

A box is on stage. It's not a special box. It's just a cardboard moving box. Grant enters and stares at the box.

GRANT

I found another one.

Grant goes up to the box. Aaron enters.

AARON

How many are there?

GRANT

He had a lot of stuff. Should we go through it?

AARON

Oh my god!

GRANT

What's wrong?

AARON

I'm having the strangest Déjà vu.

GRANT

Again?

AARON

Can you have déjà vu of another déjà vu? Is that why it's called déjà vu? Or is each déjà vu like its own thing?

GRANT

Stop saying déjà vu.

AARON

(Whispering)

Déjà vu.

Grant kneels next to the box and opens it.

AARON

Wait!

GRANT

What?

AARON

What if there's something horrible in it?

GRANT

Like what?

AARON

I don't know. Something that changes our lives forever and we're never able to go back to the people we were. I read about a woman who found a decaying foot in her floorboard. Six months later she dropped dead.

GRANT

Did the foot kill her?

AARON

Of course not.

GRANT

Then how are those two things related?

AARON

The foot was a sign. An omen. A prophecy. You think I don't know, but I know these things. I have a system.

GRANT

Rolling blunts with the horoscope section of the newspaper doesn't make you psychic!

AARON

Transitive property! Hello! Educate yourself! Read a Twitter rant!

Grant looks in the box, he puts his head nearly all the way in, because there is only one small thing in it.

AARON

Oh god! What is it? A poisonous scorpion? Don't put your face in there! Jesus!

Grant pulls a script out of the box.

GRANT

Would you calm down now? It's paper. See?

AARON

Paper? Why is that in a box in the middle of an empty space that's clearly not a stage we didn't have the money, time or resources to put a set on, in the middle of some dead guys belongings! Oh god it's a trap!

GRANT

No. It's a book! Or a script.

Grant scrolls through it and can tell what it is.

GRANT

Yeah, it's a script.

AARON

A script? Well, maybe my agent sent it over.

GRANT

You don't have an agent.

AARON

Yes, I do. How do you think I got that great deal on that excursion to Tierra Del Fuego?

GRANT

Different kind of agent.

AARON

Semi-antics.

GRANT

Not the word you wanted.

Grant looks at the title page gasps

AARON

What?

GRANT

It's called Déjà vu.

Aaron gasps.

AARON

That's so weird.

GRANT

I know.

AARON

Wait, why is that weird?

GRANT

You know, you really need to start paying attention when you talk.

AARON

Thanks, I had it trimmed yesterday.

GRANT

Also when other people talk.

AARON

Who cares about other people! What does it say?

Grant sets the script down and walks away from it.

GRANT

I don't want to know. I think we should leave.

AARON

Don't be stupid. Let me see.

Aaron picks up the script and opens it and starts reading aloud.

AARON

"A box is on stage. It's clearly a stage. It's not a special box. It's just a cardboard moving box. Grant, six two, enters and stares at the box." That's you!

GRANT

Wait, what? That's exactly what just happened! It says my name.

AARON

It says, "Grant says, 'I found another one.' Then Grant goes up to the box. Aaron, five eleven, enters. 'How many are there,' Aaron says.

'He had a lot of stuff. Should we go through it?'"

Okay, I am like literally an inch away from being six feet tall!

GRANT

Oh my god!

Aaron reads again.

AARON

"Oh my god!"

GRANT

This is crazy.

AARON

"What's wrong?"

GRANT

Give me that!

Grant grabs the script from him.

AARON

I'm having that Déjà vu again. Okay now it's called Déjà vu because I'm having it again. Dionne Warwick was right.

Grant stares at him confused.

AARON

You know because she sang that song... "Walk on by."

Grant is reading.

GRANT

"Again?

"Can you have déjà vu of another déjà vu? Is that why it's called déjà vu? Or is each déjà vu like it's own thing

Stop saying déjà vu."

AARON

(Whispering)

Déjà vu.

Oh, I know what's happening!

GRANT

"Grant kneels next to the box and opens it."

AARON

Wait!

GRANT

"Wait,"

AARON

No, no, I mean stop!

Grant looks up from the script.

GRANT

Why?

AARON

Put it back!

GRANT

What?

AARON

Put the book back in the box!

GRANT

No, don't you understand what's happening?

AARON

Oh contrair, Fozzie Bear!

GRANT

It's us! Since we came in this room. It knows what we've said. It could know everything about us! This could tell us our future.

AARON

I don't want to know my future!

GRANT

You're not at all curious?

AARON

Well, I'm also curious how vaginas work, you want me to examine one!?

GRANT

Really? You're curious about that?

AARON

Well, sometimes, I think about it. Not like that way, but you know, in general.

GRANT

Well I don't think your future and a vagina are equivalent entities.

AARON

Why not? I came out of one, and I'm going into another.

GRANT

Okay, I'm reading.

Aaron grabs the script from him.

AARON

No! You can't.

GRANT

Give that back.

AARON

No.

GRANT

I'll read it to myself, you don't have to know anything it says.

AARON

I'm going to burn it.

GRANT

Oh my god! You are not. Give it to me.

Grant pulls on the script, Aaron resists. Grant gets it.

GRANT

Ha-hah!

Aaron grabs it back.

AARON

Ho-ho!

GRANT

Stop!

Grant grabs it back and starts flipping to the last page.

AARON

You can't do this!

Aaron tries to get the script, Grant turns away from him each time he tries, still flipping through the pages.

GRANT

You're being an idiot! Anybody would want to know their own future!

AARON

Do you think Gandhi would have kept doing what he was doing if he knew how awful his future was gonna be?

They both stop moving, Grant gives him an incredulous look.

GRANT

Gandhi? Your example is Gandhi? The man starved himself almost to death. He let people beat him- he advocated-

AARON

Okay! I get it! It was a bad example.
What about Jesus?

GRANT

What about a lobotomy!?

AARON

My point! Is. Once we know something, there's nothing we can do about it. Once we know, we're totally fucked.

GRANT

You don't know that. Maybe we're supposed to read it. Maybe that's what our future is. Maybe our future isn't possible if we don't read it. Think about that. This could be the only way we can have any future at all.

Beat

AARON

But what if I get a brain tumor or something awful. I read an article-

GRANT

No you didn't.

AARON

Fine it was a headline.

GRANT

No, it wasn't.

AARON

Someone posted it on social media! Stop interrupting.
This totally normal guy got a brain tumor and it turned him into
a pedophile.

GRANT

You think you're going to read something that'll make you a
pedophile?

*As Aaron talks, Grant scrolls through
the pages.*

AARON

Well how do I know! You hear all sorts of awful stories about
people who get these aggressive brain diseases and they go out
and kill people. Or what if I'm murdered?/ Do you think you
could live knowing something like that?

GRANT

/Do you think you could live knowing something like that?

AARON

Stop!

GRANT

/Stop!

AARON

/I mean it.

GRANT

I mean it.

It's word for word.

AARON

I don't care. If you don't stop, I'll kill myself!

GRANT

Wow. I'm glad you're not resorting to hyperbole. And what a

wonderful way to avoid knowing a horrible fate, killing yourself. You're such a drama queen.

AARON

My urgency is as fierce as my special shoe closet.

GRANT

Yeah, which by the way used to be our kitchen pantry! Now, don't you think we should at least have the choice of knowing what happens next?

Beat

AARON

It's an illusion.

GRANT

What is?

Aaron grabs the book.

GRANT

Hey!

AARON

Look, if some greater entity wrote our entire lives and put it in that box, then we can't change any of it, anyway.

Aaron reads

GRANT

How do you know? It's not clear that we're operating under a system of determinism.

AARON

What does determinism mean?

GRANT

That things happen in a pre-determined way.

AARON

Which means?

GRANT

We can't change it!

Aaron looks up from the book hysterical.

AARON

I know what it means! I was reading!

Aaron tosses the script on the floor. Grant picks it up.

GRANT

Okay, well that's ironic, I'll admit.

AARON

Ironic!?

GRANT

Fine. But don't pretend you knew what it meant.

AARON

I did.

GRANT

You didn't.

AARON

I would have used context clues!

GRANT

Which are?

AARON

In Dora's backpack? I don't know. Leave me alone!

GRANT

All right, look, I'll just read it to myself, and if it's too terrible I won't tell you. Okay?

AARON

Fine. But if you don't tell me, I'll know it's terrible. So you should make it up either way. But then I'll know you're making it up. We should have left that box alone. We should have just listened to Dionne Warwick..."Déjà vu."

Grant turns to the last page. He takes a deep breath, and then he looks down to read.

Beat

AARON

What does it say?

GRANT

It says... (*he finds the last lines*)

"What does it say?..."

"It says..."

Beat Grant and Aaron stare at each other. They can't move. They can't react. They can't do anything.

Eventually...

Blackout

End of Play