

Larry of the Lake
A Play by Matt Buchanan

Characters

Jack
Larry

The setting is a dock or beach at the edge of a lake, but it is not necessary to represent a lake onstage. At the opening we hear the sounds of a lake--waves lapping against the dock, birdcalls, etc. The lights come up on Jack, seated in a deck chair, with a little table at his elbow. He has a laptop computer in his lap and a cellular phone in his ear. He is dressed in business casual—black socks and shoes with khakis and a polo shirt.

JACK

(Into the phone.) Fine. . . Fine, Mr. Phipps. Fine. . . I'll get right on it. . . Yes, sir. I'll have those figures for you by eight AM. . . I'll fax them to your office. . . It's no problem, Mr. Phipps. Enjoy your Sunday. . . See you tomorrow.

He puts down the phone and begins typing rapidly on the computer. A voice speaks from offstage.

VOICE

Working hard?

Jack looks around, but sees no one. He gets back to work.

Whatcha writing?

Jack still sees no one.

JACK

Who are you? Where are you?

We hear splashing, and Larry emerges from offstage, as if from the lake. He is dressed exactly like Jack, except that he is completely drenched. He sports a broad grin.

JACK

Jesus. Where did you come from?

LARRY

The lake.

JACK

(Snorts.) Obviously.

LARRY

(Cheerful.) Hey, when somebody asks me a question, I answer it. Doesn't cost me anything, right? There are no stupid questions. . .

JACK

Shut up.

LARRY

Gotcha.

Pause.

I mean, who am I to make assumptions? I don't know you. You could be really stupid. You are working on a Sunday.

JACK

Shut up.

Jack resumes his typing. Larry stands over his shoulder and watches. After a while. . .

What!?

Larry says nothing. Jack tries to continue working, but curiosity gets the better of him.

What were you doing in there anyway?

Larry says nothing.

Well?

LARRY

Oh. Can I speak now?

JACK

Yes!

LARRY

Okay. *(Pause)* What was the question?

JACK

Look, I've got work to do, all right?

LARRY

Great! What can I do?

JACK

What?

LARRY

To help. What can I do?

JACK

I can handle it.

LARRY

Come on. Lemme help.

JACK

If you really want to help, you could leave me alone.

LARRY

Gotcha.

*Larry moves away and stares at the lake.
Jack types. After a moment Larry becomes
curious and moves back to look over Jack's
shoulder.*

Two "L"s.

JACK

(Angry.) What!?

LARRY

In "parallel." Well, three, actually.

He touches Jack's shoulder.

Wow, are you tense! Your blood pressure must be sky high.

He begins to massage Jack's shoulders.

JACK

Do you mind!?

Larry moves away again. After a pause, Jack changes the spelling on his computer, muttering to himself as he does.

LARRY

You're welcome.

Jack types.

Because little things like spelling can make or break a first impression. You might be the smartest guy in the world, but if you make mistakes like that people will think you're an idiot. *(Pause.)* You might want to invest in a spell checker if you have trouble with spelling.

JACK

What is wrong with you?!?

LARRY

You really should keep an eye on that blood pressure. You keep overworking like that and you're just letting your health tick, tick away.

Jack ignores Larry. *There is a pause.*

Tick. . . tick. . . tick!

Jack puts aside his work in exasperation.

JACK

Do you get some kind of thrill out of annoying innocent people while they're trying to work?

Pause.

LARRY

Honestly?

JACK

What?

LARRY

Honestly?