

# The Enwumpening of Elias

A play in three acts by Thomas Wolfgang Bouwer

## Dramatis Personae

Elias-----Hissself  
The High Wumpist-----Theysself  
Chimpanzee-----Bongbo the Murder Ape  
Wumpy-----Jon Hamm  
Miggy-----Gengar  
Gengar-----Miggy

### Act 1

#### Scene 1

[Open: A ruined building in a forest. Although almost totally dilapidated, the moonlight shines through the canopy held back by the crumbling walls. In the center sits an iron folding chair. Sitting in the chair is Elias, unconscious. He slowly awakens in a confused state. A pregnant silence hangs in the room. Suddenly, a spotlight swings to the top of a ruined wall where the Chimpanzee sits.]

*Chimpanzee:* So you awaken alone in a dark wood at night and ponder to yourself: What's going on here? Exactly where, on earth, have I found myself? What time is it- no, you say, be still- what *day* is it, precisely? Was my hair this long? And these scars and cuts... where they placed there by me? Hold. You, sir. All will be answered never and in its overdue time- if you walk the path of moonlit lakes. And Hold you, sir.

[The chimpanzee takes out and lights a comically large- some might say phallically so- cigar. Fog machines start here]

*Chimpanzee:* Ah, there's the ticket. After all, thus is the nature of our world, is it not? And have we not your friend and mine dear old Isaac Newton to thank for all this? What have you to say to that? But hold, sir, perhaps you are of a different persuasion. "Who put all this here?" you may begin to wonder. "To what do I owe the pleasure?" my dear friend. Hold, what is to be done about all this? Have you an answer or have you not one?

*Elias:* (stammering) I uh this is-

*Chimpanzee:* Hold, you, sir. If you won't answer my questions perhaps you have ones of your own. Perhaps I've listed some for you, well I'll tell you this, my good sir, I'll not answer but any single one of yours and only once per day after all, don't you see, my friend. You cannot trust a word from mine beauteous lips, except for the ones that are true, and that's all of them besides the ones that are not.

[ A pause. Elias looks to nearly begin to speak several times while the chimpanzee takes a long drag from his cigar.]

*Chimpanzee:* Well, get on with it. Surely you must want to know something.

*Elias:* I don't know where to start.

*Chimpanzee:* Well, I could suggest a question for yourself to ask of me, my good sir, if you like.

*Elias:* What should I ask?

*Chimpanzee:* Well, my good sir, and hold there a moment, if it were myself in your shoes, and they are fine shoes might I say, I might be just now beginning to wonder about my parched lips and empty stomach. Hold, you, sir, and I might begin to think to myself, the answers must come later after my survival is assured. How must I behave, to whence must I go? How, precisely, do I leave this mystery locale in which I have found myself? This, I believe, is the question I would ask of mine own self, where I you and you I, but then, you wouldn't know the answer either way would you?

*Elias:* How do I get out of here?

*Chimpanzee:* Well now, hold on, you, sir. I told you not thirteen of god's own green minutes ago that I would answer not but one of your questions and only once per day after all, and if you can't adhere to the rules of our little encounter then I'm afraid I shall have to take my leave of your revisionist self.

[The Chimpanzee rises and extinguishes the cigar on the top of the wall. The fog continues to thicken, as the chimpanzee turns its back to the audience.]

*Elias:* Wait!

[The Chimpanzee remains a moment and motions toward Elias.]

*Elias:* I just, I need to know what's happening? What's happened to me? The last thing I remember is sending an email to some weird website, I can't even remember the name. My hair is longer, almost three feet longer than the last moment I remember it, and I didn't have this beard. What's happening?

[The chimpanzee sighs, not a dismissive sigh nor one of annoyance, but one of pity, of melancholy recognition, of knowing and aching solidarity for someone who does not yet know the path they have begun to walk.]

*Chimpanzee:* My friend, you must descend down the lake by the moonlit path. Thus have they all walked afore you, and those who have strayed have fallen below, to the muck of the world.

[The chimpanzee turns to face Elias again]

Chimpanzee: You are being reborn. Fear the you that is yet to be made, for he will join a terrible rank, and do not trust the you who led you to this place, for he is not your friend.

[The chimpanzee turns away once more]

Chimpanzee: You are being reborn. Best not to make it too painful.

[Exit: Chimpanzee. Elias is left alone in a foggy dead forest, the moonlight shines stage left, and after an inordinate amount of time in silence and alone on the stage, he follows. Exit: Elias.]

## Scene 2

[Elias returns to the dilapidated ruins, entering from stage right.]

*Elias:* Fuck.

[Elias looks around exasperatedly for a moment, and then sits back into the Iron chair, head in hands.]

*Elias:* I am not- it all looks the same. How am I supposed to deal with this?

[A moment of silence as Elias sits in center stage, a rustle is heard in a bush near the wall, which startles Elias. He sits staring in terror for a moment.]

*Elias:* Hello? Hey this is not funny.

[Elias stands from the chair, and begins to walk over towards the bush]

*Elias:* I know you wanted to walk off into the woods all mysterious or whatever but c'mon, help me out a bit.

[The bush remains silent. Elias approaches it.]

*Elias:* The woods all look the same. You said to, like, follow the moonlight or something but it's clear and the moon is full! The moonlight is all over the place. There is no specific direction!

[Elias now stands over the bush, waiting for an answer that will not come. In a moment of rage, he dives onto the bush, rustling through it, and pulling out an old golf club. Elias sighs and stares at it for a moment, before a howl sounds from the woods, startling him.]

*Elias:* Cool.

[Elias drags the chair up against the wall and sits in it, golf club leaning up against his shoulder, and waits. Slowly, he drifts off to sleep. Lights come down]

### Scene 3

[Lights come back up on the ruin. The chimpanzee is perched back on top of the wall, where he was before, and an unconscious body lies center stage, this is Miggy. Elias, awakening again, starts at seeing another person.]

*Chimpanzee:* And what, pray tell exactly, are you still doing here, hmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm? You have found a curious loophole my strange friend- you have not strayed from the path of the moonlit lakes, as you have remained on it, yet you have not moved from its start, except apparently to locate a sword. What do you think you're doing, or more precisely not doing, or hopefully-for your sake- not yet doing, exactly?

[Elias brandishes the golf club]

*Elias:* First of all, I'll be asking the questions. I'm through with these games.

*Chimpanzee:* Oh, and now we see fit to threaten a helpful old man who has done not but assist and inform you and only with some amount of embellishment, half-truth and untruth, and only three outright lies, after all! I should think, were our positions switched, you I, and I you, yet again in your gorgeous shoes sir, that I would thank mine own self, or in this case your own self, for the helpful direction and information! Instead you prove us different sorts of beast, my friend, for I would not brandish such a blade at so helpful and obedient a servant as myself.

*Elias:* I don't think you're being helpful, I think you're being difficult as some weird game. What, do you sit on that wall and wait for all sorts of people to wake up in this forest?

[Miggy begins to wake up]

*Elias:* And anyway, this isn't a sword! It's, like, a 4-Iron golf club. Whatever, who cares. What way is the moonlit path? The moonlight is all over the place, I don't see any specific path laid out!

*Chimpanzee:* And now he demands answers from me! My revisionary threatenist, I believe you will remember that I told you not five thousand, seven hundred and sixty of God's own green minutes ago that I would answer not but-

*Elias:* Oh my god shut up.

*Chimpanzee:* And now he demands Silence! Silence from a helpful old man such as myself! I believe when next we meet, I shall tell your own self significantly more outright lies! And just to spite you I shall tell not but the truth and answer in fact several questions from the next fool who asks me.

*Miggy:* Well that's a nice offer. Where are we?

[Elias and the Chimpanzee both start at this new figure having awakened near them.]

*Chimpanzee:* Drat. Well now admitting that that was an outright lie as well would be rather unsporting of me. I appear to have been caught in a web of mine own devising.

*Elias:* It can't possibly be that easy to get a straight answer out of you.

*Miggy:* Well I sure would like one of those answers, if I could get one.

*Elias:* He told me that I had lots of questions and that I had to follow the moonlight to the lake or get lost in the mud or something.

*Chimpanzee:* A terrible mischaracterization of my advice, I must say!

*Elias:* He also said I was being reborn. Is that also happening to him?

*Miggy:* That's a lot to take in.

*Chimpanzee:* Yes, yes you both are being reborn.

*Miggy:* This doesn't feel much like a rebirth to me.

*Chimpanzee:* That's because you think of a rebirth as a renaissance. It is a reawakening to the light, a new age of gorgeous power and prestige, of new understanding and capabilities. I was not born like that and neither were the two of you.

*Elias:* What do you mean?

[The chimpanzee leaps off the wall.]

*Chimpanzee:* We are born blind, dumb, and stumbling. The Moonlight hides and reveals us. We are lost- spared from the muck of the world by nothing- save for sheer dumb luck. "Who must we be?" "To where must we go?" A rebirth is not a thing to be coveted. It is an arrogant desire- Is the world not Enough? A rebirth is a thing to be feared.

[Silence hangs over the room for a moment, then Miggy steps forward.]

*Miggy:* Well I'm not going to wait here with you two. I'm heading off.

*Chimpanzee:* Be sure to follow the path of the moonlit lakes.

*Miggy:* Actually I think I shall head that way, thank you.

[Miggy exits stage right, leaving Elias and the chimpanzee alone.]

*Elias:* There is no path.

[The chimpanzee climbs back up the wall and relights his cigar.]

*Chimpanzee:* Of course there's a path.

[The moonlight shines from stage left, casting Elias' shadow onto the ruined wall. Elias looks at his shadow, and then to the moon.]

*Elias:* If the rebirth is to be feared, then why should I follow the path at all?

[The chimpanzee finishes his cigar, and snuffs the embers on the top of the wall.]

*Chimpanzee:* There's only one thing worse than changing, and that's staying exactly the same. My revisionist friend, if you want to remain blind dumb and stumbling and argue with me until you can't move due to hunger, then by all means wait here. Wallow in the muck. The only way out is forward, and the only way forward follows the moonlight.

[Elias looks to the moonlight, then back to the chimpanzee. He waits for a moment, then sighs, slides the golf club through his belt, and exits stage right.]

### **End of Act 1**

**First intermission should last exactly three days.**

## Act 2 Scene 1

[A clearing in the forest. Moonlight filters through the trees. Elias enters stage left]

*Elias:* Fuckin' talking to yourself, way to go Elias. Following the bad directions of some stupid monkey. Walking for what should be days in some stupid moon bullshit where time doesn't move for some ungodly reason. The sun should have risen by now and the moon should have moved but it just stays there and I walk away from it. And there's no fuckin lakes! This shit sucks.

[Elias sits down at the foot of a tree. At this point, the moon shifts from stage left to stage right, stopping about three quarters of the way. When Elias looks up, Miggy is standing stage left, covered in mud.]

*Elias:* Oh shit dude are you alright?

[Miggy does not move or answer Elias. Just stands still and stares at the moon.]

*Elias:* You're uh (laughs nervously) you're kind of freaking me out here. (pause) Are you okay?

*Wumpist:* No.

[Enter stage right, obscured by the shadows The Wumpist]

*Wumpist:* Such is the fate of those who stray from the path.

*Elias:* Is this that muck of the world thing? Like, is he trapped here? What is this?

*Wumpist:* His rebirth is not complete. We'll have to send him back once the muck sloughs off.

[The Wumpist approaches and inspects miggy]

*Wumpist:* A shame. I thought he'd make it this time. We'll be back for you.

[The wumpist moves stage right.]

*Wumpist:* and what about you, Elias?

*Elias:* You know me?

*Wumpist:* You and I have met many times. On several occasions I've had to send you back to begin again. One of these times you must succeed at completing your rebirth.

*Elias:* I'm sorry, have we met before?

*Wumpist:* oh yes. Several times.

[The wumpist approaches Elias and inspects his arm]

*Wumpist:* I see the scars have healed well enough from last time.

[Elias pulls away from the wumpist and walks across the stage, hand on the golf club at his side.]

*Elias:* are you responsible for this?

*Wumpist:* Would that I had that kind of power. I am a mere arbiter. I have never left this place, and never shall. (pause) I merely guide your way and send you back if you aren't ready.

*Elias:* How often have you sent me back? And if you're supposed to guide me, where should I go?

*Wumpist:* Two questions for me, and one for thee first, is that an amenable trade?

[Elias nods]

*Wumpist:* The ape told you to follow the moonlight and you did in spite of him being a self-admitted liar, why?

*Elias:* I suppose I don't have a reason. It was better than standing still. I don't know that any way forward is better than none, but I think in this scenario I'd rather be trying to make progress than waiting around to starve.

[The wumpist regards Elias silently]

*Wumpist:* A fine answer yet again. Not what I would say but you will never say what I would.

*Elias:* What would you say?

*Wumpist:* We've had a deal, two questions for one answer. I'll answer those and maybe I'll answer your new question later. Firstly, you will continue to follow the moonlight until you reach the shore. There, my troupe will encircle you and we shall duel. I will defeat you again, and send you back once more to attempt rebirth again. I have done so four-hundred and eighty-six times, and I will do so as many more as it takes for you to defeat me. Although this time, at least, you are armed, which is a step up from your previous attempts.



*Elias:* What, so I make it to a lake and you beat the shit out of me, and then I wake up back there with that monkey?

*Wumpist:* Ape. and yes, more or less. Although it would be more accurate to say that I poison you with this knife.

[The wumpist holds a jagged knife made of a jawbone aloft. It has a thin colorful liquid running along it. The air hangs in silence for a moment, then Elias draws the club.]

*Wumpist:* No, no, no. We cannot duel here. We must duel at the shoreline. I'll see you there.

[The wumpist exits stage right. Elias begins to follow, puts the club back through his belt, and follows the moonlight through the audience to exit the stage. Leaving miggy standing alone. He falls over, and the lights come down.]

## **Act 2 Scene 2**

[Lights come up on a different clearing. Elias enters stage right, and wanders through the trees a while then sits down. He is approached by Gengar. Elias notices the presence and leaps away with a start.]

*Elias:* Nope. I'm not interested in dealing with this. Get away.

[The gengar stands and stares at him, pointing at his club.]

*Elias:* What this?

[Elias draws the club]

*Elias:* I'll use it if you don't scam.

[Gengar moves in fast. Elias flinches, then attempts to strike Gengar with the club, missing entirely. Gengar steps back.]

*Elias:* What the fuck? Keep away goddamnit!

[Gengar approaches again. A short exchange occurs where Elias attempts to hit Gengar for a bit, failing each time, but Gengar does not touch him. They break and Elias stares at Gengar a moment.]

*Elias:* Okay. I think I see what's going on here this is like some weird training bullshit where you're going to keep doing this until I can hit you. Well I wouldn't recommend it because eventually I'll get lucky.

[Gengar looks up and down at Elias and approaches again. This exchange lasts for several minutes wherein Elias never gets truly close to striking Gengar.]

*Elias:* This fucking sucks dude can you like, not do this?

[Elias leans up against a tree, exhausted. Gengar approaches more slowly, stopping about a foot away.]

*Elias:* I just like, I had a life and now I've apparently been here for what must be years getting the shit kicked out of me by some weird robed freak and I don't remember any of it. It sucks and its scary. I don't understand what's happening. Who have I been talking to, what have I been eating? Have I just been totally lost this whole time? Like, I don't get it. What the hell is going on?

[A silence hangs in the air for a moment as gengar looks at Elias. Suddenly, Elias lifts the golf club and touches it lightly to Gengar's head.]

*Elias:* Got you. Now fuck off.

[The lights drop for a second, during which time Gengar falls through a trap door. When the lights come up, Elias is alone.]

*Elias:* cool.

[He stands against the tree for a bit before standing up and following the moonlight. Elias exits stage left.]

### **Act 2 Scene 3**

[A beach on the shore of a lake. Elias enters stage right.]

*Elias:* Well. I'm here.

Chimpanzee: Indeed you are my friend. Hello to you and welcome once again.

[The Chimpanzee sits on a short wall nearby. ]

*Elias:* I've been here before haven't I?

*Chimpanzee:* Ah, your one and only question for the day for me to answer as truthfully as I shall. I believe you know the answer, otherwise such a question would not occur to yourself as possible enough to consider, so I shall confirm as such. Yes, you have been here before.

*Elias:* You know I don't remember it. It's not like I recognize the place. I just know it without the experience, as sure as man has stood on the moon I have stood on this beach.

*Chimpanzee:* The moon both is and is not something a human has stood upon. Do you understand what I mean?

*Elias:* No. It just sounds like weird bullshit like the last several conversations we've had.

*Chimpanzee:* Well that's quite rude of yourself to say, sir. I mean only to claim that there are two moons: The one that is and the one that we have all spent so much time watching, don't you know. The heavenly body that orbits the earth and whose gravity influences the tides: As surely as the sun rises and sets humans have stood upon it. But this—

[The Chimpanzee gestures to the moon.]

*Chimpanzee:* Is the goddess moon. This is the moon of Alchemists, the moon that changes werewolves. It is made of cheese and a rabbit lives inside of it pounding sticky rice. That's the moon that people have watched for years and dreamed of. There is a city on the dark side, and no human will ever stand upon its surface.

*Elias:* Yeah but like, someone could.

*Chimpanzee:* No they couldn't. To know and stand on the moon makes it the other one. To see it without the distance, to have reached it, changes it inherently.

*Elias:* Yeah alright whatever sure. That's kinda dumb I think but yeah alright whatever.

*Chimpanzee:* Do you disagree sir?

*Elias:* I don't- this is not- you're just saying a bunch of weird bullshit and I don't want to fight about it.

*Chimpanzee:* Well fine then.

[They sit in silence for a bit.]

*Elias:* So when am I supposed to do this fight?

*Chimpanzee:* It will happen just before sunrise.

*Elias:* The Moon doesn't move, sunrise doesn't come.

*Chimpanzee:* It will move when you want it to.

*Elias:* I don't think that's true.

*Chimpanzee:* Strong Instincts.

[The two of them sit in silence for a time.]

## **Second Intermission**

**Second Intermission should last exactly 6 minutes and nine seconds.**

## **Act 2 Scene 4**

[Elias and the chimpanzee are still sitting on the beach. The Wumpist enters.]

*The Wumpist:* I see you're ready for our duel.

[Elias stands pointing to the Chimpanzee]

*Elias:* You're a jackass and I knew you were lying.

*Chimpanzee:* Should I go ahead to see you back at the ruins?

*Elias:* Nah I have a plan.

*The Wumpist:* Very Well. First we must invoke the rite.

[Lights go down to a spotlight. The Wumpist takes center stage, all else is shrouded in darkness.]

*The Wumpist:* Master Wumpy guide us. Master Wumpy teach us. Master Wumpy protect us. In your light we thrive. In your mercy we are sheltered. In your wisdom we are humbled. We live only to serve. Our lives are-

[At this moment Elias clocks the Wumpist in the side of the head with the golf club, killing them instantly. Effects should be extremely graphic. Immediately shift to lights fully back on. Elias stands over the Wumpist breathing heavily for no less than forty-five seconds.]

*Chimpanzee:* Well there you go.

[Lights go down.]

## **End of Act 2**

Third Intermission should last exactly seventeen seconds

### Act 3 Scene 1

[Open on the lakeside. Elias and the Chimpanzee sit nearby staring at the water as the corpse of the wumpist lays nearby.]

*Chimpanzee:* So you've been fairly quiet my friend.

[Elias is very silent. He stares out at the water.]

*Chimpanzee:* It's been a long time since our own eyes have seen a successful rebirth. Sooner or later everyone makes it here.

[Elias remains silent]

*Chimpanzee:* I wish it didn't have to happen like this, but I suppose them's is the rules are they not?

[Elias remains silent]

*Chimpanzee:* Who's to say what format our little game of rebirths shall take next? I know not myself. I don't know what I shall be, nor do I know what you or any of us shall be, nor what roles we shall play.

*Elias:* Are you afraid?

*Chimpanzee:* Of course I'm afraid. It has been several decades since our little group has seen a successful rebirth. I've grown used to this skin and quite comforted by its details. What am I to do if my next form cares not for the delicacies of tobacco? Perhaps I will be more inclined to tell not but the truth. Who is to say.

*Elias:* You told me it would be painful. I dread that pain.

*Chimpanzee:* It may be less painful for you and more for others. Nobody knows for certain. But the leaving of one's self behind of course leaves scars. It's a difficult process, don't you think? A terrifying one?

[A moment passes]

*Elias:* It would be worse to remain the same forever. You said that once too.

*Chimpanzee:* Could have been a lie. I've been known to tell them.

*Elias:* But that's the biggest lie of all, because almost everything you say is true.

*Chimpanzee:* No. They aren't really. But it's fun to pretend they are.

[Elias stands and walks downstage. He steps down off the stage.]

### **Act 3 Scene 2**

[Elias is wandering the seats. His movements are slow, and flowing, as though through water. An intense droning organ can be heard in the background. On the stage, the Chimpanzee stands to the full height of a human. Elias wanders through the seats, as though lost. This should take upwards of ten minutes. Afterwards, the Wumpist rises, and doffs their robes, revealing themselves to be the lord and savior themselves, Wumpy. Wumpy approaches the Chimpanzee, and detonates the explosives turning them into a fine mist. This effect should be extremely graphic, enough so to be referred to as in poor taste. Afterwards, Wumpy should descend from the stage, walking totally normally, go find Elias, and pull him back to the stage. At this point, the lights should go down.]

### **Act 3 Scene 3**

[Elias and wumpy are standing center stage in the middle of a massive splatter of blood left from the explosion of the chimpanzee.]

*Wumpy:* How do you feel?

*Elias:* Fine I suppose. I don't really feel different.

*Wumpy:* Most of you never do.

*Elias:* Who was I before?

*Wumpy:* It matters less than who you will be now. A true rebirth is severance with the past. Such a thing is impossible. But we can accomplish it in part.

*Elias:* Hey did you kill that monkey?

*Wumpy:* He was an ape Elias.

*Elias:* Yeah but I kinda liked him.

*Wumpy:* He shall return. The rebirths will continue forevermore. Maybe someday he'll even remember.

*Elias:* He was scared.

*Wumpy:* So must we all be.

[They stand for a moment at the lakeshore. Over the mountains in the back, the barest hint of warm light should signal the oncoming sunrise.]

*Wumpy:* Are you ready?

*Elias:* No. But if I had my way I never would be.

*Wumpy:* Take as much time as you like.

[Elias takes a deep breath, draws the golf club once more, and hands it to wumpy. Then he kneels down in front of him. Wumpy feels the golf club, takes a few test swings with it, and then approaches Elias]

*Wumpy:* See you soon.

[Wumpy reels back, and swings at Elias' head. The lights should go down right as he swings, but just before impact.]

**Fin.**