

# Erased from History

A Ten-Minute Play

by

Matt Fotis

Copyright © Matt Fotis  
773-369-8566  
shantz100@msn.com

#### CHARACTERS

CELESTE	60, female. Future survivor of the Titanic.
LEONARD	42, male. Future architect of The Lusitania. British.
HANNIBAL	30, male. Abraham Lincoln's future first term vice-president.
CHARLIE,	13, male. He is from the year 2010 and is on the boat due to a clerical error.
DODO BIRD	A Dodo bird. Future extinct species. Can be played by a person in a bird suit or by a stuffed animal if one doesn't happen to have a man sized Dodo Bird suit handy. You know what, just use a stuffed animal.

#### SETTING

A lifeboat that is not on water or on land. A place between places. There is a rather large apple in the middle of the boat.

#### TIME

A time where there appears to be no time. Or the present.

THE PLAY

(CELESTE, LEONARD, HANNIBAL, CHARLIE and DODO BIRD are all on a lifeboat. There is a rather large apple in the center.)

CELESTE

Have we? Died?

LEONARD

It very readily appears as though we are, how do you Yanks say, suspended in time.

CELESTE

Good sir!

HANNIBAL

At ease woman. Shipwrecks happen all the time. Someone will find us.

LEONARD

I don't mean to quarrel with you...?

HANNIBAL

Hannibal Hamlin. Mr. Lincoln's future vice-president. Very important person.

LEONARD

Very well and good, Hanny. But I don't suppose you quite understand our predicament.

CELESTE

Do you? Mean to imply? Good sir!

HANNIBAL

I'm the governor of Maine.

CELESTE

Oh? Sir? Is that? An important post?

LEONARD

I'm sure it is to ol' Hanny here. Not quite like building one of the great ocean liners of the century.

CELESTE

I was? Aboard that ship. The band played on.

LEONARD

Not that one lady, the Lusitania.

CELESTE

Lusi? Tania?

HANNIBAL

Disgusting! Is that your mistress? There's a child!

LEONARD

You Yanks don't follow your history much do you?

HANNIBAL

I was, well will be, am only a few votes away from the presidency!

CELESTE

Good sir!

LEONARD

Well, thanks be to God for that. Can we stop, how do you Yanks phrase it, beating around the proverbial bush?

CELESTE

You intend? To beat us? Into submission? There are children on board.

CHARLIE

Um, excuse me. Is this biology? Ms. Harrison's class?

LEONARD

I don't know what this is chap.

CHARLIE

Oh. I think my schedule might be wrong. What's with the bird?

HANNIBAL

I thought he was with you. A companion of sorts.

CELESTE

I need to get back to my parakeet. Fret not Ferdinand!

CHARLIE

Do you think maybe you could tell me where Ms. Harrison's room is?

LEONARD

How did you get here?

CHARLIE

It's my first day of school. Junior High. I think there might have been a mistake. I'm supposed to be in Ms. Harrison's biology class.

LEONARD

(Taking the schedule from Charlie.)

Let me see that.

(Reads.)

Hmm. Interesting. What is Shop?

HANNIBAL

Let me see that. Hmm. Interesting. What is Shop indeed?

CELESTE

The bird is going to eat us if we don't do something! He's devouring me with his eyes!

CHARLIE

I don't think so ma'am. Dodo's are harmless.

CELESTE

Not this one! Mark, my words!

LEONARD

It appears you are here by mistake young man. Clerical error.

HANNIBAL

Tough break kid.

CHARLIE

How do I get to Ms. Harrison's class?

LEONARD

The sixty-four thousand dollar question.

CELESTE

What?

LEONARD

I don't know. Just came to me.

HANNIBAL

I oversaw the-

LEONARD

Well you didn't actually oversee anything Hanny. You were seated at the children's table.

HANNIBAL

How dare you!

CELESTE

Please? Stop fighting?

(They finally notice that DODO has a note.)

The bird has a note.

HANNIBAL

From Lincoln? You see, he needs me.

LEONARD

Not for a second term though.

CELESTE

It appears to be? From, the apple.

LEONARD

Easy fella. Just give ol' Leonard the letter.

(He struggles mightily with DODO. Cries of advice, support, fear and inquires about directions to Ms. Harrison's class can be heard. He eventually takes the letter.)

Man wins again! Will nature ever just give up?

HANNIBAL

(Taking the letter.)

Let me see. Ah, exquisite penmanship for produce.

LEONARD

(Taking it back and reading.)

This apple will take one of you back to your life. The other four will be erased from history.

(Normal.)

Rather to the point wouldn't you say?

CELESTE

I can't? Die? I'm the last survivor of the Titanic.

LEONARD

Well, certainly wouldn't want to deprive the world of that.

CELESTE

Are you? Speaking—

HANNIBAL

I think it be only fair that I absquatulate with the apple.

CELESTE

Good sir, do you mean to imply? Are you suggesting? That it would be more appropriate for you to take leave? Of the fruit?

LEONARD

I think the world will get along without you Hanny. How did the fruit put it, aren't you already pretty much erased from history?

HANNIBAL

If we weren't in the company of a lady, child and Dodo Bird I would deliver a sockdologer straight to your brow sir.

CELESTE

For shame! You two fighting like children. I am, a woman. Women and children first.

CHARLIE

Shouldn't I go?

(Pause. Nobody wants to say 'no.')

LEONARD

Charming, I'm sure. But this is not the Titanic. Without me The Great War would have no end.

HANNIBAL

I could design a boat.

LEONARD

Ship! And that old bird could govern Maine. No offence intended dear.

CELESTE

Why! I never!

LEONARD

Exactly. So it is down to me and Hanny.

CHARLIE

And me.

HANNIBAL

Right. And the boy.

CELESTE

Who will tell the world our story? Of the cold cold water-

LEONARD

One of the other thousand survivors. They'll make a moving picture show.

HANNIBAL

I encouraged the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

LEONARD

Bloody hell, we signed one decades earlier. And no offense mate, but you didn't actually do the signing now did you? I'm the only one here that actually did something.

CHARLIE

I'm the only one who might still do something.

LEONARD

True, but you can't even find your biology class so the outlook is rather, how do you Yanks phrase it, Grim.

CELESTE

Surviving is nothing to you? Good sir!

LEONARD

You've a knack for it. So naturally you should stay.

HANNIBAL

Why should you get to leave? Your boat sank.

LEONARD

Ship! So you bloody Yanks can join the war.

HANNIBAL

And...?

LEONARD

And save the world. My, you Yanks sure like to toot your own horn.

HANNIBAL

It seems to me that you are doing all of the tooting.

(CELESTE and CHARLIE laugh.)

CELESTE

Some day that will be funny. I don't know why.

(HANNIBAL grabs the apple.)

CELESTE

No!

LEONARD

Think about this mate. The world can go on without you. What are you Yanks always saying, I fear you shall go the way of the dodo. Without me we're all in trenches for the rest of our lives.

CHARLIE

I really need to get to class.

CELESTE

What about the women and children? Have you no? Decency? Good sir!

LEONARD

I hear that Hanny encourages decency but doesn't actually-

HANNIBAL

How dare you!

(Taking off a glove and slaps LEONARD.)

I challenge you to a duel Mr. Peskett! Celeste, be my second.

CELESTE

What about? The children?

LEONARD

Fair enough. Typical Yank, let's fight it out. Very well. Charlie, I suppose that leaves you as my second.

CHARLIE

What about the bird?

LEONARD

I prefer to ignore it. Hopefully he'll just go away.

CHARLIE

Oh.

LEONARD

Right. I choose the weapons then.

HANNIBAL

I insist.

CHARLIE

Apples.

CELESTE

Good sir!

HANNIBAL

What?

LEONARD

Apples. Bravo boy! I believe according to the rules I bring the weapons. Oh, would you look at that. I only brought one for me.

HANNIBAL

You varmint!

CELESTE

Men have ruined civilization. I should go back.

LEONARD

I'll do all that I can to send the apple back, my love.

(Just as he is about to take a bite everyone grabs for the apple. There is a struggle as they each fight to take possession of the apple. Eventually as the others get entangled DODO BIRD takes a bite. There is a flash of light and then a blackout and then the lights immediately come back up. DODO BIRD and the apple are gone.)

LEONARD  
What-? I- Where's the bird? The apple!

CELESTE  
The children?

HANNIBAL  
Hobswallower!

CHARLIE  
Are we trapped here?

CELESTE  
Trapped? Here? Good sir!

HANNIBAL  
Forgotten again. Nobody cares about the vice-president.

LEONARD  
Cheer up ol' boy. You can be vice-president here.

CHARLIE  
(Reading his schedule.)  
What time is it?

LEONARD  
By my count it's half past three.

HANNIBAL  
You've got to account for time difference. Half past nine.

CELESTE  
I don't have a watch.

CHARLIE  
I'm supposed to be in homeroom at 9:30. I've gotta go.  
(CHARLIE gets up to leave.)

LEONARD  
No! Don't get out of the boat.

CHARLIE  
Why?

LEONARD  
You'll...um...just stay in the boat.

CHARLIE

No thanks. You guys are kinda creeping me out.

(He steps out of the boat. The lights flash, go black and come back.)

LEONARD

Just us three then.

CELESTE

Did he? The boy? Is he?

HANNIBAL

No.

CELESTE

How do you know?

LEONARD

I'm leaving too then.

HANNIBAL

Okay.

(Nobody moves. Pause.)

So it's just us three then. What should we do?

LEONARD

Wait for the bird to come back.

HANNIBAL

I think we have to wait for our turn.

LEONARD

I hope it doesn't take too long.

HANNIBAL

Here here.

CELESTE

I'm sorry? Who are you two again?

(The lights slowly fade as they sit in silence.)

THE END