

**I Am Not Afraid to Scream from the Top of a Very Very Very Tall Mountain  
That I Have Empirically Discovered That Hope Hicks Is Carmen Sandiego**

a children's game show

by Kev Berry

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Draft 4.1: April 2018

I AM NOT AFRAID TO SCREAM FROM THE TOP OF A VERY VERY VERY TALL MOUNTAIN THAT I HAVE EMPIRICALLY DISCOVERED THAT HOPE HICKS IS CARMEN SANDIEGO was commissioned and first produced by The Tank (Meghan Finn + Rosalind Grush, Co-Artistic Directors) as a part of The Fast and the Furious at The Tank in New York City in March 2018. It was performed by Kev Berry.

**Who**

Man

**When**

Now

**Where**

America

**What It Looks Like**

A dark theatre with a music stand

This play is for the staff of the Planet Fitness at 157th and Broadway

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Lights up  
A theatre  
The usual location with our usual suspect  
Man  
In a black t-shirt and dark pants  
Looks at us  
And speaks

MAN

People are crazy and it's hard to feel anything but neutral  
Should not be the daily motto of a 25 year old gay man living the dream in Manhattan  
But here we are here I am  
A 25 year old gay man living the dream in Manhattan  
And here it is here is my motto  
People are crazy and it's hard to feel anything but neutral  
People are crazy  
And it's hard to feel anything but neutral  
Of course this isn't to say that this has always been the case  
Last month two months ago people were still crazy  
But it was hard to feel anything but angry  
And we're supposed to be angry at this point in the school shooting cycle  
But it's fucking hard wondering if any of this is actually going to affect real change

I go to the gym and there are lots of TVs arranged in sets of 8  
Channel 2 is CNN  
Channel 3 is ESPN  
Channel 4 is Telemundo  
Channel 5 is TBS  
Channel 6 Planet Fitness Television where they show commercials and nmusic videos  
Channel 7 is CBS  
Channel 8 is Fox News  
And Channel 9 is TNT  
On days like today where I have off or on days where my shift at work starts at 2 or 4:30  
I tend to get to the gym about halfway through The Price is Right  
By the end of my workout the afternoon soaps  
And the midday news have begun their broadcasts

Today none of my normal treadmills were available  
I prefer to run in front of Planet Fitness TV so I can zone out and focus on my podcasts  
Or if that's not an option I prefer to run in front of ESPN so I can zone out and focus

On my deep love of sports  
Or if that's not an option I prefer to run in front of CNN so I can zone out  
And not worry about my politics being confronted vehemently

Today none of my normal treadmills were available so I ended up  
Towards the back and in front of a CBS television  
With a view  
Across the room and in front of the front row of screens  
Of CNN and Fox News  
I avoid running in front of CBS because it is my worst fear  
That I am ever as enthusiastic about anything  
As Midwesterners are about their name being called and being told to come on down  
So today was not an ideal workout  
And on top of that and to add to the dramatic circumstances of this play  
My headphones fucking suck  
So every once in a while my headphones will tell Siri  
The hunky Australian man who lives inside my phone  
To speed the podcasts up to double speed  
Or to just stop playing whatever I'm listening to  
Or to turn the phone off entirely  
And I am tortured  
I lead a tortured existence  
Not only as an artist  
As a 25 year old gay man living the dream in Manhattan  
But also as someone on a fitness journey  
Whose Duane Reade gym headphones cause his rose gold iPhone to malfunction

And today today of all days  
The headphones caused an interview with one of my favorite screenwriters  
To speed up to fast that by the time I had grabbed my phone and begun  
To sweatily grapple with the touch screen  
No easy feat  
By the time the phone was in my hands and I was raggedly breathlessly  
Cursing the ghost of Steve Jobs  
The interview had reached its end and started over at 50 percent speed  
Which as you can imagine  
Made my blood boil  
And as you may have predicted the phone then shut itself off  
And I sighed or screamed angrily  
In the otherwise relatively quiet Planet Fitness at 157th and Broadway

And plugged my crappy headphones into the earphone jack on my treadmill  
Where for the remainder of my workout  
I was forced to listen to The Bold and the Beautiful or something like that

It is a strange thing to find comfort in the gentle realism of a soap opera  
Which again last month two months ago  
Would not be a thing I would have ever considered being a valid thought  
But here we are in the second year of this regime  
Preparing for the second bomb cyclone in a week  
Last year I had no idea what a bomb cyclone was  
And am not convinced they didn't make it up this year  
It is a strange thing to find comfort in the gentle realism of a soap opera  
Letting myself zone out while blonde Ashley asked her stepfather  
Why she wasn't given a position in the family's makeup empire  
And while Michael dealt with Sophia desperately wanting to spinoff her own talk show  
From the talk show she currently co-hosted with her second ex-husband's new fling  
My eyes flitted back and forth between CNN and Fox News  
Fox News was talking about how controversial Kimmel's hosting the Oscars proved  
And still somehow still about how the Parkland kids are crisis actors  
CNN was doing a report about Kellyanne Conway  
Dragging a suitcase of stolen candlesticks and china dinnerware across the South Lawn  
As she makes a sudden and last-ditch effort to flee the country  
And a report about this rising star Sam Nunberg being hammered beyond belief  
During his MSNBC interview  
These are approximations of what I believe the news was  
I didn't care to turn the sound on  
Nor did I care to Google  
While trying to get the page count on this play up to a passable amount  
Hence the page and a half description of the televisions at my gym

These are approximations  
But as my glazed over eyes darted back and forth between CNN and Fox News  
I didn't even get angry  
And not getting angry is normally a good thing  
But as I continued running in my tortured silence  
While generic soap themes blasted into my skull during shoddy transitions  
And underscoring exposition-heavy scenes laden with love and lust and what I wore  
I began to think about why I was feeling nothing  
Other than a small anxiety  
As I deal with each time I workout

That my heart is going to pop out of my chest or just stop altogether  
Causing my obituary to read  
Weak Faggot Dies at Planet Fitness What a Nerd  
Which is also incidentally my current Grindr headline  
But here we are here I am  
Feeling nothing besides the burn of the blood running through my veins  
Slowly wiping away the cholesterol that had built up over the last year  
Feeling nothing besides the burning hope that I'll be conventionally attractive by Pride  
Feeling nothing in general when I should be feeling angry that we are still being  
Subjected to this batshit administration's reality show antics

There's so much happening you guys  
There just so much news  
Everyone's been doing e-mails and there's just so much happening

There's this former presidential aide boasting drunkenly to Rachel Maddow  
Arrest me please arrest me wouldn't it be funny  
There's the president once again tweeting out  
A veiled threat to a nuclear power across the world that we're watching  
There's Alex Jones screaming across the internet somehow  
Even though his YouTube channel has been taken down  
That he has empirically discovered that Hope Hicks is in fact  
International jewel thief Carmen Sandiego  
And that he the newly appointed head of ACME Gumshoe Detective Agency  
Knows exactly where she is  
There's the preparation for the various factions of the March for Our Lives  
Being threatened nationwide by bomb and shooting threats

Two weeks ago now it must have been  
I was sitting at my desk at my office at my job  
And my manager in the otherwise mostly quiet office  
Said just loud enough for all of us to hear  
There's been another shooting  
And we all sighed and said we knew  
We all sighed and cleared the notification off our lock screens

Do we feel nothing because we're numb to it  
Do we feel nothing because we don't want to confront what it feels to feel these things  
Do we feel nothing because these things don't mean anything anymore  
In a country where even the most unfathomable horror doesn't affect change

I want to feel angry of course  
I feel upset that I don't feel angry  
I feel upset that I don't feel anything  
Oh and good  
As I typed this sentence  
A push notification came through that another member of the President's Advisory Board  
Has resigned because he disagreed with the President

And you know what  
I didn't feel anything

The most I've felt in the last week was when I watched Taraji P Henson  
Putting a curse on Ryan Seacrest on the red carpet on Sunday night  
People are crazy but  
As a 25 year old gay man living the dream in Manhattan  
Watching the downfall of sexually deviant straight white men  
Makes it easy to feel anything but neutral  
If the slow decline of the Hollywood we once knew makes my bones tingle this way  
Imagine how we'll feel once the right straight white man  
Gets the downfall he deserves

But til we reach that day  
I'm content to find comfort in my soaps  
And to let my anger stew inside the pressure cooker that is my corporeal existence  
Until it boils up and explodes  
And I find a new way to change the world

People are crazy  
And it's hard to feel anything but neutral  
And maybe that's just the most delicious challenge

The lights snap out

**End of Play**