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## Mime With Screams

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# Mime With Screams

## scene 1

Jim Ballard

Glass enclosed office stands at far left of stage.

The glass front facing the audience is about 20' long, each adjacent side 12' long. The remaining side, seen as the distant interior wall, contains a 6' square blackboard on the right side of the wall, directly over a desk.

A padded swivel chair rests in front of the desk, empty.

Lighting is furnished by overhead florescent tubes.

An old circular clock with no hands hangs above the cabinets.

Office front should be facing audience.

On right adjacent side of office, eight men in blue working coveralls arrange themselves around the glass window. All are looking into office.

On the blackboard, written in large figures, is:  $2 + 2 =$

A working man holding the hand of a young boy of about ten enters from right side of stage. He is entirely dressed in blue. The two walk across the stage, working man smiles at other eight men, then both go through the office door and stand near the chair, facing audience. The working man says something to the boy, points to the blackboard, smiles again to the watching men, gestures toward the chair, turns, leaves the office, then positions himself beside the other eight men. Inside, the boy attempts to mount the chair but it is too high. He pushes it across the office in one motion. Then, remembering the figures on the blackboard, he awkwardly climbs upon the desk. Continually, he glances at the watching men and returns their smiles. Finding a piece of chalk, he slowly and precisely writes the number "4" in the appropriate place. Immediately, the workmen sigh with relief, look pleasingly at one another, and continue watching the boy in the process of writing the equation,  $4 + 4 = 8$ . The men act extremely happy and convey their excitement by gesturing with their hands.

CURTAIN

# scene 2

Same office setting. Equations still on blackboard.

Working men in exact positions as they were when the first scene ended. Only now, a man about twenty-five years old, neatly dressed, (but not in suit), sits in the swivel chair inspecting some papers. He looks at them, stares at the blackboard, returns to them, glances at the watching men, then suddenly slams the papers onto the desk. The watching men fidget slightly. The young man reclines in the chair in comtemplating mood, then quickly rises to the blackboard, erases the answers, "4" and "8" to the equations, replaces them with question marks. The watching men gasp with fear, look appallingly to one another, then begin pounding on the glass and pointing to the blackboard. Soon they are all violently screaming. Likewise, the man in the office is screaming, nodding his head, and pointing to the blackboard. He suddenly rushes to the window and begins pounding rapidly on the glass. The watching men back away from the window, look at one another, then slowly form a close circle as if in a huddle. Shortly, a man leaves the huddle and exits to the right of the stage. The working men return, with solemn faces,

to their previous positions alongside the window.

The young man is now sitting, head lowered and buried in his hands, and he is obviously crying.

The man who had left the group holding the hand of a small boy of about eight enters from right side of stage. As they walk by the office front, the other working men smile faintly to the boy. After entering the room, working man calmly says something to the sobbing young man and then directs the attention of the small boy to the equations on the blackboard. The young man, still crying, stands and begins slowly walking to the door. The watching men all nod their heads in reply to the young man's actions. He continues walking slowly by the working men who are now watching the little boy with the working men who are now watching the little boy and smiling. These men begin to show more and more excitement. The young man, still walking, stops half-way across the stage, turns facing the men, laughs loudly at the scene before him, bows his head, then exits crying off the right of stage. The watching men--the ninth has taken his place beside the others--are pointing and laughing at the small boy who has now climbed upon the desk.

CURTAIN