

# WHEN AMOEBAS ATTACK

By Jerry Rabushka

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**CHARACTERS:** 2F. The characters are two heads of a planarian in a high school biology class, who also play other microscopic creatures plus members of the class.

**SETTING:** On a microscope slide, but a larger scale representation on stage (or bare stage) will suffice.

PLANNY: *(this opening speech should initially make the audience feel like it's a human talking, rather than a planarian. PLANNY stares straight ahead to describe with should appear to be a horrific experience.)* I felt the knife slicing through the middle of my head and down between my eyes. I heard the laughter from above:

HEDDY: *(as various high school students)* Eeew yuk. Wow! Cool!

PLANNY: I could do nothing as my head was split from top to bottom. Little did I know this had been the fate of my brothers and sisters before me—it was the fate in store for all of us. Such is the life of a planarian in a high school science lab. “You’ll get used to it,” they told me.

HEDDY: *(with a chuckle)* “That’s how I met your mother...”

PLANNY: ...my dad disclosed. *(less horrific and more conversational, but still addressing the audience)* Having my head severed into two on a daily basis was not something I was looking forward to. You never knew who was going to be swimming right next to you.

HEDDY: *(annoyed and suspicious)* Who are *(with distaste)* you?

PLANNY: *(returning the sentiment)* Who am I? Who are you?

HEDDY: I asked first.

PLANNY: I was *here* first.

HEDDY: Are you sure?

PLANNY: *(to the audience)* As planaria, we regenerate. If you cut me in half, each half grows a new whole. If you cut my head in half, each half...

HEDDY: ...grows a new head.

*(THEY try to go different directions and a tug of war ensues.)*

And I’d like to know where you think you’re going.

PLANNY: To the left. As if it matters.

HEDDY: I don’t want to go left.

PLANNY: Deal with it. Or get “left” behind.

HEDDY: There’s more interesting stuff “right” over there.

PLANNY: We’re on a microscope slide. There’s nothing interesting anywhere. Well, if you look up you can see someone’s eyeball.

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HEDDY: (*sees something a ways away*) What's that?

PLANNY: (*looks as well*) It's a paramecium. Avoid her, she's such a gossip. (*imitating, sounding like a child with a cold*) "Let me tell you what she said, then I said, then she said..."

HEDDY: I can see we have divergent personalities. I'll have to head you off.

PLANNY: I wish I could have quit while I was a head. Now I'm two.

HEDDY: Where should two heads head to?

PLANNY: I think you should be the head left behind. (*to audience*) How I longed for the single life. And then we had to listen to the class gloating over our misfortune.

HEDDY: (*as a student*) That is so cool. What if we gave it four heads?

PLANNY: (*as a really annoying student*) What if we gave it a hundred?

HEDDY: (*as teacher*) Now class, don't get carried away. How would you like it if someone did that to you?

PLANNY: (*as a student*) Can we try Sheila? She's not using her head.

HEDDY: (*as Sheila*) Stop it! That's not funny.

PLANNY: (*as student*) No one said it was funny. It's just the truth.

HEDDY: (*to audience*) I'm not sure why I was designated as "the new head." We both came from the same place, but because *she* claims to have been here first, she seems to think I have to follow her orders.

PLANNY: One time an army of paramecia came to our village and tried to conquer us by splitting us in two. Little did they realize that the next day there would be twice as many of us. Which is another reason we don't speak to her over in the corner. "Let me tell you what she said, then I said, then she said..." Boring.

HEDDY: That happened over a week ago. Like 15 generations back. Can't we let bygones be bygones?

PLANNY: How do you know about that?

HEDDY: Half my head is yours.

PLANNY: So you're a half wit.

HEDDY: I know everything you know.

PLANNY: Yet, we disagree.

HEDDY: I want to go out tonight.

PLANNY: I want to stay home. (*to audience*) Again, when you're a planarian, there isn't much difference.

HEDDY: Where can you go for a good time around here?

PLANNY: Nowhere, really. We live in a Petri dish. Today we're vacationing on a microscope slide.

HEDDY: There has to be something to do!

PLANNY: I hear there's something going on at the Amoeba Club. But it's hard to get your foot in the door.

HEDDY: We don't have feet.

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PLANNY: Hence, it's hard. And historically, we don't get along. They're so rude.

HEDDY: *(as an amoeba, gruff and hostile, like a "bad boy" in a movie)* Look at them. Planaria. Wit' two heads.

PLANNY: *(as another)* And so many cells. One cell is all anyone needs. Everything we have, right here. No lookin' around, like, "yo, where's my stomach?" It's right here.

HEDDY: They have so much that can go wrong with them.

PLANNY: If we let them into the club, they'll take over!

HEDDY: *(telling a joke, still as amoeba)* Hey, did you hear about me and Betty?

PLANNY: What happened?

HEDDY: We got into a fight and she split. Now I got two girlfriends!

PLANNY: *(as herself, apologetic)* Just a bit of amoeba humor. I mean, when you're one cell and all...

HEDDY: *(as herself)* I thought it was funny.

PLANNY: That's the 650<sup>th</sup> time I've heard it. *(making fun of it)* Gotta split! R-O-F-L.

HEDDY: So, do we stay this way forever?

PLANNY: Hopefully some compassionate student will have mercy and cut us in half.

HEDDY: Then what?

PLANNY: Then you're on your own, until some knife-wielding wacko tries this on you. Two heads, two tails, too much to worry about. I'm going to catch a nap.

HEDDY: You're what? I'm want to go party. Am I just supposed to wait for you to wake up?

PLANNY: Yes, and be quiet.

*(HEDDY tries to argue, but PLANNY just says)*

Shhhh!

*(PLANNY falls asleep)*

HEDDY: *(to audience)* She thinks I'm going to just sit here and crochet. I'm going to the Amoeba Club. I'm sure they'll let *me* in. *(pause, if desired some party music can play in the background)* What's that music I hear? Oh, Soft Cell. Of course.

*(HEDDY looks around, PLANNY is trailing behind, still asleep)*

This is my kinda club!

PLANNY: *(now as an amoeba, with a gruff accent, sort of like a New Jersey area crime boss in a movie)* Excuse me, but we don't allow your kind in here.

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HEDDY: (*combative*) What kind is that?

PLANNY: First of all, you have two heads.

HEDDY: First of all, you don't have a head at all.

PLANNY: This club is for amoebas only.

HEDDY: I want to come in and boogie.

PLANNY: Go boogie with your own kind.

HEDDY: How can you boogie anyway? You've only got one foot. And it's false!

PLANNY: See? It's attitudes like yours that make us keep you out. And for your information, we do the hop. Looks like I have to call the bouncer. (*does so*) Hey, Bigfoot, we have a controversy up front!

HEDDY: (*now as the bouncer, again gruff and uneducated*) Did I hear you say controversy?

PLANNY: We have a two-headed planarian wants to get into the jernt. (*i.e. a mispronunciation of "joint"*)

HEDDY: I'll take care of them. (*to HEDDY and PLANNY*) You guys gotta split.

PLANNY: (*with attitude, still as amoeba*) That old joke? No one falls for it anymore.

HEDDY: Look, I've only got one cell and I'm stupid on top of it. You were expecting maybe an evening with Chris Rock?

PLANNY: (*as an amoeba*) I except you to do your job and handle the controversy.

HEDDY: (*trying to get tougher*) All right... either the two headed monster "gits" or there's going to a lot more controversy to come.

PLANNY: Besides, our chairs are made for one-celled creatures. You just don't fit in—literally. (*laughs*)

HEDDY: (*to audience as herself, as music stops*) And with that, of course, they began to attack.

PLANNY: (*as herself, waking up*) Woke me out of a sound sleep.

HEDDY: It got ugly—as ugly as it gets...

BOTH: ...when amoebas attack.

PLANNY: They said they wanted a piece of me. So I cut my tail off and threw at it the bouncer.

HEDDY: (*as bouncer*) Ow! That's not fair. You have an advantage.

PLANNY: (*upbeat!*) Sometimes being a regenerative multi-celled invertebrate comes in handy!

HEDDY: (*as herself, to the audience*) By the time this fight was over, we were in pieces.

PLANNY: And the good news...

HEDDY: (*looks around and realizes the two of them are separate, they can twirl around or something to indicate this*) I'm free!

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