

The Last Autopsy

Characters: A/B/C: Three skinny, androgynous figures with short, black bobbed hair. Their skin is deathly white and they have dark rings around their eyes. It is unclear whether they are human or not.

(Spotlight on centre stage where there is an autopsy slab with a male corpse lying naked on it. His chest is torn open and his insides are hanging out. Leaning over him are the three figures. They are each wearing blood-splattered, white doctor's coats and are clutching various medical implements. They have their hands inside the corpse's body and are pulling his body parts out. They throw entrails to a dead mongrel dog)

A: *(Stops and looks at B)* Don't say it.

B: Say what?

A: It.

B: I wasn't going to say anything.

A: You were.

B: Wasn't.

C: Say it?

A: Yes, 'it', don't.

B: I WASN'T.

A: You were.

B: No...

C: I was.

A: What?

C: Saying it.

B: What?

C: He's dead. *(Long pause. They take their hands out of the body and look at each other.)*

A: I said don't say it. *(Pause)* Is he?

B: No, surely not. He can't be. How do you know?

C: The dog. It won't eat anymore. *(They look down at the dead dog)*

A: So?

C: What time is it?

B: Four to twenty and nine quarters of eleven.

A: Already?

C: It won't eat unless the blood is still pumping. That's how I know.

A: Funny, I could've sworn it was no later than lunchtime.

B: Dead. What now?

C: Nothing much left we can do.

A: Fun's over.

B: Fun's futile. I wanted faith.

C: Fun, faith - who cares? I wanted passion and humiliation but all I got...

A: Was...

B: This... *(long pause as they stare at the corpse.)* Dead. What now?

(Spotlight up on back right of stage on a large glass cabinet containing a grotesque attempt at taxidermy. It is of a dead man posing in the form of 'The Thinker'. The three figures turn to look at it before turning back to the body in front of them.)

A: No. Limbs too stiff.

B: Hard work.

C: Art though.

A: Oh yes, art indeed but no. Too...

C: Clichéd?

A: No. Too...

B: Dated?

A: No. Too...

C&B: Clichéd and dated?

A: Exactly. (*Long pause*)

C: Dead. What now?

B: I'm hungry.

A: I'm not.

C: I am.

A: Me too. (*Long pause before asking timidly*) Best to forget it though, perhaps?

B: Impossible. (*Reminiscing*) I remember the time when we sat...

A: With the olive groves lining the landscape...

C: And the taste of Sauvignon lingered upon our tongues...

A: We gazed at the sunset...

B: As the blood dripped from our forks...

C: And we vowed that we would never...

A: Ever...

A/B/C: Never, ever, forever...

C: Forget.

B: What happened? *(Pause)*

A: We forgot. *(Pause)*

C: *(Pause)* Dead. What now?

(Spotlight up on front left of the stage on a large banquet table. The three figures look at the table and then back at the corpse.)

B: No. Not yet. He isn't ready.

A: Isn't he?

B: No.

C: He isn't...

B: Cold enough.

A: Oh. I've always preferred it warm. (*B and C both stare at A as though he has blasphemed. A Cowers in fear*) S...S...Sorry, didn't mean it...I just...just ...want to know. Dead. What now?

C: You said we wouldn't forget...

B: You said never...

C: Ever...

B: Forever.

C/B: Forget.

A: (*Terrified and backing away as C and B close in. Pleadingly.*) Yes, I know. Never, ever, forever...see, I remember. But...it was us. Not me that said it. 'Me' and 'us' are different. As 'us' we are a 'one'. Unified by the cold. I don't want 'me'. I want 'us'. I want 'us' as a 'one'. Not 'me'. 'Us'. See? I remember...never, ever, forever. Forget the warmth...remember the chill. The vow to remember. The cold. Cold slate and icy fingers. The olive groves and bloody forks. See? I remember now. I'm sorry. Dead. What now? Dead. What now? WHAT NOW? DEAD. DEAD.

B: I'm hungry.

C: Me too.

A: (*Huddled in a ball front right of stage with B and C looming behind*) No...no...no. You said he wasn't ready, remember? You said he wasn't cold enough...you said...

C: (*Tauntingly*) You said, I said, they said, we said, you said, I said, they said, we said, you said, I said, they said, we said

B: (*Shouting*) WE WOULDN'T FORGET.

A: (*Starting to cry and cuddling the dead dog*) I didn't. I didn't forget. I'm hungry too, see? I'm hungry too.

C: Too late.

B: Already forgotten.

A: (*Desperately*) No. The faith, the passion, the humiliation...I REMEMBER.

C: Too late...

B: Not cold enough...

A: But. I. But. I. But I didn't mean it. No warmth, only cold, see?

B: We like it cold. You like it warm. We eat it blue, you eat it red. Simple.

C: Yes simple. We wait. You don't. You 'prefer' it warm remember?

B: Or have you forgotten?

C: Yes, forgotten, like the thing you said we would...

C/B: Never, ever, forever...

A: Forget.

(Light up on the back of the stage, where there are a line of androgynous figures identical to A, B and C hanging upside down from their feet. Their stomachs are torn open and their insides have spewed out onto plates beneath them. There is a queue of people lining up as though in a canteen. They are loading their plates with spoonfuls of entrails. Blackout.)