

THE DELICACY OF RATS

By Jerry Rabushka

Copyright © 2024 by Jerry Rabushka, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-64479-268-1

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (888) 473-8521 • FAX (319) 368-8011

THE DELICACY OF RATS

A Comedic Duet

By Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: Alice is thrilled to be hosting a foreign exchange student until she finds out they like to eat rats! Will she give it a try, or is she resistant to other people's cuisine? Alice must find a way to be respectful and still keep rats off her plate. A fun take on people from different cultures who aren't trying hard enough to understand each other and ready to believe the worst.

TIME: Present day.

SETTING: Alice's living room.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females)

ALICE (f).....also plays GRETA. *(49 lines)*

WANDA (f).....also plays ALICE's mother. *(48 lines)*

SET: Bare stage, or some furniture can depict Alice's living room.

COSTUMES: Nothing out of the ordinary.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: Wanda is offended right out of the box, but she decides to have fun with Alice's ignorance about her culture. A lot of fun can be had with the characters' reactions to each other's misguided assumptions. As Wanda is from overseas, she can speak with an accent, but it's not necessary.

AT START: *As the play opens, both characters address the audience rather than each other.*

ALICE: So, we're getting a foreign exchange student, from some country that... I don't even remember! Like, we sent my sister over there and got someone else in return. And I'm like, yippee, like if I'd known I could exchange my sister, I'd have done this in first grade. So, it looks like I'm going to spend the school year with my new friend—Wanda.

WANDA: And I'm going to spend the school year with my new friend, Alice. I am so excited to go to school in the United States [Or insert your home country if not from the US] and learn about the people and the culture. Not from books, or from the news, or even from the aunts and uncles and cousins who had a whole bunch of really strange ideas about forks, spoons, and knives—but from real people.

ALICE: I am so excited to share my world with someone who doesn't know the first thing about the finer points of life.

WANDA: *(Pause: surprised at this.)* I don't know why she said that.

ALICE: I have a very international palette. Here in America, we have Swiss cheese, French fries, Canadian bacon *(Almost whispering to the audience so WANDA can't hear.)* I heard that where she comes from, rats are considered a delicacy.

WANDA: *(Whispering to audience in the same tone.)* It's true. Where I come from, rats are considered a delicacy. *(No they're not!)* I have no idea who told her that, but fine, I'll play along.

ALICE: *(Finally talking to WANDA directly.)* Here in America, you'll feast on chicken, hamburgers, pizza, and mac and cheese.

WANDA: *(Slowly approaching ALICE, a bit shocked.)* No rats? But... I've really been looking forward to rats, American style. Sauteed, fried, topped with—

ALICE: *(Interrupting.)* No they are not topped with anything!

WANDA: You eat them plain? I guess you could...

ALICE: *(Calms down to start over. She has a bit of a superiority complex here, so she's somewhat condescending and still grossed out at the same time.)* So, welcome to the United States, Wanda. I'm so excited to have you living with us for a year.

WANDA: After a fifteen-hour plane ride, I'm ready to Americanize!
First, I have to pee.

ALICE: Our bathrooms are indoors; if you know how they work. First,
close the door!

WANDA: (*A bit insulted.*) We have doors and bathrooms just like you.
(*She's got a bit of a superiority complex too.*) Our country's gross
national product is greater than yours, and our men's soccer team,
gold medal! We just like to eat rats. They're a delicacy. (*To herself.*)
How many times... (*Exits.*)

ALICE: (*To audience.*) I don't want to talk down to her, but I just wanted
to make sure that—wait a minute... did I really hear her right? (*To*
WANDA, off stage.) You just like to eat...

WANDA: (*Enters... like it's no big deal.*) Rats! If you had read the
information packet, you'd have some packed in the freezer... and a
few in the refrigerator for snacking purposes.

ALICE: I wanted to introduce you to American cuisine. Like pizza.
Like... potato puffs. Like syrupy sugary unidentifiable blue drinks.

WANDA: And I want to introduce you to the foods from my country.
So, where can we get some good rats? For dinner.

ALICE: No one eats rats for dinner.

WANDA: (*Offended.*) As I've said and as you've... apparently... read,
in my country, rats are considered a delicacy.

ALICE: I thought that meant that you were so poor, you were lucky to
get rats for dinner.

WANDA: We are lucky... (*ALICE is relieved for a moment.*) because
we like them. They're very expensive and have to be cooked just
so. Perhaps the grocery will have them in a specialty aisle.

ALICE: No, but you certainly know how to put the "gross" in grocery.

WANDA: (*Miffed, turns away.*) I just got here and you're insulting my
people's cultural traditions.

ALICE: (*Disgusted.*) You just got here, and you're trying to put rats on
my plate.

WANDA: We eat chips and salsa too, but we top it off with...

ALICE: (*Quickly interrupting, turning away.*) I so totally don't ever in
my life want to hear what you top it off with.

WANDA: (*Approaches her, cheerfully.*) White rats, black rats, lab rats.
(*ALICE runs away, WANDA chases after.*) You'll never know until
you try.

ALICE: (*Moves away, confused.*) How did you become a country of rat-eaters?

WANDA: (*Tells a story about how this happened.*) Back in the day, there was nothing to eat, and our people were hungry.

ALICE: That's what happens where there's nothing to eat.

WANDA: We didn't know what to do. The potatoes were failing. The cows weren't giving milk. Neither were the coconuts. But the rats, they looked fine. They were fat and happy and...

ALICE: So, you ate them?

WANDA: The king ate them first to show his people the way.

ALICE: We don't have a king here.

WANDA: We don't anymore. This was four thousand years ago. King Rat-a-Tat-Tat the Fourteenth. So now, it's considered a dish fit for a king.

ALICE: (*Losing it.*) Fine, you can have all the rats you want, but I'm not. No rats, mice, chipmunks, squirrels, rabbits, hedgehogs, or cabbage.

WANDA: Cabbage? What kind of country is this that I came to?

ALICE: It's a free country, and as long as that lasts, no cabbage for Alice.

WANDA: But corned rat and cabbage. It's amazing.

ALICE: Are you making this up? I could almost deal with the rats, but the cabbage!

WANDA: You wanted to host an exchange student, but I don't see a lot of exchanging going on.

ALICE: I just wanted to send my sister out of the country. How I'm going to live with you for a whole year, I'll never know.

WANDA: (*Pause, hurt.*) Well, I'm going to put my things away.

ALICE: You don't know where anything is.

WANDA: (*Angry.*) Maybe I'll store my belongings in the outhouse. (*Exits.*)

ALICE: (*After a pause.*) Mom!!! (*To audience.*) When in doubt, bring in the parents.

WANDA: (*Enters, as Alice's mom.*) So Alice, how are you getting on with Wanda?

ALICE: She's trying to get me to eat rats.

WANDA: (*As Alice's mom.*): That's why she's here, to introduce you to another culture.

ALICE: It's like me saying "Hi Wanda, welcome to America, let's listen to Nickelback."

WANDA: *(As Alice's mom.)* You need to make her feel at home.

ALICE: No, I want to make her feel decidedly like she's not at home, but in a foreign country where *(Loudly.)* they don't eat rats.

WANDA: *(As Alice's mom.)* You're the one who wanted an exchange student. You should have read the information packet before she got here.

ALICE: Rats are not delicate. Rats are not tasty. Rats are most famous for the bubonic plague, which they've now passed on to rabbits and prairie dogs... also never on the menu of my life.

WANDA: *(As Alice's mom.)* Well, you can't make Wanda feel looked down on.

ALICE: What do we have here that's a delicacy?

WANDA: *(As Alice's mom.)* Caviar.

ALICE: What's that, other than just as gross?

WANDA: *(As Alice's mom.)* Fish eggs. Salmon eggs. Flying fish roe, paddlefish roe.

ALICE: Why are delicacies so revolting? It's not delicacy. It's a "disgusting-acy." Why not make chocolate cream pie a delicacy?

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from
THE DELICACY OF RATS by Jerry Rabushka. For
performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script,
please contact us at:***

Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

www.brookpub.com