

Sitting Ducks On The Sitting Dock {quack!}

By

Dane Fatrell

WHY I LIKE IT: *Drama Editor JOHN SULLIVAN writes...* There is so much going on in this play that it's difficult to pick a spot to begin, so I'll just jump in and confide that I felt like I was listening to a less-stripped down and ambiguous version of Vladimir & Estragon in the banter between Ricky & Louis. And in another large diversion from Beckett's model, Godot actually does show up and, *mirabile dictu*, he's a nothing more than a superficial / self-aggrandizing and very manipulative, passive-aggressive bully. This high velocity parable questions the basis of friendship, the nature of officially defined reality, the absurdity of "political realities," and the nature and the ultimate worth of making it inside such a system – it all comes down to "interesting hats and money," no? So the organization man gets a promotion and the man who has epiphanies and revelations is cut loose / unmoored to wander in a wilderness where the effort to make sense of feelings and events is terrible for mental health. Does this sound familiar? What I really like best about the "Dock of the Ducks" is its allegorical parallels with the operating principles of capitalism and consumer economies, the inner dynamics of movements and cults of personality, and the idiotic rules we all assimilate and allow to rule our lives. It's as if a glimpse of Andrey Platonov's Soviet era novel, *The Foundation Pit*, was brought to life as a script in all its hopelessness, despair and ultimate defiance, but with a seltzer bottle, a madcap fright wig – or "interesting hat" - and a set of big shiny teeth. There's a lot to like here, and I mos' def' want to see it embodied on a stage.

SITTING DUCKS ON THE SITTING DOCK

A Full-Length Play

by Dane Futrell

SITTING DUCKS ON THE SITTING DOCK was originally produced in an environmental setting by Ghostbird Theatre Company in Fort Myers, Florida. The production took place on an actual loading dock in Florida Gulf Coast University’s long-abandoned Buckingham campus. It premiered on November 5th, 2021. Direction, costumes, lights, set, and sound were produced by Barry Cavin. It was stage managed by Noelle Horltdt. It was produced in association with Jim Brock and the rest of Ghostbird Theatre Company. The cast was as follows:

LOUIS.....Alec Taylor
RICKY.....Dane Futrell
SHIRLEY.....Lauren Tindle
SIR.....Josh Needle

Characters

LOUIS – (M) A dock worker. (pronounced “LOU-ee”)

RICKY – (M) A dock worker.

SHIRLEY – (F) Transportation services.

SIR – (M) The boss.

Place

The Sitting Dock.

Time

5 PM. Friday, maybe.

Notes

All punctuation, or lack thereof, is intentional and is meant to inform the actors' delivery.

ACT ONE

(“Subterranean Homesick Blues” by Bob Dylan is heard as the rising lights reveal an aged dock, rusted by time, but clearly well-maintained. A wooden sign marks the playing area as “The Sitting Dock”. On the dock is a bucket sloppily labeled the “soul bucket” in which ducks are piled high inside. Buckets of water fill the area surrounding the dock. The distant clamor of quacking ducks resides overhead. LOUIS and RICKY, two dock workers, struggle to push an awkward wooden chair onstage. LOUIS nearly falls.)

RICKY: Alright. Easy, Lou! Easy.

LOUIS: I'm easy, Ricky. I'm easy. You ready?

RICKY: Born ready.

LOUIS: Alright.

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: One... Two...Three!

(They position the chair centerstage.)

RICKY: Wow. Just like that, Louis.

LOUIS: Just like that! You wanna test her out, or...?

RICKY: I get the honors this time, huh?

LOUIS: Yes you do, my friend.

RICKY: Wow.

LOUIS: Go for it.

RICKY: Alright.

(RICKY analyzes the chair.)

Hmm. Let's see... everything's even, everything's clean. Hm...

LOUIS: Durable?

(RICKY sits on the chair.)

RICKY: Real-deal durable.

(RICKY knocks on the chair.)

Sounds good, looks good.

LOUIS: How's it *feel*, though?

(RICKY slumps in the chair.)

RICKY: Amazing.

LOUIS: Wow. Good job today, Ricky, really.

RICKY: Wow.

LOUIS: Hopefully this is enough to please Sir.

RICKY: *Wow.*

(A moment.)

LOUIS: What is it?

RICKY: I think... I think I just had an epiphany, Louis.

LOUIS: Really?

RICKY: Yeah. It's like I just peeled back another little layer of reality, man.

LOUIS: Well, it sure has been a while since the last one, hasn't it?

RICKY: Forget a while. Try an eternity, Louis. I forgot what this felt like, it's been so long.

LOUIS: Must be something about today, man.

RICKY: That's right.

LOUIS: I mean, there are *a lot* of souls falling today, Ricky, so—and, you know, when the number is real good, you start getting those little ideas.

RICKY: Big ideas, Louis. Big ideas!

LOUIS: Yeah, yeah, big ideas-- what's the epiphany, though?

RICKY: It dawned on me that we do *amazing* work here, Louis!

(A moment.)

LOUIS: You didn't know that already?

RICKY: 'Course I knew, but I never thought on it, really. You know, it's just nuts. We're the best, Louis. We are the best.

LOUIS: Right.

RICKY: I don't think anyone, or any-*thing* could do half as good a job as we do here.

LOUIS: Well...

RICKY: You agree with that, or...?

LOUIS: Of course. Absolutely. Yes. Well, no. Well, yes. Maybe. Ahem.

(LOUIS splashes his face with water from a bucket as RICKY looks on, concerned.)

This water is so fresh, Ricky.

RICKY: What-- it's been sitting there forever.

LOUIS: Like bathing in the Alps, man.

RICKY: Not really—hey, what did you mean “maybe” back there, Louis?

LOUIS: Back where.

RICKY: Here.

LOUIS: Maybe?

RICKY: Yes.

LOUIS: When did I say that.

RICKY: Just now.

LOUIS: I didn't say anything just now.

RICKY: You said--

LOUIS: *You're* saying things just now-- well, *I'm* saying things just now, now. Now—wait, what—

RICKY: I said “we’re the best” and you said “maybe”. Sounded like you meant something by it, too, if I’m not mistaken.

LOUIS: Maybe I did.

(LOUIS continues splashing his face with water.)

RICKY: You don’t think we’re the best workers out here, Louis?

LOUIS: I didn’t say that.

RICKY: But is it a thought?

LOUIS: We’re the only ones out here, Ricky, so I guess, yes, by default, we’re the best. But--

RICKY: Something wrong with being the best by default?

LOUIS: Again, I didn’t say--

RICKY: Everything is by default if you really think about it, Louis.

LOUIS: I mean, not really at all, but sure.

(LOUIS checks his nonexistent watch.)

RICKY: What time you got over there, buddy?

LOUIS: Fiiiiiiive on the dot!

RICKY: Crazy how some things never change, huh?

LOUIS: Just crazy.

RICKY: But that’s how we like it, right?... Right?

LOUIS: Right...

RICKY: Well, our work for the day is done.

LOUIS: Sure is.

RICKY: What should we do now?

LOUIS: What *can* we do now?

RICKY: We can, uhm... uhm.

LOUIS: We can get back to work.

RICKY: Great idea.

LOUIS: Let’s do it.

RICKY: Wait. I’ve just had another epiphany, Louis.

LOUIS: Oh no.

RICKY: And we're gonna play a little game with it, how does that sound?

LOUIS: Oh no.

RICKY: I'm gonna ask you a question and you're gonna be real confused about it, okay?

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: You ready?

LOUIS: No.

RICKY: What is silence, Louis?

LOUIS: ... I don't like this game, Ricky.

RICKY: Silence speaks volumes, Louis.

LOUIS: Not rea—what?

RICKY: Doesn't that just make sense?

LOUIS: No. No. Silence doesn't speak at all, Ricky. It's actually pretty quiet.

RICKY: Silence is a straight line. Words and everything else, a bunch of circles, man.

(RICKY waves his arms around in circles.)

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: We talk ourselves in circles, never make any progress. Wonder what would happen if we just let the silence speak a bit.

LOUIS: What, and not talk?

RICKY: Yes!

LOUIS: Everything would be meaningless, Ricky!

RICKY: Exactly! Meaningless is great, and silence is even better, don't you agree with that?

LOUIS: No!

RICKY: Let's give it a try!

(Silence. RICKY erupts into a scream and runs around in a circle.)

LOUIS: I *really* don't like this game, Ricky.

RICKY: I've just had another epiphany!

LOUIS: Slow down, man. You're gonna erupt or something.

(RICKY stops running and hears the silence.)

RICKY: You hear that silence?

LOUIS: Does anyone really hear silence?

RICKY: It's just another word, Louis.

LOUIS: Silence is *between* the words, though.

RICKY: But the *word* silence.

LOUIS: There's a word for everything!

RICKY: But is there a word *for* everything?

LOUIS: Yes. "Everything". Everything is the word for everything, and there's also a word for everything. It's how we get our point across.

RICKY: Our point?

LOUIS: Yes.

RICKY: I don't think I have one of those.

LOUIS: What? Yes, you do.

RICKY: What is it.

LOUIS: I don't know. I can't even tell you what mine is.

RICKY: So you don't have one either, huh?

LOUIS: No, no, I'm sure I have one, I just don't know what it is. I'm not an expert on all things point and purpose, Ricky.

RICKY: Good! Experts are useless. Imagine dedicating your life to one thing, and one thing only! Couldn't be me.

(RICKY splashes his face with water. LOUIS looks to the dock, and then to RICKY.)

What?

(A duck suddenly plummets from the sky and splats on the ground, dead.)

What's that, six-fifty-three?

LOUIS: I believe so.

RICKY: Six-fifty-three!

(LOUIS takes out a pad of paper, then marks it with a pen.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-three. Got it.

RICKY: Good.

(LOUIS puts the duck in the soul bucket. RICKY produces a piece of stale bread, takes a single bite of it, and throws it offstage.)

LOUIS: Hey, maybe that's your point.

RICKY: *(Full mouth.)* What?

LOUIS: Taking a bite and tossing the rest!

RICKY: Some point that is, Louis. And I guess I'm pointless now!

LOUIS: How do you figure that.

RICKY: I'm stuffed. My point is gone!

LOUIS: You bit it once, Ricky.

RICKY: All this, points... It's more trouble than it's worth, you know that?

LOUIS: Ricky.

RICKY: Forget it. I'll just starve to death.

(RICKY splashes his face with water.)

LOUIS: Hey, maybe that's it!

RICKY: What.

LOUIS: You don't want to starve, right?

RICKY: I just said quite the opposite, but--

LOUIS: You don't want to die, Ricky. You're avoiding death all the time just by living. Maybe-- That's it! Avoiding death, Ricky, that's gotta be the point, right?

RICKY: We're already dead, Louis.

LOUIS: ... Oh, yeah.

RICKY: Been that way, too, for way longer than we were alive. If there is a "point" or whatever, Louis, it's probably to just keep on going. Continue on.

LOUIS: Continue on?

RICKY: Yes, continue on, until...

LOUIS: Until what?

RICKY: Until you can't. Until it's done.

LOUIS: Until what's done.

RICKY: This.

LOUIS: And this is...?

RICKY: Think of it this way, okay?

LOUIS: Uh-huh.

RICKY: Every day we're here.

LOUIS: Right.

RICKY: And it's the same old, same old, right?

LOUIS: It's our job.

RICKY: Same thing every day.

LOUIS: It's our *job*, Ricky.

RICKY: No. It's our *passion*.

LOUIS: I don't know about that.

RICKY: And all we can do is continue on. You know why? Because *We Are The Dock*. You hear that?

LOUIS: We are the dock.

RICKY: No, no. *We Are The Dock*, you see? That's the point, Louis! We will continue to be the dock until it is a dock no more.

LOUIS: Then what happens.

(A moment.)

RICKY: Hey, wait a minute.

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: Are we keeping points here?

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: Are we keeping track of our points? How many points have we scored so far?

LOUIS: None! Oh... we're not talking about those kinda points, Ricky!

RICKY: What kinda points are we talking about?

LOUIS: Not the scoreboard kinda-- Listen. Okay?

(LOUIS points to RICKY.)

You said you didn't have a point.

RICKY: Don't point at me.

(LOUIS points to himself.)

LOUIS: *I'm* trying to help you find it. That's all.

RICKY: Hey, don't point at me, mister! With your pointy little finger.

LOUIS: I'm trying to prove a point, Ricky! Point you in the right direction. It's proving to be pointless at this point in time, but--

RICKY: What's your point, Louis?

LOUIS: I don't know!

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

RICKY: Six-fifty-four!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-four. Got it.

(RICKY puts the duck in the soul bucket.)

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: Ricky.

RICKY: What else have you ever done with your life?

LOUIS: That's a loaded question... What else have I done with my life? Uhh... Well, I, uh... fell from the sky. That's definitely something I did... I landed here... I, uh... I made a name for myself!

RICKY: No.

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: Sir gave you that name.

LOUIS: But I made it mean something.

RICKY: What's it mean.

LOUIS: Well-- hold on a second, Ricky, how do *you* know what *my* life's work is?

RICKY: Because I've been by your side the whole time, dummy. How many years have we been working on this dock? Me and you.

LOUIS: We still going by years here?

RICKY: For continuity's sake, yes.

LOUIS: Well, a bunch, man. A bunch of years.

RICKY: Give me a number.

LOUIS: I can't. Can you?

(A moment.)

RICKY: A bunch, then.

LOUIS: Oh, god!

RICKY: What.

LOUIS: I don't remember how long we've been doing this.

RICKY: Don't be a nervous wreck. It's a good thing! What's a couple years mean?

LOUIS: Years? It hasn't been just years. It's been lifetimes, Ricky, eternities!

RICKY: Well, you know it's your life's work when you can't remember anything else, right?... Right?...

(*LOUIS submerges his head in one of the water buckets.*)

Oh, what? Why are you so worried? What's there to be worried about?

LOUIS: I have no idea! That's why I'm worried.

RICKY: Oh, please! You're a funny case, you know that? When I was alive, every nervous wreck I knew was so scared of death. And now that I'm dead, my only friend is scared to *death* of *life*... Don't get caught up, Louis. You have the rest of forever to worry!

LOUIS: This isn't helping at all.

RICKY: What's the matter, Louis? You can talk to me.

LOUIS: All this worrying and talking about points... got me thinking back to the whole astral projection thing.

RICKY: Astral projection thing?

LOUIS: Yes. In between life and death... zipping past galaxies... stars bursting and reassembling... the lifespan of the universe captured into both one small millisecond and the longest eternity... The essence of life abiding by no constructs...

RICKY: Louis!

LOUIS: Every color you could ever imagine... Experience expanding beyond an emotional spectrum... It was real, I experienced it.

RICKY: Louis!

LOUIS: But it seemed so... *next* to real. Not fake, but not all the way real either... Maybe that's what forever really means.

RICKY: That was like nine epiphanies!

LOUIS: That was just common sense, Ricky.

RICKY: Whatever. Mine, my "astral projection" thing-- mine was blackness, man. Pure blackness. Only thing I remember afterward is falling from the sky, screaming my lungs out, looking back and forth between the ground and you, who I recognized instantly for some reason, and then I lost all my stuff! I mean, look at what I'm wearing!

LOUIS: I didn't lose my stuff.

RICKY: I know. You look great.

LOUIS: And then the ducks?

RICKY: Oh, the ducks!

LOUIS: A massive flock, man. Never seen anything like it.

RICKY: They were covering the whole sky! Couldn't even see the ground when we looked down, there were so many.

LOUIS: Definitely took a couple with us by accident.

RICKY: Oh, for sure.

LOUIS: And then when we crash-landed and looked up, the sky wasn't even blue. It was just duck-white, or duck-gray.

RICKY: And then *Sir*. The man in the hat showed up instantly.

LOUIS: For the greater good, he did, yes.

RICKY: He was waiting for us. Waiting for--

LOUIS: He gave us the job. It was beautiful!

RICKY: *We* made it beautiful. Sir practically did nothing. Don't forget that.

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

Six-fifty-five!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-five. Got it.

RICKY: We might just break the record today after all!

LOUIS: You, you think so? Really?

RICKY: I mean, we're right on track. Shirley won't be able to contain herself.

LOUIS: I don't know, Ricky. Whenever we break a record, we just add more weight to her wheelbarrow, you know?

RICKY: Isn't it great?

LOUIS: No. I feel bad. She doesn't have anybody like you and I have each other.

RICKY: She is a lone gun, Louis-boy. Always has been, always will be.

(LOUIS chuckles.)

What.

LOUIS: Not always.

RICKY: *(Sarcastic.)* Ha Ha.

LOUIS: Sorry, sorry, I had to.

RICKY: No, no. You're right.

(RICKY enters storyteller mode.)

Oh, there was a time when--

LOUIS: You don't have to talk about it.

RICKY: I'm clearly okay with talking about it.

LOUIS: Is that why she ended things with you, Ricky? She was a lone gun, wanted to work alone?

RICKY: Way to cut to the end of the story, Louis.

LOUIS: I've heard it a million times. I practically know it word for word.

RICKY: You tell it, then.

LOUIS: Okay... there was a time when you wanted her in your life, and she didn't want you. I'm pretty sure that's it.

RICKY: Your rendition sucks.

LOUIS: Your rendition is sad and long!

RICKY: Life is sad and long! The people want to know the details!

LOUIS: What people?

RICKY: The, the—

LOUIS: And what details?

RICKY: The sad and long ones!

LOUIS: You need to tell a new story, Ricky. You also need to ask her that question of yours that's been brewing in your head for a while now.

RICKY: What I need to do is none of your concern.

LOUIS: She's due to come around soon, man. You better ask her before she loses interest.

RICKY: You think she's still interested?

LOUIS: Only one way to find out, yeah?

RICKY: I will... consider it-- Anyway, you can go back to worrying about forever, mister, instead of worrying about me forever.

(The ducks quack overhead. RICKY looks to the sky.)

You think they're talking smack?

LOUIS: Who, the ducks?

RICKY: Yes, the ducks.

LOUIS: Why would they talk smack, Ricky?

RICKY: They heard my little story and think they're more man than I am.

LOUIS: You think they can talk?

RICKY: In their little language, yeah, sure.

LOUIS: They quack, Ricky.

RICKY: To us they quack, but those quacks could mean anything to them.

LOUIS: They're probably just having a little chat.

(The quacking intensifies.)

RICKY: They're talking smack, Louis!

LOUIS: They're quacking smack, if anything!

RICKY: You're a quack.

LOUIS: You're *on* quack. What are you gonna do about it, if they are talking smack?

RICKY: I'm gonna stand here and be real mad about it.

LOUIS: Well, you're doing fantastic.

RICKY: What was that story Sir used to tell, Louis?

LOUIS: Which one? He's got plenty.

RICKY: The one with the ducks and the souls.

LOUIS: I believe it was called "The Ducks and the Souls."

RICKY: Mhm.

LOUIS: The story goes... the ducks, the ducks that fly way overhead...

RICKY: The ducks that talk smack!

LOUIS: Sure. Their bodies are connected to the living souls on Earth. So, when someone on Earth dies, or-- I forget the phrase that Sir used.

RICKY: Gives in.

LOUIS: Yes! When a human gives in, a duck takes a fatal dive.

(LOUIS puts the duck in the soul bucket.)

RICKY: A swan dive, if you will.

(They chuckle.)

LOUIS: Yes. And they never come back. We collect 'em and Shirley sends 'em away. The life cycle in action-- or death cycle, I guess.

RICKY: You think all that's true?

LOUIS: Of course. It's self-evident. Ducks fall, people give in. It's nature! Can't deny nature... Will you stop looking up to the ducks already? They'll stop falling if they know you're giving them attention.

RICKY: I'm gonna talk so much smack to the next duck that falls, Louis.

LOUIS: I'm sure that'll accomplish so much.

RICKY: They'll learn to stop messing with me!

LOUIS: They'll stop messing with you as soon as they fall, 'cause they're dead.

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

RICKY: Six-fifty-six!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-six. Got it. Hey, please don't—

(RICKY picks up the duck and talks smack.)

RICKY: Hey there, mister duck man. You need to tell your friends up there to stop—

LOUIS: Ricky!

RICKY: What? I'm letting 'em know!

LOUIS: How are you gonna let 'em know anything? It's dead! Very dead! And it definitely can't let the other ducks know--

RICKY: I'm gonna throw it back where it came from.

LOUIS: What?!

RICKY: For all the ducks to see.

LOUIS: You can't mess up the count, Ricky!

RICKY: The only thing messed up is how much smack they were talking just now!

LOUIS: What about Shirley?! She needs the right numbers!

RICKY: I surely don't care! Sayonara, you quack!

(RICKY throws the duck way off stage. A moment as RICKY catches his breath and LOUIS splashes his face.)

Well that went well, huh?

LOUIS: You're a monster.

RICKY: I did what I had to do.

LOUIS: We're set back by one now. Shirley might have to recount everything because of you.

RICKY: It's one duck. Just act like it never happened. We'll be okay!

LOUIS: You know, maybe records aren't meant to be broken anymore, Ricky.

RICKY: What.

LOUIS: When records are broken they, they, they're not records anymore. They're just statistics. Maybe we should, I don't know, *preserve* them, and be happy with the fact that--

RICKY: Preserving what's broken leaves you with pieces. You want pieces?

LOUIS: Peace of mind.

RICKY: No! We want the whole, man! Listen to me. Every year there is a book dedicated to people breaking records. People want to see the death of the old and the birth of the new. So what if we're one down, Louis? I guarantee we'll have a broken record by the end of the day.

LOUIS: You *sound* like a broken record, you know that?

(A duck darts in from offstage and narrowly misses RICKY.)

RICKY: Jesus!

(LOUIS laughs.)

I told you they were talking smack, Louis! I told you!

LOUIS: Looks like I'm not the only one trying to knock some sense into you, man!

RICKY: Whatever. Six-fifty-six. Mark it in your stupid little pad.

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-six. Got it. Oh man, that was--

(Another duck darts from offstage and hits RICKY in the chest.)

RICKY: Agh! What, why, man?!

(LOUIS laughs.)

It's not funny, Louis! Man... Six-fifty-seven, I guess. Quacks... You know something, Louis?

LOUIS: Hm?

RICKY: Dead things still weigh *a lot*, man. You'd think they'd lose a few pounds on the way down, but--

LOUIS: The human condition sure is a heavy load! Hey, you could've ducked... Get it? 'Cause--

RICKY: I get it.

LOUIS: 'Cause they're ducks.

RICKY: I get it. Mark the pad.

LOUIS: Okay, okay.

(LOUIS marks the pad. RICKY puts the ducks in the soul bucket.)

Six-fifty-seven. Got it.

(SHIRLEY enters with her wheelbarrow.)

SHIRLEY: Hey guys!

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: Shirley!

SHIRLEY: How goes it, how goes it?

RICKY: It goes!

SHIRLEY: It does!

RICKY: Great to see you.

SHIRLEY: Surely. Been a little while, huh? How are the duckies doing?

RICKY: Oh, you know, alive and well!

LOUIS: Dead.

RICKY: Louis.

SHIRLEY: What's the count today, huh? Anything crazy?

RICKY: I don't know, was it, uh, nine-hundred-something, Louis?

SHIRLEY: Wow. That record is no more, huh?

LOUIS: We're at six-fifty-seven, actually.

RICKY: Louis!

LOUIS: It's the truth!

RICKY: I must have miscounted. Apologies.

SHIRLEY: Six-fifty-seven isn't bad!

LOUIS: Could be six-fifty-eight, but Ricky here decided--

RICKY: Stop.

SHIRLEY: Sir is gonna be real proud of you guys, that's for sure.

LOUIS: You think so?

SHIRLEY: Oh yeah. Nobody can do it like you guys!

RICKY: Awh, thanks, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: No problem. Can you help me out real quick, Louis?

LOUIS: Yeah, of course.

(LOUIS transfers the ducks from the soul bucket into SHIRLEY's wheelbarrow.)

RICKY: How's the, uh, wheelbarrow holding up, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: Tugging along, or at least she's trying to. Slower by the day, though, I swear. Might have to ditch it here soon and start walking! And, jeez, if you guys keep breaking these records, my back will be breaking, too.

LOUIS: Hey, maybe Ricky can start helping you carry the souls to the office, Shirley.

RICKY: Hey, that's a great idea right there.

SHIRLEY: Ha! Ricky can't even hold himself together.

RICKY: Huh.

SHIRLEY: I'd love to see him hold one of these when it's full of souls.

RICKY: I could do it!

LOUIS: Okay, Ricky...

SHIRLEY: Yeah, okay, Ricky...

RICKY: I totally could! I just prefer buckets, is all.

SHIRLEY: Is that right?

RICKY: Yes. I deal with buckets all day, Shirley! I don't know how I'd fare with a wheelbarrow.

LOUIS: He's a real bucket-head, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: Ha!

RICKY: (*Forcefully.*) Ha Ha Ha! You're hilarious, Louis. Ha Ha-- Hey, Shirley--

SHIRLEY: Always a good time with you two.

RICKY: Always! Hey, uh—

SHIRLEY: You guys hear about that increasing office space?

LOUIS: Yes, ma'am!

RICKY: What.

SHIRLEY: Exciting stuff, right? Could mean big things for us in the future!

RICKY: Office space?

SHIRLEY: That's right. They're expanding! Isn't that great?

RICKY: How'd you find that out?

SHIRLEY: Sir told me. Lou knows about it, too.

RICKY: He does?

LOUIS: Eh, through the grapevine I mighta heard something like that...

RICKY: Wonder why he didn't tell me.

SHIRLEY: Maybe he forgot.

LOUIS: Yeah.

SHIRLEY: Or he doesn't want you to know!

(SHIRLEY chuckles. LOUIS splashes his face with water.)

Just kidding.

RICKY: That's really odd.

SHIRLEY: Life's really odd, Ricky. Chin up.

LOUIS: Yeah, chin up, Ricky.

RICKY: It'd just be nice to know when things are happening, guys.

SHIRLEY: Things are happening all the time.

LOUIS: Sure are!

RICKY: But, that's not-- I just want--

SHIRLEY: Alright, that's that. I gotta get outta here. Hasta la vista, guys. Best of luck. I'll be back soon.

RICKY: Wait, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: Rack up them duckies!

LOUIS: Au revoir!

RICKY: Shirley.

SHIRLEY: And hey, you know what they say...

(SHIRLEY exits with her wheelbarrow.)

RICKY: *(Ashamed.)* Jesus...

LOUIS: So ambiguous, that one, huh?

RICKY: I blew it, Louis.

LOUIS: Operates in mystery.

RICKY: She hates me.

LOUIS: She tolerates you. You didn't ask her your question, either.

RICKY: I know. I will.

LOUIS: When.

RICKY: Eventually...

LOUIS: Today, Ricky. You can never be sure about tomorrow!

RICKY: Pretty sure tomorrow is gonna be more of this, Louis. And if I just come out and bombard her with my question—

LOUIS: (*Optimism.*) She'll think you're *desperate*, Ricky!

RICKY: Exactly!

LOUIS: It's great!

RICKY: What?!

LOUIS: Everybody's desperate! That's the only way to get what you want. Want it so desperately, and I mean so *desperately*, that people are willing to give it to you just to shut you up.

RICKY: I don't want to ruin what I had with her, though.

LOUIS: You can't even remember what you had, Ricky.

RICKY: I remember it vividly, Louis. It was like a dance that lasted forever.

LOUIS: It was two weeks.

RICKY: Doesn't matter how long it lasted. What matters is what I felt during that time. All I know is what I feel, Lou, same as you.

LOUIS: I know more than that, man.

RICKY: Yeah?

LOUIS: Yeah. I know family, values, and family values.

RICKY: You don't have a family.

LOUIS: Not yet.

RICKY: And you don't want one, trust me. What's a family ever done for anybody anyway?

LOUIS: Gave people like us something to live for, Ricky, gave us life!

RICKY: Gave us life?

LOUIS: Yes! And I have more than what I feel beyond family, too. I have you, I have the dock, I have Sir, I have Shirley.

RICKY: *I* have Shirley.

LOUIS: Apparently not! You can't even ask her a question.

RICKY: I can, I just haven't yet. And I think Sir has you, not the other way around!

LOUIS: It's not ownership. It's mutual. I serve my ends, and he rewards me.

RICKY: He throws a bone, and you fetch. And you're glad to do so because you only care about the money anyway, don't you?

(LOUIS follows RICKY around in circles.)

LOUIS: Why wouldn't I care about the money, Ricky? It's what we work for, isn't it?

RICKY: Be proud of the work, Louis, not the reward. We do great work here!

LOUIS: Maybe pride isn't in my blood, Ricky.

RICKY: It's in the heart.

LOUIS: There's blood in your heart.

RICKY: Then it's in your head!

LOUIS: My head hurts, Ricky! And I don't need pride to make it worse.

RICKY: Louis... do you know, do you have any idea, how many workers didn't have what it takes to work here with us? Huh?

LOUIS: A whole lot, a whole lot.

RICKY: A whole lot. That's right. You and me, Louis, we have what it takes, so forget everything else. Forget your family and forget Sir while you're at it.

LOUIS: You wanted a family too, Ricky. Don't forget that you weren't always a lone gun, either.

RICKY: Don't even start with all that.

LOUIS: All those years ago, you were Mr. Family Man. You were *fiending* for a family!

RICKY: What did I say?

LOUIS: With Shirley, need I remind you of that?

RICKY: That was an eternity ago!

LOUIS: You wanted a wheelbarrow of your own just to match hers, man.

RICKY: It would've been adorable, too.

LOUIS: And you wanted to have little Rickies running around with little wheelbarrows so you could teach them your ways. Your weird ways! And you wanted to know so many things. You wanted to know *love*, Ricky. I remember. Now you just want to know the dock, and nothing else!

(RICKY collapses.)

RICKY: The dock is all we have!

LOUIS: Your little Rickies could've been star crafters, man.

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: Mountain movers!

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

RICKY: Six-fifty-eight! Thank god.

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-eight. Got it... Listen, Ricky, I don't mean to--

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

RICKY: Six-fifty-nine!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-fifty-nine. Got it. Listen, Ricky, I'm just saying, think of the possibilities! Star crafters, mountain movers, construction guys, boat handlers!

RICKY: Boat handlers...

LOUIS: Yeah!

RICKY: Boat handlers...

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: Haven't heard about them in forever. Wonder what they're up to...

LOUIS: If I had to guess, probably handling boats.

(LOUIS puts the ducks in the soul bucket. RICKY rises, thinking.)

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: What?

RICKY: I've just had an epiphany.

LOUIS: Oh no.

RICKY: I don't think I've ever seen a boat handler, Louis.

LOUIS: What makes you say that.

RICKY: The fact that I've never seen a boat handler, Louis.

LOUIS: It's just been a long time, Ricky. I'm sure they're alright.

RICKY: It's not their wellbeing I'm concerned about, Louis! I'm concerned about the reality of it all.

LOUIS: The reality.

RICKY: Yes.

LOUIS: The reality is they have their life and we have ours, Ricky. Some worlds don't collide. That's just how it is.

RICKY: All worlds do is collide, Louis. That's what puts things in conversation.

(RICKY paces back and forth, thinking hard.)

No mountain movers, either. No. No memory of them.

LOUIS: Well...

RICKY: Or star crafters, Louis.

LOUIS: Ricky.

RICKY: None!

LOUIS: We're the dock guys, Ricky. They're the mountain guys and the star guys. Different walks of life.

RICKY: Born to be enemies, huh?

LOUIS: Well...

RICKY: Just like me and Sir!

LOUIS: You are not enemies. You work together!

RICKY: Even worse. Think about it, Louis. Why have we only seen one doofus from the office in the past eternity, and nobody else besides Shirley?

LOUIS: You like seeing Shirley.

RICKY: I *love* seeing Shirley! That's not the point.

LOUIS: And the office guys are not doofuses, Ricky. Sir is not a doofus.

RICKY: He's a big ol' doofus!

LOUIS: Stop that. You are getting real skeptical over there, Ricky. What happened to all that pride you were harping on earlier?

RICKY: Pride isn't my concern anymore.

LOUIS: What is.

RICKY: Everything else.

LOUIS: That's an awful lot to be concerned about.

RICKY: What about the construction guys?

LOUIS: What about 'em.

RICKY: All the buildings around here are falling apart. How can they even be considered construction guys when nothing's even being constructed?

LOUIS: They might be expanding the office.

RICKY: Have you seen the office yet?

LOUIS: Only in my dreams.

RICKY: Where is it?

LOUIS: Uh... Stop conspiring, Ricky. Sir says it's bad for your brain, okay?

RICKY: It's addicting.

LOUIS: (*Warning.*) Ricky...

RICKY: I feel *strong*, Louis-boy. For the first time things are starting to make sense, I'm making progress!

LOUIS: Stop making sense, Ricky. It'll kill ya!

RICKY: What should I think about?

LOUIS: Think about the dock! It makes no sense!

RICKY: I gotta know what these "construction guys" really do.

LOUIS: They construct. Sir said they build underwater or something.

RICKY: Underwater?

LOUIS: Yes.

RICKY: How can you build underwater, Louis? It's underwater!

LOUIS: They build submarines, don't they?

RICKY: Above water they do!

LOUIS: Okay! Jeez. I wouldn't know what goes on underwater, Ricky. I work strictly above it.

RICKY: There is no water around here. There is no *under*-water around here.

LOUIS: There's water all around us. We work on a dock.

(*RICKY kicks a bucket.*)

RICKY: All I see are buckets.

LOUIS: There's water in the buckets.

RICKY: But--

LOUIS: And if there's water, there's underwater.

RICKY: Okay, but what's under the underwater?

(*LOUIS splashes the water around.*)

LOUIS: Water.

RICKY: No.

(*LOUIS splashes the water around.*)

LOUIS: Buckets.

RICKY: No! I mean the underwater underneath the underwater in the underwater water buckets.

(LOUIS can't respond.)

I'm gonna check.

LOUIS: I don't think that's a good idea, Ricky!

RICKY: This might be the first good idea I've ever had.

LOUIS: Sir said moving the buckets can get you killed. I thought you didn't want to die!

RICKY: Wouldn't be the first time.

(RICKY lifts up one of the buckets. A moment.)

I'm dying, Louis...

(RICKY runs around the stage in a desperate fright. Water splashes from the bucket as LOUIS chases RICKY around.)

LOUIS: Ricky! Ricky! No!

(RICKY utcries as he continues to run.)

Stop that! Stop!

(RICKY throws the water from the bucket into the audience. A moment. LOUIS splashes his face with water from one of the other buckets. RICKY looks beneath the lifted bucket and laughs maniacally.)

RICKY: Louis...

LOUIS: Ricky...

RICKY: All that's here is concrete. Dry concrete.

LOUIS: What? There's gotta be a couple drops of water under there.

RICKY: Dry as a gosh darn desert! You know what this means, Louis?

LOUIS: Not in the slightest.

RICKY: It means there might not be construction guys around here, and there might not be any boat handlers out there either, Louis.

LOUIS: But Sir said, eternities ago, that--

RICKY: Sir has said a lot of things, Louis, and I'm starting to sniff out what's what. "Boat handlers". Why are they called boat handlers? Shouldn't they be called sailors, or captains, or somethin'?

LOUIS: I guess he wanted to take the business approach.

RICKY: I think he's lying to us. You think he's lying to us?

LOUIS: Sir?

RICKY: No, Billy McGee down by the river-- Yes, Sir!

LOUIS: Oh. No.

RICKY: There's nothing underneath the buckets, Louis!

LOUIS: Okay?

RICKY: This isn't even a lake! We're in a plot of concrete surrounded by abandoned buildings. The only water I see is way over there. Why did we build here, and not over there?

LOUIS: Sir told us to.

RICKY: Of course he did.

LOUIS: But Ricky, the construction guys could be anywhere. They could be across the country.

RICKY: Across the country?

LOUIS: Yes.

RICKY: What country, Lou.

LOUIS: The, the... country.

RICKY: The "wherever we are" country, huh?

LOUIS: Yes, that.

RICKY: Yeah, well, we're *nowhere*, Lou. You get that? We're in *nowhere* country.

LOUIS: What makes you say that?

RICKY: What makes me-- Where are we, Louis? Can you tell me?

LOUIS: On the dock!

RICKY: And where is the dock?

LOUIS: Right here.

RICKY: And where is right here?

LOUIS: Right here.

RICKY: Right here?

LOUIS: Well, it definitely isn't over there!

RICKY: Have you ever seen another worker, with any job, around here ever?

LOUIS: Why are you questioning all this now, Ricky?

RICKY: It's... It's the epiphanies, Louis... It's awoken something inside me.

LOUIS: Enough. I choose to listen to Sir, okay?

RICKY: Yeah, so much so you're starting to look like him.

LOUIS: Wha-- Don't say that!

RICKY: Look at your back. You're growing his hunch!

LOUIS: No...

(LOUIS tries to look at his back.)

RICKY: Soon you'll win limbo games with your eyes closed. And you're tense, Louis!

(LOUIS tenses up as he performs imaginary limbo.)

LOUIS: Tense?

RICKY: Real-deal tense. You're like a rubber statue.

LOUIS: What?!

RICKY: You're too tense *and* too loose at the same time.

(LOUIS loosens up.)

You're becoming him!

LOUIS: I'm only human, Ricky.

RICKY: Ha!

LOUIS: Sorry, sorry. More than human. More. But we were all humans at one point, right?... Right?

RICKY: Louis, we coulda been anything, man. We coulda been trees, we coulda been clouds, we coulda been--

LOUIS: Gods.

RICKY: I was gonna say ducks, but sure.

LOUIS: We could've been *gods*, Ricky. *Gods*.

(A moment. RICKY laughs.)

What?

RICKY: You're a funny guy, Lou. I give you hell all day, but you always know how to put a smile on my face.

LOUIS: I wasn't joking. We went from gods to dead dock guys, Ricky.

RICKY: A good thing, too! This is probably way easier.

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

Six-sixty!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty. Got it. What is the record again, Ricky?

RICKY: Six-sixty-six. And don't you forget it.

(RICKY puts the duck in the soul bucket.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty-six. Got it. We're right there, Ricky.

RICKY: We're right there, Louis.

LOUIS: ... Is it really *us* that are right there, though?

RICKY: What do you mean.

LOUIS: Are we the ones even breaking this record? In technical terms, I mean, we do very little. If you think about it, the ducks are the ones that break the record.

RICKY: All they do is fall, Louis.

LOUIS: All we do is pick 'em up.

RICKY: The record wouldn't exist without us, Louis. You and your technical terms can technically swan dive off a cliff, okay? It's an achievement, regardless of--

LOUIS: It's a day's work.

RICKY: Exactly. Thank you.

LOUIS: That's not what I meant.

RICKY: And it's not even about the record.

LOUIS: What?!

RICKY: It's not, really.

LOUIS: The record's all you've been talking about all day!

RICKY: I'm a changed man.

LOUIS: What changed?

RICKY: I had a revelation, Lou.

LOUIS: A revelation?

RICKY: Yes.

LOUIS: When.

RICKY: Just now.

LOUIS: Wha-- What, not an *epiphany* this time?

RICKY: No, no. Epiphanies are brand new thoughts. Revelations are thoughts I should've known for a while now... Listen to this. It's not about the *quantity* of things, Lou. Everywhere you go it's numbers, right? Numbers, numbers, statistics. We sit here and all we do is count ducks. And when you really think about it, our job is *one* job of the many. *We* are numbers, Louis. But it shouldn't be about the numbers. You hear me?

LOUIS: I hear you, man.

(Three ducks plummet to the ground simultaneously.)

RICKY: Holy jamoly! Six-sixty-one, six-sixty-two, Six-sixty-three!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty-one, six-sixty-two, Six-sixty-three. Got it.

(They juggle the ducks back and forth.)

RICKY: This is incredible!

LOUIS: What's the big deal?

RICKY: This is-- That's never happened before, Louis! Three at once!

LOUIS: I thought you said it's not about the numbers.

RICKY: And now we're only four away!

LOUIS: But--

RICKY: Put your arms up into the atmosphere with me!

(They both raise their hands.)

Can you feel that?

LOUIS: What is it that I'm feeling for?

RICKY: Opportunity.

LOUIS: Where?

RICKY: Everywhere.

(They wave their arms around.)

LOUIS: Is it sort of like hydrogen?

RICKY: Yes.

LOUIS: I feel it.

RICKY: Remember how that feels.

LOUIS: Airy.

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: Yes?

RICKY: We're gonna break that damn record.

LOUIS: Okay.

(RICKY puts the ducks in the soul bucket.)

RICKY: And you know what else?

LOUIS: No.

RICKY: I think we're being lied to.

LOUIS: Oh.

RICKY: I think it's been happening for a long time.

LOUIS: Mhm.

RICKY: And I think it's time we unravel some truth.

LOUIS: Alright.

(RICKY grabs LOUIS' arms and holds them down.)

RICKY: Are you with me?

(LOUIS shoots his arms back up.)

LOUIS: No.

RICKY: What.

LOUIS: I'm not a side-picker, Ricky. Isn't that how wars and stuff get started?

RICKY: You don't need to pick my side, Louis.

LOUIS: Great.

RICKY: I've already picked it for you.

LOUIS: Wait.

RICKY: And I'll show you why. Put your hands down.

(LOUIS puts his hands down.)

Do you remember what the man in the hat said to us in the very beginning?

LOUIS: I—

RICKY: And I mean the *very* beginning. As soon as we crash landed here.

LOUIS: Well, he offered us the deal.

RICKY: And?

LOUIS: And, um, he said we were recently deceased.

RICKY: Uh-huh...

LOUIS: And he said that, uh, we could stay here, basically, in between life and death forever... but we'd have to work for it.

RICKY: Uh-huh.

LOUIS: We agreed, obviously. Uh, we shook hands three ways, like this. He said “You are now more than human, my friends. I promise”.

RICKY: The first promise of many.

LOUIS: He thanked us and congratulated us. Then he asked what we wanted as our end goals, something to work for. You said one piece of bread a day, for some reason.

RICKY: Yeah...

LOUIS: Still not sure why that was your answer, but--

RICKY: It was the first thing that came to mind.

LOUIS: Understandable, but—really, bread, Ricky? You could’ve—

RICKY: He really put me on the spot, Louis.

LOUIS: It’s stale. Whatever. Anyway, I said I’d like a family someday.

RICKY: A bit pretentious if you ask me, but—

LOUIS: How is that pretentious?

RICKY: You’re just asking for more of yourself. Come on now.

LOUIS: Okay, Mr. Bread Man.

RICKY: It’s really not that bad of a choice, man.

LOUIS: We don’t need to eat, Ricky. I haven’t eaten a speck since we started working here.

RICKY: But it’s nice to fill your senses.

LOUIS: Fill? You can’t take more than a bite before you toss it into oblivion. Your body rejects it.

RICKY: “Body”.

LOUIS: Whatever... yeah, families and bread, man. What—why are we talking about Sir’s promises right now?

RICKY: Because they’re proving to be empty.

LOUIS: What do you mean? You always get your bread.

RICKY: I know that. But you haven’t seen your family yet. Not once.

LOUIS: I have no problem waiting. I love them to death.

RICKY: You don’t know them.

LOUIS: I’d do anything for them. That’s my family.

RICKY: I’m your family, Louis. You’re on my side, whether you like it or not. Always. You get me?

LOUIS: I get you.

RICKY: Good.

LOUIS: You get me?

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

RICKY: Six-sixty-four!

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty-four. Got it...

(RICKY picks up the duck, kisses it, holds it against his cheek, and laughs devilishly.)

What are you doing, Ricky?

RICKY: I'm showing appreciation, Louis.

LOUIS: That's a lot of appreciation.

RICKY: We're so close...

LOUIS: You're doing terrible things to these ducks today, man.

RICKY: Feathers of glory...

LOUIS: We need a code of ethics or something, 'cause--

RICKY: Flying high, right into the record books...

LOUIS: Okay, Rule One. Don't molest the ducks, you absolute freak.

(RICKY licks the duck.)

Well that was fast. Rule Two. Don't chuck the ducks hundreds of yards away just because they're "talking smack", or some other asinine reason.

(RICKY gears his arm back to throw the duck.)

Ricky!

RICKY: What?

LOUIS: Don't mess up the count again!

RICKY: I'm kidding, Louis! Jesus. I told you we're still gonna break it.

LOUIS: Not if you keep throwing hail mary's, we're not!

RICKY: I have a rule to add onto your ethics code thing, by the way.

LOUIS: Great.

RICKY: Rule Three. Only consider people you know to be your family.

(*RICKY puts the duck in the soul bucket.*)

LOUIS: ... That's just low, Ricky.

RICKY: Solid rule, though, huh?

LOUIS: Sir promised me a family!

RICKY: And I'm sure you'll actually see them one day if you keep kissing his behind!

LOUIS: How am I kissing anything? I just believe that--

RICKY: Stop believing things! Beliefs are just as empty as promises.

LOUIS: It's not like you to insult what I hold dear.

RICKY: Because usually what you hold dear is *real!*

LOUIS: You're being a real jerk, Ricky.

RICKY: It's okay, your family's not here to get offended!

LOUIS: (*Serious.*) Ricky.

RICKY: What?

LOUIS: Enough.

RICKY: Don't take it personal, Louis-boy. I'm just--

LOUIS: Enough!

RICKY: I'm trying to push you toward some realizations!

LOUIS: You have.

RICKY: Good.

LOUIS: You wanna hear one?

RICKY: Yes!

LOUIS: All of this means nothing to me.

(*A moment.*)

RICKY: (*Hurt.*) What?

LOUIS: This, the dock, everything, all of this, nothing but a little stepping stone on the path to my success. And I think that path is a lot longer than what you give me credit for... A lot longer.

RICKY: Louis, I didn't mean—

LOUIS: You are gonna stay here for the rest of eternity, breaking the same record over and over again, while I move on to greater things with my family, and with my integrity. I can have it all, Ricky. I can have everything I want, and that includes having what you don't: a family and a future.

RICKY: Watch yourself, Louis.

LOUIS: I'm not done! And when I get my family and I get my future, I'll make sure they know what to choose for their end goals in life. Things that actually matter, Ricky. No sandwiches, no nothing! And they'll mean more to me than this dock, or you, ever will!

RICKY: Alright! Come here!

(RICKY goes for LOUIS.)

LOUIS: Hey, hey, hey, calm down!

(RICKY grabs LOUIS by the neck of his shirt and holds him up in the air.)

Hey, hey! What the hell, Ricky?!

RICKY: People you've never met?!

LOUIS: Ricky! Jesus!

RICKY: They mean more to you than what we've accomplished all these years?!

LOUIS: Let me down! I, I, I--

RICKY: Your family?

LOUIS: They're, they're—

RICKY: Did it ever occur to you that Sir could have just made it up?!

LOUIS: Why, why would I want to believe that, Ricky?!

RICKY: Did it ever occur to you!

LOUIS: Let me down!

RICKY: Your family might as well be all the way dead!

LOUIS: Ricky, please!

(SHIRLEY enters with her wheelbarrow.)

SHIRLEY: Hey guys.

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: Shirley!

(RICKY drops LOUIS to the floor.)

SHIRLEY: How goes it over here? Everything okay?

RICKY: Everything is great!

LOUIS: Ricky needs mental help.

RICKY: Hah Hah! Louis!

SHIRLEY: Sounds like you guys are having a great time.

RICKY: Oh, beyond belief, Shirley!

LOUIS: Unbelievable fun.

SHIRLEY: How's the count coming along?

RICKY: Swimmably!

LOUIS: Slow and terrible.

SHIRLEY: Oh. Closing in on that record, though?

RICKY: You betcha!

SHIRLEY: That's good news, at least! And speaking of news, Sir asked me—

RICKY: You look great today, Shirley, you know that?

(A moment. LOUIS chuckles.)

SHIRLEY: Thanks.

RICKY: I mean, really, beautiful as the sky in the early morning rain.

SHIRLEY: Thanks? Anyway, Sir told me to—

RICKY: Well, I guess that actually doesn't make much sense, really, does it.

SHIRLEY: What.

RICKY: When it rains in the morning—well, *if* it rains in the morning which, well-- there aren't really any mornings here anyway, right Louis?

LOUIS: Please stop.

RICKY: But when it rains, you can't even see the sky, really.

SHIRLEY: What are you talking about?

RICKY: The sky when it rains. You can't see it.

SHIRLEY: Can't see what?

RICKY: Because it's all gray. The sky is gray, so-- well, I guess you can still see it, it's just gray...

LOUIS: It's just gray.

RICKY: So it's still totally visible, just... somewhat hard to see.

(Silence. LOUIS erupts in laughter and rolls around on the floor.)

LOUIS: Ohhh... Oh, man.

SHIRLEY: Having a good time, Louis?

LOUIS: Now I am. Wow.

RICKY: You look great is what I meant to say, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: I got that.

LOUIS: It's just gray!

RICKY: Shut up, Louis. You, uh, said something about news, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: Yes. Sir has big news for you guys. Important stuff, really.

LOUIS: Good news?

SHIRLEY: Surely!

LOUIS: Ha. Classic.

RICKY: Ha Ha Ha! Her name is Shirley, too, Louis. Get it? Ha Ha! ... Ahem. Boy, those ducks sure are fallin' today, huh?

(A moment.)

LOUIS: What's the news, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: Sir is coming by later to check in with y'all.

LOUIS: Oh, sweet!

RICKY: Wonderful!

LOUIS: What's the special occasion?

SHIRLEY: I let him know you guys might break the record again. He wants to come by and see for himself.

LOUIS: Thanks for letting him know.

SHIRLEY: No problem. Exciting stuff! Can you help me out real quick, Louis?

LOUIS: Sure.

RICKY: I can help you out real quick, Shirley. Let's give Louis a break.

(LOUIS and SHIRLEY transfer the souls into the wheelbarrow.)

SHIRLEY: Should do it. Thanks, Louis.

LOUIS: Any time.

RICKY: No problem, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: Well, I'd best be heading back now. Souls can't recycle themselves, you know!

LOUIS: Surely can't! Have a safe trip back, my friend.

SHIRLEY: Will do! Hasta la vista, y'all.

LOUIS: Later on!

RICKY: Bye...

(SHIRLEY begins to exit.)

Hey, uh, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: Hm?

RICKY: You've been to the office, right?

SHIRLEY: I work there.

RICKY: Right. Um, what, what's it like over there?

SHIRLEY: It's sort of like an office.

RICKY: Right.

SHIRLEY: Very office-like in structure. Pretty *official*. Which reminds me. Good luck with that interview, Louis.

LOUIS: Thanks.

RICKY: What.

SHIRLEY: Hope you get it. And hey, you know what they say...

(SHIRLEY exits with her wheelbarrow. Silence as RICKY ponders things.)

LOUIS: A true enigma she is, huh?

(LOUIS tries to whistle the tension away. RICKY slowly, deliberately walks across the stage, thinking very hard, until he is inches from LOUIS' face.)

RICKY: What was she talking about just now?

LOUIS: I don't know. She never really says, does she?

RICKY: No, I mean— she said-- you have an interview, Louis?

LOUIS: Oh yeah, maybe something like that—hey man, you really blew it this time, didn't you?

(LOUIS splashes his face with water.)

RICKY: What's the interview for?

LOUIS: What interview?

RICKY: The interview.

LOUIS: My inner views?

RICKY: The *interview*. The one Shirley mentioned just now.

LOUIS: Who?

RICKY: Shirley.

LOUIS: I don't know who that is.

RICKY: What's the interview for, Louis?!

LOUIS: Oh, that. It's just an interview.

RICKY: Uh-huh.

LOUIS: Just checking in, you know the drill.

RICKY: Checking in and...?

LOUIS: We don't need to talk about this right now, Ricky!

(RICKY drags LOUIS across the stage.)

RICKY: We definitely need to talk about this right now.

LOUIS: You're not gonna be happy. I want you to be happy.

RICKY: Too late. You might as well make it worse.

LOUIS: I'd rather not.

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: Ricky.

RICKY: Tell me right now. I'm your partner. I deserve to know.

LOUIS: Alright, alright... I'm going up for promotion, Ricky.

(LOUIS cups his hand over his mouth. A moment.)

RICKY: Promotion?

LOUIS: Yes, Ricky. I'm going up for a spot at--

RICKY: They have *promotions*?!

LOUIS: Yes, they do. And, I think I'm a shoo-in to get it, too.

RICKY: *(Aside.)* Promotion...

LOUIS: You gotta understand why I'm doing this, okay? I've been thinking about this for... forever, seemingly. Sir and I have had a dialogue over the past lifetime or so, and... he told me that he's *really proud* of me, Ricky.

RICKY: Did he now?

LOUIS: He said I'm one step closer to my family, too. He remembers! You know how much that means to me?

RICKY: I thought I did.

LOUIS: If I get this promotion, I'll finally have a family.

RICKY: Yeah, whenever Sir decides to *give* them to you.

(A duck plummets to the ground. RICKY just glares at LOUIS.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty-five, Ricky... Six-sixty-five, Ricky! Are you...

(LOUIS mimics RICKY's usual saying.)

Six-sixty-five!

(Silence. LOUIS marks the pad.)

Six-sixty-five. Got it...

(Silence.)

Oh, come on, Ricky! I'm sorry, okay? I don't know what else to say.

RICKY: I got nothing to say to you.

LOUIS: Well, say that at least.

RICKY: I just did.

LOUIS: There's no need to be ridiculous about this. I come clean with you—

RICKY: Wha--

LOUIS: And you got nothing to say in return!

RICKY: Come clean?! You can't come clean with dirty words, boy!

LOUIS: How is going up for promotion dirty? You love this job, right? I love this job, too. So much so, that I'm gonna be doing it at a higher level, you see?

RICKY: Higher level—You can't get no higher than this, Lou!

LOUIS: Sir says otherwise.

RICKY: The man in the hat can say whatever he pleases. Doesn't affect me. Shouldn't affect you, either.

LOUIS: He gave us the job. It surely does affect you!

RICKY: He *gave* it to us, and *we* did something with it. Something beautiful. And now...

(RICKY throws the duck at LOUIS, who catches it.)

It's not beautiful.

LOUIS: Hey, be careful with the souls, man!

RICKY: It's ugly!

LOUIS: Ricky...

RICKY: And filled with deceit! *Lies!* You've struck a deal with the devil.

LOUIS: Best deal I've ever made. There are other deals out there, too. So maybe you can—

RICKY: I don't want any deal besides the one I've been dealt. I would die for this job-- I *did* die for this job. I love this deal, but only *this* deal, you understand that?

(A duck plummets to the ground.)

Six-sixty-six.

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

LOUIS: Six-sixty-six. Got it...

RICKY: *(Fiendishly.)* Oh... we're tied with the record now, Louis...

LOUIS: *(Warning.)* Ricky.

RICKY: It's here. Toss me those souls right now.

LOUIS: Can you please hear me out.

RICKY: Now!

(LOUIS tosses the ducks to RICKY, who kisses them and puts them in the soul bucket.)

RICKY: *(Salivating.)* We're tied...

LOUIS: You don't even care about what I have to say.

RICKY: I need *you* to understand that Sir wants me to go for this promotion, Ricky. Says I'll be a good fit up there.

RICKY: Up where? Where are you even getting promoted to?

LOUIS: ... The office.

(RICKY chuckles with pity.)

Listen.

RICKY: The office?!

LOUIS: I, I, I--

RICKY: There's no office, Lou!

LOUIS: I have people to support!

RICKY: People to *betray* is more like it! I hope you have fun filing away the souls that couldn't make it anywhere after death, because nobody was on the dock working to send 'em away!

LOUIS: Forget the souls! Ricky, there might be plenty of openings at the office, where nobody has a soul. Sir told me they leave their souls at the door.

(A moment.)

RICKY: I've just had an epiphany, Louis. I found the difference between you and me. It's clear cut. Can't believe I never noticed. *I never leave this place. Never. Physically, mentally, all that. But you? Your mind always wonders off, Louis. I eat here.*

LOUIS: We don't eat.

RICKY: I sleep here.

LOUIS: We don't sleep, either!

RICKY: I rest my eyes, Louis! And when I wake up, sometimes I'm laying on the buckets, sometimes I'm lying on the concrete. But I'm always here, and glad to be. You can see it in my eyes. But you've got this discontentment in yours, always dreaming of what you don't have. The man in the hat has plagued your dreams with lies. He's barely ever here, Louis! And when he is, all he says are these two things: one, "wow" and two, "good job". Hollow, meaningless words! It's all circles, Louis.

LOUIS: I'm sorry you feel that way, Ricky. And I'm sorry you want the dock to be more than an assembly of wood. You embellish it with your broken records, and your philosophies... It's a distraction.

RICKY: It's a home.

LOUIS: But nobody stays home forever, Ricky... Look up to the sky. The ducks up there. Where do you think their home is? It sure as hell isn't in the clouds. They left their homes lifetimes ago, and I think we should take note of that... Listen, after all I've given, I've earned the right to take my liberties, and make my decisions. And I've made my decision, Ricky. So just help me with the dock for now, please.

(A moment.)

Ricky, if Sir comes by, he'll--

RICKY: I'll kill him!

LOUIS: You will not!

RICKY: And I'll kill you too! Unless you kill me first, seeing as you're elite now! You don't need me.

LOUIS: That's not true. Right now I need you for the dock.

RICKY: The dock's *done*, Lou! It's been finished for eternities.

LOUIS: The dock is never finished.

RICKY: Why are you leaving it, then, buddy?

(RICKY screams to the sky.)

Where is it? Where is it?!

LOUIS: Where is what.

RICKY: The last soul! The *record-breaking* soul! ... It needs to drop! Break this record and break it again!

LOUIS: What does it matter.

RICKY: It's all that's left, Louis-boy! The dock is finished, you're abandoning the cause. This matters more than anything else right now!

LOUIS: More than the dock?

RICKY: Yes.

(A moment. LOUIS scoffs.)

What, Benedict Arnold, too much betrayal for you for one day?

LOUIS: And here I was thinking this was gonna be a beautiful sendoff. Why am I not surprised?

RICKY: Well if it helps you out, I'm very surprised! I'm surprised at the dagger in my lumbar with you and Sir's names etched into the handle!

(SIR enters with a clipboard, cigar, and interesting hat.)

SIR: Hey hey hey.

RICKY: Speak of the devil!

SIR: Ricky! Louis! My boys.

LOUIS: Hello, Sir. Great to see you.

SIR: It always is, isn't it?... Wow.

RICKY: There's one.

SIR: Good job.

RICKY: There's two. See, Louis?

(RICKY and LOUIS slap each other around while SIR ponders his success.)

SIR: The dock is looking great. Everything is level, everything is clean...

(LOUIS fixes SIR's hat and hair.)

LOUIS: We really have been working hard, you know, really dedicating ourselves, and we wanted to show you the, um, extent of our dedication, Sir.

SIR: Shirley said a whole lotta ducks are falling today. Is that true?

LOUIS: Sure is.

SIR: You think it's, uh, *record-breaking*?

LOUIS: We're tied with the record as we speak, Sir.

SIR: Well isn't that exciting? You're right there! I can finally have another record attached to my name.

RICKY: Excuse me?

SIR: Ricky!

RICKY: Hi.

SIR: How's it going?

RICKY: (*Sour.*) Oh, you know... ducks and docks. Got all my ducks in a row!

SIR: ... Right. *Lou*, how are *you*? Oh!

(*SIR cracks himself up.*)

That's a rhyme right there. "Lou, you"! Tell me you've heard that one before, Louis! Tell me!

LOUIS: Never Sir, never.

SIR: Then you gotta write it down! Come on!

LOUIS: Okay.

SIR: "Lou, you". Wow, that is *gold*! Wow.

(*LOUIS marks the pad.*)

LOUIS: "Lou, you". Got it.

SIR: You know, sometimes I wonder if I got into the wrong business.

RICKY: That's exactly what I was thinking.

SIR: The comedy circuit could've been all mine, don't you think, Ricky?

RICKY: Nothing can escape you, Sir.

SIR: Can't you just see my name in the limelight, Louis?

LOUIS: It's all I see when I close my eyes.

SIR: Good. That's how I like it. I should be one of the few things that either of you ever think about.

LOUIS: Anyway, to answer your question, I'm doing good, Sir. The work we did today... beyond belief.

SIR: What'd you do?

LOUIS: We, uh, fixed the dock...

SIR: Mhm.

LOUIS: And then we, uh, well...

SIR: You sure do a great job, Lou. You know that?

LOUIS: Uh, thank you, Sir. It's been—

SIR: You do know that, don't you?

LOUIS: Uh, yes, Sir. I do.

SIR: I want to make sure all of my employees know that. You do a great job! You should be proud!

LOUIS: I'm very proud, Sir.

RICKY: What.

SIR: That's great! Pride is like a, like a good thing...

(SIR nonverbally tells LOUIS to write this down.)

LOUIS: Good thing...

SIR: That happens to good people...

LOUIS: To good people...

SIR: When they do good things.

LOUIS: When they do good things. Got it!

RICKY: Wow. You're a real wordsmith, Sir.

SIR: I know! Anyway, I'm not sure if you've heard, but some changes are upon us in light of the new office space. After moving some things around, I've freed up enough space for *one* more worker to join me at the office.

LOUIS: That's great!

SIR: Right?

LOUIS: You, you said only *one*, though?

SIR: That's right! Because, remember what they say...

(SIR nonverbally tells LOUIS to write this down.)

He who trims the *flock*...

LOUIS: He who trims the flock...

SIR: Maintains the *dock*!

LOUIS: Maintains the dock. Got it.

RICKY: Who says that?

SIR: Me! I'm just absolutely on fire tonight!

RICKY: I wish you were on fire.

SIR: Aren't I just on fire, Louis?

LOUIS: Absolutely on fire, Sir.

SIR: Except *I'm* not on fire!

LOUIS: Right...?

SIR: Because *you're* both fired. I'm taking Shirley up the office.

(A moment. LOUIS splashes his face with water. RICKY takes a duck out of the soul bucket and slowly nitpicks it.)

Kidding! I'm not on fire because we're on a dock surrounded by *water*! How could I be on fire when—you see?

(LOUIS collapses.)

Ahem. Ricky, you're awful quiet today.

RICKY: Thanks.

SIR: Yeah. Anyway, Louis, I know you're a busy man doing busy things, but when you find a stopping point, come talk to me. I got, uh, something for you. Some *information*.

LOUIS: Will do, Sir... Hey, uh, Ricky?

RICKY: Go talk to him now.

LOUIS: Really?

RICKY: We've been at a stopping point all day. Go. And give me your pad and pen, too.

LOUIS: Why?

RICKY: "Why?" What if another duck falls and we break the record?

LOUIS: I'll literally see it happen, Ricky.

RICKY: Just give it here. Not like you're gonna need it anytime soon.

LOUIS: What is this, Ricky? Some, some kinda attempt to, to, to demoralize me? *Dehumanize* me?

RICKY: No. That's actually the one thing you don't need my help with.

LOUIS: Whatever, Ricky. Take it.

(LOUIS gives RICKY the pen and pad.)

Excuse me, Sir? I can talk to you now, if that works.

SIR: Perfectly. Come on over here.

(RICKY can still clearly hear them.)

I just wanted to give you some special thanks for all that you've done recently. I've been nothing but impressed with your dedication to the craft, to the dock, and obviously to me during these past few lifetimes.

LOUIS: I appreciate that, Sir, but... you know, it isn't *just* me out here, though...

SIR: Right.

LOUIS: Ricky... I mean, he motivates me more than—

SIR: I don't think you understand, Louis. I'm really, really, really, really, really impressed with *you*. So much so, I want to do something extra special for you. Do you remember that little promotion we talked about?

LOUIS: I do.

SIR: Well... it's all yours, buddy!

LOUIS: Really?!

SIR: Yes, Louis! I've come to realize that you're the perfect fit.

LOUIS: Oh, Sir! I can't even begin to-- Really? You're serious?

SIR: One-hundred-percent, real-deal serious.

LOUIS: This is just—this is surreal, Sir.

SIR: Oh, Louis, you deserve it. Who can really tell how many years it's been since you came falling from the sky, ready to work for me?

LOUIS: Right... um... wow...

SIR: What is it?

LOUIS: Nothing... just-- what about Ricky, sir?

SIR: Ricky?

RICKY: Hello!

SIR: What about him?

LOUIS: He's been here as long as I have. He's put in the same amount of work, if not more. And he's, you know...

(They look to RICKY, who is still slowly nitpicking a duck.)

SIR: I see what you mean.

LOUIS: Don't you think he deserves something, too?

SIR: ... Listen, Louis.

LOUIS: Okay.

SIR: Here's the thing about *my* job.

LOUIS: Oh no.

SIR: *You* don't tell *me* how to do my job.

LOUIS: Oh no.

SIR: That's my job.

LOUIS: Right. Sir, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean—

SIR: And, ah, Ricky. He just doesn't *show up* like you do, you know?

LOUIS: All he does is show up, Sir.

SIR: Exactly! There's no light in his fire.

LOUIS: I meant he has nothing else, Sir.

SIR: I completely agree.

LOUIS: And it would probably mean the world to him if--

SIR: I'm glad we see eye to eye on this one.

LOUIS: Sir...

SIR: Here, I'll give you the specifics come Monday, but for now... here's your new hat.

(SIR pulls out a pinwheel hat from underneath his hat and gives it to LOUIS.)

LOUIS: *(In awe.)* Oh, Sir...

SIR: Beautiful, right?

LOUIS: Beyond words. I don't know what to say.

SIR: Don't say anything! Just wear it with pride!

(LOUIS puts on the hat and gives it a spin. SIR produces a check.)

And here's your check, too. Man, I'd love to be you today, Louis! You got the best of both worlds right there. Hats and money!

LOUIS: Yes, Sir. I'm--

SIR: Hats and money!

LOUIS: Yes, Sir. Thank you.

SIR: Say it with me!

LOUIS: Uh...

SIR: One, two, three!

LOUIS / SIR TOGETHER: Hats and money!

RICKY: Yeah!

SIR: Man, I love Fridays! Don't you?

LOUIS: I love all my days here, Sir.

SIR: Okay, enough with the Sir thing. You're one of *us* now, Louis.

LOUIS: Us?

SIR: Leave the formalities behind, okay?

LOUIS: What should I call you, then?

SIR: God works... Say, could you give Ricky his check, too, Lou? He's so far away, I don't know if I can reach him.

LOUIS: Sure thing. Uh, I'm sorry, did you say God?

SIR: Great things await you, Louis. I hope you know that. When Monday comes, your death will change forever. I'm so proud of you. You're one step closer to that family I promised you.

LOUIS: One step closer?

SIR: Yep!

LOUIS: I thought if I got the job, then--

SIR: You're making progress. Let me tell you, Louis, beings in this land are *scarce*, okay? It was hard to find a whole family for you. But I did it, because you're my favorite. But, because of the effort it took, you're gonna have to wait just a bit longer, and really, really, really, really, really work for it. Is that okay?

LOUIS: Well--

SIR: Of course it's okay! You serve your ends, I serve mine, like always!

LOUIS: But how long will it be before I see them?

SIR: Sure is getting late. Think I'd better go. Let me know if you break the record, or don't. Who really cares, you know? They're dead ducks.

RICKY: I care!

LOUIS: Sir? Or, uh, God, or whatever--

RICKY: I care about everything the dock has done for me.

SIR: Good.

RICKY: But I don't care about liars.

SIR: Excuse me. You know better than that, Ricky. I've never told a lie.

RICKY: Answer me this, then.

SIR: I'll answer any questions.

RICKY: Where did we come from, Sir?

LOUIS: Also, where is my family?

SIR: Okay, maybe not *those* questions, but any others I'd be happy to answer. Let's see here...

RICKY: You're worthless.

SIR: "Worthless". *I Am the Dock*, Ricky. You hear that? I brought you here, and that's all you need to understand. And if you don't understand, then re-familiarize yourself with the rules that you agreed to.

RICKY: I don't recall agreeing to any-- What if I have my own rules?

SIR: You can either shove 'em or take 'em elsewhere.

LOUIS: Sir?

SIR: Hold on, Louis. I'm busy.

RICKY: "I Am The Dock." Shut up.

SIR: Excuse me?

RICKY: This is our dock. Me and Lou's. We built it. We maintained it. We named it the best name of all time, and-- You heard the story behind the name, Sir?

SIR: Of course I've heard.

RICKY: We'd sit on the dock, right, and we'd always see ducks fall from the sky.

SIR: I just said I'd heard it.

RICKY: It was every day, man. They'd fall, and when they hit the ground, sometimes, and only sometimes, they'd land in such a way, that it looked like they were sitting down on the dock with us, like sitting ducks! So--

SIR: The sitting dock, yeahyeahyeah, I perfectly understand the mediocre pun, Ricky, that's not my concern. My concern is your intolerable attitude regarding my authority here.

RICKY: You have no authority here!

SIR: I gave you the dock!

RICKY: You're a doofus. Show me your clipboard.

SIR: Excuse me?

RICKY: I said, "You're a doofus." and "Show me your clipboard."

SIR: That is *very* classified information, Ricky. You--

(RICKY takes the clipboard from SIR.)

RICKY: It's blank, you doofus!

SIR: I haven't started yet.

RICKY: Started what?

SIR: My work.

RICKY: What do you even do all day? Just walk around in circles pretending to write words down? Or do you just sit on your behind, and—

SIR: That's your job, actually.

RICKY: How have you not started work yet? It's five-o'clock.

SIR: It's always five-o'clock!

RICKY: What.

LOUIS: I have a question.

SIR: Time does not apply here, so I made it five-o'clock all the time! It makes the work more than just work. It becomes a passion, Ricky, a home. You asked where you came from earlier. Do you want me to let you guys in on a little secret? Let me tell you this. I have not a single clue as to where you came from, why you came from where you came from, or, really, what you are. Finding that out is the responsibility of the individual. Look what I did. I set up a beautiful tradition, you see? I gave you a place. I gave you your names. And you chose to accept that. You could've walked right past me, found some workers of your own, and became a Sir in your own right, but you stayed here! So... why not stay a bit longer, huh? Why not stay *forever* and become something great, just like Louis here. Right, Louis?

LOUIS: Right, Sir.

RICKY: What?!

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: I thought you were on my side.

LOUIS: I'm on nobody's side besides my own, man, and I'm honestly not even sure about that... Ugh...

RICKY: Louis...

LOUIS: I don't know what to *think*!

SIR: You overwhelmed him, Ricky.

RICKY: No I didn't. I'm trying to make sense of it all!

SIR: Yeah, don't do that! It's terrible for mental health.

LOUIS: Ugh...

(LOUIS collapses.)

RICKY: Are you killing him?

LOUIS: Nothing makes sense!

SIR: Isn't it great?

LOUIS: No!

RICKY: Louis. Talk to me, buddy.

SIR: Louis, if this is a matter of taking sides, it's clear--

RICKY: Let him make a decision of his own!

SIR: All the important decisions have already been made, Ricky. By me! Louis, get it all out, and then tell Ricky here about the big changes coming real soon. And when you tell him, please remember that he'd take my spot at the drop of a hat, literally. He's waiting in line to become something more than what he is.

RICKY: That's not true at all.

LOUIS: Ugh...

RICKY: You know, I had like, *nine* epiphanies today, and—

LOUIS: Ugh...

RICKY: Okay, like *eight* epiphanies, there was a revelation at some point, but each one led to a, a, a *huge* epiphany that I had just now.

SIR: You had an epiphany just now?

RICKY: Yes, I did.

SIR: While you were yappin' away you had an epiphany?

RICKY: Yappin' away is epiphanous. I think Aristotle said that.

SIR: Who?

RICKY: You don't know the point of any of this any better than we do.

SIR: ... I know the point perfectly well.

RICKY / LOUIS TOGETHER: What is it?

SIR: It's, um... the little things.

RICKY: What.

SIR: Or something like that-- How are you feeling, Louis? You okay?

LOUIS: Ugh...

SIR: Good! I need you healthy. And working. Nobody else can do it like you can... Okay, now that everything is sorted, I'm gonna head outta here.

RICKY: No, no. You have more to explain.

SIR: There's nothing else to explain. Right, Louis?

LOUIS: Right...

RICKY: Louis, it's time to wake up, okay? It's time to wake up and have some epiphanies of your own.

LOUIS: That's more your style.

RICKY: You're waiting for things that will never come. Your non-existent family that you love so much, they might as well be on the end of a stick, dangling in front of your nose! It's Sir's excuse to screw you over!

SIR: Just because you don't believe in ambition doesn't mean others can't try to succeed, Ricky.

RICKY: Succeed in what?

SIR: Life, dummy.

RICKY: This isn't life, dummy!

SIR: It sure is close, though, isn't it? This might not be an ordinary human life, but we are not human, are we? I told you that you were more, Ricky, so do more with your life!

RICKY: How.

SIR: I don't know! Apparently me dictating other people's success is a crime against humanity. If you want a good life, or good death, find it for yourself. In fact... Louis, first order of business for you as a promoted worker person.

LOUIS: Oh no.

SIR: Thank Ricky for his troubles.

LOUIS: Oh no.

SIR: Thank him.

LOUIS: ... Thank you for your troubles, Ricky.

SIR: Now tell him he's fired.

LOUIS: But I can't do that!

SIR: Tell him.

LOUIS: Um... Ricky...

RICKY: Louis-boy. Please.

LOUIS: You're fired.

(Silence.)

SIR: So sorry we couldn't work it out, Ricky! Oh well! Gather your things, which, granted, doesn't amount to much, and, you know, thank you. Thank you for elevating Louis here to the standard of my other, more capable workers. And for that, I--

RICKY: Other workers?

SIR: Yes.

LOUIS: Here we go.

RICKY: There are no other workers here! Besides you two! And one of you doesn't even work, just walks around staring at blank paper talking about underwater construction nonsense!

SIR: Excuse me?

RICKY: Underwater construction—You know, I'm about to pick up one of these buckets and show the truth.

SIR: You don't want to do that, Ricky!

RICKY: The real truth! I got nothing to lose.

SIR: Think of the chemicals in your brain!

LOUIS: Listen to him, Ricky!

SIR: Don't do it! It'll kill ya!

(RICKY picks up one of the buckets to reveal the ground.)

RICKY: Concrete.

LOUIS: Concrete...

SIR: "Concrete." That is much more than concrete, Ricky. That is—

RICKY: Dry concrete.

SIR: It's not! There's gotta be a couple drops of water under there.

(RICKY dumps the bucket of water on SIR. A moment. SIR spits some water out. A moment.)

SIR: ... Ricky?

RICKY: Hm.

SIR: This is very wet.

RICKY: Mhm.

SIR: I am dripping because of the wetness.

RICKY: Yeah. I honestly thought you'd be melting by now, so.

SIR: You're *very* fi—god, it's like getting murdered by a shower!

LOUIS: Do you need a towel?

RICKY: Don't get him a towel.

LOUIS: At least you're still on fire, Sir, right? No matter how wet you are, you'll always--

SIR: You're *very* fired now, Ricky. Before you were just fired, but now... *very* fired.

RICKY: Okay.

SIR: I hope the next falling duck knocks you unconscious... Louis?

LOUIS: Yes, Sir?

SIR: I'll see you Monday, right?

LOUIS: ... Yes, you will.

SIR: Good! And, hey, like I said. One. Step. Closer.

LOUIS: Right...

SIR: And uh, Ricky... I definitely *won't* be seeing you Monday.

(SIR exits. Silence.)

LOUIS: Ricky... I'm so sorry, okay? I, uh... I have your check.

RICKY: *You're* giving me my check?

LOUIS: Yeah. Well... yeah. Sir told me--

RICKY: You get a stupid hat and think you can give me my check?

LOUIS: It's a new responsibility of mine. I don't know if you heard, but--

RICKY: You don't know if I heard?

LOUIS: Sir. He, uhm, sort of--

RICKY: I was sitting right here!

LOUIS: I know...

RICKY: I mean, actually, I'm surprised I caught wind of it. I mean, you guys took *two whole steps* over there!

LOUIS: This is my big break, Ricky! Can't you just—I'm one step closer to my hopes and dreams!

RICKY: Hopes and dreams are for the *living*, Louis! All we have are nightmares and empty promises.

LOUIS: Not all of them are empty, Ricky... You can accept that now, and we can have our last few moments in peace, like the ducks and the gods intended, or we can both just wonder off into the void. Up to you.

(A moment.)

RICKY: Come sit with me.

(They sit and look to the sky in silence. A duck plummets to the ground.)

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: Oh. My. God.

(They look at each other.)

Six-sixty-seven! Woo-hoo!

RICKY: Louis, we broke the record!

LOUIS: Yes we did!

RICKY: We beat the devil out of it!

(LOUIS pats himself down.)

LOUIS: Where's my pad?

RICKY: I have it. Here.

(RICKY gives LOUIS the pad.)

LOUIS: Thanks.

(LOUIS marks the pad.)

Six-sixty-seven. Got it. Wow, Ricky...

RICKY: I can't believe it...

LOUIS: We did it...

RICKY: I really can't... Isn't this something, huh?

(Silence. RICKY tosses the duck in the soul bucket. The enthusiasm fades. SHIRLEY enters with her wheelbarrow.)

SHIRLEY: Hey guys.

RICKY / LOUIS TOGETHER: Shirley!

SHIRLEY: How goes it over here?

RICKY: Great!

LOUIS: Ricky got fired.

RICKY: Wha-

SHIRLEY: I heard.

RICKY: You heard?

SHIRLEY: Word travels fast around here. Sorry to hear about that, Ricky.

RICKY: It's alright.

SHIRLEY: Better things in store, right?

RICKY: I have no idea.

SHIRLEY: What's next?

RICKY: Uh...

LOUIS: He's gonna walk in that direction over there.

RICKY: Am I?

LOUIS: Yeah. Maybe you'll find something.

SHIRLEY: Maybe you'll find another dock somewhere, huh?

RICKY: I hope not, actually-- Hey, they don't happen to be hiring in transportation services, do they?

SHIRLEY: Nope. Sorry. Strictly a one woman job.

RICKY: Damn.

SHIRLEY: Congratulations, by the way, Louis! Proud of you.

LOUIS: Thanks.

SHIRLEY: You're gonna kill it at the office! And that is a really cool hat.

LOUIS: You think so? I wasn't really sure what to think of it at first, but I think I'm warming up to it.

SHIRLEY: Suits you real well.

RICKY: Hey, we, uh, broke the record, Shirley! Can you believe that?

SHIRLEY: Really?

RICKY: Yup. Happened just now.

SHIRLEY: Wow. I didn't hear about that!

RICKY: New record holders right here, baby!

SHIRLEY: That's great. Didn't you guys hold the record already, though?

RICKY: Yup!

SHIRLEY: Wow. That's some real dedication...

(A moment.)

Man, this sure is bittersweet. This here won't be much of a dock anymore once you guys head on out.

RICKY: What makes you say that?

SHIRLEY: There won't be anyone to work on it, or think it into existence, you know?

RICKY: You'll be here.

SHIRLEY: From time to time, yeah, but I won't have anyone to check up on.

LOUIS: Sir will find others.

RICKY: He better not.

LOUIS: What, don't you want our legacy to carry on?

RICKY: Yeah, but I'd prefer if we were the ones carrying it.

SHIRLEY: Well, who knows what Sir has in store?

RICKY: I think I have a pretty good idea.

SHIRLEY: Can you help me out real quick, Ricky?

RICKY: Me?

SHIRLEY: Yeah. Your name is Ricky, right?

RICKY: Yeah, yeah. I think so.

SHIRLEY: Alright...

(RICKY transfers the souls into the wheelbarrow.)

Thanks, Ricky.

RICKY: No problem.

(A moment.)

SHIRLEY: Well, guys... I suppose this is it for a little while.

LOUIS: Ricky has a question for you before you go.

SHIRLEY: Does he now?

LOUIS: Surely does.

RICKY: Yeah, he, uh, totally, surely does. Uh... ahem. What is that they say, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: ... Pardon?

RICKY: You know, the—"You know what they say..." thing that you always say. What do they say, really?

SHIRLEY: You *know* what they say. Why would I say it if you already know it?

RICKY: Oh... What?—Nevermind. That actually wasn't the question, Shirley, uh. The question is... what are you up to later?

(A moment. SHIRLEY and LOUIS chuckle.)

What?

LOUIS: *That* was your question, Ricky?

RICKY: Maybe. What's the big deal?

LOUIS: Nothing, apparently!

SHIRLEY: Ricky, I'll be doing later what I've done for lifetimes. Back and forth, here and there, to and fro. You know how it is.

RICKY: Right. Well, my original plan was to ask if I could take you somewhere.

SHIRLEY: Well, that's awful vague, isn't it?

RICKY: But, seeing as I'm feeling the urge to leave, I'm gonna walk in that direction over there, for the rest of forever, or however long it takes me to find it.

SHIRLEY: Find what?

RICKY: And some company would be really nice, I think, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: Oh...

RICKY: Would you agree with that?

SHIRLEY: I mean, I'm sure some company would be nice for you to have.

RICKY: Exactly!

SHIRLEY: But it can't be me.

RICKY: What. Oh, come on, Shirley. I'm gone. Louis' gone. Sir might as well be gone. You'll be going back and forth for no reason!

SHIRLEY: The souls need me, Ricky. I have to--

RICKY: Nobody will be here to count them for you, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: I can do it by myself. Your job is actually really easy.

RICKY: Don't say that. Nobody's ever done it besides us.

SHIRLEY: 'Cause nobody wanted to.

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: Oh.

SHIRLEY: So I'll fill in until Sir can find others who are willing to commit full-time, then it's back to transportation for me.

RICKY: How about you transport yourself, with me, instead?

SHIRLEY: No.

RICKY: We can rekindle what we had for that one lifetime!

SHIRLEY: It was two weeks.

RICKY: Yes! Eternity awaits! What do you say?

SHIRLEY: I'm good.

(A moment.)

Sorry. I can't go, but who knows what you'll find on your journey.

RICKY: *(Pouty.)* Probably nothin'.

SHIRLEY: Or *who*.

RICKY: Probably nobody.

SHIRLEY: Come on, Ricky. Louis' got a whole family waiting for him, Sir gathered up all his workers... You won't come up empty-handed. Chin up, okay?

LOUIS: Yeah, chin up, Ricky.

RICKY: Chin up...

SHIRLEY: Okay... I gotta head back to the office, y'all. See you there, Louis. And Ricky, well... Hasta la vista, my friends!

LOUIS: Bye Shirley!

RICKY: See ya...

SHIRLEY: And hey, you know what they say... "What surely is, surely will be"...

(SHIRLEY exits with her wheelbarrow.)

RICKY: *(Contemplatively.)* Surely will be...

LOUIS: Surely will.

RICKY: Surely...

LOUIS: Well, I can't even say you blew it this time, Ricky.

RICKY: Nope.

LOUIS: 'Cause you did exactly what you set out to do.

RICKY: Yup.

LOUIS: But you fell flat on your face.

RICKY: Pain.

LOUIS: And I mean *flat* on your face. But hey, she answered you at least! That's something, right?... Right?

RICKY: Right...

LOUIS: What is it?

RICKY: Louis.

LOUIS: Ricky.

RICKY: I'm not letting this thing die unless I kill it.

LOUIS: What.

RICKY: We're gonna take the dock apart, Louis, me and you.

LOUIS: What?!

RICKY: So nobody else can! Let's take it apart.

LOUIS: Are you out of your mind?!

RICKY: Come on, in about two minutes, I'm gonna be aimlessly walking that way, and you're going up to the office!

LOUIS: Not till Monday I'm not.

RICKY: I ain't waiting, Louis. This is it, man.

LOUIS: But--

RICKY: We're never gonna see it again. Don't you understand that?

LOUIS: What about our memories? It's been here forever. *We've* been here forever!

RICKY: We can end forever right now, too. One by one, piece by piece. Come on!

LOUIS: It's our baby, Ricky.

RICKY: I know, Louis-boy, and we are the best to ever take care of it. I'd prefer to be the only ones to as well.

LOUIS: But, all those *years*...

RICKY: In the past, Lou. Look to the future, like you said. We did everything we could, and--

LOUIS: (*Emotional.*) Oh, Jesus...

RICKY: Listen. Listen, buddy.

LOUIS: So many years!

RICKY: Don't be a nervous wreck about it, okay?

LOUIS: You're the nervous wreck, Ricky!

RICKY: Okay. We're two nervous wrecks, Louis. So let's nervous wreck this dock. When we're done, I'll take a piece, you'll take a piece. Something to remember it by.

LOUIS: I'm not carrying around a piece of wood for the rest of my death, Ricky.

RICKY: You can put it somewhere nice.

LOUIS: No.

RICKY: Maybe on a shelf somewhere.

LOUIS: No!

RICKY: Okay! Let's just leave it here in pieces then. We can start with today's addition, and then move on from there... Should we, uh, take one last look or somethin', Louis?

LOUIS: I've been taking my last look for eternities, Ricky.

(They look at the dock.)

RICKY: What time you got over there?

(LOUIS checks his imaginary watch.)

LOUIS: Five on the dot!

RICKY: Sounds about right... You ready?

LOUIS: I guess.

RICKY: Let's do it.

(They stand on opposite sides of the chair. They play a game of rock, paper, scissors. LOUIS wins and happily sits in the chair. RICKY gets ready to push the chair offstage.)

All right. Easy, Lou. Easy.

LOUIS: I'm easy, I'm easy. Ready?

RICKY: Born ready.

LOUIS: All right.

RICKY: Here we go.

LOUIS / RICKY TOGETHER: One... Two... Three!

(RICKY easily pushes the chair offstage while he and LOUIS make muted, indecipherable conversation. Blackout. A moment. Lights up on the now empty dock. SHIRLEY enters with her wheelbarrow. A moment. Two ducks plummet to the ground. SHIRLEY stores the ducks away and exits. "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More" by Mance Lipscomb is heard as the lights fade. Blackout.)

END

COSTUME NOTES

Each character's face is painted with silent film style makeup. A clownish white, dark eyeshadow and eyeliner, and bright red lips.

LOUIS wears a perfectly fitted blue suit.

RICKY wears a baggy, oversized black suit.

SHIRLEY wears a 50's-inspired polka dot dress.

SIR wears a fitted black suit with an interesting hat.

PROPERTY LIST

"The Sitting Dock" wooden sign

The soul bucket

A wheelbarrow

Ducks

Buckets

Water

Pen

Pad

Bread

Check

Clipboard

An interesting hat

A pinwheel hat

THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS:

Sam Shepard's hopelessly bleak world atmospheres inspired me to put this piece on a dock in the middle of nowhere.

Samuel Beckett's hilarity through existential tragedy made me want to write about the death of the human being by means of capitalism.

Our world is full of barriers and regulations.

Go this way. Go that way. Detour if you need to.

Don't go too far. When you reach a wall, turn around.

Get a good job. Make this amount of money. Meet a person or two.

We're left to wonder if the norms of our world belong only to us, or if there is a given order to the rest of the worlds out there.

Even the world between life and death.

AUTHOR BIO: Dane Futrell is a twenty-three-year-old existentialist playwright from Central Florida. He has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Florida Gulf Coast University. He now attends Arizona State University's Dramatic Writing MFA program. He's worked in-depth with theatre companies all around Southwest Florida, including Ghostbird Theatre Company and Florida Gulf Coast University's TheatreLab as both an actor, playwright, and producer. His first full-length play, *Sitting Ducks on the Sitting Dock*, was produced in Fort Myers, Florida in the to a sold-out audience.

