

The Longest Day of April

By Christopher L. Pankratz

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DEDICATION

*To my family, and to all the inspiring theatre artists I have been
blessed to work with and learn from.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

When Max Holsten sets out for work leaving behind his briefcase and an unfinished breakfast, his quaint 1950s family is besieged by a series of misunderstandings that fester into conspiracy theories and suspicions. The extended family Max and his newlywed wife, April, have been living with are no comfort. April's sister June has an obsession with pulp-fiction intrigue and leads April to assume the worst about Max. Making matters murkier, Grandma May, the aged and easily confused matriarch of the family, misstates all the facts. Max's seemingly simple oversight is quickly compounded with a set of uncanny coincidences, leading to the inescapable conclusion that Max is living a double life with a secret family. A perfect storm brews with the arrival of June's gossip-loving book club. Have they read too many mysteries, or is Max perhaps dead in a nearby subway accident? Or is he in the mob? What's with the milkman locked in the coat closet? The play is full of action and misconstrued circumstances that show what can happen when we believe the worst! The cast includes more zany characters: there's Augustus, who hasn't spoken a word in years; June's husband Oswald, who lives to embarrass their easily embarrassed teen daughters; poor William, a young, terrified boyfriend; and the practical nurse Millie. The audience will be rolling in laughter until the final gag. Running time: 85 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

*The show was first performed on October 24, 2018 at Flowing Wells
High School in Tucson, Arizona. The cast included:*

MAY: Abigail Austin	WILLIAM: Marlon Gomez
APRIL: Issabella Luna	MAUDE: Samantha Daly
MAX: Andrew Carranza	DETECTIVE HANSEN: Raphael Abeytia
AUGUSTUS: Jonathan Holler	MILK MAN: Benjamin McDonald
EUGENE: Jesse Pesqueira	OFFICER STILTNER: Juan Alvarado
JUNE: Rachel Alvord	ZELDA: Katian Diaz
OSWALD: Jakob Carpenter	GEORGETTE: Kiana Emmons
JANET: Ashley Pearson	ELEANOR: Emily Howard
MOLLY: Melody Staller	DANA: Audrey Pearson
BETTY: Sol Murguia	SUZETTE: Yasmine Martinez
NURSE MILLIE: Marian Talamantes	HELEN: Fernanda Lujan

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 m, 14 w)

MAY: 80-something-year-old grandmother in wheelchair.

APRIL HOLSTEN: Daughter of May, recently married to Maxwell Holsten.

MAX HOLSTEN: Husband of April.

JUNE: Daughter of May, married to Oswald, mother of Janet, Molly and Betty.

OSWALD: Husband of June.

JANET: 15-year-old twin daughter of June and Oswald.

MOLLY: 15-year-old twin daughter of June and Oswald.

BETTY: The youngest daughter of June and Oswald.

AUGUSTUS: Son of May. Hasn't spoken in ten years. He will remain at his puzzle for the duration of the play.

NURSE MILLIE: Caretaker of May.

MAUDE: A book club member.

ELEANOR: A book club member.

DANA: A book club member.

SUZETTE: A book club member.

HELEN: A book club member.

ZELDA: The book club president.

DETECTIVE HANSEN

OFFICER STILTNER

MILKMAN: Having a tryst with Nurse Millie.

WILLIAM: Janet's cello-playing boyfriend.

EUGENE: The new tree trimmer from Blissful Blooms.

GEORGETTE: A realtor.

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SETTING

The entire action of the play takes place on a Tuesday in 1954, in the living room and dining area of a two-story brownstone in Brooklyn Heights. The room is elegantly decorated with rich wallpaper and furnishings.

STAGE LEFT, a front door with a pane of frosted glass leads out to the stoop and street. Next to the door is a coat closet.

UPSTAGE CENTER is a staircase leading up to the second story. The room has a seating area just left of center with a central loveseat and a single chair. A small coffee table holds an ashtray, coaster, and three small figurines: two of women and one of an Eiffel Tower.

STAGE RIGHT is a dining table with a mix of folding chairs to accommodate the large family for breakfast. There are seven folding chairs and room for May's wheelchair at the head of the table. There is a door which leads to the kitchen, and a hall which leads to a study and May's downstairs bedroom. Next to the hall is a shelf holding the telephone.

DOWNSTAGE LEFT is a small folding card table with a puzzle laid out in progress. Near the stairs is a padded piano bench.



ACT I

(AT RISE: LIGHTS up on the final moments of breakfast at a large Brooklyn Heights brownstone house that is at present overflowing with family. MAY sits at the head of the table in a wheelchair. Also seated in folding chairs are MAX, APRIL, JUNE, OSWALD, JANET, MOLLY, and BETTY. Everyone's plate is empty except for Max's. Breakfast has just about ended, and the table is having coffee. AUGUSTUS is sitting silently at the small table working on a puzzle. He will remain at his puzzle for the duration of the play.)

MAY: I was always rather fond of emerald as a color for table settings. It seems to remind me of my days as a young girl in Kansas.

APRIL: Kansas?

OSWALD: The cornfields?

MAY: No. Emerald. It was lustrous and everywhere. Of course, it was not in Kansas that I really came to enjoy it but rather in the city---Kansas is all grey you know. But the city. Emerald everywhere. Except the road of course, that was -- what did you ask me again?

MOLLY: I asked if I could be excused. Mother, I'm finished with breakfast. May I be excused?

JUNE: Of course, Molly, you and your sisters help clear the table, would you?

MOLLY: Yes, Mother. Come Betty, time to clear.

(MOLLY and BETTY get up and begin clearing their dishes and folding chairs.)

BETTY: I want to stay and listen to Grandma.

JANET: It's Molly's turn, isn't it, Mother? I want to hear the end of Grandma's story. Where did you fall in love with emerald, Grandma?

OSWALD: Janet, it's not polite to confuse her.

MAY: I'm not confused. It wasn't actually in Kansas of course, I know that. It was over the rainbow. With the lion and the little dwarves.

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APRIL: How many? Weren't there seven? Seven dwarves?
Is that right?

MAX: Wrong picture, dear.

MAY: Seven? No there were dozens of them. All singing.
When I was a girl there was a lot more singing, I think. And
dwarves, come to think of it.

OSWALD: *(Puts down his napkin and leaves the table
crossing to the middle of the room.)* I was always a little put
off by the singing dwarves. Too unrealistic for my tastes.

JUNE: *(Following OSWALD.)* Oh Oswald, three witches, a
talking lion, a tin man, a scarecrow, and all those flying
monkeys— but you think the singing dwarves were too far-
fetched?

OSWALD: A man is entitled to his opinion.

JUNE: Besides, they weren't dwarves. They were munchkins.

OSWALD: What is a munchkin?

JUNE: A munchkin is—well—I suppose it's a dwarf.

MAY: Where is my nurse? Minnie? Minnie?

APRIL: Millie.

MAY: That's not right.

APRIL: Her name is Millie, Mother. Your new nurse is called
Millie.

MAY: That's what I said. Nurse Millie? Millie Mouse?

(NURSE MILLIE enters from the kitchen.)

MILLIE: Yes, ma'am.

MAY: Oh, Minnie. How nice of you to come.

MILLIE: I brought your medicine, Miss May.

MAY: Will it make me beautiful?

MILLIE: *(Studies MAY's face.)* It's already working.

MAY: Oooo! Splendid. I think I'll keep this girl around. Millie
Millie Millie.

*(MILLIE gives MAY a small cup of liquid to drink. SFX: The
doorbell rings.)*

MILLIE: Must be the milkman back again.

End of Freeview

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