

CRAZY DREAMS

A one act by Matthew P. Burkholder

Cast of characters

Stan
Harry
The Guy

Stan is standing in the middle of the room looking at a body laying on the floor. Harry enters carrying some grocery bags, doesn't notice the body.

Harry
I brought some food.

Stan
Good. Um, Harry...

Harry
Ask your friend what he likes.

Stan
I don't think he's very hungry.

Harry
Beer?

Stan
I don't think so.

Harry
Well, ask him for crise sake!

Stan
Um... (laughs) You wanna beer buddy?

Harry
What you laughin' at?

Stan
Harry brought something to eat, you hungry? (laughing harder)

Harry
Oh my god, you killed him?

Stan

Oh, crap.

Harry

Stan! Quit laughin'! Is he really dead?

Stan

He was buggin' me.

Harry

So you killed him?

Stan

Sorry.

Harry

Sorry? You're sorry? Stan! We were hired to watch this guy... make sure nothing happened to him. You killed him!

Stan

Look, I said I was sorry. What do you want me to do?

Harry

Not kill people Stanley, that's what I want you to do.

Stan

OK. I won't kill anyone else.

Harry

Great. That's just fuckin' great.

beat

Stan

What're we gonna do with him?

Harry

Shut up I'm thinking.

Stan

All right. (beat) He was really mean. You shouldn't have left me alone with him.

Harry
So it's my fault?

Stan
You know how I get. You know how mean he was. What did you expect?

Harry
You're right. Now shut up.

Stan
He started talkin' bout Arlis. Started sayin' lots of stuff about Arlis. She's a good woman Harry.

Harry
Stan, shut the fuck up.

Stan
I just want you to know I don't go around killin' people for no reason.

Harry
Jesus Christ Stan, will you shut up so I can figure out how we're gonna deal with this?

Stan
Yeah.

beat

Harry
There goes our bonus.

Stan
(laughs) Yeah, I guess so!

Harry
This isn't happening.

Stan
Hey Harry?

Harry
What?

Stan

I'm hungry.

Harry

Me too. There's food in those bags.

Stan

Oh yeah... thanks. (He moves to the bags) Want somethin'?

Harry

I said I was hungry. Make me a sandwich or somethin'.

Stan

Hey, you got that meat I like, is this from the deli down the corner?

Harry

Pastrami, yeah.

Stan

Thanks Harry... you're the best. (he starts piling the meat on the bread)

Harry

Yeah. What the fuck am I gonna do about this body?

Stan

You want mustard?

Harry

Uh-huh.

Stan

Hey, this beer is warm, you want something else?

Harry

No. Beer's fine.

Stan

OK. I'm gonna have water myself. I don't like warm beer. I'll just put this in the fridge OK? You're a heck of a guy Harry. Thanks for pickin' up this meat. My dad used to bring home pata... what's it called

again?

Harry

Pastrami

Stan

Yeah, he used to bring home pastrami sandwiches for us after Ma left. Sure brings back memories. (he puts a slice in his mouth) Mmmm, that sure is good meat. Nothin' like a good sliced pata... a good sliced meat sandwich. (Moves back to Harry and the body) Here ya go Stan.

They sit and eat in silence looking at the dead body.

You know that church where all the bums camp out? It's up there on fifty-fifth St? I was walkin' by there the other day and there was this guy with two kids sleepin' with their heads on their dad's lap. At least I think it was their Dad. I s'pose it could have been any bum who looked out for 'em. Anyways they were sittin' there and they had all these comic books in the plastic and everything. You ever collect comic books Harry? No? Well, you keep 'em so they're like new by puttin' em in these plastic bags, so they don't get dirty or nothin'. But they were sellin' their comics. I thought that was really sad. I mean this was all they had. These comic books, and they were sellin' 'em on the street just so they could go out and have a cheeseburger or somethin. That's not what comic books are for are they? They're for kids to read. They're s'posed to be the escape. It didn't seem right. But they sure looked peaceful layin' there on their Daddy's lap. They sure were a happy family. Made me think of me and my brother and Dad.

Harry

Did you buy any?

Stan

Huh?

Harry

If you felt so bad for em... did you buy any of the comic books?

Stan
No.

Harry
Why not?

Stan
I don't know... you know they were sleepin', they looked so peaceful sleepin' there on their Daddy's lap. I didn't want to wake em up.

Harry
Don't you think they would have rather had someone buy their comics so they could eat?

Stan
Yeah, I suppose. (takes a bite of the sandwich) Yeah. I suppose.

Harry
What you wanna do about this guy.

Stan
(shrugs his shoulders) You're the brains.

Harry
Well, you wanna gimme a little help here! This ain't the kind of thing that comes up every day!

They pause while Stan thinks.

Stan
We could say we went out to get the food and when we got back he was dead.

Harry
Yeah, that'd be a great way to get ourselves killed. We were supposed to be keepin' him alive! You stupid shit!

Stan
Why? Why were we watchin' him anyway? A lot of people want him dead?

Harry
I don't know. All I know is that the boss wanted him
alive and now he's dead. And you killed him!

Stan
Why don't you call someone.

Harry
Who?

Stan
I don't know... Nine one one?

Harry
Oh yeah. Why don't I? We're both wanted men you
fuckin' moron.

Stan
They don't know that.

Harry
They don... (laughs)... you are a fuckin' moron.

Stan
Yeah.

Harry
I need another beer.

Stan
You buy any smokes?

Harry
Yeah. Here.

Stan
Thanks. Hey, Harry?

Harry
What?

Stan
I think I should grow a mustache.

Harry
Sure, why not, you'd look good with one.

Stan
Wanna grow one too?

Harry
Nah. I tried it once. I looked stupid.

Stan
You think I'd look stupid with one?

Harry
No, I said it looked stupid on me. You'd look all right with one.

Stan
Maybe those Nine-one-one people wouldn't recognize me with a mustache.

Harry
Yeah, maybe. Gimme a smoke.

Stan
That sure was a good sandwich Harry. Thanks again for getting that meat I like.

Harry
Pastrami.

Stan
Yeah. (beat) You know what bugs me Harry?

Harry
You mean other than people talkin' bad about Arlis?

Stan
Yeah, I hate that too, but this is just something that bugs me.

Harry
No Stan, I don't.

Stan

I don't get why people who go away to war and get shot or blown up or captured or something are heroes and the ones who make it home in one piece are just these loser army people. I mean, the ones who screwed up are heroes. Why is that?

Harry

I don't know.

Stan

That bugs me. I mean all these people get signed up to go away to war. To fight for democracy or whatever and they come back cause they screwed up and got shot and they're heroes. Then these guys that do the job right and don't get shot, they're just people. I don't get it Harry.

Harry

That's a good question. So you think they should give awards to people who make it out in one piece?

Stan

Yeah. I guess. Does that ever bug you?

Harry

Can't say that I've given it much thought Stan.

Stan

What bugs you?

Harry

You mean aside from the fact that you just killed a guy.

Stan

I said I'm sorry.

Harry

I know, I know.

Stan

So what bugs you?

Harry

All right, why is it...

Stan

(Leaning in) Yeah?

Harry

Why is it that people don't let people off the train first? I'm trying to get off the train and the announcer is sayin' "let 'em off first" and all that crap and I get pushed back in the train. That bugs me. Or they're all just standing right there in front of the door and don't move when you start to get off. That bugs me.

Stan

That's a good one.

Harry

You ever notice that?

Stan

Yeah. That bugs me too. (beat) Sure wish I didn't kill the guy.

Harry

Me too.

Stan

I just get these crazy thoughts in my head sometimes. Like these crazy dreams. You ever have crazy dreams?

Harry

Yeah.

Stan

I sure do. I have these crazy dreams and when I wake up it starts to get forgot. Like, I grab and I grab and it just starts to fade away 'til there's nothin left. I think it's all gone. I think I forgot it, and part of me is glad that it's gone. But then something happens, someone says somethin' and it comes back. Sometimes just a flicker, but sometimes the whole thing just comes into sharp focus and I'm sitting there with this crazy dream on replay in my head. That's what happened, Harry. I was sittin' here with the guy, and we were havin' a good time. We were playin' cards or somethin',

and he said somethin' about whether or not I had a girl and if she was a good fuck. Then next thing I knew I was in that crazy dream and I got real mad and I picked him up from his chair. He was screamin' at me, then I hit him a couple times. That's when he died. Then you came in. I'm real sorry Harry.

Harry

What was the dream?

Stan

I dreamed Arlis got ... she got fucked up by some guy. And this guy, this guy we were takin' care of, did it. I dreamed it like it was for real. She was hurt real bad Harry. I had to do somethin'. I had to. (lighting another cigarette)

Harry

Well, you sure the fuck did.

Stan

Yeah. I sure the fuck did.

They pause and look down at the body

Guy

(moans)

They both leap up away from the guy

Stan/Harry

Jesus Christ!

Harry

He's not dead?

Stan

I thought I killed him!

Harry

Shit Stan! He ain't dead!

Stan

Yeah, we're ok.

Harry
No we aren't. When he tells the boss what you did,
you're in big shit Stan.

Stan
But he ain't dead.

Harry
Hey, hey buddy. You OK?

Guy
Ow. (Doesn't notice Stan) He still here?

Harry
Yeah. Don't worry, he don't wanna hurt you guy. Are
you all right?

Guy
Yeah. Just had some crazy fucked up dreams.

Harry slowly stands up walks a few feet away from him, turns around pulls out a gun and shoots him.

Harry
Well fuck. Guess it's time to move out of New York, huh
Stan?

Stan
You killed him.

Harry
The boss wouldn't be happy about you beatin' him up
Stan. Besides, you can't trust those crazy dreams.
Come on, let's get out of here.
(lights a cigarette and they exit.)

The End.

Alternate dialogue if actors have facial hair.

Stan

I think I should shave my mustache.

Harry

Sure, why not, you'd look fine without it.

Stan

Wanna shave yours too?

Harry

Nah. I tried it once. I looked stupid.

Stan

You think I'd look stupid without one?

Harry

No, I said I looked stupid. You'd look all right without it.

Stan

Maybe those Nine-one-one people wouldn't recognize me then.