

Play Title: The Meeting

A play in One-act

Author: Cheryl Ann Costa

Contact Information:

Cheryl Ann Costa

Author@CherylCosta.com

Logliner: Representatives of two government agencies discuss a unique American sub-culture and some national security ramifications.

Synopsis: Representatives of the Dept of Homeland Security and the US Postal Dept and the U.S. Dept of Magic discuss the American Wizard culture and the security ramifications the Real-ID Act will have on that culture's coming and goings. Though the story will evolve into other matters on National Security.

Runtime: 12-18 minutes

Period: Sometime in 2007 during the 2nd term of George W. Bush

Place: Some office building in the Federal Triangle of Washington, DC

Set: The stage need only have a conference table and suitable conference chairs.

Props: Brief cases and personal zip up note book holders, a pitcher of ice water and water glasses.

Costumes: Business attire typical of Federal employees

Characters:

Stern – (40's-50's) U.S. Dept of Homeland Security (DHS)– Senior Staff

Updike – (20's-30's) U.S. Dept of Homeland Security (DHS)– Staff Real ID Division

Fizzle – (40's-50's) U.S. Postal Dept 4th Undersecretary

Hazard – (20's-30's) U.S. Postal Inspector

Directors Notes on Characters Genders:

- (The characters can be cast male or female depending upon the director's preferences and the available talent.
- The director and cast are asked to adjust pronouns as required M_ = Mr or Ms.
- For initial introductions and use of first names the actors are encouraged to use their own first names.)

Line Weights:

Stern – 50 lines

Updike – 35 lines

Fizzle – 51 lines

Hazard – 38 lines

The Meeting

A Play in One-Act by Cheryl Ann Costa

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Directors Synopsis: Representatives of the Dept of Homeland Security and the US Postal Dept and the U.S. Dept of Magic discuss the American Wizard culture and the security ramifications the Real-ID Act will have on that culture's coming and goings. Though the story will evolve into other matters on National Security.

Tip of the Hat to J.K. Rowling: This play was inspired by the universe of J.K. Rowling. The American themes and American Wizard history discussed in this play is based on the "Boorworms Academy of Magic" short stories and characters written by Cheryl Costa & Linda Miller Poore (www.Boorworms.org) and not intended to infringe upon the story lines of J.K. Rowling.

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Stern – (40's-50's) U.S. Dept of Homeland Security (DHS)– Senior Staff Real ID Division

Urdike – (20's-30's) U.S. Dept of Homeland Security (DHS)– Staff Real ID Division

Fizzle – (40's-50's) U.S. Postal Dept 4th Undersecretary – Wizard Affairs

Hazard – (20's-30's) U.S. Postal Inspector – U.S. Dept of Magic Liaison

---Characterization and Tone notes: The DHS representatives take themselves much too seriously vs. the Postal people are very laid back, often simplistic, trying to be helpful and are very a matter of fact in regards to the American Wizard culture. The postal representatives and their 233 year old dept are trying to compassionately acquaint the six year old DHS agency with knowledge and issues quite literally above their pay grade!

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Scene One: The Postal Inspectors

[As lights come up we see Senior DHS staff person “**Stern**” pacing slowly while reading some papers at the conference table. After a few moments of establishment, “**Updike**” enters leading “**Fizzle**” followed by “**Hazard**”, both are carrying valises or brief cases.]

Updike

Director Stern, I’d like to introduce you to Postal Undersecretary Fizzle and Postal Inspector Hazard both from the DC district.

[Hand shakes are offered all around across the table, Updike takes his place with Stern.]

Stern

Welcome to the Department of Homeland Security.

Fizzle

Thank you Director Stern.

[They all begin to sit.]

Stern

M_ Undersecretary what can Homeland Security do for the postal service.

[Fizzle & Hazard give each other a knowing and sheepish look]

Fizzle

Director Stern it’s the Postal Service who wants to help Homeland Security.

[Stern and Updike are expressionless but force smiles]

Updike

Our country’s security can use all the help it can get.

[Meanwhile Hazard is pulling two pieces of paper from a valise and politely pushes them over to Stern and Updike]

Stern

Every bit of information is important – What is this?

Hazard

These are a combination Non-Disclosure agreements and In-Briefing Documents. Basically it says that you won’t disclose our briefing to any unauthorized personnel not specifically cleared by us and with a clear-need-to-know.

[Stern starts to read the paper.]

Updike

What's the In-Briefing about?

Stern

What's the classification Secret or Top Secret?

Fizzle

Well think of it sensitive compartmented information; On a Need-to-know basis. In essence this document warns each of you that our briefing will forever change your world view and could radically affect your belief standards and perhaps your mental health.

[Stern still looking at the document starts to chuckle, but Fizzle and Hazard are dead pan serious.]

Stern

Here at the Dept of Homeland Security we're monitoring over a hundred radical groups, criminal elements and terrorist organizations. [He starts to sign his document] Nothing I've been briefed on to date has changed my beliefs. [He nods to Updike who takes his cue and signs his paper] As far as world view is concerned, there's a lot of bad people out there that we are trying to keep out of our country, that's all the world view I need frankly.

[Updike slides the two documents back to Hazard]

Stern

So let's get on with the briefing.

[Fizzle gives a nod to Hazard]

Hazard

I suppose the best place to start is with a quick history lesson. The postal service goes back to 1683 when Governor William Penn established Pennsylvania's first Post Office.

Updike

I thought Ben Franklin did that.

Hazard

Yes and no, Franklin initially was appointed the postmaster of Philadelphia in 1737; that early postal system was actually part of the royal post in the colonies.

Fizzle

On July 26th, 1775, the second continental congress appointed Ben Franklin as the Postmaster General of the United Colonies, which was the true establishment of what is now the US Postal service.

[Not impressed Stern remarks]

Stern

What does this have to do with fighting terrorism?

Fizzle

Please bare with us. [He nods to Hazard.]

Hazard

On August 1st 1775, Post Master General Franklin appointed a Special Deputy for the - coordination and custodial oversight of the “phenomenally adept”.

Stern

What the hell does that mean “the phenomenally adept”.

Hazard

Plainly said, “Magical folk,” [beat] in other words, Witches and Wizards.

[Stern and Updike give each other dead pan looks and then bust out in jolly laughing]

Stern

[laughing] Did the vice-president Cheney put you folks up to this, because if he did, score two for him [stern pulls out a hanky and wipes tears from laughing.]

[Fizzle and Hazard have been quite pleasant through the laughing, but calm.]

Fizzle

Director Stern, I assure you we’re being quite serious.

[Stern and Updike again look at each other and bust out with more laughing, Updike has totally lost it in giggles]

[Hazard reaches into the brief case and produces magic wand]

Stern

[laughing and points] Look, a magic wand!

[they are over come with more laughter.]

Hazard

Immobilus! [With a 1-2 flick towards both Stern and Updike, the two freeze in their motion with mouths now silent and gaping open, each with a surprised look]

Fizzle

Director Stern, I’m terrible sorry for this but this is the reaction we typically get when we do one of our briefings. We did warn you when you signed our in-briefing documents that your beliefs might be challenged. Hazard please explain the Special Deputy’s duties.

Hazard

1: The special deputy's duties shall include prescribing a set of protocols in order to guide the safe and ordered exercise of phenomenal skills. 2: That a posse of adepts will be organized and regulated to support the duties of the Postmaster general of the United Colonies and the Continental Congress as required.

Fizzle

This single appointment evolved into the US Dept of Magic. I think they will behave themselves now, go ahead and release them M_ Hazard.

Hazard

[Makes a flick action with the wand] Restorem!

[The two DHS persons carefully start to move almost afraid to. If either of them is standing they both sit politely, Then Stern speaks.]

Stern

That was an impressive trick but I've seen that over at CIA head quarters at Langley. You'll need more than that to impress me.

Fizzle

Who do you think taught it to the CIA?

Stern

So your telling me you magical folks have been involved with the CIA?

Fizzle

Yes and No, our dept has helped out various agencies over the course of our country's history but usually only if invited to.

Stern

You mean like during wars?

Hazard

Most certainly.

Updike

How about some examples?

Hazard

I remember reading that during World War One, the Dept of Magic enchanted whales as Diplomatic Couriers and later as U-boat hunters.

Stern

Did it work?

Hazard

Most certainly it did. If you know your history, the USA joined the war in 1918 and it ended that very same year.

Fizzle

They used the technique again during World War two.

Stern

So, Undersecretary Fizzle, so are you telling me that the Postal service is run by... Witches and Wizards.

Fizzle

Not exactly, the postal service is the parent agency and is run by non-magical folk; but the Dept of Magic on the other hand is predominately managed by Wizarding folk all of which are Federal employees of course.

Stern

Of course. [Stern and Updike give each other wide eyed looks]

Hazard

As a matter of fact all of our Dept of Magic field agents are commissioned as Postal Inspectors.

Stern

I think I can speak for M_ Updike when I say that you've shaken the foundations of our briefs with your briefing. [Shaking his head] Talk about being blind sided.

Updike

Can I ask you a question?

Fizzle

Most certainly.

Updike

Does the Dept of Magic ever help out the Postal Service.

[Both Fizzle and Hazard assume a prideful posture in their seats.]

Fizzle

Oh my yes.

Hazard

Historically speaking, the first official act of the first special deputy was to provide the postal service with an ancient enchantment.

Fizzle

Yes it was first coined by from the Greek storyteller and wizard Herodotus to aid messengers in their tasks. It's actually quite well known by every school child in America.

Updike

It is?

Hazard

"Neither snow nor rain not heat nor, gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

Updike

You're kidding.

Hazard

About magic, I never kid.

Stern

I must say I'm quite dumb founded.

Updike

That's an understatement

Stern

So secretary Fizzle, I've got to ask what earth shattering reason would compelled you to come over here and shake our cultural foundations?

Fizzle

Well Director Stern it's the REAL-ID act there are some awkward ramifications for Wizarding folk.

Updike

There are?

Stern

Well, if as you say our country has plenty of "Wizarding-Folk..."

Fizzle

Hundreds of Thousands of them.

Updike

Good grief!

Stern

I take it that they're all patriotic Americans?

Hazard

As patriotic as the next person.

Fizzle

But best of all Wizarding folk are all tax paying citizens!

Updike

Question: Do they serve in the armed forces?

Hazard

Some do, but like Gay and Lesbians the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy applies to Wizarding folk as well so a clear number is hard to ascertain. Although many Wizarding folk tend to not participate in the regular armed forces for practical reasons.

Updike

What do you mean by "practical reasons?"

Hazard

Many wizards are very talented at magic but tend to be less than practical in everyday skills that most non-wizarding folks take for granted.

Updike

What kinds of skills?

Fizzle

Do you remember a few months ago a man was reported to be stuck in the elevator at the Washington Monument?

Updike

Sure I remember, he tied up the elevator for hours and while we had SWAT teams surrounding the place thinking it was a terrorist. We still don't know how he got away, sight unseen.

[Fizzle and Hazard just glance at each other and smirk.]

Stern

Are you suggesting that he was a Wiz – Wizard?

Fizzle

I'm not suggesting anything; the poor man was a wizard and simply was having trouble with the elevator.

Stern

He couldn't operate the elevator? Any school child can use an elevator.

Fizzle

Any non-wizard school child.

Stern

So he was too stupid to use the elevator?

Fizzle

No, he just thought it was enchanted and couldn't understand why it would obey his commands to move.

Updike

How did he escape?

Hazard

After the SWAT team was called we dispatched postal inspectors to rescue the poor man from the elevator so he wouldn't be hurt or interrogated by non wizarding police authorities.

Updike

Hey, I was there we didn't see any postal inspectors.

Hazard

Of course not, they simply apparated into the elevator and escorted the man out by apparating out.

Updike

What in blazes is apparating?

[Updike and Stern give each other perplexed looks]

Stern

Updike Can it! Enough of this talk, I want to get back to the Real-ID issues.

Hazard

Most certainly

Fizzle

Yes of course

Stern

If as you say all these Wizards and Witches are all loyal Americans they'll have to comply like everyone else and get an updated driver's license and perhaps a passport.

Fizzle

Actually, director, you hit the issue squarely on the head.

Stern

I did?

Fizzle

Yes, the core of the problem isn't about getting proper documentation it's the documentation itself.

Updike

Don't Magical Folk have driver's licenses?

Hazard

Some of them do, but many of them don't.

Updike

How do they get around?

Fizzle

Well there's the Floo Network, Port Keys, Apparating...

Hazard

...and of course broomsticks are still very much in fashion.

[Stern and Updike are again staring at Fizzle & Hazard, dead pan and blank]

Updike

I think the important question is do these magical folk, leave and enter the country with all these unique modes of transportation?

Fizzle

Absolutely

[Stern with a sparkle in his eye, looking like he the cat-who-ate-the-canary]

Stern

Wait Updike, start taking notes, perhaps we can come up with some practical solutions to some old nagging problems.

Updike

What topic?

Stern
Exotic Border Security Techniques

Updike
Noted

Stern
Secretary Fizzle, when it comes to national security I'm less concerned with loyal American citizens coming and going across our borders. I'm more concerned with terrorists and undocumented aliens coming into the country and for that matter so are members of congress.

Fizzle
That makes perfect sense.

Stern
To start with we have a nineteen hundred and fifty one mile border between the United States and Mexico.

Fizzle
I'm aware of that?

Stern
Do you suppose that the Dept of Magic could erect or manifest a [struggling for words] perhaps a forty foot high wall that could be enchanted to not be dug under and not crawled over... and...and do it for the entire nineteen hundred and fifty one mile border with controlled crossing points?

[Fizzle and Hazard look at each other with a knowing and practical nod]

Hazard
It would take some talented effort and planning...

Fizzle
...but yes we could handle it.

[Stern wide eyed and a bit excited, pointing at Updike's note pad]

Stern
WOW! That would be super. Updike, make notes we've got a solution to the southern border crossing problem.

[Updike starts scribbling]

Stern
Now team, let's think really big here, in terms of protecting our countries borders...

[Stern staring off in front of him and spreading his hands apart as if he's visualizing something really big.]
Secretary Fizzle, what do you think about tackling the thirty one hundred mile border with Canada?

[Fizzle gives a wide eyed look and ponders]

Hazard
Gosh that border would have thousands of turning points...

Updike
Five thousand, twenty-three to be exact!

Hazard
Isn't there a considerable portion over water?

Stern
About twenty three hundred miles over water.

Fizzle
How many states are we dealing with?

Updike
Thirteen!

[The two wizards look at each other with pondering looks then Fizzle looks back with an affirmative look]

Fizzle
Like we said before, it would take some talented effort and planning but it could be done.

[Giddy as a kid in a candy shop, again pointing at Updike's pad with updike again scribbling]

Stern
Are you getting all this Updike?

Updike
Yes, I am.

[Stern takes a deep breath, placing hands behind his-her head and looking at the ceiling]

Stern
That leaves only foreign or terrorist attacks by ballistic missiles as our major threat?

Fizzle

I'm not sure I'm following you?

Stern

Come on Fizzle don't you see, it's the sky, that would be our last big vulnerability.

Fizzle

No I'm not following you.

Stern

Imagine if we could get Wizards on broomsticks or something to shoot down enemy missiles? What do you think?

Hazard

I thought the Star Wars program has that mission.

Updike

[with a snarky comment] Those guys still can't hit the broad side of a barn let alone a missile.

Hazard

You're talking about objects traveling over 3000 miles an hour in the upper atmosphere that's a tall order.

Stern

...But you guys have all this magic stuff, can't it be done?

Hazard

[shaking his head] I just don't know...the technical problems are enormous...

[Fizzle holds up a hand to quiet Hazard]

Fizzle

There was a proposal from the Dept of Magic back during the Cold War. I believe the idea got buried. It was during the Reagan administration I believe.

Stern

What proposal?

Fizzle

Please understand I wasn't involved at this level in those early days of my career.

Stern

What kind of proposal? [Making eye contact with] Come on Fizzle I'm all ears what did they have in mind?

Fizzle

There was this interesting project that involved using highly enchanted dragons.

Updike

DRAGONS!!! Oh for Pete sakes! That's ridiculous.

Stern

Dragons...hmmm...tell me about it, I'm listening?

Fizzle

The idea was that in the event of a missile attack an enchanted dragon could be dispatched to neutralize the threat.

Hazard

Hmm that makes sense they'd be ideally suited for the task.

Updike

They would? Why?

Stern

Ya, why?

Hazard

Well dragons can fly very fast and very high...

Fizzle

...they're one of the few creatures that can function up in the thin air where a re-entering ballistic warhead would be functioning.

Stern

So what happened? Why wasn't it adopted?

Fizzle

As I understand it there were safety and environmental considerations.

Updike

What kind of safety issue?

Fizzle

Control of the dragons for one and the Dragon droppings for another.

Updike

What's so bad about a few Dragon droppings?

Hazard

Well for one, they're the size of a soft ball and weigh as much as a bowling ball.

Fizzle

NASA was concerned about the speed of a falling droppings coming down from 70 or 80- thousand feet.

Stern

Oh that's baloney, even the Star Wars program has falling debris issues.

Hazard

[Looking at fizzle] I suppose there were toxic concerns too?

Fizzle

[Answering Hazard] Yes there were.

Stern

[Almost shouting] What toxic concerns?

Fizzle

The dragon dropping are somewhat toxic....

Stern

Good grief so is a spend rocket motor for god sakes!

Hazard

Well dragon dropping are toxic both magically and non-magically speaking. It takes real skill to clean up after them.

Fizzle

In fact, it was that toxic consideration that made the Environmental Protection Agency, condemn the whole project.

Updike

Ahhhh, the EPA! [shaking head in disgust] A bunch of freaking tree huggers!

Stern

Don't worry Updike; the president's been fixing the EPA

Fizzle

What do you mean fixing the EPA?

Stern

Amused, oh president's appointees have been quietly dismantling all nine of the EPA's pesticides and toxicology libraries.

Updike

It was a money saving measure too; the opinion was that the public and researchers can get all the information they need from chemical companies.

[Fizzle and Hazard seem upset at the mention of dismantling of libraries]

Hazard

If you dismantle a library, you lose not only the books but the enormous institutional experience of the professional research librarians too.

Fizzle

Librarians are managers of accumulated knowledge and wisdom?

Updike

Well the president didn't think so; he's ordered the closing of libraries all through the federal government. The EPA, the dept of energy, the agriculture dept, even NASA. I heard they had quite the garage sale.

Stern

Yesssss, I heard they sold off everything; books, fixtures, everything for pennies on the dollar. It might have gone completely unnoticed by the press and the public if it hadn't been for one screechy head librarian from the EPA who ran her mouth to the Los Angeles Times.

Fizzle

Who was she?

Updike

Oh, she was some mouthy contract librarian. She'll never work in this town again!

Stern

Secretary Fizzle it's none of your concern. When can we schedule another appointment to start serious ways and means to make this great stuff happen?

Fizzle

Have your staff send us a meeting memo, we'll be happy to attend.

Stern

That's terrific, Updike see to the follow up meetings.

[The four stand and shake hands cordially]

Fizzle

[Speaking to Stern] Do you mind if Hazard and I stay in this conference room for a few minutes to consolidate our notes.

Stern

Take all the time you want. [Stern and Updike walk nearly off stage] You know Updike I can't wait to present this to secretary Chernoff.

Fizzle

[Fizzle – flicks a wand at them before they totally exit]
Suspendem
[Stern and Updike are inert] [Fizzle Shaking head]
I can't believe the things they asked us to do?

Hazard

I can't believe the things they've been doing, closing libraries that's horrible!

Fizzle

I for one am not going to share magical technology with these sorts.

Hazard

I don't blame you, how do you want to proceed.

Fizzle

We best wipe their memories of this meeting. Lets share our concerns with the next administration, perhaps they'll be more reasonable.

Hazard

Agreed

[both with wands out and at the ready]

Fizzle

Together on three. One, two three.
[they flick their wands toward stern and updike]

Fizzle & Hazard

Forget-us

[Blackout] [Curtain]