

#4837

Set up for tonight. I'm so tired. Feels like forever. So much rain too. Good for the drought, at least. But

wife or kid. But hey, who am I to judge. I'm just the mailman.

A mail man. Haha. I should be a comedian. Maybe then I'll grab that forever.



Vipe t
lights
ing ou
g by t



ve it

he sa
's luck
ell, ye
lucky
ke th



Oh! Oh, no. No no no. I'm not admitting anything. I was thinking of the rats—hate them—on the floor earlier.

So you're saying you have a rat infestation too?

Yes, but I need help getting rid of them, if you so please.

'Fraid I can't do that. We need to shut this place down.

Ha! ... Well, I might be able to do something about that.

#4916

Middle Manager Appreciation Day? Well, please and thank you. It's not every day I get some goddamn respect. It's not every day I get some mmmm. That's good.

#4918

These people have no self-respect. Never worked a day in their life. I'd like to give *them* the mop.

#4863

by Yiu-On Li

Feeling! Crackle! Sizzle! Excelsior!
Hahahahahaha!

Never mind the tab. I'll pick it up. Buzz goes the fly from my wallet. Never mind that, dear.

Such nice lighting here. Manager will take care of the broken one. There's only one. I'm a handyman. A handy man.

So nice to be here. Let's be like this forever.

#4870

It's cold. What's it they say? "Serenity lies fallow in sheets of frost." I haven't heard that one before. I invented that one. Hahaha.

The wind whistles through the crack of an open window. Night falls. The sparrows come calling.

Readjust the blankets. That's better. What a bitter chill tonight. Not like me. Hahaha. I have money.

It's cold! Why is it so cold?! Who made it this cold?! Come back, coward sun! Come back and fight. I will make you stay. I will make you bright. I will make you shine forever.

#4894

Chemistry is hard. Neurons firing. Molecules floating around. Small balls.

This test is hard. I should have studied more. Or just studied, period.

It's okay. Chemistry will be here after we're gone. Not like me. Or her. Chemistry is forever.

#4901

Every day he ignores me, but there's something

#4922

Blue light, shine bright. It's getting hot in here. Too many circuits and not enough fans. But the quiet—so nice to have quiet.

Desk is falling apart. Same goes for the water cooler. Things fall apart. Where's Flex Tape™ when you need him? Need to ask HR to get Flex Tape™.

Sticky, sticky sweat. A job well done. Nothing but me and Ruby and Ada, cruising in my Casper convertible. Though Ada's getting a bit old. Maybe time to say goodbye. We won't last forever.

#5000

The cave of knowledge lies ahead. They say that one need only shout their question into the dark and receive in reply an echo.

What is—

#5571

What a man that walked in the other day. Or were they a man? I haven't worked up the guts to ask for their pronouns yet. Yes, pronouns don't make the man. Or woman. Or nonbinary pal. Or—Christ, English is hard. Ugh. Hard, hard, hard.

#5888

Softie! What's that light through that window? Don't tell me it's morning already. Oh. And we were having so much fun. I won't lie. I'm a bit disappointed by the way things

think there are something special. Haha. The idiot. He has no idea what's coming.

#6234

Delicate bud you are. Come here, come here. No no no—look at me, look at me. Don't turn away from me. I've been good to you, haven't I?

#7369

Hahahahahaha! Hahaha! Haha. Hahaha! Haaaa.

#8003

B glances around the room and sees A, and something happens to both of them that they can't describe but I can, but I won't because that would suck the tension out of the screenplay. So anyway, B sees A, and B goes to A and sits down next to them, and—

Wait, them? Are we talking about a crowd or—

No no no, they as in one person, like neither he nor she, like a gender-neutral pronoun, like—

You've lost me. Won't that confuse readers?

Okay, look. Pause for a few seconds for emphasis. English is hard. And anyway no one's going to read this. I'm reading it to you now, but that's only because I have to tell you about it so you can give me the okay and I can start casting people. When people actually go and see it—

So, let me get this—

Well, I—

—straight: You haven't cast anyone yet?

Of course not! First you write the screenplay, then you rewrite it, then you fire the writer and bring in someone else, then you fire that guy and bring back the guy you fired because the second guy did such a shitty job that the first guy's shit doesn't look so shitty anymore, then a higher power shelves (kills, rather) your script because of a market downturn, merger, and tsunami-hurricane all rolled into one, then same higher power realizes they're not third-person omniscient and they've made a mistake, and they decide to bring back your script. And then you cast.

You just used guy four times. That's not gender-neutral.

That's different! Guys and gals and pals all use guys now!

#8100



#8999

Hahaha! Again! Again! Again! Hahaha! Again! Again! Again! Hahaha! Again! Again! Again! Hahaha!

And anyway, what else am I supposed to say? Dude? Person? Puny mortal with trust issues? Just doesn't have the same ring.

Goddamn hypocrite.

C and D then proceed to fight, trading punches to the face and gut and balls. Then, suddenly—

Okay, wait a minute, this is totally a non sequitur! Nothing in the story so far inclines them to violence.

Did you seriously just say non sequitur? Elitist bastard.

E and F then proceed to fight by sleeping with their opposite spouses, because fidelity means nothing when marinated in boiling blood.

Hold on, this doesn't make sense—

#9996

The echo was the reply.

#9997

What is—

#9997

What is—

#9998

A refrain but never a frairn.

#9996

The echo was the reply.

#9997

What is—

#4864

Excelsior. ▲



#4880



#6009

ART // JAYLYN VAUGHAN

