

X WHY Z

by

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X WHY Z

SETTING — A home.

CHARACTERS — CHILD and ADULT.

AT RISE — CHILD is playing. ADULT is trying to work.

CHILD

Why is there an alphabetical order?

ADULT

Um. Hmmm. Well. I don't know why.

CHILD

Why don't you know why?

ADULT

Because no one knows why.

CHILD

Why?

ADULT

They started doing it so long ago that no one remembers who did it first.

CHILD

Why?

ADULT

Why did they start or why does no one remember? You should learn to be more specific with the questions you ask.

CHILD

Why?

ADULT

Because it's an essential part of being a thinking person.

CHILD

Why?

ADULT

Because if you don't ask the right questions, how will you get the right answers?

CHILD

Why?

Why what? ADULT

Why? CHILD

Why why? ADULT

Why? CHILD

Why? ADULT

Why? CHILD

Why? ADULT

Why? CHILD

Why? ADULT

CHILD
Well I suppose it's that I'm a dry sponge right now—you're not so much taking the time to fill my head with things that make me wonder, so I have to seek them out myself. It's a process of discovery, maybe. Noisy and annoying, perhaps, but essential.

Oh. ADULT

Why? CHILD

ADULT
"Oh" is what I say when someone makes such a good point that I'm not sure what to say next.

Why? CHILD

ADULT
Because I have to say something.

CHILD
Why?

ADULT
That's a good point. Maybe I don't. You're a smart kid.

CHILD
Why?

ADULT
Because your mother and I are smart people, too.

CHILD
Why?

ADULT
(realizing)
Because we asked a lot of questions.

CHILD
Oh.
(beat)
Can I watch Sid the Science Kid now?

ADULT
Sure.

CHILD scampers off. ADULT sits back, contented smile.

ADULT
Never should have fucking had kids.

END OF PLAY.