

STYX
A Play in One Act
by
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Cast of Characters

Winnie: Any actor in combination with any other actor

Willie: Any actor in combination with any other actor

Scene

On the banks of Eternity.

Time

The day a few days after the first two human beings became aware of each other.

ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING:

A pile of random sticks of varying size and length is situated at the extreme of downstage left. At center stage right, a blanket-like covering made from furry material covers two human figures.

AT RISE:

At curtain open, lights come up to full with gels supporting the idea of a pink morning light. The light will become brighter (bastard yellow), darker (dark orange, and then darkest (blue) during the duration of the play. Winnie slowly emerges from beneath the fur covering. Winnie stretches and yawns and taps the other figure still beneath the fur covering. Willie emerges from the covering and also stretches and yawns. Both characters wear white, one piece togas.

Winnie

(Stands upright and walks to center stage. Willie stoops down and pantomimes splashing water from an imaginary stream.)

That was nice.

Willie

(Stands upright and pulls a mandarin orange from beneath the fur covering and begins to peel it.)

Was it nice?

Winnie

(Picks at teeth.)

It was very nice. I think it was nicer than yesterday's.

Willie

I don't recall yesterday's.

Winnie

No? Well, it was the same thing, but somehow, today's is better.

Willie

(Pops a wedge of mandarin orange and chews it. Willie's response is distorted due to its being filled with an orange wedge.)

Maybe yesterday's was better but you forgot about it.

Winnie

(Holds out a hand.)

I don't know. Give me one of your orange wedges and I'll try to recall what yesterday's was like.

Willie

No! Do you think I'm a fool? Besides, you tried that one on me the other day. You ate two of my orange wedges while I wasn't looking.

Winnie

I was just testing to see if yesterday's was better than the day before.

Willie

You could have told that with one wedge.

Winnie

See? That's all I'm asking for today. One little wedge of orange.

Willie

(Quickly devouring the orange, and placing the peeling in the toga.)

Willie (continues)

It's gone. I ate it all.

Winnie

(Stands over Willie and pleads)

But you just couldn't spare one little wedge so that I might gain...uh.. peace of mind. After all, I got up first. I think I need more food than you do.

Willie

(Stands up and confronts Winnie)

But I also need to be fed. Besides, we were given equal amounts of food. Don't you trust the Captain to make all things good?

Winnie

(Places hand on Willie's shoulder)

But listen, what if the reason we are here is to make things better by ourselves. In our own way, so to speak? What if that was the Captain's plan for leaving us here in the first place?

Willie

I don't have any idea. Why don't you ask the Captain yourself, the next time the Captain comes sailing through? Until then, what's yours is yours and what's mine is mine.

Winnie

Oh yeah? I thought we were equals. One of two of yours is mine and one of two of mine is yours.

Willie

Yeah? And who told you that?

Winnie

The Captain while you were out hunting for oranges.

(Willie walks over to the pile of sticks and pulls one of the larger sticks from the pile and places it center stage right, between the two of them, leaving the abandoned fur covering on the opposite center stage left.)

Willie

Let's make it simple. Whatever is on your side of my stick is yours. Whatever is on my side of my stick is mine. Period.

(Winnie moves to the rear extreme of an imaginary line made by the stick at center upstage to gauge the position of the stick).

Winnie

What is this behind the stick, Willie?

Willie (arms crossed)

Mine.

(Winnie walks to the front of the imaginary line made by the twig at center downstage.)

Winnie

And what's this way up in the front?

Willie

That is also mine. Look, do you want me to make it even simpler? Watch.

(Willie gradually takes sticks from the pile and arranges them along the imaginary line between Willie's side and Winnie's side, again leaving the fur covering center stage left.)

Willie (continues)

Do you see, Winnie? Look! The line goes from all the way back there to all the way up here. Mine. Yours. When you get to the river, we can discuss it then.

Winnie

(Sits cross-legged on the floor on top of the fur covering.)

OK. Alright. I see that. I have my one twoth over here. You have your one twoth over there.

Willie

(Sits cross-legged on the floor.)

Exactly! Mine. Yours. One twoth. One twoth. Neighbors.

Winnie

(Affecting shyness.)

So...uh...neighbor...

Willie

(Annoyed.)

Yes, neighbor?

Winnie

(More boldly.)

So, neighbor...what did you do with that orange peeling?

Willie

(Pulls some orange peeling from toga and throws it at Winnie.)

Take it! I hope you choke on it.

Winnie

(Scrambling to pick up the peelings and then chewing on them with words muddled while chewing.)

Thank you neighbor. These things make my mouth tingle. Thanks.

Willie

(Flailing arms in disgust.)

I am so glad to bring some...some zest into your life.

Winnie

(Gulping down the last bite, and looking skyward.)

Neighbor, it's getting darker again.

Willie

Yes. Every day. No big surprise.

Winnie

You know what happens when it gets dark?

Willie

It always gets dark. Then, after a while, it gets light again. So what?

(Winnie stands and pulls more sticks from the pile of sticks. Winnie stacks the sticks into a sort of rough framework for the fur covering.)

Winnie

Well, if you recall, neighbor, when it gets dark, it also gets cold.

Willie

(Angry.)

Of course it gets cold. That's why you have always share the fur covering with me. It is warmer.

Winnie

(Coyly.)

Well now, neighbor. Things have changed today, haven't they? Yours. Mine.

Willie

You mean I can't crawl under your covering?

Winnie

Yours. Mine.

Willie

(Comes to a standing position.)

That is NOT what I meant. Not what I meant at all.

(Winnie crawls inside the rough frame of sticks beneath the fur covering, and peaks out.)

Winnie

But THAT is what you said. Of course, you could use your own cold, old sticks to make your own covering...

Willie

My sticks are doing exactly what I want my sticks to do – keeping what's mine and what's yours separate. But I always thought one twoth of the fur covering was mine.

Winnie

(Crawling deeper inside the fur covering.)

Sorry. You left it over here. Sorry. Yours. Mine. Fine!

(By this time, the stage lights have faded to blue. Willie sits cross-legged on the floor again. As the moments pass, Willie begins to shiver. Finally Willie's teeth chatter.)

Willie

Winnie?

Winnie

(Speaking from inside the fur covering.)

Yours. Mine. What?

Willie

(Pulling a small piece of orange peeling from the toga.)

Winnie, I still have a little orange peeling left.

Winnie

(Peeking slowly from beneath the fur covering.)

And?

Willie

Well, I was thinking that if you let me under the fur covering, I could give you a piece of peeling.

Winnie

(Crawling back inside the fur covering.)

No thanks. I can wait for another orange when it gets light. Besides, the Captain might make a landing then.

Willie

(Pouting.)

Well, I was thinking...uh...when it does get light, I could also give you two wedges from my orange. That is, if you let me under the fur covering.

(Suddenly, wild animal sounds are heard and Winnie's head pokes out with a slightly frightened expression.)

Winnie

Three wedges and it's a deal. And bring me a couple more sticks.

Willie

(Willie grabs two sticks from the pile and climbs over the wall of sticks. Winnie lifts the fur covering to allow Willie inside. Willie hands Winnie the two sticks. The two of them appear at the entrance to the covering and listen as the wild animal sounds increase.)

Willie

Winnie? I am just now starting to get warm. You must have been cold while you were in here alone.

Winnie

I wasn't cold. It just wasn't as warm...as when you crawled under the covering with me.

Willie

Really?

Winnie

Really!

Willie

(Before disappearing inside the fur covering.)

I think when it's light again, one wedge from my orange will be enough for you.

Winnie

(Staring out with an expression of dismay which then becomes one of puzzlement. Winnie holds up the two sticks Willie has given him.)

I wonder what would happen if I rubbed two of these sticks together, really hard and really fast?

(Winnie withdraws deeper under the fur covering and disappears).

Willie

(Heard from within the covering.)

Move over! And stop poking me with that thing!

LIGHTS OUT. CURTAIN.