

Acting Edition

Dirty Crusty

by Clare Barron

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|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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DIRTY CRUSTY was first produced by the Yard Theatre, where it had its first performance on October 24, 2019. The production was directed by Jay Miller, with set and costume design by Emma Bailey, composition by Jonah Brody, sound design & additional composition by Josh Anio Grigg, and lighting design by Rajiv Pattani. The Company Stage Manager was Eleanor Dear, the Deputy Stage Manager was Kirsten Buckmaster, and the Stage Manager was Shannon Gibson Durr. The cast was as follows:

- JEANINE** Akiya Henry
- VICTOR** Duggie McMeekin
- SYNDA** Abiona Omonua
- VOICES** Sarah Ridgeway, Shannon Tarbet,
Vivian Oparah, Mark Quartley,
Lorna Gayle, Clare Barron
- DANCERS** Poppy Caton, Levinia-Star Dunn,
Farrah Francis, Zian Desole,
Cyrine De Los Reyes, Tia Isaac,
Shanice Mawoneke, Tze-Yann Wijnholds,
Mia Lawson, Aurelia Hunt

CHARACTERS

JEANINE – 30s, a nursing student

VICTOR – 30s, a mask maker

SYNDA – 30s, a ballet teacher

4 VOICES – 30s

15 DANCERS – Ages 5–15

AUTHOR'S NOTES

This play was written in 2012 when I was twenty-six. It was developed with the New York-based director Ken Rus Schmoll for several years before it made its way to Jay Miller and the Yard Theatre in 2019. This text reflects the play as workshopped in New York. There's an appendix for the Yard production listed in the back.

Notes on the text

Punctuation is capricious and rhythmic – not grammatical.

Slashes (/) indicate overlapping dialogue.

The play should be staged so that transitions can happen incredibly fast, sometimes overlapping, so that the scenes run into each other and the play flows. The whole first part of the play should feel like we're caught in a current with Jeanine stuck in the middle, carried along by Victor and Synda. It's okay if we're hearing the first lines of the next scene while we're still physically in the scene previous.

Casting Note

It's possible to do the play without the dancers at the end (minus Victor and Synda) but obviously that can be a really emotional and fun moment if you have the means. And likewise, you don't need to cast an old man and woman (see the top of Part II) to do the play. Think: creative staging, sound, puppets, etc.

OVERTURE

Dusk. The outside of a small house. The house is fat and looks like it is made of paper. There's a cut-out window that's lit up from the inside. We can hear the sounds of a party.

Underscoring the following text is music – like the overture of a ballet. As the overture plays, we watch a brilliant sunset wash over the house and then fade slowly as it turns to night.*

VOICE 1. How often do you wash your underwear?

JEANINE. Um

VOICE 2. Get the forks, Mike!

VOICE 1. Do you wear them twice and wash them? Or do you wear them once

JEANINE. I wear them twice

VOICE 1. See that's disgusting

VOICE 3. No it's not. Inside, then flip 'em around and wear them on the outside. I do that too

VOICE 2. The little forks! Not the big forks!

VOICE 4. Roger

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VOICE 1. Just buy some more underwear

VOICE 2. I definitely only wear them once

I wear them once *and* I put a little panty liner in them, you know those panty liners? Even when I'm not on my period, I use a panty liner

VOICE 3. I use those under my underarms in dresses that sweat a lot. They're good for soaking up sweat so you don't sweat through your dress. You guys should try it

JEANINE. It's not like I wear them twice if they're *really really* dirty. I only wear them twice if they're relatively clean

VOICE 4. The little forks? Or the *little little* forks?

VOICE 2. Let's use the little little forks. They're cuter

VOICE 1. Do you know how good it feels to start the day in a clean pair of underwear?

VOICE 3. I like tight jeans. You know, after you wash them?

VOICE 2. Yeah

VOICE 1. Yeah

JEANINE. Yeah

VOICE 2. Yeah

VOICE 3. I like sweaters when they've just been cleaned and the yarn's all scrunched. The stitches are close together. Mmmm. I feel so safe when I wear a sweater like that. They just hug me! They just hug me all day long!

VOICE 2. I never really smell like BO. I just smell like deodorant. Even when my clothes are dirty I really only smell like deodorant. When I'm picking my clothes up and deciding if they're clean or dirty, I smell the armpits but it's either the smell of laundry detergent or the smell of deodorant. That's how I know what's clean and what's not. It's nice

VOICE 1. I can smell you, Jeanine

VOICE 2. I can smell you too

VOICE 3. She lives like an animal

JEANINE. I want to stop. I don't know how

VOICE 3. Pick up your clothes

JEANINE. I just won't do it

VOICE 1. I'm an insomniac. Was. Is. Am sometimes.
Anyway, the one thing I can tell you is – no one's going to go to sleep for you. You know what I'm saying? You have to go to sleep yourself. Alcohol, friends, warm bodies, whatever. Nothing'll put you to sleep but YOU. YOU have to do it. You have to stop making excuses and *allow* the change you want to see in your life to happen

VOICE 3. One day you'll do it

VOICE 2. One day you'll just pick up your clothes, Jeanine

JEANINE. I will

VOICE 3. You will

VOICE 2. One day you'll just clean your room

JEANINE. I will

VOICE 3. Oh my god! Look at that!

VOICE 2. Oh my god ! Look at that! That's beautiful

VOICE 1. Oh my god! What a *gorgeous* thing. What a *gorgeous* gorgeous thing. Look at those candles!

JEANINE. It's really nice

VOICE 4. Here are the forks

VOICE 2. Thanks babe

VOICE 3. Aww I love these forks

VOICE 1. They're like little baby tridents

VOICE 3. I could just stab someone right in the heart with one of these forks

VOICE 2. You guys we should sing

VOICE 4. You don't have to –

ALL. (*Led by VOICE 2.*)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY <*mumble mumble*> HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.

Smoke is pouring out the little lit-up window.

VOICE 3. Hey guys. I think something is on fire

VOICE 1. You know what you should get is a plant

A plant would teach you how to take care of yourself

JEANINE. I'll kill a plant

VOICE 1. Just get a cactus

JEANINE. I'll kill a cactus

VOICE 3. You guys I smell smoke. I think something is on fire

VOICE 1. You take care of the plant

And through taking care of the plant

You learn to take care of yourself

VOICE 4. You know what she should get – Babe?

VOICE 2. What?

VOICE 4. You know what she should get is one of those squishy plants that your grandmother has in her bathroom. They're like cacti but they're not cacti. They're like cacti without the spikes. What are those called?

VOICE 2. I have no idea

VOICE 4. They're called – Fuck! What are they called?

VOICE 2. Moss

VOICE 4. No. Like cactus. But a little less hardcore than cactus. FUCK.

VOICE 1. I know exactly what you're talking about

VOICE 2. Babe. It's not a big deal

VOICE 3. Does anyone else smell smoke?

JEANINE. I do

VOICE 4. Fuck, I know this, fuck

VOICE 3. I think someone should go check on the smoke

JEANINE. I'll do it

VOICE 4. It starts with an s.....

VOICE 1. I know exactly what you're talking about

VOICE 4. I'm gonna look it up in the thesaurus

VOICE 2. How are you going to look it up in a thesaurus?

VOICE 4. I'm gonna look up cactus and go from there.
Hang on

VOICE 1. Where's Jeanine?

VOICE 3. She's checking on the smoke

JEANINE's face appears in the lit-up window.

VOICE 4. FUCK cactus is not in the thesaurus FUCK

VOICE 2. How is cactus not in the thesaurus?

VOICE 4. It's going to come to me don't worry

JEANINE shimmies out the window.

VOICE 4. Supplicant! Supplicant!

VOICE 2. No baby. You're wrong

VOICE 3. And in the beginning was pain
And in the end was pain
And all along the way was self-doubt

VOICE 1. What?

VOICE 3. It's just a little thing I wrote

VOICE 4. Sisyphus. Synecdoche

VOICE 2. It's definitely not synecdoche

VOICE 4.

Centennial

Sycamore

Suckamore

Sucka Sucka

Sss

Ssss

Ssss

Ssss

Ss

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Sssssssssssss

VOICE 2.

Hey where's Jeanine?

VOICE 3.

She's checking on the smoke

VOICE 1.

Just watch. She's not going
to come back

VOICE 3.

Huh?

VOICE 1.

She's going to leave again.
This is just how she leaves

VOICE 2.

Don't be mean

VOICE 1.

What? It's true. It's her new
thing.

She doesn't say goodbye.

She just slips out the back

PART I

VICTOR. Jeanine?

JEANINE. Oh my god Victor! You're so scary!

VICTOR. Sorry

JEANINE. You grew a beard!

VICTOR. I did

JEANINE. It's changed your whole face

VICTOR. You are exactly the same

JEANINE. Really?

VICTOR. Yeah, your face is exactly the same

JEANINE. I don't think so

VICTOR. No?

JEANINE. No. See when I squint my eyes like this. You see
these crow's feet?

VICTOR. Uh

JEANINE. Come into the light

They move into the light.

JEANINE. See when I squint my eyes like this you see these
crow's feet?

VICTOR. I guess, yes, sort of

Pause.

VICTOR. You didn't have those before?

JEANINE. Well sure, but now they're deeper

VICTOR. You look good

JEANINE. I mean, it's the same for everyone. We're all in the same boat

She smiles at him.

JEANINE. I didn't know you were back in town. I mean, I thought you were living somewhere else

VICTOR. No. I'm here now

JEANINE. Oh

VICTOR. Yeah. I do engravings down at Danny's trophy shop

JEANINE. Cool. Yeah I'm down at Costco in the Optical Department

They smile at each other.

JEANINE. But I'm also at the nursing school!

VICTOR. Oh

JEANINE. Or, not the nursing school. I'm doing classes. To like. Be *able* to go / to the nursing school

VICTOR. I heard you were down in Portland / getting your –

JEANINE. Oh, just for a second. I didn't –

VICTOR. My sister did that. She's a nurse

JEANINE. Here?

VICTOR. No. Down in Peshastin

JEANINE. Does she like it?

VICTOR. Um. She does not. To be honest

JEANINE. Yeah. I'm starting to get nervous it wasn't a good idea...

...

...

..

.

The sun has set completely now. It's very dark.

JEANINE. Oh my gosh it's nighttime. I just realized it's nighttime

VICTOR. Yup

JEANINE. When did the sun go down? I totally missed it!

VICTOR. Where are you headed?

JEANINE. Oh. I don't know. I'm not really headed anywhere.

Pause.

JEANINE. I guess I should go home

VICTOR. I guess it *is* nighttime

JEANINE. Okay I'm going home. It was so good to see you, Victor

VICTOR. You too. Really good to see you

Morning. The same street. JEANINE and VICTOR coming from different directions.

VICTOR. Hey Jeanine! Good morning!

JEANINE. Well I can't believe we just keep running into each other. We must live on the same street!

VICTOR. How was your night? You get home alright?

JEANINE. Wait – do we live on the same street?

VICTOR. I don't know. I'm on Elliot

JEANINE. I live on Orchard! Just around the corner! Oh my god!

VICTOR. That's so wild

JEANINE. Wait – you asked me a question?

VICTOR. Oh. Uh – I just said how was your night

JEANINE. Oh yeah, it was good

VICTOR. Wait, where on Orchard are you?

JEANINE. Oh just up the block. In one of the duplexes.
Yeah, you know. Just up there.

VICTOR. We should go apple picking sometime.

JEANINE. Huh?

VICTOR. Because you live on Orchard Street. It's a –
dumb...

JEANINE. Oh yeah, Orchard Street. Haha. It used to be a
real orchard you know

VICTOR. I did know that, actually

JEANINE. Until they tore it down so we could live there.
So. I ruined the orchard

VICTOR. You killed the bees

JEANINE. Huh?

VICTOR. I said, the bees are sad there are no more orchards

JEANINE. Oh. Yeah, they're probably sad. But you know
I'm sure they're fine. In the mountains and...

VICTOR. We should really go apple picking though...

JEANINE looks at him confused.

JEANINE. Wait. Why?

VICTOR. Huh?

JEANINE. I mean, where would we go?

VICTOR. (*Laughing.*) I guess I don't know

JEANINE. My sister told me that people at her college used to go pick apples “for fun.” Like “harvest.” And she was like: Where I come from this is *not* considered a “fun thing to do.” It’s a job. Just like kids. And migrant workers.

VICTOR. Yeah

JEANINE. Did you pick apples growing up?

VICTOR. Cherries

JEANINE. Me too! Where?

VICTOR. Down at the Bickfords

JEANINE. On the water?

VICTOR. Uh-huh. Four a.m. on the water

JEANINE. Builds character

VICTOR. It made me super depressed

JEANINE.

...

...

So I’m going to go to my job now

VICTOR. Where are you again?

JEANINE. Just up the street

Night. Victor’s house. There are half-made masks everywhere – lifeless faces, lifeless eyes.

VICTOR. So this is my house

JEANINE. It’s a nice house

VICTOR. Also I make masks

They kiss.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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