



MONOLOGUES

This monologue is from a Stage Partners play, free to read in full at yourstagepartners.com.

No Substitutes by Don Zolidis

Vanna is a student in a class that is being used to try out new potential substitute teachers. Various wildly unsuitable candidates have been coming and going each day, but on the day a clown walks through the door, Vanna snaps. Why? She'll tell you why. It began with a fateful sixth birthday party...

VANNA

Let me finish my story, clown.

(VANNA goes to a dark place. Perhaps she even stands in a spotlight.)

It was a princess party. The sun was angry that day. Hot as an oven—I was dressed as Ariel, everyone else was dressed as Belle. The cake was Cinderella's castle—white frosting, topped with a plastic figurine of Cinderella and her prince, their poorly painted little faces frozen in an expression of alarm or joy, no one could tell which.

And then came the clown: Boo Boo. He had his usual clown tricks. Oversize shoes. A buzzer handshake. The squirting flower in the lapel. Behind his white makeup I could see his vacant grey eyes—I loathed Boo Boo on sight.

But we managed. Ariel and seven Belles, sweating and chanting—humoring this dead-eyed clown.

My brother, however, had other designs. He was five years older and had a pet python named Gus—Gus was eight feet long and sweet as a kitten, but my brother loved bringing him out to terrify us.

My brother looped the python in his arms and crept into the party, right behind Boo Boo. And then, as the clown turned, Gus was right in front of him. His clown mouth, painted red like a fire engine, opened in shock, all his little clown tricks firing. Water squirting from his flower as he reached out and grabbed the python.

(It's hard for VANNA to go on.)

The electric shock from the buzzer in his hand, combined with the water... ignited the snake. Smoke shot from Gus's eyeballs... My brother reeled back and flung the sparking python into the air...where he struck the ceiling fan—on its highest setting due to the heat.

Gus...exploded. Flaming chunks of snake, propelled by the ceiling fan, arced into the living room like debris from a mortar shell. Blood rained down upon eight screaming princesses, and I looked with horror—

To the kitchen—where Gus's severed head landed with a plop...on my birthday cake—crushing Cinderella and her prince, setting the trick candles—ablaze.



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I heard Boo Boo's faltering voice... "Happy Birthday to you..." as my friends, their yellow dresses now speckled red with snake blood, fled. Two of them broke through a window, another rammed into the front door—one of my friends hurled herself into our large aquarium.

You don't come back from that.

We moved cities. Changed identities. Started a new life.

And that's why I do not prefer the company...of clowns.

NO SUBSTITUTES by Don Zolidis

Length: 30-35 minutes

Cast Size: 8-25+ actors (suggested casting: 16 any)

Genre: Comedy

Synopsis: It's usually a pretty low-key day when you get a substitute teacher, but not so for Miss Florence's class. The "cool" assistant principal is using them as guinea pigs to try out a series of new prospective subs, from a wannabe inspirational teacher, to a conspiracy theorist, to a border collie. It's almost enough to make you want to quietly finish your work! You never know who's going to show up next in this outrageous comedy full of larger-than-life characters.

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