

NOTES

This satiric play is inspired by the film, *Mommy Dearest*. The film centered on the dysfunctional relationship between Hollywood screen legend, Joan Crawford, and her adopted daughter, Christina. This satirical spoof is a tour-de-force for two comedic actresses and is a perfect performance vehicle for Duo Interpretation or Duet Acting; however, with its myriad of characters, an actress may choose to perform this for Humorous Interpretation. Joan Crawford was one of Hollywood's biggest stars, and she was known for her over-the-top personality both on and off-screen; therefore, the performer(s) should not be afraid to go over-the-top with her facial expressions and gestures. As with all spoofs, it is always wise for performers to familiarize themselves with the material being satirized; therefore, watch the film, *Mommy Dearest*. Get familiar with the mannerisms and speech patterns of the characters, then for comedy's sake, exaggerate them for the stage! There are many shifts in time and locations, so be creative with the blocking. This comic-gem-of-a-play will be a crowd pleaser for two actresses who have great comic timing and are daring enough to give it the overdramatic flare it so desperately deserves. This is the perfect choice for two comedic divas!

Cast of Characters:

Paparazzi

Blanche Davis

Adoption Agent

Nurse

Jane

Announcer

Lawyer

Scene One: A press conference after the Academy Awards. Blanche is standing in the doorway of her mansion.

Paparazzi: Blanche, do you have anything you want to say to your fans? Blanche?

Blanche: Yes I do. Thank you. Thank you. This Academy Award belongs to all of you...my fans, as do my previous ones. Without you, my life would be nothing. Although I hold this award, you are the true winners. As a beautiful young woman, coming up in the business, I was told that a

pretty face and melodramatic acting techniques would only get me so far. Well, look at this broad now.

Paparazzi: What do you have in store for us next, Blanche?

Blanche: I have one true desire that I have yet failed to reach. I want a baby.

Paparazzi: Are you announcing you're with child? Who's the Father?

Blanche: Unfortunately, due to a traumatic acting misfortune, I can not conceive my own child, but I know that motherhood is something I crave. I want to adopt. I want to give a poor, sad, unloved, non-Malawi child the chance to have something wonderful...a mother like me, Blanche Davis...three time Academy Award winner for Best Actress in a Leading role and once nominated for a Supporting Role in "The Postman Always Walks a Bit to the Left."

Scene Two: An adoption agency office

Blanche: (*As if ordering from a menu*) And I want her blonde, actually curly blonde, maybe with freckles...no, no freckles...they are so common. And she must be photogenic, but no more so than I am. (*Laughing*) That would never do!

Adoption Agent: I'm sorry, Ms. Davis, but you don't fit the profile to adopt a child. You are unmarried and you are known to have an undiagnosed extreme obsessive compulsive personality disorder. Do you truly see yourself as the mother type?

Blanche: Do you have any idea who I am, girly? Do you know how many acting awards I have won?

Adoption Agent: Of course we do, Ms. Davis, but adoption is so much more complicated than...

Blanche: How dare you talk to me in that tone, missy! I am Blanche Davis and nobody says "no" to Blanche Davis! I know how to play the game. I have worked my way up in this cesspool of a town! I have done things that...

Adoption Agent: But, you are unmarried. There would be no father in the household.

Blanche: Married? The child will have "uncles", many, many "uncles." Besides, any darn man in the world would give anything to be married to Blanche Davis. I could marry the President of Pepsi-Cola for goodness sake! (*Laughs hard*)

Adoption Agent: We only have the welfare of the child in mind. We are not here to cater to you Hollywood types who have nothing to offer but cheap publicity.

Blanche: I don't want a child for JUST cheap publicity. I want a child for cheap publicity and other things as well. Who are you to judge me? I am Blanche Davis, the iconic and sassy woman. (*Smirking*) I have many, many

connections. I will get this adoption. (*Swiping a finger across the agent's desk*) You should sanitize your desk...it's smudgy.

Scene Three: The nursery in Blanche's mansion

Nurse: Just look at her Ms. Davis. (*Looking at the baby Blanche is holding*) She is so innocent, so untouched.

Blanche: She is. She is. Goodness, she already knows how good she has it. Listen to her! She is already spoiled! All she does is cry and complain about what SHE wants. It's all about what SHE wants! Let the baby do it for herself! It will only make her strong! Being the daughter of Blanche Davis is not going to spoil her...Baby Jane is going to have to make it on her own, starting now, and work her way up in life, like I did...the hard way. She is going to have to impress degrading old men and lie and cheat and even possibly steal cars.

Nurse: Of course, Ms. Davis.

Blanche: Take her away before I have to do anything. I'm wearing a sequined gown! I have a screen-test tomorrow and I can not be disturbed.

Nurse: Of course. Ms. Davis.

Blanche: Stop saying "Of course, Ms. Davis", it's beginning to become repetitive. And, get me some cucumber slices and a bowl of ice. My face is starting to sag.

Nurse: Yes, Ms. Davis.

Blanche: And sanitize your hands. You've been handling that, that baby!

Scene Four: Jane's bedroom

Jane: Mother, I love all my new birthday presents.

Blanche: Which present do you love the most, my darling?

Jane: I love them all. So many thoughtful people brought me presents and I love them all. I love them all the same. They are so thoughtful and special.

Blanche: Which one do you like the most?

Jane: Oh, Mother Dear, I couldn't pick. They are all so wonderful. Everyone took such great care.

Blanche: Which one do you like the most?

Jane: Well, Mother, if I have to choose, I like the little blue dolly the most. It seems the most special...She seems like she wants someone to love her unconditionally forever.

Blanche: Good. Then we will give the little blue dolly away, with the rest of your presents as well. We are giving everything away to charity. However, you may keep what remains of your birthday cake.

Jane: What? Mother Dear, these are *my* presents. People gave them to *me*, and they wanted me to have them. I want them!