

IN THE WAKE

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CHARACTERS

DANNY

A gay man of color.

CHRIS

A gay man of color.

WHITE MAN

A white man.

BLOB

A blob.

SCENE 1

(DANNY's apartment. CHRIS and DANNY stand kissing as they finish getting dressed. And they continue kissing. Longer. Longer! Long enough that the audience grows bored or horny. They hug like the world is ending. CHRIS leaves. DANNY latches the door behind him and realizes he is alone.)

DANNY

(to the audience, flatly)

You know how sometimes you're too lethargic to clean your apartment—

But it has to be done, of course—

Anyway, you invite a strange boy over to fuck you,

so that you're forced, before he arrives, to wipe down your goddamn countertops...

(a glimmer of snark and energy and performance)

Counter-tops.

I'm not a bottom, honey, I'm a *countertop*.

(sadly again)

Doesn't quite work, does it.

(DANNY sighs, then stands staring into nothing. A large gelatinous BLOB, nearly a foot in diameter, falls out of the sky and lands with a plop a few feet from where he stands. DANNY looks at it unfazed.)

Hello.

(The BLOB, in its way, stares back. There is a knock at the door. The lights shift.)

I don't think I invited you.

(The BLOB petulantly retreats into a corner.)

Just—stay unobtrusive, I guess.

(DANNY goes to answer the door. He switches off Lethargic and turns on Affectedly Charming and Expansive, just in case. It is CHRIS.)

Hey you.

CHRIS

Hey. I think I forgot, um, my sunglasses?

DANNY

Oh. Maybe! Come in. How have you been?

CHRIS

(playing along)

I've been good! Long time no see, how about you?

DANNY

Oh the usual, can't complain, darling. Just had a *very* cute boy over, so that was nice.

CHRIS

Funny: I, too, was making out with a cute boy a mere five minutes ago.

(The banter dies and they stare at each other with something that is maybe desire but maybe hopelessness. DANNY breaks this. He looks around and sees the sunglasses in question. He gets them, brings them over, perches them on CHRIS's head.)

DANNY

Your sunglasses, sir.

CHRIS

(He adjusts them so they don't fall off. More staring.)

My sunglasses.

(The BLOB slithers over until it is next to their feet. DANNY notices and gives it a Look. CHRIS lets himself out as DANNY is still staring at the BLOB. Once he realizes CHRIS has left, DANNY stares at the place where he exited.

Then he sits down on the ground. Absentmindedly, he begins cuddling the blob. He starts nodding asleep, then jerks awake. He realizes he is clinging to the BLOB and lets go of it immediately, backing away, disturbed. He wraps his arms tightly around himself instead.)

DANNY

What even *are* you?

(The BLOB is silent.)

I don't need ...

(to himself)

I don't know.

(He stands up and exits.)

SCENE 2

(A WHITE MAN stands to the side and watches. CHRIS enters with a guitar. He is looking for something on the ground. It is his pick. He finds it. He notices the audience.)

CHRIS

Oh, hey. Whoa. Okay.
I've—I've never had a real audience before. Funny. Okay.
Do you mind if I—?

(He starts strumming his guitar. Then he sings, trying more-or-less unsuccessfully to undercut his earnestness.)

In the wake of tragedy,
more men than ever want to suck my dick;
in the wake of tragedy,
somehow I'm handsome.

In the wake of tragedy,
somehow someone wants to put his body next to mine,
for a moment,
and then it's over,
and then it's over.

In the wake of loneliness,
what else is there to do but suck a dick?
In the wake of loneliness,
it feels like something.

In the wake of loneliness,
somehow someone comes and puts his body next to mine,
for a moment,
and then it's over—

In the wake of violence,

there's a thing that happens:
We say, "Love you, baby;"
we say, "We are One."

In the wake of violence,
that whole thing that happens
almost feels like maybe
we're not lying.

And we're united for a moment,
until the other shoe drops,
and you only want white boys,
only masculine tops.

(He rolls his eyes, then gets more serious.)

We're united for a moment,
until the other shoe drops,
and you want terrorist watchlists,
you want rainbow-colored ... cops.

(CHRIS ends his song abruptly and leaves. The WHITE MAN
lingers.)

SCENE 3

(DANNY and a WHITE MAN sit in an office,
working. DANNY stares ahead at his computer
screen, dazed, as the WHITE MAN talks.)

WHITE MAN

It's like, how hard is it to agree on commonsense gun control reforms? How *hard*? Republican obstruction, again and again. And obviously the second amendment is the second amendment, but come *on*. The Founding Fathers did not have these sorts of assault weapons in mind when they wrote that, you know. Military-grade weapons! Why do civilians have them? Why do civilians *need* them? How can you possibly think that's good for society? And barring suspected terrorists from purchasing that stuff, I mean, that's just common sense. Common sense! That's what's lacking. Common sense and also a sense of ... integrity. Statesmanship! They're just a bunch of whiny hypocrites who get petulant when they don't get their way. Right? I mean, don't get me started on the Supreme Court nomination. Don't get me started on Donald Trump. The Republican Party has been taken over by a bunch of crazy people, and we're suffering as a result. Even Ronald *Reagan*—

(DANNY finally reacts to this last bit with visible incredulity and turns towards the WHITE MAN. A shift. The WHITE MAN leaves. DANNY removes his tie. He is now at home, on the couch. He turns on the TV. The WHITE MAN's voice comes on. DANNY watches, disgusted, numb, sad.)

WHITE MAN (offstage)

—but all lives *do* matter! And frankly, these tactics are divisive, and unhelpful, a real setback to the cause. Responding to violence with more violence—I mean, it was Gandhi—a friend of the civil rights movement, mind you, he inspired Martin Luther King Junior, the nonviolent resistance of that era—it was Gandhi who said an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind. And this sort of—*rioting*, and looting, and mayhem, this isn't helping anyone's cause. It's very self-destructive behavior. And you know, public opinion is shifting on the issue of racism, you see people talking about police brutality, you see these stories. And so in moments like this, people need to—I'm just saying, people need to think about their actions. Think about the implications of their actions. Think about the best interests of their communities. Think about how they may be alienating allies, frankly. Look—spread peace! Spread love! Spread empathy and compassion and unity! *That's* the message you want to send. This isn't—

(Another shift. DANNY has had enough and turns off the TV. Then he exhaustedly primps a bit. A WHITE MAN enters. DANNY halfheartedly motions him over. As DANNY kneels and gives him a blowjob, the WHITE MAN speaks.)

WHITE MAN

—It's exhausting! All these hateful wackos—and they've got to be mentally ill, I mean, you don't kill a bunch of people like that, *bam, bam, bam*, without being crazy—or repressed—or religious—these wackos, no psychiatric screening, obviously, no sense of—hey look, maybe he's connected to radical Islam, maybe we should be careful—none of that. Anyone can buy a gun and it's no problem. It's easy!

I mean, don't get me wrong, I'm sure not all Muslims are bad people, there's plenty of reasonable ones out there I bet, but come *on*. These people are dangerous! And you'd *think* the Republicans of all people would be on board here, you'd think *finally* some sort of bipartisanship would surface, but of course not—

And look, I'm not a racist. I know those people have suffered. We've all suffered. But this is crazy. This is—oh shit. Right there. Fuck. Yeah suck it baby. Take that cock. Take that cock deep in your throat. Oh *shit* baby you're gonna make me cum. You're gonna—you want my cum in your throat? Yeah? You like this big white dick? Yeah? Yeah you do. Yea—*aughhhhhhh*. Oh! Fuck!

(He cums.)

Fuck. Ha! Thanks, kid.

(The WHITE MAN buttons up his pants and leaves. DANNY wipes his mouth. He walks around a bit. He sits. The BLOB appears once more from around a corner. DANNY looks at it wearily.)

DANNY

Okay, okay.

(He picks up his phone, makes the call.)

DANNY

Hey, Chris. Ha. No, no, I'm good! I'm good. I don't—I don't usually do this. But I ... God. Um. Can I see you again?

(He laughs giddily at a positive response.)

Yeah? Yeah! Yes. Wait, what? ...Shut up.

(He looks up towards the door. CHRIS appears, on the phone, smiling. They continue their phone conversation, both a little shy.)

CHRIS

Hey.

DANNY

Hey.

(They hang up and cross towards each other. The BLOB rises into the air. It hovers and watches as they greet each other with a kiss. It disappears.)

END OF PLAY