

Golgotha

A One-Act Play

by

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Theatre Professionals:

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THE SETTING:

The dingy interior of a gray, stuffy, one-room apartment. The furniture in the room has not changed since the previous tenant. Pizza boxes abound; the vapors of stale beer and body odor reign. A large cardboard box, about the size of a case of paper towels, occupies the center of the stage, the lid still attached though hanging to the side. A woman's [Barbara's] clothes and purse are piled on the floor by the bed. A street light shines into the window, revealing the silhouette of a nearby branch, resting motionless (at the present) against the curtain.

AT RISE:

The lights come up very slowly, showing JORGE, 27, sitting in the desk chair. He is wearing a pair of boxer shorts, no shirt, and a pair of argyle socks -- inside-out. BARBARA, 37, is sprawled out on the bed, a pillow over her face. She is wearing one of Jorge's dress shirts. JORGE opens a beer, letting the foam splash forward all over BARBARA, who does not react in the slightest bit.

JORGE

Told ya to shut up. Told ya to. Bitches're all the same. Never listen to a word I say.
(Losing it for an instant)

Not one word!

(Regaining himself)

So I pillowed ya. Got what ya asked for. Not one bit less.
(Losing it momentarily again)

Not one bit!

(Beat)

If you'd showed me just a breeze a' promise. Just a breeze. But ya didn't. Not a breeze.

(Makes a breezy sound, rather poorly)

Not a breeze.

(JORGE takes a long drink from the beer and slams it down on the desk. Then he rises and crosses to BARBARA, picking up the pillow off her face. He continues the breezy sound, acting like the pillow is floating around. He makes it flutter down, like a leaf, back onto her face, and presses his hands down on it as if to suffocate her. He pushes down on the pillow. Then he pushes harder on the pillow. There is no reaction whatsoever from BARBARA, who has been lying still the entire time. After a beat, he picks up the pillow and tosses it against the wall)

Bitches die too easy.

JORGE (continued)

(He stands, looking out the window)

What do ya say we take a spin? To the lake. After dark. Darker than dark. Moon goes down 'round two-thirty. Maybe take a swim. Slam a few brews. I got a few other lady-friends there already. Just like you. My own little harem. Harem-scarem. They dance when the wind blows. Can't keep the ladies from dancin'. They sing, too. Through the trees. Ain't so bad of a place. You'll like it. You'd better.

(Strolls over to the box, kicking it)

Gotta get you there incognito-like. Wouldn't want ole' Fred next door to be jealous. Too late. Had some screamers in my day, tell you that. God. One wench screamed at the top a' her lungs. Had to stop that shit. Neighbors thought I was rapin' her. Well, I was. But she coulda took it better'n that. She'd scream when I pushed it in, and scream when I pulled it out. Hell, she screamed when I opened a beer. Now there ain't no sense in that. Screamin' at a beer.

(The thought moves him to the refrigerator. He opens the refrigerator door, puts his hand inside the twelve-pack carton, almost up to the elbow. He searches around a little bit, and finally pulls the carton out, his hand and upper-arm still inside it.)

Dammit, woman! I said remind me to get some beer. You piss me off sometimes, really piss me off.

(He flings the carton towards her. Of course, she makes no response at all)

Gotta hand it to ya. You're slick. Real smooth. Probably lived with a drinker before, didn't ya? Know all the tricks. Now I remember. When I was 'bout ready to pull into Louie's ya grabbed me. Put me ta half-mast before we even got up here to the door. Real smooth. Put that beer right oughta my head.

(He sits down on the edge of the bed, lifting her arm and dropping it) Bought my line all the way. Ain't too many women do that. I said -- "Hey, it's gettin' stuffy in here. Wanna go out an' take a drive?" An' you just gave me your hand.

(Taking her hand)

An' we were in the car cruisin' over here. Jus' like that. Too easy. Usually gotta talk 'em out to the car first -- maybe tell 'em I've got a snort out there or some grass. When we get out there I tell 'em we gotta drive for it. If I get 'em out to the car, I got 'em. Just the way they are. You were a easy catch. Died too easy, but everybody's got their faults. I got mine, I know.

(Drops her hand. Whispers)

I hate -- I mean, I really hate -- when I get cereal down at the Foxtrot Cafe, an' they already got the milk on it. Swear to God, drives me up the wall. Now you say, "That ain't no big deal." but that shows ya how goddam picky I can be sometimes. An' take my socks...

(Picks up his leg, showing argyle socks)

I like to wear 'em inside out, an' I only met one damn woman who could ever understand that. When ya do the laundry, you gotta turn 'em inside out before ya fold 'em. So there ain't no foolin' around an' wastin' time when you're tryin' to get dressed to go out to the lake or some other place. Only met one babe on the face a' the earth who didn't turn 'em right side out before she folded 'em. Now this sock thing, it ain't no sin -- I don't mean that -- but it's a kind a' fault -- in me -- 'cause it's started more fights than I can count on both fingers an' toes put together. Course the babe could take the

JORGE (continued)

time a' day ta notice that I wear 'em inside out an' adjust accordingly, but that don't happen. Usually don't know a babe more than one or two nights, tops.

(Drops his leg down again. Fusses with her shirt)

You know, you're easier to talk to than the rest of 'em. Betcha had to live with a drinker before. Know how to listen. Not interrupt. God, I hate that. I hate a lot a' things, ya know? Not just the milk an' the socks, but just a lot a' things. You'd think I'd be a happy kinda guy. You know? Gotta good payin' job. All the babes I can handle. I like those french bread pizzas an' they always got 'em on sale somewhere. Ya know? If ya got simpler tastes, it ain't all that hard to be happy. But I ain't! I really ain't!

(Stands up)

Can't figure it out.

(A man, BARRY, who has been standing in the shadows the entire time, steps out quickly into the light. BARRY is a well-dressed man, in evening dress, about 50. JORGE notices him, but is not at all startled by him)

JORGE

(to BARRY)

They're dying too easy, Barry. Way too easy. This one woulda hung herself if I'd let 'er. Crazy bitch.

(Standing over her)

Good to talk to, though. Didn't interrupt once.

BARRY

Is it my imagination, or is it getting more difficult to find people who don't want to die?

JORGE

(Looking at him for a moment)

You know? I think you got somethin' there. Nobody bites or kicks or scratches anymore. I ain't even had a screamer past three or four times. They just lay there like a carcass an' wait for the hook ta take 'em away. Had one bitch wrap the sheet 'round her own neck. Had to fight her to unwrap it. Saved her life. Iced 'er myself an hour later, but we can't let them start choosin', can we?

(Picks up the beer from the desk)

Generally screws up a guy's weekend plans, ya know? Thought it'd take a couple hours, anyway. Fifteen minutes an' I gotta stiff to cart around an' no beer in the fridge. Gettin' too much like work ta suit me.

(Takes a drink of the beer, makes a funny face)

Warm.

BARRY

Ever get tired of this? Ever wish you could transfer to another line of work?

JORGE

(Snorts a little at the thought, shakes his head quickly)

Pay's too good.

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