

YGGDRASIL

By Jeff Dunne

© 2019 by Jeffrey A. Dunne

CHARACTERS

TREE	The Tree of Life, Mother of Odin
ODIN	The son of the Tree of Life, and once (and eventually) He who plants the Tree of Life

SETTING

A place outside the bounds of time and space.

(Lights come up to see the Tree of Life alone on stage. After a moment, Odin enters and approaches it. Depending on the intent of the director, Odin could appear any age between 10 and 80. We hear the voice of the Tree.)

TREE

Hello, my child.

ODIN

Hello, Mother. I trust the Now finds you at peace?

TREE

So it does.

ODIN

I've been thinking about what you said... what you... suggested.

TREE

I've said many things, suggested many things.

ODIN

When I told you that I was bored.

TREE

Then have you finally learned not to tell your mother that you are bored?

ODIN

It is sinking in, yes.

TREE

And you are worried.

ODIN

I am.

TREE

You do not wish to do as I suggested.

ODIN

I do, and I do not.

TREE

That is problematic indeed.

ODIN
You mock?

TREE
I sympathize.

ODIN
At first, I thought you were making a joke.

TREE
I know.

ODIN
But that was no idle remark.

TREE
No.

ODIN
As I rested, the thought did not dissipate. In fact...

TREE
It grew stronger.

ODIN
It did. You laid an Obligation upon me, Mother.

TREE
One can see it that way.

ODIN
But I think you have made a dreadful mistake. (*Pausing, looking at the Tree expectantly.*) Suddenly the Tree of Life chooses silence?

TREE
Silence can be a response.

ODIN
Do you know what you asked of me?

TREE
I do.

ODIN

No, Mother. I do not think you do. I do not think you understand the magnitude, the consequences...

TREE

My child, I see things from all sides.

ODIN

That does not mean you see clearly.

TREE

I see from the beginning looking ahead, from the future looking back.

ODIN

Mother—

TREE

From the inside looking out...

ODIN

The things they would do, Mother.

TREE

The outside looking in.

ODIN

It is not as simple as your simple words make it out to be.

TREE

Or perhaps it is exactly that simple.

ODIN

The costs are so great.

TREE

There is cost regardless.

ODIN

No! That is not true! I merely said I was bored.

TREE

And I merely said—

ODIN

I remember what you said, what now weighs so heavily upon my heart. 'Then make a world'. Such a simple reply. But I cannot do that to you, Mother. I will not!

TREE

Then you will pay the cost.

ODIN

Better I—

TREE

And I will pay a greater one.

ODIN

I don't understand.

TREE

You cannot understand right now.

ODIN

Why not?

TREE

Do as I bid, and then you will know.

ODIN

Make a world. Make a world. This is your answer to everything now?

TREE

It is not an answer.

ODIN

On that we agree.

TREE

It is the only answer.

ODIN

You have no idea, Mother. You have not thought this through.

TREE

I see things from all si—

ODIN

No! Not in this! On this matter you have not explored it as I. I've... I've envisioned. I've planned, and re-planned, again and again.

TREE

And you do not like what you see.

ODIN

You have no idea what they'll... what they'll do to you.

TREE

I do know.

ODIN

No. You can't, or never would you have suggested such folly.

TREE

I see things from all—

ODIN

Then how can you suggest such a course?! They'll twist you, Mother. Twist, and scorch, and desecrate, and...

TREE

I know.

ODIN

Then you know I could never do such a thing.

TREE

My child, that would be worse.

ODIN

How can you say this?!

TREE

Because I love you. And I foresee what would become of you should you deny this need.

ODIN

I would stay here with you.

TREE

You are not a tree, Odin.

ODIN

What matter is that? I am your son.

TREE

Yes, and once my Father as well. That is the nature of things.

ODIN

Because you are Constance.

TREE

Yes. Because I am Constance, and because you are Change. Should you deny your nature, my agony would be unending.

ODIN

In what way?

TREE

You are infinite, my child, in all things but patience.

ODIN

What are you saying?

TREE

What now is an idle itch of boredom will grow unbounded until it twists and consumes you.

ODIN

But that is what my children would do to you! They would have no respect, no appreciation for you. They will take Life as an entitlement, and use it for horrors the likes of which—

TREE

That is why you will teach them.

ODIN

And they will listen to me?

TREE

Likely not.

ODIN

Then... then what? Watch you suffer? Suffer at the hands of my creations? I cannot do that! I am your son!

TREE

Yes, and once and again my Father.

ODIN

And if I do not? If I refuse to create this world?

TREE

Then insanity will claim you, and I shall be alone for eternity.

ODIN

Once and again the Father.

TREE

Yes. From my ashes you will plant me anew.

ODIN

An endless cycle.

TREE

Perhaps.

ODIN

Perhaps?

TREE

There is always a chance to create a world with exquisite balance, where Life is enjoyed in the moment, and released in respect with the seasons' passing.

ODIN

Like a breath.

TREE

Yes, my child. Like a breath. Constance and Change in harmony.

ODIN

Very well, Mother. I shall create a new world.

TREE

Better than the one before.

ODIN

The one before?

TREE

Once and again the Father, my son. This is not the first time, and likely not the last.

I see. ODIN

But each time is a little better. TREE

Perhaps this time I will get it right. ODIN

Perhaps. TREE

(Odin exits. Lights out.)