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Pride and Prejudice: The Movie

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*To
Katherine Scoggins
and the
Kingsport Theater Guild, Kingsport, TN*

Pride and Prejudice: The Movie

FARCE. Sammy Samosa, a director of low-budget action films, has been ordered by studio brass to make a quality film. Desperate to save his job, Sammy selects a screenplay of Jane Austen's classic novel *Pride and Prejudice* but soon discovers there is no budget for a set, costumes, or film editing, and there's just one crew member to do the sound, lights, and camera work. To save money and time, Sammy ends up with a cast of "actors" including an overzealous Realtor, a hippie, a biker, a geek, a Goth, a fast-food worker, a bossy first-grade teacher, a wannabe Shakespearean actress, and a former cheerleader. Then to make matters worse, Sammy finds out he has just three days to shoot the entire movie, so he orders the cast to toss out the script and improvise the rest of the movie! This play will delight your audience with its host of hilarious characters.

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.

Characters

(6 M, 11 F, 4 flexible)

SAMMY SAMOSA: Director of low-budget action films; wears tacky clothes like a Hawaiian shirt, jams, and flip-flops; male.

RITA RICE: Sammy's assistant and movie screenwriter; wears executive clothing; female.

MRS./MR. DASHWOOD: Movie producer; wears executive clothing; flexible.

COSMO: Camera operator; wears work clothes; flexible.

VALERIE VAPOR: Gothic children's TV show actress; plays the role of Elizabeth Bennet; has black hair, Goth makeup, and wears black clothes.

JANE AIR: Air-headed, illiterate former cheerleader; plays the role of Jane Bennet; wears a cheerleading uniform.

HOLLY WOODS: Snobbish, preppy actress; plays the role of Lydia Bennet; wears preppy, designer clothes.

CINDY REMAXTON: Overzealous Realtor; plays the role of Miss Bingley; wears a skirt, blouse, and blazer with nametag.

MRS. NORMAND: Bossy, overbearing first-grade teacher; plays the role of Lady Catherine; wears an old-fashioned dress, gray wig, and granny glasses.

WINDY BREEZE: Egomaniac and wannabe Shakespearean actress; plays the role of Charlotte Lucas; wears a Shakespearian costume.

MOM: Sammy's mother; plays the role of Mrs. Bennet; wears an old-fashioned dress, gray wig, and granny glasses.

AUNT SALLY: Sammy's aunt; plays the roles of Mary Bennet and Catherine Bennet; wears an old-fashioned dress, gray wig, and granny glasses.

SARGENT PEPPER: Hippie; plays the role of Mr. Wickham; wears love beads, bell bottoms, a Nauru jacket, and John Lennon glasses; male.

AXEL TURBO: Biker who can't understand punctuation marks; plays the role of Mr. Bingley; has slicked-back hair and wears a T-shirt, leather jacket, jeans, cowboy boots, and sunglasses; male.

BUSTER BRUSTER: Geek who suffers from coughing fits and a never-ending cold; plays the role of Darcy; wears a white shirt with a pocket protector and lots of pens and geeky glasses with masking tape; male.

ACE BANDAGE: TV star on a survivor-type reality show; plays the role of Mr. Bennet; wears a plaid shirt and jeans; male.

WALT WAITS: Fast-food restaurant employee; plays the role of Mr. Collins; wears a fast-food uniform with a nametag and a Burger King crown; male.

LOUISA MAY ABCOTT: Hosts an entertainment TV show; female.

GEORGE ELIOT: Movie reviewer; female.

TEACHER: English teacher; flexible. (Note: If an actual teacher is cast in this role, his/her name may be substituted instead of Mr./Mrs. Mansfield Park.)

HOST: Host of the Academy Awards; wears a tuxedo; flexible.

NOTE: Character costumes should be outrageous and over the top (except for TV personalities).

Set

One simple set. There are two chairs DSR and an office desk, chair, and trashcan DSL.

Synopsis of Scenes

Act I

Scene 1: Television studio.

Scene 2: Sammy's office.

Scene 3: Television studio.

Scene 4: Sammy's office.

Scene 5: Television studio.

Scene 6: Set of "Pride and Prejudice," day one of the shoot.

Intermission (optional)

Act II

Scene 1: Television studio.

Scene 2: Set of "Pride and Prejudice," day two of the shoot.

Scene 3: Outside a theatre, opening night of "Pride and Prejudice."

Scene 4: Television studio.

Scene 5: Academy Awards ceremony; there is a podium CS.

Props

Desk	Coupon
3 Desk chairs	iPod with headphones
13 Scripts	Clipboard
Desk phone	Kleenex
Trashcan	Letter
Screenplay bound in a notebook	Podium
<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> novel	Small trophy
9 Résumés	Envelope
Business cards	

“Imagine...
a film with no budget,
no set,
no famous actors,
no costumes,
very little editing,
and a soundtrack
that sounds like elevator music...

This is cutting-edge filmmaking
at its best!

– George Eliot

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Television studio. Sammy Samosa, a movie director, is seated at a desk. Rita Rice, a writer, stands in front of the desk. Louisa May Abcott, a TV interviewer, and Mrs. Dashwood, a film producer, are on chairs DSL. Sammy and Rita freeze.)

LOUISA: *(To Audience.)* Welcome to "Inside the Movies." I'm Louisa May Abcott. The movies from Porcupine Film Studios have reputations much like the large rodents for which the studio is named...they can be very painful. My guest is the Production Manager of Porcupine Studios, Mrs. Emma Dashwood. *(To Dashwood.)* What can you tell us about the new owner of Porcupine?

DASHWOOD: Well, Louisa, I can tell you there are going to be some changes.

LOUISA: Porcupine is known for its low-budget action films. Their latest offering, "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 4" is due out this week. Is there anything you can tell us about it?

DASHWOOD: If you liked "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 3" then...well...maybe you should seek professional help.

LOUISA: What can you tell us about the new owner?

DASHWOOD: *(Looks toward Sammy and grins.)* Things are about to change, Louisa. The new owner is going to bring some much needed class to the studio.

LOUISA: Can you give us a little peek?

DASHWOOD: All I can say is the days of "Die Really Hard with Whatever" are over. We're going to produce some quality films.

LOUISA: Thank you, Mrs. Dashwood.

(They shake hands and exit. Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: *Sammy's office. Sammy is seated at his desk reading a script.*)

SAMMY: Rita, you've done it again! I love it! This is gonna be the best action film since "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 4"! There's a car chase and an explosion or a shootout on every page! Rita, you're a genius!

RITA: (*Smiles.*) Oh, I wouldn't say that, sir.

SAMMY: I wouldn't, either, except I need to flatter you so you keep writing this stuff. (*Rita frowns.*) So, what are we gonna call this one?

RITA: I was thinking about "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 5."

SAMMY: Hmm. It has the right kind of title for an action film, and it also has a ring of familiarity.

RITA: I wish we could produce something...you know...serious.

SAMMY: This *is* serious! We've got a covert government agency fighting another covert agency to take over the government from a third covert agency. What more could we want?

RITA: Something I can be proud of.

SAMMY: You're giving employment to a bunch of actors who would otherwise be unemployed because they don't have enough talent to chew and walk gum... (*That's correct.*) ...at the same time. You can be proud of that. (*Mrs. Dashwood enters and crosses to the desk. Sammy stands and shakes her hand.*) Hey, look! It's the producer, Mrs. Dashwood. (*To Mrs. Dashwood.*) How do ya like the new movie, boss?

DASHWOOD: It's identical to your last ten movies.

SAMMY: So you're saying it's good.

DASHWOOD: Sammy, I think your movies are garbage. But what I think isn't important. What the owner of Porcupine Studios thinks *is* important. And as you are probably aware, we have a new owner.

SAMMY: Oh, yeah. Some guy from France.

DASHWOOD: He's from England.

SAMMY: Same difference.

DASHWOOD: Not if you're French...or English...or know anything about geography.

SAMMY: Luckily, I ain't any of those.

DASHWOOD: The new owner, Mr. Willoughby, wants to change the direction of Porcupine Studios. He wants us to move away from action films.

SAMMY: But we got one already to go here.

(Sammy hands Dashwood the script. She tosses it in the trashcan.)

DASHWOOD: No more cheap action movies.

SAMMY: Can we do cheap horror movies? I always wanted to direct one of those. How about "Saturday, the 14th," or "The California Chainsaw Massacre"! We can move the "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" next door.

DASHWOOD: Sammy, Texas and California aren't next door to each other.

RITA: There are a couple of states in between.

SAMMY: You mean Nebraska and Ohio?

DASHWOOD: We're not going to do horror movies.

SAMMY: So if we ain't gonna do action films, and we ain't gonna do horror, what are we gonna do? I mean, what else is there?

DASHWOOD: Mr. Willoughby wants something with class.

SAMMY: *(Offended.)* Hey! My films got class!

RITA: She means high class.

DASHWOOD: That's right. Pitch me something I can sell to Mr. Willoughby, or you're both fired.

SAMMY/RITA: *(Horried.)* Fired?!

DASHWOOD: Any ideas? *(Silence.)* I thought not.

RITA: Mrs. Dashwood, I might have something we can use.

DASHWOOD: Didn't you write "Die Very Hard with Lots of Vengeance"?

RITA: That's "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance," Parts 1 through 4, and I only wrote those to get my foot in the door.

DASHWOOD: The door is about to slam on your foot.

RITA: Please, Mrs. Dashwood, I already have a script in mind!

DASHWOOD: I need it by tomorrow. No one can write a screenplay in one day.

RITA: It's already written. And it's based on a literary classic...a British literary classic.

DASHWOOD: What literary classic?

RITA: "Pride and Prejudice."

DASHWOOD: *(Surprised.)* "Pride and Prejudice"? *(Rita nods.)* You can't be serious!

RITA: After I finished film school, I tried to get a job at a good film company, but I ended up here. I can write good films.

DASHWOOD: "Pride and Prejudice" has been made into a movie several times.

RITA: My screenplay is faithful to the novel...more so than the recent films.

DASHWOOD: What about the price?

SAMMY: Have I ever spent a lot of money on a movie?

DASHWOOD: This could be a chance to really turn around the studio... *(Aside.)* Or to get rid of Sammy and his crew once and for all. *(To Sammy.)* You're about to make a great movie...or at least a bad movie based on a great story. Congratulations! *(Shakes hands with Rita.)* This could be a big step up for you...or it could be the end of your career and you'll end up working as a clerk in a convenience store.

RITA: Don't you want to read the script first?

DASHWOOD: The less I know, the better. I'm going to tell Mr. Willoughby we have ourselves a classic. *(Exits.)*

SAMMY: (*Sarcastic.*) Congratulations, Rita! You pitched a film and now I get to shoot it!

RITA: But it may have saved our jobs.

SAMMY: You could be right. What's with the "Pride and Prejudice" thing?

RITA: "Pride and Prejudice."

SAMMY: Whatever. Give me the lowdown.

RITA: Well...the Bennets have five unmarried daughters and Mrs. Bennet wants to see them all married. A wealthy gentleman named Mr. Bingley rents a nearby estate and he falls in love with the oldest daughter, Jane. Mr. Bingley's friend is Mr. Darcy, and he and Jane's sister Elizabeth absolutely hate each other. At first, Elizabeth thinks she's in love with a soldier named Mr. Wickham, but he proves to be dishonest and ends up eloping with Lydia, the youngest sister.

SAMMY: Is this gonna get interesting soon?

RITA: Of course. Mr. Collins, a really boring clergyman, shows up and proposes to Elizabeth, but she rejects him. If the Bennet girls don't marry and leave a male heir, Mr. Collins will inherit their estate. He has a patroness named Lady Catherine and she's very pompous, but then so is he.

SAMMY: (*Confused.*) Hey, Rita, you lost me.

RITA: It's kind of a complicated story.

SAMMY: So who gets robbed, or kidnapped, or falls out of an airplane?

RITA: No one. It's a novel by Jane Austen.

SAMMY: The lady who writes the horror stories?

RITA: No! She wrote clever and witty stories about the layers of British society! Strong heroines! Timeless prose! An energetic family circle! She's considered the first great modern novelist!

SAMMY: Look, I weren't all that great in English class at school.

RITA: (*Sarcastic.*) No kidding.

SAMMY: But I do know movies. And this don't sound like a Sammy Samosa movie. But I guess we gotta do what we gotta do. Get the screenplay and the source material. We'll have a look. *(Rita exits. Sammy returns to his desk and picks up his phone.)* Hello? Ralph? I need some actors for a new project. I don't wanna pay 'em a lot, so get 'em from that cheap agent who operates out of the booth at Burger King.

(Rita returns carrying a screenplay bound in a notebook and a copy of the novel "Pride and Prejudice." She crosses to Sammy.)

SAMMY: What took ya so long?

RITA: I was only gone about 20 seconds!

SAMMY: Ya gotta do better than that, Miss Rice. Let's see what you got here. *(Looks through the novel.)* Whoa! What's with all these words? It's like they fill up the whole page! Where's the scene headings, the action shots, the dialogue? How does anybody read this stuff?

RITA: This is the novel. Have you ever read a novel?

SAMMY: No. *(He looks through Rita's screenplay.)* Now this is more like it. It starts with a voiceover. *(Reads.)* "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." What the heck's that supposed to mean?

RITA: It's the opening of the novel. It sets the mood and the tone of the story.

SAMMY: How did he get the fortune? Did he rob a bank? Rip off the mob? Steal some diamonds? We need a little back story here, Miss Rice. When's the first car chase?

RITA: It's set in England in the early 1800s. There were no cars!

SAMMY: I'm gonna need a little help with this one. I'm making you the assistant director.

RITA: *(Excited.)* That's wonderful! Will I get a raise?

SAMMY: No. Let's get some actors in here and shoot this movie.

(Sammy and Rita exit. Blackout.)

Scene 3

(AT RISE: Television studio. Louisa and George enter and sit down on the chairs DSL.)

LOUISA: (To audience.) Welcome to "Inside the Movies." With me is film critic George Eliot who is going to tell us about a new action film.

GEORGE: That's right, Louisa. The film is called "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 4" and it's the latest action film from director Sammy Samosa.

LOUISA: How does this compare with the other three films?

GEORGE: How do I put this? (Thinks.) I thought "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 1" was the worst film ever made. Then I saw Part 2 and Part 3. Each movie was worse than the previous one. The new movie is weaker than water. It's dumber than dirt. It's slower than slugs.

LOUISA: Enough with the alliteration. What about the plot?

GEORGE: What plot?

LOUISA: The actors?

GEORGE: What actors?

LOUISA: The special effects?

GEORGE: Watching paint dry is more interesting.

LOUISA: I take it this is not a movie for children.

GEORGE: It's not a movie for anybody, Louisa. Porcupine Studios continues to produce the cheapest, most boring movies in the industry.

LOUISA: Thank you, George.

(George drops to his knees.)

GEORGE: (Begs.) Please don't ever make me see one of those awful movies again!

LOUISA: Sorry, George. Someone has to do it.

(They exit. Blackout.)

Scene 4

(AT RISE: Sammy's office. Sammy and Rita enter. Sammy sits behind the desk. Rita stands beside him. Valerie, Jane Air, and Buster Bruster enter SR and cross to Rita. Each hands Rita a resume.)

RITA: (Reads through Valerie's resume.) Valerie Vapor? Is that your screen name?

VALERIE: (Indifferent.) Yeah. So what?

RITA: I see you've done a lot of children's television.

VALERIE: I'm...like...sick of it. Anyway, the director said my negative attitude was causing the viewers to have some kind of syndrome...like I care.

(Rita hands her a script.)

RITA: Read the part highlighted in red.

VALERIE: (Reads in a monotone.) "You must decide for yourself. And if, upon mature deliberation, you find that the misery of disobliging his two sisters is more than equivalent to the happiness of being his wife, I advise you by all means to refuse him." Whatever that means.

(Rita takes the script from her.)

RITA: Thank you. (Reads Jane's resume. Looks at Sammy and rolls her eyes.) Your name is Jane Air?

JANE: Yeah. My agent said it kind of went with my personality.

RITA: The only experience on your resume is high school cheerleader.

JANE: That was really fun, until they kicked me off the squad. I couldn't remember all the cheers, or the moves, or how to do the pompoms the right way.

RITA: Have you ever been in a movie before?
JANE: Not yet. My agent said this would be a good place to start since it's such a crummy studio.
SAMMY: *(Offended.)* What's your agent's name?
JANE: Uncle Johnny. He's my mother's sister...I mean my sister's mother. I mean he's related to me somehow.
RITA: What makes you think you can be an actress?
JANE: Well, I can't do anything else.

(Rita hands Jane the script.)

RITA: Read.
JANE: *(Struggles to read.)* "You must decline..."
RITA: Decide.
JANE: *(Struggles to read.)* "...decide for yourself. And if, upon mature...dehydration..."
RITA: Deliberation.
JANE: This has got some tough words.

(Rita takes the script from Jane and rolls her eyes.)

RITA: *(Insincere.)* Thank you. *(Reads Buster's resume.)* Buster Bruster?
BUSTER: Yes, sir! *(Valerie elbows him. He puts on a pair of geeky glasses and smiles at Rita.)* Uh...ma'am. *(He sniffles and wipes his nose with the back of his hand and then shakes hands with Rita.)* I kinda got a cold.

(Rita looks at her hand in disgust and then wipes her hand on her clothes.)

RITA: I see you've worked in film before.
BUSTER: I was in an educational film called "Your Friend the Slide Rule." *(Coughs.)*
RITA: It says here you were in "Titanic."

BUSTER: I worked for Titanic. Titanic Accountants. I'm really good with numbers.

RITA: Have you ever been in a *real* movie?

BUSTER: "Your Friend the Slide Rule."

(He coughs. Rita hands him the script.)

RITA: Read the part highlighted in yellow.

BUSTER: *(While coughing and sniffing, reads.)* "Were it certain that Lady... *(Cough.)* ...Catherine would think so... *(Sniffle.)* ...but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would disapprove..."

(Buster has a coughing fit. Rita takes the script from him.)

RITA: Thank you very much. That will be all.

(Valerie, Jane, and Buster exit.)

SAMMY: What'd ya think?

RITA: They were awful!

SAMMY: But they're cheap.

RITA: Do you have any hand sanitizer? *(Holds out the script, grossed out by Buster having held it.)*

SAMMY: Why would I have something like that? *(Shouts.)*
Next!

(Sergeant Pepper, Axel Turbo, and Cindy Remaxton enter SL, cross to Rita, and hand her their resumes.)

RITA: Sergeant Pepper?

SARGENT: Peace. *(Flashes peace sign.)*

RITA: Your name is Sergeant Pepper?

SARGENT: Yeah. Isn't that cool?

RITA: You've worked in movies, I see.

SARGENT: "Zombie Killers from the Planet Krypton." I was Captain Knish. And I was Lieutenant Latke in "The Deli That Screamed Blood."

SAMMY: I thought you looked familiar. *(To Rita, proudly.)*
Those were two of my early pictures.

RITA: You realize we're doing a film adaptation of "Pride and Prejudice."

SARGENT: Yeah, cool...whatever that is.

(Rita hands him the script.)

RITA: Read the highlighted part.

SARGENT: *(Reading à la hippie.)* "Were it certain that...like...Lady Catherine would think so, but I cannot...ya know, man...imagine that her ladyship would at all...like...disapprove of you...or anything uncool..."

RITA: Can you read it without throwing in the extras?

SARGENT: Like...you know...what...like...uh...like...extras...
man?

(Rita takes the script from him.)

RITA: Okay. Who else do we have? *(Looks at resumes.)* Axel Turbo.

AXEL: You got it, good buddy.

RITA: Your name is Axel?

AXEL: Yeah. My daddy was a trucker...so was my mama.

SAMMY: *(To Rita.)* Axel was in "Die Really Hard with a Really Big Vengeance, Part 2." Or was it Part 3?

AXEL: I was the Evil Biker Dude who gets killed at the end of Part 2. Then I'm back in Part 3. I also did "Terminator Versus Alien, Part 4," "Gladiator Versus Godzilla, Part 3," and "Predator Versus Dracula, Part 2." But Mr. Samosa's picture was my all-time favorite. *(To Sammy.)* Working with you was like working with somebody who knew what they were doing...only better.

(Axel and Sammy high-five each other. Rita hands Axel the script.)

RITA: Read.

AXEL: Aw, man! You mean I gotta read? *(Rita glares at him in stunned disbelief.)* Okay. *(Reads but doesn't understand punctuation.)* "Were it certain. That Lady Catherine would. Think so. But I cannot. Imagine that her lady. Uh...disapprove..."

(Rita takes the script from Axel.)

RITA: Okay. Let's see who else we have. *(Reading resume.)*
Cindy Remaxton.

(Cindy crosses to Rita, shakes her hand, and acts like a high-pressure Realtor.)

CINDY: Hi. I'm Cindy. And you are...?

RITA: Uh...Rita.

CINDY: Rita. How nice to meet you. *(Hands her a business card.)* I have a two-bedroom, two-bath condo listed at a great price. Great neighborhood. Great schools. Great shopping. Motivated sellers. I'd love to show it to you after the audition. My number's on the card.

RITA: *(Reading resume.)* I see when you're not acting, you sell real estate.

CINDY: That's right, Rita. And I can find a home exactly in your price range.

RITA: *(Reading resume.)* You were in a film called "Oh, Sister, What Art Thou?"

CINDY: I sold the director a beautiful 4-bedroom, 4-bath, colonial with an in-ground pool in a great neighborhood. That might be a little out of your price range.

RITA: I'm not looking for a house!

CINDY: You should think about it. *(Rita hands Cindy the script.)* Okay. What do we have here? *(With the over exuberance of a salesperson, reads.)* “You must decide for yourself, and if, upon mature deliberation, you find that the misery of disobliging his two sisters is more than equivalent to the happiness of being his wife, I advise you by all means...”

(Rita grabs the script away from Cindy.)

RITA: Thank you. That will be all. *(Sergeant, Axel, and Cindy exit.)* This is discouraging.

SAMMY: Let’s see who else we got. *(Shouts.)* Next!

(Holly Woods, Mrs. Normand, and Ace Bandage enter SL and hand Rita their resumes.)

RITA: *(Looking at resume.)* Is your name really Holly Woods?

HOLLY: Yeah. So what?

RITA: It’s kind of...pretentious, don’t you think?

HOLLY: Hey! It’s my name! All right?

RITA: You mean Holly Woods is your *real* name? Not just a stage name?

HOLLY: Well, yeah!

RITA: *(Reading resume.)* You worked for [Tim Burton]? *[Or insert the name of another director.]* The Tim Burton?

HOLLY: Well, yeah! He managed the dress shop where I tried to work. My parents made me get a job. But I showed them.

RITA: Have you ever been *in* a movie...like in front of the camera?

HOLLY: Yeah. I was in “Preppy Girls from Vampire University.”

SAMMY: That was a great film!

HOLLY: You're not very bright, are you? *(Rita hands her the script. Holly looks it over and chuckles. To Rita.)* You're kidding.

RITA: This is an audition. You are supposed to read.

HOLLY: *(In a singsong voice, reads.)* "You must decide for yourself and if upon mature deliberation you find that the misery of disobliging his two sisters..." blah, blah, blah.

(Rita grabs the script away from her.)

RITA: Who's next? *(Looks through resumes.)* Mrs. Normand? I see you're an elementary school teacher.

NORMAND: I am. And did I say you could stand up and walk around? *(Firmly.)* Sit down and put your hands in your lap!

(Rita sits on the desk and puts her hands in her lap.)

RITA: Mrs. Normand, we're looking for actors, not elementary school teachers.

NORMAND: I *am* an actor!

RITA: Have you ever acted before?

NORMAND: Of course! I played all of the bunny rabbits in "Peter Cottontail."

RITA: A children's play?

NORMAND: One of my bunny rabbits got sick, so I stepped in. And it's a good thing I did! Those children forgot all their lines! I performed every single role! If it hadn't been for me, there wouldn't have been a play! That's when I made the discovery...acting is in my blood. *(Rita hands her the script. In a bossy tone, reads.)* "You must decide for yourself, and if, upon mature deliberation, you find that the misery of disobliging his two sisters is more than equivalent to the happiness of being his wife, I advise you by all means to refuse him!"

(Rita takes the script away from Mrs. Normand.)

RITA: (*Looking at resume.*) Okay. Next we have Ace Bandage.

ACE: I did a TV show called "Ace Bandage Survives Anything." The crew would drop me in the middle of nowhere, and I'd have to walk out. I did the rainforests of Brazil, Antarctica in the winter, the Sahara desert in a sandstorm—

SAMMY: Didn't that show go off the air?

ACE: Yeah. They replaced me with a show called "The World's Deadliest Garbage." Who would ever believe that people would watch a show about landfills?

SAMMY: Hey! I love that show!

ACE: I'd be real good in horror movies. I can eat bugs and worms. I've lived off of grubs and raw fish for weeks. I've also eaten an entire tree.

(*Rita hands Ace a script.*)

RITA: Read.

ACE: (*Reads.*) "Were it certain that Lady—"

RITA: Thank you, Mr. Bandage. That will be all.

ACE: But I didn't get to finish.

RITA: We'll get back to you...maybe. (*Holly, Mrs. Normand, and Ace exit.*) I can't believe these people!

(*Windy Breeze, an actress with a big ego, enters.*)

WINDY: I'm here.

RITA: Do you have a resume?

WINDY: Don't you recognize me?

RITA: Should we?

WINDY: I'm Windy Breeze. I brought this just in case. (*Hands Rita a resume.*) I thought surely you would recognize me.

RITA: (*Looking at resume.*) You've done a lot of Shakespeare. "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Romeo and Juliet,"

“Much Ado About Nothing.” Where did you perform all of these plays?

WINDY: Actually...I didn't perform in them. I auditioned for them.

RITA: But you listed them on your resume.

WINDY: Well, if I didn't list all of the plays I've auditioned for, my resume wouldn't have anything on it.

RITA: You can't list experience on your resume that you haven't had!

WINDY: I just did! I am an excellent actress! I went to the Royal Shakespeare Company.

SAMMY: What's that?

RITA: You studied at the Royal Shakespeare Company?

WINDY: No. I went to a play. Then I auditioned at every theater company I could find. Now I'm ready to do film. I've prepared an audition. Are you ready?

RITA: We're looking for actual experience.

WINDY: Here goes. *(Meditates and then takes a deep breath. Shouts out her lines, which startles Rita and Sammy.)* “What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?” *(Sammy is so scared he has crawled under his desk.)*

RITA: *(Trying to interrupt Windy.)* Thank you, Miss Breeze. That's quite enough—

WINDY: *(Shouts out the lines.)* “The thane of fife had a wife. Where is she now? What, will these hands ne'er be clean? No more of that, my lord, no more of that—”

(Rita finally puts her hand over Windy's mouth. Windy stops. Rita slowly removes her hand.)

SAMMY: Wow! That was really loud!

WINDY: It's from “Macbeth.” I wanted to make sure you heard me.

RITA: Thank you, Miss Breeze. We'll get back to you.

(Windy exits. Sammy sits up at his desk. Walter Waits enters.)

WALTER: Wait! I'm not too late for the auditions, am I? I'm Walter. Walter Waits.

(Walter shakes hands with Rita and Sammy. Rita and Sammy look at their hands and then wipe their hands on their clothes.)

RITA: Do you have a resume?

WALTER: Uh...I don't know. What is it?

RITA: A list of your professional experience.

WALTER: I've worked at every fast food restaurant in the city.

RITA: What about acting?

WALTER: I acted like the food was good.

RITA: What about movies?

WALTER: I like 'em.

RITA: We're casting a film called "Pride and Prejudice."

WALTER: Yeah. That's why I'm here. I'll do anything to get out of fast food! Please give me a chance! *(Hands Rita a coupon.)* This will get you a free drink with any Big Meal. You give me the job, and it's yours.

SAMMY: I'll take it. *(Grabs the coupon.)*

RITA: Thank you, Mr. Waits. You'll hear from us if we're interested.

WALTER: When you get your free drink, don't tell the boss where you got that coupon. *(Exits.)*

SAMMY: You know, Miss Rice, I'm tired of auditions. Let's just cast this thing with the actors we've got.

RITA: What actors? We haven't auditioned any actors!

(Sammy takes the resumes and the screenplay.)

SAMMY: I'll do it.

(Sammy starts to write while Rita tries to look over his shoulder.)

RITA: What are you doing?

SAMMY: I'm casting "Pride and Prejudice." Watch this. *(As he reads their names, the actors enter and freeze in character upstage.)* Elizabeth Bennet will be played by... *(Looks over resumes.)* ...Valerie Vapor.

RITA: You can't be serious!

SAMMY: Jane Bennet will be played by Jane Air. That makes sense...two Janes. Maybe we'll only have to pay her once.

RITA: I have to protest—

SAMMY: Holly Woods will be Lydia Bennet. Mrs. Normand will be Miss Bingley.

RITA: But Miss Bingley is a young lady! Not an old bat!

SAMMY: Sergeant Pepper can be Mr. Wickman. Ace Bandage can be Mr. Bennet. Axel Turbo can play Mr. Bingley, whoever he is.

RITA: He's a romantic lead!

SAMMY: Mr. Darcy can be the guy with the runny nose...Buster Bruster. And Mr. Collins will be portrayed by Walter Waits.

RITA: The guy has never acted before in his life!

SAMMY: But he's desperate.

RITA: Sir, this isn't going to work!

SAMMY: Let's see here...Windy Breeze can be Charlotte Lucas. We need Mrs. Bennet, Mary, and Catherine. I know... *(Dials. Into phone.)* Hey. How'd you like to be in a movie...Great. Hurry down to the studio. Bring Aunt Sally. *(Hangs up.)* That's it. Let's shoot a movie. *(Dashwood enters and crosses to the desk.)* Hey, boss! We cast the movie.

DASHWOOD: Mr. Willoughby wasn't all that excited about "Pride and Prejudice." He had to read it in high school, and apparently, he didn't do so well on the test. But I talked him into it.

RITA: I'm hoping we can shoot the film in Jane Austen's house in Chawton.

SAMMY: Where's that?

RITA: It's in Hampshire.

SAMMY: Like New Hampshire?

RITA: Old Hampshire. As in England.

DASHWOOD: There are a couple of stipulations.

RITA/SAMMY: Like what?

DASHWOOD: We know that "Pride and Prejudice" is a period piece...set in 19th-century England. Well, you're going to have to shoot it here. And you have no budget for costumes...or anything else.

RITA: We can't do that!

SAMMY: It can't be that hard to make. You run along and tell Mr. Willoughby that movie's as good as done.

DASHWOOD: (*Sarcastic.*) I can't wait to see it.

(All exit. Blackout.)

Scene 5

(AT RISE: Television studio. Louisa enters and sits DSL.)

LOUISA: Porcupine Studios just announced that it will produce a new version of the classic novel "Pride and Prejudice." Quite a change for a studio that's known for action films. To give us some prospective, we have a real high school language arts teacher, [Mrs. Mansfield Park]. [Note: If an actual teacher is cast in this role his/her name may be substituted.] [Mrs. Park], what can you tell us about the novel "Pride and Prejudice"?

TEACHER: It's a love story by Jane Austen written in 1813. It's set in a time when people were expected to behave in certain ways, and it shows the class divisions of England at the dawn of the Industrial Age. The Darcy and Bingley families are snobbish. Mrs. Bennet is somewhat of a social climber and wishes for her daughters to marry the right gentlemen. A character named Mr. Collins is a name-dropping snob. His patron is a very arrogant socialite named Lady Catherine.

LOUISA: How is a story like that relevant today?

TEACHER: It's a well-written and well-loved look into a very different time. And it's lighthearted and has a happy ending. "Pride and Prejudice" is a novel my students actually enjoy reading.

LOUISA: Has it been made into a movie before?

TEACHER: Several times. All the film versions are excellent.

LOUISA: Are you familiar with the films of director Sammy Samosa?

TEACHER: I'm afraid so, Louisa.

LOUISA: What kind of film of "Pride and Prejudice" do you think Samosa will make?

TEACHER: I think it will be horrible.

LOUISA: Thank you for your insight.

TEACHER: Anytime.
(*They shake hands and exit. Blackout.*)

Scene 6

(AT RISE: On the set of "Pride and Prejudice," day one of the shoot. The Actors enter carrying scripts. They cross downstage and stand in various positions – primping, texting on their phones, sleeping, etc. Only Buster pays attention to Rita.)

RITA: *(To actors.)* Ladies and gentlemen...and others...we're about to embark on a wonderful film experience. "Pride and Prejudice" has the distinction of not only being one of the great stories in the English language, it's also one of my personal favorites. As the screenwriter and assistant director of this project, I am overjoyed by the opportunity—

SAMMY: Hey, Rita! Knock off the intro! Let's get on with it!

RITA: Okay. I need Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. We don't have a Mrs. Bennet.

MOM: *(Offstage. Shouts.)* Sammy! Where are you?

SAMMY: In here, Mom! On the soundstage!

(Mom and Aunt Sally enter. Mom rushes to Sammy and makes a fuss over him.)

MOM: Did you drink your milk this morning? Are you taking your vitamins? What is with this shirt? I buy you nice clothes!

SAMMY: *(Embarrassed.)* Mom! Enough already! We're shooting a movie, and we need you and Aunt Sally to be in it.

SALLY: Is this one of those awful violent things you make? I can't stand those things!

SAMMY: No. It's a British story. You know...boring.

MOM: I can keep an eye on you if we're working on a movie together. *(To others.)* I have to call him every day and remind him to change his socks.

SALLY: He's old enough to change his own socks!

MOM: Do you know what's best for him? Are you his mother? I don't think so!

SAMMY: Okay. Mom, you're Mrs. Bennet. And Aunt Sally, you're Mary Catherine.

(Sammy hands scripts to Mom and Aunt Sally.)

RITA: But Mary and Catherine are two different characters.

SAMMY: Not in this movie.

RITA: You're casting your mother and aunt in our movie?

SAMMY: Why not? They work cheap, and Aunt Sally makes good chicken soup. Hey, Cosmo! *(Cosmo enters listening to an iPod and swaying to unheard music.)* Take that thing off!

(Sammy pulls the headphones off Cosmo)

COSMO: Hey, man! That was painful!

SAMMY: Is the crew ready to shoot the film?

COSMO: We kind of lost the crew. Mrs. Dashwood put them on another movie, "The Sound of Music, Part 2."

RITA: How can they make a sequel to "The Sound of Music"?

COSMO: I think it has something to do with aliens from another planet and a singing dog.

SAMMY: So who's doing sound? Lights? Camera?

COSMO: Me.

RITA: What about costumes? Sets? Locations?

COSMO: You.

RITA: We can't shoot a film with *one* crew member!

SAMMY: I've done it lots of times. You wanna say anything else before we start, Miss Rice?

RITA: How many of you have read "Pride and Prejudice"? *(No response.)* It's a novel by Jane Austen. Very famous. *(No response.)* You might have read it in high school? *(Actors snicker.)* It's the story of the romances and marriages of the Bennett sisters—

SAMMY: Okay. Let's start this thing. Places! *(The desk is removed. An extra chair is brought out. Sammy and Rita sit downstage. All actors exit except Mom, who looks over her script. Offstage. Shouts.)* Action!

MOM: Do not raise your voice to your mother!

SAMMY: *(Meekly.)* Sorry.

MOM: *(Reads from script.)* "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife." What a strange thing to say.

RITA: Your part is supposed to be memorized.

MOM: How can I memorize it? You just handed it to me!

SAMMY: We can edit out the script...maybe. Keep going.

MOM: *(Reads.)* "Oh, Mr. Bennet. There's a new resident at Netherfield Park. His name is Mr. Bingley and he is from the north of England."

(Ace enters.)

ACE: *(To Rita, indicating Mom.)* Am I supposed to be married to this old lady?

MOM: See here, young man!

ACE: Sorry. I mean, to this old bat. *(Mom takes a swing at Ace with her script.)* You know, I ate bats to stay alive when I was trying to walk out of the Carlsbad Caverns. They turned out the lights. All I had was a book of matches and a piece of string—

SAMMY: I'm sure it's real interesting, but we're trying to shoot a movie here!

ACE: Sorry. *(Reads.)* "Is this Mr. Bingley married or single?"

MOM: *(Reads.)* "Mrs. Bennet. *(With wide-eyed excitement.)* Single."

RITA: Don't read that part.

MOM: But it says, "Mrs. Bennet with wide-eyed excitement. Single!"

RITA: That's a stage direction. Read the dialogue.

(Sammy crosses to Mom and shows her where to read.)

MOM: Well, how am I supposed to keep up with all that?

RITA: *(Frustrated. Shouts.)* Just read it!

SAMMY: Hey! That's my mama you're talking to!

RITA: *(Indicates Ace.)* But he called her an old bat!

SAMMY: He didn't raise his voice.

RITA: *(Calmly, to Mom.)* Read it. Please. *(Returns to her chair.)*

MOM: *(Reads.)* "My dear Mr. Bennet, how can you be so tiresome? You must know I am thinking of his marrying one of them."

ACE: *(Reads.)* "Is his design to settle here?"

MOM: I lost my place. *(Rita crosses to Mom and points to her script.)* Oh. *(Reads.)* "Design. Nonsense. How can you talk so? He may fall in love with one of them, and you must visit him as soon as he arrives." *(To Rita.)* This doesn't make a bit of sense.

ACE: *(Reads.)* "You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves. That may be better, for you are as beautiful as any of them and Mr. Bingley may like you best." *(To Rita.)* Those must be some really unattractive daughters. *(Mom repeatedly hits Ace with her script.)* Hey! Knock it off, lady!

(Rita tries to break up the brawl.)

SAMMY: *(Shouts.)* Cut!

(Brawl ends.)

RITA: Scene 2! A dance in town. Jane Bennet dances with Mr. Bingley. *(Mom and Ace cross upstage. Jane and Axel enter and cross to Rita.)* Dance. *(They awkwardly dance with each other.)* Well?

AXEL: How are we supposed to dance and read this thing at the same time?

RITA: Skip the dance and go to Scene 3. (*Shouts.*) Buster!

(*Buster enters and crosses downstage. Axel crosses to Buster.*)

AXEL: (*In a tough biker voice, reads.*) "I think that Jane Bennet is the most beautiful creature I've ever seen." (*Aside.*) Like I'd really say something like that. (*Reads.*) "What do you think about her sister Elizabeth? Quite a beauty, no?"

BUSTER: (*Sniffs, wipes his nose, reads.*) "She is not handsome enough to tempt me, and I don't care for women who are slighted by other men."

(*Buster coughs. Valerie enters and crosses to Jane.*)

JANE: (*Reads.*) "I am inclined to think that Mr. Bingley is a most capturing..."

RITA: That's "captivating."

JANE: (*Reads.*) "...and hand *some* gentle man."

RITA: It's "handsome gentleman" not "hand *some* gentle man"!

JANE: (*Reads.*) "How do you fiend..."

RITA: "Find"!

JANE: (*Reads.*) "Mr. Doorsey?"

RITA: "Darcy"!

VALERIE: (*Reads.*) "I find Mr. Darcy to be a most disagreeable man." And I'm gonna break his hand if he doesn't keep it away from his nose!

(*Buster quickly moves his hand to his side.*)

SAMMY: (*Shouts.*) Cut! Scene 4.

(*Cindy, Normand, and Holly enter and cross to Jane and Valerie.*)

CINDY: (*Reads.*) "Our sister certainly is taken with the handsome Mr. Bingley."

NORMAND: *(Reads.)* "And he with her."

HOLLY: *(Reads.)* "I do hope I can find a husband soon." Not!

CINDY: *(Reads.)* "Must we wait for our eldest sister's marriage before we take a husband?" These women need a life!

NORMAND: *(Reads.)* "So tell us, Elizabeth. How did you find Mr. Darcy?"

VALERIE: I think he's a creep!

(Sally enters and crosses to the girls.)

SALLY: *(Reads.)* "The militia has arrived in Meryton."

HOLLY: Oh yeah? Am I supposed to be impressed?

(Mom crosses downstage.)

MOM: *(Reads.)* "My dear, you are invited to Mr. Bingley's for dinner. You had better go on horseback, because it seems likely to rain; and then you must stay the night."

JANE: *(Reads.)* "I'd much rather go by coach."

RITA: Coach!

MOM: *(Reads.)* "I'm sure Mr. Bennet will need most of the horses on the farm today."

BUSTER: *(Reads.)* "The Bennet's like of wealth make them poor marriage prospects." *(Coughs.)*

SAMMY: *(Shouts.)* Cut! Scene 5.

(Normand enters.)

NORMAND: *(Reads.)* "You're tracking mud all over the house!"

VALERIE: What's wrong with a little mud?

SAMMY: *(Shouts.)* Cut! Scene 6.

AXEL: *(Reads.)* "Whatever I do is done in a hurry. If I should resolve to leave Netherfield, I should probably be gone in five minutes." *(To Rita.)* Guess I'm born to be wild, baby.

BUSTER: *(Reads.)* "The country can supply but a few subjects of interest. It provides a very confined and unvarying society."

MOM: *(Reads.)* "I cannot see that London has any great advantage over the country, for my part, except for the shops and public places."

AXEL: *(Reads.)* "When I am in the country, I never wish to leave it, and I feel the same about the town. They have each their advantages."

MOM: *(Reads.)* "That is because you have the right disposition. But that gentleman... (Look at Darcy.) ...seems to think the country is nothing at all."

(Walt enters.)

WALT: *(Reads. To Mom.)* "I find your daughter Jane most agreeable and indeed almost worthy to be partnered with me in marriage."

MOM: *(Reads.)* "I fear Jane is soon to be engaged to another gentleman."

WALT: *(Reads.)* "Oh. Too bad. Could I marry Elizabeth then?"

MOM: *(Reads.)* "You'll have to ask."

(Walt kneels in front of Valerie.)

WALT: Will you marry me?

VALERIE: *(Sniffs.)* You smell like French fries.

(Walt stands.)

WALT: *(Reads.)* "But I am in the patronage of Lady Catherine."

(Normand enters.)

NORMAND: *(Reads.)* "I find people of common stock so very disagreeable. And I have no intention of allowing my nephew, Mr. Darcy, to marry beneath our status." And if this was *my* classroom, I'd put him in timeout.

WALT: *(Reads.)* "I can be very helpful to your family."

VALERIE: I said no!

WALT: *(Reads.)* "You have wounded my pride."

VALERIE: Good!

WALT: *(Reads.)* "I shall turn my attention to your friend, Charlotte Lucas. *(Windy enters and crosses to Walt.)* "Will you be my wife, Miss Lucas? I can provide a secure, comfortable—though boring—home for you."

WINDY: *(Other actors are startled and jump or hold their ears, etc. as she dramatically shouts out her lines. Shouts.)* "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father and reuse thy name!"

SAMMY: *(Shouts.)* Cut!

RITA: *(To Windy.)* What are you doing?

WINDY: I thought this Miss Lucas should be more like Juliet.

RITA: Miss Lucas is nothing like Juliet! She marries Mr. Collins because he can provide for her, not because she loves him!

(Sergeant enters and crosses to Valerie.)

SARGENT: *(Reads.)* "I can give you information on your Mr. Darcy that will cause you to look at him in an entirely different light. He is not what he seems." Cool. Maybe he's with the band.

SAMMY: You know, Rita. This thing don't seem to be going nowhere. All we got are these people acting like...well, I ain't sure *what* they're acting like. But it ain't interesting, I can tell you that! *(Dashwood and Cosmo enter and cross to Sammy.)* Hey, boss. What's up?

DASHWOOD: You need to put a rush on "Pride and Prejudice." We need the soundstage for another film. And Cosmo is needed on location in Hawaii.

COSMO: Cool! Hawaii!

RITA: But we haven't even read through the script!

DASHWOOD: You have three days. Good luck. You'll need it. *(Exits.)*

RITA: *(Horried.)* What?!

SAMMY: Don't worry, Rita. We can do it.

RITA: You *can't* do it! You can't shoot a story like "Pride and Prejudice" in three days with actors who are...weird!

SAMMY: You know, Rita, I've learned in this business you take what you get. You get an oyster; you make a pearl. You get a lump of coal; you make a diamond. You get an enchilada; you make a pizza. See what I'm saying?

RITA: That doesn't make a bit of sense.

SAMMY: We can do it! If all of us work together, we can make this movie! *(To Actors.)* What'd you say, actors?

ACTORS: *(Shout.)* No way!

SAMMY: How about you, Cosmo? You've been with me from the beginning. Can we shoot this script in three days?

COSMO: Man, I can't wait to get to Hawaii!

SAMMY: Okay, boys and girls! I'm gonna take this script home and read it over. Tomorrow, let's show up here bright and early and make a movie!

(Blackout. Optional intermission.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]