

FADE TO CRAZY

A One Act Stage Play

by Steven G. Jackson

Cast of Characters

Air Head: Female applicant for nursing position
Dr. Sketchy: Director of the Asylum
Tibbs: Assistant Director of the Asylum

Scene

The lobby of The Asylum for the Media Overloaded.

Time

The present.

SETTING: A desk with two chairs on opposite sides, stage right, forward. There is a bench on a platform behind them, facing stage right.

AT RISE: DR. SKETCHY, a middle-aged man dressed in business attire, is seated behind the desk. TIBBS, a younger man who is also dressed in business attire stands at his side with a sheet of paper. WACK A DOODLE, a patient, sits on the bench on the platform, staring, stage right, at a fictitious TV screen.

TIBBS

We have just one applicant left for the nursing position, Dr. Sketchy.

SKETCHY

And who might that be, Tibbs?

TIBBS

(pointing off-stage left)

A Ms. Head, sir.

SKETCHY

(leans to get a better look)

My God, Tibbs, look at her. She's gorgeous. I think she could be my next ex-wife!

TIBBS

Frankly, she has no qualifications for the position. Good thing the last applicant has everything we're looking for.

SKETCHY

I don't know, Tibbs. Let's see what this one has to offer.

TIBBS

If you insist, sir.

SKETCHY

Please show her in.

TIBBS retrieves AIR HEAD. SKETCHY stands and gawks as she takes a seat across from him, with TIBBS at his side.

SKETCHY

(sits)

Ms. Head, welcome to The Asylum for the Media Overloaded.

AIR HEAD

Media Overloaded? That's a thing?

SKETCHY

Oh, yes. With the constant barrage of entertainment and social media there's been an outbreak of people who are losing touch with reality.

AIR HEAD

Wow. Just between you and me, I've always thought reality was overrated. Most of my best work was done when my creativity was, shall we say, enhanced?

TIBBS

(scanning application)

I see that under the section asking about drugs and alcohol, you wrote ‘tough call.’

SKETCHY

Never mind that, Tibbs. Ms. Head, we’re a new company, but we’re headed for big things. We even have our own motto. Tibbs?

TIBBS

You’re not crazy unless we say you’re crazy.

SKETCHY

I wrote that myself. Now, Ms. Head, may I call you by your first name?

AIR HEAD

Please.

SKETCHY

(waits)

What is it?

AIR HEAD

What’s what?

SKETCHY

Your first name.

AIR HEAD

Air. What’s yours?

TIBBS

Air Head?

AIR HEAD

Mine, too. What are the odds? It’s a small world, don’t you think, Mr. Head?

TIBBS

(face blanking, disoriented)

They call me Mr. Tibbs!

AIR HEAD

I don’t get it. You have two names?

SKETCHY

It’s not important. Tell me ... Air ... have you worked for an institution like this before?

AIR HEAD

Not really. But I watch movies all the time. And I'm on Facebook 24/7.

TIBBS

And just how does that qualify for our nursing position?

AIR HEAD

Well, I'll totally be able to relate to the patients. It's like I'm one of them.

SKETCHY

That's an excellent point!

TIBBS

That's not a Sir, I think we've heard enough. This Air Head isn't evenly remotely qualified for this position.

AIR HEAD

Hey, it's Ms. Air Head to you. And you don't have to act so sketchy.

TIBBS

No, he's sketchy. I mean Dr. Sketchy.

(flustered)

I just think we need a nurse who can actually handle the TV room. The inmates get pretty crazy in there.

(starts to get agitated)

Watching the constant barrage of movies. Repeating every line. Over and over and over.

SKETCHY

Steady, Tibbs. Remember? Inmates? Asylum? Not good if we lose control.

AIR HEAD looks at the patient on the platform.

AIR HEAD

Is that the TV room?

SKETCHY

Yes. And that's our newest patient. Mr. Doodle. Mr. Wack A. Doodle. He sits there all day, watching movies, a glazed expression, reciting his favorite lines. It's what we call the Netflix Syndrome. Seems to be contagious. Our last nurse succumbed to it. She's in a room down the hall.

AIR HEAD

Wackadoodle. That's a funny name.

TIBBS

You think *he* has a funny name? You're one to talk.

AIR HEAD

I'll tell you something, Mr. Tibbs, or whatever your name really is. I've been good at my jobs. All twelve of them this year. If you don't hire me, it'll be your loss.

TIBBS cocks his head and regards AIR HEAD with a new perspective.

TIBBS

I may have underestimated you, Ms. Head. You know how to stand up for yourself. You don't take any guff.

AIR HEAD smiles and acts all proud of herself.

TIBBS (cont)

(in her face)

I hate that!

SKETCHY

(stands with glazed expression)

Gentlemen, you can't fight in here. This is the war room.

SKETCHY

(sits down, embarrassed)

Now, now, let's get back on track. Air, is everything on this application accurate?

TIBBS

(glazed)

You want the truth?

AIR HEAD

Oh, yes. I always tell the truth.

TIBBS

(glazed)

You can't handle the truth.

SKETCHY

It says here you last worked as a photographer.

AIR HEAD

Yes. Mostly head shots.

SKETCHY

Head shots.

AIR HEAD

Yes. I'm told I'm gifted with the head.

SKETCHY

You give good head ... shots.

AIR HEAD

That's right. Good thing, too. I could never have held that job for those three weeks if I sucked at it.

TIBBS

(glazed)

I'll have what she's having.

SKETCHY

Fascinating. And the job before that?

AIR HEAD

Glass blower.

SKETCHY

(bites his hand)

Glass blower?

AIR HEAD

I was good at that, too. Except I kept breaking things. But my boss didn't mind. He told me to just keep blowing.

SKETCHY

And the damage?

AIR HEAD

He said 'screw it.'

SKETCHY

I see. Just a few more questions. Is there a Mr. Head?

AIR HEAD

I don't think you're allowed to ask that.

SKETCHY

My apologies. Let's just forget I brought that up.

Brought what up? AIR HEAD

Exactly. Now, do you have any children? SKETCHY

Yes. AIR HEAD

How many? (sags) SKETCHY

Just the one. My Dad. AIR HEAD

What? SKETCHY

You asked me if there was a Mr. Head. My Dad. AIR HEAD

AIR HEAD turns to TIBBS.

He gets kinda confused, doesn't he? AIR HEAD (cont)

Go figure. TIBBS

No. AIR HEAD
(back to SKETCHY)

No, what? SKETCHY

You asked me if I had children. I'm not against children, per se, but it seems like all they do is watch TV, play video games, and pretend to communicate on Facebook. AIR HEAD

What we have here is a failure to communicate. TIBBS
(glazed)

SKETCHY

Well, we certainly don't need any more of that.

AIR HEAD

So, do I get the job?

TIBBS

Oh, no. We have

SKETCHY stops TIBBS with a hand gesture.

SKETCHY

What Tibbs means to say is, he and I need to discuss all the applicants. We'll make a decision soon, and be in touch.

AIR HEAD

Oooh, goody. I like touching.

SKETCHY

(glazed)

To infinity, and beyond.

TIBBS

This has gone on long enough.

SKETCHY

Yes. Thank you, Air Head. I'll be in touch with you personally.

AIR HEAD

Okay. I hope I get the job. I think we could all be crazy happy here.

SKETCHY bites down on his hand, almost in tears. AIR HEAD exits, stage left. TIBBS sits down across in the vacated seat.

TIBBS

Why didn't you just tell her she's not right for the job?

SKETCHY

I'm not so sure. She brings a certain ... energy ... to the position.

TIBBS

(glazed)

Houston, we have a problem.

TIBBS

(shakes away the cobwebs)

Sir, the applicant before her has the skills, background, and work ethic we're looking for. It would be a breach of professional ethics to bypass her and hire an individual we know to be less-qualified.

SKETCHY

But the touching ... my desires ... my future ex-wife ...

TIBBS

Also unethical. Not to mention immoral, illegal, and disgusting. You could lose your job, go to jail. Is she worth that?

When SKETCHY doesn't immediately respond, TIBBS continues.

TIBBS (Cont)

That's a rhetorical question.

SKETCHY

(glazed)

You talkin' to me? Well, I'm the only one here.

SKETCHY

(shakes away the cobwebs)

Of course, Tibbs. You know what to do. Take care of it.

TIBBS exits stage right.

SKETCHY

(glazed)

Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine.

SKETCHY looks around, making sure he's alone. He looks back toward
WACK A. DOODLE.

SKETCHY (Cont)

Wack, can I tell you a secret? I see dead people.

SKETCHY turns and grins at the audience with crazed eyes.

(FADE TO CRAZY, ER, BLACK)

(END OF SCENE)