

THE SHOUT

AUTHOR-APPROVED CUTS FOR COMPETITION

This play, even as a one-act, may run long for competitions, and while it is best served in its complete and unabridged form, I have made the following cuts in order to achieve a forty-five minute running time for those interested in producing the play for a timed competition.

Any additional cuts must be cleared with the author in advance. Please contact: markrigney671@gmail.com.

p. 14:

Cut the following sequence:

CHARLIE. A beach? Here?

ERICA. Charlie, you can call him whatever you want, it changes nothing. The problem is systemic, the problem is widespread. He wears a badge, he's part of the problem.

(CHARLIE digs out a college textbook. Maybe Freedman's The Essential Feminist Reader?)

CHARLIE. You know what? When you get all high and mighty, you get condescending, and when you get condescending, I do not like you. And I don't want to be out in front of this asshole's house at five in the morning with someone I don't like.

ERICA. Good thing I'm your best friend.

CHARLIE. *(Studying her textbook:)* We are both so lucky.

ERICA. He's not the sweetness and light you think he is. Just because he has a mother. Even I've got a mother.

CHARLIE. Oh, don't worry. Nobody 'round here's mistaking you for sweetness and light.

ERICA. All right, peace. What do we have besides M&M's?

CHARLIE. Raisins, a half-eaten tub of cream cheese . . . oh, and look. Two cracker packs with fake peanut butter.

ERICA. I think we've got pretzels in the car.

CHARLIE. All gone.

ERICA. Grapes?

CHARLIE. Personally, I could really go for French toast.

ERICA. Yeah. With a side of bacon and eggs over easy.

CHARLIE. Goat cheese, parsley. Grits on the side.

ERICA. And this is day what, three? Aren't we off after tomorrow?

CHARLIE. Officially. Like we still have a schedule.

ERICA. Charlie.

CHARLIE. Whatever. French toast on Thursday. I'll buy.

ERICA. You can't afford it.

CHARLIE. Okay, you buy.

ERICA. I can't afford it.

CHARLIE. Commitment: expensive.

ERICA. I know. You'd think I'd remember.

CHARLIE. Like in Madison, the statehouse, Scott Walker? Or driving to Ferguson, crashing at that fleabag motel?

ERICA. Can we please not mention that place?

CHARLIE. So how'd, like, Martin Luther King and those guys do it? How did they hold a job? Deal with food, laundry . . .

ERICA. They had, you know. A support structure. People who funneled the money, wrote checks.

CHARLIE. So the next time you get us into being totally one hundred percent committed idealists, the next time you volunteer us to hold down the fort even after everyone else has gone home, how about you work first on making sure we've got a funnel?

ERICA. Now who's being mean?"

Return to the text as written with:

CHARLIE. Forget it, I'm just . . . (Etc.)

p. 16:

Cut the following sequence:

ERICA. You know what? This had better be about coffee, a lack of coffee, because right now, you are really bringing me down.

CHARLIE. (*Indicating the house:*) They don't raise the windows, they don't tell us to shut up or get lost. They don't even know we're here.

ERICA. They know.

CHARLIE. The only people I wake up with the shout is us!

ERICA. So we're done here, is that it? Ready to throw in the towel? Again?

CHARLIE. No.

ERICA. 'Cos we could. We could pack right now. Or we could just run out and loot the nearest CVS. That'll get the world's attention, make our point.

CHARLIE. Will you please stop?

Return to the text as written with:

ERICA. Okay, look. How about we place our bets . . . (Etc.)

p. 17:

Cut the following sequence:

CHARLIE. Oh! I thought you meant mice.

ERICA. Sunrise.

CHARLIE. But we always do mice before bets. We wake up, we have coffee, we check for mice . . .

ERICA. And how's that working out for you?

CHARLIE. Listen, my routines, out here? I know they're not special, and I do realize that flossing and split ends, mouse patrols, they aren't—as organizing principles—brilliant and perfect, but at this point [they're what I've got left and I need them].

ERICA. Charlie, I promise, we'll get to the mice. But today, betting first. Fifty cents on red.

Also, cut the top of CHARLIE's next line, so that it now reads:

CHARLIE. Not red. Hazy gold. A sort of yellowy gold-orange. (Etc.)

p. 25:

Cut the following sequence:

CHARLIE. Please don't be like that.

DANNY. (Embarrassed by his own outburst:) Like what?

CHARLIE. Like what you said before. The cop we don't want to meet.

DANNY. What makes you think there's anybody else here?

CHARLIE. Look. It is innocent until proven guilty. Even in college. But due process, it's not enough. You've got to look at the whole culture.

DANNY. He's not a culture, he's one guy.

CHARLIE. For anyone else, anyone not a cop, what happened last month would be murder.

DANNY. Whatever it was, this much is true: no more shout. That was the last.

CHARLIE. Try telling that to Erica.

DANNY. Soon as she gets back.

CHARLIE. She's not gonna listen—and I won't either. 'Cos that's what we do for each other, we back each other up. Best friends, share and share alike.

DANNY. Share and share alike, except with sleeping bags.

CHARLIE. Yeah, no, with that, I'm definitely short end of the stick. But pretty much everything else. We even shared a boyfriend once. (*Inner gulp moment.*) I did not just say that.

DANNY. No, that's, um [fine]. It never got said.

CHARLIE. It's not like it was long-term.

DANNY. Right. Unimportant.

CHARLIE. And it was late. Really late.

DANNY. Totally understandable.

CHARLIE. And we definitely weren't [thinking straight]. I mean, we'd just come out of *Rocky Horror*, and next thing we knew [we're back at my room with this boy . . .].

DANNY. "Rocky" what now?

CHARLIE. The college brought it in, and we were all calling home, asking our parents how to dress. And then, afterward . . .

DANNY. It's okay, you don't have to [explain].

Also, cut the top of CHARLIE's next line, so that it now reads:

CHARLIE. What I need to do is stop talking. (*Etc.*)

p. 29:

Cut the following sequence:

DANNY. Sorry, no.

ERICA. I'm not looking for company. Conversation.

DANNY. Oh, if I was after company, "conversation," I know a dozen bars, nice places—

ERICA. —Yeah. Cop bars—

DANNY. —Okay, no. Bars where cops might happen to feel welcome, yes, and where a person can get a drink and relax and have a conversation that doesn't feel like you're having your toenails ripped out.

ERICA. Like I said. Go anytime.

Return to the text as written with:

DANNY. What makes you think you're the one giving orders? (*Etc.*)

p. 32:

Cut the following sequence:

ERICA. Charlie, hard to [talk to]? No. Charlie is about the nicest, most genuine—and you know what? She's worth ten of you. Twenty. Because all she really wants is to be liked, but she'll throw that away, throw it out every time, in exchange for doing the right thing.

DANNY. That's not [a fair set-up]. You make that sound like a choice.

ERICA. What, you think you can have your badge, your gun, and still be just plain you, the guy with a deaf sister, the guy who keeps fish?

DANNY. I can, yes.

ERICA. Sorry. No.

DANNY. Look, growing up? The guy across the street? He was a cop. Big. Bigger than me. Sometimes he'd come 'round the schoolyard after hours, shoot a few baskets. Big cop playing ball with the kids. Full gear, uniform. Alley-oop! And my dad always said, we had the safest block in the whole city, 'cos we had a cop living right there. I loved that, that one guy in a uniform could make us safe. And maybe that's childish or hero worship or stupid or whatever, something you'd never study in college, but I am not ashamed of that. Of looking up to something important.

Return to the text as written with:

ERICA. Has it ever helped your sister . . . (*Etc.*)