

4 PROMS

By: Allison Gregory

A short play for young audiences and families
commissioned by La Jolla Playhouse

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CAST: 4 Actors. Gender is irrelevant, inclusivity is imperative.

Four High School seniors are thinking during a pandemic, thinking so hard you can hear their charged brains. They might be in separate spaces on Zoom.

1

You know what tonight is? Would have been?

3

Was supposed to be.

2

Who cares.

1

Yeah.

3

Like everything else it went bye-bye.

2

Who would even want to go?

1

Yeah.

(pause)

2

Oh my god, you wanted to go!

1

No! Maybe. Why not?

2

Because it was sponsored by the drill team who you hate because they didn't even let us try out?

3

Aren't you over that yet?

2

Obviously. That doesn't make me want to go to their you know, thing. Anyway it's cancelled. Just like the Olympics. And major league basketball and baseball. And Kesha and Lizzo and Beck.

3

'Beck'? Really?

1

What's wrong with Beck?

2

And every play on Broadway. And our production of Footloose.

3

And dating and classes and graduation.

1

Like how long is this going to go on? It almost feels normal not to go anywhere with anyone.

They consider this hard truth.

1

"Once Upon A Time".

2

Ugh. So un-original, so boring.

1

What *should* it be?

2

I don't care.

1

Say you could choose the theme, what would you pick? Come on.

2

I *really* don't care.

3

I like this game.

2

Plus why do you even have to have a theme?

3

You *have to*.

2

Why do you *have to*?

3

Shut up otherwise it's not I don't know whatever real.

1

Agree. Our prom *has to* have a theme.

2

But it's *not* real. We're actually making this up, so that doesn't even make sense!

3

Yeah we know it's all cancelled so what we're still doing this. And we have to do it for real.

1

This prom is like *ours*. It's for us, it's our last hurrah, the tail of the comet, the Final Flight of the Osiris.

3

Wait what?

1

From Animatrix? You've never seen it?

2

Isn't that movie like ancient history?

1

So? The sparring construct program was amaaazing.

I begins to enact the sparring scene; 4 enters eating a massive bunch of grapes.

4

Hey. What up?

1

(flustered)

Hi!!

(cool)

I mean, hey.

2

That is an epic bunch of grapes.

4

This is dinner.

3

I had a box of mac and cheese. Again.

2

I miss eating food that my dad didn't make.

4

He's a bad cook?

2

No, he's a really good cook - I'm just sick of it.

3

Hey where are we going to eat for Prom?

2

Oh my god.

4

What are you talking about?

1

It's Prom Night.

3

(ordering)

Let's see, I'll have the calamari with spicy marinara sauce, and chocolate cake.

4

A pile of sushi for me.

1

I'll take anything vegan, please.

4 *(to 2)*

What are you having?

2

Dude, I'm not feeling it.

3

We still haven't decided on a theme.

2

We don't need a theme! We don't need a prom!

1

Disagree.

(to 4)

Do you think we need a theme?

4

How would I know, I've never been to prom.

1

I mean obviously none of us have.

2

Or ever will – who cares?

4

I just mean we can do whatever we want.

3

Thank you!

2

We can't go out to dinner, we can't be together, we're not wearing formals, there's no band - this isn't prom!

1

What *is* prom? I mean, what makes it a thing?

2

It's a bunch of fakey popular people in their stupid spendy 'designer-wear' dancing around like fools while everyone pretends to like them which is why I didn't even want to go in the first place. That's what it is.

1

Yeah. Probably you're right.

They mull over this; then:

4

I think it's like, you know, you get dressed up in whatever makes you feel beautiful. Even if it's cheap and from the thrift store - because you're going to feel amazing. And then like you get to the dance and it's sort of magical, with twinkle lights and no one treats you badly like they do at school because it's prom and everyone's just different for one night.

They consider this; then:

1

Everyone looks clutch, it's like adulting for real. And it doesn't even matter that you get blisters from your shoes because all you want to do is dance looking so fine to music that's so loud your ears buzz and your bones expand and your blood keeps the beat...and you don't think about tomorrow, you don't care about what's going down, there's just here and now and this is it and it feels like forever.

They consider this; then:

3

Maybe you just go out with your buds for pizza. And you lay on the grass and stick your bare feet in the air and crack up until you fart but you don't even care when you fart. Because you're with your friends and everything is gonna be alright.

4

That's our prom theme: Everything Is Gonna Be Alright.

2

It's not real so what does it matter?

1

Yeah.

(a pause)

2

Sparklers. On a boat. On the ocean.

3

What?

2

That's what I think prom is.

4 shuts eyes; smiles.

3

Hey - what are you doing?

4

Sparklers...on a boat...on the ocean.

1

I want to do sparklers!

3

Me too!

2

Hey they're my sparklers!

They all close eyes and imagine.

2

Wait. Let's hold hands.

They reach out and touch their screens. They shut eyes.

END OF PLAY