
Bow-Man His Fall

Arjun Panickssery

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Arjun †		
Chloe †		
Dylan the Bow-Man		
Jeff Bezos		
Justin †		
Mitch †		
Aniket	}	The Philosophers
Emily		
Deen	}	Model UN
Ethan		
Kelli		
Alexander the Great	}	Great Men of History
Julius Caesar		
Napoleon Bonaparte		
Protester 1	}	The Protesters
Protester 2		
Protester 3		

SCENE – I A BUS STOP.

Darkness. ARJUN stands at the stop. Enter DYLAN.

DYLAN	What brings you here at this late hour of night?	
ARJUN	My time is close at hand. My debts and credits do not square, so now the ledger seals my fate after today.	
DYLAN	Why do you speak in riddles? I came hear to ask about the topic “signaling” which you had mentioned many times before.	5
	<i>A bus is heard.</i>	
ARJUN	Talk fast. This next bus up is mine.	
DYLAN	Capricious fates! Then I have little time to ask my question. You have often spoke of “signaling” and mysteries like these. I have been thinking lately that our own so-called “quiz bowl” game is signaling and nothing else that’s intellectual.	10
ARJUN	Alas, my hour of death is close at hand, I see the bus approach. I leave you this: Make haste and quest now toward the Sun and at the Chesapeake our capital, DC, shall find you there a sage, by Robin Hanson called. He will teach you. Signaling is the cause of all our woes. And now farewell: to the Squid Game I go.	15 20
	<i>Exit ARJUN.</i>	
DYLAN	What mage is this our Hanson who so strong is knowledgéd in signaling, that I must venture far to understand the light. First I shall seek the great philosophers, And if they do my problem fail to solve to Washington a plane ride I resolve.	25

SCENE – II A GROVE.

ANIKET and EMILY converse. Enter DYLAN.

DYLAN	I have a matter of philosophy which I desire to discuss with you.	30
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ANIKET	The Bow-Man speaks. Say, Emily, have you ever tried blind-fold archery.	
EMILY	I've not.	
ANIKET	Then one might say, you don't know what you're missing!	
EMILY	Can chili practice archery?	35
ANIKET	It can't.	
EMILY	Because he didn't <i>habanero</i> .	
ANIKET	Ha! In truth we are such wise philosophers.	
DYLAN	Worthy philosophers, I mean to ask if all of quiz bowl is just signaling? If so, I do not want to play at all and rather make more worthwhile pursuits.	40
EMILY	The Bow-Man shoots his question, and so true flies his swift arrow, one might call him Karl	
ANIKET	Ay, quite the "Marx-man", still might some declare he has his "drawbacks"!	45
DYLAN	Zounds! These great philosophers know nothing wise. They only play unnecessary puns. Tomorrow I will fly to Washington.	
EMILY	The Bow-Man leaves! I hope that on his plane the pilot uses some "arrow-dynamics."	50

SCENE – III A QUIZ BOWL GAME

CHLOE, JUSTIN, and MITCH play quiz bowl.

JUSTIN	For 10 points each, name these commodities— <i>Enter DYLAN.</i>	
DYLAN	You fools! You know not what you do. You think that this is wise? That this is virtuous? Here is the greatest book since Homer sang of swift-footed Achilles; it is by the great sage Robin Hanson, who from his high office teaches us of signaling in this here book: <i>The Elephant in the Brain</i> . <i>Slams book.</i>	55
MITCH	How much I love this game! Never have I such merriment as when I hear that sweet toodle-oodle-oo, and say the little fact, "SARTOR RESARTUS" or whatever else may come up in a game while bowling quiz.	60

DYLAN	And yet to buzz is only signaling that you recall the works of Carlyle more quickly than your adversaries do. The goal of leading a life of the mind is separate from the competitions which inspire bowlers to learn binary facts.	65 70
CHLOE	But it is fun to hear the toodle-oo when buzzing with an accurate answerline.	
DYLAN	Is it not just as good to know the answer without a buzz? Internally it's the same, and only in the ears of those around is any difference made.	75
JUSTIN	You literal goon. This Robin Hanson doesn't know a lot about anything important to mankind, like art, art history, and art historians. These are what make society advance, unlike machinery, anti-malarial drugs, the sanitation, running water, roads and education, and et cetera.	80
DYLAN	But what if art is only signaling? The signalers will flock to see the works of the "great" masters, more than replicas because they care about the cost it takes to make and view, like peacocks with the feathers,	85
JUSTIN	Alack! I did not think of this before? My whole career's caput! I take my leave to meditate on this for some more time.	90
DYLAN	Yes, you will see the error of your ways. If I had more Bezos money to bet I'd wager you'll be Justin Quitmar yet.	95

SCENE – IV MODEL UN

DEEN, ETHAN, and KELLI. WYTMAR enters.

JUSTIN	I wonder why our Bow-Man thinks like this. He's gone to Washington. I hope that now, at this Model UN, I'll realize the error of his views on signaling.	
ETHAN	Regarding fishing in particular, in the South China Sea the fish are just as much Chinese as the entire name the sea itself has in my atlases:	100

	“South China Sea”. It follows that the sea, being Chinese in name, also has Chinese fish; as a result, it’s obvious to me and to my government, the titular country of the sea, that all the fish within can only be fished by the Chinese ships.	105
KELLI	“Model UN”? More like Model Yuan if this honorable delegate is believed. The honorable delegate’s a goon and didn’t make an argument that’s smart. I motion to expel him from the room.	110
DEEN	I am the chair because I have a gavel in my hand. I hit it all the time my delegates to reprimand. Descartes thought that the soul was sitting in the pineal gland. What was your question again?	115
ETHAN	Wise words, honorable chair.	
JUSTIN	This whole activity is so much noise! Besides signaling there is no substance here.	120
KELLI	Honorable chair, this guy is out of order.	
JUSTIN	What country am I representing here?	
ETHAN	Brunei. What is your stance on this?	
JUSTIN	This is all signaling! The Bow-Man’s right! The long shaft of his Bow of Wisdom, knocked and loaded, fired into my heart and taught me truth, that this depravity must be avoided. Now I must depart to Washington to join his pilgrimage.	125 130

SCENE – V A HOME OFFICE IN AN AIRBNB

BOWMAN paces in front of his laptop on his desk.

DYLAN	The light is shown to me. Now I am free but I despair the thought of those who bowl on after me, not knowing what I know. I need a plan, a goal, something to do, to save the quibblers from their signaling. My only light is Hanson, having met his most-esteemed person face-to-face. His voice I hear, his rod and staff my comfort.	135
BEZOS	You need a plan to rescue all your friends.	
DYLAN	Who voice is that? I thought I was alone.	140
BEZOS	As long as you believe, you’re not alone.	

DYLAN	It is the mighty Bezos! Save me now from my dilemmas.	
BEZOS	You must act at once. Invite your comrade Mitch to Washington on some false pretext. I will use my skill in magick to bewitch his laptop then to hack into his access to the files of ACF's cabal, and then destroy all copies of the ACF Nats set.	145 150
DYLAN	Great Bezos, you're the wisest man of all. I'll send a message now to Mitch at once.	
BEZOS	But there is more. If Mitch types at his desk as I unleash my magick techno-tools then he's electrocuted on the spot from the sheer techno-power of Bezos's hack. If you want him to live, make sure he leaves his weak machine alone in a hotel. The cyberweapon I'll discharge at dawn.	155

SCENE – VI A STREET

WYTMAR walks.

JUSTIN	What do I do now that I know the truth, that everything is only signaling? I have no more desire to bowl the quib and am propelled toward the poker game by my inertia only. What to do?	160
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Enter ALEXANDER, CAESAR, and NAPOLEON.

ALEXANDER	Not everything is signaling alone.	165
NAPOLEON	I agree.	
JUSTIN	Am I deceived? Is that Napoleon there? It's really the Great Men of history.	
CAESAR	Just as the North Star keeps its course athwart the tumult of the world, so is there stuff that isn't really signaling at all that's still worth doing.	170
JUSTIN	You are quite wise. I've made a plan. I'll book a flight to Poland in the morning, thence to Lviv to do something that's not just signaling like bowling quiz would be.	175

Exit JUSTIN.

NAPOLEON Uh, I . . . don't this is wise.

ALEXANDER Well yeah that didn't work so good for you did it lol

CAESAR Bruh.

SCENE – VII WASHINGTON MONUMENT

Dawn. Enter MITCH, PROTESTERS.

PROTESTOR 1 How now, my friends, at our beloved temple
Do we advance our glorious cause, against
The dread obstructor Moscow Mitch, who while— 180

MITCH Is this the obelisk of Washington?

PROTESTOR 2 Of course. And wherefore come you now?

PROTESTOR 3 Are you an enemy or foe? 185

PROTESTOR 2 Speak directly.

MITCH Verily, my name is Mitch.

Gasps throughout.

PROTESTOR 1 Tear him to pieces, he is the senator.

MITCH I am Mitch the quibber, I am Mitch the quibber.

PROTESTOR 3 Tear him for his bad buzzes, tear him for his bad buzzes. 190

MITCH But I am not Mitch the senator.

PROTESTOR 2 It is no matter, his name's Mitch; pluck but his name out of his heart, and tear him
going.

ALL Tear him, tear him!