



Arts Engagement
and Education

BOOTH

“Oh, come on, man, we could make money you and me.”

From *Topdog/Underdog*

By Suzan-Lori Parks <http://suzanloriparks.com>

Gender: Male/Masculine Presenting

Style: Contemporary Dramatic

Age Range: 30's

Link to Buy Script: www.amazon.com

Play Synopsis

Topdog/Underdog is a dark comedy revolving around two African-American brothers: Lincoln and Booth. Their father chose their names as a twisted joke shortly before deserting them. The choice of naming the children after an assassin and his target foreshadows how tumultuous the relationship between Lincoln and Booth would become. Both orphans, they have relied on each other for survival and company. Now in their thirties, Both men struggle with their ladies (relationships) and to make a new life, one that will leave them away from poverty. Lincoln spends his days getting “shot” playing President Lincoln in an odd tourist attraction, while Booth tries to master the con game three-card monte. Throughout their many trials and tribulations, the brothers turn to conning people on the streets, and even each other, in their attempts to survive.

Before this Moment

Booth is practicing three card Monte. Booth’s insistence that he teams up with his brother (who knows the game well) provides insight into the nature of their relationship: it’s clear their brotherly dynamic includes a power imbalance, since Booth is constantly begging his brother to play cards with him, as if he’s a young boy trying to get the attention of a brother he deeply admires. The more Lincoln refuses, it seems, the more Booth wants them to join forces.

Monologue (Scene I)

Oh, come on, man, we could make money you and me. Throwing down the cards. 3-Card and Link: look out! We could clean up you and me. You would throw the cards and I’d be your Stickman. The one in the crowd who looks like just an innocent passerby, who looks like just another player, like just another customer, but who gets intimate connections with you, the Dealer, the one throwing the cards, the main man. I’d be the one who brings in the crowd, I’d be the one who makes them want to put they money down, you do your moves and I do mines. You turn your head and I turn the card-We could be a team, man. Rake in the money! Sure there’d be some cats out there with fast eyes, some brothers and sisters who would watch real close and pick the right card, and so there’d be some days when we would lose money, but most of the days we would come out on top! Pockets bulging, plenty of cash! And the ladies would be thrilling!

Helpful Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGLkkuH_QHw