

DrainAge

a plumbjob by johnmichael rossi

[and a bad-ass play.]

CHARACTERS:

PRODUCERMAN
SANDIE
JOE THE PLUMBER
KITCHEN SINK
TELEPROMPTER

SETTING:

An Executive Office. An old and rusty KITCHEN SINK sits beside an enormously elegant executive desk. This is the Office of PRODUCERMAN a.k.a. Chief, a big-time Broadwalk producer-of-sorts. JOE THE PLUMBER is lying underneath the sink. We only see his legs, and hear some occasional clink-clank from his general area. There is something disturbingly erotic about the position that KITCHEN SINK and JOE THE PLUMBER maintain for the early part of the play. PRODUCERMAN is playing with a cap-gun, pretending to shoot himself with "good idea darts." TELEPROMPTER, a guy with signs, serves SANDIE all of her lines.

PRODUCERMAN

Sandie! SANDIE! Get in here. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, this is a frickin' tragedy gone catastrophic. Everything is closing. Closing, closing! SANDIE? Where the hell are you?

SANDIE

(comes running in)

Mawnin' Chief. Sorry I'm late. Chief! A gun? Don't-she grabs gun. Ooops!

PRODUCERMAN

It's a capgun, sweetheart. Where in the heck have you been? If this wasn't a capgun, I would already be gone on account of your lateness. Do you know what's going on out there? What time is it?! Have you heard? Broadwalk is going dark! Completely dark. Darker than the Blackouts of seventy-seven and O-three*. Before your time.

SANDIE

Gosh, this economy is really killing the theatre.

PRODUCERMAN

You're one smart cookie Sandie. You do know what this means, don't you?

SANDIE

It means-

PRODUCERMAN

It means we're screwed! Royally! Sandie. You do realize that I own eighty-five percent of Broadwalk houses. I am the Potter of Broadwalk. All these shows closing... I need to come up with something really quick. I gotta find shows. Good money-making shows need to be put in these theaters, or else... The Mayor is going to claim the theaters as public domain since they are not raising revenue. Bastard! This is absolutely the worst day of my care-free life.

SANDIE

Now calm down, Chief. You're blood pressure is going to shoot through the roof. And then you'll pop a blood vessel. Here. Take this. "Calm-Down." Rub it on your temples and cool your temper.

PRODUCERMAN

Where's my stretchy Shrek stressball.

SANDIE

Right here.

PRODUCERMAN

Sandie. I ain't tartin' around here when I say that we need to come up with some of the best shows that anybody has ever heard of. Shows that people will go to see. You're young and hip. What do people like these days? Sandie? Sweetheart. We're gonna need to have a brainstorming session. By the way. You and I. We haven't had any sort of affair or inappropriate something or anything like that, have we?

SANDIE

Chief!

PRODUCERMAN

Just checking! I guess that's a no. My wife, she uhh left me last night. Packed up all her things and said "Seeya!" I can't figure out what I did. I've been so busy, that I've lost track of where I've been. Sandie? Can you put these on?
(handing her a Mickey Mouse ears and placing a set on his own head)

SANDIE

Okay.

PRODUCERMAN

Now where was I?

SANDIE

Brainstorming.

PRODUCERMAN

We're there, we're brainstorming. See? It's all stormy and windy in here. Now use your ears, and listen. Listen for a brilliant idea.

JOE THE PLUMBER

(rolling out from under KITCHEN
SINK)

What are we brainstorming?

PRODUCERMAN

Shows! Good, cheap and easy to produce shows! I'm talking like zero budget, small bite-size cast... Maybe just kids and animals, they're cheap. Smelly though. Actually they're not cheap. What am I talking about? Sandie, knock some sense into me. Hit me! I don't want any orchestras or musicians or any of that nonsense. I'm tired of these damn fiddlers and their contracts. Same goes for the stagehands. We don't need em. I wanna do a union free show. Are you getting all of this down? Union-free! What are you waiting for? You're gonna be helping me find this show. And if it doesn't exist... It's gonna be me and you making it. And even performing it if we have to.

(a flourish of music)

JOE THE PLUMBER

I got a show for you.

PRODUCERMAN

Sandie?

SANDIE

Chief?

PRODUCERMAN

How come you keep dropping your register like that?

SANDIE

Oh, that's not me. That's Joe.

PRODUCERMAN

Joe?

SANDIE

The Plumber!

PRODUCERMAN

The plumber?

JOE THE PLUMBER

Chief. I'm sorry to say, you've got quite a situation. With your sink, that is.

SANDIE

He's here to fix the sink.

PRODUCERMAN

What's wrong with the sink?

SANDIE

It's clogged.

PRODUCERMAN

It's been clogged since I got here. I wish we can get rid of that godforsaken thing. Just get it out of here. You know, I don't even know why that damn kitchen sink is in my office in the first place. It's absurd! A kitchen sink in an executive office.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Maybe this room used to be a kitchen.

PRODUCERMAN

Are you going to fix my sink, or what?

JOE THE PLUMBER

Right!

SANDIE

Chief?

PRODUCERMAN

Sandie?

SANDIE

Joe here, coincidentally is also a performer-

PRODUCERMAN

Oh yeah?

SANDIE

Yes. And he actually has some great ideas for shows... and I was just thinking, maybe you'd want to have some of his ideas.

PRODUCERMAN

Sandie. Can I speak to you over here for a moment.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Chief, I've got this one idea where-

PRODUCERMAN

Back up the truck buddy. I'm talking to my intern over here. It's an A-B conversation and you're going to C yourself back over to that sink where you're going to solve all of my plumbing problems.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Got it.

PRODUCERMAN

Now, Sandie. I know it's not really my place and all, but of course, I feel responsible for you, being my intern and all, and I've just got to say, I don't like the way the plumber there has been eying you. Are you sure that you and I, we never?

SANDIE

Never. Now, Chief, go listen to some of Joe's ideas. He's really brilliant. He showed me the video of him as Peter Pan when he was in the fourth grade, and I have to say- I was moved more than ever by NeverNeverland. Cathy Rigby has nothing on him. Sandy Duncan neither.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Pardon. Sorry to interrupt. Do you have one of those things? The you know, the things for the, toilet? The rubber thing with the stick at the end.

SANDIE

A plunger?

JOE THE PLUMBER

Yes!

SANDIE

We've got one in the bathroom. I'll go get it.

PRODUCERMAN

What in the heck kind of a plumber are you?

JOE THE PLUMBER

You got me there Chief. I didn't even know there were different types of plumbers. I must confess. I played a plumber once in a show.

PRODUCERMAN

A show? What show was that? Where?

JOE THE PLUMBER

Oh it was way out there. Off-off-off-Broadwalk. Way off-off.

PRODUCERMAN

I see. So you're wasting my time.

SANDIE

Here you go. One plunger for our plumber.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Hey Sandie, Can I talk to you over there for a moment. Excuse us. Sandie, this doesn't seem to be working. He's not interested in hearing-

SANDIE

Shhhh... Persistence. Remember? Be your wonderful obnoxious self. Now take this and go plunge something.

JOE THE PLUMBER

Here we go. So Chief. Here we go. The plunging begins.
(the plunging begins: and enter
in WILLIAM, EUGENE, ANTON,
HENRY, ARTHUR, TENNESSEE and
BERT; they make some noise, do
some dancing and a whole lot
of unexplainable laughing,
then an awkward silence)

ARTHUR

Now what?

HENRY

Well, there was a gun in the opening scene.

BERT

This is the opening scene. It's a ten-minute play. A bad ten-minute play mind you.

WILLIAM

I don not do bad plays*. We shall leave.

EUGENE

Neither do I. Where's the whiskey?

TENNESSEE

Shhhhh. Look!

KITCHEN SINK

(rises and comes to life, real
life; as he rises, sunlight
shoots in through the hidden
window that it had been
blocking, unbeknownst to us;
the light seeps in and he
clears his throat and sighs)

Like all great tragedies, the protagonist must die, in order to purge all of you of your own inner wrong-doings. Thus, for the sake of you, I will sacrifice myself. I have plunged free of dead white men. Now I must move on to the big kitchen in the sky.

(picks up the cap-gun)
I sacrifice myself.

SANDIE
(for the first time, not
reading from TELEPROMPTER)
But wait- that's not... Real.

KITCHEN SINK
Shhhh....
(he slips her a little note;
she eyes him and he winks back
and exits, she follows...)

PRODUCERMAN
(rising to his feet)
Is that a wrap?

TELEPROMPTER
Good work today, Sandie.

SANDIE
Thanks, Telly. Sorry about the capgun mix up.

KITCHEN SINK
No I loved it. I think it gave it more depth.

PRODUCERMAN
Drinks anyone?