

To Wear The Rose Lightly

Description: A dramatic play, in three acts. The plot is relatively straightforward: the protagonist (Randall Lee) is an unhappily-married businessman who begins a doomed affair with a soldier half his age (Octavia Adams) after he meets her at a party hosted by his rival Arthur Wolfe. Naturally, Arthur himself is having an affair with Randall's wife Elizabeth, and it takes about three acts for everybody to end up being miserable, alone, and ready to start the whole thing over, with different people. The play draws very deeply on flower-based symbolism; roses in particular are used as visual shorthand of love. Randall is told by Octavia in the final scene (as she is about to ship off again to a carefully-undefined 'war zone') that he 'wears the rose lightly;' i.e., that he refuses to do anything to sustain the love that he demands from others, and it ends with him holding the rose after she leaves -- then dropping it, casually, as the lights fade.

Is this play tedious? Oh, God, you have no **idea**. No, really, you probably have no idea: the Men In Black keep this play as suppressed as possible. Not because it's tedious, of course. Or full of wearily cynical lines. Or utterly scornful of the constraints of middle-class

bourgeois society without suggesting a viable alternative. If the Men In Black cared about *that*, they'd just shut down Broadway and be done with it. What the problem is that *To Wear The Rose Lightly* is one of *those* plays. The kind of play that makes certain members of the audience **do** things later, quite against their will.

The only reason that this play isn't an open and infamous occult secret is that *To Wear The Rose Lightly* doesn't cause death or injury; just embarrassment. Every single time there's been a performance, at least three people who saw that performance will later shave their heads and dance naked in a religious institution. And that's pretty much it. The MiB have managed to keep the story suppressed, because the play was never very popular -- and because most of the people involved *want* the story suppressed.

But nobody has any idea why this happens. It's definitely occult; the appropriate sensors go off in the presence of the play's text. But the exact flavor of the spell or enchantment eludes researchers, and the MiB aren't entirely certain that they really **want** to research the phenomenon further. What if *To Wear The Rose Lightly* just needs a certain occult nudge to go Full Metal Carcosa? Nobody wants that to happen.

But it's still not a great idea to leave what might be the magical equivalent of a dud artillery shell, so here's the directions to the latest in-Conspiracy performance. It's going to be staged under very carefully controlled conditions, and they're going to need security and/or troubleshooters, so that's going to be your job. But, hey! Look on the bright side: as you well know, a **lot** of actors take the Secret Masters' deal and fake their deaths in exchange for a full-body rejuvenation and a second career on the Black Ops theatrical circuit. Think of it as a chance to schmooze with the stars.

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