



A DOUBT MY PLAY

By Glenn Alterman

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

THE PLAYWRIGHT- Male- Any age

MODERATOR (MOD)- A nice woman, about 20 years older than the playwright

WRITER 1, WRITER 2, WRITER 3- Playwrights, any age, male and female

PLACE

A playwriting group

TIME

Now

(The PLAYWRIGHT is seated in a chair. His mouth is duct-taped and his arms are tied behind him in the chair. Leaning against his chair is a closed lap top computer. He looks terrified. Around him, seated in a semi-circle, are the other playwrights. A kind woman, (The Moderator, MOD) sits next to him. As each of the other characters speak, his eyes react to what he hears, but we only hear a VOICEOVER (V) of his thoughts and see his reactions in his eyes)

MOD

Now remember, you have to just listen, you can't speak.

(HE nods yes. MOD looks at the other playwrights)

Okay, who's first?

WRITER 1

(Softly, careful, trying to be supportive)

For me... Well in my opinion, I liked it, but... it seemed, I don't know, not quite finished. I think there's more there, *there*.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (VOICE)

Where, there?

WRITER 1

Think you just need to dig a little deeper.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V- A little confused)

Deeper, I do?

WRITER 1

I guess what I'm really trying to say, it's just too short.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V- Annoyed)

It's a ten-minute play!

WRITER 2

(A slight attitude) For me, the main problem is, I don't know, who I should be rooting for. To be perfectly honest, all your characters are very unlikeable.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

They are?

WRITER 2

Except for the pathetic mother, but she's just stupid. I mean it's really hard to feel sorry for her.

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Huh!

WRITER 2

I mean letting her husband walk all over her like that. What a wimp! How can you feel sorry for someone like that? And your other characters, well, I'm sorry, I just found them ---*despicable*; I stopped caring.

WRITER 3

(Even more opinionated) Your device, y'know, having the playwright enter his own play, really?! C'mon, we've seen it a million... Feels like you just ran out of ideas, so you inserted yourself into your own play.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (Voice)

What?! No, that's not what...!

WRITER 2

And the boy's father, jeez, what an asshole! Guys like that... Drunk, unfaithful, no wonder she finally threw him out; took her long enough. I mean who'd put up with someone like that?! The whole thing just *wasn't believable*. After a while I just dropped out, started thinking, "What am I going to have for dinner?"

THE PLAYWRIGHT (Voice, softly, defeated)

Falling, falling

WRITER 1

(Comforting) But there were some really good moments.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (His head perks up, hopeful voice)

Yeah?

WRITER 1

Nice strong images

THE PLAYWRIGHT (More hopeful)

Uh-huh!

WRITER 1

I was touched.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (A smile in his voice)

You were?

WRITER 1

I mean that beautiful bathtub scene. The Jewish mother lovingly washing her young son. You could *feel* the love between them. And there's such... lovely religious imagery in that scene.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

There is?

WRITER 1

(Tenderly) He's like a little baby Moses floating in the water, with his loving mother tenderly washing him. And the bathtub, well it's obvious you meant it to be the Nile.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

I did?

WRITER 1

But you shoulda kept it going. I mean it's obviously a *religious play*.

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

What?!

WRITER 1

Moses, the Nile. You know, maybe you should also include Pharaoh. Yeah, Pharaoh, crossing the Red Sea...

WRITER 2

Yes, I agree!

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

She's just a mother washing her son in a bathtub!

WRITER 2

And we know she's Jewish, so make the play-*more-JEWISH*. Have him,... have him hold a Torah!

THE PLAYWRIGHT (V)

In the tub?!

WRITER 2

And ya gotta bring in the holocaust! From the Nile to the concentration camps, tie it all together. then you'll really have something! And with the HOLOCAUST, bring in HITLER!

WRITER 3

Yeah, the drunk father could turn into HITLER!

PV (VOICE, screaming)

WHAT ARE YOU...?! ---- STOP-REWRITING-MY-PLAY!!

WRITER 1 (Lovingly)

Well I liked it!

THE PLAYWRIGHT (Voice, cautiously)

You did?

WRITER 1

Liked it a lot! (Surprised, they ALL turn and look at WRITER 1.) But... that ending doesn't work. What you should do is put the END of the play at the BEGINNING! Then it'll make total sense! We'd have a story we could follow.