

Welcome to Hear/Now, a season of audio theater from Keen Company!

We're an award-winning nonprofit theater in New York City, championing identification and connection through stories about the decisive moments that change us.

I'm Jonathan Silverstein, the Artistic Director, and it's my pleasure to welcome you to *1993 by finkle*, the 1st production in our season of audio theater.

Join us in embracing the virtual Off-Broadway experience. Take a moment to find your seat, silence any distractions, and lower your house lights.

It's time to settle in for a night at the theater, and enjoy *1993*...

**NARRATOR**

Previously on 1993...

*Static, like the sound of changing a radio station.*

**BYRON**

Well let's focus on things that are more realistic, like you and me. What's your name?

**STEVEN**

Steven.

*Radio static, and atmospheric upbeat dance music.*

**BYRON**

Did you know my last name is Flowers? Byron Flowers. And I'm meant to de-flower you.

*Radio static.*

**BYRON**

You can move in with me!

**STEVEN**

You want me to move in with you? You don't even know me.

**BYRON**

You'll move in, and we'll get to know each other! Here's a key... *(sound of key being tossed)*

*Radio static.*

**STEVEN**

I think I *will* take that key after all, Byron. *(atmospheric dance music begins)*

**BYRON**

Welcome... *(dance music swells)*... Welcome to 512 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street!

*Abrupt radio static.*

**NARRATOR**

512 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street has four floors and seven apartments. On the second floor, in the front, is Loreena... ("Loreena" reverberates and echoes)... who the entire second episode is about so you'll meet her soon.....



**1993**

**1993**

1993



*Music swells and abruptly stops.*

**NARRATOR**

And now “THE LAST LONELY NIGHTS OF LOREENA – Tremor”

*Random song bits in the background grow and distorts;  
getting louder and faster until it cuts to quiet, ambient sound,  
a song playing in the background.  
Sound of a lighter igniting and lighting a cigarette, and an inhale.*

**LOREENA**

(sing songy) *Steven*, I’m glad I ran into you and Byron the other day. I wouldn’t even have known you were two were together since the fucking New Year. Byron’s been keeping you his little secret.

**STEVEN**

We’re not like – I mean -- it’s only been like 6 weeks.

**LOREENA**

But you’re happy?

**STEVEN**

Yea sure.

**Fuck** Loreena this radio is so *old*, is it valuable?

**LOREENA**

It is to me; it was my grandma’s, Giga. (*Sound of a bottle opening then pouring*) It’s a 1933 Phillips 634A AM Radio it was her most prized possession and now its mine. **Fuck** I miss her. *Fuck*, I’m so fucking old! Cheers. (*ice clinks in a glass. Swallow*) When’s your birthday??

**STEVEN**

July 24<sup>th</sup>.

**LOREENA**

Leo with Cancer on the cusp. Masculine and feminine in **perfect** unison. *Close your eyes*. That explains why you take so well to this **fucking** make up you’re going to be the Belle of the Gender Fuck Ball. Who are your people?

**STEVEN**

My *people*?

**LOREENA**

Where are you from? What's your background? You're a mystery to me, that's all.

**STEVEN**

I don't really-- *talk* to my family.

**LOREENA**

I get that. Both Byron and I came to the city to escape our pasts too.

**STEVEN**

Can you make that vampy flip on my eye I need to *seduce*.

**LOREENA**

Seduce? Who?

**STEVEN**

No one ... everyone, everyone I meet! I wanna look *dangerous* and **wild**.

**LOREENA**

But I like your sweetness. You still got some of your baby fat. You're so *young*! You have such a *baby face*! MMM!! That's what I'm gonna call you from now on Babyface.

**STEVEN**

Fuck that!

**LOREENA**

*(Singing) Baby Face,*

I **hate** that!!

*you've got the sweetest little baby face*

Everyone always says I have a baby face...

*There's not another one could take your place...*

And I hate it! *Stop...*

*Baby face*

STOOOP!

**LOREENA**

Don't worry about your fucking face dude, it'll catch up to you look at *my ratted-out piece of shit of a face!* Do you know I'm the oldest person at work? Fucking food prep Windows on the World same shit job I got in 19-fucking-80!

**STEVEN**

Loreena, can I – tell you a secret?

**LOREENA**

About what?

**STEVEN**

I was lying before...

*Knock on the door.*

**STEVEN**

That's Byron.  
I told him to pick me up here.  
I'm going to hide in the bathroom,  
I want to make a **big** entrance.

**LOREENA**

Wait, your secret?

**STEVEN**

Never mind. I'll tell you how it goes tonight, if anything happens, nothing is going to happen anyway, so...

**LOREENA**

Put on the heels.  
I hung up your dress on the shower.  
And be careful not to touch your face

*STEVEN's feet scurry across the floor.  
A door shut somewhat quietly  
Another knock at the door.*

**LOREENA**

*Who's there?*

**BYRON**

The boogie man. Now open the damn door.

*The door opens and BYRON inhales.*

**BYRON**

Smells like *weed* in here.

**LOREENA**

If I'm home, I'm smoking something baby. Wanna hit?

**BYRON**

Yes. No. *Yes*.

*Joint being lit. Inhale. Exhale.*

**BYRON**

*Well?*

**LOREENA**

Well what?

**BYRON**

What do you think of **him**?

**LOREENA**

He's great. He's young. How much do you know about him?

**BYRON**

What are you insinuating?

*Slow ominous music plays in the background*

**LOREENA**

I'm not insinuating anything. I just want you to be *careful*.

**BYRON**

Careful of what?

**LOREENA**

No, he's – great. There's just – there's *something*-

**BYRON**

If you have something to say, say it.

*Pause*

*Music crescendos and abruptly shifts to a "light hearted" tone*

**LOREENA**

I'm happy for you baby.

**BYRON**

Well *good* because I'm happy too.

And speaking of happiness.

*(flamboyant cadence)* Where oh where is my little sweetie?

**STEVEN**

*(muffled thru the bathroom door)*

I'm in the *bathroom!* I want to make a grand entrance!

**BYRON**

He wants to make a grand entrance... from the bathroom.

**(to STEVEN)**

Ok, darling but let's not take too long.

I *need* to be at the Tunnel early to prepare.

Tonight is the sneak preview debut performance of my first single, "6's and & 7's"

I'm having a rebirth!

I'm no longer Byron.

I am **BYRONIC!**

Steven came up with that for me

Isn't it wonderful?

Am I being ridiculous?

I am, I know I am, I'm being ridiculous.

And I don't care.

*The door opens.  
Heels awkwardly walk across the floor.*

**STEVEN**

*Ta da!*

*Silence.*

**STEVEN**

Well? How do I look?

**BYRON**

You're... beautiful.

*(Romantic music softly plays in the background, builds into electronic beat )*

**NARRATOR**

Hey uh this is finkle

Just jumping in

Hello

Uh A couple things

First I wanted to clarify that the night uh of this episode or where it started is February 25<sup>th</sup>

The second thing I wanted to bring up was the uh that Steven and Byron are off to

To the Gender Fuck Ball at the Tunnel

And I wanted to just be that I don't actually know if the Tunnel ever had a Gender Fuck Ball

I don't even know if that was something they would have really done.

I don't really know a lot about the Tunnel, to be honest and this was mostly because it was um all the way over in Chelsea and way west Chelsea because it was on 12<sup>th</sup> avenue between 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> street

And it was a big club as far as I could understand um uh and uh I just it wasn't my scene.

I mean Chelsea wasn't my scene.

Starting in the late 80s, and then even 90s and the aughts

Chelsea was sort of like

hmmmm

it was really about appearance

like I always equate Chelsea to me to 8<sup>th</sup> avenue between 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and like I would just call that like the avenue of *scowls*. Like you know you couldn't um walk up or down that avenue without being looked over thoroughly and approved or disapproved

you know like ... and frankly I was always not got enough. Maybe that was my problem with it, I was never good enough. But it was really so much about you know about the *body* and what your body looked like specifically that it made me very uncomfortable. And it was really like the counterpoint to the kind of life I was um trying to experience or imagining I was experiencing in the East Village which to me felt really queer and outsider and dangerous and, and political and transgressive and intellectual and visceral and artistic.

I really um I identified with that at the time. And I think I still do now.

I also think this culture of appearance thing is so interesting to me.

I was just reading this article in the Atlantic; which um I'm namedropping but I actually never really read the Atlantic even though I-- I find articles and stuff online that I enjoy by them I don't read them consistently but everything I read I like, so that's all I'm saying, I'm not even I don't know what I'm saying right now. I'm just gonna keep going.

So I was reading this article and it was about this idea of um sort of um where do these ideas of masculinity and physical beauty come from and how do we you know how do we as a society specifically gay society do we uphold these images that aren't always um, you know, inclusive AND or aren't inclusive at all and that this idea of the muscle body in the 80s and 90s amongst men was sort of this way of countering AIDS. It was a way of saying, well if you're really fit and really muscly um, you can't be sick.



And then uh I think about to a little later in the 90's when we start to have these circuit parties all around the country, these big parties that are essentially supposed to be, well they are, they're fundraisers for AIDS organizations and AIDS research and um support and uh but the parties themselves are not and were not body inclusive spaces they were not really um about embracing all of who we are um

Ok I've gotten you know,

That's just something I'm thinking about today so

Anyway

Rrrr ahhhhhh

Let's get back to the story

Uh, it's about an hour later Loreena is still at home

She's at home

And uh, she's in the midst of her evening ritual.

*We hear the radio broadcast playing.*

*While the broadcast plays we hear Loreena going about her evening ritual.*

**DEREK JARMAN:** Blue is a revolutionary work conceived by Jarman while he was suffering from temporary blindness brought on by AIDS. In 76 minutes there are no visual images, simply an unmodified blue with the soundtrack of reflections, thoughts and recollections spoken by John Quenton, Tilda Swinton, Nigel Terry and Jarman himself.

**VOICE OVER:** Blue marks a revolution in cinema history. In the pandemonium of image I present to you the universal blue.

Blue, an open door to the soul, an infinite possibility becoming tangible.

**DEREK JARMAN:** Blue is based on a hospital diary of which I kept and about last August I got an eye infection called CMV which destroys your sight. So it is actually about that. The center of the whole film... and then. And from that all sorts of things happen, it branches out to all these stories, its sort of a scherehazade the telling of the stories because there are no images you can be as free as you like

**VOICE OVER:** Blue transcends the solid geography of human limits

**DEREK JARMAN:** It all started years ago this film, like all films seem

*Footsteps in bathroom*

*Opening bathroom cabinet*

*Toothbrush falling into sink*

**LOREENA**

Oh damn!

*Faucet on.*

*Starts brushing teeth.*

*Spits*

*Washes out mouth*

*Water off*

*Water on again*

*Breath*

*Sound starts to go in an out as the water runs.*

*Loreena's radio pop and sizzle.*

*The sound melts away*

**LOREENA**

What the fuck?

What the **fuck**.

*Feet walking on wood floor.*

**LOREENA**

Turn on.

*Flips the switch. Nothing*

**LOREENA**

Turn on

*Flip. Nothing.*

**LOREENA**

Turn on

*Flip. Nothing.*

*Heaving breathing and a sniffeling*

**LOREENA**

Alright calm the fuck down

This isn't the end of the fucking world.

I'm gonna go to bed and after work tomorrow I'm gonna get it fixed.

I'm not going to be able to *fucking* sleep.  
I should take a sleeping pill.  
I used to have some.

*LOREENA's bare feet across the floor  
into the bathroom  
cabinet door open  
she's rifling through the contents  
panting. She finds a bottle  
Shakes it.*

**LOREENA**

Expired in August 1991.  
Expirations dates are **bullshit**.  
Take it Loreena....  
Just take the pill and wait.

*Pill bottle clanks in the sink.*

**LOREENA**

I haven't really eaten anything.  
The pill should kick in quick.  
Get the water.  
Take the pill

*Footsteps to the kitchenette  
Gets a glass out of a cabinet.  
Turn on the faucet, fill the glass.  
Faucet shuts off.  
We hear Loreena drinking water.*

**LOREENA**

I should probably set an alarm to wake up on time.  
I don't have a *fucking* alarm to set.  
I should call in sick, then I can just sleep in and get Giga's radio fixed.  
I'll lose my job if I don't go in tomorrow.  
I'm already on probation at work **fuck you Carl!!**  
Fuck this piece of shit job!  
*Fuck it.*  
If I'd *fucking* saved some money *I wouldn't have to go into work tomorrow!*  
I'm a fuck up.  
**Fuck** now I'm all pissed off.  
I'm pissed off and Giga's radio is broke and I'm gonna be in a shit mood all day tomorrow  
I don't even know where the fuck I'm gonna take this to be fixed!

*Clock rapidly ticking*

**LOREENA**

Ok its been a *fucking half hour* and I'm not feeling the slightest bit tired.  
I don't think this pill is gonna work.  
I'm too *fucking anxious!*  
I'm not going to be able to sleep at all without Giga's radio.  
I need to get this fixed right away.  
Maybe someone will come over and fix it.  
At 11:30 at night? I doubt it. Maybe there's some fucking 24-hour place somewhere.  
There's gotta be *someone, somewhere* nearby who's up and working.  
I don't care what I have to pay I want this fixed **tonight**.

*Leafing more and more frantically through the yellow pages muttering to themselves.*

**LOREENA**

What the fuck am I even looking for?  
Repairman  
Lock. ... Lock?  
24 hour  
Handyman.  
Radio... radio.... radio ....  
Radio *repair* ... 24 hours

*Touch tone dial.  
Phone ringing*

**LOREENA**

Pick up.  
Pick up.  
*Pick up.*

-

*Tick, tick, tick tick...  
A cab speeding through the streets.  
radio playing in the cab.*

**LOREENA**

I don't know what the fuck I'm doing right now.  
What the **fuck** am I doing?  
Going to *fucking* Jersey City?  
It's after midnight.  
The guy thinks it may be an easy fix though.  
I don't have cash to pay him.  
*Fuck.*  
I'll figure that out.  
I'll give him my credit card number.

I don't have good credit but he won't know that until the morning and by then I'll send him a fucking cashier's check or some shit.

*Jersey City.*

It should take another 10-15 minutes to get there.

Then maybe I'm there 45 minutes?

*God I hope its quick.*

Then I'm heading back home.

And then what?

I probably won't be able to sleep, but I could try.

I'll just fucking lie on my bed with Giga's radio on and I'll listen to something and rest my eyes.

And then when I get home after work, I'll just fucking crash.

Hey man, would you put on W.O.R.D.

The Dream station.

88.8 on the dial?

**CABBIE**

I'm listening to the game lady.

**LOREENA**

As a passenger I have the right to ask you to put on whatever radio station I want and you have to do it.

**CABBIE**

Look lady, I'm driving you to friggin Jersey City.

**LOREENA**

And your point.

**CABBIE**

My point is – you're already *pushing* it.

**LOREENA**

Fuck you!

**CABBIE**

Do you want me to pull over so you can find another cab?

**LOREENA**

Sure. Fine. Pull over!

*The cab pulls over.  
The door opening, LOREENA steps out.*

**LOREENA**

And fuck you!

*Cab door slams then the cab pulls away.*

## **TAKE A FUCKING SHOWER!**

### **LOREENA**

Good job Loreena good fucking job now what?  
Now what are you going to do you fucking *fuck up!*  
I should just head the fuck home. No fuck that. I'm almost there.  
Just get another taxi.  
Taxi!  
**Taxi!**  
*(disheartened)* Fuck it, I'll walk to the fucking PATH.

*Tick, tick, tick tick...*  
*LOREENA'S shoes on click on the cobblestone.*

### **LOREENA**

I shouldn't have fucking done this.  
I'm an idiot.  
It's almost one in the morning and I'm wandering around in fucking Jersey City?  
It's like a ghost town here.

*Footsteps continue*

Fuck. It's fucking *cold*.  
Where the fuck am I going?  
22 Vroom Street  
*Vroom.*  
Where the fuck is Vroom.  
*Mal* is the guy's name.  
I can call him if I can find a pay phone.

*Footsteps continue*

Where are all the fucking payphones?  
Not that it matters I don't even have a *fucking* quarter on me!  
How am I going to get back after this?  
I'm a fucking lunatic!  
I ran out of the house without anything.  
I didn't even put on a *fucking winter coat*.  
I'm gonna freeze out here.  
They are gonna find my body lying on the cobblestones frozen to death clutching Giga's radio.

I don't even have id.  
Unidentified middle-aged woman found dead with old radio.  
Who'd even know I was missing?  
Fucking Carl he'd probably notice – *fucking Carl* identifying my body?  
Fucking Carl.  
*Fucking Carl.*

*The muffled voices of several men speaking Arabic is heard in the distance. Then getting louder as LOREENA approaches*

-  
**LOREENA**  
Excuse me!  
*Hello!*  
Hi!  
Hi.

**VOICE OF FOREIGN MAN**  
What are you doing here?

**LOREENA**  
I'm lost. I need help finding an address.  
22 Vroom Street?

**VOICE OF FOREIGN MAN**  
Not here. Go. *Not here.*

**LOREENA**  
Right but maybe somewhere *near* here?  
Do you know this area?  
Maybe one of your friends?

**VOICE OF FOREIGN MAN**  
No. It is time for you to go!

**LOREENA**  
*(to self)* Something about this is *not* right.  
Something about this guy and the others.  
A Ryder truck outside a warehouse in the middle of the night.  
This can't be good.  
This can't be good at all.  
*(to the man)* Sorry to bother you.

*LOREEN turns and walks away.*

**LOREENA**

*( To Self)* Act casual.

Walk slow.

*Walk. slow.*

Don't turn around and see if he's looking at you

He could have a gun. He could be aiming it at my head right now.

I'm probably over-reacting *(deep breath)* but I'm starting to freak the fuck out!

This is how things like this happen.

This is how people end up floating in the fucking Hudson.

*(deep and frantic breathing)*

I think I hear him following me.

I'm going to pick up my pace.

I'm going to move faster now.

I don't even know where the fuck I'm going.

I don't know what the fuck I'm doing.

Should I scream?

If I scream and no one hears me I'm **fucked!**

*(panicked breathing continues)*

He's behind me.

I know he is!

Don't turn around.

Run.

Run Run Run Run. Run!

Run for your fucking **life!**

*Heels run over the cobblestone while LOREENA heavy panting echos.  
She trips on a cobblestone and falls to the ground. She loses her grip on Giga's radio.  
The radio violently smashes into pieces.*

**LOREENA**

GIGA'S RADIO!

GIGA'S RADIO!

GIGA'S RADIO!

GIGA'S RADIO!

*NOOOooooOOOooooOOOooooOOOooooOOOooooOOOoooo!*

No

no

*LOREENA's breath heaves in her chest as she frantically picks up the pieces.  
Footsteps, coming ever closer to her.*



**LOREENA**

Who's there?

Who's there?

*The footsteps get closer mimicking a heart beat.  
Music. (HeartDeep instrumental)*

**NARRATOR**

Did you have a radio growing up?

Did you have a favorite station?

Do you have a radio at home now?

Or do you listen to radio stations on your computer?

Or on your phone?

Do you ever miss turning a dial?

Do you ever miss dialing a phone?

Do you have a watch?

How do you keep time?

I guess, what is your relationship to time?

Like, how do you *mark* time in your life?

Do you look back on your life?

Or do you believe you should never look back?

Do you ever look back and wish you made a different choice?

Or do you ever look back and wish you made a difference choice, but also at the same moment realize that you wouldn't be where you are in this moment if you had made a different choice?

What is the *biggest* mistake you've ever made in your life?

*Instrumental music plays*

Do you want to focus more on the story?

Let's focus more on the story.

*(Pause)*

Next time.

This has been Episode 2 of 1993 by finkle.  
Directed by Jonathan Silverstein.  
All voices, music, sound, noise, and silence created and compiled by finkle.  
Publishing Assistance by Garrett Schultz.

This performance is part of Keen Company's Hear/Now Season of Audio Theater, led by Artistic Director Jonathan Silverstein.  
The Season's Audio Consultant is Garrett Schultz.  
The Hear/Now theme is composed by Billy Recce.

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Thank you for listening. I look forward to joining you at the virtual theater again soon!