

Cooked...Carrots

A short play

Written by

Ken Crost

Ken Crost
1632 W. Canal Circle
#921
Littleton, CO 80120
(303)797-6778

Character Description

Rubin: A man around 40, short, stocky, intense, dressed in a dark suit, white shirt and tie. The suit shouldn't fit very well, much too big for him. He should also be very disheveled, suit ripped and torn, dirt on his hands and face, and hair all messed up.

Denton A man between 30 and 40. Tall, slender, blond, more laid back than Rubin, but with an underlying hint of violence. He is dressed in a light brown suit, patterned shirt, and ugly tie. The suit should be much too small for him.

Setting: The top of a large mountain. The set should be sparse except for two blocks (which represent large rocks) for the characters to sit on, two larger blocks, upstage center, that represent the edge of the mountain, and a fake tree.

At Rise: As the lights come up slowly, Rubin climbs over the large blocks as if coming from a great distance. Exhausted, he rises and crosses to one of the rocks. He sits down and closes his eyes. Denton enters, crosses to the other rock, sits, crosses his legs, puts his hands on his lap, and closes his eyes. Denton lets out a loud sigh. Rubin quickly opens his eyes, finally seeing Denton.

RUBIN

Who the hell are you?

DENTON

Shhhh! I'm listening to the wind.

(Rubin crosses to Denton.)

RUBIN

There is no wind. They said there'd be wind, goddamn it.

(Denton doesn't move or physically respond to Rubin, and keeps his eyes closed.)

DENTON

Shhhh!

RUBIN

Don't shhhh me, buddy.

DENTON

Rubin!

(Rubin gets close to Denton.)

RUBIN

Rubin? Rubin? Just who the hell are you, anyway?

DENTON

I'm trying to concentrate. Please, Rubin? Why don't you give a try?

RUBIN

I don't know how.

(Finally looking at Rubin.)

DENTON

Just follow what I do, all right?

(Rubin watches for a moment as Denton gets into his meditation posture.)

RUBIN
(reluctantly)

Okay, I'll give it another try.

(Rubin crosses and sits. He tries to emulate Denton's position, finally closing his eyes. After a moment he opens his eyes and looks around.)

RUBIN
Shit. I've schlepped all the way up to the top of this lonely, desolate, god-forsaken mountain, crawling most of the way on my hands and knees, dirt and sand in my face and hair, struggling all the way up to the top.

(Rubin rises and crosses to Denton.)

Look, look at my hands, my fingers, raw to the bone.

DENTON
Oh, my poor Rubin.

RUBIN
And for what? Just so I could sit on this mountain and listen to the wind. And what do I get for all my struggles? Nothing, not a goddamn breeze.

(Rubin crosses back to the other rock and sits. He buries his head in his hands and starts crying. Denton rises and crosses to Rubin, putting his arms around him in a great bear hug.)

DENTON

Rubin, Rubin, Rubin. A man needs to feel important in whatever process he's engaged in, and when you sit here waiting for the wind, and nothing happens, well, it does tend to stab at your self confidence, I know, I've been there.

RUBIN

You have?

DENTON

Of course. Come, my little Ruby, try again.

RUBIN

You think?

DENTON

Yes, come.

(Denton holds Rubin's hands as he closes his eyes. Rubin listens for a moment and then jumps up and away from Denton.)

RUBIN

This isn't fair. The wind was howling like a son-of-a-bitch not five minutes ago. And now...

DENTON

Nothing.

RUBIN

Ya see, ya see what I'm talking about?

DENTON

It isn't fair, I know, Ruby.

(Rubin crosses back to his block, sits, and starts crying once again.)

RUBIN

I've tried the best I could but there should be some reward, something that says, yes you were here, you tried, but you failed. In spite of that we'll still give you some small token of our appreciation.

DENTON

What would you like, my little Ruby?

(Rubin slowly stops crying.)

RUBIN

Well, I'm not sure.

DENTON

Think, Rubin, think.

RUBIN

Well, I was thinking that maybe...

DENTON

Yes?

RUBIN

...a nice big, fat, beautiful piece of...apple pie would be nice.

DENTON

Apple pie?

RUBIN

(beaming)

Yes.

(Denton looks down at Rubin coldly.)

DENTON

(yelling)

We don't have any apple pie, or blueberry pie, or peach pie, or rhubarb pie, or any other type of pie, for that matter.

RUBIN

No?

DENTON

No.

(Rubin buries his head once again and begins to cry. Denton embraces Rubin again.)

DENTON

But we do have some nice...carrots. Some very nice cooked...carrots. Would that make you happy? Make you feel like someone cared?

RUBIN

Cooked carrots?

DENTON

Yes, very nice cooked...carrots.

RUBIN

That's funny.

DENTON

Cooked carrots, funny?

RUBIN

Yes, funny. Because goddamn it, I busted my ass trying everything I could to make this work. I failed, but not without effort and, so, I expect a little something in return. And what are you offering?

DENTON

Cooked...carrots.

RUBIN

I hate cooked...carrots. The color bleaches out, the flavor becomes bland, and they get mushy. Mushy carrots don't make it with me, got it?

DENTON

It's the best we could do on such short notice.

RUBIN

Notice? You had some advanced notice that I'd be here?

DENTON

Of course, Rubala, of course.

RUBIN

Who told you?

(Denton walks away as if trying to hide something. Rubin gets up and runs after Denton.)

RUBIN

Goddamn it, who told you I was going to be here?

(Denton crosses to the block and sits down.)

DENTON

None of your business.

RUBIN

What? Are you crazy? I come all the way up here to find out you have no pie, just stinking cooked carrots, then you drop the news on me that someone, who, according to you shall remain nameless, told you that I'd be here. That doesn't work, I can tell you that, goddamn it.

DENTON

We may have some fresh...carrots, if you'd like. I'd have to make a few phone calls, talk to a few people, but I think I can arrange some fresh...carrots.

RUBIN

Oh, sure, trying to distract me with the lure of some nice, fresh, crisp carrots. Well, I can tell you this, buddy... How fresh are they?

DENTON

When I say fresh, I mean fresh.

RUBIN

Just out of the dirt fresh or those shitty fresh frozen goddamn carrots? Because if they've been frozen, then they're not really fresh. Got it?

(Denton gets up and moves threateningly close to Rubin. Rubin slowly backs away.)

DENTON

(slowly)

Just out of the goddamn dirt fresh, got it?

RUBIN

Got it.

DENTON

That is if we have any carrots. I didn't say we did and I didn't say we didn't.

(Denton continues to pursue Rubin, who continues to back away.)

RUBIN

Whatever you have will be fine by me.

DENTON

Really?

RUBIN

Really, believe me, it's no big deal.

DENTON

No big deal?

RUBIN

No, not really.

DENTON

You got me all worked up for nothing, is that right?

RUBIN

Well...

(Denton grabs Rubin by the
lapel of his coat.)

DENTON

Made me rack my brain to think of something to mollify your angst? And you say this is no big deal, well, buddy, wait, just you wait.

(Denton pushes Rubin away.)

RUBIN

Wait? Wait for what?

DENTON

For the next time.

RUBIN

What next time?

DENTON

The next time you need my help. Think I'll be there? No, not on your life. Well, it's over, Rubin.

RUBIN

Over?

DENTON

Yes, over. Don't ever expect anything from me again.

RUBIN

What do you mean, expect anything from you? You're a complete stranger as far as I'm concerned. So, to be perfectly honest, I don't give a shit what you do.

DENTON

All right, be that way. See if I care.

(Denton starts to exit.)

RUBIN

Where are you going?

DENTON

I'm leaving and I don't want to hear any crying or whimpering as I wander off.

RUBIN

You're going to leave me up here all alone?

DENTON

Yes.

RUBIN

It's a long hike to the bottom of the mountain. Kind of lonely doing it all by yourself.

DENTON

I don't think so.

(Denton begins to exit once again.)

RUBIN

Wait, I'm sorry. Please, don't leave. I love carrots, cooked, raw, Julianned, I really don't care. It's celery that I don't like cooked. Mistake on my part.

(Denton crosses close to
Rubin.)

DENTON

Mistake?

RUBIN

Yeah, mistake.

(Denton grabs Rubin's tie
pulling him close.)

DENTON

It's too late now, my little Ruby. You crossed the line and when someone crosses the line with me, well that's that. Finished, kaput, over, got it?

RUBIN

Got it.

DENTON

Good, Rubin.

(Denton pushes Rubin aside
and exits. Rubin looks in
the direction that Denton
exited. He sits.)

RUBIN

(softly, to himself)

Son-of-a-bitch.

(We hear the sound of a car door slam, a car starting up, and finally the car screaming away. Rubin rises and runs toward the sound.)

RUBIN

Hey!

(He stops. The wind begins to blow. Rubin crosses to the rock and sits.)

RUBIN

Rubin? My name's not Rubin. (pause) At least, I don't think it is.

(Rubin hangs on as the wind howls and a look of fear crosses his face. The lights slowly fade to:)

Blackout

The End