

# **The Blood of a Thousand Chickens**

**What would you sacrifice for your people?**

**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 – a small cast and large cast version**

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 Act and 10 Minute Plays including Never Give Up, 500 bucks and a pack of smokes, and Elvis is Dead.**

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## **PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES**

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*The Blood of a Thousand Chickens premiered at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Short + Sweet 10 Minute Play Festival in Sydney Australia in 2016. The production was directed by Glen Pead and starred Nathan Bennett, Keira Bird, Sebastian Lopez, Warren Paul Glover, and Nicole Carney. The play was also presented at the Flathead Community College 2016 International 10 Minute One Act Play Festival in Kalispell, Montana USA. *The Blood of a Thousand Chickens* was partly developed and workshopped through the Alberta Playwrights Network Wordshed program in March 2015 with the participation of Trevor Rueger, Laura Parken, Robeta Mauer-Phillips, and Julie Orton.*

## **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).

The Blood of a Thousand Chickens – What would you sacrifice for you people?

A Comedy in Ten Minutes

ISBN: 978-1-9992733-1-6

## **The Blood of a Thousand Chickens**

### **CAST of CHARACTERS**

Name of Character	Description of Character
Oedipus	The King
Jocasta	The Queen
Phallus	The son of Oedipus and Jocasta
Cretin	A Priest
The Oracle	An Oracle (Cretin in drag.)
Penurious	A Farmer

The same actor should play Cretin and the Oracle as they are the same person.  
The same actor could play Penurious and Phallus

### **SETTING**

The Royal Palace of Thebes

### **TIME**

Ancient Greece

### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Phallus, the son of Oedipus and Jocasta, the King and Queen of Thebes, wants to marry Clitoris. Unknown to Phallus, Clitoris is actually his sister and Oedipus and Jocasta believe that their son's love for Clitoris is why the Kingdom was cursed by a pox and now faces a terrible drought and possible starvation. To save the people from the wrath of Zeus, Oedipus must offer the Gods the blood of a thousand chickens and maybe even the life of his own son.

### **Production Note**

None of the other characters are aware of the fact that Cretin and the Oracle are the same person. This is a ruse that Cretin has been using for years to his advantage.

*For Sheri*

## The Blood of a Thousand Chickens

### SCENE: THE ROYAL PALACE OF THEBES

*Setting: A great throne room*

*At Rise: A farmer dressed in rags stands before the King. Beside the King is Cretin the Priest.*

PENURIOUS: Oh wise and noble King Oedipus, I your humble servant Penurious, ask that you appease the Gods and end this terrible drought.

CRETIN: Dark days have descended upon us, oh noble King.

OEDIPUS: But why, Cretin? Why have the God's cursed us? Tell me Penurious have you made an offering to the Gods?

PENURIOUS: I have my King.

KING: Excellent. And what did you offer.

PENURIOUS: A duck.

KING: A duck?

PENURIOUS: Well I thought since I was asking for rain – a duck made sense. I sacrificed all our chickens last month when that pox broke out.

KING: Yes, I myself sacrificed a thousand chickens, a hundred rams, ten pigs, and one elephant.

CRETIN: Big problems demand big sacrifices my King.

PENURIOUS: Oh great King – slayer of the Medusa – solver of riddles – destroyer of the Sphinx – pacifier of the Gods – killer of Kings and sacrificer of chickens – I beg of you – help us.

KING: How many chickens do we have left Cretin?

CRETIN: All out of chickens I'm afraid.

KING: Please tell me we have some pigs.

CRETIN: Sorry, we sacrificed the last pig on Tuesday for the wrestling tournament.

KING: Any elephants.

CRETIN: Fresh out of elephants.

KING: What do we have?

CRETIN: We do have some ducks.

KING: But Penurious already sacrificed a duck and still no rain.

CRETIN: Maybe we need to sacrifice more ducks?

KING: What about the Spartans?

CRETIN: Oh, we shouldn't sacrifice Spartans. That would result in another one of those bloody wars the Spartans are so fond of.

KING: No, no, no, no – the Gods love Chicken, and the chicken they love the most is...

KING & CRETIN: ...Spartan Fried Chicken.

CRETIN: Yes of course, it's the secret recipe of eleven different herbs and spices that the God's love so much.

KING: Right. We'll send a messenger to Sparta and get an order to go. A thousand chickens and a cart of slaw.

CRETIN: Very good my King.

KING: And send for the Oracle.

CRETIN: Yes, my King.

KING: Rest assured citizen, the rains will come.

PENURIOUS: Oh thank you my King. You are wise in the ways of the Gods.

*CRETIN & PENURIOUS exit as QUEEN JOCASTA enters*

QUEEN: Do you know what that son of ours is planning?

KING: Oh by the peak of Mount Olympus, what's he up to now?

QUEEN: He says he's fallen in love with Clitoris. The – *daughter* – of Obnoxious the philosopher?

KING: Oh! The – *daughter* – of Obnoxious. Right. Well we can't have that can we. The Gods won't approve. I'll simply have to forbid it.

QUEEN: You know what your problem is? You've always been too easy on the boy. That's why he doesn't listen to us. You should have raised our son the way your father raised you.

KING: When I was born my father took me into the mountains and left me to die.

QUEEN: And if he hadn't you wouldn't have grown into the King you are today.

KING: I was raised by a band of travelling minstrels.

QUEEN: Maybe if you'd spent more time practicing a harp instead of wielding a sword your father would still be alive.

KING: Do you have to bring that up now mother?

QUEEN: I wish you wouldn't call me mother.

KING: Well, things have been a little weird around here since we found out the truth haven't they? Yes, I killed my father and married my mother. Just as the Oracle foretold. Our son is my brother and your grandson. But if my father hadn't left me in the mountains as a newborn to fend for myself I would have grown up here in the palace and never would have killed him. I'm sorry I chopped off his head. But it's his own fault for being such a foul tempered old fool and trying to run me over with his chariot. I've made my apologies. I've offered chickens, and pigs, and goats to the Gods. For the love of Zeus mother, what more do you want me to do? Gouge out my eyes.



QUEEN: Must you turn everything into a Greek tragedy?

*PHALLUS enters*

KING: Speaking of a Greek tragedy here comes our son.

PHALLUS: Hello father.

KING: Phallus.

PHALLUS: Mother.

QUEEN: Son.

PHALLUS: Brother.

KING: Brother.

PHALLUS: Grandmother.

QUEEN: Grandson.

PHALLUS: So, has mother told you?

KING: Yes, she says you're planning to marry Clitoris.

PHALLUS: We belong together.

QUEEN: I'm sorry son, but you can't marry her.

KING: You are the future king and you must choose a wife more suitable for the role.

PHALLUS: I suppose I could just marry my mother like you did.

QUEEN: Phallus!

KING: I forbid you to marry this girl. And if you see her or her father again, I'll have them both thrown to the Minotaur!

PHALLUS: The great mythical Minotaur. There's no such thing.

KING: Oh yes there is.

PHALLUS: Tell you what pop. You bring me a real – live – breathing Minotaur and I'll call off the wedding.

KING: Well, you can't just summon the Minotaur he's in the labyrinth.

QUEEN: But we can summon the Oracle!

PHALLUS: And why should I listen to the Oracle?

KING: Because the Oracle speaks for the Gods.

PHALLUS: You don't actually believe all those stories about the Gods, do you?

KING: Of course we do. You have to have faith my son.

PHALLUS: I have faith in what I can see and know. Not in tall tales and silly rumours.

SFX: THUNDER

KING: Oh great and powerful Zeus, forgive my son. He does not know what he speaks.

*ORACLE enters which is Cretin dressed as a woman.*

ORACLE: My King. You sent for the Oracle. What is the question you seek an answer to?

QUEEN: Your future King wants to marry the – *daughter* – of Obnoxious. Can you believe that?

ORACLE: The human heart is a more mysterious and strange place than even the underworld of Hades my Queen.

KING: Tell Phallus the prophesy you told his mother and I, when he was born.

ORACLE: Yes, my King. It was foretold that the son of Oedipus and Jocasta shall one day marry his very own blood sister and bring a pox and a great hunger to the people of Thebes.

PHALLUS: But I haven't got a sister.

KING: You have a fraternal twin sister.

PHALLUS: And no doubt Clitoris is my sister. Ha!

KING & QUEEN: Yes!

PHALLUS: I can't believe you two would stoop to such levels just to keep me from marrying a girl you don't approve of.

KING: We're telling you the truth.

PHALLUS: What proof have you got?

QUEEN: Ask Cretin. He took your sister to Obnoxious and his wife so she could grow up away from the palace and not marry you.

PHALLUS: Why should I believe anything Cretin has to say? As far as I'm concerned you ought to throw Cretin off a cliff. He's a conman pretending to be the servant of the Gods just so he can live in the palace and have a life of luxury.

KING: The Gods will bring a terrible punishment upon us if you marry your sister.

PHALLUS: Like the pox.

KING: Yes.

PHALLUS: If the God's are so upset, why did the pox go away?

KING: Because, they were pleased with my sacrifice.

ORACLE: Yes, my King. But now, we find ourselves facing a terrible drought.

PHALLUS: I guess you're just going to have to sacrifice more chickens then aren't you.

ORACLE: Oh the Gods may demand more than the blood of a thousand chickens my King and Queen. If this unholy union goes forth they may only be satisfied with the blood of your son.

PHALLUS: Oh come on Oracle, what kind of a God demands a human sacrifice?

ORACLE: An angry God. An unforgiving God. You should be careful my future King, you don't want to make an enemy of the Gods or their servants.

KING: Well I'm not willing to sacrifice my son. At least, not just yet.

PHALLUS: What do you mean, not just yet?

KING: Not if there's another solution.

QUEEN: We should consult Cretin.

ORACLE: Cretin. Must you?

KING: We must.

ORACLE: Ah, well then. I shall run and fetch him, shall I? It may take a little time...just so you know.

*ORACLE exits.*

QUEEN: You see the position you've put me and your father in?

PHALLUS: Hold on a second, isn't Zeus married to his sister Hera?

QUEEN: What's that got to do with anything?

PHALLUS: I'm just saying even if Clitoris is my sister – which I don't believe she is – I see no religious reason we shouldn't be wed, and I see no reason the Gods should disapprove.

KING: Unless the God's can show us a sign that they approve of this union I forbid it.

PHALLUS: Why don't we take a trip to Mount Olympus and ask the Gods ourselves?

KING: You shouldn't disturb the Gods.

PHALLUS: Funny thing is I've already been to the top of Mount Olympus.

QUEEN: You have?

PHALLUS: Yes, last week. And you know what I found?

KING: The gates to a great temple?

PHALLUS: No. Nothing so concrete. I found goats. There's nothing up there but goats. Lots and lots of goats. No temple. No Gods. Just goats. And a few ducks.

KING: I don't believe it.

PHALLUS: You don't have to believe me. You can go check it for yourself.

KING: I just might do that.

*CRETIN enters slightly out of breath.*

CRETIN: You sent for me my King?

KING: Yes. Why are you soaking wet?

CRETIN: It's raining my King. It would appear that the Gods have answered our prayers. The drought is over which means that I and the Oracle have consulted, and we believe that this union between Clitoris and Phallus was always meant to be.

QUEEN: Praise Zeus.

KING: *(To Phalus)* Now do you believe in the Gods?

CRETIN: Oh I'm sure our future King, having heard the willingness of the Gods to bless his union with the woman he loves, understands the importance of tradition and position and reward for keeping things as they should be.

PHALLUS: Yes. I do understand. Fine, I believe in the Gods. Praise Zeus. Hip! Hip! Hooray! Now will you let me get married?

KING: Yes.

PHALLUS: Excellent, I'll go tell Clitoris. I'm sure she'll be pleased.

*PHALLUS exits.*

QUEEN: Are we really going to let our son marry his sister?

KING: Well, it would appear that the pox and the drought must have been the result of us not letting them marry.

CRETIN: Oh, the God's do work in mysterious ways.

KING: Oh damn!

QUEEN: What is it?

KING: We forgot to order gravy.

CRETIN: Not so my King. The gravy has been ordered.

KING: Ah Cretin, whatever would we do without you? You are a blessing to us. Isn't he my dear.

QUEEN: Yes, and now it would appear that we have a wedding to plan.

KING: Quite right. We should order some wine, and I was thinking we should hire that new playwright Sophocles to write something for us. What do you think?

QUEEN: Who'd be interested in our little family drama?

KING: Oh, you're probably right. No one would ever believe it anyway.

CURTAIN