

1996: THE YEAR IN REVUE

by

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Challenge 20 - Due 21/02 at 10am GMT

The Space is in it's 20th year as a venue. Write a play with 20 characters in it (one of whom must be called Robert or Roberta). Set it in space or in an empty space or in the Space. Make it about approaching a big milestone. Excited about getting the key to the door? Terrified of going over the hill? Birthdays, anniversaries, key moments in life. Make sure there is a dramatic conclusion/endpoint

Bonus points for referencing 1996 in some way.

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1996: THE YEAR IN REVUE

TABLE OF DICONTEENTS

WHO KILLED WAGNER?
THAT 1996 SONG & WELCOME
LEAP YEAR BUNNY
BRING ON THE MAD COWS
BETCHA BY DOLLY, WOW!
FRANKENSTEIN FOOD
TAKE THAT MEDLEY
SPICE GIRLS MEDLEY
IT'S A ROYAL KNOCKOUT!
EVEREST, MANCHESTER, DUNBLANE: 96 TEARS

MUSIC

RINGMASTER: (SONG) Was ist das? Was ist er?
Das ist nicht theater!
Nein, and ich bin kill the man who says the
other!

DANCER: Who killed Wagner? You did! The Valkyries!

DENSER: Someone strangled him!

RINGMASTER: Tittle tattle won the battle!
Gimme shelter, but not yet!

SONG

CAST: The year was Nineteen Ninety-Six
A Ford Fiesta up on bricks
A funk soul brother in the mix!
Ninety six reasons to be cheerful!
Ninety six reasons to be miserable!
Ninety-six really had it all
Ninety-sixers had a ball!

RINGMASTER: Welcome, welcome! It was twenty years ago today!
Bernard Butler taught the band to play. I sing
of 1996 and the Isle of Man. Bounce, bounce,
bounce! Nasty little year, wasn't it? Make you
feel all creepy just thinking about it! What
happened those twenty years ago? Why did it

happen? Will it happen again? 1996, a lesson from history. We need to talk about 1996. It was the best of times, it was the blurst of times. The blurst of times? Stupid monkey.

CAST: The year was Nineteen Ninety-Six
A sex shop full of rubber dicks
We knew where to get our kicks!
Ninety six reasons to be cheerful!
Ninety six reasons to be miserable!
Ninety-six really had it all
Ninety-sixers had a ball!

LEAP YEAR BUNNY LEAPING AROUND

LEAP YEAR: Don't leap to any conclusions! Snif, snif.
What's blue and only comes once a year? Father Christmas's scrotum. So Mrs Christmas says. Once a year! Once a year is for amateurs. Once every four years! The Olympics! The World Cup! The next Games of Thrones novel! Or is that longer? Four to the floor we are, to the fore! Phwoar! Fire me up a cup of four, we're about to go and get some more!

[LEAPS] Have you guessed yet? Anyone? Don't be shy! 1996, come on... February the 29th... It was February the 29th, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Zeddamore had just completed angle grinding an electric toilet and started in fear at a sound from yonder. Winston Zeddamore, said the ghost, you KILLED ME! Oh my God, said Winston Zeddamore. You electrocuted me in your electric toilet and now I am doomed to walk the earth. I should have put you in a flux capacitor, said Winston. Somewhere, there is a crime happening.

Yes, it's a leap year! Every four years, we leap. Add a day to Febs. What does the spare day do the other three years? The Leap Year Bunny will tell you! In 1995 the leap year went on a backpacking trip to Bali and got a very nasty infection from a dirty coconut. In 1994 the leap year went to Glastonbury and saw Jah Wobble's Invaders of the Heart live onstage. In 1993 the leap year wrote a dystopian sci-fi novel about a non-leap year who falls in love with a leap year following their tragic romance in which they are only together one night every four years. We call it The Time Traveller's Wife.

[LEAPS] Have you ever taken a leap of faith? In the face of incontrovertible evidence to the contrary, to leap with total absurdity regardless of the wrongness of it! This is another thing that happens every four years, the General Election! The Presidential Election! Elections, elections. If we could only have a leap election and just run the place ourselves for a while. What would that be like? Better or worse? Mankind is death in human form. What a bunch of shits we are. Shall I tell you what happened on February 29th 1996 when the clocks were striking thirteen? Nothing. Nothing happened in 1996.

THE LEAP YEAR BUNNY LEAPS OFF

[THE REVUE CONTINUES OVER THE PAGE SO PTO]

RINGMASTER: Nineteen ninety-six! The year that gave up. Let us speak of cows. How now? A cow! Holy cow, it's a cow! Moo-ve over rover. You've caught me on the hoof I'm afraid. Don't grass me up! Supergrass are Alright! All for the love of cud. I cud-n't stomach it!

Ladies and gentlemen, a spectre is haunting Britain and America in 1996. Take a bow, cows! Have you ever ridden a cow? Hilarious. Knocks cow-tipping into a cocked hat. Moo! How do you like all these cow jokes? We're milking them for all they're worth! That's white! Ladies, and gentleman, bring on the dancing cows!

MUSIC

COWS: Bring on the dancing cows
You'd be mad not to dance
Take a cha-cha-cha-chance
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY

Can become Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in humans
That's nothing new man
It's the cows' gift to humans
It's really nothing new man
Been brewing it up since eighty-six
It's basically Alzheimer's In Fast-Forward!

A spinal column in a bag
A brain sandwich
Brains and spines
Brains and spines
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY

All ground up and fed back to em
Brains and spines and bones of cows
Cows are naturally herbivores
Ruminating on grass
You find that illuminating? My ass!
It's cheaper to feed cows to cows
to feed cows cows

Brains and spines
Spines and bones
Bones and brains

Brains and spines
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY

RINGMASTER: Nineteen ninety-six sure was a good year for cows. They were mad for it! You'd have to have been mad to miss it. Youth's a hoof t'will not endure! Do cows have knees? Do cows have knees? Is a thumb a finger? I'm so full of the milk of human kindness, I'm going to go now and enjoy a warm bowl of brains and spine. That's a catchy tune, eh? Bones and brains, brains and spines. What do cows eat for breakfast? Dead cows!

It's not a joke. No punchline! No moral, unless maybe to suggest that maybe feeding cows to cows is a mad idea, a bovine suggestion! Someone must have been cow-towed, that's kowtowed, not cow-toed. I cud you not. Cud you ever forgive her? Seriously, do cows have knees? It's a black and white issue. Whatever the weather it's hell for leather. Why did the Cow win the Nobel Prize? For being out standing in her field! Moooo! Moo!

Enough about cows. Nineteen ninety-six wasn't all about cows, you know? There were also sheep! Baaaah! Bah bah, cows, hello sheep. My God, we really knew how to eat in ninety-six. Betcha by Dolly, wow! Dolly, a domestic sheep cloned from an adult cell by nuclear transfer! A star is born! Ladies and gentlemen, Dolly!

MUSIC

DOLLY: There's a spark of magic in your eyes
Candyland appears each time you smile
Never thought that fairy tales came true
But they come true when I'm near you
You're a genie in disguise
Full of wonder and surprise

And betcha by Dolly, wow!
You were cloned from a mammary gland cell
And ever will my love for you keep growin'
strong
Keep growin' strong

If I could I'd catch a falling star
To shine on you so I'll know where you are

Order rainbows in your favorite shade
To show I love you, thinking of you
Write your name across the sky
Anything you ask I'll try, 'cause

Betcha by Dolly, wow!
You were cloned from a mammary gland cell
And ever will my love for you keep growin'
strong
Keep growin' strong

RINGMASTER: Very woolly lyrics. No wonder they're sheepish. Dear Dolly had three mothers, imagine that. One provided the egg, another the DNA and the third carried the embryo to term. Three mothers! That's a lot of nagging about your homework. Unless one was Alcoholic Gin Drinking Mother, one Hampstead Highgate Mother, and the other Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention. Dear Dolly would have turned out to be a neurotic psychedelicist who shops at Waitrose.

People! Don't be sheeple! Take a gene out of Dolly's book, a piddle in the puddle, the gene puddle that is, a fiddle and a muddle with a liddle biddle cell dividde. I'm a genie in a bottle! Gotta rub them cells, divide and conquer! Ladies and gentlemen, 1996 was also the first year that Genetically Modified food went on sale in these great Isles, I mean supermarket aisles. They called it 'Frankenstein food'. To be frank, I don't buy it.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING. ON THE SLAB,
THE MONSTER. DOCTOR FRANKENSTEIN
CAVORTS ABOUT GLEEFULLY.

FRANKENSTEIN: Hahahahaha! They said I was crazy! They said I was mad! As mad as a cow, they said! I'll show them who's mooing! This genetically modified puree has a stronger taste and sticks better to pasta than any conventional sauce ever seen! It has taken ten years to develop from research into the walls of plant cells! The new tomatoes respond to ethylene that causes rotting! These tomatoes will never rot! Never!

We have genetically cross-bred them with the McDonald's Big Mac, which never rots! What we have here is a tomato that will live forever! They said I have played God, that no tomato

should outlive a man - but today, a tomato will outlive a man! Man has outlived his usefulness. Tomorrow, the tomato is king! The genetically modified tomato puree will lead us toward a better world! A tomatoeyer world!

A world in which fruit and veg will not be segregated again by the vicious whims of humanity's inability to understand whether the tomato is a fruit or a vegetable! Where everyone knows that a fruit salad is an oxymoron, and that the tomato, while a fruit, is not appropriate for a fruit salad! Yes! Yes! A tomatoey world! The time is ripe for tomatification! Wait! No! No!

THE MONSTER RISES AS A GIANT TOMATO
AND ABSORBS FRANKENSTEIN INTO THE
GIANT TOMATO SUIT, CONSUMING HIM
UTTERLY.

RINGMASTER: Nineteen ninety-six... alas, we hardly knew ye. Between you and nineteen ninety-seven, there was nothing. Between ninety-eight, there was ninety-seven. It's food for thought, all right. But you'll have had your tea. You must be sick of all these mad cows, cloned sheep and frankenstein's tomatoes.

If 1996 was a weird year for food, it was also a year of happiness and sadness. For in this year, Take That split up! And and and the Spice Girls started up! I'll leave it with you to decide whether in each case these momentous events in the field of pop are tragic or ecstatic. To me, they are merely more shit that happened. Ladies and gentleman, take that! And party!

THE MUSIC OF TAKE THAT

TAKE THAT: Come on come on come on come on:
Break Up! Not party.
Come on come on come on come on:
Break Up! Don't party!

Spirits move me
When you take off your knickers
Sliding like a stallion in the sky!

A million love songs are eighties
Here I am ripping of Wham! With a saxophone
It's so obvious
A million love songs are meaningless,
Desperately soulless.

Re-light my fire!
Put another quid in the meter!
I haven't got a quid!
To be honest they cut me off weeks ago
I survive by huddling close to cans of soup.

I guess now it's time
For me to retire.
I feel it's time.
Got a P45 beside me
Got a pension plan and paid-in pension pot
Gotta fist in Howard Donald
Giving head to Robbie Williams
Gotta leave, gotta get a job on X Factor.

What ever I said, whatever I did, I didn't mean
it
I just wanted to make cash.
A shed load of cash, a great deal of cash, just
a cashload,
A cowload of cash to make.

I GUESS NOW IT'S TIME
FOR ME TO RETIRE
FOR GOOD.

THE MUSIC OF THE SPICE GIRLS

SPICE GIRLS: I'll tell you what I want,
What I really really want.
So tell me what you want
What you really really want.
I'll tell you what I want,
What I really really want.
I really really really want polyamory:

If you wanna get with me,
You gotta get with my friends.
Even the ugly ones,
and the ones that have no hands.
So don't get wasted
Give my mates a try -
I really really really want polyamory!

Stop right now, thank you very much

I need to fix the door on my rabbit hutch
If my rabbit escapes again
The poor little bunny's gonna get eaten.

[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR WIGS!
[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR BATHTIME!
[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR ACCOUNTANCY!

[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR PRO-THATCHERISM!
[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR WAG STATUS!
[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR FAILED SOLO CAREERS!
[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR REUNION!

[INCOMPREHENSIBLE SHRIEKING]
SPICE UP YOUR ENDLESS REUNIONS!

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM PLAYS. ENTER
RINGMASTER.

RINGMASTER: All rise, please, for our lizard overlords!

ENTER DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK

ENTER PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

1996 was a Double D year for Royal Divorce. A double D double cup, doubling up, double dip of D-I-V-O-R-C-E. Have you ever laughed so much? The arguments at the dinner table! The children cowering! The shouting! The screaming! But royal divorces aren't like that. The maid whispering to another made that something might have been afoot. The salt and pepper passed with a sniff. The children unaware that their father isn't their father, in spite of the ginger hair which is a dead giveaway isn't it? Or is that genetic modification too? At some point someone spliced together the DNA of a giant reptile and the DNA of a cold puddle of sick and created the Royal Family. The point about the questionable heredity of certain members is scarcely relevant, given the level of interbreeding at the top of the class structure. That's where they got the idea for Dolly the Sheep, with her three

mothers. At their Lizard Parties it's like the end of Rosemary's Baby. There's a wild circle jerk where all the Dukes jerk their dukes into a jar, and then the Duchesses suture the sperm milkshake into their lizard cervixes using long straws made of human bone. When the mixture sets, a cake rises and from this cake jumps out their lizard babies who upon birth are initially blind and pink and about the length of a finger. They are placed in a bird bath containing a mixture of brandy and heron's blood and left for six months after which time they are ritually sodomised by Prince Philip. It's a royal knockout!

THE ROYALS ARE IN HORSE RIDING GARB

ANDREW: Not a paedophile. Not a paedophile!

FERGIE: Cash for access! I'm bankrupt! Literally, not just morally!

CHARLES: Um. Er. Oof. Architecture.

DIANA: Ere blimey, I loves a colonic in the back of a French tunnel.

SONG

ROYALS: Oh the grand old Duke of York
He had a ginger wife
His ginger wife had a spending problem
Would be sure to ruin his life!
Oh the grand old Duke of York
When he got called a paedo
Made sure the media blanket covered
Up his raging libido.
He's got a ginger wife, a ginger wife
Have you ever seen such a ginger in all your
life?
Ginger wife, ginger wife,
I've never seen a ginger with such trouble and
strife.

CHARLES: I've a question...

ANDREW: Is it a question mark about the hypocrisy of your property investments when set against your public pronouncements on the beautiful in architecture?

DIANA: It's abaaaaaaat the brat innit Charlie? He don't believe it's 'is, he don't.

FERGIE: Well it's not my bloody brat. My ginger comes from my being left out on the grille too long after hatching.

CHARLES: That lad, what's his name, my son, is he mine?

DIANA: Course 'e aint yours, cor you're as green as he is ginger.

ANDREW: So who's the father?

SONG

ROYALS: Who's your dad? Who's your dad?
Who is really your dad?
IT'S A ROYAL KNOCK-UP!
Who's your dad? Who's your dad?
We all know who's really your dad!
IT'S A ROYAL KNOCK-UP!

CHARLES: Diana, I'm divorcing you because I'm in love with a woman with more names. She has six nipples and an extending proboscis that she uses to extract honey from my enormous ears.

DIANA: Well darlin' ain't that a turnout, I'm divorcin' you 'acos of your giant ears and cos your not a major.

FERGIE: I'm divorcing you Andrew. I hope I don't run out of money and have to beg for someone to bail me out so I don't get made bankrupt! And then get caught trying to sell cash for access.

ANDREW: Fergie, I'm divorcing you because the Black Eyed Peas songs just seem to get worse and worse, I mean it shouldn't be possible for them to get worse, but each song you do, it's just so much worse, how do you do it? Do you have a plan for evil, a brief. Is Will.I.Am there stroking a cat while you all plot up ways to make the worst kind of Black Eyed Pea shit soup you can make? What is wrong with you all?

THEY DRESS UP AS GIANT VEGETABLES AND
THROW HAMS AT EACH OTHER

RINGMASTER: Audience! You see them dressing up as giant

vegetables there, and throwing hams at each other. Well THAT REALLY HAPPENED. It's on YouTube, seriously, google ITS A ROYAL KNOCKOUT. That is some stupid shit right there. Prince Edward's stupid idea to carve himself a career in TV production by dressing up his family as vegetables. You couldn't make it up. As for the divorced couples, they never made it up either. BOOM BOOM! It's a Royal Knockout!

RINGMASTER: Now sadly our 1996 revue must take a turn from the tragically stupid to the plain tragic. It was a year of sadness and pain. Ninety-six heartaches, ninety-six miseries and avoidable tragedies. Here are three of them. Fortunately their interest is purely historical because the salient points about each are not relevant today. They are 1) commercialization and greed outweighing risk, 2) the bloody reality of terrorism, and 3) the serious problem of gun ownership and the need for gun controls. As I say, historical concerns.....

ROB HALL, EVEREST ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS: On the 10-11 March 1996 eight people trying to climb Mount Everest died during a blizzard. The bodies piled up as twelve more people died and eighteen were killed by avalanches. The 1996 Mount Everest Disaster gained wide publicity and raised questions about the commercialization of Everest.

MANCHESTER: On Saturday 15 June 1996 the Provisional IRA detonated a 3,300-pound, that's 1,500 kg, bomb, placed in a van on Corporation Street in Manchester city centre. Since 1970 the Provisional IRA had been waging a campaign with the ultimate goal of a united Ireland. In Manchester they targeted the city's infrastructure and economy and caused widespread damage, estimated by insurers at £700 million (£1.2 billion as of 2016). The IRA had sent telephoned warnings about 90 minutes before the bomb detonated. The area was evacuated, but the bomb squad were unable to defuse the bomb in time. Two hundred and twelve people were injured, but there were no fatalities.

DUNBLANE: On the morning of Wednesday 13 March 1996, former scout leader Thomas Hamilton, aged 43, was witnessed scraping ice off his van at approximately 8:15 am outside his home at Kent

Road in Stirling. He left a short time afterwards and drove approximately 5 miles north to Dunblane in his white van. He arrived on the grounds of Dunblane Primary School at around 9:30 am and parked his van near to a telegraph pole in the car park of the school. Hamilton severed the cables at the bottom of the telegraph pole, which served nearby houses, with a set of pliers before making his way across the car park towards the school buildings. After gaining entry, he made his way to the gymnasium armed with four legally held handguns two 9mm Browning HP pistols and two Smith & Wesson M19 .357 Magnum revolvers. He was also carrying 743 cartridges of ammunition. In the gym was a class of twenty-eight Primary 1 pupils preparing for a P.E. lesson in the presence of three adult members of staff. A total of 32 people sustained gunshot wounds inflicted by Hamilton over a 3-4 minute period, 16 of whom were fatally wounded in the gymnasium. One other child died later en route to hospital. Hamilton finally equipped himself with one of the two revolvers. He put the barrel of the gun in his mouth, pointed it upwards, and pulled the trigger, killing himself.

MUSIC: 96 TEARS BY QUESTION MARK AND THE MYSTERIANS

SONG:

Too many teardrops
For one heart to be crying
Too many teardrops
For one heart to carry on

You`re way on top now since you left me
Youre always laughing way down at me
But watch out now, I`m gonna get there
We`ll be together for just a little while
And then I`m gonna put you way down here
And you`ll start crying ninety-six tears
Cry, cry

And when the sun comes up, I`ll be on top
You`ll be way down there, looking up
And I might wave, come up here
But I don`t see you waving now
I`m way down here, wondering how
I`m gonna get you but I know now

I`ll just cry, cry, I`ll just cry

Too many teardrops
For one heart to be crying
Too many teardrops
For one heart to carry on

Youre gonna cry ninety-six tears
Youre gonna cry ninety-six tears
Youre gonna cry, cry, cry, cry now
Youre gonna cry, cry, cry, cry
Ninety-six tears

Come on and lemme hear you cry, now
Ninety-six tears, woo
I wanna hear you cry
Night and day, yeah, all night long

Uh, ninety-six tears, cry cry cry
Come on, baby
Let me hear you cry now, all night long
Uh, ninety-six tears, yeah, come on now
Uh, ninety-six tears

CURTAIN