

Promageddon premiered at the 2011 Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville. The directors were Amy Attaway and Michael Legg with the following cast:

Football QB	Gil	Scott Swayze
Musician	Theo	Jordan Brodess
Geek	Dot	Havalah Grace
Character	Alexis	Ellen Haun
Deaf	Kimmy	Dinah Berkeley

PROMAGEDDON

CHARACTERS

GIL	18 years old
THEO	18 years old
DOT	17 years old
ALEXIS	18 years old
KIMMY	17 years old

PROMAGEDDON

(A storage room in a public school basement. ALEXIS and DOT are in formal gowns. ALEXIS wears hers well, DOT significantly less so. THEO and GIL are in tuxedos. GIL stands in front of the door, guarding it. THEO strums an acoustic guitar and sings a sad folk tune.)

THEO.

WENT TO THE DANCE ALONE
TOOK A CHANCE, I SHOULD HAVE STAYED
HOME
NOW I'M TRAPPED IN RIVERSTONE
MMMMM-HMMMMM

(He finishes with a flourish.)

ALEXIS. That's it? The entire song?

THEO. Songlet. They're called "songlets." I'm pushing the envelope of brevity.

ALEXIS. Yeah? Well, try pushing something useful—like him. *(Trying to shove GIL aside.)* Move it, meatbag.

GIL. I told you: nobody's going anywhere 'til I say it's safe.

ALEXIS. You may be the star quarterback up there on the field, Gil, but down here you're not the boss of anything except industrial-sized rolls of toilet paper, anti-

bacterial soap, and...the janitor's half-used can of chewing tobacco EW!

GIL. You're a cheerleader, Alexis. You're supposed to cheer me *on*, not like, *off*.

ALEXIS. If you're so cheerworthy, how come you showed up tonight with your little sister on your arm? Oh wait, that's right, I dumped you for Zander Perkins.

GIL. She couldn't get a date. It's called a favor.

ALEXIS. It's called you got arrested last week for streaking around the neighborhood butt-naked yelling, "Look at me! I'm a freaky" so now me and everybody else at this school want nothing more to do with you.

GIL. You can't crush my spirit. I'm a natural-born leader. And I'm gonna lead us out of this.

THEO. I seriously doubt the playbook for the Riverstone Civets has in any way prepared you for what's on the other side of that door.

GIL. Shut that mooney little face of yours, dude, or so help me I will find the nearest water source and swirl you into oblivion.

LEXIS. Yeah, Theo. We don't know what's out there. It could all be fine. Like a false alarm or something.

THEO. Did you not hear the wailing screams half an hour ago? Feel the earthshattering thuds? Enjoy the delicious buzz of a mild to moderate concussion as the floor slammed up to meet your face?

ALEXIS. Okay, I know you like to think of yourself as some musical poet...

THEO. Folk rock singer-songwriter.

ALEXIS. ...but I'd appreciate a little less hyperbole and a little more "keeping your panties dry."

THEO (*singing with a snarl*).

SHE TOLD ME TO KEEP MY PANTIES DRY
THINKS SHE'S THE QUEEN BITCH OF
RIVERSTONE HIGH

GIL. Enough, you two! We're a team, and we're gonna start acting like one. Now can I get a "Go Civets"?

ALEXIS. Oh, I'll give you a "Go Civets."

DOT. Please.

ALEXIS. In fact, if you don't step two feet to the left and get out of my way...

DOT. Everybody, please.

ALEXIS. ...I'm gonna take my hotly manicured tensies here and claw the words "Go Civets" right into your—

DOT. COULD EVERYBODY PLEASE SHUT UP? (*They stare at her.*) We all could have *died*. We all could have died and we all still could die and we ought to have respect enough for the sledgehammer of that fact to be quiet for five minutes. I mean Christ: THERE WAS A NUCLEAR WAR ON OUR PROM NIGHT.

(*Beat.*)

GIL. So what does that mean for like, tux rental?

(*ALEXIS pulls out her cell phone and starts texting.*)

ALEXIS. Status update: Trapped in basement storage room with ex-bf, emo freak, and a prom dress that appears to have eaten 1990s Janeane Garofalo. Please advise.

DOT. Do you really think anyone's gonna get that?

ALEXIS. Send. (*She stares down at her phone.*) Come on... Come on... (*Nothing. She hurls her phone to the floor. Silence.*)

THEO. God. Nuclear war? It's so... *(with disdain)* retro.

ALEXIS. I know, right? That's our parents' apocalypse. Can't we have anything of our own?

DOT. Okay. I'm not sure the reality is sinking in with you guys. So I'm gonna try one more time: Up above us, everyone that used to be alive is either dead or dying. The heat from the blast has turned many people into a fine atomic mist and given many more people burns from which they cannot possibly survive. Buildings are now rubble. Water is now steam. The sky is in perpetual twilight. Civilization has ended. *(Pause.)*

ALEXIS. Or... Up above us, people are dancing. Music is thumping. Booze and pot and other amazing things are secretly trickling into the bodies of all our classmates like answered prayers. Zander is looking for me. Squeezing his tightly muscled frame through a crush of velvet and sequins and ill-advised hair. The world is turning. All is rad. And any minute, they're going to announce the king and queen. I have to go. I have to go! *(She wrestles with GIL.)*

DOT. Alexis. We all heard the sirens. We all got the texts. We all saw Mr. Havister stop the band, get up on stage, and make the announcement. And then we all did exactly what he told us not to do: run. There's nothing up there now.

ALEXIS *(stops wrestling and gives a howl of frustration)*.

I was supposed to be queen! *(Sighs)* China!

THEO. Well, more accurately, Iran. Then Israel. Then Pakistan. Then India. Then China.

ALEXIS. Then Us. Then *(Sighs)* Us. *(Pause.)* I'm a cheerleader. I have a 4.0. I have a new boyfriend so hot his tweets burn my retinas. This can't be how it all ends for

me. If I'd have known I was going to spend my last days on earth stuck in a storage room with three of the biggest freaks ever to roam the Riverstone halls, I'd have taken Kimmy Whitman's hand when she jumped off that bridge last year and gone with her, all the way down.

THEO. Wow. Where do I begin? First, if you think being a cheerleader with a hot boyfriend is a guarantee against a bleak and meaningless future, check out our parents' facebook profiles. Second, you only have a 4.0 because pathetic geeks are willing to let you cheat off them in exchange for a couple of lousy sexts. And third, shallow, self-obsessed people like you are the reason Kimmy Whitman jumped in the first place. *(Quiet.)*

DOT. That was the worst day ever. Well, besides...

THEO. Yeah. It really was.

DOT. And that YouTube video? Of the guy finding her?

ALEXIS. He throws up like forever. It was disgusting.

THEO. Not the point, Alexis.

DOT. Seaweed and algae and stuff dripping off of her. Her skin was the color of the moon. And the weirdest expression on her face. Like the tiniest smile. Like she knew something we all didn't.

THEO. Are we ever gonna see the moon again?

GIL. Yes. I'm gonna make sure of that.

ALEXIS. Well I know I'm relieved.

THEO. The point, Alexis, is that none of us would have chosen this as our way to go out. But none of us knew this was going to happen.

GIL. Well... Maybe one of us did.

DOT. Gil. Don't.

GIL. Are you gonna tell them, Dot, or am I?

THEO. Tell us what?

DOT. Nothing.

GIL. Nothing? We're on our way here in the stretch Hummer Mom and Dad rented for us when suddenly Li'l Sis here says, "Do you hear something?" And I say, like what, and she says like a bell, like multiple bells being rung or struck or something.

DOT. A) It was one bell three times, and B) shut up.

GIL. And then she jolts up straight, raises her palms to the heavens and recites this, this...I don't know what. "Prepare for the End of All Things"... "Fire Shall Rain Down from the Heavens"... "The Breath of the Beast Shall Linger 999 Days"... stuff like that. On and on. Her voice was like Metallica. Limo driver pretty much his uniform.

(They all stare at DOT. Pause.)

DOT. You're all making me feel very uncomfortable.

THEO. How long has this been going on? These, I'm assuming, visions?

DOT. Since...I don't know...

GIL. Puberty. Basically since puberty.

DOT. Goddammit, Gil!

ALEXIS. You've been having visions of the apocalypse for like five years and didn't tell anybody? This isn't your period, Dot. When it starts happening you can't just shut up, go buy a stack of maxis and get back to photoshopping yourself making out with Zac Efron. *(Beat.)* Like some people might have done at that age.

THEO. What about you, Gil? Why didn't you speak up?

GIL. She begged me not to say anything.

DOT. Yeah, thanks for keeping your promise.

GIL. Um, nuclear war? Your social status is no longer my top priority. My top priority is leading us all to safety. First things first: documenting our party of survivors. *(He pulls out his camera and photos himself.)* There. Now you, Sis.

DOT. Me what, traitor?

GIL. I'm keeping a record of how we look now. That way if there are drastic changes in our appearance—you know, like from radiation, poison...

THEO. ...starvation, death by giant mutant rat...

GIL. ...we can detect the problem early and maybe do something about it.

DOT. I hate to admit it, but that's actually pretty smart.

GIL. Say cheese. *(He snaps a photo.)* You. Emo.

THEO. Theo.

GIL. Whatever. Smile for posterity.

(THEO gives him a gesture that is anything but a smile.)

GIL *(cont'd)*. Good enough. You're up, Alexis.

ALEXIS. Absolutely not.

GIL. You're still doing this? It's the end of the freaking world!

DOT. Doing what?

GIL. Little Miss Prom Queen here won't let anyone take her picture but her.

THEO. Last guy who tried got an iPad in the face.

ALEXIS. Unlike you losers, I know how to keep myself from being tagged in incriminating photos.

GIL. I'm taking this whether you like it or not. One...

ALEXIS. Get away from me.

GIL. Two...

ALEXIS. Leave me alone!

DOT. Look, Zander's tightly muscled frame!

ALEXIS. Where?!

GIL. Three! *(He snaps a photo.)* See? That wasn't so hard, was... *(He stares at the picture on the screen.)*

DOT. Gil? What is it?

GIL. I don't know. Some kind of distortion. Like a weird circle of light around her head.

(THEO pulls out his phone and takes a picture.)

ALEXIS. That's right! Everybody gather 'round! Get your picture of the freak!

THEO. Mine has it too.

DOT. Let me see. Is that...? A halo! Alexis, does this happen in all your pictures?

ALEXIS. Ever since puberty. My mom destroyed all her photos of me from like age thirteen on because in every single one of them I look like some kind of Madonna.

GIL. Gross!

THEO. She means a figure from a religious painting, dumbass.

GIL. Oh.

DOT. Hang on. Alexis has a halo that only shows up in photographs. I have visions of the apocalypse. Does anybody else have something weird about them? Maybe something that started right around puberty? Gil? Have you been hiding something from me?

GIL. No.

DOT. You're lying. Look at your face. He's lying.

THEO. What is it?

ALEXIS. Yeah, Mister Shutterbug, what is it? A beam of heavenly light coming out of your butt?

DOT. A chorus of angel voices coming out of your mouth?

THEO. A sentient third nipple that speaks in tongues coming out of your chest? *(They all stare at him.)* I have no idea where that came from.

GIL. Fine. You really want to know? It's...this! *(He tears off his shirt, revealing an otherworldly tattoo on his back. It's a map of the school, with a large "X" indicating the storage room. Above the map are big letters that read, "LEAD THEM HERE.")*

ALEXIS. What is that?

GIL. You see it too? Nobody else ever has before.

THEO. That "X" marks the room we're in right now.

DOT. How long have you had this?

GIL. It appeared on my thirteenth birthday. It must only be visible to people like us.

DOT. No wonder you refused to take your shirt off around me!

THEO. You asked him to take his shirt off around you?

ALEXIS. Incest much?

DOT. No, I...shut up! *(She retreats to a corner.)*

ALEXIS. So when Mr. Havister said the bombs were on their way and you turned and charged down the stairwell into the basement...you were following your mystical back map?

THEO. I only followed him because I had this strange sense that I needed to.

ALEXIS. Me too!

GIL. Now do you see why I'm the leader? I've been preparing for this my whole life. That's why I streaked

across the neighborhood that night. The pressure...all these years...it was just too much. I wanted someone, anyone, to see what I've been carrying around.

(DOT is crying in a corner. GIL goes over to her.)

GIL *(cont'd)*. Dot? What's the matter?

DOT. For years I've felt like a freak because of these stupid visions. And now I find out that at any moment my popular, football hero brother could have reached out and made me feel less alone. Why didn't you tell me?

GIL. I don't know, Sis. I think something in me knew you'd see the map, when no one else could. And then it would be real. If I didn't show it to you, I could pretend I was normal. Just another run-of-the-mill really really really really talented athlete.

ALEXIS. Wait a minute. Theo. You can see the map?

THEO. Yeah, so?

ALEXIS. So that means you're like us.

(They all turn to THEO. Beat.)

THEO. I'm nothing like you people, okay?

DOT. Come on, Theo. We've all had to cough up our darkest secrets here. Why hide yours?

THEO. Because it's none of your business.

GIL. Theo, if we're gonna function as a team of survivors—

THEO. Who says we're survivors?

ALEXIS. And who says we're a team? I'm not with you guys, okay? Just because I'm suffering through the apocalypse doesn't mean I'm desperate.

THEO. Me neither. Let's just wait in our separate corners for the roaches to evolve hyperintelligence and plot our demise.

ALEXIS. Yeah. And if any of you losers even think about infiltrating the cool corner over here—

DOT. NO! Nobody gets to be cool anymore! *(She grabs THEO's guitar and swings it at them. They scatter.)* For as far back as I can remember, I've been the awkward one. The friendless, fashionless, socially disastrous one. And now, here we are at the End of the World, and you, and you, and even you, Gil, are all still acting like you're better than me or anyone else. Miss Hotter Than Thou. Mister Master of Detachment. Big Man on Irradiated Campus. Well no more! You hear me? NOBODY GETS TO BE COOL! *(She raises the guitar and starts to bring it crashing down.)*

THEO. WAIT! Please, Dot. I'll tell you. Or actually, I'll have to show you.

(Slowly, DOT lowers the guitar. THEO gently takes it from her.)

THEO *(cont'd)*. There's a reason I only perform songlets.

Ever since I was about thirteen, if I sing for more than thirty seconds...something takes over. It's not me. It's kind of horrifying, actually. You sure you want to see this? *(Everyone nods.)* Okay. Brace yourselves.

(THEO takes a deep breath. Then he sings a morose urban folk song.)

THEO (*cont'd*).

I SEE YOU ON THE BALCONY
CIGARETTE AND COLD BLACK COFFEE
MY LATTE'S SPIKED WITH BITTER IRONY
MMMMM-HMMMMMM

FRIENDING YOU WAS WRONG FROM THE START
YOUR SKINNY JEANS ARE BLUE AND SO IS MY
HEART

(Suddenly, THEO begins to convulse. Some supernatural force is taking over his body. He shakes, he trembles, he moans. Then all at once, his hips lock into a swagger, he lays down a sassy, rockabilly guitar riff, and he starts singing. It's a big, bold 1950s rock 'n' roll song—think Elvis/Buddy Holly/Jerry Lee Lewis. THEO explodes around the room, grinning and hopping and bopping it up.)

THEO (*cont'd*).

ONE HAS THE VISIONS
ONE HAS THE LIGHT
ONE HAS THE MAP
SO BABY IT'S ALL RIGHT

GO ON NOW
REPOPULATE THE EARTH
YOU SURVIVED ARMAGEDDON
SO GO ON AND REPOPULATE THE EARTH

YOU FOUR HAVE BEEN CHOSEN
BY THE HEAVENS ABOVE
SO JUST WAIT FOR THE MESSENGER
OF LOVE LOVE LOVE

AND THEN GO
REPOPULATE THE EARTH
WHEN THE MESSENGER COMES
IT'S TIME TO REPOPULATE THE EARTH

POP-A-POP! REPOPULATE IT!
POP-A-POP! DON'T HESITATE IT!
POP-A-POP! REPOPULATE THE EARTH!

(THEO collapses in a heap. Long, dumbstruck pause. THEO slowly regains consciousness. He looks around.)

THEO (*cont'd*). What happened? What did I say?
GIL. Um... Basically, you told us all to bang each other until we've made enough babies to kickstart humanity.

THEO. [REDACTED]
GIL. Exactly. Apparently a messenger is supposed to come give us the all clear. Then we can go and, you know...
ALEXIS. No. No way.

GIL. Come on, Alexis. You can't say no to the halo. You're like, the holy mother of humanity now.

DOT. I'm with Alexis. That's insane. I mean, the four of us? I'm in AP Calculus right now, and even I am daunted by the mathematics of what you're suggesting.

GIL. But this is our destiny. Look, it's simple. Dot and Theo, Alexis and me. Theo, back me up here, bro.

THEO. Forget it.

GIL. It's not like it can be me and Dot.

THEO. I don't know what I said, but there's no way I'm supposed to do that.

GIL. Look, my sister has a beautiful heart...

DOT. Oh, for God's sake.

GIL. ...and if you think I'm gonna let some goth-folk goober like you stomp all over it...

DOT. Gil, you're not helping!

GIL. Say it! Say you'll have-apocalypse babies with my sister!

THEO. No!

GIL. Why not?

THEO. You know, I was thinking to myself, there's only one way today could get any worse...

GIL. Because you don't like my sister?

THEO. Because I don't like anyone's sister!

(DOT's and ALEXIS' eyebrows shoot up. They get it. Pause.)

GIL. I still don't—

ALEXIS & DOT. HE'S GAY!

THEO. The end of THE world and the end of MY world on the very same day, how convenient.

GIL. Then...this isn't gonna work. We can't, I mean *(indicating DOT)* we can't, I mean *(indicating ALEXIS)* we could—

ALEXIS. Forget it. I'd rather hook up with Zander's melted corpse.

GIL. But, the song said—

DOT. It's over, Gil. Let it go.

GIL. So that's it? We give up? When the aliens invaded Earth in *Independence Day*, did Will Smith give up?

When the asteroid invaded space in *Armageddon*, did Bruce Willis give up? And when Ben Affleck invaded *Armageddon*, did the movie give up?

DOT. Gil...

GIL. DID THE MOVIE GIVE UP? We're better than this, people! You know, I've learned a few things about civ-ets in my four years playing football for Riverstone High. Number One: they're named for the foul-smelling secretion that comes from a gland near their genitals. And Number Two: they never give up. We survive, when others perish. We carry on, when others fail. Now hear me, Universe! I know you've given us each a holy token to carry around, marking us as chosen. But we need one more signal from you—just one—to let us know we're on the right path. As the leader of the Final Four, I'm asking you, please: GIVE US A SIGN!

(Big, earthshaking rumble. Plaster falls from the ceiling. The door busts off its hinges. Beyond, a hall filled with smoke and mist. Slowly, a FIGURE emerges from the haze; dorky glasses, dumpy clothes. Her skin is dead white, and there's seaweed dripping off of her, yet her lips betray a tiny, Buddha-like smile. It's KIMMY WHITMAN.)

ALEXIS. Oh my God...

DOT. Kimmy? Kimmy Whitman?

THEO. But you're dead. We all saw it.

(KIMMY enters the room, staring at each of them with profound grace. When she speaks, her voice echoes with otherworldly power.)

KIMMY. Once, I was Kimmy Whitman. Now I am The Messenger.

GIL. Dudes, I  told you!

ALEXIS, DOT, THEO. SHUT UP, GIL!

KIMMY. I have been sent to draw you four out into the new dawn.

THEO. By who? Who sent you?

KIMMY (*offers a small, enigmatic smile*). There are things you cannot now know. Not while you occupy these human shells.

ALEXIS. Some of us happen to like our shells.

DOT. Alexis!

KIMMY. Alexis. You will find it difficult to maintain your beauty where you are about to go. Be strong, and allow your true radiance to unfold.

(*ALEXIS is speechless at this.*)

KIMMY (*cont'd*). Dot. You will now learn what I did. That being an outcast has given you profound strength. Very soon, your smile and your guidance will be sought by all.

(*DOT is blown away.*)

KIMMY (*cont'd*). Theo. You have chosen isolation for so many of your brief years. In this new world, you will no longer have to use music to keep others away. You will no longer be alone.

(*THEO is calmed.*)

KIMMY (*cont'd*). Gil. You bravely led, when no one else would stand tall. So...good job.

(*GIL is confused, but okay with it.*)

KIMMY (*cont'd*). Now. Follow me. The time has come to begin your great work.

ALEXIS. Hold up. I'm not signing on to be a baby generator in some nuked-out hellscape.

DOT. Yeah. If we're really supposed to repopulate the Earth, we should be able to do it on our own terms, not like...I mean...I MEAN, I COULDN'T GET A DATE FOR MY JUNIOR PROM, NOW I CAN'T GET A DATE FOR THE POST-APOCALYPSE?

KIMMY. Allow me to alleviate your concerns. There are others just like you, waiting in different high-school basements, all over town. Those who were once freaks are now the chosen ones. And I, the biggest loser of all, shall lead you on your way. Even here, in this very basement, there is another. The one known as Zander is alive.

ALEXIS. YES!!!

THEO. But what good does all that do me? What if none of those other survivors is like me?

KIMMY. I just told you. The one known as Zander is alive.

ALEXIS. But, Zander doesn't like boys.

KIMMY (*offers her enigmatic smile*). Come. The end is over. The beginning begins.

(*With KIMMY in the lead, everyone heads out into the mist of a new dawn.*)

END OF PLAY