

TURNOVER: A NEW LEAF

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A Floral-Herbal Musical

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## PLOT SUMMARY

TURNOVER: A NEW LEAF is an herbal fable about an openly queer family turning a neighboring Vietnamese family's life around.

In Dirty City, a Cilantro arrives. Rau Răm is an Asian immigrant and expectant mother hoping to start a tanning salon business. When no one can spare a plot of land, Malus Crabapple welcomes her with a neighboring open plot. Rau is a bit hesitant due to Malus's gay nightclub FigLeaf. But FigLeaf patrons have a liking for Rau's body oil that spices up their skins. Rau happily takes their money but cannot support their "lifestyles." But the major turnover would be Rau's son: Parsley ("Move the Plot Forward").

This teen operates Salontro's day-to-day business and spends the nights with his mom ("A Natural"). As summer starts, Malus introduces Parsley to their teenage nibbling Pyrus ("Amount to Anything"). Parsley helps Pyrus with issues they have with the other flowers ("Grow a Pair"). Pyrus invites him to hang out and pays him a beverage, called Miracle ("Test the Water").

Parsley asks his mom to see a movie with Pyrus. She reluctantly lets him go. At Cantaloupe Outlets, Parsley and Pyrus pose in a photo booth ("Photosynthesis"). Pyrus then takes him clothes shopping. He discovers a liking for different floral styles, especially crop tops ("Crop Top"). Nearby, Rau picks a fight with Malus over finances. They soon bump into Parsley and Pyrus. Rau's world turns upside down when she sees Parsley's crop top. Malus explains Rau's prejudice to Pyrus ("Soiled").

Parsley is grounded ("Fertile"). Soon, Pyrus helps Parsley sneak out. With their guest DJ Cauliflower, they have the time of their lives ("Dirt on You"). However, herbs are not accustomed to the nightlife and this one is especially underaged. Parsley blackouts and ends up in the hospital, getting his stoma pumped.

Rau sees the light of her ways with Malus. Rau feels that she earned her green card and that Malus's "lifestyle" is as natural as the greens around ("Green Card"). FigLeaf shuts down due to the violation of underage drinking laws. Pyrus visits Parsley, letting him know that they are preparing to go back to school. Rau offers Pyrus a summer job if they ever are around again. After all, it is a family business ("Turnover").

TURNOVER plants queer themes from family dynamics, body image, performative activism, and the duality between nature versus nurture. There are turnovers between this sunny salon and night saloon with an herbal seedling's phase from day to night being the petal of this floral coming-of-age story.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**PARSLEY** RĂM, preteen, Rau's son

**RAU** RĂM, adult, Parsley's mother and the owner of Salontro

**PYRUS** CRABAPPLE, older teen, Malus's nibbling

**MALUS** CRABAPPLE, adult, Pyrus's uncle and the owner of FigLeaf

## Orchestra

**DJ CAULIFLOWER**, the alias for the production's music director, who may briefly interact with the performers

✿ Androgyny Botany: Each character resembles the androgynous nature, with open-ended vocal requirements

✿ People of the Global Majority most represent the experiences of these flowers and herbs; cast accordingly

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. "Move the Plot Forward" Malus, Rau
2. "A Natural" Rau
3. "Amount to Anything" Pyrus
4. "Grow a Pair" Pyrus, Parsley
5. "Test the Water" Parsley
6. "Photosynthesis" Parsley, Pyrus
7. "Crop Top" Pyrus, Parsley
8. "Soiled (The Family Name)" Rau, Malus, Parsley, Pyrus
9. "Fertile" Parsley, Pyrus
10. "Dirt on You" DJ Cauliflower, Pyrus, Parsley
11. "Green Card" Rau, Malus
12. "Turnover (A New Leaf)" Parsley, Rau, Pyrus, Malus

SCENE 1

DIRTY CITY

Dirty City is if Grand Rapids was entirely Frederik Meijer Gardens. The city is scaled down so that a single block takes a single step. Empty plots of land scatter about. It is between seasons. Any season.

RAU enters. Her hair is unearthly. Her tan gleams. She is expecting a new seed. She tries to plant herself in an empty plot of dirt.

A picket that reads "Curb the Herbs" projects upon that plot.

RAU moves to another empty plot of land. The same message projects. RAU repeats. The message repeats.

The sun sets.

RAU collapses on the concrete with her body facing the sunset. She feels her belly.

RAU

Sun... A leaf is not meant to turn from this light.

MALUS enters, opposite of the sunset. They are barely clothed.

MALUS

Turn over to the night.

RAU turns away from the sunset.

RAU

*Chào.* Aren't you an angel?

MALUS

*Hello.* Aren't all Figs?

RAU

*Any Fig is a malice!*

MALUS

That's my name: Malus Crabapple. I am a Fig-

RAU

Figment of my imagination.

MALUS

Does your imagination include a better life for ya-self here?

RAU

Any plant can imagine. A Cilantro can dream! This city needs its garnishes. Imagine Dirty City's first-ever tanning salon. I *dream* of a better life for my family here...

MALUS

Ya immigrants have wild dreams. *But imaginations*. Ya cannot imagine people like me living by your family, let alone amongst yours, wherever ya come from.

RAU

You don't know where I come from.

MALUS

Like a leaf, my people are open enough to fly all around the world. Ya kind of accent is not like a brussels sprout. It sounds like ya took a leave from Southeast Asia? All ya last names are like... *Weed (re: Nguyen)?*

RAU

Răm. Rau Răm. There are more family names out there in Vietnam. And no. You don't know the daily life I came from.

MALUS

Well Rau, I won't judge ya days if ya don't judge my nights.

RAU

I don't know where your nightlife comes from.

MALUS

It stems from birth.

RAU

You chose this light. This lifestyle you have. It is not something you are born with. You are not natural. I cannot imagine a life without light.

MALUS

Ya keep this up and your salon stays an imagination.

RAU

I cannot keep this up. No plot of land in Dirty City will ever let me plant myself. I moved this far for what? I move... what?

1. "MOVE THE PLOT FORWARD"

MALUS  
(Repeating)  
MOVE THE PLOT...  
FORWARD...

MALUS steps onto a colorful plot of land. They push aside an adjacent block of concrete to unveil untouched soil.

MALUS (CONT'D)  
MAKE YOUR ROOTS AT HOME.

RAU  
THIS IS YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD?

MALUS  
*ROOT FOR ME...*

RAU  
*IM LANG (translation: "Shut up").*

MALUS  
(Puzzledly)  
MAKE YA BED.

A tanning bed rolls out.

RAU  
*SHUT UP.*

MALUS  
I WASN'T BORN WITH LIGHTHEARTEDNESS.  
*I HAVE CHOSEN IT!*

NOW YA CHOOSE:  
MOVE THE PLOT FORWARD...

RAU  
OR...?

MALUS  
LOSE THE PLOT BACKWARD...  
(Repeating)  
MOVE THE PLOT FORWARD...  
LOSE THE PLOT BACKWARD...

RAU reluctantly plants herself next to MALUS.

RAU  
OH...

RAU & MALUS  
MOVE THE PLOT FORWARD...

RAU  
FORWARD!

SCENE 2

SALONTRO

The plot grows thick. The tanning salon magically moves forward, lightly transforming the heart of Dirty City. An Open/Closed sign hangs. It faces "Closed."

RAU  
Im lang. Im lang. Im lang! Im lang!

MALUS  
Imagine Dirty City's first-ever tanning salon's first-ever customer!

RAU  
*Im lang.* I refuse to imagine you Figs.

MALUS  
I may be a Fig but not a figment of ya imagination!

RAU  
*Figures...*

MALUS  
We may have different figures and feel differently for other figures, but we bleed the same eukaryotic cells.

RAU  
You are crazy to think I'd let your kind use my tanning beds. You ain't got poop on you!

MALUS  
Wash that mouth out with soap.

RAU  
We Cilantros have good tastes! I meant... Do you have bullshit on you?

MALUS  
My business adheres to the capital and makes profits. So yes. What's ya worth?

RAU  
*That'd be ten bullshits, please...*

MALUS

*That's a start of a plot.*

MALUS hands a manure-laced bill to  
RAU. They lie in the tanning bed  
and close the lid.

RAU

IT'S THE TURN OF AN ERA!  
I WAS DEALT A BAD HAND.  
THIS AREA HAS NO REGARD.  
THEY TREAT ME AS AN ALIEN.  
I HAVE GROWN THESE LEAVES THAT COULDN'T EVER HOLD THIS WATER.  
I WAS GONNA COME APART.  
BUT I GUESS YOU DO HAVE A HEART.  
I HAVE A NEW START.

MALUS gets out of the tanning bed.  
They inspect themselves.

RAU (CONT'D)

TURN AROUND.

NICE TAN.

MALUS

NOT A FAN.

RAU

NOTHING FANCY.

MALUS

YA WILL SEE THAT FANCY GETS THE FANS.

RAU goes out and gets a potted  
herb. She puts it on a shelf then  
turns the "Closed" sign to "Open."

Crickets chirp.

MALUS (CONT'D)

Well, I'll try to get my pals en root. You're  
on your own in this soil. It is all your turn  
from here.

MALUS exits.

RAU

THIS PLACE PLOTS AND LEAVES ERROR...  
I CAN'T EARN MY GREEN CARD  
IF I DO NOT STAY ON MY GUARD.  
MY LEAVES HAVE COME SO FAR.  
YOU CAN'T MAKE ME LEAVE!  
I DO NOT HAVE THE HEART TO BELIEVE...  
I KNOW MY ROOTS, BUT...  
STEM!



RAU looks upon the potted herb.  
She sits on the tanning bed. She  
exposes her belly. She pulls out a  
bottle of body oil.

RAU (CONT'D)  
I SHOULD JUST RELAX.

RAU rubs her belly with tanning  
body oil. It gleams with her tan.

Lights move in and out. Positive  
whispers are audible.

RAU (CONT'D)  
My body oil? You like this foreign stuff?

Lights are positively responsive.

RAU (CONT'D)  
This oil is not found in Dirty City. This oil  
is from my dirty ol' village!

RAU sprays body oil about.

Either animated silhouettes or a  
colorful light show demonstrate  
that business is booming with  
patrons coming in and out.  
Financial quarters roll by with  
the rising and setting sun.

RAU (CONT'D)  
TURNOVER!  
THE WORLD IS NOT OVER.  
WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND.

TURN AROUND!  
I NOW HAVE A NEW BUSINESS VENTURE.  
AFTER GOING THROUGH WHAT I CAN KINDLY PUT: AN ADVENTURE.

I'VE SHED EUKARYOTIC CELLS.  
NO ONE CARED WHAT I HAD TO SELL.  
I WAS STUCK IN THE GREEN CARD PRISON.  
THE ONLY LIGHT THROUGH THE BAR WAS OUR SUN.

I'VE MADE MY BED, BUT NOW I CAN FLIP IT AROUND TO THE COOLER  
SIDE!

TURNOVER!  
TURN AROUND!

Business is booming. Several  
tanning beds roll out. Bullshit  
rains down on RAU.

MALUS steps in.

RAU (CONT'D)  
(Deceptively)  
THIS IS THE START OF A FLORAL  
FRIENDSHIP.

MALUS  
(Doubtfully)  
THIS IS THE START OF AN  
HERBAL FRIENDSHIP.

MALUS gathers bullshit and leaves  
the rest to RAU. They exit.

RAU turns the "Open" sign to  
"Closed." RAU lies in a tanning  
bed and closes the lid.

A seedlike object transfers from  
RAU's tanning bed to another.

RAU (CONT'D)  
BUT THE BEST TURNOVER I'VE EVER HAD...

RAU opens the lid. Her belly is no  
more.

Direct sunlight lands on a  
distinct soiled tanning bed.

RAU (CONT'D)  
IS MY SUN!

PARSLEY leaps out of the lit  
tanning bed.

End of "MOVE THE PLOT FORWARD"

RAU (CONT'D)  
Turn around...

PARSLEY turns around.

RAU (CONT'D)  
You missed a spot. But son, do you shine...

PARSLEY  
Mom... Don't embarrass me in front of the  
sneezeworts!

(to the AUDIENCE)  
Don't you worry, loyal customers. We'll open up  
the salon again on the first light of dawn.  
Now, try not to fight over our complimentary  
moisturizers!

PARSLEY tosses moisturizers into  
the AUDIENCE. He gets to work  
sterilizing the place.

RAU  
Us Cilantros are all about presentation.  
Parsley Răm is a natural.

SCENE 3

It is night. Dance music distantly echoes from FigLeaf next door.

RAU uses a tanning bed as a desk to do taxes and count bullshit.

PARSLEY perches by the window.

PARSLEY

Mom... Who is out at night?

RAU

A light with no sense of direction, son.

PARSLEY

But the sound sure likes going this way.

RAU

Sounds don't feed us.

PARSLEY

A light with no sense of direction... So, there is light. They are just lost.

RAU

The light is artificial. They chose to not follow what is natural.

PARSLEY

But our tanning beds... Its light don't come from the sun?

RAU

They paint skins with UV. It is like if you split the spectrums of sunlight onto a palette.

PARSLEY

What is a spectrum?

RAU

I don't know... But don't ask Malus. Malus...

PARSLEY & RAU

Has malice intent.

PARSLEY

I know... But they—

RAU

He and his customers pay our rent. His bullshit is unnatural.

PARSLEY

Artificial is artful.

RAU

*Artificial is awful.*

PARSLEY

I'm down with it. Our neighbors and their artificial light feed my mind's eye.

PAU

More like your mind is high.

PARSLEY

Nothing is blunt as you, mom.

RAU

There is no one I need to be more direct with than you, son.

2. "A NATURAL"

RAU

NATURE...

NURTURED FROM THE LIGHT OF OUR SUN.

IT'S NATURAL.

PARSLEY nears RAU.

RAU (CONT'D)

PLANTING THEIR HOT FEET ON OUR GROUND.

THEY'RE NATURAL.

BUT IT'S NOT AS WARM AS A MOM'S HUG.

RAU hugs PARSLEY.

RAU (CONT'D)

COMES NATURAL.

WHAT'S NOT? THAT WOULD BE THE TICKLES!

RAU tickles PARSLEY.

PARSLEY eventually gets up, gets Salontro ready for the morning, and gets ready for bed. He opens a tanning bed and plants a blanket in it.

RAU (CONT'D)

(Repeatedly)

A NATURAL.

(Eventually)

SON. YOU ARE A... NATURAL!

End of "A NATURAL"

RAU (CONT'D)

Your planter is made. Now go lie in it.

PARSLEY lies in bed.

PARSLEY  
*I am a natural at lying.*

RAU tucks PARSLEY into bed.

RAU  
You speak the truth, Parsley. *Ngu ngon*  
(*translation: sleep well*), my sun.

RAU exits.

#### **SCENE 4**

The morning light returns.

MALUS, fully clothed, steps into  
the sunrise this time.

MALUS  
Cow, Parsley.

PARSLEY leaps out of bed and turns  
the "Closed" sign to "Open."

PARSLEY  
*Chào. Ya Crabapple sure always sweet, but ya*  
*can never sweeten your pronunciations?*

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)  
No malice.

MALUS  
Yes, Pyrus!

PARSLEY  
Pyrus?

MALUS  
My nibbling.

PARSLEY  
Another Crabapple?

MALUS  
Another pear in town.

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)  
And I wanna get out of this Dirty City.

PARSLEY  
Doing our city dirty, huh?  
(Genuinely)  
You'll fit in real well.

MALUS

Tanning beds come in all shapes and sizes.  
There are all sorts of tanning beds. And there  
will be one that matches your body.

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

I don't want nobody to see me around ya. Let's  
go back to FigLeaf!

PARSLEY

I always wanna go to FigLeaf.

MALUS

Now now, you may have the spirit of a Fig. But  
only adult plants are allowed at nightclubs.  
And, *your mother would lose her freakin'*  
*aldehyde.*

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

You said you'd take me to Cantaloupe Outlets,  
not make this tanning salon my outlet...

MALUS

You will never find me among those hipsters.  
How about a trip to Celery Mall?

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

But ya said we could go where I wanted! You're  
more an Apple Blossom than a Crabapple. Celery  
Mall only sells to house-old plants.

MALUS

Take that back!

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

Per FigLeaf's policy: No returns. No, Malus.

MALUS

You're digging a deeper hole for yourself.

PYRUS

Ain't that what we're supposed to do as  
plants?!

MALUS

Even plants can get overheated.

PARSLEY

You're all making a mountain out of a molehill.

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

*Shadeeee.* Ya all add to my sunburns.

3. "AMOUNT TO ANYTHING"

PYRUS walks in, with sunburns.  
Their entrance intersects a rocker  
and an acned teenager's presence.

PYRUS  
MOUNTAINS OUTTA MOLE HILLS.  
NO REST. DISTRESS. A MESS. CARELESS.

PYRUS knocks over the potted herb.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
I DELIVERED BRUISES AND I GOT INTO TROUBLE AT SCHOOL.  
SO, I'LL SPEND THIS SEASON WITH MY ONE WEIRD UNCLE.  
I WON'T KNOW MALUS...

ALL BECAUSE REALLY  
I WILL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
I WILL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
I WILL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
ANYTHING!

SUNBURNS. PIMPLES. ACNE. BIG DEAL.

I AIN'T ALWAYS THIN-SKINNED, BUT MY THICK SKIN HAS NOT LOOKED  
REAL COOL.  
SO, I'LL WASTE MY SUMMER NEXT TO A CILANTRO.  
MAKE FUN OF THEIR TASTES...

ALL BECAUSE IN LIFE,  
I CARE NOT TO AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
I CARE NOT TO AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
I CARE NOT TO AMOUNT TO ANYTHING.  
I DON'T CARE!

ANYTHING!

End of "AMOUNT TO ANYTHING"

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
I wanted everything, especially a good tan...

MALUS  
And you can get it here.

PYRUS  
But I wanted it naturally.

MALUS  
We're not the only families susceptible to  
sunburns. The Cherrys and Maples are, too.

PARSLEY  
Our tanning beds can be set at any level that  
is comfortable with you.

MALUS

See, Parsley. Always level-headed.

PYRUS looks down at PARSLEY.

PYRUS

I'm gonna level with ya Cilantros: ya can spice up my skin, but it ain't ever spice up my life.

(to MALUS)

*Don't look at me...* I'll meet you back at FigLeaf.

MALUS

You seedlings enjoy yourselves!

MALUS exits.

PYRUS

I ain't no seedling anymore!

(to PARSLEY)

Do your thing, little herb.

PARSLEY leads PYRUS around the tanning beds in Salontro.

PARSLEY

Which thing?

PYRUS

No more small talk. Not even from a little herb such as ya-self.

PARSLEY

I mean, which tanning bed? Low or high pressure?

PYRUS

No pressure at all.

PARSLEY

Why would you want that? Pressure is fun.

PYRUS

Ya weird, kid.

PARSLEY

I do many things as a kid.

PYRUS

Ya not stuck watching plants change colors everyday?

PARSLEY

Well, there's mudwrestling and singing in the rain. Since school's out, there are different things to do. Where do you go to school?



PYRUS

Tetra High Center of Learning.

PARSLEY

I've heard about THC. A high school rich enough to not have a resource officer.

PYRUS

Yeah. But, it doesn't stop other flowers from being fashion polices.

PARSLEY

And I'm here to just police your membrane. And weed out the troubles in your brain.

PYRUS

They police that, too. They get under my membrane.

PARSLEY

Under?

PYRUS

They go beyond the outer body shaming. Their thorns reach my core. My nucleus. The one thing I am.

PARSLEY

Why don't you have two things?

PYRUS

Hold up. Back up.

PARSLEY

Why don't you have a backup nucleus...?

PYRUS

What are you implying?

PARSLEY

Be brave and um...

PYRUS

You be brave and spit it out.

#### 4. "GROW A PAIR"

PARSLEY

YOU ARE NOT BEYOND REPAIR.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO CARE.

YOUR EYES SHOULD STARE.

YOUR SMILE SHALL SCARE.

YOUR MATES CAN'T COMPARE.

YOU NEED TO GROW A PAIR.

PYRUS  
I NEED TO SUNNILY PREPARE.  
I LIVE IN A WORLD THAT'S NOT FAIR.  
MY SKIN WILL JUST FLAIR.  
MY NERVES WILL GO MEDIUM RARE.  
MY "FRIENDS" WILL COMPARE.  
I CANNOT GROW A PAIR.

PARSLEY stops at a tanning bed.

PARSLEY  
HERE IS YOUR LAIR.  
PRESSURE IS NOWHERE.  
A BADGE OF HONOR IS WHAT YOU'LL WEAR.  
IT WILL BE OKAY, I SWEAR.  
THAT A GOOD MEMORY YOU'LL SHARE.  
YOU'RE GONNA GROW A PAIR.

The tanning bed is ready for  
PYRUS.

PYRUS gets in the tanning bed and  
closes it.

PARSLEY (CONT'D)  
(Repeatedly)  
IT'S IN THERE.

PYRUS  
(Repeatedly)  
GROW A PAIR...

PYRUS leaps out.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
I AM NOT BEYOND REPAIR.  
I DO NOT NEED TO CARE.  
MY EYES SHOULD STARE.  
MY SMILE SHALL SCARE.  
MY MATES CAN'T COMPARE.  
I HAVE TO GROW A PAIR.

PYRUS gets in another tanning bed  
and closes it.

PARSLEY  
DON'T WEAR IT OUT.

PYRUS tries all the tanning beds.  
They increasingly resemble a pear.  
They eventually head to PARSLEY's  
side.

PARSLEY (CONT'D)  
YOU'RE LIKE A PEAR.

PYRUS  
WE'D MAKE A GREAT PAIR.

End of "GROW A PAIR"

PYRUS pulls out a glass bottle.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
Let's test our water.

PARSLEY distances from PYRUS.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
It's only fifteen percent...

PARSLEY  
I can't drink that.

PYRUS  
Why not?

PARSLEY  
I'm not old enough.

PYRUS  
And so ain't I. But I'm fine. *I feel old enough.* And I'm like only a few years older than you. Besides, this is worth 72 bullshits. You're old enough to count that high?

PARSLEY  
You don't need to spew much. Look, it's on me. If you feel bad about it, I'll take a few bull.

PYRUS  
Nah, I need to save every bullshit I can, so I can finally cut off my carbon-dated parents.  
You've heard my experience with the flowers at school. Now imagine that but 72 times that at home.  
Just a sip. You'll feel right at home.

PYRUS opens the bottle.

PARSLEY takes a sip. He spits some of it out.

PARSLEY  
It's a miracle I got any left in my mouth.

PYRUS

That's the name of the liqueur: Miracle! Well,  
I'll let you and one of your new friends be.

PARSLEY

Friends?

PYRUS

Miracle and I, silly herb! And now that we're  
friends, friends go shoppin' together!

PARSLEY

Can Miracle come along?

PYRUS

*Miracle needs to stay a no-show or we'll be  
shown the door by the po-po. Don't start poop!*

PARSLEY

Wash your mouth out with soap!

PYRUS

Wash yours with Miracle!

PYRUS takes the bottle from  
PARSLEY. They exit.

## 5. "TEST THE WATER"

PARSLEY enters a newfound state  
that is akin to being introduced  
to alcohol for the first time.

The lake forms. The tides rise.

PARSLEY wobbles. They stay put and  
yet also journey to far-off lands.  
They break in their sea legs.

PARSLEY

(Repeatedly)

Glucose is clear...

PARSLEY passes out.

## End of "TEST THE WATER"

## SCENE 5

RAU enters. She towers over  
PARSLEY.

RAU

Parsley... Sleeping on the job? I'm going to  
garnish your wages.

PARSLEY

You're gonna make my allowance fabulous?

RAU

(Amusedly)

No... Though, *your joke is a garnish in itself.*

RAU notices the knocked over  
potted herb.

RAU (CONT'D)

No no no... Why is my brother knocked over?

PARSLEY

That is not a person...

RAU

Yes, he was!

PARSLEY

That is a model.

RAU

Yes, he was a model.

PARSLEY

My uncle?

RAU

The light of our lives that went dark too soon.

PARSLEY

Too soon?

RAU

He should have laid off the booze.

PARSLEY

Booze?

RAU

Laid off from his work, dreams, and society due  
to his unnatural rests.

PARSLEY

Well, I'd like to rest.

RAU

Alright. You've been laid off.

PARSLEY

I need a vacation.

RAU

Where would you like to go?

PARSLEY

Cantaloupe Outlets.

RAU

An American shopping center? Well, we can stop by grabbing some ingredients at their intimate Vietnamese supermarket.

PARSLEY

You like the butcher?

RAU

Someone's gotta split water into oxygen. Besides, he and I are just old friends.

PARSLEY

I made a new friend...

RAU

A classmate from Ivy League Junior High? Son, you're finally making friends! Name?

PARSLEY

Pyrus.

RAU

A relative of Malus...?

PARSLEY

You actually listen to Malus's spiels?

RAU

Yes. Even the unnatural can sound appealing. How did you two meet? Isn't Pyrus *not from here*?

PARSLEY

They are in town. One of the first things Malus introduced them to was our salon.

RAU

Did *they* try out our tanning bed? Ooh, which one?

PARSLEY

All of them.

RAU

Wow. In town for a day and already our number one customer.

PARSLEY

Yes. And I wanna get to know our number one customer at the business of all business: Cantaloupe Outlets.

RAU

What are you two going to be doing there?

PARSLEY

We're gonna go see *Popcorn*.

RAU

Oh no. That movie is for adults. And besides, I don't need you to have nightmares about what heat does to corn. It's not a pretty sight...

PARSLEY

*There's no kernel of truth in what you said.*

RAU hands bullshit to PARSLEY.

RAU

Here's twenty bullshit to see *Veggie Tales*.

PARSLEY

*God...*

RAU

Godspeed with Pyrus. Now, go get yourself ready as a plum.

PARSLEY gets in a tanning bed and closes it.

The tanning bed tilts up and transforms into a photo booth.

## **SCENE 6**

CANTALOUPE OUTLETS

Clothing racks scatter about.

PARSLEY sits inside a photo booth.

PYRUS enters.

## **6. "PHOTOSYNTHESIS"**

PYRUS

PHOTOSYNTHESIS?!

PARSLEY

PHOTOSYNTHESIS!

PYRUS sits alongside PARSLEY.

PARSLEY & PYRUS  
(Harmonically repeating)

PHOTOSYNTHESIS!

PYRUS

$6\text{CO}_2 + 6\text{H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6\text{O}_2$

FOCUS.

PARSLEY

FOE?

PYRUS

SIX CARBON DIOXIDE MOLECULES PLUS SIX DIHYDROGEN MONOXIDE MOLECULES EQUALS...?

PARSLEY

SUGAR!

PYRUS

AND SIX OXYGEN MOLECULES!

PARSLEY & PYRUS

$6\text{CO}_2 + 6\text{H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{C}_6\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_6 + 6\text{O}_2$

(Harmonically repeating)

PHOTOSYNTHESIS!

A CHEMICAL REACTION!

PARSLEY

PYRUS

GLUCOSE.  
OXYGEN.  
SUGAR!

CARBON  
DIOXIDE.  
WATER.

PARSLEY & PYRUS

DIRECT SUNLIGHT!

The photo booth flashes. It prints out photographs.

End of "PHOTOSYNTHESIS"

PARSLEY and PYRUS exit the photo booth. They hold film merch.

PYRUS

We needed to take a breather after watching *Rotten Tomatoes*. Good thing that movie was rated teens, little herb.

PARSLEY

I'd certify that it was *freshhhh*.

PYRUS

Well, I'd mark it down for the scene where despite the kids' fruits of labor they ended up diced tomatoes.

PARSLEY

Who knew tomatoes can be such squares *like you?*



PYRUS bumps into a clothing rack.  
They are fixated on the clothing  
aisle.

PARSLEY appears bewildered. He  
walks about until a floral crop  
top catches his eyes. He holds the  
crop top like a talisman.

PARSLEY (CONT'D)

Huh?

PYRUS

*You might be the square, Parsley.*

PARSLEY

I'm no square...

PYRUS

Just checking. Boobs come in all shapes and  
sizes. Go ahead, little herb. Milk it.

PARSLEY

Aren't these for...?

PYRUS

They're not just for flowers like me. But these  
would be perfect for this weekend's rave!

PARSLEY

What's a rave?

PYRUS

It's like a party where rotten tomatoes are not  
invited, given its bad views.

PARSLEY

I wanna go!

PYRUS

I don't think you can, little herb.

PARSLEY

You're not so big either.

PYRUS

Well, the music is gonna be for little big  
flowers like me. We have a famous guest DJing.

PARSLEY

What's their name?

PYRUS

It's a secret. But the DJ certainly loves  
shouting their name at the top of their stomata  
to start a song.

PARSLEY

Pyrussss. Is this half shirt the key to being allowed in?!

PYRUS

Only if you can top mine!

7. "CROP TOP"

PYRUS wears a crop top.

PYRUS

(Repeating)

NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN.

PICK A PATTERN.

PARSLEY eventually picks a shirt.

PYRUS snatches the shirt from PARSLEY. They toss the shirt away.

PYRUS (CONT'D)

NO NO. RETURN!

THE CREAM OF THE CROP THAT IS FASHION.

NO SHIRT CAN EVER TOP THIS!

PARSLEY

A CROP TOP...?

PYRUS tries on various crop tops.

PYRUS

WHERE TO FIND ONE THAT FITS?

WEAR ONE THAT SUITS YOUR PERSONALITY.

PYRUS's belly flops out of a crop top.

PARSLEY

THERE GOES YOUR BELLY.

PYRUS puts a crop top on PARSLEY.

PYRUS

YOU CANNOT BE STOPPED WHEN YOU PUT YOURSELF IN THIS CROP TOP!

PYRUS puts on a crop top. They hold grab another crop top.

PARSLEY

(Adapting)

IT FEELS SO WARM YET SO COOL...

PYRUS  
IT CUTS TO YOUR HEART'S BOTTOM.  
IT HAS YOU FEELING ON TOP!

PARSLEY dances a crop circle. They  
are rocking the crop top.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
YOU CANNOT BE STOPPED WHEN YOU'RE DANCING IN ROCKING CROP  
TOPS!

PARSLEY snatches the crop top from  
PYRUS's hand.

PARSLEY  
I TOP YOURS!

PYRUS  
YOU BOTTOM FEEDER!

PARSLEY  
I'M ON TOP!

PYRUS  
I'LL CROP YOU!

PYRUS chases PARSLEY around,  
displaying an allegory of what it  
means to crop tops off in life.

PARSLEY spreads moisturizer on one  
end of the crop top.

PYRUS nabs the moisturized end of  
the crop top and does a tug-of-war  
until PYRUS slips their grasp and  
it is securely in PARSLEY's hand.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
YOU'RE THE TOP OF THE CROP TO TOP IT ALL OFF!

PARSLEY  
(Blushingly)  
*NO ONE PULLS THEM OFF LIKE ME...*

PARSLEY & PYRUS  
CROP TOPS!

End of "CROP TOP"

MALUS marches in from the other  
side of Cantaloupe Outlet.

RAU tails MALUS.

RAU

You cropped my profits!

MALUS

*Oh, the humidity.* I ain't done nothing! I don't know what you mean. Besides, you've only lost track of 72 bullshits, which is negligible if you calculated the mean of yesterday's gross revenue.

RAU

But I cannot predict the maintenance that will go into my tanning beds. 72 bullshits was a lot of use for one of your people. It's not any FigLeaf patron. It's not you specially. It is one of your species.

MALUS

My Pyrus?

RAU

They tanned and dashed.

MALUS

I loaned- I mean gave them enough to cover seven appointments? You sure your Parsley didn't stash the bullshit?

RAU

How could you frame my son?

MALUS

Picture this: They're a teenager now, growing into adulthood, and their top priority is bullshit. Like all teenagers!

RAU notices PARSLEY and PYRUS. She heads towards them.

RAU

Im lang. I'm gonna crop your top off!

PARSLEY

(Vietnamese)

*Me (translation: "Mom")?!*

RAU

The plants around this outlet are watching a Cilantro make a scene. Pull it off now!

MALUS

You're the Cilantro always making a scene, Rau.

(Complimentary)

You're pulling off that crop top, Parsley.

PYRUS

This little herb could not be more on top of the world. His plot is where it needs to go.

RAU

(to PYRUS)

Im lang, *đồ vô học* (translation: uneducated person)!

MALUS

Parsley, what did your mom say? I've never heard this insult before.

PYRUS nods to PARSLEY.

PARSLEY

(Vietnamese)

Me... ("Mom") You're the ignorant one. *Con đĩ* (translation: "Bitch")!

MALUS

(to RAU)

Not only did you moisturize your skin, but your mouth too. Cause your mouth be foaming!

PYRUS

(Laughing)

Whatever you said. I can't believe you said it. You, son of a bitch...

RAU

(Heartbroken)

*Thang chó đê* (translation: "Son of a bitch")...  
End this scenery at once

RAU drags PARSLEY away from PYRUS and MALUS.

## SCENE 7

RAU (CONT'D)

You are so grounded, *anh thanh niên* (translation: "Young man")!

PARSLEY

Young man... Thank you for the validation, mom. Young men cannot be grounded! I am no longer a seedling.

## 8. "SOILED (THE FAMILY NAME)"

RAU

DON'T TOIL WITH ME.

HOW SHALLOW CAN YOU BE?

THE FAMILY NAME IS NOT SURFACE LEVEL.

YOUR ANCESTORS ARE WHO YOU FACE OR DEFACE.

MALUS

SUCH A DISGRACE.  
NO MORE OF OUR NEIGHBOR'S SAKE.  
WE SHOULD BE NO SAVING GRACE.  
THEIR RESPECT IS NOTHING BUT FAKE.

FATE IS NOT IN OUR HANDS.  
FAITH IS FOUND IN THIS LAND.  
THROUGH THE DIRT,  
THERE IS HURT.

RAU

YOU SOILED THE FAMILY NAME.  
IS THIS ALL A GAME?  
BROUGHT LOCALS TO DEFAME.  
DON'T END OUR REIGN.

MALUS (CONT'D)

YOU SOILED THE FAMILY NAME!  
WE HAVE MORE TO GAIN.  
BRING TO US FAME.  
BULLSHIT WILL RAIN.

RAU (CONT'D)

YOU MADE US THE DIRT BENEATH THEIR FEET.  
THE ROOT OF THEIR EVIL GOALS AND FEATS.

YOU SOILED THE FAMILY NAME!  
YOU FOILED GENERATIONS OF BUSINESS!  
YOU SOILED OUR BLOODLINE!

YOU BURIED US SIX INCHES UNDER.  
YOU PAINTED DARKNESS ON A BLANK CANVAS.

SON, YOU SET US BEYOND DUSK.  
YOU DUSTED US.

YOU SOILED THE FAMILY NAME.

PARSLEY

IN THE NAME OF FAMILY, I GAVE  
YOUR LIFE SOIL!

MALUS

IN THE NAME OF FAMILY, YOU  
GAVE OUR LIVES SOIL!

MALUS lets PYRUS keep the crop  
top. They exit.

RAU

IN THAT CASE, YOU'RE THE GROUNDEST ONE OF THEM ALL!

PARSLEY crawls into a department  
store's tanning salon.

RAU exits.

The department store transforms  
into Salontro.

End of "SOILED (THE FAMILY NAME)"

## SCENE 8

SALONTRO

9. "FERTILE"

A tanning bed holds a soiled blanket.

PARSLEY pops out from underneath the blanket. They look at a photo of RAU.

PARSLEY  
YOU DEFER MY SMILE.

YOUNG MAN...  
I AM NOT A CHILD.  
I AM MORE WILD.  
I AM FERTILE.

IT'S FUTILE...

PYRUS appears at the window.

PYRUS  
RECONCILE!

PARSLEY  
MY MOM WILL GET RILED-

PYRUS pulls out the crop top.

PYRUS  
WEAR THIS CROP TOP BEFORE IT GOES OUT OF STYLE.

PARSLEY wears the crop top.

PARSLEY  
THIS IS MY TRIAL!

PYRUS  
LET'S GET WILD!

PARSLEY writes on bullshit.

PARSLEY  
(Writing)  
YOU WON'T LIKE ME AT MY VOLATILE.  
FROM YOURS, A FERTILE.

PARSLEY climbs out of the window.

End of "FERTILE"

SCENE 9

FIGLEAF

PARSLEY and PYRUS lands on the dirt.

DJ CAULIFLOWER  
We got a Cilantro in the yard!

PARSLEY  
And you are?

DJ CAULIFLOWER  
A Cauliflower. The Cauliflower. DJ...

DJ CAULIFLOWER holds a microphone towards the AUDIENCE.

DJ CAULIFLOWER (CONT'D)  
What are you all, houseplants? We gotta act like weeds all up in this cement. Me, I'm a godsend...

10. "DIRT ON YOU"

DJ CAULIFLOWER  
DJ CAULIFLOWERRRR!

I GOT DA DA DA DIRT ON YOU.  
DA DA DA DIRT ON YOU.  
ROOT FOR ME.  
WATER ME.  
WATER ME. WATER ME.

PYRUS hands liqueur to PARSLEY.

PARSLEY incrementally drinks.

The lake forms. The tides rise.

DJ CAULIFLOWER (CONT'D)  
WHAT ARE WE?

PYRUS  
Dirty!

DJ CAULIFLOWER  
DIRTY, BABY...



GIVE ME THAT MOTHERFUCKING BULLSHIT!

PYRUS tosses bullshit at DJ  
CAULIFLOWER.

PARSLEY  
Mother... Bullshit fucked over my mom!

PYRUS  
We also are fucking over every adult in this  
Dirty City!

PARSLEY  
I see... Dirty.

PYRUS  
Dirty City... Where you live? Are you drunk?

PARSLEY  
I never felt so alive!

Sunshine reigns.

DJ CAULIFLOWER  
That little herb is on their own little island!

Rainstorms brew. The stormy ocean  
descends. A lighthouse appears.

PYRUS gets washed away.

PARSLEY literally broke his sea  
legs.

PARSLEY  
Can a plant... Can a plant drown...?

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)  
Parsley! Parsley!

The lighthouse turns into  
ambulance lights.

PYRUS swims to PARSLEY.

PYRUS (CONT'D)  
There's dirt on you...

PYRUS drags away PARSLEY.

End of "DIRT ON YOU"

SCENE 10

RAU drags in MALUS. She slaps MALUS across the face. She needs to say something but cannot find the words.

MALUS

Thang chó đê...? That's what I am.

RAU

I'm the bitch here. Where was my son?

MALUS

Fortunately not in the sky like that sun...

RAU hands MALUS some bullshit.

MALUS (CONT'D)

What's this?

RAU

For all the drinks that Parsley didn't pay for.

MALUS

This is some bullshit.

RAU

Don't put it on the house-

MALUS

There won't be a house. Dirty City is shutting us down. They got the proof. In the liqueur. Pumping out of your seedling's stoma. Underage drinking... I should have been there to card your kid.

RAU

*They got dirt on you.* I'm sorry to hear that. It's not just my kid who still needs to grow up and face the consequences.

MALUS

It would be immigrants who'd take my job away... They were right all along...

RAU

That is your problem.

MALUS

The problem is not that Parsley did not earn their adult card.

RAU

It is what, huh?

MALUS

It is that you never deserved your card.

11. "GREEN CARD"

RAU and MALUS have a sibling-esque argument.

[Definition: an identity document which shows that a person has permanent residency in the country]

Summary: Both RAU and MALUS earn their green card, respectively in residency and respectfully as a natural-born queer green plant.]

RAU

THIS SUBJECT ALWAYS LEAVES ME BLUE.

MALUS

BUT YOU HAVE FOLKS RED IN THE FACE.

RAU

I MAKE THE ORANGES GO WILD.

MALUS

YELLOWWWW!

RAU

WE LIVE IN A VIOLET STATE.

MALUS

BUT THE GRASS... THOSE PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS-

RAU

AGREEING...

I AGREE...

I PLANTED HERE AS A NONCITIZEN.

BUT ANYWHERE, I AM A REAL PLANT.

THAT IS MY GREEN CARD.

MALUS

You took away my rights.

RAU

You almost took my son's life.

MALUS

You took away my livelihood.

RAU

Have you ever lived in the hood of the woods?

MALUS

What does my privilege have to do with anything?

RAU

You can start over.

MALUS

The queer community I built?!

RAU

It carries over. The love.

MALUS

I thought...

RAU

You can always hide it underneath your soil.  
And wait to reveal yourself when the light is  
right.

MALUS

When did you get wise?

RAU

When my baby gets dumb.

MALUS

When did you see the light?

RAU

When my kid played at night.

MALUS

When are you okay with his "disorder?"

RAU

I don't know. What is order? When I see to it  
that one's disorder is another's order.

MALUS

Your mind is disordered, but your heart is  
trying to find its focus.

RAU

Have I earned my green card?

MALUS

That's not for us geezers to decide.

RAU

That's for the...

RAU & MALUS

Future generation of seedlings.

MALUS floats off.

End of "GREEN CARD"

SCENE 11

SALONTRO

RAU remains planted in the space.

Business is dead. The place is an allegory for a dead houseplant.

RAU looks inside the bullshit register. They pull out a single bullshit bill.

PARSLEY (OFFSTAGE)

Can I turn the sign to "open?"

RAU

I'm open for business. You are not.

PARSLEY (OFFSTAGE)

*Me (Vietnamese)...*

RAU

*Me as in meh or me?*

PARSLEY (OFFSTAGE)

Vietnamese words are funny.

RAU

Especially Vietnamese plants.

PARSLEY (OFFSTAGE)

Mostly the Cilantros's musical taste.

RAU

Hey. Wash that mouth out with soap.

PARSLEY enters with soap.

PARSLEY

(to the AUDIENCE)

Raise your hand if you think we taste like soap?

If an audience member raises their hand, PARSLEY throws the soap at them.

PARSLEY (CONT'D)

This is your next meal. Let me know if we really taste like that.

RAU

You talking to nobody and wasting our soap does not make a good case for you being not sick.

PYRUS (OFFSTAGE)

And I have bad case ahead of me.

PYRUS enters. Their skin holds  
minor burns.

RAU

Pyrus... In the flesh.

PYRUS

I certainly don't look fresh, Ms. Răm.

RAU

Summer's coming to an end. But there's light at  
the end of the tunnel as you return to school.

PYRUS

I need school, so I don't end up being called a  
"đồ vô học" (*translation: an uneducated person*)  
again.

PARSLEY

*Me (Vietnamese)*, you're the one who needs to be  
educated.

RAU nods in agreement.

PYRUS

Enlighten me.

RAU

There is more to darkness than meets the eyes.

PYRUS

FigLeaf was the light in the nightlife.

RAU

I'm sorry that your uncle has to start over.

PYRUS

I'm glad he helped you get started. It's your  
turn to give Malus the tips.

RAU gives PYRUS the last bullshit.

RAU

I'll give you one: to my son, say good-

PYRUS

Goodbye. I know.

Beat.

PYRUS (CONT'D)

Good riddance?

RAU

I don't know. Just have something good to say to him this time...

PYRUS

Little herb, as I stared into your eyes... You were seeing the light... I hope you realize...

PARSLEY & PYRUS

You will amount to everything.

PYRUS

I will never amount to anything. I won't mount a proper apology. But for once, I do care. This is despair. Don't look at this pear.

PARSLEY

You always amount to everything.

PYRUS

I'm off to another school year at THC. I'll climb high on a mountain.

RAU

I'm sorry things didn't work out the way they did. But you can.

As MALUS had done for RAU, RAU moves a plot of land for PYRUS.

RAU (CONT'D)

Make sure you grab a tax form on your way out!

PYRUS

Taxes?

RAU

You must pay the government bullshit to work.

PYRUS

You're referring to adulthood?

RAU

You're experienced enough to intern. And that bullshit you pocketed is your first paycheck.

PARSLEY

You're welcome back any time!

PARSLEY hugs PYRUS.

RAU

There's a plot of land for you here.

RAU opens a colorful tanning bed for PYRUS.

12. "TURNOVER (A NEW LEAF)"

PYRUS

IT'S MY TURN...  
I WAS HANDED A BAD CARD.  
THIS PLACE HAS NO REGARD.  
THEY TREAT ME LIKE I'M FROM SPACE, AFAR.  
I HAVE LEAVES THAT COULDN'T HOLD WATER.  
I WAS GONNA COME APART.  
BUT YOU HAD A HEART?  
I HAVE A NEW START.

MALUS gets out of another tanning  
bed. They inspect themselves.

RAU

TURN AROUND.

NICE TAN.

MALUS

BIGGEST FAN.

RAU

NOTHING FANCY.

MALUS

IT'S MY TURN...  
I DON'T DESERVE MY GREEN CARD.  
IT IS NOT THERE TO BE ON GUARD.  
I HAVE LEAVES THAT CAME SO FAR.  
BUT NO TREE, ESPECIALLY ME, CAN REACH THE STARS.  
I DON'T HAVE THE HEART.  
I SHOULD STOP...

Either animated silhouettes or a  
colorful light show demonstrate  
that business is booming with  
patrons coming in and out.

Financial quarters roll by with  
the rising and setting sun.

PARSLEY

TURNOVER!  
THE WORLD IS NOT OVER.  
WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND.

TURN AROUND!  
I NOW HAVE A NEW BUSINESS VENTURE.  
AFTER GOING THROUGH WHAT I CAN KINDLY PUT: AN ADVENTURE.

I'VE SHED EUKARYOTIC CELLS.  
NO ONE CARED WHAT I HAD TO SELL.  
I WAS STUCK IN THE GREEN CARD PRISON.  
THE ONLY LIGHT THROUGH THE BAR WAS OUR SUN.



I'VE MADE MY BED, BUT NOW I CAN FLIP IT AROUND TO THE COOLER  
SIDE!

TURNOVER!  
TURN AROUND!

Water rains down.

PARSLEY & RAU	PYRUS & MALUS
THIS IS THE SPARK OF A FLORAL	THIS IS THE SPARK OF AN
FRIENDSHIP.	HERBAL FRIENDSHIP.

PARSLEY turns the "Closed" sign to  
"Open."

PARSLEY, RAU, MALUS, PYRUS, DJ  
BUT THE BEST TURNOVER WE'VE EVER HAD...

A tanning bed opens.

PARSLEY, RAU, MALUS, PYRUS, DJ (CONT'D)  
IS THE SUN!

End of "TURNOVER (A NEW LEAF)"

**END OF SPACETIME**