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Dramatic Publishing

SORORITY HOUSE OF THE DEAD

By
MITCH BRIAN



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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MITCH BRIAN

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The Coterie Theatre, Kansas City, Missouri, presented the world premiere of *Sorority House of the Dead* on October 21-31, 2010, Jeff Church, producing artistic director, Joette Pelster, executive director, with the following artists:

THE COMPANY:

(in order of appearance)

Girl Scout/Ensemble Jamie Jones
Girl Scout/Ensemble Elizabeth Ernst
Deb. Zoë Brian
Tonya. Molliann McCulley
Janet. Rachael Rogers
Ensemble Jordan Spatz
Ensemble Emma Daugherty
Ensemble Haley Brown
Jason-Michael/Demon Child/Ensemble. . . Charlie Meredith
Ensemble Jordan Brazeel
Brenda. Anna Danciger
Sissy Anna Stasny
Holly Hannah Ashcraft
Greg. Jeff Smith
Ensemble Rachel Shelby
Ensemble Emmy Hadley
Ensemble Sydney Moore
Mrs. B. Kimberely Queen
Maestro D Cody Wyoming

ARTISTIC AND PRODUCTION COMPANY:

Director Ron Megee
Set Designer. Scott Hobart, Ron Megee
Properties Designer Ron Megee
Costume Designer Megan Turek
Light Designer. Moose Werks
Sound Designer David Kiehl
Make-up and Hair Design. Kimberely Queen
Score composed and performed by Cody Wyoming
Fight Choreography/Special Effects Jay Jess Atkin
Choreography Emmy Hadley, Kimberely Queen,
Rachel Shelby, Jeff Smith, Jordan Spatz
Production Stage Manager/Asst. Director.
Megan M. Engström
Technical Director/Master Carpenter. Scott Hobart*
Scenic Carpenter Matt Larson
Deputy Costumer. Amanda Burkhart
Production Assistant Sara Bossler

**Denotes Coterie resident artist*

SORORITY HOUSE OF THE DEAD

CHARACTERS:

GIRL SCOUTS (2) sellers of cookies
MAESTRO D musical goth rock icon
JANET aspiring businesswoman, wants to be a pledge
TONYA nerdy brainiac suspicious of sororities
DEB Madonna wannabe and rushee
JASON-MICHAEL hockey-masked lunatic
SISSY wealthy rushee from Hollis, Oklahoma
BRENDA former pageant queen and sorority sister
HOLLY sexy, new wave sorority sister
GREG nerdy but nice frat boy
MRS. B housemother and queen of the damned
CHARLIE MINION her twisted minion

SETTING: A sorority house. Fall 1987.

SORORITY HOUSE OF THE DEAD

(Lights dim.)

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE. The following program will be presented in the "letterbox format." The bars at the top and bottom of the frame are normal.

(A BLACK FRAME lowers [or can be carried on by robed figures]. It is a 'scope aspect ratio of 1:2.35 and can be used to occasionally "frame" the action as the director sees fit.

We see the dimly lit main room of the sorority house. There's a dead fireplace, a large door on one side, a staircase with a landing and steps going up out of sight. There's a closet as far from the main door as possible—out of view from the main room. In the center or to the side are French doors, covered by pale drapes behind which silhouettes can be seen.

There is a knock on the door...which creaks open, bad '80s horror-movie-blue moonlight bleeds in behind a long shadow...revealed to be...TWO little GIRL SCOUTS. They enter hesitantly, cradling boxes of cookies.)

GIRL SCOUT #1. Hello? Anybody here? I'm here with the cookies for your party tonight. Mrs. B? Mrs. B. I have your Thin Mints.

(They continue in, clearly spooked, step by step, crossing to the hallway entrance, peering into the darkness. WHOOSH! A figure lunges from the darkness. A WEIRDLY ROBED FIGURE, face hidden by hood, grabs the first GIRL SCOUT and pulls her behind the French doors. The other GIRL SCOUT misses it all—only possible in bad horror movies.)

GIRL SCOUT #2. I think maybe we'll just leave the cookies here. Okay? Anybody? Okay...

(MORE ROBED FIGURES appear, seizing the second girl. The robed attackers lift the girl into the air, carrying her behind the doors...now silhouettes beyond the pale curtains, joined by more robed shapes, grab limbs of the GIRL SCOUT...all pulling...and ripping the GIRL SCOUT in two.

A SCREECH OF MUSIC or CRASH of CYMBAL! Music up. Bouncy 1980s music, courtesy of MAESTRO D...a post-punk new-wave ghoul à la Robert Smith or that unfortunate guy from Flock of Seagulls...

An imaginative title sequence, maybe with 1980s photos: happy, nostalgic images in the frame. SUDDENLY the music changes...now menacing...horror-film music as the '80s images become equally scary: Ronald Reagan,

Joan Collins, Oliver North, Tammy Faye Bakker, Don Johnson, Margaret Thatcher, Mr. T.

Titles end. Blackout...and then THREE GIRLS appear in the letterbox, walking in place, like a backward dolly shot.

They are TONYA, too-big glasses and headgear braces, DEB, a Madonnawannabe, bedecked in a train-wreck combination of early Madonna gear and JANET, almost hitting the '80s power-suit-business-woman fashion target...but not quite.)

TONYA. I think this is a totally ridiculous idea!

DEB. Don't be such a spaz, Tonya. What else would you be doing if you weren't doing this? Homework?

TONYA. As a matter of fact, yes. My trigonometry "Trapper Keeper" notebook is bursting at the seams. And I'm missing "Solid Gold." (*As if of one mind, they bust a quick Solid Gold Dancer move.*) For what? This? (*Holds up one of the flyers littering the theater—to be found by the audience.*) "Party with the Undead like it's 1899. Vampire Bacchanal and Open Rush by the Sisters of Delta Pi Sigma. Beware or Be Square." Gag me with a pledge key.

DEB. Gag me with something else. You know there's gonna be boys at the party.

JANET. Please, both of you, don't embarrass me. This is the only chance we've got to get into a house. This is a brand new sorority and I hear they have a very generous attitude toward new members.

DEB. You mean they'll take anybody.

JANET. I mean I'm almost a legacy. See this scarf? It belonged to my great-grandmother who was a sister in that very house back in the 1920s.

TONYA. That was a totally different sorority, Janet. The house has been totally abandoned until just this year. Have you ever even heard of a sorority called Delta Pi Sigma anywhere else in the county? It's probably a front for some weird sex cult.

DEB. God, I hope so! *(They both look at her in shock.)*
Psyche!

JANET. You are grossing me out.

TONYA. Look, I don't wanna go to a costume party when we're not even wearing costumes.

JANET. It says costumes optional! They're the undead, not us.

DEB. Use your imagination. We'll just say we're dressed as victims.

TONYA *(no longer listening)*. Well, I can tell you one thing, I'm totally NOT puttin' up with any kind of hazing. Not me. No way. No how.

JANET. Oh, come on, Tonya, it'll all be in good fun. A sorority rush functions along the same lines as the business management principle of Cog's Ladder. I mean, I've seen *Working Girl* like five times. It's all a routine. Besides, nobody gives you anything in this world, you have to earn it. That's the first principle of business management.

(An ugly squeaking sound comes from across the theater.)

TONYA. Hey, do you hear that? What is that?

(She points across the theater. We see a squeaking shopping cart, filled with junk, pushed by JASON-MICHAEL—a man in a Freddy Kruger sweater and a hockey mask. He seems to be tracking their steps. They stop. He stops. They start walking again. So does he, pushing the cart toward them.)

JANET. Is he following us?

DEB *(shouts at him)*. Hey, Gretsky, are you following us?

TONYA. What are you doing?! Don't encourage him!

DEB. I don't think he even heard me.

(JASON-MICHAEL suddenly draws a chainsaw from the basket. It roars. DEB screams.)

JANET. He heard you!

TONYA. Run for the house. NOW!

(The three girls run away. JASON-MICHAEL stumbles unsuccessfully after them until...

...a FEMALE JOGGER in her '80s workout gear runs into the letterbox frame. He sees her. She screams as he ATTACKS her. She drops out of frame, hidden by the bottom of the letterbox...

...he drives the chainsaw down toward where she must be...the SAW ROARS...BLOOD SPURTS up into view. He reaches down to grab THE GIRL'S SEVERED HEAD, holding it up proudly. CUT TO:

LIGHTS COME UP IN THE SORORITY HOUSE. MUSIC UP, MAESTRO D providing the iconic '80s party jams.

THE RUSH PARTY IS IN FULL SWING. 1980's clothes, Reagan-era glamor. FRATERNITY BOYS with fake fangs serve punch.

BRENDA, top sister and beauty pageant queen, listens to a potential pledge, perfectly preppy, sugar-sweet SISSY.)

SISSY. I never reckoned I stood a chance. My grades ain't that good. My momma ran off with a custom cutter, so my daddy had to start rough-neckin' again and my brother Bubba, he was the one with good grades, got right into Oral Roberts University. That left me with only one goal: leave home and improve myself.

BRENDA. And where was home?

(SISSY makes the shape of Oklahoma with her hand and forefinger and points to the knuckle of her pinky.)

SISSY. Hollis, Oklahoma. Right here. Almost Texas but not quite, thank-you-very-much.

BRENDA. Well, Sissy, we have very exacting standards here and you can bet that by midnight we'll know who's true Delta Pi material. I promise if you make it through tonight's lock-in there will be a Delta Pi key in your future.

SISSY. And I promise you I won't let you down.

BRENDA. Oh, don't worry about me. It's Mrs. B you won't want to let down. She's more than just a house-mother. She's a role model for us all. Just like Nancy Reagan. We'll just have to wait and see if you suit her tastes. (*A DOORBELL RINGS.*) Excuse me. That's the doorbell. I need to answer the door. There's punch and cookies in through there.

SISSY. Can I bring you anything?

BRENDA. Oh, no. We're not allowed to snack until after midnight. Enjoy yourself.

(She heads for the door, joined by another sister, HOLLY, punk peroxide-bleached hairstyle, doing the whole "Holly Body" new wave vamp look. They open the door, revealing JANET, TONYA and DEB. BRENDA and HOLLY greet them in unison.)

BRENDA & HOLLY. Welcome to Delta Pi Sigma. "Enter of your own free will and all your dreams will be fulfilled." (*They step back allowing JANET, TONYA and DEB to cross the threshold.*)

JANET (*with a firm handshake*). Hello, I'm Janet Overmeyer. This is Tonya Brown and Deb Sweeny.

BRENDA. Brenda.

HOLLY. Holly. (*Coldly toying; eyes on DEB.*) And what are you desperately seeking?

DEB. Boys!

(No response.)

JANET. No, no, she's just kidding.

HOLLY (*with a forced smile*). Oh, you are so funny.

JANET (*holding the flyer*). We got your invitation. I just want to say how lucky I feel to be invited. My great-grandmother belonged to the sorority located in this very house back in the 1920s.

BRENDA (*faking enthusiasm*). Almost a legacy? How nice.

TONYA. Listen, there's a really freaky dude out there following us.

JANET. Tonya, not now.

TONYA. This is serious, he's right out there. (*She points outside. BRENDA looks.*)

BRENDA. I don't see anyone.

TONYA. Well, he was there, wasn't he?

DEB. Don't mind her. She's never seen a man before. It was a new experience.

TONYA. Gimme a break, you guys! You totally saw him. He was pushing a shopping cart! He had a mask!

HOLLY. Loony bin.

TONYA. What?

BRENDA. Mental health facility up on the hill. Or it used to be—until the state shut it down. Just because they're sick in the head doesn't mean they get a free ride in this country.

JANET (*chiming in*). Less government, fewer taxes. Pure Reaganomics.

TONYA. Are you kidding me? There's lunatics wandering around!

HOLLY (*sweetly*). Don't worry, be happy. Go on in and enjoy the party.

(*JANET pulls TONYA and DEB toward the party, trying to cover her embarrassment.*)

JANET. Thank you so very much. It's very nice meeting you.

(As soon as the three girls turn their backs, BRENDA's and HOLLY's smiles fade.)

BRENDA. I wonder what Mrs. B will think of them?

HOLLY. Who cares. They're ours to play with 'til midnight.

(Their smiles come back as the doorbell rings and they answer it.)

BRENDA & HOLLY. "Welcome to Delta Pi Sigma. Enter of your own free will and all your dreams will be fulfilled."

(Across the room, JANET moves in close to TONYA.)

JANET. Tonya, what were you doing back there? Don't embarrass me.

TONYA. That guy was following us!

JANET. Well, not anymore.

DEB. Helllllo, Tiger...

(They follow her gaze to an approaching boy, GREG. He carries a tray with cups of punch.)

DEB *(cont'd)*. I mean he's no Sean Penn, but he's got a nice ass.

TONYA. Oh my God! That's Greg Walakowsky. He's in my trig class. Oh my God. He's such a fox! *(She checks*

herself, suddenly panicking, turning to DEB.) Do I look okay? I can't tell. There's no mirrors anywhere in here. Oh, God, here he comes!

(Time stands still for TONYA as she sees him approaching. They seem to glide toward each other [maybe having stepped onto wheeled platforms, they actually do glide, pushed by girls obscured by the bottom of the letterbox].)

GREG extends the tray of drinks. Grins with a mouth full of fake fangs. TONYA doesn't move.)

GREG *(garbled)*. Would you like some punch?

JANET. What?

GREG. Oh. *(Removing and showing her the fake plastic fangs.)* Sorry, fangs.

TONYA *(pointing at her headgear)*. Sorry, nightguard.

(A sweetly awkward moment.)

GREG. Would you like some punch? *(TONYA stands frozen. Kismet.)* Hey, I know you.

TONYA. You do? I mean, yeah, you do. Do you?

GREG. Trig class, right? Tawanda?

TONYA. Tonya.

GREG. Tonya, right. *(Awkward pause.)* Do you...

TONYA *(at the same time)*. Are you...

GREG. Go ahead.

TONYA. No, you go.

(There's something really nice between them.)