

PLAY #25 CLOUDBURST IN DRY GULCH

by

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CHARACTERS

EUNICE

A goat farmer. Late 60s.

GRANT

Her husband. Same age.

CLOUDBURST IN DRY GULCH

(At Rise: Goats bleating. GRANT sits on a couch reading a book. EUNICE stands near him with her hands on her hips, eyeing him above and below her glasses, shifting her position now and again.)

EUNICE

I've been standing here for five minutes with my hands on my hips and you haven't even noticed me.

GRANT

Eunice, I see you.

EUNICE

That means you were ignoring me. That's even worse.

GRANT

What are you doing?

EUNICE

Waiting for it to rain.

GRANT

And how is that working for you?

EUNICE

It's gotta let loose soon, Grant.

GRANT

And who are you to say it's gotta?

EUNICE

You sure gotta lotta useless questions for me.

GRANT

Useless questions?

EUNICE

Like not real questions.

GRANT

They're called rhetorical questions, Eunice. They're meant as polite and humble guidance to the person they're addressed to.

EUNICE

Humble my ass. You and your books.

GRANT

Fine...

EUNICE

My knees are twitching. (Pause.) They are, Grant. You know I don't like it when my knees twitch.

GRANT

Well, you can reach your hands as high as you want on those hips and that's not gonna help the sky open up. Besides. The last time it was dry as a bone and your knees twitched it rained for four days and we lost a few goats into the aqueduct.

EUNICE

Well, obviously I'm not as superstitious as you are.

GRANT

It's not about superstition, Eunice. I just want you to relax. You can't make the clouds burst with your worrying.

EUNICE

How can you relax when the whole town's brown as goat muck and we're in danger of losing everything we have?

GRANT

We live in Dry Gulch. What would you like me to do?

EUNICE

I just want to be able to sleep at night.

GRANT

Is the weather worth losing sleep over?

EUNICE

That's another one of those questions.

GRANT

So be it.

EUNICE

Fine.

(EUNICE sits down. Crosses her arms.)

GRANT

You're mad at me now?

EUNICE

What's to be mad at? It's only been twenty four days.
The last one was nineteen. You're not worried about
anything. But I am.

(There's a scraping sound at the door.)

GRANT

What's that?

EUNICE

How should I know?

(More scraping. A goat bleats.)

For the love of...

(EUNICE goes and opens the door. A goat
runs inside.)

It's Sally.

GRANT

Eunice... Get the goat out of the house.

EUNICE

Sally! What are you doing in here?!

GRANT

Eunice!

EUNICE

What am I supposed to do? Why don't you put your damn
book down and do something?

(GRANT puts his book down and tries to
corner the goat. EUNICE goes to the
door and holds it open as GRANT chases
the goat out of the house. EUNICE
closes the door. Pause.)

I don't like this one bit, Grant.

GRANT

Eunice...

EUNICE

The goats have never tried to get in the house before.
(The sound of wind and rain in the
distance, increasing as the play
progresses.)

Hear that?

GRANT

It must be a storm coming. There. You see? Nothing to worry about.

EUNICE

I don't know. I don't like it.

GRANT

It's dry you don't like it. The rain comes and you don't like it.

EUNICE

Things are not right.

GRANT

They're never right. Not for you.

EUNICE

That's not true. There was a time when we could count on the rains coming. And when they came, they were mostly gentle, maybe a thunderstorm here and there. Remember when the springs would always be running? The fields flourished when they were supposed to and died back when their time had come. And my knees never twitched.

(Sound of gusting winds. Goats bleating.)

Now these warm winters. And cold summers. Springs dry half the year. And these winds!

(More goats scraping at the door. Metal twisting and scraping. EUNICE is looking concernedly out the window.)

What should we do about the goats?

GRANT

They've got the barn to get into.

EUNICE

Not really. Grant... The barn roof's gone.

GRANT

It's gone?

EUNICE

Sally knew this was coming.

GRANT

That's nonsense, Eunice.

EUNICE

Call it nonsense if you like. The clouds are bursting.
If we make it through this, I'll never forget this
day.

(The house begins creaking in the wind.
Some loud snaps are heard. Rain and
wind increases to the sound of a super
storm.)

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

END OF PLAY