

## TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN

By Dolf, Andy, and Searnold  
December, 2004

Note to director: Our play is SLIGHTLY ... what's the word? Edgy? If you feel necessary maybe a few of the "edgy" lines can be removed or toned down. But please think about the comedy of the lines in context before you cast judgment upon us! (And seriously, no messing with the gopher sex.)

Further note: Our grammar is not exactly the most precise (especially not now that it's 4:30AM) So if you know how to say something betterly, feel free.

Another Note: We the writers have procured pizza boxes, a donut box, a giant smiley face, candy wrappers, soda cans, the funny hat, the giant pencil, all the duct tape you'll need (it's mult-colored) and yes – even the toilet that you'll need for this play.

Final note: An extra actor (David Something-Last-Name-Ish) will be arriving around 8AM and he has agreed to be the Narrator/ Director guy named Nick.

GWEN is a high strung quasi leader who is constantly concerned with keeping the ideas politically correct and PG rated.

STELLA is a caffeine addicted, no-doze chugging, sugar-aholic, crazy ass bitch

HOWIE is the drunken stoner that gets pranks pulled on him, the wasted member of the party who has trouble remembering his ideas, and yet is enthusiastic about putting on a good show

MARK is crude and is a jackass who is egotistical, a loner who identifies with no-one, but is extremely creative

NARRATOR: One Hour In.

[lights up]

Four people on the stage, MARK is disinterested by GWEN's beginning introduction HOWIE and STELLA listen intently. Stella is drinking her sodas and Howie his beer

G: So group party members, let's review. As of right now (looking at his watch) we have 22 hours, 39 minutes, and 17 seconds before the curtains come up. Which means our script has to be done in 10 hours, 39 minutes, (check watch) and 13 seconds. Compensating for the time it will take to go to Kinko's and print copies for actors and directors...

M: (interrupting) Hey how bout we shut up and get to work.

G: So do any of you have any suggestions?

H: Well I came prepared with an idea about Drunken Elves. They just finished making all the presents for the year and they're celebrating because they don't have to work on Christmas day.

S: Yeah I mean who wants to work on Christmas day?

M: Well, the Jews.

G: (Stares angrily at Mark, then looks at Howie) Well, that's one idea. Not a very good idea, but that's besides the point. I...brought in some props to get some ideas. (GWEN goes in back and brings out Hat, Pencil, Smiley, and Colored Duck Tape. She tosses the Duct Tape to

Stella, the hat to Mark, the Smiley to Howie and keeps the pencil. As she gives each person their prop she calls their name.)

G: Stella. Mark. Howie. Here you go. I'll keep the pencil. What do you guys think?

S: I think it figures you'd keep the pencil, Gwen. (snickers) So, what am I supposed to do with the duct tape? (she starts messing around/ playing with the duct tape and does so throughout the entire play)

M: Why don't you tape your mouth shut? (he throws the hat aside and picks up a book)

H: Why are you so crass, Mark?

M: Because I wasn't even supposed to be here today. My mom's uncle's niece bugged the crap out of me until I agreed to show. She's been pestering me about it for four years running. So if you need me for this weak writing excursion, just DON'T. (Picks up his book and begins to ignore them)

G: Whatever Mark. Alright guys, before we start writing the script we need to come up with ideas for a theme, a plot, characterization, and a well constructed storyline. Now let's brainstorm with these props to find an answer. Now Stella, look at the duct tape... What does it make you think of (As she's speaking, Howie is drinking from a suggestive looking brown bottle), how does it represent a character, and how does it make you feel?

S: (thinking) Uhhh... it makes me feel sticky. (grins, and drinks her soda).

H: Well for me this smiley face reminds me of a young black child growing up poor in the projects of Harlem—

G: (interrupting) DON'T SAY BLACK! Children are going to see this play, we have to be politically correct. The proper term is African American (pause) dumbass. (Gwen picks up the hat and extends it to Mark) How about the hat Mark, what does it say to you?

M: (Frankly) Well hats don't talk, but if this one could, I'd say it was saying "Shut up and let the man read!"

G: (Gwen throws the hat in frustration) People, I am trying to get you to think creatively, because the clock is ticking, but none of you are really taking me seriously!

S: That's because you're holding a giant pencil. These props are lame at best. You have anything better?

G: I'm glad you asked. I happened to save the best prop for last. I brought a toilet. (everyone gives her blank stares)

H: Huh?

G: Seriously. (goes off stage and comes back with a toilet) Now doesn't this just scream creativity to you?

H: To me, it screams giant barf bag.

S: Hey – in this theatre we have a strict “clean up your OWN puke” policy. (everyone looks at Gwen)

G: (defensively) It only happened that one time!

M: I'm hungry.

H: Maybe what we need is some pizza to loosen up the tension in here.

M: That's the best idea I've heard from you three so far.

[Lights Down]

Narrator: Three Hours In.

[Lights Up. We notice 2 empty pizza boxes now on the stage as well as donut boxes bags of candy and a few candy wrappers strewn about. There are a few empty mountain dew cans next to Stella.]

[(For 30 seconds to a minute) Stella is chugging another can. Howie is sipping a suggestively beer-like bottle. Gwen is pacing furiously in front of Mark who is casually flipping through his book with headphones on. Howie puts down the bottle and picks up the smiley face and begins waltzing with it. At the same time, Stella finishes her soda, throws the can in a pile with the other empty ones and resumes playing with duct tape. Gwen throughout is miming yelling at all three of them trying to keep them on task.]

[lights Down]

Narrator: Seven Hours In.

[slight blue light fades up in order to designate that it is after midnight or later]

[The amount of candy wrappers, soda cans, beer bottles, and empty pizza boxes has increased. Stella is jogging around while playing with the duct-tape (the caffeine has really started to affect her). Howie is slightly affected by his alcohol but not completely out of it. Perhaps a slight slur begins to develop in his words. Mark is arguing with Gwen.]

M: Gopher sex!

G: No!

M: (insisting) GOPHER SEX!

G: NO!

S: Gwen, you've got to admit, gofer sex is pretty funny.

G: But it's not just about comedy. 24 hour theatre is about showing the public what theatre is all about. There has to be a theme. There has to be a point. We can't just have a randomly funny skit that does nothing but blather on about nothing in particular. It has to be culturally aware.

S: Don't you remember last year, Gwen. Our "culturally aware" Anne Frank fiasco didn't go over too well with our lawyers.

H: I'm telling you guys, Drunken Elves.

M,&G,&S: NO!

S: How about we do a spoof on 24 hour theatre itself.

H: Yeah – that's a great idea...and maybe even add a few drunken elves.

G: Are you guys stoned out of your screwy little minds? That's a terrible idea. Nobody will think a spoof on 24 hour theatre is funny.

S: Hey that reminds me, I have no-doz! (by this time she cannot hold still.) Does anyone need some no-doz? (everyone stares at her then goes back to what they were doing) Your loss. (she pops a handful or few or a couple or some or another vague numerical value of the no-doz into her mouth) I've got it! There's a man with superpowers, but not any ordinary super powers. Not only can he fly and has super strength and all that super-man jazz but he also has super brain power. Coupled with bi-polar disease he becomes both an evil genius and a super hero who has to foil his own evil plans.

G: Although that does address the issue of bi-polar disease in our society, this is 24 hour theatre. We don't have the budget for that sort of thing!

M: How about if we make fun of Hitler? Or The French? Or Canadians? Ooo, or French Canadians!! Or maybe we could create a character: Kookey the Klu Klux Klown. (he is about to expand upon his idea when he is interrupted)

G: PG! This has to be rated PG!! Children will be watching. And we don't need you to be spouting off this dribble of unnecessary noise.

M: Oh that reminds me - I have to take a piss. (he walks towards the toilet)

S: (sarcastically) Thank you for sharing. (Mark raises the toilet's lid)

G: You can't use my toilet! (she pushes him out of the way and threatens him with her pencil.)

M: Fine, I'll use the one downstairs. (he begins to exit when David (our little Cameo star) bumps into him ) Oh, hey Mr. Director (sarcastically salutes and walks off)

D: How's it going?

G: We... uh... we really are making a lot of headway. Tell him about your ideas Howie.

H: I want to do a skit about Drunken Elves.

D: I'm sure you guys have many OTHER ideas that you're working on (under his breath) hopefully. I just want to make sure that you keep a few things in mind. Are your characters being driven by who they are, or by the situation they have been placed in? That's going to affect the outcome of the plot. And keeping these things in mind is a fundamental of good writing. (specifically to Gwen) And remember to try to balance your "cultural awareness" with a little bit of humor. (exit David)

S: What we need is a running gag that keeps showing up throughout the play.

H: Drunken Elves dude. I'm telling you guys, Drunken Elves.

[lights down]

Narrator: 8 Hours In

[Lights up. All of the pizza boxes are now scattered on stage. More soda is in Stella's pile. Gwen is sitting in the corner with a laptop (or pile of paper) desperately trying to scratch out a few ideas or possibly just shaking/ quivering in fear of not getting the play written. Mark is chilling with his book and headphones. Howie is now totally drunk and has passed out in a chair. Stella who is playing with her duct tape looks at him and gets an idea. She goes and starts to wrap the duct tape around him to lock him in the chair. Mark notices and goes over and begins to help her. Lights fade down]

Narrator: 9 hours In

[Lights up. Mark is sitting where Gwen was a moment ago seeming to work on an idea. Howie is totally tied up with duct tape in his chair. Stella is on the ground making snow angels and muttering about snizzle the elf (in her own little way she's as out of it as Howie is.) Gwen is frantic and center stage.]

G: ONE HOUR! We have one hour to finish this thing and we have NOTHING written! My theatre career is over! OVER!! (her screaming "over" awakens Howie)

H: Why are you yelling? Why is my head hurting so much? And why is the room spinning?

S: (Speaking very fast) She's yelling cause she's stressed. Your head hurts cause you're drunk. And the room is spinning for the same reason. Gee, it's great to be able to hang

out with you guys and work on this stuff. Hey, what were we working on again? Oh yeah, the play. Good times. Snizzle the elf! Good times.

G: Does ANYBODY have ANY ideas for a decent storyline for our play?

H: Woah – I just thought of it. I’ve got the greatest idea ever. This is perfect!

G: Yes? Yes? What is it?! This isn’t going to be the same idea you’ve had for the last 9 hours, is it?

H: No no. This is a new idea I just thought of. We can do a play about Christmas day with – get this ... Drunken Elves.

G: (screaming/ breaking down into tears at the fact that his epiphany was less than epiphinal)

S: Howie, you already told us that idea.

H: (very confused) Did I? The last thing I can remember is... (he leans his head back in deep thought for 10-15 seconds. After that he forgets that he’s trying to remember and grows silent. Stella and Gwen are giving him their attention and he doesn’t notice.) It’s cold in here.

G: Why don’t you do us all a favor and pass out again?

H: Well you woke me up, so I’m gunna stay up.

S: We still need to decide what we’re going to do. I still think we should name one of the Elves Snizzle.

G: WE CAN’T USE THE STUPID ELF IDEA! IT WILL NEVER WORK!

M: Actually we can. Howie, we are going to use your Drunken Elf idea, but with some alterations, because they can’t JUST be drunken elves. Stella, we’ll name one Snizzle just as you have been jabbering about for the past hour. Gwen, if we have the Elves’ sloth-like nature cause them to fall behind on next years toy creation we can make a political statement about the follies of alcoholism. Now if you guys’ll shut up for the next 15 minutes I can finish this script. [Gwen is flabbergasted, Howie has now fallen back asleep, and Stella is giving Mark a big hug for no reason whatsoever.]

G: How...wait, why did you do it?

M: I was bored with listening to you people blather on and on. Besides, I finished my book hours ago.

H: Wait (noticing his wrappings) when did I get covered with duct tape?

[Lights down]

Narrator: 24 Hours In

[Lights up, the stage has been cleaned up so it is empty and ready for a performance]

H:           Wow, I can't believe we actually finished writing a script. Man I'm amazed I'm awake to see it.

G:           I can't believe we made a script about drunken elves... and it actually made sense.

S:           (yawning) Well do you think they enjoyed it?

M:           Well, we'll just have to wait and see how much they applaud during the curtain call.

[They all bow] [Lights down] [Curtain]