THAT'S THE TICKET

A One-Act Comedy by
Eddie McPherson

Adapted from his full-length play,
"Shoestring Theatre"

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DEDICATION

To my wonderful and talented drama students who brought these characters to life for the first time. Your comments and suggestions were invaluable.

The Playwright, Eddie McPherson

Story of the Play

Sanders is very upset. The budget that is to fund his season opener is being cut by eighty percent. This play is to be an epic retelling of the timeless classic, "Cinderella." But how is he expected to pull off such a spectacle with practically no money? Then Sanders learns that Mrs. Brakes, the executive director of the theatre, has embezzled the "Cinderella" money to fund a vacation for herself in the Caribbean.

He decides to take matters into his own hands: "If it's a low-budget show they want, it's a low-budget show they'll get!" He rounds up some local yokels and casts them in the show. He uses cardboard boxes for the set and paper confetti and flashlights for special effects. Cinderella's "beautiful" gown is even worse.

But Sanders is shocked when he learns on opening night that the trip planned was a surprise for him. What a disaster … that is until the reviews come in and the show is the hit of the season!

CAST
(6 men, 10 women, extras)

SANDERS: Director of a play at a local theatre.

MRS. BRAKES: The theatre's executive director.

BRUTUS: A truck driver with a heart. *(Plays Prince)*

JED: Brutus' employee. *(Plays Mouse/Chauffeur)*

TED: Brutus' employee. *(Plays Cinderella's Father)*

ERVING: Another employee. *(Plays Royal Announcer)*

PEPPER: Publicity chairman. *(Plays Fairy Godmother)*

DENISE: A theatre volunteer. *(Serves as Narrator for the play)*

EVA: Another volunteer. *(Plays a Stepsister)*

MOLLY: Another volunteer. *(Also plays a Stepsister)*

CHRISSY: Waitress at Herman's Bistro. *(Plays Step-mother)*

HERMAN: Owns a nearby bistro. *(Plays King)*

AUBREY: A talented, but crazy woman. *(Plays Cinderella)*

MARY: A bag lady and entrepreneur. *(Plays Queen)*

BONNIE: President of the theatre's board of directors.

CAPRI: The city's infamous theatre critic.

STAGEHANDS: As Delivery Boy, Beast, Ball Guests and Doctor.

Production Notes

The beginning of the play takes place on a bare stage with odds and ends sitting about. Scene 4 is also a bare stage with cheap, ugly sets and props brought on and off. It's important that everything look homemade. Ordinary cardboard is perfect for the cottages and the trees, etc. The beast is nothing more than a couple of stagehands covered in a brown cloth with the cutout picture of an animal's head on a long stick. The director or cast may come up with other creative ways to stage Sanders' low-budget production. Allow the people to enter and exit with momentum moving the action along quickly.

Props and Costumes

Large boxes with bold labels as Castle Set, Costumes, Props, etc; dollies; cigar; packing list; business card; posters and colored markers; small red wagon with odds and ends and flowers; oil rag; chef's hat; plate of food with fork and napkin; résumé; application and pen; egg in purse; briefcase with travel brochures box with ugly wig; brush; plate of sandwiches.

Large book; two cardboard "cottages"; cheat sheet; 2 nerd glasses with attached mustaches; stuffed toy dog with leash; cardboard ax and trees; tattered dress of washcloths; stool; picture frame with cartoon portrait; flashlights and penlights; fairy costume with bent wand with foil star; confetti; cardboard changing screen; tea bag gown; blow dryer and bike pump; toy stuffed cow; pie pan and spoon; several beat-up gift boxes; pair of men's pajamas and homemade trumpet; football dress; 2 ping-pong ball dresses; banana, orange and apple; wheelchair; skateboard; blanket; toy mouse; chauffeur's outfit and hat; beach ball dress, hat and purse; snorkeling flippers; cardboard rolls from wrapping paper; stepladder; marbles; plastic crown; 2 red bed sheet robes; 2 lawn chairs; rolled up newspaper; plaid leisure suit, bow tie, paper crown and crocheted shawl; pocket watch; purse and program; pad and pen; 3 large handkerchiefs with ping-pong ball eyes; white lab coat and stethoscope.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: We see a stack of large labeled boxes. FOUR MOVING MEN, dressed in coveralls, enter and start carting the boxes out on dollies. SANDERS follows MRS. BRAKES onstage.)

SANDERS: What do you mean our budget has been cut?
MRS. BRAKES: I'm sorry, Sanders; it had to be done.
SANDERS: We just received all of this from New York yesterday. *(To one of the MOVING GUYS.)* Bring that back, that's our castle! *(To MRS. BRAKES.)* They're taking Cinderella's gown!
MRS. BRAKES: *(Shouting after the WORKERS.)* Be careful with those boxes!
SANDERS: *(To MRS. BRAKES.)* What could have happened so suddenly that would cause my budget to be cut by eighty percent?
MRS. BRAKES: Unexpected expenses with the company have arisen.
SANDERS: *(Crossing and speaking to the WORKERS sarcastically.)* Go ahead! Take away my life-long dream of directing the most beautiful production of a classic tale the world has ever seen!
BRUTUS: *(Approaching with a big cigar in his mouth.)* Hey, Mister. You think this is easy for me? You know how hard it's going to be telling my little girl there's not going to be a "Cinderella"?
MRS. BRAKES: *(Approaching.)* But there will be a production, just a less expensive one.
SANDERS: *(To MRS. BRAKES.)* You cut my budget eighty percent and expect me to direct a dignified show?
BRUTUS: *(Wiping a tear.)* When fairy godmother grants Cinderella that beautiful ball gown, I get misty-eyed all over again.
MRS. BRAKES: Don't you have work to do?
BRUTUS: You don't have to get nasty. *(Pulls packing list from his pocket.)*

SANDERS: *(To MRS. BRAKES.)* I had a top-notch show coming up to open our season and now it's being carried away by a cultured truck driver.

BRUTUS: *(Presents the list.)* That's everything, ma'am.

MRS. BRAKES: Fine. *(Hands HIM a business card.)* Send the bill to this address.

BRUTUS: *(To SANDERS, extending his hand.)* The name's Brutus. You keep your chin up, Mister. *(Starts to exit.)* I'll be at that awful low-budget show. *(HE throws a mean stare toward Mrs. Brakes and exits.)*

MRS. BRAKES: Sanders, don't give up. Take what resources you have and make something magical from it!

SANDERS: Never!

MRS. BRAKES: But, you're the most talented director in town. The state. The world.

SANDERS: The universe!

MRS. BRAKES: Then you'll do it?

SANDERS: Of course.

MRS. BRAKES: Fine. I must make a meeting. *(Exits quickly.)*

SANDERS: What just happened here? *(Shouting off.)* What just happened here?!

PEPPER: *(Entering.)* Who are you yelling at? I came by to show you the art work for the publicity posters.

SANDERS: *(In a daze.)* Huh?

PEPPER: I can't wait to see the show. Word is out this is going to be your best one yet.

DENISE: *(Entering carrying a box of colored markers.)* Pepper, I can't remember which shade of yellow you wanted to use on Cinderella's gown.

PEPPER: Sunset gold.

DENISE: *(To SANDERS.)* We're trying to finish up the publicity poster sample so we can get it to the printer.

PEPPER: We appreciate so much you volunteering to help with publicity.

DENISE: Glad to do it.

PEPPER: *(Interrupting.)* Denise is excited about the show too.

MARY: *(Entering pulling a red wagon full of odds and ends.)* Flowers for a dollar. Only one dollar. Get your beautiful flowers!

End of Freeview

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