

# TRUE COLORS

BY  
LEN CUTHBERT

TRUE COLORS

**TRUE COLORS**

Copyright (c) 2020 By Len Cuthbert

**CAUTION:** Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that performance of **TRUE COLORS** is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of The United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth) and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission of which must be obtained from the Author in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for **TRUE COLORS** are controlled exclusively by Next Stage Press. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance written permission and paying the requisite fee. Inquiries concerning production rights should be addressed to [licensing@nextstagepress.net](mailto:licensing@nextstagepress.net)

**SPECIAL NOTE**

Anyone receiving permission to produce **TRUE COLORS** is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author.

## TRUE COLORS

### SYNOPSIS

A youth theatre cast are preparing to stage the musical *Joseph* for a drama contest. Ironically, some of the cast members become jealous of the lead actor, who seems to be favored by the director. When they devise a plan to oust him, the production gets derailed and their chance to compete in the contest is jeopardized.

### SETTING

A performance stage in a school. Each scene takes place in rehearsal in the staging area. SR exits to the remainder of the school. SL exits to Mr. Wood's office and backstage.

### CAST (GENDER FLEXIBLE)

Mr / Ms Wood: The Teacher

Ed (Edie)

Pat (Patti)

John (Jenn)

Marty (Marnie)

Larry (Laura)

Ken (Kerri)

Steve (Stephanie)

Andy (Annie)

Harry (Heidi)

Brian (Brianne)

Charlie (Charlotte)

Nate (Natalie)

Dan (Danielle)

Rob (Rebecca)

Gill (Gillian)

Will (Wendy)

Frank (Fran)

Terry (Terri)

Jake (Jackie)

## TRUE COLORS

### **CASTING FOR DIFFERENT SIZE GROUPS**

The script is written for 20 characters. To adjust for more for fewer, follow the following guidelines to adjust the script.

- 21+:** Additional cast in addition to the 18 listed will play “extras”. Dialogue will include parts indicated by “ALL” and can be added where multiple responses are needed.
- 20:** Use as written
- 19:** Combine **ROB** and **FRANK**.  
Eliminate **Clique B** in Scene 1  
**CHARLIE** and **GILL** join **Clique D** in Scene 1 but have no dialogue in the group.
- 18:** Combine **ROB** and **FRANK**.  
Combine **NATE** and **GILL**.  
Eliminate **Clique B** in Scene 1  
**CHARLIE** joins **Clique D** in Scene 1 but have no dialogue in the group.
- 17:** Combine **ROB** and **FRANK**.  
Combine **NATE** and **GILL**.  
Combine **STEVE** and **CHARLIE**.  
Eliminate **Clique B** in Scene 1.
- 16:** Combine **ROB** and **FRANK**.  
Combine **NATE** and **GILL**.  
Combine **STEVE** and **CHARLIE**.  
Combine **KEN** and **BRIAN**.  
Eliminate **Clique B** and **Clique C** in Scene 1.  
**DAN** will join **Clique D** but have no dialogue in that group.
- 15:** Combine **ROB** and **FRANK**.  
Combine **NATE** and **GILL**.  
Combine **STEVE** and **CHARLIE**.  
Combine **KEN** and **BRIAN**.  
Combine **JOHN** and **DAN**.  
Eliminate **Clique B** and **Clique C** in Scene 1.

<b>Most Prominent Roles</b>	<b>Moderately Prominent Roles</b>	<b>Least Prominent Roles</b>
MR or MS WOOD	BRIAN (Brienne)	CHARLIE (Charlotte)
ED (Edie)	STEVE (Stephanie)	FRANK (Fran)
PAT (Patti)	NATE (Natalie)	WILL (Wendy)
MARTY (Marnie)	KEN (Kerri)	
ANDY (Annie)	DAN (Danielle)	
LARRY (Laura)	ROB (Rebecca)	
JOHN (Jenn)	GILL (Gillian)	
HARRY (Heidi)	TERRY (Terri)	
	JAKE (Jackie)	

# TRUE COLORS

## SCENE 1: 4 Days Before Performance

*Begin with the cast milling and chatting in groups. MR WOOD enters and stand on a box (or chair) facing audience. Costumes/props sitting on floor near an empty box. Any school items (coats, bags) that kids will collect as they leave.*

**MR WOOD.** Okay, great work today everyone. Come gather around. (*Everyone comes together in a circle around Mr Wood who is just slightly above the group.*) All right. We're down to the wire. Only three rehearsals until production night. We've got some work to do if we're going to win this Drama Festival this year. (*Groans.*) That is, unless you want to let Grimsby Collegiate take home the trophy ... again.

**ALL.** Not a chance / No way / Forget that / We can do it / It's ours this year / They're not getting it again

**MR WOOD.** Okay. Good. We've worked hard on this musical. Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat is a great show. Everyone here has the ability and talent to win. You are an amazing cast and great actors. And with Marty in the lead role we have the advantage this year. So, what is everyone doing tonight?

**ANDY.** Well my mom says she's taking me shopping to buy some underwear because –

**MR WOOD.** No, Andy. The answer would be, reviewing your lines.

**ANDY.** Yes. Of course. But that's after my mom and I go shopping to buy some underwear because --

**MR. WOOD.** Too much information Andy. Okay, everyone in together for the cast cheer.

**ALL.**

Red and Yellow, Green and Brown.

Antagonists tend to bring me down.

If you miss your cue once more.

We'll toss you out the Backstage Door.

TRUE COLORS

Strike! (*Everyone strikes a pose.*) Psych! (*Everyone holds out hand to shake with a partner but pulls hand up to side of head, as if to psych.*) Dislike! (*Thumbs down and turns away.*) (*\*Actions are suggestions. Other ideas can be used.*)

**MR WOOD.** See everyone tomorrow right after school. (*Mr Wood starts cleaning up. Cast will dissipate and form the following peer groups or cliques. The groups converse but are only audible one at a time.*)

**Clique A: CS**

**WILL.** Harry and I are going to see a movie tonight

**HARRY.** Yeh, Andy. You want to come along?

**ANDY.** Aren't you going to review your lines tonight?

**WILL.** Sure. There's lots of time after. You need to come with us.

**ANDY.** Can't. Not on a school night.

**HARRY.** You need to get out more. You're so pale you're practically transparent.

**ANDY.** It's because I'm Vitamin D deficient.

**WILL.** Your bones require Vitamin D, otherwise you end up spineless

**WILL / HARRY.** (*Look at each other and then ...*) Too late.

**Clique B: DSL. Exit SR after dialogue**

**GILL.** (*to MR WOOD.*) See you Mr. Wood.

**MR. WOOD.** Review those lines, Gill.

**GILL.** (*Leaving SR*) Yeh, I will. See you, Frank. See you, Charlie.

**FRANK.** See you, Gill.

**CHARLIE.** Later, Gill.

**GILL.** (*JOHN and PAT acknowledge GILL and move away. ED, ANDY and HARRY hang out together*) See ya tomorrow, Harry.

**Clique C: USL. Exit after dialogue**

**BRIAN.** So, like, give me a call when you get home and let me know if you can come to my party.

**DAN.** You know my parents will never let me.

**BRIAN.** Tell them you'll do the dishes for a week.

**DAN.** I already do the dishes.

**BRIAN.** Why? I mean, what do you use for negotiating power.

**DAN.** Nothing. I just trust my parents with their decision.

**BRIAN.** What planet are you from? Gotta go. Call me.

**DAN.** (*DAN picks up stuff and walks off SR.*) Yeh, sure.

**Clique D: USR. Exit after dialogue.**

TRUE COLORS

**STEVE.** Let's get out of here.

**KEN.** Sounds good to me.

**LARRY.** Hey, yeh. Wait up for me.

**NATE.** You got much homework?

**ROB.** Tons. You?

**NATE.** Just finishing up my project.

**ROB.** Project? What project?

**NATE.** Science.

**LARRY.** That's due tomorrow.

**ROB.** You mean like, in the morning?

**LARRY.** That's the only tomorrow there is.

**ROB.** I totally forgot all about that. Okay, like I'm dead. (*Everyone has left except Ed, Andy, Mr Wood, Harry, John and Pat.*)

**STEVE.** Let's get out of here.

**Clique E:** *USR. Exit after dialogue.*

**JAKE.** I'm not exactly sure why we have to be at all the rehearsals. We're the sheep. You and I are a herd of two sheep.

**TERRY.** Jake, my friend. Konstantin Stanislavski said that, "there are no small parts, only small actors."

**JAKE.** That's because Stanislavski was never a sheep. In fact, he wasn't even a shepherd. I could tolerate being a shepherd. But a sheep?

**TERRY.** Jake, my friend. Dabbs Greer once said, "Every character actor, in their own little sphere, is the lead."

**JAKE.** Terry, my friend. Pamela Denholm once said, "When was the last time you changed your socks?"

**TERRY.** Who's Pamela Denholm?

**JAKE.** My mother.

**TERRY.** What does that even mean?

**JAKE.** Ask my mother.

**TERRY.** Look on the bright side. Two sheep can make up to ten wool sweaters.

**JAKE.** I didn't even know sheep could knit.

**TERRY.** Okay. Listen. We were selected to be the sheep and we need to be the best sheep this musical has ever known. We need to be so good, we steal the show.

**JAKE.** We bleat. That's our dialogue. Bleating. It's also what a truck does when it's backing up.

TRUE COLORS

**TERRY.** And we'll deliver those bleats so passionately, we'll have audiences laughing and weeping so uncontrollably in the aisles, we'll win awards. We'll be headline news.

**JAKE.** Yes. It will read, "Who were the two wooly trucks stuck in reverse?"  
(*Leaving with Terry following*) In the words of R.E.M. It's the end of the world as we know it.

**TERRY.** Oh. Well, I feel fine.

**ED.** Can you believe that? "With Marty in the lead role we have the advantage this year" Gimme a break.

**ANDY.** Well Mr. Brooks did mention all of us.

**ED.** But he specifically said "Marty". There's seventeen [*or actual number of cast*] of us in the cast. Not just one. What's so special about Marty?

**ANDY.** He's a good actor. He's smart. He's good looking. He's kind and friendly. Everyone likes him and ...

**ED.** Rhetorical question, Andy. Rhetorical question.

**MR. WOOD.** Harry, don't forget your script.

**HARRY.** (*Picking up his script.*) Oh yeh, right.

**ANDY.** So, you got much on tonight?

**ED.** Yeh. Working on my lines for the musical, like we're supposed to.

**ANDY.** (*Leaving SR*) Yep. Me too. I'll catch ya tomorrow.

**MR. WOOD.** And your pencil. And your books. And your sweater.

**HARRY.** (*Takes them and then leaves.*) Sorry Mr. Wood. My mind must be somewhere else.

**MR WOOD.** Well see if you can locate your mind and bring it with you tomorrow. John and Pat, could you put some of the props back into the box before you go.

**JOHN.** Yeh, sure.

**PAT.** (*Moving Props.*) No problem.

**MR. WOOD.** (*Leaving*) Thank you.

**JOHN.** You're doing awesome on your part. You're the perfect Pharoah and I love your Elvis impersonation.

**PAT.** (*Does a little Elvis move.*) Well. Thank you. Thank you very much.

**JOHN.** Oh yeh. I feel my temperature rising. Help me, I'm flaming, I must be a hundred and nine.

**PAT.** I'm all shook up! We probably shouldn't go on together with suspicious minds.



TRUE COLORS

**ED.** (*Pat and John high five.*) You guys notice Marty was missing from rehearsal today ... again?

**PAT.** Yeh. I still don't know how he gets away with that.

**JOHN.** He's missed, like, I don't know how many rehearsals.

**ED.** Exactly. You know, it wouldn't be such a big deal, if it weren't for the fact that he's playing the lead role. But everyone else has to be here, no matter how big their part is.

**JOHN.** Well, maybe he's sick.

**PAT.** If he's sick that much, he shouldn't get the lead role or even be in the production at all.

**ED.** Maybe he figures that since he's "the star," he can come to rehearsals when he wants to.

**PAT.** I kind of wish Mr. Wood would say something to him about it. It's only fair to the rest of the cast.

**ED.** Actually, it's kind of irritating. Personally, I think Marty should be taken out of the musical and make me "the star".

**JOHN.** Uhhmm, but doesn't the word "star" imply "naturally bright"?

**ED.** Have you ever been camping and you're lying there, looking up at the stars, and think, those brilliant stars are just planets. And if there's life on them, there's people looking up at us thinking the same thing.

**PAT.** Actually, if I'm lying there looking up at the stars, I'm thinking, who stole my tent?

**JOHN.** Things that make you go, "hmmm."

**PAT.** Go home John. See you Ed. (*They leave.*)

**SCENE 2:** Three Days Before Performance

*All are sitting sort of a semi-circle, facing the audience, some sitting on boxes or similar.*

**STEVE.** Red.

**BRIAN.** Yellow.

**KEN.** Green.

**GILL.** Brown.

TRUE COLORS

**WILL.** Scarlet.

**FRANK.** Black.

**CHARLIE.** Ochre.

**NATE.** Peach

**ANDY.** (*Laughs*) That's funny.

**DAN.** What is?

**ANDY.** Ogre. You know – the main character in the movie Shrek ... (*Imitates.*) I'm an Ogre! (*Laughs.*) I'm an ogre – arrrgh! I'm an ogre.

**KEN.** It's not ogre. It's "occur."

**WILL.** No. It's not "occur". Occur is when something happens. This is ochre.

**HARRY.** That's what he said. Ochre.

**WILL.** He didn't say ochre. He said occur.

**NATE.** But it's not occur. It's ochre.

**WILL.** I know, but Harry said that he said ochre, when he actually said occur.

**BRIAN.** I'm confused.

**GILL.** I'm lost.

**FRANK.** I have no idea what's going on here.

**DAN.** It's a color, usually described as golden-yellow or light yellow brown.

**ANDY.** Really? (*Pause.*) Wow. Ya know, I didn't think ogre fit in there – which I guess is why I thought it was funny – although, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Ogre would be an interesting show to see, but I suppose that wouldn't exactly be as interesting as Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor ...

**ALL.** Andy!

**JOHN.** Things that make you go, hmmm.

**PAT.** Thank you Andy, for sharing your aimless random thought pattern but we only have twenty-four hours in a day.

**ANDY.** Sorry.

**STEVE.** Okay. Let's get back to rehearsing these colours.

**GILL.** Where were we?

**STEVE.** Let's just start again. Red.

**BRIAN.** Yellow.

**KEN.** Green.

**GILL.** Brown.

**WILL.** Scarlet.

**FRANK.** Black.

TRUE COLORS

**CHARLIE.** Occur.

**WILL.** Ochre!

**CHARLIE.** Ochre.

**NATE.** Peach.

**DAN.** Ruby.

**ANDY.** That's what I could go for right now.

**BRIAN.** What?

**GILL.** Ruby?

**ANDY.** A peach. Anybody else around here hungry? My stomach's screamin' at me.

**STEVE.** We're getting off track again.

**MARTY.** Yes, it's really important that we know this inside out.

**ED.** Well, fortunately some of us have been at all the rehearsals or we might not know any of the other lines.

**MARTY.** Is that supposed to mean something?

**ED.** Try reading between the lines. That is, if you have them memorized.

**LARRY.** Ed, leave it alone.

**JAKE.** (*to TERRY.*) I told Mr. Wood I didn't want to be a sheep in the play. So, he gave me another role.

**TERRY.** Really? Congratulations. What role?

**JAKE.** The toilet cleaner.

**TERRY.** There's no toilet cleaner in Joseph and the Amaz – oh wait, right. That's not good.

**JAKE.** That's what I thought and then convinced him to keep me the sheep because you and I had already memorized our lines together.

**TERRY.** Yes. It would have really thrown my timing off without your responding bleats.

**MR. WOOD.** (*Enters from SL.*) Okay, everyone. Let's take a ten-minute break. Marty, I need to meet with you.

**ED.** (*MARTY gets up and follows MR WOOD.*) There goes the "Director's Favorite." (*Pause*) I still think that I should be doing the lead role of Joseph.

**JOHN.** You're not still on that are you? What makes you think you could play Joseph?

**ED.** (*Sort of singing the part and "looking great"*) Because ... I look handsome – I look smart – I'm a walking work of art!

TRUE COLORS

**JOHN.** Yeh. You're a walking work of *abstract* art.

**STEVE.** What do you think Mr. Wood wants to see him for?

**PAT.** To kick him out of the musical, what else? He hasn't even been around.

**JOHN.** You don't really think he might ask Marty to leave?

**CHARLIE.** Of course not.

**BRIAN.** But he has missed a lot of rehearsals.

**DAN.** But he still knows the part really well and he's actually really good.

**ED.** Not important. Look guys, we've been here for every rehearsal and worked hard on this production while Mr. Wood lets Marty come and go as he pleases.

**HARRY.** I don't see the big deal.

**PAT.** Really, Harry. Think about it. You've spent a lot of time working on your part, right?

**HARRY.** What are you getting at?

**PAT.** Just answer the question Harry.

**HARRY.** Okay. Yes, I have.

**PAT.** And, you've never missed a rehearsal, is that right?

**HARRY.** Yeh. I mean, no I haven't ... yeh, that's right.

**PAT.** Exactly. All because you wanted to do the best you could for this show. And, tell me Harry, what was the part you were playing again?

**HARRY.** The Baker.

**PAT.** Ahh, right. The Baker. Yes, that's the part with all of – what, four lines? Hidden within a song.

**HARRY.** Ah ... yeh.

**PAT.** Right – and isn't it the Baker that gets – uhmm – executed? Hmm?

**HARRY.** Well ... yes.

**PAT.** So, even though you have this tiny insignificant role with very few lines, you, Harry, have given your best, memorized lines, developed your character and attended all the rehearsals. Correct?

**HARRY.** Yes. That's correct.

**TERRY.** I mean, even we attend all the rehearsals.

**BRIAN.** What role do you play?

**JAKE.** The sheep.

**BRIAN.** What sheep?

**PAT.** Now, on the other end of the spectrum, there's frontline numero uno Marty. He plays the lead role of Joseph. He has the most lines of anyone in the show. He

TRUE COLORS

has more solos than anyone in the show. He has more appearances than anyone in the show. BUT, does he attend all of the rehearsals? Nope. He doesn't. So, I guess you're right Harry. It really isn't a big deal, is it?

**HARRY.** Hey wait. Hold on a minute. That *isn't* fair

**CHARLIE.** Yeh, that ain't right.

**JOHN.** Well, doesn't that just make you go ... hmmm.

**ED.** And didn't Mr. Wood say we have a good chance of winning this drama competition ... not because of the Baker – not because of the Butler – and not because of any other MINOR role ... not even because of the Elvis impersonator ...

**PAT.** (*Imitates Elvis.*) Well, thank you very much. Thank you – (*normal.*) hey, wait. What do you mean by that?

**ED.** I'm sorry, I think I've forgotten who he mentioned our hero was. Who was that again?

**ANDY.** Oh, I know who it was ...

**JOHN.** Marty.

**ANDY.** (*Oblivious to JOHN.*) Wait ... wait ... I remember ... it starts with ... with ...

**JOHN.** M. Marty. It's Marty.

**ANDY.** Shoot, who was it? I remember it so clearly that I've forgotten.

**JOHN.** Andy!

**ANDY.** Me? No, no ... it wasn't me. I don't think it was. Wait. Wait! Marty! Right?

**JOHN.** Very good Andy.

**ANDY.** Thank you.

**BRIAN.** Maybe Ed's right.

**HARRY.** He is right.

**JOHN.** But it's not like we can do anything about it.

**ED.** I think we can. In fact, I think we should. I think it's our duty.

**WILL.** Duty? What do you mean by that?

**PAT.** I agree. For the sake of the show, it's our duty. We don't want this musical to bomb.

**ED.** Annd ... for the sake of us ... we don't want to look bad either, right?

**ALL.** (*except Larry.*) Yeh / Right on / For sure / Absolutely / Oh yeh

**LARRY.** Hold on everyone.

**ED.** Yes Lawrence?

TRUE COLORS

**LARRY.** Larry.

**ED.** (*Demeaning.*) Yes. Larry.

**LARRY.** I think we should think about this.

**PAT.** Larry thinks we should think about it. You don't care about the show?

**LARRY.** Of course I do, but ...

**PAT.** But what? You don't think we should do something about it?

**LARRY.** Well yeh, but ...

**PAT.** But, but, but ... but what? You're starting to sound like a confused sheep.

**TERRY.** Hey. I take offense to that.

**JOHN.** We need to unite on this one.

**FRANK.** I agree.

**PAT.** Are we wrong to care?

**STEVE.** But what should we do?

**FRANK.** Yeh. What can we do about it? We're not in charge and the show is just a few days away.

**ED.** I'm glad you asked. I have a great idea. One of you needs to write a letter to Mr. Wood and another needs to write a letter to Marty.

**FRANK.** Why are we writing them letters when we can just talk to them?

**PAT.** But the letters aren't from us. The letters are from each other.

**FRANK.** Ahh. Clever.

**PAT.** (*Pretends to dictate a letter.*) Dear Marty.

**ALL.** (*sung*)

This is to inform you

I sadly must inform you that,

Because you've been unable to

Attend enough rehearsal

You will not be able to perform in the musical Joseph

In fairness to the cast who have invested so much time

We felt this was the right thing to do

Blah blah blah blah

Blah blah blah blah

Blah blah blah blah blah

Signed, Mr. Wood.

**KEN.** So, if Marty gets that letter and leaves, won't Mr. Wood be suspicious that he just disappeared?

TRUE COLORS

**PAT.** Correct. So, we write one to Mr. Wood too. (*Pretends to dictate a letter.*)

Dear Mr. Wood!

**ALL.** (*sung*)

Thank you for selecting me  
The lead role of the musical  
Allowing me the opportunity  
To work with such a wonderful cast.

But you see unfortunately,  
I'm faced with this reality:  
My mother has quite suddenly  
Become very ill

So, This is to inform you  
I sadly must inform you that  
Because of circumstances that I really can't control  
I will not be able to perform in the musical Joseph

Blah blah blah blah  
Blah blah blah blah  
Blah blah blah blah blah

Regretfully signed, Marty.

**ROB.** And that will be the solution to our Marty problem.

**CHARLIE.** This is sounding great.

**ANDY.** It sure is. I just love getting letters in the mail. Don't you guys just love getting letters in the mail? It's so exciting and this is going to be such a surprise to both of them!

**ROB.** Oh, they'll be surprised alright.

**HARRY.** Sounds like a pretty good idea.

**FRANK.** It's brilliant.

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS – ORDER A COPY  
AT [WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.NET](http://WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.NET)***