SUGGESTED TEXTS

CONTEMPORARY

Below are a selection of scenes from previous Physical Lab residencies and productions. Though actors are welcome to bring any text to the workshops, these are scenes which we believe lend themselves particularly well to the training and methodologies of the Lab.

If you want to work with any of the scenes below, please make sure you are as familiar with your chosen character and the source material as a whole prior to the workshop.

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01 PEOPLE, PLACES, & THINGS

EMMA: "WITH A PLAY YOU GET INSTRUCTIONS"

Actress Emma recounts her experiences on stage, the mundane moments between them, and her disconnect from a reality that doesn't require a script.

02 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

MIRANDA: "STUFF?"

Editor-in-chief of the world's most respected fashion magazine lays into her newest assistant when the young woman makes the grave error of calling high-end couture garments, "stuff."

03 A FEW GOOD MEN

JESSUP: "YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!"

When the methods by which he protects his country and its people come under fire, US Army Colonel Nathan Jessup explodes in a passionate speech to counter the judgment of those whose freedom he defends.

04 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

JACK: "I WISH I KNEW HOW TO QUIT YOU."

A secret, passionate encounter between two shepherds leaves them aching for the life the world kept from them twenty years after their time together in the mountains of Wyoming.

ALMA: "YOU OUGHTA GET MARRIED, ENNIS."

After years of an unfulfilled marriage and divorce, Alma finally finds the courage to confront Ennis about his "fishing trips" with Jack Twist.

05 EYES WIDE SHUT

ALICE: "DO YOU REMEMBER LAST SUMMER AT CAPE COD?"

In a moment of complete vulnerability, Alice opens up to her husband, Bill, about the young marine that nearly made her risk everything—including her marriage—for a one night encounter with a stranger.

06 THE DARK KNIGHT

JOKER: "I'M AN AGENT OF CHAOS."

Gotham's newest villain finds himself face-to-face with District Attorney Harvey Dent, to whom he reveals his motivation for the terror he unleashes.

07 FRIENDS

ROSS: "I'D LIKE TO MAKE A TOAST TO RACHEL AND JOEY."

Ross, in an attempt to show his support for his friends' engagement, decides to host a party, but the alcohol and his unresolved emotions get the better of him.

08 HIDDEN FIGURES

KATHERINE: "THERE'S NO BATHROOM FOR ME HERE."

When questioned by her superior about her whereabouts, Katherine—one of the few African American women employed by NASA during a time of racial segregation—informs her boss that she must walk across campus just to use the bathroom.

09 LOVE AND INFORMATION

MANIC: "MY GOD, LOOK AT THAT FLOWER..."

Caryl Churchill's collection of monologues read more like poems that flow from a stream of consciousness. In this monologue, the color red is an invitation into the scattered places of the mind. (Cliquez ici pour la traduction en français.)

10 FLEABAG

FLEABAG: "WELL, I'VE STOLEN THINGS..."

Fleabag and Priest stand with whiskey glasses, outside of a confessional. Priest points to the confessional.

FLEABAG: "HE CAN'T TAKE THAT OFF AT NIGHT."

Fleabag recounts getting ready and feeling sexy until her unfortunate encounter with Chub Chub.

11 GRISELDA

GRISELDA: "I'M GRISELDA BLANCO."

Griselda makes a brief introduction to her audience, but inspires them to go after what they all want—a slice of the good life.

12 FENCES

ROSE: "I BEEN STANDING WITH YOU!"

In a tense, explosive moment, Rose finally tells her husband, Troy, that she's been with him this whole time; sharing in his struggles and seeing first hand the man he's become.

13 WHITE LOTUS

TANYA: "CORE OF THE ONION"

In a session with spa manager, Belinda, Tanya reveals her apprehensions with revealing her true self to the men that show her interest.

14 SKYLIGHT

KYRA: "YOU CAN'T PLAY FOR NOTHING."

In this monologue from David Hare's contemporary play, Kyra, a fed-up social worker, unleashes her rage towards those unwilling to help people in need.

15 MALCOLM AND MARIE

MARIE: "I'M NOT DONE."

From the Netflix series of the same name, Marie shares her frustrations with partner, Malcolm, who has never once considered how she may feel about their relationship.

16 A BAD BITCH'S MISADVENTURES

JACKIE: "BEING A BAD BITCH IS AN HONOR."

Jackie recounts her life of always looking presentable, even when it costs her, so as to be the "baddest bitch" version of herself.

PHYSICAL LAB

UPDATED: NOV 2026

17 PULP FICTION

JULES: "I'M GIVIN' YOU THE MONEY SO I DON'T HAVE TO KILL YOUR ASS."

In this role made famous by Samuel L. Jackson, Jules stands off against Pumpkin and ensures he only has his best interests at heart.

18 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END

JACK SPARROW: "CUTTLEFISH."

Jack Sparrow, the eccentric captain of the Black Pearl, tries to appeal to the better judgment of the pirates that hold captive the powerful sea goddess, Calypso.

19 IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA

CHARLIE: "YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT STRESS?"

Charlie unleashes on Mac his aggravations about the company they work for and the secrets that are kept from them.

20 MAGNOLIA

FRANK: "RESPECT THE COCK!"

Frank T.J. Mackey speaks to a group of his followers at his seminar: a group of men whom he is trying to inspire to step more fully into their manhood and power.

21 SENSE8

WILL: "WHISPERS SAW ME."

One of eight individuals who share a psychic connection, Will must put himself into a medically-induced coma in order to protect the group from infiltration. But first he must convince Riley to overcome her fear to help them all survive.

22 ANGELS IN AMERICA

LOUIS: "YOU HAVE ALWAYS HATED ME."

Having left his lover, Prior, following his HIV diagnosis, Louis is ultimately compelled to recognize that both his new partner, Joe, and his own sense of self are not what he once imagined them to be. *(Original text from rehearsal script.)*

PRIOR: "WE CAN'T JUST STOP."

Prior, whose health continues to decline from HIV, reflects on God's role in all of the sadness, chaos, and destruction. Refusing to give into the angels' bleak outlook, he defends the future of humanity and his own life against an inevitably depressing end.

PHYSICAL LAB

UPDATED: NOV 2026

23 PENNY DREADFUL

LILY: "WE FLATTER OUR MEN WITH OUR PAIN."

Lily rejects male domination and the violence women endure. She renounces submission, claims power over men, and aligns herself with Frankenstein's Creature as one of their creator's "demons," questioning what they will do with their newfound power.

24 BOYS & GIRLS

WOMAN: "I MET MY HUSBAND IN THE QUEUE TO BOARD AN EASYJET FLIGHT..."

The Woman reflects on the frustration of waiting in a busy airport in Naples, the infuriating behaviour of two models trying to take advantage of the situation, and the events that led to her meeting her husband.

25 THE BEAR

CARMEN: "MY NAME'S CARMEN."

Carmen speaks at an Al-Anon meeting about his brother Michael's addiction and death. He reflects on their shared love of cooking and how his obsession with restaurants became a way to cope with loss and guilt.

26 WHERE YOU CAN'T FOLLOW

JOSETTE: "PEOPLE CONFUSE LOVE AND ROMANCE."

Josette talks about the sort of love that is so real it hurts.

27 THE NORMAL HEART

DR. BROOKNER: "YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON..."

Dr. Emma Brookner vents her frustration with bureaucratic delays and lack of funding from the National Institute of Health for her AIDS research.

28 THE HOURS

LAURA: "THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU DON'T BELONG..."

Laura has come to Clarissa's apartment after being informed of the death of Richard, her estranged son. Here she explains to Clarissa, Richard's closest friend and could've-been lover, why she left her family one day.

RICHARD: "I'VE STAYED ALIVE FOR YOU."

In the midst of a mental breakdown, Richard tells Clarissa he can't make it to her party and wonders if he has any good days left. He recalls a memory from their past and expresses his love for her.

VIRGINIA: “MY LIFE HAS BEEN STOLEN FROM ME.”

Virginia has been brought to Richmond so that she would be free of the voices and headaches that had afflicted her in the city. But the suburb has turned out to be even more unbearable than the symptoms of her “condition.”

29 ELEMENTAL FLOW

WATER — AN ORIGINAL PIECE WRITTEN BY DERYA CELIKKOL

01

PEOPLE, PLACES, & THINGS

"WITH A PLAY YOU GET INSTRUCTIONS."

EMMA: With a play you get instructions. Stage directions. Dialogue. Someone clothes you. Tells you where to be and when. You get to live the most intense moments of a life over and over again, with all the boring bits left out. And you get to practice. For weeks. And you're applauded. Then you get changed. Leave through a stage door. Bus home. Back to real life. All the boring stuff left in. Waiting. Temping. Waiting tables. Babysitting. Cleaning up endless shits and missing out on opportunities because you need to pay rent. Answering phones and serving canapés. Nothing permanent. Can't plan. Can't get a mortgage or pay for a car. Audition comes in. Try to look right. Sit in a room with people who look just like you, all after the same part. Never hear back. More waiting. Or if you get the part it'll be sitting around in rehearsal and backstage making less than you did temping. Make these friendships with people, a little family, fall in love onstage and off and then it's over and you don't see them again. And you try not to take it personally when people who aren't as good as you get the parts. When you go from being the sexy ingenue to the tired mother of three.

But you keep going because sometimes, if you're really lucky, you get to be onstage and say things that are absolutely true, even if they're made up. You get to do things which feel more real to you, more authentic, more meaningful than anything in your life. You get to speak poetry, words you would never think to say but which become yours as you speak them:

When he shall die, take him and cut him out in little stars, and he will make the face of heaven so fine that all the world will be in love with night, and pay no worship to the garish sun.

I played Antigone and every night my heart broke for her dead brother. Then my own brother died and I didn't feel anything. I missed the funeral because I had a matinee. I'm not avoiding talking to the group because I've got something to hide. It's the opposite. If I'm not in character I'm not sure I'm really there. I'm already dead. I'm nothing. I want to live a hundred lives and be everywhere and fight against the infinitesimal time we have on this planet.

PHYSICAL LAB

UPDATED: NOV 2026

I find reality pretty difficult. I find the business of getting out of bed and getting on with the day really hard. I find picking up my phone to be a mammoth fucking struggle. The number on my inbox. The friends who won't see me anymore. **The Instagram photos and bullshit, the mass shootings and fake news.* The moral ambivalence you have to have to just be able to carry on with your day. I find the knowledge that we're all just atoms and one day we'll stop and be dirt in the ground, I find that overwhelmingly disappointing.

And I wish I could feel otherwise.

I wish I could be like you. Or my mother. To feel that some things are predetermined and meaningful and that we're somewhere on a track between the start and finish lines. But I can't because I care about what's true, what's actually, verifiably true. You're able to forfeit rationality for a comforting untruth so how are you supposed to help me? You're looking at the world through such a tight filter you're barely living in it. You're barely alive.

Drugs and alcohol have never let me down. They have always loved me. These are substances I can put into my bloodstream that make the world perfect. That is the only absolute truth in the universe. I'm being difficult because you want to take it away from me. So sorry.

Acting gives me the same thing I get from drugs and alcohol. Good parts are just harder to come by.

Note: This monologue has been slightly edited & rearranged from its original text. I changed one line (see asterisk) to make it more relevant to what is happening in current events now. Much respect to the playwright.*

**This text has been edited for relevance. Original text is: 'The food pictures and porn videos, the bombings and beheadings.'*

02

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

“STUFF”

MIRANDA: This stuff’? Oh, ok. I see, you think this has nothing to do with you. You go to your closet and you select out, oh I don’t know, that lumpy blue sweater, for instance, because you’re trying to tell the world that you take yourself too seriously to care about what you put on your back.

But what you don’t know is that that sweater is not just blue, it’s not turquoise, it’s not lapis, it’s actually cerulean. You’re also blindly unaware of the fact that in 2002, Oscar de la Renta did a collection of cerulean gowns. And then I think it was Yves St Laurent, wasn’t it, who showed cerulean military jackets?

And then cerulean quickly showed up in the collections of eight different designers. Then it filtered down through the department stores and then trickled on down into some tragic “casual corner” where you, no doubt, fished it out of some clearance bin.

However, that blue represents millions of dollars and countless jobs and so it’s sort of comical how you think that you’ve made a choice that exempts you from the fashion industry when, in fact, you’re wearing the sweater that was selected for you by the people in this room. From a pile of “stuff.”

03

A FEW GOOD MEN

“YOU CAN’T HANDLE THE TRUTH!”

JESSUP: You can’t handle the truth! Son, we live in a world that has walls, and those walls have to be guarded by men with guns. Who is gonna do it? You? You Lieutenant Weinberg? I have a greater responsibility than you can possibly fathom.

You weep for Santiago and you curse the Marines. You have that luxury. You have the luxury of not knowing what I know, that Santiago’s death while tragic, probably saved lives; and my existence while grotesque, and incomprehensible, to you, saves lives. You don’t want the truth because deep down in places you don’t talk about at parties, you want me on that wall, you need me on that wall!

We use words like honour, code, loyalty. We use these words as the backbone of a life spent defending something, you use them as a punchline. I have neither the time, nor the inclination to explain myself, to a man who rises and sleeps, under the blanket of the very freedom that I provide, and then questions the manner in which I provide it! I’d rather you just said ‘thank you’, and went on your way. Otherwise I suggest you pick up a weapon, and stand a post.

Either way, I don’t give a damn, what you think you are entitled to!

04

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

“I WISH I KNEW HOW TO QUIT YOU.”

JACK: Tell you what, we coulda had a good life together! Fuckin’ real good life! Had us a place of our own. But you didn’t want it, Ennis! So what we got now is Brokeback Mountain! Everything’s built on that! That’s all we got, boy, fuckin’ all.

So I hope you know that, even if you don’t never know the rest!

You count the damn few times we have been together in nearly twenty years and you measure the short fucking leash you keep me on – and then you ask me about Mexico and tell me you’ll kill me for needing somethin’ I don’t hardly never get.

You have no idea how bad it gets! I’m not you… I can’t make it on a coupla high-altitude fucks once or twice a year! You are too much for me Ennis, you son of a whoreson bitch! I wish I knew how to quit you.

“YOU OUGHTA GET MARRIED, ENNIS.”

ALMA: You oughta get married, Ennis. Me and the girls worry about you being alone so much. You still go fishing with Jack Twist? I used to wonder how come you never brought any trouts home. Even though you said you caught plenty, and you know how me and the girls like fish. So one night, I got your crill case open the night before you went on one of your little trips. Price tag still on it after five years. And I tied a note on the end of the line. It said “Hello Ennis, bring some fish home. Love, Alma." And then you come back, looking all perky, saying you caught a bunch of browners and you ate them up. Do you remember? I look in that case first chance I got and there was the note still tied there. That line hadn't touched water in its life.

ENNIS: Don't mean nothing, Alma.

ALMA: Don't try to fool me no more, Ennis. I know what it means. Jack Twist. Jack Nasty. You didn’t go up there to fish. You and him-- (Ennis grabs Alma's arms violently and twists. He threatens to hit her with a closed fist.)

ENNIS: Now you listen to me, you don't know nothing about it!

ALMA: (crying) I'm going to yell for Monroe!

ENNIS: You do it and I'll make you eat the fucking floor. (Alma screams for him to get out of her house. He does, shaking.)

05

EYES WIDE SHUT

“DO YOU REMEMBER LAST SUMMER...?”

ALICE: Do you remember last summer at Cape Cod?

Do you remember one night in the dining room, there was this young naval officer and he was sitting near our table with two other officers?

The waiter brought him a message during dinner, at which point he left, nothing rings a bell?

Well, I first saw him that morning in the lobby. He was checking into the hotel and he was following the bellboy with his luggage to the elevator. He glanced at me as he walked past, just a glance, nothing more. And I could hardly move.

That afternoon Helena went to the movie with her friend and you and I made love and we made plans about our future and we talked about Helena and yet at no time was he ever out of my mind. And I thought that if he wanted me, even if it was only for one night, I was ready to give up everything. You, Helena, my whole fucking future, everything. And yet it was weird because at the same time, you were dearer to me than ever, and at that moment my love for you was both tender and sad.

I barely slept that night. I woke up the next morning in a panic. I don’t know if I was afraid that he had left or that he might still be there. But by dinner I realized he was gone. And I was relieved.

06

THE DARK KNIGHT

“I’M AN AGENT OF CHAOS.”

JOKER: Hi... Y'know, I don't want there to be any hard feelings between us, Harvey. When you and, uh……When Rachel was being abducted, I was sitting in Gordon's cage. I didn't rig those charges.

Do I really look like a guy with a plan? You know what I am? I'm a dog chasing cars. I wouldn't know what to do with one if I caught it! I just do things.

The mob has plans. The cops have plans. Gordon's got plans. Y'know they're schemers. Schemers trying to control their little worlds. I try to show the schemers how pathetic their attempts to control things really are.

So when I say that you and your girlfriend was nothing personal, you know I'm telling the truth. It's the schemers that put you where you are. You were a schemer, you had plans, and, uh, look where that got you.

I just did what I do best. I took your little plan, and I turned it on itself. Look what I did to this city with a few drums of gas and a couple of bullets, hmm?

You know what I noticed? Nobody panics when things go according to plan. Even when the plan is horrifying. If tomorrow I told the press that, like, a gang-banger would get shot, or a truckload of soldiers will be blown up, nobody panics. Because it's all part of the plan. But when I say that one little old mayor will die, well then everybody loses their minds!

Introduce a little anarchy. Upset the established order and everything becomes chaos. I'm an agent of chaos. Oh, and you know the thing about chaos? It's fair.

07

FRIENDS

“A TOAST TO RACHEL AND JOEY.”

ROSS: The first batch of margaritas was not so great, but the second batch is goooooood. Oh, guys, this is fun, isn't it? You know? Just the four of us. Just hangin’. I'm fine! Hey, I'm great! I'm just.. I'm just proud of us. There's no weirdness, no tension. We make a great foursome. We should do more stuff together. Ooh! Let's take a trip. Okay, where do you think we - we can go? My fajitas!! Everyone? I would like to make a toast to Rachel and Joey. And to love. Ah, love. L-O-V-E, love. L is for life. And what is life without love? O is for "oh, wow!" The V is for this very surprising turn of events, which I'm still fine with by the way. E is for how extremely normal I find it. That you two are together. And now one day you might get married and have children of your own. I'm sorry, it must be the pressure of entertaining. I think everyone would feel better if we had some flan.

08

HIDDEN FIGURES

“THERE’S NO BATHROOM FOR ME HERE.”

KATHERINE: There's no bathroom for me here. (What do you mean there's no bathroom?) There is no bathroom. There are no colored bathrooms in this building. Or any building outside the West Campus, which is half a mile away. Did you know that? I have to walk to Timbuktu just to relieve myself. And I can't use one of the handy bikes. Picture that, Mr. Harrison. My uniform. Skirt below my knees, my heels, and a simple string of pearls. Well, I don't own pearls. Lord knows you don't pay coloreds enough to afford pearls! And I work like a dog, day and night, living off of coffee from a pot none of you wanna touch. So, excuse me if I have to go to the restroom a few times a day.

09

LOVE AND INFORMATION

“MY GOD, LOOK AT THAT FLOWER”

MANIC: My god, look at that flower, thank you so much, have you ever seen such a red, red is blood and bullfights and seeing red is anger but red is joyful, red is celebration.

Yes, I like it. In China red is lucky how lucky we are to have red flowers,

shall I get a vase?

in China white is death and here black is death but ghosts are white of course so a chessboard is death against death, and blood of course could be death but it’s lifeblood isn't it, if you look at the flower it’s so astounding

Yes.

It means so much to me that you gave me red flowers because red is so significant don’t you think? it means stop and of course it means go because it’s the color of energy and red cars have the most accidents because people are excited by red or people who are already excited like to have red, I’d like to have red, I’ll buy a red car this afternoon and we can go for a drive, we can go right up through the whole country don’t you think, we can go to Scotland we can go to John o’ Groats, did he eat a lot of porridge do you think? but we don’t have to start from Land’s End or Land’s Beginning we should say if we start from there but we won’t we’ll start from here because here is always the place we start from, isn’t that funny, and I need to drive along all the roads in the country because I have to see to the traffic because there are too many cars as everyone knows but our car won’t be one too many you’ll be quite safe, we’ll make sure it’s all flowing smoothly in every direction because cars do go in every direction possible and everything goes in every possible direction, so we’ll find a vase for the flowers,

Yes.

FRENCH TRANSLATION

MANIC: Mon dieu, mais regarde-moi cette fleur, merci beaucoup. As-tu déjà vu une telle rougeur ? Le rouge est la couleur du sang et des corridas, voir rouge c'est la colère, mais le rouge c'est la joie aussi, le rouge c'est la célébration.

Oui, en Chine le rouge porte chance.

Comme nous sommes chanceux d'avoir des fleurs rouges.

Je vais chercher un vase ?

En Chine, le blanc représente la mort et ici, c'est le noir, mais les fantômes sont blancs bien sûr. Donc, un échiquier c'est la mort contre la mort. Et le sang pourrait bien être la mort, mais c'est le sang de la vie, n'est-ce pas ? Si tu regardes la fleur, c'est tellement stupéfiant.

Oui, cela signifie tellement pour moi que tu m'aies donné des fleurs rouges, car le rouge est si significatif, tu ne trouves pas ? Cela signifie "arrête" et bien sûr cela signifie "va", car c'est la couleur de l'énergie.

Les voitures rouges ont le plus d'accidents parce que les gens sont excités par le rouge ou les gens qui sont déjà excités aiment avoir du rouge. J'aimerais avoir du rouge. J'achèterai une voiture rouge cet après-midi et nous pourrons aller faire un tour. Nous pourrons aller jusqu'au bout du pays, non ? Nous pouvons aller en Écosse, nous pouvons aller à John o' Groats. Est-ce qu'il mangeait beaucoup de porridge, tu crois ? Mais nous ne devrions pas partir de Land's End ou Land's Beginning, nous devrions dire si nous partions de là, mais nous ne le ferons pas. Nous partirons d'ici parce que c'est toujours l'endroit où nous commençons, c'est drôle n'est-ce pas ? Et j'ai besoin de parcourir toutes les routes du pays parce que je dois veiller à la circulation, car il y a trop de voitures comme tout le monde le sait, mais notre voiture ne sera pas de trop, tu seras tout à fait en sécurité. Nous nous assurerons que tout coule parfaitement dans chaque direction, car les voitures vont dans toutes les directions possibles et tout va dans toutes les directions possibles. Donc, nous trouverons un vase pour les fleurs.

Oui.

10

FLEABAG

“WELL, I’VE STOLEN THINGS.”

FLEABAG: Well, I’ve stolen things. And I’ve had a lot of sex outside of marriage. And once or twice inside someone else’s. And there’s been a spot of sodomy. There’s been much masturbation, a bit of violence, and of course the endless fucking blasphemy.

And.

And. I.

I can’t.

Frightened.

About – forgetting things. People. Forgetting people. And I’m ashamed of not knowing what I want…

No, I know what I want, I know exactly what I want. Right now. And it’s bad.

I want someone to tell me what to wear in the morning.

No, I want someone to tell me what to wear every morning. I want someone to tell me what to eat. What to like. What to hate. What to rage about. What to listen to. What band to like. What to buy tickets for. What to joke about. What not to joke about. I want someone to tell me what to believe in. Who to vote for and who to love and how to… tell them. I just think I want someone to tell me how to live my life, Father, because so far, I think I’ve been getting it wrong.

“HE CAN’T TAKE THAT OFF AT NIGHT.”

FLEABAG: Okay. Into the shower. Boom. Bedroom. Make-up. Boom. Gonna really make an effort. I take half an hour trying to look nice and I ended up looking… amazing. I mean, best in ages. One of those days. Boom.

Gorgeous, fresh-faced, heels, wearing a skirt, new top, little bit sexy, on my way to save my café and yes, I am strutting.

I see a man walking towards me from the bus stop. He can’t take his eyes off me. I’m all walking like I’ve got a paintbrush up my arse, thinking:

Yeah, check me out, cos it’s never gonna happen, Chub Chub.

Chub Chub’s getting closer. Oversized jacket. Meaty face. Looks me up and down. It’s like he’s confused about how attractive I am – he can’t quite believe it. I worry for a second I’m going to make a sex offender out of the poor guy. He’s about to say something. Here we fucking go, this better be good. He’s passing, he’s passing. He clears his throat, brings his hand to his mouth and coughs: “Walk of shame.”

It’s too late to go home and change. I have some flat shoes in my bag and anyway, he’s fat. And he can’t take that off at night.

11

GRISELDA

“I’M GRISELDA BLANCO.”

GRISELDA: I’m Griselda Blanco. We both have the same problem. Every room I walk into, I'm just a woman. Every room you walk into you’re just a Marielito. When people look at you, they only see your tattoos and that you don't speak English. They think, “how can I use them?” “How can I abuse them? The only way to get what we want is by taking it. And to do that, we need strength. Strength in numbers and strength here. I don’t have to tell you what I’ll do for your families, you’ve seen it. I don't have to tell you I’ll fight for you, you’ve seen it. What you need to know is, if you work for me you’ll have a purpose, and you’ll have respect. When we’re done with this shit, you won’t be washing their fucking dishes. You’ll be sitting at their table, eating their lobster, driving their caddies, and swimming in their fucking pools. So who wants a piece of that? Let’s go my friends, let’s go!

12

FENCES

“I BEEN STANDING WITH YOU!”

ROSE: I been standing with you! I been right here with you, Troy. I got a life too. I gave eighteen years of my life to stand in the same spot with you. Don't you think I ever wanted other things? Don't you think I had dreams and hopes? What about my life? What about me. Don't you think it ever crossed my mind to want to know other men? That I wanted to lay up somewhere and forget about my responsibilities? That I wanted someone to make me laugh so I could feel good? You not the only one who's got wants and needs. But I held on to you, Troy. I took all my feelings, my wants and needs, my dreams . . . and I buried them inside you. I planted a seed and watched and prayed over it. I planted myself inside you and waited to bloom. And it didn't take me no eighteen years to find out the soil was hard and rocky and it wasn't never gonna bloom.

But I held on to you, Troy. I held you tighter. You was my husband. I owed you everything I had. Every part of me I could find to give you. And upstairs in that room . . . with the darkness falling in on me ... I gave everything I had to try and erase the doubt that you wasn't the finest man in the world. And wherever you was going ... I wanted to be there with you. Cause you was my husband. Cause that's the only way I was gonna survive as your wife. You always talking about what you give . . . and what you don't have to give. But you take too. You take... and don't even know nobody's giving!

13

WHITE LOTUS

“CORE OF THE ONION”

TANYA: The date. Uh... No, it was good, you know? He stayed over. Yeah. And then he left. Yeah. And he--yeah, he seem-- he seemed like a nice guy. I just know I’m gonna get hurt. Yeah. He likes the first layer. Maybe, I don’t know...you know. But what about the second layer and the third layer? And then every step along the way, you know, I have to worry about, you know, is he going to like the next layer? And then I get all afraid like, you know, how much do I wanna show him? You know, is he gonna be repulsed? Or is he gonna be alarmed? And at the core of the onion, Belinda, is just a straight up alcoholic lunatic. No it is, it is. And I just wanna show my hand. I don't wanna play poker anymore. I just wanna skip all the layers, and just go straight to the crazy, and just like, you know let the chips fall where they may. And, you know, just show him, just show him the core of the onion.

14

SKYLIGHT

“YOU CAN’T PLAY FOR NOTHING.”

KYRA: ‘Female'? That's a very odd choice of word.

You see I'm afraid I think this is typical. It's something that's happened . . . it's only happened of late. That people should need to ask why I'm helping these children. I'm helping them because they need to be helped.

Everyone makes merry, discussing motive. Of course she does this. She works in the East End. She only does it because she's unhappy. She does it because of a lack in herself. She doesn't have a man. If she had a man, she wouldn't need to do it. Do you think she's a dyke? She must be fucked up, she must be an Amazon, she must be a weirdo to choose to work where she does . . . Well I say, what the hell does it matter why I'm doing it? Why anyone goes out and helps? The reason is hardly of primary importance. If I didn't do it, it wouldn't get done.

I'm tired of these sophistries. I'm tired of these right-wing fuckers. They wouldn't lift a finger themselves. They work contentedly in offices and banks. Yet now they sit pontificating in parliament, in papers, impugning our motives, questioning our judgements. And why? Because they themselves need to feel better by putting down everyone whose work is so much harder than theirs. You only have to say the words 'social worker’ . . . 'probation officer' . . . 'counsellor' . . . for everyone in this country to sneer. Do you know what social workers do? Every day? They try and clear out society's drains. They clear out the rubbish. They do what no one else is doing, what no one else is willing to do. And for that, oh Christ, do we thank them? No, we take our own rotten consciences, wipe them all over the social worker's face, and say 'if...’ FUCK!

'If I did the job, then of course if I did it... oh no, excuse me, I wouldn't do it like that. . .’ Well, I say: 'OK, then, fucking do it, journalist. Politician, talk to the addicts. Hold families together. Stop the kids from stealing in the streets. Deal with couples who beat each other up. You fucking try it, why not? Since you're so full of advice. Sure, come and join us. This work is one big casino. By all means. Anyone can play. But there's only one rule. You can't play for nothing. You have to buy

some chips to sit at the table. And if you won't pay with your own time . . . with your own effort . . . then I'm sorry. Fuck off!'

15

MALCOLM AND MARIE

"I'M NOT DONE."

MARIE: I don't know where you're going, but I'm not done. I'm not even fucking close to being done.

But what it also makes me realize, the reason you don't get jealous is because you don't value that mystery, do you? The reason you don't value it, the reason why you never wonder if you're the best fuck I've ever had, or the most talented person I've ever been with, or the kindest, or the smartest, it's because it is inconceivable to you that there is anybody on this planet that is more interesting than you are.

Your lack of curiosity is merely an extension of your narcissism, your megalomania, your egotistical view of the world. As a result of never doubting yourself, you never stopped to ask yourself, "How can I be a better partner?"

You're good. You are set. The man I'm looking at right now is as good as he's gonna get. You yelling at me in a bathtub about how you're gonna snap me like a twig, is the best and worst of who you will be in this relationship. And that's why you can forget to thank me in your speech. Because you're not afraid that I'm gonna come home and go... [inhales deeply] "You know what? You lost me tonight. Fuck this shit. I am out."

But if you steamroll every single person in your midst, day in and day out, you are going to end up living in a fictional fucking reality. Look at me. I'm the last person standing. I'm the last person to look at you and go, "You know what? Up your fucking game." "If not for me, then for your work." Malcolm, if this is a movie, you hold on to me for dear fucking life. Because that's who we've been for one another. That's who you've been for me and I've been for you from the day we met. From the day I overdosed in that market, from the day you drove me to rehab. From the first day I read your script about me, about us, about our relationship. About how drugs were destroying my ability to love you and your ability to love me. All I wanted tonight was a "thank you," Malcolm. That is it. That's all.

16

A BAD BITCH'S MISADVENTURES

"BEING A BAD BITCH IS AN HONOR."

JACKIE: Every morning, I wake up early to put on my Fenty highlighter before my man wakes up. I'm exhausted, but I can't let Bae see me with my bare face. I've never been barefaced in front of a man....

I'm afraid he wouldn't know what to do with a woman who takes her cheekbones off every night. Sometimes I wonder if he even appreciates that I put them on in the first place. Moreover, is a partner who doesn't appreciate the cheek work deserving of my cheek twerk?

Gosh, I don't know why I'm havin these thoughts.. I love my man... But sometimes, I think about risking it all and sleeping in. I mean, I know I'm not ugly or nothin. And when I'm in the bathroom with the door closed, and locked, I love to gaze upon my fresh flat face. I wish I could have a flat face all the time. (Shocked but in longing for it)

The truth is, honey! I wish I was not a bad bitch all the time. There, I said it.

Like, sometimes I wish I was just ... an Okay bitch.

I know I'm not supposed to use that type of language up in here, but it's just a lot of pressure!

Like, I wanna wear normal house slippers, not 3 inch heel house shoes!

Look, I know being a bad bitch is an honor. But I didn't choose this life, my mama chose this life for me. (it runs in the family). Sometimes I just wanna sit down for five minutes without wearing a waist trainer. Sometimes I just want to take deep breaths. I think I deserve to take deep breaths too.

I've been really meditating on my bad bitchness lately...(embarrassed to say the words) ....`Ever since, I saw this lady walking down the street without lashes on. She didn't seem burdened by the pressures of having balled eyes. She seemed fine being an Okay bitch. I mean, she could've been a bad bitch with alopecia. I've seen those too. But No, No. She was an Okay bitch. I could tell by her wedges. A...ha!

Anyway, perhaps there is nothing wrong with being an okay bitch? As long as you're not a basic bitch...Right? There's a difference. Right?

17

PULP FICTION

“I’M GIVIN’ YOU THE MONEY...”

JULES: I'm givin' you that money so I don't have to kill your ass. You read the Bible, Ringo?...Well, there's this passage I got memorized. Ezekiel 25:17. 'The path of the righteous man is beset on all sides by the inequities of the selfish and the tyranny of evil men. Blessed is he who, in the name of charity and good will, shepherds the weak through the valley of darkness, for he is truly his brother's keeper and the finder of lost children. And I will strike down upon thee with great vengeance and furious anger those who attempt to poison and destroy My brothers. And you will know I am the Lord when I lay My vengeance upon you.'

I been saying that shit for years, and if you heard it, that meant your ass. I never gave much thought to what it meant. I just thought it was some cold-blooded shit to say to a mother fucker before I popped a cap in his ass.

But I saw some shit this mornin' made me think twice. See, now I'm thinkin' maybe it means you're the evil man and I'm the righteous man, and Mr. 9-millimeter here, he's the shepherd protectin' my righteous ass in the valley of darkness. Or it could mean you're the righteous man and I'm the shepherd, and it's the world that's evil and selfish.

Now, I'd like that. But that shit ain't the truth. The truth is, you're the weak and I'm the tyranny of evil men. But I'm tryin', Ringo. I'm tryin' real hard to be the shepherd. Go.

18

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END

"CUTTLEFISH"

JACK SPARROW: Cuttlefish. Eh? Let us not, dear friends, forget our dear friends the cuttlefish... flipping glorious little sausages. Pen them up together, and they will devour each other without a second thought... Human nature, in'it? Ooor... fish nature... So yes... we could hold up here, well-provisioned and well-armed, and half of us would be dead within the month! Which seems grim to me any way you slice it! Or... ahh... as my learned colleague so naively suggests, we can release Calypso, and we can pray that she will be merciful... I rather doubt it. Can we, in fact, pretend that she is anything other than a woman scorned, like which fury Hell hath no? We cannot. Res ipsa loquitur, tabula in naufragio, we are left with but one option. I agree with, and I cannot believe the words are coming out of me mouth... Captain Swann. We must fight.

19

IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA

"YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT STRESS?"

CHARLIE: You want to talk about stress? You want to talk about stress, OK? I stumbled onto a major company conspiracy, Mac. Huh? How about that for stress? This company is being bled like a stuffed pig, Mac, and I got a paper trail to prove it. Check this out. Take a look at this! Now, that right there is the mail. Let's talk about the mail. Can we talk about the mail, please, Mac? I've been dying to talk about the mail with you all day, OK? "Pepe Silvia," this name keeps coming up over and over again. Every day Pepe's mail keeps getting sent back to me. Pepe Silvia! Pepe Silvia! I look in the mail, and this whole box is Pepe Silvia! So I say to myself, "I gotta find this guy! I gotta go up to his office and put his mail in the guy's goddamn hands! Otherwise, he's never going to get it and he's going to keep coming back down here." So I go up to Pepe's office and what do I find out, Mac? What do I find out?! There is no Pepe Silvia. The man does not exist, okay? So I decide, "Ohhhh shit, buddy, I gotta dig a little deeper." There's no Pepe Silvia? You gotta be kidding me! I got boxes full of Pepe! All right. So I start marchin' my way down to Carol in HR and I knock on her door and I say, "Carooooool! Carooool! I gotta talk to you about Pepe!" And when I open the door what do I find? There's not a single goddamn desk in that office! There is...no... Carol in HR. Mac, half the employees in this building have been made up. This office is a goddamn ghost town!

20

MAGNOLIA

“RESPECT THE COCK!”

FRANK: Respect the cock! And tame the cunt! Tame it! Take it on headfirst with the skills that I will teach you at work and say no! You will not control me! No! You will not take my soul! No! You will not win this game! Because it's a game, guys. You want to think it's not, huh? You want to think it's not? Go back to the schoolyard and you have that crush on big-titted Mary Jane. Respect the cock. You are embedding this thought. I am the one who's in charge. I am the one who says yes! No! Now! Here! Because it's universal, man. It is evolutional. It is anthropological. It is biological. It is animal. We... are... men!

Men are shit. What? Men... are... *shit*. What, isn't that what they say? Because we do bad things, don't we? We do horrible, heineous, *heinous*, terrible things. Things that no woman would ever do. No, women, they don't lie. No, women don't cheat. Women don't *manipulate* us. But you see what I'm getting at. You see what society does? Little boys, it's, "Wow, womaaaan!" We are taught to apologize. I am sorry. I am so sorry, baby. I am so sorry. What is it that we need? Is it their pussies? Their love? Mommy wouldn't let me play soccer... and Daddy, he hit me, so that's who I am, that's why I do what I do? Fucking bullshit. I will not apologize for who I am. I will not apologize for what I need. I will not apologize for what I *want*! I'll tell you what I want you to do, Janet! I want you to do your fucking job! Respect the Cock. Tame the Cunt!

21

SENSE8

“WHISPERS SAW ME.”

WILL: Riley, Whispers saw me. He’s in my head, as long as I’m unconscious, he can't see what I see. That’s why I shot up with all those drugs. In a minute, I’m gonna be unconscious. Our only chance is if you get in that ambulance and drive us outta here. Riley... if you don’t.... we’re all gonna die.

RILEY: I can't... I can't leave her.

WILL: Riley, please.

RILEY: I’m so sorry, Will. I can't do it. (sobbing)

WILL: I know how much it hurts. I know you want to lay down here and never get up again. I know it, cause I feel it. (sobs) I can feel it. That means that somehow, somewhere... you can feel what I’m feeling, too. I love you. That’s why you can't give up. I love you.

22

ANGELS IN AMERICA

"YOU HAVE ALWAYS HATED ME."

LOUIS: You have always hated me. Because you are in love with Prior and you were when I met him and he fell in love with me, and so now you cook up this . . . I mean how do you know this? That Joe and Roy Cohn are— I don't believe you. Not . . . Roy Cohn. Joe wouldn't—Not Roy Cohn. He's, he's like the polestar of human evil, he's like the worst human being who ever lived, the, the damage he's done, the years and years of, of . . . criminality, that whole era, that— Give me fucking credit for something, please, some little moral shred of, of, of something, OK sure I fucked up, I fucked up everything, I didn't want to, to face what I needed to face, what life was insisting I face but I don't know, I've always, I've always felt you had to, to take action, not sit, not to be, to be trapped, um, stuck, paralyzed by— Even if it's hard, or really terrifying, or even if it does damage, you have to keep moving, um, forward, instead of— I can't just, you know, sit around feeling shit, or feeling like shit, I . . . cry way too easily, I fall apart, I'm no good unless I, I strike out at— Which is easy because I'm so fucking furious at my— So I fucked up spectacularly, totally, I've ruined my life, and his life, I've hurt him so badly but but still, even I, even I am not so utterly lost inside myself that I— I wouldn't, um, ever, like, sleep with someone who . . . someone who's Roy Cohn's . . . Oh no.

"WE CAN'T JUST STOP."

PRIOR: We can't just stop. We're not rocks. Progress, migration, motion is... modernity. It's *animate*, it's what living things do. We desire. Even if all we desire is stillness, it's still desire for. Even if we go faster than we should. We can't wait. And wait for what? God— God—He isn't coming back. And even if He did . . .If He ever did come back, if He ever dared to show His face, or his Glyph or whatever in the Garden again. If after all this destruction, if after all the terrible days of this terrible century He returned to see . . . how much suffering His abandonment had created, if all He has to offer is death . . .You should sue the bastard. That's my only contribution to all this *Theology*. Sue the bastard for walking out. How dare He. He oughta pay...I want more life. I can't help myself. I do. I've lived through such terrible times, and there are people who live through much much worse, but . . .You see them living anyway. When they're more spirit than body, more sores than skin, when they're burned and in agony, when flies lay eggs in the corners of the eyes of their children, they live. Death usually has to take life away. I don't know if that's just the animal. I don't know if it's not braver to die. But I recognize the habit. The addiction to being alive. We live past hope. If I can find hope anywhere, that's it, that's the best I can do. It's so much not enough, so inadequate but . . . Bless me anyway. I want more life.

23

PENNY DREADFUL

“WE FLATTER OUR MEN WITH OUR PAIN.”

LILY: We flatter our men with our pain. We bow before them. We make ourselves dolls for their amusement. We lose our dignity in corsets and high shoes and gossip and the slavery of marriage. And our reward for this service? The back of the hand. The face turned to the pillow. The bloody aching cunt as you force us onto your beds to take your fat, heaving bodies. You drag us into the allies, my lad (Lily’s Irish accent emerges) and cram yourselves into our mouths for 2 bob. When you're not beating us senseless. When we’re not bloody from the eyes and the mouth and the ass and the cunt.

(Lily’s English accent comes back) Never again will I kneel to any man. Now they shall kneel to me. As you do, monster. My monster. My beautiful corpse. How clever he’s been our Creator. But our little God has brought forth not angels, but demons. Thee and me. And what shall we do with this power, undead thing? You’re a thoughtful man, a philosopher even, so tell me, why do we exist? Why have we been chosen? Tell me.

24

BOYS & GIRLS

“I MET MY HUSBAND IN THE QUEUE TO BOARD AN EASYJET FLIGHT...”

WOMAN: I met my husband in the queue to board an easyJet flight and I have to say I took an instant dislike to the man.

This was in Italy. I'd been traveling—not with any real sense of purpose or 'see the world' but more because I didn't know what the fuck I was doing with my life and I just could not face getting another job I hated back home. So I handed in my notice, took my last month's pay along with the deposit I got back from my flat, a brand spanking new credit card and I stuck a pin in a map of the world, determined to go wherever it landed, be it Paris, Calcutta, New York or Dubai.

I got Southampton.

An entire planet to choose from and I got Southampton. But I thought 'fate - follow fate. This could be the start of the rest of my life' which is how I found myself in Southampton. For three days.

After which time I thought 'fuck you fate' and got on a train to Paris.

Paris is a dump.

I'm sorry, it is, and it's time we all started talking about this.

France is beautiful, I have been all over France and it is something, but Paris? Call that a world city? It's Leeds with wider streets.

I really, really, *really* was not on the lookout for someone. You see the travelling phase of my life had followed hot on the heels of what I now refer to as my drinky, druggy , slaggy phase: and I mean slaggy, by the way, not slutty, it was not some kind of *Sex and the City* shag fest that you could gossip with your gay pals about, it was dirty, messy and slaggy.

I'd been with the same bloke for four years - six months of passion followed by six months of warm bickering f ollowed by three years of a slow decline into sub-zero tedium, and when we

finally took it out the back and shot it in the head there was blood, mess, tears and recriminations for ... well, months, actually.

It was not nice.

But at that point I realized I was twenty-five and I'd had exactly three sexual partners in my entire life; the first for one night, the second for six months and the last for four years. So I put all this information onto a spreadsheet and was shocked to discover that on current trends I'd be with the next guy for 326 years. I decided to go a different way.

I had fun.

Drink, drugs, a fair amount of cocaine and different partners - it was fun and a laugh and also destructive and slightly depressing and oddly callous and upsetting as well as energizing - confusing. It was confusing.

The end of it came when I was having extremely drunk, doggy style sex with my flatmate on this grimy, suicide beige carpet in our flat in—of all places—Wood Green. We had developed this unhealthy 'let's not have a relationship but fuck when drunk enough' thing and at this moment I was so drunk that I'd just thrown up - and we were *still* doing it. I mean I'd just puked, the sick was right there, I'd just folluped it up on the carpet. And the force of the thrusting is kind of nudging me towards it, towards this, well, towards this puddle of puke and I remember thinking 'if he doesn't come soon, he's going to fuck me right into that puddle of puke.'

That exact thought.

That exact sentence materialized inside my brain.

Let me repeat it for you.

'If he doesn't come soon ...

he's going to fuck me right into that puddle of puke.'

Let me tell you something - when a sentence like that appears in your life, you know it's time to start looking at your choices.

That was the end of my drinky, druggy, slaggy phase. I quit my job, took my cash and went to Europe.

PHYSICAL LAB

UPDATED: NOV 2026

Beat.

So I'm queuing. And this is an easyJet flight. And it's been delayed and they're not saying anything, so everyone in this queue is just standing there quietly hating anything within our hate radius.

And this is in Italy. And let me be clear - I love Italians. Italians are great, Italy is great: but Italians do not like queuing. Italians have an extremely lax attitude to the whole concept of the queue in general.

And this wasn't just Italy, this was Naples - and I fucking love Naples, Naples is incredible, but if Italians don't respect the queue, then Neapolitans outright despise the queue. Neapolitans have a complicated relationship to rules - it's part of their charm. So for example everywhere else in the world a red light means 'Stop.' But in Naples a red light means *'Stop ... ?'*

So needless to say this queue is tense. Everyone is on edge waiting f or the cut-ins, everyone is looking daggers at everyone else like 'is that guy moving up, is he fucking sneaking up ... ?' or 'I swear to Christ, if that old bitch tries to cut in I will drop her and stomp on her neck.'

But by some miracle the integrity of the queue is staying intact. We *are* queuing, it has not become the last helicopter out of Saigon that we all know at any moment it could turn into.

But this guy in front of me ...

I mean he is just standing there, not a care in the world, reading - reading a fucking *book*, head lost in it, casually shunting his bag forward with his foot every so often, taking his own sweet, allowing a gap to open up - I mean a gap? Here? In this queue?

And I'm just fuming. I mean you moron, you idiot, you thick brained, lard-synapsed cock-head, do you not get what's going on here? Do you not know what it is taking for these people to keep this queue together? They are fighting every instinct in their bodies and are somehow winning and here you are just letting gaps open up? Gaps?

And then ...

These two

models, I mean they had to have been models, they were gorgeous, these girls, god knows what they were doing here - must've had a flight suddenly cancelled because they were looking around and thinking *'where are we? I don't like it, where's the VIP lounge?'*

And you know when you see proper expensive clothes, but *proper* expensive - and the hair and the grooming ... it was like being visited from another dimension. I swear people were taking photos.

And they go straight up to this guy

Idiot face. They go right up to idiot face and the brunette goes

Hi there, how are you?

(And he looks up and he's like *'huh?!? What?'* I mean he doesn't say that, he doesn't say anything, he's just staring with his mouth open like Scooby fucking Dooby because no one of this genus has ever spoken to him before, and he actually looks slightly scared, like he's thinking *'what is this? What's happening to me?'*)

Is it okay if we talk to you for a bit?

(this is the blonde)

Er ... excuse me? What me?

Yeah. We just wanna stay here with you and chat for a bit. Here.

And suddenly I get it and I'm thinking 'oh, no, no, no, you bitch, you conniving, long legged, no, no, no, no, no ... '

But this guy, this idiot, this moron, he is already done. He is dead, he is finished, he is prey, I mean they are shining, it's as if they've already been airbrushed before stepping into life.

You wanna stand ... here? And talk ... to me?

(wheels clunking into place in his skull, like he knows no words and language has never actually cluttered his mouth before this second)

Yeah. Is that okay?

And she pulls out this smile ... and I swear to Christ if she threw that smile it could cut heads off statues, the sound of harps accompany that smile and I'm actually admiring her a bit, though I'm not because I want to cut her into tiny pieces and feed her to an ant-eater.

And he's just like

Well, of course.

(brilliant. Brilliant, just. ..)

But I get to sleep with one of you, right?

Hold on. Hold the fuck on ...

Excuse me?

I get to sleep with one of you? I mean that is what's going on here?

Er ...

Because otherwise there really is no point to me letting you cut into this queue in front of all these good people who have been patiently waiting/or the last hour and fifteen minutes to board this plane and who want to get on it every bit as much as you do, is there?

And suddenly I realize that this creepy little slack-jawed simpleton is actually a genius with the physique of a Greek god.

And the blonde is just staring, stunned - this does not compute, not this, not from a *normal.* And the brunette is sort of horrified almost in shock - so much so in fact that she then says the most funniest thing that I have ever heard anyone say i n my entire life ever. She says ...

But ... we're models.

It just came out. Like a silent thought that suddenly wanders into your mouth without permission. And my day has flipped, this is a great day, this is a lovely day, they will write songs about this day.

And fucking Odysseus here does not miss a beat, he smiles sweet as beetroot and says *'Well you'll still be models at the back of the queue.'*

Blondie suddenly wakes up and pipes in -she's not having this ...

Look, there's no need to be rude. We were just trying to be friendly.

No, you weren't. What you were doing was the opposite of friendly. You were hoping I'd fall for you so you could get something you wanted and the moment we got on that plane you would've abandoned me and I would've felt shitty about myself. What you were doing wasn't being friendly, it was being ... well, excuse me, but you were being bitches.

And now people are listening, some are even laughing, and it's being translated to others and even in translation it's funny because let's face it no one really likes the gorgeous, and these girls ... well they're sensing it: the first f ew moments of revolution, the peasants mumbling about f reedom, the apes learning speech. The brunette decides this has gone far enough - so she leans in and goes

Oh, and by the way: we would never, ever sleep with you. Ever. Okay?

And ... I think this has actually got him. Because, well, it's true. He is looking at something some part of him *has* to want and what they're saying is 'No: not now, not ever you will never, ever touch anything like this, ever.' And something in him changes. And when he speaks it's with a softer voice, more delicate, no charm, just. .. honesty.

No. No, you wouldn't. And I know you wouldn't. But it is my firm belief that the act of making love is the highest expression of our humanity. It is the union of two souls, it is a celebration

(- this is verbatim, by the way; this is *exactly* what he said-)

- of our love of being alive. But in you, I do not see that love. I do not see that spark of life, I really don't. Therefore sex with you would be an act of necrophilia - it would be like wanking into a pretty dress.

Beat.

Bit harsh, that last bit.

But tell me that you don't just love him, a little bit.

25

THE BEAR

"MY NAME IS CARMEN."

CARMEN: My name's Carmen.

My, um... brother's an addict. My, my brother *was* an addict.

And this morning, I, um – Sorry, uh... I forgot, um – B-before I came to Al-Anon, I was a cook. I mean, I'm-I'm still a cook, I'm just a different kind of cook, I guess. My brother and I, we would cook a lot together, especially when we were kids. You know, that's-that's when we were closest.

Food was always our common ground. We wanted to open a restaurant together. Um, we had a name, we had a vibe, all of it.

My brother could make you feel confident in yourself. You know, like, when I was a kid, if I was nervous, I was scared, I wouldn't wanna do something, he'd always tell me to just face it. You know, get it over with. He would always say, um- stupid, he would always say, um... "Let it rip." He was loud. And he was hilarious. And he had this amazing ability. He could just, he could walk into a room, and he could take the temperature of it instantly. You know, he could just, he could dial it.

And, um... I'm not built like that, man. I, um... I didn't have a lot of friends growing up. I had a, a stutter when I was a kid. I was scared to speak half the time. And, uh, I got shitty grades 'cause I couldn't pay attention in school. I didn't get into college, I didn't have any girlfriends. I don't think I'm funny. I always thought my brother was my best friend. Like, like, we just knew everything about each other. Except, everybody thought he was their best friend. You know, he was that, he was that magnetic.

And, um... I didn't know my brother was using drugs. What does that say? As we got older, I-I realized, I didn't know anything about him... really. He stopped letting me into the restaurant a couple years ago. He just cut me off cold. And that, um... that hurt, you know. And I think that just that flipped a switch in me where I was like, "Okay, fuck you, watch this." And because we had this connection through food and he had made me feel so rejected and lame and shitty and uncool.

PHYSICAL LAB

UPDATED: NOV 2026

I-I made this plan where I was gonna go work in all the best restaurants in the world. You know, like, like, I'm gonna go work in real kitchens. Like, fuck Mom and Dad's piece of shit, right? And it sounds ridiculous, you know, me saying that now, but that's-that's-that's what I did. And I got the shit kicked outta me. And I separated herbs and I shucked oysters and clams and uni. And I cut myself, and I got garlic and onions and peppers in my fingernails and in my eyes, and my skin was dry and oily at the same time. I had calluses on my fingers from the knives, and my stomach was fucked and it was... everything.

And a couple years later, this funny thing happened which is like... for the first time in my life I-I started to find this, uh, this station for myself. And I was fast. I wasn't afraid. And it was clear, and I-I felt... I felt okay, you know. I knew which vegetables went together, proteins, temperature, sauces, all that shit. And when somebody new came into the restaurant to stage, I'd look at them like they were competition, like I'm gonna smoke this motherfucker. I felt like I could speak through the food, like I could communicate through creativity. And that kind of confidence, you know, like I was finally – I wa- I was good at something, that was so new, and that was so exciting and I just wanted him to know that and, fuck, I just wanted him to be like, "Good job!" And the more he wouldn't respond, and the more our relationship... kinda strained, the deeper into this I went and the better I got. And the more people I cut out, the quieter my life got. And the routine of the kitchen was so... consistent and exacting and busy and hard and alive, and I lost track of time and he died.

And he left me his restaurant. And over the last couple months I-I've been trying to fix it cause it was in rough shape, and I think it's very clear that me trying to fix the restaurant... was me trying to fix whatever was happening with my brother. And I don't know, maybe fix the whole family because... that restaurant, it has and it, it does mean a lot to people. It means a lot to me. I just don't know if it ever meant anything to him.

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WHERE YOU CAN'T FOLLOW

"PEOPLE CONFUSE LOVE AND ROMANCE."

JOSETTE: People confuse love and romance. Romance is very good, very nice. But love, love is necessary. See this? The moon, the stars, the lights over the water. The Pont Neuf. The Eiffel Tower. Candlelight there. Chocolates, small presents. All of this is romantic, no? But this is not love. I take a knife, I kill myself because you don't love me. This is love. The most powerful love you feel will be after it has gone away.

It's pain.

Yes, but love is also pleasure. The most pleasure there is in the world so when it leaves, you want to take a knife and kill yourself. No? You don't know. It's because you don't know love.

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THE NORMAL HEART

"YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON..."

EMMA: You don't know what's going on any more than I do. My guess is as good as anybody's. Why are you blocking my efforts?

EXAMINING DOCTOR: Dr. Brookner, since you first became involved with this we pay tribute to you as a pioneer, one of the few courageous pioneers—there have been other investigators... Quite frankly, it's no longer just your disease, though you seem to think it is.

EMMA: Oh, I do, do I? And you're here to take it away from me, is that it? Well, I'll let you in on a little secret, doctor. You can have it. I didn't want it in the first place. You think it's my good fortune to have the privilege of watching young men die? Oh, what's the use! What am I arguing with you for? You don't know enough medicine to treat a mouse. You don't know enough science to study boiled water. How dare you come and judge me?

EXAMINING DOCTOR: We only serve on this panel at the behest of Dr. Joost.

EMMA: Another idiot. And, by the way, a closeted homosexual who is doing everything in his power to sweep this under the rug, and I vowed I'd never say that in public. How does it always happen that all the idiots are always on your team? You guys have all the money, call the shots, shut everybody out, and then operate behind closed doors. I am taking care of more victims of this epidemic than anyone in the world. We have more accumulated test results, more data, more frozen blood samples, more experience! How can you not fund my research or invite me to participate in yours? A promising virus has already been discovered—in France. Why are we being told not to cooperate with the French? Why are you refusing to cooperate with the French? Just so you can steal a Nobel Prize? Your National Institutes of Health received my first request for research money two years ago. It took you one year just to print up application forms. It's taken you two and a half years from my first reported case just to show up here to take a look. The paltry amount of money you are making us beg for—from the four billion dollars you are given each and every year— won't come to anyone until only God knows when. Any way you add

all this up, it is an unconscionable delay and has never, never existed in any other health emergency during this entire century. While something is being passed around that causes death. We are enduring an epidemic of death. Women have been discovered to have it in Africa — where it is clearly transmitted heterosexually. It is only a question of time. We could all be dead before you do anything. You want my patients? Take them! TAKE THEM! *(She starts hurling her folders and papers at him, out into space.)* Just do something for them! You're fucking right I'm imprecise and unfocused. And you are all idiots!

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THE HOURS

“THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU DON’T BELONG...”

LAURA: There are times when you don’t belong and you think you’re going to kill yourself. Once I went to a hotel. That night...later that night, I made a plan. Plan was, I would leave my family when my second child was born. And that’s what I did. Got up one morning, made breakfast, went to the bus stop, got on a bus. I’d left a note. *(pause)* I got a job in a library in Canada. It would be wonderful to say you regretted it. It would be easy. But what does it mean? What does it mean to regret when you have no choice? It’s what you can bear. There it is. No one is going to forgive me. *(Laura looks at Clarissa, steady, unapologetic.)* It was death. I chose life.

“I’VE STAYED ALIVE FOR YOU.”

RICHARD: What are you doing here? You're early!

I had this wonderful idea. I needed some light. I needed to let in some light. I had this fantastic notion. I took a Xanax and a Ritalin together. It had never occurred to me.

Don't come near me!

It seemed to me I needed to let in some light. What do you think? I cleared away all the windows.

I don't think I can make it to the party, Clarissa. But I still have to face the hours, don't I? I mean the hours after the party, and the hours after that. Do I still have good days in front of me? Not really. It's kind of you to think, but it's not really true.

Mrs. Dalloway, it's you. I've stayed alive for you. But now you have to let me go. No, wait, wait, wait....

Tell me a story. Like that morning when you walked out of that old house. And you were eighteen, and maybe I was nineteen. I was nineteen years old and I had never seen anything so beautiful. You, coming out of a glass door early in the morning, still sleepy. Isn't it strange? The most ordinary morning in anybody's life.

I'm afraid I can't make it to the party, Clarissa. You've been so good to me, Mrs. Dalloway. I love you. I don't think two people could have been happier than we've been.

(Richard jumps out the window.)

“MY LIFE HAS BEEN STOLEN FROM ME.”

VIRGINIA: Why Mr. Woolf, what an unexpected pleasure. You were working in the garden, I didn’t wish to disturb you. I went for a walk. I’ve endured this custody. I’ve endured this imprisonment. I am attended by doctors. Everywhere. I am attended by doctors who inform me of my own interests. They do not speak for my interests. My life has been stolen from me. I’m living in a town I have no wish to live in. I’m living a life I have no wish to live. How did this happen? It is time for us to move back to London. I miss London. I miss London life. I’m dying in this town. I wrestle alone in the dark, in the deep dark, and only I can know. Only I can understand my own condition. You live with the threat you tell me, you live with the threat of my extinction? Leonard, I live with it too. This is my right. Tis the right of every human being. I choose not the suffocating anesthetic of the suburbs, but the violent jolt of the capital. That is my choice. The meanest patient, yes even the very lowest is allowed some say in the matter of her own prescription. Thereby she defines her humanity. I wish for your sake Leonard I could be happy in this quietness. But if it is a choice between Richmond and death, I choose death. You cannot find peace by avoiding life, Leonard.

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ELEMENTAL FLOW

WATER

I'm looking for what's underneath. Going deeper and deeper and deeper, there is no end. A way can always be found to go deeper. And in these depths, words are these heavy sacks that embody so many meanings that they become a burden when trying to explain something as intricate as a snowflake.

"You are not the drop in the ocean, the entire ocean inside the drop is you."

Well, sometimes words do flow like water, filling the depths of the cracks in the human soul. Down here, where blue becomes black, maybe it gets easier to go beyond what the eyes can see and fully submerge yourself in the wisdom that you are me. Down here, there is no difference between the form of me in a cup, in the rain, within a plant or inside a being that is human. Like you. Do you feel my waves within you? Running through your veins, collecting in your mouth, shielding your eyes, perspiring through your skin and constantly cleansing you from within. Can you feel the tides of your breath swaying sweetly with the push and pull of the moon?

When you make contact with me, honor my clarity, my patience, and the life I carry. I am the first medicine, older than your memory. I nourish every living root and run through every vein. I held you before your first breath, cradling your beginnings in the safe waters of the womb. When your body connects with me, it remembers where it came from. But does it really? I can't seem to feel our connection anymore.

She goes back into the bathtub.

It didn't have to be this way. I remember how clean and free I used to be. I know that given enough time without harm, I will reclaim that peace quietly. It's not that there is a lack of me but I am greatly imbalanced, my cycles ruptured, my waves full of waste. My lakes are drying up and becoming deserts. I pour down on my sister Earth, and she is so weak that she can't hold onto me like she used to. I am killing those wanting to quench their thirsts with me, for I am no longer safe to drink. Instead of nourishing roots and bringing life, my currents are roaring down in massive

destruction. I am the giver of life, I am the giver of life, I am the giver of life, so much destruction is not in my nature. I feel sick, and dirty and lost. I can't find you. I can't feel our connection. Would you connect with me again?