

## From the Monologue Show (From Hell)

By Don Zolidis

*(LOLA strides downstage, full of confidence.)*

LOLA

I'm going to tell you a story about my greatest triumph: The seventh grade spelling bee.

You can learn parts of words and waste your time memorizing the dictionary or whatever, but that's not what wins. What wins is mental domination.

The key is to introduce fear into the hearts of the other competitors. Break their spirits. You can tell right away which of them are going to crack like tiny little eggs. You make eye contact. Stare into their souls.

*(She shows off her dead-eyed stare.)*

This is my look. I call it Corpse Eye. I find the first little boy. A sixth-grader. Suhail Patel. He's about four foot nine. I get about this close to him. I'm so close that our noses might touch. And then I whisper:

'You think you understand the proper spelling of latinate verbs? Go home, little boy. I'm going to enjoy crushing you.'

And then you know what I do? I blow on his face.

*(she blows)*

He freaks out like a swarm of bees just stung him. Starts crying. He'll be out in the first round.

I use a different tactic with the girls. They've prepared for months. They're all full of confidence and hope. They got little pigtails and smiles – I start the rumors - 'So I hear you're using performance enhancing drugs.' 'What?' 'I won't tell anyone. But people are talking' Then I move on to the next girl. 'Miranda says even if you win she's stealing your boyfriend.' 'I don't have a boyfriend.' 'That's not what Suhail Patel says.'

By the time we get on stage everyone hates each other. Who's their friend? Who's their enemy? Who's taking drugs? It's a slaughter.

Down to the final two. Me and Steven Williams. Steven is cold as ice. He stares forward, acts like he's deaf, he pretends not to see me, not to hear me. He's a machine. The word is Syzygy. Definition please: An arrangement of heavenly bodies. Country of origin: Undetermined. He starts spelling – S Y Z

He thinks he's going to win. He knows the word. But then, just for instant, he glances my direction, as if to say, I'm going to win, and that's when I unleash the look that will win me this competition: I call it: Spastic Thunder.

*(LOLA makes "Spastic Thunder")*

It looks like I'm having a seizure. My eyes cross. My teeth start shaking – spit flies out of my mouth – Steven loses his place, he makes a mistake. A second Z. Ding. He's out.

That's when I give him my final look. Flaming Triumph.

*(LOLA makes "Flaming Triumph")*

My word is pulchritudinous. I'm so awesome I don't ask for country of origin. Pulchritudinous. P U L C H R I T U D I N O U S. Boom. Mic drop.

I'm taking home a cool hundred dollar gift certificate to Barnes and Noble. And that's how the game is played, suckers.

*(LOLA gives one last look.)*

*(She turns and returns to her place)*