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Cast of Characters

DR. ESSENCE

CONTROL

A DAM

BETH

PROTA

BASK

LUF

SUF

TIK

WAN

PACH

YOD

PANDO

ZATE

SHOKE

SCIENTISTS

PIE SPECIALISTS

NOTES

Casting

Though the script sometimes suggests, through naming and descriptions, that a particular gender is required for a particular character, you are free to cast anyone of any gender as any character *without* worrying about confirming with the author.

The Pie

Our pie was 2 meters (8 feet) in diameter, and was simply constructed with cardboard and foil. So that the top would look “eaten” as the play progressed, we rather ingeniously created two layers. The first was decorated like a piecrust and had a wedge cut into it so the audience could see the second layer. The second layer was painted so that when the first layer was rotated, it revealed missing pie. The back of the pie pan was open and we placed all the edible pie, already cut and on plates, on it so that the actors could grab them without much fuss.

Costumes

We wanted the “personoids” to look innocent at first but more threatening as the play progressed. Their costumes were pajama shirts and shorts with sandals. They wore bibs which could be covered with pie guck as the play progressed. (Thanks to Joseph (Heesung) Li for the bib idea!)

The Pie Sign

Actors make praying hands and then separate them into a V to represent the size of the pie. Later in the play, when the sign has symbolic overtones, it is done at the chest or forehead level.

The Pipe

We dressed up a children’s play tube and shone a light down it. Characters crawled through the tube rather than sliding down.

I am indebted to Julie Durrett Walker for the idea to cram people up the pipe.

Production History

Pie Piece was first performed in the one-act festival *Wabi-Sabi* at St. Mary's International School in Setagaya, Tokyo, Japan on October 17-18, 2020. Though character names have changed, the same roles were played by the following cast:

Directors	Douglas Craven/Dhruv Hingarh
Stage Manager	Dhruv Hingarh
Dr. Essence	Margot Barland
Control	Dhruv Hingarh
A Dam.....	Tatsuya Aoki
Beth	Jiaye Xu
Prota	Thomas Hill
Bask	Joseph Chi
Luf/Scientist.....	Jamie Matsuzuki
Suf	Emi Nishimi
Tik/Scientist.....	Anchit Bothra
Wan/Scientist	Ren Iwamoto
Pach/Scientist	Bien Bagui
Yod.....	Luke Pender
Pando/Scientist	Lyon Schaefer
Shoke/Scientist	Satoki Minami
Zate/Scientist.....	João Oliveira
Pie	Himself

Pie Piece

by Douglas Craven

(A secret laboratory.)

(Some lab sounds in the darkness. Then—fiat lux!—a spot on DR ESSENCE. She addresses the audience as if they are her lab assistants.)

ESSENCE. This is your last chance to ask questions. Last chance! All right, then, go to your stations!

(Noise suddenly. Lights. Scientific activity! She addresses groups of audience members.)

(Vandersnuff is that unlucky person in the front row.)

ESSENCE. ABLE team, start the DNA infuser and connect it to the main. Go! BAKER team . . . stand by. I repeat: BAKER team, stand by! CHARLIE team, monitor the pH levels. Prepare for protein formation on my mark.

Vandersnuff, why are you just sitting there? Keep an eye on the alpha waves and let me know the moment we have consciousness. Control?

CONTROL. Acknowledged.

ESSENCE. Control . . . keep everything . . . in control!

CONTROL. It's what I do.

ESSENCE. All ready? Engage!

CONTROL AND SCIENTISTS. *(Variously:)* This is control. Activate DNA Infuser. The board shows green. Power optimal and proteins forming. Neurofunctions positive; alpha waves show budding consciousness.

(The light on the switch comes on.)

ESSENCE. BAKER team, bring in . . . the pie.

(A group of SCIENTISTS brings in a quite large pie on a table.)

PIE SPECIALIST. Pie deployed!

ESSENCE. Filling?

PIE SPECIALIST. Apple.

PIE SPECIALIST 2. It's cherry.

PIE SPECIALIST. It is apple.

PIE SPECIALIST 2. No. Apple pie is banned. Forbidden. We switched to cherry.

PIE SPECIALIST. *(To ESSENCE:)* It's apple.

PIE SPECIALIST 2. *(To ESSENCE:)* Or cherry.

PIE SPECIALIST. Possibly both.

PIE SPECIALIST 2. But maybe neither.

ESSENCE. *Enough!* Clear the area. Secure all stations. Life minus 5, 4, 3, 2, and . . .

(She pulls a lever. A man, DAM, slides on to stage via tube or, well, a slide. ESSENCE checks him. Four other SCIENTISTS help her.)

CONTROL. All stations! We have genesis. Repeat: we have genesis.

(A hoopla around the stage, suddenly and absolutely silenced when ESSENCE puts up her hands.)

ESSENCE. Does he have all his bits?

(Each moves him around to check a bit. On the last one, he is spun away from the audience and it should be clear what bit is being checked. Arms. Legs. Um . . . the other bit.)

SCIENTISTS. Check!

ESSENCE. Check motor function.

SCIENTIST 1. *(Stroking DAM's foot for Babinski response:)* Babinski Sign Test: Check.

SCIENTIST 2. Hearing: *(Snaps in ears. Sings a note.)* Positive.

SCIENTIST 3. *(With a team, swabbing mouth with three swabs:)* Taste Test: Sweet. Sour. Umami. All good.

SCIENTIST 4. Neural Activity Test: Patient is super sensitive.

ESSENCE. Very good. Very very good. *(She moves to the personoid, speaking with exaggerated slowness:)* Welcome to life. What do you want to be called? Come on. I have things hatching in Lab 2 and they have acid for blood, so I can't spend all day here. What are you?"

DAM. Dam!

ESSENCE. I'm sorry?

DAM. Dam! *(Delighted with his voice:)* Dam, Dam, Dam, Dam!

ESSENCE. So, you're a "dam."

DAM. A dam. Adam. Yes. Adam. I am Adam. Adam. I love Adam.

ESSENCE. All right, Adam, listen carefully. This is the ground. This is the sky. This is your world.

DAM. I love the world. I love life.

ESSENCE. And this is your pie.

DAM. I love pie.

(She feeds him a bite.)

DAM. I *really* love pie.

ESSENCE. Excellent.

(Her phone rings. Tinny screams.)

ESSENCE. Dr. Essence here. Slow down! What do you mean they're hatching already? Just keep it contained.

(More screams. "There's acid in my face!")

ESSENCE. We'll be right there.

(Hanging up.)

ESSENCE. I told you all that acid blood was a terrible idea! Adam, I will be right back. This pie is all yours. Eat all the pie you want. But don't touch anything else until I get back.

DAM. I love not touching anything else until you get back!

(The SCIENTISTS all rush off.)

(DAM has some time onstage alone, exploring his new environment like a child. He looks at the pie. He takes a piece. He walks over to the lever, pie in hand. He looks at it. Again, as a three-year-old might, he reaches out and pulls it. He jumps at the noise. He leaves the lever down. A light stays on to let us know.)

(A woman, BETH, slides down the slide.)

(DAM picks her up and runs through an abbreviated version of the check the scientists gave him, innocently checking her bits.)

DAM. You have all your bits.

BETH. I'm glad.

DAM. Hello.

BETH. Hello.

DAM. Welcome to life. I am the sky. No, no. This is the sky. This is the ground. And I'm Adam.

BETH. I'm Beth.

DAM. A beth?

BETH. No, just Beth.

DAM. Beth, I love you.

BETH. And I love you.

DAM. Welcome to the world. There is pie.

BETH. Um. I love this pie. It makes me happy.

DAM. You make me happy.

(The light on the lever begins to blink. The sound starts up again.)

BETH. What is that?

DAM. That is called a thing.

(They hold each other, perhaps.)

(PROTA slides down the chute.)

BETH. Look.

(They stand PROTA up.)

PROTA. Hello.

DAM AND BETH. Hello. *(When he seems frightened by their enthusiasm:)* It's all right.

PROTA. Where is here?

BETH. The world. This is the sky . . .

DAM. . . . and I am the ground.

(BETH elbows him.)

DAM. I am Adam. This is the ground.

PROTA. I don't like the world.

BETH. What's wrong?

PROTA. It's too big. It's too high.

BETH. We'll take care of you. We love you.

DAM. Yes, we love you. Here is some pie.

BETH. He wants to be held.

DAM. No, he wants pie. See?

(He gives PROTA pie.)

PROTA. More.

DAM. But you have your piece.

BETH. There is so much pie. Can he have some more?

DAM. *(Hesitantly:)* All right. What are you called?

PROTA. Prota. I love pie. I love you. And I love you.

(As they feed PROTA, the sound comes again.)

(BASK arrives. When DAM runs over to him, BASK waves him off and stands by himself.)

DAM. Hello.

BASK. *(Looking directly at BETH:)* Hello.

BETH. Hello. *(To PROTA:)* Say hello.

PROTA. Hello.

BETH. I am Beth. This is Adam. This is our Prota.

BASK. I am Bask.

DAM. "A" Bask?

BASK. *THE* Bask.

DAM. This is the world.

BETH. And this is the sky.

BASK. *(Getting close to BETH:)* It's beautiful. Everything is beautiful. I love it.

BETH. *(An excuse to slip away:)* And that is the pie.

BASK. All mine?

DAM. I think it's . . .

BASK. My pie?

BETH. We share the pie.

BASK. How much can I eat?

BETH. As much as you want. It's a big pie.

BASK. Beautiful. Pie is beautiful. I love it.

DAM. And we love you.

BASK. *(Getting close again:)* That makes me happy. Very very happy.

BETH. *(Escaping:)* Can I speak with you?

(He nods. She waits for him. He is oblivious.)

BETH. I want to talk to you *over here*.

(DAM leaves PROTA by the pie. BASK moves forward with a piece, and unbeknownst to DAM and BETH, offers some pie to PROTA.)

BETH. I don't like Bask.

DAM. But we love him.

BETH. We love him, yes. But he is too close. Too loud.

DAM. He is one of us. Can you give him just part of your love?

BETH. A part?

DAM. Like a piece? (*Indicating size with his hands:*) Like this big?

BETH. I don't know if I can. (*Pause.*) I want to be held.

DAM. I can do that.

(*He holds her.*)

(*The sound again; LUF and SUF come down the chute. PROTA is overwhelmed and begins to cry. BETH notices him, and notices Bask's attentions.*)

BETH. (*To DAM:*) Take care of him.

(*DAM does. BETH moves over to welcome the two new arrivals. BASK cuts two pieces of pie and crosses toward them.*)

BETH. (*Helping SUF up:*) Hello.

LUF. Hello.

(*He turns and helps SUF up. Instant chemistry, of an intensely romantic nature.*)

SUF. Hello.

LUF. Hel-lo.

BETH. Welcome to the world. This is the sky. This is the ground.

SUF AND LUF. (*Eyes only for each other:*) The world.

SUF. I am Suf.

LUF. I am Luf.

SUF. I love you.

LUF. I love you.

BASK. (*Swooping in:*) Welcome! Come and have some of my pie.

SUF AND LUF. There's pie?

LUF. We both love pie. What is pie?

BASK. This is pie. I am giving you each a whole piece.

SUF. Um.

LUF. Thank you. Thank you for the pie.

BETH. Excuse me. That is not your pie.

BASK. I don't understand.

BETH. You said it was your pie. It is not your pie. It is not my pie. It is for all of us.

BASK. I never said my pie. You hurt me, but I still love you.

BETH. (*Crossing to DAM and PROTA:*) Who owns the pie?

DAM. I don't know.

BETH. You were here first. How could you not know?

DAM. There was someone here, like us but not like us. She gave us the pie.

BETH. Did she say whose pie it is?

DAM. She said, "Eat all the pie you want."

BETH. *We share the pie.*

(The sound again, this time different. People begin to pour down the chute. TIK, WAN, PACH, and YOD.

Each one is helped up, and there is a chorus of "Hellos" as each person onstage tries to say "Hello" to the new person. Perhaps some business where the new people help the newest people get up and check themselves over to make sure they have all their bits. In the center, surreptitiously guiding the proceedings, is BASK.)

ALL. Who are we?

BETH. You are you.

DAM. And this is the world. This is . . .

BASK. The sky. The world. Welcome to it, everyone. It's beautiful to see you. I love you. And I love you. And I love you. Each and every one of you. This one.

TIK. Tik.

BASK. And these two.

WAN. Wan.

PACH. Pach.

WAN. We have all of our bits.

BASK. I can see that. Welcome. And this one, I think I might love you most of all.

YOD. Yod.

BASK. Yod. Come with me, Yod, and all of you. I have pie.

(All, including LUF and SUF, go over and crowd around the pie.)

PACH. Tell us: what is pie?

YOD. Yes. Give us your pie wisdom.

BASK. This . . . is pie.

(All but ADAM, BETH, and PROTA respond with awe, perhaps literally with "Aaaaa!")

BASK. I will share it with you.

YOD. You are so kind.

ALL. *(Except DAM and BETH:)* So kind!

PROTA. *(Echoing them:)* So kind.

TIK. This place is too crowded.

BASK. This . . . is the pie. We are allowed to take one piece each, and the piece should only be this wide.

(BASK echoes Dam's earlier gesture and holds his hands in a V shape to show how much . . . about three inches.)

DAM. I am worried. *(Indicates the size with his hands.)*

BETH. Why?

DAM. That we have been greedy. We took more than *(Indicates the size.)*

BETH. No one said we could only take a piece this big.

DAM. We ate too much!

BETH. That is not right. *(Of PROTA:)* He is crying.

DAM. Maybe he ate too much pie.

(Meanwhile, YOD seems unhappy.)

BASK. What's wrong, friend?

YOD. I don't like this piece. It has too much crust. And almost no apple.

LUF. It's cherry.

SUF. Passion fruit?

BASK. Here. Take my piece. I'll take this one. Because you know . . . I love you.

YOD. (*With real devotion:*) I love you.

BETH. (*Walking up:*) Excuse me. That is your third piece of pie . . .

BASK. I think you are mistaken.

BETH. Maybe your fourth. I counted. (*To all:*) Yes, I counted his pie! Three.

DAM. Maybe four.

BETH. Maybe four! And by the way, Adam came here first, and there was someone who was already here. And she did not say we could only have pie "this big." In fact, she made no pie restrictions OF ANY KIND.

BASK. My friends, I love you. I love you too, sister. But because of my love, I feel sad for you, and I want to help you to understand.

(*He begins to hand out pieces of pie around BETH.*)

BASK. First of all, look how much of the pie we have already eaten. What would happen to the ones we love (*Here he delivers two pieces to DAM and PROTA*) if we foolishly ate all the pie? Do you want to deprive him of pie? Or him? Or her?

SUF. Me?

BASK. Yes.

SUF. No. I enjoy my pie.

LUF. So do I. I enjoy my pie. I also enjoy your pie.

SUF. Stop eating my pie!

LUF. I'm sorry. I love you.

SUF. I love you too. But don't touch my pie.

(*The chute begins churning out bodies again. This time, it produces PANDO and SHOKE.*)

BASK. You see? More people keep coming. More and more down the chute.

TIK. More people!

PACH. It is already too crowded! I can barely breathe.

TIK. What should we do?

BASK. We should . . .

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!



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