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BIG DOG PUBLISHING
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The Zombie Tango

FARCE. Everyone at the school dance takes notice when a strange group crashes their party. The newcomers stink, grunt, have no sense of fashion, and look like they took mud baths. Well, it turns out they're zombies. The only student who fits in with the group is Bob, and that's because Bob took a shortcut through the cemetery, fell into an open grave, and turned into a zombie. When Ms. Miller tries to kick one of the zombies out, she accidentally pulls off one of his ears. And as if this dance wasn't bad enough, the deejay brought only one song, which he plays over and over. Luckily, the zombies brought their own music, but the humans make it difficult for the zombies to dance as they try to scare them away with a broom, water hose, rake, shovel, vacuum cleaner, leaf blower, and even cupcakes. Audiences will love these zany zombies!

Performance Time: Approximately 75 minutes.

Characters

(9 M, 15 F, 1 flexible, opt. extras)

ZUZU: Grim zombie; female.

JOETTE: Zombie; female.

BRUISER: Zombie; male.

TIPPIE: Zombie; female.

CHUMP: Grim zombie; male.

CHLOE: College sophomore; casually dressed for a school dance; female.

RYAN: College sophomore, friend of Chloe's; wears a sports coat that is too small for him, pants, and a loose tie, male.

LUNA: Chloe's younger sister; her hair is a mess and she wears a skirt or dress with ugly brightly colored tights; female.

MASON: Klutzy college student who thinks he's an awesome dancer; male.

HEIDI: Mason's date; female.

CLAIRE: College student who is close friends with Stella; female.

STELLA: College student who is a close friend to Claire; female.

CARTER: College sophomore; male.

BOB: College sophomore; male.

MATT: College sophomore; male.

LUCAS: Handsome, egotistical guy who takes three girls to the school dance; male.

LOLA: Lucas's date; female.

PAM: Lucas's date; female.

STARR: Lucas's date; female.

MS. MILLER: Strict vice-principal of Northeast West Junior College; female.

DEEJAY: Deejay who has only one CD; flexible.

MRS. MAGOO: Overly sweet school dance chaperone; female.

MR. TOBY: English teacher and chaperone; wears a dress shirt, dress pants, and a long tie; male.

SKYLER: Student; casually dressed; female.

EMMA: Skyler's sister, who carries around a teddy bear and thinks she has an IQ of 5,024; short girl, casually dressed; female.

EXTRAS (opt.): As Students and Zombies.

Note: Zombies wear filthy, torn rags and their faces are distorted and bloody. Their movements are stiff and they grunt instead of speaking. Students are casually dressed unless otherwise specified.

Setting

Northeast West Junior College on the south side of town and a nearby cemetery inhabited by zombies.

Set

Cemetery. A couple of street lamps provide an eerie light. There are five tall tombstones and a tree or two.

Gym. Decorations hang from the stage and other places and there is a large banner. There are entrances USL, DSL, USR, and DSR. Chairs line the SR and SL walls. There is a music player/music system with a microphone.

Chemistry lab. Books and assorted chemistry equipment sit atop one or more tables.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Cemetery, nighttime.

Scene 2: Gym, decorated for a school dance, a few minutes later.

ACT II

Scene 1: Chemistry lab, a few minutes later.

Scene 2: Gym, an hour later.

Props

Smartphone (or a tablet computer may be used)	Dance music CD, for Zombies
5 large tombstones	Tango music CD, for Zombies
Teddy bear, for Emma	Fake arm, for Chump
Brochure	Cookbook
Large earphones, for DeeJay	Water hose
Fake ear, for Bruiser	Broom
Purse, for Mrs. Magoo	Plate of miniature cupcakes
Tissue	Leaf rake
Dirty piece of cloth to tie around Bruiser's head (The cloth is wrapped from his neck, over top of head, and back to his neck.)	Shovel
Several business cards, for Mrs. Magoo	Bottle of colored water
Assorted chemistry books	Cup filled with the same colored water
CD, for DeeJay	Upright vacuum cleaner
	Cake icing pastry bags filled with colored icing
	Electric leaf blower
	Extension cord

Sound Effects

Mysterious music
Cawing of vultures
Scream
Several screams heard together in different pitches
Soft song to be repeated over and over, for DeeJay
Fake blood
Dance music with a heavy beat
Tango music
Sound of Zombies beating on a door

“They need a bath
in the worst way.”

—Claire

Act I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: A cemetery at night. A couple of street lamps provide an eerie light. There are five tall tombstones and a tree or two. Mysterious music is heard followed by the "cawing" of vultures and a human scream. Another scream is heard. Several screams are heard together in different humorous pitches. Chloe hurries on SL and stops at CS, where she turns back toward SL.)

CHLOE: (Calls.) Well, are you two coming or not? We're already late for the dance.

(Ryan enters SL, carrying a smartphone or tablet computer.)

RYAN: (Looking around, nervously.) But this is a cemetery.

CHLOE: (Sarcastically.) Oh, aren't you clever?! Of course, it's a cemetery. It's the quickest way to school.

(Ryan checks his smartphone.)

RYAN: It may be the quickest way to school, but it's also the quickest way to a grave. This is the night the living dead rise from their graves and attack people.

CHLOE: Ryan, don't be silly. You're always being silly.

RYAN: Yeah, but it says right here on my phone— (Points to his smartphone.)

CHLOE: (Calls off SL.) Luna! Hurry up!

RYAN: Right here on my phone—

CHLOE: (Calls.) Luna!

RYAN: Everything about the living dead. I did the calculations myself. And tonight's their night!

(Looking around nervously, Luna enters SL. Her hair is a mess.)

The Zombie Tango

11

LUNA: *(Nervously.)* But...but why are we in this cemetery?
There are lots of d-d-dead people in here.

CHLOE: Yes, but they're not going to hurt you. They're
buried underground. Now, come on. *(Takes a few steps
toward SR and stops.)* It's a shortcut, Luna...a *short-cut*.

LUNA: I-I...think I'll take the long-cut.

*(Luna takes several steps toward SL. Chloe rushes over and grabs
her arm.)*

CHLOE: Luna!

LUNA: Ouch! Let go!

RYAN: Chloe, she's right to be afraid. Let her go.

CHLOE: No, Ryan. It's not safe for a girl to be alone at night.
(Smiles.) We need boys to protect us...

RYAN: You mean like me?

CHLOE: *(Laughs.)* Like you? Ha! I don't think so. *(Brightly.)*
More like Lucas! Now, he's really hot...and he likes me.

LUNA: *(Looking around.)* I'm scared! *(Terrified, begins to shake.)*
I've never been in a cemetery before.

RYAN: And we really shouldn't be in this one. We might
wake them up, you know, the dead people. And...and they
could come after us.

CHLOE: Ryan, no.

RYAN: *(Indicating his phone.)* But my calculations.

CHLOE: How could they be living if they're dead, huh?
There are no living dead people and no dead living people
in this graveyard...or anywhere else.

*(Bruiser, a zombie, raises his ugly head above or beside a tombstone.
Chloe, Ryan, and Luna do not see him.)*

LUNA: But there could be...

CHLOE: No, there can't be. First, dead people are put into
coffins... *(Tipper, a zombie, raises her head above her tombstone.
Chloe, Ryan, and Luna do not see her.)* ...then a deep hole is

dug. *(Joette, a zombie, raises her head. Chloe, Ryan, and Luna do not see her.)* The coffin is lowered into the ground... *(Zuzu and Chump, both grim zombies, raise their heads. Chloe, Ryan, and Luna do not see them.)* ...and a big bulldozer shovels dirt over them. No one can escape from that, so we're safe.

LUNA: Are you sure? Are you absolutely, totally certain?

CHLOE: Yes!

RYAN: But...but... *(Points to his phone.)*

CHLOE: *(To Luna.)* Come on, let's go.

(Chloe pulls Luna off SR. With a frightened look on his face, Ryan looks around and quickly exits SR, typing on his smartphone. The happy Zombies come out from their hiding places. Their clothes are filthy, torn rags, their faces are distorted and dotted with blood, and their movements are stiff. They grunt among themselves. Bruiser grabs Tipper, who drags a leg behind her, and pulls her into a tango pose. Zuzu does the same with Joette. Angry that he was left out, Chump grumbles loudly. The two couples dance several tango steps singing/grunting off-key. They are pushed aside by a group of noisy, casually dressed Teens, who enter SL and exit SR. This makes the Zombies mad and they growl at the Teens. Chump grabs Zuzu, and Bruiser takes Tipper. They do several tango steps, except Chump doesn't know the steps and can't dance. Bruiser becomes upset and goes behind his tombstone and disappears. The four remaining Zombies continue to dance but stop and watch Mason and Heidi when they enter SL, holding hands. Mason and Heidi don't notice the Zombies.)

MASON: I can't wait to dance with you, Heidi.

(Mason kisses Heidi's hands several times. Heidi pulls her hands away.)

HEIDI: But you don't know how to dance, Mason.

MASON: I'll learn.

HEIDI: The last time we danced, I couldn't walk for a week.

MASON: Because of your high heels?

HEIDI: Because you kept stepping on my toes!

(Mason and Heidi exit SR. At CS, the Zombies mime frustration and anger. As they look off SR, they grunt. Claire and Stella enter SL and head SR, passing the Zombies, who reach out to grab them but don't succeed.)

CLAIRE: *(To Stella, indicating Zombies.)* Who are those guys?

STELLA: I don't know, but they sure stink.

CLAIRE: And they smell bad.

STELLA: That's what I just said. And they look like they didn't even shower today.

CLAIRE: They need a bath in the worst way.

STELLA: That's what I just said. Looks like they took a mud bath.

CLAIRE: They've got mud all over them.

STELLA: *(With emphasis.)* That's what I just said!

(Zombies try to grab Claire and Stella, but the girls scream. Holding their noses, Claire and Stella rush off SR. The Zombies grunt their disappointment and anger. Bob, Carter, and Matt enter SL and ignore the Zombies, who continue to grunt amongst themselves.)

BOB: *(To Carter.)* I hit a home run yesterday. Did you see it?

CARTER: You did not hit a home run.

BOB: I did so!

MATT: Did not.

BOB: Well, it would have been a home run if the first baseman hadn't caught it.

CARTER: Bob, it was an out! You lost the game for us.

BOB: Big deal. *(Notices Bruiser's tombstone and crosses to it.)*

Hey, look at the size of this tombstone!

MATT: "Hey" yourself! You lost the game for us, and now you're gonna make us late for the dance.

CARTER: Yeah, all the girls will be taken before we get there.

BOB: *(Looking behind the tombstone.)* Hey, guys! Check this out! It's an open grave.

CARTER: Forget it.

BOB: No, I mean there's somebody down there. *(Leans over and falls into the grave behind the headstone.)* Yeeiii!

MATT: *(To Carter.)* I think Bob just fell into a grave. *(Rushes to the grave and looks into it.)* He did! He fell in, Carter! Bob fell into the grave!

CARTER: Well, pull him out.

MATT: *(Shrugs.)* Why? He fell in. Let him pull himself out.

(Matt chuckles and joins Carter.)

CARTER: *(Shrugs.)* Whatever.

(Matt and Carter see the Zombies, scream, go around them, and exit SR. Lucas prances on SL with Lola, Pam, and Starr on his arms.)

LOLA: Ohhh, Lucas, you are sooo handsome!

LUCAS: I know.

PAM: And sooo charming!

LUCAS: It comes natural to me.

STARR: Will you dance with me at the dance? Paaaleeze?
[*"Please."*]

LUCAS: Well, of course. But you'll have to get in line.

STARR: Oh, I'm so thrilled!

(Bruiser appears and lets out a scary grunt. Lola, Pam, and Starr scream. Bruiser pulls Bob – now a filthy, stinky, bloody zombie – from the grave, and Bob and Bruiser make creepy grunting sounds. Lola, Pam, and Starr scream again.)

LOLA: Oh, Lucas! Save me!

PAM: *(To Lucas.)* No! Save me!

STARR: *(To Lucas.)* No! Me, me, me! I'm the prettiest!

LUCAS: (*Frightened.*) You girls can save yourselves! I'm out of here!

[END OF FREEVIEW]