

DOWN WOODS S DOWN a radio play

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Voice I - 14 years old
Voice II - at least 40 years old

[A COUPLE AMOROUSLY INCLINED ... IN A BRIEF SCENE IN THE WOODS]

Notes

There is an additional element indicated in the script.

This rhythmic element called the 'time loop' uses Voice II. It is to be recorded separately.

It appears as a kind of pulse or accompaniment.

The time loop also appears alone as a rhythmic element and as an indication of time passing.

The speed of the loop may be constant throughout the play or may speed up somewhat towards the end.

Time Loop Voice II:
Time ticky time tick ticky
Time ticky tick time tick ticky
Time ticky time tick
Ticky time ticky ticky

Voice I and II should sound like the same person at different ages.

VOICE II: [TIME LOOP FIRST ALONE AND THEN UNDER TEXT]

.....
.....

Big town
.....

Big street, cross it
.....

Then into woods, another world
.....

Smell all different, and down
.....

Down always down woods down
.....

To the creek
.....

To the border of the Piedmont
.....

To the foot of the mountains near the tidal plane
.....

There the creek cut down
.....

Way down almost to tidal level
.....

A steep valley with
.....

Woods sloping down and
.....

Down curving path
.....

Back to youth
.....

Down into memory
.....

Down into walks along the same path
.....

Yes, 15 years since I've seen that town
.....

Since walking down that slope
.....

Yes, down the slope
.....

Down to the creek
.....

Would it seems a river to me now?
.....

Yes, to me, if I walked again down and
.....

Saw again down and
.....

[SOUND OF 4-LANE ROAD. START WITH LOUD AUTOMOBILE HORN. FAIRLY STEADY TRAFFIC. SOUND OF STEPS CROSSING FAST TO THE MIDDLE. THEN CARS PASSING ON FAR SIDE]

VOICE I: Pedestrians never have the right of way
they'd as soon run you down as let you cross

[CAR PASSES VERY CLOSE]

VOICE I: Up yours buddy

[THEN ACROSS ROAD AND INTO THE WOODS. HE IS NOT A CAREFUL WALKER. IT IS LATE FALL, LEAVES ON GROUND. ROAD SOUNDS FADE QUICKLY AS HE ENTERS THE WOODS]

VOICE I: [WHILE WALKING] That damn biology teacher ... what does she think she is ... didn't do that stupid busy work ... answer the thirty questions, copy from the book

[BIRD CALL QUITE CLOSE]

VOICE I: Didn't want to go today

[BIRD CALL AGAIN, STOPS WALKING]
[PAUSE]

VOICE I: Hmmmmm

[WHISTLES THE BIRD CALL. NOT ACCURATELY. THEN AGAIN]

VOICE I: Doesn't answer ... stupid bird

[WALKS AGAIN. STOPS]

VOICE I: Root beer ... sassafras

[PULLS AT BUSH TRYING TO BREAK IT OR UPROOT IT. AFTER A STRUGGLE ...]

VOICE I: Smells good ... wish I had a kinfe ... oh anyway

[WALKS AGAIN. AFTER A FEW STEPS TRIES THE BIRD CALL.
AND AGAIN]

VOICE I: Stupid bird

[AND AGAIN ON SLOW FADE OUT]
[SILENCE]

VOICE II: [WITH TIME LOOP. LOOP IS FAINTER THAN BEFORE]

.....
.....

Down the slope to a past
.....

To a way of being, a loneliness
.....

I remember
.....

Just on puberty
.....

Rotten time, a rotten age
.....

Body in conflict with self not knowing
.....

Lonely walks in woods to creek
.....

Yes, hard to think now
.....

To imagine how it was then
.....

Yes
...

[LOOP FADES]

The feeling on the way to the creek
.....

The creek yes. I remember
.....

The creek

. . .

There was a concrete wall, a rounded edge

.

The water backed up into a pleasant little lake

.

Two, or was it three times broader than the creek

.

below

. . .

The flow was constant over the entire dam

.

Spillway if you will

.

It was that small

.

Just a stoppage

.

Just a concrete wall

. [FADED OUT]

A meter fifty or two

There were big stepping stones of the same concrete

Along the top of the wall

Just out of the water.

VOICE I: [FADE IN WOODS. VOICE I WALKS. BIRD CALL. HE STOPS. BREATHES IN DEEPLY. THEN OUT. WALKS]

VOICE I: Didn't comb my hair [PAUSE] but I did ... [BITTER] for the class picture [PAUSE] I think.

[WALKS]

VOICE I: Some picture. That damn sweater's too small ... my shirtsleeves stick out. I give a damn. Shit. They all dress just so and I couldn't give a ...

[STOPS]

VOICE I: Hey, it's a turtle. Come out you son of a bitch.

[IN DISTANCE TWO HORSES IN FILE ABOUT THREE METERS APART. HE BEGINS WALKING FAST TO SEE THEM. HORSES LOUDER AND LOUDER UNTIL VERY CLOSE. BREATHING AND SNORTING. AS VOICE I APPROACHES THE HORSES WE HEAR ...]

VOICE II: World collided with self so
Fragile and ugly, yes
Down deeper down through
Woods all dark and light with
Smells and decay of growth and
Smile of water on leaves
Borad green and self searching
Not knowing yet searching in way of
Being with puberty just coming for
Body precept in space and
Emotion

[VOICE I HAS REACHED THE HORSES WHICH PASS IN SINGLE FILE]

VOICE I: Wow ... big bastard ... No, it's a bitch

[SECOND HORSE PASSES VERY CLOSE]

VOICE I: My god, my good god, look at the balls on that thing, Jesus, loot at them [FADE] Just look at them

VOICE II: At the foot of the dam a tree limb
Torn by storm up stream
Without much foliage but green still
Caught by stillness by lessening of flow by
Widening of channel
A tree limb caught half over the dam
Blocking the path across and
Serving as focus of flow as
Funnel of channel as

[FADE UP HORSES IN DISTANCE. VOICE I BEGINS TO WALK. HE WHISTLES PART OF THE VERSE - NOT THE FAMOUS CHORUS - OF THE COLONEL BOGEY MARCH. VERY OUT OF TUNE. STOPS]

VOICE I: Horse shit

[WALKS AND CONTINUES WHISTLING WHILST WALKING]

VOICE I: Another load

[CONTINUES WALKING. STREAM FAINT IN DISTANCE. CONTINUES WALKING, STREAM LOUDER]

VOICE II: [TIME LOOP. SOMEWHAT DISTANT THEN GRADUALLY MORE AND MORE PRESENCE UNTIL SOUNDING OVERLY REAL OVERLY PRESENT. THEN GRADUALLY FADE. WE HEAR ON THE FADE ...]

VOICE II: I liked the woods

.

The sassafras root

.

The being alone

.

[TIME LOOP OUT]

[SILENCE]

VOICE I: [AT CREEK EDGE, ACROSS GRAVEL ON TO DAM, ALMOST ACROSS]

VOICE I: Stupid branch, see if I can move it

[SLIPS ONE FOOT IN WATER]

VOICE I: Shit ... goddamn it

[WALKS ACROSS LAST FEW STEPS OF DAM TO OTHER SIDE.
ONE SHOE SQUISHES, THE OTHER DRY. HE BEGINS TO
WHISTLE JOHN BROWN'S BODY AS IF IMITATING THE
CRIPPLED FIFER OF THE "SPIRIT OF 1976". WALKS INTO
DISTANCE THEN OUT]
[DURING THE FOLLOWING SPEECH WE HEAR VOICE I
CLIMBING INTO THE CONDUIT]

VOICE II:

Just beyond the dam
A cave man made
A place to hide a place to play
A meter high and just as broad
A sewer conduit for
Rain water flash flood and now
Hardly a trickle with summer heat
And drought of same
A conduit
A cave sloping upwards and upwards
Darker and darker sloping
Sharper and sharper then
Wider to stand then
Back to same narrowness then
Noise of city faint at first then
Louder and louder and louder till
Huge funnel tunnel looking upwards
To man-hold cover yes

Rungs and rungs
Running up the funnel tunnel
To the man-hold cover
To the two points of light and
The line of same running
Round and round the rim
An eclipse of sun by moon
At noon in the city
Under ground under road under-two of
Searching in the cave-like conduit
Down stream from dam and
Down stream from branch and

Down woods down

VOICE I: [WHILST STILL CLIMBING IN THE CONDUIT]

You would think it made a difference ... the clothes ... the hair ...
the school work ... but it does ... it does

[HE HAS REACHED THE FUNNEL TUNNEL UNDER THE CITY
STREET. HE BEGINS TO CLIMB UP THE RUNGS. CARS LOUD
GOING OVER MAN-HOLE COVER]

VOICE I: It's the street ... must be ... where I crosses ... cars ... the bastards
never give you the right way

[HE'S UP TO THE MAN-HOLE COVER]

push the damn cover up ... and out ... Jesus again ... oh shit ...
back [SIGHS] ... back

[FADE]

VOICE II: [TIME LOOP ALONE THEN UNDER TEXT]

.....
.....

Time goes.

.....

Faster in slowing of person

.....

Yes time for me

.....

Slower or faster

.....

I don't know but it goes

.....

Slower or faster, never the same

.....

Sometimes slowing down

.....

Sometimes speeding down

.....

Down Down
.....

Time that is, for me
.....

I don't know, but it goes
.....

[SLOW CROSS FADE WITH SOUNDS OF VOICE I COMING OUT
OF CONDUIT]

Slower or faster, never the same
.

Sometimes slowing down
.

Sometimes speeding down
.

Down Down
.

Time that is, for me
.

I don't know, but it goes
.

Slower or faster, never the same
.

[VOICE I HAS COME OUT OF THE CONDUIT AND RESUMES
HIS WALK]

[WHILE HE WALKS WE HEAR VOICE II]

VOICE II: Yes, I left it all
 To live in another land
 Years ago
 The roads
 The woods
 The creek
 The country
 But not the memories
 No
 Not the memories

VOICE I: Damn kids. Snotty bastards

[VOICE I'S WALK CONTINUES]

VOICE II: Around the woods bridle paths
Ways for man on horse
Coral some five kilometres south of the little dam
Towards city center and
Out of the spokes of path around
Couples on horse on weekday morning and
One couple amorously inclined
Saddles friction and bouncy bounce
Stops in grassy glen
Dismounts to mount then

[IN WOODS ON EDGE OF GLEN VOICE I HEARS COUPLE WHISPERING. CLOTHES OFF. HURRIED BREATHING. A LAUGH PERHPAS ... A 'YOU' OR 'DARLING DON'T'. VOICE I TO HIMSELF, AN OCCASIONAL COMMENT AND HIS OWN EXCITEMENT]

VOICE I: Wow ...
Look at that ...
What tits and hair ... there ...
Look at him ... my god ... look at that ...
No ... he's going to ...
Oh yes ... oh ... [MOAN] oh ...
No ...
My ... my ... my self yes
Oh it ... aches ... ah
Take it out
Oh ... oh
I'm ... I'm

[FADE OUT]

VOICE II: [WITH LOOP] Down woods down, yes down
.....

Down to next time next place
.....

To another time
.....

To a never place
.....

This is what the layers are made of
.....

That is what the past is
.....

Down woods down
.....

Youth's little walks
.....

Times taken and
.....

Times lost
.....

Down woods down
..... [FADES OUT]

[SILENCE]