



SISYPHUS
GETS
STONED

Raininda

SISYPHUS GETS STONED

by Rayanda



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Characters:

PILGRIM

SISYPHUS

Scene: *The base of a mountain. **SISYPHUS** is rolling a rock up the slope. **PILGRIM** enters, wearing jeans and carrying a knapsack.*

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PILGRIM: Hey mister, you seen God hereabouts?

SISYPHUS [keeps rolling the rock]: God who?

PILGRIM [following SISYPHUS]: You know, the big guy up there towering over us.

[He points to the top of the mountain and beyond.]

SISYPHUS: Yes, sir, I saw him about...**[grunts]**...two thousand years ago....

[grunts]...When you see him, remind him I am here, will you please?

PILGRIM: Then you know Him?

SISYPHUS: No better than I did two thousand years ago. Zeus was—

PILGRIM: Who? [He begins following **SISYPHUS** up the slope.]

SISYPHUS: Zeus. How many guys do you think are bigger than this mountain?

PILGRIM: The God I want is the only one there is.

SISYPHUS: I know.

PILGRIM: So you do know Him?

SISYPHUS: No, you said there is only one of him. And how many Zeus' do you think there are, pray tell?

PILGRIM: None, really.

SISYPHUS: You are looking without seeing, sir. But I cannot in truth say I have ever been introduced to your God. Who are his people? Maybe I know them.

PILGRIM: We're all His people, each and everyone of us. All the children of God. And because we are His children, He gave us His only son, Jesus.

SISYPHUS: Pleased to meet you, Jesus. Who did your father give you to?

PILGRIM: Me!? Jesus!? Don't be ridiculous!

SISYPHUS: You said your people are the children of God, and he only had one son. Therefore you must be Je—

PILGRIM: No, no, no! That's not what I said.

SISYPHUS: I assure you, sir, it is.

PILGRIM: No, no—well, yes, but that's not what I meant.

SISYPHUS: Did you mean that you are the son of Jesus, who gave you away, and now you are trying to find your way back to your people?

PILGRIM: No, I'm not lost. I'm looking for God, I tell you.

SISYPHUS: He gave his only grandson away then got lost? Hiding in shame, I expect. Do not concern yourself, Zeus will expose him and take care of him.
[PILGRIM sighs in frustration.] What about God's wife? Maybe I know her people.

PILGRIM: He doesn't have a wife.

SISYPHUS: You don't say. What do you want with a god like that?

PILGRIM: I have something I'd like to ask Him. Do you have to roll that darned thing around while I'm talking to you?

SISYPHUS: I'm afraid so.

PILGRIM: What in God's name for?

SISYPHUS: Because Zeus wills it.

PILGRIM: Let it fall. You have a will of your own.

SISYPHUS: I know, that is how I ended up with the rock.

PILGRIM: Do you like rocks?

SISYPHUS: Not particularly.

PILGRIM: Then what's the point in rolling it up, when you know darned well it's just going to come right back down again?

SISYPHUS: I have not figured that out as yet, but I suspect that when I do, I will stop rolling it.

PILGRIM: So why not stop right now, or are you being punished for something?

SISYPHUS: Yes, I made the mistake once of telling the truth. I could have lied, but no, I told the river-god that Zeus had carried off his daughter.

PILGRIM: But the rock, why the rock?

SISYPHUS: It's my reward for cheating Death and avoiding Hades.

PILGRIM: You're alive, man! Be a real man and reclaim your freedom by letting go of the rock.

SISYPHUS: I cannot do that, sir.

PILGRIM: Yes you can, for chrissake. If you can roll that rock up there, you should have the strength to walk away to freedom. Your soul demands it.

SISYPHUS: My what?

PILGRIM: Your...the....Forget it, you wouldn't understand.

SISYPHUS: Sir, you are most probably right. I do not understand your idea of punishment, either. You think it is something you can walk away from whenever it pleases you. However, believe me, it is no punishment if you want to do it. But tell me, your God, when he punishes you, you tell him to go to Hades, I suppose?

PILGRIM: It's not as simple as that. The idea is to avoid punishment by obeying God's will.

SISYPHUS: Pray tell, what do you think I am doing with this rock? I am obeying the will of Zeus.

PILGRIM: Oh, what's the use. We're just going around in circles.

SISYPHUS: No, sir. I am going straight up.

PILGRIM: That's not what I...Forget it. Banging my head against that rock couldn't feel any worse than trying to get you to understand. Here's a question you should be able to answer: Mind telling me your name?

SISYPHUS: No, I do not mind. They call me Sisyphus. I am surprised my hands did not give me away. Everyone says I have extraordinary hands. And who might I be talking to?

PILGRIM: Sorry, my name's Pilgrim. How much longer do you have to roll that thing around?

SISYPHUS: Some say forever, others say differently. I am going to ask Zeus. He should be back any time now.

PILGRIM: I wouldn't count on it. He's not around anymore. In Hades where he belongs. The only thing left is his thunderbolt, but that belongs to God now.

SISYPHUS: I thought so. The joker who stole Zeus' thunderbolt is a terrible shot. He nearly knocked me off the mountain the other day.

PILGRIM: I wouldn't call him a joker if I were you. He can hear everything you say. He is everywhere, in all things.

SISYPHUS: In this rock?

PILGRIM: Sure.

SISYPHUS: Why would he want me to push him around?

PILGRIM: Not exactly in the rock so much as the rock is part of God.

SISYPHUS: He's made of stone?

PILGRIM: He's made of all things.

SISYPHUS: Women too?

PILGRIM: Of course.

SISYPHUS: Then why do you keep referring to God as *him*?

PILGRIM: Because that's what He is.

SISYPHUS: I see. He's one of the things that came out of Pandora's box. They say all kinds of strange things were in that box. Maybe you should talk to her. She might know where he went.

PILGRIM: God wasn't in the box.

SISYPHUS: But you said he is in all things. Maybe he did not come out. Ever think of that?

PILGRIM: He couldn't have been in the box, because only evil things were in there, and God sure as hell isn't in anything remotely evil.

SISYPHUS: So he is not in all things, just some things. Is God inside you?

PILGRIM: Yes, but not just me. You too. He's in everyone.

SISYPHUS: Whether we are good or evil?

PILGRIM: Yes.

SISYPHUS: So he does exist in bad things. You had better check Pandora's box.

PILGRIM: You don't understand.

SISYPHUS: Maybe not, but neither do you. If you have the answers, why are you seeking them from me and your God? You said he is inside you. Have you tried looking there?

PILGRIM: Of course I have, but I just get more questions.

SISYPHUS: Maybe you're asking the wrong questions.

PILGRIM: I only have one question.

SISYPHUS: To be or not to be, is that the question?

PILGRIM: To be or not to be. As if we really have a choice. Any fool knows it's a matter of to be and not to be. And that's not a question.

SISYPHUS: Maybe he does not want you to find him, because he does not have the answer.

PILGRIM: God knows everything there is to know.

SISYPHUS: Then maybe you can ask him where Zeus is.

PILGRIM: Zeus is dead.

SISYPHUS: Zeus can do everything and anything except one thing: he cannot die. That is the only thing he cannot do.

PILGRIM: But he's dead, I tell you. God is all there is.

SISYPHUS: If your God stole his thunderbolt, I am in trouble, because Zeus will have to get it back before he will come for me. And the heavens only know how long that will be.

PILGRIM: He's never coming back.

SISYPHUS: How do you know?

PILGRIM: Because God exists in the past, present and future, all at the same time.

SISYPHUS: Then he might know, but you do not. The next time he comes this way, I am going to have a few words with him. You did say he can hear everything I am saying?

PILGRIM: I certainly did.

SISYPHUS: But if he exists everywhere all at the same time, then I do not have to wait for him to return, because he is already here. Even in my thoughts. Now I want to know why I am still rolling this rock around. **[Pauses]** No answer. Trouble is, I have no way of knowing whether it is me or him asking the question. Why are you looking for God, when he is right here listening to you?

PILGRIM: That's the kind of question Jesus can answer.

SISYPHUS: Then you should ask him.

PILGRIM: So should you. He knows all about suffering and punishment. When he was on earth, we punished him for our sins.

SISYPHUS: So his punishment is over?

PILGRIM: Yeah, we killed him.

SISYPHUS: Who's *we*?

PILGRIM: All of us. Mankind.

SISYPHUS: Mortals cannot kill gods.

PILGRIM: But we did. We hung him on a cross, and he suffered and died for our sins.

SISYPHUS: You mean he suffered because as the son of a god he cannot die?

PILGRIM: No, we killed him, I tell you.

SISYPHUS: But you just said I should ask him about my rock. What is the point of asking him anything if he is dead?

PILGRIM: I didn't say Jesus was dead, I said we killed him.

SISYPHUS: If I am hearing you correctly, the ones who tried to kill him are the ones who suffered, because they learned soon enough, I am sure, what it means to harm a god. Believe me, if gods suffer at all, it is because they know they cannot die. Would you do me a favor and get that rock? **[He rolls over a bump.**

PILGRIM bends down and picks up a pebble.] That is the one! Thank you kindly, sir. That cursed rock has been making my life hell.

PILGRIM: When you get up to the top, and you let go of the rock and see it going back down the mountain, what does it feel like? To you, I mean.

SISYPHUS: A sense of release, I suppose. Although at that point I am not thinking of that at all, because—

PILGRIM: Sure? I would have thought you would have a sense of accomplishment that you made it to the top.

SISYPHUS: No. Continue up to the top with me, and you will see for yourself.

PILGRIM: Thanks, but I'd best be on my way. Otherwise, I'll never find Him.

SISYPHUS: I think you will get closer to him up there than down here. There is something, a force, a pervasive presence, up there. I do not quite know how to describe it for I know not what it is. When I am through with this rock, I will surely seek it out. To know it.

PILGRIM: Does this presence make you feel small but significant?

SISYPHUS: It is more like a feeling that the heavens are alive.

PILGRIM: While you've been working out your punishment with this rock, a lot of things have changed. There's only one heaven now, and we have bombs that can blow us all up at least a dozen times. That's probably where God is right now, building himself a bomb shelter. **[He chuckles.]**

SISYPHUS: What for? He cannot go anywhere where he does not already exist.

PILGRIM: That's right. You're catching on. So what do you think is up there?

SISYPHUS: I thought you might be able to tell me.

PILGRIM: It's a long way up there. I suppose there's no harm in trying. Want me to roll that for awhile?

SISYPHUS: I do, but Zeus does not. He rolled it right over the last man who tried.

PILGRIM: You make it look so effortless. Let's see.... **[He gets a rock and starts rolling it.]**

SISYPHUS: If you find God up there, what are you going to ask him?

PILGRIM: I want to ask Him why He took my only son. He was such a good boy, you know, he never gave me any trouble. I know God creates and destroys all of us, but the neighbor's boy is a rotten little hellion, yet he just keeps getting nastier and stronger.

SISYPHUS: I thought so, you are the one who lost his only son. Losing your son was a punishment, yes. Therefore, what will of God did you disobey?

PILGRIM: That's just it, none that I know of. God works in mysterious ways. He took my boy away, and I want to know why.

SISYPHUS: Suppose he finds you, and he gives you the wrong answer. What then?

PILGRIM: He never gives the wrong answer. Never! The word of God is always absolute and right.

SISYPHUS: But he can do the wrong thing. After all, he is the one who stole your son.

PILGRIM: I never said He did the wrong thing, I said I want to know why He took my son, that's all.

SISYPHUS: If you know that your God did a good thing by stealing your son, then you should be rejoicing.

PILGRIM: Not until I know the reason. I have to know the reason. I have to know. I have to.

SISYPHUS: God did not take your boy. You said he is a child of God. He cannot take something he already has. Besides, why would he take your boy only to give him away? If he did not want your son, why not leave him be? Unless there is someone who wants him more than you do, and God gave your son to this person.

PILGRIM: [Looking up.] Oh God, why isn't he listening to me? God didn't give my son away, He took him away!

SISYPHUS: Someone else must have taken him.

PILGRIM: The Devil didn't get him. He was a good boy, I tell you.

SISYPHUS: Who is the Devil?

PILGRIM: He's—

SISYPHUS: No, let me surmise. If God creates everyone, then the Devil is one of God's creations, like your neighbor's boy. It seems that the road to your God is paved by the Devil.

PILGRIM: Strange you know who the Devil is without being told, but you still don't know who God is.

SISYPHUS: Not so very strange, Pilgrim. Things have not changed as much as you think. But I know now that you are not looking for God, you are looking for your son.

PILGRIM: I know where my son is. I just don't know why he's there.

SISYPHUS: So you are here because he is there, while God is here and there. I think you should keep rolling the rock. It will take your mind off your problems.

PILGRIM: It hasn't so far.

SISYPHUS: It most assuredly has. You have your mind on God, and he is not your problem. He is mine, however. Zeus has to get back his thunderbolt before your God incinerates me with it. We are almost there. Can you feel it yet? An inexplicable force flowing through you?

PILGRIM: The presence? Ah...no. No matter what you say, you must get some pleasure when the rock starts rolling down, because gravity does the work for you. That was an oversight by Zeus. As a matter of fact, Zeus overlooked a lot of things. That's why God is everything now.

[They reach the summit and as the rocks begin rolling down, PILGRIM and SISYPHUS have to jump back quickly to keep from rolling down with them. They start down after the rocks.]

SISYPHUS: Now you know.

PILGRIM: Yeah, there's no time for satisfaction. You have to get out of the way or the rock will pull you down with it.

SISYPHUS: Not that. Did you not feel anything?

PILGRIM: I'm not sure I get your meaning.

SISYPHUS: The heavens and earth meet here. And in this oneness, we are part of something that goes beyond thought.

PILGRIM: But not beyond God. There is nothing beyond God.

SISYPHUS: Then you did not feel anything?

PILGRIM: You can't get beyond God. He is in everything that is and isn't.

SISYPHUS: If what you say is true, then if I say he is not, then he is. So I will simply say you are looking in the wrong place for your son. You should look in all the places he is not. You will not find him there, but you will find God there.

PILGRIM: I don't believe it! We're down already!

SISYPHUS: Ready to go back up. **[He takes hold of his rock.]**

PILGRIM: I don't think so. I have to be moving along.

SISYPHUS: Your son is not up there, but something most assuredly is.

PILGRIM: Some other time maybe. Right now, I've got to keep looking. May God be with you, Sisyphus.

SISYPHUS: According to you, he is whether I will it or not. No offense, Pilgrim, but my people have an old saying that before a raindrop disappears into the ocean, it can be kissed by the sun-god. But when you capture a raindrop with your hand, you destroy it.

PILGRIM: My son is not a raindrop.

SISYPHUS: We all are in the hands of the gods.

[PILGRIM waves and exits. SISYPHUS keeps rolling his rock. End and fadeout.]

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