The Executive Meeting

A Tragic Farce in One Act

Time: The 28th day of February, 1974.

All of the action takes place in the living room of the fashionable suburban condominium of Douglas and Carol Strong known as 18 Carmichael Court. The room is fully but not excessively furnished, and the decor, always in good taste, is a mixture of sobriety and frivolity, a portent of what follows. There is one jarring note, a pair of stereophonic loudspeakers on an emerald Day Glow bookcase, DL which point menacingly at the occupants of the room and seem at all times to be on the point of emitting loud sounds. Off DR can be seen a suggestion of a diningroom, with a table.

At rise, Carol is off R setting the table in the diningroom, Brooke is in chair UC, Marg Allen is in chair DL, Bob Knight is on sofa R. Prominent Director Dewi Williams is in a posture of intimate conversation with temperamental Leading Man, Laurence Thornton.

Enter: Holmes, secretary, DL with sheaf of papers which he places on coffee table C.

Jim: (modestly) I have arrived. We can start. I have brought these most elegant and witty minutes of our previous meeting all neatly typed and double spaced with a copy for everyone.

Laurence: (feverishly reaching for copy of Minutes) Do I get a mention?

Brooke: Order please.

Laurence: (Scans minutes; find what he is seeking; a momentary glimmer of pleasure fades into disbelief and then indignation) It's here, but it's spelled wrong. What idiot would spell it L O R E N T S?

Holmes: (responsibly) It is not my responsibility. A mere typographical error. Stenographer you know. (Compassionately)

She shall be drawn and quartered in the morning.

Brooke: (mediating) If there are no other objections, let's adopt the minutes with that one correction. Now, is there any business arising out of the minutes?

Holmes: Just the matter of Theatre Ontario. The membership fee is $50.00 per a Performing Group for a full year from the application. I tend to think we should join because of the intangible advantages.

Brooke: I tend to think we shouldn't because of the tangible disadvantages.

Bob: Like $50.00.

Dewi: Let's do it as an "act of faith", to coin a phrase.

All nod agreement. Bob is seen to write a cheque and hand it to secretary.

(Enter Carol, a stunningly attractive girl in her early twenties.)

Carol: Could I give the report of the Play Reading Committee so that I can get on with my affairs in the kitchen?

Brooke: Certainly.

Carol: Well, we have had oodles of meetings and read zillions of plays and we finally narrowed the field down to 8, of which 3 cannot be produced. This leaves 5. These 5 include Two Blind Mice, a so-so play with lots of men, The Lady's Not for Burning which is still going through the committee, Dear Charles, and An Inspector Calls. I expect that we will have a full slate of 8 plays by March 15. I feel that the committee's work will really show up in the 1975-76 season. Meanwhile we seem to be short on comedies. Should I keep looking for comedies?

Brooke: Keep looking for comedies.

Carol: I guess that ends my report.

(Enter Maurice Dubras who strikes a heroic posture at the entrance DL. No one takes any note of his presence, and after a moment or

two he slides into seat DC).

Brooke: And now publicity.

Marg Allen: (who until now has been sitting in silent, elegant composure. Sensing that this is her moment she calmly draws from her handbag a small sheet containing some notes).
I just would like to mention three things. First, there is a display in connection with Hunting Stuart in the Library. Secondly, some members of the Theatre Group canvassed for the Heart Foundation. Thirdly, Marvin Boss has asked me to ask the executive to support the March Hockey Association by buying sweaters at a cost of $120.00 per team.

All: That's a neat idea. Let's do it.

Marg: Fourthly, I am entering the Tunnel of Love on the listings of activities during Tulip Festival. Fifthly, I spent an evening with the president of Ottawa and Area Scottish Society and....

Brooke: You don't have to explain yourself to us Marg. You're among friends.

Marg: ... and he is coming to Hunting Stuart <u>in full regalia</u>.

Dewi: Now all we need is a streaker, for balance.

Marg: Sixthly, people want to know when the general meeting after Hunting Stuart will be held. Is it still scheduled for March 24,1974?

Brooke: Yes, with the casting for The Tunnel of Love to follow right afterwards.

Marg: Seventhly ... (her voice fades as she realizes she hasn't got a seventhly. She subsides into the chair.)

Jim: The Township wants to know if we will have any use for the auditorium after May 19, 1974?

Brooke: You can tell the township we don't.

Bob: And now the moment you have all been waiting for. Ta Da! The financial report (speaking now very rapidly). Taking into consideration the average advance in gross revenue receipts in previous years as a percentage of the debit balance special payout ledger, after allowing for the current account surplus negative income expense vouchers for capital expense items, not, of course, including B, PC, PR, PROD or PdE Set, we seem to be in a position negative deficiency gain as distinct from corrected play advance, relative to the fiscal period next last ended of $459.80, all of which is more fully explained in these accounts to be attached to the minutes. In other words we are ahead $459.80 ahead on this year.

Marg: Amazing!

Dewi: Brilliant!

Laurence: Such lucidity!

Brooke: I can't understand a bloomin' word 'e said.

Dewi: I would like to have recorded in the minutes one small item involving conflict regarding the Earl of March facilities. On Tuesday, February 26, 1974, we were prevented from rehearsing in the auditorium by a large group of parents who had taken over in spite of the fact that we held a permit for that night.

Brooke: While we are at it, we should also note that Hunting Stuart was almost bumped from its dates by a winter carnival dance. But now, if there is no other business, I would like to report on developments with regard to facilities. Maurice, Jim and I attended a meeting of council and then Maurice and I wnet to a Parks and Recreation meeting. On our short-term problem, that of storage we got a very promising reaction. And much to our surprise both bodies were interested in the long term question of a theatre. Perhaps Maurice would like to elaborate.

Maurice: (Maurice is a faded old actor, a fewer years younger than 33. Occasionally his voice reveals the strength and timbre that served him in stage triumphs of yesteryear. He enunciates clearly and speaks downstage at all times.) To begin with, provincial government financing problems make it unlikely that the garage will be expanded this year, and so the Group can't look to that for storage. Recreation and Parks however, is preparing for an architectural competition with respect to the design of a complex in Kanata, Beaverbrook to house various recreational activities. Construction would be phased over 5 to 10 years. Already strong representations have been made in favour of a curling rink, squash courts, a swimming pool and restaurant. One firm of architects has planted the seed of a theatre idea. I therefore suggest that the KTG draw up its optimum requirements and try to organize some input into the project. My own idea is to combine, somehow the restaurant with a dinner theatre facility.

Brooke: If there is any genuine possibility of a real theatre in the town centre or elsewhere, I wouldn't want to take any of the steam away from that project by spending our energies on a compromise.

Dewi: What about SS#1, which the township is always trying to interest us in? Why not turn it into an intimate theatre seating about 100 people?

Brooke: Is it big enough?

Jim: I'll get the key from the township and we'll look at it this weekend.

Dewi: Bill Teron might even be interested in helping redesign it. Maybe he could be asked to have a look at it.

Carol: I hate to break this up, but there is fondue in the dining room.

(There is a stampede to the dining room off R., leaving the stage *empty.* Spontaneously, the voice of Bill Cosby begins to address the empty stage out of the loudspeakers DL as ...)

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