

TOO LATE FOR HISTORY

by Kelly Meadows

Copyright © 2019 by Kelly Meadows, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-64479-045-8

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

TOO LATE FOR HISTORY

A Comedy Monologue

by Kelly Meadows

SYNOPSIS: Marla has a history paper due, a math test coming up, and a dramatic monologue to memorize. When everything finally comes due, she has trouble keeping it straight and mixes up her theatrical monologue with a paper on the French revolution. Which one comes out ahead?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female)

MARLA (f) A high schooler. Plays other characters as indicated in the script.

TIME: Present day.

SET: Bare stage.

COSTUME: Everyday teenager attire.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

There's a lot going on here, and Marla's success depends on making sure the audience understands her dilemma with all the different facets of her speech: history, math, and monologue. Marla's a "good student" who is a bit overwhelmed, but at the same time, brought a lot of this on herself. It's important that as she reports what the other characters say, she portrays her own attitude towards them as well.

MARLA: The dumpster of history. Years and years, growing ever more distant, rotting in a boxed-up landfill with lost novels, illegible symphonies, and untold amounts of foul-smelling witches' brews. The French Revolution, on which I'm supposed to be writing a paper instead of procrastinating up here at a podium, lies in that dumpster, festering like last month's roast goose. At one point, 1789 was just a few years ago. Then it was a hundred, then a hundred and fifty, and now it has spent over two centuries putrefying... in the dumpster of history. I'm in that dumpster too, crushed under the weight of these decaying artifacts.

My teacher has a stock answer for every time we ask why the past matters: "What happened then matters now," she says. That and "I'm not getting paid enough." Someone allegedly saying, "Let them eat cake" all those years ago, an ocean away, is why my life is the mess it is today. Which is fine. I'll be happy to blame all my problems on the Queen of France if it means I can have my cake and eat it too. So I said, (*Too sassy for her own good.*) "Maybe if more people had cake in France then, you'd be paid more now." That didn't help her salary, but it did help get 500 words added to my paper.

"You've got 230 years of research to explore," she said, "So 500 words is a drop in the bucket." "So is the guillotine," I said. "A drop in the bucket."

Along with that are my obligations here in contemporary society. Someone talked me into working up a monologue for a theater contest. "Dramatic interpretation!" they said. "You're all about drama, so why not share?"

Sure... just me talking up here all by myself for [insert duration of monologue] minutes while everyone sits crabby and mute – where every word is weighed, tasted, judged, and poked as if it's a rotten pomegranate disintegrating over a crumbling only copy of a soon-to-be-lost symphonic masterpiece. It's so quiet you could hear a head drop (*Into a whisper.*) into the bucket. I'm living through a reign of terror of 1789 and today, because what happened then matters – (*Stops herself.*) no, it doesn't!

On top of this, let's pile on a polynomial. I'm at an age when I'm supposed to be having fun, and everyone else in school is having fun – at least they act like they are – but I'm stuck home trying to learn some archaic algebraic algorithm that seems really easy for every person in the entire universe except me. When I get older, say a week older than I am now, I'll never use it again.

Now, at the worst possible moment, I had friends!

(As Friend.) Come with us Marla, we're all going to the movies!

(Disappointed.) I have to write my paper.

(As Friend.) Come on Marla. Stop being such a good girl. Just stop being who you are for once and try to have a good time. Or are you afraid your mother will find out?

My mother already did find out and apparently she had a great day as Secretary of State or whatever her profession is because she was still intoxicated with a pitcher full of on-the-job aggression. "Who are these excuses for teenagers? Before they're allowed to proceed any further onto my property, I demand to know their names, their parents' occupations, their phone numbers, and their grade point averages. Then, and only then, will I see about judging any of them proficient enough to accompany my daughter on a cinematic outing."

"Mommmy can I go just once?" I didn't really want to, but she was being ridiculous.

(As Mom.) Is your homework done?

Why? Is this a one thing at a time world where I can't eat my peas until I finish my carrots and if they're mixed together, then what?

(As Mom.) Is your monologue memorized?

(*It's not.*) Sure.

(*As Mom.*) Let's hear it.

Not now!

(*As Mom, insistent.*) Marla, let's hear it.

My friends, on the lawn like groupies waiting for Lady Gaga [or current singer] to step out of an ambulance, were on her side. (*Chanting.*) "Mar-la's monologue, Mar-la's monologue!"

(*Resigned to recite.*) So there I was at my window like Juliet on a balcony, other than Juliet's monologue has been firmly in place since 1595 and I sort of hadn't picked one out yet. People stopped to listen. Traffic was jammed all the way down the block and the kids were spellbound. But I'll never be able to repeat it because I made the whole thing up on the spot; out of my mouth and into the dumpster of history, never to be heard again.

The good news? I got to go out, and for a while I didn't feel guilty until I came home to algorithm and revolution.

Mom was so excited that the next day she wanted me to do my monologue for Dad and Grandma and Cousin Dreamsicle and Uncle Cremation and I'm like no, I need to save it for the contest and she said, "You need to recite it as often as possible so you're comfortable with any audience." So again, I "monologued," but much less successfully, because as you know, my best work was now history in the can.

(*As Mom.*) That's not the way you did it the last time, Marla.

(*Sassy.*) That's so correct, Mother.

Uncle Cremation was confused. "What's that about? It sounds like English, but I'm not exactly sure. And the ending was so tragic! I kept thinking there was going to be a clearance sale at Marshalls

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from TOO LATE FOR HISTORY by Kelly Meadows. 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