

Outside the city of Ancient Troy. Two guards, LINUS and OTIS, sit in silence. Otis peers out at the horizon through a pair of ancient binoculars. Every so often, he reaches into a bag of peanuts and eats a few. There is a mess of shells at his feet. Linus stares off, lost in thought.

OTIS

Hm.

Hm. Hm. Hm.

Hey, Linus. I think the Greeks are up to something.

Linus?

There's a lot of movement in their camp. I think they may be retreating.

Linus?

Did you hear me?

Linus?

Otis looks over at Linus, who is still staring. Otis throws a peanut at him.

LINUS

Hm?

OTIS

Did you hear me?

Linus doesn't respond. Otis throws a handful of peanuts at him.

LINUS

Jeez! What gives, Otis?

OTIS

You were doing that thing again.

LINUS

What thing?

OTIS

That thing. That thing you're always doing. You know.

Otis exaggeratedly imitates Linus staring off into space, slack-jawed.

LINUS

I was not.

OTIS

You were. You do that a lot. What's up with that?

LINUS

I don't. I wasn't.

OTIS

Um. You do. But okay.

LINUS

I wasn't.
I wasn't doing anything.
Because that is our life now.

OTIS

That is not our life.

LINUS

That's our life.

OTIS

That's your life, maybe. It's not my life. I do lots of stuff.

LINUS

You don't do anything. Neither of us have done anything since we've been out here.

OTIS

That's not true. I do a lot!

LINUS

Eating all our peanuts doesn't count.

OTIS

(holding up the binoculars)

Um. Hello?

LINUS

Yeah, great. Maybe you can watch the Greeks to death.

Linus slumps. He picks up some of the fallen peanuts and cracks 'em open to snack on.

OTIS

You know, this isn't gonna be forever. You know that, right?

LINUS

Oh really?

OTIS

Yeah. Really.

They're gonna let us come home.

LINUS

You honestly believe that?

OTIS

I do. I do believe that.

LINUS

Even though King Priam specifically told us that would *not* happen?

OTIS

Oh, come on. He was grieving. People say all kinds of crazy things when they're grieving.

LINUS

Otis, he said he'd rather watch Troy burn than see us back within its walls. That's a direct quote.

OTIS

He was grieving!

Look, he could have executed us, right? But he let us live. That's gotta mean something.

LINUS

It means he wants us to live long and terrible lives out in the gods-damned boonies with our gods-damned thumbs up our gods-damned asses. We're men without a country. Face it, we're never going home.

OTIS

I think you're reading into it too much. He was grieving. He had just lost his oldest son.

LINUS

And he blamed us!

OTIS

But it wasn't our fault. We both know that. Look, I'm just saying people go a little nuts when they're sad. When Vulcan died, I basically didn't leave my house for a week.

LINUS

Vulcan was a dog.

OTIS

He was the best dog!

(remembering, with sorrow)

I loved that little guy...

LINUS

People can buy new dogs! I can't believe we're even talking about this.

OTIS

Look. When the war is over, everything will calm down. King Priam will see that Hector's death wasn't in vain, he'll see the error of his ways, he'll welcome us with open arms.

LINUS

Are you listening to yourself?

OTIS

There'll probably be a feast. In our honor.

LINUS

Oh my gods. Even if that was true, the war isn't going to end any time soon.

OTIS

Oh, it's going to end.

LINUS

It's been going on for nine years. It'll probably go on for nine more.

OTIS

Um, you obviously weren't listening to me earlier.

LINUS

Earlier?

OTIS

While you were off in la-la land, I was gathering important information about our Greek friends over yonder.

Oh gods. LINUS

What? OTIS

Here we go again. LINUS

What are you talking about? OTIS

Linus lets out a big sigh.

Let me guess. You think the Greeks are up to something? LINUS

Yes. Yes I do. OTIS

You think maybe they're retreating? LINUS

That is correct. OTIS

Beat. Linus is nonplussed.

Otis. LINUS
You say that every day.

What? No I don't. OTIS

Every day. You say the exact same thing. Every day. LINUS

That's patently false. OTIS

Are you joking? You're joking, right? LINUS

Whatever, it's totally different today. OTIS

LINUS

You say that every day, too!

OTIS

But today it's really—
I think Troy may have finally won the war.

LINUS

(overlapping)

“Finally won the war,” yes oh my gods you're like a broken... thing... that repeats itself over and over!

OTIS

Look, I'm just calling it like I see it. If you don't believe me then look for yourself.

Otis holds out the binoculars. Linus looks at them. A beat.

LINUS

No thanks.

OTIS

Come on!

LINUS

I don't wanna look.

OTIS

Just look. Just take a look.

LINUS

Get that thing away from me.

OTIS

What's wrong with you?

LINUS

I don't wanna look, okay? Every day, you say the same thing and then I look and it's the same thing. I'm done. They're Greeks. They're at war. They move around. They do stuff. I'm not enabling this behavior anymore.

OTIS

Enabling this behav—?
Just look through the dumb binoculars and tell me what you see.

LINUS

No. It's dumb. It's pointless. It's stupid. It won't—

But— OTIS

It won't change anything. LINUS

But— OTIS

Otis. No.
Just.
No. LINUS

Okay. Fine.
Jeez. OTIS

An awkward beat. Neither one knows where to look. After a moment.

Ok, but it's just this time it's really different. Like for real. OTIS

Otis! LINUS

You're really gonna wanna see. OTIS

I really don't think I will. LINUS

Prove me wrong! Take a look! OTIS

No! LINUS

Come on! OTIS

No! LINUS

OTIS

What are you so afraid of? What is it? You scared I may be right? Oh no, gods forbid Otis get something right. Gods forbid Linus be proven wrong one of these days. Gods forbid— Oh boy, what is it now?

Linus has turned away from Otis. He hides his head in his shirt like a weirdo. He shakes his head vigorously from side to side: "Nothing, go away!" A beat. Otis softens.

OTIS

Aw, come on.
Linus, what is it?
Was it something I said?

He shakes his head again: "Leave me alone!"

OTIS

Hey.
Buddy.

Otis puts a hand on Linus' shoulder. Slowly, his flushed face emerges from his tunic. After a beat:

LINUS

...I am not afraid.

OTIS

...Oh. Shit. I'm sorry, man.

LINUS

You know how I feel about that word.

OTIS

I know. Hey, I'm sorry.
I didn't mean it like that. You know I didn't mean it like that.

LINUS

I know, but still—

OTIS

I just meant like you were worried I'd be right.

LINUS

I know what you meant. I'm just...

OTIS
I'm sorry. Okay?
I'm sorry.

LINUS
Okay.

OTIS
Okay?

LINUS
Okay.

A long beat.

OTIS
Okay, what about this.
I give you the binoculars, and you look out at the Greek camp, right? And if it's not actually really truly one hundred percent different from all the other times...
(deep breath)
Then you can punch me in the face.

A beat.

LINUS
You'll let me punch you in the face?

OTIS
Yeah.
Right in the face.

LINUS
I dunno.

OTIS
Are you kidding? It's me getting punched in the face!

LINUS
You've been punched in the face more than anyone I know. Back in Troy, you got punched in the face like once or twice a day. I think you may actually like getting punched in the face.

OTIS
That is not true.

LINUS

That is very true.

OTIS

Not once or twice a day! Once or twice a week. Maybe. But even that's being kind of generous.

LINUS

I don't want to punch you in the face.

OTIS

Ugh. Fine. Punch me in the dick, then.

LINUS

What? No!

OTIS

Kick me in the dick?

LINUS

Otis.

OTIS

Kick me in the shins!

LINUS

Otis!

OTIS

Purple nurple!

LINUS

Otis!

OTIS

What, then? What can I say to prove it to you?

Linus thinks for half a second.

LINUS

Your binoculars.

Let me break your binoculars.