

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S GUILD PRESENTS:

TROUPE?

DRAFT #4

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“BACHELOR PARTY”

Monique Legaspi

Characters

Gondola, Rhubarb, Elliott “Jumper” K. Bells, Griffin, Zachary, Chadley

*Curtains open on a completely dark stage. Audience hears a faint rustling.***ELLIOTT** [muffled]

Hello? Is anyone there?

*A spotlight opens over ELLIOTT. He is sitting in a chair, limbs bound, and there is a sack over his head. He does not look scared or jittery. In fact, he looks relaxed.***ELLIOTT**

Ha-ha, guys, very funny. I know what you’re doing. Kidnapping? Tying me to a chair? Putting a sack over my head? That’s Bachelor Party 101!

*Beat.***ELLIOTT**

So where are we, huh? Vegas? Reno? [slyly] Chad’s mom’s house?

*Beat.***ELLIOTT**

Hellooo? Griff? Zach? Chad? Where my boys at???

*An arm reaches out of the darkness and yanks off the sack. ELLIOTT blinks. He’s grinning--for the first few seconds, at least.***ELLIOTT**

WOOOOOOO!...

*ELLIOTT’s whoop trails off as he grows confused. He turns to look in the direction the arm came from. Another spotlight opens to reveal GONDOLA.***ELLIOTT**

Wait, who are you?

GONDOLA

Confidential.

ELLIOTTWell, then, who are *you*?

ELLIOT turns to face the other way. A third spotlight opens on RHUBARB, who is munching on a stalk (???) of rhubarb. Very loud crunching can be heard.

RHUBARB [around mouthfuls of rhubarb]
Rhubarb.

ELLIOTT
No, I know that's a rhubarb. What's your name?

RHUBARB swallows his bite of rhubarb.

RHUBARB
Rhubarb.

GONDOLA
Our client has tasked us with kidnapping you and taking you to an undisclosed location. No one knows where you are. No one can save you. You have no idea what's in store.

Strangely, ELLIOTT looks really excited right now. GONDOLA looks a little disgusted.

ELLIOTT
Hell yeah! Let's DO this!!!!!!

Solid beat.

RHUBARB [whispered, to GONDOLA]
Don't remember seeing "masochism" in his profile, Gondola...

ELLIOTT [obnoxiously loud]
GONDOLA???? THE HELL KIND OF NAME IS GONDOLA?????

GONDOLA [completely ignoring ELLIOTT]
Rhubarb, initiate Phase 1: Sensory Overstimulation.

RHUBARB nods and steps out of the spotlight.

ELLIOTT
Like--even though it's a little farmer-ish, "Rhubarb" makes sense as a stripper name because like... *[makes widening motion with hands]* But GONDOLA??? I just don't get it! But I mean, whatever floats your boat.

GONDOLA
What? No, we're not--

ELLIOTT

OH HH WAIT!!! I get it now! You're Gondola because *you* "float *my* boat"!

RHUBARB [off-stage]

All set.

GONDOLA

Oh, thank god. *[turning to ELLIOTT]* Get ready for the time of your life.

ELLIOTT [seriously]

Bro. I was *born* ready.

GONDOLA steps out of the room, and the spotlights give way to strobe lights. MO BAMBA plays at an absurd volume, heavily bass-boosted.

ELLIOTT

YOOO! This song SLAPS!!!

ELLIOT starts dancing in his chair. He gets so hyped at one point that he slips out of the rope and begins to dance really poorly, ending with a dab. GONDOLA runs back on stage.

GONDOLA

RHUBARB! KILL THE MUSIC!

RHUBARB shuts off the music and re-enters. The strobes snap back to three spotlights. ELLIOT slips his arms back in the rope.

ELLIOTT

That was so LIT! Don't think I've ever heard that remix before. Is it on Spotify?

GONDOLA

You were NOT supposed to enjoy that.

ELLIOTT

Yeah, you're right--Sicko Mode arguably slaps *way* harder--but it was still awesome!

RHUBARB crunches his rhubarb stalk. GONDOLA smacks the stalk out of his hand.

GONDOLA

Initiate Phase 2: Liquid Pseudo-Submersion.

RHUBARB nods and exits.

ELLIOTT

Don't know what the heck that is, but it sounds like you said "liquor", so I'm down.

RHUBARB comes back with a bowl of liquid.

ELLIOTT

YOOOOOOOOOOO! You got me VODKA PUNCH?!

RHUBARB shakes his head.

RHUBARB

We're gonna waterboard you.

ELLIOTT

SICK!!!!!!

GONDOLA pulls a rag out from his back pocket.

GONDOLA

I hope you're thirsty.

ELLIOTT

Hell yeah! Thirsty for a good time!

*GONDOLA steps behind ELLIOTT and puts the cloth over his eyes, yanking his head back.
RHUBARB "pours" the bowl of water over ELLIOTT's face. After a few seconds of gargled
choking, ELLIOTT wrenches his head out from under the rag.*

ELLIOTT

WOOOO! HELL YEAH! I haven't played that drinking game before, but I like it! A little watered down, but hey, you gotta do what you gotta do in this economy, right?

RHUBARB looks into the empty bowl, quietly bewildered.

RHUBARB

He drank all of it...

GONDOLA grabs the bowl out of RHUBARB's hand and throws it off-stage.

GONDOLA

Enough! Nothing seems to work on you. It's time to take more drastic measures.

ELLIOTT

Hey, if you've got any straight Svedka back there, I'd be down.

GONDOLA

Rhubarb, initiate Phase 3: Shock Therapy.

RHUBARB nods and rotates ELLIOTT's chair so he's facing GONDOLA. GONDOLA rubs his hands together rapidly and shakes them out, like he's getting ready to do something.

ELLIOTT

"Shock therapy?" / Sounds fun--

GONDOLA slaps ELLIOTT across the face.

ELLIOTT

OW!!! WHAT--

GONDOLA grabs ELLIOTT by the collar and shakes him vigorously.

GONDOLA

WHERE'D YOU HIDE THE MONEY, JUMPER? HUH???

ELLIOTT

WHAT??? WHAT MONEY???

GONDOLA

DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME! YOU STOLE THREE MILLION DOLLARS FROM OUR HQ! YOU TOOK OUT FIVE GUARDS WITH A SINGLE JUMPER CABLE!

ELLIOTT

WHAT?! I'M 23! I ONLY HAVE \$12 IN MY BANK ACCOUNT!

GONDOLA slaps him again.

GONDOLA

You think you're SOOO slick, huh?? Well, one of those guards is still alive. And he gave us your name and exactly where to find you. Next time you should finish the job.

RHUBARB

Except don't actually. Our life insurance isn't that great.

ELLIOTT [frightened, possibly blubbering]

I--I--I literally have no idea what you're talking about! What kind of strippers are you? Where are my bros??? This is the worst bachelor party ever!!!

Beat. GONDOLA and RHUBARB look at each other, then back at ELLIOTT.

GONDOLA

...Bachelor party?

ELLIOTT [sniffing]

Yeah, man. I'm getting married next week, and now I'm gonna have to watch Cameron walk down the aisle through a black eye...

RHUBARB pats ELLIOTT's shoulder sympathetically.

GONDOLA

This is ridiculous. He's clearly bluffing.

GONDOLA raises his hand for another slap.

ELLIOTT [panicked, but slowly devolves into rambling]

Nononono, I swear I'm not lying! I got down on one knee and gave her a diamond ring and everything! I mean it was actually cubic zirconia because we both just got out of college and it's been really hard looking for a job right now because no one wants to hire Art History majors / and--

GONDOLA cuts him off with a curt laugh.

GONDOLA

You know, for a world-class criminal, you might be the worst liar I've ever had to torture! I mean, the whole "broke, jobless college student who couldn't POSSIBLY have done the crime because he's an Art History major" bit? Do you know how many people have tried that on us?

RHUBARB

More than you're probably thinking.

ELLIOTT [probably straight-up crying]

Please, let me go! I just wanted to have some Smirnoff with my bros one last time before getting cuffed to the girl of my dreams!

GONDOLA

You're not leaving this place until you give us / the money--

A very loud, aggressive knocking noise can be heard backstage. Everyone looks in the direction that the knocking came from. When the knocking stops, GONDOLA turns back to ELLIOTT.

GONDOLA

Anyway. You're not / leaving--

The knocking returns, except it sounds like several people banging their fists on the door.

GONDOLA

What the hell is that?

GRIFFIN [off-stage, jubilant]
YOOOOO ELLIOTT!!!! YOU IN THERE???

ELLIOTT instantly perks up.

ELLIOTT [half-yelling]
Griff? Buddy, is that you?

GRIFFIN
NO, IT'S THE DEAN! I'VE COME TO CONFISCATE YOUR ALCOHOL!

ZACHARY [off-stage]
YO, YOU BETTER NOT BE GUZZLING ABSOLUT IN THERE WITHOUT US!

ELLIOTT
I would *never* guzzle Absolut without you, Zach! Please, you gotta get me out of here! I'm in trouble!

CHADLEY [off-stage]
OH, YOU'RE IN TROUBLE ALRIGHT!

SICKO MODE (?!!) starts playing from a mysterious, unseen source. The lights go up completely, and GRIFFIN, ZACHARY, and CHADLEY storm the stage, waving around bottles of cheap vodka and Beats By Dre speaker pills. They are probably Hooting, Hollering, and Hdabbing.

ELLIOTT [weeping joyfully]
GRIFFIN!!! ZACHARY!!! CHADLEY!!! You have no idea how happy I am to see you!!!!
Where were you???

GRIFFIN
Bro, we could ask you the same question!

ZACHARY
We were *gonna* kidnap you for your bachelor party, but when we got back to the bar, you were just--poof! Gone! We were freaking out, man—how could we tell Cam we lost you??

CHADLEY
We looked for you all over, but you weren't in the bathrooms... or the, uh... well, we kinda stopped looking after the bathrooms. But we didn't want all this Krupnik to go to waste, so we had the party without you.

ELLIOTT looks genuinely hurt by that.

ELLIOTT

You had my own bachelor party... without me?

CHADLEY

Yeah, a little bit. But it looks like you're having a blast here! *[leans in, whispers]* Who hired these weird strippers, though?

ELLIOTT

Look, man, I don't even think they're strippers. They keep saying I, like, robbed them. And then killed a bunch of guys or something?

Music stops.

GRIFFIN, ZACHARY, AND CHADLEY

WHAAAAT???

GRIFFIN *[chastising, to GONDOLA]*

My boy Elliott couldn't hurt a fly! Have you even SEEN his arms? He's got like, negative gains!

ELLIOTT

Hey!!!

GONDOLA has been rubbing his temples for a while, trying to figure out what's been going on.

GONDOLA

Okay, I admit he lacks the upper body strength—

ELLIOTT

HEY!!!

GONDOLA

—but he *has* to be our guy.

GONDOLA looks at ELLIOTT, who shakes his head.

GONDOLA

...So your name is *not* Elliot “Jumper” K. Bells? International thief and famed dual-jumper-cable wielder?

ELLIOTT

No, dude, my name is Elliott K. Balls.

CHADLEY, GRIFFIN, and CHAD snigger loudly.

GONDOLA

Huh. Guess we got the wrong guy. Rhubarb, untie him.

RHUBARB does just that. ELLIOTT stands up, rubbing his wrists.

RHUBARB

Sorry about all that.

ELLIOTT

No biggie. Everyone makes mistakes.

ELLIOTT attempts to give RHUBARB and GONDOLA fist bumps before his bros swarm him, jostling him and laughing.

CHADLEY [throwing an arm around ELLIOTT]

Hey, we still got some bottles of Grey Goose back at my place. How about a little Bachelor Party 2: Electric Boogaloo?

ELLIOTT

Oh HELL yeah!!!

The four bros cheer, chattering amongst themselves as they start to walk offstage. GONDOLA leans his elbows on the back of the now-empty chair.

GONDOLA

How the hell did we get the wrong guy?

RHUBARB

You heard him. Everyone makes mistakes.

Just before the bros make their way completely offstage:

GRIFFIN

So, when do we get our cut?

GONDOLA and RHUBARB look over at them immediately. ELLIOTT cups a hand over GRIFFIN's mouth and drags him offstage. Blackout.

END

INTERLUDE #1

BOB

Hi. I'm Bob Craig, and you're still listening to the Wheeler County Outer Space Radio Hour.

There are no Targets in outer space. However, I think Target is pretty neat, because Target has everything you could ever need. Towels... astronomy books... Tostitos Hint of Lime chips... they have it all. One time, I was feeling a little under the weather, so Nancy drove our Honda Civic down to the nearest Target to buy some ibuprofen and chicken soup to go with my Tostitos Hint of Lime chips. I love Nancy very much.

They opened a Starbucks in the Target near our house. Nancy says I can't have any of the fancy drinks, because too much sugar gives me the jitters. I just love how they make those fun little shapes in the milk.

Sometimes I wonder what it would be like if they had a Starbucks... in space. Would the coffee be good? Or would it just float around? Maybe they'll invent a coffee cup that can keep all the coffee inside. Then, they can still have the fun little milk shapes. Wow.

Thanks for listening to K-PWG 103.7. I'm Bob Craig.

“TURING TEST”

Monique Legaspi

Characters

Kickflip, Magnolia

Lights up on a mostly empty stage, save for two stools. They are placed equidistant from a thick line of tape that stretches down the middle of the stage. MAGNOLIA sits in one stool, one leg crossed over the other, foot tapping impatiently. After a few seconds, KICKFLIP steps onstage and approaches the other stool. She stares at it for a moment, then flops down on it so only her stomach is on the seat part.

MAGNOLIA [unamused]

Kickflip.

KICKFLIP [in the same serious tone]

Magnolia.

MAGNOLIA

You're late.

KICKFLIP

You're early.

MAGNOLIA

Early is better than late.

KICKFLIP

This isn't middle school. We're not gonna get penalized for ollie-ing in after the bell.

MAGNOLIAYou know as well as I do that I'm not gonna get paid if *you* screw up their data by showing up late.**KICKFLIP**As if you need the money. Even *if* you were human, you'd probably be, like, some uptight Wall Street native or something.**MAGNOLIA**

Oh, Jesus Christ, we are not doing this again.

KICKFLIP

I'm not doing anything.

MAGNOLIA

Don't play dumb. You know exactly what you're doing.

KICKFLIP flips onto her back, throwing her arms up in the air.

KICKFLIP

There's literally nothing else to do! That's the whole point of this experiment! I'm the human and I'm supposed to, like, Turing Test you and figure out if you're a super-advanced robot. And I think it's safe to say they did a pretty bad job designing your AI.

MAGNOLIA

We've been through this, Kickflip. It's the other way around. *You're* the robot, and I'm the human. I will admit they've done a good job making you so... *casual*... but we can't get on with this experiment if all we talk about is Who's The Goddamn Robot.

KICKFLIP and MAGNOLIA engage in a stare-off, eyes narrowing. Eventually KICKFLIP lets out a loud sigh and turns around once more, moving to sit on her stool normally.

KICKFLIP

Fine. Fine! You're right. No surprise there. Robots are always right.

MAGNOLIA

I just told you--[grits his teeth, exhales]--Whatever. Why don't we converse a little? I ask you some questions, and you can ask me some? Even though I'm sure you're not advanced enough to come up with any sort of question.

KICKFLIP

Wow, sexist.

MAGNOLIA

Not that! I mean, you haven't asked a single question since I first met you.

KICKFLIP [scoffs]

I'm human. I can ask questions. I can ask a question right now.

KICKFLIP stands up and walks right up to the tape line. She motions for MAGNOLIA to come closer.

MAGNOLIA

Whatever you ask, you can ask me from your seat.

KICKFLIP

I don't bite, Mag. Plus, there's literally three inches of glass between us. I couldn't bite you even if I wanted to.

MAGNOLIA sighs and stands up, walking over to the tape line with crossed arms. KICKFLIP leans in and cups a hand around her mouth.

KICKFLIP [whispers, just loud enough for the audience to hear]
Got any weed?

MAGNOLIA makes a noise of extreme disgust and covers his ears, walking away from the glass. KICKFLIP doubles over with laughter.

MAGNOLIA
Who designed you?? A thirteen-year-old??

KICKFLIP
Typical that a robot would have no sense of humor.

MAGNOLIA
And we're back to square one.

KICKFLIP
Y'know, it would be so much easier to determine who's the robot if this stupid glass wasn't here. Then I could kick your ass and see how much oil comes out.

MAGNOLIA
First off: that threat is a *complete* violation of Asimov's first law. Second: do you even know how science works? We're supposed to be in a controlled environment. That's the only way to get accurate results.

KICKFLIP
All I hear is zero-one-zero-zero-zero-one- / zero-one--

MAGNOLIA
Shut up! [massaging his temples] Now, the best way to go about this is if we assume the other is also human. So let's just ask some normal questions.

KICKFLIP
Sure, whatever.

MAGNOLIA takes his stool and drags it closer to the tape line, sitting down. A moment passes as he tries to come up with a question.

MAGNOLIA
Sooo... why do you go by Kickflip?

KICKFLIP

Uh, because I thrash. I thrash *hard*. Boardslide, fakie, 360, you name it. I pop-shuvit every single day of my life.

MAGNOLIA

Do you even own a skateboard, though?

KICKFLIP

You saying I'm a poser?

MAGNOLIA

I'm saying you might be running a "random skate lingo" generator.

KICKFLIP

Oh, yeah? What about you, then? Why do you go by Magnolia?

MAGNOLIA [embarrassed]

Well, um... Because, I...

KICKFLIP [smugly]

Uh oh! Magnolia.exe stopped working.

MAGNOLIA

I chose the name for personal reasons, that's all!

KICKFLIP

You're just saying that to cover up the fact that you chose the name at random. Because you have no passions. *Like a robot*.

MAGNOLIA

I have passions!

KICKFLIP

Like what? Debugging?

MAGNOLIA

For the last time, I'm not a robot!

KICKFLIP

Only a robot would say that.

MAGNOLIA

I'm allowed to have secrets--that doesn't make me a robot! In fact, I'd say it makes me more human than you'll ever be!

KICKFLIP

I have secrets. They're more secret than your secrets.

MAGNOLIA

Enlighten me, then. What are they?

KICKFLIP

If I told you, they wouldn't be secrets anymore.

MAGNOLIA looks like he's about to rip his hair out. Maybe he's actually ripping his hair out.

MAGNOLIA

There's no way a human could stay as calm as you!

KICKFLIP

Nah, I'm just cooler than you.

MAGNOLIA

How would you like it if I started hurling accusations at *you*, huh? I bet you'd crack under the pressure. Like--a robot would never be able to tell me their mom's name.

KICKFLIP

Linda. Next.

MAGNOLIA

Well, a robot would never be able to tell me their favorite color.

KICKFLIP

Bright orange. Next.

MAGNOLIA

A robot would never be able to... uhh... tell me who dies in Endgame!

KICKFLIP [disgusted]

Whoa, dude. Are you kidding me? Not even a robot would be that cold.

MAGNOLIA

[under his breath] Damn it. [regular volume] You leave me no choice. Time to bring out the ultimate fail-safe.

MAGNOLIA pulls a paper out from underneath his stool and unravels it, revealing it to KICKFLIP. She gasps loudly.

KICKFLIP

You didn't.

MAGNOLIA

Oh, but I did. Because a robot would NEVER be able to tell me... which one of these pictures has a fire hydrant in it!

MAGNOLIA turns the paper to the audience, revealing three sort-of-fuzzy pictures, only one of which contains a fire hydrant. After a beat, he turns it back to KICKFLIP. She stares really hard at the paper, very obviously struggling. MAGNOLIA jumps out of his chair and points at her, feeling victorious.

MAGNOLIA

HA! I KNEW IT! YOU'RE THE ROBOT!!!

KICKFLIP

Oh yeah??? I'd like to see you try to do it, then!!!

MAGNOLIA [scoffs]

Are you kidding me? It's obviously...

MAGNOLIA flips the paper over so he can look at it, but he struggles, too. He eventually just folds it back up again in frustration.

MAGNOLIA

I don't need to prove anything to you! I already know you're the robot!

KICKFLIP

No, you're the robot!

MAGNOLIA

No, you're the robot!

KICKFLIP

No, you're the robot!

MAGNOLIA

No, you're the robot!

KICKFLIP

NO, YOU'RE THE--

KICKFLIP visibly short-circuits and collapses.

MAGNOLIA

YES, YES I KNEW IT! YOU'RE THE ROBOT! YOU'RE THE--

MAGNOLIA visibly short-circuits and collapses as well.