

DOKKAEBI: A Work in Progress (aren't we all?)

a new play

By Ashil Lee

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CHARACTERS

SUNHEE (pronounced exactly like ‘Sunny’) - “she/her” ((they/them)). Remember being thirteen? Oh god.

LAUREN (pronounced like ‘Law-ren’) - she/her. Too cool. But still knows the rules...

DOKKAEBI (pronounced like “doh-kay-bee”) - it/they/Dokkaebi. Ancient Korean folk gremlin / creature of gender fuckery.

PANTS LAWYER - he/him. VERY SERIOUS HIGH POWER LAWYER IN POWER PANTS

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER - she/her. Steam pressed pencil skirt every morning to keep up appearances.


THOMAS - he/him. Dad to be, expecting, “sensational” but not in the way they meant it, Asian trans man.

ON FORMATTING

A slash / in the middle of a line indicates the start of the next line.

Floating punctuation ! ? !!! indicate energy or internal thoughts rather than traditional punctuation.

ALL CAPS does not necessarily indicate volume.

 - each emoji represents a ‘moment’, whether that be a physical motion, sound, facial expression, etc. is up to the actor, but do give it the brief moment it deserves.

*Verse is indicated by italics without parenthesis,
Perform rhyme and cadence with tons of emphasis!*

Thank yous

Maria and Michael. Sebastian, Kallan, Lex, Daniel, Nikhil, Alle, Marissa, Jess, Emma, Phoebe, Futaba, Marshall, Annie, Clew, Janvi.

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SMELL ON A SMELL

(It's dark.

But we FEEL finished basement vibes.

Not that we can really see it.

Because it's dark.

Except for the glow of a TV where the DVD menu screen (one of those early 2000s, Lindsay Lohan hits) plays quietly on a loop.

SUNHEE and LAUREN in sleeping bags.)

SUNHEE

...

...

...

Hey.

....

...

Are you sleeping ?

..

or just breathing?

LAUREN

.....

Both ?

SUNHEE

I have another one.

LAUREN

Go.

SUNHEE

I guess it's not so much a question, as it is, like, a comment— ?

LAUREN

What's your comment?

SUNHEE

So I have this...

...

Warm Vanilla Sugar ?

Like.

Spray ?

And

What I think I'll just do is:

Spray it.

Like, that's what I'll do, whenever it's that ti—whenever I have to, is I'll just...

Spray it!

LAUREN

Oh.

That won't work—

SUNHEE

It will work!

LAUREN

You'd think it would, but it won't.

(Silence)

SUNHEE

Well it SHOULD.

It's in the name.

Bath and Body WORKS.

...

What about Cucumber Melon?

LAUREN

Won't work.

SUNHEE

Sweet / Pea??

LAUREN

It doesn't matter what it is, *it's a smell on top of a smell!*

...

It does the opposite.

You're thinking: cover it up, no one will notice. But it's actually: Hey everyone! Me, over here!

I'M trying to cover up my stinky crotch!!! It's ME!!!

(LAUREN sits up)

Cuz here's the thing 🙌

They ? People ? Society ? The WORLD ??

They don't know that you sprayed whatever pleasant body spray down there, so they don't even know to identify it.

But they DO know you get a period—cuz...I mean, they can *see you*.

So they DO know to identify it as a period smell—and it all gets lumped in as that. It all gets blamed on the period, cuz it's obvious. They know it's there.

Even for you!

And after a while, it all melds together and somehow it's even worse than before and eventually you can't tell spray from stink and it becomes its own distinct... its own distinct, complicated stink.

SUNHEE

Scary.

LAUREN

I guess.

SUNHEE

What are we supposed to *do*??

LAUREN

(*Sound of: "I dunno 🙄"*)

SUNHEE

But it definitely stinks?

LAUREN

Mm-hm.

SUNHEE

A lot??

LAUREN

Sometimes.

SUNHEE

And the other times?

LAUREN

Different kind of stink?

SUNHEE

...

(SUNHEE turns on a lamp.)

SUNHEE

And I've smelt it?

LAUREN

How would I know?

SUNHEE

No exactly— !!

I feel like *I* would know. If I knew ?? Right?

Like if it definitely stinks ?

A lot ?

(Sometimes.)

And it's happening approximately 25% of the time ?

To like half the people ?

And not necessarily at the same time, so like...d'y'see what I'm saying?

Like—

I don't know if I've smelt it—

So maybe it's not actually that bad! Like maybe it's worse to the person whose it is—

Like—!!

Yeah, like—Maybe that whole 'whoever smelt it dealt it' thing has some real, honest to goodness truth to it, like even more than we thought, like even beyond farts?

LAUREN

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!

It stinks all month, but on that week ? much more so!

There's no escape, you're MEANT to sit in it—

That rancid stink of shame that you now emit.

Deep inside you, past your inferior interior,

Comes down the harshest sentence...of a period.

A thing that, in its essence, IS FILLED WITH SHAME!!!

Menstruation and mortification are one in the same.

SUNHEE

...

Wow, okay.

So there really *is* nothing we can do about it.

LAUREN

Yyyyyyup.

Sux.

SUNHEE

When are you supposed to get it?

LAUREN

Depends.

But you probably have a while.

Like if you haven't even started growing boobs, you still have a while.

SUNHEE

I started!

LAUREN

(Looks)

Really?

SUNHEE

Yeah.

I'm past the weird, hurt-y puck stage, I'm in actual boobie territory now!

LAUREN

Huh.

But...

It IS a bummer that you won't get huge knockers.

It's important ! That's what makes silly boys strong stalkers 🥰

But O! How culturally narrow of me!

Tiny tits on Asian chicks? That's meant to be.

I forgot that's not what guys prize in your type,

It's quiet, young sweeties, who serve - so polite.

SUNHEE

I'm taking this in...and I know that you're right.

LAUREN

And this is relevant to you and not to me because,

(To audience) Let me state the obvious that—

Here, in *this* world!

We are White!

Or I should say, we are predominately,

Predominantly White.



SUNHEE

Except me.

Here in this world,
I'm Asian. You're White.
(To audience) Just stating the obvious.

LAUREN

Exactly! So don't worry about your boobs.
They're perfect for who you're supposed to be!
Love your bod! Blah, blah, blah!
(LAUREN yawns and lays back down)
By the way—training bras? They're not for training your boobs to grow.

SUNHEE

What??

LAUREN

Yeah, they're there to train YOU.

SUNHEE

...What a waste of time...
Where'd you learn all this stuff?

LAUREN

American Girl Doll Puberty Book.

SUNHEE

What?

LAUREN

You don't have it?
How are you even navigating American Girl Doll Puberty?

SUNHEE

(A realization) I don't know.

LAUREN

Well you can have my copy.
It's over on my bookcase, bottom shelf.

(SUNHEE goes to look for the American Girl Doll Puberty Book)

LAUREN

Pretty much everything you need is in that book.
Plus the Guide—

Once you get your first period they give you an American Girl Doll Puberty Book Period Girl Guide.

SUNHEE

They do?
Who's 'they'?

LAUREN

The...American ? Girl ? Doll ? Puberty Book People ???

SUNHEE

And they give you a guy?

LAUREN

(Sigh) It's not a Guy, it's a Girl-Guy— !
A Girl Guide!
Like, a Girl.
Like, a Girl that is a Guide.
Like, a Girl to guide you. Through American Girl Doll Puberty Book Stuff.

...

(LAUREN points to an empty corner of the room.)

Her.
I'm talking bout her.
You haven't noticed her?

SUNHEE

..wh/o?

LAUREN

(Keeps pointing)
Her!
Actually, she knows all the puberty stuff—you can ask her—

(LAUREN tries to go back to sleep,)

LAUREN

(Responding to the empty corner)
Oh really? You can't?
.....
And there's no way for you to talk to each other?

....

But how come Mary Catherine could?
When we—

.....
Really?? Evan after the first period—

....
Wow geez, okay.

...
(Back to SUNHEE) So anyways, mine's over there, whatever.
Lauren's American Girl Doll Puberty Book Period Girl Guide, Sunhee.
Sunhee, Lauren's American Girl Doll Puberty Book Period Guide.

SUNHEE

(To the empty corner) Hii :)
Nice to meet you

...
Beautiful name... wh-what does it mean ?

.....
(To LAUREN) So.
I can't see her cuz I haven't gotten it yet?

LAUREN
No it's not that, it's—

...
(Re: corner) You tell her you're excited for her journey.

...
Okay fine, yes! I'll tell—
(Sigh...)
She says:
"All the American Girl Doll Puberty Book Girl Guides are nice and resilient and confid—blah, blah, blah. She says just chill out, it's, like, not that big of a deal—"

.
What ?? I don't need to say it EXACTLY how you— Okay FINE!

...
(Mocking) "When you make that next step...and become a hwoomany-hwooman!
You will know, OH YOU WILL *KNOW*, by the mark of her arrival...
For she will leave a single red rose petal.. inside your panties!
That panty petal marks the start of your period!

And a sign that you are starting to blossom into a luscious and fertile flower~"



There. Are you happy ???

...
I'm not *always* com/bative—!!!

SUNHEE

A rose petal?

She said it'll look like a rose petal? And then I'll get some help?

LAUREN

Yeah...

That is what she said.

Can we go to bed?

Doing that exhausted me—*(to the empty corner)* You exhaust me...

(To SUNHEE) Appreciate the time before your 'court appointed bestie' shows up.

(SUNHEE chuckles)

LAUREN

(To the empty corner) No— it was a joke, I'm not mad at you. Just go to bed we'll talk about it in the morning...

(SUNHEE turns the lamp off.)

A bit of silence)

SUNHEE

You wanna hear how dumb I used to be?

LAUREN

.....sure.

SUNHEE

You're gonna think I was so dumb.

I used to think

That when you got your period

You had to spend the entire week sitting on the toilet.

Like eat, sleep, do homework in the bathroom because

I used to think

That it was basically like pee, that you couldn't hold in, that flowed continually for a week straight. But also it's not pee, it's blood, and I pictured myself:

In the bathroom with all my rations for the week, flushing every 20 or so minutes to keep things sanitary.

I literally used to think that's what a period was.

Because that's what someone told me.

...

I really used to believe that.

...

Can you believe I was ever that dumb?

LAUREN

Yeah...

SUNHEE

?

Yeah, you agree with me ? or Yeah, you can believe I was that dumb ??

LAUREN

(...sleepy...)

Both.

...

It's not...a bad thing, just...

...

A fact.

...

I used to think all dogs were boys

and all cats were girls

and all mosquitos were bad thoughts that someone had squeezed out their brain through their ear

and now they're buzzing around the earth looking for another brain to burrow into...

Everyone is dumb...

.....

Before they're not...

...

And even then...

.....Prolly still dumb about somethin'...

(Silence)

SUNHEE

Lauren, I have another one.

LAUREN

Hmm?

SUNHEE

...it's definitely...*definitely* coming, right?

...

Like, there's no way I could get out of it?

...

...

...

ORDER, ORDER!

(DUN DUN!!)

SUNHEE

Order, order!!

(Lights up on: a courtroom! Just like the ones you've seen on TV!

SUNHEE, wearing a Judge's robe, bursts through the doors, as they speak they finish putting on a classic white wig. They sit at their Judge's bench, complete with the classic giant chair, sleek Judge's lamp, and fancy nameplate.)

SUNHEE

Let's go full *(Law and Order theme)* 'DUN DUN DUN DUN DUN DUN DUN DUN'!

Let's get this *(Law and Order emphasis sound)* 'DUN DUN' on the road!!!

Welcome back!

To Supreme. Gender. Cooooooooooooourt!!!!

Division of *Internalized Affairs*.

I am the Honorable Judge Sunhee presiding and I run this courtroom! Woohooo!!

(Banging and waving gavel)

Bang-bang! Order, order! Gavel-gavel-goo!

Let's get this court in sesh-i-on!!

Enteeerrrr Lawyeerrrrrs!

(From opposite sides of the room, two LAWYERS with briefcases shuffle in.

They wear matching suits and matching bowl cuts. They are identical in every single way except for the fact that PANTS LAWYER wears pants and PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER wears kitten heels. And a pencil skirt.)

PANTS LAWYER

(Greeting, i.e. 'Doctor')

Lawyer—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Lawyer—

BOTH LAWYERS

Your Honor—

JUDGE SUNHEE

Hi, Hi, Lawy-iiieees~

Looking great! Fresh cut?

BOTH LAWYERS

(Bashful) Thanks for noticing, Your Honor.

JUDGE SUNHEE

Anything for my favorite lawyer 🥰

BOTH LAWYERS

Aww 🥰

(Look to other LAWYER)

W/ait—

JUDGE SUNHEE

Now, you might be wondering why I've called court so suddenly and it's because—

....



Actually, y'know, I just thought it would be fun to get together again, catch up, open a case, open a bottle, get a discourse going, and I've just been thinking!

About...

Things.

About STUFF, about—

Academic..theorems....concepts..

Um.

Really...

Deeply...

! Philosophizing!

About a very intriguing field of study...

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Which is—?

JUDGE SUNHEE

Y'know !

I've been looking over, looking back on things—records and things.

There are so many things that seem so obvious to me, like, why didn't we pull that piece of evidence?

But we didn't know to know that it was important, you know?

And now there's new evidence coming in and it's like:

Okay woah, that's like a lot.

PANTS LAWYER

So is there new evidence you'd like us to examine? New...old ? evidence?

JUDGE SUNHEE

Um.

No, no not necessarily...

I was more just...chatting :)

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Apologies Your Honor, I'm having difficulties understanding what you're asking of us.

Do you *need us* for any/thing or—?

JUDGE SUNHEE

Yes! I do! It's URGENT.

But also it's like so not a big deal or whatever, it's fine.

Okay. I'll just say it:

The thing is...

I've been kind of.....I'll say..

.....Curious.....?

About the things I might have to deal with if...I wasn't dealing with the specific things I'm dealing with now because of...who I am ?

Am I...

...Making any sense?

BUH! Yeah. GUH. Ha ha . I'm not making any sense—Just !!!

Lawyers, present your cases!!

LAWYERS

HUP!

(The LAWYERS pose and present their briefcases.)

PANTS LAWYER

Mine is brown!!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Mine is brown!!

JUDGE SUNHEE

(Flailing gavel, exasperated)

JUST—DO YOUR LAWY-ING THING! DO YOUR INFORMATION!!

(The JUDGE flops down on their bench, exhausted.

The LAWYERS parry back and forth, like fencers)

PANTS LAWYER

Law—!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Law—!!

PANTS LAWYER

Is that your testimony?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

I move to strike.

PANTS LAWYER

Statute!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Subpoena!

PANTS LAWYER

IF. IT. PLEASES. THE. COURT!

(PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER and JUDGE SUNHEE gasp!)

JUDGE SUNHEE

Pants Lawyer has won the right to speak.

Pants, you may take the floor.

(PANTS LAWYER takes center stage, PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER begrudgingly steps back)

JUDGE SUNHEE

Court. Tension...

PANTS LAWYER

Your Honor. Pant suits and pencil skirts of the court.

First, I will state the obvious that

Here, in this court world ??

We...are all Asian.

Or rather, we all *look* East Asian...

Or rather, not even necessarily East Asian, but we do all look

Like what most people in our extremely White vicinity call:

“I think maybe Chinese? Something like that. But you know what I mean.”

And we do live in the third least diverse large city in the States.

So we are all well aware of what's been
Said about people who look like us
As a collective.

But we are not here to talk about the general 'ching-chongs' and the 'no but, where are you really from?'s'

We are here to talk about WHO,
between the two of us,
Possess the better, more appealing,
Racist stereotypes.

And, as it is assumed, stereotypically, that I am programed only for logic and intelligence over fickle emotionality, your best bet is to be convinced by me—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Your Honor, the burden of evidence clearly proves that BOTH parties lay claim to supposedly being “cold and emotionless” as well as being “inherently intelligent”, which means both arguments are irrelevant in this particular case and should be thrown out.

PANTS LAWYER

Wait! Give us math at least!!

Your Honor, come on!

Pencil Skirts are English and Language Arts.

Pants are MATH and Science!

THESE ARE THE LAWS PEOPLE !!!

The statute of sexism compounded with the perception of Asian Mathleticism means Pants are inherently assigned more math expectations—!! mathspecta/tions.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Legally, being good at math is a universally Asian trait, regardless of gender.

PANTS LAWYER

Your Honor.

Allow yourself to be racist for a moment...take a deep breath...and picture:

An Asian Nerd

...

He's wearing pants, isn't he?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Your Honor, let's be real, if you TRIED you could imagine her in a pencil skirt.

PANTS LAWYER

Wai-wait—Your Honor? Your Honor?!

Didn't you—and, Your Honor, please-I beg of you, allow yourself to be racist AND sexist for a moment...

Didn't you first imagine her in a Mini Skirt?
Plaid?
School?
Uniform?

JUDGE SUNHEE

....(Face/sound of: Eh, you got me there!)

PANTS LAWYER

(To PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER) You have claim to *Slutty* Asian Nerd, that's entirely different.
Stay. In. Your. Lane.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Geez, fine, calm down.
Your Honor, motion to grant Pants: Asian Nerd.
But while we're here—motion to grant Pencil Skirts: ALL Slutty Asians.

PANTS LAWYER

Fair.

JUDGE SUNHEE

Granted and granted! Gavel-gavel-goo! (*Gavel!*)

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

But, Your Honor, if you're going to grant Pencil Skirts: Slutty Asians, then you must also grant us...

Everything else.

For we possess the Power of Paradox.

You want enigmatic? We've got that, full stop.

We possess both Karate-Chop-Precision,

Yet we're 'only a child who needs supervision'.

A lady born with 'bitchy dragon' bloodline,

Is still billed as: Sweet, Submissive Concubine.

Helpless yet proficient. Not seen yet somehow in the way.

In need a savior while also expected to save.

To be pure, untouched, virginal, forever divine.

While also expected to love you long time.

To possess such multitudes, to be so expansive?

We're experiencing freedom, much more than Pants is !

So many positions that we are allowed in.

And it is a PRIVILEGE, not a burden.

(Beat.)

PANTS LAWYER

May I...question the Lawyer?

JUDGE SUNHEE

Sure, go ahead—

PANTS LAWYER

Pardon me for pant-splaining, but it seems my opponent has omitted some highly sensitive evidence—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Objection, speculation.

PANTS LAWYER

Speculate this—Why ?
Are you burying
The genitals??

JUDGE SUNHEE

(Gasp!)

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

I'm not! It's further along in my presentation!
I was only speaking for like five seconds—

PANTS LAWYER

Really???
I feel like you talked for so long.

(PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER moves to respond but is speechless)

PANTS LAWYER

Well, now it's out there— *(arms out, taking the floor)* let's talk about it!
You wanna know why it's a *good thing* to
Have everyone think you have a small dick??
Why it's *advantageous*,
And, like, actually the BEST thing !!

..

Keep expectations low and you will always *rise* above them.
People love a pleasant surprise.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

You wanna talk pleasant surprise?

May I remind the court that under our Pencil Skirts...we are SIDEWAYS !?

Allegedly ! 😏

And what's more surprising, more mysterious?

What is more *exceptional*?

We are pursued simply for the potential to bear witness to this...miraculous anatomical anomaly.

And even when they're relieved to find out it's not true...

We still win because,

word on the street is,

Pencil Skirts are much, much *TIGHTER*.

As a garment. And culture.

...

And vaginally.

Which has the highest desirability quotient—

PANTS LAWYER

Extrapolation! That's not true, people like a whole variety of things!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Irrelevant.

We are working off the LAW, not "opinions" or "truth".

PANTS LAWYER

Yeah ? Well— Well.... !! !!!

I WOULD MUCH RATHER BE RUMORED TO HAVE A *REGULAR* DICK BUT SMALL, OVER PEOPLE THINKING I HAD *HORIZONTAL GENITALIA*—!!!

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN??

THE VAGINA IS INTERNAL—??

HOW DO THEY THINK THEY'RE ACCESSING THE PART / THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO REALLY LIKE —???

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

OBVIOUSLY THEY MEAN 'VAGINA' AS IN 'VULVA'.

EVERYONE MEANS 'VAGINA' AS IN 'VULVA'—

PANTS LAWYER

THEN WHY NOT CALL IT WHAT IT IS?

PENCIL SKIRT

THAT'S HOW IT'S WRITTEN IN THE LAW BOOKS !!!

JUDGE SUNHEE

Order!! ORDER!!!

Look. *Everyone* here is fighting allegations of possessing very...distinct private parts, that's no debate—

What we should be debating is...

Wh—what we SHOULD be debating is—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Objection! (Er, no—) A question ! Your Honor.

JUDGE SUNHEE

Yeah?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

May I request a sidebar?

JUDGE SUNHEE

O fer sure!

We're gonna sidebar! Gavel-goo! (*Bang, bang!*)

(A little bar appears (off to the side) with two decked out piña coladas on top. The JUDGE and PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER sit down together behind the bar and take a sip—yummm !! The courtroom has faded into the background and the bar is lit by a dim, intimate spotlight)

JUDGE SUNHEE

So what's up? Spill everything. (*siiiiip*)

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Well...basically...

In conclusion, Your Honor. (*breath*) Honestly? You

Need to close the case.

JUDGE SUNHEE

What? No! Wait—why are you

Doing your closing statements? We were in the

Middle of trial. What's your sidebar?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

It's not...

Right. Having us come to trial and argue this

Stuff? You're starting things that are better left

Untouched. Some things don't need to be explored—

JUDGE SUNHEE

BUT—

What about the discourse? What about *justice*?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Justice-shmustice. This is Supreme *Gender* Court.
The scales are rigged...and always tipped to favor
The weight of upholding the framework that keeps
The distinction between Pants and Pencil Skirts
So...um... / palpable—

JUDGE SUNHEE

Implicit?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Huh? Wait, what did you say?

Implicit? Uh... yeah, I guess so...but also it takes a lot of work to maintain...

!!Uh, but not in a burdensome way !! Not at all! Especially if you *try* not to notice,

Which is...(gets lost in a thought)... ! Easier than it sounds!!

Look.

Just...stay..

On our side?

JUDGE SUNHEE

How do you know what side I'm on?!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

(*'lol pls'*) Come on, Judge—

JUDGE SUNHEE

But I'm wearing my judges robes !

(*Beat...a little uncomfy.*)

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

I know this can only sound biased from me,
But we really have landed on the better
Side of this whole thing. If we have to be
Perceived as perpetual foreigners, don't
You think it's much better to be at least seen
As desirable in *some* way? Even
If it isn't *ideal*, you can still use it
To your advantage! There are people who have

Fetishes specifically centering
 On an image you could totally fulfill!
 Over on the other side, they have nothing.
 It would be so hard and you would lose so much—
 Believe me. Believe me! BELIEVE ME! Just close
 The case. And walk away.

JUDGE SUNHEE

But there's no verdict—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

This process is painful. For everyone.
 I *need* you to be convinced to stay.
 And I know a verdict will only lead to another queary, another investigation—
 And the more we 'do trial', the closer we get to some sort of decision? The more I feel...
 Sick?
 Cuz I'm prepared, to fight my case ! I've prepped !
 But I'm so aware of how close I am to having the rug pulled out from under me and having
 gravity turned off and—
 Please. Just.
 Do nothing.
 Keep the peace.
 Don't make waves.
 Close the case.

(Beat.)

JUDGE SUNHEE

.....I'll close the case.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Oh!
 Good.
 Your Honor, it's the right thing to do... *(One last siiiip)* Alrighty! Sidebar's over!

(The JUDGE stays at the bar, in a daze, as the PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER bursts back into the courtroom, bringing it back to life. The PANTS LAWYER comes stomping in, mid-thought.)

PANTS LAWYER

—It's ALL based on racist stereotypes
 But even if it *were* true, have you not
 Heard of: "motion of the ocean"? Foreplay—??

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Save your energy, bebs. I think Judge Sunhee is
About to make a declaration... Your Honor?

(The LAWYERS look expectantly at JUDGE SUNHEE, who sits, staring off.)

JUDGE SUNHEE

.....
I've....
Decided to make a declaration.
I have decided that...this court will stand in
Recess until.....
I guess indefinitely.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Recess??

PANTS LAWYER

Indefinitely???

JUDGE SUNHEE

That is my ruling.

(The JUDGE bangs the gavel on the bar weakly twice.)

JUDGE SUNHEE

*I guess, whatever it was, I got over it over that drink...
Pack up. Go home. We're done for a while, I think.*

(The LAWYERS exit.

JUDGE SUNHEE, still sitting behind the bar, dejectedly takes their wig off. They move to take a sip of their drink...can't. They get up and the courtroom melts away.

JUDGE SUNHEE goes to exit, starting to take their Judge's robe off...midway through, SUNHEE looks down and stops in their tracks—)

DOKKAEBI ARRIVES

SUNHEE

Uhhhhhhhh.....

(SUNHEE'S spine squirms.

...

SUNHEE slowly turns back around.

Hanging out of the front of the waistband of SUNHEE'S pants (cuffed) ...is a pair of underwear (with a small brownish stain).

SUNHEE looks down...)

SUNHEE

What

...

Is that?

Did that...come from—??

I didn't even...feel it, how is that.....possible?

.... (thought: did I...poop? I'm embarrassed.)

.... (thought: I didn't even notice, are my nerves okay?)

.... (thought: could it be ANYTHING else?)

.... (thought: am I dying ?)

(SUNHEE frantically takes the underwear out of their waistband, takes off the Judge's robes, and scurries to a trash can.

SUNHEE crumples the underwear into a tiny ball, shoves it down into the trash can, then the robe, using it to bury the underwear, shoving everything deep ! deep ! down into ! the trash!!)

SUNHEE

(Sigh of: Get out of my life forever!! 😞)

...

(Sigh of: Everything's all good 😊)

...

(SUNHEE turns to walk awa—

SUDDENLY !!! Magic (and trash) erupts from the trash can and the top half of a goblin-like creature, the DOKKAEBI, pops out. The domed swinging lid of the trash can mostly obscures the creature's head.)

SUNHEE

WHAT IS THAT ?!?!

DOKKAEBI

I'm your Dokkae/bi!

SUNHEE

SHUT UP! / WHAT!

DOKKAEBI

Sorry! I didn't mean to startle you!

SUNHEE

...

UMMMMAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

.

ARE YOU HOME YET ???

THERE'S A...

TORSO OR SOMETHING IN MY TRASH CAN!!!

...

UMMMMAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

(A long silent moment as SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI, still under the trash can lid, stand frozen waiting for a response. There is none.)

SUNHEE

You are so lucky the Asian market is like three hours away.

DOKKAEBI

Three hours?? That sucks!

Of course, I'm sure it's worth the trek. There's just something about the comforting power of your cultural food that always brings you / back to—

SUNHEE

SHUT UP ABOUT CULTURE!!!

What are you !?

Get out of my trash !!!

(The DOKKAEBI lifts the swingy lid a bit so a bit of its face can be seen. It is a flashy and slightly unnerving, creature with giant eyes, fangs.)

DOKKAEBI

Hi!

I'm your Dokkaebi!

SUNHEE

My what?

DOKKAEBI

Dokkaebi!

SUNHEE

What are you saying?

DOKKAEBI

Do-kay/-bee—

SUNHEE

‘Togepi’?

Like, the best Pokémon? The egg? Misty’s Togepi??

DOKKAEBI

NO!!! DOKKAEBI!!!

‘Dough’ like for bread,

‘K’ like the letter and,

‘Bee’ like the insect or the letter.

‘Dough—Kay—Bee’, Dokkaebi.

You’ve never heard of me?

I’m famous.

(In Korean culture...)

SUNHEE

Oh.

I’m not really keyed into all that

Asian-y stuff.

DOKKAEBI

???

Okay but you’ve at least *heard* of those goblins ? trolls ? trickster creatures ? Sometimes helper gremlins ?

In all those Ancient Korean folktales and myths?

Helloooo, that’s me!

Well, my kind, y’know—Ancestors. But we’ve only gotten better over time ✨

SUNHEE

Okay...

So you’re, like, a, what..Korean ? ...thing?

DOKKAEBI

Yup!

SUNHEE

Why are you here?

DOKKAEBI

Ah! Thank you for the segue—IIIII am here for YOU!

SUNHEE

No, I mean, why are you here—in America?

If you're an ancient Korean creature, should you be off somewhere...with ancient Koreans?

DOKKAEBI

W— well, I'm..Korean-American. (—are *you* not Korean-American?)

SUNHEE

Yeah, I guess, but—

DOKKAEBI

Okay, so what's the issue?

SUNHEE

You just look like you *should* be in Korea.

DOKKAEBI

Oookayy ?

Well. I'm not!

I'm *here* because you created me.

SUNHEE

Nuh-uh!

DOKKAEBI

Yuh-huh.

You bled recently, didn't you?

SUNHEE

What?

DOKKAEBI

Bled? Bleed? Blood?

Scraped your knee? Get a cut?

SUNHEE

No ??

DOKKAEBI

Are you sure?

SUNHEE

Are you doubting my self-awareness??

DOKKAEBI

...

Yes.

Look, you had to have gotten blood on something, some sort of household item,
And then you discarded it and that item mixed with your blood mixed with centuries Korean
mysticism and magic...

Creates a Dokkaebi! Me! That's how the legend goes.

So you did bleed recently,

Because that's the only way I'd be here.



Pleased to make your acquaintance.

(The DOKKAEBI tips the trash can lid like a hat, revealing SUNHEE'S underwear (with a small brownish stain) on of this creature's head.)

SUNHEE

IS THAT MY UNDERWEAR ON YOUR HEAD??? WHAT / THE HELL, YOU PERV!!!

DOKKAEBI

What? Huh? No!

SUNHEE

Take that off—!

*(SUNHEE tries to yank the underwear off DOKKAEBI'S head but ends up pulling the
DOKKAEBI out of the trash can entirely.*

Both SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI schlorp to the ground)

DOKKAEBI

OW! OW!!

Woah, / what the— there's more of me? Cool!

SUNHEE

Eww! There's more of you?? Ugh!!
Get out!

(SUNHEE throws the American Girl Doll Puberty Book at the DOKKAEBI, who dodges.)

DOKKAEBI

Woah!!
Okay so, I wouldn't—??

(DOKKAEBI does some Dokkaebi magic. SUNHEE gets a cramp and doubles over.)

SUNHEE

/ Gowww!!

DOKKAEBI

Oh that's right, I'm a magical entity 🤪👉

SUNHEE

Ow, ow, oh my god—what is that? What did you do??

DOKKAEBI

(Stretching and testing its body) Tricky magic-y / hehehe !

SUNHEE

Ow—oh, I need to lie down.

(SUNHEE lies down in the middle of the floor in fetal position as the DOKKAEBI reaches up to feel its head (and the underwear))

DOKKAEBI

??
OOOOOHHHHHHHHHH.....I see. That's what made me...
(Really?...huh.. Well!)
Okay so, it's not ON my head,
It IS my head.

SUNHEE

It IS your head ? My underwear IS your head???

DOKKAEBI

Well, part of it. Would you say your ears IS your head? Ish ? Part of it, right ?

What a weird way to / phrase it—

SUNHEE

What are you talking about??

DOKKAEBI

Weren't you listening when I told you where Dokkaebis come from? You got blood on these and discarded them and then / they turned—

SUNHEE

(Sitting up a bit)

I didn't throw those out bc they had blood on them

I threw them out becau—!!



DOKKAEBI

Because why?

SUNHEE

(Back to fetal position) I don't have to tell you—!

(DOKKAEBI does some magic)

DOKKAEBI

Yuh-huh! Magic-magic!

SUNHEE

🌀 !! I THREW THE UNDERWEAR AWAY CUZ I POOPED A BIT IN THEM BUT DIDN'T FEEL IT AT ALL—LIKE AT *ALL*—AND I WAS SCARED MY NERVES WERE DYING AND I WAS DYING SO I HID THE EVIDENCE !! 🌀

..



Hey!!

DOKKAEBI

It wasn't poop—

SUNHEE

It was BROWN.

DOKKAEBI

Blood turns brown.

(SUNHEE stares skeptically at DOKKAEBI...)

DOKKAEBI

When it's exposed to air, it oxidizes and turns brown.

(A long beat.....)

SUNHEE

I....

started my period ??? I'm ON my period ?? Right now ?? As we speak ????

OH NO!!!

I mean, oh good. Finally. It was way past time.

But also WHY. This SUCKS!

Wait, wow, that's cool! I *get* it—I've always heard it said but now I'm like, yeah, I feel it, it DOES suck!

And you..?

You're...

My American Girl Doll Puberty Book Period Girl Guide ???

DOKKAEBI

Each word individually, I understand. But all together—?

SUNHEE

Lauren said we were supposed to get one of those helper girls from the Puberty Book.

AND!! She told me what it was *supposed* to look like. Yeah, she told me was *supposed* to be a single, red rose petal so what happened there? Huh??

What the hell kind of American Girl Doll even are you???

DOKKAEBI

I'm not an American Girl Doll, I am a Dokkaebi, I keep trying to—

SUNHEE

Ya! Ya! Dokkaebi, Old-ass Bloody Korean Creature Creep.

You're my Period Guide Creature or whatever... I got it.

DOKKAEBI

I'm not—*technically* here as a Period Guide,

I mean, that's definitely part of it ?

Like, as an example, if it ever makes you feel... like you need to pull yourself out of yourself and crumple it like tissue paper into a tiny little ball.

I could help you with that!

The feeling! Not the doing.
That's for sure within my jurisdiction!

SUNHEE

Okay, so what's the point of you?

DOKKAEBI

Well... I'm not meant to *tell* you, but...I'm here to take your lead.... 🙄🙄🙄🙄

SUNHEE

What's wrong with your eyes?

DOKKAEBI

I'm here to foster your sense of personal discovery, okay??
To help you connect more to...aspects of yourself that may need...nurturing ??

(The DOKKAEBI looks expectantly at SUNHEE....)

SUNHEE

Aaaaaamazing.
Everyone else gets a normal American Girl Doll Guide I get stuck the Period Chink that's gonna get in touch with my friggin' heritage.
Yet another thing...



I. Never. Asked for!
TANTRUM !
STOMP !
STOMP !
STOMP !
DOOR ! SLAM !!!

*(Door slam 🙄🙄
Blackout.)*

LAWLLWAY

(A hallway in the Supreme Gender Courthouse.

PANTS (LAWYER) has taken over a portion of the hallway—the walls covered in papers, notes, and the conspiracy bulletin board yarn. PANTS is half-practicing his arguments, half-conspiracy-ing.)

PANTS

—AND THIS CONNECTS !

To the PROVEN speculation that one too many tofu grows Pant-boobs...

Which—(! tof-oobs ?) ..where's that thread?

Ah !!

Which, ONCE AGAIN, leads us back to: Asian Pants are too much like Pencil Skirts (our strongest argument and stereotype).

Which means...!!! (Come here, stringy-string)

(String connecting)

Yes!

Any attribute my opponent argues for the Pencil Skirts...inevitably ends up spilling over to the Pants.

So I don't even need to work to get wins.

Wow.

I am

Incredibly intelligent.

When we get back in court, I'm gonna argue the freakin' pants off that—

(PENCIL SKIRT enters, speeding by.)

PANTS

Pencil Skirt Lawyer!!

PENCIL SKIRT

Pants?

PANTS

HI! It's you!

How have you been, you didn't answer my / texts—

PENCIL SKIRT

(Hissed) ! I told you not to.

What...is all this?

PANTS

I'm waiting.

For us to get called back from recess? Thought I'd review my arguments—

PENCIL SKIRT

It's been ten months, Pants.

Have you been out here waiting for *ten months* in this law hallway?

PANTS

..this..Law-llway.



Well, I guess that does explain why my arguments were getting so good.

PENCIL SKIRT

Uh-huh.

PANTS

But you're back! Are we back on?

Court ! I mean, are we back on in court? Is what I was ask/ing. (Unless ?)

PENCIL

NO. We are not back on in court.

Judge Sunhee is still holding us in recess.

PANTS

So what are you doing here?

(PENCIL SKIRT looks around, steps in close for privacy.)

PENCIL SKIRT

Off the record?

PANTS

Really? Right here??

PENCIL SKIRT

No, no—!

It's serious.

PANTS

(genuine concern) Oh. Serious??

PENCIL SKIRT

I was approached...by a mysterious figure—

PANTS

DUN DUN!
Who was it??

PENCIL SKIRT

I don't know! It was *mysterious* ???
Someone in a..big hooded robe— Red..or actually kind of.. *brownish*-red ? Not sure, it was kind of hard to tell in that light.
But it walked up and was like:
“Pencil Skirt Lawyer?”
And I was like:
“Do I know you?”
And it handed me this envelope and disappeared with a poof into the night!

PANTS

The cold, dark one??

PENCIL SKIRT

The very same!
And look at what was inside.

(PENCIL SKIRT hands the envelope to PANTS, who pulls a thick manila folder, labeled ‘Judge Sunhee’.)

PANTS

(childlike awe) Manila !

PENCIL SKIRT

😬 Which means ???

PANTS

!! A new case !!
We're gettin' back in court, baby!!

PENCIL SKIRT

No, I don't know if we should...
There's something different about that case.
I think we need to look into this before we bring it to trial.

(PENCIL SKIRT makes PANTS open the file to read:)

PANTS

“Quote.

Thought, colon,

‘I wish I could be a boy, dot dot dot—

But if, italicized, *I* were to be a boy, I’d have to be an, italicized, underlined, *ASIAN BOY*

So.

Is it worth it, question mark. Lawyers, go, period.

.....

And by ‘Boy’ I mean ‘Pants’. End quote.”

..

What??

The...

CRAP/-uh!?!?!?!?!?

PENCIL SKIRT

I know—

PANTS

Judge Sunhee doesn’t wanna be Team Pants?? What the / crap-uh??

PENCIL SKIRT

What?? How is that what you—?

That’s not even the— You’re missing the point !!!

...

This ? isn’t a case, it’s clearly something...different.

Which made me think !!

There’s clearly something bigger happening with....whatever happens over there in...
wherever it is they decide..whichever cases we argue. And *theen* I was like:

Hang on a minute!

I actually don’t even know who it is that’s making all these delegations, do you?

PANTS

I do not 😊

PENCIL SKIRT

Aren’t you curious?

WHY we’re debating these things??

I’ll admit,

There was a time, not too long ago in fact, that I thought the best course of action was to put
my head down, make peace. Do nothing, if it meant not making waves.

But now?

With this information...I have this strange feeling...that we *need* to follow the information. So that we can maybe start... 'doing law' in a way that feels...

More productive?

We've spent so much time—*all* our time wearing a rut into that courtroom floor with the same, tired arguments. And I can only turn my brain off and “just follow the evidence prepared in the case” for so long—WHAT IF I NEED TO QUESTION THE CASE??

...

I kept telling myself: Stop worrying.

Everything is 'fine'. 'Fine' is good.

'Fine' is enough and as long as I'm not in *complete* agony at every waking moment, then it's Fine and, also, not worth thinking about!

But you know...

Never, EVER, in my entire life, have I had the thought, “Yeah, this is fine!” while actually actively experiencing something truly fine.

And the threshold for what a person considers 'fine' for their own self is always shockingly, *shockingly* low... horrible judgment for that kind of thing, people.

Pants,

Did you know that we're actually within our rights to be More than 'fine'?

I've gone over every statute, every amendment, no matter which way you spin it—we are totally within our rights to seek out 'Spectacular.'

...

Right now, there is no clear path—but I think, I *think*..the information in that file could help us begin to uncover it.

Pants,

Didn't you ever consider that with our knowledge and dexterity of the law...we could be finding our own way through it, creating our own verdicts?

Instead of going back and forth, endlessly trying to find the most ideal way to Settle.

.

You're telling me you don't think that's worth investigating?

(Beat.)

PANTS

No. I'm a Lawyer. Not..a Detective.

I have a task, I follow THOSE directives.

My job, your job, is to argue the case:

Accept your stance and everything else, erase.

Believe it or not, fight hard for your side.

Present your self well, but never ask why.

.

We are not here to play “investigator”, Pencil Skirt *Lawyer*.
 In fact, some might consider what you’re suggesting to be an act of distrust.
 So I’ll do you a favor and forget this ever happened.
 Now if you’ll excuse me, you are in my home.

PENCIL SKIRT

This is not your home.

PANTS

Then why have I been *residing* here for the past 10 months??

...

Huh! Case closed.

PENCIL SKIRT

Fine.

I’ll... “vacate the premises”.

Just give me back my—

(PENCIL SKIRT holds her hand out, PANTS clutches the file.)

PENCIL SKIRT

...Pants?

PANTS

...Lawyer.

I’m a Lawyer

I’m a great Lawyer.

I do

exactly my job and I do it exactly.

I come to work every day

and I argue my cases

and I come to work

and I come to work

I don’t ask questions

and when we’re in recess, fine! we’re in recess

and I wait, to be called back

and I wait

and I wait

to do my job, which I am GREAT AT.

(Preps to tear the file.)

My job, which is being a Lawyer,
 which is upholding the Law.

PENCIL SKIRT

Pants.

Please.

Don't—!

(PANTS tears the file.

Blackout.)

UN-LAUREN-ING

(In darkness)

SUNHEE

You're ruining everything, you know that right?

(Lights up on SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI in the halls of SUNHEE'S middle school.)

SUNHEE

This is all your fault in the first place,
If you hadn't freaked me out...
I need to talk to Lauren, she'll be able to actually help me...

DOKKAEBI

I was only trying to make sure you considered angle before saying anything!
It *is* a huge thing. Especially for a mother...
There's no way she's not thinking about..like..fertility ? and womanhood and / growing up
too fast and aging and dying and birthing and pregnancy and sex and—

SUNHEE

We are not doing this again. See this is exactly what I'm talking about!—SHUT UP!!!!

(SUNHEE realizes they're in public and feels deeply embarrassed.)

SUNHEE

God...This is so awkward turtle.

DOKKAEBI

Oh I know, I wasn't going to say anything but what are the odds you show up in the same
outfit as four...er, nine—twelve other??—geez, so many / people!

SUNHEE

UHGG.

It's. A. *Uniform*. Hello ???

I didn't choose this.

It's dress code, we have to wear it.

DOKKAEBI

Says who?

SUNHEE

The *Law* ??

DOKKAEBI

The wha—?

SUNHEE

You thought I chose this skort?

DOKKAEBI

I like ‘it! You can be like—bahh!! (*pantomimes flashing, lifting the skirt to reveal shorts*)

SUNHEE

Ew. STOP-uh!

We hate the uniforms.

(*Re: everyone in the school*) We all hate the uniforms. Got it?

...

Can you stand behind me or something? You’re being so...

(*SUNHEE tries to be as small as possible*)

(*To the world*) Sorry...

...

Uhg!

Look what you’re doing—!

Not even two minutes in public with you and you’re turning me into this...

I’m not that ‘girl that gets embarrassed by her own existence’...

(*SUNHEE is hyper aware they’re in public, being perceived.*)

SUNHEE

They can’t see you, can they?

DOKKAEBI

No.

Not unless you want me to reveal myself to them ?

SUNHEE

NO! NO! No thank you.

Never do that, ever.

...

Uhg.. I FEEL like they can see you, are you sure?

DOKKAEBI

Positive.

Look—

(Loud, obnoxious cover of Leona Lewis' 'Bleeding Love'¹)

♪♪ KEEP BLEEDIN', / KEEP-KEEP BLEEDIN' LOVE ♪♪

(No reactions !!)

♪♪ I KEEP BLEEDIN', KEEP-KEEP BLEEDIN'—♪♪

SUNHEE

Oh my god ! WHAT ARE YOU— SHHH!!!

— Okay??

No, don't ! Keep singing !! SHHH! SHHHH!!!

DOKKAEBI

See?? No one's loo— oh.. okay, yeah people are looking...

But don't worry, I'm pretty sure that's cuz of you, not me.

(Checking for reactions) BAHLOLOLOOOOO~ !!

Yeah, no, they can't see me—you're all / good.

SUNHEE

Can you just— !!

Be quiet and stay out of my way.

(SUNHEE turns away from the DOKKAEBI.

The DOKKAEBI lingers nearby but leaves some distance.)

SUNHEE

WHERE'S LAUREEEEN!!! CALLING LAUREN???

LAUREN

Hey, what?

Why are you screaming?

SUNHEE

I dunno! Not like I CARE how loud I am—

LAUREN

..Same?

SUNHEE

YEAHH!! Hah! Yeah!!

Except...

¹ okay but I'm not even being cheeky - 'Bleeding Love' by Leona Lewis is the dramaturgically accurate #1 Billboard hit down to the month

I do need to speak with you privately.

LAUREN

Okay.

SUNHEE

...

My rose petal was so crusty and wilted that, at first,
I thought it was potpourri.

LAUREN

You got it?! / Finally!

SUNHEE

Unfortunately.

Yeah. But I need your help,

I'm almost out of the pads from that sample box we got in Health and I need you to help get
me more.

LAUREN

What? Why can't you get them?

SUNHEE

If I tell my parents I need pads, they'll know I got my period.

LAUREN

You haven't told your parents?

(I mean, you don't have to tell your dad, your mom's supposed to do that)

But you haven't told your mom?

SUNHEE

Gee, I dunno !

I triiied.

But it was as if? There was *something*....annoying and STUPID making it...impossible for
me to do so!

DOKKAEBI

(Cheeky, not actually sorry) (sowwy / 🙄)

LAUREN

Oohhh...

Cultural barriers?

I've heard of that.

...

Wait !

If you got your period, you must've gotten your Guide.

Your American Girl Doll Puberty Book Period Girl Guide?

SUNHEE

Oh.

Yeah! I totally got my.. American Doll. Girl Puberty. Period Girl..Guy...

...

I love her ! 😊

LAUREN

Where is she? Let's meet her!

SUNHEE

She's right—oh shoot! You can't see her?

Weird.

Must be something weird...like, I still can't see yours, I guess you can't see mine either.

Must be some weird..rule or law—

But she's here, she's right....

...There!

(SUNHEE points to a random spot, definitively away from the DOKKAEBI)

LAUREN

Hey. Good to meet / you. Sorry I can't see you.

DOKKAEBI

Wait, who?

You're not gonna intro/duce—

SUNHEE

Yup! There she is! She is right there!

She's super cool and really helpful and *so totally* American Girl Doll.

But. Um.

That doesn't mean we still can't talk about this kind of stuff. Like, I'm still gonna need your tips.

LAUREN

Sure ? But I get all my tips from them (*re: empty spot*)

I'm sure she's already taught you way more than I ever could.

Has she shown you ‘how to disappear stains in a fun and foamy way’?

DOKKAEBI

Wh/at?

SUNHEE

Huh?

LAUREN

You must have stained your underwear—especially on your first time?

That’s like one of the first things mine showed me.

What did your guide do with your underwear?

DOKKAEBI

Ohoho—!

SUNHEE

NOT SURE! I haven’t the foggiest idea... !

LAUREN

You didn’t throw them away did you?

SUNHEE

What? Why?? Wait, you...you know what happens if you discard them?

LAUREN

Yeah! ..Of course!

You end up spending like a billion bucks on undies if you throw away every pair that gets stained.

SUNHEE

Oh. Right.

Well I definitely didn’t do that.

LAUREN

So what *did* you do with them?

DOKKAEBI

You created llllllll/ffffeeeee ~~~!!!

SUNHEE

Quiet!!

LAUREN

Huh?

SUNHEE

Uhh... -cquire.. Acquire !

I...acquired them and..I was able to..keep ? them ?

DOKKAEBI

For posterity!

SUNHEE

—As a memento.

LAUREN

Keep?

Who's keeping it? You?

Where?

Why??

SUNHEE

No, no, sorry I misheard her! Not 'keep'—she said, uh... 'steep'!

She said / 'steep' because...

DOKKAEBI

Steep?? Like TEA? To DRINK????

SUNHEE

NO!

To ! CLEAN !!!

...

! No, you're right! We did clean them! We cleaned them by steeping them!

In that...

Foam stuff you were talking about...

LAUREN

Which foam / stuff?

DOKKAEBI

Shaving cream ? Milk foam? / Whipped cream ?

Bubble bath ? Shaving cream ? Sea foam?

SUNHEE

Mmmmmmmuuhhh-bbuhhh-Sshhhhhhhhuuuuuhhhsssssssssssssea foam.

Sea foam.



Sea foam to clean.

LAUREN

(To the empty spot) You told Sunhee that steeping stained underwear in sea foam gets the blood out?

(Silence)

LAUREN

(To the empty spot) We live in a landlocked state what the hell.Why would you tell her that?

(Silence...)

SUNHEE

(GAASSPP!!!!) Ohmygod, you can't say that!!

LAUREN

What?

DOKKAEBI

What??

SUNHEE

She just said:

“Don't talk to ME about landlocked or I'll land my..fist in your locks, you ..B !!!”



(To the empty spot) Ohmygodyoucan'tSAYYthat!! That's like, sexist and stuff...

See, Lauren???

I knew something was off about her! I still need your help.

LAUREN

Look, I would give you my emergency pad but I just had to use it because I started *my* period last period.

SUNHEE

Wait! We're synced already?? Okay that's kind of fun—

DOKKAEBI

That's a myth—

SUNHEE

*(Hissed at DOKKAEBI) You're a myth !!
(To LAUREN) But you don't have another extra?*

LAUREN

Sorry.
Someone definitely has one, you could just ask.
BUT NOT HERE.
Not right in the public square... where there are *boys* ???
Definitely can't ask here.
Gym is a safe time to ask publicly, cuz it's not really 'public' if it's the girl's locker room.
But Gym isn't until 8th period.
So...
Your Girl Guide taught you how to make toilet paper pads, right?

SUNHEE

That's my only option?

LAUREN

Yeah.
It's too risky to try and ask without revealing yourself.
Remember what I taught you:
If people know you're on your period, they'll be tuned in to all your slightest shame scents.
And that's not worth it is it?

DOKKAEBI

Is it?

SUNHEE

I guess not...

LAUREN

*NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!
It stinks all month, but on this week ? much more so!
There's no escape, you're MEANT to sit in it—
That rancid stink of shame that you now emit.*

SUNHEE

Do I...
Have to believe that? Because...

(SUNHEE bends in half to sniff their crotch.

*SUNHEE stands back up and sniffs the air.
SUNHEE processes for a moment then shakes their head.)*

SUNHEE

I'm not exactly sure what 'rancid stink of shame' smells like but...I'm not sure I'm emitting it.

LAUREN

But!

It's!

True!

SUNHEE

Even if it is,
I need a pad.
And I'm gonna get one !

(DOKKAEBI starts underscoring: rousing superhero speech)

SUNHEE

You wanna know why?
Because...
I'm strong!
And not ashamed....
And I'm so, extremely, unabashedly..
Terrified of leaking through my skort and I'm way more scared of that than I am of asking for a pad. Even if a boy does see me.
...also maybe w-we're not even supposed to be, like, ashamed of, actually, any of it !
Y..Yeahh!! 💪

LAUREN

Yeah, maybe you're right...
But not ashamed of ANY of it? That seems a little much—

SUNHEE

Yeah, no you're right, that sounds extreme, we'll write that down but fine tune it as we go.
What's it called?

LAUREN

A living document?

SUNHEE

Yeah. Exactly.

...

Lauren?

I love ya.

But I think there are some things that I'm going to have to start...

Un-Lauren-ing.



LAUREN

..Dang.

Deep.

SUNHEE

Okay.

One. Two.

DOKKAEBI

You go this!

(SUNHEE steps forward, a spotlight !)

SUNHEE

DOES—!!

Um.

DoesanyonehaveapadIcouldhave?

(Pads flutter down from the sky)

LAUREN

What?!?!

SUNHEE

It worked!

LAUREN

And you survived !!!

DOKKAEBI

She's looking at you like you're a badass! Cuz you are!

SUNHEE

I am?

DOKKAEBI

What's that thing about seeing yourself through another's eyes?

SUNHEE

Yeah, I guess I didn't even care when the whole class heard me! Ha!

DOKKAEBI

They probably all think you're a badass!

SUNHEE

Really??

(SUNHEE and DOKKAEBI do a big turn out, to look "at the rest of the class"—!!!)

DOKKAEBI

(A shift, a deeply unpleasant experience)

You know how sometimes you can see yourself through another's eyes,

You can see exactly what they're seeing in you?

And sometimes you see yourself in another's eyes

And you're just a list of adjectives...?

(SUNHEE'S energy drops, they turn to the DOKKAEBI, fuming.

SUNHEE takes a deep breath. Then, a witchy incantation:)

SUNHEE

.....

~Habeas corpus, ex parte,

Pro bono, pro bono, in facie curiae!~

DOKKAEBI

What are you doing??

SUNHEE

Court summons!!!

(SUNHEE brings the courtroom back in.)

MOVEMENT OF SEPARATION

(The courtroom world, including the LAWYERS, swirls in)

JUDGE SUNHEE

Enough is enough!
I am calling court back into session!!
We are no longer in recess!!

PANTS LAWYER

GREAT TO GET BACK TO LITIGATION, YOUR HONOR!! LET'S GET LITTY
TITTYYY—!
Ahem, um.
(Greeting, i.e. 'Doctor') Lawyer—

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

/ Lawyer—

JUDGE SUNHEE

Yeah, yeah, Lawyer, Lawyer, My Honor—let's get on with it!
Gavel-gavel-goo!

LAWYERS

Gavel-goo!

JUDGE SUNHEE

I am requesting,
A Motion of Separation!!!
Effective immediately!
(If it goes through. Fingers crossed.)
I beg the court to grant me relief from this hellion, this leech,
This extremely *cultural* creature—the Dokkaebi.

DOKKAEBI

Helloo 🖐️
I'm the Dokkaebi
Thanks for hav/ing me.

SUNHEE

You want one of these Lawyers to represent you?

(The LAWYERS present themselves !)

DOKKAEBI

I'll represent myself.

PANTS LAWYER

Aw man—

JUDGE SUNHEE

Okay same.

Opening Statement, Go!

I AM ENTITLED to a period guide who is competent and can adequately fill the job description,

This thing can't even help GUIDE me to a box of pads.

Please, hear my plea and approve this Motion of Separation!!!

(Beat.)

PANTS LAWYER

Y-you're the one who approves requests...

JUDGE SUNHEE

Oh.

Right.

Heh-It's been a while...

(Raises gavel...)

And who grants permission for me to give my approval?

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

That would be...above our pay grade, Your Honor.

PANTS LAWYER

(To PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER) You're getting paid for / this?

JUDGE SUNHEE

This is ridiculous! What is the chain of command? Is this what bureaucracy is??

And I'm allowed to just decide this for myself???

Somebody tell me what to do!

(Silence)

JUDGE SUNHEE

This place is a mess...

Okay, if I'm the one in charge ?

I'm going to go ahead and approve the motion of separation!
Alright?

...

...

Okaaaayyyyy.....!

(JUDGE SUNHEE raises their gavel—) Gavel-gavel-/g—

DOKKAEBI

I'm so sorry to interrupt—

I gotta question this system...if the Judge is also the Prosecutor ? What chance do I have at all?

SUNHEE

Uh-huh.

DOKKAEBI

Don't you want to be ethical in passing your Motion of Separation?

SUNHEE

We take Ethics in High School and I'm in eighth grade.

(SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI look at each other...

Quickly, the DOKKAEBI does a slight bit of magic, zipping SUNHEE'S zips, unbeknownst to the LAWYERS.)

DOKKAEBI

(Turning to the LAWYERS) Why don't you guys judge?

PANTS LAWYER

Who judge?

DOKKAEBI

You judge!

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Oooh, judge?

PANTS LAWYER

Two judge??

DOKKAEBI

(Shrugs) Yeah!

Why the hell not!

PANTS LAWYER

But we are Lawyers!!

We've been trained to 'yer' the Law, not to judge it.

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

Actually, this might be good for you—a little real life experience stepping outside the box.

PANTS LAWYER

I don't know...

PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER

We can do it.

(PANTS nods.)

DOKKAEBI

Okay!

(Releases the magic on SUNHEE) We're ready, if you are?

(SUNHEE takes off their Judge's wig and holds it out)

SUNHEE

Whatever.

DOKKAEBI

Great!!

Deposition time!

Everyone to de new positions!

(Courtroom musical chairs!)

PANTS and PENCIL SKIRT put the Judge's robe on, one sleeve each. One wears the wig, the other holds the gavel and they sit together at the Judge's bench.)

DOKKAEBI

The Honorable Judge Pencil Skirt Pants presiding!

(PANTS JUDGE does the 'royal wave')

PENCIL SKIRT

Thank you.

Our initial question is—

PANTS JUDGE

Wots all this then?

PENCIL SKIRT JUDGE

Why have you requested this movement of separation?

PANTS

Yeah, why??

PENCIL SKIRT

We're listening.

SUNHEE

Your Honors...

I was promised a competent period guide

DOKKAEBI

I'm not a period guide—

SUNHEE

I'll say!

Did you hear that? A clear admission of guilt.

DOKKAEBI

Respectfully, Your Honors, not an admission, it's the crux of my case!

I have been trying to inform you that there might've been some misunder/standings—

SUNHEE

Um, hey, Judges, who has the floor right now?

PENCIL SKIRT

Prosecutor Sunhee has the floor for opening statements.

SUNHEE

Oh kay, cool cool cool. Just wondering.

As I was *saying*..

A period guide is meant to help...minimize shame and humiliation as much as possible but mine is only making it worse.

Evidence shows that I'm almost positive that everyone else gets a *normal American* period guide and I'm stuck with this...

Ancient Korean freak ??? How is that fair—how is that *just*?

I already look different from everyone else at my school — which is something people keep saying to me even though I’m like...every person looks different from everyone else in the school ??? Except for the twins in the grade below me...

Objection, relevance! Withdrawn.


There’s all this information that everyone’s getting that I’m missing out on, even though, I’m an American Girl too!

But because I have this..*additional adjective*—that’s all people can see and, apparently, all that matters is that I get a period guide that “aligns with my culture”.

Which isn’t even something I chose—it’s just something that people keep pointing out to me because I look like this.

Your Honors, please, grant me this Motion of Separation—it’s clear we’re not clicking and I think we would both be happier with different assignments.

PANTS JUDGE

 Sounds good to me!

(Raises gavel—)

DOKKAEBI

No! I haven’t made my argument yet!

(Why does this keep happening??)

Alright!

(arms out, taking the floor a la PANTS LAWYER) Let’s actually talk about it!

Let’s stop beating around the bush and name it.

This whole thing, all this *(motion of: this whole stupid thing)*

You feel restricted, uncomfortable, dissonant being forced to navigate this...

Binary.

(Um. I should define that for the court)

Binary meaning: made up of two parts.

Meaning: involving a choice between two alternatives ONLY.

Meaning: splitting every aspect of existence into two separate piles. And everything must be sorted.

And there is a binary, right?

That exists as two sets of rules and attributes and stereotypes—and you are only allowed to exist in ONE. And you only are allowed to exist as THIS one, the assigned to you.

And that’s uncomfy for you.

“Doesn’t feel nice.

And that’s not fair!

So what do I blame ??”

And here’s something that you can see, that everyone can see. Something that’s so obvious it sits on your face—

(Well, not ON your face, it IS your face)

And it's easy to point fingers at.
 Especially when you're in an environment that also consistently points fingers at it.
 But it's not ONLY that,
 You're so focused on this one target that you're missing the bigger picture.
 THAT'S what I'm here for, not just the period stuff.
 There's this whole other...crucial thing at play and you can't actually make sense of any of
 this without also...investigating...

SUNHEE

The binary.

...

I'm so dumb.

How could I not see it before?

DOKKAEBI

Don't beat yourself up—

SUNHEE

How can it be possible that I've lived this long navigating a maze without seeing the walls.

Or knowing I was in it.

I thought I was making all my own decisions about where to go—

DOKKAEBI

It's difficult to identify by design—

SUNHEE

But now it's impossible not to see it...

DOKKAEBI

Yeah? Yeah!!

SUNHEE

The Asian vs. Cool Asian Binary!

DOKKAEBI

Heh??

SUNHEE

Shush, shush! I need a moment to digest that.

Because it's shifting memories from way back.

You're right...there is a binary I'm trapped by.

A structure that's been molding me, out of sight.

*Invisible repulsion I haven't seen,
 Pushed away 'Shy Asian Girl' like, 'that's not me'.
 And everything created in resistance,
 Brings the counter-stereotype to existence.
 But here's the clear answer; the road before me,
 To learn the 'Cool Asian Girl' track and start performing.*

(Beat.)

DOKKAEBI

...How could I have made that clearer?

SUNHEE

Hey!

Maybe you're not as useless as I initially thought!

DOKKAEBI

/ Um—

PANTS

Aww! Look at that! We're all getting along!

PENCIL SKIRT

Great work everyone! Looks like we've done our job!

PANTS

Gavel time!

*(PANTS and PENCIL SKIRT bang the gavel—instead of its typical *bang*, it *squeaks*.
 PANTS and PENCIL SKIRT look quizzically at the gavel for a second, before shrugging and
 preparing to exit.)*

DOKKAEBI

We can't be / done—

*(SUNHEE and the LAWYERS limply high five each other as they pack up, a la 'good game'
 after a soccer game.)*

SUNHEE / PENCIL SKIRT LAWYER / PANTS LAWYER

Good court, good court, / good court—

DOKKAEBI

I do not rest my case! My case is wide awake!

PANTS

(Exiting) That was fun! Did we do good, Penny??

PENCIL SKIRT

(Exiting) Yes, Panty, we're an excellent Judge.

DOKKAEBI

Wait! Request to be heard, Your Honors ??

*(The LAWYER/JUDGES are gone.
SUNHEE is on their way out.)*

DOKKAEBI

Hey I'm not done—

SUNHEE

Okay.

But we are.

You can stay if you want.

(SUNHEE flips a switch—a section of lights goes out.)

DOKKAEBI

Your Honor, if you have no further questions for me, I'd like to call a witness to the stand!

SUNHEE

Sure, do whatever you want.

(Another switch—more lights go out.)

DOKKAEBI

I would like to call...

(More lights out.)

DOKKAEBI

Thomas
to the stand!

SUNHEE

Thomas?

Who the heck is Thomas?

(THOMAS is a visibly pregnant Asian man, appears in a soft beam of light.)

THOMAS

Hi!

I'm Thomas!

DOKKAEBI

(Speedily) Thomas! Swear in!

Do you do solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give is your truth, your whole truth, and nothing but your truth, so help you You?

THOMAS

Sure do!

DOKKAEBI

Now would you please state yourself for the court?

(THOMAS speaks to the DOKKAEBI, SUNHEE 'eavesdrops' on what is specifically for them.)

THOMAS

For the court,

I'm Thomas :)

Good to have you meet me.

Check me out! I'm on TV ha !

I'm on your TV on this tabloid-leaning talk show your Mom's got on—you're not watching, but you can hear it.

And here they go asking all the wrong questions,

Here they go harping on the weirdest things,

Here's some B-roll of my sensationalized life as the 'First Ever blah blah blah', even though I'm by *far* the first guy to—But whatever !

It seems like you've been tuning all that out,

Which is good. I am too.

I'm really here to say: Hey ! What's up? It's me, I'm Thomas, as you can see *(THOMAS presents his face :))*

As you can also see, I am expecting !

Which the world outside *my* world finds "fascinating" and "odd"

But there was a point in my life when it was "fascinating" and "odd" to me too.

Now I just find it exciting.

I'm excited to be a Dad.

I have hair that kind of looks like your Dad's, if you noticed, sticks out on the sides.

I hope I'm ready to be a Dad.

I've thought a lot about it. Like a lot, a lot about it.
 And I think...I think I'm ready to be a Dad.
 I've been wishing about being a Dad.
 Wishing I could be one.
 Which I have to remind myself means that I'm probably ready to be a Dad.

...

By the way, you've noticed my eyes, right? :)
 I just wanted to say: ... Hey. How are you?
 Here's a clip of me entering my home, like any other guy—(shoes off, yes, thanks)
 Here's a clip of me sharing an ultrasound with a friend.
 Here's a clip of me walking in my neighborhood.
 And I think this is the first time you've seen someone like me before—someone like me, like you.
 Exists.
 Which is maybe why I'm here
 On your TV on this tabloid-leaning talk show in the first place ?
 Just to say: Hey you, kid at home. ...Hi :)

(Beat. THOMAS stays suspended in his beam of light.)

SUNHEE

He's... ?
 Is he..... ?
 So he's..... ?

DOKKAEBI

Yes??

SUNHEE

Asian?

DOKKAEBI

Not what I what I expected you to say but
 Yeah.
 That too.

SUNHEE

That too...

(SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI look at each other.)

SUNHEE

Well, see ya!

(SUNHEE goes to flip the last light switch)

DOKKAEBI

Wait, what?? You're still leaving court? What about—? Thomas is still on the stand— ??

SUNHEE

Yeah I'm still leaving. Actually might not be coming back *here* for a while—

DOKKAEBI

But—

SUNHEE

Sorry Dokkaebi,

He seems really nice ?

But

I don't know what you expect me to say....

(SUNHEE and the DOKKAEBI look at each other...)

SUNHEE

Great work today.

(SUNHEE turns and flips the last switch.

Darkness, except for the faint glow of the Judge's lamp.

Silence—except maybe we hear the DOKKAEBI sit on the ground and sigh.

Maybe we hear Thomas shift to get more comfortable.

We do not hear SUNHEE leave.)

SUNHEE

....

....

....

You still there?

DOKKAEBI / THOMAS

...

Who?

SUNHEE

.....

Both ?

DOKKAEBI

Uh-huh

THOMAS

Yup

SUNHEE

...

...

You wanna hear something dumb?

....

....

...

Or

...

You wanna hear something...

Something ?

...

Even

When I'm using the fullest extent of my peripheral vision,

It's hard for me to see

Both,

when they're so far from each other—

the dysphoria I feel in my face from my race

and the euphoria I feel in my face from my gender.

....

....

....

Hey Thomas ?

I know these aren't things aren't in your control.

And I know the way I feel about them aren't in my control.

But

Thanks for being the first trans guy I saw. I needed that.

Thanks for being Asian. I need that even more.

(Eventually,

We hear SUNHEE leave, though the big heavy courtroom doors.

We hear SUNHEE walk down the long law-llway, though another set of heavy doors.

...

It's dark.

...

But we can FEEL that THOMAS and the DOKKAEBI still there.

^

Not that we can really see them.

Because it's dark.)

End of Play.

