

Circle Of Self

By Ruth Dilley and Ruth Anne Wood

© 1991 © 2018

Act I

Scene 2 – “The Greatest Cyclist In The World”

(Lights come up. Kitchen clock says a little after 7 am, Inyah has on a jacket and her backpack at her feet ready for the bus.)

A woman stage right cuts melon and pushes pieces off the cutting board into the glass bowl. Inyah’s eyes are watery. talking to her mother.

MOM: Our therapist says your father and I should separate.

INYAH: I can’t believe you’re taking advice from a shrink who has been divorced, how many times? And now (mockingly) Dr.-Reverend-Laura is divorcing her latest husband Pete after his affair!

MOM: I know you adored them as a couple.

INYAH: (Pouting) You should get a new therapist, one who knows how to stay married!

MOM: (Mom smiles lovingly.) Just because you fall, doesn’t mean you don’t know how to ride a bike.

INYAH: What's that suppose to mean?

MOM: Just because she had three failed marriages doesn't mean she can't be a great marriage counselor.

Inyah gets a distant look in her eyes. Offstage we hear very faint cheering. Then the crowd noise grows louder as dozens of spectators rush onto the stage from both directions until we see two people holding either end of a string with plastic event triangle flags on it, with some of the show sponsor names on it.

(An official sports announcer holding a mic steps front center.)

SPORTS ANNOUNCER: And now the moment you’ve been waiting for ... some say “The Greatest Cyclist In The World”. He has ridden long distance in the highest and lowest elevations, on the coldest and most glassy and hottest surfaces. Ladies and gentleman, please give a huge round of applause for Travis Winsor!!!

(The crowd previously hushed compared to the announcer suddenly erupts into another ear deafening applause, thanks to an extra race crowd soundtrack.)

(Here comes Travis Winsor Stage Left cycling Down Stage of the flags with his arms in victory pose in the air coasting after a big race. Suddenly, at the end of the line of spectators, he wipes out Stage Right, and just lays there.)

HECKLER 1: Bogus!

HECKLER 2: Looser!

CROWD MOM: (With a boy and girl holding both hand, she turns away from the crash.) Kids, who wants ice cream?

KID 1: I want Chunky Peanut butter!

KID 2: I want Blueberry Blast!

(The crowd clears from every direction very quickly. Finally, the flag holders are the last to gather the flag and we hear revved truck engines turning on and leaving. Soon the only one left is Inyah, who walks towards Travis on the ground in a mangled bike heap.)

INYAH: Are you alright? How can I hel-?

(Travis jumps up as if he's playing make-believe rough housing with his kids on his carpeted living room floor.)

TRAVIS WINSOR: (Looking at his watch with a big smile) Wow! I think that's a new record! That's the fastest I've ever cleared out an audience!

INYAH: You mean, you meant to wipe out in front of thousands of people?

TRAVIS WINSOR: (Unzipping his sweaty jersey) Well, I really don't like to wait hours for the crowd to clear or answer the same cliché interview questions, so after something like this happened once at an event, I've covertly done a version of this ever since.

Inyah and Travis freeze on stage.

One appears behind a cutout silhouette of the departing crowd.

Zero who has been quietly painting on the edge of the stage the whole time quickly adds a bold stick figure riding a bike to the picture in front of her whirling abstract of color. Zero quickly signs her name ZERO, unclips the painting from the easel and hands it to One with a big foolish grin.

ONE: You've got to be kidding me, Zero! This doesn't prove anything about how Inyah deals with conflict or life for that matter. Put your unfinished work in progress back on the easel. I'm the one who gives it a name or a deadline and decides when the contest is over.

Zero's grin dims for just a moment. In a matter of moments, Zero paints a giant heart over the previous work and keeps going.

One just shakes his head, half defeated and half ashamed of Zero's naivety...even though she is timeless.

The almost invisible character with an outstretched hand uses the force to reveal the next painted backdrop across the stage.

Lights dim.

Scene 3

(Coming tomorrow)