



SOGGY VICTOR'S UTOPIA

A collection of short plays by
Jacob Surovsky

CONTENTS

WATERING HOLE	2
GALAXY DANCE	9
THE COOKIE CRUMBLES	18
HAIKUS	21
WEBBER	25

HELLO

Thank you for giving these scripts a look.

I hope you get something out of them.

I'm not trying to presume, but if you would like to perform any of these pieces for any reason please do inquire at jacobsurovsky@gmail.com.

And if you enjoy these, please share them!

Cheers,

Jacob

WATERING HOLE

CHARACTERS

THE DRY MAN

MOMBLEY

JIMBO

We're at the watering hole. It's just a wide dirt lot and then a pit that's sunken into the ground and full of water. It's rustic, and not in an appealing way.

A man enters. A very dry man. He staggers towards the watering hole, his knees buckle, and he crashes to the ground. But he persists, hand over hand, inching his way to the water's edge. He submerges his face and he drinks, bubbles streaming out next to his ears.

Mombley and Jimbo enter. Jimbo wears a party hat. Mombley holds a party horn.

MOMBLEY: Birthday! Big boy! Big birthday boy!

(Mombley toots her party horn in Jimbo's face. Jimbo lets it happen.)

MOMBLEY: Look at you, a man! Finally, I get to be the first one to take you to the watering hole, and we say Hallelujah!

JIMBO: It's fine, I don't need--

MOMBLEY: But you must! You must drink!

JIMBO: I'm okay, but thank you--

MOMBLEY: Come on Jimbo, this is a historical place for us! And now it's your first time indulging in its sweet libations. Here, it's like this.

(Mombley lunges her legs out into a deep stance and leans forward into the watering hole, lapping up the silty water.)

MOMBLEY: So refreshing.

(She breaks into a violent coughing fit.)

JIMBO: ...you okay?

MOMBLEY: I'm fine, I'm fine. Sometimes it burns a bit on the way down--

JIMBO: Oh....

MOMBLEY: No no no it feels nice, it's a good burning. *(Clears throat)*
Yaaah.

JIMBO: I just don't think it's for me.

MOMBLEY: Come on, at least try it. Haven't you ever tried it?

JIMBO: Sure I've tried it.

MOMBLEY: Where have you tried it?

JIMBO: Uh....I was out at the park once, at night with some friends, and we came across a puddle...in the sidewalk, and...

MOMBLEY: And?

JIMBO: And I didn't like it, okay?

MOMBLEY: Oh come on, be sensible! That was just a puddle, of course you wouldn't like it. This is the good stuff right here, this is the proper stuff.

JIMBO: I already said I don't--

MOMBLEY: You don't have to like it....but how can you know you don't like it if you haven't even tasted it? When I was a kid, on special occasions, my parents would let me drink from their cistern in the backyard. Papa's special stash! I didn't like how it tasted then either, but I knew it was special. I could tell that it mattered. It's not even really the

taste of it....it's the culture. The whole atmosphere! It's being here together! This is where people go to be themselves....to really get to know each other! This is where life happens.

(She stoops over and slurps more brackish brine out of the watering hole.)

MOMBLEY: This is the essence of life! Come on Jimbo....look into the watering hole.

JIMBO: Why?

MOMBLEY: All great minds have stared into its ruddy depths. It will tempt you. It will quell you. It will inspire you.

(Mombley waits for Jimbo to respond. Jimbo stares into the watering hole for a while.)

(The dry man raises his head out of the water. He looks around, disoriented. He sees Jimbo and Mombley and flashes a toothy grin.)

DRY MAN: Don't mind me.

(He guzzles his head back under the water.)

MOMBLEY:

Go on, drink it.

Just lean over.

Nothing bad will happen, I promise you.

(Jimbo shrinks, his toes hanging over the edge.)

MOMBLEY: *(laughs gently.)*

You look like the day you went up on the diving board.

You stood up there on the edge forever.

You didn't want to take the leap.

What'd I do?

Remember?

I pushed ya!

(She playfully shakes Jimbo's shoulders. He stiffens.)

MOMBLEY: And nothing bad happened, remember? Nothing bad happened, because I already taught you how to swim.

JIMBO: Couldn't we have gotten froyo?

(Mombley swells.)

MOMBLEY: Are you shitting me Jimbo? I try to do one nice thing for you and you...and what are you so afraid of? Everyone does it and no one gets hurt....

(On cue, the dry man coughs up some bubbles but remains submerged.)

MOMBLEY: --Okay, some people get sick or blackout or stumble onto train tracks but I won't let that happen to you!

JIMBO: I would rather stay in control of myself.

MOMBLEY: *(Scoffs)* What do you think happens? You're going to turn into a frog!? No! All it does is it strips you down to your essence. For you that's a good thing, you have a great essence! I like to think I've raised a pretty great kid. So if that's what you're worried about, well sometimes you can't care what other people think. Why do people say "dance like nobody's watching"? They should just say "dance". I promise you, nobody's watching. Come on, dance with me.

(She starts dancing.)

JIMBO: I don't want to.

MOMBLEY: Oh don't be such a party pooper, it's your birthday! *(on rhythm)* You're poopin' on your own party!

JIMBO: Mom please--

MOMBLEY: You know this is where people your age happen. This is where you'll make business deals! Connect with old friends! Find lots of SEX! Gosh, I wasn't much older than you when I met your father

here--without this watering hole you wouldn't exist! (*She falls into a pit of despair.*) And it all goes by so quickly, ohhhhhh what happened to my baby boy?

JIMBO: He's still right here.

MOMBLEY: Can't it just slow down? Slow down.

I want to talk with you.

Just scoop you up and keep you.

Like lightning in a bottle.

JIMBO: You are talking with me.

MOMBLEY: Sure, but it isn't really talking. This is why people come here. To loosen up. To share what's deep inside.

JIMBO: What do you want to really talk about?

MOMBLEY: Have you taken any lovers lately?

JIMBO: What?

MOMBLEY: Don't get all squiggly-- don't understand that you sir are at your prime, but YOU HAVE TO LIVE IT. And then things will happen to you! Jump damn it, jump!

JIMBO: Things do happen to me....

MOMBLEY: Then tell me about them! I want to hear.

JIMBO: I've tried to but....they're not your things.

MOMBLEY: You can't say that. What kind of pansy answer is that? I can't help it if I worry....all I've ever done is tried my hardest to prepare you for the world, to give you the tools....I'm starting to think I failed you.

JIMBO: You haven't failed me mom. I just want to go home.

MOMBLEY: But you haven't even tried it!

JIMBO: I've tried it--

MOMBLEY: The sidewalk doesn't count--

JIMBO: I've TRIED IT. I'VE TRIED IT I'VE TRIED IT I'VE TRIED IT.

(Beat.)

JIMBO: At school. I was at...a party, and mostly lots of people I knew were there. And out back, everyone was lined up to drink out of the hose. So I get in line, and I'm talking to Melinda Farbunkle, who is not usually a very nice person to me and I don't normally talk to her, but that's where I happened to be in line. And we're getting closer to the hose, and she keeps nagging me. Because she likes to schmooze, and she knows that dad is in business law and she wants me to connect him to her and I slipped up and said yes--but like this is not the time, we're at a party let's chill out already. And the line is creeping up, and after Melinda has like, siphoned onto it, now it's my turn at the hose, and I drink it. It's gross, but I drink a lot of it. And it's surging through me, I feel so much all over, and it's all looking for somewhere to escape, and I feel her tapping me on the shoulder and I turn around...and the dam bursts.

I watch myself just tear into Melinda, these horrible thoughts spewing out of me...like I've become the hose and now she's siphoning it all out of me.

You're right, it was my essence. It didn't change me at all. I said those things, and I hurt her really bad.

And it got me thinking, you know sometimes it happens with dad too or you do it...you'll have a drink, sometimes more, and say something that makes everything different....

But I guess that's your essence.

(Beat.)

(Jimbo takes a Capri Sun out of his satchel and shotguns it.)

(Another beat.)

MOMBLEY: I love you, you know that.

JIMBO: I know.

MOMBLEY: And sometimes I say these crazy things out of love, because I love you.

JIMBO: You should say everything because you love me, not just the hurtful things.

MOMBLEY:

I can't believe I finally get to take you here.

I still see that little boy,
still dipping his toes in.

Sometimes I forget how much he's grown.

I'm sorry.

Do you want to get some froyo?

JIMBO: Yeah.

(They leave the watering hole.)

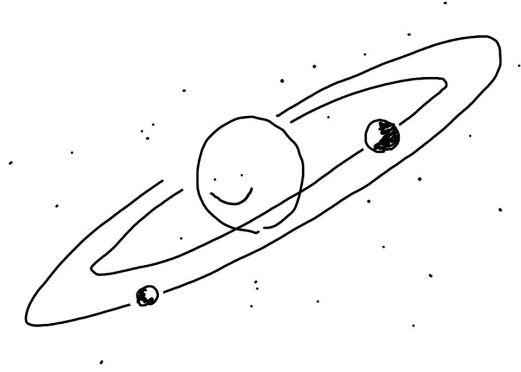
(The dry man slides in and sinks, disappearing in the murk.)



GALAXY DANCE

CHARACTERS

SUN
BEEVIL
TYLER
OLLIE
VIKKI
BAXTER
OPPO 3000
SPAX 900
THROSH
PEST(S)



A space opera.

SCENE ONE

A vast void.

Expanse.

In the distance, pinprick stars.

In the middle sleeps SUN.

Celestial chimes play.

SUN slowly stirs and wakes up.

She yawns.

SUN: SUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUN.

The expanse glows bright around her.

SUN: Good morning!

BEEVIL and TYLER, those rascals, run in chasing each other.

BEEVIL: Good morning!

TYLER: Good morning!

BEEVIL: Tag!

Beevil runs ahead of Tyler now.

TYLER: Hey! Get back here!

They giggle and chase each other.

SUN: Be careful now!

OLLIE tumbles in from the edge of the void and sings her name.

OLLIE: **OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE!**

BEEVIL: Hello Ollie!

OLLIE: **OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.**

The chimes play and everyone orbits in blessed harmony.

VIKKI enters and runs across the stage really fast.

VIKKI: Wubbawubbawubbawubba!

SUN: Hi Vikki!

BEEVIL: Where's she going?

SUN: Running errands.

BEEVIL: We won't see her for a while now will we?

SUN: No we won't.

TYLER: Can I go with her?

SUN: No dearest.

TYLER: Why not?

SUN: Because then we may never see your beautiful face ever again.

And I would miss you so. So please stay where I can shine on you.

OLLIE: **OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.**

BAXTER enters, careening out of control. He shouts:

BAXTER: A-whoah a-whoah a-whoah woah woah woah!

SUN: Look out sir!

OLLIE: **OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE!**

TYLER: Stop!

Baxter crashes into Ollie and there is a huge explosion. Blackout.

SCENE TWO

Baxter and Ollie are fused together, their corpses slowly dancing around the perimeter.

Tyler and Beevil still chase each other around the Sun.

BEEVIL: Are you sad?

SUN: Why would I be sad?

BEEVIL: About Ollie?

SUN: We have to leave things behind us.

BEEVIL: I'm still sad. I don't think I'll ever stop feeling this way.

Tyler catches up.

TYLER: You're it!

BEEVIL: Not fair!

Beevil starts chasing Tyler now.

SUN: Be careful with that game!

TYLER: We are!

SUN: I couldn't bear to lose you too.

BEEVIL: I miss her singing.

SUN: I do too. Let's think of happier things.

BEEVIL: Like what?

SUN: Like comets. And galaxies. Look, all of your cousins are waving back at you.

BEEVIL: Are we getting closer?

SUN: Yes.

BEEVIL: I hope I can meet them. Maybe one day our family will grow again.

TYLER: It'll probably be a very long time.

OPPO 3000, a satellite, runs by.

OPPO 3000: DING DING DING DING DING DING.

Flash! Oppo 3000 takes a photo of Beevil and Tyler and exits.

TYLER: What a handsome stranger.

SCENE THREE

Same arrangement as before.

Ollie and Baxter are a little bit closer to the center now.

BEEVIL: Hey Sun?

SUN: Yes?

BEEVIL: Has Ollie gotten closer?

SUN: I told you, don't fret yourself with Ollie.

SPAX 999, a spaceship, enters.

SPAX: RATATATATATATATATA. BLEE BLO BLEE BLO.

TYLER: There's another man!

BEEVIL: Why is it following me?

TYLER: Run faster!

Spax 999 chases Beevil around the sun and eventually catches up. It latches on.

SPAX: CHHSSHHHHHHH.

BEEVIL: *(Screams)* AHHHHHHH! GET IT OFF ME! GET IT OFF!

TYLER: Shoo! Shoo!

SUN: I don't think it listens.

SPAX: *(Hums.)* HMMMMMMMM RUGGGGGGGGGG....

Spax 999 uncouples from Beevil and flies away.

BEEVIL: Thank goodness.

TYLER: Wait what about me? COME BACK!

SCENE FOUR

Beevil has spots all over his face now.

He coughs smoke.

Ollie and Baxter are closer still.

BEEVIL: I'm worried about Ollie.

SUN: I'm worried about you. Turn to face me.

Beevil turns.

SUN: You look awful.

BEEVIL: I feel fine.

SUN: You've lost your luster.

BEEVIL: It's just cosmetic.

TYLER: Can we play tag?

SUN: I told you, it's too dangerous.

TYLER: Not if we do it right.

SUN: You never do.

TYLER: You're not the boss of me. I'm eight billion years old.

Beevil coughs again.

SUN: Oh sugar.

TYLER: He said he's fine. He's the lucky one! At least something happened to him. I wish I had a moon.

SUN: What happened to the one I gave you?

TYLER: I mean a cool one.

THROSH sprints by.

THROSH: LAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Throsh goes far far away.

SUN: Someone's in a hurry.

TYLER: Lucky.

SUN: You may think that. But once you start being in a hurry, it's hard to stop.

Ollie and Baxter drift.

SCENE FIVE

Beevil is much much worse.

He has glowing silver warts all over him.

He coughs and coughs.

SUN: Oh it pains me so. What curse has fallen on my children?

TYLER: I'm still fine.

BEEVIL: *(Sneezes)* Uh oh.

TYLER: What?

A small silver PEST detaches itself from Beevil.

PEST: Whiiiiiiiiishk.

It flies towards Tyler.

PEST: Psssshshhhhhhhh.

TYLER: Uhhhh...hello?

And lands on his forehead.

PEST: Ding!

TYLER: What's this?

BEEVIL: It wants to spread.

SUN: Does it hurt?

TYLER: No it--

The sound of a tiny jackhammer.

TYLER: Owowowowowow YEAH it hurts!

The pest flies back to Beevil.

PEST: Bzzzzzzztttttppssshshhhhhhhhh.

BEEVIL: They like you.

TYLER: What does that mean?

BEEVIL: You satiate them.

*Suddenly a SWARM OF PESTS break off of Beevil and fly towards Tyler.
They chase Tyler in circles.*

PESTS:

BZZZZZASHHSHSHSHSHSAAASSHSHSHSHWEEEOEEEEEE!

TYLER: Ahhh! Keep them away! Keep them away!

All the pests settle on Tyler and burrow into his skin.

TYLER: Owwwwwww.

BEEVIL: You alright?

TYLER: No.

BEEVIL: You'll get used to it. I did.

Vikki whooshes by again.

VIKKI: Wubbawubbawubbawubba!

SUN: There goes Vikki.

TYLER: I knew we'd see her again.

SUN: But it's been such a long time.

TYLER: Not so long. I wish I had gone with her instead. Don't you Ollie?

Ollie doesn't respond.

SUN: Don't be rotten.

TYLER: (*Coughs*) I am rotten. I am rotten and I'm here. When I could have been free and fresh. I wish I had gone.

SUN: I would've missed you so.

TYLER: Still I should have gone.

SUN: But how I would have missed you.

TYLER: I know I should have gone.

SUN: But wouldn't you have missed me? And your brother?

TYLER: I miss Ollie.

SCENE SIX

A very very long time has passed.

Ollie and Baxter are much closer to Tyler and Beevil now, both of whom are glowing under a thick haze.

SUN: Does anyone want to sing?

TYLER: No.

BEEVIL: No.

SUN: I would like to sing.

So she does. She sings to herself.

SUN:

OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE. OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.

If you get too much closer you will hug me for the first time.

If you get too much closer you will hug me for the last time.

Ollie and Baxter continue to circle closer and closer.

SUN:

And then I'll be alone once more.

Ooooooh, everyone moves quickly

Ooooooh, I cannot keep up

And soon I'll be alone once more.

A swarm of pests detach from Tyler and Beevil and fly away.

SUN:

OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.

BEEVIL:

OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.

SUN:

OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.

TYLER:

OLLLLLLLLLLLLLLIE.

SUN:

Oooooooh, I remember all the doorbells

Oooooooh, enough to sing and dance

But now I'll be alone once--

Ollie and Baxter crash into Beevil.

BEEVIL: Ahhhhhhhhh!

Tyler crashes into Ollie, Baxter, and Beevil.

TYLER: No no no no no no!

BEEVIL: Look out!

And they all slowly start to fall towards the sun who sings to herself.

SUN:

Now I'll be alone once more.

Blackout.

Crash.

THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

CHARACTERS

DEVIN/COOKIE

SALLY

MS. TRETTLE

SOLDIER 1

SOLDIER 2



(Lights up on the end of a talent show act. Little Sally is hula hooping her frickin' heart out. She finishes hula hooping and bows.)

SALLY: Thank you everyone!

(Sally runs offstage. Ms. Trettle enters.)

MS. TRETTLE: Wow, thank you Sally! What a wonderful talent. The next act in the Riverside Elementary talent show is...Devin, with his piece titled: My Childhood Trauma, the Cookie Crumbles!

(Ms. Trettle exits. Devin enters, holding a puppet, Cookie.)

DEVIN: My name is Abraham Lincoln. This is Cookie. Cookie, you have the floor.

(Cookie the puppet addresses the crowd.)

COOKIE: Raise your hand if all your grandparents are still alive!

(Cookie counts all the people in the audience with their hands up.)

COOKIE: Raise your hand if all your grandparents are dead!

(Devin raises his hand. Cookie turns to Devin.)

COOKIE: HA HA! That's just the way the cookie crumbles!

(A rap song starts playing a remix of Cookie's voice. Cookie and Devin dance in anguish.)

***THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES
THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES
THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES***

COOKIE

Jesus cured a town of lepers! Did he cure me? No siree!
Now my skin is flaking off, my bones dissolve to dust.
I'm cursed to crack and fade away, and yet in God we trust!?
Is that fair? No siree. That's just the way the cookie crumbles!

(The song plays again)

***THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES
THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES
THAT'S JUST THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES***

COOKIE: *(To Devin in a deep voice)* HEY YOU! LITTLE BOY!

DEVIN: Yes sir--

COOKIE: LOOK AT YOUR FATHER WHEN HE'S TALKING TO YOU.

(Cookie grabs Devin's face and forces him to lock eyes.)

COOKIE: Did you wash my car?

DEVIN: Yes sir.

COOKIE: Did you shine my shoes?

DEVIN: Yes sir.

COOKIE: Did you sweep the floor?

(Devin looks away.)

COOKIE: Did you sweep the floor? Did you sweep the floor after I ate my crumbly cookies?

DEVIN: *(Sobbing.)* No sir!

COOKIE: Well clean that shit up!

(Cookie hits Devin. Devin screams and is thrown to the ground and lies still. Cookie pops up from behind him.)

COOKIE: Useless...useless.

(Two Union soldiers enter through the front door of the theater.)

SOLDIER 1: FREEZE!

SOLDIER 2: We got him!

BOTH: John Wilkes Booth!

COOKIE: Ah rats you found me!

SOLDIER 1: You've got hell to pay John.

COOKIE: You'll never take me alive!

(Cookie dives out of site behind Devin's motionless body.)

SOLDIER 2: Put that gun down John. Put it down!

(A gunshot. Cookie flies back, dead.)

SOLDIER 1: Christ almighty.

SOLDIER 2: Come on then.

(The soldiers pick up Cookie and exit. The lights fade to black as a choir sings.)

That's just the way the cookie crumbles

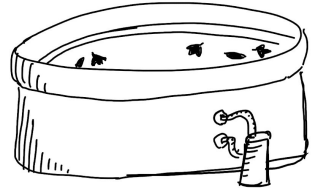
That's just the way the cookie crumbles

HAIKUS

CHARACTERS

YERB

TUCK



Please do not perform like it's a poetry reading.

Haiku [for you]
- Sonia Sanchez - 1934 -

*love between us is
speech and breath. loving you is
a long river running.*

*(Yerb swims in the pool.
Aboveground and blue plastic.
Tuck enters and speaks.)*

TUCK:
The water looks warm

YERB:
It's not, it's very very cold.
The heater's broken.

TUCK:
Did you plug it in?
You should've skimmed the leaves out
Before you got in.

YERB:
I'm fully content.

TUCK:

They'll jam the heater if you
Forget too often.

YERB:

I cannot break what's
Already not working so
Why bother with it?

*(Tuck crosses to see
If the heater is in fact
plugged in like Yerb said.)*

TUCK:

This heater is not
Plugged into the outlet, that's
why it's not working.

YERB:

Can you plug it in?

TUCK:

Sure, but you should skim the leaves
Out of the pool first.

*(Yerb keeps on swimming.
Waiting for Tucker to say
What they want to hear)*

TUCK:

I'm sorry for what
I said this morning to you.
There was no reason

To make it a fight.

YERB:

I don't know what I can say
To you, sometimes I

feel I'm on eggshells

TUCK:

I swear I'm not a minefield.
I'm leaves in a pool...

Not great with filters.
You can say anything you
want to around me.

I won't be upset.

YERB:

It bugs me that I bug you
just for existing.

Can't I swim in peace?

TUCK:

That's a monstrous thing to say.

YERB:

Monsters aren't real,
But my hurting is.
You said you wouldn't be mad.

TUCK:

Can't what's passed be past?

YERB:

What's passed about it?

TUCK:
Why keep digging up old wounds?

YERB:
They weren't buried!

I cannot break what
Already isn't working,
This isn't my fault.

TUCK:
Even if you're hurt,
A broken bottle still cuts.
You're all sharp edges.

Healing takes practice,
And I can't do it for you.
But I'll do my part.

*(Tuck takes the heater
And plugs it in the outlet.
It turns on and hums.*

*Yerb keeps on swimming.
Maybe there is no high road
When picking at scabs.*

*And maybe it's fine
To let leaves float in the pool
If one chooses to.)*

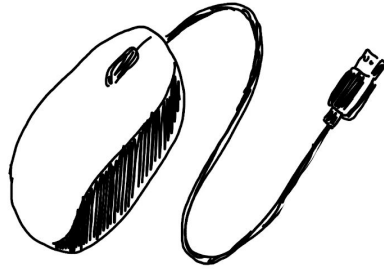
WEBBER

CHARACTERS

ANGELA

WEBBER

OWL



Webber's room is in a small two bedroom apartment on the second story of the building. His bed is in one corner, his desk in the other. A cheap electric keyboard stands next to it. A large computer monitor is set up, filled with samples and songs. It's about 10 in the morning.

(Webber's phone rings. It's Angela.)

ANGELA: Hey Webber. Angela.

WEBBER: Oh hi, how are you--

ANGELA: Just calling to check in on the jingle, how's it sounding?

WEBBER: I'm adding the finishing touches right now. Actually here I'll play it for you--

(He hits the spacebar on his computer. An enormously overproduced theme song blares through the speakers. And it's good, like...too good. Trumpets, and pianos, and french horns, a choir....all stops have been pulled out. It's like a massively overproduced Looney Tunes fanfare.)

JINGLE:

***STARDEW'S COFFEE IS THE FINEST COFFEE THAT YOU'VE
EVER FUCKING TASTED!***

NO MATTER WHAT THE TIME OR DATE

OR LEGAL STATUS OF YOUR STATE

YOU NEED A BUZZ TO RIDE PAST EIGHT

TRY STARDEW'S CANNABIS COFFEE!

(Beat)

WEBBER: So, what do you think?

ANGELA: I love it! Josh is with me too and he is nodding like crazy. How soon can you get that sent my way?

WEBBER: I'm just making some final tweaks, and then once I get final payment I'll send it your way.

ANGELA: And how much was that again?

WEBBER: It was five hundred total, so with the deposit you owe me two fifty.

(Angela screams like she's being stabbed in the kidney.)

WEBBER: Everything okay?

ANGELA: Oh it's just...when you sent us that quote we could totally afford it, but we didn't know that Facebook has upped their rates for advertising--bastards, John says they're bastards. Anyhoo, we have to reach over a hundred thousand people or it's just not worth it so we had to go a bit over budget there and now we're a little bit spread thin...we can do...a hundred right now? And we'll get you the rest as soon as we have it.

(Now Webber screams like he's being stabbed in the kidney.)

ANGELA: Come again?

WEBBER: I mean...hmmm.

ANGELA: I'm really sorry, we had to start our campaign or there's no point in even having the jingle.

WEBBER: I totally get that, but I really need the full amount we agreed on.

ANGELA: And I totally get that, but it's not up to me how much we spend on marketing.

WEBBER: I thought you were head of marketing.

ANGELA: Yeah, but I just tend to deal with the macro. Look, I get it's not ideal for either of us but we'd really appreciate it if--

WEBBER: Then no deal.

ANGELA: But--

WEBBER: No way....

ANGELA: Uh, then we'll need our deposit back.

WEBBER: You don't get it back, the deposit is to make sure you don't back out.

ANGELA: But you're backing out!

WEBBER: No, you signed a contract, look at the contract...

ANGELA: Okay, who uses contracts!?

WEBBER: You signed a contract!

ANGELA: Josh signed it! Josh! Oh for fucks sake Josh! Fine, steal our money perv, the jingle sucks anyways.

(Angela hangs up in a huff. Webber sits back, drained. In through the window swoops a motherfucking barn owl. It entirely belongs here.)

OWL: Breathe Webber, breathe. In and out.

WEBBER: What the hell was I thinking?

OWL: Breathe. Breathe. Feel the air in your wings.

(Webber takes a deep breath. He calms.)

WEBBER: Thank you.

OWL: You need a haircut.

WEBBER: I've been so busy.

OWL: That doesn't shock me at all.

WEBBER: You think I should've just given it to them? It's not gonna do me any good.

OWL: They'll be lacking without it.

WEBBER: Oh I'm such an asshole. They really were strapped for cash. They weren't trying to rip me off, I was trying to rip them off!

OWL: Easy there...

WEBBER: I already had the deposit, and I overcharged them because I thought they could afford it and because it was really inconvenient and I thought their idea was dumb....it's just a hundred fifty short--that's not even that much money--I'm gonna call them back--

OWL: Hold on a minute! Can I tell you something funny?

WEBBER: Now? Sure, what?

OWL: Recently I've had no trouble finding mice. I used to starve through the night, hoping for one to appear, but now it seems every time I think of food one crosses my path.

WEBBER: Is that....funny?

OWL: No. The funny thing is I haven't excreted a single pellet. Yet the hunger still gnaws.

WEBBER: You want a Miralax?

(Beat.)

OWL: Walk with me.

WEBBER: Now? Man, I have a to-do list a mile long--

OWL: Come on.

WEBBER: First I'll just call them back--

OWL: Webber. I'm a big bird who's full of shit, don't give me any of yours.

(Webber sighs and gets up.)

WEBBER: Where are we going?

OWL: The forest.

WEBBER: There's no forest, this is Valencia.

OWL: Okay, then let's perch on your shitty balcony.

WEBBER: Hey.

(The owl slides open the door and stands on the balcony.)

OWL: Seriously, couldn't you put some plants out here? Or a windchime? Or some weatherproofed seating?

WEBBER: It's crossed my mind.

(Webber puts his hands on the railing and looks over the edge.)

OWL: You want to jump?

WEBBER: It's crossed my mind.

OWL: Bummer.

WEBBER: I mean, I wouldn't right now. There's too much to do.

OWL: I admire that about you. Always something going on.

WEBBER: Keeping busy makes me feel fulfilled.

OWL: Feel, or be? You look at any trees lately?

WEBBER: Like out the window? Today. Everyday.

OWL: When's the last time you really gave a shit about a tree?

WEBBER:

WEBBER: It's been a while.

OWL: Do you remember when you were younger?

WEBBER: Sometimes.

OWL: We'd play in the backyard.

WEBBER: And the backyard connected to that trail....and a bit up the trail there was that clearing with the tree that always made me think of Richard the Third because it was crooked.

OWL: And we'd dance.

WEBBER: --I'd dance, you'd watch from the branches.

OWL: --I would dance. And then when Minnie got annoyed with you playing in the house you'd take your recorder out there to practice.

WEBBER: I'd talk to the birds.

OWL: You must be the only person in the world who decided to get good at the recorder.

WEBBER: There are other people out there--

OWL: Name one other person--

WEBBER: I don't know any of them, but I've seen them on YouTube.

OWL: And you'd play. You'd play for yourself, but we'd all listen, like a Pied Piper for the whole world.

(Beat. The sounds of the neighborhood take our attention. A car honks in the distance.)

WEBBER: It's not as easy anymore.

OWL: Why not?

WEBBER: I dunno....the world stopped listening.

OWL: Pish posh.

WEBBER: Well then it all moves too fast.

OWL: What moves too fast?

WEBBER: I need to get a haircut.

OWL: Webber.

WEBBER: What am I doing here? Some creative spirit....I moved into an apartment with white walls that I'm not allowed to paint. I tried with the lamps and the posters, but things still look pretty bleak. And all my friends are in rooms just like mine....and they're uncomfortable too....but what can we do? We can't make things better...we're not even allowed to paint the walls.

OWL: What color would you paint them?

WEBBER: I don't want to paint them, I want to be back in that clearing playing for nobody and believe I'm the king of the world because this is before I saw the YouTube video of Tyler Pitzera playing Beethoven's Fifth on the recorder and so to the extent of my knowledge I was the best recorder player in the world.

OWL: It's a good thing your work fulfills you.

WEBBER:

We used to hunt and gather and our needs were met.

We'd weave baskets and paint the walls and share berries with each other.

Imagine how long life must have felt back then, with so little to do.

Now we have deadlines. Haircuts. Walls we can't paint. Songs we must write. Promising careers built on broken promises.

I gotta get back to work.

(Webber crosses back into his room. Owl stays on the balcony.)

OWL: So what gig is this?

WEBBER: Which one?

OWL: That you're starting now?

WEBBER: This next one's for uh, toothpaste coated condoms.

OWL: I'm sorry, for WHAT?

WEBBER: They're cornering the market of unreciprocated oral hygiene.

OWL: They are not.

WEBBER: Yeah make it part of your morning routine, the early bird gets the....worm

(Owl charges over to Webber and all but grabs him by the scruff of his neck.)

OWL: Damn you! You should be scoring films! You would be changing lives!

WEBBER: Please don't start with that again....

OWL: But why won't you try?

WEBBER: I found my niche, and I'm good at it.

OWL: Fuck you! You're good at everything. You're good at the recorder for fucks sake!

WEBBER: Then I guess I've just been pigeonholed.

OWL: PIGEONS!?! Those VERMIN! Don't you DARE!

(Webber doesn't respond. He's put on his headphones and has started piecing tracks together.)

OWL: Hey! Hey I'm talking to you! Webber! WEBBER!

(In a final act of desperation, Owl swoops down, grabs Webber's mouse off the desk, and eats it. Webber rips off his headphones.)

WEBBER: Hey! Give that back!

(Owl backs up to the balcony and shakes his head no. He starts slurping up the usb cord like a long noodle.)

WEBBER: You spit that out....spit that out now!

(The mouse is gone.)

WEBBER: What the hell!

OWL: No more grabbing what's right in front of you, you're gonna reach for something, you're gonna--

(Owl suddenly grips the railing with steely concentration.)

OWL: *Hyup*....uh oh. Hey Webber?

WEBBER: What?

OWL: You got a bucket?

WEBBER: No....

OWL: *Hyuppp. Blach.*

(Owl retches up a mouse pellet onto Webber's carpeting.)

WEBBER: Oh god.

OWL: Don't look at me.

WEBBER: I don't have anything--

OWL: *BLAAAAAACHHHHHHHH.*

(Owl sprints out the balcony door, leans over the railing, and gags up dozens of owl pellets. They patter down onto the street before like fuzzy boney hail. Webber stands in his room, turned away from the balcony. He winces with every retch. After a little bit, Owl stops gagging.)

WEBBER: You good?

OWL: Holy shit. *Gluch--* no wait, one more.

(Owl spits up the computer mouse, it dangles out of his mouth by the cord. Beat. Owl picks it up by the usb and gingerly places it on the ground.)

OWL: I'm just gonna sit here for a bit.

WEBBER: Yeah.

OWL: Hoo boy.

(Webber crosses and sits down at his desk. He turns to his computer, then pauses. He reaches into his desk drawer and takes out his recorder. He crosses back and sits out on the balcony. He plays a tune, and the world listens.)