RADIO RAZZLE-DAZZLE

A One-Act Comedy

By Steph DeFerie

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DEDICATION

For Donna Rose - Sisters at last

STORY OF THE PLAY

It's a few minutes to eight, New Year's Eve, 1940. In a radio studio a group of beleaguered people are desperately trying to put on a radio show. It's the most important episode of "Invitation to Danger" ever, but everything is going wrong – the organist and the sound effects man have eloped, the director is missing, one third of the cast has passed out on the sofa and the script has arrived at literally the last moment! Will our heroes Steve, Blackie and Pete finally uncover the true identity of the Hooded Terror, or will he escape them again? Will our plucky cast and crew wrestle some sort of sense from this hysterical catastrophe, or will chaos prevail? Tune in and find out.

Running Time: 1 hour.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

Radio Razzle Dazzle *was first performed on December 31, 1997 as "On the Air." The show was staged at the Chatham Drama Guild on Cape Cod, MA as part of the Chatham First Night Celebration. It was directed by Virginia Polak and stage managed by Marilyn Lamb. Sheldon Ripley designed the set and Jack White was in charge of lights and sound effects. The cast was as follows:*

MITZI: Lee Fuller
PATSY: Jane Hattemer
TRACY: Karen McPherson
ROGER: Joe Cromarty, Jr.
SKIP: John Hallstead
BUDDY: Fred Rice

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 3 w)

MITZI PRESSMAN: The producer – an energetic, middle-aged woman you do not want to tangle with.

PATSY KELLY: Her secretary, a young woman trapped in an old cliché – she would be quite pretty if her hair wasn't up in a tight bun and hidden under a hat, if she took off her ugly glasses, and if she unbuttoned her tight jacket.

TRACY LEROY: The engineer, a rather practical person.

SKIP SMITH: An actor, easily excited, takes everything very seriously.

ROGER KAPLAN: An actor, cooler than Skip, smokes a pipe.

BUDDY MCCOY: An actor.

SETTING

A radio studio in New York City, New Year's Eve, 1940. UL is the sound booth. There is a soundproof window looking into the sound booth. The control board is understood to be directly under this window. There is a door from the booth into the studio UL next to the window. The studio contains two microphones down center with the call letters WCDG on them. These need not be practical. Far right is the sound effects area with a practical microphone. There is a table and maybe some shelves containing the various sound props. DR is a small table containing snacks. UR is the door to the hallway. Above the door are an "ON AIR" sign, which lights up, and a practical clock. Also in the studio: A sofa, perhaps under the booth window, and a piano or organ UC between the two doors. The room has been decorated for the holidays: A banner reading "Happy New Year – 1941," streamers, balloons. There are also leftover Christmas decorations scattered about, a sad-looking tree, and a box of ornaments and tinsel.

PROPS

Old-fashioned 1940s radio
2 period standing microphones
1 practical mike (sound booth)
Purse, pil bottles, pills
Clipbord and pencil
Headset
Party noisemaker
6 scripts
Pen
Squeaky stuffed toy dog
Cellophane
Sponge
Brown paper bag
Crash box
Small door unit (creaks and door slams)
Water pitcher and glasses
Balloons (for cricket squeaks and for pops)
Empty coconut shells
Jingle bells on string
Drinking straw
Starter pistol (3 gun shots)
Chains
Papers
Christmas tree, Christmas decorations
Stick (baseball bat sound)
Noise makers, horns
Snacks – cake, a big bowl of very crisp potato chips, paper cups and straws, a bowl of punch or a pitcher of water, etc.
Drum
Stick to break
Glasses

RADIO RAZZLE DAZZLE

(In the darkness, a SPOT shines on an old-fashioned radio. We hear a program that is just finishing up. Note: The three FEMALE actors can do the voice-overs or it may be on a pre-recorded tape. Any of the MALE actors can do the ANNOUNCER.)

JUDY: *(VO.)* Come on, chums. We've just got to think of some way to get into that dance.

SUZY: *(VO.)* But we don't have a thing to wear!

PEGGY: *(VO.)* All our clothes were eaten by that swarm of locusts!

JUDY: *(VO.)* There's got to be a way! If we just put our heads together, I know that we can come up with a plan to get some new dresses.

SUZY: *(VO.)* But the dance is tonight! We only have an hour!

PEGGY: *(VO.)* And that's not nearly enough time! We'll never make it!

SUZY and PEGGY: *(VO.)* And we'll never meet all those single, handsome millionaires!

ANNOUNCER: *(VO.)* What will our gals do? Will they find a way to get three new ball gowns in time, or will they miss the biggest chance of their lives to catch millionaire husbands? Tune in same time tomorrow for the next installment of "Three Smart Gals." And coming up in just 15 minutes, it's the exciting episode you've been waiting six months for on "Invitation to Danger!" Will our boys finally unmask the criminal mastermind known as the Hooded Terror, or will evil triumph over good? That's "Invitation to Danger," tonight at eight o'clock. But coming up next, sit back and enjoy 15 minutes of big band music, live from the Stardust Ballroom where revelers are already beginning to dance away the final hours of 1940.

(The radio disappears and the LIGHTS come up on a 1940s radio studio. AT RISE: The studio and booth are both empty. The clock reads 7:55. The practical mike is on. Enter from UR MITZI PRESSMAN and her secretary PATSY KELLY. Mitzi is taking several small pill bottles out of her purse and swallowing pills. Patsy is carrying a clipboard and pencil.)

MITZI: No one? Not anyone?

PATSY: No. He hasn't come in, hasn't called and there's no answer at his apartment. Nobody's heard anything.

MITZI: Wonderful. Our biggest show of the year and the writer-director is missing in action.

PATSY: I'm sure Mr. Stanton will turn up.

MITZI: Yes, at the morgue, if I get my hands on him. You're sure he didn't drop the script off or have it messengered over this morning?

PATSY: Positive. The "Three Smart Girls" pages were here as usual, but there's no "Invitation to Danger." The last confirmed sighting was at 10:30 last night. The doorman saw Mr. Stanton leave here with Mr. McCoy. They were going for a couple of drinks over at Jimmy's.

MITZI: Did you …

PATSY: Talk to the bartender at Jimmy's? He remembers them coming in but he didn't see them leave and they didn't say where they were going.

MITZI: Have you talked to McCoy?

PATSY: *(Hesitantly.)* No one's seen him, either.

MITZI: Oh, swell! Now we're short a director, a script and one third of the cast. What else could go wrong?

PATSY: *(Cheerfully.)* The studio could catch on fire.

MITZI: That's not funny.

PATSY: Mr. Stanton's a very dependable man. I'm sure he'll be here in a minute.

MITZI: *(Looking up at the clock.)* Yes, you're right. Why am I worrying? One minute? Ha! We've got five of them. Five whole minutes. Plenty of time.

End of Freeview

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