

TIME TO SCREAM

A Darkly Comedic One Act

by Scott Mullen

Copyright © 2021 by Scott Mullen, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-64479-135-6

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

TIME TO SCREAM*A Darkly Comedic One Act***by Scott Mullen**

SYNOPSIS: Seven teens show up at a warehouse to audition for a monster movie that requires screaming—but as the screamers start disappearing, they worry that the monster may be real.

DURATION: 20 minutes.

TIME: Present.

SETTING: An empty warehouse.

CAST OF CHARACTERS*(1 female, 7 either)*

AMBER (f)	An oddly frazzled young woman trying to hold it together. <i>(32 lines)</i>
ONE (m/f)	Is bossy, and always thinks they are the best. <i>(22 lines)</i>
TWO (m/f)	Is a lot like One, but not quite as dominant. <i>(27 lines)</i>
THREE (m/f)	Wishes they were One, but isn't. <i>(17 lines)</i>
FOUR (m/f)	Twins with Five, and very bonded. They do not need to look alike. <i>(34 lines)</i>
FIVE (m/f)	Twins with Four, and very bonded. They do not need to look alike. <i>(33 lines)</i>
SIX (m/f)	A little over-eager, but has a sensible side. <i>(50 lines)</i>
SEVEN (m/f)	Very quiet, and the most fearful. <i>(50 lines)</i>

CAST NOTE: The characters are all in their teens. Any numbered role can be male or female, of any race.

SET: A bare stage

PROPS: A folding chair, with a paper sign attached reading “Wait here.”

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The challenge here is to make the staging of a bunch of people on a mostly bare stage (especially early on) interesting. Have fun with it. The fact that the set is a warehouse also can be utilized however you want—there can be whatever items that might be in a warehouse to help make the stage—and the staging—more interesting. The offstage screams should all come from the same place (wherever people are exiting to) while there are some early screams from non-cast characters.

DO NOT COPY

AT START: *The stage is empty, other than a folding chair. A hastily-scrawled sign attached to it reads "WAIT HERE." SIX wanders in from stage left. Spots the chair.*

SIX: I think this is where it is. (*Looks back.*) Come on!

SEVEN enters. Wary.

SEVEN: This is creepy. Let's go.

SIX: Don't be a scaredy-cat! We're in the right place. There's a sign!

SEVEN: You call that a sign?

SIX: Maybe it's a test, to see if we can follow directions.

SIX moves next to the sign.

SIX: Stand next to me. In case someone's watching.

SEVEN: There's no one here.

SIX: There must be someone here. It's a big warehouse. There were a lot of cars in the parking lot.

SEVEN: Tell me again what it said on the Internet.

SIX: It said there were going to be auditions to act in a horror movie, and they were desperate, because they were making the movie right now, right here. Oh, and we had to be really great screamers.

SEVEN: This could be a creepy trap!

SIX: It's not a trap! C'mon. You're a great screamer.

SEVEN: Maybe I don't want to scream.

SIX: It's a movie! Who doesn't want to be in a movie?

SEVEN: I'm leaving.

SEVEN starts to go, but then stops at the sound of voices. SEVEN retreats behind SIX as FOUR and FIVE enter from stage left.

FOUR: See, there's someone here. And there's a sign!

FIVE: It's real. We're going to be movie stars!

FOUR: (*To SIX and SEVEN.*) Are you here to audition?

SIX: We just got here.

SEVEN: I don't think anyone is here.

FIVE: But the parking lot is full of cars.

SIX: That's what I said!

FOUR: Can you scream?

SIX: We can scream.

FIVE: We're great screamers.

ONE, TWO, and THREE enter from stage left.

ONE: Great, there's a line.

THREE: A short line.

TWO: Where are the cameras?

THREE: Where are the people?

Offstage, someone screams. It's cut off.

SEVEN: Okay, that was scary...

FOUR: Someone's here somewhere.

TWO: That wasn't a very good scream.

THREE: They totally aren't going to get the part.

FIVE: We can scream better than that.

ONE: I'm going to save you all some time. This part is going to be mine. I have experience, I know I can act circles around you all—

TWO: You don't even know me.

ONE: I can tell, just by looking at you. You don't know what it means to tap into deep, internal emotions. You're amateurs.

TWO: It's a horror movie.

ONE: Movies take talent! The camera is right there, in your face! So you're all wasting your time. I'm an experienced actor, I've been in movies!

TWO: I don't recognize you.

ONE: Did you see "Bloody Playground?"

TWO: Never heard of it.

ONE: I was the one who gets stabbed on the slide.

THREE: You were really good. The way you screamed, all the way down...

ONE: I'm known for my screaming. I'm the best screamer in the whole area. I bet none of you have any serious screaming experience.

TWO: I was in a horror movie. I played a dead body in "Swimming Pool of Fear."

ONE: Did you scream?

TWO: No. I was just dead.

ONE: That's not real acting. Anyone else?

FOUR: We were in a diaper commercial.

FIVE: We were babies.

ONE: Did you scream?

FOUR: We cried.

FIVE: We needed to be changed.

ONE: That doesn't count.

Offstage, someone screams. It's cut off.

SEVEN: Okay. That sounded real.

ONE: I can scream better than that in my sleep.

TWO: This isn't Shakespeare. It's just a scary movie.

ONE: Just a scary movie!? Do you know how many famous people did horror movies when they started out? Jennifer Aniston was in "Leprechaun." Kevin Bacon was in "Friday the 13th!"

TWO: Who's Kevin Bacon?

ONE: He's famous!

TWO: If you say so...

ONE: What about the guy who starred in "Get Out?" No one knew who he was before "Get Out." After that movie—famous!

FOUR: I want to be famous.

FIVE: We're going to be famous.

THREE: Maybe they are going to cast a lot of people.

ONE: You better hope so.

SEVEN: There's something really spooky going on here.

ONE: Don't be weird.

SEVEN: (To SIX.) Can we leave?

SIX: I want to stay. You can go.

SEVEN: You're my ride!

SIX: It's a movie.

AMBER enters from stage right, a bit desperate looking.

AMBER: Thank goodness, someone showed up. Though I was hoping for more. Maybe this is enough. I hope this is enough. You

are teens, which is perfect, because the people in there now... I don't think they're going to get the job done.

Offstage, someone screams. SEVEN takes a step backward. AMBER takes a distracted look where she came from, then focuses.

AMBER: I think this time I'll bring you in one at a time.

ONE: Who are you?

AMBER: I'm Amber. I'm... the director's assistant.

TWO: How many people do you need for this movie?

ONE: I'm the best screamer—and I can actually act. My name is—

AMBER: Stop! I don't need to know your names. Line up, right here. In order of how good you think your scream is.

ONE pushes to the front of the line. TWO is next. There's pushing between THREE and FOUR, but they line up in numerical order, FIVE behind them. SIX and SEVEN, much more polite, take their spots at the end.

AMBER: This is what I'll call you (*Counts off.*) One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven.

ONE: Did you hear that? I'm number one. You should just send Two home.

TWO: You should send One home!

Offstage, someone screams.

SEVEN: Oh no...

THREE: Relax already.

ONE: Are you auditioning other people?

TWO: That wasn't a very good scream.

ONE: Because you need to give us a chance, too.

AMBER: We'll know very quickly.

AMBER looks offstage. Frowns.

AMBER: (*To ONE.*) Let me hear your scream.

ONE screams. It's pretty good.

AMBER: You'll do. Follow me.

TWO: Hey!

ONE follows AMBER offstage.

TWO: My scream is awesome!

TWO screams. AMBER exits without reacting.

TWO: So unfair.

THREE: Your scream was pretty good.

TWO: I know, right?

SIX: It sounds like you've had a lot of practice screaming.

TWO: Not really. I'm not afraid of anything.

THREE: Me either.

SEVEN: I'm afraid of everything.

SIX: (To TWO.) But wouldn't that make it harder to scream? If you can't imagine the thing you're most afraid of?

TWO: I scream on roller coasters.

SIX: Because you're afraid.

TWO: Because it's fun.

THREE: It's totally fun.

SIX: So you aren't afraid that the roller coaster will jump its track and you'll fall on your head?

TWO: That can't happen.

FOUR: This guy our cousin knew, he fell out of a roller coaster.

FIVE: And now he has a metal forehead.

TWO and THREE laugh.

SIX: You think that's funny?

TWO: What if he walks under a big magnet, and it pulls him into the air, so he's just hanging there?

TWO acts it out. THREE, FOUR and FIVE laugh. Offstage, ONE screams. It goes on for a while, then suddenly cuts off.

SEVEN: Oh, no, no, no, no....

THREE: That was a pretty good scream.

TWO: You think so?

SEVEN: One really sounded afraid.

TWO: It was weak. This part is mine.

SEVEN: *(To SIX.)* Please can we go home?

SIX: The line isn't that long.

AMBER enters, a little more frazzled.

AMBER: You're all going to have to do a lot better than that. This is a movie about a scary creature that can only be destroyed by just the right teenage scream. A monster that will eat you while you scream, unless you can scream the perfect scream. Now it's easy to be a terrible screamer, and become monster food, but it's going to take a special screamer to be the hero. Who thinks they are the hero?

Everyone raises their hand immediately except for SEVEN, whose hand finally goes up, a lot slower.

AMBER: Good, good. We need heroes. Who screamed when I left?

TWO: I did!

AMBER: You'll do. Come on. Try to scream better than One did.

TWO: I can do that.

SEVEN: What happened to One?

AMBER: One didn't work out.

SEVEN: Did One leave?

AMBER: Yes... One went out the back door. Come on, Two.

TWO follows AMBER offstage.

THREE: I'm next.

SIX: That was suspicious.

FOUR: Something weird is going on.

FIVE: Totally weird.

FOUR: When we came here, we rode our bikes.

FIVE: There's a path in the back.

FOUR: And we didn't see any doors.

FIVE: The only way out is—

FOUR: Through here.

SIX: Are you twins or something?

FIVE: We are.

FOUR: I was born first.

FIVE: You cheated.

THREE: There must be a door to the outside you didn't see.

FOUR: I'm sure there is.

FIVE: There must be.

SEVEN: I haven't even seen any cameras.

SIX: Why would there be cameras out here?

Offstage, TWO screams. It goes on for a while, then is cut off.

THREE: That sounded pretty good.

FOUR and FIVE: Ehhh....

FOUR: We can do better.

FIVE: Together.

FOUR: Or separately.

FIVE: We never do things separately.

FOUR: If they only let us in one at a time—

FIVE: We'll insist. Together.

FOUR: Fine.

AMBER enters, splashed with a bit of blood. Even more frazzled.

AMBER: No one else has arrived? We might need more people.

THREE: Give me a chance.

AMBER: Are you a good screamer, Four?

THREE: I'm Three! And yes.

AMBER: Okay, this is what I need—

SEVEN: Is that blood?

AMBER looks down, seemingly aware of it for the first time.

AMBER: Oh... it's fake blood. Movie blood.

SEVEN: Why are you using fake blood for an audition?

AMBER: Because it... makes it more real?

SIX: What is it made of?

AMBER: What?

SIX: The blood. Is it made out of corn syrup?

AMBER: I guess.

SIX: Can I taste it?

AMBER: No! You can't taste the blood! (*To ALL.*) This is what I need.

I need someone who can scream in a lot of different ways. High, low, long, short. Let's put it this way—if this monster is chewing on your legs, do you think you can give me six different screams in three seconds, as you try to find the perfect one that will kill the creature?

THREE: I can try.

AMBER: Go. Let's hear it.

THREE tries to do six screams in three seconds. It's a mess.

AMBER: No.

THREE: I can do better. Let me try again.

THREE tries to do a bunch of screams again. It's better.

AMBER: All right, I don't have time to test you all, you'll have to do.

The rest of you, if the lights go out, just start screaming as loud as you can.

AMBER and THREE hustle offstage. The others watch them go.

SEVEN: Why did she say that?

SIX: I don't know. Maybe you're right. This is starting to freak me out.

SEVEN: Yes! What if there's really a monster in there that can only be killed by teenagers' screaming?

FOUR: That's not a thing.

FIVE: Totally not a thing.

FOUR: Unless it is.

FIVE: What?

FOUR: Isn't this exactly what they might do? Tell a lie about a movie to get teenagers to come in and scream, in hopes that one of them will kill the monster—and if they don't, at least the monster has someone to eat until the next screamer comes along?

SEVEN: That sounds weirdly possible.

FIVE: No! How would they know that only a teenager's scream can kill the monster? Because if they learned that—the monster would be dead!

SIX: That's a great point.

SEVEN: That makes sense.

FOUR: So it's just a movie.

FIVE: Yes!

FOUR: I'm sorry I doubted you.

FIVE: We're going to be movie stars!

SEVEN: Unless you get eaten by a monster!

FOUR: Well, we're amazing screamers.

FIVE: So if there is a monster in there—

FOUR: We'll scream, and kill it.

FIVE: And be famous.

FOUR: So either way, win-win.

FIVE: This is going to be amazing.

FOUR and FIVE high five. And then, backstage, THREE starts screaming. THREE only gets to three different screams before it cuts off.

FOUR: That wasn't six screams.

SIX: Maybe the third one worked.

FOUR: No way.

FIVE: That was a loser scream.

FOUR: I bet Amber will be out any second.

FIVE: And then we're next. Together.

AMBER comes out, a bit dazed and traumatized. Maybe covered in a little more blood.

AMBER: Okay, forget the whole six screams in three seconds thing. Just give me your best scream. Who's next?

FIVE: Us.

FOUR: Together. Unless you don't want that.

FIVE: No, the two of us together is better. We'll get it done.

AMBER: Why not. Come on.

SEVEN: Wait! Tell us the truth! Are there cameras in there shooting a movie? Or is there really a monster that is killing everyone you bring in there?

AMBER looks at SEVEN. A very long beat.

AMBER: The first one.

FOUR: Awesome!

FIVE: We're going to be famous!

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from
TIME TO SCREAM by SCOTT MULLEN. 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**