

THE NORWEGIANS

BY C. DENBY SWANSON



DRAMATISTS
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THE NORWEGIANS received its world premiere production in March 2013 at The Drilling Company, New York, NY, Hamilton Clancy, Producing Artistic Director.

THE NORWEGIANS was first seen as a 10-minute play as part of the Play in a Day 24-Hour Play Festival at Learning Stages,
Renee Jacobs Post, Executive Director; Joe Salvatore, Artistic Director.

THE NORWEGIANS received its world premiere at The Drilling Company in New York City, opening on March 8, 2013. It was directed by Elowyn Castle; the set design was by Jennifer Verbalow; the costume design was by Mimi Maxmen; the lighting design was by Tyler Learned; and the choreography was by Megan Snipe. The cast was as follows:

OLIVE Veronica Cruz
GUS Dan Teachout
BETTY Karla Hendrick
TOR Hamilton Clancy

CHARACTERS

GUS and TOR, the Norwegians.

OLIVE and BETTY, good friends. Sort of.

THE NORWEGIANS

ACT ONE

Scene 1

A room. A table. It is today.

There is a red checkered table cloth. Single dingy light bulb dangles overhead. Tor pulls the string and turns it on, revealing:

Olive. Nervous. Sitting in the chair. Tor and Gus stand behind her. This does not make her less nervous.

TOR. So.

OLIVE. I was —

I was —

I was referred by uh a friend.

GUS. A friend.

OLIVE. Yes.

GUS. A *friend*.

OLIVE. Is that wrong?

Is that the wrong thing to —

GUS. What's this friend's name?

OLIVE. Uh name?

GUS. Tell me the name of your friend.

OLIVE. I don't really —

Why do you need —

GUS. Marketing purposes.

OLIVE. Marketing? Marketing

Purposes?

GUS. Yes.

OLIVE. Is that a um a euphemism?

Or

TOR. Uff da.

OLIVE. No?

GUS. We don't use euphemisms, Olive.

TOR. We're Norwegians.

GUS. Minnesotan Norwegians. *(Pause. Possibly threatening.)*

GUS. And a little bit of other stuff.

TOR. Stay focused, Gus.

GUS. It's actually for marketing.

OLIVE. Oh. *(It may seem to Olive that Gus advances on her. She backs away. Gus extends his hand. Olive cringes. Gus stops.)*

GUS. Tor.

TOR. What.

GUS. I need a — bulb.

TOR. A bulb?

GUS. A light bulb. This one is too dim. I can't even see her face, Tor.

TOR. Uff da.

GUS. How can I do my job if I can't even see her face?

TOR. Wait just a second. *(Gus pulls the string and turns off the light. He unscrews the light bulb. Tor comes back on with another light bulb.)*

Low-watt bulbs are great for mood, aren't they, Gus.

GUS. And the environment.

TOR. But mood isn't everything, is it now?

GUS. The environment isn't everything.

TOR. What is everything, Gus?

GUS. Trust.

TOR. Trust. Trust is everything.

GUS. Light.

TOR. Light helps trust grow.

GUS. That's profound, Tor.

TOR. Oh, sure. *(Gus turns on the light again. It is much brighter now. Disconcertingly brighter. At least to Olive.)*

OLIVE. You are gangsters.

Right?

You're —

TOR. Norwegian.

GUS. Gangsters.

THE NORWEGIANS

by C. Denby Swanson

2M, 2W

A strong, bitter comedy about women scorned in Minnesota and the really, really nice gangsters — Norwegian hit men — they hire to whack their ex-boyfriends. Olive is a transplant from Texas and Betty is a transplant from Kentucky, but neither of them was prepared for the Norwegian men they would fall in love with there: the practical, warm, thoughtful, destructive, evil, jilting kind. If you're a hit man in Minnesota, 83% of your clients want to take out their ex (oofda!). Betty has referred Olive to Gus and Tor, a partnership in the whacking business. What Tor doesn't know is that Gus has been sleeping with the clients. What Olive doesn't know is that Gus is Betty's own ex, and she has already put out a hit on him with a Swiss firm. Can Betty call off the job in time to let Gus do his? Should she?

“C. Denby Swanson’s extremely odd and delightful comedy, is something of a guilty pleasure.”
—**The New York Times**

“An oddly entertaining dark comedy by C. Denby Swanson that attempts to combine the patter of a mob comedy with dour but nice Scandinavians ... In a culture that so strongly defines as ‘American,’ there is surprising humorous mileage in the regional nuance being used in much the same way as astrology.”
—**NYTheatre.com**

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