

RED SUMMER

Red Summer Development History

1st Draft: 7 Stages, Home Brew Series_2017

2nd Draft: 7 Stages, Home Brew Series_2018

Working Title Playwrights

First Light Reading_2020

(Full rewrite-shit first draft_2021)

Theroun D'arcy Patterson

theroun@yahoo.com

(404) 661-2052

Characters

Theo Parker, 40s an heir to the Leighton fortune, Head of the Leighton Educational Foundation
Yvette Parker, 40s an heir to the Leighton fortune, CEO of Leighton Acquisitions, Theo's sister
Eirene/White Woman, 30s a political strategist, pollster, campaign manager, also, none of those things
Kendrick Leighton, 30s-40s an heir to the Leighton Fortune, fourth child of Caleb Leighton
Boy, 18 an ancestor, the fallen

All actors are African American.

A / in the dialogue indicate when the following line overlaps.

A – is an interruption, self-inflicted, or otherwise

A . . . indicates a word, thought, or feeling that expresses itself physically however minute, or otherwise

i.

**Oceans by Jay Z (feat. Frank Ocean) smashes
into the darkness. Let it run a bit as . . .**

(Light warms on YVETTE sitting in a chair reading a magazine. She wears a stylish pant suit and long camel overcoat.)

(Light warms on THEO standing upstage of YVETTE. He stands in the middle of the room reading from a copy of a speech. He wears a stylish grey suit.)

(YVETTE licks her finger and turns a page. The music cuts out. The light softens and spreads. We are in a luxury hotel suite.)

Theo

"Fellow Americans. Educators. Brothers and sisters. Neighbors. We stand together under a cloud of great division."

(THEO looks at YVETTE.)

"During a time of strife. And darkness. And a seemingly endless struggle for justice and equality. We must persevere. We must be vigilant, because the alternative is failure, and failure is the one thing we cannot and will not accept. Pause."

(Again, THEO looks at YVETTE.)

The Great and Honorable Dr. Martin Luther King once said . . ."

(THEO laughs a bit to himself. YVETTE licks a finger and turns a page.)

Yvette

What.

Theo

Is he describing a Wizard? The *Dazzlingly Resplendent and Powerful Oz* once said –

Yvette

Are you done?

Theo

I'll let you know.

Yvette

You're not even supposed to have that.

Theo

You can't let him utter this nonsense out loud.

Yvette

I wouldn't characterize his speech as utter /non –

Theo

Yvette.

Yvette

That opening 's been tested.

Theo

On monkeys?!

Yvette

It scored very well, actually.

Theo

I don't believe you. Who wrote this?

Yvette

None of your business.

Theo

Okay. Well. This isn't happening.

Yvette

You're not pulling him.

Theo

I *am* pulling /him.

Yvette

He's been scheduled for /weeks.

Theo

I don't remember agreeing to /any of this.

Yvette

Theo, you don't remember *agreeing* to this because you don't *read* anything you sign.

Theo

I have a guy for that.

Yvette

No, you /*had* a –

Theo

Pope!

Yvette

He's –

Theo

'ey, *Pope?!*

Yvette

Pope 's gone.

Theo

Gone?

Yvette

Graduated.

Theo

That guy was still in *school?!*

Yvette

Theodore, I need that /back.

Theo

Who puts these events together for me now?

Yvette

Eirene did, but –

Theo

And where is this Eirene?

Yvette

She's downstairs in the convention center thanking donors for their continued support of your foundation. And you're not pulling him.

Theo

...

(She stares at THEO as she licks a finger and turns a magazine page.)

Yvette

...

Theo

(holding up the speech) You know what this sounds like.

Yvette

...

Theo

Every other speech we've heard the last six days.

Yvette

It's expected.

Theo

Nah, it's easy.

Yvette

Jesus Christ, Theo.

Theo

We *must* heal from this and we *will* heal from this! Applause, applause. I am the *band aid of justice*! Applause, /applause.

Yvette

It doesn't /say that.

Theo

Equality! Equality! And you'll all nod and look at each other and start your chorus of laments until the waiters come 'round with the pecan pie and the music starts, 'cause we all practiced our electric slide a little bit before we got here tonight. Didn't we Yvette?

Yvette

It's what Kenny wants to say.

Theo

Did *Kenny* write this?

Yvette

It should be *mentioned*. Something like that. It'll be *glaring* if /it isn't mentioned.

Theo

"It."

Yvette

Stop it. The *boy*. The *boy* should be mentioned.

Theo

I'm handing out scholarships tonight. Give the kids the night off from the *struggle*.

Yvette

That reminds me.

Theo

Have a little fun.

Yvette

Kenny is gonna hand out the scholarships tonight.

Theo

...

Yvette

Right after he announces his candidacy. Which will be right after that speech you're holding in your hand.

Theo

You mean this repository of fucking clichés?

Yvette

No one asked for your help, Theo. Oh. *Wait*.

Theo

Don't *do* /that.

Yvette

I *did* ask you.

Theo

I don't want to be a speechwriter.

Yvette

You don't want to be *his* speechwriter.

Theo

He's an *asshole*.

Yvette

Yes, and what are *you*? Besides *absent*.

Theo

I *don't* want to be involved.

Yvette

Your first book said otherwise.

Theo

My first book said I was snorting lines of James Baldwin.

Second book was terrible.

You should ask mom.

I did.

Turn you down, too?

She said to ask you.

Didn't answer the question.

Said it would be good for you.

Oh. So. Pity.

You're a hermit.

I can afford to be a hermit.

Yes. You can.

Imagine what a surprise it is that you're guilt trippin' me right now.

You knew this was coming.

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

Yvette

Theo

...

Yvette

Don't look away. This is part of the plan. "We grow, /or we die."

Theo

"*We grow, or we die.*"

Yvette

Right.

Theo

Growth or death.

Yvette

I realize we're doing both as we speak.

Theo

Politics.

Yvette

It's the next game.

Theo

Games have rules. *This is snakes* thrown into a burlap sack.

Yvette

Then I guess you're free to *go* downstairs, Theo and open the show. Tell your inappropriate jokes, get wasted and go home with someone's wife, or whatever it is /you do at these things.

Theo

That's cute. That's also a rumor.

Yvette

I get it. You like known quantities. *Comfort.*

Theo

"Known quantities."

Yvette

You *do*.

Theo

You calling me chicken?

Yvette

Did it work?

Theo

...

Yvette

I put you next to Uncle Grey, by the way. You're welcome.

Theo

...

Yvette

And I am happy to see you. All evidence to the blah blah blah. You should answer your phone from time to time. It would make all of this less embarrassing for you.

Theo

Your tongue is black.

Yvette

Shit, really?

Theo

It's a dirty assed *magazine*, Yvette. Ink soaked pages. Don't lick your fingers, idiot.

Yvette

I was trying to look cool and methodical.

(Two quick knocks. Then we hear a key card in the door. EIRIENE sticks her head in the room.)

Sorry, um –

Eirene

It's fine.

Yvette

Is this her?

Theo

This is Eirene.

Yvette

Good to finally meet you Mr. Parker. Your remarks are preset on the prompter. Yvette, ten minutes.

Eirene

Thank you.

Yvette

"Yvette."

Theo

Need anything else?

Eirene

Not, "*Ms. Parker.*"

Theo

We're fine.

Yvette

"We're fine."

Theo

Kendrick wants a word. He's in conference room four.

Eirene

You didn't show him up?

Theo

Eirene

He said –

Theo

You should have shown him up.

Yvette

He was here earlier.

Eirene

Yeah, you missed a few things.

Theo

(Takes off his glasses. Looks at Eirene.) I'm sorry?

Eirene

He said, he wanted to make a phone call before going through the final – the speech again.

Theo

"Phone call" is code for I need to find a quiet bathroom to /take a –

Yvette

He's nervous. Tell him I'll be down shortly.

Theo

He's gonna ask you for coffee. You tell him, *no*.

Yvette

Get him a green tea, would you? Put some of that collagen in it.

Eirene

Okay. Theo?

Theo

... What.

Eirene

You need anything?

Theo

The *nearest* exit.

Yvette

Thank you, Eirene.

(EIRENE smiles, exits.)

Theo

You gave her a key to the suite?

Yvette

It's fine.

Theo

Is it?

Yvette

Yes. Theodore! It is. You wanna question my choice of *footwear*, too?!

Theo

I don't like her.

Yvette

Well, you're gonna disappear for months again after tonight, so what do you care?

Theo

'All cities are potentially powder kegs, and in the final analysis: A riot truly is the language of the unheard.'

Yvette

He's paraphrasing.

Theo

Phrase-jackin', is what he's doin'.

Yvette

He's —

Theo

One eight-hunnit mug a quote.

Yvette

We'll work it out.

Theo

Is there some quote record I need to be aware of?

Yvette

Probably.

Theo

You can't let him talk about *rioting* in the opening minute of a speech to a union of underpaid educators! Especially with a fifty something year old quote that shines a big bright light on how *little* things have changed.

Yvette

...

Theo

You've read this.

Yvette

Is that a question?

Theo

No. You've read this.

Yvette

Okay.

Theo

And you're *letting* this stand.

Yvette

Don't know what you mean.

Theo

You need my help, but you want me to say yes first. *Why?*

Yvette

...

Theo

What is it?

Yvette

I've gotta go talk to our cousin.

Theo

(THEO flips through more of the speech.)

Yvette

I don't think the plumbing will survive his nerves.

Theo

Look at me.

Yvette

...

Theo

I don't trust your face.

Yvette

See you on the dais. Thanks for being on time.

Theo

You *literally* force me to do these things.

Yvette

It's *six* commitments a year, Theo! Or, do you not like your seat on the board?!

Theo

...

Yvette

I've gotta go.

Theo

Hey.

Yvette

...

Theo

Did *you* leave his speech here? Or, did he?

Yvette

He must have.

Theo

...

Yvette

(She's smiles as if she's holding pocket aces.)

Theo

You can both fuck off.

Yvette

Wear your suit jacket. You're sweaty.

(YVETTE gets halfway out the door.)

Theo

Yvette. The *Mayor's* office? What are we *doing*? Does Kenny want this?

Yvette

Kenny believes he "has the vision to galvanize this city using action items that will become the /standard for the nation."

Theo

Oh, *JesusChristpleasestoptalking!* If I hear one more person say, *action ite* – You mean a *list*?! Is that what you mean?!

Yvette

Would you vote for someone with a *list*, or someone with “*action items*?”

Theo

...

Yvette

Kenny wants to be Mayor.

Theo

Cousin Kenny likes being in front of a camera.

Yvette

And he wants to be Mayor. And the family is behind him. And we need you. It's the right time.

Theo

This is an *opportune* time, Yvette. That's not the same thing.

Yvette

It is in politics, Theodore.

Theo

...

Yvette

...

Theo

...

Yvette

What.

Theo

(shakes his head)

Yvette

Say yes. You were my second choice. You gotta respect that.

Theo

... I don't like being twins with you.

(YVETTE exits. THEO stares at the words on the page. He inspects the paper, then each page as if their weightlessness confounds him somehow. Eventually, EIRENE enters carrying her laptop bag and watches him in silence. THEO tears a page down the middle as static, like distant waves, bleeds into the quiet, then recedes. THEO tears another as we hear the static again as light finds a BOY on the shore of a beach. He stares at the crisp and clean water. He looks around slowly, then starts to slip a foot out of one shoe as THEO does the same. The BOY then removes his other shoe - as does THEO - and weighs the consequences of stepping into the water.)

Eirene

Theo.

(Both men look in her direction. The sound of static waves recedes as the light fades on BOY and beach. The BOY's shoes remain on the floor in the middle of the room.)

Theo

There's the go getter.

Eirene

Left my badge up here, I think.

Theo

You're gonna need that.

Eirene

Right.

(EIRENE begins looking around the room casually as THEO, unable to help himself, begins re-writing the speech.)

Theo

How's Kenny?

Eirene

Good. Yvette's going over reporter Q and A.

Theo

Rehearsing answers.

Eirene

Yes.

Theo

Shouldn't you be down there?

Eirene

I'm off the clock for a few minutes.

Theo

Good for you.

Eirene

I'm a spectator now.

Theo

And how much is my sister paying spectators these days.

Eirene

Depends

Theo

On?

Eirene

Things happening a certain way.

Theo

Well, I'm gonna have you fired as soon as this thing is over.

Eirene

Gonna get Pope back in here?

Theo

By Monday, I'm thinkin'.

Eirene

You can't fire me, Theo.

Theo

Don't stand in my family's Hotel and tell me what I can and can't do, okay?

Eirene

You can't fire me because I don't work for you. I'm Kendrick's Campaign Manager.

Theo

Then, why aren't *you* fixing this?

Eirene

I was told you might be helping us with that.

Theo

My sister overreaches at times.

Eirene

She says you have good ideas.

Theo

Why does that *matter* to you, Eirene?

Eirene

Matters to *us*.

Theo

(he laughs) I hope you're not the Closer.

Eirene

...

Theo

...

Eirene

Do you need to hear anything out loud?

Theo

What makes you think that?

Eirene

There's torn pages on the floor.

Theo

So?

Eirene

Do you need to hear anything new?

Theo

No luck with that badge, huh?

Eirene

It's here somewhere..

(EIRENE grabs the magazine YVETTE was reading and tucks it in her bag and continues looking for her badge half-heartedly before stopping. THEO notices,)

Theo

Must have left it in conference four.

Eirene

Must have. I'm gonna have to walk through backstage security with you, if that's okay.

Theo

Need me to vouch for you?

Eirene

If that's okay.

(She sits and looks at her phone.)

Mind if I wait here?

(Eirene texts someone. THEO notices.)

Theo

It a free-*ish* country.

(Her phone rings.)

Eirene

Yes. You did? Great, I'll be down in a sec.

Theo

Let me guess.

Eirene

Conference four.

Theo

Guess you'll be heading out now.

Eirene

Guess so.

(Eirene gets up.)

Should I tell them to hold?

Theo

Tell them whatever you like.

Eirene

... She said you were this *way*.

Theo

What way is that?

Eirene

I said, "They're all the same when it's time."

(EIRENE picks up a page of the speech. She tears it down the middle. Light warms on the shoes. Gentle waves of static. We see the shadows of small sea birds; hear their cries in the distance. THEO sees the shoes. He walks over to them and puts them on his shoeless feet as if they were his.)

I said, (her voice completely changes) "They all tremble at first."

(She drops the pages. The sound cuts out.)

Theo

What?

Eirene

I'll see you down there.

Theo

I suppose you have to. And leave the magazine, please.

Eirene

...

Theo

That's what you came up here for, isn't it?

Eirene

... Yes.

Theo

"*Cool and methodical*" my ass. She was reading something specific.

Eirene

It's an advanced copy. It's the *only* copy, so far.

Theo

...

Eirene

Ask. If you want to *know*.

Advanced copy of what.

Theo

Kenny's interview with Foray Magazine.

Eirene

...

Theo

Ask. If you want to know.

Eirene

Would you leave that here, please?

Theo

I can't do that.

Eirene

Just tell her you couldn't find it.

Theo

I texted her and told her I did.

Eirene

Then, what do you want for it?

Theo

Those pages. And a handshake.

Eirene

... What did he say?

Theo

Kenny has ideas too.

Eirene

...

Theo

Eirene

The pages. And a handshake.

Theo

...

(THEO holds out the note riddled pages. EIRENE removes the magazine from her laptop bag, and makes an exchange with him. She extends her hand. He pauses, then shakes her hand.)

Eirene

Page seventy-eight.

(THEO turns the pages of the magazine as EIRENE exits the suite with the speech. He paces the room as he reads. The spot where he was standing remains lit. The BOY returns to the spot looking for his shoes.)

Theo

Oh. No.

(Static in the air. Sea bird squawks and screeches turn to voices shouting from the past.)

Voice

BOY!

Boy

Oh /no.

Theo

No no /NO.

Boy

(a loud panicked whisper) /Oh no.

Voices

BOY!

(The BOY looks in the direction of the voices. Lights out on everything but the BOY and THEO. Lights out.)

ii.

KENDRICK and YVETTE go over THEO's notes in conference room four. She is also trying to get make up on his face. KENNY wears a blue suit, white shirt, red tie. EIRENE is on her computer making the changes to the speech. There is a pre-event spread of finger foods, white and red wine, and bottled water. Kenny is eating chicken wings. There is something off about them. Yvette drinks water. Eirene drinks a glass of red wine.

Kenny

I'm not saying that.

Yvette

It's better than what you wrote.

Kenny

I don't care. I'm not saying it.

Eirene

We'll figure out how to phrase it so you don't sound –

Kenny

Like I pair my wines with my fucking cheeses?

Yvette

Change it on the prompter. Let's keep going.

Kenny

I need to practice that.

Yvette

"Practice?"

Eirene/Yvette

*"What the fuck is practice?!"**

*(*No Chill by Skrillex and Vic Mensa for musical reference. Also, see Allen Iverson “practice” press conference for original reference.)*

(EIRENE and YVETTE laugh.)

Kenny
Is everyone drunk?

Eirene
If this goes well? Definitely.

Yvette
Why are you – *Where’s* your tea?

Kenny
It’s . . .

Eirene
You poured it out.

Kenny
Thanks for that.

Eirene
(laughing) I’m so sorry.

Yvette
Can we get him a salad? And a wet nap?

(Eirene moves to make that happen.)

Kenny
Damn all o’ dat.

Yvette
Right. Damn that high cholesterol making sludge out of my bloodstream.

Kenny

My mistake. I thought I left my wife outside.

Yvette

You got a thing for heart attacks or somethin'?

Kenny

(He bites into another wing.) MMM. Needs more salt!

Yvette

I promised I'd get you to eat something green.

Kenny

Then you overpromised, *Benedict*.

Yvette

Okay, so the tombstone should read, "He died –"

Kenny

A *free* man! Tell my tale to all the land: "Kenny died with animal flesh between his teeth, God damn it!"

Eirene

(eating a wing by now) Hnh. These are weird.

Kenny

Right?!

Yvette

Eat the salad, please. Don't make me give your wife bad news. I don't – I don't think I could take her in a fight.

(Eirene answers her cell. Yvette fusses over Kenny's clothes.)

Eirene

Yes. . . .Thank you.

Yvette

Where are we.

Eirene

Band is covering Prince. Kids are grinding inappropriately. We're good for a bit.

Kenny

Is his majesty going to grace us with his presence at some point?

Yvette

At some point. *Hold your arms up.*

Kenny

Always waiting for Theo.

Yvette

It's not like that. *Put them down.* Who tailored this suit for you?

Kenny

One of Pope's guys.

Yvette

Um, *no.*

Kenny

No?

Eirene

You're swimming in it.

Kenny

People. There will be photographs. Every time I shake one of those outstanding students' hands. I can't look like I'm in my big brother's hand me downs.

Yvette

You're gonna use *my* tailor from now on.

Kenny

Janine? Wonderful. Doesn't solve my problem tonight, though.

Yvette

Lose it while you're up there. /It'll play –

Eirene

He doesn't use the jacket tonight.

Yvette

Sorry?

Eirene

You're right, it'll play better if he takes it off onstage.

Yvette

But don't make a big deal of it.

Kenny

Okay. Tell Janine I don't want to have to dress like the fucking *flag* all the time.

Yvette

You will if it polls well.

Kenny

I want suits like the European Ryder Cup Team.

Eirene

What does that mean?

Yvette

(to Eirene) Please don't. Kenny. Not this particular rabbit hole. Not tonight.

Kenny

Do you watch golf?

Yvette

The answer better be "no" or /you're fired.

Kenny

(nibbling on a wing as he speaks) They *wear* their suits. Our *suits* wear *us*.

Eirene

"*Us?*"

Kenny

You feel me.

Yvette

No, she doesn't. He needs a campaign pin for later.

Eirene

Some in my bag.

Kenny

Get some to my wife, so she and the kids wear 'em.

Eirene

Already done.

Yvette

Is Aunt Tracey coming tonight?

Kenny

No, but she sends her love.

Yvette

Your mom's a lot more fun than you.

Kenny

She really is.

Yvette

Are you ready?

Kenny

I don't know, are we ready?

Yvette

Why do you want to be Mayor?

Kenny

"I believe in what we can be as Americans. I believe in *unity* and —"

Yvette

No.

Kenny

I like my answer better.

Yvette

(smiles genuinely) No one cares.

Kenny

(smiles genuinely back) Thank you.

Yvette

... Why do you want to be Mayor?

Kenny

“Cries for change remain just that if the people don’t have an advocate in offices that matter. Laws need to be changed. Procedures and training need to be changed, but first hearts and minds –“

(THEO bursts in and slams the door behind him.)

Theo

You’re *swimming* in that jacket, Kendrick, you fucking *idiot*.

Eirene

I’m gonna go and delay for five minutes.

Theo

Yeah, you do that.

Kenny

He read the article.

Theo

I read the article.

Kenny

It’s been *months*. How’s um ... Leah. *Tia. Cara.*

Samantha.

Yvette

Samantha. How's –

Kenny

Broke up.

Theo

You've got to get better at that.

Yvette

I'm working on it.

Kenny

I quit, by the way.

Theo

I heard you shook on it.

Kenny

Reparations, Kenny?!

Theo

I don't have time for this. I'm about to –

Kenny

You can't *run* on that.

Theo

I can run on whatever I want. It's a *small* part of my platform.

Kenny

She calls you the "*Reparations Candidate!*"

Theo

It's fine, *Theo*.

Kenny

It's "fine," he says.

Theo

It has strong support.

Kenny

No. Kenny. It doesn't.

Theo

I had Eirene poll it.

Kenny

You did *what?!*

Yvette

I. Had. Her. Poll it.

Kenny

Tell me she told you that was a bad idea.

Theo

We need to bury an article *and* a poll?

Yvette

What do you mean *bury* it?

Kenny

Ten feet deep. Right next to Jimmy Hoffa.

Theo

I'm not ashamed of it.

Kenny

I blame *you* for this. Yes, I do.

Theo

I have it handled.

Yvette

(YVETTE gets on the phone.)

Theo

Don't say the word reparations tonight. There's press here. It's all they'll hear and want to talk about because it is what'll lead the news hour. And they *all* want the *lead*, Kenny. Not to give all the elements of your platform equal goddamn attention!

(EIRENE enters.)

A poll?!

Eirene

It's fine.

Theo

Are you two an *act*, or something?!

Kenny

...

Theo

What was the con/text?

Eirene

"If a committee to explore reparations for the descendants of slaves was on a ballot for funding, how likely are you to vote for it? Not likely at all, somewhat likely, likely -"

Theo

But what was the *context*?

Eirene

Well, it sure as shit wasn't, "If Kendrick Leighton were running for mayor on a reparations platform, how likely are you to vote for him?"

Theo

...

Yvette

...

...

Kenny

Eirene

I know what I'm doing.

Theo

That makes one of us.

Kenny

I'm ready to go.

Yvette

Hang on. We'll go together.

Kenny

Shall we hold hands?

Theo

Shut up, Kenny.

Theo

Yvette? Article?

Yvette

It's – It should be fine.

Theo

What does that mean?

Yvette

She had to go, but she texted me. "Exclusive. Entire family. After the announcement. Consider the article scrapped. Deal?"

Kenny

Take the deal.

Yvette

I have to talk to the family.

Theo

Take the deal. We'll talk to them afterward.

(YVETTE begins to text, when a video is sent to her.)

Yvette

What *is* that?

Kenny

Yvette, let's go.

(Yvette is still looking at her phone. Phones beep and vibrate. Everyone's except Eirene's.)

Yvette

What *city* is that?

Theo

...

(They gather around Yvette's cell. THEO does not move.)

Kenny

This just happen?

Yvette

This is um ... live.

Kenny

What *city* is that?

Yvette

(To the phone) Stay in the /car.

Kenny

*(To the phone) Stay in the /**car**!*

Yvette

(To the phone) / JUST STAY IN THE CAR!

Kenny

...

Yvette

...

(THEO slowly covers his ears.)

Eirene

They tremble at first.

(Theo braces.)

(The stage darkens suddenly. Gunshots register as massive bursts of light in the room as they watch Yvette's screen: CRACK CRACK CRACK CRACK CRACK. Darkness. The present shatters. Static crashes like waves. Light finds the BOY, breathless on the shore of a beach considering the implications of stepping into the cool and clear water. His shoes are in front of him in the sand. The sea birds squawk. EIRENE speaks to him.)

Eirene

They make a terrible racket, don't they?

Boy

I wasn't doin' nuthin.

Eirene

You're thinking about it.

Boy

...

(The birds screech.)

Eirene

I will rip you from the sky!

(The birds quiet themselves.)

Boy

You crazy, or somethin'? I can't deal with a crazy white lady today.

Eirene

You're not supposed to be here.

Boy

...

Eirene

I said, you're not supposed to /be here.

Boy

I *know*.

Eirene

You have your own beaches. Your own sand. Your own /water.

Boy

It's all da same water.

Eirene

Are you alone?

Boy

... Are *you* alone?

Eirene

No. Yes. No.

Boy

I'ma leave so, don't scream or nuthin', a'ight?

Eirene

What do you want here, Boy?

Boy

Don't call me /that.

Eirene

If it's all the same water, then what'd run all the way here for?

Boy

... Run.

Eirene

Don't smirk. Don't you smirk at me.

Boy

It is a condition of my existence

Eirene

...

Boy

to leave home every day fully prepared to run for my life.

Eirene

...

Boy

Did you know there's places, that when da sun goes down, men turn into jackals? And their sons turn into jackals. And at night they roam the roads. Roam in packs. Lookin' for Boys like me out after dark, runnin' the treeline along the road, branches and thorns takin' their piece of 'em along the way. Blood for the dogs. Runnin' the ditches to stay outta sight. Comin' home from drinkin' and dancin' wit' girls an' listenin' to music ... Tellin' lies about our time over there ... I come home and ... it's be *here* in da light boy, *there* in tha dark, eat *here* boy, drink *there*, *can't* learn here, can't *sit* here, *swim* over there, not over here. Choose not ta listen and "You will die to the sound o' me mockin' yo' screams and my pack coughing their laughing barks and spit into the night air."

I'ma put my feet

(The BOY puts his feet in the water.)

in whatever water, I damn —

(A large sharp rock lands in the water next to the BOY. The sound of an angry crowd, shouting at him bleeds in, then cuts out.)

(we have to hear the actual words of the mob, not generic crowd noise)

(Another rock lands. The sound of a mob is heard briefly, then cuts out.)

(Another finds the side of the BOY's skull. He lands in the water with a splash. Blood leaks from the wound. We hear people screaming at him to get out of the water.)

(We should hear "stay down boy" over and over here maybe.)

(He hesitates.)

Eirene

You all do the same thing when its time.

(He gets to his feet. EIRENE walks to him and puts her arms around him as the rocks descend; hitting the BOY through her as the lights snap out.)

(Lights snap up in the conference room as we see them experience the murder again. We hear the gunshots through the phone speakers.)

Yvette

...

Kenny

...

Yvette

...

Kenny

Somebody should /um ...

Yvette

Find out what city that is.

Kenny

...

Yvette

Eirene?

(YVETTE looks over to find EIRENE gone and a soaking wet and shivering THEO staring back at her.)

Kenny

Theo?

Yvette

...

Theo

...

Yvette

...

(Quick knocks at the door. EIRENE enters wearing a different outfit, hairstyle, name tag and badge. She carries an Ipad.)

Eirene

They told me conference three, I'm sorry Mr. Leighton. Clearly, it's conference four because, well, here you are, so ... They said the Comedian has already gone over. Are you ready?

(THEO and EIRENE look at each other.)

Kenny

I'm coming ... Tell them I'm coming.

Eirene

Yessir.

Yvette

Thanks Dana.

Eirene

Sure, Ms. Parker.

(EIRENE exits. Kenny looks at YVETTE)

Kenny

... What am I supposed to –

Yvette

Start with it.

Kenny

Announce it?

Yvette

If we've seen it, they've seen it.

Kenny

What do I say?

Yvette

Theo?

Kenny

What do I tell these people, /Theo?

Yvette

Theo, are you okay?

(THEO trembles. His breath is shallow. He walks over to KENNY and helps him take off his suit jacket.)

Theo

Lose the tie. We'll talk on the way.

(Everyone exits leaving THEO in the room. He looks down at the shoes on his feet. He lifts the bottom of a pants leg and inspects the shoes a little further.)

Lights out. End of Act One.