

ADMITTANCE

(a ten-minute play... *absurd* style)

by

Greg Vovos

CHARACTERS:

PETEY DIXON: A man in pursuit of a dream. But not altogether certain whether he or his dream is even worth it.

JACK HORNSBY: A gatekeeper. Strong and sure. Smart, practiced, but sharp with the tongue. What could this man be missing?

RAQUEL LUSCIVIOUS: She's both luscious and lascivious and her dream goes without saying. Or does it?

PURPLE MABEL: No one can begin to comprehend the true magnificence of her dream, except for her of course. She's dressed in all -- you guessed it -- purple. Sparkle would be a plus.

MR. PEMBROOK: He's reckless, unpredictable, a bit slovenly, and in love with big ideas. A mad genius perhaps.

BETTY SPANCRACKER: She could put a 1950s housewife to shame with her style and cleanliness. She wears bright rubber dishwashing gloves, keeps her spray bottle holstered in her apron, and her washcloth at the ready.

SETTING:

Just outside the entrance to the House of Dreams.

SYNOPSIS:

Not just anyone can get into the House of Dreams and admittance does not come without a price. Find out the cost in this bit of absurdia.

TO PRODUCE THIS PLAY contact playwright at gregvovos@yahoo.com

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ADMITTANCE

Lights up on a table stationed behind two stanchions joined by a velvet rope. At the table sits JACK HORNSBY, a dapper if not disjoined man. He has a clipboard and briefcase on his desk, but his attention is focused solely on the tube of lipstick in his hands.

On the other side of the stanchions stands PETEY. If only Petey could be more sure of himself, then he'd know exactly what to do with himself. Petey waits expectantly for Jack to notice him. He waits. And he waits...

Petey COUGHS to get Jack's attention. But nothing.

Petey COUGHS again. Nothing still. He COUGHS again.

JACK

(Without looking up) If you are ill, please remove yourself and your bald head from my presence. I haven't the patience for either.

PETEY

Oh, I'm not ill, I'm just...

JACK

Were you or were you not just coughing?

PETEY

Yes, but I was...I'm not sick.

JACK

Then why were you coughing, sir?

PETEY

I wasn't...my coughs were...I was just trying to get your attention.

JACK

--Through deceptive means by posing as an infirmed hanger-on?

PETEY

I wouldn't put it that way.

JACK

Then how would you put it?

PETEY

Can I please just get inside?

JACK

Into the House of Dreams? so you can spread your rancid mendacity?
I think not. Deception is not welcome here.

PETEY

Look, I've been waiting patiently. And you've been ignoring me so I
felt I needed to get your attention in the least intrusive—

JACK

What is your name, sir?

PETEY

Petey Dixon.

JACK

Dicks in what?

PETEY

Excuse me?

JACK

You're not on my list. You'll have to go.

PETEY

That's not acceptable. I need to get in there.

JACK

And why is that?

PETEY

To make my dreams come true. That's what happens here, right?

JACK

What dream specifically are you referring to?

PETEY

Specifically? Well, I'm not really sure...specifically. I mean, I was
hoping that once I was inside there--

JACK

--That you would be enlightened? This is not some hippie commune, Mr. Dixon his palm. I wonder what it is about you that drives you to behave in such a confused and disturbing manner?

RAQUEL LUSCIVIOUS sashays on. She gets extremely close to Petey. She sniffs, then licks him.

RAQUEL LUSCIVIOUS

He smells like chicken. (*Extends hand to Jack*) Hello, Jack. May I enter?

JACK

(*Kissing her hand*) I'd prefer if it I were the one doing the entering, if you know what I mean, Ms. Luscivious.

Raquel and Jack LAUGH loudly, exaggeratedly, like old friends from the country club, until Raquel SLAPS Jack across the face. The LAUGHING CEASES IMMEDIATELY.

(*Rubbing his cheek*) Sorry, my dear. I'm still evolving.

RAQUEL LUSCIVIOUS

(*Considering this.*) Hmmmm, evolving. Yes. Okay, then...

Raquel takes off her scarf, perhaps brushes Petey's face with it, then wraps it around Jack's neck. She scrutinizes Jack's look.

JACK

(*Overly polite*) I beg of you, please, tell me your dream.

RAQUEL LUSCIVIOUS

Not that I should have to state it, Mr. Hornsby, but my dream is to help all the little bitty chickens grow up to be big bold cocks -- cocks that can both please and respect a woman.

JACK

(*Welcoming her inside.*) You are an inspiration to me. Please...

He opens the rope for her. She adjusts his scarf a bit and then enters. Petey tries to follow behind but Jack cuts him off.

I don't think so.

PETEY

You let her in. Why not me?

JACK

I like the way she looks. I like the way she didn't lie to me. I like the tingling she gives my soul. I like the way her dream complements my own. You -- I like nothing about.

PETEY

Look, I have a right to my dream just like anyone else. I mean, what's so special about you or your dream anyway that makes you the judger of all things dreams.

JACK

My dream is none of your concern!! But I can assure you that not only is it life-changing, but I am striving to achieve it at this very moment.

Jack pulls some earrings from his briefcase and puts them on.

PURPLE MABEL enters. She seems to bring the mystic with her.

PURPLE MABEL

I have a dream! The sky will turn to purple. The stars to dust. And then they will fall to Earth like the tears of angels, washing our souls clean of all doubt, fears, and impurities. And then to celebrate our societal transformulation, we will feast on Starburst and Twix bars.

JACK

That is beautiful. Please enter. See! now that's a motherfucking dream right there. Yes!

Jack high-fives Purple Mabel as she enters the House of Dreams.

PETEY

Are you fucking kidding me?

Jack SMACKS Petey across the face.

JACK

Do not use that kind of language in my presence.

PETEY

But you just said mother—

JACK

--I will speak any way I choose! Because my words mean something. Because I chose my words specifically. Because my words were bequeathed to me by my mommy. Do you understand that?

PETEY

How come that woman can come in here, spout insane ramblings about the color purple and she gets in, but I can't simply because--

JACK

Tell me, Petey, why should I grant you admittance? What do you have to offer? Your intelligence? Your wit? Your mind? Is your mind capable of dreaming up something more significant, more worthy, more fantastic than changing the sky -- the motherfucking sky -- from black to purple? Does your dream deserve to break bread with that dream?

PETEY

I don't know...I...

JACK

You don't know? You don't fucking know?? Well, if you don't fucking know then I damn well know. I know that the answer is N-O NO! (*Shaking his head.*) My motherfucking mommy died so she could get in here. She gave up her life. What has your mother done besides give birth to a wart on society's unwashed bottom? Jesus, I wish I could be half the woman my mommy was.

Jack pulls a woman's wig from his briefcase, puts it on his head.

PETEY

Look, I don't know what your deal is with your...(afraid to offend)... I'm very sorry to hear about your mother, but I get the feeling that you don't want any men inside there and that's why you won't let me in.

A man enters. His name is MR. PEMBROOK.

MR. PEMBROOK

The name's Pembrook. Mister Pembrook. Mister means I'm a man.

Jack plops down into his chair in disgust.

JACK

You're not on the list. Sorry.

MR. PEMBROOK
But I have a very special dream.

JACK
So you know your dream?

MR. PEMBROOK
Of course I know my dream. What kind of fool would show up at the House of Dreams without knowing his dream?

JACK
A bald fool to be precise.

MR. PEMBROOK
My dream is to live in a world where the color of one's skin, the gender of one's beloved, or the scent of one's farts has no bearing on personal liberties. Oh, how I long for the freedom of farts.

JACK
That is magnificent! Please, sir, enter at your le-sure.

Mr. Pembrook passes through the rope, pulls down his pants, FARTS, and then cartwheels his way inside the House of Dreams.

PETEY
What in the hell was that?

JACK
That is a man with a dream. A dream that I can get behind. Let me guess, you don't want equality for mankind?

PETEY
Farts? He was talking about farts!

JACK
You don't believe in farts?

PETEY
Of course, I believe in farts. You know what, fuck this!

Petey bull-rushes Jack and knocks him on top of the desk. The men struggle until Jack corals Petey with a headlock. Jack puts Petey over his knee and begins to spank him. As he does...

JACK

Let ye without dreams cast the first stone...

SPANK! (Petey can audible as necessary here.)

Let ye possessing of dreams set the world ablaze...

SPANK!

Let me spank some sense into this confused and frightened little boy...

SPANK!

And let me be heralded as the Mother of All Dreamers!

*A barrage of spanks until the spanking reaches a feverish pitch.
Then Jack rolls Petey off his lap and onto the ground.*

Jack stands calmly and smooths the hair on his wig.

PETEY

You are a sick, sick puppy.

JACK

Woof! Correction! I am a sick, sick puppy WITH a dream. A dream to help other dreamers. And you are wasting my time. You've been here six minutes now and not once have you articulated your dream to me, because you are ashamed of the stirrings of your soul. Yet you have the audacity to ridicule, comment upon, and diminish the dreams of others. For that I am sickened by you and tempted to give you another lashing. Because, look out, Petey Boy, Mama's got a new pair of shoes.

Jack slips into some high heels.

Tell me, Petey. Who's your mama, huh? Who's your mama?

PETEY

Not you! My mother would help me find my dream. You're not anyone's mother. You're the mother of nothing!

JACK

Listen here, young man! A mother understands that deep down inside we all know what our true dream is. Some mothers coddle, others do not. Now tell me your dream. And I must warn you: only one spot

remains before we close admissions to the House of Dreams so I suggest you spit it out now.

PETEY

What?!? No one told me that there was a limit on dreamers!

BETTY SPANCRACKER runs on wielding a spray bottle and a washrag. She cuts in front of Petey.

BETTY SPANCRACKER

I have a dream! I have a dream!

PETEY

What the hell, Lady? I was in front of you. No cutting.

Petey pushes Betty aside to take his place back. Betty GASPS, then clutches at her chest.

BETTY SPANCRACKER

Oh my! Do not touch me there, you unscrubbed linoleum floor.

Betty blasts Petey with her spray bottle.

PETEY

What the fuck, you crazy--

Betty sprays Petey some more. Then she draws the washcloth from her apron and scrubs down Petey's mouth.

BETTY SPANCRACKER

Shut your mouth, you dirty boy.

She squirts him again and again and again. She sprays him into submission. Then clearly and calmly...

My dream is to rid the world of all its filth. Starting with this man.

Betty gives him a few more sprays.

JACK

(*Bowing*) Madame, you emit cleanliness of the highest order. It is with both pleasure and pride that I welcome you into the House of Dreams.

Jack escorts Betty Spancracker through the rope. They both disappear into the House of Dreams without a word to Petey.

PETEY

Wait! You can't leave me behind like this--

The door SLAMS on Petey and his dreams. He leaps over the roped barrier and tries to open the door but to no avail. He's locked out. He POUNDS on the door...

I do have a dream! I want to find the beauty of others. I want to reflect their light out into the world. I WANT TO BRING GLORY EXPONENTIAL TO THE UNIVERSE!!!

Still nothing. Dejected, Petey collapses onto the table. He spots the tube of lipstick, studies it, and notices his reflection...

I want to help mankind shine...

...A COUGH. COUGH. COUGH...Petey slowly turns to see Jack standing behind him. Jack now wears a wig, heels, and a dress, yet somehow he still seems incomplete. Petey is speechless.

JACK

I'm not sick. (*Jack smiles.*) Your dream is beautiful. Wondrous. (*Indicating the lipstick*) May I?

Petey hands Jack the lipstick. Jack is about to put it on but hesitates.

I don't know why I...I can't seem to take the last step...

PETEY

Because you don't know how beautiful you can be. Neither of us does.

Petey takes the lipstick from Jack and applies it to Jack's lips.

There. Now you can be the Mother of All Dreamers.

JACK

I can?

Petey pulls a mirror from his pocket. Shows Jack his reflection.

PETEY

You're both brutish and beautiful all at once. You're brutiful. See how you shine?

Jack nods vigorously as he fights back tears. He pulls a handkerchief from the bosom of his dress, dabs his eyes...

Jack opens the rope so Petey can pass through.

JACK

Would you like to enter the House of Dreams?

PETEY

What?

JACK

A spot has become available, and I'd like to offer it to you.

PETEY

But I don't understand. I thought it was all filled up.

Betty and Raquel enter pushing a two-wheeler with Mr. Pembrook's body on it. They dump him onto the floor. (There may be an ad-libbed grunt or line here from the gals.) Mr. P's chest is bloodied, and he's missing an arm. He does not move.

Purple Mabel follows behind, holding Mr. Pembrook's missing limb. She gently lays it on his bloodied chest. Betty sprays Purple Mabel's hands clean of Mr. Pembrook's germs.

PETEY

He's...he's...he's dead?

The Three Women nod in unison.

PURPLE MABEL

Apparently, the world is not yet ready for equality of the fartses.

JACK

Sadly, it doesn't always end well, Petey. The House of Dreams can be a terribly unforgiving place at times. Noting is guaranteed.

PETEY

SO I COULD DIE IN THERE???

JACK
Oh, you will most certainly die in there.

PETEY
What?

JACK
Everyone dies, Petey. At least in here you die chasing your dreams. I admire this man greatly for that.

PETEY
But what if...what if...what if...

JACK
What if I take a dump on your head and it sprouts wings and flies south for the winter? What would it matter?

PETEY
No. What if my dream's not worth it?

JACK
Everyone's dream is worth it, Petey.

Petey wipes his forehead. He's sweating this decision.

Jack takes out a bigger handkerchief from his bosom, and gently and lovingly wipes down Petey's head -- gives it a good shine.

Come on, my boy. Time for YOU to shine.

Petey thinks a moment, then nods. Petey, Jack, and the Women head to the door. As the Women enter, Petey stops Jack.

PETEY
This is not how I imagined my dreams would come true.

JACK
Yes, well, if it were how you imagined, what would be the point?

Petey doesn't know. They go inside the House of Dreams as lights fade. The fading light shines on an unmoving and very dead Mr. Pembroke, who somehow seems to be smiling.

END OF PLAY