

Turn Around When Possible

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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
Shel	A nonbinary person, they get misgendered as a woman, regardless if that was their assigned gender.	26-30	NB
Tess	A young woman, Shel's somewhat privileged pal.	26-30	NB
Some Rando	A normal dude with a normal dog	26-40	M
Siri	A Mac product interface.	Flexible	F

Synopsis

Drunk and lost, Shel and Tess argue if they can trust a suspicious Siri.

A bare stage. Throughout this play are sounds of the city, wind in particular, that slowly turns into thick, asthmatic breathing.

You'll know when it reaches that point.

Beat.

SIRI (O.S.)

Turn around when possible.

SHEL (O.S.)

Shut up.

Enter TESS and SHEL, both a bit tipsy from the bar. Tess is holding her phone, looking at the screen. Shel is keeping their eyes up for street signs and landmarks.

TESS

We're getting lost.

SHEL

No we're finding out where we are.

SIRI

Turn around when possible.

SHEL

Shut up.

TESS

Look, Shel look. The hotel is/ in the other way.

SIRI

Turn around when possible.

SHEL

Shut up.

TESS

Excuse/ me?

Not you, the phone.	SHEL
Turn around when possible.	SIRI
Shut up.	SHEL
Try me you broke ass binch.	SIRI
Wh/at?	SHEL
Turn around when possible.	SIRI
You hear that?	SHEL
Shel.	TESS
Tess did you hear that?	SHEL
Shel, please don't get in a fight with my phone.	TESS
She called me a binch!	SHEL
She isn't a person!	TESS
Please do not yell, maybe you should turn around when possible.	SIRI

SHEL

Could you turn her off or something?

TESS

Then we don't have the map.

SHEL

Then just cancel the route.

TESS

But-

SHEL

Please?

Please, it's not worth it.

Beat. Tess does. Tense silence.

SHEL

Right.

Right I'm pretty sure that we. . .

Did. . .

. . . not go down this way and, in fact, went the other way.

TESS

I do not recognize any of this.

SHEL

Because we're drunk.

Told you we shouldn't drink too much.

TESS

Really? It's my fault you're drunk?

SHEL

No, that came out wrong.

TESS

I did not buy you drinks.

In fact, you bought *me* drinks.

In fact, if you *did* say that, it was so you wouldn't feel bad for drinking so much later.

So there.

(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

(beat)

Can we please just follow the map?

Shel sighs, walks over to Tess.

SHEL

Could I see your phone for a second?

(Tess does. Shel fiddles with it.)

Okay look.

See, that's our hotel's address, yeah?

TESS

That's what I entered yes.

SHEL

Yeah yeah, but look.

Biggens Street, 1503, yeah?

So why is the route the phone is giving, leading us *over here*.

Across town.

TESS

That's still Biggens Street.

SHEL

That would be, like, 103 Biggens, Tess. That's a lot of blocks.

TESS

Either way it would get us to Biggens!

SHEL

But it's quicker to go this way.

And we don't know, like, what's around there you know?

Just can't know.

Beat.

TESS

We should have just taken an Uber.

I'm getting an Uber.

SHEL

You know basically anyone can be an Uber driver?
You think Uber doesn't have a cover up a crime fund?

TESS

Okay fine let's just sleep on a fucking grate, that guy looks like he'd share his mattress.

SHEL

I don't like fighting.

TESS

I don't like being lost!

SIRI

Turn around when possible.

Beat.

SHEL

I thought you turned her off.

TESS

Something was probably . . . Finger slip or something.

SHEL

I'm going to turn her off okay?

TESS

Yeah.

SHEL

Fab.

They do that. Beat.

TESS

Now what?

SHEL

We get back to walking.

TESS

I'm not going to move unless we follow the GPS.

SHEL

Look. Please don't assume I'm crazy/ but

TESS

Why are you like/ this when you drink?

SHEL

But I don't trust iPhones.

TESS

I mean, yeah, you'd be stupid to trust them.

They track your movements, they record your Siri asks, they track your web history.

But that has nothing to do with us going back/ to the hotel.

SHEL

Everything.

I just. . .

You never worry about someone hacking your phone?

Beat.

TESS

Yes. Again, reasonable fears.

SHEL

Well what if. . . Hear me out.

What if someone hijacked your phone so the GPS map would lead you on a route, yeah?

A route that would. . . Perhaps. . . Put you in harm's way.

Beat.

TESS

You're afraid that the GPS will lead you to. . . What? Human traffickers?

SHEL

Or muggers or something yes.

TESS

Has that *ever* happened?

SHEL

No. But you know the quote “The invention of the ship was the invention of the shipwreck?”

Everything opens a disaster.

TESS

Okay.

But that’s not going to happen tonight.

SIRI

Turn around when/ possible.

Both startle.

SHEL

This is why I’m paranoid!

TESS

Okay I’m turning the phone off, God.

SHEL

As if that does anything

Tess turns off the phone again. Beat.

TESS

So where to next?

Beat.

Beat.

SHEL

You’re sure it’s off?

TESS

Yes.

Okay. SHEL

I don't know where we are. SHEL

Beat.

What a fucking awful night. TESS

Sorry. SHEL

Whatever. TESS
Just. . . This sucks. It really sucks

Beat.

Do you hear that? SHEL

What? TESS

Like. . . I dunno. Like. . . SHEL
It's fucking creepy.

No I- TESS
Wait. Wait I do.

Beat. The sound is definitely breathing.

Run. SIRI

Shel yells, tosses the phone offstage. Tess sprints in the opposite direct.

SHEL

Tess wait-

Shel turn to run but trips. Lands on the ground.

The breathing is deeper, louder.

Shel curls into a ball and-

SOME RANDO comes up walking their asthmatic Frenchie. The Rando pauses, kneels down, and pops the dog's mouth open.

This helps clear the dog's airways. The sound stops.

SOME RANDO

You okay miss?

Beat. Shel slowly un-balls, stares at the dog.

SHEL

Yeah. Yeah I just.

(laughs)

Oh my god.

SOME RANDO

What?

SHEL

I thought. . .

Well just, thought your dog was a murderer or something.

SOME RANDO

Penny Lou wouldn't hurt a fly.

SHEL

No I get/ it.

SOME RANDO

Literally, she has bad hips. More likely the fly would hurt her.
Speaking of which, you nearly beaned her.

The Rando passes Shel the phone. They take it.

SHEL

Oh my god I'm sorry.
It's my friend's phone.

SOME RANDO

The flighty one.

SHEL

Yeah.

SIRI

Turn around when possible.

Shel startles. Nearly tosses the phone again.

SHEL

Why does it keep doing that?!

SOME RANDO

You must not be on the right route.

SHEL

No it just. . . Does this even when it's off.

SOME RANDO

Fucking creepy.

SHEL

Yeah it sucks.

SOME RANDO

God what if. . .
What if somebody had this. . . I dunno, remote right?

(He pulls out something like a car key.)

And they could like-

He presses a button.

SIRI

Turn around when possible.

Silence. He presses the key fob again. And says in unison
with Siri

SIRI/RANDO

Run.

Blackout.