

COYOTE

A play by

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COYOTE

CHARACTERS

VINCE Male, 60s
LUKE Male, 20s
ANNA Female, 20s

SETTING

Arizona, on the border between Mexico and the United States of America.

SCENES

ACT I
Ragnarök

ACT II
B'ak'tun

Night.

A month later.

A NOTE ON THE SCRIPT

A dash at the end of a line (—) suggests a hard interruption. The character who speaks next should sharply interrupt the character delivering the dashed line.

A slash at the end of a line (/) suggests a soft interruption. The character who speaks next should begin his or her line early such that both characters speak briefly at the same time.

COYOTE

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

COYOTE was written with support from a 2009-10 Jerome Fellowship from the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

COYOTE received its first staged reading in April of 2011, directed by Phil Mann, at the UK National Student Drama Festival in Scarborough. It received its first reading in the US in May of 2011 in Nouveau 47's New Works/New Voices Festival at the Margo Jones Theatre in Dallas, Texas, directed by Diana Gonzalez.

PREMIERE

COYOTE premiered in Dallas, Texas at Nouveau 47 under the artistic direction of Tom Parr on January 26th, 2012 in the Margo Jones Theatre. Donny Covington directed, with design by William Anderson, stage management from Melissa Hennessy, and the following cast:

ANNA	Marti Etheridge
LUKE	Stephen Witkowicz
VINCE	Arthur Peden

AWARDS

Winner, 2011 International Student Playscript Competition
 Winner, 2011 Repertory Theater of Iowa's Alpha Project

Have you seen that vigilante man?
I been hearin' his name all over the land.

- Woody Guthrie, Vigilante Man

All politics is local.

- Tip O'Neill

ACT I

RAGNARÖK

ACT I
Ragnarök

Night. Arizona, on the border between Mexico and the United States of America. VINCE sits atop the cab of his truck, looking out at the dark. LUKE leans on the side of the truck, earbud headphones in his ears. VINCE climbs his way down and speaks.

VINCE

So we come out here, and we patrol. But mostly we sit. I hope your ass doesn't fall asleep easy, kiddo.

LUKE

(plucking the headphones from his ears)

My ass is well conditioned.

VINCE

Yeah, I'm sure.

LUKE

I am of a generation that has been encouraged to sit and stare at screens.

VINCE

That's true. Poor kid.

LUKE

It makes for well-honed asses.

It's nice out here. Smells so clean. Fresh. Pure.

And it's quiet.

So many stars.

VINCE

Sure. Stars. Stars. Stars. Whirling in their orbits. You think they ever smash into each other?

LUKE

It must have happened once at least. There are no borders in heaven.

VINCE

Probably. Must be some kind of Hell when two stars smash into each other. Some kind of beautiful Hell.

VINCE hits a flask.

VINCE
(cont.)

Where'd you say you're from?

LUKE

Tucson.

VINCE

The big shitty.

LUKE

Born and raised.

VINCE

Raised?

LUKE

Yeah.

VINCE

Raised like raised? That's a thing, ain't it? Being raised as a Mason.

LUKE

Nah, nothing like that. Raised like reared.

VINCE

Reared. Right.

LUKE

Right.

VINCE

I got friends who did all that shit. Scottish Rite. Shriners. They wear funny hats and ride in those little cars. I'm more of a lone wolf, all told. Your dad ever do any of that?

LUKE

He's dead.

VINCE

Welp. Yep. Sorry to hear that.

LUKE

Drink. Couldn't stop himself. Like a fish. 'Cept he drowned in it. A fish would have lasted longer.

VINCE

That's tough.

LUKE

It's life. We're German on his side. Irish on my mom's.

VINCE

Salt of the fucking earth there. Salt of the earth.

LUKE

Fucking A salt of the earth. God's own people, the Irish. Drinkers, too. You know who the Germans belong to. So I got both. God and the—

VINCE stares bullets at LUKE.

No offence meant if you've got any German.

VINCE

I'm just fucking with you. German, yeah. I got a bunch of Norwegian too. Scandinavia running in my veins.

VINCE hits his flask. HE rolls up his right sleeve and reveals a tattoo.

Read that.

LUKE

“Feeleez fee-or-vee?” What's—

VINCE

“It sates itself on the life-blood
of fated men,
paints red the powers' homes
with crimson gore.
Black become the sun's beams
in the summers that follow,
weathers all treacherous.
Do you still seek to know? And what?”¹

LUKE

What the Hell is that?

VINCE

Ragnarök. The Twilight of the Gods. The end of the world. That's heritage on my arm. That's white pride. Listen to those words. White pride. That scare you?

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ragnar%C3%B6k>

LUKE

No. Look at me. I'm white as snow.

VINCE

Scares white people the most. White people are afraid of their heritage. We got no culture in America. Europe's not much better, from what I hear.

Kiddo, we have been swindled. We have been PC-d to death. Televised to death. I swear. We won the keys to the kingdom and then lost them because we got lazy. Your ass is well honed? All our asses are. We've forgotten what it means to be powerful. We forgot that power is the goal, not just a means to more power.

I got that tattoo in ninety-nine. I was ready for the apocalypse. Still am.

Built a bunker and everything. You'll have to come see it. It's great. Four beds. Ventilation. The whole shebang. Sometimes I go down there and watch the ball game. Just for a change of scenery. Watch it on an old black and white TV on batteries. It's real old school. Cost me a lot of money. Figure I'm going to get some use out of it one way or another.

LUKE

Kind of a waste, isn't it?

VINCE

We'll see, won't we?

LUKE

I guess. Ragnarök. They say twenty-twelve might be the end.

VINCE

Right. The Mayan calendar.

LUKE

Mayans were Mexicans. Or they lived in Mexico. What's now Mexico.

VINCE

Yeah, well. If Mayans were such hot shit, they'd still be around. Where's that culture gone? Losers.

White pride is the most dangerous force lying dormant on the face of this earth. So they get us hating ourselves and use that to control us.

LUKE

I don't hate myself. Who's "they" any/

VINCE

All this white fucking guilt. The white man is an imperialist. The white man is the reason for all wars everywhere. The white man is the slaver, never mind some black king sold his enemies off for a profit. The white man is a cancer. Call every white person a “gringo.” That’s all right. “White trash” is fine to throw around like nothing, but don’t dare say the word “nigger” or you are in some hot shit right away. You’re a racist.

Goddamn right I am. I’m proud of who I am. That makes me a racist? I’m a racist.

The white man is the new nigger, and nobody says shit about it. Nobody stands up and says it.

That word bother you?

LUKE

What?

VINCE

Nigger.

LUKE

Doesn’t bother me.

VINCE

Say it then.

LUKE

I’d rather not.

VINCE

White man is the new nigger. I swear to Jesus.

VINCE hits the flask.

Oh, excuse me. Straight white man is the new nigger. Queers get all kinds of privileges now. Guys like us have to walk on eggshells every day of our lives, lest we upset the delicate balance of supposed equality. Queers get to marry now too some places. Let them! Let them marry and drive each other crazy like straight people do. Since Adam and Eve. There’ll be a run on rainbow colored nooses in about six months. Shit.

Marriage.

VINCE hits his flask.

I remember when white men were the floor. The ceiling. The stars in the fucking sky. Now it’s just—

LUKE

You got any water?

VINCE

Couple of canteens in the back.

Some folding chairs there too. Bring them up here. We'll sit out under the stars.

THEY exit the truck. LUKE grabs the chairs. THEY settle in.

Next time bring your own water.

You know what I can't figure out about fags? Who sticks what where? I mean, how do they decide that?

LUKE

I honestly couldn't tell you.

VINCE

It's fucking weird. A woman and a man get together, and it's pretty clear who's going to stick what where. That's natural. But a man and a man.

You use the Internet, Luke?

LUKE

Yeah?

VINCE

You ever watch porn on it?

LUKE

I'm a guy. I'm sure most guys do.

VINCE

You ever see any of that gay porn? Be honest. Nobody but you and me and the coyotes out here. And maybe some spics sneaking around. Don't mind them. Their English is shit.

You ever see any of that gay porn?

LUKE

Once or twice by accident. But I don't watch it.

VINCE

How about trannies?

LUKE

Vince, what the fuck?

VINCE

You ever watch a black man give it to a white woman?

LUKE

Same thing, actually. By accident. I just don't like to watch it.

VINCE

So it doesn't look natural to you—

LUKE

Vince, listen. I don't/

VINCE

You listen. Growing up I knew this was a white country. Built by white people. Now it's gone to Hell. It's run by niggers, spics, kikes... kikes always had a piece, but you know, they're like leeches. It's because they don't believe in Jesus. They're merciless. Catholics too. Papists. There's no white anymore. It's shades of brown. Shades of shit. We've got to draw a line in the sand. You hear me?

LUKE

I hear you. I really hear you. I don't recognize this country anymore. It's a mess.

VINCE

You're pretty young to be out here, aren't you?

LUKE

I'm not that young.

VINCE

I thought it took a guy years to get as bitter as I am. Most kids your age wouldn't sit and listen to my shit.

LUKE

I'm old enough.

VINCE

Old enough. Shit. People are never old enough. They're just old or they ain't. Here. Drink. It'll speed up time.

VINCE hits the flask, then passes it to LUKE. LUKE tips it back but keeps his lips pursed.

LUKE
 God! What is that?

VINCE
 You believe in Jesus, Luke?

LUKE
 How do you mean?

VINCE
 How do I mean? I mean do you believe Jesus is your savior and the savior of the God-forsaken shithole world?

LUKE
 Yeah.

VINCE
 And you believe Jesus has a special plan for the United States of America?

LUKE
 Clearly. We're a shining beacon on the hill.

VINCE
 So you believe you've been saved?

LUKE
 Don't have to believe. I know.

VINCE
 So do the beaners flooding over the border every goddamned night. 'Cept they're mostly, well, you know. Catholics. So they're damned, more or less.

LUKE
 Right.

VINCE
 They sure don't love America like we do. Too goddamned used to being on their knees. They get trained to kneel when they're just kids, and from there it's all/

LUKE
 I think they believe they're kneeling to God.

VINCE
 All those rules. All that homage to some little man in a fancy hat who lives in Italy. It's fucking weird. Bunch of fag priests, too, fucking kids. Sick, dickless fuckers. I don't know why they think they need those big churches. Architecture.

VINCE
(cont.)

Look at all this. There's some architecture. This desert is a church. This sky. The rocks. The coyotes are the choir, and I can get Willie Nelson on the AM. My truck's hood is the altar. I don't need some faggot priest to call God for me. I got a direct line. I got a direct line from my heart right to Mother Nature. That's how God speaks to us out here.

You got a wife there in Tucson?

LUKE

Nope.

VINCE

Why not?

LUKE

Haven't found the right one.

VINCE

You're not a—

LUKE

Fuck no.

VINCE

I'm an old racist fuck, but I'm open-minded. It's all right if you—

LUKE

If I was the son of one of your buddies, would you ask me this stuff?

VINCE

No.

LUKE

So imagine I'm the son of one of your buddies.

VINCE

You ain't.

LUKE

Imagine I am.

VINCE

I have a hard time seeing it.

LUKE
What's the problem?

VINCE
You're too... something.

LUKE
Too good looking?

VINCE
Yeah, well. You do got a purty face.

LUKE
Shit.

VINCE
Hey, I really don't want to bust your swollen balls.

LUKE
Swollen?

VINCE
Your balls are swelled up like cantaloupes. Shit, kiddo. You ain't been laid in a month.

LUKE
How do you know?

VINCE
It's all over you. "How do you mean?" Shit. Anybody talks like that needs his dick sucked three ways to Sunday. A month since you blew your wad into some pretty thing, am I wrong? Come on.

LUKE
Yeah, well. It's been a dry spell.

Dry as the desert. It's getting bad! I jerk off like three times a day! I got a lot of seed to sow. Shit. A man has needs.

VINCE
You're telling me. My face ain't so purty. I usually have to pay for it.

LUKE
Fuck.
