

# **-YELLOW STRIPED WARNING-**

a conversation by johnmichael rossi

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## **CHARACTERS**

WOODY

GRAY

## **SETTING:**

A public place; perhaps a park. A large chalk-white square is drawn on the ground; a place of assumed possession.

**TIME:** A quarter to, or of.

## **NOTES:**

\*The actors should remain within the confines of the square at all times.

\*The occasional appearance of an asterisk (\*) in the middle of a speech indicates that the next speech begins to overlap at that point.

*A place of possession and status; a square. GRAY wanders about the space arbitrarily for a quite some time, while WOODY watches with concern.*

WOODY  
Can I help you?

GRAY  
Uh . . . no. No. Thank you.

WOODY  
I can't?

GRAY  
Uhh . . . no. Thanks.

WOODY  
You sure?

GRAY  
Yes. I'm sure. Thank you.

WOODY

GRAY

WOODY  
Because you see, it's just that, well . . . you're here.

GRAY  
Yes.

WOODY  
And I'm here.

GRAY  
It seems that way. Yes.

WOODY  
And I know why I'm here.

GRAY  
You do?

WOODY  
And I'm-Yes. Yes I do. Why?

GRAY  
Hm?

WOODY  
Why?

GRAY

Why, what?

WOODY

Why do you ask me if I know why I'm here?

GRAY

I didn't.

WOODY

Do you doubt that I know why I'm here?

GRAY

No. No sir. I do not. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll be\*  
on my way.

WOODY

Because I'm here because this is my house.

GRAY

WOODY

GRAY

Your house, did you say?

WOODY

Yes. MY house. Mine. All mine.

GRAY

WOODY

GRAY

Hm.

WOODY

What?

GRAY

Nothing.

WOODY

No. Not nothing. You said "hm." What "hm?"

GRAY

"Hm" nothing.

WOODY

You can't have a "hm" nothing. There has to be a "hm"  
something. Always a something.

GRAY

Well, not this time.

WOODY

What do you mean, not this time?

GRAY

I mean simply that you said, that there has to be a something following a man's "hm." But in the case of my "hm," there is nothing that follows. I Purely meant "hm," followed by nothing. Therefore, your theory about "hm's" is wrong.

WOODY

Wrong?

GRAY

Yes. Wrong.

WOODY

Who do you think you are? Do you know who I am?

GRAY

Why yes, you're the\* owner of this house.

WOODY

I'm the owner of this house.

GRAY

Yes. That has been established, Mister Owner-of-this-house.

WOODY

Why yes. Of course.

GRAY

But, what we don't know, is *what* makes you the owner of this house?

WOODY

Why, of course we do?

GRAY

Do we?

WOODY

Yes.

GRAY

Yes?

WOODY

Why, I make me owner of this house.

GRAY

How triumphant of you, sir.

WOODY

Who do you think you are? Who are you?

GRAY

Well, according to you and your theory that you make yourself owner of this house\*, I must be . . .

WOODY

Theory?

GRAY

Yes. Theory. According to this theory of yours\*, I must be nothing.

WOODY

Now you listen here. I do not like the tone of which you are speaking to me.

GRAY

Well I am most accordingly sorry sir, but this is the only tone of which I know how to speak with. So if you'll excuse my tone\*, I will continue . . .

WOODY

I most certainly will not!

GRAY

I will continue with my explanation.

WOODY

There will be no explanations! You are to leave my house at once!

GRAY

But-

WOODY

At once!

GRAY

But sir-

WOODY

What?

GRAY

You wanted to know who I was. Do you no longer wish to know who I am?

WOODY

Well?  
GRAY

Go on.  
WOODY

As I was saying.  
GRAY

As you were saying.  
WOODY

Before being rudely interrupted.  
GRAY

WOODY

GRAY  
That according to your theory that you make yourself owner of this here house, then I am nothing. But, I am not nothing. I am most certainly something.

WOODY

And . . .

GRAY  
And the something that I am, or shall I say the someone that I am, is the person that makes you, owner of this here house.

WOODY

Why, that is preposterous. I don't even know who you are.

GRAY  
Were you not paying attention, sir? I just told you. I am the person that makes you owner of this house.

WOODY

But . . . why, this is ridiculous. I've never seen you in my life.

GRAY

Precisely.

WOODY

Well, if I've never seen you, how and why would you make me owner of this house?

GRAY

I just do.

WOODY

Get out of my house! What are you, some sort of a freak or something?

GRAY

A freak? No. Not at all.

WOODY

Well. Get out of my house!

GRAY

WOODY

Go on! GET OUT! Before I call the police.

GRAY

WOODY

I don't see you moving.

GRAY

WOODY

Get. Out. Of. My. HOUSE!

GRAY

WOODY

GRAY

No.

WOODY

NO?

GRAY

No.

WOODY

GRAY

WOODY

It's MY house. Get out!

GRAY

You see, sir. I made you owner of this house and I can take away your ownership. I can.

WOODY

Get out of my house you dirty freak. I've never seen you in my life and I wish never to see you again.

GRAY

Wish, wish, wish all you want. But I gave you ownership and I can take it away.

WOODY

Get out of my house you dirty peasant before I-

GRAY

(pulls out a gun)

Before you what?

WOODY

GRAY

What?

WOODY

Get . . . out . . . out of my house . . . now.

GRAY

Oh. That's easy sir. Cause this is no longer your house.  
So therefore, I'm not in your house.

WOODY

No longer . . . mine?

GRAY

Precisely. Sir. I hereby declare you no longer owner of  
this house. It's no longer your house. It's my house now.

WOODY

GRAY

You wanted to know who I was. Now you know. I am the owner  
of this here house. And do you know who makes me the owner  
of this here house?

WOODY

GRAY

I said. Do you. Know. Who makes me owner of this house?

WOODY

GRAY

Well? Are you going to answer me? Or not?

WOODY

GRAY

Do YOU? Know what makes me owner of this house? I'll give  
you one last chance to answer.

WOODY

You do. You do!



GRAY

Who makes me owner of this house?

WOODY

You do! You do!

GRAY

(firing his gun)

Wrong Woody. Wrong.

(WOODY is dead)

You do. You do. Because you can't say otherwise.