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Return of the Script

A comedic thriller in one-act

By Don Zolidis

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One-Act Comedy

5 any gender plus ensemble

Miss Walters's life is upended after she does the unthinkable and forgets to return a perusal script. Now, she's on the run from international conglomerate Musical Theater Global, trying to dodge the two agents they sent after her. (Which is especially hard since one of them can talk to birds.) If Miss Walters wants to live one day more, she must find and return the perusal before MTG finds her. Return of the Script is a madcap chase by plane, train, and automobile that teaches an important lesson: Always read the terms and conditions.

Cast of Characters

MISS WALTERS, a seemingly ordinary musical theater teacher

AGENT 1, an agent of the international conglomerate, Musical Theater Worldwide

AGENT 2, a second agent of the international conglomerate, Musical Theater Worldwide

ACTOR 1, any gender

ACTOR 2, any gender

Possible Other Roles:
UBER DRIZER
SECOND UBER DRIVER
ROGER
MARGARET
TSA AGENT
MYSTERIOUS FIGURE/MR. GREGORY
HOODED FIGURE/BOB
BERT
FLIGHT ATTENDANT
THE GOAT
LONELY GOATHERD
SNOWMOBILE 1
SNOWMOBILE 2
TREES
INGA'S FEMALE FAMILY (Inga's Mother, Inga's Aunt Gertrude, Inga's sister Lina, Inga's Great Aunt Bernice)
INGA'S MALE FAMILY (Inga's Father, Inga's Uncle Yakob, Inga's brother Hans, Inga's Grandfather Rupert)
TRAIN CONDUCTOR

INGA

How to Perform this Show:

Method 1: The first, and possibly the most fun, is that every role except for Miss Walters, Agent 1 and Agent 2 is played by the 2 actors. This includes all practical effects and even inanimate objects at some point. The actors can be any gender. They will be switching genders many times throughout the play.

Method 2: Actor 1 plays the narrator, essentially, and all the other roles are split up amongst as many actors as you like. This can yield a much larger cast, but is perhaps a little less theatrically fun than method 1. You may cast any number of actors in any number of parts (it's fine for 1 actor to play 4-5 roles, switching gender as necessary) – (To preserve the jokes, Inga's family should be played by a total of 2 actors, however)

Music: This play benefits greatly from a lot of underscoring. (Remember that if there is underscoring make sure the actors are either mic'd or loud enough to be heard!) The music of Bernard Hermann and his classic work on such films as Psycho, North by Northwest, Vertigo, and the Twilight Zone has played a major role in my inspiration here. Feel free to create your own music with that feel or find royalty-free versions on the internet. If you do choose to use the work of Bernard Hermann, make sure you pay applicable royalties. I have marked in the script where I think some music would be most helpful, but you are free to experiment and create your own moments.

Scene Changes: There are many scene changes in the show, but I believe it is best done with virtually no set changes at all. If possible, some projections might be nice to have – but resist the urge to bring any scenery on or off.

Creepy, sinister music.

Lights slowly rise on MISS WALTERS, a young theater teacher, in her office. She's hard at work.

ACTOR 1 emerges from the darkness somewhere, perhaps in a spotlight. Actor 1 possibly wears a suit and tie.
Music continues to underscore Actor's speech to the audience.

ACTOR 1 *(to the audience)*
The following play is a cautionary tale. It is a true story, without embellishment. Picture an ordinary musical theater teacher, Miss Walters. Her first name is not important, but it is Gail. She is hard at work, on an ordinary day, in an ordinary school, in an ordinary provincial town.
She does not suspect that her ordinary day is going to become quite extraordinary indeed.

KNOCK KNOCK.
Miss Walters looks up.

MISS WALTERS
Come on in.

ACTOR 1 *(to the audience)*
Big mistake.
AGENT 1 and AGENT 2 enter.
They wear identical suits.

AGENT 1
Miss Walters?

MISS WALTERS
Yes?

AGENT 2
You are the musical theater teacher here at this school.

MISS WALTERS
I am. Is there something wrong?
They both stare at her.
There is an air of menace.

AGENT 1
We represent Musical Theater Worldwide, a musical theater publisher.

AGENT 2

On September 7th, you received a perusal script of one… Annie Junior. Yes?

AGENT 1

Delightful show.

MISS WALTERS

I think so.

AGENT 2

Yes or no, ma'am.

MISS WALTERS

Yes.

AGENT 2

You are familiar with the terms and conditions of receiving a perusal script, are you not?

MISS WALTERS

Well I'm not sure I know all of them.

AGENT 2

You clicked a box online that you agreed to the terms and conditions. Are you saying you didn't fully understand those terms and conditions before you clicked that box?

AGENT 1

That would be a mistake.

MISS WALTERS

What is this about? I haven't done anything wrong!

AGENT 2

If I recall correctly, you just mentioned that did not know the terms and conditions you agreed to, isn't that right? So how is it that you know for certain you haven't done anything wrong?

AGENT 1

Perhaps this will refresh your memory.

Agent 1 slaps a large pamphlet of papers on the desk in front of Miss Walters.

MISS WALTERS

What am I looking at?

AGENT 2

These are terms and conditions, Ma'am. Terms and conditions you agreed to.

AGENT 1 *(with menace)*

Terms. And *conditions*.

AGENT 2

Tell me what it says on page 51.

MISS WALTERS

This has to be some kind of mistake.

AGENT 2

MTW does not make mistakes. Tell me what is says on page 51.

MISS WALTERS

I don't know where that is!

AGENT 1

It's on page 51.

AGENT 2

You seem flustered. Guilty, almost.

MISS WALTERS

I don't even know what I'm guilty of!

AGENT 2

Page 51, Ma'am.

MISS WALTERS

"All perusal scripts must be returned unmarked to MTW within six weeks."

AGENT 1

What day is it?

MISS WALTERS

Uh-oh.

AGENT 1

What. Day. Is it?

They freeze. Actor 1 speaks to the audience again.
Intense music.

ACTOR 1

That's right. An ordinary musical theater teacher who has neglected to return a perusal script on time. She knew the rules. She knew the risks. But she never made it to the post office. Or to Fedex. Or even UPS. She chose to live a life on the edge. She didn't return *Annie Jr* and now, friends, now, we are about to witness the consequences of that critical error.

AGENT 2

Scum like you makes me sick.

MISS WALTERS

Can I send it tomorrow?

AGENT 2

Oh I'm afraid the sun's not coming out tomorrow. We'll wait right here.

AGENT 1

MTW pays us very well to make certain every script is returned.

AGENT 2

We have never failed.

MISS WALTERS

Right. Um… sure. Actually, I know exactly where the script is –

AGENT 1

Wonderful.

MISS WALTERS

It's in my other office. If you'll just wait right here, I'll go get it.

AGENT 2

Of course.

Miss Walters gets up, whistles to herself, and slowly exits.
Pause.
Pause.
Both Agents look at their watches.

AGENT 1

You think she ran?

AGENT 2

They always run. That's why I love this job.

Intense chase music.
Both Agents hurry off.

ACTOR 1

The teacher's parking lot, empty except for one car. The car of the musical theater teacher.

Miss Walters runs in.
ACTOR 2 enters, opposite.

A storm is raging. Wind blows.

Actor 2 takes a handheld fan and blows it in Miss Walters' face.

Rain pours down.

Actor 2 takes a spray bottle and spritzes it in Miss Walters' face.

Actor 1 produces a "car." (This can be a toy car, or a fake car of some kind wheeled in.)

Her vehicle, a 2004 Toyota Corolla with 179,000 miles. The check engine light has been on for two months. She hasn't checked the engine.

ACTOR 2 *(to the audience)*

The car… explodes.

Actor 1 makes the car explode. Perhaps throws the toy into the air and makes an explosion sound.

Miss Walters stops and falls over.

Actor 2 spritzes her in the face again.

MISS WALTERS

My car?!

Agent 1 and 2 run in, through the audience.

AGENT 1

Stop right there!

AGENT 2

Just return the script, Ma'am!

MISS WALTERS *(shouting across the theater)*

I'm not a ma'am, I'm twenty-seven! My job is stressful so I'm aging pre-maturely!

Actor 1 holds up a sign for Uber (or Lyft.)

Actor 1 becomes an elderly UBER DRIVER (or another actor enters and becomes the driver) Uber Driver holds a steering wheel.

She leaps behind him.

UBER DRIVER

Where to, Ma'am?

MISS WALTERS

It's Miss! I am a Miss! Can't you see my face?!

UBER DRIVER

Where to, Miss?

MISS WALTERS

440 Meadowbrook Lane.

UBER DRIVER

Oh sure yeah I know where that is.

MISS WALTERS

And step on it!

UBER DRIVER

You betcha!

The Uber Driver makes sound effects for his car as they drive off.

Putt putt putt…

A SECOND UBER DRIVER rolls up with a steering wheel in hand.
Both agents hop in behind them.

AGENT 1

Follow that Uber!

AGENT 2

Speed is of the essence.

Second Uber Driver is READY for this.

SECOND UBER DRIVER

I knew this day would come. Let's see what this Prius can do.

They floor it. Make sound effects.

Eeeeeeeeeeeee…

The CHASE.

Uber Driver (with Miss Walters) enters downstage.
Upstage, Second Uber Driver (with Agents) enters.
If you have the actors, they may become TREES and slowly move upstage past the cars.

Intense dramatic music.
Cut off by… easy listening.

UBER DRIVER

How's that music?

MISS WALTERS

Can you drive faster please?!

UBER DRIVER

Oh sure I can go a bit faster. Nothing my ol' Betsy can't handle.

He pats the imaginary car.

Putt putt putt…
What do you think about this weather, huh? Mighty unusual for the weather to be this unusual.

MISS WALTERS

Please sir, I am being chased like an animal.

UBER DRIVER

Oh sure yeah, that happens. Every day I get somebody. `Help I'm being hunted! Help I'm on the run from the law!' So many fun stories.

MISS WALTERS

They're right behind us!

Second Uber Driver closes in. Agent 2 mimes rolling down the window and starting to climb out. He's going to leap from the hood of one car onto the trunk of the other.

UBER DRIVER

If you don't have time to follow the rules of the road, you sure don't have time for an accident. That's what I always say. Slow and steady. Would you like an Aquafina? It's like water except more expensive.

MISS WALTERS

Sir, if you don't speed up, I will rate you 4 STARS!

UBER DRIVER

You wouldn't. Monster.

MISS WALTERS

I mean it! Four stars!

UBER DRIVER

This is on your head!

Uber driver accelerates.

Vroooooooom.

The cars begin to separate.

Uber Driver and Miss Walters exit.

SECOND UBER DRIVER

Eeeeeeee…

AGENT 1

Can't this hybrid go any faster?!

SECOND UBER DRIVER

Do not DISPARAGE the Prius!

AGENT 2

I just need you to go faster!

SECOND UBER DRIVER

I am getting 47 miles to the gallon, sir! FORTY-SEVEN!

AGENT 1

They're getting away! Do something!

SECOND UBER DRIVER

Hold on. I got something I can try. I saw this in a Fast and Furious movie but it seemed realistic.

Second Uber Driver spins the wheel.
They careen off the side of the stage.

Actor 1 returns.

ACTOR 1

Fortunately for our teacher, the physics of the Fast and the Furious do not equate to the physics of the real world.

Miss Walters rushes in –
A door.
She knocks on it.
She knocks again.
Actor 2 becomes ROGER, another teacher.
He opens the door.

ROGER

What are you doing here?

MISS WALTERS

They've found us.

ROGER

No!

MISS WALTERS

The script, Roger. I need the script.

Roger turns away, dramatically.

ROGER

I'm afraid that's not possible, Gail.

MISS WALTERS

What do you mean that's not possible?

ROGER

I don't have it.

Miss Walters is appalled.

MISS WALTERS

You're lying.

ROGER *(extremely dramatically)*

I don't have it!

MISS WALTERS

I gave it to you for consideration for our spring season!

ROGER

I never wanted *Annie Junior!*

MISS WALTERS

You were the one who suggested it! You thought it had a lot of roles for girls!

ROGER

I was just doing that to humor you! I think the orchestrations are banal!

MISS WALTERS

Where is it now.

Roger can't answer.

Roger, where is it?

ROGER

I lent it to a student.

MISS WALTERS

You're a madman.

ROGER

She's normally very reliable, she usually returns –

MISS WALTERS

Students never return anything! Have you lost your mind?!

ROGER

She asked nicely!

MISS WALTERS

Which student.

ROGER

Inga.

MISS WALTERS

The foreign exchange student?

Roger nods sadly

Who has returned home to SWITZERLAND?!

Roger nods again.

You've signed my death sentence, Roger.

ROGER

I'm so sorry.

MISS WALTERS

I thought I could trust you.

ROGER

I cherished our times in the faculty lounge hiding from the children. Drinking coffee. Complaining about our third period classes. I'll miss you.

MISS WALTERS

Hold on. I'm not dead yet. I have to go.

ROGER

Where?

MISS WALTERS

Where they'll never find me.

She heads off

ROGER

Godspeed, Gail. Godspeed.
And if you don't come back, can I take your parking spot?

Ominous music.

Lights change.

Agent 1 and 2 enter, elsewhere, dusting themselves off.

AGENT 1

That was a poor choice of Uber.

AGENT 2

She's around here somewhere.

AGENT 1

What are you picking up?

Agent 2 makes bird sounds (or whistles if your actor can whistle.)

AGENT 2

Ca-Caw! Ca-Caw!

Birdsong.

Got it.

AGENT 1

You can talk to birds?

AGENT 2

It's a perk of the job.

AGENT 1

And when we find her… like a housecat, we pounce.

AGENT 2

Like a housecat?

AGENT 1

I have a very fierce cat.

AGENT 2

Let's move out. I know where she's headed, and she's about to make a fatal mistake.

They exit.

Actor 1 enters with a sign that says "Southwest Airlines" They become MARGARET, Southwest Airlines agent.*

**If you are outside of the United States, feel free to use a local, notoriously unreliable budget airline.*

Miss Walters hustles in.

MARGARET

Welcome to Southwest Airlines, we're sorry.

MISS WALTERS

Do you have any planes heading to Switzerland?

MARGARET

Our name is Southwest Airlines.

MISS WALTERS

I just need to get to Switzerland.

MARGARET

Uh huh. We all got needs, sweetheart. All right lemme see. Normally we don't fly there. Sure you don't want to go to Santa Fe? I hear it's nice.

Margaret mimes tapping on a keyboard very quickly.

Waits.

MISS WALTERS

I'm in a hurry.

MARGARET

Oh boy. Oh gee. A hurry. Wow.
She raises up her fingers.
Let me just press the "In a hurry" key.
She presses a key very deliberately.

MISS WALTERS

Did that work?
Margaret glances at her imaginary screen.

MARGARET

That's odd. We have a flight to Switzerland today. Leaving soon.

MISS WALTERS

I need to be on it.

MARGARET

Of course. That will be all the money.

MISS WALTERS

All the money?

MARGARET

We do surge pricing. The more you need it, the more expensive it is.

MISS WALTERS

I can give you my car. It's a 2004 Toyota Corolla with 179,000 miles on it.

MARGARET

Done.
Miss Walters hands over some keys to Margaret.

MISS WALTERS

You can pick it up in the teacher's parking lot if you can put it back together.
Actor 2 enters as a bubbly TSA AGENT

TSA AGENT

Welcome to the TSA! Woo! That stands for Terrific Stupendous Awesome! Who's ready to get searched?! Step into our happy machine and it will bombard you with thousands of tiny lasers! I like to think of it like a hug all over my privacy! Ooh Aquafina!

Miss Walters rushes up to the TSA Agent.

Okay, shoes in the bin please! And your jacket. Anything metal? Water? If you have anything metal inside your body, you're going to need to do a little minor surgery to remove that. Hopefully it's not a plate in your head cause those are murder to fit back in! I have one from IKEA. It's called a Shlobungin. There's an umlaut in there somewhere. Feel it. Feel it now.

The TSA AGENT puts their heads towards Miss Walters.

MISS WALTERS

I really just need to get through here.

TSA AGENT

Anything in your pockets? Put it right here in the bin! Hopes and dreams? You can hold on to those! Ha ha ha ha! I tell jokes. You can catch me at the Ha Ha Shed on Third Street when they have open mic nights and Joey isn't working as a bouncer. Cause that dude is not a fan.

Miss Walters puts all her things in the bin.

Fantastic. Well done! You are a seasoned traveler. You know how I can tell? The lasers leave tiny pockmarks in your skin.

MISS WALTERS

They do?

TSA AGENT

Nope! But that's just a little taste of my comedy stylings. So remember: Ha Ha Shed. Hands up please.

Miss Walters puts her hands up.

Boop.

TSA Agent suddenly becomes serious.

We're going to need a female assist.

Agent 1 and 2 enter, opposite, with newspapers, looking around.

MISS WALTERS

I need to get moving right now!

TSA AGENT

Calm down, Ma'am.

MISS WALTERS

You don't understand, I need to get through security right now!

The agents spot Miss Walters.

They begin to rush towards the stage.

TSA AGENT

No can do. Things have just gotten… serious.

The agent speaks into their walkie talkie again.

I'm going to need that female assist with extra cold hands please.

Actor 1 becomes a MYSTERIOUS FIGURE, perhaps attaching a long white beard, and approaches.

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

I'll take it from here.

TSA AGENT

Oh look a mysterious figure. Of course you can take it from here.

MISS WALTERS

But –

The Mysterious Figure takes Miss Walters' hand.

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Come with me and say nothing. I'll get you out of this.

They flee just as the agents arrive.

AGENT 1

Where did that lady go?

TSA AGENT

Welcome to the TSA! That stands for Terrific Stupendous Awesome!

AGENT 2

Cut the nonsense – where is she?

TSA AGENT

Oh hi you must not be reading my TSA badge correctly. Cause it means I'm in charge here, buckaroos. And if you are entering my domain, you're gonna play by rules. Rule 1: You better be ready for the funny cause I'm about to bring it. Rule 2: No one gets through here without a plane ticket. So unless you've got one of those, I suggest you skedaddle. Go on now. Ske-Daddle.

Lights change.

Mysterious figure approaches a door with Miss Walters.

MISS WALTERS

Where are you taking me?

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Shhh…

MISS WALTERS

You've very familiar and yet so mysterious.

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

If you want to live, you'll do exactly as I say.

The mysterious figure knocks a special knock on the door.

Actor 2 rushes to become HOODED FIGURE.

It's me.

HOODED FIGURE

Password.

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Pop.

HOODED FIGURE

Six?

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Squish.

HOODED FIGURE

Uh-uh?

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Cicero.

HOODED FIGURE

Lipshitz.

The door opens.

Follow me.

Mysterious Figure takes Miss Walters down some stairs.

Hooded Figure becomes Actor 2 and speaks to the audience.

ACTOR 2

Into the bowels of the regional county airport they went.

MISS WALTERS

What is this place?

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

You'll be safe here.

ACTOR 2

Picture an entire enclave of broken men and women, huddled for protection. Words frozen on their lips.

*Actor 2 points to an empty spot on the stage**

The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.

Actor 2 points elsewhere

You're never fully dressed without a smile.

Actor 2 points to another spot.

Grease is the word.

*(*If you have other actors, they may play other BROKEN MEN and WOMEN in this scene and mutter these lines)*

Mysterious Figure removes his hood. He becomes MR. GREGORY.

MR. GREGORY

I knew you'd come here some day, Gail.

MISS WALTERS

Mister Gregory? Is that you? My old musical theater teacher?

MR. GREGORY

The same.

MISS WALTERS

You disappeared! What happened to you?!

MR. GREGORY

After you graduated, I never returned a perusal copy of *Into the Woods*. MTW came looking for me. I've been hiding out at the airport ever since. We all have. Dozens of us live here now.

Actor 2 becomes Hooded Figure again.

HOODED FIGURE

We are the musical theater teachers time forgot.

MR. GREGORY

If only I had done *Pirates of Penzance* when I had the chance – it's public domain.

HOODED FIGURE

You still would've needed to rent the score.

MR. GREGORY

Blast it all.

MISS WALTERS

You're all on the run from Musical Theater Worldwide?

HOODED FIGURE

It's a rigged game, like the oldest established permanent floating craps game in New York. Sooner or later you mess up. You think you collected all the scripts after a show so you can return them, but there's one missing. Number 24. You hunt for it. You find it and you wish you hadn't. Chewed to pieces by a beagle, used for a kite and caught in a tree. It's only a matter of

time before the MTW goons arrive at your door asking questions you can't answer. Demanding scripts you don't got. So you run. But you can't run forever. This is the only safe space for our kind.

MR. GREGORY
I'm glad you're here. You can tell us about all the new musicals out there.

MISS WALTERS
They're all based on television shows and movies now.

MR. GREGORY
What? No!

MISS WALTERS
But I can't stay.

MR. GREGORY
What are you talking about? This is your home now.

HOODED FIGURE
You go out there, they'll catch you. MTW won't stop. They don't tire. They will keep coming and coming and coming until you return your script or you are dead.

MISS WALTERS
Then I'll get the script back. I have a plan.

MR. GREGORY
It's too dangerous. I can't let you leave.

HOODED FIGURE
Wait. I know I just met you, but when I saw you I thought, at last, my life is ready to begin.

MISS WALTERS
What are you talking about?
Romantic music plays.

HOODED FIGURE
You could be my angel of music.

MISS WALTERS
Dude. You live in a basement.
Romantic music stops.

HOODED FIGURE
Under certain circumstances that can be attractive. What if I had a skiff?

MISS WALTERS

I have to go. I'm sure it would be great to hang out here with you other lovely musical theater teachers, but I have a script to get.

MR. GREGORY

Goodbye, Gail. It was nice seeing you again.

MISS WALTERS

Thank you.

Miss Walters runs off.

Hooded Figure watches her, sadly.

HOODED FIGURE

I could've loved her. She would've set me free. But it's not to be. If I can't love her… then who?

MR. GREGORY

Honestly, Bob, you are being so creepy right now.

HOODED FIGURE

I'd grown accustomed to her face.

MR. GREGORY

She was here two minutes, Bob.

Actor 1 grabs a microphone to become the VOICE.

VOICE

Now boarding, Southwest Flight 1279 to Switzerland, flying at 26,000 feet. No specific place in Switzerland. Basically the whole country. Be very careful in Switzerland. We have been warned that the hills are alive. They are hungry. I can only imagine this means that they have grown enormous teeth and are now lumbering about the countryside, snapping up sheep and devouring them.

Voice listens to an earpiece.

Check that. I am being told that is in Austria. Switzerland is safe. Now boarding Southwest Flight 1279 to a place where the hills are dead.

Actor 2 becomes a jaded FLIGHT ATTENDANT and holds up a sign that says "THIS IS AN AIRPLANE." And then a second sign that says "JUST GO WITH IT."

Miss Walters darts in.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Take a seat anywhere. This is Southwest Airlines. It's chaos.

Miss Walters sits next to an open seat.

MISS WALTERS

Oh I didn't realize we didn't have seat assignments.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Some other fancy airlines have assigned seats. Not us. Life is about uncertainty. Will we leave on time? Will we make it to our destination? Will you sit next to a person with terrible body odor and personal space issues?

Actor 1 becomes BERT, a tourist.

BERT

Looks like I'm sitting here in this primo spot!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

At Southwest Airlines we understand that we control nothing. Life is a series of random disasters. If you understand I'm going to need a verbal yes.

MISS WALTERS

Yes?

BERT

Sure?

Flight Attendant exits.

You know what's funny? They always tell you the elevation you're flying at. Oh, thirty-*five* thousand feet? That's the best elevation. Well done. Or is someone like, `excuse me, I'm not cool with thirty-three thousand feet, I'm gonna need you to do better.'

MISS WALTERS

Yeah I guess that's funny.

BERT

Name's Bert, by the way. I'm heading to Switzerland. I guess we all are. Unless you parachute out I guess! Hoo.

MISS WALTERS

I don't think these planes are made for parachutes.

BERT

Just think about it: A long journey like this. You could be meeting your future soulmate. You ever think about that?

MISS WALTERS

No.

BERT

I do. I think about that every day. What if this lady is the one? What if I am sitting next to the future mother of my six children? We sit next to each other on a long plane ride. We're both

tired, but the conversation is so engrossing that we can't sleep! We talk and we talk and we talk and we share so many things, like how my favorite pet growing up was a gerbil named Grover, and how I used to talk to Grover and sometimes Grover talked back to me – and everyone thought I was crazy, but he used to say things like, "Bert, free me from the wheel. The wheel is killing me." And I said Grover I can't get you off the wheel and he said, "I hate you Bert. At night, when you sleep, I am plotting to murder you. I will chew through this plexiglass cage and I will have my revenge." Good times.

Miss Walters is asleep. Snores.

Huh. On the other hand, maybe my soulmate is the person who is soothed by my voice so much that she feels comfortable falling asleep on a long flight.

MISS WALTERS

I'm awake.

ACTOR 2

And we now cut to a long scene of a completely uneventful flight in which nothing important happens whatsoever.

Agent 1 and 2 enter and sit in the back of the plane. They have newspapers in front of their faces (or musical theater catalogues)

Yessir, nothing important whatsoever happens on this flight. You can relax.

Agent 1 and 2 move up. Open their newspapers again.

Surely there are no secret agents on this plane. That would be unrealistic.

Agent 1 and 2 move up. Open their newspapers again.

BERT

You ever wonder if you're being followed by secret agents?

MISS WALTERS

I'm sorry?

BERT

Back there. There are two people who look suspiciously like secret agents. And they keep moving up.

Miss Walters turns and spots them.

MISS WALTERS *(trying to get the flight attendant's attention)*

Oh no! Miss! Miss!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

I'm a Ma'am.

MISS WALTERS

Oh. Sorry. Is there any way off this plane?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Is there any way – *off* – this… *plane?* That's what you're asking?

MISS WALTERS

It's an emergency! I'm in terrible danger!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Oh in that case then just take one of the parachutes stored under your seat.

MISS WALTERS

Great, thank you.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

I was being *sarcastic.*

Miss Walters reaches under her seat and pulls out a backpack parachute.

Huh. When did we get those?

Miss Walters leaps to her feet and moves towards the front of the stage.

The two Agents stand up.

The Seatbelt light is on, people. Please return to your seats.

AGENT 1

I need to go to the bathroom.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Oh so I guess the rules don't apply to you then? Seatbelt sign is ON.

Ding.

Oop. It's off.

The agents rush towards Miss Walters as she gets the parachute on.

AGENT 2

It's over, Gail. Give up.

MISS WALTERS

It's never over! This is an exit row. And I mean to EXIT. I already agreed that I was willing and able to assist in an emergency, and I am very, very able.

Actor 1 leaps out to speak to the audience.

ACTOR 1

And then, with a completely realistic surge of strength fueled by abject terror, our musical theater teacher ripped open the emergency exit door, and leapt from the jumbo jet!

Miss Walters mimes opening a door –

She leaps out.

Actor 1 becomes Bert again.

BERT

If you didn't want to talk, you could've just said so.

Miss Walters plummets.
If you have the actors, they may become CLOUDS and move up past Miss Walters.

MISS WALTERS

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh
Takes breath
Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhh
Takes another breath, looks down
Oh you fall for a really long time from 26,000 feet.
Aaaaaaaaaah.
Maybe I'll try defying gravity!
She tries defying gravity. Fails.
Aaaaah.
I guess I should pull this ripcord then.
She pulls the ripcord and is pulled backwards off-stage.

ACTOR 2

Picture her now, our intrepid musical theater teacher, parachuting over the Alps – thinking about her life choices, her choice of major in college – A B.A. in English. It's a straight line from a liberal arts degree to fleeing the country. Does she survive?
Miss Walters stumbles in, brushing off pine needles.

MISS WALTERS

Where am I?
Actor 1 becomes THE GOAT, and enters with a sign saying "GLACIER IN THE ALPS."

THE GOAT

Bleeeaat.

MISS WALTERS

A goat?

THE GOAT

The goat. Bleeeeaaat. Grrr,
The Goat tries making several different goat sounds.
Whatever sounds goats make, I don't know.

MISS WALTERS

I think they make kind of an eh-eh-eh-eh-eh noise.
Miss Walters attempts a goat bleat.
The Goat tries it.
They both try it.

Actor 2 becomes a LONELY GOATHERD and enters, tromping in like a marionette.

LONELY GOATHERD

Lay ee odl lay ee odl lay hee hoo

He coughs

Sorry, I got something in my throat. Hello there.

THE GOAT

Bleaat?

MISS WALTERS

Oh hello. Can you tell me where I am please?

LONELY GOATHERD

Switzerland.

MISS WALTERS

Wonderful. I'm looking for someone named Inga.

LONELY GOATHERD

Certainly! She lives in village down below. I can take you down there in morning once I take care of Peter.

MISS WALTERS

Who is Peter?

THE GOAT

Bleeeat.

LONELY GOATHERD

This is Peter. He is very naughty goat.

THE GOAT

Bleeeat.

LONELY GOATHERD

Yes you are, Peter. Do not deny it. I have come to take you home. It's what I do, as a goatherd.

MISS WALTERS

It's just the one goat?

LONELY GOATHERD

There can be only one goat. Come, Peter and I shall make you hot cocoa. In the morning we will take a snowmobile to the village. There are no roads.

The Lonely Goatherd takes Peter's hands.

Actor 1 steps out for a moment

ACTOR 1

And in our completely realistic and true story that is also entirely accurate about Switzerland, the lonely goatherd returned with our musical theater teacher to his rustic log cabin that was decorated tastefully with minimalist flair from IKEA.

ACTOR 2

That's Swedish.

ACTOR 1

They're basically the same, right?

ACTOR 2

Sure.

The Lonely Goatherd and the Goat return with packets of Swiss Miss.

MISS WALTERS

Oh, Swiss Miss?

LONELY GOATHERD

Actually, in Switzerland we get Swiss Mister. It's a little more rugged.

MISS WALTERS

And handsome.

LONELY GOATHERD

Yes. And lonely in the mountains.

Romantic music plays. They gaze into each other's eyes.

MISS WALTERS

Yes, it must get very lonely up here. In your log cabin. With your fire and your cable-knit sweaters.

LONELY GOATHERD

Every day I gaze into distance, glacier reflecting off my piercing blue eyes, before I go chop firewood in the back.

MISS WALTERS

You chop your own firewood? That must be very… strenuous.

LONELY GOATHERD

It is. Sometimes my shoulders and my back… ache. They are very muscular if you wish to feel them.

MISS WALTERS

Oh no I couldn't.

LONELY GOATHERD

Very well.

She draws closer to him.

MISS WALTERS

This cocoa is… hot.

LONELY GOATHERD

Yes. It is hot… cocoa.

MISS WALTERS

The little marshmallows are… melting.

LONELY GOATHERD

They do that.

They are close.

THE GOAT

BLEEEAATT.

LONELY GOATHERD

Oh I am sorry it is time for Peter's sponge bath.

THE GOAT

Thank you.

MISS WALTERS

Peter gets a sponge bath?

LONELY GOATHERD

He gets very cranky if I do not sponge him for a few hours a night. He is very silly goat.

Lonely Goatherd exits with The Goat.

Miss Walters sighs and sips her cocoa.

MISS WALTERS

Why are all the good ones crazy?

Creepy music plays.

Agent 1 and 2 enter, in parkas. They approach the cabin.

One of them steps on a twig.

AGENT 2 *(whispered)*

Watch where you're stepping!

AGENT 1 *(slightly less whispered)*

That wasn't me!

AGENT 2 *(almost full volume)*
You just stepped on a twig right then!

AGENT 1 *(full volume)*
We're on a glacier! There are no twigs!

AGENT 2
Then what made the twig sound, huh?! WE ARE TRYING TO BE VERY QUIET AND STEALTHY AND YOU STEPPING ON A TWIG RUINED IT!

AGENT 1
YOU RUINED THE QUIET BY YELLING!

AGENT 2
THE YELLING WAS NECESSARY!
Miss Walters hears them, gasps.
She runs out.

ACTOR 1
There was only one way out for our musical theater teacher.
Actor 2 enters with a sign that says "I AM A SNOWMOBILE."
It was many miles down the mountain into the village – excuse me, it was many kilometers down the mountain, but still…

SNOWMOBILE 1
Vroooom!

MISS WALTERS
All right then!
She leaps on the back of the Snowmobile (or holds the snowmobiles hands, or otherwise is attached to the snowmobile)

AGENT 1
Stop right there!
She zooms off on the Snowmobile.
The actor playing Snowmobile 1 makes sound effects.

AGENT 2
Stop right there? You thought that was going to work?

AGENT 1
Well at least I tried something!
Actor 2 picks up a sign that says "I AM ALSO A SNOWMOBILE"

AGENT 2

Come on! Anything she can do I can do better!

Both the Agents grab a hold of Snowmobile 2.

SNOWMOBILE 2

Vroooooom!

Snowmobile chase!

The actors who are the Snowmobiles narrate this part.

SNOWMOBILE 1

Eeeerrrrmmmmm! Down the mountain we go! Weaving in and out of trees!

The Snowmobile weaves in and out of trees.

Snowmobile 2 enters, behind them.

**If you have the bodies, you may have additional actors play TREES, and move backwards as the snowmobiles face the audience.*

***Alternately, you could use a projection on the screen behind him.*

****A third option is to do nothing special here and rely on the audience's imagination.*

MISS WALTERS

I don't know how to drive this thing!

SNOWMOBILE 1

She has no idea what she's doing! Eeeermmmm! We narrowly miss a tree! We careen over a frozen stream!

They lean to the left.

We bounce over a log!

They both bounce at the same time.

SNOWMOBILE 2

Vrrrmmmmm! We are gaining on them! I Am the best snowmobile in the world! We are fast! We careen over a frozen stream!

They lean to the left.

We bounce over a log!

They all bounce at the same time.

MISS WALTERS

Ah! They're gaining on us! Go faster!

SNOWMOBILE 1

I am an old snowmobile, ma'am!

MISS WALTERS

Miss!

SNOWMOBILE 1

I am trying my best! We lean left! We lean right!

They lean left. They lean right.

We explode over a ledge! We take to the air!

They go over a major jump – barely miss a tree.

SNOWMOBILE 2

Veeermmmm! I am invincible! I am a Yamaha! We lean left! We lean right!

They lean left. They lean right.

AGENT 2

You're going too fast!

SNOWMOBILE 2

We explode over a ledge! We TAKE TO THE AIR! WOOOOOOO!

They go over a major jump, even higher than Snowmobile 1.

I AM TRULY ALIVE THIS IS THE BEST DAY –

WHAM. They hit a tree.

Agent 1 and 2 fall out of the Snowmobile and tumble off-stage.

Miss Walters speeds off.

SNOWMOBILE 1

Putt putt putt…

Actor 2 returns.

ACTOR 2

Our completely accurate story takes a turn – and our musical theater teacher arrives…

Actor 1 returns with a sign that says "QUAINT SWISS VILLAGE"

At a very large house with Inga's very large family.

MISS WALTERS

Is this the Robinson residence?

*Actor 1 becomes the female family members.**

**If you are using multiple actors for the show, have this all be one role – the actor playing the roles can be any gender.*

INGA'S MOTHER

Ja, who is it?

MISS WALTERS

I'm looking for Inga.

INGA'S MOTHER

Oh! Willkommen. Bienvenue. Welcome.

Miss Walters steps in.

FRITZ! Wo ist Inga?!

*Actor 2 becomes the male family members.**

**see note above.*

INGA'S FATHER

How should I know? She is teenager! She tells me nothing!

INGA'S MOTHER

You are her father! You should know!

INGA'S FATHER

Oh and the mother does not know! Can one say double standard! I will ask her sister.

He calls out.

Lina!

Female family member switches wigs to become Lina. On her phone the whole time.

LINA

Ja?

INGA'S FATHER

Wo ist Inga?

LINA

Why do you always ask me that?!

INGA'S FATHER

Lina is hormonal teenager. Very difficult to talk to.

LINA

You're tearing me apart! Ask Hans!

Male family member switches to baseball cap for Hans. Mimes chewing gum.

HANS

What.

Female family member switches wigs back to Inga's Mother.

INGA'S MOTHER

Have you seen your sister?

HANS

Yeah.

INGA'S MOTHER

Where is she?

HANS

I dunno.

Male family member switches to the Father.

INGA'S FATHER

Oh good answer Hans.

Switches back to Hans. Chewing gum.

HANS

What.

Female family member switches to Lina. On the phone.

LINA

You are so stupid. I'm recording you right now so people know how stupid you are.

HANS

You're stupid. Ask our bitter Aunt Gertrude who has a limp and a jaded worldview.

Female actor switches to another wig, mimes drinking coffee.

AUNT GERTRUDE

I coulda been somebody. Instead I'm trapped in this tiny Swiss village.

HANS

Wo ist Inga?

AUNT GETRUDE

I hope she got out.

HANS

Got out where?

AUNT GERTRUDE

Doesn't matter. Anywhere is better than this. My dreams are dead. My husband Jakob surely knows. He keeps up with these things despite the fact that he is terribly hard of hearing.

Male actor switches to UNCLE JAKOB with a different hat.

UNCLE JAKOB *(speaking German)*

WAS?!*

**(this word is "was," German for "what")*

AUNT GERTRUDE

HAVE YOU SEEN INGA.

UNCLE JAKOB

WAS?!

GERTRUDE

INGA!

UNCLE JAKOB

JA INGA!

MISS WALTERS

It's pretty important we do this quickly, actually.

Male Family Member becomes Inga's Father again. He mimes shouting in Jakob's ear.

INGA'S FATHER

HAVE YOU SEEN INGA?!

Switches to Uncle Jakob

UNCLE JAKOB

OH DEFINITELY JA. SHE WENT TO UM… UM… I FORGET THE WORD… FRITZI!

FEMALE FAMILY ACTOR

Who is Fritzi?

UNCLE JAKOB

FRITZI WHO IS INGA'S GRANDMOTHER WHO IS PARANOID -

Female Family Member becomes FRITZI with a grey wig.

FRITZI

Who's asking?!

UNCLE JAKOB

WHO ALSO HAS SHINGLES AND… AN EYEPATCH… AND… A PET SQUIRREL SHE KEEPS IN BLOUSE.

Fritzi acts out all of those things.

FRITZI

Ack! You stay in there Bubbles.

She pushes the squirrel back into her blouse.

Male actor switches back to Inga's Father.

INGA'S FATHER

Have you seen Inga?

FRITZI

Who are you?

INGA'S FATHER

I am…

Checks hat, tries to remember.

Inga's father.

He works out the math.

Your son.

FRITZI

Oh I see yes.

MISS WALTERS

There's two secret agents chasing me, that's all, in case you wanted to speed this up.

UNCLE JAKOB

WAS?!

MISS WALTERS

Speed it up!

FRITZI

Oh yes Inga is at… Train Station!

MISS WALTERS

Thank you.

FRITZI

You can get directions from Rupert, Inga's Grandfather, who is deranged and does not speak English.

Male actor becomes INGA'S GRANDRATHER

INGA'S GRANDFATHER

Nein!

MISS WALTERS

All right I gotta go.

The actors all switch roles very quickly to say goodbye before Miss Walters can make it off the stage.

HANS

Bye.

LINA

Whatever.

INGA'S FATHER

It was nice meeting you!

INGA'S MOTHER

Why must you people be so rude?!

UNCLE JAKOB

Tradition!

GERTRUDE

Good riddance!

INGA'S GRANDFATHER

Auf Wiedersehen!

FRITZI *(pushing her squirrel down)*

Get back in there Bubbles!

Both actors stop. Exhausted.

They exit.

Actor 2 returns quickly as the TRAIN CONDUCTOR.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

All aboard the train! The train going to… other places in Europe because this is a Eurotrain and there's train service everywhere!

Miss Walters rushes up.

MISS WALTERS

Excuse me, is this the train?

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

What did I just say?

MISS WALTERS

I don't know, I figured since we were in Switzerland you'd be speaking in German and not just English in a terrible Swiss accent.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

Right. Um…

Talks into their phone

Google, how do you say "All aboard the train" in German?

All en den Zug en Deutsch!

All en den Zug en Deutsch!

MISS WALTERS

Is this the train?

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

Ja. This is the… Zug. Ticket please.

MISS WALTERS

Oh I –

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

Just kidding. In Europe everything is free.

Actor 1 enters.

ACTOR 1 *(to the audience)*

Our musical theater teacher boards the high-speed Eurorail zug.

Miss Walters mimes going through the train cars.

MISS WALTERS

Excuse me. Sorry. Rude American coming through. Excuse me. Looking for a girl named Inga. Anyone know Inga?

ACTOR 1 *(to the audience)*

See her go from car to car.

Agent 1 steps into her path.

Dramatic music.

Miss Walters turns around.

MISS WALTERS

Coming back through – excuse me – sorry –

Agent 2 steps into her path from the other direction.

She's trapped!

AGENT 1

Well well well… at last we see each other plain.

AGENT 2

You thought you could escape us.

MISS WALTERS

How do you keep finding me?

Agent 1 keeps going, getting into it.

AGENT 1

You know nothing of me, girl

AGENT 2

Like all musical theater villains, we arrive at precisely the right time.

AGENT 1 *(continuous)*

I was born inside a jail

AGENT 2

Hey I think

AGENT 1 *(continuous)*

I was born with scum like you –

MISS WALTERS

I think he's lost it.

AGENT 1 *(continuous)*

I am from the gutter too!

MISS WALTERS

Is this necessary right now?

AGENT 1

There is no place for you to hide!

They each take a step towards her.
Miss Walters looks round.
They take another step.
And another.

End of Excerpt.
To purchase this play, visit www.concordtheatricals.com