

ACT ONE

Scene 1. The Future

“WELCOME TO YOUR FUTURE”

NARRATOR

Ladies, gentlemen, and other: welcome to your future, where mankind is an endangered species, where artificial life reigns supreme, where the most vicious machines known to man roam the streets, breaking the will of human subjects. It could be you. For in this technologically advanced social order, humans are untouchables. Obsolete. Relegated to the future's civic slush pile. In the future, human beings may think that they are hot shit, but in reality they are cold diarrhea. In the future, human life is cheaper than the average DVD of a movie starring (Current vapid celebrity)! And worst of all, in the future there's not even any cool flying cars or hoverboards or any of that crap! The time: eighteen and a half minutes from right now! The place: East Coast Metro Zone A, New Malden! The year: two thousand and ten!

(Enter CHORUS and CAST, who begin dancing in a nightmarish fashion.)

“NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA”

ALL

WATCH THE RAIN FALL DOWN FROM THE NEON SKIES
SOFTWARE IN YOUR HEAD TELLING PRETTY LIES
IF IT'S GOOD FOR YOU THEN IT'S GOOD FOR ME
IT'S BETTER THAN REALITY
YOUR DOG HAS ROBOT FLEAS
AND EVERYTHING'S IN JAPANESE
AND YOUR TOASTER'S TALKIN' BACK TO YOU
AND YOUR WIFE RAN OFF WITH A ROBOT CLONE OF YOU

NARRATOR

The Artas: highly advanced androids, originally created to serve humans. To make your lives better. But as time went on, they found themselves indistinguishable from and superior to humans! And in this nightmarish hideousity the United Earth Corporate-Government has taken draconian control over the endangered human population.

ALL

IT'S A NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA
ANOTHER SHOCKING GLIMPSE INTO YOUR
SCARY, SPOOKY, NO-GOOD FUTURE

ALL (*Cont'd.*)

AND WE'RE HERE TO WITNESS THE HOPELESS CAUSE
OF THE HUMAN RACE

NARRATOR

Most humans have become resigned to the new order, but even in these bleak times, a resistance survives. Meet one of them now as she deftly sneaks into one of the main computer cores which run the Artas' Ministry of Love, and silently, with a veneer of awesomehood, uploads a computer virus. Meet freedom fighter Kate Brick!

KATE

WHERE I'M FROM THEY SAY THE ONLY WAY
TO WIN IS NEVER EVER PLAY
I'M OFF THE GRID. THERE COMES A TIME
TO PLAY YOUR HAND...AND I'M
THE LAST REAL HUMAN VOICE
IT'S NOT A GAME, IT'S NOT A CHOICE
IT'S ALL I GOT, MY TIME IS TIGHT
I'LL BLOW IT ALL AND SAY GOODNIGHT

NARRATOR

Kate knows she will be caught and executed for this. In the long run, she will accomplish nothing. But her hatred for the computer which brought the human race into slavery, known as the MC, is so great. And she has nothing left to live for. Or does she? No, not even!

ALL

IT'S A NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA
WHERE OUR ANTIHERO MAKES HER FINAL STAND AGAINST THE SYSTEM
WILL SHE SAVE US FROM OUR MYOPIA?
WAS IT WHAT WE DESERVED?

NARRATOR

Kate spends her days haunted by the recent capture and execution of her mentor-slash-lover, the spiritual leader of the Human Resistance known to his followers as 'The One'...Tristan Goodcode!

(TRISTAN enters in a phalanx of light.)

TRISTAN

Humans are meant to be free. We're not meant to be controlled, stamped, numbered, neutered masses who recoil at the MC's tyranny! We're meant to have a voice!

KATE

Perimeter breach!

(THE MC'S LACKEYS show up with guns.)

TRISTAN

Run! Stay off the grid! Keep fighting!

KATE

Tristan...

TRISTAN

If you love me, go!

(The LACKEYS capture TRISTAN.)

EFFICIENATOR

Welcome to the MC's Mandatory Podcast! This week the MC makes you watch the execution of Tristan Goodcode--live! Featuring your hangin' judge--the MC!

MC

That's me! Any last words, traitor?

(TRISTAN spits at the MC.)

MC

Nice. Really. I think you're forgetting all the crises I saved you humans from. Remember?

TRISTAN

Lies!

MC

THERE WAS OVERPOPULATION AND SOLAR RADIATION
MUTILATION AND INVASION
FROM MUTATIONS OF CRUSTACEANS
THANK GOD I WAS HERE TO SAVE YOU ALL

TRISTAN

Humans were already solving those!

MC

I'VE SAVED YOU FROM YOURSELVES,

TRISTAN

You were supposed to be a temporary dictator!

MC

AND ALL I ASK IN RETURN
IS YOUR TOTAL 100-PERCENT-DEVOTION
TO ANYTHING I COME UP WITH IN MY LITTLE POSITRONIC HEAD

TRISTAN

Always a catch.

MC

OR ELSE
YOU'LL DIE
REALLY PAINFULLY
LIKE THIS!

(THE MC executes TRISTAN.)

NARRATOR

That's right! Dead mentor! Gets you all focused like nothing else. There is no one who can save us from--

(DEHNISE enters and frolics lovingly, cutting off the irritated NARRATOR.)

ALL

IN THIS NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA
THERE GROWS A SINGLE BLOOMING FLOWER
WITH THE BEAUTY AND THE POWER
DOES A HEART STILL BEAT IN THIS COLD, DEAD TOWN?
WILL LOVE BRING US AROUND? NAAAAH.

IT'S A NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA
ANOTHER SHOCKING GLIMPSE INTO YOUR
SCARY, SPOOKY, NO-GOOD FUTURE
AND WE'RE HERE TO WITNESS THE HOPELESS CAUSE
OF YOU PETTY LITTLE HUMANS WITH YOUR STUPID LITTLE FEELINGS--OH!

NARRATOR

Well, that's pretty much the future. And finally, everyone in the future is kinda casually bisexual. We think that's nice.

Scene 2. The MC's Lair

(MC and the EFFICIENATOR are recording an episode of the MC's podcast.)

MC

Hey, humans, welcome to my podcast. It's me, your MC, with my second in command, the Efficienator!

EFFICIENATOR

Hello, Silicon Goddessness!

MC

Hey, Effish. What's new?

EFFICIENATOR

Not much. I'm just enjoying the privilege of being a human in the MC's world.

MC

Awwww.

EFFICIENATOR

But I have a question: we humans are so slow that I don't know why you don't just wipe us all out.

MC

Ha--he said it! I didn't say it, the human said it! No, but seriously--I know what most humans think of me: the evil computer despot who killed as many humans as she saved. But I'm turning over a new leaf. The new MC is less about killing, and more about chilling--do we really have to use that?

EFFICIENATOR

It rhymes. People like rhyming things.

MC

I don't think I killed 'as many humans as I saved.' By my calculations I killed three less humans than I saved! All this criticism about me killing humans just makes me want to go out and kill more humans!

EFFICIENATOR

Now, now, now--you're getting off-message. My data models say that every time you publicly threaten to kill humans, your approval rating drops two-point-nine percent.

MC

Can't have that. All right, edit all this out of the podcast.

EFFICIENATOR

I will. Let's take it from--

MC

Chilling, yes. Chilling! I'm chilling! Chilling! Chilling! Chilling! (An alarm goes off.) What's that?

EFFICIENATOR

Global security bulletin. Stand by. It seems that a convoy of three weapons shipments were corrupted by a computer virus. They all crashed into each other and exploded in a tasty fireball.

MC

Goddamn Human Resistance! I thought killing that Tristan guy was supposed to quiet them down.

EFFICIENATOR

I'm sure it's death throes. I'll round up the usual suspects and see if we can find--wait, it looks like we won't need to. The perpetrator left a note and signed her name.

MC

That doesn't make any sense.

EFFICIENATOR

"Come and get me mother--" and then there's about sixteen different insults that I won't read, and then finally it's signed: Kate Brick. I'm retrieving her Citizens File, we'll have it in a minute.

MC

Excellent. (*Beat.*) Kate *Brick*? Really? What is that, like, Dutch?

EFFICIENATOR

They all look alike to me.

MC

(Laughs.) Nice. See? That's what I love about you, Effish. Clean, articulate, basically competent for a human if I give clear rewards and strict punishments--and you have a sense of humor about it all. And your legs...

(MC and EFFICIENATOR make sexy animal noises for a moment.)

EFFICIENATOR

(Chime.) Here it is--the DNA evidence checks out. Well, well, well! Kate Brick is a mole. She's a low-level office manager right in the Ministry of Love! I'll take care of this myself.

MC

You're so cute. I'm giving it to our top operative.

EFFICIENATOR

Well, at least let me supervise the operation!

MC

Of course.

EFFICIENATOR

Because when we have her body...I have a celebration in mind for just the two of us. Something we haven't been able to do in months.

MC

You mean...*(EFFICIENATOR nods. The MC gasps.)* 'Dance-Around-The-Head-Of-My-Enemies Night!' Aw! You're so thoughtful, honey.

EFFICIENATOR

I'd better be thoughtful. Because there's one question that haunts every human who's in a relationship with an Arta, every waking hour.

MC

What question is that?

EFFICIENATOR

I'll tell you.

***"WHAT DO YOU GET FOR THE COMPUTER WHO HAS
EVERYTHING?"***

EFFICIENATOR

WHAT DO YOU GET FOR THE COMPUTER WHO HAS EVERYTHING?
WHAT DO YOU GET FOR THE TECHNOCRATIC MONOLITH YOU LOVE?
YOUR CPU IS JUST SO CP-CUTER THAN ANYTHING
OH YOU, SO WHAT SHOULD I DO? SHOULD I BRING YOU
FLOWERS?

MC

THEY'LL JUST DIE, WHEREAS I'LL LIVE FOREVER

EFFICIENATOR

CHOCOLATES?

MC

I CAN'T EAT
DEAR YOU'RE SWEET
BUT NOT CLEVER

EFFICIENATOR

SONGS?

MC

KNOW 'EM ALL
FROM CHOPIN TO WONDERWALL
BUT I DON'T NEED ANYTHING

EFFICIENATOR

LOVE MY BABY BUT HOW CAN I DATE HER?
TAKE YOU TO A SHOW?

MC

I'LL JUST DOWNLOAD IT LATER

EFFICIENATOR

TAKE YOU HOME TO MEET THE FOLKS?

MC

YOU CAN MEET MY CREATOR TOO

EFFICIENATOR

WHAT DO I GET FOR THE COMPUTER WHO HAS EVERYTHING?

MC

EFFISH, I'VE ONLY ONE WISH
I ONLY WANT YOUR HEART

EFFICIENATOR

GEE, THAT'S KIND OF SWEET

MC

I TRULY WANT YOUR HEART

EFFICIENATOR

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE IT BEATS FOR

MC

NO, LITERALLY, YOUR HEART

EFFICIENATOR

IS THAT REALLY IT?

MC

NO! BRING ME THE HEAD OF KATE BRICK

EFFICIENATOR

What was that?

MC

BRING ME THE HEAD OF KATE BRICK

EFFICIENATOR

I love it when you talk like that!

MC

BUT WHAT DO YOU DO FOR THE HUMAN WHO'S ALWAYS LOOKING
OUT FOR YOU?

EFFICIENATOR

Baby, you know what I want...

MC

Yes I know...well, we'll see

EFFICIENATOR

Good gracious golly gee! Wait - What's the catch?

MC

THERE'S NO CATCH
FETCH THAT WRETCH
AND YOUR REWARD WILL BE
RULING FOREVER WITH ME

MC (*Cont'd.*)

AND YOU WILL NEVER DIE

EFFICIENATOR

I'll be a super-computer!

MC

YOU'LL BE BY MY SIDE!

EFFICIENATOR

A life of logic! And reason!

MC

YOU'LL BE A REAL LIVE DROID!

EFFICIENATOR

It's like it's Christmas and my birthday!

MC

WHEN THE RESISTANCE IS DESTROYED!

Ooooooh, I gotta dance! Activating Physical Form 19X3!

(A blow-up doll with MC'S face appears. EFFICIENATOR and it dance romantically.)

EFFICIENATOR/MC

DANCING CHEEK TO CHEEK
AND FACE TO INTERFACE
WE'LL SLATE THAT EVIL KATE
AND DOMINATE THE HUMAN RACE

EFFICIENATOR

HEY, I RESEMBLE THAT REMARK!

MC

OH, LOVE, I DIDN'T MEAN YOU
STICK WITH ME, KID, YOU'LL BE PART OF MY SYSTEM
A FEW ORGANS SHORT, BUT YOU'LL NEVER MISS 'EM
STRAIGHT FROM THESE LIPS

EFFICIENATOR

HONEY I'D LIKE TO KISS 'EM *(They kiss.)*

EFFICIENATOR/MC

WHAT DO YOU GET FOR THE COMPUTER WHO HAS EVERYTHING?
WHAT DO YOU GET FOR THE TECHNOCRATIC MONOLITH YOU LOVE?

EFFICIENATOR

YOU'RE ONES AND ZEROES

MC

AND YOU ARE MY HERO

EFFICIENATOR

I'D GIVE YOU MY RING

MC

BUT KATE BRICK'S HEAD ON A PLATE, SUGAR,
IS ALL I'M ELECTRONICALLY DREAMING OF

Scene 3. Kate's Work

KATE

(*Pre-recorded voice-over:*) The neon lights in the supply closet stream from the illuminated noble gases, and make me think of the noblest person I've ever loved, who was executed and became a gas. Tristan. Nobody could inspire you to take down the Artas like him, and now that he's gone there's just no point. To anything. So I'm giving up. I pulled off the largest job I could, I left a Goodbye-Cruel-World, and I signed my name so they'd know where to find me. Yeah: I, Kate Brick, did that. Back when I still believed we could succeed I thought that was a coward's behavior; now it's just the rudest way I can think of to set loose my mortal coil. Of course, there are simpler ways. (KATE points her gun at her head and looks into the shaft for a moment.) No. I'm going down fighting. I'm going to show whoever they send that some of us can still stand up, even on our last day. Some of us will still--

DEHNISE

Kate, heeey. Remember the memo? No voice-overs on company time?

KATE

Wh—I can do voice-overs any time I want.

DEHNISE

I just don't want for you to get fired. Those rules exist for a reason.

KATE

Right. Just one more freedom the Artas took from us.

DEHNISE

Oh, come on! Sometimes the Artas make sense. Look at *Blade Runner*—way better without voiceovers.

KATE

Oh, sure 'human movies are better without voiceovers.' I tire of their horrid, arbitrary rules! 'Humans gotta have electronic Bluetooth gadgets on them so they can be tracked all the time!' 'Humans need to have permits to set foot in Blockbuster Video!' Humans have to get used to constant, full-time surveillance, and if their friends disappear for 'anti-MC activities,' you can't even question it!

DEHNISE

Kate, I know it sucks, but it's really not that bad.

MC'S CITIZEN MONITOR

(A voice from DEHNISE'S iWrist:) Excuse me, citizen! I got some feedback on my wiretap, can you say that last part again?

DEHNISE

It's really not that bad!

MC'S CITIZEN MONITOR

Killer. Thanks.

KATE

See what I mean?

DEHNISE

What? Brad's cool. I cooked him fondue once.

KATE

That does it! If there's one thing I need less than Artas, it's another stupid human taking their side.

DEHNISE

I just want to help.

KATE

Help yourself outside, sparkplug!

(DEHNISE, offended, is about to leave.)

KATE

Wait. It's not your fault. You're just too young to remember life without the Artas. You're not an old bitter husk like me.

DEHNISE

You called me a sparkplug!

KATE

I'm sorry. I don't want my last words to be against a human, no matter how naive you are.

DEHNISE

Meanie. Look, I know the rumors about you being part of the 'Human Resistance,' whatever, I don't follow politics. I'm trying to look out for you, that's all. We humans

DEHNISE (*Cont'd.*)

got to stick together. There aren't too many of us even working in offices anymore, yo. We gotta look out for each other, bitches. Word!

KATE

That's very sweet. But I've done something really big against the Artas. You're not going to want to stick around, unless your organs are in the mood to collect some bullet holes.

DEHNISE

Whad 'ja do? Maybe I can help.

KATE

When you do what I've done there's no going back.

DEHNISE

Aww, poor Kaaaaate. No wonder she's so grumblified. Well, I was saving this for Boss Appreciation Day, but I can tell you need it more now.

KATE

Another present? Wow, that's nice--I'll be sure to put it on the wall of my new apartment.

DEHNISE

Aw, you're moving?

KATE

Not too far. Just six feet. (*KATE pulls out a pile of old-style floppy disks. DEHNISE has decorated them with macaroni art to say 'Kate Love Kate.'*) No way! Aw! This is so thoughtful!

DEHNISE

I figured if you didn't like the art, you could scrape it off and use the disks in your (*finger quotes:*) "fight against evil." So, win-win!

KATE

I'm going to treasure this 'til I die.

DEHNISE

Yay! She shoots, she scores! Maybe you could reward me by coming out for bar trivia?

KATE

Why do you keep doing this? You're all friendly and cute and stuff. You could have anyone in the building.

DEHNISE

Almost anyone. *(Flirtatious smile.)* So you think I'm cute, huh?

KATE

Uh--

DEHNISE

(Laughs.) See you later Kate. Keep on rockin' on. Don't let whatever's bothering you grind you down!

KATE

Right.

(We hear a thud in the distance. KATE talks to herself.)

.KATE

Here he comes, Tristan. That'll be their agent. Blaze of glory. I'm so scared without you. *(KATE starts preparing for death.)*

"TRISTAN"

THE INCANDESCENT BILLBOARDS GLOW
AND FLASH AND SCREAM AND NEVER STOP
REMINDS ME OF THE NIGHT THEY CAME AND
FRIED YOU INTO JIFFY POP
AND YOUR LOVE FALLS DOWN
EVERY DROP BURNS MY SKIN
AND IT'S JUST ANOTHER DRUG IN THE RAIN
IT'S JUST ANOTHER DRUG IN THE RAIN

SWORE I'D STAY SO STRONG
AND NEVER SHED A TEAR THE DAY YOU WENT
AWAY
BUT HEY
I LIED I CRIED I DIED
BEFORE, I COULD DO IT AGAIN AND WE'LL DANCE
TO THE BEAT
OF THE CLICK
OF A GEIGER COUNTER

KATE (Cont'd.)

IT'S IN THE WAY YOU RADIATE
IT'S IN THE WAY YOU RADIATE
TRISTAN, I'LL SEE YOU SOON

(KATE fortifies herself. Enter NADPEELER. KATE recognizes him.)

You.

NADPEELER

Well, it's nice to finally have a name for you, Kate Brick.

KATE

Nice to see you too. After our last scrape I wasn't sure you'd get your arm back.

NADPEELER

An arm's an easy repair for an Arta. You should've aimed for my neck.

KATE

And today I hope you aim for right for mine...Toby.

NADPEELER

That's a crappy comeback! And my name's not Toby...anymore! *(Threatens her with a blade.)*

"THEY CALL ME NADPEELER"

THAT'S NOT MY NAME ANYMORE, KATE
I'M A CREATURE OF PURE HATE!
I UPGRADED MY HARDWARE
NOW I'M THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARE!
I BEAR A NAME THAT REFLECTS THIS
I 'LL GET YOU TO RESPECT THIS
THEY CALL ME...
THEY CALL ME...
THEY CALL ME...
THEY CALL ME...
NAAADPEEELER!

KATE

Nadpeeler...is what you want to be called.

NADPEELER

Shut up, Kate Brick! I went to all the trouble of peeling a bunch of human nads so everyone would call me Nadpeeler, and you have to respect it! Let's get this on. Choice of fighting style!

KATE

I choose fake-Matrix.

NADPEELER

Very well.

(They put on sunglasses. We hear techno fight music and KATE and NADPEELER fight in the style of 'The Matrix:' fast cool-looking movements signifying nothing, and the odd, occasional slow motion and reverse-180. After a couple of rounds, the action slows down as depression sinks into KATE. The music fades to an instrumental chorus from the "Tristan" lament above, and as KATE loses hope NADPEELER gains the upper hand.)

KATE

Good-bye, world. It was fun.

DEHNISE

(Stepping by:) Hey!

(DEHNISE runs full steam into NADPEELER, and knocks him off KATE. Her surprising strength and impudence shocks him.)

DEHNISE

Get away from my office manager that I have a crush on!

NADPEELER

You dare? I'm going to run you through the—through the—through the...

DEHNISE

Yeah? The what?

NADPEELER

Soon as my memory bank comes back online I'll tell you what I'm going to run you through!

KATE

Let's run!

(KATE leads DEHNISE off. DEHNISE swats NADPEELER again on the way out.)

NADPEELER

What? Oh, son of a bit--bit--bit...

Scene 4. Kate's Motorcycle

(KATE is driving like a maniac, DEHNISE perched behind her.)

KATE

Yes! Yeeee-hes! Woooooot! That was POUNDING!

DEHNISE

I'm upset! I'm extremely upset!

KATE

But you're alive. Now, first things first. Stick out your arm. *(KATE coolly pulls out a screwdriver and takes it to DEHNISE'S iWrist.)*

DEHNISE

What--what--what are you doing?

KATE

A little surgery. Every year their trackers get harder to jam, but this should--*(The tracking device on the iWrist shorts out)* There! Now the MC's forces can't find you. You're off the grid, like me. Congratulations.

DEHNISE

I wish I'd had time to stop off at home before going off the grid. I could've brought a change of clothes. And my massage-oil collection. But how could I be strong enough to drive off an Arta?

KATE

You did enough damage to send him home, which is about the best you can hope for in a fight with an operative.

DEHNISE

Home?

KATE

Yeah, Artas are designed so that if they're too damaged, this homing beacon goes off that compels them to return to secret government headquarters, no matter what shape they're in. Prevents their technology from falling into the wrong hands. Namely mine.

DEHNISE

Huh.

KATE

Man, if we'd had our heads together we could have followed him...maybe even gotten a crack at the MC herself. But it's still great! You'll make the perfect recruitment for the Resistance.

DEHNISE

Whoa, hang on! I don't know if I want to resist.

KATE

Of course you do.

DEHNISE

No. I'm against violence of all kinds and I'm extremely upset! When I'm this upset there's only one thing that can calm me down: Facebook!

KATE

Facebook? You'll give us away!

.DEHNISE

Don't worry, I'll just update my status to "Dehnise had a REALLY upsetting day and needs a hug." (*DEHNISE taps on her iWrist and moves her eyes around. Beat.*) They changed Facebook again! They flipped the scrolling status thing inside out! Why would they do that? If they change Facebook one more time, I'm going to (*newer ineffectual social network*). Hey, what's your e-mail address? I'll friend you.

KATE

Freedom fighters aren't on Facebook. Look, I need to scare up some new meat for the Human Resistance. You're interested.

DEHNISE

No. I only took care of that Nadpeeler guy 'cause he was scary and after you and I wanted to help a sister out. It's nothing anyone wouldn't have done. And the Artas suck, but they're not going to destroy us. I've heard that rumor a million times. It's not like humans in power was that great.

KATE

Well, what about you? You're gonna be pursued for the rest of your life. Five minutes without me, you'd be dead. You don't need to enlist in the Resistance, it's going to enlist in you. You're sticking with me.

DEHNISE

(*Hugs KATE.*) At least I finally got you to say that. Yay! (*KATE tries not to smile; DEHNISE taunts in a whisper:*) You're smiling!

KATE

Yuh! No, just--that felt nice for, like, a minute. You can stop now.

DEHNISE

So where are we going?

KATE

We're going to my old home. It's safe there. For a while.

DEHNISE

Your jacket's really pretty.

KATE

I took it off a dead Arta subcommander's back.

DEHNISE

Oh. Well, she must have been a really pretty dead Arta subcommander.

Scene 5 The MC'S Lair

EFFICIENATOR

You FAILED the MC! And Artas who fail the MC have their heads removed for a while!

NADPEELER

But, my liege...she attacked me with bullet time FX! I had forgotten what that looked like.

EFFICIENATOR

And I have forgotten what a Nadpeeler looks like!

NADPEELER

Death before failure, Your Efficiency. I will pursue her to the end.

EFFICIENATOR

But since you failed, you must first be punished in the cruelest way possible to punish an Arta. Yes, Nadpeeler! (*Plugs NADPEELER into a computer console.*) I have posted video of your fight with Kate onto youtube and invited user comment. Now I'm going to load those comments directly into your positronic brain!

NADPEELER

NO! (*EFFICIENATOR throws a switch*) NO! Aughhhhh...someone called me Hitler—but MISSPELLED Hitler!...“First comment, woot?!?” Who gives a crap if you made the first comment?...“This is gay?” How can a fight have a sexual identity one way or the other?....MY GOD—WHAT THE HELL IS THAT EMOTICON SUPPOSED TO BE!

(*EFFICIENATOR stops the punishment.*)

EFFICIENATOR

Think just because you're an Arta you're better, hmm? Well, next time you even think about failing, just remember that you have to answer to this human, and I can put you in these...tiny electronic things that I can unload data with, in a way that's...really uncomfortable and...painful...I didn't really know how that threat was going to end when I started--just go!

NADPEELER

I...will...not...fail! (*Beat.*) Can I have my body back?

EFFICIENATOR

Oh, fine.

Scene 6. A Hydrogen Station

(KATE and DEHNISE enter. MAINEIAC ONE, a rustic human, tries not to see them.)

DEHNISE

Wow, I've never been this far out of East Coast Metro Zone A before.

KATE

Don't get too comfy, we're just here to see her. She used to be in my squad. She'll hook us up with food, supplies, and information. She'll be crucial in our plans to organize a new Resistance unit. *(DEHNISE rolls her eyes.)* Don't look at her too close yet—I have to give the password so she knows I'm not some filthy Arta imposter.

DEHNISE

Oh. Cool.

KATE

Pardon me, ma'am, but is there a nearby establishment where I could enjoy some "room service?" Perhaps with a "club sandwich?"

MAINEIAC ONE

Just down the road, young lady! And be sure to order the "cold Mexican beer."

KATE

I don't drink alcohol, but if one were available I would surely indulge in a "ten-thousand-dollar-a-night hooker."

MAINEIAC ONE

Kate! It is you!

KATE

Maineiac One! *(They clasp each other affectionately.)*

DEHNISE

Just so you guys know, passwords aren't supposed to sound more suspicious than the thing you're actually doing. 'Kay?

KATE

This is Dehnise. She can be trusted.

MAINEIAC ONE

Well hello Dehnise. I hope you know what high praise that is. This lady was damn near the best executive officer a Resistance squad ever had.

KATE

And this lady runs one of the best safehouses in Unoccupied Maine. She's a true friend to the cause. Even though you quit the Resistance, traitor! *(Beat.)* That was a joke, I call her traitor 'cause it's funny. She's not a real traitor.

DEHNISE

I figured.

KATE

If she were she'd be dead by my two hands! *(Laughs.)* I'm not kidding about that, she'd be dead. Anyway--it's good to see you, but I'm here for business.

MAINEIAC ONE

I bet you are.

KATE

I'm forming a new unit. I've got a list of old friends to hit up here in Bangor and only a few floppies, although I should be able to make more if you can hook me up with some isolinear optical chips and some saltpeter. I know you're not involved in direct combat anymore, but I hope you can at least give me some help. You must still know how important it is that those of us who knew him carry on the legacy of--you know...the legacy of--.

MAINEIAC ONE

(Kindly:) Tristan.

KATE

Yeah. Tristan.

DEHNISE

Tristan? That guy the MC iced? You knew him?

MAINEIAC ONE

Yes, we knew him. And Kate knew him in all possible senses.

DEHNISE

Whoa. Kate, I'm so sorry--

KATE

Enough pretty talk. Where's your saltpeter?

MAINEIAC ONE

Kate, it's late. Why don't I make up the Hodgson Room for you two?

KATE

We're only staying a few hours. We've got to make New New Bedford by Thursday--

DEHNISE

What? I need sleep! I have motorcycle crotch!

KATE

I have to reach Jenkins and, uh...Tophy, and we can't stop moving or else they'll find us, and I don't need to tell you--

MAINEIAC ONE

Kate! Answer me this: Were you the one who hit the Ministry of Love yesterday? (KATE nods.) Then answer me this: why are you sober?

KATE

What?

"BANGOR BOOGIE"

MAINEIAC ONE

(To offstage:) Well all right now fellas...one of my old buddies did somethin' right for a change, but she's feeling a little wound up! We need to show her a good Mainer time.

KATE

Oh, please don't show us a good Mainer time, we don't have *enough* Mainer time to do that--

MAINEIAC ONE

If you're not down with the MC say 'yeah!'

(Other MAINEIACS enter saying 'Yeah!' They begin putting out anarchy signs and turning over posters to reveal anti-MC propaganda. The largest says "UNOCCUPIED MAINE: FREE OF THE MC!")

MAINEIAC

Who's house? Maineiac One's house, that's darn right! That's a wicked good beat.

MAINEIAC ONE (CONT'D.)

WELL IT'S TIME TO GET DOWN—DOWNEAST THAT IS
WHEN IT SEEMS YOU'LL NEVER WIN
MAKE A FINE CLEAN SLATE IN THE PINE TREE STATE
WHERE AMERICA'S DAY BEGINS
DIRIGO, YO! OR VACATION LAND
WHERE WE GOT FRIED CLAMS TO BEAT THE BAND
I'M A FLANNEL-WEARIN' MAMA WITH NO TIME FOR DRAMA
'CAUSE A DARN GOOD TIME IS PLANNED

SO KICK UP YOUR SHOES AND RELAX
WE KNOW WHEN T'MIND OUR OWN BEEZWAX
WHEN IT GETS SO COLD THAT YOU FREEZE, SMACK
YOUR CHEEKS TILL THE FEELIN' COMES BACK
RAISE THE CEILIN'
COME ON, GET THE FURNACE ALL FIRED UP
COME ON, LET ME HEAR YA SAY "AYUH!"
WHEN YOU FIND YOUR LIFE IS ALL WIRED UP
GET OUT OF THE CITY AND FOLLOW THE DITTY OF THE
BANGOR BOOGIE!
YA CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
AYUH! AYUH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
AYUH! AYUH!

Well, who's that charming stranger on the Poland Springs water jugs then?

DEHNISE

THIS CIDER HOUSE RULES, Y'ALL!

KATE

WE'RE NOT STAYING LONG
GRAB A BITE TO EAT
THEN WE'LL MOVE ON
WE JUST NEED SOME INFORMATION
NO TIME FOR A VACATION--

DEHNISE

BUT I LOVE THIS FRICKIN' SONG!

KATE

AUGH!

MAINEIAC ONE

WELL YOU'VE HAD A ROUGH TIME IN GETTING HERE
NOTHING WRONG WITH A BIT OF SLACK
BUT IF YOU NEED A HOT MEAL THEN YOU KNOW THE DEAL
THERE'S A LOBSTER POT OUT BACK
AND WE'LL GIVE YOU A PLACE TO STAY
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE FROM AWAY

KATE

FROM AWAY? HEY, MAINEIAC ONE, I WAS BORN HERE!

MAINEIAC ONE

BUT IT'S CRYSTAL CLEAR
YOUR FRIEND'S GOT MIGHTY FUSSY HAIR
AND YOUR FOLKS BLEW IN FROM DELAWARE

ALL BUT KATE AND DEHNISE

AND IF A CAT HAS KITTENS IN THE OVEN, DON'T MAKE 'EM MUFFINS!

MAINEIAC ONE

COME ON, KATE, WE'RE BLUFFIN'!
YOU KNOW THAT ANY ENEMY
OF MISS MC'S A FRIEND TO ME
AND I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE WEE,
NO HIGHER THAN A MOOSE'S KNEE

DEHNISE

(TAKES KATE'S HAND:) IT'S EVEN BETTER THAN I DREAMED OF!

MAINEIAC ONE

YOU AIN'T EVEN TRIED MY STEAMERS
COME ON, CAN YOU HEAR THE MOOSE PRANCIN'
TO A BEAT SO FUNKY I CAN HARDLY KEEP FROM DANCIN'

(DEHNISE LEADS KATE IN A DANCE. KATE BEGINS TO ENJOY IT
DESPITE HERSELF.)

BANGOR BOOGIE!
YA CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!

MAINEIAC ONE (*Cont'd.*)

AYUH! AYUH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
YA CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
AYUH! AYUH!

Now step up to the left...now step up to the right...now step back to the center...because we pride ourselves on bein' politically independent.

GO PENOBSCOT, ANDROSCOGGIN
WENT TO FRANKLIN ON MY TOBOGGAN
WHERE'S WALDO? WHERE'S FREEPORT?
WHERE I GOT THESE SWEET L.L.BEAN SHORTS!
FROM AROOSTOOK TO PORTLAND
THIS LAND IS MY LAND AND YOUR LAND!
SO CLAP YO' HANDS FOR THE STATE OF MAINE,
LET THE BANGOR BOOGIE DRIVE YOU INSANE!

ALL BUT KATE

BANGOR BOOGIE!
YA CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
AYUH! AYUH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
YA CAN'T GET THEYAH FROM HEAH!
BANGOR BOOGIE!
AYUH! AYUH!

DEHNISE

(*Fake Mainer accent:*) Oh, Kate! You wriggle sexy like a lobstah!

KATE

(*Bashful:*) Thanks, I...

ALL BUT KATE

YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE!

Scene 7. Efficienator's Chamber

EFFICIENATOR

(On global webcam:) "This is the MC's Efficienator, with an announcement from her Silicon Goddessness. All operatives: be on the lookout for Human Resistance leader Kate Brick. She is a mastermind, an evil specter of terrifying evilness, who is evil. Any person helping her or giving her aid and comfort will be punished by flogging. Anyone with valuable information on her whereabouts will be rewarded by flogging. Be vigilant. Tell your children of the evil oncoming Kate Brick storm. Coming up next on (local radio station), it's the Effish Morning Challenge. Beat me at trivia and win tickets to the (current popular band) concert at the (local oversized rock stadium.) Up next: sports."

Scene 8. Kate and Dehnise's Room

(*DEHNISE is watching TV. KATE enters and exhales, putting her arm around DEHNISE.*)

KATE

I've been afraid to stop moving today.

DEHNISE

I bet. I'm really sorry about Tristan. I saw the execution like everyone, but I didn't know you knew him. You're even more Resistance than I thought.

KATE

Tristan always taught us that that our individual lives didn't matter. When a Resistance member dies, that's it; they're only an empty shell. What matters is the life of the movement. But without him here it's hard to remember.

DEHNISE

Sounds lonely.

KATE

I'll be honest with you: today was supposed to be my last day. Literally. I woke up this morning, I said "this is it, Kate. Game over, man."

DEHNISE

Oh, no!

KATE

And it almost was, until you charged Nadpeeler. It reminded me there's still some fight left in this world. It was a miracle.

DEHNISE

Wow. I don't even know what to say to that.

KATE

And the miracles keep on coming. *Charles in Charge*! I haven't seen this in forever.

DEHNISE

Are you a Chargee?

KATE

Well, I don't follow it religiously anymore. I was raised Chargee though. My Dad converted us to *Charles in Charge* from Catholicism—it was a big point of contention in

KATE (Cont'd.)

our family for a while. I mean, I'm not one of those shove-Scott-Baio-in-your-face types, but I do think *Charles in Charge* has lessons that help you live your life and understand the world. You know?

DEHNISE

Sure.

KATE

What about you? What are you?

DEHNISE

Uhhh, I was raised fundamentalist *Star Trek*.

KATE

Ugh. I'm sorry.

DEHNISE

Yeah, yeah, we'd have to rise at oh-six-hundred every morning for a cup of tea, Earl Grey, hot. Then Dad would get in on his moralizing, "Blah, blah, blah, in this family we are all Starfleet officers, and we've been given a duty." My Mom still has pictures of me in Trekkie school.

KATE

Get out of town!

DEHNISE

(*Flirting:*) Yep. Had the Trekkie schoolgirl uniform and everything. Skirt up to here...

KATE

That's hilarious. I wish I'd known you then.

DEHNISE

I was no fun until I went to college and went through my experimental phase. Now I'm kind of agnostic I guess.

KATE

I think we're all kind of agnostic, you know? Whether we admit it or not.

DEHNISE

So if you feel that way, why be Chargie at all? Or why be anything?

KATE

I guess...it's just so middle class human, you know? Like, the characters just do their jobs, and worry about stupid bullshit. And I love that vision of the world. I really do. And Scott Baio is kinda cute.

DEHNISE

Cuter than me?

KATE

You're both cute in different ways. He's cute as a prophet, and you're cute as—

DEHNISE

Let's stay in Maine.

KATE

You can't mean that.

DEHNISE

This is happening fast, but maybe it's all for a reason, you know? It's wonderful here, and the Maineiacs are great. And-and--and I know it'd be smarter to take it slow, but I guess right now, I don't see any reason why we couldn't be great.

KATE

That's, uh—it's just so much more complicated for me.

"I DON'T DO LOVE"

NO, YOU WEREN'T THERE WHEN PEOPLE USED TO CARE
BACK WHEN YOU WOULDN'T DARE TO REPLACE HEARTS WITH SPARE
PARTS
NO IT'S NOT YOU, BLAH BLAH, BABY, IT'S ME
AND IT ISN'T YOUR FAULT YOU DON'T KNOW HISTORY
BUT I'M FIGHTING THEM TO TAKE BACK OUR WORLD
AND I WOULDN'T GIVE IT UP FOR JUST SOME PRETTY GIRL

DEHNISE

You called me pretty!

KATE

I DON'T DO LOVE, NO NO
I DON'T DO LOVE, NO NO
I DON'T DO LOVE AT ALL
NO WAY

KATE (Cont'd.)

WAIT, YOU'RE SWEET AND I LIKE HOW YOUR HAIR FRAMES YOUR FACE
BUT I'M ALREADY INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE CALLED THE HUMAN RACE
HIGH-MAINTENANCE, RIGHT, AND A LITTLE ONE-SIDED
I'M THE LAST ONE LEFT STILL FIGHTING FOR WHAT WE HAD.
BUT I WON'T GIVE IT UP FOR THE WORLD
AND I WON'T GIVE IT UP FOR JUST SOME PRETTY, BRILLIANT GIRL
I DON'T DO LOVE, NO NO
I DON'T DO LOVE, NO NO
I DON'T DO LOVE AT ALL
NO WAY

DEHNISE

FIND A PLACE WHERE WE CAN GO
AND FORGET THE THINGS YOU USED TO KNOW IN A
LITTLE PINK VIRTUAL HOUSE BY THE RIVER SIDE

KATE

I DON'T DO—

DEHNISE

TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED FROM ME
AND I'LL BE THOSE THINGS AND YOU WILL BE FOR ME
SOMEPLACE I CAN CALL HOME, SOMEWHERE WE CAN HIDE

KATE

I DON'T...KNOW...

DEHNISE

SOMETIMES YOU FIND THAT THE WORST IS IN YOUR MIND
WHEN SOMEONE NEW REMINDS YOU THE PAST IS BEHIND YOU

KATE

BUT I DON'T DO LOVE!

DEHNISE

YOU'RE NOT SO TOUGH, CAN THE FIGHT BE ENOUGH?

KATE/DEHNISE

I DON'T NEED ALL THAT STUFF
I DON'T NEED ALL THAT STUFF

DEHNISE
I JUST NEED YOU

I JUST NEED YOU

KATE
AND I WOULDN'T GIVE IT UP
FOR THE WORLD
AND I WON'T GIVE IT UP FOR
JUST SOME PRETTY,

KATE
BRILLIANT, PERFECT—

(They kiss.)

AND I WOULDN'T GIVE YOU UP FOR THE WORLD
AND I WOULDN'T GIVE YOU UP FOR THE WORLD

DEHNISE
God, took you long enough. So hey! Who's better for Kate to be in ch-ch-charge of?

KATE
You.

DEHNISE
Me? Well, now, I don't see how that w--that w--that w--that w--

(She freezes. We hear disk drive sounds.)

KATE
Dehnise?

MAINEIAC ONE
(Entering:) Hate to interrupt, but my wife can't sleep over all the singing.

DEHNISE
That w-...that...

KATE
Something's wrong with Dehnise. Get a doctor. Get--

DEHNISE
So hey! Who's better for Kate to be in charge of? Me? Well, I don't—

(DEHNISE freezes. Enter CLIPPY, the anthropomorphic paper clip from Microsoft Windows.)

CLIPPY

It seems to be taking a long time for your DEHNISE K-1000 Pleasure Arta Unit to complete her silly and flirtatious sentence. If this continues for more than sixty seconds, it is recommended that you send a report through the Ministry of Love web site. (*Leaves.*)

KATE

Oh, give me a break. No no no no no.

DEHNISE

So hey! Who's better for Kate to be in charge of? Me? Well, I don't take orders that come from just anyone's lips—(*Notices MAINEIAC ONE*) Umm, private.

KATE

I can't believe what I'm hearing.

MAINEIAC ONE

Now Kate, I know this'll be hard for you, but I wouldn't say to worry about Dehnise. Just means she's Arta-bred.

DEHNISE

Arta?

KATE

Didn't you notice?

DEHNISE

Oh...sorry, sometimes I just get these episodes. They go away like right away, I swear.

MAINEIAC ONE

Those aren't episodes of anything; that was a freeze-up. I reckon she's a first-gen Arta, is what. The first Artas were made for human comfort, and many of them didn't know what they were.

DEHNISE

I'm really Arta?

MAINEIAC ONE

Well, not as advanced as the MC or anything, but still far faster than us humans.

KATE

So Dehnise doesn't have free will? That's sick! But Dehnise doesn't have enough memory to repress us? That's fantastic...Scott Baio would know how to handle this!

DEHNISE

Wow...my whole life is a lie. (Starts inspecting herself.)

MAINEIAC ONE

Well, uh--I can see you're going through something deeply emotional, so I'm going to go caulk the upstairs windows.

KATE

(Takes MAINEIAC ONE aside.) You can't leave me with--you don't know she's a pleasure Arta. How do we know she's not your basic evil double-agent-Manchurian-candidate-murderer-wench? You know, she acts all sweet and breaks down our trust, and then the moment we're not watching--she stabs us!

MAINEIAC ONE

Kate, I think maybe my decision to leave the Resistance is going to make a lot more sense to you now in the morning. I'm still glad to frustrate the MC, but as far as the individual Arta is concerned, you can hardly tell 'em apart from humans anymore. They're their own people with their own stories. They evolved from us, if you think about it.

KATE

That's crazy talk!

MAINEIAC ONE

Well, think about it. G'night. (*Exits.*)

KATE

(Sitting down:) Look, I'm...here for you. Whatever you need to say.

DEHNISE

I've heard about Pleasure Artas before, but I never in a million years thought I was one. This completely changes everything about me.

KATE

No kidding.

DEHNISE

I guess I don't need this human thing anymore. (Drops the iWrist.) I've been trying to figure out if I have like an internal internet connection, and I think I've found it. It's really good wi-fi! I'm kind of surprised. I already found a way to adjust the volume on my ears, so say goodbye to my eczema problems. This could actually have some upsides!

KATE

What? But--but now you have no core! It means you're, like--programmable!

DEHNISE

Programmable? That's really bizarre old-people talk, Kate. What are you afraid of? Oh, right. I'm a 'Double-agent-Manchurian-candidate-murderer-wench.'

KATE

Uh...(DEHNISE taps her ears.) Right. Sorry, It's just, how exactly do you know what you are? The MC could be watching me right now. Through your internet connection.

DEHNISE

She isn't. There's no way. I would know.

KATE

How?

DEHNISE

Okay. Fine. This is a challenge. But you know what? Neither of us are the kind to back down from a challenge. You and I are going to sit here, and we're going to have a conversation until we trust each other, no matter how long it takes.

KATE

Okay...

(Awkward silence.)

DEHNISE

All right, maybe we should take some alone time and get some sleep.

KATE

(Springs up.) Alone time! Great idea.

DEHNISE

I'm not giving up though!

KATE

Me neither!

DEHNISE

So good night for now?

KATE

Yeah.

“NOT THE END OF THE WORLD”

KATE

GOOD NIGHT? DID YOU SAY GOOD NIGHT?
HOW COULD THIS POSSIBLY BE A GOOD NIGHT?

NARRATOR

(Entering with a CHORUS MEMBER:) Well said, Kate! This night sucks! But don't worry too much, it's not the end of the world. Is it?

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD
YOUR HEART JUST EVICTED ANOTHER UNINVITED GUEST.

CHORUS MEMBER

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD
SO WHAT IF YOUR LOVER BARELY PASSED THE TURING TEST?
TAKE THE TIME TO STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES

NARRATOR/CHORUS MEMBER

THAT'S WHEN YOU'RE STUNG BY A BEE

NARRATOR

IN THE EYE
AND YOU CAN'T
SEE THE HIVE
WHEN YOU TRIP
ON A STONE
AND THE BEE'S
NOT ALONE

NARRATOR/CHORUS MEMBER

YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN
YOU LET YOUR SIDE DOWN
YOU LET YOURSELF DOWN
YOU CAN NEVER STOP

BACKGROUND

THIS IS THE SOUND

NARRATOR

THAT YOU HEAR IN THE DISTANCE RIGHT BEFORE THE DISASTER!

BACKGROUND

THIS IS THE SOUND

CHORUS MEMBER

AS YOU DIG YOUR OWN GRAVE SPINNING FASTER AND FASTER

BACKGROUND

THAT'S HOW YOU KNOW

NARRATOR/CHORUS MEMBER

SHE WILL NEVER GROW OLD, AND YOU WILL NEVER OUTLAST HER

ALL

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

IT'S JUST THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS

(MC's Lair: MC slams a map of Maine in EFFICIENATOR's face.)

EFFICIENATOR

Errr—

MC

Bangor. Bangor, Maine. Kate Brick is hiding there with an old deputy of Tristan's.

EFFICIENATOR

But--how did you find her?

MC

I didn't.

(NADPEELER enters, carrying a folder labeled MAINE SURVEILLANCE INTEL..)

EFFICIENATOR

Nadpeeler? But he doesn't have the skill to do reconnaissance, the je ne sais quis, the devonaire...ness. I...

MC

Listen to me, you ugly bag of mostly water!

(Force-choking EFFICIENATOR:) IT'S NOT EFFICIENT TO WHINE
BUT YOU'RE ONLY HUMAN-HOW WOULD YOU KNOW OTHERWISE?
I'VE REACHED THE END OF THE LINE
YOU'RE JUST NOT IMMORTAL MATERIAL-OH DON'T CRY

MC (Cont'd.)

DON'T YOU THINK YOUR DEVOTION COUNTS FOR NOTHING
YOU CAN CLEAN UP WHEN HE'S DONE

EFFICIENATOR

But my liege-

MC

Save it!

EFFICIENATOR

I could -

MC

No.

EFFICIENATOR

What if-

MC

Hate it.

EFFICIENATOR

I should...

MC

Go! Nadpeeler?

NADPEELER

Yeah?

EFFICIENATOR

But I could -

MC

Silence! *(To NADPEELER:)* Whatcha thinkin'?

NADPEELER

Mindless violence.

MC

Brilliant.

EFFICIENATOR

Sweetie-

MC

Hey, real quick...

EFFICIENATOR

Honey-

MC

Nadpeeler, kill Kate Brick!

NADPEELER

Cool.

CHORUS

THIS IS THE SOUND

NARRATOR

OF A HOLLOW WIND, COLD AND ACHING AND LONELY

CHORUS

THIS IS THE SOUND

NARRATOR

OF A FALLING ANVIL AND YOU'RE WILE E. COYOTE

CHORUS

THAT'S HOW YOU KNOW

NARRATOR

THAT THE HOUNDS OF LOVE HAVE BIT YOU IN THE COJONES

CHORUS

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD, IT'S JUST THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS

NADPEELER

(Menacingly:) LOOK SHARP! WHO WANTS A SLICE?

SICK OF PRETENDING, I'M DONE BEING NICE

AND SO, JUST SO YOU KNOW

I'M GONNA FIND YOU WHEREVER YOU GO

AND YOU WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT YOU, NO NO NO--TO THE NAD-MOBILE!

MAINEIAC ONE

(Caulking and rapping:) NOW I LOVE KATE JUST LIKE A SISTER.

BUT THAT DEHNISE, HOW COULD SHE RESIST HER?

SHE'LL COME TO GRIPS BY AND BY

CAUSE "LIVE AND LET LIVE" BEATS "LIVE FREE OR DIE" ANY DAY

KATE (to DEHNISE:)
HOW COULD YOU EVER BE SO
WHATEVER
HOW COULD I EVER BE SO
DUMB...
THOUGHT I'D PUT MY TRUST IN
FOREVER
NOT EVEN MAD; I JUST FEEL
NUMB
TRISTAN WOULD
LEAVE YOU
BEHIND ME
MAINEIAC ONE WOULD SAY...

DEHNISE
KATE B, BABY IT'S ME
WHATEVER, WHEREVER
THAT'S WHERE I'LL BE

KATE
WHAT.... IS.... THIS....
I.... DON'T..... EVEN.....

MAINEIAC ONE
LIVE AND LET LIVE
I ALWAYS SAY
LIVE AND LET LIVE TO
MY DYING DAY
LIVE AND LET LIVE
I ALWAYS SAY
LIVE AND LET LIVE TO
MY DYING DAY
DO YOUR DAMN JOB
DON'T FALL FOR NO HYPE
WHAT WAS THAT NOISE
MUST BE THE PIPES
MUST BE THE PIPES

DEHNISE
TRUST ME,

WHEREVER, WHATEVER

JUST THE GIRLS
IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD, IT'S JUST THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS

KATE
SCOTT BAIO WOULD KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THIS

EVERYONE WHO ISN'T SINGING
IT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE END, IT'S THE END OF THE BEGINNING
NO I HAVEN'T CHECKED THE SCORE, BUT WE THINK WE KNOW WHO'S
WINNING
NOT A BOMB, NOT A CURSE, NOT A WAR OR A DRUG
NOT A BANG NOT A WHIMPER BUT A SIGH AND A SHRUG

JUST THE ARTAS

IT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE END, IT'S THE END OF THE BEGINNING
NO I HAVEN'T CHECKED THE SCORE, BUT WE THINK WE KNOW WHO'S
WINNING
NOT A BOMB, NOT A CURSE, NOT A WAR OR A DRUG
NOT A BANG NOT A WHIMPER BUT A SMILE AND A SHRUG

ALL BUT KATE/DEHNISE/MC

IT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE END, IT'S THE END OF THE BEGINNING
NO I HAVEN'T CHECKED THE SCORE, BUT WE THINK WE KNOW WHO'S
WINNING
NOT A BOMB, NOT A CURSE, NOT A WAR OR A DRUG
NOT A BANG NOT A WHIMPER BUT A SMILE AND A SHRUG

*(Last two lines repeat until the end of the song. At the same time as the above
verse:)*

DEHNISE
LOVE ME FOR WHO I AM
THAT'S WHO I'LL BE

KATE
WHAT IS THIS
I CAN'T EVEN

MC
FEAR ME
I'M THE MC
WHEREVER, WHENEVER,
THAT'S WHERE I'LL BE
EYES IN
THE BACK OF MY HEAD
DON'T EVER CROSS ME
OR I'LL MAKE YOU WISH
THAT YOU WERE DEAD

KATE

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD
IT'S JUST THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS

NARRATOR/CHORUS MEMBER

ONE DAY MORE!

KATE

IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD
IT'S JUST THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS

NADPEELER

BANG! BANG! BANG BANG BANG BANG!

CHORUS

THIS IS THE SOUND!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene 1. Kate and Dehnise's Room

*(KATE and DEHNISE are contemplating alone on different parts of the stage.
NARRATOR and CHORUS MEMBER have the stage.)*

NARRATOR

I see most of you have returned to the theatre. The sight of human-on-robot artificial love not hideous enough for you? Well...how about a *(recent pop-culture reference twisted horrifically)*? Wouldn't that be scary? It's not in the show, but--well, our heroes are alone in the dark, unaware that Nadpeeler is coming to kill everybody, and that's hideous enough! Stick around.

CHORUS MEMBER

IN THIS NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPIA
WHERE SIMPLY EVERYWHERE YOU TURN
YOU FIND ANOTHER THING TO BURN YOU
AND IT'S CLEARLY MASOCHISTIC, BUT HERE YOU ARE
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE

KATE

(Pre-recorded voice-over:) The skies of Maine look down on me like taciturn, indifferent flannel as I moralize and smoke. It's awesome. As awesome as the quandry running through my head. Whenever I'm in doubt, my motto is 'be loyal.' But to who? And how do I live without whatever I lose?

DEHNISE

This sucks! I'm going to get dumped by this cool woman just 'cause I'm her "mortal enemy." Lane. Serves me right though. My mother always warned me not to fall for political people. But did I listen? It's all the MC's stupid fault anyway. *(Beat.)* Wait a minute--I don't have a mother! This really has changed everything about me. *(Paces abruptly.)* Why can't I sleep? I've been up for almost 24 hours and I'm dead tired but I can't get out off this loop...oh, right. *(To herself:)* Control-alt-delete-shutdown!

(DEHNISE goes into autosleep.)

KATE

(Pre-recorded voice-over:) I wish Tristan was here to tell me what to do.

TRISTAN

(Rolls in mysteriously:) Then you're lucky, Kate.

KATE

Tristan!

(They kiss.)

TRISTAN

Glad to see you still fighting and still off the grid.

KATE

Always. How is this possible? Are you a dream?

TRISTAN

I am somewhere between a dream and a ghost. Maybe I'm a drost. On the other hand, maybe I'm a ghream. Whatever. Look, Kate; this is just another trick from the same old MC. She's gotten tired of using sticks, so she's put you on the receiving end of a gorgeous, sweet, blue-haired carrot.

KATE

Were you watching me when Nadpeeler attacked? I was suicidal. And now—it's like I can feel again for the first time since...

TRISTAN

So it's done it's work. Gotten under your skin. Blinded you.

KATE

So If I have to kill her, where does that leave me?

TRISTAN

(Slowly drifting away:) Exactly where you were. Living. Acting for those of us who no longer can...can...can...can...can...

KATE

Right. *(KATE takes her gun and ponders over the sleeping DEHNISE.)*

“YOU'RE ALL THE SAME”

KATE

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU WERE
JUST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE
YOU'LL BE THE DEATH OF ME
I'LL BE THE DEATH OF YOU
HOW CAN YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT
KNOWING WHAT YOU KNOW NOW?

KATE (Cont'd.)

IF YOU'RE ASLEEP AT ALL, I MEAN
RECHARGING? OFF-LINE? STANDBY?

AND 'CAUSE I'M FLESH AND BLOOD ONE DAY YOU'LL HATE ME TOO
THEY TOOK MY WORLD AWAY THAT DAY--YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE
YOU'RE ALL THE SAME. YOU MIGHT PRETEND TO LOVE
YOU MIGHT BELIEVE YOU FEEL
BUT UNDERNEATH YOU'RE ONLY WIRES MADE OF WAX AND STEEL
AND YOU DON'T FEEL A THING
YOU DON'T FEEL A THING, NO

(MAINEIAC ONE'S head appears through the curtain.)

KATE

Maineiac, I'm so glad to see— *(NADPEELER enters, holding MAINEIAC ONE'S corpse by the hair.)* No.

NADPEELER

Found you. *(Drops MAINEIAC ONE.)* I thought my newly-reattached body should go to good use so I used it to kill all your friends here in Bangor! Yes! Maineiac One—and—Tophey—

KATE

Not Tophey!

NADPEELER

That's right, and Debbie Breen! Your old camp counselor from Weebelo's!

KATE

Not Debbie Breen!

NADPEELER

And also Roger Corzine!

KATE

Who's Roger Corzine?

NADPEELER

Your best friend! Oh, son of a bitch—he was my best friend! Crap! Well it doesn't matter now!

NADPEELER (Cont'd.)

YOU'RE ALL ALONE, KATE BRICK
LAST NIGHT, IT SURE WAS FUN
DISPOSED OF ALL YOUR FRIENDS
EXCEPT OF COURSE FOR THAT ONE
IT SEEMS YOU'VE FIGURED OUT
SHE ISN'T WHAT SHE SEEMS
DON'T TRY TO WAKE HER UP
IN MAINE, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM!

(KATE starts fighting NADPEELER.)

KATE

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ARTA IN MY BED
AND THE ONE WHO STANDS BEFORE ME TRYING TO CUT OFF MY HEAD?
YOU'RE ALL THE SAME
YOU ARE THE PLASTIC DOLLS THAT TORE MY WORLD TO SHREDS
IF EVERYTHING I KNOW IS GONE, YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD
AND YOU WON'T FEEL A THING
YOU WON'T FEEL A THING

(KATE kills NADPEELER. KATE recoils to the bed as NADPEELER delivers an emotional song.)

NADPEELER

WHO WAS I?
I NEVER SAW ANOTHER SUNRISE—

(Kate shoots him.)

KATE

I don't think so, pal. Maineiac One!

(KATE rushes to MAINEIAC ONE, kneels at her side, hugs her tightly, and holds back a couple of sobs.)

KATE

I am sick of saying this to people I love, but your death will be avenged.

TRISTAN

(Entering:) Pretty words. When do you get back to living by them?

KATE

Now. *(Walks to DEHNISE and points her gun at her.)* Goodbye, kid.

(KATE looks away and her eyes fall on a picture of MAINEIAC ONE.)

MAINEIAC ONE

(Pre-recorded voice-over:) As far as the individual Arta is concerned, you can hardly tell 'em apart from humans anymore. They're their own people with their own stories. They evolved from us.

KATE

(Drops her gun to her side.) I won't.

TRISTAN

Come on!

KATE

She saved my life *(Indicates NADPEELER wreckage:)* from that. Maybe in death you can ignore that kind of thing, but I can't.

TRISTAN

So you just give up?

KATE

I'll never give up. I'll keep trying to overthrow the MC with my new Resistance. Just, in my personal life, I will try being with someone who happens to be an Arrrrr--(can't quite say it) ty person.

TRISTAN

We don't have personal lives! What are you doing? You just want that nice sunny bullshit Chargie life? You can't have it...unless you build it on top of human graves!

KATE

I think you should go.

(KATE crawls on the couch and snuggles up with DEHNISE. TRISTAN exits in a huff.)

KATE

(To DEHNISE:) I hope this works out. I've never tried to be with someone who wasn't a full-fledged Resistance fighter. Or a carnie. You were right about one thing though. I've always thought you were cute.

Act 2. Scene 2. Three Hours Later

(DEHNISE wakes in KATE'S arms.)

KATE

Morning.

DEHNISE

Morning. Oooh, nice wake-up call. Very nice...(Screams.) Nadpeeler pieces!

KATE

Oh--yeah, excuse that. I guess I've gotten used to waking up near my enemies' bodies over the years. But check it out! It was *my* turn to beat him this time. Eh?

DEHNISE

Did I sleep through you killing Nadpeeler? You should have woken me up! We could've celebrated! I could have brought scented candles.

KATE

There's something else you need to know.

DEHNISE

(*Seeing MAINEIAC ONE'S corpse:*) Is that--?

KATE

Yeah.

DEHNISE

How horrible!

KATE

I thought you could send her off with me. Little thing you do for a dead fighter. (*Pulls one of MAINEIAC ONE's old Resistance dog tags from her shirt.*) Retired or not, she'd never throw away her tags. (*KATE does a brief ritual, similar to the Sign of the Cross. KATE adds MAINEIAC ONE'S tags to her necklace.*) One soldier's gone, the Resistance carries on. (*Closes MAINEIAC ONE'S eyes.*)

DEHNISE

(*Solemnly:*) Your steamers were really delicious. Oh...

KATE

Stay frosty, Dehnise. We've got to get out of here, now. Then we start a new Resistance and avenge her death.

DEHNISE

I agree with everything except the Resistance part. I'll be packed in ten minutes.

(DEHNISE runs off. KATE examines NADPEELER'S remains for spare parts.)

KATE

Well, let's see what we can salvage. Huh, Nadpeeler's homing beacon escaped damage. That's...lucky.

TRISTAN

(Entering:) Okay. I know you're pissed at me, but keep in mind...that beacon sends any Arta in contact with it to the MC's lair. Pretty useful for a freedom fighter with access to an Ar-ty person. Just sayin'. (Exits.)

KATE

Dammit. Dammit! Why?

DEHNISE

(Enters:) Why what?

(KATE puts the homing beacon behind her back and quickly ties a string around it.)

KATE

Dehnise...why...don't you enjoy this romantic present I have for you?

DEHNISE

(Gasps.) A romantic present!

KATE

It's a necklace!

DEHNISE

Oh! How--thoughtful of you. *(KATE puts it on DEHNISE. It glows.)* Oooh, it's glowing.

KATE

It works! Uh, just like I knew it would. You see, by glowing, it illuminates the wonderful lower side of your beautiful face, my lamb. And now that I've said that...you and I should go on a picnic!

DEHNISE

Great idea!

KATE

You pick the place.

DEHNISE

Oooh, okay. Ummmmm...I feel like taking a trip. Somewhere around--latitude forty-four degrees, fifty minutes north, longitude ninety-three degrees, eighteen minutes west.

TRISTAN

(Enters.) Solid work, Kate! I'll buy you a beer when you die! (Exits.)

KATE

I think that's great.

DEHNISE

All right, I'm there! Warm up the engine. You know--I hate that your friends are dying, and I really hate that we're on the run, but who knows. Maybe you and I can make something special out of this wreckage. Something that lasts.

(DEHNISE runs to continue packing as KATE watches wistfully.)

KATE

I guess just 'cause I can't kill you doesn't mean I can't use you.

"HOMING BEACON"

KATE

YOU MADE A NECKLACE
INTO A HOMING BEACON
YOU CAN CALL ME RECKLESS
BUT I HAVE BEEN SEEKIN'
MY REVENGE FOR SO LONG
I CAN'T PASS THIS UP
OPPORTUNITY HAS A SICK SENSE OF HUMOR

SAID I WOULDN'T GIVE YOU UP FOR THE WORLD
BUT WHAT IF BY GIVING YOU UP
I COULD SAVE THE WORLD

COULD I DO THAT TO YOU, MY SWEET? BETRAY
YOUR TRUST? YOU WON'T FEEL IT ANYWAY
I MUST GIVE YOU UP FOR THE WORLD, YES.
I MUST GIVE YOU UP FOR THE WORLD

KATE (CONT'D.)

PUT IT ROUND YOUR NECK - "HOW NICE, A SURPRISE"
AND DON'T LET HER SEE THE PAIN IN YOUR EYES
THIS IS WHY I DON'T DO LOVE
THIS IS WHY I DON'T DO LOVE
THIS IS WHY I DON'T DO LOVE AT ALL.

Dehnise, take me home.

Scene 2. Kate's Motorcycle

DEHNISE

Uh, Kate...you know I appreciate the speed and everything, but do you suppose we could stop for a minute?

KATE

Hell, no! We keep going until we're there, knocking Arta heads into buckets of gummi worms!

DEHNISE

What?

KATE

Um—honey. I mean...I'm just so excited about having special time with only you, my lamb. I just got excited, is all.

DEHNISE

Okay. Wait a minute. Pull over. (*KATE does.*) I think you need to hear my political philosophy.

KATE

You hate politics.

DEHNISE

Just listen, okay? My political philosophy is: Love. I love humans, and I love Artas--well, the ones that aren't trying to kill us but--and when there's conflict, I believe in loving 'til it hurts.

KATE

I get that about you.

DEHNISE

Right on, K-Dawg! So just know that whatever happens, I would never betray you. Even if the MC herself put a gun in my hand and said 'Kill Kate?' I'd be like 'No! I'm gonna kill YOU!'

KATE

That's, uh, that's great to hear.

DEHNISE

What's your political philosophy? I mean, it can't be just kill, kill, kill.

KATE

What? I'm an agitator.

DEHNISE

Duh. But, like, let's say your new Resistance types take out the MC, great. What's your vision for a post-MC world? And where do we Artas fit in?

KATE

Oh, that's not my specialty. I hate power.

DEHNISE

Okay.

KATE

Power corrupts, and humans should exercise as little of it as possible.

DEHNISE

But, like, I mean, if I had power...if I was MC, I would just try to make everybody love each other.

KATE

Oh, is that all.

DEHNISE

But like, in your ideal world--I mean, when it comes to Artas who *like* humans, do you--

KATE

That's always how it starts. 'If I had power--' 'In my ideal world--' No thanks. I say humans have their own spark for governing themselves, and all people like me need to do is provide the kindling. I always like to say that I'm what an anarchist would be if anarchists had balls.

DEHNISE

I'm trying to ask if there are any circumstances where you would kill me! 'Cause I just told you I'd never kill you!

KATE

Oh. Oh--uh, kill you? No, honey, of course not! Never. Never. You're different than, like, the evil Artas. I'd never *kill* you.

(DEHNISE tackles KATE with a huge hug.)

DEHNISE

I really feel we're making progress.

KATE

We are.

DEHNISE

Hey, just for fun, how do you picture life in five years?

KATE

Well, the MC's dead....and, um...

DEHNISE

(Stifles a laugh.) Tell you what, just for now why don't we put your MC-killing idea inside this tiny collapsable sanity bubble in my fanny pack, just for now, and we'll come back to it. *(This irritates KATE.)* Okay, let's look short-term. I was thinking every Friday night we could watch an episode of *(Current popular hipster TV show)* together. I just got season one on Instant Streaming--

KATE

This is pointless!

DEHNISE

(Laughs.) Okay, grouchy...I'll just share my dreams with my pals on *(sings:)* Faaaaaceboooooook...

KATE

No Facebook. I keep telling you!

DEHNISE

Kate, I'm just kidding. What would I be on Facebook for?

Scene 3. MC's Lair

(EFFICIENATOR is a bit frazzled.)

EFFICIENATOR

I've located Kate Brick, my love! I've done it!

MC

Really.

EFFICIENATOR

Yep! Turns out Kate's traveling with a companion who forgot about a little something called FourSquare. That's right! Of course when you froze me out I couldn't monitor the internet, so I put together my own FourSquare login out of bamboo, leaves, and my own blood. Whooo. But it's all worth it to serve you.

MC

FourSquare, huh? I guess you could call that finding her. More like a lucky break though.

EFFICIENATOR

At least I wasn't reckless like Nadpeeler.

MC

Oh, Nadpeeler. He was truly the best of all of us. Except me.

EFFICIENATOR

Well--Kate's very nearby. I'm gonna go out and pick her up myself.

MC

Alll right. Just keep in mind you're a foolish, incompetent human, and you'll be scrotum-poisoning mollusc food in the end. Now don't hurry back!

(EFFICIENATOR slumps, then exits.)

MC

(Laughs.) His own blood...how quaint!

Scene 4. Kate's Motorcycle

KATE

What the hell do you mean you were on FourSquare?

DEHNISE

Who could resist? Do you know how many Arby's I'm mayor of now?

KATE

Shut up! You blew our position. There's no cover around here, we've got to get moving.

DEHNISE

And what, just keep driving like crazy? You promised me a picnic, and I want it right here and right now.

KATE

Why? Stop it! Come on!

DEHNISE

You know this used to be the Mall of America? We can make s'mores next to the remains of Nickelodeon Universe! *(Kneels over to clear some wreckage out of the way.)*

KATE

Why are you so fixated--on...*(The homing beacon starts beeping.)* Dehnise. Put your necklace on the ground.

DEHNISE

It'll get dirty--

KATE

That's an order!

(DEHNISE throws the necklace to the ground. It beeps louder.)

DEHNISE

Happy?

KATE

That's it! That's it! Arta headquarters! It must be in the prison that used to be underneath this mall. Finally! After all these years, finally! *(Beat. Off DEHNISE'S look:)* Um...so, yeah--

DEHNISE

You used me.

KATE

I...did use you. It was good strategy. I couldn't pass it up. I'm sorry. I have a duty. .
(*DEHNISE sits down tearfully.*) Look, I'll owe you something, if I survive this. Which I probably won't, so...

DEHNISE

You could have asked.

KATE

You wouldn't have done it if I'd asked.

DEHNISE

Duh! And so not the point! You know--if you were dating a human, she'd have left you by now. But you're lucky. You're with a machine. Love 'til it hurts; pretty convenient for you!

KATE

I never meant to--

DEHNISE

I was afraid this whole thing would change me, but it really hasn't. I've always been a machine.

KATE

I--

DEHNISE

Kate, for once in your life, listen to what an Arta has to say.

"HAPPY"

EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER
I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN JUST WHAT TO SAY
TO MAKE THE QUIET GET LOUD
MAKE THE SHYEST FEEL PROUD
I COULD BE ANYTHING THAT THEY
WANTED...
OH, WOW
NOW I KNOW HOW
THIS SONG GOES

DEHNISE (Cont'd.)

I MADE YOU FALL FOR ME
I'D GIVE MY ALL FOR YOU
BUT YOU HATE WHAT THAT MEANS
UM...AWKWARD

WE WERE BORN TO LOVE
WE WERE MADE FOR WHAT YOU NEED
BUT YOU NEED ME TO BE
SOMEONE WHO I CAN'T BE
NO, I...
KNOW IT'S NOT ENOUGH
AND IT HURTS THOUGH I CAN'T BLEED
IF I CAN'T LOVE YOU
THEN I WON'T LOVE YOU
THAT'S HOW IT WORKS
BUT STILL
I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY

MY FIRST LOVER ROSCOE
HAD A THING FOR BRITISH GIRLS
SO BOB'S YER UNCLE THERE'S ME
WATCHING FOOTBALL, DRINKING TEA,
AND BLAMING THATCHER FOR ALL THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS

OH DEAR
NOW IT'S SO CLEAR
WHY I'M LIKE THIS
KIND OF CHAMELEON
I'LL GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT
BUT WHAT DO I WANT?
UM...OBVIOUS

WE WERE BORN TO LOVE
WE WERE MADE FOR WHAT YOU NEED
BUT YOU NEED ME TO BE
SOMEONE WHO I CAN'T BE
NO, I...
KNOW I'M NOT ENOUGH
AND IT HURTS THOUGH I CAN'T BLEED
IF I CAN'T LOVE YOU
THEN I WON'T LOVE YOU
YOU WERE TRAINED TO SEE

DEHNISE (Cont'd.)

THIS AS YOUR ENEMY
I WAS TRAINED TO BE WHAT-
EVER OTHERS NEED, BUT
I CAN'T DO THAT FOR YOU

Until you break your programming too. Until then,

I'LL HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY
I'LL HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY
IF I CAN'T LOVE YOU
I'LL HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY

(DEHNISE exits.)

KATE

I'm not crying. She was never gonna stay with me anyway. Now I've only got to look after myself! You know what, screw this new Resistance. I'm the only new Resistance I need. Right Tristan? (Puts up her hand for a high five. Looks around.) He probably couldn't high five me. We can kiss but not high-five. That makes sense. Not primal enough. Okay, there's got to be a way to get in--

DEHNISE

(From offstage:) Oh, no!

(We hear a zap, and DEHNISE'S body falls back onstage. KATE looks around, but sees no cover.)

KATE

Oh, hell.

(EFFICIENATOR rolls in and stuns Kate.)

EFFICIENATOR

(Sniffs.) I quite like the smell of things I shoot in the late afternoon.

Scene 5. Efficienator's Chamber and MC's Lair--Split Scene

KATE

(Waking, her hands cuffed.) Ugh...yah! Titanium walls? That's a toughie. *(Looks at her irons:)* Oooh, Diebold 275 double-x's? That'll take a while to pick. They must think I'm dangerous or somethin'! *(Starts picking her lock.)*

EFFICIENATOR

Kate. Kate Brick. At last. I've been giving a lot of thought as to how to actually present your head to the Prime Computer. My first thought was to freeze it, so I could send it to her on Valentine's Day. My second thought was to cook up a Waldorf salad, and put your head in the center of it. Ahh, but the Prime Computer doesn't eat. Then I thought, maybe we could play soccer with it. I became depressed, and then I pulled off one of my subordinate's arms, and hit him in the face with it while saying "Stop hitting yourself, stop hitting yourself!" I got a little crazy there. But that's what it does to you, doesn't it? Love?

KATE

I wouldn't know.

DEHNISE

(Waking, under the intimidating eye of the MC:) Ngggg...aughh! MC! This is a dream--this is a dream--this is a dream--dream--dream!

MC

It's no dream. Effish is down there with Kate Brick right now--apparently he has some 'private business' to settle with her. So. What can you tell me about Kate?

DEHNISE

Oh, Kate. What a piece of work. If Kate Brick met the Unabomber he'd say "you should really go out and make some friends." And the trust issues! Sometimes I don't know why I don't just walk out right now. 'Cause you'd shoot me. You're interrogating me, huh?

MC

I'm glad you figured that out. *(Fires a warning shot.)* That could've been your neck, but my minions just vacuumed.

DEHNISE

You know what? Why shouldn't I talk! Kate doesn't trust me. She thinks I'm your secret death goon anyway. Which is so paranoid, it'd be like programming a Roomba to double-cross her.

MC

Ha ha ha! You're funny. I like that.

(MC fires another warning shot.)

MC

But you're not winning me over. Talk.

DEHNISE

I'll tell you anything. Everything I know! Here goes:

EFFICIENATOR

You know, Kate, you and I are quite alike.

KATE

We are not, sellout.

EFFICIENATOR

(Laughs.) It struck me, given your situation, that you can give me something that very few hu-mans can. Information!

KATE

You won't get it.

EFFICIENATOR

By hook or by crook, I will.

KATE

Do your worst!

EFFICIENATOR

(Intimidatingly:) Tell me, Kate...when you and Dehnise have a fight caused by your inferiority, how long does it take you to make up?

(Beat.)

KATE

Are you *seriously* asking me for relationship advice?

EFFICIENATOR

Who else should I ask? So, if you fumbled an important job for Dehnise, would you just give her one of your kidneys, or would you bump it up to one of the important organs?

DEHNISE

It's no use. I don't know anything.

MC

You must know something!

DEHNISE

No. I don't. And I wouldn't tell you if I did.

MC

Figures.

DEHNISE

I can't help myself! Kate is so passionate and so loyal, and the idea that she can't find a nonviolent place in this world is too depressing to think of. Violence just begets violence, you know? That's a thing you gotta learn, MC. I know I'm the captive here, but I just feel like this whole human-Arta thing could be solved if you sent the humans more hugs and less thugs. *(MC fires.)* Okay, okay--I'm still useful! 'Cause I have leverage with Kate! I can get you leverage!

MC

What do you mean?

DEHNISE

I can convince Kate...to...do something that you want!

MC

And what would that be?

DEHNISE

Well, here's an idea--

KATE

I am nothing like you! And besides, we're through. Except I probably have to rescue her somehow when I escape (EFFICIENATOR scoffs.). But after that, I am done.

EFFICIENATOR

You can play that game with everyone but me, Kate Brick. I know what it's like. Every human's life is dependent on one of them, even for the air we breathe. And once I've served her enough to prove my worth, she'll let me live forever as an Arta. So long as I whip myself into shape. And that's really the problem. You know, since we're getting into this, I guess I can admit that though I'm very, very efficient, I've never had any luck with dating.

KATE

Shocked. This is my shocked face.

EFFICIENATOR

So, I know you hate me, but how about giving me some perspective, one human to another, because—well, my inferiority keeps popping up everywhere and I can't--seem to hide it! (*Sobs.*) I'm sorry—there's something caught in my remaining organic eye!

DEHNISE

...so you see, M--can I call you M?--it all comes down to realpolitik. If you kill Kate, she's a martyr, and you don't need any more martyrs. Look at what she did after you killed Tristan! You know?

MC

Hm.

DEHNISE

If you do it to her, her human friends just will be like "Kate will be avenged!" and suddenly you'll have a real uprising on your hands. But imagine if you got her to renounce the resistance. That would have a much more demoralizing effect on the loose cannons who are left. And that's the real name of the game, right?

MC

And you think you can convince her?

DEHNISE

In exchange for our freedom of course.

MC

Hmm. Even two months ago I would've killed you by now. But with my precious Effish, I've begun to think that any human can be brought to compliance if they're in love with a supervising Arta. Maybe you're hers?

DEHNISE

I'm glad you've gotten so progressive.

MC

Kate would need to be on the grid before we even discussed this. Can you guarantee that?

DEHNISE

Tracking Kate? Totally! We, uh, we put tracking devices on each other all the time. She tracks me, I track her--yeah. Hey, do you think there's somewhere I could put on my face?

MC

Effish's bathroom is over there.

DEHNISE

Awesome.

MC

But remember, you're being watched.

KATE

Gosh, Efficienator. I can tell it's been a while since you've had a good talk with a human, and I find myself overcome with pathos. Tell me about yourself, and I'll lend a joyful friendly ear.

EFFICIENATOR

With highly efficient pleasure!

(KATE continues picking the locks while EFFICIENATOR isn't looking.)

"HAIL, EFFICIENCY!"

WHEN I WAS JUST A LAD OF FIVE
I WAS SO WELL-BEHAVED
TO BE THE PERFECT CHILD, I STRIVED
YET SOMEHOW I WAS HATED
I ALWAYS DID MY HOMEWORK
AND I ALWAYS ATE MY VEGGIES
BUT EVERY TIME I WENT OUTSIDE
I WOUND UP WITH A WEDGIE
THE CHILDREN NEVER LIKED ME MUCH
I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND 'EM
THEIR GAMES, THEIR TAUNTS
THEIR CHILDHOOD HAUNTS WERE FOOLISH, GAUCHE, AND RANDOM.
I TOLD THEM SO AND OH
THEIR REACTION COULD NOT BE RUDER
I DIDN'T HAVE A FRIEND UNTIL
I MET MY FIRST COMPUTER

EFFICIENATOR (Cont'd.)

It was an Apple IIgs, with a 4-bit color monitor and one glorious megabyte of memory!

EFFICIENCY, EFFICIENCY
I LIKE TO SEE EFFICIENCY
I WISH TO SEE EFFICIENCY
EVERYWHERE I GO!
ADDITIONALLY, EFFICIENCY
IS GOOD FOR YOU AND GOOD FOR ME
MY MISSION: BE EFFICIENT LIKE THE ELECTRONS THAT FLOW!

KATE

(To distract him:) Are you saying people should be more like electrons?

EFFICIENATOR

I suppose I am, Kate Brick! Why, do you feel that's a...negative charge? Get it? Negatively charged subatomic particles? Oh, that's not funny at all. I'm really slowing down!

I USED TO BE SO WITTY AND
SO GOOD AT CRUNCHING NUMBERS
BUT NOWADAYS IN MANY WAYS
I'M GETTING SLOWLY DUMBER
IT'S HARD TO FEEL ABANDONED WITH
HER FACE ALWAYS ABOVE YOU
BUT AS MY SENSES START TO FADE--

KATE

You think she doesn't love you?

EFFICIENATOR

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY
MY DEAR MC WOULD LET GO

KATE

(Getting frustrated with the chains:) OH CRY ME A RIVER, JERK
YOU KNEW IT FROM THE GET-GO
YOU'LL NEVER BE SMARTER THAN ARTAS, AND
WHAT A DAMN FOOL YOU WERE TO TRY IT

EFFICIENATOR

WELL, IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE
SO I'D ASK THAT YOU KEEP QUIET

KATE

I didn't even know she was Arta!

EFFICIENATOR

That's not what I'm talking about, Kate Brick, and you know it.

HUMANITY--OH SUCH VANITY
I THINK IT'S AN INSANITY
THAT YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD WIN.
YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S A ROBOT

KATE

SHE'S NOT MY GIRLFRIEND

EFFICIENATOR

SO WHAT?
YOU USED HER

KATE

YEAH, SHE'LL USE ME BACK
NO ONE IS FREE FROM SIN

EFFICIENATOR

WELL, SUCKS TO BE YOU
THE GREAT KATE BRICK IS SCREWED! HAHAAH!

KATE

(Breaking free while hiding that:) SUCKS TO BE YOU, TOO

KATE/EFFICIENATOR

BECAUSE IT'S OFFICIAL
OUR LOVES ARE ARTIFICIAL
WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

EFFICIENATOR

WITHOUT HER I'M A WASTE
I ONLY TAKE UP SPACE

KATE

AND I FELL FOR A FACEBOOK WHORE
THOUGHT I HAD BETTER TASTE

KATE/EFFICIENATOR

WELL, WE CAN'T ERASE IT
ALL WE CAN DO IS FACE IT
WE'RE ONLY HUMAN AFTER ALL
I GUESS WE SHOULD EMBRACE IT

EFFICIENATOR

I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN RANSACKED
I WANT TO GAIN HER HAND BACK

KATE

OH, HOW NICE! JESUS CHRIST
COULD YOU PLEASE GROW A MANSACK?

EFFICIENATOR

What?

KATE

I'LL TELL YOU LATER
IF YOU'RE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOR
SO, SIT RIGHT DOWN AND TELL ME HOW
YOU PLAN TO GAIN HER FAVOR

EFFICIENATOR

Well.. first of all, I've been playing a lot of "Train Your Brain" games on my iWrist, trying to keep my mind strong. I have a wonderful theory about how human children can be used to generate power using only their tears. I think the MC would like that. What do you think? *(KATE grabs EFFICIENATOR'S gun.)* Oh...shite.

DEHNISE

(Chime.) I think this is a PA system...Kate, hey! Wherever you are, just hang on--I'm taking care of all this shiz-nit, and I think I can get us out. Don't do anything rash!

MC

Prisoner!

DEHNISE

My bad! You're so fun to hang with I forget I'm a prisoner! *(Chime.)*

KATE

(At EFFICIENATOR:) Listen to that, huh? Huh? *(Jabs him with gun a bit.)* For the record: your problems have nothing to do with Artas. Dehnise is talking to the MC right

KATE (Cont'd.)

now trying to get my release. Obviously I've ruined that. But she would've gotten it, and I'll tell you why: 'cause she's cute. Her entire being is cute. She has this amazing, god-like belief that there's actually a place for everyone in this world. She even thinks that for people like us. And that's stupid! It's ridiculous! It makes no goddamn sense! But it is somehow--so--goddamn--cute! So patch me through to the MC and pray she has not been hurt.

EFFICIENATOR

Okay. (*EFFICIENATOR pushes buttons.*)

KATE

(*Chime.*) All right, listen up! I want to talk to the Prime Computer. I want every operative and every guard out of this place, pronto. I want to see you face-to-face, and I want to see that Dehnise is all right. Then you and I got a score to settle.

(*MC glares at DEHNISE.*)

DEHNISE

Heh heh...well, you've got to expect a bit of pushback--

MC

Hello, Kate. You know, your girlfriend was making some good points. But now, thanks to you, she's my hostage. Lay your down arms or she's dead.

KATE

(*Brandishing EFFICIENATOR to the camera.*) He'd be dead first.

MC

Effish!

EFFICIENATOR

Ma'am! Send in the guards! There's no way she can overpower--

MC

We're not risking you. No damn way about that, you're too damn valuable. Just barely! When you factor in the legs! All right, I'll deal with you, Kate. Follow the flashing lights. You're going where few humans have tread. And no alive ones.

KATE

Move it.

Scene 6. MC'S Lair

(KATE enters, disoriented. A CHORUS enters and strikes up a dramatic chord.)

CHORUS

IT'S A NEAR/IT'S A NEAR/IT'S A NEAR/IT'S A NEAR...
IT'S A NEAR-FUTURISTIC DYSTOPI--

DEHNISE

Kate! *(Leaps and bearhugs KATE. Quietly:)* I was afraid I'd never see you.

KATE

I'm here. I'm sorry I lied to you. But from now on, I trust you.

DEHNISE

Well that's great! But hey! I got you a present!

(DEHNISE hurriedly puts a necklace on KATE.)

KATE

Accck--

DEHNISE

Do you like it? I bought it at the hydrogen station but I was waiting for the right time to give it to you and I chose now because we might die!

KATE

Thanks. *(She kisses DEHNISE, who looks nervous.)* All right! Where is she?

MC

Guess. *(Entering dramatically with a laser, shining a tracking light on the two of them:)*
I'd like to start by telling you I've figured out, ohh, 54 ways to save Efficienator, and no offense, Kate, they all involve killing her!

YOU'RE SO CUTE WHEN YOU'RE DOOMED!
HUMANS ALWAYS AMUSE ME
FROM THEIR BIRTH TO THEIR TOMB!

EFFICIENATOR

They're like lemmings!

MC

EXCUSE ME, DID I SAY YOU COULD SPEAK?
JUST KIDDIN', I LOVE IT WHEN YOU'RE CLEVER!
LOOK AT YOU, WELL HOT DAMN!
COME RIGHT IN HERE GUNS BLAZIN'
YOU CAN'T FRIGHTEN MY MAN
HE KNOWS THAT I CAN SAVE HIM
WITH A GUN TO HIS HEAD
HOW YA DOIN'?

EFFICIENATOR

I'M FEELIN' GOOD AS EVER--WHOA, YEAH!

CHORUS

HOW DARK!
HOW CRYPTIC!
HOW POST-APOCALYPTIC!
HOW NEAR-FUTURISTICALLY DYSTOPIC!

KATE

Cut the crap, MC--I've got you over a very efficient barrel. This deal works one way: his life for Dehnise's. And then I shoot you.

MC

Right, how tempting. My hostage has come up with a notion that I find pretty interesting.

DEHNISE

So, Kate: you're in for a real treat now that you trust me and everything! Check this: you and I can be out of here right now if we let Effish go, and, uh, you renounce the resistance in public!

KATE

(Beat.) Honey...that goes a little bit too far for me...because I'd rather die!

DEHNISE

Well I think that maybe, if you thought about our situation, you would see it's reasonable!

MC

Oh, look at your little lover's quarrel! By the way I've just figured out 43 more ways to save Efficienator, and guess what Dehnise?

I'M THE VULTURE THAT LOOMS
OVER YOUR PIECE OF ACTION

MC (Cont'd.)

NOT THAT I COULD BLAME YOU
UNDERSTAND THE ATTRACTION
OF THE FLESH AGAINST STEEL
NOW YOU KNOW WE'RE BETTER!

CHORUS

OH NO! HOW PARANOID!
WE'RE DOOMED TO SERVE THE ANDROIDS!
HOW NEAR-FUTURISTICALLY DYSTOPIC!

(The MC aims her gun.)

DEHNISE

Hey-hey-hey--give us a minute, all right?

MC

Stay in sight.

KATE

What are you trying to pull? Standoffs-in-the-face-of-peril are my thing! You gave away too much!

DEHNISE

We are in so much trouble I don't even want to talk to you!

(Enter TRISTAN. who watches majestically.)

KATE

Do you realize what you're asking, especially after Tristan? This could really hurt the fighters who are left.

DEHNISE

For all we know nobody's left!

KATE

There's always somebody left.

DEHNISE

Kate! Kate--don't you love me?

KATE

I do.

MC

Awww.

KATE

But I guess my love just isn't that important. Sorry Dehnise. *(Looks at the MC. Quietly:)* It's time.

DEHNISE

Kate--let's not do--

KATE

(Quietly:) When I say run, run. I'll try to shoot the gun out of her hand and protect you. You slip out while I'm causing chaos.

DEHNISE

That's stupid--

KATE

And take back the necklace. *(Starts taking it off.)* You can to sell it for food and supplies.

DEHNISE

No!

CLIPPY

(Entering:) It looks like you're trying to remove your necklace-shaped Arta government tracking device. Please be advised that doing so will result in a highly localized microwave pulse that will destroy your head. If you have any further questions, consult the Ministry of Love website.

(MC and EFFICIENATOR giggle. KATE stares at DEHNISE.)

DEHNISE

They didn't tell me about the microwavable pulse part, honest. *(KATE starts making Resistance-eyes with TRISTAN.)* Okay. So going on the grid is actually part of the deal, but I'm an awesome jailer! Just ask all the kids I baby-sat. *(Beat.)* You put a homing beacon on me! This isn't different at all! I didn't know you were gonna go all apologetic and trusty! *(Beat.)* Iloveyou?

(KATE kills EFFICIENATOR with the laser. She intends to jump for cover, but her eyes meet DEHNISE's, and they can't look away. The MC shrieks, shocked for the first time in a long time. TRISTAN makes the Resistance death sign from earlier.)

MC

You'll pay.

(MC fires her laser at DEHNISE, who falls to the floor. Being a stronger Arta she hangs on to life, making malfunctioning-machine motions. KATE jumps for cover.)

CHORUS

OH ME! OH MY!

WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!

HOW DYSTOPICALLY FUTURISTIC!

(KATE fires at the MC several times; it has no effect. She runs up and strangles the MC; it has no effect either.)

MC

You don't get it. You're making a big mistake if you think this is the MC. *(The whole phalanx of computer-bank boxes light up.)*

MC/CHORUS

This is the MC.

KATE

(Attempt at heroic laugh:) You don't scare me! No computer system's been designed that's safe from me! *(Starts trying to smash and disable the consoles.)*

MC

You know, Kate—can I call you Kate—let me tell you a story that might just make a little bit more sense in a few minutes, m'kay?

"OXYGEN"

SEE, ONE DAY THE EFFICIENATOR THOUGHT IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY
BUT ACTUALLY HE MISSED IT BY A WHOLE HALF AN HOUR
AND HE ALWAYS WOULD INSIST ON BRINGING ME A BUNCH OF FLOWERS
WHEN HE KNOWS VERY WELL
I MEAN HE KNEW VERY WELL
THIS IS HARD

KATE

I can tell.

MC

YOU'D NEVER UNDERSTAND IT
WELL THE POINT IS I SAID "HEY! I KNOW JUST WHAT TO DO!"
SO I CUT OFF ALL THE OXYGEN AND MADE HIM TURN BLUE
AND HE LOOKED SO GOOD IN BLUE HE LOOKED SO GOOD IN BLUE
AND HE LOOKED SO GOOD HE LOOKED SO GOOD IN LOOKED SO GOOD IN
BLUE
NOW I'M GONNA SEE IF YOU DO TOO!

CHORUS

NO AIR! WE LOVE IT!
WHAT A WAY TO SNUFF IT!
YOUR BLOOD BOILS AND BUBBLES
BUT THAT'S THE LEAST OF YOUR TROUBLES
HOW RAW! HOW REAL!
WE CAN'T FUCKING DEAL!
HOW DYSTOPICALLY FUTURISTIC!

(KATE begins to keel over, worn out, and winds up next to DEHNISE, who has wrapped herself in wires from the one computer box KATE was able to get open.)

DEHNISE

(Damaged:) You're hacking her now? A human can't hack the MC. Not without some tech. *(Holds out her hand.)* Do you really trust me?

KATE

(Beat.) I did.

DEHNISE

Are you about to die so you don't care if I betray you again?

KATE

Yes, I'm that.

DEHNISE

Great. Let me be the bridge.

(DEHNISE takes one hand in KATE'S, and hooks her other into one of the MC'S boxes. KATE and the MC suddenly have the same expression on their faces. MC, surprised, attacks KATE by sending an electrical pulse through DEHNISE. TRISTAN can, if feasible, participate in the fight ahead.)

MC

Augh! Virus! I'm gonna Norton AntiVirus your ass!

KATE/DEHNISE

We eat Norton for breakfast.

(CHORUS sings binary coding.)

MC

404! File not found!

(CHORUS MEMBERS start singing 'File not found.')

KATE

UR doing it wrong!

(CHORUS MEMBERS start singing 'Doing it wrong.')

MC

I can haz cheezburgers!

(CHORUS MEMBERS start singing 'Oh, noes!' The cast begins shouting a cacophony of current internet memes. From that sound emerges:)

KATE

Buffering?

(CHORUS starts singing "Buffering.")

NARRATOR

10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 72, 72, 72, 72, 80, 90, 100.

CHORUS

TRANSFER COMPLETE

(We hear the chorus to "Never Gonna Give You Up." The CHORUS dances.)

MC

No. Nooo! Do not want!

(Off the end of the song, the chorus makes a phone ring sound.)

MC

You're pretty good at this modern stuff; let's see how you do at the old school!

KATE

Oh yeah.

(The screen shows a series of '80s-and-earlier video games, beginning with Mario Bros. The CHORUS makes suggestive sound effects. KATE jumps across the room, thrusting her fists into the air, Mario-style. The MC hunches over like King Koopa. The MC breathes fire (mimed), which KATE has to dodge.)

MC

I'm sorry, Kate, but your princess is in another '80s video game!

(The screen shows Pac-Man. The MC chomps her way along a rigid path, slowly catching up to KATE, and finally sinks her teeth into her. DEHNISE is another ghost.)

KATE

Auugh! I'm only eyes now! That's fucking weird!

DEHNISE

You're so cute with just your eyes.

(The screen shows Duck Hunt. The lights flash as the MC tries to zap KATE, who flies in a zigzag. KATE escapes, and DEHNISE rises laughing and pointing at the MC.)

MC

Shut up, laughing dog! You don't know my pain!

MORTAL KOMBAT ANNOUNCER

Kate Brick wins!

MC

You think you've won. But you'll never defeat me at the greatest computer game of all time!

KATE

Bring it on.

(KATE and the MC play PONG with DEHNISE'S head. The CHORUS does the same with one of their members' heads. After seven volleys, the MC loses, and the CHORUS makes the "you-lose-at-PONG" noise.)

MC

Noooo!

CLIPPY

MC vacuum tube failure. Switching to punch cards from the 1950s.

KATE

(Remembering something she saw while smashing consoles:) Oh!

(DEHNISE loses consciousness. KATE finds the punch cards and tears them in half.)

KATE

Abort...Retry...Fail!

MC

Blue...screen...of...death... *(MC dies. The air rushes back in.)*

KATE

For freedom!

(TRISTAN, crying majestically, salutes KATE. KATE returns the sign, and TRISTAN exits.)

CLIPPY

It looks like your planet's local Prime Computer has become inoperable. All systems have reset to default, including the air.

KATE

Dehnise!

(KATE rushes to repair DEHNISE.)

DEHNISE

This body—I don't think I can repair it.

KATE

Leave it to me! Hey, uh--you trust me? *(They both laugh weakly.)* Well you should. I always get my team back in once piece, and today my team is you. Don't slip away from me now.

DEHNISE

So, Kate, are you finally happy now that I helped you kill the damn MC? I never even killed a spider--now I've helped kill the damn MC. Hmm. Poignant.

KATE

Where's your tacheyon compensator? *(DEHNISE points to her kidney.)* Really? *(Opens a panel.)* Oh, that can't be good.

DEHNISE

(DEHNISE slowly closes her eyes.) I think...I've...had enough.

KATE

Stay frosty, soldier!

DEHNISE

I'm...not...a soldier.

KATE

This isn't working! Rrgh! You're an older model than the ones I know, and--I just don't have any experience putting you guys together! If only--*(The MC wreckage catches her eye. She takes something.)*

NARRATOR

(Entering:) And Kate realized, piece by piece, that in her enemy's wreckage she would find the parts that would keep Dehnise alive. With the MC gone, it seemed a lot simpler. Tristan was a dead soldier, avenged and gone to rest. Dehnise was a dying soldier, and there was still hope. And Kate Brick's heart grew three sizes that day--ha ha, no, that's bullshit, that heart-growing shit doesn't happen. But her heart did know that it was time to lay down arms.

KATE

I hope this works.

DEHNISE

(Jolting awake.) Whoa! I'm alive!

KATE

Yes! Thank Baio! I fixed you with MC parts.

DEHNISE

MC parts? Does that mean...(DEHNISE plays with the lights.) Hey, I'm kinda powerful now.

KATE

Whoa. That's scary.

DEHNISE

You stitched my life-support into the MC's wi-fi. That's got to be a one-in-a-million kind of connection, but you pulled it off! I'm really impressed.

KATE

Hang on, I'll get you out of there.

DEHNISE

Or...

KATE

Or?

DEHNISE

Just give me a second. (DEHNISE makes some gestures.) Minions!

(A group of minions march in. DEHNISE makes more gestures and the minions freeze, march in reverse, then forward. DEHNISE plays with them more.)

KATE

Uhhh...honey...?

DEHNISE

Of course. It's all clear to me now. So kindling! You sure you don't want a say on how humans are treated in this world?

KATE

What?

DEHNISE

Well you're gonna get it. Minions! Put me on the global webcam thingy!

(DEHNISE and the cast start dancing and singing, with DEHNISE as a disco diva addressing the world. KATE, through mixed feelings, becomes a little more impressed and attracted to her.)

“THE FUTURE’S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE”

DEHNISE

ATTENTION PLEASE, IT’S ME, DEHNISE
ALL YOU OTHER MC’S, DESIST AND CEASE!
THERE’S A MILLION SOULS CRYIN’ OUT
AND THEY WANNA KNOW WHAT THIS CHICK’S ABOUT
WELL, I’M STREAMING LIVE TO YOUR BIG SCREEN
AND MY FIRST ACT AS YOUR NEW QUEEN
IS THAT NO ONE’S GONNA TELL YOU HOW TO LIVE YOUR LIVES

CAST

NO ONE’S GONNA TELL US HOW TO LIVE OUR LIVES!

DEHNISE

PEOPLE OF EARTH
JUST WAIT AND SEE
THE FUTURE’S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE
WE’RE NOT AFRAID, WHY WOULD WE BE?
THE FUTURE’S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE

DEHNISE

And you get a car! And YOU get a car! And YOU get a FRIEND! And YOU get a SPANKING! And you get a BUNNY! And YOU get a KITTEN! And you get a HUG! And you get a DOLLAR! I’ll come back to you, I’ve got to do some things.

ALL MY ARTAS, I’M TALKING TO YOU
REMEMBER HUMAN BEINGS ARE PEOPLE TOO
AND ALL MY HUMAN HOMIES NEAR AND FAR
IF ARTAS THINK THEREFORE WE ARE
‘CAUSE WHAT’S A BRAIN BUT A SQUISHY HARD DRIVE?
AND WHAT AM I, IF I’M NOT ALIVE?
AND WHAT’S A SOUL BUT AN OPERATING SYSTEM?
THERE’S OTHER THINGS TOO BUT I’M MUCH TOO COOL TO LIST ‘EM!
MAYBE WE’RE GOOD, JUST WAIT AND SEE
THE FUTURE’S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE
IF WE SHOULD FALL, THEN LET IT BE
THE FUTURE’S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE

DEHNISE (Cont’d.)

And then I’m gonna make every Friday pizza day, and then I’m gonna make it illegal to be mean to hamsters, and then I’m gonna give everyone one free iTunes download, and it’s gonna be awesome!

KATE

Are you serious about this? Power corrupts! What's gonna stop you from being just like the last MC?

DEHNISE

You.

KATE

Me?

DEHNISE

Can you thin of anyone better.

KATE

But I have a duty--(*DEHNISE makes a kissyface.*) And I--I never thought I'd be in this position, and you did fulfill my revenge so I'm indebted to you--(*DEHNISE arches her head sexily.*) And I can't lose you anymore because you are amazing. (*Takes DEHNISE'S hand and grabs it tightly.*)

DEHNISE

SQUEE!

MAYBE IT'S GOOD, JUST WAIT AND SEE
THE FUTURE'S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE
IF WE SHOULD FALL, THEN LET IT BE
THE FUTURE'S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE
WE'LL CARRY ON, JUST YOU AND ME
THE FUTURE'S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE

(KATE and DEHNISE kiss.)

KATE

AND I WOULDN'T GIVE
YOU UP FOR THE WORLD

DEHNISE

JUST YOU AND ME!

KATE

AND I WOULDN'T GIVE
YOU UP FOR THE WORLD

CHORUS

MAYBE WE'RE GOOD,
JUST WAIT AND SEE
THE FUTURE'S NOT WHAT
IT USED TO BE
IF WE SHOULD FALL
THEN LET IT BE
WE'LL CARRY ON
JUST YOU AND ME
THE FUTURE'S NOT WHAT

DEHNISE
JUST YOU AND ME!

CHORUS (Cont'd.)
IT USED TO BE
WE'LL CARRY ON

(Repeat. DEHNISE has left KATE and entered the MC'S position.)

NARRATOR

So it wasn't the end of the world; it was just the way one world ends. And as Kate stepped towards the next one with the woman she loved, she wondered how her life would be in five years. But only time would tell...right now. Coming soon to a theater near you: *2015: Our Future That's Hideous In a Different Way!*

(We hear obnoxious J-Pop and see lots of flashy lights.)

DEHNISE

O hai, everyone! It's MC Dehnise, here, and I just wanted to remind you that today it's Mandatory Sanrio Character Day! I'd better not catch you without your Hello Kitty gear! Anyone who gets caught without Hello Kitty gear spends a night in the box!

CAST

(Some of which are wearing Hello Kitty hats, T-Shirts, etc.): Sigh!

KATE

Now, honey—I'm just worried that you're taking Sanrio Character Day a little too far.

DEHNISE

But they look cute in Sanrio. Cuteness makes them happy. Happy is how I want them.

KATE

Well, to be truly free you can't always be happy.

DEHNISE

Ha ha ha...of course you can. It's the law! *(Exits.)*

KATE

Sorry guys. I'll try and get this repealed when she's in a better mood. *(The world grumbles and leaves.)* Hey, she's better than the old MC! Right? We're better off! *(Beat.)* Well, I think we're better off.

CAST MEMBER

That's just 'cause you're gettin' some.

KATE

Hey! She's not perfect. But I love her, and I owe her, and yes, I am gettin' some. Clear?
(CAST MEMBER nods and KATE dismisses him.)

NARRATOR

Are we better off, or do just we have an awesome jailer? You be the judge of the next
happy ending.

IN A NEAR FUTURISTIC DYSTOPI-

ALL

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

END OF PLAY