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*Please Remove This Stuffed Animal
From My Head*
First Printing, 2010
Printed in U.S.A.

More Great Plays From OWP

Killed A Man In Reno

by Robin Hack

3 Males, 1 Female

Synopsis: Kurt and Julie Lawry travel to Reno, Nevada for a wild weekend. The biggest little city in the world doesn't have all the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas, but it is able to offer its own "unique" activities. As soon as Kurt and Julie arrive in their room, the trusty hotel concierge is at their service, offering to get show tickets, reserve gaming tables, make dinner reservations, or let them kill a man just to watch him die. *"It is what Reno, Nevada is famous for Mr. Lawry."*

Mrs. Henderson's Cat

by Lia Romeo

1 Male, 1 Female

Synopsis: Cats do not have nine lives. And when 10-year-old dork Bobby and 11-year-old pageant princess Christine accidentally kill the cat they are supposed to be caring for, they go on the lam to avoid their inevitable punishment. In a plot that twists and turns like a kitty headed for the bathtub, grand theft auto, petty larceny, sugar highs, pop music, and hand holding run wild.

Touchstone, U.S.A.

or How Terrorism Brought an American Family Back Together

by Paul North

3 Males, 3 Females

some play multiple roles

Synopsis: Billy converted to Islam causing his parents to think he's a terrorist; now the only solution is for the ghost of Billy's older sister, Liberty, to come back and set things right again. A look at the American family and all its dysfunction.

Please Remove This Stuffed Animal From My Head

A one act play
by Crystal Jackson

For Mason.
Meet you at the coast.
(P.S. DLR-era Van Halen was way better.)

Please Remove This Stuffed Animal From My Head was originally commissioned and presented by DiverseWorks in Houston, Texas on April 3, 2006 for Monday Night Footfall. The production was directed by the playwright; the stage manager was Dennis Draper; the evening was curated by Amy Steele Wernig.

The cast was as follows:

MAN	Robert McMillan
PHIL	Nelson Heggen
JERRY	Ben Mowbray
WOMAN	Julia Traber

Characters

MAN - Late 20s, wearing a smallish stuffed lion on his head. Semi-rebel.

PHIL - 50s, wearing a large stuffed frog on his head. Bible-thumper.

JERRY - Mid 30s, wearing a medium-sized stuffed animal on his head. Bureaucrat.

WOMAN - Age irrelevant, wearing no stuffed animal on her head. "The Woman."

Place

A gray office in a nondescript office building in a large city.

Time

The near present. Kind of.

[Please note: This is not a farce.]

Please Remove This Stuffed Animal From My Head

[Lights up on Man, who has a small stuffed lion attached to the top of his head. Phil and Jerry, who are elevated, also have stuffed animals stuck to their heads. The specific type of animal does not matter for Jerry, though it should be comical in some way. Phil should have a large stuffed frog on his head.]

JERRY

(not looking up from his files)
Would you like to take a seat?

[Man looks around for a chair. There is none.]

PHIL

I guess we don't have a chair for you. Sorry about that.

MAN

That's fine. I'm hoping I won't be here long.

JERRY

And what is the purpose of your visit?

MAN

(pointing to the stuffed animal on his head)
I'd like to get this removed, please.

JERRY

(still not looking up)
You'd like what removed?

MAN

The stuffed animal that's on my head.

PHIL

It's a lion.

MAN

I'd like the stuffed *lion* removed from my head. How soon can I get it done?

JERRY

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. We have a lot of questions that need to be answered before we discuss removal.

PHIL

Why don't you tell us why you'd like to undergo such a painful operation to remove something that's sooooo cute and cuddly?

MAN

Because I'm really not interested in having a stuffed animal on my head.

JERRY

Before we move any further, I'm under obligation to tell you that the removal procedure is potentially life-threatening.

MAN

I've read the studies. It's only life-threatening if you attempt it yourself.

JERRY

Have you attempted it yourself?

MAN

Of course not. I don't want to go to jail.

PHIL

We don't want you to go to jail either. We just want to talk things out, give you your options, like that.

MAN

I know my options. I can either keep the stuffed animal on my head or I can have it removed.

PHIL

Sounds like someone did their homework.

MAN

I was in the lobby for fifteen hours. I read the one brochure you offer over and over again.

JERRY

I'm sorry if you found the wait to be a bit lengthy. We like to take our time with these judgments, even if some of you are capricious in your decision to be here. We believe in doing things by the book.

MAN

I do things by the book. That's why I'm here. And I didn't mean to complain. I'm just really thirsty and tired and my feet hurt.

PHIL

Poor thing. Would you like some water?

MAN

That would be nice.

[Phil looks in desk for water. Out of habit, Phil supports his neck with one hand to counterbalance the effects of having had a larger-than-average stuffed animal on his head for so many years.]

PHIL

I guess we don't have any water. Sorry about that.

MAN

Thanks anyway. Looks like you're having a hard time there.

PHIL

No I'm not. Feelin' fine.

MAN

It looks like your neck hurts.

PHIL

It's an old army injury. Has nothing to do with Mr. Froggles, if that's what you're suggesting.

MAN

Must be hard to sleep with such a large stuffed animal on your head.

PHIL

It's not hard at all. In fact, I don't even need a pillow. Quite comfortable.

JERRY

We're here to talk about *your* stuffed animal.

PHIL

It looks like you.

JERRY

Tell us why you want the animal removed from your head.

MAN

I've just never had an interest in having a stuffed animal on my head. I don't know what else to say. It's simple, really.

JERRY

It's simple? You're willing to undergo a potentially life-threatening procedure to remove a stuffed animal from your head, and you call it simple?

PHIL

(touching his very large stuffed animal)
And he's such a manageable size.

MAN

I don't care how manageable he, *it*, is and I don't care how life-threatening the procedure is. I don't want to have this thing on my head for the rest of my life. It gives me a headache.

JERRY

Have you spoken with someone who's undergone this potentially life-threatening procedure?

MAN

I don't know anyone who's done it.

PHIL

You don't? We always assumed you all hung out together to discuss your hatred of little stuffed animals.

MAN

I don't hate little stuffed animals unless they're on my head. And I don't know anyone who's done it because I think most people are intimidated by the large amount of hoops one must go through to get the procedure approved

JERRY

(interrupting)
Potentially life-threatening procedure.

MAN

The *potentially* life-threatening procedure approved, so there aren't a lot of them out there. Almost like it's some sort of a, uh, deterrent. *(with less bravado)* To have to do all these things in order to get approval. *(quiet)* For the procedure.

PHIL

It'll take a while for your hair to grow back in that spot.

MAN

I'll wear a hat.

PHIL

Some report a crushing sense of loss after removal.

MAN

I'll cry myself to sleep.

PHIL

Your ability to have sexual relations may diminish.

MAN

Then I'll become a brilliant conversationalist.

PHIL

Is there a special someone in your life?

MAN

Does that make a difference?

JERRY

Please just answer the questions you are asked.

MAN

I'm seeing someone.

PHIL

And what does she think about your little furry friend?

[Man looks down at his crotch. Phil points at his head.]

MAN

She's happy with whatever I decide.

PHIL

How accommodating of her. But surely she has an opinion.

MAN

This is really my decision.

JERRY

Don't you think the person you're sharing your life with should have some say in what you do?

MAN

No, I don't. It's *my* head.

PHIL

Many women find men who lack a stuffed animal on their heads to be less attractive, less masculine than other men.

MAN

She'll love me regardless. We don't have a superficial relationship.

JERRY

And if she all of a sudden got really fat, I guess you're saying you'd still be with her?

MAN

She's really fat now, and I'm still with her.

JERRY

How open minded of you.

PHIL

Why do you hate stuffed animals?

MAN

I don't hate stuffed animals. I just hate having something stuck to my head. It's hot and my scalp itches.

PHIL

Have you thought that maybe there's a bigger reason for the appearance of your little friend?

MAN

I hope I'm here to do more with my life than be a man-sized hemorrhoid on the ass of a stuffed lion.

PHIL

Such language.

JERRY

While it is not exactly illegal to have the animal removed, you do need a compelling reason to do so. Do you have a compelling reason?

MAN

Isn't the fact that I want to have it removed reason enough?

JERRY

No.

PHIL

Just "wanting" it gone is not a reason. It's a passing fancy. That's why we recommend the two-month waiting period.

[Jerry begins flipping through a file full of paper.]

JERRY

I see from your file that you've only waited seven weeks.

MAN

Seven weeks and fifteen hours. *(looks at watch)* And seven minutes.

JERRY

We recommend eight weeks.

MAN

This was the only appointment open for the next month and a half.

JERRY

But we recommend eight weeks.

MAN

And if you go past twelve weeks, it's illegal to have it removed. Today was my only option.

PHIL

No, you have the option of not having the animal removed at all.

MAN

I'm not coming back in one week.

JERRY

I thought you did things by the book.

MAN

(nervous)

I mean, I don't want to come back next week. I will if I have to.

JERRY

I don't think we have anything open next week.

PHIL

Some people would say the book specifically prohibits removal of the stuffed animal.

MAN

All due respect, the people who wrote the book don't have to worry about stuffed animals being on their heads. I don't really think we should be strictly following rules created by people who won't ever have to face this issue.

PHIL

That's why we're allowed to interpret the book on a case-by-case basis.

JERRY

There are rules that must be followed. Protocol that must be honored. You get a fair hearing and then we make a fair decision, based on the facts.