

Applaud for Blood

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A short play

By Jarred Corona

AT RISE: We're in a holding room. Three people sit in chairs, AMY, ERICA, and JUAN. They've been here for a while. They're bound. Their eyes are covered, perhaps more.

AMY

(Chanting:)

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Though I walk // through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you thou art with me.

JUAN

Though I walk through the valley // of the death and the shadow, I fear no evil for thou art with me.

ERICA

I walk through the valley where the shadow is dying, and I fear for the evil that is with me.

AMY

Though I walk...

JUAN

I am still...

ERICA

...for the evil...

AMY

...of death...

JUAN

...and the shadow...

ERICA

...I fear...

AMY

...thou art with me.

...with me.  
JUAN

...with me.  
ERICA

The CONDUCTOR enters. She's dressed impeccably. It's hard to tell if what she wears is fashionable or entirely devoid of anything at all. She drags on DONNIE, who is bound and blinded in much the same way as the others.

DONNIE  
...get away with this, you hear me? Someone will search you out, and you'll get what's coming to you. You'll get karma in your x-rays, you motherfucker.

AMY  
Don't!

JUAN  
Save your energy.

ERICA  
How many are they gonna bring?

The Conductor forces Donnie into the remaining chair. At some point in the following, she manages to bind him to the seat one way or another.

CONDUCTOR  
Sit.

AMY  
He's the seventeenth.

ERICA  
Is that including us?

JUAN  
I counted ten.

Is that including us?

ERICA

Stop struggling!

CONDUCTOR

Oh.

JUAN

Fuck you!

DONNIE

Just listen to her, please.

AMY

I'll go deaf if they fire again.

ERICA

Oh, I hate the blasts.

JUAN

Who the fuck are you people?

DONNIE

Ahem.

CONDUCTOR

See! You're already choking, you bitch.

DONNIE

(Beat.)

We're playing the silent game now? Bet that's the trick, ain't it? Blindfold me so I can't tell there's no one else in here. I mean, people are here. People are everywhere. But they're not really like me. They're not victims to whatever BULLSHIT this is. Bet you want me thinking your partners are in the same boat so I start to trust them, but joke's on you. I see past that. I see past all of it. I won't be...

The Conductor removes whatever it is that's been covering his eyes.

Oh.

DONNIE

CONDUCTOR

Shhhh. Yes. I think this group will do just fine.

One by one, she removes their blinds.

ERICA

It's bright.

AMY

Hush!

CONDUCTOR

It's hard to face the light, isn't it?

DONNIE

Didn't know I was dealing with a walking nasal strip.

CONDUCTOR

Excuse me?

DONNIE

Because that was on the fucking nose.

CONDUCTOR

Does that pass for clever where you're from? Sad. I believe introductions are in order. We'll start with you.

DONNIE

Fuck you.

She pulls out a conductor's baton.

CONDUCTOR

Would you like me to plunge this inside your nasal cavity? It's made of fiber glass. It's certainly a once-in-a-lifetime experience to snort such a material. Or perhaps I could plunge it into something more precious to you. No? Then state your name.

DONNIE

Donnie Drung.