

# GRACIE AND THE GALAPANZAS

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A one-act drama for high school or college

by  
**John Glass**



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## 👉 About Student Plays 👈

*Student Plays* consists of **John Glass, Jackie Jernigan, and Dominic Torres**. We are a group of playwrights and directors that have written scripts for elementary school through college. We are proud of the variety of ages that our scripts serve.

*Student Plays* has “creepy” plays, and we also have Latino-themed plays. These are scripts that focus on Latino youth and the Latino experience. Any school can perform a Latino-themed play: it just requires a general introduction and basic exposure to the Spanish language, something that most schools and students already have.

To learn more, visit [www.studentplays.org](http://www.studentplays.org), or to contact one of the playwrights directly, simply email us at [john@studentplays.org](mailto:john@studentplays.org).

☆ Characters ☆

<b>GRACIE GALAPANZA</b>	20s. Emotional, angry. Tightrope walker and trapeze artist.
<b>FRANK</b>	30s. Kind, caring. Security guard.
<b>PALÓN</b>	40s-60s. A famous tightrope walker.
<b>POLICE OFFICER # 1</b>	Extremely brief role, at the end of the play. Any gender.
<b>POLICE OFFICER # 2</b>	Extremely brief role, at the end of the play. Any gender.

The time is 1980, and the setting is two small rooms in New York's Twin Towers. The rooms are in different towers, and they directly face each other through two windows.

One room is stage left, the other stage right. 95 percent of the play takes place in GRACIE's room.

Each room is a simple setup of one chair and a small table. There is a telephone in GRACIE's room, and also a small balancing pole. The two windows can be a simple arrangement. They could be made from cardboard, or thin pieces of wood or light aluminum tubing, something that could easily be taken on and off the stage.

Throughout the play, GRACIE holds a handgun, which she waves menacingly as she holds FRANK hostage. She must wield the gun throughout the play so as to maintain control and power over FRANK. GRACIE is wearing a bandana or tights or clothing that resembles a professional tightrope walker.

Broken glass can be scattered in front of GRACIE's window, as GRACIE has smashed the window in order to construct the tightrope. A bow/crossbow and small bags stuffed with steel tools are also lying about her room. If desired, a simple tightrope can be devised between the rooms to reinforce a good visual of the setting.

## SCENE ONE

At RISE: *GRACIE is pacing the room, holding a handgun. FRANK is seated, staring out the open window. The lights are down on the other room.*

**GRACIE** I still can't believe this. You've never heard of the Flying Galapanzas?? Man!

**FRANK** I told you. I don't really follow such things.

**GRACIE** And you've lived in New York all your life?

**FRANK** Yes.

**GRACIE** Me and my brothers toured all over! Baltimore. Jersey City. Syracuse. I was the youngest person to ever walk the Blue Towers in Philadelphia!

**FRANK** No kidding?

**GRACIE** Yes, yes. Unbelievable. Frank, I thought you were hipper than that.

**FRANK** I remember that my wife used to read about Palón. But that was years ago.

**GRACIE** Well, of course! *Everybody* followed Palón! I should be so lucky!

**FRANK** Well, not *everybody*.

**GRACIE** Whatever. He needs to get here soon.

**FRANK** You heard me on the phone! They're trying to locate him.

**GRACIE** He needs to hurry up. He's gonna watch me walk this wire!

**FRANK** He will. He will . . .

**GRACIE** Staten Island's not *that* far, and I know that's where Palón lives. They better not be trying any funny business!

**FRANK** He'll be here. I promise.

**GRACIE** Hmmph. Okay.

*(Pause.)*

**FRANK** Um. Gracie?

**GRACIE** What?

**FRANK** I beg your pardon, but—

**GRACIE** Why do people say that?

**FRANK** I . . . beg your pardon?

**GRACIE** See, there you go again. How do you ‘beg someone’s pardon’?

**FRANK** Uh, I don’t know. It’s just a, you know, a—

**GRACIE** Talk, friend. What do you want to say?

**FRANK** What’s the purpose of all this? I’ve been sitting here listening to you talk for almost an hour. You toured all over! You did it *all*, you said. At such a young age!

**GRACIE** Well, sort of.

**FRANK** Sort of?

**GRACIE** I *did* tour all over, yes. We did the Niagara Falls. The Albany State Bridge. Lots of things. Shoot, the Flying Galapanzas once made the cover of the New York Post. And I was still in high school then!

*(Pause.)*

But things just . . .

**FRANK** Things just *what*?

**GRACIE** Just never mind! Don’t ask so many questions!

**FRANK** Sorry.

**GRACIE** And you better be sure that *only Palón* is in that room! *(Pointing out the window.)* Room 9032! Right where I can see him! Him and nobody else!

**FRANK** You heard me tell the police! They know!

**GRACIE** Don't you forget who's in control here.  
*(Waves the gun.)*

**FRANK** Okay. I'm not.

**GRACIE** Good.

*(Pause. GRACIE sighs, tries to relax. FRANK is looking out the window.)*

**GRACIE** So . . . you, uh, see her yet?

**FRANK** Um. No. Not yet.

**GRACIE** Which floor is it?

**FRANK** 88. Two floors down.

**GRACIE** Oh. Yeah.

**FRANK** *(Pointing outside.)* Right there on the corner. That last office. *(Pause.)* I usually work downstairs in the lobby. But sometimes I come up, you know, to some of the higher floors, and I try to see her while she's working. You know, when we're not too busy.

**GRACIE** What does she do?

**FRANK** She's a secretary for Bonanza Comics.

**GRACIE** Shut up! Bonanza Comics?

**FRANK** Yep. For 7 years.

**GRACIE** No way. Does she work with all the big writers? The Incredible Hulk? The Flash?

**FRANK** No, no. That's DC and Marvel.

**GRACIE** Oh.

**FRANK** Bonanza is a smaller company. She's just a secretary, you know.

**GRACIE** Wow. I love comic books. Aquaman. Batman. I really like the Flash. (*Beat.*) You're not kidding around, are you? Is that really what you've been looking at? Trying to find your wife?

**FRANK** Yes! I've actually been coming up to this floor almost every day this week.

**GRACIE** Why *this* week?

**FRANK** Oh, no reason, really.

**GRACIE** Why this week?

**FRANK** It's an important week.

**GRACIE** Important?

**FRANK** Yes. That's all.

**GRACIE** What are you talking about?

**FRANK** Nothing. It's just an important time for us.

**GRACIE** (*Waving the gun.*) Frank . . .?

**FRANK** Yes?

**GRACIE** I'm tired, Frank. And I like direct communication. Now tell me: what the hell is so important about *this* week?

**FRANK** Our daughter died exactly three years ago. *That's* what.

**GRACIE** What? You have *kids*? You're so young!

**FRANK** Well. I *had* a kid.

**GRACIE** Oh. Okay. Sorry.

**FRANK** That's okay. She died on August 6, 1977. It'll be three years on Thursday.

**GRACIE** Wow. Um. How?

**FRANK** Hmm?

**GRACIE** How did she die?

**FRANK** Um. My daughter?

**GRACIE** Yes.

**FRANK** She died in a car crash. On Belt Parkway. In Brooklyn.

**GRACIE** Oh. Yeah. Belt Parkway can be rough.

**FRANK** Yeah. So, you know. There's been a lot of depression in the house right now. This time of year there's always a lot of depression.

**GRACIE** Well. Man. That's too bad.

**FRANK** And so, you know, I come up here. It's beautiful this time of day. The sun is so golden as it hits the glass of all those buildings. It's almost mesmerizing. I come up here and try to see my wife.

*(Long pause as he fumbles for the words.)*

And at the same time, I try to forgive myself for letting it happen.

**GRACIE** Have you ever seen her?

**FRANK** My wife? Amazingly, no. I never have. The South Tower is only a few hundred feet across. But there are a lot of people walking around, you know. So it's hard

to tell. I know exactly where her office is. But I have yet to see her.

**GRACIE** Wow. Hmm. In the same building as the Flash, huh?

**FRANK** No, I told you, that's—

**GRACIE** Do you think the Flash could walk a tightrope as well as I can?

**FRANK** The Flash? Uh, well, I don't know.

**GRACIE** The answer is *no!*

**FRANK** Okay.

**GRACIE** Nobody can match the talents of the great highwire artist Gracie Galapanza!!

*(She mimes walking across a highwire, then stares out the window.)*

**FRANK** Okay. Not even the Flash?

**GRACIE** Nope! Not even the Flash! *(Beat. Points the gun at him.)* Well, there is actually *one* person. And that one person had better get here soon. Let's get on the phone again, Mr. Frank. I need to remind these people that time is running out.

**FRANK** (*Picking up the receiver, begins to dial.*) Okay.

**GRACIE** I've got a wire to walk!

*(Lights fade to black. End of scene.)*