

LIGHTS UP

A man in a hospital gown, PATIENT, sits behind a table with three pieces of paper in front of him. SCIENTIST #1 holds a clipboard and pen nearby, wearing a white labcoat and lab goggles.

1

That's right 671, there's no right or wrong answer.

PATIENT

And I can just pick whatever pattern I want?

1

Yes 671. Just...go with your gut.

PATIENT

Ok. This one.

1

Oh?

PATIENT

Yes. I like the triangles.

1

Very good. Very good. Excuse me just a moment.

SCIENTIST #1 walks across stage where other scientist has back facing audience.

SCIENTIST #2 turns and screams.

2

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH HIM?

1

I DON'T KNOW

2

FIGURE IT OUT OR IT'S YOUR ASS, DO YOU HEAR ME, YOUR ASS.

Scientists both turn, 2nd scientist back to audience, 1st scientist back to patient.

1

Ok, 671. You. You are a good patient. Let's just try this again.

PATIENT

Sure. Ok.

1

Remember, you're going to get paid whatever choice you make.

PATIENT

I know... thanks.

1

Hey. You're welcome. So...

SCIENTIST rearranges shapes in front of patient slightly.

1

When you look at these NOW.

PATIENT

Right.

1

At these patterns NOW.

PATIENT

Sure.

1

What do you...which one do you prefer?

Patient looks at Scientist #1 for a moment. reaches out his hand to the same pattern that has shifted left or right slightly. Scientist looks at patient and tightens his jaw, staring at him eyes frozen.

1

Great.

Scientist quickly walks back to side stage where Scientist #2 turns facing towards

audience again

2
GOD-DAMN TRIANGLES, STRUMTON.

1
I JUST NEED TO RUN A FEW MORE TESTS.

2
I HAVE GIVEN YOU A SIMPLE TASK.

1
THERE ARE SUBTLE COMPLEXITIES.

2
DO YOU ENJOY BRINGING HOME A STEADY PAYCHECK TO YOUR WIFE AND
TODDLER SON?

1
I AM TRYING AS HARD AS I..

2
BECAUSE YOU APPEAR TO HAVE EITHER AN ACUTE DISLIKE OF YOUR ROLE AS
A PROVIDER...

1
LET ME TRY..

2
OR A SEVERE PROBLEM UNDERSTANDING THE SYNTAX AND GRAMMATICAL
URGENCY OF AN IMPERATIVE STATEMENT!

1
OH DON'T YOU PRETEND TO...

Scientist #1 and #2 abruptly turn again, #1 back toward patient and #2 back turned

away from audience.

1
Look...Bob...

Patient looks warily at Scientist #1, uncertain of the new familiarity.

1
I...I know what it's like to be mixed up. To not understand your left from your goddamn right, Bob. One time my wife, my beautiful wife, she...or my son, my special special boy. You know, he can almost walk now, except he has this cough...medical bills, mortgage refinancing...what I mean is Bob, I've been there and back, so I can tell you right now there is no judgement whatsoever on my part.

Patient nods in tentative agreement.

1
And I'm ... I'm a good guy, right? I'm a ... I'm a good, a good man...

Scientist #1 starts sobbing quietly. Patient looks around, not sure what to do. Scientist #2 briskly walks over, putting on rubber gloves.

1
WAIT!

All three freeze.

1
LET HIM TRY. AGAIN.

The patient stares at both men for a moment. He then holds up a slip of paper with a group of triangles drawn on it.

2 pulls out a gun, points at PATIENT. #1 gasps. #2 points gun at #1. #1 and PATIENT GASP. #2 turns gun on himself. All three gasp. 2 polishes gun with his lab coat and puts it back in his pocket. He then takes out his clipboard and places a large X on the paper. PATIENT nods in understanding. He gets up starts walking away, revealing his ass through the gown. Right before he reaches the edge of the stage, he reaches for #1 with yearning in his face. #1 smiles bittersweetly, nods with tears in his eyes. The

moment passes, and PATIENT leaves. #2 moves back to original position side stage. #1 collects himself

1 (weakly)
672?

PATIENT 2, wearing a diaper, comes on stage look up and around in curiosity.

1 (as lights fade)

That's right. Now, there's no wrong or right answer...