

Thank You, for Me, Please

Duration: ca 3 hours with breaks between acts

colour codes

BEIGE slam table or clap hands

GREEN silent instruction

BLACK read aloud

'C:' (in beginning of act) indicates line of character C

[square brackets] = mood

ACT 1. Introduction.

C: Here is some kind of a venue. Here are chairs and a table. There is a table cloth and candles in chandeliers on it. There are plates, cutlery and flowers. Place cards with black liner writing tops each set of plates and utensils. We have written your names.

20 in the audience, the photographer and a prepared performer; C, are let in to the venue at 8 pm. They circulate and talk. C marks the beginning of the evening by doing 20 push ups.

C does 20 push ups.

Welcome, everybody! To Thank You, for Me, Please. We are here to have a meal together, and we are here to perform together. We will do this whilst following a set of rules and by taking instructions.

The rules are:

This is a performance by ME.

In this performance I am C. You are you, and when C reads you will sit quietly and listen. You will speak only when being spoken to, or when asking a question. You will ask a question by raising your hand. Further more, and more importantly, you will follow all instructions given to you as carefully as possible.

When C does not read, however, you can eat and talk in whatever manner you like. You can conversate with C. In a sense, you are free.

Please be seated.

WAIT FOR PEOPLE TO BE SEATED

To make this easier to follow, I have further more named the two different types of periods just described. The periods when C reads, or performs, will also be referred to as active periods. The periods when you are free, will be referred to as inactive periods.

You will notice that an active period commences when you hear this:

SLAM THE TALBE

Meaning, that when you hear this:

SLAM THE TALBE

the period is active, you will be quiet and you will follow instructions.

When you hear this, on the other hand:

CLAP HANDS

the period is inactive, and you are free to do as you please.

Meaning. When you have heard this:

CLAP HANDS

we are just having dinner.
Is that all clear?

PAUSE

EXPLAIN THAT THE AUDIENCE SHOULD FEEL FREE TO TAKE PHOTOS

TURN TO PHOTOGRAPHER

EXPLAIN THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHER WILL TAKE PHOTOS CONTINUOUSLY THROUGHOUT EVENING

HAVE A TALK ABOUT HOW AND WHEN THEY SHOULD PHOTOGRAPH

LET ALL SIT AGAIN

Finally, let me repeat and summarise: It is very important to C that you follow these rules unconditionally,

and that you in all instances show respect. To C, to one another and to all emotions in your face. Meaning: Not in your actual face, but in your face. Visible to you.

We apologise in advance should C be unable to carry out this performance, give you instructions or enforce these rules in a calm manner or tone. We apologise for any signs of aggravation or frustration when you fail to carry out the instructions completely. We assure you, it will never be personal – but C will go more in to that shortly.

For now, for Me, Please, let's enjoy ourselves as we wait for the pre course.

CLAP HANDS

ACT 2. A READING

SLAM TABLE

C: Hi again.

For now, please, be really quiet and listen.

SIT ON THE CHAIR WITH FEET AND LEGS FOLDED UNDER YOUR ASS. TAKE OUT THE NOTE FROM UNDER THE PLATE. READ NOTE TO SELF – SLOWLY – BEFORE READING IT ALOUD SIMULTANEOUSLY AS CARRYING OUT INSTRUCTIONS

SHEET 1

[super quiet, introverted] C sits in their chair reading from a note. They read the note silently to self before reading to the audience. C mumbles. C moves their chair out. C stretches out their legs. C moves their toes but you can't see their toes. C lays down. C sits up. C hits their face. C takes a sip of water. Stand up. C is scared cus everyone notices everything. Sit down. C stands up. C sits down. C stands up. C sits down. C is up. C is down. C goes up. C goes down. C sits still. C describes the moment: People are watching and listening. A moment for C to get through the note, and stretching of the legs and the movement of the toes and the laying down. All are breathing and watching, listening and looking. C places the note under their ass and moves on to the next note on the table.

SHEET 2

READ NEXT NOTE TO SELF BEFORE READING IT ALOUD AND CARRYING OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS.

[calm but official] Stand up. Repetition is crucial. The same word here and there in a text is crucial. Your tone is crucial. Your audience is crucial. The same history and history is crucial. The rise of nation states were *crucial* in the process of establishing the dominance of 'unified' languages in late 19th century Europe. This history is the basis of current hierarchies in linguistic expression.

'Thus actual speakers are able to embed sentences or expressions in practical strategies which have numerous functions and which are tacitly adjusted to the relations of power between speakers and hearers. Their practical competence involves not only the capacity to produce grammatical utterances, but also the capacity to make oneself heard, believed, obeyed, and so on. Those who speak must ensure that they are entitled to speak in the circumstances, and those who listen must reckon that those who speak are worthy of attention.'

p. 7 in a foreword of Language and Symbolic Power by Pierre Bourdieu.

‘The kind of competence that actual speakers possess is not a capacity to generate an unlimited sequence of grammatically well formed sentences, but rather a capacity to produce expressions which are appropriate to particular situations, that is, a capacity to produce expressions a propos.’

p. 7 in a foreword of Language and Symbolic Power by Pierre Bourdieu

‘The competence adequate to produce sentences that are likely to be understood may be quite inadequate to produce sentences that are likely to be listened to, likely to be recognized as acceptable in all the situations in which there is occasion to speak’

p. 55 in Language and Symbolic Power by Pierre Bourdieu.

Legitimising art with academic reference is a mother...
fucking...hate crime.

SHEET 3

SIT DOWN. READ THIRD NOTE FROM MIDDLE OF THE TABLE TO SELF BEFORE READING ALOUD AND CARRYING OUT INSTRUCTIONS.

[really loud, like stressed] HIT ME TIL I DIE. I can't I can't I can't I can't I can't I caaaaaaaaaaan't

C and everyone explains that writing is crucial. To this world and this pace, it is an endangered form of expression, reminding us of the past. In this project it serves as a reminder of implicit mail and letters, of post, of office and truth. In everyday life, before and after homecoming. Especially regarding the act of following a text. Markers keep attention, colours keep attention, phrasings and repetitions and making the reader feel smart keeps attention. Engaging the audience keeps them engaged.

In all regards, it doesn't have to BE like this. It is too smooth and silky and sweet and hot. And then, an essay that will examine the relationship between all of the above, and their inherent paradoxes and all. Let us begin where in the intersection of me and emotion and me as superior to she and another she is superior to me. Of you telling me about stuff. Of all instructions, and failing to eat like I tell you to.

CLAP HANDS

ACT 3. INSTRUCTIONS

SLAM TABLE

C: Referring back to what I said about it being important to C that you follow my instructions carefully, you should know that I have problems with social settings. When unexpected things happen I tend to get stressed, simply because I feel unsafe. I am diagnosed with dyslexia, depression, and I am autistic. I also have traits of other disorders such as motor tics, a hybrid eating disorder and difficulty focusing. I am often unaware of body language, facial expressions and tone of voice. I struggle to know what needs to be said and what doesn't, so at times I may give you instructions which you feel are obvious. I may also feel anxious around even small changes, so my routines are important – especially around having dinner with you guys. Therefore, I ask you to have this meal with me, doing exactly what I ask you to. Please do not carry out any actions before the instruction is complete.

WATER

Please: grab your water. Hold it in your right hand. Good. We are about to drink. I would like you to bring the glass to your mouth in the same pace as I do, and I would like you to synchronise your drinking with me. You will take three small sips. Is that clear? Ok, then follow me.

AUDIENCE AND C SYNCHRONISE THEIR DRINKING

Thank you. That was really good.
Ok. Now we are going to have some water again.
But this time, you can grab it in whatever hand feels the most comfortable. Once again you are going to synchronise your drinking with me. But you know how you normally kind of half suck, half pour the water in your mouth? This time I would like you to only pour so it lands below your tongue – do not try to suck or force it in. We are going to take one sip like this. And after you have taken that sip, I would like you to take the edge of the glass to kind of wipe your bottom lip free of drops of water. Then you can put it down. Is that ok? Do you feel like you understand?

ALL POUR WATER BELOW THEIR TONGUE

Thank you. That felt really good. Thank you.
Ok. Now we are going to assemble a reasonable bite from this plate of couscous.

I would like you to take your fork, for Me, please. Hold it like you would hold a pen. You can pretend that you are going to draw on the table cloth with the end of it, the eating end, if you have trouble envisioning how you would hold the fork like a pen.

Can you please try and make a line for me?

HAVE THE AUDIENCE TRY OUT DRAWING A LINE WITH THEIR FORK ON THE TABLE CLOTH

NO. Not a fake line. Can you please put the edge of the fork against the cloth? And draw a line in the cloth?

Agh. Sorry. Sorry. I didn't mean a straight line, my mistake. I mean a curved line. Like a half moon. Like this.

SHOW THE HALF MOON LINE

Ok thank you for that.

Now you can take your fork and put some food on it.

NO NO NO.

NO.

STOP THEM, THEY ARE LIFTING THE FOOD WRONGLY WHEN THEY ARE TRYING TO LIFT IT TO THEIR MOUTHS

Sorry. I didn't mean just scoop it, like that. Can you lift the couscous on to your fork? Then lift the fork in a straight line from the plate, and make a sharp cut corner when redirecting to bring the fork in to your mouth. Imagine that it is like this elevate-able part of the end of a truck. That goes up and down like this?

Can I see you lift it?

SHOW THEM WHAT YOU MEAN BY 'MOVING THE FORK UP AND DOWN AND IN LIKE THE END OF A TRUCK

No, you're not treating the fork at all like a pen. I'm sorry but it looks really clumsy.

Do it again.

DO NOT USE THE KNIFE. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE KNIFE. And please, I asked you to make the corner really sharp. Try to make it a 90 degree angle.

Please take five bites like this, as I just showed you.

Ok. Ok, go.

EVERYBODY TAKES FIVE BITES. WATCH THEM AS THEY TAKE FIVE BITES

WALK AROUND AND CONTROL THAT EVERYBODY ARE DOING IT TO YOUR SATISFACTION. GET ANGRY IF SOMEONE DOES IT WRONGLY (AGAIN)

Ok great can you please have some water again? Normal sips are fine.

But also this time please put your glass down 10 cm further in on the table than you normally would. Use the edge of your glass's foot and eye measure to move it exactly 10 cm.

I am going to watch.

CORRECT THEM IF THEY FAIL TO PUT THEIR GLASSES EXACTLY 10 CM FURTHER IN THAN BEFORE ON THE TABLE

ASK HARSHLY:

DID I NOT ASK YOU TO PUT IT 10 CM FROM THE PLATE?

DOES THIS LOOK LIKE 10 CM TO YOU?

HOW CAN YOU THINK THAT THIS IS 10 CM?

GET UPSET, BECAUSE YOU REALLY ASKED THEM NICELY, AND EXPLAINED WHY IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THEY PUT IT DOWN EXACTLY 10 CM FROM THE PLATE

CORNER ONE PERSON AND TREAT THEM REALLY BADLY

Ehm you. How come everybody are able to move their glass perfectly 10 cm further in but you? I specifically said to use your eye measure. Please show me one more time.

NOOOOOOO.

Ok. Will you all just wait one moment and I will go and see how you did with your glasses.

Ok.

WALK AROUND THE TABLE, INSPECT AND COMMENT.

That will be fine then.

CLAP HANDS

ACT 4. Apology

SLAM TABLE

C: Hi. I am very sorry for how I just behaved. It was not my intention, at all, to sound that upset. It really was not personal. It made me stressed that I so clearly asked you to be careful with how you followed my instructions. And then it seemed like you.. you know.. you kind of didn't take it so seriously. Although - I AM sorry. I was having quite a lot of anxiety building up. I just lost control. I am sorry.

Can I ask you – how did you interpret what just happened?

LISTEN IF SOMEONE SAYS SOMETHING, AND RESPOND TRUTHFULLY

I told you I am uncomfortable. And I have various mental and physical disabilities. AND I am your superior. I told you to use your eye measure, and I really tried to explain to you why it was important to me that I needed you to follow all my instructions as well as you could. Was I in any way unclear?

LISTEN IF SOMEONE SAYS SOMETHING, AND RESPOND

No you know what. I am actually sorry. I am really sorry. It was all my fault.

GATHER YOURSELF

COSTUME CHANGE IN FRONT OF AUDIENCE

In order to properly apologise to you - would you please allow me to read a poem for you? Yes? Thank you very much.

I, Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski of 86 Brayards Road, SE15 2BQ, formerly known as Knäppgök Knäppgöksson do solemnly and sincerely declare that: I absolutely and entirely renounce relinquish and abandon the use of my said former name of Knäppgök Knäppgöksson and assume adopt and determine to take and use from the date hereof the name of Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski.

I shall at all times hereafter in all records, deeds, documents and other writings and in all actions and proceeding as well as in all dealings and transaction and on all occasions whatsoever use and

subscribe the said name of Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski as my name, in substitution for my former name of Knäppgök Knäppgöksson.

I authorise and require all persons at all times to designate describe and adress me by the adopted name of Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski.

I make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Statutory Declaration Act 1835.

IN WITNESS of this I have signed in both my old name of Knäppgök Knäppgöksson, which I relinquish, and my new name of Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski by which I shall from the 6th of April 2019 be known.

DECLARED by the above mentioned.
Knäppgök Knäppsson and Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski

CLAP HANDS

ACT 5. DESERT

SLAM TABLE

C: Hi, welcome to the last act of Thank You, for Me, Please. This last act will be: Desert.

This time, when I have finished reading and I clap my hands - it will be the last time that I clap my hands and the performance will be over. But first

[slowly, making eyecontact]

TURN TO THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU, AND THEN ANOTHER PERSON FOR NEW EACH LINE

WAIT UNTIL YOU RECEIVE EACH ITEM BEFORE YOU PROCEED

Can you pass me the pepper?
Can you pass me the salt?
Can you, please, pass me a candle?

BLOW OUT THE CANDLE

TURN TO ANOTHER PERSON

Do you have a lighter?

LIGHT THE CANDLE

TURN TO ANOTHER PERSON

Can you blow this out please.

THE PERSON BLOWS IT OUT, YOU LIGHT THE CANDLE

REPEAT AS MANY TIMES AS SUITABLE

Now. Please be quiet and watch me whilst I finish my desert. Do not start eating before I am completely done eating.

EAT

CLAP HANDS