

the beginning of

**OY** (from the comic revue **OY!**)

a short comedy by Rich Orloff

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*Place:* A health club sauna.

*Time:* Late morning.

*Characters:* MURRAY, an old Jew  
LEO, an old Jew  
SOL, an old Jew

As the scene begins, MURRAY enters the health club sauna.

MURRAY  
(sighs)

Oy.

Murray crosses to a place to sit. With each step, we hear:

MURRAY (cont'd)  
Oy... oy... oy... oy... (etc.)

Murray sits.

MURRAY (cont'd)  
Oyyyyyyyyyy.  
(beat. An internal shrug:)  
Oy.

LEO enters. His body aches.

LEO  
(different than Murray:)  
Oy!

Leo rotates a shoulder.

LEO (cont'd)  
Oy!

Then the other.

LEO (cont'd)

Oy!

Leo crosses to a place to sit. Having just had a big workout (for him, at least), he feels his muscles with each step.

LEO (cont'd)

Oy... oy... oy... oy, oy, oy...  
oy... oy, oy, oy... oy...

Leo sits with some difficulty.

LEO (cont'd)

Oyyyyy...

(the seat is very hot;  
Leo bounces back up)

Oy!

(He tries again.)

Oyyyyy...

(still too hot; another bounce)

Oy!

(one last try)

Oyyyyy...

(This one feels good to his tush.)

Oy.

SOL enters, shuffling to his place in the sauna. He carries a newspaper under his arm. Like an elderly Jewish Indian in a waltz, Sol chants with each step as he shuffles.

SOL

Oy, oy, oy, oy...

Oy, oy, oy, oy...

Oy, oy, oy, oy... (etc.)

As he slowly sits, with great concentration, there is silence. Until he touches the very hot seat.

SOL (cont'd)

("Boy, is that hot!")

Oy!

Sol jumps up. He slowly lowers himself again, touching down one buttock first, then rolling down the rest of his tush. As each body part touches again, Sol makes a peeping sound.

SOL (cont'd)

Oy... oy... oy... Oyyyy.

The men all sigh:

MURRAY, LEO and SOL  
(simultaneously)

Oyyyy.

Sol opens his newspaper, which includes articles about economic conditions, trouble in the Mideast, celebrity gossip, anti-Semitism, an obituary, recent positive medical developments, etc. As he skims the paper, Sol's responses run the gamut from disgust and contempt to hope and amusement. Sol responds with a distinct and different "oy" every time he sees a new headline or reads a story.

SOL

Oy!... Oy!... Oy!... Oy!...  
Oy!... Oy!... Oy!... (etc.)

After a bit, Murray has heard enough of this, and he starts telling Leo how his day has gone. Soon he is involved in a long monologue about his life and the emotions he feels in response to it – happy, sad, confused, disappointed, acquiescent, bitter, hopeful, tired, tolerant, amused, etc.

MURRAY

Oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy... (etc.)

Leo quickly ignores Murray (who continues anyway). Leo stands and does some stretching exercises. With each stretch comes an "oy". Since Leo has been doing his stretches in a set rhythm for years, the oy's should be rhythmical as well.

LEO

Oy... oy... oy, oy, oy...  
Oy... oy... oy, oy, oy... (etc.)

The three activities continue for awhile, a fugue of OY's.

Leo's stretching gets more and more intense, until suddenly, he grabs his heart.

LEO (cont'd)  
(a sharp pain)

Oy!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Murray and Leo respond.

MURRAY and SOL

Oy!

They rush over to Leo and help him sit down.  
Leo realizes he just pulled a muscle. His heart is fine.

LEO

("It was nothing, no big deal.")

Oy.

MURRAY

("Are you sure?")

Oy?

LEO

("I'm sure.")

Oy.

SOL

("You should be more careful!")

Oy!

LEO

("I'm fine.")

Oy.

SOL

("I mean it!")

Oy!

LEO

("Relax.")

Oy.

Murray and Sol return to their places.

SOL

(to Murray: "Leo is an old  
fool, and soon he will die.")

Oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy, oy.

Murray, Leo and Sol look at each other.

MURRAY, LEO and SOL

(simultaneously:  
"Life is difficult.")

Oyyy.