"T.O.T. for A.Y.P.

**O**r

The Certifiable Teacher"

A Comedy in One-Act

Ву

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# CAST

Rose Rongbochs High school drama teacher, early 40's

Lucky (Voice) Drama department colleague, mid-40's

## **SETTING**

Time: End of third quarter (March) in a recent school year

Place: An urban high school in the South

# Synopsis

Drama teacher fights to save her sanity in the battle with educational bureaucracy.

(Two walls covered with photos, posters, fliers, calendars, and memos create the corner of a cramped teachers' office. Behind the upstage wall is an adjoining office nook; this space is a haven off the hallway. The office includes a cluttered desk, rolling chair, a couple of file cabinets, and, connected to the desk and hugging the wall, a credenza that houses shelves and more file drawers, "in kind" donations from a business "partner-in-education." A computer sits angled on the desk's corner, the screen saver slowly pulsating. The bell rings, prompting the hallway din of whoops, foot traffic, loud voices and clanging lockers.)

#### ROSE, Off

Darren. Stop Darren! The mask. Security will take you down! Yeah, yeah. Thanks.

(Rose enters carrying an overflowing canvas tote and juggling a camera and white neutral mask; her entry mutes the noise, as though a door closed. Dropping her things on the desk, she hooks the mask around her neck, and sits. A mechanical sound blast: HonkHonkHonk.)

#### **INTERCOM**

The following students please report to attendance now—

(*She gets camera cable from a drawer and connects the camera to the computer.*)

The following students—please report to attendance now:

(She downloads drama class photos, examining images as they appear.)

Jason Hightower, Keisha Stone, and Marcus Lee; that's: Jason Hightower, Keisha Stone,

(She pulls mask onto her face and mimes waking up.)

and Marcus Lee, report to attendance, please.

(HonkHonkHonk—sound of intercom's exit. Her phone rings. She strikes an escape pose, then removes the mask dangling around her neck and answers.)

#### **ROSE**

Rose Rongbochs. Hello, Ms. Badgett. Annelle? She's in, uh, 4B—yes, she was in class yesterday. A call? Oh.

(Searching for paper and pen.)

No, I haven't met her mother. Certainly—through E-mail group—we're computer pals. Yesterday, well, I did report Annelle as absent, but—

(Tardy bell rings. Muted hall noise ceases. She finds pencil over her ear and speaks at hyperspeed.)

## ROSE (Cont'd)

she was out of her seat when I checked roll—yes, a seating chart—Zipped the report off—We started class and like magic I looked again there she was in her seat—So of course I re-sent the report. Quickly.

(Sitting, she pulls sticky notepad from drawer.)

Her mother got the automated absentee report. I understand she was upset. I'm sorry. A mother who doesn't play. Yes, M'am. I know you don't play either. I don't play myself—Right: on the same page. Yes, I'll explain. 'Bye.

(She hangs up receiver, removes mask, holds it out, mirrors its expression.)

ROSE (Cont'd)

I don't play myself.

(Writing a note.)

Annelle's mom – 4B NOT ABSENT.

(Sticking note to computer screen.)

Annelle played. Door: locked—but, poof! There she sits.

(She tosses mask onto pile of papers and opens email window on computer. Incoming messages fill the screen.)

ROSE (Cont'd)

Wait, wait! E-mail mom, before you lose the reminder—and the remainder of your mind.

(As she opens the message to Annelle's mother, the intercom sounds: HonkHonkHonk.)

### **INTERCOM**

Teachers, please excuse the interruption. Please excuse the interruption. Copies of the schedule change and assembly seating for this afternoon are in your boxes now.

**ROSE** 

What?

## **INTERCOM**

Please send a student to pick up your schedule before lunch. Thank you.

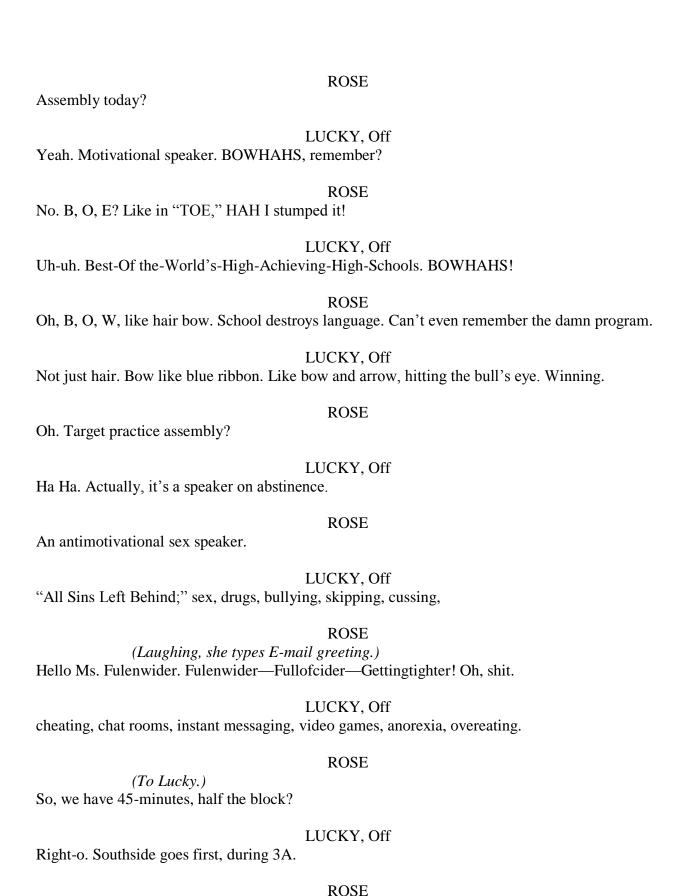
(Intercom sounds the exit: HonkHonkHonk. She speaks to colleague in rear office.)

**ROSE** 

Hey, Lucky.

LUCKY, Off

Yo.



OK. Thanks.

ROSE (Cont'd)

(Continuing typed message.)

Hello Ms. Fulenwider. Sorry you received an absence call for Annelle. I corrected the 4B class report when I saw her present. She was—out of her seat—momentarily. Thanks for checking—it always helps students to know that parents and teachers are on the same page! R. Rongbochs

(Rose clicks "send," and diminishes E-mail screen.)

ROSE (Cont'd)

45 minutes. Short review, drop quiz bowl; still, test.

(Stretching arms and back.)

BOWHAHS, God!

LUCKY, Off

Praying, or dying?

**ROSE** 

(Finding file of papers.)

Groaning, before paper grading.

LUCKY, Off

Grading? Gotcha. Just sent interim reports myself.

**ROSE** 

Show off.

(Computer jingle tone announces Rose's new E-mail message.)

LUCKY, Off

See the memo on sorting by special modification needs?

**ROSE** 

No.

(Opening new message from principal.)

"Urgent!" So what freakin' isn't? "Send proof of your 3 TPC hours to Human Resources by this afternoon. Don't Dawdle!" What the hell? "Downtown will publicize district- wide figures."

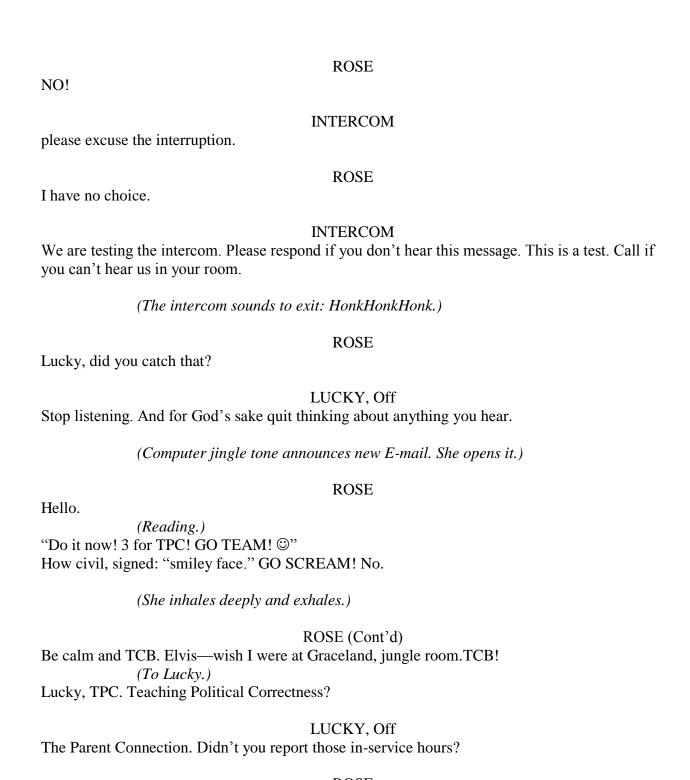
LUCKY, Off

You add the code to the interim—

(The intercom sounds: HonkHonkHonk.)

**INTERCOM** 

Teachers,



ROSE

No, but thanks and shut up. After you tell me where the "proof" would be that I was subjected to the session.

### **INTERCOM**

(Clicking on with scratchy static, not honks, to call a single room.)

Ms. Rongbochs? Ms. Rongbochs?