

The Burnt Woman of Harvard

aka

Transcendental Pornography

By Kirk Wood Bromley

Characters:

Alex –Harvard student

Mark –Harvard student

John Brown – Big Man Off Campus

Haydon/The Dean of Danger – Harvard student

Clara –Harvard student

Bishy – Harvard student

Gordon – Harvard student

Helen – Harvard hopeful

WJ – Harvard hopeful

Lyuba and Zhazha – Russian e-mail brides

Megan – The burnt woman

Professor Hazlitt – Harvard English Professor

Students, hopefuls, bouncer, gas man

Scene 1 – A Harvard classroom. Enter Professor Hazlitt, Mark, Alex, Clara, Haydon, and others.

Prof - And so the central question of this course
Comes from setting the poet on himself:
Is beauty truth, truth beauty? Is that all
We know on earth and all we need to know?

Clara - Beauty is truth once you've seen true beauty.

Alex - Beauty's of aesthesis, truth of logos,
This personal, that verifiable,
And as their synthesis occasions ethics,
So their equivalence dolocracy.

Mark - I find myself compelled to side with...

Clara - Clara.

Mark - To look on beauty is to know the truth,
As thru each captious vision we relive
Those vital adaptations whereby sense
Foreclosed us slow to all but what attracts,
That we emerge a striving to convene
With beauty's logic, which equilibrates
Our free ambition to our true desire.

Alex - To say that we see only what we wish
Prevents an unwisht view from being seen
Thru truth-indicial lies, not valid links,
And claiming how we see is what we see's
More wearing glasses just to see the glass.

Prof - This course is called the Agony of Keats.

Mark - Yet ecstasy so gesturates his tropes.

Alex - Ecstasy's the flame, agony the fuel
Of Keats's torrid probe. Is joy not purer
Filtered thru some grief? The fiercer the storm,
The clearer the skies once havoc's run,
As adverse aspects clashing neutralize
In juncture to the span of their divergence.
What of ugly truths? How happens horror
Less ecstasy concede to agony?

Haydon - The question is how happens truth and beauty
When each seems antithetical to each,
And for that, parse the poet, not the poem.
To pathiate false truth and awful beauty,
Live in lonely slip, agony ecstatic,
Wild want your guide, chaos certainty,
Granting force of self to selfless symbols,
Your cordon to create as you delete
Senses intimate thru alien sense,
Your body bent against embodiment,
Loving pure illusory relations,

Concocting of this mess a true ideal
 While dying daily for the unlived life,
 This quandary's the asylum of the lyrist.
 Not truth in beauty, but peace in paradox
 Compels the poet's symptom-urge, which we
 Ivy-choked critics never could endure.

Mark - Some of us are poets.
 Haydon - Then why are you here?
 Mark - To learn the art.
 Haydon - The art is lived, not learned.
 Prof - Let's read the poem in which the art is lived
 To learn if its lyric licks our inquest,
 Starting, as ignorance will, to my right.

During the reading of the stanza, Megan, outside, enters and exits.

Alex - "Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:"

Haydon - "What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?"

Clara - "What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?"

The bell rings.

Prof - Halting problems we must tomorrow sleuth,
 For time ends every bind with "you're excused."
 Save for Clara. Please, a moment at my desk
 To discuss an assignment. O, and students:
 Homework tonight is cancelled, save for this:
 Cross something off your not to be done list.

The class disperses as Clara talks with Professor Hazlitt.

Mark - Did you see that woman?
 Alex - And ever do.
 Mark - Where?
 Alex - Before me, like some precocious dessert,
 Fattening our souls on quick penuche;
 Behind me, Queen Bikini on a float,
 All waves and smiles and onlyfans galore;
 Above me, petrol rainbows over scum;
 And yay, below, my drear ambition's corpse;

I see her everywhere except in me,
 But me? I'm not bitter. She's my suite mate.
 Mark - You room with her?
 Alex - Thus, like truth and beauty,
 Tho opposite, we're commonly confused.
 Mark - How did she get that way?
 Alex - Like anything
 That always gets its way: luck and lunges.
 Mark - If that is luck, she should have lunged away.
 Alex - Maybe she'll lunge at you, Mr. Lucky.
 Mark - What good is all this glib? Are you so close
 To her imperative callosity
 Your empathy is now desensitized
 To such sadness?
 Alex - Is't sad to be so hot
 That all desire to touch thee? Hey, I know:
 Pen her a poem and I'll deliver it:
 "O Clara, let me tongue thy thermal coil
 And spike that cool coulis to heavy boil."
 Mark - I didn't mean...
 Alex - To play me like a prof?
 I like your thinking, Mark, but not your thoughts.

All exit, save Mark.

Mark - I was fresh at Harvard, undeclared.
 A fine free beam of calorescing love
 My spirit yawed, genteely plundering
 Arcane tradition for impressured poise
 To vitrify my aggregates to voice,
 Yet most in all did I at beauty needle.
 Nectant for her nectarous shivaree,
 My organs gaped to swill the native dope,
 Til vision, that shallow trick-directrix
 Of our intentions, hemisphered my urge.
 O little did I know how deeply ran
 Sensation's rare reserves! To be so swung
 From avid hungering to full revulsion
 In single space, such terrible delight
 Crushing while securing my larval life,
 Wild pagodas of serenity
 Decaying from within, and my decay
 Into beauty blooming. Which must I choose
 To interlock with truth? O let it be
 Bet beauty that produces all our bliss.
 Yet there's the catch: if bliss must be a bet,
 Veracity's abetted by the odds.

How meatish and unprized she calmly moved
Across the mental eden we construct
Of arrogant and mumbling arrivistes,
Snailing hush about the sumptuous set,
A bleak angel bearing senseless stigma
Of subterfuge, her scalded, hopeless wings
Conducting a choir of silent cackles
That mock human heed. Looking half her way
You felt the mounting of a failed birth:
The harried midwife, universitas;
The sweatbox mother, calm exclusive she;
The choking child, you, hurtling wordward
Out the dribbling caul, a puzzled phyton
Shrieking, "If this is life, I deign to die,"
For O how you, how all who saw her there
Were gazing braised in their hauteur ideals.
Are we secluded pick-aparts so hookt
On surgery's comelier dividends
That sensual embellish seizes us
Before our tongues may taste the rancid oils
That she osmotes from her refusing form?
Can these decortic, quarantining eyes
Ever phase away her warning placard
On our cathartic rubble, baiting us
To hope's high drudgery? Must craving mind
Dizzy downward drill into the vomit
Of crassing's meal to scrape one scrap of truth
Esteemed alone as self-disgust delights
In our disrepaired imagination?
Gape away! There's no peace in paradox,
No sense in an agonized ekstasis.
You, the poet, must beauty's secrets plunge
To mine of priceless truth the mother lode,
And's none can quell a voice that screams when
shusht,
Here mark my word: my words shall hit her mark,
And she'll be markt by me, for me, all me.
I will not be by ugliness unmothered.
I will of beauty breathe and not be smothered.
To Clara I'll convert all truth uncovered
When first I saw the burnt woman of Harvard.

All exit.

*Scene 2 - Harvard campus. Enter Harvard Hopefuls waiting for a tour, Helen
and WJ among them.*

WJ - Ain't it heaven?
 Helen - Ain't?
 WJ - It heaven?
 Helen - It is empyrean to those refined enough to solemnize its apocatastasis.
 WJ - Its afrozappawhatsis?
 Helen - Apocatastasis, a neologism of the toddler church, indicating the renaissance of the condemned to redemption, from apo, as in up, and catastasis, as in return.
 WJ - Great, you go to heaven, I'll go to Harvard.
 Helen - SAT?
 WJ - Perfect. You?
 Helen - Same.
 WJ - GPA?
 Helen - Perfect. You?
 WJ - Same.
 Helen - Adversity score?
 WJ - Favorably disadvantaged. You?
 Helen - Same.
 WJ - Legacy?
 Helen - None. You?
 WJ - Same.
 Helen - Awards? Activities? References?
 WJ - Class president, valedictorian, every letter alum. You?
 Helen - Same.
 WJ - So, we're the same.
 Helen - Ain't.

Enter Bishy and Gordon.

Bishy - Harvard Hopefuls, fall in line.
 Gordon - Welcome to the world's most prestigious university.
 Bishy - The tunnel under Wall Street.
 Gordon - The gateway to the Beltway.
 Bishy - The ivory tower atop the ivory tower.
 Both - Harvard.
 Gordon - I'm Gordon Mangusta Lavish III, pre-law and posthaste senator from the great state of Unleash the Power Struggle Within.
 Bishy - Bishy Beaucoup, chemopolitical fitness imagineering major with an emphasis on the problematic intersectionality between non-gendered propaganda and structural racism denial in suburban America's non-existent foreign language immersives.
 Gordon - And we will be your tour guides thru....
 Bishy - Wimpe now...

All - Harvard.
 Gordon - Mmmm, feels like getting a Macarthur Genius Grant without all that “being a genius” shiz.
 Bishy - Shiz is not a word we use at Harvard, Gordy.
 Gordon - I misapologize.
 Bishy - You’ll have to forgive Gordon. His great second cousin went to BU, so he’s got some developmental gaps.
 Gordon - Cute, coming from someone whose grandfather’s third adopted son went to Tufts.
 Bishy - He was born with a congenital brain disorder that prevented him from forming sentences.
 Gordon - I bet they taught him to say, “I went to Tufts.”
 Bishy - Shall we continue the tour or take this to arbitration?
 Gordon - I’m good. You?
 Bishy - Oui, sin, ia, tak, hai, da, si.
 Gordon - Christo et ecclesiae.
 Bishy - So, Gordy, whence the perfection that is...
 All - Harvard.
 Bishy - Did I say “wimme now,” Gordy?
 Gordy - Not that I caught, and we Harvard boys catch everything.
 Bishy - Learn to listen, Harvard Hopefuls, or learn to work a job.
 Gordy - Work is not a word we use at Harvard, Bishy.
 Bishy - Shiz now.
 Gordy - Good job.
 Bishy - So, I repeat, whence the perfection that is Harvard, Gordy?
 Gordon - For my money, and I repeat, not your money, it’s the high demand low supply exclusivity wherein chummy connections preserve the innovative class.
 WJ - Yet haven’t many leading innovators dropped out of Harvard to pursue more promising opportunities?
 Gordon - Your name?
 WJ - WJ Bate.
 Bishy - You wanna go to Harvard, Welfare State?
 WJ - Oui, ja, si, hi, ho, hi, yes.
 Gordon - Then let me nip and tuck your flabby chances with some 1% wikidis, Mister Baters. While prematurely ejaculating from Harvard may on rare occasions lead to a financially pregnant exile, not matriculating into Harvard will on all occasions lead to being a non-trending whysexual bitchagaloop porch monkey with a job at “Must be Tufts to BU.”

Enter Professor Hazlitt.

Bishy - But, hey, enough of my priceless insights - let's do some insider grading.
 Gordon - Professor Hazlitt!
 Bishy - Eminent Harvard didact.
 Gordon - Redundancy check!
 Bishy - Professor, what character trait is most valued at Harvard?
 Prof - The ability to look down on others while bending over.
 Bishy - Funny and funded!
 Gordon - What's the principle benefit of attending Harvard?
 Prof - When someone tells you to go to hell, you don't have to change dorms.
 Gordon - So full of wit!
 Helen - Any superciliously gyrencephalic sesquipedalianisms on getting into everybody's dream school?
 Bishy - Your name?
 Helen - Helen Vendler.
 Gordon - Well, Smelly Blender, the only thing talking out of turn gets you at Harvard is turned down.
 Prof - If this is your dream school, then I suggest you wake up. The value of an education is inversely related to its abolition on anxiety, and the crimson prison only wraps you in irrelevant to ship you to submissive so you can spend the rest of your safe life feeding a communal echo chamber with the critical content it pumps out your cue-tooth mouth speaker. Forget Harvard and go to Beauty School, where you'll actually learn something useful, like how to be hot without burning yourself, cuz if you get that, I'll get you into Harvard.
 Bishy - To the Peabody!

All exit, save Helen and WJ.

WJ - Where are you going?
 Helen - To Harvard.
 WJ - The tour is this way.
 Helen - The door is that way.
 WJ - If you know something I don't know...
 Helen - If?
 WJ - We're compadres, right?
 Helen - We are competitors.
 WJ - Competitor is Harvardian for compadre.
 Helen - If that's a joke, so are you.
 WJ - Yo, I am Harvard material!

Helen - Harvard material is not a word we use at Harvard, Welfare State.

WJ - Harvard material is two words, Jelly Fender.

Helen - Is your school even ranked?

WJ - We emphasize invention over retention.

Helen - So invent something and go there.

WJ - My dad will recall his genes if I don't get in.

Helen - My mom will retract her milk if I don't get in.

WJ - Damn, ever kiss someone then wonder where you got it?

Helen - What was Professor Hazlitt's prolocution in response to my impressively palaverous interrogative?

WJ - I was so unoppressed by your oversensitive pilobolus, I don't recall.

Helen - He said, "Forget Harvard and go to Beauty School."

WJ - Did you break your sarcasm sensor hitting the books?

Helen - And what did he say after that?

WJ - I'd remember it were it memorable.

Helen - He said, "Where you'll actually learn something useful, like how to be hot without burning yourself."

WJ - I don't want to be hot; I want to go to Harvard.

Helen - And after that he said?

WJ - "Would you like a little more off the bangs"?

Helen - "Cuz if you get that, I'll get you into Harvard."

WJ - Cosmetology is a trade, Helen. You use your hands. On people's hair. Just thinking about it gives me never hives on my guaranteed six-figure income.

Helen - And the Beauty School is an off-campus invite-only rave house frequented by certain incognito pupils and preceptors, including Gordon, Bishy, and Professor Hazlitt.

WJ - Your hot air balloon has me about to unfriend my future, so get to the point so I can stick you with it.

Helen - Ad coetum per coetum cum coetu.

WJ - I doubt coitus is a word we use at Harvard.

Helen - In Latin, which is Greek to you, that's "through the club's club to the club."

WJ - Brilliant academic careers don't start in shady shake joints, Helen. This normy's back on tour.

He goes to exit.

Helen - 56% of the applicants on that tour are fortunately disadvantaged.

WJ - Is fortunately higher than favorably?

Helen - Higher, hired, highest.

WJ - I'm dress for a panel interview, not casual intercourse.
Helen - Hip is in the head.
WJ - That must be why people turn their heads when I shake my hips.
Helen - Enter party, locate professor, yourname@heaven.edu in perpetuum.
WJ - Fine, but you best be right.
Helen - Wrong's the only song that ain't my jam.

All exit.

Scene 3 - The Beauty School. Enter John Brown.

JB - Lyuba? Zhazha? Why am I alone?

Enter Lyuba.

Lyuba - Zhazha making fun for me, Johnny.
JB - Of you, baby, of you.
Lyuba - Who is Uvya Baby? Johnny have three girls now? O I am jealousy kartoshka!
JB - The phrase, you cream soda vending machine, is Zhazha's making fun of me.
Lyuba - But Lyuba make more maslo nogi for mentolovyy muzhchina's funemy, nyet?

Enter Zhazha.

Zha - Why you want that dryannoy suka, Johnny?
Lyuba - Pokinut'!
Zha - Ya sdelayu tebya pavement pizza!
JB - Ladies, can we please shred less partisan cheese on the fattucheeny? My meatballs gotta stay lean for this evening's dankquet.
Lyuba - Am I not your most lyubimyy kogal kitty?
Zha - Am I not your samyy seksual'nyy sweater zeppelin?
Lyu - Pochemu doobla womans, Johnny Brown?
JB - Yo, I done dirged that lewd awakening so many timorous moons I got thirst traps on my alabama wrecking balls, but since the hyposaurus has clearly walmarted your thunk trunks, I'll encore my manstake. Run down with skimming dehydrate instructions while I'm tryna big the dipper – like you can't doodle a yankee or whistle that dixie nowadays without some ten course discourse on the patrimonial evils of the coy smile – I went scuba for new crab

danglers thru the cyber seas of shippable shag, and
there I found yous twoses.

Zhazha - But who was first?
Lyuba - Menya.
Zhazha - No, menya!
JB - No, me told ya, that statue's been antifa'd by the
anarchists of anachrony, but beaver eager that I was, I
musta double clickt, cuz next I know, boo for the price
of won: Lyuba Beluga Vonbehindovitch and Zhazha
Boozoombas Ontopsky, deuce nutrajuice for great
American astronaut, so since our moonwalks are so
mondo boffo, let's wander off the psychopath, loosen
that chocko knot, and set some wooden spoons up in
this carnival spread, cuz...

You are both krasivyy to me.
You are both krasivyy to me.
Razve ty ne vidish?
You're much more than I askt for,
And you got no DMZ,
But you are both krasivyy to me.

Enter Haydon.

JB - Haydon, how was Hahvahd?
Hay - Stupefyingly educational.
JB - That's the IV league, baby: an ego trip down the
tenure drip.
Hay - The university's a great idea crammed with bad ones,
the worst of which is letting students speak.
Zhazha - What Haytem say?
Hay - Haytem say, Sex Slave Barbie, what you are too
biodebatable to absorb, and while I'd love to stay and
lob inanities over the multiculti net, I must study.
Lyuba - What is study?
JB - It means "little stud."
Zhazha - Malen'kiy shpil'ka.
Lyuba - Grustnyy malen'kiy shpil'ka.
Hay - And study is to stud as poetry is to poet; when the
latter abandons the former, it hunts itself into
extinction.
JB - On that ticklish topic, can I read you my poem, if I
may be so brash as to classify the compositions of
chaos, thou laconic lord of life after laughter?
Hay - You wrote a poem?
JB - No, I wrought a poem out of adamantine
ambivalence, and though it's been umpteen orgies

since I footed about in the antipodal directions, I so metric.

Hay - Does it employ the six requisite qualities of excellent verse, or is it just more licentious libido rodeo yeeha?

JB - Refresh my malady with the six esculent cavities of the rabbinic curse, and I shall answer to the west of my abrasively.

Hay - What?

JB - Are the six requisite qualities of excellent verse, Mister Tongue Lister?

Hay - Ethos, or an assertion of value.

JB - My words undervalue my words, tho making much of risks making less from.

Hay - Mythos, or a synthesis of times.

JB - I spit it then, it sprays me now, I am the mist of sibilance!

Hay - Dianoia, or discursive thought.

JB - This cursing thot or that cursing thot, ne umiray ot skuki!

Hay - Does it possess melody?

JB - Well, I happen to know melody, and she will only be possessed by those possessed by her, so that singularity's complicated.

Hay - Spectra, or image?

JB - There's more to view in my verse than in the vastness that vernackled it.

Hay - Diction?

JB - Nay, my song shall never shun its seminal stock of sound.

Hay - If it's at all scatologic, I will be irkt in the extreme.

JB - You, Haytem, have an extremity?

Hay - I have only what you push me to.

JB - Then let me push you off the ledge that hangs over all you'd have.

Hay - Let you.

JB - "A Lament upon the Permanence of Transient Hope."

Hay - Well, I'm cautiously surprised. Quite neo-romantic, nearly pre-Raphaelite, with a transcendental finish. Go on.

JB - I will go on and off as off and on I ever go, on the verge of a nervous vacation, so off book I upstage myself, on the off train, off the real story, in an off and on affair with my on again off again auto au pair, on it til I'm so damn off it gets on me for bein all promise perverse, all trite brite, all half on my rocker cuz I'm knockin off more on something than the pile of

regurgitated revolts, muddling scoff and yawn and
nope, I'm blank. My brain's been durchgefickt by its
own borderline. Drugs very good for thinking up, but
very bad for noting down. Come, my pussy whips: I've
swallowed melpomene and need my stomach pump.

Hay - You were once a poet, John, of serious potential.
JB - Potential's parasitic, and serious plus serious is
"seriously?"

Hay - You taught me to seek a higher beauty.
JB - No, I said get high and yeet that booty.
Hay - These foreign holdings have devalued your currency.
JB - These holdings are domestic enough to endow my
private sector with the liquidity I need to grow in a
protracted depression, and crap for the carp, right,
Haymosabe?

Hay - Crap for the carp, but you are a man whose mind is
the endless echo of imperceptible time, so must you
savor the symbol's odic nutris beyond all the
moribund webcest glitz of gluttonous graceland if you
wish to be more than a skittish animal.

JB - I am not an animan, I am a manimal.
Hay - "If steady you stood at the whipping sea,
Absorbing the ancient, algic swells
Thru every eager lacerated pore,
And at the mystery-sprinkling moon,
Whose serene remarks human havocs hush,
You cast your spirit up in exaltation
Repeating the desire of landed life
To own an ecumene of aerial truth,
And, in a language you believe distilled
From compounds nature resينات to ease
Our grinding, lame attempts at reclamation,
You freed the liquid fossils of your doubt
Into the wild immediate tidal now,
What measure of effusion would you employ
To gauge the inlets of your urgent flow
That feeds this drive to die where none may know?"

Lyuba - You write this, Haytem?
Zhazha - Zvuchit talantlivo.

Hay - John Wesley Brown, Ode to Shame, date denied.
JB - That could not have been further from the couth.
Hay - She loved that poem.
JB - And if you love your mouth, you'd be wise to shut it.
Hay - I simply sound the silence in your head, which says
Megan.

JB - I will eat your head and shit your better.
Hay - Better than eat my heart and shit your worst.

Zha - Who is Negan?
JB - Negan is the Nymph of Negativity. Too often taken for an academic's anonymous smoker's station, she drags her blistered bulk about the cerebral quarantine cages of Cambridge En-Masse in search of aspiring cynics to terrify into heterophobic homeothesis, and the only way to extinguish her admonitional glower is to throw a Burning Man Rave, which just so happens to be this evening's oddity, so come, my cyberian hussies, we must point the purple laser of love at our green-eyed cornea and carve a new perception. O, and Haytem: forge her again, it's you will burn.

All exit.

Scene 4 – Harvard Campus. Enter Mark.

Mark - This mind on winning her must now be set
To gain a double pay off at the line:
My poetry envigored by the get,
My prize her winner's cup when she is mine.

Enter Alex, to the side.

Alex - Behold the poet on his pedestal.
O were I holding him! Yet here or there
I sense a scrape: if here, he is not there,
Yet there, I'm too of here. So, status, sate.
Mark - Praise is her fuel, yet that's so daily juiced,
Might she not crave a respite in critique,
Some zapper trigg'ring with its charge new spark?
There is a pact in dreamt-of deception
Sustaining a jolt of proof that desire,
Drunk on her drippings, petty objection
Over-rules and flows in stoppered judgment,
Less guided by the truth than by the tooth.
Alex - No looking can downwind the heady blast
That I would give my every feather to.
Yet how not look? He looks to be lookt at,
Tho looking not at me, as I too lack
The beauty every poet needs to see.
Mark - Yet love a liar? Lies in love unwrench
The fundive pact, as word-born's word-bereft.
Then honesty's the hitch, yet how be straight
With she whose stuff is show, who is the cause
Of craft and cunning, artifies too real?
Alex - He is a man, and poet, which is all

That's good in man; upon rapacity,
He rapture pours; his love's not brief, but loves
To lengthen love. Defensiveness destroys
The courage-caged, yet the scissured poet
Thru ringent, brave submission wins the world
Then hands it back, perfected thru his pain.

Mark - Indifference! Ah, such beauty can't resist,
For who on admiration feeds soon freaks
When board's withdrawn, and surplus quickly begs
From her once beggar. Yet, handouts returned,
Her begging's ended, arrogance grows fat,
And indifference treats indifference different.

Alex - O you effusive tropaion, jutting forth
The hedric symbiant of rich despair,
How I would flounce you, rub you cross my face,
Force you spate of my imagined wiles,
Ingest your mania, and feel no more
Misplacement, finally by you freedom-held,
In cuddle bard embracing that my sulk
Arouses wide as O as wide as you,
My grind-piping, deep-stirring, lexiconstruction man.

Mark - Why not simple awe? Supreme subservience?
Yet who can crave whose craving is so huge
There's no craving room? Maybe my approach
Of acting on her cue is off; my aim
Should be to speak the beauty in my urge
For hers to show in selfish selflessness
That we are one.

Alex - O deprecating dream!
Why must I ever wish what never will?
Why strain my soul to leap a sky-high fence?
Why squeg and scream at fact? What shorts my brain
To bid on what my body can't afford?
I'd be his briefest beauty, yet I want
To my mere the means. I'm too poorly made,
Too greatly failed at all I sadly crave,
And while upon this looted stage of life,
I play for no one, and so sappy show
My truth, my caste, my all is ugliness.

Mark - What does beauty need? Beauty needs beauty,
And there's her only flaw: flawless, she is stuck
In self requiring far extolling selves
That even her condign supremacy
Must justify her thru some equity.

Alex - Why ugly? O don't ask. The answer comes
More ugly, as it's full an ugly past,
While now's at least an ugly moment managed.

Mark - So I'll be her equal, pose for poesie,
 And weave her such a writhe that she shall reel,
 With my free rein rosette, as in my sense
 Her sense-beyond's incensed. O I will sing
 Her shine, grown hotter, sharper magnified;
 Her depth, which on my tether she may plunge;
 Her image, thru my imagery gone rogue;
 Her rhythms, by my cadence animized;
 Her far-off in my fictions palpable,
 I'll draw her all devotedly to me.

Alex - My lacking looks disrupt this poet's eye
 By being truer than he seeks to see,
 Nor should he, as it's beauty sets him on.

Mark - I will call my poem "An Ode to Beauty."

Alex - So let him be, a poet, beautiful,
 For I would be too true to my malform
 To clive where beauty best admires himself.

She goes to exit.

Mark - Clara's roomie. The harsher the route,
 The sweeter the view, and she's my sherpa.
 Alex!

Alex stops.

Mark - Mark, from the Agony of Keats.

Alex - Right, Mark, and his gospel of the gorgeous.

Mark - I've been thinking long and hard on what you said,
 And I'm coming to your side.

Alex - What's my side?

Mark - That beauty isn't truth, truth not beauty.

Alex - Then you've come to your senses, not my side,
 As a man's senses never let him stay
 Where what he senses after isn't sense,
 So my side was surrendered when you spoke.

Mark - And there you go, in contra sense my fix:
 You are so beautiful and speak so true,
 Tho your words have severed truth and beauty.

Alex - Then you're blind and say only what you'd see,
 So any truth I show is lost on thee.

Mark - And there you go again, declaring dark,
 Thru subtext antithetic, the bold rebuff
 Of your daresay's glosing opposition,
 Yet the speaker is the short of the speech,
 So what are you? A woman, beautiful,
 Whose truth is this: that beauty is untrue?

A paradox (where poets are at peace),
 Awful to surmise, teasing on the eyes,
 Lamping the quest: Can eye and why be one
 When every sight swindles their connection?
 Looking on you now, I see the answer's yes,
 At least when looking on you, as I see
 Your beauty's truth by being so untrue
 To itself (though, of course, in conscious ruse),
 Which means both are right: beauty's false to be
 So true and true to be false to itself,
 Unswindling all the swindlers with its grace.
 Beautiful, Alex. Truly beautiful.

Alex - Your cute device disproves its own deny
 As such an ugly lie shows beauty's truth.

Mark - What lie?

Alex - You do not think me beautiful.

Mark - Yeah, right.

Alex - Yeah, right.

Mark - I know you want to hide
 Inside your head, an intellect at heart,
 But I say feel, come out, and show the world
 That beauty's freedom fires nature's foundry.

Alex - I'm hiding from the inside of your head.

Mark - Alex, why?

Alex - Whatever you are after
 By mocking me will have its way with you,
 And that way will be worse than you to me.

Mark - Mocking you? That takes an imperfection,
 But there's no take on you I wouldn't keep.

Alex - What part of you could being so cruel content
 That so contented won't come after you?
 To call me beautiful when all can see
 That's all I cannot be? Or could not be,
 For next your ugliness I'm beauty's best,
 So thank you, no, thank me for letting me
 Like you, find you beautiful, even though
 I saw the truth when you asked of Clara
 After class, so I guess that stubs the toe:
 We know alone by knowing not to know.

Mark - I guess you didn't see the burnt woman.

Alex - The what?

Mark - The burnt woman.

Alex - Who's the burnt woman?

Mark - I don't know, but she passed our class today
 And stared at me while that one girl read Keats.

Alex - That's Clara.

Mark - The burnt woman?

Alex - That one girl.
Mark - Ok.
Alex - Stop lying.
Mark - What am I lying about?
Alex - You asked me about Clara after class.
Mark - No, I askt you about the burnt woman.
Alex - A burnt woman?
Mark - A burnt woman.
Alex - O how sad.
Mark - A sadness past all power to see past.
Alex - Was she badly burnt?
Mark - Her entire body
Was with such a blinding badness lacquered,
Its specter felt some cribbing pleistoforce
That spiny slithers deep into your skull
And yanks your optic nerve into its den
That you no more detect what you detect,
As urge and hope and all perspectives crash
Into frescos of enucleation.
Her skin was carmelized, magmatic, charred,
Like some desquamate rotisserie goat
Forgotten by the durnks who skewered it,
No ears, a few stray hairs, those brashly tippt
By a red carnation, lips seared away
That center faced a toothy jackal jeer,
Her mouth no more the broker to her moods,
And both her hands, those gnarled carbon stubs,
Seemed poker sticks for stirring lambent coals.
Over this incineration, she wore
A delft flower dress, so slight and see-thru,
All hapless viewers funneled forcefully
Thru her rack-heap, and so she proudly slithed
Along, than amputation ancient more,
Yet freshly burnt, all burnt, as burnt's a bug
That crawls into a log to flee the flames.
I call her woman for my peace; for truth?
To call her aught but burnt's to torch the tongue.
Alex - Why tell me this?
Mark - Imagine being her.
No intimacy save with what you scare.
All who face your blazing anaphora
Empath the febrile, life-beguiling supplice
Of that horrid conflagration cauterized
Your grievous to a mesh of worse majeure,
Reliving day on day a frozen hell
Whose instant soup forever scorcht you out
The social flue, not just to sulk alone,

But be the cause of loneliness in all.
Imagine being her, then say to me
That I'm untrue to call you beautiful.
Alex - Dear boy, there being plaudits you won't coo
Assures no perfect pitch to those you do.

She goes to exit.

Mark - Wanna study and sublimate tonight?
Alex - I'm going to a party with Clara.
Mark - Or that.
Alex - Or that with me or her?
Mark - With you.
Alex - Eight o'clock at the Beauty School.
Mark - I'm there.
Alex - You should talk to her.
Mark - Clara?
Alex - The burnt woman.
Mark - Ah, ya know, I doubt I'll see her again.
Alex - O, you'll see her again. She lookt at you.

Alex exits.

Mark - It shows an aberrant ugliness in me
To lie to her, tho I lie beautifully.
Yet of that beauty she so clearly covets,
Well, I desire it too, and here, it's true,
True beauty makes me false, subsuming all
In its hot pursuit, yet what guilty of?
Panting after pants? Gaping after gaps?
Such redundancy's the double helix,
A dereliction tinctures to acquittal,
For universal guilt is innocence,
Or, what's the same, defenselessly condemned,
As consciousness itself's mere concoction
Of dodge and dupe to sack the stunner's wand.
Besides, thru this trompe l'oeil, the poet squints,
For how in outback beauty shall he sleep
Less from the trail of truth he venture off,
Which bucks my stand, yet need coherence nulls:
This Claracquire drives me so mindless on,
I'd parch the planet for one sloppy lick.
It's sad I must hurt Alex, tho, as she
Seems interesting, a foe I'd maybe face
Were she not seeded to a Clara match,
Were I not like all likers striking struck.
Lit on life, we must burn our peers to see

Who is meant for truth, and who for beauty.

All exit.

Scene 5 – Clara and Alex’s dorm room. They enter.

Clara - So, you parst the poet?
Alex - Only his title: Ode on Scoring You.
Clara - Take him. I’m bookt for teacher.
Alex - Clara, please, no more coed sex scandals. Like how’s a scholar to pathologize the plebeians with yr dirty fergy all up in his rigor?
Clara - Nah, that’s one faculty member won’t be heading my department, but I gotta draw some d’s out his didact, cuz he’s our barcode to the Beauty School.
Alex - Good, cuz their rejection letter was clippt to my birth certificate.
Clara - This is a job for Princess Percocet.

She offers Alex a pill.

Alex - Thanks, but pain’s the only part of me I can stand.
Clara - Buzz is the best beautician, Alex. See footnote me.
Alex - Your footnote has a citable body of research above it, while mine references an endnote that recommends the reader see your work.
Clara - In high school I won most likely to need more microwave.
Alex - Then some surgeon bought a beamer on your bill.
Clara - My secret is the Pow-Her Pussy Heat Sheet.
Alex - Your highness is high.
Clara - High enough to see how hot you’ll be once you hit my heights.
Alex - Since this is Infeasible 101, do I get credit for failing?
Clara - Level 1 - Basic Bitch Mild: top so tight, no one can breathe.
Alex – Bdonkadork.
Clara - Level 2 - Devious Call Girl Medium: skirt so short, it can’t reach resist.
Alex - Will this call attention to my body, cuz every time I do that my hopes hang up.
Clara - Level 3 - Albuquerque Hooker Fusillade Chiquita: Shoes that say the stripper’s now the pole.
Alex - And the pole is now at half-mast to honor the death of my pride.
Clara - Level 4 - Flaming Kamikaze Inferno Dragonista: more lipstick than a lamprey, eye shadow that says,

“there’s sun under my umbrella,” and hair so there
 there’s like hair in your hair.
 Alex - My hair’s been classified as concertina wire.
 Clara - And Level Fire - Exploding Starfish Carolina Reaper
 Rimjob Bar-b-Queen: your steamer either rings the
 dinner bell or blows the bear horn, so tits commit, butt
 on jut, and move like the Louvre.
 Alex - The Louvre would no doubt move if I showed up.
 Clara - Stop self-deprecating, Alex. It’s a total turn-off.
 Alex - I turn myself off so no one turns me on cuz booting up
 only gets me the boot.
 Clara - Hey, pretty ain’t all pretty.
 Alex - I was pretty once.
 Clara - You are pretty, Alex.
 Alex - Pretty what?
 Clara - Pretty close to hot if you’d just rock the fits you throw.
 Alex - When I was six, this boy from across the cul-de-sac
 would come and swing in my yard. He was as luscious
 as an apple mid-air, and I would sit and watch him
 like a prairie dog worrying a storm, for I knew what I
 had to do to save our bountiful world of two.
 Clara - Yeah, what’s that?
 Alex - Ask him.
 Clara - Ask him what?
 Alex - If we could, ya know.
 Clara - At six? Damn, girl, where I’m from, we dig the pool,
 then we dive.
 Alex - If we could kiss.
 Clara - And?
 Alex - Yes, but for every schmatz, he got something.
 Clara - Something?
 Alex - Anything.
 Clara - Anything?
 Alex - O we lived such a brief and sweet hereafter. Too
 freshly formed to partake of awkward difference, we
 simply reveled in minute explorations of summer’s
 impartial, dewy pabulum, til his mother found us
 neath a wagon, he got grounded, I moved away, and
 memory’s finest vintage attained its replenishing seal.
 Clara - You were raped.
 Alex - I was not.
 Clara - Anything for a kiss? If that ain’t rape, the wacker’s
 now a gavel.
 Alex - I wasn’t raped.
 Clara - Then at least charge your next good night hunter a
 higher bagging fee.

Alex - I'd be unfenced and free if freedom came from playing to others.

Clara - And since when don't it? Since women of a certain rage spread the proctorial disease of "once rejected, always dejected" via their enflamed inhibitory glands, causing ambitious babes everywhere to adopt the stillborn, sterilizing belief that being desirable to what you openly crave is somehow demeaning while being despicable to what you secretly crave is somehow empowering, but Bechdel's a choker's test, cuz freedom means dressing for dressage.

Alex - Then why don't all the wires end in women?

Clara - Because woman is the why in the wires. What is it to walk on stage, and boom, it's your scene? It is power. To be the source of ardor in the soul? Power. To rouse the nightly squalls that green the garden of dreams? Pow pow pow-her.

Alex - Maybe I forgot to pay my utility bill.

Clara - So we re-up your account at Beauty School.

All exit.

Scene 6 - Outside the Beauty School. Enter Haydon.

Haydon - O John, how much I want you as you were,
 To hear some raucid fervor you transcribe
 Into the most contained and glyptic notes
 That time is left in cuffs. How much to lounge
 In wait for perfect sentiment to rise
 That you might throw it further than surreal
 And stun the stylish fluster with your lilt.
 O how much to see you gladd'ning Megan,
 Your charms conveyed, locutions unobscured,
 Your passions vying not at futile prize
 But jaunting thru the idioms of genius
 That knows of symmetry its nimblest twists.
 And am I wrong? Am I to be abjured
 For blandly cowering at your stilted soul,
 Each moment casting me the shutdown clown
 In hopes that you might brightly cheme again,
 If only by reflection of my spite?
 My love's the shadow of some sheer nostalgia,
 Yet still I love, a fire that seeks to cool,
 A wrath that judges tender, washing clean
 With dioecious het the ornery scent
 Of every sludgy sickness you pursue,
 A love sad-panning thru your silty guilt

At faltering in Megan's helpful harsh
 Demands, that now, tho once a verse elite,
 You take pornography for poetry.
 See her again, you must, for me, for you,
 For she who taught you how to see again.
 Her smit trench of worship must pull you down
 To hurl you up, befouling to absterge
 And stop this stocking fat corruption's fete.
 But how? I've tried with everything I am;
 So what of what I'm not? Might I put on
 A parody of your disconsolance,
 And making like emblazon buried shame
 To hit the switch before you self-destruct?
 Yet I be you, or worse than you? Are you
 Not just as far from what you were? Among
 Perfection imperfections most allure,
 And in our formulaic fame a flop
 Alone can sometimes penetrate. A flop?
 A freak? A mutant? Might I somehow mod
 To my advancing this great disadvantage?
 Like you abluded, seeking truth in trash,
 A gimp, a recidivist retraction,
 The self-defeated face that wins all funds,
 A staph endangered to the booming point,
 A slug so fuckt he tucks in anywhere?
 The chiddys in their crudded cribs will scream,
 "That pyrotic hyperencephalate
 Sleazo-slingin mook of edible shit,"
 And it'll be true, cuz I'll be so more you
 Than selfish, self-defiant you can be,
 You'll re-revert to her by facing me.
 Hellmouth, Hellmouth, rap me a trap,
 And stuff it up with rhymes that make the stiffies snap.
 Backbone, backbone, scan me a man,
 And trick him up with treats that sweet the nasty plan.
 I have crawl'n into the angel food.
 I am a prank fallen from the mothers.
 When you sleep, dweamers, I move your room and
 run.
 Dean of Danger, no one stranger,
 Square root of the negative one.

He exits as the Dean of Danger.

Scene 7 – Outside the Beauty School. A bouncer stands at the door. Enter Alex and Clara.

Clara - Oops, there it is: The Beauty School, where Harvard's
Community Guidelines go to die that truth may live.

Enter Mark.

Mark - Is this the secret meeting of the Keats Society?

Enter Professor Hazlitt.

Prof - Ah, Clara, you brought your peers.
Clara - Peer on this.
Prof - That is without peer.
Mark - We've been declaiming Keats.
Prof - " Heard melodies are sweet."
Alex - "But those unheard are sweeter."
Mark - "Therefore, ye soft pipes, play on."
Clara - Soft pipes?
Prof - Let them play on.
Alex - "Not to the sensual ear."
Mark - "But, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone."
Clara - Ditties of no tone?
Prof - Tone? Def.
Alex - Zero for tone, ten for deaf.
Clara - Rate my ditties, professor.
Mark - Being a professor, he can't profess the truth.
Alex - He must choose between possession and profession.
Prof - Indeed, I rate thy ditties as berating me with the
frustration that I may not venerate them without
reinvigorating the administration in its aspirations to
castrate my liberation.
Mark - First rate.
Alex - Denigration.
Clara - "Fair youth, beneath the trees,
Never canst thou leave thy song."
Prof - "Nor ever can those trees be bare."
Alex - "Bold lover, never, ever canst thou kiss."
Mark - "Tho winning near the goal."
Prof - Near the goal? O my "all but" life!
Clara - "Yet do not grieve."
Alex - "She cannot fade."
Mark - "Tho thou hast not thy bliss."
Prof - I know it like the yes I've never heard.
Clara - "Forever wilt thou love."
Alex - "And she be fair."
Prof - Her fair's unfair to ever wilt my love.

They step up to the door.

Bouncer - Welcome back, Professor.
Prof - In front, in back, in absentia, it's all welcome at my age.
Bouncer - They with you?
Prof - They're as with me as what I must live without.
Bouncer - Everyone 18?
Prof - Correct: three 18ers, which, if my times are good, is 54, or what 50s for.
Bouncer - You're over my head, professor.
Prof - Wish I was over my own.

Clara, Alex, Professor, and Mark enter the party. Enter Helen and WJ.

Helen - My asseverations infallibly apprized our syndic's sibyllines.
WJ - Only you could make me miss, "I told ya so."
Helen - Infiltrate instanter!
WJ - Hesitate, Miss Faster: that bouncer looks like he gives up panda for Lent.
Helen - Bouncer? Ha! I'll flatten him like curls in Quartzsite.

They step up to the door.

Bouncer - Names?
Helen - We don't have any.
Bouncer - You don't have names?
Helen - Why tag what's not for sale?
Bouncer - I guess so you can be identified.
Helen - Yo, I'd rather be duct-taped to IRS HQ with a sign on my rump that reads, "audit this." The epithets work for the epitaphs, so a birth certificate's just the reaper's IOU. In fact, last time I got cited, I got shot. Only good in scoring a title is the cardio you get running from it, cuz staying on brand's just straddling the heat stamp. They name to shame, christen to chasten, and invoke to revoke, so lube your knob with this inglorious extract, doorman: nick your own name and don't press charges, cuz identified, liedentified.
Bouncer - So how'm I sposta see if you're on the list?
Helen - What list?
Bouncer - The list of the names of the people that get in.
Helen - We're on the other list.
Bouncer - What other list?
Helen - The list of people without names that get in.
Bouncer - There's no such list.
Helen - O, great, it's discrimination time again! "Those no names are clearly hiding something." "So you think you're above the law cuz you can't be written up?" "If you're not enumerated, do you really count?" "I say we put a handle on her so we

can throw her in the ovens.” When will people who don’t want to exist be allowed to exist?

Bouncer - Howbout you go exist elsewhere before I put you on the missing persons list?

Helen - WJ, call your dad.

WJ - My dad?

Helen - Yeah, ya know, your deputy corporal commissioner dad who runs the BPDDPDPP.

WJ - The what?

Helen - The Boston Police Department’s Division to Prevent Discrimination against Pseudonymous Persons. He’ll be jackt to hand this obscurophobe to the torpedos.

WJ dials his phone.

Bouncer - My brother’s a cop, and he ain’t ever mentioned that division.

Helen - Sure he did, just not by name, so you didn’t listen, cuz you’re a namist chomo bout to get raw-dogged by big bubba.

WJ - Hey, dad.

Helen grabs the phone.

Helen - Officer Bate, I’ve got a registered flex offender here who’s throwing sticks and stones cuz I decided names can hurt me. Really? Federal offense? Ten years to life? Solitary, no mattress?

Bouncer - Fine, you can come in.

Helen hangs up.

Helen - On the ball, for a bouncer.

They enter the party. All exit.

Scene 8 – Inside the Beauty School. Enter Gordon and Bishy on stage, partiers all around.

Gord - You ready, babes and buffs, for Beauty School?

Bish - The world’s most egregious blueniversity.

Gord - Then pop it like you’ll stop it.

They pop pills.

Bish - Cute Brute?

Gord - Speedball Bunny?

Bish - Whence the pure confection that is...

Gord - Wimme now.

All - Beauty School!

Gord - For my honey, and I repeat, yo honey, it’s that Beauty School is brought to you by X.

Bish - X? No habla sin palabras.

Gord - X is the cure for the academic ass ache.

Bish - X is the lyric tweet of rebound baby brain waves.
 Gord - X is the freestyle tongue of naughty obstetricious.
 Bish - X is the deva beat of incognito supralicious.
 Gord - X is the gregarious grid.
 Bish - X is the romp recipe.
 Gord - X is
 Bish - Wimme now.
 All - Ecstasy.
 Bish - Crisco Chimp?
 Gord - Sin Some Dim Sum?
 Bish - Where's Burning Man?
 Gord - Burning Man?
 Bish - Yeah, like that really stick-stackt, really ghost pepper,
 really moto moto man?
 Gord - O, you mean the mystic mixer of the rave elixir?
 Bish - No, I mean the illbient heartbeat of the double-decker
 drool bus.
 Gord - O, you mean Burning Man.
 Bish - Do dat dip dup duh don dunk.
 Gord - Lemme show you where he at.
 Bish - He make my eyeballs fat.
 Gord - Thrawn outta the bone-dry Hopi lands, where Oraibi
 Wash meets Chinle Valley, down a dusty basin of the
 Chuska Range, near the lost city of the Lukachukais
 comes the man with the stoniest mind.
 Bish - O he's a funky chunk o' burnin love.
 Gord - He is Geometrico Destructionato.
 Bish - Spiff up your genital embrace metaphors...
 Gord - Cuz his every thot's that thang.
 Bish - And join me in welcoming...
 Gord - The headtrancer of the Beauty School...
 Bish - The MC of tonight's transgressivities...
 Gord - Wimme now.
 All - Johnny Brown.

Enter JB, Lyuba, Zhazha. Dean is to the side.

JB - Time for a poetry lecher.
 Dean - Only notes I'm takin's out your swan song.
 JB - Tonight, my fruity pebbled schoolies, we swot the
 story of sex, cuz what that Statue of Three Lies mixed
 you ain't one tippie o' truth.
 Dean - If the truth met your tongue, it would lie out your
 mouth.
 JB - That's why you need Professor Polymorph and his two
 rushing angels of nervonic slanguages.
 Zhazha - Zeezee Karmaklutz.

JB - Bot of lust.
 Lyuba - Leelee Zerkerkoontz.
 JB - Bot of love.
 Dean - And Dirty Dangerpork, bot of larp.
 Lyuba/Zhazha - Balilaika Upanayana!
 JB - We gon' hit that shit so straight, you'll call yourself a fan.
 Dean - And when that shit is in your face, you'll call yourself my man.
 JB - Sex, you see, hasn't always been, but had to bear the pangs of birth.
 Lyuba - How pangs?
 Zhazha - Why birth?
 JB - That chasm's where my cliffhanger's headed.
 Dean - Your spasm's where my stiff danger's bedded.
 JB - Twas in old India, where the fluviated Punjab swoops and broods, swipping its petal mounds thru the fuliginous Indus damp, that the world was once an immeasurably intimate bloodstream without skin.
 Zha - Death to the flesh stockade!
 Lyu - Long live the chamois switchblade!
 JB - Skin, said the satvas against sutras, is both divine and deadly.
 Zha - Why divine?
 JB - For only fission conduces fusion.
 Lyu - Why deadly?
 JB - For only incision induces contusion.
 Dean - My derision will loose your confusion.
 JB - Soon, as sequels will stretch it...
 Dean - The only flower that lives forever is the tale of a flowerless time.
 JB - Two prophets emerged to declare the dawn of dermis.
 Zha - I am Inny, and I say your skin is in you.
 Lyu - I am Outty, and I say your skin is on you.
 Dean - She is tetchy, but you're sick with clicking-thru.
 JB - Then the prophets did as prophets do: they pro foughted.
 Zha - Your skin is in you, so your beauty is inside.
 Lyu - Your skin is on you, so your beauty is outside.
 Dean - Her skin's a pot-au-feu you left untried.
 JB - With that, the tongue-tied pinfold burst its fence, skin flyin bout like schmatta, as the crazy and the cozy came O so eerily close, til, explodious implosions, a third prophet came.
 Lyu - Who dat?
 Zha - What he?
 JB - His name is Neither-Here-Nor-There.

Dean - Your shame's to neither truth nor dare.
JB - And Neither-Here-Nor-There declared, "Inny is outty, wuzzy willy, dermis vermis, yeah."
Dean - And obeisance to abundance is abeyance.
JB - We walk its augur's trace. We warm our waters in its out of reach. We hug its impetuous debatable sign. Single, deft, inaudient, it filters our mind to a stilling silt, floating a freedom mask on the other shore, winging the hank of humanity into the Valley of Anomalous, where, thanks to skin, we are born to touch, for from our touching comes our all.
Dean - As from my clutching comes your fall.
JB - It's then that Inny and Outty cried...
Both - We are dancing dermis!
JB - And they danced, until Inny, ever itching for a whiching, said:
Zha - We need a word for this.
JB - So off they scooncht, down the Indus to the sea, slinking along the spice coast to the pearl bed of words.
Lyu - Phonesia.
JB - And there they met a sly, stizo'd lizard.
Zha - Lizard?
JB - Woozup?
Lyu - We need a word for dermis dancing.
JB - So yous gotsta pay da visit wit mon Simeon Stylites.
Zha - Gimme-em Highmightees?
Lyu - Protean Uptightees?
JB - Simeon Stylites.
Zha - Will he give us word for dermis dancing?
JB - If you gon ged him down dem pillar.
Lyu - How we do dat?
JB - Try da five fold ecstasies. Shit work wonders.
Zha - Where can we find this Simeon Stylites?
Dean - Vualya!

Dean pushes Mark forward.

Lyuba - Oo, I likee.
Zhazha - Krasavchik.
Lyuba - Are you smelyy poet?
Mark - Maybe.
Dean - I'd rather read Maybe Smelly than Certainly Sterile.

Lyuba and Zhazha pull Mark on stage.

Lyu/Zha - A vot i on!

JB - Get on up, cuz it's a throw down.
 Lyu/Zha - Pratyahara ura!
 JB - For the fresher wedge of his life, Simeon Stylites,
 opposed to all things earthly, sat on a pillar and
 thought himself a bust. Then along came the five fold
 ecstasies to tempt him down and out.

Lyu - Will his lines belay his lift?
 Zha - Or will he drop, descants adrift?
 JB - This is Verse Wars!
 Dean - In your mouth, terms diverse, one disease.
 JB - Numero uno: the Ecstasy of Strangers.
 Lyu - Round you distant drifters spin,
 Close as guile to the grin,
 So back, my pea, into the pod,
 For strange is sweet when all's abroad.

JB - Who can resist the sultry askance?
 Descend from judgment, Simeon, and dance!
 Mark - Succoring self to alien voice
 We birthlings crave, yet frauded choice
 Soon learns what muted malice hides therein,
 And then suspicious supersedes seduction.

Dean - Yet I'm seduced by these seeds of super.
 JB - Well said, but like charges break the lattice.
 Cometh she, the Ecstasy of Status.
 Zha - You know me, not what I am;
 You hear me, not where I jam.
 You see me, not who I see;
 For my status, take twice a knee.

JB - Sir Simeon, aloof and keen,
 Jack you such down stalk of bean?
 Mark - Power plays at love to lose. No rule
 Can shake off what it takes to be uncruel.
 Unstinting tenderness can only thrive
 When primal balance grabs us otherwise.

JB - Neverminding's ever climbing, Simeon,
 But here comes the Ecstasy of Abandon.
 Lyu - Take the twitching for the twitcher?
 Crave the kiss, who cares the kisser?
 Abandon, lead me by the gland
 Back to whatsoever land.

Mark - To need the game the gaming spirit kills;
 The unmoved mover commotion overstill.
 This self-reliance you ennoble is a mess
 That owns all it demands we dispossess.

Dean - Even tomorrow knows when to quit,
 But this spitter's got his host on the spit.
 JB - You are, Simeon, big for your size,

But try this on – the Ecstasy of Surprise.
 Zha - Simps in charge of every tease,
 Enemas with enemies.
 Which never's next? Which nip'll slip?
 Mind is a coin only no-mind can flip.
 Mark - We dig for gold in spontaneity,
 Yet gold is but the dirt of history,
 So freedom is too under our command
 For shockwaves to unfeign the out of hand.
 Dean - This gibbering fleek has John in his beak.
 JB - Bird brother, Simeon, sky-siring poet,
 If there's a nest in unnerving, you beau it.
 But here's an egg no loner can unspring:
 The Ecstasy of Nothing.
 Lyu - I am here, you are there,
 In between, the stare we share,
 And thru this O so loaded nothing
 All you are's resistless rushing.
 JB - Sex is best in the glare of a gun.
 Surrender, Simeon, and let the down be done.
 Mark - Slow, like steam rising
 From plane crash dead
 On Xiao-lin mountain,
 I uplift into the polarimetric
 Patience our need becomes
 When greedy sight's seen thru,
 Where even the clouds,
 As they disperse their comfort,
 Are to extinct domains
 Far more willful than
 The sapping myology called
 Sexual me, and feeling
 The adaptive fluctuations
 Of my extraneous being, I sit,
 Native to wild impulse,
 Radically fair-minded,
 Peaceful as a myth untold.
 Dean - Simeon wins the Verse Wars!
 All - Simeon! Simeon!
 Dean - Crown him Chancellor of the Beauty School!
 All - Crown him! Crown him!
 JB - He banters well, but it takes more than words to rule
 this shaky roost.
 Dean - You bartered on his banter and he turned your bash
 to bashful. No one's ever held the pillar to the finish.
 He tazed your truth, mangled your mingle, and with

your fiasco graph he toucht privation deepest. Crown
him, or your cred is off the streets.
Crowd - Crown him, crown him!
JB - Teleport this upstart to the Sky Cave. See you in the
cemetery! DJ, drown it out.

Lyuba and Zhazha grab Mark.

Dean sings.

Dean - *John Brown has lost his captaincy
To a boy who speaks in poetry.
John Brown's a lush to failed desire,
This boy is love that pays the buyer.
John Brown's a blind spot for a brain,
This boy to every vision's frame.
John Brown now runs to crypt his jewel,
This boy now runs the Beauty School.*

JB, Lyuba, Zhazha, Mark exit.

Clara - Professor, would you mind fetching me a Leg
Spreader, extra maraschinos?
Prof - You won't ditch me, will you?
Clara - If I do, I'll see you in my ditch.

He exits.

Clara - Come on.
Alex - Where are we going?
Clara - To the top cock's coop.
Alex - But the professor...
Clara - Only butt he get's the one I flick after smokin JB.

All exit.

Scene 9 – John Brown's Sky Cave. John Brown, Mark, Lyuba, and Zhazha enter.

JB - Make yourself confusable, Wordboy. ZZ, slice up
some pawg cheese, as our new friend must be beat
from stompin them feet. Lyuba, two white Russians,
more on the rocks than off the ropes.

Zhazha and Lyuba exit.

JB - Wordboy, you won the war, but still may lose the
babble.

Mark - My animus was my adversary.
 JB - Then my edge retains its plunge.
 Mark - I thought it nature's only void, but you are a beautiful man.
 JB - No, I'm an ugly situation, but I control the lights.
 Mark - Least you're not some edubot armed against obscenities.
 JB - Sniffing for filth only slows you down, and my train's on max express, straight track, no stops, super speed, zoom zoom, but your honor's got me feeling kinda choo choo.
 Mark - Poetry is unstoppable in your presence.
 JB - Please don't use that word in front of my inner problem child; poetry's a tunnel into prison.
 Mark - A tuneful cell beats a strident expanse.
 JB - Poetry, Wordboy, is dead.
 Mark - Then its downfall is its gravidity, for new poets are born every day.
 JB - So are new spearchuckers, but they go into software.
 Mark - Since when does temporary govern time?
 JB - Since connectivity killed the at.
 Mark - Self will never come unstuck from the speech that gives it soar.
 JB - Our super-crashing did emit strange quarks of verbal spark.
 Mark - O we could really move some anti-matter.

Enter Zhazha, and she cuts some lines.

JB - Copy that wild-eye, Wordboy. We'll be international poesy pushers, lowballing our piper cub, The Poet's Autopilot, down to the Mandalay of Metaphorical Mentation, then, with our hardcovers stufft to the hymn with huge American rhyme syndicates, we'll haul back enough chiasmic leptons, periphrastic muons, and uncut assonant protons to burn the septa off those Hohum nose-it-alls.
 Mark - They'll matriculate at Beauty School.
 JB - Our shield shall read Versitas.
 Mark - There's only one class – the Nonesuchables.
 JB - Attendance strictly prohibited.
 Mark - We need a fight song.

John mimics "Fair Harvard."

JB - *Free poets, we join in thy querulant song,
 And with stressings enmurmur thee more,*

*By these Beauty School raves, from the page that is gone
To the page that is waiting before.*

Enter Lyuba with two white russians.

Mark - To victory, poetry, and their standard - more opulent
than luxury, toppling all traditions, never running thru
the nickel - beauty.

JB - Literary fever's given you a healthy head, Wordboy,
but your sequela oblongata seems enflamed – if I may
offer you my atrocious opinion, shut your mouth and
save your mind from its own backdrafting diploma.

Mark - You deny that beauty is poetry's Get Out Of Yale
Free card?

JB - I declare that I'm broke by the beauty my poetry's
bought me.

Mark - It is a pleasure for beauty to live, so should poetry
exalt its incessant nascency.

JB - ZZ, edumacate the myth-grader.

Zhazha - It is pleasure for beauty to live, Woodboy? You know
why I leave Russia to be with Johnny? At my country,
it is torture for beauty to live. When I ten and sister
twelve, we go to city seeking job because mother's
zhidkiy zavtrak so dorogo and father love tell bedtime
touchy story. In city, big boss pretending to be money
for model'naya industriya lock us in truck and drive to
girl farm. Men at morning come to take much
pleasure from our beauty. In afternoon men with
kamerami come and take much pleasure from our
beauty. Then at night men in strashnaya forma with
hurting toys take all pleasure from our beauty.
Nakonets, when my sister run away, they throw her in
campfire til svin'i take their pleasure from her beauty.
This what comes to beauty in my country, where
poetry is, kak skazat', much populyarnyy.

Lyuba - No listen crazy pussy, Woodboy. My country not bad
place; it just not in good place.

JB - But damn, I hate a downer mood more than icy
slopes. What you do in school today, Wordboy?

Mark - I saw a burnt woman.

JB - What?

Mark - On campus, during class, I saw a burnt woman.

JB - You saw a burnt woman.

Mark - She stared at me thru the window.

Zhazha - What is burpt woman?

JB - If you're in Crimea with her, I'll nuke you both.

Mark - I'm in fear of her, that's it.

JB - Is she here?
 Mark - In this house?
 JB - Megan, you perk up hard to Black Rock Brown.
 The'll be no getting what you want from he
 You told the'll be no getting what him wants
 Now we're playin Burners without Borders.
 My life may be a film your genes project
 Onto an unseen screen, each frame a death
 That flickers out the story of your sex,
 But check what that makes me: moving images
 Of your sick need for smithereened briquettes
 That arc welds your venging plot to static,
 So blow it out! No guilt trip can enjoin
 My dick to your dukkha, for slash and burn
 Conviction ever fails to neutralize
 What seeds the tree of Miss Information,
 As she grows ever virile with the ash.
 Hear that, Megan? I'm receiving a call
 From the kernel of disparate desire,
 And here's the jerk: "Romantic poetry's
 Just a suicide note she writes for you."
 I am that boy of urgent peaches, girl.
 I am the joule of pounding summer rut,
 My mama's jiggy pudding churnin deep
 And awful in my tummy, yes I am
 That jugular stud of deceptive love
 Whose spunk injection all lips twitter of,
 And you will never shut me down, you hear?
 I will slush my fund, port my folio,
 Accelerate all spiracle outlays,
 For the myxospongia grows horny
 Feelers to unfeel it all with feeling
 That screams: I will not have you in my life.
 I will not, or I will, but then you'll see:
 The blast that comes of us ends you and me.
 Lyuba - Kuda ty idesh?
 Zhazha - Chto, Johnny Baby?

All exit.

Scene 10 - The party. Enter Clara and Alex. Enter Dean to the side.

Dean - Wowzy woozy, it's my Papa Stigma Pie sisters. That
 doggy pile potsticker's way outta facetune, but I could
 possibly stomach the ghastly task of three hole
 punching Ms. True Beauty's loose leaf. So what's my
 modus upperhandy? Nothing gets a she-sow hoot like

a prickly pufft-up he boar. Yet there must be an injury in the icon, or perfection reads pretension. So I'll deform to form's facteur to more profanely pirouette my "practice makes pervert" porkchop into her porous patisserie (sorry, I had to pee): grubby snout, hispid hide, cranium caved but quick as dope, and crooked hooves to stoutly grip the guilty to my slop. Heehaw! Prime your grinders, my sausage sleeves, cuz I'm one sexy fuckin meat group. E-male, the inbox beckons, and so, like a po-taught robot, touting that standard male transfer protocol, not known from God so he must be God, enter Haughty the Hog.

Dean enters.

Dean - How you shawties honeydewin?
Clara - Not you, so space or brace.
Dean - I'll retreat if you're the tart.
Clara - Only candy you'll get from me is can die.
Dean - Damn, you give good chat. That twat swatter pornotude got my mouse on mustang. You'd be baller tits on voyeur cam.
Clara - My kitty'd crash your server.
Dean - Bestiality's a bull market, baby.
Alex - Go away, or I call the bouncer.
Dean - Who's the eyesore?
Alex - Look who's talking.
Dean - I'm talking, you irredeemable coupon moppet, in a noble scam to dig my unclippt greyhound nails into this bunny pot pie, and were it not for your poorly managed, subparly proportioned, utterly disgusting holocaust museum of a body fumigating her main course filly mignon like a stinky side dish of corruption index, I'd be forkin some holy snail in schwetty grundlebutter ri' now, so...

*Exit, Anna Phrodisia,
You're killing all the vibes.
Stop creaming dyskinesia
Onto our trombone slides.
Stop shooting anaesthesia
Into open flies.
Exit, Anna Phrodisia,
And let us live our lives.*

Alex - i.e., get your virago out my viagra, you schwing shrink. This is Beauty School, not Ugly Camp.
Ugly sees but ugly.

Dean - And butt ugly's what I'm seein.
Alex - Then I'll rip out your eyes to spare you my sight.
Clara - Alex, wait. Didn't you sing about John Brown after the slam?
Dean - Good ear. Q-tip?
Alex - Clara, I wanna find Mark.
Dean - You've hit your mark, and nobody marks it.
Clara - Can you point me to him?
Dean - What do I get for my services?
Clara - A straw draw for my cervixes.
Dean - And Humpty Dumpty had a great boing!
Clara - But first, apologize to my bestie.
Alex - I don't want his apology. I want Mark.
Dean - What are you, a dysphasic dog? Mark! Mark!
Clara - Apologize.
Dean - I'm sorry you're so ugly.
Clara - Humpty Dumpty's bout to meet Cracky Kathy.
Dean - I'm sorry I called you ugly; hit by the what-the-fuck truck is more like it.
Clara - Last chance at the Shoot Your Shot Saloon.
Dean - Forgive me.
Alex - Fuck off.
Dean - Alexa, block Alexa.
Clara - You're forgiven. Now, where's John Brown?
Dean - Come in close, I'll tell ya.
Alex - Clara, don't.
Clara - I can handle myself.

She leans in.

Dean - But I can handle you better.

Dean grabs her. She hits him.

Dean - At last, we're makin love war!
Alex - Are you ok?
Dean - I feel so sweet inside, I'm poopin cruellers.
Clara - Touch me again, my stilettos split your stones.
Dean - If you're lookin to hotbox Johnny Brown, say, "I wanna burn."

Clara and Alex exit.

Dean - Yowza, that was better than dumpin drano down a cockblocker. I'd say I'm native to this obscene state. Yay, in bawd I trust.

Enter Professor Hazlitt, holding two drinks.

Dean - Careful, Professor Two Fists. You might drink yourself out of oblivion.

Professor - I lost my date.

Dean - You lost your date when you dated yourself by dating the dead.

Professor - I am the pre-eminent expert on the subject of nascent marxism in the early romantics.

Dean - So you blinker the young with resentment so you can win at sneaky nut?

Dean sings.

Professor Booky
Can't get no nooky
Professor Wookie
Can't get no looky
Can't get no rookie
Can't get no cookie
Professor Hooky
Can't get no nooky

Professor - What are you, my guardian jackass?

Dean - Heat Exchanger Dean of Danger, Boomslang in the Greener Grass.

Dean exits.

Professor - If that's what girls are into these days, call me the Touchy Mortician.

All exit.

Scene 11 – The party. Enter John Brown.

JB - Emerge, Megan, or I will smoke you out.

Enter Mark.

Mark - I swear it, John. We never spoke. I came
 With friends and never heard what you two have.

JB - We have each other's backs, so must not mix,
 Lest our crooked tilt-a-whirl lurch out so far
 We lose our heads lookin for where we were.

Lyuba and Zhazha enter.

Lyuba - Johnny, what is problem?

Zhazha - Why you skhodit' s uma, baby?

Enter Alex and Clara.

Alex - Mark, where have you been?

Mark - Tell John I came with you.

Alex - Why?

Mark - Tell him.

Clara - He came with me and Alex,
And he's with her, and I'm with no one yet.

JB - Lyuba, Zhazha, back to the Sky Cave.

Lyuba/Zhazha - Johnny, nyet!

JB - Back, or no Zamboni dung.

Lyuba - Eto tvoya oshibka.

Zhazha - No, eto tvoya,

They exit.

Alex - Mark, could we please speak?

JB - Change your range, Wordboy.
I've got important business to fuck up.

Mark and Alex exit.

Clara - If you're the producer of this big time,
I'd love to audition.

JB - I've seen enough
To know you get the part.

Clara - O boy, which part?

JB - The biggest.

Clara - O my gosh, but are you sure
I can handle it?

JB - From what I've seen so far,
You can handle anything I give you.

Clara - I'm so excited.

JB - That makes two of us.

Clara - What's the part called?

JB - Clara.

Clara - That's my name.

JB - Yep.

Clara - What's the show called?

JB - Clara.

Clara - The title role?
You sure know how to light a girl's grill.

JB - Yeah, I've lit a few, but you are special.

Clara - I am?

JB - Very.

Clara - Hey, but how can you tell?
I mean, you haven't even seen me yet.

JB - I'm seeing you now.

Clara - And I'm seeing you,
Which maybe means we're seeing each other.

JB - Damn right we are, and I've already seen
Enough to know that with talent like yours,
All I gotta do is trust my instincts.

Clara - Which are?

JB - Your star is gonna shine so bright
I'll be up all night.

Clara - OMG, I feel
Like calling my mom.

JB - The more the mommier.

Clara - Hold on, you Bababooney of Big Dreams.
In acting school they taught us to never
Accept an offer right away.

JB - How come?

Clara - Cuz you seem desperate.

JB - What's wrong with desperate?

Clara - That's when you get taken advantage of.

JB - Hey, I'd never take advantage of you,
Tho I might take it from you, soup it up,
Then put it back better, anywhere you wish.

Clara - How long do I have?

JB - How long?

Clara - To pretend
I don't want it while waiting to take it?

JB - Well, keeping in mind that shooting can't start
Til you and I jump in bed together,
How long do you want?

Clara - As long as you'll give me.

JB - I'll give you so long you might start longing
For a little less, so when that sounds good,
Just say the magic words.

Clara - I wanna burn.

He knocks her down.

JB - Megan!

Clara - Motherfucker.

JB - Hear that, Megan?
Go tell your father, girl, he's been fired
By Johnny Candlekick. And far's the corpse
That's now your genie, tell her I ain't got,
Cuz malefaction's ashy fingers might
Paw for feed at the casements of my mud,

But every day at dawn, fresh beauty jaunts
Like a coy French maid, “Oui, I do windows,”
And with that fishy swish, she wipes them clean,
Then out my grimy hovel head I gaze
At nature’s ripe exotic splendor bof
And go off digging for what’s rightly mine,
For pain is claim, much to our own delay,
Yet value in possession is the swap.
Swap! Swap! For obfuscation, opulence.
And for this show beer, Megan? Sustenance.

John exits. Enter Dean.

Dean - Ain’t you the spent woman on the bag of dicks
someone keeps sending to my apartment?
Clara - I said I wanna burn, and John Brown hit me.
Dean - Hit you how?

She hits him.

Clara - Like that.
Dean - Like that? You goosh your gogurt too?
Clara - You’re ballsy for a eunuch.
Dean - And you’re overstafft for a cheap hotel.
Clara - Lo the loser: trying to fill what’s already filled, he
auditions to be the asshole in her pants.
Dean - You fetcht-out pug, I’m already in your pants.
You pet my buzz cut every time you wipe;
You breach my ground troops every time you tamp;
You crowd my hallway every time you tight;
You drown my mermen every time you damp.
That glory hole’s my piscina animalia,
And I’m all bellyfloppin palilalia.
Clara - Why are you so crude?
Dean - When the kid is straight, the man is crooked.
Clara - Your kid is too cruel.
Dean - Yo, I got altruistic incentives, bitch.

Dean sings.

*Dreaming, I imagine, love,
An organ not my own,
Pink and puff, like a glove,
That snaps the springy bone;
Wag it not, throb it never,
But is still and rapt,
Different as my need’s endeavour,
Wants in fibers trappt;*

*You are it, so be disposed
To sit for my inception,
Heaving as the fire froze
In nature's first election.*

Clara - Albino grape don't get matcht with ribeye.

She exits.

Dean - Call me a premature evacuator, but I'm gettin off!

All exit.

Scene 12 - The party. Enter Alex and Mark.

Alex - I was so impressed with your performance
In the Verse Wars.

Mark - Thanks.

Alex - How did you do that?

Mark - Do what?

Alex - Speak in poetry.

Mark - I dunno.

Alex - Can I ask you something, Mark?

Mark - I suppose.

Alex - Are you and I together?

Mark - Together?

Alex - Yeah, like you told me I was beautiful,
You came to this party with me, and now
We're here together, yet your not being
With me now we're here together leaves me
Wondering if we understand together
In the same way.

Mark - How do you understand it?

Alex - That you want to be with me.

Mark - Look, Alex.

Alex - Look at what? I want to look
At you, but I don't want to look at you
Unless you want to look at me, so where
Should I look?

Mark - That is not for me to say.

Alex - Yes, it is, cuz I am for you to say.
Say what you want, and I'll be that, cuz that
Is where it's at for me when I see you.
I'm yours, so say me so. What do you say?
You cannot say. So I am nothing then,
Though nothing knows alone to say for you
What you would say: remember when you said
I want to hide inside my head?

Mark - Not really.

Enter Dean, listening from the side.

Alex - Well, you said it, and it was real to me,
Cuz you, tho unretaining, walled me in:
I hide in my head, cuz when I come out,
Taking sunny for a groundhog's welcome
And the six weeks winter as an omen
Some Inner Circler'd like to punk my tawny
And tap me with his top hat, what am I?

Dean steps in.

Dean - Fair game for happy hunter.
Alex - He slides in,
And with paean-baited words, lures me
Within shooting range.
Dean - You're so beautiful.
Alex - And nodding with my need to be noted,
All my inborn caution melting away...
Dean - The trap is set.
Alex - But is the ravin clued?
Dean - Clued in.
Alex - Cuz I'm all, "O my awesome life.
He thinks I'm beautiful. He's chosen me."
For in my rummy dependent delusion
A warm adrenaline wind...
Dean - Like the dead
Must feel once they end their failed marriage
With breath, that on-again-off-again sob.
Alex - Swirls thru my sensors so much janky frip
My relief garbage-sales my demurral.
Dean - She basks in a false positive flashback
Of all the good things that never happened.
Alex - I pull persimmons off the lowborn tree.
Dean - She turns a glorious refuge of her own
Appallingly snaggle-tombed emotions.
Alex - Until, predictable as up for grabs,
I hear my handsome hero to the side...
Dean - "I did the duff, so gimme that dime bag."
Alex - A bet. I was a bet.
Dean - A winning bet.
Alex - Not yet, cuz bro's all like...
Dean - "Yo, you ain't won
Til I see the proof you bombed her kimba."
Alex - And he replies, gorgeous as a butcher

Dean - Stropping sexy blade over wittle wamb...
 "I'd rather screw a wet wig on a socket.
 That gink got shadow-banned for posting face.
 She's like the chips and salsa of schlumpy.
 My kafka poker's set to approve her
 As the only cure for quif addiction.
 Colostomy, colectomy, quit liking me."

Alex - And so, after this uplifting downgrade,
 I zombie home and stare into the mirror
 With all the namaste of a dead teabag:
 Fuck you, reflection. Fuck you, family.
 Fuck you, world, O, and fuck you, Alex,
 For being so fucking unfuckable.

Dean - I'd say fuck you back were I not worried
 You'd take it as a late night booty call.

Alex - So, Mark...

Dean - It's pronounced Mock...

Alex - Let your bro know
 I believed you; let him know you did me
 And collect your reward.

Dean - Re-psycho-ward.

Alex - But for my devastation I demand
 One repairing: tell those happy hunters
 I will never drop, for there's no shooter
 Sharp enough that he can hit my hollow.

Dean - And that's it for another annoying episode of Top
 Dog and Ugly Duck. Can these quisling creatures
 procreate and end the reign of iMatter, the Terribly
 Important? Tune in next week for the no good
 conclusion of "Drunk Enough to Screw a Nail" or
 "This Ratite Fossil Has Working Boobs."

Mark - Clear out, asshole.

Dean - By the looks of you, my asshole already cleared out.
 Ha, burn!

Alex - Ignore him.

Dean - At your bestie's peril, Princess Shrivel-Me-Scotch-
 Eggs, for I bear an official request from Clara.

Alex - What about her?

Dean - Indeed, a bout has bloodied her.

Alex - Where is she?

Dean - Between the endless keg line and the cheeba dojo, so
 she's wack for the where.

Mark - I'll come with.

Dean - She doesn't want you, which is news to no one save
 you.

Alex - You're in deep shit if you're lying to me.

Dean - Why lie? I'm in deep shit just being over you.

Alex exits.

Mark - What's your problem?
Dean - I'm honest. What's yours?
Mark - I'm not.
Dean - Congratulesions! Carpet layers tack more shag.
Mark - Then truth is life's most willing victim.
Dean - And change is a lame excuse for change, but why so
fizzle madizzle? I know John Brown like guitarded
wanksbedextrous, and no one ever sunned his mayo
so. Circle jerk?
Mark - I'm good.
Dean - No, you gooier than good; you DJ DNA, running our
lab rat grooves thru some vagarious amazables.
Mark - So what's with him and the burnt woman?
Dean - What's with you and the burnt woman?
Mark - I saw her once.
Dean - Damn, you lucky fucky. The burnt woman only steps
out of the oven for the din-din of aspiring poets she
deems heavy-beauty enough for the rumination of her
ghastly, coxing rations.
Mark - If that's luck, I'm thirsty for a dry spell.
Dean - Meh, no end in aching for allay.
Mark - How's she know I'm an aspiring poet?
Dean - O she knows when a man wants to meter, but don't
expect her charbroil on your ciabatta, cuz she John
Brown's sub.
Mark - He lost it when I brought her up.
Dean - That's cuz he almost lost it when she got him up.
Mark - They had something?
Dean - They would have had everything if not for the
conductible autoerotic immolation.
Mark - The what?
Dean - But who's your muse? Ugly Duck?
Mark - No, and she's not that ugly.
Dean - So which ugly is she? That ugly everyone calls pretty
cuz they feel bad it's so ugly? That ugly everyone says
we all have to be to end the oppression of the ugly?
Or that ugly everyone shoves on us so we keep buying
beauty creams? If she ain't got the looks that killed
homoerectus, I'm selling my stock in get real.
Mark - She's a woman, and therefore beautiful.
Dean - Ha! It's thanks to softies like you spouting
That femocrisy-owned dick-denying shit
That there are no more beautiful women!
Fled into plastids for shield and shrouding,

Convolved by managed dreams into clouding,
 Sad-glad, fist-in-mouth, you jape our arousing
 In some cockamamie bildungsroman
 That proves you're just a slushy spoof of a man.
 There are no more beautiful women,
 Only politically active schlub tubs
 That beat us with our balls so we subserve
 The nerve cell in their disowned comeliness.
 There are no more beautiful women,
 Save she who, burnt, would kill to win the pageant.
 Mark - She beautiful?
 Dean - The current term is "hot."
 Above her, little birdies singe and crash.
 Around her, mighty rhinos roast and pop.
 The leafies on their twigs in fire flash,
 As neath her, all the soil is sere to crop.
 That babe's so hot the pulsing sky's got holes
 To let escape we sweaty, hairless souls.
 Mark - I'd put her out.
 Dean - O she is pure put out,
 Yet you would fight her blaze that frights the night
 As rangers fight, contain with righteous swilge
 Her embers bright, spit frigorific slush,
 Dump slurry foams upon her high insight,
 Your hose rambunctious slathing forth its mush.
 Why shovel, cut, encrenelate, and bilge?
 Why bunyan all her fuelful forest gives?
 Why seal her air-rapport with clotting sieves?
 O let her natural powers cyclic burn
 And thru that clearing true enlighten learn.
 Mark - What has she to do with enlightenment?
 Dean - Is she not heat that warms the coldest tongue,
 The tortured shape addicts us to the young,
 A sight so ghoulish we past spectra strive,
 That ugly beauty round her truly thrive?
 In pace beyond control, she is the pause.
 On spirit's wound, her gasping's liquid gauze.
 As pure as fumes from deep earth's boiling stone,
 She's with us that we come to be alone.
 Her ache the coup that lust may never tame,
 She is an avatar of our first flame,
 And he that would make meaning of dehisce
 Must glean his grammar from her scrambling kiss.
 Mark - You grant insanity too much intention.
 Dean - You grant inanity too much prehension.
 Her frenzy is the fix to versoplexy:
 Sans her morass your poems are pesty;

With it you exude squeezable bubbles
 Of freshet; your ersatz, vagrant troubles
 Banter spacey, pushing you, like fecca,
 Deep into posteriad dejecta,
 But she's the love-spot's spotlight, a figurine
 From those reality shows in your machine;
 O she's a high that's higher abating,
 Teaching us the measure of our waiting:
 That from a source we rise, a rotting storm;
 That social wires force illiberal form;
 That wrongly done said rightly's perfect truth;
 That beauty is the velvet on the noose.
 Mark - Are we in a class together?
 Dean - Yo, I'm in a class by my stealth.
 Mark - You go to Harvard?
 Dean - Harvard? I may not be bright, but I ain't blighted.
 Mark - So where do you go?
 Dean - To Have Hard, cuz I got shit to learn.
 Mark - So what's your name?
 Dean - Routine Slaughters.
 Mark - Cool.
 Dean - Poutine Squatters.
 Mark - Ok.
 Dean - Butene Daughters.
 Mark - Later, man.
 Dean - Nice to beat you, Later Man. Now allow me to pre-empt your regularly scheduled flim-flam with some ahead of its time hold up before you're Laterman the Late. You saw the burnt woman cuz she's into you.
 Mark - I gave her no reason.
 Dean - No reason is reason enough to be unreasonable.

Mark exits. Enter Lyuba and Zhazha.

Zhazha - You go back to Russia!
 Lyuba - Ne ty!
 Zhazha - Ne ty!
 Dean - Look, it's the Russians, fighting each other, or am I being redundant?
 Zhazha - What you say for Russia?
 Dean - What's to say for Russia cept there isn't much to say?
 Lyuba - You no like Russia?
 Dean - Russia's lovely, less the Russians, so let Russians be Russians that there be no more Russians.
 Zhazha - You have never been.
 Dean - I'd rather never be than be Russian.
 Lyuba - Shut mouth or I stuff it with Russia.

Enter John Brown.

Zhazha - Johnny, Lyuba say I go back to Russia, but I have
your baby, so you no make me, right, Johnny?
JB - Not have my baby, Zhazha, am my baby.
Zhazha - No, have your baby.
Lyuba - U tebya net yego rebenka!
JB - We will talk about this later.
Lyuba - She blow smack up ashram.
Zhazha - Test say I am baby!

They exit. Dean sings.

*All the beggings ever wheezed,
All the dreamers ever teased,
And every taunted tiny son
That grows to shrink and shrinks undone
Will never change the freaky fact
That truth's a pyromaniac
Set on playing hot or not
So it can flip us when we flop.*

JB - Who are you?
Dean - You, with extra ass-to-mouth scenes.
JB - Yeah, right. I've done so many of those,
I can't talk without sharting my shemagh.
Dean - Better than filling your diaper with shush.
JB - I'm too macrotial to hear anything
But myself.
Dean - The burnt woman could brazilian
Those cochlea labia.
JB - Have you seen her?
Is she here? Where is she?
Dean - Hey now, shift it down,
Mr. Body-Slammin-on-the-Shit Bag.
You way too whirled in the world. Course I seen
The burnt woman. I got demise, don't I?
But as for at, her purlieu's obvs in you,
So check your own bastion of not nervous
Before you call her the stress in your sauce.
JB - I'll kick her out.
Dean - Which finsta's got the foot?
The poet, the professor, or the playboy?
JB - The playboy.
Dean - Playing the boy to avoid
Being a man's avoiding that one thing
About men only we unmanly men know:

Everything inside a man's a woman,
 So we sulk about, sunk in the sick sense
 Of deviant self, our auxiliary
 Our ineptitude, knowing that woman
 Is the reptile of source and solution,
 And to reclaim ourselves, we vape her out
 By burning down her squatted residence,
 Our wagered body, as we rise to raze
 A haunted party mansion in repairs.
 JB - Then I'll profess the justice of her vanish
 From vitals she's been disinvented from,
 And sure's the old are mockt to sure their spawn,
 She's out before my lecture's premier yawn.
 Dean - What can you profess but your perversions,
 And how can she respond save to remain,
 For she's in you to press at that justice
 Makes your cognition the ruddy returns
 Of her squadrons celeste. Look how she flares,
 Dying to lift your dapple off the surface,
 Yet there you are, lounging on her launchpad,
 Deriding her hypothesis engines,
 Ripping her firmament with shanks of sleaze,
 Dumping prompt detritus into her seas,
 All so your sparkling, greasy rape snorkel
 Can shoot its sloganeering barbituates
 Of tangy, so-cal brie perpetual
 Into her community of genius.
 For your hairy sinew of hucksterism,
 Your disgruntled jiggling waste cakelet,
 And your tainting, decontemporizing
 Curiosity, I hereby grant you
 A Doctorate in the Girl You'll Never Get.
 JB - Then knowing she wants me to go poet,
 I'll drive her out in my Discursion Coupe.
 Dean - O yeah, you'll sing her like Louisianan
 Leaflets on Tel Avivan weaponry
 In verses ineptly universal:

*When I pump long, my nozzle shrivels,
 To maingy meals from bundant vittles,
 Then to my love am I unattractive:
 Action renders us inactive.
 Stingy as the be here now,
 Weazened from its hukilau,
 "Bigger portions," cries my she;
 Pleasure stocks vacuity.
 Cheer too much, my larynx blister.
 Think too much, my axons twister.*

*Love too much, despite develops,
Show it, and it love envelops,
But as our dreams décor decay,
Pump my nipples another day.*

You're right. Spill such hogwash on her muumuu,
She's gone, ok, but what's then left of you?

JB - Only a stranger could know me so well.
Dean - Any tool with half a purpose knows you,
For you are the portent crumbling, the revival
Stumbling, the annunciation mumbling,
Preference grumbling, idioplasm fumbling,
You are the formatted hoax, whose true self
Talks in cheat-speak to improve its status,
Which strengthens alone your nymic nervulose
To awe at the extranics of difference
That all you do is dope your soul with tidbits,
So as you swerve from thing to pringled thing,
Sacrificing wisdom to dud scansions,
Your adroit power twitches with the times
That what you ought you did not, cannot do.

JB - My anxiety is haggard by its rest.
Dean - You've randonauted down bottom-out drag
In search of syndication long enough.
Trying not to think about her's only
Preventing you from knowing how to think.
Saved by her, you'll spend yourself more wisely.
She means well, and meaning genders the man.

JB - She means hell, so I'm damned the more I damn.

John Brown exits.

Dean - *Goodnight geistlich, goodnight fling,
John Brown's got in my heart-center sting.
Voyeurism, voyeurism, sex as flaw,
John Brown's shot by empleomania.
But yay I found his price with my appraisin,
Cuz fwe all died the same, who'd sing amazin?
Dean of the Crack in the Ladies' Man,
I'll make ya think shame's just an endless sham.*

All exit.

Scene 13 - The party. Enter Alex, Clara, Mark, and Professor Hazlitt.

Prof - The Keats Society convenes again.
Alex - Agonies adjourned. I'm taking Clara home.

Mark - What happened?
 Clara - Nothing.
 Alex - John Brown assaulted her.
 Prof - On the topic of who's taking Clara home
 And who has, right or no, assaulted whom,
 The agony's just begun, and nothing
 Will be adjourned until I bang the bell.
 I got you into this irrational park,
 So I'll let you out once you've been graded
 Like a dirt road to homebase for the high priest.
 Alex - The Faculty Oversight Committee
 Will no doubt enjoy going down that road
 To review such a noted pedagogue.
 Prof - The Student Integrity Commission
 Will no doubt enjoy the staggering fact
 You shaggies all got zoinkt on scooby snacks
 At a renowned off-campus drug bucket,
 And my life's as gone thru as yours just out,
 So who bleeds the most if we get busted?
 Now, Clara, please recite the third stanza.

He hands her a book.

Clara - "Ah, happy, happy boughs! That cannot shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,
 For ever piping songs for ever new;"

She hands Mark the book.

Mark - "More happy love! More happy, happy love!
 For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
 For ever panting, and for ever young;"

He hands Alex the book.

Alex - "All breathing human passion far above,
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
 A burning forehead, and a parching tongue."
 Prof - So now the test, with I the open book.
 Mark, plead my case to Clara. She came here
 With me full knowing my Pleasant Street pad
 Sits stockt of hard-to-come-by slurps and nibbles,
 So ought we thither stumble thence together
 For our post pre-gaming colloquia,
 If there's any decency left in duh.
 But enrollees, note: you will be assessed

By how slavishly you serve me dat ass.
 Alex - I will get your ass so axed...
 Clara - Alex, don't.
 My honor isn't worth more than Harvard.
 Prof - Especially at this evening's prices.
 Clara - Go on, Wordboy. Show Old Sextra Credit
 How you frosh.
 Mark - It seems, per this first passage,
 That Keats implores us strive at our ideal
 Where love is ever young, as here below
 It's sorrowful and cloyed, high parcht and burnt,
 So if in some body's brow-beating look
 We think to see love's spirit re-emerge
 And spin thru wild signs our reticence,
 We can but blame beauty's vespering blend
 That hides from us the very thing we'd view
 Should we breach decency to quash a thirst.
 Clara - Ideals are not attained by coercion,
 But are coerced by what we would attain,
 So's your defending innocence not proof
 Of some consorting inhuman corruption?
 Mark - No tagging, telic rendition rules me:
 I see what I want, I want what I see,
 And like the undercut in overcome,
 My message comes of all medium free.
 Clara - No, your message comes overdetermined
 By the medium of underhanded.
 Mark - All my would-have has is underhanded:
 I am to myself capricious burden,
 A played-out fold, an irresponsible
 Electorate of impossible choices,
 Yet you are perfection, unmoving swoon,
 A streusel my false tonguing would unkink,
 So take my underhand, and feel my cause
 As nothing more than truing how you touch.
 Clara - The seething ocean drained of life is truth,
 The lambency that lags our deadened eyes.
 Keep your truth and give me misadventure
 Thru the netherwards we can't unwonder.
 Mark - My cachalot comes near the crumple zone,
 False killer whales in loud, peckish pursuit.
 Clara - Yet do you dive to devour or delight?
 Mark - Elusive quiz from skill of beauty's brain!
 I dive, my aquatic flame, to save my skin,
 To feed the breed, to swap gemmules with you,
 And every wreck I splay displays my all,
 But know, the depths my melon's braved to tract

Our morphic mingling prove my esters' aim
To delight in your devouring of my case
Thru sharing of the crystal spermacet
That risks, and so ensures alone, one life.

They kiss.

Prof - Let this be a night to not remember.
Alex - Which Pow-Her Pussy Shit Show's this, Clara?
Clara - The only one that matters in the moment
That's all we'll ever have of that bygone
We can't but crave: When your tits got turgor,
Your mink is sleek, and your butt's on bubble,
Pop the cork with no worry who it hits.
Or ought my pleasure take its tuts from you?
You who dress your mind in drab hand-me-downs,
Who force your freedom to play by the book
That teaches it what? Illcliteracy?
You clash with yourself, Alex. Your station
Squelches a thousand contrary signals,
And not one of them plays Come-n-Wet-It.
The erotic squish of the world's trade winds
Can't reach you in your thick stove of sorrow
Where you glaze your little pots for growing sad.
Me, I wake where I will, cuz if you can't
Get off on yourself, how are others to?
Woman should be bulbed by her own circuits,
Irradiating self-illuminance,
The mirror of her body where she sees
An ego delible to all delight
By way of set-off sheets between her selves,
That when she would, she simply strips the signs
And scribes herself anew. So watch in awe:
Get mine's the verb I squeeze from hem and haw.
Alex - You dicker low what held would hoist your sway.
Clara - If you don't like my way, don't look my way.

Clara and Mark exit.

Alex - Order up, Professor Burger Flipper.

Alex exits. Enter Helen and WJ.

Helen - Professor Hazlitt, I'm Helen Vendler, this is WJ Bate,
and you may have imprinted our applicant facies in
the syntagmatic chain "this morning/Harvard
Hopefuls Tour/random encounter," and we're first

person present here at the illustrious Beauty School to take pansophical advantage of your cryptomimic admissions practicum, which, I credulize, we have overthwarted super modum mensurae.

WJ - Please, Professor, Helen is what one might call soliloquically social, so if our taking your excellent throwaways as any indication that this way Harvard lies...

Prof - Welcome, oracular Helen. You have heard the true owl through the swart waft. Allow me to escort you to the seminarian citadel for your quadrivial coronation as my gifted and talented freshperson.

Helen - Moi?

Prof - Toi.

They start to exit.

WJ - Et me, bidet?

Enter Gordon and Bishy.

Gordon - Bishumbilix, I need you to freak sink
And tell your Lordy Gordy what you saw.

Bishy - Autokinetic roadkill.

Gordon - Pour some concrete on me, girl.

Bishy - Peripatetic pretzel.

Gordon - Harvard to Bishy; complete sentences, Bishy.

Bishy - Ambulatory medical waste.

Gordon - Don't tell me you took the fuzzy purple pill!

Bishy - I was in the yard, gronking to Stankonia, when her incredulizing tire fire blew my way, and all mindfulness went bezow doo doo zoppity bop bop stop.

Gordon - Who, Bishy, who?

Bishy - The burnt woman.

Gordon - In the Beauty School?

Bishy - Seeping in, thru the fence, like the stench of a poorly pickled pigeonhole.

Gordon - With the pomposity of a peppermint fisting glove.

Bishy - She'll take the beauty out of Beauty School, and then it'll just be...

Gordon - Don't say it.

Bishy - Someone's got to stop her, or no more no no.

Gordon - Someone will, someone will.

Gordon and Bishy exit.

Professor - How badly do you want to attend Harvard, WK?
WJ - So bad I can taste it on the perfectly sharpened tip of my number 2 ticonderoga.
Professor - Then all you have to do is pass the test.
WJ - Show me the test, and I'll pass it on the right.
Professor - The burnt woman must never haunt our Beauty School again.
WJ - Pardon my jerky germanometer, but what's harassing a burn victim got to do with getting into Harvard?
Helen - His school isn't ranked.
Professor - This mutually assured distraction venue is dearer to my muted, mortared heart than sciolism to enormity. You keep her out, I get you in.
WJ - Where's she live?
Professor - In the old caretaker's cabin at the Cambridge Cemetery, where Beauty Schoolers jelly flop into the hot seat. Let her know how I like my stake in our nation's future cookt.

Professor and Helen exit.

WJ - If this falls thru, I'm taking a life-long gap year.

All exit.

Scene 14 - The party. Enter Dean and Alex.

Dean - Yo, Kiss, you out for some in?
Alex - O look, it's the quirk molding. Started any futilities lately, fug runt?
Dean - Only settin up quiniela on your flotilla, bettin I beach where the bent things are.
Alex - I touch down where my time is up, so if you're counting on returns, go against me.
Dean - I'd gladly go returningly against you, and I bet I get me some placement.
Alex - By misplacement I thrive, like puke, like you.
Dean - Did you just call me puke, fire-tongue?
Alex - Puke.
Dean - If I'm puke, you're starving.
Alex - You're the one crawling over the caution tape you put around me.
Dean - Maybe all I am has spilled, and my straw's turned soluble.
Alex - Maybe we only truly love what we lose.
Dean - You piss effluvial gems, my unplumbed urologist.
Alex - Can you guzz it, my emulsible oneirocritic?

Dean - *Tinkle, tinkle, indoor cock;
I'll lick the jelly off your sock.*

Alex - Your whistle is your work.

Dean - So warily together let us gussy this misplace: you are a woman, albeit poorly presented; I am a cripple, onerous, but functional. This wrong's ethical pittance is we should mate, squeaky geeky, in a sour alliance of losers.

Alex - What can a cripple do to a woman that she hasn't already overdone to herself?

Dean - O, everything. A cripple fits a woman more than man and makes her dumpy all the mute intended. Only he her dodgy spaces mumble spans, giving agency to her distended. He fills her pumice pain with runch refuting, insoling her contortion, rubbing out her dub, a trainer evolved to a broken toy, completing with new fangles what began her flub du frottage: desire regarded at angles.

Alex - You talk like you might stop stinking.

Dean - I stink so you might start thinking.

Alex - Am I that sad?

Dean - You've been burned.

Alex - Are you hot to ice my sizzled, subcutaneous fat?

Dean - Rumble, squawk, and blether.

Alex - Come, mutant; let's get unwanted together.

Dean sings.

Dean - *Dangers in the night,
Exchanging sad sauce,
Skulking out of sight
With their pants off,
Wondering how they might
Save face and kill the view!*

*Dangers with no likes,
Two bitter equals,
Tritely sphinging thru their plight
Of boring sequels,
Anal wart porn eremites
Screaming "we crappy few!"*

*Tough shit sodomites,
All stoopt and huffing,
Disappointing genotypes,
Worth only flushing,
Supercilious parasites,
Sabodouching appetites,*

*Love was one bad match away,
A swift, igniting scratch away.*

*And ever since that light,
They're stuck together,
Bonded in their blight,
Too much forever,
It turned out so shite
For dangers in the night.*

All exit.

*Scene 15 – Megan's house (an old caretaker's cabin) in the Cambridge Cemetery.
Megan enters and recites a stanza from Ode on a Grecian Urn.*

Meg- "Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return."

The Gas Man knocks.

Megan - No need to knock. Why lock up what I'd love
Lookt over like some smutty manuscript?
Come in, and we'll ruddle the headstones' blush
With the terse jumbles of our crumbling crypt.

The Gas Man enters.

Gas Man - Megan Fowler?
Megan - I am what's left of me.
Gas Man - Gas delivery.
Megan - Goodness, aren't you prompt?
That's magic in a man. It shows he knows
There's no better time than when I say so.
Gas Man - The order reads, "drop off just before dawn,"
And as weird as that is, that's what we do.
Megan - There's a candlelit love den over heaven
For we who do the weird.
Gas Man - That reminds me
Of the bumper sticker on my work truck:
"Gas men don't die. They just light the place up."

Megan - You've lit me up, you witty pickup poet.
 Gas Man - Speakin of witches, mind hittin the switch?
 You don't want me bangin into something.
 Megan - Are you sure?
 Gas Man - I'm only sure if I do
 This flammable substance will guarantee
 We go out with a season-ending bang.
 Megan - Fine. That we bang to bang again, I'll twist
 The little thingy on my statement lamp
 So you can see what, or who, you're doing,
 But promise me you won't go running off
 The field without putting it where I want it.
 Gas Man - Why would I do that?
 Megan - No man stays in love
 Once love turns on the lights; only darkness
 Allows his need to be what it first was,
 Which is his one unloseable religion.
 Gas Man - Bumper sticker the next: "Gas men like it
 With the lights on."
 Megan - Then without judicial review,
 I give you Mr. and Mrs. Pro Pain.

She turns on the lamp.

Gas Man - So where do you want it?
 Megan - Under the bed.
 Gas Man - That ain't to code.
 Megan - Do I look like I keep
 To code?
 Gas Man - No, but you look like I should ask
 Why you'd put explosives under your bed.
 Megan - To kill the monsters, me not included.
 Gas Man - You're not a monster. You just got the shaft.
 Megan - I don't get the shaft cuz I'm a monster,
 But you've sworn to put it where I want it,
 So under the bed.
 Gas Man - Look, if I put it
 Under the bed, you could get burned...sorry...
 Or I could get fired...sorry...either way
 It could blow up in someone's face...sorry...
 Under the bed it is. So, you live here?
 Megan - I do, tho not as well as those who don't.
 Gas Man - Did the listing say it comes with depression?
 Megan - It's thanks to their depressions that I feel
 As lifted as the crematory smut,
 For we're only as high as the lows we face.
 Gas Man - Bumper sticker stuff.

Megan - Do you like being
A Gas Man?
Gas Man - It's ok, but as we say,
At least it ain't a blast.
Megan - I believe it
The oldest, noblest, truest profession.
Gas Man - How's that?
Megan - Well, it's the oldest because
The big bang was a gas delivery;
And it's the noblest as it empowers us
Without niggling into how we use it.
Gas Man - So why's it the truest?
Megan - Cuz, you hotty,
Everything's a gas.
Gas Man - More like it will be
If you pound hard enough on that sleep sack.
Sign here please.

He holds out a pen and invoice.

Megan - Is that our marriage license?
Gas Man - Yep. It says I put it where you want it.
Megan - Under the bed?
Gas Man - That'll be our darkness.

She takes the pen and drops it.

Megan - My fingers...
Gas Man - Try again.

She drops the pen again.

Megan - They won't...
Gas Man - Lemme help.

He holds her hand while she holds the pen.

Megan - You're the first man to touch me in forever.
Gas Man - I don't doubt it.
Megan - Am I that repulsive?
Gas Man - It's hard to look at you without feeling
What it must have felt like to become you.
Megan - It wasn't so bad, and blowing the trees
Of time has made it seem survivable.
Gas Man - Men just can't replace pretty with pity;
I suppose it goes against their interests,
And without those, the bank might as well fail.

Megan - Women are no different; they're just different.
 He cannot see the giver in the treat,
 She only sees how the giver treats her,
 And somehow that's a planet full of puppies.

Gas Man - We'll take it slow.

Megan - Do you want my signature
 Or my autograph?

Gas Man - You got a fame name?

Megan - Harvard boys know me as the learnt woman.

Gas Man - Harvard boys know me as a hurtbag townie,
 So sign your name, cuz that's who got the gas.

Megan - If I ever hear a Harvard boy call you
 A hurtbag townie, this gas'll teach him
 What it must have felt like to become me.

Gas Man - 'Preciate ya.

Megan - With this invoice, I thee wed.

She signs.

Gas Man - If they send a survey, my name is John.

Megan - Of course it is.

Gas Man - It's common.

Megan - No, it's perfect.
 Another name would never get my hand.

Gas Man - Ok, so now we're married, give it up:
 How come you want the gas under the bed?

Megan - I love you too much to tell you the truth.

Gas Man - Then I'll be going.

Megan - Going? Going where?

Gas Man - There's other beds to burn.

Megan - But, John, we're married.

Gas Man - Come on, Megan. No man's gonna marry
 A woman who wants it under the bed.
 Enjoy your morning.

Megan - Enjoy my mourning?
 Who am I mourning? Mr. Change-His-Tune,
 The symphony-swinging contrabassoon?
 By night, when all he can see is his quiff,
 He croons how every girl deserves a kiss
 In her darkest depression. But come dayglow
 And its dings-on-the-newbie show-off show,
 He slithers away like the dealt who smellt,
 Serenading his spankbang buckle belt:

*The Gas Man, you quim, is blowin in the wind;
 The Gas Man is blowin in the wind.*

Gas Man - Guess my third bumper sticker just got earned:
Don't come too close, lady, or you'll get burned.

The Gas Man exits.

Megan - O wow, the pickup poet poppt a rhyme!
Glister, you graves! Insufferably reflect
His quickie brilliance. But where go now, Gas Man?
No stay lovin cup? Slip thru fangirl grab?
Want oogly nongenuie leave under bed?
Well, guess what, you toxic hurtbag townie:
You'll never know how close I cuddled in
Just to brand my ass on your hibachi.
My sweet psychopathic intuition
Can read your rare, insentient, he-man gestures,
And my transcription of your trundling smarts
Shall ever drip a traceless antidote
To the lost you can't help but locomote
On joy's ghost bike and ever bur my shrewd
Into you, such that I'm your inner skin,
The fusion your delusion needs to stag.
O John, when I'm so close your gills but gape,
No more will that manscaped éclat, those looks
You lunge behind, waste your inspurious soul
On bolding concords of a false seduction,
Nor shall I be as I am now, dissuaged,
Irradiated, wedged away, defunct,
In life's haphazard crank a snagging grain
Of truth, to fact's affected faience glazed,
But will throw back all crisp and rigid shapes,
All stiff and bridgeless songs upon the clock
Of paragone, and melt into our balm.
Desexed, we will be sex decentralized.
I'll eat you in my lust, yet there you'll lie,
Not in failure's spite or a girlish gripe
That dreams demise, but an avenging thrill,
And we will flicker out among the stars,
Extremists fastened, poised for the fair hand,
For hasp and staple pinned by beauty droll.
No, I will not cry. I will not cool myself,
But fat the fire with my sweet petrol spew
And send us to a suaving, flinchless sleep
Where we in closer seconds may relive
What none can now eak out this garish gap,
Youth trappt in time, time free of youth; O John,
You're so close I can smell you in my hell:
Hotter, hotter, hotter, hotter, hotter.

All exit.

Scene 16 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter Mark and Clara.

Mark - It burned?
Clara - That's right, and stopcock the gee whiz:
You clearly feared transferent inflammation
With all that run in, blow your hose, and out.
Mark - Why didn't you say something?
Clara - Why didn't you sense something?
Mark - You seemed to like it.
Clara - O, so you had sex
With my seem? Maybe that's why it felt
Like you were shredding me into sisters.
Mark - Is it so strange to assume you'd speak up
Were it unpleasant?
Clara - Well, is it so strange
To assume you might feel it's unpleasant
For me when we're engaged in a project
Of trying to feel mutual pleasure?
Mark - How'm I supposed to know what you won't show?
Clara - You could have askt me before you asht me.
Mark - In the future feel free to clue me in
On any misconceptions arising
From our lego lock, e.g. when sex burns.
Clara - E.g.?
Mark - Exempli gratia, i.e.,
For the sake of an example.
Clara - I.e.?
Mark - That's right. Id est. As in, that is,
As in, let me say it another way,
As in, if it hurts, blurts.
Clara - Thank you for that,
Professor Boring Playmobile Blowtorch.
Thank you for making an example of me
As your ample ex, thank you for using
My forsake for the sake of your keepsake,
And thank you for letting me know in what state
Of vaginal smarting I'm allowed to speak.
Mark - Speak? You bevel beneficence to blades.
Clara - All I've learned came from getting taught by you.
I came to class to schlob your case in point,
But then you pulled a fast one, didn't you,
You tricky little dictationist pilf?
Your gripping ted talk on current events
Got me venting currants, my pepos spiced

By your efficacious comprehensives.
 Like could I even bone up before you?
 Like you restored the PhD balance
 In my creamy brainfood shake, like you sourced
 My unfounded assertions, like your research
 Organized my messy compositions,
 And like, sure, it was a lot, but how to scream
 With your syllabus up my ignorance?
 To be cute and honest, I kinda loved
 How you kept nudging me toward your thesis,
 How you dangled your degree down my oral,
 How you made my magna cum so laude,
 O yes, my egghead, finally I can speak
 My mind now you've stuck your post-doc in it
 And credited my common core for merely
 Coming to your class again and again.
 Mark - Clara, I'm sorry. I'm kinda new at this,
 And maybe came too hungry to the table.
 Clara - Now for the adding insult to orgasm
 Way too large portion of The Post-Coital Pain
 Apology Tour wherein - unaskt, mind you -
 The Actors' Studio baizuo cheese-bombs
 My feed with "I Really Care."
 Mark - But I do.
 Clara - Please, don't; your care is too much kerosene.
 Mark - Does it happen every time?
 Clara - It comes and goes;
 Sound familiar?
 Mark - Do you know what it is?
 Clara - No, do you?
 Mark - No.
 Clara - That's cuz it's my condition,
 So keep your fucking forceps off it, k?
 Mark - Is it contagious?
 Clara - Yes, Mark, from now on
 Your juice wallet's gonna bubble over
 With fuzzy purple esspicey every time
 You jumping jack into that junior frat bag.

Enter Megan to the side, singing.

Megan - *She steams in chimera,
 Yet shies in the shorn,
 She palms you messiah,
 And brags you were born,
 She begs you to profit
 Then loves you accord;
 Upstirs with her spirit*

Want's wild cord,

*But deep in the brackets,
Trenchant and deep,
Her seeching but shoots
His refusal to reap,
For look at me, love,
Is all her sick wish,
Yet off he spies on
For some graven remiss.*

She exits.

Mark - It's her.
Clara - It's who?
Mark - The burnt woman.
Clara - The what?
Mark - I have to talk to her.

He goes to exit.

Clara - Walk on me, bruh,
And I rape charge your teledildonic djeep
In a stonk of he said/she sadistic.
Mark - She's stalking me. I need to find out what
She wants.
Clara - A burnt woman is stalking you?
Mark - In class, at the Beauty School, and now here.
Clara - And she's burnt?
Mark - As the first into the club.
Clara, please, she's getting away. Megan!
Clara - O, so that's where this smash-up is headed?
You've labeled me on sale so your cheap chuff
Can drip my fire-damage to your crew.
Mark - Clara, no, she is real; you heard her sing.
You saw her.
Clara - I heard her, but I saw you
Projecting her on me.
Mark - Did you not see
Her molten face, her twisted, lightning-struck,
Lag-convicted fins? How did you not turn
To place that you might flee the source of such
A forcible, malodorous adhesion?
Clara - My hate won't let me slur from what it loves,
And it loves nothing more than watching you,
The source of my eschar, go up in joke,
Cuz as scathed as I am, as prickt by slights,
I've hoped enough of heal for one dead hole,

And it is time to yell it like it fucks:
Go die, Mark. Do it slow. Do it in bed,
And do it with the baddies in your dreams,
But don't expect them ever to come true.
Your hither trigger's failed to affright
Our prayed-for goddess. The sexy servers
That float in fantasies and sop the sleep
Of good men won't put their greasy pizza
On your plate, cuz you're crummy with the tip.
And that fatherly habitude you have,
That mist of the breath of their first desire,
They will not stop til that fake shit is fritzt
Back into the stink whence it sanduskied,
Cuz daddy drear, you couldn't cook an egg
Were it yolk up on your hood at summer fest.
I may be the vitriolage I fear,
But you're the impactor who falls on his spear,
So you'll never crush with the cherries you pick
Cuz your flamethrower's stuck in your dick.

She exits.

Mark - Her outed secrets are not mine to cop,
 Yet soldered to my soul the one I'd stop.

All exit.

Scene 17 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter John Brown.

JB - Here I am, Megan. Come mock the man you made:
 Squadhead, showpoke, logospasmatist.
 Look, Megan: me again, so back me up
 Into your severe satire damage.

Enter Megan singing.

Megan - *What if there are no windows to the soul?
 What if the goalie's bigger than the goal?*

*Living is easy, O living is easy,
It's easy, it's easy that's hard.*

*What if it's more than we can even think
Just going from the kitchen to the sink?*

*Living is easy, O living is easy,
It's easy, it's easy that's hard.*

*Wow, big move, from the toilet to the bowl.
So all that straining not to see's your soul?*

*What if there's life on Mars til you get there?
What if it's only fair when nothing's fair?*

*Living is easy, O living is easy,
It's easy, it's easy that's....*

JB - O, John. Hello. I didn't see you there.
Megan - Either I've lost my lust, or you your looks.
What do you want, Megan?
What do I want?
I think I want to know what I stand for.
Am I a wrongteous feminist soljah
Roasting gauche wieners on the stake I blame
For life? Am I the last critic who dared
To cry, "Art must be fatal to the artist"?
Am I some high gloss, frog-eared gabbaghoul
Gone bonkers to save the slobber shellac
On the toys her daddy gave to good will?
Or am I just another spurnt woman
Wildin so white hot I've been blacklisted
From presenting my conspiracy theory
That the exhortation, "learn from the past!"
Is a smokescreen whereby teachers ensure
The future accedes to their construals.
So, yeah, I want to know what I can't know
Cuz it's already getting known of me.
JB - Same old Megan: complicating questions
Cuz she don't have an answer.
Megan - Same old John:
Finding himself amusing so he can hide
His sobs at every social as I wipe
His insides with answers, which he refutes,
Since real men only cry if there's pussy
At the wet bottom of the tissue box,
So here's another mommy make it better,
Since you're my fucking favorite waste of trees:
I want you to see yourself that you see
Your wanting not to see me's killing you.
How's that for sweet and simple, you hard lad?
JB - You have no right to stalk me, Megan. None.
Megan - But if I don't stalk you, how will you grow?
You shoot yourself with your self shoots, you know.
JB - And there she goes, whose dream's to hack me down,
Preaching my cultivation at her saw,
Yet what is it she sees in me that it

Is now so sharp? Her dream that I be cut.
 Megan - My dream? I don't dream. My dreams got burnt out
 Of me by you.
 JB - Your dream's I go missing
 In your dream again.
 Megan - If I dream, dear John,
 It's of your helping me rebuild my dream
 That I forget you lit the fire in me
 Then put me so out all I want's back in.
 JB - I saved you.
 Megan - Spend me now.
 JB - On what?
 Megan - On us.
 JB - We're a bad investment.
 Megan - How so? I'm free,
 And what a fire sale.
 JB - To sell you off
 Would sell you out, and you don't do that.
 Megan - Ha!
 I sold out so long ago, look what's left:
 Shelves scraped and barren, save for lack of you,
 And you are not an empty I deserve,
 So that's your wrong, yet my guilting guilts me,
 For I sold all you might rebuy me for,
 So let us love each other for how right
 Our wrongs make us for each other.
 JB - Megan...
 Megan - Look at me, John.
 JB - No.
 Megan - Lo, the lord of sad:
 He believes that by looking not at her
 He leaves her; I thought you smarter than that.
 JB - I'm no smarter than the day I took off,
 Save in this: I'm smart enough to not return.
 Megan - Yet here you are.
 JB - To tell you where I am
 Is not a there you're wise to go unto.
 Megan - There's no there for you because you want me.
 JB - You want an organ for reality,
 So wanting you's to stan for self-deceit.
 Megan - A game you slay.
 JB - I may deceive myself
 To live, but you defect from life, so die.
 Megan - I'm far less defective than you, fuck boy.
 JB - So says the casualty that I would be
 Were I even once to wend her wishing.
 Megan - At least I have a wish.

JB - I wish to be.
Megan - And I wish to put the monstrous piece
Of my son back in my mouth.

JB - O Megan,
You are the sole antonym of mother.
Megan - So I'm the truth of life. Thru me alone
The genuine-devout may run to death
And divert that derivative echo
That ends where it began so it can say,
"I'm home" to who knows what. Baby Johnny,
You were the violet verdure of the mind,
Yet now your words can't speak for their disport.
Your self-idolatry is charlatan
For how you hate the way you love yourself.
What are you but a prisoner on the prow
For some crowded cell? Once you said to me,
"Light cannot shine thru indignant spirits,"
Yet all you look upon are but incensed
At your not looking more for what they're not.
I offer you a verier veritas:
End my indignancy, then look thru me
And have in one what all can never be.

JB - Lam no more my way. I will have beauty.
Megan - O your stunting, fouling, raping beauty.
You hound that treat so shysty, emptiness
Alone can fill the void it leaves to being.
So symmetrical it slides thru youngered touch,
So perfectly designed, it fits to nothing.
Beauty is an addiction to the bland,
A self-erogenous disgust with self,
A fever popping fire. There is no truth,
And therefore no so there it's worth its want,
In a body fighting after beauty.

JB - I've crawled thru piles of beautiful bodies,
Never fighting, ever eating my fill.
Megan - A body beautiful? It comes in waste
And blood, it scours sludge and dumps its wretch,
It taunts at rot and daily drooping dies.
Once a man sexually preserved in truth,
What are you now but piles of abient pride?

JB - Do not come near me, Megan.
Megan - I've no need.
The more I'm from you, I'm in you the more.
I am the flora of your honesty,
And you will ever gasping rill to me
For richer breath.

JB - You are deformity.

Megan - Look at me, John, and you will see different.
JB - I cannot look. You cauterized my eyes.
Megan - Look, and they will open.
JB - Do not come near,
Or that star you wish upon falls on you.

John exits.

Megan - *He runs from me, girls,
And hides from my sight.
He runs from me, scared of me,
Leaves me to die.
My craving his courage
Has brought him to flight.
He runs from me, girls,
So why should I cry?*

All exit.

Scene 18 - The Cambridge Cemetery. Enter Alex singing.

Alex - *Popper, pop her
Bottled slop.
Dropper, drop her,
Like a lop.*

Enter Mark to the side.

Mark - Megan, is that you?
Alex - *Knives are spooning,
Lives untuning,
Dreams of dooming
Sick for shock.*
Mark - It's Alex, and she's tailed by that simp.

Enter Dean singing. Mark stays to the side.

Dean - *He's been pinkwasht.*
Alex - *She's a toss off.*
Dean - *What's the worry?*
Alex - *Keep me blurry.*
Both - *All recall what's best forgot.*
Dean - Why the woes, wombat?
Ain't I wowed ya with my woo scat?
Ain't my distorted notabilia
Put some god zero in your omni-myth?
Ain't my heehaw pouty wrangler
Constructively misconstrued your grumpy

Cat gif? Remember, wrecktember:
 You can fly from the cripple pimp,
 But that high-tail's his landing strip.

Alex - Run? No, I wilt, an aimless inextirpable
 In oestral clay fugacious, glampt
 By your underyanking, like corpses
 Swell and peat, like tease most loves defeat,
 Blades and breezes equal churn my danking.

Mark - She seems differently disturbed.

Dean - Then what's all this cryin about the cake
 In the cake? When worms get to wrigglin,
 Ain't it wormy? You het up, there was water.
 Serve me dinner, expect some litter.
 But don't gimme that do me don't me wap
 Like daddy's got no fatty. You ordered
 Burger chuck, I gave you god-damned god gut.
 So call your mom a fickle tit and look me up
 In the book of no good answers.

Alex - Blown by all your dusty, seedy rubble,
 Payback's muddy bubble makes the stiffened
 Wisdom wheeze, makes all senseless power
 Sneeze, all our transport, all our trouble.

Mark - O don't tell me they...

Dean - Yo, intake form, let me fill you in, again.
 On occasion, you're someone's cigarette,
 But just cuz ya gickt a mutant don't mean
 Ya gotta be vicious, stupit. At least ya didn't
 Screw yourself to the back of the bus.
 What? You want humanitarianism?
 Fine, I ate you, ain't I? So welcome, mat,
 To the clean plate club. Not bad for a hot mess.
 Now stop repurposing that pumpnickel
 And splashing huge ramifying ripples round
 Your antithetic slumming pool, cuz the fact
 Remains: my spirit bored a dispiriting vein
 In your spirited opposition, and the less
 You feel for it, the better it'll feel.

Mark steps out.

Mark - I've had about enough of watching your mouth kill
 the music.

Alex - Mark?

Dean - Call him off!

Alex - Touch my man, and it's dunzo nut.

Mark - Your man?

Dean - Your man?

Alex - My man, Shanky Dean the Velocirapture Submarine.
Mark - Did he do something to you?
Dean - Could you be a bit more vague? I'm almost losing you.
Alex - He did something to me that can only be named "the storm no other man's the mast to ride."
Dean - I did?
Alex - O Dean, it was so viscioulicious. Like you lit my gingko up with your flow in the bark shit, that boy blue paint gettin all viperous on my flashy drive as a near-fall sex site. Baby, you fueled me up enough for a nonstop to craniofacial belfie day.
Dean - So why'd ya hide it?
Alex - That's how I save it.
Mark - Alex, can we talk alone?
Alex - Yo, beta boy, I'm talkin to the Deano.
Dean - Besides, all you do is talk alone.
Mark - Why are you with this asshole?
Alex - Cuz the more assholes I got the more I can shit on you.
Dean - My girl's a hammerthrow on a crowded subway.
Alex - No, Dean, I'm an embryo and you're a hand grenade.
Dean - I like how that doesn't follow, cuz I'm all about the chase.
Alex - O Deano, houdini my moxie!
Dean - Like a pill masser remixing your factory-set frenetics.
Alex - I never felt so emphasized before.
Dean - They call me the highlighter cowboy.
Alex - You make the nerve swim, the rum foam, and the tunnel bud tenor ukeleles.
Dean - Plüng, plüng.
Alex - Give unto the feud dude what the feud dude is for, and let me lose my eye to the ball it's on.
Mark - Alex, please.
Dean - Yo, no legroom, who let you in my cockpit?
Mark - The burnt woman is here.
Alex - The burnt woman? I'm so sick of hearing about the burnt woman I could eat the dog I feed.
Dean - Him cup, me bowl.
Alex - Go roast your weanie on the burnt woman, Mark, and leave us tongans to our mangos.
Dean - Hosed by the hose of hoses!
Mark - Look, I'm sorry I dumpt you.
Alex - Dumpt me? O if only you had dumpt me, But no, instead, you tied and tortured me, Cuz apparently your shame hasn't flusht Since way the fuck back in never happened.

Nevertheless, I am ever the less
Unable to point the more I finger
Other than myself, for as crayon fragments know,
Break-ups begin when you open the box,
And there's no sideways purchase whence we might
That acrimony short-circ, cuz it's us,
Flagrantly unobvious, dragging our bag
Of non-recyclable aspirations
To compost heaps filled with tinder fungus
And stirred by pronghorn hatecore chavalas,
So strung on fantasy we can't be stoppt
To chomp the bit on why breaking the seal
Is so unquittable, so riven fixt
In our repubescence. "Girl, fly the glue!"
We hear you, mommy, but our need's so funny
It uses us for its sarcastic source,
And who could claim to know the cure to that?
Like we need the love machine, so hot and loud,
Bombasting thru shop-soiled dating games,
To keep its arcane production quotas
Of smoterlich affluence that we might once
Take our torture for a tickle. It's true:
Life's a tit, and we live off its let down.

She exits.

Dean - Nuthin like the afterglow of a weird three-way.
Mark - You've had your meat, maggot; now I get mine.

Mark goes at him.

Dean - I can tell you how to find the burnt woman.
Mark - So tell me, or I spill what guts you got.
Dean - Geez, big man beats up on special kids.
Mark - Tell me, you defective goth wagon tool munch.
Dean - Anemone to Eglantine, left on Arethusa, right on
Thistle, and in just a few graves, Fort Da.
Mark - I'm keen to chip your rip, so you best not be lying.
Dean - Don't chip it til I'm lying, cuz I got banshees yet to
burp.
Mark - How could any woman want you?
Dean - How could any man want Megan?

Mark exits.

Dean - Bawdy wawa, what a wowch of a night.
I'll have to do this "just this once" again.

Then again, I seem to remember me
Tasting sweeter syrups on higher shelves.

Enter John. He doesn't see Dean.

JB - She is a verbose blip of stupefaction,
A clitless impossibility curve,
The dealer of persuasive paradox
Who plugs the urge to wade in whirlpools.
Dean - Here comes the king I loved just one night last.
I'll sculpt his skull into my queller's crown,
Yet what's in me that now I think to toss,
With plans to botch the catch, this scanty past?
JB - Crouching in lividity, seeking sense
In stammer, she homilizes hesitance
To the cirque, redundancy for difference,
Isolation on osmosis, preaching
"To know, but want the wall you cannot see."
Dean - What's in me is his dull binary knife;
Those rust stains round the man of steel's wrist
Are my grubby gloves begging specimen
From honey hips, but gall is all my malt.
JB - I will press the redress from plump desire,
Carouse thru caution, dig the telegenic
So-be-it, for her fire's nothing but
A dimming sheen from the fourth dementation.
Dean - Yet even his putrescent leftovers
Are tasty to my tongue. I cannot be
Indifferent to this manhood's fluency,
So back to what I was when I was his.

Dean turns into Haydon and steps out.

Haydon - I thought to find you in this green of death
With all the crepitude your life's croppt up.
JB - Haydon, why are you here?
Haydon - To help you home.
JB - I saw Megan.
Hay - Saw her?
JB - Spoke to her.
Hay - That's good.
JB - How good?
Hay - She is the home I mean.
JB - She is a home-sized sliver in my brain,
A smut fungus spreading eodic stopple,
A purification tablet absorbing
All my variance; O what is it shells

My memory out of me but her biting,
Gun-in-the-wrong-mouth dehomology?
Hay - Stop mistaking her for your defections,
And she will shine, your soteric beacon.
JB - You're just more stuffy slang for talkin shit.
Hay - And you're just "free" in a cartoon font.
JB - Eat me, Haydon.
Hay - I already did,
And you're sleeping with the bones.

Haydon turns back into Dean.

JB - Haydon?

Dean sings.

Dean - *Nah, it's me, Cream of Razors,
Straight outta Golconda's gutters,
Where shoddy's always
New and pert, stability's
On a losing spurt,
And shallow depths
Are shimmied down,
Cuz do is low,
And don't is round.*

JB - You were at the party.
Dean - The party was in me.
JB - What is this, Haydon?
Dean - This is you, minus Megan.
JB - I am out.

John starts to leave.

Dean - You think you're out,
But your grave knows better.
JB - What grave?
Dean - Right there.
JB - That's a nameless stone striving into sand.
Dean - Don't you see the body here beneath it?
JB - No, and no one can. That's what graves are for:
To hide sad endings from future heroes.
Dean - That's why this nameless rock's so clearly yours.
JB - No more.

John starts to leave.

Dean - You leave, and I'll stay here with you.

John stops. Dean addresses the unmarked grave. During this speech, he turns back into Haydon.

Dean - Well, John, here we are: me and missing you.
Lookin good, at least the parts I can't see.
When I heard you'd gotten into Terra,
I tried to get her to give you a stone
With something on it, but she said, "Like what?"
And honestly, I drew a blank, so that
Is all she wrote. But hey, it kinda fits,
Cuz like if you left anything behind
It's the legacy of doing nothing,
Which ain't to say there weren't worthwhile things
To do, it's just you whiled away their worth.
So now I'm the only one who can tell
This grand failure of distinction is you,
And perhaps because your remains are so
Unreminding, even I'm drifting off
Into unremembering, but that's cool,
Cuz in a sense the less I sense of you
The more I'm with you, seeing as it made
No sense the way you came to your senses
Like a lonely wank on an unmarked grave.
So, yeah, here we are: me acting like you
To show you what you never should have been,
And you hiding from me to show me how
Loving a misper is living for death.

John sits down at the gravestone.

JB - Thing is, dude, I don't like the burnt woman.
Sure, I loved Megan, she was amazing,
But this showy victim shit is overshare.
It's so symbolic, it's like superficial.

Haydon - Given how you're living, you're hardly one
To call someone out for staying surface.

JB - See, I think you got your pot upside down
In the hopes your plant will grow back into
The dirt cuz living things make you anxious
With all their wild, reckless protrusions,
But upside down pots don't hold any dirt,
Which is cool by you cuz dirt bugs you out,
So you cancel others to calm yourself.
It's Harvard's communicable disease,
And you done got it.

Hay - Inverted or not,
My love of truth does not deserve your shame.

JB - I too love the truth, when it's lookin fine.
 Hay - Why fight for beauty if its furor leads
 To the apogee of otiose marauding
 About as a self-embalming body?
 JB - Because beauty is good and perdures most.
 It orders us, without where-wondering,
 Stumbles on us, visits us in lockdown,
 Sanctions us, rewards our merits, provides
 Our uncoupled organs with symmetry.
 Ease the discongruent soul requires
 To unsleep, beauty is the outstanding,
 Qualitous nuance of our initial,
 Eternal desire. Prudent in abandon,
 Mining for the power we can't extract
 From our jurisprudential correlations,
 It's all that keeps us from going extinct
 In a conflict that precludes concession.
 Without it, we'd be only what truth makes us:
 Corrected crabs scuttling over scrap heaps,
 Clawing for sparks in the surge, rummaging
 Thru a long-shut sale, like a skin shedding
 Its source, a nulling design, endlessly
 Fighting forward to find a peaceful past,
 Throbbing like a thrill in a box, ugly,
 Mutilated, a burn victim haunting
 The mindful squalor of rejected splendor.
 Hay - You sound like your old self.
 John - So old, I'm dead.
 Hay - Feel the beauty death becomes beneath you,
 But look up, and your living makes it true.

Enter Lyuba, carrying Zhazha's uterus.

Lyuba - O Johnny, yes, I find you.
 JB - Lyuba, what have you done?
 Lyuba - I have baby, our baby.
 JB - What happened, Lyuba? Where did this come from?
 Lyuba - Zhazha say she have your baby and I go back to
 Russia, but I no go back to Russia, so I take baby out
 of Zhazha, and now it's you me baby.
 JB - Where is Zhazha?
 Lyuba - At Beauty School.
 JB - Is she all right?
 Lyuba - No, she all not right.
 JB - Is she alive?
 Lyuba - Gluppy Johnny, how she be alive if she dead? Haha,
 so why me in kladbishche, and not her? Tak tak baby.

JB - Lyuba, no.
Haydon - Come with me.
Lyuba - No, Haytem, I stay with Johnny. Look your baby,
Johnny. It's me you baby. Ty khochesh' derzhat'
sebya?
JB - No.

John pushes Lyuba away, she falls, hits her head on a gravestone, and dies.

Hay - She's not breathing.
JB - O this is bad, Haydon.
Hay - This bad is what you are. Here, first and last,
Comes your reason to nap. This is beauty,
This is life's thin line of choose or chosen,
And it's low enough to trip you when you're high.
Who are you, John, to deny her justice?
Like some clickt-up dancer, you are aging
From grace to suet. Do you see her?
Do you see the desert you made of her,
Your two minds evaporating camels
Gnashing each other's blood into the sand?
You are no good without Megan's guidance.
Go to her. Dead end this demented gene.
Her power over you will set you free.
JB - What about this? And what about Zhazha?

Mark calls from the side.

Mark - Megan?
JB - Someone's coming.
Hay - No one knows her.
She doesn't exist, but you and Megan do.
Leave this knock off to her secret status;
I'll scrub down Beauty School. Go to her, John.

They exit in opposite directions. Mark enters.

Mark - I'll swear that mother sent me on a goose chase.
Like there's the grass where me and Clara...wo.
That's one of John Brown's girls. Are you...O...dead.

Megan is heard singing to the side.

Megan - *There fam no finer trees
Than tine about the graves;
The laughter in their leaves
Shoots wild from idyll brains.*
Mark - It's her.

Megan - *From journeyed veins unclencht
Swell hearty, sapid trunks;
And every voicing branch
Triumphals earthen lungs.*

Mark - This is not for me.

Megan - *Than wooding out still hands
That strain no more to chop,
Weep-wet and heavy-cached,
There springs no sprier crop.*

Mark - I've seen so much tonight, I finally see I'm blind,
Yet there the certain sun; I see its beauty shine
On what I now can say was hid by me from me,
And so I go her way that I might truly see.

All exit.

Scene 19 - Megan's house. Enter Megan.

Megan - What is it draws me dreaming to my man,
That makes mind's melody of husky throat?
His rough and soft, his crucial width and span,
The pelvimetry whence I beg his bloat?
These measures draw me dreaming to my man,
But measures cannot measure all I am.
Is it then his hope, his hype, his power?
The freer space his luring motions gest?
The winding words whereby he gyps the hour?
His quiet hurt, or how it spurs redress?
These features draw me dreaming to my man,
Yet features cannot feature all I am.
Perhaps it's how I feel inside his eyes
When they emit his frenzied urge to in,
Or how his furtive animal surmise
Leads my beaten path to some secret swim?
These certainly allure me to my man,
Yet certainty can't certain all I am.
His ever being born beyond abuse,
His respite set to grueling nature's use,
His majesty amidst the dark diffuse
That laughs at loathe and grants it more profuse,
This, mostly this, and mostly other than,
Draws me, all I am, dreaming to my man.

Enter WJ.

WJ - Excuse me?
Megan - You come excused, as we're all here to be walkt on.
WJ - I'm looking for a burnt woman.

Megan - A burnt woman? Is there more than one?
WJ - I hope not.
Megan - Then my advice is to stop seeking what it's no fun to find before you become what it's no fun to be.
WJ - I just want to talk to her.
Megan - Are you a fireman? Cuz otherwise, she's out.
WJ - When will she be back?
Megan - At the moment, she's all back to you, but she might show her face if you promise not to react honestly.
WJ - You don't make the honor roll reacting honestly.
Megan - The honor roll? Then you're much too smart to fail her test, and as her manscara shows, she only faces bombs.
WJ - Try me.
Megan - Very well. You are on trial for looking away while looking my way. How do you plead, guilty or groomed?

She turns to him.

WJ - Were you at the Beauty School last night?
Megan - Can't you tell?
WJ - You need to stay away.
Megan - But I'm just trying to help, cuz now I'm beautiful, they can preach me; or if I'm not, they can teach me.
WJ - You are unsightly.
Megan - What to say? Some have vision and some can see, and I just want them to stumble into each other.
WJ - You kill the vibe. You scare people. Tell me you'll stay away.
Megan - Why are you doing this?
WJ - So I can go to Harvard.
Megan - Why would you want to do that?
WJ - Why wouldn't I want to do that?
Megan - Because Harvard hates the Beauty School. Academia is a sitting army against good looks. They can't compete so they shame the game. I should know. I'm the school spirit.
WJ - Of Beauty School?
Megan - Of Harvard, you clownfish. The spirit of Beauty School is the burnt woman.
WJ - No. Harvard's school spirit is the truth, and you're a liar. There's nothing but beautiful people at Harvard. It's a factory for perfection, and I'm going to go there, so you stay away from the Beauty School, or I, well, I might just rough you up.
Megan - Ooo, I bet you're a rough rougher-upperer.

WJ - I've roughed up a few in my time.
Megan - Well, ruffity ruff, come rough me up, cuz all's caress to the never groped.

Enter Gordon and Bishy.

Gordon - What are you doing here?
WJ - Getting into Harvard.
Gordon - No, you're getting on my shit sheet.
Bishy - That's the hideous bitch who lookt at me last night.
Gordon - So let's feed this fried turducken her own syrx.

Gordon grabs a mirror.

Gordon - Hold her down, Bishy.

Bishy grabs Megan and holds her down.

WJ - No!
Gordon - You keep quiet, JK, or the only Harvard you'll see is from the server side of a warming pan.

Gordon holds the mirror to Megan's face.

Bishy - How's it feel, hideous bitch?
Gordon - How's it feel to have some churrascaria upchuck starin ya right in the face?
Bishy - Face? More like the spontaneous science project of a chain smoker with butane burps.
WJ - Leave her alone!
Gordon - The chunderella fritter you see here better not come round Beauty School again, or I'm tossin it in the grease trap, you hear me?
Megan - Did Harvard teach you to ask a woman with no ears if she can hear, or are you just naturally adept at gagging on your mother's dick?
Bishy - You hassadiddy gangrenous boogawoof.
Gordon - Time to pinch the wick on this sasquatch chandelier.

Gordon goes to hit her with the mirror. WJ hits him over his head.

WJ - Get out, or I make feet for baby booties outta your skull.

Bishy exits.

Megan - Go.
WJ - What about him?

Megan - He's mine.
WJ - But she'll tell on us.
Megan - So chase her down and kill her.
WJ - What?
Megan - It's all or nothing now.
WJ - No, it's all for nothing.

He exits. Megan picks up the mirror, holds it to Gordon's face, and sings.

Megan - *Would you convene at Mirror Lake
To couple midst the greening?
The way wends long and wild, my love,
But there at last our meaning.*

*Down whorling canyons, cross quick creeks,
The struggles never cease;
You'll ache and chafe, you'll curse the route,
But there, at last, your peace,*

*As on her shores we new begin,
Her every view reviving
The life we lost by being born
To thoughtless, fatal thriving.*

*For when you kneel beside her glass
And gaze into her glimming,
You'll see yourself both looking back
And thru her freely swimming,*

*And as you stare, insane to stitch
The sever in your seeing,
You'll come into the truth of life;
My being is your being.*

*Then into Mirror Lake we'll fall,
And round her we'll go flying,
Our bliss now care to save our source
From all who crave her dying.*

She smashes the mirror, cuts his throat, and he dies. Haydon calls from the side.

Hay - Megan?

She pulls the body under the bed then cuts her hand with the mirror.

Megan - To cut a figure, she cut herself.

Enter Haydon.

Hay - What happened?
 Megan - Go away.
 Hay - Are you ok?
 Megan - Yep, half red, half trash, all supercell weather.
 Hay - Has John been here?
 Megan - Who's John?
 Hay - Megan, please.
 Megan - No. Pleasing's begging on an empty street.
 Now go away before I spread my scabs.
 Hay - Why are you mad at me?
 Megan - Cuz your shit sucks.
 You told me to haunt his party, so I did.
 You told me to find his better, so I did.
 You told me you'd bring him to me. So did you?
 No, and when I do what you tell me to do,
 But you don't do what you told me you'd do,
 That's a quickie mix for angry cookies.
 Hay - I'm trying.
 Megan - You are trying my patience,
 So take small bites or choke on my largesse.
 Hay - I want it more, or as much, as you do.
 The closest I will ever come to him
 Being what I love, loving who I am,
 Is when he's with you. You make him the man
 I want more than any man I can have.
 Megan - Lovers have a way of coming to look
 Like each other. Will you still want him then?
 Hay - You swore to me, Megan, that was over.
 You swore you wanted what we had before:
 Poetry, philosophy, civility.
 You swore to me.

A knock at the door.

Megan - He's here. Go out the back.
 Hay - You swore.
 Megan - Haydon, look at me. Still believe
 I've learned nothing from touching a hot stove?
 Hay - When we sit free and fervid in the yard
 And draft our dreams to rhythm and image,
 There's nothing we can't learn from what we touch.
 O return us, Megan.
 Megan - I will. Now, go.

Haydon exits.

Megan - I'll re-turn us on the spit of over it.

She shouts to the door.

Megan - The door, like she it cyphers, is unhinged.

Enter Mark.

Megan - O, it's you. For the first course, second best.

Mark - Why are you shadowing me?

Megan - Cuz you're so hot.

Mark - That's it?

Megan - There's more, but it's just in the way
Of my losing layers at your ingle.

Mark - Its not being named is what's in the way.

Megan - I want you to look at me.

Mark - I did.

Megan - No.
We look at what's beautiful. We look thru
What's frightening to cower in its absence.
Be a brave boy, and look at my beauty.

Mark - I can't.

Megan - Ha! He reckons he's a poet,
Yet he won't wreck himself for poetry.

Mark - I've done little but wreck myself tonight,
So I'm in the shop.

Megan - I'd say you're totaled.

Mark - I'll come out great.

Megan - Or grated.

Mark - You'd like that?

Megan - Da, I love impossible puzzle men:
So many pieces whence to choose my piece;
So don't finish it. Don't even start it.
Just open the box, throw it everywhere,
I'll jiggle into every tab and slot,
A vot i on: you, fully interlocked,
Tho, fair enough, the picture's now of me.

Mark - I'll do myself myself.

Megan - Redundancy
Is not the road to truth.

Mark - True. Beauty is.

Megan - I've already exhausted that topic
With a far more formidable loser,
So shhh...I'm putting the stillbirth to sleep.

Mark - Can we please just talk?

Megan - If you look at me.

Mark - I'm looking.

Megan - Liar, liar, versifier.
Mark - It's hard.
Megan - If it hard, then why you no sip
My soju, daddy? Love-time best inside
Bootleg risky mosaic.
Mark - You are wow.
Megan - If I'm so wow, then why do you attack
Your muted muse with rote remonstrations
On the free will of solid-state disgust,
Disguising selfish needs in timid thoughts
Like some passive, equilateral mood
Can reform the fear holds fast where it fell?
Only confusion grants us conviction,
Yet on you pose, hard to horror's heckle,
Abdicating glory the more you cope,
Too taken to be shaken by a song.
Were you one jot of what you deem your style,
You'd see I am mammatocumulus,
A storm cloud with tits, raining rancid milk,
And you'd open wide and turkey to death,
Where, absorbed in my opposing, fertile,
Impossible dreams, you'd finally exchange
All those valued, anaesthetic viewpoints
For one sordid suckle at my sex hex.
Mark - You're all fucking burned. Your legs, hands, lips, nose,
And who knows what else, gliddered, flame-befooled,
So what are we talking about? Beauty?
What is beauty? To live forever cookt
In roux of rut? To laminate our flesh
With favor? To titivate the truth
Into this despoiled evagination?
I will not pillage you to grunge my peace.
Megan - Aw baby, just cuz I call you baby
Don't mean I want you to wake me up, k?
Mark - I must at times be human.
Megan - At all times,
Should you ever wish to go beyond it.
Mark - Inebriate with lost identity's
The only vice I hallow with that slur.
Megan - Then your muse must muss you up, else for esteem
You fail on principle, sue creation
For irrelegance, bounce about mumbling
"Like my shirk ethic?" fiercely forgetting
What fantasies teach, it's smart to unlearn.
Mark - Beauty is my muse, I am fantasy,
And she dumps my dresser to muss me up.
Megan - Yet ask yourself, how good are you to she

Who makes you better? How fair your frenzy
 For her most fair? Plucking chicks from their nest
 And chucking them at skewers isn't flying.
 Mark - This world is a meet between the sexes,
 And tho unruly contact's righteous code
 Adorns the queer facades of misconstrued
 Emulation, the players must be free
 To make the competition what they will
 Within their fabula, and act on them
 All down their lane, for such is strategy:
 The stars in eyes desire beats to gold.
 Distortion's no deliverage from form,
 Like love idealized no self-despite.
 Passion for the product's still the process,
 And the psychotron's two modes: on and shame,
 So let the glamour floors boom erotic.
 Megan - You set her smoldering so you can smoke
 An alien nicotine and stay high
 Enough to think it deep you've rendered her
 An unrendered film about your problems.
 If you want to live real implications,
 Walk your needs avert from her, see her off
 And strange and true, mount that run-away truck
 And ride her phoretic, fomenting wave,
 Intimate at last with prima facie,
 For if you love outside the looks you seek,
 Your poetry will sing as none may speak.
 Mark - To be with John, you must have been...
 Megan - I was.
 Mark - Calling knuckles brass won't bring back your ring.
 Megan - Only back I want from him is off mine.
 Mark - So what's the story?
 Megan - Why should I tell you?
 Everything you hear's just cuz you said it.
 Mark - I want to know.
 Megan - Then look at me with love.
 Mark - It would be untrue.
 Megan - Nothing's true until
 A fallacy bears fruit we can't resist.
 Look into my eyes.
 Mark - No.
 Megan - Look into them.
 Mark - What for?
 Megan - They are not burnt, but beautiful,
 And show the stars that set adoring on.
 Mark - I'm sorry.
 Megan - Look into my eyes, poet,

And all you'll know of sorry is their tears.

He faces her, eyes closed, and she sings.

Megan - *When you were born,
I died away,
When I returned, you hid.
As I lookt round
Your stifled weep
My backward vision bid.
Now I am here
Inside your eyes
You long to look thru mine
As if you then
Might realize
A difference none can sign.
But none arise
For we are dead,
Live only in the trace
Our looking leaves
For beauty's bred
Beyond our freer face,
And this desire
By light allied
Of common, kindling sun
Is all we are
That all we see
Reflect oblivion.*

Mark opens his eyes.

Mark - I see it.
Megan - Come and get it.

Enter John Brown.

JB - Careful, Wordboy.
 There's no decent living in the lightning.
Megan - Life hangs fresh goodies higher than good sense
 Then sells us wobbly ladders dear and used,
 But alight the lightning, the living's good.
JB - So says the lightning.
Megan - So says the goodies.
Mark - I found one of your girls dead by a grave.
JB - I know.
Mark - You know?
JB - She killed my other girl,
 So let the hours inhume her. As for me,

I just wanna make a living living.

Megan sings.

Megan - *Johnny's girl
Killed Johnny's girl,
So Johnny spit her rind.
O bless the killers
Of this world
Cuz now dear Johnny's mine.*

JB - I never said that.

Megan - Said every never.

Mark - This is not my scene.

Megan - That's right, it's my scene,
And you just bussed yourself in.

Mark - You made me.

Megan - No, I tried to make you, but you can't make
The Great American Killer Poet
Out of no acceptable rates of death.
See, Wordbore, you're hot to be my scribbler,
But too cool to play the part, which requires
A practically Keatsian conniption
For croaking young, cuz that's so romantic.
When literature's just lit like no one's got
A lighter for the blunt, it's best to pass.
JB - Hey, now. His Stylites held the pillar.
Megan - I know. That's why I flushed him thru your yard:
To rouse you into flapping back to me.
But as for him, he's a pornographer
Ashamed of his proclivity for porn.
He feigns an odor to the fatherland,
A frail criminal charging charisma
His bills of defense, slogging the infinite
For pro tem signs that beauty betters us,
But fondling your pride's just more sloppy trot
Thru the bullshit bazaar, shouting bullshit!

Mark - And what's your stunt? Badmouthing morchella
Cuz you're a false morel? What's your moral
But amorality? Such a brisk limp,
Such erect dysfunction, gushing ridicule
Upon the hygenics that endue you
With sterile conditions to carelessly tweeze
Your stroma from our sanies, and for what?
To eat what's best in us in front of us.
If our purity's poison, loose what lips
You've left from its aggravating faucet
And leave the self-fracking to the boreholes.

JB - I told you, Megan. Kid's got icky licks.

Megan - He can talk stink, but I am rotten eggs.
 Mark - You fetishize revulsion to impress
 Self-serving provisos on pulchritude.
 Meg - That's just me burning in your effigy
 So when you, in a wet venereal tizz,
 Chinny-dip some peach petite for your sack lunch,
 Her bald, pampered form your hot xanadu
 Of stagey craft, I am there, in the seats,
 My clap clogging up your jubilant moans.
 Mark - Yet the world's applause ever drowns you out,
 Refiling your rageful inanity
 Under "three-fingered dire wolf termagant."
 Megan - Problem is, I'm the now in your birth bilge,
 Whispering out my wound, "breathe me, baby."
 Mark - Sure, you're around, but I'm on straightaway.
 Meg - Straightaway thru some slow-receding flood
 Where women sprout, you yank them from the earth,
 Wrap them round your face and dance thru the day,
 "I found myself! I found myself!" Boring!
 Over and over you go under and under
 And up again, a rally fed on flop.
 Mark - Why draggle me if this is how you feel?
 Meg - So I could mock you in front of my man.
 Mark - To love such a bed sore's to frag your dreams.
 JB - Yo, Wordboy, shut it. You don't fuckin know me.
 You saw me, you liked my girls, my party,
 We spit grammatic garble at the air
 And squeeze our fruits in compounded presses
 To divvy lexical menageries,
 But you don't fuckin know me. I'm a prop
 To you, and I dwell in the empyreume
 You on rare occasion rove and covet.
 Meg - His rizzle's just gas from the girls he gulps.

Mark pulls out his poem, Ode to Beauty, and reads it.

O beauty, sense has never shared itself
 So fully, with such pure, excessive rush,
 Such potent hue, as when it went for broke
 And spun us you. Confusion other touch,
 Yet when, with hope's huge hand, you tender spread
 Your holist self-unselfing spectra boundless,
 We bathe in a detemporizing light
 Illuming ways to wander that ingress

The scintillative symbol core, and we
 Who look therethru see essence unreduced,

Snort madly at your pollen swell, relieved
To be your trip of temporary truths,
For bliss infumes upon the pheromones
Of your frenzy gland, and covert coaxing all
Biune life to link freely to our brains,
You vertebrate the songs inscrutable

To lucid neolalia, sounding new
Our inmost echoes old, shot shapes reborn
By demolition to pulsation's primal
That grant the tongue its trophies multiform
And snag a bud forever isolate
That taste is one in service to the throat,
With curves ineffable and welcome turns
And flavors that hit every silent note

Of line's alluring obstacles to blench,
Leading us, marbles on a wobbly maze,
Into the ever-inward folding poem
That is a secret teased into a sage
Who loves the rawk of nature's ever laugh,
The sexual shining figure past all sight,
Who loves you, Beauty, past chaos or calm,
And will for just one peek absorb the blight.

JB - I'd say Wordboy won that one.
Meg - I sang you
Better on our shedding night.
JB - Megan, don't.
Meg - My house, my mouth.
Mark - Your shedding night?
JB - I'm here
To stave our living space. Why swim thru screams
That rasp from stock entitled human pain
Of imperfection struggling to perfect
Its past when there are festivals of love
Just waiting for our hands to yank our heads
From the rage rehearsed in quibbling covens?
I'm here to lift us, Megan, over us.
Meg - He hates to talk about our shedding night
Cuz he kept his skin; you leave a man out
For a second, and he goes bad for life.
JB - I let myself out of your bad for life.
Meg - See, me and Johnny, back then, were a thing.
JB - Yeah, like two trees thrasht into a thicket
By self-propelled vortextual headwinds.
Meg - He was at Harvard.

JB - She was a hazard.
 Meg - But when I heard him read at Woodberry,
 I knew it was time to change his IV.
 JB - She put me on that lethal drop-out drip.
 Meg - I became his muse.
 JB - For her amusement.
 Meg - His inscape bandog, his negatrix plus,
 His tour guide to truth around the bend,
 My goal to rid him of that natal flaw,
 The boyish need for beauty.
 JB - Beauty she
 Brandisht better than this boy'd ever seen.
 Meg - Ours is the lame age of minor poets;
 Sucking cheese out some sachem funding source,
 Pounding the beauty pulpit with soft fists,
 Ranting their pouts in one slim extension,
 They lose the opposite sex to become
 The opposite of sex so they can say
 They're not offensive toward their only goal,
 Enchanting us with one-sided pennies
 That could be yours as long as flipper calls.
 But in the rare a poet's born who's freak
 To dive the boiling epileptic cauldron
 Of paradox, where pleasure contradicts
 Its object, and respirating beauty
 Into volatility, is major.
 JB - She whispered like a limo on the moon,
 "Leave Harvard for my hyperpoetics,"
 So I'm a hunk a hunk a burning love.
 Meg - O we strode the stoitering gamut of sense,
 Thru neologe and slam adventure flickt,
 Careening crooked lines of nuance down,
 Drunk on song subverting the sententious.
 JB - Crimpt, dirty lurches were our bed.
 Meg - The sky
 Our shelter.
 JB - Distress, inspiration.
 Meg - Burrowing the earth's arcane elations
 In an n-th orthogonal spasmic nod.
 JB - Seducing our resolve with sickening.
 Meg - Darker than the stoplight you didn't see.
 JB - We lived inside the eddy of a poem,
 Our metaphors commixing metaphors.
 Meg - Death to the Barker narcs!
 JB - Nothing dehumanizes
 Like the Humanities!
 Meg - We must elude

Our predilections if we wish to sing
 A truth that's only true because it's sung,
 Which is the only truth worth its terror.
 JB - Each moment was a pulsing, timeless image.
 Meg - Every urge letter bound.
 JB - What words we were.
 Meg - Intention made the phrase, if law the line.
 JB - The spraddling sway of matter was our meter.
 Meg - The stranger the hitch...
 JB - The deeper the stich.
 Meg - Yet I could not escape the throttling nag
 The grandeur of his genes was still to splay.
 He took his plastic badge for the zesting sun;
 His coming out was often looking back,
 Like a stolen child free but funny for pain,
 And that old habit, beauty, still remained,
 Scrabbling the specs of some new perception,
 His liquid text, that palinodic quagma,
 O how I burned for him!
 JB - But who the hell
 Sees foreshadow in bright America?
 Meg - Poetry's a blind date with disaster
 That risks it all to drip one tongue-eyed dream.
 JB - Here's where the stunt double grabs the camera.
 Meg - We started inhaling ethanol, screwing
 In public restrooms, phlebotomizing
 Our nomic lifeblood into lower worlds,
 And soon we found ourselves on the freeway
 To Burning Man, but being so in love,
 We took our vows in Vegas, which of course
 Cried out for a flamboyant honeymoon,
 Yet since we're so alt wrong it couldn't be
 Some normal cherry-on-a-sword cocktail,
 We stumbled over the bar and ordered
 One His and Hers Romantic Fire Orgy,
 And going too far in the right direction,
 Consummated our union with a zippo.
 JB - Ain't I married a hell of a woman?

She pours scentless fuel from a cup into her hands and rubs it on herself.

Meg - I wanna burn.
 JB - Megan, no.
 Meg - It's water,
 Theater juice. Sniff it, like good ole times.

He smells it.

JB - Ok, but why?
 Meg - Because you fucking flincht.
 You took me all the way then left me there.
 Now look at me: the dud parrot you egg'd
 Of what you're too much man to manifest.
 So the least you can do is help me give
 My pain some purpose by showing Wordboy
 How we got to where he must never go.
 Mark - I'm fine.
 Meg - But you could be so much finer.
 JB - She's on the bed, basted in regular,
 Her lighter up like Lady Liberty.

Megan grabs a lighter and gets on the bed.

Meg - I am Lady Dying Young for Poetry!
 JB - That's not a lady I can love, Megan.
 Meg - That's cuz she speaks the truth.
 JB - She speaks my death.
 Meg - If you won't hear death, your life is a lie.
 Come pink and pop and peal that disguise,
 Pulverize the meccas of miming me,
 Become the stigma, fuck the frigid muse,
 Let the real move your organs, magnet-like,
 And its dead hands will verify your soul.
 JB - I'm not ready.
 Meg - You'll never be, so be,
 Or life will find a freer mind to gift.
 JB - Such a temptress.
 Meg - My lure is only love.

John gets on the bed.

Meg - *Him I saw who was my soul,
 Another kist his hair,
 Held his hand thru cities foul,
 Caresst him here and there;
 He is my soul, and so he knew
 That from afar I watcht,
 Yet no trace there of this review,
 His body moved unmatched.
 Yet as my soul, his beauty bore
 The mark of my devotion,
 Much like a pattern set before
 Our bond were his intention,
 That thru his voice, which is my peace,
 I hear alone his roaring for release.*

JB - And that's when I went backwards off the bed.
Meg - And I went up. Line?
JB - Wordboy's got no words.
Meg - Then let me pilot light the poet's lyre:
Here lies one whose name is writ in fire.

She lights the gas under the bed, it explodes, and she and John burn to death.

All exit.

Scene 20 - Harvard Campus. Enter Helen with an envelope in her hand.

Helen - Ladies and lessers, the future is female, and here is her present: a three story colonial on Professor's Row, and yes, that's original Flemish bond with walnut velvet interior; a lifetime membership and postmortem wall portrait at the Faculty Club, where scheduled prizewinners and ensconced opinionati in herringbone tweed power suits dictate our culture's demising misconceptions over an exquisite saffron drizzle; an office, just anent the quad, spacious yet palpably fraught, tome-crammed, diploma-bedeckt, high-end Horchow leather wing chairs rendered appropriately proletarian by casually draped and responsibly sourced Tibetan prayer flags, where I, when "working," grill and grace my disciples with the hieratical minutiae touching on the bigoted injustices of the various middle dim regions, for, as any qualified prepster can see, though I primarily jazzle in general linguistics, I care immensely about the redistribution of tangible resources according to the principles irrefutably established by my illustrious colleagues; and, of course, visiting lectureships, during which critical stints of communal knowledge infusion, I venture, begrudgingly yet generously, onto the fly-over campuses of, how shall we say, subpar semi-educational institutions, whose accreditation credentials strangely yet adorably include such solecisms as "higher" and "ranked," and where I, a renowned Harvard intellectual, expand and expunge, enlighten and enfuscen, instruct and deconstruct, mere instinctual effulgencies of my apotheote status, taking few questions, leaving far more, crossing my legs to say "I'm considering that" while rolling my eyes to say "that is beneath my consideration," sighing with charitable disdain when some state school mumblety-peg quotes from an online journal, and

then, with one final outrageously astute opaque observation, I take my leave, return to my penthouse executive suite, and in the warm moonlight that seems to say “you are my earthly internunciess,” I open my correspondence, predictably rife with accolades and opportunities, and read aloud, in the oral tradition, for I am, beneath all my folie de grandeur, a dame of the people.

She opens the envelope and pulls out a letter.

Hmm, official Harvard stationery. A small, early listing of the vast territory I shall someday raj above.

She reads the letter.

“Dear Ms. Vendler”... soon to be Dr. Vendler to you, dear one... “Thank you for your interest in Harvard”... no, Harvard, thank you for your interest in me... “After careful consideration of your application”... O, come now, let’s drop the formalities, shall we, for how careful must one really be when considering such an applicant?... “I am sorry to inform you that we are unable to offer you a place in the class of...”

Enter WJ to the side.

WJ - Psst, Helen, over here.
Helen - Impossible.
WJ - I can’t be seen in public.
Helen - Twitter! Guerrilla Girls! Southern Poverty Law Center!
WJ - Helen, what are you doing?
Helen - A reddit fascist regime has infiltrated our nation’s mails! Our civilization is under attack! We must stop this miscampaign of disinformation!

WJ’s phone rings.

WJ - Hey, dad. What? So open it. Yeah, yeah, O no. No. No. Yes, I submitted it on time. Yes, I ran my essay through nine grammar nazis. Yes, all my recs glowed like grandpa’s nose. Dad, you’re making those ayahuasca chimp set loose in a polling place sounds again. Dad, can you hear me? You’re breaking up, breaking...

He hangs up.

WJ - I didn't get in.
Helen - You didn't get in? I didn't get in.
WJ - You didn't get in too?
Helen - I didn't get in too? Yo, I got a lot less in than you.
WJ - Yo, I clockt an upperclassman.
Helen - Ha! I sack-checkt a professor, and...wait, you did what?
WJ - I went to the burnt woman's house like Hazlitt said and Gorgon and Bitchy showed up and Gorgon started harassing the burnt woman so I hit him over the head and Bitchy saw it, which is why I'm hiding.
Helen - Well, even if you had been accepted, you'd be expelled for clocking an upperclassman, duh.
WJ - And even if you'd been accepted, you'd flunk out cuz who's got time for homework when you're wack-specking professors, hu?
Helen - But neither of us were accepted.
WJ - Was accepted. The neither is singular.
Helen - O no, my conjugations are already chaturbating.
WJ - We're rejects, Helen. Cracked cello bows, baklava that fell into the babaganoush, a spelling bee contestant who misidentified the schwa syncope in respiratory, rejects, Helen, going nowhere getting nothing being no one rejects.
Helen - May I share a secret, WJ?
WJ - As long as I can tell everyone, cuz all I've got for holding things in is a life on hold.
Helen - That feels like a bet I'm best to lose.
WJ - Then lay it on me, girlfriend.
Helen - When Professor Hook-Up bent me over a bust of Dewey and conducted my admissions interview, this zany thought dribbled out the whimpers I knew too well and chuckt my morgenbesser yes O yes in the no pile: "All you've ever done, Helen, is take it in the rear so you can be in the front of the class. And where'd you get that little injection of injurious ipseity? Your family, which is a nightmare waiting to happen, so where are you really headed other than into the communal kiln like an urn getting fired up by the flames of focused ambition so it can someday house the ashes of that ambition's biggest chump?" So ya see? Maybe not getting into Harvard gets us into everything else. Reject? Nah, I'm a freeject. And I mean to make my own way, the hard way, which is the easy way if by success you mean getting so lost the

whole world's looking for you. Care to join me,
boyfriend?
WJ - Sure, but what are we gonna do without elite degrees?
Helen - We're gonna burn so hard they'll say we're stars.
WJ - What, like the burnt woman?
Helen - You can burn without getting burnt if you practice
proper fire safety.
WJ - Fire it up, Outta Here U!

All exit.

Scene 21 - Outside a Harvard classroom. Enter Alex, Clara, Haydon, and other students.

Student 1 - Did you hear the news?
Student 2 - I'm too busy cramming facts to hear things.

Student 1 hands Student 2 their phone.

Student 1 - "Three bodies were discovered this morning in the smoldering remains of a caretaker's cabin in Cambridge Cemetery. One casualty was identified as Harvard senior Gordon Mangusta Lavish III, another as John Wesley Brown, purveyor of an off-campus party barn, and one has yet to be named. A fourth person escaped the blaze and was treated at Harvard General for third degree burns. He was later cleared of any wrongdoing and released."

Enter Mark, his face and hands wrapped in gauze.

Alex - Mark, what happened?
Mark - I maybe got out alive.
Haydon - Were you there?
Mark - Not until I left.
Clara - Mr. Cute
Isn't quite fully down with giving it up.
Alex - He's hurt, Clara.
Clara - Yeah, who isn't?
Hay - Is it true
They're dead?
Mark - The bodies are too burnt to assess
What viabilities may linger therein.
Hay - Did Megan do it?
Mark - If you know Megan
Then you know that with her you never know.
Hay - Drop the fucking snark and tell me how they died.
Alex - O my god, you are him.

Mark - You are he, Alex.
Please preserve the predicative grammar
That deludes the subject into thinking
Identity does not objectify.

Hay - I loved them. John went there on my urging.
I wanted them to live. I wanted to live
With them, so just tell me what I have done
That I might terminate myself with truth.

Mark - You're looking at the truth. I'm what you did.
And that's why we go to Harvard, ain't it?
To get taught: that revenge has major stake
In the mistaken, that passion is highly
Perishable and must be refrigerated
On opening, that agony's ecstasy,
That only isolation can free its mind,
That fear's the lone decorum allowed
By knowledge, fear that mothers the million
Hyperboles, fueling frantic echelons
For an endemic culture we can control.
Megan lit herself and John on fire to show
We have and don't a stance for the violence
That separates our dreams from our desires,
So let you who cheered the speed apprise the crash.

Clara - Like this is so totes my fazizzle part
Of college – when the flowering injury
Enters the room and starts slapping everyone
With shame stickers. It's just so insanely
Instructive, it makes me wanna learn to talk
Without committing my mouth so I can say
Things like, "I'm not retreating or advancing,
Yet profusely I'm pusht," or "Count thy wrongs
To know thyselfes," ya know, so I can spout
Such victim dictum no one notices
I'm love-shoving my ill into their will.

Alex - I can only hope, Clara, that in the midst
Of your most precious confidence there lies
The least seduction of insecurity
And confusion, those open-air emotions
That let you hear the shy shalom of love
And all its segues hum.

Clara - I hear it now:
Fear nothing more than the safe in the space;
That sisterhood's on to efface your face.

Enter Professor Hazlitt.

Prof - Today we complete our study of Keats's

Ode on a Grecian Urn, so let us begin
 With the last stanza, starting to my left.

Alex - "O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed;"

Hay - "Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!"

Clara - "When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

Mark - "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, -- that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Prof - Yet here, neutered and solemn, we repose
 In ruly ritual that fakes to heart
 The expired scrip of some dead doctor's art,
 More lost than salmon swimming up a hose,
 For thinking just to flout what we propose,
 We lose our minds, which tools call feeling smart,
 To the gap between this new growth set apart
 For harvest and those wild, haunting willows
 That, left to leaf the scrublands of the self,
 Could seed no scorn for freaks who love us when
 We stop denouncing beauty as untrue
 And sickening our sex with mental health,
 But no more: class dismiss, all forgiven,
 As full blame I take and leave you to you.

The professor exits. All exit.

THE END