

# **HORRIBLE: THE MAYFLY'S LIFE**

A ten-minute play written by

Sean Abley

CONTACT:

Sean Abley  
5724 Hollywood Blvd.  
Suite 109  
Los Angeles, CA 90028

213-804-2401  
[seanabley@darkbluefilms.com](mailto:seanabley@darkbluefilms.com)

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

MAYFLY, an innocent born into a cruel, uncaring world.

EVERYONE ELSE (preferably played by one actor/actress)

NOTE: This play was written as a quick-change piece without the quick changes. The “Everyone Else” actor/actress would ideally convey each character with a change of voice and physicality.

The staging can be done very simply on a unit set with several entrances, two or three chairs, and a podium. Pace is important – lightning fast is preferable to highlight the absurdity of the action.

(LIGHTS UP.

*A PREGNANT WOMAN'S legs, raised in the air in preparation for giving birth, stick out from the wings on a table. We hear her.)*

PREGNANT WOMAN. (*Off:*) Oh, God! Get this thing out of me!  
Motherfuckershiteatingsonofbitchfucker!! AAAAAHHHHHHHHH!

*(MAYFLY pops out from between her legs and flops on the floor. There is a brief moment of calm, as if this were an aside.)*

MAYFLY. Wait...I've been here before...

*(MAYFLY reverts to the infant he is, suddenly crying like a newborn baby, and the scene jumpstarts. The PREGNANT WOMAN's legs drop onto the table, dead. The legs disappear offstage. A DOCTOR enters, wearing a stethoscope and carrying a clipboard.)*

DOCTOR. (*Ignoring Mayfly's cries, puts the stethoscope to his chest.*) It isn't crying!  
Oh, I forgot to slap it. (*Viciously slaps Mayfly across the face several times.*)

MAYFLY. Stop!!

DOCTOR. (*Reading clipboard:*) Mother's condition: A) conscious, B) unconscious, C)...  
(*Checks off:*)...dead. Your mother died during childbirth. Good job, you worthless cell  
mass! Not even a minute old and you've already killed someone!

MAYFLY. But...

DOCTOR. (*Realizing:*) You murdered her! Murderer! (*Shouting to the heavens:*)  
MURDERER!! I'VE FOUND THE MURDERER!!

MAYFLY. I didn't murder her!

DOCTOR. Stay away from me! You're trying to kill me, too! SERIAL KILLER!!  
There's a serial killer in the hospital!! (*She runs off, panicked.*)

MAYFLY. I swear, I didn't mean to! Maybe she had a faulty vaginal canal!

*(NUN enters.)*

NUN. Why aren't you in school?

MAYFLY. Oh, Sister, well, I...am I supposed to be in school already?

NUN. Young man, you're almost two minutes old! Of course you're supposed to be in school! Now sit down in your chair, open your book and recite the capital cities of each state in reverse alphabetical order.

*(MAYFLY moves over to a chair.)*

MAYFLY. Oh, God, I don't think I have a book ---

NUN. Did you just use the Lord's name in vain? Praise Jesus right this instant, or the fires of Hell will leap forth to consume you! Do it, blasphemer!

MAYFLY. Praise Jesus?

NUN. Exalt his holy name! *(Trying to keep her feet off the hot floor:)* I can feel the Hell fire burning up thru the gymnasium! Make your peace with Jesus or suffer eternal damnation!! Ow! Ouch! Hot! *(She skitters off, trying to keep her feet from burning.)* Praise him, goddammit!

MAYFLY. Uh, Jesus is good. I like Jesus. Jesus, you are like my best friend who never wants to borrow money and you totally like animals, and, uh, if you were a flavor you'd totally have "X-treme" as an adjective to describe you...

DOCTOR. *(Off:)* There he is! The serial murderer!

*(COP enters holding a gun.)*

COP. Are you the child of that dead woman back in the hospital?

MAYFLY. Yes...

*(COP beats MAYFLY across the face with the butt of the gun, knocking him to the floor.)*

COP. You resist arrest one more time, and I'll blow your fucking head off. I don't care if you are two minutes old! Now get on your feet.

*(MAYFLY stands up.)*

COP. I said sit down!

*(MAYFLY sits down on a chair.)*

COP. You wait here until the judge gets back from lunch so you can find out what your sentence is gonna be. Spoiler: You're getting' the chair, murderer! *(She exits.)*

MAYFLY. But I have a chair...

*(JUDGE enters.)*

JUDGE. All rise.

*(MAYFLY rises.)*

JUDGE. Murderer, if you don't take your seat, you will be found in contempt of this court.

*(MAYFLY sits.)*

JUDGE. In the case of You, The Murderer vs. the State of Everywhere, this court sentences you to death by the electric chair.

*(MAYFLY is silent with shock.)*

JUDGE. I said I'm sentencing you to death by electric chair. Aren't you shocked? Terrified? Don't you want to beg me for your life? Wait...did someone spoil the surprise already? Is that why you're not saying anything? Because you already knew?

*(MAYFLY shrugs.)*

JUDGE. Great. My one joy in life, and someone has to shit all over it. This court is adjour—

MAYFLY. But I'm only 3 minutes old!

JUDGE. What? You're only 3 minutes old?

MAYFLY. Yes, your honor.

JUDGE. Are you fucking kidding me? You're a minor?!

MAYFLY. Yes, your honor.

JUDGE. Great. Now we have to have a big, fat do over. Okay, in the case of You, The Murderer vs. the State of Everywhere, this court sentences you to a juvenile detention center until your fourth minute birthday. This court is adjourned.

*(JUDGE exits.)*

MAYFLY. This is going horribly.

PRISON WARDEN (*Off:*) Get in your cell! Lights out!

*(MAYFLY moves into his cell and sits.)*

MAYFLY. This is madness. I feel like I can't get my bearings. It's like I'm on a sailboat wearing roller skates playing "Pin the Tail on the Donkey" in a hurricane. This is all so familiar, and yet I have nothing I can use, nothing at my fingertips, to keep the world from spinning out from under my feet. *(Takes a breath.)* Breathe. Deep. Think. Or don't. Instead of bracing against the tide, relax and let it take you with it. You are fluid. You are sanity. You are of the Earth.

*(PRISONER enters.)*

PRISONER. And now you're gonna get raped.

*(PRISONER backhands MAYFLY so hard, he falls off his chair and lands face down, ass up.)*

PRISONER. *(Unbuckling belt.)* You're gonna wanna relax. Cuz if I have to punch you in the kidneys to keep you quiet? You're gonna be pissin' blood. And no matter how you slice it, that's inconvenient. Get up! I don't want no one watching our private romantic business!

*(PRISONER yanks MAYFLY to his feet and drags him behind a wall so that we can only see MAYFLY from about the waist up as he bends over. PRISONER noisily rapes him from behind, heard but unseen by the audience.)*

PRISONER. *(Off:)* Yeah! Take it! That's right! You love it! You love it! You love to murder and get raped!! Oh, God, this is it! AHHHHHHHHH!!!!

*(PRISONER climaxes, then shoves MAYFLY away. MAYFLY stumbles to his cell.)*

PRISONER. *(Off:)* Get out!

MAYFLY. *(Praying:)* Dear Jesus. How are you? I am fine. If you could let just one good thing happen to me, I promise I will believe in you forever and ever. Amen.

PRISON WARDEN. *(Off:)* Okay, murderer! You're minute is up! You're a free man.

MAYFLY. *(To the Heavens:)* Thank you!

*(SOLDIER enters.)*

SOLDIER. And now you're off to the front lines! Drop and give me a billion!

*(MAYFLY drops and starts doing pushups.)*

MAYFLY. Do I have to join the military? I think, maybe, I might be anti-war. Or pro-peace, or something. Something that doesn't involve getting shot. Or getting shot less.

SOLDIER. You're five minutes old and you have a criminal record, boy! You're good for two things – digging ditches, and killing the people we bury in those ditches! You're going to redeem yourself by being a patriot for two minutes and kicking the enemy's assholes inside out! *(Sees something in the distance. Quickly hands Mayfly a big knife.)* Holy shit, this is it, boy! Get up and face that enemy head on! Go! Go! Go! *(Races off to fight the enemy.)*

MAYFLY. But they're not my enemy! I don't even know them!

*(MAYFLY runs offstage to fight the enemy. We HEAR fighting, then the ENEMY staggers across the stage, having been stabbed in the stomach. MAYFLY enters, horrified at what he's done, as the ENEMY staggers off the opposite side to die offstage.)*

MAYFLY. *(Shouting to the Heavens.)* Question! I have a question! Why is this murder okay again?

*(PROTESTOR enters.)*

PROTESTOR. What makes you think it is, man? How do you justify the slaughter of innocent people?

MAYFLY. I was told I was being patriotic. Because they're the enemy...

PROTESTOR. And what makes them the enemy? What criteria do you use to mark someone "bad" or "villainous"? How they talk? Their politics? What they wear? Why not just say, "People who wear hats are the enemy"? Why not murder me?

MAYFLY. Um, okay...

PROTESTOR. *(Sees something in the distance. Starts running off. Shouts back:)* Shit, bacon wagon! Patriotism is the virtue of the vicious! Used as a weapon or a shield when reason fails The Man. *(Exits.)*

MAYFLY. "Reason." She said, "reason." I know this word. Noun. "The mental powers concerned with forming conclusions, judgments, or inferences." And, "a basis or cause, as for some belief, action, fact, or event." Reason. I'm seven minutes old. I have developed a sense of reason in order to discover the reason for this chain of events I call "My life."

*(SPLIT FOCUS – DOWN LEFT: PREGNANT WOMAN enters. She sees a bug on a chair. CENTER STAGE: MAYFLY reacts to the woman "above" him.)*

MAYFLY. My God...

PREGNANT WOMAN. Eeiw! (*Raises her hand to squash it.*)

MAYFLY. (*Reacting to the hand coming down from above.*) NOOOOO!

*(SPLIT FOCUS – DOWN LEFT: PREGNANT WOMAN squashes the bug on the chair. CENTER STAGE: MAYFLY crumples to the ground behind a block, squashed.*

*PREGNANT WOMAN suddenly goes into labor. She pants and puffs as she moves to CENTER STAGE, positioning herself on the block behind which MAYFLY was squashed, on her back with her head toward the audience, legs upstage. Her legs go in the air. She begins screaming in pain.)*

PREGNANT WOMAN. (*Screaming in pain:*) AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!

*(MAYFLY is once again birthed from between her legs. He pops out, flops to the ground. She dies. A moment of calm.)*

MAYFLY. I've been here before. Oh, God....

*(BLACKOUT.)*

THE END