

January 23



KRISTIN HARDWICK REVIEWS PANIC AT THE RIVERSIDE MOTEL

Written by John Pastore Directed by Maria Riboli

Panic Productions' Presentation of **PANIC AT THE RIVERSIDE MOTEL** is a comedy involving a soon to be married couple who find themselves in the middle of a drug buyer's suicide. Or, as the bride's brother screams on arrival, "I can't be here in the middle of a Tarantino movie!"

The play opens in darkness with the young couple (**Olivia Rose Barresi** as Kaitlin and **Michael Orlandi** as Jake) begging someone not to shoot them. The lights come up with Kaitlin and Jake spattered with blood standing over a dead body. Kaitlin (called Kate) comes up with the idea that she will call her brother Billy (**Thom Christensen**) to help them fix this problem; as he will know what to do. Their story unfolds and reveals that Kate and Jake are to be married in a week and are planning a \$100,000 wedding. Therefore, they decide to sell drugs in this "rent by the hour to hookers and drug dealers" motel room to get the money for their wedding.

Billy arrives with a gym bag full of tools to dispose of the body, including a hacksaw, of course. Jake is dragged into the bathroom to help Billy dismember the body and place in garbage bags for easy disposal. Kate is catching up on her reading of *Bride's* magazine when there is a knock at the door. The Riverside Motel manager (**Tom Cappadona**) wants to know what is happening in the room. Finally, Kate lets him in the room which prompts Billy to take the manager hostage.

In the next scene, the manager is meeting with Detective Miller (**Tom Burka**). Their meeting is one of the many comedic highlights of the play. Between the frazzled and confused manager and the rookie Detective Miller, the audience enjoys a lot of laughter.

Now the detective must solve this mystery with just the crazy, mixed up word of the manager.

The chemistry between Kate, Jake and Billy is remarkable! Kate is the mediator of her brother and fiancé and in doing so, she creates this believable, endearing character. The nervous Jake and level headed Billy's performances are hilarious.

PANIC AT THE RIVERSIDE MOTEL is one of the best comedic plays I have seen in a long time!

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