

GREENHOUSE LIVING

a short play



BY TARA MEDDAUGH

Greenhouse Living

A ten-minute play

By Tara Meddaugh

EXCERPT

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After its initial commission and school production by the Lancaster Country Day School, *Greenhouse Living* was first produced at The Director's Studio in New York City on September 16, 2007, as part of the one-act play, [*Movements of the Wind*](#), with the following cast:

Hyacinth	<i>Hana Kalinski</i>
Tulip	<i>Bram Barouh</i>
Poinsettia	<i>Samantha Sherman</i>
Fern	<i>Lindsay Roth</i>
Banana Tree	<i>Rich Price</i>

Directed by Kel Haney
Costume and Scenic Design by Rebecca Frey

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Character Breakdown

POINSETTIA	A poinsettia plant. Female or male.
FERN	A fern plant. Female or male.
HYACINTH	A hyacinth plant. Female or male.
BANANA TREE	A banana tree. Male or female
TULIP	A tulip. Male.

Setting

A greenhouse.

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At rise: A greenhouse containing POINSETTIA, FERN, BANANA TREE and HYACINTH. All, except for Banana Tree, are hopping around, playing a game and singing:

PLANT CHORUS

*Hop right in to our paradise
We'll welcome you once and we'll welcome you twice.
A perfect world for all perfect plants,
The only way to have a second chance
At living.*

(The game ends and they cheer and clap, then find space to lounge around, fanning themselves. They might pick up a drink or two.)

POINSETTIA

Ah...hot and perfect.

FERN

Feel that sun...

BANANA TREE

Through the glass.

POINSETTIA

Where's my spritz?

FERN

They haven't been in here yet today.

BANANA TREE

They were here a few minutes ago! They just spritzed you, Poinsettia. See—your leaves are even moist.

POINSETTIA

Are they?

(pause)

HYACINTH

I miss the little Girl Tall.

BANANA TREE

She's the one who just spritzed us.

HYACINTH

I miss her reading her book to us. About the plant princess? Maybe I'll start reading a book.

POINSETTIA

You can't read.

FERN

The girl doesn't read either.

HYACINTH

Well, she looks at the pictures then. And calls me a princess. I could look at pictures and call me a princess.

FERN

She draws in her books.

HYACINTH

Well, that's too hard then. Never mind.

FERN

She makes those round puppy faces and cat ears...

POINSETTIA

I hate Cat.

BANANA TREE

She shouldn't draw in those books.

FERN

Why not?

BANANA TREE

They're not hers.

HYACINTH

Whose are they?

BANANA TREE

The Boy Tall's.

FERN

He doesn't care about them now. He's too old.

BANANA TREE

It's still not right to take someone else's things. You should know that.

HYACINTH

Maybe she got permission.

BANANA TREE

I doubt it.

HYACINTH

She's very sweet.

BANANA TREE

She's a spoiled little brat! You know how many leaves she's pulled off of me? Every time she comes in here!

FERN

You're the one who's spoiled, Banana Tree.

BANANA TREE

Of course I'm spoiled—not that I asked for that. We're all spoiled. We live in a greenhouse, Fern! But that doesn't mean—

POINSETTIA

Oh, please don't go on with a boring lecture.

HYACINTH

You don't think we're lucky?

BANANA TREE

Well, in a sense...

HYACINTH

We don't have to deal with thunderstorms.

FERN

Or droughts.

HYACINTH

Or wondering where our next meal will come from.

POINSETTIA

Or Cat!

BANANA TREE

Yes, I know—okay—we have that. But—the most important thing—the air, the air we breathe and live in—it’s all, everything is all stagnant. Don’t you feel that?

POINSETTIA

No.

BANANA TREE

Exactly! No breeze!

HYACINTH

I never liked the wind anyway.

FERN

(to Banana Tree)

You just feel stagnant because you’re boring. Boring and old and withering. If I were that Girl Tall, I’d pick off your leaves too—just to make you more interesting.

HYACINTH

You do kinda ignore all our exciting games, Banana Tree.

BANANA TREE

You know, Fern, you’d be considered a weed if you lived outside. How boring is that?

FERN

But I’m not a weed! I was born and raised here—right in this greenhouse!

BANANA TREE

And I’m not as good as you because I was brought here, right? Well, at least they wanted me enough to take me. You were just an accident. A seed carelessly dropped by that Girl Tall.

FERN

That’s not true!

BANANA TREE

You know it is!

POINSETTIA

Please stop fighting! Fern! Banana Tree!

(pause)

At least until my spritz gets here.

(pause)

Okay—some of us were born here; some of us were brought here. What difference does it make? We’re all here now.

BANANA TREE

It makes a difference to Fern.

FERN

It does make a difference, because we're full. We're all filled up and when the Talls bring in more plants, it just takes up more of our breathing space. Just look at Banana Tree! With those big intruding leaves. You're choking me, you know! You're choking all of us!

BANANA TREE

Oh, please! You need your own stage.

(A new plant, a TULIP is shoved into the Green House. TULIP is not a child, but not quite an adult.)

POINSETTIA

Look!

FERN

You've got to be kidding me! Another one!

END OF EXCERPT

For the complete play, [Greenhouse Living](#), visit:

www.tameddaugh.com/greenhouse-living

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Tara's plays have been presented by theater companies such as Fusion Theatre, Mosaic Theater Company of DC, The Directors Company, Le Petit Theatre de Terrebonne, Theatre One, Tutti Bravi Productions, Westchester Collaborative Theater, Possibilities Theater, Tagragg Productions, One Armed Man, Oracle Theatre, Inc, The Acme Theatre Company, The Harlequin Players, Woman Seeking..., and numerous schools, universities and colleges including Gardner-Webb, Prince Williams, and Colgate. Her work has showcased at festivals such as the Artists of Tomorrow Festival in NYC, The Bangkok Community Theatre Fringe Festival, the Pittsburgh New Works Series and the Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Alaska. Tens of thousands of teachers, actors and students world-wide have utilized her monologues for competitions, course material, auditions, performances, and showcases. Tara has taught Playwriting at Carnegie Mellon, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, and for The Westport Country Playhouse, and she has led Creative Dramatics Workshops for children in underserved areas throughout New York and New Jersey. Additionally, she has script consulted on several animation and VR projects. Tara's work has been published by YouthPLAYS, Smith & Kraus, Oxford Press South Africa, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA), Limelight Editions/Applause Acting Series, The Hunger Journal, Meriweather Publishing, Applause Theatre & Cinema, Performer Stuff and Ace-Your-Audition. She is a recipient of the Shubert Fellowship in Dramatic Writing, the Sloan Screenwriting Fellowship, the New Works for Young Women [Actors] Award, The Write Stuff Award, and is a member of the Dramatist's Guild. Tara holds her MFA in Dramatic Writing from Carnegie Mellon University.

For more information about Tara Meddaugh or her work,
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