i'm the monster, it's me *cries in shark*

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Sarah Lawrence College
i’m the monster, it’s me *cries in shark*

BY
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Submitted in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Theater
Sarah Lawrence College
ABSTRACT

*i'm the monster, it's me *cries in shark* follows Finley who is your average boat skipper on Amity Boat Tours when her boat gets attacked by a shark. Or does it? Eventually Finley will learn what really happened during that attack, and realize she has more in common with sharks than she initially thought. The performance is framed by the Jaws ride from Universal Studios resort, challenges the typical perception of sharks, and interrogates the mirrored perceptions of a woman of color. This piece is part theme-park ride, part immersive experience, part puppet show, and all theater. Audience members get roped into their seats and given safety instructions before the ride "departs". The show utilizes shadow puppetry, voiceover, and special lighting effects to show a fantastical reimagining of a traumatic event. This piece is a wave of comedy and drama to explain what it is like to break out of a stereotype. *i'm the monster, it's me *cries in shark* invites its audience to challenge their own prejudices and reflect on where they come from.
i’m the monster it’s me *cries in shark*

FINLEY
Hello everyone aboard! Please make sure to keep all hands, arms, and feet inside the boat at all times. You are all fully protected against shark attacks today by this 40 millimeter grenade launcher. That and the fact that no one has seen a Great White here in 50 years, so we'll just put that away. Amity 6 to Base, come in base.

BASE
This is Base, you’re cleared for departure, Amity 6. Have a good trip.

FINLEY
10:4. Alright folks that means it’s time to start our voyage, so wave goodbye to those happy land lovers, up there! And base!

Alright everyone, welcome aboard Captain Jake’s Amity Boat tours we are the best! And only scenic cruise on the island. My name is Finley and I’ll be your skipper today as we visit the actual spots where back in 1974, that bad old shark devoured those poor innocent islanders.

The first site of interest is going to be on our port side. That is the home of our very own chief of police, Martin Brody. Now Brody really did blow up that shark and he became a legend in his own time. Roy Schneider made him in the movie about our little shark episode. How many of you have seen the film Jaws? Yeah well you got to watch the film but we had to live through—

GORDON
Mayday! Mayday! This is Amity 3! Something’s out there! Help! Help! Ahhh ahhh ahh!

FINLEY
Amity 6 to Base, did you copy that transmission? It sounded like Gordon on Amity 3. Over.

BASE
10:4 we copied. He shouldn’t be too far away, he was headed back in. Keep an eye out for him. We’ll call Chief Brody. Base clear.

FINLEY
10:4. Sorry folks, it seems like one of our other tour boats ran into a little bit of trouble. Probably nothing to worry about but—
[Lighthouse reveal.]

FINLEY  
I can’t believe this, what happened? Amity 6 to Base, Amity 3 is sinking out by the light house. I don’t see any survivors. I don’t know what could have done this except… except a shark.

[Shark fin reveal.]

BASE  
Amity 6, repeat that?!

FINLEY  
Shark! It’s the biggest one I’ve ever seen and it’s going underneath the boat! Base, what do we do?

BASE  
Stay calm, try the grenade launcher. Over.

FINLEY  
What, you mean this thing is actually loaded?

[She fires. She misses.]

FINLEY  
Missed!

[She fires again.]

FINLEY  
Missed again. Amity 6, we’re going to try to wait in the boathouse until Chief Brody gets here, alright?

[Inside the boathouse.]

FINLEY  
Hello? This is Finley from Amity Boat Tours. Anyone in here? Okay. I guess it’s just us. Not to worry, I’m sure everything will be fine And? Okay you know what? We’re just going to wait in here until they come to get us. No one panic. No one worry.
[Water bucket drops in video.]

FINLEY
What was that? Oh no that’s him. We have to go.

Oh no.
Guys. I can’t start the boat. Come on man, this isn’t funny. Come on!

[A scream. The shark appears.]

BRODY
This is Chief Brody, I’m on my way, I’ll be there in ten minutes.

FINLEY
Ten minutes? We’ll be shark bait in ten minutes! Oh where is he? I don’t see him.

[Shark appears. FINLEY shoots. Fire erupts.]

FINLEY
Ooops. Well that’s it we gotta go for it.

[Leaving the fire.]

FINLEY
Okay. Okay okay that wasn’t so bad, right? We’re just going to unload at that fold fishing dock
over there. We will unload one row at a time, single file. And please remember to watch out for
that high voltage barge. It’s very dangerous and– oh no. I think we have company.

[Shark reveal. Finley fires. She fires again.]

FINLEY
Oh that monster is disgusting. Uh oh! Smile you son of a bitch!

[Finley fires once more. SHARK exits.]

BASE
Amity 6, what was that? Where the heck are you?
BRODY
This is Brody, are you alright?

FINLEY
Chief, Base, you can call off those marines because we are coming home!
Hey everyone. Um. Shit. Shit. Listen if word got out about this little shark episode, that would be it for Captain Jake's and all the other businesses around here so let's just keep this to ourselves. After all, we really roasted him. But seriously, if anyone asks we had some barbeque and saw some dolphins.

Thank you all so much and um… yeah please make sure to go check out the ice cream parlor on Main Street. Have a wonderful rest of your time in Amity.

[TRANSITION TO OFFICE]

FINLEY
I don't know what happened. I don't really remember it.. I think I blacked out a little bit. All I remember is that I was on the boat. And the shark came out of nowhere. I had to do it. It was going to kill us. It was defense. That’s all it was. I was scared so I had to– If word got out about this little shark incident that would be it for Captain Jakes and all the other businesses around here so let’s just keep this one to ourselves. You think people are going to be quiet about this? We’re all over the news, it’s trending. I killed it.
What I don’t understand is how I did that. I mean I’m terrified of cockroaches I can’t even kill them. I just scream and trap them in a jar and throw them out into my yard and– Why do we even have grenade launchers on a boat? You didn’t even tell me how to use the grenade launcher!

I just did it, I had to figure it out because no one has seen a shark here in fifty years-odd years. We didn’t need a bigger boat, our boat was big enough.

But I didn’t want to but I had to
Brody wasn't going to get there in time. I don’t know what I did. I feel like I’m crazy and that I’m insane. I killed it. I killed it.

I didn’t mean to do it. I mean it was purely self defense. Because that’s what I had to do. Every time I close my eyes I see it. No I can’t go into work because I killed the thing. I’m an animal lover, okay? It’s a monster because it’s a predator. It eats people. It’s an eating machine. Someone could have died and some. I was going to be liable. I couldn’t get fired. This is the only job I have. But the eyes. But it looked so scared and I was so scared.
And I am so scared of the shark and I had to do it, I had to do it.

Did I have to do it?
I was in a boat.
I was in a boat. I could have gotten away
I don’t understand how Gordon didn’t get away because we were in a big fucking boat. And it’s one shark. One shark in a boat this big? I don’t even know anything about sharks
Why are we still scared? Why am I scared?
It’s just a fish.
I need to go. I need to go home.

[FINLEY in her house. FINLEY is on the floor doing yoga/attempting to meditate.]

GUIDED MEDITATION
Good evening and welcome to Seaside Shores Mediations where we put down our worries from the day and sink into thoughts of relaxation. Seaside Shores Meditation is available on all streaming services. Subscribe to Seaside Shores Meditations for notifications of when we post, and never be anxious about missing a meditation again.
I’m Andrea, your host, and I’m so glad to have you here with me.
Tonight we’ll be focused on a meditation centered on anxiety and guilt.
Because you have both of those things.
First get into a comfortable position. Gently take a breath in, and concentrate on the sound of my voice. Allow it to ground you into the present moment. You are here now.
Feel the journey of the breath through your body, and send an extra breath to where is holding tension.
Let your shoulders drop.
Unclench your jaws…
Your feet - are on a boat.
Your hands - are holding a grenade launcher.
Your eyes - which look deeply into the black eyes of the shark you killed violently.
Your head - will not let you rest. It is filled with all of the what ifs and should haves.
You are here now. Because your anxiety is present. Your anxiety is now. Your guilt is now.
For the next few minutes, allow yourself to breathe in, feel it expand in your ribcage. Hold it for a moment. And exhale.
Your guilt will never go away.
Listen to the sound of the waves and the sound of the ocean. Know that there is one less shark in there because of you. You are a shark killer.
Take a deep breath.
Inhale. And exhale.

FINLEY
Seriously? Seriously?! Unsubscribe.
Fuck this, I’m going to bed.

[SHADOW PUPPETRY - JAWS LULLABY
Fish in the ocean. Fin. Dolphin appears.. Shark appears.]

[SHARK GHOST APPEARS FROM UPSTAGE DOOR]

FINLEY
Please.
[It stares]

Why are you here?
What do you want?
I’m sorry.
I’m sorry.
I didn’t mean to–
[GHOSH SHARK brings out another shark. It is a costume. GHOSH SHARK holds it out to FINLEY.]

FINLEY
What? What do you want me to do?

[GHOSH SHARK continues to hold out the shark. Carefully FINLEY takes the shark costume and puts it on. GHOSH shark goes to SR Aqua Splash and undouses it. When the costume is fully inflated, the SL Aqua Splash is doused to reveal the full shark costume.]

FINLEY

Hello everyone, welcome to Coral Reef Shores Tours. We are the best! And only swimming shiver tour in this part of the coast. My name is Finley, and I’ll be your flipper today. Please remember to keep all pectoral, dorsal, tail fins in a unified order and remember to always swim forward, never back. Please stay thirty fins away from the surface level, the boat propellers up top are sharp. And of course, keep away from the dolphins.
You will notice the good warm temperature of the water is a solid 67 degrees making it the perfect time to go swimming. Always important to stay away from the beaches because if we respect the humans, they might respect us and—

[SOUND OF DOLPHINS ATTACK/JAWS TRAP REMIX]

I can’t believe what's happening? Those dolphins are attacking the boat. It’s sinking… they’re dragging the humans down. I have to help. *I’m going to go up to the surface and try to lead the boat away.*

[SOUND OF “I don’t know what could have done this… except a shark.”]

FINLEY
It’s not me!

‘Stay calm, try the grenade launcher”

FINLEY
Oh no.

FINLEY
I should go, I should go, I can’t be here.
No. No no no the dolphins are following them into the boathouse. GET OUT! Get out! Move move move!!

[DOLPHIN SOUNDS.]

FINLEY
You need to go! Please go go go!

[“SMILE YOU SON OF A BITCH”
SHOOT.
DIES.
DOLPHIN SOUNDS.
OCEAN SOUNDS.]

FINLEY
My name is Finley. I'm a shark. And I won’t hurt you. I’m not a monster. Can’t say the same about the dolphins though – they’re scary.

My name is Finley and I want to ask you a question: What do you know about sharks? Sharks get a bad rep for being evil. They will eat the little boys that swim in the ocean, the women who go skinny dipping, the captains who go down with the ship, the menstruators, the humans in distress. Sharks are monsters. This is the stereotype.

Sharks are curious. Not killers. Sharks have bad eyesight. You’ve got glasses on. Take them off. How many fins am I holding up? Trick question, we’re in the ocean and it’s dark and you can’t see shit.

Sharks aren’t all the same. They are diverse with behavioral and social patterns. They aren’t monolithic. They don’t all look the same, they don’t all behave the same.

My name is Finley and I’m a shark. I’ve been hunted because of the way I appear. My fin is mistaken for a dolphin fin, but that’s not who I am. Dolphins will attack for fun. I know better. I know that if I do what dolphins do, I’ll get hurt.

[TO AUDIENCE MEMBER.] Can you help me out of this?

[AUDIENCE MEMBER HELPS FINLEY OUT OF SHARK COSTUME.]

My name is Finley and I’m a shark. I’m not a monster, I won’t hurt you. Sharks don’t eat people. Sharks are protectors. Sharks will protect themselves, but they still end up harmed. But who has the advantage here? The one with the teeth and the fins? Or the one with the hooks and the guns?

My name is Finley and I’m a shark. Sharks have a complex psychological and nervous system. They feel joy, they feel anxious, they feel pain. Sharks don’t have vocal chords, so when they are hunted, when they are attacked, when they are victims of harm, they are forced to suffer in silence. But if they did, would you listen?

My name is Finley and I'm not a shark.
My name is Finley and I’m not an animal.
My name is Finley and I’m not a stereotype.
My name is Finley and I’m human.
My name is Finley and I want to ask you a question: What do you know about sharks?
My name is Finley and you don’t know anything about sharks.
My name is Finley and I want to ask you a question: What do you know about me?
i’m the monster, it’s me *cries in shark* cue list

Anna Green
Sarah Lawrence College

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<tr>
<th>PAGE NUMBER</th>
<th>CUE TYPE</th>
<th>CUE NUMBER</th>
<th>Cue Line/Action</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lights 100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Preshow</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>TOP OF SHOW.</td>
<td>GO WITH SVQ 500 + 501</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sound/Video</td>
<td>500 + 501</td>
<td>Beginning of show, after ropes have been tied to audience seats, Anna is center and gives thumbs up.</td>
<td>GO WITH LIGHTS 200</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>Gordon Transmission: Mayday! Mayday!</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>Amity 6 to base did you copy that transmission?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>&quot;I can't believe this what happened?&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Lights</td>
<td>204 --&gt; 205</td>
<td>FINLEY raises grenade launcher to fire (1) 205 launches automatically after 204</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Lights</td>
<td>206 --&gt; 207</td>
<td>FINLEY raises grenade launcher to fire. (2) 207 launches automatically after 206</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Lights</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>Amity 6 to Base, tell Chief Brody we're going to wait for him in the boathouse until he gets here, okay? 208 launches automatically after 207</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Lights</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>&quot;This is Chief Brody&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Lights</td>
<td>216 --&gt; 216.6 --&gt; 216.7 --&gt; 217</td>
<td>Shark runs onstage and into house left, Finley shoots grenade launcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Lights</td>
<td>216.5</td>
<td>216.5 launches automatically after 216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>216.7</td>
<td>216.7 launches automatically after 216.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>Fire burst</td>
<td>217 launches automatically after 216.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>218-219</td>
<td>&quot;We gotta go for it&quot;</td>
<td>219 launches automatically after 218</td>
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<td>Lights</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>&quot;Unload at that old fishing dock over there&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>225.5-225.6</td>
<td>Finley shoots shark on DSR</td>
<td>225.6 launches automatically after 225.5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>226-226.5</td>
<td>Finley shoots shark on SR</td>
<td>226.5 launches automatically after 226</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>227-227.5</td>
<td>Finley shoots shark on upstage wall/door</td>
<td>227.5 launches automatically after 227</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>&quot;Chief, base, you can call of those marines because we're coming home&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scene</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>Transition to office/office monologue</td>
<td>Skipper podium needs to be pushed upstage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>&quot;I need to go home&quot; Finley in her house.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Finley is on the floor attempting to do yoga/meditate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>Immediately following &quot;Unsubscribe. Fuck this I'm going to sleep.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>Ghost shark enters from US door</td>
<td>After Ghost Shark has helped Finley into the costume, they will sit at the Aqua Splash on SR.</td>
<td>After Finley is zipped up in the shark costume, Ghost Shark will go to SR Aqua</td>
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<td>Splash. After they sit down, Aqua Splash on SR will undouse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Lights</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>Shark costume fully inflated</td>
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<tr>
<td>When the shark costume is fully inflated, the Aqua Splash on SL will undouse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Sound</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>at the end of &quot;if we respect the humans, they might respect us and—&quot;</td>
<td>Jaws Trap Music/Dolphin Attack</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Lights</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>at the end of &quot;if we respect the humans, they might respect us and—&quot;</td>
<td>Go on Jaws Trap Music/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>GO AFTER</td>
<td>Sounds are &quot;I don't know what could have done this except a shark&quot; (625) and &quot;try the grenade launcher&quot; (630). They will both fire automatically after 621 is launched</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>270 --&gt; 271, 272, 273</td>
<td>271, 272, 273 will automatically follow after 270 is launched</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Sound 621 I'm going to go up to the surface and try to lead the boat away.

8. Sound 630 "Stay calm, try the grenade launcher, over"

8. Lights 275 "I should go, I should go, I can’t be here. No no no the dolphins are following them into the boathouse."
| Sound | 620 | ON LINE
"I should go, I should go, I can’t be here. No no no the dolphins are following them into the boathouse." |
<p>| Sound | 640 | This will be fired with the light cues below. The recording is of Finley's &quot;Smile you son of a bitch.&quot; |
| Lights | 280 --&gt; 281, 290, 291, 293, 294 | &quot;Smile you son of a bitch!&quot; 280 - underwater high voltage barge, 281 - Finley shot on dsr, 291 - Finley shot at SR wall, 293 - Finley shot at upstage door. 294 - Finley dies at upstage door. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>641</th>
<th>After Finley shark dies</th>
<th>Sounds of dolphins (645) and underwater sounds (646). They are grouped under 641 and they will be launched together.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>The first My name is Finley. I'm a shark.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>AT END OF &quot;My name is Finley and I want to ask you a question: What do you know about me?&quot; - GO</td>
<td>Blackout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Bows</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lights</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>house lights up for audience exits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Performance
Performances occurred on March 29, 2023 and April 1, 2023.
Performers included: Chisom Awachie, Anna Green, Megan Hamm, and Zee Hanna.

i’m the monster, it’s me *cries in shark* MFA performance
Timestamp: 42:15 - 1:08:50
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