

# Bezos N' Me

\*or\*

( R a d i c a l ) ( O p t i m i s t s )

By Patrick Vermillion

Welcome to the 2020s, the hottest, most pungent, disgusting decade yet.  
In Los Angeles, California, the closest place on Earth to actual fucking hell,  
A few legendary folks (basically frickin' Jedis!) practice the revolutionary philosophy that  
Everything is actually going to be totally O K A Y.

Portsmen - M - 30s - A Radical Optimist

Lizbeth - F - 30s - A Radical Optimist

Jeff Bezos - M - 59 - A Radical Optimist

Trashy McGarbage - Just an absolutely terrible human being. A truly sick and misguided individual who doesn't understand economics or social policy. While character descriptions are usually supposed to be objective the author has gone out of their way here to remind the audience that this person is fundamentally the bad guy. You should by no means root for them. If you think this play in any way endorses this person you are trash. Garbage. Fuck you. Please hate this character. A program should indicate this character should be boo'd whenever they are on stage. Maybe have a convicted felon play them to make it a little more "real"

*"Optimism, what is that?"*

*"It is the obstinacy of maintaining that everything is best when it is worst"*

- Candide

*"Had to have high, high hopes for a living  
Shooting for the stars when I couldn't make a killing  
Didn't have a dime but I always had a vision  
Always had high, high hopes"*

- Pete Buttigieg Theme Song

Day 1: start up

Day 2: stasis

Day 3: irrelevance

Day 4: excruciating, painful decline

Day 5: death

- Jeff Bezos's actual life philosophy (It's always day 1).

## SCENE 1

A massive, beautiful gate in front of a driveway that leads up a hill and into a massive mansion. The area is surrounded by a thick forest. The gate is bordered with two stone pillars. In front of each pillar is a blue plastic chair. In the left sits PORTSMAN and in the right sits LIZBETH. Both of them are carrying massive assault rifles. Portsmān examines his gun, while Lizbeth stares into space. She sniffs.

LIZBETH

Smells like smoke.

Portsmān projectile vomits onto the ground.

LIZBETH

Jesus fuck!

PORTSMAN

Sorry about that.

LIZBETH

Are you okay?

PORTSMAN

Yeah I'm fine. That's just my anxiety.

LIZBETH

That's a lot of vomit.

PORTSMAN

I had soup for lunch.

LIZBETH

I'm sorry you're experiencing anxiety.

PORTSMAN

It's okay. You're right.

LIZBETH

About what?

PORTSMAN

It does smell like smoke.

LIZBETH

Yeah, it does.

PORTSMAN

I thought the fire was up in Ventura.

LIZBETH

They said the wind is blowing it down here.

PORTSMAN

Wow! I live between here and Ventura so that's kind of nerve-wracking!

LIZBETH

Haha don't vomit again.

PORTSMAN

Haha bleh! Nah, I'm just messing around. It'll be fine.

LIZBETH

Nice. Yeah it'll for sure be okay.

PORTSMAN

So yeah, I'm working on a new pilot.

LIZBETH

Woah, really?

PORTSMAN

Yeah I decided the Priests were too--- Now's not a good time for priests.

LIZBETH

Agreed.

PORTSMAN

This one is about a softball team. And like, all these people in New York. (I used to live in New York) who come to Central Park to play on this softball team. And how it like, impacts their lives.

LIZBETH

That sounds really good. Is it funny?

PORTSMAN

It's funny most of the time but it's also very sad and occasionally devastating.

LIZBETH

Runtime?

PORTSMAN

30 minutes with breathing room, so maybe occasionally dips into 40-45 minute territory but no commercial breaks.

LIZBETH

Sound excellent. I'll buy it.

PORTSMAN

Haha I wish.

LIZBETH

Haha one day. So yeah, my pilot's the same as always. It's like. I feel it should be funnier. I don't know how to make it funnier.

PORTSMAN

Does the mom character still commit suicide?

LIZBETH

Yes.

PORTSMAN

Hmmmm

LIZBETH

But my mom actually did commit suicide.

PORTSMAN

Yeah, that's just very challenging subject material for a half-hour sitcom.

LIZBETH

Okay, it's a dramedy and besides, that juxtaposition is exactly what I want! I don't know. It might still be too raw. I haven't been able to distance myself from it.

PORTSMAN

You've been working on it for like five years though, haven't you?

LIZBETH

Are you gonna clean that up?

PORTSMAN

Oh yeah.

Portzman begins to clean up his vomit. He reaches behind a bush and pulls out a large plastic container with yellow liquid in it. There is a label on it reading: "Amazon Basics Waste Disposal Container."

LIZBETH

What are you doing?

PORTSMAN

I'm putting my vomit in the communal urine jug.

LIZBETH

But the urine jug is optimized for urine only.

PORTSMAN

I mean, it's almost full.

LIZBETH

Right, but it's my week to sanitize the communal urine jug and I would rather not clean vomit residue out in addition to both of our urines.

PORTSMAN

Oh, I'm sorry. That's inconsiderate of me. How about I sanitize the urine jug this week.

LIZBETH

No, you don't have to! That would be two weeks in a row.

PORTSMAN

I really don't mind!

LIZBETH

Ohhhh okay, if you say so! I owe you one!

PORTSMAN

Ohhh You don't owe me anything I'm putting vomit in the urine jug, if anything I owe you!

LIZBETH

Ohhh I feel bad now.

PORTSMAN

Ohhhh why do you feel bad?

LIZBETH

I don't know. I feel like I was horrible to you.

PORTSMAN

You weren't. Tell me more about the pilot!

LIZBETH

No, no. It's terrible. I don't want to even talk about it.

Portsman finishes scooping the vomit into the container.

LIZBETH

Okay. Wait.

PORTSMAN

What's up!

LIZBETH

I was just thinking: You know what has suicide in the pilot? Fleabag! And that's like, the best show ever made.

PORTSMAN

Fleabag IS the best show ever made.

LIZBETH

It's so good.

PORTSMAN

So good.

LIZBETH

The priest?

PORTSMAN

The priest.

LIZBETH

"It'll pass"

Brutal. PORTSMAN

Devastating. LIZBETH

But so good. PORTSMAN

SO good. LIZBETH

But yeah. PORTSMAN

Yeah. LIZBETH

Yeah. PORTSMAN

Yeah. LIZBETH

Yeah. PORTSMAN

Yeah. I guess. Do you really want to invoke comparisons to Fleabag, though? LIZBETH

Of course, who wouldn't! PORTSMAN

Right, but I mean like. Do you want people to say "This is like a less funny Fleabag" LIZBETH

Oh...No, I guess not...Ugh! I wish I could let you read it. PORTSMAN

I'd be happy to read it! LIZBETH

It's just not ready yet. PORTSMAN

I understand.



LIZBETH

I'll read your softball thing though.

PORTSMAN

Ugh, when it exists. You'll be the first person.

LIZBETH

Promise?

PORTSMAN

Promise.

Portsman puts the lid on the container and puts it back to its place in the brush. Lizbeth puts her head in her hands.

LIZBETH

I'm never going to be a writer.

PORTSMAN

Hey! Don't say that.

LIZBETH

It's true. My ideas are stupid and derivative. I don't write anything important ever. I'm the biggest fucking idiot of all time. I deserve cancer. Or double cancer.

PORTSMAN

Lizbeth!!! Don't say things like that. Think of the bible.

Portsman pulls out a book from thin air. It reads "The Radical Optimist's Bible"

PORTSMAN

We are radical optimists because we believe that the future will be a better place for all people! That includes ourselves.

LIZBETH

I know, I know. I'm just not feeling very optimistic in myself right now. Besides the world is falling apart, who am I to think I could write in a time like this?

PORTSMAN

Hey no one said it's easy to be an optimist these days.

LIZBETH

Everyday feels worse than the last.

PORTSMAN

But that's the trick! Pessimism is the enemy. A self-fulfilling prophecy of misery. What does Guillimo Del Toro, director of *The Shape of Water*, say?

LIZBETH

"Optimism is the instinct to breathe when you're suffocating."

PORTSMAN

You are being suffocated by negative thoughts! You forget, we have a new President! Time to breathe.

Lizbeth breathes deeply.

PORTSMAN

You will be successful.

LIZBETH

I will be successful.

PORTSMAN

You are a good person.

LIZBETH

I am a good person.

PORTSMAN

You deserve success because you're a good person.

LIZBETH

I deserve success because I'm a good person!

PORTSMAN

Now breathe IN and OUT!

Lizbeth inhales & exhales.

LIZBETH

We do have a new President, don't we?

She looks ahead.

LIZBETH

Woah, do you see that?

See what?

PORTSMAN

Car coming up the driveway?

LIZBETH

Mail?

PORTSMAN

No...It looks like...Oh my God, Portsman. I think that's him.

LIZBETH

What? No way. He never comes down here!

PORTSMAN

I swear to God that's his car!

LIZBETH

Well, I'll be slapped silly! You did it!

PORTSMAN

Oh stop.

LIZBETH

No really! You summoned him with your positive energy! This is the power of radical optimism!

PORTSMAN

Portsman and Lizbeth both throw their chairs off the sides of the stage. They stand at attention.

PORTSMAN

How do I look? Do I look like I vomited recently?

LIZBETH

No, but you do smell a little like puke.

PORTSMAN

That's okay. You look good.

LIZBETH

Okay.

The car pulls up on stage. A door opens.

PORTSMAN

(Whispering.)

Oh my god it's him.

LIZBETH

(Whispering back.)

Still drives a Honda Accord what a gentle soul.

PORTSMAN

Why do you think he's here?

LIZBETH

Maybe there's a premier coming up!

PORTSMAN

Oh my God maybe he's with a celebrity.

LIZBETH

What if he's with Channing Tatum?

PORTSMAN

I would drench my pants with piss if Channing Tatum was in that car!

LIZBETH

Haha you better use the jug!

PORTSMAN

Haha, no I totally would.

Bezos steps out of the car, dressed in a t-shirt and khaki shorts. He waves kindly.

BEZOS

Hello there!

LIZBETH

(To Portsman)

Mask up!

Portsman and Lizbeth both pull out Amazon branded masks and put them over their mouths.

LIZBETH

Greetings sir.

PORTSMAN

Good afternoon!

BEZOS

I don't know if we've ever met but uh, I own this house you're guarding! Haha!

PORTSMAN

Haha! Of course, Mr. Bezos! Welcome home!

BEZOS

Haha! Thank you! That's quite a gun you're carrying!

PORTSMAN

Oh? These? Yeah, I don't know. Maybe they're excessive.

LIZBETH

We used to just have tasers but these came in the other day and they told us-

BEZOS

Oh no, no it's all good. This is good. Let me take a look.

Portsmann hands Bezos his assault rifle. He inspects it. Then he inspects them.

BEZOS

You guys look so tense. Loosen up those joints.

LIZBETH

Sorry sir.

PORTSMAN

Sorry Mr. Bezos.

BEZOS

No, don't be sorry. And you can lose the masks by the way.

PORTSMAN

Sorry sir.

BEZOS

Don't be sorry! You were following company policy. But it's a hot day and the air quality's already bad enough. Besides, I'm fully vaccinated for the new strain.

PORTSMAN

Wow!

LIZBETH

That's incredible.

BEZOS

Ah, please, I'm just lucky. I wish I could do more. So much loss. It's inconceivable. Have you been vaccinated yet?

LIZBETH

No, sir. We're in still in line.

BEZOS

You should get on that, it's important for our future.

PORTSMAN AND LIZBETH

Yes sir!

BEZOS

(Winking.)

Just tell them you work for me.

Portzman and Lizbeth geek out.

BEZOS

This is a real piece of machinery. Mind if I give it a go?

PORTSMAN

Please do!

Bezos turns around and looks at the car.

BEZOS

Alexa, survival protocol DS9.

A drone flies out of the car. It flies into the air. Bezos shoots it repeatedly with the assault rifle. Portzman and Lizbeth clap.

PORTSMAN

Amazing aim!

LIZBETH

You're a natural!

BEZOS

Oh, I hardly know what I'm doing. Just a few survival classes I've been taking in my spare time.

The drone is on the ground crying an upsettingly human-like scream.

BEZOS

Sorry. That's uh. That's been a bug.

He shoots it again. It dies. Portsman makes a singular clap.

BEZOS

This thing's really nasty. What is it?

LIZBETH

That's an M16, Mr. Bezos.

BEZOS

Is this the one that teenager used to kill all those poor people at The Grove last month?

LIZBETH

Oh, no. That was a modified bushmaster.

BEZOS

God. Where do they get those guns? You know, Amazon is the only online retailer that doesn't sell guns! I said never ever will I sell guns on this site.

LIZBETH

Yes thank you for that Mr. Bezos!

BEZOS

Horrible thing, that was. Troubled kid. How many people did he kill again, 13?

PORTSMAN

I thought it was 15, because he killed his parents first.

BEZOS

Right. Right. Of course. How awful and terrible.

LIZBETH

No 15 was the Arby's killer. I remember because he used an AR-15 to kill 15.

PORTSMAN

Ohhhh right. Truly awful and sick.

Lizbeth begins to sing softly.

LIZBETH

*He was a lonely boy, with low self esteem,  
Went to Arby's with an AR-15,  
Killed those people who didn't need to die,  
bleeding from their mouths with half-chewed curly fries...*  
Sorry...  
Sorry that was just-  
Sometimes singing a song makes things better.

Bezos looks at Lizbeth...

BEZOS

So--- No one's ever used an M16 to do one of these rampages?

LIZBETH

Not on American soil sir! These are military-grade!

BEZOS

Good. Because I ordered these for my houses for a special reason and boy are they nasty! Can't imagine if these got into public hands!

PORTSMAN

Oh yeah it for sure be the deadliest mass shooting ever! 100 dead easily!

No one says anything Portsman holds a burp.

PORTSMAN

But of course obviously-

LIZBETH

It would never-



PORTSMAN  
So we're just-

LIZBETH  
Haha.

PORTSMAN  
Haha.

BEZOS  
Haha. Well. That's good. You two know your stuff.

He hands Portsmann the rifle.

BEZOS  
Hey so, do you guys like me? Like as a person.

Portsmann and Lizbeth both nod unsure.

BEZOS  
I'm sorry you don't know me at all. I just. I feel like. No one likes me anymore. Like everyone hates me. I got divorced which sucked major ass. Then the riots started. And I'm pro-BLM for the record, there's a documentary on Prime about it and everything. But then my workers started abusing company property which is just, unfortunate because I want to help you know? And now we have this whole unionization thing in Alabama which is just so misguided. I just am beginning to feel like the world just wants me dead or something.

PORTSMAN  
We don't hate you Mr. Bezos.

LIZBETH  
You've done so much good for the world!

BEZOS  
You really think so? You're not just saying that?

PORTSMAN  
Uhhh you frickin' revolutionized online retail!

LIZBETH  
You've made grocery shopping so convenient!

PORTSMAN  
You employ like half the country!

LIZBETH

You single handedly sustain America's economy when we're all quarantined!

PORTSMAN

We love you!

BEZOS

Ahh c'mon.

PORTSMAN

No really. It's an honor to work for you.

LIZBETH

A great honor. To be honest. We've always sort of hoped you'd stop by some day.

PORTSMAN

Union people don't understand it's all scam so some mafioso can get rich at the track.

BEZOS

You're so right. You guys are great. Can I give you both a hug?

The three have a group hug. Bezos takes out the radical optimist's bible from Portzman.

BEZOS

I see you're a radical optimist too!

PORTSMAN

Mr. Bezos! You practice?

BEZOS

Of course! I'm DEDICATED to it. Americans are so sad and pessimistic these days, but good things are ahead The 24 hour news cycle makes their money by scaring us, but the truth is things are going to be better than ever! We have a new president!

PORTSMAN

Damn straight!

LIZBETH

DAMN straight!

BEZOS

Can you two keep a secret? No one knows I'm here. We're, uh, having some trouble up in Seattle. Have you heard anything about that?

He waits. They haven't.

BEZOS

Folks are, uh. Well some of those workers, found my home address. They started giving me some trouble at my home up there. I sent my kids to their mom's but I figured I'd come here and clear my head. I mean I just love it down here. Of course now this smoke.

PORTSMAN

Sorry the air is so crappy.

BEZOS

Hey! You didn't set the fire, right?

PORTSMAN

Haha NOPE!

BEZOS

I don't think anyone followed me here, luckily. I should be able to get some peace.

LIZBETH

That's a relief!

BEZOS

Yes, but God forbid anything happens. You two can keep me safe right?

LIZBETH

Absolutely!

PORTSMAN

We're ready for anything that's coming!

BEZOS

Great. Because it really is just, unfortunately. Getting a little ugly up there. I hate to do this but I did unfortunately have to bring in the local SWAT, just for my own safety.

PORTSMAN

That's so sad. You don't deserve that.

LIZBETH

Misguided souls. They can't see that you're doing more help than harm.

BEZOS

Yeah, it's unfortunate. And I mean. I get it. No one could have foreseen how badly the virus was going to hurt the economy. I mean thank god we're recovering. People want change but no one can agree on how we do it. Unrelated. Have either of you ever taken a human life?

Portzman and Lizbeth look at each other.

BEZOS

This is just hypothetical of course. But there are unfortunately some people who just would do anything to try and harm me.

PORTSMAN

Well I've never killed anyone sir but we've been doing a lot of target practice since they gave us the new guns!

LIZBETH

Yes I've never killed anyone but it turns out we're really good shots.

PORTSMAN

Yeah Lizbeth is basically American Sniper.

LIZBETH

And Portzman over here is essentially Chris Kyle.

PORTSMAN

Except neither of us have ever killed anyone.

LIZBETH

Yeah...I really don't believe in killing??

BEZOS

Cool! Neither do I. This is just purely hypothetical. Because ideally no one would ever be so sad or sick that they'd come and try and hurt me-

LIZBETH

That's radical optimism!

BEZOS

Exactly. But- God forbid. If someone were to get on the property I just want to be sure-

LIZBETH

Oh yeah, once they're on the property.

PORTSMAN

We'd never let them get on the property.

LIZBETH

But god forbid they got on the property-

PORTSMAN

As we said we're very good shots. They'd be dead. God Forbid.

LIZBETH

And we're such good shots they wouldn't even feel any pain. God forbid.

PORTSMAN

And it would be legal even though it would be very sad God Forbid.

BEZOS

Oh. Great. That's really relieving to hear. That's good there'd be no pain. I'm sorry. I know this is uh. An upsetting thing to think about haha.

PORTSMAN

Haha.

LIZBETH

Haha.

Portzman dry heaves.

PORTSMAN

I'm okay.

LIZBETH

I believe no one will come up here. And I believe they'll all realize you're helping out. And that everything will be okay. That's what I believe.

PORTSMAN

I share that belief.

BEZOS

Yeah. I guess I should believe what you both believe.

PORTSMAN

Don't forget to breathe!

BEZOS

Right. Of course. May I-

Bezos gestures toward the gate.

PORTSMAN

Of course!

Portzman presses a button. The gate opens.  
Bezos walks back into his car and drives up to  
the gate.

BEZOS

You two are kind souls. What are your names?

PORTSMAN

I'm Portzman.

LIZBETH

Lizbeth.

BEZOS

How long have you been working for me?

PORTSMAN

About three years!

LIZBETH

Three and a half for me!

BEZOS

Wow, I guess I should really come by this house more often.

PORTSMAN

Please come by any time!

BEZOS

Your names sound very familiar...Have I heard them before?

PORTSMAN

Oh!!

Portzman pulls out the Amazon Basics Waste  
Disposal Container.

LIZBETH

We were semi-finalists for last year's Innovational Employee Environmental Health  
Initiative.

BEZOS

Get out of town! You were Semi-Finalists for I-Double-E-H-I??

PORTSMAN

We were the ones who came up with the idea to combine our urine containers! So we didn't have to use so many.

LIZBETH

Half the waste without any productivity loss!

BEZOS

Of course! With your idea we were able to reduce the number of waste containers in facilities by half. Wow. I had no idea I was in the presence of such, talented minds.

PORTSMAN

Ohhhh all we did was start peeing in the same container.

BEZOS

Nonsense, you're saving money, time, and the Earth to boot! I feel like I should reward you both!

LIZBETH

Oh, please Mr. Bezos, the gift cards were enough.

BEZOS

Nonsense. Alexa, remind me to add an extra two hundred to Portzman and Lizbeth's Christmas bonus.

Portzman and Lizbeth look at each other excitedly.

ALEXA

Sorry, I didn't get that.

BEZOS

Huh. Well. I'll make sure it gets done. I'll see you both later

He puts the car in drive.

LIZBETH

Um, Mr. Bezos. (sorry real quick)

BEZOS

Oh?

LIZBETH

No it's just. I wanted to say. The bonus is nice. It's great, thank you. But. And. We like working here for YOU but to be honest. I'm aspiring to be a television writer.

PORTSMAN

I am too. To be honest.

LIZBETH

So we like this job. But I just. I want to let you know. That uh. If you ever need someone. To like write something.

PORTSMAN

Or if you need two people!

LIZBETH

We uh...Yeah. Cause you said we had talent and uh. Yeah.

BEZOS

Oh. Well. Huh. I'll keep that in mind. Nice to meet you both!

Bezos drives up towards the house. Portsmann closes the gate. Lizbeth puts her hands in her face. Portsmann vomits, missing the container.

LIZBETH

I fucked that up so badly.

PORTSMAN

Are you kidding me? I'm the one who came off like a total dweeb.

LIZBETH

I sang a song about a mass shooting!

PORTSMAN

You're a writer! You can't help but make art out of things that impact the world, including your songs. I sound like a teenage girl when I talk to him.

LIZBETH

First of all, there's nothing wrong with sounding like a teenage girl. Being a teenage girl is not a fucking character trait, let alone a negative one, the experiences of women aged 13-19 are diverse and valid so lets just leave that shit behind please and second of all: I can just see it now, me pitching my pilot to him in five years and he stops me and goes like, "Wait. Weren't you the security guard who talked about how many people that pimple face fuck killed in the fast food restaurant?"



PORTSMAN

We're being too negative. We need to look on the bright side.

LIZBETH

I wish a deranged lunatic would slit my fucking throat.

PORTSMAN

Lizbeth you can't say stuff like that!

LIZBETH

I'm sorry.

PORTSMAN

It's okay. I'm sorry about the teenage girl thing.

LIZBETH

It's fine. You're like one of the biggest feminists I know, I'm just holding you accountable.

PORTSMAN

I appreciate that sentiment and will not allow it to poison my ego.

LIZBETH

I'm feeling pessimistic. What does the bible say?

Portsmann pulls out the bible. He opens it.

PORTSMAN

Remember, radical optimism doesn't mean always feeling great. Suffering is part of life. We just have to remember: Active Suffering vs. Passive Suffering. Are you going to suffer passively? Or are you going to take your suffering and apply it to your future success.

LIZBETH

Right. Right. I'm an active sufferer I know this about myself.

PORTSMAN

This could be an amazing part of your pilot. Like an awkward moment between the main character and her boss.

LIZBETH

My main character doesn't work a job though, she inherits an estate through a fluke, remember?

PORTSMAN

Right. I forgot. Sorry.

LIZBETH

That's okay. You haven't read it.

Portzman's phone begins to ring.

PORTSMAN

Oh shit, I gotta take this!

LIZBETH

Portzman! You can't take a call. If he sees you it'll look bad on both of us. We want to make a good impression if we're gonna get Amazon to produce our pilots one day!

PORTSMAN

I'm being radically optimistic that he won't come back down right now.

LIZBETH

(Pointing to cameras on the gate)

But the cameras.

PORTSMAN

I'm being radically optimistic that he's not watching the cameras right now because he's a very busy man...Lizbeth I really need to take this.

LIZBETH

Ugh. Just. Be fast.

PORTSMAN

I will.

He picks up his phone.

PORTSMAN

Hello? Oh---Hi, honey...Yeah...Well...That's good, right? Oh. It's not? Well, okay. Yeah. We'll figure it out though for sure. And we'll talk more when I get home. I'm sure it's fine though. Okay. I love you too. Bye bye.

He hangs up.

PORTSMAN

Sorry that was my wife.

You're married?  
 LIZBETH  
 Portsman lifts his wedding ring which is on a necklace under his shirt.  
 PORTSMAN  
 Ten years.  
 LIZBETH  
 You've been married for ten years?  
 PORTSMAN  
 Yeah.  
 LIZBETH  
 We've worked together for three years and you've never mentioned you were married.  
 PORTSMAN  
 Oh, really?  
 LIZBETH  
 Yeah.  
 PORTSMAN  
 Weird...So my son might be sick.  
 LIZBETH  
 You have a son????  
 PORTSMAN  
 Yeah, he's six. I love him so much.  
 LIZBETH  
 How sick?  
 PORTSMAN  
 Ahhh like, cancer.  
 LIZBETH  
 Oh shit. What kind?  
 PORTSMAN  
 Like the really bad kind that kills you.

LIZBETH

Fuck.

PORTSMAN

Yeah. We're getting some tests done right now. So you know. It might not be cancer. But then, like. Every time the phone rings I'm like---Ah!

LIZBETH

Yeah...

PORTSMAN

Yeah...

LIZBETH

I'm radically optimistic that your son doesn't have cancer.

PORTSMAN

Thanks. It would for sure be sick if he didn't have cancer.

LIZBETH

For sure.

PORTSMAN

I started thinking about like. How I could write about it if he did though.

LIZBETH

Oh yeah.

PORTSMAN

Yeah like...It'd be a good movie I think. Is that so incredibly fucked up?

LIZBETH

I don't think so. You have to process it.

PORTSMAN

That's true. Besides he probably doesn't have it.

LIZBETH

He absolutely does not have it. 0% chance.

...

LIZBETH

I can't believe you're married! I want to meet your wife!

PORTSMAN

Oh yeah, you can meet her. That could be fun. We can get dinner or something. If you have like a husband or partner.

LIZBETH

Not anymore, remember the-

PORTSMAN

Oh right the snake bite. That's okay. Just the three of us then. That'll be fun too.

LIZBETH

Yeah. What's she like?

PORTSMAN

She's like incredible. I love her so much. She's so talented and well dressed. And she's far too beautiful for my fat ass.

LIZBETH

Don't say things like that.

PORTSMAN

I know, I know, it's not right to say. But it's just genuinely fucked up we live in a society where a woman as beautiful and intelligent as my wife can be attracted to a flaming dumpster fire like myself.

LIZBETH

Hmm perhaps the optimistic way to look at it is that she's not attracted to you at all but rather feels like she has to be with you because her self-esteem is so low she thinks that's what she deserves.

PORTSMAN

Right...How is that optimistic?

LIZBETH

Just because it would reflect more on her and less on society as a whole.

PORTSMAN

Oh! Right. Of course. But I'm also optimistic that she IS attracted to me like she enjoys my face and thinks I'm handsome even if she's wrong.

LIZBETH

Well that's good to hear!

Bezos walks back down towards that gate.

LIZBETH

Oh shit, he's coming back!

PORTSMAN

Fuck we have to be cooler than last time.

LIZBETH

Clean up your fucking vomit!

Portsman tries to put his vomit in the container, but realizing he's out of time, uses his foot to slide his vomit into the brush. Bezos reaches the gate. He stands on the other side of it.

BEZOS

So...TV writers, huh?

LIZBETH

Yeah! Specifically for Amazon Originals!

BEZOS

Oh you don't have to say that! You can aspire to write for any streaming service.

LIZBETH

Actually, we are confident that Amazon's where it's at!

PORTSMAN

(Getting way too excited.)

Fuck Netflix! Fuck Hulu! FUCK Disney. Mandalorian sucks SHIT!

LIZBETH

(Also way too excited.)

Yeah fuck Disney! Fuck Apple! Ted Lasso can get FUCKED!

PORTSMAN

Fuck Paramount Plus! Fuck Discovery Plus!

LIZBETH

HBO Max? More like HBO suck.

PORTSMAN

More like H-B-Blow-Maximum suckage.

LIZBETH

Netflix shows are basically just the streaming equivalent of mass shootings, they're relevant for three days and then everyone forgets they ever happened!

BEZOS

I don't agree with the rhetoric but you're not wrong.

PORTSMAN

But also like. Amazon has the best stuff! It's true! The Boys, Ms. Maisel, Mozart in the Jungle, R-Rated Lord of The Rings show with real sex in it,

LIZBETH

Transparent, I Love Dick, Jack Ryan, Modern Love -

PORTSMAN & LIZBETH

Fleabag!!

BEZOS

Oh, God I LOVE FLEABAG. Phoebe is a genius.

PORTSMAN

You've met her?

BEZOS

We get dinner every few months!

PORTSMAN

Thank you Mr. Bezos for distributing Fleabag in America!

LIZBETH

And thanks for securing PWB for further projects! Can't wait!

PORTSMAN

And thank you for Fleabag season 3 & 4 and Fleabag movie!

LIZBETH

I thought she was done after two and I'm glad she wasn't!

BEZOS

Ohhh yeah, she did say that but when the audience demands it a negotiation can always be reached!

LIZBETH

I can't wait to see what she has next!

BEZOS

Well, we're planning on releasing the next season just in time for the winter spike, so no one misses it during the summer blackouts.

LIZBETH & PORTSMAN

YES!

PORTSMAN

Of course, we'll be here guarding your house as essential employees but that's good for all the work from home employees!

LIZBETH

So yeah...I guess we'd be just a LITTLE excited to write an Amazon Original.

PORTSMAN

By little I mean we would PEE ourselves.

BEZOS

Well, it's exciting to hear you're both so passionate about writing for our television department. I love the enthusiasm.

LIZBETH

Amazon is the ONLY place to work in the 2020s!

BEZOS

You know...I can't promise anything. But this whole conundrum up at HQ has made me think...Maybe I want to just write my own story you know? Maybe I should have a show.

LIZBETH

Woah, really.

PORTSMAN

That sounds like an amazing idea.

BEZOS

Haha, well I'm only planning it right now. But like you see how people love Fleabag and they love how she does bad things and makes relatable choices. I bet even the poor misguided individuals rioting at my house up in Washington like Fleabag!

PORTSMAN

Who wouldn't!



BEZOS

Well I was thinking what about like, a show like Fleabag. But instead it's about a man who owns a big corporation and is a billionaire. And like it would be sort of based off my life and all the adventures I've had.

PORTSMAN

Wow.

LIZBETH

That sounds, like, really good.

PORTSMAN

I'd watch the fucking shit out of that.

BEZOS

You think so?? I think I just. I want my story told, you know? I'm tired of being torn down by newspapers and all these holier than thou Twitter profiles. Media can be so influential. They make billionaires look like caricatures of villains who are greedy and evil. They don't ever focus on the programs we fund, or the people we employ, hell I'm funding half the government right now! And sure they all complain now, but who was delivering their groceries and toilet paper when they were stuck inside for 2 years?

PORTSMAN

AMAZON.COM!

BEZOS

EXACTLY! And I mean, they don't ever point out that we're just normal people who worked really hard to get where we are. But that doesn't mean we don't like to cuddle or drink Sprite. I mean don't get me wrong. There are bad billionaires.

PORTSMAN

Fuck Mark Zuckerberg.

LIZBETH

FUCK Trump.

BEZOS

Exactly. Zuckerberg's a sociopath. Trump's a narcissist. Elon Musk is just a geek with a daddy complex. Whose space ships suck, by the way. But I'm just. I grew up working on my grandfather's farm! I think people need to see me for who I really am! How I'm using my wealth to help the world, not harm it.

LIZBETH

Definitely. There are good billionaires and bad billionaires.

PORTSMAN

Like wealth distribution is definitely a problem in this country, but some rich people like, \*uncanceled celebrity name\* use their wealth and platform for good!

LIZBETH

It's not about the wealth itself it's about how you use it or so I've heard!

BEZOS

Exactly! I don't know though. Maybe I'm too boring.

PORTSMAN

That's not true!

LIZBETH

I'm fascinated by everything about you, Mr. Bezos.

BEZOS

Yeah. Well. I just wish there was a way to add a little spice to it, you know? I thought maybe he could be moonlighting as a super hero but then I realized that's just Batman.

LIZBETH

Batman is another example of a good billionaire though.

BEZOS

That's true!

PORTSMAN

Well...(maybe if I could just pitch a little Mr. Bezos) what if you gave the Billionaire protagonist a bit of a personal backstory. Something tragic! To make him relatable.

BEZOS

What do you have in mind?

PORTSMAN

Well, what if, just for example, the billionaire's son was dying of like, a really rare cancer. And he like can't get over the fact that all the money he worked so hard for still can't cure his son.

BEZOS

Ooooh. I do like that. Maybe you should be writing this show haha.

PORTSMAN

(nearly vomiting.)

UGHM haha.

LIZBETH

Or-OR (Just another quick pitch) the billionaire's mom committed suicide. And he has spent his entire life trying to outrun the guilt by becoming all the things he thinks his mom wanted but he can't shake the fact that he feels somehow responsible even though everyone says he is very not responsible. It actually makes it worse when people tell him how not responsible he is because it feels like some grand conspiracy to hide the truth. And it motivates him towards his success but then when the only motivation is negative reinforcement it makes the failures altogether more painful.

Bezos points to Lizbeth.

BEZOS

I almost like that more. Cancer is so sad. I wouldn't want cancer to dominate the show.

LIZBETH

She can even visit him as a ghost!

PORTSMAN

The son could have already died of cancer like a few years ago.

LIZBETH

Eh, I don't know. Cancer as a narrative device feels kind of cheap these days.

PORTSMAN

I mean it's kind of anti-feminist-non-woke for a male billionaire's mother to be ritually sacrificed and only work as a narrative device to serve the male protagonist.

LIZBETH

I don't really see it that way. And she wouldn't be the ONLY woman character on the show. There can be a woman billionaire to balance it out.

BEZOS

Oh yes, definitely woman billionaire. We need that on screen.

LIZBETH

Rivals.

PORTSMAN

Friends!

LIZBETH

Friends is good! Frenemies perhaps! Maybe they're thinking of merging their companies and that's the arc of season one!

BEZOS

Oh my God! Get in my Amazon Writer's room right now!

LIZBETH

Haha show me the way LOL.

PORTSMAN

Maybe they dated in college.

LIZBETH

Ehhh it's not Ally McBeal.

Bezos checks is watch.

BEZOS

Listen. This is great content. Exactly the kind of energy I need in my writer's rooms. None of the ego you get with the more "Established." Why don't you both each give me a six page pitch by tomorrow. I'll read them over and send it to the head of our television department with a heavy recommendation. Who knows, maybe you'll be show running my show?

LIZBETH

Really??

BEZOS

Yes, of course! I mean it's completely out of my hands, but still! I'm excited! But for now, I'm going to get some much needed R&R.

LIZBETH

You've earned it!

PORTSMAN

Take a load off sir!

BEZOS

Make sure my house doesn't get taken over by any crazed maniacs, okay? Haha.

PORTSMAN

Haha.

LIZBETH

Haha.

BEZOS

Haha.

LIZBETH

But nah, we won't let that happen sir.

BEZOS

What is that? Over on the hill?

Portsman and Lizbeth look.

PORTSMAN

It looks like the fire. Must have spread over the 405.

BEZOS

Is that coming this way?

LIZBETH

I'm not sure.

PORTSMAN

No, no. Radical optimism. It's not coming over here.

LIZBETH

Right, right. It's not. Of course it's not.

BEZOS

No, it won't be coming here.

Bezos, Portsman, and Lizbeth look at the fire.  
Bezos steps back into his gate. Fade to black.