ZOOMY ZOOMY KILL KILL:
A HORROR STORY FOR A WORLD IN QUARANTINE

by Ricardo Pérez González
ZOOMY ZOOMY KILL KILL is meant to be performed live over Zoom. The screen should display four participants, and the Hosting Zoom Account should mute and disable the cameras of spectators. 

(STAGING NOTE: If two actors aren’t available in the same space due to quarantine issues, the play’s final moments can take place over Zoom.)

CARLTON WARD, mid 30s, African American, nerdy, business casual button down, pops up on screen.

CARLTON

Hello?

He searches the screen, looking for other participants. Seeing there are none, he checks himself out on screen. Fixes his hair. Maybe picks his teeth or rubs his nose. The second after he touches his face he realizes what he’s done. He stares at his hand in horror.

He checks the screen, gets up quickly. We notice he is wearing classic Zoom corporate attire: button down on top, boxers on the bottom. Yes, he is, indeed, pantsless. He exits the screen, returns with hand sanitizer. He squirts some on his hands, his keyboard, his screen, sanitizing his work space. He is caught off guard when LINDA MONTOYA, Latina, 20s/30s pops on screen, wearing earbuds.

LINDA

Hello?
CARLTON
Hello?

LINDA
Hello!

*Carlton quickly slips on large, noise cancelling headphones.*

CARLTON
Hello!

LINDA
Are we the first ones on?

CARLTON
Yeah…

LINDA
Oh.

*That awkward moment. You know the one. Where you know you have to make small talk but don’t want to.*

CARLTON
So… how are you?

LINDA
You know. Same as everyone.

CARLTON
Yeah.

LINDA
Yeah.

*Before things get too awkward, KELLY GRACE, 20s/30s, pops on screen, followed shortly by MARIO PALMA, 20s 30s, all with earbuds in.*

KELLY
Hey hey party people! // How’s it going?
Heya!

Hey Mario! Kelly.

Linda! Carlton! Kelly.

Linda! Carlton! Kelly.

TGIF ya’ll! Everyone excited for the weekend?!

Yeah. // Cause that’s a thing still…

Sure. // Totally

Seriously?

I am looking forward to opening up a bottle of wine with the old husbandrino and putting up our feet ya’ll! With Brian at the hospital all day, oof! I am just a ball of stress!

Oh. I’d forgotten your husband is a doctor.

Clearly, she hasn’t.

Yeah, it’s pretty tough, him being like on the front lines, I mean the front lines, you know?

Can we maybe just start—

I can’t imagine what that must be like, Kelly—

Really? I can // because she talks about it like every—
CARLTON
These are really difficult times for all of us and it’s important that we all support one another. Right?

KELLY
Oh my god, yes!

CARLTON
Right, everyone?

LINDA
//Right.

MARIO
Yeah. Sure.

CARLTON
Why don’t we begin? I believe… Kelly, it’s your turn to lead the daily debrief.

LINDA
Yay. So many yays.

KELLY
It is! And I have so many ideas about this new branding opportunity. I’ve put together a Prezi that traces the history of erectile dysfunction medication in the U.S. and the relative success of brands as relates to name-recognition. So the first ED treatment of note was Dr. Samuel Solomon’s Balm of Gilead, a cordial that actually suppressed sexual impulses // to help “build up semen reserves”—

LINDA
Can you—can you maybe just e-mail the Power Point and we can review it offline?

KELLY
Well, first off, it’s a Prezi, not a Power Point, and second off it’s kind of crucial to my branding recommendations and I put a lot of work into this so // I’d appreciate—

LINDA
Look, I get you put a lot of work into it. I just really want to know your final recommendation // so I can start my end of the project—

KELLY
Yeah? You want my final recommendation? That’s a first! You’ve paid like zero attention to this project // all week—
LINDA
Well I’m sorry if naming a new erectile disfunction pill is NOT my top priority right now, okay? Just tell me what you want to call it and I’ll design a logo, okay?

KELLY
I thought we were running this by consensus, Carl, because when I pitched Engorg-a-lux // to you, you said we needed to run it by the team—

CARLTON
We are, // but ultimately you’re the project owner and we’ll follow your lead—

LINDA
Don’t bring him // into this—

MARIO
Guys, I’m having trouble hearing everyone with everyone talking like this, this isn’t the best platform—

*The sound of shattering glass.*

MARIO
What was that?

CARLTON
What?

LINDA
Sounded like glass.

KELLY
I didn’t hear anything.

CARLTON
Neither did I.

MARIO
That was definitely glass breaking.

CARLTON
Well did someone drop a glass?

LINDA
Not *a* glass, like glass, like a window shattering.
KELLY
Did one of your kids have an accident // or something—

LINDA
None of us have kids and you’d know that if you listened // to someone other than yourself—

MARIO
No one’s in the house except me.

CARLTON
Just me too. But I was on mute so it didn’t come from my end—

KELLY
No you weren’t.

CARLTON
I was.

KELLY
No, the little mute icon comes up and yours wasn’t up.

CARLTON
Are you sure?

KELLY
Totally. I’m like very observant, despite what some people might think.

MARIO
I don’t think it came from—

Another sound. Everyone hears it this time.

CARLTON
Okay. I heard that.

LINDA
Was it coming from your place?

CARLTON
I’m… I’m not sure.

MARIO
Hold on… I think I heard something here. I’ll be right back.
LINDA
You’re not going to check it out.

MARIO
Yeah.

LINDA
This is like horror movie 101. You don’t go checking out strange noises, you run in the opposite direction.

MARIO
Come on. I’ll be right back.

LINDA
At least unplug your head phones so we can hear you if you’re being murdered.

MARIO
Fine.

Mario unplugs. Walks off screen. The other three wait.

KELLY
Do you think we should // call someone—

CARLTON
Shhhh!

Silence. Then more suspicious noises and—

MARIO (OFFSCREEN)
Jesus Christ!

CARLTON
Mario!

LINDA
//Oh God!

KELLY
I’m calling the police.

MARIO (OFFSCREEN)
No! No! Everything’s fine! It’s just Luigi.
Mario returns. If the actor playing Mario has a pet he brings the pet on. If not, he doesn’t.

MARIO
My cat (or other pet). Luigi. Say hi Luigi!

He either sets the pet down or waves to it offscreen.

LINDA
Fucking god.

CARLTON
Hey. This Zoom is being recorded for senior management—

LINDA
Forgive me for being concerned about my coworker.

MARIO
Dude, it’s fine.

LINDA
The world is a post-apocalyptic shitshow. It’s only a matter of time before our lives becomes Saw XII.

MARIO
Relax. Besides, if this were a horror movie, I wouldn’t be the first to go. I mean…

He looks toward Carlton’s box, if such a thing is possible.

CARLTON
Really? Are we really dragging out that old chestnut—

MARIO
Dude! No! I didn’t mean it like that. // We’re talking tropes, man—

LINDA
Mario, why are you always such an ass? You give Latinos // the world over a bad name—

KELLY
Can we get back to my Prezi? // I worked really hard—
MARIO

// You’re one to talk, gringuita—

LINDA

Would you drop the Power Point—

KELLY

It’s a Prezi!

CARLTON

You know what. I think we’re done here.

KELLY

But Carlton—

CARLTON

No. No. Linda’s right. This is ridiculous. Send her your presentation with your recommendations and she’ll mock up a logo. E-mail it to Mario for legal clearance and I’ll approve the damn thing. PharmaRex will take what we give them—this is so not important right now.

MARIO

Don’t we want to—

CARLTON

No. We don’t. Whatever it is, it’s not important. Meeting adjourned.

KELLY

Carl—

CARLTON

Meeting. Adjourned.

KELLY

Fine. Fine. I’ll just e-mail. Forget the hours of work I put into this.

She leaves the Zoom meeting.

MARIO

Wow. Great meeting guys.

CARLTON

Mario—
MARIO
I got it. I got it. Talk to you later. Boss.

Mario leaves Linda and Carlton alone in the room.

LINDA
Hey. You okay?

CARLTON
I’m fine. Being cooped up’s just starting to get to me.

LINDA
Yeah. I think it’s getting to us all. Look, I’m sorry if I was out of line—

CARLTON
Linda. You’re straightforward. Direct. And I love that about you. But just… try to be a little more patient. Kelly’s really good at her job and her husband actually is on the “front lines,” you know?

LINDA
So are grocery workers—

CARLTON
Yeah, and are you married to one? Know any, in fact? Don’t “all-front-line-workers-matter” her when she’s living with a fear you don’t have to live with every day, okay?

LINDA
Yeah. I just did that, didn’t I? Fine. I’m sorry.

CARLTON
Don’t be sorry. Be better. Okay?

LINDA
Roger. Take care of yourself. Okay?

CARLTON
Roger.

Linda leaves the meeting. Carlton remains on screen. He deflates.

More menacing noises, this time closer, and this time obviously coming from Carlton’s space. He removes his head phones to listen.
Hello?

A shadow falls behind Carlton. He looks up, his eyes wide.

WILSON (OFFSCREEN)

(whispering, creepily) Are you alone?

CARLTON

Yeah.

A MAN enters the screen wearing a ski mask as Carlton stares, seemingly frozen.

The man removes the mask, puts his arms around Carlton from behind. Kisses his head. This is WILSON, Carlton’s boyfriend.

CARLTON

I thought better of it.

WILSON

Yeah. It seemed kind of messed up.

CARLTON

I thought it’d be fun.

WILSON

Because what the world needs now is more mayhem.

CARLTON

Prank mayhem. A fake kidnapping… it’s like classic April Fools.

WILSON

I think this is a read-the-room situation.

CARLTON

Yeah. Yeah…

WILSON

Next year, baby. Next year.
CARLTON
If there is a next year.

WILSON
Yeah.

CARLTON
Yeah.

WILSON
Yeah.

They stare into their laptop’s camera. Their screen goes blank.

End of play.