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The Why Overhead

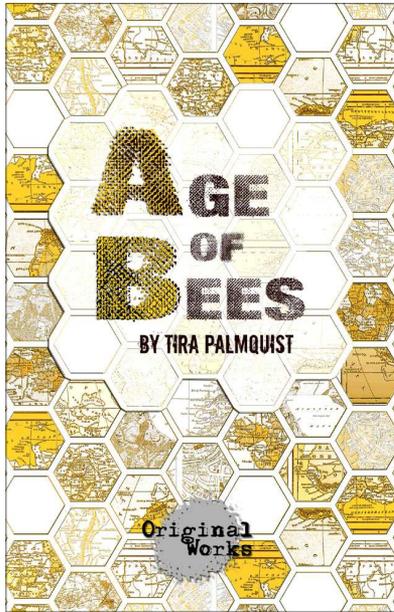
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Age of Bees by Tira Palmquist

Synopsis: The bees have gone, disease and scarcity are rampant, but Mel, a young pollinator, finds refuge on an isolated farm. This place is fertile and safe, and Mel counts herself lucky to have a place where – even if it is not exactly happy – she has a purpose. When that purpose and safety are threatened, Mel faces an awful choice: will she risk leaving this relative safety, or will she hide from greater dangers, even if it means giving up some chance that something good can grow in this ruined world?

Cast Size: 1 Male, 3 Females

The Why Overhead

By Adam Szymkowicz

**For those who make the day go by faster, especially
Jodi Lipper, Michele Hammond and Joel Liestman.**

The Why Overhead was first produced by Zootopia Theatre Co. It opened September 6, 2012 at the Access Theater in New York City.

Directed by Matthew J. Nichols
Set & Lighting Design: Andrew Lu
Costume Design: Caroline Berti
Sound Design: Brian Andrews
Original Music: Dru Cutler
Production Stage Manager: Phillip Rudy
Graphic Design: Aaron Hansen
Press Representative: Jonathan Slaff & Associates,
www.jsnyc.com
Ticketing: Brown Paper Tickets

The Cast:

KAREN:	Heather Hollingsworth
DOG:	Larry Phillips
ALAN:	Scott Thomas
SAM:	Rowan Michael Meyer
SID:	Matthew Murumba
ANNIE:	Susan Louise O'Connor
NIGEL:	Jeffrey Emerson
DONALD:	David Bennett
VIOLET:	Cotton Wright
JESSICA:	Alexandra Hellquist
SUE:	Britney Burgess
MR. HENDERSON:	Ken Glickfeld

Special thanks to Matthew and Britney and the amazing cast and crew from the Zootopia production. Thanks also Kristen Palmer, John and Rhoda Szymkowicz, Tish Dace, Travis York, Flux Theater Ensemble, Larry Kunofsky and Purple Rep, and the actors from the serials series—Piper Gunnarson Bishop, Drew Hirshfield, Dana Jacks, Brian Pracht, Christina Shipp and Christopher T. VanDijk. This play would not have been possible had I not spent many hours in offices. So thank you to the folks at Randstad in New York and Prostaff in Minneapolis and of course, everyone at the development office at The Columbia University School of Journalism.

CHARACTERS

KAREN
DOG
ALAN
SAM
SID
ANNIE
NIGEL
DONALD
VIOLET
JESSICA
SUE
MR. HENDERSON

(There is no doubling except everyone will be a hobo)

NOTE: More POLICE OFFICERS can come in with SUE and stand around taking notes at the end if you want. But they are not necessary. It all depends on the size of your stage and if you have people who want to do this.

PLACE

New York City—

An office, KAREN's apartment, DONALD's apartment, a street.

THE WHY OVERHEAD

1

8:11 AM

(KAREN and her DOG in their apartment. KAREN wears pajamas or a robe.)

KAREN: *(to her DOG)* I see you looking at me. I know what you're thinking. You're thinking I should get dressed and go to work. "Get going," your eyes say. But I am moving. You might not see it, but I'm moving. It's slow sure, but I'm faster than erosion. Faster than continental drift. But wait a minute. Let me rest. What's the hurry? Live in the moment here with me. I'm here right now and I aim to stay here for another few minutes, an hour, a day. Everything will go on without me. I didn't go to work yesterday or the day before and yet the world continues to revolve. New York does not need me. People go about their lives. No one calls to ask where I am. It's like I don't exist at all. But I do exist don't I?

DOG: Ruff!

KAREN: Your mouth says yes but your eyes say no. Please stop judging me. I don't need to go to work, not today. It won't affect the food in your dish. You'll get fed. And you won't be lonely.

DOG: Ruff.

KAREN: Please don't say anything. I know you disapprove and I hear you but it's really not what I want right now and I know you subscribe to a sort of tough love viewpoint, but sometimes that's not very helpful and furthermore, not appreciated. Don't look at me like that. I do appreciate you, just not the hard line you try to draw sometimes. The world is not black and white. And colors can be confusing, so let me sit and rest and figure out a few things, okay? It'll be fun. I can stay here all day with you. We can watch bad romantic comedies and you can jump up on the bed and curl up with me and we can eat crackers if we want. I won't kick you out. And tomorrow? *(beat)* Who knows? Let's just think of today. Everything is so uncertain these days.

(Pause)

DOG: Ruff!

9:23 AM

(At the office, cubicles. Phones ringing. Sounds of a fax machine, typing.)

SID: *(on phone)* Yes, Ma'am. No, Ma'am. We'll get that right out to you. Thank you for calling. We're here from nine a.m. to five p.m. Monday through—*(the woman has hung up.)* Okay then.

SAM: *(peers his head over the cubicle)* What's the dare for the day?

SID: Oh, man, I don't know.

SAM: ALAN! ALAN! ALAN! ALAN! I think he's here. ALAN! ALAN! ALAN! ALAN!!! ALAN!!!!

(ALAN appears.)

ALAN: What?

SAM: What do you got for today?

ALAN: Um...

SID: What do ya got?

SAM: You got one?

ALAN: Hold on. Yeah. Okay.

SID: What do ya got?

ALAN: Right before they hang up, you say real quick, “I love you.”

SAM: That’s funny.

SID: “Thank you for calling, I love you.”

SAM: “I love you, sir.”

ALAN: Yeah.

SAM: Dare accepted.

SID: Accepted.

ALAN: Accepted.

SAM: Good work.

ALAN: Thanks.

(Enter NIGEL.)

NIGEL: Where the fuck is Karen?

SAM: I don’t know.

SID: Well, if she’s not coming to work again, I’m going to stop working. I’m serious. If she’s not working, we shouldn’t have to.

NIGEL: Yeah, Okay.

(NIGEL exits to his desk.)

ALAN: She might come in, still.

SAM: Has anyone heard from her? Hey! Has anyone heard from Karen!

ANNIE, NIGEL, ALAN, SID, JESSICA: (off) (*From various parts of the office*) No!

ALAN: Maybe she called in sick to Mr. Henderson.

(ANNIE comes over.)

ANNIE: I mean at the very least she could send us an email.

SID: She probably died.

ANNIE: Stop.

SID: She probably fell off her treadmill.

ALAN: Fell to her death off the treadmill?

SID: Yeah fell to her death. That dog of hers is probably eating her right now.

ANNIE: Stop.

SID: Well, I'm not doing any work until she comes back. If my boss can play hooky, so can I.

9:24 AM

(KAREN and her DOG in their apartment.)

KAREN: Here's the thing, Eugene.

DOG: Ruff.

KAREN: I know you think I'm crazy, but I woke up one day and there was a *why* hanging over everything I did all day. Why? What for? How come? It kept poking at me, insistently. Why! Why? And I didn't have an answer, you know? I was doing the things I thought I was supposed to do even though I hated doing them. And really, I don't have a good reason for doing any of these things. And so it stayed. That big *WHY* hanging over my head, over my life and it's coloring everything. And I have no answer. I don't know why. Why? Why am I doing anything? So I decided from now on not to do anything unless I had a damn good reason. So let's keep watching this film, because it makes me feel good and it takes me away. And I'll keep petting you because you like it and I like how soft you are.

DOG: Okay, but what if you never have a good reason to do anything ever again? Will you just drop out of life altogether, and if so, what will that look like?

KAREN: That's a good question. Why don't we both think about that, maybe after the film is over. Okay?

DOG: Ruff.

KAREN: Okay.

4

10:45 AM

(NIGEL is working on his computer in his cubicle. ANNIE can be heard in another part of the stage.)

ANNIE: Who left this in the refrigerator? Oh my god!

(ANNIE enters NIGEL's area carrying a brown paper bag. It looks wet, like it may have leaked.)

ANNIE: Is this yours?

NIGEL: What's that smell?

ANNIE: It's yours, isn't it?

NIGEL: Get that thing away from me!

ANNIE: You can't just leave smelly shit in the refrigerator just because you don't want to touch it. You have to take responsibility for the stench you create, Nigel.

NIGEL: It's not mine.

ANNIE: It's not yours?

NIGEL: It's not mine.

ANNIE: This isn't yours?

NIGEL: No.

ANNIE: It's not?

NIGEL: No.

ANNIE: Whose is it?

NIGEL: How should I know?

ANNIE: If it's not yours, whose is it?

NIGEL: I don't know. Maybe you shouldn't bring me every smelly thing you find hanging around.

ANNIE: I wouldn't except that every time there's something that smells it seems to belong to you.

NIGEL: How about your smelly feet and your smelly face?

ANNIE: My what? How about I shove this bag down your throat!?

NIGEL: Go ahead and try it, hot shot!

ANNIE: You are so asking for it.

NIGEL: Are you going to give it to me?

ANNIE: I would so kick your ass.

NIGEL: You are a wimpy little girl.

ANNIE: You are a wimpier littler girl.

(With that, she throws the paper bag on his desk.)

NIGEL: Oh, come on! Come on! Foul! I call foul!

(But ANNIE has left.)

NIGEL: You better run. You better be afraid of me. I am a man. I am a big man and I won't take this kind of insanity from a girl like you! I have scaled mountains. I have forged rivers. I have run in races. I built snow caves and spent the night in them. You hear me?! I jumped out of airplanes. I drove a motorcycle. I am very hairy. I work out two or three times a week. With free weights. I eat lots of vegetables. I am a fairly good pool player. Also pinochle. I could catch a tiger if I had the right equipment and enough time on my hands and if I was in the vicinity of tigers. I have a charming personality. I can make up jokes that people repeat later and don't even realize they're mine. I can make intricate cages out of popsicle sticks. My chest is enormous! I am a wealth of knowledge about music and musicians, especially in the years nineteen fifty nine to nineteen ninety-four. I write poetry. I won an award once for punctuality. My smile is terrific. I used to be a choir boy. I can peel oranges with great speed and dexterity. I am good at choosing shoes. I once played tennis for three hours. I am omnipotent! Okay, well maybe that last one isn't true. But I am a man and I will crush you. You hear me?! YOU HEAR ME?!!

SAM: I hear you and I want you to shut up.

10:47 AM

(At DONALD's apartment, DONALD talks to a stuffed cat. No, not like a stuffed animal. Like a cat that used to be alive that was taken to the taxidermist and was stuffed and now sits lifelike before us. The cat meows, yet eerily, the sound does not seem to come from the cat. DONALD can meow for the CAT if you like.)

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: What's that mittens?

CAT: *(Louder)* Meow.

DONALD: Oh. No. no. Don't worry about me. It's true I've been a bit sulky since that female laid me off. But I'm recovering, licking my wounds. Anyway, I have ideas about how to take care of that.

CAT: Meow?

DONALD: Sure, I might apply for some jobs in my sector. That could be part of the plan. But that's not the main plan.

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: Well, I'm glad you asked. You see, I have not been true to my nature. My nature is murder and pillaging. My nature is smash and grab and instead I had meetings a lot and typed things into Excel documents. I should be harpooning seals and drinking the blood of my enemies, not filling out requisitions for erasers. (continued)

DONALD (Cont'd): So the job was not in fact a good match. Still, for them to treat me so discourteously, well I'm going to take care of that. Don't worry.

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: Don't worry about that. Don't worry just yet. Just know I'm working it out. I mean, she should have laid off one of those worthless cabana boys or one of those phone jockeys. I was the office manager! You can't go on without an office manager. I don't know what she was thinking. The place is probably falling apart without me at the helm, ordering the paper. Answering the phones. Keeping track of the sick days and the personal days. *(beat)* Maybe I should poison her dog.

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: You like that idea, huh?

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: Me too. But I don't know where she lives. She's unlisted, you see. Anyway, it seems unfair to hurt an animal who has nothing to do with her. But it would hurt her a great deal. It's a tough decision. Life is full of tough decisions. But I have a better idea anyway. I may as well tell you. I've been keeping it to myself. You know what I'm going to do?

CAT: Meow?

(DONALD whispers something to CAT.)

CAT: Meow.

10:54 AM

(ALAN approaches JESSICA's cube.)

ALAN: Oh, hey, Jessica, I didn't hear you come back.

JESSICA: Yeah.

ALAN: How was the dentist?

JESSICA: Fine.

(SID enters.)

SID: Hi, Jessica.

JESSICA: Hi.

SID: How was the dentist?

JESSICA: Fine.

SID: I bet you look really cute with gauze in your mouth.

JESSICA: Yes, I do.

ALAN: Did you have any cavities?

JESSICA: No.

SID: She has perfect teeth. Look at those teeth. That girl doesn't have cavities.

JESSICA: I don't have cavities.

ALAN: Maybe she doesn't have a sweet tooth.

JESSICA: I have a sweet tooth. It's just I brush is all.

SID: She brushes.

JESSICA: And floss.

SID: She flosses.

JESSICA: And mouthwash.

SID: She m—

ALAN: Shut up. You're making a fool of yourself.

SID: No, I'm not. Am I?

JESSICA: I wasn't paying attention.

SID: See?

ALAN: She's not paying attention to you because you're a fool.

SID: I am not a fool. You are the fool, fool. Anyway, what do you care?

ALAN: I don't.

SID: Good.

ALAN: Fine.

JESSICA: Um. Do you want something? Or are you just going to hang around my cube and argue.

ALAN: Oh, actually . . . So you want to—

SID: Okay, yeah.

ALAN: Should I ask or—

SID: You can ask.

ALAN: All right.

SID: Or I could ask.

ALAN: Okay.

SID: Or we could both.

ALAN: So Jessica...

JESSICA: Yeah?

SID: We wanted to ask you—

JESSICA: I'm not having a threesome with you.

ALAN: No, no. We weren't going to ask that.

SID: We don't want that. Trust me.

ALAN: No.

SID: I mean, he might, but I don't. Not that I don't want to get in on with you, but I just don't want anyone else involved, you know?

JESSICA: What do you want?

SID: Right.

ALAN: Well, when are you going to lunch today?

JESSICA: I'm busy. For lunch. I'm not having lunch with you.

SID: Oh, no.

ALAN: We didn't mean that.

SID: No.

ALAN: We have a surprise, but we need access to your cube to make it happen and we need you to be away, for like an hour.

SID: An hour?

ALAN: Yeah, bout an hour.

SID: Make it an hour fifteen.

JESSICA: Fine.

ALAN: What time?

JESSICA: One.

SID: Perfect.

ALAN: Great!

(They stand there, smiling at her.)

JESSICA: Okay, now go away so I can do work.

SID: Right.

ALAN: Okay.

SID: See you at one.

(They exit. SID looks back one last time and smiles.)

11:15 AM

(At SAM's desk. His phone rings. He puts on his headset.)

SAM: Thank you for calling customer service. This is Sam. How may I help you today?

(Lights up on VIOLET in another part of the stage. Where is she? In her house, on the street?)

VIOLET: Hello, Sam.

SAM: Oh, hello. It's you.

VIOLET: Yes.

SAM: I was hoping you'd call.

VIOLET: You knew I would.

SAM: I know. But I didn't know when. It's like a treat. And a surprise.

VIOLET: Am I a treat and a surprise?

SAM: You are. You really are. So how are you doing?

VIOLET: I'm good.

SAM: I love your voice.

VIOLET: Thank you.

SAM: I got those pictures you sent.

VIOLET: Yeah?

SAM: You are so fricking cute. And beautiful too, you know. You are cute but at the same time gorgeous.

VIOLET: Thank you.

SAM: And hot too. I don't want you to think just because you're a great beauty you're not sizzling hot too.

VIOLET: Thank you. I liked your photos too.

SAM: You did?

VIOLET: They were funny.

SAM: I was trying to entertain you, you know.

VIOLET: You have really nice eyes.

SAM: Thanks. I was born with them. I mean, they've gotten bigger, but they're the ones I've always had.

VIOLET: Lovely.

SAM: Lovely, huh?

VIOLET: Don't embarrass me.

SAM: I'm not.

VIOLET: Did you ever think you'd get along so well with someone calling in one day with a warranty question?

SAM: Never. I never thought work would bring me such pleasure.

VIOLET: It's a special thing. Nothing like this ever happened to me.

SAM: Me either. I'm so glad you took a chance.

VIOLET: Me too. It was a lark.

SAM: I'm glad.

VIOLET: I don't do things like that.

SAM: No.

VIOLET: Except that once.

SAM: Yeah. When can we meet?

VIOLET: Face to face?

SAM: Yeah.

VIOLET: I don't know.

SAM: What do you mean?

VIOLET: Timing is really important. We can't do it too soon and we can't wait too long.

SAM: Okay, so when?

VIOLET: (*looking at her watch.*) Oh shit. I got to go to work. I'll call you back.

SAM: Okay. Call me back.

SID: *(on the phone.)* Okay, ma'am. Have a nice day.
(beat) I love you.

(SID and ALAN laugh.)

11:25 AM

(At KAREN's apartment. A movie has just ended. Maybe KAREN is crying a little. The DOG is not.)

KAREN: That was a gorgeous film.

DOG: It was okay.

KAREN: I thought it was touching. Did you see his face when he saw her there at the end?

DOG: I have a hard time seeing two dimensional images. Also I'm near sighted.

KAREN: We should get you glasses.

DOG: Okay. So we've seen that movie. Now what? Are you going to continue this? You want to watch another movie? And then another? You want to delay your life indefinitely and never get dressed?

KAREN: Oh, Doggy. You really don't let me collect myself.

DOG: You've been collecting yourself for a week. I demand decisions. I don't want you to go through life like this.

KAREN: I know you don't.

DOG: It's okay for me. Because I'm a dog.

KAREN: I know. That's unfair.

DOG: Of course it is. But I'm a dog and you aren't. You can't just become a dog. One of us has to be the human.

KAREN: I guess.

DOG: And it's not going to be me.

KAREN: Okay.

DOG: So?

KAREN: I have one idea.

DOG: Let's hear it.

KAREN: Here is what I propose. I take you for a walk. But then we keep walking. We take a walk that lasts for the rest of our lives. I pack up all the food and necessities. We go off with a tent and we walk the length and breadth of the United States for the rest of our lives.

DOG: Like hobos?

KAREN: Like free people.

DOG: Will we bring the TV?

KAREN: I don't think we can.

DOG: I'm in.

KAREN: Okay. Let's pack.

DOG: Wait. This means no more city, no more job, no more walks in the park. No more treats from the high class pet store.

KAREN: Yes but it means lots more cities, and fields and woods and streams. It means chasing rabbits sometimes. There are the possibilities of other jobs. Someday we may stop and stay somewhere else for a while. But yes it means casting off our old life for the unknown, for a new life, for adventure.

DOG: There will be new smells.

KAREN: Yes.

DOG: I like that.

KAREN: We are agreed?

DOG: Okay.

KAREN: Okay?

DOG: I think. Let me think. Let me just mull it over.

KAREN: You're afraid.

DOG: Just give me a minute.

KAREN: Okay.

DOG: Ruff.

12:13 PM

(ANNIE at her cubical, maybe offstage. NIGEL at his cube.)

ANNIE: What the? Is this cottage cheese?

(ANNIE screams, then runs over to NIGEL's area.)

ANNIE: Did you put spread cottage cheese on my desk?

NIGEL: Was it large curd?

ANNIE: Yes.

NIGEL: Two percent?

ANNIE: I don't know.

NIGEL: Because I did put two percent, large curd cottage cheese all over your desk. If that is what you're referring to, yes, that was me.

ANNIE: Fucking—

NIGEL: I think it's yours actually.

ANNIE: Mine!

NIGEL: Someone left it in the fridge to go sour. I see you eating cottage cheese an awful lot. And you know, it had your name on it, so...

ANNIE: You are an asshole.

NIGEL: Does it smell bad?

ANNIE: You're disgusting!

NIGEL: Well, you made my desk smell bad.

ANNIE: That's not the same thing.

NIGEL: I refuse to be bullied by you anymore!

ANNIE: You realize what this means, don't you?

NIGEL: That you're going to apologize?

ANNIE: This time you went too far. This time, you have stepped over the line, Nigel Melnick.

NIGEL: Good.

ANNIE: This means war!

NIGEL: Bring your war. I welcome it. I will defeat you soundly. Bring whatever you have. Your pathetic intellect and weak muscles are no match for me. I will crush you.

ANNIE: We'll see who crushes who.

NIGEL: I will crush you!

(ANNIE exits. JESSICA walks over wearing headphones. She takes them off as she approaches NIGEL.)

JESSICA: Do you understand the filing system?

NIGEL: I am going to crush her.

JESSICA: Can you explain the filing system to me?

NIGEL: No, I don't know.

JESSICA: I don't know what the fuck Donald did. It's not alphabetical and it's not numerical and I can't figure out what it is.

NIGEL: Yeah I don't know. Maybe Karen knows.

JESSICA: She hasn't been here all week.

NIGEL: Oh. Right.

JESSICA: You don't think . . .

NIGEL: What?

JESSICA: Donald did something to Karen.

NIGEL: No. No. I don't think so. Will you leave me alone, now? I have to plot Annie's demise.

JESSICA: Oh, Okay.

(JESSICA puts her headphones on and starts to walk away as SAM enters.)

SAM: Hey does anyone understand the filing system? Hey. Jessica? Nigel? Hey. Hey! Why is everyone ignoring me?

12:52 PM

(SID and ALAN enter JESSICA's area carrying step ladders.)

SID: Hi, Jessica.

ALAN: Hi, Jessica.

JESSICA: What's with the ladders?

ALAN: It's part of the surprise.

JESSICA: And I'm going to like this?

SID: We think so.

JESSICA: And you need ladders?

ALAN: We do.

JESSICA: Is it dangerous, this thing you're doing? Does it have the potential to fall on me?

SID: We don't think so.

JESSICA: I just don't want things to fall on me. The last apartment I had, the ceiling was falling on me, piece by piece.

ALAN: Right. You told us about this.

JESSICA: Little crumbs at first but then bigger and bigger chunks of plaster, just raining down. I had to fall asleep holding an umbrella over my head. I'm glad I don't live there anymore. It was a nightmare. Whenever the people above me were having sex it was like it was snowing. You're not going to make it snow on me?

ALAN: No.

JESSICA: Good. I hate snow. I should move to LA. Do you think I'm attractive enough for LA?

SID: Absolutely.

ALAN: No doubt.

SID: Wait, you hate snow?

JESSICA: Yeah.

SID: Really?

JESSICA: Yeah. Rain too. Anything that falls.

ALAN: We won't make it snow.

JESSICA: And nothing will fall on me, right?

ALAN: Right.

SID: Right. Quite the opposite, actually.

JESSICA: Because I can't handle things falling on my head. My older brother when I was a kid, used to drop things on me. He would pin me to the ground and then drop things on my face. Gummi Bears, ping pong balls, chocolate chips, our goldfish.

SID: Your goldfish?

JESSICA: Legos, Barbie heads, pens, popsicles, water balloons, eggs, tin foil, socks, shoes, magnets, pieces of paper, jello, cereal, the cat.

ALAN: Really?

JESSICA: Marshmallows, a slinky, legos. Flowers, ice, a recorder, matches, unlit. Matches, lit. matchbox cars, cellophane, statue of the virgin Mary, chapstick, butter, and then liquids. Juice, milk, water of course. Salt, pepper, thyme, rosemary, parsley, bacon bits, tongue depressors, spit, oregano, pancakes, stuffed animals, marbles, lettuce, sticks, forks, spoons, wood chips, chopsticks, erasers. Legos. Did I say legos? Toast, rubber balls, hackey sacks, Frisbees, action figures, dirt, spare change, mints, catfish.

ALAN: Catfish?

JESSICA: It is my dream to someday lock him in a room, handcuff him to a chair and spend all day and night dumping things over his head.

ALAN: Huh.

SID: Yeah, we won't drop anything on you.

JESSICA: Okay, good. I'll be back in an hour.

(Exit JESSICA, carrying an umbrella.)

SID: Okay.

ALAN: Oh, wait. Make it an hour fifteen. Jessica!

SID: She's gone.

ALAN: Okay. *(Pause.)* Before we start, I want to be clear.

SID: Okay, let's be clear.

ALAN: I'm only teaming up with you on this because I think you know what you're doing and I care about the structural integrity of the design. We'll do it together and it will be great and we will perhaps both benefit. But after this is over, it's every man for himself, again.

SID: Agreed.

ANNIE: Does anyone have any paper? Are we out of paper? *(Pause.)* Does anyone know how to order paper?

1:18 PM

(SAM at his desk on the phone. VIOLET on her cell, wherever VIOLET is.)

SAM: It's great to hear your voice.

VIOLET: Yours too.

SAM: And I love this relationship.

VIOLET: I love it too.

SAM: This phone thing.

VIOLET: Yeah.

SAM: It's great. You know I haven't even told anyone about it?

VIOLET: Really?

SAM: Not that I don't want to and not because I'm worried if I speak of it, it will cease to exist or something, but because I want it just for me.

VIOLET: Oh.

SAM: Other people might not understand. And they'll define it and then their definition will limit it. And right now, it's limitless.

VIOLET: Oh. That's nice.

SAM: So is this. That's what I'm saying.

VIOLET: I agree.

SAM: But we will meet, won't we?

VIOLET: Of course. It's just.

SAM: The timing.

VIOLET: Right. You have to get these things right.

SAM: I guess.

VIOLET: I'm still newly out of a relationship.

SAM: Right.

VIOLET: I'm just not sure I'm ready to take on another one. Not with the kind of attention I think a relationship like ours would deserve.

SAM: Yeah.

VIOLET: My parents grew up in the same town. They knew each other since the sixth grade. And my father was in love with my mother from the first moment they met, but even though he was there the entire time she was growing up she never really saw him. She didn't see him until eight years later when they both ended up taking a semester abroad at the same time from their different colleges. They were both Americans in Prague and they found each other one night in a smoky bar and my mom fell in love with him over Czech beer.

(continued)

VIOLET (Cont'd): And he had never stopped being in love with her. And six months later they were married. So you see, timing is very important. Sometimes things have to happen when they happen, not when we want them to happen. You know?

SAM: I guess.

VIOLET: So you'll wait.

SAM: I guess. I mean, it has to be this way? You're sure. Cause I'm just not sure.

VIOLET: Listen, I got to be across town, but I'll call you later, Okay?

SAM: Okay. Wait.

VIOLET: What?

SAM: No, nevermind.

VIOLET: Bye.

SAM: Wait.

VIOLET: What?

SAM: Nothing. Nothing. Bye.

VIOLET: Bye.

(SAM hangs up. ANNIE is standing in his cubicle.)

SAM: What?

ANNIE: You got a girlfriend?

SAM: No.

ANNIE: It's okay if you have a girlfriend.

SAM: I don't.

ANNIE: It's okay if you do.

SAM: It's not that yet.

ANNIE: All right.

SAM: Not yet.

ANNIE: Fine. *(beat)* I had a girlfriend once.

SAM: You did?

ANNIE: It didn't last. There was something untrue about it for me.

SAM: Oh.

ANNIE: It's boys for me. For always. But lately, nothing.

SAM: Huh.

ANNIE: Bone dry.

SAM: Oh.

ANNIE: I've become a fighter instead of a lover, I think. There was a fork in the road and I took the fighter path and I didn't turn back. Every relationship since then has been about being right. I'm not quite sure why. I don't think I'm a particular right person but get me in a room with someone I'm dating and suddenly I'm Encyclopedia Annie. What the fuck is that about?

SAM: I don't know.

ANNIE: Every little thing any of my exes has ever done makes me want to destroy them. I look at their stupid faces and I want to ruin them. Is that love?

SAM: Probably not.

ANNIE: If it is, it's a pernicious kind of love. Why do I want to destroy things that I love, that love me? If we hadn't been born with opposable thumbs all those years ago, we would have been killed off by tigers or something before we got smart enough to make clubs or guns or nuclear weapons. I wish I had a club right now. I would bash Nigel's head in with it. *(beat)* I need coffee.

(ANNIE walks away.)

SAM: Okay, nice talking to you.

1:22 PM

(DONALD and his CAT.)

DONALD: Mittens?

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: I finished it finally. My manifesto. You want to hear it?

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: Oh good. I was hoping you'd want to hear it. Are you ready? Are you comfortable?

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: "Manifesto to leave behind after everything has happened to explain why in case it is less than obvious." Is that title too long?

CAT: Meow.

DONALD: Yeah I don't think so either. *(DONALD clears his throat.)* "There are certain times in history when certain actions become necessary. Right now it is a time when there are great inequalities. I have taken on the responsibility to right wrongs to stop injustice and to use the pen here and later the sword so that the words from my pen will be read. Anyone can write anything, but you also have to get people to read what you write. (continued)

DONALD (Cont'd): That's what the sword is for. I stand before you a man ready to take drastic actions. There are men that take actions and men that do nothing but complain. We are all angry but only the brave few who stand up and fight back will be able to accomplish anything of note. History will show that my actions were the right actions at the right time. History will record today as the turning point for America when a wave of citizens led by me took back their country."

"I ask that in my absence, one of my future followers take care of my cat Mittens. She needs neither food nor water. She has evolved beyond life. She only requires company and for someone to talk to her and listen to her. I know that Mittens and I will see each other in the next life and I wouldn't be surprised if she became a conduit for my messages from beyond the grave. In the past, I have spoken to many great leaders through her. Like Marie Antoinette, John Adams, Martin Van Buren, Henry Ford, and a spirit guide dog named Hamish. So when you need to reach me, ask Mittens nicely and I'm sure she will oblige. And through her I will give you future guidance on how to overthrow the government and corporations and create a civilization for the people by the people. The right people, that is."

"In conclusion, when statues of me are built, I ask that Mittens be portrayed as well in bronze or gold or whatever. Her guidance has been incredibly helpful and without her I couldn't have accomplished what my actions accomplished. Like the straw that breaks the camel's back, the small deeds of today will reverberate for generations."

“I sign this with my left hand though I am right handed.” And then I signed it. Do you like it?

CAT: (*weird echoing meow.*) Meow.

DONALD: Me too.

1:32 PM

(SID and ALAN are both on ladders constructing something over JESSICA's cubicle. It's hard to tell what it is they're building at this point.)

SID: I'm just saying it's clear that she and I have a strong connection and I think you should just step aside and let nature take its course.

ALAN: I should step aside.

SID: You should step aside.

ALAN: I don't think so, Sid. First of all, you don't have some kind of special relationship with her. You just don't. You're imagining things. Second of all, you're just not as physically attractive as me.

SID: What? You're dog-like in appearance, while I am sculpted. Additionally, you are not funny. I am very funny and she loves that about me.

ALAN: I've never heard you be funny.

SID: I'm funny all the time.

ALAN: Because you tell knock knock jokes?

SID: I am inherently funny.

ALAN: You're inherently goofy. I'm not sure that's the same thing. I mean if she's looking for a clown, I mean strictly a non-funny clown, maybe you'd do okay, but if she wants a life full of joy, I'm not sure you'd be the first choice.

SID: I am full of joy.

ALAN: When it comes down to it, you're just not cool. I'm much cooler than you.

SID: I don't think you're cool.

ALAN: Well, look at the crowd you run with. Would you know cool if you saw it? I mean I think some people like you can never be cool because you don't understand what it is. I, however, am very aware of cool and have been cool since puberty. That's just how I roll.

SID: Bullshit. That's what I say.

ALAN: Whatever. Jessica knows. I vibrate cool and she wants to rub up against that shit.

SID: She doesn't want anything to do with you and if you left us alone for more than five minutes you'd see that because we'd be making out.

ALAN: Really?

SID: Really. She's just waiting to get me alone. But you can't take a hint. So I'm here to tell you. Step back, cool kid. No one wants your vibrations.

ALAN: Whatever. If she was into you, you two would have gone on a date by now.

SID: She and I don't think that we should mix our work lives and social lives. It's not professional.

ALAN: Well, then I don't think you're going to be making out with her.

SID: Not yet, I mean. We have to discover that we can't live without each other and then, human resources be damned!

ALAN: Yeah, okay.

SID: Yeah.

ALAN: New dare. The first one that gets a date with her wins.

SID: Really?

ALAN: Put up or shut up.

SID: Dare accepted.

ALAN: Accepted.

SID: You are so going down.

ALAN: You know what? If you had the opportunity, you wouldn't even know what to do with a girl like Jessica. She would intimidate you.

SID: Me? No way. The first thing I would do is make sweet love to her.

ALAN: That's the first thing you would do? No dinner?

SID: Oh. Yeah. We would have dinner at an extravagant restaurant. Then we would go see a film, probably something foreign. Then I would take her dancing. Followed by ice skating, dog racing, the opera, a baseball game, a long walk in the park, a trip to a museum, perhaps the MOMA. If it's hot out, we'd sneak into a hotel pool. Then we'd sit in the back garden of a Brooklyn restaurant and drink mimosas.

ALAN: Mimosas?

SID: Margaritas. Long Island iced tea. Or tequila. A full bottle at the table and two shot glasses. And big glasses of ice water.

ALAN: Okay.

SID: Then we would go back to my place and make love.

ALAN: I mean that sounds like an okay date. For someone like you who has no imagination.

SID: What would be your date?

ALAN: I would pick her up in a horse drawn carriage.

SID: One of those dumb things at the park always shitting on the street?

ALAN: I would have a bouquet of red roses for her at her door. She would blush. Kiss me sweetly on the cheek.

SID: Strictly platonic.

ALAN: At first. But we would ride the horse-drawn carriage through the park at night.

SID: Just like tourists.

ALAN: Then dinner and drinks and a show. She's always loved Broadway musicals. I'd take her to something light and funny. But there would be that seduction scene. What is a musical without a seduction scene? And when the scene begins I will kiss her softly on the neck and then when she murmurs her appreciation, I would begin to bite a little bit then a little more until most of her neck is in my mouth. It is at this moment that she feels the intensity of my lust and is turned on by my complete and utter power over her. I put one arm around her waist, and grasp the divot under her knee, with my hand. My thumb on top. And I would pick her up and carry her from the theatre. We would hail a cab. Our clothes are already disheveled when the cab arrives and we start our lovemaking in the back-seat. We just can't wait. We're too caught up. And then when we get back to my place, we do it again. And again and again.

SID: Classy.

ALAN: I don't expect you to understand. A woman like Jessica needs to be devoured with a hunger reserved the finest things in life.

SID: The best food in the world is in front of you and you want to inhale it. You're trying to do a keg-stand with a Chateau Margot.

ALAN: Whatever. I don't have to justify myself to you.
When she picks me over you, you'll see.

SID: So never, then.

ALAN: You'll see.