

Tortuga

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Synopsis of *Tortuga*:

In *Tortuga*, brother and sister WOOKIE and ANNABEL determine the best way to kill a small animal, all the while attempting to evade their mother's interference. But is their youthful violence more aimed at the animal or at larger issues that are out of their hands? *Tortuga* has not been previously produced.

A Note about Staging:

Set is minimal. Props include a rock, a stick, a box, and a sandwich. The ending should convey a sense of finality with little ambiguity.

Characters:

Annabel A girl, 8. Preferably played by an older
Actress (50-70 would be ideal).

Wookie Annabel's brother, 9. Preferably played by an
older actor (again, 50-70 is good, though
there should be parity between their ages).

Mom's voice Offstage. A woman in her 30's.

SCENE 1

SETTING: A wooded area behind a house. The present.

AT RISE: WOOKIE and ANNABEL stare into a medium sized box, S.C. WOOKIE is holding a rock in his hand, he raises it above his head and violently throws it into the box. Fascinated, ANNABEL absent-mindedly holds a sandwich that she occasionally nibbles at.

WOOKIE

I think we should kill it.

ANNABEL

Let's let it go.

WOOKIE

It must be like a thousand years old.

(WOOKIE begins to search the stage for something on the ground).

ANNABEL

How do you think it got here, Wookiee?

WOOKIEE

It dug.

ANNABEL

From where?

WOOKIEE

Prob'ly Afghanistan.

(WOOKIEE searching takes him off stage).

ANNABEL

Is that where they come from?

WOOKIEE

Prob'ly.

(WOOKIEE returns carrying a big stick. He does not speak softly).

ANNABEL

What're you gonna do?

WOOKIEE

Do you think it bleeds?

(WOOKIEE jabs the stick into the box).

ANNABEL

Stop it!

(Surprisingly, he does, as if he were looking for a way out. Then from off-stage:)

MOM (offstage)

William! Annabel! What are you doing?

(A moment of panic and then--)

ANNABEL

Nothing!

MOM (offstage)

Can I bring you anything?

WOOKIE and ANNABEL

No!

MOM

Well. If you need some lemonade come inside.

WOOKIE

Mom would totally kill it. Not like your dad.

(WOOKIE loses the stick).

ANNABEL

He's your dad too.

WOOKIE

He sucks.

ANNABEL

He just has too much work.

WOOKIE

She would take out one of those big knives she has in the kitchen.

ANNABEL

She doesn't have any big knives.

WOOKIE

You don't know anything. She keeps them there to cut meat.

ANNABEL

That's not true.

WOOKIE

She also keeps 'em back there in case Dad comes back.

ANNABEL

No she doesn't.

WOOKIE

If he came back he'd come to our room. Then she'd take a big one out.

(WOOKIE pantomimes taking out Mom's knife. ANNABEL reacts. WOOKIE, sensing the power of the imaginary knife in her fear, continues the scene).

A really big one. She'd see him. She'd say:

(to ANNABEL)

"Howie. I told you never to come back! Don't you dare touch him, Howie."

(Approaches ANNABEL, wielding the imaginary knife).

ANNABEL

Wookie, stop it!

WOOKIE

And then she'd get real close and grab Dad by the throat!

(does so)

And then—

MOM (offstage)

Kids!

(The freeze in tableau).

It's getting late. Willy, you have to bring the garbage in!

(beat)

WOOKIE

O.K.!

(Lets ANNABEL go).

MOM (offstage)

All right. A few more minutes. Don't go far.

WOOKIE

That's what happened.

ANNABEL

That's not what mom said.

WOOKIE

How would you know? You were at piano. Mom was on the floor.

And she threw a plate. And it hit him. And she pointed at

the drawer and told dad that if he ever came back she would get him. Then he left. He said he wasn't ever coming back. That's why she keeps those big ones there.

ANNABEL

She said Dad went away for work.

WOOKIE

Don't be stupid.

ANNABEL

(Beat).

What did you do?

WOOKIE

(Beat. Then *sotto*).

Ran away.

ANNABEL

That's what I do.

WOOKIE

If you were there you would have got it too.

(Beat).

If I were big I'd kick him. I'd knock him back. He'd fall and I'd stomp him.

(Beat).

I wonder what they eat.

(WOOKIE spies ANNABEL's sandwich and takes it away from her).

ANNABEL

Prob'ly not sandwiches.

(WOOKIE takes a bite out of her sandwich, contemplates placing it in the box and momentarily decides he would rather eat it himself. He takes another bite).

WOOKIE

I bet if I put it in front of him he'll stick his big 'ol head out.

(He does this. They stare).

He only puts it out part way.

(Picks sandwich back up).

ANNABEL

Maybe they like carrots. I like carrots too.

(Beat).

Tortuga. That's what they call it in Spanish class.

WOOKIE

Well, I'm gonna kill your stupid toortugah.

(Beat).

Three stomps!

(Stomps his foot outside the box three times).

On it's giant head!

(Begins stomping his foot inside the box).

Stupid Howie! I told you never to come back! I told you!

ANNABEL

Stop it! You'll kill it!

(ANNABEL pushes WOOKIE, he falls. The sandwich falls to the ground. Long pause as WOOKIE gets up, etc.).

It's not dead.

WOOKIE

Your dad sucks.

(Pushes her. Exits).

ANNABEL

(Picks up the sandwich, takes a bite. Places it inside the box as before).

Come out, little Tortuga.

(Beat).

There's your big head.

(Pause. She lifts her foot above the box and--- lights).

End of play.