

An excerpt from...

"NUDE SCENE"
A Short Play
by Bruce Kane

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NUDE SCENE
By Bruce Kane

SETTING: A theatre presenting a play that takes place in a hotel room.

TIME: Now.

CHARACTERS:

ACTRESS – Beautiful and vain.

DIRECTOR – Manipulative

STAGE MANAGER: Nervous.

ACTOR: Nice looking.

LIGHTS UP:

(The Actress and Director enter arguing)

ACTRESS: Not on your life.

DIRECTOR: You knew what the part called for when you signed up.

ACTRESS: You never said I would have to go out there completely nude.

DIRECTOR: What other kind of nude is there?

ACTRESS: I don't care. There's no way I'm going on stage in front of all those people... naked.

DIRECTOR: I'm not asking you to go out there naked.

ACTRESS: But you just said....

DIRECTOR: I'm asking you to go out there nude.

ACTRESS: I fail to see the difference.

DIRECTOR: Being naked on stage is just taking your clothes off to titillate the prurient interests of the audience. But when an actress... a real actress goes on stage nude... That's art.

ACTRESS: Well, then you go out there "nude."

DIRECTOR: Those good people sitting out there in the dark didn't shell out big bucks to see my boobs. They shelled out big bucks to see yours.

ACTRESS: Well, then they're going to be very disappointed.

DIRECTOR: You walk out on me now and you'll never work naked in this town again.

(The Stage Manager enters carrying a clipboard)

STAGE MANAGER: What do you want to do, boss? Send the audience home?

DIRECTOR: Send the audience home? ? One never sends the audience home.

STAGE MANAGER: Because the show must go on?

DIRECTOR: Because we'd have to give back the money. You're new to the theatre, aren't you?

STAGE MANAGER: What are you going to do?

DIRECTOR: *(takes the Stage Manager's clipboard and pen and writes)* Here... Go out there and read this to the audience.

STAGE MANAGER: Me... I'm not an actor...

DIRECTOR: Just get out there.

(The Stage Manager walks downstage and nervously begins to read.)

STAGE MANAGER: Due to the completely unprofessional and unwarranted conduct on the part of the actress who was to perform the role of Helen

ACTRESS: Unprofessional? I am not unprofessional. You can call me a lot of things...

DIRECTOR: And many people have...

ACTRESS: But you cannot call me unprofessional because I wouldn't..?

DIRECTOR: Will you keep it down.

ACTRESS: Take my clothes off.

STAGE MANAGER: On the part of the actress who was to perform the role as it was written and as she specifically agreed to play the part

ACTRESS VOICE: I never agreed to go out there naked.

DIRECTOR: Nude... Not naked... And yes you did. I have it in writing.

STAGE MANAGER: As she specifically agreed to play the part when she was begging to be cast in the role.

ACTRESS: Beg? Beg? I have never begged for a role in my life. If I remember correctly you were the one down on your knees.

DIRECTOR: That was in a completely different context. Now, will you keep it down.

STAGE MANAGER: We are sorry to announce that Barbara Andrews will not be appearing as previously announced. In her place...

ACTRESS: In my place...???

STAGE MANGER: Hey, is this correct?

ACTRESS: In my place? You're going to send out a nobody in my place?

DIRECTOR: Not exactly. *(to Stage Manager)* Just read it.

STAGE MANAGER: Okay. *(reading)* No one will be playing the part of Helen.

DIRECTOR: I'm not sending out a "nobody" in your place. I'm sending out nobody.

ACTRESS VOICE: *(confused)* Nobody is going to play my part?

DIRECTOR: That's right. And she'll probably be ten times better at it.

ACTRESS: Don't you think the audience is going to notice that something isn't quite right?

DIRECTOR: That's the glory of theatre. The total suspension of disbelief.

ACTRESS: I don't believe this myself.

(An UPSTAGE DOOR OPENS and an ACTOR ENTERS holding the hand of a non-existent actress)

(The play continues...)

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