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Theatre for a New Theater: A Play on Architecture

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Overview_

Description:

The project entails transforming a former military fort into a theater. The scopic parameters native to both fort and theater can provide a field of operation for an architecture that simultaneously mobilizes and exposes the machinery of spectacle. In tandem, amplifying and distorting existing conditions of the fort and repurposing them for a theatrical program can provide catalytic parameters for design that are typically absent when designing from a clean slate.

Site:

About one kilometer south of Manhattan, Governors Island is a world unto itself. A diametric opposite to the dense urban constrictions of New York City, Governors Island is an open, foliage-saturated, hilly terrain populated by quaint 19th century masonry buildings and virtually no occupants outside of the summer months. Aside from its otherworldly quality, choosing Governors Island was a first instinct as a site for the project purely out of the desire to provide New York's 'West End' with its very own 'South

Bank.¹ At that point, the project was going to start from an empty site and produce a theater catered toward experimental performance as an alternative to the musical-theatre focus of Broadway. The decision to instead renovate Fort Jay came with the discovery that Foster and Partners Architects will be renovating Castle Williams into what will be the New Globe Theater, based off of the original plans for Shakespeare's Globe in London. Castle Williams and Fort Jay are the two oldest structures on Governors Island, built originally for the War of 1812 and undergoing various modifications since then. Upon visiting Governors Island, the monumental, iconographic quality of Fort Jay exhibited strong potential for re-visioning into a major performance venue. Some of its key features include:

- the highest point on all of Governors Island
- surrounded by open field
- some of its walls extend forty feet below ground

¹ The city of London contains two primary theatrical districts. The West End is similar to New York City's Broadway, populated entirely with conventional theaters. London's South Bank, across the River Thames, provides more varied theatrical experiences. It includes: the London Eye, the Royal Festival Hall, the Royal National Theatre, and Shakespeare's Globe.

- its five-pointed star plan is an opportunity to reinterpret stage, audience, or both²

Methodology:

Renovation has been approached from numerous pragmatic necessities and theoretical dispositions. That which this project most directly reacts to (specifically, against), is Rem Koolhaas' re-vision of the Arnhem panopticon prison.³ Here, an outdated prison ideal is maintained only iconographically, while a completely new diagrammatic ideal is grafted on top of it. It is the contention of this project that something both more precise and architecturally provocative would have come out of amplifying the existing architectural qualities, taking a step back, looking at it through different programmatic eyes, and distorting the result for the production of particular effects. Ultimately,

² The star-shaped plan of the fort evolved out of the age of gunpowder and cannons. Under heavy siege and a simultaneous army attack, forts confronted the need to always be able to fire on a target from at least two directions. The star shaped fort eliminated the dead zones existing in traditional square fortresses as well as in turret design, which always provided a tangent point that made an approaching army invulnerable to attack. In the design approach, beyond the strong unconventional nature of the natural site geometries, the occupant/onlooker roles of attacker, defender, spectator, and performer became strong catalysts

³ The panopticon is a prison model designed by Jeremy Bentham in 1785. The concept of the design involves a central guard tower that provides a view of all encircling prison cells. Due to the distance and a mediating visual factor in the tower (such as blinds), prisoners are unable to tell if they are being watched or not. Rather than exploiting this powerful optical relationship, Koolhaas labeled it as an obsolete ideal and fashioned a renovation of the Arnhem prison ostensibly devoid of an optical hierarchy.

this case study led to a prison even more dangerous, isolationist, and self-policing than the original design. Taking a step back, however, yielded that the relationships of power made for an excellent rock concert venue after only minor distortion.

This methodology yields a more charged architectural proposition than merely superimposing a new program on top of the existing one. Thus, in approaching Fort Jay, it became clear that the design process would span two phases: 1) amplify the inherent militant qualities to make it even more fort-like in its defensive capabilities, and 2) distort the results to optimize theater operation while maintaining its scopic traits. A key result of this would be an inversion of the 'military theater'⁴ from outside the fort, to be completely contained within. The goal of the first phase would not be to make a fort that could withstand modern warfare, but rather be a stronger fort for the time it was built, thus enhancing the characteristics it already contains. The goal of the second phase would be to distort this 'enhanced' fort

⁴ 'Military theater' is a term used to describe a specific area of conflict bordered by areas of no conflict. In Fort Jay's initial incarnation, the military theater would be the exterior of the fort during war. In Fort Jay's realization as a theater, the exterior becomes 'demilitarized' and the conflict is contained to the interior.

as necessary to make a modern theater capable of housing performances and an audience.

Amplify- The following steps were taken to amplify the 'fortness' of the site:

- dropping the central courtyard and its buildings to sea level. This provided an alternative means of entering and exiting the fort which did not risk penetrating the outer wall.
- tunneling through Governors Island and up to Fort Jay. A submarine would provide transportation.
- extending the outer walls with holed masonry and strengthening them. This provided for another layer of defensive protection while providing small holes that give the defenders of the fort a hidden view to the outside as well as a means to fire smaller caliber artillery before the cannons. The moat then serves as a catch for any destruction without damaging the next layer of wall.
- raising the starpoints containing cannons to extend firing distance, should the first wall be breached.

- enclosing the top of each pair of converging walls in order to create a rigging system that allows for extra walls to be brought down should areas of the fort need to be contained, such as after a section is breached.

Distort- The following steps were taken to distort this 'ultimate' fort to claim optimal usage as a theater:

- adjusting the rake of the starpoints to allow audience members situated on the level interior to see the entire stage while making it a readily occupiable space for performers. Each of the five starpoints becomes a separate stage. The perimeter geometry stays the same to allow for the already-present effect of forced perspective.⁵
- modifying the interiors of each of the four existing buildings in order to house the program necessary to running a theater.
- adjusting the containment rigging system to function also as flytowers and to handle lights.

⁵ Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1554) was an architect, theoretician, and set designer who pioneered such stage effects as: colored lights, mechanical rigging, and using forced perspective to produce the illusion of a greater depth than that which actually exists on the stage. The star-plan geometry of Fort Jay allows for five stages employing extreme forced perspective thanks to the convergence of its walls instead of the standard backwall.

- inserting interior cameras among the rigging systems to provide the audience with alternative means of viewing performances.
- allowing the submarine to not only dock at the bottom of the central atrium, but to travel to the top of it so as to provide the submarine audience with a panoptical view of all five stages.⁶

The distorted result, in fact, continues to use military technology to achieve many of its ends. The thousands of cameras inhabiting the theater are only possible by means of advanced mobile microcamera technology developed by the military.⁷ The submarine is able to rise to the top of the atrium using a system based both on hydraulic pumps developed for the military, as well as missile silo design. The resulting theater maintains many of the fort's characteristics that mask the outside of the structure, only to leave the workings of the interior entirely exposed. Typically in a theater, this would

⁶ A reinterpretation of both 'periscope' and 'panopticon,' the submarine audience sacrifices the close view of an individual stage for the power of seeing all five stages without being seen themselves.

⁷ Currently, high definition cameras smaller than a microchip exist. They have wireless feeds of up to one kilometer. (http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/health/microchip-sized-digital-camera-to-provide-vision-for-us-militarys-insect-sized-aircraft_100196080.html). In this theater, the cameras are large enough to have a physical presence in theatrical space and become active performers.

be hidden by wing space and placing rigging much higher up. This project, however, is interested in maintaining the quality of epic spectacle without masking its incarnation.⁸

Experience_

Like its military incarnation, the submarine approach provides a dramatic event unlike anything most of the audience will have experienced. Rather than simply *waiting* for their arrival at the theater, the audience directly causes it. The usual passive qualities of transportation are lost as it is up to the collective audience to work together with their pedal strokes (as in the cooperation required for a kayak or paddleboat) toward the goal of ultimately viewing a performance; yet this in itself *is* a performance. This alternative mode of engagement establishes for the audience a sense of what they are to experience within the theater, where numerous scopic variations await them. As the submarine finds itself directly under the site

⁸ Bertolt Brecht (playwright) advocated for epic theater that evaded suspension of disbelief. Guy Debord (filmmaker) advocated for spectacles to contain 'detournments' which call out attention to its falsehood so as not to be drawn into them. This theater provides grandly scaled spectacle while also displaying all the mechanics behind it. This will craft a visual conflict to induce a state of hyperawareness similar to the effect achieved by architects Diller and Scaffidio's Blur building, a pavilion made entirely of steel and fog. There, the obscuring of vision heightens the participant's awareness. Here, the level of exposure and control of vision achieves a similar level of focus, but through engagement instead of exclusion.

and needs to turn upright, it begins to be aided by a massive hydraulic pump churning out nearly forty-thousand gallons of water per minute to aid the audience in their approach. When they break the surface, looking directly into the exposed sky above the theater, the audience may exit the submarine at the dock to find standard seating, or remain onboard for the next phase. Spiraling up the circulation ramp like a missile silo, the submarine comes to rest at the top of the atrium. Here, the shell is lifted off by fly wires from each of the five theaters, exposing the submarine audience to the grand theater that surrounds them. Able to rotate fully in their seats, this new incarnation of the panopticon 'tower' allows for viewing of any of the five theaters without even getting up.⁹

⁹ Paul Virilio (cultural theorist) presents the notion that sight is a weapon, and if you can see something, you can expect to destroy it. He goes on to discuss how images have replaced objects as the catalysts for war, and their inherent power should not be underestimated. At first, the audience members seated in this new incarnation of the panopticon tower may not feel the exhilarating sense of power that a guard in the prison model would have felt because they do not seem to be have any effect on what they are watching. However, the notion of providing highly maneuverable cameras not only makes the performances more visually accessible, but also becomes a part of the performances, like the sub ride itself. The cameras are physical objects visible to both audience members and performers, and they have the ability to influence a production. With the camera's feed acting as live image and the performance as live object, what happens when both are accessible? This is a test of Virilio's assertion. Does the image entirely replace all concern for the object? This theater provides a battleground for the debate.

However, despite clear sightlines, each of the stages are at a great distance. Even if you are seated on the edge of the submarine, the closest stage to you will be over two hundred feet away. How is this remedied? More decisions requiring group cooperation. The base of the submarine shell situated twenty feet above will at this point begin projecting a video feed on each of the five sides. What of? The submarine is linked to five cameras, one in each of the theaters. A joystick controller is already present in front of five submarine members' seats, each with the ability to control one camera. For the duration of the performances in the various theaters, it is up to the submarine audience to negotiate how the cameras will be controlled. Will they take turns? Will they shout out requests? Will they wrestle the control away from someone focusing on the receding hairline of an ensemble actor instead of the primary action? Just as in the approach, teamwork is key. Echoes of platoons and war committees abound.

So what of the audience members in 'standard' seating, confined to one theater and one stage? Sure, they may be able to see one, maybe two of the other stages, but

they could be as far as seven hundred feet away. These audience members find themselves in a unique position of power. Sacrificing the panoptical view of all five stages, every audience member has access to a small screen on the back of the seat in front of them which directly links to a video feed. Unlike the committee setting inside the submarine, this video feed comes from a camera that each audience member has direct personal control over. However, their camera is not located in the same theater as them; it is located in one of the others. This allows an audience member the power of experiencing both object (directly in front of them), and image (that of a different object they can barely see with their naked eye). Each of these cameras has the exact same controls as the submarine cameras, allowing for panning, zooming, and rotating, often resulting in a cluster of cameras fighting to obtain particular prized views. As the cameras are objects, they now become part of the performance. Imagine one camera snaking its way onto the stage to get a supreme close-up of the lead actor, which then prompts fifty other cameras to attempt the same view. An occurrence involving so many objects would not go unnoticed by the audience. Also, because of the

competitiveness of these views and no camera able to occupy the same space as another, there needs to be some element of strategy which allows an audience member to anticipate the views of their 'enemies' and make a preemptive strike. Thus, each screen can see up to five views at once. Again, they can only control their one camera, but by spying on the views of others, they have opportunity to enjoy others' views as well as interfere with them.¹⁰

Again, we see power put in the hands of an audience member not to directly affect an event, but rather their experience of that event.¹¹ In the submarine, it was how quickly they arrived at the theater. Inside the theater, it is how they view the performances. All such strategies work together toward creating a more

¹⁰ If you can see what your enemy sees, you can counter it. This notion, ever-present in military intelligence interception, will be more readily relatable to participating audience members as a common quality of war video games. When playing on a single, split screen, a common tactic utilized by players to find or avoid their enemy is to spy on their division of the screen. The fort's forced-perspective-ready geometry enables this potential by funneling the actions of cameras and thus creating inherent conflict between those competing for deeper stage views.

¹¹ This is an alternative to the Jumbotron solution to providing closer live views to distant audience members. In a Jumbotron scenario, the audience is at the mercy of the professional camera crew and editor behind the booth. This experience is far more personalized, and caters to the active, multi-tasking nature of the younger generations. Control your own camera, interfere with others, experience two or more theaters at once, this theater thrives in hyperawareness; it is not a theater in which you sit in reverential silence, nor is it a mere gimmick. These physical cameras and their rigging provide both their *own* viewable performance, as well as the capacity to affect the on-stage performance. Imagine an acrobat who swings from one moving camera to another, an actor who directly speaks to different cameras, or even an actor who grabs and throws them.

heightened awareness of the theatrical experience as well as the very act of viewership itself.

Significance_

That which has arisen out of this unorthodox design methodology is a theater unlike others, yet entirely based on existing practices seen in the military, theaters, or both. Some are used to new ends, like providing audience members with personal cameras. Others are simple inversions, like peripheralizing the audience to raked stages to provide audience members with the most powerful view. The guiding interest in the design began as a desire to craft a theater that provided not only spectacle, but transparently exposed all machinery that allowed for that spectacle to take place. The amplify/distort design methodology was a means to that end. However, many implications arose out of the final product. The importance of optics and sightlines took center stage, and Virilio's war-central argument on the image versus the object strongly influenced the final positions of power at which the audience arrives at. Should such a theater ever be built, it would provide an audience member with both an enlightening, hyper-aware spatial

experience as well as a dramatic sequence unequivocally describable as 'super fun.'

Dramatic Extension_

Deviating from the traditional path for architecture students at Syracuse University, this Honors Capstone includes a project complimentary to the architecture thesis project, but individually complete: an original play. Though the intention is to continue working on this play after graduation, for the purposes of the B. Arch. thesis project, a single scene has been crafted that focuses the unique production capacities of the theater's design. The writing of this play has been overseen by David Feldman, playwright, on recommendation from Kyle Bass of the SU Drama Department. David was also an adjunct professor in the Drama Department

The play's entire plot has been outlined during frequent correspondence with David, providing a professional playwright's perspective. The setting is a Dubai architecture firm. It is a time in the not-too-distant-future when buildings are constructed and demolished within months, instead of decades. This

temporal quality—focused on aesthetics and form over function or pragmatism—is due largely to a desire in companies to maintain an image of freshness, of being on the cutting edge. Architecture, thus, finds itself subject to the constant flux of fads and trends usually reserved for fashion, art, and cinema. The two opposing characters provide the conflict of architectural theory that drives the play forward: what does it mean to design and build architecture in the 21st century? On one side we have the iconically named 'Filip', a 'starchitect' who favors beautiful architecture above all else. On the opposing side stands Rory Wren, a former classmate of Filip's who is out of work due to her steadfast desire to design and build purely out of a utilitarian desire, completely unsympathetic to aesthetics. Hilarity ensues. The key features of the play that make it specific to the theater include:

- the use of multiple stages
- simultaneous action
- controlled demolition
- subtle elements worthy of a focused camera

The scene I have written is Rory's confrontation with Filip when she suspects that he is demolishing her buildings prematurely. Here in Filip's office, after ten years of no contact, the audience bears witness to characters who struggle to define the future of architecture out of irreconcilable theoretical differences. True to the characters' personalities, Filip directly engages individual audience-controlled cameras that may venture into his reach, while Rory avoids the cameras at all costs (which is still in itself an interaction). Also, in tandem with the image versus object debate central to the design of the theater, news broadcasts take place 'live on the scene' out of the various stage points. Some are genuine and some are manipulated, but only the submarine audience—privileged by their view of all five stages—will be able to tell the difference.

This scene, along with the entire play's outline, is included as part of the thesis book, turned in as the Honors Capstone.

Fleeting_ A Play on Architecture

Outline

Main Characters_

Filip/Philip Fleeting:

Tragic flaws:

Childish- had a crush on Rory all through college which he expressed by belittling her work, sabotaging it, and making fun of her.

Fame obsessed- gives the public exactly what they want without taking on any responsibility to improve the condition of the built environment.

Rory Wren:

Tragic flaws:

Pride- more than once refused to show her work at all because was ashamed that it wasn't her absolute best.

Power obsessed- though not power hungry. Is more frustrated the hierarchies of those who have power over her and uses this sense of injustice to justify her vengeful actions.

James:

Tragic flaws:

Closet romantic- deeply in love with Rory, but has never been able to tell her. Manipulates Rory out of a desire to keep her dependent on him.

Single track happy-ender- truly believes his life will be perfect if him and Rory are together for the rest of their lives...and that his life will have no meaning if she is gone.

Other Characters_

Varme de Bueller-Schmidt: CEO of Autobedesk. Very mysterious.

Riblad Wren: Rory's father.

Lishka Wren: Rory's mother.

Guard 1: Varme de Bueller-Schmidt's right hand man.

Guard 2: Varme de Bueller-Schmidt's left hand man.

Key Events in Each Theater in Each Act

Production Note: There are no set changes. Each theater operates in real time, populated at the start of the show with elements that may be destroyed or built upon. In other words, if elements are added or removed from a scene, they are done so because it is part of the scene's action. Each theater has its own 'world,' though only a portion of its events are central to the story's overarching plot. The actions of Scene 1 of one theater are simultaneous with Scene 1 of any other theater. Thus, to experience the play's primary action, the audience members need to be able to be able to follow Rory and therefore witness all five theaters (even if it's only through their personal camera). Nevertheless, an audience member may focus on one theater for the entire play and witness a very ambient sequence of cause and effect related to whatever portion of that stage's action is central to Rory's story. The primary action is in black. The actions that lead up to the primary action are in blue and the actions that are the direct effect of the primary actions are in red.

Northeast Theater: Rory and James' Apartment**Act 1:**

A. Economic depression got Rory fired from her last job (pottery teacher). She's online trying to find a new job (we see her computer screen projected most of the show).

- B. James enters, eating food at will, be silly, makes a comment about why she doesn't just let him move in...
- C. James encourages her to try to find a job in a Second-Life Dubai-esque kind of place, where she does not require an architectural degree.
- D. They argue about the past, she blames all of her failures on Filip.
- E. James steers the conversation back toward the here and now, and lays out how she could get work.
- F. In this process of convincing, we hear through James all the power and potential of a single designer in this time. The key is in his abilities to crack the latest 'Masterbuilder' software, which won't even be released to the public for several months.
- G. James goes by the hacker name 'Y-Farce', and has been hunted by the FBI for years for his amateur software pirating.
- H. Crisis decision, she decides to use his cracked software, though doubts it will get her very far.

Act 2:

- A. FBI and IBC (International Building Code) agents comb the apartment.

Act 3:

- A. Rory and James are redecorating the apartment with their new fame, news reports of Rory's brilliant design coming in from all angles.
- B. She is getting commissions left and right until finally, a super secret call from the CEO of Autobedesk who wants Rory to be the new face of the company, effectively replacing Filip! She is thrilled.

- C. That's when the news reports on Rory's success turn sour, when suddenly, after only three months, the first building Rory built with the software is reported as having collapsed. It is the first building to collapse 'with no visible signs of sabotage' in twenty years.
- D. Rory knows how well Filip has always been able to hide his sabotage, and certain that this came out of a jealousy for her potential offer at Autobedesk, she decides to confront him.

Act 4:

- A. James watches Rory on the news, does some checking online, and realizes what has caused her building to collapse.
- B. He knows that more will collapse and rushes to stop her from confronting Filip (both out of a desire to keep them apart, and to let her know the truth...)

Act 5:

- A. Their apartment crashes as well.

North Theater: Architecture School

Explanation: The smallest theater, the action that takes place here in this architecture studio is a play unto itself. Somewhere between a prologue and a flashback, the action chronicles the extensive back-story of Filip, Rory, and James from their time in college, to the arrival of Rory's situation at the beginning of the play. Its location provides easily accessible views for audience members in both the Northeast and Northwest theaters, which is when the pre-existing relationship between the central characters is most crucial to establish. The action that occurs on this stage is meant to coincide specifically with key moments happening in the 'present' on the other stages; sometimes the action helps to explain the reasoning behind a character's current action, while other times it presents an ironic counterpoint.

Act 1:

- A. Philip (not Filip yet) and Rory meet for the first time when they are assigned studio desks next to each other.
- B. With an obvious spark of chemistry, Philip takes the initiative and asks Rory out on a date.

Act 2:

- A. On the date, their clear differences in design philosophy materialize. Rory is bothered by Philip's lack of care for the environment, Philip finds Rory's inability to express her ideas clearly without drawing to be cute and hilarious

Act 3:

- A. At their first studio design competition, Rory and Philip, opposite ends of the design spectrum, find themselves tying for first place. Now 'Filip', he "lightly" sabotages Rory for the first time to win.

Act 4:

- A. Mostly silent, progressing through the various design challenges of architecture school, we see constant 'one-upping' of Filip sabotaging Rory's designs, while Rory sabotages Filip's presentations. Both feel the other is much crueler.

Act 5:

- A. Much later in architecture school (4th year), Rory has obtained a prestigious fellowship that Filip was desperately hoping he would get. The days approach when she will be leaving for it, when she suddenly gets deathly ill.
- B. James, always a 'loyal' friend, tells Rory that he has a job all lined up and would be happy to take her in until she gets better and can take the fellowship...

Northwest Theater: Rory's Parent's House

Act 1:

- A. Rory's parents have essentially their own sitcom...meant to be a representation of today's younger generation in their golden years.
- B. They wander around their crumbling house, moaning and whining about the good ol' days when you didn't have to talk to a computer to get coffee, and when video games were something you could play with your hands.
- C. They also talk about Rory and in typical parently fashion, express their disappointment in what she has done with her life, especially everything related to James. They don't like James.

Act 2:

- A. Rory arrives. She is ready to build them the dream house they always wanted. Listing out what she'll be doing and how it will work with the software 'Masterbuilder'
- B. Based on her enthusiasm and the fact that she took out an enormous loan to do this, you would think the parents would be grateful.
- C. Nope, they immediately start critiquing the design and complaining about all sorts of 'savvy' design elements that they don't approve of.
- D. Rather depressed by the compromise, Rory sets in motion the construction of their house (done by robots) she leaves.

Act 3:

- A. The house goes up while the parents sit on the lawn chair and sip Long Island Ice Teas. They critique and moan about the whole process (especially how 'long' it's taking...)
- B. News reporters arrive on the scene almost immediately and after interviewing the parents, declare the house and incredible work of fresh architecture, pushing the Masterbuilder software in directions never before seen, truly a delight for those sick of the stale buildings coming out of the 'Filip school' of thought.

- C. Toward the end of the Act, the same reports we hear in the other theatres of Rory's first building collapsing trickle into the news in their house, but they are setting up an elaborate love-making ritual and have to yell to hear each other, let alone the soft news.

Act 4:

- A. Truly elaborate, this ritual involves everything from candles and incense to a series of 15 very specific songs, dancing, massaging, eating, drinking, staring contests, and painting.
- B. They are just about to start having actual sex when Rory calls with the news that their house is going to collapse.
- C. Rory, always being a little paranoid, is not believed by them, and they begin to have sex while she continues to berate them.
- D. The building collapses.

Act 5:

- A. The wreckage is being unearthed by firemen and the same robots that built it.
- B. Rory's parents are okay, but taken away before James arrives to check on them. James is knocked out and taken to Autobedesk Tower while the rest of the act involves the various processes of cleaning up the destruction.

Southwest Theater: Filip's Office

Act 1:

- A. With the same frustration as Rory over in her apartment, Filip is trying to find some way to reinvigorate his public image (Rory is just trying to invigorate hers). After a string of rather 'unlivable' buildings equated to sculptures, the famous Filip the starchitect has fallen out of the good graces of the public.
- B. He is, however, very excited by the prospect of the next release of Autobedesk Masterbuilder, which is supposed to essentially have sentient capabilities. A major world building

construction expo is coming up and Filip would like to showcase the next release there, as the power of this new technology will get the public excited about him again.

- C. He has no idea that at that moment that beta release is being cracked for use by Rory...
- D. Asked for comment on his latest public project public-image disaster (the rioting and report being shown on the news at Rory and Rory's parents' house), he decides to announce that he'll be showcasing the latest release of Autobedesk Masterbuilder at the Dubai Expo.
- E. He leaves for Autobedesk Headquarters to get his faux pas approved.

Act 2:

- A. His interns are left there to do his dirty work, which rather than drafting window details or redlining (typical in architecture firms today), involves painting giant portraits of him, answering fan mail, and cooking elaborate food for him.

Act 3:

- A. Filip returns in a feeling of betrayal. He does yoga for a while while his interns continue to work, and practices his speech for the expo. Eventually he orders his interns to leave so he can have 'thinking time'.
- B. Suddenly he sees the reports of Rory's collapses.

Act 4:

- A. Rory arrives, threatening Filip's life.
- B. They argue/flirt as James arrives and hides.
- C. Just when Rory starts to believe Filip had nothing to do with her buildings collapsing, James reveals that the software itself is causing the buildings to collapse.
- D. Rory realizes that her parents' house is about to collapse. She calls them to warn them, but it's too late.
- E. This reveals to Filip that it actually is his fault because he's been rushing the development of the software.

- F. He has the crisis decision of continuing to push the software out and help his image (blaming any failures on Autobedesk), or to stop the software development and save countless other buildings from collapsing (and Rory's reputation)
- G. IBC and FBI agents arrive looking for Rory and James (for different reasons) and Filip helps them escape right before the Autobedesk Tower collapses.
- H. Filip convinces Rory to go to Autobedesk Tower with him, while James goes to check on Rory's parents.

Act 5:

- A. Wreckage cleanup of Filip's Office, primarily done by his interns.

Southeast Theater: Autobedesk Tower

Act 1:

- A. The CEO of Autobedesk is worried about 'ghost code' that seems to be acting out of turn. We have insight into software development.
- B. She gets very angry when she sees that Filip wants to move forward with the software development...especially since she's been searching for someone to replace him as the 'face' of Autobedesk.

Act 2:

- A. Filip arrives to apologize, and gets slapped a lot.
- B. Filip spends a lot of time feebly justifying the push to have the software ready for the Dubai expo, barely masking his selfish desire to improve his image.
- C. After enough denial, it turns to him blackmailing the company, revealing dirty little trade secrets...they give in.
- D. As Filip leaves, Baron von de Bueller-Schmidt (CEO) sees a report on Rory's new, fresh architecture. She immediately wants to make Rory Filip's replacement, having no idea of their previous relationships.

Act 3:

- A. CEO is on the phone with Rory about all of her great work, asking a lot of questions, all the while Rory tries to skirt around the whole 'illegal software use' thing. They're both thrilled by the opportunities they can offer each other.
- B. When Rory's building collapses, the conversation becomes cold, and CEO not only rejects Rory, but begins to blatantly insult her.

Act 4:

- A. Time is spent gathering intel from the IBC and the FBI on Rory and James and Filip. The CEO compiles enough information to turn Rory into the face of Autobedesk, but essentially at gunpoint (so she can never threaten them the way Filip has).

Act 5:

- A. Rory and Filip arrive to confront the CEO.
- B. In the end, the CEO threatens all of them, including James for extensive software pirating, and Rory, Filip, and James bond together, escaping, and destroying the Autobedesk building where the software would have been released into the world, causing countless buildings collapses and deaths. Rory ends up with Filip, and James is sad.

Another direction: Each theater might also have different directions that the play could take, but allow for set changes.

Act 1:

Theater A- The start (for all other directions)

- A. Economic depression got Rory fired from her last job (pottery teacher). She's online trying to find a new job (we see her computer screen projected most of the show).
 - B. James enters, eating food at will, be silly, makes a comment about why she doesn't just let him move in...
 - C. James encourages her to try to find a job in a Second-Life Dubai-esque kind of place, where she does not require an architectural degree.
 - D. They argue about the past, she blames all of her failures on Filip.
 - E. James steers the conversation back toward the here and now, and lays out how she could get work.
 - F. In this process of convincing, we hear through James all the power and potential of a single designer in this time. The key is in his abilities to crack the latest 'Masterbuilder' software, which won't even be released to the public for several months.
 - G. James goes by the hacker name 'Y-Farce', and has been hunted by the FBI for years for his amateur software pirating.
 - H. Crisis decision, she decides to use his cracked software, though doubts it will get her very far.
-

Act 2:Theater A- Parental Approval

A. Setting: Rory and James in their new apartment, lavishly decorated. She has become successful almost comically fast. James has moved in with her.

B. We see her finishing up her latest building commission on her computer (she has never had to leave her apartment).

C. James is satisfied he's now living with her, but the more Rory talks about her own brilliance, the more he feels like his encouragement and contributions are not appreciated.

D. Now that she's started to get enough money working, she can finally fulfill her promise to her parents of building the dream house for them. The way she talks about them, we think they're this kindly old couple afraid of technology (they don't even have a phone and live in the middle of nowhere).

E. When she sits down with her parents to finally present the design and build the house, they're the grumpiest most senile people we've ever seen. Hilarious though, from a distance.

F. The design gets made to their satisfaction. Just then she's getting a call for her next major commission: a skyscraper for Autobedesk; the very company she's using cracked software from. It's the CEO who speaks to her, Varne de Bueller-Schmidt. She'll only be the second architect ever to design and build a skyscraper completely on her own (James tries to call several times during this conversation but she ignores the call). Not concerned about the consequences, she lets them know she'll get started on it as soon as she gets back to her apartment (though there's a hint of menace in the phone call where they want to know what software she's using).

G. Back at her apartment we see its been ransacked. The one time she's left in so long! We

have no idea who did it. Worst of all, her computer and hard drives are gone. Also her underwear...

H. She calls James to find out if he knew about this. He says he's been trying to call her all afternoon to congratulate her on the skyscraper commission (it's already in papers). He freaks out when he hears their apartment's been ransacked.

I. Rory is certain who's behind it: her old college nemesis: Filip, who's clearly heard of her up and coming success and seeks to destroy her. James tries to tell her something when a news bulletin takes over the volume: the first building collapse in 20 years, and it's one of her designs.

Theater B1- Computer Says No

A. Setting: Rory's apartment, now with some surreal furniture.

B. Rory is acting strangely, weirdly happy. But she seems to be doing very well. We hear on her computer often: 'you've got commissions', and she continues to design in happiness.

C. James is right by her side, tending her every wish and doing his best to make her feel like a queen. He keeps suggesting they go have some fun together, go to a movie or something, but she says she's getting all the satisfaction she needs right there on her computer. She's designing all over the world, from Hong Kong to NYC to Dubai, and she's never had to leave her apartment.

D. After doing three new commissions a couple of minutes, she reminds James that she promised her parents she'd design their dream house before they die. She says she wants to go visit them, but James says that they're sick and can't have visitors right now; she should do everything by phone. She said she doesn't think they'll like

that, but calls them anyway. James leaves the room.

E. After a ridiculous phone argument where her design is compromised beyond all belief, she creates a design for her parents.

F. James asks if she wants to go to a movie with him. She says she'd feel a lot better if she had just one more commission that day. James sighs, saying that's what she always says. Just then she gets an e-mail from the CEO of Autobedesk asking if she'd be interested in a designing a skyscraper for them.

G. Suddenly her screen starts glitching and James re-enters to help her fix it. He says that they need to check on the operation of her buildings. Oh no, he tells her. He doesn't know why or how, but they're all collapsing. He doesn't know why.

H. Rory says she knows exactly what's happening, Filip is sabotaging her work. He doesn't want her to be happy. He can't stand the idea of her being successful. James tries to relax her, not too worried because he knows she hasn't left the apartment in months and she's not likely too now. Without warning, she grabs a kitchen knife and bolts out the door, James not realizing until she's already gone.

Theater B2- Not Forgotten

A. Setting: Architecture School

B. Here we see a young Rory and Filip, clearly the two most ambitious students in their class competing to have the best project of their fourth year. Filip's carrying around a letter with him, not daring to open it.

C. As each leaves to pursue different tasks, we see them sabotaging each other's work: Rory sabotages Filip's presentation style while Filip

sabotages Rory's actual work. There's a strange flirtatiousness to it.

D. The scene ends with Rory bragging to Filip about the fellowship she just won. Filip feigns not even knowing what it is, and Rory seems to believe him, but at the end of the scene we see him tear up the letter he's been carrying.

E. Setting: Rory's parent's house: She's successful, wrapping up the dream design for them (with only minor qualms). She receives a call from the owner of Autobedesk who offers her a skyscraper commission when he stops midsentence. She's confused and doesn't understand what happened. She assumes the call dropped, but James is suddenly calling her. He says their apartment has been ransacked and that one of her buildings has collapsed!

Theater B3- Poster Child

A. Setting: Rory's Parent's House. She's helping them design their dream house. While working on the design and compromising her design philosophy with their traditional values (pitched roofs and the like), they discuss her recent success.

B. Afterwards, while it's being built (automatically by robots of course), she gets a call from Varme de Bueller-Schmidt, the CEO of Autobedesk. He would like to discuss the possibility of her being the next spokesdesigner for Autobedesk. He would like to meet with her.

C. Varme and Rory meet for a discussion on what an incredible future she could have as the face of Autobedesk.

D. He begins speaking a little too much about the business side of things, and though Rory has a clear animal attraction to him and just likes listening to him talk, she tries to steer the conversation back toward her architectural design

philosophies and what opportunities this may present for her to make the world a better place.

E. To her relief, he seems incredibly receptive to the notion of being subservient to her design (thought we sense he's up to something). Frankly, she's lost in his eyes.

F. Flirtatiousness increases. They get close, near kissing when suddenly...

G. James interrupts them and tries to tell Rory she needs to speak to her in private. Still being flirtatious, Rory says she's about to start as a strong partnership and that anything that James wants to say he can say in front of Varne.

H. Frustrated, James comes out and says the first building collapse in twenty years has just occurred, and it's one of hers! All pretenses of flirtatiousness are dropped and Varne says he's going to have to keep Rory here until the authorities arrive. She'll have to be questioned. James distracts Varne, Rory punches him, and they escape; she's certain Filip is behind it all.

Act 3s:

Theater A- Who Gets the Girl?

A. Setting: Filip's office.

B. Rory storms in. Filip has no idea how she got past his security. He feigns not recognizing her.

C. She's in a rage, incomprehensibly accusing him of both ransacking her apartment and sabotaging one of her buildings. Filip, not taking in anything she's saying, claims to remember her thanks to the inaudible rage.

D. She pulls of knife and tries to attack Filip who remains playfully uncaring, but also starts to freak out wondering where his guards are. He deflects her with his iconic tape measure.

E. Finally cornered and being directly threatened with a knife, Filip becomes a more serious and admits to noticing her rising fame, but can't believe that she thinks he would still take part in the sort of petty sabotage they put each other through in college. He's famous now! He's the spokesdesigner for Autobedesk! He could care less about her. When they get to speaking more specifically about the building collapse, Filip appears genuinely surprised to hear that those were her buildings.

F. Buildings? She thought it was only one. She finds out now that almost every building she has designed has collapsed. She begins to freak out about her parents. Are they okay?

G. Filip tells her callously that she should be more worried about herself, since there's a warrant of arrest out for the designer of the collapsed buildings. In fact (he eyes his security cameras), guards seem to finally be coming up stairs.

H. All Rory can think about is saving her parents. She asks Filip if he'll help her. He's back to his typical personality, saying he doesn't see why he should, but he's turned on by Rory's begging.

I. Filip says he'll help her if now, in this moment, she'll admit that he was always the better designer. She refuses and they have an absurd argument as the guards approach, where finally she decides to climb down the side of the building.

J. After a life-threatening rappel, she gets to the bottom where Filip is waiting without any guards. He's wearing a ridiculous overcoat so she doesn't recognize him at first. He says it's because he's so famous and doesn't want to be recognized. However he does want to help her. He has a car waiting and will take her to her parents' house.

K. She still doesn't trust him and tries to refuse. She tries to get a hold of James but can't. Filip talks her into coming.

L. They arrive at Rory's parent's house just as a loud beeping occurs. They pull them out of the house right before it collapses.

M. Rory's parents say that the building started beeping something about pirate software.

N. James arrives on the scene right after the collapse, not seeing anyone. He cries and curses about letting Rory's parents die, saying it's all his fault that she doesn't love him, that the software's malfunctioning, that his life has no meaning, and that he ransacked their apartment and destroyed all of Rory's work because she was so much nicer to him when she relied on his income (he gets to seeming pretty pathetic)--- Rory cuts him off by screaming at him. James is startled and relieved that the parents are alive but completely embarrassed by what he was saying out loud. He tries to say that he heard through one of his friends that Autobedesk had found his location and was going to be raiding their apartment. He destroyed everything to protect them.

O. At that moment it appears that the FBI has arrived, but it's the CEO of Autobedesk with his guards. He claims they're all arrested, and thanks Filip for recording his whole experience with them as evidence of both Rory and James' illegal actions. Rory tries to attack him but is held by Guard 1. James claims that they'll never get away with this, that the bug in the software making buildings collapse has nothing to do with his pirating of it and that they're responsible, and he can prove it.

P. Varme de Bueller-Schmidt laughs (as do his guards) and says that no one is going to listen to them.

Q. Filip comes to the rescue by destroying his recording device, making Varme very angry. He decides that at this point the easiest thing to do is just make it look like they were all killed in the collapse of the house, since he already has witnesses saying Filip left with Rory.

R. Put into a firing line, they all prepare to die as Filip, thinking this his last moments, confesses his love for Rory, how all the petty sabotage, all the name calling, everything was out of a desperate love for her. James reminds Rory that he's confessed his love for her too. James is ignored. Filip admits to poisoning Rory during her fellowship, at which Rory manages to kick Filip across the face while being restrained by a guard. James reminds Rory that he confessed for ransacking the apartment. James is ignored. Rory admits to leaking disturbing rumors about Filip during his early rise to fame. Filip manages to attack Rory. Their confessions of sabotage after college continue until in a wild frenzy they end up knocking out the guards and stealing their weapons to threaten each other. James tries to help them understand they're free now. James is ignored. Varme, baffled, tries to make his way toward one of Guard 2's dropped guns that no one seems to have noticed, but after a bizarre moment of passion and forgiveness between Rory and Filip, they become aware of Varme and stop him just in time. He tries to flirt with Rory the same way he did when he offered her the skyscraper commission, letting her know that if she just takes him with them that and much more could be hers. With the snap of his fingers she'll be the spokesdesigner for Autobedesk; all of their corporate buildings will be designed in her style. She'll be the sexiest designer in the world!

S. The play ends with a freakily passionate connection and longing between Filip and Rory who are planning to design in practice together, leaving Varme in the middle of nowhere with no electronic devices, while poor James continues to be ignored as he threatens to stay behind too since there's nothing left in his life to live for, but he ultimately gets into the backseat of Varme's car as the three drive away, soft weeps of sorrow from James as Rory and Filip kiss.

Theater C1- Corporate Corruption

A. Setting: Filip's Office. Rory blames him for everything, especially the direction he's

forced Autobedesk to take as a company toward his 'aesthetic architecture'. He eventually admits that he barely makes decisions of any kind anymore and 99% of his designs are automated.

B. The CEO, hearing this discussion in Filip's office, tells Filip that he's fired and that the reason he had offered the new skyscraper project to Rory is that he wants her to be their new spokesdesigner.

C. Confident that she's being hunted by the FBI, she believes this must be a joke. Callously, the CEO explains the fashion-trend nature of design and how people are getting bored with Filip's design style and the company needs a new one to latch onto, like hers. Again, she brings up her collapsed buildings and the problems with the software. CEO says it's a quick fix and that as more buildings collapse, it will be easy to focus the blame more on designers besides her. Autobedesk has the media on their side, and they can give Rory the equivalent of 'bad press-immunity'. In fact, if other designers are taking the wrap and being put out of business by this, as well as all the clear ground in wake of the building collapses, it means more work and commissions for her. Wouldn't she have loved to be the head architect after the Great Chicago or London fire? Doesn't she want to see more of her designs out there?

D. Rory can't believe she's hearing such lack of consideration not only for her design philosophy, but for the lives of the people killed in the building collapses.

E. Essentially, the CEO is mastermind behind everything going wrong. In a Bob Congel-esque manner, he doesn't particularly care what happens to everyone because he's already made an enormous profit and Autobedesk isn't liable for anything going wrong. They will argue they've been under too much pressure to improve their software at too quickly a rate. They have the media on their side, and will make everyone believe that they're the victims just as much as the people in the buildings and that it's the designers who are to

blame. They want to use Rory as their new face of 'greenness' and 'sustainability' to keep as much heat off of them as possible.

F. She tries to stand her ground, but the CEO scoffs and tells her to not let her ego get so high...she needs to recognize that she never would have amassed the fame she already has if she hadn't been using their software, illegally, he adds.

G. Filip, the coward, tells her it's the safe choice and she should save herself, that it's too late for him.

H. She asks if she refuses if the CEO will just find another spokesdesigner and she'll just be one of the mass of 'insignificant' designers who have to take all the heat.

I. He says if she doesn't take the appointment, he'll make sure she the face of everything that's gone wrong here, especially with the death of her parents, whose house just collapsed. The CEO says they can make her out to be a phoenix rising from the ashes to design anew, or a rabid dog who puts so little thought into her designs she doesn't mind killing her parents.

J. The play ends with her falling out the window to commit and honorable suicide just as James arrives in the hopes of saving her, all too late. The CEO asks Phillip if he can 'handle this'. He reluctantly nods.

Theater C2- Crazy Sci-Fi Robots Take Over

A. Filip's Office confrontation except he admits to nothing. He's very nervous about her and thinks she must be really bad luck if her designs are so bad they're causing buildings to collapse.

B. She threatens him with a knife, and Filip thinks she's drunk. He feels bad for her and tries to calm her down. She's been doing very impressive work and he's proud of her, to an extent. Getting extremely peeved that he won't

admit to causing all of her woes, he presses and knife to his throat, just about to kill him until--

C. James enters and explains that he's figured out that the auto-correct function of Autobedesk Constructor has evolved to have a mind of its own. It's taken its 'efficiency rules' and has now started automatically demolishing buildings two years after construction, since that's what has been the industry standard, not taking into account that these are usually corporate buildings and that Rory has specifically been designing to have buildings that would last 200 years.

D. The Trio decide to work together and enter the Autobedesk headquarters an corner the CEO who Filip knows. The CEO scoffs and tells them they have no idea what they're talking about. None of the buildings they've constructed with the new software have collapsed. Filip skirts around having the software illegally before it was released, but they are unsuccessful in convincing him.

E. They know about the major cities being planned with the next release of the software where virtually everything will be automated, and that if Autobedesk goes through with releasing it, the world is doomed. Demolition robots will be unstoppable and we'll all have to live in caves!

F. They decide they have to bring down the Autobedesk building.

G. Using a sophisticated worm virus developed by James right there, they manage to input it into the Autobedesk building and successfully bring down the building. The FBI shows up to arrest them, but they feel like they have accomplished a greater good. However, just as they are being arrested, they see all the other buildings in the city collapsing that were reliant on updates from the Autobedesk mainframe. A bittersweet dramedy ending.

Theater C3- An Obsessed Fan

A. Filip's Office confrontation except he admits to nothing. He really hasn't heard about anything she's been up to since after college.

B. She threatens him with a knife, and Filip thinks she's drunk. He feels bad for her and tries to calm her down. He explains no building has collapsed in twenty years and he's sure that's still true.

C. She says he could do better to cover himself than that. He holds a knife to Filip's throat just as James bursts in to stop her. Rory tells James not to stop her, and that this is the only way she'll have peace in her life, the only way she'll be able to do anything for herself; if he's dead.

D. In the desperation, James tells her that it's all his doing. You destroyed my buildings? Rory asks, but James explains that he has been deeply in love with her for years. He was the one who poisoned her during her fellowship because he couldn't stand the thought of not having lunch with her. He was a senior and she was going to have her fifth year of architecture school and he couldn't stand the thought of them being apart. When he cracked the software for her and she still wasn't getting commissions, he couldn't stand to see her so sad faked the identity of dozens of clients to make her feel like she was helping the world.

E. Rory's expression is unreadable. Filip just wants his guards. He thinks he's surrounded by insane people. James asks for a kiss from Rory, and she complies.

F. Rory promises him she'll forgive him if he'll just bring her home and show her how he's been keeping her so 'happy' all this time.

G. The play ends with James alone in a room, insanely mumbling about the happy things him and Rory get to do together, how beautiful their 16 children are, and how she needs to make sure to walk Snuffles or he'll get too hyper...

Theater C4- The Greater Good

A. Setting: Filip's Office with a focus on the actual real world merits of their design work (As opposed to many of the other confrontations that are far more personal and petty). Rory totes it to be a good sign that people are finally tiring of Filip's work and appreciating hers.

B. When Rory hears the FBI is coming, Filip wants to continue their architectural debate, so he brings her down into the mechanical shaft where they continue to argue about what is 'good design', all the while guards are searching for her.

C. Pragmatic versus Aesthetically pleasing, the debate rages on as they exit the building and walk aimlessly down the street, buildings beginning to collapse.

D. James appears and informs Rory he's found a bug in the Autobedesk software, baffled by how one missing line of code could cause entire buildings to collapse, lives of living people to hang in the balance.

E. Rory says she's going to make it her goal to get Autobedesk out of business, and she'll go back to designing with a team of people, experts of all different fields. When Filip is out of work, he's welcome to stay on as an 'aesthetic consultant'. Filip begs her not to do this and using his influence in the Autobedesk industry tries to offer her all sorts of powerful positions that she declines wholeheartedly. Eventually he turns to threatening, but she ignores him.

F. Her and James expose the software flaws to the world, it's declared illegal, and the good guys win.

Primary action

Scene 1: Rory's Apartment. She decides to use the program.

3 weeks later (for all stages)

Scene 2: Rory's parent's house. After a couple of successful commissions, she is able to build her parents' dream home. We see news reports.

3 weeks later (f.a.s.)

Scene 3: Rory's apartment, newly decorated, she speaks on the phone with one of the representatives from Autobedesk (the right hand man) about the possibility of becoming the new poster child (in essence replacing Filip, unbeknownst to him) when she gets word her first building has collapsed. We see news reports.

(26 hours later)

Scene 4: Filip's Office (written). Include this 'light' outline, and the beat by beat reversals I did for David. Ahem. Rory confronts Filip about the possibility that he has destroyed her building. James shows up unexpectedly. (use my real outline) Rory's parents' house collapses, and Rory needs the power of the CEO of Autobedesk to make sure they're okay. James explains the bug, which Filip is indirectly responsible for, and he wants to avoid letting the CEO know, but he already knows! Her, Filip and James escape together, though Filip tried hard to get James to go check on Rory's parents, but he insists on not leaving her.

(32 seconds later)

Scene 5: At Autobedesk Tower, James is not able to enter. A scanning IDs him and he has to flee, reluctant to leave Rory, Rory says to go check on her parents. He does, where he is arrested by the CEO of Autobedesk herself who was there confirming the parents are okay...(what about that fake news broadcast)? Rory and Filip are not able to find the CEO, and are given the run-around by the guards, who say the CEO will return shortly. Filip tries to keep her there, while she wants to go save her parents.

Finally, the guards take her to the house.

Scene 6: At the collapse of Rory's parent's house, we see James in custody, ready to be assassinated by the CEO. Rory tries to explain the buildings are collapsing because of a bug in the software. When confronted by the CEO, Filip would rather lie and say he did it then tell the truth that it was a bug (caused by him). The CEO reveals definitely that he was going to replace Filip with Rory as the new posterchild. This makes Filip want to help Rory and James in their new plan to destroy the Autobedesk tower (when they escape, probably thanks to Filip or James.)

Scene 7: They destroy Autobedesk Tower, only to get arrested...what will the news reports say. Does anyone die? Look at old outlines...and think about it.

Fleeting_ A Play on Architecture

Scene Outline

Motivations and Actions_

Scene: Filip's Office

Scene Objectives:

Rory wants:

- Filip to admit that he destroyed her buildings
- To assert her moral dominance over him
- For him to grovel, sexually or otherwise...

Filip wants:

- Rory to stay impassioned around him
- To keep Rory in the room (he is desperately bored of his day to day associates)
- To flirt with her
- To avoid any hint that its his fault the bug is in the Autobedesk program (because he rushed the development)
- To get her to apologize, sexually

James wants:

- To avoid awkward confrontations
- To tell Rory that Filip didn't destroy the buildings
- ...but still put a stop to their obvious chemistry
- Just as in college, he wants Rory to choose him over Filip

Reversals_

1) (-) Rory asserts her anger by pressing a knife to Filip's throat. Filip finds this strangely intimate, which takes Rory off guard and reminds her of her old attraction to him (+)

2) (+) Filip tries to take advantage of this, grabbing his gun and making an offhand comment that deeply offends her (-)

3) (-) Rory uses this as a launching point to express how based on their history, this is exactly the kind of disgusting-thinking is funny-kind of sabotage he would resort to, but Filip turns the tables by expressing how her sabotages were much worse! Rory laughs, certain that what he did to her was worse. She remembers how petty their fights were, and now understands that Filip did not sabotage her buildings.
(+)

4) (+) Speaking about their sabotages in a much more lighthearted manner, they remember how silly they both were, and decide to play chess, being very flirtatious until (-) James can't take it anymore and breaks the silence.

5) (-) James explains how it was an 'honest' software bug that's causing the buildings to collapse, and Filip in fact had nothing to do with it (+)

6) (+) Rory hugs Filip and says how they should all get a hold of the CEO of Autobedesk ASAP to correct

the problem, clear her name, and hopefully put the software company out of business. Filip says he can't help them (-)

7) (-) Filip then goes on to say that doesn't she know she's wanted by the police for not one, but three building collapses. Didn't she know? James realizes what this means and tells Rory to immediately call her parents; she can save them! (+)

8) (+) The grandparents lighten up the scene, until their house collapses and their fate is uncertain (-)

9) (-) Rory gets 'passionate' again and struggles to get this new piece of information out of Filip, how can she get a hold of the CEO of AutobeDesk?! At the same time she needs to find her parents. Filip explains that any knowledge of the mythical CEO is shrouded in secrecy and they have no idea what would happen to him if he gave that information away. Rory punches Filip, which turns him on (+)?

10) (+)? James, who has been trying to speak this whole time but busied himself with calculations, now finds the courage to confront Filip with his prediction that the building they're in right now is also a product of the beta-version of the software. He lets everyone know the building is about to collapse, and Filip explains that IBC agents are coming up the elevator as they speak. (-)

11) (-) Rory asks Filip to at least help them escape, even if he won't help them find the CEO. He shows them an escape route (+)

12) (+) Just as they are escaping, Filip confronts the agents, telling them exactly where Rory and James went, until the building collapses as Filip jumps down the hatch...their fate is uncertain, but we're pretty certain that they're alive. (-/+)

ACT II SCENE 1 SOUTHWEST STAGE

Lights up on Filip's Office. It is lavishly decorated with sweeping, barely functional furniture that could only be described as bizarre. Key scene elements include: a thin couch, a rug, an enormous desk, a kingly chair with a GUN strapped to the bottom, a wildly curving shelf of books and belongings, a larger than life portrait, and a half-enclosed mini bathroom. At rise, FILIP is in his chair, feet up on desk. He is dressed in neon colors with large sunglasses and speaks with a European accent. A large screen projects a news broadcast, coming live from NORTHEAST STAGE.

NEWSWOMAN

--and we're live in front of the young architect's newly renovated apartment, also done using Autobedesk software. Before the events of today, Rory Wren was a favorite to replace Filip Fleeting as the spokes-architect for the construction industry leaders. After the collapse of not one, but now two of her buildings, this move seems unlikely if not improbable. The CEO of Autobedesk, Varme de Bueller-Schmidt, was unavailable for comment, though an spokesperson for the company who wished to remain anonymous declared that the fault was entirely on the architect and not the software. Quote "the designs must have been so poorly thought out that even our error-checking algorithm wasn't able to correct it in construction."

RORY

(bursting in toward FILIP)

You!

FILIP

(admiring himself in a mirror)

Me.

RORY

You...

FILIP

Me...

RORY

I can't believe you--

FILIP

(flicking out a full TAPE
MEASURE, stopping her.)

Ah ah ah. Proximity check. You want come closer to 'the
Lip', I'll need measurements.

(He measures her, all the while
softly commenting.)

RORY

Filip! It's Rory!

FILIP

Rory of course! (pause) You have grown. A moment.

(His bathroom zooms in front of him,
blocking RORY. He looks in a
different mirror, sprays on cologne.
He jumps up and down for joy, looks
down in attempt to condition himself
properly for seeing RORY again. A
flash of a less confident, more
sensitive side of him is revealed.
After a moment, RORY kicks one of the
walls, shattering it, and punches
FILIP hard. She gets on top of him
with a KNIFE to his neck. In this
chaos, JAMES enters at a sprint,
doesn't see the KNIFE, freaks out and
hides under the thin couch.)

FILIP

Wow, I am so turned on right now.

(FILIP tries to reach his GUN but
can't reach it in his position)

RORY

Do you know why I'm here?

FILIP

You?

RORY

ME.

FILIP

My guess would be after all of these years you can't stand to be away from me anymore. I accept. Take off your clothes and get on the couch.

RORY

You bastard. How dare you speak to me like that.

FILIP

You, playing the 'I want to save the world and be sustainable and help everyone' architect. How idealistically unoriginal...

RORY

And I suppose it's much more original to take the opposite path and see how quickly you can exhaust the world's resources.

FILIP

My buildings are green! I built an office tower in Sri Lanka just yesterday that generates 60% of its power from algae.

RORY

And I bet it requires 2000% the power of any other office tower that size.

FILIP

You must be chic if you want to be a sheikh.

RORY

Right, nice moral responsibility. How's your mother?

FILIP

Fine. How about putting the knife away?

RORY

(pressing further still)

Not until I get some answers.

FILIP

Alright! Fweesh. What seems to be the trouble my dear dear friend?

RORY

I'm on to you, you scheming parasite. Filip...

FILIP

Sorry, I can't understand your accent...did you just call me 'felt tip'?

RORY

(smacking him again, putting
him in a better position to
reach his gun)

What the hell's wrong with you? You know why I'm here.

FILIP

I have no idea why you're here, you, dirty...knife wielder.

RORY

You demolished my building!

FILIP

YOUR building? What are you talking about? Like I have the time to keep up with the mediocre victories of Rory Roar. Just sit down and we can talk.

RORY

We can sit when James gets here.

FILIP

James? James Madeleine, your college roommate? Did you two get married?

RORY

God no, ew, we're just friends.

FILIP

With 401k's.

RORY

What?

FILIP
Benefits.

RORY
No.

FILIP
Mm hm.

RORY
Anyway, when he gets here we can sit and relax. He has a Pararay Blaster and I'll feel safer at a distance then.

(JAMES checks his empty pockets, finally noticing it fell out of his pocket by the doorway. He makes several attempts to retrieve his PARARAY BLASTER without being seen but cannot manage it.)

FILIP
(finally reaching his GUN)
Oo, a scary Perrier Blaster. How lush. I have an appointment in five minutes.

RORY
No you don't. Wednesday is your 'think day' and always has been.

FILIP
We'll see...I think it just became my ACTION day!

(FILIP pulls the GUN up and presses it to RORY's head, who reacts by pushing the knife deep into his skin, cutting him. He manages to knock her off of him, she gets up, and is immediately across the room in a pose ready to throw the KNIFE at him.)

FILIP
Ow! You cut me! You actually cut me! I'm bleeding! I haven't bled since freshman year. What the hell Whory!

(He fires three shots randomly in his office, one narrowly missing JAMES)

Drop the fecking knife!

RORY

I trained as a Spetsnaz. I can hit your nose ring within a couple of inches. Don't tempt me.

(They circle each other, JAMES under the couch in the middle.)

RORY

I don't believe you.

(RORY throws the KNIFE, knocking FILIP's GUN clean out of his hand, she darts across the room, and within two seconds is holding both her knife and his gun, which she holsters. A stunned FILIP pulls his TAPE MEASURE back out, and showing surprising control of the archaic object, slaps RORY across the face with it from ten feet away.)

FILIP

Owie! I didn't mean I don't believe you can throw a knife, I can't believe that this is how you enter my life after a decade of nothing. Say whatever you came here for and get the hell back out of my life.

RORY

Gladly. I'm here because--

FILIP

Do you have any idea the pain you've caused me? What you did to me at university? What you're still doing to me, and the long term emotional--

RORY

Do you want me to talk or not?

FILIP

If it wasn't for you, I'd probably be married with four kids right now. But thanks to you, I can't manage to hold relationship without sabotage, just out of force of habit.

RORY

That's exactly why I'm here.

FILIP

(prepping the TAPE MEASURE for
another attack)

You stay away from Jillski! I like her and she's much
smarter than her reality show would have you believe.

RORY

I'm not here to sabotage your relationship. I'm here
because you sabotaged my life.

FILIP

No. No I have not.

RORY

Oh, so I'm supposed to take it as sheer coincidence that
the first building in thirty years to collapse was one I
masterbuilt. Me, with all the care and consideration you
know I put into every one of my designs. You just couldn't
stand to see the limelight shifting to a real designer,
could you?

FILIP

I've always been the better designer. I have a better eye,
a better sense of what the people want, a much better--

RORY

Who cares what they want? It's about what we can offer;
brilliant ideas a client never could have come up with on
their own.

FILIP

The hovering skyscraper was completely my idea! No one
asked me for it!

RORY

No one would ever--how the hell do you justify the energy
costs of such a gimmick?

FILIP

It nearly doubles the available parking. Your feminine
logic continues to be your greatest liability.

RORY

(finding the PARARAY GUN and
picking it up, simultaneously
searching for JAMES.)

Look, as nostalgic as such a petty argument is for me, I'm here for one reason: to get you to confess to sabotaging my building so I can take it to the press and clear my name. Now are you going to be reasonable or do I have to use Plan B?

FILIP

Considering I have been completely out of touch with you for a decade and haven't done anything remotely wrong, I guess it will have to be Plan B.

RORY

All right then.

(She points the PARARAY GUN at FILIP who instantly reacts swinging his TAPE MEASURE, but RORY is too fast and zaps him. It is a surprisingly grotesque sight. FILIP convulses wildly, falling to the floor and sounding like a dying antelope. He is completely limp.)

RORY

James if you're here you can come out now!

(JAMES remains hidden. RORY lays FILIP down on the thin couch. With a terrified face, FILIP watches RORY reach into her back pocket and produce a lighter. From her front pocket she produces a PIPE and a small BAG OF HERBS)

RORY

Oh I'm sure you remember how pan affects you.

FILIP

(strangled)

Noooo!! Please. My appointment...

RORY

(lighting the PIPE and placing
it in FILIP's mouth.)

Now breathe deep.

(Crying a little bit, he tries not to
but ends up taking a deep breath from
the PIPE. After a moment of silence,
he begins to laugh insanely,
constrained by his paralysis)

RORY

That was a good day. Final presentations. Comprehensive
studio. You put pan in my oxygen shot, thinking I didn't
notice and in one swift move I got you right in the arm.
I had no idea it would be so beautiful. You with your flashy
animations and perfectly timed presentation with your
cheesy jokes and rehearsed suck-ups to the critics.

(mimicking)

Ha ha ha! Professor Nogelthorp! Ha ha ha! I know you can
relate to this design, ha! Condition! Ha! It's similar to
your brilliant, ha! Design Gesture of an acute, ha ha ha!
Concrete deck canti-laughter! Laugh laugh laugh! Ha. Ha.
Ha.

FILIP

(still laughing wildly,
paralysis wearing off...)

I was trying to help you relax! Ha! You're so uptight! Ha
ha! And mean! Ha! God I hate you! Ha! Ha ha!

RORY

Okay, so come on Filip. I'll make this easy. Yes or no:

(One breath:)

You couldn't stand the thought of me, the real designer
of our year getting some of the fame and attention you knew
I deserved so much more than you and used your connections
as an Autobedesk sponsor to get my building an early
demolition.

FILIP

No! Ha ha. I would never stoop that low! Ha!

RORY

Right, like when you said you would never stoop so low as to set one of my models on fire, only to be caught by me personally doing it again a week later!

FILIP

We were teenagers! Ha ha ha! I've grown up. Ha!

RORY

(giving him another PIPE hit)

Really, just admit it. I mean it wouldn't be THAT bad, your reputation could take the blow. No one was killed or anything. And heck, it wouldn't be any worse than that scandal with the goat farm on top of your Citibank building.

FILIP

(insanely)

Haahahahahahahahaha!!!! That was!!! HAHAHAHAHAHAHA! A MISUNDERSTANDING!! HAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaa!

RORY

Right. I think you need another hit.

FILIP

HAHAHA!! NOO!!! PLEASE NO!! I'M TELLING THE TRUTH JUST LET ME EXPLAIN!!! I LOVE YOU RORY!!

RORY

What?

FILIP

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!

RORY

Wait, what did you just say?

FILIP

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!!

RORY

(pulling out her WATER BOTTLE)

Okay, here have some water.

FILIP

(drinking)

HAHAHAHAHAHAHahaahahahahahaaaaaaa....

RORY

Did you just say you love me?

FILIP

Yeah, but no. I don't really. It was the only way I thought you'd let me talk.

RORY

(lighting the PIPE again)

Why you little--

FILIP

No no! Wait Rory. Ha. Let me explain all right? Real honesty. Here, you can check my pulse. Just like university.

RORY

(grabbing his wrists)

Oh I'm not even sure I remember how it works, but...

FILIP

Honestly. I have been keeping up with your work. Honestly. Yes, I have felt a little jealous at the attention you're getting. Honestly. It's kind of nice to not be the center of attention and not be in a place to have my every decision criticized by world for just a moment. A moment where they've taken an interest in someone else's work. And I know your work has been very well reviewed so far, but you need to understand with the media Rory, it's only a matter of time before they come down on you like they've done to me.

RORY

And you just thought you'd expedite the process a bit!

FILIP

No. Rory, listen. I did not destroy your building. Check my pulse again. I have not sabotaged or destroyed anything of yours for over ten years.

(Beat.)

RORY

But...you have to have. Who else would? Who would do that to me?

FILIP

Maybe it's like the media is saying, it just wasn't good design and it had to fall.

RORY

Oh come on! Really?! Some of the ridiculous structures you've dreamt up shaped like frozen yogurt twists and bent erections have held up using the same software I was using. And you want to tell me that my carefully planned out--structurally conservative if anything--designs couldn't hold up in that program.

FILIP

Maybe it's just not designed for your particular style.

RORY

You mean good design?

FILIP

Sure. If that's what you want to call it. I mean did you get your style stamp checked?

RORY

I don't HAVE a style stamp. I've been designing EACH building INDIVIDUALLY.

FILIP

What? But that's impossible...there's no way you could get that kind of output without a parametric algorithm.

RORY

Yeah. It's been hard work. But the stupid Revit Constructor software should still be able to correct any errors, right?

FILIP

In theory. What version are you using?

RORY

Oh, it's, um, I don't remember. It's recent. Very recent.

FILIP

It's a great program. The next version is being released tomorrow and there's some incredible workflow improvements.

RORY

Right, um, don't you think there's anything wrong with the fact that you don't really even design anymore?

FILIP

I design. What do you mean?

RORY

No not you in particular, you as in the collective you. Architects in general creating buildings today.

FILIP

My algorithm style stamp was painstakingly honed by me, no one else.

RORY

Yeah but what happened to really investing in a design. Diagramming from scratch, testing iterations with models and drawings all done by hand--

FILIP

We never did that--

RORY

But our parents did!

FILIP

My parents were scuba instructors--

RORY

Stop interrupting!

FILIP

Yes mam.

RORY

Architecture, the profession, used to have so much more...energy that went into it. So much more focus and attention and...intent. I mean code still requires that we check all the schedules and believe we would have made the design decisions the computer's made for us, but do you sign off on those things? I certainly haven't had time.

FILIP

That's just it. We can do so much more than those before us! I mean I've had over seventeen thousand of my designs constructed! How amazing is--

RORY

Yeah but how many are still standing?

FILIP

Currently? Over six hundred as a matter of fact, which is still far more than any architect of the twentieth century!

RORY

Yeah but after you die, all your designs will be gone, demolished replaced within a decade at most!

FILIP

Not if I sell my algorithm stamp...

RORY

But where's the integrity! The responsibility? The legacy??

FILIP

Rory, I think we have very different ideas about what constitutes a legacy.

(Strangely long pause.)

FILIP

Well. Look, really Roars, I'm sorry about what's happened and I would like to be able to do anything I can to keep your name clear. This isn't university anymore and we're not competing for a professor's compliment or trying to one up the other.

RORY

You're serious.

FILIP

I sure am. How about a drink?

RORY

It's three o'clock in the afternoon. What about your appointment?

FILIP

(pouring two glasses from a bottle under his desk.)

You're right. It's a thinking day.

RORY

I knew it. Where the hell is James?

(As RORY turns, FILIP places a small
pill inside of one glass)

FILIP

I don't know. I can page the guards downstairs and see if
they saw him come in. How about that drink?

RORY

No thanks and no that's alright.

FILIP

You sure? This is great whisky.

RORY

Really I'm sure. You know I really can't believe some of
the shit you put me through. That awful music you'd play
in studio, the distracting faces during my
presentation--did you really moon me?

FILIP

Maybe.

RORY

Geezum...

FILIP

You were terrible! I still can't believe you snuck the
slide into my presentation with a picture of my french--

RORY

That was nothing. You graffitied my Memory Wall!

FILIP

I wanted to give you a challenge! If that was actually built
you'd have to be prepared for crazy kids besmirching your
pristine vision. And your reaction: priceless, I must say!

RORY

When Professor Winstrow called me out on it and I--

FILIP

Right, and then he--

RORY

Yes! And then I--

FILIP

You have to admit that was worth it...

RORY

Ahhh...well, in retrospect you certainly got me good at thinking on my toes.

FILIP

Me too. Sometimes I put in a random slide in my FirePoint Presentations these days just because it gets everyone's attention.

RORY

Hahaha, well that right there shows that I have more design integrity. I would never compromise my vision.

FILIP

Oh come on, I just lighten things up.

RORY

And you lose respect.

FILIP

Bah. I'm THE most well-known architect in the world.

RORY

You'll notice that known is not synonymous with 'respected'.

FILIP

I'm better.

RORY

I'm best.

(Beat.)

FILIP

Well. Clearly there's only one way to settle this.

RORY

Only one?

FILIP

The same way we always did before.

RORY

On the couch?

(JAMES cringes)

FILIP

No, it's not big enough...The floor. You got ten minutes?

RORY

Alright...its been a little while.

FILIP

Here, pull that rug over.

RORY

My god, you keep that in your office?

FILIP

Why not? Sometimes I'm entertaining clients unconventionally.

RORY

Ha, with inverse relationships and figure/field play?

FILIP

Certainly. With the right clients.

RORY

So it's okay to pull it out.

FILIP

Mm hmm.

(RORY pulls out the boardgame GO from the shelf.)

RORY

White or black?

FILIP
Black.

RORY
I'm always white.

JAMES
(to himself)
Roleplaying?

FILIP
What was that?

RORY
James?

FILIP
(setting up the board)
You know I think it's great you can be this relaxed after having three buildings collapse. I admire how far you've come from how tightly wound you used to--

RORY
Well it's healthy to just...THREE?! What do you mean THREE?

FILIP
Three. Your office tower, the museum, and then that house.

RORY
What house?!

FILIP
I don't know, um, a house?

RORY
What house! Was it my parents house?!

FILIP
No no, it was a vacation house for some rich couple. They weren't even there.

RORY
Wait...this must mean...

JAMES
(rolling out and standing up)

Rory, that's what I've been trying to tell you. There's a bug in the Autobedesk software. It's gotten so smart that it's recognizing the fact that no building stays up for more than a couple of years, and now its just destroying them automatically. Its found a pattern and thinks its just facilitating a natural process.

FILIP

(scandalized)

Have you been under there the whole time?!

RORY

My parents!

FILIP

What have you been doing? Why didn't you come out?

RORY

Filip where's your phone?

FILIP

It's just a speaker. Press the button on the top of the desk and press the numbers. And dial nine, then four first.

JAMES

I'm sorry Rory.

MAMUSHKA

(from their kitchen in their
house on STAGE NORTHEAST)

What do you want?

RORY

Mom! Dad?! Are you okay?

MAMUSHKA

What do you want honey? Of course we're okay.

RORY

Get out of the house now!

MAMUSHKA

What, you haven't called us once since you built us the newy benewy house, and now you're yelling at us. I don't understand.

RORY

I can explain later! Just get out of the house right now.

MAMUSHKA

Honey, we're...

RORY

Get out!

PAPA

(loudly)

We're in bed! Having sex. Leave us alone.

RORY

You don't understand, the building--

MAMUSHKA

I understand the building just fine you condescending ungrateful turnpot!

(a beeping, then the entire second floor buckles. MAMUSHKA and PAPA experience only a roof tile fall)

George! What happened?!

RORY

Papa!

MAMUSHKA

What kind of shit house did you build us? The roof is already expired.

PAPA

That's it, you're out of the will dollface. You can't buy us off with a cruddy bemuddy, good for nothing--

(the entire house collapses and MAMUSHKA AND PAPA are lost in the rubble. A beat.)

JAMES

Should I call an ambulance?

RORY

No. No don't call an ambulance. If the police know where I am I'll get arrested. They're either perfectly alright or dead. Ambulance won't matter.

JAMES

Rory are you okay.

RORY

Yeah I'm fine. I mean they could be alright. If they were up in the bedroom on the second floor...the roof is very lightweight and they could be okay just...um, let's go right now.

FILIP

(to JAMES)

Wait, you think its a bug in the Constructor software that did this?

JAMES

Yes.

FILIP

That can't be true. what about the million other buildings done with it? What about the million I've done with it?

JAMES

We got a hold of the release early. Rory's the only architect to have used it yet. We have to stop Autobedesk from releasing it to the general public tomorrow.

RORY

James let's go.

FILIP

(standing still)

There's nothing to worry about, besides the fact that there are IBC Agents are on their way upstairs to arrest Rory, and now probably you. But this building, that we're in right now, this was the first building in the world to use Revit Constructor 2050. And its functioning pretty darn well.

RORY

What?!

RORY

Filip, you have to help us escape! I need to get to my parent's house!

JAMES

But we need to go to Autobedesk and speak to the CEO.

FILIP

Ha, good luck with that. You want to speak to Valheiman Struttenberg, the wealthiest person in the world? You'd need to be me to get just a second of her time.

JAMES

Then come with us dammit! Don't you understand what needs to be done?

FILIP

Look, I don't think you've got your facts straight.

JAMES

Rory come on, I'll call an ambulance, but we have to go to Autobedesk first.

RORY

You go!

JAMES

I need the car!

FILIP

Agents coming up the stairs...

RORY

We're going to get my parents! Filip get us out of here!

FILIP

Oh fine, into the mechanical shaft... I use it as my personal escape slide when the press is coming.

(He rotates the painting of himself sideways and reveals an opening. The building begins to shake. RORY jumps down, then JAMES.)

FILIP

(bracing himself against the
increasing shaking)
These guys are heavy...

(His door opens and in enter three IBC
agents)
They just went down this shaft! You can still catch them
if--

(Half of FILIP's roof collapses,
instantly crushing all three agents)
Son of a bitch!

(Filip dives into his mechanical
shaft just as the entire building
comes down. The locations of FILIP,
RORY, and JAMES are unclear as the
dust begins to settle as the lights
fade...)