

# Madame Mandze Goes to Niall

An Overview of Responsibilities for the Creation and Execution of a Children's Show

By Molly Zupon

## WRITING

The idea from the script came from when I was taking the class THSP 2030 Into Scriptwr/Playwrtg (which I would highly recommend to take before anyone tries to write a script; in the class we go over proper format and construct of a script.). We had an exercise where with a partner we created a outline of a story; the only requirement being that it had to be futuristic. I paired with Travis Sjaaheim and together we thought up a story based on an inside joke pertaining to a show we were both in. There was a character played by an actor that irritated us (with the way that she danced) and we wanted to send her into space, thus creating the first prototype called "Madame Cobweb Goes to Space", basing the name off of the actual name of the character in the show. It started out with characters directly based on Travis and I, (they even shared our names) living in the future, watching this girl dance and the Molly character getting fed up with Madame Cobweb's incessant dancing and using her evil genius to shoot her out into space. That's where the first version of this story left off. The more I thought about the story (and my impending honors/theater project), the more I wanted to develop it; and when I asked Kay if I could do the Children's Tour this year and got the thumbs up, I decided this was the story I wanted to use.

The Travis and Molly characters stayed in the show, but evolved into brother and sister, both having some fun stereotypical traits (such as incompetence, or an overbearing nature). I also wanted to create or find names that spoke of an era we haven't identified with yet, names which are unfamiliar and strange. I found these names by doing a basic baby name search and clicking on nationalities that are not western. For the most part I knew the beginning letter the name should start with, and then I compromised with which I was given. Travis and Molly became Cedric and Vatusia and Madame Cobweb became Madame Mandze. I knew that I wanted to change Madame Cobweb into our hero (protagonist) and I wanted to give her a name that made alliteration with the Madame (since I enjoyed the way it sounded) and that gave the impression of a little girl's name like Mandy or Meggy but was just different enough to insinuate the future. Cedric was the same, a less heard of name that implied perhaps nerd tendencies, and was a little too adult for the bearer of the name.

Vatusia's name was carefully selected to create an image of someone who maybe wasn't the nicest girl. As for the aliens, I wanted really fun names that were not gender specific, unlike the human names. The twins, Gauri and Gargi can easily swap genders much like the others, Quillian and Filib. Just to prove that Filib could be a female's name, I referred to the "she" pronoun when it was unavoidable in the script, but such details can be worked out after casting. I also wanted there to be a definite leader of the group, hence Master Aoko's name. He (or she) had to be separated from the others just by title alone.

The story line needed to follow a logical flow, and although I didn't plan on there being any certain number of scenes, three seemed to work out just fine and had the "beginning, middle, end" sequence that signals to the audience where the story is going. I did run into occasional problems, such as how to incorporate ideas into the story without interrupting the flow. For example, there needed to be a reason why there were only five of the aliens (or Miri) left on the planet. I had to work in a story, a sort of narration, which should be avoided as not to bore the children, but completely necessary in my story. I also debated for a long time just exactly how the Miri became close to extinction. I didn't want to insult the children's intelligence, but I didn't want to scare them either. I finally settled on the story that is told how the dinosaurs died out, the idea of a meteorite hitting the planet. This then was an idea that they've possibly already identified with, made sense, and was easy to work into the story without causing much damage to the flow. I also wanted to work in a way of Mandze's talents being under appreciated at home, but completely awe-inspiring in a different environment. The idea that the Miri were nomadic and desperate to find others of their kind lent kindly that their way of life and celebratory/ritualistic culture had disappeared. This created a window of opportunity to have Mandze share something that was so simple to her, yet completely foreign to the Miri, generating a bond between the two. This was then the principle of the show; that even though someone does not approve of something you love does not mean that everyone in the world (or universe even!) feels the same way. This was another goal; to create a simple yet effective "moral" to the story line so that the children went away amused and educated at the same time.

#### CASTING

Together with my stage manager Christal Solomon, I planned for auditions. She created the audition sheet template, and created the 8 x 11 posters announcing auditions. The days leading up to the auditions were sparse with this advertisement (it was done more last minute than anything), so I wasn't too shocked when I didn't exactly have the biggest turn out. If I had been more organized, I would've done huge posters in the union weeks in advance. Another draw back was that the original plan was to do the tour over the spring break to cause less frustration with missing classes due to the tour. We would not be in school yet the children

would be. This could have been a deterrent for anyone unwilling to sacrifice their spring breaks for the show. I had eight parts to fill, none of which I wanted to take on (I didn't want the whole thing to become "The Molly Show" so I wanted to refrain from casting myself) so I was satisfied with the eight people who auditioned. Casting is hard, you never know if you've made the right decision until it's too late to reverse things. I took some chances with my casting, and was very pleased with the results. The people in my show were talented enough to have played several of the parts and would have done fine with the roles but I was very happy with how the show evolved due to the casting choices I had made. Each person wore his or her character very well and even without much direction took them to new levels.

**DIRECTING** The rehearsals were extremely laid back, and on purpose. I wanted this show to not be a chore or a dreaded event, but a social activity where we came together for an hour to create something fun. And since the show was only a half an hour in length, I didn't want the actors to get bored with the show or peak too soon. There was an issue with excessive chattering in the "back stage" area, but I wasn't too worried. These were people who had all done theater at BSU before and I knew what they were capable of doing when it came down to it. I blocked the scenes before the rehearsal and we ran what I had, working out awkward crosses or giving the actors business. I always accepted ideas and criticism and openly welcomed their input, anything to make it easier on them and the show better, but there was the underlying understanding that I was the director and ultimately this was my vision and they all respected that. This process went very smoothly, only once did we have a problem with an actor forgetting about rehearsals. There was also a slight issue regarding tardiness, but nothing too huge that took away from the quality of the show. Unfortunately, in the middle of this process we got some bad news. The schools that we had already set up performances at were pulling out. With no reasons given, we were left with a show and nowhere to put it on. My actors then got their spring break returned to them, and we made plans to put the show on at BSU later in the month of March. Finding a performance space was no easy task, both theater spaces were reserved for other things, and the last option we had before moving our show out of Bangsburg was to ask to use the Recital Hall. This wasn't as easy as it seemed, I had to go through a bunch of paperwork and approvals before we got the thumbs-up to use the space. In the end, the show worked extremely well in the space. Of course, I had designed the show to be portable, so it was flexible and thank goodness for that! This even gave my stage manager cues such as bringing the house lights down and cuing the actors. I was very happy with how the show went, save for a few blocking things that in the end I didn't enjoy, but that was my fault, not the actors. And this didn't interfere with the flow of the show, so I say it went off well.

**COSTUMES/MAKE-UP** I took the opportunity to design my own make-up and costumes for the show. This really allowed the characters to grow in the direction that I wanted them to go. From taking my costuming class in the fall, I knew what kind of time commitment costuming my actors would be and what kind of limited resources I would have. I also was familiar with the costume shop and knew where to find things so it made sense that I was the one who costumed the show. Just because I would find something perfect for the characters didn't mean it would fit the actors, so there was some trial and error, but fortunately most things fit my actors on the first try. I also knew that I wanted the aliens to look as un-human as I could manage with their costumes. This was possible through the costumes Kay had made for the show "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and the masks she had bought for the faires. This worked perfectly because these costumes were fun, glittery, fantasy-like, and bright. Because I wanted them to be removed from humans, I wanted to cover their hair, or give them hats to create height and variation. For my human characters I choose to put them in as bright of colors as I could find. I also wanted to accentuate the hair for the humans, so I put the girls in brightly colored wigs; royal blue for Mandze, black and florescent pink for Vatusia, and Cedric used bright orange spray-in temporary hair dye. For Vatusia, I wanted the idea of villain to be insinuated so she wore more black than any other character. I found a dress that worked perfectly; black knee-length with multicolored polka dots all over. She also wore black shoes and bright purple stockings. Mandze I had problems finding an outfit for, since she has a bigger bust, but I augmented a yellow dress that worked very well. Cedric was the easiest of the humans to costume; bright green shorts and an orange top that reminded me of Ernie off of Sesame Street. I only had to design make-up for the humans, and basically it was using a base to make their skin appear smooth and unblemished and coloring in their eyebrows to match their hair/wig color.

**SET/PROPS** I also designed the set and props for the show, which was somewhat of a hassle. I knew the biggest problem was going to be creating the machine that zapped Mandze into space. It had to be easily portable, but big enough to hide a full-sized person in. It also had to allow for Mandze to slip away unnoticed. The solution I came up with was creating a three-sided cubicle made out of Styrofoam and held together with hinges so that the foam could stand on end and support itself. For the backdrop, I used what was created for the winter musical "A Little Night Music", a curtain suspended by poles on either side. This wasn't the most stable thing (it was on casters and moved around easily) and the curtains weren't long enough to sufficiently hide the actors (which was very important; the aliens could not be seen until their entrance). I found hidden away in a box way in the back of the costume shop old curtains used for some children's show long since past. They were perfect. They had bright red, yellow and blue polka dots all over. It was like a circus theme. So I stapled the material onto the

wooden frame of the existing curtain holder and created the perfect backdrop for my play. There wasn't much for props besides the machine and the tools used to "build" it. I found some fun toys in the prop room such as a children's squeaking mallet that got used very effectively in the show by my creative actors. I also wanted some silver shiny tools so I borrowed a few weird instruments from the costume shop, such as a highly adaptable tool that later I found out was used to pick up pins off the floor. It was long and spring-like with a magnet at the end, and it swayed back and forth in the actor's hand. I also had some random miscellaneous tools just for noise effect (they got dropped several times) and aesthetic purposes.

#### OTHER

Things that worked: having a stage manager! She took care of a lot of behind the scenes stuff that I would've gone crazy over. She also was super organized, something I can tend to lack. My cast really worked too, but I was extremely lucky to have found such a great cast. It was sad about the schools pulling out on us, but we made the most of what we had, so I am very happy about the whole thing. I was able to use a ton of theater skills that I had accumulated over the years effectively, and made a show that not only pleased me, but several audiences of people! I would do it again if I had to, there is no doubt about that!! If someone is interested in writing/producing a children's show, there are some things they should consider taking or looking into before jumping into the project.

- THSP 2030 Into Scriptwr/Playwrtg
- THSP 3660 Stage Costuming
- THSP 2720 Children's Theatre
- THSP 2510 Theatre Form And Process
- THSP 3550 Stage Directing
- THSP 2600 Technical Theatre

All these classes were instrumental in getting me the end result I got. I was educated on theater, the process, and specifically the angle of children's theater, directing and writing. All this plus help from my advisor, Kay Robinson, my stage manager, Chrystal Solomon and my actors made my show possible.

#### Bibliography

*Theatre for Children: A Guide to Writing, Adapting, Directing, and Acting*, by David Wood with Janet Grant, Copyright 1979, 1999 by David Wood and Janet Grant. Faber and Faber Ltd.

MADAME MANDZE GOES TO NIALL

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A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY

MOLLY ZUPON

### Cast of Characters:

- Madame Mandze: Happy-go-lucky and carefree. She enjoys life, especially dancing.
- Vatusia: A mad, misunderstood scientist, she finds dancing of any kind annoying and invents machines to rid her of dance. Unfortunately they almost never work.
- Cedric: Her older brother who got the shallow end of the gene pool. His bumbblings often times results in the failure of his sister's experiments.
- Aoko: Leader of the Miri on planet Niall.
- Gauri and Gargi: Twins on the planet Niall. They say everything together, or at least finish each other's sentences.
- Filib: The shy Miri who always has the best ideas.
- Quilian: A googly-eyed Miri. Occasionally tweakish, this Miri is fun and spontaneous.

### Scenes

A futuristic habitat pod made for life on a different planet. The year and time are ambiguous.

A distant planet named Niall. All the action takes place on the same day.

Scene I

SETTING: A simple set to insinuate the future. Homey, yet futuristic.

AT RISE: It is midday. We see MANDZE come out from behind the set (perhaps a curtain or back-drop) dancing.

MANDZE(singing)

La la la laaaaaaa. I loooooove to daaaaaance!

(She notices audience)

Oh hello there! My name is Mandze. Welcome to my pod. It isn't much but it's home. Oh silly me, I'm sorry. When I say pod I mean 'house'. It's what you live in when you live in space like I do! I live here with my family and my friends. My dad is a computist. He puts together networks for interplanetary communication. My mom is a researcher for Unfound Planets. Oh look! Here comes my friends, Vatusia and Cedric!

(Whispers to audience)

Vatusia can get crabby but Cedric and I secretly dance when she's not looking.

(Giggles with glee then dances)

VATUSIA

Cedric! Hurry up! I want those vapor inducers up here right away!!

CEDRIC

(Enters, overloaded with random silver parts)

Vatusia, I can't carry these all by myse...

(He suddenly drops all the parts on the floor)

VATUSIA (shrieks)

NOOOOOO!!! Their magnetization! You dolt!

CEDRIC

Sorry...

MANDZE

(right up in VAT's face)

Hi Vatusia.

VATUSIA

Augh! Don't... **do** that!



MANDZE  
(teasing her)

What? Would you rather have me dance?

VATUSIA

Ooooooh no, no I think not.

MANDZE (dancing)

What? I can't hear you! I'm dancing!

VATUSIA

Nonsense! How can dancing affect your ears? Cedric, how can-

(She notices he's slightly dancing)

**Cedric!** Stop that! Back to the vaporizer!

MANDZE

(Suddenly interested)

What are you making, Vatusia? Another beat destroyer?

CEDRIC

No! Remember I accidentally stepped on the fibulator! This is a new machine and it's totally cool. We're gonna-

VATUSIA (interrupting)

Will you zip it? No, Mandze it's not a beat destroyer. That machine was fluff. Child's play, a precursor to what real power I can unlock! Now I've got the end of dance within my grasp. With this machine, dance will totally be eradicated forever! **Bwahahahaha!!**

MANDZE

But why do you want to get rid of dance?

VATUSIA

(Mocking MANDZE in a high-pitched voice)

Why do you want to get rid of dance?

(Normal voice)

Because you fool! Dance is a waste of time.

(Going over to pile of silver parts)

We need that extra time to do experiments! Why, after our forefathers unlocked the secrets to living on different planets, we've got no time to spend wasting on silly things like dancing or having fun! We need to work! We need to discover! We need to- **Cedric!**

CEDRIC

(Who had been dancing with MANDZE  
suddenly stops and acts innocent)

What?

VATUSIA  
(Up to CEDRIC)

I'm going to get the extra parts. You behave. I'll be checking up on you!!

CEDRIC  
(Watches her go, then to MANDZE)

Aw Mandze! I wish I could dance like you! You always have so much fun!

MANDZE  
Well why don't you? Why do you let Vatusia boss you around?

CEDRIC  
Well...  
(He moves closer to whisper)  
I don't know!!!

MANDZE  
Oh! Well, we should take advantage that she's gone and dance right now!

CEDRIC  
I don't think that's possible Mandze. You heard what she said. She's going to check up on me to make sure I'm not dancing.

MANDZE  
I've got an idea! Let's use our friends to watch out for Vatusia!

CEDRIC  
Our friends?

MANDZE  
(Motions to the audience)  
Yeah, these friends. Will you help us? You will? Oh good! Now, you just have to let us know if you see Vatusia. Just point to where she is and say, 'stop'. We'll know what you mean. That way we can dance! Are you ready Cedric?

CEDRIC  
I don't get why they have to say the word 'stop'. I mean, it's so boring. Why can't they say the word 'buggaloziaflapwartpah'? It's my favorite.

MANDZE  
Look, do you want to dance or not?

CEDRIC  
(He thinks then solemnly nods)

MANDZE

Good!

(To audience)

Now remember you point and say stop, not 'blahblahwartyplah' or whatever Cedric said.  
All right Cedric, let's dance!

(They do so, suddenly we see VATUSIA  
appear. The children react and CEDRIC and  
MANDZE whistle and stare at the ceiling)

MANDZE

Whew! That was close! Okay Cedric the coast is clear!

(They continue dancing and once again  
VATUSIA appears and they pretend  
they are playing rock paper scissors)

Is she gone? Common, Cedric, cut a cyberrug!

(Once more VATUSIA peeks her head  
around the corner and MANDZE  
and CEDRIC crash into each other  
VATUSIA disappears, snickering)

CEDRIC

Mandze, this is getting dangerous! I think we better play something else.

MANDZE

What could be better than dancing?

CEDRIC (thinking)

...When you drink soda and the bubbles tickle your nose. Ha ha, that's the coolest.

MANDZE

Cedric! Common, I love it. I'll even teach you a dance!

(to the audience)

And you guys too! I'll sing it and you can join in whenever you feel comfortable!

(singing)

Now first things first you move your hand like so

(humming)

And as you're doing that move your head to and fro

(humming)

And once you've got that, you're doing fine

(humming)

Common everybody it's dancing time!

Daaaaaancing! Everybody loves Daaaaaancing!

It's so much fun! For everyone!

And now you're dancing too!

CEDRIC

I didn't quite get that. Could you sing it again?

MANDZE

Sure! Common everybody!

(she repeats song and at the  
end of the song she claps)

Wow! That was great Cedric! I didn't know you could dance like that!

CEDRIC (shy)

Well I couldn't -until you taught me Mandze.

VATUSIA

(Entering with more parts)

I thought I heard singing. I don't suppose there was... dancing then too, was there?

MANDZE (coy)

Maybe...

VATUSIA

Well, no matter. My machine is nearly finished. **Cedric!** Grab that pair of fibotransmitters and hurry. We are on the brink of a new scientific discovery! An expedition down untravelled roads... we are about to make **history**, Cedric!

MANDZE

You say that every time, Vatusia!

CEDRIC

Yeah and every time something either blows up or starts on fire... uh, maybe I should stand over here...

VATUSIA

Oh no you don't. I need you right... here. I also need... I need...

(Her eyes fall on her prey)

I need **you** Mandze.

MANDZE

**Me?!**

VATUSIA

Yes, to...test it out. Make sure it works.

MANDZE (shrugging)

Eh, what will it hurt? Nothing you've ever made has worked before. But you have to promise that you'll quit bugging me about dancing all the time.

VATUSIA

Yes yes. Whatever. Now get in!

(Excitedly to herself)

Oh boy oh boy oh boy! I think this time it's going to work!

(Clearing her throat)

Now, just for the scientific record, how do you feel?

MANDZE

Bored.

VATUSIA

Well, not exactly what I was looking for but fine, fine. What about any sensations? Do you have any sensations?

MANDZE

Well I might need to use the toilet soon if that's what you mean.

VATUSIA

(To herself)

There is something I've missed. What did I do wrong?

CEDRIC

(Who has been worried)

**Speak to me Mandze! Are you all right??!**

MANDZE

I'm fine, Cedric. Vatusia, how long do I have to stand here?

VATUSIA

Just a bit longer I-

(Realization)

Cedric, did you plug in the vaporizer?

CEDRIC

...No?

VATUSIA

Okay well hold on... there! Now, Mandze. How do you feel?

(Silence)

Mandze? ... uh, Mandze?

(They reveal her absence)

CEDRIC

(Wide-eyed)

What did you **do**??!

VATUSIA

I... I... don't know!

CEDRIC

I thought you said it was a popcorn maker!

VATUSIA

Well I flubbed a little! But what's one small detail? Common Cedric, let's get the machine out of here; we wouldn't want people knowing about our great discovery and stealing it from us now would we?

CEDRIC

Now wait just a darn minute. Vatusia, what happened to Mandze?

VATUSIA (guilty)

Uh... uh... she's gone. Somewhere in space.

CEDRIC

**What!!** Somewhere in space! Well let's just bring her back!

VATUSIA

I don't think that's possible, Cedric. I never installed a reverse option.

CEDRIC

So she's... lost... in space?

VATUSIA (sheepishly)

Yeah.

CEDRIC

(A look of determination,  
then he grabs Vatusia)

Well common, we're going to make a machine that's going to bring her back!

VATUSIA

(Shocked at Cedric's forwardness)

We are?

CEDRIC

If you can finally make a machine that works, there's a good chance that you can make two. Mandze is my friend, we have to help her! Common!

END SCENE ONE

Scene II

SETTING:

A distant planet.

AT RISE:

MANDZE walks out from behind the curtain. She is disoriented and scared.

MANDZE

(Nervously singing)

La, la, la... I love to dance...

(Nervous giggle)

La, la, la... gosh I'm scared. I've never been away from the pod before.

(One of the Miri giggles)

**What was that?** Uh, hello? ... It must just be my imagination. I'm just imagining I heard a really super scary giggle.

(Another Miri giggles)

**Ahhh!!** Okay. I heard that. I know I heard that.

(The twin Miri giggle together)

I'm okay, I'm okay. No I'm not! I'm on a really scary weird planet where hidden things laugh and no one knows how to find me! What do I do?

(She looks as though she might break down and cry but then an idea hits her)

Wait a minute. What is one thing I do that makes me happy no matter what? I dance! Maybe if I dance right now I'll feel better!

(She dances and the Miri slowly make their way out, MANDZE is lost in dance and doesn't notice them coming out. At the end of her dance they're All sitting around her in a circle)  
MANDZE (cont.)

Ahh, I feel much better! In fact I-

(Noticing the aliens)

Oh! Who are you?

AOKO (standing)

I am Master Aoko. Those are the twins, Gauri and Gargi

(Leans over to whisper)

although none of us know which is which. This is Quilian,

(Quilian is obviously excited)

and lastly this is Filib. We are the Miri. We live here. We haven't had any visitors since the reign of our last king. What brings you to Niall?

MANDZE

Niall? What's a Niall?

GAURI AND GARGI

Our planet. Don't you live on a planet?

MANDZE (intrigued)

Well of course, but I've never been outside the pod before. The air isn't breathable. So we live inside a big glass dome that reaches up into the sky.

GAURI

Gargi, what's a pod?

GARGI

Gauri, what's a glass?

GAURI AND GARGI

What's a sky?!

(They walk away  
whispering to each other)

AOKO

It sounds like you live in a mighty kingdom with many marvels. Tell me, are you the ruler? Is that why you have come?

QUILIAN

Pffft! Her? She's so small! She probably couldn't rule an ant hole!  
(He laughs insanely to himself)

AOKO

Do not be so quick to judge, Quilian.

(Back to MANDZE)

Why have you come to our tiny planet? Madame..?

MANDZE

Oh, Mandze.

(She curtsies)

AOKO (bowing)

Ah yes, Madame Mandze. Are you on a mission?

MANDZE

No, no mission. Just dumb luck. My friend vaporized me here because she didn't like my dancing.



QUILIAN

Is that what you called that crazy thing you were doing?

GAURI

(rushing over)

We thought she was signaling her people-

GARGI (joining)

-and saying that her butt itches!

(They both start crazily itching)

QUILIAN

No, no you ridiculous twins, she was measuring the gravity!

GAURI AND GARGI

(Shared look)

Itching!

QUILIAN

Measuring!

GAURI AND GARGI (loud)

**Itching!!**

QUILIAN (louder)

**Measuring!!**

FILIB

(Stands in the middle of the fight)

I think she was just trying to be happy.

(The fight immediately dies)

MANDZE

How did you know?

AOKO (smiling)

Filib never says much, but when she does she shares her heart.

QUILIAN

But why would you try to make yourself happy?

GAURI AND GARGI

Maybe she saw you and you made her mad!

(They giggle)

QULIAN  
(Pokes his tongue  
out at the twins)

MANDZE  
It was because I was scared. I'm here all alone. I got sent here against my will. I just  
didn't want to be sad anymore.

QUILIAN  
I hate being sad. Like when I get lice in my eyelashes.  
(He pretends to  
scratch at his eyes)

GAURI  
No, it's like when we lose our bubble gum in the bloko marsh-

GARGI  
-and then fall in after it!  
(The twins shake their  
heads in somber regret)

FILIB  
I don't think it matters what makes you sad. It's not a nice place to be.

AOKO  
Yes, and we Miri have had much hardship. We know too much about sadness.

MANDZE  
How come?  
(The Miri look at each  
other- it is story time and  
they all scramble around  
AOKO, impatiently waiting)

AOKO  
Yes, let me see. It was a long time ago. The world was suddenly covered in darkness  
when a big stone fell from the sky. Many tried to seek shelter underground, and many did  
not make it. After the air finally cleared our ancestors, few as they were, traveled the  
planet to find survivors. We are all that is left of the Miri.

(They all turn and give  
MANDZE puppy dog eyes)  
We used to celebrate. But that was hundreds of years ago.

MANDZE  
Well, how about I teach you dance? That way you'll be able to celebrate again!  
(The Miri look around confused)

QUILIAN

You mean you'll really teach us to move like you were doing earlier?

GAURI

Well, she's going to teach me-

GARGI

-and me

GAURI AND GARGI

But probably not you.

(Poking tongues out)

QUILIAN

Excuse me... I think you forgot someone.

GAURI AND GARGI

(Shared look)

Oh yeah!

(smug look from QUILIAN)

We forgot Filib!

(FILIB blushes)

MANDZE

I'm going to teach **all** of you how to dance! I'll start real simple so that you'll all be able to join me. You know what? I'll have my friends help me.

AOKO

Friends?

MANDZE

Yeah, these guys!

(Motions to audience)

They helped me teach my friend Cedric how to dance. They'll be great at teaching you guys how to dance. Is everybody ready?

(Mandze sings song)

Wow! That was great everybody!

GAURI AND GARGI

We danced, we danced!

QUILIAN

That was the neatest thing I've ever experienced! It makes me feel fizzy!

FILIB

Thank you so much!

AOKO

What a wonderful thing to give to the Miri; a gift that will be reciprocated. Name your wish, Madame Mandze and we will do our best in fulfilling it!

MANDZE

(Looks around guiltily)

Well, even though I just met you all, I feel close to you. You found me when I was lost and made me less scared. But I miss the pod, and my parents. I miss Cedric, and even Vatusia who sent me here. I just want to go home. Hey! Maybe you could come with me! Since you're all that's left of the Miri! Mom and dad wouldn't mind! Please?

AOKO

(Turns to the Miri)

Well?

(They nod enthusiastically)

Then it's settled. Your wish is our command, Madame Mandze!

MANDZE

Oh really? You mean it? Oh I'm so excited! So how do we travel?

AOKO

Travel?

QUILIAN

Oh no...

MANDZE

Well certainly, we can't go the way I came. Don't you have any way to travel?

QUILIAN

We use our feet! You mean there's another way to get somewhere?

GAURI

Yeah, Quilian it's called-

GARGI

-hitching a ride!

(They pick Quilian off the ground)

MANDZE

(After commotion dies)

Oh no, how will I ever get home?

AOKO

I am sure there will be a way.

QUILIAN

Well what are we doing just standing here? I say we search a way out! I'll find your travel for you, Madame Mandze.

(He leaves determined)

GAURI AND GARGI

(Following closely behind)

We'll help!

MANDZE

Wait! You don't know what you're looking for!

(AOKO rushes after her)

FILIB

(Just realized everyone left)

But I have an idea!

END SCENE TWO

Scene III

SETTING: Back at the habitat pod.

AT RISE: As the Miri escape off stage, Cedric comes on the opposite side. He is carrying the same parts he was carrying in scene one. His determination hasn't worn off, but Vatusia is exhausted.

VATUSIA

(Off stage)

Cedric, I need a break! I can't keep going like this! We've been at it for hours!  
(she stumbles on stage, panting)

CEDRIC

Nope. We don't rest until Mandze is back home safely.

VATUSIA

But, but, nothing we've tried has worked! I'm ready to give up!

CEDRIC

(A gasp of surprise)

**Vatusia!** Never give up on a friend you love! I wouldn't give up on you! And I know Mandze wouldn't give up on us, either.

VATUSIA

You... think Mandze would try to help me?

CEDRIC

Of course I do! She loves you! She tells me all the time!

VATUSIA

Really?

CEDRIC

Yes really. She doesn't understand you, but she loves you. Just like me!

VATUSIA

Oh... well we should probably make sure she gets home then!

CEDRIC

(Surprised)

Huh?

VATUSIA

What are you just standing there for? Hand me that fibotransmitter doohicky.

CEDRIC  
(Very pleased)

Yes ma'am!

VATUSIA  
Just a few more... there! Let's try it now!

CEDRIC  
(A bit nervous)  
Oh please-oh please-oh please-oh please let it work!

VATUSIA  
All right! Let her rip!  
(Suddenly QUILIAN pops out)

QUILIAN  
Wow! What a rush!  
(VATUSIA and CEDRIC gape)

GAURI AND GARGI  
(Coming out next)  
Let's do it again!

AOKO  
No no, I believe I have had enough fun. My, I am getting too old for this!

FILIB  
Look at how beautiful this place is!

CEDRIC  
(Into the machine)  
We didn't order this!

VATUSIA  
Isn't Mandze in there?

AOKO  
She was right behind us...

MANDZE  
(Dances out)  
Ta da!! Home! Home at last!

CEDRIC AND VATUSIA  
Mandze!!  
(They rush and hug her)

MANDZE

I missed you guys too!!

CEDRIC

I just have one question; what **are** these things?  
(Motions to the Miri)

GAURI

Look, Gargi, a pod!

GARGI

Look, Gauri, a glass!

GAURI AND GARGI

Look! A sky!

QUILIAN

I sure could get used to **this** place!  
(He touches the machine and  
a part of it falls to the floor)

It wasn't me!

FILIB

I told you guys if we just imagined ourselves here it would happen!

AOKO

You certainly did, Filib.

MANDZE

Vatusia, Cedric, I want you to meet the Miri! Those are the twins, Gauri and Gargi, that's Quilian, Filib, and Master Aoko. These are my new friends from the planet Niall!

CEDRIC

Well, welcome to our pod! How did she meet you all? Hey! Did you hear that? I'm a poet and I didn't even know it!

(He snickers)

AOKO

It was chance really. We just happened to be on that side of the planet today.

QUILIAN

She **danced** for us! Then she taught us to dance!

GAURI

She taught you to dance-



GARGI

-only because you happened to be standing there!  
(QUILIAN pokes tongue out)

CEDRIC

You guys are so lucky! She's so much fun to learn from!

VATUSIA

(Quietly)

Maybe someday she'll teach me how to dance?

MANDZE

(Coming over to her)

Well of course Vatusia, but I thought you hated dance?

VATUSIA

(Wistful)

Well, I always said that because... I was jealous of how happy it made you and how much attention people paid to you when you danced. No one pays attention to my inventions because they don't work. Usually. So I thought if your dancing was out of the picture, that people would notice me more.

MANDZE

Oh, Vatusia. People do notice you. My parents think you're going to be the greatest inventor this pod has ever had! It just takes time and practice to be good at something. Sometimes people have gifts, and other times we have to work for what we want but as long as we try, it all works out in the end!

VATUSIA

Thank you, Mandze. So how about that dance?

MANDZE

Yeah! And everyone who knows it can sing along!  
(Sings song and everyone  
chimes in, dancing and laughing)

CURTAIN CALL

THE END.

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

Student Junior Voice Recital Josh Nice, bass & Travis sjaahheim, bass University Band Home Concert	March 29, 7:30PM March 30, 3:00 PM
Tresca String Quartet	March 30, 7:30 PM
Brass Ensemble Concert	April 3, 7:30 PM
Jacqueline Tellers Junior piano recital	April 5, 2:00 PM
Molly Zupon Senior voice recital	April 12, 3:00 PM
Student Junior Voice Recital Brenda Kennedy, soprano & Dan Carpenter, tenor	April 13, 3:00 PM
Minnesota Orchestra Concert BSU Concert Series	April 24, 7:30 PM
Theatre Production: "The Weir" Black Box	April 25, 26 and May 2, 3 8:14 PM
Student Senior Recital: Candace Borgen, horn	April 27, 3:00 PM

# Bemidji State University Theater Department

Proudly presents in conjunction with  
Theater Unlimited

## Madame Mandze Goes to Niall

A Children's Play in One Act

By  
Molly Zupon

Friday March 28, 5:00pm  
Thompson Recital Hall

## Author's note to the audience

I feel like I identify with Mandze in many ways.

Growing up, I naturally gravitated to the performing arts. My first major decision was taking up the violin in fifth grade. Shy and awkward, but terribly in love with music and performance, I gave everything I had in my ten-year old body to making the best out of my squawking fifth grade orchestra. Much to my surprise, when I started to excel some of the children teased me, poking their violin bows into my back during class. It was disheartening, but I didn't give up on what I loved. Because of that determination, I am completing two degrees in both music and theater. I wouldn't have been as successful with either of these majors if I had let those children scare me away from my passion. All of us have gifts and it's up to us how far we push ourselves to learn about them and how we can benefit the communities we live in by sharing them. With hard work and determination, all of us can dream, dance, and sing along to life.

Enjoy the show!

## Cast

Madame Mandze	Jessica Cramer
Vatusia	Michelle Robison
Cedric	Andy Browers
Aoko	Steve Beal
Gauri	Robert Thomas
Gargi	Jon Olson
Filhb	Megan Gerlovich
Quillian	Jesse Whiting

## Production Crew

Writer/director	Molly Zupon
Stage manager	Christal Solomon
Costume/Props	Molly Zupon