

A SHORT HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

By Charles Leipart

WHY I LIKE IT: *Drama editor JANET COLSON writes:*

Three young people are going nowhere fast. They can't afford a meal, but watch out when one of them brandishes and then stomps on a shiny new iPhone:

BRANDON

Holy shit, you just smashed an iPhone! We could have used that, man.

HUCKER

FOR WHAT? To order out Chinese? No, we got to free ourselves of these devices. That's how the government spies on us and controls our minds. Google knows stuff, man.

SAM

Google knows everything.

This is a tale of destruction and self-preservation. On the streets. On the edge. Starbucks is currency in this Orwellian vision of the present day where exploitation and power dynamics reign supreme and he who carries the bloody hockey stick holds the power. Themes of morality, mortality, and corruption are woven throughout. What would it take to help each other out? Playwright Charles Leipart delivers with an I don't give a fuckery on a level with Tarantino. Kind of leaves us wondering if there's any kindness left in the world, but to hell with happy endings. You have to laugh, otherwise you might weep.

SAM

(painting her toenails)

Fuckin'-A. We're gonna change things.

(Spacing is playwright's own.) Eds.

A SHORT HISTORY
OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

in One Act

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CHARACTERS
(1 woman, 2 men)

SAMANTHA, called SAM, 20s, a female member of a homeless tribe.

BRANDON, 20s, Sam's boyfriend, a reader of history, member of the tribe.

HUCKER, formally "Harrison Huxley III," 20s, a new member of the tribe. He has a full shaggy beard, wears a leather hunting cap with ear flaps, and carries a blood-stained hockey stick.

and

Biscuit, a sleeping mongrel bitch of pit-bull breed. She does not wake. Note: "Biscuit" is a dummy property, not a live dog.

*A residential side street in Manhattan. Morning.
The front step and arch-covered entrance
to a padlocked derelict brownstone church.*

A SHORT HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

(A residential side street in Manhattan. Morning.

The front step and arch-covered entrance to a derelict brownstone church. The double red doors to the church are chained and padlocked. A defaced metal sign reads "PRIVATE PROPERTY, NO TRESPASSING." The "NO" of the sign has been red spray-painted out. SAMANTHA, 20s, called "SAM" unkempt, in need of a bath, lies sleeping covered by a light blanket. Next to her, lies Biscuit, a sleeping mongrel bitch of the pit-bull breed. (the sleeping dog is a dummy property; during the play, "Biscuit" never wakes).

BRANDON, 20s, unkempt, stringy hair, in need of a bath, sits reading a battered, secondhand, thick paperback. Duffle bags, backpacks, and a rusty grocery cart filled with their possessions are piled up. A blood-stained hockey stick leans against a pile of duffle bags. BRANDON turns a page of his paperback)

BRANDON

Man! Like, you know, WOW.

SAM

(Stirring awake)

Like, I know, what WOW?

BRANDON

This Hannibal dude. Awesome.

SAM

Brandon, that Hannibal "dude" ate human brains with a spoon. I'm not that desperate.

BRANDON

Not that Hannibal, Sam. The original guy, Hannibal, way back in the Punic Wars.

SAM

Punic Wars, Pubic Wars. Whatever. I missed the movie.

BRANDON

This dude way back in the B.C., like 250 B.C., crosses the Alps with a bunch of elephants and invades Italy and defeats the Roman army! Totally awesome.

SAM

Did they eat the elephants?

BRANDON

Eat the elephants? *(He scans the page)* No, I don't think so. They must have put them in the circus when they got to Rome. The Romans had circuses, you know, with lots of cool stuff, like gladiators fighting to the death.

SAM

To the death is cool.

BRANDON

And wild beasts and sea battles. They flooded the place for that.

SAM

Maybe you should think about getting us some breakfast. Pass me the toilet.

(BRANDON passes her an aluminum bowl. SAM takes it, tents herself with blanket)

BRANDON

So how long is he staying?

SAM

(from under the blanket tent)

How long is who staying?

BRANDON

Captain America with the hockey stick.

SAM

I don't know. Maybe 'til he can pick up a good hockey game. *(SHE un-tents herself and passes BRANDON the aluminum bowl)* Here, empty this. Pour it where the dogs pee. Nobody will notice.

(BRANDON takes the bowl)

BRANDON

I hate doing that to the nice flowers. Don't you like flowers, Sam?

SAM

Yeh, I like flowers, doofus. But I ain't the Beautification Police. You can bring me a dozen roses. Now empty the toilet.

BRANDON

Okay, okay. *(HE exits off with the metal bowl.)*

SAM takes up a small yellow plastic container that props up a colored chalk-lettered sign, "HOMELESS & HURTING. BLESS YOU." SHE empties out the loose change on the ground, counting out the change)

SAM

We got to do better than this. Time to change the sign. *(SHE reaches behind her for a set of hand-lettered, battered cardboard signs)* "SICK DOG NEEDS VET." No. Let's switch to "EVERYONE DESERVES A GOOD BREAKFAST. BE KIND." *(SHE sets the "BREAKFAST" sign in front of the change container)*

BRANDON

(re-entering)

Maybe we should just call your parents. Or ask what's-his-name to call his father.

SAM

Fuck, Brandon. You are such a wuss. Man-up, dude. You need to put down that stupid book and work the front of Papaya King around the corner. You got to learn to hustle, man.

BRANDON

I don't eat hot dogs. If you knew what goes into them. They make hot dogs out of Biscuit here. You wouldn't eat Biscuit would you?

SAM

I'd eat you first.

BRANDON

I wish you wouldn't say stuff like that.

SAM

MAN, you are SO INEFFECTUAL! Get a sense of humor, dude. Hucker must have scored big. He went out before dawn. Hucker knows how to work it.

BRANDON

You didn't answer my question. How long is this Hucker guy staying?

SAM

He has a plan, Brandon. He's gonna set us up. Hucker knows how to play the Man.

BRANDON

I know why you like him.

SAM

Yeh. Okay. I like him. But not like I like you, baby boy.

BRANDON

He brings you Starbucks. Where the fuck does he get money for Starbucks?

SAM

Brandon, what you don't get is, Hucker has charm, Hucker has the charisma! He doesn't need money. People give him stuff.

BRANDON

Like Grande Lattes from Starbucks.

SAM

Yeh. If you don't stop complaining, next time you'll buy your own. Take this one, "STRANDED IN NYC. NEED BUS FARE HOME TO IDAHO." (*SHE hands BRANDON a cardboard sign*) That sounds like you.

BRANDON

I'm not doing the hotdog stand, I told you.

SAM

Then you'd better do something, because I'm getting the feeling your days are numbered.

BRANDON

Numbered? NUMBERED? Like, what do you mean, "Numbered"?

SAM

Like I'm counting down all the way to ZERO. Approaching expiration date. Like that pathetic carton of milk you brought us yesterday.

(BRANDON takes a box of Cap'n Crunch cereal from the rusty grocery cart)

BRANDON

And a box of Cap'n Crunch. It's got all the Daily Nutrients. You oughta read the Nutrition Facts on the box: "Niacin, Iron, Zinc, Vitamin B6--". All that good stuff.

SAM

When you score a steak, let me know. Pass the Cap'n Crunch.

(BRANDON does. SAM eats from the box)

BRANDON

He's got blood on his hockey stick.

SAM

What?

BRANDON

Blood. There on the end of his stick. That's blood.

SAM

Rats, Brandon. He's been whacking rats. You're too passed-out dead asleep at night to know that. When Biscuit catches a rat, Hucker whacks it. Otherwise, we might get the bubonic plague or something. When the rats bite you.

BRANDON

The rats don't bite, it's the fleas. I was reading back in the Dark Ages, when they had the plagues, it was the fleas jumping off the rats on to human beings that did it.

SAM

Christ, Brandon, STOP, all right? You're really creepin' me out. Hucker whacks the rats, that's why he's got blood on his hockey stick!

BRANDON

Maybe he whacks people. Maybe he kills people. We don't know. Maybe that's how he gets stuff.

SAM

You got too much imagination. You always got your nose in that book. Hucker doesn't have to kill people. He knows how to work it to get the stuff he wants.

BRANDON

So, like, explain to me, if he can get everything he wants, what he's doing here with us? Sleeping on the street.

SAM

Maybe he's into us, doofus.

BRANDON

He's into me?

SAM

He only has to be into ONE of us. Do the math.

(Enter HUCKER, formally "Harrison Huxley III," with a full shaggy beard and wearing a leather hunting cap with ear flaps. He carries a take-out tray set with three Starbucks' Grande Lattes and a Starbucks paper sack)

HUCKER

Home is the hunter, home with the kill. Three Grande Lattes. And I scored some Reduced-Fat Cinnamon Swirl Coffee Cake to go with them.

SAM

Awesome. Hear that, Brandon? That's why Hucker is here. Hucker is a Provider.

HUCKER

With a capital "P" and that rhymes with "T" and that stands for the Tuscaloosa County Jail where I spent a weekend whacked out of my mind on crack. When am I'm gonna get some of that sweetness, baby girl?

BRANDON

Hey. Hey, Hey. That's out of line, dude. Samantha is my girl.

SAM

The name is SAM, doofus. SAM. Got it? I hate that whimpy-assed, pussy name. *(Grimacing)* SA-MAN-THAAA. BLECK!!

(SAM runs a large broken-tooth comb through her straggly hair, looking at herself in a small mirror, scrubs her teeth with her index finger)

BRANDON

I think it's a sweet name.

SAM

You would. And while we're on the subject, baby boy--I am nobody's girl, Brandon. Nobody owns me. I own myself.

HUCKER

"I AM WOMAN, HEAR ME ROAR!" YEH! And possession is 9/10th of the law.

BRANDON

9/10th of what law?

SAM

He doesn't get it, Hucker. Brandon is SO OBTUSE AND INEFFECTUAL.

HUCKER

I love it when you use those ten-dollar words, babe. Like mo' money in the bank, Ka-ching, Ka-ching!! But go easy on ol' Brandon, Brandon is my bro'. *(HE puts an arm around BRANDON shoulders, pulling him to him crushingly)* Ain't that right, Bro'?

BRANDON

Yeh. We're bros'. *(Taking a Starbucks)* Thanks for the Starbucks, Hucker. Get me some of that coffee cake--- *(reaching for the bag)*

HUCKER

(withholding it)

Hey. Hey. What do we say? *(in a grand manner)* “Though our circumstances be reduced, good man, there is no cause for incivility.”

BRANDON

What?

HUCKER

Shakespeare, dude.

SAM

Hucker, you are so DOPE. *(to BRANDON)* Suck-up, baby boy.

BRANDON

Okay, I say, “Please, Hucker, may I have a piece of coffee cake?”

HUCKER

“OH, PRETTY PLEASE, HUCKER, MAY I?”

SAM

And don’t forget, “With whipped cream and a cherry on top!”

BRANDON

Sam, please--don’t--huh? *(to HUCKER)* C’mon, give me some cake, man.

HUCKER

Sure, buddy. There you go. *(HE gives BRANDON the paper sack.)*

BRANDON opens the sack, taking out a piece of coffee cake. It has been half-eaten)

BRANDON

Hey, man, somebody’s been eating this.

HUCKER

And now you’re eating it. Do you want it or not?

BRANDON

I want it, I want. *(HE takes the cake and his container of coffee and hunkers down, eating it)*

HUCKER

And then he says, “Thank you, Hucker.”

BRANDON

Thank you, Hucker.

HUCKER

Anything for a brotha'. You can hustle us up some dinner tonight. How much much we got in the Give-All Cup?

SAM

Four dollars and seventy-three cents.

HUCKER

Not good. Not good. Somebody ain't pulling his weight. Okay, into Papa's bank account. *(HUCKER takes the container of change and dumps it into his pant leg pocket)*

BRANDON

Shouldn't we be splitting that up? I mean, you know, like sharing it?

HUCKER

Sharing it? Like this is some fuckin' communist commune, or what? Like meet Brandon the Millennium Bolshie? Man, Marx went out with the European Free Market and the euro, dude. Look at China, look at Russia, man, what we got now is State-Controlled Capitalism, or don't you keep up on with Current Affairs?

SAM

Current Affairs is bullshit.

BRANDON

I've been reading up on history. There's a lot of awesome stuff in here, like Hannibal crossing the Alps with elephants-- cool stuff you can learn.

HUCKER

Let me see that. *(HE takes the book)* "Property of the Boston Public Library", there you go, dude, somebody stole this book! That's the history lesson there, bro'. "A Short History of Western Civilization." Yeh, a very short history. *(HE tosses the book back to BRANDON)* Write me up a one-page summary. I had a book like that in prep school. Except mine wasn't a piece of secondhand beat-up paperback shit like that. It was quality textbook binding on gloss-finished paper. But it was still full of shit. Sam agrees with me, don't you, Sam?

(SAM reaches into her knapsack, takes out a bottle of green nail polish and begins applying polish to the toenails of her dirty bare feet)

SAM

History is shit. It's stuff that a lot of old white guys made up and wrote down to control us. That's why we have to live outside the system. Brandon doesn't get that.

BRANDON

I get it. I get it. We're living outside. Like we're living here. On the street.

HUCKER

YO! Brandon's the wit. "Living outside." You are a mother-fuckin' genius in the art of repartee, dude.

BRANDON

I'm just sayin'.

HUCKER

And that was, saying what exactly?

BRANDON

You know. Like we're all in this together. Struggling to live on the street. Like doing what we can to get by. Beating the system.

SAM

(painting her toenails)

Beat the motherfuckin' system. Whack.

HUCKER

No, Brandon, you're just along for the ride. Everybody likes a free ride. *(HE throws his hands over his head)* WHEEEEE! FREE RIDE!!

SAM

Go easy, you'll wake up Biscuit. She needs her rest. She's gonna have pups. *(SHE pets the sleeping dog, hugging it)* Yes, she is. We're gonna be a Mommy.

BRANDON

Hey. Hey. I do my share. I get us dinner from the "sharing table" at the center, don't I?

HUCKER

There you go again with your sharing bullshit. What we have to learn from history, Brandon, is that one must control the resources. "To the victor go the spoils--VICTORI SPOLIA! VENI, VIDI, VICI! Totally control the resources. *(with a look to SAM)* Resources of all sorts and kinds. Build up our capital base. Then we can change things.

SAM

(painting her toenails)

Fuckin'-A. We're gonna change things.

BRANDON

When you say that "Veni, Vidi" stuff. That's Latin, right?

HUCKER

Some of the shit they taught us a Choate. That and “Chinese In the Cyber Age” and “Ennui, Adultery, and Death in Madame Bovary.”

SAM

Say something in Cyber Chinese, Hucker. Show him.

HUCKER

Běn hā kè, Huǒbàn.

BRANDON

What’s that?

HUCKER

“HACK THIS, BUDDY!”

SAM

Hucker, you are so COOL!

HUCKER

Give me some sugar, baby.

SAM

Just a little. *(SHE puckers up, chastely.*

HUCKER puckers up. THEY share a chaste kiss. Then HUCKER slips his arms around her, pulling her closer)

SAM

That’s enough. Stop it. *(SHE pulls away)* I mean it, Hucker.

HUCKER

I like a lady with limits.

BRANDON

I guess you got like what they call a classical education. They didn’t teach us cool stuff like that in Kenosha.

SAM

That was back in the day when Hucker was “Harrison Huxley the Third.” How many companies does that pig of a father of yours own?

HUCKER

Too many, sweet stuff. The pater sent me this iPhone to keep in touch. *(HE takes a new iPhone from his pocket)*

SAM

Hey, cool, guys! Now we got a iPhone!

HUCKER

Sorry, Pops. Wrong number. *(He drops the iPhone and steps on it, crushing it)*

BRANDON

Holy shit, you just smashed an iPhone! We could have used that, man.

HUCKER

FOR WHAT? To order out Chinese? No, we got to free ourselves of these devices. That's how the government spies on us and controls our minds. Google knows stuff, man.

SAM

Google knows everything.

HUCKER

And the waves from them can really fuck up your head.

BRANDON

You can get a lot of cool free stuff and games.

HUCKER

I don't need games, man. I got the greatest game of all. THE GAME OF LIFE. Where I get to make the rules.

SAM

Hucker is so awesome. Hucker is gonna rule the world.

HUCKER

"Is Paris burning?"

BRANDON

What's wrong with Paris?

HUCKER

Like Attila the Hun said, "Walk softly and carry a hockey stick."

BRANDON

I don't think Attila had a hockey stick. They didn't have hockey back in his day.

HUCKER

It's a metaphor, dude. You know what a metaphor is. Like, English Lit 101. This thing stands in for that thing. Figure it out.

SAM

Hucker the HUN!

BRANDON

What do you want with us, Hucker? What are you doing here?

HUCKER

Want? Doing? I want doing what everybody wants doing, man. I want World Peace and zero carbon footprint. *(HE walks gingerly about)* But most of all, I want SPACE. I need a lot of space. We got a territorial imperative, dude. We want the whole motherfuckin' front of this church and all this sidewalk here. We're gonna mark it off. There to there. It's gonna be Hucker space!

SAM

We're gonna take the block! Drive out the Bougies!

HUCKER

Save the nabe' from the Avocado Apocalypse!

BRANDON

Avocado Apocalypse! Oh, yeah, I get it. That's funny, man--Look, it's raining avocados!

HUNKER

(Deadly serious)

What I mean, dude, is to restore this block to its authentic pre-gentrification culture. Dig it?

BRANDON

The garbage pickup used to be really bad.

SAM

It's gonna belong to the tribe, HUCKERLAND FOREVER!

HUCKER

We want it all, Brother Brandon. HUCKERLAND, THE BEAUTIFUL! The Brady Brunch over there is gettin' it. They all crossin' to the other side of the street. *(HE shouts "across the street")* YO, BRADYS! *(Grabbing his crotch)* SUPER-SIZE THIS!

SAM

Christ, Hucker, if you were a dog, Biscuit could have your puppies.

HUCKER

Woof, Woof!

BRANDON

You guys are weird.

HUCKER

What?

BRANDON

You're weird. The two of you. You talk some weird shit.

HUCKER

(Picking up his hockey stick, precisely)

Don't. Ever. Call. Me. Weird.

SAM

You gonna piss him off, Brandon. You don't want to piss him off.

HUCKER

'Cuz I got the hockey stick. And the man who holds the hockey stick, rules the tribe. Let us take a moment's pause for that thought.

(An uncomfortable PAUSE. Then)

SAM

I-- was--*(pause)* I--was-- *(pause)*

HUCKER

You was what, sweetheart?

SAM

At the library.

HUCKER

Holy shit.

SAM

On the INTERNET. They got these really cool sites where they show you how to make bombs and shit. You can make bombs out of stuff you got around the house, like Mr. Clean and Mazola Corn Oil and plant fertilizer.

HUCKER

That's nothin' compared to the bomb that's in my head. Bomb-making is very cool. All-expense-paid trip to Syria!

BRANDON

We're gonna blow something up? Since when?

SAM

Ka-BOOM! Drop the fuckin' bomb on Iran! That's how we change things. Blow the fuckers up. We're gonna be in charge. Then the heads are gonna to ROLL! (*SHE high-fives HUNKER, HE high-fives her back*)

HUCKER

You are so ON IT, babe. Like Robespierre.

BRANDON

Robespierre? Who's Robespierre?

HUCKER

WHO'S ROBESPIERRE? You're the one reading history, man. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, dude. THE REIGN OF TERROR. Dig it!

SAM

Brandon is SO not there yet.

BRANDON

That's still three hundred pages ahead, Sam.

HUCKER

You're closer than you think, bro'. Robespierre was a real righteous, do-right-dude and his fellow do-right bros' put together the Committee for Public Safety.

SAM

That's what we need. There are a lot of crazing, bad-ass freaks roamin' the streets. I'd go for that Public Safety thing. That's why we have to have Biscuit here.

HUCKER

Unfortunately, all that bitch does is sleep.

BRANDON

Hey, man, don't talk smack about Biscuit. She protects us.

SAM

Catches rats. So we don't get the Plague.

BRANDON

What's this "Reign of Terror" thing? What page is that on?

HUCKER

You don't have to look it up, dude. That's when they roll out Madame Guillotine.

SAM

Like a big Veg-o-Matic! Chop, chop, chop!

HUCKER

When all the "HAVES" become the "HAVE NOTS."

SAM

You mean the "HAVE-NOT-HEADS"!

HUCKER

BUGGALOO!!

(HUCKER and SAM fist-bump)

BRANDON

That's THE REIGN OF TERROR, huh, chopping people's heads off.

HUCKER

Man, you are so PERSPICACIOUS, Man.

SAM

Ka-ching! Ten dollars for Hucker!

HUCKER

So when am I gonna get some sweetness, sugar?

BRANDON

Enough of that, all right? Enough. You're way off-base, Hucker. Show some respect, man.

SAM

Oh, chill, Brandon! You are such a TOOL. Hucker's only messin' with you.

BRANDON

Well, I don't like it.

HUCKER

Too bad, Sir Galahad.

SAM

I'll decide who's disrespecting me, Brandon. Stay out of it.

HUCKER

We need to concentrate on the PLAN. This sign here. "PRIVATE PROPERTY." We're taking this dump over, it's our new squat.

BRANDON

It's a church, man. You don't want to vandalize a church. It's bad karma. We got a good situation here. The cops don't hassle us. We got like SANCTUARY.

HUCKER

SANCTUARY? Ka-ching! Brandon's gonna break the bank.

SAM

They might have left some really good stuff inside.

HUCKER

Yeh, like altar stuff and shit. Gold plate and candlesticks and statues of Jesus and shit like that. We could sell 'em here on the sidewalk. Make us some serious bread.

BRANDON

It's a sacrilege, man.

HUCKER

"And Jehovah shall smite thee!" Whack, WHACK!

BRANDON

I'm serious. We don't want to do this.

HUCKER

"We don't want to do this." Sam?

HUCKER and SAM

INEFFECTUAL!!

BRANDON

Besides, they got a big padlock and chain on the door. There's no way we can break that.

HUCKER

My motto, "Be Prepared." (*HUCKER opens a large duffle bag, taking out bolt cutters and a sledge hammer*)

SAM

Holy shit, bolt cutters! And a sledge hammer! Hucker you are so COOL. We can get in anywhere with those. We can do the cash machines!

BRANDON

But what about the owner-guys, it says, "NO TRESPASSING." They'll get the cops on us. We don't want any trouble with the fuzz, man.

SAM

Nobody wants this old dump of a church. We can take it over. Move in. CONFISCATE IT, MAN!. Get all the tribe in here tonight. Built a fire. Make us some

cool s'mores. And there's plenty of room for the dogs and Biscuit and the puppies when they come. Let's do it!

HUCKER

Okay, you two stand in front, so nobody can see.

BRANDON

I don't know about this.

SAM

Are you with us or not, Brandon?

BRANDON

With you, with you.

(BRANDON and SAM stand side by side as HUCKER goes behind them with the bolt cutters)

HUCKER

Ready to roll. Hold a mo'. On second thought-- *(HE hands BRANDON the bolt cutters)* --to show you're with us, comrade, you do the honors. 'Cause if anybody asks--

SAM

(pointing at BRANDON)
"Brandon did it!"

HUCKER

(pointing at BRANDON)
"Brandon did it!"

BRANDON

Okay, I'll do it. I'll do it. Just don't step on Biscuit. *(BRANDON takes the bolt cutters, carefully steps over the sleeping dog, and cuts the chains & padlock, swings the church doors wide)*

SAM

Holy shit, you did it! We're in!

HUCKER

Give him some sugar, babe.

BRANDON

Yeh. Give me some sugar.

SAM

Sugar for Brandon. *(SHE kisses BRANDON)* You are BOSS, baby boy.

BRANDON

I am not ineffectual.

HUCKER

No, YOU DA MAN. As we say at Mo' Money Moe's Chop Shop on East 141st Street. Shall we take possession, Sam? Let me carry my girl over the threshold.

SAM

I'm nobody's girl, Hucker. I told you.

HUCKER

No, nobody's girl. You're my woman now.

SAM

Am I?

HUCKER

Time to give me some sweetness. How 'bout it, Princess? *(HE cuddles up to her)*

SAM

(coily to HUCKER)

Only Princess wants-- *(pause)* Only Princess wants-- *(pause)*

BRANDON

Only Princess want what?

SAM

Princess Samantha wants a Starbucks Caramel Cocoa Cluster Frappuccino. For afters. With extra caramel dribbled on top.

HUCKER

You got it, babe. Anything else?

SAM

And a rose. A big, mother-fuckin' long stem red rose. It's got to be a red one. Yeh. That's what Princess wants. Brandon, be sure to feed Biscuit. She's eating for her puppies now-- *(SAM steps into the church, turns)* I got to go get pretty in the church. *(Sings, as SHE exits)* "I feel pretty, oh, so pretty, I feel pretty and witty and smarttttt--"
(Exits)

HUCKER

Yeh, we're all eatin' for her puppies. Have a squat, bro'. Later you can come in and do a pipe.

BRANDON

Hucker?

What? HUCKER

Like I'm thinking, I mean, you know-- BRANDON

Frankly, "dude," I don't know. HUCKER

What I'm thinkin,' I mean--when you're finished gettin' your sweetness, do you think I could get some? Sweetness, I mean. When you're finished. BRANDON

That all depends, bro'. On how much Sam has got left when she's done with me. You know I'm a double-dipper. HUCKER

Yeh. Whipped cream and a cherry on top. BRANDON

But you know what you can do. If you want to stay. HUCKER

I want to stay. BRANDON

Then you know what you gotta do. HUCKER

Sure. *(Pause)* What is it I gotta do? BRANDON

Do some crowd-funding, dude. HUCKER

Funding? For what? BRANDON

For that monster frappuccino for the lady. With the extra caramel dribbled on top. And don't forget the rose. HUCKER

A red one. BRANDON

HUCKER

Princess Samantha likes a little romance. *(Picks up the empty yellow plastic change container)* Jingle, jingle.

BRANDON

(taking the container)
Jingle, jingle.

HUCKER

Don't forget your sign. *(HE hands BRANDON a battered cardboard sign)* "STRANDED IN NYC," yeh, let's get you home to Idaho. You can work the curb with your baby-boy looks. Lookin' good, man. Real good. *(HUCKER steps carefully over the sleeping dog Biscuit)* You better feed this bitch soon. I don't wanna be around when she wake up REALLY HUNGRY. Gonna go in and get me some sweetness. You know what you gotta do. Generate some revenue! Yo!

BRANDON

Generate some revenue. Yo.

HUCKER

E PLURIBUS UNUM. *(HUCKER picks up his bloody hockey stick, holding it high)* "Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia!" Sam Peckinpah, 1974. Now, THAT is HISTORY, man. What we needs to do is get us a gun. HUCKER IS ENTERING THE BUILDING! *(HE exits into the church.)*

BRANDON looks about. He kneels and tenderly pets the sleeping dog. He picks up the cardboard sign reading, "STRANDED IN NYC. NEED BUS FARE HOME TO IDAHO." He digs into his pants pocket for a bit of change, puts it to the plastic container, shaking it. HE takes the cardboard sign and moves downstage center to the curb, looking out. HE extends the yellow plastic container to the AUDIENCE, shaking it)

BRANDON

Hey, man, be kind? BE KIND? *(HE continues to hold the sign in one hand and extending the plastic container to the AUDIENCE, shaking it)* Hey Lady--BE KIND? *(as the lights fade)*

THE END

THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS: *Civilization is a fragile contract. At any point in its existence, depending on the ruling powers of the community, their "civilization" can begin the downward slide back into Barbarism. This is the theme and concern of the play. A group of homeless youth abandons civilities and have begun to function in their baser natures. With the sole exception of Brandon, who with his battered paperback "A*

Short History” begins to question where they are headed, and makes a plea for compassion and kindness.

A Short History of Western Civilization was award 2nd prize in the Segora International One-Act Playwriting Competition, August 1019 St André-sur-Sèvre, France. It has yet to be performed.

AUTHOR’S BIO: CHARLES LEIPART’s work has appeared in the Bayou Magazine, the Jabberwock Review, Burningword Literary Journal, Gathering Storm Magazine, the Scene and Heard Journal, QU Literary Magazine, Projector Magazine of the University of Greenwich, London UK, and the Exposition Review. An award-winning playwright & screenwriter, Charles is a graduate of Northwestern University, a former fellow of the Edward Albee Foundation. He lives and writes in New York City. www.charlesleipart.com Also at Twitter: @CharlesLeipart