

SANCTUARY

A Short Play

by
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
Cow	Spirited, free	Any	Any
Vinny	Anxious, uptight	Any	Any
News Reporter	Literally a news reporter	Any	Any

*Cow and News Reporter can double.

We should be aware that Cow is played by a human. They should walk, talk, and behave like a human. The costuming should be at the level of a childhood church nativity scene play. Some felt ears, a brown body suit, some cut out udders.

SETTING

Brooklyn, NY

Present

Based on true events (sorta): <https://rb.gy/dddvk>

LIGHTS UP ON:

The exterior of a standard Brooklyn pizza shop.

Vinny yells into their phone.

VINNY

No! No I told you Johnny, I already told you on the fucking phone last week.
I called you on Monday like I call you on every Monday and I placed my usual order like I
always place my usual order and then you asked me if
“I wanted to add anything else”
and I said
“well now that you mention it!”
and then I added 20 pounds of ground beef.
And then you said
“oh, that’s new”
and I said
“yup, going in a different direction!”
Then you said you’d
“send it over but I’ll need to charge you in advance”
and then I said
“ok sure I understand”
even though I don’t really understand because you know I’m good for it but still I said
“yes I understand”
and then you said I need to
“settle up my tab first”
and I said
“yes of course, I understand” even though, again, I don’t really understand because I
thought I could pay at the end of the month
but then you asked how I
“wanted to pay”
and then I spread it out over three credit cards
and then you said
“great! We can deliver it Wednesday”
and then I said
“great! See you Wednesday”
Do you remember? Do you remember that, Johnny?
Because I remember.
I made promises to people.
I advertised specials
I was gonna make meatballs, Johnny. I was gonna put down a tablecloth and light some
candles and really make something of myself.

The other night I was singing that song to my kid, that song that's like "on top of spaghetti all covered with cheese" which would have you thinking the protagonist of the song is spaghetti but actually it's a very meatball centric number if you listen to the lyrics and so I was singing it to my kid, when I had a vision for the restaurant. I thought to myself, maybe we don't have to be some generic, run of the mill, shithole for a quick slice ,maybe I can break the generational curse of my parents and their parents being chained to this place without an escape. What if we were some sort of special place that people called home? What if we were a sanctuary? And then I thought, would it be insane if I finally believed in myself? Would it be so koo koo if I turned us into a true Italian restaurant with three dollar signs on the Yelp listing and made my parents proud and finally did something with my no good, rotten, useless fucking life? Would it be so crazy to live out my dream? So I thought I'm gonna finally do it I'm gonna take the first step I'm gonna make meatballs and serve them as a special and I posted all about it on our social media and I reached out to some god damn yuppie food vloggers in Greenpoint with a million followers to help create buzz and now everyone is coming today except you, except YOU Johnny.
 WHERE THE FUCK AM I GOING TO GET ALL THIS GROUND BEEF!?

Suddenly, a cow runs across the stage.

A big

fat

giant

fucking

beat.

VINNY

(re: phone)

I'll call you back.

They hang up.

They look around.

They turn to the audience.

VINNY

You guys saw that too, right?

Vinny runs off stage to look for the cow.

Beat.

The Cow emerges back on stage.

It looks around for Vinny, and then makes a “shhhh” gesture to the audience.

COW

I bet you're wondering how I got here.

A cow in Brooklyn.

It's not something you see every day.

I've always dreamed of the big city. The bright lights, the bustling streets.

Ever since I saw *Sex and the City*.

I wish I was a Carrie but unfortunately I'm more of a Miranda, that's my truth.

When I imagined it, this wasn't exactly what I pictured

I thought it'd be a little less...

What's the word?

Fugly.

VINNY

(Off Stage)

How the hell does a cow get to Brooklyn?

COW

(re: audience)

That's an excellent question, I'm so glad you asked.

You see, I wasn't supposed to be here today.

I don't just mean Brooklyn, or New York, or in front of this depressing pizza shop where dreams go to die.

I mean on Earth.

Alive.

(pause)

There is a genocide happening all around us.

Cows like me are being killed at exponential rates for the human race to consume.

It's happening in your own backyard.

For centuries.

You're all complicit.

Cow picks someone in the audience.

COW

You especially.
You sick fuck.

(pause)

It feels like nobody is listening.
First I watched my parents, and then my siblings, and then my friends.
Today it was my turn.
I'm not stupid.
I knew this day was on the horizon.
But you can never be prepared for when your number is called.

Beat.

COW

Sorry. It's been a...bizarre day.
I heard my number called, and I thought to myself.
Well? What are you going to do?
You can give up and let them win and lay down and die.
Or you can fight.
Growing up, our elders would tell us the story of this sanctuary in Manhattan.
Where animals can live with food and shelter and community.
Where our lives aren't constantly threatened.
I always wondered if they really existed or if it was some kind of fantasy.
Like Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny.
The Easter Bunny does actually exist, she's just a huge bitch.
I always hoped that they were real, these sanctuaries. I wouldn't know unless I lived.
This morning, they gathered me in my cell and shoved me in the back of a truck.
I'm not gonna lie, my first thought was "at least I won't die in New Jersey"
The only thing worse than living in New Jersey is dying in New Jersey.
The ride was brutal. Bumpy and long.
And then I saw it, as we sat at a standstill on the bridge.
The Manhattan skyline.
It was exactly as I saw in pictures.
Yes, cows have Instagram, check your internal biases.
There it was, my freedom, my future, everything I've ever wanted. Staring right in front of me.
I've never been so close.
Would it be so crazy to live out my dream?
What would Carrie do?
Well, probably nothing.
But Miranda? She'd fight back.

Vinny comes back onstage holding a lasso, looking around for Cow.

COW

I realized the latch on the back door wasn't properly locked, so I gathered all the force I could muster and kicked it open and I jumped out and ran and ran and ran as fast as I could until I took the first exit I came across.
Brooklyn.

(pause)

These motherfuckers still somehow charged me a toll.

Vinny notices Cow and runs toward them, throwing the lasso around them.

VINNY

Yes!

COW

What is this?!

VINNY

Oh my God, did you just speak?

COW

It's a harmful stereotype that you'd think otherwise.

VINNY

Holy cow, you can talk!

COW

Just so you know, that's a slur in the cow community.

VINNY

Oh, sorry.

Beat.

COW

What's your plan now?

VINNY

What do you mean?

COW

I mean, it's kind of insulting that you think I can't break out of this.

VINNY

It seems to be holding you pretty good right now.

COW

This piece of dental floss against my 1,600 pounds of pure muscle?

VINNY

Pure muscle?

COW

Do not body shame me.

Beat

VINNY

You're right. I don't know what I'm doing. I've never caught a cow before.

COW

Why are you trying to now?

VINNY

Um...no reason.

COW

There has to be a reason.

Beat.

VINNY

I was supposed to make meatballs.

COW

Wooooowwww

VINNY

I'm sorry!

COW

That's it? You're sorry?

VINNY

I mean, this was before I knew you could talk!

COW

So it's okay to kill a living being if it doesn't speak?

VINNY

You're not going to like my answer.

COW

I wouldn't expect anything less from a human.

VINNY

Whoa, hey, that's not fair.

COW

You were planning to catch me and eat me.

VINNY

I guess you're right. But it was an emergency!

COW

What could be so important?

VINNY

I finally decided to live out my dreams.

Beat.

COW

I can understand that.

VINNY

You can?

COW

We have dreams too, you know.

(pause)

I'm here to find my sanctuary.

VINNY

How are you going to do that?

COW

I don't know. But I don't have a choice but to figure it out. It's not fun, being scared of death all the time.

VINNY

It's not fun being scared of life either.

Screams and chants from offstage are heard. "Where's that cow?" "Let's get it!", etc.

VINNY

They're calling for you.

COW

I know.

VINNY

They're not going to stop until they catch you. They're not really used to your kind around here.

COW

I've had to fight my whole life, I'm not going to stop today.

Vinny drops the lasso.

VINNY

You need to get out of here.

COW

I thought you wanted to make meatballs?

VINNY

I'll figure something else out. Most of these vloggers are vegan anyway.

COW

You know, you can make vegan meatballs.

VINNY

I can?

COW

Yeah. Quinoa, or tofu. Impossible meat. There's a lot of options.

VINNY

I didn't know.

COW

Will you be okay?

I'll figure it out. Go. VINNY

Find your sanctuary. *(pause)*

I'll never forget you. COW

Yes you will. Everyone always does. VINNY

Promise me you'll find your sanctuary. COW

I don't know— VINNY

Promise me. COW

Beat.

I will find my sanctuary. VINNY

And then they kiss? Don't ask me how but they do. And guess what, weirdos, it's kind of hot.

They linger for a moment.

This has been a very bizarre day. VINNY

Cow takes off, sprinting toward off stage.

Wait! VINNY

Cow stops and looks back.

What's your name? VINNY

Pause.

It's Miranda.

COW

Cow runs off stage.

The sounds of the mob yelling go from "let's get it!" To "he's gone, what should we do now?"

A NEWS REPORTER enters.

NEWS REPORTER

Excuse me? I'm with the news. Did you see the Cow?

VINNY

Yes.

NEWS REPORTER

What do you think about that? Seeing a runaway Cow on the streets of Brooklyn?

VINNY

(in a daze)

I think they deserved it.

I think they earned it.

NEWS REPORTER

What's next for you after this bizarre day?

Beat. Vinny finally notices they're on camera.

VINNY

Today's the opening of my new restaurant. Right here. It's called Sanctuary. You should give it a try sometime.

NEWS REPORTER

Oh, sorry I'm vegan.

VINNY

We actually serve vegan food. Meatballs. It's the Miranda Special.

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY