

Fernando and the Killer Queen

by Kyle John Schmidt

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Characters (5M, 1W)

QUEEN	an evil, all-powerful monarch. Played by a man in drag.
FERNANDO	the Queen's nephew. Sweet, kind, precious. And a wiener.
BORIS	the Queen's Imperial Narrator. Boris narrates the Queen's life.
BRENDA	the Queen's Royal Maintainer. Brenda maintains the Queen's dignity.
ALEX FRACTIS	the Queen's General. Noble, steadfast, and true.
INSURGENT #1/ SOLDIER/ PEASANT KING/ CURTIS the PEASANT/ MINION	the Queen's enemies.

Setting

A tyrannical monarchy beset with near constant revolutions.

Act 1

Scene 1

The palace throne room.

In the center, there's a throne.

Two doors: one to the bathroom, one to the rest of the fortress.

Front and center, there's a strange man in a strange robe looking at us.

BORIS

A Narrator stands in the shadow of a dazzling jewel-encrusted throne at the heart of a monstrous palace. Against all odds and any expectations, the kingdom finds itself ruled at the whim and fuss of a single woman: our Queen.

(FERNANDO bursts through the door with a suitcase.)

FERNANDO

There's a murderer in the palace!

BORIS

A young man enters. He's sweet, innocent, kind, precious, in other words, a wiener.

FERNANDO

Did you hear me?

BORIS

I'm narrating.

FERNANDO

But there's a murderer in the palace!

BORIS

Who are you?

FERNANDO

Fernando. The Queen's nephew. Here to visit. Who are you?

BORIS

Boris. Imperial Narrator to our Queen. Here to narrate.

FERNANDO

Where's the Queen?

BORIS

Busy.

FERNANDO

But there's a murderer in the palace!

BORIS

She's busy.

FERNANDO

I need to talk to her now!

BORIS

She's very busy.

FERNANDO

Make her un-busy.

BORIS

She's in the bathroom. Being busy.

FERNANDO

Oh. Sorry. I can wait.

BORIS

The Queen's dress. It got dirty. So she went to the bathroom. Brenda, our Queen's Royal Maintainer, is in the bathroom with her. Helping. With appearances. How was your trip?

FERNANDO

When I entered the palace, an enormous man—

BORIS

Was it the Cook?

FERNANDO

I don't know.

BORIS

Did he make you a snack?

FERNANDO

No.

BORIS

Too bad.

FERNANDO

He shoved a lumpy, dripping bag in my hands and asked me to dump it in the woods.

BORIS

Did you do it?

FERNANDO

No. Before I could do anything, I was surrounded and swarmed by all these peasants. Who tore through the bag. Inside was a carcass.

BORIS

Well, that's not good.

FERNANDO

With an elbow.

BORIS

That's really not good.

FERNANDO

It was a man. Murdered. Torn to pieces. And the peasants were starving. So I stood there. And watched. As they ate the body!

BORIS

Fernando, who taught you to feed people to peasants?

FERNANDO

No! I didn't! I couldn't stop it! I tried. I saved this signet ring.

(FERNANDO hands BORIS the signet ring.)

BORIS

Oh. Oh! OH! Boris has a moment of remorse and remembrance. Poor Ferguson Rickitts. What a fate! We used to play horseshoes.

FERNANDO

You knew him? The man—

BORIS

— you let fill a few rustic bellies? Yes. Everyone did. General Ferguson Rickitts. Our Queen's all-time favorite General. But now: he'll never throw a ringer again.

FERNANDO

We must catch that cook.

BORIS

The Cook's gone. Boris saw him leave.

FERNANDO

But the Queen will think I killed the General.

BORIS

That's silly, Fernando. Our Queen killed the General. And the Cook was supposed to make Ferguson Mini-pizzas. Deep-dish. We're having a royal sleepover tonight. With pizzas and pillow fights. Did you bring your jammies?

FERNANDO

I'm leaving.

BORIS

Before board games? Our Queen would mutilate you.

FERNANDO

But why would the cook give me the body?

BORIS

To distract you. So he could lead a revolution.

FERNANDO

There's a revolution?

BORIS

Most likely. Have no fear, Fernando, our Queen will retrieve the Cook. In time. In pieces. As soon as Brenda's done scrubbing the General's blood off her dress.

FERNANDO

What if she killed Brenda, too?

BORIS

Never. Brenda's an exceptional pillow-fighter.

(The sound of cannon-fire rocks the throne room.)

FERNANDO

What was that!

BORIS

The revolution.

*(The sound of missiles, machine guns, and a deafening cheer from outside.
BORIS and FERNANDO look out.)*

BORIS

Look. Insurgents. They're swarming in. The palace is taken. This does not look good.

FERNANDO

Queen! Queen!

BORIS

Fernando, let our Queen get clean in peace or Brenda will give you the rough side of her tongue.

FERNANDO

There's a revolution outside! Why isn't she fighting it!

BORIS

Brenda's good with a pillow, but not that good.

FERNANDO

The Queen. Why isn't the Queen fighting the revolution?

BORIS

Quiet down. Our Queen never fails. Has never failed. Though we've never had a revolution inside the palace before.

(Another earthshaking explosion, gunfire is sprayed into the throne room from a window. FERNANDO and BORIS hit the ground.)

FERNANDO

But I'm just a visitor! Tell the insurgents that I'm a nobody!

BORIS

Tell them yourself! Boris runs and hides.

FERNANDO

Hide me too!

BORIS

No. *(Pause.)* Boris jokes! Boris and Fernando run to the hallway and hide in the disguise closet.

FERNANDO

Disguise closet?

*(BORIS and FERNANDO exit to the hallway.
More explosions.)*

And then a sudden silence.

A WOMAN enters grandly from the bathroom looking both regal and brutal.)

WOMAN

My people. No. My subjects. No. My surroundings. As revolutionaries attack, your Queen, your illustrious Queen, idles away on her gilded throne at the top of her massive skyward castle.

Servants parade about me and present the oncoming danger with a moving song. Servants. Sing! Twirl! Now sparkles! Now garlands! Now magic! Servants dance better. Better! I ban poor dancing skills! It is hereby illegal.

Brenda. Brenda! Kill my servants for being invisible. Brenda. *(WOMAN looks to the bathroom.)* It appears as though Brenda is gone. Of all impudence! Thunder! Fury! I ban Brenda's disappearance! It is hereby illegal.

(There is a pounding at the hallway door.)

Insurgents. They came.

(The pounding at the hallway door gets louder.)

I ban insurgents. They are hereby illegal.

(The pounding at the hallway door reaches a fever pitch!)

Hiding hereby becomes a fashionable ploy for the high-minded and well-dressed.

(WOMAN hides behind the throne.)

(INSURGENT #1 breaks down the hallway door and enters with a large gun.)

INSURGENT #1

Get down! Hands up!

(Nothing happens.)

INSURGENT #1

She's not here. Come, come. Stop dawdling.

(INSURGENT #2 walks in cautiously with a large machete.)

INSURGENT #2

Last time someone tried to overthrow the government I heard the Queen rode them over with a lawn mower. Can I hold the gun?

INSURGENT #1

I don't want your bumbling wasting bullets. You already fell down a flight of stairs. Nearly gutted yourself!

INSURGENT #2

But she could fly out from the rafters with a weed whacker and VRRRRRRRRRR you're flesh clippings!

INSURGENT #1

Are you seriously doubting my abilities to insurrect? You do know that my prowess during tonight's uprising will be heralded as the revolutionary act of the millenium. And when I kill the Queen, I will rule.

INSURGENT #2

Lucky you. Are you going to tell me how we're going to murder the Queen yet?

INSURGENT #1

How do I know you're trustworthy?

INSURGENT #2

I'm probably not. But I'll need to know how to act so she doesn't see me piddle my pants.

INSURGENT #1

Courage! I need you to have courage! Can you have courage?

INSURGENT #2

When the moment comes, I'm your man.

INSURGENT #1

When the Queen discovers that we have infiltrated her palace and incapacitated her security, she will retreat here—the throne room. While she's weeping over her wasted life, we will switch weapons. You'll hold her with the gun and I'll slice off her head, hands, and heart with the machete. Then I address an assembled crowd while clutching the royal entrails. And we institute a representational democracy under my authority. Maybe they'll make a small mention of you in the history books. A footnote in a book about me. Are you crying?

INSURGENT #2

No. Maybe. A little. Can I tell you a secret?

INSURGENT #1

Please don't.

INSURGENT #2

I think I'm depressed. I thought it was some sort of seasonal disorder. Or environmental factors. Work-related stress.

INSURGENT #1

Pull yourself together, man.

INSURGENT #2

That is what I love about you. You have such impersonal occupational zest. Would you consider me a lovable person? I know we just met.

INSURGENT #1

You need to stand ready, soldier. The Queen could arrive at any minute.

INSURGENT #2

But, sir, we're about to go through something very major together and I think we should discuss where I'm coming from. I'm a sunny person. I like things. Not the best body anymore. Sometimes you can't keep the field from running over the fence, if you know what I mean. Can I tell you the truth?

INSURGENT #1

You're making this not fun for me.

INSURGENT #2

When we were walking up those stairs I was trying to fall on my knife. I'm not a cutter, though, if that's what you're thinking.

INSURGENT #1

Okay.

INSURGENT #2

I'm not suicidal.

INSURGENT #1

You said that.

INSURGENT #2

No I didn't.

INSURGENT #1

Practically.

INSURGENT #2

I just don't think it'd be a tragic thing. To die. To get rid of all these costumes one wears to slog through life. I think that's what death is: mandatory nudity. Can you imagine me naked?

I can not. INSURGENT #1

Will you? INSURGENT #2

No. INSURGENT #1

You don't get me, do you? INSURGENT #2

I do not. INSURGENT #1

INSURGENT #2
I don't get me either. Sorry. I always get this way during a revolution. Sad. Remorseful. Open. Do you think things will be better after this revolution?

INSURGENT #1
Why does the throne have a petticoat?

INSURGENT #2
Oh. It's her. The Queen.

(WOMAN rises from her hiding place: fierce, proud, and fearless.)

WOMAN
The Queen ascends from her secret burrow to ambuscade the unsuspecting intruders. Insurgents fall to her feet and beg mercy.

INSURGENT #1
Don't move! Don't move!

INSURGENT #2
She's not moving.

INSURGENT #1
You are cornered Queen.

WOMAN
Insurgents stop threatening. Threats are banned.

INSURGENT #1
(To INSURGENT #2:) Go get her.

I am. INSURGENT #2

Stop sulking. INSURGENT #1

I'm not. INSURGENT #2

(INSURGENT #2 grabs WOMAN.)

Queen! I've got you— INSURGENT #1

(WOMAN loses her bravery and starts running in circles.)

Wrinkles. Wrinkles. I've got wrinkles! WOMAN

Hold! INSURGENT #1

The clothing line is broken! And if I don't run my dress will get wrinkles! WOMAN

Your reign of terror is over. INSURGENT #1

Wrinkles are not a crime! WOMAN

Look, she's weeping. Sweet, mournful rivulets! Note this for history, I made the Queen weep. INSURGENT #1

Noted. INSURGENT #2

I'm not the Queen! I'm Brenda! Brenda the docile servant! Silly Brenda with the innocuous wrinkles problem! WOMAN

(WOMAN becomes BRENDA.)

INSURGENT #1

What!

(A lawn mower erupts outside of the room.)

INSURGENT #1

Lawn mowers!

BRENDA

Now we're doomed.

INSURGENT #1

She can come from anywhere! Stand ready! Stop moping.

INSURGENT #2

I'm not.

INSURGENT #1

I can't have you brooding throughout my revolution.

(SUDDENLY! FERNANDO appears wrapped in a mess of scarves and fabric.)

INSURGENT #1

Queen!

*(FERNANDO hisses at the INSURGENTS.
INSURGENT #1 points his gun.
FERNANDO freezes.)*

INSURGENT #1

Checkmate.

*(INSURGENT #1 hands off his gun to INSURGENT #2
and commandeers the machete.
As INSURGENT #2 aims the gun at FERNANDO,
INSURGENT #1 approaches with the machete.)*

INSURGENT #1

I've plotted against you for years. Dreamt of this my whole life. But now. Finally. Your royalty is mine. *(INSURGENT #1 rips fabric away from FERNANDO's throat. FERNANDO is revealed.)* What! You're a man!?! The Queen is a man? All this time I was fighting a man in skirts?

INSURGENT #2

Hardly.

*(INSURGENT #2 shoots INSURGENT #1 with the gun.
It's a machine gun.
So it takes a while.
INSURGENT #1 finally dies.
INSURGENT #2 becomes QUEEN.)*

QUEEN

(To FERNANDO:) I am visibly aghast. Why are you wearing my clothes? Does everyone flounce around in my scarves when I'm away?

FERNANDO

I'm Fernando.

QUEEN

Fernando is killed in the most despicable way possible.

FERNANDO

I'm your nephew. Fernando. I have a letter of introduction.

QUEEN

Fernando. My nephew. Arrives. Saves the day. The Queen places the treasured royal diadem upon her head and regains ascendancy. Brenda disrobes and dresses the Queen in the bathroom.

FERNANDO

What about outside? The revolution?

QUEEN

It's over. I won.

(QUEEN exits. BRENDA follows. BORIS appears.)

FERNANDO

What just happened?

BORIS

Our Queen won the revolution.

FERNANDO

But how does she know?

BORIS

Obviously she planned it. She, being immeasurably dissatisfied with her own rule, began a revolution to overthrow her own government, and is now ready to assume the rule of a new, brighter Age. Same thing happened last week. And you can count on another in a week.

FERNANDO

She stages her own revolutions?

BORIS

Who else would do it for her? However, our Queen's never let them get this close to the throne room. I actually thought it was over. But you saved the day! Who knows what would have happened if you hadn't sashayed in!

FERNANDO

I don't know what came over me.

BORIS

The famed specter of glory. That's what came over you. A ghost of fortune.

FERNANDO

Won't the people wonder who started the revolution?

BORIS

I'm sure we'll blame that hoss, Ferguson Rickitts. And he was killed. Remember, you fed him to peasants.

FERNANDO

I didn't.

BORIS

You did.

FERNANDO

Boris, I think the Queen was crying.

BORIS

Doubtful. Crying is banned. And what if she was? So what. Maybe this revolution will fix it. Or the next. Or the next. Our Queen is addicted to revolution.

(QUEEN enters wearing a grand dress.

BRENDA follows, meekly, wearing a robe similar to that worn by BORIS.)

QUEEN

Brenda and Boris perform the Song of Victorious Revolution.

BRENDA AND BORIS

*The tinkling bluebells twinkle and sway
To the blasting bomb's metallic spray
The red-eyed grackles snarl and caw
At the young man attacked by chainsaw
The running river will always flow,
But the headless crew team never ever rows.*

*Banquet of mud
Delicatessen of blood.
The revolution is over!
Goblet of crud
Green, black, 'n' yellow soap sud
The revolution is over!
Teeth cracked,
Body racked,
Let's have snacks!
The revolution is over!*

*A long pink sunrise pledges great news:
White are the bones, purple is the bruise.
The Killer Queen is back at the prow
She'll mangle your babes, blow up your town.
The round earth sucks bodies into loam
Every revolution draws us closer home.*

*Banquet of mud
Delicatessen of blood.
The revolution is over!
Goblet of crud
Green, black, 'n' yellow soap sud
The revolution is over!
Teeth cracked,
Body wracked,
Eat some snacks!
The revolution is over!
And over and over and over!
And over and over and over
And over and over and over!*

QUEEN

Boris removes the body from my throne room five minutes ago. (*BORIS drags INSURGENT #1 out the door.*) Brenda becomes a chair. (*BRENDA becomes a chair. The QUEEN sits on her.*) Fernando.

FERNANDO

Hi.

QUEEN

Why are you still wearing my frippery?

FERNANDO

I don't know.

QUEEN

The Queen entertains fantasies of beating Fernando to death for daring to wear clothes fitted to her petite frame. Fernando, do you think I'm a lizard?

FERNANDO

No.

QUEEN

Then why did you, dressed as me, encounter insurgents, and hiss like a lizard.

FERNANDO

I don't know.

QUEEN

Fernando. Or should I say Fer-I-Don't-Know, what are you doing here?

FERNANDO

Visiting.

QUEEN

Visiting during a revolution? That doesn't sound smart.

FERNANDO

I didn't know there was going to be a revolution happening when I arrived.

QUEEN

Do you have a job?

FERNANDO

Yes, I'm a student.

QUEEN

I meant a real job.

FERNANDO

No.

QUEEN

Did you come here to cry and mope?

FERNANDO

No.

QUEEN

Your mother informs me in your letter of introduction that you quit school in order to devote yourself to crying and moping full-time.

FERNANDO

My girlfriend Maricynth, the most voluptuous girl in all of college, ended our three-semester-long relationship.

QUEEN

We don't cry in my kingdom.

FERNANDO

I know. That's why my mother sent me here.

QUEEN

The Queen thinks very hard about what to do with tender Fernando. A vision appears through the churning vapors of her imagination. A deviously wicked, yet positively splendid idea.

FERNANDO

What?

QUEEN

The Queen makes Fernando her Heir.

FERNANDO

I'm a student. I know nothing about government. I'm majoring in art.

QUEEN

Heralds triumphantly report the ascendancy of a new Heir and attribute the murder of General Rickitts to his mighty claws.

FERNANDO

I haven't claws, I have the soft hands of a vase maker. I don't want to be Heir. I should return school.

QUEEN

Then the revolution was fought for naught and Brenda wasn't setting the stage for the Heir to save the life of the Queen. Brenda failed and the Queen should scatter her mixed bits across the throne room. Squeal, Brenda, squeal!

*(QUEEN threatens BRENDA's life.
BRENDA squeals.)*

FERNANDO

Would I have to wear a dress?

QUEEN

You're a man. Why would a man wear a dress? (*BORIS enters.*) This is Boris, the Imperial Narrator.

BORIS

Boris waves. (*BORIS waves.*)

QUEEN

He narrates the splendor of my life. And this is the Brenda. My Royal Maintainer.

BRENDA

Hi.

QUEEN

Brenda maintains things. My dignity, my appearance, my noble conduct, my elaborate ruses, my lumbar support when my throne hurts my back.

Boris, Brenda. We have a grand new Heir. And he's feeling expressive. Please put him in tight, tight, tight, green tights and teach him a balletic dance. Ensure he can't escape by throwing away his clothes. And send his school my condolences.

*(BORIS takes FERNANDO's suitcase.
BRENDA and BORIS strip FERNANDO down to his underclothes.)*

FERNANDO

No. Stop. Please! I want to keep my clothes.

QUEEN

Too bad.

FERNANDO

But! But! But!

QUEEN

Fernando quits his pestering. First lesson. If you want to yoke the world to your resolve, never wheedle, never nag, only command. The Queen exits.

FERNANDO

Why did Ferguson Rickitts die?

QUEEN

He tried leaving my palace without wearing pants. And that's banned. So don't even think about escaping. The Queen exits.

FERNANDO

The Cook escaped.

QUEEN

But he came back . . . to make pizzas!

(QUEEN takes a large arm out from under her dress and throws it on the ground. QUEEN exits, cackling.)

BORIS

We're back! What a delight!

BRENDA

Boris, you should have seen her with the insurgent. It was almost like she wanted to be defeated.

BORIS

Yeah right, Brenda.

BRENDA

I'm serious. I've never seen her get so close to losing. If that boy hadn't come, we'd be dead!

FERNANDO

Really?

(An awkward moment.)

BORIS

Let's go, Fernando. Time for tights.

FERNANDO

Wait. So now that I'm Heir . . . Boris claps his hands. *(BORIS claps his hands.)* Brenda boogies. *(BRENDA boogies.)* Boris hopscotches with Fernando. *(BORIS hopscotches with FERNANDO.)* Brenda gets Fernando a snack. *(BRENDA exits.)* Boris gives Fernando his pants back.

BORIS

Sorry. Fernando trumps Boris, but our Queen trumps Fernando.

FERNANDO

Fernando overrides the Queen.

BORIS

Hardly.

FERNANDO

Boris reveals how I can survive my visit.

BORIS

One. Dance admirably. Two. Don't leave the palace without pants or you'll set off the pants-detecting lasers. And three. Watch out, Brenda won't do what you tell her to.

FERNANDO

She just did.

BORIS

Making others miserable is the Brenda Agenda!

(BRENDA enters with a snack.)

BRENDA

Fernando, here's your snack.

BORIS

See you in the tights gymnasium, Fernando.

(BORIS exits with FERNANDO's suitcase and clothes.)

BRENDA

And you got a letter.

FERNANDO

It's from Maricynth! Her beautiful nugs left two indentations at the bottom of the letter as she wrote! *(Reading:)* Fernando, please return immediately. I must tell you something. But only in person. x-o-x-o, Maricynth." This is the sweetest letter ever written in the history of paper!

BRENDA

She's probably trying to trick you.

FERNANDO

Brenda jumps. *(BRENDA jumps.)* Brenda jumps higher. *(BRENDA jumps higher.)* Brenda does a somersault. *(BRENDA does a somersault.)* Without the Queen's knowledge, Brenda saves Fernando's pants from being thrown away.

BRENDA

But Fernando! You can't leave!

FERNANDO

Why are there slugs all over my snack?

I don't know.

BRENDA

(BRENDA smiles and exits.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2

Later.

The throne room.

ALEX FRACTIS, a man in decorated military apparel, paces back and forth.

QUEEN, FERNANDO, and BRENDA enter.

FERNANDO wears a robe to cover his tights.

QUEEN

Disappointed. Eternally so. Fernando, that dance was pitiable. Like a sleep-deprived hippopotamus rex. Lumber, lumber. Where's your sense of spectacle? If you are to become my Heir, and that is a big IF, you must learn that distraction is the universal remedy for chronic disappointment. Watch, I am presently disappointed. Brenda provides a distraction.

BRENDA

My feet smell like corn.

QUEEN

My thoughts precisely. Fernando, are you embarrassed?

FERNANDO

No.

QUEEN

Then why did you hide your beautifully taut tights the second your performance was over? You do know that I banned embarrassment days ago. It was thereby illegal.

FERNANDO

I am cold.

QUEEN

Uncomfortable? That was banned years ago.

FERNANDO

The room is chilly.

QUEEN

Barely excusable. Fernando, you have twenty minutes to prepare a new show with punch and pizzazz. If you want to tether the world to your resolve, you must wear your tights proudly. *(Turning suddenly:)* What are you?

ALEX FRACTIS

Alex Fractis.

QUEEN

Alex Fractis? Sounds like a skin disease. Are you contagious?

ALEX FRACTIS

I'm your new General. General Fractis. Since Ferguson Rickitts—

QUEEN

Was stopped. By merciless Fernando. And his bloody paws.

FERNANDO

I make paintings.

QUEEN

Out of dissident skins!

ALEX FRACTIS

I got your memo. About starting the next revolution.

QUEEN

Always a revolution to plan and execute. Rule. Rule. Rule. Reign. Govern. Control. What?

ALEX FRACTIS

Yes?

QUEEN

You're staring at me. Did you eat today?

ALEX FRACTIS

I did. Why?

QUEEN

You look hungry. Queen takes a revolutionary dump in the bathroom.

(QUEEN exits. FERNANDO stops BRENDA.)

FERNANDO

Have you found my pants?

BRENDA

No.

FERNANDO

Brenda.

BRENDA

I'm trying.

FERNANDO

Brenda tries harder.

(BRENDA squeaks and exits.)

ALEX FRACTIS

So you're the new Heir.

FERNANDO

I guess.

ALEX FRACTIS

You know the Queen. Deeply and intimately. What kind of revolution should I arrange for her?

FERNANDO

I don't know the Queen at all.

ALEX FRACTIS

Then how did you win her graces so quickly?

FERNANDO

I stumbled into the right place at a strange time.

ALEX FRACTIS

The only true recipe for greatness and notoriety.

FERNANDO

I don't plan to remain the Heir.

ALEX FRACTIS

No Heir ever does.

FERNANDO

I'm just visiting.

ALEX FRACTIS

Visiting? In tights? How suspicious.

FERNANDO

These aren't mine.

ALEX FRACTIS

Said the cat to the rat in regards to his paws.

FERNANDO

I haven't the slightest clue about what I'm doing!

ALEX FRACTIS

Said the fork to the ham before it dug in!

FERNANDO

I'm not the enemy!

ALEX FRACTIS

Said the Heir to the General before he usurped the Queen and began his own monarchy!

FERNANDO

I promise you that is the furthest thing from my mind.

ALEX FRACTIS

Why else would you be here?

FERNANDO

I'm sad about a girl!

ALEX FRACTIS

Of course.

FERNANDO

Maricynth, the prettiest girl to ever kiss these lips and the nicest gub gubs in all of college, broke up with me.

ALEX FRACTIS

Was she your first girlfriend?

FERNANDO

Yes. And the only girlfriend I will ever require. In fact, I got a letter from her wishing to talk about our accidental misunderstanding.

ALEX FRACTIS

She accidentally dumped you?

FERNANDO

Well, I found her in bed with my roommate. But it was my fault. I should have knocked. I have heard that relationships are supposed to have problems, so I'm glad

that we can confront ours now at three semesters rather than wait till the night before graduation or, god forbid, as alumnus.

ALEX FRACTIS

I once heard a story about our Queen. She wanted to attend a once-in-a-century meteor shower that was only visible from a certain mountaintop. On her way there, a homeless man came up to her begging for money. And she yelled: You have two arms. You have two legs. You have two eyes. You're healthy! You can work! For twenty minutes. But the man didn't listen

FERNANDO

Because he was lazy?

ALEX FRACTIS

Because he was deaf, you asshole. But the Queen spent so much time yelling, she missed the meteor shower.

FERNANDO

What does that mean?

ALEX FRACTIS

When you want something, don't let yourself get distracted.

(BORIS enters.)

BORIS

Sparkle dancer! We have major work to do! Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!

FERNANDO

Good luck with your revolution, Alex Fractis.

ALEX FRACTIS

And you with yours, Fernando.

*(BORIS and FERNANDO exit.
QUEEN enters.)*

QUEEN

What are you doing?

ALEX FRACTIS

Admiring your view.

QUEEN

I do not want you admiring anything of mine. Let's talk revolution. Do you need a chair?

ALEX FRACTIS

I can stand.

QUEEN

Obviously. I have eyes, Alex Fractis, I can see you standing now. Don't think I ever lose sight of my Generals.

Brenda becomes a chair for Alex Fractis. Where did that whelp go? Brenda arrives promptly! I need MAINTAINING! I always talk too much whenever Brenda's gone. Not even talking, just noise. Conversational belches, vocalized diarrhea, throat farts. Thoughts just squirt out my mouth! Blargh! Blrrrrg! Pah. Am I covered in insects?

ALEX FRACTIS

What?

QUEEN

You keep staring. Did Brenda put beetles on me? Don't just stand there. Get them off me.

*(ALEX FRACTIS brushes QUEEN off.
This brushing is quick . . .
. . . until it slows down to a caress.)*

ALEX FRACTIS

Your skin.

QUEEN

Is cold and slimy, I know.

ALEX FRACTIS

No. It's soft.

QUEEN

Can we postpone this interaction?

ALEX FRACTIS

Why?

QUEEN

Because I will talk senselessly about things I don't mean without Brenda. Let's meet again.

ALEX FRACTIS

No.

QUEEN

Alex Fractis chooses to meet the Queen later. With Brenda present!

ALEX FRACTIS

No. Talk to me now.

QUEEN

I know that look on your face!

ALEX FRACTIS

What look?

QUEEN

The wolfish grin, that lip-licking tongue, those bonfire eyes. You want to murder me.

ALEX FRACTIS

I don't want to want to kill you—

QUEEN

It doesn't matter, you're too late. I have already murdered myself.

ALEX FRACTIS

You're dead?

QUEEN

Once there was a sweet child. Loved peaches. Told silly jokes. Couldn't wait for prom. But life is a monster with tusks and fins and teeth that devours sweet children. So I became a monster myself. My face, these clothes, this palace. All parts of my monster.

ALEX FRACTIS

I don't think you're a monster.

QUEEN

That's because you don't know me very well. (*QUEEN looks embarrassed and laughs.*) Throat fart! Blargh! Pah! Where's Brenda? She's supposed to prevent this.

I have told you the truth. Reluctantly! Now your turn. Tell me something true. A truth that one can only tell standing at the awesome pediment of death with my mantis claws praying at your temples.

ALEX FRACTIS

I'm sweating.

QUEEN

Tell me more.

I can't. ALEX FRACTIS

Why? QUEEN

I'm afraid. ALEX FRACTIS

Good. QUEEN

And. ALEX FRACTIS

Speak the truth. QUEEN

I think. ALEX FRACTIS

Let it drool out your mouth. QUEEN

I am. ALEX FRACTIS

Spit it on me! QUEEN

I have come to save you. ALEX FRACTIS

I can save myself. Stop staring. QUEEN

ALEX FRACTIS
I won't. Cupid's rose tipped missiles dart out of my eyes. My heart drums a
thunderous beat. You see one mortal man here, but inside him marches a thousand
dizzied armies begging to onslaught your tremendous, austere, mountain fortress.

QUEEN
No possible interlinking of syllables could ever impress me.

ALEX FRACTIS

I'm in love with you.

QUEEN

What.

ALEX FRACTIS

And there's nothing more I'd like to do, than rescue you from the Queen I see in front of me. I long to lie with the girl who loves peaches. Laugh at her silly jokes. I'm going to take you to prom.

QUEEN

Nice try, skin disease. I'm unsexable. An old clam factory. Stay back. I said stay back!

ALEX FRACTIS

Ten years ago I was a lowly private in your army and I hated taking orders from imbeciles so I ran, abandoned the military, decided to go work my dad's farm. Running home through the woods, I came to a grove. And I saw you at a forest pool. You thought no one was looking so you took off your jewels, your weapons, your dress, everything, until you were pure naked among beams of sunlight. I couldn't move. You swam freely all afternoon. And when you finished swimming you danced with yourself. As evening came your arms waved with the trees. Like you were trying to keep the sun from setting. Then I saw you in the blue of moonlight, putting everything back on, crying softly, and marching back to your palace. I returned to the army and I have worked day after day, night after night ever since so I could be in a room with you. You glow. Every moment you glow and I watch with hot breath caught, blood waterfalling from head to foot to heart pounding. I see what you hide and its beauty strikes me blind.

QUEEN

Alex Fractis stops talking. Brenda returns. Brenda materializes. Brenda runs in with wrinkles.

ALEX FRACTIS

Do you still dance?

QUEEN

No, people dance for me.

ALEX FRACTIS

Will you dance with me?

QUEEN

The Queen doesn't dance. It's banned.

ALEX FRACTIS

Please. Rosalee.

QUEEN

What did you say?

ALEX FRACTIS

Rosalee.

QUEEN

Where did you hear that name? It's banned.

ALEX FRACTIS

You screamed it out the night I saw you in the forest. Rosalee. That's your real name. And I've remembered.

QUEEN

Remembering my name was forever banned!

ALEX FRACTIS

I repeat it every day so I won't forget. Rosalee dances with Alex Fractis.

QUEEN

No. That's not. I can't. I'm. Queen! I'm Queen. *(QUEEN goes to the door and shouts:)* Boris comes here NOW. Sorry, Alex Fractis, I must know how I actually appear.

(BORIS enters.)

QUEEN

Look Boris. A man's trying to assassinate me. Boris narrates the Queen.

BORIS

Like a retracted fang glowing in mid-day light, our Queen prepares to brutally dismember another unsuspecting foe.

QUEEN

That's right, I almost forgot who I am and what I do. Tying with you time is over.

*(BORIS sits on the throne and gazes into the distance.
He describes the following as if it's no different from any other time.)*

BORIS

Our Queen attacks Alex Fractis. She breaks his jaw. She puts a finger through his eye. She slices off his arm. She bites off a hunk of shoulder meat. She beats Alex Fractis in the face with his own arm. She thrusts two hands into his thorax. She

pulls out a handful of innards. She whirls around the intestines of Alex Fractis like a lasso. Blood fountains out of Alex Fractis. And we all cheer yet another revolution won by our Imperial Majesty.

*(As BORIS's description flowers, QUEEN runs to attack ALEX FRACTIS.
He pulls her seamlessly into a dance.
Like a waltz. Or a tango.
During the dance, QUEEN tries to kill ALEX FRACTIS.
Knives, clubs, and guns fly into QUEEN's hands and then launch into the air as
ALEX FRACTIS defends himself.
QUEEN tries hand-to-hand combat . . . still maintaining the rhythm and moves
of the dance . . . but ALEX FRACTIS won't let her land a punch.
ALEX FRACTIS takes the crown off the QUEEN.)*

QUEEN

Release my diadem.

ALEX FRACTIS

You're prettier without it.

*(QUEEN and ALEX FRACTIS lean in for a kiss . . .
. . . but before their lips touch BORIS leaps atop of the throne and shouts:)*

BORIS

Our Queen falls madly and hopelessly in love.

QUEEN

Boris. No! No I don't. He's telling lies. Boris retracts! Boris rewinds! Boris reconsiders! I don't know how to love. This whole thing, I was joking! I joke. I joke! I make jokes out of my life to make everyone laugh.

I love you kind of possibly maybe a little I might love you.

(BAM! A soldier bangs through the door with a big gun and a knife.)

SOLDIER

Revolution!

QUEEN

No. No! I'm not ready for this one. It's not the right time! Soldier stops. Soldier ceases! Soldier quits! Go back!

SOLDIER

We've surrounded your palace, your security has failed, and it's only a matter of moments before you are hacked—

(ALEX FRACTIS drives the SOLDIER out of the throne room.)

ALEX FRACTIS

I got this.

(ALEX FRACTIS throws QUEEN a peach.)

BORIS

With his massive brawn, Alex Fractis hurtles a soft fuzzy peach at our Queen.

QUEEN

The Queen melts.

(ALEX FRACTIS exits.)

QUEEN

No, stay. This is my fight.

(A scream is heard.)

BORIS

Soldier dies.

QUEEN

My mess.

(ALEX FRACTIS appears at the door.)

BORIS

Alex Fractis—

(ALEX FRACTIS falls to the ground with a large knife in his back.)

—dies too.

(Silence.)

QUEEN

Boris removes the dead body . . . my throne room . . . five minutes—you know.

(BORIS exits dragging the body of ALEX FRACTIS.

QUEEN picks up her diadem and places it upon her head.

She sits atop her throne.

Then.

Like a defeated monarch after a lost battle:)

QUEEN

I could barely get dressed this morning. I think I have too many costumes. I collapsed in my closet and couldn't stop crying. I wish I'd worn a better dress today. Something lighter. Prettier. Brenda becomes a sun-drenched breakfast nook. Brenda becomes bagels and oatmeal and butterflies outside. Brenda becomes my blushing cheeks. Brenda becomes my cooing voice. Brenda becomes my favorite morning.

(FERNANDO leaps into the room wearing tight, tight, tight, green tights.)

FERNANDO

The Heir unleashes his new dance.

*(FERNANDO begins a balletic dance.
And look! A ribbon dancer.
QUEEN sits upon her thrown, destroyed.)*

(BORIS enters.)

BORIS

We're under attack.

QUEEN

Let Fernando finish his dance.

FERNANDO

I'm done.

QUEEN

(Ferocious:) THEN DO IT AGAIN!

(A pause.)

QUEEN

Brenda is retrieved and saves the Queen.

(QUEEN exits to the bathroom.)

FERNANDO

What's happening?

BORIS

Another revolution.

FERNANDO

The General will take care of it.

BORIS

The General is dead.

(BRENDA enters with a letter.)

BRENDA

Fernando, another letter came for you.

FERNANDO

It's from Maricynth! *(Reading the letter:)* "Please come, this is very important. M." Brenda gets my pants! Immediately!

BRENDA

I don't know where your pants are!

QUEEN

(From the bathroom:) Brenda! Brenda!

*(BRENDA runs for the bathroom.
FERNANDO intercepts.)*

FERNANDO

You find my pants, I'll deal with the Queen.

BRENDA

But—

FERNANDO

Brenda doesn't argue.

(BRENDA runs out.)

QUEEN

(From the bathroom:) Brenda! Brenda!

FERNANDO

You have to come out. There's a revolution.

QUEEN

(From the bathroom:) Fight it for me!

FERNANDO

I don't know how. You organized it. Isn't that what you do? Make revolution happen. From beginning to end.

(QUEEN enters.)

QUEEN

The best revolutions are the ones you don't plan.

FERNANDO

Are you crying?

QUEEN

Boris distracts Fernando with a game.

(BORIS produces a horseshoe set.)

BORIS

Look Fernando! Horseshoes!

(BRENDA enters carrying a pillow and FERNANDO's suitcase.)

QUEEN

Brenda! Where have you been?

BRENDA

I was ambushed by insurgents!

BORIS

How did you survive?

(BRENDA displays the pillow and smiles courageously.)

BORIS

Exceptional Brenda.

BRENDA

We must escape.

QUEEN

But. Brenda. I believe I had fallen in love.

BRENDA

What's his name this time? Machine gun? Scimitar? Steamroller?

QUEEN

It's not a weapon. You dog-faced ninny. I haven't fallen in love with a weapon. It was a person. Someone who breathed. There was a moment. Airy and light. For an instant I wasn't a Queen.

(QUEEN shows BRENDA the peach.)

BRENDA

Peaches! Peaches are banned. You made them illegal.

(BRENDA destroys the peach.)

QUEEN

Brenda.

BRENDA

It would have never lasted. No one loves a Queen.

(QUEEN darkens.)

QUEEN

You're right, Brenda. Royal jelly isn't meant for worker bees. Brenda gives me reinforcements.

BRENDA

My Queen regains the unholy fire that made whole continents quiver under her grip. That made nightmares of new born babe's first slumbers. That made thunder hide in silence among the clouds. My Queen becomes my Queen.

QUEEN

My mouth tastes of fury so dark it will take a black sea of writhing creatures to devour my poison. *(To her cohorts in turn:)* You smell funny. Your back sweats. Is that your body or a banana with toothpicks? *(To the audience:)* The Queen is returned!

FERNANDO

Queen, I have had a wonderful adventure and am very grateful for your hospitality. But I must quietly withdraw.

QUEEN

You'll never make it out alive, the palace is swarmed.

FERNANDO

Are we all going to die?

QUEEN

Fernando, do you think I would fail to craft an Escape Stratagem? Meet the Imperial Waterslide.

(The bathroom door opens and a bright, heavenly light shines through.)

BORIS

Fernando peers into the bathroom and sees a rushing swill of water that will guide the ousted government through loops and drops and swirling tide to safety three miles away from the palace.

FERNANDO

Uh. Wow.

QUEEN

We'll run into the night and seem to rescind the throne. But in the silence of the stars we'll begin our divine requisition. My dominion shall reign again! *(To FERNANDO:)* Queen makes Fernando her General. To the Waterslide!

*(In a leap, QUEEN runs into the waterslide.
BORIS runs into the bathroom with a "whee!")*

FERNANDO

I can't be a General! I don't know how! Brenda gives Fernando his pants.

*(BRENDA unlatches FERNANDO's suitcase.
A coat falls out.)*

FERNANDO

Brenda, these aren't my clothes. *(FERNANDO pulls out a uniform.)* These are—

BRENDA

A General's uniform. Are you sad and suffering yet?

FERNANDO

The Brenda Agenda.

BRENDA

Let's win a revolution.

(BRENDA exits down the waterslide.)

FERNANDO

But Maricynth demands me!

(An explosion rocks the palace.)

FERNANDO

Dammit! Why aren't there any pants!

(FERNANDO puts on the General's coat.)

Fernando becomes a General. Reluctantly!

(FERNANDO exits down the waterslide.)

*(ALEX FRACTIS stumbles on stage rubbing his head.
He drops the bloody knife.
He looks into the audience.)*

ALEX FRACTIS

The audience takes a 10-minute intermission.

**END OF SCENE
END OF ACT 1
INTERMISSION**

Act 2

SCENE 1

Days later.

The throne room.

The PEASANT KING stands on the throne.

PEASANT KING

A new King proclaims himself in the throne room.

(QUEEN enters lackadaisically.

She guns down the PEASANT KING.

BORIS and BRENDA enter.)

QUEEN

Crown me.

(BRENDA places the diadem on the QUEEN's head.)

QUEEN

Boris disposes of the body. Brenda retrieves General Fernando.

(BORIS and BRENDA exit.)

(QUEEN sings:)

QUEEN

Oh Alex Fractis

You gave me a peach

Hoping it would attract us.

Oh Alex Fractis

You saved my life when

assholes wanted to sack us.

Oh Alex Fractis

I wish that revolution

didn't always distract us.

Dead Alex Fractis

I might have loved you if

I had better practice.

(FERNANDO, BORIS, and BRENDA arrive.)

QUEEN

Fernando, you were the worst General I have ever seen and were absolutely no help in the last revolution.

FERNANDO

I tried. I really did.

QUEEN

When you weren't trying to look busy, you were trying to excuse yourself to the portable latrine. My throne has more sense than you and it just sits here. Fernando is killed the most despicable way possible.

FERNANDO

How can I fight a revolution when I know poor Maricynth is heaved gloriously upon her desk, burdened by her two tremendous weights: love and longing. You should let me go.

QUEEN

You can't leave until you learn that no matter how bad you want it to work out. It won't. (*ALEX FRACTIS enters.*) Even if you see them in your dreams. (*ALEX FRACTIS touches the QUEEN.*) Even if you feel them on your skin. (*QUEEN sees ALEX FRACTIS.*) Even if they appear attractively before you in hallucinations!

BORIS

Our Queen realizes that Alex Fractis is there, in person, actually alive.

QUEEN

How did you survive my revolution?

ALEX FRACTIS

Passion invigorates where the body fails. And I'm built like a brickhouse.

QUEEN

Brenda fans me. In my next reign, I'm banning hot flashes. Too inconvenient, by far.

BRENDA

My Queen is an impervious beast who only pretends to have emotions for sport and trickery.

QUEEN

But Brenda, he likes me. And he's built like a brickhouse.

BRENDA

This never works out. Queen remembers!

BORIS

In a blinding flash of recollection, our Queen quickly recaps her life through a series of hypercolor vignettes:

(BORIS sings:)

*Your first love groped you like a circus ape,
then told his friends you were roommates.
Another love shared your bed with strangers happily
But kept you top secret from his family.
And that one boyfriend who never had time to get a job
But always made time to beat you like a door without a knob.
Remember that one who made you grovel at his demands.
And said in his intimate voice: 'You have man hands'.*

QUEEN

Boris stops! I ban Alex Fractis. He is hereby illegal. I ban the name Alex Fractis. It is hereby illegal. Alex Fractis never existed. And I have never spoken with him. It is thus pronounced.

Queen quits the room. And retreats to her bed where her servants make a revolutionary fort out of sheets.

(BORIS and QUEEN exit.)

BRENDA

Oh Fernando, you got another letter.

FERNANDO

I did!

BRENDA

And I cut it up for confetti. *(BRENDA throws confetti in the air.)* Sorry!

(BRENDA exits.

FERNANDO searches through the confetti.)

ALEX FRACTIS

I'm banned.

FERNANDO

(Picking up pieces of the letter and reading:) "Fernando." "Miss." "You." Greater words have never been written.

ALEX FRACTIS

Banned! Banned! Banned!

FERNANDO

"Love." "Sorry." "Forever." "Us." "Me." "Wedding." "Maricynth." "Let." "I'm."

ALEX FRACTIS

I may as well be dead.

FERNANDO

(Rearranging the pieces:) “Fernando: I’m sorry. Let us have a wedding soon! Will you marry me! Love Forever, Maricynth!” *(To ALEX FRACTIS:)* You cannot give up!

ALEX FRACTIS

No, it is over. I am banned.

FERNANDO

But I’m not banned. I’ll help you!

ALEX FRACTIS

Why would you want to help me?

FERNANDO

I thought all was lost with Maricynth. But look! She wants to marry me. However, I can’t leave the kingdom unless I possess a pair of pants. You get me pants, I’ll get you a Queen.

ALEX FRACTIS

I promise you that even the worst beast that fiery hell could dream could not stop me from getting you those trousers you so desire. But how will you get me the Queen?

FERNANDO

Come, Fernando has a Fer-plan-do.

(ALEX FRACTIS and FERNANDO exit.)

END OF SCENE

Scene 2

FERNANDO stands in the throne room, waiting.

BRENDA enters.

FERNANDO

Ha ha ha ha! Oh. Ha ha ha!

BRENDA

What are you laughing about, Fernando?

FERNANDO

Boris just told me a funny joke.

BRENDA

I've never known Boris to make jokes.

FERNANDO

That's because all his jokes are about you. I shouldn't say anything more.

BRENDA

Tell me what the joke was.

FERNANDO

I couldn't.

BRENDA

I will put mucus on your toothbrush.

FERNANDO

Okay, but I warned you. What's the difference between a pimped monkey butt covered in feces and a Brenda?

BRENDA

What?

FERNANDO

Lipstick.

BRENDA

Boris made that joke?

FERNANDO

Yeah. His Brenda jokes are the best.

BRENDA

He has more than one?

FERNANDO

He has more than one thousand.

BRENDA

Well, I'm not hurt by that. I can't be hurt. Excuse me. I'm supposed to wake the Queen.

(BRENDA exits.)

FERNANDO

Boris arrives immediately.

(BORIS enters.)

BORIS

What's the matter, Fernando?

FERNANDO

I can't concentrate, Boris. It's Brenda

BORIS

Did she staple snakes onto your bedroom curtains? Don't worry, that is the Brenda way of saying, "Good Morning".

FERNANDO

No, I think Brenda is in love with me.

BORIS

Brenda only loves trouble and misery.

FERNANDO

The last time Brenda delivered a letter to me, I found this poem attached. But I don't think I was meant to see it.

(FERNANDO produces a poem.)

FERNANDO

Don't read it, please.

BORIS

Brenda and I are very close, she wouldn't mind me reading her verse:

Thoughts About My Feelings
By Brenda

These days I pine in my silent forest
My yearnings trapped tight, but skin is porous.
Desires creep like a slow-moving loris
Emotions screaming, "you can't ignore us."
And then I come to a clearing
Where I can't help but hearing
Sweet angels sing in full-throated chorus:
The man I love is my best friend—

FERNANDO

Fernando.

BORIS

It doesn't say who she loves. The poem cuts off.

FERNANDO

Yes, but the context clues suggest Fernando.

BORIS

Fernando doesn't rhyme with chorus. The one she loves must rhyme with chorus.

FERNANDO

Who could she love beside me . . . Boris?

(BORIS has a realization: "Boris" rhymes with "chorus.")

BORIS

Brenda! Loves! *(BORIS points to himself, but stops himself from saying anything.)*
Fernando listens intently to Boris. Don't talk to Brenda. Let me gauge her feelings
towards you and then narrate them back to you. So as not to embarrass yourself
with a superfluous love declaration.

FERNANDO

Thank you, Boris. I promise to name our first child after you.

BORIS

May there be no doubt that Brenda's first child will be named Boris.

(FERNANDO exits.)

BORIS

Boris, Jr.!

*(BORIS exits.
QUEEN enters, miserably.
BRENDA follows.)*

QUEEN
Brenda performs the Song of Brighter Moods

BRENDA
*I'll be your biddy
And sweet nursemaid.
Tell me your problems
What stopped your crusade?*

Why's my Queen so depressed?

QUEEN
She just woke up.

BRENDA
Why's my Queen this distressed?

QUEEN
Her nap was abrupt.

BRENDA
How can Brenda ease your pain?

QUEEN
Maybe if she sang a joyful refrain.

BRENDA
*Light-winged fairies
and flute-toting fauns
Gardens are so pretty in the spring!
Creeping zeppelins
And high flying bombs
The world is full of beautiful things!
Bang! Smash! Boom! Crash! Pow!
Watch out! Oh that hurts! Kazzow!
Prophetic Brenda proclaims:
Everything nice goes up in flames!*

QUEEN
I don't know Brenda, I'm still sad. Maybe sing another verse?

BRENDA

*I'll be your teacher,
A stern governess.
No more sulking,
You learn to suppress!*

My Queen is not forlorn!

QUEEN

Well, no one made her breakfast.

BRENDA

My Queen's rage is reborn!

QUEEN

But, Brenda, I smell. Sometimes even after I bathe.

BRENDA

My Queen does as Brenda commands!

QUEEN

I guess.

BRENDA

*Cool spring evenings,
Lilacs dot the lawn
I wonder what tomorrow will bring!
Man mulching mowers
To devour the calm
The world is full of beautiful things!
Bang! Crash! Clang! Vroom! Zing!
Roar! Misery! Screams! Ka-ching!
Remember what Brenda sang:
Even peaceful things go up in flame!*

QUEEN

What I need is revolution. Some dramatic upheaval that will make me forget the horror of my current reign. Queen plucks a plan from the lush jungle of her imagination: The homeless are dressed in zoo costumes. A safari appears on every downtown stroll. "Look honey, that lion's roaring for a nickel or a Johnny Cake." In the confusion, a dazzle of zebras surrounds the palace to overthrow the government!

(FERNANDO enters.)

FERNANDO

Queen! Your palace is surrounded.

QUEEN

My revolution has begun! Roar elephants, scream hyenas, prance giraffes!

FERNANDO

It's not a revolution. There's no revolution. The peasants have refused to fight anymore.

QUEEN

Impossible.

FERNANDO

They're milling about outside.

QUEEN

Milling?

FERNANDO

And singing about peace.

QUEEN

But I need a revolution. I can't live with the misery of now. I'll scrape my eyes out. Chew my arms off. Pull all the hair out of my wig!

BRENDA

My Queen gets her revolutions back!

QUEEN

The feelings buffet is over. Put away your plates. I hope you got dessert. Pedagogical moment, Fernando. If you wish to harness the masses to your command, you must make them believe you are one of them.

FERNANDO

How will you do that?

QUEEN

Costumes. Fernando and the Queen exit to plot the next revolution.

(QUEEN and FERNANDO exit.)

(BORIS enters.)

BORIS

Why. Hello. I say. Brenda. Hi. I say.

BRENDA

Why are you giving me that comical sideways look?

BORIS

Boris presents his amorous face. His affectionate glance. Currently. To you.

BRENDA

Oh Boris. I wouldn't believe it until now. You have been making jokes of me.

BORIS

No, I—

BRENDA

These hands are lumpy splotches. This neck is a bloated rope. I could paint my face with crickets to marked improvement. I am the vilest kind of ugly. The world has laughed at my appearance and now you wish to augment that comedy with your own Brenda jokes. How could you!

BORIS

But Brenda—

BRENDA

Let me say it for you: monkey-butt-face Brenda exits.

(BRENDA exits.)

BORIS

Boris is sad.

(BORIS exits.)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 3

ALEX FRACTIS and FERNANDO hold a clandestine meeting in the throne room.

ALEX FRACTIS

How do the Queen's defenses stand?

FERNANDO

Boris and Brenda should pose no more problems.

ALEX FRACTIS

Excellent. I convinced the peasants to stop revolting.

FERNANDO

But the Queen's planning to infiltrate them with a ruse and if she succeeds she'll make them revolt.

ALEX FRACTIS

What will we do?

FERNANDO

I've got a scheme. But I'll need you to take my place in the Queen's ruse. She expects me in this costume.

(FERNANDO hands ALEX FRACTIS a costume.)

FERNANDO

Keep the Queen distracted for as long as you can. I'll return when my scheme succeeds.

ALEX FRACTIS

You will succeed and one day the masses will cheer the tale of Fernando and the Killer Scheme.

FERNANDO

We will win you that Queen you so desire.

ALEX FRACTIS

And you will get those gub-gubs you require!

(FERNANDO exits.)

(QUEEN and BRENDA enter the throne room.

QUEEN is dressed as a male peasant.

BRENDA is dressed as the QUEEN.)

(ALEX FRACTIS puts on the costume . . . it is that of a female peasant.)

QUEEN

No. Brenda. No! Say it again. With more authority. Pretend I am the peasants.

BRENDA as QUEEN

The Queen lords over her peasants.

QUEEN

And?

BRENDA as QUEEN

She apologizes for her current appearance—normally she isn't so haggard and crinkle-faced.

(QUEEN notices ALEX FRACTIS dressed as a female peasant.)

QUEEN

Oh Brenda, look. Isn't Fernando darling? I hardly recognize him. Brenda, prepare your entrance. Boris will be here any minute with a peasant whom Fernando and I will use to infiltrate the masses.

BRENDA as QUEEN

I'm always discovered when we play this game.

QUEEN

Brenda, do worms complain when you put them on the hook? No! They dance. Take lesson: put some cha-cha in your costume. I would!

(BRENDA exits.)

QUEEN

Fernando, you mustn't speak. Your graveled baritone would give yourself away against my swelling soprano. If you must utter a word or two, remember to use a pitched tone.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Okay.

QUEEN

Good boy. I must say, there's something markedly different about you.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Really?

QUEEN

Don't take this the wrong way, but you are remarkably more attractive than usual. Not that I condone cross-dressing. Oh look! Here comes Boris. Remember, we are married peasants.

(PEASANT and BORIS enter.)

BORIS

Three peasants assemble to greet the Queen.

(BRENDA enters.)

BRENDA as QUEEN

The Queen with my haggard face enters. Who appears before me?

CURTIS the PEASANT

I'm Curtis the Simple Peasant. Where are the free snacks? That Boris guy told me that if I agreed to meet the Queen, she'd make me a snack.

BRENDA as QUEEN

The Queen promises plentiful snacks immediately following introductions. Now, who are you person-I-have-never-laid-eyes-upon?

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

I am Ernest Slenderwaistprettybottom, my mother was a Slenderwaist and my father was a Prettybottom, and I was lucky to inherit names and signifying attributes from the both of them. And this quiet, creature is—

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

—his comely wife! Geraldine.

QUEEN QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

We've just arrived in the kingdom for our honeymoon.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

I'm going to have sex!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Geraldine.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

It will be very noisy!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Geraldine.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

I can barely keep my clothes on!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Geraldine! Excuse her excitement this is her first time—

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

That's what he thinks!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Her first time meeting a Queen!

BRENDA as QUEEN

It is an honor to meet you Ernest and Geraldine Slenderwaistprettybottom—

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Actually, it's Geraldine Megalegsbouncytits. I am keeping my given name. From my mother, a Megalegs, and my father, a Bouncytits.

CURTIS the PEASANT

Are introductions over? Because I'm so hungry I could eat Geraldine's wig.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

How dare you mock my wife's beautiful tresses!

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

I call them my reigns of love!

BRENDA as QUEEN

Introductions are over! The Queen has brought you here because—

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Will this take long? I'm having sex soon and I should stretch out.

BRENDA as QUEEN

You're here because I eat peasants and I will now eat all of you.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Oh no! Someone will have to save us from the Queen. Must I, a mysterious stranger from far away, be that savior?

(ALEX FRACTIS embraces QUEEN.)

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Hold me, husband. I am so frightened that my thighs are quaking like a pair of playtime marionettes.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Release me Geraldine, so that I might fight the Queen and Curtis here might inform the other peasants of my bravery in the face of tyranny.

CURTIS the PEASANT

Give me a cracker and I'll tell them whatever you want.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

No, I can't lose you!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

If I can incapacitate Queen now, I may be able to lead the other peasants in some kind of revolutionary act.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

I won't let go.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

You must.

ALEX FRACTIS as FEMALE PEASANT

Never!

CURTIS the PEASANT

I'm okay with being eaten, if you feed me first.

BRENDA as QUEEN

No.

CURTIS the PEASANT

Tyrant! I'll feed myself!

*(CURTIS the PEASANT grabs ALEX FRACTIS' wig.
ALEX FRACTIS is revealed.)*

ALEX FRACTIS

My reigns of love!

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Skin Disease!

BRENDA as QUEEN

His wife is a man.

CURTIS the PEASANT

That happened to me once. It's okay if you keep an open mind.

BRENDA as QUEEN

Wrinkles! Wrinkles! Wrinkles!

CURTIS the PEASANT

What's the matter with the Queen?

BRENDA as QUEEN

I've got wrinkles.

CURTIS the PEASANT

Ernest Slenderwaistprettybottom here has more wrinkles than you and you don't see him flipping about.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

How dare!

(FERNANDO enters.)

FERNANDO

That's not the Queen.

QUEEN as MALE PEASANT

Fernando, what are you doing?

FERNANDO

This is the Queen!

*(FERNANDO unveils his shirt.
It's emblazoned with the QUEEN's face ala Che Guevera.)*

QUEEN

Why is my face on your shirt!

FERNANDO

I made them myself and sold them to your peasants! Look outside! They're all wearing them!

QUEEN

Promotional commodities! Nothing kills a revolution like merchandising!

FERNANDO

Now everyone knows what you look like. Your days of disguise are over.

QUEEN

You can't make merchandise of someone still living. I might do something! I might get prettier!

BRENDA

No one gets prettier.

QUEEN

I might.

FERNANDO

Unlikely.

QUEEN

I will!

BORIS

Doesn't happen.

QUEEN

I'm a very different kind of human being and there are untapped reservoirs of beauty and wonder hidden within me.

ALEX FRACTIS

I agree, Rosalee.

QUEEN

Silence, Skin Disease! The Queen massacres the traitors flanked by Boris and Brenda.

CURTIS the PEASANT

That's Brenda?

BORIS

Curtis the Peasant quits talking!

CURTIS the PEASANT

Boris is totally attracted to you.

QUEEN

Impossible. Only slime and mold are attracted to Brenda.

CURTIS the PEASANT

On our way to the throne room, he would not shut up: Brenda is cuter than kittens. Brenda is fancier than waltzing. Brenda is softer than two-ply toilet paper.

BRENDA

My Queen silences Curtis the Peasant with her exalted lawn mover.

QUEEN

My thoughts precisely!

CURTIS the PEASANT

But, hey, wait, I never got my snack! I NEVER GOT MY SNACK!

(QUEEN chases peasant out the hallway.

Sound of a lawnmower.

QUEEN returns in her full regalia.)

QUEEN

Boris as you know, liking Brenda is completely banned. I will assume everything you told the peasant was directed towards me and react flattered yet completely disinterested.

BORIS

Boris pronounces proudly: I love Brenda! Just Brenda! Only Brenda! She is my favorite friend-a!

QUEEN

My subjects are staging a coup. They're couping me. I'm being couped. Someone get a picture, I must immortalize this moment for my scrapbook.

BRENDA

Brenda does not coup her Queen!

QUEEN

Oh goody!

BORIS

But Boris loves Brenda.

BRENDA

Brenda doesn't care.

QUEEN

Brenda retrieves my weapon of last resort.

(BRENDA exits to the bathroom.)

ALEX FRACTIS

Rosalee, you must stop. You've been defeated.

QUEEN

Oh Skin Disease. You may have taken my revolutions and my ability to wear costumes. But I've still got my Brenda maintaining me. And one other thing that you'll never take away.

(BRENDA arrives with a mysterious box.)

FERNANDO

What's that?

QUEEN

My mysterious box.

BRENDA

My Queen sings a song about her mysterious box!

QUEEN

*Daggers and lasers
Leotards and razors.
I've got a scary box.
What's inside?
Fungus rot,
Monkey snot,
A collection of socks?*

QUEEN

No! It's a bomb! I have a bomb! A big nasty scientific one! To kill all of you.

*Daggers and lasers
Leotards and razors!
Who will survive the night?
Talky Boris?
Silly Fractis!
Not Fernando, right?*

*Daggers and lasers
Leotards and razors!
There's no place to run.
We sing
We dance
And blow up everyone!*

QUEEN

I'm going to have a new kingdom. Just me and this slop pile garbage pail I call a Brenda! Queen cackles!

ALEX FRACTIS

Fernando, you've gotten us killed!

FERNANDO

How was I supposed to know she had a bomb?

QUEEN

Oh Fernando. I was planning to make you my Successor. I would have taught you how to Successor-ize.

FERNANDO

You can't kill all of us!

QUEEN

Did I imply we're all going to die? Meet my Impenetrable Lavatory!

BORIS

Everyone spies into the bathroom and marvels at the indestructible porcelain bowl with a carpeted lid that once closed will safely encase the Queen and Brenda in a small pool of spring water while roaring plumes of bomb fire envelope the land.

QUEEN

Farewell, traitors. Farewell, kingdom.

*(QUEEN and BRENDA exit into the bathroom.
QUEEN begins a countdown.)*

FERNANDO

Boris saves us.

BORIS

Boris can't save you.

FERNANDO

Boris disarms the bomb.

BORIS

Boris doesn't know how to disarm the bomb.

FERNANDO

Boris throws himself on the bomb.

BORIS

Boris does not throw himself anywhere.

QUEEN

(Reaching the end of her countdown:) Boom!

(Nothing happens.)

Boom!

(Nothing happens.)

The bomb goes boom.

(QUEEN and BRENDA enter.)

Brenda, why didn't my bomb go off?

BRENDA

There's something stuck in the fuselage.

QUEEN

Let me see here. It's soft. Probably mold. Oo! And tender. A rat? Oh Brenda, I think it's a moldy rat!

*(QUEEN takes her hand out of the bomb.
She's holding a peach.)*

QUEEN

A peach! Who put a peach in my bomb?

BRENDA

I did.

QUEEN

Why?

BRENDA

To distract you.

QUEEN

Why ever would I be distracted by a peach . . .

(ALEX FRACTIS puts his hand on the peach.)

QUEEN

Skin Disease.

ALEX FRACTIS

Alex Fractis narrates Rosalee's beauty every day. Alex Fractis maintains Rosalee every second. And Alex Fractis's embrace becomes armor to keep Rosalee safe for all time. Rosalee falls in love with Alex Fractis.

QUEEN

Why can't you understand? I am not that girl, that Rosalee, anymore. I am Queen. Queen! Queen. Queen. Queen. I have come too far and struggled too hard to be more than a Queen.

ALEX FRACTIS

You are a Queen. And a Rosalee. And a dance. And a peach. And a sadness. And a joy. And a violence. And a costume. You are those things and a hundred more. And I know, to love the one, I must love them all.

QUEEN

Impossible. You can't.

ALEX FRACTIS

I can if you let me. Un-ban yourself, my Queen. Have a revolution. A real revolution. Come all the way back to the beginning.

QUEEN

Being uncomfortable is no longer banned. It is hereby legal. Crying is no longer banned. It is hereby legal. Peaches are no longer banned. Liking Brenda is no longer banned. That stupid grin on Fernando's face is no longer banned, even though it should be. And. Alex Fractis is no longer banned. *(A kiss.)* You are contagious.

BORIS

Our Queen's kingdom is free! Thunderous applause!

(Audience applause.)

QUEEN

But Brenda, I have one question: why did you fail to maintain the Queen?

BRENDA

Brenda confesses: I've always liked Boris.

QUEEN

The Queen gives her blessing!

BORIS

Peerless Brenda!

BRENDA

Wonderful Boris!

(BORIS and BRENDA kiss.)

QUEEN

I didn't say you could make a show of it.

BORIS

Alex Fractis and the Queen. Boris and Brenda. Such divine coupledness as the world has ever witnessed! And yet! Fernando stands alone.

FERNANDO

I'm not alone, silly. I have Maricynth at home.

QUEEN

Oh Fernando. Look, I'm having an emotional moment. You remind me too much of myself as a youth. Sweet, innocent, kind. A wiener. And I have tried so hard to humiliate you. So you will be stronger, tougher. For this moment. I'm sorry.

(QUEEN hands FERNANDO an envelope.)

FERNANDO

What's this?

QUEEN

An invitation. To the wedding.

FERNANDO

Wedding?

QUEEN

Maricynth is marrying that old roommate of yours. She wrote you a letter about it. Didn't you get it?

FERNANDO

No.

BRENDA

I cut that letter up for confetti. Whoops.

QUEEN

This is your final lesson, one I just learned myself: You will get your heart broken. You will get depressed and humiliated. You will get treated poorly and left unfairly. Over and over. But. You must build a kingdom around your soul. And you must

keep that kingdom whole. *(Pause.)* And wrinkles. You shall get those too. But I don't know how to stop that.

BRENDA

A good iron.

QUEEN

Before we run off to the annals of perpetuity, I have one last command: Fernando pants! Everyone dance!

*(EVERYONE dances.
Except for FERNANDO.)*

ALEX FRACTIS

*In the kingdom of my soul
You'll always have command.*

QUEEN

*In the army of my heart
You will never be banned*

BORIS

*Brenda will rule the spotlight
Of all my narrations*

BRENDA

*I promise Boris these arms
For all his vacations.*

ALEX FRACTIS

*And now the evening
The stars are beaming
And peasants walk home
With their chosen mates.*

QUEEN

*The fireflies glimmer
As daylight grows dimmer
Songs fill the air from
impassioned crusades.*

BRENDA

*Pillows are now
only for sleeping*

BORIS

*Arm cradle arm
we'll lie just dreaming.*

ALEX FRACTIS and QUEEN

*We'll make a life together
Without gun, knife, or bomb
Dancing wonders forever
On this night, eternal prom.*

EVERYONE

*La, la, la, la, la, la
La, la, la, la, la, la!*

(ALEX FRACTIS, QUEEN, BORIS and BRENDA exit.)

(FERNANDO stands alone.)

FERNANDO

A Queen vanquished and a kingdom saved. The peasants celebrate. Rising flags, winding banners, and a marching band. Then. A minion appears.

(MINION appears dressed in the same manner as Boris and Brenda.)

MINION

Minion places a dazzling crown on the mighty conqueror's brow. He stands brave and tremendous.

FERNANDO

We march outside to an iron zeppelin armed with a hundred cannons to rein crackling fire on the wedding of wretched Maricynth!

MINION

All hail Fernando!

FERNANDO

What did you say?

MINION

All hail Fernando?

FERNANDO

That name is banned.

MINION

Yes sir.

FERNANDO

It is hereby illegal.

MINION

Yes sir.

FERNANDO

Fernando has been killed in the most despicable way possible. *(Pause.)* The revolution is over. And over. And over. And over.

THE END