

Voices In The Trees

by

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Cast of Characters

<u>CLIFF:</u>	13
<u>BETSY:</u>	42
<u>MARINA:</u>	15

Place
Suburban home

Time
11:00 AM

Setting: Modest home in the suburbs in need of a general renovation and interior makeover.

At Rise: Cliff eats his buffalo wings at the kitchen table when Betsy enters.

Cliff sits at the kitchen table eating buffalo wings.

Betsy walks in.

BETSY: Where's your sister? Ain't seen her all day.

CLIFF: She's outback.

BETSY: Outback, where?

CLIFF: She's been in the backyard all day.

BETSY: In this cold?

CLIFF: Staring at them trees. Says she keeps hearing sounds.

BETSY: What kinda sounds?

CLIFF: I don't know.

BETSY: Go get your sister, tell her I said I want her in this house right now.

Cliff gets up and goes to the kitchen screen door.

CLIFF (shouting): Marina! Marina, Ma wants you to get-in-this-house-right-now!

Betsy puts on the kettle and shakes her head.

Cliff returns back to his seat to eat his buffalo wings.

BETSY (to herself): Boy, I'll tell ya...

CLIFF: What?

BETSY: Nothin' Clifford, nothin'. She comin'?

CLIFF: I told her...I don't know.

BETSY: She hear you?

CLIFF: Ma, she looked my way, so I guess she heard me.

BETSY: Freezing out there. Can't believe you let her stay outside.

CLIFF: Told her to come back in, wouldn't listen.

BETSY: Go out there and get your sister!

CLIFF: I'm eating my buffalo wings.

BESTY: Now! She gets ill, it's your fault. God knows that's all we need now, top of everything else. Criminal.

Cliff passes his mother puts on his puffer coat hanging by the door, followed by his boots.

Phone rings.

BETSY: Go on now, make sure you don't come back without her. Hurry up!

Cliff exits.

Betsy answers phone.

Hello? Oh Ma, is everything, alright? Can I call you back? Marina's outside and tryin' to get her back in the house...what? Cause she is Ma! I know it's cold out---trying to—call you back later.

(hangs up phone)

(to herself) Now I gotta deal with her.

Betsy pours a cup of tea. She stirs it and walks to the door, looking out.

Cliff and Marina enter.

Marina, you look like a frozen popsicle. What the hell has gotten into you? Thought you were in your bedroom all this time. Cliff tells me you're outside freezing to death. Hearing sounds? What sounds you hearing out there?

MARINA: Sounds in the trees.

BETSY: What sounds in what trees?

MARINA: I keep hearing voices in the trees.

BETSY: What voices?

MARINA: Different ones...

BETSY: You can't hear voices in the trees.

MARINA: You can. I hear them. Many voices and they call my name. Been driving me crazy all morning, so I decided to go out there and listen to what they had to say, but all they keep repeating is my name.

BETSY (concerned): Your name?

MARINA: And I told them either talk to me or leave me be, cause I ain't having it.

BETSY (worried): And what they say?

MARINA: They stopped.

BETSY (relieved): Well, that's a good thing.

MARINA: I hope so.

BETSY: You turning blue.

MARINA: I'm fine, Ma.

BETSY: Drink this tea.

Marina takes tea and drinks.

I want you to take off all them wet clothes and get in the shower, this instant.

MARINA: Should I drink this tea or shower, Mom, cause I can't do both at the same time?

BETSY: Drink the tea, then the shower.

MARINA: Okay, Mom.

BETSY: You are ice-cold, child.

MARINA: I don't even feel it. After a while your body adjusts. The human body is a remarkable instrument.

BETSY: That's right, it is, but you can get pneumonia and die. You're already fragile as it is.

MARINA (darkly): I am not as fragile as you think I am!

BETSY (cautious): Okay, alright.

MARINA: You think I'm not aware of how cold it is outside? I'm all too aware.

BETSY (friendly): You shouldn't seek to be in such conditions.

MARINA: I can handle it. *Four* hours. I stood out there in the cold for four whole hours.

BETSY: (*taking tea from Marina carefully*) Let's get you in the shower.

MARINA: Cause I can take it. Most regular people like you can only take a few minutes. I stayed outside for four hours.

BETSY: That's incredible. Isn't that incredible, Cliff?

CLIFF: That's stupid.

BESTY: Clifford! Watch your mouth!

MARINA: What's stupid about it, Cliff?

CLIFF: Who wants to go outside and freeze for no good reason?

MARINA: I had a reason. To show everyone that I can take it, that I am not weak and to stop the voices from trying to intimidate me.

CLIFF: That's stupid.

BETSY: Cliff, go to your room, right now!

CLIFF: You know it's stupid too, Mom.

Cliff exits.

BESTY (calmly): Let's uh, let's get you undressed and, uh, warm you up.

MARINA: I'm so sick of how all you people view me. Your points of view is repulsive. Look how you worry. (*mocking*) “Oh, no! Oh, no!” “Where were you?” “Why were you outside for so long?”

One day you will cause a heart-attack inside yourself. What will you do, dead? What good will all that ignorant worrying have done for you? You are one of those people that think if they don't worry, something bad will happen, so you constantly worry, worry, worry like a neurotic. Is that normal? Meanwhile, you all look at me, like I'm the lunatic.

I'm the only sane one in this crazy ass family! *You're* all the lunatics!

Did you see the way my shit-bag of a brother was eating those buffalo wings? Disgusting.

He is way too old *not* to be using napkins. (*points to door handle*) You notice that? I did. All sticky from his filthy fingers. Who does that? Who walks through life like that at his age?

Completely unaware, completely oblivious to the entire world, cause he's stuck in his little baby bubble. Off to his room, to sulk because he thinks he's right to call me stupid, when I'm not. I'm intelligent. You're all the ones that are ignorant. Ignorant fools!

Marina exits kitchen.

BETSY (to herself): Okay, just breathe, just breathe, you know what this is, you know, you know... (*clears her throat*) Marina, get in that shower, right now...

Phone rings.

Of course....(*picks up*) Hello? Yes, Ma, she's back inside. Oh, I don't know, she was out by the trees in the backyard, she's fine, everything's fine, you alright? Yeah? Okay, good, not to worry, she's going in for a hot shower now and I, let me just make sure she's good, check up on her and, I'll call you back...let me call you back.

END OF PLAY