



SHOWS FOR DAYS by Douglas Carter Beane

CAR: *(A grown-up.)* I look over and standing there in the doorway by the host station is my father. Fuming. I – haven't called home. Since that afternoon. It's now two in the morning. And I'm fourteen. So I was grounded for two weeks and Fred was free to return to play the butler and carry the tray of champagne, which was really just ginger ale, but on stage ginger ale is champagne.

But then school was out and I had a birthday and turned fifteen, thanks for the card, too late. And thus began the best summer of my life. Prometheus was the center, I'd rehearse from seven to eleven every night, but after that I would work at the theater, paint, sew, stretch muslin, Dutchman the flats – Google it later, you'll be surprised – and make midnight runs all the time getting to know these fascinating creatures that were the exact opposite of anything suburban I had seen. I'd be home at two in the morning, I'd wake up at eleven. And then, as if God himself had created the syllabus, every day at noon Channel 48 showed another midday musical. The entire MGM and Warner Brothers Catalogue of movie musicals. For me. Then a trip to the Wyomissing library. I took out all the plays I could: Williams, Noel Coward, Oscar Wilde, the collected plays of Kaufman and Hart. George Kaufman was my gateway drug to the harder stuff – the Algonquin wits! I think it's safe to say my life would have turned out differently if I had played sports as a child.

**culled*