

A THEORY OF LITTLE MEN

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By E.R. Schultz

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SYNOPSIS: A fast and funny conversation between two brothers about the hidden meanings and subtext they think is weaved into the Walt Disney movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(THREE MEN)

STEVE(55 lines)

ERIC(55 lines)

BARRY(16 lines)

AT RISE:

It is approximately 8:00 am, open on a small apartment. The apartment is neither lavish nor downtrodden but is generally well put together. STEVE is sitting at the table with his back to the fridge reading the paper. He is dressed in a white collared shirt and dress pants. ERIC, on the other hand, is dressed in casual, almost trashy attire. He is sitting on the couch staring at the T.V. Neither ERIC nor STEVE seems to even be aware the other is in the room, both engrossed in their paper and television respectively.

ERIC: This is just odd. Are you seeing this?

STEVE: *(Not looking up from his paper.)* Not really.

ERIC: *(Still engrossed in the T.V.)* I can't believe I didn't notice this before. I mean, it's everywhere. It is literally falling from the ceiling. And they are there every day...yet, they live in a—! That makes no sense to me at all. Does it make sense to you?

STEVE: Not really.

ERIC: Absolutely everywhere, just waiting to be picked up. I mean...odd, it's just odd. Don't you find this odd?

STEVE: Not really.

Pause, both ERIC and STEVE are motionless.

ERIC: Why is it that I get the feeling you're not listening to a word I'm saying?

STEVE: Because it's early, and you're distracted, and I'm not.

ERIC: It's nice to have a brother that you can talk to.

STEVE: Oh, you can talk to me. Just...not about whatever oddities you pick up on during your countless hours wasted in front of that television.

ERIC: I'll have you know that the television is extremely vital to my daily routine. The television serves as a spark which allows my artistic passions to ignite into flame.

STEVE: Here we go.

ERIC: What do you mean "here we go"?

STEVE: Artistic tendencies? I mean, really?

ERIC: I will have you know that I am both an author and an illustrator. That is art in two of its purest forms.

STEVE: Really? Let's take a look at your "art."

STEVE stands up and crosses down to the second level, carrying the paper with him. He sits down next to ERIC on the couch and unfolds the paper.

STEVE: (*Whilst shuffling through the pages.*) Sports, Politics, Entertainment, and here we are...Comics, where genius flourishes. Am I right?

ERIC: Why, where could you possibly be going with this? The suspense is killing me. In case you haven't already picked up on it, I'm being sarcastic.

STEVE: Oh, look at this, your art. "Forest Friends Frenzy." I feel like I'm reading a Jane Austen novel.

ERIC: That is what I was going for.

STEVE: Well done, I've got goose bumps already. Should I read on?

ERIC: Knock yourself out.

STEVE: Oh, in this one, you have Paul the Pigeon defecating the tree trunk home of Sammy the Squirrel...why Eric, I believe you've crafted a masterpiece.

ERIC: I like to think of it as a metaphor for the way modern society defecates on the, uh...I can't really think of a way to end that sentence so just pretend I said something intelligent.

STEVE: I'll try.

ERIC: Why do you read the paper anyway? Are you hoping that one day you notice some hidden code in the corner of the newspaper so you can embark on an adventure with Indiana Jones and pretend that you're cool?

STEVE: And with that, I'm off.

ERIC: So soon?

STEVE: Yes, some of us don't have "artistic tendencies" and we have to resort to crazy measures just to get along such as...going to work.

ERIC: Have fun, sunshine.

STEVE: Unlikely, but thanks for the thought. You have fun too with whatever it is you're watching. (*STEVE then looks at the T.V.*) What are you watching? Is that—? Is that Snow White?

ERIC: No, that is *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Don't go knocking them out of the title.

STEVE: Why are you watching that?

ERIC: It's 8:00 am and we don't have cable. I'm not exactly drowned with options here. I mean, it was either this or *Elmo Ends World War II* or something.

STEVE: Yeah, Hitler never saw those puppets coming. You know if you don't like anything that's on, you realize that you could just...not watch T.V.

ERIC: That had, in fact, occurred to me. My original plan was to just watch a couple minutes of the movie, you know, for nostalgic value and then go apply my mind elsewhere to more deserving causes.

STEVE: And how'd that work out for you?

ERIC: Oh it went swimmingly. As a matter of fact, I'm off curing world hunger as we speak.

STEVE: Yeah, Eric, that's a real knee slapper; one of your best. If only it were true and you weren't spending your morning watching a children's cartoon.

ERIC: Hey look, it's not my fault. I meant to stick to the plan but over the course of the movie I picked up on some stuff that was lost on me during previous viewings and I had to keep watching.

STEVE: Stuff, like what?

ERIC: You know, just stuff.

STEVE: For example...?

ERIC: For example, there is something off about these dwarfs.

STEVE: What? Like the fact that they're dwarfs, or the fact that they're named for personality traits, or the fact that they're cartoons?

ERIC: No, like the fact that—well, look, what are the dwarfs doing now?

STEVE: (*Staring at the T.V.*) I don't know, singing their little "Hi-Ho" song...without any sound. Why is there no sound?

ERIC: Oh yeah, I spilled queso on the remote yesterday and haven't been able to get the sound on.

STEVE: And...are those German subtitles?

ERIC: Believe it or not, the queso spill was not limited to just the one button. Now can we please get back to the task at hand?

STEVE: Sure.

ERIC: Thank you, now look. Where are the dwarfs currently?

STEVE: In their mine.

ERIC: What kind of mine?

STEVE: I don't know.

ERIC: Just look, the answer is literally all over the screen.

STEVE: Can you just cut to the chase here?

ERIC: I have to do everything, don't I?

STEVE: Uh-huh, now if you could hurry this up. I need to leave for work soon. I am losing valuable "Sitting at my desk, wishing I wasn't there" time.

ERIC: Fine. What I have been trying to point out is that there are diamonds all over the place.

Pause.

STEVE: So what?

ERIC: (*Gesturing toward the T.V.*) So don't you think that it is a little odd that there are diamonds practically falling from the ceiling?

STEVE: Not really. I mean, I suppose that's why the dwarfs chose the mine in the first place. Without the diamonds, they would just be mining rocks.

ERIC: Point taken. But look where they are now.

STEVE: (*Looking back at the T.V.*) In their quaint little cottage of Disney magic. Will we be arriving at your point any time soon?

ERIC: Yeah, I'm getting to that right now. Don't you find it odd that seven men, or dwarfs if you will, who have a monopoly on mining the biggest diamond jackpot in history not only live together but live together in a cottage?

STEVE: (*Slightly intrigued.*) Go on.

ERIC: I mean, if they absolutely needed to live together, like in a Bert and Ernie type situation, you would think that they would have the money to buy some diamond mansion or something, wouldn't you? Like I said...odd.

STEVE: (*Processing this new information.*) Huh...that is weird. Oh by the way, Bert and Ernie don't live together anymore.

ERIC: What?

STEVE: Yeah, I was reading about it yesterday. Apparently their living status was deemed "controversial" and they had to stop being roommates.

ERIC: No way.

STEVE: Way, and the Cookie Monster. Now called the "Fruit Monster" or maybe it's just "Monster" I can't remember. Anyway, the bottom line is the folks down on Sesame Street figure that by taking away the cookie in "Cookie Monster" they are putting a stop to childhood obesity.

ERIC: I mean, I'm all for helping people as an "idea" but come on! This is Sesame Street for crying out loud. Is nothing sacred anymore? It's like they're ripping apart the fabric of my childhood.

STEVE: You know you've lived a full life when the fabric of your childhood was created by Jim Henson.

ERIC: Well, let's face it as a toddler I didn't have a lot going on. Still I mean, of all things why the Cookie Monster? He never hurt a soul. Bunch of PBS bureaucrats messing up society to help cure "obesity."

STEVE: Hey, on this one, I'm with you.

ERIC: I tell you, this is why we should hate fat people. Well, fat people who aren't Chris Farley, or John Belushi, or Homer Simpson, or Grover Cleveland, or—

STEVE: (*Interrupting.*) Wait, who's Grover Cleveland?

ERIC: You know, Grover Cleveland, first person ever to be elected president of the United States on two non-consecutive occasions.

STEVE: Oh, I did not know that. Come to think of it, how did you know that?

ERIC: Sesame Street.

Pause.

ERIC: The irony is not lost on me.

There are several knocks on the door.

STEVE: Okay, well, I'm going to take that as a cue for me to go to work.

BARRY enters and immediately dashes past STEVE without a word and crosses to ERIC.

BARRY: Eric, I got your message and I'm so happy you brought it up because I was starting to think I was the only one who noticed.

STEVE: Noticed what?

ERIC: (*Ignoring STEVE.*) I know the feeling, I tried explaining it to Steve but he still doesn't get it.

STEVE: Get what?!

BARRY: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.*

STEVE: You have got to be kidding me.

ERIC: Don't listen to him, Barry. What've you got?

BARRY: Well, I've given it a lot of thought and I think I've solved it.

STEVE: Solved what! The movie is rated G!

BARRY: It's a meth lab.

Pause.

STEVE: What?

BARRY: The dwarfs. I was watching this news piece earlier and it just clicked. It was about this lottery winner in Arizona. Apparently this like 60-year-old man won 33 million dollars and used it to set up this meth lab in the desert. To the public he was just a little old man who knit quilts, watched the *Andy Griffith Show*, and told stories about Vietnam. But in reality, he was like a drug kingpin.

STEVE: Are you for real?

BARRY: Yeah, the authorities didn't find out about it until the old man died of an overdose.

STEVE: No, I mean about the dwarfs.

BARRY: What about them?

STEVE: You're talking about the "Seven Dwarfs"?

ERIC: Yes, as in "Snow White...and the Seven Dwarfs." God, Steve, if you're going to eavesdrop at least have the decency to do a good job of it.

STEVE: You think the Seven Dwarfs...are running a meth lab?

BARRY: Well, they aren't necessarily running it but they are definitely financing it with some of that diamond money. And it's not even necessarily a meth lab, that's just one very specific possibility. They could also be running a heroin dealership, a child labor camp, or just all members of a really expensive cult.

Pause.

STEVE: You do realize that it's cartoon, right?

ERIC: A cartoon with more subtext than an Oliver Stone movie on crack.

STEVE: Okay, I have no idea what you're talking about.

ERIC: How is that different from any other time?

STEVE: Touché. I think the best course of action here for me is to...leave as quickly as possible. So, yeah I'm just going to leave you two alone and go to work but thank you both for all the pearls of wisdom. Ridiculous as it may be, you've given me a lot of thought to occupy those hours of boredom at work previously occupied by Tetris. So...have fun doing whatever it is you guys do.

BARRY: (*Sitting down on the couch next to ERIC.*) Alright well Snow White is on again so you'll forgive me if I don't hold the door for you on your way out.

STEVE: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.* Don't go knocking them out of the title.

ERIC: Bye, Steve.

STEVE exits.

BARRY: Hey, you know Bambi?

ERIC: The deer?

BARRY: Yeah.

ERIC: What about him?

BARRY: He's totally a Nazi.

ERIC: No friggin' way.

BARRY: Yep, that deer's an anti-Semite. True story. You can Google it and everything.

ERIC: Good to know man. Good to know.

BARRY: And "Beauty and the Beast"—

ERIC: *(Interrupting.)* Can we just focus on Snow White right now, man?

BARRY: Okay, right on, one step at a time, I get that. I'll just keep my mouth shut.

ERIC: Thank you.

ERIC and BARRY refocus their attention on the T.V. Pause.

BARRY: *(Staring at the T.V.)* Is that German?

ERIC: It's a long story.

THE END