

Script:

Outline of Script/Plot:

- PART I: Narrator introduces the book, Thoreau observes ant fight and talks abt his infatuation with ants
- PART II: Thoreau goes to sleep, and wakes up in his lucid dream
- PART III: Dream itself- Thoreau at the MX-US war, arguing w/ general
 - Narrator dryly comments about Thoreau's hypocrisy and all that

Skit Title: *Thoreauception*

ACT I SCENE I: Introduction

background forest music

Narrator (Abhinav): Hello, everyone. Today, we shall continue with our audiobook reading of *Walden* and observation of the wild Henry David Thoreau. We shall continue from the middle of Chapter 12, Brute Neighbors: "One day when I went out to my wood-pile, or rather my pile of stumps, I observed two large ants, the one red, the other much larger, nearly half an inch long and black, fiercely contending with one another..."

ant fight begins while narrator keeps on reading

Black Ant (Kayla): *ant noises* THIS IS MY LAND NOW.

Red Ant (EZ): *ant noises* DIE!

fight continues as Thoreau begins gushing about ants

Thoreau (Jared): Just...look at them... *sighs in utter euphoria* Oh, what gifts nature has bestowed upon us! Man may think he is the only civilization that exists. Nay, nay, I say every aspect of nature is civilization! These ants, the rabbits, the chirping birds! What a wondrous choice I made, escaping from humanity's perilous society to nature's auspicious ones!

Narrator (Abhinav): "And certainly there is not the fight recorded in Concord history, at least, if in the history of America, that will bear a moment's comparison with this, whether for the numbers engaged in it, or for the patriotism and heroism displayed." *stops reading from book* Here, the wild Thoreau exhibits its most common tendency of cherubically gushing about his love of nature (beside that time he had the savage desire to devour that woodchuck). These ramblings are often followed up by a rant about the ills of American society.

Thoreau (Jared): What a pity it is that this nation is focused on brutality, pettiness, and unbridled growth! War is celebrated, factories and material wealth sacrosanct! Oh, the disgust! The ants, birds and trees have principles worth fighting over, while we revolted over a three-cent tax on tea. Is our government of lesser intelligence than our brute neighbors?! Oh, how good a

decision I made in isolating myself in these woods! To be exposed to this natural beauty is to complete one's life!

Narrator (Abhinav): Curiously, a common phenomena with the wild Thoreau is its selective amnesia. By his time, Walden Woods was heavily deforested. He complains about industrial society, yet earlier he stated earlier that the passing train made him happier than ever. I wonder how Thoreau would react if he knew that he was the warring ants for *our* eyes.

Thoreau (Jared): Alas! It is my hour of rest!

Thoreau falls asleep against the tree

zelda to shiek music → indicating dream

ACT I SCENE II: The Conscription Letter

Narrator (Abhinav): Now, let us observe the wild Thoreau while asleep in its local habitat. Oh, but what's this? Suddenly, the peaceful domain of his slumber turns into a cacophony of his worst nightmare...

cue peaceful morning music which will be terminated by a random flying letter and a record scratch)

Thoreau wakes up with a letter on his face

Thoreau (Jared): BAH! What in mother nature's *BLEEP* name has happened?! A letter?! BAH! BAH, I say to the news! I came to Walden Woods to live deliberately and derive meanness from life! Can I not escape society's petty news?!

Narrator (Abhinav): Ah yes, a core attribute of the wild Thoreau is his willful social isolation. Except, of course, when he goes into Concord town to hear **all** the gossip.

Thoreau rips up the letter, but another soon comes flying into his face again

Thoreau (Jared): What simpleness is this?! Why am I being besieged? Could it be? A letter from my dear Ralph? My mother?

Thoreau opens the letter

Narrator (Abhinav): *Teases audience* Huh-hoh! What will it be? Perhaps his mother will finally ask him to do his own laundry? Or maybe he'll be sent back to prison?

Reads letter aloud in reading voice

Thoreau (Jared): “Mr. David Henry Thoreau, you have been selected to partake in the ongoing war in the west. Your service in securing the rightful American land that Mexico is trying to steal is mandatory. Prepare to depart from your residence to your local military base...

Thoreau looks down at the paper with a super surprised/disgusted face, up at the audience, down at the paper again, and finally up at the audience

Narrator (Abhinav): My, my, our Thoreau is in quite the predicament! How will our pacifistic, idealistic friend fare in a war setting? More importantly, [remove accent] how am I going to be able to make fun of him? Oh, whoops! I can't say that. Guess I'll just have to cut that for when I upload this. *Ahem* [accent returns] I suppose we shall find out.

Thoreau visibly gets ready for a long rant....

Thoreau (Jared): MOTHER NATUR-BLEEEEEEEEEEEEEPPPPPP *While Thoreau is silently screaming*

CUT! *cue next scene.*

ACT II Scene I: Bedtime Trouble!!!!

Enter General with triumphant background music

General (Kayla): ATTENTION MAGGOT! GETCHUR GOSH-DARNED GOLLY WHIPPING KABOOSE OUT OF THE TENT!! WE'VE GOT A WAR HERE!!

Thoreau (Jared): WAR??!! Why, what an insufferably tragic path many a man may boastfully embark upon! Why must so many men deconstruct their unadulterated potential simply to—

General (Kayla): QUIET MAGGOT! THE ENEMY IS APPROACHING! YOU GET YOUR COWARDLY MUCKRAKING PITIFUL FECES-INFESTED CRY TO YOUR MOMMY STUPIDHEAD ON THE FRONT LINES THIS INSTANT!!

BOOM sound in the background

Thoreau (Jared): I do not support this war! By merely lifting my sword, I am forced to voice my full support for a land where the backs of men who built this country to its prosperity are used as stepping stones for another man's profit! I will NEVER swear allegiance to a country whose foundation is built upon such horrid traditions!

Narrator (Abhinav): That's a good point, Thoreau. But don't you receive help from Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose grandfather profited off of slavery? Were you yourself not inspired to go to Walden Woods by the stories of former slaves who lived there before you? If you're a true abolitionist, why fail to acknowledge this?

General (Kayla): I'm a Northerner like you, Thoreau! I am even subscribed to the *Liberator*! I am a hardcore abolitionist, but I'm still here!

Thoreau (Jared): HARK! Know you not the American System?! General, where do you think the cotton for your textile factory back home comes from? You only support ending slavery because it creates competition with the wage labor your enterprise is built on! This war is but a disgraceful attempt to expand human bondage and the claws of industry!

Narrator (Abhinav): Correct again, Thoreau. But, don't you too benefit from the wealth generated from slavery and capitalism? For example, you are able to pay for your elite Harvard education because your siblings worked under the capitalist system, were you not?

General (Kayla): *bonks Thoreau on head* FOOL! WHAT INSUBORDINATION! Although, I wouldn't expect anything less from a man who stayed in prison for not paying his taxes! And what are you doing, dwelling in the woods?! I say you're a coward causing societal chaos.

Thoreau (Jared): General, *you* are the one employing violence! I am being *civil* in my *disobedience*. At any rate, I would much rather stand not more than the length of 10 thumbs from he who—

General (Kayla): SILENCE, MAGGOT! This is war, not poetry! I hate to burst your bubble Thoreau, but not everyone was lucky enough to get a Harvard education like you! The common man cares not for socioeconomics and reckless idealism! American liberty means more land, more resources, more wealth, and more prosperity for more people! Complain to POLK, fight for MEXICO, for all I care! But if you truly value equality and being genuine, you'd be darned wrong to think sitting around and whining will defend your fellow soldiers from being shot at! *Mockingly* After all, they're being used by the government and war is a waste of their time, right?

Narrator (Abhinav): Surprisingly, it seems that the General's words are somewhat truthful. The wild Thoreau has run out of tactics to defend itself. Maybe he'll finally realize the value in so-called *hospitality*? Indeed, New Harmony and Brooks Farm were contemporary to Thoreau, but unlike him, they realized the value of communalism.

Thoreau (Jared): *surprised (exclamation sound)* E-even so, that doesn't mean I ought to—

General (Kayla): These men are concerned with their lives! Are you going to be an individualist coward, no different from those you criticize? Or are you going to fight?

Transitions right into ACT II Scene II: KABLOW BOOM bang bang!

Big Bomb BOOM Sound!!

Narrator (Abhinav): It seems that Mexican forces are now advancing to the Americans.

General (Kayla): [Starts ranting but then realizes Mexican soldier and stops] LOOK OUT THOREAU!

Mexican Soldier Emerges

Thoreau (Jared): AHHH!

The Mexican Soldier draws his sword and engages with Thoreau in combat

Thoreau attempts to draw his sword but fails

Narrator (Abhinav): The wild Thoreau never learned how to draw a sword.

Thoreau attempts again, this time drawing his sword so hard it flies out of his hand.

Narrator (Abhinav): ...or how to wield any sword in general..

General draws his flintlock

General (Kayla): I got this!

He shoots but misses the mexican soldier

Mexican Soldier (Ethan): VIVA LA MÉXICO!!! *charges*

Thoreau (Jared): AHH!

Thoreau falls over and curls up into a ball, causing the Mexican soldier to stop, confused.

Everyone freezes in place

Narrator (Abhinav): Aha! Now we see an example of one of the wild Thoreau's natural defense mechanisms, "the turtle pose". He used this pose to defend himself from government officials when he committed tax evasion. [loses accent] It's not very effective... ugh! Great, I'll have to edit out this pokemon joke too... *Ahem* [accent returns] Let's see how he fares.

Unpause

Mexican soldiers snaps out of his confusion and starts hitting Thoreau with his sword

Finally, thoreau's turtle pose gives up and he opens his arms and looks up at god

Narrator: Unfortunately, it seems this defense tactic failed to protect Thoreau.

Mexican Soldier decapitates Thoreau, and he falls asleep

cue zelda music

Thoreau: WHAT IN THE ANKLE-BITING GOBBLE-SMACKER JUST HAPPENED!!!!
(*bleep*)

In the next few minutes, thoreau spazzes out in a fearful frenzy (silently) while the narrator concludes our play

Narrator: Thank you for tuning into our session today. Join us next time to read and observe Thoreau some more. I would like to thank today's sponsor, Raid Shadow Legends. The first 1,000 people to sign up with the link below will get 30% off their first month of membership. Please do check this amazing game out, it really supports my podcast. Good-bye.

Cue ending song (37 seconds)