



HELLO KITTY MUST DIE

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SoloChicago Theatre

[We hear grungy rock music as house lights fade. Grunge music morphs into upscale "muzak" as projections appear suggesting upscale plastic surgeon's office. Lights up on Fiona, dressed upscale, she is waiting.]

FIONA

This all started with my hymen. For almost three decades I kept the "family honor" between my legs untouched to please my traditional, old school parents. The existence of that unbroken membrane sent every American boy running as none of them wanted to marry me by the third date.

American boys and Chinese boys may be different culturally, but as men they're all alike as far as Asian women are concerned. They all want the Hello Kitty fantasy. I'm not talking about the little kitten-like cartoon Character. I'm talking about that stupid Asian girl fetish, the stereotype of the quiet, submissive, hypersexual, exotic Asian female.

For my entire life, culture and upbringing intertwined my self-worth with my virginity. Keyword MY, my parents considered it THEIRS - so when I was 29, my father concluded that I had failed miserably at finding a husband. He and my mother decided to take a proactive approach to ensure my "domestic bliss".

DAD

Fiona, you are twenty-nine, almost old maid. You need to get married. Your mother and I have decided to find you a husband. No more American boys. You need a nice *Chinese* boy. I've asked everyone we know and my friend has a son who would be good for you. His name is Freddie. You have a date with him two weeks from Sunday. Don't forget to wear lipstick.

FIONA

Hai, Daddy.

(to audience)

The Cantonese word for yes is "hai," if you pitch your voice down. The Cantonese word for cunt is "hai," if you pitch your voice up.

Anyone who thinks Mandarin is a better language than Cantonese needs to appreciate the subtlety of pitch and intonation that can make yes sound like cunt. I love Cantonese.

DAD

And *STOP kissing that filthy bird. You'll get the SARS virus.*

FIONA

Hai, Daddy.

[WE SEE A PHOTO OF A PARAKEET]

(to audience)

I have a hand-raised parakeet named Pepito and he's fucking gorgeous...forty grams of seed throwing, foot nipping, constantly pooping pure love. I think God must have a thing for birds. I know I do. Why force a husband on me? As far as I was concerned I had everything I needed and I was done letting anyone equate my self-worth with a little strip of flesh.

So one week before my thirtieth birthday, I went on Amazon, Prime, and bought a purple medium-sized silicone dildo with a flared base for easy grip. I named him Mr. Happy. Silicone dildos are the best for two reasons. One; it's not attached to a man and two; you can boil them in water. We Chinese folks love to boil things. And it was "Made in China." A fact my parents would surely appreciate. I got a prescription for 10% Lidocaine anesthetic gel. Okay, yes. It occurred to me that what I was doing was absurd. Absurd, demented, and *brilliant!* Penises, so overrated.

To get in the mood I flipped my bedroom lights off.

[LIGHTS DIM]

I don't know...it seemed less comical in the dark. I pulled the Lidocaine cap off with my teeth and squirted a zig-zag line on Mr. Happy, like I was putting mustard on a Bratwurst at the ballpark. I even smeared some Lidocaine up inside me. I saw no reason to endure any pain...or pleasure for that matter. Go, Mr. Happy, go where no man has ever gone before.

[LIGHTS UP]

I guess I expected something...a tear, a puncturing... something, but...nothing. I grabbed a piece of cotton gauze and jumped up and down, trying to shake every last drop of family honor out of me. And what came out of me? A slick, glossy whiteness and Lidocaine, no blood.

My doctor had told me that some women break their hymens through physical activity and some are born without them. I'd never done a split or straddled a horse. Which meant - I had been born without honor. My family had no honor. For all this time I'd been protecting and defending something that had never existed. (pause) OK now I was pissed!

Listen, I was owed my hymen. Evolution denied me one and like anything you're expressly denied - I wanted it. I needed it. I didn't need it for a wedding night. I didn't need it to save myself from a village stoning. I just wanted it so that I could shred into bloody pieces and wear around my neck, like Angelina did with Billy Bob's blood.

So I Googled hymen recovery and found the Internet flooded with ads for hymen restoration surgeons. Apparently, nose jobs are out and hymen jobs are in. I skipped to an ad with a Four Star Yelp rating. Dr. Sean Killroy, Top San Francisco plastic surgeon, highly experienced in hymen reconstruction and restoration. "We give you a second chance to have your first time." I took the first available appointment.

Hi. My name is Fiona Yu. People call me Fi. I'm 30 years old. I'm first generation Chinese-American. I went to law school because I didn't want to be a pediatrician or a gynecologist, like the other Chinese girls in my class. I had no desire to stick my face in women's nether regions or wipe dripping snot from toddlers.

I became a *corporate* lawyer because after thirty years of marriage, my mother still asked dad for money to buy Payless shoes, discount clothing, and Maybelline makeup. I wanted to pay for my designer wardrobe myself and support my stiletto heels addiction. It was my way of telling anyone who tried to put a damn bow behind my ear to go to hell.

So two weeks later I found myself in Dr. Sean Killroy's very posh exam room. The nurse gave me the once-over, pausing ever so slightly at my crotch. I could hear the 'ka-ching' in her head. "Take your clothes off and put this on. Panties too. The doctor will be right with you." Panties. I hate that word. It makes me think of sweaty-horny frat boys and molesters. Dr. Killroy hurried into the exam room with his nose buried in a file folder:

SEAN

Good morning, I'm Dr. Killroy. What can I help you with today Ms...

[THERE IS SUDDEN MAGICAL SOUND.
ALL PROJECTIONS AND SOUNDS STOP]

FIONA

(to audience)

He looked up and everything stopped. You can change your name, dye your hair, you can change your clothes, but barring *major* plastic surgery, you *can't* change your face. You never forget the face of your first and only best friend in the whole world...even eighteen years later. His dark wavy hair, his beautiful crystal blue eyes and elfin features. Sean Deacon and I met in the fifth grade courtesy of the biggest and meanest bully at St. Sebastian's Catholic School.

[SOUNDS AND IMAGES CHANGE TO SCHOOL PLAYGROUND]

Jeremy. He was huge. His forte was 'food-thumping' where he'd grab your lunch box, throw your food on the ground, and stomp on it. One day he snatched my blue Smurf lunchbox and sent my lunch tumbling onto the blacktop where he stomped it and tossed the box aside. I didn't cry. We all knew if you cried Jeremy would make it much worse. I grabbed my lunch box and chased after my thermos. I just caught it when I noticed this other boy staring at me from behind the rectory where he was smoking a cigarette. He pointed to my lunchbox.

SEAN

Give him a thumping with that thing, Smurfette.

FIONA

This? Jeremy's skull would crack this thing in two. And my name's Fiona, not Smurfette.

SEAN

That's why you have to fill it with rocks first, Feee-ona. And no worries, I'll back you up. (*winks*) Two against one.

FIONA

Yeah, right. I don't want to *die*.

SEAN

Everyone has to *die*. You're just scared.

FIONA

So? Aren't you?

SEAN

No such thing as fear. Go on. I'll be right behind you. One thing though, smile at him first. Don't say a word, just smile, and clock him. Think of it as doing God's work.

FIONA

(*to audience*)

He stared at me with those piercing eyes. I felt light, calm...like all the sound had been sucked out of the space around me. I became fearless...

[PLAYGROUND SOUNDS OUT]

Most Asian American kids have "lunchbox moments" where other children make fun of their weird Asian food. Not me, I was about to have my own kind of badass lunch box moment. I filled my blue Smurf lunchbox with rocks, snapped it shut and walked right up to Jeremy.

I smiled brightly...then clocked him right in the face with it! Even after he fell to the ground I kept swinging. And swinging. I called it jackass thumping. It felt triumphant. I looked up to 'cigarette boy' but he was nowhere to be found. Shit.

I broke Jeremy's jaw in three places and landed myself on the bench outside the principal's office. THAT'S when cigarette boy finally showed up.

FIONA

Where were you Charles Manson?

SEAN

You didn't need me. You had yourself covered.

FIONA

Thanks, but now I'm gonna get expelled. Who the hell are you anyway?

SEAN

I'm Sean Deacon. And you're not gonna get expelled. Just tell them how much you love Jesus.

FIONA

(to audience)

Jesus. The nuns at St. Sebastian's loved Jesus. "I'm sorry, Sister Carmen. I'm sorry I hurt Jeremy, because I know it really hurt Jesus too." And the nuns ate that shit up. I didn't get expelled, but Jeremy did because he wasn't sorry for hurting Jesus. And Sean and I instantly became best friends for life.

Well that is until Sean was ripped away from me. Because of Stephanie! Stephanie was the prettiest girl in our class and naturally she was also the meanest. Stephanie wanted Sean. Every chance she got she'd be all over him, touching him, making goo goo eyes at him. Little did she know Sean's mom was overtly sexual and a public embarrassment. So he hated flirtatious women almost as much as he hated bullies.

Stephanie told the whole school that Sean was gay because he blew her off. His dad got wind of it and beat the crap out of Sean every day for a week, saying he'd, 'beat the faggot out of him.'

When Sean finally returned to school he took me behind the rectory and lifted his shirt to show me the bruises on his back and belly. Then he winked at me and sauntered straight to the playground and lit Stephanie's hair-sprayed head on fire with his Zippo lighter. Poor Sean. Not even loving Jesus and all the Saints could save him. He got expelled and sent to juvie.

Maybe that was why he changed his name, to erase his naughty schoolboy past...OR maybe because no one wanted a hymen surgeon who had a history of setting people on fire.

[SOUNDS AND PROJECTIONS OF DOCTOR'S OFFICE RETURN]

So now, eighteen years later, there I was in his fancy Doctor's office in a paper gown with no panties as we stared at each other in shock.

FIONA

Sean Killroy my ass. You're Sean Deacon.

SEAN

Holy crap, Fi?

FIONA

Yeah.

SEAN

I...changed my name.

FIONA

Yeah, I can see that. And became a cosmetic surgeon?

SEAN

Yeah...well lucky for me Stephanie didn't die so they let me out of juvie at 18. I changed my name, fast tracked medical school in Puerto Rico. Blah, blah. Here I am, fixing what's broken...like hymens...You mind if I smoke? I can open that window there.

FIONA

God, Sean, yes. My asthma, remember? Besides, I thought doctors knew better.

SEAN

Everyone has to die. So what brings you in?

FIONA

(to audience)

I told him about the complications of arranged dating. *Freddie* was the latest Chinese boy my parents were force feeding me and, of course, I couldn't leave out the 'popping-my-own-cherry-with a-purple-dildo-disaster.'

SEAN

Wait, Fi. I'm thirty. That means you're thirty. And you've never...?"

FIONA

Sean, I'm Chinese...it's complicated... it's not like I've been living in an Afghan cave...I just never...went all the way. I tried once. It was a total disaster. If my parents had their way I'd be married by the third date.

SEAN

Fi, why would you want to marry *anyone* by the third date? The guy could be a complete psycho.

FIONA

I don't want to get married. Hell, I don't want to date. This is all my parents' idea. Why would I want to be anyone's green card ticket, housemaid, or baby machine? I hate people touching me. The feel of someone's flesh and bone...it's creepy.

SEAN

Ooooooh, well, that explains why your first time was with a dildo dipped in Lidocaine. You have no libido. Most women your age would be out at some boogie bar trying to get laid but instead, you're here with me bitching about your hymen and your arranged dates. Fi, get yourself a Chanel handbag and forget this.

FIONA

Is that it?

SEAN

Yeah. And one more thing. I was wondering if you want to hang out on Saturday so we could catch up?

FIONA

Sure. I'd love to, Sean.

[SEAN'S OFFICE DISAPPEARS. LIGHTS CHANGE.MUSIC TRANSITION]

FIONA

On Saturday, Sean asked me to meet him at his apartment before heading out to bar-hop.

He said he had 'something to show me'. I wore a black, ruffled DG top with skinny Chloe jeans and maroon patent leather Dior stilettos. Sean opened the door wearing a pink feather boa and nothing else.

FIONA

God, Sean. Is that what you wanted to show me?

SEAN

Nah, that's still inside. Nice shoes, Fi.

FIONA

(to audience)

Out of nowhere "You put that away young man or I'll call the cops!" A walking dead version of "Estelle Getty" from *Golden Girls* appeared from across the hall, She scared the shit out of me, but Sean just waved his boa at her:

SEAN

Betty you've been spying through your peephole again haven't you? Now go inside or I'll send you to the psyche ward and you know I can do it. C'mon in Fi.

[PROJECTIONS SUGGEST INTERIOR OF VERY UPSCALE APARTMENT]

SEAN

My neighbor, Betty. She's our resident busy-body.

FIONA

Where'd you get the boa?

SEAN

Halloween a few years back. So tell me. *This...* does nothing for you?

FIONA

Nice penis. But nope, 'fraid not.

SEAN

Then why do you dress like that, Fi?

FIONA

Because I don't think they'd let me in if I were wearing a garbage bag and Kleenex boxes for shoes. Why-why-why do guys always assume we dress exclusively for them? My *stilettos*, Sean, are the perfect combination of beauty and pain. Yes, they accentuate my legs, hips, torso and give me height. But I wear them for the feeling. I love how the pain shoots up my ankles, calves, and knees with every pounding step I take. It lets me know that I'm here. In my body. That...and I could really hurt a man with these heels.

SEAN

Hey, you're hurting me just looking at you.

FIONA

Wait. What? Are you trying to seduce me or something?

SEAN

(thrusting hips laughing. Finishing with hip circles.)
Fi, I'm naked and making obscene gestures at you. I may hold my knife and fork like a hymen surgeon, but I can fuck like a tree surgeon.

FIONA

Please. Save it for the trees. Just put some clothes on and let's go.

SEAN

Suit yourself, your loss. And he slapped his ass and strutted out.

FIONA

(to audience)

Okay, okay.. Truth is, I had been half in love with Sean since that day he enticed me into clobbering Jeremy, the lunch thumper. *Half* in love. But I had also been half in *fear* with Sean since that day he did "God's work" on our classmate Stephanie.

Look, even if I had any real desire to sleep with him, it would be like curling up with your pet python. An interesting proposition but potentially fatal.

While Sean changed, I took a good look around and found a punching bag shaped like a giant baby hanging from the ceiling and anchored to the floor with a metal chain. I lightly punched it and it started wailing like a stuck pig.

[LOUD OBNOXIOUS WAILING SOUND]

Sean glided into the room flawlessly dressed head to toe in Armani.

SEAN

Like it?

FIONA

What the hell is that?!? Make it shut up!!!

(to audience)

Sean picked up a baseball bat and whacked the shit out of the bawling baby. And then it stopped.

[WAILING STOPS]

SEAN

It's what I wanted to show you. It's very therapeutic. Helps me deal with aggression. You *whack it as hard as you can* until it stops screaming. Like it?

FIONA

Yeah. I need one for my office.

[SHORT MUSIC TRANSITION, WE HEAR BAR NOISE AND SEE PROJECTIONS OF BAR IMAGES]

(to audience)

We arrived at the Oak Room at the Clift Hotel. Overpriced drinks. Overpriced people. Sean and I sat down opposite a gaggle of oh-too-perfect blondes clustered around the end of the bar.

SEAN

Pick one for me, Fi.

FIONA

What do you mean 'pick one'?

SEAN

I mean pick one... for me.

FIONA

Oh I see. You're going to hit on some girl and leave me here all by my lonesome. Didn't know you liked blondes.

SEAN

I don't. (*slight pause*) Just pick one. One you like the least. (*winks*)

FIONA

Ok I'll play. (*to audience*) I studied them and named them after their drinks. Cosmo. The tallest blonde had a gardenia behind her ear, daytime drama cheekbones, Christian LaBoutin stilettos, a silver Tiffany charm bracelet with matching necklace. She kept glancing over at Sean.

Melonball; Cosmo's shorter companion chatted away ferociously. Her breasts jiggled every time she waved her hands around. Prada open-toed stilettos and a Tiffany bracelet like Cosmo's *without* a matching necklace. White Russian;

The third blonde had her hair pulled back into a chignon, beaded Manolo Blahnik shoes and a repeat of that damn charm bracelet. They all looked the same. Sean elbowed me.

FIONA

Miss Cosmo.

SEAN

Why that one?

FIONA

I covet her shoes. Red soles. Good luck in Chinese culture. That and she's way too pretty. Look at her. Thinks she's got this whole place wrapped around her little finger...well, that and the other one just looks boring and sad. I mean White Russian?...come on.

(to audience)

Sean leaned in and gazed at me. He rested his hand on my arm.

SEAN

Aren't you going to ask me what I'm going to do, Fi?*(slight pause)* Fi?

FIONA

No. Should I even stick around for this?

SEAN

You should probably finish your drink and go home to Pepito.

FIONA

If I was any other girl, I'd call you an asshole for telling me to go home.

SEAN

But you are not any other girl, Fi.

FIONA

(to audience.)

No, I'm not. And I thought I could handle it, but out of nowhere, I panicked and was hit with a wave of nausea. I begged Sean to leave the bar and come dancing or just (To Sean), "See me home so that I don't trip and die in my stilettos or get mugged by some druggie."

SEAN

Everyone has to die, Fi. Now go home, I have work to do.

FIONA

And he winked at me and sauntered off in the direction of Miss Cosmo.

[BAR SOUNDS AND IMAGES OUT. MUSIC TRANSITION. LIGHTS AND PROJECTIONS CHANGE TO INDICATE FI'S ROOM AT HOME]

The last time I watched him do that it was on a playground and then he was gone for eighteen years. I wasn't about to let that happen. The next morning I left him a message. I left messages everywhere. Weeks went by. No response.

Okay. Maybe Sean was ghosting me and banging Miss Cosmo. Maybe he was passed out at home, drunk. Maybe he died. Or maybe he didn't want to be found...by me. This was new. And unwelcome. I was suffering from acute Sean withdrawal. Symptoms included lack of concentration, mood swings, anxiety, irritability, bloating, boredom. Boredom proved to be the most dangerous. It was boredom that prompted my next "Arranged Date".

[LIGHTING CHANGE. SOUND AND PROJECTIONS SUGGEST "INEXPENSIVE" CHINESE RESTAURANT]

Freddie. Five foot five. Dressed in a short sleeved collared shirt and pleated khaki pants. Freddie had an engineering degree from UC Berkeley. For Chinese-Americans, UC Berkeley was Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Cambridge and Oxford all rolled into one. It meant you would be successful. You would marry the right person and live in the perfect house and have two boys. You would be set for life. For life. My parents were probably booking the banquet hall at that moment.

On Sunday evening at a cheap Chinese restaurant, I wore a silk halter dress and a pair of four inch stilettos. I knew that I was overdressed for this date.

I had no intention of seeing him again, I just wanted to flaunt what he could never have in his face.

FREDDIE

Can you cook? Because I need a woman who can cook. Like my mom.

FIONA

[to audience]

I need a man who I can tuck away in a drawer. Like Mr. Happy.

FREDDIE

This dating thing is sorta new to me, Fiona. I haven't really dated before...Oh, except once. Senior Prom.

FIONA

How old are you?

FREDDIE

Thirty-five.

FIONA

(to audience) What the fuck? Well that made me feel less absurd about Mr. Happy and Lidocaine.

FREDDIE

Oh, do you like pets? Because I have a pet turtle. His name is Fei because it sounds like my name - Freddie.

FIONA

I have a parakeet, Pepito. Because it doesn't sound anything like my name.

FREDDIE

Oh, I hate birds. Noisy and stupid things. Only good for stir fry. I'm gonna step out back for a smoke.

FIONA

And he was gone. I just stared after that bird-hating lump of a man-boy. I thought; My Pepito is twice the man you'll ever be. Pepito has a foot fetish, you motherfucker.

Go home and eat your mother's goddamn wonton soup and drop dead. I sat there for thirty minutes and he never came back. The bastard.

[LIGHTS CHANGE. RESTAURANT OUT -WE HEAR STREET SOUNDS]

I threw down a twenty and left the restaurant to hail a cab. Outside it had started to rain. Perfect. A horn honked. I turned around and there was Sean waving at me from his shiny black Mercedes. God bless Sean. Perfect timing. Just like the day we met. Just in time to rescue a damsel in distress.

SEAN

You need a ride, Fi?

FIONA

Oh God, yes.

SEAN

I thought you were on a date. Where is he?

FIONA

Don't even remind me. What an asshole. Went out for a smoke and never came back.

SEAN

Well, it's his loss. You look nice.

FIONA

Thank you, Sean. Where the fuck have you been??

SEAN

I had to take care of something. Oh, here. You can wear it behind your ear. I hear it's all the rage.

FIONA

(to audience)

And he handed me a small Gardenia. Just like Miss Cosmo's. Nope. Wasn't gonna ask. That was one of the first lessons I learned in evidence class. Never ask one question too many.

I thanked Jesus that night for making Sean show up like that outside the restaurant. I didn't ask myself why Sean was there. But more importantly, I didn't care.

[EXTERIOR STREET SOUNDS OUT. WE HEAR SHORT MUSIC TRANSITION]

The next morning, my father woke me from a dead sleep by shaking the bed.

DAD

Fiona!

FIONA

(Bleary eyed and groggy) Huh?

DAD

Fiona wake up! Wake up! I have some bad news and some good news. Freddie's dead! They found his body out behind that restaurant. Someone slit his throat for his wallet.

FIONA

(Still Groggy) Is that the good news?

DAD

Fiona!!! What happened last night??

FIONA

Jesus. I don't know, Dad. All I know is that he ditched me at the restaurant to go smoke.

DAD

You probably scared him off. I told you to wear lipstick. When I showed Freddie's mother your picture, she said that you were too dark. You need to wear lipstick. You'll look more like a lady.

FIONA

He left me with the bill. I had to pay for the whole meal!

DAD

What? You had to pay!

FIONA

Uh Huh!

DAD

Then the hell with them! I never liked his mother anyway.

FIONA

(to audience)

I felt giddy. Then I remembered his pet turtle, Fei. I wondered who would feed it now, change its water, tell it that it was the best little turtle in the world. And then I felt bad. For the turtle.

DAD

Fiona! Pay attention! Here's the good news! I set up another date for you next weekend. His name is Don Koo. He's the son of the head chef at the best restaurant in Chinatown. Much better. Don't forget to wear lipstick.

FIONA

Hai, Daddy.

(to audience)

Don Koo. Son of a chef. Great. I was too groggy to argue with my father. And I knew it would be useless. You rebel, you get shut out. How do you live with the consequences of disappointing your parents?!

*[WE HEAR A SHORT MUSIC TRANSITION AND
SEE IMAGES OF HIGH RISE OFFICE BUILDING]*

FIONA

(to audience)

As a young associate I was a prisoner at Toller Benning LLP, doing scut work for my fat, foul-mouthed, bulldog faced boss, Jack for over 80 hrs a week.

To stay motivated, I created a slideshow of serial killers on my desktop. Did you know America has the longest list of serial killers of any nation on earth? These folks are not to be confused with the crazies, who wear tin foil hats or think they're Jesus. No these folks have jobs.

Just comb your hair and wear a suit and you can be one crazy motherfucker and get away with it.

[WE SEE MONTAGE OF SERIAL KILLER PHOTOS]

And most of them are white guys. You never hear 'The unsub is most likely female. Asian. Age twenty-five to forty'. Some days, Ted Bundy would grin back at me from my screen with that handsome, wolfish, psychopathic grin.

[WE SEE A NICE PHOTO OF TED BUNDY]

Sometimes I'd catch my secretary, Tiffany, sneaking a peek.

SECRETARY

Who is that cutie? Is that your boyfriend?

FIONA

Oh no, he's out of my league.

SECRETARY

I'd wrap him around my little finger.

FIONA

Oh, he'd probably eat you right up.

On Monday morning the "LLP" in Toller Benning LLP meant Land of Laid-Off People. The firm called it downsizing. I called it dumping powerless associates when business sucks. Jack phoned me from his office which was fifty feet away. "You have two hours to get the shit out of your desk and vacate the premises." I didn't need two hours...all my shit was on a thumb drive.

The only thing I valued in that office was my desktop gallery of the sick and twisted. Fuck... At least I didn't get canned for having a bum uterus. One big downtown firm fired an Asian-American female associate after she had a miscarriage. See, no one wants a Hello Kitty with a defective uterus. Or worse, a Hello Kitty with one that worked too well, churning out baby kittens and robbing billable hours from the firm. How was I going to pay for my

shoes now?!?! No work - no salary - no shoes. Existential crisis.

I called Sean and whined like a nine year old about losing my job. To make me feel better, he invited me out for drinks, suggesting we go to any place where all the young associates hang out. I knew the perfect place, The Wine Table.

[WE HEAR RESTAURANT SOUNDS AND BACKGROUND MUSIC]

When we got there, he put an arm around my shoulder and said playfully, "Let's get you a job." We slid into a corner booth and ordered two glasses of Shiraz. There they all were - Young, successful, moneyed America getting drunk after a hard day at the office.

SEAN

So...which one looks like a hot shit power associate, Fi?

FIONA

At a law firm?

SEAN

Yes, Fi. Pay attention. You want to work at a *law firm*, right?

FIONA

(chuckling)

Oh no, Sean, Associates can't hire anybody. I have a better chance doing job searches on the web - which I should be at home doing right now, even though the job market sucks.

SEAN

That's not what I meant.

FIONA

(realization)

Nooooo...Sean, no. Let's just sit here.

SEAN

Do you want a job or not? *(smiling coyly)* C'mon, Fi, be a good little "downsizee" and tell me which one. The night's not getting any younger. And I'm getting bored.

FIONA

(to audience)

And then he kissed my hand. And he was right. I really did need a job. And the job market wasn't getting any better. So I scanned the bar for someone with the I'm a hot-shit I-bill-out at-five-hundred eighty-five-dollars-an-hour look.

There was a guy sitting at the bar; wavy blond hair, Fit, Hugo Boss power suit, onyx cufflinks. He caught me looking at him and quickly averted his eyes. I stayed focused on him. He looked at me again, and then turned his whole body away. Wow. The classic whole body brush-off. Not pretty enough. Not worth talking to or even a drink. Not Hello Kitty enough.

I hated him. Because he could have anything he wanted. Because he would never have to stand out in the rain just for taking a drumstick.

[RESTAURANT SOUNDS AND IMAGES FADE OUT]

You see, when I was seven, my parents dragged me back to the motherland to visit relatives. We saw my crazy Grandma who thought she would save me from dating boys in America. "You want boyfriend?" Then she unbuttoned her blouse and swung her long, floppy boobs at me. (*she mimics her granny's breasts*) "This is boyfriend. You want to look like this? You want seven brats? You go touch boys."

In China, boys (being more valuable than girls) had first dibs on the best parts of everything on the dinner table. So of course, I grabbed my fork and nabbed a prime drumstick in protest. I got sent out to the open yard. And it was raining. That's what happens when Hello Kitty refuses to obey the rules. She gets sent out in the rain...ostracized, shunned. As if that weren't bad enough, Uncle Yuen paid me a visit out there. He was what people called a "funny" uncle...and not because he was full of laughs, but because he tickled me in all the bad places. Hello Kitty was defenseless prey to him.

But this time before he could do anything, an entire flock of pigeons took off from the courtyard and distracted him just long enough that I stabbed him in the hand with my fork and ran away as fast as I could. His tickling days were over. That's why I love birds. I owe them, big time.

[RESTAURANT SOUNDS, MUSIC AND IMAGES RETURN]

Back in the bar, I sat there hating Mr. Whole Body Brush-off because I realized that he would always get to pick the choice pieces of the meal, that he was just plain *freer* than I would ever be. This time HE got picked.

FIONA

Okay. Him. Wait, but...he's a guy.

SEAN

So? You think I can only work women?

FIONA

Oy-vey. Okay. Have a good night at work, Sean. And I left.

[RESTAURANT OUT]

When I got home, my father ambushed me on the stairs and asked if I was drunk. "Yes, I am. Very. I got laid off today."

DAD

Why? Were you drinking at work? Were you not working hard enough?

FIONA

What? No Dad. I got *laid off*. So did eighty other associates.

DAD

You must have done something bad.

FIONA

Yes, I was very bad, Dad. I wouldn't wear lipstick.

DAD

Fiona, stop. Don't forget you have a date with Don Koo this weekend. (slight pause) Make *sure* wear

FIONA

(to dad)

I knooooow! (to audience) Don Koo. Another "nice Chinese boy". Ugh!

[SOUNDS AND IMAGES SUGGEST AN "UPSCALE" CHINESE RESTAURANT]

We meet at this fancy Chinese restaurant for Dim Sum. We ALL meet at this restaurant for Dim Sum. His Mom and Dad. His sister. His auntie. His *GRANDMOTHER??* Everyone wants to make sure that he and I are both 100% Chinese and ensure that there would be no premature hymen destruction. Don is schlubby and poorly-groomed. He wears dirty sneakers, a home done crew cut, probably from his mom.

DON

Hey, I'm Don. Good to finally meet you. I work on my car a lot, soup it up. It looks hella good. I don't really like going into the city. Nothing to do there. I like working out with weights, hanging out, playing Super Mario Brothers, and going crabbing with my friends...

FIONA

And he scratches his nose with his pinky, which has a long, pointed fingernail. Americans call it the coke fingernail? But it has nothing to do with drugs. In Chinese superstition, if your pinky finger doesn't reach the farthest joint line of your fourth finger, you are destined to be poor. For life. So some Chinese folks let their pinky nails grow out. Long and pointy to ensure wealth and prosperity. Five thousand years of Chinese wisdom and logic came up with *that* idea.

Don's Dad dominates most of the conversation and he asks me about my interests. I tell him that I took flying lessons and liked to go on long drives in my car. And he says, "But those are boy things." Boy things. NOT Hello Kitty things.

Doesn't matter. I am zoning out, wondering what Sean is doing, wishing that I was with him. Wishing I was ANYWHERE else.

That is until Don starts dying. One second he is droning on about some video game and the next moment his eyes roll back into his head and he grabs his throat. His goateed mouth looks like a vagina, gasping for air, coughing, wheezing, spitting out a mouthful of dumpling. Don's mother screams, "My son is choking!" He looks up into his mother's eyes and gasps "Peanuts..."

Don has a peanut allergy! He was stuffing his face with the chef's special dumplings all night. Turns out they were made with peanuts! He slides out of his chair onto the floor. His mother starts slapping him, his father starts shaking his bloated body and his little sister is pulling at his legs as he lay there unconscious on the floor. All the while no one thinks to grab an Epi-pen or to call 911.

[ALL RESTAURANT SOUNDS AND IMAGES OUT.]

The next afternoon I was spiraling down the rabbit hole of dating despair and unemployment, when Sean called me and said "Google the Chronicle Online! Search Beamer-Hodgins!" And he hung up. I did and there it was in Breaking News:

[WE SEE NEWS ARTICLE PROJECTION]

Local Attorney Dies After Possible Alcohol Poisoning.

David Keener, San Francisco Attorney, died yesterday evening at the Wine Table...blah blah blah...large quantity of alcohol and unknown sedatives...found unconscious in restroom...blah blah...paramedics failed to revive him.

Keener was an associate at the prestigious San Francisco law firm of Beamer Hodgins LLP.

[NEWS ARTICLE OUT]

I had almost forgotten our night at The Wine Table. I flew onto Beamer Hodgins' website and searched for "David Keener" and there he was in all his perfect blonde-Hugo Boss glory. I also found Keener's boss, senior partner Jack Betner. Holy crap, another Jack. Also white, also old. Same shit, different toilet.

So I did what anyone would do...I drafted a cover letter, updated my resume and emailed that shit directly to Jack. Afterwards, I couldn't resist, I typed Keener's name into the search box one more time. NO RESULTS FOUND. They had deleted Keener in less than twenty-four hours. My kind of firm.

[WE HEAR CHEERFUL TRANSITION MUSIC AND THE LIGHTS CHANGE]

FIONA

After a series of round robin interviews ending with senior partner Jack Betner, I got hired at Beamer-Hodgins. No one asked what happened at my other firm. No one asked whether I had even passed the bar. Or even how I knew they had a job opening. It didn't matter. They just wanted someone fun to cure their hiccups. Or so I thought.

[WE HEAR SEAGULLS AND SURF AND SEE IMAGES OF THE OCEAN]

To celebrate my new job Sean took me out on his sailboat, The Countess--I noticed the "o" was rubbed out...nice.

[PROJECTION OF BACK OF BOAT NAMED THE C UNTESS]

The second thing I noticed was - It *smelled*. The sickly sweet smell of death. It was intoxicating, it was orgasmic. I asked Sean if he smelled anything. He laughed and said he hadn't smelled or tasted anything for years because of a kid named Darrell, who he met in juvie. Darrell was a bully who had raped his own sister. One day he shoved a pencil way up Sean's nose. Sean did God's work on Darrell but not before Darrell had 'murdered' Sean's sense of smell.

Sean had me steer The C_{unt}ess as we sailed out into the bay. We passed a fancy boat full of people dressed in black. Sean said it was our lucky day because we would get to inhale the dead; That they were scattering cremation ashes at sea. Cool. I asked Sean if he wanted to be cremated, "Hell, yes. I want to be cremated! And I want to be scattered over my neighborhood so my bitch neighbor Betty can choke to death on my ashes!" Always thinking of others, my Sean.

While I was busy keeping the boat away from the rocks, Sean brought several packages wrapped in black garbage bags up from below deck and casually dropped them overboard. "Don't worry, Fi. They're biodegradable." He laughed and I laughed and I ignored the suspicious packages. You know, the way you pretend not to notice the smell of your friend's farts even though you might gag. You *know*...People culture. After the package dumping was finished we returned and docked back in the marina. We were about to toast to my new job when:

MEI

Heeeyyy handsome...nice boat!

FIONA (*to audience*)

This very young, very sexy, bikini-clad Asian girl on the smaller boat next to us had zoned in on Sean like a cat finds the only person in the room who is allergic. She glanced at her old white dude sugar daddy, whose back was turned, then turned back to Sean and did that flirty hair toss thing.

MEI

Ohhhh...are you making Cosmos? (hair toss) I looove Cosmos.

FIONA

(*to audience*)

Sugar Daddy turned around and Fuck My Life! It was Jack Betner! My new boss at Beamer-Hodgins! I had just *barely* met him the day before at my job interview. Sooooo Jack hired me yesterday and today I find he has a what? A concubine?!?. Asian fetish 101. He liked Hello Kitties. I hoped Jack wouldn't recognize me, but of course he did.

"Why Fiona, what a nice surprise." (to audience) No it wasn't. But I acted casual, invited them onboard and introduced everyone. People culture. And right on cue Jack piped in, "This is my girlfriend, Mei." Sean looked knowingly at Mei and handed her a Cosmo. Jack sniffed the air and made a face. I thought, "oh shit here comes trouble," but Jack had the decency to ignore the odor and make small talk. See, people culture. Mei on the other hand:

MEI

(giggle) Ew, what stinks? (sips) Ohhh I'm so thirsty. (gulps down drink) Please sir may I have some more?..and don't be shy with the vodka. (sniffs) Jeezus what *is* that awful smell!? Can't you smell that, it smells like something up and died. (giggle) Seriously! (hands over the glass)

FIONA

(to audience)

No People Culture. Sean disappeared below deck leaving me high and dry between the tipsy, flirty Mei and Jack who kept making excuses for her. Luckily Sean returned and handed Mei her refill. By the time I realized what might be in it besides vodka, she had already gulped it down...oh well.

MEI

(after long full drink)

Whoa, I think I overdid it, honey. (stumbles and giggles) I'm fine. I'll be fine.

[OCEAN SOUNDS AND IMAGES OUT]

FIONA

(to audience)

Yeah...she wasn't gonna be fine. You don't tell people that their farts stink. Or that their boat smells like death. (pause) And I really wasn't fine. I had to face Jack on Monday. I waited till I got to the safety of my bedroom to call Sean because you never want to accuse your friend making you an accomplice to a felony when you are floating alone in the middle of the Bay. Once again he didn't pick up so I left a cryptic voicemail.

God Sean. Are you insane? She was my new boss' girlfriend. Just tell me she's going to be okay? Call me, asshole!

SEAN

(recorded voicemail Beeeep!)

Hey Fi I got your message. Breathe! Everything's gonna be fine. Think about it - The guy was wearing a wedding ring and Mei sure wasn't Mrs. Jack. Now do you think he's going to drop an underage, drunk, unconscious girl off at the ER? No way. The ER would have to report it. His wife would find out. The divorce would kill him. So what I think is, he's going to make it all go away. Assholes are always true to their nature.

[TRANSITION MUSIC. LIGHTS CHANGE. NEW OFFICE REVEALED]

FIONA

(to audience)

Bright and early Monday morning, I showed up for my first day at Beamer-Hodgins and was shown to my beautiful new 21st floor office.

Right away Jack buzzed and asked could I step into his office. I was sure an entire SWAT team would be waiting for me. But it was just Jack sitting at his desk with all of his framed photos of his wife, their two daughters, even his dog. But no photos of Mei.

JACK

So Fiona, how was your last weekend of freedom? Do anything fun?

FIONA

(Catching on) Um no, not really, Jack. I just kicked back and spent some time hanging out with an old friend. I wanted to rest up for my first day at the firm.

JACK

Good for you. I spent all of Saturday with my wife and kids. And I was here at the office all day Sunday, working. No rest for the wicked. Here are your assignments.

FIONA

(to audience)

Sean hit the nail on the head. Assholes are always true to their natures. I went back to my office and set up my computer desktop. That day instead of Ted Bundy, I chose GIULIA TOFANA to look out from my desktop. In the 1600's, she was famous for selling poison to women who wanted to murder their husbands. They called her poison "Aqua Tofana" and it is said to be responsible for 600 deaths. My new secretary was immediately intrigued.

SECRETARY 2

Who's that?

FIONA

A true role model for women.

SECRETARY 2

Girl power. Am I right??

FIONA

Sure. You bet. Thanks, that will be all.

I opened my browser and I didn't even have to Google her, Mei was at the top of my news feed:

[WE SEE NEWS ARTICLE]

Asian Teen Drowns in San Francisco Bay:

Unidentified Asian female in her late teens discovered dead blah-blah-blah. Police investigators blah-blah probably fell off a boat...large quantity of alcohol and unknown sedatives blah-blah-blah seeking possible witnesses.

[NEWS ARTICLE, OFFICE SOUNDS AND IMAGES OUT.]

So Jack made everything go away, just like Sean said. I guess no one wanted a dead Hello Kitty full of vodka and date rape drugs. (pause) Sean and I settled into a life together; sometimes we'd hang out at his place, sometimes we'd go sailing, but mostly we'd dress up in our finest and

prowl San Francisco's upscale establishments, watching privileged people down pricey drinks thinking that they're free, that they can have anything they want, that they're going to live forever, when really they're just waiting for someone to put them out of their misery. I had my best friend back. I felt invincible!

[SOUND; KNOCK KNOCK]

DAD

I just spoke to Don's father. Don's taking you crabbing with some of his friends this weekend to make up for what happened at dim sum.

FIONA

(to Dad)

No. No no no no. Tell him no thanks, Dad. I'm glad the shrimp rolls didn't kill him but he's boring. I'm not interested.

DAD

Ai-Ya! Fiona, don't be rude. He really feels bad about almost dying at lunch. And his father is my friend. The least you can do is to be polite and say yes.

FIONA

Hai, Daddy.

(to audience)

I agreed because it's exhausting to keep fighting losing battles. Been there, done that. Of course it's easier to agree when you're armed with roofies. The tiny pills were a gift from Sean after my first date with Don Koo and his family.

[FLASHBACK]

FIONA

Shit, Sean, why didn't the peanuts kill him?

SEAN

Because God saved him for you, Fi. Here take these with you in case you need to make an emergency getaway next time. Induces partial amnesia.

He won't remember anything after you knock him out.

Rohypnol; Almost impossible to detect. The perfect date companion.

[END FLASHBACK]

FIONA

They came in handy because, as it turned out, my Dad and the Koos had plotted behind my back. Saturday morning, when Don got me in his car, I found out this was going to be an *overnight* camping trip. Camping?! I don't do camping. My idea of "roughing it" is a Motel 6 because I'm so allergic. Everything in nature irritates my asthma. I mean it took mankind thousands of years to crawl out of the woods. Why would anyone want to go back out there and sleep on the ground? Have you seen "Naked and Afraid"? Ew! And to me, if you want to eat crabs, you pick them out from the aquarium in a Chinese restaurant like normal people.

[ANIMAL SOUNDS AND PROJECTIONS OF DEEP WILDERNESS]

But no, to Don and his friends, you have to travel to the middle of dipshit nowhere and throw chicken necks into mucky water inside metal crates and then play cards and drink canned beer around a campfire...FOR HOURS! As if that wasn't bad enough, I found out I had to share a tent with Don. Oh God. I *really* wished Sean was there. And then I realized he was. In two little white tablets.

DON

Man, I'm beat. I guess I'll go in the tent and lie down. C'mon, Fiona, don't worry, my tent is big enough for both of us.

FIONA

(To Don)

Okay Don, go on in. I'll get you a nightcap. My mom says it's always good to have some liquids right before you go to bed.

DON

Aw, thanks, Fiona. That's very sweet.

FIONA

(to audience)

Take one roofie tablet in some beer and Good night, Don Koo. On normal dates, you might wonder what the other person looks like naked. I wondered what Don would look like as a corpse. I got a pretty good idea. The next morning, we all got in Don's car and headed home.

With yesterday's makeup on my face and a layer of dirty soot in my hair, I promised myself to never, EVER go crabbing again. Not with Don, not with anybody. I also made a mental note to ask Sean for more roofies.

[WILDERNESS SOUNDS AND IMAGES OUT]

I thought I'd heard the last of Don Koo. Note to self never underestimate the persistence of Chinese culture. The next Friday I was headed out for work when my parents blocked the front door with evil grins on their faces.

DAD

So you like Don, right?

FIONA

No. Don sucks.

DAD

What do you mean? You spent the night with him. You shared a tent. (*mischievous grin*) You two slept together.

FIONA

I had no choice because *no one* told me to bring my own tent because *no one* told me that it was going to be an overnight camping trip! And besides, nothing happened!

(to audience)

My mom caught me before I could escape.

MOM

It's okay. There's nothing wrong with liking a boy. His family bought a house in San Bruno for both of you. It's nice. We'll all go over and have dinner.

FIONA

What the...?! A HOUSE?? Mom, I-DO-NOT-LIKE-DON-KOO! Seriously.

MOM

(*puzzled*)

Then why did you go camping overnight with him?

FIONA

(*very heated*)

Because Dad tricked me! He *pushed* me into it. He never told me it was going to be overnight!

MOM

Oh.

FIONA

Yes! This is Dad's fault! I blame him!

DAD

Well, guess what, Fiona. You are getting married to Don on the twenty-eighth of next month. Your mother and I have made all the arrangements. Don Koo is the best we are going to do for you. His family is having us to dinner at Don's new house tomorrow. Wear lipstick.

FIONA

Oh my God! This isn't China! People don't get married just because they spent the night together! Hell, they don't get married even if they've popped out three kids together!

DAD

Fiona, you are *Chinese*. And Don's father and I already agreed.

FIONA

Hai...FUUUUCK!!! I so wanted to call Sean. I needed to talk to him. Fuck. I knew I would only get his voicemail.

FUUUUUCK!!! Things were going so great, we'd go to some upscale bar, I'd choose the most likely "candidate", I'd leave Sean alone to do "God's work", then we'd go moonlight sailing.

Then Caroline Derby came along. Or rather her entire bloated, fish nibbled body washed up on the shore. The media exploded warning rich young women about roofies and going out to bars alone. Sean's fuck-up made all our little kitties stay home. And just like that Ritzy bars were out and the Tenderloin district was in. Instead of laying low, Sean decided that we would start picking up prostitutes. It no longer mattered to him whether someone was asking for it or not. He was in it for the thrill. He became deeply addicted. I warned him. Then he stopped taking me along, said that I killed his mood! That he didn't need me anymore!!!

[LIGHTS CHANGE RETURN TO OFFICE SOUNDS AND IMAGES]

FIONA

Before my head exploded, I stormed out of the house and away from my conniving parents. I sought solace in the only place that was left to me: the office. Ironic, I know. And things only got worse.

The problem with bullies is that they grow up and stay bullies. They leave the playground and become senior partners. Instead of thumping your lunch, they force you to work overtime, threaten to fire you, put you down in front of your colleagues and wait for you to fail.

Jack the asshole called me into his office and said he wanted me, and *me alone*, to process tens of thousands of brand new documents no later than five o'clock. Was he fucking kidding!? It was already after lunch. This would've been impossible for a dozen associates. I told him so.

JACK

I don't want to hear it. I need everything done by the close of business, Fiona. Don't give me this shit about not enough time!

FIONA

Jack, with due respect, it's after noon. There are five boxes of this stuff. There are thousands of pages. There's no way I could do all this myself. Why can't I split the work with another associate?

JACK

Five hours, Fiona. Christ, my wife gave birth in less time! I can't believe you went to Yale. Now get this crap out of here and bring me some decaf coffee! One sugar, no cream. I need to take my heart pills.

FIONA

(to audience)

Jack had heart problems. So to keep it working effectively, he took digoxin, a form of digitalis. He pulled out his vial and popped the cap too hard and the pills tumbled out onto his desk and floor. I got on my knees to help him pick up his pills.

JACK

Fucking Son of a bitch! I am your boss. Which means I have the power. Which means that you get to be on your knees and smile while I ejaculate in your face. Get out! Now!

FIONA

So I left his office with the stack of files, a stomach full of red hot anger, and four tablets of digoxin which I crushed, dissolved, and stirred to smooth perfection into his hot decaf.

After I dutifully served it to Jack, I went back to my office and shut the door. Within minutes someone screamed out in the hall. Someone else began yelling for an ambulance. Someone started running around outside. Everyone

at Beamer Hodgins sprang to life, well, everyone except Jack.

Jack's secretary, Margot came over in tears. She said she "couldn't believe it! This was the second time he'd accidentally OD'ed on his heart meds."

[OFFICE IMAGES AND SOUNDS OUT]

As they hauled Jack away I realized two things. One; karma was on my side - Jack's death would be ruled accidental. And two; I had power over the insanity around me. All my life I had been programmed to fear the consequences, the shame and guilt if I went against my culture's status quo, or the wishes of my parents or the expectations of society. Sean had never understood that. I was tired of taking it. Tired of feeling less-than. I needed to deal with my bullies my way. Because they were asking for it.

FIONA (to audience)

Don was slowly metastasizing through my life like cancer. Cancer must be physically eliminated, cut out and chucked into a biohazard bag.

(takes out cellphone, dials)

Don? Yeah, hey, it's me Fi. ONA!?! My parents tell me that we're all meeting over at your place tomorrow?
How about we just make it the two of us. I mean, our families have already met. Cool? Crab? Sounds great.

(Hangs up. Dials Sean's number. It rings several times.)

FIONA

Sean? Jesus. It's about time. Listen, you won't believe what happened at the office today. I did God's work.
I...(pause)..Okay, self-preservation, I got it.(pause) No I can't this weekend. I'm busy. I have a surprise for Don.(pause) I'll be careful. (slight pause)I won't panic...(pause)Yes, yes...opportunity and timing, I remember.(pause)Your not going to lose your sailing buddy.

(slight pause)Where does he work!?? Forget it, Sean. I don't need you for this.(slight pause) No. I don't need roofies...I've got Snickers.

[WE HEAR CHEERFUL CANDY BAR MUSIC. LIGHTS CHANGE]

FIONA

Snickers; with that gooey nougat and caramel which make finely-chewed bits of peanut stick to your teeth, gums, tongue, and lips. "But Officer, I ate the Snickers. Not Don. He's allergic. That's why I didn't offer him one. I would never do that." Oops. Hello Kitty forgot to rinse her mouth out before kissing her boyfriend.

The next day I parked my car a block away from Don's house and threw my Snickers wrappers in a public trash bin. I strode up the block in my four inch Prada stilettos, pounding on the pavement hard, strengthening my resolve to do God's work the way it should be done. [doorbell] Don opened the door wearing a tank top and Walmart gym shorts.

DON

The crabs are cooking. I was going to work out with weights a little, so I will look good, for you know, our big day. You wanna watch? I think I can bench press one-eighty, Fiona.

FIONA

(to audience)

Oh great. What a treat.

DON

Just spot me and slide on two more ten-pound weights, okay?

FIONA

(to audience. discovery)

And there it was. Opportunity. I slipped a twenty five-pound disk on each side of the bar. "You're good to go...honey." Don gritted his teeth and hefted all two hundred ten pounds off its holder. He brought the weight towards his chest and pushed it back up. "One." He didn't quit though and I had to hand it to him. He was dying to impress me. Then Don lost his grip and the bar crashed down onto his throat.

Did you know that if your husband, wife, child, mother, or father is drowning and you do nothing, you're liable for their death? 'Black letter law' says that you have a duty to rescue them but NOT friends, acquaintances, or the boy that your father is trying to force you to marry. Just FYI.

"The bar is way too heavy for me, Don. I'm going to call 911."

[gets phone out dials 911 but does not hit the call button]
So it turns out I didn't even *have* to kiss him. All I had to do was nothing, for about five minutes. Until he stopped gurgling.

(Pauses while she waits and watches, then hits call button)

"Emergency? I need help. My friend just had an accident with his weights. Please send an ambulance. Hurry!"

With all the questions and paperwork from the police and paramedics I didn't get home until midnight and as soon as I opened the door, my father accosted me with questions.

DAD

"Why are you home so late? How was your dinner? What do you mean Don's dead? Ai-Ya! Did you call an ambulance? Did you try to help him?" Then my mother wailed,

MOM

Oh my God! What about his parents? How terrible! I'm so sorry Fiona. Did you eat?

FIONA

No, I just had a snack before I got there and I'm kind of hungry.

MOM

You poor thing. I'll make you some ramen noodles with hot dog.

FIONA

(to audience)

I love my mother. She's the best. Always ready with some TLC and Chinese comfort food.

The next morning when I got to the office I went online and found the news item:

[WE SEE NEWS ARTICLE]

San Bruno Man Crushed to Death: Don Koo, 30, of San Bruno, blah blah blah.

Koo's fiancée, Fiona Yu, an attorney at the prestigious San Francisco law firm of Beamer Hodgins LLP, called emergency services but paramedics were unable to revive Koo despite repeated attempts.

(gets phone and dials)

Sean, It's me. Have you read the news? Go online. Type in Don Koo. K-O-O. Don't worry. God did his own work. Seriously. Just Google it. *(slight pause)* You're...proud of me? *(touched)* Like you said, everyone has to die.

[CHINESE FUNERAL MUSIC LOUD AT FIRST THEN FADE UNDER]

FIONA

I usually love Funerals. They are chock full of good energy, which is perfect for me because I have a porous psyche. It's like bathing in pure sunlight with perhaps a teeny dose of schadenfreude. I mean no one ever says, "I've been a pallbearer twenty-seven times and never the deceased. When do I get to be carried down the aisle?"

[MUSIC LOUDER WE SEE IMAGES OF CHINESE FUNERAL, THEN MUSIC OUT]

It's dangerous business to attend a Chinese funeral. So dangerous, my mother wouldn't let me wear my Dior suit. She handed me an eighty-dollar suit from TJ Maxx to be worn once and burned to avoid bad luck associated with death. All because of Don. So I did as I was told and while we watched the polyester go up in flames my father blessed me with this news.

DAD

Oh, Fiona, I almost forgot. You were Don's fiancée and that's almost like a wife. So out of respect for him, you can't go on any dates for at least a year.

FIONA

A whole year?

DAD

A year.

FIONA

Hai, Daddy.

(to audience)

That's the upside of Chinese funerals. If you obey all the rules, good luck follows you.

[MUSIC AND IMAGES OUT]

And it did. The next day at work I got moved to a much bigger office with a much better view and a couch. Although it came with a price - an all-nighter to finish my assigned contracts. I was so busy I missed a call from Sean.

SEAN

[RECORDED VOICE MAIL SFX Beeeeep.]

Fi, it's me. Hey. Where are you? I know it's late but can you come over tonight? Please? Or maybe sometime tomorrow? You know what they say about luck, that it eventually runs out? Well...anyway. Just text me back and let me know what time you can get here. Thanks.

FIONA

(to audience)

I had never known Sean to be anything but calm and totally under control. Whatever this was, it had to be serious. It sounded like Sean needed a major dose of good luck. You know, he should have attended Don's funeral with me. I texted him, "6pm tomorrow." He texted back, "OK."

From his sense of urgency over the phone, I expected Sean to answer the door immediately when I buzzed his apartment. But he didn't. No answer. I called his cell.

Hey Sean, I half expected you to greet me in your feather boa, again. But I'd settle for you just to buzz me in. What? Of course I'm at your apartment. You called last night and asked me to drop by, remember? You're busy?! I mean yes, I can meet you tomorrow, but why was it so important to meet you today? Sean, where are you? Well at least tell me everything's okay.

(to audience)

He hung up. He didn't even apologize for standing me up.

Contrary to what he said, we didn't meet up the next day, or the day after that. I waited, no phone call, text message, email, nothing.

Then my mother called me at the office one night to say that I needed to "come home immediately because there is a serial killer on the loose. His picture was all over the news."

Ok yes. I *had* been wishing for Sean to slip up, but I still felt nauseous, and hoped that the picture wasn't him. But it was. Sort of. It looked like a cross between Edward Norton and Orlando Bloom. The only part that was right on was his piercing eyes. The story was front and center of every online news source.

[ARTICLE APPEARS]

Attempted Kidnapping of Young San Francisco Woman: blah blah *narrowly escaped when man tried to pull her into his car* blah blah blah The unsub is most likely male. Caucasian. Age twenty-five to forty'.

[ARTICLE OUT]

See?? It's always a white guy between twenty-five and forty. I called Sean at his office and left a message that "Fiona was in *desperate* need of a new hymen." When he finally called me back, I told him guess what - you're on the front

page of the news - that it's about that girl who got away. He was silent and then says "Aw shit, Fi." "Shit indeed, dude." He asked me to come over later and hung up.

[SOMBER TRANSITION MUSIC AND LIGHTING CHANGE]

Around seven o'clock, I buzzed Sean's apartment and he opened the door, not his usual flamboyant self. He peered down the hall to see if anyone was around.

FIONA

It's okay. I don't think "Estelle Betty" is watching.

SEAN

Oh, don't worry. She isn't. Come on in. I take it you saw the sketch, then? It doesn't really look like me. Although, apparently it was good enough. You'll never guess who recognized me...or maybe you would. Betty, the stupid old cow. She actually came over with sketch in hand, bragging about how she was going to tell the police.

FIONA

(to audience)

I had to laugh. Seriously. Who goes over to a suspected killer's place and brags about how you're going to turn him into the police? I mean that's just begging for it. I sat on the couch and asked him what he was going to do. His eyes twinkled as he kissed my cheek and handed me a scotch on the rocks.

That part of me that was in fear of Sean told me maybe I shouldn't drink it. I told him I needed to use the restroom and he said "it's occupied", wink, wink. "This might take a minute...just make yourself at home." He turned on the stereo, put on a plastic apron, picked up a hand-saw, walked into the bathroom and shut the door. Dude, even Pepito knows you don't shit where you eat.

So...I went into the kitchen and poured out the scotch. And then...I noticed the stove. Sean had a gas stove. There it was. Opportunity. I remembered the fierceness of Sean's beautiful blue eyes and how they sucked my fear away back on that playground.

I mean really, I had no idea whether Sean was evolving or devolving, but I knew that he was out of control and headed for certain destruction. I also knew that Betty's absence would absolutely bring the police right to Sean's door.

I washed the glass, wiping it clean of my prints, placed it on the dish rack and I walked over to the stove. No crappy prison food. No bright orange jumpsuit. No sadistic guards. No unwanted butt sex. Not for my Sean. Not for my best friend. Not for the love of my life.

I turned on the gas using the sleeve of my shirt. And thanks to Darrell and the pencil he shoved up Sean's nose, Sean would never smell a thing.

I checked the windows. Already closed and curtains drawn. He didn't want to disturb the neighbors. Always thinking of others, Sean was.

"Sean? I need to go back to the office." He cracked the door open. He had a bit of blood splattered on his cheek. It was cute.

"Fi, before you go, can you check on the coffee table and see if I have any cigarettes left?"

"Yeah, you got plenty, Sean. Just wait till I leave to light one, remember my asthma, OK?"

I carefully removed one from the pack and slipped it into my pocket. It was time to go.

[WE SEE IMAGES AND HEAR SOUNDS OF HUGE EXPLOSION]

[THEN WE HEAR FAMILIAR GRUNGE MUSIC THEME]

The next morning, I left home early and went to Walgreen's, where I purchased one of those cheap lighters right next to the cash register, then walked over to what remained of Sean's apartment. I stood on the sidewalk in front of the apartment building, pulled out the lighter and Sean's cigarette, (*She mimes lighting cigarette and inhaling; coughs*) Asthma be damned. Everyone has to die.

As I looked up at the large, gaping black hole which used to be Sean's living room window, I thought about what he had said about his ashes. And then I took a deep breath. I was inhaling Sean's ashes, his essence, his spirit, whatever was left of him in the air around me. I told myself that that was what Sean would have wanted. Isn't that what people always tell themselves?

All those little tiny particles, like mini ticks and fleas, insured that wherever I went Sean would be with me. More portable than a thumb-drive, but much better.

With my lungs full of Sean, I went to work. It was a good day. I turned on my computer and I didn't even have to search for the story.

[WE SEE NEWS STORY]

Local Surgeon Killed in Gas Explosion:

Dr. Sean Killroy, 30, a prominent plastic surgeon of San Francisco, died yesterday evening at his Russian Hill apartment. Investigators believe Killroy accidentally set off an explosion when he struck a match to light a cigarette, unaware that his apartment had a gas leak. The explosion also claimed the life of Killroy's neighbor, Betty Mulroney, 86, who was found in Killroy's apartment. Authorities believe the two victims had been friends...

[NEWS STORY OUT]

Awwww. Betty and Sean. Friends. How lovely. With the article was a professional picture of Sean. I clicked and set it as my desktop background. Much better.

[WE SEE PROFESSIONAL PHOTO OF SEAN IN WHITE COAT]

"Who's that?" someone would ask.

"The love of my life," I would tell them.

"Lucky you." They'd say.

Damn right.

Sean smiled up at me from my desktop. Reminding me that there's no such thing as fear. Reminding me that I could handle anything and anyone life would throw at me. Reminding me to live my life, my way.

[STAGE GOES DARK FI STEPS INTO SPECIAL LIGHT]

Hello Kitty.

She doesn't have a mouth or fangs. She can't eat or lick herself. She has no eyebrows, so she can't express her anger.

She can't bite off a nipple or finger, give head, tell anyone to go and fuck their mother and she can't scratch your eyes out. She's just clawless, fangless, voiceless, with that placid, blank expression topped by a pink ribbon. Hello Kitty goes through life itchy, un-licked and unscratched. Tortured by her own blank perfection.

I hate Hello Kitty.

I'm Fiona Yu. Glad to meet you.

Blackout

[MUSIC]

End of Play