



Sample Pages from
Claque Attack: a clapping contemplation on
the nature of applause

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CLAQUE ATTACK

A VIGNETTE PLAY BY
Lindsay Price



Claque Attack

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Characters

37 Any Gender, Doubling Possible

Scene One: The Claque Attack Clique:
Rire, Applaudir, Remarque, Acclamer, Rejecter

Scene Two: Patrice, Norice, Reine, Acel, Evon

Scene Three: Vidal, Citroen, Claque Clique

Scene Four: Berneen

Scene Five: Lorin, Octave, Alair

Scene Six: Claque Clique, Valentin

Scene Seven: Alix, Zurie, Amou, Claque Clique

Scene Eight: Malleville, Fabrice, Tallis

Scene Nine: Moreau, Petain, Manet, Binoche, Delaunay

Scene Ten: Perrin, Talon, Jourdan

Scene Eleven: Theron, Orane

Scene Twelve: Claque Clique, Veronique (Perrin, Talon,
Jourdan)

Scene Thirteen: Darcel, Dru, Daine

Scene Fourteen: Berneen (from Scene Four)
Zurie (from Scene Seven)
Veronique (from Scene Twelve)

Scene Fifteen: Claque Clique

All of the characters can be played by any gender. Feel free to adjust any pronouns accordingly.

As per the mood of the piece, the names are all of French origin and any time a name is said in the dialogue it should be said with the rhythm of a French accent with the emphasis on the second syllable. For example, Jourdan would be pronounced Jour-DAN. Berneen = Bear-NEEN. Norice = Nor-EESE. Give it flair.

There are 37 individual roles, but many characters only appear in one scene. Feel free to maximize your cast by casting each scene individually or by doubling/tripling the roles to give your actors more to do.

Mood

The play is inspired by an actual “Office de la Claque” from 19th century France where people were hired to applaud, cry, and laugh at a show. Thus, the mood of *Claque Attack* is decidedly French.

There are several French words and phrases sprinkled throughout and they should be said with confidence and zeal. Use the atmosphere and style to influence blocking, music choice, and costumes.

DO NOT do the whole play in a bad French accent. That’s not the point. Your goal is to emulate a style and a rhythm.

Setting

A bare stage with a variety of cubes and risers for levels. A backdrop with a Paris skyline would be appropriate if you want a splash of colour. Design your set to allow each scene to flow easily into the next.

Costumes

Basic costumes with add-on pieces is going to work best for you as your actors move from scene to scene.

I suggest the Claque Clique dress in the iconic French mime look – white face, black pants, striped black and white shirt, and a splash of red. Perhaps a black hat, a pair of suspenders or a vest.

You could, in fact, dress all of the characters in variations of black, white and red.

Transitions

There is only one identified blackout in the play – at the end. Avoid any other blackouts. They slow the pace and take the audience out of the world of the play.

Use music and in-character blocking to flow the show from one scene to the next. Organize the traffic flow from one scene to another so that as a scene ends on one side of the stage, the actors for the next scene are entering from the other.

Pronunciation Guide

Acclamer	Ah-clah-may	Malleville	Mall-VILLE
Acel	Ah-CELL	Manet	Man-AY
Alair	Ah-LARE	Margeaux	Mar-GO
Alix	Ah-LIX	Moureau	Mor-OH
Aller	Ah-LEY	Norice	Nor-EECE
Allez zou	Ah-ley ZOO	Octave	Oct-AHVE
Amou	Ah-MOO	Orane	Oh-RAN
Applaudir	App-plod-EAR	Oui	We
Berneen	Bear-NEEN	Patrice	Pah-TREECE
Binoche	Bin-OHSH	Perrin	Pear-EN
Bonjour	Bohn-JOOR	Petain	Pay-TAN
Citroen	Sit-TREN	Prochain	Pro-SHEN
Claque	Clack	Reine	Ren
Clique	Cleek	Rejeter	Reh-jeck-TAY
Combien	Comb-BEEYEN	Remarque	Reh-MARK
Daine	Dane	Rire	Reere
Darcel	Dar-CELL	Sans doute	Sahn doote
Delaunay	De-lan-EH	Solange	So-LANGE
Dru	Drew	Spectacteur	Spec-tac-TUR
Evon	Ee-VON	Tallis	Tah-LEESE
Fabrice	Fah-BREECE	Talon	Ta-LON
Fantastique	Fan-tass-teak	Theron	Ter-ON
Formidable	For-me-DAB-bluh	Va'ten	Va-tyen
Grotesque	Grow-TESK	Valentin	Val-en-TEN
Incroyable	En-croy-AH-bluh	Veronique	Ver-ron-EEK
Jermaine	Jer-MAIN	Vidal	Vee-DAHL
Jourdan	Jor-DAN	Violette	Vee-o-LET
Lisette	Leese-ETT	Zuire	Zoo-REE
Lorin	Loh-REN		

Original Production

Claque Attack premiered at Governor Simcoe Secondary School in St. Catharines, Ontario on June 14, 2019.

Director: Rassika Risko

Cast: Nigel Barber
Amber Belchior
Noah Bondoc
Emily Boyd
Deryck Burke
Kaylin Connolly
Nicholas Dilts
Gabe DiSanto
Breanne Dreyer
Codey Fegan
Olivia Hadfield
Dante Kellar
Madison Key
Taylor Locke
Adam McIsaac
Hannah Miller
Christian Shugan
Arlinda Veseli

Stage Manager & Sound: Breanna Berg

Lighting: Hunter Fulton

SCENE ONE

A group of clowns enters. This is the CLAUQUE ATTACK CLIQUE. They are full of themselves as they strut across the stage. Their attitude, walk, gestures and facial expressions are snobbish and full of disdain. They form a tableau downstage centre, each striking a disdainful pose.

There is a rhythm to this text. Think of it like music. If you have to add an extra “ha” or clap to make it work rhythmically go for it. If you have to change the order to make it work, that’s fine.

This is all performed with disdain.

RIRE: *(a rhythmic peal of laughter)* Ha, ha, ha.

APPLAUDIR claps their hands twice.

ACCLAMER: Bravo.

REMARQUE: Amazing.

REJECTER: Boo.

RIRE: *(a rhythmic peal of laughter)* Ha, ha, ha.

APPLAUDIR claps their hands twice.

ACCLAMER: Bravo.

REMARQUE: Amazing.

REJECTER: Boo.

RIRE: *(a rhythmic peal of laughter)* Ha, ha, ha.

APPLAUDIR claps their hands twice.

ACCLAMER: Bravo.

REMARQUE: Amazing.

REJECTER: Boo.

RIRE starts to laugh, this time with delight. APPLAUDIR starts to clap enthusiastically. Everyone else joins in. They all change their facial expressions and body language to what looks like pure enjoyment.

ALL: Bravo! Amazing! Boo!

They freeze for a moment and then transform back into their disdainful, “better than you” facial expressions and stances.

The CLIQUE give a verbal sneer, sniff loudly and cross upstage to cubes. Each cube has their name written on it. They stand/sit on their cube and observe (use levels) standing/sitting in a pose that shows off their character.

SCENE TWO

REINE enters from the opposite side of the stage, walking slowly across (step, pause, step, pause). After a couple of steps PATRICE and NORICE run over from the opposite side, cheering and applauding REINE.

ACEL and EVON enter behind PATRICE and NORICE and watch with curiosity.

PATRICE: (*applauding REINE*) Way to go!

NORICE: (*applauding REINE*) You're amazing! Incroyable! You're doing it!

PATRICE: Way to go!

REINE keeps walking slowly, PATRICE and NORICE keep applauding and encouraging.

ACEL: What is happening?

EVON: I don't know.

PATRICE: (*applauding REINE*) Standing O! Standing O!

NORICE: (*applauding REINE*) You're amazing! Incroyable!

REINE reaches the other side of the stage and stops to pose with great accomplishment.

PATRICE: Way to go! You did it! You did it!

NORICE: Incroyable!

They silently congratulate REINE.

ACEL: What is happening? Did he (*change pronouns if need be*) cure cancer or something and this is the victory lap?

EVON: No...

ACEL: Good. Seems like a weird way to celebrate curing cancer.

EVON: (*observing*) I think... I think... he just crossed the stage.

PATRICE: (*slapping REINE on the back*) It was touch and go there in the middle, but you really stuck it out.

NORICE: (*hugging REINE*) I'm so proud of you!

ACEL: Seems like a weird way to celebrate crossing the stage.

PATRICE: This deserves a medal.

NORICE: Or at the very least a ribbon. You did so good!

PATRICE: (*turning to ACEL and EVON*) Where's the medal?

NORICE: Why are you standing there? Get Reine's medal! Aller! Go!

NORICE chases ACEL and EVON offstage. PATRICE and REINE follow behind.

SCENE THREE

As they do, VIDAL enters. He looks at the CLAUQUE CLIQUE on their cubes. The CLAUQUE CLIQUE eyes VIDAL. VIDAL is not intimidated in the slightest.

VIDAL: Applaud! Maintenant!

The CLIQUE all turn their heads away from VIDAL with disdain and sneering.

VIDAL: Applaud! Maintenant!

CLIQUE: (*all at the same time, everyone picks their own word/phrase*)
Applaud yourself! Va t'en! We don't want to! We're busy, bah!
You get nothing – rien!

VIDAL: Enough! (*the CLIQUE stops*) Applaud! Allez zou! (*changing tone and tactics*) There's eclairs in the break room...

The CLIQUE sniffs. Then they instantly come to life. They smile wildly. They have bright engaged eyes. They applaud as if whatever they are watching is the best thing they've ever seen.

CLIQUE: Bravo! Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

The CLIQUE stops in unison as if a switch was turned off. They instantly return to their pose of disdain.

VIDAL moves to stand behind a counter (two stacked cubes) or at a table. There is a small, low status chair/ cube beside the counter. CITROEN enters and timidly approaches VIDAL.

VIDAL: Bonjour. (*pause, CITROEN says nothing*) Bonjour? Yes?

CITROEN: Ah... yes. Bonjour...

VIDAL: Can I help you?

CITROEN: Ah... my name is Citroen. The playwright? You know me, of me, my work, perhaps?

VIDAL: What do you want Citroen the playwright?

CITROEN: This is the Office du Claque? (*whispering*) Claqueur Services Limited?

VIDAL: Yes. Oui. (*pause, CITROEN says nothing*) Come now, I haven't got all day. What do you want Citroen the playwright? (*gestures to the small chair*)

CITROEN: (*sitting awkwardly*) Do I come right out and say it?

VIDAL: But of course. I don't read minds.

CITROEN: It seems so...

VIDAL: So?

CITROEN: Well, it won't work. It can't work. Can it?

VIDAL: You appear to be the expert.

CITROEN: I mean... shouldn't a play stand on its own merit? Shouldn't I just go out there and if the audience loves or hates my work, I should bow to their comprehension and digestion of what I'm trying to communicate? I shouldn't try to manufacture their response. Should I?

VIDAL: You ask nothing but ridiculous questions. (*moving swiftly past CITROEN to call out the "door"*) Next! Prochaine!

CITROEN: (*scrambling after VIDAL*) Not so fast! Une minute! I didn't say I wasn't going to do it.

VIDAL: (*calling off*) Next!

CITROEN: Please! My last five plays have been disasters. I can't take another. I need someone to tell the audience I'm good at what I do.

VIDAL: Our staff are not miracle workers. But, we are the best.

CITROEN: Combien? How much?

VIDAL: That depends. (*gestures back to the counter and chair*) Do you want polite applause? Cheers? Les Spectateurs overcome with tears? A standing ovation? Laughters? It's all on the price chart. (*gesturing to the price chart*)

CITROEN: Standing ovations aren't so special these days. Everyone and their brother gets one. Hardly worth it.

VIDAL: So you say.

CITROEN: (*pointing at the price chart*) And that's the price for five minutes of clapping?

VIDAL: It's our most popular item.

CITROEN: It's expensive.

VIDAL: Audience manipulation isn't cheap.

CITROEN: Please! I don't want to coerce the audience into applause. Just gently nudge them in the right direction. (*sighs and stands*) Maybe the 6th time's a charm. (*turning away*) Au revoir.

The CLIQUE act out the following, silently miming any cheering and applauding.

VIDAL: (*jumps to the chair with a bang*) Citroen the playwright! (*this stops CITROEN*) Picture this. The show ends. The curtain comes down. There is a second of silence and then you hear the strong, enthusiastic applause from a single person. The Chef de Claque. And then another person starts to clap. And another. And the entire audience realizes in an instant that your play is the best thing they've ever seen. They burst into thunderous appreciation! The noise is deafening, it is a freight train smashing into the curtain. Women are crying. Men are clapping their hands raw. The echoes of encore ring like the bells of Notre-Dame. They will carry you out into the street, shouting your name. Citroen! Citroen! Praising your words like golden pearls. Your life will never be the same again. (*the CLIQUE freezes*) If that's what you want. (*moves back to the counter*)

CITROEN: I want, I want!

VIDAL: *(with a smile)* Fantastique.

VIDAL gestures to the (offstage) office and they exit. The CLIQUE changes into a different pose.

SCENE FOUR

Applause is heard. BERNEEN runs onstage. BERNEEN makes a “cut” gesture. The applause cuts off. BERNEEN is holding two signs. The audience can’t see what’s written on them yet. I suggest affixing the signs to sticks so that BERNEEN can hold one in each hand.

BERNEEN stands centre stage, giggling. For at least five seconds, BERNEEN does nothing. See how long you can hold out – the point is that the audience is looking at nothing. BERNEEN does nothing and wants something for it. When you feel you can’t hold it any longer...

BERNEEN holds up a sign so the audience can see it. The sign says APPLAUSE! BERNEEN thrusts the sign toward the audience. The goal is to get the audience to applaud, even though there hasn’t been anything happening onstage. BERNEEN wants something for nothing.

BERNEEN takes the sign away, giggling. Again, hold on for at least five seconds, doing nothing. See how long you can hold out. When you feel you can’t hold it any longer...

BERNEEN holds up the other sign and encourages the audience to respond. This sign, however, says BOO! BERNEEN thrusts the sign at the audience, but then seems startled by the reaction. BERNEEN looks at the sign and is horrified! It was supposed to be the APPLAUSE! sign. BERNEEN tries to hold up the APPLAUSE! sign.

And then see what happens. Does the audience continue to boo? Does the audience switch to applause because they’ve been told to?

BERNEEN’s response will depend on what the audience is doing. If they continue booing, BERNEEN

will run offstage in embarrassment. If they applaud, BERNEEN will strut offstage basking in the applause.

SCENE FIVE

As BERNEEN exits, OCTAVE, ALAIR and LORIN enter. OCTAVE and ALAIR are clapping enthusiastically (for BERNEEN). LORIN has their arms crossed and is frowning.

OCTAVE: Oh wow that was so good.

ALAIR: So good. Such a good scene.

OCTAVE: I can't believe how good that was.

ALAIR: So amazing.

OCTAVE: I can't believe how amazing that was.

ALAIR: I'm going to say it. Can I say it?

OCTAVE: Say it.

ALAIR: I'm going to say it. Brilliant.

OCTAVE: So brilliant.

ALAIR: I could watch it over and over.

OCTAVE: So many times. Lorin?

ALAIR: So wonderful.

OCTAVE: (to LORIN) Didn't you like it? You don't look like you liked it.

LORIN: Well...

ALAIR: You didn't like it? Really?

LORIN: It was okay.

OCTAVE: It was more than okay. Wasn't it?

LORIN: It was okay.

ALAIR: Oh.

LORIN: Actually when I think about it...

ALAIR: I thought we were all on the same page.

LORIN: It could have been a lot more impactful, you know?

ALAIR: I do know.

OCTAVE: But you just said it was wonderful.

ALAIR: You said it was brilliant.

OCTAVE: You said that.

LORIN: It was not wonderful. Or brilliant. Far from it.

OCTAVE: Huh. When you say it like that...

ALAIR: I mean if I had to criticize, it totally could have had more impact.

LORIN: I can't applaud for something I don't like. I'm not trying to judge but...

ALAIR: I totally agree.

OCTAVE: It was okay? More than okay...?

ALAIR: Really? You liked it, Octave?

OCTAVE: Well, it was okay.

ALAIR: I did not like it. Right?

LORIN: It was not good.

ALAIR: Right. Not good. I can't applaud for something that isn't good.

OCTAVE: I guess not. Now that I think about it...

ALAIR: Then we're all agreed. Better luck next time.

The three exit, shaking their heads.

SCENE SIX

Traditional classical music surges up. The CLAQUE CLIQUE moves downstage, strutting with disdain. They form a line centre stage, posing. They are at a classical music concert. Pick a famous French composer such as Debussy, or Berlioz.

VALENTIN enters and mimes as if they are trying to get past people to their seat in the concert hall. VALENTIN keeps pushing past, stepping on toes,

ad-libbing things like “sorry, excuse me, sorry, sorry, excuse me.” They get to the CLIQUE, and push past them to stand right in the middle of the line. The CLIQUE reacts.

There is a pause in the music. As soon as the music stops, VALENTIN gives a huge smile and starts applauding wildly. The CLIQUE react.

INDIVIDUAL CLIQUE: *(each picks a word/phrase, all said at the same time)* Be quiet! Shhh! Be respectful! How dare you! The rube!

ALL CLIQUE: The nerve of some people!

The music starts up again. The CLIQUE snap their attention to listening to the music. VALENTIN looks rattled by the experience. VALENTIN takes a deep breath and starts to enjoy the music.

There’s another pause. VALENTIN starts to applaud but stops. Looks left and right. The CLIQUE do not look or respond. The pause continues. VALENTIN starts to clap. The CLIQUE attack.

INDIVIDUAL CLIQUE: *(each picks a word/phrase, all said at the same time)* Be quiet! Shhh! Be respectful! How dare you! The rube!

ALL CLIQUE: The nerve of some people!

The music starts up again. The CLIQUE snaps their attention to the music. VALENTIN is annoyed and really shows it with facial expressions. This time the music comes to a clear end. There is a pause. VALENTIN does some physical action that says, “I’m not clapping” – crossing arms, stuffing hands into armpits, shaking head.

The pause goes on and on. VALENTIN looks left and right. The CLIQUE does not respond but then...

Suddenly the CLIQUE breaks into applause, causing VALENTIN to react violently, perhaps fall on the floor. They attack VALENTIN for not applauding.

RIRE: The nerve!

APPLAUDIR: The rube!

REMARQUE: Not applauding at the end!

REJECTER: The boor!

ACCLAMER: I mean!

ALL CLIQUE: The nerve of some people!

VALENTIN storms off in a huff.

SCENE SEVEN

On the other side of the stage AMOU enters and sits. The CLIQUE CLIQUE moves to stand behind AMOU in tableau.

ALIX and ZURIE enter. They do not react to the CLIQUE.

ALIX: Hey Amou!

ZURIE: Did you get your exam results?

ALIX: I can't bear to see my Chem mark. I so screwed up. All the way to screwed-up-ville and back again.

ZURIE: You always say that.

ALIX: This time it's true.

ZURIE: It's never true.

ALIX: This time...

ZURIE: Never...

AMOU: *(a little deadpan)* What's the difference between a lawsuit and a cat? One has claws at the end of its paws, and the other has pauses at the end of its clauses!

The CLIQUE laugh, like a recorded laugh track – all at the same time and then they shut off together. ALIX and ZURIE look around, puzzled. They hear the laugh track.

ZURIE: Ah...

ALIX: Amou?

AMOU: *(a little deadpan)* What are bad pianos? Instruments of torture!

The CLIQUE laugh like a laugh track.

ALIX: What are you doing?

ZURIE: Why are you telling such bad jokes?

ALIX: And why is there a laugh track? Are you travelling with a laugh track?

AMOU: When are handcuffs like knapsacks? When they're made for two-wrists!

The CLIQUE laugh like a laugh track.

AMOU: Get it? Two wrists? Tourists?

The CLIQUE laugh like a laugh track.

AMOU: Which runs fastest hot or cold?

ZURIE: Amou, this is weird.

ALIX: Weirder than that shoes no socks thing.

ZURIE: People wear shoes without socks every day.

ALIX: And they're weird. And wrong.

ZURIE: You can't say that. Just because you don't like socks without shoes doesn't mean –

ALIX: (*overtop starting after "that"*) You can't say "I can't say that." Everyone is entitled to –

AMOU: (*interjecting*) I failed Chem.

ZURIE and ALIX stop immediately and focus on AMOU.

ZURIE: What?

ALIX: But... you studied so hard.

AMOU: Yep. I thought I had it... I didn't. My parents are going to kill me.

ZURIE: (*not totally sure*) They won't...

AMOU: They keep pushing science and pushing and I can't make my brain work that way. "You're not trying hard enough, Amou. It would work if you really tried." I do try but... I don't know. I'm not what they want, I guess. They want someone they can brag about: "Your kid got a football scholarship? Well, my kid is changing the world." Three cheers for Amou! (*beat*) I could

change the world. Just not the way they want. (*sighs and looks at the CLIQUE*) I wanted a little levity, that's all. It's not really working out.

ALIX: Which runs fastest hot or cold? (*the others look at ALIX*) Come on, finish the joke – which runs fastest hot or cold?

ZURIE: Alix.

ALIX: I say if you've got a laugh track you should use it. I don't have a laugh track. Do you know how many times I could have used one? If you're going to walk around with chuckles at your disposal, you should really go for it. Although, you could get some better jokes.

AMOU: That's the thing. (*gestures to CLIQUE*) They laughs no matter what.

ALIX: Which runs fastest?

AMOU: Hot. You can always catch a cold.

The CLIQUE laugh like a laugh track.

ZURIE: Can I try?

AMOU: Sure.

ZURIE: (*rushing the joke*) When is a window like a star? When it's a sky light.

ZURIE does a jazz hands like "ta da" pose. The CLIQUE look at one another and sneer at ZURIE. They are not laughing.

ZURIE: What? Catch a cold gets a laugh and I don't?

ALIX: I guess even a laugh track has a line.

AMOU: If a parrot and a clock could speak, what subject would they talk about? Polly-ticks.

The CLIQUE laugh like a laugh track.

ZURIE: So unfair.

They exit as the CLIQUE moves back to their cubes.

SCENE EIGHT

On the other side of the stage MALLEVILLE, FABRICE and TALLIS enter. MALLEVILLE is speaking with great passion, moving downstage, speaking out. TALLIS follows behind, worried. FABRICE follows behind TALLIS, confused. Once onstage, FABRICE sits in a huff, arms folded.

MALLEVILLE: *(as if performing)* And when the smoke clears, and the clock booms the end of time, and the earth cracks, and they have eaten the baby, the lights dim slowly, 10 minutes slowly and we are left in the dark. The utter loneliness of the nothing. We are all nothing. Rien. The end.

TALLIS: I see...

FABRICE: Can we go back to the part about eating the baby?

TALLIS: *(approaching tentatively)* Ah – can I ask, do you mind if I ask a question?

MALLEVILLE: I feel I have been perfectly clear.

TALLIS: Without a doubt. Sans doute! It's just that... I wanted to know, what is your goal with this project. At the end? What do you want from the audience? Our... audience...?

FABRICE: Our audience is not going to want to see the part about eating the baby.

TALLIS: How do you want them to respond? How the audience should... react? Do you know?

MALLEVILLE: But of course. *(and then says nothing)*

TALLIS: And what would that be? Do you want them to... like... it?

MALLEVILLE: Of course not. That would be absurd.

FABRICE: *That* would be absurd.

MALLEVILLE: The reaction I want is... No applause.

FABRICE: Why not?

TALLIS: You don't want any applause?

MALLEVILLE: No.

TALLIS: No applause.

MALLEVILLE: Zero.

FABRICE: That can be arranged.

TALLIS: But... why? I mean – why? I mean – applause is, well it's –

FABRICE: Kind of the point. Actually, it is the point. We want the audience to applaud..

MALLEVILLE: Grotesque!

FABRICE: (*can't take it any longer, standing*) You're grotesque.

TALLIS: Fabrice!

FABRICE gets right in MALLEVILLE's face, pushing TALLIS out of the way.

FABRICE: It's not a play without the reaction of the audience. We need them! And I like applause. That's why I'm an actor. For the applause!

MALLEVILLE: (*not backing down*) Idiot! If you want applause you should join the circus!

FABRICE: (*not backing down either*) If you don't want it you should be wallpaper!

TALLIS: (*getting in between them*) Fabrice, Malleville, please, can we discuss this civilly? Arrête!

MALLEVILLE: Applause. What is it? This clap, clap, clap, what is that?

FABRICE: They way people express their appreciation. For hundreds of years.

MALLEVILLE: Bah! You want their love? Ridiculous. They don't love you.

FABRICE: You, they don't love. Me, they love a lot. Audiences adore me.

MALLEVILLE: *You* they forget as soon as they leave the theatre.

FABRICE: You don't know that!

MALLEVILLE: I know everything!

TALLIS: Perhaps you could explain it to us?

MALLEVILLE: (*moving downstage again, speaking out*) First, I want no applause. I want their disdain. Silent, festering disdain. And I want

that disdain to swell and grow inside of them. I want that disdain to enlarge until they hate me with every fibre of their being! Until their rage explodes out of their body! I want them to be so angry they rush the stage and attack the actors!

FABRICE: Come again?

MALLEVILLE: I want them out for blood. I want them ravaged! *(beat)*
That is an appropriate audience response.

TALLIS: Ohhhhhhhhhhh. I get it.

FABRICE: You do?

TALLIS: *(on solid ground now)* Their disdain, is your applause.

MALLEVILLE: *(a little shook)* What?

TALLIS: It's your standing ovation.

MALLEVILLE: No, no, no. No applause! I spit on applause!

TALLIS: We can totally get behind this. We'll back you 100% Malleville.
(starts to exit)

MALLEVILLE: No! I don't want your money! I spit on your money!
(follows out, mock spitting)

FABRICE: Can we go back to the part about attacking the actors?
(follows out)

SCENE NINE

Applause is heard. Five people enter. They are applauding with big smiles on their faces. The smiles wane and the applause goes on. And on. They continue to applaud during the scene. (The applause softens so we can hear the dialogue.)

MOREAU: How long will it be this time?

BINOCHE: *(cheerfully, singsong)* As long as it takes. You shouldn't question.

MOREAU: I'm allowed to say things.

PETAINE: Sure you are. What happens *after* is the problem.

MANET: There are microphones...

MOREAU: Maybe I love clapping.

PETAINE: You can't love it as much as Binoche.

BINOCHE: (*cheerful & honest*) I have substantial admiration and no problem showing it.

MANET: There are microphones...

MOREAU: (*calling out genuinely*) I love clapping!

DELAUNAY stops clapping.

BINOCHE: What are you doing?

DELAUNAY: (*shaking out hands*) My hands are sore. I just need a break.

BINOCHE: Poor excuse. (*cheerfully*) We've all clapped the same amount.

DELAUNAY: No one is watching.

MOREAU: It's true.

PETAINE: So stop clapping.

MOREAU: (*genuinely*) I love clapping. I could clap forever.

PETAINE: You *think* no one is watching.

MANET: There are microphones...

PETAINE: We know, Manet.

MOREAU: (*calling out*) Let the record show I am clapping my substantial admiration.

BINOCHE: Let the record show that Moreau is lying.

MOREAU: Let the record show that Binoche is jealous of my substantial admiration.

BINOCHE: (*breaking cheer for the first time*) I am not. I AM NOT. (*beat, back on the cheerful track*) I have my own substantial admiration, thank you very much. I don't need any of yours.

MANET: Please Delaunay, you must start clapping. We could be considered accomplices.

DELAUNAY: (*starts clapping again*) I just needed a break.

BINOCHE: (*cheerfully*) I don't need a break. It fills my heart with such joy to clap like this.

DELAUNAY: (*not so cheerfully*) You're an inspiration.

BINOCHE: I know.

MOREAU: How long will this go on for?

PETAINE: Thinking about stopping? Sitting down?

MOREAU: I'm not afraid.

PETAINE: Ha.

MOREAU: I'm not.

PETAINE: Double ha.

DELAUNAY now pretends to clap – bringing the hands together without actually touching.

BINOCHE: Now what are you doing?

MOREAU: Are you having a stroke?

DELAUNAY: I'm pretending to clap. My hands are sore.

MANET: There are microphones! How many times do I have to say it!

MOREAU: That looks weird.

DELAUNAY: Better than not doing it at all.

MOREAU: No one is watching.

PETAINE: (*pointing*) Policier!

MOREAU starts clapping harder than ever.

PETAINE: Ha!

MOREAU: (*back in the rhythm of clapping*) That was mean.

PETAINE: I have so little to live for.

DELAUNAY: Someone has to be the first one to stop and sit. Last week it was 15 minutes.

MOREAU: But someone did stop, yes? Someone sat down and we all followed.

PETAINE: Jean-Claude.

MOREAU: Jean-Claude is an inspiration. We should all strive to follow his example.

PETAINE: He was arrested.

DELAUNAY: We could be here all day.

BINOCHE: (*cheerfully*) If that's what we have to do. That's what we have to do.

The applause gets louder as the five exit, clapping.

SCENE TEN

On the opposite side of the stage, three people enter and stand stage left, centre stage and stage right. JOURDAN steps forward.

JOURDAN: You can't say that! I'm a kind person. I'm thoughtful. I like posts. A lot of them. I regram important causes. I am an advocate for justice – did you see my HIV vlog? I cut my own hair, live. Well on video. I use social media as a platform to express my opinion about the issues of the day. And people see what I say and they subscribe to my channel. That means something. I have impact on my audience and it's just as good as volunteering. It's like, I use my phone to act as a superhero for right and might. Yeah, I'm a superhero.

The focus shifts to stage right with TALON.

TALON: You can't kick me out! I belong here. I belong backstage. I AM a part of the show, just because my name isn't on your stupid little call sheet – you don't know anything. I have seen the show 27 times. That is important. I have seen the show 27 times and I applaud after every song. I'm not just some last minute wannabe who buys rush tickets and sits in the back. I am in front, fully engaged, right there clapping as hard as I can. I am the cue everyone follows. They know what to do and when to do it. Isn't that what you want?

The focus shifts to centre stage with PERRIN.

PERRIN: (*hand in the air*) You can't do that! You have to call on me. My hand is up and I know the answer. You know I know the answer. I'm the only one with my hand up. You want Lisette to find some glimmer of revelation somewhere in her tight ponytail? Lisette doesn't know the answer, she never does. I'm sorry Lisette, but it's true. You don't do the homework and you never do the reading. I do everything. I come to class prepared, and even though my dad thinks it's not enough, I can prove him wrong. My hand is up, so

you need to call on me and you need to tell me I'm right. I need to know I'm right.

PERRIN, TALON and JOURDAN all move to the side, but still remain to watch.

SCENE ELEVEN

THERON enters, taking several selfies, all with slightly different poses, then starts scrolling through them.

THERON: No, no, no, no, no. Maybe. Hmmm, maybe with the right...
No.

During the above ORANE has entered, watching. ORANE now approaches.

ORANE: Hey... um... can I talk to you? There's something important –

THERON: Hold on, okay? One minute. *(starts taking more pictures)*

ORANE: It won't take a minute. Sorry, that was harsh. I really just want to say –

THERON: *(scrolling through the pics, not listening)* Yep, heard you. Hold on. Won't be a minute.

There is a pause. THERON does not look up.

ORANE: Theron? Hello? *(THERON is still scrolling)* Ugh forget it. I just wanted to say –

THERON: *(interrupting)* That's it! Look. The perfect shot. That is going to get all the love. Now I have to find the right filter... no... no... no...

ORANE: *(bursting out)* I'm breaking up with you! *(exits)*

THERON: *(does not look up from phone, waving)* Ok. See you later. *(looking up for the first time)* Wait, what did you say? *(runs off)*

SCENE TWELVE

The CLIQUE move forward.

RIRE: And now...

APPLAUDIR: Our favourite person in the whole show.

REMARQUE: She is amazing.

RIRE: Dazzling!

REJECTER: A bright shining star!

ACCLAMER: She is so formidable, she deserves a round of applause.

APPLAUDIR: Yes, yes! Absolument!

RIRE: A round of applause.

PERRIN: (*who is off to the side with JOURDAN and TALON*) But no one's met her yet.

JOURDAN: Why would they applaud someone they haven't met?

TALON: She's not that great.

CLIQUE: (*they all make "shut up" gestures to go with this sound*) Sht-sht-shh! (*The CLIQUE all take a deep breath in and then*) Veronique!

The CLIQUE starts to clap and prompts the audience to clap, which they will. If they don't, improvise lines about how they play won't continue until they clap with enthusiasm. Once they start clapping, the CLIQUE encourages the applause to grow.

CLIQUE: Louder! (*pause*) Louder! (*pause*) Louder!

VERONIQUE enters with great flourish. She smiles. She gestures as if to say "for me?" and then turns to the audience with a deep, complicated bow. She blows kisses at the CLIQUE. VERONIQUE turns so that she can take a selfie with the audience and post it.

This causes PERRIN, JOURDAN and TALON to shake their heads and exit.

The CLIQUE stop applauding makes the cut gesture.

VERONIQUE: Thank you friends. Thank you. I am, so touched, so blessed. So, so grateful. This is obviously a meaningful moment for me. One I will never forget.

She bows her head, with a hand to her chest. When she raises her head, she looks at her phone and is confused. Someone has not liked the selfie she has just posted.

Jermaine! Jermaine!

VERONIQUE stomps centre stage and talks to the audience as Jermaine. NOTE: the stage directions for Jermaine's actions are there just so the actor playing VERONIQUE has context. However, if you want to have a "Jermaine" onstage, go for it.

Who do you think you are? I was there for you. I supported you. (*holding up the phone*) The level of this betrayal is so devastating it has left me speechless, Jermaine. (*Jermaine says "What are you talking about?"*) What am I talking about? Don't pretend you don't know, you know exactly what I'm talking about. You know. And my revenge will rain down on you like an avalanche. My revenge will be all-encompassing. It will be complete. (*Jermaine says "I have no idea what you're talking about."*) Don't play the fool with me, Jermaine. It is not an attractive look. (*beat*) That sweater does look quite nice on you, though. The colour compliments your eyes. You should wear maroon more often. (*Jermaine says "That top is very cute."* *VERONIQUE looks down*) You think? Stripes are always tricky, but you're right this top is so cute that I – DON'T DISTRACT ME! Don't think my desire for revenge will lessen with talk of fashion, Jermaine. (*holds up the phone*) Do you see this pic? This selfie? Of me? Who has liked this picture Jermaine? Who? Lisette liked it. And Violette, and Margeaux, and Solange. Who didn't, Jermaine? Who didn't come off her high horse? Off her mountain? Who didn't grace us with her presence by descending from the second floor to like my selfie? Who's supposed to be my friend, one of my best friends among a fluctuating and ever-changing circle? Who's supposed to support me and demonstrate to the student body that I am charming and well liked person? What are people supposed to think if my pictures aren't sufficiently supported? What are people supposed to think if we don't tell them? You are responsible for confusion and unrest among the masses! And you know what else? That party on Saturday? (*Jermaine says "Of course I'm looking forward to it."*) Oh, looking forward to it are you? Invite denied! You are uninvited! That's right. And I'm going to take lots of pictures and tag everyone! You know that great picture of us at the homecoming game? I'm going to repost it. And cut you out. And I'll laugh while I'm doing it. I'll laugh, Jermaine. (*VERONIQUE gives a sort of evil laugh. As much as she can really do. She cuts herself off. Jermaine has dropped to the floor and is crying.*) Well it's not that bad. I'm not sure it's crying on the floor worthy. As much as I appreciate the response. (*beat*) It's simple. Like the picture. You can do that, can't you? (*looks at her phone*) Awwwwwwww. Thank you so much. Love you, Jermaine! (*she makes the heart sign*) Bye!

The CLIQUE applauds VERONIQUE as she exits. VERONIQUE waves and blows kisses. The CLIQUE follows her off.

SCENE THIRTEEN

On the opposite side of the stage, DARCEL, DAINE & DRU enter. They are wearing sheets draped like togas. DARCEL is holding a scroll.

DARCEL: Is this the room?

DRU: *(positive)* This is the room.

DAINE: Doesn't look... official.

DRU: We have to pass the assessment. We're not official until we pass the assessment. So that's why we're in an unofficial room. It's fine.

DAINE: And I don't see any pastries. They said –

DRU: All the pastries you can eat. Did you not see the tower of cream puffs? The éclairs?

DAINE: Yes, yes.

DRU: Trust me. We got the better deal.

DARCEL: Did we really escape the lions? It looks fine... It looks fine but I don't feel...

DRU: You're alive. You're in a well-ventilated, relatively clean, although plain, environment. You are not waiting underneath the colosseum, minutes away from being torn limb from limb for the amusement of a somewhat delusional crowd with questionable decision-making when it comes to their entertainment choices. *(pointing off)* There, there are lions. *(pointing to the floor)* Here, none. Right? *(pointing off)* Lions. *(pointing to the floor)* No. Lions. There, *(a big frantic gesture)* swimming with lions. Here, *(a smooth, namaste gesture)* none. And all the pastries you can eat? We won the lottery.

DARCEL: Nobody swims with lions.

DRU: So?

DARCEL: You swim with sharks. You swim with the fishes, but that's bad. I even think you can swim with pigs. Lions don't swim. They might, but that's not the phrase.



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