

The Hero Squad
vs.
The Supervillain's Apprentice

By Will Ledesma

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DEDICATION

For Travis and Sherri—my two biggest fans—
and for Hannah, the one and only SSM. Thanks!!

STORY OF THE PLAY

The Hero Squad of Metro Valley, Iowa—a team comprised of superheroes 3-D, Lindy, Iron Lung, and Slapshot—are enjoying a bit of a peace in their home city. All that changes when their archnemesis, the ever-scheming Nikolai Oshgoshbgoshnikov, gets a visit from his teenage niece Veronica. Veronica is a supervillain-in-training with a knack for robotic henchmen and a devious plan to destroy the Hero Squad from the inside out. Posing as a super-fan, Veronica infiltrates the Hero Squad's HQ and begins to plant seeds of dissension among the four friends. Things come to a head when she kidnaps 3-D and decommissions the team's automatic supercomputer, Gina Gizmo, leaving the remaining heroes bickering amongst themselves. The supervillain's apprentice even succeeds in stealing her uncle's latest doomsday device and kicking him out of his own evil lair! The remaining members of the Hero Squad will have to work through their differences quickly if they intend to stop the treacherous Veronica and her large, robotic teddy bear of a henchman and save their teammate before it's too late.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

A. D. Players in Houston, TX, on April 29th, 2014.

The production was directed by the playwright with the following cast and crew: Brittaney L. Becker, Travis Hayes, Leslie Lenert, Trisha Wise, Braden Hunt, Kurt Bilanoski, Stephen Hurst, Beth Lazarou, Hannah E. Smith, Kathleen Lothringer, Robin Gillock, Donna Southern Schmidt, Laurie Arriaga, Mark A. Lewis, and Orlando Arriaga.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 3 w, 2-4 flex)

The Hero Squad

3-D (m): The co-leader of the team, often protective. He is the expert in battle strategy.

LINDY (f): Co-leader of the team, often the voice of reason. She is kind and gentle.

IRON LUNG (m): Not really the brightest of the bunch, but fiercely loyal. Living his life's dream. Is the older brother of teammate Slapshot.

SLAPSHOT (f): Hockey-playing teen, she has a short fuse and a fierce temper. Quick to rise to her big brother's defense.

GINA / GARY GIZMO (flex): The team's crime-fighting super-computer. Has a bit of spunk, but is always ready to help.

The Bad Guys

NIKOLAI OSHGOSHBGOSHNIKOV (m): The thorn ever in the Hero Squad's collective side. Has dozens of henchmen and hundreds of evil plots, but probably doesn't know what he would actually do with the world if he ever did manage to conquer it.

VERONICA SHANTEL (f): Nikolai's excitable, brilliant, and slightly imbalanced 17-year-old niece. Doesn't have any friends; instead she constructs robotic henchmen she can completely control.

MR. / MS. TUGG'N'BUTTONS (flex): The beloved teddy bear of Veronica's youth, rebuilt and reprogrammed as a loyal henchman. He is an eight-foot tall teddy bear, nonspeaking.

PONYBOT (flex): Another of Veronica's creations, Ponybot has a few loose wires and as a result has dual temperaments, existing as both the playful, lovable pony and the merciless engine of destruction. She looks like a perfect cross between a My Little Pony and a Transformer.

YELLOW JACK (flex): A pirate Nikolai unleashes in the grocery store in an attempt to steal some snacks for his Evil Slumber Party of Doom with his niece.

Doubling Options: Gina Gizmo can be pre-recorded. Yellow Jack can double as Mr. Tugg-n-buttons.

SETTING

The action of the play occurs over several days. Locales vary throughout the metropolis of Metro Valley, Iowa, including a grocery store, Hero Squad headquarters, Nikolai's evil lair, and a park. One brief scene is atop a mountain in the Alps. It is current day.

NOTES

This production calls for a very busy props master. However, the vast majority of the props noted in the script can be engineered fairly easily with a little imagination. The notable exception is Lindy's extendable sword, which she pulls from her bag in the first act. In the original production, Lindy's sword was a collapsible practice sword used for tai chi. The blade was made of a pressed foil and it slid to full length from the hilt with a flick of the actor's wrist. Because the blade slid back into itself, it was imperative that the actors took great care not to clash weapons at full force, but with a bit of rehearsal this wasn't an issue.

To design Mr. Tugg'n'Buttons, commercial patterns can be purchased and used, but may need to be adjusted, based on size and style. The body consisted of two layers: on the outside was the fur, inside was ½" foam sandwiched between two pieces of muslin which helps shape the body and give it a more "plush" look. The foam should be cut according to the pattern pieces, but without seam allowances and then sandwiched between two pieces of muslin before being assembled fully. The fur layer should be constructed separately and then slipped over the foam body. For the head we used thick upholstery foam which was cut without seam allowances as the edges were butted against each other and hand stitched or glued. It's best to reinforce the neck hole with a sturdy wire to prevent stretching, warping, and tearing. Leave the mouth open and use a dark mesh to cover it. A bicycle helmet inside the head helped it stay in place. Have fun and get creative with texture and materials for the snout, nose, eyes, and ears.

Scene 1

(SFX: Siren and GINA GIZMO'S voice is heard in the darkness.)

GINA GIZMO: This is Gina Gizmo, everyone's favorite crime-fighting computational compadre of Metro Valley's own Hero Squad! Over the years, the phenomenal foursome have battled supervillains, ninjas, bank robbers, and other nasty creeps and criminals. But nothing, and I mean nothing, has prepared them for their latest challenge: grocery shopping!

(AT RISE: A supermarket. 3-D stands over the produce, sifting through apples, while IRON LUNG and LINDY are examining breakfast foods. A display of cupcakes is SR.)

IRON LUNG: Grocery shopping is so hard!

LINDY: What's the matter, Iron Lung?

IRON LUNG: *(Picks up two cereal boxes.)* Okay, look at this, Lindy: This box of cereal says it has three scoops of marshmallows in every bowl. *This* box says that it now has thirty percent more marshmallows, but thirty percent more than what? And how big are the three scoops?

LINDY: Iron Lung...

IRON LUNG: I'm just trying to make a well-informed shopping decision! Why do they have to make it so difficult?

LINDY: *(Takes both boxes from HIM.)* Here, how about I handle the breakfast cereal. You can go help 3-D pick out some fruit. *(Wanders off.)*

(IRON LUNG sighs and crosses to where 3-D, with a grocery cart, is picking through some apples.)

3-D: What's up, Iron Lung?

IRON LUNG: 3-D, why are we at the grocery store?

3-D: Even superheroes need groceries, dude.

IRON LUNG: But Lindy's the one who does the shopping. She *likes* it. How come we had to come along this time?

3-D: Think of it as a team-building exercise.

IRON LUNG: You know what would be an even better team-building exercise? ...Fighting supervillains!

3-D: There just aren't a lot of villains out there right now. We haven't heard of a single supervillain or evil henchman anywhere in the city for over a month.

IRON LUNG: That's great...but it also makes it kind of boring to be a superhero...

(SLAPSHOT rushes onstage with a few reusable grocery sacks hooked onto her hockey stick.)

SLAPSHOT: Hey, guys!

3-D: What is it, Slapshot?

IRON LUNG: What's wrong, Sis? Killer robot? Hostile aliens? Evil grocery-stealing bandits? *Please* let there be evil grocery-stealing bandits!

SLAPSHOT: What? No. You're weird, big brother. I just wanted to say that I'm done with my list. I'll bet you haven't even started on yours.

IRON LUNG: Hey, my list was hard.

(LINDY re-enters with a box of healthy cereal and her arms full of other items. She drops the items into the cart.)

LINDY: Here, Iron Lung. This is the cereal you should buy.

IRON LUNG: Raisin bits? That doesn't have any marshmallows in it at all!

LINDY: You'll thank me when you still have all your teeth in thirty years. Oh, Slapshot, this is the wrong kind of broccoli. The list said you were supposed to get broccoli Normandy.

SLAPSHOT: There's more than one kind of broccoli?

LINDY: Never mind, this will work.

(YELLOW JACK bursts onto the stage with a hearty "ARRRGH!" He is carrying a sack, telescope and sword.)

YELLOW JACK: ARRRGH! Step back, all you scallywags and land-loving buffoons! Yellow Jack is here, the most feared pirate in all of Iowa, and I'll be taking all the cupcakes this ramshackle shack of rations has to offer with me! *(Begins tossing cupcakes into a sack.)*

SLAPSHOT: Are you guys seeing what I'm seeing?

IRON LUNG: Yes! A cupcake-stealing pirate!

LINDY: I had a dream where this happened once.

IRON LUNG: Don't worry, I got this. Hey, pirate!

YELLOW JACK: Eh? *(Fumbles with a telescope and looks through.)* Superheroes, ho! Ye'll rue the day you crossed swords with Yellow Jack! *(Draws sword.)* Have at you!

(IRON LUNG grabs a bag of frozen peas from the shopping cart.)

LINDY: Wait...

IRON LUNG: You forgot to say *peas!*

(HE tosses the bag at YELLOW JACK, who falls in surprise. Iron Lung then grabs a roll of tin foil and throws it at Yellow Jack.)

IRON LUNG: *(Cont'd.)* I hate to foil your plans.... *(HE tosses a can of relish.)* ...but I really relish... *(Grabs a squash and tosses it.)* ...this chance to squash your evil for good!

LINDY: You may not use my groceries to fight the pirate!

IRON LUNG: *(Grabbing at a box of spaghetti.)* Aw...but I have a really good spaghetti pun...

LINDY: No!

3-D: We have to get this guy out of here before he hurts somebody. I've got a plan, but I'll need a bungee cord and a distraction.

LINDY: *(Digging around in her bag, produces a bungee cord.)* Here. As for the distraction, leave that to me. I'll keep him busy.

3-D: Are you sure?

(YELLOW JACK is back on his feet. He roars with rage.)

End of Freeview

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