

Script

From Collaborative Writing

(Lights up on Geoffrey and Donkey. Donkey pushes a wheelbarrow. They are far stage right. Center left is Cloris, dozing and snoring in a chair next to her 'Psychoanalysis' stand. She is in a shabby chair and there is a dirty/shabby mat/blanket next to her on the ground. Also nearby is a sign that says 'Psychoanalysis', then has several amounts which are marked out from \$100/hour down to \$5, then finally 'Rates Negotiable')

GEOFFREY

Psychoanalysis, huh?

CLORIS

(bolting upright in shock)

Huh, what?

GEOFFREY

Your sign. You offer psychoanalysis?

CLORIS

(quickly gathering her wits, this is her first customer in a long time, maybe ever)

Yes. Yes, I am Cloris Watterson, Ph. D. Please, have a seat.

GEOFFREY

(Sitting down on the couch stand-in next to Cloris. You should be able to see that this is supposed to be a stereotypical analyst's couch, but it looks like a jumble of trash)

How long have you been in practice, Dr. Watterson?

CLORIS

Please, call me Cloris. No need to be formal here.

GEOFFREY

I'm Geoffrey. *((they shake hands))* See a lot of clients, Cloris?

CLORIS

Not as many now, obviously, but I used to. So Geoffrey, do you have anything you'd like to discuss?

GEOFFREY

What do you want to know?

CLORIS

Well, how did you wind up here? What have you been doing P.A.?

(Geoffrey looks confused)

CLORIS (CONT.)

Post Apocalypse.

GEOFFREY

Oh. Until this morning I was holed up in my castle with the Cowboys Cheerleaders, but I ran out of food. And more importantly, wine. So now I'm out here trying to find something to eat and drink and perhaps a little adventure to work up my appetite.

CLORIS

What happened to the Cheerleaders?

(Geoffrey shrugs and waves his hand like they just went away)

CLORIS

Hmm, I see.

(writes on her notepad)

Do you think perhaps loneliness might also have driven you out of your castle?

GEOFFREY

Cloris, you little minx you, are you suggesting what I think you're suggesting?

(Geoffrey leans in for a kiss)

CLORIS

Goodness no! I have a strict no involvement policy with my patients!

GEOFFREY

What if I weren't your patient?

CLORIS

Then you and your donkey could move along. I'm not *that* kind of businesswoman.

GEOFFREY

Look, Cloris, if I offended you, I want to apologize. You're right. I am lonely. Deserted. Desolate. And even depraved. I'd hoped to talk to you about truly intellectual matters. A conversation between equals. And yes, perhaps our heated discussions would lead to a heat in our hearts. But for now, just the talking.

CLORIS

Okay... So you still want to have a therapy session?

GEOFFREY

Yes. Yes, please, Cloris, save me from myself!

CLORIS

Right. So just settle back and let's begin.

GEOFFREY

Ready.

CLORIS

(gets out the pad of paper and a pen again. Maybe some reading glasses for extra effect)

So, tell me about your mother.

GEOFFREY

Oh, my mother. My mother! She was a cruel, calculating and cold monster who left my father and my brothers when I was only 6 months old to wander the world, destroying all who dared to get close to her. And when I meet a beautiful woman, I drop everything to be with her. Especially a beautiful, powerful woman. Especially a beautiful, powerful, insightful woman. I become her slave, Cloris.

CLORIS

(as she writes, more to herself than Geoffrey)

Co-dependent, looking for a mother figure. Transference to his therapist.

GEOFFREY

Is that what I'm doing? I find that unfathomable. Because when I sit here, so close to you and yet so far away, my feelings are not that of a son for his mother.

CLORIS

Yes, Geoffrey, it's called the Oedipus Complex. You see your mother as both someone to love and revere and someone to fornicate with.

GEOFFREY

Oh that's terrible! Do I, is that how I see her? Or how I see you, Cloris?

(he fixes on her with a gaze that is piercing, perhaps supernatural, in its power)

CLORIS

Geoffrey, I'm-I'm not feeling so good. Perhaps now would be a good time to end our session for today.

GEOFFREY

Cloris, why don't you lay down?

(he gets up off the couch and guides Cloris to lay down on it)

CLORIS

Thank you, I don't know what's come over me, but I do not feel right.

(she is getting woozier and woozier, like she drank some Love Potion #9 and is suddenly in love with Geoffrey)

GEOFFREY

Cloris, it's going to be just fine

(he straddles Cloris)

CLORIS

Geoffrey, I don't think this is-

GEOFFREY

(puts his finger over her lips)

Shh, this will only take an hour or two.

CLORIS

An hour?!

GEOFFREY

Geoffrey takes his time with his ladies, Cloris.

CLORIS

Hmm.... Well I guess I don't have anywhere to be.

(they go in as if to kiss, then lights out.)

(Lights up on deserted playground. Scene opens a split second after the rope that Graham has just used to hang himself has suddenly snapped. He gets up coughing and retching a bit and starts to dust himself off. He examines the piece of rope around his neck trying to deduce how it snapped. As he's removing the rope from his bruised neck, Geoffrey and Donkey enter. Geoffrey is holding a crossbow. Donkey is still pushing the wheelbarrow, containing the ridiculously passed out Cloris)

GEOFFREY

That's gonna leave a mark.

(Graham looks stunned at Geoffrey momentarily speechless)

GEOFFREY

The words you're looking for are, Thank You.

GRAHAM

Thank you?

GEOFFREY

You're welcome friend. I think I have some salve in my pack. No doubt your neck has looked better. That's an awful bum there. Donkey sit.

(Donkey gives Geoffrey a sharp look but doesn't say anything)

GEOFFREY

Donkey. We don't want the whip again, do we?

(Donkey sits)

GEOFFREY

That's a good donkey.

(Graham watches this whole exchange with mingled curiosity and confusion. He continues to struggle with the noose as Geoffrey searches his pack for some salve)

GEOFFREY

Oh, let me help you with that. *(Geoffrey gives Graham a hand getting the noose off)* You tied one helluva knot here my friend. Where'd you learn to do that?

GRAHAM

Eagle Scouts.

GEOFFREY

I had you pegged right then! You're lucky to have such a skill. Not everyone these days can lay claim to valuable knowledge. *(Geoffrey applies salve to Graham's neck. Sharp intake of breath from Graham)* Oh, oops! Should have warned you. This might sting a bit. *(a few beats of awkward silence)*

GRAHAM

This weather we've been having is quite nice.

GEOFFREY

Oh yes, dry, but not too dry. The winter was a bit hard, without central heat and all.

GRAHAM

I don't think I can get used to it.

GEOFFREY

Oh we'll manage without for a while. But I'm sure we'll remember how we did it before. We'll do it all again. Only this time we'll get it right.

GRAHAM

I'm not so sure. Everything on the grid just stopped working. With no explanation. Everything just stopped. Something, somewhere, broke.

GEOFFREY

Someone will figure out how to fix it...trust me, Graham.

(Looks meaningfully at Graham. For an uncomfortable period of time. Graham looks away finally.)

GRAHAM

So, um, how long had you been...watching me?

GEOFFREY

Oh, for quite some time actually.

GRAHAM

Why didn't you stop me sooner?!

GEOFFREY

Well, it seemed like something you needed to get through. If I'd have intervened any sooner I'd have interrupted a very important moment in your life. I wanted to see what happened when that rope went taught around your neck, whether you'd fight or not.

GRAHAM

I was pretty determined up to the point where the rope went taught.

GEOFFREY

What changed your mind?

GRAHAM

I don't know, it sounds silly to say it out loud....

(Geoffrey puts an arm around Graham in a fatherly way)

Go ahead. You can trust me.

GRAHAM

For a while I just haven't wanted to be alive anymore. I'm still not sure there's a point to living. But maybe that doesn't matter. Maybe just being alive is enough.

GEOFFREY

Oh there's a point my friend. Life is about to get very exciting. You'll want to be a part of it...trust me. There's no greater time to be alive than right now. Why don't you come with me? Donkey's a good animal, but not much of a conversationalist. I could use some company on the road. And I can tell you have some skills that would benefit both of us.

GRAHAM

Who are you?

GEOFFREY

Oh, just a fellow on the road like you. My name is Geoffrey. This is Donkey.

(Graham waits for Geoffrey to address the issue of Cloris, who is still passed out in the wheelbarrow. He doesn't.)

GRAHAM

And you want me to go with you?

GEOFFREY

Sure.

GRAHAM

Now?

GEOFFREY

No better time.

GRAHAM

It just seems odd to meet a stranger...on the road, so to speak, and invite him to share a very intimate relationship.

GEOFFREY

Whoa, hey now, I'm not suggesting anything like that.

GRAHAM

No I don't mean that kind of intimacy--

GEOFFREY

(winks at Graham)

Not yet, anyway.

GRAHAM

(beat)

Um, ok. What I mean is that, you don't know me from Adam, or from an ax murderer for that fact.

GEOFFREY

Didn't see any axes, so I think it's an ok risk.

GRAHAM

You realize that I just tried to kill myself.

GEOFFREY

Yep. Watched the whole thing.

GRAHAM

And now you are inviting me to be your traveling companion? Why?

GEOFFREY

Because you've already made your goodbyes. Settled your affairs, sold your possessions. You're already packed. *(puts an arm around him again)* You are a man of many talents, I can just tell. And this is the first moment of the rest of your life. Hey, do you like Scrabble?

GRAHAM

Um, sure.

GEOFFREY

Fantastic. Because Donkey here is absolute rubbish at it.

(Donkey makes an irritated braying sound)

GRAHAM

Maybe he's more of a Boggle equine.

GEOFFREY

Mmm. Never cared for Boggle. Too rushed of a game. No finesse. I like to plot my moves.

(Geoffrey holds out flask to Graham)

GRAHAM

Right. I think maybe I should go home now.

GEOFFREY

What, and miss out on this? Carpe diem, my friend. This new world is just ripe for the plucking. There's a place for men like us. *(puts his arm around Graham)* A chance to start over. You wouldn't want to miss your chance again. And besides, you don't have a home here anymore. You know that.

(Graham stares at him speechless for a moment.)

GRAHAM

(rubbing his head, he suddenly pauses)

I'm already dead, aren't I?

GEOFFREY

Come again?

GRAHAM

(to himself)

No, not yet. I'm still falling. The rope hasn't gone taut yet. *to (Geoffrey)* I'm still falling and imaging all of this, aren't I?

(Geoffrey sighs and holds the flask out again towards Graham. Graham takes it this time)

GRAHAM (CONT.)

I imagined you coming along with your... Donkey...to save me. It's classic. You want me to “go” with you, on a “journey” into the West, dodging cannibals, wrestling with brambles, and fomicating with sirens. Except there's a catch. Because when we finally get to the end, the supposed paradise that lies just beyond the horizon, and I finally touch my lips to that sweet, sweet Ambrosia then SNAP! *(he clenches his fist as if hold an imaginary rope)* the noose finally tightens. And I cease to exist.

(Graham takes a deep swig.)

GEOFFREY

You are quite the storyteller.

GRAHAM

(sarcastically)

Thanks.

(Graham another swig)

GEOFFREY

No, really. I had you pegged for a Divine Comedy sort of guy. Must be the cardigan. But Ambrose Bierce...I like it.

(Graham hands the flask back to Geoffrey. He bends over and braces himself on his knees from the rush of whiskey.)

GEOFFREY

You good?

GRAHAM

Yea, I think so. And I'm in. If there is an end. A real end. I want to see it.

GEOFFREY

Great. Now lets get out of here. These sad, twisted little playgrounds give me the creeps.

(Geoffrey gives Donkey a boot in the ass and they all begin to exit.)

(Scene: A rickety little parlor room, with boarded up windows and various junk, trinkets and tons of books piled floor to ceiling. MARTHA sits at a table in the center, pouring a cup of tea and looking thoughtfully at the teapot. She nods her head as if listening to a conversation we cannot here.)

MARTHA

I understand you don't want everyone back as they were, with their head in a screen and not even a simple smile for their fellow humans, *(she takes a careful sip of her tea)* but the wheel of progress must roll on *(she sets her cup down and points to the teapot)* whether you ride it into the future or let yourself be flattened by it. *(she begins to sugar her tea, again nodding her head)* Technology is not the enemy, but the way it was used, exactly. *(pats the sugar bowl. a grandfather clock chimes the time)* Goodness, it's 6 already? They seem to be running a bit late. *(she turns her attention to a teacup sitting alone on pedestal)*. I'm not doubting you, Martin, I'm making an observation. We are talking about my sister after all. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go gather some refreshments.

(MARTHA exits to the kitchen. There is a beat where all we hear is the ticking of the grandfather clock. Then there is a knock on the door.)

(Geoffrey, Graham and Donkey (still pushing Cloris in the wheelbarrow) enter, they are "outside".)

GEOFFREY

(to no one in particular)

Good god, she's still out like a light. I knew I was one hell of a lover, but this is a bit much.

GRAHAM

Um, I didn't want to be rude before, but who is this exactly? And what exactly are we doing here? I signed on for adventure, but I'm not really the type for raping and pillaging.

GEOFFREY

Guess you didn't ask enough questions, did you. Donkey, do something about this (*gestures to Cloris*)

(Donkey gives the wheelbarrow one hell of a big donkey kick. Cloris comes around quite suddenly, looks around in confusion.)

CLORIS

(sitting up, bringing up her hands for a fight)

What the hell is this! If you think you can drug and date rape Cloris Watterson, PhD, then you've got another thing coming!

GEOFFREY

Whoa, there, easy little lady.

CLORIS

Little lady my ass. *(donkey looks a bit offended)* Who the hell is he? *(really looking around for the first time)* And what in god's name are we doing at my sister's house?!

GEOFFREY

Sorry Cloris, but this was the only way I could devise to get you here. And you see, I was afraid your sister wouldn't be as welcoming to strangers as you were. Just make the introductions and you can leave. Trust me.

CLORIS

I don't trust you as far as I can throw you, but I'm definitely not leaving you alone with my sister!

Hello? Martha? Are you in there? Martha, it's Cloris.

GEOFFREY

You sure this is the right place?

CLORIS

You're the one who brought us here! *(to Geoffrey)* You're going to have to break down the door and then go inside and see if she's still alive.

GEOFFREY

Why do I have to go inside first?

GRAHAM

Well, I'm not going to do it. Not what I signed up for. Boggle donkey?

(Donkey brays in affirmative, extracts it from his saddlebags and they go off to play)

CLORIS

Well I can't do it. She's my sister. I don't want to see her mummified corpse, ok?

GEOFFREY

(entering the room)

Hello? Martha. *(he sniffs the air)* I don't smell rot.

CLORIS

(hesitantly enters)

Martha? It's Cloris. Are you home?

GEOFFREY

(scanning the room's contents)

Wow, look at all this stuff.

CLORIS

We definitely have the right house.

GEOFFREY

Well, at least she's not a crazy cat lady.

CLORIS

(nervously laughing)

Oh, Geoffrey Let me tell you-

(Martha suddenly enters from the kitchen with a serving bowl in hand)

MARTHA

Oh, Cloris, don't be dramatic. *(Cloris yelps)* Nice to see you too, sister.

CLORIS

Martha! You had me worried sick.

MARTHA

You...worried about me? That must be a first. Tea?

CLORIS

No, I don't want tea. I just trudged through a muddy wasteland to find you.

GEOFFREY

Well, I wouldn't mind some tea.

CLORIS

Geoffrey!

MARTHA

Oh, Geoffrey, how rude of me. *(she holds out here hand)* It is so nice to meet you.

(Geoffrey kisses her hand)

MARTHA

(blushes)

My, but aren't you are charming. Your new beau, Cloris?

CLORIS

No. Not exactly.

MARTHA

Oh, so you are unattached then, Mr. Geoffrey?

CLORIS

Come on Martha, gather what you can carry and we'll go.

MARTHA

Oh, Cloris, have some tea with us. I made peas. I thought I'd break out the good stuff since I knew you were coming.

CLORIS

You knew we were coming?

MARTHA

Martin told me the other day you'd be dropping by. *(turning her head towards "Martin" the teacup)* Of course, he didn't tell me how handsome your friend would be *(she winks at Geoffrey)*

CLORIS

(places her hands over her face)

Oh no.

GEOFFREY

Who's Martin?

MARTHA

Oh, just a friend. *(to Geoffrey)* Nothing romantic.

CLORIS

It's a teacup. It's her fucking teacup. That's what I was trying to tell you earlier, Geoffrey. My sister is fucking loonier than a toon.

MARTHA

He's the one that warned me about the lights going out.

GEOFFREY

Really?

MARTHA

Yes. Martin has been very good at watching out for me. He knew the evacuations were bad news and told me that I was better off staying put. And thus far I've been quite content...and all the canned peas my heart desires.

GEOFFREY

So it's just been you and Martin this whole time?

MARTHA

Oh no. You see the day the lights went out is the day the rest of them finally felt free to speak.

GEOFFREY

They? You mean the rest of the teacups can communicate like Martin?

MARTHA

Teacups, sugar bowls, clocks, chairs, bedposts, coatracks. It's a wonderful village we have here.

CLORIS

That's it. Geoffrey, find some rope. I'll get the duct tape.

GEOFFREY

(to Martha)

Sounds a bit crowded.

MARTHA

Oh, cozy, yes. But we get along quite well- most of the time. The creamer and the honey pot are still not on speaking terms.

CLORIS

Martha, don't you see what's happening? The world has gone to hell, and you're locked in a house debating with the tea service all day long.

MARTHA

No, we don't do that all day long, although it has been a favorite past time of late for tea. We used to play charades, but some folks (nudging her head toward the china cabinet) got a bit irked on the account that I always won. Oh, and every Saturday we perform a play.

Last week we performed "Ann of a Thousand Days". They don't want to admit it, but I had the curtains weeping for da

GEOFFREY

I'd like to have seen that.

CLORIS

Don't encourage her, Geoffrey!

MARTHA

Oh, well, I'm sure we could arrange a small sampling, just a bit...if that's alright with you, Winston.

(Martha looks at the wingback chair in the corner of the room, Geoffrey and Cloris also follow her gaze.)

MARTHA

Oh, he's acting bashful now, but his Henry VIII is most impressive.

(MARTHA stands up and turns on a few floor lamps to act as stage lights. She positions "Winston" opposite her and dons a lacy table covering to act as a headdress. She does a few quick and ridiculous looking diction exercises before taking a deep breath.)

MARTHA (CONT.)

All right, Winston.

(She performs acting against "Winston" who is obviously an inanimate object who doesn't respond.)

MARTHA (CONT.)

"Before you go, perhaps you should hear one thing. I lied to you. I said "I love you", but I lied. I was untrue. Untrue with many." . .

"It is true. I was unfaithful to you with all of them. With half your court. With soldiers of your guard, with grooms, with stablehands. Look for the rest of your life at every man that ever knew me and wonder if I didn't find him a better man than you!" . .

(Martha lets out a cry and collapses to the ground in dramatic flair)

GEOFFREY

(clapping)

Bravo!

(Cloris rolls her eyes as Martha curtsies)

MARTHA

Thank you, you are too kind.

GEOFFREY

Martha, I think you have got to be one of the most marvelous people I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. Have you ever considered taking your talent on the road?

CLORIS

Great idea, Geoffrey I can see it now. My sister starring in "A Streetcar Named Desire" opposite a set of throw pillows

MARTHA

Oh, Cloris. Don't be silly. Pillows can't talk, they're full of stuffing.

GEOFFREY

Yes, Cloris, don't be silly. (to Martha) She's such a joker, that one.

CLORIS

(glares at Geoffrey)

Okay, Martha, it's time to go.

MARTHA

But you haven't even tried the peas yet.

CLORIS

(reaches into the bowl of peas and throws a handful in her mouth. With her mouth still full)

Delicious! Now let's go. Martha, if you agree to come willingly, I'll give you 5 minutes to gather up some of your buddies to come along. If you fight, I'll drag you out of here empty handed.

MARTHA

Cloris, what do you mean?! Be reasonable. You can't expect me to abandon my friends!

GEOFFREY

Martha, dear, of course we would never expect you to leave your friends. *(he pats her on the shoulder)* There, there, it's okay. *(he does the Vulcan nerve pinch. Martha goes down, passed out.)* Alright, Cloris, lets go. Grab some peas, okay? And that Martin fellow. Just in case Martha is completely crackers when she wakes up and needs a buddy. *(directing his voice outside)* Donkey! Put those letter dice down and get your lazy ass up. There's a passed out loon in here that requires your handiwork.

(Geoffrey and Cloris exit to the tune of Geoffrey singing Willie Nelson's On The Road Again. He's doing his best Willie impression. It's pretty damn awful... lights out)

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