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Collective Rage:
A Play In Five Boops

by Jen Silverman

SAMUEL FRENCH

Samuel French Manuscript

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Cast: The Betty Boops
(5F)

- 1: Femme, white, rich, uptight, fueled by secret rage
- 2: Femme, white or Asian, rich, uptight but coming undone
- 3: Femme, Latina, charismatic and pretty, kind of a know-it-all
- 4: Butch lesbian, any ethnicity except white or Black, great tattoos, gently melancholic, is too often ignored
- 5: Butch queer, Black, great tattoos, owns a hole-in-the-wall boxing gym

Time

Now.

Place

New York?

Notes:

Scene Titles:

The scene titles might be projected. Or they might be announced before each scene by somebody with a God mic.

Casting:

Casting is best when very diverse. Boops 4 and 5 should be different ethnicities from each other (and best if neither is the same as Boop 3.)

Design:

The space is very fluid. The pace is fast and sometimes breakneck. Scene changes should be immediate and uncluttered by props, until the second-to-last party scene, which can take more time.

Notation:

[] is unspoken, although the character is thinking it.

() is spoken out loud but is a side-thought.

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

Despite the comedy, the Boops are in desperate pursuit of happiness, in face of an almost unbearable loneliness. Do not eschew the human, raw, and sad in favor of the funny – even if you think the text is giving permission. (It isn't.) The humor works best when we genuinely care about all five women – and when they learn to genuinely care about each other.

1. Betty Boop 1 Is In A Rage

*Betty Boop 1 walks out on stage.
The space is very empty and very spare.
She looks very proper. But she's pissed off.*

BETTY BOOP 1

I was watching the news the other day and
there was this segment on mutilated children?
And then I was watching the news, and
there was this special insider report on amputees.
And then I was watching the news and
it told me that I was going to die of diabetes and high blood pressure and lyme disease
and ovarian cancer and violent-thug-attack by a person, I think a Man? a Black Man? —
oh maybe that's racist.
Well that's just the news, I am not responsible for the news.

This world is terrible. This world is awful.
I am Very Very Concerned about the State of Things.
My husband Richard came home and I said to him RICHARD
I said RICHARD
I am Very Very Concerned About The State of Things.
My husband Richard is a calm person.
He is a logical and a rational person and He Wears A Suit.
And Richard said to me: BETTY
Richard said: BETTY
Richard said: Betty, Don't Worry.

(pause – with sudden fury)

AND THAT DIDN'T MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.

(beat – breath – with great dignity)

There is currently nothing in the whole world
that makes me feel better.
So I decided to throw a Dinner Party.

2. Betty Boops 1 and 2 at a Dinner Party.

*Betty Boop 2 walks out onstage.
She's an equally perfect Betty Boop.
Younger and a little more fragile. Possibly
coming unraveled.*

*Now all of a sudden the two Betty Boops
are having a dinner party. A really really
white uptight dinner party, where they
pretend to be much better friends than they
actually are.*

BETTY BOOP 1

Betty.

BETTY BOOP 2

Yes Betty?

BETTY BOOP 1

Lady, I love your nails.

BETTY BOOP 2

Thanks lady, I love your nails too.

BETTY BOOP 1

I think that color is just darling on you. Where'd you get it?

BETTY BOOP 2

Well I went to this little salon on the upper East
Charles said, *You treat yourself, you just treat yourself*
So I just treated myself.

BETTY BOOP 1

That Charles. He's so thoughtful.

BETTY BOOP 2

I know!

BETTY BOOP 1

Richard gave me the nicest present the other day.

BETTY BOOP 2

What was that?

BETTY BOOP 1

Well I'd been so Stressed out, I've just been feeling a lot of Stress
and I came home and Richard's assistant had gotten me a gift card for a massage
Richard told his assistant to get me a gift card for a massage
isn't that thoughtful?

BETTY BOOP 2

That's so thoughtful.

An awkward beat. They sip their white wine.

BETTY BOOP 1

How are the kids?

BETTY BOOP 2

I don't have kids.

BETTY BOOP 1

Oh!
I thought...?

BETTY BOOP 2

No...

BETTY BOOP 1

Oh.

They sip.

BETTY BOOP 2

This neighborhood is so lovely.

BETTY BOOP 1

That's so true.
Other neighborhoods are so much less lovely these days.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh, I know...

BETTY BOOP 1

They say there's an Influx
if you know what I mean
yes, that's certainly happening.

(beat)

I didn't mean to be... [racist]
That wasn't ... [racist] ... was it?

BETTY BOOP 2

...No?

BETTY BOOP 1

Because that has nothing to do with it.
In fact, some of our Best Friends are People of Color.

BETTY BOOP 2

...They are?

BETTY BOOP 1

For example, Betty, whom I have also invited to dinner tonight.

BETTY BOOP 2

Which Betty?

BETTY BOOP 1

She had a hard childhood but she has risen above it with resilience and courage.
She's sassy and no-nonsense.
She's a nurse or a healthcare worker. I think?
Or somebody's nanny? Maybe she's *my* nanny?

BETTY BOOP 2

You don't have a nanny because you don't have kids either.

BETTY BOOP 1

Oh. That's right, I met her at Sephora!
Here she is!

*Betty Boop 3 walks out onstage.
She's Latina, high-femme, super queer.
She sits down with them. The dinner party is
now in full swing.*

BETTY BOOP 3

The first time I fucked a girl I was like
BINGO! I WON! I WON THE FUCKING LOTTERY!
I was all up in that shit!
I was like, girl, you come here
you put your mouth here
to the left! to the right!
It was the wild west up in there!
I was like a pro-wrestler and a cowboy
and also like an astronaut
like the Neil fuckin Armstrong of the bedroom.

Beat.

BETTY BOOP 1

That's not good conversation for a dinner party.

BETTY BOOP 3

No?

BETTY BOOP 1 and 2

No.

BETTY BOOP 3

How come?

BETTY BOOP 1

We don't talk about sex at dinner parties.

BETTY BOOP 3

What else you talk about?

BETTY BOOP 2

We aren't having sex, so we can't talk about it.

BETTY BOOP 3

Mira, maybe you should start having it.

BETTY BOOP 1

(this should be obvious)

We're married.

(Reclaiming the dinner party convo)

How's Charles' job?

BETTY BOOP 2

I think he's going to get a promotion.

BETTY BOOP 1

That's so exciting. So well deserved.

BETTY BOOP 2

He works so hard all the time.

BETTY BOOP 1

I know!

BETTY BOOP 2

And Richard?

BETTY BOOP 1

He's managing a brand new account.

BETTY BOOP 2

That's wonderful.

BETTY BOOP 1

It's a big one. Lots of room for upward mobility.

BETTY BOOP 2

Richard is such an achiever.

BETTY BOOP 1

So is Charles.

They beam at each other uncomfortably.

BETTY BOOP 3

Can I talk about pussy?

BETTY BOOP 1

(through her beaming smile)

We said No.

BETTY BOOP 3

Not like *using* the pussy, not *activating* the pussy
just pussy itself.

BETTY BOOP 1

No and we don't like that word, pussy. It's indecent.

BETTY BOOP 3

What about pussy-lips?
Just the lips around the pussy?

BETTY BOOP 1

Absolutely not.

BETTY BOOP 3

This is a boring-ass dinner party.

BETTY BOOP 1

That. Is the point. Of a dinner party.

BETTY BOOP 3

Oh.
Okay.
Well.
In that case,
I'm gonna throw my own dinner party.

BETTY BOOP 1

You do that.

BETTY BOOP 2
(whispering to her)

What time is it and where?

3. Betty Boop 3 Has Her Own Dinner Party, In Which All Of Us Talk About Pussy

Boops 3 and 2.

Also a new Boop, 4, has awesome tattoos and is as butch as you can get. She is in love with Boop 3, despite being friend-zoned.

Betty Boop 3 tells us the story of her day.

BETTY BOOP 3

—And then the bitch was all, “I don’t know, lemme try the Givenchy tester.” And I was like, “You been trying testers for ninety minutes, now it’s time to buy.” And the bitch was all, “This is a free country” and I was all, “NOT IF YOU GOT MY FUCKIN JOB.”
(beat)

Sephora gets cray.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh wow.

BETTY BOOP 4

You handle things really well.

BETTY BOOP 3

That fuckin place gives me hives.

BETTY BOOP 4

I go visit her at work and she handles stress really well.

BETTY BOOP 3

I need to quit.

BETTY BOOP 4
(a little alarmed)

Quit?

BETTY BOOP 3

Why not?

BETTY BOOP 4

What would you do if you quit?

BETTY BOOP 3

...Anyway, then I went to Party City and I got banners for the dinner party but then on the way home I got into a fight on the subway and I forgot them under my seat.

BETTY BOOP 2

You got in a fight??

Bitch pushed me.	BETTY BOOP 3
The same bitch?	BETTY BOOP 2
No! A different bitch!	BETTY BOOP 3
Bitches are bitches.	BETTY BOOP 4 <i>(in solidarity)</i>
Wow. I don't think I've ever been in a fight.	BETTY BOOP 2
<i>Never?</i>	BETTY BOOP 3 and 4
If somebody pushes me I say, "Sorry," even though I was the one who got pushed? And whenever I ask anybody to do anything for me, even if they're a waiter, I say, "Sorry," even if it's their job? And then after they've done it, or usually even right before they've done it, or actually even if they never do it at all, I say, "Thank you?"	BETTY BOOP 2
	<i>Beat.</i>
<i>And</i> she's not having sex.	BETTY BOOP 3
Damn.	BETTY BOOP 4
Betty!!	BETTY BOOP 2 <i>(horrificed and embarrassed)</i>
That sucks.	BETTY BOOP 4
I KNOW!	BETTY BOOP 3
How long's it been?	BETTY BOOP 4

Betty!!

BETTY BOOP 2

I feel like the longest I've ever gone is...

BETTY BOOP 3

(she thinks)

Three days!

(pause)

I guess it was two.

(pause)

Pues actually I cheated so I guess it was one.

BETTY BOOP 4

(to Boop 2)

Her girlfriend was out of town but she met a sailor.

BETTY BOOP 2

A sailor??

BETTY BOOP 3

If you put it in a uniform, I'm gonna tap that shit.

BETTY BOOP 2

Wow. I feel like
it's so strange to even talk about this.

BETTY BOOP 3

(a realization, to Boop 4)

How'd you know about the sailor?

BETTY BOOP 4

After your girlfriend left you, you got wasted and told me about him.

BETTY BOOP 3

Oh yeahhh.

(to Boop 2)

So what about you?

BETTY BOOP 2

Wow.
This is so...!
I've never had any friends before.

BETTY BOOPS 4 and 3

Whoa. / Ayy...

BETTY BOOP 2

This is so exciting!
Well I guess
it's been like five years? Maybe six?
And
Charles is very nice.
He's very considerate?
We read in bed together?
Like, he's on his side of the bed? And he reads Hunting & Fishing.
And I'm on my side of the bed? And I read Ladies Home Journal.

BETTY BOOP 4

What's that?

BETTY BOOP 3

Porn?

BETTY BOOP 2

No, it's a *journal* about *ladies* who want to make a *home*.
It's just... suggestions.
For how to do things better than how you're doing them.

BETTY BOOP 4

That sounds depressing.

BETTY BOOP 3

She needs to get laid. We gotta help her with that.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh no, you don't have to...

BETTY BOOP 4

Shut up, we're helping you with that.

Betty Boop 3 passes out hand mirrors.

BETTY BOOP 2

Uh... what's that for?

BETTY BOOP 3

We're gonna look at pussy
so you know what you got to work with.

BETTY BOOP 2

I don't think I'm gay?

I'm bi.	BETTY BOOP 3
I'm queer.	BETTY BOOP 4
I don't think I'm either?	BETTY BOOP 2
Are you currently right now having sex at this juncture?	BETTY BOOP 3
Uh... no?	BETTY BOOP 2
Then you don't got enough data...and the window of potential is open.	BETTY BOOP 3
Wide open.	BETTY BOOP 4
Wide.	BETTY BOOP 3 <i>(leering a little)</i>
Oh. Oh wow.	BETTY BOOP 2
Place the hand mirror below your vaginal situation. In a pussy-specific area. Two inches from your cooch-ular region. Then look.	BETTY BOOP 3 <i>(officiating)</i>
Okay.	BETTY BOOP 4 <i>(looking)</i>
Mmmm!	BETTY BOOP 3 <i>(looking)</i>
	BETTY BOOP 4 <i>(trying to glimpse Boop 3's mirror)</i>

Hmm...

BETTY BOOP 3

(unaware, and enjoying herself)

Mmmm-hmmm!!

(to Betty Boop 2)

You're not looking.

BETTY BOOP 2

I'm scared.

BETTY BOOP 4

What are you scared of?

BETTY BOOP 2

Something terrible might be there.

BETTY BOOP 3

It's just your cho-cha.

BETTY BOOP 2

What if it's ugly? What if there's teeth? What if it's lopsided? What if it's lumpy? Or flat? Or geometrically displeasing? Or what if I don't have one at all and there's just a small animal who lives there, like a lizard or a dwarf-hamster, and all I see are the gleam of its little eyes as it stares back up at me?

A beat. They consider this.

BETTY BOOP 4

Everybody has a pussy.

BETTY BOOP 3

Nobody has a hamster.

BETTY BOOP 4

But if you did, it might be nice.

BETTY BOOP 3

Nothing is going to get better for you if you can't open your eyes.

BETTY BOOP 2

Maybe everything is fine for me right now.

BETTY BOOP 3

Look at her.

They both look at her. A judgmental gaze.

What!!	BETTY BOOP 2
Yeah.	BETTY BOOP 4
Oh yeah.	BETTY BOOP 3
Bleak.	BETTY BOOP 4
Pretty bleak.	BETTY BOOP 3
Depressing.	BETTY BOOP 4
You guys!!	BETTY BOOP 2
Look at your pussy, Betty Boop.	BETTY BOOP 3
Both eyes.	BETTY BOOP 4
	<i>Betty Boop 2 looks at her pussy in the hand-mirror. A long beat.</i>
Well??	BETTY BOOP 3
What do you think?	BETTY BOOP 4
What's down there?	BETTY BOOP 3
Oh.	BETTY BOOP 2
What??	BETTY BOOP 3 & 4

Ohhhh....	BETTY BOOP 2
What!	BETTY BOOP 3 & 4
	<i>Betty Boop 2 experiences a moment of extreme self-actualization and sexual awakening. With increasing excitement:</i>
It's... strange.	BETTY BOOP 2
...It is?	BETTY BOOP 3
And... unconstrained.	BETTY BOOP 2
It...is?	BETTY BOOP 4
And... squashy!	BETTY BOOP 2
I mean. It's a pussy.	BETTY BOOP 4
I just wanna touch it. I just wanna touch it all the time.	BETTY BOOP 2
Need help?	BETTY BOOP 3
She doesn't need help.	BETTY BOOP 4
I have to go home now.	BETTY BOOP 2
Can I keep this? I'm keeping this.	<i>(hand-mirror in hand)</i>
	<i>She leaves.</i>
I always throw the <i>best</i> dinner parties!	BETTY BOOP 3

4. Betty Boops 4 and 5 Work On Their Trucks And Discuss Love

Betty Boop 4 with a new Boop, Betty Boop 5. Boop 5 is equally butch and has EVEN MORE awesome tattoos. Boop 5 is wildly charismatic and if you were a lady, even a straight lady, you'd get fluttery.

They work on their trucks side by side.

BETTY BOOP 4

Been fixing my truck.

BETTY BOOP 5

I can see.

BETTY BOOP 4

Gettin all up in there. Engine was busted. Been fixin it up.

BETTY BOOP 5

Looks good.

BETTY BOOP 4

I see you gotta new truck.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah.

BETTY BOOP 4

Didn't wanna fix your old one?

BETTY BOOP 5

Figured it was time for a new one.

BETTY BOOP 4

Wow, okay.

I see that.

(Beat, they work.)

Looks like you got some new ink.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah.

BETTY BOOP 4

Cool, yeah. It looks great.

Thanks man.

BETTY BOOP 5

You didn't wanna just keep your old ink?

BETTY BOOP 4
(has to ask)

Felt like it was time for some new ink.

BETTY BOOP 5

No, yeah, sure.
Where'd you get it?

BETTY BOOP 4

Prison.

BETTY BOOP 5

Oh!
Cool.

BETTY BOOP 4

You should go to prison sometime. It's great.

BETTY BOOP 5

Oh yeah?

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah!
There were a lot of activities. And I was the best at the activities.
And there were a lot of straight girls. And they all had crushes on me.
Oh yeah, and then I got to work in the machine shop.

BETTY BOOP 5

Oh wow that sounds fun
That sounds like you had a really good time

BETTY BOOP 4
(increasingly sad)

Yeah the machine shop was rad
and then I met these hot chicks who did meth
and they had a smuggling ring?
and I was really good at smuggling.

BETTY BOOP 5

And my best friend in prison was this chick
who had serious gambling problems

(this bit really matters to her)

and we played a lot of cards.

BETTY BOOP 4

Oh wow.

BETTY BOOP 5

And she told me I was a natural.
She was like, "You're a natural."
And I was like, "Thanks."

BETTY BOOP 4

(sad)

That's really great that you made so many new friends
that's awesome and I'm really happy for you.

BETTY BOOP 5

(also suddenly sad)

Yeah...

*(A moment. Boops 4 and 5 clock that the
other one is sad, but neither knows why or
what to do about it.)*

...So how are you?

BETTY BOOP 4

I'm good.

BETTY BOOP 5

It's good to see you!

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah I mean I've called you.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah?

BETTY BOOP 4

Since you got out. Yeah. I've been calling.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah I haven't really been answering the phone.

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah I noticed.

BETTY BOOP 5

Ever since I got out, all I want to do is work on my truck. And eat pussy.

And run my boxing gym. And eat pussy.

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah no it's cool. It's no biggie. I barely even noticed.

BETTY BOOP 5

You eating any new pussy?

BETTY BOOP 4

Me? Yeah totally.

BETTY BOOP 5

Who is it?

BETTY BOOP 4

Just somebody you don't know.

BETTY BOOP 5

...Or are you still hung up on Betty?

BETTY BOOP 4

I don't know what you mean.

BETTY BOOP 5

Sephora Betty with the tits Betty, who we grew up with Betty.

BETTY BOOP 4

We're just very very close friends.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah okay.

BETTY BOOP 4

I don't feel like that about her at all.

BETTY BOOP 5

Yeah okay.

BETTY BOOP 4

Anyway, what about you?

Who are you...with?

BETTY BOOP 5

Pussy is pussy. You don't gotta name it.

They work.

BETTY BOOP 4

She says she wants to quit Sephora.

BETTY BOOP 5

Good.

BETTY BOOP 4

Betty!

BETTY BOOP 5

She should try something new. She should go to prison!

BETTY BOOP 4

I don't know...

(A beat. They work.)

Betty?

BETTY BOOP 5

Ssup, Betty.

BETTY BOOP 4

I feel like
things
are changing.

BETTY BOOP 5

I hope so.

BETTY BOOP 4

But everything was good the way it was.
Wasn't it?

BETTY BOOP 5

Change is exciting.

BETTY BOOP 4

Change is sad.
Change is things getting forgotten.
Change is people getting left behind.

*Betty Boop 5 looks at Betty Boop 4 closely.
A long level glance.*

BETTY BOOP 5

You good, right?

BETTY BOOP 4
(*lying*)

Me? Yeah. I'm great.
You?

BETTY BOOP 5
(*lying*)

Great.

5. Betty Boop 1 Has More Rage, And Does Something About It

BETTY BOOP 1

I was watching the News again this morning and
 there was this Special on placental abruptions
 and then I was watching the News and there was an interview
 with a woman who was buried underground for twelve years
 and she's alive!! but her stomach shriveled up so they had to remove it
 and *then* I watched this report on octogenarians who commit suicide
 because life was *just* so disappointing and
 then Richard came home and I said to him: Richard, I said,
 Something Has To Be Done. This Is A Terrible Place To Live.
 And he said, *The upper east side isn't so bad.*
 And I said, I Mean The World, Richard.
 And he said, *The world is the world, whattaya gonna do.*
 What Are You Going To Do?
 What Are You Going TO DO??
 I AM GOING TO FIGHT BACK, RICHARD!!!!

(A beat. A deep breath.)

So I went to a new gym, it's above 72nd Street so nobody I know would ever go there, I
 went to a new gym and I found a trainer and I said: You Teach Me How To Box.

*Betty Boop 5 walks on. Boxing gloves.
 Showing off her amazing tattoos.*

BETTY BOOP 5

You?

BETTY BOOP 1

Is there a problem?

BETTY BOOP 5

You...wanna box?

BETTY BOOP 1

Do you have a problem with that, if I want to box?

BETTY BOOP 5

You don't look like the sort of person who wants to box.

BETTY BOOP 1

Where's your manager.

BETTY BOOP 5

I'm the manager. This is my gym.

Oh. BETTY BOOP 1

(*a beat*)
Listen, young man. Young lady? Young man?
(*breath*)
Young lady!

BETTY BOOP 5
I'm genderqueer, but whatever.

BETTY BOOP 1
I want to learn how to box. And I have A LOT of money. And you are going to teach me.
Do you understand?

BETTY BOOP 5
You look like the type of woman who'd cry if I hit her.

BETTY BOOP 1
I want to rip someone's throat out. I want to tear out someone's heart-muscle with my
bare hands. I am not the type of woman who is interested in crying.

*Betty Boop 5 sizes her up anew. Interesting.
A current of electricity builds from
here.*

BETTY BOOP 5
You got my attention.

BETTY BOOP 1
(*surprised and pleased*)
Oh.

BETTY BOOP 5
That doesn't sound like boxing. That's more like... muay thai?

BETTY BOOP 1
...I don't know what that is.

BETTY BOOP 5
Krav maga?

BETTY BOOP 1
I've never heard of it.

BETTY BOOP 5
Or a particularly stealth and vicious form of karate.

BETTY BOOP 1

I've heard of karate.

BETTY BOOP 5

Or maybe all of those things all rolled together. Like UFC.

BETTY BOOP 1

Yes! Teach me all of the things together!

BETTY BOOP 5

Who did you say you were again?

BETTY BOOP 1

I'm very rich.
 And very powerful.
 And very impatient.
 And very rich.
 And very unhappy.
 And very frustrated.
 And very gluten-free.
 And very vegetarian.
 And very alcoholic.
 And also still very rich.
 Are you a boy or a girl?

BETTY BOOP 5

I'm a gender-non-conforming masculine-presenting female-bodied individual. But I'm comfortable with female pronouns.

BETTY BOOP 1

(a little flustered)

I... don't know what any of that means.

BETTY BOOP 5

I'm the person who's gonna teach you how to fight.

6. Betty Boops 3 and 4 Discover That Highbrow Things Are Just Things That Seem To Be About Other Things When They're Actually About Pussy

*Betty Boop 4 works on her truck.
Betty Boop 3 drinks Fanta and watches her.*

BETTY BOOP 3

I went to a play the other night.

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah?

BETTY BOOP 3

In The Thea-Tah.

BETTY BOOP 4

What'd you do that for?

BETTY BOOP 3

I went on a date
with this rich white lady, her husband was outta town
and she took me to The Thea-Tah.
You should go sometime. To The Thea-Tah.

BETTY BOOP 4

I'm workin on my truck.

BETTY BOOP 3

You can work on your truck whenever you want, you can only see the play in The Thea-tah at specific times.

BETTY BOOP 4

You've never asked me to go with you. So.

BETTY BOOP 3
(doesn't clock this)

It was very complicated BUT
it was about these people who fell in love with each other
and they did terrible things to make sure that nobody loved anybody else
and then other people put on a play
inside of the first play
and then in the end
everybody fell in love.

BETTY BOOP 4

That sounds confusing.

It was cultural.

BETTY BOOP 3

Whatsit called?

BETTY BOOP 4

Summer's Midnight Dream.

BETTY BOOP 3

Was Summer the main character?

BETTY BOOP 4

There wasn't really a main character.

BETTY BOOP 3

That sounds confusing. I like stories where there's a main character and you think something is gonna happen and then it happens. Those are the stories I like.

BETTY BOOP 4

This was very famous. It was a very famous play, lots of people think it's good.

BETTY BOOP 3

Like there's this one story with a guy with a dog in a truck. And you know he's gonna drive the truck real fast and there'll be like a view, like some kind of a view, and the dog will hang its head out the window, and then the guy will look at the camera and smile. And then those things happen, and I feel good.

BETTY BOOP 4

That's not a story. That's a commercial.

BETTY BOOP 3

It's a commercial story.

BETTY BOOP 4

Mira, you should come with me to the Thea-tah.

BETTY BOOP 3

With you?

BETTY BOOP 4

Sometime. Unless I'm on a date.

BETTY BOOP 3

BETTY BOOP 4
(*bristling*)

It sounds boring.
I bet you were bored. Don't lie. Were you bored?

BETTY BOOP 3

My mind wandered. It may have wandered.
But I was there. I was present.

BETTY BOOP 4

Yeah well my mind can wander in front of my TV and at least I didn't pay fifty bucks for it.

BETTY BOOP 3

Eighty-five.

BETTY BOOP 4

EIGHTY-FIVE????

BETTY BOOP 3

(now she's a little ashamed)

It was cultural.

BETTY BOOP 4

My asshole is cultural. I'm not payin eighty-five dollars for anything that won't go on my truck.

A beat. They both reflect on this.

BETTY BOOP 3

(a quiet confession)

It wasn't really in English.

BETTY BOOP 4

Was it Spanish?

BETTY BOOP 3

No, it was like, in kind of an English? But not an English anybody speaks?

BETTY BOOP 4

You're gonna pay eighty-five bucks go someplace where you don't understand what they're saying? That's stupid. I can go to Queens for free in my truck.

BETTY BOOP 3

Lots of people liked it.

BETTY BOOP 4

Lots of people are stupid.

BETTY BOOP 3

(wistful)

Everybody stood up and clapped though.
All these old white people stood up and clapped.
And the actors came back onstage and they stood there and let everybody look at them?
And they looked so happy.
Everybody just stared at them and loved them and wanted to be them - but nobody was.

(wistful, vulnerable)

Hey.

BETTY BOOP 4

What.

BETTY BOOP 3

You think I could be an actor?

BETTY BOOP 4

I don't know. Sure. Yeah. You're hot. Sure.

BETTY BOOP 3

(Suddenly shy)

But am I talented?

BETTY BOOP 4

I've never seen you act.

BETTY BOOP 3

You saw me lie to the cop that one time
when he was like "Did you run that red light"
and I was like No, and then I cried. And he let us go.

BETTY BOOP 4

Oh yeah! That's right.

BETTY BOOP 3

So you saw me act that time.

BETTY BOOP 4

I thought you were just having a nervous breakdown.

BETTY BOOP 3

I think that's sort of what acting is? Only you do it at specific times, on a stage?

BETTY BOOP 4

Oh!

Well
then
yeah
you'd be a good actor.

BETTY BOOP 3
(this means something to her)

Thank you.

An awkward beat.

BETTY BOOP 4
(regretting this the second she's said it)

Or you could be a porn star.

BETTY BOOP 3

Betty!

BETTY BOOP 4

Sorry. I just meant. Uh. I don't know what I meant.

BETTY BOOP 3
My PUSSY is not gonna do the acting, *I* am gonna do the acting. In THE THEA-TAH.
People are gonna come and stare at my feelings, and those feelings will be Art.

BETTY BOOP 4
(with great philosophical conviction)
I think a lotta things that seem like art are maybe actually just about pussy.
And then also, things that are mostly about pussy might actually be about art.

BETTY BOOP 3
That might be true.

Beat.

BETTY BOOP 4
...You think I could be an actor?

BETTY BOOP 3
You??

BETTY BOOP 4
Me.

BETTY BOOP 3
I don't know, are you a good liar?

I dunno.

BETTY BOOP 4

Like, remember your ex-girlfriend. Did you ever lie to her?

BETTY BOOP 3

I guess, sure.

BETTY BOOP 4

Then yeah I don't see why not, you could be an actor.

BETTY BOOP 3

Beat. They both think about this.

We should do a play. Together.

BETTY BOOP 4

Do we know any plays?

BETTY BOOP 3

Well. There's the play you just saw.

BETTY BOOP 4

And there was a play inside that play! So that's two plays.

BETTY BOOP 3
(getting excited)

Maybe we could charge people eighty-five bucks. And I could fix up my truck.

BETTY BOOP 4

I could get my hair done.

BETTY BOOP 3

New ignition. Muffler. Radio. We'd just drive around playin tunes.

BETTY BOOP 4

I could quit my job.

BETTY BOOP 3

We could go on vacation!

BETTY BOOP 4

I wanna be the director.

BETTY BOOP 3

BETTY BOOP 4

We could see each other every day.

BETTY BOOP 3

And also the writer and also the lead.

BETTY BOOP 4

We could have brain-storming sessions late at night.

BETTY BOOP 3

And also I'ma do hair and make-up.

BETTY BOOP 4

We could really do something. You and me.

BETTY BOOP 3

I'm gonna quit Sephora and dedicate my life to Thea-Tah.

7. Betty Boop 2 Acts Out Her Feelings With A Puppet Because She Has No Real Friends

Betty Boop 2 is alone. She uses her pointer and thumb to make a mouth. Now she has a friend!

BETTY BOOP 2

I went to a dinner party and there were lesbians there.

BETTY BOOP 2

They're everywhere these days.

BETTY BOOP 2

I guess so.

BETTY BOOP 2

You better be careful.

BETTY BOOP 2

I guess so.

BETTY BOOP 2

What did they make you do?

BETTY BOOP 2

They made me look at my... you know.

BETTY BOOP 2

No, I don't know.

BETTY BOOP 2

My...you know!

BETTY BOOP 2

No, I'm not sure, what?

BETTY BOOP 2

My PUSSY.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh no!

BETTY BOOP 2

In a MIRROR.

Oh my god.

BETTY BOOP 2

It was very uncivilized and terrible.

BETTY BOOP 2

I can only imagine.

BETTY BOOP 2

Let's never speak of it again.

BETTY BOOP 2

Let's never.

BETTY BOOP 2

What did it look like?

(beat)

Well.

BETTY BOOP 2

I wouldn't like to talk about it out loud.

(getting excited)

But

I *will* say

that it was very

very

BETTY BOOP 2

...Yes??

BETTY BOOP 2

Bright.

BETTY BOOP 2

Your pussy was... bright?

BETTY BOOP 2

Shhh! Not so loud!

BETTY BOOP 2

What do you mean "bright."

BETTY BOOP 2

It was very...vividly... colored.

BETTY BOOP 2
(driven by curiosity)

What color was it? Purple? Gold?

BETTY BOOP 2

I don't know the word for that color.

BETTY BOOP 2

You should never go to a dinner party thrown by lesbians, you don't know what might happen!

BETTY BOOP 2

I know, it's terrible.

BETTY BOOP 2

Do you think they might invite me next time?

BETTY BOOP 2

No.

BETTY BOOP 2

Why not??

BETTY BOOP 2

Because you're just a hand-puppet.

*(Betty Boop 2 puts down her hand.
She's despondent.)*

I don't have any friends.

What about...?

No.

What about...?

No.

Or maybe...?

No.

(decisively)

Nope.

I don't have *any* friends.

(beat)

That makes me sad. I feel sad.

I looked at my pussy in a mirror and it was a color I don't know how to describe and I don't have any friends and I'm sad.

(beat)

Charles??

Charles!!

(beat)

And Charles isn't home.

Betty Boop 2 picks up a large old-school

phone receiver. Or makes an “I’m picking up the phone” gesture. She makes a “phone call.” Betty Boop 3 appears, also “on the phone.

BETTY BOOP 2

Hi, is this Betty?

BETTY BOOP 3

Yah who is this.

BETTY BOOP 2

It’s Betty.

BETTY BOOP 3

Okay. Whatchou want.

BETTY BOOP 2

I guess I wondered if you were at a lesbian party doing lesbian things?
And if maybe I could come over?

BETTY BOOP 3

I went to The Thea-Tah on a date with a married lady and I saw a famous play inside of another famous play by a dead man named Rootbeer.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh. You did?

BETTY BOOP 3

And I quit my job and *now* I’m a director and an actor and I’ve decided to put on a play, or actually the best part of that play, which was the littler play, and actually right now I’m casting it.

BETTY BOOP 2

Oh. Wow.

I didn’t know you liked The Thea-tah?

BETTY BOOP 3

I didn’t. Anyway I’m pretty busy, I better go.

BETTY BOOP 2

Wait, hold on!

BETTY BOOP 3

What.

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