



WOYZECK; LEONCE AND LENA

BY GEORG BÜCHNER

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DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



WOYZECK
LEONCE AND LENA
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WOYZECK	5
LEONCE AND LENA	27

WOYZECK

CHARACTERS

WOYZECK

ANDRES

MARIE

CAPTAIN

BARKER

SERGEANT

DRUM MAJOR

DOCTOR

DRUNK SOLDIER 1

DRUNK SOLDIER 2

JEW

IDIOT

KATEY

INNKEEPER

FIRST CHILD

SECOND CHILD

WOYZECK

Scene 1

WOYZECK. Oh my ... Andres ... Look ... The grass ... Over there ... See that streak? That's the place where the heads roll. This guy picked one up at night once. Thought it was a hedgehog. Three days later, he was in his coffin. Shhhhhhhhhh.

ANDRES. *(Singing.)*

Saw a very large rabbit

Munching on the grass

Munching on the grass

Till it all was gone.

WOYZECK. Shhhh. Something moved.

ANDRES. Munching on the grass, till it all was gone.

WOYZECK. There's something moving. It's behind me. *(He turns around.)* It's under me. *(He stamps his feet.)* Hear that? Hollow ... It's the Freemasons. They've got tunnels. Down there. A whole network of tunnels.

ANDRES. I ... think ... we should ... go ... now.

WOYZECK. It's so quiet. Makes you want to hold your breath.

ANDRES. Say that again.

WOYZECK. Makes you want to hold your breath. *(Long pause.)*

Say something. Andres ... Look at ... the sky ... It's on fire ... Sounds like trumpets. Leave. Don't look back.

ANDRES. You hear it now?

WOYZECK. Stopped. No sound. Like the world ... had died.

ANDRES. We need to get back.

Scene 2

MARIE. (*A knock at the window.*) That you, Franz? Come in.

WOYZECK. No time. Got roll call.

MARIE. Did you cut the wood yet? For the Captain? (*Woyzeck does not respond.*) Franz?

WOYZECK. Yeah, I cut the wood.

MARIE. What's wrong?

WOYZECK. Happened again, Marie. The sky was on fire. And a terrible noise. Doesn't the Bible ... talk about ...

MARIE. Franz ...

WOYZECK. It's like stone out there, our world. Hard, cold, dark. Something behind it, though. That moves. We just can't see it. I ...

MARIE. Franz!

WOYZECK. Gotta go.

MARIE. Franz. Your child.

WOYZECK. No time. Tonight. The fair. I'll get him something. (*He goes.*)

MARIE. (*To the child.*) You're very quiet, boy. Are you scared? He's seeing things, your papa. Getting darker. We'll all be blind soon. What happened to the light? I'm scared.

Scene 3

CAPTAIN. Not so fast, Woyzeck, not so fast. You're making my head spin, you're giving me vertigo. Slloooowwwdooowwnnn. If you finish early, what the hell am I going to do with the extra 10 minutes? You'll live for another 30 years. 30 years! That's 360 months. 10,800 days, 149,200 hours, 8,952,000 minutes. What are you going to do with all those minutes, Woyzeck? Take. Your. Time.

WOYZECK. Yes sir, Captain.

CAPTAIN. You know what terrifies me, Woyzeck? Terrifies me? Eternity. It's too long, Woyzeck. Too damn long. It's an eternity. It's also the blink of an eye. It's over before you know it, Woyzeck. The

LEONCE AND LENA

CHARACTERS

KING PETER of the kingdom of Tushy

PRINCE LEONCE, his son

PRINCESS LENA of the kingdom of Wee-wee

ROSETTA, a Courtesan

VALERIO, a Vagabond

Lena's GOVERNESS

And, played by the same actor:

TUTOR

LORD PRESIDENT

MAGISTRATE

SCHOOLMASTER

CHAPLAIN

MASTER OF THE REVELS

LEONCE AND LENA

ACT ONE

Scene 1

TUTOR. (*In an exaggerated French accent.*) Your Highness ...

LEONCE. And what, again, is the purpose of these lessons of yours?

TUTOR. The point is, Your Highness ...

LEONCE. I don't have time for your lessons. There's so much to do. First, I have to spit on this rock 365 times in a row. Ever done that?

TUTOR. Well, Your Highness ...

LEONCE. You should. There is no other entertainment quite like it. Then there is the "how many grains of sand" game. (*He tosses a handful of sand up in the air and catches it on the back of his hand.*)

How many grains of sand are there on the back of my hand?

TUTOR. I am sure I wouldn't ...

LEONCE. Odd or even, then? Would you care to place a little wager on it?

TUTOR. Well, I don't think I ...

LEONCE. You Godless Heathen. Have you no faith? Do I have to bet against myself? Now if your lessons could somehow, magically, summon up one that would occasionally bet against me, well, then I'd have time for them. I also have to come up with a strategy on how to look at the top of my head. I have no occupation, but there is plenty for me to do. Don't let me detain you; I'm sure there's something you need to be doing. (*The Tutor bows deeply and leaves.*) A man could do himself a fatal injury bowing like that. I feel a giant yawn coming on. (*He yawns.*) I could practice my yawning. Do that for a while. Break up the monotony a bit. The sun's rays sprawl out in a stupor all over the Earth while bees drone on without a thought in their heads. A lethargy holds the planet in its thrall.

Boredom is everywhere. And all that we do is done out of boredom. We study out of boredom; we pray out of boredom; we fall in love out of boredom; spawn out of boredom; and in the end we die out of boredom. Am I the only one who realizes this? Why can't I put clothes on the monkey, be respectable, lead a useful and a virtuous life? Oh, not to be me for a while, to be somebody else.

VALERIO. (*Enters drunk and pulls on his earlobe.*) Indubitably!

LEONCE. Correctamundo!

VALERIO. Can you follow my drift?

LEONCE. Absolutante!

VALERIO. Can't have that. Let's change the subject. (*He lies down on the grass.*) My nose sticks out just above the tops of the blades of grass. The bees and the butterflies, mistaking my nose for a rose, will alight on it and inspire me to write an ode to them. I love Nature. Oh, to be an ox who eats the grass, and then to be a man to eat the ox who eats the grass.

LEONCE. You are so sad.

VALERIO. Beyond sad. Tragic, that's what I am. I could stay up all night, singing, "There's a fly on the wall."

LEONCE. That way madness lies.

VALERIO. I'd rather be mad than be stuck with common sense.

LEONCE. And how do you make your living?

VALERIO. I don't. My vocation is idleness. I am supremely skilled in the art of doing nothing. These hands of mine have never known work. Sweat from my brow ... (*He sighs.*) I am so lazy I can't even finish this sentence.

LEONCE. Friend. (*He embraces him.*) Stay with me.

VALERIO. You're on. (*They go off arm in arm, singing, "There's a fly on the wall, a fly on the wall, a fly on the wall."*)

Scene 2

KING PETER. (*Having just finished a bath, walking about half-naked while his valet dresses him.*) Man must think. My subjects do not think. I must think for them. The essence of a thing is the thing itself, you follow me? Where are my trousers? You are leaving my free will exposed to the entire world for all to see. (*The valet holds*

WOYZECK; LEONCE AND LENA

by Georg Büchner
translated by John Christopher Jones

WOYZECK is the first lower-class tragic hero, and he is the first psychotic hero in dramatic literature. But Woyzeck is truly a victim. This unique classic is based on the true case of a soldier who killed his common-law wife and was executed when his plea of insanity was rejected by the courts. (12 men, 5 women, doubling.)

LEONCE AND LENA is a fractured fairytale for grownups, in which King Peter of the kingdom of Tushee has arranged a marriage between his son, Prince Leonce, and Princess Lena of the kingdom of Wee-wee. But the young prince is determined not to marry at all, unless it is for love. Refusing to bow to custom, he disguises himself as a common man and sets off on a journey with his drunken fool, Valerio. The two vagabonds accidentally bump into Lena and her governess, who are also disguised. The prince and the princess fall in love, not knowing the true identity of their mate. (4 men, 3 women, doubling.)

Also by John Christopher Jones
PLATONOV

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