REFERENCE GUIDE

**Scene Word/Phrase Meaning**

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|  | Răm | A near homophone for Pham. |
|  | Rau Răm | Vietnamese coriander. |
|  | Pyrus | The pear tree and shrub are a species of genus Pyrus. |
|  | Malus | The genus of small deciduous trees or shrubs in the family Rosaceae, including the domesticated orchard apple, crab apples and wild apples. |
|  | DJ Cauliflower | A cauliflower referencing a famous disc jockey and performer. |
|  | FigLeaf Nightclub | In culture, a "fig leaf" or "fig-leaf" is a literal or figurative method of obscuring an act or object considered embarrassing or distasteful with something of innocuous appearance. |
| 1 | Grand Rapids | The second largest city in Michigan. Pham’s birthplace. |
| 1 | Fredrick Meijer Gardens | Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, 158-acre botanical garden, art museum, and outdoor sculpture park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. |
| 1 | Curb the Herbs | A phrase close to ”Curb Your Dog” |
| 1 | Chào | ”Hello” in Vietnamese |
| 1 | Figs | A soft pear-shaped fruit with sweet dark flesh and many small seeds, eaten fresh or dried; in the musical *Turnover*, it is repurposed to be a near homophone for Fags |
| 1 | Klootzak | An insult in Dutch |
| 1 | Weed | In *Turnover*, a common Asian American surname |
| 1 | Stems | An allegory for the body and perhaps spirit |
| 1 | Im lang | ”Shut up” in Vietnamese (eem laang) |
| 2 | Eukaryotic cells | Plant ”blood” |
| 2 | Poop | A profanity. |
| 2 | We Cilantros have good tastes | Some people have a variation in a group of olfactory-receptor genes that allows them to strongly perceive the soapy-flavored aldehydes in cilantro leaves. |
| 2 | Bullshit | Currency in Dirty City. |
| 2 | Green Card | An immigration card and imaginary card for who is a true plant or not. |
| 3 | Sneezewort | A daisy. |
| 3 | Trichomes | Plant ”hairs”. |
| 3 | What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen dandelion seed? | A *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* reference for ”What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?” Pham acted as King Arthur in *Spamalot* in 2013. |
| 3 | Boxwood tree | Pham should have said cubed root. |
| 3 | Flores Elementary | ”Flores” is flower in Spanish. |
| 3 | Pick you before the Cherries | Cherry picking joke. |
| 3 | Apple’s sport | Apples connect to the dental point in root canal. |
| 3 | Root canal | Teeth and play-on of botanical ”root” |
| 3 | Golden Delicious | A species of apple. Parsley’s teacher Ms. Red’s wife. |
| 3 | Fig weddings | A gay wedding. |
| 3 | Stamens and pistils | Reproductive organs of plants; plays on of “when a man and woman love each other.” |
| 3 | Their light is artificial | Basically: ”where straight people get their light is natural while where gay people get their light is unnatural.” |
| 3 | UV | Ultraviolet light. Very violet light. |
| 3 | Spectrums of sunlight onto a palette | Lights come in spectrums in the order of: radio waves, microwaves, infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, X-rays, and gamma rays. Like gender. |
| 3 | Biodiversity | Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you'll find in one area. |
| 3 | Homogeneity | Rau appreciates conformity for her own survival. |
| 3 | Grooms | A hypersensitive word nowadays to mean ”immoral exploitation” |
| 3 | Ngu ngon | ”Sleep well” in Vietnamese |
| 4 | Aldehyde | Aldehyde is a chemical acting as defense mechanisms and protects the plants from environmental stressors and herbivores. It is the plant’s brain and mind. |
| 4 | Cantaloupe Outlets | Cantaloupe is a type of true melon (Cucumis melo) from the family Cucurbitaceae. Cantaloupe Outlets is based on Tanger Outlets in Michigan. It is getting more popular to visit an outlet than a mall. |
| 4 | Celery Mall | Celery is part of the Apiaceae family, which includes carrots, parsnips, parsley, and celeriac. It is a low calory, lame food. Celery Mall is based on Rivertown Mall in Grandville, MI. |
| 4 | Apple Blossom | Apple blossom is the flower of the apple tree, which Crabapples also dwell on. |
| 4 | Houseplants | Houseplants have been domesticated to survive in households but are fragile as outdoor plants. |
| 4 | Mountain out of a molehill | ”Making a mountain out of a molehill” is an idiom referring to over-reactive, histrionic behaviour where a person makes too much of a minor issue. |
| 4 | Morsal | ”Morsal” is a small slice or mouthful of food |
| 4 | …susceptible to sunburns. The Cherrys and Maples | Some young trees with thin bark are at greater risk of sunburn damage such as flowering cherry, maple, and many fruit trees. |
| 4 | Cilantros: ya can spice up my skin, but it ain’t ever spice up my life. | Cilantro has a complex flavor with hints of pepper, sage and lemon. A versatile herb, it's used in everything from traditional Indian curries and Asian stir-fries to Mexican salsas. |
| 4 | Tetra High Center of Learning | Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis. |
| 4 | THC, in the U P? | ”U P” is how Michiganders abbreviate Michigan’s Upper Peninsula |
| 4 | They get under my membrane. | A plant’s skin. The plasma membrane, also called the cell membrane, is the membrane found in all cells that separates the interior of the cell from the outside environment. |
| 4 | Mudwrestling and singing in the rain! | Probably a plant’s favorite game or sport |
| 4 | Rose and thorn | Rose is a highlight, success, small win, or something positive that happened. Thorn is a challenge you experienced or something you can use more support with. |
| 4 | Nucleus | Plant’s core or heart. All plant cells contain a nucleus, a structure that stores DNA and acts as a cell's command center. |
| 4 | Poop head | Plant’s profane insult |
| 4 | Fertilizer popsicles | Fertilizer are nutrients. Without fertilizers, nature struggles to replenish the nutrients in the soil. Note to Pham: Write popsicles into lyrics. |
| 4 | Carbon-dated | Old-fashioned |
| 4 | Barley piss | Barley has been used as a source of fermentable material for beer for thousands of years and whiskey for hundreds of years. |
| 4 | Wash your mouth out with soap | A reference to cilantro tasting like soap amongst some in the population |
| 4 | Glucose is clear | Homophone of ”The coast is clear.” Glucose is a sugar with the molecular formula C₆H₁₂O₆. |
| 5 | Fungal infection | Pathogenic fungi cause plant diseases such as anthracnose, leaf spot, rust, wilt, blight, coils, scab, gall, canker, damping-off, root rot, mildew, and dieback. |
| 5 | Bees’ knees | The Cilantros probably got some literal bees knees from the black market. |
| 5 | Indoctrinating the kids | A reference to the national discourse around teaching kids LGBTQ history in schools. |
| 5 | Discounts are handouts. | Asian Americans often speak in white supremacy talking points in order to grow in affluency. |
| 5 | It is allowed under national law | Some businesses are allowed to discriminate against one’s sexuality in some states. |
| 5 | You were born this way! | Lady Gaga is an icon to the queer community. |
| 5 | Moms for Canopy | A reference to Moms for Liberty, an American conservative group that is getting schools to ban books that teaches real history like slavery, LGBTQ identities, feminism, and even STEM. |
| 5 | *Lotus* | A reference to *White Lotus*, a television show. |
| 5 | Garnish | Garnish has two meanings: to add pizzazz to something or to take the wages away from someone. |
| 5 | Modelled plant | Dirty City does not take 2D photos but 3D |
| 5 | Butcher: Someone’s got to split water into oxygen. | Plant butchers splice water molecules rather than meat. |
| 5 | Ivy League Junior High | Ivy League Junior High is the middle school that Parsley is going to go to after graduating from Flores Elementary School. |
| 5 | Cruciferous | The Broccoli family who are lame to Parsley. |
| 5 | Gravity created the Universe. | A reference to *Ellipses*, another science musical by David Quang Pham. Gravity the dog with their friend HD unintentionally created the Universe. |
| 6 | Photosynthesis | 6CO2 + 6H2O → C6H12O6 + 6O2. |
| 6 | *Rotten Tomatoes* | *Rotten Tomatoes*, the fictional critically acclaimed film, is a reference to Rotten Tomatoes, a real-life critics awards for poorly reviewed movies. |
| 6 | Raspberries | Raspberries is a reference to the Razzies, an raspberry-shaped award for the worst films. |
| 6 | ...kids’ fruits of labor, they ended up diced tomatoes | The typical arc of a movie where the central characters face the consequences in the end for their actions throughout. |
| 6 | Quit the sour face, sour grapes. No whining about wine either. | Grapes make wine. |
| 6 | ... flowers like me. | Crabapples are part of the floral family and it’s an allegory for queerness. |
| 6 | Asparagus | A plant that smells bad like many parties that get out of hand. |
| 6 | Summer solstice | June 21, the most daylight in a day per year. This hints the plot takes place between May and June. |
| 6 | Mari Juana, the security guard | Marijuana |
| 6 | Grounds rule | Parsley and Pyrus are partially aware that they live in a musical. Parsley sees theatrical elements around more than others. Pyrus states that there is “no time” for another musical number, indicating that Pham is too lazy to write it. |
| 6 | Stomata | Plant’s lungs. |
| 7 | Seed funding | Incremental funding from the public. |
| 7 | Grassroot Organizations | Public and community driven organizations. |
| 7 | Transplant | A foreigner in a new place. Wordplay for “trans” and “plant.” |
| 7 | *Soil and Green* | A reference to *Solvent Green*, a disaster movie. |
| 7 | Eggplant | A foxy species of plants and emojis. |
| 7 | Homogenous | Conformity. |
| 7 | Horseshit | A mix of profanity and alternate currency. |
| 7 | Me (Vietnamese) | “Mom” in Vietnamese (meh) |
| 7 | Đo vô hoc | “An uneducated person” in Vietnamese (Doh voh oh) |
| 7 | Con đĩ | “Bitch” in Vietnamese (con di) |
| 7 | Thang chó đe | “Son of a bitch” in Vietnamese (Than cho de) |
| 7 | How did “Parsley” slither into your mind? If you did not want me to conform to the ecosystem... | This is based on an argument that Pham and his mom had when she declared that Pham was inadequate as a Vietnamese person. Ironically, she named David Quang Pham a non-Vietnamese name in order to conform to society. |
| 7 | Anh thanh niên | “Young man” in Vietnamese (Anh thanh nien) |
| 7 | Xylems | Plant’s nerves |
| 7 | Our family’s natural garden could have shocked him out of his truth that no other therapy and their biochemicals could have! | A reference to conversion therapy with electric shock. |
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