

Wookiees In The Wilderness

A one-act stage play
Written by Marcus Scott

Wookiees In The Wilderness

CHARACTERS

2 Men

SMOKEY (17 / Black Youth)

Dark features, charismatic charm and brio; a slacker who doesn't take life seriously, like at all. Comes off entitled, self-obsessed, attention-seeking, politically incorrect, sexually ambivalent, flirtatious, and a bit narcissistic; doesn't take no for an answer, underneath lurks something a little more nefarious.

BISHOP (17 / African-American Youth)

Overachieving, hormonally obscure, level-headed yet passionate high school honors student and bookworm with a posh nerdy schoolboy look; bashful but authoritative, his lower-class blue-collar childhood upbringing reinforces his stellar work ethic and drive. Knows more than he should about sci-fi films. Scrawny, he's stronger than he looks.

Warning Actors: Characters speak in Ozarks/Appalachia lingo and there's no glossary. Enjoy!

Ozark speak example: [Youtube](#)

Wookiees In The Wilderness

TIME

Present Day: Early-Summer, 2020; during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PLACE

The Ozarks, a cove near Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri; in an isolated camping area in an open clearing on a mountaintop, around sundown.

SYNOPSIS

BISHOP and SMOKEY are best pals. Smokey will do anything for Bishop, who is in the midst of recovering from a recent trauma. Bishop will do anything for Smokey including go out to the mountainside wilderness of the Lake of the Ozarks to prep him for his upcoming Wilderness Survival test for the Eagle Scouts. But as the sun down begins and night falls upon them, the boys are reminded to truly be prepared for anything. “Wookiees in the Wilderness” is a buddy drama about race, class, retaliation, wasted potential, Star Wars and equal opportunity in a Trump’s America.

“The Edge... There is no honest way to explain it because the only people who really know where it is are the ones who have gone over.”
— Hunter S. Thompson

**“On My Honor, I will do my best
To do my duty to Go and my country
And obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
Mentally awake, and morally straight.”**
— “Boy Scout Oath,” Boys Scouts Of America

(Sundown. The Great Outdoors. Lush green plant life and foliage align the stage, while leaves, grass needles and pine cones feather the floor. A makeshift tent near a tree, a pair of large logs. Pet sounds and the wild could be heard in the distance. Bishop, 17, lithe and slightly awkward stands alone in the mountains, reading intensely. Silence falls on the environment for a moment. There is an almost spooky hush. Then: Smokey, 17, strapping and red-blooded, appears.)

SMOKEY

Hey lady-killer, what'cha got there?

BISHOP

You'ns wouldn't be interested.

SMOKEY

(Getting a glimpse of the book, joking:) You'ns readin' *Star Wars* or somethin'?! Sorry bruh; didn't know George Lucas was for you'ns edumacated intellectuals.

BISHOP

There's more to sci-fi than George Lucas' record-breaking billion-dollar franchise. *(And he's off...)* *Brave New World, 1984, Catch-22, A Clockwork Orange, Hitchhiker's Guide, Handmaid's Tale, Slaughterhouse-Five—*

SMOKEY

Nerd.

BISHOP (cont.)

—And you'ns think *Star Wars* is the pinnacle of science fiction? Hell even—

(Smokey snatches the book from Smokey's grip, reading...)

SMOKEY

Kindred—?

(Bishop takes the book from Smokey, turns it over so he can read the description.)

BISHOP

Octavia Butler. She's dope. You'ns should get on it; more fantastical than anythin'—

SMOKEY

Looks like *Birth of a Nation* with time travel. Can black folk be in a story without bein' whipped by white-y?! Where are the robots, the light sabers, the Wookiees?

BISHOP

Wookiees are just fur-covered Bigfoot niggas... in the wilderness... of space.

SMOKEY

That's a bit of a reach, don't you'ns think?!

BISHOP

George Lucas shot a space opera with a bunch of furry brown creatures and the one black dude with a speaking role didn't show up until the second original movie.

SMOKEY

Sayin' he racist or somethin'?! That's ridiculous. Ain't he married to some black lady?

BISHOP

You're tellin' me you'ns can't be anti-black and married to a black lady?

SMOKEY

She's prob'ly this supernaturally smart sistah, and they probably have crazy high fidelity, hi-definition, stereoscopic sex. Who knows? Prob'ly responsible for Mace Windu and Finn in the later films. We don't know. All we know is you'ns bein' hateful.

BISHOP

(*Returning the book to Smokey:*) What do you'ns call Ewoks then, huh? Think they just these anthropomorphic hunter-gatherin' teddy bears—

SMOKEY

Who live on Endor, your point?! Why do black people always—

BISHOP

Dude: They speak slang, fight with stone spears, love a good barbecue and they know the finer points of cosmetology.

SMOKEY

When you'ns put it that way...

BISHOP

Gorillas, chimpanzees, bears; when we weren't bein' drawn as backwoods big-lipped watermelon goblin' little black sambos, all those comic books and Disney cartoons that you'ns love so much... the hands behind 'em likened us as animals. Chewbacca might as well be a Somali pirate in space. Only thing is, they found a use for 'em.

SMOKEY

Damn, man...

BISHOP

There's a reason Lando Calrissian just galivanted his fly ass on the scene in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

SMOKEY

Star Wars might be a lil' "problematic."

BISHOP

Welcome to the dark side, Comrade.

SMOKEY

Did you'ns just pull a Jedi Mind Trick on me?

BISHOP

I've got powers!

SMOKEY

Fuck, I'll say! You'ns be one helluva Sith Lord.

BISHOP

Yo, Smokey, why'd you'ns drag me all the way out yonder?! Sundown's comin' on. Couldn't this wait til' daybreak?

SMOKEY

You'ns can put yourn things down. We made it. See?

(He points to the tent in the distance.)

Came by here earlier, scoped the place out; just us and mother nature in these here parts. Wilderness Survival exam is a week away. Got everythin' down pat except rifle and archery. Figgered I'd need the most rootin' and tootin' buckaroo shootin' sum bitch this side of Springfield to help me hit my mark. This is my last chance 'fore we head off to Uni, the last chance I'll get to prove I'm worth my salt and all.

BISHOP

Self-reliance. Ever heard of it? Do it on your own, Smoke. Practice makes perfect; I'm sure the kind folk back at the BSA will make due with yourn test score.

SMOKEY

Oh, c'mon Bishop. Bruh, I never ask you'ns for nothin'. We talkin' 'bout a *gun* here. You'ns know that if there was anyone, and I mean anyone that I can go to with this, I would. But there's no one. Pappy got sugar runnin' through him, vision's all fucked up, so that means I'm left with you, my best pal who can do surgery with a shotgun blindfolded, my best pal who happens to be in a Navy Junior ROTC cadet with honors, my best pal whose got The Citadel and West Point fightin' over him. You already got the badge, so it ain't a big deal and all. But it's my turn and I want that badge. *(Beat.)* Takin' the test with Darryl Hutchins; you know his uppity, biggety ass goes off to the shootin' range with his pappy every Sunday like its church. Got a whole wall dedicated to his pistols and crossbows and whatnot, actin' all high and mighty like he's a poster boy for the NRA, gettin' full as a tick on a horse's ass 'cause of his pappy got a few dollars in his wallet and you expectin' me to just wing it?! Bruh! You know what this means to my pappy, don't 'cha?

BISHOP

All due respect, yourn pappy is a utilitarian fascist on the verge of a nervous breakdown who gets his kicks by living vicariously through you'ns.

SMOKEY

What in the Sam Hill? What you'ns say about my kin?

BISHOP

That he stays tightening that ol' iron grip of his 'round yourn throat and I'm beginnin' to think you like it, may have developed a little fetish.

SMOKEY

Hush up.

BISHOP

Well, bless yourn little pea pickin heart! You'ns gonna tan my hide or somethin'?

SMOKEY

Fixin' to.

BISHOP

Pshaw!

SMOKEY

You'ns knows I'm fit as a fiddle. Don't get too big for your britches.

BISHOP

Sure, I'll help. What you workin' with?

(Smokey quickly opens his duffle bag and takes out a competition rifle, hands it to Bishop who cradles it like it is a treasure.)

Smith & Wesson. M&P 15 semi-automatic. Gas-operated, rotating bolt. .223 Remington ammo. Good, but it's got some years on it. It'll do, though. There 'nother one in there?

(Beat.) Let me see it.

(He hands Smokey the other gun; Bishop takes the second gun and inspects it.)

Alright. That's south. What we're going to need is some kind of barricade, some kind of cover. These logs will do.

(Bishop and Smokey squat, resting their bodies as if in a foxhole near the logs and take aim, pointing the rifles out into the wilderness of the audience. Bishop notices Smokey's grip on the firearm; he puts his rifle to his side, leans over, sitting behind Bishop, adjusting his posture and his grip.)

BISHOP

Breathe. Relax your shoulders. Steady your hand. *(Beat.)* Good.

SMOKEY

(Awkward:) You'n people, how are they holdin'? Don't see much of 'em these days since Tyler—Shit, pardon me, I didn't...

BISHOP

He's been laid to rest three months now. It's OK, you can say his name. Everybody gets all junebug jittery when he come up while we conversate.

SMOKEY

I reckon words fail; folks don't know what to say, don't wanna cause any unnecessary roughness.

BISHOP

My people, they're still a bit discombobulated, everything's been all cattywompus since... well, you know. Just about everyone we come across in the holler be whisperin' 'bout the family of that black boy who got himself blown to swiss cheese. My pappy been holdin' strong, but there's a sadness, you know? Any minute now, he be about break. Took mama a spell, but she found a reason to get out of bed, eyes been a frog strangler since the po-po knocked on our door that day. Now she's madder'n a wet hen; she's focused now, determined now. Nowadays when they're not givin' the PD hell, they're talkin' to protesters, gettin' familiar with the law.

BISHOP (cont.)

Most nights they're lookin' at old photos, nursing a smidgin' of white lightning, puffin' on loosenin' weed...Until they're hunkered down, all haired up like a summer pig turd and plum tucker'd out. (*Beat.*) Met with this fancy ferner civil rights attorney, some Yankee, who says he's gon' make us millionaires after the dust clears. Says folks are mad, says they need to see us mad, angry, hurt. That's not me, I'm not much for public displays of emotion. But Tyler? Tyler would have crushed this, if it were the other way around—

SMOKEY

Don't speak like that. Don't even play with thinkin' like that.

BISHOP

Just sayin' that Tyler would have crushed it. He would be online, he would be front and center on TV, he would have been presidential or some shit, he would've said all the right things. You know, once he said he was gonna be the Zuckerberg of videogames.

SMOKEY

I remember, alright! Wasn't for him, your boy wouldn't know how to code.

BISHOP

Get this: He graduates summa cum laude despite low test scores all of middle school and high school, walks across the stage, snags his diploma in Computer Science, gets recruited by a world famous gaming company, comes home to spend some quality time with his people 'fore he flies out to Silicon Valley to be with city folk and leaves the nest for good. Then, one day before he's scheduled to catch a plane out of town, he steps out to go for a run and we never see him again. He ran down a bike path, a path he ran every single day and next thing you know, they're pickin' buckshots from his gizzards in the coroner's office.

SMOKEY

Are you OK? If you want to talk—

BISHOP

They disappeared into thin air, Smoke. They put on airs and what not in front of the press, meanwhile they hunted my brother in our own neighborhood and recorded the kill so the whole wide world could see. PD got a mountain of evidence and they sat on it for months and when they finally decide to nab 'em, they get lost in the wind. PD don't do nary a thing when it's one of us and they expect respect?! Ain't that some shit.

SMOKEY

Bishop—

BISHOP

We're losing daylight. Let's take a shot. Look around, I'll let you pick a target.

SMOKEY

That right?

BISHOP

Yep'in'deedy.

(Smokey focuses with the rifle, taking aim, scanning the area. A moment, then:)

SMOKEY

Alright. You're six, my five. Look alive, look alive.

BISHOP

(Pause:) What's that?

SMOKEY

You tell me.

BISHOP

What is that? That, right there?! There's a little too much shade over there, but it looks—

SMOKEY

You'll figger it out. Lickety-Split, I reckon.

BISHOP

What in tarnation?! Are those people? I thought you said we alone out here.

SMOKEY

Alrighty-then, guess I wasn't as thorough as I thought.

BISHOP

Three of 'em; sittin' around, guzzlin' hooch. They're camping all the way out here?

SMOKEY

Weird. All by their lonesome like that? Spooky.

BISHOP

Huh.

SMOKEY

What?

BISHOP

Mind is playin' tricks on me, all this talkin' 'bout Tyler—it's just, they kind of look like...
(Bishop lowers his gun and looks at Smokey, who meets eyes with him.)
Smokey... why'd you bring me out here?

SMOKEY

I told you. Wilderness Survival.

BISHOP

...What if someone finds them?

SMOKEY

So?

BISHOP

What if they link the bullets back to us?

SMOKEY

Don't you never mind about that.

BISHOP

Forensics, dummy. Blood splatter analysts, ballistics tests...

SMOKEY

You're gettin' way ahead of yourself there, pal.

BISHOP

There's about 13 guns and ammo retailers in town. Where'ya get ya boomstick?

SMOKEY

Walmart. My brother Jessie got a little collection at his crib; I'm only borrowin' 'em for the test. Just yourn standard pump action semi-automatic double barrel shotgun.

BISHOP

Not unlike the one they used on Tyler.

SMOKEY

Not unlike the one they used on Tyler. Only there are thousands of these and a few hundred of theirs.

BISHOP

How'd you'ns find them?

SMOKEY

Google Maps.

BISHOP

Stop cuttin' up and lolly gaggin' and be true.

SMOKEY

After that news segment of theirs went viral, after they lied on national TV like that, after we all saw what they did in that videoclip, figgered I'd hop on TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Insta, whatever. With a few clicks I found their address, saw what they did for work, saw what they did for fun and where they did it, where they go on vacation... When the pigs finally got off their keisters, givin' them bastards time 'nough to run, figgered I'd quit my piddlin' and get to work on a case Springfield PD got no interest in. Only took a day. Turns out them three incels have a hanker'n for catfish 'round this time every year. So?

BISHOP

(Laying his gun down:) ...Nah.

SMOKEY

(Laying the gun down:) The fuck you'ns mean, "Nah"? Nah! Nah?!

BISHOP

That dog won't hunt. (*Beat.*) I'm hurtin' bad, but this ain't the way things is done.

SMOKEY

Listen to me you'ns lil' sum bitch, they saw yourn own brother on a beautiful sunny day while he was out joggin', stalked him for a mile like he was Bigfoot because they said he looked "suspicious" and then they had the audacity to mow him down in the middle of the street like a doe-eyed deer. They posted photos of his kill on the internets like they were fuckin' poachers, flashin' smiles and throwin' gang signs, got on live TV—and you know the white man speak with a forked tongue—, said they were scared for they lives, said that they got into an old school donny brook and bullets started flyin' and when the storm clouds ran off in the sky—, it took a whole nation to get outraged before the police felt pressure to do anything. Do that or don't that make you'ns the teensiest bit upset? A'int you outraged that them yella-belly piss ant varmints done slaughtered your big brother out right?! I reckon it do. I reckon you're at war with yourself. I reckon that inside you is a big ol' fender-bender. Every single night your ma's face is wet like a crick and pappy is three sheets to the wind, both of 'em tore up from the floor up, worn slapped out. You think'n there's a kind of happily ever after if this thing goes to trial?

BISHOP

You don't think I feel some type of way?! But this ain't the way...

SMOKEY

You'ns got a better alternative? Because I'm out of options.

BISHOP

We can alert the little piggies. They'll be charged with evading arrest.

SMOKEY

What makes you'ns think the police are gon' do a damn thang? They shoot us like they shootin' hoops; it's a game to 'em. George Zimmerman, that self-hating Hispanic wannabe white supremacist *walked* after he hunted that poor boy down and his ass is still out in these streets gloatin' and carryin' on. Dylan Roof, that motherfuckin' thunder cunt went into one of our churches, mowed nine of us down like we was weeds in his garden and *gumshoe* stopped by Burger King before escortin' him to a precinct. But God forbid one of us reach for our wallet or play outside or stay indoors or breathe; more than half the time we're unarmed and you'ns think these fuck'n pigs are gon' believe yourn black ass over 'em? You'ns think the court is goin' to actually indict these inbred bastard sons of bitches?! Bless your heart. You'ns got quite an imagination, pal. Those cross-burning lily-white ghosts will *walk* like they always do and be treated like heroes.

BISHOP

So, we take a shot at 'em and what does that solve?! We're talkin' 'bout human beings!

SMOKEY

Six of one, half dozen of the other, don't you think? They take one of us, we take three of 'em. Now, I don't have a dog in this fight, but yourn my best pal, my twin flame to hell and back. I loved Tyler like he was my kin, but that day they didn't just take him, they took a smidgin' of you with 'em and from the looks of it, the best parts. I want my best pal back. I need my best pal back. (*Beat.*) The Bishop I know, the one I'm 'memberin' from before—he'd let it roll off of 'em like water off a duck's back.

SMOKEY (cont.)

But the person standin' 'fore me is sweatin' like a sinner in church, nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs. This new Bishop with his tree-hugger bullshit?! It don't amount to a hill of beans. You can protest 'til the cows come home, throw hissy fits and get online, *petition*... But if I had my druthers, I'd take the fight to 'em.

BISHOP

Inside me, it's blowin' up a storm. Everything's spinnin' like a carousel in a twister. Dad gum it, I'm so mad sometimes I can't think straight, you know?

SMOKEY

...How I see it, they ain't worth the powder it would take to blow them to hell.

BISHOP

...Get the thingmajig, please?

SMOKEY

(Surprised:) Well, shit fire and save matches!

(Smokey grabs the gun. Bishop gets behind him and gets him in position.)

BISHOP

Shoulders down. Raise your head a bit. Elbows in at the waist. Now loosen your hips. There you go. *(Beat.)* Once you start, don't stop.

SMOKEY

Sure. Wanna grab pizza or somethin' after this?

BISHOP

I could eat. But I left my wallet back at my house. Can we swing by there first?

SMOKEY

Don't worry about it. It's on me. *(Beat.)* Which one? I'll let you'ns call first dibs.

BISHOP

I dunno. The fat one.

(The boys share a laugh. Then, Smokey steadies his broomstick.)

SMOKEY

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe. Catch a tiger by the toe. If he hollers let him go—

(Bang. The sound of a thud in the distance and the scatter of a flock of birds.)

BISHOP

Right between the eyes.

(Bishop gets into position. Black out. Bang. Bang.)

(End of play.)