

Mask of Thorns

A Play in One Act

By

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Cast of Characters

Charlotte:

Mid-thirties. She is a single mother and wears it with pride. Divorced and single. Like any good mother, she loves her son and will do anything for him. She is a member of the St. Thérèse of Lisieux School PTA.

Theodore:

Upper-thirties. He is the ex-husband of Charlotte. He visits his son when he can, but is active in his child's life. He is a gifted artist, specializing in painting and drafting.

Mrs. Travis:

Mid-Twenties. Like any good teacher, she is overworked and underpaid.

Scene

Second grade classroom at St. Thérèse of Lisieux Elementary school.

Time

2:45pm on a sunny Friday afternoon in springtime during the school's Spring festival.

At Rise:

CHARLOTTE is standing still looking for someone. Two rows of three lift lid desks are set center stage. Each desk has a colored drawing except one. The teacher's desk sitting on the right side of the stage with two adult sized chairs in front of the teacher's desk. The audience is the windows showing the school fair. She is smoking in the classroom, blowing smoke out the window. The back of the stage holds a wall that displays the student's classwork. The school fair is going on right outside the school building. Kids, families, teachers and school staff are enjoying the fair. Theodore enters the classroom. Light carnival music is playing.

THEODORE
(sees CHARLOTTE and pauses. Closes the door behind him.)

CHARLOTTE
(Stoic and still)
Why I am not surprised that you are late again.

THEODORE
(Walking to center stage)
Hello to you too Charlie.

CHARLOTTE
(Unmoving)
Don't call me that. You do not get to call me that anymore.

THEODORE
Sorry, sorry. Old habits.

CHARLOTTE
(Silent)

(THEODORE waits for a reply while CHARLOTTE continues smoking. Her eyes still searching.)

THEODORE
You know that you are not allowed to smoke here right?

CHARLOTTE
(Still silent)

(THEODORE quietly scoffs at CHARLOTTE and paces around the desks, examining them as he passes. Eventually, he stops at a random desk and reads.)

THEODORE
(Chuckling)
"When I grow up, I want to be loved by my family, friends and strangers by Brittany Knox"... that is a future stripper for sure.

CHARLOTTE
We all know you have a lot of experience with them.

THEODORE

That was a year ago Charlie. She was a nude model. I knew her from several other colleagues.

CHARLOTTE

I still cannot believe you did that.

THEODORE

Well get over it. We were already divorced. Just because you cannot get over it does not mean I shouldn't.

CHARLOTTE

(turns silent and resumes smoking while THEODORE lumbers around the classroom. CHARLOTTE eventually breaks the long silence)

I don't think our son is at the fair.

THEODORE

Of course he's there. He is probably with his friends loading up on junk food. I thought he would be here with you.

(THEODORE notices an empty desk and awkwardly sits on the chair and opens the lid of the desk. CHARLOTTE finally turns to face him as he goes through it.)

CHARLOTTE

What the hell are you doing?

THEODORE

I am looking through our son's desk.

CHARLOTTE

(Walking over)

How do you know that it's his?

THEODORE

All the other students have drawings with their names on the desk. This one doesn't.

(CHARLOTTE and THEODORE examine papers found inside.)

CHARLOTTE

This is his handwriting...

THEODORE

The hell is this?

(THEODORE pulls out a small, thin shaped piece of plastic.)

CHARLOTTE

(Taking the item to examine it.)

It looks an EpiPen...

THEODORE

Daniel is not allergic to anything though.

CHARLOTTE

No, he's not... Did he take this from someone?

(The classroom door slowly opens and MRS. TRAVIS slowly enters the classroom. She is carrying a big load of papers. She drops a significant amount. CHARLOTTE rushes over to help her while THEODORE frantically shoves the EpiPen and the papers back into his son's desk.)

MRS. TRAVIS

Thank you. Thank you. I am so sorry I'm late. You must be Daniel's parents?

CHARLOTTE

Yes, Charlotte and Theodore.

MRS. TRAVIS

(Walks over to her desk and sets the papers down.)

Good. I am glad you are both here. Please take a seat.

(CHARLOTTE and THEODORE seat in front of the desk while MRS. TRAVIS sits on her own desk chair.)

MRS. TRAVIS

Daniel is a smart, bright, good kid. Lately, the other kids have gotten wind of his parents not being together.

THEODORE

Do not look at me like that Charlie. That is just like you to blame it all on me.