

YALE *Drama* SERIES

The Boys from Siam

a play by

John Austin Connolly

with a Foreword by Edward Albee



THE YALE DRAMA SERIES



David Charles Horn Foundation

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The Boys
from Siam

JOHN AUSTIN CONNOLLY

Foreword by Edward Albee

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This is for
Margaret
who believed and encouraged,
good times and bad;
another baby, to add to the five

Why was the human race created? Or at least why wasn't something creditable created in place of it? God had his opportunity. He could have made a reputation. But no. He must commit this grotesque folly—a lark which must have cost Him a regret or two when He came to think it over and observe effects.

—MARK TWAIN

Truth sits upon the lips of dying men.

—MATTHEW ARNOLD

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Foreword

Judgment Day

I am not certain that the play which I have chosen to win this inaugural year's Yale Drama Series competition, and the accompanying David C. Horn Prize, co-sponsored by Yale University Press and Yale Repertory Theatre, is necessarily the best play of the five hundred and eight submitted.

How can this be? Well, I did not read all of the plays. There are two reasons for this—my sanity and my time. My sanity first: I have judged enough play contests and read enough new plays generally to know that maybe one in twenty of the plays submitted to any contest is worth the reading, and that we playwrights are in sufficient despair over the condition of theatre without having our tenuous grasp on life-force diminished by the pummelings of the mediocre and the truly hopeless.

My time second: see “my sanity” above.

What to do? What I *did* was, choose six young theatre professionals—playwrights, mostly—whose work and minds I respect and whose objectivity I trust to winnow the pile down to a relative “precious few” and have me read *them*—thoroughly and carefully.

This is not an ideal solution, but what is one to do? During the fifteen years I was teaching playwriting at the University

of Houston, in Texas, I read all the plays submitted to my class each year—seventy-five or so, usually—and then chose the ten I found most interesting, or, perhaps better put, least uninteresting. I learned during this decade-and-a-half-long process that “most interesting” does not necessarily mean most professional, most complete, most organized, or even most coherent. Indeed, some of the playwrights I chose to work with knew little about “the craft of playwriting.” They were incapable of slick (or even sincere) imitations of Ibsen, Williams, Shepard, et cetera, did not necessarily know how to fashion a script ready for the stage, but what they *did* have—these ten I chose each year—was that hard-to-pin-down combination of individuality, freshness of approach, a sense of “necessity”: that the play, however imperfect, “needed” to be written, was not just “a good idea.” I began to understand the crucial difference between an individual voice and one which copied others, that the proper shape of a play is, ultimately, *its* proper shape, not necessarily the expected.

Of the ten I chose each year (the minimum permitted by me) I would have been happier with five of them, some years two, but I could rig the game only so far. Some of my students have gone on to theatre careers; a few have defected to film and TV, where quality is judged by popularity rather than its proper reverse. And some of my students have abandoned the uncertain track of a playwright—no matter *how* accomplished—for a happier passage as a civilian. I wish them all well, and I thank them for teaching me as much as I may have taught them.

(*Insertion of unnecessary anecdote:*)

Back in the late-sixties and early-seventies, when my producers Richard Barr and Clinton Wilder and I were pouring much of our (ill-gotten?) gain from *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* into the Playwrights Unit—a decade-long workshop and performance space for the world premieres of

new American plays, where we did over one hundred new scripts during our tenure—I was—at one period—becoming disaffected with the plays being selected for production by our resident “reader,” a bright fellow, though more of a director than anything. Good plays were, I thought, *must* be, getting rejected while their lessers were going on to production under our banner.

So, one day, I made a test. I had just completed an eleven-minute-long solo play—the performer (preferably) onstage but the performer’s voice on amplification. I had been as secret about it as I am about *all* of them until I write “End” on the last page, and I had shown it to no one. It was a rather experimental piece and I was quite proud of it. (It turns out to be widely admired, if infrequently performed.) I submitted it—finished, of course—to our organization, under an assumed name—Rayne Somebody-or-other, as I recall—took a post office box, and awaited a reply. When none had come after several months I grew impatient and went to our offices, to the room where our reader was reading, and asked him what was up. “A lot of shit” was his response. I went to the file where he kept his evaluations of the submitted plays—found my play—*Box*—under Rayne Somebody-or-other’s name—and read the evaluation: “Boring, incoherent and empty.” “Boring, incoherent and empty” I false-laughed, showing him his evaluation. “A piece of shit!” he said (everyone is a critic), turning back to the probably true piece of shit he was chuckling over.

Rayne What’s-his-name and I were unhappy to receive our dismissal letter a week later.

The guy (the reader) quit a couple of months later—fully unaware—and it wasn’t until much, *much* later—years!—that I told him of the ruse. Oddly, he wasn’t amused.

So—to return to our dilemma—there is no perfect way around five hundred and eight scripts and one final judge, but I feel we solved it as wisely—if imperfectly—as could

be done, and if there were finer plays than our winner and two runners-up in the four hundred and seventy-eight plays I *didn't* read, my congratulations to their authors. They are extraordinary writers, and their time will come.

Now to the chase.

What standards did I employ in judging the plays I read? Well, the predictable, of course:

Have I read this play before? (Interesting how often the borrowings were from minor plays.)

Can I read to the end of it without losing consciousness? (How often I would refresh myself—coffee, perhaps; stand up, walk around.)

Is it wise in a three-act play to have Act Three one-quarter the length of Act One, one-third (at most!) the length of Act Two? (Indeed, is the three-act play not now anachronistic? Is not proposition/solution not now a preferable method?)

Am I learning anything from this play? (Anything provocative and illuminating, that is?)

Are the questions the play poses sufficiently interesting to warrant the paucity of answers provided? (Often—perhaps oddly—the questions are almost always more interesting than the answers provided. In theory, at least, a play of only questions can be profoundly involving.)

Does this play stretch my mind, open vistas of yet unexplored dramatic concepts? (Well, *that* doesn't happen very often, *does* it!? And when it does we are grateful beyond thanks.)

Is this play just so “good” at what it does that we are tricked (almost!) into thinking it matters?

Is this absolutely chaotic and anti-dramatic mess of a play really as exciting as it seems?

And so on.

Ideally a play should be so fresh in its ideas and execution that we are breathless, for it is clearly the first play we have ever read! Or is it merely honorable, and intellectually and emotionally engaging, structurally persuasive on its own terms, and worthy of a mumbled “Well, now, *that* wasn’t bad!” This last describes most of the “good” plays one reads. The exceptional is truly rare—one out of a hundred, maybe? One out of two hundred?

The plays submitted to me ran the gamut, of course. Some were tiresome retreads; some indicated no intuitive understanding of dramatic structure; some were really essays in borrowed clothing; two were laughable in their efforts to be shocking; some others were intelligent and sincere but hampered by their belief that playwriting ended with middle-Ibsen; a few were all emotion and nothing else; a few were hobbled by crippling Mametisms, some by (intended?) stylelessness; and some (the majority) were . . . OK, if hardly exceptional.

And then there were the three that really took my attention and retained it.

The Boys from Siam, by John Connolly, is, in its final version, a beautifully realized concentrated universe. It takes big chances along the way, unhesitatingly assuming it knows what it’s doing (which is almost always), and makes us care—really care. Put all this together and you have a winner.

(*Insertion of second unnecessary anecdote:*)

When I was sixteen I read a novel, *Memoirs of a Midget* by the British post-Victorian poet Walter de la Mare, which was exactly what its title proclaimed it to be. Around the same time I saw the extraordinary German film *Freaks*, which was harrowingly also about its title. These fascinated me and it was a few years later, the more I read, the more I saw, that I realized that writers are attracted to the extraordinary for its dramatic intensity and endless possibility. We are equally attracted to the unextraordinary for the same reasons. We

write about the doomed, the damned, the lost, the afflicted, first because we care about them and then because they are fine dramatic subject matter.

Four years ago I began a play about—among other things—identical twins. Critics remind me it is a subject I've treated often and variously: The Young Man in my early play *The American Dream*, for example.

The play—*Me, Myself and I*—is heading toward production as I write this. Was I surprised when I realized that in *The Boys from Siam* I was reading a play about Siamese twins (as they are almost always incorrectly called)? Of course not! What a subject!

It did cross my mind that a few sour or careless minds might conclude that I was swayed toward *The Boys from Siam* by its subject matter, just as a few others might think I should have denied the play its due for the same reason. But there are only—what?—seven plots and twenty-seven subplots available to us, and fertile minds like rich soil. No, I gave the prize to Mr. Connolly because I found his play the best of the bunch.

(By the way, as judge I was given the option of awarding no prize if I found none of the submissions worthy. I would have hated to have had to do that and I'm glad it wasn't the way out of an embarrassing situation.)

As for the two runners-up: *The Secret Agenda of Trees*, by Colin McKenna, intrigued me by its confluence of reality and fantasy, though incompletely realized. The red dirt concreteness of the situation doesn't fully mesh with the unreality of the young girl. Alas, she occupies a different play. Had the author been able to meld the two we may well have had a tie for first place.

Lazarre Seymour Simckes' *Open Rehearsal* has an outrageous premise and an even more outrageous twist on *that*. While the play doesn't always transcend its premise, it is intelligent and witty and frequently moving.

Close call!

I look forward to seeing all three of these plays in production—good productions worthy of their creators' imaginations. And some day soon, I hope. After all, only mediocrity deserves mediocrity, and our theatre is far too occupied with perpetuating mediocrity as it is.

Edward Albee

London

March 2007

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Preface

People ask, What gave you the idea for the play? Why was April 2005 the month of inspiration—why not June or September?

I had not thought to write a play at that time and had no need to write one, not least because an extended period of treatment for two cancers urged me to enjoy the moment and not become captive to an onerous demand—two words that might well sum up playwriting.

Fate had other ideas. During that April of 2005 a pair of conjoined twins were born in my hometown of Dublin, an event that naturally generated some discussion and speculation in the newspapers. At that time I knew little enough about Siamese twins that I was content to use that term, but enough to follow the story of these two infants with an understanding of the difficulties their conjoining brought in its wake.

A very early decision was made to attempt separation, when they were eight days old. The public were not acquainted with the nature of the join, the twins' identity, their possible life expectancy, or the reason for the decision to separate.

Both twins died.

Much of my professional life had been spent with people who were special in some way, who had small or great handicaps

in body, intellect, or emotion, so all aspects of the event were of great interest to me. In truth, I was well educated about twin issues (I thought) but nonetheless was strangely, distressingly moved—enough to start reading around the subject of twinship, conjoined, identical, and non-identical.

I found volumes of information on the subject. I learned the history and background of the “original” Siamese twins, Chang and Eng Bunker. Not only they were written about, but others, ranging from the Biddenden twins of the fourteenth century to twins of the present time, and how they were classified in twelve or fourteen ways, joined, it seemed, in any way one could imagine.

I had never, I believed, read up on any subject that raised so many issues: How did they get born? Why and when did the conjoining start? Were some so joined that judgment could not be passed on whether they might best be regarded as one or two persons? How did conjoining relate to cases of parasitism? Was it right to separate them? Was their personhood defined in some way by their being joined? If so, were they less a person if separated? Did parents or doctors or churches or judges have a right to decide for or against separation, and if so, why? What of the “Maltese twins,” removed to London for their doctors to argue in the High Court that they should be allowed to sever the two, despite the parents’ insistence this was against their wishes? How could three judges give opinions based on quite different arguments?

All my research—many hundreds of pages’ worth—suddenly coalesced to provide a question: What would happen after one of an adult set of twins died? And—a thought coming fully grown into a premise—how would it feel?

So several months of reading and reflecting left me with no choice: I had to write a play with this premise. The drive to write was fully grown, the need also, so for a further year, obsessively, day and night, alone or with family or friends, I

teased out the structure of a play, and its characters, and answered each question and problem as it came to the fore.

How did they sleep, go to the toilet, eat, dig the soil, travel—all these questions had their turn, as did, of course, the one everyone asked first: How did they have sex? The Bunker twins fathered ten and eleven children apiece, having married two sisters: Did each sibship share the same father and mother? How did they earn a living?

How would a twin feel with a dead twin beside him on the bed? What would he do?

And how could I design a play to carry such questions, suggest some solutions, have no answers for others—a play to raise questions of emotion, morality, separation and attachment, individuality and its loss or growth?

Why did such things happen? Where was a god? Was it right to sell the sight of such freakishness in order to make a living? Could the audience be made to care?

Slowly, line by line, the play grew. Its protagonists are called Pigg and Pegg because the play is definitely not the history or the story of the Bunker twins, although their life and times are the backdrop and thread. The play is the story of conjoinment, of the determination that we have to become “normal,” of the way we face freakishness, and death, and the conjoined twin. It is about loss, separation, attachment, and identity. From bare outlines Pigg and Pegg filled in, became three-dimensional, became individual characters with distinct voices. They became as real as family and friends.

When I submitted the play for the Yale Drama Series award, my two boys from Siam had grown, however temporarily, four other characters—their Mama, their brother Park, a god figure, and a showman. Or, rather, I had, because I thought the new characters enriched the story and attraction of the play.

The play was showcased by Yale Repertory Theatre in a staged reading lasting perhaps two hours and ten minutes. After

watching the two acts, sitting companionably beside me, Mr. Edward Albee turned and asked me what I thought.

I replied, with the clarity of a revelation, that all the drama came from the twins. Although the other figures were interesting, and believable and watchable, they were unnecessary in generating drama above and beyond that which the twins' characters generated. A further draft was indicated. Edward Albee, during a later discussion regarding the play, agreed that I should follow my gut reaction and narrow the action to the twins alone.

Three months of steady work resulted in this redrafted version. I killed off four characters to leave the stage to the twins alone. I found Pigg and Pegg were indeed strong enough to deal with this diminution of cast and could incorporate into their speeches essential material the other four had brought to the previous version.

They carried it comfortably, as they had carried each other in the lives I had created. So nothing was lost, of importance anyway. Two acts became one, with only the barest of blackouts between scenes. Two hours and ten minutes were refined to perhaps ninety or a hundred.

Slimmed down, focused more closely, without any distraction from the murdered, excised characters (and oh, how did I love them), the drama had a greatly enhanced effect. With the blessing of Edward Albee, who had chosen the previous version as the David C. Horn Prize winner, the version herein presented is the final version for both print and stage.

For the moment anyway. I hope it entertains.

Acknowledgments

EDWARD ALBEE: judge, mentor, friend

Ego te saluto

To Francine Horn and the David Charles Horn Foundation, the former for conceiving, endowing, and supporting what became the Yale Drama Series, the latter for ensuring that the series would go forward.

To those, visible and unseen, at Yale University Press, the Yale School of Drama, and the Yale Repertory Theatre, who at various times helped with the play from its selection as winner of the inaugural Yale Drama Series competition, through its staged rehearsal at the Yale Rep, and on to this publication—in particular, at the Press, my editors, John Kulka formerly and Keith Condon latterly, who brought so much knowledge to the task, and Mary Pasti, assistant managing editor, who brought her delicate sensibility and formidable intellect to bear. And to Lindsay Toland, Jennifer Kiger, Linda Klein, James Bundy, and John Donatich.

To Liz Diamond, my director, who showed me how things might best be done.

To Robert Balsam, whose ability to steer us all through choppy waters was a pleasure to behold.

To my actors at the staged reading, who made the characters

Mama, Park, the Big Fellow, Doc Roberts, and Pegg—four of whom trailed briefly across the firmament and then, ephemera, were discorporated by the author—in particular, Francis Jue, who defined the part of Pigg and how the Boys should be and whose magical voice gave background in my head and helped me create this version.

Finally, and fondly, to Peter Franklin, my agent, a tiger burning bright on my behalf.

The Boys from Siam

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Cast of Characters

PIGG	A man in his sixties and younger
PEGG	His twin
SAL and ADDIE	Two wickerwork figures: sisters

Place: PIGG's home and various other locations revisited

Time: A single day in 1874 and earlier times revisited

The two figures are life-size, constructed of wickerwork and able to bend at the waist. They are evidently representations of two plump women, each wearing two items of clothing: an apron and a bonnet. The apron ties around the waist, and this is primarily what gives the impression of plumpness. Otherwise the figures are entirely composed of wicker; the backdrop and the lights can be seen through this. They can be set to stand on the floor, are lightweight enough to be carried easily by the actors, and are made so that the actors can place them in a sitting position with ease.

When PIGG or PEGG speak as another character, the delivery must have a different individual rhythm and nature.

The script format is chosen to draw the optimal reading from the actor: firstly the pauses and silences, then the punctuation, and, finally, on this edifice, the words.

The author wishes to acknowledge the lives and experiences of Chang and Eng Bunker.

Apologies to Stephen Foster for occasionally placing
"Beautiful Dreamer" in an earlier time.

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Scene One

The setting is PIGG's bedroom, indicated center stage. An unusually large bed sits in the middle; everything in the set forces attention to the bed. The bed can be pulled apart into two smaller beds, although this is not yet apparent.

A playbill is displayed on the left upstage wall of the bedroom. On it the heading ROBERTS AND RAWLEIGH can be seen. On the right upstage wall a votive light flickers. A pair of calf-high boots stands under the votive lamp, another pair under the playbill. A stand with a ewer, placed stage left of the playbill, has two hand towels hanging beneath it. A large cut-throat razor is clearly visible on the ewer stand.

To the right and the left of the bedroom are small, ill-defined spaces. The stage-left space is the larger. The stage-right space contains unclear images, reminiscent of a delta, at the back, including a minimally indicated two-dimensional image of a riverboat, such as might be found in Southeast Asia. A real coolie hat hangs from where the mast is pictured.

The layout allows the actors to move directly between the three spaces as events occur. The presence of doors or walls is indicated minimally and by the movement and behavior of the actors.

The curtain rises on a dimly lit stage. Details can be made out as the light rises on the bed and bedroom, and the outer spaces darken. PIGG lies on the bed, propped up by a collection of pillows and bedclothes. He has thrashed his way to the center of the bed, and further to his left the bedclothes and pillows are massed and tumbled, suggesting distress and

agitation. PIGG rocks the bundle beside him roughly, pauses, then withdraws his hands quickly.

PIGG (*Moaning.*) It's over. I'm finished. That's it.

He throws his arms wide in despair and intones pitifully.

The curtains have closed. The spirit has died within me.
The sun has set. . . .

Crops harvested and now the grass yellowing. The well has run dry.

I am finished. Laid to rest. That's it. I'm all done. Pegg is dying. Dead, perhaps.

He pauses and reflects. He looks wonderingly around and upward and beyond the fourth wall into the distance, as if seeing a vision.

It wasn't like this in the beginning.

Nothing like this. (*Dreamily.*) It felt good then. Just to be alive. The sun rising in the east.

He stares to his left, gestures with his arm.

The birds singing. The dew fresh on the green grass. It felt good then.

It felt good to be part of the new day. It felt good to be alive. (*Pause. To the audience.*) We had no complaints. How could we?

PEGG's voice comes from beneath the bedclothes. All the interjections by PEGG are muffled but audible.

PEGG *You* didn't!

PIGG I remember the glint of the early light across the delta.

He points to his left as a shaft of light comes across him and illumines the boat.

Just a glimmer, as the less-than-blackness shouldered its way in from the east.

The side of life. I always loved the east. Always wanted to be the east.

The west stood for the setting sun; when it went down, it pulled you down too. Nighttime. I never wanted to live in the nighttime, to have some thing or some one come between you and the side of life. The east side.

So when you rose and crept out on the dewy deck, you turned so you faced the dim light.

Pushing your way around (*Struggles.*) if need be.

Then there was nothing between you and the sun rising (*The shaft of light brightens and reddens.*), that brilliant red rim wavering up from the water's horizon.

PIGG *forms a circle with his cupped hands. He stretches out his left arm and closes his hand in the shaft of light.*

(*Quietly.*) All I ever wanted was to hold the rising sun.

He cups his hands around his eyes to cut off his view of the two spaces on either side of the bedroom.

But that's over now. It was over a long time ago.

He punches the bed in frustration.

Below, as PIGG relives the moment, the sunlight brightens and fades, intensely and dramatically, in parallel with the volume of his voice and the topic.

You can't forget.

I could rise early as the dawn and see that sun king awake from slumber.

I could believe for a half-instant (*Illustrates with his thumb and forefinger.*) that I was alone in all the world. Just me, just the sun king, together.

And then I felt I could soar on the first trembling shafts of the new light.

Savor the birth of the new day (*Stretching hands wide, poetical. To the audience.*), rising on the luminous eddies so that my soul left me, free as a stray thought, the first dipping touch of the breeze against my body.

PEGG That's all finished.

PIGG Alone without loneliness.

I was only a child then. I knew nothing about reality. (*Gestures toward the playbill.*) I thought that golden moment in the early dawn *was* reality, was the way of the world.

Thought that I too could be like the sun king, alone, strong, forever independent.

I thought then that in that split second perhaps I *was* God, could make myself God!

PEGG Don't!

PIGG (*Contemplates. To the audience.*) That's if he existed at all.

I would stand on the tip of my toes, facing the east, letting my arms float wide (*Illustrates.*) on the breath of dawn, and I would close my eyes and feel my body about to assume itself into heaven—

PEGG Stop!—

PIGG To join and be and become the sun king.

He pauses, deflated.

That moment was my life.

The only thing that was ever truly mine.

PEGG (*Interrupts, disparagingly.*) You were lucky.

PIGG And then the weight would come.

He falls back against the pillows.

So I had to keep my feet hard against the grainy deck, curling my toes in anguish, as that weight forced me to let go my vision of the king, to fall back, (*Tearful.*) to fall down into the waters, closing, cooling, contracting my spirit; dark, not light; sinking, not rising.

Done. Finished. That single moment of aloneness gone.

All the yearning of my soul was in that moment! Ready to fly, up from tiptoe, and then gone.

Pause.

All finished, all done. . . . They all said, (*Tapping his chest with his finger.*) I was the one with the dreams.

(*As if someone else, mockingly.*) You were the one with the dreams.

Pause.

The—what is it they call it?—irony, that's it. Life has an—an irony all its own. What you wish for, you get, but you discover that it's not what you want.

He opens his clasped hand and peers closely, then exclaims and throws off whatever it is he has found.

Aloneness. That's what I wanted.

Pause.

That's what I thought I wanted.

Just some time—a few moments only—time on my own.
Alone.

And the loss of that aloneness soured my life, hung over
me like the sword in that story, the sword of Damocles.

All my life I twisted and turned to become free, to be
alone again, like those moments on the boat at the time
of sunrise.

And now it's all over, and I'm finished.

That's it.

It's only morning, but already I can see the sun going,
setting in the west, trailing my life downward with its rays.

*The illumination reduces and blues. He wraps the bedspread
tightly around himself.*

It's cold, so it is.

Pause.

All my life I've hidden those moments of beauty deep
within myself.

The sun rising, bursting, flowing with life.

A rose unfolding and the rose petals falling on the grass.
Sweet music.

Cut grass drying in the dusk.

He lifts the bedspread, looks under it.

You!

The lights slowly go up as PIGG reflects.

(To the audience.) I could always see beauty.

In Mama's face.

In a wisp of smoke from the cooking fire on the deck of the boat.

Making clouds into horsemen.

Making rainbows of the twisting fish.

I often wondered how the others made out. (*Pause.*) It took the two of us together to make out.

Long pause. He shakes his head sadly.

Poor Ching.

Pause.

We were great fishermen. The best!

Cleaving the water like the fish we sought. Like dolphins in the dawn.

Chasing those darting flashes, (*Illustrates.*) spearing them in an instant until the net bags tied to our waists were full of wriggling bodies and we had to fight to lift ourselves to the surface.

We kept all of them alive.

Mama said it. And now life . . . life . . . it's going. It's done. I never did have time to hold the rising sun.

PIGG agonizes in frustration. He hits out at himself, the pillows, the bedclothes. To his left in the bed the bedclothes heave and twist and a voice grumbles in remonstrance. The face and shoulders of another man appear. It is PEGG. They glare at each other.

PEGG (*Dismissively.*) It would have burned you. (*Pause.*) Move back to your own side. You always hung out of me.

PIGG Pegg! I thought you were nearly dead. Dying, at least. Now you're not.

PEGG (*Sourly.*) I am. (*Pause.*) Nearly. Not long to go.

PIGG So it's . . . no use. We're finished.

PEGG Maybe so. Maybe not.

PIGG Oh.

PEGG It depends.

PIGG (*To the audience.*) It always depended with you. It depended what you wanted. I only dreamed. You made things happen.

PEGG (*Nodding.*) True. We left the others behind a long time ago. You dreaming, me doing.

Pause, as they reflect.

PEGG You're alive. I'm nearly dead. Dying, anyway. (*Pause.*) Together we're in . . . trouble.

PEGG shifts awkwardly and wraps some blanket around PIGG. The gesture is almost tender, but neither acknowledge this. In the process they both sit up fully, and the audience can see that they are joined by a flexible band, about the thickness and length of an upper arm, which runs between their chests forward of the meridian and at breast level.

The join is suggested as much as shown, for their nightwear is designed to accommodate their unusual shape. Their daywear also proves to be tailored appropriately.

To the observer the band is a shocking restraint, but they pay no particular heed to it. They have lived with it all their lives

and can maneuver easily to accomplish any task. They have to address every task in unison but are also obviously two separate bodies and personalities. PIGG, it later becomes clear, is slighter and smaller.

PIGG Is it . . . big trouble?

PEGG I never thought it would come to this. I'm halfway gone. Look at me! No energy left. Just draining away. You can't do a thing for me. I never thought . . . (*Gestures at the bed.*) this would get dimmer slowly and that (*Points to his left.*) would get clearer by the minute. When we fished, all those years ago. Diving down, then rising up to the surface, so it was dark below and light on top. Remember?

PIGG Surely you didn't—

PEGG (*Irritated.*) Like this, I mean. Like this. Me dying. You . . . maybe left alone.

PIGG Oh.

PEGG It was supposed to be different. A simple matter of closing our eyes, lying back, going to sleep. (*Illustrates.*)

PIGG I did that! We both did it. We both went asleep. Last night. You remember.

PEGG Well, it didn't work for me. Dead and dying at the same time.

It was supposed to be angels whenever it happened. Choirs and trumpets. Just me, mind. Not you.

You weren't supposed to be hanging out of me like a . . . like a . . . piece of phlegm.

PIGG That's all you ever thought of me.

PEGG That's a lie.

PIGG Look at you now, nearly finished. Go on, anyway.

PEGG (*To the audience.*) I always believed.

He gestures toward the votive lamp.

PIGG (*Without heat, almost habitually.*) When it suited you.

PEGG You remember when we settled here? The next day Pastor Gustafson rode over.

PIGG Doffed his hat.

PEGG He was always very civil. He said: "Good day to you, gentlemen."

PIGG "Both of you." He said "both of you."

PEGG (*To the audience.*) It was good land, the best.

PIGG I wanted to plant some trees. Remember?

PEGG How could I forget? You wanted to waste good land. You had a vision, you said.

PIGG I wanted to plant trees.

Two of those giants we saw when we displayed out West. So in the morning they would frame the rising sun—

PEGG Don't be a fool! The well had to be dug.

PIGG (*Obstinately.*) Not right there.

PEGG (*Dismissively.*) They would have drained the ground like a leech.

PIGG Look who's talking.

PEGG Well, they would.

PIGG It would have helped. Helped me. It was something I wanted. Just for me. Something special. But you couldn't. Not then, not now. You were being practical back then. That's what you said. But what about now? I can't live for you, breathe for you, beat my heart for your heart much longer.

(*Aside.*) What am I supposed to do? If I do nothing, I'm gone anyway. (*Holding his right hand with fingers straight, making a chopping motion.*) If I do . . . do . . . *that*, no, no . . . (*Weeps.*)

PEGG (*Ignoring him, refusing to be drawn.*) Those visions got you nowhere. Where would you have been without someone practical. Didn't you have me?

PIGG (*Reflectively.*) Just once, to be alone.

PEGG Dreamer.

PIGG (*Steadily, to himself.*) So when I saw the rising sun, I could for one solitary instant even think I was alone, imagine what it would be like to be alone.

He turns as far as possible away from PEGG. Silence.

PEGG Well, now you are. (PEGG *grasps* PIGG's hand *between his two and strokes it.*) In half an hour, anyway.

PIGG Don't say that.

PEGG (*Urgently.*) Don't give in, Pigg.

PIGG What's it like?

PEGG What?

PIGG That. You know. What's it like . . . dying.

He gestures at and beyond PEGG.

PEGG (*Testily.*) I was telling you. But you always interrupt.

PIGG Go on.

PEGG (*Puzzled.*) I can't see very clearly. I can't see *you* very clearly. Like I'm in between somehow. I can just make things out. It's a bit empty.

PIGG Empty?

PEGG There isn't very much here. There. Wherever it is.

PIGG Well, where's all the—

PEGG Shh! Keep your voice down. It's like I . . . I'm not all there. You remember the spectacles I had to get when I couldn't see to do the accounts any longer? Well, here it's like . . . Well, the only way I can make you understand, it's like having spectacles, but with glass from the bottom of a bottle. Not smooth but wavy, clear in some places, foggy in others.

PIGG You're crazy. (*Aside.*) Although you've looked through the end of a bottle enough times to know what *that's* like!

PEGG It's not like Pastor Gustafson said.

Heavenly choirs and angels. All the righteous. Mama.

PIGG Not there? Ha! Then I was right, all those years. You knew it was just politeness when I pretended to listen to his sermons.

PEGG (*Ignoring him.*) Not here. No sign.

PIGG I don't understand.

PEGG It's difficult to explain. It's not as if it's a big space like what you'd expect. Doesn't look like prairie land.

PIGG Don't blame me. I never expected anything.

PEGG (*Ignoring him.*) It's more like lots of tiny ones, but that's not quite right either.

I can hear them in lots of other spaces, but I can't see them all. Just a few. It's like being in a mist. You'll see what I mean. Later, when you—

PIGG Oh. (*Intently.*) And Ching! What about Ching?

PEGG (*Passing off question.*) Maybe when I have time I'll have a look around.

PIGG (*Half serious, half mockingly.*) Maybe you could put up a bill—

He points to the playbill.

PEGG Are you mad?—

PIGG Tell them there'll be a display. That'll bring them in. It always did. Remember?

(*Elbows PEGG.*) Berlin. Remember Berlin? One thousand four hundred and eighty-one.

PEGG Two. It was two. All in one week.

PIGG Well, eighty-two, then.

PEGG All those dollars!

PIGG You remember, we didn't charge the old woman because you thought she looked like Mama?

PEGG You're right.

PIGG (*Hopefully.*) No sign of her?

PEGG No.

PIGG Anyone?

PEGG Just the Big Fellow. An odd fish—

PIGG (*Scoffs.*) The Big Fellow. With a crown and trident, I suppose.

PEGG That's the strange thing. He's small. Remember our brother Park?

PIGG He was Mama's favorite.

PEGG The Big Fellow's only as big as Park. (*Shaking his head.*)

Not impressive. Like one of Doc Roberts's little people.

PIGG I wonder how he is.

PEGG Park? Ten years older? He's dead. You can be sure of it . . . and now I'm going.

PIGG We should have taken him with—

PEGG Don't start. Listen, Doc's here, anyway.

PIGG Don't get involved with him.

PEGG He's close by. I heard his voice. Not that clearly. When I get closer, maybe . . .

PIGG (*Reminiscing.*) He always had presence.

PEGG He was rolling up. "Roll up! Roll up!"
Just like that first time in Boston. Except now he's
hollering, "Roll up, folks. Last time to see the Big Fellow!
Only a dollar a time!"
He never missed a trick.

PIGG He'd exhibit anything.

PEGG "The Greatest Show on Earth."

PIGG We did better without him.

PEGG Well, he never cheated us.

PIGG No, but eighty cents in the dollar wasn't a fair share.

PEGG The Captain gave Park five dollars for letting us go. Why should Park have taken it all?

PIGG That was head money. Not for us.

It was for Mama.

And for—for—you know who it was for.

And all the others. We had nothing, not even a quarter-dollar note.

PEGG Coin, coin. The captain had to give us clothes. We had nothing, just our . . . togetherness. Never mind. We survived. Truly, we survived. Leave it be. Can't you see it's over?

Suddenly agitated, PIGG attempts to pull himself out over the side of the bed, flailing at PEGG to let him go.

PIGG It's over! I'm finished! That's it! Look what you've done! Leaving me like this!

PEGG Take it easy. You always got agitated.

When you left Mama. When Doc set up things. When we displayed. (*Furiously.*) You couldn't do anything on your own!

He leans away from PIGG and glares, then softens and puts his arm around him.

I'm nearly gone, Pigg. What are we to do?

PIGG (*To the audience.*) At least I could dream. Perhaps I was lucky.

PEGG puts his left hand out tentatively, as if feeling something he can only faintly see.

The lights dim around PIGG and PEGG, showing them, faintly, as a tableau of stilled, straining figures. Full black and silence.

Scene Two

Bedroom. The lights come up. PIGG and PEGG heave and fight with each other silently on top of the bed, pulling in opposite directions. They wear suits. At length PIGG prevails and manages to drag PEGG with him until they are sitting on the end of the bed. PEGG hangs down limply from PIGG's side.

PIGG regards PEGG silently and then puts his arm around his shoulders. He rocks him for a while. When PEGG still hangs limply, PIGG shakes him roughly like a rag doll. Glares and shakes him again.

In this scene, when PEGG is acting as PEGG, he is clearly talking to PIGG; when he is talking as Mama, he makes this clear by speaking to the audience.

PIGG Wake up!

I know you're not—you're not—you can still hear me.

You're a bastard, leaving me like this. You never cared for me anyway.

Pegg! Answer me, please. Don't leave me like this. I'm cold. Look, feel me, see how cold.

He takes PEGG's limp hand and lays it on his own thigh.

You're cold too.

He lifts PEGG's hand, holds it against his cheek, weeps.

Pegg!

PEGG *shakes himself, grunts, sits up. He is clearly not as strong as PIGG.*

PEGG (*To himself.*) They were here just a moment ago. That is strange. I can still hear Mama. She was looking at the playbill and muttering. Strange. I can see . . . that place. Like in a dream, getting clearer. I can also see this place getting dimmer. Listen, Pigg, listen to her!

(*As Mama, reads the playbill, haltingly.*) “Rob . . . erts. Roberts and Rawleigh.

“The Greatest Show. On Earth.

“See the little ones. General Tom Thumb.”

What a strange name!

“The lady with the beard of wire. The nail eater. The counting horse.”

I should have started at the top; the pictures are much bigger.

(*To himself.*) I miss them. Brother Park and all the others.

He puts his hands over his heart, then holds out his arms and closes his hands as if holding hands with Park.

Park had to stay. He was the oldest, remember. He had responsibilities.

PIGG Pegg! Don’t do this to Pigg!

I didn’t want to leave Mama!

But I had to! I had to see beyond. The delta was too small. Say it was, Pegg. That I had to see beyond.

And I took you with me too. No one ever came between us. Not Addie. Not Sal.

(*To the audience.*) Park *was* the eldest. He had no choice. (*Proudly.*) We gave him the chance, though. Kept the others alive.

Park knew we'd make out.

Pigg the dreamer, Pegg the doer! (*Wiggles with pleasure at recalling.*)

Pause.

That Captain! He said we were different, that was clear.
But when we stood close together, you could never tell.
With the right clothes it was fine.
We were strong and we were willing!

PEGG (*As Mama.*) Your name written big like that. You were worth more than five dollars.

PIGG We were worth three dollars.
One for each of us and another for Mama.
Everyone always got a dollar head money.
The girls going to get husbands in that faraway place . . .

PEGG (*As Mama.*) Did you ever settle down, my Pigg-Pegg?
Find girls? No, that was only my dream, a mother's strange thought.

PIGG The boys to plant rice, maybe. Or to work ship.
Always a dollar.

PEGG (*As Mama.*) What did you do with all of your life?
(*He mimes lifting down the playbill, looks closely at it.*) A dollar then was good to keep a family for a whole year.
(*Sadly.*) Five dollars only!

PIGG A dollar head money was plenty. Everyone wanted it, they all did.

PEGG (*Glares.*) But you couldn't wait.

PIGG It wasn't easy, finding space. There wasn't room for everybody who wanted to go.

Poor Ching!

PEGG (*Aside.*) I was going to ask for three dollars only. (*Gestures with his thumb.*) Pigg wanted to go. He'd always dreamed of what was beyond. I didn't mind. As long as there was something to do. The Captain did not believe us at first. What a long time ago!

PIGG and PEGG stand up, and as they walk slowly toward their left they pass the ewer stand. PIGG picks up the razor, looks at it briefly, and places it down. As they turn to walk downstage and around the end of the bed PEGG looks back at the razor. They go stage right, look at the delta background, then come downstage. As they move they look up and around, surveying their new environment. They nod at each other, as if conniving. They laugh, salute each other with their outer arms, puffing out their chests.

PIGG Like yesterday.

They spread their arms open and bow. They are facing the Captain in his boat.

(*As Captain.*) What do you mean, two-in-one? Ain't no such thing.

PEGG Oh, sir!

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Got any sisters? Nice 'n' pretty? Hey?

PEGG Oh, sir. Believe me. Have a look.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Got all we can carry, all we can hold. Unless they're gals, that is.

PEGG See how strong and agile. Two-in-one. All the fish you could need.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Got to be off if you got no pretty ones. Hey?

PEGG (*Pleads.*) Please, sir.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Got to be off. High tide at three.

PEGG Sir. We will starve.

PIGG (*As Captain, reluctantly but kindly.*) Oh, OK. Get aboard and let me see.

PEGG Thank you, sir.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Natives! Get in the cabin.

They move eagerly to center stage, looking around, taking everything in.

PEGG Look up, Pigg! Look up!

PIGG (*As Captain.*) See nothin' different.

PIGG *takes a watch from his watch pocket.*

Tide's risin'.

PEGG Stand away! Show the gentleman.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Holy Moses!

He is silenced. He bends down to examine the twins more closely. He moves a hand to the join but thinks better of it.

Two-in-one.

Never would have . . . (*Pauses.*) Doc Roberts would pay . . . Holy Moses. Say, you sure you want to come?

PEGG We want to come. On my honor. And the head money . . . ?

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Money. Say, I'll give you head money.

For both together.

But five dollars is all. And you sign, sign yourselves over to me.

PEGG Five dollars—

As Captain, PIGG answers firmly, thinking PEGG wants more.

PIGG Five dollars. Here. Take it.

Get your stuff aboard. You can settle in right now.
(*Realization dawns.*) Hey, how are you goin' to sleep?
And use the heads?

Come on, Mr. Pigg-Pegg, you've a lot to learn me before the tide turns.

They walk slowly toward stage right.

PEGG (*Excitedly.*) Five dollars! The gentleman must have made a mistake.

They stop, turn to face the audience, shading their eyes with their hands. Soberly, to the audience.

Poor Mama. Poor Park. (*Pause.*) They did not know where we were going. How could they have thought of it? How could they have understood?

PIGG (*Digging PEGG in the ribs with his elbow.*) We knew.
To see. To see beyond.

PEGG It was fun, then.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) OK, boys. Where were we? Wake up
now.

PIGG/PEGG Yes, sir, Captain.

PIGG (*As Captain; pointing as appropriate.*) Boots.

PIGG/PEGG Boot.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Ewer.

PIGG/PEGG Ewer.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Towels.

PIGG/PEGG Towel.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Faces.

PIGG/PEGG Face.

PIGG (*As Captain.*) Twins.

PIGG/PEGG Pigg an' Pegg. Pigg an' Pegg.

They point at their midriffs.

Belly button. Belly button.

*They move, laughing, toward stage right, as if to exit; the
lights dim, and they then move toward the bed as the lights go
to black.*

Scene Three

Lights up. Bedroom. PIGG and PEGG go to the bed and pull at the bedspread. They hold it up in the air using PEGG's left hand and PIGG's right hand so that they are covered from view from the shoulders down.

PIGG Do you remember Boston?

PEGG We were eighteen.

PIGG Our first display.

PEGG We had three years to run.

PIGG Until we were our own men.

PEGG Cap'n Coffin and Mr. Hunter, they set it up.

PIGG It was raining.

PEGG It was cold outside.

PIGG There was a wind.

PEGG The tent shook.

PIGG But people came.

PEGG You were nervous.

PIGG We had learned a lot of English.

PEGG Could understand their comments.

Pause.

PIGG They could have said . . . things.

PEGG Yes.

They lift the bedspread up to cover themselves entirely.

The following dialogue must come across as a duet, a recitation almost, with its own rhythm. It must seem as if the two are observers of what is being described as much as the audience is. It should be almost hypnotic.

PIGG The chairs squeaked.

PEGG When the door flapped, we shivered.

PIGG We wanted to run.

PEGG But we could not.

PIGG Cap'n Coffin has told us what to do.

PEGG The voices of the watchers rise and fall.

PIGG We hold hands.

PEGG We thought the voyage would be the worst part.

PIGG We thought saying good-bye to Mama would be the worst part.

PEGG Saying good-bye to Park.

PIGG Saying good-bye.

Pause.

PEGG Learning to understand was hard.

PIGG The rough seas were hard.

PEGG The food was hard.

PIGG Strange to eat only beef at sea.

Pause.

PEGG The journey was hard too.

PIGG But we persevered.

PEGG We always persevered.

PIGG Hard work was never a problem.

Pause.

PEGG Listen!

PIGG The voices rise and fall.

PEGG Listen!

PIGG The Cap'n.

They lower the bedspread to shoulder level.

PIGG/PEGG Ladies and gentlemen.

PIGG Here we have a wonder.

PEGG All the way from the Orient.

PIGG You won't believe this.

PEGG Let me present Pigg-Pegg.

PIGG The wonder boy.

Their inner hands appear and grasp the top of the spread so that all four hands can be seen.

PEGG They gasp.

PIGG We want to run.

PEGG The Captain says, "Lower your mainsail."

PIGG We are afraid.

PEGG "Move it now, boys," he growls.

PIGG He is a big captain.

PEGG We are only boys.

They lower the bedspread to reveal the join. The actual join is hidden by their clothing. But the conjoining of their bodies at the breast is clearly shown, both by their stances and by the angles of their bodies.

PIGG There is silence.

PEGG The men whisper.

PIGG "Holy smoke" and "By the hokey," they say.

PEGG A woman faints.

They drop the bedspread to the floor and walk downstage, engaging the audience with their eyes.

PIGG “Step forward,” says the Captain.

PEGG We step forward.

PIGG The people at the front step back.

PEGG “Turn around, boys,” says the Captain.

PIGG (*Both turning.*) We turn and face the crowd again.

PEGG “Show them your arms,” he says.

PIGG (*Both raise their arms.*) We shake our arms in the air.

PEGG “Show them your feet,” he adds.

PIGG (*Both lift their legs.*) We lift our legs up and down.

PEGG The heads in the crowd lift up and down.

PIGG “Hear them play,” he says.

PEGG The crowd looks around in wonder.

PIGG We take out our flutes.

They reach into their pockets.

PEGG They gasp and fall silent.

PIGG We play, each like the image of a mirror.

They play “Beautiful Dreamer”: a few plaintive bars.

PEGG We stand still.

PIGG Put our flutes away.

PEGG We are nervous.

PIGG We wait.

Pause.

PEGG “A dollar,” says the Captain.

PIGG The crowd murmurs.

PEGG They paid their dollars at the door.

PIGG They do not understand.

PEGG “A dollar in,” he says.

PIGG “And a dollar to touch.”

PEGG The crowd gasps and falls back.

PIGG Silence.

PEGG We look back at them.

PIGG “Come and touch it,” he urges.

PEGG “See, it’s real.”

PIGG “Who is going to be the first?”

PEGG We step forward again.

PIGG The crowd moves back.

PEGG (*Illustrating.*) We beckon.

PIGG Those at the back—

PEGG Begin to shuffle out.

PIGG/PEGG They will not touch us. (*Beat.*) They are the boys now.

Lights to black.

Scene Four

Lights up to reveal PIGG and PEGG downstage right. They move to center stage and look out at the audience. They move upstage left.

PIGG What men we have become. Houses. Lands. Servants. Children—imagine! You with eleven and me with ten. Silver spoons and gold coins hidden—

PEGG Shh.

PIGG Sal and Addie. Strange, that: two sisters fighting so. I always thought our destiny was to be death at the hands of the cholera.

(To the audience. Cupping his ear.) I can still hear Mama. After each one was taken, it was the same . . .

PEGG Sadness. Resignation. How could you ever forget her?

PIGG The Supreme Being was a—

PEGG Don't!

PIGG I can hear her words now.

(As Mama. To the audience.) You need a lot of children. The Supreme Being needs more than his fair—

PEGG Stop!—

PIGG (*Continues as Mama. To PEGG.*) Share! There is no doubt, he makes and he takes. That's how it is. That's how it always was. In my mother's time, *her* mother's time. It was never different. It will never change.

PEGG (*Reflects.*) That is true. It is strange. He makes one and makes him sick. Then they are no use. Not to us, not to the Supreme Being. Why does he need to make a child sick and then harvest him? Why?

PIGG (*His head cocked, his finger to his lips briefly to quieten PEGG.*) I remember. That time. You were there. Or not there. I cannot remember you, but all my life that image has been like a curtain fallen between what is in my head and the world I see outside.

That time. That one. Ourselves and—and—Ching.

Of course we were there. We could not see then, but later, when Mama told us so we would know how it had been.

She said . . .

PEGG What, Pigg, what did she say?

PIGG (*He speaks slowly and carefully.*) She said, and these were the words. (*As Mama.*) You make them and you grow them in your belly.

The year of the dog or the year of the dragon, it makes no difference. They wriggle and twist, they swim and they kick.

And their time comes, and they get born through your pain and tears.

And you know they were made inside you but that they don't belong to you.

PEGG That is all true.

PIGG (*As Mama.*) And boy or girl, it's not your choice.
Big or small.

And you watch them play and you know most of them will die.

Making and taking. That is the way it is. (*To the audience.*)
So Mama said.

*They move to center stage and sit on the end of the bed.
They sit quietly, their elbows on their knees and their hands
supporting their heads. The silence is just long enough to
underline the previous dialogue.*

PEGG (*Gesturing to PIGG to stay still.*) Shh!

PIGG What?

PEGG He's talking. Saying something. That it's not . . .
the way it is.

*There is a long silence. PEGG looks out, as if seeing a scene
above the audience.*

PIGG Why? Why so many that went wrong?

PEGG It just happens. (*He flaps his hands helplessly.*)
That's why he puts them in rooms all together up here.
Up there, I mean.

No, that's not right either. It's like here and there all at the
same . . . I'm going, anyway. Soon, I think.

He thinks they're company for each other, putting them in
all together like that.

PIGG Why so many, Pegg?

PEGG I suppose it just turns out that way.

PIGG He must be able to do something about—

PEGG He tries! He tries.

PIGG (*Sourly.*) Not enough.

PEGG (*Pleadingly.*) It's different from what you think. Try and understand.

PIGG (*Pushing him.*) He's responsible, isn't he? For all this? For everything?

PEGG Yes. Well, the Old Fellow mostly. But he's never around. So the Big Fellow, I suppose. Who else?

PIGG Well, then. How can a Supreme Being start out to make a child and end up with two as one, two-in-one. What happens when one dies?

PEGG You don't think it's not on my mind all the time, do you? Right now? This moment? Right here?

PIGG I suppose not. (*He feels PEGG's hands.*) You're getting colder all the time.

PEGG Listen, Pigg. Listen. He, he . . . says it beautifully. It sort of . . . makes sense, the way he talks of it.

He bends down, picks up an imaginary stone. The following speech must be slowed, using the punctuation breaks to build the drama through pauses.

(*As Big Fellow.*) You skim stones on the pond. Maybe like the one at the bottom of the big meadow.

Each one the same.

Flat and round. Same weight, even.

(*Illustrates. To the audience.*) You heft them and they could be the same stone. So you draw back your arm, and you use your finger to make it spin. Let go. And it twirls as it

leaves your hand and sits on the wind and it winds down toward the water.

And when it hits, it just splashes a little, and it sings up again and then bounces again, each time a smaller, lower bounce because it's losing power.

And the water throws out ripples, and at length it makes one last little kiss on the surface and settles and sinks out of sight—

PIGG I remember when we fished in the delta—

PEGG (*Ignoring him; as Big Fellow.*) And it's gone.

And you do the same thing, again and again, and each one twirls and skims and settles like the last.

A child can do it. Even we know that.

He holds up his finger to ensure PIGG's full attention.

But there's something strange. (*Voice rising.*)

You know how to choose the stone and how to spin it and you do it each time exactly the same, but somehow sooner or later—

PIGG I know—

PEGG (*As Big Fellow.*) The stone hits and skims and hits, and then, instead of skimming, it hits wrong, and it cartwheels and splashes, and it's gone, dead in the water.

PIGG I know. What sadness.

PEGG (*Sadly, shaking his head.*) Hear what he's saying. No matter how hard you try, how right you get it time and again, it's always the same.

There is no reason, nothing different.

I don't think even the Big Fellow can explain it.

Sooner or later something changes.
Something happens. It's a wonder.
No matter how hard you try, something always happens.
You do it often enough and a lot happens.
And always there's a Doc Roberts and his freak show.

PIGG Crossed eyes.

PEGG Yes.

PIGG (*Indicating different points in the audience.*) No brains. Eyes missing. Monsters.

PEGG Yes.

PIGG Dwarves.

PEGG (*Irritated.*) Look, it's enough.

PIGG So sad. And every so often, something really big.

PEGG That . . . also.

PIGG Two-in-one!

PEGG Don't go on about us.

PIGG We were a big . . . stone that didn't bounce.

PEGG Can you imagine? The one that comes out first is mostly bigger. Think of poor Mama.

PIGG I cannot.

PEGG Get one out and it's not finished.
And then maybe a foot or an arm.

And Mama thinks it's just twins, but there is a strange kind of band joining the two of them.

And when the little one comes Mama sees it.

He pulls PIGG to his feet in agitation. They range between downstage center and the bed for the rest of the scene.

PIGG I came first.

PEGG You were the little one. Always second.

PIGG Say "us." Say "us." We are us since we became men.

PEGG No, you are wrong.

It's one baby to her because it's joined.

Two heads, four arms, and four legs. Two bodies, even. Still, it's one to her.

It always was, it always will be. And we got bigger and learned to run around, do everything like with a mirror. And Mama calls us he, and our name is Pigg-Pegg. And Pigg thinks the other one's part of him, and I think you're part of me—

PIGG When we were children. (*Urgently.*) Only then, not now.

Then, we were I.

Now, we are we.

You do your dying on your own. I do my living on my own.

PEGG (*Illustrating more casually this time.*) It's simple. The stone skims and skips and skims and skips again and then splash!

It's gone.

And sometimes it skims and skips and bang! (*Clicks fingers.*) Nothing.

The Supreme Being cannot predict . . .

He waves his arms helplessly.

Uncertainty. It is not predictable.

So we were joined but separate. How could we have expected a normal life?

What do people think we feel?

They sit down and talk face to face.

PIGG What do you think I feel now, today, here?

If you die, I may survive, if I can . . . can . . . separate our togetherness.

If you die, already separate, I may survive.

But you may also survive, without me or with me.

What do we do, Pegg?

Lights to black.

Scene Five

Lights up. Bedroom. The twins lie on the bed, legs hanging over the end and feet touching the floor.

PIGG I'm cold.

PEGG I can feel you.

PIGG (*Plaintively.*) I think it's over. I'm finished. That's it.

PEGG Persevere! You can't give in.

PIGG I'm tired.

PEGG I know.

PIGG I'm frightened.

PEGG Of what?

PIGG Of being . . . where you are. Beyond. In a strange place.

PEGG *sits up, pulling PIGG up with him. He gestures around the stage.*

PEGG It's all right. It's different, but it's somewhere. (*Pushes at PIGG.*) Anyway, I have not gone anywhere yet.

PIGG My head is all confused. It's happened at last. After all these years. What I feared and imagined from . . .

PEGG When?

PIGG From . . . from the time we stopped being Pigg-Pegg and you became Pegg and I became Pigg. When we came to this great land.

Silence. PEGG moves his head from side to side, considering. At last he nods to himself and turns to PIGG.

PEGG Dr. Curtis. Wanting to help.

They smile in complicity; this is a familiar game they play.

PIGG New York it was.

PEGG Boston.

PIGG Somewhere, then.

PEGG *elbows* PIGG.

PEGG You never could remember.

Pause. PIGG and PEGG recall the occasion.

PIGG I want to separate you.

PEGG It's not natural.

PIGG You boys need a normal life.

PEGG A hot iron.

PIGG A piece of rope. He called it a ligature.

PEGG A saw.

PIGG Would we survive?

PEGG There must be blood vessels.

PIGG Muscle.

PEGG Tendon.

PIGG (*Aping voice.*) My aim's to cut 'em and hot-iron 'em and sew you boys up again. You should survive.

PEGG Of course there might be . . .

PIGG Complications.

PEGG The unexpected.

PIGG Sudden failure.

PEGG A flow of blood.

PIGG Some lingering illness.

PEGG Fright.

Pause. Now fully serious.

PIGG That, too. I should know. Look at me.

PEGG Don't think about it.

PIGG I'm shivering. Light-headed.

PEGG How do you know? You look fine to me.

PIGG I'm going to try and stand.

PEGG Don't. You'd fall.

PIGG I know. I've got to try.

PEGG I can't help.

PIGG You've got to.

PEGG It's not the same when you're up here.

PIGG *attempts to stand, pulling at PEGG to come up with him. He falls back down.*

PIGG Lift!

PEGG I can't.

PIGG Don't resist! Be strong!

PEGG It won't work. What are you doing?

PIGG The wash stand. The razor.

PEGG You'll fall.

PIGG I've still got to try.

PEGG I won't resist. You're right. It's the only solution.

PIGG There. Feet on the floor.

PEGG Firmly. Stick close.

PIGG How can you joke?

PEGG Closer than normal, then.

PIGG That's the problem. (*Rages.*) Always the problem.

He tries to stand up and half pulls PEGG up with him again, but has to sit down, exhausted from the effort. It is clear that PEGG is trying to help.

If I turned to one side, you were there. On the other side, too. I could never be separate, have my own soul.

PEGG I'm sorry.

PIGG I could never run up steps without you. Sleep on my side.

PEGG I remember.

PIGG When you caught a fever, I got ill. I could feel it when you trembled.

God, I'm cold. Are you not cold?

PEGG It's strange. I don't feel any temperature. As if I left my body and disconnected.

PIGG That's just it. *You're* all right now. Look at me.

PEGG Each of us was part of the other.

PIGG (*Nodding.*) Dr. Curtis.

PEGG How do you go to the toilet, boys—pass a motion?

PIGG How did he think?

PEGG Do you take it in turns?

PIGG Of course we used a two-holer.

PEGG Out in the backyard.

PIGG Like any normal person.

PEGG Where did you get these fancy clothes?

PIGG The little Jew man.

PEGG The one in the town. Silverman.

PIGG He never minded.

PEGG "Hello, gentlemen," he said.

PIGG "Meet another one who plays a different game from the one in town."

We were all different.

PEGG Passed no remark.

PIGG Never wanted to make rude inquiries.

PEGG Touch it.

PIGG Never talked about it.

PEGG To our neighbors.

PIGG "I'll need a large bolt of cloth. You'll understand that," he said.

PEGG "Yes, Mr. Silverman."

PIGG "Seventeen dollars a person."

PEGG "That's fine, Mr. Silverman."

PIGG "Plus five dollars to cover . . . to cover your togetherness."

PEGG "We understand."

PIGG "No offense."

PEGG We went back.

PIGG The next week. Remember?

PEGG How could I forget?

PIGG Our first real suit.

PEGG He found a way to tailor it for us.

PIGG I remember.

PEGG So when we stood close, no one would notice.

PIGG And if we wished to stand wider apart, we were artfully dressed.

PEGG We were young men then.

PIGG Confident.

PEGG We had a good show.

PIGG We could display anywhere.

PEGG All we needed was ourselves.

PIGG It was a good show.

PEGG We could display anywhere.

PIGG Standing up.

They stand up and sit down twice.

PEGG Walking over to the people on the side.

They walk downstage left and bow.

PIGG Walking to the people on the other side.

They walk downstage right and bow.

PEGG Standing right up against the crowd.

*They come fully downstage and peer down at the front row.
To the audience.*

PIGG Because we wore good suits.

PEGG Mr. Silverman's.

PIGG People respected that.

PEGG We looked after our business.

PIGG Put our dollars in the bank.

PEGG We saw the world.

PIGG We saw everywhere.

PEGG Do you remember, Pigg?

*He throws his arm over PIGG's shoulder, and PIGG puts his
arm around PEGG's waist.*

PIGG I remember, Pegg. (*Silence.*) Always together.
(*Shakes head sadly.*)

PEGG Boston.

PIGG Philadelphia.

PEGG New Orleans.

PIGG San Francisco.

PEGG New Jersey.

PIGG Louisiana.

PEGG North Carolina.

PIGG South Carolina.

PEGG We saw them all.

PIGG They all saw us.

PEGG Hotels.

PIGG Saloons.

Pause.

You liked them.

PEGG Churches.

Pause.

You didn't care.

He points at the votive lamp.

Don't let the votive light go out on us.

PIGG Tents.

PEGG Exhibition centers.

PIGG We played them all.

PEGG They all came.

PIGG We danced.

PEGG We played flutes.

They mime playing the flute while humming the first few bars of "Beautiful Dreamer."

PIGG We did handstands.

They illustrate.

PEGG We did headstands.

They illustrate.

PIGG We did backward flips.

(Sadly, looking over their inner shoulders.) We were young then.

Pause.

PEGG We sang songs.

PIGG We recited poems.

PEGG We played poker.

They retreat to the bed and sit down, at full distance from each other. PIGG takes a pack of cards out of his pocket and deals two hands very professionally.

You were always the best.

PIGG We played shuttlecock.

They bend down to look under the bed. They reach in and pull out two badminton rackets. PIGG also pulls out a shuttlecock.

They bat the shuttlecock back and forth for a few moments until PIGG misses.

PEGG I liked a glass of whiskey after we played.

PIGG I hated the fumes.

PEGG It kept me warm.

PIGG (*Angrily.*) You didn't have to get drunk. Where did that leave me?

PEGG It kept me sane.

PIGG (*Contemplatively.*) There's that.

PEGG We had to persevere.

PIGG Still, they came.

PEGG We always persevered.

PIGG We made them come and see.

PEGG Boys.

PIGG Girls.

PEGG Rich.

PIGG Poor.

PEGG Farmers.

PIGG Salesmen.

PEGG Storekeepers.

PIGG Prospectors.

PEGG Cheats.

PIGG They all wanted to see.

PEGG Yes.

PIGG Our eyes.

PEGG Ears.

Silence as they each recall and rub their hands over their faces.

PIGG Before each show in a new place.

PEGG The doctors came.

They pause, reflectively.

PIGG Measuring.

PEGG Checking.

PIGG Doubting and believing.

PEGG Prodding.

PIGG Tapping.

PEGG Weighing.

PIGG Squeezing.

PEGG Open wide. (PIGG *does so.*)

PIGG Stick out your tongue. (PEGG *does so.*)

PEGG (*Points. To the audience.*) Read the letters.

PIGG On the top line.

PEGG Can you feel this?

PIGG Can you hear that?

PEGG Do you talk together?

PIGG Do you think together?

PEGG Do you get sad together?

PIGG And . . .

Pause.

PEGG That too.

PIGG Do you urinate together?

They shake their heads in puzzlement.

PEGG What a strange word.

PIGG Do you . . . ? Do you . . . ? Do you . . .

His tone drops, tailing off. Pause.

PIGG/PEGG Let me see your private thing.

Lights to black.

Scene Six

Lights up in the bedroom. The bed that was in the center has been split into two beds, placed on either side of the stage. PIGG and PEGG lie on top of the bed at stage right. PIGG begins to thrash about, restless. After a few moments the lights dim so that only the beds are lit. The remaining stage is in darkness.

PIGG (*Agitated. Aside.*) Sal? Sal? Sally! She won't answer. That's it. She's not here.

Sally! Can you hear me?

He cups his hand to his ear.

That's her. No, it isn't. No, it can't be.

It's not Sal's day, is it? I must stay calm. I wish Pegg was here, I mean listening. He'd know what to do. (*Shakes PEGG, grumbling.*) Don't keep going asleep!

Pause.

Addie! Addie! Listen, Adelaide, it's me, Pigg.

Come upstairs and help me. Ride over and go get Sally, will you? I need help.

He listens, fruitlessly.

Come over to my house, Sally. Maybe you need milk and some oatmeal, all those mouths to feed. Sally! Please listen, wherever you are.

Go get the big bucket and ride over here. Addie has a full larder. She always insists on that.

Pause.

Oh God. Nothing to insist on now.

Let me listen.

Pause.

Nothing to be heard. Just silence.

He lies back against the pillows. To the audience.

He never left me before. We were always together.

I never had to look at a mirror in my life. I just looked at him, Pegg.

He said the same. We never needed a mirror in our homes, not even to shave by. No wonder we used so much cotton, stanching the blood.

Pause.

Mind, I was a little bit smaller. Just an inch or two. And lighter.

God, I can't believe it's over.

He sits upright, calls out.

Addie! Time to get up!

Cows to be milked, children to be fed. (*To the audience.*)
She must be out in the barn, or churning in the dairy.

He shakes his head sadly.

No use. (*Points across at the bed to his left.*) I know Sal will be working already. Her bed must be cold.

Pause.

She won't come now. It's too late. We were always up as the sun rose. The best farmers in the valley. Everyone knew it.

We could dig all morning, sow all the afternoon, and then harvest in the evening as the sun died.

The following is directed at an unheeding PEGG. To be taken slowly, elegiacally.

God, it's over. I'm finished. That's it.

Look, my cheeks feel cold to the touch. (*Illustrates.*)

My brow isn't sweating.

My legs feel different already. Here, look, feel them.

(*Displays.*) Hey? They're colder, I swear.

(*Shaking PEGG's shoulder.*) You don't notice because you're so cold. Everything else seems warm to the touch.

He lifts PEGG's hand, rubs it softly, examines it. Checks it against his cheek.

It's not warm either. Here, put your hand to my breast. (*Illustrates.*) It's panic. My heart shouldn't be racing. It's not a good idea to wear a heart out.

Pause.

You know the fob watch we bought in Dublin when we arrived? Well, the one I bought.

You spent some money on a spade. You hadn't seen one with a long thin handle before. "Makes it easy to lever the sod up," you said. "Better for both of us."

Pause.

Well, anyway. I liked the watch. Four little diamonds. Twelve, three, six, and nine. The north, the south, the east, and the west.

It kept fine time, just a few seconds lost in a day. I can't understand why time is different between Dublin and here, or even in Meklong. Six hours, they say.

Pause.

And yet the sun rises and the sun sinks everywhere. It gets light and it gets dark. In and out, up and down. The same old earth and the same old sun.

Many days I stood in the field—Pegg, too—and we watched the new sun throw light upon the dust below, where we'd dug and broken the sod.

Pause.

I liked the earth, brown, crumbling, in my hands.
(*Illustrates.*) It took the seed in, nurtured it, let it grow through to the light, form leaves, and stretch to the sky. It seemed solid somehow.

Better than the water, although my first memory is water. Diving. Fishing with sharpened wands. Like a porpoise. The two of us like fish, darting, curving, splashing, diving.

He shakes his head, reflecting on the memory.

Mama would have starved without us.

And Park. He was the eldest. So old I thought he was my uncle. He was tied so deep into the earth, a rooted tree, that he could never even think of leaving. He never did. Poor Park. He must be dead now.

Pause.

Like me. It's over. I'm finished. That's it.

Pause.

I can feel death come creeping through my body.
I thought it was sudden, like sunrise. Not slow, like
sunset.

Sunrise comes from nowhere: flash!

Sunset settles so gently there is no single point of change
from light to dark.

That's me. My body alive, just my feet slipping into
death. But by the time you realize that, your knees have
died as well.

He flaps his hands.

Alive yet dead.

Look, my hands are fine. (*Illustrates.*)

But my feet are dead. Look!

His feet move with just a hint of jerkiness.

Well, they feel dead.

(*Pokes PEGG. To the audience.*) It's his fault. We never
talked. Well, not about that.

"Ladies first." "After you." Meaningless talk was all we did.
All the stuff about life and death we ignored.

Muses. Then speaks slowly.

I'm alive. But I know I'm finished. It's over.

But you can never let yourself think it's going to be you.
It's always the other fellow.

As long as you can think, you're alive; and when you don't think, you're asleep.

But you don't *know* that you're not thinking.

(*Puzzled.*) So you're never asleep to your own awareness?

And you're never dead.

Pause.

Unless you are. Oh God.

Lights to black.

Scene Seven

Lights up. PIGG and PEGG stand in the stage-right space. Faintly, behind, there is a wooden cross with the word CHING on it. In front of the cross a small mound indicates a grave. The moon is above, so the whole scene, palely lit, has a ghostly quality. The double bed is rejoined in the center space.

PIGG I had a dream, so large it filled my head from east to west. (*Opens arms wide.*)

PEGG I had a dream too.

PIGG You cheated; you were listening to mine.

PEGG How could I hear you? I was listening to whispers.

PIGG Well, when the dreams filled up my head, you could; then you had a little dream made up of my leftover dreams.

PEGG Leftovers. That's right. All I got from you. Dreams and leftovers.

Leftover dreams.

What's a dream anyway, hey?

It's pictures. In your head. Very vivid, too.

Not true and not false.

Or, not true *or* not false.

What am I saying? I mean, either true or either false.

In the following scene the two move about.

PIGG This is my always dream. All my life. Once each moon, or every three months, no matter. Always it would come. From where I do not know. Do not know why.

Except it carries me like the riding of a wild horse, bringing me from where I do not know to where I do not know. It is where my meaning lies.

An overheard story to my sister, perhaps. A dream, maybe. But more real inside (*Points at his head.*) than outside. (*Gestures out to the audience.*) I have a heart, and Pegg has a heart. But mine is broken, since I got the always dream. This is perhaps why my heart cannot now beat for Pegg also.

Shh! She talks now, my mama, in the dream. (*Cries with his hands to his face.*) I must listen.

She speaks of me and from me and by me and to me.

The lights change to leave PIGG and the grave spotlit. Behind the grave the image of an Asian woman can now be seen.

PIGG (*To the audience.*) Listen! It is Mama!

(*As Mama. Still to the audience.*) I want to die myself. Before I see another one taken from me. I never thought I would want Ching to stay alive, not to be taken from me. I have nothing now, nothing.

Pigg-Pegg is gone beyond, dead to me.

I don't know why he never contacted me.

I don't know why he never returned.

(*Flatly.*) So.

(*Heavily.*) The Supreme Being has enough for now.

He turns and gestures back at the grave.

Alone like this is the end. All has finished. Everything has stopped.

My son who was, is no longer. Just a name. Just a burst of sadness.

He touches his breast.

Now he is hot in my heart. Like a new blossom. Soon he will grow faint, like the image of his father.

The blossom will dry and shrink and blow off the branch. Waiting for a new role, new blossom, new life.

Pause.

Except all my blossoms have died. I am too old to grow any more.

I have given all I can to the Supreme Being. I am dry like the riverbed before the rains come.

Pause.

(*He goes to stand by the grave.*) Poor Ching. At last he rests. He was born, he lived, and now he is dead.

Pause.

(*Dismissively.*) His living was nothing. His death a whisper of air. Nobody cares. Just me because I am his mother. A mother has to care, do the remembering. I always cared.

PIGG leans down to touch the cross.

Things never felt right from the start. When he kicked, it felt like a dog with a limp.

But still I believed it would be well, all would come to pass. I lit my votive lamps, laid my fears in the care of the Supreme Being.

But I knew something was not right, knew the Supreme Being had forgotten me.

Just for an instant. (*Clicks his fingers.*) One instant. It was enough.

PIGG *holds his belly.*

And then the liquids came, and it was my time.

You cannot understand.

(*Fiercely.*) And because I was swollen like a whale and the flow was like a river, my baby got ready to come, and in pain and suffering he came, like a whale forcing his way through a wooden fish barrel.

Pause. He goes to sit on the end of the bed.

And I felt his head come and push, (*Groaning.*) and come and push, and push and push and push and squeeze out, so I could at last rest before his body followed.

(*Panting.*) But there was something else, and that was another head tucked in under his neck and above his shoulder, and that had to come too.

His head emphasizes each word. The lights increase their illumination of PEGG, who shows signs of life, of movement, shaking his head as if struggling to come awake.

And so, push and push and push, and squeeze out before two sets of shoulders forced themselves out like a whale forcing itself out of a water bucket.

PIGG *stands and tiredly walks back to the grave. He drops slowly to his knees and then leans forward to straddle the grave indicated by the mound. Supported on his arms and knees, he looks from PEGG to the grave. PEGG kneels as upright as he can.*

(*As himself. To PEGG.*) It was a hard night. Mama said it seemed like hours. It went on forever.

Pause.

(*As Mama. To the audience.*) Push and squeeze. Squeeze and push.

And the old women helping me and holding me, taking hold of poor Pigg-Pegg as he struggled out.

“Is he breathing?” I would cry, and they would say, “He still lives,” and I would get energy from that and push and squeeze again and again.

Pause.

I was like a fish flapping on the bottom of the boat. Twisting and gasping. Flipping up into the air.

But at last no more movement from within me, my body capable of no more either.

And so it was when his four feet were taken out. And the old women were crying, moaning and rocking, passing Pigg-Pegg around and crying out that the Supreme Being had abandoned me.

As Mama, PIGG, agonized, goes down onto his elbows and knees, his head hanging. He grieves and then sits up on his hunkers. PEGG is now clearly able to help him move.

(*To the audience.*) He was laughing, too. I could tell he was.

When the pains began again, I thought, “This is not natural, but perhaps the Supreme Being wishes to punish me some more, perhaps I have sinned, and I need to pay for my sins.”

Pause. To PEGG.

So I began to twist and moan, moan and twist, and when I cried out finally because I could not tolerate the pain

and was ready to die, one of the women came and looked between my legs, and she cried out, “A baby! A baby! Another one comes!” and at that moment I knew I . . . I must say this, Pegg. Knew I hated the Supreme—

PEGG Mama!—

PIGG (*As Mama.*) Being!

PEGG Mama! Let me hold you.

He takes PIGG gently by the shoulders, his handling of him underlining how frail Mama is. PIGG looks closely into PEGG’s face, questioning him.

PIGG Why did he choose Mama? Why did he play with her, make a joke?

They stand up from the grave and walk haltingly toward the image of Mama and regard it.

So that she screamed and she shouted and hated the Supreme Being—

PEGG *places his hands over his ears.*

PEGG Don’t!

Pause. PIGG attempts to pull a distressed PEGG downstage.

PIGG (*As Mama. To the audience.*) But you cannot put a baby back.

It’s like a leaf falling or a river flowing or a cloud changing shape.

Nothing can be changed.

PEGG tries to cover PIGG's mouth to prevent him from talking on, but PIGG continues as Mama, implacably, speaking throughout to the audience.

And into all this noise and blood and pain came a head . . .
Not a proper head but a long one and a narrow one and
I was weeping and the old women were moaning and the
head got born by itself because no one would touch the
Supreme Being plaything. So Ching arrived without any
struggling or twisting and turning.

He pauses sadly.

And the old women wanted me to kill him right there.
But how can a mother kill her own baby?
So I thought there must be a reason, a why and a because,
a reason why the Supreme Being had given me these two.
So I held them in my arms.
Pigg-Pegg in my right arm and Ching in my left arm.
And I whispered to the Supreme Being, "Thank you for
giving me a fine strong boy."
(*Pauses.*) But I didn't say anything to him about Ching.

*PIGG kneels down, drawing PEGG down with him, and
stretches his arms wide. He rocks an imaginary baby from
side to side. He speaks as Mama with increasing drama; he
addresses himself to PEGG but also to the audience, as if seeing
them both as a single listener.*

But what do you do with a baby like Ching?
One leg and no room for another.
One arm and no room for another.
One eye in the middle of a face with no nose.
A monster.

Pigg-Pegg was perfect by comparison.

And what do you do with a monster?

Stick a bamboo spear in his heart?

Place him in the river, watch him sink below the surface?

Burn him on the fire, leave no trace, (*Making a sprinkling gesture.*) sprinkle the ashes on the waves?

It is easy to do that, or just to leave him in the jungle for the animals to find.

But when Ching the monster comes from within your body, grew from you and of you, his memory cannot be killed beneath the waters or through fire.

They stand up and walk downstage left. PIGG shakes his head in disbelief at the story he has just told. He takes both of PEGG's hands in his own, the conversation now directly between them. PIGG speaks as himself.

You know our story. You have listened to my dreams often enough. Do you remember still? Now that you're nearly, nearly . . . gone from me.

You never had the strength to carry this dream alone.

PEGG The dimness comes, Pigg.

PIGG How could you not remember? Hiding him quietly all those years? For the world he did not exist, and he lived only because he existed for you and for me and for the others.

And Mama buried him in a quiet place at a quiet time.

Pause.

(*To the audience.*) Who could forget a dream like this? A story like this? Who could *live* with a story such as this? My dream is ended. Ching gone and Pegg going. Me too,

probably. Pigg is Pigg because Pegg is Pegg. We exist only because the other exists.

He raises his right arm and points to his right. He slowly lowers his right arm until it hangs by his side.

It's over. That's it.

Lights to black.

Scene Eight

Lights up. The center stage is a bedroom as before. The stage-left space has a bench with two hats resting on it. Some trees can be seen vaguely in the background. The stage-right space has a bench also, under a pergola, with two wickerwork figures seated on the bench. The backdrop is the veranda of a board house.

PIGG and PEGG lie face down on the floor between the bed and the ewer stand where the razor is. PIGG is struggling to pull PEGG across the floor. He is grunting and exclaiming.

PIGG Come on, you bastard! Help me. Can't you see I'm unable to pull you all on my own? I've got to get to the ewer, drink some water. I'm parched.

PEGG So am I!

PIGG I need it. You don't. Come on!

PEGG You have to do this on your own.

PIGG I've always had to do things on my own.

PEGG That's not true. I was beside you, everything you did.

PIGG Oh yes. (*Pause.*) Pulling away hard in the other direction. I was never free of you.

PEGG I was the practical one.

PIGG I was the dreamer. You said that often enough.

PEGG Well, you were.

PIGG Come on, move your leg, just an inch!

PEGG Go on, Pigg. I moved that time. Pull hard.

PIGG *wriggles and strains, moves a foot forward, grunts and collapses.*

PIGG It's no use. It's over.

PEGG (*Insistent.*) It's not.

PIGG (*Surrenders.*) I'm finished.

PEGG (*Urgent.*) Keep trying.

PIGG That's it.

PEGG You can't just give up like that. You know what it means if you do. Look at me.

PIGG I'd be better off. (*Short pause.*) This is killing me.

PEGG Think of the good times.

PIGG (*Incredulous.*) Good times?

PEGG Yes. Remember? When we made our first pile?

PIGG *props himself up on his elbows. Reflects.*

PIGG I remember when we bought our house. It was a long time ago.

PEGG That's right. In Mount Airy.

PIGG Now I remember.

PEGG So do I.

PIGG We thought that no one had ever been as wealthy as ourselves.

PEGG All those displays.

PIGG All that traveling. The dust.

PEGG But it was worth it.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG We purchased hats.

PIGG They were fine affairs.

PEGG We purchased shoes.

PIGG Boots.

PEGG Those boots were the finest.

PIGG Look! Let's try them on.

He points to the set under the votive lamp.

PEGG They're mine.

PIGG No, I'd recognize them anywhere.

They stand up, easily, and walk to the boots.

PEGG Look, that's my spur. Pure silver.

PIGG Put them on. See if they still fit.

PIGG *helps* PEGG *put the boots on.*

They look fine.

PEGG Elegant.

PIGG Like an officer of the army. Let's walk.

They walk around the end of the bed and to the ewer stand at upstage left. The clack of the boots contrasts with the swish of PIGG's stocking feet.

PEGG (*Picking up the other pair of boots and handing them to PIGG.*) Here, these are yours.

PIGG It's all coming back.

He smells them.

How I polished them!

PEGG You always had a problem with them.

PIGG Me? A problem? No, I didn't.

PEGG You remember. You wanted to keep them perfect, the finest pair in the world.

And you wanted to be admired, too, when you went abroad. So what could you do? Wear them or not wear them?

PIGG You were right, Pegg. There was only one solution.

PIGG/PEGG Buy another pair!

PIGG Here, help me pull them up. There. I feel like a king again.

PEGG Or a general.

They walk together, out of step, admiring their boots.

PIGG (*Suddenly shouting.*) Attention!

PEGG (*Shouts also.*) Quick march!

PIGG/PEGG One two! One two! One two!

They march around the space, from one side to the other, skirting the bed. They pretend to maneuver forward, backward, they salute, draw swords, wheel in formation. They move in perfect synchrony. Finally they sit down, breathless, on the bench at stage left.

PEGG They were great days.

PIGG We were young.

PEGG Not so young.

PIGG That's true.

PEGG Getting on.

PIGG Ten years displaying.

PEGG Eleven.

PIGG Eleven, then.

PEGG Time to settle down.

PIGG It was a fine house.

PEGG It was a fine area.

PIGG It suited us.

PEGG Not too big, not too small.

PIGG Our first big bed. (*Points.*)

PEGG He was a good carpenter.

PIGG It had to sit downstairs.

PEGG Do you remember? It had to be made inside the house.

PIGG It still had to sit downstairs.

PEGG Yes. Because there was no upstairs.

PIGG Not at that time, no. (*Reflectively.*) That is true.

PEGG The big fireplace between it and the chairs for our visitors.

PIGG Dr. Harris. Mr.—Judge—Graves. What a fine name.

PEGG Judge Jesse Franklin Graves. He liked the Franklin. Young to be a judge. He was hardly our age.

PIGG He always encouraged us.

PEGG Work the land.

PIGG Grow trees.

PEGG Set seed.

Long pause.

PIGG That, too.

Silence.

PEGG Do you remember? We could see their house.

PIGG Take out the telescope, General!

PEGG *mimes taking out a telescope.*

PEGG What a fine place!

PIGG The best between us and Wilkesboro!

PEGG Two stories!

PIGG Two daughters!

PEGG I can see them now.

He points.

PIGG (*Grabbing the telescope.*) Adelaide. Addie!

PEGG Sally Anne.

PIGG They were fine girls.

PEGG Solid.

PIGG Plump.

PEGG The way a girl should be.

PIGG Like their Mama.

PEGG Remember when she died. She was a . . . a . . .

PIGG (*Delicately.*) A very big lady.

PEGG Seven men to carry the coffin!

PIGG She was a fine woman.

PEGG She had fine daughters.

They stand up as if to leave.

PIGG Let us go to Wilkesboro for supplies.

PEGG Let us harness the surrey.

Lights one-quarter down. They place their hats on their heads and stroll off stage left. Almost immediately they reappear from stage right. Lights up. They stand in front of the two wicker figures and bow. They remove their hats with a flourish. They conduct a one-sided conversation.

PEGG Miss Sally Anne. Miss Adelaide.

PIGG Miss Adelaide. Miss Sally Anne.

PEGG How good to see you again.

PIGG A pleasure, ma'am.

They both bow.

PEGG Oh, we were on our way to town.

PIGG (*Explaining.*) Fencing posts.

PEGG Nails.

PIGG That's true, ma'am. It is a fine piece of land.

PEGG But it needs to be worked. And many fences.

PIGG We've traveled all over, seen a lot of places.
Certainly we have. This is the fairest.

PEGG It is time to settle.

PIGG Get to know our neighbors.

PEGG Pay our respects.

PIGG Is your papa in?

PEGG Then we will go inside.

They enter the house. The sound of "Beautiful Dreamer" rises gently and can be heard for the time they remain inside (perhaps ten or fifteen seconds). PIGG and PEGG come out of the house and put on their hats. They walk down to the wicker figures and doff their hats again, with a slightly exaggerated air.

PIGG/PEGG Good-bye, ladies.

They leave stage left. Lights to black.

Scene Nine

Lights up. Bedroom. A bench to one side. PIGG and PEGG are agitated, moving around restlessly, from bench to bed and back, sitting or standing. Their dialogue is interrupted by these movements.

PIGG What are we to do?

PEGG Where are we to go?

PIGG Our friend Dr. Harris says to hold out.

PEGG Don't be hasty.

PIGG But he is older.

PEGG Settled.

PIGG Even though he is older, he appears to have more time, less need to hurry.

PEGG Strange.

Pause.

PIGG We are . . .

PEGG Mature men.

PIGG We have made a pile and settled down.

PEGG We have erected fences.

PIGG Dug a well.

PEGG Built a house.

PIGG We have a set of silver spoons.

PEGG Four in all.

PIGG And forks. And knives.

PEGG We are men of some small substance.

PIGG Respected by our neighbors.

PEGG Our fields are green.

PIGG Our earth is rich.

PEGG There is hay in our barn.

PIGG We are of good character.

PIGG *points.*

PEGG Look! Even a votive lamp.

PIGG (*Accusingly.*) You didn't need to get a silver one.

PEGG It was necessary.

PIGG (*Nagging.*) Copper would have done.

PEGG You must give thanks.

PIGG It is enough that we go to the church for the Baptists.

PEGG They are upright and honest.

PIGG This Bible thing. It is hard to read.

PEGG It is their way of communicating with the Supreme Being.

PIGG Love my neighbor.

PEGG Sally Anne.

PIGG Adelaide.

PEGG It will never work.

PIGG It has worked thus far.

PEGG Not easy.

PIGG No.

Pause.

Life is hard. But being together makes us strong. Tending our fields, building our house, shooting ducks.

PEGG My ears ring still.

He takes his earlobes between his fingers, shaking them.

PIGG But two-in-one is best. Most of the time.

PEGG But not for Sally Anne. Or Adelaide.

PIGG No.

PEGG Papa Yates is unhappy.

PIGG "You are good men," he says.

“And my girls are good girls,” he says.

“I can see you honor and respect each other. Love, maybe. But you cannot marry.

“It would not be natural,” he says.

“My Sally Anne and my Adelaide cannot be expected to share every aspect of their lives with you two men. Always together. So close. How could you procreate?

“It does not bear thought,” he says.

“And if you have children they may be . . . not ordinary men.”

PEGG He has nothing against us, he says.

PIGG *shakes his head.*

PIGG He does not say everything. We are two-in-one. Our neighbors accept this and show respect. It is a wonder to be forgotten in the course of acquaintance.

PEGG That’s true.

PIGG But he cannot forget the country whence we came.

PEGG We are respectable men.

PIGG I am Mr. Pigg Bunker.

PEGG Me too. I am Mr. Pegg Bunker.

PIGG Good solid names.

PEGG Mr. Bunker from New York was kind to let us borrow his name.

PIGG True.

PEGG Still, we look different.

PIGG We are two-in-one.

PEGG No, we are from the East.

PIGG Mr. Yates cannot . . .

PEGG Accommodate.

PIGG That is true.

Silence.

PIGG Perhaps he is like Mama, is Mr. Yates.

PEGG Seeing us as two but one. He could not have one person marrying his two daughters.

He must believe that because we have everything in common.

PIGG (*Indignant.*) What have we in common?

PEGG Two hearts?

PIGG (*Reluctantly.*) Yes, that, anyway. Both beat.

PEGG Yes. Two lungs?

PIGG Both breathe.

PEGG Yes. Two stomachs?

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Both take in food.

PIGG And two ears to listen.

PEGG Yes. And two sets of arms.

PIGG Yes. And two sets of legs.

PEGG Two . . . privates?

PIGG (*Amused; pretends to be doubtful.*) Perhaps.

PEGG Are we two persons or one?

PIGG I don't know. Are we one person or two?

PEGG I don't know. All I know is I am me.

PIGG I know that also. But I also know you are me, too.

PEGG True. But are we each other?

PIGG Perhaps.

PEGG We come from one egg. Mama said it.

PIGG We had to.

PEGG I have often wondered.

PIGG I too.

PEGG Are you real?

PIGG Am I not joined?

PEGG But are you real? I can touch myself. I can touch you. Where is the difference?

PIGG Well, I can hear myself. From the inside.
And you, from the outside.

PEGG Am I a person?

PIGG Are you?

PEGG I don't know. Are you?

PIGG I don't know.

PEGG Neither of us knows if we are one.

PIGG Strange.

PEGG Yes.

Long pause while they reflect. Then they stand up and start to walk away in different directions. They struggle fiercely for a few moments, then sit down again, breathing heavily.

PIGG There you are. We resist each other. I know I am alive.

PEGG (*Slyly.*) But do you own a life?

PIGG (*Angry and distressed.*) How can I own a life?
Where would I find a life?

My life is your life also, every step and every breath. It is my fate.

PEGG *hugs* PIGG *briefly. Reassuringly.*

PEGG Look, of course you have a life! You love Miss Addie.

I like Miss Sally also.

You have your own feelings. You remember what you remember. You like to do what you like to do. Your desires are yours.

Your beliefs also. See, there's a difference. My beliefs, your no-beliefs.

He gestures toward the votive lamp.

Look, the flame is quenched.

Pause.

No. I am one story, you are another.

PIGG That is true. We have different stories.

Pause.

Are they going to have a happy ending?

Lights to black.

Scene Ten

Lights up on stage right. The Yates house. Evening. PIGG and PEGG sit outside the house on the bench. Beside them are the two wickerwork figures. The boys each have an arm around a figure.

PIGG Adelaide. Addie.

PEGG Sarah. Sally Anne.

PIGG You have such sweet names.

PEGG Such sweet faces.

PIGG Such temperaments.

PEGG Your dispositions—

PIGG Are all that we could wish.

Silence.

PEGG Yet what can we do now?

PIGG You will not dishonor your parents by marrying against their will.

PEGG We must do something, Sal.

PIGG I do not wish to . . . to . . . relinquish you, Addie.

He lays his head on her shoulder.

PEGG So we have decided.

PIGG Made up our minds.

PEGG To go to New York.

PIGG To see Dr. Curtis.

PEGG And to lay ourselves open to him, to his knives . . .

PIGG So he may separate us, make us two, and so satisfy your father's wishes.

PEGG For Addie, Pigg.

A very slight pause.

PIGG And for Sally, Pegg.

They pause, tilting their heads to look at the girls, as if listening.

PEGG What? We do not know. It may work.

PIGG He is not sure. Perhaps so. Perhaps not.

PEGG We have no other choice.

We want to marry our girls.

He does not want his girls to marry a two-in-one from the East. We will always be from the East, Sal.

PIGG But we need not always be two-in-one.

And perhaps in time, with acquaintance, he would no longer see the East in us, just see we are good husbands.

Silence.

PIGG/PEGG Sal? Addie? What are you saying?

PIGG You will not marry against your parents' will.

PEGG Yet you will not have us split ourselves in two.

PIGG And if we are so minded you will abandon us.

PEGG So there is only one solution.

PIGG We four will run away. We will . . . We will . . .

PEGG Elope.

PIGG That is the word. And we will go so swiftly that Papa and Mama Yates will not catch us until we are married.

PIGG *displays an air of complicity, humor.*

PEGG Mama cannot run! You are bad girls!

PIGG Disobedient.

PEGG Such wickedness!

PIGG I love you, Addie.

PEGG And I like you very much, Sally.

PIGG/PEGG Let us pack quietly.

Lights to black.

Scene Eleven

Lights up. Bedroom. The bed is center stage. PIGG and PEGG are propped up in the middle, with a wickerwork figure sitting to each side of them.

Behind, on a large backdrop of scrimlike material, are projected vague, figurelike entities, which may symbolize arms and legs; these undulate dreamily, as with bodies in congress. It is essential that bodies not be seen, just an impression of insubstantial limbs. Yet the limbs, though not overtly sexual, should clearly suggest congress.

The movement of the limbs is in rhythm with the dialogue and the action on stage. All must beat with each other.

PIGG Addie!

PEGG Sal!

PIGG What a way to win a wife! Papa and Mama Yates would not let us run away.

PEGG Still not separate.

PIGG Still two-in-one. For good or ill.

PEGG Don't be mean-minded.

PIGG We are four, yet two, yet one.

PEGG You are Pigg. No more. No less. And Sal is Sal, no more, no less. And Addie is—yours, your wife, your other. No more, no less.

PIGG Addie is mine. I grant you that. But you are mine also. And you are Sal's, so Sal is mine also.

Pause.

I am confused. Help me, Pegg.

PEGG Forget we are two-in-one. We are brothers. (*Wonderingly.*) I have never used that word before.

Pause.

Brothers. And more, we are joined.

This—togetherness, as Mr. Silverman called it—makes us different in the extreme from other men, yet identical in the extreme also.

Pause.

Forget this.

Pause.

You and I are brothers. Identical. Yet we are separate. Truly. And Sal and Addie are separate also. So we are all related; similar, yet different, separate.

Pause.

Be glad of this, Pigg.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG We have done our utmost.

Even the Supreme Being knows this.

We have accepted our togetherness all our lives yet lived as two-in-one.

We have become gentlemen, owners of slaves even, and set up house and now home.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG So now we are come of age.

We have fought and won.

For the first time we do not have to face each other, alone yet linked, but can relate to two others, separate yet related.

For the first time we can face these others as individuals, form another two-in-one as meaningful in some ways as our own two-in-one.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Now we are truly men. Do you remember, Pigg? When we dived and splashed and swam, we were proud of our fishing, giving our catch to Park or Mama. When we were still boys but felt like men?

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And then you had the dream.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And you dreamed of going somewhere. Beyond, you called it.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And Cap'n Coffin sailed us across the great world and we came to Boston town?

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And then we understood that because we were two-in-one, the great world was open-eyed at our togetherness and wanted to learn more?

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And we displayed throughout the world!

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Every city.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Every town.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Every village.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG *pauses*.

PEGG Theatres.

PIGG Halls.

PEGG Small rooms.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To multitudes.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To hundreds.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To tens and tens.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To twos and threes.

PIGG Yes.

He pauses, reflects, and nods.

Those also.

PEGG We displayed.

We walked and we talked.

We danced and we sang.

We did all that we were requested to do.

We displayed with ourselves alone.

With other men.

With Doc Roberts.

PIGG Yes.

Silence.

PEGG Do you remember the American Museum?

PIGG How could I forget?

PEGG Doc Roberts was a good man.

PIGG Decidedly. An honest man. Seventy cents in the dollar.

PEGG Eighty.

PIGG (*Corroborative.*) That, too. Eighty cents in the dollar.

PEGG So now we are come of age.

PIGG Fought. (*Reluctantly.*) And won.

PEGG It is time.

PIGG *pauses.*

PIGG (*Heavily.*) Yes.

PEGG *points.*

PEGG This is Sal.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG Here, beside me.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And Addie.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG There, beside you.

PIGG Beside me?

PEGG Yes.

He speaks as to a child.

Extend your arm.

PIGG *moves his right hand out gingerly, touches ADDIE's shoulder. He does not look at her directly. He moves his hand tentatively until it rests on her left shoulder, hardly touching it.*

PIGG Yes. A body.

PEGG Yes. Addie. Your wife.

PIGG I believe.

PEGG To be touched.

Pauses.

To be felt.

PIGG Yes. Not easy.

PEGG Not easy, no.

PIGG *surveys* ADDIE.

PIGG I can feel her nevertheless.

He explores her carefully. He touches her wickerwork face, her bonnet, her back; he lays his hand on her stomach, stiffly.

PEGG You are a man.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And she is a woman.

PIGG You are right.

PEGG Of course I am right. Let us begin.

A lengthy pause. PIGG replies at last, reluctantly.

PIGG Yes.

Lights to black.

Scene Twelve

Lights up. Bedroom. The bed has been separated again, but both smaller beds are in the stage-right space. PIGG and PEGG lie on the floor between the beds and the ewer stand, where the razor is clearly seen. They are now closer to the ewer stand. PIGG is trying to pull PEGG toward the razor on the ewer. They struggle to move. PIGG's head droops. He is exhausted.

PIGG It's no use. Leave me be.

PEGG (*Grunting.*) You can't give up now!

He tries to pull PIGG toward the ewer, slowly, with effort.

PIGG I'm done.

PEGG Look at me. Save yourself while you still have time. Go on!

PIGG *falls back.*

PIGG I'm tired.

PEGG What?

PIGG Tired of life. Tired of living.

PEGG You're not well.

PIGG I know that. I'm cold. My heart beats for you, and it beats for me. It's too much to expect.

PEGG (*Urging.*) Hold out until Dr. Harris comes. He will sever us.

PIGG How long ago did they send for him?

PEGG Hours. A few hours at least.

PIGG How far is it? Tell me again.

PEGG Ten. Maybe eleven.

PIGG Ten miles!

PEGG The road is good.

PIGG He has to harness up.

PEGG Twenty minutes.

PIGG Too long.

PEGG Fifteen, then.

Pause.

Ten, nearer ten.

PIGG He has to get his medical things together.

PEGG That's little enough.

PIGG True. But it's still dark. Look.

PEGG There is light beginning in the east. And the road is good. You know that.

PIGG *shakes his head, letting it hang in defeat. After a few moments he revives and struggles with PEGG again, inching closer to ewer and razor.*

PIGG (*Resigned.*) This is it, Pegg.

PEGG Come on! You nearly made it that time.

PIGG It's all over. I'm finished. I can feel it. You must, too.

PEGG It's only a long stretch away. Look, I stropped the blade yesterday. It's sharp.

PIGG I'm tired.

PEGG It will do the job.

PIGG Nothing will do the job.

PEGG Nothing?

PIGG Nothing.

Silence.

Are you not tired?

PEGG I told you. Since I started going from here (*Points to join.*) to there (*Points upward.*), I have no feelings at all.

PIGG None?

PEGG None. In my body I mean. (*Reflects.*) Not hot, not cold. Not strong, not weak.

PIGG I'm cold.

PEGG You don't have me to warm you.

PIGG (*Testily.*) Your body keeps me cold.

PEGG I'm sorry.

PIGG Your body weighs me down.

PEGG *tries to explain.*

PEGG It's . . . being here. I can't help you carry your own weight.

PEGG *puts his arm around PIGG's shoulder, trying to draw him close. PIGG throws it off.*

PIGG (*Angrily.*) It's not just now. You always weighed me down. You and your body.

I couldn't think but you were there thinking too.

I couldn't move unless you agreed to move as well.

PIGG *points at the two separate beds.*

I couldn't even have my own bed without you. You always had to come too.

Three days in my house.

Three days in your house.

What normal man would do such a thing?

PEGG It was Addie. And Sal.

PIGG It doesn't matter.

PEGG How could we know that they would grow to dislike each other so? It became easier to separate our houses.

PIGG (*Reluctantly.*) Maybe.

PEGG And the space. Don't forget the space. One house only for all those parents was not enough. And the children. One or two each year.

PIGG Every year.

PEGG No house could hold so many.

PIGG I suppose. (*Marveling.*) Six children when we moved to live in separate houses!

PEGG Mama would have been amazed. Imagine. Ten for you altogether, and eleven for me altogether.

PIGG You always ended up with more than me. (*Heatedly.*) When we divided our estate to live separately with our wives.

Your Sal made sure you got much of the land, and I got most of the slaves.

And after the Union War there were no more slaves, but the land remained the same.

Oh, your Sal was able to divide our possessions all right, but not us.

And when we get to divide ourselves, I suppose you'll—

PIGG *makes a lunge at the ewer stand to grab hold of the razor. He knocks it off the stand, and it falls to the ground between them. PEGG watches him, waiting. PIGG moves his hand over the razor, flexes it, then places his arm around PEGG's shoulders. They sit in silence for a short while.*

Do you remember the playhouses?

PEGG (*At a loss.*) What?

PIGG The playhouses. With all the people . . .

PEGG Oh. The actors. I remember them.

PIGG When we went to the playhouses. You remember that, don't you?

PEGG Yes, yes. Now I remember. New York, wasn't it?

PIGG Boston.

PEGG Not New York?

PIGG Maybe. But London certainly.

PEGG Wherever it was. (*Testily.*) I can remember the first one.

PIGG Doc Roberts took us.

PEGG He was a good man.

PIGG I recall what he said.

PEGG Yes.

PIGG He said . . . He said . . .

PEGG He said he had showed us.

PIGG That was true.

PEGG Showed us in every theatre—

PIGG In the world!

PEGG Yes. What an amazing thing.

PIGG Us.

PEGG You.

PIGG And me.

PEGG That's us.

PIGG In every theatre.

PEGG Every church, every hall, every tent—

PIGG (*Shortly.*) Don't go on.

PEGG Well, anyway. That one was different.

PIGG Certainly.

PEGG This time he said—

PIGG (*Excitedly.*) This time—

PEGG (*Joining in the game.*) This time, it was time—

PIGG He said that too!—

PEGG This time he would show—

PIGG That's right! Said he would show—

PEGG The theatre—

PIGG To us.

PEGG What a change.

PIGG We were not the boys.

PEGG No.

PIGG We were not to stand on the stage?

PEGG No.

PIGG Not to bow?

PEGG No.

PIGG Not to pir . . . to pir . . . What's the word?

PEGG Turn around, that's it.

PIGG In a neat circle.

PEGG No. No more of that.

PIGG This time would be different.

PEGG I remember.

PIGG This time, no bowing.

PEGG No backflips.

PIGG No games.

PEGG No. No games.

Silence.

PIGG We would not have to see the doctors first.

PEGG Before the show.

PIGG (*Deepens voice.*) Can you hear?

PEGG Can you talk English?

PIGG (*Bitterly.*) Can we see . . . ?

PEGG Your togetherness.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG And then.

PIGG Each time. And then.

PEGG Can we . . .

PIGG Can we see . . .

PEGG Can we see . . . your private thing?

PIGG (*Gesticulating. To the audience.*) I cannot think how many times we showed our togetherness.

And our eyes and our ears.

Our teeth and our tongues.

Our arms and our legs.

(*Voice rising.*) And always, each time, always the doctors said . . .

Not asking. No, not asking. Saying.

So we could not deny.

So we could not refuse.

PIGG *intones passionately, banging his fist on the ground in rhythm with his words.*

Saying, "Can we, can we, can we see, can we see your private thing?"

PEGG Do not distress yourself.

Silence. He hugs PIGG.

Each time.

PIGG That is true. Each time. Each place. Each show.
How could you believe in the Supreme Being?

PEGG It was all they wanted.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To see.

PIGG (*Heavily.*) Not alone.

PEGG No. Not alone to see.

PIGG To touch.

PEGG Not just them.

PIGG No. Not just *them* to touch.

PEGG (*Pause.*) No.

PIGG (*To the audience.*) First *they* touched.

PEGG What rudeness.

PIGG Cruelty.

PEGG Each of us they touched.

PIGG Those curious doctors.

PEGG And then.

PIGG And then.

PEGG Touch . . .

Pause.

PIGG Each other.

PEGG That . . .

Pause.

PIGG Too . . .

Long silence.

Can you imagine?

PEGG No.

PIGG (*Disbelieving. To the audience.*) Can you imagine?

PEGG I cannot.

PIGG Can you imagine? Two of us. Together from birth.
Two peas.

PEGG In a pod.

PIGG Two peas. Together.

Each, one of the other.

Each, different. Yet each, two-in-one.

And the doctors . . .

PEGG The doctors.

PIGG The doctors do not understand.

PEGG Not the conjoining.

PIGG Not the togetherness.

PEGG No. Not that.

PIGG They want to know . . .

PEGG What it means.

PIGG To be separate . . . yet together.

PEGG True.

PIGG It is not just our togetherness.

PEGG No, that is true.

PIGG It is not that they wish to understand.

PEGG No.

PIGG But . . .

PEGG Yes.

PIGG But . . .

PEGG To see our private things, each to touch the other, to be separate yet together, to touch the other . . .

PIGG True.

PEGG Do you recall the first time?

PIGG Yes. In Boston.

PEGG You recall!

PIGG (*Heavily.*) Yes.

PEGG One to touch the other.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To lay hands.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG To . . . (*Shakes head.*)

Silence.

To do things.

PIGG Yes.

PEGG That men do to other men.

PIGG *hangs his head.*

PIGG True. Also. Yes.

Silence.

PEGG May the Supreme Being let us forgive.

PIGG (*Derisively. To the audience.*) Supreme Being!

Pause.

PEGG Look, time is short.

PIGG *rubs his arms to keep warm.*

PIGG I'm cold as ice.

PEGG Look, what you were saying.

PIGG About the theatre? Oh.

That first time.

When Doc took us.

(*Gestures to the audience with open arms.*) It was magic.

The crowds! The dresses!

PEGG We wore our best suits.

PIGG That Mr. Silverman.

PEGG He did us well.

PIGG He was a man.

PEGG And the hush as the curtains opened.

PIGG What fun. The acting. The actors.

PEGG It was like regarding ourselves in a mirror.

PIGG True.

PEGG And the stories, the plots.

PIGG Great stories. Great heroes.

PEGG Yes. Great heroes.

PIGG Always frustrated.

PEGG Their quest denied.

PIGG But heroes are strong.

PEGG Not to be denied.

PIGG True. So they struggle. Always a struggle.

PEGG That was the story.

PIGG And, at the end—no struggling.
Not any more.

PEGG And so they always lived.

PIGG Always.

PEGG Happily ever after.

PIGG Light from dark.

PEGG A loss recovered.

PIGG A new life.

Silence.

Those stories . . .

PEGG What about them?

PIGG Those stories . . . We loved them.

We went to the playhouses, the theatres.

Wherever we were. New York, Boston, across the ocean.
Dublin. That place.

PEGG Which place?

PIGG With all the princes.

PEGG Oh. Vienna.

PIGG Yes, Vienna. And in each place we displayed.
Were presented to those princes and lady princes.

PEGG Princesses.

PIGG Yes, those too. And in each place we went to the playhouse. The story house.

And the stories were the same.

A hero. A loss. A gain. The end.

PEGG What are you saying, Pigg?

PIGG In each story, the hero, he loses, he gains. He lives happily ever after.

That's the way it was.

A story with a happy ending.

The hero lives. Finds his lady, his . . . his princess.

PEGG Don't.

PIGG (*Angrily.*) It was true. Always that was the way.

That was why we went, remember?

To see how it ended.

To see the story end the way we knew it should.

Pause.

(*To the audience and to PEGG.*) We too had a story. We too stood on the stage.

Tents, halls, exhibition centers. Theatres also.

We showed our story to all the world.

Tried to be heroes.

Did everything we could. We did what other men do.

We dug the ground. Built our houses. Met our wives.

(*Beat.*) Went to the Baptist church. Prayed, even. Well,

I pretended, but you believed.

Pause.

All our lives we struggled to make a story. A story like all those other stories. And now, this. What did we do wrong?

Pause.

We did our best.

We kept Mama and Park and the others alive.

We were great fisher persons.

I always looked for the new sun, always looked beyond.

Felt my story was beyond.

Silence.

PEGG (*Almost apologetically.*) That wasn't all.

PIGG (*Heavily.*) No.

PEGG Don't forget . . . him.

PIGG No. I will say his name now.

PEGG You must not.

PIGG It's over.

PEGG *shakes his head.*

PEGG All those years.

PIGG Never a mention.

I thought we could leave him behind too.

PEGG We did. We thought that.

PIGG Every day I thought. (*Beat. Spreads arms wide.*) I could *see* him there. . . . Like a great eye, always watching, always a memory.

PEGG Part of our story.

PIGG Yes. It was always two-in-one.

Always Pigg-Pegg in the story we showed the world.

Always wanting to be men, just ordinary men.

But always he was there.

(*Pause.*) Ching.

PEGG Don't.

PIGG I thought I could get away.

He pauses wearily. His head and upper body slump, and he breathes heavily, moaning a little in exhaustion. PEGG cradles him, strokes his head, and helps him sit upright again. PIGG turns and places his face against PEGG's.

He was a . . . a monster.

We were three-in-one, truly.

PIGG *pauses, breathing heavily.*

I thought, "Let us leave him behind.

"Two-in-one will be better.

"And who knew, someday, one-in-one, like normal men."

PEGG (*Urgently.*) Go on. Take your chance. (*Pointing.*) Take the razor.

PIGG *ignores him, his mind elsewhere.*

PIGG I thought if we disappeared, we could undo that part of ourselves.

If we cast off Ching.

And to cast off Ching, we had to cast off Mama, and Park, and the others.

What sadness.

Long pause.

Leave our family to find ourselves.

PEGG At least we made a family.

PIGG Yes. Fine children. Good wives. Good widows too, I hope.

PEGG Just one more effort. Do it now. It's your last chance. You're freezing!

PIGG Help me. Pegg!

PIGG struggles, suddenly aroused, and frantically pats the ground between them in search of the razor. He finds it, holding it up in his fist in front of them. He falls back after the effort, so they are partly supported by the ewer stand.

PEGG Go on. Cut it. Leave me be. I'm gone anyway. I don't need you now.

PIGG You never did.

PEGG (*Cradling* PIGG.) Come on, Pigg, do it now. I stropped it last morning.

PIGG *eyes the blade, opens its slowly, hypnotically. He feels it with his thumb.*

(*Urgently.*) You were ready to do it when we went to marry Sal and Addie. You agreed to cut it . . . our togetherness. . . . You can do it now.

PEGG *takes hold of PIGG's forearm, tries to pull it down toward their join. PIGG, trancelike, ignores him and resists the pull easily. PIGG raises the blade and runs it over the hairs on his neck to test its sharpness.*

Come on, Pigg! It's your last chance! Free yourself!

PIGG *shakes his head.*

PIGG (*Flatly.*) It's over. I'm finished. That's it.

PEGG Not if you do it. Go on, I won't feel a thing. I feel nothing up here. Go on. Take your chance. Do it for yourself.

PIGG Myself?

PEGG Something just for you. Go on. For once it's nothing to do with me. Nothing! Go on, do it, Pigg!

PIGG *looks at PEGG and back to the razor. He lifts the razor high, ready to strike. PEGG covers his eyes and flinches.*

PIGG For me!

He strikes down, giving a great howl. PEGG cries out with him. The blade flashes down and impales itself in the floor between the twins' thighs. PIGG and PEGG turn to each other, embrace tightly, and fall back. Brief pause. They sit up.

PIGG Pegg?

PEGG Pigg?

They embrace again and fall back. As they do, "Beautiful Dreamer" is heard. Tableau as lights dim slowly to black.