

REVISED BY THE AUTHOR FOR THE 2005 BROADWAY REVIVAL

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

"Towers over the common run
of contemporary plays."

—*The New York Times*

EDWARD ALBEE



(Set in darkness. Crash against front door. MARTHA's laughter heard. Front door opens, lights are switched on. MARTHA enters, followed by GEORGE)

MARTHA

Jesus . . .

GEORGE

. . . Shhhhhhh . . .

MARTHA

. . . H. Christ . . .

GEORGE

For God's sake, Martha, it's two o'clock in the . . .

MARTHA

Oh, George!

GEORGE

Well, I'm *sorry*, but . . .

MARTHA

What a cluck! What a cluck you are.

GEORGE

It's late, you know? Late.

MARTHA

(Looks about the room. Imitates Bette Davis)

What a dump. Hey, what's that from? "What a dump!"

GEORGE

How would I know what . . .

MARTHA

Aw, come on! What's it from? *You* know . . .

GEORGE

. . . Martha . . .

MARTHA

WHAT'S IT FROM, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE?

GEORGE *(Wearily)*

What's what from?

MARTHA

I just told you; I just did it. "What a dump!" Hunh? What's that from?

GEORGE

I haven't the faintest idea what . . .

MARTHA

Dumbbell! It's from some goddamn Bette Davis picture . . .
some goddamn Warner Brothers epic . . .

GEORGE

I can't remember all the pictures that . . .

MARTHA

Nobody's asking you to remember every goddamn Warner Brothers epic . . . just one! One single little epic! Bette Davis gets peritonitis in the end . . . she's got this big black fright wig she wears all through the picture and she gets peritonitis, and she's married to Joseph Cotten or something. . . .

GEORGE

. . . Somebody . . .

MARTHA

. . . somebody . . . and she wants to go to Chicago all the time, 'cause she's in love with that actor with the scar. . . . But she gets sick, and she sits down in front of her dressing table. . . .

GEORGE

What actor? What scar?

MARTHA

I can't remember his name, for God's sake. What's the name of the picture? I want to know what the name of the picture is. She sits down in front of her dressing table . . . and she's got this peritonitis . . . and she tries to put her lipstick on, but she can't . . . and she gets it all over her face . . . but she decides to go to Chicago anyway, and . . .

GEORGE

Chicago! It's called Chicago.

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EDWARD ALBEE

"Twelve times a week," answered Uta Hagen when asked how often she'd like to play Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* In the same way, audiences and critics alike could not get enough of Edward Albee's masterful play. A dark comedy, it portrays husband and wife George and Martha in a searing night of dangerous fun and games. By the evening's end, a stunning, almost unbearable revelation provides a climax that has shocked audiences for years. With the play's razor-sharp dialogue and stripping away of social pretense, *Newsweek* rightly foresaw *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* as "a brilliantly original work of art—an excoriating theatrical experience, surging with shocks of recognition and dramatic fire [that] will be igniting Broadway for some time to come."

"Albee can...be placed high among the important dramatists of the contemporary world theater." —*New York Post*

"An irreplaceable experience...a crucial event in the birth of contemporary American theater." —*The Village Voice*

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