

'Stic

Written by

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## CHARACTERS

[we're in a] PICKLE: any age or gender, practical, pragmatic, a fervent believer in saving the Earth. In a relationship with:

[leave no] TRACE: any age or gender, idealistic, a preservationist, a dreamer.

## SETTING

A contemporary kitchen, and later, the out-of-doors.

## TIME

Today.

LIGHTS UP.

A kitchen: table, chairs, work space, utensils. A rope delineates the kitchen from the front of the stage.

PICKLE and TRACE race around for breakfast.

They both wear Velco-covered outfits that zip up the front over bodysuits.

Throughout the piece, they use PLASTIC everything.

Pickle enters the space as Trace cooks imaginary food.

Eggs?	TRACE
Depends.	PICKLE
On?	TRACE
Are they organic?	PICKLE
Of course. Nothing but the best for you, my sweetcake.	TRACE
Trace dishes them up for Pickle. Pickle pokes at them.	
Free-range? Cage-free?	PICKLE
Naturally.	TRACE
Grain-fed?	PICKLE
What else?	TRACE
Brown or white?	PICKLE

TRACE

Trick question. Whatever the chicken prefers.

PICKLE

I like to keep you on your toes.

Pickle holds a bite up to examine it.

PICKLE

Are they all-natural, artisanal, whole, fresh, omega-fortified, heritage, heirloom, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, GMO-free, gluten-free, MSG-free, cruelty-free eggs?

TRACE

They are 100 percent sustainably-produced local farm-to-table fair-trade certified eggs.

PICKLE

Did you take the car to pick them up?

TRACE

As if. I rode my bike, carrying them in my reusable, biodegradable shopping bag.

Pickle grins.

PICKLE

I suppose they're acceptable.

Pickle takes a bite.

TRACE

Orange juice?

PICKLE

Sure.

Trace pours Pickle a cup from a plastic container. Then, Trace sticks the plastic container to their jumpsuit. Pickle drinks the juice, then sticks the cup to their outer outfit.

PICKLE

Don't you wish everyone could be as virtuous as us?

TRACE

We're saving the planet yolk by yolk.

PICKLE

And joke by joke.

TRACE

What shall we do today to save the world?

PICKLE

I thought of a few things I'd like to change. One, light pollution. Two, sound pollution. Three, water pollution, four, quantity of shit in landfills. Five...

TRACE

Let me guess! Ozone!

PICKLE

Drat. I was going to say air pollution, but ozone is more accurate.

TRACE

Let me help you with that.

Trace takes Pickle's plate and fork and attaches them to their suit. Pickle grabs a phone and speaks a text message into it.

PICKLE

Dear miscreants and power-hungry power mongers who have been making the rules in this country. Don't you know that ozone is dangerous to breathe? It can cause a variety of health issues, including scarring lung tissue. I don't want my lung tissue scarred! Fix regulations. Say no more to ground level ozone. In natural wonder, Pickle.

Trace then grabs the phone, also dictating.

TRACE

Dear half-wits in Washington. Ozone harms vegetation, AKA trees. And shrubs, and pollinators, and corn stalks and cabbages and squash vines and radishes, etcetera. Do you want to eat food? If so, provide funding stat to those working to protect our plants. And, ecosystems, etcetera. Your food depends on it. Happy Earth Day, Trace.

PICKLE

Nice.

Trace attaches the phone to themselves.

PICKLE

Compost?

TRACE

Certainly.

They empty various small containers  
of (imaginary) food into a bin,  
attaching the containers to  
themselves as they go.

PICKLE

Don't you feel dreamy?

TRACE

Just too good to be true.

PICKLE

Except.

TRACE

What?

PICKLE

Do you suppose we can change the world?

TRACE

Of course. Who else will?

PICKLE

Yes, but I mean, do you think we're making progress? Are our  
actions providing results?

TRACE

Yes.

PICKLE

How?

TRACE

Well. Running Buffalo Clover has completely recovered. They  
thought it was extinct.

PICKLE

Yes, but the Western Black Rhinoceros *is* extinct.

TRACE

The United Nations has banned Japan from whaling in  
Antarctica.

PICKLE

Yes, but half of the thirteen whale species are currently  
endangered or vulnerable.

TRACE

There's the bill in congress to limit the sale of  
bioengineered salmon.

PICKLE

The what now?

TRACE

The genetically engineered salmon?

PICKLE

For what reason?!

TRACE

It grows full-sized in half the time.

PICKLE

That's an abomination! Who would eat that? No one's going to buy that.

TRACE

It's already for sale.

PICKLE

The politicians making these decisions, they keep getting voted in, but they always vote to better their own self-interests.

TRACE

There's not a lot choice in public officials; hardly anyone can afford to run for office. What's gotten in to you? Shall we call our senators? That will make you feel better.

Trace pulls out their phone.

PICKLE

No. I want to believe we're doing the right thing, but I wonder if we're capable as individuals of being heard.

TRACE

It's dialing...

Trace hands the phone to Pickle.

PICKLE

Hello, I'd like to make a comment on the bill regulating the sale of genetically engineered salmon. We should not be engineering animals. Period. Or selling them. Pickle Porter, Aberdeen, Washington. Yes, I'm a registered voter. Out of curiosity, how did Senator Rockline make his fortune? He worked for the FDA.

Pickle hands the phone back to Trace, who hangs up and then attaches it to themselves.

PICKLE

We're doomed.

TRACE

Think of the good we're doing on a micro-scale.

Trace takes out a pen and starts writing the following down.

TRACE

Car-pooling to work. Recycling glass wares. Arbor Day. Come on, help me out here.

PICKLE

Not flying. Growing our own beets. Thrift shopping.

TRACE

There you go! Keep going.

PICKLE

Stopping phone books from coming. Refrigerating lard in case we ever want to use it. We might want to get rid of some lard...

TRACE

Right! Meatless Mondays. Ladybug pest control.

PICKLE

Reusing floss!

TRACE

Yeah, I don't do that.

PICKLE

What?

TRACE

That just grosses me out.

PICKLE

But, you only use your floss once?

TRACE

Hey, I'm probably the only person in this state who actually flosses daily.

PICKLE

Still, I thought we were in this together. It's so wasteful to just floss-and-toss.

TRACE

You should talk.

Trace attaches the pen to Pickle.

TRACE

You've bought bottled water.

PICKLE

What? No!

TRACE

Oh yes. I've seen the empty bottles in your car.

PICKLE

Only when I'm desperate.

TRACE

Isn't that what they all say?

Trace takes a bottle out from a secret hiding spot and attaches it to Pickle.

PICKLE

Sometimes, sometimes I just get thirsty. And if I don't have a water fountain or a free-running mountain stream handy...

TRACE

It's all right. I'll get you a LifeStraw like I have.

Trace takes out a straw filter.

TRACE

See? With this little gem, you can drink directly from puddles. You'll never go thirsty again.

PICKLE

Wow. And it's safe?

TRACE

One hundred percent. Removes bacteria, parasites, fecal material--

Pickle shudders. Trace attaches the straw to themselves.

PICKLE

I'm not using that. Everything's so filthy.

They begin to attach whatever else is in the kitchen to themselves, things like electronics, kitchen utensils, office supplies, anything plastic.

PICKLE

I feel like we do everything that we can. And yet.

TRACE

And yet.

PICKLE

Are we missing something?

Trace looks directly at Pickle,  
covered in plastic.

TRACE

Not that I can see.

PICKLE

I mean, we already know about the lack of corporate responsibility resulting in more pollution than you and I could ever generate in our lifetimes.

TRACE

But there must be some sacrifice we're missing, in our pursuit.

PICKLE

There must. I want something pure.

TRACE

Me, too. A life that's, I don't know. Biodegradable? That's not the right word.

PICKLE

I know what you mean. A non-toxic world.

TRACE

Yeah. Remember when you could touch the lettuce because it wasn't hermetically sealed?

PICKLE

And fruit wasn't stickered?

TRACE

And you ate apples the same year they were picked? Remember when you could swim without worrying about Meningitis or medical waste?

PICKLE

And take a walk without worrying about breathing smog or stepping on hypodermics?

They stop, enveloped in plastic items.

Remember when night was dark?  
TRACE

And quiet?  
PICKLE

And you could see the stars above?  
TRACE

Remember animals?  
PICKLE

Like birds?  
TRACE

And deer. And porcupines and turtles.  
PICKLE

And picking sugarplums from a tree.  
TRACE

In your own backyard.  
PICKLE

That hadn't been sprayed-  
TRACE

Or fertilized-  
PICKLE

Or spliced-  
TRACE

Or modified-  
PICKLE

I remember.  
TRACE

They turn to one another, and attempt to embrace. Due to the plastic, they cannot touch each other.

It seems so long ago.  
PICKLE

Do you think-  
TRACE

They shed their plastic-covered clothes.

I think maybe- PICKLE

Maybe we can- TRACE

Get unstuck- PICKLE

From the 'stic- TRACE

Again? PICKLE

They step out of the world of their kitchen.

Looking around in wonder, they clasp hands.

Plants grow out of the stage as Pickle and Trace raise their faces to the sun.

Fade TO BLACK.