

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.

***(Foremost Anti-Bullying Unit Looking Out
for Undermined Students)***

a play by Jonathan Rand

Cast of Characters

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.

SARGE, the veteran

FIERCE, the tough guy

GRUNT, the muscle

BOOKS, the brains

MAINFRAME, the technician

ROOKIE, the rookie

CITIZENS

HARRIS

YOLANDA

TRENT

OLIVE

WENDY

MICHELLE

AMY

Note: The F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. team's demeanor and dialogue entirely contradicts the connotation of "fabulous" – they always speak and act with the same machismo one might expect from a S.W.A.T. team.

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.

(Foremost Anti-Bullying Unit Looking Out for Undermined Students)

by Jonathan Rand

(At a school, but a bare stage is fine. Lights up on HARRIS and YOLANDA chatting, possibly with others hanging out nearby. HARRIS wears glasses.)

HARRIS. Man that bio quiz was brutal.

YOLANDA. I don't think I hate two words more than "Golgi" and "apparatus."

HARRIS. Totally.

(Enter TRENT.)

TRENT. Hey *Four-Eyes!*

YOLANDA. *(Annoyed:)* Oh no...

TRENT. I'm talkin' to *you, Four-Eyes.*

HARRIS. Uh, my name is Harris.

TRENT. Sure, *Four-Eyes.* Gimme that algebra homework so I can copy it during lunch.

HARRIS. Or you could just do your own homework like everyone else.

TRENT. I *could.* But you know what I could *also* do?

(He puts HARRIS in a headlock.)

Put you in this headlock until you fork over the homework.

(Suddenly, intense action movie music plays briefly as the scene is taken over by F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S., a team not unlike a S.W.A.T. team, but instead of weapons, each team member – except for ROOKIE – holds a different item that might be considered fabulous. "F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S." appears in large letters on their uniforms. Every time "F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S." is mentioned, it is pronounced "fabulous" instead of being spelled out. The team's demeanor and dialogue entirely contradicts the connotation of "fabulous" – they always speak and act with the same machismo one might expect from a S.W.A.T. team.)

SARGE. Release him, *now!*

TRENT. Aw, *man...*

GRUNT. DO IT.

(TRENT releases HARRIS.)

SARGE. Who are we?!

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. We are F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

SARGE. And what does F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. stand for?!

BOOKS. Foremost Anti-Bullying Unit Looking Out for Undermined Students!

SARGE. And why do we carry these fabulous items?!

MAINFRAME. So people remember that our name is F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

SARGE. (*Pointing to FIERCE's item:*) And what is your fabulous item?!

FIERCE. This delightful hat!

SARGE. Fabulous. All right, Rookie, lemme introduce you to your first perpetrator, or "perp." This here's Trent, and he's easily one of the most stereotypical bullies around. Trent, meet Agent Rookie. It's his first day on the job.

ROOKIE. Hi there.

(TRENT responds with either a rude gesture or grunt or quick mean retort or silence.)

SARGE. Real friendly, Trent. Now have a seat.

TRENT. Make me.

GRUNT. DOWN.

(GRUNT simply presses down on TRENT's shoulder which causes TRENT to end up sitting on a chair or the floor.)

SARGE. Agent Fierce—walk the rookie here through the standard protocol.

FIERCE. Copy. First, we read the bully his rights. Agent Grunt?

GRUNT. (*To TRENT:*) NO RIGHTS.

FIERCE. Next we review the infractions. Agent Books!

BOOKS. Infractions include name-calling, threats, and physical bullying.

FIERCE. Next we review the surveillance footage. Agent Mainframe—run it back.

MAINFRAME. Patching into the video feed, annnnnnd rewinding.

(As MAINFRAME taps keys on a device, F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. looks on as TRENT, HARRIS, YOLANDA, and any others quickly rewind themselves to the moment where TRENT commits the infraction.)

Resuming playback now.

(MAINFRAME taps a key, and the earlier moment repeats exactly as before.)

TRENT. Hey *Four-Eyes*!

SARGE. Pause!

(MAINFRAME taps her device. The action pauses.)

There's your verbal bullying. Now I've been on the force a while, and I haven't heard the term "Four-Eyes" in quite some time. Agent Books, let's hear some historical context.

(BOOKS reviews some hard copy documents or books or a mobile device.)

BOOKS. The expression "Four-Eyes" originated in the 1870s and was last used with any measurable frequency in 1992. In short, it's equally as dated as the outmoded epithets "Poindexter" and "Dork."

GRUNT. OLD SCHOOL.

FIERCE. More like out of touch.

GRUNT. TOTES.

SARGE. Hey Mainframe, can we do a deeper dive on the "Four-Eyes" usage?

MAINFRAME. Way ahead of ya, Sarge. I've hacked each party's medical records and it turns out our perp has significantly worse visual acuity than the victim, not to mention surprisingly thin corneas.

SARGE. Mainframe, can you enhance right here?

(SARGE circles her fingers around TRENT's paused eyes.)

MAINFRAME. On it.

(MAINFRAME taps a few keys. While otherwise "paused," TRENT shuffles closer to SARGE. As a result of this enhancement, all F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. members but Rookie knowingly murmur with intrigue at what they now see.)

ROOKIE. What is it?

SARGE. It's just what I expected: Acuvue Disposable Contacts... Agent Fierce, tell the new guy here what that means.

FIERCE. It means that while the perp's name-calling is hurtful in any event, he's also a Level-Five Hypocrite.

GRUNT. FIVE BAD.

SARGE. Okay Mainframe, let's keep going with the playback.

(MAINFRAME taps her device. TRENT shuffles back and then playback resumes.)

TRENT. Gimme that algebra homework so I can copy it during lunch.

SARGE. Pause!

(MAINFRAME taps her device. The action pauses.)

BOOKS. A clear-cut case of imperative statement with strong implication of threat.

SARGE. Resume playback.

(MAINFRAME *taps her device. Onstage playback resumes.*)

TRENT. But you know what I could *also* do?

(*He puts HARRIS in a headlock.*)

SARGE. Pause!

(MAINFRAME *taps her device. The action pauses.*)

Agent Books, tell the rookie what you see.

BOOKS. Well, much like the “Four-Eyes” epithet, this headlock move here is highly antiquated. We still do see it occasionally, even though it feels like something from a bad ‘80s movie.

SARGE. All right, cut the feed.

(MAINFRAME *taps her device. TRENT, HARRIS, YOLANDA and any others return to their positions from prior to the playback.*)

So we’ve wrapped the surveillance review, where the initial assessment was confirmed and bolstered. Agent Fierce, tell the rookie the final step.

FIERCE. Simulation of each person’s future.

MAINFRAME. Here we go. After running all variables through our system, we see here that if Trent doesn’t forever cease all bullying, the misconduct will snowball to the point where at age 26 he will end up in prison.

TRENT. I’m not going to *prison*.

MAINFRAME. On the contrary – the simulation says you try and rob an Arby’s but forget your weapon and instead threaten the cashier with an empty can of Mr. Pibb.

TRENT. (*Resigned:*) Okay that does sound like me...

SARGE. So you hear that, Trent? One more infraction, and your life’s in the toilet.

TRENT. (*Reluctantly giving in:*) Yeah...

MAINFRAME. As for Harris, we see that no matter what, he’ll move on from these tough times and channel them into the creation of a hit HBO comedy series and three bestselling memoirs.

HARRIS. Whoa. Sweet.

TRENT. Hey, sorry about all of that, man.

HARRIS. It’s okay. But let me know if you need an algebra tutor. Also...?

(HARRIS offers up his glasses to TRENT, who accepts them and wears them.)

TRENT. Thanks, Two-Eyes.

(They fist bump.)

SARGE. Fabulous work, F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. Let's go.

(Music plays briefly as F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. quickly exits.)

(HARRIS, TRENT, and YOLANDA head toward OLIVE, whose eyes remain glued to her phone throughout. WENDY is nearby. Perhaps we hear the faint recording of WENDY singing and playing guitar.)

YOLANDA. Hey, Olive.

OLIVE. Hey, good to see you. Nice haircut.

YOLANDA. Whatcha watchin'?

OLIVE. That girl Wendy posted a video of her singing some song she wrote.

(Having overheard Olive, WENDY approaches, possibly holding a guitar.)

WENDY. Oh you saw my video? What'd you think?

OLIVE. Oh... Wendy... Okay, I'm not gonna be *rude* by telling you directly? I'm gonna take the high road and post an anonymous comment.

(OLIVE types something on her phone.)

(Suddenly, the scene is taken over by F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. as their entrance music briefly plays.)

SARGE. Put your thumbs where we can see 'em!

OLIVE. Aw, man!

GRUNT. THUMBS.

(OLIVE raises her thumbs.)

SARGE. Who are we?!

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. We are F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

SARGE. And what does F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. stand for?!

BOOKS. Foremost Anti-Bullying Unit Looking Out for Undermined Students!

SARGE. And why do we carry these fabulous items?!

MAINFRAME. So people remember that our name is F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

SARGE. (Pointing to the box that BOOKS holds:) And what is your fabulous item?!

BOOKS. Artisanal buttercream chocolates!

SARGE. Fabulous. All right... let's give the rookie another look at the protocol. Agent Grunt?

GRUNT. *(To OLIVE:)* NO RIGHTS.

SARGE. Infraction review – Agent Books!

BOOKS. Infractions include cyberbullying.

SARGE. Agent Mainframe – surveillance!

MAINFRAME. Patching into the video feed, annnnnnd rewinding.

(As MAINFRAME taps some keys on a device, F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. looks on as OLIVE and any other extras quickly rewind to the moment where Olive commits the infraction.)

Resuming playback now.

(MAINFRAME taps a key, and the earlier moment repeats exactly as before.)

OLIVE. I'm gonna take the high road and post an anonymous comment.

(OLIVE types something on her phone.)

SARGE. Pause!

(MAINFRAME taps her device. The action pauses.)

Okay, Mainframe, can you enhance right here?

(SARGE circles her fingers around OLIVE's phone.)

MAINFRAME. Enhancing the perp's online comment.

(MAINFRAME taps a few keys. While otherwise "paused," OLIVE shuffles closer to SARGE. Either someone – a stagehand or otherwise – appears with a poster board, or a slide is projected, or some other method that's used to clearly display what Olive has posted. We see the following: Dont quit you're day job. #yourfat.)

SARGE. Okay, this is far worse than we thought. Agent Fierce, whaddaya see?

FIERCE. Blatant cyberbullying in that the perp makes a needlessly hurtful digital statement.

SARGE. What else?

BOOKS. Well, this is more under the jurisdiction of the Grammar Police, but nobody should mix up the pronoun "your" and the contraction "you're" after the second grade.

SARGE. Without a doubt. Hey Mainframe, can we do a deeper dive on the "yourfat" hashtag?

MAINFRAME. I've hacked each party's medical records, and it turns out Olive here actually has higher blood pressure and cholesterol than Wendy, and last year only exercised *twice*.

SARGE. And therefore?

FIERCE. Not only is the insult *already* cruel and cowardly and awful, but the perp is literally less healthy than the victim, which means she's a Level-Five Hypocrite.

GRUNT. FIVE BAD.

SARGE. All right, cut the feed, Mainframe.

(MAINFRAME taps her device. OLIVE and all others return to their positions from prior to the playback.)

So our initial assessment is confirmed and bolstered. Agent Fierce, remind the rookie of the final step.

FIERCE. Simulation.

MAINFRAME. We see that if Olive doesn't quit all cyberbullying, at age 28 she will find herself so absorbed by her phone that she will literally become trapped in a six-second loop inside a GIF.

OLIVE. That's not possible.

MAINFRAME. In the *future* it is.

SARGE. So you hear that, Olive? One more false step, and you'll be stuck in the cloud.

OLIVE. Hashtag notgood

FIERCE. Also? Hashtag privileges revoked for a month.

OLIVE. (*Embarrassed:*) That's for the best...

MAINFRAME. As for Wendy, she decides not to concern herself with the haters — because, after all, haters *are* gonna hate — and she goes on to win the 38th season of *American Idol*.

WENDY. All *right!!*

OLIVE. Hey, I'm really sorry about the mean comment.

WENDY. Apology accepted. Y'know, you could make it up to me by tuning my guitar. I'm not *fat*, but my pitch was *flat*.

OLIVE. (*Genuine:*) I love rhyming wordplay!

WENDY. (*As she displays the apostrophe with her finger:*) Hashtag you'rewelcome.

SARGE. Fabulous work, F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. Let's go.

(Music plays briefly as F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. quickly exits.)

(OLIVE and WENDY and maybe others encounter MICHELLE and a crowd of others who are all circled around and facing MICHELLE.)

CROWD. No way! / This is news to me! / etc.

WENDY. Hey, Michelle. What's all the commotion?

MICHELLE. Did you hear about Amy?

WENDY/OLIVE. No. / What happened?

MICHELLE. OMG, yesterday? Amy totally skipped soccer practice to make out with her secret lesbian girlfriend.

(Suddenly, the scene is taken over by F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. as their entrance music plays.)

SARGE. Cease all gossiping!

MICHELLE. Aw, man!

GRUNT. CEASE.

SARGE. All right, Rookie, it's your show. Let's see what you've learned.

ROOKIE. Okay... Here goes... Who are we?

F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. We are F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

ROOKIE. And... what does F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. stand for?

BOOKS. Foremost Anti-Bullying Unit Looking Out for Undercooked Steak-Fries!

ROOKIE. I think you mean Undermined Students.

SARGE. That was a test; keep goin'.

ROOKIE. Why do we carry these fabulous items?

MAINFRAME. So people remember that our name is F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.!

ROOKIE. *(Pointing to GRUNT's item:)* And what is your fabulous item?

GRUNT. *(Holding a Beyoncé photo:)* QUEEN B.

ROOKIE. *(To SARGE:)* Fabulous?

SARGE. Absolutely fabulous. You're doing great so far. Keep it rollin'.

ROOKIE. Okay... Let's see, first Grunt reads the rights.

GRUNT. NO RIGHTS.

ROOKIE. And then the infraction review byyyy... Agent Books?

BOOKS. Infractions include relational aggression by spreading rumors, and an attempt to reveal and demean a person's sexual identity.

ROOKIE. Okay, surveillance?

MAINFRAME. You got it, Rookie. Patching into the video feed, annnnnd *rewinding*.

(As MAINFRAME taps some keys on a device, F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. looks on as MICHELLE and others quickly rewind to the moment where Michelle commits the infraction.)

Resuming playback *now*.

(MAINFRAME taps a key, and the earlier moment repeats exactly as before.)

MICHELLE. OMG, yesterday? Amy totally skipped soccer practice to make out with her secret lesbian girlfriend.

ROOKIE. Pause.

(MAINFRAME taps her device. The action pauses.)

Okay, Mainframe, can you enhance right here?

(ROOKIE circles his fingers around MICHELLE's mouth.)

MAINFRAME. Enhancing perpetrator's mouth.

(MAINFRAME taps a few keys. While otherwise "paused," MICHELLE shuffles closer to ROOKIE.)

ROOKIE. Actually, I don't know why I enhanced. Do I always enhance?

SARGE. No, not always.

BOOKS. Yeah this was not an enhancement scenario.

MAINFRAME. Wait, did I just enhance for no reason? Enhancing isn't easy, y'know.

SARGE. All right, Mainframe, cut 'im some slack. Keep goin', Rookie.

ROOKIE. Okay, well, please cut the feed.

(MAINFRAME taps her device. MICHELLE and all others return to their positions from prior to the playback.)

So the surveillance confirms our initial assessment: textbook sexual identity rumor-spreading.

SARGE. Exactly. What else?

ROOKIE. Well, I think I'd like to have Mainframe do a deeper dive on the rumor's verisimilitude.

BOOKS. Great word.

MAINFRAME. So I've patched into various systems from yesterday, and see that Amy did *not* engage in make-outs, but attended a meeting of the Gay-Straight Alliance. Furthermore, I've hacked into Michelle's diary –

MICHELLE. What?! You can't do that!

GRUNT. NO RIGHTS.

MAINFRAME. Based on my analysis, it turns out she secretly questions her *own* sexual identity.

BOOKS. Rest easy, Michelle: we at F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. are obligated to remain discreet and respectful of everyone's privacy.

FIERCE. (*Staring right in MICHELLE's face:*) You should try that some time.

(Without breaking her stare at MICHELLE, FIERCE casually holds up a hand and BOOKS slaps her a high five.)

SARGE. So, Rookie, what conclusions can we draw from this intel?

ROOKIE. That while the bullying was hurtful in any event – regardless of the sexual orientation of those involved, which couldn't be more immaterial – we've got ourselves a Level... *Four*... Hypocrite?

(The F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. members all simultaneously give the same signal for ROOKIE to move it up one notch.)

ROOKIE. Five?

GRUNT. FIIIIIIIVE.

BOOKS. Home stretch, Rookie!

FIERCE. Make it happen!

ROOKIE. Agent Mainframe simulates the future.

MAINFRAME. If Michelle doesn't immediately cease all rumor-spreading, at age 24 she'll be seriously injured from falling into a rumor mill.

MICHELLE. Is that an actual thing?

GRUNT. RUMOR MILL.

MAINFRAME. As for Amy – whoa... The simulator just says "U.S. President."

BOOKS. Not bad...

(AMY enters.)

MICHELLE. Hey Amy? I'd like to apologize for that rumor.

AMY. It's okay. Though you did confuse my boyfriend.

MICHELLE. Oh...

AMY. But listen, we're having a meeting next week and everyone's welcome. If you want, we could go together.

MICHELLE. I'd like that.

(They walk off.)

(ROOKIE turns to the rest of F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.)

ROOKIE. So... how'd I do...?

SARGE. Well, Rookie... *(Beat.)* You nailed it!

(F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S. cheers.)

SARGE. And to mark the occasion, we now officially bestow you with your own fabulous item: this reclaimed-wood pepper grinder.

(SARGE reveals just that and hands it to ROOKIE.)

ROOKIE. Thanks, you guys. *(Choking back tears:)* This means a lot.

SARGE. All right, that's enough life-changing heroism for one day. Who wants dinner?

FIERCE. As long as you're buyin' ...

SARGE. What are we thinkin' – burgers?

MAINFRAME. Burgers sound good to me!

BOOKS. I second burgers.

GRUNT. *(With a polished, possibly British voice:)* Alternatively, we might consider a culinary choice that is both health-conscious and revitalizing, perhaps a scrumptious kale salad with a light balsamic vinaigrette.

SARGE. Sorry, sometimes his brain sort of malfunctions. Agent Fierce, would you?

(FIERCE smacks GRUNT on the back of the head.)

GRUNT. MEAT ON BUN.

FIERCE. Burgers it is, buddy, burgers it is.

SARGE. But listen, before we go, I've got one question for you, Agent Rookie, and it's the question we ask every new recruit. And that question is: Who are you?

(ROOKIE looks around at the group.)

ROOKIE. I'm F.A.B.U.L.O.U.S.

(They all loudly cheer as they proudly raise their fabulous items skyward. Blackout.)

End of Play