! I never made a deal with the Director. He gave me some bullshit plan for a set, so I said I would make a better one.

Producer - Sorry. This Director makes me nervous. He doesn't have any boundaries.

Writer - What do you mean by that?

Producer - The way its supposed to work is like this. The Director deals with the Actors and overall artistic vision. And the Producer deals with everything else.

Set Guy - Yeah well he has a very expensive artistic vision.

Producer - I've noticed. Lets step outside for a cigarette. We'll talk about your plan for the set.

Set Guy - I was wondering if there was another smoker on this gig.

Exit Producer & Set Guy.

Co-Writer *to Writer* - So do you agree with what I did with the script?

Writer - Yeah. I can see the problems already. Its very different on paper.

Co-Writer - Yeah. Add actors fuck-ups into the mix and boom.

Writer - Are they always so difficult?

Co-Writer - Oh yeah. These guys are mild in comparison to some of the actors I've been around. There was this one gig we did and the lead actress how should I put it? She liked guys. So she works her way through the entire cast. Until there's just me and tech guys left. And I could see that the gig was falling apart due to jealousy and all that. So I said no way. However the techie, he decided it, fuck it. *pauses for affect* He hasn't worked since.

Writer - Serious? Why?

Co-Writer - She got the producer to blacklist him. Can you picture that? She goes through a entire cast & crew, ends up with the tech guy then decides for some reason to completely destroy him.

Writer - Jesus. She still working?

Co-Writer - Oh yeah. She's now in TVland. Still at the same old stuff.

Writer - That would be great in a play.

Co-Writer - Yeah it would be. If you want some inspiration talk to the crew, everybody has good stories. Stay away from the actors though their stories are always about themselves.

Writer - I've noticed a serious anti-actor feeling around here. What's that about?

Co-Writer - Its cause of the Producer. He can't stand their crap. Most guys say nothing. But he lets us say what we want.

Writer - Doesn't that get him in trouble?

Co-Writer - You kidding? He produces successful plays. Success equals money. Cash is king. Also the actors might hate him on set but once the show is over everybody gets on great. Theatre is like Disneyland, its all magic.

As the Co-Writer finishes speaking. Music from Disney films starts to be played.

Co-Writer *starts laughing* - That's Jimmy cueing us to leave.

Writer - Why doesn't he just tell us.

Jimmy (Voice) - This way is more fun. Also lunchtime.

Co-Writer - Cheers Jimmy. *to Writer* Hey I'll buy you lunch. I know this great Turkish place. Really nice kebabs.

Writer - I'm vegetarian.

Co-Writer - They got great lettuce.

Exit Writer & Co-Writer.

Lights fade as they walk out.

Scene 4

Lights up

Enter Set Guy with props & wood, he is accompanied by Lead 1.

Set Guy - Ok you have time to give me a hand?

Lead 1 - Yeah. The Director is busy with my fellow actor in the back room.

Set Guy - She's not bad looking. Good for him.

Lead 1 - I agree. So what are we building?

Set Guy *hands over plan* - This.

Lead 1 - Seems simple enough.

Set Guy - It is.

They begin to put the set together, first two chairs are put in position. Then a backdrop is rigged. They talk as they work.

Set Guy - So how long you been working?

Lead 1 - Couple of years. Started out in college drama, moved from there. Did some training in Dublin.

Set Guy - How was that?

Lead 1 - Very good but very expensive.

Set Guy - I'll bet. *to Jimmy* Hey Jimmy. Do you want me to lay down the set before or after your rig the lights?

Jimmy (Voice) - I've already rigged the lights. I've enough hanging to light them wherever. As long as they know their positions.

Set Guy - Cheers Jimmy.

Lead 1 - What was that about?

Set Guy - Usually the Lighting guy will rig the lights first then we lay down the set but because the Director's design was ridiculous that didn't happen.

Lead 1 - So the Director messed up?

Set Guy - Big time.

They have finished the basic set up.

Set Guy - Looks good. Thanks for the help. Without you I would have been here a while.

Lead 1 - No problem. Always happy to help. And to get back into shape.

Set Guy - Hard work beats the gym every time.

Enter Producer

Producer - Its cheaper too.

Set Guy *to Producer* - What do you think?

Producer - Looks good.

Lead 1 - I helped.

Producer - Thats great. Where's the Director?

Lead 1 - I'll go get him now.

Producer - Cheers. *to Set Guy* You let him touch power tools?

Set Guy - Come on you think I'm an idiot? Apart from the legal stuff, he wouldn't know how to use a drill. He just helped rig. He was very helpful and very sound.

Producer - Whatever makes you happy. *hands over envelope* Here's your money. *Hands over form* Sign this receipt and you're done.

Set Guy - I've a few other bits to do but I'll be back to do them later.

Producer - No bother. I like the set, nice and simple.

Set Guy - Yeah simple is good. Anyway I've to run. I don't do this full time you know.

Producer - I forgot, what else do you do?

Set Guy - Electrician.

Producer - Yeah? Well my brothers girlfriend needs some work done on her john, the light won't come on. You think you could drop over? And feel free to overcharge. I can't stand her. But hey he *loves* her.

Set Guy - Sure. *over his shoulder as he leaves* Give her my number.

Producer - See you later.

Exit Set Guy.

Enter Director & Actors.

Director - Ok lets do the Scene 1. Its the opening scene, so its very important that you have it down. No mistakes. This is going to be the first time the audience see you. So you need to capture their attention.

The Actors get into position. There is no light change. Lead 2 is just starting into her opening speech.

Lady - All of my life I've been taken advantage of. That's soon change; good for me, bad for my enemies. My humble backgrounds and my lack of "status" have always been held against me, but now I'm in charge, soon I'll be so powerful no one can challenge me.

Lead 1 is about to reply to her when the Marketing Guy bursts in from the back of the room. Running past the audience snapping away at a camera attached to his neck. He looks somewhat like a hippie, takes dozens of photos a minute and completely wrecking the actors concentration.

Director - Who the hell are you?

Marketing Guy - I'm the Marketing Guy.

Director - I didn't know there was a Marketing Guy.

Marketing Guy - Yeah was hired by the Producer. *notices Lead 2 takes out a pad of paper* Hey what's your name?

Enter Producer

Director - You hired this guy?

Producer - Yeah he's doing marketing. Photos for the poster, interviews, blurbs for actors all that PR stuff.

Director - Well he completely ruined the scene I was doing.

Producer - Yeah well the actors seem happy to have the attention.

Marketing Guy *to Lead 1* - Your name is actually John Smith? Wow. Thats like the most boring name ever. Is that your stage name?

Lead 1 - No. And I spell it with a y.

Marketing Guy - Well its a pleasure Mr Smyth. *turns around and notices the Producer and quickly takes a photo* I finally have a photo of you. You've been avoiding photos for years now.

Producer - I'm not supposed to be seen. Stop taking photos of me. Take a group photo of the actors and the Director. I'll go get the Writers so we can have a cast & crew photo.

Marketing Guy - Cheers. Also I've a great idea for the poster.

Producer - Tell me in a minute.

Exit Producer

The Marketing Guy is completely manic, he moves around fast and is always taking photos. He pushes the Actors & Director together. With the Director standing between the Actors. He snaps away loads of photos.

Marketing Guy - Thats great. Thank you.

Director - So have any of your photos gone anywhere?

Marketing Guy - Yeah, you know that picture on the side of the buses of the girl staring at the boy? That was me.

Director - I've seen that. How much did you make off that?

Marketing Guy - I was very comfortable for a few months.

Enter Producer & Writer(s)

Producer - Ok now we have a full crew.

Director - What about Jimmy?

Marketing Guy - Who's Jimmy?

Producer - He's the techie.

Jimmy (Voice) - No photos.

Marketing Guy - Hey Jimmy. Could I have some nice moody lighting for the cast & crew shot?

lights change so there are shadows everywhere. The Marketing Guy shoots off a load of photos.

Marketing Guy - Ok now all that left is the poster shot. Could everyone move away from the set bar the actors. *Everyone leaves the illuminated set but the actors Cheers.* *to Lead 1* Ok now I want you to stand on this chair and face the fire exit. *to Lead 2* And I want you

to sit with you head in your hand in this chair here, facing the wall. Thats great. Looks beautiful. *snaps loads of photos*. Ok folks that all I need. Thanks for your time.

Lights go back to normal.

Producer - Thanks for all your work.

Marketing Guy - My pleasure. *looks around the room* This is a great room. *Starts photographing the room and the audience*. What a great atmosphere.

Producer - If you say so.

Director - I think that it for today.

Producer - Yeah. *address everyone* Ok folks it was a really productive day today. Now we've about a week to go before we do this for real. So lets make sure that the show moves smoothly.

All Exit.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

Day 1 - Dress Rehearsal

Scene 1 - Morning

The set is in place. Actors are running lines in the corner. The Director and Producer are going over the program. The Wrtier is sitting in the corner looking at the actors.

Enter the Co-Writer.

Co-Writer - Hey have you seen the posters?

Producer - Yeah.

Co-Writer - There deadly.

Producer - Well it wasn't exactly what I wanted.

Director - Me neither.

Co-Writer - Come on cheer up. It'll bring in the audience.

Producer - I hope so. *to Director* I hate this program.

Director - Hey I didn't design it. You brought in the Marketing person.

Producer - I know, I know.

Writer - What are they doing? *pointing to actors*

Director - Running their lines.

Writer - Yeah but their different lines from mine.

Co-Writer *to Director* - You let them improvise?

Director - It helps them get into the piece.

Lead 1 - Is there something wrong?

Writer - Yeah your changing the lines.

Lead 2 - It just helps us learn them better.

Co-Writer - Hold on aren't you supposed to be professionals? Isn't learning lines part of your job description?

Lead 1 - Yeah.

Writer - Well then maybe instead of butchering what we wrote. You should learn them.

Director - Ok, everybody calm down. *to Actors* You guys follow me. *starts to lead Actors out.* Don't worry I'll make sure that their lines are fine.

Exit Director & Actors

Writer *to Producer* - Is there anything I can do to help?

Producer - Not really we just have to make sure that all the set, the props and everything else is sorted by tomorrow.

Co-Writer - Have you worked out a capacity of seating?

Producer - What?

Co-Writer - How many people are going to be sitting here? Are you adding an extra row?

Producer - Shit. I forgot to ask the front desk. Cheers.

Exit Producer

Co-Writer - You nervous?

Writer - Yeah. Tomorrow the show opens, I have no idea what people will think of my script.

Co-Writer - Our script. Don't worry about it. Its your first play.

Writer - What do you mean by that?

Co-Writer - First plays are always messy. A lot of big ideas, disorganized thoughts. Your next play will be 100 times better than this.

Writer - But this one is good, right?

Co-Writer - Of course.

Enter Producer

Producer - Hey could you guys do me a favor? I need someone to help bring the costumes and props from my car. *throws over keys* Here are the keys.

Co-Writer - No problem.

Writer - Sure.

Exit Writers

Producer walks around the stage with his checklist in hand. He paces around looking at the set and makes sure that everything is where its supposed to be.

Producer - Hey Jimmy! Do you wanna do a sound & light run?

Jimmy (Voice) - Do you mean a tech run?

Producer - Yeah.

Jimmy (Voice) - I would liked to have done one 3 days ago but sure why not.

Producer - Thanks Jimmy, how about after lunch.

Jimmy (Voice) - Thats fine.

Producer - Cheers.

Enter Actors

Lead 1 - I think its great that its just the two of us.

Lead 2 - Why?

Lead 1 - Cause now there's more time for me on stage.

Producer - Please keep your ego in check. How are your lines today?

Lead 1 - Their good.

Lead 2 - Mine have always been good.

Enter Director

Director - Where are the props? And I need the actors costumes.

Producer - The two boys are bringing them in. Here they are.

Enter Writers

Writer - Wow. I didn't really think you could get all this stuff. *dumps props on the floor*

Producer - Well it wasn't easy.

Co-Writer *drops costumes on the floor* - Man they smell really musty, where did you find them?

Producer - St Vincent de Paul.

Director - Theatre heaven. *to Producer* Just occurred to me do we have a stage manager?

Producer - Yeah.

Director - Who?

Producer *grabs Co-Writer* - You're looking at him.

Director - Oh. *to Co-Writer* You've done this before right?

Co-Writer - Oh yeah on loads of shows.

Director - That's great. *to actors* Lets take these costumes and wash them.

Producer - Maybe they should try them on first?

Director - Good idea. Lets go to the changing rooms.

Exit Director & Actors.

Co-Writer - What exactly does a stage manager do?

Producer - Runs backstage and makes sure the actors know when their entrances & exits are.

Co-Writer - You know I've never done it before, right?

Producer - Yeah. But you'll learn.

Co-Writer - Hold on. You put in a position and didn't tell me?!!

Producer - I didn't want to use someone I didn't know and its an extra expense.

Writer - Makes sense.

Co-Writer - Your lucky, you don't have to deal with the actors.

Writer - You're right. I am lucky.

Producer - Don't worry about it. *slips him some money* I'll make sure you're looked after.

Co-Writer - Well in that case no problem.

Writer - I'm hungry, should we get lunch?

Producer - Yeah but takeout today. We need to stay here keep working.

Exit Producer & Writers.

Lights dip

Scene 2

Tech Run in progress, the actors are in their positions. The Director and Producer are sitting down watching. The Writers are standing against the wall trying to be unnoticed but are failing miserably.

Jimmy (Voice) - Hey! You guys ready for the tech run?

Director - Yeah.

Jimmy (Voice) - Ok. Scene 1. The lights are as follows, *lights change* could the actors get into position?

Actors are having trouble getting into position.

Lead 1 - Am I in the right position?

Jimmy (Voice) - Walk 3 paces to your right. *Actor walks to his left* Your other right!!

Lead 2 - Am in position?

Jimmy (Voice) - Yeah. Hey could someone put some tape for our too ballerinas? Cause I'm worried they won't remember this come tomorrow.

The Producer goes out and marks on the floor with tape where the actors are supposed to stand.

Jimmy (Voice) - Cheers. Ok Scene 2 is the same lighting. Scene 3 is this *lights change* there are no spots here so you can move around freely. Except don't walk beyond the line of light.

Lead 1 - What do you mean? *As he says this he walks into shadow*

Jimmy (Voice) - You're in shadow, step forward. *Actor does so* Good. Now don't step beyond that point.

Lead 2 - I can't see a thing.

Director - Its alright. You look good.

Lead 2 - Thank you.

Producer - Leave it for the bedroom lets move on.

Jimmy (Voice) - Scene 4 5 6 7 & 8 are all like this. Hold on *rustling pages are heard* Ok so there's no change for about 15 pages. Then towards the end of Act 1, in Scene 9. This happens *lights change into a beautiful colour scheme that slowly diffuses across the room.*

Writer - That looks great.

Jimmy (Voice) - Ok actors. You have to cue me for that. The line is: "Oh don't say that my lord. Thats very Jewish of you." Ok do you want me to repeat that?

Lead 1 - We got it. We're not children you know. *steps back into shadow by accident*

Jimmy (Voice) - Get outta the shadow!

Director - Ok now there's the interval. Could you cue the music?

Jimmy (Voice) - What music? I never got any music.

Director - Sorry its here. *walks up to the back and hands over CD, walks down to stage and calls back up to him.* Its track 4.

Jimmy puts in the CD and starts playing terrible dance music.

Producer - Thats terrible. Jimmy put on your work music.

Jimmy puts on his work music. Its muppet music.

Producer - Thats much better. An audience would prefer to walk out of the theatre listening to that. If they heard that dance music they would ask for their money back.

Director - I want that music played.

Producer - Ok. Jimmy I'm really sorry but your going to have to play that dance crap.

Jimmy (Voice) - Wonderful.

Lead 1 - What are the cues for Act 2.

Jimmy (Voice) - Keep your shirt on! *more rustling of pages* Ok opening of Act 2 should look like this. *lights go black, then slowly rise* Then we have another 10 pages of nothing. Then in the last scene of the play. Ok could you guys do the scene cause I need to be cued off your movements.

Director - You heard him. Last scene guys. Do it like its the real thing.

Lights dim. Actors start to do their lines.

Bill - So where is she?

Alice - She ran off Bill that seems to be her plan for now. Run when people try to help me.

Bill - So why am I here?

Alice - Well when I first got here I noticed a tape player.

Bill - And?

Alice - Stop worrying and think for a minute will you. She said that she heard doctors voices on tapes, radios whatever. So I checked it out.

Bill - Where there doctors speaking?
On the word 'speaking' the lines change.

Alice - Of course there were Bill, no it was a man reading statistics on blind people.

Bill - So she misheard that?

Alice - No this is proof that she is crazy. Did you send the hospital people to look for her.

Jimmy (Voice) - Thats enough. Ok the I have my cue. The line is "Where there doctors speaking?" Don't forget it. I need that cue. So the cue will continue for about 2 minutes and end in a blackout.

Director - So we all set.

Jimmy (Voice) - Yeah.

Producer - I want everyone to get a good nights sleep we are in here at 9 am tomorrow morning. Actors I want you hear by 5 pm. Ok? You get a lie in. Everyone else be here at 9am. We'll need all the help we can get tomorrow.

Everyone start gathering their stuff and leaving.

Producer - Ok Jimmy shut it down.

Light die suddenly

Scene 3

Day 2 - The First Performance. Time 5pm

Lights come up on the Producer checking the stage adding props here and there. He walks over to the table and stares at it for a moment and starts to curse.

Enter Lead 1

Lead 1 - What's going on?

Producer - That cowboy!

Lead 1 - Which cowboy?

Producer - The set guy. He screwed up the set. The table is completely messed up back here. It looks like a good sneeze would knock it over.

Lead 1 - Well you know when I was helping him. He seemed really out of it. Like he was on dope or something.

Producer - Really?

Lead 1 - Yeah. I just thought it was normal but if he messed up the set then thats not on.

Producer - Damn straight. Well I've paid him for this job. But I'll make sure to put the word out that he's unreliable. Cheers man.

Exit Producer

Lead 1 - Oh shit.

Enter Lead 2

Lead 2 - What did you do?

Lead 1 - Nothing, nothing.

Enter Director

Director *to Lead 2* - Why did you blank me last night?

Lead 2 - What?

Director - I was on my way over to your place and you passed me. Like I wasn't even there.

Lead 2 - What time was that?

Director - About 8.

Lead 2 - I was on my way to yoga. Sorry I must have been really zoned. I'll make it up to you.

Director is happy to hear that he's about to lean into a kiss

Lead 1 - Should I go?

Director jumps

Director - Jesus I didn't even know you were here.

Lead 1 - Cheers.

Director - Oh come on. Where's the producer?

Lead 1 - Sorting out props I think.

Director - Cool. I gotta talk to him about the extra seats.

Lead 1 - Expecting a big crowd?

Director - We're half booked already.

Lead 2 - Really? Not bad.

Director - I know its great. Ok I'll be back soon enough and we can do a warm-up.

Exit Director

Lead 1 - So when you gonna break it off with him?

Lead 2 - I dunno. Probably when the show ends.

Lead 1 - Who's next? The Writer? Jimmy?

Jimmy (Voice) - I'M GAY!!

Lead 1 - Really?

Jimmy (Voice) - That a problem?

Lead 1 - No. So am I.

Jimmy (Voice) - We should go out sometime.

Enter Producer

Producer - Easy now Jimmy.

Jimmy (Voice) - All we need is a Jew and we're a cliched theatre group.

Producer - Well don't look at me.

Lead 1 - Everything ready for tonight?

Producer - Yeah. Where's the director?

Lead 2 - He's looking for you.

Producer - Its a small theatre, how did he not see me. Ok your costumes are hanging in your dressing rooms. You should make sure you have all your personal props.

Lead 1 - Will do.

Lead 2 - I've lost my earrings.

Producer - Ok. See if you can find them in the dressing room. If not just go without tonight and bring more tomorrow.

Lead 2 - Ok.

Exit Actors

Producer - Jimmy! You're not gay.

Jimmy (Voice) - I know.

Producer - Stop playing with the actor. He needs to be sharp for the performance.
Jimmy starts laughing

Producer - Ok. I just thought about what I said. Bad choice of words.

Enter Director

Director - There you are. What about extra seats for tonight?

Producer - I'm for it. But we'll lose some of the stage.

Director - How much extra money would we make?

Producer - Lets see €10 a ticket. And extra row has 8 seats. €80.

Director - Add the row. I'm going to do a warm-up with the actors.

Producer - I'll get the writers to help me with the seats.

Director - Its been a pleasure working with you.

Producer - Yeah.

Exit Director

Jimmy (Voice) - Its always a pleasure working with you.

Producer - Shut up Jimmy.

Enter Co-Writer & Writer

Producer - Ok you guys help me add a new row of seats.

Co-Writer - Bit late isn't it?

Producer - Not really. We'll see tickets on the door.

The Producer & Writers move over the row of seats in front of the audience. The two writers sit on either side of the aisle and the producer crouches down and talks to them.

Co-Writer to Writer - Nervous?

Writer - Yeah.

Producer - Don't be. Just enjoy the show.

Co-Writer - Am I supposed to be doing something as stage manager?

Producer - Not right now.

Writer - So wait you added this new row of seating for more money?

Producer - Yeah.

Writer - But it will reduce the amount of space the actors have.

Producer - Look this is a business I gotta pay actors, Jimmy, you two. Where do you think the money comes from.

Co-Writer - The actors will be fine.

Producer - Nearly showtime.

Co-Writer - I better head backstage.

Producer - I'm going to go out front and see how many tickets have sold.

Writer - What about me?

Producer - Sit back relax and enjoy the show.

Exit Producer & Co-Writer. The Writer stays sitting in the new row of seats. The lights change so people think its the opening of the show. A pre-recorded message is played:

Hello and welcome to the Town Hall Theatre, please make sure all mobile phones are switched off. The fire exits are the door you entered and the door right in front of you. Also no flash photography, smoking or eating of any kind is allowed in the auditorium. Thank you. there is a pause and then Thats all folks Looney Tunes music is played.

The End.