



Len Cuthbert

Norman Maine Publishing

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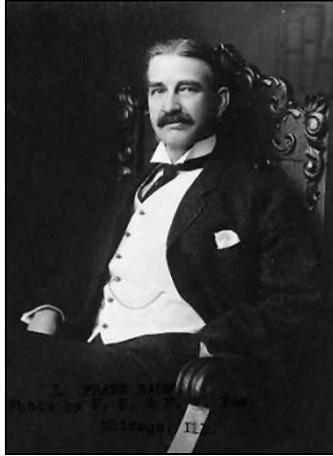
OZ IN A CLOZET was first performed at the London Fringe Festival, London, ON, in 2011.

OZ IN A CLOZET

Winner, St. Tammany National One-Act Festival, 2009
Finalist, Drury University One-Act Play Competition, 2007

COMEDY. On the night Chet is supposed to propose to his fiancée, he finds himself locked in a custodial closet at a movie theater with a strange woman who is a big fan of *The Wizard of Oz*. Soon, the two are dressing up and dancing around like *Wizard of Oz* characters in this asylum of mops and brooms. Chet's future happiness depends on whether he can escape from this freak-show-in-a-closet...or does it?! Opportunities for physical comedy are endless in this clever, quirky, award-winning comedy.

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.



L. Frank Baum (1856-1919)

ABOUT THE STORY

L. Frank Baum was born in Chittenango, NY, and grew up on his family's large estate. Influenced by the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen, and Lewis Carroll, Baum's best-selling children's novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, was published in 1900 and was the basis for Baum's 1902 musical *The Wizard of Oz* and the 1939 film adaptation featuring Judy Garland. In the novel, Baum's description of Kansas is thought to be based on his experiences living in drought-ridden Aberdeen, SD, where he owned a store. Baum wrote 13 more novels set in the Land of Oz as well as numerous short stories, poems, and novels before he died in 1919.

CHARACTERS

(1 M, 2 F, 1 flexible)

CHET: Accidentally gets locked in a janitorial closet at a movie theater on the night he is supposed to propose to his girlfriend; male.

BLAIR: Eccentric woman who is locked in a janitorial closet at a movie theater and has seen *The Wizard of Oz* 163 times; wears a t-shirt with a sweater and jeans; female.

BAMBI: Chet's domineering girlfriend; well dressed; female.

ALEX: Movie theater employee; flexible.

SETTING

Movie theater.

SET

Movie theater/custodial closet. A door in a frame is slightly SL facing SR and SL. On the SR side of the door is the custodial closet. The door opens inward into the closet. One panel of the face of the door is disguised/ designed to break easily with the swing of a plastic axe. There is a lightweight shelving unit in the closet at USR with assorted janitorial items on it.

PROPS

2 Soda cups	Purse, for Blaire
Large container of popcorn	Engagement ring
Ticket	Varnish
Metal bucket	Lacquer
Wooden crate	Black enamel
Screwdriver	Carpet cleaner
Putty knife	Air freshener
Rope	WD-40
2 Mop heads	Goof Off
Mop	Assorted cleaning products
Cleaning rags	Axe (plastic)
Toilet bowl brush	Boots
Work gloves	Raincoat and hat
Broom	Garbage can lid
2 Arm-length pieces of heating duct	Piles of loose paper
Roll of duct tape	Rolls of toilet paper

SOUND EFFECT

“Crazy Talk” by Chilliwack or another suitable song, optional.

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"SO, IF YOU DON'T WORK HERE,
THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE...
IN THIS CLOSET?"

—CHET

OZ IN A CLOZET

(AT RISE: At SL, Chet approaches Alex. He has two drinks and a large container of popcorn in his hands. Inside the closet at SR, Blair is sitting down, hidden and out of sight among the custodial items.)

CHET: *(To Alex.)* Sure is quiet tonight.

ALEX: With the forecast, I'm surprised anyone showed up. You're one of the few courageous enough to venture out.

CHET: Forecast?

ALEX: The storm. You haven't heard? There's a major cyclonic disturbance heading this way. They're predicting a severe depression. But it obviously didn't scare you off.

CHET: Oh, I didn't know. My girlfriend is already in the movie, so there's no sense in changing plans.

ALEX: Looks like you're all stocked up. So, do you have your ticket handy?

CHET: Ticket. Yeah. What did I do with the ticket? I think I put it in my pocket. *(Trying to reach his pocket but fumbles.)* Um...look, can you hold these for me? *(Chet hands Alex the drinks and holds the popcorn. Searches his pockets and finds the ticket.)* Here it is. Got it.

ALEX: Right. Your theatre is straight down this hall, make a left, then a right, and it's on the right. All right, you'd better hurry. That movie has already started.

CHET: Right. Left down the hall, make a right—

ALEX: No, no. That's not right. Straight down this hall, then make a left.

CHET: Right. Straight down the hall, make a left, and then it's on the right.

ALEX: Make a left, then a right, then it's on your right. All right? *(Pause.)* Do you want me to write it out—?

(Chet starts to exit.)

CHET: No, no. I'll be okay...I think.

ALEX: *(Holding drinks up.)* Excuse me!

CHET: Right. Right. Don't want to forget those. *(Takes drinks.)* Straight, left, right, on the right. Right?

ALEX: Right.

CHET: Right.

ALEX: Just follow the numbers and you'll be all right.

CHET: Right, right. *(Slowly.)* Follow the numbers. *(Wanders toward door. Looks at ticket trying to read it. Looking at theatre numbers along the way.)* Okay...theatre...nine. Why is it always way on the other side of the building? Well, there's eight. Where's nine? Ah, here. This must be it. *(Slowly opens the door and steps inside the closet. To himself, stage whisper.)* This is strange. *(Loud stage whisper.)* Hello!

BLAIR: *(Startled, jumps, screams.)* Ahhhh!

CHET: *(Screams, jumps back, and bumps the door shut.)* Ahhh!

BLAIR: Ahhh! *(Runs toward the door, hitting one side of Chet.)*
Don't close the door!

CHET: Ahhh! *(Spins around, balancing his drinks and popcorn, keeping them from spilling.)* Geez, watch it! You know, you nearly knocked it right out of my...

(Blair pulls on the door but can't open it. She spins around with her arm out and whacks the popcorn out of Chet's hand.)

BLAIR: Shoot!

CHET: ...hand.

BLAIR: *(Unsympathetic.)* Whoops.

CHET: Whoops? You know how much I paid for this stuff? I have college loans, ya know. *(Starts picking them up.)*

BLAIR: You're not going to eat those, are you?

CHET: They're not mine. They're my girlfriend's.

BLAIR: Oh. So she's going to eat them?

CHET: You should be buying me another bag.

BLAIR: I should? You spilled it.

CHET: You whacked it out of my hand.

BLAIR: You slammed the door shut.
 CHET: You scared the crap out of me.
 BLAIR: You scared the crap out of *me*.
 CHET: You nearly ran right over me.

(Pause.)

BLAIR: *(Stare.)* Fine, then. I'll buy you another popcorn...
 CHET: Good.
 BLAIR: ...as soon as you get us out of this locked closet.
 CHET: This isn't the theatre?
 BLAIR: It is, if you like sodium bisulfate sprinkled on your popcorn.
 CHET: What?
 BLAIR: Toilet bowl cleaner. Take a whiff. *(Starts picking popcorn out of the bag and tosses them.)* Too late. Floor's been cleaned with hypochlorous acid.

(Chet sets the popcorn aside.)

CHET: Oh. Well, can you tell me where I can find theatre nine?
 BLAIR: What? You're joking, right?
 CHET: No, I'm serious.
 BLAIR: There're only eight theatres in this place. Who told you there were nine theatres?
 CHET: Says right here on my ticket.
 BLAIR: Let me see that. *(Grabs ticket and flips it over.)* Nice. That's a six. *(Flicks the ticket in the air, turns, and sits on an upside down bucket.)*
 CHET: Hey, hey...that's my ticket. *(Picks up ticket.)* Well, look at that. I knew I shouldn't have let her go off without me. So, look, my girlfriend is waiting for me in the movie. How do I get there from here?
 BLAIR: You having a problem connecting the dots? You're not going anywhere, pal. We're stuck in here because the

handle on that door is jammed or something and it won't open from the inside.

(Note: Blair and Chet don't pay much attention to each other for the following and their dialogue often overlaps.)

CHET: I can't get out?

BLAIR: You got it. Stuck, you and me, in the custodial closet—

(Chet grabs the doorknob and yanks it and shakes it.)

CHET: This can't happen. Not today. This door won't open.

BLAIR: With no way out...no thanks to you for slamming the door closed.

CHET: I'm supposed to be meeting my girlfriend. This is messing everything up. Nooo! This can't be happening.

BLAIR: What's the matter? Are you, like, claustrophobic? You're not gonna start hyperventilating on me, are ya?

CHET: I'm in deep serious crap if I don't get to the theatre. This is the night I'm supposed to propose.

BLAIR: 'Cause I don't know CPR well enough to—
(Surprised.) You what? What did you say? You're gonna what?

CHET: Be in serious crap.

BLAIR: No, no. After that.

CHET: I'm...going to propose?

BLAIR: You mean, like, marriage propose?

CHET: There's another kind?

BLAIR: You chose a movie theatre to ask the big question?

CHET: I'm not going to ask her here. I'm going to ask her later on tonight. This is just the beginning of the whole big plan.

[END OF FREEVIEW]