

A List of Irrational Fears for Future Leaders of the World  
*A memory play in one act*

By  
Andrew Terrance Kaberline

**A LIST OF IRRATIONAL FEARS FOR FUTURE LEADERS OF THE WORLD**  
*was originally staged in New York, New York by Critical Point Theatre*

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

*directed by Julia Katz |*

*designed by Dylan James Amick |*

*sound design by Matthew Bell | stage managed by Jackie Mullen*

February 22-March 1 | The Kraine Theatre, FRIGID New York

March 21 | Rock the Blocks Music and Art Festival, Blacksburg, VA

ORIGINAL CAST

*Andrew Terrance Kaberline as Kenrick*

*Lani Fu as Jorja*

*Coryn Carson as Belinda/Female Therapist*

*Tyler Weaver as Carter/Male Therapist*

## SCENE ONE

*The stage looks like an elaborate filing system, where information and ideas have been cataloged and numbered for quite some time, with nothing to distinguish one storage unit of memories from the other. They are not unique, but rather uniform.*

*This will be the **set** for the duration of the play, but not the **setting**.*

*A boyish man, **KENRICK**, walks on stage using a cane. He has an obvious limp. He stands nervously and waits.*

*A Female **THERAPIST** enters, unlocks a cabinet, retrieves a composition book, and hands it to **KENRICK**. She takes a seat, clicks a tape recorder, and waits.*

KENRICK

Just...whenever?

THERAPIST

Whenever you're ready.

KENRICK

And you?

THERAPIST

Don't wait for me.

KENRICK

Where did I leave off?

*THERAPIST rewinds, then plays KENRICK's own voice "221. Fear of getting stuck in a round-about."*

KENRICK

(Reading from his composition book)

222. Fear of needles. 223. Fear of red lights. 224. Fear of home phones. 225. Fear of being shot. 226. Fear of falling. 227. Fear of birdbaths-

THERAPIST

Why did you stop?

KENRICK

The birdbath. I think that's a repeat.

THERAPIST

It's a repeat. Noted.

KENRICK

And that's OK, or...

THERAPIST

Keep going.

KENRICK

228. Fear of splinters. 229. Fear of landslides. 230. Fear of fire. 231. Fear of progress...

THERAPIST

Something wrong?

KENRICK

I don't understand why we're still doing this.

THERAPIST

I asked you to.

KENRICK

How is this helping me?

THERAPIST

Let's look at the landslides, do you feel any fear when you say that?

KENRICK

No.

THERAPIST

What about progress? Are you afraid of that, do you believe it when you say it?

KENRICK

Not at all.

THERAPIST

You should. It scares most people.

KENRICK

I'm not most people.

THERAPIST

I know. I know.

*A sizable shift. Tape Recorder clicks.*

KENRICK

Did you really think that about me?

THERAPIST

I did. I had never seen someone quite like you.

KENRICK

Just when I thought this week couldn't get any crazier, We've got this boy, his parents kill themselves in the garage. He finds them, doesn't call 911 or run to grab help. Instead he climbs onto his roof, swan dives off, hits the birdbath, the ground, leg shattered!-

THERAPIST

It was a little less enthusiastic.

KENRICK

This boy walks all the way to the hospital with one leg, not afraid of anything, like some sort of superhero.

THERAPIST

I never used the word superhero.

KENRICK

I sure felt like one though.

THERAPIST

And what exactly was your super power?

KENRICK

Are you serious?

THERAPIST

Yes.

KENRICK

I wasn't afraid of anything.

THERAPIST

And what did you do with that?

*Shift Back. Tape Recorder Clicks.*

THERAPIST

Your parents left a list for you. They were afraid of things.

KENRICK

You want me to become my parents?

THERAPIST

Of course not. Your parents were sick, Kenrick.

KENRICK

I'm sick too.

THERAPIST

Very different. You're parents were very anxious people, afraid of what might happen next.

KENRICK

I'd rather have my own list.

THERAPIST

But what would be on it?

KENRICK

A short list is still a list.

THERAPIST

Kenrick, you feel invincible. I understand. People aren't supposed to display aphobic properties for more than a few minutes. You're the outlier. The fact that you seem, stuck there, it concerns me.

KENRICK

I'm not faking.

THERAPIST

Not accusing you of that. Something changed when you jumped off your roof. You agree?

KENRICK

When I fell off, yes.

THERAPIST

I want to change it back for you.

KENRICK

I dunno. I like being the fearless guy. It's a cool handle. It's my thing.

THERAPIST

You make the people here a little...uneasy.

KENRICK

The people in your office?

THERAPIST

The people in town. To them you're strange.

KENRICK

What's wrong with strange?

THERAPIST

Understand that it's been a very rough year for Blacksburg. Everyone is afraid.

KENRICK

Not me! I can change the town! Lead by example!

THERAPIST

But we need the fear, Kenrick. Fear is the great motivator that prompts people to act. Being fearless won't make you some sort of...superhero.

*Shift. Tape Recorder Click.*

KENRICK

See, you did say it. About six months into our sessions. Tuesday, October 16th, 2007, 11:45am. I remember.

THERAPIST

I don't.

*THERAPIST rewinds the recorder looking for the aforementioned moment. This frustrates KENRICK. He moves on, handing back the composition book.*

KENRICK

Go to Monday, February 7th, 2011. 11:15am.

THERAPIST

Fine.

*THERAPIST stops rewinding, and instead fast forwards a bit. Shift back.*

THERAPIST

We need to look to the list and find things that can begin to cause you fear, then we can proceed.

KENRICK

What about anxiety?

THERAPIST

Have you felt that recently?

*A girl who has had a rough night, **JORJA**, appears on stage with a bloody eye.*

KENRICK

Yeah, I think. 178. Fear of telling a stranger she's beautiful.

THERAPIST

You feel anxious when you read that?

KENRICK

No, I did it. Like, to an actual girl. Thursday January 27th, 2011. 11:46pm. B and I were coming back from some party somewhere, and this girl was sitting alone in the street. Blood pouring from her eye socket. I got really overheated, and I walked over to her and said, "Hi, I wanted to tell you, that you are very...very beautiful, and... it terrifies me to say that. Your beauty...it's horrifying."

JORJA

What?

KENRICK

Horrifying!...Then I went home. Thursday, January 27th, 2011, 11:56pm...

## SCENE TWO

*KENRICK and a female friend, BELINDA, approach the porch in front of an apartment.*

*KENRICK tries to open the door, but is having trouble holding his keys straight.*

BELINDA

Let me do that for you.

KENRICK

Fucking keys.

*BELINDA takes the keys and opens the door.*

BELINDA

Coming?

KENRICK

The night is still young, B. I don't want to be boring.

BELINDA

Then find something interesting to do. I'm going to bed. Can you manage to lock the door this time?

*KENRICK waves. BELINDA hands him the keys.*

BELINDA

Hey!

*KENRICK kisses BELINDA. BELINDA kisses KENRICK.*

KENRICK

Good night B.

BELINDA

Good night K.

*BELINDA is inside.*

*KENRICK puts his cane aside and carefully positions himself on top of the porch railing, almost falling once or twice, until he is standing up, balancing on it. All the while...*

KENRICK

We real cool. We/left school. We/lurk late. We/strike straight. We/sing sin. We/jazz june.  
We/die soon.

*JORJA, still with bloody eye, enters while KENRICK is performing.*

JORJA

Aren't you afraid of falling and shit?

KENRICK

I'm afraid of lots of things. Got a whole list.

JORJA

Is that what you were reading?

KENRICK

That? No, that was Gwendolyn Brooks.

JORJA

What's that?

KENRICK

I'm guessing you're not an english major.

*JORJA climbs up to KENRICK.*

JORJA

Thanks for saving me back there.

KENRICK

I wasn't trying to save you.

JORJA

But you did. Save me.

*KENRICK isn't having it.*

*Pause.*

KENRICK

You want something for your eye?

JORJA

What's wrong with my eye?

It's a fucking mess.

KENRICK

You called me beautiful.

JORJA

*KENRICK gingerly climbs down from the railing and sits on the porch.*

Whoever did that...I just don't want, like, your boyfriend showing up and doing that to me, ya know?

KENRICK

He delivers pizza. He's not my boyfriend.

JORJA

Ok.

KENRICK

*JORJA comes down to KENRICK.*

I'm Jorja.

JORJA

Good for you.

KENRICK

Your name?

JORJA

Kenrick.

KENRICK

Kenrick?

JORJA

Kenrick.

KENRICK

What kind of name is that?

JORJA

A dumb one-

KENRICK

JORJA

REALLY dumb.

KENRICK

My parents wanted me to suffer, obviously.

JORJA

Are you going to invite me inside?

KENRICK

Why do you want to go in there?

JORJA

So we could fuck.

KENRICK

Oh...

JORJA

Or we could do it out here, I don't mind.

KENRICK

I mind.

JORJA

You call a girl beautiful and she's gonna show up at your door.

KENRICK

Oh, but you see that wasn't the point.

JORJA

I don't believe you.

KENRICK

I don't care, really.

JORJA

You want me to come in your room with you.

KENRICK

Don't come to my porch and tell me what I want!

*Pause.*

JORJA

I like your cane.

KENRICK

You're persistent, I'll give you that.

JORJA

So, fuck me.

KENRICK

No thank you!

JORJA

The offer is on the table.

KENRICK

Yeah, no shit.

JORJA

Is there something wrong with me?

KENRICK

Past the head wound?

JORJA

Fuck you!

KENRICK

(Feigning pain)

It hurts me when you say words like that

JORJA

So, like, you're scared to have sex with a girl like me, is that it?

KENRICK

Yeah, sure. Sorry, no offense.

*Suddenly falling away from the world of the porch,  
JORJA slinks to the ground.*

KENRICK

You alive?

JORJA

I'm dizzy.

KENRICK

Well, you did lose a lot of blood.

JORJA

I think- I think I'm going to throw up.

*KENRICK gives up, opens the door, and begins to head inside, throwing JORJA the keys.*

KENRICK

Bathroom's on the right. Lock the door behind you.

*THERAPIST joins KENRICK at the side of the stage, with the Tape Recorder.*

KENRICK

Tuesday, October 16th, 2007, 10:30am!

*KENRICK is inside.*

*A MALE THERAPIST walking downstage and sitting at attention. Curious, JORJA walks downstage and joins him.*

**SCENE THREE**

*A Therapist's office. MALE THERAPIST sits, while JORJA stands uneasily.*

*KENRICK and THERAPIST watch at a distance.*

MALE THERAPIST

What are we going to talk about today?

*JORJA doesn't answer.*

MALE THERAPIST

Wanna try sitting down? Changing positions...different perceptions...anything?...Bueller, Bueller...

*JORJA continues to stand, giving nothing back.*

MALE THERAPIST

Alright. Whatever works. So, how are you getting accustomed to the Larson family? I know they've got a pinball machine in the basement...so that's cool.

*JORJA shoots MALE THERAPIST a look, begging for him to stop.*

MALE THERAPIST

How bout something completely new today? Something I've never even tried with a patient. Sound fun?

JORJA

What's that?

MALE THERAPIST

A colleague suggested this exercise to me. I'm going to ask you a question, and all you have to do is start listing as many answers as possible.

JORJA

I don't have to talk about them?

MALE THERAPIST

Nope.

JORJA

What's the question?

MALE THERAPIST

Alright, let's go withhh.... ah, what are you afraid of?

JORJA

There's a bunch of things-

MALE THERAPIST

List them. Go on. "Fear of blank, Fear of blank."

JORJA

Well, Fear of elevator doors. Fear of cameras taking my soul. Fear of splinters. Fear of God. Fear of science. Fear of police officers from other states. Fear of getting bitten by a spider while I'm sleeping. Fear of Being a socially awkward parent....Fear of mom jeans!... Fear of being lost in the supermarket...I went shopping with my Mother when I was nine or ten. I went to look at the magazine rack while she got stuff for dinner. I was through an entire issue of *Teenbeat* before I realized how long I'd been there. I tried to find Mother. Couldn't. I sat down in the middle of aisle twelve and cried out. I cried out "where are you, why won't you pick me up anymore?" I was crying out for my Dad. I was there with Mother, but I wanted Dad. I needed him. Turns out Mother drove home without me.... was already in the driveway before she noticed- She swore it was an accident when she picked me up, but I feel-

*Pause.*

MALE THERAPIST

What's up, J?

JORJA

I- You said I didn't have to talk about them.

MALE THERAPIST

That's right.

JORJA

Sorry, I forgot-

MALE THERAPIST

Nothing to get upset about. Any more?

JORJA

Fear of being lost in the supermarket. Fear of small spaces. Fear of Octopi. I'm afraid that my Dad isn't coming back. Fear of not wearing the right dress.

*MALE THERAPIST takes the papers he has been writing and locks them in a cabinet drawer. He leaves.*