

THE LESSER OF TWO WEEVILS

A short comedy for young audiences by
Nicole B. Adkins

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

WORMLY, an earthworm.

SQUIRMAL, another earthworm.

CHEEKACHEE, a chickadee searching for breakfast and a nest.

PHEE-BEE, another chickadee searching for breakfast and a nest.

NUTSY, a grumpy old squirrel.

LARVALEE, an acorn weevil larva.

LARVALOO, another acorn weevil larva.

The earthworms and larvae could be double-cast.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The oak tree setting could be as simple or elaborate as the producing company wishes. Levels of some kind would be nice, so that the squirrel and birds could look down on the worms and leaves. Additional non-speaking roles as needed could include various forest creatures and/or an ensemble of students creating/depicting the natural elements such as the tree and the acorn. Two squirrels (a younger Nutsy and his rival) could be added to help act out Nutsy's story.

(Lights up on an oak tree with a nice, inviting branch just right for a bird's nest. Grass and leaves below. WORMLY and SQUIRMAL, two earthworms, are in the leaves having breakfast.)

WORMLY: Nothing like a wilted, rotting oak leaf in the morning!

SQUIRMAL: I prefer a nice beech leaf, pre-chewed by a caterpillar. But this will do.

(CHEEKACHEE, a chickadee, flies in.)

CHEEKACHEE: Chicka-chicka-dee! Breakfast for me! A beetle, a berry, or better yet a worm – love the yummy, juicy way they squirm!

WORMLY: Quick, Squirmal, into our holes!

SQUIRMAL: Off we slither, Wormly!

(Wormly and Squirmal quickly disappear. Cheekachee flies after them, just missing their wormy ends.)

CHEEKACHEE: Cheeeeep shot! Away they got!

(Cheekachee looks around for something else to eat and notices the tree.)

Ooh! Look at that tree. Just right for a nest for me! Now to gather some sticks and bits for a cozy fit!

(Cheekachee flies away. PHEE-BEE, another chickadee, enters, also looking for breakfast. Phee-Bee also notices the tree.)

PHEE-BEE: Cheer-up! What a find! Just the place I've had in mind! Now to gather some sticks and bits for a cozy fit!

(Phee-Bee exits. Cheekachee enters with some sticks and bits. They begin placing these on the branch. Phee-Bee enters with their own sticks and bits, sees Cheekachee.)

Chicka-dee-chicka-chicka-CHEEK! This is my home, dullbeak! Who do you think you are! Scram! Fly far!

CHEEKACHEE: Well! That's a twig in the eye all right! You looking for a fight? This is my home, fair and square, found it myself and I won't share!

PHEE-BEE: A fight you want, a fight you've got! This is my home – you can't say it's not!

(The birds circle each other doing the chickadee gargle call [Google this; it's fun.] NUTSY, a grumpy old squirrel, enters.)

NUTSY: Hey! Hey! Whaddaya think you're doing, disturbing my day! I was just enjoying a nice bouquet of tree flowers when you two jibber-jabs started your cheeping and chattering! This is a quiet, peaceful neighbor-wood. We'll be having no chickadee battles in my tree!

(Nutsy's firm tone quiets the two birds.)

CHEEKACHEE: I apologize for this...squealer, this nest-stealer!

PHEE-BEE: Cheep! Chicka-chew-why I oughtta wing-flap you!

NUTSY: Enough! I'm gonna' tell you two young flappersnappers a story about – an old friend of mine. Once, long ago, there was... *(Dramatically:)* A HUGE acorn.

(The two birds groan.)

CHEEKACHEE: But I have to make my nest –

PHEE-BEE: You fly off – that will be best –

NUTSY: Chh-chh-chh. You will both stop your flapping and hear me out. Hmmm, now... Ah yes. Remember it like it was yesterday. Once, long ago, there was... *(Dramatically:)* A HUGE acorn.

CHEEKACHEE: *(Mutters:)* You already said that bit...

PHEE-BEE: Hush, nit-wit.

NUTSY: And inside this acorn lived two weevil larvae.

(LARVALEE and LARVALOO enter, crouching under an acorn shell.)

LARVALEE: My mom, a beee-autiful brown beetle, an acorn weevil, to be precise, laid me in this acorn when I was a tiny egg, to keep me nice and safe until I could eat my way out of the acorn in the spring.

LARVALOO: *My* mother, a glorious brown beetle of the same genus and species, laid *me* in this acorn *first*, for the same reason!

LARVALEE: Actually, *I* was here first, and, like, there's only enough acorn meat for one of us, so, get!

LARVALOO: You crawl out and find your own acorn!

LARVALEE: You crawl out!

LARVALOO: No, you!

(They begin wrestling.)

LARVALEE: May the Greatest Weevil Larva *win!*

LARVALOO: Me, obviously!

(They wrestle and wrestle and the acorn rolls about. Maybe two more SQUIRRELS enter to act out the rest of Nutsy's story.)

NUTSY: Well. They got the acorn rocking and knocking with their larva-wrestling, which captured the attention of — a couple other squirrels I once knew. And the nut looked so delectable that both squirrels decided to go for it. At the *same time!* They were so focused on the acorn that they didn't even look where they were going. They ran right into each other — bam! Got knocked clean out. The nut fell outta the tree, and that was that.

(Larvalee and Larvaloo roll offstage.)

LARVAE: Oh noooo...

NUTSY: When the two squirrels woke up, the acorn was nowhere to be seen, so they went their separate ways.

(Nutsy wipes their eyes with a paw. Or a leaf. Or, you know, a tiny squirrel handkerchief.)

Always did wonder what happened to that nut. I mean...my friend wondered. But I'll tell you this, yung'uns—I never did bother to argue much after that. I mean my friend didn't.

(Both Chickadees stare at Nutsy, ready for more.)

CHEEKACHEE: So...who won?

PHEE-BEE: Larva Two or Larva One?

NUTSY: Nobody won, featherheads! That's the point!

(Nutsy storms off, fuming.)

CHEEKACHEE: That was a good story!

PHEE-BEE: A tale of weevil glory!

CHEEKACHEE: Who'd have thought that we'd agree.

PHEE-BEE: I thought you were my enemy.

CHEEKACHEE: Cheeka-chee! It's come to me!

PHEE-BEE: What if we were to—

CHEEKACHEE: Share this tree?

PHEE-BEE: A nest for you and a nest for me.

CHEEKACHEE: Could it be? A tree with two chickadees?

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