DANCES WITH THE MINOTAUR

A play by

Daniel S. Kehde

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Sam and Billy, two wheelchair-bound teens, have been mainstreamed into a regular school. Billy, a poet, exchanges romantic e-mails with Miranda under the pseudonym, "Minotaur." Sam is a rebel with devastating wit, who fights against the double standards that exclude them from the lunchroom and after-school activities. When Billy reveals who he really is to Miranda she is stunned at first. But they soon become friends, and Miranda agrees to go to the prom with Billy. Sam takes Mrs. Brown, a teacher he's befriended. But a fire breaks out in the chem lab and results in tragedy when Sam is killed. Years later, Billy recalls how Sam's defiant example spurred him on to go to college and become a writer, a husband and a father.

Dances With the Minotaur is a stirring, funny and deeply moving play about overcoming physical limitations and reaching deep into the core of our common humanity.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(4 male, 4 female, extras)

BILLY ROMERO: A wheelchair-bound high school senior. A writer, poet and dreamer.

BIG GEORGE: A caring male nurse.

SAM CUMMINGS: Billy's best friend, also wheelchair-bound. More profoundly disabled than Billy.

MIRANDA: A high school senior who sees beneath the surface of things.

BETH: Her best friend.

MRS. BROWN: A caring high school teacher who bends rules.

MRS. HANSON: A high school teacher who is a stickler for rules.

BILLY HARRIS: Athletic high school student.

OTHER TEACHERS and STUDENTS

Dances with the Minotaur premiered in Nitro, West Virginia in the fall of 1995 with production costs funded by grants from the West Virginia Development Disabilities Planning Council, Step by Step Incorporated, and the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Across the back of the stage is a large movie screen or cyc or any reasonable receiver for overhead projection. The screen remains in place throughout the play. Set pieces are placed around it, and it can be used as the back wall of the cafeteria or bedroom or hallway.

Costumes are contemporary and can reflect the change of seasons.

Many of the "typed" video lines can be spoken out loud by the actor playing Billy.

PROPS

Two computers (monitors and keyboards)
Plates of food
2 wheelchairs (electric)
Spoons, forks
School books
Glass with straw (Billy)
Sign – "Tear Down the Stairs" (Sam)
"FREESAM" stickers (Sam)
Book (Sam)
Makeup, hair brush, spray (Miranda and Beth)
Camera (George)
Cigarette pack and matches (Harris)
Punch bowl
Two glasses
Straw (Billy)

ACT I

Prologue

(House is darkened and the screen lights up. Words appear being typed onto a computer screen and projected onto the screen on the back of the stage.)

"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He taught me to see truth but fight reality."
(The TYPIST backspaces to erase to.)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He taught me to"
(And adds.)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He taught me to seek reality through the truth."
(HE erases it again.)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He"
(And adds)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He made me live. He fought for things that I thought were stupid or frivolous, he tried to change things that I was perfectly willing to live with."
(HE erases to.)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He made me live. He fought for things that I thought were stupid or frivolous, he tried to change things that I was perfectly willing to"
(And adds.)
"Sam Cummings was a revolutionary ... and a friend. He made me live. He fought for things that I thought were stupid or frivolous. He tried to change things that I was perfectly willing to leave alone. He was a pain in the butt."

(Screen goes out.)

End of Prologue

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: LIGHTS come up on group home dining area. Stage is set with tables and food plates. The food prep area is offstage right. PEOPLE are wheeled on stage. Some with crutches make it to tables and sit. Some are being fed, others feed themselves. There is music being played on the radio. On stage sits BILLY ROMERO in his wheelchair center table. A large jovial man, BIG GEORGE, wheels in SAM CUMMINGS to Billy's table. Sam is more profoundly disabled than Billy, able only to move his right hand enough to work his electric wheelchair. Sam can also move his head from side to side and speak fairly clearly.)

SAM: Why don't you just wheel me up to the trough, George?
GEORGE: *(To BILLY.)* Here, Bill, you deal with him.

(HE walks off for food.)

BILLY: Having a good day?
SAM: Peachy, just peachy.
BILLY: Dear Mrs. Winthrop, please excuse Sam Cummings from American Civilization, he's having a bad day.
SAM: I hate that class. I hate Mrs. Winthrop. I hate that school.
BILLY: Forget to take the old med's, did we?
SAM: Bite me. Do you know what she did to me today?
BILLY: Other than ignore you?
GEORGE: *(Re-entering.)* Wise lady.
SAM: She gave me that look.
BILLY: Oh please, George, my violin.
SAM: Fail me, blast it, or put me in a corner facing the wall.
BILLY: Yeah, and forget you.

End of Freeview

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