

# **Elvis is Dead**

**Saving the world takes time.**

**A 10 Minute Comedy**

**By James Hutchison**

**Also available from [www.jameshutchison.ca](http://www.jameshutchison.ca)**

**What the Dickens!** *Even Scrooge got a second chance.*

When Marty Fisher gets caught kissing his stage manager Samantha and the actor playing Scrooge shows up drunk Marty has to scramble to save the opening night production of a Christmas Carol and his engagement to his fiancée Tami.

**Two Act Comedy, 6M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes**

**A Christmas Carol – Two versions available -**

When Scrooge's nephew Fred finds some letters Scrooge had written to his sister Fan a long time ago the past is unlocked, and Scrooge learns how his fear of poverty and pursuit of wealth have cost him a chance for love and genuine happiness.

**CAST OF 10+ - Two Act Drama, 6M, 4W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes**

**CAST OF 25+ - Two Act Drama, 15M, 10W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes**

**Under the Mistletoe** *Not every romantic evening goes as planned.*

Two couples in their late fifties, one long time friends and the other having just met, try to navigate the tricky road of love, sex and desire while spending a romantic night in the Christmas Themed Suites at the Prairie Dog Inn.

**Two Act Romantic Comedy 1M, 1W or 2M, 2W Single Set, 120 minutes**

**Heart of Stone: A Jessica Quinn Mystery** *Trusting the wrong person can be deadly.*

When Jessica Quinn uncovers the truth about her father's killer and the truth behind a woman claiming to be the long-lost daughter of her client Mary McConnell more than one person ends up dead.

**Two Act Mystery, 7M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes**

**Stories from Langford** *Every town has its secrets.*

Six characters from Langford tell stories from their lives: stories about, jealousy, revenge, love and forgiveness.

**Two Act Drama, 1M, 1W, Simple settings, 120 Minutes**

**Death and the Psychiatrist** *Even Death Could Use a Friend*

Feeling depressed about having a job where no one likes him Death goes into therapy with Dr. Thompson in order to help him cope with his guilt.

**One Act Comedy, 3M, or 2M, 1W, Single Set, 50 Minutes**

**Plus, other One Acts and 10 Minute Plays including The Blood of a Thousand Chickens, 500 bucks and a pack of smokes, and Elvis is Dead.**

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## **PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES**

To secure performance rights please contact the author, James Hutchison, at:

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*Elvis is Dead* premiered at the Dewey Decimal Festival for Friends of the Chappaqua Library in Chappaqua, New York. It was produced at the Short+Sweet Festival Gold Coast in Queensland Australia where it was directed by Rebecca Elise Lamb and starred Richard Murphy, Nicola Stewart, and Alex Watson. Other productions include the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual One Act Play Festival for the West Coast Players in Clearwater Florida, The Red Eye 10s International Play Festival, and The Puzzle Theatre Festival in New York City.

## **The Playwright**

James Hutchison writes comedies, dramas, and mysteries. He also interviews other playwrights, actors, and directors about the business and creative aspects of theatre, film, and television. You can read his interviews on his blog and download his plays at [www.jameshutchison.ca](http://www.jameshutchison.ca).

Elvis is Dead – Saving the world takes time.

A Comedy in Ten Minutes

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# **ELVIS IS DEAD**

## **CAST of CHARACTERS**

Fred Bunson: the Historian – determined but emotional mid to late 30s.

Robert Frump: the Commander – slightly incompetent and immature 30s

Sally Knowlton: the Librarian – smart, good natured and rational late 20s or early 30s.

Character ages are suggestions only and can certainly vary.

## **SETTING**

A Community Library

## **TIME**

Just before 9:00 pm one day in the year 2019.

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Time travellers Dr. Fred Bunson and Commander Robert Frump have travelled back in time to retrieve a lost book and save the universe. With no library card and the book already signed out things look dim for our intrepid time travellers until librarian Sally Knowlton comes to the rescue.

## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

Although the dialogue is silly the lines should be delivered with sincere emotion and conviction. That makes them even sillier.

The lighting and sound effects for the “off stage” time machine can be accomplished with a camera flash and a swoosh sound from a cell phone or with a flashlight and the actor making the sound – there are many simple and fun possibilities.

*For Graham*

## ELVIS IS DEAD

### SCENE: A LIBRARY

*Setting:* A LIBRARY a few minutes before closing.

*At Rise:* There is a flash of light and a swoosh sound. BOB and FRED enter. Both wear space suits and carry tablets.

BOB: Oh, thank God it worked!

FRED: You sound surprised.

BOB: Well the chimpanzee we sent through the first time portal a week ago couldn't actually tell us where he'd been could he.

FRED: No, I suppose not. But here we are in 2019.

BOB: Yes, here we are.

FRED: The big question is – has the time pulse changed history in any way?

*BOB refers to his tablet.*

BOB: Mmmmm. No that's the same. That checks out. Hold on a second.

FRED: Is it something good or something bad?

BOB: Something good. Elvis is alive!

FRED: That is good.

BOB: You know when I was at MIT I made extra money on the weekends as an Elvis impersonator. Hey – look at this – he's still performing and at his age – he's got a concert tomorrow night in Vegas. We should go. I love Elvis!

FRED: We're not here to see Elvis in concert. We have work to do and the sooner we get started the sooner we'll be done. How much time do we have?

*BOB looks at his tablet.*

BOB: Well that can't be right. According to this we only have fifteen minutes.

FRED: Fifteen minutes! You said we'd have fifteen hours not fifteen minutes.

BOB: It looks like I might have miscalculated.

FRED: You idiot. The entire world is depending on us and we've only got fifteen minutes to find the books we need and return to the future.

BOB: Time travel isn't an exact science you know – don't go blaming me.

FRED: Well who the hell else am I supposed to blame!

*SALLY enters.*

SALLY: Gentlemen – excuse me. This is a library. Please keep your voices down.

FRED: How can we keep our voices down when the future of mankind depends on us?

SALLY: Even so we should be using our inside voices. Are you two on your way to a costume party?

FRED: No. Listen I'm Dr. Fred Bunson and this is Commander Robert Frump. We're time travellers from the future and we're here to get some books.

SALLY: Are you?

BOB: One specific book in particular.

FRED: Yes. Quantum Time Fluctuation Theory by Dr. Otis T Kwack. It's an extremely rare book, but if my calculations are correct you should have a copy here in the library.

*SALLY checks a library terminal.*

SALLY: I'm not familiar with that particular title but that doesn't mean we don't have it.

FRED: You've never heard of Dr. Otis T. Kwack the father of time travel.

SALLY: No.

FRED: Well Kwack was considered a bit of a nut-case in his day. He spent most of his life in an asylum.

SALLY: Roommates were you.

FRED: Hardly.

SALLY: Oh here it is.

FRED: Oh, thank God for that.

SALLY: But I'm afraid it's been signed out.

FRED: Signed out?

SALLY: Yes. It's not due back until tomorrow. You could always put a hold on it.

FRED: Is that your only copy?

SALLY: It is.

FRED: Well that's just great. Now what are we going to do?

SALLY: He has written another book called Peter Penguin and Polly Pachyderm's Time Travelling Adventures. Would that help?

FRED: No. We need his other book.

SALLY: Why? Don't they have books in the future?

FRED: No, everything's gone digital.

SALLY: Kobos, Kindles, tablets that sort of thing.

FRED: Exactly. Everything – including literature – music – history and science has been transferred to quantum drives – or I mean – will be transferred to quantum drives.

SALLY: Even 50 Shades of Grey?



FRED: Is that a book?

SALLY: That's debatable.

FRED: It's not on my list.

SALLY: What list?

FRED: I have a list of over ten thousand books I'm supposed to try and bring back to the future with me.

*SALLY takes a look at the list. BOB picks up a book.*

SALLY: Well, Dr. Bunson even though this is a lending library – I'm afraid, you can only sign out fifteen items at a time.

BOB: Hey where's the power button on these things.

SALLY: Books don't have power buttons.

BOB: How do you turn them on?

SALLY: You don't turn them on. You open them up.

BOB: Oh. How do you adjust the text size?

*FRED pushes the book into BOB's face.*

FRED: Like this.

BOB: Well I'm sorry Fred – I've never seen one of these things before – how am I supposed to know how they work.

FRED: Listen you're a librarian so you must have an appreciation of literature and knowledge. If we don't come up with some way of getting these books into the future they'll be lost forever.

SALLY: But I thought you said everything had gone digital.

FRED: I did. But the first time travel experiment was conducted a week ago and when the time portal was opened it created a time pulse – and unfortunately – that time pulse destroyed all the quantum drives and all of man’s recorded knowledge.

BOB: Including Dr. Kwack’s time travel formula.

FRED: We have to find that book so we can shut down the time portal.

SALLY: Nobody memorized the formula?

BOB: Why memorize something when you can look it up?

FRED: We’re a little technology dependent in the future.

SALLY: Nobody thought to write it down?

FRED: In hindsight it might have been a good idea to have had a hard copy of some sort.

BOB: Hey you know what this means?

FRED: What?

BOB: We’re the first humans to travel through time. You and I are the ones history will remember. Like Lance Armstrong the first man to walk on the moon.

SALLY: Don’t you mean Neil Armstrong.

BOB: No I don’t think so. Do I?

FRED: She’s right. You’re wrong. *(To Sally)* Is there any way you can help?

SALLY: Do you have a library card?

FRED: No. Do we need one?

SALLY: If you’re going to sign out any materials or put a hold on a book in our collection – time travellers or not – you’ll need a library card.

FRED: We don’t have time to get a library card. In less than – oh my God – two minutes our time machine will return to the future with or without us.

SALLY: I'm sorry gentlemen, but as much as I sympathize with your situation it's already past nine o'clock and the library is closed. Your mission to save mankind will have to wait until tomorrow.

FRED: Don't you understand every time we use the time portal we risk changing history or destroying the Universe.

SALLY: Alright, who put you up to this Steve?

FRED: Nobody put us up to anything.

SALLY: Is there a camera somewhere. Are you going to put this up on YouTube?

FRED: How can I prove to you that time travel is real?

SALLY: Oh that's easy.

BOB: Is it?

SALLY: All I need to do is put one of our give-away books in a time capsule and bury it at the entrance to the library. You simply return to the future – dig up the time capsule – then return to me here – right now – and show me which book I buried.

FRED: And risk destroying the universe.

SALLY: I figured you'd say something like that. You're not really time travellers are you.

BOB: Come on Fred we've only got thirty seconds.

FRED: Alright we'll do it, but if anything goes wrong it's going to be your fault. I hope you can live with that.

SALLY: What could possibly go wrong?

*BOB and FRED run off stage.*

FRED: Promise me you'll bury one of those books.

SALLY: I promise.

FAST FLASH of LIGHT and a QUICK SWOOSH SOUND OFF STAGE.

*SALLY takes one of the books on the give-away pile.*

SALLY: Oh this is perfect.

*SALLY opens the book and writes something on the inside cover.*

FAST FLASH of LIGHT and a QUICK SWOOSH SOUND OFF STAGE.

*BOB and FRED enter. FRED carries a small time capsule.*

SALLY: The lighting and sound effects look a bit cheap don't you think. Do you have the book?

FRED: We brought the time capsule. I thought it would be best if you opened it.

SALLY: Are you magicians by any chance? Is this some sort of Reality TV show?

*FRED hands SALLY the time capsule.*

FRED: I'm not a magician. I'm a history professor. Would you just open the time capsule.

*SALLY takes The Time Machine by H.G. Wells out of the time capsule.*

FRED: Now, be careful – it's very old.

BOB: The Time Machine by H.G. Wells. That's funny.

SALLY: Alright smart guys I wrote something on the inside cover. Let's check that shall we.

*SALLY opens both books to the inside covers.*

SALLY: I don't believe it.

BOB: What does it say?

FRED: To Fred and Bob – happy to be a part of your time travelling adventures. Love Sally.

BOB: Hello Sally.

*FRED compares the two inscriptions.*

FRED: Look, they match perfectly. Now do you believe us?

SALLY: I don't know what to think.

*BOB checks his tablet.*

FRED: Come on Sally we need your help.

BOB: Oh damn.

FRED: What now?

BOB: Elvis is dead. *(To Sally)* You killed Elvis.

SALLY: What's he talking about? Elvis has been dead for years.

FRED: It doesn't matter. I'm sorry Bob but it could have been a lot worse you know.

BOB: Aw crap.

FRED: What?

BOB: It is worse.

*Beat*

BOB: They turn the Broadway musical Cats into a movie.

FRED: So?

BOB: You don't want to know.

FRED: Alright then. Come on Sally together – you and I – the two of us can save the universe. What-da-ya-say?

SALLY: You already have your solution. Instead of putting *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells in the time capsule I can put *Quantum Time Fluctuation Theory* by Dr. Otis T. Kwack in there instead.

BOB: She's right. When the book gets returned tomorrow she just has to put it in the time capsule.

FRED: Problem solved.

SALLY: So, what happens now?

FRED: We have a lot of other books to collect. *(To Bob)* How much time before we have to head back Bob?

*BOB looks at his tablet.*

BOB: That can't be right.

FRED: You guaranteed me we'd have more than fifteen minutes.

BOB: We have more. A lot more. Fifteen years more.

FRED: Fifteen years! How did that have happened?

BOB: It looks like I might have made a slight miscalculation.

FRED: Fifteen years! What are we going to do for fifteen years?

SALLY: Well we could certainly bury an awful lot of time capsules and make sure these books survive into the future.

FRED: That's a great idea, Sally. That's exactly what we'll do.

SALLY: Have you ever thought of writing a book yourself?

FRED: I write about history. But most of the history I write about hasn't even happened yet.

SALLY: Have you ever thought of writing fiction?

FRED: Fiction?

SALLY: Yes, science fiction. I think you'd be rather good at it.

FRED: That's not a bad idea. You are a smart woman. I think I'm going to enjoy my time in the past.

BOB: Hold on a second. What am I supposed to do for the next fifteen years?

FRED: Maybe Vegas could use another Elvis impersonator. What do you think?

BOB: I think I better start working on my act. Do you have any books on Elvis?

SALLY: We have a whole section. Of course you will have to sign up for a library card if you want to take anything home.

FRED: Sign us both up.

BOB: Look out Vegas here I come. Thank ya – thank ya very much! And Elvis has left the building.

The End