

Delayed Exposition

By Michael Ferrell

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DEDICATION

To my sister, Jennifer, who taught me how to write.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Two class-clown type guys are playing a video basketball game and discussing one of their girlfriends. When one of the guys loses the game, along with his temper, the illusion of the fourth wall gets broken. The two young men, now exposed for being merely actors in a play, argue and debate about what to do next. When the character "Jessica" enters and proves to be trapped in the world of the play, things go more than haywire. The play is set in real time, able to be adapted to whatever situation or play competition in which it is performed.

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

"Delayed Exposition" was first performed at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 1998. It was directed by Michael Ferrell, Josh Purvis, and Chris Chalk. The cast was as follows: Steve - Michael Ferrell; Todd - Josh Purvis; and Jessica - Clare Trautvetter

Distinguished Play – NCTC Regional Festival, 2001

CAST OF CHARACTERS

STEVE: Teen guy, also known as Actor B.

TODD: Steve's buddy, also known as Actor A.

JESSICA: Steve's girl friend.

SETTING

The set is Todd's house, with shabby pieces of furniture suggesting an actual house where people live. There is a couch, downstage, facing the audience. An imaginary TV is out towards the audience. The controllers are tied to the legs of the table. At one side of the stage is the home's front door.

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(AT RISE: STEVE and TODD are playing basketball on a video game. THEY are on the couch, downstage, facing the audience. The controllers are tied to the legs of the table. The imaginary TV is out towards the audience. Steve and Todd are playing furiously as the lights go up.)

STEVE: Yeah, son, whatchu got?

TODD: You want me to pull the three? You want me to pull it?

STEVE: Pull it, let's see what you got—see you're scared. You gotta pass it off.

TODD: Pass this off! Ugh!

(TODD dunks on STEVE. In the game. Of course.)

STEVE: That was nuthin'.

TODD: Wait, wait, wait, check out the replay. Bam! Tell me that wasn't hot!

STEVE: It was aight.

TODD: Let's see what you got then. Watch out for this steal...

STEVE: Watch out for this, son ... Bam!

TODD: Wow. A jump shot. Big man. Two points.

STEVE: It's your game, man. How'm I supposed to beat you at your own game?

TODD: I don't play this game unless you're over here. You think I practice when I'm home by myself?

STEVE: Yeah, you play against the computer. Aight, here I go. That's what's up Shot ... water, sucker! Raining on you. Three points.

TODD: What does it matter? There's only a few seconds left in the game.

STEVE: Just enough time for the "Comeback Kid" to do his thing.

TODD: Bring it.

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(STEVE pauses the game suddenly.)

STEVE: Hold up, wait.

TODD: What are you doing? Why'd you pause the game?

STEVE: I just remembered something.

TODD: What—that you suck at this game?

STEVE: No, I was supposed to call Jessica.

TODD: So?

STEVE: She was supposed to meet me here at your house.

We had a date.

TODD: You can't have a date. She's your girlfriend.

STEVE: What kind of logic is that?

TODD: If she's your girlfriend, it's not a date. It's just killing time before you make out with her.

STEVE: Yo, I messed up big time. We were supposed to go see a play or something.

TODD: A play? Yo, that sounds awful.

STEVE: I know. It was her idea. What time is it?

TODD: 7:45.

STEVE: It's probably too late.

TODD: Is she gonna be mad at you?

STEVE: Yeah, she's gonna be mad. You know Jessica.

TODD: So what are you gonna do?

STEVE: Buy her flowers or something...

TODD: No, man, I mean about the game. You gonna throw in the towel? This is the playoffs. You call her, the game's over. You gonna throw it all away for a girl?

STEVE: Don't do that, man, this is real life, this is serious.

TODD: And the playoffs aren't serious?

STEVE: *(Sits down quickly.)* All right, fine, I'll show you why they call me the "Comeback Kid."

TODD: Nobody's ever called you that, Steve.

STEVE: They will after today.

TODD: There's fifteen seconds left.

STEVE: All the time I need, Todd.

TODD: You're down by seventeen. That's more than a point per second. That's why you failed math too.

STEVE: Here it is—three pointer ...

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TODD: Four, three, two, and ... one. Game over, son. You better come back from the store if you wanna keep that nickname.

STEVE: So, man, so what? Shut up, sucker, let's run 'em back.

TODD: What does it matter? I beat you every game. You've never won a game. Ever.

STEVE: That just means I'm due!

TODD: Face it, Steve. You're no good. You're just a poor loser.

STEVE: Well, you're a poor winner. You know, you have a real superiority complex.

TODD: Well, it's easy to feel superior to you when I win all the time.

STEVE: You don't have to make a big deal out of everything.

TODD: Well, you don't have to suck at everything.

STEVE: That's how it is, right? I suck at everything and you just excel at everything you do, huh?

TODD: Pretty much, yeah.

STEVE: Oh yeah?

TODD: Yeah, son.

STEVE: Well, guess what.

TODD: What?

STEVE: You didn't win that game.

TODD: Oh, I didn't?

STEVE: No.

TODD: What are you talking about, Steve?

STEVE: You know why you didn't win that game?

TODD: Why?

STEVE: Simple. 'Cause there was no game.

TODD: What do you mean?

STEVE: That's right. There was no game ... because there was no television.

TODD: I don't know what you're talking about. Steve, you're being real weird right now.

STEVE: Look, here, I'll prove it to you. (*STEVE waves his hand in front of them, where the imaginary TV was.*) See? Nothing but air.

End of Freeview

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