

HUBBLE BUBBLE

By

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Synopsis

Phoebe and Seline need to recruit a third witch for 'that' play. The only applicant is Harper, a Gen z-er and the audition doesn't augur well. Is she even speaking the same language?

Characters

Phoebe – an off-duty witch. Assertive and impatient

Seline – an off-duty witch. Submissive and kindly.

Harper – a young woman with a phobia – and an interesting vocabulary.

Setting

A simple interview setting of a small table and 3 chairs (either in a room or a forest!)

Feel free to add a cauldron or other appropriate props.

Production note

Seline and Phoebe should be made up to look witch-like but not dressed as such.

HUBLE BUBBLE

It is night.

Silene sits at the interview table. Phoebe paces.

Phoebe: She should be here by now.

Seline: Stop worrying, Phoebe. It's only just gone ten.

Phoebe: She'd better have a good excuse. I can't abide lateness.

Seline: There is still time. The moon has not yet risen. Though why we always have to do this at this time of night is beyond me.

Phoebe: It's traditional.

Silene: But surely in this day and age –

Phoebe: Tradition is important. If it wasn't for tradition, Silene, we'd be out of a job. I swear it's only tradition that keeps this show on the road.

Seline: I suppose you're right.

Phoebe: As it is, we have to constantly fight for the rights of women in this industry.

Seline: But Phoebe, you do know of course, that traditionally all the parts were played by men.

Phoebe: Yes, well, that's one tradition that certainly needed to go.

Phoebe continues pacing then looks out to the horizon.

Phoebe: It's just starting to rise. Where the hell is she?

Seline: She'll be here. She sounded very – er – keen on the phone. Young, but definitely keen.

Phoebe: But if she was really keen, she would have made the effort to be early.

Seline: Perhaps she missed the bus or something. They're not very frequent at night.

Phoebe: Then she should have allowed more time.

Seline: These things happen.

Phoebe: Well I think it's indicative of poor work ethic.

Seline: She's only five minutes late.

Phoebe: Disrespectful. This is a waste of our time.

Seline: Phoebe, give her a chance.

Phoebe: Why? She's clearly not going to be suitable.

Seline: For Goodness sake, Phoebe, be reasonable. We're not exactly overflowing with applications. We might have to take what we can get.

Phoebe: Hmm! (*Beat*) We should advertise again.

Seline: There's no time. We open in a week.

Phoebe: Then I think we should delay the opening.

Seline: We can't. All the sponsors are coming to opening night. And without them, there wouldn't be a show.

Phoebe: But Seline, even if this girl is suitable, she will need more than a week to learn the lines.

Seline: We'll get by. I'm sure they can ad-lib a bit. I mean, it's not like the audience actually knows the script.

Phoebe: Ad-lib? Ad-lib? Do you remember the last time that happened? When Luna, God rest her soul, totally forgot her lines, and made up some mumbo-jumbo during the spell?

Seline: Don't be hard on dear Luna. She was pretty old and past it by that stage. The poor thing struggled to remember her own name.

Phoebe: It's just as well we don't have names in the play then, isn't it?

Seline: It is one less thing to have to remember.

Phoebe: But what was Luna thinking of? The wretched cauldron burst into flames and set fire to the curtains.

Seline: Poor thing got fixated on the 'Fire burn and Cauldron bubble' line. It was the only one she could remember.

Phoebe: But to throw in her lighted candle...

Seline: At least she did make a rhyming couplet. Quite clever I thought. 'For a charm too hot to handle, Let me add a lighted candle'.

Phoebe: Yes, I'm sure the fire brigade appreciated that! And anyway, people do know the script. I guarantee there are people out there who have seen Mac ...

Seline: (*Quickly*) AH! The Scottish play.

Phoebe: Who've seen the Scottish play at least half a dozen times. We are the most famous witches in history.

Seline: True.

Phoebe: Well, if we can't delay the opening, then we should work on making it rain. I have had more than enough of open-air theatre anyway. It's so weather dependant.

Seline: Still, look on the bright side. At least there are no curtains to burn.

Phoebe: But the cold plays havoc with my arthritis. What say I get the book out? She's clearly not coming.

Knock at the door.

Seline: There you are. She's here.

Phoebe: About time.

Seline: Phoebe, be nice.

Phoebe: Huh!

Seline: Come in.

Harper, enters. She wears mirrored sunglasses and avoids looking directly at the witches. She immediately turns to take an Instagram post.

Seline: Er – yes. Please do come on in. We don't bite.

Harper holds out a hand and completes her post. The others roll their eyes.

Harper: Minute.

Phoebe: Huh!

Seline: I'm Seline and this is Phoebe.

Harper: Sup.

Seline: Please, take a seat.

Harper: (*Affronted*) What, me? Take a seat?

Seline: Er, yes. This one.

Harper: Ah! Soz. Where to?

Seline: Sorry?

Harper: Where d'ya want me to take it?

Phoebe: (*Under her breath*) Oh, no.

Seline: Oh, no, I mean, please sit down.

Harper: Oh, right. (*Sitting*)

Seline: Phoebe, would you like to start?

Phoebe: No, no. Be my guest.

Seline: Right. Well then, welcome Miss Wayward –

Harper: Not Miss. Mux.

Seline: Pardon?

Harper: It's gender neutral.

Phoebe: (Under her breath) Oh shit.

Seline: Right. Well, Mux Wayward –

Harper: Harpy.

Seline: Sorry?

Harper: You can call me Harpy. It's, like, short for Harper.

Phoebe: Not exactly though, is it?

Harper: S'cuse?

Phoebe: Shorter.

Harper looks confused.

Phoebe: Never mind.

Seline: So, Harpy. You've applied for the position as witch number three.

Harper: Bet.

Seline: And you've read the job description and understand what the role entails?

Harper: Reck'n.

Seline: Well, that's a good start. Um, Phoebe, would you like to ...

Phoebe: So, Mux Hayward ...

Harper: Harpy.

Phoebe: Harpy, what made you apply for this role?

Harper: Well, I like, need a job. I like, went for one at Maccas, like, but didn't get it. Which is OK like, cos working at Maccas is like, real cheugy now. But, like, this gig seems quite lit.

Phoebe: Lit?

Harper: Yeah, like it really hits different, y' know, and so it'll be like, a good fit for a main character like me.

Phoebe: Pardon?

Seline: A main character?

Phoebe: I wouldn't exactly call witch number three a main character.

Harper: Course not. I mean, like, how could they be? Cos, they're like a witch, right?

Seline: (Confused) Right.

(Beat)

Phoebe: Perhaps, Harpy, you could describe to us what you qualities you think you would bring to the role.

Harper: Well, I don't like to flex but like, I've got rizz.

Seline: Rizz?

Harper: Yeah, like I've got over a thousand followers. Y'know – my Instafam.

Seline: Oh, thousand. So, you'd be able to bring in an audience then. That's good isn't it, Phoebe?

Phoebe: Hmmm! And what other qualities do you have that make you right for this role?

Harper: Aw, that's easy. I've got youth and beauty.

Phoebe: Youth and beauty?

Harper: Well, I mean, I don't want to like, drag you, but like, you've got to appeal to the younger generation. No cap. It's all about your drip these days.

Seline: Drip?

Harper: You know – style. You have to look snatched. I mean, no one wants to look at old hags.

Phoebe: But we are witches. We are meant to look like old hags.

Harper: Look, I'm not dissing you or nothing, but you two need to like, glow up.

Phoebe: Grow up? (*Standing*) How dare –

Seline: Sit down Phoebe. She said glow up.

Phoebe: What does that even mean?

Harper: You know, like, get some transformers.

Seline: Some what?

Harper: Like, beauty treatments. Lips, brows, butt. Whatever it takes.

Phoebe: Hmm! (*Standing again, smiling tightly*) Seline, can I have a word?

(*Seline and Phoebe move to one side.*)

Phoebe: (*Whispering*) You have got to be kidding me. This is a total waste of time.

Seline: Just give her a chance, Phoebe. She's young. We have to move with the times.

Phoebe: If you say so.

(*Seline moves back to the table*)

Seline: Harpy, I need to explain that this production is one hundred percent traditional Shakespeare. There will be no – no – beautifying of the witches. We will be as we always have been – warts and all.

(Harpy shudders.)

Harper: Ick. Right.

Seline: So, are you still interested in the role?

Harper: It depends.

Phoebe: On what, dare I even ask?

Harper: On if you can you accommodate my disability.

Seline: Your disability?

Phoebe: What disability? You look perfectly normal to me.

Harper: OK Boomer. Disabled people are normal people as well, you know.

Phoebe: *(Taking a deep breath)* I apologise. Yes of course they are.

Harper: I mean, like, not all disabilities are obvious, are they?

Phoebe: No, you're right. Obviously.

Seline: *(Quickly)* We do pride ourselves on being an inclusive company, so, Harpy, if I'm not invading your privacy, and if you are comfortable to talk about it, may I ask what exactly is your disability?

Harper: Cacophobia.

Phoebe: A phobia. So it's nothing physical then.

Harper: Well, no. It's -

Seline: Good, in that case, I'm sure we can work around that.

Harper: That's Gucci.

Phoebe: Gucci. Right.

Seline: Well then, if you are ready Harpy, we'll move on to the audition part of the interview. Have you prepared a monologue?

Harper: Er, no. I wasn't sure what that was.

Phoebe: You've come for an audition and don't even know a monologue is?

Harpy: No need to get salty.

Phoebe: What?

Seline: *(Quickly)* Not to worry. We'll get you to just read from the script.

(Seline hands over a script. Harpy peers at it)

Phoebe: It might help if you took off your sunglasses.

Harper: I can't.

Seline: Ah, you have a fear of light.

Phoebe: Well, that's not going to work is it

Harper: No, fear of light is photophobia. Like number 403.

Phoebe: What?

Harper: On the list of phobias. There are 541, like, named phobias.

Seline: Are there? That's an awful lot.

Harper: No cap. I suffer from cacophobia.

Seline: Fear of chocolate? Oh you poor thing.

Harpy: No, cacophobia. Number 87. It's –

Phoebe: Look, it doesn't matter what number your phobia is, you will need to take off your sunglasses.

Harper: But, like, you said my disability was no deal.

Phoebe: Yes, we did say that, but we didn't realise that your – disability – would mean you need to keep your sunglasses on.

Harper: Well I do. It won't stop me from, like, performing my duties so, I mean, like, I can't see the problem .

Phoebe: No. The problem is we can't see you.

Harper: Yes, you can. You just can't, like, see my eyes.

Phoebe: Precisely.

Harper: And that's, like, a problem is it?

Phoebe: Yes.

Harper: But that's like, discrimination. I don't think you can, like, not employ me just because I wear glasses.

Phoebe: But they are sunglasses. Mirrored sunglasses.

Harper: So if I was blind, would it matter?

Phoebe: Yes – No - Possibly – oh shit. I don't know.

Harper: So you'd take a blind person but not someone with, like, cacophobia? I reckon the Minister for Disabilities would have something to say about that!

Seline: Look, Harpy, there's no need to go that far. I'm pretty sure we could find a way to work around the sunglasses.

Phoebe: Harpy, will you excuse us for one moment? *(Aside)* Seline? What the f...

Silene: We have to make this work. Beggars can't be choosers.

Phoebe: But –

Silene: Phoebe, it'll be alright. Trust me.

Phoebe: Huh! On your head be it.

Seline: Harpy, we've had a think about it and agree –

Phoebe: Have we?

Seline: Yes. There's no reason why you couldn't wear some kind of mask to go over your sunglasses. I'm sure the Props master could come up with something sufficiently hideous.

Harper: *(Starting to panic)* Hideous? Oh no. I couldn't wear that.

Silene: But it would just be a mask, dear. In fact, it would be a lot easier than gluing on all those warts every show.

Harper: Warts? OMG! That's whack! No. No I couldn't.

Phoebe: Why ever not?

Harper: Because – because – then I'd be – you know – *(Can hardly say the word)* fugly!

Phoebe: Exactly. Then you'd look the part. You'd look like an ugly, warty, old witch.

Harper: *(Very distressed)* Argh! Don't. Don't say it. *(She puts her hands over her ears)* You said you'd like, be OK with my phobia. Oh shit. I am high-key stressed.

Silene: Harpy, dear, you haven't actually told us what cocoa – whatever it is – actually is.

Harper: Not cocoa - cacophobia. It's a fear of – of – *(She starts to cry)* Oh, this is agony.

(Phoebe looks up cacophobia on her phone)

Silene: There, there. It's alright, dear. Here, dry your eyes. *(She hands over a tissue)*

(Without thinking Harper takes off her sunglasses and dries her closed eyes. She opens her eyes and sees Phoebe and Silene. She stands frozen with fear for a moment, then grabs her sunglasses and runs off, screaming. She stops at the door and runs back for her phone, shielding her eyes. Exits)

Seline: Oh dear. I wonder what upset her.

Phoebe: Here it is. Cacophobia – irrational fear of ugliness.

Silene: Really? I don't think it was a thing in my day.

Phoebe: No. Typical of this generation. Everyone has to be beautiful, it seems.

Silene: Hmm. It's a good job we didn't have our make-up on then.

Phoebe: Indeed.

The End