

WRITING SAMPLE

HE AND SHE

A Play in One Act

by

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HE AND SHE was first performed at the Dowling College Performing Arts Center, Oakdale, Long Island, New York on October 23rd, 1987, with a Semi-Professional Cast as follows:

HE - Keith Fadelici
SHE - Patricia Byrne

OTHER PRODUCTIONS

-Professionally Produced in NYC at Theater 22, 1990's
Dowling College as a Student Production 1990's

-Aquinas College, Michigan, Nov. 2021

This play explores the struggle for individuality while maintaining a relationship. The struggle must grow in intensity and never cease even when exhaustion occurs. The actors must find within themselves their own struggles, express them fully and to their absolute limits. The play must run continuously without an intermission. The actions using furniture or costume pieces as the play progresses work directly with the language to create a metaphorical image. The actions stated must be adhered to. However, the actors are welcome to find new, additional actions that are imaginative and bring out the meaning of the moment and theme of the play.

CHARACTERS

HE - A man.

SHE - A woman.

THE TIME

The present.

THE SCENE

A home somewhere.

THE SET

A suggestive room. Black behind it. A bed center. Flowered bedspread. A large stuffed chair down stage right. The stage left area must be completely bare so that when the lights on the chair and bed fade out, and the actors are lit in this area, The furniture will disappear.

SET

A suggestive room. Black behind it. A bed center. Flowered bedspread. A large stuffed chair down stage right. The stage left area must be completely bare so that when the lights on the chair and bed fade out, and the actors are lit in this area, the furniture will disappear.

EXCERPT 1

AT RISE:

The set is dramatically lit. The lights dim out very slowly. Pause, for a long moment in the dark. Lights come up very slowly in a pool, highlighting the man and the woman. Both stand facing the audience on either side of the stage and both wear body suits to match their natural skin color. There is a long silence between them. They begin.

HE

Hello.

SHE

(pause)

Hello.

HE

Nice weather.

SHE

Yes...very.

HE

Dark though.

SHE

Very.

HE

Endlessly.

SHE

And here?

HE

Hmmm?

SHE

Here.

HE

Yes. We're here.

SHE

I thought so.

HE

I'm glad we agree.

SHE
(pause)
Yes.

Pause.

HE
What's your name?

SHE
Hmmm?

HE
Your name...what is it?

SHE
Oh...SHE!

HE
I always like that name.

SHE
Thank you. I was named for my
grandmother.

HE
Not for you?

SHE
(pause)
After her.

HE
I see. Which one?

SHE
Both.

HE
MMMMM.

Pause.

SHE
And yours?

HE
I never knew my grandmothers.

SHE
No. Your name.

HE
Oh, I'm sorry...HE!

EXCERPT 2

They marry, and after a short time
grow bored.

SHE

Love me?

HE

Course.

They stand looking at each other blankly.

He crawls onto the bed on all fours. Looks around. Looks at
her. Looks at the bed.

HE (CONT'D)

If I kneel on it, it feels different
then when I lay on it. All my
discoveries up to this point in time
have turned me into another kind of
animal... A more sophisticated creature...
MAN!

He lifts up the covers and peeks underneath.

HE (CONT'D)

LOOK HERE! Another world. As I look
underneath, I have the feeling of
safety. It takes me out of that cold,
lonely, dangerous, primitive space.

She notices the bed.

HE (CONT'D)

(ignoring her)

Verrrry interesting. Dark. Warm.

(pause)

It's a different dimension then being
on the outside of the bed covers.
The primitive stuff is becoming a
vague memory. Everything natural is
a blur. I feel safer. More secure.
What would happen if I went
underneath?

He begins to move under the covers from the top of the bed.

SHE

I wonder who's sat in this chair?
Before.

She sits in the stuffed chair.

SHE (CONT'D)

Ahhhhh, this really feels nice.

HE

I'm beginning to feel as though I've always been here. Born here. Raised here. All this comfort. I don't ever want to come out.

SHE

How many different positions, people have assumed in this chair?

She begins to explore different physical poses and positions in the chair. Very large physical and facial expressions.

HE

There's more to explore. But all that I really want to do is rest. Sleep.

He explores the bed under the covers. We see a huge, snake like lump moving slowly around the bed. She continues to explore the physical and facial positions in the chair.

SHE

How many different types of people sat in this chair?

HE

This is me now. I am part of the bed.

SHE

What they felt?

HE

I am becoming a bed.

SHE

Why they were here? Sitting?

HE

I am the bed. I'm not me anymore. I've changed...

SHE

Who they were?

HE

A completely different person.

SHE

If this was their whole existence?

HE

A new man. A contemporary man. MODERN
MAN!

SHE

If they felt free, more alive, or
just lonely and stuck?

HE

Where do I go from here? Just solve
the same old problems? There's nothing
left to do, but review myself.

SHE

How long they sat in this chair?

HE

I want to get out.

SHE

If they thought this was all they'd
ever need?

His head pops out of the covers by the foot of the bed. The
audience sees only his head as he faces out toward them.

HE

I've lost my orientation again.

SHE

If they wanted to get out of this
chair and move around the space, or
stay here forever?

HE

I remember the outside. Being outside
when you were just inside. In the
warmth.

SHE

But now that they are so comfortable
in this chair, would they ever want
to take another risk, and stand up?
Or just give up and act content.

HE

In the comfort. Of everything. Inside
the organization. Inside the order.
Where everything is in its place.

SHE slowly begins to stand up. She must go through the fear
of change, dealing with the unknown.

SHE

If they stood up, they would feel weight. Pressure. From their own bodies. They would feel the responsibility of balancing themselves on their own two feet. I wonder if it would be worth it to them, to go through all of that? It would be so much easier to sit, and remain seated.

SHE, is halfway to standing. Fearfully, SHE, sits back down, slowly.

HE

Then you step outside, back into the earth. Ground. Solid. Vacant. Alone.

Pause.

EXCERPT 3

She rises from being stuck in her chair, to explore the room.

She takes a step. Very frightened. Almost trembling.

SHE

Oh... that was difficult.

She begins to walk slowly and carefully around the room, as if she were walking on thin ice. She becomes more and more confident as she continues to walk.

HE

(pause)

I remember it being terrific at first. All the movement. It had its benefits. It made me feel like I thought I was supposed to feel. Important. A somebody. It all seemed to make so much sense. But now, it's exhausting. I feel like a rationalization. The commuting. The demands. The limitations. The conformity and obligations and responsibilities. Everything coming at me. It's terribly exhausting. I don't know how... I've survived this long in this position. Stuck. That's how I feel most of the time. Stuck.

(pause)

All the bills. I go to work. I have to eat. At least we're eating and are protected. Nothing can happen to us... really... I don't know how all this happened. But here I am... stuck... He remains strained and supporting himself by his arms. His face contorts in different uncomfortable even painful expressions of experience, out toward the audience. The lower half of his body remains hidden under the sheets.

SHE

Try and get out. It feels great.

HE

(face in pain)

HOW? HOWWWW?!

SHE

Think, in a different way.

HE

(face in pain)

If that were all there were to it,
why would I stay here?

SHE

How would I know? You tell me. You're
the one that's stuck, and only you
can get yourself out of that
conundrum.

HE

(face in agony)

Using big words to confuse me are
you? Are we married? It sounds like
we're married. Don't married people
talk like that?

SHE

Like what?

HE

(face in terror)

A sentence like that. How would I
know? You tell me. A badly written
line like that.

END OF EXCERPTS