

Picking the Perfect Play

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Choosing a play is hard to say the least. Scouring book after book, website after website to find something that speaks to you. Dr. Whatley put it best on our first day of Directing One “You’ll be married to this play for the next four months, so you better love it.”

Before the semester even started, I had my sights set on a handful of plays I had read in the past but my bubble was quickly popped. Some were too long, others just not written well enough for what I had in mind. I had to start from scratch. Internet sources were helpful, but after awhile the sites just had the same plays I had seen before. That’s how I found myself on the floor off the library one afternoon on a break between classes, nose deep in The Best American Short Plays collection.

After my fourth book I began to feel a bit hopeless. All the plays were good, but none had screamed “Pick Me!”. It didn’t help that I had come into this entire process with expectations of what type of play I should pick. I didn’t want a straight comedy, but nothing too depressing either and a sprinkle of life lessons to top it off. I wanted the audience to walk away thinking, but not out of confusion. The list went on.

Halfway into yet another edition of the collection I came across a play that piqued my interest. I didn’t want to dwell on anything for too long, I needed to read as many as I could, so I jotted down the name and kept looking. After several more plays and some process of elimination, it made it to my top three list. I wanted to make sure that it wouldn’t go over the time limit of thirty minutes so I recruited a friend of mine to read it outloud with me while I timed it. By the time we were finished, I didn’t even read the other two plays to see if they would fit. I knew I wanted this to be the play I married for four months.

Before decision can happen, I need to pitch it to the class first. The Directing One class is supposed to replicate the experience of putting on a professional production, just without the budget. I need to put together a presentation about the play I’ve chosen and why it deserves to be put on the stage. My classmates will vote to decide if my production pitch convinced them and then it’s off to the races. Until then, I’m biding my time reading and re-reading my script