



Hello! Thank you so much for tuning in to Beckett's Babies. We are so happy that you joined us! Every episode, we love to attach a playwriting exercise that we think might be helpful so that you can go forth and start writing your own play! Below is a playwriting exercise from our guest and playwright friend Micah Ariel James.

ACTIVATING YOUR IMAGINATION

When I was in undergrad, one of my fiction writing instructors would start our class sessions with an exercise that was meant to help us release the stresses of the day and be present. I have since adapted that exercise that I have found to be particularly helpful for people who are having trouble getting started. You might also consider recording these instructions so that you can play them while you do the exercise.

Close your eyes and breathe. Listen to your breathing. Listen to the sounds around you. Try to distinguish the sounds around you. Is that the refrigerator or the air conditioning? Which one is louder? Try to hear sounds that are even further away. If you're inside, listen for birds or cars or sirens outside. If you're outside, listen for the absolute farthest sound. What's making that sound? Where is the thing that is making that sound? If you can't tell or you're not sure, use your imagination. What do you notice in the place where that sound is coming from? What does it smell like? What does it look like there? What's the vibe? Are people happy there? Is anything bad happening there? Try to picture the people who are there. Eavesdrop on their conversations.

Open your eyes and write down everything you can remember. Be as descriptive as possible. Begin to write the words you "overheard". Give the characters names or don't, but write as quickly as possible. Feel free to drop back into your imagination at any point.

This exercise can be adapted as well. Instead of listening for the farthest sound, you might try looking as far as you can and imagining what's happening just past your view. Or you might find that a car is the furthest sound, but instead of stopping there, you might imagine getting into the car and going where the driver is going. Where is the driver going and why? Who will greet them at their destination? The possibilities are many.

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