The Hero Squad
vs.
The World's Angriest Cow

by Will Ledesma

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DEDICATION

In memory of Jeannette Clift George, 1925-2017, who opened the first door into the theatre to myself and dozens like me over the years.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The Hero Squad, four superhero friends based in fictional Metro Valley, Iowa, decide to make amends and invite their arch-enemy, the nefarious criminal mastermind Nikolai Oshgoshbgoshnikov, over for a Christmas party and caroling. Little do they realize, Nikolai is secretly plotting against the heroes with special eggnog designed to turn them evil. Meanwhile, an old roommate from Nikolai's past, the gargantuan bovine supervillain Angus Khan, has returned with his own plan to rule the world. The Hero Squad have a lot on their plate: Not only must they deal with the wrath of one very angry cow, as well as their arch-enemy and his terrible new invention the Doohickey of Doom, they also face a split from within. It seems that Iron Lung has accidentally ruined his sister Slapshot's dreams of playing hockey in the Olympics, leaving Slapshot angry enough to quit the team forever. Can the Hero Squad heal the scars between them long enough to pull together in one final last stand against the most powerful threat they have ever faced? Will the team be defeated once and for all, or will help from an unexpected ally give them the edge they need for another victory? Find out in this large-scale adventure that can be presented by small-scale theaters, and is fun for all ages. Approx. running time of 60-70 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

A. D. Players in Houston, TX. April 26, 2016. Directed by Will Ledesma, stage managed by Hannah E. Smith. Spanish translations provided by Jennifer Rendek. Original cast:

LINDY - Leslie Lenert
THE IRON LUNG - Travis Hayes
SLAPSHOT - Trisha Wise
3-D - Jordi Viscarri
GINA GIZMO - Megan Jackson
NIKOLAI OSHGOSHBGOSHNIKOV - Craig Griffin
CHRISTMAS TREE-VIL/ GORILLA - Linford Herschberger
ANGUS KHAN - William Burke

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Cast: 4 m, 2 w, 3 flexible)
(In order of appearance)

LINDY: (W) A superhero, co-leader of the Hero Squad. Kind, nurturing, often the peacemaker of the group; acts at times like the team mom, and like any good mother she can get almost frighteningly serious when the situation demands it.

THE IRON LUNG: (M) Another hero. Not the brightest lad in the world, but thoroughly sincere; friendly and trusting to just about anyone; fiercely loyal and protective of his friends; a bit of a soft spot for pretty girls and his sister, Slapshot.

SLAPSHOT: (W) Iron Lung's little sister, also a hero. Smallest, youngest (teenager), and loudest of the team; spunky, energetic, with a bit of a short fuse; a hockey fanatic, she always wears roller blades and knee and elbow pads and carries her hockey stick. She never uses her stick as a weapon, however; as she's the first to admit, hockey sticks are dangerous! Known to act rashly when riled up, but her bark is always worse than her bite.

3-D: (M) Another hero, co-leader of the Hero Squad. Strong, dependable; always takes an active leadership role on the field of battle, but never dominating; very likely the most "legit" of the Hero Squad; remains level-headed in difficult situations. Wears "interesting" glasses.

GINA GIZMO: (flex.) Artificial intelligence. Has been the Hero Squad's crime fighting supercomputer since the beginning. Has always wanted a chance to be a part of the team but has run into the pesky problem of not having a body. That could be about to change, however... (Can easily be changed to Gary Gizmo with some pronoun changes if needed)

NIKOLAI OSHGOSHBGOSHNIKOV: (M) A nefarious evil Russian warlord. Fancies himself as the meanest man in the entire world, but is more taken with the idea of being evil than the actual practice of it. Somewhat of a buffoon; has a vast array of resources, henchmen, and gadgets at his evil disposal; will stop at nothing to "save" the world, by which of course he means to rule it. His plans are always convoluted and would probably work if not for the great leap in logic that undermines his entire way of thinking. Anyway, he's probably not really sure what he would do with the world if he ever did conquer it.

CHRISTMAS TREE: (flex.) An otherwise innocent tree transformed into a raging monster of yuletide doom due to a dose of Nikolai's Evil Egg Nog. Rar!

ANGUS KHAN: (M) A great, hulking barbarian of a cow. He has remarkable presence. He is rage personified, dressed as an ancient Mongolian warrior with a high-tech-looking vest strapped to his chest. Even his muscles have muscles. He stands with a spear.

GORILLA: (flex.) An average gorilla at the Metro Valley Zoo about to have one wild day. Non-speaking, can be doubled with CHRISTMAS TREE.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Please use your imagination to make this production as lavish or as minimal as your production requirements will allow. Suggestions for more simplified versions of the "fight scenes" can be found in the playwright's notes at the end of the script.

SETTING

Locales vary throughout the metropolis of Metro Valley, Iowa, including the Hero Squad headquarters, Nikolai's evil lair, zoo, bus station and underground tunnel. It is current day.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1: Hero Squad Headquarters. December 20th, late afternoon.
Scene 2: Nikolai's Evil Lair.
Scene 3: Hero Squad Headquarters. Three months later.
Scene 4: The Zoo.
Scene 5: Hero Squad Headquarters.
Scene 6: Nikolai's Evil Lair.
Scene 7: Hero Squad Headquarters.
Scene 8: Bus Station.
Scene 9: Hero Squad Headquarters.
Scene 10: The underground tunnel of Nikolai's Evil Lair.
Scene 11: Nikolai's Evil Lair.
Epilogue: Hero Squad Headquarters.

SFX

Christmas music
Kitchen timer
Knocks and pounds at door (heard repeatedly)
Crash in kitchen (pots, pans crashing)
Siren
Foghorn
Motorcycle
Car starting and speeding off
Alarm (heard repeatedly)
Loud kaboom

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The Hero Squad Headquarters. It is December 20th, late afternoon. The place is decked out for the holidays, complete with a large CHRISTMAS TREE in the corner. SFX: A peppy, festive tune is blaring from the speakers. As the LIGHTS come up, LINDY is hastily tidying up around the room while donning oven mitts and a holiday apron. IRON LUNG bursts in the front door wearing a Santa hat and a Christmas tie, singing along loudly, with all of his heart and soul, to the song on the radio and startling Lindy. He grandly takes center stage as the song gets to the really, really good part, carried completely away in his own holiday zeal.)

LINDY: You know, Iron Lung, you might want to save a little of that holiday spirit for the party.
IRON LUNG: No worries, Lindy, I've got enough holiday spirit to power five city blocks!

(SLAPSHOT rolls in on a pair of rollerblades with a hockey stick, handling a street hockey ball around the room.)

LINDY: Slapshot, no hockey in the house, you know that!
SLAPSHOT: But Lindy, my tryout for the Olympic team is only three months away!

(SFX: Offstage, a kitchen timer dings.)

LINDY: Cookies are ready. I'll be right back. No hockey!

(LINDY exits. 3-D enters, excitedly waving a stack of papers in his hand.)

3-D: You guys, I got it!
GINA GIZMO: *(Unseen voice that fills the room.)* Don't you mean *we* got it, big guy?
3-D: Right, sorry, Gina.
SLAPSHOT: What is it, 3-D?

3-D: Gina Gizmo and I came up with an algorithm to calculate the most efficient possible route to maximize both fun and holiday cheer during tonight's caroling.
SLAPSHOT: Huh? *(SHE winds up to take a shot.)*
GINA GIZMO: It means we used hard math and computery stuff to decide where you guys should go caroling.

(LINDY catches SLAPSHOT'S… well, slapshot… as she breezes in from the kitchen.)

LINDY: I said no hockey. The cookies are done and—
3-D: *(Excitedly shoves papers in LINDY'S face.)* Lindy, check it out! A computer-plotted course for the perfect caroling experience!
LINDY: Don't we usually just go door to door?
3-D: Well, yeah, we could do that, but… *(Holds up the papers again.)* It's *science*, you know?
IRON LUNG: What's burning?

(LINDY yelps and hurries back into the kitchen.)

IRON LUNG: *(Cont'd.)* Lindy seems frazzled.
3-D: Well, you know how she gets when we've got guests coming over.
IRON LUNG: Speaking of that, I still don't get why we invited our evil archenemy over for a Christmas party.
3-D: He said he'd bring eggnog.

(LINDY enters with a couple of festive throw pillows.)

LINDY: I told you, I ran into Nikolai at the store, and we got to talking, and the poor man doesn't have any family or friends in the area... and really, it's been *ages* since we've had company over for a party.
3-D: Don't worry, buddy. Lindy made him pinky-swear. No fighting, no evil, no world domination until *after* Christmas.

(SFX: There is a knock on the front door.)

End of Freeview

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