

Peerless by Jiehae Park

After some really dark times, D had a vision that led him to take a self-actualization course, lost thirty pounds, and get into a prestigious college. Now he is at the school dance with the girl of his dreams and her twin sister (who unbeknownst to him, are plotting his murder).

D:

I once licked a cashew and it sent me to the hospital for three days.
Just licked it, you know? Didn't even put the whole thing in my mouth.

And my face got all puffy, like---

Last week I picked up a walnut with both pinkies just to see what would happen and I didn't die but my hands puffed up. I still can't bend my pinky-knuckles.

My counselor says that's why no matter how much weight I lose I'm still fat in my head—I mean why I think I'm fat in my head, because there's some sort of unconscious-association going on with food and death and also maybe that's why I use food to address anxiety, because there's this unconscious association with food and death and I've got an unconscious death wish.

I'm talking a lot
I talk a lot
My mom (says)
This isn't interesting
For other people
It makes them think I'm fragile
I'm not fragile
Or maybe
I was fragile
But now I have NO FEAR
I GO
I DO
I GO
I'm going to stop talking now.

Men on Boats by Jaclyn Backhaus

Men on Boats charts John Wesley Powell's 1869 expedition, sanctioned by the U.S. Government, to chart the Colorado River. In this play, an ensemble of ten play these characters. These roles should be cast entirely by people who are not historically cisgender white males – I'm talking about racially diverse actors who are female-identifying, trans-identifying, gender-fluid, and/or nongender conforming.

In this monologue, John Wesley Powell, the one-armed leader of the expedition, puts Dunn, a fellow crew member, in his place after a disastrous run on the river causes Dunn to loudly question Powell's leadership skills.

POWELL:

Well. Some of you are here for sport and some of you are here for skill and some of you are here because you get a kick out of killing bears and some of you are here because it got your ass out of the army on a good note and some of you are here because you have nowhere else to go. You know why I'm here? I'm here because my friend, the fucking PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES, needed a better knowledge of the arid lands of this nation. I am here because I was given a job. And it just so happens that I've run more rivers than any of you all put together—I did the fuckin' Mississippi up and down when I was seventeen years old and I've done more tributaries than you can name on BOTH of your sorry hands. If you want to go over what we could have done to save the No-Name, then be my guest. But, instead of that, I am going to focus on the marvelous forethought we put into divvying up most of our supplies between each boat. And I'm going to thank God that none of us perished today, and that none of us broke any crucial bones. All of that is a win, in my book. We won't make it to the end of this expedition if we focus on anything other than wins. So, if you don't want to go down to the wreckage tomorrow, then I'm sure I can rely on one of your fellow crew members to be a good sport.

You got your fucking cliff, Dunn. Now how about a nice fucking rabbit dinner.

Here's What I Said When I Prayed in Spanish

I love to hear you pray over me,
yet as foolish as it may sound,
I hate when it is my turn
because of how well *you* do it.
So I do it in the easiest way,
and I know you don't understand,
but you say it's fine.
So here's what I said when I prayed in Spanish:

I thanked Him, and I asked Him to give you
a more-than-decent job offer.
I begged Him to put a wall of angels around you
because I knew that was what my grandma would say.
I asked Him to protect your heart and all its purity
so that it may never be ruined
by anger and resentment.
I told Him I love you.
I told Him I love Him.
I told Him I love you because He gives me
the strength,
the capacity,
the courage.

He quickly replied
and told me I was a vessel.
He loves you through me.

Niw, La Negrita
from Maria Soñando

Éste es el po
pero para mí
para mi famil
para cuando
«¿Qué sabes
«¿De quién e
«¿Cómo te e

Éste es el po
No sé nada,
que perdí ya
En verdad,
Yo estoy ta

Everybody – Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins

COUSIN

Everybody, can I just be really honest with you for a second?

(Everybody: Okay?)

Real talk, cousin to cousin: Don't you think you're being sort of the asshole right now?

(What?).

Don't you think what you're doing is sort of selfish? Like you can't just decide I'm a garbage person based on whether or not I want to die with you. I mean, you just *just* confirmed this whole "God" thing for me but it sounds like everybodys' got some sort of presentation they're expected to deliver, so it's like how am I supposed to go with you but also get myself ready, too? You know what I mean? There's only so much time in the world and everyone knows multi-tasking leads to diminished quality in the overall work and honestly, like, maybe it's not all about you, Everybody? You know what I mean? Maybe the point of life is that everyone has to wrestle with it on their own terms. Actually, you know what? Let me go and get started on figuring out this presentation, because it sounds like a lot of work. Man, I wish somebody had told me earlier—but see? This is why I'm thankful for family. They tell you those things no one else will...at some point...if you're lucky. And I guess I'm lucky. Thanks for the heads up, Cousin. I wonder if it will help if I think and talk about "God" more? Then my presentation would just be like, "Well, honestly, I spent a lot of my time talking about you, man!" Do you think that's what "God" wants? But then that's like super-weird, because it's like: Then why was I given the option of *not* doing that? Like what if "God" is like: "That' it?! That's all you did with the greatest gift I have to offer?!" Man. Life is just constantly like...wow, man. It's like...Woooooooooooooow---

Cousin exits the theater and seems to run into some people outside.

Yo yo you, do all you guys know about "God"?!

Just Looking

By Kellie Powell

Later in ACT II. Angela has just realized the real reason she's been crazy:
Her infatuation with Brian.

ANGELA:

I have feelings for you. Not just, like, strange, uncontrollable physical attraction, although, I feel that... I have since we were in *Oedipus* together, since before I even broke up with Luke. And not just that bizarre combination of admiration and fascination that keeps you on my permanent good side no matter how drastically you cross the line or how much of a little whiny bitch you can sometimes be - although, obviously, I feel that. And not just that totally annoying and inescapable feeling that I want to take care of you, because I made you promise to treat her right, and I should've made her make that same promise, so you'd never have to feel the kind of pain I feel when I see her let you down - even though I feel that, too. It's all those things, and it's more, more than I can ever put into words.

Listen, don't say anything. Because you need to spend some time on your own, be alone for a while, and you're going to need time to let all that sink in.

I'm going to need time to let all that sink in.

But... if the time ever comes in your life, when you're ready... please consider me. I'll be here. I'll be waiting.

From **The Virus** by Carolyn Kras

MAN: 30s.

Let me reassure you, I've had a funeral for my anger. I read *Transcending Hurt* cover to cover, and it's opened a lot of doors for me. I've forgiven how you sold my computer on eBay to pay your credit card. You needed a little extra cash. And totaling the Beamer. The car is replaceable, you aren't. The night I came home and saw you with the grocery bagger: Zap! erased from my memory. All of that's gone. And now I'm ready for you to move back in. Please, come home, I will lay out the welcome mat. Everything will be fine. More than fine: Fantastic. Because we've healed. And I . . . I really . . . Fuck this. No. Rachel, you were a virus. You somehow broke down my firewall, infiltrated my system, and all hell broke loose. Except I didn't know it until I was already half destroyed. Like those nasty Trojan Horse numbers. And it's taken me a long, long time to figure out how to quarantine your shit. I have re-booted my system. And now, you are permanently deleted. Find somebody else to infect.

TWELFTH NIGHT II.ii

VIOLA/CESARIO

I left no ring with her: what means this lady?
Fortune forbid my out-side have not charm'd her:
She made good view of me, indeed so much,
That me thought her eyes had lost her tongue,
For she did speak in starts distractedly.
She loves me sure, the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger:
None of my lord's ring? Why he sent her none;
I am the man, if it be so, as tis,
Poor Lady, she were better love a dream:
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy is it, for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms:
Alas, O frailty is the cause, not we,
For such as we are made, if such we be:
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I (poor monster) fond as much on him:
And she (mistaken) seems to dote on me:
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love:
As I am woman (now alas the day)
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?
O time, thou must untangle this, not I,
It is too hard a knot for me t' untie.

HENRY V 1.1 - CHORUS

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars, and at his heels
(Leash'd in, like hounds) should famine, sword, and fire
Crouch for employment. But pardon, gentles all,
The flat unraised spirits that hath dar'd
On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
So great an object. Can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! Since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million,
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.

AS YOU LIKE IT II.vii

JACQUES

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women, merely Players;
They have their *Exits* and their Entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His Acts being seven ages. At first the Infant,
Mewling, and puking in the Nurses arms:
Then, the whining School-boy with his Satchell
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to schole. And then the Lover,
Sighing like Furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his Mistress eye-brow. Then, a Soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the Pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden, and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble Reputation
Even in the Canons mouth: And then, the Justice
In faire round belly, with good Capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws, and modern instances,
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd Pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide,
For his shrunk shanke, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble pipes,
And whistles in his sound. Last Scene of all,
That ends this strange eventfull history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.