

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Abacus

by Brett Heath

EXTRACT

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Simple melancholic piano music plays. A black fluro light pours light from it's downstage position, stage level. See Abacus entwined within himself lying on the stage, back to audience. He wears tea stained y-fronted undies and a tea stained singlet. The singlet is pulled over his face. Hear intermittent gasps. When audience is in, music slowly fades down. Abacus's feet begin to move slightly before his coiled body begins to spasm. This happens a number of times before he rolls onto his back.

ABACUS: I was in a room, yes, a room, a room very near to this size. But it had no windows, no windows, no glass, no view. Doors. It had doors. It had doors this big and it had doors this big. But they were locked. All locked, all the fucking doors were fucking locked. What to do? Where to go? Run.

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, one door open, one door calling... I galloped towards the open door. Outside. Outside, my little lamb was outside, calling, calling. I am coming, my angel, my little dove, my arm outstretched through the open door, I hear you, I hear you...the door, through the open door, open door, arms through the door, door closing door closing, closing, no!! Aaarrgghh!

My hands, both hands, blood, blood, fountains of blood, I am drowning in my own flesh and blood. I must swim to shore, swim to shore, I keep falling under, falling under, down, down, can't breathe, can't breathe, falling under, falling under, down down, can't breathe, can't breathe, falling under, falling under, down down, drowning, drowning, no light, no light, save me, help me, Lilly, Lilly, Lliilllyyy,!!....

He quickly pulls the singlet from his face as if he had been suffocating under it. He breathes deeply.

Well, well, awake, awake yet again. Three fifty seven a.m., yet again. I felt exhausted. Truly exhausted. My body ached like a frozen river, my mind as precise as lead. For this dream, this hallucination, this murkiest of waters, this that swoops down upon me at random like an unwelcome and despised friend. Sweet dreams? Are they not made of this? I fear not. For this dream lay at the bed of the abyss, motionless yet monster like the creature from the blackest lagoon. Oh, yes, it is there, believe you me.

Down, down, down, you go. Blop...blop... blop, where you'll end up, nobody knows.