

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



The Tribulation of Abacus Christie

by Brett Heath

EXTRACT

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This script is distributed by The Australian Script Centre
77 Salamanca Place Hobart 7004 Tasmania Australia
email admin@ozscript.org
www.ozscript.org
ph +61 3 6223 4675
fax +61 3 6223 4678

THE TRIBULATION OF ABACUS CHRISTIE

SETTING: A LARGE CRUMPLED OFF WHITE CYC IS BACKDROP. ON ONE OF THE WALLS A LONG KNOTTED SHEET SNAKES IT'S WAY FROM THE TOP OF THE HANGING BATON DOWN TO THE STAGE WHERE IT IS SHAPED INTO THE OUTLINE OF A LARGE RED HEART. THIS SHEETING IS FADED GRADUALLY FROM WHITE TO BLOOD RED.

BLACKOUT.

WE HEAR DISTINCTIVE NIGHT EXT ATMOS. THIS FADES TO INT. ATMOS. WE THEN HEAR FOOTSTEPS CREAKING ALONG A HALL. FADE TO A CLOCK TICKING. WE THEN HEAR A MAN SLEEPING. AT A GIVEN POINT HE GASPS LOUDLY. LIGHT FAIRYTALE MUSIC BEGINS. AT SOME POINT WE GRADUALLY BEGIN TO HEAR A WOMAN READING THE OPENING LINES TO SOME WELL KNOWN FAIRY TALES, A GIRL SINGING 'GIRL GERMS, GIRL GERMS, YOU'VE GOT GIRL GERMS' WE HEAR A WOMAN'S VOICE SAYING 'WAKE UP, WAKE UP, YOU'VE GOT TO WAKE UP'.

THE MUSIC HAS NOW SEGUED INTO A RAUCOUS JUNGLE-LIKE PIECE AND AT A GIVEN TIME ABACUS SCREACHES ONTO THE STAGE.

I was in a room, yes, a room, very near to this size. But it had no windows, no windows, no glass, no view. Doors. It had doors this big and it had doors this big. But they were locked. All the fucking doors were fucking locked. What to do? Where to go? Run. Running faster and faster around the room. But the faster I ran, the larger the room became. And the larger the room became, there were more fucking doors. But one door, open, one door calling.

ABACUS GRABS HOLD OF THE PIECE OF KNOTTED SHEETING AND THRUSTS HIMSELF OUT TOWARDS THE AUDIENCE.

I galloped towards the open door. Red door. I could see inside. Inside. My little lamb was inside, my bounty of bounty's. She had summoned me. I am coming, my angel, my little dove, my Lazerus arms outstretched, I hear you, I hear you...the door, the door, arms through the door, through the door, closing, closing, no!!

ABACUS NOW TWISTS THE SHEETING AROUND HIS WRISTS, IT NOW PULLED TIGHT AS HE PULLS HIMSELF BACK TOWARDS ITS TIE OFF POINT.