

# **Viji Rajaratnam Writing Sample:** *Dickey's Wheely Fun Magical Good Place*

*Dickey's Wheely Fun Magical Good Place* is a twine adventure set in a euthanasia theme park. OLLY, a season pass holder, takes an unsuspecting GRACE on a blind first date through life-threatening rides and attractions.

This theme of morbidity is so embedded into the park that every ride, food item, and even gateway is denoted by a percentage indicating the probability of death. Visitors of the park fall roughly into two categories: those who come for the thrill, and those who seek farewell.

The player character assumes the role of GRACE, who falls into neither camp. She is comedically oblivious to the moribund nature of the park and her date. This screenplay depicts one path of player progression in a small section of the game, which involves visiting a bar after surviving the second ride.

Will this first date be your last?

INT. DICKEY'S RISKY DRINKIES- DAY

A humble establishment filled with empty bar stools and faint indie rock. BUCKY mans the front. OLLY and GRACE take their seats.

OLLY:

Bucky! I was hoping to catch you.

BUCKY:

Hey, Olly. Got me on my last shift.

OLLY:

Good. Looks like we could both use some liquid courage.

BUCKY:

What's it gonna be this time?

OLLY:

I want something strong today. The strongest you've got.

BUCKY:

Yeah, I think I got some prune juice out back.

OLLY:

No, man. I'm *serious*. Get me a Dark & Stormy.

BUCKY:

No, *I'm serious*. You never finish this shit.

OLLY:

Oh, please... We just got off a ride that was 30%.

BUCKY:

Heh... Tryin' to show off for the lady here, ain'tcha?

GRACE:

Now that I think about it, you didn't want to get on the ride, either.

OLLY:

Screw you both. Make it a double.

BUCKY:

Okay, I'll pour you one. But don't go dumping it all out this time. My daffodils are still growing back.

OLLY:

Eh, no one liked your plants, anyway.

BUCKY:

And what can I get for...

GRACE:

It's Grace.

BUCKY:

Pick your poison, Grace.

BUCKY slides GRACE a menu. "Dark & Stormy" is starred as a favorite, right above the 40% content warning and description: "A dark liquid sure to stormy up your insides."

OLLY:

Bucky's always talking up this drink.

BUCKY:

One of our most popular vices by far.

GRACE:

Is this what your regulars order?

BUCKY:

We don't tend to get a lot of repeat customers... Well, outside of ol' Oliver here.

OLLY flips BUCKY off.

GRACE:

Hmm... I might go for something else.

BUCKY:

We've got the good stuff over here, 60% Battery Acid and 80% Bleach...

GRACE:

These are some edgy names, and *Bleach*? Who names their drink after an anime?

BUCKY:

Don't let the names scare ya. Just a lil' something to take the edge off.

GRACE:

Ha... Well I hate to be that person,  
but I actually don't drink.

BUCKY:

Oh, right. Forgot you're *Olly's*  
date... How 'bout this one?

BUCKY points out "Dinky Drinky" on the menu. "A 0.05% syrupy sipper."

BUCKY (CONT'D):

Won't take you out for the day, but  
it's a slow killer on your arteries.

GRACE:

Sure, I guess.

OLLY:

And what about you? Are you actually  
drinking with me this time?

BUCKY pulls an opaque bottle out of the drink cooler.

BUCKY:

Handed in my resignation today, so  
I'll indulge just this once.

OLLY:

So, you're really doing it. Why now?

BUCKY pours a dark sludge into two tall glasses.

BUCKY:

Hey Olly, I never asked ya. Got any  
family?

BUCKY slides one of the glasses over to OLLY and takes the  
other for himself.

OLLY:

Not anymore.

BUCKY diverts his gaze away from OLLY and looks at the table.

BUCKY:

You know, my brother was always the  
worst gift giver. Just hopeless.

BUCKY starts on GRACE's drink.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Everything had to be handmade.  
Everything.

BUCKY opens the shaker and pours a fluorescent pink drink into a wide martini glass.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Man showed up to our Ma's wake with  
paper mache roses in a cardboard vase.

BUCKY hands GRACE the glass.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
But one day... He suddenly stopped.

OLLY shifts uncomfortably in his seat.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Left all his collector item paint  
sets, brushes, his craft paper behind.

BUCKY starts slicing up some limes.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
I swore I'd never let that happen to  
me. I wasn't no quitter.

BUCKY sprinkles a few final garnishes into everyone's drinks.  
He raises and clinks his glass with GRACE'S and OLLY'S.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Bottoms up.

OLLY:  
Belly-up.

GRACE:  
Down the hatchet.

OLLY grimaces as the dark liquid touches his lips,  
immediately thrown into a coughing fit. BUCKY downs half of  
it and refills his glass. GRACE takes a small sip.

BUCKY:  
I followed that man like a shadow. I  
really did.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
I thought maybe I could grow into the  
role, heh... become Todd's understudy.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Even in the days when things stopped  
coming so damn easy to him.

BUCKY takes another long drink from his glass.

OLLY:  
Was he a big shot, when you were kids?

BUCKY:  
Big shot? Heh. He got into Ole Miss on  
a full-ride sports scholarship. Made  
all the major outlets.

GRACE takes another sip.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
*Teen talent scouted from hick town.*

OLLY takes a longer sip.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Y'all might not be old enough to  
remember, but competing at that level  
used to be a big deal.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
His every play on the world's lips.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Who was sponsoring him, who he was  
dating, who went to see him and on  
what day.

BUCKY finishes his glass and pours another, offering to  
refill OLLY'S. OLLY shakes his head.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
I grew so tired of watching him  
live...

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
I got into this business of dying.

OLLY:  
Sometimes there's just nothing left to  
salvage.

GRACE:  
So, I take it you don't talk much  
anymore?

BUCKY chugs away at his drink.

BUCKY:

He made an effort for a while, called on birthdays. Still sent me his trademark misshapen pottery.

OLLY takes a swig.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

One day he calls me, tells me he's in love. Shows me the ring.

BUCKY finishes his drink and pours another.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

Thank the Lord he had sense not to handmake that as well.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

Though in hindsight, that mighta just made things worse.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

He planned his proposal out to a tee. Went over the steps with me 'til I had them memorized.

GRACE and OLLY take another cautious sip.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

He had a major game coming up out of town, planned to fly into fiancé's city.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

They'd stroll through the butterfly sanctuary together, have brunch in the park, champagne in the limo, and...

BUCKY (CONT'D):

Off into the sunset.

BUCKY downs and pours another.

BUCKY (CONT'D):

But even though Todd didn't make it himself, he just couldn't stop himself from customizing the ring.

OLLY shakes his head.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Got the day they met specially  
engraved into the band. Mixed both of  
their birthstones. A real cut above.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
But maybe...

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Maybe if he hadn't spent those extra  
few minutes admiring his work in the  
backseat...

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
The ring wouldna fallen out of his  
pocket on his way out.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
He wouldna bent down to pick it up  
from under the car.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
And the tire wouldna crushed his hand.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
His playing hand.

OLLY:  
That's rough.

GRACE:  
I'm sorry.

BUCKY:  
Poor bastard never regained feeling  
after that.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
He couldn't even recover the nerves  
enough to hold a paintbrush, much less  
make his signature throw.

OLLY drinks until half the liquid remains.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
The fans were patient at first, to a  
point. But eventually they lost  
interest.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Even his fiancé left him.



GRACE takes a sip.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Suddenly this man I used to see as  
larger than life...

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
He had no one left in his corner.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Only me to remember him by.

Everyone takes a long drink.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Believe me, wasn't my first choice  
doin' what we did... We r-really  
tried. We both did.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Therapy sessions, med'cation changes,  
\*hic\* h-healthy outlets...

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Nothin' could settim right.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Whole life I molded myself aft-  
\*hic\*... Couldn't recognize him no  
more.

BUCKY pours himself another glass. OLLY has just about a  
quarter of the dark liquid left now.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
In th- \*hic\* end, sendin' him here'z  
our only option.

GRACE:  
That's terrible... but I mean, do you  
really think a theme park would help?

OLLY sends GRACE a scowl.

BUCKY:  
Ah think... is was for th' best. \*hic\*

OLLY polishes off the last of his drink.

OLLY:  
I'm sorry about your brother.

BUCKY:  
Even now. I follow his footstep \*hic\*

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
...S-see him soon enough.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
He'll be... \*hic\* that stupid fuckin'  
tooth grin... \*hic\*

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Shitty moun da clay in iz hand...

OLLY:  
He's in a better place now.

BUCKY looks off into the distance and begins to slouch.

BUCKY:  
Gon' close up for th' day now.

OLLY:  
What do we owe you?

BUCKY:  
None. Ain't like I got no paycheck  
\*hic\* for 'em to take out no more.

BUCKY (CONT'D):  
Just promise... you won't waste...  
\*hic\* the rest of y'all's time here.

OLLY:  
We won't.

BUCKY:  
Enjoy 'ch other f-for as long as  
poss...

OLLY:  
We'll see you on the other side.

GRACE:  
Take care.

GRACE and OLLY leave BUCKY slumping behind the bar with his head in his hands, and a sleepy grin on his face. He looks peaceful.