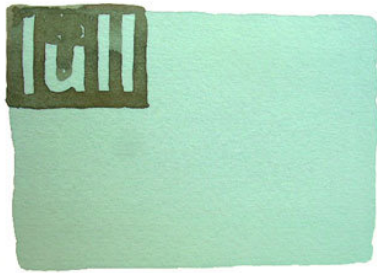


Story for performance #996  
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Source: Ashraf Khalil, 'Cheney to spearhead Middle East talks', *LA Times* in *Sydney Morning Herald online*, 12/03/08.

Tags: [home](#), [music](#), [theatre](#), [sexuality](#)  
Writer/s: [Deborah Levy](#)

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'I love my new house,' says Jonny Lull to his colleague Tina Tassels. 'It's modern and it's even got a tiny garden for my cat. The only trouble is I don't really know where it is but that's okay because I work at the club most nights now and by the time I get home it's four in the morning. I fall into bed and there are these beautiful birds singing in the trees.'

Tina Tassels who is sticking her eyelashes on with glue says 'Actually, I know more or less where your new house is. Larry told me. It's in Devon in South West England. It rains a lot there.'

'Ah,' says Jonny Lull, 'I did wonder if it was in Devon.'

'Yes,' says Tina Tassels, stuffing her bra with socks, 'you'll probably have to buy yourself a car. There aren't that many buses in the rural area where you live now. It's hard to get by without a car in Devon. How did you get to the club tonight?'

'Well,' says Jonny Lull, 'I caught a train.'

'Ah, trains are always very relaxing,' says Tina Tassels and then tells Jonny to put his slap on because the show is about to start and Peter the stage manager is tapping his watch.

'What's slap?' asks Jonny Lull applying lipstick from a pot to his lips with a cotton bud.

Tina Tassels bends down to buckle her silver heels. 'It's a word for foundation, Jonny. All the performers at the club use it. You probably don't know because you're new here. It makes your skin smooth and stiff like a mask.'

'Oh right,' says Jonny Lull. 'Actually, I'm a bit worried about the foundations of my new house in Devon. Sometimes it sways when I make my toast in the morning. I can feel it move beneath my feet. In fact most mornings my new house doesn't seem to be built on solid foundations at all.'

'Yes,' says Tina Tassels. 'Put your fishnets on now Jonny, our audience is waiting for us. Here's your script. How it goes is, you sing what ever comes into your head while I bandage my head by the microphone.'

'Okay,' says Jonny Lull.

He is feeling quite confused and emotional but he knows he looks good. His own beauty scares him. It takes him longer than usual to put on his fishnets.

The audience is impatient. They're sick of waiting for Jonny Lull and Tina Tassels. They've drunk too much vodka and the heating system has broken down. Some of them have tumours. Some of them are millionaires. Some of them work in the city and others are teachers. Some of them are on pensions. Two are worried about their mortgage repayments. It's a mixed audience at the club tonight. There are two Norwegians and two Italians amongst them. The four of them are getting on well but they're also impatient for the show to begin. One of the Italians has an interesting book in his pocket. The other has a card from a prostitute in his wallet. Bjorn the plumber is on his honeymoon but an hour ago he told his new wife he was nipping out for a pint of milk.

The lights change and the show begins.

Jonny Lull sings his song while Tina Tassels bandages her head by the microphone. There are all sorts of news flashes breaking inside Jonny as he sweats under the lights and the audience sways and claps with him. Jonny Lull sings his song and his heart is breaking. He finds the world and its arrangements both senseless and totally transparent and he tries to convey this to his audience as he sings.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Deborah Levy.