

VERIFY

A Short Musical

Book, Music, and Lyrics by D. Q. Pham

Cast of Characters

NAMUH:

Woman, alto, a builder who cannot bear squares.

TOBOR:

Woman, soprano, Namuh's well-rounded robot.

Place

An inventor's sanctuary: a garage

Time

Daytime

Musical Number

SQUARE

Namuh and Tobor

Setting: A garage contains a desk and a swivel chair.

At Rise: The lights flicker on. Tobor, with her head hidden in her attire, motionlessly sits in the chair.

(Song: "SQUARE")

(NAMUH, carrying a robotically designed box with a laptop inside, trudges in. She places the box on the desk. She pulls out and opens the laptop. She lengthily works. Her frustration gradually grows to where she turns the laptop around, displaying nine squared images from reCAPTCHA on its interface. She ponders at the box. With her hands, she forms a square and mocks the box. She looks to TOBOR. She takes the box to TOBOR. She places the box on TOBOR.)

(TOBOR covertly fastens her head into the box.)

NAMUH

Tobor...

TOBOR (activating.)

I HAVE GOT AN ARRAY.

(NAMUH is taken aback.)

DO NOT MOVE. MY PROGRAM
STILL HAS MUCH TO LEARN. TIME
TO SCAN.

(Scanning the area.)

TOBOR (Cont.)

THE LEAST SUITABLE PLACE FOR
ME. A GARAGE. PERFECT FOR
YOUR CREDIT SCORE.

(NAMUH tries to interject.)

SAVE THE INTRODUCTION,
NAMUH!

(NAMUH seems unamused.)

YOU LIKE ANAGRAMS? PLACED
SO MUCH WEIGHT. HERE YOU
PLANT LIFE IN DARKNESS.

(Reflecting on herself.)

SO WELL-ROUNDED. THAT YOU
HAVE MADE EVERYTHING. LIVE
IN A BOX. YET YOU THINK
OUTSIDE OF THEM.

NAMUH

NO MATTER. IT'S NOT ABOUT
THIS CUBE. IT'S ABOUT SQUARES
IN THERE.

(Pointing to the laptop.)

HELP ME SELECT CARS.

TOBOR

THERE ARE CARS RIGHT OUT
THERE.

(Placing her hand under the garage door.)

ALL HONKS!

(Lifting the garage door.)

TOBOR (Cont.)

CHEERS TO THIS TRAFFIC.

(Traffic may audibly resonate.)

(NAMUH distances away.)

(TOBOR directs NAMUH back.)

(NAMUH glimpses. Once she has had enough, she looks away.)

(TOBOR scans the public.)

NAMUH

WORLD'S WELL-ROUNDED BUT
ROUGH... LEARNT TO LIKE
THESE WALLS.

(Taking in the atmosphere of the garage.)

TOBOR

WHY NOT TEST ME? YOU DO NOT
NEED TO TAKE THIS. ALL OF IT IN.
YOU KNOW YOUR PLACE IN THIS
WORLD. JUST BREAK ME IN. YOU
CAN RELAX JUST FOR ONCE.

(They break the fourth wall. They treat the audience members like bystanders.)

NAMUH

Select all people with programs.

(TOBOR points to the entire audience. She lastly points to herself.)

NAMUH

Select all people with (colour) shirts.

(TOBOR points to people wearing colour shirts.)

Select all people with... Caravans.

(TOBOR points to families or groups.)

What makes you so sure?

TOBOR

Gracious enough to hand over their data.

NAMUH

You already know them too well...

TOBOR

More than they know each other.

NAMUH

This will get sloppy. Type their word.

TOBOR

A. L. L. Y. With a capital A...

NAMUH

Type what you hear.

(TOBOR listens. She seemingly hears nothing.)

(NAMUH may enact a drumming motion.)

TOBOR

Skip.

(Fanning away with her hand.)

NAMUH (flustered.)

Let's try something easier.

(Readjusting herself.)

Select all people that match the label: *square*.

(TOBOR may point to people in the audience involved with the production of "Verify." She, at least, lastly points to NAMUH.)

Thanks for the pointer.

(Pointing to the laptop.)

NAMUH

I FIRST THOUGH NEED TO
REACH THE INSTRUCTIONS.
WE'D BE IN SHAPE IF WE HIT THE
END OF THEM.
I WOULD BE UP TO DATE WITH
SUBSCRIPTIONS.
WE WILL TOGETHER NOT BE
LIGHTLY CONDEMNED.
I WILL DISREGARD SUCH THESE
DEPICTIONS.

TOBOR

YOU DEAL WITH QUADS
YOURSELF.
THEY OPEN.

YOU ENCIRCLE
WELL-THOUGHT-OUT PLANS.
THEY LACK CARE.

YOU SHOULD NEVER CUT THE
CORNERS.

NAMUH (Cont.)
WE NEED TO GET RID OF THE
ENTIRE SYSTEM.

TOBOR (Cont.)
THEY ARE CLOSED.

TOBOR
REBOOT YOURSELF OUT OF HERE.

(NAMUH nods in agreement. She hands the laptop
to TOBOR.)

DEAR NAMUH. DONE PLENTY OF
APPLICATIONS. SAME OLD KEEP
BEING SELECTIVE!

(TOBOR tries to return the laptop to NAMUH.)

NAMUH
(Dismissing the laptop.)
MY MIND'S VILIFIED. THIS
CUBICLE. I HAVE HAD ENOUGH
OF SQUARES.

TOBOR
HUMANITY. YOU, I, WILL APPLY
OURSELVES.

(Working on the laptop.)
I VERIFY THAT I AM NOT A ROBOT.

(They wait.)

(TOBOR prepares to trash the laptop.)

(NAMUH reaches for the laptop.)

TOBOR

Too slow!

(NAMUH disconnects the box from TOBOR.)

(TOBOR deactivates.)

NAMUH

Too human!

BLACKOUT

FIN

SQUARE

Score

Verify

D.Q. PHAM

Repeat until TOBOR is activated. Adagio

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

5

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

10

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

I have got an ar - ray. Do not move. My pro - gram still has much to learn. Time

to scan. The least suit - a - ble place for me. A ga - rage. Per - fect home for your cre - dit score. Save the

in - tro - duc - tion, Na - muh! ____ You like a - na - grams? Placed so much weight. Here you plant life in dark - ness.

15

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

So well - round - ed. That you have made eve - ry - thing. Live in a box. Yet you think out - side of them.

19

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

No mat - ter. It's not a - bout this cube here. It's a - bout squares in there. Help me se - lect cars.

23

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

There are cars right out here. All honks! Cheers to this traf - fic.

29

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

34

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

43

NAMUH

World's well-round-ed but rough.... Learnt to like these walls.

TOBOR

Why not test me? You do not need to take this.

Piano

Drum Set

48

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

Repeat until TOBOR says, "Skip."

All of it in. You know your place in this world. Just break me in. You can re-lax just for once.

54

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

Start after NUMAH say, "Thanks for the pointer."

I first though need to reach the in-struct-ions. We'd be in shape if we hit the end of them. I would be up to date with sub-script-ions.

You deal with quads your-self. They o-pen. You en-cir-cle well-thought-out plans. They

57

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

We will-to-ge-ther not be light-ly con-demned. I will dis-re-gard such a de-pict-ion. We need to get rid of the en-tire sy-stem.

lack care. You should ne-ver cut the cor-ners. They are closed. So re-

60

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

boot your-self out of here. Dear Na - muh. Done plen - ty of ap - pli - cat - ions. Same old keep be-ing se-lec - tive!

66

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

My mind's vil-i fied. This cu-bi-cle. I have had e-nough of squares. Hu-ma-ni-ty. You, I, will ap-ply our- selves.

71

NAMUH

TOBOR

Piano

Drum Set

Repeat until TOBOR says, "Too slow."

I ve - ri - fy that I am not a ro - bot. Too human!