

Audrey's Adventure

It all began with my husband suggesting the play Little Shop of Horrors to our community theater's play-reading committee. Somehow, they actually chose it and my husband was chosen to direct it. That was months ago, and the play is slated for production in October, which is rapidly approaching. Realizing the enormity of the scale of a production like this, we've begun to work on it, even though it's only April. Among the many challenges we will face are casting, music (do we cram a band into the theater or use pre-recorded music?), blocking / dancing, and props – which are going to be a doozy for this show. Normally these things are all part of the fun of staging a production, but given a unique set of circumstances, we are in for quite an endeavor – mainly, the fact that we are to perform this thing on a very small stage with an even smaller back stage area. If you are familiar with the show, then you know that the plant involved is HUGE – it must be big enough to eat a person. Not only that, but there are actually *four* of the plants – it starts small and gets bigger during the show, and at least 2 of the Audrey's are VERY large. Also challenging will be filling the role of the plant – it is a VERY physical role, as the person actually has to get inside the plant and use all of his/her muscles to move the thing around – very challenging, and it's not like they will get a lot of glory in that role; their face will never be seen on stage. I expect it to be challenging to fill such a role in community theater where most all of the actors I know LOVE the glory that comes from a role well-played. I am really looking forward to the challenge, however, and I think great things can be accomplished!

What we need is a lot of HELP! Manpower, brains, talents all intersecting to achieve what might seem impossible – to stage an awesome production of Little Shop in a small theater. The good news is, we've already had LOTS of volunteers, with some

people actually stepping up to help already – and it's only April! Take [JustJ](#), a fellow blogger for instance. Yesterday he ventured to Lima Ohio with us, an hour and a half away (thought it took much longer than that to get back – you'll read why later), to pick up Audrey II, the man-eating plant needed for the show. And it was an adventure, to say the least. Let's begin by saying that the three quotes I'd gotten from costume shops and other theaters to RENT an Audrey range from \$900-\$1200 – WAY out of our theater's price range. So when I found a theater down in Lima who was willing to see us all four Audreys plus some miscellaneous props for \$250 to KEEP, not rent, I was excited and charged ahead with the arrangement like an idiot who made a New Year's resolution to curtail her bad procrastinating habits. Was \$250 too good to be true? I guess that's something I should have thought about before we made the drive. Their \$250 Audrey II was a heap of foam mess on the floor. They did throw in a curtain for the last scene of the show, a huge (and awesomely scary looking) dentist's drill, some "seedlings" for the flower shop and a flower display case, but the Audrey II was in a state of ... well, I'm going to say disrepair, but only because today is our 10th wedding anniversary and I'm in a good mood. But you know what? We're going to set up a PMS Team (**P**rops and **M**ovable **S**et Team – what were **you** thinking?) who will start working on repairing Audrey II and breathing some life back into her ASAP. I am going to be totally optimistic, and that's why we're starting so early – it's going to be a GREAT show!

Back to the adventure portion of this post... We loaded the heap of foam that was Audrey into JustJ's pickup truck, along with all of the other props, and it all fit! Well, sort of...



Of course it had to be somewhat windy yesterday, and that complicated things. We're driving along, and next thing we know, JustJ and my husband (who was riding shotgun) are seeing pieces of Audrey flying down the road in their sideview mirrors! So we pull over, and my husband goes to retrieve whatever lost pieces of Audrey he can find while JustJ adjusts the tarp that we had to stop and buy earlier in the day. My husband didn't quite get all of Audrey's pieces, so don't be surprised if you read about little man-eating plants sprouting up somewhere in the farm fields outside of Lima, Ohio! We get back in the car for take two and didn't make it more than a few miles before Audrey is flapping in the wind again. The cycle continues, and now Audrey is breaking (eating? Nah, she has a taste for only flesh) bungee cords too, so we have to stop at the first hardware store we came across – a little hole in the wall place in Bufu Cooper Ohio, wherever that is...

The good news is that only seven stops later, we finally made it back to the theater with Audrey, just a little worse for wear. Hey, she needed much repair in the first place, so what's the difference? Now she is ours and she's here! So any takers for the PMS Team? And thanks, JustJ for making the trek and keeping your cool during Audrey's adventure. A producer job is yours if you want it!