

Commissioned by the Goodman Theatre (2015)

**ENTRY**  
(OR, YOU THINK YOU KNOW ME)  
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## **Characters**

COYE, Whit's wife

WHIT, Coye's husband

A STRANGE COYE

A STRANGE WHIT

THE UNFAMILIAR ONE

FIGURES OF AN OIL-BLACK SUBSTANCE

## **Setting**

A cabin by a lake. No one is around.

## **Dialogue**

Interruptions in dialogue are noted by slash-marks (/). The interrupted actor should treat this as a true interruption and continue through their line without waiting for the other to finish, overlapping as necessary.

**ENTRY**  
**(or, you think you know me)**

*A small lakeside cabin. Cozy, a bit dated. There are no signs of electronics, not even a tv. The whole place is one room, with the sleeping space and living space conjoined. There's a bed, there's a couch.*

*There's a small kitchen area upstage, with some handy counter space. There's an area beyond the upstage wall that can be disappeared behind.*

*In a very visible spot is a GUESTBOOK, lying open.*

*There are three doorways. One stage left leads outside, one goes to a bathroom (these each have standard doors); a sliding door stage right leads to an enclosed sunroom, most of which is offstage. A daybed is referenced in the sunroom but is not seen. There are a lot of windows.*

*At rise, it's early evening, the light is dim. An oil-black figure stands still in the doorway to the sunroom. This figure is literally completely black, like a bird following an oil spill: black oily hair, black raiment, skin like sludge or slick mud, no features, androgynous in form. It stands there silently for a long time before moving, hopefully unnoticed until it moves. Very soft whispers are heard, disembodied voices seeming to come from the corners of the room. The figure very very slowly emerges from the doorway, just barely, like it's on a short leash.*

*A car approaches, headlights. The sound of car doors from outside. The oil-black figure retreats into the sunroom, slowly, not rushing. COYE and WHIT enter and go about the business of loading their belongings in. They aren't speaking much but not because they're fighting or anything, they just aren't. They understand the other's rhythms. Each knows what to do. They get most of their stuff in, making a few trips. Whit, at one point, starts unloading groceries and setting them out on the kitchen counter, organizing them while Coye starts to get the contents of her suitcase unloaded onto the bed. She takes some toiletries into the bathroom, makes a noise, comes back.*

COYE:

Tiny bathroom.

WHIT:

It looked tiny.

*They fall back into their activities. Whit pulls a bottle of tequila and a bottle of vodka out and sets them on the counter. Coye runs back out to the car one last time, comes back with a garment bag and umbrella, sets them down. She notices the door to the sunroom and investigates. Goes in, makes a noise, comes back.*

COYE:

There's a sunroom, did you see?

WHIT:

I enjoy a good sunroom.

COYE:

This will be nice. It's a little warmer. Has a daybed and everything.

WHIT:

I enjoy a good daybed.

COYE:

Looks brand new.

WHIT:

Probably right off the showroom floor, never used.

COYE:

For sale: Baby shoes, never used.

WHIT:

Wow...geez. Really?

COYE:

Sorry.

*A tense little pause. It passes.*

WHIT:

And it's "never worn."

COYE:

Is it never worn?

WHIT:

It's never worn.

COYE:

*(beat)* Get me a drink?

WHIT:

Fa sho. Is it covered in those impractical pillows that you / just have to throw on the floor?

COYE:

Oh, you know it is. You've seen / a daybed before.

WHIT:

I have. Didn't we look at daybeds?

COYE:

When?

WHIT:

When we first got the house.

COYE:

Not together we didn't.

WHIT:

I feel like I remember daybed shopping.

COYE:

Oh...ohhhh / nooooo, you went daybed

WHIT:

What the hell am I thinking of?

COYE:

shopping alone. That's the saddest.

WHIT:

Maybe I was just looking online.

COYE:

That's a little less sad. Or, like / way sadder.

WHIT:

Way sadder. Way sadder. Here, try this.

COYE:

Oh...um. *(tries drink, cringes, sniffs it)* What is this?

WHIT:

Tequila. Like a tequila concoction.

COYE:

Tequila? I don't want tequila. / You bought tequila?

WHIT:

You don't? Yeah it's, I did. Here, I'll drink it.

COYE:

I mean, I'll drink it, I just / don't like it.

WHIT:

You don't like tequila? I pictured us drinking margaritas. I got vodka too.

COYE:

Sure. Great. *This* isn't supposed to be a margarita [is it]?

WHIT:

No, it's just. Nevermind. What do you want instead?

COYE:

Did you get any wine?

WHIT:

Was I supposed to?

COYE:

Well, "supposed to," I didn't ask you to but I usually / don't have to.

WHIT:

Aw geez. I'm sorry.

COYE:

Did you think we'd be doing shots / all week or something?

WHIT:

Maybe. Sorry, I...I thought you said something about cocktails, wanting a lot of cocktails.

COYE:

I might have said that.

WHIT:

Well, I'll go back out, / get some wine.

COYE:

Go tomorrow, just get me like a vodka / something?

WHIT:

Yes. Vodka...oraaange...juice?

COYE:

That works.

WHIT:

Tonic?

COYE:

Have we never drank together?

WHIT:

Yeah it's...I guess I'm just...

COYE:

You don't pay attention to details, / whatever that's fine.

WHIT:

It's probably amnesia.

COYE:

Probably. Yeah, probably amnesia. If we're exploring theories. *(finds the guestbook)* What if we were the kind of people who signed guestbooks? *(starts leafing through)*

WHIT:

What if?

COYE:

A lot of people have signed this one.

WHIT:

What do people even write?

COYE:

"What a perfect place. I wish town was more walkable."

WHIT:

Look for a bad one, like ranting.

COYE:

They're all pretty positive, "what a good / place," "what a quiet place."

WHIT:

That's boring.

COYE:

Oh, here's one. "The tap water is unFUCKINGdrinkable." Un-fucking-drinkable, it says. FUCKING is in all caps.

WHIT:

That's important emphasis. Thank you.

COYE:

"We had to buy bottled water." Ha! This is... "It didn't ruin the experience but we drink a lot of water, so..." Dot dot dot.

WHIT:

Makes sense.

COYE:

None of these have names attributed. Is guestbooking typically anonymous?

WHIT:

Anonymous guestbooking. That's fuckin' hardcore.

COYE:

*(beat)* [re: drink] This works.

WHIT:

It's ok?

COYE:

It's good. Sit. *(pause, Whit keeps buzzing around)* Hey. Can you come here a second? Sit?

WHIT:

Yeah, I am. Sitting. Comfy couch. Sort of.

*Whit sits but neither of them says a word for a few beats.*



COYE:

We keep putting this off but I want to talk about it now, so it's not just...looming.

WHIT:

Ok.

COYE:

Ok. I think we should talk about adopting.

WHIT:

*(pause)* Baby shoes, / never worn.

COYE:

Sorry, it just popped / into my head.

WHIT:

Adopting. Like, get on a list? Or go to China?

COYE:

I'm serious, I want to talk about it, every time it comes up we get interrupted / or the

WHIT:

Fine so what do you want to talk about?

COYE:

conversation goes nowhere so can we talk about it now?

WHIT:

Go ahead.

COYE:

I'm—I'm going ahead. That's what this is. I said that I want to talk about it.

WHIT:

I understand that.

COYE:

You do?

WHIT:

Yes. I do. I—

COYE:

And?

WHIT:

And I keep thinking about how fucking horrible that day was. And the weeks that followed. And / that makes me hesitant.

COYE:

I know but at a certain point, you / have to...

WHIT:

No no, I don't need to get over / it. Is the thing.

COYE:

I'm not talking about trying again. I'm talking adoption, which is / totally different.

WHIT:

Or what if maybe...I don't know...we're not supposed to have kids. Maybe we're not those people. Ever consider that? Maybe we're just supposed to have each other and take care of each other and grow old together and be grateful for that.

COYE:

You always wanted kids.

*Silence. They each sip their drink. Coye aimlessly flips through the guestbook.*

WHIT:

I'm not ready to go through that again.

COYE:

Neither am I. That doesn't mean we shouldn't.

*Silence. Coye finishes her drink.*

WHIT:

You ready?

COYE:

I think I am, I mean yes I have hesitations but I guess I'm as ready as—

WHIT:

No no, I'm—I'm sorry, are you ready for another drink?

COYE:

Oh. Whoa. Yeah, I / suppose I am.

Guess you like vodka after all.

WHIT:

It's tequila I don't like.

COYE:

I swear I never knew that.

WHIT:

Well...the mystery's gotta come from somewhere.

COYE:

I think I need to see this daybed for myself. (*looks*) WOW. Now THAT's a beautiful daybed.

WHIT:

Right?

COYE:

And I know daybeds.

WHIT:

Oh, I'm aware of the / affinity.

COYE:

Such a gorgeous pattern, the rusty reds, the vague browns. Someone honestly could be / murdered

WHIT:

MURDERED!

COYE:

on that daybed and you'd never know.

WHIT:

I thought the same thing. I thought the same thing.

COYE:

That says way more about us than it does about the daybed.

WHIT:

Way more.

COYE:

WHIT:

*(taking Coye's glass)* Stronger? Less strong?

COYE:

That was good. *(starts reading again, laughs a little, then exclaims:)* Oh!

WHIT:

What?

COYE:

Yeah, um...it's not really that exciting, just I noticed there are repeat offenders.

WHIT:

Offenders?

COYE:

I recognize the same handwriting. Yep, there it is again.

WHIT:

Must like it here, they kept coming back again and again.

COYE:

Why do you think they're drug addicts?

WHIT:

What?!

COYE:

I said why do you think they're drug addicts?

WHIT:

I didn't say anything about drugs.

COYE:

Oh, you...oh. I really don't know what I thought I heard.

WHIT:

I mean, most guestbookers are drug addicts, but I didn't want to go there. Your beverage.

COYE:

Set it down.

WHIT:

So...you're still...feeling...

COYE:  
Yeah.

WHIT:  
...Yeah.

COYE:  
I think we have unfinished business.

WHIT:  
Well. Ok. You gonna keep reading that or do you want to hash it out?

COYE:  
Hash it out? Are we gonna fight?

WHIT:  
Hash it out doesn't mean fight.

COYE:  
It implies disagreement.

WHIT:  
Exactly the opposite. It implies coming to agreement. You hash out the details. You agree.

COYE:  
Yeah, but we don't, do we?

WHIT:  
What?

COYE:  
(takes a drink) Agree.

*Coye starts reading in the guestbook again. Whit takes a drink. He puts a hand, gently, on her knee. Coye puts her hand on his. Kisses his hand. Keeps reading.*

WHIT:  
Could you close that, please? (she doesn't) Coye?

COYE:  
Oh, um. Sure.

*Coye reads one last passage, whispering it under her breath unintelligibly, then smiles and shuts the guestbook.*

*When she does, the lights abruptly dim, followed by a low-frequency hum.*

*The oil-black figure appears in the door to the sunroom. The humming sound becomes more percussive, more of a thrum.*

*Voices are heard, many quiet voices. [these could be recorded or live, but they fill the room.]*

voices:

there was a moment moment she looked at me and it was strange she had a look in her eyes like she didnt recognize me and it was only a moment moment and then she went on speaking but it was measured in a way clipped the way you talk to a stranger like she was searching her mind for a name she used to know like she hadnt known mine for years and years like she didnt know me in that moment moment she was watching what she said she was being polite being polite like she needed to be careful and watch what she said but it was only a moment moment just the slightest smallest moment moment and i probably shouldnt have even noticed it there may have been nothing for me to notice in that moment moment there may have been no moment moment no moment moment no moment moment

*Whit and Coye change into more comfortable clothes as the voices speak. Then:*

*The oil-black figure slowly disappears back into the sunroom. Whit goes into the sunroom. Coye opens the guestbook. The hum fades. The voices cease.*

*The clinking of a spoon in a mug. Whit comes out of the kitchen with a cup of coffee.*

*Silence. Coye shifts uncomfortably.*

WHIT:

Your back hurt?

COYE:

I didn't sleep well. The bed...I / kept having these dreams...

WHIT:

Did you get up in the middle of the night?

COYE:  
Yeah, I was up reading.

WHIT:  
Reading what?

COYE:  
The uh...the uh thing.

WHIT:  
The guestbook? Seriously?

COYE:  
Yeah...

WHIT:  
That sounds...excruciating.

*Coye stares at him something awful.*

COYE:  
Any other adjectives you wanna test?

WHIT:  
I know. Sorry. I'm not trying to piss you off, it just / seems like not the most—

COYE:  
You know what? I'm going for a walk.

WHIT:  
Now?

COYE:  
Yeah, now. To the lake / or something.

WHIT:  
Ok. Want me to come with?

COYE:  
If you want to.

*Coye grabs a coat, pauses by the door a moment to see if Whit might follow. He doesn't.*

WHIT:

Take the umbrella. It's gonna rain.

COYE:

How do you know?

WHIT:

Smells like it.

*Coye opens the door. Stands in the doorway. Doesn't leave. Light changes. A bird of prey screeches.*

COYE:

Yeah. It does.

*She goes outside, closes door behind her.*

*Whit stares ahead. He goes to the kitchen, pours tequila in his coffee. He comes to the couch, sits and drinks deeply. After a few moments. He opens the guestbook. Reads aloud, but quietly:*

WHIT:

"We always discover something new here."

*He flips ahead. Drinks.*

WHIT:

"This is the only place where we can communicate." That's bleak. *(flips ahead many pages)*  
"We come here to see each other." *(flips)* "We come here to continue the conversation."  
*(flips)* "We're not alone here." *(flips)* "You're not alone here."

*He starts to write something in the book. As he writes the writing gets more hurried, feverish, manic. As he writes he seems to get panicked, breathing heavier and heavier. He slams the pen down. A light comes from the sunroom. It's pretty, serene. Whit is lured by it, he leaves his coffee on the table, goes out to the sunroom.*

*Time passes. Rain.*

*Coye enters from outside, wet from the rain. She sits at the couch. Drinks Whit's coffee. Something she reads in the book upsets her. She closes the book.*