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Dramatic Publishing

The Girl Who Was Asked to Turn Blue

A One -Act Play
for a Variable Cast
by

EV MILLER



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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(THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE)

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THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

*A One-Act Play
for a Variable Cast*

CHARACTERS

TRACEY LOGAN, a girl of sixteen

411

919

817

764

NUMBER ONE

STRANGE BOY

OTHER BLUE CHARACTERS

TIME: *The Present*

PLACE: *A Blue World*

PREFACE

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE has been written with two endings. The director has the option of presenting the play in one of three ways - with ending number one, ending number two, or with both endings. The author himself prefers the latter approach because it gives a wonderful choice of having the audience decide, in the innermost parts of their own minds, which option might happen. If the director chooses to present the play with both endings, the following announcement should either be placed in the program or announced orally to the audience before the play begins.

ABOUT THE ENDINGS

This play will be presented with two different endings. It will be performed through the final curtain with Ending Number One. Then, after the curtain, it will resume with Ending Number Two.

The second ending will begin at the point when Number One and 411 are onstage, waiting for Tracey to return from offstage.

After viewing both endings, the audience must ask - which way would it have really been?

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

SCENE: The curtain opens to depict a very sparse setting. Actually, this play could be done bare stage, but if scenery is desired, it should consist of a few large tree or shrub-like plants, a few benches, etc. All in all, it should look much like a courtyard or patio.

CURTAIN: TRACEY LOGAN is onstage. She is a normal looking girl* of about sixteen. She is dressed in contemporary clothing; jeans, short-sleeved top, tennis shoes, etc. She looks around the area with an extremely bewildered look on her face.

***NOTE:** The gender of the lead or any of the other characters is unimportant. The lead could be played by a boy and the play called "The Boy Who Was Asked to Turn Blue." The play could be done with an all-girl cast, an all-boy cast, or a combination. Pronouns referring to "her" could be then changed accordingly, of course.

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

TRACEY (to herself). What in the world? Where am I? (She walks around the courtyard a bit and looks carefully at everything. She touches a bench.) What is this place? (She stands erect and calls out.) Hello! Hello! Is anybody here? (There is no answer, only the extreme silence.) Can anybody hear me? (She turns to walk slowly back to C, near the audience.)

(Other FIGURES begin to drift out of the shadows slowly from various parts of the wings. As they enter the light, they can be seen more clearly. ALL are young - teenagers - and all are dressed exactly alike - tight, dark blue pants resembling blue jeans and loose-fitting dark blue tops. The most striking part of their appearance is that each one of them is colored a medium blue - their hands, faces, hair. It is difficult to tell male from female because of the loose-fitting tops and the cut of the hair. None wear makeup. TRACEY turns and sees the OTHERS.)

TRACEY. Oh! (ALL jump back instinctively.) Who are you? (They begin to step forward again tentatively. They are very curious, but a bit afraid. TRACEY steps back as they advance.) What do you want? Who are you? (ONE closest to her tries to touch her face. She jumps away.) Stop it! (She looks closely at the OTHERS.) Why, you're all blue!

411. And you are white!

919. I have never seen anything like it!

817. Have you ever seen anything so ugly?

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

TRACEY. Me, ugly? You've got to be kidding. (The OTHERS try to touch her arms and face. ONE succeeds and looks at "his" hand.)

411. It doesn't come off

TRACEY. Of course it doesn't come off! What's the matter with you, anyway? This is the way I am! (She reaches toward one of them.) Yours must come off . . . (ALL shrink back.)

411. Don't be foolish! (Pause.) Who are you? Where did you come from? How did you get to this sacred place?

TRACEY. Sacred place?

411(sweeping "his" hand around). This is the sacred place of our cell. It is here that the Holy Cabinet is kept.

TRACEY. Is this a church?

817. Church? What is a church?

TRACEY. A church is a place of worship.

817. Yes, this is our place of worship. It is here that the Sacred Blue Rites take place.

TRACEY. What are they?

919. Enough questions. I think we should call Number One. Number One should question her. (The OTHERS make sounds of approval.)

817. Won't Number One be upset if we call for that?

411. We have no choice. None of us know how to deal with this. 764 . . . you go.

764. All right . . . immediately. (764 rushes off.)

411 (to TRACEY). What is your number?

TRACEY. Number?

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

411. Yes, in your cell . . . what number have you been given?

TRACEY. I . . . I don't have a number. I have a name.

817. A name? What is that?

TRACEY. It is what I am called. My name is Tracey Logan.

817. Tracey . . . Logan . . . (817 looks at the OTHERS who shrug, not understanding.)

TRACEY. Yes, my father's name is John and my mother's name is Alice.

919. Father?

817. Mother?

411. What are they?

TRACEY. My parents. (Pause. ALL look at each other.) Don't you know what parents are? (They shake their heads or utter "no.") They . . . well . . . my mother gave birth to me . . . from her body.

919 (snorting in disbelief as the OTHERS howl with laughter). Oh, really now! Do you expect us to believe that?

817. What a ridiculous thing to say!

TRACEY (exasperated). It's true!

919. You must think we're fools!

TRACEY. Well! How were you born?

817. Born?

411. I think she means, how did we come into existence?

817. Oh . . . why didn't she say that then?

411 (tentatively). Tracey . . . (Her name sounds awkward the way it is said.) Tracey . . . we . . . we are given existence in the Sacred Laboratory.

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

TRACEY. You mean by a test tube?

411. There is no "test" connected with it. When one of our cell is terminated, another is created to replace it.

TRACEY. Terminated! You mean killed?

817 (laughing). Really! You say the most outlandish things!

411. It is very simple. When our period in our cell is over, we are terminated. There is nothing else to say about it.

TRACEY. How . . . how long do you get to live before you are "terminated?"

411 (shrugging). I am not sure. None of us really think about it. The time comes when we are called into Number One and he tells us it is time.

TRACEY. Number One? Who is that?

919. Number One is our High Priest. The Keeper of the Holy Cabinet.

TRACEY. Aren't you afraid when he tells you?

817. Afraid? Of what?

TRACEY. Of being terminated.

817. Of course not. What is there to be afraid of?

TRACEY (looking around the GROUP). You are all so young. Where are the older people?

919. Older people?

TRACEY. Yes, those with a lot of years.

919. Years? (919 turns to the OTHERS.) What are years?

817. This is foolishness! Why are we talking to this one? Where is Number One?

THE GIRL WHO WAS ASKED TO TURN BLUE

411 (patiently). Tracey, we are the most mature in our cell. No one gets more mature. Is that what you are asking about?

TRACEY. I . . . I think so. What about the babies? The little ones?

411. Those who are not yet able to take care of themselves are kept in a special place until they are able to take a place in a cell. There are 999 of us in our cell. It is never allowed to grow any larger.

TRACEY. How many cells are there?

411 (shrugging). I haven't the faintest idea . . .

(They are interrupted by the sudden appearance of NUMBER ONE. The OTHERS look with awe.)

411. It is Number One! (ALL kneel, their heads bowed.)
NUMBER ONE. You may rise. (ALL stand.) What is this all about? (NUMBER ONE stops suddenly and looks at TRACEY.) Well! It *is* true! I thought 764 was exaggerating.

411. The question, Your Holiness, is what do we do?

NUMBER ONE. Well, that is obvious.

411. It is?

NUMBER ONE. Of course. This person must be turned blue . . . like the rest of us.

919. Of course . . .

817. It is so simple . . . Why didn't we think of that?

919. I suspected that is what we should do all along.

TRACEY. Now, wait a minute . . .

NUMBER ONE. You two . . . go get the Sacred Cabinet. We will do it immediately. (The TWO rush offstage.)