

OPERATION: DESSERT STORM

by Linda Cooke

Copyright © 2019 by Linda Cooke, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-64479-051-9

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

OPERATION: DESSERT STORM

A Ensemble Comedy

by Linda Cooke

SYNOPSIS: In an effort to shed their nerdy image, students in a women's dorm plan to kidnap male students and bring them back to HQ for dancing and dessert. It's not as risky as falling on a grenade, but in attempting to pull off a military-style takeover, these free-thinking feminists are navigating a serious social mine field.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(7 females, 1 male, 0-10 extras)

SHARON ROSS (f) Schaffer women's commandant,
a take-charge individual.
(31 lines)

JANET RIGBY (f) Happy and competent in her role
as second in command.
(21 lines)

BECKY FARNSWORTH (f) Sweet but a little scatter-brained.
(18 lines)

AMY CHANG (f) Has body issues, needs a
confidence infusion. *(14 lines)*

DEBBIE MURPHY (f) Brave soul, perfect for the recon
mission. *(11 lines)*

GLORIA CHAVEZ (f) Political activist searching for
meaning. *(16 lines)*

KAREN SCHMIDT (f) Tough as nails head of
interrogation. *(15 lines)*

TODD WISEMAN (m) Women's 'hostage,' a generally
nice guy. *(17 lines)*

MALE 'PRISONERS' (m) 0-10, College students.
(Non-Speaking)

TIME: Early evening.

SETTING: Women's college dorm lobby.

SET: Open lobby with couches and armchairs, functioning elevator doors.

COSTUMES: Casual college attire.

PROPS

- ☐ 7 Bananas
- ☐ 7 Bandannas
- ☐ Cell Phones (Walkie Talkies)
- ☐ Banana Crème Pie
- ☐ Assorted Desserts/Snacks
- ☐ Stack of Cups
- ☐ 7 Watches
- ☐ Clipboard
- ☐ Sheer Scarf
- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ Notebooks/Textbooks

SPECIAL EFFECTS

- ☐ Elevator ping
- ☐ Text notification

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Set, costumes and props can be customized to fit the era the director chooses.

Based on actual events, and dedicated to the wild and wonderful women of Pound Hall. The dorm is gone, but the memories live on.

AT RISE: *Women's college dorm lobby – early evening. Plates and bowls of snack food are laid out around the room. AMY and DEBBIE chat quietly in a corner. SHARON enters with stiff military gait. JANET enters, scampering behind with a clipboard.*

SHARON: *(To JANET.)* Give, the order, lieutenant.

JANET: *(Saluting.)* Ma'am, yes ma'am. *(Shouting.)* Company, fall in!

AMY and DEBBIE scramble to the center of the lobby. GLORIA and KAREN enter in a scramble. The four of them form a ragged line. ALL but AMY carry bananas hidden in their pocket, while DEBBIE carries two bananas hidden in a pocket.

JANET: Dress left!

WOMEN extend their left arms to shoulder height, straight to their left. They line up, shoulder to fingertip, and straighten up their line.

JANET: Attention!

WOMEN stand at attention, eyes forward. When called upon, each amplifies her rigid posture.

SHARON: Well done, platoon. Now, we face our first mission, code name "Night maneuvers." Let's go over the plan again, in detail. Chavez, sound off! What is phase one?

GLORIA: Ma'am, at nineteen hundred hours, assemble in the lobby for weapons inspection and final instructions.

SHARON: Correct! Murphy, phase two!

DEBBIE: Nineteen ten: Depart dorm floor and stealthily ascend the back stairs to the fourth floor of McCormick Hall... *(Scandalized.)* the men's dorm.

SHARON: Well-done! Chang! Phase three?

AMY: Nineteen twenty: Attain targets. Escort targets back to HQ at banana point. *(Uses a banana to illustrate.)*

SHARON: Very good! Farnsworth! Who are the targets?

BECKY: The men of McCormick Hall's fourth floor, our brother study floor.

SHARON: Exactly right. Murphy, Phase four?

DEBBIE: Nineteen twenty-five: Activate current platinum hit music.

SHARON: Correct! Chavez! Phase five?

GLORIA: Nineteen thirty: Serve luscious desserts and campus-approved beverages.

SHARON: Final phase of the plan? Company sound off!

ALL WOMEN: *(Except SHARON.)* Party!!

SHARON: Good work, platoon. *(To JANET.)* Lieutenant, complete the drill.

JANET: Yes, Ma'am. Right shoulder arms!

With upper arms against their sides, WOMEN in unison bend their right elbows, bringing the bananas to shoulder height.

JANET: Present arms!

In unison, WOMEN straighten their right arms in front of them. SHARON walks slowly down the row, inspecting the 'weapons.' SHARON notices AMY is missing hers.

SHARON: Where's your weapon, soldier?

AMY: *(Reluctant.)* Ma'am, I ate it. I was so hungry! I've been dieting all week.

ALL break out of military mode, groaning and rolling their eyes.

DEBBIE: *(Gentle but firm.)* Amy, we have talked about this: Your self-worth is not defined by your dress size. You are a beautiful, healthy human.

GLORIA: You're going to wind up anorexic, Amy!

WOMEN relax further and murmur agreement.

JANET: No talking in ranks!

WOMEN return to attention even as JANET relaxes in an aside to AMY.

JANET: But your comrades are right. I'm pre-med and I know for a fact that a distorted body image can lead to eating disorders. It's okay to eat a cheeseburger once in a while.

AMY: But I'm a vegetarian!

Ad lib encouraging comments from the WOMEN (excluding SHARON.): Good for you! Such a noble sacrifice! The animals are so abused! Way to go. Striking a blow for the environment!

SHARON: Ten-hut! (*Sighing.*) Does anybody have a spare banana to give Amy?

DEBBIE hands a spare banana to AMY, who becomes serious and 'presents' it along with the others. SHARON nods to JANET.

JANET: Holster your weapons!

WOMEN snap bananas back up to their shoulders, then slip them in their front pockets.

JANET: Engage face masks!

With precision, WOMEN use both hands to place bandannas over their lower faces and return to attention. GLORIA instead arranges a sheer scarf over her head and face.

SHARON: Chavez! This is not the approved gear.

GLORIA: Permission to speak frankly, ma'am.

SHARON: Permission granted... but could you uncover your face, please?

GLORIA: (*Removes the scarf.*) I chose the Hindu veil, or "dupatta" to show support for our sisters in India, who are compelled to live under the sexist system of purdah.

AMY: But, Gloria, the dupatta is a symbol of male oppression and not in keeping with our message of female empowerment.

DEBBIE: I have to say, the veil conceals your identity even better than the bandanna does. Maybe we should all wear veils.

GLORIA: Look, Debbie, I know you're the International Studies major-

DEBBIE: President of the Multicultural Association.

GLORIA: But I'm double-majoring in Political Science and Women's Studies, so I think—

WOMEN break rank to debate the issue. They ad lib several seconds of dialogue.

SHARON: Attention!

ALL snap to.

SHARON: *(To GLORIA.)* Soldier, you disappoint me. *(Breaking character into relaxed mode again.)* I mean, for serious, Gloria, we've been planning this for weeks! You couldn't have expressed your political views previous to the mission?

KAREN scurries in, bandana around her neck, banana at the ready. She tries to sneak onto the end of the line unnoticed. She tosses her backpack behind the line.

GLORIA: I was inspired in class only yesterday by Elhadi's independent film on the suppressive—

DEBBIE: Ooh! I saw that in my World Religions class! The title is, "Dupatta? DON'T-patta." So insightful!

WOMEN again break rank to discuss the merits of the film.

JANET: Attention!

WOMEN return to their stiff posture. SHARON has spied KAREN, the latecomer, and gets, literally, up in KAREN'S face.

SHARON: Assembly was scheduled for nineteen hundred hours, soldier. What's your excuse?

KAREN: Ma'am, midterm exam ran long.

SHARON: You're excused, Schmitty. Studies before Socials. Do you have your face mask and side arm?

KAREN: *(Efficiently bringing the bandana over her nose, she then presents her banana.)* Ma'am, yes ma'am!

JANET: If I may, Captain, I'd say it's time we synchronize our watches. *(Raises her wrist to eye level.)* Nineteen ten on my mark *(pause a few seconds.)* Hack!

ALL: *(Repeating.)* Hack!

SHARON: *(Turns to DEBBIE.)* Murphy, I'm sending you out on recon. Bring back a report after you have a visual on the targets!

DEBBIE: Ma'am, yes, ma'am!

DEBBIE races to press the elevator button. SFX: The elevator pings, and the doors open. To the surprise of all, TODD steps off the elevator. As a unit, WOMEN draw their 'weapons' and take aim at him. A couple drop to their knees, one may even go down on her belly. Instinctively, he puts up his hands, dropping his backpack, and notebook/textbooks.

AMY: Halt! Who goes there?

TODD: *(Seeks out BECKY.)* Becky, it's me, Todd. I came to share my chemistry notes, remember?

BECKY: Crap, I totally forgot!

AMY: Becky, how could you—

KAREN: He's one of the McCormick Four. We've been compromised!

SHARON: *(To DEBBIE.)* Murphy, execute recon as previously ordered. Text me with a status report.

DEBBIE: *(Saluting.)* Aye-aye, captain! *(Exits via the elevator.)*

JANET: *(Gesturing to TODD.)* We'll have to hold him hostage.

AMY: Roger that. *(Menacingly to TODD.)* Looks like you'll be staying with us for a while.

TODD: Uh, yeah. I was kind of planning on that, actually.

KAREN: *(To SHARON.)* Captain, permission to interrogate the prisoner?

SHARON: Good idea, Schmitt.

WOMEN grab TODD and back him into an armchair.

KAREN: Okay, you. What's the deal with your comrades and... the toilet seats?

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from OPERATION: DESSERT STORM by Linda Cooke. 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**

DO NOT COPY