

**A COLD NIGHT FOR A DIVA**

Written by

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## **DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

**TUSHY MAGELLAN (DIVA)** - a washed-up diva (55+), a D-lister, a has-been star...a pain-in-the-ass.

**CAROL** - 45, still trying to find her place in the world.

**GUARD** - Theatre building security guard; burly and stoic.

**WALKIE-TALKIE** - off-stage voice of front door security guard over walkie-talkie; filtered sound and walkie-talkie squawks; annoying rookie.

## **SYNOPSIS**

A former star is confronted by a fan who inadvertently exposes the reason for the Diva's antisocial behavior.

## **TIME**

Present day, or recent past.

## **PLACE**

Back door of a theatre. Anytown midwest U.S.A.

## A COLD NIGHT FOR A DIVA

FADE IN:

*The back door of a theatre opens in a cold blue alleyway.*

*It is snowing moderately.*

*A lone, inadequate street lamp overhead conically lights the pitiful scene.*

*A lone security GUARD stands his post outside the door. He takes his job seriously... perhaps too seriously... maybe dreaming about wearing paramilitary gear.*

*We hear some filtered chatter over his shoulder-mounted walkie-talkie.*

*The Guard becomes increasingly annoyed with the rookie on the other end.*

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

*(filtered)*

Got your ears on?

*Closes his eyes. Takes a breath. Braces himself.*

GUARD

Roger.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

Breaker 1-9.

GUARD

*(unenthusiastic)*

Go ahead.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

What's your 10-20?

GUARD

*(incredulous)*

Back door?

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

Wanna do a 10-27?

GUARD

*(dead pan)*

No.

*A beat.*

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

They're leaving now.

*Guard doesn't reply.*

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

Did you copy?

GUARD

Affirmative.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

What's your handle?

GUARD

You know perfectly well what my handle is.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

Roger.

GUARD

Roger or Affirmative?

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

What?

GUARD

Stay off the channel.

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

You're breaking up. I think we've got a 10-1.

## GUARD

Bullshit. You are loud and clear.

*A back door of the theatre opens.*

*Emerging is TUSHY MAGELLAN (55), a washed-up diva, a D-lister, a has-been star...a pain-in-the-ass.*

*Her costume, if that's what it is, almost looks like that of a homeless woman trying to keep up appearances.*

*The security Guard pays her no attention at all.*

*She is angling for attention, recognition, a compliment... anything from the Guard. He remains steadfast, stoic.*

*Carol (41) enters the scene... kind of hovering around. It's not clear what she is doing here. What does become clear is that Carol is a fragile woman who is still trying to find her value in life. Carol sizes up the situation... Guard and Diva...and when the opportunity to approach the Diva seemingly evaporates, pulls out her cell phone, attempting to cover up her desperation to meet the diva by making it look like she was waiting for a phone call. Not too clever, she starts speaking without dialing.*

## CAROL

OMG. I'm out back. I thought we decided to meet out back.

*(beat)*

What do you mean no one says OMG?

*(beat)*

You're in the front?

*(beat)*

What?

*(beat)*

Back.

*(beat)*

Front?

*(beat)*

What?

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

*(beat)*

Why?

*Exasperated, she looks over to TUSHY  
MAGELLAN, making it look like she's talking to  
an idiot.*

CAROL (CONT'D)

*(beat)*

No, I'll come to the front when...

*(beat)*

What?

*(beat)*

Valet?

*(beat)*

Okay. I didn't know you valet'd the car.

*(beat)*

No, I don't have any cash on me for tips. I'm pure plastic now.

*(beat)*

Well, let me know when they get there.

*(beat)*

Okay. Bye.

*(beat)*

What?

*(beat)*

No, I didn't say to buy anything. I said bye...as in goodbye.

*(beat)*

Okay now.

*Carol puts the phone back in her pocket. To  
Tushy...*

CAROL (CONT'D)

*(exasperated)*

Wow!

TUSHY

You didn't even dial.

CAROL

*(caught)*

What?

*Not knowing what to say, Carol waves her off.  
The stoic Guard cracks a smile--he knows the  
drill.*

*It's the first time he has adjusted his position ever so slightly. When Carol randomly moves in Tushy's direction, Tushy moves closer to the guard. Carol grabs her phone again.*

CAROL (CONT'D)

Yes. I'm already on my way. No. I'm pushing my way through the crowds.

*(beat)*

What?

*(beat)*

Yes, I'll see you then.

*Carol sizes up the situation, then leaves.*

*Tushy is again alone with the guard. Although she attempts some feminine wiles to get his attention, he stoically ignores her. She is about to say something, when...*

WALKIE-TALKIE (V.O.)

*(filtered)*

Front is secure.

GUARD

Copy.

*He exits through the heavy metal door, slams it shut, secures it (loudly), and disappears forever...leaving Tushy Magellan 'out in the cold.' She looks as if she's awaiting fans. A short while later, Carol arrives back on the scene.*

TUSHY

Oh, God, not you again.

CAROL

You know, that's not really a nice way to acknowledge a fan.

TUSHY

You're a fan? God help me.

CAROL

You're Tushy Magellan, right?

TUSHY

Someone who talks to themselves on a cell phone? Who needs fans like that?

Where's your guard?  
CAROL

My guard?  
TUSHY  
*(caught)*  
I sent him away.  
*(beat)*

Whatever.  
CAROL

*Carol makes an aggressive move in Tushy's direction, thrusting something toward her...*

Here...  
CAROL (CONT'D)

Stay back!  
TUSHY

*She runs toward the door, pulls on it--and when it doesn't open--bangs on it.*

Help! Help!  
TUSHY (CONT'D)

Take a chill-pill, lady.  
CAROL

S-s-stalker!  
TUSHY  
*(like a sibilant snake)*

Oh my god. This is the first time I've ever met you in person.  
CAROL  
*(sotto voce)*  
No wonder your career took a nose dive.

What did you say?  
TUSHY

I said: no wonder you're doing  
CAROL  
*(almost barking off-off, off-off)*  
*off-off, off-off* Broadway.

TUSHY

I choose to do this.

CAROL

Sure. Ever since you embarrassed yourself trying to dry-hump Al Pacino.

TUSHY

Well, what have you accomplished that would get you within five feet of Pacino?

CAROL

I've accomplished plenty.

TUSHY

Oh, yeah? Like what?

*(beatlet)*

Name one thing.

*Carol tries to think.*

TUSHY (CONT'D)

That's what I thought.

*A beat.*

CAROL

Tushy is such a stupid name. It probably truncated your career.

TUSHY

Shut up!

CAROL

I'm surprised you didn't try a Madonna. Tussshhh!

*Carol laughs a cruel laugh.*

CAROL (CONT'D)

Michelangelo. Madonna. Tussshhh...hilarious.

TUSHY

At least I was a somebody, once. Look at you...all you are is a...a fan...

CAROL

And now you don't even have any of those.

TUSHY

Fuck you!

CAROL

What the fuck [did you just say to me]?...

*Carol lunges at Tushy.*

TUSHY

What the hell are you doing? Get away from me. Ow!

CAROL

You bitch!

*Words are exchanged as they tussle. Then...*

TUSHY

What is the precise nature of your malfunction?

CAROL

I came to get my old playbill signed, you stupid cow!

TUSHY

Not the hair! Not the hair!!

*Carol has pulled off Tushy's hairpiece.*

*Holding the hairpiece, Carol freezes...*

CAROL

Oh my God!

*Laughs.*

*Tushy, bald, and now in tears...*

TUSHY

Look what you did?

CAROL

Holy shit!

*Tushy jerks the hairpiece back.*

CAROL (CONT'D)

Sorry.

*Pitifully cradling the hairpiece, like hat in hand...*

TUSHY

*(tearful)*

Now you know.

CAROL

*(half laughing)*

I'm really sorry.

*Tushy tries placing the hairpiece back on...unsuccessfully.*

TUSHY

What do you care?

CAROL

I didn't know.

*Now the hairpiece looks like a mop draped over a muppet.*

TUSHY

Fuck.

*Tushy pulls off the hairpiece and slams it into the ground.*

TUSHY (CONT'D)

*(tearful)*

Fuck!!

*A beat.*

CAROL

Why am I the one who always feels bad afterwards?

TUSHY

*(slow to answer)*

Don't be so hard on yourself.

*Tushy reaches down to pick up the hairpiece and stuffs it in her bag.*

*Carol looks around...*

CAROL

Who were you waiting for?

TUSHY

I'm not sure anymore.

CAROL

Hate to break it to ya: I'm probably all you've got left.

*Carol walks away...*

TUSHY

Which playbill was it?

*Caught off-guard, Carol stops.*

CAROL

What?

TUSHY

Which playbill was it you wanted me to sign?

CAROL

*(sadly, shaking her head)*

Oh. It's crumpled now.

*Carol reluctantly hands it to her.**Tushy inspects it.*

TUSHY

That was a great show.

CAROL

It's when you peaked.

*Tushy shoots her a look while signing.**A beat.**Tushy hands her back the playbill.**Carol looks at it, prizes it.*

CAROL (CONT'D)

*(empathetically)*

How you gettin' home?

*No answer.*

CAROL (CONT'D)  
*(sweetly)*

Need a ride?

*A beat.*

TUSHY  
*(pitifully, desperate)*

I could use a meal.

**END OF PLAY**