



# BORN ACTOR

A play to do by yourself

Pete  
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Characters:

– Just you

You will need:

- A Mirror
- A Cup
- A T shirt you can take off

Notes:

- Italics are stage directions
- \_\_\_\_\_ denotes where you can speak freely, eg: “I’m \_\_\_\_\_.” could be “I’m happy!” or “I’m sad.”

*You’re alone in your bedroom. You’re under the stairs. You’re in a basement.*

*Where are you?*

*You: I’m \_\_\_\_\_!*

*Great! You, the actor, goes to find a mirror.*

*Please.*

*The actor finds a mirror, then stands, or sits, whatever is comfortable, facing it.*

*The actor takes (themselves, himself, herself,) in. They appreciate their clothes. They wonder if they need a shower this evening.*

*Hmmm.*

*They take a few deep breaths, roll their neck, shake their body out. They drop their body forward then roll up slowly through the spine, vertebrae by vertebrae, head coming up last. Very actor-y.*





*The actor stares into their own eyes.*

*The actor winks at themself!*

*(Go on)*

*Was that embarrassing? Was it a bit fun?*

*The actor takes a moment to decide how winking felt.*

*For some people acting is “all about truth” and I like to think truth means that if you do something (for example wink at yourself in the mirror,) what works best is not to try stopping yourself feeling embarrassed, if you find it embarrassing, but to sit in embarrassment. The truth of how you felt.*

*Share that feeling, that truth. Even if it's just with yourself.*

*You: It felt \_\_\_\_\_ but \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Thanks, okay! I'm glad you're here giving it a go! Glad you're meeting me halfway. Feels like team work.*

*It's been a long year hasn't it, a long lonely year.*

*Sorry, where are you again, where is the actor?*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*You're in a basement.*

*Everyone smells like they smoke, some people are smoking. Everyone is crammed in and close, sitting on crusty benches and sloshing things onto each other as the room ripples in excitement.*

*(Could you please sit down, if you aren't already. And pick up your cup?)*

*The actor seems small and hunched in the busyness of the second row (how did you get such a good seat?!) They're clutching at a (biodegradable) plastic cup with a dribble of gin and tonic in the bottom.*

*On one side they're knee to knee with an angelic person with no eyebrows, and on the other they're occasionally bumped by a ferociously snogging pair of butches.*





*The angelic, eyebrowless person catches the actors wide eyes and smiles gently, something glowing from behind their teeth.*

You: Hello

*They raise their skin (where the eyebrows would be) and smile again, then wink. The actor winks back.*

*All of a sudden the lights drop and a hush falls, chased by a frantic whisper which bounces and writhes into a whooping cacophony as the crowd begs for the performance to start!*

*It's infectious! (Go on!)*

You: WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

*Even though they're joining in with everyone, the actor is very aware of their own wavering voice cutting through the cheers. Almost like they're cheering alone.*

*They stop woo-ing but the riotous audience around them keeps feeding the little simmer of excitement*

*in their chest. Silent or not they're still a part of the cheering mass.*

**SHOOOMWOAAHHHHHHRRRR**

*A humming spotlight explodes across the stone basement and bathes the raised wooden platform of the stage in a white-yellow splendour, flooding over the rippling bedsheet hung across the back wall, and the audience reaches a religious fervour to rival the world cup final as The Devil takes a be-heeled step into the pristine glow.*

You: She's beautiful.

*She is.*

*She's bleach blonde and draped in red lace, she has a piercing through the bridge of her nose and two thick ridged horns jutting out from her fringe.*

You: She's beautiful!

*She is.*





*The Devil raises the spare microphone to her lipstick jaws and the crowd is entranced, harmoniously silent save for sharp breathes and the occasional explosion of agreement as she swirls her dress and prophetizes.*

You: It's beautiful.

*It is!*

*She howls rapture and rebirth, truth and trans rights and red lights slice through the white as everyone raises to their feet and cheers and dances to her preaching, arms flickering through orange strobe and haze until the crowd is a swirling fiery pit - and just as they start to spark and spit with rage righteous and radical burning love, the Devil bares her body and rips a raw chicken from her belly - spraying the zealots with strawberry gore, and swinging her dripping bloody pink offspring aloft, high above you all, proclaiming the BIRTH OF THE TRANSGENDER ANTICHRIST! LONG LIVE THE TRANSGENDER ANTICHRIST!*

You: Long live the transgender antichrist!

*Long live the transgender Antichrist indeed. Where are you?*

You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.

*You're alone in your bedroom.*

*The actor wipes dried blood from their face, confused. They look a little lost, feel a little frantic. They take a little walk around their room.*

*(Go on)*

*They realise they're holding a cup, where's that from? They put it down.*

*They sit somewhere comfortable, somewhere worn in. They've not left this place in a while. It's been a long time, a long year. A long lonely year.*

*Just them, (him, her, them, other,) alone, in this room.*

*If the Antichrist lived all by themselves, no one to be Antichrist-y too, would they still be the Antichrist?*





*What makes someone the Antichrist? The actor wonders what the Antichrists' pronouns are.*

*We would, we do, assume being the Antichrist is a divine right, but they're literally the anti-christ so surely just because the bible said so would mean it's not so?*

*Because surely as the Antichrist they want to be anti-the-word-of-christ and therefore not the Antichrist, but then wouldn't that mean they're doing that because they're the Antichrist – which means we're back to them being the Antichrist, so we're just back to where we started again asking if they're really the Antichrist, and why?*

*Which came first, the Antichrist or the person who decided they're the Antichrist?*

*You: Kentucky fried Antichrist.*

*Do you think if the Antichrist was alone for a year, longer even, that they might decide that maybe they aren't really the Antichrist after all? Or, do you think that because other people call them the Antichrist,*

*that's why they're the Antichrist? Whether they're much like an assumed Antichrist or not.*

*You: If I was alone for a year, maybe I'd become the Antichrist.*

*Do you think, if you were an Antichrist, The Antichrist, that maybe, eventually, you'd get a little bit tired of being Antichrist?*

*Just because it comes with a lot of baggage doesn't it? A title like Antichrist.*

*It comes with a lot of assumptions. People aren't the biggest fans, generally, of Antichrists.*

*You could be a perfectly nice Antichrist and people would probably still have a problem with you, just because you're an Antichrist.*

*Maybe you didn't realise but you've actually, unknowingly, been the Antichrist all along and it's only now that you have the time and space to really stop and think about it that you realise you are.*





*Only now, removed from outside judgements and expectations of what an Antichrist should or shouldn't be, or peoples opinions as to whether being an Antichrist is a "good" thing or a "bad" thing, can you consider what being an Antichrist means to you.*

You: Is Antichrist a metaphor for something?

*Lots of things, probably.*

You: Antichrist noodle soup.

*Antichrist noodle soup indeed.*

*The actor spreads their arms, and swings them around, side to side, testing how much space they have around them.*

*The actor stands back in front of the mirror so they can watch their body practice moving.*

*They sway a little, gently, leaning into where they want to go, where feels good, where stretches, where yanks.*

*They reach their arms into the air, reach their fingers as high as they can. They rise onto their toes, push upwards, outwards. Up and up, stretch, close their eyes-!*

*They come back to the centre. Return home. Relax. Shake it out.*

*The actor drops down and curls up into a little ball, they condense, pull their limbs into themselves, tuck in their head, close their eyes and scrunch their face up, up in in squeeze squeeze hold-!*

*They burst open.*

*Flower in spring, exploding overstuffed suitcase.*

*The actor lets out a great big breath that they've been holding in. A loud sigh, a long groan. They've been holding it in for a while now. A long time.*

*They breathe in again, sucking up air, hovering. They hold it in. Screw themselves up. Tight red balloon insides. Squeeze, squeeze. Hold. Hold.*





*Hold.*

*Burst open!*

*Limbs splay, head back, stomach clenching, sucking in like it's wringing something more than air up and out of their lungs. Squeezing desperately like their insides are a waning tube of toothpaste. PFFFFFFPPPPFFFFFFttthhhhhhhhhhhhhuu uu u*

*The actor stands, hanging off their skeleton, deflated. Empty. Roomy. They breathe again.*

*Alone in their room.*

*How does your body feel?*

*You: It feels \_\_\_\_\_.*

*What gender is that?*

*(No pressure)*

*You: It's not, it doesn't have one.*

*Your body?*

*You: No*

*Your body doesn't have a gender?*

*You: No, no - yes, no - no.*

*No it does, or no, yes, it doesn't or no, yes it does or no, no, yes, you're right it doesn't?*

*The actor thinks for a moment, thinks hard.*

*They might know the answer, they might know what they were going to say, but they still think for a second. They give themselves a moment to think.*

*You: ...*

*You don't have to answer. I don't mind either way. Whatever way. No, yes, no no yes, yes no, yes yes no, yes no yes. It's all fine.*

*The actor stays silent. I'm sure they've some choice thoughts, but they don't say anything right now.*





*Not necessarily a revelation, but something's going on inside them, in their head. We can see it in their eyes.*

*The actor looks into their mirror, they can see it in their eyes too. Not a revelation, just something, inside.*

*When I want to make a decision, when I can't choose, I ask someone else to choose for me, and when I hear what they pick I get a feeling, something jumps in my chest or squirms in my gut. That's usually the real answer.*

*It's not about the person you ask, it's about putting yourself in a situation that makes you feel something.*

*Based on what I feel, I usually pick the choice that made me feel good, or the one that didn't make me feel bad. It's not a revelation, just something happening, inside.*

*The actor still doesn't say anything, but they don't need to. I don't mind. It's not about me.*

*The actor takes a second, a moment, and when they're ready they shake their body out.*

*Really shake it out, reach up and down and spin if they want to, if they can, any way they feel like moving, shaking, they do.*

**Go, GO! GO, GO ON! GO ON!! SHAKE IT OUT! SHAKE, SHAKE! SHAKE!! SHAKE YOURSELF SILLY!! SHAKE!!**

**SHAKE!!**

**SHAKE!**

**SHAKE!**

**Shake! Shake! Shake!**

*Shake, shakey shake shake.*

*Shake. Shake. Still.*

*Was that embarrassing? Was it a bit fun? Was there enough space?*





*The actor looks around the room. The space where they shook, shook, shaken.*

*Where are you?*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*You're under the stairs.*

*The walls are I-don't-care-just-give-it-a-lick-of-paint eggshell, illuminated to a pale yellow by the lampshadeless bulb that hangs too low, flickering. A moon choking at the end of a noose.*

*Shelves made of piled books are crammed with knick knacks. Toys from coin machines and treasures found on the ground, overdue library loans and charity shop gems. Pencil sketches, pins, and paperclips are strung criss cross on the walls.*

*A delicate canopy of white lace spider web hangs over it all, quivering with the thud of the stairs overhead as people stomp up and down in the morning rush.*

*The actor, curled up in a nest of blankets on top of a foam mattress on the floor, seems used to it. They pay it no mind.*

*They're still and they breathe gently, like they've learnt how not to disturb even the air around them.*

*In, out. In, out.*

*Like they've been here for a long time.*

*Like they've been trapped in this closet for years.*

*The actor looks like someone else, he (they, she, he,) looks like someone familiar.*

*He's small for his age, maybe the wrong side of too skinny in certain places, wrong shape, something off.*

*He has dark hair, almost black, with a home haircut. Sticky-up, unruly and all over the place.*

*His top hangs off him, four sizes too big, swallowing his body, wrapping him up, blurring his edges in the folds of the ill-fit fabric.*





*He's got glasses on too, he doesn't wear them all the time though. It's not Harry Potter.*

*It's not!*

*J K Rowling's a terf, remember. So it's not Harry Potter, it's not. Definitely not.*

*The actor, the boy, looks in the mirror in the corner of his closet- cupboard under the stairs.*

*He fits snugly in the cramped space, all of this excess, this stuff, build up, pressure packed around him, he's used to it.*

*The actor takes a deep breath, has a little wriggle, a little shake. Readies himself, centres himself.*

*And then all in one motion he slips his top up over his head.*

*He stares at himself, locking eyes with the nipples of the hanging crushed breasts that droop from below his collar bones.*

*In here, under the stairs, they don't mean anything yet.*

*He thinks he should hate them. But here, removed from outside judgements and expectations of what his body should or shouldn't be, people's opinions as to whether the way it is, is a "good" thing or a "bad" thing, he can consider what that means.*

*What would his boobs mean if they were kept in jars, on a shelf in a museum? What would his boobs mean if they were round and perky?*

*What would his boobs mean if he was pink, and raw, and drenched in sticky sweet blood and they were dangling off of him, dangling above a sea of rampant raging wonderful queers hedonistically chanting his name?*

*What do they mean when he leaves for the shops, and he has to wear two hoodies? In here, under the stairs, they don't mean anything yet.*





*When you're alone in your cupboard, who are you?*

*When you're alone in your room, who are you?*

*Is it embarrassing? Is it a bit fun? What are your pronouns?*

*It's been a long year hasn't it. A long year, alone.*

*Who do you think you'll be when you go outside?*

*(No pressure)*

*Where are you again?*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Are you sure?*

*Who are you again?*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Are you sure?*

*(No pressure)*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Are you sure?*

*I don't mind either way. Whatever way.*

*You: I'm \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Shake it out.*

