

*Theatre/Practice: The Online Journal of the Practice/Production Symposium of the
Mid-America Theatre Conference*



Volume 13, 2024

The Last Fantasy Package

A ten-minute play by
Greg Romero

With an introduction by
Christiana Molldrem Harkulich

Copyright © 2022 - 2023
Greg Romero
1827 Branard St # 5
Houston TX 77098
(512) 796-0422
gregoryromero@yahoo.com

Many of Greg Romero's plays live in a world between fantasy and reality, where very real emotions and events are mixed with elements of folktales, science fiction, and fantasy, and *The Last Fantasy Package* is no different. This play began as a prompt coming from The Tank's 7x7: a short new play event where seven invited playwrights each contributed a rule that every play had to contain. The rules included: a threat on page one, a ponzi scheme, the line "fuck around and find out", an actor repeating an action four times instead of three, one character never uses more than five words per line, someone corrects someone's posture, and something is broken (which was Greg's rule). Many of these elements remain in the version of the play we worked on at the Mid-America Theatre Conference (MATC) in 2023, and help to shape the dramaturgical structure of the play. The limits provided by the 7x7 format structure a play about a woman at a deeply vulnerable moment and provide for the wonder of what the titular fantasy package may actually be.

Romero has a commitment to bringing animals into his plays. This comes from an impulse and interest in environmentalism and building empathy with the more-than-human world. In the *Last Fantasy Package* the character of Candace fills this position. Candace is "Equal parts very professional-looking human female and wild gray wolf." The animal characters in Romero's plays speak to essential truths unmired in the lies and narratives of the human characters. Candace - as a half-wolf - has the ability to smell and see the truth of Beverly beyond the lies of the "ponzi-scheme" workplace setting. Animals know things.

-Christiana Molldrem Harkulich, PhD
Eastern Illinois University

The Last Fantasy Package

Characters:

AMANDA. (F) Very professional-looking.

BEVERLY (F). Doing her best to look professional. Has a broken arm.

CANDACE (F). Equal parts very professional-looking human female and wild gray wolf.

Time and Place:

Ponzi-scheme office building. A dance space. A mountain summit overlooking the ocean.

About Script Notation:

Breaks in speech are noted by a series of ellipses after the character designation. i.e.:

WOLF:

....

Each single dot represents one heartbeat.

This is space that the character uses to react to what was just said, or to hold back the next thing to say, or both. These are not moments in which to relax.

The Last Fantasy Package

Lights up.

AMANDA, very professional-looking, sits, agitated, at a desk with an office phone to her ear.

BEVERLY, doing her best to look professional, sits in a nearby chair, unnoticed. Beverly has a broken arm.

AMANDA (*into phone*)

Fuck around and find out!

Amanda slams down the phone.

Amanda and Beverly sit in silence.

Finally:

BEVERLY

Um, hi.

AMANDA

Oh! Hi. Didn't see you there.

BEVERLY

Ok.

AMANDA

Welcome to Fonzy's Fantasies. How can I help you?

BEVERLY

Well—

AMANDA

Wait! You must be...

BEVERLY

I have a 9 o'clock—

AMANDA

You're early!

I'm...excited?
BEVERLY

Excellent!
AMANDA

A little nervous.
BEVERLY

We do this all the time. "Day or Night, Fonzy's Fantasies will treat you right".
AMANDA

Yeah. Ok.
BEVERLY

You must be—
AMANDA (*flipping through paperwork*)

Beverly.
BEVERLY

Beverly. Right. I'm Amanda. And...no last name?
AMANDA (*seeing her paperwork*)

That's right.
BEVERLY

...
AMANDA

Is that a problem?
BEVERLY

No last name?
AMANDA

...
BEVERLY

In order to go forward, we need—
AMANDA

Amanda finally notices Beverly's broken arm.

What happened to your arm?
AMANDA

BEVERLY

...

AMANDA

Um. Ok. No last name. I can work with that. Just...uh...it's no problem.

BEVERLY

Ok, good.

Amanda takes a deep breath.

AMANDA

So—

BEVERLY

I want The Last Fantasy.

AMANDA

...

BEVERLY

The Last Fantasy Package.

AMANDA

...

BEVERLY

With The Sunset Ending.

AMANDA

...

Amanda sits down.

BEVERLY

Please.

AMANDA

We don't do that anymore.

BEVERLY

What?

AMANDA

I'm sorry.

No, I have the money.

BEVERLY

It's not about—

AMANDA

I got the money.

BEVERLY

Well, I know, we've processed your paperwork, it's just, we, we don't do that anymore. We can't.

AMANDA

...

BEVERLY

I'm sorry.

AMANDA

Beverly takes a deep breath.

Yeah, well, you're a fucking fake ass fake.

BEVERLY

Beverly begins to limp toward the exit. Amanda watches her for a moment before calling out:

Wait.

AMANDA

Beverly stops.

Candace!!

AMANDA (*calling off-stage*)

CANDACE, who is equal parts very professional-looking human female and wild gray wolf, enters.

Beverly would like The Last Fantasy Package. With The Sunset Ending.

AMANDA (*to Candace*)

Candace looks at Beverly for a moment, sizing her up, then nods to Amanda and exits.

Amanda and Beverly sit in silence for a moment.

Finally:

Thank you. BEVERLY

Don't mention it. AMANDA

... BEVERLY

... AMANDA

Today's my birthday. BEVERLY

What? AMANDA

It's my birthday. BEVERLY

Happy birthday! AMANDA

... BEVERLY

Oh. AMANDA

Amanda lets this sink in for a moment.

Candace!! AMANDA (*calls offstage*)

Candace enters.

Let's add The Birthday Bonus. AMANDA

Wait— BEVERLY

No additional charge. AMANDA

Candace nods, then exits.

Birthday Bonus? BEVERLY

It's a dance package. AMANDA

Dance package? BEVERLY

You like dancing? AMANDA

It's been a while. BEVERLY

Good! Good. You'll like the Birthday Bonus, then. AMANDA

Ok. BEVERLY

They sit in silence for a moment.

Do you have kids? BEVERLY

Uh...yeah. Two kids. Twins. AMANDA

That's nice. BEVERLY

Yes. I uh. I feel very lucky. AMANDA

... BEVERLY

... AMANDA

I...I uh...I...I had...uh...
BEVERLY

...
AMANDA

Do you have a picture?
BEVERLY

Um. No, actually.
AMANDA (*lying*)

...
BEVERLY

Company policy. No personal items at work.
AMANDA

Do you like that policy?
BEVERLY

...
AMANDA

They sit in silence until Candace enters, carrying a contraption that looks like a pasta colander with crazy straws attached to the top.

Great! We're ready!
AMANDA

Oh my.
BEVERLY

Now, Candace is going to set The Transporter on your head and then you have to activate it, and then you'll be off.
AMANDA

Ok.
BEVERLY

Ready?
AMANDA

Yes.
BEVERLY

Candace?

AMANDA

Candace approaches Beverly and carefully places The Transporter on Beverly's head, making sure it fits and is secure.

Once Amanda sees they're set:

Beautiful, thank you, Candace.

AMANDA

You ready, Beverly?

BEVERLY

Still yes.

AMANDA

Right. Ok, to activate The Transporter, you have to blow into the right straw, then blow into the left straw, then blow into the right straw again. When you blow into the right straw for the second time, you will start the transportation process.

BEVERLY

Ok.

AMANDA

Once you get to your Fantasy Destination, blow into the left straw, and the Sunset Ending will...

BEVERLY

I get it.

AMANDA

Right. Whenever you're ready.

BEVERLY

Ok.

AMANDA

...

BEVERLY

...

Beverly? AMANDA

Yes? BEVERLY

AMANDA
You're gonna do great. Have a nice time...Goodbye.

Beverly takes a deep breath.

Beverly blows into the right straw.

Beverly blows into the left straw.

Beverly takes a deep breath.

Beverly blows into the right straw.

Nothing happens.

Nothing happens.

Candace approaches Beverly and corrects her posture.

Beverly blows into the right straw again.

Lights shift and music blasts. Something upbeat, maybe from the 1980s, and somehow Beverly immediately begins dancing in ways she's never imagined. She's like a dancing savant, bustin' out dance moves that are joyful and wacky. Her body is free and uninjured, and she can move however she likes.

Amanda and Candace join in, synchronized. Their dancing is energetic and uplifting, somehow also expressing the magic of birth.

They dance together for some time until, gradually the music shifts, the dancing slows, Amanda and Candace disappear, leaving Beverly alone.

Lights shift again, as the music becomes the wind, the ocean waves crashing in the distance. Beverly

feels the wind embrace her, gently. She walks, the sun shining on her as she hikes up a mountain, the ocean keeping time.

She reaches the summit, overlooking the water. For as long as she needs to, she listens to the birds, the wind as it passes through things, and the waves.

The sun lowers in the sky.

Beverly continues watching the sun, listening, breathing deeply with the waves.

The sun continues to lower.

When she's ready, Beverly blows into the left straw.

Lights out.

END OF PLAY.