

Andrew

Hello everyone. This is Andrew Pond, Artistic director of Eclectic Full Contact Theatre. Welcome to Season 5 of The Half Hour Audio Hour. Every month, we'll be featuring a different playwright, allowing you to not only hear their work, but to find out a little more about them and their process. If you enjoy what you hear, please remember to like, follow, and subscribe to our podcast. And feel free to leave a review! You can help us out in continuing this work by heading over to [tinyurl.com/EFCTHHAH](http://tinyurl.com/EFCTHHAH), where you can sponsor us through a one-time or recurring donation and become our partner in highlighting the voices and stories of women, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ artists.

This month's production is "THE ELEVATOR", written by Alice Burke directed by David Lipschutz, and starring Kelcy Taylor, Shane Roberie, Jamie Dillon Grossman, and Ben menses  
Before we start, we'd like to briefly introduce you to Alice Burke  
After the production, stay tuned for an interview with Alice for more insight into the play and this process.

Alice lives in Huntington, NY with her husband in the home she grew up in. She started writing plays quite recently in her life with the encouragement of her playwright brother, and loves the creative outlet. By day, Alice is a transcriber, volunteer EMT for her local fire department, and occasional background actress. By night, she is a part time EMT at a local entertainment venue. Needless to say, all of these experiences play a role in coming up with fun ideas for play

And now, The Elevator

LILY steps into the elevator and moves to the back.  
FRED enters and stands in the middle. LARRY runs for the elevator and sticks his arm in the door, sort of jumps in and stands closer to where the front of the elevator would be.  
LARRY pushes the button.

LILY

Did someone push L?

LARRY

I pushed it.

LILY

Why aren't we moving? Is it lit up?

LARRY

It's not lit up anymore. None of the buttons are.

FRED

You've got to be kidding me. Push it again.

LARRY

I tried -- it doesn't light up.

LILY

Push another one.

LARRY

Pushes buttons.

FRED

Just push the open doors button, we can take another elevator.

LARRY

Pushes buttons

LILY

Call the fire department.

LARRY

I don't think that's necessary. There's a call button -- I can try that.

FRED

Yeah, try that one.

LILY

It's already getting hot in here.

LARRY

Stay calm, it's only been less than a minute. I'm pressing the call button.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Hello? Can I help you?

LARRY

Hi, we're stuck in an elevator on the 6th floor?

LILY

We're not moving!

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Okay. How many people are in there?

FRED

Just three of us.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Just the three of you? Hmm, not sure why it's not moving then.

LARRY

The sign says a limit of 3,000 pounds. I'm sure we aren't over 3,000 pounds.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Did you try holding the open button?

LARRY

It's not doing anything.

FRED

Can you send someone?

LILY

It's really warm in here!

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Is everyone okay?

LARRY

Yes, I think we're all fine. We just really want to get out of here.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) I understand. I'm going to call a technician now. I'll let you know howlong it will be. In the meantime, stay calm. You can always call me if you need to.

FRED looks at his watch and sighs. LILY is fanning herself with her hand. FRED Texting on phone. Phone rings.

LILY

(starts) Oh God, what was that?

FRED

It's just my phone

Yeah, I'm really stuck in the elevator at work. Yeah, I'm going to be a little late. Tell your parents I'll be there when I can. I'm hoping this won't be too long. I knew I should have taken the stairs. I know. Okay, bye.

LILY

I'm so thirsty. Is anyone else hot and thirsty?

LARRY

It's only been a couple minutes. The call lady said to stay calm. I think you should just try to relax.

FRED

I'm actually okay with this, I'm supposed to have drinks and dinner with my in-laws. I've been dreading it all week.

LILY

What if we tell the call lady that I'm dehydrated and feeling faint?

LARRY

I think if we say there's a medical issue, they will send the fire department. That's not a good idea. The fire department has better things to do than to come open the elevator doors. We're fine. I really think the technician will be here soon.

FRED

So -- do you both work in this building?

LILY

Please don't turn this into a social event. Ack, I'm sweating. You guys are sucking up all the air in here. I can hear the fan up there, but I feel nothing but our body heat.

FRED

The time might go faster if we talk to each other -- I'm Fred and I'm from the Bronx.

LILY

This isn't an AA meeting.

to Larry.

I think this is your fault. The elevator was ready to leave, and you stuffed your arm in the door. Why couldn't you wait another a few minutes for another elevator?

LARRY

I'm sorry. I don't believe my arm forcing the door open made it get stuck. I mean, I actually do that all the time. The elevator doors in this building close really fast.

FRED

Not the same thing, but at my bachelor party, we took an elevator down 39 floors with 25 guys stuffed in. It was actually really funny. Although my friends thought it was a riot to pass gas right when the doors closed. We had been drinking though. A lot. But anyway, we made down all 39 floors without getting stuck.

LILY

Please, don't even think about farting. Seriously, I don't care how uncomfortable you are, you better hold it in.

She sighs.

I'm so thirsty.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Hello? How are you guys doing? Everybody okay?

LARRY

We're fine.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Okay, keep hanging in there. The technician is on his way. He will be here as soon as he can.

FRED

Thanks -- hey, what's your name?

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) I'm Stella.

FRED

Hi, Stella, I'm Fred.

LILY

Stella, this is Lily. Can you arrange for a large bottle of cold water to be waiting for me when we get out?

STELLA

Uh, sure. I'll check in with you guys again soon.

FRED

I think we'll all laugh about this when we get out. I mean, it is sort of funny, right?

LILY

Nothing about this is funny.

LARRY

So Lily, what were your plans for this evening? Something better than this I assume.

LILY

I don't have to tell you my plans -- but just know it did not involve being stuck in a hot, sweaty elevator with you two, that's for sure. I'm very thirsty and now I'm getting hungry. Does anyone have food? I actually think I might have a mint.

She starts rummaging through her bag.

LARRY

Lily, it's been only about 5 minutes, if that. I don't think it's time to break out the snacks. You're not going to starve.

LILY

Well, I just heard someone's stomach growl, so it's not just me.

FRED

I've been looking out my window all day. It's gorgeous out. I do wish I was outside; however, I didn't want to go to dinner at a stuffy restaurant with Sally and Tom. If we could just stay in here for a couple of hours, I could miss the whole thing. (Laughs)

LILY

You can stay in here for hours, I'm getting out of here! Please, push the fire department button, I need some air.

LARRY

Hey, come on Lily, we have plenty of air. Yes, it's getting warmer, but we are not using it all up. Stella said it won't be long. I believe her. You have to stay calm, Lily.

FRED

Are you a shrink? You sound like a shrink.

LARRY

I am a therapist.

LILY

Oh, I've been looking for a new therapist. I have a lot of anxieties. Are you taking new patients?

LARRY

I am actually taking new patients.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Hey, everyone, just to let you know, the technician is about 5 minutes out.

I'll let you know when he gets here. Is everyone okay?

LILY

I'm --

LARRY

Yes, Stella, everyone is okay. Thank you.

FRED

You know, I could tell my wife that we were stuck in the elevator for a couple hours and then when we get out, I could just go to the bar and sit on the patio on this beautiful night and have a few cocktails. That's believable, right? That it took them two hours to get us out? I could come up with a really good story about us having to climb down the elevator shaft.

LILY

Oh, God, that's not a thing, is it?

LARRY

Fred, I totally get not wanting to have dinner with your in-laws, but I think it's pretty cruel to scare your wife like that. She's probably worried about you. A couple hours with her parents won't kill you.

FRED

I know it won't "kill" me, but they are very annoying people. Spending a Friday night with them telling me how we shouldn't be living in the Bronx and that if I had a better job we could live in Manhattan -- it gets old after a while.

Fred's phone rings again.

LILY

Ahh -- what was that?

FRED

That was my phone again. (Into phone) Hi. No, we're not out yet. Not sure how much longer it's going to be. No. Please just go and meet them and I will meet you when I get out. It's fine. Don't worry. Okay. Love you too.

LARRY

See, she must be worried about you.

FRED

No, I think she's more worried about being alone with her parents.

LARRY

I'm sure that's not true.

FRED

You don't know Sally and Tom.

LILY

When I get out of here, I'm going to drink that entire bottle of cold water that Stella has waiting for me. Then I'm going to go home and take a shower to wash this nasty elevator stink off of me. Then I'm going to order Thai food and sit and watch hours of the Gilmore Girls.

LARRY

That sounds nice and relaxing, Lily -- but a little lonely. Do you have anyone there to talk to?

LILY

I have Boo and Princess, my cats.

Are you being a therapist right now? You aren't going to charge me for this, are you?

LARRY

(Sighs) No, Lily, I'm just being friendly. Making conversation while we wait to get out of here.

STELLA

(Voice from off-stage) Hey folks, the technician is here and he's working on the issue. It shouldn't be too much longer.

FRED

Thanks, Stella!

LILY

Oh, my god, did someone fart?

LARRY

Lily...

LILY

It must have been Fred because it wasn't me and I'm guessing a therapist wouldn't torture people like that.

FRED

You keep talking about it stinking in here, so –

LILY

Oh, my God, are you five?

That's not funny.

LARRY

Look, it's a tight space, we are all uncomfortable. Can we just try to keep positive thoughts flowing? And please Fred, try not to make the situation worse.

LILY

There is nothing positive about this. I am thirsty and now I'm starving. I'm sucking in body odor and Fred's gas. My cats are probably worried about me. They might be clawing my new couch because they are mad that I'm late.

FRED

Wow, I thought my life was rough. I have a wife who says she loves me, but she nags constantly and forces interactions with her parents every few weeks, knowing that I hate them with every fiber of my being.

LILY

Well, that's a little dramatic.

FRED

Oh, I'm dramatic?

LARRY

Wow, this is spiraling right out of control. I think we all need to maybe just stay quiet and take a deep breath -- well -- maybe not too deep -- thanks a lot, Fred. I think I hear the technician outside.

LILY

Help!

LARRY

Lily... look, I have a wellness group on Monday evenings. We sit in a cool room with fresh air and plenty of water. I have plants and flowers around and candles burning. I play relaxing nature sounds. We sit on pillows on the floor and meditate. It sounds like you -- and Fred -- could both use that. If you need to see me one-on-one as a therapist. We can do that too.

FRED

That sounds pretty great, actually.

LARRY

Call me later and I will put you down for this Monday's session.

LILY

That does sound nice -- thanks.

The doors suddenly open.

Oh, thank God!

The three of them walk out.

LARRY

Take care you guys, and call me for that session!

FRED

I think I will. Now I think I'll go for one drink before meeting with my wife and her parents. That's fair, right?

LARRY

I think that's fair.

LILY

I have to find Stella and my water. And I'm taking the stairs down. See you Monday, Larry. And ... thanks again.

Stella comes walking over with a bottle of water which she hands to Lily as she passes by. Larry approaches Stella.

LARRY

Thanks, Stell, I got two more for Monday and maybe some one-on-one sessions. Another successful trap -- Lily lost it almost from the get go.

STELLA

That's great!

LARRY

Maybe next time don't leave us in as long -- we had a farter -- I should have known, Fred seemed like the type. It was rough for a few minutes.

STELLA

Yeah, sorry. There's always one. See you next week?

LARRY

Sounds good. This time on the west side of the building on the 4th floor, car 9.

He passes her a wad of cash which she shoves in her pocket.

Have a good weekend, Stell!

STELLA

I will, you too.

Andrew

Thank you for listening to The Elevator, here on The Half Hour Audio Hour. Next up is a brief interview we conducted with Alice Burke after the recording of this show.

[Andrew]

So first off, Alice, I would really like to welcome you to a half-hour audio hour, and I'm really thankful that we got a chance to be part of your show, The Elevator. My first question is, how long have you been writing?

[Alice Burke]

I started writing about two years ago. My brother Scott Mullen, who is also a scriptwriter, has been writing 10-minute plays for years now. He's written, literally, I think he said that he's written about a thousand 10-minute plays, and I was talking to him about it, and he was telling me about a festival in New York and suggested that I try to write something.

So I thought to myself, I could do that, and I wrote out a play, and believe it or not, it got chosen and was performed, which was pretty exciting. So I've been writing 10-minute plays since then, not full-time, but just when something inspires me.

[Andrew]

Well, that leads very nicely into my next question, which is, what inspired The Elevator?

[Alice Burke]

What inspired *The Elevator* is that it was, believe it or not, it is based loosely on something that happened to me. I am also a background actor from time to time when I get a chance to do it in between everything else that I do in my life, and I was working as a background actor for the movie *The Instigators*, which was being filmed in New York. So a bunch of us were in our costumes and getting in an elevator to go down to the set, and sure enough, *The Elevator* got stuck, and we were stuck in there for about probably 40 minutes.

It wasn't really dramatic or anything, but for whatever reason, after that incident, I started thinking about writing a play about getting stuck in an elevator.

[Andrew]

Well, I'm glad that the exact thing didn't happen to you, that it's not that much of a true story. My next question is, have you written for audio before, and if not, are you thinking of doing more of it?

[Alice Burke]

I have never written for audio before. This is my first. It's pretty exciting, and I really can't wait to hear how it comes out.

And yes, I would definitely write more for the audio in the future.

[Andrew]

Well, I certainly hope you enjoy how this turns out. So my next question is, do you have any upcoming projects that you'd like to promote?

[Alice Burke]

I can't really think of any. My brother Scott and I did write a collaboration of a collection of 10 Minute Plays that was published by Howard. It's called *A Bench in Dragonfly Park*, and he wrote five plays, and I wrote five plays. So it is presented as a full-length play of stories that occur on the same bench in this park.

[Andrew]

And this, of course, brings us to the most important question of this entire interview, which is elevator or stairs?

[Alice Burke]

Elevator or stairs. I will take the elevator if it's more than two floors.

Otherwise, I will just take the stairs.

I'm not afraid of elevators.

[Andrew]

Well, that is excellent to hear. Once again, Alice, thank you so much for being part of the half-hour, audio hour, and letting eclectic be part of your show, The Elevator. It was a really lovely script and really a lot of fun to work on.

And on behalf of everyone here at EFCT, I just want to say thank you so very much.

Andrew

We hope you enjoyed The Elevator. Next month, we will be presenting Park Benches by Darrin J Friedman, And don't forget to head over to [eclectic-theatre.com](http://eclectic-theatre.com) to find out about all our other shows and projects, like our upcoming show, Relatively Speaking, by Alan Ayckbourn, a hilarious comedy about love, trust, and mistaken identities, running May 9th- 24th at The Bramble Arts Loft. More info at [eclectic-theatre.com](http://eclectic-theatre.com)!

On behalf of myself and everyone here at EFCT, thanks for listening