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One-Person Show: Field Notes on Writing, Producing, and Performing My Own Work

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One-Person Show: Field Notes on Writing, Producing, and Performing My Own Work

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Theatre

by

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Huntington University
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, 2018

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This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination and journal for my process of writing my full-length one-person show *Isolation*, the organization and steps of producing it from scratch, and the preparation and performance of the show. It will also include the version of the *Isolation* used in the performance, a statement of artistry, some of my current acting materials such as a link to my website, a headshot, and a resume.

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STATEMENT OF ARTISTRY

Some of my earliest memories were sitting at bar stools too tall for my feet to touch the ground, listening to my father or grandfather tell stories to rooms of attentive listeners. Their ability to enthrall the listeners, to know them enough to know what little details would make them really imagine, and how long to hold before delivering a punchline to get the biggest laugh. It was their gift of oral storytelling that attracted me to acting. The idea that I could tell stories that entranced, entertained, and moved listeners connected with me deeply.

To summarize my purpose as a storytelling artist I'd say it is to tell stories that make us laugh from our bellies, weep from our souls, and lessen the distance between our hearts. A play or film, to me, has to accomplish nothing more than to entertain or move someone for me to be interested in it. Anything that can activate a spark in our hearts can move us closer together, and for me, there is no higher task I can accomplish other than to lessen the distance between people's hearts.

DRAFT ONE: WRITING

I believe most will agree that the pandemic was one of the most isolating periods of time in modern human history. That we would shut ourselves into our homes and onto our Zoom boxes to help contain COVID would be the catalyst to what inspired my one-person show this thesis revolves around, *Isolation*.

Sometime in Fall 2021, I discovered a television series called *Alone*. The premise of the show is that ten contestants are placed—alone—in a remote part of some extreme natural environment and tasked with surviving. They are each given ten items of their choosing as well as camera equipment to film themselves. Whichever contestant stays out there the longest wins a large cash prize. The main draw of the show is the survival skills employed by the contestants and the demonstration of a survival scenario. What I found myself drawn to was the mental descent each contestant went through. As the contestants progressively got colder and hungrier their mental stability suffered and many tapped out from sheer loneliness. Being trapped indoors and unable to connect with almost anyone, I found the show deeply compelling.

I also found the show somewhat disturbing. Firstly, you never really had contestants on the show that were financially well off enough that the money wouldn't deeply and significantly change their lives and the lives of their families. In a vacuum, this may not seem like an inherently bad thing being that it is a reality game show and the money provides an incentive to attract willing contestants, but it might be when there is a lack of contestants willing to participate for reasons beyond the prize money. If the game show is potentially lethal and the contestants are all in some sort of financial need, the line between reality game show and *Squid Games* becomes blurry. Secondly, the voyeuristic aspect of my watching these people lose upwards of 40 to 70 pounds over three months from starvation and suffer intimate emotional

breakdowns made me feel a little twisted at times. That the show would not exist and these people wouldn't be fighting to survive if I, and many like me, didn't take a twisted interest in watching it made me question the ethics of what I choose to offer my time to.

Together, my comfort, fascination, and guilt complex watching *Alone* stirred my creative energies. I decided I would parody the television show for theatre. To push home the isolating demands of the television show, I would write my parody as a full-length one-person show, with one actor playing several characters for at least 75 minutes. I also knew that before I even wrote a single word, I wanted the setting of the play to not only parody the television show, but to parody watching television in general.

With a premise in mind and ideas already percolating, I sat down to write in October 2022. The process of writing involved going to my favorite coffee house, putting on my headphones, and letting my mind wander. In my personal process, my first draft is the most exploratory; I write what immediately seems right and feels fun.

I found the structure of the show very early. I decided the best way for one actor to play several characters in the given premise was to have a series of short monologues separated by an interaction with a flip chart. The flip chart would allow me to title each monologue by the characters' names and the days they were giving their monologue. For example, if the actor was performing as Brian, once the speech is over they would flip a page on the flip chart that would reveal the next character for them to transform into (Sylee) and how many days had passed between speeches. Writing *Isolation* this way also developed a natural act structure.

By November I had two monologues written for each of my five characters. In December I toyed with a television-inspired "montage" act where I abandoned some of the structure established in the first half of the play for a faster-paced, rapid-fire character transition section.

And by New Year's Day, I finished one more act after the montage that completed the first draft.

With my writing style being almost entirely exploratory, I knew the moment I completed draft 1 that I would have to immediately get to work on draft 2. There were too many creative decisions made at the end of the process that didn't align with decisions made at the beginning of the process. I also discovered with the completion of the first draft that I wanted to make *Isolation* my thesis project and attempt to produce and perform the show.

DRAFT TWO: PRODUCING

They say that the process of writing is actually rewriting and *Isolation* was no exception. I had written five characters that were trying to survive on a reality game show. Each with their own values, developments, and topics of interest.

The five characters of *Isolation* are Brian, Sylee, Zoe, Conche, and Dan. Of these five, Brian and Sylee were deeply flawed because of late writing decisions made that weren't supported by earlier decisions. The first step of writing Draft 2 was aligning the Acts 1 and 2 of the play with the final Act, 4.

In writing a second draft, I also forced myself to read each speech aloud and began tweaking the rhythm and sound of each speech. My exploratory writing technique tends to result in too many tangential jokes being written that are difficult for an actor to articulate while still maintaining the through line of a speech. I also tend to write with too much alliteration which can make some sections of text sound ridiculous or unnatural to a listener. So I spoke each speech and made small edits to the texts throughout the piece. All in all the first draft had 26 monologues, so speaking and tweaking each one took days.

After redrafting *Isolation* I reached out to my fellow acting cohort for a read. I invited them over to my house, offered snacks and beverages, and assigned them roles to read. Even though it is a one-person show, the show has five characters and there is value in hearing the text read by different actors and receiving their thoughts and feedback. I became an outside ear to my own work which allowed me to tweak the language more, and with the knowledge of the read, I was able to make the final adjustments to finish the second draft by February 1, 2023.

In this stage, I also began the work of producing. The show, having been a late addition to the Theatre Department's season, would have no official department support. At first, it was up

to me to secure everything I needed to put the show on, so I chopped my priority list into Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary concerns.

Primary concerns are items that need to be present or there can't be a performance. These included a performance draft of the script and a space to perform in. The script was well on its way so I didn't have any concerns there. With *Isolation* being my thesis project and the department having access to several spaces, securing a space became little more than a logistical task of selecting one and reserving it through a few emails. The fact that I can reserve a space for performances and all it takes is a few emails is perhaps one of the single most convenient parts of being a graduate student at the University of Arkansas; having self-produced a show before, securing a space for performance or rehearsal is the most expensive and difficult aspect.

My secondary concerns are items that would greatly improve the quality or production value of the show but aren't inherently necessary. These included a director to collaborate and offer an outside eye for me while I rehearse, a stage manager to help organize and run a tech booth should I secure any designers, a lighting designer, and a costume designer. For my director, I reached out to Michael Landman because he is the Head of MFA Directing and the professor who taught the one-person show class. He had directed me in a large project years prior and I loved his attention to detail, his specificity, and his wealth of knowledge in performing one-person shows. He agreed to not only direct but also lend assistance in securing other resources. Michael Landman became a massive boon to the project because he also had a particular gift for finding and utilizing department resources that weren't already being used on other projects. I was also very fortunate in finding a stage manager. We don't have a dedicated stage management track for students at the UofA, so normally we don't have many students interested, but with a small amount of inquiry I was able to find a smart, eager, and competent

stage manager in Leah Christensen, a Senior undergrad in the Theatre Department. You could say that producing *Isolation* was a string of good luck, because it just so happens that graduate students on the design side of the department need a capstone project for their design thesis and the theatre department had a graduate lighting designer and a graduate costume designer who needed a capstone project. With that news, Zach Macjunks and Ripley Decaluwe joined the team as lighting designer and costume designer with a few simple Facebook messages.

My tertiary concerns are items that would provide a moderate boost to production quality. While not being required, they hinged on the success of getting my secondary concerns met. These included an Assistant Stage Manager, a Set Designer, and a Sound Designer. For the Assistant Stage Manager, I relied on Leah to find someone she trusted, and she did! Leah found Carrighan Hughes, a Freshman within the department who had an interest and some experience in Stage Management. Admittedly, I wasn't very hopeful about a set designer with the department not providing any financial support, but once again luck was on our side! Michael Riha, the Department Chair and the resident Set Designer sent along a promising undergrad, Haley Lewis, who recently switched to the design and tech side. Haley was looking for something to be her very first design project, and with her talents and motivated spirit, she provided much more than I expected possible. Similar to stage management, at the UofA we do not have a lot of resources dedicated to Sound Design. Fortunately for us, we had Huan Bui, a graduating MFA director who just happens to have sound design skills and wanted an opportunity to use them!

By mid-February, I had finished my second draft and secured a space and an entire creative team! I was shocked to have so many interested creatives working on the show and with the student power *Isolation* now had, we were able to ask for department support. Michael

Landman and I met a few times during this period to do a few read-throughs and to discuss ideas. I truly believe the show could have gone up successfully with just me and a space, but with the addition of designers and department support, we were able to put on a fully realized production. This comes with the added benefit of gaining the knowledge of how the show integrates and uses technical elements. It also allows us to take pictures and videos of a quality high enough that I could more easily pitch and sell the show in the future.

DRAFT THREE: PERFORMING

With Draft 2 completed and a creative team assembled it was now time to establish a rehearsal schedule and get to work developing the performance. Michael Landman, Leah Christensen and I, while working around space reservations, decided to start the official rehearsal schedule on March 1st with an opening of April 1st. We would have 10 days of rehearsal before Spring Break, then we would return to our tech week with the designers. 10 days is a remarkably short amount of time to prepare a full-length one-person show so we had to use our time extremely efficiently.

I started a formal process of setting aside five or so hours a week in mid-February just for memorization work. These hours also provided an “in-body” experience with my own text that allowed me to further explore the text that I wrote and to edit it to even further streamline thoughts and discover more jokes to add. It was at this stage that I also discovered that if I was to parody watching television there was no way I could get away without having a single commercial in the piece. Thus, Dickie Ruckus was born--the sixth character to join the cast and with him three new monologues that I worked out over the two weeks.

All in all the finished Draft 3 of *Isolation* had 35 speeches/sequences and over 8000 words to memorize. It was a tall order, but doable with an equally tall work ethic. By the first rehearsal, I had all of the sequences memorized with the specific words of the sequences lagging behind, but it was enough to fruitfully work with a director.

While the designers were hard at work on their own plans and contributions, Michael Landman, Leah Christensen, and I met to rehearse three to four hours a day, 10 out of the 12 days leading up to Spring Break. We worked diligently on blocking, obtaining finer specificity in each character/monologue, and designing the transitions between sequences.

The term blocking refers to the movement an actor takes on the stage. Each character and each speech demands a lot of movement. The character of Brian has a sequence where I fire real arrows at a target, Sylee has a wood-chopping sequence, Zoe has several sequences where she pretends to be on a different television show altogether, and Dan needs to fight a bear. These sequences and others demanded a ton of care and attention because, on our 10th day of rehearsal, we were to have the designers come in and watch what we've blocked so far so they could adjust their plans accordingly.

The art of a one-person show takes numerous forms, but the most common aspect present in this sub-medium of theatre and a prominent demand of the script I wrote is one actor playing several characters. The "how" of this aspect is often challenging as the audience needs to be crystal clear on which character is speaking at all times. When we weren't focused on blocking we were fine-tuning each character's presence in my body. Each character had their own accent, posture, way of walking, way of thinking, relationship to the audience, relationship to sharing intimate details, and a unique list of background details that influenced each and every line. We knew we were going to have lighting and costume elements that would greatly help, but we wanted my performance to be so specific and finely tuned that even without them the audience would know "who" was on the stage at any given moment. This was also a vital need because we had 3 sequences where the character had physical action long before any lines were spoken and the audience would need to know who is who simply by how each character stood.

The final priority we had in our limited rehearsal was transitions. In most rehearsals transitions would be a sub-category of blocking, but for this show how I ended one character and started a new one was as much a writer question as it was an actor or director question. The primary question transitions create in a one-person show is if the change from one character into

another isn't instant, then who is on stage between character transitions? Is it the actor, literally me, or a narrator of a sort? We decided that since we wanted to tell the story that each character was isolated in a survival situation, we wanted it to feel like the characters never had a moment of rest. With that an in-between actor interrupting the action between characters made it feel like each character had "breathing room" so we made the transitions instant. The character, when done with a sequence, would go to a flip chart and flip the page to a new day "in character" and I would switch to a new character the moment the page was flipped. We dedicated several hours total to figuring out exactly how each character justifiably left their sequence and what the process would be for me to instantly transform into someone else.

After 10 days of rehearsal and Spring Break, we returned to the space on March 27th to begin our tech process. Typically in theatre, the tech process looks like the actor going through the show in a stop-and-start fashion until someone asks to hold, then technical elements are honed or created to match the moment, rinse and repeat until the entire show is completed. In this process, the director is in conversation with the designers to ensure that the elements being implemented tell a cohesive story. For our production, it being a one-person show and me being the playwright, Michael Landman and I agreed that I would also have directing powers to shape the technical elements as I saw fit as well. For five days, five hours each night with an additional three hour tech day added the morning of April 1st, we slowly worked and teched the entire show.

We finally arrived at opening night. In 60 days we grew from a 1st draft and a dream, into a fully technically supported 90-minute One-Person Show. It's a nightmarish pace to produce anything that quickly let alone perform with only 10 days of dedicated rehearsal. Our Stage Manager, who is in charge of "calling" each technical queue (in which we number over 100)

only had one dedicated dress rehearsal to practice. Our lightboard operator, who listens to the Stage Manager's queues and executes them into the board had never seen the show before--he was operating "blind" as they say. All of these details would make a producer in the professional theatre world blush, but I was confident in the team. They poured so much into the production and their motivation and competency gave me confidence that they would all perform their duties brilliantly.

When you're an actor in a one-person show you are truly alone. No one can cover you if you forget a line or if something breaks. That level of isolation on stage lends itself to the nature of the play I've written. It takes an immense amount of trust in the work already done to reveal itself on opening night, but the most important piece of knowledge I can impart on performing a one-person show is to know that you've already done the work of building the story, now just go out there and tell it.

We opened to an audience of 60 people on April 1st and closed with 70 people on April 2nd. They were wonderfully responsive, attentive, and respectful audiences. In script analysis, there is a term called the "Central Event". It is the moment at the end of a play where the primary "forces" of the story come into contact and there is an outcome. It is the single most important part of the play, every part of the play contributes in some way to this moment. In *Isolation* the central event is unique, in that the event relies on the audience. Inspired by the voyeurism I felt watching *Alone* I wanted the final decision in *Isolation* to belong to the audience by having the final character, having won the game, ask an audience member for a hug; a small gesture of connection that the audience can give to the character. The audience, having not been queued beforehand, must decide how the play ends. Both nights I received the deepest and most beautiful hug, and thus fulfilling the desired end for the show. What follows from here is the 3.6

Draft of *Isolation* used for the performance.

ISOLATION SCRIPT

ISOLATION

By Riles Holiday

riles.holi@gmail.com

CHARACTERS

Host

Dickie Ruckus

Brian

Sylee

Zoe

Conche

Dan

Isolation, in its original form, was performed as a one-person show with the exception of Host, who was a pre-recorded voice. However, I am deeply curious how the show feels and is received if every character was played by a different actor! Should you perform the piece that way, email me! I want to watch.

*The stage is dark
Suddenly the sound shifts into war drums
We hear an intense voice in the dark*

Host

For the first time in Isolation history
Five participants fight to survive
Deep in the rugged Canadian wilderness.

*A spot up on Brian
He wears Hunting Camo and a Beanie*

Brian

Hey y'all.
I'm, uh, I'm Brian.
I like to Hunt.
I teach wilderness camps at a Boys and Girls club in Kentucky.
I want to show em how it's done and take home that trophy!

*The lights go out once again
The voice continues.*

Host

If contestants can survive chilling temperatures,
Starving grizzlies,
And
The Isolation
Long enough to be the last one standing,
They'll walk away with
FIVE
MILLION
DOLLARS.

*Spot up on Zoe
She wears a bandana and a bomber jacket*

Zoe

Whoa, hey, wait.
Is this the interview?
Theese interview,

whoa, this is exciting!
I always wanted to be on T.V.
Hi, All!
I'm Zoe!
I'm gonna win!

*The light goes out on Zoe
The host continues*

Host

Should contestants wish to tap out.
They each will have access to
The Radio.

Spot up on radio center stage

Far from any human development,
Their radios will be their only way to contact anyone for help.

*Lights down on radio
Lights up on Sylee
She wears a ball cap and vest*

Sylee

Hi.
I'm Sylee.
Professor, uh former, sorry- no I'm not sorry-Shit, fuck, goddamn!
god...
Can we retake this?
No?!
I don't see why not.
Can you just re-

*Lights down on Sylee
The Host continues*

Host

Contestants will be dropped off at predetermined locations
Deep in the Canadian mountain wilderness
and will be given camera equipment to film their own journeys.

Contestants have one month before winter sets in.
They'll be completely isolated from all human contact.

*Spot on Conch
He has a shell necklace*

Conch

I'm Conch.
By day I work at a gas station,
By other days I am a hobbyist bush craftsman.
Surviving is one thing.
It's the mind game of being alone that breaks you.
Toughest dudes and dudettes to walk this earth have crumbled under the weight of loneliness.
Me?
when my spirit is low,
I got song to take me to serenity

*It goes dark on Conch
The host continues*

Host

Along with camera equipment,
Contestants will be allowed 10 items of their choosing
To aid them on their survival journeys.

*A spot up on Dan
He wears military surplus gear
Action drums continue*

Dan

My name is Dan.
The outdoors is the only escape we really have from the government.
I chose my phone as one of my items just to make sure I didn't have a signal.
I can't be tracked.
If this game is rigged, I'll be the first to know.
I'm out here for reasons.
You don't need to know what they are.
I'll see this mission to the end

It goes dark on Dan

*We hear the sounds of Canadian wilderness
Overlayered on the Canadian wilderness background
DAY 1 - Brian
Lights up
He's adjusting the camera*

Brian

I hope I got that right.
I am not much of a cameraman.

He sits down on his log

Hey, people!
How ya doing?
You like your couch?
Here's mine.
It's got state-of-the-art knots, for... stuff.
If you scratch at the bark,
Boom, built-in chips for your dip!
It's gonna be my talkin couch.

He starts whittling something

Gotta make it a home couch, you know?
Hunger is coming, and I can hunt.
I hope!
Cold winds will blow, but I'll have a fire.
But home will always be somewhere else out here.

Home is an ache deep in your belly.
Being without is a wind that will rip through any layer you got on.
Only place to be is home,
And it's the only thing I ain't got out here.

In Kentucky, I got a house,
But it aint much of a home.
Just a couple of walls and a t.v. really.
I do got some kids though,
They aint mine,

They kids at a boys and girls club I teach at.
We call the club, The Dog House.

I teach em outdoors stuff.
Pickin flowers and climbin trees.
Survival stuff.
Teachin them, uh,
Being there-
-That's home to me.
Dog House is home.

Dog house probably doesn't make any sense.
One day, I was showin them different trees,
Bark identification,
This bark from that bark,
This kid, Jessy, she hears all this bark talk and just goes,
"Woof"
Later, the sun is going down so I say "Hey, we gotta get back before dark!",
And she goes,
"Hey, we gotta get back before bark!"
She's quick, man!
Now I got a whole troop of kids woofing at trees and barking whenever it gets dark.
So, I changed the sign above our clubhouse to say "The Dog House"
So that's-
That.

There's Katie, she's 6,
She's an ankle biter!
She'll wrestle ya, and she's good too,
She'll probably take gold one day.
She runs around calling herself grizz,
She'll growl as she sneaks up on ya,
And roar just before chagrin at ya!

There's Ben, he's, uh, 8.
That kid's smart. Whoa, that kid is smart.
I took em out to identify poison ivy,
These kids always be gettin into somethin.
Now Ben loves plant identifying, thinks these plants are neat,
So I gave him my book of plants.

Next week he comes back, and he's pointing stuff out that ain't even in the book.
Turns out, he went to the library on his own accord and started reading other books.
And he ain't just readin and learning the plants, no no no, he's grabbin the latin names!
He's coming up to trees, speaking chicken scratch, sounding like he's casting spells.
The kids started calling him Gandolf.
I think he likes it though, cause he corrects me when I call him Ben.
So I call him Gandolf too. haha!

There's Jessy,
Jessy is funny.
She can fart on command,
So she'll wait for the most awkward moment to rip.
She goes by Jess.
I said, you got a Gandolf, Grizz,
And you want to be Jess?
She said it was funnier that it was just Jess.

Oh, man!
She's a wild child too.
She was climbin up a tree one day.
She got up to the upper rungs,
I start yellin out, "Heyy, Jeeees, be careful now!"
SNAP!
The branch she grabs breaks,
And she slips.
Boom!
Hits the branch below her,
Boom!
Slides of again,
Boom!
She collapses onto the ground, into a bush!
I come running up.
"Jessy!
Jessy!!"
I start picking through the bushes.
Why is she quiet?
Don't be dead.
I see her.
...
She aint moving.

I came up to her.
I'm real careful not to move her too much,
In case she broke her neck or something.
I tap her face.
"Jes, Jessy, buddy, you okay?
Jess, say something buddy."
I put my ear to her chest. Listenin for a heartbeat.

...

Thppppppppbbbt.
SHE RIPS!
Practically blows a hole through her pants and
That little punk starts SQUEALING
And runs off before I can yell at her
For scaring me half to death!

I'ma miss those kids, y'all.
But I gotta bring home the win.
Man, They'd be so excited!

*He reveals the thing he was whittling
It's a wooden sign that reads
Dog House*

*Day 3
Sylee*

She has an ax and is taking apart a thick stump

Sylee

Sorry.

Whack

I'm not sorry.
I'm not sorry for shit.
I've got a lot of work to do.

She places more logs as she speaks and chops

I'm going to do as much physical labor as I can while I still have the energy to do it.

She grabs her belly

This ain't much.
It isn't going to last long enough.
That and I had an absurdly large burrito before we left
And I'm investing every one of those calories.
In two months the last thing I want to be worrying about is chopping wood.
I'll be too busy keeping my toes warm and dreaming about Taco Bell.

Whack

On the outside.
Oh god, listen to me,
I'm talking like I'm in prison.

Whack

On the outside you have lots of things to distract you from your problems.
There is no television here,
Well,
There's television for you, not for me.
Out here there is nothing to distract you.
Your thoughts are louder than the wind.

So you gotta gather your woes up.
And chop 'em out.

Got a blister on your foot?

Whack

Found bear tracks in your first hour on site?

Whack

Wish you had a dog, but you're on a t.v. show about being alone in the woods?

Whack

It's easy!

Lumberjacks have been doing it for millennia.

Out here

You need to exercise your demons early.

Cause when you're hungry,

And you get tired and you fall asleep at the wheel, so to speak,

Your demons will take the driver seat.

Like my ex-husband.

...

Fuck that guy.

Whack

He got bored.

Decided to find something more fun.

Someone, sorry.

She is a person. A nineteen year old person.

Whack

Bill, that unemployed twat, took a lot of my money in the divorce, too.

Marriage is an economic arrangement, not a romantic one.

I learned that.

Whack

I uhh, wanted kids.

I know its a bit, I don't know, traditional,

whatever,

I wanted kids!

He... Didn't.

Even after saying he did before we got married.

That created some conflict.

If you're out there watching, Bill, I hope this is vaguely embarrassing for you.

The responsibility of the raising a child sounded scary to you so you went out and fucked one instead.

Whack

I just spend so much time thinking about the past,
And it's shape,
And all the little things that make us who we are now,
And I want to be a part of affecting how we move into the future.

Whack

Outside of here.
Hehe, Outside of here!
I am a professor in ancient communities.
Was.
I have a Phd in ancient society survival methods.
I was teaching in the Department of Classics.

I'd love to say coming here was some sort of crazy sabbatical research thing.
NOPE!

Whack

I was denied my tenure.
...
Let's be honest here, I was fired.
HA!

Whack

I might be a little bitter.
I might also be on a television show where
I get frostbite and starve for money.

Whack

Maybe I worked really fucking hard,
For eight years,
And I was depressed after a messy divorce,
Maybe we can have some compassion about not attending faculty meetings?
Or maybe when "sorry" stops being my most used word, it doesn't mean I'm a bitch.

Maybe I have a lot of shit going on, and I'm trying to balance my cope drinking so it doesn't just become alcoholism drinking, cause my fucking husband got the house? And I feel like I wasted my fucking life, and I'm lonely as all hell!
Maybe we shouldn't care when I fuck a graduate student?
Huh?

Whack
Whack
Whack

The tenure committee cared.
You know there isn't a lot of jobs for a Phds in ancient society survival methods
Other than university, and no one is going to take me now.
SOOOOO

This show is my job now.

Whack

And hey,
If you're a cute single guy,
Preferably older than 26,
You like nature,
Have a job
Are liberal - fuck it, liber-ish I'll take liberal-ish,
And you want a kid or two,
You know, give me a call!
I don't have a phone, so.
Send up a smoke signal or something.

Day 5
Conche
He has a guitar

Conch

Man,
There is something special.
About this place,
This nature,
This freakin air.

It's clean and its quiet,
And that's something you can't buy!

Cause it's free.

You just gotta come out here.

I bet one day there will be a subscription service for nature.
They'll charge bears rent and tax the trees.
Better get out here while you can, man.

Like mother earth is a savage, but she's also a provider.
She can grow miracles you can witness!
In real life!

I wish I could just share it all with you.
Just pull you through the camera like a reverse Willy Wonka
And show you what I see.

Especially you Terra!
Haha, I bet she's blushin.
For the multitude who do not know,
Terra is my soulmate.
She is pregnant,
Growing miracles inside her, man!
Two beautiful babies, we got twins!
She's back home cheering me on, I'm sure.

Dang.

I miss you, baby.

Whoa!
Baby has a whole new meaning now!

I'm feelin a lot right now.
Terra, you are my world.
Which is fitting cause your name means earth.

I've been thinking about you, like, every second I've been out here

And I want you to know that I'm staying strong
And that you are loved.

And I wrote you a song.
Here you go.
It's called Big Love Baby

**I miss you
I wanna be with you
But I wanna provide for you
So you can give birth and stuff
And not worry and stuff**

**Big Love, Baby
Big Love**

*Day 7
Dan*

Dan

They told me I have to record myself.
I don't want to.
But you watching my recording pays for my winnings,
So I have to.

...

Hi.

He takes a swig of his canteen

Boil your water before you drink it.
You're a dumbass if you didn't already.

There are tracks all around my spot.
It's a bit of a natural highway for wildlife.
Lots of prey.

Where there is prey
There are predators.

I doubt I am the only one.

This is fucking stupid.

He leaves

Day 8

Zoe

She has a camping pan in her hand

Zoe

Heyo Dayo viewers!

Welcome to Zoe's Campin Kitchen!

We have a practical treat for all you solo survivalists out there.

Air fried Air!

Okay first you're going to take out your handy dandy pan!

Bring it over to a heat source.

Now, take your air oil and drizzle a lot in the pan.

Next, and this step is the most important.

You need to go ahead and think about all your hopes and dreams.

Breath those in, really think of something nice.

Now blow them into the pan.

Huge breath of air into the pan

Okay, leave that on the heat for now,

We'll be right back for that.

Let's go over here and work on our protein source.

For today's meal we're going to go ahead and pull out our soul.

She mimes ripping her heart out.

Here we go!

One fresh, still hopeful, soul.

My god, it's practically praying!

Let's bring it to a hard flat surface and tenderize it with our hands.

She goes to town on her soul

Really work on it,
you gotta soften this guy up.

Whoa, okay, let's give him some emotional space for a sec.
Let's return to our hopes and dreams.
Start mixing this baby up,

She tosses and mixes her pan.

Really work it around so it's nice and evenly cooked.
This can take some time, so be patient.
Just as they start screaming,
Put a lid on it and ignore it!

Then lids it.

This meal is dedicated, Emerald Isle, Michigan, United States of America.
Located 47.976 degrees North, 88.933 Degrees West.
It is the Jewel of Lake Superior, the ancestral lands of the Chippewa peoples,
And where I work as a park ranger.
The park is experiencing unprecedented financial struggles due to a lack of visitors
From its remote location in the middle of Lake Superior.
Which as a seclusion zone to preserve its natural beauty and resources,
Having a lack of visitors seems like the point to me.
Time to go back to the food and get back to work keepin the park alive with tv show money!

*She moves back to her soul
She starts pounding away at it*

Let's get to work on this soul shall we.
Be gentle here.
The soul can resist big blows and will just bounce back,
But if you really lay into it with repeated small blows in rapid succession
You should be able to see it start to give way.

She moves back to the pan

Okay, take the soul and add it to the pan.
Really dig it in, put it right on the pan surface and surround it with hopes and dreams.
Shift it around a little, and let it cook.

As you know viewers,
In the middle of bum fuck northern Canada,
There isn't much in the way of food.
So we really have to make do with what we have to keep on going on.
The secret to making air fried air a delicious and nutritious meal
Is having at least one item of material and edible food.
Like this wild onion I found!

She holds up her onion

At just 1 gram of fat, and 2 grams of carbs
This 17 calorie snack will fuel you almost as long
It took to pretend to cook to the stupid root.

She scoops up her air fried air with the onion and eats it.

*Commercial Break
We hear bright and fun rock music
Bright lights up on Dickie Ruckus
He wears a blue polo
And pants made of trash bags*

Dickie Ruckus

Cancel that gym membership and throw out the waist trainers
It's time to really trim up for swimsuit season!

Hi!
Dickie Ruckus here LIVE with WET PANTS!
The newest and greatest weight loss product on the market today!

Just slide them on and live your life!
Whether you're on the couch, at the desk, the driver seat, or out with friends, WET PANTS has
you covered.

The patented design traps heat below the beltline making you sweat!
A KEY FUNCTION in weight loss!
Hit stubborn fat, BELOW THE BELT!

It's scientifically proven!
Look at all these studies!

Time to get WET!

Dickie tosses a huge stack of paper in the air!

For just 3 easy payments of \$14.99
You can get wet, and start losing weight!

Call now and we'll double the offer and send you another pair of wet pants.
Get wet at home and at work!
Or share with a friend and
Get your partner WET!

Feel less ashamed in life,
And get WET, TODAY!

Back to the show!

Lights shift, Dickie thinks he's off air

Max, I'm getting these fuckin pants off of me, right now!

*Dickie rips off the wet pants
Actual shift
Day 10
Brian*

Listen up Dog House,
I know you're watching,
Just cause I'm not there doesn't mean I can't show you a thing or two.

Brian grabs his bow

I'm going to be hunting a deer.

I know you're shakin your head Gandolf, wishin I was gathering more,
But I'm just not as smart as you and I don't have as many spells memorized as you.
Listen wizard, If I catch a deer I could keep myself fed for two good months, four if he's big!

I've spotted some tracks, some trails, that sucker wonders reeeel close.
But, before I go lookin, I'm going to give y'all a shootin lesson.

Brian reveals his target

Shooting ain't about whether you can hit the target,
It's about whether you can hit the target every time.
When the episode is over you go outside and practice a few shots.

He stands and assumes position again

Okay.
Square your hips, spread your feet a little,
That's you Grizz, don't lock your feet together,
You're a hunter not some musketeer.

Keep breathing and when you're ready, draw.
Here's the big thing!
You need an anchor point.
A place where, when you pull,
The string and your hand hit the same place on your face, everytime.
Without an anchor point,
Your shots will be all over the place.
Pull, anchor point, release.
Pull, anchor point, release.

When you fire a few arrows.

Brian grabs a bundle of his arrows

What you have now is a grouping.
You can see the evidence of how consistent you were
In finding your anchor.

When a deer is in your sights, you'll feel the weight of having your shot.
Maybe the deer startled you.
Maybe you're hungry,
God, maybe you're starving.
Maybe you've been thinking about catching him every minute since you woke up for the last week!
In that moment if you aren't practiced at finding your anchor.
You will miss it.

Your anchor is what makes you a good marksman.

Brian moves to position and prepares to shoot

And this thought.

You know. It- it can apply.

Other places.

My anchor in life, and I hope it becomes yours,

Is leading with love.

That when I don't know what to do, I can at least anchor on listening

And helpin.

You know, cause there are so many people in this world that love you unconditionally.

But there will be some who will only love you conditionally,

But they won't tell you that, cause they don't even know.

And it will be up to you to meet their conditions.

To be an anchor for them.

Things are going to happen, kids, that shake your world.

When the pressure is on, and when it's hardest.

Be an anchor for people.

Brian fires three arrows into the target making a tight grouping

And when it's hardest, they'll stick around.

Lights out

Day 12

Conche

He twiddles with his guitar, not really a song

Just playing around

Conche

Hey.

I have a question.

Are you all, like, watching

Or am I on in the background?

I don't know if that makes sense.

Are you on your couch at home watching

Or are you, like, at the bar with your friends

And you're kinda bored so you looked up at the screen

And you can't really hear it so you're reading my subtitles?

He lets out a bizarre series of wild noises

Yeah, transcribe that editor, haha!

More noises

It's getting wild!
I'm belching the meaning of life out here.

The wildest of noises

Bet you wish you could understand that, bar dude.

OH!
Hey, if you're one of those folks at home are you with someone?
Are you chilling with your spouse or whatever and you're into the show,
But, like, your spouse is like "whatever" and is on their phone?

Hey, phone person.
What are you watching?
Wait, nevermind, I don't want to know.

Hey, on a serious note though,
Do you mind getting off your phone, please.

Do you think I'm joking around, bruh?
I'm talking to you, ya know?
Can you just like... watch?

I'm not at home with my pregnant lady cause I'm out here trying to provide.
I'm, like, going through a lot out here, literally, so you can chill and watch at least.
Can you give me the time of day, please?

Day 14

Zoe

She places the camera downstage

Zoe

Okay people, places for top of scene.

Aaaand action!

*She mimes a microphone and poses before the camera as if it is an interview
This next sequence she performs and abridged Blair Witch Project*

This is Bumfuckisville
Formerly known as Bumfucknowhere
Here, no one lives.
But if they did, they'd live in fear
Of
The Bumfucknowhere witch.

We came to Bumfuckisville to see if we can find the Bumfucknowhere witch.
Let's see what the locals have to say.

Zoe will switch characters fast

Have you heard of the Bumfucknowhere witch?

“Oh, oh, oh, that's an old story. Yes!
They say she's a crazy hermit!”

New character

Have you heard of the Bumfucknowhere witch?

“Yeah, plenty of times! Neighbors mostly,
I think there is a Discovery Channel documentary about her!”

New character

And you, sir?

“My ma used to tell us stories about the Bumfucknowhere witch to make us go to bed.”

Scene change

We've tracked the Bumfucknowhere witch to her alleged territory in the woods.

Oh no, I'm lost,
I've been walking in the woods for 3 days without a map,
Ah. ah. Ah.

Pulls camera into her face and fake hyperventilates

I'm scared. I'm lost.
I'm being hunted.
I just want to apologize
To Mike's mom, Josh's mom, to my mom.

Ohmygod an ominous tree!
It's the Bumfucknowhere witch!

She puts the camera down and gets behind something

Mwaa! I'm the bumfucknowhere witch.
I'm going to eat your face!

*She bounces on the camera
She pretends to eat the victim's face.*

Annnnd scene.
Can we acknowledge for a second.
In movies, forget that they're the bad guys usually,
Witches are badass.
When I was a kid if the movie had any women speaking roles at all,
Your options were incredibly limited.
You had, Innocent love interest, hard to get love interest, and the manic pixie dream girl.
The preppy mean rich bitch, a crackhead, the first character to die,
Mom, bad mom, good mom, crackhead mom,
And the evil witch.

If I had my choice. Evil witch every time.

Kiki's delivery service? Deliver my heart!
Maleficent, iconic. The only Disney magic ever made!
Wicked Witch of the West, literally defying gravity.

In Macbeth I believe it was the witches,
Who had the power to move the plot forward.
Witches kill kings and I think that's kinda cool.

Witches, in reality, are just women,

With knowledge, power, and the determination to use it for their own gain.
The idea of women with self reliance and competency was so wild
That men literally thought it was magic, the morons.
They burned women they thought were witches.
That's how scared the idea of an independent woman made them.

I have a secret to reveal, boys.
I am a witch.
I practice witchcraft.
I cast spells and perform rituals.
Is my magic real or am I just a badass?
Who's to say?
But I am a great-granddaughter of the witches you couldn't burn.

Speaking of knowledge and self determination.
I've been working on a net.
Wild onions weren't exactly doing it for me.

It's almost done.
I don't know if they explain it or not, but they do send wellness checks every few weeks.
You go to a predetermined location.
A helicopter comes, drops a scale and a thermometer.
If you're too underweight or sick, they pull you.
Despite the ratings boost it would be, they don't actually want us to starve to death.

Maybe they do, but it's a legal thing?

Thank you Canada and United States, everything short of dying on T.V. for money!
I, uh, don't have a lot of weight to lose so I gotta start getting real food.

Faint sounds of a helicopter approaching

Here comes the bird.
A woman has never won this show in 11 seasons.
Some are fair, some just quit,
The rough ones are the ones pulled for low weight at the very end.
Which is fucked cause those women clearly have more fight in em.

*It's arrived
Zoe steps on the scale and pops a thermometer in her mouth*

*She looks down
Gives the helicopter double middle fingers*

I have plenty of fight left in me!

It flies away

*Day 19
Dan*

Dan

It's been a few weeks, Camera.
I've got shelter, plenty of wood, and I've been successful at foraging.
Soon my area will be depleted of berries and roots and I will need to secure a kill.

I tracked a set of prints hoping to find a deer bed.
I found a carcass instead.
I don't know what killed it.
I am not truly alone out here it seems.

There is something wrong

This morning the grass was frosted.
Could be a small cold front, could be the first day of a winter in a rush.
I need a big win in the next week or so if I am to stay out here.

The phone continues to have no signal.
I turn it on now and again to check.
You continue to be my only real contact with the outside world.

...

What else do you want to know?

Huh?
Answer me.

Dan rushes toward the camera

What the fuck do you want to know about me?!

Fuck you and your prying ears!
I know you're watching!
Waiting for the drama!
You want me to cut myself widdling a stick?
Fall out of a tree?
Accidentally burn my shit down?
Have some fucking monologue to the camera
where I break down and tell you I miss my family,
With snot running down my fucking face
And the limp dick editors put some stupid violins in the background.
FUUUUUCK YOUUU!

He takes a step back

I'm losing my goddamn mind out here!

I do miss my daughter,
I...She...

Goddamnit, I'm not doing this!

He slaps the camera

Day 23

Sylee

Still at it with the ax

Sylee

And fuck you, Blue Cross Insurance,
Removing my appendix should've been covered,
It's, like, the second most common surgery!

She chops one last log of wood

And sits on a small throne made out of her chopped wood.

Still gripping her ax

Now that that is done I can stop sustaining myself with termites.
They're surprisingly tasty,
But

*She pulls from her pocket a small sack of snacks
She eats them periodically
It is very crunchy*

my shits have been like gravel.

Nothin wrong with a few more.
They're not that bad!

It's hard to explain, but,
Being out here, shits getting weird.
And sad, and hard.
Mostly sad,
But my point is that is weird.
Like mystic almost.

For example,
I've been vaguely soaked for a week now.
It rained and hasn't quite been open skied or warm enough to dry my clothes.
So i've just been damp and miserable and
I found myself asking the sun if he could shoo away the clouds.
But not ask, like, ironically.
I just dropped my ax and
prayed to the sun.

The sun is a collection of hydrogen fusions burning in space
And I prayed to it.

I feel like you can skip volumes of prehistoric religion study just by starving yourself in the woods for three weeks.

Humans are social creatures by nature.
Prehistoric humans practiced pack communities for so long
It's hardwired into our DNA.

Being out here, this long, feels like
Echoes in my skull of my Prehistoric ancestors are screaming for me to quit.
I just want somebody near me.
I yearn for contact.
My feet wiggle and stretch at night trying to play footsie with someone who isn't there.

I'm going full monkey-brain, like I want to sniff people, I don't care if it's B.O. I'll stick my face in someone's ass for a human scent.

God, my fucking knuckles itch wanting to punch someones fucking face, but like a love punch, because they're knuckles and they don't know better.

I cry, randomly, constantly, because I daydream about the baby I wanted to have, and all the little firsts I wanted to watch, and I think I hear crying and I turn and it's just the wind ripping through the branches.

I miss people.

I'm alone, and I miss everyone in the entire world.

I'll take anyone.

I'm alone

What am I doing?

Hello?!

ANYONE!

HELOOOOOOOO!

...

Hey, who are you?

She approaches something

Hey.

Hey little guy.

It's okay.

It's okay.

I'm not going to hurt you.

How are you?

Whatcha doin'?

Whatchin me cry in the dirt?

It's okay, you can watch me cry in the dirt.

You want some termites?

She tosses some termites at it

There you go, buddy.

I'm going to call you Tommy.
It's me and you, Tommy.
You and me.
We're going to win this together, okay?

She grabs the camera and swaddles it like a baby

*We hear light and fun rock music
Bright lights up on Dickie Ruckus
He wears a blue polo
He's finishing a line of blow
He starts humping the table*

Host

Dickie, we're live!

Dickie Ruckus

Oh shit?
LETS GO!

Let's face it, our bodies break!
Aches and pains, broken bones, infection, disease, parasites, cancer,
Doctors COST money!

Before you go and spend the cash
Lets save you from living in trash!

Dickie Ruckus here LIVE with OxyCodone!
The pain-KILLER that will save you the PAIN of PAYING health insurance!

An Oxy a day keeps the doctor away!

OxyCodone is no ordinary pain relief pill,
It's specially design controlled release capsule will keep you relaxed for 12 hours straight!
Just 2 pills a day and you'll be flying high PAIN FREE!

Injury and disease is a distraction
If you're trying to work, sleep, watch T.V.
Oxycodone can help you get your life back!

Maybe your healthy, maybe life hasn't given you an physical alignments
Well wait right there!
Oxycodone can help you deal with your depression in no time!

Oxycodone's award winning formula can help you disassociate from all life's problems!

It's scientifically proven!
IT'S APPROVED BY THE FDA!

Dickie tosses another huge stack of paper in the air!

For just 2 easy payments of \$49.99
You can say goodbye to medical bills and hello to a pain free life!

BUT WAIT RIGHT THERE!
If you call now,
We'll double the offer and send you two prescriptions!
Pain relief at home and at work!
Or share with the family!

Give debt collectors the finger
And order Oxycodone TODAY!

Back to the show!

Lights shift on Dickie, he is off air

That's what I'm fucking talking about, Max!

Actual Shift

Day 28

Conche

A helicopter whirls

He stands on the scale and gives the thumbs up

It flies off

Conche

Yo, I've been thinking about y'all.
All y'all viewing people out there,

And I wrote a song for you.
It's called Alive
Here you go.

**You only get to realize that you're alive once
And it's the absolute best feeling you can feel
Everything is colorful, its vivid now, it's wonderful
And it's all because I know it isn't real**

**You only get to realize that you will die once
And everyday thereafter is a gift
Someday your bones will turn to oil, how soon your soul will turn to oil
It's a miracle that we get to exist.**

**So I'll name all the termites, that eat my wooden teeth
And I'll shake the tiny hands of all the worms that squirm beneath
And when I look down past the bug bites, at my decomposing feet
Turning back into the earth from which I've grown
She'll whisper to me, "Darling, welcome home."**

*Lights out on Conche
But the guitar melody continues*

Dan

Dan

You want to know something about me?

I uh, like hockey.
There you go, I like hockey.
I used to play, now I just watch.
Go Bruins.

There is a strategy called Pulling the goalie.
Normally in hockey you have 6 players on the ice.
2 defenders, 3 forwards, and a goalie.
But when you're down and the clock is ticking, what do you do?
You pull the goalie from the post, and push more guys onto the ice to hopefully score.
You've got no Defense in that scenario, but when you're down and about to lose,
Who cares?

That's just a thing.
There you go.

Brian
He is pulling arrows from his target

Zoe
We can hear the sounds of water

Zoe

It's almost time.
You are ready net.
It is time to be cast!
Gift me Dinner.

Zoe kneels and opens her arms to the sky.
It's getting very dark on stage
Only fire and star light remains

The moon is full tonight.
Hear me wide universe!
I am the great-granddaughter of the witches they couldn't burn.
Hear my ache.
Hear my pang.
Gift me life over death

She casts her net

Dan
A helicopter whirls
He stands on the scale
He stares at the helicopter
It flies off

Dan

I heard an animal last night.
A deer,
At first I thought it was a doe bleating,
But it was too late at night and it kept going on and on.

For hours.

This morning I had a little walk to check it out.
And I found a carcass.
Mauled.
A bear.

It's a better hunter than me.
And when all the deer are gone,
And it gets colder out here,
And the bear gets hungry again,
It might hunt me.

Sylee

*She is trying to feed the camera like a baby, playing airplane with it.
It doesn't eat its termites and she just dumps them on the ground
She congratulates it as if it did*

Sylee

Yayy!
Goodjob!

She starts playing peek-a-boo with the camera

Oh!
I see you!
Haha
I see you!

**You only get to realize that you're alive once
And somehow that day feels like the first
That you'll grow and then decay, the wind will blow your bones away
Don't wait till then to realize what they're worth**

Dan

*It's very dark
Only his flashlight
If there is projection, let to be a sea of stars
He's climbing and struggling
He arrives somewhere*

*High up
He places the camera down while catching his breath*

Dan

Don't complain to nobody that Dan didn't do or show you anything.
I brought you up here, to the top.
You can see all the pretty stars and shit.
Granted, I didn't come up here for y'all.
This is for her.

*He pulls his phone out and begins walking around to find a signal.
He finds it
He begins to make a call
It receives*

Hey, baby.
How-
I know you weren't expecting a call.
How are you feelin?

That's good.
They taking good care of you?
Them doctors better be taking good care of you!
What?

*He lets out a big belly laugh
He hasn't laughed that deep in a long time*

No, no, I'm okay, baby.
I'm good.
Well-

Yeah.

I miss you too, Caroline.

Yeah.

Daddy's got to go now, baby.
Okay.

I'll be home soon.
Don't worry.

I love you.

Bye bye now.

He hangs up

There you go.
I shared something with you.

*Brian
Is standing with his bow
A twig is snapped
Brian immediately shifts into predator mode
Some leaves are rustling
Brian sneaks to take the shot, he draws his arrow, he takes careful aim
He sees something and holds his fire
He loosens the draw
...
He draws again
...
He slowly loosens the draw*

Brian

Get out of here!

*He picks up a rock or a stick and tosses it in the creatures direction
Brian takes a seat on his log
We hear the sloshing of water
Zoe*

Zoe

Ahh!
Ah!
I caught one!

HOLY SHIT I GOT ONE!

She has a massive Trout

Thank you thank you thank you!

*She kisses the fish
Her excitement turns into a breakdown*

Thank you thank you thank you.
I get to stay.

*Dan
He's climbing again
Only flashlight
He places the camera
He kneels in front of it
Whispering*

Dan

I haven't had a meal more than 400 calories in 15 days.
Soon my body will be completely without fat.
I will have nothing left to burn, and I will be too weak to do anything.
The clock is ticking.
I need to score some points or its game is over.
I ain't gonna lose for you, Caroline.

If you're watching, baby, turn off the TV.
I mean it, turn it off. Stop watching.

I tracked that bear down to its cave.
And I'm gonna have to kill it.

*We can hear some bear grumblings
Dan draws a hatchet*

I ain't going home.
I ain't leaving empty handed.
I ain't quitin!

A full on bear roar

WITNESS ME!

*Dan charges off stage
More bear roars
It goes quiet and dark
We only hear bear breathes*

Conche

Conche

**You only get to realize that you will die once
And that your memorize will wash off with the rain
All your history and all you feel, and all you see, it's only real
in the organic matter of your brain.**

**So I'll name all the termites, that eat my wooden teeth
And I'll shake the tiny hands of all the worms that squirm beneath
And when I look down past the bug bites, at my decomposing feet
Turning back into the earth from which I've grown
She'll whisper to me, "Darling, welcome home."**

End of For Your Viewing Pleasure

*Day 60
Brian*

Brian

It took me an hour to put on my boots and crawl the 8 steps it takes to get to my spot.
I don't know if it actually took an hour.
The sun peaking through my little shelter woke me up
And now it's over there, and that's about an hour.
I think.
I don't know.
Maybe I took a nap after the boots and getting out here.
I am lying down after all.

My brain feels like mashed potatoes.
I'd really like some mashed potatoes right now.

A helicopter whirls

*He rolls over onto the scale
It flies off*

They really gonna let me stay out here like this?

I feel like, if I died here,
Right now,
Noone would find me for at least 1000 years.

Little aliens kids on a field trip would excavate me up,
And their alien high school graduate woodland survival teacher
Would educate them on how the Nike symbol on my boots was the mark of some god I
worshiped.
Or how humans, when they were really tired and sad, sometimes just rolled over and die
voluntarily.
An alien child would weep at the thought that such simple creatures were capable of so much
feelin.
They would sit around a fire that night and be feeling sentimental.
The alien kids would open up about stuff weighing on their hearts.
Some alien kids' alien mom is sick.
Or their alien dad was violent sometimes.
And the alien teacher would open up to the kids about his situation.
How the alien teacher and his alien wife had all the hope in the galaxy for their own alien kid.
But they had a miscarriage and the alien teacher and his alien wife never really recovered.

That he wanted his wife to comfort his grief so bad, that when she was incapable due to her own
grief that he took it personally, and every silent breakfast, or non-committed kiss became further
evidence that she didn't love him anymore.

She needed him to be vulnerable about his grief, so she didn't feel so weak for her own.
And that he grew to hate her, when she did nothing but be in pain.

...

We split up some 6 years ago. I'd like her back, but that's too much to ask her.
I mostly want what we were before the miscarriage back, and that's impossible.
I want her to know that she is loved, and that I am sorry for not knowing how when she needed it
most.

...

The alien teacher would tell the alien kids all that.
Not to receive their pity or comfort.
But to reward them for their own vulnerability. To let them know that while their situations are unique, their hurt is universal, and worth sharing.

I couldn't shoot the deer.
Doe rather.
Jane Doe had a little Bambi and that wasn't a story I wanted to be in.

I'm sorry I'm probably going to lose, kids.
I got a little more fight in me, maybe I'll get lucky.
I'm going to keep giving it my best, kids.

I hope you're still proud to have me as a teacher.

Day 63

Zoe

*She is making a Bear Grylls survival show
She whips the camera around in her hand
Doing stunts during her video.*

Zoe

Dun dah dah dun dun dun!
I'm Bear Grylls
And I'm going to show how to survive in some of the most inhospitable places on the planet.
I'm in Northern Canada, where the winds pierce your bones and the apex predators roam the lands looking to make you their next meal.

She breaks character

Unless you're the apex predator!
Ayyyye

*She eats some cooked fish off a stick.
Back into character*

Here in the furthest reaches of territory
We are too far from civilization for help.
If you were to run into a wild brown bear, my namesake,

No one can help you.

Look at this look at this.

A wild Zoe.

*She jumps back and forth between Bear Grylls to Wild Zoe
She gets on all fours and roams around snacking on her fish*

It looks like she has been sustaining herself on fish.

Mighty plentiful in this region of Canada,

But as soon as the water completely freezes over she may be shit out of luck.

Oh watch out.

She smells somethin.

*Back on all fours curiously sniffing the air
She approaches the camera*

Now stay calm.

Try not to make any sudden movements.

Wild Zoes are wicked territorial

But if you're calm, she might just let you live.

*She sniffs the camera
Growls
Then moves away*

Wow, would you look at that.

Wild nature before your very eyes.

Breaks all character

Watch out competition,

Wild Zoe is out here and she's hungry!

Not really.

Ayyyyee

She finishes her fish

Maybe just a little.

Fish really don't have a lot in the way of calories.
I have to eat like 3 a day to eat like normal,
I catch maybe 3 good ones a week.

I love it out here.
I truly love being out here.
I am in love with nature, with the purity that's out here.
Like, I am here.
Right now, I am here.
Now.

On my lonely little island at home, the park,
We get visitors every so often.
They always, and I mean always 100% of the time, have a moment of taking a picture with
Some breathtaking bit of scenery.
And undoubtedly those pictures are going online somewhere,
Uploaded to youtube with some mundane life blog voice over.
Like, you're only going to see something majestic like that for the first time, once.
The picture will never capture the scale, or tug at your sternum.
When you look at that picture on your own feed counting the likes and comments
It's like an oil spill flooding your memory with a crude replica.
Why dilute the memory of the first time.
Why approach mother earth's majesty with some concern for future you.
Let the moment belong to current you.
Give the gift of the moment to present you.

I watch so much t.v. it's depressing,
and I usually watch t.v. because I want to be distracted from my usual depression.
But being out here, and really being alone has shown me that
I love that I love nature.
And that is enough for me.
I love it out here.

Don't get me wrong,
I'm slowly wasting away,
It takes me an hour to feel any warmth from the fire,
And I think I have worms, shhhh.

But it's now. All the time.
I'm only in now

And it simultaneously feels tremendous and weightless.
They're going to have to drag me out of here.

Day 68

Conche

His guitar has broken strings

Conche

I knew I was coming out here like 4 months in advance.
So I stuffed my face as much as possible.
I was scooping cream cheese with pork rinds.
It's like a \$6 dollar combo by they way.
In case you're really hungry and broke or somethin.

Well, like, I don't know if you noticed, but,
I don't really have a lot of survival skills.
I mean I have some, but I'm not Les Stroud or anything.
My plan was to get out here, get warm, and reserve my fat stores by doing nothing for as long as possible.
Not the best plan, but hey, it works for bears I guess.

I just,
My girl is like 8 months pregnant.
Today.
And we don't have a lot of money, you know.
I want to provide for her and the twins, ya know.
But there's not much I can do.
There are only, like, 12 people total who get paid to play guitar.
I'm not college educated, I never owned a car, I'm just a townie, man,
But that's not good enough these days.

This mornin my chest was feelin funny.
My heart beat felt, I don't know, like, hollow,
And I was feeling this like impending doom.
I was feeling all sorts of off, and I was thinking about the Terra,
And the kids, and like all the stuff they were gonna do.
The wild and majestic nature of seeing your kids do stuff for the first time
And like, they aren't even born yet and it's got me messed up.
I was thinking about it all morning and I wrote a song.
It's called

Ring The Bell
Here you go.

Conche just plays the high e string of his guitar slowly.

I don't think I can play. I don't have much of a song in me.
I'm coming home, Terra.
I quit, I'm not gonna let myself die out here.
I'm coming home.

*He puts his guitar down and approaches the radio
He confidently picks it up*

Dinner Table 1, this is Conche.
Send a helicopter
I'm ringing the bell.
I quit.

Day 70

Sylee

*She is wondering with Tommy swaddled up in one arm
Her ax in the other
A helicopter whirls
She stands on the scale*

Host

Put the ax and camera down, Sylee.

Sylee

His name is Tommy!

Host

Put the ax and Tommy down, Sylee.

She puts the ax down sets Tommy up and steps back on the scale

You're cleared for now.

It flies off.

Sylee

They don't even say bye, Tommy.
I'm nothing to them.
You know, Tommy.
The world out there can be so hard.
Things are going to happen that will hurt
And people might not notice.
Your heart could be pulverized
And everyone else will be so consumed, or busy, or indifferent
That it might feel like you have no one to turn to.
But I will see you Tommy.
I will always be watching.

...

My sweet baby boy.
I know you'll be watching too.
With your big little eye
Always watching me.
I know you're always going to be watching.

Don't worry, Tommy.
I will protect you.
From anything.

*She notices something
She investigates and picks it up
It's Dan's scarf, bloody and tattered
She drops it and screams
She notices something else
It's Dan's twisted and torn up camera
She stands gripping her ax defensively
Swings around furiously
She stops to look and catch her breath
She gathers up Tommy
She runs off*

Day 76

Zoe

She stands defiantly, looking up

*Before her a scale to measure her weight
Sounds of a helicopter
The hosts voice from a megaphone*

Host

Step on the scale, please.

Zoe

I can stay!
I have more fight in me!

Host

Just step on the scale, Zoe.

She slowly and reluctantly steps on the scale

Host

Hold.
Receiving data.

*She looks down at the scale
She begins to breakdown*

Zoe

I'm not leaving!

Host

Zoe, You've lost too much weight, you are in danger of permanent injury.

Zoe

I am fine!
I can do it!

Host

Send them in.

Zoe

I'm fine!

Through some mechanism, either people or ropes

Zoe needs to be dragged off.

I'm not quitting.
I can keep going!
I can keep going!
I can keep going!

*The fun rock music once again
Lights up on Dickie Ruckus' set but no Dickie*

Host

Dickie we're live on the finale.

Dickie Ruckus

WOOO!

Host

Come on out Dickie
Come on, let's go.

Dickie Ruckus

LETS GO!

Dickie runs on stage shirtless

Are you sad?
Are you-

Host

Dickie, put your shirt on.

Dickie Ruckus

I said!
Are you sad?
Really, are you sad?
Don't order Oxycodone.
That shit will have you shooting heroin within 4 months.

Host

Stick to the script, Dickie-

Dickie Ruckus

SHUT UP!
SHUT YOUR FACE!

Dickie draws a line of cocaine

People.
Listen to me.
Stop buying shit from my commercials.

The shows are designed to capture your attention
To poke at your most vulnerable parts of your psyche
Long enough
To get my commercial!
Then you buy shit!
You fire off endorphins!
The rush of buying buying buying
To buy more
You can't stop.
It's addictive!
The show is addictive!
THE EPISODE IS OVER WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?!
GO OUT AND BUY SHIT!

It's not going to make you happy.
It's going to make you feel good, but feeling good isn't being happy.
And your money is fueling my debilitating stimulant addiction.

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH COKE IT TAKES TO BE A PITCHMAN?
WE ALL DO IT!
WE HAVE TO.

I gotta take this mundane stupid, useless shit,
and sell it to you like it's a goddamn cure for cancer
Everyday of my life.

Host

Pull him off the air, Max!

Dickie Ruckus

Max, you switch my feed off and I'll choke you out with these wet pants
And pummel your face to paste with a shake weight!

Dickie does another line

Don't fuckin test me Max!

Listen to me people.
I can't sell you happiness.
Happiness isn't a thing you buy,
It's a satisfaction you build.

Go love somebody!
Just give your heart and soul to people
FOR FREE!

You need to-
Oh-

Fuck!

*Dickie suddenly succumbs to a violent seizure.
He falls into his table of stuff knocking everything to the ground.
He continues to seize*

Host

Pull the feed, Max.

Lights out on Dickie

Day 80

*We are at Brian's camp
We can see his sitting stump and Dog House Sign.
Sylee creeps onto stage with Tommy and her ax.
She come across Brian's camera set up to film
She approaches it gently*

Sylee

Hey hey hey.
What are you doing out here all alone?
Someone just left you out here?
I see you little guy.
Don't worry, I can take care of you.

*Then Brian enters
He sees Sylee
He hasn't seen another person in months
He first approaches, but stops when he sees the cameras and ax*

Brian

...
Hey-
Whoa whoa whoa,
It's alright.
Hey, look, I've got nothin.
I'm just an unarmed guy.
I aint gonna hurt you.

Can I - do you mind if I sit next to you?

Okay.

Brian takes a seat on the ground near Sylee

My hands are stayin up, nothin in em.
What are you doing this far out here?
Are you lost?

Sylee

No. We aren't lost.
Tommy and I were looking for a spot to spend the night.
We're on the move.

Is this one yours?
I found him out here alone.
Is he yours?

Brian

Uhm, yeah?
Yeah, he's mine.
I was just back there grabbing his spare battery.

Yes, he's mine.
His name is... Jackie.
The little rascal is a bit of a wild child and ran off.
Thank you for watching after him.

You're on the move?
Where to?

Sylee

No where that concerns you.

You haven't seen anything off have you?

You better be careful out here.
I've seen some really troubling things, and it's..
It's not safe.

I'm sorry, I'm not normally like this, I'm very stressed.

It isn't right to just up and take someone's kid.
I'm going to give him back.

She slowly puts down her ax and hands Jackie to Brian

Brian

There you go, buddy.

Hey, no need to apologize, we're all a little tired and hungry out here.
I, uh, haven't seen anything troubling out this way.
I think it's safe here.
Relatively speaking.

You think maybe, it's about time to go home?
Some place a little warmer, more food, safe.
Speaking from experience this isn't a great place for kids.

Sylee

I lost the house in the divorce.
So no, I don't have a home to go back to.
This is it for Tommy and I.

I'm sorry- shit, fuck, goddamnit!
Oh my god. I didn't mean to cuss around your kid.

I'm just-
Why are you laughing?!

Brian

I haven't heard cussin like that in 6 years.

Brian has put his foot and Sylee's ax

Shit fuck goddamnit, haha!

He slides the ax a little out of reach

Hey, uh, this might sound weird, but,
I've got a home in Kentucky.
It has plenty of spare room for you and Tommy.

In reaction to a look from Sylee

Now look, I don't mean anything weird.
It's just that, if you're on the run, and you ain't got a place,
I have a place that you can stay until you get on your feet again.

Look, I see you, and I see Tommy.
And y'all are cold and tired and hungry.
And I've got more than enough at home to help.
I see you.

And you don't need to worry about gettin there.
I can call a friend.
He'll give us all a ride.

...

You wanna go now?

Sylee

I can carry the kids.

*Sylee gathers the kids and walks towards the radio
She stops and looks back to see if Brian follows
He does and together they walk to the radio
They stand before it*

Brian

You want me to call?

*Sylee nods her head
Brian picks up the radio*

Brian

Dinner table 1, this is Brian.

Host

Brian, this is Dinner Table 1.
Are you packing it in?

Brian

Dinner Table 1, I'm folding.
And uhh.

He hands the receiver to Sylee

Sylee

And it's Sylee.
I'm also here.
I wanna leave.

Host

Sending a bird now.

She puts the receiver down

They stand and wait as the blades of a helicopter approach.

*Black out
It needs to seem like the end of the play
Silence
If the audience claps, let them*

*All stage lights suddenly turn on
Dan is standing center stage in a bear pelt cloak bewildered
The Hosts voice booms*

Host

Congratulations!!
You are the Isolation season 12 Winner!
Well done!!
Here is your prize!

*A giant check is brought out and given to Dan
He receives it cautiously*

Take a look at all the dedicated Isolation fans that have witnessed your journey!

Dan

They have witnessed me?

Host

They sure have!
Is there anything you would like to say to the dedicated viewers?!

*Dan puts the check down and approaches the audience
He hasn't seen another human for months
When he finds a kind face in the audience he speaks*

Dan

Can...
Can I have a hug?

I've given you so much.
Can I have a hug?

*He either will or won't receive a hug from the audience.
Either will break him*

*If a hug is not offered after his text.
He will not beg for one.
He will return to his check and bow to the audience
True Blackout*

*If a hug is offered
It may be the deepest hug he has ever let happen
When it's over he will thank the audience member
Then he will go back to the check
He will raise it over his head
True Blackout*

End of Play

HEADSHOT



RESUME

Riles Holiday



Vocal Range: Tenor

Height: 5' 10"

rilesholiday.com

Theatre

<i>The Tempest</i>	Stephano	Arkansas Shakespeare	Morgan Hicks
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Don John	Arkansas Shakespeare	Stacy Pendergraft
<i>The Seagull</i>	Constantine Treplev	Evergreen Theatre Collective	Magda Roub
<i>Macbeth</i>	Macbeth	Distant Drama	Trevor Poli
<i>Stupid Fucking Bird</i>	Trigorin	Distant Drama	Magda Roub
<i>Importance of Being Earnest</i>	Jack	Distant Drama	Magda Roub
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Mercutio	Oconaluftee Little Symphony	Thaddeus Walker
<i>Hand To God</i>	Pastor Greg	Oconaluftee Little Symphony	Hayden Schubert
<i>Isolation</i>	Actor	Nadien Baum Studios	Michael Landman
<i>Best Christmas Pageant</i>	Father	Trike Theatre	Chris Tennison
<i>The Interrogator</i>	Young German	TheatreSquared	Amy Herzberg
<i>My Father's War</i>	Male Understudy	TheatreSquared	Damon Kiely
<i>Responders</i>	Stage Directions	TheatreSquared	Vickie Washington
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Aguecheek	First Pres Theatre	Ranea Butler
<i>The Christians</i>	Associate Pastor	First Pres Theatre	Thom Hofrichter
<i>Dogfight</i>	Fector	Three Rivers Music Theatre	Andy Planck
<i>Isaac's Eye</i>	Isaac Newton	Little Corner Theatre	Julia Till
<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Don Armado	University of Arkansas	Paul Barnes
<i>Tartuffe</i>	Tartuffe	University of Arkansas	Steven Marzolf
<i>Ride the Cyclone</i>	Noel	University of Arkansas	Morgan Hicks
<i>In the Book of:</i>	Bo. Jr	University of Arkansas	Michael Landman
<i>The Laramie Project</i>	Ensemble	University of Arkansas	Thiên Huân
<i>All My Sons</i>	Chris	Huntington University	Adam Sahli
<i>Shrek the Musical</i>	Pinocchio	Huntington University	Robbin Higginbotham
<i>Middletown</i>	Mechanic	Huntington University	Jay Duffer
<i>Peter and the Starcatcher</i>	Mrs. Bumbrake	Huntington University	Jay Duffer

Education

M.F.A. Acting (2023) University of Arkansas

-Amy Herzberg, Steven Marzolf, Jason Burrow, Michael Landman, Brandon Dirden, Crystal Dickenson

B.A.Theatre Performance (Cum Laude) Huntington University

-Jay Duffer, Melissa Duffer, Joni Killian

Workshops: Carmen Cusack, Tim Miller, Peter Coyote, Sabin Epstein

Additional Skills

Fight Certification in Unarmed Stage Combat(SAFD), Small Sword(DAI), Basic Whip Skills

Great With Dialects

Intermediate Guitar and Ukulele Player

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu(2yrs), Cheerleading(2yrs), Fencing(2yrs), and Wrestling(2yrs)

6 Years of U.S Army Infantry Experience

Skilled Dungeon Master

WEBSITE LINK

rilesholiday.com