

SCRIPT

GROUP
D

Occupation, inhabitation and appropriation

Satire comedy in three acts

By Group D

Characters/cast

QUEEN ELISABETH I: the ghostly narrator, drifting through the edges of the scene, never acknowledged by the characters; an observer of the scene.

BOY

GIRL1

GIRL2

GIRL3

SUPERFICIAL: driven by fear of loneliness, tries to take part in a culture by copying visual style and consumer goods

ANTICOMMODITY: Keeps society on a distance by deliberate uglification, drawn to violence, Rejects the concept of history and future

CAMPAIGNER

DESIRE: restless, grasping, always wanting something just out of reach.

HABIT: repetitive, ritualistic, insists things must be done “as they always are.”

Excess – pragmatic, hoards, tries to make use of everything.

ACTI - The Occupation

I.1. The Dark Room

(A dark square room. In the gloom, Queen Elizabeth squints her eyes to just make out the space around her. Black. Smooth. Anonymous. A single neon light, left on all night, dimly illuminates the empty tables.)

QUEEN: This is a place I hardly knew. A place where the noise of keyboards fills the silence, so I've been told. A place where colors must be hidden. A place where the ticking of the clock matters more than the beating of a heart. "A multinational," as they call it.

(The closed windows and lowered blinds do not let the moonlight slip in between the rolling chairs. The Queen walks slowly along the monotonous rows of tables and runs her hand over the black lockers.)

QUEEN: (she moves in the middle of the room) Why is it so cold here? How can a place so often used feel so unwelcoming? The touch of the metal is most unpleasant.

I.2 The Demonstration

(The office is still closed when a commotion draws near. Songs and inaudible shouts reach the ears of the Queen. She cautiously approaches the window and raises the blind a few centimeters.)

QUEEN: What is this crowd of masked people in the distance? Their faces seem all the same, and they chant in unison slogans I can hardly grasp... Why do they come toward me? This is something from Seattle 1999.

(Soon, only one façade separates the Queen from the jubilant crowd. They sing, dance, drum, and settle down gently. One group unfolds tents, another pulls out pots of paint in every color, and five young people force open the main once door and sneak into the dark room. Queen Elizabeth watches intently, without saying a word.)

ACTI - The Occupation

I.3 The Occupation

BOY: Hand me a flashlight, I can't see a thing in here! Everything is gray and dead.

GIRL1: Perfect place to set up our camp, isn't it? (she tosses him a flashlight across the room)

(The five young people spread out across the room, drop ping their bags on the floor, their placards and their colorful fabrics on the walls. One of them takes out some candles, a match, and places them around the room. Another inflates a mattress in the middle of the space. They all chant the same slogans together, on repeat. Laughter and color soon fill the entire room. Queen Elizabeth observes, puzzled and fascinated.)

QUEEN: They storm this place like corsairs, yet their weapons are not of steel. A strange conquest! Once, my soldiers planted flags. They... they hang motley cloths. I do not yet understand: do they seek a kingdom? Or do they merely wish... to exist?

(The occupants all settle onto the creaking mattress and pull out their provisions; they have enough to last at least two weeks.)

GIRL2: I'll bring some color in here! (she laughs) Where are the spray cans?

(A boy hands her a green spray can, and within seconds, rebellious slogans cover the black walls of the room.)

GIRL3: Their rules are over. Here, this is our kingdom, messy and alive! (she raises a banner)

(After finishing off a few tins of beans, the five young people lie down, determined to remain there.)

QUEEN: I, who once ruled an empire, discover tonight a kingdom without a king, where revolt brings no death, and where life settles once more where it no longer was.

ACTII - The Inhabitation

II.1 Pillow Cave

(A room structured through a succession of floors on different levels. A cavernous, badly but warmly lit room. The floor is completely invisible, buried under a miscellaneous arrangement of mattresses, pillows, sheets, and other domestic comforting elements. The transition from floor to wall can only be imagined, as it is hidden by a continuous layer of artefacts of a society solely connected by the mutual possession of consumer goods. Between the ridges, a silhouette can be surmised. Only the face is clearly visible, lit by fast successions of blinking coloured light. The sound of short-form video content—often interrupted after tenths of seconds by a swipe—is the most prominent sensory element.)

QUEEN: Look at them. Trying to manifest their lives in their possessions. One creates a cushioned cocoon of fashionable artifacts to keep out the unbearable world that creates these fashions. Yet it is pierced by the fanfare of ever-expanding fractured subcultures, that change in the instance of a touch. Others try to cope with writing and reading history, while the last want to singularize history and future by tearing down society.

II.2 The workshop for societal turmoil

(The new camera films Superficial from behind. In the foreground, the pillow landscape fades out until the end of its platform, defined by a rounded curve. It is located roughly 40 cm higher than the adjacent and colder central area of the room. There, an arrangement of motorcycles, a makeshift workbench constructed from shipping pallets, and all kinds of tools—of which it is not clear if they are used for their intended purpose or as weapons. On the bench, Anti Commodity works on a Molotov cocktail.

Across this higher part of the ensemble, a wooden cluster of cells, rooms, and other niches and crevices defined by right angles is visible. The doors and windows are the only areas that resist the consistent application of posters, artefacts, and the use of every available ledge as a bookshelf. A rockface of the rewriting of history opens up higher than the light allows the camera to capture it.

ACTII - The Inhabitation

On one of the ledges, Campaigner sits, writing a recasting of history.

Superficial lies on a pile of cushions, scrolling through her phone. Anti Commodity slams a hammer onto the workbench, startling Superficial. Campaigner looks up from her notebook, her pen hovering over the page.)

ANTI COMMODITY: (holding up the Molotov cocktail, examining it) This is how you make a point. Not with words. Not with likes. With fire.

SUPERFICIAL: (glancing at the bottle, then back at her phone) Or you could just, you know, not set things on fire. It's a little dramatic, don't you think?

ANTI COMMODITY: (smirks, wiping her hands on her jeans) And what's your solution? Posting about it? Waiting for someone to hand you a revolution in 280 characters?

SUPERFICIAL: (shrugs, scrolling) At least I'm not out here romanticizing destruction like it's some kind of art form.

CAMPAIGNER: (closing her notebook, her voice cutting through) You're both missing the point. (to Anti Commodity) You think burning it all down makes you free, but you're still using their tools, their streets, their rules. (to Superficial) And you? You're so busy documenting the revolution, you've forgotten to live it.

SUPERFICIAL: (pauses, then snaps back) Oh, please. Not everyone can afford to be a martyr or a philosopher. Some of us just want to get through the day.

ANTI COMMODITY: (lights a cigarette, exhales slowly) Getting through the day isn't the same as changing it.

CAMPAIGNER: (standing, tucking her notebook into her bag) And burning it down isn't the same as building something new.

ACTII - The Inhabitation

(A distant alarm blares. The lights flicker. Superficial tenses, her fingers tightening around her phone. Anti Commodity doesn't move, but her grip on the bottle tightens. Campaigner watches the door her expression unreadable.)

SUPERFICIAL: (quietly) Is that the cops?

ANTI COMMODITY: (grinning, almost to herself) Let them come.

CAMPAIGNER: (picks up her bag, calm) Or we could leave. Take the story somewhere else.

(The alarm wails. Queen Elizabeth watches from the shadows, her gaze moving between the three women—each frozen in their own defiance, their own fear, their own version of control.)

QUEEN: (softly, to the audience) A kingdom of poses. Each one convinced their mask is the face beneath.

ACTIII - The Castle (Appropriation)

III.1 The lounge

(An enfilade of rooms in a castle. A paint can crashes onto the floor. Blue paint spreads across the parquet flooring, bleeding onto the Persian rug curls up at the corners. A plastic crown and sceptre sits at the end of a table. Gold wallpaper is already peeling off the walls. Velvet curtains flop against fake panelled walls. A chandelier hangs low, half the lights do not work. A mattress leans against one wall, badly disguised with a blanket.

DESIRE: (leaning forward, pointing) There. The crash. That's the moment. We should repeat it—no, preserve it—no, erase it.

HABIT: (trying to mop with a tea towel) Every spill has a routine. Dab, blot, rinse. As it was yesterday, so it shall be today.

SURPLUS: (collecting drips into a chipped mug) Don't waste it. Blue is useful. We can trade with it, maybe.

(A silence falls on the scene. The Queen enters, at the very edge of the room. She watches; speaking to the audience, not the actors)

QUEEN: Observe. They think themselves keepers of the place, but they are merely only outsiders of residue and stain. They dream of dominion, but dominion has already fled.

III.2 The kitchen

(The kettle clicks as steam is pouring out the spout. Habit produces mismatched cups. Desire snatches at the cups, placing it in the centre waiting for the teapot. Surplus pours imaginary tea from it into cups. Nothing ever fills. They all sip nothing.)

HABIT: This is how it goes: you pour from kettle from the centre, with your cup cups. One sip, then pass.

DESIRE: (angrily) But nothing comes out! I wanted tea, one milk two sugars!

SURPLUS: (angrily) We drink nothing, habit. There is nothing in the pot.

ACTII - The Inhabitation

(The Queen drifts closer, whispering.)

III.3 The library

(A personal library filled with books backed onto gordy wallpaper. A book slams onto the floor to draw the viewers attention into focus. Habit picks up the book, which is one of their favourites. Surplus sits in an armchair next to desire on the floor.)

DESIRE: Don't read that shit.

HABIT: (picks up the book on the floor) You're not a fan of Karl Marx's The Communist Manifesto? (with a hint or irony)

DESIRE: That is a crock of shit that, full of lack of freedoms and ideas that will send us back to the stone age.

SURPLUS: (chirps up) Yeah, think about it we'd never have the place we're living in now.

QUEEN: How can I possibly speak impartially on this. I own all the antiques they speak of. The gold-plated wallpaper and chairs are mine too. (The Queen turns to the viewer) and they belong to you too, (pause) don't they?

End