

The Best Way Out

A political dramedy in Seussian verse

CAST:

Donald J. Trump (DJ) – white (or slightly orange) male, 50-70, recently elected POTUS, egotistical, greedy, pompous, unethical, and not terribly bright

Polly – white female, 25–35, sweet, hard-working, naïve, idealistic presidential aide

Nick – white male, 30–40, cynical presidential aide, who doesn't like DJ but follows him

Hannah/Anna – 1 actor plays 2 roles, both are female, any race, 25–40, representing two different organizations with the acronym of CARE

SETTING: The Oval Office, January 2017

POLLY & NICK stand in Oval Office. DJ enters to the sound of cheers offstage.

DJ:

I've made it! I won! Even though I'm not moral! Thanks to the college they call "electoral." I know I would have gotten *more* votes, too, if the booths weren't rigged by *you-know-who*. I'm *huge* with the good people in this great nation. You could see them all at my inauguration. *Millions* were there to see me take the oath. And I used *two* Bibles. I needed them both. My hands are *not* tiny like some people say. In fact *no* part of me *is*, by the way.

NICK (ASIDE):

His *ego* is surely as big as they come.

DJ:

Another big lie is that I am quite dumb. Which I know isn't true because I'm very smart. My brain is *this big*. (*Indicates with hands something huge.*) It's my most hugest part.

POLLY (LOOKING AT WATCH):

Oh, sir, it's time for your meeting with CARE. Should I bring her in, or will you go out there?

DJ:

I don't want to meet with someone right now. I'm hungry—in fact, I could eat a cow! Let's order in—what are you two eating?

POLLY:

I'm not hungry and we really *should* be meeting...

DJ:

Okay, just bring her in. Who'd you say she was?

POLLY:

Someone from CARE, but I don't know what she does. Ivanka set it up. So I'm sure it's fine.

DJ:

Any friend of Ivanka's is a friend of mine.

NICK (ASIDE):

And if she's young and *hot*, I'm sure it would be finer...

POLLY exits briefly and returns with HANNAH.

POLLY:

Sir, may I present to you... (*Looks at HANNAH, realizing she doesn't know her name.*)

HANNAH:

Steiner, Hannah Steiner.

DJ:

So CARE feeds hungry kids—isn't that what you do?

HANNAH:

Oh, that's a different CARE, which is a good cause, too. We provide support to people with AIDS.

DJ:

Oh, the gays, they love me—they do the best parades!

POLLY:

So you're not the relief group, but I still don't see...

HANNAH:

Comprehensive AIDS Resources & Emergency.

DJ:

So you don't know Ivanka?

HANNAH:

Not really, no...

NICK:

Should I call security?

HANNAH:

Don't bother. I will go.

NICK opens the door and CARE exits.

DJ:

Now it is time to select all my flunkies. I can choose *anyone*. I could pick monkeys! But first, let's get Steve on the NSC.

POLLY:

A *civilian* in charge of...security? He's not military or even CIA. He's racist and misogynist.

NICK:

And he's anti-gay. He also can't stand feminists and doesn't like Jews.

POLLY:

I hear he's pretty mean and doesn't like to lose.

DJ:

You're not saying anything that I didn't know. The point is he's my guy, he's right wing, and he's a pro. I want what I want, and I want it right now!

POLLY:

But how can we do that?

NICK:

Yes, please, show us how...

DJ:

Okay, first, keep your eyes on the prize! *I* start by spreading rumors and lies. Make people scared of who they don't know. Plant seeds of hate, and then watch 'em grow! Then when it happens, when I hit a nerve, I pretend to pitch straight. Then I give 'em my curve. I fake a few lefts, then I throw a hard right—

POLLY:

But that doesn't sound like you fight a fair fight!

NICK:

Sir, you're mixing metaphors. Please choose just one thing. Are you on a pitcher's mound or in a boxing ring?

DJ:

I'm great at *all* sports. I am very athletic.

NICK: (*ASIDE*)

His insecurity borders on pathetic.

DJ:

But a *fair* fight, my friend, is not the end goal. It's a *diversion*, so I can grab control.

POLLY:

You depend on people's fears and build on their hate?

DJ:

That's the core of my plan to make the U.S. great! For instance, I make an executive order to keep certain Muslims from crossing our border. While the fake news shows a protestor's sign, I quietly sneak Steve over the line.

NICK:

That's pretty devious. I'm kind of impressed.

DJ:

And that first tricky act is really a test. If that one works, I've got hundreds more. It's a deep-sea attack while they're watching the shore. (*POLLY takes a call quietly while DJ talks, then puts her cell away & turns to DJ.*) Jefferson B. Sessions will be a great A.G.

NICK (*ASIDE*):

Well at least we know that the *skinheads* agree...

POLLY:

I've just had a call—your ten o'clock's here.

DJ:

I could really go for some tacos and beer...

POLLY:

But it's not good to make people wait...

DJ:

Can't we just talk while I'm over a plate?

ANNA enters, offers her hand to DJ, who holds it and then yanks on it.

ANNA:

Thank you for your time, sir. Here is my report.

DJ:

I don't like to read. Give me highlights. Keep it short.

ANNA:

We at Citizens Against Racist Education--

NICK:

How many CAREs can there *be* in this nation?

POLLY:

So you aren't the group that helps feed the poor?

ANNA:

No need to show me out. I'll find the door...

ANNA exits.

DJ:

No more meetings with charity groups. Give me some action. Let's send some troops!

NICK:

Ready to start a new war right away?

POLLY:

But the rep from the *real* CARE may still come today. . .

DJ:

Say, what do you think of my health secretary?

POLLY:

To be quite honest, Tom Price makes me wary. What about ethics? That deal with the stock—

DJ:

Oh, ethics, shmethics! Tom Price walks the walk. He'll finally get rid of Obamacare!

POLLY:

But what's the replacement?

DJ:

I really don't care.

POLLY:

So you don't care about citizens' health?

DJ:

I'm too busy planning how to spend my wealth. *That's* what I'm aiming for. That's my *real* goal.

POLLY:

And you aren't concerned for the sake of your soul?

DJ:

My soul? But you see, I don't have one of those.

NICK:

Is that why your cabinet has Betsy DeVos? She's not qualified...

POLLY:

She's against Title 9!

DJ:

Now look, I don't pay you to sit there and whine! When I tell you to act, then I want you to do it!

POLLY:

But can we discuss your choice of Scott Pruitt...

DJ:

My cabinet pick to head up EPA? Scott is a great guy, a great guy, I say!

NICK:

He sued EPA for protecting our air. His campaign funds came from—

DJ:

Oh no, don't you dare! Just because he's friends with some oil-rich folks—

NICK:

And the fact that he thinks global warming's a hoax!

POLLY:

Don't you want experts who can truly *advise*? Not merely yes men who will just tell you lies?

DJ:

You don't understand—I don't *want* strong choices! Then I'd have to listen to all of their voices. I'll do what I want when I want to do it! If others don't like it, I'll tell 'em to screw it! I'm a man of the *people*—*they* like what I say! Some hang on my tweets and read them all day. Twitter, by the way, is the best communication; I can tweet out my anger and vent my frustration. The handy thing is I can do it while I tan. I can do it while I'm eating or when I'm on the can! Tweets are just the right length to fit each of my thoughts. And because I'm very smart, I have lots and lots!

POLLY:

But do you think it's quite presidential...?

DJ:

It's better than that—

NICK (ASIDE):

He thinks they're essential!

DJ:

But here is the point that I'm trying to make. I stir things up and hope that they'll break. I talk about Mexicans and promise a wall, even though there's no way to build one that tall. But it's the idea that we are the best and don't have to mingle with all of the rest. I'm here to enjoy the ride while it's good and piss off the haters like a strong leader should. When things fall apart, and I'm sure they will, I'll already have my hand in the till.

POLLY:

You're planning to *fail* and then steal public money?

DJ:

At last, you are catching on to me, honey! Now, it won't be *illegal* the way I get paid. But morals would get in the way, I'm afraid.

POLLY:

Yes, now I'm finally starting to see! It's not about *them*.

DJ:

No—it's all about *me*! And you, my two friends, will be at my bidding. Now that I rule!

NICK (ASIDE)

He's got to be kidding! (*To DJ*) You know, sir, you aren't a *king* or *dictator*—

DJ:

A matter of time—we can change titles later...“Emperor Trump” has a ring, I confess. I will insist on “Your Highness”—no less!

NICK (ASIDE):

We have created a monster, I'm thinking.

POLLY (TO SELF):

My stomach's in knots, and my heart? It is sinking...

NICK (TO DJ):

But one day your enemies are bound to catch on...

DJ:

By the time that they do, I'll be gone, daddy, gone!

POLLY:

Wait—do you mean you're not sticking around?

DJ:

I'll only stay if I can get *crowned*. Otherwise, I might last six months or a year. Long enough to make a real impression here. And of course, enough cash to last me for life. And the lives of my kids and at least one more wife.

NICK:

But you worked so hard to get elected.

DJ:

'Tell you the truth—it's not what I expected. This whole job business—it's just not for me. There's all this stuff I have to do and places I should be.

POLLY:

So it was just acting, a reality show...

DJ:

Why are you so surprised? We *do* what we *know*.

POLLY:

I knew that you weren't perfect. I knew you were uncouth. But you're not a politician, so I thought you told the *truth*.

DJ (*APPEARS TO BE CONSIDERING SOMETHING IMPORTANT*):

I was mistaken. But now it's clear to me.

POLLY looks hopeful.

DJ:

I don't want the *tacos*. I want KFC!

NICK:

I'll send someone out. Do you want breasts or thighs?

DJ:

No, I want to go—get the Secret Service guys.

NICK exits. DJ follows.

POLLY:

I thought he was different—he just needed the right guide. Now I know he fooled me, I am *so* on the wrong side. I should turn around right now, admit defeat, and run. But what if I am saboteur? *That* would be more fun. A fly in the ointment, a snag, and a hitch. To his face, I will be sweet, underneath a nasty bitch. Robert Frost said, “The best way out is always through.” So look out, Mr. Trump, I’m coming right through you!

The end