

THE PETZY/SPATHA
(Four Minute Play- #4)
Written by Jon Jory for the Educational
Theatre Association
2018

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*Two climbers on a ledge nine feet long and four feet wide.
It is almost dark.*

1

What do you think?

2

What do you think?

1

I think we need to do it. Sun's almost down. It's going to be 15 or 20 degrees.

2

How's your leg?

1

I can put weight on it, more or less. Bad sprain maybe. Could be worse.

2

I kind of think we should sit it out. We should have been bak a couple of hours ago. They'll be out looking soon, if they're not already.

1

There's not much they can do after dark.

2

Helicopter can still go out. They could drop supplies get us through the night.

1

We're on some kind of ledge. I don't think a copter can get down here. There's the overhang above us, makes us hard to see. Look, from this ledge to the rock field across from us is only about five feet. You can jump that easy, then it's a pretty simple descent. You have maybe twenty minutes of light. You gotta go.

2

That's a really bad idea, okay?

1

It's a really good idea, a really necessary idea. Bad weather is coming in. Copter won't be able to go out. They'll have no idea where we are. You don't go now and bring them back, they'll only find us in the spring. Do what I tell you and do it now.

No. # 2

Do it! # 1

No. # 2

And Plan B is what? # 1

Body heat. Two of us, we can make it through the night. # 2

And freeze together the next day. # 1

Then make the jump with me. You say it's just a sprain. # 2

I won't have enough push-off. # 1

Push off the good foot! # 2

I don't have a good foot! # 1

You said only the left one was screwed? # 2

Yeah, well, I lied. You're like hysterical so I didn't want to spook you. Look at me. Look at me! Hey! We don't have a choice, so stop jacking me around. Go! # 1

You are a piece of work. # 2

Give me a hand up. # 1

2

For what?

1

Because I said so.

(A pause and then # 2 helps # 1 up.)

You hit me in the bar, would I take you out? You climbed this, you said, you climbed that. Fine. I take you out. In ten minutes it's clear you don't know a climb from a rhinoceros. You're a rube, a rookie, a nothing. And that, by the way, is how I got hurt. You slacked the line and didn't tell me, you moron. Now, make the jump, do the descent and send them up to get me at first light. You hear me? Do it and do it now.

(Releases # 2 with a push that sends him off balance.)

2

Hey! I could have gone over the edge.

1

(Not sorry.) Accept my profound apologies. Go.

2

Fog's in. I can't see the other edge.

1

We saw it, it's four, five feet. Put your back against the rock wall, take three steps, jump and you're there. A ten-year-old could do this. If I had one foot, I could do it. Now do it.

2

I can't do it.

1

You're kidding me, right?

2

I can't do it.

1

(# 1 grabs # 2 by the hair on the back of # 2's head.)

Okay, I'm going to help you now.

2

Hey.

1

Now you got only two steps because I'm behind you. How I'm going to help you is this: On my count of three ...

2

You're hurting me.

1

... count of three. You're going to put full forward energy into the first step, like you were running the fifty-yard dash. On the second step you plant hard, like you want to put that foot fight through the ground and launch out, throwing your shoulders forward and pedaling like you were on a bicycle, and there you will be on the other wide.

2

I'm not doing this.

1

Or else, I'll give you a good hard push, you'll go off the ledge, fall four hundred feet, high rock and break several deozen bones which really won't hurt 'cause you'll be dead.

2

No.

1

Oh yeah. I'm getting married next month and I'm gong to be there.

2

Please.

1

You feel that little prick in your back? That's my climbing knife. For your novice information it's the Petzul Spatha, the best there is. Here we go.

2

I—can't—do—this.

1

Shows how little you know; on three

2

I'll fall.

1

You won't fall. One, two, three.

(# 2 launches out. Blackout.)

End of Play