

THE APPLE AND THE KNIFE

By Larry Mitchell

A short play without words about instinct

September 29, 2008

Larry Mitchell

mygrandadsname@gmail.com

Copyright 2008 LM

Cast of Characters

WOMAN F, 20's -40's, waifish
BOY M, 10-20, plump
SOLDIER Uh- huh
ANOTHER SOLDIER Ditto
(VOICE FROM THE SKY) Again, just like the description.

NOTE: The bottom three are gender neutral roles.

SETTING

TIME The future, night
PLACE A street, in the dark and dangerous city

THE APPLE AND THE KNIFE

By Larry Mitchell

SFX: Sirens

AT RISE, a bare stage, a city street. Perhaps there are search lights roaming about. Perhaps there are cubes or whatnot scattered about to give the impression of the environment, or perhaps one might choose to leave the stage bare of such “visual” obstacles.

The sirens continue as the following announcement is heard.

VOICE FROM THE SKY (V.O.)

Attention all citizens! There is a terrorist in the area. All citizens are ordered to stay indoors until the suspect or suspects can be located.

Sirens continuing, a WOMAN runs on with a brown paper bag, it spills, dumping a pile of vegetables and potatoes, all brightly colored.

SHE makes an attempt to scoop them back in, ripping the bag in the process. Everything falls out. SHE runs, with the bag, but sees something in HER path. S

HE jumps behind something and hides. The sirens continue.

VOICE FROM THE SKY (V.O.)

Attention all citizens! There is a terrorist in the area. All citizens are ordered to stay indoors until the suspect or suspects can be located.

A BOY, very young, very scared, runs on with a knife. HE immediately makes HIS way to the same obstacle the WOMAN is hiding behind.

BOTH jump up immediately and run to separate and new spots to hide, almost unconscious of where the OTHER has chosen to go.

A SOLDIER runs by, tripping over the spilled veggies, gets up and does a scan of the street, before running off.

The SIRENS stop.

The WOMAN and the BOY slowly rise, WOMAN with HER bag and the BOY with HIS knife.

BOY points the knife at WOMAN as THEY slowly circle each other, the WOMAN making HER way to the veggies and the BOY inching closer to the WOMAN.

The WOMAN slowly bends down to take the vegetables in HER arms, leaving the bag. The BOY, understanding, bends down to pick up the veggies, startling the WOMAN, who again, drops the veggies.

The WOMAN stands, backing away from the BOY and HIS knife. The BOY picks up an apple in HIS open hand and walks towards the WOMAN who continues to retreat. BOTH stop.

The WOMAN holds out HER hand, and the BOY attempts to hand over the apple. The WOMAN recoils, shaking HER head, "no." SHE wants the knife.

The BOY attempts to speak, but the WOMAN reaches in with HER hand to cover the BOY's mouth. HE accidentally cuts her arm.

SHE recoils again, holding HER forearm, and placing a finger over HER mouth, indicating a “shhhhhhhh.”

The BOY picks the apple back up, walks over to the WOMAN, who is initially scared of the approach, but warms when HE holds the knife with the butt towards HER. SHE takes the knife. HE offers the apple, but she motions for HIM to keep it. HE begins to speak, perhaps to thank HER, but catches, HIMSELF, stopping short. Instead, he takes a bite of the apple.

SFX: Sirens!

VOICE FROM THE SKY (V.O.)

Attention all citizens! There is a terrorist in the area. All citizens are ordered to stay indoors until the suspect or suspects can be located.

BOTH run behind the nearest obstacle and hide, TOGETHER.

The SOLDIER returns with ANOTHER SOLDIER. This time, BOTH SOLDIERS stop at the veggies.

ANOTHER SOLDIER sees the “blood” on the ground, and stops the SOLDIER from speaking with one hand, while indicating that HE believes the suspect(s) are in the immediate area.

SOLDIER indicates that HE understands, and BOTH slowly begin a creeping search, until THEY are both dangerously close to the SUSPECT(s).

The WOMAN and the BOY jump up, running in different directions.

Pinned each way by the SOLDIERS, they return to each other. The SOLDIERS close in.

The WOMAN grabs the BOY, and holds the knife to HIS neck.

VOICE FROM THE SKY (V.O.)

Attention all citizens! There is a terrorist in the area. All citizens are ordered to stay indoors until the suspect or suspects can be located.

The SOLDIERS and the WOMAN are in a stand-off. All THREE stand motionless but with intent.

The BOY elbows the WOMAN in the stomach and bites HER wrist. The WOMAN screams, drops the knife and runs offstage, the SOLDIERS draw weapons and open fire.

The sirens stop.

The BOY is frozen as the SOLDIERS run offstage after the WOMAN.

Once the SOLDIERS are gone, the BOY makes HIS way back over to the veggies. HE picks up the bag and begins to collect the ones that are still good, using the flattened bag as a “basket.”

HE hides as the SOLDIERS cross the stage with the limp body of the WOMAN. Once THEY are gone, HE comes out of hiding, walks over to the knife, turns from it and scrambles offstage.

Lights fall on the knife lying in the middle of the “street.”

VOICE FROM THE SKY (V.O.)

Attention all citizens! Success! Our suspect or suspects has or have been apprehended.
Thank you for your cooperation.

THE END