



TYLER. (~~Pause~~) How do you do. Can I help you with something?

MOORE. (~~Stops~~) Well, yes.

TYLER. What?

MOORE. (~~Starts~~) I should've realized I didn't expect to be welcomed. (~~Starts~~) You don't know who I am, do you?

TYLER. Should I?

MOORE. I've been trying to reach you for several days. (~~Starts~~) I'm from the Coalition. (~~Starts~~) The Coalition for the Liberation of the South African People.

TYLER. Oh, I see.

MOORE. Yes. I wish you'd returned my calls.

TYLER. (~~A beat~~) Well, we've been extremely busy getting ready for our festival. We're producing a different play each week for six weeks.

MOORE. We're aware of your agenda...

TYLER. And the first one opens tonight...

MOORE. And are you still planning to have Oliver Manzi and Robert Obosa perform?

TYLER. (~~Starts~~) They're our guest artists, yes.

MOORE. You intend to ignore the Coalition's request?

TYLER. Well, I wouldn't say ignore...

MOORE. Simply not agree to it, then.

TYLER. (~~Starts~~) I thought I'd made our position clear. I recall speaking to someone — someone else, not yourself. I explained there was nothing we could do.

MOORE. Which is why I was asked to step in.

TYLER. In what capacity?

MOORE. As their attorney.

TYLER. You work for them?

MOORE. I do some work for them. When I'm needed. As a volunteer, of course.

TYLER. Of course.

MOORE. I support the goal of a free South Africa.

TYLER. Well, so do I.

MOORE. (~~Starts~~) There, you see? We've already found an area of common agreement. (~~Starts~~) I'm sure we'll be able to count on your cooperation.

TYLER. (~~Starts~~) Well, actually... no. I simply can't do what your Coalition asks.

MOORE. (~~Starts~~) Let me clarify the lines of authority here. You are the director of this festival?

TYLER. Yes, over-all. I'm also directing the play these two actors are appearing in.

MOORE. I see. But it was your decision which artists to invite?

TYLER. Yes.

MOORE. Then you have the authority to cancel, to, say — disinvite anyone on the program?

TYLER. I suppose so.

MOORE. So you can do as we ask. It's only a question of whether you will or not.

TYLER. (~~Starts~~) You realize this isn't my theatre. I don't run it. I'm an independent, hired by the Board of Trustees to organize the festival.

MOORE. Should I meet with the Board?

TYLER. Well, you can't...

MOORE. No?

TYLER. The members aren't all in one place.

MOORE. Can you call them together?

TYLER. Not on such short notice...

MOORE. Why not?

TYLER. It's just not possible...

MOORE. And not really necessary. The choice is yours, isn't it?

TYLER. But I'm answerable to the Board...

MOORE. We're all answerable to someone, Mr. Tyler. Can you or can't you make the decision on your own?

TYLER. (angry) I can, yes.

MOORE. (a beat, smiling) Good. (He opens his briefcase, takes out a ~~separated brochure~~ reads) "~~The International Theatre Festival was conceived as a celebration of theatrical art as a means of bringing artists of diverse national origins to the attention of our city for the betterment of our cultural life~~" (~~He flips down the brochure~~) Very admirable.

~~These are exciting prospects.~~

MOORE. The Coalition would like very much to support your festival. We can help you. But we can not agree with the political statement you are making by including a production by members of the Cape Town Theatre Company.

TYLER. We're not making any political statement.

MOORE. Maybe not deliberately, but the implications...

TYLER. What implications?

MOORE. This production will be seen as a sign of approval of the South African government.

TYLER. I don't see why. We're talking about two celebrated actors who've performed practically all over the world.

MOORE. We're aware of their reputations.

TYLER. I've never heard it suggested that their work showed approval of their government. Quite the opposite.

MOORE. They are still South African.

TYLER. But they're black. Do you know that?

MOORE. Yes. Even so, to allow them to perform here would show that we're willing to have cultural exchange with South Africa...

TYLER. Not with South Africa. With two actors who happen to be South African.

MOORE. ... And that would be a violation of the boycott. We must maintain the boycott, Mr. Tyler. It's the only way for the civilized world to deal with South Africa.

TYLER. We're not trying to deal with anything. We're doing a play.

MOORE. But you could be doing much more. You have a chance here to make a real contribution. (a pause) In return, we'll...

TYLER. You mean if I cancel the production.

MOORE. ... Yes...

TYLER. I can't... I won't do that. I won't have these two men become pawns in some political game.

MOORE. This is hardly a game, Mr. Tyler. (a pause) Let me explain what I'm asking you to do...

TYLER. Please don't.

MOORE. But we can help you... help the festival.

TYLER. I don't need your help, and I don't want it. ~~(He~~  
~~frustrated)~~ Look, I'm sorry, I'm sure you think you're doing  
 the right thing. But I don't believe you can help the cause  
 of freedom in South Africa by stifling freedom of expres-  
 sion here in America. You'll end up victimizing two of  
 the men you profess to be trying to help.

MOORE. ~~(frustrated)~~ We're not stifling anyone's freedom.  
 We're trying to help millions gain their freedom, and giv-  
 ing up a single production in a theatre festival seems a  
 very small price to pay.

TYLER. I'm sure it does, to you. And you might be  
 right, if it would somehow lead to what you want, but  
 it won't.

MOORE. We disagree...

TYLER. Yes, that's obvious.

MOORE. What happens here will have a major effect on  
 the international situation.

TYLER. You can't really believe that.

MOORE. Yes, we can. And we do. *(He glances at his  
 watch)* I have to advise you that if you're unwilling to  
 agree to our request, we're prepared to take whatever  
 steps are necessary to stop the production.

TYLER. What steps?

MOORE. We'll exercise our right to protest.

TYLER. Well, I can't stop you from doing that.

MOORE. You stop us? It's quite the other way around.  
 If we have to stop this production, we intend to stop the  
 entire festival.

TYLER. Oh? How?

MOORE. By eliminating your audience.

TYLER. ~~(Frustrated)~~ Are you going to show them?

MOORE. We have a demonstration ready right now to  
 move in. ~~(He enters the stage)~~ We are not the ones play-  
 ing games here, Mr. Tyler.

*(The sound of laughter comes from offstage. OLIVER and  
 ROBERT enter from the wing they had exited to. OLIVER  
 is in the lead, trying not to spill the cup of coffee he is carry-  
 ing. ROBERT is trying to restrain him.)*

OLIVER. John!

ROBERT. Oliver, stop this...

OLIVER. *(Turns back to him.)* Shh! *(ROBERT shrugs, lets go  
 of him. He turns to TYLER.)* I have to tell you. We were just  
 talking about your lovely theatre. We wish we had a place  
 like this at home. *(He looks about the theatre appreciatingly.)*  
 Ah, yes. Ours is nothing like this. You've heard of Shake-  
 speare in the park? We have Beckett in the basement  
*(laughs)* Of course, that's kind of appropriate.

ROBERT. *(A loud whisper)* Oliver, you see? I told you.  
 We're interrupting. *(OLIVER notices MOORE shrugs  
 apologetically, begins to follow ROBERT off)*

TYLER. No, wait, I'm glad you're here. *(ROBERT and  
 OLIVER stop.)* I think you should meet...

MOORE. Mr. Tyler, I'm not authorized to discuss this  
 with anyone but yourself.

TYLER. Not even the men involved?

MOORE. I'm to speak only to you, Alone.

TYLER. *(A beat, then he continues.)* Robert Oboza, Oliver  
 Manzi — this is Mr. Moore.

OLIVER. *(After a great beat.)* An honour to *(He yields  
 to Moore.)* Oh, John.