

An Empty Box of People

Written by: Nico Swenson

Music by: Max Shinn

(Music: 1 Intro Song)

D. G. Tate

(into her phone)

Listen!... no listen,

Listen....

I'm coming up right now.

Out of my way

No not you

No not to you

To one of your schmucks

Yes your workers

I call them schmucks

There just like you

Animals--

In a zoo

And this is it

I'm coming up

And if your with her than I quit

I can't be married to whore.

A corporate whore!

(She runs into Franklin pushing and her cellphone falls into his mailbag during the collision)

Franklin

My cellphone!

I am so sorry mam

My cellphone!

I'm am so sorry really sorry

But will you help me find

My cellphone!

Sorry Sorry ma'am

Will you shut up

Can you hear me roger

What a klutzy move of mine

You are a whore!

I am so sorry ma'am

IT'S FINE!

....

....

Would you push the elevator button?

(Franklin does as she finds her cellphone and they get in)

He hung up!

Really, I am so sorry ma'am

John

(While pushing the elevator button)

I'm late I'm late I'm late I'm late I'm late

Really, I am so sorry mam

It's fine

Open the door

I'm just mad

Because my husband

Is a whore

Open the door

Who is your husband mam?

Your boss.

My Boss?

My boss

Is going to kill me

If again I'm late

Roger Tate

Your Mrs. Tate?

(Elevator opens and John pushes in, shoving Franklins Mailbag around)

Excuse me sorry

It's just you see

I'm very late

Euma

Wait!

This elevator

I'll hold the door

I cannot wait

This elevator	This elevator	This elevator	<i>(She gets on)</i>
This elevator	This elevator	This elevator	This elevator
Is so		Is so	
Old	Old		
	I don't know how it	I don't know how it	
Operates	Operates	Operates	Operates

(Door "closes". Guarmo walks in and pushes the budget and waits fidgeting)

			Guarmo
			La la la la la
			La la la
Lala	lala	lala	lala
Lalala	lalala	lalala	lalala

Mince
*(Entering and
flirting with
Guarmo)*
Guarmo
Mr. Guarmo
Are you waiting for
an elevator ride

...yes

Do you care
if I wait here

That's a little close

Just by your side.

I'm standing here!
(Elevator opens)

What are you Queer?

Step inside.

He's running late

Step inside!

Excuse me?!

This is too much I'll move my cart Please get inside we weigh too much Can't I just flirt?
We weigh too much everyone is in I am too late we weigh too much! This is too much Hello there john

(doors close completely)

lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala
lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala lalala lala

(Screech! Lights go out!)

Euma:
(Screams!)

Moment: Talk Dies.
(still dark)

...
(screaming
multiple people screaming)

Tate:
Stop it!
Stop it!
Stop it!
(Long Silence)
Thank you.

John:
Thank *you*.

Franklin:
Arthur?

Tate:

Who is Arthur?

Franklin:

I thought Arthur was on the elevator.

John:

Who is Arthur?

Franklin:

Oh, I don't know, I don't know him very well.

Euma:

(Screams)

Guarmo:

SHUT UP!

Euma:

I can't shut up! No one is going to *hear* us if we just sit here chatting about strange men who we may or may not know!

Franklin:

Oh no, Arthur's not strange at all. He's a very nice man. I just don't know him very well.

...

Euma:

(Screams)

Mince:

Stop it!

Stop it!

Would you shut up!

I'm sure they already know we're in here. And when they come to get us, I'd like them to find us with my hearing to be still intact.

...

Guarmo:

Do you have something against deaf people?

Mince:

No, I just appreciate my ears the way they are.

Guarmo:

Oh.

Because sometimes I have something against deaf people. So I would understand.

....

Euma:

Screams

Tate:

Shut up!

John:

Actually you should probably keep screaming. I'd rather lose my hearing than listen to an abilist bigot.

Guarmo:

Are you referring to me?!

(One or two emergency lights flicker on.)

(Music: 1.1 - Disillusionment)

Moment: Disillusioned Realm

(They wait on stage for 40 seconds of silent, still nothing)

Tate:

I think they're coming for us already.

Euma:

What?

John:

Yes, I can hear them working on the door.

Guarmo:

There's something metal

Euma:

I don't hear anything.

John:

Hello! Help! Hello?!

Mince:

Why is everybody this flustered already? It can't have been more than a half hour.

Euma:

Are you crazy, one-hour minimum. Possibly two!

Guarmo:

I'd say four.

Franklin:

It's only been—oh. My watch has stopped working.

Guarmo:

I'm certain it's been hours.

John:

It could have been days!

Mince:

It couldn't have been days!

Tate:

Doesn't anybody have their phone?

Euma:

Why has no body thought of a phone?

Guarmo:

People don't think much in the dark.

Franklin:

Especially while others are screaming.

Tate:

My phone is missing...

My phone has vanished.

I was holding it when I entered

Who has my phone?

Guarmo:

Don't look at me, I left mine on my desk.

Mince:

Check the emergency phone.

John:

(Opens the compartment)

There's not one.

Euma:

What do you mean there's not one?

John:

There's no phone. There's just a detached cord inside.

Franklin:

Hit the alarm.

Tate:

(Hits the alarm)

It doesn't work.

Guarmo:

Move

(Hits the alarm)

It doesn't work

Euma:

No one has their phone

Franklin:

Mine was in my bag

John:

It's not here

Tate:

Your telling me that everyone is missing their phone?! The emergency phone is a cord!! AND the alarm is broken?!

Euma:

Try the escape hatch.

John:

(climbs up Guarmo's shoulders and pushes the hatch)

It's stuck!

Mince:

Move, let me try.

(John climbs down from Guarmo's shoulders and Mince climbs up John to push the hatch)

It's stuck.

(Climbs down)

(All speaking very quickly)

Guarmo:

They'll come for us. I'm sure.

John:

I swear I hear them working the door!

Guarmo:

Metal I hear metal!

Euma:

HEY OUT THERE!

Mince:

Why is it necessary to get in such a fuss? 30 minutes I'm telling you.

Franklin:

This watch has never stopped before.

Guarmo:

Hours. I can practically feel the hours.

John:

Days!

How does no one else feel the days!

Tate:

How could no one have their phone?

Guarmo:

No one thought of that before getting in I guess.

Franklin:

People don't think much at all, do they?

John:
Too busy screaming.

Guarmo:
About missing phones?

Mince:
Vanishing phones.

Tate:
I swear I had mine in this elevator!
Who has it?!

Guarmo:
Stop blaming me, it's on my desk.

Euma:
You're sure there is no emergency phone?

John:
(Opening the compartment)
There's not one.

Tate:
How could there not be one.

Mince:
There's no phone... There's just a detached cord inside.

Guarmo:
Hit the alarm again.

Euma:
(Hits the alarm)
It doesn't work

John:
Move.
(Hits the alarm)
It doesn't work.

Franklin:
No one has their phone?

John:

Mine was in my pocket.

It's not here--

Tate:

Everyone is missing their phone?! The emergency phone is a cord!! AND the alarm is broken?!

Mince:

Try the escape hatch!

Euma:

WE'RE TALKING IN CIRCLES! Everybody sit down, shut up, and wait.

Tate:

Dear God

Franklin:

Buddha.

John:

Huh?

(Horribly long Pause.)

Tate:

So we wait, then?

(Pause.)

Mince:

Yes.

(Pause.)

(Music 1.2: Awkwardness)

John:

Has anyone watched any good movies then?

(Aggressively long pause.)

Franklin:

No.

(Pause.)

Euma:

No.

(Pause)

Guarmo:

Yes.

(Long Pause.)

Tate:

Yes what?

Guarmo:

Yes I've seen a good movie recently.

Franklin:

And?

Guarmo

I can't remember what it was. I just remember it was good.

(Elevator jerks heavily)

(Screaming)

(Screaming slowly dies down.)

(Silence.)

(Pause.)

Moment of Metaphorical Physicalization: Wait.

(Tate sinks.

Mince silently jitters.

Franklin has all the air sucked out of him.

John envelops himself.

Euma turns to stone.

Guarmo dies.)

(All Freeze.)

(Tate Pulls herself back up.

Mince explodes.

Franklin pumps himself up

John heaves himself up

Eurma crumbles

Guarmo is electrocuted back to life screaming)

(The following text before the song can be broken up however chosen. Could be one monologue. Two people. They whole cast. Etc.)

Oh Dear

God

I can't get out

A Breath! I need a Breath!

Scream

I can't see

The exit

We're going to die

Trapped in here

Somebody open the doors

I need to Escape
I can see it now
Heavens
They're coming to get us
Angels
God
A breath
I need a breath
Heavens
the exit
It's all blocked off
Somebody open the doors
I can't see
God
I can't get out the
Exit
It's all blocked off
Oh dear
We're all going to die
Angels
Scream
Scream
Scream

(Music 2.0- Soft Panic)

Tate:

They're coming for us
I know they are.
They're coming for us.

Tate	Franklin	Mince	John	Euma	Guarmo
Still we sit		sit	sit		
Silent people	Silent				
Screaming silently				Silently	Silently
Suspending in the air		Screaming in a Metal box			
Angels they will come for us	There is no air	Suspending in the air There is no air		Suspending in the air There is no air	
Tate	Franklin	Mince	John	Euma	Guarmo
We're living In a box	This is a Life that we're living	We're living	Not a box Life that we're living	We're living	living
And we're dying to get out Short time in an elevator	In a box	And we're dying to get out	And we're dying to get out	And we're dying to get out	
dying to get out Long time to live	dying to get out	dying to get out	dying to get out	dying to get out	dying to get out
This is a	This is not just box This is a Panic of a lifetime	This is a	This is not just box This is a Panic of a lifetime	This is a	This is a Panic of a lifetime

Panic of a lifetime

Panic of a lifetime
Trying to get out of

Panic of a lifetime
Trying to get out of
Trying to get out of

Here
I'm seeing angels

Trying to get out of Trying to get out of

Here

There is no exit

Oh

Oh

Oh

Dear
I can't get out

Oh
Dear

Heavenly scream
Heavenly scream

Don't believe in angels

Heavenly Scream

Dear

Heavenly scream

Don't believe

angels

Breath!

Tate

Franklin
Any

Mince

John

Euma

Guarmo

Breath!
I need a Breath!

More

I need a breathe

More

I need a breathe

More

Heavenly Scream

Heavenly Scream

I can't see!

The exit!

We're going to die!

Trapped in here

Somebody

open the

doors

I need to Escape

I
doors

can
doors

see
doors

it
doors

now
doors

Somebody open the
doors

They're coming to get us

Heavenly Scream

Heavenly Scream

They're coming to get us
I know they are

Heavenly Scream
Heavenly Scream

Heavenly Scream
Heavenly Scream

We're All going to
die

Scream
Scream
Scream

(Music 2.1 – Moment: Waiting)
Moment: Silent, metaphorical physicalization.

(Tate melts.
Mince loses her brain.
Franklin gets slowly sucked into his mailbag like quicksand.
John can't control his mouth.
Euma is trapped inside herself.
Guarmo sets on fire.
Tate screams back to a solid form.
Mince has the painful experience of growing a new brain.
Franklin pulls himself out
John forces his mouth into submission
Euma fights free
Guarmo sucks the fire into himself.)

Mince:
Screams (collapses inwardly while pushing everything out)

Tate:
I've met fate before.

Mince:
(Circles tightly knot, involuntarily on her inside, causing one long breath to be pushed out.)

Tate:

I've had my head literally put on a chopping block as if I were Marie Antoinette

Mince:

(Pushes up repeatedly trying to cause an inhale.)

Tate:

No, I'm not Marie Antoinette. I'm not that idealistic. I'm much more of a Stalin. I just know what I need to do.

Mince:

(Feels one quick, involuntary push down through her body causing breath to fill back into her like a vibrating gong.)

Tate:

How long has it been?

John:

Yes. Now. Years? Perhaps? Decades?

Franklin:

(Feels a very strong, long push to his core and resists it as much as possible.)

John:

They say, however, that time is relative to the people you're with.

Franklin:

(Gives into the push causing him to fold over and let everything out of him in a wave.)

John:

If you fear them. Are disgusted by them. Enraged by them. Saddened. Shocked by them. You're brain will recount every second. Everything will slow like an absurdist hell.

Euma:

The absurdists would find that a heaven.

Guarmo:

Earth. The absurdists would, and have, found that to be earth.

Tate:

(Feels a volcano start to tremor beneath her and tries to push down against it.)

Guarmo:

Earth is one of the most absurd. Places.

Euma:

Humans being the most absurd?

Tate:

(Feels six quickening sharp down pushes going all the way from head to floor. And one slower, firmer, down).

Guarmo:

No, we aren't nearly that important. However, just as odd. Everything in planetary motion is freakish!

Tate:

(Grows an angry bomb inside herself throughout Guarmo's following monologue.)

Guarmo:

Humans put cloth on our bodies and then charge it with enough power *to kill* each other over what we are wearing. Have you every thought of a fly as some other creature's father. Trees coming from seeds is truly surreal. The fact that an inanimate metal box can shutdown, trapping living organism in a confined space while they come up with concerns over concepts of time and fatality while somewhere in Mexico another machine is hacking at the neck of a fish who is feeling non aquatic gravity for the first time. And we're sitting here in play acting characters on a stage to a pack of mammals over some contrived concept that will be viewed through completely opposite understandings despite the fact they are all acting for us as well.

Tate:

(Bomb Explodes in every direction pushing everyone back.)

SHUT UUUP!!!

Guarmo:

My point is. I don't understand how we aren't completely fascinated and at the same time horrified at every second by the very concept of our own fingernails.

Euma:

(Pushes a swing out of her stomach and lets it come back and lightly hit her.)

Tate:

This isn't how people get stuck in elevators on television.

Euma:

(Starts to slowly but heavily sink.)

Tate:

This isn't even how people get stuck in elevators in real life!

Euma:

(Continues to sink.)

Tate:

This is completely illogical.

Euma:

(Melts as she hits the floor.)

Tate:

(In a burst)

Does anyone care who I am? Does anyone care that my name is D.G.? Does anyone care that my husband is cheating on me? Or that I'm a prude? Or rich? Or that I've been insecure about just about everything since my father died when I was 16 and living in Nebraska?

Euma:

(Feels multiple, short, quick, and involuntary strings get pulled out of her.)

Franklin:

We would if this were a television episode.

Tate:

Does anyone think it's odd that we are overly concerned for our survival and making vastly unnecessary, conceptual metaphors for our experience? We're just sitting on a God-damned, broken-down elevator.

Euma:

(Is air)

Mince:

We would. If this were reality.

Franklin:

There's no need to get so conceptual.

Tate:

How is this not reality?! This is reality to me!

Guarmo:

What?

John:

(Energy shoots up his neck and out his eyes.)

Mince:

John, are you all right?

John:

(His eyes become the motor of his body and start to lead him.)

Tate:

What's wrong with him?

Euma:

Perhaps he's gone crazy.

John:

(His eyes start to lead him frantically.)

Guarmo:

I would not blame him sitting with all of us for so long.

John:

(Goes out and starts making long, shocked eye contact with audience members.)

Franklin:

Either way his mind is clearly wandering.

Tate:

Well we can see that.

Franklin:

That's why I said clearly.

John:

Returns and sits down as though landing from flight

Euma:

Are you alright?

John?

John:

Huh?

Euma:

Are you alright?

John:

Yes, just thinking. Something someone said...mammals... people ...I don't know, just thinking.

(Very long pause during which Guarmo builds from twitchiness up to the point of seizing)

Guarmo:

I got.. I gotta... We... I gotta... I can't do this... any...more! I gotta! Outta here! Out of! Here! I can't sit in here any! More!
Ah! I! Ah!

Mince:

Guarmo! Calm down!

Guarmo:

I! Ah! There! The walls are! I can't I gotta get!...Out!

Tate:

Guarmo!

Mince:

Guarmo, calm down!
(Tries to hold him)

Guarmo:

Don't *touch* me!

Mince:

I told you he was gay.

Guarmo:

I'm *not* gay! I just don't you to *touch* me!

Franklin:

(to Guarmo) Do you have a problem with gay people?

Guarmo:

No! I just don't want to be touched!

Franklin:

Oh, because sometimes I have a problem with gay people. So I would understand.

John:

Dear, God! Is *everyone* on this elevator a *bigot*?!

Euma:

screams

Tate:

Shut! Up!

Guarmo:

I'm just claustrophobic! And I don't like being touched by the corporate *whore*!

Mince:

Excuse me?!

Euma:

Oh, everybody knows your porking boss! How else could a twit like you get a position as the head-mans assistant.

John:

Who's assistant are you?

(Music: 2.2 – Married to a Whore)

Euma:

She's Mr. Tate's assistant! And for no good reason.

Tate:

Excuse me?!

Euma:

Mr. Tate's assistant.

Tate:

Do any of you even know who I am?!

Mince:

No, and now is not a good time to care! None of you have any business calling me a—

Tate:

Whore!

John:

Yup! Everyone's a bigot!

Tate:

I happen to be Mrs. Tate!

Guarmo:

Heaving Does anybody care that I'm having a claustrophobic panic attack over here?

Tate:

I don't think you realize who it is your messing around with here.

Guarmo:

Frantically searching for an exit Hello?!

Tate:

You thinking my husband makes the decisions around here? Ha! My husbands a dipshit!

Franklin:

Excuse me!

Tate:

I could probably get you all fired, you know.

Guarmo:

Screams

Tate:

A housewife has a lot more power to her opinion than you think!

(Music 3.0 – Claustrophobia)

Guarmo

Euma

Claustrophobia!

You know what I have a problem with?

Claustro

The existence of manipulative housewives and secretarial sluts

Phobia

While there are hard working woman like me busting my ass off in a cubicle!

Guarmo

Claus

Tro

phobia!

John

You're not the only one stuck in a cubicle, you know!

Guarmo

Euma

Claustro

Claustro

John
This isn't the job I want to have!

Guarmo
phobia

Euma
phobia

Tate
Because being trapped in my house for the past thirty years
is exactly what I wanted to do with a college education.

Guarmo
Claustrophobia

Euma
Claustrophobia

John
Claustrophobia

Mince
Claustrophobia my ass! Trying
being caught in a double standard

Guarmo
Claus
Tro
Phobia

Euma
Claus
Tro
Phobia

John
Claus
Tro
Phobia

Tate
Claus
Tro

Guarmo
Claustrophobia

Euma
Claustrophobia

John
Claustrophobia

Tate
Claustrophobia

Mince
Claustrophobia

Franklin
All of that
sounds better
than working
thirty-seven
years in the
mail-room at
minimum
wage

Guarmo	Euma	John	Tate	Mince	Franklin
Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia
Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia
Claus	Claus				
Tro	Tro	Tro	Tro		
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
Elevator		Elevator			Elevator
	Elevator		Elevator	Elevator	
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
It isn't just a					It isn't just a
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	It isn't just a
	Social Status			Social Status	
Phobia		Phobia			Phobia
There's reason for a	There's reason for a	There's reason for a			
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
Elevator	Elevator	Elevator	Elevator	Elevator	Elevator
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
	(Clarinetist: Will we every get out)				
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
Claus	Claus	Claus			
Tro	Tro	Tro	Tro	Tro	
Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	Phobia	
Medication	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia
Medication	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	
Medication	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia		
Medication	Claustrophobia	Claustrophobia			
Medication	Claustrophobia				
Claustrophobia!!					

Mince:

Are you better yet?!

Guarmo:

No!

Mince:

Well get over it! There's nothing any of us can do about our outside lives until someone comes to get us.

Euma:

Is someone coming to get us?!

Tate:

You'd think in a major corporation someone would have noticed an unoperating elevator a long time ago!

Mince:

Well there's nothing to be done until they do notice!

Tate:

Well I could certainly smash your face in!

John:

How primal of you.

Franklin:

There's got to be something between us that we can coexist upon

Euma:

Shut up Franklin! You're only going to cause more arguing! The only thing to do is just shut up!

Guarmo:

Why isn't anyone thinking of a way to get out of here?!

John:

We tried getting out of here!

Franklin:

Did we really try get out of here?

Guarmo:

You're all stupid!

Eurma:

We're all stupid! You're included.

Tate:
That's right! What have you done but panicked and made extremely socially embarrassing comments!

John:
You see! This is why I don't talk to anyone in our office!

Franklin:
This is why I avoid talking to anybody at all!

Mince:
I love talking. And think this is all rather fun.

Tate:
Shut up!

John:
If I had a knife, I'd shut you all up!

Tate:
Shut up shut up shut up!

Euma:
Screams

Franklin:
What is everybody yelling for?!
(Tate and John begin to wrestle)

Mince:
God, I can't stand this anymore!

John:
I can't stand *you* anymore!

Mince:
I can't stand you anyways!
(Mince and John begin to wrestle)

Guarmo:
Are you all trying to get murdered?

Mince:
Are you trying to get slaughtered?

Tate:

I could rip out all your throats!

Guarmo:

Then come at me if you want!

(Mince and Guarmo begin to wrestle)

Euma:

All of you are imbeciles! When I get out I'll call the cops!

Franklin:

Like you're any better!

Euma:

Would you stop!

John:

All of this is getting pointless!

Guarmo:

You only say that 'cause you're weak!

Euma:

You're all becoming animals!

Guarmo:

Animals that will survive!

(Euma and Guarmo begin to wrestle)

Tate:

This is becoming a zoo!

Guarmo:

Life's a zoo!

John:

Life is a war!

Franklin:

This is a war! Over an elevator!

Euma:

This is a territory.

Fraklin:

This is a metal floor! Just a metal floor!

Euma:

This is a fight for space!

(Franklin and Euma begin to wrestle)

(Overlapping:)

Tate:

Back off!

Franklin:

(Growling)

Guarmo:

Move!

Mince:

(Barking)

Euma:

I hate all of you!

John:

Mine! This is mine! *Mine!*

Guarmo:

(Screams but in an animal like rage)

Franklin:

I'm not afraid to hurt you!

Tate:

(Howling)

Mince:

Jerk!

Euma:

(Laughing like a hyena)

John:

(Snarling)

Mince:

(Barking)

Franklin:

(Growling)

Tate:

(Howling)

Euma:

(Laughing like a hyena)

Guarmo:

(Screams but in an animal like rage)

(They all continue except for Guarmo. While Guarmo speaks. John lurks around. Tate swings around the space. Mince hunches over and hops. Franklin Jerks. Euma is lead by her head and swims around the space. Guarmo stands facing the audience in front of them and speaks:)

Watch humans. Confine them. It's research. Animal research. My 7th grade teacher asked us to list animal titles that were written with 3 letters. I said man. She rebuked me.

All:

Digression!

(They all return to there actions.)

Guarmo:

Subconscious study suggests central serotonergic synapses surround cerebral suppression. Specifically spastic self-stifling. Supposition sinks serotonin slumping to—

All:

Meaning?!

(Returning to actions but quieter and more "human".)

Guarmo:

That homosapien seem so sad due solely to suppression of selves as animalistic creatures! I don't understand. Don't domestic dealings demand dialing deanimalizing? Dangerous deconstruction during dehumanization—

All:

Digression!

(Return to actions but quieter and more “human”)

Guarmo:

People are animals and animals are people too! We just inhibit ourselves from inheriting the inseparable instinct of our involuntarily intuition by encapsulating our interests in inevitably inhospitable—

All:

Meaning?!

(Returning to there actions but very human)

Guarmo:

Meaning people are animals that are trapped in societal cages and the only way to get the animal out is to trap the human into a literal cage!

All:

Meaning?!

Guarmo:

Meaning people are animals but we only see it now when they’re in fight or flight mode like us.

All:

Meaning?!

Guarmo:

Meaning people are animals but we don’t show it.

All:

Meaning?!

Guarmo:

Meaning people are suppressed animals.

All:

Meaning?!

Guarmo:

We’re acting instinctually.

All:
 Meaning?!

Guamo:
 We're acting?

All:
 Meaning?!

Gaurmo:
 Now that's just not a can of worms I'm willing to answer!!!

Mince:
 Why doesn't anything you say mean anything?

Guarmo:
 Why don't you make meaning?

Mince:
 Why not give meaning?

Guamo:
 I am!

Tate:
 Your not!

Guarmo:
 Says who?

John:
 Says me!

Franklin:
 Dear Buddha, if you hear my prayer, open the elevator doors for me.

Euma:
 Well, I don't think you're very qualified to say anything.

John:
 Why doesn't anybody just not say anything?

Guarmo:
 Well you got to give'em hope?

Tate:

Hope?

Mince:

Nope. I'm not giving anybody hope.

Franklin:

Out! I don't care how just get me out!

John:

Bigots!

Euma:

Do you have the right?

Tate:

He doesn't need the right. He is right.

Guarmo:

Fight! Fight! Fight! Fight!

Mince:

I don't know why I'd even try!

Franklin:

Buddha!

Tate:

What?

Mince:

What?

John:

Try what?

Mince:

Hope.

Guarmo:

Bitch.

John:

Bigot.

Euma:

Bastard!

Franklin:

Anything?! A seraph with a rope I'd hang from and you'd pull me up! An electrical surge! An explosion! Please dear Divinity!

(Music 4.0 – Come at Me)

(Franklins breathing and singing should become distressed and labored throughout the song)

Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince
Come at me	Come at me				
Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me		
Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me
COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME
People are					
Animals	Animals	Animals			
Practically					
Cannibals			Cannibals		
				Ripping away	At each other!
				At each other	At each other!

But that is the game
And it's called
Place the blame
and witness the death
of your Brother.

Place the blame

Place the blame

The fittest survive

The smart stay alive

Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince
				You'll have to take down	

				your own mother!	
So pick up your knife					
	And fight for you life				
You'll be stabbing	You'll be stabbing	You'll be stabbing			
the back of another!	the back of another!	the back of another!			
<i>(To each other:)</i>					
You idiot					
	You twit				
		You dumb piece of shit!			
			All right		
				That's it!	
					I have to admit!
You fool		You tool			
	You obstinate mule!				
You—	You--	You--	You--	You--	You—
				Come at me	Come at me
		Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me
Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me	Come at me
COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT ME	COME AT
ME	COME AT ME				
All you heartless people					
	You're weak and your feeble				
Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince
We best get you out of the way	We best get you out of the way	We best get you out of the way	<i>(Heavy breathing)</i> <i>(Heavy Breathing)</i>	We best get you out of the way	We best get you out of the way You scratch

				And without a care	and you tear
	You cause other people dismay		<i>Heavy breathing</i>		
In this elevator You'll meet your creator	In this elevator You'll meet your creator	In this elevator You'll meet your creator	<i>Gasping</i> creator	In this elevator You'll meet your creator	In this elevator You'll meet your creator
And this is all they will say—	And this is all they will say—	And this is all they will say—		And this is all they will say—	And this is all they will say—

Franklin: *(Cutting off song)*

STOOOOOOP!

....

(Takes 10 separate slow, struggling breathes)

I

(One more breath)

Can't breathe.

Mince:

Breathe? No body can breathe in here. I don't why we should care so much if you can't—

Tate:

Shut up!

Mince:

Yeah, so shut up.

Tate:

Not him, you.

Franklin:

(Starts and continues to make groans as though there is a great weight on his chest)

John:

You're not going to die in here are you?

Guarmo:

Stop giving it all away. I'd like to have some surprises you know.

Franklin:

I need water. Does anyone have any water?

Euma:

No... no one has any water.

Guarmo:

They keep water in the corporate elevator, I don't know why they should—

Tate:

Shh!

Franklin:

It's hot! God! I want out!

Mince:

There isn't a way out.

Franklin:

Large grown

(faints)

(Pause)

Euma:

Oh God... did he just die?

John:

No, I think he just passed out.

Guarmo:

I think he's dead.

Tate:

What was his name again?

Mince:

Franklin.

Tate:

Poor Franklin.

Franklin:

Groans

Mince:

Oh, well he's not dead.

...kina dead.

But not quite.

John:

Aren't we all.

Euma:

Wow John. How philosophical.

John:

I'm just trying to bring in some practical conversation

Tate:

Oh yes, 'cause that's really practical right now.

John:

Hey, if you have an issue with the way I talk—

Guarmo:

Why do you all always have to be talking—

Mince:

I think I ought to have a say in---

Franklin:

Please! Stop! Please stop. Stop. Please. Stop fighting. Please. Please stop. Please. Please. Please.

(faints again)

(Pause)

Tate:

Did he die this time?

Guarmo:

Paul?

John:

His name is Franklin.

Guarmo:

Oh... Franklin?

(Pause)

Euma:

Well does anybody know C.P.R.?

Tate:

Well Mince is the closest thing we've got that... she's made out with enough people.

John:

Now is not the time—

Mince:

No, that's fair

(Semi makes-out with/gives Franklin C.P.R)

(Pause)

I'm not getting anything.

And he tastes like salami.

John:

Move, I was a lifeguard in high school

(Repeats Mince's actions of semi-make-out C.P.R.)

I'm not getting anything either

Tate:

I am.

Euma:

(Checks his pulse.)

Well for one, he's not dead yet... Franklin!

(Slaps him across the face)

Franklin!

Franklin:

(in a mumbling daze)

Just take it! Take everything in and blast it out. That's the function of a person. Explode. Bottle it up in a bottle rocket and let everything fester into fuel for the guns.

Mince:

What's he saying?

Guarmo:

Ssh.

Franklin:

(Still mumbling)

When I was born my mother kissed me on my head. When five, I played in the fountain. Baptized myself with joy. Joy that was my religion. At 10 I worked for neighbors. Ruled the world. Complained about mediocre things and cursed at my parents whom I loved. 15 I flirted with people and life. 16 I fucked for the first . 20 I drank the most. 25 I married. 30 I systemized. 31 brought the babies. 40 gave up. 45 tried again. 50 loved my wife. 51 buried her in the ground 53 forgot our anniversary. 62 waited. 65... The elevators door opened.

Mince:

I don't understand.

Euma:

I....

Guarmo:

My constituents. I believe we have just witnessed a man witness his life flash before our eyes before his eyes.

Tate:

People usually survive after that happens.... Don't they?

Guarmo:

No, it's just the ones that die don't live to say they witnessed their life flash before their eyes... and those who witness don't usually have the privilege of the dying person narrating it.

Euma:

Well he's not dead yet!

(Gets on top of Franklin shoves on his chest)

Franklin!

All but Franklin and Euma:

There's no blood in his brain!

Euma:

(Shoving on his chest again)

Franklin?!

All but Franklin and Euma:

He's heading towards a bright light.

Euma:

(Shoving on his chest harder)

Franklin!!

All but Franklin and Euma:

He's meeting all his relatives, having all sorts of delusions, he's moving on with the other 108 people who will die this minute—

Euma:

(Shoving on his harder and keeping pressed down during the following text.)

This is not a statistic! He is not a statistic!

All but Franklin and Euma:

He's meant to die now that's what his place is.

Euma:

(Shoving rapidly and desperately throughout following text)

He's not just some character created to die divisively! He's a human being! He's a human being we've worked with together everyday for the past God knows how many years! He's not just some support! He's an individual life.

John:

1.8 people per second. This is his second. His and point 8 of another person.

Tate:

6,461 per hour.

Guarmo:

That about the same number as the average population of a city in the United States

Mince:

155,060 per day.

How many elevators is that?

Euma:

1 right now.

The rest of us might not be that far behind franklin.

Franklin:

(Gasping quietly)

One... right... now.

(Dies)

(Music 5.0 – Silence)

(The song Silence is a recording of a non-acting singer with the orchestra and will be played underneath the following text:)

Euma:

He's dead.

Mince:

No shit, Sherlock.

John:

Have some respect.

Mince:

Sorry... No shit, Euma?

Tate:

Well...

Guarmo:

Yes?

Tate:

Well... shouldn't someone say something about... Franklin.

Guramo:

Euma just said something about him... he's dead.

Euma:

No, somebody say something about him, really.

John:

Why don't you?

Euma:

...I... I don't know him very well... I don't have anything to say.

John:

Nothing?

Euma:

...he...

Mince:

He road the elevator.

Tate:

Yes, he road the elevator... with us... all.

Guarmo:

And he...

John:

Worked in the mailroom.

Guarmo:

Yes! He worked in the mailroom... doing...mail things.

Mince:

Oh! And his breath always smelled like salami!

Euma:

That's not respectful.

Mince:

I meant it in an endearing way.

...

Guarmo:

I like salami.

John:

This is not an adequate funeral in the least.

(Pause)

Tate:

Well the best we can do is give him our blessing and focus on getting out. If we stay in this elevator much longer he's going to start to smell.

(pause)

And nobody wants to be trapped in a room with a rotting corpse.

(long Pause)

Mince:

Where are we going anyways.

Guarmo:

What?

Mince:

Where are we going when we get out?

Tate:

Back to work, our homes, wherever you belong.

John:

We don't even know if those things are still out there...

We don't know how long it's been. A day? Year? Century? Anybody? I can feel my bones decaying.

Tate:

Well we're still living aren't we?

Euma:

...

No...

We're not.

We... as a collective whole... have just begun dying.

(Long pause as Silence ends they burry Franklin in his mail)

(Moment of Metaphorical Physicalization – Mourning)

(All pause for 20 seconds.

Then Mince collapses into her hands.

Euma turns into an old woman.

Mince solemnly attempts to kiss John.

John sharply turns his head and body just in time.

Guarmo melts

Franklin stays dead.)

(There is a large clank of metal snapping all of them out of it.)

(Music 5.1 – Clanking)

Tate:

Dear God!

Clank

John:

What is that?

Clank

Euma:

It sounds like someone's coming for us!

John:

Who's coming for us?

Euma:

I don't know! Someone!

Clank

Guarmo:

Hello?

Clank

Guarmo and Mince:

Hello?!

Clank

John:

You sure it's not the elevator?

Tate:

Why would it be the elevator?

Mince:

It could be falling!

Tate:

Why now?

Clank

Tate:

Do you feel anything?

John:

Like what?

Tate:

Like movement? I don't feel any movement.

Guarmo:

I feel fear!

Clank

Tate:

The elevator is not moving. It has to be someone coming for us!

Clank

John:

Like who? Who?! From where?

Tate:

Does that matter?

Clank

Mince:

Maybe it's something coming for Franklin

Guarmo:

Something?

Mince:

Someone

Guarmo:

Someone? For Franklin?

Tate:

Franklin is dead, why would they be coming for a dead person?

John:

Yes, Franklin is dead. They're coming for us!

clank

Mince:

They don't know that!

Guarmo:

Franklin is Schrodinger's cat!

Mince:

He's still alive! He's still alive!

Tate:

He's dead!

Clank

They might not know that, but I do, and I'm sure both Franklin and the cat know that too!

Clank

(Pause)

Clank

(Pause)

Clank

(Pause)

Guarmo:

I remember!

Clank

Tate:

What?

Guarmo:

What?

John:

What did you remember?

Clank

Guarmo:

Trails along the Passing River!

Mince:

What?

Clank

Guarmo:

The movie! Trails along the Passing River!

Mince and John:

What?

Clank

Guarmo:

It was the good movie I saw recently! You asked, remember!

Tate:

No! No body remembers that! No body cares!

Guarmo:

I care.

Tate:

Why? Why now? Why do you care now?!?!

Guarmo:

Because it was a good movie. I wanted you to know.

(Pause)

(Pause)

(Pause)

Tate:

I!--

John:

Wait!

(Pause)

(Pause)

Mince:

What?

John:

Listen

(Pause)

(Pause)

(Pause)

Mince:

What?

(Pause)

John:

Silence...

(Pause)

(Pause)

(Pause)

Tate:

Well did they stop?

Mince:

Are they coming?

(Music 6.0 - Panic at Life and Death)

(Clanking gets rapid and follows a repeated rhythm

Aisha the fire fighter[?] appears on stage away from the rest of the group.)

Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince	Aisha
Hello!						

....
Hello?

Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince	Aisha
------	------	------	----------	--------	-------	-------

...	...					
Hello!						
	Light!					
Hello?	I see light!					
...	...					
Hello!						
	Light!					
Hello?	I see light					
....	...					
Hello!						
...	Light!	Great compassion!				
Hello?	I see light!			(Stands, still dead)		
...	...			(and moans oms)		
Hello!				Om		
	Light!	Great compassion!		om		
Hello?	I see light					
				om		
Hello!				om		
	Light!	Great compassion!		om		
Hello?	I see light			om		
				om		
Hello!				om		
	Light!	Great compassion!		om	Who	
Hello?	I see light			om	are	
				Om	you?	
				om		
				Om	Who	
Tate	Euma	John	Franklin	Guarmo	Mince	Aisha
Hello!			Om	are		

Hello?	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om Om Om	you? Who are you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
Hello!			Om Om			
Hello?	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om Om Om	you? Who are you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
Hello!	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om	you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	My name is Ashia
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I am here to guide you out.
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Why do you stay inside?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	open
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I see you inside
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
Hello!			Om Om	Who are you?		
Hello?	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om Om Om	you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
Hello!			Om Om			
Hello?	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om Om Om	you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
Hello!	Light! I see light	Great compassion!	Om om	you?	Void! <i>Screams</i>	
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Complacent

<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I see inside
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I see you inside
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	If you want to live
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Open</i>
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I see your faces
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you wearing mask?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	I will rip down your walls
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	But you inside
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Move
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Are you dead?
<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	<i>Hums</i>	Move!
Hello!			Om	Who		
	Light!	Great compassion!	Om	are		
Hello!	I see light		Om	you?	Void!	
			om		<i>Screams</i>	
Hello!			Om	Who		
	Light!	Great compassion!	Om	are		
Hello!	I make light		Om	you?	Void!	
			om		<i>Screams</i>	
Hello!			Om	Who		
	Light!	Great compassion!	Om	are		
Hello!	I make light		Om	you?	Void!	
			om		<i>Screams</i>	
Hello!			Om	Who		
	Light!	Great compassion!	Om	are		
Hello!	I see light		Om	you?	Void!	
			om		<i>Screams</i>	

*(During the last segment of hums all the characters undress to only underwear, blacks, nudes, or nude)
(Tate and John are nose to nose, Guarmo places his hands on Johns hips, Mince sits and touches their legs, Franklin places a hand over his eyes and the other hand on Guarmo's forehead.)*

Break the walls
Live
I see you
What the hell are you doing
You're mad
Mad
You poor, poor people
you've gone mad
Live
Break the walls
Break the walls

(All push on the walls of the elevator beginning to break it)

All:

Break the walls
Break the walls
Break the walls

(Walls break apart; song ends as they all scatter across the stage.)

(Franklin gets dressed and lies down on the ground; dead again.)

Aisha:

Are you out?

Tate:

I think so.

Aisha:

Is everyone alright?

John:

I think I'll be fine.

....

Mince:

Thank you.

Aisha:

You're welcome. I think.

Guarmo:

Where are we?

Euma:

Out.

...

I think.

John:

You think a lot, don't you.

Guarmo:

You don't?

Tate:

I try not to.

(Tate goes and gets her clothing and starts putting it on.)

Tate:

Are these mine?

John:

I wouldn't wear them.

Tate:

When did I take them off.

(Pause)

Euma:

What?

(All other characters get their clothing and put it on.)

(Aisha leaves)

(Pause)

Tate:

Well, I should get going. I still need to yell at my husband.

Mince:

And I still need to sleep with him while he thinks your not paying attention.

Tate:

I'm not paying attention. To a certain extend I don't even care anymore.

Guarmo:

I think I missed my lunch break.

John:

Lunch break... I think I missed my entire work...day?

Euma:

I need to shower.

Tate:

Shower.

Mince:

I didn't receive any mail today.

Euma:

Odd, me neither.

John:

The people down in the mailroom are always slacking on there jobs.

(Pause)

Guarmo:

People should really just switch to email anyways. It's much more efficient.

Tate:

What is your name again?

Guarmo:

Guar—

Tate:

Never mind. I don't think I really have any reason to know that.

(Pause)

(Long Pause)

(Characters simultaneously take out cell phones from their pockets, bags, etc and hold them to their ears.)

(Music 6.1- Before Intro Song Reprise.)

Ashia: *(from off stage yells)*

No body is going to answer!

No one is there!

You

Are

Alone!

(Music 7.0 – Intro Song Reprise)

D. G. Tate

John

(into her phone)

Listen!... no listen,

Listen....

I'm coming up right now.

Out of my way

Tate

John

Euma

Guarmo

Mince

No not you

I'm late I'm late

I'm late I'm late

I'm late I'm late

No not to you

To one of your schmucks

Yes your workers

I call them schmucks

There just like you

Animals--

In a zoo

And this is it

My boss

I'm coming up Is going to kill me
And if your with her than I quit
I can't be married to whore.

 If again I'm late
A corporate whore!
It's fine
I'm just mad

Excuse me sorry
It's just you see
I'm very late

Wait!

I cannot wait
Bla bla blabla blabla blabla
blablabla blablabla blalbabla blablabla

(Song ends as all walk off 'Bla'-ing except for Mince)

Mince:

Hm.hmm

Yup.

...

no, I can't do that.

...

Do you?

...

Oh

...

alright

Well just tell her she's a fat cow and needs to stop eating all your food.

I don't care how she feels. The bitch has got to get her life together.

No.

No.

No.

There we go.

(Sees Franklin's dead body)

...

One second. I'll call you back...

(Hangs up)

(Music 7.1 – Good-bye Franklin)

(Walks over and looks at him with an moment of almost complete fear and brokenness, then quickly, but apathetically breaks that moment, looking up again.)

Can we get a janitor in here?

Hello?

Doesn't anyone around here do their jobs anymore?

...

...

Christ...

(Steps over Franklin's body and Exits)

END

(There should preferably be no curtain call. The house lights can come up, but the stage lights should stay on and Franklin should stay dead and on stage until the audience is cleared. This is to estrange an clapping that happens and inhibit the audience from "clapping-away" the thoughts and emotions that they have developed throughout the piece. However in the event of curtain call [Music 8 – Bows/Exit] can be played.)

