

BELEAGUERED

a one-act play by
Peter M. Floyd

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PARK STREET ANGEL

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

PRIVATE VINCENT, male, early twenties
PRIVATE LASALLE, female, early twenties
EDWARDS, male, mid-twenties
PILOT, male, about thirty

An almost bare stage. A few large rocks and boulders are arranged haphazardly. A body wearing a military uniform lies facedown stage center. A large pack is strapped to its back.

A few moments after lights come up, VINCENT enters from the left. He wears the same military uniform as the body, and totes a large rifle. Upon seeing the body, he stops.

VINCENT

Whoa. Not good.

He looks around, as if expecting to be fired upon at any moment. When this does not happen, he relaxes, and looks back over at the body.

VINCENT

You got anything I could use, buddy?

He opens up the dead man's pack, and begins examining its contents. He pulls out several bags of rations.

VINCENT

Aha!

He removes his own pack, and places the rations inside. He then returns to examine the body with a critical eye. He picks up one of the body's feet, and examines the boot.

VINCENT

Hmm... Maybe, maybe.

VINCENT unlaces the shoe, and removes it from the body's foot. He then sits, and places the sole of the boot against the sole of one his own boots. The boot he is holding is clearly much smaller.

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VINCENT

Ah, figures.

He tosses the boot aside, and continues to sit, absently rocking back and forth.

After a moment LASALLE, another soldier, enters from the left. She is wearing the same type of uniform. She looks at VINCENT.

LASALLE

Hey.

VINCENT

Hey.

LASALLE

Are you real, or just a hallucination?

VINCENT

Dunno. *(He raises a hand to his face, and touches it meditatively.)* I guess I'm real.

LASALLE

Awesome. I haven't seen anybody in a day and a half. Everything's fucked. What happened to him? *(She points to the corpse.)*

VINCENT

Dead. Like that when I got here.

LASALLE

I wasn't blaming you.

She walks over to the body and begins to rummage in his bag, as VINCENT did previously.

VINCENT

I already got anything worth getting.

LASALLE does not reply. She looks at the boot that VINCENT tossed away. She goes to it and, as he did, holds it against her own boot. They seem much the same size. With a cry of triumph, she takes off her boot, and puts on the one that came from the body. She then begins to take off the boot that remains on the body. However, it does

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not seem to want to come off. She struggles for a moment, and then turns to VINCENT.

LASALLE

Little help?

VINCENT

What'll you give me?

LASALLE

Got some extra MREs.

VINCENT

Don't need 'em. I got his.

LASALLE

Give you a hand-job.

VINCENT (*thinking it over*)

Mmmm... Nah, I'm gay.

LASALLE shrugs, and goes back to the boot. After a few moments, she wrests it from the foot. She gives a cry of triumph, and pulls the boot free. She quickly takes off her own, and replaces it with the new one. She then begins to walk around in them, like any customer trying on new shoes.

LASALLE

Not bad. They're broken in, but still in pretty good shape. Guy must've been a newbie.

VINCENT

No newbies here.

LASALLE

Yeah, but even so.

VINCENT

No newbies here.

LASALLE sits again, opens her own pack, pulls out an MRE, and begins to eat, occasionally taking a pull from her water flask. VINCENT looks at her and decides he's hungry. He opens his own pack and pulls out one of the MREs he took from the dead man. He opens it up, and grimaces.

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VINCENT

Shit! Gross. Look! *(He offers LASALLE a look inside the bag. She grimaces.)*

LASALLE

Ew! That's disgusting.

VINCENT tosses aside the bag, and takes out another one. He opens this one, looks inside, and shakes his head.

VINCENT

This one, too.

LASALLE

Life sucks.

VINCENT

His boots were new, but his food was fuckin' *old*.

LASALLE

There's some kind of lesson there.

VINCENT

Got any you can share?

LASALLE

What'll you give me?

VINCENT

...How 'bout a hand-job?

LASALLE *(laughs)*

I don't think so.

VINCENT

Come on. Do you want me to starve?

LASALLE

Why not? I don't know you.

VINCENT

James Vincent, Private First Class. Company C. My buds call me Vince. There, now you know me.

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LASALLE

Fine. But you'll owe me a favor. *(She digs into a pack, and pulls out another bag, which she tosses at VINCENT. He opens it, and begins eating voraciously.)*

VINCENT *(between bites)*

Thanks.

LASALLE

Liz LaSalle, Private First Class. K Company. My buds call me Ms. Queen Bitch of the Fucking Universe. *(VINCENT nods, and continues eating.)* Do you know where we are? *(VINCENT shakes his head.)* My GPS unit is toast. Cell, too.

VINCENT *(while chewing)*

Yours and everyone's. I heard they're shooting down the satellites.

LASALLE

Who said that?

VINCENT

Just some people.

LASALLE

They don't have the technology.

VINCENT

They don't but they might have friends who do.

LASALLE

Everything's fucked. *(beat)* I got a map, but it doesn't really help. All desert looks alike to me.

VINCENT

Lemme see.

LASALLE pulls out a map from her pack and unfolds it. VINCENT, gulping down the last of his food, takes a look.

VINCENT

Well, there was a wadi just over the ridge back there. You know what a wadi is, right?

LASALLE

Yeah, I know what a wadi is.

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VINCENT

And we're facing north. That means, I think, that we're right along here. *(He points to a place on the map.)* Unless we're here. *(He points to another place.)*

LASALLE

So, are we on their turf or ours?

VINCENT

Depends. If we're *here (points)* we're on *our* side, but if we're *here (points)* we're on *theirs*.

LASALLE

Oh. Huh. Like it matters at this point. You ask me, this whole war's getting weird.

VINCENT

Well, it's war.

LASALLE

No, I mean you see all these soldiers wandering around like zombies, all dead-eyed. Who are they? Where do they come from? I was talking to this captain a week back, he said he's getting all these contradictory orders from HQ. No one's got a clue what's going on, what the big picture is. I think something's happening back home, something bad. They won't let us call home or look at the internet, or anything. Something's up.

VINCENT

I don't know what to tell ya. You're right, but what are you gonna do? You can't just hang out here with a dead guy 'till the war ends. You gotta get back to your company.

LASALLE

I don't think I got a company any more, to be honest.

VINCENT

Yeah?

LASALLE

It's fucking chaos out there. It's fucking anarchy. I don't think anyone knows what's going on. Okay, so we were movin' in on this village, supposed to have a nest of hostiles, right? Suddenly, these six or eight fighters pop in overhead, start shelling the shit out of us. Couldn't even

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LASALLE (CONT)

tell what kind they were, or where they were from. Next thing, boom! boom! boom! Everyone's screaming and dying all around me. Something blows up right behind me, and I black out. When I wake up, there's nothing but rubble and bodies all around me.

VINCENT

Whoa.

LASALLE

I mean, what the fuck? Did some other country declare war on us since last week?

VINCENT

Could be. Wouldn't be a bit surprised. Might be China. Trying to come in, you know, hit us when were down.

LASALLE

Well, far as I'm concerned, China can have this place.

VINCENT

No, see, that would totally destabilize the balance of power. If they got their hands on all this oil.

LASALLE

Fuck the balance of power. If giving oil to China means my ass goes home, then let 'em tank up.

EDWARDS, another soldier, enters from the left.

EDWARDS

Hey.

VINCENT

Hey.

LASELLE

Hey.

EDWARDS (looking at the body)

Picked clean?

LASALLE

Yeah.

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EDWARDS

Huh. Figures. You guys got anything to eat?

LASALLE

No.

VINCENT

No.

EDWARDS

I'm so fucking hungry I could eat me a fucking rhino. Your GPS working?

LASALLE

No.

VINCENT

No.

EDWARDS

Shit. Any idea what's going on?

VINCENT

No.

LASALLE

No. Everything's kinda coming apart, I think.

EDWARDS

It's no fucking way to run a war. (*He sits down next to them.*) The generals an' shit in charge of this, they're too pussy-assed about this, that's their problem. If I was running this fucking war, I'd drop a fucking nuke in the dead center of this country, wait a few days for the smoke to clear, and then send in some boys to mop up. So much cleaner.

VINCENT

Might not be so good diplomatically.

EDWARDS

Yeah, well, you can't eat diplomacy, you can't fuck it, and you can't wipe your ass with it.

VINCENT

...Wait, what does that even mean?

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EDWARDS

It means diplomacy's more fucking useless than tits on Hitler.

LASALLE (*looking up*)

Get down.

EDWARDS

What?

LASALLE

Hit the fucking dirt!

LASALLE drops to the ground. EDWARDS and VINCENT do likewise. There is the sound of a jet going overhead.

EDWARDS

What the hell was that?

LASALLE

That was one of the bastards that hit us!

EDWARDS

What the hell was it? I didn't recognize it at all. Who was it?

VINCENT

Chinese, you think?

The three pick themselves up again.

EDWARDS

Chinese? That wasn't fucking Chinese. I don't know what it was, but it wasn't fucking Chinese.

LASALLE

At least they didn't see us.

VINCENT

You sure?

LASALLE

Well, they didn't drop anything on us.

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