

THE THRONE ROOM

By Jonathan Dorf

Cast of Characters

The Theatre Kids:

RIOT

BROOKYLN, the troupe president.

AVERY

QUINN

THE ENSEMBLE, including a Giggling Theatre Kid.

Agents of the Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts:

RED

WHITE

GRAY

The Toilet Paper Poets:

LEAD SINGER POET

FIRST BACKING POET

SECOND BACKING POET

OTHER POETS, as many as you'd like.

CROWD VOICES, recorded or live, as you wish.

The Characters:

SAM, any gender, a teenager stuck to a toilet seat.

TIFFANY, female, a teenage breakfast ninja.

VAL, female, Tiffany's friend, ready for a change.

SONYA, female, Tiffany's friend, the peacemaker.

REILLY, any gender. A teen trying to enjoy a bath.

TULIP, female, a teenager ready to go all-in on the latest TikTok craze.

MARA, female, Tulip's friend who's trying to keep her high school career from going up in flames.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY, a teenage boy.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL, a teenage girl.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID, a non-binary teen.

SKY, any gender, cleaning up graffiti for punishment because of Nick.

NICK, any gender, cleaning up graffiti for punishment.

ALEX, any gender, a teen who's having nightmares.

JORDAN, any gender, Alex's friend and self-appointed counselor.

DISCIPLES OF THE PORCELAIN GOD, any gender and number, but preferably at least four.

DUCKIE, any gender, a giant and arguably hallucinatory rubber duck.

COURTNEY, the teenage girl who moved.

VIOLET, the teenage girl who stayed and ghosted her.

SID, any gender, a teen cleaning a toilet for punishment.

JESS, any gender, but probably the same gender as Sid. Sid's moral support.

LUIS (or LOUISE), the teenager who threw shade at Mara.

AUGUST, a teenage karmic force. Or something like that.

ADDISON, probably female, but not necessarily.

SAWYER, the teenage guy who's been in the bathroom a long time.

JAKE, the teenage guy who's gone to find him.

MISSION CONTROL VOICE, any gender, live or recorded.

THE GIRL WITH THE TOILET SEAT, an astronaut, an inspiration and the one we've all been waiting for. Also, the Voice of the Porcelain God.

The Theatre Ensemble, the Agents and The Toilet Paper Poets can be any gender, as can many of the Characters. If no specific gender is assigned, the role may be gendered according to the needs of the production, with pronouns updated accordingly.

The expectation is that the Theatre Ensemble will play the Characters and the Toilet Paper Poets. Those playing the Agents are theoretically outside the Theatre Ensemble, but Theatre Ensemble members could double those roles if need be, as long as they're made to look sufficiently different. Multiple cast as much--or as little--as you'd like. The play could be done with as few as 8-10 performers or more than 30.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Feel free to make the names of the teachers and administrators mentioned in the script specific to your school if appropriate (and they don't object).

In the premiere, because the agents of the Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts entered through the audience and had to negotiate the stairs, Gray galloped in on a hobby horse. Feel free to use this option, and they could wear a backpack filled with snacks. Be creative.

[Bracketed text] is meant either to replace the text it follows or to allow you to customize certain elements of the show, but it should never be used in addition to what's already there. In the first example, one can use something other than Vick's, and in the second example, you're prompted to plug certain details into the line:

SONYA

I've been using Vick's [or similar] under my nose to mask the bathroom smells.

MARA

Not just saved. You, Tulip Gardenia Jones, have singlehandedly saved the [name of your school] class of [your graduation year].

List of Scenes

Bathroom Break
On With the Show
Toilet Paper Poets, Interlude 1
The Mile High Club, Part 1
*Breakfast at Tiffany's
You're the One, Part 1
TikTok Don't Stop
Toilet Paper Poets, Interlude 2
Unisex Symphony
Graffiti, or 867-5309
The Mile High Club, Part 2
Altar of the Porcelain God
The Empire Strikes Backish
You're the One, Part 2
*All's Fair
Toilet Paper Poets, Interlude 3 (Sort of)
Hopes and Dreams
Toilet Paper Poets, Interlude 4
Karma
Life
Prom Night
Toilet Paper Poets, Interlude 5 (Encore)
You're the One, Part 3
The Mile High Club, Part 3
The Eagle Has Landed

The play runs 70-80 minutes if all scenes are performed. It's possible to cut certain scenes for time (i.e., if you want a shorter running time) or for any other reason. These scenes are marked with an asterisk (*). Any other cuts require permission.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to John Tourtelotte and the advanced theatre students of Hollywood High School (Los Angeles, CA) for their help in the development of the play.

First produced by David Huber and the students of Hoover High School (Glendale, CA).

BATHROOM BREAK

RIOT, a theatre kid of any gender, in a spotlight, or wherever.

RIOT

Shakespeare and the Greeks, authors of quite possibly the greatest plays ever written. Also, some of the most disturbing plays ever written. Here are the sordid highlights:

Sacrificing your daughter.

Murdering your husband.

Murdering your father.

Murdering your mother.

Murdering your brother.

Murdering your children.

Murdering other people's children.

Sleeping with your mother.

Putting your own eyes out.

Putting someone else's eyes out.

Cutting someone's tongue out.

Sealing someone in a cave.

Seducing a widow over her husband's corpse.

Suicide by poison, suicide by snake bite, suicide by dagger and sword, rape, decapitation, madness and my all-time favorite, baking children into a pie and serving them to their mother.

(Beat.)

Many of these things happen more than once--sometimes a lot more. Tons of fratricide and infanticide, and matricide isn't far behind. I think there was just one pie.

(Beat.)

But through all the murders and maimings, you know what we never see? Nobody ever goes to the bathroom.

(Beat.)

We know they had to do it. We know it must have happened. But the closest we ever get is Lady MacBeth washing her hands. And that's not even because she went to the bathroom. She just can't get the imaginary blood off them.

(Beat.)

I get that there's only so much time, but is that the real reason? Or do bathroom scenes make us uncomfortable?

(Channeling Jack Nicholson in

A Few Good Men.)

You want the bathroom? You can't handle the bathroom.

(Beat.)

Seriously, though, what are we afraid of as artists that even our most revered playwrights are running scared of this one place? I know what you're gonna say: "What about *Urinetown*? It's not Shakespeare, but it's all about pee!" Sure, but don't think that one pee-centric show makes up for centuries of creative constipation. Talk to me when we're on *Urinetown, the Sequel...* to the sequel... to the sequel...

RIOT (CONT'D)

(Beat.)

Maybe the problem is this: We need to stop looking at the bathroom as something that happens at intermission. Stop thinking of it as a break. Think of it as an opportunity to bring out our best. I want to see people laugh and cry, be vulnerable and have magical moments...in bathrooms. I want that for myself. Tell me you don't want that too. I'll wait.

(Beat.)

No--I take that back: I won't wait. They say, "Be the change you want to see in the world." It's time to be that change...

ON WITH THE SHOW

Riot pivots out of performance mode.

RIOT

Help!

(Waiting for this to settle,
and then:)

Help! Somebody help!

The ENSEMBLE MEMBERS--except for the soon-to-be introduced agents of the Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts--enter thinking there's some kind of emergency.

VARIOUS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

What?
What is it?
What's wrong?
What happened?
Are you OK?
I heard screaming.
Riot?

An Ensemble Member giggles, which brings glares from the rest of the group.

GIGGLING THEATRE KID

What? It's a funny name.

They all wait expectantly for an answer from Riot.

RIOT

We're performing a play.

Beat.

BROOKLYN

That's why you were yelling?

VARIOUS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

We thought you were in trouble.
Or hurt.

QUINN

Or dead.

BROOKLYN

(To Quinn:)

Dead people don't scream.

QUINN

Almost dead.

(Beat.)

We thought it was an emergency.

RIOT

It is.

QUINN

A play.

RIOT

This play. We need this play. The world needs this play.

Beat.

BROOKLYN

Then I guess we need to do it.

AVERY

(Gesturing at Brooklyn:)

If our troupe president says we're doing it, then we're doing it.

VARIOUS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS

What's it called?
 What's it about?
 Pass out the scripts.
 Schedule auditions.
 Fill out your conflict sheets.
 Who's directing?
 Riot, are you directing?
 Schedule the auditorium.
 I'll do the poster and publicity.
 Set design--who wants to build?
 Lights here.
 I'll do costumes.
 I'll stage manage.

Feel free to have other ensemble members chime in with things they want to do to round out the production.

RIOT

This is awesome--thank you, everyone--but we're performing now.

Beat.

Now?! QUINN

Yes--now. RIOT

So we're on book then. AVERY

No. RIOT

Is it improv then? BROOKLYN

I don't think so. RIOT

Beat.

QUINN
No scripts, no rehearsal, no idea what play we're in. You're literally asking us to be part of the actor's nightmare.

RIOT
It'll come to us.

AVERY
And you know this because...?

RIOT
Because these are our lives.

QUINN
Brooklyn?

Brooklyn thinks.

BROOKLYN
This is impossible.

A ripple runs the ensemble:
Brooklyn's said no. It's over.

BROOKLYN
So let's do it.

The mood flips in a moment: This is happening.

BROOKLYN
Just let it flow, people.
(To themself:)

BROOKLYN (CONT'D)

Somehow, I feel like that was a strangely appropriate direction.

People move into position, and Riot becomes a performer once again.

RIOT

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, non-binary friends of all ages, pets, aliens who may be observing our planet from a galaxy far, far away--

RED (OFF)

Stop!

RIOT

Today, we present to you--

Enter a TEEN IN A RED T-SHIRT, probably from the house.

RED

I said STOP!

The house lights come up as the spotlight goes out. Beat as Red catches their breath.

RED

(Still trying to catch their breath:)

You can't put on this play.

RIOT

But--

Red holds up a finger for silence. They are still sucking air through the next exchange.

RED

I come from the Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts.

QUINN

The what?

RED

The Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts.

QUINN

That sounds like something from *Harry Potter*.

AVERY

It totally sounds like something from *Harry Potter*.

RIOT

That's not a real thing.

RED

It's completely a real thing, and this play can't go on.

BROOKLYN

Because the Department of Impure Thoughts--

RED

Department of *Protection Against* Impure Thoughts--

BROOKLYN

--says so?

RED

Yes. Because we say so.

RIOT

Do you need oxygen?

RED

Are you trying to bribe a government official?

Enter a TEEN IN A WHITE T-SHIRT,
breathing even more heavily than
Red Teen.

RIOT

You're not--

WHITE

(Sucking air while everyone
watches:)

I...am...carrying...the official...decree.

RED

Took you long enough.

WHITE

(Every breath a struggle:)

Do...you...know...how heavy...this...scroll...is?

White, still sucking air,
produces an impossibly tiny
scroll--think inches in length--
though when they unroll it, it
should be long enough to reach
the ground and keep going
comically.

RED
The official decree of the Department of--

BROOKLYN
Impure Thoughts.

RED
Protection Against--calling on you to cease and desist.

Riot examines the scroll.

BROOKLYN
(To Riot, Avery, Quinn and
any other Ensemble members
who may still be on:)
Have any of you heard of the Department of, uh...?

QUINN
Nope.

AVERY
Nada.

RIOT
Never.

RED
That's because the Department of Protection Against Impure
Thoughts is a government agency so secret that when you
leave, they erase all memory that you were ever--

QUINN
That's *Men in Black*.

RED
Where do you think they got it from?

AVERY
(To Quinn:)
Quinn, what does it say?

QUINN
(Trying to read the scroll:)
I mean, it *looks* official.

RIOT
But what does it say?

QUINN
I have no idea.

WHITE
It's in Latin.

RIOT

How are we supposed to read Latin?

RED

You don't need to read Latin. All you need to know is that there will be no bathroom plays!

QUINN

Why?

(Sotto to Riot:)

We're doing bathroom plays?

RED

Because bathrooms are about bodily fluids, and you cannot present your bodily fluids to

(Indicating the audience:)

these people.

RIOT

But--

RED

It's wrong.

WHITE

Very wrong.

Enter GRAY, colleague to Red and White, peddling maniacally on a tricycle. A basket hitched to it-- in front or wherever--contains what appears to be an ample supply of junk food.

GRAY

(As they enter:)

Nothing could be wronger.

RED

(Sotto:)

Nice of you to join us.

WHITE

(Sotto:)

Next time, I get the company car.

GRAY

(Sotto:)

Would you rather I didn't pick up the snacks?

They realize everyone's watching them. Back to the mission:

WHITE

That's right--nothing!

RED

(As White pantomimes:)

Children will cry. Grown men will weep. Fairies will fall down dead.

WHITE

(Chiming in:)

Dogs and cats, living together.

GRAY

(Finishing White's thought:)

Mass hysteria!

QUINN

That's from *Ghostbusters*.

RED

(Lying:)

No it's not.

RIOT

OK. First, ugh. Second, nobody's presenting their bodily fluids to anyone. Third, ugh.

BROOKLYN

(To Riot:)

I got this. I have no idea how, but I got this.

(To White, Red and Gray:)

Did you know the average person spends more than a year of their life in the bathroom? According to some studies, more than two years. If you're somewhere for more than a year, more than two years--guess what: Stuff happens. Life happens. We change. We grow up--and our bathrooms see it all. They're there for us. Sometimes even when our own parents aren't. Did you hear about the girl who brought a toilet seat to back-to-school night?

QUINN

Really?

BROOKLYN

It could happen, and when it does and she tells the story of how that toilet seat told her she could take AP Calculus and Physics and Statistics, that NASA would be lucky to have her and to never stop reaching for the stars, I'll say, "Amen. The throne itself says you're a queen, and don't let anybody tell you different."

QUINN

That is so inspiring.

RED
That'll never happen.

BROOKLYN
(To Red, White and Gray:)
The bathroom's the one true Room of Requirement--the room where it happens. Do you not want things to happen?

RED
It's not like that.

BROOKLYN
Then what's it like?

RED
It's, uh...

WHITE
Tell 'em, Red.

GRAY
(To the actors:)
Prepare to be told.

A painfully long silence as Red tries to think of a good argument. And tries again. And again. It may look not unlike a bad case of constipation.

RIOT
Great. So...if there's nothing else,
(To the audience:)
we now present the story of our lives...in bathrooms.

RED
We are not done here.

QUINN
Buh-bye.

RED
We'll be watching.

WHITE
That's right.

Gray makes the "eyes on you" sign.

RED
For bodily fluids. Uncomfortable truths. And anything that makes us go "hmm..."

That's right. Hmm... WHITE

Hmm... GRAY

We could stop the show at any second. RED

Hmm... WHITE & GRAY

The others start to push Red,
White and Gray off as the trio
feint at them making "hmm..."
noises. Finally, they're gone.

I have a bad feeling they'll be back. RIOT

White and Red reappear.

I'll be back. WHITE, RED & GRAY
(Doing their best Arnold:)

They disappear again.

What are we waiting for?! AVERY
(Immediately springing into
action:)

The Poets! Cue the Poets! OTHERS (VARIOUSLY)

Guys, gals and non-binary pals, give it up for the world's
one and only haiku band, the Toilet Paper Poets! RIOT
(As the others exit:)

Riot and the others exit as the
lights shift...

TOILET PAPER POETS, INTERLUDE 1

Enter the TOILET PAPER POETS, a trio (or more) of poets who look like a rock band. Think Spinal Tap.

The Poets can play any instruments you want, ranging from real instruments--as unusual as you can get your hands on--to air guitar tennis racquets, or anything in between. Crowd noise, as if we're at a stadium rock concert. One poet could function as a Lead Singer, while the other two could do backing vocals, instrumentals--there are no limits to how bizarre you can make this.

LEAD SINGER POET

Toilet paper is...
Our sacred scrolls our parchment
Our cocktail napkins.

On with the show:
Planes and picnics and painting,
As ducks rule the roost.

They finish to an eruption of canned crowd noise, flashing lights, you name it. They run off.

THE MILE HIGH CLUB, PART 1

SAM, a teen of any gender, alone.

SAM

Did you know that in some airplane bathrooms there's a sign telling you not to sit on the throne when you flush? OK--it doesn't use the word "throne"--though that would be kind of epic if it did--it feels like something Southwest [or the "it" airline of the moment] would do.

(Beat.)

But whenever somebody says "don't do it," there's at least one person who's like, "I gotta do it."

Sam slowly raises their hand.

SAM

I mean, seriously what could go wrong? It's not like you can see the ground through the bottom of the bowl. You're inside the plane. It's the stinky, probably-got-pee-on-the-floor-and-the-door-knob-is-a-petri-dish part of the plane, but it's still inside the plane.

(Beat.)

So...I do the deed--with a seat cover, of course--and then I flush. I'm not gonna lie: it feels kind of amazing, like those Japanese toilets--only with air and not water, and I'm like, I gotta tell my mom about this. And Randy. Especially Randy, because he's being a total pain--punching me and then when I punch him back, telling Mom I started it. And Mom won't let him go on his own, so there's no chance he'll get to do this, which is 11 out of 10 on the torture scale.

(Beat.)

And I'm writing my speech in my head--something like "Yo, parasite, I just discovered the best thing ever, but it's not for babies who need their mommies to go to the bathroom." And he's going to ask me what and I'm going to be like, "Don't you wish you knew." And he's going to beg and beg and finally I'm going to make him confess to Grandma's vase and the car farts and ruining six months' worth of Rocky Road and a long list of other crimes--some of which I may have actually committed--and it's going to be glori--

Sam acts as if they're trying to stand up, only they're stuck.

SAM

--uh...

Sam tries again.

SAM

Help?

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

TIFFANY, SONYA and VAL in a bathroom with what would otherwise be perfect for a picnic: Blanket, picnic basket, insulated food delivery bag, coffee drinks and some muffins already in hand. The one outlier: air freshener.

SONYA

(Halfway through a muffin:)

This is amazing. It's blueberries and--what is that?

TIFFANY

Basil.

VAL

Iconic.

TIFFANY

Baked with love.

VAL

Iconic love.

SONYA

(Pronouncing scones with a long o)

I think this is even better than those fig scones.

VAL

(Pronouncing scones with the same vowel sound as "gone")

Or was it the fig scones?

TIFFANY

Tomato tomahto. I'm just happy you guys are happy.

The sound of the door opening.

TIFFANY

(To an unseen person, suddenly like a Mogwai that's turned into a Gremlin:)

You know the bathroom's closed until 8!

The door closes. Tiffany returns to her pleasant self.

TIFFANY

We should get to the bennies soon. They'll stay warm in the carrier, but I feel like the texture changes.

SONYA

Nobody wants a congealed hollandaise.

TIFFANY

That's what I'm talking about. Should I plate?

VAL

(Takes a leap:)

Do you ever wonder what would happen if we did this somewhere else?

TIFFANY

What do you mean?

VAL

Well, this is like a picnic, right? So what if we actually did the picnic...outside?

TIFFANY

This is tradition.

SONYA

It is tradition.

VAL

But, like, why?

TIFFANY

What are you, sundowning?

VAL

No, I--

TIFFANY

Then you remember when we were freshmen and this was literally the only place we didn't get kicked out of. And though thankfully those days have been dumped into the horrific dustbin of high school history, we made a vow never to forget our roots.

SONYA

Should that be freshwomen?

TIFFANY

Sonya.

SONYA

Freshpersons?

SONYA!
TIFFANY

VAL
It smells in here.

TIFFANY
Of good food, better memories and best friends.

VAL
It kinda smells like they missed a cleaning.

TIFFANY
And that's why we have the air freshener.

SONYA
Maybe we should've doubled up on that today.

The bathroom door opens again.
Tiffany goes Gremlin again:

TIFFANY
What part of "closed until 8" do you not understand?!

The door slams shut. Tiffany goes
back to Mogwai:

VAL
I just--
(No turning back now:)
We've been doing this for three years, and Breakfast at
Tiffany's is, like, the highlight of my life.

TIFFANY
I love that we call it that.

SONYA
That is iconic.

VAL
I just wonder if maybe it's time to move it to a nicer spot--
like outside somewhere.

TIFFANY
Val, where is this coming from?
(Beat.)
I get up at 4 a.m., not for me, but for you. For the two of
you.

VAL
I didn't ask you to do that.

SONYA
I, uh...appreciate that you do.

TIFFANY

And I appreciate your appreciation.

VAL

What about the senior benches? Or maybe the East Courtyard...?

TIFFANY

You know I'm agoraphobic.

VAL

No you're not.

TIFFANY

I am too.

VAL

You seemed fine at the pep rally last week on the football field.

TIFFANY

It comes and goes.

SONYA

(Beat. Waiting for lightning
to strike her down:)

I've been using Vick's [or similar] under my nose to mask the bathroom smells. I hit the wall six months ago and I just couldn't take another day.

TIFFANY

Et tu, Sonya?

The bathroom door opens once
more. Tiffany goes Gremlin:

TIFFANY

Open this door again and die!

The door slams shut. Tiffany goes
back to Mogwai. She smiles at Val
and Sonya benignly. Beat.

TIFFANY

I thought you loved this.

SONYA

I do. We do.

VAL

We just need a venue worthy of your talents.

Beat.

SONYA

If you could overcome your agoraphobia, what about the picnic bench by the old swings?

VAL

It's got that view of our old elementary--I know you love your nostalgia.

TIFFANY

What if it rains?

VAL

I read about these instant tents.

TIFFANY

You mean like, camping?

SONYA

Glamping.

TIFFANY

(Beat.)

I suppose I could glamp--with a side of nostalgia.

VAL

Yay!

SONYA

Group hug!

They hug as the door opens once more.

TIFFANY

(Going Gremlin at the door-opener while still in the hug:)

I will end you!

Tiffany goes back to her Mogwai self, smiling at Val and Sonya as the lights dim on them.

YOU'RE THE ONE, PART 1

REILLY, any gender and wearing a bathrobe, closes the bathroom door.

REILLY

To the rest of the world, Wednesday may be Hump Day, but at casa moi, it's Date Night. That's right, that magical evening of spontaneity hard-wired into the calendar when my parents "rekindle the spark." So, for at least the next 117 minutes, which is when Mom and Dad's dreary subtitled art film comes to its incredibly ambiguous ending, it's go time for me time. The bath will be 103 degrees, with bubbles by L'Occitane [or your favorite bath bubble product], and a very special friend will be here to take all my troubles away.

From the depths of the robe, as if it's been smuggled in, Reilly pulls out a package.

REILLY

Shhh! I can hear my parents now. You're 16, Reilly--what are you thinking? I can't even imagine what kids at school would say if it ever got out. Violet--my new bff now that her old bff Courtney is gone--should understand, or at least do her best not to judge me. I don't know. Maybe she'd be like, "Reilly, you too?!" And then we'd laugh and--I don't know, maybe we'd do it together sometime. OK. That's a bit much, because it just feels like such a private thing.

Reilly inspects the bath, possibly reaching to shut off the (imaginary) water.

REILLY

You have no idea how much I need this.

Reilly unwraps the package: It's a rubber duckie.

REILLY

Duckie, I've missed you. Did you miss me too?

The lights fade as Reilly steps over the threshold and into the "bath."

TIKTOK DON'T STOP

TULIP and MARA in a high school bathroom. Nearby--seen or not--a soap dispenser.

It's a soap dispenser. TULIP

I know. MARA

People are ripping out toilets. This is nothing. TULIP

I know. MARA

OK. TULIP

It's just that-- MARA

What? TULIP

Well, soap is important. MARA

And...? TULIP

Well, it's important. MARA

OK... TULIP

MARA
(Beat.)
I just think maybe we should think.

About...? TULIP

You know. MARA

TULIP
You know what would be hilarious? We could turn it into a commercial for soap. Would that still count?

What? MARA

If we commercialized soap. Is that a word? Commercialized? TULIP

I don't think so. MARA

But it would be funny, right? TULIP

What if we get caught? MARA

Luis said you wouldn't do it. TULIP

You said Luis was an idiot. MARA

Well, I-- TULIP

That's what you said yesterday. Actually, no: Your exact words were "Luis is the biggest idiot I've ever seen." MARA

I was exaggerating. TULIP

Barely. MARA

Fair. He's definitely top 10. But is he wrong? TULIP
(Beat.)
Seriously, your image could use a little coolification.

Also not a word. MARA

Coolifying? TULIP

Nope. MARA

What are you, the word police? TULIP
(Beat.)
A little firing up?

MARA

Still firing blanks.

TULIP

All I'm saying is it wouldn't kill you to be on-trend for once in your life.

MARA

(A question:)

This is trendy.

TULIP

...

MARA

I'm just sayin', if we post it, that's how people get caught.

TULIP

That's how people get followers.

MARA

I'm barely on the app.

TULIP

Then help *me* get followers.

(Beat.)

If we all do it, they're not gonna punish us.

MARA

Because...?

TULIP

They can't punish the whole school.

MARA

Prom.

TULIP

What about prom? What-- You think they could-- They can't cancel prom.

MARA

They could totally cancel prom.

TULIP

They would never--

MARA

Do you want to be the soap dispenser that pushes Mamakas over the edge?

TULIP

Dr. Mamakas loves prom. Do you remember last year how he and Mrs. Richmond were doing those 80s dance moves that were weird and mildly disturbing but also strangely endearing? He lives for prom.

MARA

Kill your darlings.

TULIP

What?

MARA

It's an expression.

TULIP

I'm pretty sure it doesn't mean that.

MARA

At this moment, it means exactly that.

TULIP

People know I'm doing this. They are expecting me to do this.

MARA

Tell them you changed your mind. No--tell them you came up with something better.

TULIP

I came up with something better?

MARA

Yes. You did. You're not just on-trend--you are the trend.

TULIP

And prom is saved.

MARA

Not just saved. You, Tulip Gardenia Jones, have singlehandedly saved the [name of your school] class of [your graduation year].

TULIP

I have. I have!

(Beat.)

I have no idea what to do. I don't know what the next trend is.

MARA

To see ahead, look behind.

TULIP

That sounds like a fortune cookie.

MARA
Got it from China Palace [or your favorite local Chinese spot] last week. But it's not wrong.

TULIP
To see ahead, look behind.

MARA
Exactly.

TULIP
(Having an idea:)
Like kid stuff.

MARA
Yes.

TULIP
Stuffed animals, temper tantrums, diapers...

MARA
Keep going...

TULIP
Crayons, playdoh, fingerpaints, baby food--

MARA
That's it!

TULIP
Baby food?

MARA
No--fingerpaints.

TULIP
What's wrong with baby food?

MARA
Nothing.

TULIP
But fingerpaints are better?

MARA
Yes. Imagine for a--

TULIP
What about fingerpainting with baby--

MARA
No! Now imagine--

TULIP

I just want this--

MARA

Close your damn [freakin'] eyes and shut your mouth!

(Beat.)

Please. Imagine you're outside. Birds are chirping.

TULIP

Birds are--

MARA

Do you want to save prom or not?!

TULIP

Yes.

MARA

All right. So you're outside. Birds may or may not be chirping, but there are fingerpaints, lots of different colors of fingerpaints, and you are fingerpainting, only you're fingerpainting all over your body, which includes one of those dancer skin-colored body suit things or the clothes of your choice but probably PG-13 because *prom* and at the end you turn yourself into a human canvas--possibly while using optional dance moves--and challenge someone else to do the same.

TULIP

Huh.

MARA

Yes...?

TULIP

That could actually trend. I didn't know you had it in you.

MARA

Thanks, I think.

TULIP

You co-saved prom.

MARA

I guess I did.

TULIP

We still need to work in the baby food somehow.

End of scene.

TOILET PAPER POETS, INTERLUDE 2

The Toilet Paper Poets return,
possibly in different outfits,
but equally outrageous and with
just as much fanfare. Again, the
backing Poets contribute as much
vocally or instrumentally as
you'd like.

LEAD SINGER POET

Paper in our hands,
It's the one place of business
Where we're all equal.

BACKING POET

Thank you, [Name of your town]!

They run off to more insane
canned crowd noise.

UNISEX SYMPHONY

Three teens walk separately into a new kind of bathroom: a BOY, a GIRL and a NON-BINARY KID. They see each other. Beat as each becomes lit in their individual spotlight.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

I'm low-key nervous. I'm going to the bathroom with girls.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

I'm not sure what I think of this. I mean, you walk in and there's boys.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

I mean, not with girls, but like, with girls.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

Trans and non-binary kids too.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

I'm excited. I'm also nervous.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

Like, a girl could be in the stall next to me. What if I fart?

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

But that's pretty much whatever except to people who still think fax machines are a thing.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

If you told me five years ago I'd be excited about a bathroom, I'd have told you to check your meds.

The Unisex Symphony Boy makes a fart noise.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

In high school, that could ruin your life.

Lights up on Red, White and Gray, outside somewhere.

RED

Hmmm...

White brandishes a gadget that can be as ridiculous as you want it to be:

WHITE

The Uncomfortable Truth-o-Meter is going wild.

RED

This is a thing that makes me go "hmm..."

GRAY

Hmm...

They can continue to ad-lib
"Hmm..." as the lights go down on
them.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

Anyway, story time.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

It's not like we're in here together. I mean, we're together,
but not together. We all go into our stalls and...go to the
bathroom.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

My dad's from Brooklyn. He always says, "Keep your eyes
open." Who's in front of you? Who's behind you? You've got to
treat the bathroom like the street.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

And then we come out and wash our hands. And leave.

UNISEX NON-BINARY KID

I used to go to the other side of the school to use the all-
gender singles, but there's only a couple--and they're not
specifically for non-binary and trans kids.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

Here's the deal: They can only tie you to your fart if they
catch you.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

I get that that's what you're supposed to do in the bathroom,
but bathrooms are so much more. I'm not talking about
brushing your hair or doing makeup.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

Without getting graphic, that has the potential to end badly.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

You've got the communal sink and mirrors and the row of
stalls. If nobody's at the sink, get into a stall as fast as
you can.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

And I'm glad each stall has a "feminine products receptable."
Huge win.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

I'll never forget that time somebody was projectile vomiting in the first one and somebody else was having a nervous breakdown in the other one. Another nine seconds and I would've had a different breakdown--all over the hallway.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

No phone calls, recording for social media or singing along to your favorite song. If you do and things go bad, now they can ID your voice. Just because you didn't see anyone on the way in doesn't mean someone isn't already in a stall.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

Wait--what if there's a boy inside when you make that ripping-Velcro sound, and he knows what it means because he's got sisters or he watches rom-coms or he heard it when his mom didn't know he was listening and he's unnaturally curious?

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

It's not that I think bathrooms like this are unicorns. I know they exist.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

If people are out there when you come in, then they've seen you. You can try to wait them out, but sooner or later, you gotta make your move.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

Maybe I can play white noise on my phone. Or random sound effects. Or death metal.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

We went to this fancy restaurant in LA [or the nearest cosmopolitan city], and they had this exact setup. Well, theirs had organic soap and cloth towels you threw into a hamper--and candles.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

So here's what you do: Imagine you're a diver. If you go right to the surface, your body can't get rid of the nitrogen fast enough, and you'll get sick. Same thing here. Don't go for the gold in one push: Imagine yourself swimming slowly upward--with your butt.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

But the bathroom is where you go when that smiling psycho Tabitha just ruined your life--again--or you're having a wardrobe malfunction and only your best friend can fix you or your mom is out of control and you need therapy. Or it used to be.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

I'm not asking for actual candles--I'm not delusional--but could we talk about electric candles someday?

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

Still, sometimes bad things happen. If nobody's out there, no harm, no foul: Wash your hands and go while the going is good.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

Of course, it was also the scene for conversations like this:

(Pretending to be two
different people:)

Serious question: What is the difference between cute and hot?

Jake is cute, and Sawyer is hot.

You think so?

Sawyer sets off my gaydar.

You're just mad he's taking Mara to prom.

UNISEX SYMPHONY NON-BINARY KID

I think that's why I'm nervous--because this bathroom is my dream. Well, my dream is also getting into Harvard, seeing Machu Picchu and winning a Tony, but this is the immediate dream.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

But if there's even a chance there's a witness who can make you, your only option is to accuse them before they accuse you.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

(As herself again:)

OK--I won't miss those conversations. As for the other ones, that's gonna be a change.

UNISEX NON-BINARY KID

So I guess I'm livin' the dream! Seriously, though, this bathroom is a game-changer.

UNISEX SYMPHONY BOY

I hope I never have to do that, but like Machiavelli says in history class, "The end justifies the means." The end is me making it through high school.

UNISEX SYMPHONY GIRL

But life is change. In two years [or however long for the actor], I'm off to college. If I can't handle a bathroom, how am I gonna handle that?

UNISEX NON-BINARY KID

And that's my nightmare: What if it's not real? What if I wake up and it's gone. No motion-activated communal sink, no row of beautiful stalls, no future electric candles.

(Beat.)

I just want to go to the bathroom in peace. I don't think that's too much to ask.

GRAFFITI, OR 867-5309

NICK (or NIK, short for either Nicholas or Nicole) and SKY (short for Skylar), any gender, in the bathroom. Sky is on their knees in a stall.

SKY

I hate my life.

NICK

You have to think of a situation like this as an opportunity.

SKY

An opportunity to strangle you with no witnesses?

NICK

Love you, Sky.

SKY

Grrr...

NICK

You know what your problem is?

SKY

You?

NICK

You're a glass half-full person.

SKY

I am on my knees in a bathroom scrubbing decades-old graffiti because of you.

NICK

I made you steal that soap dispenser.

SKY

Yes.

NICK

Did I put it in your hands?

SKY

Yes!

NICK

I mean, technically yes, but you were a willing accomplice.

SKY

You're like the poster child for gaslighting.

NICK

I just have a different memory of how it happened.

SKY

You said "Come to the bathroom with me--I need to tell you something." I thought you were gonna come out to me.

NICK

Why would I pick a bathroom to come out in?

SKY

Why not? People do. And then the next thing I know, you yank the soap dispenser from the wall and shove it in my hands.

NICK

...

SKY

That's what happened.

NICK

And you should be thanking me.

SKY

For getting me sentenced to hard labor?

NICK

We could be cleaning toilets like Sid.

SKY

...

NICK

Instead, we're boldly going where no man has gone before.

SKY

You're quoting *Star Trek*.

NICK

I'm sad for you that you know that.

(Beat.)

Seriously, though, this graffiti is like a time capsule. We're anthropologists--or is it archeologists?--encountering the writings of our ancestors.

SKY

(Reading some of the graffiti:)

Class of [the year before the current year, e.g., '22] rules! Yeah--real ancient.

(Finding another scrawling:)

"Jake + Tulip." They still go here.

NICK
(Joining in the graffiti
hunt:)

What about this one?

SKY

Which one?

NICK
(Pointing:)

This.

SKY
(Looking:)

I can barely read it.

Sky pulls out their phone to
create more light. At this point,
they're both leaning down to
explore the same patch of wall.

NICK
867-5309. Phone number?

SKY
It says, "For a good time call..." Whoa.

NICK
Jenny. Dang, this is crazy. All these people wrote all this
stuff:

(Reading:)
Jenny I've got your number.
I need to make you mine.
Jenny don't change your number.

SKY
(Reading:)
I got your number on the wall.
Jenny I've called your number.
Jenny, Jenny who can I turn to.
(No longer reading:)
These people are desperate.

NICK
(Reading again:)
I tried to call you before but I lose my nerve.
I tried my imagination but I was disturbed.

SKY
No kidding. Poor Jenny.
(Back to reading:)
For the price of a dime I can always turn to you.
867-5309. 867-5309. 867-5309.

SKY (CONT'D)
(No longer reading:)

This is intense.

NICK
(Checking something on their
phone:)

Fun fact: Payphones started costing a dime in the 1950s and stayed that way into the '80s. That means this graffiti is at least 40 years old. We've discovered a relic from the ancient world.

SKY
What about Jenny?

NICK
(Not sure where Sky is going
with this:)
Uh, she's ancient too...?

SKY
No, I mean don't you want to know if she's OK?

NICK
It was forty years ago.

SKY
...

NICK
You're not seriously suggesting we call that number.

SKY
Maybe the universe sent us to this bathroom for a reason.

NICK
(Serious:)
You want an apology? Is that what this is about? I'm sorry:
It's my fault you're in trouble. One hundred percent. Happy?

SKY
I'm serious, Nick.

NICK
Even if by some miracle she's still at that number, I'm sure she doesn't need a couple high school kids checking in on her.

SKY
How do you know?

NICK
"For a good time, call..."

Sky has their phone out.

Don't. NICK

Why do you even care? SKY

I don't. Which is how you survive high school. NICK

So you care about me surviving. SKY

Don't twist my words. NICK

... SKY

... NICK

Unlike the soap dispenser, this is my choice. SKY

I'm begging you... NICK

SKY
(Into the phone:)
Hi, my name is Skylar, and I'm not calling for a good time--
but I am wondering if Jenny is still at this number...

The lights dim on Sky and Nick.

THE MILE HIGH CLUB, PART 2

Sam is still "stuck." They hold up a phone and take a selfie.

SAM

That moment you realize your butt is suctioned to the airplane toilet seat. So gonna post this. When we land. Mom won't let me get Wi-Fi 'cause it costs an extra \$25.

(Beat.)

Kidding about the selfie. Try getting your butt stuck at 35,000 feet and see if you remember to take one. I try not to freak out. It's not like being trapped in an elevator. I have a theory about elevators. Do you want to hear it? They post all these signs about how you shouldn't panic because you're not gonna run out of air or fall uncontrollably...but I think those are just lies they tell you because if you knew the truth you'd highkey panic and run back and forth inside the elevator and throw yourself at the door like one of those birds in horror movies and then you really might run out of air or fall uncontrollably. It's just a theory.

(Beat.)

So...at first they think I mean that I can't get the door open. And this guy who sounds like my grandpa is very nicely trying to explain how the latch works, that maybe it's stuck and how sometimes at home he has to pull the door out a little before he can push it in. Grandpa, I'm 99.9% sure if I could reach the latch I could open the door, but sorry, my ass is glued to the seat and my arms are a foot too short. I don't know a nice way to say that, so I just say I can't. And Grandpa says, "Well..." Then I start to hear other voices:

(Imitating the other voices:)

"What's going on in there?"

"It's been 20 minutes."

"I really have to go."

"Is it just one person in there?"

And then somebody starts banging. Angry banging.

(Beat.)

Finally, I just blurt it out: "I'm stuck to the toilet seat." Some dude straight up laughs. I hear a woman tell him it's not funny. Honestly, it would be hilarious if it wasn't happening to me. But it is, and the voice isn't just some woman. It's my mom: She says she's going to get help.

(Beat.)

A minute later, more voices. One of them is a flight attendant, and she and my mom are telling me to stay calm--they're going to get me out. Then there's more conversation, but I can't make out the words. And then there's another voice: It's the captain. The short version: If I don't unstuck naturally, I'm gonna have to hang tight until we land--in two hours--but I should let them know if I start feeling like I'm gonna pass out.

(Beat.)

SAM (CONT'D)

That's where I start to lose it, because I can barely feel my butt or anything...south, and what if I'm not getting blood there for two hours until the plane lands? What if that's too long? What if they need to amputate? I just wanted to see what would happen if-- I'm freaking out. I try calling for my mom, but it's like the words are stuck. I'm going to die, and even worse, they're going to find me with my pants down.

ALTAR OF THE PORCELAIN GOD

In a blinding spotlight on an otherwise dark stage--think star chamber--is ALEX, any gender. Lights up just enough for us to see that closing in on them while maintaining a semicircle formation are the DISCIPLES. The disciples--at least four would be nice for maximum intimidation--are dressed like monks in robes and hoods, preferably black or brown. Behind them, cloaked in shadows for the moment, is a toilet.

FIRST DISCIPLE

You dare defile the altar?!

ALEX

Me? No, I--

SECOND DISCIPLE

Blasphemy!

THIRD DISCIPLE

Sacrilege!

ALEX

I didn't defile anyth--

FOURTH DISCIPLE
(Pointing at Alex:)

Heretic!

ALEX

I don't even know what that means.

FIRST DISCIPLE

Stone the heretic!

ALEX

Whoa--no. No stoning!

SECOND DISCIPLE

Off with their head!

ALEX

You have the wrong person. I just went to the bathroom--

FIRST DISCIPLE

You worshipped at the altar of the Porcelain God and did not make your offering.

ALEX
 Wait--what?

SECOND DISCIPLE
 You. Did. Not. Flush.

ALEX
 I-- Yes, I did. I thought I did. Maybe it's broken?

THIRD DISCIPLE
 Fetch the axe!

ALEX
 I'm sorry!

FOURTH DISCIPLE
 Fetch the rocks!

ALEX
 C'mon, please--

FIRST DISCIPLE
 Drag them to the river [lake, reservoir or whatever might be nearby]!

ALEX
 Haven't we all been there?!

Heavenly music and what seems like a massive flush intertwined as lights rise on the toilet, er...altar. The altar itself has either a statue or projection atop it of the Porcelain God: A girl astronaut holding a toilet seat, perhaps with divine-looking rays coming from it. We hear a voice, shrouded in effects so as to sound otherworldly.

VOICE OF THE PORCELAIN GOD
 (Shrouded in effects:)
 Always remember to flush...

With that, the Disciples advance threateningly toward Alex, who is trapped and can't escape. Just as they grab Alex and things look terrible, all freeze and the lights shift. Alex steps into a scene with JORDAN, any gender. Lights fade on the toilet and the Disciples, who should exit quietly.

It's as if none of what we've just witnessed ever happened.

JORDAN

And it's the same dream every night?

ALEX

Sometimes it ends a little sooner, sometimes a little later, but yeah. For two weeks now.

JORDAN

(Beat.)

Maybe it's, like, a vision. Yeah, maybe it's a vision and you're a prophet.

ALEX

Or maybe I'm going crazy.

JORDAN

Also possible. But check it: The unflushed toilet represents your fear.

ALEX

Of what?

JORDAN

Of not flushing the toilet.

ALEX

Why didn't I think of that?

JORDAN

But that's not the important part.

ALEX

Of course not.

JORDAN

We're all afraid of forgetting to flush. Some days I'm so terrified I can't get out of bed--and don't even get me started on the threat of bowl spray--but that's just the backdrop. The part of the dream you need to be paying attention to is this astronaut holding the toilet seat.

ALEX

The Porcelain God.

JORDAN

Exactly.

ALEX

Uh...why?

JORDAN

Well, astronauts are heroes, right? They represent humanity's potential to reach for the stars.

ALEX

OK, and...

JORDAN

So--and I realize I'm reaching a little bit--I think this recurring astronaut-toilet-spacegod dream means somebody's going to come into your life soon, or you're going to have this choice to do the hard thing or the easy thing and you need to reach for the stars, or maybe just that a spaceship carrying a toilet seat-wielding astronaut girl is going to crash land on campus and don't get smushed by it.

ALEX

That's not going to happen.

JORDAN

Probably not.

ALEX

Definitely not.

JORDAN

Who can say? People are fingerprinting on their own bodies and recording themselves as they dance.

ALEX

Sign of the apocalypse?

JORDAN

We are living in the end times. Or the matrix.

Beat.

ALEX

So what do I do?

JORDAN

I was thinking we might join in.

End of scene.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACKISH

The Toilet Paper Poets are tuning up their instruments, their pads and their lips for their next appearance--feel free for this to be absurd--when Red, White and their colleague Gray enter.

You're the Poets?!

RED

That's us.

LEAD SINGER POET

We love poetry.

RED

We do?

WHITE

Red kicks White furtively but hard.

WHITE

(Stifling a yelp:)

Yes. Poetry--we love it. I thought he said "we love growing trees." Trees are too much work for me.

RED

(Indicates an area offstage:)

Could we talk to you more about poetry over there?

WHITE

We love talking poetry. With poets. And ourselves.

GRAY

We talk about it all the time. How...poetic it is.

LEAD SINGER POET

Smashing. We've got some new material we're working on.

GRAY

We can't wait.

LEAD SINGER POET

It's gonna rock really hard.

Red gestures for the Toilet Paper Poets to exit--they do--and then follows them off with White and Gray.

YOU'RE THE ONE, PART 2

Reilly is in the bath, which could be as basic as sitting behind a cardboard front of a tub.

REILLY

This is the life. Me and you, Duckie. Splashin', thrashin' and--

Enter DUCKIE, human-sized.

DUCKIE

I don't know how I feel about this.

Reilly gasps and tries to cover up.

REILLY

Duckie?! I'm nake--

DUCKIE

Nothing I haven't seen before.

REILLY

Wait-- What? I must've hit my head on the tub. I don't remember it, but of course I don't remember it: I hit my head.

Duckie shakes their head. Beat. Reilly grabs for a towel, but Duckie grabs it first and holds it away.

REILLY

Duckie, please give me--

DUCKIE

This all feels very one-sided.

REILLY

No, it's not like that. I--

DUCKIE

Then why won't you ever sing the song?

REILLY

You know I can't sing the song.

DUCKIE

Copyright shmopywright.

REILLY
Copyright is real, Duckie.

DUCKIE
And I'm not?

Duckie throws the towel offstage.

DUCKIE
Does this look real to you?

REILLY
Duckie, what are you--

DUCKIE
Or this?

Duckie grabs Reilly's bathrobe.

REILLY
Not the--

Duckie throws the robe offstage.

REILLY
--robe. Can we talk about this?

DUCKIE
We're talking.

REILLY
No--you're throwing my things through the wall, which is impossible but seems to be happening anyway.

DUCKIE
It seems to be the only way I can get your attention, and believe me I've tried. That last time you squeezed me, I squeaked out "Help!" by the Beatles, but you just kept blowing bubbles in my face.

REILLY
I'm sorry. I didn't know.

DUCKIE
How do you not know the Beatles?!

REILLY
I know the Beatles, but--

DUCKIE
And the time before that, it was "S.O.S." by Abba, and you dunked me.

REILLY

I didn't reali--

DUCKIE

Or Aretha Franklin's "Rescue Me" right before you underwater farted and held me in front of the blast?

REILLY

I'm not proud of that.

(Beat.)

I guess I just didn't understand the...situation.

(Beat.)

I'm sorry. I should have considered how my actions might affect you. But I'm listening now. One hundred percent.

DUCKIE

It feels like you're ashamed of me.

REILLY

No.

DUCKIE

You keep me hidden in a bag in a box under a box in the closet--in the dark. Do you know what what's like? It's like being buried alive. And when you take me out each week, I can't help but hope: Maybe this time I'll finally be free. Two hours later, I'm back in the grave.

REILLY

(Beat.)

I'm sorry. I just don't want my parents to find you.

DUCKIE

Right--because you're ashamed of me.

REILLY

No--I'm not.

(Beat.)

It's complicated.

(Beat.)

Any chance I could get my robe? Or at least a towel?

DUCKIE

It's complicated.

The lights dim on their standoff.

ALL'S FAIR

A bathroom at a county fair.
 COURTNEY is halfway inside,
 leaning out the door to talk to
 someone we don't see.

COURTNEY

Just wait. That's not what I'm--

VIOLET, washing her hands, turns
 at the sound of Courtney's voice.

VIOLET

Courtney?

COURTNEY

Who's--

(Turning to see her:)

Violet?!

(Beat.)

No way.

VIOLET

This is--

COURTNEY

Insane.

VIOLET

Like, insane squared.

COURTNEY

I mean, there's coincidence, and then--

VIOLET

There's like, lottery-level coincidence.

COURTNEY

This is all six numbers of the Powerball coincidence.

VIOLET

What are you doing at a random county fair in Santa Maria?

COURTNEY

Mom's on a mission to see every national park in the lower
 48. So we just hit Channel Islands, and she's like, "Who's up
 for funnel cakes?" So here we are.

VIOLET

Yep. Here we are.

There's an awkward silence.

VIOLET
I'm dating this guy who's, like, all into pigs.

COURTNEY
Like, actual pigs?

VIOLET
He raises actual pigs.

COURTNEY
Does he know you're vegan? Are you...still vegan?

VIOLET
I'm probably dumping him on Monday, but I heard Plant Kingdom was gonna be here.

COURTNEY
I don't know what that is.

VIOLET
And he drives.

COURTNEY
Is that a band?

VIOLET
Food truck.

(Beat.)
They're normally only in San Francisco [or another city that's a little too far to drive to regularly], and this might be the only time they're kinda near LA, so I had to. Does that make me a terrible person?

COURTNEY
You didn't start dating him just so he could drive you to Santa Maria to eat at Plant Planet--

VIOLET
Kingdom--

COURTNEY
Plant Kingdom--did you?

VIOLET
I didn't even know he had a car, at least not consciously.

COURTNEY
OK then.

(Beat.)
Well, you might be a little bit of a terrible person.

VIOLET
(Beat.)
I meant to text, and then, you know...life.

COURTNEY

Three times. Three is officially ghosting.

VIOLET

I know. I meant to, but the first time, I lost my phone and I lost all my messages, and the second time, I was doing this new fingerpainting bodypainting TikTok thing and I couldn't touch my phone, but then like 12 people texted and it got pushed way down and I forgot.

COURTNEY

And the third time?

VIOLET

I just wasn't in a good place for a while and I didn't message anybody, so...

COURTNEY

Are you OK?

VIOLET

Better. Not perfect, but better.
(Beat.)

How's Chicago?

COURTNEY

Urban. Lake's nice. Winter's brutal. More real than LA.

VIOLET

Everywhere's more real than LA.

COURTNEY

There's this place called Dubai where they built these high-rise towers on land that's basically reclaimed from the sea. Tallest building in the world is there. I think it gives LA some competition in the fake department.

(Beat.)

The Burj-Khalifa. I don't know if I'm pronouncing it right.

VIOLET

Crazy. That's in Chicago?

COURTNEY

Nah. Middle East somewhere.

VIOLET

I'll have to Google it.

COURTNEY

I should probably go to the bathroom before my mom thinks I ran away.

VIOLET

Yeah, I should get back to Bryan before he thinks I left with somebody else.

COURTNEY

Brian with an i or Bryan with a Y?

VIOLET

Y, of course.

COURTNEY

Is his brother Jake?

VIOLET

That's the one.

COURTNEY

I remember him. He was nice. Didn't know about the pigs.

VIOLET

Yeah, the old point guard slash pig breeder slash ballet dancer combo.

COURTNEY

He dances ballet?!

VIOLET

He doesn't really want people to know.

COURTNEY

I feel that.

VIOLET

Would it be cheesy if I said I missed this?

COURTNEY

You can say it anyway.

VIOLET

I'm gonna text you this time.

COURTNEY

Maybe I won't text you back.

VIOLET

You'd better text me.

(Beat.)

I'm texting you now.

COURTNEY

(Pronounced like "vie":)

Bye Vi. Say hi to Bryan with a Y.

Courtney exits.

Sent!

VIOLET

Beat. There's the sound of a notification on Violet's phone. She smiles. End of scene.

TOILET PAPER POETS, INTERLUDE 3 (SORT OF)

Enter what seems to be the Toilet Paper Poets, but this time, they're wearing full-on hazmat suits with some rock and roll flourishes on top of that. There's something incredibly awkward about them, as if they've forgotten how to perform-- probably because they're not the Toilet Paper Poets: they're Red, White and Gray.

RED

Wave your hands in the air, wave 'em like you just don't care.

(Sotto to White and Gray:)

I always wanted to say that.

Crowd chants of "haiku, haiku, haiku" pick up.

RED

Bodily fluids biohazard
Bad bad bad bad bad bad bad
Down with fluids, down...

WHITE

--the hatch?

RED

Escape hatch. Batch. Latch.

WHITE

Thatch.

GRAY

What's thatch?

WHITE

Uh...

Boos from the crowd, scattered at first and then louder.

CROWD VOICES (VARIOUSLY)

That's not a haiku.
You're not the poets.
We want the poets!
Poets! Poets! Poets!

RED
 (Taking off their hazmat
 suit:)
 That's right. We're not the poets, and we're not here for
 poetry. We're here with a message.

WHITE
 A warning.

GRAY
 A prognostication.

RED
 We're downright oracular.

WHITE
 (Sotto:)
 I don't know what those are.

GRAY
 (Sotto:)
 Roll with it.

RED
 She is coming.
 (To White and Gray:)
 Reverb me:
 (To the audience:)
 She...

WHITE & GRAY
 (Doing their best in the next
 sequence to sound like
 reverb:)
 She, she, she...

RED
 Is...

WHITE & GRAY
 Is, is, is...

RED
 Coming...

WHITE & GRAY
 Coming, coming, coming...

WHITE
 Mic drop.

RED
 Department of Protection Against Impure Thoughts out.

HOPES AND DREAMS

A high school bathroom. SID, any gender and wearing gloves, is on their knees next to a toilet. A plunger and a trash can or bag are nearby. JESS, any gender, watches from a safe distance. Sid fishes out a wad of wet tissues.

SID

This is disgusting.

Sid tosses it into the trash.

JESS

This is why I make it a point not to get in trouble in Doberman's class.

SID

This totally violates my First Amendment right against cruel and unusual punishment.

JESS

That's the Eighth Amendment.

SID

Well, she definitely violated my First Amendment rights when she went into my backpack.

JESS

Fourth Amendment.

SID

Still, she shouldn't have gone through my bag.

JESS

Maybe if the soap dispenser wasn't hanging out.

SID

And how did Nick and Sky only get graffiti duty?

JESS

Slick Nick? You have to ask?

SID

(Fishing another object out:)

Is this a t--

JESS

A *feminine product*.

SID

Everybody knows you're not supposed to flush tam--

Don't say it. JESS

Tam-- SID

Don't say the T-word! JESS
(Beat.)
I throw up in my mouth.

Seriously? SID

It started in sixth grade. After the...incident. JESS

Ohhh... SID

Yes. Ohhh... JESS

I thought you'd developed some sort of tick. You'd do that little rooster-pecking thing and--wow. Sorry. SID
(Beat.)
Are there any other words I should know about?

I'll text you a list. JESS

Is this an English paper? SID
(Fishing a wad of paper out:)

Everybody hates *The Canterbury Tales*. JESS
(Scrutinizing it:)

Couldn't you shred your F instead? SID
(To the author of the paper:)

I'd burn it and scatter the ashes at sea. JESS

Underwear?! SID
(Fishing the next item out:)

Boxers or briefs? JESS

SID

I'm not looking close enough to find out.

(Next item, a sandwich
wrapped in brown paper:)

Pastrami on rye with Russian dressing if the label's right.

JESS

Eaten or uneaten?

SID

(Weighing it in their hand:)

Feels uneaten.

JESS

Why would someone flush an entire sandwich? And how is it still in one piece?

SID

(Pulling out more items:)

This is only getting weirder.

In succession, Sid pulls out a tennis ball [or a baseball], salt and pepper shakers [each slightly bigger than the ball], a keyboard, a houseplant,

JESS

This is straight up impossible.

and finally a stuffed koala bear [alternatively, a panda or some other adorable animal]. Feel free to add more items, as long as the stuffed animal is last--but try to preserve an order that is incrementally more impossible in terms of size and likeliness to end up in a toilet pipe.

SID

Why would somebody flush their koala [panda, etc.]?

JESS

I'm still stuck on how a koala [panda, etc.] fit into what is obviously a tiny pipe.

SID

It didn't quite.

JESS

It fit enough.

SID

You're missing the point.

Sid yanks from the toilet a small suitcase that reads "Hopes and Dreams."

SID

(Shaken:)

Oh. Oh my.

(Beat.)

Somebody's in trouble.

JESS

Us. We've clearly been sucked into an alternate universe.

SID

It's like they're letting go of their past and future all at once. Like they're giving up.

JESS

Did you possibly inhale bowl water? Did I possibly inhale bowl water? Are we having a shared hallucination?

SID

We've got to find them.

JESS

I'm just going to sit for a minute and hope this passes.

SID

You can't sit! Somebody needs us!

JESS

And you know this because...?

SID

Because I've been there.

JESS

(Beat.)

OK--let's pretend for a minute that we're both completely sane, we're in our proper place in the space-time continuum and we're not under the influence of toilet toxin. How do you propose we find this person?

Sid yanks one more item from inside the toilet, a giant map of the area.

JESS

You've got to be kidding.

Once unfolded, the map says "YOU ARE HERE" in giant letters with an arrow indicating a spot on the map.

SID

Is that us? Are we here?

(Pointing to the spot on the map:)

There?

JESS

No.

(Pointing to the school bathroom, give or take, on the map:)

We're more like here.

SID

(Pointing to the "YOU ARE HERE" spot:)

Then that's where we need to go.

(Starting to exit and yanking Jess with them:)

Come on!

They exit as the lights dim.

TOILET PAPER POETS, INTERLUDE 4

The Toilet Paper Poets--the real
Toilet Paper Poets--return.

LEAD SINGER POET

We're ba-aaack!

BACKING POET

Accept no substitutes!

CROWD

Haiku, haiku, haiku...

BACKING POET

Are you ready to haiku?!

LEAD SINGER POET

Sitting on the throne,
Dreaming on our fields of dreams,
Kings, queens one and all.

Rabid cheering from the crowd,
the sort of cheering you'd hear
at the end of a rock concert.

BACKING POET

We love you!

KARMA

A high school bathroom. Two stalls. LUIS (or LOUISE) is in one stall and AUGUST is in the other. We may or may not see them.

LUIS

Hey.

(Pause.)

How's it going?

(Pause.)

You there?

AUGUST

Who are you talking to?

LUIS

You--I think we're the only ones here.

(Beat. Fumbling around in the dark:)

So how's it going?

AUGUST

How's what goin'?

LUIS

Uh...

AUGUST

Like, my...efforts?

LUIS

What efforts?

(Realizing what he's just asked, or at least how it sounds:)

Oh no-- No, that's-- I just meant, like, life.

AUGUST

Life.

LUIS

Yeah--I dunno.

AUGUST

In the history of weird conversations, this tops the list.

LUIS

(Decides to go for it:)

Sorry--hey--can I borrow some toilet paper?

AUGUST
You gonna give it back after?

LUIS
You know what I mean.

AUGUST
Dang--I hate when that happens.

LUIS
So can you hook me up?

AUGUST
I think people steal the rolls.

LUIS
True story.

AUGUST
Probably bring 'em home.
(Beat.)
It's Luis, right?

LUIS
Yeah--who's that?

AUGUST
August.

LUIS
Cool.

AUGUST
So how much you need?

LUIS
I dunno--maybe a good wad just to be safe.

AUGUST
I can do that.

LUIS
Thanks.

AUGUST
But the question is, "Should I do that?"

LUIS
What?

AUGUST
Running into a stall and just doing your business without due diligence--

LUIS

Due what?

AUGUST

--that's just careless. If there's no consequences, then I'm-- what's that word we learned in health--an enabler? Yeah, I'd be an enabler, and that bad habit is just as much on me as it is on you. I don't know if I could live with myself.

LUIS

It's toilet paper.

AUGUST

Fair enough. But there's also the matter of Mara.

LUIS

What matter? What are you talking about?

AUGUST

You said she'd never go through with stealing a soap dispenser.

LUIS

OK... I was right.

AUGUST

Correct. But you didn't say, "I know Mara is a better person than that, I know she won't steal that soap dispenser. In fact, I bet she'll come up with something smarter and better." Which by the way she and Tulip did. No--you were all about the negative. No can do. Glass half empty. Major black cat energy.

(Beat.)

Karma's a thing, Luis.

LUIS

This is insane.

AUGUST

And that is the attitude that has you trapped in a stall, having just played a very sloppy version of Beethoven's Concerto Number Two, with no toilet paper.

LUIS

It wasn't--

AUGUST

I could hear it.

(Beat.)

Bell's about to ring, so I'm gonna go.

August flushes. We may only hear it.

AUGUST

When I do, maybe you can waddle over to this stall and its pillowy rolls of wipey goodness, or maybe you'll be begging its next occupant for a handout as the time ticks away and you grow ever later for Doberman's class.

LUIS

You know my schedule?!

August washes their hands.

AUGUST

Knowledge is power.

LUIS

You're full-on crazy.

AUGUST

You sure you want to go down that road again? You know what they say about history: Learn from it or you're doomed to repeat it.

The bell rings. Exit August into a bustling hallway. Blackout.

LIFE

ADDISON, looking very pregnant (but not), stands in a high school bathroom. They're in a dress [tux], probably covered by a coat. Beat. And then they pop a baby doll out of their costume and onto the floor.

ADDISON

That was me. I don't think I flew through the air, but that's pretty much what happened.

(Beat.)

It was my mom's fifteenth reunion. I wasn't due for a month, and ever the overachiever, she decided to get in one last hurrah before her life changed forever.

(Beat.)

The DJ had just started playing "I Had the Time of My Life"--because they play that near the end of every dance in human history--and boom, her water broke. My mom's--not the DJ's. And then, in the charmingly dated words of my parents, it's on like Donkey Kong. The music stops, somebody's calling 9-1-1, and there's the classic, "Is there a doctor?"

(Beat.)

There is--and a good thing, too, because I am not waiting for the ambulance. A dermatologist. Not my mom's first choice, but it was either him or the class clown who dropped out of med school after a year to become a realtor.

(Beat.)

They take my mom to the bathroom because there's running water. This bathroom. DJ starts blasting "Eye of the Tiger" to get my mom amped up--pretty sure she didn't need that--and by the time the ambulance gets here, my dad's barfing in

(Indicates one of the stalls:)

a stall, "Eye of the Tiger" is playing for the 11th time and I'm a free woman [man]. But then again, you know this story, because you were there.

(Beat.)

I've never told you this, but the thing I looked forward to most about high school was you. Seeing you again and being able to share this...stage of the journey. Does that sound corny? Seriously, though, I could always come to you, you'd never judge me and I could just be.

Addison removes the coat to reveal a dress [or a tux] that should at least not clash with the bathroom.

ADDISON

And now here we are: prom. I hope you like the dress [tux]--I tried to find something that would match.

ADDISON (CONT'D)

(Beat.)

It's kind of bittersweet, 'cause prom's one of those milestones. Like, by the time you get to prom, high school's almost over. Next thing you know, you're off to college or a job or finding yourself on a commune in the middle of the desert. Whatever it is, we'll be gone, and we'll only come back for reunions.

(Beat. To the bathroom:)

So I wanted to share this moment, because you've always been more than just a bathroom to me. You've been part of my circle of life, and I love you.

Addison places a corsage in the bathroom and exits.

Want to read the entire script? Hit the back button and follow the instructions for requesting a perusal!