

Blasphemies on Forever: Remembering Queer Futures

Dustin Bradley Goltz

*Time is a construct.
Invented so we wouldn't miss
mass and meals,
births and bombing raids,
weddings and wakes,
meetings and monied accounts.
What is time?
A false finite; a blasphemy on forever.*

—Dennis Cooper¹

Scene #1 — “Nowhere, Baby”

DUSTY (Hereafter DBG) stands stage right, at the edge of a large projection screen covering the back wall. Stage left stands the second character, THE GHOST, played by Jason Zingsheim. They both wear white tuxedo shirts and bowties. Loud church bells begin to ring, and the poem “Time is a Construct” by Dennis Cooper is projected across the back wall.

DBG

(In SR dark corner, a la Tooter Turtle²)

Dustin Bradley Goltz is an Assistant Professor of Communication and Performance Studies at DePaul University. He is the author of *Queer Temporalities in Gay Male Representation: Tragedy, Normativity, and Futurity* (Routledge, 2010). His research has also been published in *Text & Performance Quarterly*; *Critical Studies in Media Communication*; *Qualitative Inquiry*; *Western Journal of Communication*; *Genders*; and *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*.

¹ Cooper, Dennis. “Time is a Construct.” 12, June 2012. <http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/time-is-a-construct/>

² Tooter Turtle is an animated character from the 1960s television program *King Leonardo and His Short Subjects*. In each episode Tooter asks his friend Mr. Wizard the Lizard to send him to different times or allow him to be some other person. The lesson, with each episode, is that Tooter gets himself into a big mess being someone else, and in a moment of crisis, calls for Mr. Wizard to bring him home.

“Oh Please Mr. Wizard, let me try?”

GHOST

(In SL dark corner, as “Mr. Wizard the Lizard”)

“Very well, my boy, but be careful.”

The video projects an edited sequence of images, beginning with Steven Carrington from “Dynasty,” with his soon to be deceased boyfriend, Ted Danard. “What is the plan Steven? Do you want to end up alone and miserable?” The words “alone and miserable” are looped over and over with a rapid succession of images of dinosaurs wailing, young boys paid for sex, Freddy Krueger, Boo Radley, the DBG suffocating under a mask of converse shoes, the setting of a formal dining table, and multiple images and motifs that carry throughout the performance. The soundtrack shifts to Ally Sheedy from “The Breakfast Club” narrating how it’s “inevitable” that “when you grow up, your heart dies.” Dinosaur growls are over-edited with the “Laverne & Shirley” theme song. Young children, from “A Nightmare on Elm Street” chant “One, two, Freddy’s coming for you. Three, four, ...”

On stage, as the video and audio play, DBG and Ghost move through a rapid “pose, hold, and move” physical intertextual sequence of obscure physical references from 1980s sitcoms. Beginning with the moment of camera recognition by Captain Stubing, Julie, and Isaac in the opening of “The Love Boat,” their two bodies mirror one another, as they mine the behind the back pancake flip from the opening of “Who’s The Boss.” Physical movements referencing “The Golden Girls,” “Perfect Strangers,” “My Two Dads” and “Diff’rent Strokes” are choreographed together in an intricate weave of references. Their faces bounce between hyper animated smiles to vacancy.

The video footage cuts together Faye Dunaway running in fast forward and rubbing her face with ice for “Mommie Dearest” with film clips from “Children’s Hour,” “Love and Death on Long Island” and “Rocky Horror Picture Show,” as Frankenfurter reveals his beautiful male creation by lifting a large red piece of fabric. The lifting of his fabric is juxtaposed with the snapping of a tablecloth, where wine glasses, china, and silver are carefully set around the table. On the video, we hear the DBG’s voice, muffled, like a distant radio broadcast.

DBG (VOICEOVER)

Dorothy, we have a problem. I try to trace my disappearance, but I am failing. I try to see beyond the future for something to hold out for, but I grow tired... I grow weak and uncreative... and I look for something to save me... some me to break out and escape. I still believe in the stories... our stories... they challenge the forces... rewrite, rework, and maybe, just maybe... recreate us

On stage, the Ghost places a large white sheet over the DBG, like a cape, and the waves his arms and lets the white fabric billow and flutter in the air. The DBG drops to his knees, and the Ghost, standing behinds him, mirrors the dancing motion. They look down to each other, to the left, and their right (referencing “The Brady Bunch”) and then turn to the audience and cock their heads slightly to the side with a vacant frozen smile.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Scene #2 —“That Lovely Toast”

DBG steps center stage, and Ghost helps place on his tux jacket, while handing him a champagne flute and wireless microphone.

DJ (VOICEOVER)

Now put your hands together, as the best man, Dusty, offers a toast to the bride and groom!

DBG

Kevin. Jules. *(Selects a couple in the audience to deliver the toast)* I love you both, as individuals, and as a couple. In this moment, I only hope that you are fully present and engaged, experiencing each and every wonderful feeling as it comes. And for the future...

I wish you a life and a love as passionate as a Nick Cave ballad

That is as playful as The Magnetic Fields

As patient as the Counting Crows fan

As cool as Emily Valentine on her first day at West Beverly

As anticipated and as rewarding as this season of *LOST*

That is as dedicated as Jules to her Blackberry

As honest as the crowd at a Neil Diamond concert

As unique as Kevin’s hair twist followed by a sniff

As thoughtful as a Cameron Crow movie soundtrack

As effortless as Jami Gertz playing a kooky Jewish American princess

As enthusiastic as a hard earned victory playing “flip cup”

As familiar as a Kailua and crème on Christmas

As unpretentious as a Dolly Parton song

And as exciting as the release of a new *Batman* trailer

To Kevin and Jules *(lifts glass)*

My you find a happiness and joy that exposes the artifice and shallowness of all the previous films referenced, redefining the dream in such a way as to make those fictional bastards jealous.

His glass is raised, and DBG takes a sip. “The Love Boat” theme plays with a video montage of Julia Roberts’ films and real-life magazine covers about her love life, marriage, and children. Ghost steps out from the side, takes the flute and microphone, and coerces DBG into hula hooping as part of his best man/supportive wedding-guest role. For thirty-some seconds, he hula hoops in pained compliance as Ghost encourages the audience to support him by clapping along. A thunderous dinosaur growl interrupts “The Love Boat” theme, as Julia Roberts’ face fades to white.

Scene #3 — “Creatures of the Night”

Sepia-aged video is projected of an unseen body turning on an old counter radio, making chocolate milk, and assembling a peanut butter and Frito sandwich. Once the sandwich is completed and cut in half, the video is then reversed. On stage, Ghost and DBG drape a large shimmery white sheet over the floor lamp stage left. They huddle into a tent with, their hands touching, silhouetted by a flashlight inside their “fort.” The voiceover is a deep male radio voice, crackly and interrupted by excessive static.

MALE COMMENTATER (VOICEOVER)

Good evening, America. Late at night when respectable citizens sleep after a long day at work, public parks, back alleys, and restrooms are crawling with the lowest form of depravity. These twilight creatures—the homosexuals—turn to the streets to feast upon the naïve and the innocent and spread their seeds of perversion. With no happiness, purpose, or future outside of misery, these creatures of the night seek revenge upon good, upstanding American values and families. Lock your doors, watch where you walk at night, and most important, protect your children, America! Our very future depends on it.

Scene #4 — “Grandpa’s Horny”

DBG and Ghost exit the fort, as strumming guitar music fills the space. DBG walks the microphone right up to the audience, center, and ties a red bandana around his head. In a Bruce Springsteen-esque mid-number monologue, DBG addresses the audience in a deep, gruff, slow-paced and often pausing masculine mumble. Ghost sits on a stool, upstage center; the video projection slightly interrupted by his the back of his white dress shirt. The video projection is a black and white still image of a worn-out Chuck Taylor Converse high-top with the words “Sometimes death is the sexiest one in the room” written in pen across the rubber base.

DBG

How are you all doing out there tonight? All right. Growing up, and when I first starting going to gay bars, my friends and I didn’t have the stories of some of our seniors. It was a different time. We were young. We were scared, and they were always sitting on that barstool, at the corner of the bar, waiting for us, mocking our dreams. Mocking our dreams. You all might know this one. Sing along if you like.

From the musical “RENT,” the music of “One Song Glory” begins to play, though the DBG sings different lyrics. The video projects a sequence of 80s horror film characters, including Freddy Krueger, Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, Cane from “Poltergeist 2,” and several other iconic representations of evil juxtaposed against images of aging gay males and dinosaurs.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

DBG

(sung) Grandpa's Horny

Grandpa's, wanting my ass, horny,
he wants to eat be-hind... MINE

Grandpa, by me a drink, Stoli,
for the pretty boy bottom,
who'll keep your sad ass company

Sing me, some crappy show tunes you love,
Judy, Ethel, Bette Barbra Liza, oh Liza !

Gosh dang, I'm so drunk, 50 bucks for the night,
pay me, I feel your tongue now,
grandpa, careful don't exert yourself...

eat Raw... Grandpa!

(Chorus) Horny!...My grandpa's horny!...
sexual... grandpa... grandpa!!!!

The Performer mails notes, while slowly gyrating, offering a fisting gesture, and arching his back while rotating his ass.

So, grandpa, can I crash here with you,
you've got a lovely condo,
and I'm all alone...NO?

I'm screwed, cause dad through me out,
born again, and I thought we were family,
you fucked me

asshole, you fossil, crusty crumbly old shit,
drop dead, no more rim job, grandpa,
you're a sad pathetic joke, you smell,
I'd rather die than end up like you,
Fuck off.

The song ends with the DBG flicking off the audience with both hands, removing his bandana, and walking the microphone off to stage right. Ghost and DBG each place a stool at the center of the stage, where they sit, as if in a movie theater, facing the back screen.

Scene #5 — “I Can’t Remember the Future”

On the video, is DBG, in gaudy drag. Melodramatic silent film music blares. The video is aged, in black and white, with sharp contrasts mirroring 1930s film. In the film, DBG is playing a heightened extreme of the female character who is unaware her absent lover is queer. She wears a black dress, pearls, heavy eye make-up, and ridiculously long eyelashes that are about to fall off. Ghost plays the tortured closeted male character who is sleeping with her queer lover. He wears a tuxedo and stares off longingly while sipping martinis. In front of the projection, DBG and Ghost sit, watching, cruising one another in coded and subtle ways, jumping back to a time when queer affection was always cast out of mainstream representation and intelligibility. They secretly flirt, touch, smile, and yet pull back quickly, aware they are being watched.

DBG AS FEMALE (ON FILM)

What do I do? If I tell him I love him, I could lose him forever.

GHOST AS MALE (ON FILM)

Honestly, my dear. You’ve already lost him. But there is still time for you to find yourself. To find that little piece of forever deep inside yourself that only you can grasp onto.... When you find that, you’ll see, he was always yours. Always yours. Always Dammit! (Swig drink and slam on table, sound matched on video)

DBG AS FEMALE (ON FILM)

(Melodramatic) Where are you going?

MALE VOICE

It’s a little late for that question, now isn’t it?

DBG AS FEMALE (ON FILM)

But will I ever see you again?

MALE VOICE

I don’t remember, don’t you see? I can’t remember the future. I have no recollection of it... ever. It’s almost like the future never happened.

In the film, the male storms out of the house, slams the door, and collapses against the closed door in melodramatic exhaustion. Inside the house, the female wails on the floor in agony, smeared make-up caked across her face, and the dramatic soundtrack crescendos. Ghost, after a secret “hook-up” with the DBG in the theater, abruptly exists at the end of the film, and DBG turns to address the audience. The floor lamp stage left slowly and softly flickers, under the white shimmery fabric – like furniture draped in an old house – throughout the next scene.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Scene #6 — “My Grandpa, the Ghost”

DBG

I have never met my grandfather. Having died from a heart attack at 45, stories of him provided our first and only introduction. Relatives I have met face-to-face comment on him, on us, how I take after him. His love of the arts, the pull of the theater, my nose being his nose, and how our likeness is “scary.” Their narrations of him, of us, left me wanting more... more details, more specifics, more him, as they only spoke in vague generalizations about this guy whose shadow colors me so vividly its “scary.” Shoulders shrugged when I begged for more clues. Logical replies, such as, “he wasn’t really around when I was growing up” are repeated by my mother with such a mechanical repetition, I’d swear the reply was beaten into her in some Manchurian Candidate brainwashing conspiracy. The excuse that “His times at home were infrequent,” would be set in front of me as routinely as a PB&J sandwich at lunchtime. His departures, his other life, always a mystery. On one rare occasion, when I think I caught her off guard, she divulged one more crumb. She said, “ Even when he was there, he wasn’t there. My father was a ghost.” It has been years since I’ve asked... At some point, I, like all of them, grew afraid. I stopped asking, because once I learned that my grandfather was a ghost, I began to feel him lingering in the margins of my vision, blurred, erased, yet so very present. I feel like he’s here, even when he’s not here.

Scene # 7 — “My 30-Year-Old Ass”

The video projects DBG in drag, wearing full makeup, a short brown wig, glasses, and flower pin, and sweater loosely around his neck. DBG plays the part of EDITH, a mature and seemingly older psychologist on the video. Edith speaks in dialogue with DBG on stage, timed to create the illusion of real-time exchange. The following text, “Therapist Edith, Year, 2003, Hangover: Mild” flashes on the screen. On stage, with the looming projection behind and over him, DBG faces front, seated in a chair.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

Let me try putting this differently. Okay, based on our work here, from my perspective, you do seem, to me, to be... well, a little immature for your age.

DBG (VOICEOVER)

My shrink said this to me as she glanced down at the floor. It took me a second to realize that she wasn’t looking at the floor, she was looking at my shoes.

DBG (LIVE)

What? Why are you staring at...?

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

(glaring at the floor)

They're Converse...

DBG (VOICEOVER)

...She threw out as if it has been on the tip of her tongue since our first session.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

...Half laced up, riddled with holes, and you have writing all over them.

DBG (LIVE)

They're very comfortable.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

And you still live with your parents...

DBG (LIVE)

...In some cultures, that is a sign of respect....

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

...and you throw keggers everytime they leave town....

DBG (LIVE)

...Community celebration rituals...

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

...Your longest relationship has been two, maybe three...

DBG (LIVE)

...Do you see how heterormative that is, trying to quantify love?

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

What do you want. What is it you want?

DBG (LIVE)

(Sincere) I want to dance in the desert, with large shimmering pieces of fabric.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

(Annoyed) Like a Belinda Carlisle video?

DBG (LIVE)

Exactly like a Belinda Carlisle video!

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Edith scribbles away on her notepad incessantly, pulling it in secretly when he tries to peek.

DBG (LIVE)

What are you writing? I'm feeling unsafe, I'm thinking we should up my dosage.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

(after taking a swig of wine) I'm going to ask you one more time. What do you want? Out of life, out of work, out of a relationship?

DBG (LIVE)

(sincerely)

"You really want to know. What I want in a guy. Well I'm looking for a dream on a mean machine, with hell in his eyes."

EDITH (ON VIDEO)

Oh my.

DBG (LIVE)

"I want a devil in skin tight leather."

BOTH EDITH (VIDEO) AND DBG (LIVE)

(sung) "He's gonna be wild as the wind."

The music for "Cool Rider" from "Grease 2" kicks in, and if it wasn't clear before, his answer was Michelle Pfeiffer's anthem from the film. They both sing along with the music, as DBG begins dancing around the stage as if he were Michelle Pfeiffer in the film. For a few bars, Edith sings along on the video, but composes herself. When she speaks the music abruptly scratches to a halt.

EDITH (ON VIDEO): I don't think this is productive...

DBG (LIVE): *(deflated)* I want to up my dosage...

EDITH (ON VIDEO): For the nine months we've been seeing each other.

DBG (LIVE): Woah, we are not "seeing each other," Edith.

EDITH: For nine months we have been in session, you have failed to write down one tangible long term goal, One goal! One ambition! One direction!

DBG (LIVE): I feel like *you* have some unresolved anger that I think we should process before moving....

EDITH (ON VIDEO): (*coming undone with anger*) Look at yourself! Do you ever comb your hair? Do you shave? You are a thirty-year-old man! A thirty-year-old man, Peter Pan! That's right, thirty. THIRTY YEARS OLD! THIRTY!!!

On stage, the DBG first laughs in confusion, before the repetition sinks in. Ghost appears, from the wings, carrying the large white sheet, which he holds up to block DBG's body from the audience.

DBG (VOICEOVER): What the hell is she talking about? Just because I am thirty doesn't make me a thirty-year-old man. Oh shit. Maybe it does. Oh shit! That means that when my boxers are hanging out of my baggy pants, that those are the boxers of a thirty-year-old man, ON A THIRTY YEAR OLD ASS! That would mean both of my brothers are "men." All my friends are "men." When we go out, we're like these thirty-year-old "men" going out. Kids will look at me with my Bon Jovi records, like I looked at those old dudes who liked Peter Frampton. Oh my god. I still have movie posters on my wall, UNFRAMED! I don't even shave, I just skim the long hairs with a hair clipper. I live on Tombstone pizza. I call my mom if I'm staying out late.

On the video is a sequence of images narrating his Voiceover breakdown (plumber's crack, yuppies at a bar, Peter Frampton album, DBG clipping his facial hair with a giant trimmer). At the end of the breakdown, suddenly lights begin flashing, the "Mr. Belvedere" theme song blares in the space, and the white sheet held up by Ghost is dropped to reveal DBG. He wears an Elephant Man-like mask composed of canvas from Converse shoes, a T-shirt with a screen print of a muscular chest, tight spandex shorts with a screen print of a penis, and ripped beige dancer's tights. An image of Mr. Belvedere is projected with a cardboard tongue dropping out of his mouth like a bad cartoon, wagging back and forth. On stage, DBG dances in jolting, awkward movements, referencing Tao Bo, break dancing, show choir, and Vogue. The movements are trying hard to be sexy, but they are stiff, awkward and grotesque, heightened by the nude-printed clothes and giant mask.

EDITH (ON VIDEO)
Hey... Hey (snap). Where did you go. Hi Friend. Hello.

The music stops, and [Performer] removes his mask, holding it over his "naked" body. He is lost and confused.

DBG (LIVE):
Can I ask you a question? When you turned thirty, did you kinda freak out?

EDITH (ON VIDEO)
Uh, hmmm. I'm actually 27. (*seeing his terror*) Would you like me to up your dosage?

DBG (LIVE)
Yes, Please, thank you.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Scene #9 — “My First Date (aka Why I Drink)”

DBG puts on black pants and his white tuxedo shirt, as he begins telling his story to the audience.

DBG

Dad was a drinker. He spent a lot in bars. My brother Hayden met his husband in a bar. Christian was a cocktail server. My other brother, Jeremy, met his wife, Brandi, in a bar. She was a bartender. So, whenever someone accuses me of being an alcoholic, I think, “No,” “No, Dust.” You are just waiting for the right person.

The first date I ever went on, I met him at a bar. I was doing the white boy two step and he was reapplying his Robert Smith eyeliner. The sparks were a flyin. We exchanged numbers and agreed to meet at Paradise Valley mall to see “Threesome” that Saturday.

When I arrived, doused in Drakkar Noir, he abruptly informed me he had to “run an errand”, and wanted to know if we could catch a later show. I said sure. He invited me along. I didn’t question. We hopped into his crappy hatchback and started driving (He was listening to RuPaul... I should have known then something bad was about to happen).

Twenty minutes of RuPaul later

“Where are we going?”

“To my nephews birthday party.”

Five more minutes of RuPaul, as the car turns into a cemetery.

“*Where* are we going?”

“To my nephews birthday party. He died last year.”

We pull up to a grave site, where about twenty people are hovering around. Balloons are attached to lawn chairs, presents and a giant cake are laid on the headstone. The crowd is in tears. On the cake, in big blue icing are the words, “Happy Birthday Eric!”

My date hits his shitty brakes, and the wailing chorus turns to inspect the car. “Oh, just so you know”, he turns to me, “I just came out to my family last week. They are a little weird about it.” I sat paralyzed trying to figure out what would Ferris Bueller do

in this situation. “Come on!”, he calls to me. I hesitantly open the door and stand up. The chorus of mourners, in one perfectly choreographed jerk, shot their bloodshot eyes directly at me, through my eyes, into my skull, desperately trying to make my head explode.

I stood away from the pack, reverently, sunglasses on, like the mysterious mourner, soon to be primary suspect, in a murder mystery. I wanted to tell them, “I’m not screwing your son or anything”, but there was no saving me. They all knew who I was. I was that gay murderer who had the gaul to show up at the deceased nephew’s funeral-slash-birthday party. HAVE YOU NO MERCY! One of the children was crawling on the grass, and reached over the grave to open one of the wrapped presents, which received a SMACK from the sobbing mother. “That’s baby Eric’s!” The child tipped over, and his arm and shoulder fell to the ground, crushing the cake. The mother’s body collapsed with an echoing wail of torment, and, for some reason, the entire crowd turned to me in disgust, as if they had read my very private thoughts. “Lady, baby Eric is not going to be opening that present anytime soon.”

The ride back to mall was silent. RuPaul seemed more perverse than ever. We got to theater, bought our tickets, and I excused myself to the men’s room. “I’ll come with you”, he offered like a total idiot.

(I cannot stress this enough. Whether you are gay, straight, bi, trans, or whatever, bathrooms are neutral territory on a date. Under no circumstances do you invade this sacred space.)

All I wanted was a moment to collect myself. I was completely stupefied by the whole dead nephew’s graveside birthday shin dig. I just needed to splash some water on my face and have a poor Dusty moment in the mirror. Instead, my date took the loudest, foulest, most sputtering deuce I have ever heard, smelt, or felt (Oh yes, the stalls shook).

Then, as we sat in the theater, he reached over and held my hand during the opening credits. I looked into his eyes. He looked into mine. I ran. I stood up, ran full speed out of the theater, through the parking lot, to my car, not looking back, in fear he was following me. Winded, confused, and repulsed, I went straight to the bar. You want to date me? You know where I’ll be.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Scene #10 — “Those Molly Ringwald Nightmares”

The space goes to complete blackness. A dark video projection begins, as the theme song to TV’s “Webster” blares at a annoyingly loud volume. On the video, there is a young boy, sleeping in bed with a teddy bear. Two figures, wearing hockey equipment enter the boy’s room. The figures pull open the boy’s legs, tear off his underwear, and then remove their own. The two attackers lube up the top of a hockey stick and force it into the boy’s ass. Towards the end of the video, we see the figures are both wearing masks over their faces. Ironic and playful, the attackers are Molly Ringwald and Andrew McCarthy from the film “Pretty in Pink.” As they continue plunging the hockey stick rhythmically, they sway and dance back and forth to the sitcom music in a ridiculous cheerfulness. Barely visible at the edges of the projected screen, on SR and SL, Ghost and DBG bob their head in unison to the cheerful tune.

Scene #11 — “(Not) My Best Friend’s Wedding”

DBG steps forward, and Ghost assists him in putting on his tux coat, and handing him a champagne flute.

DJ (VOICEOVER)

And now, please welcome to the microphone, your best man for this evening, Justin.
(*Awkward pause*) Please welcome to the microphone, your best man, Dusty.

DBG

(Directed to another man and woman in the audience)

I’m not sure why Paul asked me to give this speech today or to be his best man. Truth be told, I don’t really know Paul that well or like you that much, but I’ll do my best. Rock on. Paul, writes, “the day I met Jacqueline was the day my world opened up and swallowed me whole.” It’s a lovely image, huh? But, if I may, I’d like to attempt a translation. For years, Paul, was... how should I put it... He did a lot of drugs, was often out of his fucking mind, sorry Grandma Parker, and had no fear impulse to speak of. These were the qualities I used to find attractive in Paul. He’d jump off of, jump out of, hitch a ride to, snort, fuck, suck, and wrestle whatever came his way. Tomorrow had no voice, vote, or influence on Paul’s today, which made him one of the craziest and most interesting guys to know. God I wanted to fuck you. (*To Ghost, who is seated to the side*). Too much?

GHOST

Lil’ bit.

DBG

(Back to audience) Then, one day he met someone, Jacqueline, and suddenly time had a course- a direction, a runway. After 6 years of being passing acquaintances, I suddenly

saw this potential in Paul to be... such a blind and privileged ass. I always suspected Paul was gay... I think his parents did too, right? But after Jacqueline entered the frame, I think, for the first time, I could see just how straight Paul was. You lack conscience, reflection, or any concept of your own hypocrisy when you tell me its time to get a life, take that next step, to grow up. Well, fuck you Paul and this is for you.

(Raise glass)

To Paul and Jacqueline. To the pictures. To sucking it up for a few years of wanting to rip each other's eyes out until the little hellions arrive. To photos in front of the fireplace at Christmas, first walks, first tricycles, and a never-ending stream of photographic stamina... pushing you forward. To the endless parade of clichéd scripts, which all begin with two hands meeting, the most gentle of touch, and inevitably sink into a slow slow fade. – To Paul, Jacqueline, and the shit dreams are made of.

DBG raises his glass and downs it and then quickly walks off-stage.

Scene #12 — “Chick Chick Chicken”

(DBG stands on a table at the center of the stage, wearing a dingy yellowed plastic poncho. Ghost walks in front of him with a giant platter of buffalo wings, crouches down so that his face is in DBG's crotch, and DBG feasts on the wings in front of him. DBG begins to violently tear into the chicken legs like a starving dog tearing at a rotting and bloody carcass. Sauce, chunks of meat, and grease are smeared across his face, chin, and hands, as food is forced into his mouth, chewed up, then dropped back out. On the video, which is projected on their bodies, is black and white ghostly images of Julia Roberts and the DBG suffocating inside the Converse mask). A Voiceover plays over this scene.

DBG VOICEOVER

Standing in a spa in West Hollywood, I serve water and cold towels to the men secretly cruising one another in the steam room. My job is to keep them from messing around with one another. Needless to say, I am not very good at my job. I stand at attention... watching the space that exists between my eyes and the steam room door. For months I was convinced that if I looked close enough, stayed open enough, I could see the ghosts, next to me, among us, with us. Somehow the opening and closing of the steam door would briefly give the ghosts shape. I don't know who they were, who I so desperately wanted them to be, but I wanted something else, something else between me and all the beautifully sculpted, artificially tanned, white, thirty something, and organically moisturized men who stood in front of me. Something at corners of my eyes, the margins of my vision.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Scene #13 — “Steve the Friendly Dinosaur”

(Video ends with an upbeat fanfare, and the image of a happy cartoon dinosaur in tennis shoes. With his hands and face covered in spicy hot sauce, DBG playfully walks down to the audience and begins to tell his story, oblivious to how disgusting his hands and face are (both the sight and an overpowering smell). He taunts the audience with touching them, performing the role of the super friendly schoolteacher who playfully acts out characters at story time.

DBG

Once upon a time, in the land of now, there lived a younger dinosaur named Steve. And Steve went to the adult bookstore late one night to meet some other hot dinosaurs, which, like him, were horny and looking for some quick and anonymous sex. He stomped and cruised the back porno booths, surveying the man buffet before him. Suddenly from around the corner, appeared a giant, old, sweaty toothed T-rex. AHHHHHHHHH.

DBG selects one male from the audience and leans right into his face to breath on him.

His skin was crusted over, his eyes tired, and his body weathered and saggy. Steve froze, stayed perfectly still, trying to avoid eye contact. HHHHHHHH. HHHHHHHH. The T-Rex’s breath was rank, the stench of decay oozing from every exhale, as he leaned his snout into Steve’s neck to take in a deep sniff. Steve, quickly clomped away, but the Creepy, nasty old T-rex followed him. Steve tried to shake him off, but the T-Rex continued to follow him, monitoring his every move, pushing for some kind of eye contact. Steve kept his eyes averted, turning away, trotting side to side. The T-rex grew more and more angry, warm air shooting from his snout, teeth dripping with saliva, and continually blowing muffled frustration with each exhale. “Fucking asshole”... “Little fag punk.”

Cringed in terror, Steve’s tail began to curl, and the night’s objective of a blowjob had become less and less appealing. Steve was about to flee, when suddenly a baby brontosaurus swaggered through the cruising zone, demanding everyone’s full attention.

DBG selects a male audience member across the room and runs up to him, fawning on his, almost caressing his face with his filthy fingers.

So young, and so beautiful was this brontosaurus that Steve was instantly taken. This kid was like a porno fantasy or some locker room memory from high school that Steve would play over and over in his masturbation fantasies, for years to come, desperate to preserve each visual detail.

Steve played it cool, letting the raptors, the T-rex, and the pterodactyls swarm around the baby brontosaurus... sniffing him out, feasting on his scent. Steve knew the kid could smell their need, their hunger, their desperation, and so Steve feigned disinterest. Steve stepped into an empty porn booth, and before long, the kid had followed him inside.

DBG moves center stage and stands in a dim spotlight.

The monitor in the booth played the introduction to a porn segment. Two travelers, lost in Europe, fumbling for a street map. "A profound plot", Steve joked, but the brontosaurus muffled a barely audible response, his eyes fixated on the porn screen, perfectly still. He wasn't speaking, but he wasn't leaving either. Several seconds passed. The brontosaurus remained frozen, staring blankly forward, waiting. "Do you want me to leave," he mumbled. "No," Steve contested abruptly. "I'm Steve." Without averting his eyes, the boy said, "Charlie" in a matter of fact whisper. "Don't worry, I'm legal." Charlie remained frozen, waiting for Steve to attack... an offering. Steve felt awful, ashamed of himself, as he slowly began sniffing the boy, taking in his scent. The boy, however, was unresponsive. "Do you want to fool around," Steve asked. "I'm here, aren't I" Charlie replied as he unbuttoned his pants. Standing there, frozen, pants to his knees, Charlie waited, staring at the screen.

Every inch of this little brontosaurus was so perfect, so beautiful. His skin was soft, his cock medium and clean. In all the dinos Steve had been with, Charlie was the greatest yet. Steve being sucking him off, but Charlie stood still and silent, seemingly not into it, except for the occasional grunt and growl. Steve felt terrible, and wondered if he should stop, but he was amazed by this kid, his taste, his smell. He desperately wanted the brontosaurus to cum in his mouth. He never lets strangers do this, but he wanted so badly to taste this boy. To taste this perfect boy. Charlie got closer, more groans, deep warm, sweet breath shooting out of his nostrils, signaling Steve to pull back, but Steve didn't. Steve blew faster and faster and faster, and just as Charlie came, he pulled Steve's head away and shot his load to the side. Steve managed to catch a little bit of his front leg. Right by his foot. He hid it from Charlie, for some reason, pulling his front leg to the side. Steve asked if he was all right, aware of how pathetic he sounded, Charlie zipped up his pants and waited to be dismissed. "Take Care" Steve mumbled, ashamed of himself. Charlie looked so disgusted with Steve, letting out this deep, pained exhale, as if he expected Steve to say something else. Steve didn't. Charlie left. Steve looked down at the ejaculate on his front leg, he smelled it, and then he jerked off to it. The cum of the perfect boy. He came instantly, and then he left. As he walked by all the raptors, and pterodactyls, and the nasty old T-Rex, he knew something was different. His scales had grown harder, crustier. By accident or defeat, Steve allowed the T-Rex to catch his eyes for just a moment and they silently looked at one other... no anger, no expression.... Just the stench of

Dustin Bradley Goltz

decay and an absent meeting of eyes. The T-Rex looked down as Steve passed him by. He heard the T-rex say in a muffled whisper, “take care.”

Scene #14 — “Not me TV”

Ghost tosses DBG a damp towel, and he wipes off his face and hands. DBG changes into a silver superhero cape with a gay republican sticker on his chest. Ghost wears a boy scouts uniform and a red cape. The music from the TV show “The Greatest American Hero” fills the space. DBG sings the song with altered lyrics, as Ghost stands next to him, as couple, enacting a tableaux sequence of the normative suburban white gay male couple. During the song, the video projects a sequence of normative and white gay media images (“Will & Grace,” “Dawson’s Creek,” etc.) with repeated imagery of patriotism and 1950’s suburban iconography.

DBG

(Sung) We’re just as white as can be-e
We act like the boys next door
No longer the pervert or predator
We’re American to the core

(Chorus) Believe it or not,
We’re straight acting gays
We never thought we could be on Must See TV
Flying away to adopt again
As normal as normal can be
If you would just let us marry.

So next time you see us gays out on the street
Perhaps at the church or the mall
Wave “Hi” to these friends of America
We drive the same SUV after all.

Both hold capes to the side in a triumphant and heroic performance.

(Chorus) Believe it or not,
We’re white waspy gays
I never thought I could be so suburban.
Flying away to the PTA
Living our life by God’s plan
Three kids, two dogs, and my man

Our lives are really a bore
We don’t even fuck any more

Ghost walks off pissy/whiney about the last line and DBG is oblivious, dramatically holding the final note.

Scene #15 — “Belinda and I”

DBG removes cape and sticker, and sits center, holding a childhood blanket on his lap.

DBG

In elementary school, I shared a bedroom with my brother, but on the days when my brother was away, or the nights he slept over at a friend’s or was off on a hockey trip, that room became the most exciting space I have ever inhabited. I was a young, thin, pale-skinned boy with hair so blond it was white. "Tow head," they called me. My mother’s friends would caress my hair and say they would give anything to have hair like mine— long, shaggy, white, consistent. I understand that now. I’d give anything.

In that room I would spin in circles and turn from Diana Prince into a force to be reckoned with.

DBG leaps onto a table, playfully, yet seductively.

I’d transform to Wonder women, and rescue major Steve Trevor, who was tied to a chair and we’d have the hottest, kinkiest sex (and I’d play both parts). I would dance my Sarah Jessica Parker, “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun” Dance, winning my rightful place as a DTV regular, and transform myself with soft yellow blankets, crisp white sheets, and an imagination that I now mourn.... An imagination that has long since been lost. An imagination whose absence is rendered present by the dull ache I feel in the times I am alone as an adult. Spaces of potential have turned to places of regret.

I wish I could move backwards.... Before the crisp white Mormon shirts, the pathetic longings for white weddings, and white hospital beds drenched with tears of suicidal, shame-filled- self-loathing stories and just dance, in the desert, with large white shimmering pieces of fabric blowing in the desert wind.

(Ghost enters from behind, as DBG stands on the table. He hands DBG the white sheet, helping him to realize his lost fantasy. As DBG waves his arms, draped in fabric, in the air, Ghost billows the fabric from behind.)

You and me Belinda, in one giant Tampax commercial that never needs to end! Come on... Dance with me in the “Summer Rain,”³ and “I Get Weak.” We’ll draw “Circles

³ All the quotations in this paragraph are the names of Belinda Carlisle songs.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

in the Sand,” I’ll “Leave a Light On” for you,” cause I’m “Mad About You.” Do “I Feel the Magic?” Oh Yes, “Heaven is a Place on Earth” and “I Feel Free!”

I remember that magic, and potential, and a constant state of production that was systematically corrupted through half-assed answers to the most beautiful of questions.

I wish I could reenter that space again. Dance, draw, and imagine myself in the ways I once did— a fairy, a hero, and angel, a crime fighting, sequin wearing dominatrix who could have a four-person orgy all by herself. I wish I could reassure that horny and flamboyant little tow head that all the ways he doesn’t fit are so fucking precious. And all the ways he will try to fit the world outside this room, and eventually will start to fit the world outside this room, come with a price.

He’ll surrender his creativity for a community development blueprint, sketching lines, and walls, and parameters that he cannot erase, cannot redraw, and cannot imagine a time when they weren’t there. If I could go back, I’d ask that mystical tow head to draw me a different picture. The lines on his blueprints would bend and break into one another, dancing on and off the page, rejecting the margins they impose. Marker and crayon lines would faintly slide off the tracing paper, onto the desk, off the edge and into the air, continuing their journey out of the window past that large Maple tree.

The monologue ends awkwardly, held in stillness, and a feeling of deep regret and lack of closure.

Scene #16 — “Dancing with Death: A Romantic Comedy”

Bette Midler’s “Do you Want to Dance” fades in as DBG enters a gay bar space. He turns as a large door opening is heard. Death enters, although the character is only heard in the Voiceover and never seen. DBG sizes him up, puts on a smile, and begins flirting. Throughout the scenes with Death, images of Molly Ringwald and John Hughes’s “Brat Pack” stars slowly burn in the background.

DBG
I’m Dusty

DEATH (VOICEOVER)
(Extremely deep, booming voice that shakes the room)
I’m Death

DBG
Cool name, wanna drink?

DEATH
I'll take an Amstel Light

DBG
You got it!

DBG gestures to Ghost, off on the side performing bartender, for the beer. A cell phone rings and Ghost quickly hands DBG a rainbow lei.

DBG
I'm so sorry, I have to take.... Hello?

DBG puts on the lei and answers the phone. The text of this cell phone exchange scrolls on the projected screen, in a screenplay format, drawing attention to all the white space floating around these minimal Hollywood exchanges. The Male Voice is recorded and timed to create the illusion of "real-time" with DBG, live on stage.

MALE VOICEOVER
Thank god, there you are.

DBG
(Suddenly DBG is extremely flamboyant)
And here you are. What do you want?

MALE VOICEOVER
Please, I know I messed up...

DBG
Understatement of the year. She dumped you. I support that. I'm cruising someone hot, so piss off.

(DBG rips off lei and, drops flamboyant performance, and returns his attention to Death)

DBG
(To audience)
Death is playing hard to get, eyeing another hot guy across the room.

DEATH
Well Thanks, see you around

DBG
Hey, wait... I mean, uh, you're Death. You've got to have some good stories?

Dustin Bradley Goltz

DEATH

“I have enough stories, now I want a life?”

DBG

I know that line. “28 Days!” God, I hate that feeling that Sandra Bullock knows something I don’t.

DEATH

I know what you mean.

Cell phone rings again. Ghost throws DBG another rainbow lei. Text of exchange scrolls on screen again, interrupting burning Molly images.

DBG

(Flamboyant again)

Fuck! What?

MALE VOICEOVER

Please. Just tell me where she is?

DBG

Why would I do that?

MALE VOICE

Because....

DBG

Time is passing....

MALE VOICE

Because you are her best friend. You know her better than she knows herself, and you know that if she marries that jackass, that spirit that burns inside her will fade away. Don’t let that spirit fade away.

DBG softens, holds in overly performed tears. Lick the Tins “I Can’t Help Falling in Love With You” triumphantly begins playing in the background.

PERFORMER

She’s on the seven o’clock to Hawaii. You can borrow my car!

(The music blares, as DBG holds a triumphant fist in the air pose of celebration, anticipating the reuniting of the heterosexual couple. DBG holds false excitement for a moment, but then rips off the lei, drops the flamboyance, and returns to Death)

DBG

So, Death, you want to get out of here? Go back to my place?

DEATH

Sorry, you're a little old for me. But, thanks for the beer.

Scene #17 — “Melancholy Postmodern Sitcom Tragedy Sampler”

The scene in the bar, and the overall special logic of the show seems to dissipate in this moment, DBG walks forward, dumbfounded. “Girl For all Seasons” from “Grease 2” begins to play. The video projects video footage of DBG grinding on top of a giant black bearse, dancing around the car erotically in a tuxedo.

DBG

I'm literally thrown into a *Grease 2*, Stephanie Zanoni moment. “Girl For All Seasons” is going on all around me, but my breakdown moves in fast-forward, as I decompose and vanish before my eyes.

DEATH

(Echoed in repetition)

Sorry, you're a little old for me. But, thanks for the beer.

A rapid video sequence of bearse grinding and dancing continues, as the song “Turn Back the Hands of Time” from “Grease 2” plays. The following dialogue from the film is embedded in the song, and DBG desperately mouths the words with conviction.

STEPHANIE (FROM GREASE 2 VOICEOVER)

“It all seemed so unfair. Just when I found you, I lost you.”

MICHAEL (FROM GREASE 2 VOICEOVER)

“That doesn't matter now. The only thing that matters is to keep our love alive. So Stephanie, don't forget me!”

DBG

I promise! I'm “All Cried Out”⁴ over you Lisa Lisa, I'm “Lost in Emotion,” “Hit the beat now!” That's right, Expose, “You take me to that point—that point of no return!”

⁴ Quoted text in this line, are, once again song titles or lyrics.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

“If You Were Here” by the Thompson Twins (from the final scene in “Sixteen Candles”) fades in. On the video are black and white video sequences of older men, sitting alone on barstools inside bar spaces.

DBG

My head races back to that time, in my room, sprawled out against brick walls like Martika, “Talk Hard,” says The Eat-Me-Beat-Me lady to Happy-Harry hard-on.⁵ “Cause the future is Electric Youth!”

DBG

(Timed with music, he performs Jake Ryan at the end of “Sixteen Candles.”)
“Yeah, you...”

DBG, having an intertextual meltdown, freaks out and calls to Mr. Wizard the Lizard, in the voice of Tooter Turtle from the opening of the performance.

DBG

“Mr. Wizard? Mr. Wizard! Get me out of here!”

Ghost jumps on stage, tapping DBG on the shoulder, as the “Growing Pains” theme song plays. Images of Julia Roberts and her million-dollar laugh and smile are projected. DBG and Ghost recognize each other, then recognize the audience with a large smile, as in most sitcom openings, and strike an iconic “buddy” pose. The music stops, as he yells...

DBG

(His voices echoed and layered on recording and live)

Fuck Facebook! A message from a childhood buddy sends my 34-year-old mind reeling. A boy I was friends with, a pal from long ago is queer. I didn’t know. He didn’t know. I am thrown. His voice, even in cold typed font, sounds so broken...

Ghost, on his knees, grasping on DBG’s leg, slowly rises, as if to kiss. On the screen, the words “It’s been a long time, buddy” are typed on the black projection screen in typed white letters.

PRERECORDED MALE VOICE

I’ve had some rough years, but I’m starting to be better. How were the 90s for you?

“How weird, that both of us...” is typed on the screen, followed by “I’ve had some rough years...”

DBG

(Right before the kiss)

⁵ Reference to the late 80s film, “Pump Up The Volume.”

Fuck! Suddenly I'm drowning in "what ifs." (Echoed voices overlap) I project all my shit onto him... the years of alienation, shame, regret, suicidal crap... all those things I have put into a box labeled late teens, early twenties angst, and stored away...

An image of an empty ashtray is projected, and in a sequence of ten still shots, slowly overfills with cigarette butts. There is a quick cut through multiple film clips from the opening of the show, including Suddenly Last Summer as Sebastian is killed, John Hurt standing isolated on a pier at the end of "Love and Death in Long Island" and "Mommie Dearest" as Faye Dunaway violently throws all her clothes in a closet to the side.

PRERECORDED Male Voice
"How were the 90s for you?"

DBG

I think back and realize what I could have done, what I never allowed myself to feel, to give, or to receive. (More echoes)

"One Day at a Time" theme song plays, "So up on your feet. Up on your feet. Somewhere there's music playing...." Ghost and DBG leap into the sequence of sitcom tableaux from the opening, including "Who's the Boss" and "Golden Girls" references. On the video, feet playfully dance, wearing Converse high-tops. "One, Two, Freddy's coming for you" from "Nightmare on Elm Street" interrupts the soundtrack. The feet disappear into thin air, and the video cuts to an empty bookshelf, that in ten quick still cuts slowly fills to more than capacity. DBG mechanically waves his arms in the air, as if dancing with Belinda, lost in a moment, until the "M.A.S.H." theme fades in. In the fort, which is the lamp covered with the white sheet, Ghost turns on a flashlight and holds his hand out, stretching the sheet, to touch DBG who stands next to him. Their hands meet and hold contact for a moment. DBG speaks over the music.

DBG

I remember the times we, as young boys would spend time at each others homes, the kindnesses we granted one another, two "Islands in the Stream," love lifting us "Up Where We Belong," "a little ditty about us," "making our way the only way we know how..."⁶

Cell phone ring interrupts DBG. From inside the fort, Ghost pulls out a rainbow lei and tosses it to DBG who puts it on while answering the phone. The screenplay text, on a white background, quickly cycles through again, textualizing the phone scene.

DBG

(Overly flamboyant again)

⁶ The quoted text are song titles, as well as lyrics from "Jack & Diane" and the theme song from "The Dukes of Hazard."

Dustin Bradley Goltz

Hello? She's on the *seven* o'clock to Hawaii. Now, Go get that girl!

Once again, DBG holds a triumphant fist in the air pose of celebration, anticipating the reuniting of the heterosexual couple, holding pained excitement for a moment, as romantic music builds to a climax. The opening of the "Laverne & Shirley" theme, "One two three four five six seven eight" interrupts his posed celebration, and He and Ghost quickly move through a sequence of iconic poses, ending in a waltz. They dance, to the theme song of "Punky Brewster." The video projects an image of an animated depiction of Peter Pan flying over Neverland, followed by a faceless figure smoking against a brick wall and vanishing slowly into thin air.

DBG

Had we known, had we been there for each other.... Two skinny little boys caring for each other

Lyrics of theme song play, "Maybe the world is blind..."

DBG

... How different might our world be?

Theme continues, timed with DBG's line, "Or just a little unkind..."

DBG

(Along with theme song lyrics)

Don't Know

Ghost and DBG stop their waltz, and face each other and bend, as if playing "London Bridges Falling Down." Slowly they rise to look each other in the face, mouths just inches away, as the "Who's The Boss" theme plays, "There's a chance I'm taking, a road not taken. The choice is up to you my friend..." The video plays a rapid sequence of picture frames that zoom into a blank middle, where the frames, themselves, disappear at the margins of the screen.

The music stops, and the video projects two hands on a keyboard of a computer, hesitant, typing and then deleting words, and then freezing throughout the entire voiceover. On stage, Ghost turns a passive DBG to face the audience, picks up the white sheet and lovingly drapes it over his arms.

DBG VOICEOVER

I experience a never-happened embrace between our eleven-year-old bodies as a thirty-four-year-old man, the embrace I didn't ask for, or know I needed until it randomly walked up to me and opened its arms, and I collapsed inside it and sobbed. My narratives of progressing beyond the past unravel before me.

Ghost then lifts DBG's arms up in the air, as the "Diff'rent Strokes" theme plays, "Everybody's got a special kind of story. Everybody finds a way to shine." On the video, an empty mantle is slowly

filled with picture frames in ten quick still cuts. A dancing body sways in slow motion as a distorted breathing is heard. Days are "X'd" out on a calendar in rapid succession. On stage, DBG dances slowly with his white sheet, as Ghost stands behind him.

DBG VOICEOVER

Dorothy, we have a problem. I try to trace my own disappearance, but 'm failing.

On stage, wrapping himself up in the white sheet, DBG crunches into a ball. Standing above him, hands on DBG's shoulders is Ghost, wearing the large mask constructed of Converse shoe canvases. The video plays the slow accumulation of laundry in a hamper and the setting of a formal dining table. The "Taxi" theme fades in and plays over the dialogue.

DBG

That kindness, you know? That hope? I wonder how we'd see differently, having gotten that hug. Now that I am a thirty-something year old man who bleaches chunks of his dark hair light blond, refusing to let it grow out of me. A man who, when he gets depressed, goes home, and puts on his theme song in the dark, and just wonders to himself, what would it be like to hear this song while riding in an actual taxi.

Ghost, standing over DBG removes his mask.

GHOST

(As the Wizard)

"Oh! Here we are again. Dweezle, dreezle, drazzle, drone. Time for this one to come home."⁷

The counting from the beginning of "Laverne and Shirley" replays, "Five six seven eight..." And Ghost and DBG move through another extended tableaux sequence of sitcom poses, mirroring the opening of the show. The theme from "Alice" plays, "Going through life with blinders on, it's tough to see. I had to get up, get out from under and look for me." An extremely rapid collage of images flashes across the screen, from normative gay couples on TV, to Freddy Krueger, to Julia Roberts, to Dinosaurs, to "Will & Grace," to Uncle Saul from "Brothers & Sisters," to Wedding Cakes, to arrested gay males from a 60s raid. The sound goes silent and the lights drop to black, except for the dim light of the lamp SR.

DBG

(In dark)

The email from him twenty years later sends me reeling, in shame: shame for who I am, shame for who I might have been, shame for who I might have potentially seen myself as possibly being someday far off. So I write him back....

⁷ Again, this text is from Tooter Turtle, and the Wizard delivers these words at the end of each episode to summon Tooter back to his life.

Dustin Bradley Goltz

(Sung) “There's nothing we won't try.
Never heard the word impossible.
This time there's no stopping us
And we'll do it our way, yes, our way
Make all our dreams, come true”⁸

Its good to hear from you friend, I too am trying to figure out where to start. How to start. I trick myself into thinking that I cannot wait till this Ph.D. is over, so I'll have time for a life, and I say that with a confidence that implies I have a clue what that means. A Life. Next? I start with what I know. I've decided to have a dinner party. It's what I have right now, because those who don't remember the future are destined to repeat it. It begins with the exit, and the trace that lingers. I look forward to seeing you. I hope you can make it. Your buddy, Dust. PS- Please don't send me any of that green patch crap.

Scene #18 — “Gay Weddings”

Lights come up. Ghost taps champagne flute to get attention of audience. DBG puts on tuxedo jacket and addresses the audience.

DBG

Today Jimmy and Brian follow a tradition that honors tradition itself. Traditions of their parents, that of their rearing, and yet they stand on the cusp of a second liminality. Marriage is not new. From our first breath, it is there for us to define the future, to structure a template for the years we spend in this life. Queerness is not defined. It is open, it seeks out and celebrates the potentiality that each present and each new moment affords—it celebrates brave and fearless discovery, never mapping, yet illuminating a new terrain. A new terrain of... of

(He puts down the card and pauses, realizing he's lost everyone and is too in his head)

Hey Brian, do you remember being 18 and us thinking that once we came out we'd find this sea of fascinating queers who live their lives in ways we had yet to imagine? Remember the countless pride events, parades, and parties and not really paying attention to what was going on in the spaces to our left or our right? Who these people really were? As if the world revolved around me and you and the cute boys we would single out in seas of thousands of faces, leaving the rest of those thousands a blur. And how that blur has come to haunt me, as those faces turn to ghosts.

⁸ Lyrics from the theme song to “Laverne & Shirley.”

The video comes on, looping a short sequence from the film “My Best Friend’s Wedding” when Rupert Everett disappears into the airport and the camera follow Julia Roberts.

Where do you think he is going? When George leaves Julia Roberts at the airport to head home. What do you think he leaves, when he returns at the end of the movie to dance with her?

Looped video moves to dinner party scene in the film, where groups of people are seated around the table. It replays a quick moment of the film repeatedly, with the faces blurry and hard to decipher.

When Julia calls during his dinner party, leaving an embarrassingly long message that interrupts whatever discussion was taking place, what do you think they were talking about? Who were these blurred faces seated around the table, never the focus, yet still present. Why were they having dinner? What were they celebrating? Maybe one of them was that lost uncle from one of our families who just disappeared. The one who moved away who we weren’t supposed to talk about. The one who if you asked, “whatever happened to Uncle Matty” the table grows silent and you get reprimanded because we don’t talk about what happened, what happens, or what might happen to Uncle Matty, leaving him forever elsewhere, a ghost, a blur, out of focus.

Raises flute. Looks left down to a sea of seen, but not-visible faces. Looks right to the same.

We’ve spent so many days and nights being haunted by the ghosts of future. They visit us; they speak in questions without any answers. And they celebrate you, Brian, Jimmy, all of us, but they ache for more. They call to our strength. They whisper to our creativities, and they cry out at our submissions. They are here. They are with us, at the exits, in the blurred corners of our vision, gently guiding our attention to the not yet imaginable. They leave us with questions, and beg for us to see beyond the trappings of being in focus, to look far beyond the future, to draw the impossible, to dance in discovery, and to honor those traditions not yet in existence. To Brian and Jimmy. May you never fall victim to the burdens of “what next.” And always play in the potentiality of “what else?”

Ghost meets DBG center stage and DBG pours each of them a glass of champagne. They toast together, and then separate on opposite sides of the audience to watch the final film.

Scene #19 “Write Your Own Ending”

The video plays the ending song from “The Muppet Movie” with Kermit singing, “Life’s like a movie, write your own ending, keep believing, keep pretending...” The video projects a sequence of clips, intercutting a set table for a the dinner party, a Belinda Carlisle video in the desert, Michelle Pfeiffer dancing in “Grease 2,” Edith the shrink, the DBG in bad 20s drag, shoes dancing, and a

Dustin Bradley Goltz

series of motifs from the show. At the close of the video, an image of a large blank frame is zoomed in on, until the frame itself is no longer there. Ghost and DBG, in and with the audience, raise their glasses to toast.

End



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>; or, (b) send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 2nd Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.