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Laurence Anyways

By Xavier Dolan

Need a hand?
You look lost with that old dinosaur.
You were forty minutes late!
What's one more?
Where was I?
What are you looking for, Laurence Alia?
I'm looking for a person...
who understands my language
and speaks it.
A person who,
without being a pariah,
will question not only the rights
and the value of the marginalised,
but also those of the people
who claim to be normal.
Fuck me!
Who are these proles?
Shall we add them now
to the list of things
that minimize our pleasure?
Laurence?
What are you wearing tonight?
Nothing.
What will you say
at the Michel Berthiaume Award ceremony?
Something minimalist, like...
Literature!
Torrent of beauty!
Cascade of sperm!
Glistening stream!
Infinitesimal dust!
So... What is your full name?
Laurence Emmanuel James Alia.
- Age ?
- Thirty-seven.
Should I call your publisher?
I have a meeting in two hours and--
Forty-five!
Gender?
What's next?
'Blood type' and 'Favourite colour'?
Ten years ago,
these would have made puke.
Proust describes too much.

Three hundred pages to tell us
that Tuteur fucks Tatave...
is too much.
In fact,...
were it not for his talent,...
L.-F. Cline would not have been spared.
Collaborating authors
did not come off unscathed
after World War II.
Writers like Bernard Grasset
or Jacques Chardonne
were tried by the Writers' Council
and suspended for cooperating
with the occupying forces.
Whereas others,
like Cline,
opted for the fresh air of Denmark,
just to kick back in kinder climes.
Today, his talent...
has precedence over his true self.
Such is life.
Can one's writings, therefore,
be great enough
to exempt one from
the rejection and ostracism
that affect people who are different?
One who, in another time-space,
could be you or me?
That's the topic of your next essay.
Laurence!
Hi, everyone!
Congratulations!
A friend of mine
won the Berthiaume Prize!
Years ago. My father...
used to hang out with Berthiaume
before his arrest in '71.
Then we lost touch.
Anyway, congratulations!
You amaze me!
Well done!
That newspaper likes me
and spilled some ink.
It's a small award.

False modesty!
Small award, big winner!
Have a drink on us when you get it.
In vino veritas!
Back to 'Pink'.
Liking pink...
and baby blue...
Write!
Indicates...
a latent...
Write it down!
'Latent'...
Childhood...
... trauma!

Authors' Note:

'Parents...
who paint their kids' rooms in pastels
go on the list of things
that subtly minimize our pleasure!'
Time for 'Yellow', sir?
Yellow? Massive ego.
Fuck! I swear, Laurence, I swear to you!
I was thinking 'big ego'.
And potentially problematic!
Now, a yellow car...
That's a fucking statement!
Get out of my lane!
Brown...
the anti-sexual colour.
You just hate my brown Bermudas.
Absolutely not!
I love 'em!
By charter, our lists must be impartial!
I hate brown? I'm wearing brown socks!
Red.
The colour of rage!
And blood!
And seduction!
And passion!
Bugsy Brown!
Red!
Gimme some red!
I'm starving!

Dark chocolate?!
What have I done to deserve this?
I fucked up, I was high,
I took the wrong bar.
My bad!
Dark chocolate minimizes our pleasure,
as you well know!
A mere sign of man's
self-destructive nature.
It can't happen again!
That's on the list of things
that cannot happen again!
Let's tear up the dance floor!
Berthiaume winners don't dance!
Back off!
I love it, I want it by the bed!
One month later
Please stop scrapbooking.
It's fucking torture,
no one wants that.
For your 35th birthday.
To you, to me, to us.
To our past, to our present...
Fucking lame. On purpose?
Absolutely.
Surprise!
Who's surprised now?
You're drenched.
Thanks, Andre.
Who's the Marxist? Laurence's father?
No, way too young.
He's my former Marketing teacher.
We were supposed to meet for coffee,
but I got a commercial.
Laurence knows him, so it's cool.
Who's the purple gaylord?
Liberace's interior decorator?
Lafortune. He's Laurence's supervisor.
And the beehive lady's Francine.
A shrink and a teacher.
Is this a fucking seminar?
Only PhD's can get some black forest?
It's not a black forest.
It's a spice cake.

Cardamom and fresh dates.
Will it blow me and
make me a cappuccino?
Fred, more canaps.
I'm bringing the cake.
Then hurry, the guests are starving.
Lafortune's at the Song of Roland
and the Saracen army.
A fierce intellectual!
I bought Laurence a book.
Couldn't find the Bouvier
or Basquiat ones,
but I got a collector's edition
of Mauriac's oeuvre.
And I added a Finance 101 brochure,
Business Break.
- I hope you kept the bill.
- The bill? Why the bill?
Couldn't you just stick to my list?
Basquiat is a mess.
Mauriac is a must.
That acclaimed pious fag
no one reads 'cause...
he's dull?
Oh you, you...
You just shut up. You don't exist!
You don't exist, dear.
Laurence?
You do like Mauriac, don't you?
There was a time in my life,
I threw all my watches away.
I didn't want to watch time go by,
hour after hour.
That explains a lot.
Can you move on--
You became a compulsive
latecomer in the '90s.
Then you became...
what you are today.
But...
in the chapter called...
Head Above Water,...
your character...
you...

How could I put it?
It all happens so suddenly.
What's real, here?
And what's fiction?
As a child,
I spent a lot of time
at my uncle's house.
With my cousins.
They had a swimming pool...
and we'd play Hold
your breath under water.

Bottom line was:

you simply had to stay under
the longest. Easy enough.
They all gave up.
But I...
kept going.
Not knowing how long I 'd last.
Then...
I 'd surface
just before my lungs exploded.
Death was a breath away.
That's it.
Cooking isn't as easy as pie.
But with Sugar May,
making a good dessert is...
a piece of cake!
Cut!
Was that natural enough?
- Was I natural?
- You were fine.
Ladies and gents, it's a wrap!
Gimme that blindfold!
Stop! Wait!
Fucking sailor's knot!
What's Montreal doing here?
Montreal from the Belvedere!
And for your birthday,
we'll add a centrepiece
to our now famous list of things
that minimize our pleasure:
People who find this spot romantic,...
when 45 planes may come...

crashing down on Parc-Ex!
Really!
It's Christmas! Yay!
What time's our reservation?
What's this?
Fuck the restaurant!
I dressed up! We're not going?
I'll make up for your party screw-up.
My Passport...
Is this a new thing among
red-headed bipolars--
It's a new thing among those who,
since you have the next two days off
and I'm off until Monday,
have planned a trip to...
New York City!
Babe, we're going to New York!
So no restaurant? We just--
Forget the fucking restaurant!
It's history! Moving on!
Jeez! You're drunk as a lord!
I'm what?
Drunk as a lord?
Thanks for the gem, grandma!
Live and learn!
Sorry, babe, sorry!
Can't stop talking. Yak yak yak.
One of our grips was about
to flush whatever coke he had.

I said:

So you're high as a fuckin' kite!
Sorry, babe! I did it all!
I'll get you a snack.
Just get over the restaurant please.
Forget it!
Get it out of your head, love!
Want a hot dog?
Am I lost'?'
Let's hit the car wash, anyway.
Let's go wild in New York!
Why the fuck are you so blue?
Bad day at school?
Will you shut your fuckin' mouth?

Just shut your fuckin' mouth!
I didn't go to work!
And I'm not going to New York!
I have to tell you something!
It's very important! I have to tell you!
I can't take it anymore! I'm dying!
I'll die if I don't!
Listen!
I'm going to die.
What?
Where were you?
At your mom's?
Why is her goddamn number still unlisted?
Why didn't you tell me you were gay?
I'm not gay-
Why didn't you tell me?
You pictured me as a man?
I'm not gay, Fred!
Stop fucking with me!
You're a fag! You're gay!
It's not the end of the world.
It's not that I like men.
I'm just not made to be one.
It's different.
This here? That's not me!
Neither is this!
Or that! It's disgusting! It's not me!
I've lived like this for 35 years.
And that's a crime.
And I'm the criminal.
Stealing someone's life.
Whose life, Laurence?
The life of the woman I was born to be.
Everything I love about you, you hate.
Is that what you're saying?
Is that all you love?
So everything we've been
through is... nothing?
Everything... must...
be... reinterpreted.
I'm not stupid.
I would've known. I would've seen it.
I would've felt it.
You'd have done something.

Dressed up as a woman.

- Did you?

- No.

Did you?

- What did you wear?

- Nothing.

- What do you wear?

- Nothing!

What do you wear, Laurence?

A dress? A sweater?

Nothing. Anything.

Tell me what you wore.

Clothes I bought.

I wouldn't touch yours.

Out of respect for you.

Then I'd throw them away.

I just did it twice, three times.

Ten tops!

- Do you put make up on?

- Come on!

Yes, you do.

Did you ever...

Did you try on my underwear?

Once, I put on a pink bra.

Yeah, pink.

I didn't kill anybody, Fred.

- With a white shirt?

- No, black, of course.

- Your job.

- What about it?

- What will you do?

- Go in as a woman.

After Christmas. After the holidays.

I'll write it down:

'Upcoming Event, Save the Date.'

The List of Upcoming Events.

That's not funny. So not funny.

My life isn't real.

I'm on hold.

I bet you are!

Our life together isn't real?

It's just an 'on hold' thing?

Waiting for real life?

Waiting for me to realize

you've lied to me?
For two years?
I didn't lie.
I just didn't say anything.
I need time apart.
I need time to think.
Do you hate me?
Winter's here and the roof is leaking.
What a drag!
So what are you up to?
What do you mean?
How do you spend your days?
Apart from your work.
You go out, you read?
What do you and Dad do?
Nothing special.
What a question!
Why not go back to painting?
Want some more?
Some port?
They gave your dad a bottle.
Want some?
No, I'm fine. Thanks.
I'm glad you came by.
I need a man to move the TV.
Into the living room.
Your father's too weak for the stairs.
No problem.
Won't you go say hello?
Hey, Dad.
- How are you?
- Fine.
You're hurting? Where?
I thought of you yester...
Wait for the commercial, I can't hear.
Wait for the commercial.
Read between the lines.
He just wanted you
to be in on the secret.
Yeah, sure.
I can't. I just can't.
I gotta be there for him.
I can't just dump him.
Come on!

He knew you'd run when you heard.
I'm sure he's already made his peace.
Boys don't cry and while you are...
He's having a party, trust me.
In fact, he probably did you a big favour...
Cut to the chase, coach!
Look, you're a woman who loves men.
He's a man who wants to be a woman.

Bottom line:

thank you, bye.
I need to wake up next to him.
I need his forearms.
Everybody has forearms!
Mom?
Are you listening?
Damn it, it's important!
Can you still move the TV upstairs?
Do I put it on the floor?
Why do you react like that?
How do you want me to react?
I don't know,
you're not asking any questions...
You're not surprised.
I have no questions.
You throw something totally nuts at me.
So you're nuts. Fine.
But questions?
None.
I don't ask any, so don't ask me.
You want to tell me how to react?
Surprised?
Why?
You always dressed up, as a kid.
I thought you'd end up gay.
When your father
goes for his check-ups...
he stops at peep shows.
Yeah.
Every time.
That's why he doesn't want me along.
Am I surprised?
Am I surprised we left Europe?
Or that the roof is leaking?

Do I look surprised to you?
I'm not surprised!
Never let yourself be surprised. Ever.
I'm sure it's very serious,
and I'm taking you very seriously.
But should I torture myself
and think I'm a bad mother?
I don't care!
Why should I?
And your father?
What father?
Personally, I don't care.
You and I never bonded.
But if you are in trouble,
in any way,
deal with it.
Our door will be closed.
- Your father won't accept you.
- Did he ever?
So...
will you still love me?
Are you becoming a woman or an idiot?
Let's smoke.
Hey, it's me.
I'm coming back home tonight.
I'm coming back and...
Let's do this together.
Well?
What?
What the fuck?
You're still wearing your old clothes!
Calm down!
What went wrong?
Ever heard girls wash their hands?
They started blabbering about...
hunks, Casanovas
and whatever jock they banged.
The grungy guy, the old guy,
the chemistry teacher
vs. the film teacher...
At some point...
and I'm not bragging,
they talked about me.
They said I was cute.

One even called me sexy
Did you get their phone numbers?
No! Listen to me.
I was struggling with my panties!
Fuck!
Can you picture it?
A guy in the stall
squeezing into a dress?
I could see their faces drop.
And then the silence!
The silence after.
It's cool.
You'll try again next Monday.
Mayday!
You'll do it another day.
You've been on hold for 30 years.
Who cares?
Come on!
Major Tom?
Still alive?
Asshole!
Was the transition...
an overnight thing?
Or a slow process?
And from a professional standpoint?
'Cause that will be the focus.
Strutting out in
a fabulous skirt wasn't enough
I had to go all the way.
Dive right in.
So you're diving, now?
Wasn't it about keeping
your head above water?
Didn't you have an appointment?
You'll be late.
Maybe we should wrap it up?
Let me make a phone call...
Use the big mirror.
It'll be easier.
Why not?
Because...
I know what I look like.
It's working.
It works.

- You sure?

- Yeah.

Thanks.

Yes?

Page 3, paragraph 3...

The sub was kind of vague
about the assignment...

Hi, Laurence!

Hello, Mr. Lafortune.

\$0?

D-day, dear?

Didn't see you come in today.

It's quite a shock, huh?

Is it a revolt?

No, sire, it's a revolution!

A class of 30, 35 students.

You said we'd be shopping?

We are shopping.

What a perfect gift for a first day.

Punch me!

What's next?

A clutch and a Barbie fridge?

Just walking down the street
takes balls of steel.

You guys remember
where you put 'em?

Please. Give it a rest, ok?

How about this one, Stef?

It's cute, it's simple, it's...

Depends. Are you going
for the suicidal look or...

or Grandma Beaver's bangs?

God you're ill intended!

Our kids won't be like that.

Oh my God, you want to spawn?

I'm going out for a smoke.

And maybe a quick hurl.

Come on, Stef!

What?

I don't want to be cut off from
both my mother and my sister.

It's a bit too much.

Look who's talking!

We're not exactly super-normal,

are we?
Our generation can take this.
We're ready for it.
Mom!
Happy birthday.
Open it!
Sable hair paintbrushes.
I know, but...
They cost a fortune!
When did you start playing dress-up?
Today.
Maybe we could surprise Dad?
I could come home with you.
Sure.
Then what, world peace?
I'll miss my train.
Let's go away this summer.
How about the Isle of Black?
For peace and quiet.
No one knows it exists.
They're all in Ogunquit.
Peace?
Well, in a way.
I know, it's not your birthday
it's your mom's, but...
I wanted to celebrate your first day.
Fred, you didn't have to!
The fact that you're here
means everything to me.
You may find this stupid, but...
It's not, but...
The moment I met you,
I knew I was in for
something extraordinary.
You want to go one step further?
I'm your man.
I'm proud of you.
I'm proud of us.
On the health that's regained
On the perils of old days
On the hope with no past
I'm writing your name
Liberty
Fuckin' teachers!

Boring bitches with broomsticks
up their butts! They're everywhere!
Are they fucking with you?
Old people can be so...
For me, it's young people.
Guys my age.
I rarely talk to them.
I hang out with older guys.
Not misfits but people who are
curious and care to share.
Basically bored.
Labelled 'abnormal'
because they don't have kids
or still have roommates at 40.
What do you
hear most, really?
Mystics, zealots,
guys who expostulate theories
about the laws of nature or Jesus...
Oh. yeah!
The one that beats them all, by far:
That's different.
Well, I don't run into
many dudes in stilettos.
It is 'different'.
Boobie...
Don't 'Boobie' me!
What does 'different' mean, Stef?
They say that in front
of a porn-period Picasso.
- Ever heard of him?
- Suck my dick!
Has anyone stopped talking to you?
What's this, Mel?

Tranny Poppins:

Just asking, missy!
You don't like it, piss off!
'Cause this lid's gonna flip!
She nailed you, man.
She's not the star tonight.
Just the seat-filler at the freak show.
Go sulk in your big fat Nazi outfit.
I'm not fat!

Fuck, Fred!
Aladdina's on a roll tonight!
- It's my Anna Karina look.
- Who?
Now physically,
do you wax?
I do electrolysis and hormones.
Bitch, please!
We're out of sugar?
I finished it today.
But I don't want any.
Me, neither.
- Well, I do.
- Me, too.
I'll go. I need to get
some other stuff, too.
Run along, I'm in very good company.
Sorry. I put the wig on
just to make her happy.
What's your shoe-size?
Sugar
Sorry.
I knew it was you.
I waited outside.
He took a cab?
Yeah.
Femina Clinic, how can I help you?
I'm calling for an appointment.
Please hold.
What did she tell you?
She didn't really elaborate.
She misses her sister.
Her sister's away, isn't she?
She's down South.
And her mother?
Playing la Parisienne.
Sounds like fun.
All day long.
Is she working?
No, but there's an American movie
coming up. Big production.
She should've heard.
I'm sure she will soon.
It's a big step for her.

Her first feature.
And it's American.
We didn't discuss...
sexual intercourse.
Not my fault!
I'm just giving you a rundown!
Don't be so defensive.
Burn-outs don't just happen!
They are set off by
catalytic events.
Really? Tell me more!
No, not necessarily.
She says it has nothing to do
with your metamorphosis.
Into a unicorn?
Your change.
She's trying to protect you, but...
If Ben came home
tonight and said he...
wanted to have a sex change...
Yes, but it's different for us.
So...
if Fred told you she was
becoming a man...
What's that?
The Isle of Black.
Ah, yes! Have you been there?
No, but we often talked about it.
I'll ask a doctor to prescribe
her some antidepressants.
Did Lafortune call you?
No. Why would he?
I'm out of it.
Never mind.
Thanks, Francine.
I'm glad you came.
Everything will be fine.
I'm looking for some light.
Fiat lux...
This might warm things up.
What?
We don't laugh anymore.
We chose to keep you out of this.
For your own good.

Personally, it doesn't bother me.
And it doesn't affect your teaching.
We sent a letter to all the parents.
I said to everyone:
'Rest assured...', blah, blah...
But then, if it doesn't affect
the quality of my teaching...
'The Professor(ette)'
What's this? An article?
A member of the Parents Group--
Parents Group?
A coalition of parents unhappy
with our response.
They met to...
share their ideas.
One of them is a columnist at the
Montreal Post-Intelligence.
Be frank!
It's just a suburban publication!
Listen, Michel...
They sent it to Quebec,
the Ministry of Education called me.
Mental illness? They're insane!
In the latest edition of the DSM
published by the
American Psychiatric Association,...
'Transsexuality' is listed as...
a mental illness.
What about justice?
What about it? It's fucked.
Education's scared stiff
from the Polytechnic massacre.
I'm not talking about...
I'm talking real justice.
I could sue you.
On what grounds?
For not demanding to be fired as well?
Out of sheer solidarity?
You're about to write your first novel.
Come on!
Your first book.
You can waste your time and money
on litigation...
And you may win!

After two years of banal lawyering,
publicized hearings
and huge bills.
Or see this as a golden opportunity
to dedicate yourself to your work,
to your new career...
In short, I should thank you
for the gift of unemployment
because, silly me, who needs an income
when you work in the arts, right?
I'm trying to see the positive side of it,
that's all.
Between you and me...
if it were just me...
As Secretary of the Board, I must
alas remind you that today is Friday
and that your desk...
and file cabinets
must be cleared out by Monday.
Ideally.
Gentlemen...
Ma'am...
I'm thrilled to meet you, Frdrique.
I've heard great things.
Big fan of your work.
I can call you Fred?
Look, it's a bit delicate...
I don't know, Frdrique...
I mean, Fred...
how to tell you, Fred, but...
I asked some of
my colleagues about you.
I'm just starting.
I don't have a lot of experience,
but I know one thing:
I need my people to be available.
And I don't just mean on paper
or whatever schedule.
Oh my gosh!
What a coincidence!
I never come downtown!
Will I see you at the Cinbal?
Yves made a donation,
so we're going.

I don't know.
Let me give you my number,
in case you need a ticket or a ride.
We got a limo, with a chauffeur.
Slick!
A ball is a ball, you know?
I mean, go glam, girl!
Let me give it to you.
Oh, my gosh! My pen!
Hold on...
I can do it!
Whatever, whenever, call me!
Great. Thanks.
Ciao, Freddie darling.
Wait!
Third time's a charm!
Fuck me!
That's a look, dude!
Sir, can you spare a quarter?
Gotta use the phone, love?
It's me, Laurence.
I know.
I recognized your voice.
Look, Mom, I...
You're off today, right?
Can we meet somewhere?
I can't leave the house.
Your father's having a bad day.
I just can't.
Maybe I could just come by?
We could go for a walk?
Not a good time.
Don't you care about me?
Don't manipulate me!
I don't get it!
You disappear from our lives.
Suddenly, you show up at the office,
you call out of the blue.
Did I ask you to?
I stayed away from you because...
I didn't want to see you
until I'd be honest!
Until I had changed!
Until I was myself!

Fine! Hooray!
You got what you wanted!
But you can't have it all.
I warned you, damn it!
I did, but you never listen!
Do what you want,
but I can't do this to your father!
I won't!
Maybe next week.
No, it has to be today,
I'm not doing well.
Do you understand?
I'm not doing well, Mom.
This is important.
I have to go. Your dad's calling.
Wait!
Maybe we can hook up next week.
Go to a museum...
Whatever. Maybe.
I don't know. We'll see.
Don't you love me anymore?
I'm coming, Pierre!
I'm sorry.
Make yourself at home!
I'm so sorry.
I'm Simon Belisle.
Laurence Alia.
Call me Baby Rose.
I'm more used to it.
Too bad the girls aren't around.
I'd have introduced you.
Old broads that got me
to join their band.
There's a back door.
You'll avoid the
window-shopping dinosaurs.
Right there.
Doesn't matter, doesn't matter...
May I know what happened
to your face?
Please?
I told you.
I fell down the stairs.
From a landing.

A landing or a helicopter?
I know, I didn't miss.
Damn slippery Steps-
Thank you.
I got fired.
I know it's scary,
but... I'll get severance.
We'll live on it while I'm writing.
We should use it to go to the country.
Or to the Isle of Black...
Ma'am?
Some more coffee, please?
Sure.
How about you, sir?
I mean, ma'am?
Sorry, but...
We can't really tell, huh?
Nowadays...
Especially with that look.
I mean... It's so cute.
I'm used to it.
You're going to make it.
We'll find a way.
You'll see a doctor,
I'll stay home and write. It'll be fine.
We'll fix you.
Oh. yeah?
I'm counting on you.
You're the man.
Hell, it's original.
I mean, what a look!
Is it just for fun or...?
The kitchen staff was wondering.
We see a lot of them in the street.
Some are professionals.
Are you guys together?
Cute couple.
Hard to stay in the shade, huh?
You stupid old bag!
Show some manners, miss!
Who the fuck do you think you are?
What's with the stupid
fucking questions?
I'm curious! How can I not...

Relax!
It's Saturday brunch and we're packed!
Who's in charge here?
I am. What can I do for you?
Here's what you can do for me.
It's simple as hell.
Don't talk to me.
Don't ask questions.
Keep your dumb-ass-bitch
opinions to yourself!
End of story!
Can't we fucking exist
outside PTAs and picket fences?
Can we breathe this goddamn air
and have goddamn peace
in this butt crack town?
You're scaring the customers!
I'm scaring the customers?
I'm scaring the customers?
You're a riot, bitch!
His nail polish must scare the shit
outta you, huh?
Everybody under their desks!
Look at me,
I'm talking to you.
Ever bought your man a wig?
Didn't think so.
Ever been afraid he'd
get beaten on the street
and not come home in one piece?
Do you walk in my shoes?
Do you live my life?
You and your questions,
stay out of my life!
You have no right over me!
You don't have the right to talk to us!
Serve coffee, bring food,
pick up your dollar
and shut the fuck up!
Saturday brunch.
Damn it, Fred, wait!
Leave me alone!
Thank you for...
Stop it!

You're gonna fix me!
Between you and me,
who really needs...
Who really needs to be fixed?
Leave me alone.
Elise?
Hi, it's Fred.
Fred Belair, Andre's daughter.
Do you still have that ticket
for the Cinbal tonight?
So you're the one
Baby helped yesterday.
Yes.
Thanks for having me.
The pleasure is ours.
We love visitors.
Who did this to you?
I got into a fight.
No kidding, Einstein!
It gets better, my ass.
I'm Mama Rose.
Laurence Alia.
Alia?
Like the cans?
The toilet bowl
and bidet company?
This is my sister, Auntie Rose.
Charmed.
Shookie Rose, my cousin.
Thrilled.
Dada Rose...
My '70s lover.
Guess who slipped!
And finally, Baby Rose...
My son.
Your son, puh-lease!
Silence!
In fact, Baby works with
the people down here at the warehouse.
Which, believe it or not, I own.
Down where?
Shazzam!
Holy shit!
I don't get it.

Are you guys singers or...?
How about both?
We brought stuff over
when we moved in.
My brother was already here.
He owned this. He died.
We inherited, but it's not our thing.
We're into show business.
But that doesn't pay the bills.
We get a bunch of closeted queers
who'll merrily dump wife,
kids and cat in Oregon
to come here and haggle over...
a fragment of a porcelain bowl
in which Robespierre...
may have dropped a deuce!
So there you have 'em...
The Five Roses.
The largest song repertoire
in the world.
It's lip synch.
How about you?
Do tell.
What's on your mind?
How many times?
- It's been a month.
- How many times?
Give me a number.
How many times?
- It's been a month.
- Give me a number, I said!
Five or six?
Five.
Seven, then.
Stef will help me pack later today.
We'll be done by dinner.
It's okay if you don't
want to see me again.
I'm moving to Three-Rivers next week.
The apartment is all yours.
What a manipulator!
Like your mother.
I guess she's paying for the move
and everything else?

That woman's not half
as smart as you are.
Stop it.
You'll be safe now.
You'll be safe.
You'll be safe, is that it?
Our love wasn't safe,
but it wasn't dumb.
What is it you want, Fred?
What is it?
A child? A house?
I can give you that.
I'll change. This is just an
adjustment period, it's normal.
Nothing to do with us.
We haven't had a chance.
Why are you dressed like this? Why?
Why not normal, as a woman?
To please you, baby.
- Tell me...
- Stop!
Tell me you're not in love.
Are you in love?
Answer me.
No, Say in
- I want to hear it!
- Yes.
Yes, you're in love?
Yes, I'm in love.
Check, please.
Miss?
Check, please.
Come in.
Come on!
Should I talk about
the letters I never sent?
To the A.Z. woman.
By calling her that,
don't you feel you are...
objectifying her?
No.
I call her A.Z.
because it all begins
and ends with her.

It's not a serial number
or a bar code.
So I wrote to her.
Letters I never sent.
Letters I threw in the gutter
or flushed away.
Like bottles into the sea?
Into an ocean of shit, maybe.
No, it's far more romantic.

Picture it:

a cave-dweller,
who lives in the sewers,
discovers the letters.
He collects them, reads them,
then starts dreaming.
Even envies that love, perhaps.
I think I wrote
a thousand letters, that time.
I still remember the room
in that little cottage.
All of this is off the record,
of course.
I could've written
her a song instead.
Ne Me Quitte Pas.
Something like that.
Belgians speak slowly,
but they keep it simple.
Where are you?
What are you wearing?
What are you doing?
Excuse me?
Where are you?
What are you wearing?
Those were...
questions I'd ask myself
when I woke up.
Thinking of her.
And I'd go to bed...
with the same questions.
At some point, I needed answers.
Three-Rivers, 1995
Leo?

I'm ready, hurry up!
Ma.
am?
Excuse me, where's the cardamom?
If there's any left, it should be there.
Otherwise, use some ginger.
Or curcumint. Same crap.
Do me a favour, Leo,
don't crush the apples.
Here we go, Leo... candies.
I bought stuff for your friends tonight.
I thought we'd go out for lunch
for a change. It's Christmas.
The streets are empty.
Isn't that weird?
Lunch? Out?
Were you talking to me?
You know I can't hear
a thing with these on.
Ever gonna remember?
So what is it?
Would you like to go out for lunch?
And bump into people? No way.
Today is the 24th.
And I have things to do.
Before they get here.
You said you'd join us
for champagne after your shift.
Are you still joining us after your shift?
Yes!
Hey, can I borrow your car tonight?
What for?
Errands.
Stores close at five.
I already bought all the food we need.
Not that kind of errands.
It's not...
Come on!
Here.
Why? Why did you bring so much?
Stop whining, it's Christmas!
Are you moving in'?
Or going on a world tour
with fucking Jules Verne?

Where's your Christmas smile?
You forgot your make-up artist
on the backseat!
I missed your sister!
Thank God for caterers!
I'm so not ready.
Everyone's coming at 5:30 sharp.
I'm freaking out.
They're all so fucking punctual!
Some even come early.
How rude! How provincial!
- Where's Albert?
- I told you, he's with a client.
My cardamom cake!
That cake just won't die!
I'm happy to see you.
Sometimes I...
I really am.
You know, if you ever feel...
Well, feel I mean if you're free
for a week-end, call me.
I'll pick you up and drive you back.
I already visit once a month,
you know.
I know!
Ouch!
Someone regrets married life!
Excuse me?
Frdrigue?
Leo won't take his bath.
Soap destroys his magic powers.
Not his power to piss me off.
Pure fantasy!
When did you start smoking?
How much do you need?
To buy yourself a decent winter coat.
Look at you!
- The Little Match Girl.
- No, thanks.
But I'll take cash
for a little coke instead.
Pickles!
Dumb bitch!
Jesus, Mary!

Full confession on Sunday!
It's okay.
Let me help you. Let me help!
No! Just get out of the kitchen.
All of you!
Sorry. I don't mean to be rude, but...
Watch it, kid!
Kevin, honey, come here.
All is well, butterfly.
Your shindig's a triumph!
Stay calm.
Damn it!
Don't. Only me.
I regret what I said.
I have no regrets.
The lady of the house!
Watch out, it's a mess.
Everywhere.
I hear you're Miss Congeniality?
Bouncer, chef...
That's a lot of hats to wear.
Will you get a bottle from downstairs?
Honey?
The wine.
Let me just clean up first.
Poor Auntie!
She went through hell with this kid.
Sons! There's no lookbook.
Do what you can, ma'am.
Where's Auntie?
Poor thing.
Every year, our Polish neighbour
has us over for her fish zuppa.
Auntie's always had a dramatic tummy.
But she said Ograh,
the Polish neighbour,
tried to poison us.
She sat all night long
making love to the toilet bowl.
She's still at the hospital.
Screaming Poison!
Tastes like fish sperm anyway.
It makes no sense. Any evidence?
The evidence?

She pissed it out her ass!
Let's drink.
I'm so happy!
I raise my glass to my family.
Daniel...
Simon...
Teresa who is throwing up in Montreal.
Chantal...
To Charlene, our hostess.
And to Laurence's book of poetry,...
which is due next month!
A toast to Laurence, our host.
Host-ess!
Silly me! Hostess.
And poetess!
My father used to say:
Poets never dress for winter.
But winter for them is no harm,
for a poet's heart
keeps him warm.
Unless it burnt to ice.
Beautiful!
Mama's little poet!
Cutie pie!
Enough! Cheers everyone!
Merry Christmas!
To success and more sex!
Sure, Shookie.
I'm seeing a lawyer next week
to finalize the paperwork.
They're doing research, inquests, stuff.
It can take months.
But I can wire you some money.
- Are you sure you're okay?
- Yes, mom.
I'm swamped right now.
Tons of manuscripts to read.
I'm good.
You look great!
Why?
Why? Because. You look great.
Your make-up, your eyes, your outfit...
You look great.
So do you.

Will you come to my loft
when you're in town?
What loft?
Don't you ever listen to me?
I told you I was going to move.
I found a loft downtown.
You changed sex,
I changed my address!
Anyone in your life?
Yeah.
Ever hear from...?
I like Charlotte.
We rented a small cottage
for next weekend.
She understands me,
she takes care of me...
And vice-versa?
Are you being honest?
Here.
This is for you.
- A present.
- You shouldn't...
Come on!
We're going to miss your bus.
When you were a kid and took the bus,
you always called to check in.
It was annoying.
Really annoying.
I don't like obligations, conventions...
I always saw you as a woman
who just lived in the house.
Never as my mother.
And I never saw you as my son.
But I do see you as my daughter.
Seasons fall from branches
Her back lies against tranquil skin
Hope hurts in the house she's in
Where we winter like a wounded beast
Still the whitest bricks couldn't keep
A ROSE FROM BLOSSOMING
Plumart Publishers.
I'm calling from Canada.
I'd like to...
I'd like to send a letter

to one of your authors.
You have crossed the borders of my life,
of my town, of my street.
All that's left is my front door.
I think you know where to find me. Fred.
Milk? Sugar?
Your coat.
Need a hand?
Want to take it all off?
Not yet.
- We have three hours.
- It's a lifetime!
How long have you been spying?
For over a year.
How did you find out?
Laurence, you sent me your book.
I'd be surprised if your arm
was long enough
to reach from Paris to here
and paint a brick on my house.
Good job.
With the pink brick, I mean.
Want to make a list?
This little Balinese dancer...
Slightly to the left.
That's too much.
That's too much?
Wait.
Now we can't tell!
Ok, these two...
these two decanters...
Switched.
Perfect!
This little bull...
The bull and his friend the mermaid...
The mermaid fucks the bull.
Want some dark chocolate?
You've changed!
I knew you'd say that.
Wasn't it a strong sign of men's
self-destructive nature?
Why the self-inflicted torture?
- However light...
- ...however slight.

Back to our old list.

- Come with me.

- That hideous statue...

Hideous... statue.

Come with me.

Come on.

ISLE OF BLACK:

But had I picked that place randomly?

When I first met the Pink Club,

Mama Rose said a friend

of hers had moved here.

With her lover.

Well...

a man who'd been a woman.

I wanted us to see that.

To see it was possible.

Hey! Did you take a bath, my love?

Are you coming back soon?

Yes, my angel.

Mommy can't really give you a date.

But in a week or two,

two weeks tops, I should be back.

And I can't wait to tickle-tickle you!

- How's it going, love?

- Fine, fine.

This is just a quick call...

We're moving on to the night scenes,

I have to get back.

- Call back anytime. Love you.

- Me too.

Friends of mine from Montreal

know a guy who lives here.

With his wife.

I called him today.

He invited us over.

Good evening.

Your son didn't come with you?

No...

You're empty.

Thank you.

So you've lived here for seven,

eight years?

Amazing! Don't you miss the city?

It's peaceful here.
We always worked from home, anyway.
Even in the city.
The operation complicated things.
Family...
Work...
We needed a break.
If I may, what is this 'operation'?
Alexander was going on
about 'the operation'...
Was it a lung thing? Is that...
why you left the city?
No, the sex change operation.
Who?
Alexander.
I think I burnt the cake.
I always do.
Glad you liked the pot-au-feu,
but the cake, Mon Dieu!
You know Mama Rose, don't you?
Your chick's friend.

Her motto is:

your cake and eat it too.'
And Dada always adds:
'As well as the baker's balls!'
Alexander?
Can you give me a hand?
- May I use your phone?
- Of course.
By the front door.
I need to call my sister.
Then join us in the greenhouse.
What else do we need?
I needed to hear your voice.
You did?
How was your day?
Fine. Nothing special.
Actually, I'm having dinner
with the crew at some locals'.
We're still eating, but...
I met Charlotte yesterday.
Charlotte, your ex's girlfriend.
Laurence.

Laurence Alia?

Yes.

Who's with you right now.

I forgot to tell you,
he's part of the shoot.

Come on, you know

I'm smarter than that.

Live what you want,

do what you like,

we'll talk when you get back.

We were just asking Laurence...

How long have you been together?

Nine years.

On and off.

This hash is local?

Ever tried opium?

No, I haven't.

Would you like to?

Not really.

Not tonight.

Sorry, I don't want to be a drag,

but you're driving, Laurence.

Right.

Then, no, thanks.

So YOU guys are...

together no matter what.

And you've never split up.

Were you already a lesbian, Fanny?

Well... For me,

what matters is the person.

Alexander...

Alexandra...

Alexandrine...

I follow the logic of my heart.

Of course.

Gender is shallow to me.

The logic of your heart?

Looks can be quite deceiving.

Let's be honest, it's easier for you.

Because you can't tell.

But I...

I always feel I'm lying to myself.

Hiding from the truth.

They prove happiness is...

happiness!
Get real! Happiness!
They live in a shitty shack!
Baked as fuck on cheap opium,
surrounded by inbreds!
They're buried here because over there,
he'd be stoned to death!
Happiness!
And her! HER!
Looks can be quite deceiving.
Thanks for the tip, freak!
Thank you, I deserve this award!
If he was fat, she'd dump him!
Fuckin' phony!
What did your sister tell you?
Who's Charlotte?
Who the fuck is she?
She's... How did you find out?
That bitch came to my house
and stabbed us in the back!
She knew we were here?
I don't know.
Last time I saw her, I was packing.
Who told you?
Albert?
You thought
I'd jeopardize my whole life
just for a winter safari on an island?
What did you tell him about us?
I told him I was going on a shoot.
You lied to him.
And to me, too.
Yes, I lied, you lied,
they lied, we all lied!
It would've worked
if your fucking girlfriend--
She's not my girlfriend!
You're jealous!
- I'm not!
- Yes, you are.
I'm just curious!
Who is this 'Dada'?
And Mama Rose? Prostitutes?
Watch it! They're not prostitutes!

They're singers I met before we split
and they helped me a lot.
Charlotte's a nice girl. We fucked.
She loved me, but I was waiting.
- For what?
- What do you think, you idiot?
You want me to give up my life?
Ruin my life for you?
What a pretentious man you are!
'Woman!' 'Pretentious woman!'
Well, so are you!
I thought we could go back
to where we were before
your side trip into normal life.
You think you're smarter than I am,
but you're not!
You think I buy your little sham?
How wonderful!
We fuck, we dance, thank you.
But you're doing it for me.
Like it's charity!
What do you want from me?
Do what I do!
Enjoy life, enjoy our story, enjoy our love!
Nothing, no one can
come between us!
- Except you!
' No. you!
Fuck no! You wanted this.
We tried, we did it!
But you can't have it all.
You made a choice, I respect that.
But you risked everything we had.
And we lost it.
And it's all your fault!
So, sure, come home,
come spy on me,
send me your book...
dismiss the life I've built for myself...
even piss in my gas tank!
That's you! I could think of moving
somewhere to spy on you.
Think, but not do.
That's what pisses me off!

You piss me off!
'Cause I can't keep up with you!
I can't! I'll lose the beat!
I don't want to be just a nothing.
That nothing next to you.
That nothing that wipes your ass!
I'm not a groupie!
That's the deal?
Choose a boring family life
or become a woman and
end up alone and a loser?
- Thanks for the pep-talk!
- Oh, shut up!
Of course, there's more!
You understand shit!
And you do it on purpose!
You know I love you!
I love you more than my son!
I don't want that!
What do you want, then?
Come on, say it!
What do you want?
A man!
Cheap shot.
I'm not made for this.
I'm sorry. I can't see you. I can't.
I just can't! I won't fuck up my life
so you can find yourself!
I shouldn't have left--
Then why did you leave,
you stupid fucking cunt?
'Cause I was sick of thinking
about my child 24/7!
What Child?
What Child?
What child, Fred?
What child? Damn it, what child?
Just after your switch...
I freaked out.
I had an abortion.
'Cause I... wanted to stay with you.
I wanted to...
I thought we'd work it out.
I thought it would give us time.

Is it the end of the world?
Maybe you just hate being
here because you have to.
No, I don't hate being here.
But I hate you being
Then the coffee is on me.
I don't want any coffee. Sound check.
A beer, then?
It will relax you.
I don't want to relax...
I don't want a beer. It's 1 PM.
Sound's good.
We're on.
So, Laurence Alia...
You're just back from the US.
Vermont, in the end.
Got back last week.
Look, this is ridiculous.
Have a coffee, it's my treat.
Okay. A decaf,
since you're harassing me.
With a drop of hot milk.
So...
after three years,
you came back here for...
not just for your book launch, did you?
Do you have anything
to add that might interest...
or be relevant to the reader?
What reader?
Are you writing my profile
for my publisher or just my biography?
Listen, Laurence.
I ask questions, you answer them.
I can't think of a more
efficient approach.
But contempt...
What about you?
Aren't you a tad contemptuous?
Yes, I was late, but...
Ever since we started,
not once have you looked me
in the eyes.
Is there any blood left

in that upper lip?
You think you'll turn to stone?
Do looks matter to you?
I don't know.
Does air matter to your lungs?
There you have it.
Disgusting people lived here.
They brought cockroaches this big!
I had to call the exterminator.
Not cheap, that.
Cost a fortune!
This is bathroom.
Looks great. Fully equipped.
I put mirror for you. Brand new.
From antique shop.
Fortune.
Here you have bedroom.
Closets, very large, huge.
Just for you.
It's unique space, bravo.
And here, window reveal
beautiful mountain, direct view.
You'll never get this
anywhere else. Never, ever.
Here you have kitchen.
With lots of storage space.
Stove, fridge...
Well, fridge coming soon.
I put it in. Free for you.
Just for you. Exception.
Excuse me.
What now?
To answer your question,
I came back
to see some people
and settle some things.
Nothing major.
I was just tired of living in a trailer.
I had finished my book...
And my mother is ill, so...
Is that a way to speak
to your mother?
Shut up!
Go to your room!

Go to your room or I get the belt!
Give me your mother back!
Sure! I'll get it on my way home.
No problem.
My wife. Calls 25 times a day.
She's crazy for me.
Hi, ma'am.
In your book,
you hope to end the divide
between the normal
and the marginal.
How romantic!
The social division...
We're entering a new millennium.
Ah, yes, Y2K.
I mean...
Beyond computer malfunction in 2000,
why not wish for real change?
I made the leap.
I think about the youth, now.
What's in store for them.
I'm not in the game anymore.
I'm living out the last half of
a woman's life.
All women do, eventually.
Yes, but... Last half's nothing
without the first.
But you are beautiful.
Hold on, let me look at my notes...
What are you looking for,
Laurence Alia?
In your book, In Praise of Normal,
when you speak of love,
you speak of
a woman named 'A.Z.'
The 'A.Z.' woman.
She is the main...
one of the main characters
in the novel.
Can we talk about her?
It's all in the book.
But have you seen that woman again?
- How are you?
- Fine. You?

How's Fred?

Yes, she did leave Albert.

She's back in Montreal,
we're having dinner with mom soon.

What are you doing?

Is that her number?

That's the year we met!

Yes!

- On the set.

- Yes!

Gotta get back.

We hadn't written to each other,
hadn't called...

Apart from the septic epistle.

How did the reunion go?

I didn't quite know what to expect.

I didn't know...

I just didn't.

Sorry, sorry.

No place to park.

I drove around forever.

The minute I park,
two spots free up right in front!

Murphy's Law.

You look great!

I'm glad, you're so pretty.

Thank you. Likewise.

Thank you.

Excuse me, can we get two vodkas,
two ice cubes, one lime?

Is that okay?

That's your drink, right?

So, when did you get back?

About a week ago.

I thought it was...

I moved back a month ago.

I've been going back and forth
for a while, and...

I live next to the Jean-Talon Market.

Cool! I went there the other day,
they have cherry tomatoes--

The St. Jones?

Yeah! They're so good!

Amazing! And they sell them

at a price that's not too...
Extravagant?
Right. Exactly what
I was about to say.
Congratulations!
On your book.
I just bought it.
Piece of shit, right?
No, Laurence.
I haven't read it yet.
Haven't had the time.
Too much on my mind.
Are you happy?
Weren't you happy with me?
It wasn't all bad, was it?
Sorry, I'm so heavy.
I go straight for the serious stuff,
the most awkward stuff,
but... I'm just curious.
That's all. And if I see you
only once every three years...
Yes, Laurence.
Why did you say my name?
It sounds incriminating.
It's your name, Christ!
I love it when you do that!
I stole it from you.
I love the back of your neck.
I love your neck, actually.
Your neck is telling the whole world,
Kiss my ass.
Any regrets?
About what?
You.
What you mean is,
was it worth losing you?
- Not really.
- Yes, you do.
But that's okay, I'll tell you.
I don't regret...
getting up in the morning
and seeing the reflection
I always wished for.
What I regret...

and it dawned on me
not so long ago...
is that even before I became
a woman we were screwed.
Please elaborate.
We were fucked.
Your family, my family,
your work, my work,
our day-to-days,
we were fucked.
Other people didn't have that.
They envied us.
Before I was an outcast,
we were outcasts already.
You mean we wouldn't have lasted,
even if you hadn't...?
I don't know.
I don't know. I don't want to...
I'm not abdicating responsibility.
And I can't be pardoned.
All I'm saying, Fred, is that society...
Stop!
Leave fuckin' 'Society' alone!
What are you thinking?
Come back to Earth, please.
Come back to Earth?
Is that what you said?
Do you hear yourself?
Well quit the broken record,
damn it.
Stop talking shit!
That's insulting, to both of us.
I don't want to come back to Earth.
I don't give a fuck!
We flew so high...
I won't come down.
Then stay up there.
So are we going to eat?
Sure!
I'm just going to wash my hands.
You must be pretty busy these days.
I guess you are in high demand.
No.
And this new decade?

Big deal?
Are you a confident ma-...
Woman?
May I borrow your glasses?
Confident? No.
Determined.
Fall is here. Time for coats.
Yes... Fall.
Cut! I've got what I need.
Fred to Pierre.
We're just checking the gate.
If it's clean, it's a wrap.
Gate's clean.
It's a wrap!
Thank you, everyone!
Excuse me, miss.
This may sound a little stupid but...
The guys over there made this.
If you take it, I'll get 20\$.
What is it? Some kind of cloud?
No, it's... a butterfly.
But the fact you think it's a cloud
minimizes my pleasure.
You just made 20 bucks.
Okay, here's the deal.
Ten dollars for gas.
And ten to buy you
a drink after wrap.
Deal?
Fred Belair.
Laurence Alia.
Laurence who?
Alia.
But...
It's Laurence, anyways.
In memory of Luce Baillaireg.