

Produced by Singularity Theatre Company, NYC, 2001.

SOFTLAND
musical monologue cycle

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SOFTLAND

by Sheila Callaghan

Music by Sophocles Papavasilopoulos

PART ONE: DOUGLAS

DOUGLAS is lying in bed trying to sleep. He is dressed in a ripped, ratty T-shirt and ripped cut-off shorts.

DOUGLAS

(A capella)

I would like that
A rolling ball of sleep
I would like it much
Blue, the bluest blue, they haven't made this color yet
The color of my sleep
Yes
I place it on the floor
And it grows and grows
My arms open to it
My neck arches to it
My chest braces against its curve
Yellow breath caught and it rises
I am inside
Floating
Floating

Sounds of a piano in the room next door.
DOUGLAS stands and opens his door.

Hi. Mike?... No, your headphones aren't plugged in. Maybe you need a tighter... No, it's totally, I was awake.... Yeah, pretty early... Appointment... Haircut... You think? All of it? Nah... Really? Nah... Really? All of it, huh? You think. You are fully out of your mind, punk... no, you're a punk ... punk ass motherfucking poopface cockmouth... what are you working on... you ever gonna be done with that fucking... fuck off, ass breath... I'm sure it is. Can't wait to.... All right. Goodnight. Good luck.

He shuts the door and lays back in his bed. Pause.

(A capella)

Blue rising, rising

I am inside
Inside...

Punkass. All of it...right. Fucking Douglas H. Cueball. Already thinning... softer at my fingers, clumps in the drain. Bald bald bald. Shave that shit. He'd like that. Mike, you living with that BALD dude? Big ol' BALD noggin every day, make you crazy, doorknob walking around... bald-ass roommate...

Shaved his head 'cause I told him to
Bald-ass roommate
So square without his hair
Do anything I told him to
Just gotta laugh
At my bald, baldy-bald bald
No-haired bald-ass roommate

Shave the shit. Summer, cooler. Cheaper. No bad hair days. Stop borrowing his hats. Good taste in hats. Gets them online. Slick hipster site. Fucking hipster. Mr. Orange pants, Mr. Bowling shirt, Mr. Tiny Butt Bony Hips Wacky Glasses Goatee. Can wear anything. Doesn't eat, no job. Meanwhile. Tempwear for Douglas. Salvation Army, ugly ass blue ties with yellow amoebas, pit stained white shirts, grey-ass slacks. The fuck are slacks. Need new ones. Those have a rip in the. Next week. Call in Tuesday. Ha.

Bald temp.
Hard-core scary
Transcribe your voicemail
And eat your children
In slacks.

How do you do it? Never panic about money, about rent, eating? Suppose you don't have to 'cause I do. Punk-ass. What am I, your bitch? Don't worry about any, any shit ever. Playing your damn keyboard every damn. Til you bleed. I know you bleed. Lifted the cover yesterday. Tapered red streak on three lower keys. You cleaned it later.

Split your skin on ivory
Which finger is it
Your wound won't heal
Keep tearing it open
On the keys
Your keys

Play so fucking hard. Do they play that hard? Malcolm, Kurt, Beaver? Malcolm shaved his head once. Fucking hipster. So fucking hip he doesn't even need hair on his head ooh I smoke cigarellas and have a bulemic girlfriend and wear shimmery shirts and I'm a gifted drummer a gifted fucking drummer so goddamn gifted Mike can't shut up about it and I don't wear hair on my head because it gets in the way of my gift...

Douglas, chill, chill you vile mother fucker. Blue things, the ocean, color of my sleep...

(A capella)

My arms open to it
My neck arches to it
My chest braces against the swell
Yellow trunks billow
I rise

who said, someone, we're born with the potential of a niagra, society dries us down to a faucet drip... ha... I'm a victim of the great social blowdryer... If I were bald wouldn't need a blowdryer... If I were bald I wouldn't have a job. No facial hair body piercings shaved heads offensive attire original ideas. No. Bad shaped head for bald anyway. Big-ass dent in the. And dandruff. Nasty shampoo. Makes my head smell evil. Keeps the bugs away. The boys away. Todd, what did he, my head smelled like the inside of a rotting lung? Dumb-ass. Huge freckled hands. Pink elbows. Ate so much fish, sushi like every day. Told me *I* stank? And fucking garlic. Garlic in everything. Sweat. The dip in his back. His freckles moving.

Wet sheets
breeze through the window
smell of garlic from our skin...
days tumbled past like crumpled paper
frightened boys sprawling
in a moment too huge

it is a cheapness
how we let people go

Hungry. Just ate like two hours ago. Groceries yesterday. ... hot pockets... dijournos
pizza... diet shasta... what else what else... chunky monkey. With Magic shell. Oh yes.
Good good yummm...

La la la la-la magic shell...
I loooove you magic shell...
you're mine
yooooouuuuuu magic magic shell.....
yeah, so magic
soft in the bottle
hard in the air
how do you do it?
it's maaaaaaagiiiiic...

I want it. Better fucking be there. Always eating my. Not my damn fault you don't have a job. Been over five months. Showing up all. "Is this my room?" Classifieds crunched

in your fist. Unwashed hair and eightball eyes. No fucking money. “Only temporary.” Right. Uncle never got you that job as a barback in his steakhouse, did he? Afraid the soapwater would wrinkle your special hands?... Blood on the keys. The hell is in you needs to be bled out? Some sickness you don’t talk about... never talk about it. No friends... Hilary always calling in tears, what do I tell her? And the strange mail. All winter letters from Nepal, then Hong Kong in the spring... and then ashes in the garbage. You burn them. BURN. If you talked about it... to me, maybe... you know... I wouldn’t go soft. I’d listen with my eyes cool. I’d nod and I’d mean it. I’d look at your hands if your face was too much.

Knobby wrists
Pipe-cleaner arms
Hands sprouting too big
Jagged nails from biting
Which finger bleeds?
Three fat blue veins
Trace to bulby tips
Awkward elegance breathing through them
Which finger bleeds, Mike?
I want to know

I’d ask... I’d ask you if. But you don’t. You have no. Only once. Two months ago. Came home from a gig all liquored up. Sat at the kitchen table and drank the rest of the Stoli with me. Laughed so hard spit came out our noses. Told me your father lost an arm in the war. He still feels it. Told me you tore your thumbnail off ripping down the keyboard. You were seven. Told me the first time you had sex you cried because it hurt her so much. You made your mouth say these things to me. You wanted me to know. That comes from somewhere. Doesn’t just fade in the morning when you’ve slept off the. There’s nothing. You believe, believe, first. Great desperate things. And a darkness. Thumbtacks. Walking.

He is falling asleep.

Your hands. Torn, skin torn. Blood keys. Like teeth. Do you need. You need. My mouth.

A beat.

Shave it. Gone. Tomorrow.

He is asleep. Blackout.

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!
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