

Aspartame Game

written by

Devin Gerhart

devger21@gmail.com

EXT. TOWN HALL - NIGHT

A banner hangs across the white columns of town hall

"Additive Debate"

Slight chatter sneaks out of the building and fills up the air

INT. TOWN HALL

Two men stand behind their respective podiums. A woman sits at a desk in front of the men listening to them talk. The middle school auditoriums sized room is filled with the town people.

MR. SIMMONS
THEY ARE POISONING US! RIGHT IN
FRONT OF OUR FACES!

He is a the smaller and the more frail of the two men

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)
WE HAVE NUMEROUS STUDIES SHOWING
RED 40 HAS A LINK TO CANCER,
HYPERACTIVITY, DIABETES, AND GOD
KNOWS WHAT ELSE!

The other politician has wider shoulders and a beard that he probably got from eating pussy.

He pulls out a red sports drink, cracks the top, and takes one massive gulp in one meticulous motion.

JUSTIN
AHHHHHHHH...

HE IS EXTRAORDINARILY REFRESHED.

Half of the audience loves it.

MR. SIMMONS
Oh. Yeah. Wow. This is classic. I-
I- I can't comprehend how you got
this far.

JUSTIN
This is just classic fear mongering
done to rob us of lives greatest
joys.

The crowd cheers like its a sporting event of some sort.
Maybe football.

MEDIATOR
Gentlemen I-

The men continue back and forth. Their sounds muffled by the crowd

MEDIATOR (CONT'D)
I'm sorry but we really have lost
our time here. We have enough for
one last talking point. Mr. Simmons
if you will.

The crown dies down. Mr. Simmons fully gathers him self
before his final attack on the agenda on Politician 1.

MR. SIMMONS
My final point...

He continues to shuffle papers around.

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)
Is on the effects of aspartame.

Mr. Simmons finally pulls a paper out and examines it closer
before walking it over to the mediator.

Smugly Justin pulls a Diet Coke from his small snack cabinet/
brief case next to his stand. This has been killing all
night.

The crowd has a whisper of cheers. Excited for him to pound
this diet coke in this nerds face.

Mr. Simmons Returns to his podium

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)
Conjoined with the great science
department of Indiana University of
Pennsylvania-

JUSTIN
Go Hawks!

A slight wave of cheers interrupt the conclusion of the
debate.

Mr. Simmons takes a deep breath that goes into his mic and
out the speakers in the auditorium.

MR. SIMMONS

We have ran multiple trials for many months now and we are of the upmost certainty that...

He sits on the bombshell for a minute. He seems equally excited and nervous to break this to the town.

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)

...aspartame shrinks penis size by 11% in almost all cases.

The crowd murmurs.

Justin smiles now.

JUSTIN

Wow. Really? I didn't expect much but that is just a stab in-

MEDIATOR

No he's right. All this research makes perfect sense. There is even picture proof.

She flips threw the papers.

The audience ruffles a bit.

A man in the back tries to lower his diet coke down and under his chair.

JUSTIN

Bullshit! Let me see-

MR. SIMMONS

Aye yoooooooo.

Crushed.

It was a line Justin had used against him several times before. He was nervous he used it wrong. The crowd continues to slowly build into a panic

Justin frowns and looks over and scoffs a bit.

JUSTIN

Every body relax. I mean come on. We have been over this time and time again. This is nothing but classic fear mongering trying to take control of us.

MR. SIMMONS

Take a sip.

Mr. Simmons is more polite and timid than his usual self.

JUSTIN

Wha- What? I'm sorry but that is
just ri-

MR. SIMMONS

This is just classic fear mongering
right? Please show us.

He gestures to Justin like he's inviting him take a seat at
his home

The crowd is dead silent

A bead of sweat rolls down Justin's forehead and connects to
his eyebrow

JUSTIN

I mean at this point I'm really not
that thir-

MR. SIMMONS

LIES!

He injects himself. All attention shifts to him.

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)

He feeds all you people lies! He
knows tha-

His voice fades out.

Everything is dizzy for Justin.

He glances around the room looking for something. Anything.
This cant be happening.

He looks at the corner of the room. This cant be true. Two
men presumably owners of Frito-Lay and Coca-Cola are their.
They have massive logos on their chests of their respected
company.

He squints hard. They are gone.

Mr. Simmons voice cuts back in.

MR. SIMMONS (CONT'D)

...do you have anything at all to say
for yourself?

All eyes on Justin. This is everything. The finale. The Climax. The center of the tootsie pop. Will he do it.

He hands are slick and shaky. The silver Diet Coke logo shines brighter than normal.

The room seemingly grows larger.

JUSTIN
SIMMONS IS A PEDOPHILE!

The rooms whips back into normal size.

Its silent.

Mr. Simmons looks disgusted and in disbelieve. Justin still sweating and nervous as ever.

AUDIENCE
FUCKING PIG!

The voice of a middle aged heavy set women breaks the silence.

Justin smiles slightly scanning the room for approval.

Mr. Simmons looks at the crowd in complete awe.

AUDIENCE (CONT'D)
YEAH FUCK YOU!

This time a raspy mans voice. Maybe a sanitation worker.

The crowd now roars louder than ever.

The mediator stand up looking at the crowd and the energy shifts toward Mr. Simmons.

He looks at them completely stunned.

Two cops run out from behind the stage with their arms spread wide. They stand at different points in front of the crowd trying to prevent the crowd from reaching the stage.

Mr. Simmons looks over at Justin. He's terrified. He looks ill. How does this always happen.

He runs off the side of the stage and out an emergency exit. A sea of hate speech follows him out the door.

Justin spins his head to watch him walk out in defeat.

He stares off for a second. His vision returns to the crowd. He throws his arms in the air to signal he had won.

The crowd revs like a car engine.

He is smiling big now. He drops his arms to his side and turns to grab his brief case and he walks out the exit as well.

The audience slowly quiets. They are disgusted but equally happy. Happy because they always knew they were right and that guy was a pedophile. They turn around the leave. Its Thursday Night Football. Jaguars vs Browns.

The room is starting to die.

Two podiums stay on the stage ready for their next battle. But they are unmanned. Unmanned except for one.

A dull Diet Coke stands 16.9 FL Oz tall into the microphone.

The last one standing.