

*Living Room Play*



by Johanna Reed

“Pain is measured and detailed.”

—*Gonzalo Millán* (from Alejandro Zambra)

Character—

THE WOMAN

Notes—

*Living Room Play* must take place in the living room of someone's house, furnished with ordinary living room-type things (lamps, little tables, a rug, etc.). It must have a couch long enough for THE WOMAN to lay supine on and a table sturdy enough to support her weight. If possible, it should have a taller piece of furniture (i.e., a bookcase) that she can climb.

The performance can take place at any time of day, though there should be a certain beauty to the light in the room, whatever kind it is.

THE WOMAN wears a robe and a pair of white socks.

The audience can sit anywhere in the room, except on the sofa.

The audience must be at least one.

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THE WOMAN is supine on the couch of a living room, her front pushed against the couch so we see only her back. She is more or less still for a long time, at least five minutes. She makes small movements of existence (it must be clear that she is not sleeping): she scratches or touches her skin, puts some of her hair in her hand and gently tugs, shifts deeper into the pillows, twists her shoulders to reveal part of her neck and clavicle, etc.

She slides her socks off using her feet.

She waits a few minutes, then takes off her robe. She is nude.

The next actions must be done as if THE WOMAN were moving underwater:

She moves off of the sofa onto the floor. She moves slowly across the floor by pushing herself small distances in a kind of graceful flinching. She moves onto the top of the table, and then, if she is able, climbs a bookcase or a piece of taller furniture. Perhaps she rolls herself into the rug or hem of the drapes, or curls around the leg of a chair.

She can touch the audience and move herself over them, if they are in her way, but they are furniture.

She traverses the majority of the living room without ever becoming fully upright or using her limbs to move herself effectively.

She moves slowly, in little gulps. She makes quiet sounds about the grief of living.

Depending on the size of the living room, the performance should last between 20 and 40 minutes.

When she is finished, she puts on her robe but not her socks and leaves the room.

END