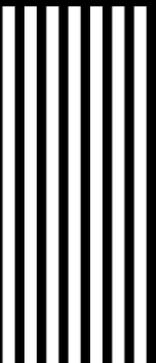




BREATHING TIME

BY **BEAU WILLIMON**



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

BREATHING TIME
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The world premiere of BREATHING TIME was produced by Fault Line Theatre (Craig Wesley Divino and Aaron Rossini, Co-Artistic Directors), on March 27, 2014. It was directed by Aaron Rossini; the set design was by Tristan Jeffers; the costume design was by Izzy Fields; the lighting design was by John Eckert; the sound design was by Chad Raines; and the production manager and technical director was Nate Frieswyk. The cast was as follows:

JACK Craig Wesley Divino
MIKE Lee Dolson
KAREN Whitney Conkling
DENISE Shannon Marie Sullivan
JULIE Molly Thomas
WAITER John Racioppo

CHARACTERS

JACK

MIKE

KAREN

DENISE

JULIE

WAITER

SCENARIO

ACT ONE — An office on the 95th floor of a tall office building.
Around 7:45 A.M.

ACT TWO — Three weeks later. A restaurant in TriBeCa.
Evening.

THE STAGING

The office in Act One can be conveyed with a set as simple as two desks with some indication of the window and door, but it can be as elaborate as space and funds allow. Since the transition for the restaurant back to the office in Act Two should not necessitate a set change, the restaurant should probably be conveyed simply by a table set downstage or to the side of the main set.

BREATHING TIME

ACT ONE

An office on the 95th floor of a tall office building. Mike is working at his desk. Jack, looking the worse for wear, enters with a briefcase and a coffee. He sits at a desk opposite Mike's.

MIKE. You're here early.

JACK. I got that thing ...

MIKE. Oh right.

JACK. Presentation.

MIKE. That thing with the —

JACK. Yeah.

MIKE. When?

JACK. At nine.

MIKE. Shit.

JACK. I know, right?

MIKE. You look terrible.

JACK. Yeah?

MIKE. Like shit.

JACK. I *feel* like shit.

MIKE. Hungover?

JACK. Still fuckin' drunk. *(Mike laughs. Jack sets down his briefcase and opens it.)* Upstairs.

MIKE. Oh yeah?

JACK. Big dicks.

MIKE. V.P.s?

JACK. The Board.

MIKE. You mean *upstairs* upstairs.

JACK. Exactly.

MIKE. Big *wrinkled* dicks.

JACK. Those are the ones.
MIKE. Liver spots on 'em.
JACK. (*Laughs.*) Fuckin' catheters.
MIKE. At nine?
JACK. At nine.
MIKE. Well you got an hour. To detox.
JACK. (*Looking at his watch.*) Hour and fourteen minutes, my man.
MIKE. Don't wanna be smellin' like Dewar's.
JACK. Fuck Dewar's. I drink Jameson.
MIKE. Don't wanna be smellin' like Jameson then.
JACK. Can you really smell it?
MIKE. As soon as the elevator doors opened.
JACK. Shit.
MIKE. Should put on some cologne or somethin'.
JACK. I did.
MIKE. Well it ain't working.
JACK. You got any?
MIKE. What?
JACK. Cologne?
MIKE. You think I got drawer full of toiletries in my desk or somethin'?
JACK. Sure. Why not?
MIKE. No. I don't have any cologne.
JACK. I mean you keep a toothbrush in there.
MIKE. That's different.
JACK. I've seen it. You keep a fuckin' toothbrush and dental floss in there.
MIKE. For after I eat.
JACK. But those would qualify as toiletries would they not?
MIKE. Yeah, but a toothbrush is like standard practice.
JACK. So why not cologne? I mean, you gargle Listerine.
MIKE. We're talking about two different things.
JACK. You never combed your hair at the office? Given yourself a shave?
MIKE. No. I do that before I leave for work.
JACK. Well if you're runnin' late or somethin'? Throw the brush, the razor in your briefcase ...
MIKE. I'm never late. So it's not a problem.
JACK. That's true, isn't it? You're never fuckin' late.
MIKE. Never.

JACK. Early every morning.
MIKE. Beat the traffic.
JACK. Fuckin' boy scout.
MIKE. It's practical.
JACK. It's kissin' ass.
MIKE. Beatin' the traffic. All it is.
JACK. It's hopin' one of the big dicks will peek his head in the office some morning and see you here before everyone else.
MIKE. Is that so wrong?
JACK. Not wrong at all. It's smart.
MIKE. So then.
JACK. Unless you value sleep.
MIKE. I didn't get any less sleep than you last night.
JACK. That's true.
MIKE. Prolly got more even.
JACK. Probably.
MIKE. So there you go.
JACK. But let me ask you this. Did one of the big dicks peek his head in the door this morning?
MIKE. No.
JACK. So you coulda slept in.
MIKE. Then again one of the big dicks could always stop by.
JACK. Won't happen.
MIKE. How do you know?
JACK. Because all the big dicks are fuckin' still *asleep*.
MIKE. Okay. You gotta point.
JACK. What I really need to do is get a muffin or somethin'. Soak up all this booze.
MIKE. So go get a muffin.
JACK. Don't have time.
MIKE. So send Karen to get you one.
JACK. She's not here yet.
MIKE. Probably still sleepin', right?
JACK. Hey — You wanna grab lunch, after I get outta the uh —
MIKE. Can't.
JACK. Why not?
MIKE. Gotta take my kid to the dentist.
JACK. Oh man. Cavity?
MIKE. Two of 'em.
JACK. (*Mocking a shudder.*) Fuckin' drills.

MIKE. I know, right?

JACK. Give me shivers.

MIKE. Mark — he gave me shit about leaving early.

JACK. To take your kid to the dentist?

MIKE. Can you believe it?

JACK. Cocksucker.

MIKE. Hate that asshole.

JACK. He *is* a fuckin' prick.

MIKE. I mean it's my kid, right?

JACK. The other day he corners me by the copier and tries to have this big political discussion with me.

MIKE. No shit?

JACK. All in my face about "Who you gonna vote for mayor?" and I'm like "I don't know Mark" and he's like "You gotta vote for Bloomberg" and I'm like "Okay, sure Mark, sounds good to me," but he won't shut up about it. Talks my ear off for twenty minutes Bloomberg this and Bloomberg that. Like I give a fuck who's mayor.

MIKE. He's right though. You gotta vote for Bloomberg.

JACK. I just told you I don't give a fuck.

MIKE. I'm just sayin'.

JACK. Prolly won't vote at all.

MIKE. You gotta vote.

JACK. I don't have to do shit.

MIKE. Okay.

JACK. I mean it's a free country, right? Which means I'm free not to vote if I don't give a fuck. Am I right or am I right?

MIKE. I guess.

JACK. I am. I'm right.

MIKE. If you say so.

JACK. Anyway, the point is Mark is a fuckin' prick.

MIKE. We're in agreement there.

JACK. Come to think of it, I can't name a single person who actually likes him. Can you?

MIKE. Unh-uh.

JACK. That's because no one does. The dude is universally hated. That's not an easy thing to accomplish. To be *that* hated by everyone in your office.

MIKE. He's the boss. It's his job to be hated.

JACK. That's not true. Remember when Dave ran things?

MIKE. Dave was an asshole too.

JACK. But not as *much* of an asshole.

MIKE. True.

JACK. I mean every now and then you'd be like "Okay, this guy's not a *total* douchebag." You know what I'm sayin'?

MIKE. Sure.

JACK. But Mark — I have never *once* thought that. I've never sat back and thought to myself there was a single redeeming quality in the guy. When I picture him in my head I keep thinking of the same three syllables over and over: Cocksucker cocksucker cocksucker cocksucker. (*Mike laughs as Jack takes a sip of his coffee. He grimaces and pushes it away.*) God — this coffee is shit.

MIKE. Where'd you get it?

JACK. Chinese guy on the corner.

MIKE. At the deli?

JACK. No — at the bagel stand.

MIKE. Oh right, *that* Chinese guy.

JACK. Fuckin' worthless.

MIKE. You gotta go to the Starbucks over on Rector.

JACK. Starbucks can suck my cock. Overpriced bullshit.

MIKE. It's decent coffee.

JACK. For three dollars a pop? No thank you.

MIKE. I like it.

JACK. You would.

MIKE. What the fuck is that supposed to mean?

JACK. You're like the typical fuckin' Starbucks customer.

MIKE. Is that right?

JACK. Slave to the brand name, dude.

MIKE. I am not.

JACK. Would you pay three dollars for the same cup of coffee if it didn't have that gay little green logo on the cup?

MIKE. I don't give a shit about the logo.

JACK. It comforts you, doesn't it? That little green happy face or whatever the fuck it is?

MIKE. Bite me.

JACK. Smiles at you every morning. Says "Here I am, your brand-name coffee. Exactly what you expect. You can count on me."

MIKE. (*Sarcastic.*) Yeah, that's right. You hit the nail on the head.

JACK. I bet if I scooped my own feces in a coffee maker and strained it into a Starbucks cup you'd gulp it down happy as a clam.

MIKE. You feelin' all righteous now? Standing up to the corporate

BREATHING TIME

by Beau Willimon

3M, 3W

Jack and Mike are bankers — one reckless and larger than life, the other responsible and grounded. When we meet them, their typical morning ritual proves to be anything but routine. Three weeks later, Jack's sister and Mike's wife meet for dinner — two strangers connected by only a photograph. Denise is a struggling dancer trying to make ends meet. Julie is a suburban mother doing her best to raise a young son. Fate has brought this quartet together, but they refuse to let it tear them apart.

“... a simple study in how ordinary relationships can be shaped or put in perspective by much larger events.”
—**The New York Times**

“[Willimon is] especially good at having one of his characters drop a little bomb of information that takes the audience completely by surprise, changing irrevocably everything that's to follow in the narrative ... [BREATHING TIME is] a brilliant study in character, and anyone who's spent so much as a day in a big-city office among employees jockeying for position and not identifying one bit with their work beyond the money it brings them will identify.”
—**TheWrap.com**

“... intimate drama ... Willimon's gift for incisive characterizations and colorful dialogue is well on display.”
—**The Hollywood Reporter**

“Willimon writes some of the strongest and most realistic dialogue in theater ... he is one of our strongest modern playwrights.”
—**Theatsy.com**

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