

"Middle"

by

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Middle

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CHARACTERS

Janus	The Roman god of beginnings.
Jesus	The Christian savior.

SETTING

Nowhere.

TIME

No time.

SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1 In a limbotic nowhere.

"There are two mistakes one can make along the road to
truth: not going all the way and not starting."

--Buddha

ACT I

SCENE 1

Two chairs are set facing each other on an otherwise bare STAGE. Upon either chair sit two male gods, JANUS and JESUS, the latter is in typical hippie-esque attire attributed to the Christian savior, the former has both a forward and rear face and is in Grecian/Roman dress. They are mid-argument.

JANUS: Start.

JESUS: End.

JANUS: Start.

JESUS: End.

JANUS: Look, Jessy, the lights just came up, we've just begun speaking, the audiences' asses are barely making indentations in their seats - we are clearly at the start of this thing.

JESUS: What do they tell every playwright though? Every writer, every artist! Start at the...

JANUS: End, yes. But the operative word is "start" not "end." You can't start anywhere but the start.

JESUS: I think we're getting into semantics, Jan. This is the end of the discussion we're in the middle of.

JANUS: But we started at the end!

Jesus jumps up from his chair.

JESUS: But the end is where we're at! This, here, now - everything everyone's watching now is a degradation, an entropical spiral toward finality. The omega is nigh upon us!

JANUS: But we're not at the end. We're at the start. Maybe not anymore - we're probably veering into the middle now, or maybe a pinch, but still, if we are moving toward this finality you speak of then we certainly aren't there at the moment.

JESUS: I think you're missing the point, Janus: the end is everything, an epoch yawning ahead. Since this audience didn't see how we came to be in this (MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D): limbotic nowhere, nor how we came to conversation, nor indeed how said conversation has turned into the debate we're roiled within currently, they are privy only to the end of our encounter between our countenances. They are, by definition, watching the end of our discourse.

JANUS: But even the end of our discourse has a beginning. In the beginning there was "Start."

JESUS: Beginning of the end!

JANUS: But there was still a beginning!

JESUS: Uch. Why don't you stuff yourself into a doorway?

JANUS: Sure. I'll fornicate your mother there.

JESUS: What'd you say about my momma?

JANUS: I said the only thing immaculate about her is...

JESUS: You stop right there before you say something you'll regret.

JANUS: How willing she is to take a god inside herself.

Jesus slaps Janus. Janus stands, gets in Jesus' face.

JANUS: (*referring to rear face*) Oh, am I supposed to turn the other cheek?

JESUS: That's very funny, you two-faced relic. No one even believes in you anymore.

JANUS: Oh boo hoo. So I don't have humans bothering me every other second? Yeah, real loss there. Give it another thousand years, you'll get sick of it too.

JESUS: How do you get tired of being worshiped?

JANUS: Because they don't really worship you. It's not like they think, "Oh boy, I sure do love my god" all day every day. They rarely think of us, their little lives clutter their attentions too much; the only time they really think of us is when they want something.

JESUS: Maybe that's how they acted for you. I have devoted followers the world over.

JANUS: Oh yeah - charlatan interpreters that condemn each other to hell, or else take the words of the prince of peace as justification for their wars and murders.

JESUS: Hey, my father gave them freewill, it's not my fault they twist my words to their personal motivations.

JANUS: But the young Jesus I knew wouldn't have stood for this, he would have gone into their temples and overturned their collection plates and yelled at their misdeeds.

JESUS: That was two-thousand years ago.

JANUS: That Jesus also wouldn't have slapped me.

JESUS: He would have if you insulted his momma, which you did.

JANUS: Look, let's just nip this in the bud, we're getting to the end.

JESUS: No no, we're just getting started here, Janus.

JANUS: (*producing the script*) I'm afraid not. Look, we're definitely petering toward the end.

JESUS: But this conversation was just starting to get interesting.

JANUS: Well, it wasn't going to get much better than this anyway. Besides those people are getting restless. There's other shorts they're here to see and some of them are highly offended by our very characters being portrayed, let alone the content of our discourse. Well, your character being portrayed - no one cares when or where I show up anymore.

JESUS: (*to the audience*) You all need to relax. As Wilde put it, "There's nothing to indicate that life should be taken seriously." And people do still care about you, Janus.

JANUS: Please. We don't have time to assuage my ego now, we're so close to the end, there's no need to make me feel better.

JESUS: But it's true! Just because no one believes in you anymore doesn't mean you don't get mentioned.

JANUS: By academics. And poets. I'm not really sure which is worse or if it's really worth it. Every time I hear my name now it's either really dry or poorly phrased. I used to have priests of every cult invoke me before their ceremonies. Even the Bacchae. Man, could they throw some parties. But no more.

Janus sits in the seat Jesus formerly occupied.

JESUS: What are you doing?

JANUS: Waiting for the end.

Jesus sits across from Janus.

JESUS: Is it really that time, already?

JANUS: Just about. Look, the lights are starting to fade.

The LIGHTS begin to FADE.

JESUS: But we've only just begun! And we don't have a resolution.

JANUS: Most things in life don't. And we're not alive anyway. Perhaps in the hearts and minds of men, but we're not really, biologically speaking.

JESUS: I am.

JANUS: You were. How many life-forms walk around with holes in their appendages?

JESUS: You might have a point there.

JANUS: *(beat)* Want to go get some pizza?

JESUS: Sure. I know a good kosher place in Manhattan, 2007.

The LIGHTS fade completely to black.

JANUS: Can't get pepperoni, can I?

JESUS: Don't start.

END.