

SCENE 1

...which begins outside the theater as patrons begin to make their way in. A shabbily dressed black woman—homeless by all appearances— approaches as many of them as possible, begging for money. This is YVETTE FRANKLIN.

Her speech is mostly improvised and is muttered, barely coherent, and repetitive in a way that suggests a mental disorder. But it's always motivated by a single goal: getting asthma medication for her daughter.

Here's some sample dialogue:

YVETTE

Excuse me. Please. I'm w-wondering if you can help me... help me get the medication. They said... they said... they told me that um... that she needs it to breathe. We need money to breathe. She needs to breathe or she won't be able to sing in the concert. It's the asthma. They said mmm... mmthey said asthma. Do you have money f-fff for asthma? I know you do I can smell it. *(She inhales deeply.)* Because I can breathe. I can breathe but she can't. She can't breathe because the asthma. We need asthma money. Do you have asthma money? Fffff for the doctors? I have prescriptions I have all the prescriptions from all the doctors I just have to buy the medicine. Fff for my daughter. She needs to breathe. Please help. She can't breathe. She can't breathe. She can't breathe...

(And on she goes. Begging for money. Maybe some give¹. Maybe they don't.

Maybe someone calls the police². The theater is no place for begging, after all.)

(End scene.)

¹ If folks give, I'd love it if whatever money's collected could go toward a local organization that addresses homelessness, mental health, or criminal justice.

² Miiiiight be a good idea to give the police a heads-up that this is a performance. Just sayin'.

SCENE 2

The very renovated, open-layout owner's unit of a brownstone in Bed Stuy. The living room looks less like a living room and more like a wing of Santa's toy workshop. It's got three dollhouses, all in various stages of construction, all pretty fucking impressive for dollhouses. Only one, the most complete one, has furniture in it. There's a desk also— part executive, part drafting— with renderings all over and a fancy computer somewhere in there.

And there's the owner, REBECCA BURGESS, in all her gentrifying glory. Presently, she's in the kitchen looking for something on an elaborate looking spice-rack and talking on her cell. A pot simmers on the stove.

REBECCA

Wait wait wait wait wait, *how* do you say it? Say it again..... Again..... One more time..... I'm *not*! I'm *not* fucking with you! I'm just trying to... I mean, there's an "r" in it, though, right? Are you saying the--?..... No, not that. That's... there's *another* "r," a *second* "r," after the, after the "u."... I swear I'm not making this up. Hang on, I'm still looking for my—*hold on, bitch!* I'm gonna find this and you are gonna feel so dumb. So, so, so, so, so, so d— ohp, FOUND IT! Aaaaand *boom!* I was right. It's *turrrrrrmeric*, motherfucker..... Fuck you! This is not a pic-or-it-didn't-happen kind of thing. This is some highly Google-able shit, so Google it, you ignorant twat..... I love you, too..... No, I can't. I'm working..... Whatever, I have a *deadline*. It's for a birthday. I might make an exception if Ryan's gonna be there, though..... No, Ryan *M*.... I know..... Totally. If he came, it'd be like incentive to get this shit *done*..... Shut up. Supply and demand. As long as there are people willing to pay for custom, handmade dollhouse furniture, I will be there to fulfill their needs, because unlike you, I am not cut out for office culture..... Not even *corner* office culture. Congratulations, by the way. We should totally celebrate that shit WITH AN AFTER-HOURS PARTY IN YOUR MOTHERFUCKING CORNER OFFICE. Invite Ryan M. Just put his sexy ass on auto-invite for everything from now on, okay?... I'm serious! The man is perfection. He checks all the boxes on my list—he's hot, he's successful... it's a short list. We'd make an incredible power couple.

(Suddenly, there are three kinda slow knocks on her door. She heads to answer it.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Ugh. There's somebody at my door. Probably my tenant wanting something dumb. Last week, she wanted me to sign for a package. Like I don't have anything

REBECCA (cont.)

better to do than wait around for her shit to get delivered..... I don't know. Some shit about a family emergency. Like, *(her best/worst Ebonics) Bitch, if it was such a emerrrrrgency, you wouldn't have no tiiiime to be worryin' 'bout your daaaamn package and botherin' me.*

(Rebecca gets to the door and peeps through the peephole. She doesn't see anyone. Curious.)

REBECCA (cont.)

(to whomever's on the phone)

Hang on a sec...

(to whomever's on the other side of the door)

Yes? Who's there?

(No response.)

Hellooooo?

(When there's still no response, she just goes ahead and opens the door. Nothing's there.)

REBECCA

(annoyed)

Okaaaaayyy...

(She closes the door and starts to head back toward the kitchen.)

REBECCA

(back into the phone)

Nobody..... Whatever. Probably my tenant fucking with me now because she thinks I'm mean.

(Before Rebecca can get back to what she was doing in the kitchen, there are three more slow knocks on the door.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Uuughhh.

(Back to the door. She opens it. Again, no one's there.)

REBECCA (cont.)

(shouting down the hall to no one)

Okay! Ha-ha! Hilarious! You can stop now!

(She hardly gets the door closed again before there's an urgent and insistent pounding on it. Rebecca opens the door quick, fully expecting to see the offending knocker on the other side. Nope. Nobody's there.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Huh.

(She fully steps out into the hall. Still nothing.)

REBECCA (cont.)

That... is... weird. Either they're just really fucking fast or...

(Suddenly she spots something stuck on her door. A slip of paper.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Okaaaaaaay...

(She pulls it off her door and examines it. Meanwhile, whatever's in her pot on the stove catches full-on fire.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Fuck is this?

(mystery interrupted by whoever's on the phone)

Oh, um...something stuck to my door..... I don't know. It looks like a scrip..... Bitch, it's a *scrip*. I can't *read* it. It's got that bullshit squiggly doctor's handwriting.... Well, unless it's for oxy, it ain't for me, so...

(She crumples up the slip and turns back to the kitchen where she just now sees the flaming pot.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Fuck!

(She dashes into the kitchen, grabs something to protect her hand with before grabbing the pot, putting it in the sink and running water on it.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Oh nothing, just burning down my house.

(barely a beat)

But hey, speaking of oxy...

(End scene.)

SCENE 3

The next night at Rebecca's. Following close behind is RYAN M. Yes, that Ryan M. And yeah, he is quite sexy. You know, for a white boy. They're both dressed in their Saturday night best and clearly a lil' tips'.

REBECCA

Noooooononononononono, that's wroooooong. There's a second "r," one after the "u." Tuuuuuuumeric.

RYAN M.

Bullshit.

REBECCA

I swear. I'm not making this up. I just checked yesterday. It's innn therrre.

RYAN M.

Okay, however you say it, it's gross and it stains everything. I dated an Indian girl for like five minutes, which is all it took for her to ruin my white marble countertops with that shit.

REBECCA

(sincerely impressed)

You dated an Indian girl? That's so like... *progressive*.

RYAN M.

I know. She was Muslim, too.

REBECCA

(more surprised, than scandalized)

Oh.

RYAN M.

Like her last name was actually Islam.

REBECCA

Nooo!

RYAN M.

Yeah. I'm glad it didn't last long enough for us to fly anywhere together, you know? That is a lifetime of "random screenings" right thurrrr.

(Rebecca giggles at his pronunciation because)

it reminds her of that Chingy song, which she starts to sing and dance to.)

REBECCA

I like the way you do that right thurrrr...

(Ryan M. joins in.)

RYAN M.

Right thurrrr!

(They continue the song and Rebecca pushes him onto the couch and gives him a sloppy-ass lap dance.)

REBECCA & RYAN M.

Swing your hips when you're walkin', let down your hurrrr!

RYAN M.

Let down your hurrrr!

REBECCA & RYAN M.

I like the way you do that right thurrrr...

RYAN M.

Right thurrrr!

RYAN M

Lick your lips when you're talkin', that make me sturrrr...

(He pulls her down onto his lap and just talks now.)

RYAN M.

Lick your lips.

(Rebecca smiles like, "Serious?")

RYAN M. (cont.)

(dead-ass)

Lick your lips for me.

(She does.)

RYAN M.

Mm. Good girl.

(He kisses her. Slow. Long. Hard. They are both

really into it. But then suddenly, Rebecca stops and goes:)

REBECCA

I'm sorry, I'm so rude. I didn't offer you anything to drink. Are you thirsty?

RYAN M.

(amused, grabbing her ass)

Heh... yeah, I'm thirsty...

REBECCA

I mean for real thirsty. We should probably stay hydrated, if you know what I mean.

RYAN M.

(his best/worst Ebonics)

You riiiiiiight, you riiiiiiight...

(snapping back to WASP)

You have any Voss?

REBECCA

(springing into action)

Of *coss!* It's the only water worth drinking.

RYAN M.

Right? I had my first bottle at the Ritz Carlton in Marina del Rey, 2012 and it changed my life.

REBECCA

Fashion Week 2013. Everything else is battery acid.

RYAN M.

Exactly.

(He stands and walks around taking in her place. In the kitchen, she holds up two giant bottles of Voss for him to approve.)

REBECCA

You want a glass?

RYAN M.

Nah, I like it straight to the head.

REBECCA

(flirty)
The head, you say?

RYAN M.

I do say.

(She hands him a bottle, he grabs it.)

RYAN M. (cont.)

I maaaaay have to marry you now.

(handing the bottle back without missing a beat)

I prefer room temp.

REBECCA

Oh. Okay.

(She takes the bottle back and heads back into the kitchen. Meanwhile, he examines the dollhouses.)

RYAN M.

Oh my God. Please tell me that you build these.

REBECCA

Yeah. I told you at the party that's what I do.

RYAN M.

Yeah, but I thought you were like... being funny. Like referencing that one movie or whatever.

REBECCA

Nope. It's literally what I do, like for a living.

RYAN M.

You must charge a fucking mint. This place is nice.

REBECCA

(returning with water)

I do. It is. And it helps having a tenant.

RYAN M.

(preoccupied with the near complete dollhouse)

Mm. And a trust fund hey, why is this one like this?

REBECCA

Like what?

RYAN M.

With the furniture on the ceiling?

REBECCA

What?

(She comes to see what he's looking at. Curious.)

REBECCA (cont.)

Um. Huh. Okay. Am I that drunk right now? Or like... are we *both* that drunk right now? I don't remember doing that.

RYAN M.

Were you drunk *then*?

REBECCA

(disturbed)

I didn't do this.

RYAN M.

Well, whoever did it is a genius.

REBECCA

... Yeah?

RYAN M.

This is some subversive shit. A total statement. Like "Fuck your domesticity. I'll turn your whole fucking house upside down. Smash the patriarchy raaarrgghh!"

REBECCA

Huh. Then I guess I'm an accidental genius.

RYAN M.

Cool. I never fucked an accidental genius before.

(They kiss again. Voss be damned, they start to undress each other right there. They manage to get her out of her top and him out of his pants before she leads him back to her bedroom.)

(A moment before Rebecca dashes back out for the water and then dashes back.)

(End scene.)

SCENE 4

Later that same night at Rebecca's.

It's real dark. So dark that Ryan M. has to grope his way down the hall out into the living room. We see enough of his silhouette to get that he's not wearing much. Maybe some boxer briefs.

He's trying to find his way to a window, bumps into a dollhouse.

RYAN M.

(shout-whispering)

Shit...!

(A moment before he resumes what he came out here to do. His pants are somewhere out here on the floor. He feels around for them, digs his cell phone out of one pocket, a small storage box out of another.

He turns on the flashlight from his cell phone so he can see. He pauses at the sight of the now illuminated doll house with the upside-down furniture.)

RYAN M.

Heh.

(He takes a pic of the dollhouse with flash. The keen-eyed audience member might be able to make out the shape of a woman in the far corner of the room.

Decidedly not Rebecca.

Ryan M. does not see her. He posts the pic he just took on Instagram with a caption with which he's clearly amused.

The woman watches him from the corner the whole time.

When Ryan M. puts his flashlight back on, the woman is gone. None the wiser, he makes his way over to a window, opens it, sits on the sill and begins the

painstaking and kind of pretentious process of rolling his own cigarette. Illuminated by streetlight now, he removes all the necessary items from his little storage box and gets to work, grinding the tobacco and rolling.

As he lights up, we can see that the woman is closer to him now.

He only gets in one good drag before everything, even the streetlight, goes totally black.

When the streetlight comes back on seconds later, Ryan M. is gone. No trace of the woman either.

Nothing but the lingering smoke from that hand-rolled cigarette.)

(End scene.)