Approximately 100 words. Summarize the major events of the play without commentary.

TESS just started a new job at The Gradient, which is a rehab facility for perpetrators of sexual assault/harassment. The facility’s success is rooted in an algorithm that evaluates the CLIENTS on their personal growth and ethical learning based on their answers to specifically engineered interviews and exercises. We see her go through many one-on-one interactions with her clients and get a sense of the kind of men that end up in this facility. One client in particular, JACKSON, bothers Tess due to the ways his answers and demeanor mutate given the situation to fit the needs of the test. Tess believes that the men are learning what to say in order to rig the algorithm into an early release, and reports it to NATALIA, her superior and one of the algorithm’s developers. She learns that her idealized concept of what the group was doing was not in the good faith that she assumed when she began work. In an exit interview Jackson, her fears are confirmed when Jackson makes unwanted contact with her after being “Fast Tracked” through the program for “good behavior/growth.” Her disillusionment with her role in her clients’ “success” leads her to break her professional distance and reveal her real, pent up rage, leading to her immediate dismissal from the program.

What seems to be the playwright's intention? How successfully is this achieved? Discuss strengths and weaknesses regarding the plot, structure, characters, dialogue, etc. What are the play's most theatrical elements, such as onstage action, spectacle, language, and other non-textual components? You may then discuss your emotional or subjective response but be careful not to mistake one kind of evaluation for the other.

The playwright did a masterful job encompassing the ways in which (American) men are conditioned to center themselves so holistically that reality goes unnoticed, especially regarding their treatment of women in every capacity. They included clients of every type, age, and tone to show the depth and scope of the problem being combatted within this fictional facility. I love the play of sound and light in this piece as a device separating the relentlessness of Tess’s day to day at work and the Zen, yogic voice of Natalia delivering the PR messaging of the company. The jarring visual shifts between interview rooms and work environment also reflect the difference in the messaging of the company and the actuality of the in-room discussions.

They include the powerful moment mid-play, after watching minute growth within the men, where the voice of Natalia encourages the audience to literally applaud these men for not being rapists, which is a very uncomfortable moment for the audience, and an effective turning point in the narrative where The Gradient’s rehabilitation comes into question. Another incredibly powerful moment in the show is Tess’s process of attempting to report the deception of the men to her superior, a woman, and being asked invasive questions reminiscent of the victim blaming tactics of a rape trial lawyer. The playwright includes so much dimension to this narrative, complicating every aspect of this borderline-utopian concept, and keeping the audience questioning the motives, intentions, and consequences of the quantifying of repentance.