

Adventure Cabaret

Not Committing Planetary Suicide

[TBD]

Professor Clinkscales: Earlier the question was asked “What is the most important issue in the world.” I have a definitive answer to that question. What is the most important issue in the world?

Screen: Not committing planetary suicide

Professor Clinkscales: Is there any issue more important than whether we have a habitable planet? Obviously not, but we are currently on course to destroy every ecosystem on the planet, one way or another.

And please don’t think you’re not part of it just because you recycle, or drive an EV, or give a few bucks to some eco non-profit. We are all part of this juggernaut of human evil and idiocy that is destroying all that is good in this world.

Want specifics? Let’s go!

The professor whips out some notes, which he refers to during this presentation.

Screen: Planetary overheating

Professor Clinkscales: This one’s completely obvious, and an utter disaster. We’re overheating the planet by pumping huge amounts of CO2 into the atmosphere.

At this point Lola de Campa comes out from the wings, clearly agitated, glares at the professor, grabs her head as though she has a massive headache, and storms off.

Screen: Ocean acidification

Professor Clinkscales: This one's also a "no brainer." We are disrupting all the ocean ecosystems.

Screen: Sea level rise, leading to crises of mass migration

Professor Clinkscales: Yet another "no brainer," folks! A hotter planet means the oceans expand, coastlines move inland, and hundreds of millions of people have to move.

Screen: Mass extinction of species

Lola de Campa storms onto the stage, weaves circles around the professor while making faces at him, holds up two "rabbit ears" fingers behind his head, etc., and storms off, swishing her skirt and glaring at the professor.

Professor Clinkscales: Every year, human stupidity and greed are causing more and more species to go extinct.

Screen: Dangerous loss of biodiversity

Professor Clinkscales: ...the loss of so many species means a loss in biodiversity, which leads to instability in ecosystems.

Screen: Depletion and pollution of fresh water sources

Here begins the counterpoint between the professor and Lola, who vie for the attention of the audience.

Professor Clinkscales: We are also ruining our sources of fresh water all over the planet. Fresh water is only one percent of the water on the planet, and we are polluting it.

Let's Play with the Planet

[TBD]

The professor continues to speak, even as Lola begins speaking.

Lola de Campa: Ok, enough with all the depressing stuff! I can't take this any more! We need to get back to having fun! Are you guys ready to play with the planet? Great! Bring out the planet!

Professor Clinkscapes: Do you acknowledge *horrific human stupidity* yet, or should I continue?

Screen: [slide of a young girl playing happily with the planet in a swimming pool]

Drum roll as the planet is brought out ceremoniously, and handed to Lola. Meanwhile, the professor continues with his presentation, even more vigorously.

Lola de Campa: Ok, everybody! Here's the planet! Let's all play with it!

She tosses the planet out into the audience, which begins to bat it about high in the air among themselves with great delight and enthusiasm.

Professor Clinkscapes: Wait a minute! You can't control my screen! God damn it, give me my screen back!

The professor furiously works his laser pointer. The screen returns to showing the professor's slides, but he does not actually have control of the screen, which switches back and forth between his slides and the "Play with the planet" slide, further enraging the professor in the process.

Screen: Deforestation

Professor Clinkscapes: Eighty percent of Earth's land animals and plants live in forests. Every year, humans destroy more than twenty five million acres of forest.

Screen: Fast fashion and textile waste

Professor Clinkscapes: Fast fashion often uses lower quality materials that don't last long. Unsold or outdated clothes are often discarded or incinerated, contributing to waste and pollution.

Lola de Campa: La la la...we can't hear you! *(She covers her ears, and wiggles obnoxiously.)* Plus, I like buying new clothes! *(She swishes her big skirt extravagantly.)* I always keep up with the latest fashions!

Screen: Depletion of fish populations worldwide

At about this point the other cast members begin trying to recover the planet from the audience. This may be challenging, particularly the timing of it. If the planet is not recovered by the time the professor has finished his presentation, he will simply wait for it.

Professor Clinkscapes: The depletion of fish populations is a critical issue primarily caused by overfishing. We are wreaking havoc on the natural systems of the ocean.

Lola de Campa: Don't you love playing with the planet? I sure do! Fuck the fish! I don't give a crap about some stupid fish!

Screen: Toxicants in food sources

Professor Clinkscapes: Toxicants in food sources can directly harm human health, and now these toxicants are everywhere in the environment *because of us.*

Lola de Campa: It's not toxicants in food sources that makes me sick! It's listening to you be so depressing! You make me sick, you depraved old man!

The planet has been recovered from the audience, but a switch is performed just offstage, substituting the deflated beach ball, which is handed to Lola as though it is the most evil, disgusting thing that has ever existed. Lola is visibly shocked and horrified, and her patter song fades into confusion and dismay.

Lola de Campa: dah...dee...uh oh. Oh no.

We're All Dead, and So Is Everything Else

[2:10]

Screen: [skulls, bones, dead bodies]

One by one, the other cast members come out on stage, looking distraught and forlorn, staring at the depleted planet. Occasionally they look up at the screen, look at each other, look at the audience, sickened and horrified. One of them rushes offstage, clearly about to vomit. This makes the others look like they are all going to vomit as well, and they are barely holding it in.

Professor Clinkscales: So now we're all dead, and so is everything else! Are you proud of yourselves? We all have the same blood on our hands.

Screen: [bloody hands]

Professor Clinkscales: Yes, the blood is on our hands, *our hands*, for killing everything, polluting everything, destroying everything—and all because of our egotism and greed and stupidity. All because we wanted to believe that the worst species of all—*homo* [air quotes] "*sapiens*"—was the best species of all, and the only species that matters.

We've destroyed everything, even ourselves, even our children and grandchildren. We've destroyed humanity's entire future...

...because we are just...plain...fucking...stupid.

The professor grasps his head in agony, and screams.

Horrific Human Stupidity!

Pause, as the professor weaves and bobs in complete torment, holding his head and moaning horribly.

Lola is holding the depleted planet at arm's length, between thumb and index finger. She stares at it, utterly horrified.

Lola de Campa: Did I do this? Please tell me I didn't do this. I just wanted to have fun...I just wanted everybody to have fun.

She begins to cry, still holding the depleted planet at arm's length between thumb and index finger, occasionally glancing at it.

Lola de Campa: Oh my God. I am SO SORRY!

She begins to weep, gradually bringing the depleted planet toward her, tragically embracing it as though she has murdered her own child.

The Mistress of Ceremonies strides out, with great confidence.

MC: Cheer up everyone! None of this is a problem! No problem at all! How do I know this is all not a problem? Because everybody knows we've always got Planet B!

The MC makes an extravagant gesture with her arms, top hat and cane.

Drum roll.

MC: Bring out...Planet B!

Silence. Nothing happens. The MC's extravagant gesture wilts a bit. She delivers the big gesture again, with a touch of desperation.

MC: Bring out...Planet B!

Silence again. Again, nothing happens. The MC's gesture wilts even more, and her composure begins to crack. She tries the gesture one final time, grinning painfully.

MC: Please bring out...Planet B!

Horrible silence. From the wings, the actor who fled to vomit delivers the next line, as The Talking Dog.

The Talking Dog: You humans are so stupid. Even a talking dog knows there's no Planet B. Bark bark, you idiots.

An unbelievably awkward, terrible silence ensues. The MC's forced cheerful expression breaks. She begins to cry, then sob. She loses control, and drops her precious top hat, then drops her cane.

MC: Professor, you must know what to do. I mean, you're a professor and everything.

The professor is barely recovering from his torment.

Professor Clinkscapes: *(pitifully)* I wish I could tell you, but all I do is study stupidity. I don't really have any answers.

The Mistress of Ceremonies is suddenly enraged.

MC: What? You have NO ANSWERS?! FUCK YOU! Just absolutely fucking FUCK YOU!

The Mistress of Ceremonies rushes toward the professor in a blind fury, and raises her arm to strike him as hard she can in the face. He cowers before the incoming blow, and she barely stops herself, slowly lowering her arm.

MC: Oh my God. Oh my God. Professor, I am so sorry.

The Mistress of Ceremonies slowly and tenderly touches the professor's cheek, kisses the professor on the cheek, then moves away, looking into his face, holding her hand on his cheek until it is out of reach.

Lola, still holding the planet, goes slowly to the professor, and embraces him as they both cry. She is holding the planet between them. She lets the planet go, and it falls to the floor between them as they continue their tender, sad embrace.