

Recovery Room

by

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Cast of Characters

OLA:

30's

JAMES:

30's

Place
Room

Time
Any

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a large square room. There is a mattress on the floor and dirty walls with various stains. A dumbwaiter hangs stage left, a bathroom beside it, what were once windows are now filled with red brick, a small kitchen follows stage right. Beside it a steel door, two chairs. Nothing else.

At Rise: The play opens with James sitting in one of the chairs when Ola sits beside him.

OLA: You're new.

JAMES: They told me to wait in here.

OLA: (*laughs*)

JAMES: What's so funny?

OLA: You're gonna be waitin' a long time.

JAMES: How long is long?

OLA: I've been here two years.

JAMES: Two years?

OLA: Uh-huh.

JAMES: Do you mean it feels like two years or -

OLA: No. That's not what I mean. I mean exactly what I said. Two years.

JAMES: That's impossible.

OLA: Look around you. (*beat*) Take a good, hard look at this place...welcome home.

JAMES: Can't be.

OLA: Should I leave you alone while you have your hissy fit?

JAMES: What? Uh, no, no, um...

OLA: You've been assigned. They will tell you that you need to stay for further observation, followed by further examination, followed by the REALIZATION that you're never going to leave. You will die here one day.

JAMES tries the door.

JAMES: It's locked!

OLA: It's a steel door that doesn't ever open. They use the dumbwaiter to give us our food and whatnot.

JAMES: How do I get out of here?

OLA: What's your name again?

JAMES: Fuck my name?! How do I leave?!

OLA: You can't leave, not of your own volition.

JAMES pounds his fists against the steel door.

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

JAMES: I want out!!

OLA: You'll get used to it.

JAMES: No!

OLA: Not like you have a choice. *(laughs)*

JAMES: There's always a choice.

OLA: Not here.

JAMES: My family will get me out.

OLA: No, they won't. They've most probably been informed that you're deceased. Your identity is no longer your own, in fact, you have no identity, not even a number, you have no reference but your name, that's all, but eventually that will be forgotten and all you will have left is being. Only being. Simply being. You can be anything you want, a butterfly, a scorpion...I was once a chimpanzee for two whole weeks..you end up changing your name to Zeek or Grant and soon enough forget yourself and only exist in the now, a most frightening prospect at first, but over time one floats with the current. Depending on your threshold for pain, you will sooner or later get brought back to your imagination...when a blanket could become a superhero cape or a secret cave or used to wipe blood stains when something bad happens. Belief. What we believe is real. Today, I am Ola. Nice to meet you, Brick. You look like a Brick to me today, tomorrow you may be a prick, but today you are Brick. Do you want me to show you around?

JAMES: Are you having a laugh? It's amusing to you, is it?

OLA: Look around on your own, Brick. Go on. You'll be back.

JAMES looks around the room.

JAMES: Where is everyone else?

OLA: There is no one else.

JAMES: Why is it just you and me?

OLA: Haven't figured that part out yet. You're the first person I've seen since I was placed here.

JAMES: Really?

OLA: I told you that I mean exactly what I say?!

JAMES: ...Sorry, sorry...right.

JAMES sits.

OLA: Coffee?

JAMES: There's coffee?

OLA makes coffee like a mime and hands it over to JAMES.

OLA waits for JAMES to grab the invisible cup and take his first sip.

JAMES plays along.

Mmm. *(he nods in approval)*

OLA: *(dances a happy jig)* Wasn't sure if you were a two sugar or one sugar kind of guy...

JAMES: It's great. Thank you.

OLA: You hungry?

JAMES: No, no, I'm not hungry. *(pointing)* There's no light coming from those windows.

The dumbwaiter sounds a bell.

OLA: Oh. We have a delivery.

OLA opens up the dumbwaiter and takes out a note. She laughs hysterically.

Now it makes sense.

JAMES: What does?

OLA: This note.

JAMES: Yeah?

OLA: *(reading)* HAVE BABIES.

JAMES: What?!

OLA hands JAMES the note.

OLA: We better get to it.

JAMES: Get to WHAT?

OLA: Baby making.

JAMES: Are you kidding?

OLA: (*screaming*) I mean exactly what I say!!!

JAMES: Okay, okay, okay, sorry, please don't scream, please don't do that...

OLA lays down on the mattress.

OLA: Here, we will make the babies here.

JAMES: I'm not, this is, I don't even--

OLA: Come on, pants off.

JAMES: Wait! Just wait! This isn't going to happen.

OLA: It will happen.

JAMES: There is no way I'm doing this.

OLA: You want to learn the hard way, don't you?

JAMES: A person shouldn't be forced to do something they don't wish to do.

OLA: We have no choice.

JAMES: I disagree.

The dumbwaiter bell sounds.

OLA runs over to it and takes out a tray with a large cup of wine.

OLA: Loosen up? It's red wine.

JAMES sticks his head in the dumbwaiter and shouts upward.

JAMES: Hey, fucker! Let me out! Let me out of here NOW!!

JAMES climbs into the dumbwaiter.

We only see him from the knees down as he stands. His legs disappear as he climbs up.

OLA calmly sits on the mattress and drinks the wine.

After a moment, JAMES comes crashing down.

OLA gets up to assist him back into the room.

JAMES' forehead is bleeding.

What was that thing? What was that?

OLA: Shh! I told you, there's no way out of here. We have to do what they say.

JAMES: What the hell is going on?!

OLA wets a washcloth and tenderly applies it to JAMES' forehead. He winces.

Is it bad?

OLA: I've seen worse.

JAMES: Those scars on your arms...is that from here?

OLA: I think so.

JAMES: You've tried to escape?

OLA: I think so.

JAMES: Don't you remember?

OLA: It fades. Today will fade. Tomorrow will too. Everything almost does...we all fade away into mist and ash and dung. Up, up and away we go to a place that no one knows. They say there's an afterlife and yet if Euripides, the Greek playwright wore a robe and died and went to some afterlife place and now let's say today you died and go to an afterlife place, does that mean you will get a chance to meet Euripides or are there two different afterlife places? Does each of us get our own special corner? And if you do meet someone from the past, then what does that communication look like? Does he question why you're wearing jeans? Would you get along? I'm trying to catch up on my spiritual growth...

END OF PLAY