Top Class Theatre Studies

Daniel Clancy monologue transcript

*The Encounter* by Complicite / Simon McBurney, inspired by the novel Amazon Beaming by Petru Popescu.

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Monologue script from pp.43-46

LOREN

We walk. What’s happening? Where are we going? I strain my ears, hoping against hope for the sound of a plane. I hear nothing. We walk all that evening. We stop at sundown, no evening meal. We sleep on the forest floor, nothing to eat the next day. It’s the same the next day and the next day and the next day.

I’m walking close behind Barnacle. I’m going to beam him something. ‘Where are we going?’ I ask him.

BARNACLE

*To the beginning.*

LOREN

The beginning?

BARNACLE [quietly]

*The beginning.*

LOREN

And what might we find in your goddamn beginning? I stop. And suddenly I realised that his answer might be death. Death is awaiting us in the beginning.

I look at the people. I’m searching for signs of resistance in their eyes, but they drift past me. As if I am invisible.

Day four. Day five. The older people are limping. Women break branches, grabbing fruit to feed their children who loll vacant eyed over their parents’ shoulders.

This is madness. We drink water incessantly.

I’m going to take leave of Barnacle and his people. I’ll follow them to the first navigable body of water, use a log as a raft. I’ll take my chances. I’ll take my chances.

Days pass. And then suddenly I recognise a human scent, smoke or cooked meat or decomposition. What is it?

Oh my god, a village! A settlement! Maybe they have a plane, or a boat, or a radio!

And suddenly a crowd of tribespeople storms through the trees. Mayoruna – but less gaunt, less emaciated. They rush to surround the newcomers, the children, touching, jumping, the adults smiling and exchanging loud greetings. Barnacle disappears in a circle of women and youngsters – his family. I see Tuti throwing himself on the old man, hugging him. Barnacle swings the boy up onto his shoulders. Why had I never guessed he was Barnacle’s son?

And then we’re eating.

Gobbling, gorging. I feel drunk with food, drunk with momentary survival.

And then – amongst these newcomers, I see a man, a shaman with a conical hat, looking at me. He’s wearing shorts. A pair of tattered shorts. He’s wearing shorts. I hold my breath. I hold my breather, I step closer to him and I say:

Olá. Meu nome é Loren. Fala Português?

I turn away in bitter disappointment. I’m walking away, when over my shoulder, I hear…

He’s speaking to me in Portuguese. He says ‘Welcome, Loren.’ And then again immediately ‘Cambio’. Cambio means ‘over’, in radio parlance. He just greeted me with ‘Welcome, Loren, over.’

I’m about to hug him. I have so much to say. Listen, I don’t know how long I’ve been with these people but… I’ve lost count of days but… I had a watch but… I’m waiting for a plane… There’s too much. Just ask something simple.

Is this your village? Está é sua aldeia?

‘My village, over.’

So these people are relatives of yours? Então essas pessoas são sua família?

‘My people, over.’

How come you speak Portguese? Como que você fala Português?

‘Six years ago, gunmen came. Searching for developments. They attacked us, but I got away. I found a place of safety in a mission. I got work for a radio operator and I learned. Over.’

What is your name? Qual é o seu nome?

‘They call me Over. Over.’

[Interpretation Statement]

I have created an Eclectic piece honouring the original theate style of Immersive theatre, attempting to create a sensory experience for the audience, through the manipulation of everyday properties to create sound effects and stimulating visual imagery. This was intended to increase engagement through the element of surprise, in line with the traditional audience culture of Immersive Theatre. My choice to use consumeristic materials to create diegetic landscapes lends itself to Epic Theatre influences, with the intention of provoking the audience to think about their impact on the environment.

Through my dramaturgical research, into the theatrical possibilities for creating sound, I discovered the work of foley artists. Inspired by this, I adopted foley practises in order to emphasis the waste in our current society. My research into the whole play and *Amazon Beaming* helped me gain respect for the complexities of the story in relation to Western exploitation of indigenous communities and natural resources. This knowledge inspired both my design concepts and application of Acting and Direction.

Amazon crude is represented by the barrel and the box of overflowing bills alludes to the monetary motivation for obtaining crude oil. I have emphasised Loren’s appreciation for the Mayoruna people, by blocking myself down stage centre in the final moments and sitting on the floor in a respectful manner when speaking with Cambio.

The sound of fire at the start of the monologue references the climatic moment immediately preceding the monologue, and the non-diegetic sound of trees falling and distorted radio frequency highlights environmental issues and creates tension.