

SPEAK|EASY

Written by

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THE ENVIRONMENT: At the entrance participants are greeted by a towering metal acacia tree sculpture that seems to emerge from a pile of old tires. It is clear the tree has been made from recycled materials. Its limbs stretch outward draping over an entranceway. Hanging lights adorn the tree and further bring attention to the doorway. At the mouth of the entranceway is a chalked logo that reads "S/e".

Section 1: **The Password**

SFX: Sounds of jazz piano waft up from the speakeasy below.

Two Ushers stand near the entrance, they keep a lookout for customers as they wander close by.

//INTERACTIVITY: An USHER greets the player (improvised).

PLAYER RESPONSE SOUGHT:

Do you stand in solidarity?

//INTERACTIVITY: If the player does not give the above response, the USHER then asks them://

USHER

Do you stand in solidarity?

//INTERACTIVITY: Player responds either with curiosity or affirmatively.//

USHER

Welcome to Speak|Easy. Come on down.

//INTERACTIVITY: the USHER welcomes players onto the elevator and presses the button for them to arrive at the Host stand.//

Section 3: Welcome to Speak Easy

As customers come off the elevator they see the band playing to their left and a bar in the distance to their right. Directly ahead of them is either the manager or the host, standing at a podium with a computer.

HOST or MANAGER

Welcome to Speak|Easy where we invite you to speak easy. Our table service is not available at the moment, but you are welcome to enjoy the live music or head on over to the bar. Adrian will be sure to take care of you.

//INTERACTIVITY: Host or Manager indicates or guides PLAYER/S to the bar as needed. Some conversational improvisation may occur to help acclimate the PLAYER to the world. If encountering anyone who the host or manager knows in real life, the Host or Manger also introduces themselves by their character name.//

The PLAYER heads over to the bar.

Section 4: Mocktail Trivia

ENVIRONMENT: In a corner of the space is an L-shaped bar set up adorned in a green table cloth with paper flower centerpieces. Waters in glasses sit on a section of the bar free for the taking. On each corner of the bar is a framed notice that reads: "**Feeling Thirsty?** To order a mocktail, you'll need to learn the password. Answer this [trivia question / riddle] by scanning the QR code below, and we'll send you the password to order."

//INTERACTIVITY: Player scans the QR code and enters into a text conversation with the host or manager. Depending on the QR code they scan their conversation follows Section 4A or 4B path://

Section 4A: Riddle

TEXT #1 from HOST STAND

forever foe to what is wrong,
men rage if i be lost by theft;
I am what justice works to bring,
And all you have when nothing's left

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (Rights or Human Rights) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #2 from HOST STAND

That's wrong. Maybe try asking for some help?

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (Rights or Human Rights) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #2 from HOST STAND

Not quite right. Want me to help you?

//INTERACTIVITY: If they player responds affirmatively for help.//

TEXT #3 from HOST STAND

It rhymes with the opposite of darkness.

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (Rights or Human Rights) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #4 from HOST STAND

Wow! You sure are persistent. A for effort. The drink password is MAVIS STAPLES. Tell that to Adrian at the bar for a free drink.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER automatically moves onto section 5.//

Section 4B: Trivia

//INTERACTIVITY: Player scans the QR code and enters into a text conversation with the host or manager.//

TEXT #1 from HOST STAND

TRIVIA: What is the current hourly minimum wage in Arizona for a restaurant worker?

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (\$9.80) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #2 from HOST STAND

That's wrong. Maybe try asking for some help?

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (\$9.80) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #2 from HOST STAND

Not quite right. Want me to help you?

//INTERACTIVITY: If they player responds affirmatively for help.//

TEXT #3 from HOST STAND

Google will give you the exact number, but I can tell you it's under \$10.

//INTERACTIVITY: Player makes a guess and types it into the text conversation. If the answer is correct (\$9.80) they advance to Section 5. If incorrect, they receive this message://

TEXT #4 from HOST STAND

Wow! You sure are persistent. A for effort. The drink password is MAVIS STAPLES. Tell that to Adrian at the bar for a free drink.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER automatically moves onto section 5.//

Section 5: Ordering a Mocktail

THE ENVIRONMENT: Behind the bar is Adrian, the bartender, and a menu that reads: "Bob Dylan: lemon, rosemary, honey. Nina Simone: grapefruit, lime, pomegranate molasses. Billie Holiday: raspberry, lemon, rose."

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER approaches BARTENDER and gives the password "Mavis Staples."//

BARTENDER

What'll you have?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER orders a drink from the BARTENDER. Bartender hands PLAYER drink. PLAYER may roam between the bar and the music. Until...//

WAIT STAFF

(NOTE: Wait staff may all put their own spin on these lines as long as the basic frame is consistent.)

Good evening! I'm [NAME] and I'll be your host this evening. May I inquire as to your name?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER/S respond.//

WAIT STAFF

It's wonderful to meet you [PLAYER NAME]. Let me officially welcome you onto my team tonight. Please take this sticker *(hands PLAYER/S a colored dot sticker)* and wear it with pride. You are on [NAME'S] team. It will let the other wait staff know that you're with me.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER/S respond. They take sticker, continue. They do not take sticker, continue to Section 5A.//

WAIT STAFF

Now, we are still waiting for your table to open up in the VIP section, but I may be able to get you a cushioned seat by the fountain if you'd like?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER/S respond. If affirmative, continue. They decline, continue to Section 5A.//

WAIT STAFF

Excellent. So these cushions are in short supply here - *[mutter some comment about the boss - she's cheap, particular, not from the customer service industry, etc.]* So, I'll need you to work a little bit for it. Would you prefer to work with a friend or go it alone?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER/S wants to work with a friend, continue to Section 5B. If PLAYER wants to work alone, continue to Section 5C. If they don't want to play, continue to Section 5A.//

Section 5A:

WAITER

No problem. Enjoy your drinks and the music and holler if you need anything else. Otherwise, I'll be back when your table is ready.

(WAITER leaves. PLAYER may roam around the bar/band area or exit the experience).

Section 5B: Working with a Partner - BINGO!

WAITER

Alright then. At Speak|Easy, we serve conversation, so it's important that even if you stick with a friend that you feel comfortable speaking easily with strangers. So your mission to get the cushion is to complete a row on this bingo card (pulls out 2 bingo cards and a pen and hands them to PLAYERS). To play this version of Bingo, you'll need to meet other guests in the bar area and ask them if one of the Bingo squares matches their life experience. Use it as a chance to get to know a bit about them. If you complete a row, you'll each get a cushion. BUT... if you clear the whole board, I'll move you right to the top of the waitlist for the VIP section and you'll get a table.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS accept mission, continue to Section 6. If PLAYERS decline, continue to Section 5A.//

Section 5C: Working with ALONE - WAIT STAFF

WAITER

At Speak|Easy, we serve conversation, but I'm gonna let you in on a little secret. Come over here, even the walls have ears. (WAITER leads player to a quieter corner or just outside the bar area by the stairs). Speaking honestly has been pretty tricky in this place lately.

Speak|Easy used to be a family run place, until the prior owners sold it to a corporate franchise. And since corporate has gotten involved, it's becoming harder and harder to speak easily here. I don't have time to fill you in on all the details, but if you want to know the whole story, you should ask around.

(WAITER sends PLAYER to talk to their direct CONTACT - Eli to Valerie - Valerie to Adrian - Adrian to Kay - Kay to Charlie - Charlie to Eli)

Go find them and use this code phrase, "Can I get a Pete Seeger?" They'll fill you in further.

After you talk to a staff member, they will give you one of these (WAITER hands PLAYER a bean). If you get 4 beans, you can buy your way into the VIP section if you pay off the manager. I got to go. Here, take this (hands them a token) to get started - in case you forget the code phrase it's "Can I get a Pete Seeger" this will help the staff know whose side you're on.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS accept mission, continue. If PLAYERS decline, continue to Section 5A. WAITER leaves.//

(PLAYER finds their next contact who fills them in on the next piece of the puzzle.

- (Kathy), the manager, was sent by corporate and recently took over the restaurant, even though she has no experience in customer service or restaurant management. She's changing everything about the restaurant and won't listen to the staff who have all been here longer than her to know what works.
- Valerie was in line to take over as manager before Kathy stepped in. Valerie has worked here forever and is hurt by being passed over. Valerie's vision of *Speak|Easy...Build out more - sow seeds of coup?*
 - Having confidence in the job, knowing you do it well and having someone new come in and tell you you're wrong. And getting berated. Gaslighting?
- Adrian the bartender, they'll help you out if you need some information - they know everything that goes on behind the scenes. They'll never stand up to Kathy directly - but they will help you behind her back.
 - Which side are you on? Confiding in player about coming in under new management. Summer job, etc. Here's your drink. (refresh drink)
- Eli - if you see some sort of injustice happening here at *Speak|Easy* and it doesn't sit right with you, you need to

go talk to Tanner. He's your man if you need advice or a tip on how to intervene.

- How would you feel if you worked at a place for ten years and you were up for a position that someone just walks in and gets? The employees are just not given the raises they deserve. It's insane.
- Charlie - really needs to keep this job as he's studying abroad and broke. Kathy definitely has it out for him.
 - Let them know about how management plays favorites. Yeah I get called out a lot. I'm out here mopping everything down and Kay is just chilling. Management could be better. Boss plays favorites
- Kay - very charming, but don't be fooled - he's really just out for himself. Very manipulative. Slept with Z's partner, but framed Charlieley.
 - I agree that new management is not the best. But they're just new and trying to learn. Every place has issues. We should give them a second chance...

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS achieves mission, continue to Section 6. If PLAYER declines the mission continue to Section 5A. If PLAYER fails or discontinues, the experience fizzles until they intercede to get back on track in Section 4.//

Section 6: YOUR TABLE IS READY - Bingo your way in

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS get full board BINGO, find their host to turn the card in.//

WAITER

Excellent, you cleared the board! Meet any interesting people?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS respond. WAITER banter with them as appropriate.//

WAITER

Let me move your name to the top of the waitlist - it should just be a moment or two more. I'll be right back to seat you shortly.

(WAITER checks in with HOST or KATHY? To update player's status in the game. Continue onto Section 6A or 6A1

Section 6A: YOUR TABLE IS READY - Buy your way in

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYER achieves mission and has 6 tokens. The final WAITSTAFF to give them a token says...//

WAITER

How many tokens you got now? That's enough to buy your way in. Go find the manager (*Points KATHY out to PLAYER*) and flash her those coins. Then watch and see how fast she bends over backwards to get you a table.

(PLAYER finds KATHY and shows them the coins. Before that exchange, KATHY improvises a warm greeting and asks them how their experience has been, etc.)

KATHY

Oh! I'm so sorry, very important customer! We will get you a table RIGHT away! CHARLIE!!!!!! (Or other waiter/host) Hop to it. Let's go people. VERY IMPORTANT PERSON HERE! (Kathy ad libs as necessary until table is ready. If need be, she can seat the guest herself).

(PLAYER is seated at a table in the VIP section. If alone, continue).

KATHY

I'll send your server and your table mate/s over pronto. Don't want to keep a VERY IMPORTANT CUSTOMER like you waiting.

(Kathy exits VIP section and taps a waiter to bring over a guest from the Fountain or Bar area.

Section 6A1: *At this point Fountain/Bar guests are separated from someone they came in with. If they are currently with a stranger-guest, both parties may join a table. KATHY or WAIT STAFF usher the new table mates over to the VIP PLAYER. If KATHY is present, she hands the table off immediately to the WAITER).*

WAITER

Good evening! I'm [NAME] and you are?

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS introduce themselves./

WAITER

This evening we have three special conversations available for you. There's the "How's your day?" the "Where are you from" and my personal favorite, "What's your vocation?". Is there a particular conversation you're hankering for?

//INTERACTIVITY: WAITER facilitates the PLAYERS as they negotiate or decide what to choose.//

WAITER

Excellent choice. Why don't you all get started with that first question (repeats their choice back to them) and I'll be right back with the rest of that course of conversation.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS continue the conversation. WAITER retrieves the appropriate menu of questions and returns to the table.//

WAITER

Here's the rest of that conversation. I'll let you all enjoy your tapas of talk. Let me know if you need anything.

//INTERACTIVITY: PLAYERS continue the conversation. At this point, they are interrupted only by the larger conflict at play. See disruptions://

Disruption 1:

CHARLIE sweeps up some dust/dirt. KATHY approaches him.

KATHY

Um...Charlie, what are you doing?

CHARLIE

I'm sweeping.

KATHY

I can see that. Why are you doing it now?

CHARLIE

Because it's dirty over here.

KATHY

But this is the middle of the dinner service. This is pre-shift work.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry. I just thought -

KATHY

Well, clearly not hard enough. Can you get that broom out of here?

VALERIE enters and intercedes

CHARLIE

I'm sorry. I'll just put it away.

VALERIE

Kathy. Kathy - you need to calm down. Everyone can hear you. You're disturbing the customers.

KATHY

I'm speaking in a very calm tone. Charlie, aren't I speaking in a calm voice?

CHARLIE

Yes. I'm sorry. It won't happen again.
(*Charlie moves to exit.*)

VALERIE

Kathy. Kathy - you need to calm down. Everyone can hear you.
You're disturbing the customers.

KATHY

I'm speaking in a very calm tone. Charlie, aren't I speaking in
a calm voice?

CHARLIE

Yes. It's my fault. I'll go.

VALERIE

No. You don't need to go.

CHARLIE

It's fine.
(*Charlie exits.*)

VALERIE

It's not fine.

KATHY

Charlie says it's fine. Now, get back to work.

SIMULTANEOUS TO THIS SCENE:

- *KAY brings the musicians a drink and gossips with them about the disruption. The PIANIST accents key moments of tension with musical stingers.*
- *ELI and ADRIAN catch each other's eyes. As CHARLIE exits the scene one of them (depending on bar traffic) intercepts CHARLIE to learn about what just happened.*

Disruption 2:

CHARLIE moves to the bar.

ADRIAN

Hey, Charlie! Can you go grab me another shaker from the back?

CHARLIE

Sure thing.

CHARLIE exits and returns with a cocktail shaker. As he approaches the bar, he trips and drops the shaker. It makes a loud clanging noise calling KATHY to the scene.

KATHY

What was that?

(KATHY arrives)

Charlie?

CHARLIE

I'm sorry! I'm so sorry. It was an accident.

ADRIAN

It's fine. It's no problem.

KATHY

What are you even doing behind the bar? You should be on the floor serving customers. Is anything broken?

ADRIAN

Nope. It's all -

KATHY

Because if so, it's coming out of your paycheck.

CHARLIE

What? I didn't mean to -

ADRIAN

It's like a four dollar item.

KATHY

I can't have employees breaking things and in parts of the restaurant they shouldn't even be. Now get back to work.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry. I'll go.
(CHARLIE exits).

ADRIAN

Hey! Do you have a moment?

KATHY

Uh, yeah. Sure.

ADRIAN

You doing okay?

KATHY

Um, yeah. We're a little busy.

ADRIAN

Okay. I just want to make sure, because you do seem a bit stressed out tonight. A little bit on edge. If there's anything I can do for you, I would love to be of help. Because it seems that some of the staff are taking a bit more of the brunt than they should be right now.

KATHY

Sure if you want to hand out some waters that would -

ADRIAN

Yeah, I can hand out some water. Just like, are things okay with you and Charlie?

KRISTNA

Well, he's just making a lot of mistakes tonight.

ADRIAN

Yeah, but he's also new and still in training. I just want to make sure that you know he's working another job right now and going to school and everything. So, like. I just feel like there are a few other people who could be taking more of the weight around here. I don't know, Kay, specifically, probably could be.

KRISTNA

Yes. Kay definitely knows what he's doing, so I can give him more.

ADRIAN

That would be great. I'm gonna get back to my work.

KRISTNA

Excellent.

SIMULTANEOUSLY to the ADRIAN/KATHY SCENE: ELI approaches CHARLIE as he gets back to work. This conversation should be in proximity to the customers at tables.

ELI

Hey, Charlie, are you okay?

CHARLIE

Yeah...hey man.

ELI

I mean, seriously. This has been going insane.

CHARLIE

Yeah, no I just keep fucking up tonight.

ELI

No. that's not just you, by the way. Kathy has been acting insane tonight.

CHARLIE

I know. I feel like she's targeting me.

ELI

Yes! I think we're all noticing that she's targeting you.

CHARLIE

I try to wipe down a place, she comes over and is like "Hey you missed a spot!"

ELI

Listen, man we are going to do something about this. I think that a few of us want to get together and walk out or some sort of protest. So we are trying to think about ways that we can make it look like that this is just terrible management. Would you be okay with possibly being treated badly a little bit longer?

CHARLIE

You want me to be part of it?

ELI

Yes, and.

CHARLIE

Can you imagine how mad she's gonna be? She's already pissed at me!

ELI

Yes, and. Here's what I'm thinking. To make it really look bad - other than you, we are gonna have the other waiters sit at the tables that they are waiting. We are going to ask the customers observe how Kathy treats you when you're the only one left to take care of the establishment.

CHARLIE

So it's a bit.

ELI

It's a bit.

CHARLIE

You're trying to mess her up.

ELI

So you might have to be the butt of Kathy's wrath for a minute, but it also puts emphasis on the bad scenario, because she doesn't treat us as badly as you. I mean, she loves Kay, but he's drunk on the job.

CHARLIE

I can do it.

ELI

Are you in?

CHARLIE

Yeah. I can do it.

Disruption 3:

CHARLIE moves to the bar.

ADRIAN

Hey, Charlie. Why don't you take a break. It's a little slow right now.

CHARLIE

Awesome. Thank you.

Charlie leaves the bar and grabs his phone. He heads to a break area in view of some tables. A minute later KATHY spots him and confronts him

KATHY

Charlie, what do you think you're doing?

CHARLIE

I'm on a break?

KATHY

A BREAK?! *(Kathy's outburst is accented by the pianist who stops playing)* Who said you could take a break?

CHARLIE

Um...Adrian?

KATHY

Is Adrian your boss? This is not a great time for a break. We are slammed.

CHARLIE

It's actually a bit slow.

KATHY

I need you on tables right now. You can take your break later when it dies down more.

CHARLIE

Sorry - I.

KATHY

I don't have time to argue about this now. I need you to get back to work.

VALERIE enters.

CHARLIE

But -

VALERIE

Kathy. You are making a scene.

KATHY

I'm doing no such thing. We can't have staff on breaks right now.

VALERIE

He's legally allowed to take a break

KATHY

Yes, but this isn't a good time.

KAY enters.

KAY

Hey, Kathy. Can I talk to you for a second?

KATHY

Yeah, sure. *(to VALERIE:)* Let's all get back to work, okay?

KAY

I just want to talk to you about Charlie, a bit. I know he messes up a lot.

KATHY

Yeah. yeah.

KAY

He's trying his best, I just wanted to let you know. Like he was talking to me earlier and he says he has anxiety.

KATHY

Oh no.

KAY

Just go easy on him if you could - if he messes up. Like, if he messes up take him to the side and let him know what he's doing wrong. I'm pretty sure you have experience, you can help him out. Cause I'm seeing the others are watching the situation.

KATHY

I'll tell you what. For you, I'll do it. You are my favorite.

KAY

Oh thank you so much. I really appreciate that. I'm on your team. We're just here to make the restaurant better. You're doing amazing. I don't think we had such good management before.

KATHY

Thank you! You always back me up.

KAY

I don't want to take any more of your time.

KATHY

I'll take it easy on him. For you.

SIMULTANEOUS to the KAY/KATHY scene, VALERIE and ELI console CHARLIE. They convince him to agree to walk out with them.

//INTERACTIVITY: The staff then works their way around the tables to recruit customers to walk out with them.//

Final Disruption:

KATHY is distracted and busy "managing" when the entire waitstaff invites all of the customers to join them at the microphone by the bandstand. The dialogue below can be improvised loosely along these lines.

KATHY

What's this? Is it my birthday?

ELI

No, Kathy. We are walking out.

KATHY

Walking out?! This is the middle of your shift.

ELI

We are protesting your terrible management and inhumane treatment of all the staff, but especially Charlie.

KATHY

What? Charlie, what are they talking about?

CHARLIE looks hesitant, ELI coaches him on what to say.

KATHY

Does Charlie want to say something, or are you just using him to speak for you?

CHARLIE musters the courage to take the microphone.

CHARLIE

I don't understand why you're so mean to me. You yell at me when I'm working, you won't let me take a break. I work 3 jobs and I work really hard here -

KATHY

I'm sorry if you thought I was being mean to you, I don't recall yelling at you. I always thought I was speaking in a calm voice.

VALERIE

You were not. You were shouting. The entire restaurant could hear you.

KATHY

They couldn't possibly. *(To the customers:)* Could you hear me?
//INTERACTIVITY: KATHY improvises a response based on the audience's response. She mostly accepts the majority's ruling on this before insinuating...//

I try really hard to make sure everything is running as smoothly and comfortably for the customers as possible. I'm sorry it that comes off hardly.

CHARLIE

You yell at me when I'm cleaning. I'm just doing my job! And you threatened to take part of my paycheck when I accidentally dropped the shaker. You never let me take a break -

KATHY

Excuse me, may I have a chance to address some of these charges?

ELI

Sure. *The staff parts to let KATHY take the microphone.*

KATHY

(Staff interrupt periodically through this to jeer or contradict a microaggression:) I'm sorry if I come off strict. Charlie, you do excellent work, yes. Is it always at the appropriate time? No. But it is good work. As for taking broken items out of your pay, well I have a bottom line to adhere to and is it my fault if you are clumsier than most? I have to motivate you in some way. You are welcome to take your break when we aren't in the middle of the rush.

VALERIE

He is legally allowed to take a break.

KATHY

Well if he wants to take his break then getting to work early enough to complete his shift work before we open should be a priority.

ELI

(to the tune of We Will Rock You)

We will

We will

Walkout

(he repeats this until the crowd joins in.)

KATHY

Walkout? Fine. Walk out. I don't need any of you.

(The staff walks out with any customers who will join them. They move to ENDING SECTION)

Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for this ruckus. Pay no attention to them. Come on back. We have half priced drinks the rest of the night. Kay, get behind the bar.

KAY

Sorry, I, uh... *(KAY walks out.)*

KATHY

What?! You can't go. Ugh. Fine. I'll do it myself.

(If customers remain, KATHY serves them alone. If none remain, she exclaims after them:)

Don't review us on YELP!

ENDING SECTION:

ELI and VALERIE have led the crowd to a safe location outside of the speakeasy. ELI addresses the crowd, VALERIE passes out a pamphlet with the program for the show and a list of resources for the audience.

ELI

We thank you all for aiding us with your support and solidarity to help us stand up to the management that has taken advantage of its employees for too long. Tonight has shown us what it means to truly band together and denounce injustice. I know it's cliché to say that there is strength in numbers, but it is true. The amount of support you have on a ship determines whether you sink, or sail. Thank you for helping us set sail and proudly wave our masts. Have a great night!

