

THE SIMPLEST THING YOU COULD IMAGINE

a short play

by Diane Exavier

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ABOUT THE PLAY

This play was inspired by an article that ran in the New York Times on Thursday July 16, 2009, written by Alan Feuer with photographs by Fred R. Conrad. The article tells a short and simple story about the Wonder Wheel at Coney Island on a rainy day. So I wrote this short and simple play about the Wonder Wheel at Coney Island on a rainy day (or days). There were plenty of articles to choose from: articles about the mayor, senate hearings, the war that never ends, wars that have just begun. There was even an article about when it's time to start clothing children who prefer to frolic in the nude. It was thoughtful and amusing. In the end I chose "At Coney Island, the Little Engine that Could" because it was good news. And though good news seems hard to come by, it still exists, as good as it ever was.

This is for The Work Office, Café con Leche, and D.J. Vourderis.

CHARACTERS

CLANCY.....an old man

LUKE.....another old man

SETTING

Summer.

Coney Island.

Gray mornings at Rudy's, a bar.

SCENE ONE

(Coney Island. Morning at Rudy's. The sky is gray and quiet. It rains lightly. Two old men sit in shelter drinking beers for brunch.)

CLANCY

I'm telling you, this is it.

LUKE

Mm.

CLANCY

I feel it in my elbow and my elbow ain't never lie.

LUKE

Yesterday, it was your knee.

CLANCY

My knee ain't never lie either.

LUKE

Mm.

(Breath. For a moment, the men look up into the short distance. The moment after, they return to their bottles.)

END SCENE

SCENE TWO

(Coney Island. Another morning at Rudy's. The sky is gray and quiet. It rains lightly. Two old men sit in shelter drinking beers for brunch.)

CLANCY

When's the last time we had sun?

LUKE

Must be twelve days now.

CLANCY

Twelve days...

LUKE

Mm.

CLANCY

Twelve days. I'm telling you. I am telling you: this is it.

(Breath)

You gotta look at the weather. The weather tells you. The weather doesn't lie.

LUKE

I thought that was your elbow.

CLANCY

My elbow where?

LUKE

Your elbow doesn't lie.

CLANCY

Yeah. Neither does my knee. But they both get it from the weather. They get the truth from the sky.

LUKE

Why don't you tell them to send back the rain?

CLANCY

If I could.

(Breath. For a moment, the men look up into the short distance. The moment after, they return to their bottles.)

END SCENE

SCENE THREE

(Coney Island. Another morning at Rudy's. The sky is gray and quiet. There is no rain. Two old men sit in shelter drinking beers for brunch.)

LUKE

Almost there.

CLANCY

Never in my life. I am amazed. I am amazed by how the light just left.

(Breath.)

You know, you never think about how you see in the dark. It's not impossible. Just different. Because it's not your eyes. It can't be your eyes because it's dark. It's more like feeling. Like touching the world around you from where you are in your skin.

LUKE

There must be a whole lot of touching going on right now. Too much, maybe.

CLANCY

That's why the sun's gotta come back.

LUKE

So this isn't it?

CLANCY

Not quite.

LUKE

What about all the feelings in your joints?

CLANCY

You testing me?

LUKE

Nope.

(Breath.)

CLANCY

Mislocated gas.

LUKE

In your joints?

CLANCY

These are afflictions I do not ask for.

(Breath. For a moment, the men look up into the short distance. The moment after, they return to their bottles.)

END PLAY