

Tallahassee
Ca. 2045

Francis Bass



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Characters

GABBY
17-18. Female. Black.

JAMIE
17-18. Latinx.

OBAMA
17-18. Non-white.

EVAN
17-18. Male.

CHARLIE
17-18.

TALIA
17-18. Latina.

ERICA
17-18. Female.

BB
17-18. Latina.

PAOLA
16-17. Latina.

ADULT
An adult.

Setting

Tallahassee, Florida, 2044-2045.

Playwright's Notes

GENDER. Jamie, Charlie, and Obama are non-binary—that is, the *characters* do not identify as either gender. The pronouns they use are their first initials—so Charlie's pronouns are C, C, C's, C's self, rather than he/him/his/himself or she/her/hers/herself or they/them/theirs/themselves. They can be cast with actors of any or no gender, but the pronouns in the script should not be changed. What I'm trying to make clear here is that

these letter pronouns are an element of character and world-building, not a script device used as a placeholder to be switched out after casting.

LANGUAGE. Every character in this play, to some extent, uses Spanish words and phrases as part of their vernacular. These instances of Spanish are italicized in the script for ease of reading, not to denote emphasis or stress. The pronunciation should always be competent, though not necessarily on par with a Spanish-speaker—with the exception of BB, Jamie, and Paola, who can speak Spanish fluently. Regardless, all of these characters speak Spanish to varying extents, and are heavily exposed to it. They should all get the consonant and vowel sounds right, if not the exact affectation and cadence. And by “right” I mean consistent with any existent Spanish accent, preferably of Central American origin.

GLASSES. All the characters in this play own and use glasses, also known as “Glass”—augmented reality devices that perform all the functions that cell phones do for us now, and more. These devices project images and text onto the lenses of the glasses, giving the wearer the illusion that they are surrounded by images and text, or that there is a news story written on their hand, or that they are using their finger to draw something on a piece of paper. None of this needs to be represented on stage in any way, though it may be.

SLANG/SPANISH GLOSSARY.

Cash — Cool, dope

Money — Awesome, cool

In toto — Totally

Gummy — Loser, prick, jackass

Up — Cool, hip

Doubling — Emphasis (i.e. cash cash, great great)

Como — Like

De claro/claro — Of course, clearly

Por supuesto — Of course, sure

De verdad — Really, in truth

Igual — Whatever, same difference

-ísimo — Emphasis (i.e. monísimo, funnísimo)

Quiero decir — I mean

Mira — Look

No pasa nada — No problem, it's fine

ACT ONE

Set: Chairs and tables. Some protester's signs may be propped up on the periphery, or far upstage, reading things like "It's hot out here" or "No more fucking windmills."

INTERSTITIAL ONE

JAMIE enters. J, as well as all the cast, wears large glasses, flip flops or sandals, and very short clothing—short shorts, tank tops, crop tops, short skirts, sports bras—it's hot out. J addresses the audience.

JAMIE

I cried for hours. I'm on Kaddy, I didn't know it was possible to cry, but ... *dios mío*. In the end, we didn't matter at all. No one understood.

Pause.

It was outside the old capitol, so there's public domain recordings of it all. I've been perusing those recordings, going back through them, looking over them, trying to figure it out—and going back even further, thinking about the way we were before May 30th.

Pause.

Sí, de claro, I'm one of the people who has the luxury of being able to figure things out. *Quiero decir*, I'm not one of these creeps in Switzerland or Minnesota or Moscow watching the world drown and taking my sweet time, "oh, how did it all go wrong ... well, you know, for years the Pentagon advised that greater safeguards be built, in case of such a ..." I'm more affected by it than them, I have friends, family, with flooded houses, or who have been laid off, I'm not a *complete* vampire wasting away hours staring into the past because I have the privilege of being able to do that ... but it's summer. Gimme a break. I'll start volunteering with Erica in a few days or something, just ... for now, I want to go back through it. At the time, I was trying to understand what was going on, trying to grasp our narrative, our story, I was trying to write my memoir or my exposé or the script to the documentary or something, as it was happening, but of course that's impossible—the more you try to build narrative the less you're looking at the real thing, and the less you're looking at the real thing the less material you have to build narrative ... but hindsight, I'm hoping, will help. And remembering not just the protest, but the formation of it, the conflicts already coming between us before May 30th.

Pause.

I also want to formulate this into something that can represent us, to you, who don't really think about us, at all. And obviously it's too late, anyway, so this isn't really about sending you a political message—what would that message even be? Secession? Veganism? Socialism? Republican? Democrat? It's all a mess. Maybe, we can figure that out together. That was always the big question during the protest, what is our *actual* message, maybe I'll have some idea of it at the end of this.

Beat.

Or maybe it really meant nothing.

Beat. Enter GABBY and CHARLIE.

Igual. We'll start just a few days before the beginning of our senior year in high school. On 13 August 2044, this was the news on Florida public radio.

GABBY, JAMIE, and CHARLIE seat themselves at a table, with GABBY on one side and CHARLIE and JAMIE on the other.

GABBY

As News Anchor.

Governor Fuentes has accepted federal funding for several new solar power plants in South Florida. Although Fuentes had earlier chafed at this federal project to expand solar infrastructure in coastal states, now that the bill has passed he's expressed optimism over the development. Fuentes has had a complicated relationship with the federal government, turning down billions in Medicare funding last year, while working very closely with FEMA and the USRA to recover from two years with devastating hurricane seasons. Joining me now is Margaret Dixon from the Miami Herald, and José Silva from the New Coast Institute. Welcome.

JAMIE

As Dixon.

Good to be here.

CHARLIE

As Silva.

Glad to be here.

GABBY

So, help us make sense of this move by Governor Fuentes, who criticized the Green Deal programs of the Democratic Party numerous times during his campaign.

JAMIE

Well Clarissa, Fuentes is in a difficult position. Really, what we've been seeing throughout his governance is an attempt to play to both sides of the aisle. He has to please the people living in coastal areas, who are largely dependent on federal reconstruction jobs, he has to please the older—the *significant* portion of Millennials living in Florida, who remember what the debt crisis was like, and worry about the federal government going down that path again—and he has had to deal with two of the worst hurricane seasons in decades.

GABBY

And is it working?

CHARLIE

No. The—that's absolutely right, he does have many different demographic groups to please, but he does not have to pander to *all* of them, and we're seeing that him trying to do so is not working out. The only reason his approval rating hasn't fallen any lower than it already has is that he handled Nolan and Diego so well. But otherwise, he has managed to make enemies in every quarter, including his own party.

GABBY

Do you think accepting this funding was a mistake?

CHARLIE

No. Rejecting Medicare funding, and allowing the state to bear a cut of less educational funding for not enforcing FESA standards, I think those were really the mistakes.

JAMIE

Well, regardless, the problem really is consistency of message, and Fuentes has struggled to establish that, probably because he is a bit shaken by how narrowly he beat out Graham. On the campaign trail, he really toed the Republican line, you could've replaced him with any southeast governor and not seen a difference—but after winning by less than a hundred thousand votes, he's had to re-assess his message.

SCENE ONE

GABBY's house. Exit CHARLIE. Enter PAOLA.

JAMIE

He's such a fuckin' gummy. Pick one, man!

GABBY

He just wants everyone to like him.

JAMIE

He's a governor, not a substitute teacher.

GABBY

Well, he put in a carbon tax, and he made it through Diego and Nolan without any major missteps. He can flip flop on all the other stuff for the next two years, I don't care.

JAMIE

And he expanded Bright Futures to cover study drugs.

GABBY

Yeah, that didn't hurt either.

A knock. GABBY exits to go to the door.

JAMIE

Qué piensas, Paola?

PAOLA

About Fuentes?

Sí.

JAMIE

You guys are right.

PAOLA

But we said different things.

JAMIE

So?

PAOLA

Off.
Hey! Come in!

GABBY

He's a flip flopper. I'll still vote for him in a few years.

PAOLA

If he makes it out of the primary.

JAMIE

Enter GABBY, OBAMA, and ERICA.

OBAMA
I love how they've tried to integrate the busses with AR overlays. Like you'll walk in and see *como* fifty "error, asset could not load" files hanging out around the ceiling. Implementing Glass integration in public transportation? Check. Actually bothering to support it, with like the tiniest budget for bandwidth? Naw, fuck that.

Hey, Obama.

JAMIE

Hola, todos.

OBAMA

O and J hug.

Jamie! Tip!
They hug.

ERICA

It's *greatísimo* to see you! Sorry I didn't hang out with you before I left, I forgot how calendars worked and in toto didn't realize I'd be leaving just a few weeks after school got out.

Está bien, Erica, no pasa nada.

JAMIE

OBAMA

Are the others meeting us at the rally, or are we waiting for someone else?

GABBY

Yeah, Charlie texted me, they're all there.

OBAMA

Who all is it?

GABBY

Charlie, Evan, BB and Talia.

OBAMA

Cash. Let's go then.

JAMIE

We're waiting on cookies to finish baking.

OBAMA

Dios mío. What do y'all have against store bought?

ERICA

What kind are they?

JAMIE

There's nothing wrong / with store bought, we just like baking.

PAOLA

To ERICA.
Peanut butter.

OBAMA

I'm pretty sure baking cookies has a worse CFW rating than just buying them.

GABBY

I'm pretty sure that's not true.

JAMIE

Tapping on J's hand, asking J's hand.
Is it?

ADULT

As Elijah, the system AI of all Glass products.
No.

JAMIE

Examining information projected onto J's palm.

Yeah, assuming you're using the most low-impact ingredients—which we are—and you're buying from a low-impact distributor, they're basically the same.

OBAMA

Well they have a worse CFW rating than not eating them.

JAMIE

Well then why don't we all just die, Obama?

OBAMA

That's the way the world's going, if y'all keep baking cookies. Your chocolate chip cookies will be the death of us all.

PAOLA

Peanut butter.

JAMIE

So you won't eat any, then?

Oven timer goes off. As OBAMA speaks, PAOLA and GABBY exit to take the cookies out and package them.

OBAMA

Mira, I think we all learned from many a brain genius that insisted on eating meat when its footprint was still massive, there's no reason to refuse to eat something when it's already been made, right? The cookie cow has already been slaughtered, so I might as well eat the product, right?

JAMIE

That's a straw man. I don't think that's why people ate animal.

ERICA

It was because it was easy, and cheap, and the consequences didn't affect them. It wasn't anything logical, it was just convenience.

JAMIE

Sí, and they didn't have CFW ratings or mandatory labels.

ERICA

And people didn't start eating factory meat until it actually tasted good, and was, *como*, cheaper than the real stuff.

JAMIE

Well, *sí*, it was the same decision we're making about eating cookies now. We could all just eat bread and beans and vitamins and have, some, zero environmental impact—

OBAMA

Or we could all off ourselves—*that's* zero environmental impact! Elijah, what's the CFW rating for suicide?

ADULT

No results found.

GABBY and PAOLA enter, PAOLA carrying a cloth bag with a tin of cookies in it.

GABBY

Vamos!

They leave the house and board a bus.

OBAMA

Where is it? It's at Cascades, no?

GABBY

The rally? Yeah.

OBAMA

Who organized it?

GABBY

Mmm, PYR I think.

OBAMA

Always good to have old folks organizing a youth rally.

GABBY

That's how they all are.

OBAMA

Sí, but PYR is especially old. Usually it's groups of college kids or grad students.

GABBY

Igual. I wanted to go to a protest, everyone else wanted to go to a protest, we're going to a protest.

JAMIE

Yeah, like you even care, Obama. If I told you this was a free trade rally, would you care?

OBAMA

Better question: would anyone?

ADULT

As Bus Driver.

Tennessee and Franklin!

GABBY

Looking out the window, waving to their high school.
Hi, high school. We don't have to see you for another two days.

JAMIE

Dios mío, it's that soon, isn't it?

ERICA

You were right about the overlays, Obama.

OBAMA

Huh? Yeah, they're trash, no?

Beat.

ERICA

How was your summer, Paola?

PAOLA

Oh. Pretty good. I didn't go anywhere, just stayed here and worked.

JAMIE

And started developing an AI, right?

PAOLA

Did develop a creative AI. Yeah.

ERICA

That's money!

PAOLA

Just a simple one.

ADULT

Cascades Park!

This is their stop. They get off. A few people in the audience hold up signs which say things like "No Education Without Representation," "Lower the Voting Age," "I'm a Person," and "Age is Just a Number." GABBY, ERICA, JAMIE, OBAMA, and PAOLA make their way out into the house, and CHARLIE, EVAN, TALIA, and BB enter, talking amongst themselves.

GABBY

It'd be fun to organize one of these.

ERICA

A protest?

GABBY

Yeah, a youth rally. Since they're always put on by people old enough to vote anyway, it'd be cash to have one lead by actual youth, no?

OBAMA

So where are they?

JAMIE

I think Charlie said they're on the hill by the amphitheater.

OBAMA

Oh, I see. One of them put up a beacon.

JAMIE

Oh, sí. It's the—

Chuckling.

It's the animated one of BB jumping up and down waving?

OBAMA

Yeah, that's it.

JAMIE

There's so much shit on my overlay, I didn't see it at first.

OBAMA

Affecting a snooty voice.

God, Jamie, you just live in a digital world, don't you? Can you even see the real world through your Glass?

JAMIE

I would punch you, but you're hidden somewhere behind AJ and Politico.

CHARLIE and those on stage catch sight of the others.

CHARLIE

Hey!

As the people in the house reach the stage.

GABBY

Hey! *Qué tal!*

She and CHARLIE hug. Throughout the following, GABBY hugs EVAN and TALIA, JAMIE hugs CHARLIE and EVAN, and ERICA hugs CHARLIE, EVAN,

and TALIA. They may exchange greetings as they do so, i.e. “hey,” “Evan!,” “hola,” etc.

BB

Qué pasa?

GABBY

It feels like forever since we’ve had this many people together.

CHARLIE

I blame *Mermaid*.

OBAMA

Yeah, Gabby, if you wanted to hang out with us you could’ve just devoted every waking hour to rehearsing a musical all summer, *Jesús*.

ERICA

Oh my god, I’m so *sorrísimo* I missed it, you guys, I really really wanted to see it.

CHARLIE

You can buy a recording of it. You *should* buy a recording of it, because that’ll be the entire budget for next year’s musical.

PAOLA sits down aside from the group, JAMIE sits down with her. As the conversation continues, she opens the tin of cookies, eats one, and then sets the bag and the cookies down beside her.

ERICA

I will, I will.

She taps on her palm to make a reminder for herself.

BB

It was so good—I went and saw it twice, it was great great.

OBAMA

It was pretty good.

EVAN

It was alright.

CHARLIE

It was *monísimo* is what it was! Obama was Sebastian.

ERICA

I saw the pictures! I can’t wait to watch it.

BB

Yeah, I'd never seen Obama smile as hard as O was doing in that picture, *como*, the one you put on WeBo, you were like:

Does a smile that looks painful.

PAOLA

Having eaten one.

Hey there's cookies here, for whoever wants them.

BB

Cash!

The rest continue to talk about the musical as BB goes to get a cookie.

Are these homemade?

PAOLA

Sí.

BB

Taking one.

Money! You guys always make, your, the stuff you bake is always so good.

JAMIE

That's the main way Gabby and I get people to join TSMUN.

Pronounced TUSS-mun.

Baked goods.

BB

She sits down beside JAMIE.

Yeah, they're great great. So what've you guys been up to?

JAMIE

Reporting. Research.

PAOLA

Working.

JAMIE

About PAOLA.

And programming.

BB

Oh, yeah, how's that? How's programming?

PAOLA

It's ... *bien*?

BB

You do, *como*, creative AIs, no?

PAOLA

Sí.

BB

What, for, so *como*, what's one you've been working on?

PAOLA

Uh, a comic. A comic strip one.

BB

Qué bien! That's, is there a place I could, uh, see them? The comics? Or the AI? Or something.

PAOLA

Well I'm still tweaking it. I haven't published it anywhere.

JAMIE

You should though—or just publish some of the comics, some of them are really funny.

BB

That sounds so cash, if you, you should send me some—or don't, if you don't want to, but, I'd love to see them.

PAOLA

The AI's not good enough yet. Maybe if I get it working better.

JAMIE

We could in toto publish them in the school paper ...

PAOLA

Mmmmmm, no.

TALIA comes over to get a cookie.

BB

That stuff is just magic to me, I'm so dumb with computers, I couldn't even—*como* I wouldn't even ...

TALIA

Getting a cookie.

Don't say that.

BB

What? Don't say—

TALIA

“Dumb.” Don’t say that.

JAMIE

Hey, Talia.

TALIA

Hey, J.

BB

Wait, because it’s elitist? But I said it about myself.

TALIA

I wouldn’t mind it, but other people would.

BB

Really? I didn’t—

TALIA

Safer just to not say it.

BB

Sí. That’s probably right. You’re right. I’ll try not to, but, I might, you know, forget. I don’t really—

TALIA

Thanks for the cookies, y’all.

JAMIE

Por supuesto! Enjoy!

TALIA goes back to the other conversation. J gets a cookie.
So what have you been up to, BB?

BB

Oh, nothing cash like you guys. Just doing some work, trying to find scholarships for study drugs.

JAMIE

You have any idea what you’re doing after high school?

BB

Community college, then probably FSU. But definitely community college first.

JAMIE

What would you—

Inexplicably, a chant of “Lo-wer it! Lo-wer it!” starts up, and moves through the gathered protesters like a wave. All but PAOLA and OBAMA join in when it reaches them.

OBAMA

What was the deal there? Why’d everyone just ...

JAMIE

A drone from Channel 7 flew over.

OBAMA

Ah.

GABBY

Hey, Jamie, BB, Paola—what would y’all think of organizing a youth rally?

JAMIE

Of *us* organizing a youth rally?

GABBY

Well, mainly me, but I’d need some help from all of you guys.

JAMIE

That’d be fun. We could probably get a lot of Leon people to go, I don’t know about anyone from other high schools.

BB

Yeah, that’d be cash cash! It’d actually be, *como*, entirely non-adults.

GABBY

Well, depending on when we do it. But, yeah, mostly non-adults—at least, no one over eighteen.

BB

Yes, yes, in toto, I would so help you with this, that’d be money!

GABBY

Well I don’t know if I’m gonna do it, I’m just thinking about it now. I think it’d be nice though.

The same chant starts again. Some of them look up to spot any news drones, but there are none.

ERICA

Pointing.

Oh! They’re starting—the speakers.

GABBY

We should move closer so we can actually hear them.

OBAMA

We should move closer so we can hear them and make snide comments.

BB

But we were sitting and ... no? Ok. *Vamos.*

BB and PAOLA and JAMIE get up. All but JAMIE, PAOLA, and CHARLIE exit.

INTERSTITIAL TWO

JAMIE

That was when the idea for the rally first came into Gabby's head, but it wasn't until 8 November 2044 that we decided to do it. Election night. Incumbent Democrat Jonathan Maddox faces Republican Senator David Torres. During a slow moment before the west coast states start reporting, PBS replays footage from the third debate.

TALIA and CHARLIE stand behind podiums, as Torres and Maddox respectively. JAMIE, as Debate Moderator, faces them.

JAMIE

Senator, in an interview during the primaries you defended Former President Jane Waters, saying the country would be in a, quote, "drastically better position if she had remained in office."

TALIA

Absolutely.

JAMIE

Please expand on that.

TALIA

Absolutely. I think, the evidence is truly night and day, when you look at, economically, the state that our country is in now versus how it was under President Waters. Deficits are up, more jobs are either leaving this country, or being destroyed by environmentally hazardous automated labor, inflation has increased to four percent—and, really, the biggest difference is that people are scared now. I've talked to people all over the country, and they are worried that their government is getting / out of control,

JAMIE

Overlapping.
Mr. President—

TALIA

they're worried there might be another big bust. I had my disagreements with President Waters over the course of her term, but I can say without question, we would be much better off now if she had remained in office.

JAMIE

Mr. President your response.

CHARLIE

Well I think the record really speaks for itself, and there's a *reason* she won by such a narrow margin in 2040, and there's a *reason* the American people did not want her as president for another term, and there's a reason that so many of your colleagues wanted to distance themselves from her during the primaries. Her economic policies were rigid, draconian carry-overs from more than a decade ago, which stifled prosperity for workers and small business owners. Her diplomatic efforts were meek—they didn't show the kind of confidence, and strength that America should have—and her attempt to reintroduce the carbon tax, as a system of federal grants, was disastrous.

TALIA

What I am talking about—

CHARLIE

The American people knew that this country needed real change, and they voted against her.

TALIA

What I am talking about is the economy. If you look at economic measures, if you look at inflation, if you look at wage growth, if you look at reports published on financial security, you cannot look at that and say we are better off now than we were four years ago.

CHARLIE

The problem is, and I understand, senator, that your job is more limited in scope than mine, but the problem is that zeroing in on a few specific data points does not give you the full picture. My job is not to fiddle with these arbitrary statistics, my job is to look at everything—security, health care, the environment, education, jobs, trade—all of that, and ask myself, will this help people in the long term? Will this bill be something that doesn't just help out one little group, but helps out everybody?

SCENE TWO

Living room of GABBY's house. Enter GABBY, OBAMA, ERICA, and PAOLA, exit TALIA.

GABBY

Everybody except for everyone living in coastal regions, everyone with working class jobs, everyone living in the Malay archipelago, everyone who doesn't have access to stims, everyone who wasn't born into wealth ...

ERICA

I wish they'd stop playing that clip.

JAMIE, OBAMA, ERICA, and GABBY sit together in GABBY's living room, watching election coverage. Although they are watching video of it on a TV, they may also frequently look down to tap on their hands and check other news feeds. OBAMA, JAMIE, and GABBY are on a couch, ERICA is in a chair beside them. PAOLA and CHARLIE sit off to the sides, by themselves, in a video chat with the others, also watching election coverage. They are actually in their respective homes. PAOLA is doing Calculus homework, CHARLIE is making a half-hearted attempt at a college application essay.

OBAMA

Yeah, it's in toto difficult to understand what Torres is saying with all that foot in his mouth.

ERICA

Wha—he—tip, he's right, Waters was great.

OBAMA

But people hated her. She has the charisma of a dead mouse.

ERICA

So what? She's money—she did so much to protect lower class jobs.

OBAMA

Erica, I'm not arguing policy, I'm arguing politics. Talking about the boring old drip that made everyone eat their vegetables, and who shit the bed in Jakarta, and then *doubling down* on talking about them, is a bad idea. Say "but the economy" all you want, it's a bad look.

CHARLIE

Also, plenty of people don't think she did a good job with the economy.

OBAMA

About CHARLIE.

Yeah, like Keynes over here.

GABBY

How's the essay going, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Oh, god. Right. Slow.

GABBY

Are we distracting you?

CHARLIE

I'm going to be distracted no matter what. My mom and sister are screaming every time they call a state for Maddox.

GABBY

Ha! Like it's a football game?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JAMIE

As Missouri is called for Maddox.
Aw shit.

CHARLIE

Yep, there they go.

ERICA

Isn't Missouri, *como*, a bellwether state?

JAMIE

I don't think so.

CHARLIE

I thought it was a city in Missouri.

OBAMA

Tapping on O's hand.
Elijah?

ADULT

As Elijah.
The Missouri bellwether was a political phenomenon in which the state of Missouri voted for the winner in all but one U.S. Presidential election from 1904 to 2004.

JAMIE

So, good news, it's not over yet.

ERICA

Why do people say that then? I'd swear I've heard that, that it always predicts the winner.

OBAMA

Cause people don't check with Elijah cause they trust their wetware to be smarter than a computer.

ERICA

"Wetware"?

PAOLA

Brain.

ERICA

Huh?

PAOLA

Your brain. Or other organic matter.

GABBY

Looking at her hand.

Politico just called Oregon and Washington for Maddox.

JAMIE

No surprises.

OBAMA

To Oregon and Washington.

Have fun dealing with China when Maddox goes to war with them, gummies.

ERICA

You don't actually—no, you're just—god, never mind.

OBAMA

I'm dead serious. Can't you tell from how everything I say is one hundred percent the truth.

The video feed they're watching calls Oregon and Washington.

CHARLIE

And cue screaming.

A long pause. Things are not going well.

GABBY

Mmmm. So is this it?

ERICA

Well there's still all the west coast, and Alaska and—

GABBY

Jamie, is this ... *como*, can we assume it's going to be Maddox?

JAMIE

No. California's a big mess, we don't know what it's gonna do. If we ...

J starts tapping on J's hand, manipulating an electoral map.

If we assume that Florida goes Republican, Arizona Nevada Democrat, Alaska Hawaii Republican, Virginia ... leave Virginia alone, California would swing it either way.

Excited, the only person having fun right now.

Ooh, but then if we don't assume Florida, and we assume California either way, then Florida would swing it.

OBAMA

What if McIntosh takes it all?

JAMIE

Literally impossible right now.

OBAMA

What if it's a tie?

JAMIE

Um, for that to happen ... wait, let me see ...

J becomes very engaged in trying to work out a realistic scenario where Maddox and Torres could tie.

CHARLIE

Hey, at least all my family will still have jobs if Maddox wins.

GABBY

Is that really—would it really be likely that they'd lose their jobs, if Torres won? I'm not challenging you, I'm genuinely curious.

CHARLIE

Well I don't know. But they definitely have jobs because of the Democratic Party, not the Republicans. They were worried when Fuentes was elected, that he might cut GECO contracts, but that ended up ...

JAMIE

Sí, Torres wouldn't be as flip-floppy as Fuentes.

ERICA

Won't be.

OBAMA

Wouldn't.

ERICA

Stay positive.

CHARLIE

I was being perfectly positive.

ERICA

Yeah, but—no, I know, Charlie, sorry, I don't mean to be ugly, I just mean in general, it'd be positive—for most people, obviously I know your family depends on Green Deal stuff, / but for young people and for most poor people and for the climate in general ...

CHARLIE

I know I know I know, *no pasa nada*, I'm rooting for Torres. If we were old enough, I would've voted for him. But the part of me that knows why I have food to eat and why my sister and my cousins, and a lot of my friends have food to eat, is going to be alright with Maddox winning.

JAMIE

Florida went Republican.

ERICA

Money!

OBAMA

Qué bien!

GABBY

Who called it?

JAMIE

Me. I'm calling it. It's just precincts in South Florida that haven't reported, and they're definitely going Republican.

ERICA

That's so up. How does that affect the states now, *como*, which states have to vote for who?

JAMIE

It doesn't. Cause I was assuming Florida would go Republican anyway.

ERICA

Oh. So ...

Pause as Arizona and New Mexico are called for the Democrats.

GABBY

Ugh. What is that, Democrats are twelve points from winning now?

JAMIE

Sí. And so far, California is reporting pretty blue.

Pause. Does it seriously take this long to count votes?

OBAMA

Ms. Smirnoff's gonna have a conniption tomorrow.

ERICA

What? Why?

OBAMA

Cause she's a dyed in the wool Republican. Every other word out of her / mouth is debt crisis.

ERICA

I know, but we don't know that Maddox is gonna win yet, do we?

Pause. Don't we?

GABBY

Have you guys started that *US v. Ivanovich* essay yet?

JAMIE

I've glanced at it.

ERICA

Yeah I've just done some research but I have no idea what I'm going to say about it.

PAOLA

Sí.

JAMIE

How much have you done Paola?

PAOLA

I've written a page.

JAMIE

Qué bien.

OBAMA

You should explain it to us at some point.

PAOLA

Just read the dissenting opinion and the majority opinion. They spell everything out.

OBAMA

Reading. Hmm. Reading. Never heard of it.
California is called for Maddox.
Fuck me!

Pause as they all react, decompress. GABBY begins tapping at her hand.

CHARLIE

That's it, then right. It's over?

OBAMA begins digging in O's pockets.

JAMIE

Yeah, that's it. Pretty much.

OBAMA

The fun thing about spritz,
O takes a nasal spray out of O's pocket.
is that you can hit it to celebrate, or to cheer you up.
O takes a short spray into O's nostril.
So the only way I wouldn't've gotten some use out of it is if McIntosh had won.
O offers it to the rest.
You guys want some?

CHARLIE

As JAMIE takes the spray.
Agh, you're making me wish I was there. I would in toto hit some spritz right now.

JAMIE offers it to the others. GABBY shakes her head, still focusing intently on her hand.

ERICA

No, no thanks.

JAMIE hands it back to OBAMA.

JAMIE

On the bright side, the Everglades referendum passed.

OBAMA

Qué genial.
O takes another spray.

ERICA

You should probably be more discreet with that.

OBAMA

It's legal.

ERICA

Not for minors. And even if it were—

GABBY

My parents wouldn't care.

OBAMA

I have bioengineered parasites living in me to help with memory retention. If I'm old enough for that shit I'm old enough for some spritz.

O considers taking another spray, but decides to hold off for a bit. O stands up.
I'm gonna get some water. Y'all want anything?

ERICA

No.

JAMIE shakes J's head. They don't really look at O. They just look at the screen, which is still spewing out information. OBAMA exits. Pause.

GABBY

So. Youth rally. A protest. Y'all want to do it?

JAMIE

Sí! Sí, in toto!

ERICA

Yes, yes, we have to. Absolutely, I am with you.

CHARLIE

I'm up.

PAOLA

Sí.

GABBY

Good. That's what we'll do.

All exit except JAMIE and OBAMA.

INTERSTITIAL THREE

JAMIE

14 November 2044. The NESAs—National Education Standardization Act—passes the House, with a vote of 227-206. It is essentially what the Democrats wanted FESA to be six years ago, but had to compromise to get it passed. Congresswoman Deyo, Democrat Connecticut, a co-author of the bill, has this to say about it.

OBAMA

As Congresswoman Deyo.

We hope that our colleagues in the senate will review the bill thoroughly and promptly, so that it may be signed into law as soon as possible. Every day that goes by is another day that state education systems are failing students—neglecting those students who learn at a different pace, and forcing them to struggle along without the personal attention they need, while at the same time, not giving children who learn at a faster pace a chance to challenge themselves.

JAMIE

The senate passes it two weeks later, and Maddox signs it into law the same day.

SCENE THREE

Enter PAOLA, ERICA, and GABBY. The plaza outside the old capitol building. A protest against a district court ruling, which found no evidence of former Governor Patricia Graham being bribed by GECO. Signs rise up throughout the house reading things like “GG No Re,” “Fire CEO Graham,” and “I didn’t vote for GECO.”

JAMIE

Not that it’s going to affect *our* class of students or anything. Implementation only begins next year.

OBAMA

Why’s it such a boogeyman? It’s just an education bill.

JAMIE

It creates tracks for students, based on test scores.

OBAMA

Don’t we have that already?

JAMIE

Yes, but people can choose a lower or higher track if they want. They’re just usually advised not to.

OBAMA

Sí sí sí, get to the part where it kills babies.

JAMIE

You don't see the problem with dividing people into separate groups, based on something they can't control?

OBAMA

No. I would love to kick out all the ...

JAMIE

All the what? All the i-words?

OBAMA

Dios mío, I didn't say that, Jamie. I'd probably be pretty slow myself if my parents weren't rich enough to afford colonies, never mind stims.

JAMIE

Well, it sounded like you were about to say something elitist.

OBAMA

Mira, don't you ever get annoyed with students slowing down the process because they aren't paying attention, or they aren't doing the homework?

JAMIE

It's de facto segregation, Obama. All the people who can't afford study drugs would be separated into one group, all the people who can would be put in the other.

GABBY enters.

And in theory, these groups would be separate but equal—but that never works out.

ERICA

It would also kind of pressure people, even more than they already are, into using study drugs.

OBAMA

And what's wrong with that?

ERICA

Well just that they're not for everybody.

GABBY

Did Charlie and Evan not come?

OBAMA

They're spending the day together—it's their anniversary or something.

GABBY

Oh. Aww, that's sweet.

JAMIE

One-year-anniversary? Didn't they break-up at some point though?

OBAMA

Whatever. Did you need them here Gabby?

GABBY

No, no, it's fine. Sorry to interrupt whatever y'all were talking about.

JAMIE

No pasa nada. Just the education bill.

OBAMA

I remain unconvinced of how apocalyptically horrible it is.

ERICA

But, O, it's just feeding into this Intelligence Revolution idea of being the smartest there is, through use of drugs and colonies.

GABBY

Sí. Which effectively means through use of money.

ERICA

Well, yes, and even beyond that, it's ugly to think of parents putting their kids on stims just to get them into the better track, you know?

GABBY

Well, that's not really ... that's happening regardless / and I don't see what the issue with that really is.

ERICA

But this wouldn't *help* the problem.

OBAMA

What problem?

ERICA

To OBAMA.

People using stims, thinking of them as this one-size-fits-all thing.

JAMIE

To GABBY

How's the networking going?

OBAMA

To ERICA.

Aren't they? Except for, *como*, the one percent of the population with allergies—

GABBY

Ignoring JAMIE, returning to the conversation with ERICA.
Yeah, Erica, I don't see how that's a problem. We're all—

ERICA

We don't even know what these drugs do, long term. We're the first generation to use them, we shouldn't be ingraining it in our legislation without at first—

GABBY

Erica, the only—the only thing that *isn't* one-size-fits-all about study drugs is that they don't fit the poor, because they're expensive. That's a, *privilegedísimo* argument, the argument that study drugs are dangerous, it's a privilege to be able to worry about the costs of *having* these drugs, but for everyone else, the—when Fuentes was pushing through the bill for the stim scholarships, that was an argument that people were throwing against it—that they were dangerous. And if people had *listened* to that argument, straight up, I wouldn't be able to pay for stims, and I probably wouldn't be where I am now.

ERICA

Well, I know th—I know, I wouldn't want to take away scholarships, I'm just saying, we don't know what will happen years down the line, or if suddenly we have to go off them, and—

GABBY

I'm saying, *you're* on them, right? So why are you arguing about this?

ERICA

Well, I've been thinking about going off them. Going natural, before college.

Pause.

GABBY

Sorry. *Quiero decir*, I'm not sorry about my opinion on this, but, I'm sorry for making an assumption about you, and I'm sorry if it seemed like I was judging you.

ERICA

That's fine.

Pause.

JAMIE

So, how's networking going?

GABBY

It's ... been alright.

OBAMA

I haven't seen many young people here. Juridical mismanagement just doesn't draw out the youngsters, no?

GABBY

Yeah there aren't too many, but I also talked to the organizers of this event, to get some pointers on what works for them. They've been helpful.

JAMIE

Do you need our help with anything?

GABBY

Uh ... no, no, unless you want to just follow me around meeting up with all the people I wanted to meet up with here. Sorry, I thought there'd be more going on at this protest, but, it feels like I've just dragged you along to my little networking conference.

ERICA

Yeah, Jamie and Paola and I were gonna work on our college applications, do you guys want to just go ahead and ...

PAOLA

Yeah.

JAMIE

Yeah, we can head out.

OBAMA

I'll stick with you Gabby.

GABBY

De verdad?

OBAMA

Sure. I don't have much going on.

GABBY

Money! It'll make me look more legitimate and less like I'm a delusional person who's just telling people about all her pipedreams. Alright, well, see y'all around, the rest of y'all.

ERICA

Yeah, good luck!

JAMIE, PAOLA, and ERICA start to exit left, and OBAMA and GABBY exit right, but JAMIE stops at far left as PAOLA and ERICA continue off.

INTERSTITIAL FOUR

JAMIE

6 December 2044. Finally, China invades MMI-controlled Indonesia. Everyone has a hot take on it—

All appear onstage as quickly as possible. Their lines may overlap slightly.

GABBY

—president said the landing had been a complete success, and he expects victory—

OBAMA

Of course, for nations of the western world, the invasion bears an eerie resemblance—

BB

—that someone at least, some country, has said that this is enough, this has got to stop—

ERICA

—remember that the MMI are not representative of all Muslims, and that in fact, the—

CHARLIE

As of right now, it is unclear how much the Chinese government coordinated with—

EVAN

But is more war really going to fix this problem? It's a fundamental issue, do we really—

PAOLA

—move is a blatant power grab by China, we've seen it in Palawan, and it's clear now—

TALIA

—could be very disruptive to the world economy, if the war becomes a quagmire for—

JAMIE

—but you get the idea. For us, this was also the day we drafted our—well, we drafted our *first* manifesto.

Exit OBAMA, EVAN, CHARLIE, and PAOLA.

SCENE FOUR

Leon High School. A picnic table, outside, lunch time. GABBY sits in the middle, JAMIE and ERICA on either side of her. TALIA and BB sit to their left, BB on the end of the table. All are eating, or have lunches out, except Gabby, who is writing something in a notebook.

TALIA

War is expensive. A war of attrition, which might last decades, that's even more expensive. If they let it, this war could destroy them.

ERICA

But, it's China! China's in a golden age! How could they—

TALIA

The “golden age,” “China-is-the-new-US” stuff is overblown. They still have big inflation problems, and spending large deficits on war isn't going to help.

ERICA

Right. Yeah, I ... I guess I get that. But it's not like they're going to war with all of Indonesia, it's just this part of Indonesia—

TALIA

Which they'll probably be occupying and administrating for the next decade or so. And they'll be taking on the baggage of the environmental damage there. It's a lot of upkeep.

Beat.

I'm not saying it *will* cause an economic meltdown. I'm saying it could. There's a distinctly higher chance of one now than there was before.

GABBY

Y'all want to help me with something?

JAMIE

Sure!

ERICA

But China's ...

TALIA

China's not *that* exceptional.

JAMIE

To TALIA.

It's *pretty* exceptional.

ERICA's glasses beep a few times until she reaches up and turns the beeping off.

TALIA

Mmm, no. I don't think so.

JAMIE

Historically, *como*, holistically, it is the oldest, largest, most consistently powerful—

TALIA

Well I was just talking about its status as an actor, here and now.

Beat.

What was that beep?

ERICA

Oh! That was me. Just an alarm.

JAMIE

Are you awake?

ERICA

No, no, not like that, it's for taking Prolin.

TALIA

Prolin? My older brother took Prolin, back when *he* was in high school. I thought it wasn't a thing anymore.

ERICA

Well, yeah. It's not really, but it's a good transition, for—if you're going off your prescriptions, it's a good intermediary drug ...

JAMIE

Oh, you're going, so you *are* going natural?

ERICA

Yeah. For college.

BB

Why?

ERICA

Uh, just, I've been on stims for years and years now, *como*, I don't know what's Erica and what's the stims, and I want to figure that out before going out into the world.

BB

Hmm. Isn't that ... *quiero decir*, I don't want to say, but isn't that—

JAMIE

What'd you want help with, Gabby?

GABBY

I'm writing a manifesto. For the youth rally.

BB

Oh shit! I forgot about that! We're still doing that, no? When are we doing that?

GABBY

Later. I got swamped with school work and submitting stuff for exchange, I haven't done much to get it rolling this last nine weeks. But I'm thinking we'll have it beginning of summer break, outside the capitol.

ERICA

Sounds up!

GABBY

These things usually have stated goals, demands, ideas, so I'm writing a manifesto.

BB jumps up to go over and see what GABBY has written.

BB

After reading it for a moment.

Yeah, okay, and you should say: the decisions that adults vote on, and, *como*, the people they elect, directly affect young people—or sometimes *only* affect young people, like with the school superintendent.

GABBY takes note of this, and continues to do so as she receives more suggestions.

ERICA

“No education without representation,” right?

TALIA

So what's the policy?

BB

And, and, the youngest members of society are the ones who are going to have to deal with the consequences of elections for the longest amount of time.

TALIA

But what's the policy then? We should allow all ages to vote?

BB

Well that's the other thing—people say that, *como*, dumb people shouldn't vote—or, they, sorry, but, you know, they say it in coded ways, but they say that, like it's going to dilute the vote or make it less likely that a vote will elect the better candidate, *but*, that's not true, because there's this thing, it's a math thing, Condorcet jury theorem, where

TALIA

Breathe, BB.

BB

Where—

She laughs, self-conscious.

GABBY

Keep going, keep going. I didn't know you were so into youth rights, this is great.

BB

Sí, it's, *como*, the one issue I actually have strong feelings on. Okay, so, Condorcet jury theorem—no matter how bad a person's judgment is, as long as they have a greater than fifty percent chance of getting things right—basically, as long as they're smarter than a random coin toss—having them also vote will only make the election more likely to choose the better candidate.

GABBY

Assuming "better" candidates are a thing.

BB

Right. Aren't they?

TALIA

I'd say so.

BB

So as long as young people are smarter than a coin toss—which, because of the Intelligence Revolution, *como*, lots of young people are smarter than old people, just, *como*—so yeah, then they won't hurt the vote.

TALIA

What's the policy though? That's just argument, what is the policy that we want?

JAMIE

At minimum, any student should be able to vote in elections pertaining to their education.

GABBY

I have that fourteen and up should be able to vote in all local elections.

ERICA

Ideally, it'd be fourteen and up can vote in *all* elections.

BB

Ideally, elections would be weighted so that, based on, *como*, average US life expectancy, your vote is weighted by the number of years you have left to live.

TALIA

Dios mío, BB, we can't put that.

BB

Why not?

TALIA

What is our *serious* demand here?

JAMIE

To BB.

Wouldn't that mean if you live past life expectancy, your vote counts negatively.

BB

Oh ... um, yeah.

TALIA

How about: we should lower the voting age for *all* elections to sixteen.

JAMIE

Still to BB.

But then you could game it, by voting for the candidate you don't want to win. And the longer you outlast the average, the more weight you'll have.

BB

Joking, she and J are laughing about this.

Then that would be, *como*, it'd be an incentive. It'd be like a reward. If you lived past life expectancy, you're probably a pretty responsible person, so then you get, *como*, you get to have more say.

The bell rings.

JAMIE

About the bell.

Whaaaaaat?

They all start to pack up their stuff.

GABBY

To ERICA and JAMIE.

We can keep working on this in gov.

JAMIE

And we can ask Paola and Obama about it.

GABBY

Is Paola here today?

JAMIE

Yeah, she's just had some ROTC meeting during lunch.

BB

See you guys!

TALIA

Adiós.

Ad libbed good-byes as JAMIE, GABBY, and ERICA head left, and the others head right.

ERICA

About PAOLA, as they exit.
I wonder if they're talking about the invasion.

INTERSTITIAL FIVE

Enter JAMIE and CHARLIE.

JAMIE

20 January 2045. President Jonathan Maddox delivers his fourth state of the union address. He spends stunningly little time discussing climate change.

CHARLIE

As President Maddox.
And we will continue to create jobs through clean energy projects. In the past four years we have expanded America's green energy grid by more than any previous administration, and I believe that in the next four years, we can surpass that record again!

Pause for applause.
Our coastal states, which have been battered so hard in the past two decades, will have the funds, and economic rejuvenation that they need to come back stronger than ever!
The president freezes, beaming out at his admirers.

JAMIE

And then he moves on to talk about his plans for standardizing health care.
J breaks J's journalistic neutrality for a moment.
Have you ever heard of Nero? Do you think this clown has ever heard of Emperor Nero?
Mimes playing a fiddle viciously.
Jobs! Jobs! Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!

SCENE FIVE

An anti-animal-meat protest at Lake Ella. Signs go up in the audience, such as "Meat is STILL Murder," "BAN Meat," and "Genesis 1:30." Enter PAOLA and EVAN, EVAN holding fliers for GABBY's youth rally. JAMIE and CHARLIE join with this group, and they head into the house, EVAN occasionally handing out fliers.

CHARLIE

But they're bringing in jobs.

JAMIE

My issue is, it's a short-term thing. They're building new energy plants, but not closing any of the old ones that are still polluting like crazy. You can't just add jobs and add jobs and add jobs.

CHARLIE

I understand that. But I can't just say that it doesn't matter.

EVAN

Youth rights rally! Check it out!

JAMIE

Well that's their game. They're trying to establish this dependency. They don't care about creating actual infrastructure down here, they want the gulf states to be forever in this cycle of destruction and reconstruction, where we have to look for federal assistance to pick ourselves up, and inflate our energy grid to power it all.

EVAN

Youth rally! Outside the capitol, gonna be great!

CHARLIE

But, what is the alternative?

JAMIE

Carbon tax. Controlled retreats. Shut-down natural gas and nuclear power plants. Build more mass transit.

CHARLIE

Okay, sí, but right there, there goes my family.

EVAN

And my dad.

CHARLIE

And possibly Evan, next year.

EVAN

Hey, youth rights protest! Hit it up!

JAMIE

Next year? Wait, Evan, you're going to ... I thought you were going to NFAC.

CHARLIE

So did I.

EVAN

Okay, thanks, C, for sharing that information on my behalf.

CHARLIE

What? You didn't tell me that when we were alone, it's not a secret. Are you ashamed of it?

JAMIE

Yeah, there's nothing wrong with a gap year, or some other kind of non-traditional education.

EVAN

It's not a gap year.

JAMIE

Oh. Well, I guess that's ... yeah, college isn't for everyone. Would you really be working for GECCO though?

EVAN

Youth rally! This summer! I mean, yeah, I've done part-time work with them over the summer, in the past, so.

They take the stage.

JAMIE

Well. If you don't mind my ask—

EVAN

Okay, I'm starting to see the same people over and over again. Do we really have to hand out all of these?

JAMIE

Sí.

EVAN

Speaking of wasteful.

JAMIE

It was only twenty pieces of paper. That's a lower CFW rating than a person taking a bus ride, I'm pretty sure.

PAOLA

It is. We made sure.

EVAN

Fine, but why?

JAMIE

It's a throwback. It'll get people's attention.

EVAN

Isn't the idea that we don't like old people and all the things they used to do?

JAMIE

It'll get people's attention.

EVAN

Well I can't hand out fliers to people who've already got them.

CHARLIE

We could wait for more people to show up. The protest's only been going for, what, a half hour?

JAMIE

Sí.

CHARLIE

You guys want to go listen to the speakers?

Pause.

EVAN

Eh.

JAMIE

Not really.

CHARLIE

Yeah me neither.

JAMIE

I'm pro veganism, *de claro*, but now it just feels kind of ...

EVAN

Go home!

JAMIE

Sí, como, y'all won, or, *quiero decir*, science won and made veganism viable. Commercially viable. I haven't eaten animal product—*actual* animal product—in probably five years.

CHARLIE

Yeah, this wasn't really on my radar—I probably wouldn't have come if we weren't passing out fliers for the protest.

JAMIE

Obviously it's more of a social thing than a real protest, but, if you're going that route, you have to really make it fun and interesting, and have people who are really excited and energetic, not so serious. No?

CHARLIE

In toto. One hundred percent. We—Obama and Evan, some other theatre people and I went to this polyamory rally—no one there really expects the government to legalize polygamy—but it was a blast!

EVAN

Isn't that all protests? To some extent? Kind of a big party?

CHARLIE

Well, sí, if you have no political opinions, like you.

EVAN

I have some political opinions.

JAMIE

Oh, come on. That's not ...

EVAN

I do!

JAMIE

You can't say, "aren't all protests like big parties?" and then turn right around and say, "I've got opinions."

EVAN

That's a, that's not exactly what I said.

CHARLIE

To JAMIE.

Libel!

JAMIE

Laughing.

Libel is if it's published. Fine. What's a protest that you would go to, even if you didn't know anyone there, Evan?

Pause.

CHARLIE

Woooooow.

EVAN

I guess, anti-racism?

CHARLIE

Stop. Stop.

EVAN

Like if there was a national racism-funding bill, I'd go to a protest against that.

JAMIE

There *are* bills that are essentially racism-funding, and the fact that you couldn't think of any proves you do not have political opinions.

EVAN

I think that still counts.

PAOLA

Should we start distributing those again?

CHARLIE

Yeah, looks like some more folks have trickled in.

EVAN

Y'know what?

He divides up his stack of fliers into two, and hands one to JAMIE.

Why don't we split this up? Y'all circle around toward Black Dog, we'll head toward the tree, and then we'll meet up wherever we meet up.

JAMIE

Okay. Pincer move!

CHARLIE

You watch too many war docs.

JAMIE

No, everyone else watches *demasiado*, *demasiado* few.

CHARLIE

Alright. Theatre division vs. TSMUN division. *Vamos!*

JAMIE laughs, C and EVAN exit right. JAMIE and PAOLA head left and into the crowd.

PAOLA

Citadel accepted me.

JAMIE

Citadel? The military college?

PAOLA

Sí. They accepted me.

JAMIE

Well, that's money, Paola. You going?

PAOLA

They have a fantastic AI program. Mostly for mapping and other defense things, *de claro*, but, still really good.

JAMIE

Youth rally, everybody!

PAOLA

And I'd have a full ride. I'd have almost a full ride at UF, but.

JAMIE

But there's no creative AI stuff, at Citadel, is there?

PAOLA

Sí. Pero, I'd be guaranteed a job when I get out.

JAMIE

Hey, y'all should come to this youth's rights protest!

To PAOLA.

Well, would ...

PAOLA

So I'm almost a hundred percent going there.

JAMIE

Cash.

Beat.

Paola, I just ...

J stops, and PAOLA stops with J, probably somewhere in the house where they will be visible to most of the audience—or even somewhere onstage, if necessary.

I *hate* when people try to lecture me about the advantages and disadvantages of going to a Campus, and I *really* hate when I see other people being lectured about taking a gap year, or doing an apprenticeship, or going—or even just going to a traditional university, people from the other side will get on their high horse about how expensive it is or whatever. I hate that, because, that's what's great about tertiary today, there's so much choice, and everyone can have their own path.

PAOLA

Sí. I understand

JAMIE

Entonces, I don't want to do that to you. But, I don't think you should give up on your creative AIs, because they're really, *really* fuckin' cash, Paola. They're *monísimo*, and if they're something you're really interested in, I don't think you should—even going to Citadel, I don't think you should ...

PAOLA

Yeah, I don't want to. Stop doing them. I might have to, depending on, *como*, how much time I have.

JAMIE

Sí. Bien. That's just, my thoughts, on that.

J resumes walking, and PAOLA follows. They head offstage.

PAOLA

Any word from ACS?

JAMIE

Not yet, no. But I'm not worried, they don't have super high standards. Youth rally! Come check it out!

JAMIE breaks off from PAOLA, and takes center stage as she exits.

INTERSTITIAL SIX

JAMIE

13 April 2045. *Sí.* We're almost there. Almost to May 30, but not yet. On 13 April 2045, China holds unmonitored elections in occupied Kalimantan. The people vote in a government sympathetic to China, instantly decried across the world as a puppet regime. The next day, President Maddox holds a press conference, and remarks that the international community cannot stand by and watch China degrade the sovereignty of Indonesia. He calls for the Chinese to instantly turn the administration of East and North Kalimantan over to the Indonesian government.

Enter OBAMA.

The unspoken "or else" in his statement is picked up by the press, overblown, underblown, extrapolated and worked over by everyone from bloggers to talk show hosts.

OBAMA

As a late-night talk show host.

The Chinese response to President Maddox was essentially, "Hey, we didn't see anyone else stepping up to the plate. If you want to create *democratically* run countries, why don't you find your own failed state and invade it yourselves?" To which the US responded, "We did, it wasn't such a great scene."

Laugh break, through the laugh break.

“Tried it, didn’t like it, kept doing it anyway.”

Laugh break continues. Once it dies down.

“We weren’t threatening you, we were actually giving you a heads up. Get ready to cut some *big checks*.”

JAMIE

On April 15th, peace marches mobilize across the US, as well as a few other countries whose heads of state took the Kalimantan elections as a chance to flex their muscles.

Exit OBAMA.

SCENE SIX

A march for peace, starting at Railroad Square and ending at the capitol, currently heading down Gaines street. Enter PAOLA, BB, TALIA, CHARLIE, EVAN, ERICA and GABBY. TALIA and BB are at the back, EVAN, CHARLIE, and ERICA near the middle, and GABBY, JAMIE, and PAOLA at the front. They are all within earshot of one another, though it is awkward for those at the front to have a conversation with those at the back.

JAMIE

What do you think Paola?

PAOLA

Huh?

JAMIE

What’s your take? You’ve got family in the ... navy, right?

PAOLA

Pues, sí.

JAMIE

So?

PAOLA

I’m here aren’t I? At this protest? War is bad. Peace is—

JAMIE

Sí, but that’s not the question. The question is, how do you deal with this situation?

PAOLA

Am I the speaker for the military now?

JAMIE

I'm just asking.

ERICA

Yeah, none of us have connections with the military, so, *como*, you've probably got a unique perspective on things.

PAOLA

Well, I don't know. No one wants to go to war with China, no one wants to go to war with the MMI.

EVAN

We're already at war with the MMI. Remember, cause we're at war with terror.

GABBY

Dios mío. Funnísimo, Evan. Paola, go on.

PAOLA

That's all I know. I'm not the president, am I?

JAMIE

Por seguro, but everyone has an opinion, no?

PAOLA

Well my opinion is we shouldn't get into another war.

GABBY

Do y'all think—do you think maybe this will overshadow the youth rally? I've got a few hundred people going on the WeBo page, but ...

BB

No, it won't, it's in toto—because, it'll just be more important. The higher the stakes of what's going on in, *como*, in politics, the more important it is that young people be able to vote.

EVAN

But will people who aren't young care about it? They're the only ones that can give over that power, no matter how hard we protest.

GABBY

That's what I mean. If everyone's distracted by a possible war—already, when we get to the capitol, I have to go meet with FFP, the people organizing this event, to make sure they don't schedule anything at the same time as our protest. And it's not just the war, it's anything—anything that could blow up.

BB

But ... but we're still doing it right?

GABBY

Oh, absolutely. Just something I've been thinking about—and, *como*, how to get around it.

Pause. At this point, ERICA starts to feel woozy, though she keeps it hidden mostly.

JAMIE

Evan, Charlie, where's Obama? O wasn't in school on Friday either.

CHARLIE

College visit. O's too good for us now.

BB

O's—O's for sure going to that school in Washington?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

JAMIE

We're all gonna be scattered.

CHARLIE

Speak for yourself. BB, Erica, Evan, and I will all still be here in Tally.

JAMIE

Sí, but you'll all be scattered away from me. And I'm the one that really matters.

EVAN

And, no, I won't, I'm going to be in Pensacola. We talked about this.

CHARLIE

Oh shit, duh. I still can't get that through my head, for some reason.

GABBY

Pensacola? That's, your dad lives there right?

EVAN

Yeah. I'll be living with him for a bit, then hopefully move out once I've got enough money. I'm going to be working on the living shoreline there.

GABBY

You'll be working for GECO?

CHARLIE

He's forsaken the theatre.

EVAN

Yeah.

GABBY

Well, you can still do theatre outside of NFAC, right?

CHARLIE

Yeah, but if you live in Tallahassee, you have this great, this perfect opportunity right in your backyard to go into theatre—so if you're passing that up, you gotta figure—

ERICA starts to lag behind.

EVAN

Well I might come back to it eventually.

CHARLIE

—you gotta figure you don't care that much about theatre.

EVAN

I do, just not ... not *that much*, I guess ...

ERICA falls behind the rest of the group. TALIA and BB notice, and ERICA suddenly sits down, nauseous, light-headed.

TALIA

Over her shoulder to the group, rushing over to ERICA.

Hey, *paren paren!*

To ERICA, as the others turn back to surround her.

Erica, you okay?

ERICA

Yeah, yeah, I just need to sit here for a little bit.

TALIA

When's the last time you drank water?

ERICA

I drank a bottle back at Railroad Square. It's just ... it's the withdrawal, okay. I probably shouldn't have gone and—I probably shouldn't have come to this. You guys can keep going if you want.

GABBY

Erica, we're not gonna just leave you here.

ERICA

It's fine, I just, I probably won't be able to walk the rest of the way. And you need to meet with those people, right?

GABBY

Alright, well, do you want us to walk you to a bus stop?

ERICA

No, you don't have to. Really, I just pushed myself too hard.

BB

Sí, so how's the whole, going natural, thing, going? *Quiero decir*, I know what it's like to *not* be on drugs, I can't afford stims, but the process of going off them, I don't know what the process of going off them is like.

ERICA

Mostly fine. Mostly ...

GABBY

She sits down beside her.

Look, we'll wait here until you can stand up again, and then we'll walk you to a bus stop, okay?

ERICA

Okay. Thanks guys.

JAMIE sits down as well.

TALIA

To EVAN.

You're going to be working for GECO?

EVAN

Yeah.

TALIA

They're awful.

CHARLIE

They're the reason we have a coastline.

TALIA

But what are they saving? They have to destroy all the area where they're building protections. That's what happened to your family, right BB?

BB

Well, the family shop, *sí*. That's why we moved up here.

EVAN

I really don't—it's just a job.

TALIA

Nothing's just a job.

EVAN

Maybe not to you. But this is just a job, really.

PAOLA

They also have a really bad CFW rating.

EVAN

Well, I need a job.

TALIA

Do you need *that* job?

EVAN

Someone's going to do it anyway.

GABBY

Well you're not planning on working for them all your life, no? It's just a low-level, get-some-money-in-the-bank-type job, no?

EVAN

Kind of a joke.

Jesus, why does everyone care so much about how I make money all of a sudden.

ERICA

I think I can stand up now.

TALIA

Because it's GECO.

GABBY

Helping ERICA up.

You good?

ERICA

Uh ... shit ... no, I was wrong. I need to ...

ERICA slowly sits back down. GABBY looks around. At this point, the march has left them behind.

GABBY

Mmmm. How much longer do you think you need to wait?

EVAN

Y'know, those of us that don't really care about the protest could just stay here.

JAMIE

You don't care about peace?

EVAN shrugs.

BB

Quiero decir, me too, it's not that I don't care, or I actively, or I—I don't oppose it, but I just don't know enough to really have an opinion on it. So I wouldn't—*quiero decir*, I'd love to keep going with y'all, but I won't be crushed if I don't get to do all the chanting and cheering and stuff at the capitol.

GABBY

Well. Are you sure, Erica?

ERICA

Yes, yes, y'all go, have fun. I'll see you in school on Monday.

GABBY

Okay. Well, get well—or. Shit. Should I not say that?

ERICA

No, yeah. I mean, I'm not sick, so ...

GABBY

Yeah yeah. Sorry. I hope you feel better.

ERICA

There we go! Thanks.

GABBY

Okay. See y'all!

Ad libbed farewells. TALIA, BB, and EVAN stay behind with ERICA while the others progress off stage.

CHARLIE

Come on! Keep up the pace, *vamos!* Gotta catch up!
They do so, exiting.

Exit ERICA, TALIA, BB, and EVAN.

INTERSTITIAL SEVEN

JAMIE

30 May 2045. Yep. Here we are. *Claro*, none of us knew what was going to happen that day. There was plenty of other stuff going on anyway.

Enter EVAN.

Governor Fuentes made some off-color remarks about the US signing onto a UN resolution for developed countries to take in more refugees—

EVAN

As Governor Fuentes.

Washington should really consider their priorities, when signing onto a bill like this—our country's got its own refugees, all along the Gulf coast.

Enter OBAMA.

JAMIE

The supreme court declined to hear *Hughen v. Missouri*, allowing the lower court's decision that NESA is perfectly constitutional to stand—

OBAMA

As congresswoman Deyo.

We are so glad that there is no more political obstructionism to get in the way of our children's education.

Enter TALIA.

JAMIE

The White House announced that in a month it will be mediating a summit between Indonesia, China, and the Philippines.

TALIA

As a news anchor.

Chief among US interests is that the presence of the Chinese navy remain a deterrent to pirates, and a protector of commercial vessels.

Enter GABBY.

JAMIE

Leon County Schools Superintendent Mary Pons declines to comment about allegations that her deputy embezzled money from reconstruction funds.

GABBY

As Superintendent Pons.

We support the investigation, and transparency in the use of public funds, but we have no comment on Deputy Paul at this time.

JAMIE

And we're all at Wakulla springs. We graduated last week, though most students are still in school, so it's not that crowded mid-day on a Wednesday. And we're swimming, so we have our glasses off.

J takes J's glasses off, all the others do the same.

SCENE SEVEN

Wakulla Springs. Enter ERICA, CHARLIE, BB, and PAOLA. They've all just come back from swimming, and they descend on their bags and things to grab towels and dry off.

So y'all still want to go to a protest?

GABBY

Sí.

JAMIE

In toto.

ERICA

Do we always have to go to a protest?

EVAN

*To EVAN.
De verdad?*

PAOLA

I don't know. Whatever.

EVAN

Wait, you *don't* want to go to a protest?

GABBY

No, I don't care, I'm just say—

EVAN

Great shut-up. We should go to the fuck Fuentes protest.

OBAMA

Is that what they're calling it?

CHARLIE

That's what I'm calling it. "We have our own refugees." Gimme a fuckin' break.

OBAMA

JAMIE

Wait, Gabby, are there any protests you want to go to?

GABBY

Huh? No, it's, whatever everyone else wants—

JAMIE

Quiero decir, como, any protests you want to go to so you can meet with someone or observe how they're handling something, or—

GABBY

No, look, the youth rally's in two weeks.

PAOLA

A week and a half.

GABBY

No, cause it ... shit, a week and a half, you're right. Anyway, if people aren't going they aren't going. And I've been telling all y'all where to go and dragging you along to protests all year it feels like, just—y'all decide, where do you guys want to go?

As the scene progresses, finished drying off, JAMIE and GABBY work together picking up a picnic blanket and a couple beach towels, shaking them out, folding them, and packing them away.

OBAMA

Fuck Fuentes.

ERICA

Won't that be a lot of Democrats?

OBAMA

So? You worried it's contagious?

ERICA

No, I just ...

OBAMA

That's my vote.

ERICA

I don't want to go to a protest where people have signs saying "Redneck Brownoser."

OBAMA

Chuckles.

Yeah, but it is kinda funny though.

ERICA

It's incredibly elitist, and it makes me uncomfortable.

OBAMA

Like he's not a redneck?

PAOLA

It's a classist word.

OBAMA

But was that not the most *redneck* shit to say, that "we have our own refugees."

JAMIE

O, it was a racist thing to say, yes. If the protest was just that, they'd be fine with it, but they're worried that people will take it farther than that.

BB

There's a protest against Mary Pons—

OBAMA

Well so what if they do?—Sorry, BB—but come on, no one's going to bite you.

PAOLA

They talk about displaced people like they deserved it. Like refugees are victims, but displaced citizens deserved it. I am not going to go to a protest that is mostly composed of those people.

OBAMA

Who made you defender of the homeless?

BB

So, as a formerly displaced person ... I think we should go to the protest against Mary Pons.

EVAN

Who?

BB

School superintendent. Her deputy embezzled a lot of money from reconstruction funds, and she probably did too.

OBAMA

Look if y'all don't want to go *está bien*, I just think it's silly not to go because you don't like the people protesting.

EVAN

Why would you go to a protest if you didn't like the protesters?

BB

Anyway, it'd be cash to get a bunch of young people there, you know, to show that we care about our education, and stuff.

OBAMA

To EVAN.

Sí, but *we'll* be there at least.

TALIA

Or, speaking of education, we could go to the NESAs protest.

BB

Oh, is that ... I don't know as much about that.

TALIA

You should. That's a youth issue too.

BB

But it's ... *sí*, you're right. I guess I just don't know much about it.

OBAMA

I thought that shit happened a while ago.

CHARLIE

NESA? Can someone give me a refresher?

GABBY

It's the education bill that creates tracks.

ERICA

It's elitistísimo.

OBAMA

Sí. I thought that shit happened a while ago.

JAMIE

There were some people challenging its constitutionality. The bill was upheld, and the supreme court just declined to hear the case.

OBAMA

Oh. Well. Sounds like not a big protest.

TALIA

I don't know. I'm just saying, for consideration, there is that.

BB

Yeah, I think the Pons protest will be bigger. People had a lot of problems with her beforehand actually, a few years ago she just ripped a bunch of middle school principals out to put them in administration, and, *como*—

OBAMA

You know my vote.

CHARLIE

What about you Gabby? Anything on your radar?

GABBY

Naw. The Pons protest sounds good. Or the NESAs thing. I don't really care. We can decide on the drive back though, come on.

Everyone picks up their bags, puts on flip flops, readies themselves to leave.

JAMIE

There's a GECO protest, by former workers. They have some shitty employment practices, apparently.

ERICA

Let's do that one.

CHARLIE

Or not?

ERICA

Oh right, sorry ... but ...

OBAMA

*As a quiet chant.
Fuck Fuentes, fuck Fuentes ...*

JAMIE begins rooting in J's bag for J's glasses.

GABBY

Okay, let's vote. Uh ... the Pons protest?

Only BB raises her hand.

BB

Chuckling.
Aw, man. *Está bien*, I get it.

GABBY

The ... NESAs thing?

CHARLIE, PAOLA, and JAMIE raise their hands, as JAMIE puts on J's glasses.

OBAMA

Really? Okay. That sounds like the dumbest protest of all time ...

GABBY

Fuentes?

OBAMA and EVAN raise their hands.

PAOLA

I really will just go home, if y'all want to go there.

OBAMA

Alright there. Is that an ultimatum?

PAOLA

No.

GABBY

Okay, so maybe not that, then.

ERICA

And the GECO, protest!

She and TALIA raise their hands.

GABBY

Alright then, NESA protest it is.

All are ready to go at this point, but no one's making a move. JAMIE is powering on J's glasses, and calibrating them.

OBAMA

Wait, no, *you* haven't voted.

GABBY

Well I don't care, just, most people want to go to the NESA protest, so—

OBAMA

That thing is gonna be so dead.

ERICA

There's always the GECO protest ...

EVAN

You know, I'm going to be working for GECO.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I'd really rather not ...

GABBY

NESA.

EVAN

We could also just do no protest.

OBAMA

No, come on!

GABBY

We could. We'll all be getting together for the youth protest anyway.

OBAMA

Oh, well, actually,

JAMIE sees the news. J drops J's bag and stares at the information projected on J's hand.

JAMIE

Dios mío. Dios mío, oh my god, oh my god, god damn it, god fucking damn it!

ERICA

What?

PAOLA

Jamie?

JAMIE

God fuck it, shit! Therossiceshelf, its collapsing.

GABBY

Huh?

JAMIE

Fucking, a big ice sheet is falling off of Antarctica, into the ocean—some seismologic activity or something, it was just waiting to go before, and now—it's like a person getting into a bath tub that's full to the brim with water.

GABBY

Wait.

OBAMA

It's not a hoax?

EVAN

So, what, a few millimeters sea level rise?

OBAMA

They're not exaggerating it?

JAMIE

Not a hoax, everyone's running it. Ten to twenty centimeters.

ERICA

But, that's not much, right?

JAMIE

It's a lot.

ERICA

But, only—

JAMIE

It's at *least* as much as sea level has risen in the past century. It's at *most* double that. And it'll happen over the course of a week. Fuck, *fuck*.

Pause.

GABBY

Shit.

CHARLIE yells.

OBAMA

So, you guys want to go to that NESAs protest, or ...

GABBY

Fuck that. Jamie, find a protest or a riot or something. *Vamos*.

They head left.

OBAMA

Fuck it's hot out here!

Exit all.

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

The steps of the old capitol. Upstage stand six large columns. Enter JAMIE. J surveys the audience for awhile.

JAMIE

Cape San Blas. Port St. Joe. Carabelle. Apalachicola. St. George Island. These are places I've been going to since I was a kid. And they're gone now. Beaches, seaside towns, always on the cusp of destruction, but that's where I had birthday parties and family reunions and a big graduation party after finishing middle school, and they're all nothing but mud now.

Beat.

I know I'm making this about me, and there are people who have it off way worse—for instance, people who actually *lived* in Apalachicola. And I know that there's nothing that can be done now, and you all are just a device for me to direct these thoughts somewhere, but ... I have to ask, *was it worth it?* Was it really worth it, y'all? Was it worth the whole gulf coast, to eat animal, back before it could be more sustainably grown in factories? Was it worth the beaches I went to as a child, the beaches my children—not that I want children, but if I did—the beaches that my children can *never* go to now, was it worth destroying them to drive an SUV, or even a fucking hybrid, or even a god damn electric, when you could just walk, or bike, or use mass transit?

More to J's self on these next two.

Was it worth it to always buy the newest pair of glasses? Or buy hardcopies of books? Was it?

Beat.

Okay. On to the protest.

Enter ALL. JAMIE's backyard. It's J's birthday

OBAMA

When's it gonna fucking stop already?

TALIA

It's slowing down now.

BB

But it still went up almost a whole centimeter.

TALIA

It went up two on the second. It's coming down. It's projected to be seventeen, when it's all settled.

OBAMA

I just wish it would stop so I know exactly how pissed off to be. I mean, when I see an old person, do I glare at them, or do I spit on them? These are important considerations.

ERICA

You wouldn't actually ...

CHARLIE

They can all hang. I can't stand anyone whinging about how disrespectful we're being, or the plight of the poor old people. We're footing the bill for the murder they've gotten away with for generations.

JAMIE

Who's whinging?

TALIA

People on the news.

JAMIE

Well, of course, but—

CHARLIE

My parents. Evan's mom. They act like they're defending the elderly, but they're just talking about themselves.

JAMIE

So am I suspect too, since it's my eighteenth birthday?

OBAMA

Yeah, we're all adults now. Do you think kids, *como* really little kids, talk about us the way we talk about Millennials?

PAOLA

I'm not eighteen.

TALIA

I'm not either.

OBAMA

Most of us though.

BB

They can't though—because we're the first generation that's going to be dealing with the consequences of this stuff our entire lives—we might even have it worse than the next generation, since we'll be dealing with a recession too.

TALIA

Or a depression.

JAMIE

It's not even anything yet.

TALIA

It's going to be something. There's no way we get through this much of a crisis without some economic consequences.

OBAMA

Digging a nasal spray out of O's pocket.
By the way, happy birthday Jamie.
O tosses J the spray.

JAMIE

Catching it.
What's the CFW rating on this?

OBAMA

Bad. Really bad.

CHARLIE

Maybe we should spit on you.

OBAMA

But it's not like I buy them in bulk. I go through, some, two a year.

JAMIE

JAMIE takes a long spray.
Y'all want to tip some cars?

ERICA

Huh?

CHARLIE

Fuck yes.

JAMIE holds out the spray, EVAN takes it. Throughout the scene, the spray is passed around, and EVAN, GABBY, BB, CHARLIE, and OBAMA all take sprays before handing it back to JAMIE.

JAMIE

One of my neighbors has this big old SUV parked outside their house.

ERICA

But isn't that, uh, *como*, we could be hurt by that too, couldn't we?

OBAMA

Legally?

ERICA

Or if the car tipped onto us?

JAMIE

The roads are really inclined in this neighborhood. It would almost certainly fall toward the curb.

ERICA

But also legally?

CHARLIE

We'd do it at night, after they're asleep.

JAMIE

You don't have to do it if you don't want to. But I want to do it. I want to push something over.

GABBY

Isn't that sending a bad message?

OBAMA

Who's talking about message? We just want to break something.

JAMIE

What do you mean, Gabby?

GABBY

I think it makes it too easy for people to dismiss protesters as hooligans if we're just breaking things.

OBAMA

Can't we be both? Can't we be hooligans *and* in toto, completely right?

GABBY

I don't know. I'm just thinking a lot about how to protest in a way that properly ... that really communicates, you know?

BB

Oh shit—are you—so are you still—isn't the youth rally in a few days?

GABBY

It's about a week from now. I'm pretty sure I'm gonna call it off. I mean ...

OBAMA

Yeah, hey, we're not even youth anymore. *Quiero decir*, we can vote now.

TALIA

I can't.

PAOLA

I can't.

OBAMA

Thanks guys.

GABBY

I feel bad—I guess this is why youth's rights never really becomes a thing, because people just age out of it and care more about other stuff.

BB

But it's the fact that young people haven't been allowed to vote that's put us in this mess. We're, some, ten years slower than we should be.

OBAMA

So the whole world would've flooded a decade later if we'd allowed eight-year-olds to vote?

TALIA

Or it would've not flooded at all, ever. It's impossible to say—

BB

But maybe we should still do it.

GABBY

I don't think anyone will want to come ...

She goes to the WeBo event page for it.

Oh shit. Holy shit.

OBAMA

Someone die? We lose some famous old lighthouse?

GABBY

There are over a thousand people signed up to go.

JAMIE

What!

GABBY

I know! What are you guys thinking? There's, some, fifty different protests every day, what are y'all doing?

BB

They're probably mostly high schoolers.

GABBY

Of course but ... of course.

JAMIE

A lot of displaced people have moved to state capitals, just to protest. That might be some of it.

GABBY

And I haven't even been promoting it. I haven't even looked at it since May 30th.

JAMIE

You know what you have, Gabby?

PAOLA

A battalion.

JAMIE

Not what I was gonna say, but sort of—an apparatus.

GABBY

Like a state apparatus? I'm not a state though.

JAMIE

I'm saying, this doesn't just have to be a youth rally. We can use this organization that we have, right here in our laps, to demand ...

BB

Reparations!

JAMIE

Yes! Or a carbon tax, or a punitive tax, or a seizure of assets, or something!

GABBY

Or to get people to stop knocking over cars.

JAMIE

That too.

GABBY

Yes. Yes, this is—yes! We're going to do this. We're going to do this, right?

CHARLIE

Hell yeah!

EVAN

Sure.

Ad libbed affirmatives from all.

OBAMA

Can we make signs that say, “I want my fuckin’ money!”

CHARLIE

Can we make signs that say “We fucking told you so”?

EVAN

Just as long as it has “fuck” in it, huh?

GABBY

But no car-tipping. Any of you. No looting, no tagging gas stations, none of that, if you’re going to be a part of this. Not judging you for that, not judging anyone for that, but our message can’t just be ...

JAMIE

We need to give them nothing to criticize us on.

GABBY

Yes!

JAMIE

We need to just be united saying, we want justice here.

OBAMA

What if we already tagged something?

CHARLIE

Laughing.

Did you tag a gas station, O?

OBAMA

I wrote “It’s hot out here” on a neighbor’s car.

GABBY

That’s fine. But no more.

ERICA

Good. That’s, that’s probably for the best.

GABBY

So first off ... we need a new manifesto.

JAMIE steps to the front as the others continue talking.

JAMIE

We threw everything at the wall. Carbon tax. Seizure of all oil corporation assets. Reparations to all developing coastal nations. Impeachment of Jonathan Maddox. Immediate emergency elections. Punitive tariffs against all OPEC countries. Punitive tariffs against Russia. 100% inheritance tax. Tax on any family with a history of slave ownership. Tax on any family with a car. Tax on any family with more than two biological children. Tax on any family with a dog. Aid packages to coastal cities. Aid packages to lower class and minority neighborhoods of coastal cities. Forced quartering of displaced persons with high income bracket individuals. Immediate shutdown of all gas plants. Planned shutdown of all non-renewable power plants. Voting age lowered to 16. Voting age lowered to 10 for local elections. No minimum voting age. No social security. No medicare for the elderly. Immediate ban on driving with less than one person in a car. Immediate ban on cars. Funding for scientific research. Funding for research based in affected areas.

OBAMA

Everyone gets to lay one good, hard, slap across Maddox's ugly face.

GABBY

I'm not putting that.

ERICA

What about volunteering?

OBAMA

I don't think he's gonna volunteer to get slapped, that's why we have to demand it.

ERICA

I mean, could that be part of our, um, thing? *Como*, volunteering? I know Publix and Walmart need people to help give out food for displaced people.

GABBY

Sure. We can't do it while we're protesting, but, we could highlight some good organizations for folks to donate to or spend time volunteering at.

ERICA

I'm going down to help out at the civic center, this weekend, if any of y'all, want to, you know—

JAMIE

How long are we going to be holding this protest? Is it just a one-off, or, *como*, the occupy movement?

GABBY

We need to stay out there. The people going to this protest are just like us—they want to be out in the streets, regardless. The best thing we can do is channel that energy, and keep it all right in Fuentes and everyone else's faces.

EVAN

But not *quite* in their faces, right? It's in front of the old capitol, not the new one, right?

GABBY

They're right next to each other.

OBAMA

Sí, but we won't be able to stand on the dolphin statue and get great photo ops.

GABBY

Photo ops—Paola, can you put together some sort of website where protesters can post pictures and messages and things?

PAOLA

Yes. By the time of the protest?

GABBY

Sí.

PAOLA

Sí, absolutely.

GABBY

Cash cash. I'll take what we've got here—

ERICA

Well, so, yeah—I was, but I was asking about how long we'd be there?

GABBY

As long as it takes.

ERICA

But ... okay, yeah, I, so I think I'll probably just show up for the first day or something? If that's okay?

Beat.

JAMIE

Why don't yo—

ERICA

It's not that I don't want to protest! I just, I don't know if the ... I'm not the most, *como*, passionate supporter of the—

CHARLIE

You don't have to be passionate, you just have to show up.

ERICA

No, but, *como*, I don't ... I just don't think I'd really fit in with a bunch of protesters, being, uh, *como*, angry and stuff. Because I ...

OBAMA

You're not angry? This doesn't piss you off?

ERICA

Well no but yeah I—but, I, I guess upset, and sca—I guess scared, but not so much angry like y'all.

OBAMA

What, cause you just can't stand to get pissed at your mom and dad?

CHARLIE

You should try it. It's a lot of fun.

BB

True story.

ERICA

That's not fair—not all adults are to blame for this—

JAMIE

Jesús Erica really?

ERICA

Look, look, I'm just not—I just know, there are people who came before us who really supported better environmental policy, you know, so I just can't feel that, that blanket hatred for every old person, the—

JAMIE

It's not every person clearly, but it's enough of them, if there are six people in a family and five of them murder someone it doesn't do us any good to talk about the sixth one as if all in all this family balances out, or if four of the murderers say they didn't really enjoy the murder, it doesn't make them not a murderous fucking family.

ERICA

No, it doesn't balance, of course it doesn't balance, I'm just saying, I can't feel, I don't feel really enraged by—

OBAMA

Well why not then? The only people that aren't pissed off about this are the people who are unaffected, or who were part of the problem, or are apologists for the people who were part of the problem.

TALIA

We're all part of the problem.

OBAMA

To TALIA.

You—stop it. If you do that every time, it's gonna take us ten years just to discuss the weather.

TALIA

You can't ignore that we're part of this.

OBAMA

And that's beside the point anyway, because I'm not saying all people who caused climate change aren't angry, I'm saying all people who aren't angry are either A. privileged or B. part of the problem or B, roman numeral one, apologists for people who are part of the problem.

ERICA

But I'm not any of those things—I'm all for this, I'm all for y'all.

BB

You didn't suggest anything for the manifesto.

ERICA

I suggested volunteering!

GABBY

She just doesn't engage with politics the way we do—there's nothing wrong with that, we're all on the same side.

CHARLIE

But we—

ERICA

Yeah, I'm going to be volunteering! Y'all, I will do everything to help you, to support you—whatever you need, but I'm not ... these protests are different. This isn't like the peace march or the youth rally last year, this is people who want to hurt other people, and I don't ... I don't know what's wrong with me, I don't know why I'm not infuriated like y'all are.

GABBY

Erica, whatever support you can give us, we'll take it. Everything helps. The only failure is doing nothing, and helping displaced people isn't nothing.

EVAN

Why aren't you pissed?

ERICA

I don't know. Maybe I'm just too scared to be mad. But, wait, you didn't have any suggestions for the manifesto.

EVAN

Well I'm pissed, I just don't have any opinions about what to do about it. Y'all know this stuff, all I know is something wrong happened, and there have to be some consequences.

OBAMA

Mmm, stirring stuff, Evan.

EVAN

Wha—oh, whatever.

The two laugh.

GABBY

I'll take what we have here, and make something more ... cohesive. I don't think everything will make it in—

BB

Please don't put everything in. Some of my suggestions were, *como*, in toto jokes.

OBAMA

You mean you weren't serious about using Shell execs as flotation devices? Cause if not, I'd like to submit it for serious consideration.

JAMIE

Hey, guys.

OBAMA

Yeah?

JAMIE

Thanks for the awesome birthday.

JAMIE stands and the others disperse.

The sea level stabilizes by the fifth. The UN emergency meeting passes a resolution for massive amounts of aid, mostly to countries in the Malay Archipelago, East Asia, and coastal Africa. Old fuckwit Americans scream about how China and India shouldn't be seeing a penny of this money because they're the leading polluters, even though their pollution is far lower per capita, even though their lifetime pollution is much lower than that of western countries. Anyway, the aid isn't enough, and it's too late anyway, and it's especially too late for the estimated million people dead worldwide. On 9 June we all meet up early for the protest, probably the last time *all* of us were together ... I mean, so far anyway. No one died, we could still get together in the future. Probably won't though.

The steps of the old capitol. Enter ALL. BB has a big bag of cheap snorkel masks, which she sets down at left. JAMIE and OBAMA carry on signs ("It's Hot Out

Here,” “We Told You So,” “Pay Up!”, etc.) and set them up around the stage. GABBY holds a megaphone. PAOLA is on a call with her mom, her hand held to her ear not for any functional purpose but as a commonly understood hand gesture to indicate she’s talking with someone though the glass.

PAOLA

No sé, what does it matter how long?

GABBY

Feeling out the space.
Alright, so we’ll stand and speak from here, when we do speak.

CHARLIE

What are we speaking?

PAOLA

Porque es una protesta, there’s no specific ending time.

GABBY

Our demands—well, I’ll be speaking. If any of y’all want to say something, let me know, I’ll figure out how to work it in. Also Portillo, from Peace Jam is gonna speak about / environmentalism—how to keep being environmentally conscious now, after May 30th.

PAOLA

Sí. Sí. ... Sí, mamá.

BB

When do I get to hand out the snorkels?

GABBY

Not during the speeches, but whenever people arrive. Erica, Talia, can y’all run
Pointing to the far corners of the auditorium.
over there and there, I want to see how loud I’ve got to be.

ERICA

Yeah.

TALIA

Por supuesto.

PAOLA

Sí, de claro, but I’m not just going to leave the protest.
TALIA and ERICA go into the house and head to their designated spots.
Sí. Love you. Adiós.

BB

Your parents want you back by nine?

PAOLA

No, but ... just being irrational.

EVAN

How long are we here Gabby? I mean, how long do you want *us* here?

GABBY

Y'all can go home whenever you want, I completely understand that. But I want to be here until we see some actual action, some actual legislation from the feds.

OBAMA

So, you know, forever.

GABBY

They can't ignore millions of protesters.

Seeing that ERICA and TALIA have arrived at their spots. Using the megaphone.

Testing! Testing! Can y'all hear me over there?

ERICA and TALIA both give a thumbs up. GABBY turns off the megaphone.

Cash. Jamie, where are you setting up your stuff?

JAMIE

J takes a digital recorder from J's pocket.

This is what I'm using for audio—I can just hold it up to whoever's speaking or, you could even hold it while you're speaking—video I'm just gonna crowdsource it using Paola's site—*quiero decir*, the site Paola put together.

ERICA and TALIA return to the stage. OBAMA has stumbled upon the bag of snorkel masks and taken a few out.

OBAMA

What's the deal here?

BB

Preparations!

OBAMA

De claro, this is all preparations, wha—

BB

No no no, cause you—*como*, no, it was a joke, *como*, preparations for the total flooding of Florida.

OBAMA

Ooooooh.

O laughs.

But then—

BB

I saw—Talia and I were at Lake Ella the other day and we saw some people wearing them, they're *como*, you know, symbolic protest—so everyone can see—

OBAMA

Putting on two masks.
They're goofy as fuck.

TALIA

You're wearing two.

OBAMA

I'm embracing the goofiness.

BB

They're a—

GABBY

I think they're fantastic. Y'all should all put them on—or at least have them around your neck or on your head or something.

OBAMA

What about bathing suits?

EVAN

Yeah, why don't we all wear flippers?

OBAMA

No, I'm—shut-up, I'm serious, we should go all the way—swim suits, bikinis—flippers, if you really wanna go all out,

TALIA

Or water wings!

CHARLIE

Sí, we've probably all got old beach stuff lying around, we could in toto do this.

GABBY

That's a good idea. If y'all want to make a run home and change at some point, go for it—and Paola, post on the site, let everyone know to wear swimming gear if they want to.

PAOLA

But, you—shouldn't you do it?

GABBY

I'll go home and get swim gear too at some point. Or have someone get it.

ERICA

I could—if, since I’m going to not be here, or, not all the time, I could go to your house Gabby and get whatever you need.

GABBY

Gracias, do that, absolutely.

PAOLA

I actually meant, shouldn’t you be the one to send out the post?

GABBY thinks about this for a moment.

GABBY

Maybe, maybe not. You should be the one to make big announcement posts, since you’re the most familiar with the site. But if you want to put it under my name, that’s fine—but whatever you do, be consistent with all the future posts. If this announcement comes from me, they all come from me. If you’re the announcement person that people will become familiar with, stick with that. Okay?

PAOLA

Sí. Cash.

JAMIE

Reading a news headline.

Representative Haynes from Nevada—those calling for reparations are being “myopic”—“we are all hurting.”

OBAMA

Are we now! Would we like to be all hurting? Would Representative fucking Haynes of Ne-fucking-vada like to know what hurting actually is?

CHARLIE

Inland states can go fuck themselves.

OBAMA

De verdad.

ERICA

Um, yeah, so, Gabby, should I go home now, or—

GABBY

Whenever. You’re not doing anything—I mean, sorry, that sounded ugly, I mean you don’t have any specific task that needs to be done, so,

ERICA

Cash. I’ll just go ahead and go now, then.

She exits.

JAMIE

To the audience. As J speaks, BB and TALIA begin distributing snorkel masks to the audience, and by the time J is done, all have exited except GABBY.

That first speech, that first day, was probably the clearest, most singular idea we had of what we were doing. *We* had of what *we* were doing. Everyone else seemed to always know *exactly* who we were, *exactly* what our god damn business was, who we voted for, what shows we watched, what kind of money we had, who our parents were, what our problem was, what our frustration was, what our world was, why we were so ungrateful and pissy, *sí*, everyone became a fucking child psychologist then. *No importa*, that day, 9 June, our demands were clear.

JAMIE moves into position to record GABBY without obstructing her.

GABBY

Addressing the gathered protesters.

We were all born into the debt crisis. We came of age during the worst Atlantic Hurricane seasons in decades. And now, we'll be graduating in the wake of May 30. We'll be around on this planet for the next eighty years, paying off the tab that our great grandparents ran for their entire lifetimes, if we do not demand to be acknowledged, *now*. We cannot let the benefactors of almost two centuries of greed and laziness continue to postpone their responsibilities. We must demand a better inheritance than windmills and dykes and billions and billions in reconstruction costs. What we want is simple—punitive taxes on high polluting corporations, and sales taxes on high impact products. A comprehensive carbon tax, with better regulation and fewer loopholes than Fricther-Lang. Voting age reduced to sixteen, in all public elections. Funding for mass transit and housing for displaced persons. And we are not going home until we are heard!

Cheer break.

We've been lucky enough to secure this protest spot outside the old capitol, because I started planning for this rally before anyone knew May 30 would be an important date. It was originally going to be just a youth rally, but now it's more than that. We have to occupy this space. We have to stay visible. We have to not be ignored, laughed at, derided, or parodied. This is still a youth rally, and every protest demanding that the wealthy past pay for the impoverished future that we are at risk of entering, is a youth rally.

Cheer break.

Demands for reparations are demands for equal treatment of the next generation, and demands for youth rights are demands that stewardship of the environment be entrusted with the only group of people that has a clean record. Now, to speak more about that, because I know a lot of us are unsure what environmental responsibility even means now—to speak more about that, everyone, here's Mary Portillo!

Cheers. Later, that night. Enter EVAN, CHARLIE, PAOLA, BB, and TALIA. EVAN and CHARLIE carry two lawn chairs each, which they then sit in. BB and TALIA take up the other two. PAOLA is in a call with her mom again. GABBY is consulting her hand intently, as is JAMIE.

JAMIE

“Youth rally draws crowd outside old capitol”—come on, *Democrat*, you can do better than that!

BB

Paola, tell your mom you made the news.

PAOLA

Until, *sí, hasta las reparaciones.*
Barely registers BB's comment.

CHARLIE

Carrying on C's own conversation with EVAN.
Well, O said O was going to talk to some friends from Sealey.

JAMIE

Let's see ... *sí*, the ... okay, “the protest incorporated demands for reparations which have been heard across the southeast over the past week, in addition to demands for a lower minimum voting age.”

EVAN

Maybe O's just left us for good.

PAOLA

No.

JAMIE

But the article mostly just calls it a youth rally.

EVAN

To JAMIE now.
Isn't that true though? Isn't that what it is?

BB

But, the thing is, it isn't just that, or, *como*, it's both, no? Reparations and youth issues, it's the same now, you know, like Gabby said.

PAOLA

No, I'm staying. Well I changed my mind, *me quedaré*. ... *Sí, pero cuando estoy en Citadel, no iré a casa cada día, entonces, me que*—I'm staying, I am staying here.

BB

Paola! Tell her!

PAOLA stifles a laugh.

PAOLA

Puedes hacer cualquiera, no me importa. Me importa este movimiento, es ...

EVAN

What's she saying?

BB

You can do whatever you want, I don't care, I care about this movement,

PAOLA

Sí, mis amigos. Sí. Sí, she's here, so's Gabby, we're not gonna get hurt.

BB

Yes, my friends.

EVAN

Yeah, I don't—

BB

Yes. Yes, *está aquí, también está Gabby, no vamos a lastimarnos.*

EVAN

Jesus, BB, I didn't need the English translated.

CHARLIE

This is an open, inclusive protest, Evan, what if someone here spoke only Spanish.

EVAN

Oh my god.

PAOLA

Sí. Love you. Sss ... sí. Adiós.

PAOLA hangs up.

GABBY

Oh, okay, Erica's not coming back tonight. She messaged me, says she'll probably stop by from time to time. Alright. Can someone make an announcement about ... let's see, uhh ...

OBAMA enters.

GABBY

Obama! Perfect!

OBAMA

Wow. *Dios mío*, can everyone greet me that way from now on—Obama! Perfect!

GABBY

Can you make an announcement about bug repellent and sunscreen? Some kids from SAIL brought a bunch, but the post about where to find it got kind of buried on the website.

PAOLA

Sorry, I probably could've made it—

GABBY

No no no, no problem, *no pasa nada*—

PAOLA

My mom called, and—

GABBY

Está bien, don't worry—

OBAMA

But wait, why me? Why don't you announce it?

GABBY

Because it's a bad look if I'm the only one getting up there speaking. This isn't *my* protest, it's theirs.

BB

Ours—all of ours.

OBAMA

Sí sí, kumbayah. Just tell me what to say then and where the megaphone is.

JAMIE

Addressing the audience. BB exits.

Pretty soon we all had our jobs. Obama was kind of like an MC—O introduced major speakers and announced items of importance to the protesters—

OBAMA

The Bourdain list—it's the hottest French export since socialist austerity—a list of high-impact products and companies to boycott, ordered by severity—the list started at just a few hundred items, he's since partnered with CFW, now the list has over two thousand items—there's a link on the site, you can also just search it yourself, they're even working on a glass app that will automatically highlight products to boycott in your overlay—use it. You vote with your dollar, so right now this is the only vote we have—we should all be using it!

JAMIE

Paola ran the website, Talia and BB did a lot of outreach and made sure it wasn't just us friends of Gabby running the whole thing. Still, Gabby was the unofficial leader, although

she was just one member of a leadership group including myself, Gabby, Talia, and several other activists—*igual*, *she* set the agenda.

GABBY

We will stay here until we are heard. We will not go home because of promises, we will not go home because of tokenism, we are here on this ground until the feds take action.

JAMIE

Evan and Charlie were more involved in manual labor—getting tents moved here and set up, making sure food was coming in. Ally—she was the president of TSMUN at SAIL, Gabby and I had kind of known her before—she handled the treasury, made sure people knew how to donate and that all the money was going toward buying food and water and sunscreen. Erica stopped by every now and then, she'd donate some food to us, but she wasn't really a part of the demonstration. And I made announcements too. Every day, before Gabby would speak I gave summarized reports of the news—just US news, and only concerning the sea level rise of course.

To the protestors.

The Emergency Relief Bill is set to go to the floor of the House this week—

Boos.

On both sides of the aisle, there's been a lot of debate over whether or not loans should be a part of the package.

More boos.

OBAMA

Y'all know, like when firefighters put out a house fire, and then the homeowners have to send the fire department bottled waters for the next ten years. Loans and emergencies, *es como* you can't say the one without thinking of the other.

Everyone congregates around the lawn chairs.

JAMIE

And they're bailing out HIA. They passed *that* bill quick.

CHARLIE

Democrat Republican, they're all a bunch of gummies. They don't have saltwater coming up out of their sewer grates. They don't have to leave their houses, don't have to move somewhere else. The bunch of wasters.

EVAN

Isn't HIA insurance? *Quiero decir*, isn't it good—good for everyone—that they stay in business?

TALIA

Only the people who had homeowner's insurance in the first place. They're bailing out the middle class ahead of dealing with the low-income communities.

CHARLIE

Same as ever. The people in Liberty City were saying for years—for fuckin’ years, the pump stations aren’t powerful enough, they wouldn’t be able to take care of actual flooding—now it’s six inches to a foot of water, all around there, all the time.

GABBY

Jamie, Talia, we’re moving the daily meeting to five thirty. Portillo had to go to some family thing.

JAMIE

Como a bad family thing?

GABBY

No ... I think just ... well, P said “family thing.”

OBAMA

Doesn’t that mean funeral?

TALIA

No importa.

JAMIE

Sí, no importa.

BB enters.

JAMIE

What are we talking about at the meeting?

GABBY

I think the main thing is the FSU sustainability group.

TALIA

What’s this?

GABBY

The Florida State Eco-Reps—it’s a student organization, they emailed us about getting involved.

CHARLIE

Getting involved in *our* protest?

GABBY

Yes.

CHARLIE

In what way? Involved?

GABBY

I'll pull up the email.

TALIA

So what is there to discuss?

JAMIE

Whether or not to let them get involved?

TALIA

But there is no reason that we wouldn't let them get involved.

CHARLIE

Of course there is! What if they're trying to hi-jack the protest?

TALIA

That sounds far-fetched.

CHARLIE

Why? It happens all the time, look at the ... like the ...

JAMIE

There was a big civil rights movement in Myanmar, now it's been co-opted by climate groups. The minorities are getting pushed out of their own movement.

CHARLIE

Yes, see?

TALIA

Well, just, forward us the email, and—

GABBY

Here it is—I'll just read it. "Dear ..." blah blah blah, uh, "We would like to partner with your organization, encouraging more college students to join the protest, and providing members of your organization with access to our resources. It is important that young people voice their disgust with current climate policy, and their desire for change. With our two organizations working together, our voices will be even louder. We currently have members working with the local chapter of The Bourdain List and CFW, and could put members of your organization in touch with them if any are interested. I would love to see our groups coordinating to work for a better future, and ..." yeah, so that's the gist of the "involvement" they want.

BB

See, it's *como*, mutually co ...

TALIA

Mutually beneficial.

BB

Exactly!

CHARLIE

They didn't mention youth rights at all!

BB

Didn't they? They said,

JAMIE

It's important that young people voice their disgust with climate policy.

BB

Sí, well, I guess—

CHARLIE

They don't give a shit.

BB

But it's all tied together—youth rights, reparations, it's all about—

CHARLIE

Not for them it isn't. I don't think we should just let some college students come in here and redefine *our* protest.

GABBY

No one's redefining anything. We're not agreeing to let them take over, or even to let any of them join the leadership group. But they're right—the more of us there are, the more we'll be heard.

CHARLIE

But what will people be hearing? If we let them in, they could push us out of our own movement, like the ... what was it? In Myanmar?

JAMIE

Or African-Americans. The Conyers Foundation has been turned into an environmental restitution group.

TALIA

What was it before?

JAMIE

Race-based reparations.

CHARLIE

Well that—yeah, but that's ...

OBAMA

Everything gets co-opted by someone else, and then gets co-opted by someone else. We can't escape ideological appropriation.

CHARLIE

Yes, we can, if we resist it, and stick with each other.

TALIA

Who is that, exactly? You're of voting age, should you be kicked out of the protest?

CHARLIE

But I'm close enough! Really, none of you get this?

JAMIE

I get it but I don't think I agree.

CHARLIE

Evan?

EVAN

Huh? Oh, well ... what?

CHARLIE

Do *you* agree with me?

EVAN

Well what does it matter, I'm not in the leadership group.

GABBY

I would actually like to know what you think Evan. I don't agree with Charlie, but I'll still take it into consideration at the meeting.

EVAN

Well, the ... I don't know, why do I—

CHARLIE

What do you mean you don't know? I was talking to you about this the other day, about the ridiculous signs that have nothing to do with our movement?

EVAN

I remember, but ...

CHARLIE

How do you not have an opinion? What are you doing here if you don't have an opinion?

OBAMA

Charlie, you should calm down.

CHARLIE

Fuck that! None of us should be calm right now! This is life and death!

BB

Not for you it's not.

CHARLIE

It—

BB

Mira, my friends in Miami—my best friend there, her family is homeless. In toto, capital-H homeless, sleeping in the Dolphins' Stadium. That is life and death, Charlie.

CHARLIE

BB, that's what I'm—

BB

No, stop. What I'm saying is, don't act like you're the center of this protest movement, or youth is the center of it, or whatever, because it's about everyone. I'm co-opting my friends' pain. We're all co-opting a century of environmentalist ideology. It's, *como*, the protest is reparations, with youth rights, and bringing in people who only care about reparations isn't going to destroy that.

CHARLIE

I guess y'all just don't give a shit about voting age anymore then.

C exits.

EVAN

I'm gonna, uh

OBAMA

Yeah you really fucked up on that one Evan.

EVAN

I'm gonna go after C, and uh ...

He exits.

OBAMA

Well that was intense.

JAMIE

You were unusually quiet.

OBAMA

I was just enjoying the show.

BB

Was that ugly of me? To say, *como*, “don’t act like you’re the center of attention.”

Beat.

GABBY

Well, I think

PAOLA

Simultaneous with GABBY.

No. C—sorry, you—

GABBY

No, go ahead.

PAOLA

C was being ugly. Saying this is life and death. My cousin’s in the hospital right now, because someone threw a bottle at his head.

BB

Okay, *gracias*, thank you Paola, because that was starting to bother me. I get it, be passionate, but, *como*, you’re not—don’t act like you’re the most legitimate, *como*, the owner of the movement or something, just because your favorite beaches got flooded, when there are people who are actually *directly* affected by this.

OBAMA

Sí, como, if you wanna talk life and death, my dads’ herb garden is totally decimated because their water’s been out for a week. Is that ... *sí*, no? Does that give me some cash cred?

Exit all. It starts drizzling.

JAMIE

To the protestors.

The house has delayed their vote on the relief bill again, with the next planned vote to take place on Wednesday.

Boos.

Tropical—

Waiting for the boos to die down.

Tropical storm Dennis has been upgraded to a Category 1 hurricane, and should make landfall sometime next week, around Pensacola—it’s expected to still be a Category 1 hurricane at that time.

Enter PAOLA and BB. PAOLA sits in one of the chairs and sets a crude cardboard keyboard in her lap—not an actual functioning keyboard, but a visual reference

for her Glass. She types on it, managing the website. BB is in a call with TALIA, and may pace a bit. JAMIE sits and reads news reports on J's hands.

BB

Uh-huh ... *sí*, if you look, it should be in the llllleft corner? ... No, it should—*sí*, in the left corner, look ther—oh. *Pues, no sé*, in the other corner then? Oh. Are you sure?

JAMIE

Muttering.
Youth rally, youth rally, youth rally.

BB

Sorry, okay, maybe then ... *a ver, dónde está? Sí sí sí, lo siento*—ummmm, try the hall closet?

PAOLA

What was that, J?

JAMIE

Have you seen anyone reporting on this protest as anything other than a youth rally?

PAOLA

I'm not as dialed in as you.

BB

Monísimo! Gracias!

JAMIE

But, *de verdad*, have you?

PAOLA

No. Sometimes they'll add detail, but youth rally always comes first.

JAMIE

That's been exactly my experience.

BB

Sí—es todo, sí, gracias, gracias Talia. Okay. Bye.
She hangs up.

JAMIE

I'll just have to post even more articles and videos and press releases to make up for their shitty coverage.

BB

Qué tal, Paola?

PAOLA

Programming. Modifying the priority algorithm.

BB

Fancy.

PAOLA

Gabby—Jamie, this is to you, Gabby said she wanted you to do some research on storm shelters—makeshift storm shelters.

BB

Yeah, I was wondering, because, when, you announced Jamie no?, that Dennis is gonna hit next week—are we gonna just ride it out?

JAMIE

We have to talk about that at the leadership meeting. But ...

To PAOLA.

shhhh, can't Talia do that? I wanted to work on a press release about us partnering with Eco-Reps.

BB

Well, she's out running errands right now, but she'll be back by one.

JAMIE

And is she doing anything when she gets here?

BB

Not that I know of.

JAMIE

Great, then she can research storm shelters.

PAOLA

Well make sure it gets done. Gabby's too busy to do it, so. Someone has to get it done.

BB

Amused.

Are you, *como*, her secretary? You sound so official.

PAOLA

No. She just told me though. She's the one running this thing, she needs our help to run it properly.

JAMIE

BB, has Charlie been hanging out with the secessionists?

BB

Ummmmmmmm. Well.

Pause.

JAMIE

I know that a lot of theater people from Chiles are in there, so. And I know C hangs out with them.

BB

Hmm. *Sí.*

JAMIE

It's not a witch-hunt, BB, I'm asking because it'd be great to be able to interview C if C is.

BB

Yes. Yes and no. *Quiero decir*, I don't know if C considers C's self a secessionist. But C definitely hangs out with them.

PAOLA

There are secessionists here? I thought secessionists were all Millennials.

BB

There are. Are y'all gonna do anything about that?

JAMIE

What do you mean "do anything"?

BB

I mean tell them to stop flying that old Florida flag and chanting secessionist slogans.

PAOLA

I heard Gabby say she doesn't mind them at all. She's fine with them being here.

BB

I'm—no, *quiero decir*, I'm fine with them being here, *está bien*, but I don't want them pushing that agenda at this protest.

JAMIE

You didn't have a problem with Eco-Reps coming in.

BB

No, because they have the same message that we do, roughly.

JAMIE

JAMIE infrequently looks at J's hand as J talks to BB, as if J is taking notes. But you could say that the secessionists have a similar message.

BB

They want Florida to be its own country—that's not the same at all. There would be, *como*, no chance of us getting reparations if that happened. It's in *toto, como*, the opposite of our movement. *Sí*, we both dislike the feds, but ... are you recording me?

JAMIE

We're on public property, we're all being recorded.

BB

But—no, I mean, are you—I know that, *de claro*, but *quiero decir* you, are you ... you know what I'm asking.

JAMIE

Is that alright? I was just going to use it anonymously, but, would you—

BB

Sí, yes, *no me importa*—they hate the feds, we both hate the feds, I was saying, but you know, who doesn't?

Enter GABBY.

GABBY

Oh, BB—um, yes, yes you can help me.

BB

What's up?

GABBY

Charlie's a secessionist, right?

BB

C had better not be.

GABBY

Oh. What?

JAMIE

C hangs out with secessionists, at least.

GABBY

Okay, *bien*. I was going to ask Talia, but she's not here right now.

BB

She was getting a solar fan from my house.

GABBY

But you can do this BB—go over to the secessionist camp, it's over by the energy office, and meet up with Charlie, and get them to take down the confederate flag.

BB

They're—are you serious? *De verdad*, they're flying a *confederate* flag?

GABBY

Well, someone over there is, so—

BB

They've got to go. They don't represent us.

GABBY

No, but they think we represent them. They have a right to be here.

BB

We have completely different goals!

GABBY

Different methods, BB.

BB

No.

GABBY

What?

BB

No, I, I won't go over there and make nice with them. I don't want them here, I can't help you with this.

GABBY

BB, we're all hurting here—that's why we're here, that's what unites us—

BB

Reparations is what unites us.

GABBY

Maybe we need some extra autonomy too.

BB

Are you saying you agree with them?

GABBY

I'm saying, it's all worth bringing to the table. We shouldn't be silencing voices.

BB

But you want to take down the confederate flag. Why do you draw the line there?

GABBY

It makes people uncomfortable.

BB

You mean it makes *you* uncomfortable. Well, the secessionists make me uncomfortable, flag or not.

PAOLA

To GABBY.

You could just call Charlie, get *C* to take care of it.

GABBY

Okay. Good idea, I'll—but, BB, you understand where I'm coming from, right?

BB

You just want to be the biggest protest? But, the bigger we get, the less clear our message is.

GABBY

Our message is still clear, we—

BB

Jamie, how do people report on this protest?

Beat.

JAMIE

Well, actually, they still call it a youth rally. Occasionally they'll mention the reparations stuff, but mostly no.

BB

Okay, well—

JAMIE

But that's a good question still, Gabby, how should *I* report on the protest?

GABBY

It's ... a protest of ... the federal climate policy. In general. With some more specific demands about financial policy and voting rights for minors.

BB

And nothing to do with secessionists. We're not incorporating their demands into our demands, are we?

GABBY

No. But they can have their own demands.

BB

The next time you give a speech, you should reiterate our demands. So people don't forget what we're here for.

GABBY

That seems ... sorry, I need to be meeting with Hannah. Um, Paola, you mind calling Charlie?

PAOLA

Sure thing.

GABBY

Great, okay, see you guys around.

GABBY exits. PAOLA dials CHARLIE's number.

PAOLA

You're sure you don't want to go over there yourself. BB?

BB

Why are you helping with this? You're not a secessionist.

PAOLA

Gabby's right. Strength in numbers.

PAOLA calls CHARLIE.

BB

Talia needs to get over here already.

Exit all except JAMIE. It's raining now. Enter OBAMA. O and JAMIE are preparing to make announcements. O has a nasal spray.

OBAMA

So what's the news, J?

JAMIE

Reviewing J's notes.

Mmm. Aid package passes house, hurricane Dennis. You're talking about our shelter plans, right?

OBAMA

Yep. Watch these guys fuck it up somehow.

JAMIE

Who? Eco-reps?

OBAMA

No, the protestors. Any instructions I give them, they can't follow them. Whenever I give an announcement, right after they're messaging my Glass with questions that I *just* answered.

JAMIE

They like you. They all think you're their friend.

OBAMA

Fat chance.

O takes a spray.

If they were all like you, and Gabby, and Talia, y'know, that'd be fine. Then this thing would run a lot smoother.

JAMIE

You don't think it's running smoothly? Why not?

OBAMA

Cause people are still tipping fucking cars! You want some of this?

Offering the spritz.

JAMIE

No.

OBAMA

You were hitting some *long* spritzes at your birthday party. What, you worried because it's on the Bordain list?

JAMIE

No. Is it?

OBAMA

Sí. But it's an old bottle, I didn't buy it after May 30. What happened to argumentative Jamie? What happened to "Y'all wanna tip cars" Jamie?

JAMIE

I don't think it's useful to be argumentative now—except, argumentative with the feds. My role is to accurately represent this protest to the world, and accurately represent the world to this protest.

OBAMA

And that means you can't even hit some spritz?

JAMIE

You conflated those two things, not me.

OBAMA

Is that a yes or a no?

JAMIE

Give me the bottle.

O tosses J the bottle, J catches it and takes two very short sprays.

Bien. Fantastic. Vamos!

J steps forward to address the protestors.

Hurricane Dennis is now a Category 3 hurricane, and should make landfall in Mobile, Alabama tomorrow. Earlier today, the Relief bill passed the House of Representatives. It includes \$1.1 trillion of aid to be dispersed among coastal states—

Wild cheering. We finally won one. OBAMA looks on this with disdain, knowing the battle isn't over yet.

As well as \$1.6 trillion in funds available as loans for reconstruction projects.

Boos.

OBAMA

Not to the protestors—they can't hear O.

Would they rather that money *wasn't* available?

JAMIE

The bill also reinstates large portions of the King Carbon Tax. The bill has yet to pass the senate, though Majority Leader Cameron Newsome has said getting it passed is his top priority.

In the middle of J's line the protestors begin to chant "Pay up," and continue for some time. Once they've started to subside.

Alright, that's all from me. Here's Obama, O's gonna talk about our plan of action for when Dennis hits.

OBAMA takes J's place.

OBAMA

Alright, *mira*, this is importantísimo. If you were asleep during Jamie's announcement, which, I don't know how you could've been with that chant, but

Claps hands together hard several times.

Wake up! This is important. When Hurricane Dennis hits, part of it is going to hit Tallahassee as well. At that time, if you are out here, you will die. Possibly. So, when the hurricane's a few hours off, we are going to march over to Graham Park, where all the energy contractor offices are, and together with Eco-Reps—we got some people from Eco-Reps out here?

Some cheers.

Together with them—more of them—we're having a sit-in there. We're going to ride the storm out, and at the same time protest the dick-shit contractors, that are operating high-impact power plants, that are *still running as I speak.*

Cheers from everyone.

So pack some snacks, some food, water, make sure you have that stuff ready, because when we go, we're going, and anyone who gets left behind or doesn't bring supplies—we're not gonna wait around for you.

Exit OBAMA. Hurricane Dennis hits. A total downpour. There should be no thunder sounds, hurricanes don't have thunder and lightning.

JAMIE

Despite Obama's misgivings, our march to Graham Park went off without a hitch. Some protesters just went home, but in all we had a thousand people filling the lobbies of the energy offices, in addition to the seven hundred or so from Eco-Reps. It even got some good coverage, mainly because it was so easy to take the fact that we were both taking shelter *and* protesting at the same time, and flip it into a juicy hook for a news story. The headlines wrote themselves. But those stories were steam-rolled once stories started coming out of Mobile and New Orleans.

Enter GABBY, TALIA, OBAMA, BB, and PAOLA. They all sit on the floor cross-legged, in a semi-circle. They are playing an AR game with their Glass, similar to chess. To move pieces they make slight, precise hand motions where the piece is on the game board they can all see.

BB

It's my go, right?

OBAMA

Por favor, don't do what I think you're going to do.

BB

Huh? Why? You scared?

JAMIE

No collusion!

OBAMA

I'm not colluding, I'm just saying ... I really hope she doesn't do what I think she's about to do.

BB

I don't even know what I'm about to do, how can you know what my next move is?

TALIA

O could just be trying to scare you off of doing something that would hurt O.

OBAMA

That's exactly what I'm doing—or it would be, if I thought it would work.

BB

Oh, wait, I see—okay, I can snipe that fort. Is that what—am I not supposed to do that?

JAMIE

Don't answer that, O.

OBAMA

Fuckin' secretary general over here, *Jesús*.

BB

But, why ... I don't see why I wouldn't ...

She goes ahead and makes the obvious move. OBAMA dies a little inside. JAMIE quickly makes the move J's been planning. TALIA, after a moment, makes a move to ambush the pieces BB left unguarded.

OBAMA

Fuck.

BB

Oh. Oh I see.

OBAMA

Ooooookay. So. Mmm. I should've budgeted for the incompetence of others.

TALIA

Or the competence of me.

OBAMA

I *had* budgeted for that, but that trap seemed so obvious to me, but evidently no ...

BB

Lo siento. I was looking for a trap around the fort, you know, not around—

OBAMA

No no, *está bien*, can't get mad at you for how you move your pieces.

Although O is.

Alright,

Moving a piece away from TALIA's newly claimed spaces.

Retreat! Retreat, soldiers!

Pause. Focus shifts to GABBY, whose turn it is.

GABBY

Oh. Oh shit, sorry. Sorry, I'm just ... looking at these articles and videos from New Orleans.

She tries to focus on the game for a moment, but she can't.

Lo siento, I can't ... y'all go on playing, I can't, I'm just too distracted right now.

JAMIE

No, I know. Me too.

GABBY

God. *Dios mío*, it's like Katrina all over again.

BB

Katrina? Was that a hurricane?

JAMIE

Back in the aughts. It wrecked New Orleans, and the feds fumbled the recovery effort.

GABBY

When my mom was a kid, living there. God damn it. It's like, we're going a hundred miles an hour in the wrong direction, and all we can do is just ask that we slow down and drive safely, and maybe *eventually* turn around—but regardless, it'll be *years* before we've driven back to the point where we started. This is just the fourth tropical storm of this season, and look at the damage it's done. It's just a Category 3, but because of the May 30 flooding, it may as well be a Category 5! This is only the beginning of it all ...

JAMIE puts a hand on GABBY's arm. Pause.

Lo siento. I'm just a bit worn down. I'm gonna go take a nap, y'all can keep playing without me.

She logs out of the game, then stands and exits.

Pause.

OBAMA

So. Paola, your turn now.

Enter GABBY, EVAN, and CHARLIE. All congregate around the lawn chairs. JAMIE addresses the audience.

JAMIE

Adjusted for inflation, Hurricane Dennis is the costliest natural disaster since Hurricane Jordan—so, the second most costly natural disaster in the history of the US. That is, not counting May 30 as a natural disaster. It's difficult to draw the line between nature and man-made, but if you take humans out of the equation May 30 definitely doesn't happen. Hurricane Dennis, or a hurricane like it, may still happen, though the damage it does is amplified by May 30, so it's all a big mess. A few days later, the Coastal Recovery and Reconstruction Bill passes the senate. It immediately becomes clear that the process for applying for grants is a total clusterfuck. Each coastal state is allotted a proportional amount of the money automatically, but for major reconstruction projects, states have to submit applications for specific amounts of funds, and believe it or not, there are not nearly enough funds to go around.

EVAN

So, is this gonna take a while?

GABBY

Well, it could. Why?

EVAN

Cause I've got to get home.

CHARLIE

Got to get home? Why?

EVAN

My dad had to evacuate during the storm, but he just got back and his place is in toto trashed. He needs help—

CHARLIE

So you mean, your *dad's* home? In Pensacola?

EVAN

Yeah, the bus leaves in twenty minutes, so—

GABBY

Then you should probably just go.

EVAN

Alright, well—

CHARLIE

What the hell? Since when is—

EVAN

I told you, he just got there, he had to evacuate during Dennis, and now—

CHARLIE

How long are you gonna be down there?

EVAN

As long as it takes. He doesn't have anyone to help him, everyone there is in the same place as him, trying to take care of their shit before another storm comes.

CHARLIE

Well you might as well just give up the protest then, huh?

EVAN

No—wha, if I have time, I'll come back, but—

OBAMA

Leave him alone, he's gotta help his family, would you not do the same in his situation?

CHARLIE

I wouldn't! His dad works for GECO! That whole town is one big GECO office, I wouldn't go and rebuild shit for them.

EVAN

I'm rebuilding it for my dad, not—

OBAMA

To CHARLIE.

You're saying, if your house was ravaged by Dennis, and your parents called—

CHARLIE

I wouldn't. I'm loyal to this protest, not my parents.

EVAN

Well, I'm loyal to both, and right now, my dad needs me more, so—bye, I've got to

CHARLIE

Like you ever cared about this protest.

EVAN

I do! I care about *y'all*. And, I don't know, I'm not a political, I just don't get politics okay, but I care about you guys, and—

OBAMA

Go, Evan. Charlie's the only one who's having trouble understanding this.

CHARLIE

Y'all are the ones not understanding.

EVAN

Alright, well, *adiós*, hopefully I'll be back soon.

Ad libbed farewells from all but CHARLIE.

CHARLIE

At the tail end of everyone else's good-byes, just before EVAN steps offstage.
Bye.

GABBY

Okay, well, this is sort of along the lines of what I wanted to talk to you guys about. There's a lot to talk about at the next leadership meeting, and I wanted to get all of your opinions— I guess, except Evan, maybe I can call him later during his bus ride—

CHARLIE

You weren't going to get an opinion out of him anyway. This protest is just a party to him.

Pause. No one wants to re-open that can of worms.

GABBY

So, the question is, how do we go forward with the protest now? Because, the relief bill does meet some of our demands—we have a carbon tax,

TALIA makes a derisive noise at this.

And funding for mass transit, and for housing of displaced persons.

TALIA

The carbon tax isn't nearly enough. The tax needs to hit specific companies that have a history of high pollution rates.

CHARLIE

And we're no closer to any voting age laws!

GABBY

So then, how do we go forward?

CHARLIE

Demand lower voting age, demand *actual* punitive taxes.

BB

Not ... um, not anything else?

CHARLIE

No. What else?

BB

Good. *Bien*, cash, no, I just ... I'm glad we're all focused.

JAMIE

I ...

GABBY

Yes, Jamie?

JAMIE

I think we should consider what the protesters, in general, want. We lost a lot of them after we came back from the sit-in, and we're shedding protesters each day.

OBAMA

How many are we at now?

JAMIE

About a thousand.

TALIA

A lot of that is probably people like Evan, who have to take care of damage done to their houses.

OBAMA

Sí, but people are just getting burned out in general. The crowd isn't as enthusiastic, I've noticed. I think a lot of them believe we've already won.

CHARLIE

We could incorporate some secessionist demands. Secessionists are still enthusiastic as hell.

TALIA

There we go.

CHARLIE

What? Y'all incorporated Eco-Reps, why can't—

BB

But, Charlie, secessionists—are you a secessionist?

CHARLIE

Sí.

BB

Okay, well y'all's goals are counter to our goals. We can't get reparations if we aren't part of the United States!

CHARLIE

We could get UN aid.

TALIA

That is not something that we want. The UN has much less imperative to see us succeed than the US does—as long as we stay a part of the US.

CHARLIE

As long as we stay a part of the US, we'll keep going through this cycle of dependence, where we have to look to them to pick us up.

TALIA

And it's better to be in a cycle of dependence on the UN and the IMF?

CHARLIE

At least we'd be free!

GABBY

Wait—hold on, y'all—

BB

Why should we endorse a group that flies a, *como*, a confederate flag?

CHARLIE

One person flew it, that's not—that's always—

GABBY

Wait wait wait, everyone, what do y'all think about some sort of, open, democratic process of drafting a new set of demands? We could let the protesters themselves put together something that they're excited about.

Beat.

OBAMA

No. No way.

JAMIE

You're the one that said they were less enthusiastic.

OBAMA

I know, but we should not turn them over to themselves.

PAOLA

We could resolve this secessionist dispute.

OBAMA

Not likely. What happens when they just make some ridiculous manifesto that includes everything that everyone wants? That would just bake in the secessionist dispute, not resolve it. *Quiero decir*, some of these people are just ninth graders, they're not—

CHARLIE

The whole point of this protest is that these people should be allowed to vote, how can you say that?

OBAMA

Then let them vote—draft two, maybe three manifestos, and have them vote on that.

CHARLIE

Leave it to the leadership group? What makes them any better at coming up with demands than those ninth graders?

OBAMA

Are you kidding me? Talia's interned at the Mag Lab, Gabby was president of Leon's TSMUN club, Ally was *SAIL*'s TSMUN president, Jamie was editor-in-chief of the school paper, Nolan's a presidential scholar, Hannah's a research fellow at FSU, Portillo was president of the Peace Jam club, and Max is ... I don't know, he probably has

qualifications, but you get what I mean, they're not just a bunch of these mindless chanters. Believe it or not, "Pay up! Pay up! Pay up!" is not a really solid set of demands.

BB

"Mindless"? Really?

OBAMA

Lo siento. Unmindful then. They wouldn't know the first thing about leading this organization.

CHARLIE

If we leave it up to the leadership group, they're not gonna offer anything that anyone's really excited about, and this whole thing will die out.

BB

You're just worried there won't be a secessionist option to vote for, no?

CHARLIE

Why don't you shut-up BB.

OBAMA

American pronunciation.
Jesus.

GABBY

Charlie, don't talk to her like that.

CHARLIE

I'm sick of her—

To BB.

I'm sick of your comments about the secessionists, like we're some disease. You know, that's how the rest of the country feels about the south.

BB

Uh, maybe it has something to do with secessionists flying confederate flags.

CHARLIE

Again with—

GABBY

Guys, both of you, calm—

CHARLIE

No, this is bullshit, she keeps—

PAOLA

Loud.

Be quiet and stop arguing!

Silence. No one's ever seen that side of PAOLA.

GABBY

*Gracias, Paola. Everyone. We're all on the same page here. We all feel like we're being overlooked—as minors, or as southerners, or as minorities, or as secessionists. And we all want to be heard. And we're under a lot of pressure, and it feels like we're crabs in a bucket, and it doesn't help that there aren't nearly enough funds to go around and all the coastal states are doing the same thing as us, fighting for attention—but, *mira*. We need to voice our concerns together, and we need to direct them in the same direction, not at one another. So, I'll take these ideas to the leadership meeting. And if any of you felt like you weren't being acknowledged, you can come and talk to me in person, *bien*?*

CHARLIE

Bien.

BB

Bien. Gracias, Gabby.

Exit all but JAMIE.

JAMIE

It turns out our crisis of enthusiasm is quickly remedied by dipshit-in-chief Jonathan Maddox. As the tidal wave of grant applications grows, Maddox orders an immediate funding freeze for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, for all but the most urgent projects. Ironically, Mobile and New Orleans end up better off, because of how dire their situation is, than cities like Miami or Charleston. Hundreds of thousands of people flood the streets to protest this, and our protest numbers grow to almost two thousand. Thousands of federal workers strike, and on 26 June, Maddox demands that state governors exercise their emergency powers and break up these protests, as they pose a threat to national security and public health in a time when ...

Trying to remember.

fuck, what did he say? In a time ... *Dios mío*, I hate him. All this with the threat that if state and local governors do not do something to get their people cooperating with the feds again, *then he will*. This threat does not de-escalate the situation, and on June 27 a nationwide march to impeach Maddox brings out six million protesters, mostly concentrated along the east coast and throughout the southeast. Riots break out in Liberty City, Miami, killing one police officer and two protesters. A Republican representative files a preliminary impeachment inquiry for Maddox, though on the whole, congress is waiting to see if Maddox really is about to declare a national state of emergency. As are we all.

JAMIE goes to the edge of the stage, and addresses the protesters.

Governor Fuentes announced this morning that he is “just as concerned about the threat that certain demonstrations pose to our state as President Maddox” —

A mix of boos and cheers.

And he is making it a top priority to negotiate with the workers' groups that are striking right now. He declined to comment on the riots in Liberty City, or on permitting the use of K-gas.

Enter CHARLIE, GABBY, OBAMA, TALIA, and BB.

CHARLIE

It's the last god damn straw. If Maddox comes in here with an army, of federal troops, and tries to put down protests—*quiero decir*, you see what I'm getting at.

OBAMA

Yes, Charlie, it's the only thing you're ever getting at.

TALIA

Maddox won't do that. Just like he hasn't done anything about China.

BB

Dios mío, I forgot China existed. What's—*quiero decir* ... you know what I mean. What's happening over there, with Indonesia?

JAMIE

Pretty much—

CHARLIE

Who cares? We have our own stuff to worry about. Like the fact that there's a group of protesters here, who

GABBY

Sí.

CHARLIE

Continuous, not stopping for GABBY.
are in favor of Fuentes using whatever means necessary to disperse obstructionist protesters.

GABBY

So, we'll be drafting the two or three manifestos, for folks to vote on, in a few days, and—

CHARLIE

We need a strong condemnation of Maddox's threats, a demand that Fuentes not comply with them.

BB

Yes—in *toto*, *cien por ciento*, I completely agree with Charlie. *Como*, anything else, it's like we're shooting ourselves in the foot. How can we have a protest that is protesting the existence of other protests, it's—

JAMIE

Well, there are ... Their position is, that Fuentes should target the really unruly ones. And federal workers on strike. Because—

BB

That's bullshit—*Pues, lo siento*, never mind, you're not actually in agreement with them.

GABBY

I don't think it should be a part of the manifesto.

OBAMA

You mean not a part of all of the options?

GABBY

Not a part of any of them. There was a poll on the website earlier, people are split either way, pretty much down the middle.

BB

Then, *como*, get rid of the half that we don't agree with. Is there, what's the problem with that?

GABBY

The problem is—

CHARLIE

Bigger isn't always better Gabby.

BB

Oh, now you're the one saying that. Nice.

CHARLIE

What? I've been saying we should keep it smaller.

BB

Except when you wanted your secessionists included.

CHARLIE

And you were fine with being inclusive when it meant bringing in the Eco-Reps.

OBAMA

Yes yes! We're all hypocrites! Will you two shut-up and let Gabby talk?

GABBY

Right. The problem is that, if we divide over that, suddenly, that's what our protest is—and their protest, if they all decide to form their own group. Suddenly that's, *como*, the defining issue, and it shouldn't be.

TALIA

But if we stay together—how can we be pro-federal-cooperation, and at the same time be protesting federal policy? If we keep just ignoring these differences—and especially this difference, where we have people over by the Clerk’s office that think Maddox should just go ahead, give the order, and have federal troops come in and disperse any obstructionist protest—if we keep ignoring those differences, our protest will have no message whatsoever.

OBAMA

Sí, what is our message?

GABBY

It’s the same as it’s ever been.

JAMIE

Sí, but you get a different answer to that question depending on who you ask.

GABBY

Is that a bad thing?

JAMIE

Is it?

GABBY

I’m asking you, have an opinion, Jamie.

JAMIE

I ... I haven’t thought about it much. I certainly enjoy having all these different opinions around me ... I don’t think it’s politically ideal though ... I think, at least, the people should have an option, in one of the manifestos, to vote for a condemnation of Maddox’s ultimatum.

Throughout the rest of the scene, JAMIE infrequently makes notes.

OBAMA

No, this is the problem, an option isn’t a guarantee, people won’t vote for that—we need to insure that, no matter what—

GABBY

We aren’t doing anything. *I* am going to discuss this at the leadership meeting, I’m just asking for input.

OBAMA

Well I—

GABBY

Paola, what do you think, I never bother to ask you, so ...

PAOLA

Strength in numbers. I don't think we should jeopardize that.

BB

There was no point in doing that, Gabby, she's just going to agree with you no matter what.

PAOLA

I agree with her because I trust her.

BB

What's your opinion on Maddox's ultimatum then? Huh?

Beat.

You don't know what to say, because Gabby hasn't said anything?

Pause.

PAOLA

I don't see a problem with that.

BB

With the ultimatum?

PAOLA

With basing my opinion on someone I trust.

BB

But—come on, *por favor*, Paola, this is huge, this is *hugísimo*, how can you not have an opinion on Maddox threatening to use federal troops, with, with K-gas, to put down protests!

Pause.

Wow. You're fucking ridiculous.

GABBY

BB, please.

BB

I thought I was the dumb one, at least I can form my own opinions.

OBAMA

Alright there.

CHARLIE

Yeah, you're not exactly a philosopher yourself, BB.

BB

But I don't have to wait for someone else's approval to think something.

CHARLIE

BB, you are *como* the exact average of the reparations movement—you have no opinion that doesn't align with—

OBAMA

Oh, *dios mío* will you two, honestly, shut the fuck up? None of you—*none of you*—are brilliant political thinkers and warriors of an ideological revolution, you're *como* two steps above the mob that is the rest of the protesters, and that's *it*. Now Gabby—

BB

You're an asshole. Just because you get in front of the crowd and they all love you, just because you're so smart from stims and Fenner colonies, you think you're better than them. You're not, we're—

OBAMA

I actually am, and that's the point, Gabby, that demand, that Fuentes not comply with Maddox, that goes on every single option for the vote, or I'm out of here. Your big announcer, your mascot, is gone.

Pause.

GABBY

I'm sorry to hear that, Obama, but I won't include it on every option. And you should apologize to BB and Charlie.

OBAMA

What? What did I say that wasn't true?

TALIA

True doesn't matter, you were being nasty.

OBAMA

You're telling me that you weren't absolutely sick to death of hearing them go back and forth?

TALIA

So what if I was, you can't talk to them that way.

OBAMA

Well, I'm not sorry, because everyone around here needs to stop acting like they're ML-fucking-K when they can't even spell ML-fucking-K, and god damn it is going to be *good* to get a break from that, so everyone, *adiós*, don't be a stranger, call me if you change your mind.

OBAMA exits.

BB

So, *como*, who's going to do the announcements?

GABBY

Do you want to?

BB

That's not, no, that, I wasn't getting at—

GABBY

You Jamie?

J is taking notes.

Jamie?

JAMIE

To the audience.

Should I have been more involved in that situation? Should I have stopped trying to be an observer, stopped trying to understand the inner workings of this protest, and tried to defuse things? Was defusion even possible?

Well, the demand that Fuentes ignore Maddox's ultimatum was on *one* of the three sets that protesters could vote for, but that one didn't win. BB and Talia didn't make a big show of it like Obama, but they left the protest after that.

BB and TALIA exit.

And a few days later, Fuentes started using K-gas to disperse protests. We never got to see if Maddox was bluffing, because every state governor, and several local officials, followed his request. Fuentes, ever the Mugwump, shut down protests regardless of ideological alignment. Lots of protests dissolved, anticipating that they would be shut-down, and flash protests became the only form of political demonstration—brief, one-to-three-hour gatherings organized on the fly, usually with a hundred or so in attendance. And, at a certain point, we became “The Last Protest in Florida.” That wasn't really true, but we were the last one of our size. I'm starting to come to the conclusion that the reason we weren't shut down—well, until we were—was because people couldn't figure us out. Neither party knew if they should feel threatened by us, so we were in some sort of no man's land, and no one went after us. We got a lot of press out of it, including a short Frontline special.

Long pause.

We were the fluff piece. We were the fucking fluff piece to make everyone go, aww, isn't that cute. The reporters presented it like, *here's these whacky kids that think they should have rights, ha ha ha, oh look, they even have some secessionists and reparations supporters among them, isn't that cute?* I tried my hardest to really capture what we were, on my own, in my own little short documentary, but honestly, it was a mess. There was no way to encapsulate it. We were a bunch of kids that, our parents had kept us locked in our rooms for eighteen years, and we'd just finally been allowed out,

A sudden, violent shift in tone.

only to see that our parents had fucking torn the fucking house apart! They'd been tearing the house apart to use it for firewood, and there was hardly any house left, and they were

thousands of dollars in debt, and the whole place was flooded because they'd never bothered to fix the god damn roof—and then they turned around and starting talking to us like we were idiots, and asking us to clean it all up! So we were all angry, frustrated, and we were sending that anger in fifty different directions at once, and I don't know what the point of the protest was, because—well, Erica ... Erica thought that she had some idea. After the Frontline crew had come through, someone from the *Tallahassee Democrat* was doing a big piece on us.

Enter ERICA.

And they interviewed Erica, I guess because she wasn't at the protest but she knew something about it—but they really shouldn't have, and they made it out like she spoke for us, which was unfair, but she said,

ERICA

To interviewer.

No, it's also a bit of a youth rally, but it's mostly about reparations. That's really the main thrust of it, y'know, because that's the really big picture thing, that's what the demands really are, and the youth rights thing was more because, you know, that's how it started, and that's what we all have in common, being young people. No, definitely not a youth rally, they don't like when people call it that, because it's like it's trivializing it.

CHARLIE

God damn it, why did they interview her? And why did she have to talk like she knew everything? "Trivializing"? It's not trivial to want to be acknowledged as people! And she didn't even say anything about the secessionists, or the socialists.

JAMIE

To audience.

We'd also picked up a socialist camp in that time. Erica's comments chafed at a lot of people, a lot of people thought they were spot on, most everyone wondered why this girl who was not regularly attending the protest was speaking for us, and Erica herself,

ERICA

In a call with JAMIE. Exit CHARLIE.

I am so sorry, I thought, I mean, that was just my opinion, I didn't think they would present it like it was fact.

JAMIE

Yeah, but you stated it pretty confidently, Erica.

ERICA

I really didn't mean to offend y'all, I'm, I thought—didn't you tell me you didn't like people calling it a youth rally?

JAMIE

I don't like people *only* calling it a youth rally, Erica.

ERICA

I emailed them, I asked them to take it out—

JAMIE

It doesn't matter now, we got an OTD.

ERICA

You ... what?

JAMIE

An order to disperse. Fuentes thinks we're a Republican group, and he doesn't want anyone to accuse him of playing favorites in his game of protest breaking, so.

ERICA

Oh ... oh god, I'm so sorry—

JAMIE

I know, Erica, but. I'm not sure how sustainable this protest was anyway.

ERICA

Oh, um ...

JAMIE

I have a meeting to go to.

ERICA

Oh, uh—

JAMIE

Adiós.

ERICA

Adiós.

Exit ERICA. JAMIE, GABBY, and PAOLA sit down.

JAMIE

Do we fight this, or do we just disperse?

GABBY

People are leaving already. Just, going out for breakfast or lunch and not coming back.

Pause.

I need to give a speech. What speech do you give at this kind of ... I mean, what is ... did I mess up? Should we have just stuck to one specific agenda, and kicked out anyone who didn't agree?

JAMIE

Well, we'd still be getting shut down.

GABBY

I know, but would we have accomplished more, if we ...

JAMIE

We're just one protest among hundreds, we were never going to be, *como*, the magic bullet protest.

GABBY

But we didn't do *anything*. *Quiero decir*, what if we'd just focused on youth rights? And that was it?

JAMIE

Wouldn't have been nearly as big.

GABBY

I know, Jamie, I'm saying, could we have actually accomplished something?

Pause.

Or are we doomed to be ignored? Do we just have to wait until we're fifty and we have money and power to get people to pay attention? Do protests do anything?

JAMIE

Of course protests do things. They're a form of expression. "Dramatization of suffering," or something like that.

GABBY

Then what did our protest do? Paola, what did our protest do?

Pause.

PAOLA

I don't know.

GABBY

Jamie?

JAMIE

It's the highest profile voting age protest ever. Well, in the US. Since the 26th amendment.

GABBY

A high-profile protest, but in the middle of a hundred other protests.

JAMIE

So, do you think it was pointless?

GABBY

Well. I got something out of it. It was a learning experience I suppose. But what—when all these protesters go home, what can they say that they *did*? When people drove by this protest, what did they see?

Pause.

JAMIE

To audience. PAOLA exits and GABBY stands as J speaks.

Hence the crying for hours. Well, that came later. Gabby gave her final speech, something about enduring, and being ready, and taking this experience and building on it later in our lives.

GABBY

This last week has been hard for a lot of us. Going forward, it's hard to imagine a world where people listen to us. It's hard to imagine a world where people will start changing their minds, on anything. Sometimes, it's hard to imagine a world. But we all have 65 years. By current life-expectancy figures, we all have about 65 years left in our lives to volunteer, to fight, to scream, and to lift up the voices of the next generation. The monsters who put us in this situation—a lot of them are dead. A lot of them will pass away soon. It's hard to imagine, but one day, they'll be a memory, and we'll be them. And we need to do our best to live our lives in a way that—in a way that the teenagers of 2100 will not see as a total disregard for their existence. We don't have jobs. Only some of us have a vote. We don't have university degrees or certificates, we don't have attention, we don't have beaches, we don't have economic stability, but we do have our whole lives. This is not the end for us, this is our beginning.

And some people may say this protest was pointless—that all these protests have been pointless, but remember, the fight lives on in all of us. This demonstration will only be a failure when we give up, when we decide that nothing can be done, when we make the same mistakes that caused May 30 in the first place.

Loud, a set-up for the crowd to shout back "No!"

So tell me, when you've all left this square, when you've all dispersed, are you going to give up?

Total silence. GABBY exits.

JAMIE

And we dispersed. The day after, I set out to write this big, long personal essay about the protest, and I was ready to do it, ready to take all this great material I'd been gathering and put it together properly, and I started looking through all my notes, and I started looking at how we'd been misrepresented, and I realized that I couldn't think of any way to spin it into a cohesive essay, and I started crying. And here we are. I still don't know what the point was. Maybe the point was just to say, "this sucks.

Directly, to the audience, to the actual people in the seats in the theater.

What you've done sucks. What you're doing sucks. You're hurting us." But the whole time, I thought it was some political thing. I thought there was some core ideological thread that could explain everything, and maybe explain how I can get all my friends to talk to

each other again. But ... no. The only thing I can think of is, "Here we are." "This hurts."
"It's hot out here."

J sticks out J's tongue and makes a plllllt sound at the audience, giving them the middle finger, and then calls ERICA.

Hola Erica! So, I wanted to ask you about volunteering.

To audience.

See. Like I promised. Pity party's over.

To ERICA.

Oh cash! When can I come in then?

END OF PLAY.

Afterword

You could say that I fell in with the right crowd in high school. “Fell in” because, for the most part, I met them first as friends of friends, not through any shared extracurricular interest or from any effort on my part to meet new people. And “right crowd” not because they were straight-laced t-totalers or anything, but because they were incredible kids (and *are* incredible people, for that matter.) They were kids who talked about politics during lunch. Kids who talked about, and argued about, Ferguson and Santa Barbara and Syria, about Common Core and Jackie Pons and gay marriage, about dress code and rape culture and climate change. Kids who made up jingles about socialism. Kids who discussed gender and sexuality without the tied tongues of adults nor the giggles of less mature kids. Kids who participated in Model UN and Peace Jam and GSA. Kids (a few of them at least) who once went to the principal to ask that he improve the school’s nearly non-existent sex-ed. Very liberal kids all, some of whom had liberal parents and some of whom had conservative parents. Kids who were vegetarian and vegan. Kids who, as they were mostly girls, never had any reservations in answering my questions when some bit of common female knowledge went over my head. Kids who acted, kids who ran, kids who wrote, kids who played instruments, kids who spoke Spanish, a kid who spoke Portuguese, a kid who spoke Russian, kids who knew Latin (and who *could* speak it, though it’s Latin, so they mostly didn’t.) I don’t mean to give the impression that we were all just pundits or politicians—we of course did talk about other things, about teachers and homework, tattoos and vacations, books and movies, food and theatre—but these are the relevant points for this afterword.

I don’t know if this group of kids was special, if there are lots of people who had politically conscious friends in high school, but I can say for certain that I almost never see them portrayed in fiction. (I say “almost,” because one example is “Annabelle, Annie” by Lisa Goldstein—though it takes things from a very different, much grimmer angle, and is told from the point of view of one of the children’s mothers.) Certainly the activist college student is well-storied (*Les Misérables* comes to mind as a very dramatic example), but there is little of the politically conscious high schooler. I take this as a very personal offense—every writer seems to be willfully ignorant of the existence of my friends! The distinction between college student and high schooler may seem arbitrary to some people, but the distinction is precisely this: one group is disenfranchised, the other is not.

It isn’t just that my friends are not present in fiction, it’s that there’s a prevailing notion that young people are politically disengaged and apathetic, that they are this way because they are a) lazy, b) stupid, or c) a & b. They are too stupid, or too easily influenced by their parents, to even be allowed to vote. This is why it was and remains important to me to insist on the existence of my friends, and countless kids like them. Kids do care about politics. Kids are affected by politics. Kids are enraged by politics. In some ways, kids are more politically sophisticated, sensitive, and literate than any other group, because they are so receptive to new ideas, because they haven’t been around long enough for their ideology to start calcifying, as happens with so many adults. This is probably most prominent in language—in slurs (avoided by kids) and neologisms (wielded adeptly by kids.)

My goal in writing these characters was not to assert that all young people are hyper-politically-conscious, or that all young people will be hyper-politically conscious in the future. My goal was to reflect a piece of reality, a piece of reality which has been very prominent in my life, and which has been scarcely portrayed in media.

Of course, in reality, people 18-24 are less likely to vote than any other age group (in the US anyway.) But this is a nasty bit of circular logic. People below 18 are told they are too stupid or feeble-minded to vote, or that they have too marginal a role in society to be allowed to vote. They are told this (implicitly, or perhaps explicitly) all their lives, and probably take along with this a heaping spoonful of bullshit stereotypes about their generation that older generations have cooked up. When they finally turn 18, is it any wonder that they would not feel a strong desire to vote? Is it any wonder that they would believe their voice inconsequential? And then, that very reluctance to vote is used to reinforce the idea that there should be a minimum age limit for voting, and that it should be high.

My friends stand outside of that cycle. Apparently, they did not believe the lie that they didn't know anything about politics. That is what I find so sorely missing from representations of young people—the spark of defiance, of independence, of not waiting to be given permission to start shouting about injustice. That is why stories about politically active college students are not good enough for me—because college students *have* been told they are allowed to be smart, they are allowed to be politically engaged. Even in YA books, high schoolers are so often told that they are the chosen ones, that they are special, before they decide to save the world. This is not the reality I'm familiar with. Yes, the world is in need of saving, yes the adults are failing the children, yes the young will have to save the world for themselves—that's all the same—but no, no angel or dragon or prophecy is going to indicate them as the saviors.

This is why I so wanted to write a story with characters in this situation, because I have a tremendous amount of empathy for them. The double-burn of facing a calamity and being told your opinions are not needed in resolving the crisis. The bizarre feeling of being a civilian in a warzone, of sitting in a bunker murmuring and cracking jokes about the militias and bombings and aid convoys as gunfire hammers in the distance. Of course, young people are not the only disenfranchised group, and they are a special kind of disenfranchised in that they have built-in social mobility. They will all, inevitably and on-time, be granted the right to vote, which cannot be said for prisoners serving life sentences (except in some states) or residents of Puerto Rico (in federal elections anyway.)

So for this play, the main political issues are ones which are especially tied up with young people, and the recognition of young people as people: climate change, and voting rights. (Of course, climate change also heavily effects Puerto Rico, so we arrive at the real reason I didn't focus on legitimately disenfranchised people: because I just know more about Florida teens than I do about prisoners or Puerto Rico. I leave it to someone else to write *San Juan ca. 2045*.)

The idea of youth rights, for me, is wrapped up inextricably with environmental justice. If you believe the future generations are going to shit—better said, if you *lie to yourself* that the future generations are going to shit, are getting dumber and dumber, it's a lot easier to not care about your contributions to the apocalypse they'll suffer. If you don't think of young people as people, or as members of society, or as people who are affected by politics, then you will not weigh them, their suffering, in the calculus of your actions. If you don't think of teens and kids as fellows, then even if you comprehend that

your actions will have consequences, you will accept those consequences, because you'll think, *hey, I know I'm fucking the world, but I'm part of the world—I'm only doing this to myself*. But you're not, you're doing it to our children and grandchildren.

I suppose you can say that that is the ethos from which the world and characters of this play were developed, if not the particular inspiration for it. More like the soil, microbiota, and moisture surrounding the seed of the story, rather than the seed itself. The seed itself was "Protests all te time play [*sic*]." As hasty and brief as that initial note was, the idea was actually rolling around in my head for a while. Winter of 2016-2017 was a time of protests in the US. There were protests after the 2016 election results and protests surrounding the inauguration. There were planned protests and impromptu protests. We had just elected a president that we did not elect—what more could be expected, in those circumstances, than waves of people screaming "I don't want this!"

Protests were all-consuming, and at the same time, the fear that protests would not help anything was ever-present, even when it wasn't spoken. And in this context I began to think a lot about what the function of protests was, societally. What enabled protests? Who went to protests? What issues did people protest? What incentivized people to actually get up and do something? And as I thought, I began to envision a world of constant protests. A world where protests replaced social functions (I realize that, for certain subsections of the population, this world is a reality.) A world where organizing and attending protests was easy, and where a hyper-informed, hyper-intelligent young populace could fuel these demonstrations.

I could've taken this idea a lot of different directions, but I ended up using it as a play because I was in a playwriting class in the spring of 2017 and needed to write a full-length as the main assignment for that course.

A few ideas guided me in writing this play and developing the world for it. Of course, there was my desire to represent my friends, to show how politics can affect people even when they don't seem to *directly* affect them, and to explore protest culture.

Another important idea was that these characters feel somewhat foreign (hence the new slang, Spanglish, new gender-neutral pronouns, and "Obama" being used as a first name.) Hand-in-hand with this, I wanted the characters to be better people, more ethical and sensitive, than my current-day peers. That's why they're all vegan (granted, it's much easier for them), among other things. Essentially, with these two guiding principles, I aimed to create characters that were as distant from Millennials as Millennials are from Boomers.

I also wanted to present a different political landscape, where Republicans weren't clearly conservative, and Democrats weren't clearly liberal. (I suppose this idea also ties in with my desire to portray that generation gap.)

So as part of my worldbuilding notes, I drew up a list of slang phrases, and made a chart outlining major political issues and the party stances on them.

Far and away, the majority of my notetaking was devoted to the characters—outlining their relationships to one another and their unique circumstances which would inform how the various news stories and policy changes in the play affected them.

Because of the immense world-building that went into this play, combined with a heavy course load during the spring semester, this play took a while to write. Although I could find snatches of free time to write it in, I needed more than snatches. I needed big blocks of time where I could be immersed in the language and politics of these characters—and those blocks were hard to come by. I finally finished it in May of 2017

and took only a few months to get around to editing it. That was because I fervently did not want this big, strange play haunting me, as I knew it would if I dragged my feet in getting around to revising it. So in July I decided to just put all my effort into finishing the thing, by hook or by crook. Here's an excerpt from my journal describing that initially arduous process:

Tallahassee Circa 2045 may turn out to be the greatest turn around in the history of editing. When I first read through it, I really did not want to read through it. I mean *really*. ... When I got to the end of the first act, far and away the more broken half of the play, I flung the thing across the room into the corner between the door and the foot of my bed. The brads popped out of it and it exploded, and I promptly proceeded to shove the pages under the bed with my foot.

Remember, I had just finished with *Suggest the Empire*, which took a lot of time to edit, and here was this play two-thirds the length of StE which seemed to have far deeper problems, and it looked like it would be an albatross around my neck. But, the next day, when I was feeling better about it (the script-throwing may have had something to do with me just being a bit burnt out that day) I read the second act—which, essentially, works perfectly.

... I'm about to read the second draft, the one in which I've amped up the friction for act one, so maybe I'll throw the thing across the room again, or maybe this thing—and I really cannot stress enough how broken it was. It wasn't just me making a big fuss out of nothing, the first act was really a fever headache in print—will turn out to be the albatross I originally expected it to be.

[...]

Turns out it's the biggest turn around ever. Nice.

The play went through one final edit in February of this year. The initial purpose of that edit was to make a few minor changes that'd been nagging at the back of my head for a while, perform a final proofread of the play for this e-book version, and improve some of the Spanish, which, being in Spain at the time, I had considerably more experience in now. However, I also ended up adding Gabby's speech at the end. Originally the speech was only alluded to by Jamie, but that felt too abrupt to me, so I decided to throw in a little splash of optimism by having Gabby actually deliver part of it. I can't remember now if I decided this before or after the shooting in Parkland, Florida, but I know that once that killing occurred, it dominated my thoughts, and especially my thoughts surrounding this play.

It dominated me writing this afterword, which I wrote most of in February. A shooting, in my home state. Protests, in my home city. High school students, so like my friends, so like the characters in this play, being so brave. I found myself inspired by them, and terrified that they would be treated like the protagonists of Tc2045.

I am now finishing this afterword, and preparing to publish the play, over three months after the shooting. Just days ago, there was another school shooting in Texas. Parkland has faded somewhat from public memory, and who knows if this new shooting will get swept under the rug or not. I greatly hope that these students can affect change,

but my God is it bleak, and I often feel like Jamie, wondering if it's all truly pointless, regardless of how loud we scream.

Because I don't want to be a (total) bummer, I'll close with two anecdotes:

While I was in Spain, I managed to go to the March for Our Lives demonstration in Barcelona—surely a pointless protest, given that it was a protest against US gun policy that took place in Spain. *And yet*, the protest alleviated a great deal of personal anxiety over not being able to do anything about a tragedy which had occurred in my own state. The protest gave me the sense that I was not alone, standing there as I did with a small band of expats in the Plaza de Catalunya. Was that protest pointless? Can we really say that feeling that, in a world of injustice, you aren't alone doesn't have value in itself? Can we really say that huddling together during a cold and uncaring storm, sharing in and listening to each other's pain, does not have value in itself just because it doesn't stop the rain?

And the second anecdote: this play somewhat made me vegan. Although I'd been trending in that direction more and more (and I'd been vegetarian all my life), spending so much time thinking about these characters, their world, their behavior, got me to really commit, and bit by bit remove dairy and egg products from my life. I think it's a good rule of thumb to think, *what will progressive young people of the future think of as immoral and unjust?* and then stop doing that.

What is the purpose of these two anecdotes? Nothing is pointless. Change happens in small, odd ways. It's hot out here, and even if just saying "it's hot out here" doesn't change that, if enough people say it we at least won't have to feel alone.

Francis Bass
May 2018