

## THE TITLE ROLE

By Jeff Dunne

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## CHARACTERS

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| DIRECTOR  | A generally obnoxious director who is about to get a nasty surprise. |
| THE DEVIL | Who eventually runs out of patience.                                 |

## SETTING

Pretty much anywhere an audition could be held.

SCENE

*(A Director is holding auditions for a play called "The Devil Exclusive" when the Devil shows up, ostensibly to read for his own part.)*

DIRECTOR

Alright, let's see who we have next. Number fourteen?

DEVIL

Right here.

DIRECTOR

And I see you're interested in auditioning for the part of the devil.

DEVIL

That's r—

DIRECTOR

Except you were supposed to indicate your role preference below. Name was where you were supposed to put your own name.

DEVIL

That's wh—

DIRECTOR

Not a big deal, I guess. Alright. You're familiar with the script?

DEVIL

More or less.

DIRECTOR

So you're the devil...

DEVIL

Right.

DIRECTOR

And you've come down to Earth—

DEVIL

Up.

DIRECTOR

--to meet with a journalist—

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What? DIRECTOR

Complaints. We've been ge— DEVIL

DIRECTOR  
Look, I know a lot of actors just want to ad-lib everything, but this isn't an improv piece. We've got a script. Good lines, good point, and so let's just read that, okay? Here, I'll get you started. (*Reading...*) So you're the devil.

So you're the director. DEVIL

Oh my god. DIRECTOR

Actually... DEVIL

DIRECTOR  
The line is "So you're the journalist". Can we just try it that way?

I think— DEVIL

DIRECTOR  
Good. Great. Alright, so... So you're the devil.

That's right. DEVIL

DIRECTOR  
Stop. Just stop. Alright. What the hell is wrong with you?

Funny you should put it that way. DEVIL

DIRECTOR  
Did you just come in here to waste my time? There are a lot people out there waiting for a chance at this part.

Two. DEVIL

DIRECTOR

Well, that's still one more than I need.

DEVIL

And one thinks he's auditioning for Kinky Boots.

DIRECTOR

And how do you know—

DEVIL

He dressed for the part.

DIRECTOR

Well it doesn't matter. We've got lots of people. Lots of options. So if you aren't going to take this audition seriously, just get the hell out.

DEVIL

Again, funny you should mention—

DIRECTOR

That's it. I have all I need. If you would be so kind as to send in the next actor on your way out.

DEVIL

I don't think so.

DIRECTOR

I don't care what kind of boots he's wearing, at least he might be willing to read from the script.

DEVIL

I've come to have a word with you.

DIRECTOR

Well, this isn't the time for it. Unless it's a word in the script.

DEVIL

I think it might be in there somewhere.

DIRECTOR

Fine. Then get on with it.

*(The Devil takes his copy of the script and puts it on the table.)*

DEVIL

The game's over. You see, once upon a time, people actually tried to resist me. They practiced moderation and self-restraint. They thought ahead, they balanced the desires of the present against the needs of the future. Back in those days I had to be clever. How could I tempt this person, how could I mislead that one? Now, though... There's nothing to do. So few of you ever think beyond immediate gratification that the very concept is dying out—

DIRECTOR

Alright. I'll admit I'm impressed that you memorized the monologue. Well done. But now I need you to read it more... like the devil.

DEVIL

More...

DIRECTOR

Devilish. Yes. I need you to mean it.

DEVIL

Oh, I mean it.

DIRECTOR

I need to feel like you really have something to say.

DEVIL

Trust me, I—

DIRECTOR

Something that's specific to me. You know? Something very hellfire and brimstone. Make me pay attention.

DEVIL

In four days you are going to die a horrible death at the hands of disgruntled actors, and then I'm going to drag your soul down to Hell where you will listen to entitled, egotistical first year theater students misinterpret Hamlet for all eternity.

DIRECTOR

That's... that's actually rather disturbing. But let's just stick to the script for—

DEVIL

Your audience will consist of old people who ceaselessly complain that their hearing aids aren't working, and small children with an insatiable appetite for crunchy candy wrapped in crinkly metallic paper reinforced with chainmail.

DIRECTOR

Not those little gold foil—

DEVIL

Oh yes. And in every performance, your incompetent Hamlet will proudly proclaim to the entire audience, "Alas, Port Yorick! I knew him well, Fellatio,"

*(The Director shudders at this.)*

And no matter which part you try to correct for the next performance, he does it exactly the same way. Over. And over. And over. For all eternity.

DIRECTOR

*(Weakly...)*

Heh heh.

DEVIL

Not a joke.

DIRECTOR

You're not... you aren't really... this isn't...

DEVIL

Sorry. It's either that, or...

DIRECTOR

What?! That or what? Is there another option? Because I'll take the other option. I swear! I'll take the other option!

DEVIL

Are you certain?

DIRECTOR

Oh yes! Please! Anything but the torment you just described!

DEVIL

Done. I'll return on Tuesday.

*(Devil goes to exit.)*



DIRECTOR

Wait! Just... out of curiosity... What is the other option?

DEVIL

*(With a wry smile...)*

You are going to become Shakespeare.

DIRECTOR

Shakespeare? That doesn't sound too bad.

DEVIL

That's right. You will become William Shakespeare himself... trapped watching incompetent actors butcher Hamlet for all eternity in front of an audience of... well, you get the idea. Enjoy the weekend.

*(Lights out.)*