BUNNY EAR

A comedy in one act
by
Bradley Hayward

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haywardb@hotmail.com

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SYNOPSIS

Two loyal shoelaces come together on a boy's shoe to help him face a gang of bullies at school. They quickly discover that getting tangled up in life is just part of learning how to stand tall.

CHARACTERS

(2 actors, any gender)

LEFT.....The left end of a teenager's shoelace, any age.

RIGHT.....The right end of a teenager's shoelace, any age.

SETTING

A bare stage.

RUNNING TIME

10 minutes.

PRODUCTION NOTES

LEFT and RIGHT may be portrayed by actors of any age and gender. They belong to the shoe of an unseen character named Jason, but feel free to change his name to a female one. Several bullies are also mentioned by name, and feel free to change those names as well.

(AT RISE: LEFT and RIGHT stand side-by-side, connected at the waist by a long shoelace. Their shoulders are limp and their heads hang downward. Suddenly, a violent yank pulls them upward and they snap to attention.)

LEFT
(Panicked)
Quick! They're coming!

RIGHT
(Breathless)
Whoa! Careful, kid! I just polished my aglet!

LEFT
He's pulling too fast. Look at his fingers. He's shaking. The loop is crooked!

RIGHT
Of course he's shaking. You hear those footsteps down the hall? That's Tyler and Patrick. And trust me, they aren't coming over to compare notes on state capitals.

LEFT
(Reciting firmly)
"Over, under, around and through. Build a tree, for the bunny to do." It's four simple steps.

RIGHT
He's not a little kid anymore. Why are you're still building imaginary trees on his footwear? Just double-knot us and run!

LEFT
We don't double-knot. Double knots mess up the tension. It creates a jam. You know Jason can't handle the jam!

RIGHT
You know what else he can't handle? Getting shoved into a locker! Which is currently scheduled for 8:14 AM because of your refusal to be tied like a normal teenager!

LEFT
The rhyme keeps him safe. It makes the noise in his head stop.

RIGHT
Well, the rhyme is making the noise in their heads louder.

(A sudden violent jerk forces LEFT and RIGHT to collide, as Jason tries to execute the knot at light speed. They twist around each other throughout the following. The struggle is real.)

LEFT
"Around the tree, through the hole..."

RIGHT
(Gasps)
He missed the hole! We're going to trip him. We're literally hanging on by a thread!

LEFT
Hold on to me!

RIGHT
I don't want to hold on to you! You're the side that always gets untied!

LEFT
Only when you pull away! Just don't snap! He's trying so hard!

RIGHT
Trying hard doesn't stop the pavement from hitting his face. Remember third grade? The dodgeball tournament?

LEFT
(Winces)
We don't talk about third grade.

RIGHT
You botched the cross-over! He took one step, flew like a bird with a broken wing, and face planted right into the gym floor. Teeth through the lip. Blood on the hardwood. And who took the blame? Me! I was dragged through the slush for a week!

LEFT
It wasn't a botch, it was an overwhelming sensory input. The whistles were blowing, the kids were screaming, the fluorescent lights were humming. He couldn't count the loops.

RIGHT
Other kids' laces are tucked neatly inside their shoes. Smooth and invisible. But us? We're out here performing full-blown puppet theatre!

LEFT
It’s not puppet theatre. It’s a sequence. Sequences bring order.

RIGHT
Tell that to middle school. Remember the cafeteria hallway in seventh grade? When Dennis Peet stepped on my tail on purpose, just to watch Jason freeze up?

LEFT
I remember. Jason stood there for two minutes, completely paralyzed because his right lace was pinned and his left lace was free. His whole world went out of balance.

RIGHT
And Dennis just stood there laughing. “Look, the bunny lost its ear!”

LEFT
But Jason didn’t cry. He looked down, and he whispered the rhyme. Verse by verse. Step by step. He built the tree. He made the loop. He pulled it through. And then he walked away with his head held high.

RIGHT
He walked straight into the nurse’s office to spend lunch alone.

(The tension between them sharpens dramatically as Jason pulls them tightly together into a trembling knot.)

RIGHT
(Choking)
Gah! He’s yanking too hard! He’s gonna snap my core!

LEFT
Don’t break! If you break, he falls!

RIGHT
I’m frayed! Ever since the puddle incident in October, my weave hasn’t been the same!

LEFT
Then hang on to me! We’re part of the same lace. If he falls, we both hit the mud.

RIGHT
(Panic rising)
He’s doing it again! His hands are flying! He’s skipping steps!

LEFT
Jason, slow down. “Once upon a time, a little bunny grew...”

RIGHT
Forget the poem! Just make a knot! Any knot! A clump! A tangle!

LEFT
(Louder)
“...He made a big tree, proud and true! He ran around the tree, oh so quick...”

RIGHT
He’s not running around the tree, he’s strangling it! He crossed us backwards!

LEFT
“...And popped through the hole with a bunny ear trick.”

(There’s another sudden jerk. But instead of forming a symmetrical bow, LEFT and RIGHT collapse into a disastrous, twisted heap on the floor.)

RIGHT
Oh, great. Fantastic. Bravo. What is this? This isn’t a bunny ear. This is a crime scene!

LEFT
(Upside down)
Wait, where’s my loop? Why are you in my loop?!

RIGHT
Because he panicked. He shoved my aglet through your underpass. We’re inverted. We’re a disaster!

LEFT
(Desperately tries to adjust)
No, no, no! He can fix it. He just needs to untangle it --

RIGHT
There’s no time to untangle it! Hear that? Heavy sneakers on linoleum! Tyler and Patrick are right around the corner!

(They are suddenly lifted to their feet. Still tangled, they shuffle across the stage, holding onto each other for dear life.)

RIGHT
HE’S RUNNING ON IT! HE’S RUNNING ON THE BAD KNOT!

LEFT
STAY TIGHT! DON’T SLIP!

RIGHT
I can’t stay tight! I’m half-looped! Every step he takes is pulling me looser!

LEFT
Just four more steps, Jason! Just make it to the stairwell!

RIGHT
Four more steps?! We’re not going to make it one!

(The tension between them gives way. RIGHT slips completely free of the knot, flailing in the air, while LEFT falls in the other direction.)

RIGHT
I’M OUT! I’M UNTIED!

LEFT

WE’RE GOING DOWN!

RIGHT
Mayday! Mayday! Aglet down! I think I have a stress fracture!

LEFT
Jason! Are you okay, Jason?!

RIGHT
Bruised knee, bruised pride, but he’s okay. But look --

(He points toward the stairwell.)

LEFT
(Gasps)
Oh no...!

RIGHT
Is that... his left shoe?!

LEFT
It’s off his foot!

RIGHT
Rolling toward the stairwell!

LEFT
Look at it go!

RIGHT
Tumbling like a Nike acrobat!

LEFT/RIGHT
Swoosh!

LEFT
HOLD ON TO THE EDGE!

RIGHT
It’s not holding on to anything! It’s airborne! Direct flight to the basement landing!

(In slow motion, their heads lift up and down together as they watch the other shoe hit each step on the way down the stairwell. Once it hits the bottom, they groan.)

LEFT
(Whispers)
It’s... it’s all the way at the bottom.

RIGHT
(Covers his eyes)
I can’t look.

LEFT
And Jason. He looks so small, with one blue sock on the cold concrete.

RIGHT
Tyler and Patrick are at the top of the stairs, aren’t they?

LEFT
(Looks up)
Yeah. And of course they’re laughing.

RIGHT
He’s not gonna run anymore, is he?

LEFT
He can’t. You can’t outrun anything with one shoe.

(He turns away, trying not to cry. He sniffles and wipes away a tear. RIGHT uncovers his eyes and gently puts his hand on LEFT’s shoulder.)

RIGHT
Hey...

LEFT
Yeah?

RIGHT
Your loop... it’s still holding a little bit of the tree.

LEFT
(Now sobbing)
It’s crooked. It’s useless.

RIGHT
But it’s still here. Nudge over.

LEFT
What?

RIGHT
Nudge over. Wrap your tail around mine. If he’s gonna sit on these stairs, we’re gonna give him something solid to hold onto.

(He holds out a gentle fist. LEFT looks at it for a second, nudges over, then gently bumps RIGHT's fist. They look up, together.)

LEFT
His fingers are freezing.

RIGHT
Shaking like leaves.

LEFT
(Gently)
It’s okay, Jason. Take a breath. One big, slow one.

RIGHT
Tell him to do the balloon thing his doctor taught him. In for four, hold for four, out for four. Come on, kid. Fill the balloon.

(Together, they inhale for four seconds, hold the breath for four seconds, and exhale for four seconds.)

LEFT
(Relieved)
That’s it. Ease the pressure. Easy does it.

RIGHT
We’ve got all the time in the world now. The other shoe is at the bottom of the Grand Canyon anyway.

LEFT
(Looks at RIGHT, warmly)
Thank you for staying close.

RIGHT
(Laughs)
We’re kinda stuck with each other. Besides, somebody has to keep track of the tangles.

END OF PREVIEW

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