



Fantastic Figments

A short one act comedy for a young cast
by
Barbara Hockley

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Fantastic Figments

The play is set in the dream landscape of our heroine LEX after she falls asleep whilst trying to write a short story for homework. The various aspects of her self (her mind, emotions, physical being) battle it out in dreamland to try and inspire the best story and impress it upon her when she awakes. LEX's 2 invisible guardians try and keep order

There are 15 speaking parts and you could easily add more characters (Researchers and Performers) if you wish.

Characters:

LEX - Our heroine. Lex has to write a story for homework (could be a lad)

ORPHILIA – One of Lex's invisible guardians and entrusted with the job of inspiring her

SPARKLE - Another invisible guardian (ditto)

PROF (PROF) – An aspect of Lex's mind

DOCTOR – Another aspect of Lex's mind

2 RESEARCHERS – Prof & Doc's workforce

SWEETIE – An element of Lex's romantic/dramatic nature

ARTIE – The artist in Lex

2 TROUBADORS - Aspects of the performer in Lex

SPEED -

PEP - } The physical, energetic aspects of Lex

LISSY - }

MUM – Lex's Mum

As the curtains open LEX is lying/sitting on her bed listening to her ipod, playing games, taking calls etc. She has a school book nearby. Her guardians ORPHILIA and SPARKLE sit on either side of the bed looking fairly bored. MUM approaches offstage.

MUM (Offstage) Lex!

Lex grabs her book and pen and looks as if she's writing. Mum enters. ORPHILIA and SPARKLE continue to look fairly bored throughout the conversation. They move nimbly out of the way should Mum stray into their path. Mum does not (and cannot) see them.

What are you doing dear? Dinner will be ready in half an hour.

LEX I'm doing homework Mum.....English We have to write a story

MUM *(sits on bed)* Really, what are you writing about?

LEX *(hiding book)* Oh ..errrm ... it's a fantasy story. It's going wellactually ... I'll tell you about it when I come down for dinner

MUM Sounds fascinating Lex. I'd better let you get on then!

LEX I'll be down in half an hour then ...

MUM *(scary voice – pretending to be an evil queen)* Would you like a bite of this nice shiny apple?

LEX What?

MUM Never mind – just thought it might inspire you *(laughs)*

ORPHILIA and SPARKLE exchange a knowing look (they know how hard it is to inspire Lex to write)

LEX Oh right. Of course. Down in a bit Mum.

MUM leaves. LEX goes back to doing nothing ... then reluctantly picks up the book again and sighs. She thinks.

SPARKLE *(whispers)* Orphilia, look. Something's happening.

ORPHILIA Why are you whispering?

SPARKLE Someone might hear us

ORPHILIA Like who? The only person who could hear us is Lex, and look at her. No chance. We're supposed to be her guardians, giving her inspiration and support.

SPARKLE We do our best and you never know, she might be storing all our inspiration and support for future use.

ORPHILIA You're such an optimist

SPARKLE That's what I do

ORPHILIA We might as well sink back into her subconscious and see if we can do anything there

SPARKLE I don't like it there, it's so crowded

LEX I know!*(starts to write)*

ORPHILIA What happened, did you do that?

SPARKLE Errr, maybe I did. What's she writing?

ORPHILIA Let's see *(reading)* "Henry is soooo cute" You inspired her to write that?

SPARKLE No, that wasn't me! Maybe she did it herself.

LEX is exhausted by the effort and slumps on the bed

ORPHILIA No, don't let her go to sleep! We need to get her to write a story before dinner.

SPARKLE Ok, Concentrate

*They close eyes and concentrate (humming is good)
LEX lifts her head, props it up & picks up her pen*

LEX Right. *(reading)* A story of your own choice in the fantasy genre....

ORPHILIA Oh, that should be easy. I have so many ideas about fantasy...

SPARKLE Lets get transmitting

They think hard again

SPARKLE Is it working?

ORPHILIA Not sure, keep going

LEX looks confused

LEX A story about kangaroos who live in a magic forest

ORPHILIA Was that you?

SPARKLE It was the first thing that came into my head

ORPHILIA Well, think again. In fact don't think at all. I have a better idea. A story about the dark underworld of the giant goblin spiders...

SPARKLE We should encourage her to write positive and jolly stories, not scary stuff

LEX Yep, kangaroos in the magic forest, I like that, it's...jolly.

SPARKLE looks smug, ORPHILIA is angry

LEX I wonder how it starts.....*(she picks up ipod, puts the book down and starts dancing on the bed)*

ORPHILIA Lost her again

SPARKLE For a while we were making a difference

ORPHILIA We gave her a few ideas

SPARKLE What shall we do now? *(ORPHILIA shrugs)* We shouldn't give up.

ORPHILIA We could do the dream body thing

SPARKLE She has to be asleep for that. And we'd have to time it really well, dinner is in half an hour.

ORPHILIA We could do it. I've made a study of these techniques. We get her just before

she slips into a deep sleep and pull her dream body out. Then we take her on a tour.

SPARKLE Of what?

ORPHILIA Herself

SPARKLE Which bits?

ORPHILIA Depends who's around at the time I suppose

SPARKLE And that inspires her to write a story?

ORPHILIA It might. Well, she might get in touch with parts of herself she didn't know existed.

SPARKLE There could be a real writer in there somewhere. Let's give it a try.

ORPHILIA And I get to do the song..... the one that sends her to sleep

SPARKLE Why you?

ORPHILIA It was my idea. When she falls asleep, you pull.

SPARKLE Ok

ORPHILIA sings a haunting song that lulls LEX to sleep. SPARKLE pulls her off the bed.

LEX Oh... Who are you? What are you doing in my bedroom?

SPARKLE I'm Sparkle

ORPHILIA I'm Orphilia. We're your guardians ...friends.

SPARKLE Helpers

ORPHILIA Messengers from the depths of your ...

LEX Ok, ok. I'm leaving, now.

SPARKLE No stay, we have things to show you.

LEX Is this a dream?

ORPHILIA No

SPARKLE Yes, it is

LEX Ok, cool

ORPHILIA Ok. It is a dream, well, sort of. Only it's a real dream and we're here to

introduce you to some inspirational aspects of yourself.

LEX Why?

SPARKLE So you can be inspired?

LEX Why?

ORPHILIA Because you have to write a story and we want to help!

LEX This isn't going to turn me into a geek is it?

ORPHILIA Hardly

LEX Because I know this girl in my class and she's so clever and it's really not cool

ORPHILIA I don't think you're in any danger

LEX Ok, could be fun then

SPARKLE Where shall we start

ORPHILIA Well, let's see who's about.

They wait, nothing happens. Then a sound starts – ticking, followed by mechanical sounds and people calling out numbers. Prof and Doc & the Research Assistants are busy taking notes. They have lab coats, clipboards and a large trolley full of equipment – the more things the better. When not speaking they tend to make observations, take measurements & write things on clipboards.

ORPHILIA Lex, meet the Professor

SPARKLE And Doc

ORPHILIA And their team of research assistants

LEX There are only 2

SPARKLE 2 what?

LEX Research assistants

ORPHILIA Your point being?

LEX A team of 2? Can you have a team of 2?

RA1 & 2 *(The Research assistants always speak in unison)* Two or more can be a team I think you'll find

RA1 & 2 Technically that is

LEX Oh, I see

RA1 & 2 We doubt it

LEX *(Offended)* Excuse me!

PROF *(Notices LEX)* Ah, good evening

DOCTOR *(Looks at watch)* Not quite Professor

PROF *(Checking his watch)* Are you sure?

DOCTOR Quite sure *(to RA1 & 2)* Are we in agreement?

RA1 & 2 *(check watches)* Agreed!

PROF I must check that

DOCTOR I think you'll find my calculations are correct

PROF You're right, my time-abulator must be out of phase

DOCTOR I'm usually right Professor

PROF *(To LEX)* Ah, Good afternoon

DOCTOR Actually Professor, I think you'll find it's now evening
(To RAs) Check?

RA1 & 2 *(looking at watches)* Check. The evening has now arrived, please alter your speech-apparating function accordingly.

PROF Good grief, this is terrible. I must take a few measurements, as a precaution

PROF starts to measure things and make notes, the RAs help

LEX *(To SPARKLE who shrugs)* What are they talking about? *(TO ORPHILIA who shrugs)* A precaution against what?

DOCTOR Cell degeneration. Happens when you least expect it. Got to keep the cells active you see

PROF Ah, that's better. I think I've caught up.

DOCTOR Synchronise *(they all check watches together)* 3 .. 2 ... 1 Check. Excellent. Perfect time.

LEX Great. I'm glad that's sorted. Now what about my story?

PROF/DOC Story?

LEX Yes, I have to write a story and you need to inspire me

DOCTOR Well, clearly the story must be about ... a man of science a Doctor a calculating man ...

PROF And a wise and learned Professor with all the knowledge of past ages at his disposal

RA1 & 2 A team of observant and devastatingly attractive research assistants

DOCTOR Together they account, compute, determine, divide and work out everything required to solve the mystery

LEX *(Interested)* What mystery?

DOCTOR The nature of the mystery is unimportant.

PROF Unnecessary complication

DOCTOR The important aspect of the story is the incredible brain power that the Doctor and the Professor unleash upon the problem.

PRF The way they approach the dilemma. The intensity of their thought processes.

RA1 & 2 The dynamic interaction of deductive reasoning and astute observation.

LEX But isn't the mystery the whole point of the story? The bit that makes it interesting?

PROF No

DOCTOR Absolutely not. Couldn't be further removed from the facts of the matter.

LEX So, what's my starting point?

DOCTOR Well, I would suggest the beginning. *(To OTHERS)* Do we concur?

PROF It is the only logical starting point.

RA1 & 2 We concur. To start at the end would be unreasonable on the reader

LEX Well, in that case, I'll start with the idea I've already had.

DOCTOR Which is what, exactly and precisely?

LEX It's about a race of kangaroos who live in a magic forest

PROF, DOCTOR, RA1 & 2 look at each other, raise eyebrows & start making calculations & notes

LEX What are you doing?

DOCTOR Calculating

LEX Calculating what?

PROF How tall are the kangaroos?

LEX I don't know ... 2 metres?

PROF 2 metres!

RA1 & 2 2 metres. Check.

DOCTOR Excellent. How long is the story?

LEX About 2 pages

RA1 & 2 In metres please

LEX Metres?

DOCTOR Of course. We need to calculate the height and the frequency of the average kangaroo jump

LEX Well, errr. I guess it might be about that long *(indicates with hands, RA1 & 2 immediately measure)* I don't really understand how this will help my story.

DOCTOR Your story clearly needs to have a sound basis in proven scientific therogs and all action must be derived from mathematical computagrams

LEX *(unsure)* Ok.....

*DOCTOR, PROF, RA1 & 2 set to work and continue to measure & take notes throughout the following. They measure, weight & list everything they can find in her room
SWEETIE enters dramatically. She is dressed in a romantic gypsy/fairy-like fashion – long flowing clothes, beads etc.*

SPARKLE Oh, look, here's Sweetie

SWEETIE Hello love, love, love, love, love....*(kisses SPARKLE & ORPHILIA on cheeks)*

LEX Who are you?

SWEETIE Oh, Sweetie!

LEX No, I'm Lex

SWEETIE Of course you are Sweetie. How you've grown...

ARTIE *(Runs on and makes an intensely important and emotional announcement)*
I've almost finished, this is going to be amazing ...my best work..... *(runs off)*

SWEETIE It will be amazing