

**"THOUGHTS
IN A
LUNCHEON
TIMEWARP"**

A One Act Play

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THOUGHTS IN A LUNCHEON TIMEWARP, by David Goossen, directed by David Goossen, was presented by Bread and Water Productions at the Vancouver International Fringe Festival, September 1990.

CAST (in order of appearance)

ADAM.....David Goossen

BOB.....Alex Taylor

JUAN.....Derrick Stone

WOMAN.....Lisa Peltzer

MAN.....Kevin Clarkson

STAGE MANAGER.....Jill Wyness

PROPS/SOUND EFFECTS.....Jill Wyness

The stage is set as a trendy restaurant, bistro. Anywhere in any city in Canada. Upstage is a wall, covered with artistic renderings of famous places in Canada. Stage Right is the door to the street, Stage Left is a door to the washroom and there also a telephone near the exit, US Center is the door to the kitchen. There are a few tables scattered around the stage with the main point of interest being the table for two DS Center.

At this table ADAM is sitting, sorting through the piles of manuscripts, loose pieces of paper and magazines that are covering the table. Adam is in his mid twenties, wearing rumpled clothes. He is sorting through the papers.

ADAMscene one..ending...scene four, middle...act two, scene three, start and end....scene one ending?

He holds up a few pages and looks closely at them.

ADAM (cont) 'A Very Brady Easter'..yuk...

Adam chucks the pages onto the floor and continues to sort when BOB comes rushing onto stage from the street. He is also in his mid twenties, but is dressed slightly better. He seems to be a much more frantic and extroverted person. He is carrying a huge battered suitcase. They slap hands as Bob sits down.

ADAM You're late, Bob...

Bob starts to unpack his suitcase.

BOB Talk about a fantastic experience!! You're not going to believe this!!

ADAM Is this a write it down kind of experience or a purely vocal one?

BOB Write down. Definitely a write down. We could use it for the end of scene one..

Adam searches for a blank piece of paper.

ADAM Which scene one?

Pause.

BOB Any scene one...it doesn't matter! It's that good!

Adam finds a scrap of paper and takes out a pencil.

ADAM Fire away.

BOB Ok..

He gets settled into his chair and is excited about telling the story.

BOB ..about twenty minutes ago, I was parking my car in the usual place...

ADAM You mean down by the Law Courts?

BOB No, up by Eaton's.

ADAM (confused) What? On Georgia?

BOB No, the other way.

ADAM By Robson?

BOB (patiently) Yes.

ADAM Ah, I see...

He writes furiously for a moment.

BOB (irritated) What difference does it make?

ADAM (scribbling away) It's crucial background info.

BOB Anyways, so I parked-

ADAM North or south side of the street?

BOB What?

ADAM Illegally or meter?

BOB What does it matter?

ADAM Did you leave the windows cracked slightly? Did you eject the tape before turning off the engine? I hate it when people don't do that. Don't you?

Adam looks, smiling, across at Bob. Bob stares back waiting for him to say something. Bob finally gets exasperated and..

BOB Do you want to hear-

ADAM Or did you listen to the radio?

BOB I hate you.

ADAM Did you see the red Ferrari parked down by Georgia?

BOB (lusting) Oh boy, did I see that car. Now that's an automobile!! I'd give up my...typewriter for that..

ADAM Just your typewriter?

BOB (defensively) Hey, it's a great typewriter.

ADAM And it's an eighty thousand dollar car.

BOB Ok, and my stereo.

ADAM How about your typewriter, your stereo, and your camera for the Ferrari.

BOB (bartering) My typewriter, stereo, camera and shoes for the Ferrari and your watch.

ADAM The watch, my shoes and the Ferrari for all that and you buy lunch.

Pause.

BOB Lunch? Forget it.

Pause.

BOB Where the hell's the coffee?

ADAM I don't know...

Pause.

ADAM What was your ending to scene one?

BOB (thinking) It...um...I....shit...

He shrugs.

ADAM Another Tony award winning ending lost in the sludge of rampant memory fluctuations.

BOB That makes about ten we've lost.

ADAM Is it only ten?

BOB Or fourteen. I don't remember.

ADAM Don't remember what?

The waiter, JUAN, a typical waiter for a trendy restaurant arrives at the table. He is very serious and deadpan all the time. He is carrying a couple menus under his arm.

JUAN Oh...you two back again?

ADAM As long as the doors are open, we'll be here.

JUAN (not meaning it in the least) Wonderful...Well, here's a couple menus.

Juan gives them the menus. Adam and Bob look intently at them.

ADAM What's the quiche?

JUAN Ham.

ADAM And...?

JUAN Just ham.

BOB Boring. How's the fettucini today?

JUAN One of the chef's best.

ADAM Of course. What do you get with the grilled Rainbow Trout?

JUAN It comes with steamed potatoes and the vegetable of the day.

BOB Which is?

JUAN Beets.

Adam starts gagging, loudly.

JUAN What can I get for you?

Both of them peruse the menus once more.

BOB Well, it all sounds so good.

ADAM Oh, I do concur.

BOB I believe I'll have...

JUAN (anticipating) Yes sir...

BOB A coffee. I'll have a coffee.

JUAN Just a coffee?!

BOB Please.

JUAN (keeping calm) And you sir?

ADAM (smiling) The same for me too.

JUAN (barely containing himself) Very good, sirs...

He turns and exits.

ADAM Ok, act one first?

BOB Absolutely. What better place to start than the beginning?

ADAM That's what God said.

BOB Then we must also.

Adam picks up a couple scraps of paper from the piles and reads.

ADAM The story so far.. It's spring, 1790, and all of Paris is smiling. Marcel, the cooper's apprentice, is heading down to the farmers market when he sees Janine...

BOB (whining) Why does it have to be Janine?

ADAM I like Janine.

BOB I don't. How about something like...Muriel? Or Dawn?

ADAM (sarcastically) Dawn?!?! Why don't we turn her into a sleeze tramp and set the play in the Los Angeles bus depot?!?

BOB (placating) Ok,ok, ok.

Juan arrives with the coffee. Adam grabs his quickly and drinks most of it.

BOB Refill's are no charge, right?

JUAN That's correct.

ADAM (finishing off his cup) I'd like a refill please.

Adam smiles at Juan leaves to get the coffee pot.

ADAM Where was I?

BOB Janine...

Bob is stirring a couple packets of sugar into his cup with a plastic stir stick. He is looking intently into the cup.

ADAM (continuing) Janine is the perfect name for her, it shows strength and love and a want for a meaningful relationship. And boy could I use a meaningful relationship.

BOB Well, not this cowboy.

Pause.

ADAM Who said that first.

BOB (thinking) Wild Bill Hickock.

ADAM Nope.

BOB What's his name...rode Trigger...Tennessee Williams?

ADAM Nope...Francis of Assissi.

BOB You're kidding.

ADAM It sounds a lot better in the original Latin.

BOB I would hope so.

ADAM It was in the bible. Book of Doug. It got lost at the printers...and that's a fact.

BOB Your knowledge of historical facts is truly amazing.

ADAM That's what history's for, being amazing. Not unlike us.

BOB Too true. Good thinking.

They slap hands and clank over their coffees. They both jump up trying to stop the coffee from soaking everything on the table.

ADAM Oh shit...

Juan comes out of the kitchen and over to the table.

JUAN Are you ready to order, sirs?

BOB (trying to clean up) Oh, um, I don't know...we've uh..

ADAM Our coffee tried to escape.

JUAN I'll inform the chef.

ADAM It's too late for that.

JUAN Are you ready to order?

BOB I'll just busy myself with cleaning this mess up.

ADAM I'll have... How much is the fettucini?

JUAN \$5.95.

ADAM Then forget it. Just get me a refill, and my friend will have a sponge.

JUAN A sponge.

BOB A what?

ADAM A sponge.

JUAN Uh huh.

BOB And some bread.

JUAN Very good sirs.

He leaves.

BOB (looking up) Oh yeah. I came up with the perfect ending to act three, scene four.

Pause. Adam looks at him.

ADAM Which act three, scene four?

BOB The one in the volcano.

Pause.

ADAM Which one set in a volcano?

BOB You know...

ADAM The musical?

BOB No.

ADAM Oh...the comedy.

Bob shakes his head.

ADAM Greek tragedy?

Bob shakes his head again.

ADAM TV Series?

Bob shakes his head again. Adam pauses and thinks.. Finally he timidly asks...

ADAM Historical drama?

Bob responds with a major flurry of nose tapping and nodding.

ADAM Well, what is it?

BOB Oh, I wrote it down somewhere...um..

He starts going through his pockets, pulling out matchbooks, cigarette packs, and is down in the suitcase digging through it. All the time he is talking to himself.

BOB (remembering) The laundry! That's where it was! Of course..

He goes back into the suitcase. He's pulling out all of his laundry onto the table.

BOB Here it is!

He's written it all over his white socks. He's sorting them out.

ADAM You wrote it on your socks?

BOB ((as if it explains everything) It's a fantastic idea.

ADAM Well..

He can't argue with logic like that.

ADAM Let's see it then.

Bob starts laying out the socks in front of Adam and Adam begins reading. After a moment he holds on up, confused.

ADAM This one doesn't make sense.

Bob looks at it.

BOB Just a sec.

Bob takes off his shoes and puts his feet up on the table, balancing back on the chair, precariously.

BOB Ok, that should make it clearer.

Adam stares at Bob for a moment, shakes his head and then starts reading. Bob leans back to listen to Adam's comments and praise.

ADAM ..Titus...of course, the Egyptian slave girl...Hey, what's this about edible underwear?

BOB Forget that.

ADAM This is great...really great.

Juan arrives.

BOB Oh hi.

Bob falls. Juan has a sponge on a plate with garnish.

JUAN Here's your sponge.

ADAM Where's the bread?

JUAN Bread doesn't come with an order of sponge.

Juan leaves. Bob gets up. Adam takes the sponge from Bob.

ADAM Look at the mess you've made. Boy, we got a lot of paper wet.

THOUGHTS IN A LUNCHEON TIMEWARP by Dave Goossen
BOB Yeah.

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ADAM If we want to use any of this, we might have to rewrite it all.

BOB You know.. I don't really feel like writing a meaningful play set in the French revolution.

Adam pauses and looks down at all the papers on the table.

ADAM Shall I file it then?

BOB (nodding) Under F.

ADAM For French?

BOB No. Forgotten.

Pause as Adam tosses it into the suitcase.

ADAM Ok. Filed and forgotten.

BOB Excellent.

Prolonged pause. They both look across the table at each other.

ADAM So.... now what are we going to write about?

BOB Something more relevant than the French revolution.

Pause.

ADAM An action adventure?

BOB How about a tragedy?

ADAM Too depressing.

BOB An action tragedy.

ADAM Sort of 'The A Team' meets 'King Lear'!

BOB Start writing.

Adam grabs a pen and some paper.

ADAM First, the setting.

BOB Vietnam.

ADAM The Congo.

BOB The L.A. Underground.

ADAM Marseilles.

BOB Moscow.

ADAM Wasn't the last comedy set in Moscow?

BOB But it was a musical.

Pause.

ADAM Ankara.

BOB Rome.

ADAM The Bronx.

BOB Vancouver.

ADAM Kitsilano.

Pause.

BOTH Na.

BOB Manila!

ADAM Manila?

BOB It's the perfect place! I know it like that back of my hand.

ADAM You've never been to Thailand.

BOB I got four postcards from my sister when she was there. And pictures are worth a thousand words.

ADAM Ok. You know four thousand words worth of the city. A plot please?

They both pause and look at each other.

BOB A boy and a girl?

ADAM Romance.

Bob has an extended pause as he thinks, and then blurts out.

BOB Who murder their drug rehab officer and are on the run with fifty thousand dollars worth of cocaine.

Pause.

ADAM Action. Definite action.

BOB And the underground is after them.

ADAM Suspense. What about tragedy?

BOB (thinking) Hmmm, they're both narcoleptics.

ADAM And insomniacs.

BOB Whoa, and neurotic.

ADAM Psychotic.

BOB Diabetic....teenagers.

ADAM Is that tragedy?

BOB Let's recap.

ADAM (reading back) Ok, we've got a narcoleptic, insomniac, neurotic...no, we've got TWO narcoleptic, insomniac, neurotic, psychotic, diabetic teenagers on the run from the Manilian-

BOB -Envelope?

ADAM (continuing) Shut up. With a half million dollars worth of coke that was planted, unbeknownst to them, by the FBI...

BOB Who were using the coke to embarass the Thai Government!

ADAM Yeah!!

They stop and look at each other.

BOB Pathetic!

BOTH Shit...

They look down at the table.

BOTH Coffee!!!

Juan comes out with a pot of coffee. As he pours Bob's, Adam drinks down his cup and is waiting for more.

JUAN How's the writing going today?

ADAM Oh great...

BOB Yeah, tons of brilliant ideas.

ADAM Oh yeah, tons...

Juan pours more cups of coffee. Adam keeps sucking the coffee down.

JUAN It's a good thing we don't charge for refill's, huh?

Bob laughs hysterically. Then holds up his empty cup, his face deadpan. Juan fills it up and leaves with a smile.

ADAM We've got to get mercenary about this.

BOB About what?

ADAM Scriptwriting. We want to write a play that will be produced. Right?

BOB Right. But...

ADAM And to get a play produced you need?

BOB ...a script?

ADAM No. You need bucks. megabucks.

BOB Oh....what's your point?

ADAM What we need to do is come up with a play that screams out for a Canada Council Grant!

BOB That's not artistic...that's terrible...that's...

ADAM Capitalistic?

BOB Right!

ADAM All the better! Capitalism is the undisputed winner worldwide, it was in all the papers.

Before Bob can respond, Adam carries on.

ADAM Look, what do we want?

BOB More coffee.

ADAM Farther in the future.

BOB Cheesecake?

ADAM No. We want fame and glory, without having to die for it...

BOB Oh right. And then cheesecake.

ADAM And a council grant is the way we get it.

BOB By selling out?

ADAM Do you know any history at all?

BOB I took fossils in grade twelve...It's about the only thing I remember from high school. Other than the bomb scares and Heidi Martell's halter tops...

ADAM Back track just a bit, Bob, huh? Let's get our sticks on the ice together, huh?

BOB Oh...a play about fossils.

ADAM Get the typewriter, Bob.

BOB Wow...big time idea.

Bob reaches down and pulls a portable typewriter out of his suitcase. But there is no room on the table for it. Adam blythely pushes a bunch of dishes into the case and Bob quickly kicks it shut as Juan comes out, looking for the source of the noise. He can't find it and returns to the kitchen. Bob winds a piece of paper into the typewriter.

BOB Ready.

ADAM We are going to write a fantastic play about a famous Canadian-

BOB -fossil?

ADAM Just type. About a famous dead Canadian.

BOB (thinking) But there aren't any.

ADAM Sure there are! Think of it! Riel....Billy Bishop...Maggie and Pierre...the guy who invented Velcro!

BOB What?

ADAM And now....!

BOB Yeah...

ADAM um...Ken Dryden!

BOB He's not dead either.

ADAM But he's Canadian. And that's what counts.

BOB The Ken Dryden Story?

ADAM (shaking his head) That's so boring. Show a little flair. What would 'Evita' have been like if it was called 'The Mrs. Peron Story'? We'll call it....'DRYDEN!!'

BOB Yeah..'Dryden'.

ADAM With an exclamation mark.

BOB 'DRYDEN!'... You know, I think this is going to work. It's the first time that we've actually got a title.

ADAM We're on our way.

BOB The sky's the limit!

ADAM First we open in some out of the way town...like Edmonton..

BOB Then it's straight to the National Arts Centre in Ottawa..

ADAM For a held over three month engagement.

BOB Records set monthly.

ADAM Weekly.

BOB Nightly.

ADAM A piece on The Journal.

BOB Barbara Frum!

ADAM Press meetings, parties...

BOB A special performance for the visiting heads of the Commonwealth.

ADAM Every Canadian theatre award.

BOB And then..

ADAM It's inevitable..

BOB New York.

Elaborate hand shake across the table.

ADAM Not even an opening in Boston.

BOB Never a bad review.

ADAM We meet the president.

BOB Boring.

ADAM We meet Shirley Maclaine.

BOB We met hear already-

BOTH -in a past life.

ADAM Fame..

BOB Fortune, residuals..

ADAM Movie rights, soundtracks, books...

BOB Ken Dryden dolls..

ADAM 'The Making of Dryden!'..

BOB We're set for life.

ADAM Penthouse apartments...

BOB My own island...

ADAM If we need more money...we write another one called...

BOB 'Lafleur'!

Juan enters with a coffee pot.

ADAM With an exclamation mark! And then...

JUAN Coffee?

ADAM (without missing a beat) Yeah, please.

BOB Sure.

ADAM Let's get started!

BOB Oh what?

ADAM On....uh....(he's forgotten, too) What did you get down on the typewriter?

BOB Oh yeah...

Bob pulls the paper out of the typewriter.

ADAM This should get us right back on track.

BOB (reading) 'Dear mom, how are you? I'm fine. Adam's still a knob...'

Adam takes the paper and crumbles it.

BOB I think it's time to dig into my book of writer's inspiration.

ADAM This sounds like fun...

Bob pulls out an old and battered book from his suitcase. He flicks through it.

BOB Ah ha!

ADAM What?

BOB Word association.

ADAM (rolling his eyes) Oh not that...

BOB It says it works great.

ADAM But everytime I play that at a party we end up talking about sex...

BOB Well this isn't a party, is it?

Before Adam can answer, Bob begins.

BOB Ready?

ADAM No.

BOB Ok..ship.

ADAM Cabin.

BOB Night.

ADAM Sweat.

BOB Sex.

ADAM I tried to tell you, that's what always happens.

BOB That was your fault. How do you get sweat when I say night?

ADAM The only time I slept on a boat, I sweated a lot.

BOB That's dumb.

ADAM So's this game.

BOB We'll start again. Bomb.

ADAM Drunk.

Pause.

BOB Drunk? That doesn't make sense.

ADAM Bombed. Drunk.

BOB Why don't you say something normal like war?

ADAM Why don't you play by yourself?

BOB (placating) Ok, ok...Drunk...um...party..

ADAM Girls.

BOB Sex.

ADAM See? So we got a bunch of sweaty drunk boat people having sex-

BOB -with Ken Dryden!

ADAM Your inspiration isn't working.

BOB It's not my fault.

ADAM Oh I see, because you can't come up with anything to write you blame it on me. Well, that's just typical.

A beautiful blonde walks in and sits down at a table against the wall directly behind Adam. Bob has instantly noticed her.

ADAM (cont) I'm the cause of your mental shortcomings... Well, that's good to know. It's nice to finally find out why my lifes seemed so terribly odd recently. I'm to blame for your and God knows how many other people's mental and creative shortcomings...thanks so much Bob, old bud...

Adam notices that Bob is staring past him and isn't listening.

ADAM (cont) What's the matter with you?

BOB The most beautiful girl in the world just sat down behind you.

ADAM (turning to look) Where?

BOB Don't look!

Adam stops turning.

ADAM The most beautiful girl in the world?! Really?!

BOB An extreme example of babe-atude!

ADAM Miss Eleven in a world of tens?

BOB Yes!

ADAM I want to see her!

BOB Ok, we'll change seats.

ADAM How?

BOB We'll bump things off the table.

ADAM Then the waiter will come.

BOB Drop quietly. Then we both get up, grab what we dropped and sit down in each others chairs.

ADAM Brilliant!

They shake hands.

ADAM Drop cutlery on three.

BOB One.

ADAM Zwei.

BOB Trois.

They both drop cutlery off the table. They both look down at it for a moment and begin to get up. Juan enters and crosses to the table to pick up the forks also. He and Bob reach for the same fork.

JUAN Let me get that for you.

BOB No, it's all right.

JUAN It's my job.

BOB I don't care.

ADAM I got mine.

Adam smiles and sits down in Bob's seat. Bob and Juan scuffle over the fork.

JUAN It's dirty!

BOB I like dirt!

JUAN I'll get you a new one!

BOB It's all right.

By now the girl is looking over, radiantly, at the scuffle. Adam is staring back at her, in awe.

ADAM My God, she is beautiful!

BOB Who?

ADAM Her!

Juan and Bob look around and see the girl looking at them. They both recoil, dropping the fork. Bob smiles weakly and sits down in Adam's seat and Juan grabs the fork and quickly exits to the kitchen.

BOB Ok, you've seen her.

ADAM And I'm in love.

BOB What?

ADAM I'm in love...

BOB I'm so happy for you. Have you picked the day yet?

ADAM If all goes well, mid June.

BOB Lovely time of year to get married.

ADAM In a pasture on a hill under an oak tree.

BOB Beautiful.

ADAM We'll both wear white.

BOB How about a white padded jacket with extra long sleeves that tie up in the back?

ADAM How about a punch in the face?

BOB Oh yeah?

ADAM Yeah!

Bob stands up, Adam follows as the argument increases.

BOB Oh yeah?!

ADAM YEAH!

They see the girl staring at them and both sit down.

BOB Fine. Now that that's out in the open, give me back my chair.

ADAM What do you mean, your chair?

BOB Don't start with me, I want my chair back.

ADAM Your seat....this is MY seat.

BOB Then you're about to lose your seat, bub!

He gets up, angrily.

ADAM What are you doing?!

BOB Regaining what is rightfully mine!

ADAM Sit down, she's looking at us!

Bob turns to see her looking over at them, goofs off stupidly and then sits down.

ADAM Brilliant! Now she'll never talk to me!

BOB Give me back my seat!

ADAM Not on your life!

BOB It's your life that's at stake here!

ADAM What?

BOB You asked for it. Remember that when the police show up!

Bob starts shifting himself, still seated, around to Adam's side of the table, Adam is trying to push him back.

ADAM Robert! For God's sake, we're fighting over which side of the table we sit at! This is ridiculous!
It's childish!

BOB You're the one being childish! Move over!

They end up on the same side of the table pushing each other.

ADAM No!

BOB Yes!

ADAM I want to see her!

BOB Then go over there.

ADAM NO.

BOB Chicken...

ADAM Poultry insults?!?!?

Bob ends up right beside Adam.

BOB Ha! You lose!

ADAM Do not..

BOB Do so..

Pause as they continue to struggle and look across the restaurant at the girl, who's leafing through a book. Juan arrives at their table after watching some of the struggle from the kitchen door.

JUAN You two make a really cute couple.

And Juan heads back to the kitchen. They both look at each other, look at the seating arrangement and realize what they just said. They look across at the girl, who is looking at them and they way they are seated. They look at each other again, then Adam suddenly jumps up, grabs his chair and moves around to the other side of the table smiling nervously at the girl and pointing, meaninglessly, at the floor and shrugging. He sits back down, facing Bob.

BOB (sing song, taunting) I can see her and you can't..

ADAM Ah..shut up...

A tall handsome man enters the restaurant, sees the girl, waves at her and goes over to her. Adam doesn't see him at all but sees him kiss the girl and sit down at her table, holding her hands. Bob just stares with his mouth open.

ADAM What's the matter?

BOB Look..

ADAM Are you sure?

BOB Just look.

Adam turns and sees the man kiss the woman again.

ADAM (loudly) Ah shit...

The couple look over quickly.

ADAM (cont) ...out of coffee.

Adam laughs stupidly and turns back to Bob.

ADAM (cont) Oh well, so much for that..

BOB That's it?

ADAM Yup...

BOB You don't love her now?

Adam shakes his head.

BOB So we can now carry on?

Adam nods.

ADAM Yup. I'm total focussed now. We can write anything we want.

BOB It's spring, 1780, and all of Paris is smiling..

ADAM Except for that..

Lull. The man gets up and crosses to the phone USL.

ADAM (cont) I've just realized something.

BOB We're out of coffee?

ADAM No. Yes.

BOTH Coffee!

Juan saunters out, dumps them coffee and leaves.

ADAM (sipping his coffee) I've just realized something. Again.

BOB What?

ADAM We've been here all week, sucking down six gallons of coffee a day, and we've come up with the plots for five plays. One music, one action/tragedy, the comedy, the historical recreation of the invention of the fulcrum-

BOB -in mime..

ADAM ..in mime, and that sci-fi thing.. And all of them have been filed and viciously forgotten.

While Adam talks, the man returns to the womans table and it is clear from their conversation that he has to go.

ADAM (cont) They've entered a black hole in your suitcase, and their sudden appearance in a parallel universe has probably started an inter-galactic war of irreparable proportions.

BOB (impressed) Well put.

ADAM I'm serious about this. We must have millions of pseudo-brilliant ideas down on paper and none of them are worth writing an entire play about. Do you see what I'm getting at?

Bob pauses and tries to collect his thoughts. As he thinks, the man leaves the restaurant after giving the woman a quick kiss.

BOB I'm beginning to. We have to find our justification and reason for writing.

ADAM (amazed that Bob is on the right track) Exactly.

BOB We have to dig back into our personal experiences, mold our creative ambitions and streamline our thoughts into a written comment on our society.

ADAM Yes! Finally, Bob! You've got it!

Pause.

BOB Screw that! She's alone!

Adam spins around to the woman, knocking over his cup of coffee.

ADAM Shit!

BOB (as the coffee pours into his lap) Ow!

The woman stares at them and they stare back. Juan arrives at the table and calmly uprights the spilled cups and refills them without commenting. Adam and Bob struggle to clean up, again.

BOB (to the woman) His fault! This was all his fault..

ADAM (spinning around) Was not!

BOB Was too!

The woman smiles at them.

WOMAN It's all right, occasionally I spill stuff too.

She smiles again and they both break out laughing, trying to out do each other.

BOB Brilliant!

ADAM Very well put...insightful really..

WOMAN Thank you.

BOB Oh no, thank you..

ADAM I must right that down.. I might be able to use a comment like that somewhere. What exactly did you say?

WOMAN Um...'Occasionally I spill stuff too'.

Adam writes it down, chuckling to himself.

ADAM It gets better with time.

WOMAN Are you a writer?

BOB We're-

ADAM Why yes, I am...

WOMAN Really... What do you write?

ADAM Presently, I'm working on-

BOB A play. We write plays...together.

ADAM Yes, we're both playwrights.

WOMAN Interesting.

ADAM Yes, it is. Very interesting.

She smiles at them and goes back to the book she's reading.

BOB Enormously interesting.

ADAM Really, really interesting!

She looks over at them and smiles, then goes back to her book. Conversations over. Adam and Bob look at her for a moment and then turn to each other.

BOB Brilliant job killing OUR conversation, Adam..

ADAM Your conversation?! She was talking to me. She didn't even know you existed..

BOB Bullshit.

ADAM It's true. You weren't relevant.

BOB Tea drinker.

ADAM Don't you ever call me a tea drinker, poo face.

BOB Ah, upping the stakes, are we?

ADAM Household lint has more intelligence than you.

BOB Sure, lint comparisons.

ADAM How about-

BOB Jerkface.

ADAM Dipshit.

BOB Maggot.

ADAM Troglodite.

BOB Double troglodite.

ADAM I am rubber, you are glue, what bounces off me, sticks to you.

BOB Oh mature... Herbavore.

Juan enters with a coffee pot.

ADAM Druid.

BOB Dork.

ADAM Bruce Willis.

JUAN Coffee?

BOB (without missing the beat) Yes please.

ADAM Sure.

Juan pours and leaves.

ADAM (cont) What were we talking about?

BOB Um, the ending to act one?

ADAM Yeah, I think you're right. Ending to which act one?

BOB Doesn't really matter if we can't remember, does it?

ADAM Not really...

Lull as they drink their coffee.

ADAM (cont, remembering) 'DRYDEN!'

BOB I'd start it with his birth...

ADAM Oh stage, nightly? Not many actresses will want to do that role...

BOB Ok...farther back.

ADAM Conception?

BOB Yes. No, later, in a hockey rink. A dressing room. His first peewee game. A rousing song and dance number about...about...

ADAM (quickly) Cold hockey rinks at 5 in the morning, when you'd rather be in bed and your dad's in a shitty mood because the arena coffee machine is broke and he wasn't supposed to drive until next

BOB ...yeah...

No, something more up beat than that.

ADAM Like?

BOB Like the thrill of setting foot onto the unbroken expanse of ice-

ADAM -and then getting run over by the Zamboni.

BOB You're being negative. Shake it our and help me here.

Adam shakes out his negativity and drinks both of their cups of coffee.

ADAM Ok, ok. No crazy Zamboni drivers. A song...

BOB Yeah...

They think and realize their cups are empty.

ADAM (yelling) Coffee!

Juan enters.

JUAN Do you ever eat?

ADAM Why?

JUAN Never mind.

He leaves and Bob stares across at the woman.

BOB What a smile.

Adam turns around and stares at her.

BOB Can you see what she's reading?

ADAM What do you care?

BOB Just curious.

ADAM Oh.

Adam leans out on his chair, balancing on the back legs of his chair. It topples and he falls to the floor. She looks over at him, confused. Adam stumbles to his feet.

ADAM (to Bob) Yes, that will work. But only if the subtext of the scene allows it. Let's put it in for now.

Bob nods and writes on a piece of paper.

ADAM (to the woman) Writers...huh.

He uprights the chair and sits back down.

BOB Well?

ADAM I think it's about theatre.

BOB We've gotta find out for sure.

ADAM Why?

BOB She might work in theatre..

ADAM We could start a fire...

BOB Lacks a certain subtlety, Adam.

ADAM Ok, ok no problem. I know, we could get someone to phone, ask for her and keep her busy on the phone while we find out who she is!

BOB Who can phone her?

ADAM Steve can!

BOB Who's he gonna ask for?

ADAM The power babe in the corner!

Bob rolls his eyes.

ADAM Ok, what if we're writing a scene...that we have to act out..

BOB (understanding) ..set in a restaurant..

ADAM ..and the two characters are at opposite ends of the restaurant..

BOB ..hiding..

ADAM ..by the table that a beautiful woman sits at..

BOB ..making absolute fools out of themselves.

ADAM (angry) Are you going to shoot down all my great ideas?

BOB What great ideas?

ADAM You're being negative, shake it out and help me here.

Bob shakes it out.

BOB Did you know that I was literarally beaten as a child?

ADAM Literarally? Don't you mean literally?

The woman gets up and crosses towards them.

BOB No literarally, they hit me with books.

She goes past.

ADAM Yes, but the essence of the scene, in a Judao-Christian ethic, is marred by the subtextual-

BOB -statements towards a pre-20th century evolutionist dogma..

She goes to the phone.

ADAM Go for it!

BOB What?

ADAM Check out her table!

Bob starts across the restaurant, quickly towards her table. he is just about there when Juan enters from the kitchen with a coffee pot. Bob stops in the middle of the restaurant, turns around and looks seriously at the table. Adam and Juan watch as he shakes his head and moves DS to look again.

JUAN What's he doing?

ADAM Shh...visualizing..

JUAN Oh.

Juan watches.

ADAM You can pour coffee.

Juan stops watching and pours coffee.

ADAM Thanks.

Bob starts to do tai chi around the table and then bows and sits down.

BOB Yes. That will work.

Juan stares at him and then exits.

BOB Your turn.

Adam thinks furiously for a moment and then flings his saucer over his shoulder. It smashes off the wall and clatters onto the floor, by the womans table. The woman looks over her shoulder at the

ADAM Oh, look what you've done, Bob.

Adam gets up.

ADAM (cont) I'll get that for you.

BOB I'd appreciate it, Adam.

Juan, with a coffee pot, also heads for the dropped saucer.

JUAN I'll get it.

ADAM Oh, that's all right.

JUAN Look. How about we pretend that it's my job.

ADAM But I-

JUAN (deadly serious) If you go over and pick that up....refills will start costing.

ADAM But-

JUAN Fifty cents, each time. I'd say that you two are up to about thirty dollars worth of coffee, so far today.

Adam stops and bows to the waiter.

ADAM Let no one say that I got in the way of an honest worker.

JUAN Right.

Juan goes over to the saucer, the woman gets off the phone. Bob is looking depressed and Adam is standing in the middle of the restaurant. The woman is looking at Adam, curiously. Adam notices her looking at him and turns to Bob.

ADAM Like this...

BOB So, your preconceived notions of the characters..

ADAM ..as a symbol for..

BOB ..Stalinist oppression of the independent working class..

Adam stares at Bob over that line. Bob shrugs, in a panic.

ADAM ..are...altered, jumbled up-

BOB -so to speak..

ADAM ..so to speak, right at the end of the first act.

BOB Subtly effective.

Bob starts to write it down. Adam smiles at the woman.

WOMAN Sounds like a difficult scene.

ADAM Have you ever come across an easy one?

WOMAN (laughing) No, not yet.

ADAM (hitting a conversation blank) uh...there you go...

As Adam doesn't continue the conversation, the woman smiles and sits back down. Bob rolls his eyes and shakes his head. Adam turns back to Bob.

ADAM So..act one.

BOB You had her. Even I'll admit that. All you had to do was reel her in.

Juan walks over to the woman and chats with her while pouring her coffee.

ADAM No, I didn't.

BOB Trust me..you did.

ADAM Did not.

BOB Did too.

ADAM Not.

BOB Too.

Juan leaves her table and Adam reaches out with his coffee cup, not leaving the conversation or even looking to see Juan. Juan sighs and fills his cup up.

ADAM No, and I should know.

BOB Too, I was watching. I know what happened.

ADAM But I was there.

BOB You were staring at her breasts.

ADAM (shocked) Oh, was not!

BOB Was too...

The woman gets up from her seat and heads towards them. Bob stares at her as she passes. He tries

to smile but fails. She continues past them and exits USL to the bathroom. As soon as she exits, Adam and Bob both get up and rush over to her table. As they are searching through her stuff, Juan comes out, wanders over to peer through between them and waits.

JUAN Ahem.

BOB (startled) Oh hi!

ADAM How ya doin'?

JUAN What's your problem today? You've been moving around and stuff all afternoon...it's not like you.

ADAM Uh...Bob?

BOB (thinking up a lie) We're trying a new writing technique.

ADAM Yeah!

JUAN Why can't you go somewhere else and try things like that..you're scaring the customers.

They all look around at the empty restaurant. Juan grabs Adam.

JUAN (threateningly) You sit down. Right now...and I'll get you some coffee.

Adam quickly sits down. Bob sits down as Juan exits, holding up a business card to read.

BOB I don't believe it.

Adam takes the card and reads it.

ADAM Diane Cole, script supervisor, Theatreworks, Inc. Oh my God! We're in!

They slap hands.

BOB I don't believe it...I can't believe this is happening!

ADAM None of this was mentioned in my horoscope!

BOB Mine neither!

ADAM She already knows that we're writers!

BOB We're in!

Slap hands again.

ADAM Maybe not.

BOB I don't want to hear this.

ADAM You've got to hear this.

BOB No I don't.

ADAM Yes you do, don't be a child.

BOB I'll be a child if I want to.

Bob shuts his eyes, blocks his ears and starts humming.

ADAM Oh come on...Bob... Bob.

The woman comes out of the bathroom and comes towards them. Adam hides the card and starts humming along with Bob. The woman walks by, pausing to stare at them. Adam opens his eyes and stops humming.

ADAM Zen Buddhism.

WOMAN Ah, does it help?

ADAM Oh, absolutely.

They both look over at Bob, who's still humming.

WOMAN I've always been interested in Buddhism.

ADAM Really...

WOMAN How does it work for you?

ADAM (not expecting that) Uh..well...it's hard to explain but....it...it helps us to focus our minds, collectively, on a problem we're having with a certain scene, and then we...mentally interact...and solve it.

WOMAN Psychically?

ADAM Exactly!

Bob stops humming but doesn't open his eyes, or unblock his ears.

BOB I'm still not listening to you.

And he goes back to humming.

ADAM Excuse me, he's waiting for me to join him..in the trance.

WOMAN Amazing. You know, I'm involved in theatre.

ADAM No...

WOMAN Yes, a little bit. Maybe I can help you with your script problem-

She looks over at Bob, who's humming some silly nursery rhyme.

WOMAN (cont) -Zen Buddhism doesn't seem to be working too well right now.

ADAM Uh, sure..if you don't mind. It's a pretty complex segment.

WOMAN Even better. I'll get my chair and coffee.

She walks over to her table. Adam frantically kicks Bob.

BOB Ow! I'm not listening to you!

Adam hits him again.

BOB (letting go of his ears) That hurt!

ADAM (quickly) She's coming over to join us! We're working on a very difficult scene, and you're meditating.

BOB (not quite understanding) I'm not meditating.

ADAM She thinks you are.

BOB I don't understand why I have to do this...

ADAM Because.

BOB Because why?

ADAM Because-

Adam hits Bob on the side of the head, he sees the woman arriving at the US side of their table, shuts his eyes and starts to hum. Adam leaves his hand on the side of Bob's head.

ADAM (cont)(soothingly) -..and we'll start walking out of the forest...it's getting warmer, and brighter and we move out of the heavy pine trees and into a grove of aspens...a brook is rippling at your feet...you step across on the rocks and walk up through the thinning trees into a field of wild grass...it's getting warmer....you see yourself lying in the grass, sleeping...you move over and lie down beside yourself...gently you roll over and become one again...

Bob slumps back in the chair and stops humming. Adam takes his hand away and turns back to the woman.

ADAM He'll be with us in a couple minutes. My name's Adam. This is Bob.

He gestures to the slumped Bob.

ADAM Nice to meet you. Diane.

They both sit there as the conversation collapses.

ADAM Would you excuse me for a moment? I have to chat with mother nature....

Bob opens his eyes quickly, trying to make eye contact with Adam, but Adam is avoiding him.

DIANE Oh, sure..

ADAM Back in a sec.

He gets up and fairly rushes off the stage to the bathroom. Diane sits there, staring at the slumped Bob. Suddenly he opens his eyes and sits up, awake and rested.

BOB Hi. I'm Bob.

DIANE Diane. We met already.

They shake hands.

BOB What are you doing here?

DIANE While you were...out...

BOB Oh. The Karma retraction.

DIANE Adam said Zen Buddhism.

BOB Right. Zen Buddhism....with Karma retraction.

He laughs nervously.

BOB (cont) And where is old Adam?

DIANE Bathroom.

Nervous pause from Bob.

DIANE (cont) I'm going to help you with the scene. The one you're having trouble with.

BOB Ok.

They continue to stare at each other. The following is a rather drawnout and painful conversation.

BOB What do you do?

DIANE Not much. A little work in theatre... I dabble.

BOB A dabbler.

DIANE Yes.

BOB Do you like Pinter?

DIANE Yes.

BOB Always helps.

Adam comes out of the washroom, leans into the kitchen, grabs a whole pot of coffee and comes over to the table.

BOB Good, you brought coffee.

Bob takes the pot and pours all around while Adam sits down.

DIANE So, what's the matter with the scene?

Bob and Adam look at each other, in a slight panic.

BOB Uh..maybe, maybe it would be better if we start with explaining what we're trying to do with this play first.

DIANE Ok.

She politely sips her coffee. Adam and Bob chug down theirs and pour more.

BOB The story so far. It's spring, 1790-

BOTH -and all of Paris is smiling.

BOB Marcel, the cooper's apprentice, is heading down to the farmers market when he sees Janine-

DIANE Why is her name Janine?

Bob smiles smugly at Adam.

ADAM Because it is. Numerologically it's right for the character study we've already done.

Bob stops smiling. Adam starts smiling.

DIANE Wow. You've done a lot of work on this.

BOB That's right. I have to go to the bathroom. Excuse me.

Adam stops smiling as Bob gets up and rushes off to the bathroom.

ADAM And...well...that's the basic setting. Paris, during the days before the revolution.

Diane leans forward, interested.

DIANE Then what happens?

ADAM Uh...Janine..well..basically...let's see what's the right way to put this...

Adam drinks down his coffee, pours himself another cup.

ADAM (blurting it out) She gets arrested for stealing a loaf of bread for her poor parents and gets caught and thrown in the Bastille and then Marcel has to get her out. Oh, and the revolution occurs.

Diane nods, impressed. Adam leans back, relieved.

DIANE Impressive story.

ADAM Thanks.

DIANE Musical?

ADAM Hey, that's an idea.

He thinks about it for a moment.

ADAM (cont) No. Not now. Maybe later.

DIANE It's a lot like 'Les Miz'.

Adam stops smiling. A pager goes off. Adam looks around and Diane takes her pager out of her pocket and turns it off. Bob comes out of the bathroom, looking relieved.

DIANE Damn...

ADAM What?

DIANE I've got to get back to the office.

She gets up and starts collecting her things.

BOB But...leaving so soon?

DIANE Sorry I couldn't help you more. It really was a nice idea, other than the plagiarism thing.

Bob looks at Adam sharply.

DIANE Good luck with the scene. Sorry, I better say break a leg.

And with that, Diane leaves.

BOB (turning to Adam, angry) Ah shit. What stupid plot did you tell her? The one like 'Les Miserables'?

ADAM (defensive) No.

BOB Yes, you did. God, you always bring that one up, why?

ADAM I don't know, I like it.

BOB Like it?!? Of course you like it!!! Everyone likes it!! It's the biggest grossing musical of all time!

ADAM (defensive) You got any better ideas?

BOB Matter of fact, I do. Why don't you go piss up a rope?

ADAM Oh yeah?

BOB Yeah.

ADAM Oh yeah?

Juan enters and watches.

BOB Yeah.

ADAM You know, I think it's time you and I parted ways.

BOB Fine.

ADAM Fine.

BOB Fine.

ADAM Give me back my pencil.

Bob breaks the pencil and throws it at Adam.

ADAM (furious) Oh! That's it!

Bob starts packing up his suitcase, Adam grabs at the papers on the table.

BOB Fine.

ADAM Fine.

BOB Fine.

JUAN Same time tomorrow?

BOTH Sure, why not?

They both leave and Juan shakes his head.

Blackout.

The End.