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# EXCERPT

To get the complete play, <u>Grinching 101</u>, visit:

www.tarameddaugh.com/grinching-101-a-oneact-play

Special thanks to Kevin Christopher Snipes, Mike Bouteneff, Dylan B., Luke B.

# **GRINCHING 101**

A One-Act Christmas Comedy

By

Tara Meddaugh

# EXCERPT

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### **GRINCHING 101 EXCERPT**

#### Character Breakdown (16+ any gender)

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL	Male (any gender). New at teaching Grinching 101, a bit short tempered. Former pupil of Sourpuss.
SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY	Any gender, more experienced at teaching Grinching and has more patience. Mentor to Killjoy.
PING PONG SUGAR PLUM	Any gender. An elf, has a lot of toys in pockets, aspires to be a leader
PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE	Any gender. An elf, really likes cookies.
GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR	Female (any gender). An elf, likes to look nice.
SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS	Any gender. An elf, skeptical of the Grinching 101 class
PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS	Female (any gender) An elf, bff with Happy Eggnog Twinkles
JOLLY GINGER ORANGE PINECONE	Male (any gender). An elf. Has a crush on Peppy Fruitcake Fuzzy Nose
HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES	Female (any gender). An elf, bff with Peppermint Glitter McButtons
MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY	Female (any gender). An elf, top in her class.
CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER	Male (any gender). An elf, not super smart.
FROSTY SNOWBALL WONDER	Any gender. An elf, a strong minded Christmas Elf
COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH	Any gender. An elf, perpetually upbeat and positive
PEPPY FRUITCAKE FUZZY NOSE	Female (any gender). An elf. Has a crush on Jolly Ginger Orange Pinecone
FLUFFY MCWAFFLES TART	Any gender. An elf. Doesn't like the sound of jingle bells
TOOTSIE FROSTED COOKIE STOCKINGS	Any gender. An elf, loves videogames
ELVES	Unlimited number of ensemble elves.

#### <u>Setting</u>

A classroom in the North Pole.

# EXCERPT

AT RISE: A classroom in the North Pole, around Santa's Village. Grinches, KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL and SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY, are the teachers of Grinching 101. Sourpuss is experienced at teaching and Killjoy, his former pupil, is new to teaching. The classroom is filled with bright-eyed eager elves, dressed in appropriate elf attire: PING PONG SUGAR PLUM, PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE, GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR, SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS, PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS, JOLLY GINGER ORANGE PINECONE, HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES, MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY, CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER, FROSTY SNOWBALL WONDER, COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES, THE FOURTH, PEPPY FRUITCAKE FUZZY NOSE, FLUFFY MCWAFFLES TART, TOOTSIE FROSTED COOKIE STOCKINGS.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

All of you who are early-raise your hand!

(Half the class raises their hands)

SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY

All of you who are on time, raise your hand!

(All but Glitzy Waffles Giggle-Bear raise their hands)

**KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL** 

Those of you who just raised your hand... (KILLJOY and SOURPUSS look at each other)

CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER

Did I win? Do I get a prize?

PING PONG SUGAR PLUM Can I get a prize too? I'd like a super soft blanket shaped like a taco that I can—

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL No one won! In fact, you have all FAILED your first test in Grinching 101!

CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER

I took a test? Jolly! Was I sleeping during it?

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY

You all failed simply by arriving because if you expect to be a grinch, you will never be on time, and certainly never early.

Even if there are free cookies?	PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE
Never!	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
It appears that this elf— (pointing to Glitzy Wa	SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY ffles Giggle-Bear)
what's your name? Glitzy Waffles Giggle-Bear.	GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR
Ugh.	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
Yes, it appears this Gilfrey Watson—	SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY
Glitzy Waffles—	GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR
Glitzy Watson Bubblegum—	SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY
Glitzy Waffles Giggle-Bear.	GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR
Whatever!	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
It appears she is the only one who ar	SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY rived late.
	GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR

I was having my cap's pom-pom fluffed.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

I wish I could un-hear that.

#### HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES Oh my Rudolph, you look so cute, Glitzy Waffles Giggle-Bear!

#### PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS

Prettier than a peppermint!

#### PEPPY FRUITCAKE FUZZY NOSE

Brava to her!

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

No, no, no! Stop complimenting her looks! You'll never be grinches with those attitudes!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY-DUDDY

Well, it's not easy for them, Professor Killjoy Cactus Snarl. Remember what it was like being an elf trying to become a grinch? Learning to despise the scent of sweet pine and sugar cookies for the glorious stench of a sewer on a hot day?

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

It seems so obvious.

#### SOURPUSS

But it wasn't then. It doesn't happen instantly.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

I don't know how you've managed to teach for so long! I've only just started and already I want to drop old banana peels and rotten eggs on their heads!

#### JOLLY GINGER ORANGE PINECONE

Gross!

FLUFFY MCWAFFLES TART

We aren't garbage disposals!

#### SOURPUSS

I remember a certain bright-eyed elf who came to me wanting to be a grinch when he still preferred the sounds of Christmas music over the screeching of nails on a chalkboard.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Was I ever that ignorant?

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

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It's just a different way of life, Professor.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

All right, I suppose I will try to have a little more sympathy for their utter ineptitude.

#### CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER

Our "utter" what-now?

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Exactly.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

We will start slowly, at the bottom, and we'll work our way up to Skilled Grinchhood soon.

Ha!

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

So class, we've learned our first lesson: that grinches arrive late. And they arrive late because they don't care who they inconvenience.

#### GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR

Well, I care. I just wanted to look nice.

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Lesson Number two: Grinches don't care if they look nice or not.

MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

Can I share a lesson now?

ELVES

Yes/Oh, please do!

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

No!

#### MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

It's just—I've been the top of my elf class four semesters in a row. So if you need me to teach some, I could—

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

This is grinching class! Not an elf class!

MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

Right, but I can recite all the elf skills in alphabetical order. A: Acrostic Poetry writing. B: Building snow castles, Building snow forts, Building snow houses—

Stop! Stop!	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
Okay, fine! I'll move to Cs. There's a l	MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY ot for this letter though, so get comfy.
Okay!/Sure thing!	ELVES
Christmas Apple-Baking—[Christmas	MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY S Applesauce Making, Christmas]
Why is she still talking? Professor! M	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL lake her stop!
All right, Elf. What's your name?	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY
Merry Berry Cheery Cherry.	MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY
What?	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
Merry Berry Cheery Cherry!	ELVES
Well, Merry Blah Blah Blah. We get t	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY he idea. About your list. You can stop now.
Fine, but they seem way more intere have said yet.	MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY ested in the lesson I was teaching than anything you guys
	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Okay. Let's review our first two lesson. Should a Grinch be on time?

ELVES

Yes!

No!

### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

#### PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE

But if there are cookies, then it's okay.

COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH

Oh, yes! As the old elf adage says, "If ever there are cookies near—"

ELVES

"An elf should be there, fast, with cheer!"

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

No! Why are you quoting elf adages! You want to be grinches, don't you? And we just told you the answer a minute ago! Professor Sourpuss, this is clearly the worst class in the universe!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Class, show Professor Killjoy Cactus Snarl how smart you are by answering this review question. Does a grinch care if she or he looks nice?

#### PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS

We totally have to always look nice.

#### **KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL**

No!

#### HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES

Please! Like I would leave the bedroom if my ears were perfectly pointy.

PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS Right? That would be so embarrassing, Happy Eggnog Twinkles.

HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES

Right, Peppermint Glitter McButtons?

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Wrong wrong wrong!

#### GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR

But that's why I had my cap pom-pom fluffed of course! And you said I won—although still waiting for my prize...

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

No one won anything! And now you're demoted to—to—Number 12, Glitzo the Clown!

#### GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR

Oh!

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

And this peppermint egg pair, you're in the last two places!

#### PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS

Rather be last than ugly.

#### HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES

High five.

#### (PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS and HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES high five)

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

But that's—that's not what a—a—!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Step back a moment, Professor Killjoy. Close your eyes, imagine the most relaxing scene you can think of... perhaps a child's disappointed face when she wakes up Christmas morning to discover all her toys have been stolen.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Oh, that's helping some.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Good. Keep imagining.

(to class)

Now, class. You're clearly not doing well answering correctly at this point. But we've barely begun the class, so don't get your stockings in a knot. I'm going to split you into two groups for a learning activity that will shed light on all things Grinch.

Can I be the leader of my group?	MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY
I don't care.	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY
Yay!	ELVES
	PING PONG SUGAR PLUM

I'll be the other leader.

#### ELVES

Hooray!

MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

You're gonna do awesome, Ping Pong Sugar Plum!

PING PONG SUGAR PLUM

So will you!

#### CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER

Can I have a present now, Professors?

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

(moving toward Chippy Sweet Nutmeg Glitter in fury) You impertinent little—

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Professor, your happy place...?

#### **KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL**

Fine.

(turns back to close eyes and relax)

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

This half of the class, assemble over there with that elf. (pointing to Ping Pong Sugar Plum) And the rest of you, congregate over there with the know-it-all elf.

#### MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

Thank you, Professor!

(ELVES shuffle into groups)

(Group 1: PING PONG SUGAR PLUM, PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE, GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR, SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS, PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS, JOLLY GINGER ORANGE PINECONE, HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES.)

(Group 2: MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY, CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER, FROSTY SNOWBALL WONDER, COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH, PEPPY FRUITCAKE FUZZY NOSE, FLUFFY MCWAFFLES TART, TOOTSIE FROSTED COOKIE STOCKINGS)

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Now here is your assignment: Work together quietly to change a Christmas Elf Adage into a new Grinch Adage. Before you do so, here is lesson number three: When you wonder how a grinch should think, remember that whatever you like as an elf, the opposite is the case for a grinch. Consider your five senses: smell, touch, taste, hearing, sight. So let's take the sense of hearing. If, as a Christmas Elf, you like the sound of reindeer hooves on the snow, as a grinch, you would *hate* that sound and prefer the sound of, say, an alarm screeching in your ear. Here's an example about touch. If as a Christmas Elf, you like the feel of a soft puppy, as a grinch, you would *hate* the feel of a puppy and you would prefer the feel of something like a pricker bush or moldy hair caught in a drain. Do you understand?

ELVES

Oh, yes!/Of course!/Clearly!/Now I get it.

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Wonderful. Now get to work! You have...one minute!

(ELVES work quietly in their 2 groups)

(to Killjoy)

Have you calmed down now, Professor Killjoy Cactus Snarl?

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Trying to. I was daydreaming about putting cockroaches in all the Christmas pies! (chuckles)

Can you imagine the squeals as they chew down to hear that cockroachy crunch? Little legs getting stuck between the teeth.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

A perfect scene.

#### **KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL**

Indeed. And then I open my eyes and see this group of smiling, cheerful, pom-pom fluffing elves, and my blood boils as if I'd just been given a hug by a rainbow!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

No grinch likes to see smiling elves. That's only natural. But I've never had a class this full before. In fact, you were the only pupil in my last class.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

And that was a century ago.

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

So you can see it's been very hard to recruit elves who want to be grinches. I fear we'll become obsolete if we don't pass down our ways. And they're the only candidates we have right now.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

I know, I know. But Professor, I'm afraid I might not be cut out to teach them like you are. I appreciate your taking me under your stinky hairy arm, but you see, I have no patience.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

That's because you're a good grinch.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

I had a good professor.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Thank you.

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

But how can I be a good grinch and also have patience to deal with happy elves? With happy names? That make me want to vomit? It seems impossible to be both and yet you do it somehow.

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Well, that's because, over the years, I've discovered something...very unusual about the grinch and elf relationship.

#### PING PONG SUGAR PLUM

We're ready!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

And in order to be successful, I've had to embrace it.

#### TOOTSIE FROSTED COOKIE STOCKINGS

We're ready too!

### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Reindeer droppings! Be quiet, elves! The grinches are talking!

#### PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE

Can we go first?

#### COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH

Of course you can go first!

**KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL** 

What did you discover, Professor?	
Thank you! Unless you want to?	PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE
mank you: oness you want to:	COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH
No, it's okay! Be happy!	
You be happy!	PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE
	COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH
No, you be happy!	
	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

killing mo insidel

## No one, be happy! You're all killing me inside!

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

We'll talk more later, Professor. But their minute is up. Now class, go ahead. Group 1. What is the old Christmas Elf Adages you chose and how did you transform them?

#### PING PONG SUGAR PLUM

Thank you, Professor Sourpuss Fuddy Duddy. Okay, so the Christmas Elf Adage we chose was...

"Making a toy always brings joy."

MERRY BERRY CHEERY CHERRY

That's a good one!

HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES

lsn't it?

SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY And the new Grinch Adage based off of that one?

GROUP 1

PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE Right! You're gonna love this one, Professors!

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Are we?

PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE

Ready? Here it is!

"Making a toy always brings joy."	GROUP 1	
(pause)		
Wow, that's good.	FROSTY SNOWBALL WONDER	
But that's not—	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL	
I wish I thought of that one.	CHIPPY SWEET NUTMEG GLITTER	
Me too!	PEPPY FRUITCAKE FUZZY NOSE	
KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL That's not a new adage! That's just the same one! You didn't even say it differently!		
The assignment was to <i>change</i> the that, Group 1?	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY Christmas Elf Adage into a Grinch Adage. Did you understand	
Yes, we did.	PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS	
Absolutely.	HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES	
(sighs) Group 2, what do you have?	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY	
Okay, well, our Elf Adage is "Feed th	COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH ne reindeer day and night—"	
"Give them love, make them feel br	GROUP 2 right."	
That's very wise.	PING PONG SUGAR PLUM	

And what is the new Grinch Adage y	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY ou transformed it into?
"Feed the reindeers day and night—	COCOA PUFF HOLLY GIGGLES THE FOURTH
They better not do the same thing.	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
"Give them love, make them feel rig	GROUP 2 ht!"
Wow. Just wow.	PERKY RIBBONS BUMBLE PIE
I can't believe you thought of that!	GLITZY WAFFLES GIGGLE-BEAR
l just got chills.	HAPPY EGGNOG TWINKLES
Me too!	PEPPERMINT GLITTER MCBUTTONS
Poetry.	JOLLY ORANGE NUTMEG GLITTER
(to Sourpuss) Is it any different?	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
They changed "bright" into "right."	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY
But it's still all happy!	KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL
(to Killjoy) Yeah. Their vocabulary is limited. (to elves) Okay. Well, you all failed again.	SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

#### ELVES

What?/How can this be?

#### SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

I thought they were perfect! And if you think that's failing, I'm beginning to think maybe this class is a waste of time. You didn't even give me new fuzzy mittens yet!

#### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

(to Silly, about to explode) Why on North Pole would I give you—

#### SOURPUSS FUDDY DUDDY

Now, take a breath. Remember the cockroaches. This is a teachable moment, Professor. Use it.

#### **KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL**

(calming down) Fine. Then let me ask you this. Have you had success on your own becoming a grinch?

SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

Well-

### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

(walks closer to Silly. Smells something near Silly) What's that I smell on you?

#### SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

What?

### KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Is it the scent of...orange...clove and roasted chestnuts?

#### SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS With a little bit of brown sugar, of course! This morning I made the most delicious—

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL A grinch doesn't smell delicious! Look at your socks.

#### SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

What about my socks?

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL Red and white? Are you wearing these colors ironically? Sarcastically?

SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

Everything I own is red and white and green.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

A grinch never wears red and white! You—

#### SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

Silly Cinnamon Socks.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL

Of course. You need this class more than anyone else in here! You've been demoted to last place! Now do you still think this class is a waste of your time?

SILLY CINNAMON SOCKS

I kind of think it's more of a waste of my time now actually. Still waiting for those new mittens.

KILLJOY CACTUS SNARL You're not getting mittens! I think I might lose it, Professor!

# END OF EXCERPT



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#### ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Tara holds her MFA in Dramatic Writing from Carnegie Mellon University, is a member of the Dramatists Guild, and is the recipient of numerous theatrical awards, including The Sloan Screenwriting Fellowship, The Bradford Gromelski Jury Award, The Shubert Fellowship in Dramatic Writing The New Works for Young Women [Actors] Award, The Write Stuff Award, and The Arts Alive Recovery NY Regrant Award. Her 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. 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 countless universities, colleges and schools. 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. Additionally, she has script consulted on several animation and VR projects and once wrote monologues for a receptionist robot long before AI was commonplace. Tara has taught Playwriting at Carnegie Mellon, the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, The Westport Country Playhouse, and numerous Theater workshops for children. She lives near NYC with her creative husband and kids, and fluffy cat, Kiwi.

During the Christmas season, you might find Tara enjoying hot chocolate while watching somewhat-cheesy Christmas movies, hosting a Candy Cane Hunt for kids or a Christmas Mystery Party for adults, or building strange snow creatures in the yard.



For more information about Tara Meddaugh or her work, visit her website at www.tarameddaugh.com.

For permission to perform, contact tmeddaugh@gmail.com.