

ENEMIES OF THE STATE

A Play
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Synopsis

The greatest punishments are senseless, and random, and secret. But they shape the lives of those on whom they have been inflicted, as well as on those who are near to them. And so the secrets emerged on one perfect weekend in a lovely house that sits on the slope of a mountain in Colorado. Two couples, anxious for the conversations they would kill for, sort through the puzzles of things that have gone wrong and the hidden wounds which have shaped them.

In the 1970's the Argentinean dirty war victims who became the disappeared. In much the same way, the "girls next door" of the 1950s and 60s went away and disappeared to bear children in shame. They keep their secrets, these enemies of the state.

Characters

Morgan	Forties, male, married to Tizzy, an independent book publisher, he has come to Colorado to reconcile with his wife, Tizzy, who has left him; has "disappeared."
Tizzy	Forties, female, married to Morgan, Morgan's strange estranged wife, who has kept her secret of being a birthmother for 30 years. Sunday her son will have his birthday, and she has secretly searched for him and expects first contact, a phone call.
Enrico	Fifty, male, scientist, a climatologist, born in Argentina, imprisoned by the generals in the 1960s.
Rose	Forties, female, long time friend of Tizzy's. She paints stones for a hobby. Married to Enrico, she seeks to make sense of the stories that unfold.
Setting	The interior of a house on the side of a mountain in Colorado. We see a very stark outline of the living room with the kitchen area S.L. with a dining table Behind, the door to the patio, with a patio and rails behind, and a barbecue grill. S.R. living area chairs.
Time	Late 1990s. Act 1, a Saturday. Act 2, the following Sunday.

Estimate Running Time: 95-105 minutes.

Some advice for pronouncing Argentinean Spanish. When they read the "LL" sounds like the English "SH", i.e. to say "ella" you would read "esha". Another thing they do is "singing" when they talk like the Italians do. The rest of the letters are read the same. Let me know if you have any question regarding the pronunciation. I can try to study how to make you pronounce the text correctly. Remember to roll the "R".

SCENE 1

Setting: Living room in Colorado. Sliding doors open from the dining room to a deck. A kitchen area to one side, wrapping further to the bedroom and bath.

On Rise: MORGAN and ROSE enter, Morgan carrying his bags. ENRICO on the phone on the patio (O.S.) speaks in Spanish.

ROSE

It's good you're here, Morgan. We don't see you much.

MORGAN

I was glad Tizzy called. I started to think she might have disappeared this time for good.

ROSE

I'm sure she hasn't left you....

MORGAN

Six months ago she left for two weeks. Was on her way to the dry cleaners and she drove on to Cape Cod. She had all my shirts. I am glad she came to Colorado this time. I'm glad she's with you and Enrico. She worries me.

ROSE

We worry about her.

MORGAN

She calls, but with cell phones, I can't tell where she is. In the old days I could get the area code. Does she miss me?

(beat)

Is it alright if I stay here? I guess she said something....

ROSE

She's my dear friend, Morgan. I've known her for twenty years. And you're her husband. You're always welcome, but you two have to figure out your own sleeping arrangements.

MORGAN

If I can stay, I'd sleep in the woods.

ROSE

You know what I mean. We have plenty of beds.

MORGAN

For now.... I thought I'd.... Well, we'll see.

ROSE

We'll have a good weekend, a nice visit. Enrico likes it when you visit. He has so few friends. We love good conversations and stories. You can stay....

MORGAN

....as long as she wants me....?

ROSE

....until we have had at least two good conversations. How's that?

MORGAN

You sound like an ogre who lives under a bridge making a demand.

(ROSE offers wine)

Too early. Maybe coffee....

ROSE

Coffee, then.

(ROSE makes coffee in
kitchen area)

What does she tell you when she takes off? Does she say she's coming here?

MORGAN

She says she needs some space. 'To think,' she says. 'Something's wrong, and it's getting worse.' She doesn't sleep. We fight over nothing. Has she been thinking anything? Out loud, I mean. To you.

ROSE

No. She'll start to talk, but then she stops. Tizzy can certainly keep a secret. I don't push it.

MORGAN

Wise choice. That's all?

ROSE

That's all I know.

MORGAN

Her leaving is getting to be a habit. Things are so unsettled. If she had a job, she'd be fired. Still, I worry she'll drive off some day, camp out or rent some dump god knows where.... and never come back.

ROSE

Have you been fighting?

MORGAN

She doesn't tell you?

ROSE

There are parts of Tizzy I don't know.

MORGAN

I thought you kept each other up to date.

ROSE

You never know everything about someone else, do you? Or wants to? That would ruin the mystery. And the surprise.

MORGAN

I don't know her either, and I'm married to her. I'm not sure I want any surprises....

(MORGAN sips coffee.)

That's good.

ROSE

(ROSE has rocks laid out on a table which she picks up and looks at, arranges almost unconsciously as she talks)

We indulge in good coffee. And good wine. And good friends. We would kill for good conversations.

MORGAN

She drives me crazy. The longer I know her, the less I know. And now....leaving.... She doesn't say anything to you?

ROSE

We haven't talked about you.

MORGAN

Maybe tonight, when I find out where I sleep, that'll be my barometer. That should tell me something.

ROSE

I don't know what to say, Morgan. Tizzy is sad, and quiet, and takes long walks. We have dinner in the evening, and sometimes a fire, and she'll sit and not say anything for a long time. We've been waiting for her to tell us what she wants to tell us. I know she wants to tell us.

MORGAN

If she says anything me anything, I'll tell you.

ROSE
Good.

MORGAN
And if you find out
anything, you'll tell me?

ROSE
If I can.

MORGAN
Wrong answer.

ENRICO
[ENRICO O.S., speaking in
Spanish, opens the door and
waves welcome to MORGAN)
...si está tan mal, ¿por qué
no la llevás a un sitio
donde la puedan curar?

ROSE
It's all I can promise. Enrico's talking with his family.

MORGAN
His ex-wife?

ROSE
No, his mother in Argentina. She's nearly deaf, and very ill.

MORGAN
Where is Tizzy?

ROSE
Walking. How about a little croquet while we wait? No one
plays croquet with me except you. I've been waiting for your
visit.

MORGAN
Croquet?

ROSE
Mindless croquet. You're too serious, Morgan. You worry too
much. Let's go knock some balls around a little bit.

MORGAN
Is that a proposition?

ROSE
A proposal.

MORGAN
If I didn't know you better, Rose....

ROSE
You don't know me well enough. I'll take the red balls
because I'm Rose. You can have the blue balls because....

(They both laugh)

MORGAN

You're making jokes, Rose. I know you only have one ball in croquet.....

ROSE

That, Morgan, is too sad to talk about.

MORGAN

You're trying to make me feel better because I'm going to get bad news, right? Tizzy comes here when she's in the dumps, because no one can feel bad for long around you.

(MORGAN toys with the croquet mallet without looking at ROSE.)

MORGAN (CON'T)

Do you think there's someone else?

ROSE

Someone else?

MORGAN

A man?

ROSE

Tizzy refers to you as her final husband. If there was another man, I'd know.

MORGAN

And if it was a woman....?

ROSE

I'd know that, too.

(ROSE laughs again)

MORGAN

And you'd tell me.

ROSE

(smiles) Of course.

MORGAN

(using the mallet)

I'm quitting my job. Did she say?

ROSE

You?

MORGAN

Surprised?

ROSE

Shocked. You're always saying you're working until you die....

MORGAN

I should have been a climatologist like Enrico. Nobody cares about books anymore. Or reading. Internet. Television. Film. But not books. I think... sometimes.... Tizzy is right, I ought to let it go. Sell it. Relax. Kick back. Play golf.

ENRICO

[O.S. in Spanish]
...entonces por qué no la llevás a Italia, donde tienen buenos médicos y hospitales, así sabrás si hay algo que podás hacer. La podés traer a Colorado. Denver. O la podemos llevar a Boston...

ROSE

Tizzy doesn't say that. She admires what you do. You have your own company, you publish what you want, you do what you think is important.

MORGAN

I used to think that.

ROSE

(laughs)

You were living the dream.

MORGAN

I was living in a dream. I think the price has been too high. Tizzy hates it. I've told her I am going to give it up.

ROSE

She hasn't really said anything.... I think you'd be a good boss. You could tell me what to do.

MORGAN

(Unaware of the flirtation)

Like, I'm in the trenches, and we've decided to charge, and I'm up over the wall and halfway across no man's land, yelling 'Follow me,' 'Follow me,' and I look around and, fuck, no one is there, no one is following, they are all back in the trenches, waiting to see how it's working out....

ROSE

That's what you wanted when you started your own business.

MORGAN

That's what I thought I wanted. I'm tired, Rose. I can't do it all, not and

live with Tizzy. Nothing's ever settled. Something's always up in the air.

...La quiero ver porque ella es mi madre. No me importa nada más. Tengo derecho a ver a mi madre. Ella tiene derecho a verme a mí...

ENRICO

[ENRICO in the back speaks in Spanish)

MORGAN (CON'T)

Do you think things can change? Do you think things can get better? That's what I need to know.....

ROSE

Every moment holds a hundred possibilities, a hundred stories. If you believe things will work out, they will.

MORGAN

.....because sometimes I think things never really change. People just grow older, become more of what they already are. And things? They just go on.

ROSE

Croquet?

MORGAN

Can two people play?

ROSE

As many people can play as have balls.

MORGAN

Now, what's the course? I hit it through that hoop, then that hoop, and I hit the stake....

ENRICO

Bueno, por todos los cielos, entonces, sacála de Buenos Aires y llevála a Italia donde tienen buenos médicos. Si no podés venir a América. Podríamos preparar algo acá, pero si te la llevás a Italia...

ROSE

And around like that. We'll practice. Then when Tizzy and Enrico play against us we'll kick their butts.

MORGAN

Ah, competitive croquet. Croquet slap down.

ENRICO CON'T

Porque si ella está en Italia, puedo verla...

MORGAN (CON'T)

And we can play croquet on the side of a mountain?

ROSE

If you make one leg shorter than the other, you can stand straight. Don't knock your balls too hard. It's a long roll down.

MORGAN

If you knock me out of bounds.....?

ROSE

Then you're balls'll end up in Denver.

(MORGAN and ROSE exit)