

New Wolverines

by

Julius Galacki

(A False Translation of Two Scenes of Stanislaw Witkiewicz's "Nowe Wyzwolenie")

- Dialogue Sample -

CAST (in order of Appearance)

King Richard III: physically well built, but he has turned yellow from disease. He sees a dark, obese future. He makes his living, cheating the bureaucracy.

Tatiana: a svelte blond in her forties. She owns a Pekinese dog that other people walk for her.

Amnesia: about 17. Brunette. She is suffering from skin sores and a stomach ailment. She wears black.

Mordred: The chief minister. He wears a very stylish Italian suit and a black mask with a moustache.

Floristan: late 30's. Well built blond. He has a marked desire to wear flannel shirts, but nonetheless, he sings elegantly. He went to school to be a fireman and earned a medal: Order of the Pool Bucket.

*Note: **New Wolverines** is a false translation of Stanislaw Witkiewicz's "Nowe Wyzwolenie", i.e., with very little knowledge of Polish and without consulting a dictionary or having read an English version of this particular play, I "translated" Witkiewicz's proto-absurdist play by freely associating on the sounds of the Polish words. With some minor adjustments to this process, I fashioned a narrative about a tyrannical king suffering from a spiritual and physical malaise, while four of his courtiers attempt to lift him from his funk, while simultaneously promoting their own agendas. In doing so, I created my own brand new "absurd" play that weirdly honors the spirit of Witkiewicz's avant garde enterprise.*

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(Scene i: A lewd party at Court. Wearing a black robe, King Richard III sits on his throne unhappily taking in the party scene. He then takes a stick of charcoal from his robe and smears it across his cheek.

Mordred, his Minister of Security and State Artist, does a stylish dance while holding a book. The title of the book is shown: "A = Aaaaa!" Tatiana then lewdly eats a canapé for Richard's viewing.

Amnesia, at her side, gives Tatiana a prawn which she holds up to the light. Tatiana now moves mechanistically away from the king. Amnesia furtively follows. Meanwhile, a crowd of people bow before the King and exit.)

TATIANA

(While alone with Amnesia.) Work your worker, little Amnesia. He'll satisfy you much better than Floristan. Believe me, you need to twirl your turban away from the court courtiers. Line up your stripes in perpendicular directions. Glam, wham and spam, Bo peep. This principle and that, gets dropped like any other toy set.

(Mordred slinks toward them and glowers, then moves away.)

TATIANA

There's that snoopy Mordred with an ear in his nose. He has as much soul as a servant.

AMNESIA

I wish the King would ignite that straw chessman. I've gotten used to privacy and I don't want to lose it rickety, dickety every night with a mouse up my clock. Pooh! That ozone monk isn't hiding his true dehydrated class. After all, I am a direct descendent of Queen Jadwiga.¹ I can see.

¹ Jadwiga is pronounced Yad-vee-ga

TATIANA

Well said. You are one of the group, my Amnesia.

(The King rises. Tatiana and Amnesia move forward together. Tatiana makes a robotic bow. But Amnesia begins to sob.)

KING RICHARD

Give me my chocolate milk! *(Suddenly seeing Tatiana, he becomes aroused.)* Ah, my Tatie pretzel.

(Mordred interrupts the King's desire by stomping out a dance - but with great panache. He then exits.)

KING RICHARD

(Referring to Mordred.) I am sad. My State artist and Minister of Security has just failed to amuse me. I am lost.... My sweet giblet with the wide open eyes -- Comfort me! I am in a sciatic pickle, dressed for all the world to see. *(A beat.)* Question: why should a skunk wrestle when he need only walk on delicate paws?

TATIANA

(Petting the King's head, then taking him by the cheeks.) Wipe away that sleepy crust, Richard. You are you. You need only name the tea leaves and your future is sinecure

KING RICHARD

(Quite morose.) Yes, it is true. Talk is silly and mangled. But, precisely this charcoal giddy bop brings me a bovine kiss. *(Reconsiders.)* But how came you to have mowed the sugar cane? *(Aside to the audience.)* And to have stayed so luscious! *(Back to Tatiana.)* Have you traded your soul to stay so sweet? Why don't you stink of stale cabbage as you should! So, now, give me ten naked kisses!

TATIANA

But, I am already naked before you. Evidenced by my fine Cuban cigar. *(She pulls a cigar from her cleavage and gives it to him.)*

MORDRED

(Re-enters, slowly doing a stomp dance across the stage.) "A? Aaaaa! *(pronounced "Eh? Aaaaah!")*

(The King begins to follow Mordred off-stage as if in a trance. Amnesia breaks the King's line of vision and thus Mordred's spell.)

AMNESIA

(Seductively cleaning the charcoal from the King's face.) Your worship, don't talk in such convoluted cosmopolitans to us bumpkins. Look at me. *(Offering herself.)* Isn't youth in check a better specimen than all that outside ballast that has affected you?

TATIANA

Listen up, your highness. *(Walking like a robot again.)* Why let your conscience prick you? You need only steal the secure musician's horn...or the dancer's steps. And then, kill him. State artists, secure ministers - one and the same.

AMNESIA

Yes, exactly. *(Aside, to Tatiana)* That's all? How would we dispose of the strings? *(To the King.)* But of course, from such a murder, you want neither a clash nor a panic that would arouse the rabble. So, the planning must be delicate.

TATIANA

(To the King.) By the speed of your light and weight of your might, you've caught two female intuitions for your book. You can dismiss us as weak whims, a yakkety jest. Or understand that the Masses may yet tire of your gluttonous tyranny.

AMNESIA

As per the inertial law of jealousy.

TATIANA

But you can still seize victory. Protect your loyal bureaucracy. Unite against the people. Unite against your disloyal ministers. In law, neither truth nor hubris.

(Tatiana gives the King her hand, but then grabs his hand and pulls it underneath her dress. The King swoons.)