

THE MIRACULOUS DAY QUARTET

A ten minute play

By

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

- JIM - Neat and a bit prissy. Always tried to control his environment. When things went out of control, (such as mismatched socks) well, so did he. Worked in management, lived a solitary existence in his brownstone and saved his money. 30's
- SANDY - Sweet, earnest, young thing, new to the city and cohabitation with her slacker boyfriend. Was working her way through the business world as an intern in a tall office building, she used to like the view from the window next to the fax machine. 20's
- DENISE - A high maintenance, low powered executive from the West Coast, she faced a unique moral dilemma after her employee made a minor mistake. Now Denise has to deal with the realization her only claim to fame is simply for being late. 40's
- DAMON - He used to be secure in his life's purpose but has since been set adrift, cursed to wander the world forever, with no place to go. Did he truly pray too long or was a change of heart behind his lateness? Ageless.
- CONDUCTOR - Brings a seamless story together through direction of the characters, as if each person was a different instrument in a concert. Has utter disdain for Damon 50's

Synopsis: Four people who were late to where they needed to be on a significant day in history, blend their individual stories, as if they are instruments in a cosmic musical quartet.

The Miraculous Day Quartet - Prologue

SETTING: Bare stage with the exception of five music stands, four facing the audience, one downstage center facing away from the audience: the Conductor's stand.

Enter JIM, DENISE, SANDY and DAMON one by one, dressed in philharmonic orchestra garb.

The actors begin to vocally "warm-up" simultaneously, using their monologues below to create a cacophony of sound, much like an orchestra warming up.

After a moment, the Conductor enters and takes his place at his music stand.

The Conductor taps his baton. He "conducts" each monologue.

JIM

I screwed up. I was late. But it wasn't my fault. My alarm didn't go off. Or I hit the snooze button. Or was it the cat? I rolled out of bed and looked at the clock and went cold inside. I'm never late-ever in my career. They could always depend on me. I even bring extra pens and paper. And here I was, my heart pounding and without two matching socks, and where were those shoes and the shirt didn't come back from the cleaners. My God. The key wouldn't leave the door. My brownstone was holding me hostage.

Pause. The Conductor turns to SANDY.

SANDY

I really screwed up. Wayyy late. But it wasn't my fault.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Greg wouldn't get off me and...well, though I kept saying I had to get up to go to work, he knew I didn't mean it. And pretty soon, I didn't mean it too. I decided what the hell, it won't kill them this one time. I'm never late. I had to be at that desk, but I wasn't. Somebody took my place at the fax machine. The one by the window. I hope it wasn't Cheryl.

Pause. The Conductor turns to DAMON.

DAMON

Do not ask. I was too late. I'm never late. It was a conspiracy. Why didn't they get me? I was on the corner like they said. Like he said, "Be on the corner and don't be late." Only I was late. There was the light in the sky and I remembered when I was young and praying to the east and peeking to see my first spark of sunrise, though I wasn't supposed to peek. I said my prayers that morning...

Pause. The Conductor turns to DENISE.

DENISE

I screwed up. I was so late. But it wasn't my fault. I couldn't believe that idiot of an assistant wrote down 8:15 a.m. instead of 7:45. I ran through the terminal, my heels aflame...my assistant was out to get me. And those idiots at the counter wouldn't hold the plane. Don't they know who I am? I have to be on that plane. I stood there at the terminal window and just watched it go. I was gonna kill that kid when I got back to L.A.

Pause.

THE MIRACULOUS DAY QUARTET

The Conductor turns to the Sound Booth and "conducts" the music to begin - "The Bells Of St. Genevieve" by Mann Marais.

After a moment of the music playing, the Conductor turns to the actors, and conducts...

JIM
I screwed up.

SANDY
I really screwed up.

DENISE
Me too.

DAMON
Do not ask.

JIM
I was late.

SANDY
Wayyy late.

DENISE
So late.

DAMON
Too late.

Pause. The Conductor conducts the next moment.

ALL (Except DAMON)
But it wasn't my fault.

JIM
My alarm didn't go off. Or I hit the snooze button. Or was it the cat?

SANDY
Greg wouldn't get off me and... well, though I kept saying I had to get up to go to work, he knew I didn't mean it. And pretty soon I knew I didn't mean it too. I -

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DENISE

I couldn't believe that idiot of an assistant wrote down 8:15 a.m. instead of 7:45.

SANDY

I -

JIM

Rolled out of bed and looked at the clock and went cold inside. I --

DENISE

Ran through the terminal, my heels aflame --

JIM

I --

SANDY

--Decided what the hell, it won't kill them this one time. I'm never late.

DAMON

Never late.

JIM

--Ever in my career. They could always depend on me. I even bring extra pens and paper .. and here I was, my heart pounding and without two matching socks, and where were those shoes and the shirt didn't come back from the cleaners. My God. The key wouldn't leave the door. My Brownstone was holding me hostage.

DAMON

It was a conspiracy.

DENISE

My assistant was out to get me.

DAMON

Get me. Why didn't they get me? I was on the corner like they said. Like he said. Be on the corner and don't be late. Only I was late. There was the light in the sky and I remembered when I was young and praying to the east and peeking to see the first spark of sunrise, though I wasn't supposed to peek...

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DAMON (CONT'D)

I said my prayers that morning,
the last prayers of my little
unworthy life, hoping for the glory
of being one with the sacred flame
of sacrifice. I fasted for two days
before... to be clean.. to be
ready... to be saved.

SANDY

Saved.

JIM

All my life, I saved.

DENISE

And those idiots at the counter
wouldn't hold the plane. Don't
they know who I am? I have to be
on that plane.

SANDY

I had to be at that desk--

JIM

--At the meeting. But I wasn't.

SANDY

I wasn't.

DAMON

I wasn't.

DENISE

I stood there at the terminal
window and watched it go. I was
going to kill that kid when I got
back to L.A.

JIM

I rounded the corner just in time
to see the first one hit.

*Pause. Music plays for a few measures.
The Conductor turns back to JIM.*

JIM (CONT'D)

I stepped back and stumbled on the
curb. Sat down hard and ripped my
good pants. A woman fell down
beside me and stared at my socks,
one black, one blue.

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SANDY

Somebody took my place at the fax machine. The one by the window. Hope it wasn't Cheryl.

Pause. The Conductor conducts the Sound Booth to raise the volume of the music for a few measures, then slowly bring it back down to normal.

DENISE

So should I fire Teddy or give him a bonus? I don't like to reward bad behavior.

JIM

I should have been there. They counted on me.

SANDY

There are other jobs. Maybe in another town.

DENISE

I don't want to be one of those stories. You know. The lady who missed the plane... I don't want to be her.

DAMON

So what to do now?

JIM

I don't want to do anything.... just go home and sit.

SANDY

Spend a month in Greg's arms. Or go home. I mean really go home. See the family.

Pause as SANDY exits. The Conductor turns to JIM.

JIM

See my sister. Hug her kids.

Pause as JIM exits. The Conductor turns to DAMON.

DAMON

See the U.S.A.?

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Pause. The Conductor turns to DENISE.

DENISE

See my therapist.

(DENISE gives Damon a look of anger and disgust, then exits.

DAMON is stunned, then angry. He turns to the Conductor. They lock eyes. The Conductor puts down his baton as the music continues. The Conductor exits, leaving DAMON alone onstage. He stares at the audience members, one by one.

DAMON

It's a miracle. A cursed miracle.

We hear the plane fly overhead. It is very loud. DAMON looks up and follows it with his eyes. There is screaming and cursing as we hear people watch the first plane fly into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

DAMON drops to his knees as...

We hear the horrifying crash of the plane flying into the building.

BLACKOUT.

(The sounds of the aftereffects of the attack slowly fade out.)