

AN ABUNDANCE OF CAUTION

A Play written for videoconferencing

CHARACTERS

CHARLIE, man

FINN, woman

TIME

Day Four, Worldwide Quarantine

SETTING

Socially-isolated living rooms, different homes.

CHARLIE and FINN check in via Zoom. Weird times!

FINN

We will sing classical arias on our balconies, to lift the human spirit!

CHARLIE

We will squabble at Costco over Lysol spray, bitches!

FINN

What is something you dislike about yourself?

CHARLIE

Go away.

FINN

What is something you do well? Answer me.
What is your favorite room in your home and why?

CHARLIE

What “home”?

FINN

What is a good neighbor?

CHARLIE

Shut up.

FINN

I’m elevating the conversation! Now tell me, what is your favorite time of day?

CHARLIE

Nap time.

FINN

What is something you are optimistic about?

CHARLIE

Wombat altruism.

FINN

What is something you are pessimistic about?

CHARLIE

Ongoing nightmares.

FINN

What is your most indispensable possession and why?

CHARLIE

My own penis, for obvious reasons.

FINN

What is your favorite song and why?

CHARLIE

Happy Birthday.

FINN

Why?

CHARLIE

I don't know!

FINN

What is the best birthday present you ever received?

CHARLIE

Vitamin C. The chewable gummy ones that tasted like candy.

FINN

Fucking great. What is the best birthday present you could receive?

CHARLIE

A bubble bath. I only have a shower here.

FINN

What is something that makes you feel sad?

CHARLIE

I'm not doing this.

FINN

What is your favorite book and why?

CHARLIE

We don't — We have a log and a rope and a ball. We don't have *books*.

FINN

What is something that really bugs you?

Really?

CHARLIE

What is something that really makes you angry?

FINN

Uh.

CHARLIE

What is the best advice you ever received?

FINN

Unplug your toaster between usages.

CHARLIE

What?

FINN

You never know what might happen.

CHARLIE

Electrocution?

FINN

That didn't happen yet, did it? So.

CHARLIE

What is your favorite holiday? What makes this holiday special?

FINN

I liked the one with the green beans.

CHARLIE

What is your favorite day of the week?

FINN

It's just gray?

CHARLIE

What is your favorite month? Why?

FINN

The wombats were inviting other animals into their burrows. Isn't that nice?

CHARLIE

FINN

What would happen if you could fly whenever you wanted? When would you use this ability?

CHARLIE

I'd go get sesame chicken.

FINN

What would happen if there were no television? Why would this be good? bad?

CHARLIE

Log. I like log.

FINN

What would happen if everyone lived in space? What type of houses would they live in?

CHARLIE

It would all look like IKEA but the part with the pots and pans.

FINN

What type of clothing would they wear? What type of food would they eat? How would they travel?

CHARLIE

If we go into space — Do we have to eat our own young? I don't know how it works.

FINN

What if cows gave root beer instead of milk?

CHARLIE

Where would we get the ice cream for root beer floats?

FINN

What if all the streets were rivers? What would be different?

CHARLIE

I can't swim.

FINN

What would happen if it really did rain cats and dogs?

CHARLIE

Did they up your meds?

FINN

What would happen if animals could talk?

What are some of the questions you would like to ask animals?

CHARLIE

Do you hear music in your head, too? Because there's this Billy Joel song that's been stuck —

FINN

What would happen if you grew taller than trees? How would this change your life?

What would happen if you found gold in your pocket?

What would you do if someone said you did something wrong and you didn't?

CHARLIE

I miss cheese.

FINN

If you were five years older you would...

CHARLIE

Be dead?

FINN

If you were lost in the woods and it got dark, what would you do?

CHARLIE

I used to —

FINN

If you had to describe yourself as a color, which would you choose?

CHARLIE

Oh — I know this one.

FINN

What do you think about ghosts?

What do you think of someone who has bad manners?

What do you think about people who take advantage of others?

What do you think about when you can't fall asleep?

What do you think courage means?

I —

FINN

What is something that makes you melancholy?

What makes you laugh?

CHARLIE

There was this movie with —

FINN

Explain how to play your favorite game.

CHARLIE

Charades! You start with —

FINN

Why is it important to be honest?

Why is it not wise to squander your money?

CHARLIE

Choose a player to start the game. The player thinks of a book title, a famous person's name, a saying, a movie title or a song title to pantomime. He should choose something with which the others will be familiar.

To indicate a book, pretend to read a book.

To indicate a song, pretend to sing.

To indicate a movie, pretend to crank an old movie camera.

FINN

Why?

CHARLIE

To indicate the number of words, hold up that many fingers. (Then hold up one finger before pantomiming the first word, two fingers before the second, and so on.) To pantomime a word that rhymes with the word you want players to guess, first tug on your ear to say "sounds like."

The first person to guess the word or phrase gets a point. Ready? Thumbs up emoji if you are.

FINN clicks the thumbs up emoji. CHARLIE mimes something.

CHARLIE

Bread.

FINN

No!

CHARLIE

What?

FINN

You can't just do that.

CHARLIE

Do what?

Say, "Bread."	FINN
That was my word.	CHARLIE
We're not playing anymore!	FINN
We're not?	CHARLIE
Mime it — Like this.	FINN
Feedback.	CHARLIE
Nope!	FINN
Stranger?	CHARLIE
Uh-uh.	FINN
How many words?	CHARLIE
Stupid. This many!	FINN
Movie town region.	CHARLIE
No!	FINN
Memory ear presence.	CHARLIE
You're not even trying.	FINN

CHARLIE

How many syllables?

FINN

Jesus.

FINN keeps miming.

CHARLIE

Confusion Delivery Science?
Grandmother Preference Housing?
Historian Clothes Homework?

It's just.

FINN

Yeah?

CHARLIE

Breakfast.

FINN

Oh. That was the —

CHARLIE

Yes.

*They both wave and smile, maybe their pets join in.
They might eat a snack, and they click, "Leave the meeting."*

End of play.