

Take a Chance

By
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STORY OF THE PLAY

As the play opens Rosie, riding a stick horse, and Oliver, pushing a wheelbarrow, are walking around a square stage. The fact that they are in the game Monopoly should slowly manifest itself in various funny ways, but what starts as a cute comedy turns into an existential quest for self-meaning. Oliver, the idealistic one, believes that there must be a life beyond his own mundane existence in a rule-governed world. Rosie, the cautious one, is addicted to "passing go" and is afraid to leave the familiar. Their love is evident, and yet part of the conflict. Through the course of the play, Utility becomes meaner and nastier, ultimately leading to the play's climax. Will Rosie and Oliver stay in their confining existence, or will they "Take a Chance" at a potentially better life? About 25 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 m, 1 w, 1 flexible)

OLIVER: Any age, male, pushes around a small wheelbarrow. Oliver yearns for more out of life, for a challenge, to trek into the unknown. He wants to escape the routine. He also is in love with Rosie.

ROSIE: Any age, female, rides a small stick horse. Rosie is somewhat stuck to the familiar and fears change. She is an addict. She fears leaving the familiar. She is in love with Oliver.

UTILITY: Either gender, any age. Wears a top hat and monocle, carries a cane. Dictatorial. Obsessed with the rules of a linear existence. Lives to enforce these rules.

STAGE DESIGN

The stage needs to have a square on it in some way. Any way of making four corners on the stage should be sufficient. The set should not look like a Monopoly board but rather be a loose interpretation of it.

PROPERTIES

Wheelbarrow for Oliver
Stick horse for Rosie
Top hat, monocle, whistle, and cane for Utility
Treasure chest
Orange chance cards
Yellow community chest cards
Money
Deeds
Bouquet of flowers
Whistle

TAKE A CHANCE

(AT RISE: ROSIE and OLIVER are walking along the perimeter of the square. UTILITY sits atop a chest/box in the middle of the square.)

ROSIE: *(Riding a small stick horse, catching up to OLIVER.)*

Hey there, wait up! *(Counting.)* Nine, ten!

OLIVER: *(Pushing a wheelbarrow, stops to wait for ROSIE.)*

Oh, hey. I haven't seen you in a while. *(Looks around.)*

This seems like a nice place ... what's it called?

ROSIE: *(Squinting up in the distance.)* It looks like New York Avenue.

OLIVER: Those houses are nice ... this wouldn't be a bad place to settle.

ROSIE: The houses are fine, but why do they have to be green?

OLIVER: Aren't all houses green?

ROSIE: Yeah, and I think that all houses are ugly.

OLIVER: I may buy some property here some day. I hear there's free parking nearby, too.

ROSIE: This is a nice area. I like how you can smell the ocean. *(They BOTH pause for a moment to take deep breaths, but UTILITY interrupts them by clearing his throat loudly.)* ... Well, I should probably get going.

OLIVER: OK! Well, maybe I'll see you soon!

ROSIE: I'd like that!

(SHE looks towards UTILITY, who is waiting impatiently. Before speaking, he looks into the distance as if listening for something, and does this each time before telling them to move.)

UTILITY: Seven.

ROSIE: OK.

(SHE begins to walk, takes one step forward, turns right and takes six more steps, counting out the numbers as she goes.)

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UTILITY: *(To OLIVER.)* And for you ... six.

OLIVER: *(Begins to walk, counts to six as he goes. Stops just behind ROSIE.)* Well, we meet again!

ROSIE: *(Turning around.)* Oh, hey! How is the railroad station?

OLIVER: It's all right, I guess. Doesn't look like anything is running right now.

ROSIE: That's too bad. I always liked riding trains.

OLIVER: Yeah ... hey, which is your favorite?

ROSIE: Railroad?

OLIVER: Yeah.

ROSIE: For some reason, I've always loved taking a ride on the Reading Railroad. I just like the sound of it. *(UTILITY clears his throat again.)* Oh, looks like I have to go.

OLIVER: Oh, OK. I hope you don't wind up "you-know-where."

ROSIE: Thanks. Same to you.

UTILITY: OK, time to go. It's ten this time.

ROSIE: Doubles?

UTILITY: Nope.

ROSIE: OK.

OLIVER: Bye, Rosie!

ROSIE: Take care!

(ROSIE counts as she walks again. Takes four steps forward, stopping at the corner. Turns right and walks for six steps. As she walks, UTILITY approaches with a deck of orange chance cards. She takes one off of the top.)

UTILITY: Pay poor tax of \$10.

ROSIE: *(Reaching in her pocket for the money.)* You know, it really stinks how we have to pay money for being poor.

UTILITY: It could be worse. *(Turns to OLIVER.)* OK, you're up. Move eight.

OLIVER: Doubles?

UTILITY: Nope.

OLIVER: Will do.

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(OLIVER, counting steps, takes five forward, turns right, and three more. UTILITY steps forward with the deck of Community Chest cards. Oliver takes one from the top.)

UTILITY: Congratulations! *(Produces a bouquet of flowers.)*
You have won second prize in a beauty contest. *(Gives OLIVER the \$10 he had taken from ROSIE.)*

OLIVER: Wow! This is great! I'd like to thank everyone who helped me get here, like the car, and that little dog, and the iron, oh, and Rosie and her horse! And my best friend the thimble, I couldn't have done it without you, buddy! Oh, and—

UTILITY: OK, OK, that's enough.

ROSIE: Good for you, Oliver! You deserve it!

OLIVER: Thanks, Rosie! Although, you know, you would have won first prize if you had entered. *(Puts flowers in his wheelbarrow.)*

ROSIE: You're too sweet ... *(THEY look at each other lovingly for a second, as if about to kiss. ROSIE takes a step towards OLIVER.)*

UTILITY: HEY! You don't move unless I tell you to move!
You know the rules!

ROSIE: You're right ... I'm sorry.

UTILITY: Just for that, I hope you *do* go you-know-where.

OLIVER: Hey! That's not right!

UTILITY: Both of you be quiet. *(When they have been quiet for a few moments.)* OK, Rosie ... while you may not deserve this, you're moving seven places.

ROSIE: That means

UTILITY: You got it!

(ROSIE quickly waves goodbye to OLIVER, and hurriedly walks and counts out four steps. Then she waits anxiously for the UTILITY, who takes his time coming over to her.)

ROSIE: *(Like an addict needed her fix.)* Come on, come on, I need it! Come on, give it to me, GIVE IT TO ME!

UTILITY: What do we say?

End of Freeview

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