

The Last Wife – Eddie Scenes

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are providing the following scenes in advance of Youth auditions for *The Last Wife*. While these excerpts do not represent every moment the character of Eddie appears in the play, they include content we believe is important for you to review ahead of time.

Please take the time to read each scene and accompanying summary carefully. We encourage you to consider whether your Youth will feel comfortable engaging with the material during both rehearsal and performance.

If you would like to read the entire play prior to applying or auditioning, please contact auditions@royalmtc.ca

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Scene 7 – A Game of Tickle

This scene features Eddie interacting with two adult characters — Kate and Thom — during a moment that blends playfulness, family dynamics, and underlying adult emotions. At its core, the scene portrays a child enjoying an innocent game of tickling and pretend play. Meanwhile, the adults — who are navigating a complicated romantic relationship — are using this playtime as a proxy to communicate attraction and unresolved feelings with one another.

At no time is the child actor involved in adult themes, touched inappropriately, or made to understand or interpret the adult subtext. Eddie's actions and lines remain rooted in the perspective of a child at play. Any moments of intimacy or romantic tension occur solely between the adult characters. The scene – including any physical touch of the youth Artist – will be thoughtfully staged by the director and a professional intimacy director, ensuring a respectful and age-appropriate environment.

In private. Eddie and Thom are playing with two toy ships.

EDDIE

(making the waves) Splsh. Splsh. Splsh.

THOM

Ahoy, matey! Swab up that poop!

EDDIE

Poop!?

THOM

Not that kind of poop. The deck. Right here, see?

EDDIE

Why would they call it the poop?

THOM

Something to do with Latin. Splsh. Splsh. Splsh.

EDDIE

Oh, Puppis! The stern of a vessel. You just said it wrong.
Ahoy, matey! Swab up that puppis!

Kate enters with books for her student. When she and Thom see each other, a current of danger and excitement fills the room.

(to Kate) Hi.

KATE

Hello.

EDDIE

This is my new mother.

THOM

Hello.

EDDIE

This is my Uncle Thommie.

KATE

Uncle Thommie.

THOM

Mother.

EDDIE

(*that's funny*) You don't call her mother.

THOM

I don't?

EDDIE

Her name is Katherine.

THOM

Can I call her Kate.

EDDIE

Can he call you-- oh! *May* he call you Kate?

KATE

May he. Yes. Uncle Thommie might call me Kate.

EDDIE

He brought me this! It's a ship. Not a boat.

Eddie sits on the floor and plays with his toy.

KATE

I thought it was writing time, Edward.

EDDIE

Can I play? Please? Just for a minute?

KATE

Just for a minute.

Eddie plays. Kate and Thom take each other in.

How's Holland?

EDDIE

He's working for my Dad.

THOM

Lots of tulips.

KATE

All blonde?

EDDIE

(that's funny) Tulips are red.

Eddie thinks.

Or yellow.

THOM

And here?

KATE

I'm coping.

EDDIE

I'm writing letters.

THOM

Good.

KATE

You've come for meetings?

THOM

Strategic planning.

A moment.

Is it a good game we're playing?

EDDIE

It's great!

KATE

Well, when an excellent playmate shows up... it suddenly shows more promise.

Eddie looks at Kate.

EDDIE

I'm an excellent playmate.

Thom suddenly tackles Eddie. They play and laugh as the sexual tension rises between Thom and Kate.

THOM

Ooooo, I miss you! I want to *wrestle* with you. I want to *cuddle* you. I want to lift up your top and *kiss your tummy*! I want to nibble right *here*! Ummummmmm! Is that fun?

EDDIE

Do some more!

THOM

I want to...

EDDIE

Tickle me!

He does.

THOM

Yaaaaaaah!

KATE

Blow on his back.

He does.

EDDIE

(laughs)

KATE

With your lips.

He does.

EDDIE

(laughs)

KATE

Make your fingers like spiders.

THOM

Skin on skin.

KATE

/Yeah.

EDDIE

Yeah.

KATE

Now hold me.

EDDIE

Me.

He does.

THOM

Like this?

KATE

Cradle my head.

He does. A moment.

EDDIE

Now tickle me!

And then it's awkward, and over. Thom quickly escapes and adjusts himself.

THOM

I... better go.

EDDIE

Aawww, we're just having fun!

KATE

Writing practice. Uncle Thom will have to come back.

THOM

As soon as I can.

EDDIE

And bring another present?

THOM

Sure.

Thom looks at Kate.

(to Eddie) Do I get a kiss?

Eddie kisses Thom on the lips, but Thom's kiss is for Kate.

EDDIE

I like my ships.

Thom stands, looks at Kate.

THOM

Lips and ships.

Thom waves at Eddie. Goes. Kate stares after him for a moment, grappling with longing, guilt and confusion. She moves slowly to the table.

Eddie sits at the table. He sees how distracted Kate is.

EDDIE

That was fun.

KATE

It sure was.

EDDIE

He'll come back and we can play some more.

A moment.

Wanna hear my letter?

KATE

I think so.

Kate sits beside Eddie. Eddie gives her a big cuddle. Kate isn't sure how to respond. Eddie picks up his letter.

EDDIE

Okay, here goes:

"Most honourable mother, I most /humbly"

KATE

Hang on.

EDDIE

What?

KATE

Couldn't it be less... formal?

EDDIE

It's an official letter.

KATE

But can you say, well, how you feel about me.

EDDIE

"Most honourable... *(he writes)* and *entirely beloved*... mother..."

KATE

Really?

EDDIE

Is that not good?

KATE

No. That's good.

EDDIE

"...I most humbly commend your grace with like thanks /both for..."

KATE

Hey Eddie...

EDDIE

What.

KATE

Do you really think of me as your mother?

EDDIE

Sure.

KATE

Do you think Mary and Bess do, too?

EDDIE

They should.

"...both for that your grace did accept so gently my simple and rude letters, and / also"

KATE

So... do you think your father might acknowledge them again, you know, legally?

EDDIE

He never said they weren't his kids. But I think you help because you're a mom to all of us. And Father... well he's our dad. So that makes us a family, right? Mom, Dad, sisters, brother.

KATE

You are very smart.

EDDIE

I am.

KATE

We should just be a family.

EDDIE

Yes. If the girls want that.

Scene 10 – Family Dinner

This scene takes place at a tense family dinner involving the characters Kate, Henry (the King), their children Mary and Bess, and young Eddie. In this scene, the tension between Kate and Henry erupts into a heated argument.

Throughout the scene, Eddie remains on the sidelines observing the fight. He is not directly involved in the argument, but the intensity of the moment is clear through his reactions — covering his ears and closing his eyes. **At no point is Eddie subject to violence.** However, the strong language and emotional tone of the scene may be unsettling for some young actors.

This scene will be staged with care to ensure that the young performer feels safe and supported throughout rehearsals and performance.

At table. Kate, Henry, Mary, Bess and Eddie. Eddie is the only one still eating. Henry's leg has taken a turn for the worse, which has sorely affected his spirits. He has the leg up, and his "souped-up curtain rods" by his side.

BESS

Are you happy, Majesty?

HENRY

What?

KATE

Tell your father what we were studying this morning.

BESS

The ethics of Aristotle.

KATE

Which are based on...?

BESS

The cardinal virtues of Plato:

HENRY

Smarty pants.

BESS

Courage, temperance, justice, and... /prudence.

EDDIE

(with a mouthful) Prudence.

HENRY

Dear prudence.

KATE

And the practice of these virtues is to achieve...?

BESS

The highest human good.

KATE

Referred to by Aristotle as...?

BESS

Happiness.

HENRY

(answering Bess's first question) No.

BESS

(thinking she got the lesson wrong) Yes. That's what Mother taught us today.

HENRY

(taking this in) Mother?

KATE

You've confused the child, Majesty.

MARY

(correcting Bess) Her Grace.

BESS

Her Grace.

HENRY

(picking up the idea) No, no: Mother. Are we a family here or a court? Am I your husband or your King?

KATE

I... Both.

HENRY

Yeah. Can we call each other by name please. Can I have the opportunity, on occasion, to be a... dad.

KATE

Of course.

HENRY

No, I am not happy. Bess.

BESS

Oh.

MARY

I can't imagine why you wouldn't be happy. Dad. You're the King of all you survey.

HENRY

Don't get cocky, kiddo. You're being insufferable here at the invitation of Mother not me.

KATE

Hal.

MARY

You're right. I am here for her Grace—Kate—Mother— certainly not for you.

HENRY

I am not happy—and neither is Mary—because true happiness requires an excellent character. And an excellent character / is a

BESS

is achieved by virtue of what we undertake voluntarily, and not what we accomplish under duress.

HENRY

Yup. I am sitting at luncheon with the three of you women, *under duress*. My son and I could be planning the impending invasion of France. I would *undertake* that pastime *voluntarily* but I cannot because my fucking leg is killing me and I'm left to hobble around with the help of souped up curtain rods, *under duress*.
Ergo, I do not possess an excellent character. *Ergo*, I am not happy.

MARY

Perhaps your humour is too hot.

HENRY

Aaaah, heat — hang on a sec, now — Heat— the choleric humour— is a quality possessed more by men than by women, and makes a person more intelligent. (*to Bess*) Did you read that part?

MARY

More subject to a tyrannical nature.

HENRY

(*to Kate*) A woman is cold—melancholic—and therefore more deceptive.

BESS

How is Mother deceptive?

HENRY

A woman who gives a child the means to provoke her father under the guise of education... is deceptive.

KATE

(*coming back at Henry*) A deceptive person is one who skirts the truth.

BESS

But she's not trying to provoke you, she's trying to make you *happy*.
Mother says, if you were more balanced, if you saw things as less
black and white and /more

HENRY

Hang on— you talk about me in your studies, do you?

BESS

You are the king. We use you as an example of wisdom and
leadership.

HENRY

(*playing along*) Uhuh. And in an analysis of my wisdom and
leadership you feel that my policies are too...?

BESS

Inflexible.

KATE

We don't /really

HENRY

Ah. And your mother's advice to me would be...?

BESS

To see both sides of the coin, /because

HENRY

More grey.

BESS

Yes.

KATE

In the abs/tract

HENRY

More lenience. More... tolerance.

BESS

Yes.

KATE

Theoretically. As an illustration /of

HENRY

If I travelled the golden mean, for instance...

BESS

Yes! (*to Kate*) He *does* know.

HENRY

Right. You want to learn a lesson. Get your notebook...

Henry grabs Bess by the arm. Eddie stops eating.

BESS

Ow.

HENRY
GET YOUR NOTEBOOK!
(to Bess, but looking at Kate) Write this down: Aristotle wasn't an Englishman. Nor did he have to deal with the fucking Catholics.

Bess looks to Kate. Eddie covers his ears and closes his eyes.

WRITE IT DOWN!!

BESS
I told you!

Mary goes.

HENRY
(calling after her) You're supposed to excuse yourself from the presence of your goddam king!

Mary returns.

MARY
Will you pardon me, Your Majesty, my stomach has taken /a turn.

HENRY
Yeah. Piss off.

MARY
(turning back sharply) That "submission" I signed? It's just a contract: like your marriage: no truth in it. When you're dead you can't touch my faith, and you can't touch what I know about my mother.

HENRY
Your mother is the one to blame,/ not me!

MARY
Don't you /start —

KATE
/Mary —

HENRY
You would never've had to sign that paper —

MARY
/If what?

HENRY
The whole country could've stayed Catholic if she'd just listened to me and become a stupid nun.

KATE
/Henry —

MARY
No way, daddy-oh! You don't get away with that. You divorced her: you killed her.

HENRY

(to Kate) I put a lid on this shit years ago, and you had to stick your finger in.

KATE

/I was only—

MARY

But you'll die too — hopefully soon — and when you do, I'll rip all your deluded lies out of my body.

Mary makes to go.

HENRY

Well, I'm sure as hell not dead yet!!

Mary returns for one last stab.

MARY

(to Kate) You know the family portrait he commissioned last month? He had *Jane* painted in as our mother. Just in case you thought you were getting somewhere.

Kate is hurt by this news. Mary goes.

HENRY

(after her) *Jane* gave me an heir! Your mother just gave me a *pain in the ass!*

KATE

Teach me the lesson, will you? The girls are just doing what I tell them.

HENRY

Don't try to dangle your ethics in front of me. I'm not a fish to be baited.

KATE

Go to your room, /Bess.

HENRY

(to Bess) Don't you dare!
See how your "mother" is using you to get what she wants? (to Kate) I am not to be steered. You may have operated this way in the past, but you'll have to be a lot more canny with me. (to Bess) That's the last lesson you'll be learning here. You're back to Hatfield tomorrow.

KATE

/No

BESS

No!

KATE

Henry, don't. She's a child.

HENRY

(to Kate) *DON T USE THE CHILDREN!*

KATE
I'm not using them!

BESS
(to Kate) Yes you are! This is your fault! You want me to think what you think and do what you do. But I can't, I can't, I'm not smart enough.

KATE
/You are

BESS
I Can't Be You!

Bess runs from the room.

HENRY
Talk to *me*! what do you *want*?

KATE
I didn't mean to use—I, I was trying to show them options, that's/all.

HENRY
Oh, for God's sake, woman!! Have you ever had absolute power?! Do you really think the options aren't glaringly obvious?! Get your shit together Kate. You've lost your little wedding present now. Let's hope you fare better with Eddie.

Henry leaves. Eddie slowly takes his hands off his ears and opens his eyes.

Scene 13 – Omens

This scene takes place late at night, with Young Eddie waking from a nightmare in which he saw his mother being hurt. He is deeply shaken by the dream. Kate gently comforts Eddie.

This scene depicts a realistic parent-child moment following a nightmare. **There is no violence onstage and no physical conflict**, only emotional content connected to the child's fear.

As with all scenes involving the young actor, this moment will be rehearsed and staged with great care, ensuring the performer is always supported and never placed in a situation they are uncomfortable with.

At bed. Kate and Henry are asleep. Eddie runs into the room. Henry watches this scene unfold, barely breathing.

EDDIE
Mommy?!!!

KATE
Eddie—

EDDIE
There was blood—

KATE
On you?

EDDIE

He was trying to hurt you /and

KATE

Alright—

EDDIE

and I couldn't get to you—

KATE

I'm okay—

EDDIE

your neck, and I was too little

KATE

Okay now—

EDDIE

and he could just hold me back with one hand

KATE

Here—

EDDIE

and I couldn't get to you

KATE

Alright now—

EDDIE

I couldn't help you!!

KATE

I'm not hurt—

EDDIE

There was blood on you!! there was blood on you!!

Kate shows Eddie her neck.

KATE

See? I'm fine.

Eddie settles.

EDDIE

There was blood on you.

KATE

It was a dream.

EDDIE

It was a bad dream.

KATE

A very bad dream.

EDDIE

Yeah.

KATE

Yeah. Okay now?

EDDIE

Okay. Yeah.

Eddie looks over at Henry, then back to Kate.

HENRY

It wasn't me.

EDDIE

It looked like you.

HENRY

It was a dream.

EDDIE

It looked like you.

KATE

Wanna sleep in the big bed?

EDDIE

Yeah.

KATE

Come on then.

Eddie crawls in beside Kate.

I have something that'll help with these scary dreams.

EDDIE

You do?

KATE

A little present for you.

EDDIE

Okay.

Kate brings out a miniature portrait.

It's you. It's both of you. And look: it fits in my pocket.

Eddie puts the portrait in his pocket.

KATE

No more bad dreams, right?

EDDIE

Right.

KATE

You are strong and smart and capable.

EDDIE

I can't fight back.

Kate gets close to Eddie on the bed.

KATE

You and me, we're not strong like your dad, but inside —deep in here (*Eddie's heart*); in here (*Kate's heart*)—we know that no one can push us around. Can you believe that?

EDDIE

Yeah.

HENRY

It was a dream.

EDDIE

Yeah.

KATE

Sleep now.

Kate tucks Eddie into bed. Henry and Kate look at each other. Kate snuggles with Eddie. Henry sits up, staring ahead.

We are committed to the safety, comfort, and well-being of every young performer. If you have any questions after reading these scenes, we welcome the opportunity to connect further.

With thanks,

The MTC Team