

"GOODBYE, MOTHER"

by

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...Open all doors

Open all senses

Open all defences

Ask, what were these closed for?

Open all family secrets

Open all trap doors

Open all dark passages

Open all attics and cellars...

LEMN SISSAY, *Open Up*

CHARACTERS

MARGARET

A woman.



A single light over MARGARET. The rest of the stage is in darkness. MARGARET represents millions of women. The world is in darkness.

MARGARET

Monsters.

Monsters are real but you only see them while they attack. More precisely, while they are attacking you, and you are not a monster so there is no contest. You are going to lose. Know this now: You will lose. But what will you lose? And how much? How much you'd lose just depends on the level of rage of your monster. That's the lottery. How do we stop the betting?

If you've been under attack you know what I am talking about, and I am sorry for you, I am so sorry it also happened to you. Hear me, sister. It doesn't matter if it happened once or a hundred times. It was never your fault. We know what we've been through. We know. We know that seeing the true face of a monster is the scariest shit that'll ever happen to anyone.

(MARGARET screams as loudly and as long as she can. Pause. She breathes herself back into normality, taking her time.) Seeing your husband turn into a monster for the first time is something out of this world. Out of time. Perplexity and fear, revulsion and terror, your body collapsing under a pain you can't identify the source.

What is happening? Who is this person?

Why is he so red?

Wait.

Is my nose broken?

Is this still a person? So red.

What?

What is he saying?

Unintelligible screams I can't answer to.

Am I going to die today? Here? Is death this sudden? This stupid?

I'm going to die today. Right here, in this kitchen. In this narrow kitchen, with a window behind me, ends the world. I'm wet.

I didn't know I was peeing.

I don't want to die in a kitchen. Nor in a bathroom. Nor in a bedroom. Wet. I don't want to die wet down there.

But he's faster. The monster is stronger, and faster and huge. The monster is red and unstoppable. So red. So red. I don't want to die in this house.

I thought I was bigger than this. Than dying wet. The pee taking away my dignity. It's getting cold. Cold pee. How long have I been crouched down, getting punched and whacked and slammed and kicked and punched and punched and kick and whacked and slammed? Again.

I look up. I can't recognize the face of my own husband. Still. I can't recognize him. Please shift back into the love of my life, please. Are you suicidal? Stop looking at him! Now! His rage is burgeoning. Don't look at him.

It's pointless, anyway, I can't see anything through my tears.

I didn't know I was crying.

How can I talk him out of this if I don't know who this thing is?

And then you understand that the monster doesn't even speak your language, and you can't figure out the monster's language. Unintelligible screams you can't answer to. Don't even try. It enrages him.

What is happening? How did we get here?

It all comes down to how fast I can escape now. Where are the exits? There's the door. Not the door. The door is too far away from where I am, in the other end of this long narrow kitchen. Behind me. The window. I can't anticipate his moves. He's too fast. I'm too scared. I'm out of my body and I don't know how to move it. If I try and jump and he stops me... would he be saving me?

WHAT?

Will I survive five stories fall? Is it safer to jump out of the window than staying? I think it is. Can I reach the window in time? Would he stop me? My nose is broken, I've peed myself. How is it possible these two things haven't stopped the monster, is he not seeing them? Is he not seeing me? Thoughts run faster than the speed of light.

He loves me, he should be seeing this.

WHAT?

HE WHAT?

STOP IT!

I'm all wet and thinking I need to change my clothes before escaping, I don't want the neighbors to see me wet. He would kill me.

There will be people in the street. Get to the street. Out. Get out. Through the window. Would he be saving me? The street sounds like heaven now. If I get to the street...

Do I have time to run to the bedroom, get clothes, go to the bathroom, lock myself into it, change and run out of the front door of the house?

Not in a million years.

HE WHAT??

Can I just get to the bathroom and lock myself in there? Is he still hitting me? I can't even feel anything anymore. I just see him everywhere I look. Parts of him. Here. The knee. There. An arm. There. Hair. There. A hip too close to the counter. Here. A hand. So red. All of him. There. Shirt. There are parts of the monster blocking my vision no matter where I look. There's also blood on the floor. Is that my blood? Must be. In the way towards the door. Get to the window.

I didn't know I was bleeding.

How do I stand up? He's too close. He's too close. I can't even stand up. How am I going to jump all crawled up? Would he be saving me? WHAT THE FUCK, MARGARET? WHAT THE FUCK? Stop betting on him. NOW.

I have no idea how long all this has been going on. Seriously. No idea. Four minutes? Fifteen years? Stop thinking, Margaret! I need you to move! Come on!

But I can't see anywhere. I can't see anything. What's happening.

I didn't know I was blinded.

Oh, God. How long have I been crouched down, getting punched and whacked and slammed and kicked and punched and punched and kick and whacked and slammed? Again. Again. Again.

When will he stop? Will he ever stop? I can't feel anything anymore. I don't care about anything anymore. I'm just... I'm... going to let go. I am ok with it. It's better to let go of all this. This is it. It's ok. I know I am dying.

It's better this way. I'm leaving. That's all I want.

(To herself)

Goodbye, baby. See you on the other side.