

TAR AND FEATHER
by Kristin Idaszak

About the play (from the playwright):

When Erin takes a #gaschamberselfie, it goes viral--and so does she. Her job offer gets rescinded, she's not allowed to go to class, and her family and friends abandon her. Everyone that is, except for Claudia, her best friend. Together they hatch a plan to confront Erin's anonymous online trolls. TAR AND FEATHER examines public shaming in the digital age. How close are any of us to a fall from grace? And how does a well-intended person transform into a troll?

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RUTH—Female, 20s

About the scene:

RUTH has found unexpected popularity after calling out a thoughtless post on Instagram. Through leading a crusade against the poster, who goes to her college, she tries to adjust to her new role on campus

RUTH

I have been anxious my whole life.
I'm anxious when I go to bed at night.
I'm anxious when I wake up in the morning.
In between, I dream that I'm back in high school
and I have a math test but I can't find the classroom
and I forgot to study for the test.
This happens every night.
I've been researching anxiety assiduously.
Oh, sorry, that means meticulously.
Oh, sorry.
Was that pretentious?
I've been told that I can be—but I'm trying not to.
Be. So.
Myself.
I'm trying to be someone better.
And I am.
I mean, I'm still Ruth.
But now I'm *Ruth*.
I'm the leader of a movement.
People look up to me.
People need me.
And that is who I'm supposed to be.
Who I was destined to become.
And that's, that's—
Oh right, my research.
So here's the thing.
Epidemiologists still classify anxiety as a disease.
But sociologists think it's something else.
A cultural phenomena.
And I just, my question is,
if I'm not the one who's sick,
if society is what's to blame,

and everyone feels the exact same way I do all the time,
then why does everyone else seem so . . . okay?