

ELEVATOR

written by

Karla Weber

Address Box 6E, RR 1, Regina, SK
Phone 306.570.6665
E-mail purplehenproductions@outlook.com

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF ELEVATOR

A crowd is gathered outside a closed elevator door in a high rise condo building. An elderly woman pushes her way to the front of the crowd to push the button AGAIN. A young goth couple is sharing a set of earbuds. DENISE stands calmly and checks her casserole bag, OLIVIA is standing uncomfortably beside a priest holding her nearly empty Starbucks cup. A handsome man and a few others wait as well.

A muffled "ground floor" can be heard as the elevator door opens, a family exits through the crowd trying to get in. Elevator music plays as each person enters and diligently presses their floor button before finding their place to stand.

A shirtless man holding a vase of flowers stands in the back. The elderly woman annoyingly pushes her way to the front stomping a foot with her cane. The door closes and everyone is squished. Side eyes in abundance.

On the 3rd floor, the goth couple exits, passengers shift. Next floor, the granny is next and hits each person making her way out. As the floors pass, all passengers exit on their floors, leaving only Denise, Olivia and the handsome man.

Handsome man exits the elevator on the 8th floor, and as soon as the door closes both Olivia and Denise let out a huge burst of air from holding their breath.

OLIVIA
DID HE DOUBLE DIP IN THAT COLOGNE
THIS MORNING-?

She looks at Denise incredulously with a smirk.

DENISE
Oh my god, it's nearly 6pm - can
you imagine what it was like when
it was fresh this morning?

They both chuckle and resume the position of facing forward. Suddenly the elevator jerks, alarming them both. Then the lights abruptly go out, a low hum and an unnatural light comes on washing the women in a weird hue. Both women look shocked but Olivia immediately looks panicked. Denise gets her bearings, not noticing Olivia's panic.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Well, I don't know about you but
now I have to pee...

She looks to Olivia, who is now frozen in panic mode. The only thing moving is her eyes, they dart to Denise. She opens her mouth to speak.

OLIVIA

No no no no no no no, nope, nuh-uh
this is not happening. Period.
Nope. I have a date, I'm not stuck
in an elevator, I am NOT IN AN
ENCLOSED SPACE and I AM FINE
OBVIOUSLY I AM FINE THIS IS COOL

Denise realizes that this girl is about to have a full-blown panic attack and goes into Mom Mode to calm the situation.

DENISE

O..k..not to worry! I'm sure we
will be out of here in no time!
This is a very busy building and I
am sure they will be on getting us
out of here ASAP.

Olivia is still staring ahead and starts to hyperventilate. Denise moves toward Olivia, who is mumbling to herself, and gently touches her shoulder to bring her out of it. It works, and now Olivia is staring wide-eyed at Denise, emitting a squeak of panic. Denise swiftly reaches into her purse and grabs a mint, offering one to Olivia.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Nope, here you go. Have a mint, go
on. You can't freak out when you
have a mint in your mouth.

Confused, Olivia grabs several and pops them in her mouth like they are meds. Through a mouthful of mints...

OLIVIA

How do mints help?

She's frantically chewing them and staring at Denise.

DENISE

They don't. But it makes you think
about something else...

DENISE (CONT'D)

Well, first things first - we need
to let someone know we are in here.

Olivia is immediately fumbling with her phone, dials and looks at the screen, she remembers that there is no service in this stupid elevator.

OLIVIA

There's no service in here, what the hell are we going to do?!

DENISE

No, no worries. Look. There's an emergency call box right here!

She hits the call button while Olivia paces the elevator.

OPERATOR

Hello, thank you for using Albatross Elevators. How can I uplift you today? (in a singsong voice)

Olivia runs to the intercom and yells right into it.

OLIVIA

How can you UPLIFT ME? Is that ELEVATOR HUMOUR?! Do people just CALL you randomly to UPLIFT THEM? Now I have to pee and I can't survive on just mints! Omg, is it hot in here? I'm not sure we are getting enough air..we nearly died from a cloud of cologne... let me out! LIFT ME OUT OF HERE!
(huffing like hyperventilating)

She starts pacing again and Denise takes over at the intercom.

DENISE

Hi, yes we are stuck at Finnegan Towers.
(Denise reaches into her purse and hands her a fan)

OPERATOR

Okay, thank you, can you tell me what floor you are on?

OLIVIA

Are you serious? Help! We need TO GET ouuuuut! This is torture, how long can we survive in here! It's been forever!

OPERATOR

I am so sorry ma'am, can you tell me how many passengers and how long you have been hindered in travel?

DENISE

Hindered in travel?

OPERATOR

Yes mam, we find the term "stuck" gives an unpleasant impression about the quality of our products.

DENISE

There are 2 of us, and it's been about - checks watch- 2 minutes?

OLIVIA

At least!

OPERATOR

I'm sorry, did you say 2 minutes? Please hold while I check for service members in your area.

Her tone is notably irritated. The two women share a look, as they both recognize it. Olivia slides to the floor in resignation, looking less panicked - maybe a little annoyed and sad. Denise decides to sit down opposite, facing Olivia.

OPERATOR (CONT'D)

Hello, there appears to be no service members currently in your area. We have contacted fire and rescue and they are unavailable for the next hour or so. You are their next call.

OLIVIA

An HOUR?!

Denise pulls out another handful of mints and cracks a smile while extending a hand to Olivia, who in turn smiles back and looks resigned to the situation

The operator claps back before catching herself.

OPERATOR

Yes a WHOLE HOUR...think you can survive that?

The women immediately look to each other and put their hands over their mouths to muffle the laughter

OPERATOR (CONT'D)
[Coughs] What I mean to say, is
help is on the way as soon as
possible. Is there anything I can
do for you in the meantime?

OLIVIA
Yes - I would like a venti caramel
macchiato with 2 pumps of vanilla
bean, topped with whip and a
drizzle. Stat.

Denise looks incredulous, their eyes meet and she understands
that Olivia is just baiting the operator.

DENISE
I'll just take a steeped tea.

They both bust out laughing and the operator pipes in.

OPERATOR
Oh sure, let me get right on that.
Call us if you need anything.

OLIVIA
Seriously though, this is so not
cool, I hate small spaces, I'm
hungry, now I have to pee - thanks
a lot for that one - and I can't
even call my boyfriend to tell him
I'm stuck in here and he's waiting
up there for me!

The women settle in for the wait and conversation.

DENISE
Aw I'm sorry, hopefully it will be
sooner than later. I'm Denise by
the way.

OLIVIA
Hi, I'm Olivia. I'm serious, I
really need a distraction here, or
I will be ballistic. Oh my god,
what are we going to do for an hour
- and we have no cell service!?

Denise decides to address the situation by immediately trying
to distract her. Just then the elevator shakes, making them
both gasp.

DENISE

Did you say you had a date tonight?
I love your shoes by the way, I
would literally snap an ankle.

Olivia looks to her pumps and smiles.

OLIVIA

Yes, I was just heading up to my
boyfriend's. He has a special date
night planned. And I got all
dressed up because he said we were
going to do something special. Now
here we sit.

DENISE

... And I really do have to pee.

They both laugh.

DENISE (CONT'D)

STOP! Seriously. I have to pee!

She crosses her legs and they both laugh harder.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Oh no, now I need the distraction!

OLIVIA

[Sneeze] Oh excuse me, I can TASTE
that cologne. Yikes, I'm freezing,
I was dressed for a date not a
hostage situation.

Denise effortlessly pulls a kleenex from her purse and hands
it to Olivia. Next she pulls out a tightly rolled sweater.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Thank you, you're a life saver! God
I dated a guy like that once. He
thought the more AX he coated
himself in the more sophisticated
it made him. Haha. Mind you he also
thought that... well, he thought
you put out candles with water...so

DENISE

Oh, I have so been there. I dated
a guy in high school who used to
brag about how far he could spit.

They both laugh and cringe at the same time.

OLIVIA

This is precisely why I am so glad to be in a relationship and not just dating anymore.

DENISE

Ugh, dating. I only dipped back into the dating pool again about 5 years ago. And it was no longer a pool, more like a swamp.

OLIVIA

Amen! So. Many. Toads.

DENISE

Wearing cologne!

They bust out laughing.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I know it sounds like a punch line, but I am dead serious: wow. The online thing is such a mixed bag- but it doesn't seem like there is any other way these days. In my dating days, your "profile" was literally how you look in those skin-tight jeans in the mirror! Selfie wasn't even a word!

ELEVATOR VOICE

For your convenience, the back up lighting will turn off momentarily every 15 minutes. Thank you.

Both women jump from being startled.

OLIVIA

Are you kidding me?! How is that CONVENIENT?! Seriously! God, we gotta get out of here!

Denise recognizes an oncoming spiral and continues the conversation.

DENISE

So, what do you do, what gets you out of bed in the morning?

It works, the question snaps Olivia back.

OLIVIA

Oh,um, you mean for work?

DENISE

Yeah, job? Career?

OLIVIA

Well right now I sell hair care, online, but that is just until my career takes off! I'm poised to be an influencer- well a tropical plant influencer specifically.
(she squeaks) What about you?

Denise looks both amused and confused.

DENISE

I run a non-profit for struggling artists. Which basically means all artists... haha. But I have to say, call me naive, but what exactly does a tropical plant influencer... do?

Olivia looks so happy for the question, she loves this topic!

OLIVIA

Oh yeah, for sure, well basically, I INFLUENCE people on what tropical plants they should buy. People really don't put enough consideration into it really, it turns into this whole thing "oh this one looks pretty, oh this one's pretty too". Like can we be SERIOUS for a moment, a plant is a LIH-VING thing, hello! And plants are meant to last a lifetime, you know, and a lot more thought should go into a decision about a roommate for life that you are responsible for keeping alive! God, like it seriously is giving me a headache just thinking about it!

Denise reaches into her bag without breaking eye contact.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

I know it sounds like no big deal, but it is! And no one is talking about it! - (off into a excited mumble/ramble, more talking with herself now)

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Like no one even mentions how many tropical plants DIE every year, the statistics of how many tropical plants die in Canada ALONE every year is staggering, not to mention the entire population that gets REHOMED every year...

Olivia is becoming amped up at the mention of her passion project and the tragedy of it all. Denise has put 2 Advil in her hand during the rant and silently extends a hand to Olivia, who accepts and takes the pills without skipping a beat.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Is it getting itchy in here?

Olivia is looking a little panicked, and starts scratching, just then the elevator jerks and they both let out a gasp, and grab for each other's hands. Denise goes into Mom Mode.

DENISE

Well, we could do without that!
You know what, I don't know about you but I'm actually getting hungry. I mean we have a warm meal right here, and it seems we have a bit of a wait left. Let's see what we got here...

Olivia is looking a little sad and freaked out but hopeful at the thought of a homemade meal. Denise proceeds to unzip the casserole dish, to reveal mac & cheese, with 2 glass plates and a flipper in the bag. She then puts her purse on her lap and proceeds to take out metal cutlery wrapped in napkins, s & p shakers and a bottle of hot sauce. Olivia is impressed!

OLIVIA

Oh wow! This is amazing! All we're missing is wine and candles!

Denise smiles and reaches into her purse, pulling out a small wine bottle and a used box of birthday candles. They both bust out laughing. She hands the bottle to Olivia

DENISE

Here, you open this while I serve us up.

OLIVIA

Gladly, but you will have to drink this alone unfortunately.

DENISE

Oh, you don't partake?

OLIVIA

Oh yeah, for sure, normally, but-
she whispers almost mouthing it- I
could be pregnant!

OPERATOR

Did she say PREGNANT?

The woman jump/scream at the sound of her voice, and look at
each other incredulously.

OLIVIA

Yes I did thank you...where is my
coffee? If you don't mind...

She looks excited, but shy to say it out loud. Denise looks
surprised at the news, but reaches into her bag and pulls out
a bottle of orange juice and hands it to Olivia.

DENISE

Oh well! Then should we call this a
celebration dinner? Wait! Is this
what your special date is for
tonight?

OLIVIA

Thank you, no, actually. I haven't
said anything to him yet, not until
I'm sure. Not like it would be a
total surprise or anything, he
always says "what will be will be"
He's sooooo philosophical, and I'm
practically wifey at this point
anyway...I'm just waiting for him
to propose!!!!!!

Olivia's excitement is palpable.

DENISE

Oh wow! Are your parents excited?
Possibly a baby *and* a wedding in
your future!

OLIVIA

Well actually, they haven't even
had the opportunity to meet each
other yet. My parents are -

(she makes air quotes)

"professional gamblers" and they
travel a lot.

(MORE)

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

They have been gone for like the last 5 months, they are working on some new system that they think will really pay off this time. I'm really proud of them. No matter how many times they fail, they just keep on trucking!

Denise has made their plates and set it up like a mini picnic while Olivia was talking. The lights flicker, Olivia notices.

DENISE

So, how did you meet him? How long have you two been entwined together in this fabulous love story?
(Denise flourishes)

OLIVIA

Oh, that is a really cute story actually... I was taking an Interpretive Sculpting Class - to like expand my mind and stuff - and get this! He was our nude model! Like talk about confidence- if you know what I mean... *meow!* And we have been together for 7 months already!

Denise responds in a way that is shocked and entertained.

DENISE

Wow. NUDE? I really need to get out more! The most extreme thing I've ever done was get blonde highlights in the 90s!

OLIVIA

Oh he's a wildcard! He is constantly surprising me! He surprised me a few months back by taking us to get matching belly piercings, he's sooooo romantic like that.

DENISE

Oh no, too wild for me!

OLIVIA

Oh come on, are you saying you've never done something wild, spur of the moment?...I don't believe you!

DENISE

Well, nothing I will admit to! Ha!

OLIVIA

Come on, spill it, you first!

DENISE

Oh my god, I have never told anyone this - this is so embarrassing. I went on a cruise with my ladies group...and, well after a plethora of mimosas and hot sun... we thought it might be a good bonding experience to get a tattoo together...

(she hides her face in embarrassment) so I did.

OLIVIA

Awesome, and...

DENISE

... And it's a tramp stamp!!

Denise turns to show her the tattoo on her back that reads "live, laugh, love" in 3 different scripts, with a bird. It looks like 90s wall art. They both dissolve in laughter.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I would DIE if my family found out!
Hahahaha! Now your turn!

OLIVIA

Okay baddie, I see you! That's not even bad, it's cute!

The elevator jerks and the lights flicker again.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

God, I wish he was here, I would just jump into his arms and meow.

DENISE

I'm sorry did you say meow?

OLIVIA

Haha, yeah, it's how we communicate - he loves it, it's our love language. Meow meow meow -
(she makes expressive meows)

DENISE

What is it with guys these days
between the meowing and the
ghosting and the cracking!

OLIVIA

Cracking?

DENISE

Well this is something... In for a
penny, in for a pound I guess! So,
I was dating this guy last year,
and I things were going well. We
enjoyed each other's company, had
gone on a couple of mundane dates,
and finally I decided to stay at
his place one night. Ugh, long
story short, he whispers to me at
one point, when we're, well,
romantic... he says..."Denise, will
you...crack my toes?"

OLIVIA

What?

DENISE

Uh yeah, my thoughts exactly. He
asks me *again*. I didn't know what
to say. I paused too long. So I did
it. I cracked his toes.

OLIVIA

OMG - and then what?!
(hanging on her every word
with amusement)

DENISE

So, he seemed to really like it -
like after a good back crack? He
seemed... sort of blissful.

OLIVIA

And...?

DENISE

So, I wasn't sure how to proceed
so, I just said "Hank... will you
crack mine?"
(mimics a sultry face)

OLIVIA

And?!

OPERATOR

Yeah..and...

The women both look at the speaker box

DENISE

He said, "No, I'm too tired!"

The women lose it laughing

OPERATOR

Man, the last guy I went home with?
He was catching the mice in his
apartment building and keeping them
as pets. Had like 60 mice.

A stuttered pause, uncertainty - then laughter from all 3.
They decide to keep talking.

OLIVIA

Again, I am so happy to be in a
relationship and off the market.
He's my person. We tell each other
everything, we're working on our
big dreams together. I've never
been happier. What about you, Miss
Missy Denise, what's your status
right meow?

DENISE

... Optimistic?

OLIVIA & OPERATOR

Do tell!

DENISE

I think I have finally rounded that
corner and met someone I am head
over heels for.

OLIVIA

Okay, I need details! Is that who
the food was for...? I hope food
isn't his love language and I just
ate it.

DENISE

No, no, no. Don't worry about the
macaroni. Anyway, his name is Frank
Larry, and he is actually overseas.

OLIVIA

Without you? Rude! Seriously, tell me more - is he tall dark and handsome? Where did you meet him?

OPERATOR

Please tell me there is no toe cracking involved!

Both women make faces, and then smile.

DENISE

Oh god no. We have been together just over 6 months. I haven't even told anyone about him. Because we haven't actually met face to face.

OLIVIA

Are you serious, why?

DENISE

Well, he's very private. He's stuck on an oil rig in the ocean, the owners are corrupt and they have taken his phone, passport, all access to his banking. He doesn't want anyone to know that this single woman is keeping him afloat- I know he will pay me back as soon as he gets to the mainland. We just have to be patient! I love how he makes me feel, he calls me every day, asks me if I've eaten, calls me baby, sends me the sweetest message every morning that starts with "good morning beautiful" - I sound like a teenager! Haha!

OLIVIA

Do you have any pictures of said Prince...

(deciding to let it go)
Charming?

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

You know, when you finally meet Frank, you should wear this shade. My lovey goes crazy for it, makes you irresistible!

Olivia proffers the lipstick. She makes a pouty face and puts the lipstick on Denise. Denise sits close to show her some bad pics of the boyfriend, while Olivia tries to give her an overlined lip.

The camaraderie devolves into a montage of the women in the elevator in various positions: cracking each other's toes, eating chips, licking their plate, rifling through the big purse, swapping shoes, and other nonsense. The elevator lights flicker and the montage ends.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

... That's why I think that
responsible breathing will actually
save the world.

OPERATOR

(interrupts)

Riveting. Well, ladies, are you
still there?

(both women sit up
excitedly)

It looks like we will have you to
your destination momentarily. Thank
you for travelling on Albatross.
Have an uplifting day. Going up!

The elevator makes a whirring sound, the lights come back and the same song as before can be heard from the speakers. A wash of relief comes over them both, they smile and pack up.

After gathering their belongings, they gratefully step out of the elevator and look at each other. They share a smile and a hug, like saying goodbye.

OLIVIA

(Solemnly)

We've really been through
something. I think we trauma
bonded.

(Putting her hand on
Denise's shoulder
sanctimoniously)

I will think of you every time I
eat a mint or crack my toes.

(breaking the sanctimony)

And now, I have a date and you have
an empty casserole thingy. Thanks
for everything!

Olivia starts to sprint down the hall, carrying her shoes, when she turns back to say:

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Oh, I almost forgot! Your sweater!

She turns back and hands her the sweater, and skips off down the hall. Denise smiles and waves her off.

With Olivia several paces ahead of Denise, Olivia skips up to an apartment door and eagerly stops with a jump and a knock on the apartment door. She looks excitedly to Denise who is still walking down the hall, slower now with a puzzled look on her face.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)

Baby, I'm here! - finally!

Denise and Olivia are now side by side at the door, realizing that they are going to the same apartment, therefore the same person...

LOGAN

Hold on!

The lock clicks, a moment passes and the door opens and camera flashes immediately go off, stunning the women.

The flash fades, and the women see a photographer step aside to reveal Logan on one knee with flowers and an engagement ring.