

“There’s a hole in my pocket, dear Liza dear Liza, there’s a hole in my pocket”

Act I -

Lights up

H: Our bucket has a hole in it.

L: What? What Henry? What did you say?

H: [emphatically]: Our bucket has a hole in it!

L: So fix it.

H: With what?

L: With straw, Henry, with straw.

H: Straw? What am I going to use to cut straw?

L: The knife, Henry, the knife.

H [quiet, perhaps under his breath, perhaps angry]: It’s not sharp.

L: what?

H [louder but not shouting]: The knife is not sharp.

L: So sharpen it, Henry, sharpen it.

H [not angry, but not happy, adjusting to the frustration]: The sharpening stone is too dry.

L : So wet it.

H: And with what shall I get water?

L: The bu... oh [she starts to realize] Oh. OH. Wait no I don’t get it.

H: Well, our bucket has a hole in it.

L: Ok, so fix it.

H: With what?

L: Oh. Hmmm. What about straw?

H: I thought we went over this already. We have nothing to cut straw with.

L: Oh right. Well what about, hmmm, well what about the knife?

H: It’s not sharp.

L: Well we can sharpen it.

H: No. The stone is too dry.

L: No problem we’ll just wet it.

H: And how do we get the water?

L: Well we just go fetch it in the bu... OHHHH... well maybe [she excites for a beat, he points to the bucket, she:] OHHH. Hmm.

H: So I guess we’re stuck.

L: Well, I don’t want it to be my fault.

H: What do you mean?

L: I mean I don’t want to be responsible for ending the scene.

H: Well, I realized a long time ago, it just took you a little while to realize and now that you have, we can end this scene.

L: Bu...(starts to say Buckets but is cut off)

H: No. No **but**s about it, We know where this goes. We can just end it right now. You understand don’t you?

L: Yeah I think I do.

H: So then it's over.

L: [long pause]: Oh Henry, I don't want it to be over, couldn't we just fetch some water in the bu... [he interrupts again]

H: Don't say it.

L: I have to, Henry, I have to. I have to try. We have to try.

H: Oh dear, dear must we do this again.

L[upset]: Ok, no. No. We don't have to do it again. Not if you don't want to.

H: Oh thank god.

L: I just thought...ya know... maybe we could try once more, ya know, for old time sake.

H: But what's the use, we know where it goes.

L: How do you know what I know? Maybe I don't know... maybe I'm confused, maybe I just don't want to know, maybe I need to know so badly that even knowing isn't enough.

H: That doesn't make sense.

L: Please let's just try.

H: Fine. [pause... Liza is waiting for something]: Oh, did you have a suggestion about how to get some water to wet the stone that is too dry to sharpen the knife which is too dull to cut the straw?

L: Hmm. [pause... thinking ... as if suddenly enlightened]. Oh I know, we could fetch some water in our bucket!

H: There's a hole in our bucket

L: Fix it.

H: With what?

[they continue but the lights dim and they get quieter]

L: With straw

H: How should I cut it?

L: With the knife?

H: It's too dull.

L: Sharpen it.

[when they are inaudible and in the dusk, a voiceover effect of L's voice says "Oh thank you Henry"]

[Blackout]

Pause

A bugle call- morning, a military camp perhaps? A boy scout troupe? A horse race?

[Lights up slowly]

A man in chain shackles, hands to feet and to the floor.

Fetal on the floor, he does not appear to be treated well.

[The light sufficient, he speaks:]

Damned sun.

Why must you rise?

I have no need of you anymore. Your light only bothers me, reminds me of someplace else. I am here now.

[More light]

Damn you sun
Leave me be.
If I cannot find solace here where is there peace?
Why won't you let me be.

[Brighter still]

Wretched hellfire, will you not relent
Nausea overwhelms me
I cannot bare this any longer
And yet I will, you will not defeat me

[dimmer]

Ah ha. You see, you cannot hold out all day.
I am already winning.
You are weak old star.
I will be rid of you yet.

[original lighting]

Ha. And you thought you could intrude on my space.
You thought you could take a piece of me.
Burn yourself into me.
Not today sun. Not today.

[darker]

Bye bye loser.
Finally, gone, and when your gone, I'm gone.
Peace at last.
By George, peace at last.
By god almighty, peace at last.

[Blackout].

Sound: News broadcast Vietnam era. Radio – crackles

Today more American soldiers died. The war rages on with no end in sight. No one is really sure where the war is. The president today took time out from his vacation to talk to the press about the country's economic decline but refused to take questions about the war. When asked about the war, the president said, "Hey why don't we talk about

fixing the economy?” Reporters immediately followed up with questions about the war. No answers were provided until one intrepid blogger was allowed to ask the most revealing question of the press conference. As it turned out, the president’s tie was a French designer label.

[Blackout]

Air raid siren

Voice in darkness: We stand at the brink of the unknown. We have no choice but to leap forward. To stay here is to die.

Air raid siren again

[Lights up – Bright].

[Emptiness as only theatre stage can be]

Man [running across the stage]: We’re all going to die! AHHH. They’re coming!!! Run for cover!

SM [calmly]: Shhh. There’s a show going on,

Man [still excitedly but not screaming]: We have to get out of here. I heard on the news that they’re coming and we don’t have much time we have to go, we are all going to die.

SM [unmoved]: Please be quiet, there is a performance going on. The audience is a very special audience tonight and they seem to be enjoying it thus far so please be quiet.

Man: What show is it?

SM: Does it matter? I just call the cues on the board. Either way we have to be quiet or we are going to disturb the show.

Man: Disturb the show? [whispered yelling]: But we are all going to DIE!!!

SM: Of course. But we needn’t do it right now must we?

Man: How do you know?

[They look up for a beat. Man continues looking up, SM looks down, flips through paper on clipboard.]

SM: No. Not yet. We are only in the third scene.

Man: Oh, I thought this was the fourth scene.

SM: No, the radio voice didn’t count as a scene.

Man: Oh. Oh. So it was just Henry and Liza and then the guy in the cell and then us.

SM: Yeah.

Man: Oh. Then nevermind. [he walks off]

SM about to leave too when P enters

P: What the hell was all that noise about?

SM: Really strange, this guy just came in here screaming we were all going to die. But I set him straight.

P: Well good.

SM: What’s the house count tonight?

P: I'm waiting to find that out myself, there were a few last minute sales.

SM: It's a good house.

P: The only good house is a full house.

SM: [shrugs]

P: What's this show about anyway?

SM: I'm not really sure. [Pause looks at clipboard speaking into headset:] Light cue 73, standby, sound cue 15 stand by. [back to P:] sorry what were you saying?

P: Oh nothing, I don't mean to disturb. It doesn't really matter anyway. I should get back to the front, I'm sure they've done counting by now.

SM: Light cue 73 go. Sound 15 go.

Blackout

Music up.

Sound cue: act one

curtain rises

spotlight on a giant pile of shit

tech cue one: a large fan appears from backstage and starts blowing the aroma of creativity towards the audience

tech cue two: the fan slowly gets closer to the pile, the aroma fills the theatre eventually, the fan hits the shit

large chunks of ideological garbage plaster the walls of the theatre

the audience, overwhelmed by the spectacle sit motionless, unable to comprehend the significance of the shitstorm, but convinced by sounds and lights that the show is continuing, they stare wide eyed:

tech cue three: harmless but large flies are released into the theatre and the audience is encouraged by sound cue to revel in the gluttonous feeding of god's creatures

after a while, the roof of the theatre opens and wind machines blow air forcefully upward the audience is raised into the air and dams are opened to flood the theatre

the audience lands onto a floating raft above a river where they are washed away with the rest of the shit just in time for another performance

Black out.

Scene four a porch in summer. Rocking chair. Lemonade.

On porch, Auntie Ma and Uncle Pa. She is knitting. He is reading.

Man enters

M: We're going to die!

They ignore him

M: We're going to die! Hello!

Up: Did you hear something ma?

Am: No, why did you say something?

Up: No, must be the wind.

Am: Yeah, old porch been mighty creeky.

Up: Oh well, me an boy e'll have to go underneat take look make sure everything's all tightened up.

Am: Yeah, do that before my mother comes next week.

Up: yes dear.

M: Hello. Did you not hear me, I said we're going to die!!!

Am: ya know dear I better check on those pies in the oven.

Up: mmm pie.

Am: be right back.

M: Hello people this is really kinda important.

This goes on.

Eventually M gets close enough

Up: well you don't have to yell.

...

U: now now settle down. Have some lemonade. Ma, bring out another cup we have a guest.

M: I am not a guest. We have to get out of here. They're coming.

Up: Now now, what's going on.

M: We are all going to die!

Up: Of course we are.

M: No I mean, they're coming.

Up: Who is?

[Am back with lemonade pitcher and glasses, U make M drink some before he lets him speak]

Am: What's going on Pa.

Up[to M]: alright now, what's all this?

M: The critics. They're coming. We are all going to die. We have to get out of here.

Am [relieved]: oh is that all.

U: oh boy, you had Ma all worked up there for a minute. Ha.

M: Wait why aren't you afraid? Do you understand what I am saying? They are coming. The critics are coming and they are going to tear this place apart.

U: Settle down boy settle down.

M: But...

U: First off, critics don't come around these parts. Even if they did, wouldn't be anything we hadn't heard before. Not like we don't know how bad it is.

M: But they are going to rip us apart, deconstruct the works, pull out underlying controversies, shakes our foundations.

A [to U]: It's like he's never seen a show before.

U [nods]: Ya know boy, why are you so afraid of all this?

M: Huh? How could I not be? Their savages, gunna tear us limb from limb.

[A and U share a knowing glance of enjoyment – they are looking forward to it]

U: Boy you ever been ripped apart?

M: What?

A: I bet he never has. Only explanation for all this excitement. [she's returned to knitting]

U: Boy you gotta relax. Them critics is the whole point. We are here for them.

M: Well I'm getting out of here. You either stupid or crazy but I'm not sticking around to find my end with you.

U: Suit yer'self

A: Aw pa, don't ya think we oughta make him stay.

U: No, we shouldn't make him if he ain't ready.

[M runs out]

[A and U continue on the porch reading or knitting sipping lemonade, a few beats later lights start dimming ... about halfway, monsters run in from stage left and maul the couple. Fake limbs fly out as the actors and monster mob disappear quickly stage right (tazmanian devils?)]

SOUND EFFECT: "MAYBE THE DINGO ATE YOUR BABY!"

Music cue: ???

Lights up low and vary as per scene directions from actor

Scene five

can you see me?

perhaps a little more light. Ok now, can you see me?

hmmm.

I don't think so, let's have more light.

Ah, no that's uncomfortable. Less light. Ok.

Great.

You probably think you can see me now.

You can't.

This isn't me.

This is a play. A staged production. A character from the mind of another being presented to you in this flesh.

I know you think you knew that. But did you really?

Don't you still think you are seeing me?

I am talking to you, sure it must be me speaking.

Is this not my voice?

Did I choose these clothes?... why did I choose these clothes?

Why do you judge me by my clothes?

Do you think they are me?

Do you think they mean something about my character?

Do you still think you are seeing me?

There is shadow on the floor is that also me?

It moves with so much life. Perhaps I am over there.

[shadow puppets, staring contest]

but alas, my shadow is boring. It has no spunk. Peter Pan's shadow led him to Wendy. She sowed him back together.

I think that's why your here. You have to try to put me and my shadow back together. You don't have much choice in the matter. Your brains are trying to make sense of all this mess. There this material shadow bouncing in the light. A hunk of darkness - you are hear to make it me - to see a soul.

When the lights go out, I'll disappear
Back to Never land
me and my shadow gone from your room
enjoy growing up
try to remember me.

BLACKOUT

Lights up on the same porch from scene 4.

C1: I don't think I understand this show.

C2: No. Neither do I.

C3: You two are so predictable.

C1: And your not?

C3: No I just mean here we are, the critics, and we hate everything.

C2: Is that a problem?

C3: Well it's very predictable.

C1: I see your point.

C2: Well, I don't think we have an alternative. It is our role.

C3: Do we have to be so critical all the time?

C1: Well I think he's right, it is our role.

C3: Right but if I am catching the theme of this show, and mind you I am not saying this is a good show, I am just thinking that there is a recurrent theme here and it seems to have something to do with being trapped.

C1: So you think we're trapped too?

C3: Well it's like he(2) said, we have to complete our role just like all the rest of them.

C1: Yes yes, but we are critical thinkers, we can transcend.

C3: Yes but how do we do that exactly?

C2: By fulfilling our role.

C3: Do you see the problem?

C1: No.

C3: If we just keep tearing this show apart, how are we any different then they are? I mean we're up here too.

C1: So what do you propose?

C3: We could think for ourselves, lose the script and really think?

C2: But how would the light board operator know when to change the lights?

C3: He would have to think too,

C1: Oh I don't know, that is a lot of responsibility.

C3: Exactly, that's exactly what this show is lacking, responsibility.

C2: Oh I agree with that completely, this show is absolutely lacking.

C3: Lacking in responsibility.

C2: Yes, that too.

C1: So you are taking responsibility now?

C3: Well, I don't know about that. I mean I'm not sure I could do that.

C1: Why not? I mean you seem to think that's the only way we can avoid succumbing to our role.