

THE LEGEND OF KATASTROPHE KATE

The Most Dangerous Woman in the West

by Stephen Murray

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Hold on to your tumbleweeds 'cause here comes the legendary Katastrophe Kate, the most dangerous woman in the West! Whaddaya mean you never heard of her!!? Didn't ya know that Texas has a panhandle on accounta she was such a great cook?! This Tex-Mex tall tale begins when Katherine, a mild-mannered, Eastern born and bred protégée of world-famous chef, Madame Julia Enfant, must transform herself into Katastrophe Kate in order to conquer the Wild West with her chili recipe.

In a steamy cook-off at Miss Lillian's Saloon, Kate also has a little romance simmerin' on the back burner with her arch rival, Jose Habañero, who claims to have the hottest chili in the Southwest. Into the melting pot, throw some dancin' girls called the Fosse Posse, add a dash of international outlaws for spice, and pepper it with a prying reporter named Penelope Penmore, and you have a recipe for one red-hot, Texas chili party!

(A musical version of this play is also available.)

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(11 m, 18 w, 8 flexible. Extras and doubling possible.)

KATASTROPHE KATE/KATHERINE

JOSE HABAÑERO

MISS LILLIAN

SNAKEBITE SALLY/SVETLANA

SHERIFF SAM

DEPUTY DAN

PENELOPE PENSMORE

*IVORY TICKLER

HIS SIDEKICKS

*JALAPENO

*CAYENNE

*CILANTRO

THE CHEFS

MADAME JULIA ENFANT

PIERRE FLAMBE

WENDY WELLINGTON

*THE SINGING CHEF

*CRUSTY CROISSANT

ALLY MODE, the Sleepy Chef

NUNZIO SPUMONI

PATTY PATE

BRATWURST PARFAIT

SARA LEE SCHNITZEL

CATHY COLANDER

THE OUTLAWS

HAGGIS MCGRUNDY

CACTUS PETE

TORTILLA SAM

WALTZIN' MATILDA

CRAZY AL CAPULCO

NATASHA BADANOV

*ABIERTO CERRADO

TUMBLEWEED TESS

HANS KAPUT

THE DANCING GIRLS, THE FOSSE POSSE

LUCILLE FOSSE

BOSSY FOSSE

SUE

GLOSSY FOSSE

SAUCY FOSSE

*Indicates male or female role.

Time: The late 1800s.

Place: Madame Julia Enfant's Cooking School in New York City and Miss Lillian's Saloon in Buckshot, Texas.

SETTING

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There are two simple settings: Madame Julia Enfant's Cooking School and Miss Lillian's Saloon. The cooking school may be played in front of a curtain if you need to accommodate a single unit set for the saloon. The saloon only requires a serving bar, cooking area, piano, and tables and chairs.

PROPS / COSTUMES

CHEFS: Various cooking utensils, serving dishes, and food.
All need white aprons and chef hats and later change into Western outfits. In addition, some will need mime costumes.

PIERRE: Beret and mustache.

PENELOPE: Reporter's notepad and pencil; ties and gag.

MADAME JULIA: Paper and pencil.

PETE and SAM: Paper and pencils.

OUTLAWS: Western outfits.

HAGGIS: Wears a kilt with his Western outfit.

ABIERTO: Western outfit and a black mask.

JOSE: Western clothes with sombrero and handkerchief.
Recipe on a piece of paper.

KATHERINE: Chef and Western costumes, container of her chili.

SHERIFF: Two floral bouquets, one fresh, the other wilted.

PRESET IN SALOON: Playing cards; various cooking utensils and serving dishes.

ACT I

(AT RISE: The OUTLAWS, DANCING GIRLS, SHERIFF, DEPUTY, LILLIAN, and IVORY TICKLER assemble on stage. The scene is Miss Lillian's Saloon. SNAKEBITE SALLY speaks to the ensemble and the audience as a storyteller.)

SALLY: I'm glad you all came here today, 'cause I've got a story to tell you. A story about one of the greatest legends of Texas. The Legend of Katastrophe Kate.

ALL: Yeee! Hah!

SALLY: Many a tale has been told about Old Kate's adventures in the great state of Texas.

AL CAPULCO: I heard that Texas has a panhandle because she was such a great cook. *(CAST rumbles in agreement.)*

SUE: I heard she was stronger than seven men put together. *(Rumble.)*

IVORY TICKLER: I heard that when she sneezed it caused tornadoes. *(Rumble.)*

BOSSY: Someone told me that she could scare the rain into falling up! *(Rumble.)*

SALLY: Now I'm sure everyone here has their favorite Katastrophe Kate story. But how many of you know her story from the beginning? How she came to be Katastrophe Kate? *(CAST rumbles in ignorance.)* Well then I'll tell you. This story isn't like other Tales of Texas. It doesn't begin in the old West. This story begins a long, long time ago in New York City.

ALL: New York City?!?!?!?

(ALL except SALLY and COOKING STUDENTS leave in disgust.)

SALLY: This story begins in the New York cooking school of the famous chef, Madame Julia Infant. *(SALLY exits.)*

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(The scene is Madame Julia Enfant's cooking school. This scene may be played in front of a curtain if you need to accommodate a single unit set for the saloon. The COOKING STUDENTS, dressed in white kitchen garb, are assemble along with PIERRE, a cooking instructor in apron and large white chef's hat. He is frantically trying to place the students into an organized line.)

PIERRE: Quickly, quickly, everyone! You must assemble for Madame Julia! Today is your final exam.

(The STUDENTS scurry into position.)

BRATWURST: She's coming, she's coming!

(MADAME JULIA ENFANT enters.)

PIERRE and STUDENTS: Good morning, Madame Julia.

JULIA: Bon jour, my good friends. Today is an important day for you. Today you will present your final exam dishes for my approval. Should you succeed, you will be allowed to graduate and represent the Gourmet Cooking School of me, Madame Julia Enfant.

(Polite applause from STUDENTS, JULIA bows lightly. PIERRE steps forward.)

PIERRE: But, should you fail ... you will be forced to endure more grueling hours in the hot kitchen under my command!

(STUDENTS gasp.)

JULIA: Very well then, let us begin.

(PENELOPE PENSMORE, a reporter dressed in long skirt and blouse, enters carrying a pad and pencil.)

PENELOPE: Excuse me? Madame Julia? Madame Julia?

End of Freeview

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